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URsearch, part 2

Comprising Volumes 87–116

(1996–2025)

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URsearch (our initial *UR* search program) includes the contents of *Unsearchable Riches* magazine from volume 1 (1909) through volume 90 (1999). *URsearch, part 2,* however, is in the form not of a hyper-text program, but of a single PDF file, with hyper-text links (1) to each UR volume, and (2) to each UR article contained therein. It comprises the contents of *Unsearchable Riches* magazine from volume 87 (1996) through our most recent complete volume (currently, volume 108). Each one of these facilities (*URsearch,* and *URsearch part 2*), within its' own respective contents, may be searched to find the occurrence of any desired word or phrase, within its own context.

The pages immediately following will outline each *UR* volume and show the titles of the articles contained in each number of that volume. To access any desired volume, click on that volume's header line. You will then be taken to that volume's index. You may then click on the green page number to the right of any certain article and you will be taken directly to the beginning of that article. To navigate back to the top of the document, simply depress the "Home" key.

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Volume 87 (1996)

Volume 87, number 1; January, 1996: Paul to the Philippians; Let Him Be Anathema!; The Endurance of Job (translation and exposition of Job 3-5); Arrays of the Living Elohim; Set for Life Eonian.
Volume 87, number 2; March, 1996: Paul to the Colossians; The Arrows of Him Who-Suffices (translation and exposition of Job 6,7); My Impregnable Retreat; For You are Bought With a Price; More Than Conquering; There Has Come New; When It Delights God.
Volume 87, number 3; May, 1996: The Prayer of Faith; Paul's Promise Epistles; The Truth of the Evangel; For the Sake of His Delight; If Not God, Indeed, Who? (translation and exposition of Job 8-10).
Volume 87, number 4; July, 1996: Paul's Personal Epistles; The Hand of Eloah (translation and exposition of Job 11-14); The Ways of God and Man; Concealed in God; Not Already Perfected; The Evangel of the Uncircumcision.
Volume 87, number 5; September, 1996: The Deity of God; Salvation and Judgment in the Book of Matthew; Enoch and Elijah; A Witness in the Heavens (translation and exposition of Job 15-17); Through the Faith of Christ; Be Conciliated to God!
Volume 87, number 6; November, 1996: God All in All; O Foolish Galatians!; The Voice of One Imploring; Dais of Christ; How Long? (translation and exposition of Job 18,19); The Living Redeemer.

Volume 88 (1997)

Volume 88, number 1; January, 1997: Crucifixion; Graciously Granted, Through Promise; Astonished at His Teaching; Face to Face; Disquieting Thoughts (translation and exposition of Job 20,21).
Volume 88, number 2; March, 1997: Crucified Together with Him; In Three Days I Will Raise It Up; Transformation; That I Might Find Him (translation and exposition of Job 22-24); 1 Samuel 1,2; First Samuel: Overview; If the Lord is Willing.
Volume 88, number 3; May, 1997: Unity by Crucifixion; Galatians Four; You Fall Out of Grace; Lord! Save Us!; Mutually Solicitous; Israel's First Two Kings; 1 Samuel 9 and 16; The Thunder of God's Masterful Deeds.
Volume 88, number 4; July, 1997: The Stupidity and the Wisdom of the Cross; Elohim Understands (translation and exposition of Job 27,28); Anointed as King; 1 Samuel 10; In the Day of Judging; Unpardoned Sin; Walking in Spirit (Gal.5:16-26).
Volume 88, number 5; September, 1997: Humanity Crucified; Sowing Into the Spirit (Gal.6:1-10); Called in Accord with God's Purpose; Faith Hampered by the Flesh; 1 Samuel 13:19-14:52; Yet Evil Came (translation and exposition of Job 29-31).
Volume 88, number 6; November, 1997: The Crucifixion of the World; Boasting in the Cross; Lest They Perceive; Job 32-37; The Speeches of Elihu.

Volume 89 (1998)

Volume 89, number 1; January, 1998: The Salvation of the Unbeliever; Do Not I Choose You?; The Lost Sheep of Israel; Invoking and Avowing; Then Yahweh Answered (translation and exposition of Job 38); The Best of the Flesh (translation and exposition of 1 Samuel 15).

Volume 89, number 2; March, 1998: God's Will and Intention; To Know the Love of Christ; Foreknowledge and Salvation; Do You Observe the Travailing; The Spirit of Yahweh Transferred Who, Consequently Can be Saved?.
Volume 89, number 3; May, 1998: The Will in God's Word; Christ Died for Our Sakes; Soul, Spirit, and Resurrection; The Arm and Voice of El; Job 40:1-24 David and Goliath By No Means, Till.
Volume 89, number 4; July, 1998: The Judgment of the Nations; It is Yahweh's; Eon, as Indefinite Duration; The Unachievable Reward; Coming with Power and Much Glory.
Volume 89, number 5; September, 1998: Satisfaction, Government, or Conciliation?; When it Delights God; The Coming of Faith; Job 42:1-9; But Now my Eye Sees You; 'Jesus': Yahweh-Saviour *Revealed*.
Volume 89, number 6; November, 1998: Babe, Child, Sonship and Firstborn; Foods, which God Creates; Yahweh's Consummation of Job's Captivity; Lessons from Job; Yahweh's is the Battle; For He was Roused.

Volume 90 (1999)

Volume 90, number 1; January, 1999: The Book of Beginnings; Genesis 1:1; The Verb 'Create' ; Elohim Creates; Written for This Teaching of Ours; Jonathan and David; Introduction to Ecclesiastes; What Elohim has Given to the Sons of Humanity.
Volume 90, number 2; March, 1999: Genesis 1:2; Disruption and the Power of Spirit; Disruption, Darkness and Light; Developments in Genesis 1:2; Intuitive Anticipation; Saul's Persecution of David; Words and Works; Elohim Gives Experience.
Volume 90, number 3; May, 1999: Genesis 1:3-5; The Light of Life and Love; Rejoicing Nevertheless; The Initial Actions of God; Divine Foreknowledge and Its Significance; Wisdom and Toil; From the Hand of Elohim.
Volume 90, number 4; July, 1999: Light and Luminaries; From Genesis to Romans; Why, Then, is He Still Blaming?; The Elusiveness of God's Anointed; The Times and Seasons; Elohim Does It.
Volume 90, number 5; September, 1999: The Atmosphere and the Waters; It is Becoming So; Saul's Schemes and God's Spirit; Human Will and the Ministry of Law; Even the Death of the Cross; The Soul's Yearning and God's Humbling; God Gives and God Withholds.
Volume 90, number 6; November, 1999: The Dry Ground and Vegetation; From Light to Life; Concerning Disputations About Free Will; 1 Samuel 20; The Departure Stone; The Work of God; Elohim has Made All our Days.

Volume 91 (2000)

Volume 91, number 1; January, 2000: The Will of God; Divine Illumination; Elohim is Giving; The Sabbath Day; Further Thoughts On Good and Evil; Testing What is the Will of God; Introduction: The Death of All in the Death of Christ.
Volume 91, number 2; March, 2000: The Fifth Day; Christ Alone has Immortality; Lucifer, or Howl! in Isaiah 14:12?; God's Righteousness and Human Unrighteousness; A Most Acceptable Era; A Turning Point; Light Amid the Shadows; Remember Your Creator.
Volume 91, number 3; May, 2000: The Object of Divine Judgment; Through Our Lord, Jesus Christ; Understanding and Assurance; Elohim is Blessing; David in the Wilderness.
Volume 91, number 4; July, 2000: The Making of Humanity; Displays of God's Power; Not Becoming Diversely Yoked; Grace Under Law; The Goat Rocks; For All Mankind.

Volume 91, number 5; September, 2000: The Forming of Adam; Questions Concerning Grace; Pledge of Our Allotment; All Vivified in Christ; God Takes and Gives.
Volume 91, number 6; November, 2000: Creature Complements; Believing and Understanding; Saul's Final Pursuit; That God May be All in All.

Volume 92 (2001)

Volume 92, number 1; January, 2001: New Year's Soliloquy; The Spirit in Generation; Insight and Discernment; God's Purpose in Christ; David Leaves the Land of Israel; A Prophetic Text.
Volume 92, number 2; March, 2001: The Saviour's Exaltation; God Highly Exalts Him; Growing in the Realization of God; All is For God; A Pattern of Sound Words; Saul and the Medium of Endor; Septuagint Contributions.
Volume 92, number 3; May, 2001: The Universal Dignities of Christ; The Reconciliation of All to God; In the Father's Hands; Marriage and the Believer; Among the Philistines; God at Work in Genesis Two.
Volume 92, number 4; July, 2001: The First Offense; God Sees; Marriage and the Believer (Part 2); Salvation is a Journey; God, the Saviour; Not by Vigor.
Volume 92, number 5; September, 2001: The First Offense (Part 2); Yahweh Elohim in Genesis Three; The Battle of Mount Gilboa; Encouragement in the Word; Marriage and the Believer (Part 3); The Saviour of All, Especially of Believers.
Volume 92, number 6; November, 2001: The First Offense (Part 3); Appointed by God; The Advent of God's Grace; Marriage and the Believer (Part 4); Yet Now They are Holy; The News of Saul's Death; A Suggested Translation of Titus 2:11.

Volume 93 (2002)

Volume 93, number 1; January, 2002: A Sonnet; The Way of Cain; Cain's Stubbornness and Fear; Outside the Garden; A Present Resurrection? Disqualification and Faith; Jews, Israelites, and Judeans; Israel Under New Rule.
Volume 93, number 2; March, 2002: Abel's Sacrifice; Yahweh Needs Abel; In the Name of Jesus Christ, We Must be Saved; God's Evangel Concerning His Son; Remember Paul's Bonds; David's Household.
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Volume 93, number 4; July, 2002: Subjection in the Line of Seth; God Sets; In Flesh, Apart From Christ, and Without God; The Establishing of David's House; Paul's Will for Us; Creation by God.
Volume 93, number 5; September, 2002: The Increase of Humanity; Yahweh Regrets and Grieves; The Grace of God in Truth; Saving Grace for all Mankind; The God of the Good News; Why All the Suffering?; Conflicts with the Philistines; Through the Prophets; Hebrew Prophecy.
Volume 93, number 6; November, 2002: In the Days of Noah; In the Eyes of Yahweh; Neither Will He be Sparing You!; The Sovereign and the Supreme; God Speaks in a Son; The Return of the Coffer.

Volume 94 (2003)

Volume 94, number 1; January, 2003: The Deluge; The Death of the Cross; Christ, in Judgment and Salvation; Unveiling of the Sons of God; Through the Apostles; God's Righteousness Revealed; House of God; House of David.
Volume 94, number 2; March, 2003: After the Deluge; Yahweh Sets Up Covenants; The Extension of David's Kingdom; Faith and Righteousness; "What Must Occur Swiftly; Even While in Bonds;" Through the Sacred Scriptures.
Volume 94, number 3; May, 2003: The Mindfulness of God; The Sons of Noah; David's Unusual Kindness; "What Must I Do to be Saved?" Justification Out of Faith; God's Salvation and Indignation; Righteousness.
Volume 94, number 4; July, 2003: The Disintegration of Language at Babel; Babylon in the Scripture; Divine Operation and Control; Salvation From What?; Effects of Divine Righteousness.
Volume 94, number 5; September, 2003: Paul, the Evangelist; A Spirit ofWisdom; God's Just Judgment; A Memorial Address; From Shem to Abram; What was God Thinking of?; Conflicts and Leadership.
Volume 94, number 6; November, 2003: Promise and Faith; Faith Righteousness; Yahweh Speaks to Abram; David and Bathsheba; Contrast and Agreement.

Volume 95 (2004)

Volume 95, number 1; January, 2004: God's Boundless Love; Abram and the Nations; Faith in the Supreme; David Confronted with his Sin; The Years Between; Desperate Need.
Volume 95, number 2; March, 2004: Abram Believes God; Abram to Abraham; Reaping the Whirlwind; Not of Men, But of God; Growth in Realization of God .
Volume 95, number 3; May, 2004: The Two Seeds; God is Faithful to His Word; David as a Father; "Outside of the Body"; Prayer, and the Will of God; When God is Being Judged; The Teaching of Baptizings.
Volume 95, number 4; July, 2004: The El Who-Suffices; Words of the Days; The Humiliation of the King; "Concealed From the Eons"; "As Deceivers and True"; All Under Sin; Types and Antitypes.
Volume 95, number 5; September, 2004: The End of the Flesh; Cast Down But Not Perishing; In the Days of David; "Let No One, Then, Be Judging You"; Temple Types; The Day of Christ Distinguished; In God's Sight.
Volume 95, number 6; November, 2004: Concerns of Faith and Grace; Lot and Abraham; God Rules in the Affairs of Man; Wherefore Console One Another; Yet Now, the Evangel of God; Paul and Baptism.

Volume 96 (2005)

Volume 96, number 1; January, 2005: "It is Finished"; The Rescue of Lot; The Judgment of the Cross, and Personal Adjudication; The Spirit Supreme; David at Mahanaim; The Evangel and God's Righteousness.
Volume 96, number 2; March, 2005: Abram's Justification; Seductive, Prideful Delusions; Varied Usages of "Eons"; David's Mourning; Baptism in Paul's Epistles; Manifested Righteousness.
Volume 96, number 3; May, 2005: Faith Perfected by Sacrifice; Attested by the Law and the Prophets; Bringing the King to the Throne; Perfection; Salvation From Sin, In Position and Practice.
Volume 96, number 4; July, 2005: Abraham Buys a Tomb; A Wife for Isaac; Honor; Trinitarianism and Heresy; Through Jesus Christ's Faith.

Volume 96, number 5; September, 2005: The Sons of Abraham; Isaac, the Son of Promise; The Lamp of Israel; Justification; "Justified by Works";The Evangel and Humanity.
Volume 96, number 6; November, 2005: Isaac's Sojournings; A Psalm of David; Perception and Reality; Conscience and the Evangel; Wisdom from Above; Christ's Faith and our Believing.

Volume 97 (2006)

Volume 97, number 1; January, 2006: "O Love, that wilt not Let Me Go"; Human Schemes and Divine Intention; Struggling in Prayer; Attaining to the Unity of the Faith; The Last Words of David; The Book of Jeremiah; Justified in God's Grace.

Volume 97, number 2; March, 2006: David's Masters of War; Jacob's Contacts with God; Appointed as a Prophet; White as Snow; Struggling in Prayer; "Binding" and "Loosing"; "Paul, an Apostle. . . . ".
Volume 97, number 3; May, 2006: Jacob and Laban; Proclamations from Yahweh; Into God's Hands; The Consequences of the Cross; God is Love; Through the Deliverance in Christ Jesus.
Volume 97, number 4; July, 2006: The Sons of Jacob; The Founding of Kingly Strength; Crisis in Corinth; The Disipline of Evil; Whom God Purposed.
Volume 97, number 5; September, 2006: The Return of Jacob; Division and Reunion; God's Righteousness Displayed; Through Faith in His Blood; "Nothing . . . is Now Condemnation".
Volume 97, number 6; November, 2006: From Jacob to Israel; Now On Display; Warnings to Judah; Is Yahweh True to His Troth?; Glorying In Expectation.

Volume 98 (2007)

Volume 98, number 1; January, 2007: "It is Thy Hand, My God!"; Back in the Land; Search for Faithfulness; The Pattern of God's Ways; God's Operative Love; Adam, Where are You?; Boasting Debarred.

Volume 98, number 2; March, 2007: Concerning the Flesh; Indeed, did Elohim Say . . . ?; Grace Reigns Through Righteousness; Faith and Righteousness; Be Admonished, Jerusalem; The Basis of Justification.
Volume 98, number 3; May, 2007: Jacob and the El of Bethel; Proclamations from the Temple Gate; Thoughts on Prayer; Justification by the One God; The Blessedness of Believing; Who Am I?.
Volume 98, number 4; July, 2007: Esau and the Edomites; Joseph and his Brethren; Believing God; What Then is This Bleating?; It is Enough!; Divine Supremacy.
Volume 98, number 5; September, 2007: Judah and His Wives; Fleshly Interlude; Joseph in Egypt; Do You Not Know?; Happiness from God; The Evangel We have Accepted.
Volume 98, number 6; November, 2007: Joseph's Exaltation; The Sin of Joseph's Brothers; Faith's Righteousness; Thoughts on Prayer; God's Word Operates.

Volume 99 (2008)

Volume 99, number 1; January, 2008: "The Sacred Scriptures"; Yahweh Speaks to Cain; Genesis 4:1-7; There is a Sin Offering; Deeming It to Be Refuse; The Repentance of Israel; What is Judgment?; Through Faith's Righteousness; An Evangel of Promise.
Volume 99, number 2; March, 2008: The Return to Egypt; There is a Reclining One; For the Progress of the Evangel; Satan Tries Christ; In Accord with Grace; Abraham's Faith and God's Grace.

Volume 99, number 3; May, 2008: Faith and Expectation; We are Awaiting; The Disposition of Christ; Abel as a Type of Christ; Sin for Sin; The Breaking and the Subjection.
Volume 99, number 4; July, 2008: A Revelation of the Divine Intention; The Authority of the Word; Given Up and Roused; Not, Neither, But "Be Rejoicing in the Lord Always".
Volume 99, number 5; September, 2008: So Israel Journeyed; Set by God; Teaching and Fellowship; Being, Then, Justified.
Volume 99, number 6; November, 2008: Sojourn in Egypt; The Problem of Evil; Order and Leadership; Through our Lord, Jesus Christ; Justification and Conciliation.

Volume 100 (2009)

Volume 100, number 1; January, 2009: "The Glory Effulgent"; God's Deity in Judgment; Expectation is Not Mortifying; Paul the Pessimist; "Not for All is the Faith" "Whose End is Destruction"; Psalm 22.
Volume 100, number 2; March, 2009: Sin and Death; God's Love in the Death of Christ; A Beneficent Divine Providence; The Divine Assumptions; The Mystery of Evil; Adam Died.
Volume 100, number 3; Ma y, 2009: What is Mankind?; The Human in Creation and Resurrection; A "Holy Kiss," Yet Opposition; "The Rock was Christ"; The Commendation of God's Love.
Volume 100, number 4; July, 2009: What is the Soul?; What is Spirit?; Keeping the Unity of the Spirit, In the Midst of Confusion; Justified in Christ's Blood.
Volume 100, number 5; September, 2009: What is Death?; Conciliated Through the Death of God's Son; What is an Offense?; Prayer, and the Deity of God.
Volume 100, number 6; November, 2009: What is God's Goal?; Prophecy and History; Glorying in God; Perceiving the Grace of God.

Volume 101 (2010)

Volume 101, number 1; January, 2010: The Transmission of Sin; Death in God's Purpose; Therefore, Through One; Adam and Christ; Believing and Salvation; In-Beginning-Of; The Verb "Create".
Volume 101, number 2; March, 2010: The Sin of Adam; The Evangel of Christ, of Israel, and of the Nations; Precious Bane; Death Reigns; Imputation or Transmission; The Creation of Humanity.
Volume 101, number 3; May, 2010: Undeniable Evidence; For the Resurrection; The Vivification of All; How the Dead Are Roused.
Volume 101, number 4; July, 2010: Not as the Offense, Thus Also the Grace; But Grace Superabounds; Grace and Glory; What is Grace?; Out of Many Offenses; Misconceptions Concerning Justification by Works.
Volume 101, number 5; September, 2010: The Grandeur of Faith; God's Purpose; "A Shocking Blasphemy"; Reigning in Life Through the One; Man's Mission in Creation; "That Grace Should be Increasing".
Volume 101, number 6; November, 2010: Momentous Parallels; Racewide Condemnation and Vivification; Disobedience and Obedience; Critical Questions Concerning "The Many" and "On Which"; All Included in Christ; Consequently, Then.

Volume 102 (2011)

Volume 102, number 1; January, 2011: "His Matchless Worth"; Justification by Death; God's Evangel Concerning His Son; Notable Effects of God's Own Righteousness; From Righteousness To Righteousness; The Human Soul.
Volume 102, number 2; March, 2011: Christ and Paul; "Honor Your Father and Mother"; Grace, and "The Ration of Sin"; The Soul Not Immortal; Through the Obedience of the One.
Volume 102, number 3; May, 2011: The Expectation Reserved For Us; Our Celestial Change; The Supremacy of Spirit.
Volume 102, number 4; July, 2011: "Imperceptible" or "Eternal"?; Sin Reigns in Death; Grace versus Sin; The Grace that Superexceeds; The Grace that Reigns; Overwhelming Grace.
Volume 102, number 5; September, 2011: Righteousness Revealed in Grace; The Law and Justification; What, then, shall We be Declaring?; In Grace and Out.
Volume 102, number 6; November, 2011: The Various Baptisms; Baptized Into Christ; God's Power for Believers; The Evangel of the Faith of Christ; The Slavery of Sin.

Volume 103 (2012)

Volume 103, First Quarter, 2012: "The Supremacy of God"; The Different Evangels; Justification by Faith; The Faith of Abram; Faith in the Supreme; The Walk of Abraham.
Volume 103, Second Quarter, 2012: He Died, He Died—He is Living, He is Living; Untenable Texts; The Rich Man and Lazarus.
Volume 103, Third Quarter, 2012: The Word of the Cross; Taking Account of Grace; Christ's Death and the Believer's Reckoning; Human Destiny (Part One).
Volume 103, Fourth Quarter, 2012: Human Destiny (Part Two); Israel Under the Law; We Are Under Grace; Perceiving the Grace of God.

Volume 104 (2013)

Volume 104, First Quarter, 2013: "Grace"; The Example of Christ; The Human Will; The Obedience of Grace; The Type of Teaching; Two Teachings.
Volume 104, Second Quarter, 2013: As a Human; The Service of Timothy; Epaphroditus' Sufferings; The Imitation of Paul.
Volume 104, Third Quarter, 2013: The Sacred Scriptures; Notes and Reflections; Abbreviation Key; Instruction for Use; Psalm 72; Judgment and Righteousness; Peace and Plentitude.
Volume 104, Fourth Quarter, 2013: To Die You Shall Be Dying; Dying Unto Death; Adam and Christ and Us; Then and Now; The Rations of Sin; The Gracious Gift of God.

Volume 105 (2014)

Volume 105, First Quarter, 2014: "A Prayer"; Heaven and Hell; The Object of Creation; Torturing Doubts, and Exultant Faith; In the Hand of the Potter; The Body and Ears of our Lord.
Volume 105, Second Quarter, 2014: Figurative Death and Life in Paul's Epistles; What, Then, is the Law?; The Spirit of a Sound Mind; Thoughts on Law and Sin; To Become Another's.
Volume 105, Third Quarter, 2014: Thus All Israel Shall be Saved; I Will Stand Erect; Because of Another; Three Laws; Law and the Knowledge of Sin; God's Law of Grace; The Parable of the Potter.
Volume 105, Fourth Quarter, 2014: Concordant Version Notes; "Grace" in Romans 7; Psalm Thirty-Eight; Rescue by Grace; Concerning What is "About to Be": "Pending" versus "Impending."

Volume 106 (2015)

Volume 106, First Quarter, 2015: Christ's Universal Headship; The Supremacy of Christ; The Reconciliation of All; A Prayer for Making the Secret of Christ Manifest; Christ, the Glory of Creation.
Volume 106, Second Quarter, 2015: Substitution or Inclusion?; For or Instead?; Consequently Now.
Volume 106, Third Quarter, 2015: Crucified with Christ; Buried, Ascended, Seated; Together with Christ; Growth in Realization of God; God, Sending His own Son; Sin for Sin.
Volume 106, Fourth Quarter, 2015: What is a Version?; The Greek and English Indefinite; The Fact Verb.

Volume 107 (2016)

Volume 107, First Quarter, 2016: "Love Embraces All"; God's Evangel; Simple Facts; Justification; Paul and God's Purpose; Figures of Speech.
Volume 107, Second Quarter, 2016: Son of Abraham; Jesus Christ's Faith; "Through the Faith of Christ"; Not Ashamed; The Just One; The Faith of Jesus Christ; Those Who Believe.
Volume 107, Third Quarter, 2016: The Supremacy of Christ; The Firstborn; Concerning Jacob and Joseph; Understanding and Assurance; Enriched in Him; The Evangel and Our Walk.
Volume 107, Fourth Quarter, 2016: Paul to the Romans; Notes on Romans.

Volume 108 (2017)

Volume 108, First Quarter, 2017: Paul's Testimony; Paul to the Galatians; Notes on Galatians.
Volume 108, Second Quarter, 2017: Paul to the Corinthians (1); The Word of the Cross; The Holy Spirit; The Evangel in Romans; Christ Crucified.
Volume 108, Third Quarter, 2017: Spiritual Gifts for Today; Spiritual Endowments; The Duration of Languages; The Primitive Passed By; The Mind of Christ.
Volume 108, Fourth Quarter, 2017: I Corinthians 15-16; The Evangel; From Mortality to Vivification; The Resurrection Change; Christ Dies; Crucial Questions About Resurrection.

Volume 109 (2018)

Volume 109, First Quarter, 2018: God's Aching Heart; An Epistle for the Heart; Paul to the Corinthians (II); In Accord with the Scriptures; The Death of All in the Death of Christ.
Volume 109, Second Quarter, 2018: Romans 3:21–26; God's Evangel of Righteousness; Apprehending the Word that God Declares; The Disposition which Must Be; Grace and Obedience.
Volume 109, Third Quarter, 2018: Romans 7:21–8:8; Spirit and the Mind; Life and Peace; Creation and Disruption; The Holy Spirit of God; The Myth of "FreeWill."
Volume 109, Fourth Quarter, 2018: Reign, Resurrection and Revelation; The Kingdom in the "Old Testament"; True Spirituality; A Word in Due Season; Wisdom are we Speaking Among the Mature; The Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of the Heavens.

Volume 110 (2019)

Volume 110, First Quarter, 2019: I see Thee, Lord, in everything; Framework of Philippians; Introduction to Philippians; The Philippians' Contribution; Joint Participants of Grace; Deeming It to be Refuse; Do Not Worry about Anything.
Volume 110, Second Quarter, 2019: Paul's Affairs; The Example of Christ; The Human Will; Growth in Realization of God.
Volume 110, Third Quarter, 2019: The Service of Timothy; Epaphroditus' Sufferings; The Imitation of Paul.
Volume 110, Fourth Quarter, 2019: The Kenosis of Christ; The Disposition of Christ.

Volume 111 (2020)

Volume 111, First Quarter, 2020: Framework of Colossians, Paul to the Colossians, His Grandest Glories, Colossians (Introduction and Conclusion), Mutual Reports (Colossians 1:3-8–4:7-9).
Volume 111, Second Quarter, 2020: The Secret of Christ (Its Realization), The Secret of Christ (Its Manifestation), The Blood of Christ's Cross.
Volume 111, Third Quarter, 2020: Philosophy and Religion, That Which is Above, Except What is Human, God'sWill and Intention, The Death of the Cross, Christ, in Judgment and Salvation.
Volume 111, Fourth Quarter, 2020: On Thy Account, God and Christ, The Complement of the Deity, The Love and Will of God, Growing in the Realization of God, The Reconciliation of All to God.

Volume 112 (2021)

Volume 112, First Quarter, 2021: Framework of "Ephesians" Chart, Paul to the [Ephesians], The Address on the Envelope, Our Saviour, God, In Grace and Out.
Volume 112, Second Quarter, 2021: Spiritual Blessings, One God and One Lord, Blessed in Christ, Believing the Evangel.
Volume 112, Third Quarter, 2021: Among the Celestials, Whose Faith?, Faith Accords with Grace, Yahweh is the Only Elohim, Justified.
Volume 112, Fourth Quarter, 2021: Our Blessings are in Christ, God Chooses Us in Christ, Foreknown and Chosen of God, Paul to the Thessalonians (I), Paul to the Thessalonians (II), The Trumpet of God.

Volume 113 (2022)

Volume 113, First Quarter, 2022: The Glory of His Grace; Human Love and Freedom; Paul to Timothy (I); Faith and Love in Christ Jesus; Worthy of All Welcome; Paul to Timothy (II); Fully Follow Paul.
Volume 113, Second Quarter, 2022: Deliverance by Blood; The Secret of His Will; Pause, Repeat and Reflect; Judgment and Indignation; Paul to Titus; The Common Faith; The Advent of God's Grace; Ideal Acts; Introduction to Philemon; Paul to Philemon.
Volume 113, Third Quarter, 2022: James Robert Coram; The Boundary Line; God Makes Our Trials; Paul and God's Evangel; When it Delights God; The Message; It is God Who is Operating.
Volume 113, Fourth Quarter, 2022: The First Ephesian Prayer; Choosing What is Choice; The Knowledge of Good; Evangel for our Faith; The Righteous One.

Volume 114 (2023)

Volume 114, First Quarter, 2023: God's Wondrous Grace; Editorial; God be All the Glory; Holy Spirit; The Earnest of the Spirit; The Sealing of the Spirit; The Righteous One's Faith.
Volume 114, Second Quarter, 2023: Editorial; Celestial Sovereignty; Boasting in God's Will; Christ's Supremacy; The Singular Faith of Christ; Faith Perfected.
Volume 114, Third Quarter, 2023: Editorial; Seated Among the Celestials; Herald the Word!; Forbear—Justify—Propitiate; Romans 3:21-28; Righteousness through Jesus Christ's Faith.
Volume 114, Fourth Quarter, 2023: Editorial; The Era Preceding the Present; The Word of Christ, it's Grace and Power; Together with the Lord; God is One.

Volume 115 (2024)

Volume 115, First Quarter, 2024: A Hymn of Consolation; Editorial; Consolation in Expectation; Our Believing and Christ's Faith; Given Up and Roused; We Rely on the Living God.
Volume 115, Second Quarter, 2024: Editorial; Our Relationship to Christ; From Enmity to Peace; The Living God and the Eons; Justified out of Christ's Faith.
Volume 115, Third Quarter, 2024: Editorial; The Secret of Christ and the Dimensions of His Love; Love Transcendent; Choice and Deity; God's Righteous Love.
Volume 115, Fourth Quarter, 2024: Editorial; Both Blessed Together in a Joint Body; Joint Partakers of the Promise; His Achievement are We; Romans 5:12-6:23; Listening to God's Evangel of Joy.

Volume 116 (2025)

Volume 116, First Quarter, 2025: 2 Editorial; The "Mystical" Body of Christ; The Evangel of the Uncircumcision; An Evangel is Brought to the Dead; Who Receive the Secret?
Volume 116, Second Quarter, 2025: Editorial; The Spirit's Unity; The Unity of the Spirit; The Appreciation of God; Listening to "Listen"; The Figure of Salt.
Volume 116, Third Quarter, 2025: Editorial; God's Evangel; Romans 1:1-12; Adjusting the Saints; The New Humanity; Darnel, Fire, Furnace; Outer Darkness.
Volume 116, Fourth Quarter, 2025: Editorial; The Joint Body—in the Lord; The Celestial Conflict; 2 Corinthians 10:4-6; A Chained Ambassador; The Evangel of which Paul is not Ashamed; The Metaphor of God being a Consuming Fire.

INDEX TO VOLUME LXXXVII

Anathema, Let Him Be . . . 9
Arrays of the Living Elohim . . . 35
Arrows of Him Who Suffices . . . 55
"Be Conciliated to God" . . . 235
Concealed in God . . . 169
Dais of Christ . . . 271
Deity of God, The . . . 195
Endurance of Job, The . . . 23
Enoch and Elijah . . . 211
Epistles of Paul, The . . . 5,51,111,147
Evangel of the Uncircumcision . . . 181
For the sake of His Delight . . . 127
For You are Bought With a Price . . . 72
God All in All . . . 243
Hand of Eloah, The . . . 154
How Long? . . . 277
If Not God Indeed Who? . . . 134
Job, Notes on the Book of . . . 23,55,134,154,214,277
Living Redeemer . . . 286
More than Conquering . . . 75
My Impregnable Retreat . . . 65
Not Already Perfected . . . 175
Obituaries: L. Abbott 110, W. Dane 110, I. Degen 276,
C. Fletcher 276, M. Hansen 276, J. Hawes 276,
T. Jodar 110, A. King 276, R. Racer 276, H. Rocke 97,
P. Rutter 276, C. Snider 276
O Foolish Galatians! . . . 251
Paul to the Colossians . . . 51
Paul to the Philippians . . . 5
Paul's Personal Epistles . . . 147
Paul's Promise Epistles . . . 111
Prayer of Faith, The . . . 103
Salvation and Judgment in the Book of Matthew . . . 203
Samuel, the Last of the Judges . . . 35,65
Set for Life Eonian . . . 43
Studies in Galatians . . . 9,87,117,181,226,251
Studies in Matthew . . . 203,263
There Has Come New . . . 79
"Through the Faith of Christ" . . . 226
Truth of the Evangel, The . . . 117
Voice of One Imploring, The . . . 263
Ways of God and Man, The . . . 167
"When it Delights God" . . . 87
Witness in the Heavens, A . . . 214

Contents:

2 Grace Triumphant
3 Editorial
5 Paul to the Philippians
9 "Let Him be Anathema!"
23 The Endurance of Job
35 Arrays of the Living Elohim
43 Set for Life Eonian

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Unsearchable Riches

A Bimonthly Magazine
For God and His
Word

VOLUME LXXXVII

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Grace Triumphant

Before the world was made
Or sun or planets shone,
Salvation's base was laid
In God's anointed Son,
Who came to spread the truth abroad
And reconcile a world to God.

By mercy's hand upheld,
Firmly His purpose stands:
What love His bosom filled!
What kindness moved His hands!
What pity warmed His pleading breath,
Who meekly blessed His foes in death!

Now raised to realms above
Where boundless mercies shine,
Will Christ forget His love?
Forget this heart of mine?
O, no; His favors never end;
He's there, as here, the sinner's Friend.

Hail, all-triumphant hour
In which my Saviour rose!
The grave has lost its power;
My soul, forget thy woes.
Widely He'll spread His grace abroad
And safely guide a world to God.

S. Streeter

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 1996
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-SEVEN

EDITORIAL

MORE AND MORE we treasure the saying that "we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour" (2 Tim.4:10), welcoming it as a faithful word for each new day of our lives. We can put no reliance on our leaders, our thinkers, our social, educational, economic and ethical systems, no matter how well-meaning they may be, how sensible and hopeful they may seem. We pray for those in superior station and for all mankind, our neighbors and relatives, and those in distant places, millions upon millions of fellow human beings. But we don't *expect* ("expect" and "rely" are used for the same Greek word in the Concordant Version) anything of lasting value from them.

Our expectation is built and settled on the living God. That means we are optimistic in every way. As we begin this new year we look forward to great things. But these are not great things of our accomplishment or as measured by the world about us. We expect the great blessings of joy that issues from appreciation of God's grace; of peace that issues from acquaintance with God's work of conciliation; of invigoration that issues from the evangel that is God's power for salvation. Like Paul, we are not despondent, even though our bodies are decaying and we stumble into all sorts of troubles and perplexities, because we know these things are temporary, even momentary in comparison to what God is leading us into (*cf* 2 Cor.4:7-18). God is living, and He is saving, and He is bringing about "a transcendently transcendent eonian burden of glory."

It is significant that Paul reminded the Galatians of both former suffering (Gal.3:4) and happiness (Gal.4:15). Even though they had turned from the message of grace

Paul was heralding, the two experiences of affliction and joy had accompanied their believing of the evangel (see also Phil.1:29;4:4). Indeed for all human beings there is much suffering, but for those who believe there is the special joy of seeing all, including pain and sorrow, under the hand of our gracious God, and though special afflictions are also added for those who believe, in connection with our believing, yet the grace in the evangel gives meaning and purpose to all our struggles.

When we hear of the illnesses of longtime friends of our work, and witness troubles in the lives of fellow believers, and receive whatever portion of evil God sends our way (*cf* Job 2:10), we remember that God is living, and He is saving. We know there are Goliaths to face in the coming year, but the *living God* will provide His arrays (see p.35). Yet where we can go beyond Job (see p.23) and beyond David in this recognition of God's hand operating in all things is that we have accepted and are believing that Christ died for our sins and has been roused from among the dead and exalted above all powers (1 Cor.15:1-4; Phil.2:9-11). Because of the evangel concerning "the grace of Christ" (Gal.1:6), we see the character of the operations of the living God, that they are certain of success and are glorious!

Consequently, as believers, we are aware of such arrays of the living God, as those of grace in the evangel brought by Paul (see pages 5-8 on Philippians and pages 9-22 on Galatians), and of the way in which we have been *set* upon this pathway of grace (see p.43). The living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, is saving us who believe in special ways even today, bringing His arrays of grace transcendent and of love and faith and expectation into our lives. What a glorious prospect! As we look about at the multitudes of humanity, the ignorance and estrangement and confusion of this eon, we are made exultant by the faith that is given to us. D.H.H.

PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS

THE Philippian epistle is a divine commentary on the latter half of Ephesians, and, like it, is especially concerned with the deportment demanded by the transcendent doctrines developed in the first half of the Ephesian letter. This is the key to its contents. *It does not deal with doctrines, but with deportment.* This will illumine many a difficult passage in it, and this has been allowed to color the wording of the Concordant Version.

The letter comes to us from two *slaves,* not from an *apostle.* It is an *exhortation,* designed to affect our feet, rather than a revelation for the enlightening of our minds. Paul and Timothy do not present the truth as to our position in Christ, but the path to be pursued by the Philippians, after they know their place in Him.

Philippians occupies the same relation to Ephesians that the Corinthian epistles do to Romans. In this epistle we may expect to find set forth the *conduct* which flows from our relationship to *Christ* and to our *fellow saints.* The power of the appeals will depend largely on our apprehension and appreciation of the last two items of the secret—that we are a joint body, and are joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which Paul became the dispenser.

As shown in the literary framework, the epistle is a perfect, though complex reversion. Its controlling theme is Participation in the Evangel, not only by its public proclamation, but especially by a conduct consistent with its teachings.

FRAMEWORK OF PHILIPPIANS

Introduction (1:1)
Salutation (1:2)
The Philippians—Contribution—Doxology (1:3-11)
Paul—his bonds in Christ (1:12-18)
Paul—his indifference to death (1:19-26)
The Philippians—suffering with Paul (1:27-30)
Exhortation to imitate Christ (2:1-4)
Christ (2:5-11)
Exhortation to Obedience (2:12-18)
Timothy—his character and service (2:19-24)
Epaphroditus—his character and his sufferings (2:25-30)
Exhortation to Beware (3:1-3)
Paul (3:4-16)
Exhortation to imitate Paul (3:17-4:9)
The Philippians—their care of Paul (4:10)
Paul—his complacency in want (4:11,12)
Paul—his strength in Christ (4:13)
The Philippians—Contribution—Doxology (4:14-20)
Conclusion (4:21,22)
Salutation (4:23)

THE BELIEVER'S CONDUCT

Both Ephesians and Colossians are easily divisible into two parts, doctrine and deportment. No such division can be seen in Philippians, for it is all devoted to conduct. It, indeed, divides into two complementary halves, for a glance at its structure will show that it is a reversion, dealing principally with living expressions of the evangel. In the first half are the examples of Christ and Timothy. These are balanced in the second by those of Epaphroditus and Paul. In the first part we are exhorted to imitate Christ (2:1-4); in the second we are bidden to imitate Paul (3:17-4:9). These facts are of vital value in the interpretation of this epistle, for some passages in it, divorced from its controlling theme, may be made to appear to teach truth quite beyond and contrary to Ephesians, but when kept within the bounds set by the epistle itself, and applied to our experience, they are in fullest accord with the previous epistle and its transcendent revelations.

A casual reading of Philippians gives little idea of the symmetry and beauty of its structure, Yet, for a close consideration of the epistle, there is no key comparable to a clear exhibition of the literary framework. The mind is likely to be lost in a maze of detail and forget the theme under discussion. Indeed it is not always easy to seize the real subject without some such aid as the structure affords. Perhaps the common impression of this epistle is that, like our own letters, it is a jumble of this and that and the other, without any designed relation between its parts. A so-called "analysis" is apt to be arbitrary and is usually derived from the interpretation, instead of aiding it. But a real "framework" should be as self-evident as the skeleton of an animal, with all its parts symmetrical and complementary, making their relationships quite obvious to all.

THE FOUR EXAMPLES

The framework of Philippians shows that its subject is *participation in the evangel.* We must not limit this to the heralding of "the gospel" to unbelievers. It includes all of the glad message as it was revealed, not only as imparted to faith, but as expressed in life. In the second half of Ephesians we are *told* how we should walk; here we are *shown.* There the basis of conduct is *truth.* Here it is illuminated by *example.* The greater part of this epistle is devoted to *living expressions* of the evangel. The service and suffering of its greatest exponents are presented for our consideration. Christ Himself, in His descent from the form of God to the shame of the cross, is presented for our imita-

tion. Corresponding to this we have Paul's descent from a self-righteous Pharisee to conformation to the death of Christ. The center of the epistle depicts two ideal characters—Timothy for service, and Epaphroditus for suffering.

Practice is a more powerful teacher than precept. Deeds may do more than declarations in directing our lives. In Ephesians we have already been told how we should walk. In Philippians we are given examples of such conduct in the careers of others. We are pointed to the emptying and humiliation of Christ, the forfeits of Paul, the solicitude of Timothy, and the suffering of Epaphroditus. These are the special characters in Holy Writ who are presented for our emulation within the boundaries of this present secret administration. Hence they should be frequent and foremost in our exhortations. They should be the leading characters in Christendom.

EXHORTATION TO SERVICE

In accord with its character, the hortatory passages in Philippians are not grouped together at the close, as in Ephesians and Colossians, but are scattered symmetrically throughout the epistle. They appear before and after the two great examples. The apostle pleads for a humble and obedient disposition like our Lord's (2:1-5, 12-18). He exhorts us to imitate himself and beware of those who act otherwise (3:1-3, 17-21). The question may arise, Since Ephesians has already dealt with the conduct which comports with its new revelation, what room is left for exhortation in Philippians? The answer is that here also we see the special character of this epistle. The exhortations are general in Ephesians, here they apply particularly to *service.* Ephesians indeed dealt with the slaves of masters on earth. Philippians deals with the conduct of all saints in their character of slaves of a heavenly Master.

A. E. Knoch

"LET HIM BE ANATHEMA!"

IN APPROACHING our consideration of Paul's epistle to the Galatians, in which the apostle defends his evangel of grace, we are especially struck by a recognition of our total dependency on God for the sake of faithfulness in the task at hand. If within Paul's epistles there are "some things hard to *apprehend*" (2 Peter 3:16), there are a great many other things that are easy to *apprehend,* even if difficult to *accept* and *believe,* due to the power of false tradition.

When we read in this same verse, written by the apostle Peter, that it is "the unlearned and unstable," who are twisting the words of Paul, "as the rest of the scriptures also," to their own destruction (or "loss"; *apōleia,* FROM-WHOLE-LOOSing), we are apt to suppose that it is primarily those with little formal education, perhaps ones who are mentally unstable as well, who twist the words of Scripture. In contradistinction to such persons of low estate, we are apt as well to call to mind the *learned* scholar and the *stable* citizen, only to suppose that such ones of high station, at least if they should be consecrated believers, are not apt to be guilty of any such twisting of Scripture as contemplated here by Peter. Such, however, is a naïve supposition indeed. In fact, it is a supposition which few scholars would make, for they are well aware of the tremendous diversity of opinion, even within their acknowledged circle, on a vast range of issues, including topics of great importance, whether within the Pauline writings or elsewhere in Scripture.

Perhaps if one insists on taking "unlearned" and "unsta-

ble" in such a sense that all honorable academicians of renown are excluded, we should reply, "All right, but I would have you know that *in addition* to the destructive twisting of Scripture which is engaged in by the unlearned and unstable, there is much Scripture-twisting engaged in as well by the learned and stable!"

It is not at all likely, however, that such a sense as most conjure up when hearing the word "stable," and especially the word "learned," is the thought that Peter had in mind. One may be a stable citizen, friend, and comforter, while being by no means stable in the faith. A man may be solid in his business dealings or otherwise in common points of character, and yet be altogether weak-kneed in standing for truth, or even in recognizing it. Similarly, one may be highly learned and enlightened in many a scripture-related discipline, rendering invaluable service to many in various ways, and still be quite *unlearned* as to many important scriptural teachings. In such cases, all their learnedness notwithstanding, it is simply that otherwise-learned men, have nevertheless not *learned* the truth as to various scriptural revelations of great consequence.

"*All* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are *concealed*" in Him, in the God and Father of Christ (Col. 2:2,3). Paul does not say that, for one who is a good fellow and scholarly, this is no longer true; that such a one may forego divine enlightenment, and has no need of saving grace in matters of spiritual judgment.

Similarly, Paul declares, "I plant, Apollos irrigates, *but God makes it grow up.* So that, neither is he who is planting anything, nor he who is irrigating, *but God Who makes it grow up . . . .* God's fellow workers are we. *God's farm, God's building,* are you" (1 Cor.3:5-9). Again, Paul does not say that, if one is of prodigious intellect and lauded by all the orthodox as being both astute and consecrated, such a one's intellectual and moral virtues may serve as a substitute means with a view toward that growth in truth for which lesser mortals must wait upon the divine determination. Nor does Paul say that in some mysterious, originative sense, such a one is ultimately responsible for his own growth; that he is *not* God's farm and building, but is his own farm and building.

As a means of grace, factually correct, scripturally-pertinent, advanced learning is often invaluable in the cause of truth, with a view toward its demonstration or proof. While at least in its vital elements, such scholarship will *be* intellectually sound, this is by no means to say that it will be *recognized* as such by all conservative and sincere theological academicians or other such professional theologians. Let us not be wise in our own conceit (Prov.26:12). "Let no one be deluding himself. If anyone among you is presuming to be wise in this eon, let him become stupid, that he may be becoming wise, for the wisdom of this world is stupidity with God. For it is written, 'He is clutching the wise in their craftiness.' And again, The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain. So that, *let no one be boasting in men . . .*" (1 Cor.3:18-21a).

grace to you, and *peace!*

Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through a man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who rouses Him from among the dead), and all the brethren with me, to the ecclesias of Galatia:

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ . . . . (1:1-3)

In this epistle to the Galatians, the characteristic words of thanksgiving or blessing, which introduce Paul's other epistles, are conspicuous by their absence. Instead of giving thanks, Paul "marvels" (1:6); instead of a word of blessing, he pronounces an emphatic anathema (1:8,9). Indeed, Paul, immediately, without delay, begins by emphasizing

the *authority* which inheres in his apostleship and evangel, though this authority may be challenged or even denied by the Galatians. Without any deference either to formality or pleasantry, Paul abruptly begins by insisting that his apostleship is "*not* from men, *neither* through a man," but that it is instead "through Jesus Christ and God, the Father."

By his very first words, Paul emphasizes that "all the brethren with [him]," join him in acknowledging his authoritative apostleship, even as in concurring in the substance of the epistle which is to follow. But, far more significantly, Paul intimates here what he soon goes to extraordinary lengths both to stress and elucidate, that he is speaking by the word of the Lord in making this emphatic asseveration of his apostleship. Accordingly, in making the following extended presentation in defense of his evangel, a presentation with which the entirety of the remainder of the epistle will be concerned, Paul thus presses upon the Galatians the fact that he not only has the right to speak, but the right to be heard, and heeded. If the Galatians should dismiss his testimony, it is at their own peril that they do so.

As sobering as all of this is, what is more striking is that even if Paul must omit his usual introductory words of thanksgiving or blessing, that he might lose no time in pressing the urgency of his message upon the recipients of this epistle, he nevertheless does *not* omit his always-applicable (and, always-appropriate) words of greeting, "from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." This word of greeting is, "*Grace* to you and *peace* from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." If the believer should involve himself in both moral and doctrinal evil, as at Corinth, and even if, as in Galatia, he should go so far as to become transferred from the glorious evangel through which he was called in the *grace* of Christ and become transferred to a *different* evangel (1:6)—and even if in so doing he should *repudiate* the grace of God (*cp* 2:21)—the word of truth

declared unto him remains: "*Grace* to you and *peace* from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

What if some should come to disbelieve, and even repudiate, the grace which they once accepted? "Will not their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? May it not be coming to that! Now let God be true, yet every man a liar . . ." (Rom.3:3,4a). What God has promised in grace to His chosen ones, will surely come to pass concerning them. Simply because it is grace, it will not fail to bestow its blessing!

That which is in grace is not out of works, "else the grace is coming to be no longer grace" (Rom.11:6). While a wage is not reckoned as a favor (or gracious gift), but as a debt (Rom.4:4), that which *is* reckoned as a gracious gift, is not reckoned as a debt. Since such a gift is not owed in the first place, and neither at any time does it become owed, it follows that any deficiency of service—however extreme—on the part of the one to whom its endowment has been granted, cannot deprive such a one of its blessing.

Consequently, when believers, such as the Galatians, "fall out of grace" (Gal.4:4b), they do so only in their apprehension of grace, and in an appreciation of it, with all the practical benefit that this entails. One does not, through disobedience, remove himself from the sphere of whatever divine blessing has been afforded him in grace. While this is so, he nevertheless may very well thereby remove himself from the sphere of a recognition and enjoyment, as such, of God's gracious blessings. This is especially so in the case of one who denies and rejects the truth of grace.

For example, in the coming eons, all the members of the ecclesia which is Christ's body will joyfully partake of the allotment of life eonian. This is simply because that allotment is a gracious gift (Rom.6:23). Yet only those members of the ecclesia today, who, in fact, and apart from contradiction, *believe* that eonian life is a gracious gift, presently recognize and enjoy this gift according to its true nature.

Many cannot possibly be at peace in their hearts, for they fancy themselves to be at least possible candidates for divine wrath. They imagine that *if* they should avoid coming under such judgment, it will finally be thanks only to themselves that they avoided such an awful end. We cannot convince them that they are in error; and God has yet to convince them, whether through ourselves or some other means. So we must deem such strong delusion as being in accord with His wisdom, and ultimately being out of Him (Rom.11:36).

We long for others to rejoice with us in common faith. We know how helpful it has been for ourselves no longer to repudiate God's grace, but instead to repudiate our own self-righteousness and pride (to the degree that we have succeeded in so doing). We long for our fellow believers to join us in pursuit of a walk consistent with the truth that all is of God, through Him, and for Him. But until God grants them this awareness, and whatever they may say or do in repudiation of grace in the meantime, let us rejoice that the word of truth to them remains: "*Grace* to you and *peace* from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

ESTABLISHED, YET NOT STEADFAST

Who gives Himself for our sins, so that He might extricate us out of the present wicked eon, according to the will of our God and Father, to Whom be glory for the eons of the eons. Amen! (1:4,5)

Even as God "extricated" ("lifted out") Joseph out of all his afflictions" (Acts 7:10), and, later on, extricated the sons of Israel out of Egypt (Acts 7:34), thus also, Christ Jesus "gives Himself for our sins, so that He might extricate us out of the present wicked eon." In each case, the respective extrication is "according to [literally, "down"] the will of our God and Father, to Whom be [the] glory" (*cp* v.5). The basis of the blessed deliverance is God's own decision

so to act. What it "comes down to," then, is that Christ gives Himself for our sins, so that, according to God's own will, such a glorious deliverance of us, out of this wicked eon (*cp* 1 Thess.4:15-17), should actually come to pass. It is not that Christ gives Himself for our sins so that such a deliverance might *possibly* come to pass, but then again might never come to pass at all. If God must wait on man, and worse yet, *depend* on man, He can never act in grace, much less, can He glorify His own name, alone, in our deliverance.

It is with such considerations having already been presented, that Paul then moves directly to the heart of the Galatians' error:

I am marveling that thus, swiftly, you are transferred from that which calls you in the grace of Christ, to a different evangel, which is not another (1:6)

Though Paul had once labored among them, "establishing all the disciples" (Acts 18:23), it is evident that the Galatian believers were unable to remain steadfast. Though for some time, they remained in the teaching which they had accepted through Paul, they never became "settled, [and] unmovable" therein (*cf* 1 Cor.15:58). They were by no means mature in the faith, readily able to discern contradictory teachings. Any objections that they may have initially had to such a different evangel as that introduced by Paul's opposers, were subsequently quelled, through the persuasiveness of the entrancing error with which the Galatians eventually became enthralled (*cf* 3:1; 5:1,8).

Whether or not their "insurrection" (5:12) also startled him (*cp* Phil.1:28), it at least caused Paul to "marvel" (1:6). He frankly admits that the Galatians' swift transfer from his own evangel of the grace of Christ to a different evangel, was an object of wonder, full of astonishment!

It was not that the Galatians immediately, as soon as Paul was out of reach, turned away from the truth to such grievous error. It was instead that, however long it may have

been before the incipience of their apostasy, once they came under its spell, they then "*swiftly*"[1] became "transferred" from Paul's evangel of grace to a *different* evangel.

"A *DIFFERENT* EVANGEL, WHICH IS *NOT ANOTHER*"

Note that the Galatians were transferred from "that which" called them in the grace of Christ to a *different* evangel. "That which," in the Concordant Version, simply represents the Greek definite article ("the"). It is evident from what is said, however, that "the [evangel]" through which the Galatians were called into the *grace* of Christ brought by Paul, was that from which they were transferred to a *different* evangel. This is the central point: the message to which the Galatians had been transferred, which they deemed a message of good news, was nonetheless *different* than the evangel of the *grace* of Christ.

At least in the eyes of those who boast in themselves, it is possible to conceive of a message which holds out blessing as a reward for obedience to law-works, apart from grace, as a message of good news. It is not that, theoretically, such a message could not be a message of good news; it is instead that, as Paul insists, *such an evangel is not the evangel of the grace of Christ.* This is so whether by this expression one has in mind either the evangel of the Uncircumcision or that of the Circumcision (2:7); or, both of these together, as considered in their essential unity.

The evangel to which the Galatians had been transferred, is first described as being "different" (1:6). The Greek word, *heteros,* present in such English words as "heterogenous" and "heterosexual," speaks of "*essential* difference," or difference in *kind."* Certainly grace is the essential character-

[1] *Tacheōs* (SWIFT-AS) signifies "a *speedy kind*" of occurrence (e.g., John 11:31; *cp* John 20:4). It speaks of inherent *rapidity of succession,* apart from a consideration of a thus-characterized activity's relation to other events, whether antecedent or subsequent.

istic of the evangel of Christ. Yet through his use of *heteros,* Paul thus insists that the spurious evangel by which the Galatians had become deceived, was, in its very essence, *different* than the true evangel, that of the *grace* of Christ. Therefore, at its core, this corrupt gospel was not, in fact, a gospel of grace, but of something different than grace, a gospel of blessing by means of law-obedience, *apart from the grace of Christ.* It is the grace of Christ which ultimately underlies the evangel of the Circumcision, even as, on its face, grace is the essence of the evangel of Christ which Paul was heralding among the nations (2:2).

Therefore, this spurious gospel by which the Galatians had become deceived, was "not another." That is, it was not actually the evangel of the Circumcision, even if the Galatians were so ignorant of the true nature of that evangel as to identify the heterogenous corruption which they had embraced as the evangel of the Circumcision.

Here, for the English "[an]other," the Greek is *allos,* from which "allotropic" is derived, which points to variation of *form,* to changes of properties *shown* by elements, without change of essential composition. Whatever the Galatians themselves might claim or imagine, Paul insists that their false gospel is *essentially different* from the evangel of the grace of Christ. It is *not* the "other" true evangel (the evangel of the Circumcision) at all, but only a psuedo-evangel which is a gross caricature of the evangel of the Circumcision. According to truth, it is no evangel at all. Therefore, it should be rejected, not embraced.

It is glorious to recognize that the true evangel of the Circumcision *was* the "other-evangel," to which Paul here alludes. Though the evangel of the Circumcision differed from Paul's in "other" (lesser) things—in externals of form and practice, as well as in allotment and in relation to the law—*in essence,* it was the same as Paul's. That is, in the wider sense, it too was the evangel of the *grace* of Christ. Under

the evangel of the Circumcision, as much so as under that of the Uncircumcision, all blessing flows from the grace of God, through Christ, with all boasting in man debarred.

Hence, only by a fundamental distortion of the true evangel of the *grace* of Christ itself, could it ever be said that the Galatians' pseudo-evangel, while being distinct from Paul's evangel in non-central externals, was nevertheless, in essence, quite the same as the evangel which the apostle himself heralded.

But if ever we also, or a messenger out of heaven, should be bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you, let him be anathema! As we have declared before and at present I am saying again, if anyone is bringing you an evangel beside that which you accepted, let him be anathema! (1:8,9)

In verses 8 and 9, the New International Version renders the dual phrases, "let him be anathema!" as "let him be *eternally condemned!*" Those who approve this supposed "dynamic equivalent" for the literal rendering, evidently reason that since the gospel which Paul herein opposes was not a true gospel at all, it must be that those who herald such a message are themselves lost, which, it is alleged, is to be equated with being "eternally condemned."

We can understand why, as traditional "evangelicals," such "translators" would conclude that false teachers, ones who themselves were unsaved, would have to be punished eternally. After all, according to them, the vast majority of the entirety of the human race, will be forever damned in the horrors of hellfire. So it is hardly surprising that unsaved, false teachers as well would have to be included, within the company of the damned.

It is not a matter, however, of a failure to believe other important teachings, but of a failure to believe the central message of "Christ crucified," His death and resurrection, that shows that one is lost. Conversely, where these same

glorious essentials *are* believed, we have the evidence that one is saved. All who see in Christ, God's own wisdom and power, who believe as well that Jesus died and rose, are included among God's people (*cf* 1 Cor.1:21-25; 1 Thess. 4:14). This is so, even if they should be utensils of dishonor as to their service, having been given over to foolish myths.

There is no indication that those who were disturbing the Galatians denied these most basic elements of faith. Indeed, it is not credible to suppose that they did do so. The Galatians would hardly welcome the teaching of any who actually made any such extreme, foundational denials. Therefore, even on so-called "evangelical grounds," such a remarkable rendering as, "let him be eternally condemned!" should hardly be countenanced.

Paul's words, "if ever we also, or a messenger out of heaven, should be bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you, let him be anathema!" (1:8), make it clear that an evangelist's divine authority is vested not in the messenger, but in the message. If Paul himself, or even "a messenger out of heaven," must be anathematized should he bring a different evangel than that of the grace of Christ, it is impossible to believe that any contemporary man, whether priest or pastor, would be exempt from this same proscription.

"DEVOTED TO DESTRUCTION"

But what does it mean to be "anathema," and of what does the anathema consist here in Paul's warning?

In the Septuagint (the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament), *anathema* is the translation of the Hebrew *cherem.* It speaks of something that is "devoted," yet in the sense of, unto adversative judgment; hence, "devoted to destruction" (or "loss"; e.g., Deut.7:26; Joshua 7:1,11-13). Certainly, an anathema is something that no one would care to invite upon himself. When Paul, then, says of any who bring

a false gospel, "let him be anathema!" the sense is, Let him be subject to *certain, adversative judgment.* The word itself, however, tells us nothing of the particulars or duration of any such judgment. For this we must consider the nature of the case, in any specific pronouncement of anathema.

The "anathema" which Paul pronounces in Galatians 1:8, 9, consists of many grave consequences, but these do not include being subjected to "eternal condemnation." Life's justifying is for all mankind; and through the obedience of Christ, the entire vast throng of the human race shall be constituted just (Rom.5:18,19). We rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10), Who will abolish death and become All in all (1 Cor.15:26,28).

Neither does Paul's anathema consist in the loss of eonian life for any such opposing teachers, those who nevertheless are in Christ. Eonian life is a gracious gift (Rom.6:23); grace reigns, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord (Rom. 5:21; *cp* Titus 3:7). Nor does Paul's anathema consist, in the case of any in Christ who indeed must come under its judgment, of also coming under God's indignation. God has not appointed us to indignation (1 Thess.5:9a); we shall be saved from the indignation of God through Christ (Rom.5:9).

Finally, Paul's anathema does not impose soulish suffering. There is much that is *destructive,* that nonetheless is not at all destructive to health, wealth, and pleasure. For example, untroubled resignation concerning, combined with an unbridled zeal to uphold, the teaching of a horrible hell where the vast majority of men must spend eternity, coupled with an ethic that can finally only thank oneself for one's exemption therefrom, is conducive neither to pity nor humility. Yet since most, especially if they should enjoy a good measure of conventional well-being, are insensitive to the deep injuriousness of such attitudes and beliefs, they remain oblivious to the very real anathema to which their own apostasy has subjected them.

For all the things which Paul's pronouncement of anathema does *not* bring upon those who come under its judgment, this anathema *does* result in the preclusion of its subjects from the circle of those who are faithful dispensers of Christ (Col.1:7), and ensures all such persons' inclusion among that company who are fraudulent workers (2 Cor.11:13), deceivers (2 Tim.3:13), and enemies of the *cross* of Christ (Phil.3:18). One may be all of these, without intending to be any of these, while being confident that one is none of these.

Paul's anathema upon those who proclaim a different evangel, entails their loss of wages at the dais of Christ (*cp* 1 Cor.3:14,15; 2 Cor.5:10), even as their disqualification for a position of reigning (*cp* 1 Cor.9:27; 2 Tim.2:12a). It means that, apart from repentance, such will spend their careers in essential and vital opposition to the grace of God. It means that their ministries cannot but become a substantial disservice to others, through which many are injured and deceived. Worst of all, Paul's anathema entails God's displeasure with the ministry of all such ones, at least with respect to the essential character and content of their teaching. It means a life lived under the power of strong delusion; a strong delusion of a most insidious nature.

If one finally owes their enjoyment of divine blessing to themselves, it is impossible for them to thank God for it. Such cannot glorify God as God, and must to a considerable extent involve themselves in the veneration of the creature rather than the Creator. They cannot thank God alone even for their virtues, much less for their failures, which will yet bring glory to Him, for they imagine that they themselves are ultimately responsible for their deeds.

Anyone who is subject to such dreadful consequences as these, certainly has come under a great anathema; a tremendous course of destruction, to one's own great loss. And, anyone who repudiates the grace of Christ for a dif-

ferent evangel—so long as he continues on in such a course—is indeed subject to just such consequences.

It is not that God is indignant with such ones and so is reckoning their offenses against them. This is by no means the case (*cf* 2 Cor.5:18,19; Rom.5:9,10). It is simply that, as in the case of all evil doing, when one is resolute in the advocacy of fundamentally false teaching, injurious consequences must follow in response to such improper actions. All such chastenings are designed to accord with God's purpose, and are in perfect harmony with His wisdom and love. Eventually, through such disciplines, and especially, through the saving grace of God itself, all will be brought not only to their senses but to salvation, even as to a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4).

Even if some (indeed, the vast majority) are ignorant of God and of the evangel of the grace of Christ, may such ignorance not be our portion. Let us "sober up justly and . . . not be sinning" (*cp* 1 Cor.15:34). While Paul's anathema is formally pronounced only upon those who *bring* an evangel beside that which the apostle first brought to the Galatians, many of the same injurious consequences which most especially accrue to the heralds of such delusions, necessarily accrue as well to those who accept and live according to the selfsame teachings.

Even so, having duly considered this baneful anathema pronounced by Paul, how we rejoice to know that for those who are in Christ, even if, like the Galatians, they have come under the sway of the teachings of Paul's antagonists, there is a word of grace and peace. Accordingly, Paul writes to all such ones: "*Grace* to you and *peace* from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal.1:3). Hence, as the apostle further declares in closing this epistle, we say as well to our readers in closing this exposition: "The *grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit brethren! Amen!" (Gal.6:18). J.R.C.

THE ENDURANCE OF JOB

THE SCENE set before us is grim. A good and compassionate man sits among the ashes, full of boils from head to foot, bereaved of his children, deprived of all his acquisitions, utterly cast down from his position of respect and honor within his world. Three close associates, evidently holding similar positions of responsibility in their respective city-states, have traveled to comfort him. But they are so astounded by his misery they cannot speak.

WHY THIS SUFFERING?

As we try to visualize this scene we find ourselves asking the question, Why? Why is Job experiencing this great evil? And more than this, Why is there evil at all? And most importantly of all, Why is there evil when there is also God?

We cannot expect the book of Job to answer this deepest of questions fully, but we can expect it to provide some important understanding. The book will indeed testify to the most basic principles of all, that God is in charge and has goals of good in view and is operating toward those goals.

Two of these goals are suggested in James 5:11. The most immediate purpose for Job's afflictions is the development of *endurance.* But as Paul reminds us in Romans 5:3-5, endurance is not an end in itself, but is a good that leads to further blessings. Hence James speaks of the *consummation* that the Lord provided for Job, the insight Job gained through the words of Yahweh concerning His deity and the enjoyment of God's abundant provisions in Job's "latter years" (Job 42:12-16).

ENDURANCE

It is in view of the severity of Job's sufferings that we can truly speak of his *endurance.* The measure of Job's afflictions is the measure of his endurance. We are apt, however, to think of endurance as a kind of passive acceptance. But, though it would include the seven days and nights of silence, Job's endurance involved his outcries and lamentations starting with chapter 3. Job's endurance was an insistence on connecting the evil he was suffering with the God Who brought him into existence and Who is operating all.

The elements of the Greek word for *endurance,* used by James, are: UNDER-REMAIN. Job remained under his afflictions, but not under the afflictions alone. He remained under the conviction that whatever he received in life, whether good or evil, it is from God. Job's endurance involved a continually honest facing of the facts. The sufferings were genuine; they were not divine judgments against wickedness in himself; he must look to God alone concerning them. Job's endurance involved his refusal to be deviated from this position.

THE CONSUMMATION

The word "consummation" suggests more than a ceasing or coming to an end. It speaks of coming to ends that were in view from the beginning, in this case to the goals that the Lord had purposed. Job's sufferings and the endurance given to him under his sufferings lead forward to "the consummation of the Lord," that is, that achievement of good that the Lord had in view from the beginning.

At the end of the book, Job realizes that he had professed ideas without understanding them: "Things too marvelous for me, that I did not know" (Job 42:3). What he had said was "rightly so" (42:7), but as he spoke he was not *seeing* Yahweh (42:5) with clear realization and confidence. That was reserved for the consummation of his experience.

In considering the long exchanges of words between Job and his associates, and then between Job and Yahweh, along with the observations of Elihu, we will find many marvelous things, ideas that must finally be related both to the great evil that has come upon Job and to God Who is over all, Who is the First Cause of all, and Who knows what He is doing.

JOB AND HIS ASSOCIATES

The series of speeches between Job and his three associates begin with chapter 3 and extend through chapter 31. They open and conclude with addresses by Job, who also replies to each of the speeches of his associates. Eliphaz and Bildad each speak three times, but Zophar speaks for himself only twice. Where we would expect Zophar to speak a third time, and where indeed the thoughts of his two addresses actually reappear in the text (Job 27:13-28:28), they are uttered through the lips of Job himself. It is as though Zophar and his companions have exhausted their ideas before the debate can be concluded, and Job has to recapitulate their arguments for them. The section closes with Job's summation of his own concerns (29:1-31:40).

This series of speeches can be outlined as follows:

- Job's First Address (3:1-26)
  - Eliphaz's First Address (4:1-5:27)
- Job's Reply to Eliphaz (6:1-7:21)
  - Bildad's First Address (8:1-22)
- Job's Reply to Bildad (9:1-10:22)
  - Zophar's First Address (11:1-20)
- Job's Reply to Zophar (12:1-14:22)
  - Eliphaz's Second Address (15:1-35)
- Job's Reply to Eliphaz (16:1-17:16)
  - Bildad's Second Address (18:1-21)
- Job's Reply to Bildad (19:1-29)
  - Zophar's Second Address (20:1-29)

Job's Reply to Zophar (21:1-34)
Eliphaz's Third Address (22:1-30)
Job's Reply to Eliphaz (23:1-24:25)
Bildad's Third Address (25:1-6)
Job's Reply to Bildad (26:1-27:12)
Job's Review of Zophar's Thoughts (27:13-28:28)
Job's Summation (29:1-31:40)

LET IT BE DARKNESS!
(Job 3:1-26)

After the seven days and nights of silence, Job opens his mouth and words pour out. It is the reverse of Genesis chapter 1. In Genesis the brief and powerful words of God burst through the darkness and the chaos and bring forth seven days of creative activity and achievement. In Job the seven days (with their seven *nights* of darkness, appropriately noted) lead to the many words of Job pleading for a negation of his own beginnings. Job would have the light turn back to darkness, and his life undone.

Far from forgetting his words of 2:10, Job associates the evil he is experiencing with his Creator by paralleling his words with the opening words of Genesis, though in reverse order. In effect, Job points to God as the One with ultimate responsibility. God has given life to Job and has brought him into a world energized by light, but a world nevertheless where darkness remains. Life and light are not the problem, but rather the experience of evil within life, and evil so severe that Job longs for a reversal of the light into the darkness of Genesis 1:2. And for this, Job looks to God.

It is in this pathway, the struggle to perceive God in and through his experience of evil, that Job's thoughts take us. His words lead backward from the evil of his afflictions to a longing for the darkness of Genesis 1:2, and this will eventually bring us to a fresh insight into the mean-

3 Thereafter Job opened `his mouth, and he |maledicted `his day. 2 +**Thus Job |asserted,** + |**saying:**

3 **May** the **day perish in which I was |born,**
And the night that **said,** A **master is engendered!**
4 ·**That ·day! let it** *b*|**be darkness;**
Let not Eloah from above |seek after it,
And let not a light **beam |shine on it.**
5 **May darkness and** the **blackest shadow redeem it** back;
May a **cloud tabernacle over it;**
May rolling fogs of the **day frighten it.**
6 ·**That ·night! may gloom take** hold of **it;**
May it not be |one *i*|**of** the **days of** the **year;**
In the **numbering of** the **months, may it not enter.**
7 **Behold, ·that ·night! may it** *b*|**be stark;**
Let no|*i* **jubilant** song |**enter in**to **it.**
8 **May** those who **curse**| the **day revile it,**
·Who are **equipped** to **rouse**– the **dragon.**
9 **May** the **stars of its** morning **gloaming be darkened;**
May it expect › **light and** there **be no**ne,
And let it not |see *i* the **eyelids of** the **dawn.**
10 **For it** did **not close** the **doors of my** mother's **belly**
+**Or |conceal misery from my eyes.**
11 **Why** did **I not |die from** the **womb,**
From the **belly** come **forth and |breathe** my **last?**
12 For **what reason** did two **knees anticipate me,**
And *wt*|**why** the two **breasts that I** could |**suck?**
13 **For now I would lie and be |quiet;**
I would sleep; then there would **be |rest for me,**
14 **With kings and counselors**| **of** the **earth,**
The builders| of **desert** tombs **for them**selves,
15 **Or with chiefs who** ›**had gold,**
·Who were **filling their houses** with **silver.**
16 *or*|**Why** *lb*|**was I not like** a **buried**| **stillborn** child,
Like babes who **have not seen light?**

ing of Genesis 1:1 and a clearer recognition of God, Who gives light and life.

ELOAH

In addressing Deity or speaking of Him, Job uses the title "Eloah" more often than any other designation. He uses "Elohim" only once, and "El" eighteen times, but he uses the rare title "Eloah" twenty-five times.

The common Hebrew term for God is "Elohim" which is plural in form. "Eloah" is the same term in its singular form and means literally: TO-SUBJECTOR. A. E. Knoch comments on this in relation to the book of Job, as follows:

"The book of Job is remarkable in many ways. As it is one of the earliest pieces of literature, it deals with the relations between man and his Maker in a very simple and primitive fashion. In our present study, it is worthy of note that . . . [Eloah] is more frequent [in Job] than in all [other books] combined . . . . Job seems quite sure that his fate lies in the hands of the To-Subjector, Whose function it is to make him bow to the Subjector's will."[1]

DIFFERENT CONCERNS

There are distinct differences in tone and direction between the speeches of Job and those of his associates. Job is obsessed with the evil he is suffering and often speaks imprudently as he cries out for understanding and relief. His three associates are shocked by Job's outbursts and try to redirect his thoughts into more conventional channels. But they forget that Job's situation is not a conventional one.

Job's lamentations continually direct attention to searching questions concerning the origin and the purpose of evil, and lead inevitably to thoughts regarding God's rela-

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.45, pp.146,147.

17 **There** the **wicked leave off** all **disturbance,**
And there those **wearied** from **vigor are resting.**
18 **Prisoners are tranquil together;**
They do **not hear** the **voice of** the **taskmaster**ˡ**.**
19 **Small** ⁺**or great, he** is **there,**
And the **servant** is **free from his lords.**
20 **Why is He giving light to** the **miserable,**
And life to the **bitter of soul**
21 (ʿWho **tarry**ˡ **for death,** ⁺**yet it is no**t coming,
And ˡ**delve** for **it** more ᶠ**than** for **buried** treasure**s,**
22 ʿWho **rejoice**ˡ un**to exultation,**
And **are** ˡ**elated** ᵗ**when they** ˡ**find** the **tomb),**
23 **To** a **master whose way is concealed**
⁺**When Eloah** has ˡ**screened him about?**
24 **For** ᵇᶠ**like my bread** ˡ**comes my sighing,**
And my roarings ˡ**pour forth like water.**
25 **For** the **alarm I was afraid** of, ⁺ **it** ˡ**arrives** for **me,**
And ʷ**whatever I shrink** from ˡ**comes to me.**
26 **I have no**ᵗ **ease, and I am not quiet;**
⁺ **I have no**ᵗ **rest, and disturbance** keeps ˡ**coming.**
4 ⁺**Then Eliphaz the Temanite** ˡ**answered,** ⁺ ˡ**saying:**
2 Can one **try** a **word** ›**with you? You** would ˡ**tire;**
⁺**Yet** ᵃ**who is** ˡ**able** to **restrain**⁻ ⁱ**from declarations?**
3 **Behold, you have admonished many,**
And you ˡ**reinforced slacking hands.**
4 **Your declarations** ˡ**raised** one who was **stumbling,**
And you made the **bowing knees** ˡ**resolute.**
5 ᵗ**But now it is coming** ›**on you, and you** ˡ**tire;**
It is touching unto you, and you are ˡ**flustered.**
6 Is **not your** devout **fear your confidence,**
And your flawless ways your expectation?
7 **Remember,** I **pray,** ᵃ**who that** is **innocent perishes?**
And where are the **upright suppressed?**
8 **Just as I have seen,** those who **plow**ˡ **lawlessness**
And sowˡ **misery are reaping it.**

tionship to his sufferings. In 2:10 he had spoken of this evil as being received from Elohim. This lies at the heart of his concern and his hope for understanding. The associates also trace pain and suffering to God, but in a qualified way that does not fit the situation before them.

Where Job would probe, his associates would keep him from probing or get him to soften the probing lest he make matters worse by what seems rash impiety. The struggle is not so much between truth and error as between a searching out of the problem of evil and a caution not to enter into matters of "proper" human concern. Job's words are "rightly so" because they point us toward God and prepare the way for Him to reveal Himself. The words of the three associates, however, in effect, direct attention away from God to the human. What they say about God ends up by focusing on Job and what they feel he must do.

A WORD FROM ELIPHAZ
(Job 4:1-5:27)

It is not that what Eliphaz says is wrong in itself, but it is "not rightly so" in the context of the evil set before him. Like Bildad and Zophar, Eliphaz seeks to restrain (*cf* 4:2) and redirect Job's thoughts. Hence he speaks of Job's former qualities of leadership (4:3-6) and reminds Job of principles concerning divine operations that Job had previously held in common with his associates (4:7-11).

In no way would Eliphaz continue along the lines of thought that Job had introduced in chapter 3. Instead he would speak of Eloah with caution and a dose of mystery as we see in 4:12-16. When Eliphaz first speaks of Eloah his point concerns humanity rather than God: "Can a *mortal* be righteous before Eloah?" (4:17).

Hence our thoughts are directed to the fact that human beings are sinners. But the sinner Job, who owes his being to God, is suffering from severest bereavement and throb-

9 [f]**By** the **breath of Eloah are they perishing,**
And [f]**by** the **spirit of His nostrils**
are they being [all]**consumed.**
10 The **roaring of** the **lion**
and the **voice of** the **black** lion are gone,
And the **teeth of** the **sheltered** lion**s are broken out;**
11 The **long-maned lion** is **perishing from lack** of **prey,**
And the **cubs of** the **lioness are** |**parted** away.
12 +**Now** a **word was** brought |**stealthily to me,**
And my ear |**took** hold of a little **buzz** [f]**of it.**
13 **In disquieting** thought**s from visions of** the **night,**
In that **stupor** which **falls**~ **on mortals,**
14 **Alarm befell me and quivering,**
And it [c]**made** the **multitude of my bones afraid.**
15 +**Then** a **wind** |**passed by** [on]**before my face;**
The **hair of my flesh** |**bristled.**
16 Something |**stood** there,
+**yet I** could **not** |**recognize its appearance;**
A **representation** was **in front of my eyes;**
It was **still, and I** |**heard** a **voice:**
17 Can a **mortal be** |**righteous** [f]**before Eloah?**
[if]**Or** a **master be** |[cl]**pure** [f]**before his** [d]**Maker**|**?**
18 [bd]**If He** [c]**places no**[t] **faith in His servants,**
And He |[pl]**charges His messengers** with ~**impropriety**~,
19 **How much more so** those who **tabernacle**|
in **houses of clay,**
Whose foundation is **in** the **soil?**
Forces |**crush them** [bf]**like** a **moth.**
20 [f]**Between morning** >**and evening**
they are being pounded;
[f]**Without** be**ing** [pl]**regarded, they** |**perish** > **permanently.**
21 **Has not their** tent **cord been pulled up** [i]**from them?**
They |**die,** +**but not** [i]**with wisdom.**
5 **Call** [pr]**now! is** there one who will **answer**| **you?**
And to [a]**whom from** the **holy** one**s shall you face?**

bing pain, and he is struggling for some understanding that relates this all to God. Eliphaz has missed the point, or rather, he refuses to deal with it.

Not only does Eliphaz want Job to concentrate more on himself as a mortal and a sinner, but he would have Job see God as One at a distance from dying and foolish humanity (4:18-5:7). He makes much of inquiring of El and placing his cause before Elohim. He speaks of God's great deeds and marvelous works, but he refuses to go beyond what he has always understood of God, namely that God provides necessities and safety for the needy and appropriate retribution for the wicked (5:8-16). God causes pain (5:18) but in connection with correction of human failures (5:17). He assures Job that things will work out; as long as Job is innocent God will rescue him and restore him to prosperity (5:19-27). Again, this is what happens to Job, but it happens as God's consummation rather than as God's response to human deservings.

Besides using the characteristic title, *Eloah,* Eliphaz is the first to use the equally distinctive designation, *Him Who-Suffices* (5:17). Yet Eliphaz's view of God's sufficiency is applied only to human worthiness, so that, in effect, the thoughts of Eliphaz are discouraging to Job.

In 1 Corinthians 3:19, Paul cites the words of Eliphaz from Job 5:13. God is clutching or seizing "the wise in their craftiness." This certainly is a good principle to remember concerning the wisdom of this eon (1 Cor.3:18), but it has little to do with Job's situation, which would parallel more closely Paul's situation described in 2 Corinthians 12:7. What Paul heard from the Lord then is surely something Job would have rejoiced to hear, and, we believe, truly in accord with that dimmer revelation of divine purpose that Yahweh finally gave to Job: "Sufficient for you is My grace, for My power in infirmity is being perfected" (2 Cor.12:9).

D.H.H.

2 [f]**Indeed vexation shall kill** [›] the **foolish** man,
And jealousy shall [c]**put** the **simple**[l] one to **death.**
3 **I my**self **have seen** a **foolish** man [e]**taking root,**
And I saw **his homestead suddenly** [l]**reviled:**
4 **May his sons** go **far from safety,**
And may they be crushed in the **gate**
[+]**when** there **is no rescuer**[l]**.**
5 [w] **His harvest,** the **hungry** one **shall eat,**
And he shall take it away **to ~secluded** places**~;**
[+] ~Those **thirsting~ will gasp for their estate.**
6 **For sorrow** does **not** grow [l]**forth from** the **soil,**
And from the **ground, misery** does **not** [l]**sprout,**
7 [f]**But humanity is born to misery,**
[+]**Even** as [son]**sparks of burning coal fly**[–] [l]**aloft.**
8 **Nevertheless,** as for **me, I** [l]**inquire** [›]**of El,**
And [›]**before Elohim** do **I** [l]**place my** [sp]**cause,**
9 **Doer**[l] of **great** deeds**, [+]of** which there **is no fathoming,**
Marvelous[l] works [f]**of** which there **is no enumeration,**
10 [r]Who is **giving rain on** the sur**face of** the **earth**
And sending waters over the sur**face of** the **open places.**
11 In order **to** [pl]**set** the **lowly** [›]**on high,**
And so the **somber**[l] may become **impregnable** in **safety,**
12 He is **annulling** the **devisings of** the **crafty,**
So [+]**that their hands may not** [d]**achieve prosperity,**
13 **Seizing** the **wise in their craftiness,**
So [+]**that** the **counsel of** the **cunning**[l] is carried **headlong**[l]**.**
14 **By day they** [l]**encounter darkness,**
And they [l]**grope** [i]**at noon as** in the **night.**
15 [+]**Yet He** [l]**saves** the **needy from** the **sword** [f]**of their mouth**
And from the **hand of** the **unyielding.**
16 [+]**Hence** there **comes** to [l]**be expectation for** the **poor,**
And iniquity, it shuts its mouth.
17 **Behold, happy** is the **mortal whom Eloah** [l]**corrects;**
[+]**Thus you must not** [l]**reject** the **admonition**
of Him **Who-Suffices.**

18 **For He Him**self **causes** [l]**pain, and He shall bind up;**
He [l]**transfixes, and His hands, they shall heal.**
19 **In six distresses He shall rescue you,**
And in seven, evil shall not touch [i] **you.**
20 **In famine, He will ransom you from death,**
And in battle from the **hands of** the **sword.**
21 [i]**From scourge of tongue shall you be hidden,**
And you shall not fear [f] **devastation** [t]**when it** [l]**comes.**
22 › **Devastation and** › **starvation shall you ridicule,**
And you shall certainly not fear [f] the wild **animal**
of the earth.
23 **For you** will have a **covenant with** the **stones of the field,**
And the wild **animal of the field**
will be at **peace** ›**with you.**
24 + **You will know that your tent** lies in **peace,**
And you will check over **your homestead**
and shall not miss anything**.**
25 **You will know** +**also that your seed** will be [mn]**abundant,**
And your offspring like the **herbage of the earth.**
26 **You shall come to** the **tomb in mature** age**,**
Like a **shock** of grain that **ascends**¯ **in its season.**
27 **Behold this, we have investigated it; it** is **so;**
Do **hear it; and you,** get to **know** it **for you**rself**.**

3:1-10: [l]**cf** Jr 20:14-18.
3:7 jubilant song: [l]**cf** Jb 38:7.
3:8 dragon: or, **leviathan** (possibly the crocodile); [l]**cf** Jb 41:1; Ps 74:14; 104:26; Is 27:1.
4:18 [l]**~~~ impropriety:** Hb **raving.**
5:5 [l]**~~~ secluded** place**s: Hb pricking** thorns**;** [l]**~~~** Those **thirsting:** Hb Asnag.
5:13: [l]**cf** 1 C 3:19.
5:17: [l]**cf** Ps 94:12; Pr 3:11,12; Hb 12:5,6.

ARRAYS OF THE LIVING ELOHIM

When Samuel had ended his last meeting with king Saul and "turned around to leave, Saul held fast to the hem of his robe, and it was torn. Samuel said to him, Yahweh has torn the kingship over Israel away from you today and has given it to an associate of yours who is better than you" (1 Sam.15:27,28). The prophet declared that this incident was a symbol of what had happened to Saul's dynasty: Yahweh had annulled it and had given the kingship to an associate, to a better man.

Saul may have thought that Samuel might go out some day and anoint that man secretly, just as he himself had once been anointed in secret. A man of Samuel's power and influence could not make such a trip unnoticed, since it would be outside his routine movements to Bethel and Mizpah as a circuit judge. Hence Samuel's curious question (in 16:2): "How can I go?"

Just before Samuel left, "Saul pleaded, I have sinned, yet now, I pray, bring glory to me in front of the elders of my people and in front of Israel. Return with me so that I may prostrate myself before Yahweh your Elohim. So Samuel turned back, following after Saul, and Saul prostrated himself before Yahweh" (15:30,31). Here Saul asked for at least a token show of honor before his people, and Samuel accommodated him.

"Then Samuel went to Ramah; as for Saul, he went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul. Samuel did not come again to see Saul until the day of his death, though Samuel mourned for Saul" (15:34,35).

FILL YOUR HORN WITH OIL!

"Yahweh said to Samuel, How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go! I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected among his sons a king for Myself. Samuel replied, How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me. Yahweh answered, Take a heifer of the herd in your hand and say, I have come to sacrifice to Yahweh. You must invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and then I shall make known to you what you should do. You must anoint for Me the one whom I shall designate to you" (1 Sam.16:1-3).

Jesse the Bethlehemite was grandson of Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 4:17-22). Coming from Ramah, Samuel would have to travel through Gibeah, Saul's hometown. The latter would call Samuel's anointing another man an act of treason, if word of it ever reached him. So Samuel was given a cover story. He was to take a heifer with him and make a sacrifice to Yahweh in Bethlehem. When he arrived there, "the elders of the city trembled as they met him. They asked, Are you coming in peace, O seer? He replied, I have come in peace to sacrifice to Yahweh. Hallow yourselves and rejoice today with me. He himself hallowed Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice" (16:4,5).

Bethlehem lay about six miles south of Jerusalem in Judah. The elders were not trembling before the prophetic office, but because of political risk. The high status of the visitor would certainly mean trouble for the city. Either Samuel was Saul's man who came with acquisitive intentions to the unclaimed south of the land, or he was not Saul's man, which might put them at risk with Saul. And now the great prophet from the north had come south for a mere sacrifice! Yet Samuel was obviously able to alleviate their fears when he invited them to the sacrifice.

YAHWEH'S SPIRIT PROSPERS ON DAVID

Samuel hallowed Jesse and his sons, carrying out the appropriate ritual of purification before the sacrifice. In this way Samuel was shown each of Jesse's sons, and he was ready to hear the word from Yahweh whom *He* had chosen. Looking at the handsome and tall appearance of Eliab, the eldest son, Samuel thought, "Surely, in front of Yahweh is His anointed. But Yahweh said to Samuel, You must not look at his appearance and at the loftiness of his stature, for I have rejected him. For not as a human sees, does the One, Elohim, see. A human sees the visible appearance, yet Yahweh sees into the heart" (16:6,7).

Samuel thought that he had before him all the sons of Jesse. As he viewed them, he imagined that in one of them he was looking at the person whom Yahweh had chosen. Samuel was impressed by the eldest son, Eliab, a striking looking young man; and so he felt sure that the latter must be Yahweh's anointed (16:6). Yet Yahweh urged Samuel not to look at the lad's appearance and the loftiness of his stature. Samuel, like people in general, was impressed by what is on the surface. Yet Yahweh perceives the inward qualities and sees into the heart. And so He told Samuel that He had rejected Eliab.

Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But the prophet told Jesse, "Yahweh has not chosen any of these. Then Samuel asked Jesse, Are the lads finished? He replied, There remains yet the youngest. Yet behold, he is shepherding the flock" (16:10,11). At Samuel's request, Jesse "sent and had him come; he was ruddy, with lovely eyes and of good appearance. And Yahweh said [to the prophet], Rise and anoint him, for this is he. So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the spirit of Yahweh prospered on David from that day onward. Then Samuel rose and went to Ramah" (16:12,13).

David received the anointing silently; no word was spoken by him, nor by his brothers, nor by Samuel. The anointing was a private act and was not publicized. David's fine appearance was an external sign of his inward merit; Yahweh had seen into his heart, and from that day onward His spirit prospered on David. So by intuition he would come to discern in Israel's soldiers more than a bunch of dismayed people; hence he would call them *"the arrays of the living Elohim."* For the time being, David would be king in Yahweh's sight only, Who had sought out for Himself a man in accord with His own heart (1 Sam.13:14).

DAVID MEETS SAUL

"As for the spirit of Yahweh, it had withdrawn from Saul, and an evil spirit from Yahweh frightened him. Saul's courtiers said to him, Behold now, an evil spirit from Elohim is frightening you. Let our lord now order your courtiers, who are before you, that they should seek a man who knows how to play the harp. Whenever it occurs that an evil spirit from Elohim comes over you, then he will play with his hand, and it will be well with you and give you rest" (1 Sam.16:14-16).

Once the spirit of Elohim had prospered over Saul (11:6) and had enabled him to win victories. This divine power is now said to have withdrawn from him; and the void is filled by an evil spirit from Elohim that frightened him. Hence Saul suffered from fits of extreme depression and later from a kind of persecution mania.

We know from Isaiah 45:6,7, that Yahweh is not only the Former of light and the Maker of good, but also the Creator of darkness and the Creator of evil.[1] Now Saul's courtiers had told him, "An evil spirit from Elohim is frightening you," and they recommended the power of music to

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* September 1995, p.214.

assuage the depression. So Saul said to them: "Select now for me a man who can play well, and bring him to me. One of the young attendants answered, saying, Behold, I have observed a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who knows how to play. He is a master of valor, a man of war, proficient in speech, a handsome man, and Yahweh is with him" (1 Sam.16:15-18).

So Saul sent word to Jesse, "saying, Do send to me David, your son who is with your flock" (16:19). This royal message was a command that required immediate obedience. Since no one would appear before the king empty-handed, Jesse sent not only his son David, but also some of the produce of his farm: a load of bread, a skin-bottle of wine, and a kid of the goats.

David[2] must have been a lovable character. The affection that Saul had for him may have helped toward Saul's healing, while the therapeutic charm of the music of the harp "inspirited Saul, and it was well with him [for the time being]. Then the evil spirit would withdraw from him" (16:23).

We may surmise that David's appointment in 16:22 ("Let David now stay before me") was not intended to be permanent, and that he was only summoned when Saul's intermittent bouts of depression required his services as a musician.

We also read in 16:21: "Later David became a gear-bearer for him." This happened a few years later when David had matured into a bearded adult who looked very different from the youth of 1 Samuel 16. Hence Saul did not recognize the young man who had slain Goliath, the champion of the Philistines.

THE ARRAYS OF THE LIVING ELOHIM

The Philistines had sent an invading army on to Israelite territory, not this time to the central hills from which the

2. David, literally: Endearing, or Beloved, Darling.

enemy had been chased westwards. Now the Philistines had gathered their forces (1 Sam.17:1) on the borders of Judah and nearer their own territory. The villages mentioned in verse 1 were located about 15 miles west of Bethlehem. Saul and his army "were gathered and encamped in the vale of Elah" (17:2), that ran westwards from the hill country of Judah, roughly in the latitude of Bethlehem.

"Now the Philistines were standing on this side on a hill, while Israel was standing on that side on a hill, with a ravine between them. A champion[3] marched forth from the array of the Philistines; his name was Goliath" (17:3,4), and he was over nine feet in height. This giant taunted the arrays of Israel for forty days (17:16), saying: "Choose for yourselves a man and let him come down against me. If he should prevail in fighting with me and smite me, then we will become servants to you. Yet if *I* should prevail over him and smite him, then . . . you must serve us . . . . *I* challenge the arrays of Israel this day! Give me such a man, and let us fight together. When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and exceedingly fearful" (17:8-11).

"The three elder sons of Jesse had left and gone following Saul to the war . . . yet David would go and return from attendance on Saul to graze the flock of his father at Bethlehem" (17:13-15). Since the three brothers were needing supplies of food, Jesse sent David out to bring toasted grain and ten loaves of bread to them in the military camp, and to check about their well-being. Jesse added ten fresh milk cheeses for the chief officer of their contingent (17:17,18).

When David arrived at the camp, the army was marching forth to the array. Hence he left his supplies in charge of the quartermaster, so that he could run to the battle line and find out about his brothers' welfare. While he was still speaking to them, Goliath the Philistine came up. "He

3. champion, literally: man of the [space] between [two armies].

spoke those usual words, and David heard them. All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled before him and were exceedingly fearful" (17:23,24).

Yet David was indignant about those insulting words. He asked, "What shall be done for the man who smites this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he challenges *the arrays of the living Elohim*?" (17:26). David recognized that the Philistine champion was actually taunting Elohim when he said: "I challenge the arrays of Israel this day" (17:10). We may assume that David's confidence in the power of his Elohim was absolute, knowing that only faith in Him would overcome the gigantic champion of the Philistines; for the spirit of Yahweh prospered on David (16:13). So to him, Goliath was just a dangerous predator, comparable to the wild animals that used to attack his father's flock.

In answer to his question, David learned of the three privileges for the one who would kill Goliath: "The king shall enrich him with great riches, he shall give to him his daughter, and he shall make his father's house free"[4] (17:25). When David asked other soldiers, he received the same answer; and he may have repeated his denouncement: "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he challenges *the arrays of the living Elohim*?"

David's words were reported to Saul who sent for him. David announced his offer to fight the giant, but the king tried to discourage him. So David reported of his experience as a shepherd of his father's flock, "when a lion or a bear came and he carried off a flockling from the drove" (17:34). He would go after the predator and rescue the flockling from its mouth and kill the wild animal. He added: "Your servant has smitten both lion and bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will become like one of them, for he has reproached *the arrays of the living Elohim* . . . . Yah-

4. either tax-exempt, or free from statute-labor for the king.

weh Who rescued me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, *He* shall rescue me from the hand of this Philistine" (17:36,37).

So the king said: "Go! And Yahweh, He may be with you" (17:37). Then Saul offered David his own armor. This was a most generous offer since only he himself and his son possessed full battle dress. David tried it on, but he was unable to walk in it (17:39); it was probably too large for him.

"Then he took his stave in his hand, chose for himself five smooth stones from the wadi . . . . With his sling in his hand he came close to the Philistine" (17:40), who maledicted him in the name of his gods. David replied: "I am coming against you in the Name of Yahweh of hosts, *the Elohim of the arrays of Israel,* Whom you have challenged today . . . . I will smite you . . . . Then the whole earth shall know that there is an Elohim in Israel. And this whole assembly shall know that Yahweh shall give victory without sword or spear. For *Yahweh's is the battle,* and He will deliver you into our hands" (17:45-47).

"David, with sling and stone, was faster than the Philistine; he smote the Philistine and put him to death . . . . Then the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines" (17:50,52). Thus *the arrays of the living Elohim* responded to the vaunt and the challenge of the enemy (17:10). And David may have rejoiced with words like these (Psa.68:1-4):

Elohim shall arise! His enemies shall be scattered,
And those hating Him shall flee from His presence!
Like the whisking away of smoke . . .
So shall the wicked perish from the presence of Elohim.
Yet the righteous shall rejoice;
They shall be glad before Elohim,
And they shall be elated with rejoicing.
Sing to Elohim! Make melody to His Name!

H.H.R.

(To be continued)

SET FOR LIFE EONIAN

"Now on the coming sabbath almost the entire city was gathered to hear the word of the Lord. Yet the Jews, perceiving the throngs, are filled with jealousy, and they contradicted the things spoken by Paul, blaspheming.

"Being bold, both Paul and Barnabas say, 'To you first was it necessary that the word of God be spoken. Yet, since, in fact, you are thrusting it away, and are judging yourselves not worthy of eonian life, lo! we are turning to the nations. For thus the Lord has directed us: I have appointed you for a light of the nations; for you to be for salvation as far as the limits of the earth.'

"Now on hearing this, the nations rejoiced and glorified the word of the Lord, and they believe, whoever were *set for life eonian*" (Acts 13:44-48).

These special words; "*set for life eonian*" are most significant! *Designated, called,* and *justified,* these are familiar terms to our ears. They should be, for these are not merely "terms;" rather they are the precious "keys" which released us from the bondage and misery of despair into the glorious intimacy of reconciliation. Of the hundred and one definitions of this word "set" in the dictionary, we choose two: "*to set someone free,*" and "*to put into order or readiness for use.*"

On the previous sabbath, Paul and Barnabas had entered the synagogue, and were courteously invited by the chiefs for "any word of entreaty" (Acts 13:15). While Paul discounted his expert knowledge of ritual and the Mosaic law, deeming his brilliant legalistic experience to be refuse

(Phil.3:8), both he and his companion, a Cyprian Levite, were eminently qualified. Their bearing and Paul's words would plainly testify to their maturity. He spoke fearlessly of his Lord, declaring, for the first time, "Let it then be known to you, brethren, that through this One is being announced to you the pardon of sins, and from all which you could not be justified in the law of Moses, in this One everyone who is believing is being justified" (Acts 13:38,39). Remarkably, on this occasion, there was no dissent. Outside the synagogue, many of the Jews and reverent proselytes spoke privately to Paul and Barnabas, and these were persuaded to remain in the grace of God.

Now, as initially noted, on this second sabbath, Paul's opening words made it plain that he was speaking mainly to the gentile population. Almost the entire inhabitants of Pisidian Antioch had gathered to hear the evangelists. The manner in which the evangel was thankfully received as well as the rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord thoroughly exasperated those Jews who showed themselves neglectful of so great a salvation. With a cunning ploy which seems uncomfortably familiar, they spurred on the *reverent,* the *respectable,* and foremost citizens of the city to eject the apostles from their midst! Now in this present day of apostasy, these hypocritical opponents have other allies, *apathy and indifference.*

Should we today insist that the evangel of the Circumcision must not, under any circumstances, be confused with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, and, moreover, should we insist on a recognition of the—as yet unfulfilled—promise of a glorious millennium for Israel, then our listeners would shake their heads in confusion, or, perhaps like the Jews of Antioch, would do all in their powers to oppose our ministry.

With gentle persuasion and the consummate skill of brilliant oration, the apostle had vainly attempted to reach the

hearts of those in the synagogue by referring to those tender words from the second psalm, "My Son art Thou; I today have begotten Thee" (Acts 13:33; Psa.2:7). He brought them the stupendous evangel of justification, associated with the law of Moses. Although this loving kindness was far below the soaring high plateau of justification *apart from law,* and included a pardon which could and would be revoked, even this made little impression.

"WOE TO ME"

"For necessity is lying upon me, for it were woe to me if I should not be bringing the evangel!" (1 Cor.9:16). We know what the apostle suffered in bringing the evangel. We may read of his profound heartache for his brethren, his relatives according to the flesh as he witnessed their rejection and callousness (Rom.9:1-5). After many, many hard years of suffering infirmities, outrages, necessities, persecution, distresses, he now embarked on carrying his own salvation into effect in heralding the evangel of the Uncircumcision. We may depend on the fact that this would be undertaken with great courage, and "*without murmurings and reasoning*" (Phil.2:14). What tremendous joy would fill his loving heart in witnessing the glad acceptance of the evangel!

He had no way of knowing those whom his Lord would be calling. We may be sure that he fully honored the Jerusalem agreement, and would confine his commission to the nations. He even went further than mere observance, to the loving gesture of bringing gifts for the poor saints in Judea. The response? Harassment of the young ecclesia and attempted assassination!

"MY SON, THE BELOVED"

What then is persecution but a privilege in light of God's love in *setting* us for life eonian? Let us, then, meditate on

the particular reference which Paul used to reach the hearts of those in the synagogue in connection with the filial love of the Father for His dear Son. In this we are reminded of the joyful—dare we say *proud*—announcement, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight" (Matt.3:17).

"Open my eyes that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Open my ears that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my ears, illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Open my mouth and let me bear
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart and let me prepare
Love with Thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my heart, illumine me,
Spirit divine!"[1]

The motto on my desk calendar was "Let your religion be less of a theory and more of a love affair." While this speaks of temporal affection, and may not compare with

1. hymn by Charles H. Scott.

that higher, divine love, yet the very intensity of many such renowned loves may cause some of insipid faith to pale into shame. We ought not to despise this human relationship, for it has much to teach us. Our own dear Father speaks of us as His children. Our Lord drew on this same relationship to provide many instances of filial tenderness. How poignant the sore challenge of Abraham through this same kinship:

"The messenger of Yahweh called to him and said: Abraham! Abraham! And he replied: Here I am. He continued: Do not stretch out your hand on the youth, and do not do anything to him; for now I know that you fear Elohim since you have not kept back your son, your only one from Me" (Gen.22:11,12).

Consider well the precious intimacy of those incidents concerning Jacob and his son, Joseph in Egypt. We can scarce do this casually or with indifference, for here is a searching insight into the suffering and pain of God, for His beloved Son.

"He asked them about their well-being and said: Is all well with your old father of whom you spoke? Is he still alive? They replied: All is well with your servant, our father; he is still alive. And they bowed the head and prostrated to him" (Gen.43:27,28).

Finally, at the conclusion of this drama we read: "Joseph had his chariot hitched up and went up to meet his father Israel in Goshen. When he appeared before him, he fell and wept long on his neck. Then Israel said to Joseph: I am willing to die at this time, after I have seen your face, and that you are still alive" (Gen 46:29,30).

A TIME OF APOSTASY

"Let us not gauge our service by apparent results or so-called success. By that standard the later ministry of our Lord was a failure. Fewer followed Him as He went

on unfolding His sufferings. But surely this phase of His earthly service, culminating in the cross, was most appreciated by His God and Father. Paul also went from service to suffering. But shall we say that the aged apostle, in his chains, rejected by the saints in Asia, forsaken by his friends, was not a success? Then it was he wrote his greatest epistles and, in his infirmity, really accomplished far more than all the rest of the apostles together.

"It has always been God's way to reserve a remnant in the midst of apostasy. Such there is now. We cannot stay the tide of evil. That is in fulfillment of His Word. But we can accomplish a work in the midst of it far more pleasing to God than is possible at any other time. This should encourage us in the midst of apparent failure and when called upon to face opposition. As a soldier our principal business is to suffer evil.

"At the same time God is preparing hearts for the message He has given. We must depend on Him for that quite as much as for the truth itself. Men will not have it unless constrained by His spirit. Let us seek to fall in line with His operations. With gracious persistence, let us present the truth wherever possible, and press it upon all who will hear. Let us not aim merely at the blessing of our fellow saints, but at the higher goal—the glory of God, on which all ultimate blessing depends."[2]

"Grace be with you all. Amen!" Donald Fielding

2. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.20, p.130.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES VOLUME FOR 1995

Unsearchable Riches Volume 86, for the year 1995 (288 pages, bound in dark green cloth), is now at the bindery, and should be available for shipping in a few weeks. The price is $15.00 plus $1.50 shipping (California residents please add sales tax). A list of available *U.R.* volumes (as well as photocopied sets) is available upon request.

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Paul to the Colossians
55 The Arrows of Him Who-Suffices
65 My Impregnable Retreat
72 For You are Bought With a Price
75 "More Than Conquering"
79 There Has Come New
87 "When It Delights God"

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 1996
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-SEVEN

EDITORIAL

IN the northern hemisphere this is the season of renewal. All around us there is a vigorous burst of life after months of stillness and coldness. The winter speaks of death; the spring speaks of life out of death, however dimly it may be.

It is fitting that it was at this time of year our Lord was crucified, and three days later He was roused from among the dead. But nothing in the present system can perfectly picture the truth of this evangel and its significance for humanity and all the universe.

We are always encouraged by the spring season. There is indeed a manifestation of God from the creation of the world (Rom.1:20). But if this is all we have for learning of Him, our feelings of optimism are bound to disappear soon. Springtime may picture resurrection in its renewal, but it is far from paralleling the power, vitality and glory that is in Christ as the Firstfruit of those who are reposing and the One Who is our Life.

The seasons are cycles, repeating themselves over and over again. What God is doing in Christ leads forward to a consummation which is not a ceasing, but an achievement. The ancient practices and symbols of spring that have been incorporated into our culture, the songs and flowers and decorated eggs, and even spring itself, cannot establish a firm grasp of the evangel concerning the cross and vivification of Christ.

The death and resurrection of Christ are not cyclical renewals, and the evangel does not speak merely of reformation and improvement. In that Christ died "He died to Sin once for all time" (Rom.6:10). "In Christ shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22).

The human ideas that make up so much of "Easter" actually reinforce wrong thinking about the death and resurrection of Christ. The old is decorated. And the decorated thing is temporary, like spring itself. This cannot reflect the evangel which speaks of a new creation and an actual achievement that is certain of full and final realization.

The changes that are channeled through Christ are not fading and transient but lead from glory to glory as Paul expressed it in 2 Corinthians 3:18. God's grace, God's peace, God's love—these are blessings in Christ that various contributors have focused upon in this issue.

Especially in dealing with Paul's evangel and the secrets associated with his apostleship, we find a happiness and a confidence unparalleled by terrestrial experience. The terminology itself is full of optimism: conciliation, reconciliation, delight, love. But when such terms are associated with God's work in Christ they become powerful in lifting our spirits and effecting changes in our lives. God was in Christ conciliating the world to Himself. It was God's delight to sever Paul and unveil His Son in him; and His delight reaches forward in the future to the reconciliation of all. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!

As David's experiences led him to a growing reliance on God as his Impregnable Retreat, so may our experiences lead us to an increasing confidence in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And as Job tenaciously focused upon God through his severe sufferings, so may our hearts be focused on God's multifarious wisdom, transcendent grace and vast love. When Christ was roused from among the dead, there began a new "springtime" that speaks only of good, of life and righteousness, that will never fade, but will only increase to that consummation when God is All in all.

D.H.H.

PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS

COLOSSIANS is the complement of the doctrinal section of Ephesians. Two mysteries dominate both. Ephesians elaborates the present Secret Economy, which concerns the *members* of the body of Christ: Colossians dwells upon the secret of Christ, Who is the *Head* of that body. Ephesians, however, *teaches* the truth, while Colossians *corrects* departure from it.

TO THE BRETHREN IN COLOSSE

The epistle is addressed, in the first place, to Colosse. Yet is was also sent to Laodicea, and, indeed, is especially meant for all who had not seen Paul's face in the flesh (4:16; 2:1). Like its companion epistles, Ephesians and Philippians, the very mode of communication is in accord with its contents. Flesh has no place. Paul is bound (4:18). He could not go to Colosse in order to tell them these transcendent truths by word of mouth, but is compelled to have his words committed to writing, so that they will be seen rather than heard, and not only can be transported vast distances, far beyond the reach of his voice, but may be imperishably preserved for the future. And so they have come to us.

The recipients of this epistle are distinguished by two tokens—holiness and faith. On God's side they were saints, hallowed by contact with Him. On the human side they had believed in Christ. The faith of the Colossians is expressly said to be in Christ Jesus (1:4).

FRAMEWORK OF COLOSSIANS

Introduction (1:1,2)
Report of Epaphras to Paul (1:3-8)
The Secret of Christ
–Its Realization (1:9-2:7)
Correction of Doctrine (2:8-23)
Correction of Deportment (3:1-4:1)
The Secret of Christ
–Its Expression (4:2-6)
Tychicus to the Colossians (4:7-9)
Conclusion (4:10-18)

The literary framework gives us a clear clue to its contents. Within the Salutations and Mutual Reports, the whole body of the epistle deals with the details of the Secret of Christ. First the apostle, in one of the most sublime passages in Holy Writ, sets forth the secret glories of Christ as the Son of God (1:9-2:7).

At the close of the epistle he speaks of this again, desiring to make it known (4:2-6).

The bulk of this letter deals with correction in doctrine and deportment necessitated by departure from the Secret of Christ. A knowledge of this secret is vital to the spiritual welfare of all who know God.

Rationalism and ritual, the philosophy of the nations and the relation of Israel, are the two great enemies to the truth which find correction in Colossians.

Every false theology or philosophy which places anything of human origin between God and man, is set aside by the great truth that Christ is God's Complement. As our Complement He displaces all the decrees and rites of Judaism. In Christ we are complete and need naught else to fit us for the Father's presence.

The secret of Christ is presented in its future aspect in Ephesians. There is to be a harvest era in which Christ is

to be supreme, not only on earth, but in the heavens also. His sway will be universal (Eph.1:10,22,23). In Colossians, however, the emphasis is placed on His past headship in creation and His present headship in redemption with a view to a future reconciliation of the universe. The unity of creation has led philosophers to trace it back to a common origin, by some called a "primordial germ." This first element in creation, however simple it may be said to be, must possess within itself a potential universe. The Son of God, the Firstborn of Creation, is the satisfactory solution to all questions which concern creation. Creation did not begin in chaos but in Christ. It will not end in ruin wrought by man but in universal reconciliation wrought by the blood of His cross.

THE INVOCATION

The invocations in Paul's three prison epistles are identical. Just as the body of each epistle commences with blessing or thanking, so the first wish of the apostle's heart for his readers is *grace.* Divine favor lavished upon those who deserve God's indignation will yet be the most precious gem in the crown of His glory. His creatures will be awed by His infinite might. They will be amazed by the wonders of His works. They will marvel at His wisdom. Their hearts will swell with thankfulness for His kindness. Far more precious will be the praise and worship which His mercy will call forth. Yet the highest adoration and the deepest affection will come to Him from those who realize the depths of the deficiency of their deserts and the corresponding heights to which His grace has exalted them.

We should make more of His grace. Not only should it warm our own hearts at all times, but it should pervade our walk and our service. Oh, how great a transformation would it work in the heralding of the evangel, if it were presented

in its purity and power! Grace that Saul encountered on the Damascus road. Grace that Paul received to serve the saints. Grace that enabled him to suffer for Christ's sake. Let us not confine it to the past, to our call, when we first believed. This invocation is not for unbelievers, but for us. Our salvation is not only *by* but *to* or *in* grace (Eph.2:5). Not only did it begin with grace, but it continues so, and will finish with the greatest display of all, when our bodies will be transfigured and glorified.

First grace, then peace. First justification, then reconciliation. Were God not gracious, what could there be but indignation and enmity? But now that His favor hovers over us as a benediction, we may have peace with Him, peace in our spirits, peace with our fellow-saints and the world, yea, we may enter into the peace *of* God, and enjoy some measure of the calm with which He is filled, Who knows the end from the beginning, and Whose great aim is to overcome all enmity with love, and clasp His whole creation to His heart in the bonds of perfect and perpetual peace.

FROM GOD OUR FATHER

These blessings can come from one source alone—from God, Who now looks upon us as His children, and through our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator between us, our Saviour and Lord. We are no longer merely creatures of the great Creator. We have entered the circle of His family and now are children of an affectionate Father. He will be gracious to us and give us peace, through the work of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Indeed, He is our Peace, for He not only reconciles us to God through the blood of His cross, but removes the barriers between the saints, and makes the despised Uncircumcision one with the privileged Circumcision.

A.E.K.

Notes on the Book of Job

THE ARROWS OF HIM WHO-SUFFICES

IT IS BECAUSE Job was afflicted with unusual evil that his words and thoughts go beyond the usual wisdom. Without his trial Job would have spoken, concerning any such evil as he was suffering, much as his associates spoke. It is the experience of severe affliction coupled with his uncompromising recognition of God as God (*cp* Rom.1:21), that makes Job probe deeper into the meaning of this evil.

In Job 4 and 5, Eliphaz had voiced conventional wisdom concerning sufferings. He had determined to his own satisfaction that what Job was experiencing was Eloah's correction for iniquity, *"the admonition of Him Who-Suffices"* (5:16-18). The implication was that if Job would acknowledge his sins, and like Eliphaz, "inquire of El" (5:8), he would be rescued out of his afflictions (5:19-27). "Behold this, we have investigated it; it is so. Do hear it; and you, get to know it for yourself."

JOB'S REPLY

If this bluntness at the end of Eliphaz's speech leaves us gasping, it does not silence Job. In chapters 6 and 7, the afflicted man stays his course. He continues to affirm that (1) his sufferings are extreme, (2) God has given them, and (3) he would have God remove them by taking away his life.

The words of Eliphaz are, on one hand, like "insipid food" (6:6), and, on the other hand, like the "treacherous" torrents of water that rush down the dry "wadis" in the rainy season (6:15). They do not relate to the realities of Job's situation, and thus are tasteless; but they also offend, and thus

are treacherous. If all that can be said is that no mortal is righteous before God (4:17) and that God saves the needy (5:15), then all Job can do is resume his plea for death.

Eliphaz has focused attention on Job. Job would turn it back to God. Where Eliphaz had spoken of the *admonition* of Him Who-Suffices, Job would speak of the *arrows* of Him Who-Suffices (6:4). Eliphaz measured God's sufficiency for human needs in terms of correction and discipline in light of human sinfulness. But Job could not, in all honesty and reality, see his afflictions as divine admonition. His sufferings were deep and real; they were "arrows;" but they were arrows from *Him Who-Suffices.*

And that is the problem! Job's sufferings were from God, Who is sufficient in dealing with every sorrow and every woe. Unlike Eliphaz, Job cannot feel any confidence in understanding how the "arrows" relate to God as the All-Sufficient One. But Job is convinced these arrows are not simply divine correctives of secret sins he may have committed.

Nevertheless, they are from God Who is sufficient. They are "frightenings," but frightenings from Eloah, Who is in charge. Job does not know the *why,* but he is keenly acquainted with the *what.* Consequently, Job turns away from Eliphaz and makes requests of Eloah. Since Eloah is sufficient in bringing His arrows upon Job, He is sufficient to take away Job's sufferings by taking away his life.

Indeed, Job errs in not relating God's sufficiency to a deliverance that is full of blessing and life, to a bringing of joy out of the sorrows and consolation out of frightenings. But he is right in focusing his attention on God as the One Who is Sufficient. In this way he is being prepared for a fuller grasp of the ways and character of God.

The divine title, *Eloah,* and the verb, *disposed,* in Job 6:9 share the same root, word-element, "subject," in Hebrew. Eloah is the *To-Subjector,* Who can *subject* His operations

6 **+Then Job |answered, + |saying:**
2 **O that my vexation** could **be |weighed,** yea **weighed–.**
And they could **|take up my woe** *i* **upon** the **scales**
together with it**.**
3 *t* **Because now it is |heavier** *f* **than** the **sand of** the **seas,**
Therefore my words are impetuous.
4 **For** the **arrows of** Him **Who-Suffices** are *wi* **in me;**
Their venom is *w* **what my spirit** has been **drinking;**
Frightenings from **Eloah are |arrayed** against **me.**
5 Does an **onager |bray over verdure?**
if **Would** a **bull |low over its fodder?**
6 **Is insipid** food **being eaten without salt?**
if **Or is** there **taste in** the **ooze of purslane?**
7 **My soul refuses to touch** them;
They are **like bread** of **sickness** to **me.**
8 *a* **O |g that my request** would **|come,**
+That Eloah would **|g grant my expectation,**
9 **+That Eloah** would **be |disposed +to |crush me!**
May He *c* **let loose His hand and |clip me** off**!**
10 **+Then** there would *fr* **still |b be** this **consolation** for **me,**
+While I |flinch in the **travail** which **He is not sparing,**
That I have not suppressed the *sa* **words of** the **Holy** One**.**
11 **What** is **my vigor that I should wait?**
And what is my end that I should prolong my soul?
12 *if* **Is my vigor** the **vigor of stones,**
if **Or my flesh** like **bronze?**
13 *if* **Isn't** it that there **is no**thing **in me** to **help my**self,
And all **prosperity has been driven away from me?**
14 One who is in **despondency** should **›have kindness**
from his associates,
+Even if **he should forsake** the **fear of** Him **Who-Suffices.**
15 **My brothers, they are treacherous like** a **wadi,**
Like a **channel of wadis** that **|p overflow,**
16 ·That become **somber|** *f* **because** of **ice,**
And **snow |obscures** *on* **them.**

to the crushing of Job. As it turns out, Eloah was not *disposed* to crush Job, but rather to bless him. But at this point, Job was not aware of this purpose of the One Who-Suffices.

WORDS OF A DESPERATE MAN

It is a struggle, however, for Job to keep his attention on God. This is reflected in chapter 6, where he alternately addresses God and then his associates. Job first traces his woe to Eloah (verses 1-4), and then, by a series of parables, intimates that his associates' words are irrelevant and meaningless in the present situation (5-7). Next he turns again to Eloah, pleading for Him to grant him death (8-10), and then once more he turns to his associates, describing their words as unhelpful, and even more than that, as treacherous (11-30). (But finally, in chapter 7, Job will turn entirely from the instruments of human wisdom before him and plead his case, with God alone in view.)

In 6:11-27 we see a man "in despondency" (v.14), appealing to his associates to treat him as one who is truly suffering and does not know why. They have jumped to the conclusion that Job needs correcting, but Job knows well that this is not the explanation of his suffering. They are looking for something that does not exist, as travelers in the arid Mideast may look for water that is not there (6:18-21). Their acquaintance with Job should not have led them to think of him as a deceiver (22,23). They cannot point to any specific error on his part (24). "How can correction from you be correcting?" (25).

These indeed are words of a desperate man (26)! The more he thinks about what his associates are saying, the more frustrated he becomes. They are not *disposed* to face Job as he is; they do not subject their thoughts and words to the fact that someone in dire straits and needs is before them, whose situation cannot be dismissed as a simple matter of divine correction (27-30).

17 **In** the **season** when **they** [l]**thaw they are effaced;**
In the bright **warmth they are extinguished**
from their [ri]**place.**
18 **Caravans are** [l]**sent aside** from **their way;**
They [l]**ascend in**to the **wasteland and** [l]**perish.**
19 The **caravans of Tema look** for waters;
The wayfarers of Sheba expect to find **them.**
20 But **they are ashamed that** each one **trusted** the place;
They come [fr]**to it, and they are** [l]**abashed.**
21 [t]**Thus have you now become** [7]**to me~**[cs]**;**
You [l]**see catastrophe, and you are** [l]**fearful.**
22 [t]**Indeed have I said, Grant** something **to me?**
[+]**Or,** Pay a **bribe from your fortune in my** [fr]**behalf?**
23 [+]**Or, Deliver me forth from** the **hand of** a **foe?**
[+]**Or, You shall ransom me from** the **hand of terrifiers?**
24 **Direct me, and I′ shall** [c]**keep silent,**
And [wt]**where I have erred,** [c]**make ›me understand.**
25 [wt]**How** [M]**savory~ are** [sa]**words of uprightness,**
[+]**Yet** [wt]**how** can **correction⁻ from you be correcting?**
26 **Are you designing to correct** with **declarations,**
[+]**Yet** treat **›as wind** the [sa]**words of** a **desperate**[l] man**?**
27 **Indeed, you** would [l]**cast** lots [on]**for** the **orphan,**
And you would [l]**barter over your associate.**
28 [+]**Yet now be** kindly **disposed; face** [i] **me;**
[+] **I shall assuredly not** [l]**lie** [on]**to your face.**
29 **Relent,** I **pray; let it not** [l]**become iniquity,**
And relent further; my righteousness is at stake **in it.**
30 **Is** there **iniquity** [i]**on my tongue?**
[if]**Or** does **not my palate** [l]**understand woes?**
7 **›Has not** a **mortal** a hard **enlistment on** the **earth?**
And his days, are they not **like** the **days of** a **hireling?**
2 **Like** a **slave** who **is gasping** after **shade,**
And like a **hireling** who **is expecting his wages,**

6:21 *7-~cs* **to me:** Hb **to him.**
6:25 *M-~* **savory:** Hb **harassing.**

HIM WITH SIGHT

Job continues to speak of his pitiful situation in chapter 7, but as he proceeds we become aware that he is no longer addressing his associates but rather God Himself. The One "with sight" in the first line of verse 8 is surely Eloah. He is the One Who places a guard over Job (7:12), Who has made a great thing of him, checking him every morning and never taking His probing heed from him (17,18); He is the Preserver of mankind (20).

There is much here that is radical, expressing the bitterness of Job's soul (11), and much of what Job says is uninformed in that it does not express reliance on God for salvation to a good consummation. But what Job says is right in its recognition of the deity of God. Job traces his woe to God, and this is right. But Job's only hope is that the God Who dismays and frightens him (14), will bring him death soon (15).

DREAMS AND VISIONS

Job's reference to dreams and visions from God (7:14) connects with the rather melodramatic description Eliphaz had made of his own "visions of the night" in 4:12-16. Yet where Eliphaz brought his clearly overdrawn account of a mysterious dream to the very conventional and pious question, "Can a *mortal* be righteous before Eloah?" (4:17), Job's restless dreams aroused in him the cry, made more shocking by being addressed directly to Deity, "What is a *mortal* that You should make a great thing of him?" (7:17). Where Eliphaz would speak of God as One at a distance from impure humanity, Job faces Eloah and speaks of Him as One Who checks him every morning and tests him every moment (7:18)! Hence, while Eliphaz seems to speak more reverently than Job about God, his words end up directing our thoughts away from God to man's sinfulness. Yet

3 **So am I allotted months of futility for my**self,
And nights of misery have they assigned to me.
4 *if* **When I lie** down**, +then I say, When shall I rise?**
+Yet the **evening** is **interminable,**
And I am surfeited with **restlessness**
until the morning **gloaming.**
5 **My flesh is clothed** with **maggot and dirt**y **scab;**
My skin is split apart and is [l]fetid.
6 **My days are fleeter** *f*than a **weaver's shuttle,**
And they shall *all*conclude
*i*with the **limit of** the **weaving thread.**
7 **Remember that my life** is a **wind;**
My eye shall not turn back to see good.
8 The **eye of** Him with **sight shall not regard me;**
Your eyes will look *i*for me, **+but I will no**t **be** there**.**
9 As a **cloud** *all*vanishes and **[l]goes** away,
So one **descending** to the **unseen shall not ascend.**
10 **He shall not return** any *fr*more to his house,
And his *ri*place shall not recognize him *fr*again.
11 *mr*Indeed for **me, I shall not keep back my mouth;**
O **let me [l]speak in** the **distress of my spirit;**
O **let me [l]importune in** the **bitterness of my soul.**
12 Am **I** the **sea or** the sea **monster**
That You should place a **guard over me?**
13 **For I said, My cot shall comfort me;**
My bed shall bear away **my concern;**
14 **+Yet You have dismayed me** *i*with dreams,
And *f*with visions You have **[l]frightened me.**
15 **+So my soul** would **[l]choose strangling,**
Death, rather *f*than my bodily **staunchness.**
16 **I reject** this**; I** would **not [l]live for** the **eon;**
Let *f* **me alone, for my days** are a **transitory** breath**.**
17 **What** is a **mortal that You should make**
a **great** thing of **him,**
+Or that You should set Your heart *>*on him?

Job's impetuous words keep focusing attention on God as directly involved in his sufferings.

GOD'S TARGET MARK

Eliphaz had said that "humanity is born to misery" (5:7). But he presented this truth as a simple fact, without making any association with God. In the following verse, 5:8, Eliphaz drew attention to his practice of inquiring of El, but the point of all this was to divert Job's attention from his misery to God's providence for the needy and correction of the crafty.

In contrast to this, Job describes his own misery in vivid terms (7:3-5), and boldly traces this to God. Eliphaz had implied that Job's misery was a judgment on him for his sins, some craftiness that might not be clear to Job's associates but was clear to God. To this Job replies (without addressing Eliphaz directly, but rather facing Eloah), "I have sinned" (7:20). But is this the reason for his misery? "Yet what do I contrive against You, O Preserver of mankind? Why have You established me as Your target mark, that I should become a load to You?" (Job 7:20).

We may deem these words irreverent, even though we understand how Job is led to utter them. He is extremely harassed. But he refuses to look for any other cause than God Himself. Job is like a target mark. And if so, then this is of God.

Eliphaz was satisfied to view misery simply as a fact of human existence, almost as without cause or purpose. Job could not do so. If his woe cannot be traced to God, then there is no hope at all. But since it is God Who sends arrows of misery upon Job as a target mark, then He can take them away.

The words of Job 7:21 are among the most weighty and revealing of the book. Job means them as a plea for death as an end to his affliction, but for us today, viewing them

18 +**Or You should check him ›every morning,**
And **You should test him ›every moment?**
19 **How** long**?**
Shall You never take Your probing **heed from me,**
Never *c*[**let me** ˡ**relax** even **until I swallow¯ my saliva?**
20 **I have sinned,**
Yet **what** do **I** ˡ**contrive ›against You,**
O **Preserver**ˡ of ˙**mankind?**
Why have You *pl*[**established me ›as Your target mark,**
+**That I should become** › a **load** *om*[**to** *S*[**You***ph*]**?**
21 + *wt*[**Why** do **You not** ˡ**bear my transgression**
And ˡ**pass** over ˋ**my depravity?**
For now I shall lie ›in the **soil,**
And You would *m*[**seek me early,** +**but I will no**t **be** there**.**

7:20 *S-ph* **You:** Hb **me.**

in light of the evangel of our salvation, we can appreciate their great relevance to Job's situation. Eloah would indeed bear Job's depravity, but in doing so He would put the depravity to death so that Job will live. What Job wanted was death. But what God brings is enlightened life.

Consequently we see that the book of Job is not a treatise on human sinfulness and divine judgment, but a masterpiece concerning human suffering and divine purpose.

D.H.H.

JOB'S OUTLOOK IN THE DEBATE

The debate between Job and his associates does not appear to start with any idea that there is an ultimate issue to life, one that requires the fact of resurrection. Death appears to conclude the present life, and any future is not within the outlook of any of the arguments. In Job's first reply to Eliphaz he speaks of our days as an enlistment, those of a hireling (7:1), and he puts the position thus: "As a cloud vanishes and goes away, so one descending to the unseen shall not ascend" (7:9).

However, as Job proceeds, seeking for a solution to his case, he does develop the theme, though without reaching any concrete solution. A point of change is perceived in 14:14 when Job asks, "If a master dies shall he live again?" and he declares, "All the days of my enlistment I shall wait until my relief comes." The problem will not be settled until Yahweh Himself ministers the required glory. He is the Source of all, and to Him all leads.

–adapted from notes by E. H. Clayton

CHANGES IN THE EVOLUTIONARY THEORY

According to an article in the December 4, 1995 issue of *Time* magazine, "evolutionary theorists" are beginning to conclude "that biological change often occurs in sudden fits and starts," rather than gradually through immense periods of time. They still speak of vast time periods and hold fast to the basic evolutionary theory, but it is now explained that about "543 million years ago . . . within the span of no more than 10 million years, creatures with teeth and tentacles and claws and jaws materialized with the suddenness of apparitions. In a burst of creativity like nothing before or since, nature appears to have sketched out the blueprints for virtually the whole of the animal kingdom. This explosion of biological diversity is described by scientists as biology's Big Bang."

It is disturbing that "nature" should be thought of as creator (*cf* Rom.1:20,21), but it is intriguing to see that the evidence uncovered by scientists has led the reporter, if not the biologists, to speak of a "burst of creativity."

MY IMPREGNABLE RETREAT

"When Saul had seen David going forth to meet the Philistine,[1] he had said to Abner, chief of the military host, Whose son is this lad, Abner? And Abner had replied, As your soul lives, O king, how should I know? Then the king had ordered, You inquire! Whose son is this stripling? So, when David had returned from smiting the Philistine, Abner had taken him and brought him before Saul, while the head of the Philistine was still in his hand. Saul said to him, Whose son are you, young man? David replied, The son of your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite" (1 Sam.17: 55-58). It seems possible that, before the battle, Saul may have seen David only in his fits of madness, and so he did not recognize him when he clothed David in his royal coat (1 Sam.17:38); and the king did not remember him after the battle either.

JONATHAN'S COVENANT WITH DAVID

David had not yet become the king's son-in-law, and the people may have wondered why the publicized promise (given to any victor over Goliath)[1] was not confirmed. But David did receive the love of the king's son Jonathan, which was more marvelous to him than the love from women (2 Sam.1:26).

"It came about . . . that Jonathan's soul was tied to David's soul; and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. On that day Saul took him [into permanent service] and would not

1. i.e., Goliath the Philistine of Gath (1 Sam.17:23).

allow him to return to his father's house. Jonathan contracted a covenant with David, since he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David along with his coats and even his sword and his bow and his girdle. Then David went forth with the men of war; wherever Saul sent him, he proceeded intelligently, so that Saul set him over the men of war; and it seemed good in the eyes of all the soldiers and also in the eyes of Saul's courtiers" (1 Sam.18:1-5).

Jonathan, too, was captured by the charm of David. When Jonathan stripped off his royal garments and gave them to David, he tacitly handed over to him the right of succession to the throne, for he loved him as his own soul. Jonathan's covenant with David was based on his love for him; thus David would always have the full support of Saul's heir apparent.

Obviously Saul had no idea that Samuel had already anointed David to become his successor; so there was no sign of jealousy. Saul was delighted to have a military aide who was able to lead others, to win battles, and to be a friend of his son. David had been popular with all the soldiers after his victory over Goliath, and his popularity increased as he joined them as their leader in battle after battle. Even Saul's courtiers admired David's military leadership, since he showed discretion and practical ability.

When the record says: "he proceeded intelligently," it refers to more than common human intelligence. This causative verb form would also mean that "he gained intelligence" or that "he gained insight," i.e., insight concerning Yahweh's loving purpose for Israel and for its future king. David would never forget that Samuel, at the bidding of Yahweh, had already anointed him for this highest office.

SAUL'S JEALOUSY AND FEAR OF DAVID

David's increasing popularity among the soldiers and

the people drove a wedge between him and Saul. At a time when David and the army came back from smiting the Philistines, "the women from all the cities of Israel went forth singing and dancing in choruses *to meet king Saul* with tambourines, with rejoicing and with three-stringed instruments" (1 Sam.18:6). We may assume that they chanted additional verses to celebrate the victories of king Saul and his military aid, and not just the one recorded in verse 7: "Saul has smitten his thousands, yet David his myriads." Obviously the whole song was not designed to disparage Saul; and the thought rhyme in verse 7 could be paraphrased to say (in prose), our two heroes have killed many, many enemies.

Yet Saul had not the maturity and security to accept the couplet chanted by the women, and to endorse it; so it rankled and festered into incurable jealousy. "Saul's anger grew exceedingly hot; this matter was displeasing in his eyes, and he said, To David they have ascribed myriads, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. What more can he have but the kingship? Saul was jealously eyeing David from that day and beyond" (1 Sam.18:8,9). Saul may have remembered Samuel's prophetic words: "Yahweh has torn the kingship over Israel away from you . . . and has given it to an associate of yours who is better than you" (1 Sam.15:28).

"It came about on the morrow that an evil spirit from Elohim[2] prospered on Saul. He prophesied [in ecstacy] inside the house, while David was playing the harp with his hand, as he did day by day; but there was a spear in Saul's hand. Saul lifted up the spear thinking, I shall smite David into the sidewall. Yet David got around his presence twice" (1 Sam.18:10,11).

Saul was well aware of the fact that the spirit of Yahweh

2. *cf Unsearchable Riches,* January 1996, p.38.

prospered on David; hence everything was going right for David. Since the spirit of Yahweh had withdrawn from Saul, everything went wrong for him, and an evil spirit from Elohim was frightening him (1 Sam.16:14). So "Saul was *fearful* because of David's presence . . . . Saul put him away from himself; he made him his chief of a thousand who marched forth and came in before the soldiers . . . . When Saul saw that he was proceeding very intelligently, *he shrank away from his presence*" (1 Sam.18:12,15). This would mean, he removed him from his presence, hoping that David would be killed in battle.

MICHAL LOVED DAVID

"Now Saul's daughter Michal loved David . . . . So Saul thought I shall give her to him; let her be a trap for him, and let the hand of the Philistines come to be against him . . . . Then Saul said . . . No delight has the king in a bride-price, but rather in a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king's enemies . . . . [David] delivered them in full to the king, to become son-in-law to the king. So Saul gave him Michal his daughter as a wife" (1 Sam.18:20-27).

Saul's repugnant demand was designed to assure David's death, just as almost all his dealings with David; he even urged his son Jonathan and all his courtiers to put David to death. So Jonathan warned his friend to go into hiding, and he pleaded with his father on David's behalf. Jonathan insisted, "Let not the king sin against his servant . . . for he has not sinned against you, and his deeds have been of very good service to you. When he took his soul in his palm and smote the Philistine, and Yahweh wrought a great victory for Israel, you saw it and rejoiced" (1 Sam.19:4,5).

So Saul heeded the voice of Jonathan, at least for the time being, and he swore, "As Yahweh lives, he shall assuredly

not be put to death" (1 Sam.19:6), and he admitted him to the royal palace as heretofore. It was a temporary reconciliation, for Saul's jealousy returned. Whenever David smote the Philistines, each victory made David more popular with the army and with the people of Israel, and increased Saul's fear of him.

Once again, when David was playing the harp for him, "Saul sought to smite David with the spear . . . yet he dodged from Saul's presence, as he smote the spear into the sidewall. So David fled and escaped" (1 Sam.19:10). He went to his own house; obviously he thought that Saul had just succumbed to the evil spirit that influenced his actions.

Yet "it occurred in that night that Saul sent messengers to David's house to observe him and to put him to death in the morning. But Michal his wife told David, saying, If you are not providing for your soul an escape tonight, tomorrow you will be put to death. Michal had David descend through the window that he might go and run away and escape" (1 Sam.19:11,12). Obviously the house joined the wall of the city, allowing him to be lowered without being detected by those who had the house under surveillance.

Then she decided to delay discovery of his departure by putting a dummy on the couch, so as to give the impression that David was sick in bed. She used many small figurines, like those which Rachel hid in her saddle basket (*cf* Gen. 31:34); thus Michal built up the dummy on the couch. She covered it with David's cloak and put goats-hair gauze in the place where his head would have been (1 Sam.19:13).

"When Saul sent messengers to take David in, she said, He is ailing." When Saul heard of it, he sent them back to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me on the couch to put him to death" (1 Sam.19:14,15). When the messengers entered David's room, they found a dummy on his bed. Saul resented his daughter's disloyalty in deceiving

him; yet she claimed that David had threatened her with death (1 Sam.19:16,17).

DAVID WENT TO SAMUEL

"As for David, he ran away and escaped [after Michal had helped him to descend through the window]. He came to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him" (1 Sam.19:18). Obviously they discussed all the recent events, and Samuel may have advised David to fully trust in Yahweh Elohim Who would always rescue him from those who waited in ambush for his soul. Samuel may have added that the Elohim of benignity would go before him and enable him to sing of Elohim's strength and be jubilant each morning over His benignity.

At a later date (without hinting at Saul) David spoke of his enemies (in ambush for his soul, Psalm 59:1,3); thus his verses would be a consolation for those in similar distress.

IMPREGNABLE RETREAT

This term is a conspicuous characteristic of David's psalms, such as: "May Yahweh answer you in a day of distress; *May* the Name of Jacob's Elohim *be* your *impregnable retreat*" (Psa.20:1). He used this verb form again (in Psa.107:4): "Yet for the needy He *makes* an *impregnable retreat* from humiliation."

David used the noun as an attribute of the Deity: "Yahweh shall become an Impregnable Retreat for the crushed, An Impregnable Retreat in seasons of distress" (Psa.9:9,10).

"On the day Yahweh rescued him from the palm of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul, [David] said: . . . My El, my Rock! I take refuge in Him . . . my Impregnable Retreat" (*cf* Psa.18:heading, v.2).

"Our Impregnable Retreat is the Elohim of Jacob" (Psa.46:7).

"Elohim . . . is known as an Impregnable Retreat" (Psa.48:3).

"He only is my Rock and my Salvation,
My Impregnable Retreat; I shall not slip . . . " (Psa.62:2,6).

"But Yahweh shall be my Impregnable Retreat,
And my Elohim, the Rock of my refuge" (Psa.94:22).

"Blessed be Yahweh, my Rock,
Who is teaching my hands for the attack,
My fingers for the battle,
My Benignity and my Fastness,
My Impregnable Retreat and my Deliverance for me,
My Shield; in Him I take refuge" (Psa.144:1,2).

A DAVIDIC INSCRIBED PSALM

When Saul sent, and they kept watch over the house to put him to death.

Rescue me from my enemies, O my Elohim;
From those rising against me,
may You make me impregnable.
Rescue me from those contriving lawlessness,
And from men of bloodshed, save me.
For behold, they wait in ambush for my soul . . . .

For Elohim is my Impregnable Retreat.
The Elohim of benignity to me shall go before me;
Elohim, He shall let me see the fate of those
who lie in wait for me . . . .

But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength
And be jubilant each morning over Your benignity;
For You are the Impregnable Retreat for me,
And my Haven in the day of my distress.
O my Strength, to You I am making melody,
For Elohim is my Impregnable Retreat.

(Psa.59:1-3,9,10,16,17)

H.H.R.

(To be continued)

FOR YOU ARE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE

We marvel at the reality of God's love for us. In Psalms 8:4 we read, "What is a mortal that You are mindful of him?" In this the psalmist speaks of the total unworthiness of any human to have God "mindful" of him. What aspects of any human make this attention on God's part a proper thing for Him? There are none in ourselves, for as the apostle Paul writes in Romans 3:23, ". . . all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God." Just before this Paul employs Ecclesiastes 7:20 ("There is not a righteous man in the earth who does good and never sins"), observing in Romans 3:10,11, "Not one is just—not even one. Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God."

It is easy to conclude that from man's standpoint there is absolutely no justification for God's lavishing His attention and His love on His creation. In no sense, in no degree however small, can mankind be said to have earned His love or somehow to have become deserving of it.

Yet in 1 John 4:8 we find the profound statement, "for God is love." At verse 10 of the same chapter we read, "In this is love, not that we love God, *but that He loves us* . . . ." From His basic nature flows all of the blessings He has poured out and continues to pour out upon us. In Paul's words, The "love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is being given to us" (Rom.5:5). Furthermore, God's love is so tenacious, so unalterable that nothing in all creation "will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom.8:35-39).

IN GOD'S SIGHT

We are undeserving of God's love, but God *is* love, and He pours out His love in our hearts. In this, we grasp that His point of view is radically different from ours.

Paul comments on this in Ephesians 1:3-5, speaking of God's blessing of choosing us in Christ before the disruption of the world, "we to be holy and flawless *in His sight,* in *love* designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus." God's sight focuses on His goals which so clearly display His love. In Ephesians 2:1-10, the apostle writes of our unworthiness as "sons of stubbornness," and of God's *vast love* toward us nevertheless. Here again God's viewpoint is centered on the oncoming eons and His achievement in Christ Jesus.

WITH A PRICE

Let us turn back to 1 Corinthians 6:20, where we read, "For you are bought with a price;" and 7:23, where Paul writes, "With a price are you bought." In the world of business, we know that the price anyone pays for something is in fact the buyer's value for it. If the asked price is too high, the buyer does not buy, but if the price is seen as commensurate with the value perceived by the buyer, the purchase is made. In the price God has paid for us, for you and me, we learn of the value He places on us, our real worth *in His eyes.* It is not a view of what we are in ourselves, but what we are in Christ as will be fully manifested in the achievements of God's purpose.

The price God has paid, in His love, is the giving of His Son on our behalf. We read in Romans 5:8, "God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes."

Quite some years back while I was very much a beginner in learning the glorious truths of the conciliation, a friend asked me if I knew John 3:16. "Of course!" I replied.

The King James Version's rendering of that passage was possibly the very first passage I had committed to memory. So he asked, "How does it go?" I replied that he knew it as well as anyone, but he persisted until I recited the verse for him. He then asked what it was that God loved; what did the verse identify as the object of God's willingness to pay so great a price as His Son, the Beloved? The world! This world with all its failures and faults is valued so highly by God that He has paid a price for it that we are hard pressed to grasp.

Hard pressed to grasp—until we begin to catch a glimpse of His goals of sonship and the display of the transcendent riches of His grace and the heading up of all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth. Consequently, with Paul, we bow our knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that "having been rooted and grounded *in love,*" we should be strong to grasp what is the breadth and length and depth and height of that vast love (Eph.3:14-21). William S. Penn, Jr.

THEOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT

The Doctrine Commission of the Church of England has issued a report entitled, *The Mystery of Salvation,* in which the traditional teaching of an unending hell of torment has been rejected. Among the reasons for this change is "that the picture of a God who consigned millions to eternal torment was far removed from the revelation of God's love in Christ." However, the report seems to have substituted a view of divine failure for the older doctrine of divine malevolence. According to the report, "Hell is not eternal torment, but it is the final and irrevocable choosing of that which is opposed to God so completely and so absolutely that the only end is total nonbeing."

Similar questionings of the idea of endless suffering are being heard among Protestant "Evangelical" groups, and even within the Roman Catholic Church. As for us, we pray for all who teach God's Word and believe that Christ died for them, that they may come to place their confidence in the living God and in His Son Who came into the world to save sinners, and Who died for us all.

"MORE THAN CONQUERING"

"BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, *in love* designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved" (Eph.1:3-6).

Could there ever be such a "love letter" as this? All of the epistles convey the apostle's devotion, but here God's fervent love is emphasized. The approach present, that " . . . in grace, through faith are you saved," must surely sweep aside all barriers in overwhelming, incomparable love! Brother A. E. Knoch, once wrote something to the effect that the *driving force of fear is impotent compared with the drawing force of love.* How true this is. The apostle Paul, who had plainly written of being an ambassador, beseeching for Christ's sake, "Be conciliated to God" (2 Cor.5:20), is here setting a supreme example in bringing the evangel by first presenting God's wonderful love!

Reaching down through long, intervening years, this letter is very personal and private; in God's wisdom, these gracious words have been completely enigmatic to all but the recipients, "the saints who are also believers in Christ Jesus" (Eph.1:1). It is equally true to say that all the apostle's letters, which contain many secrets, continue often to be misunderstood by each successive generation.

Paul had previously described how every individual of

God's choice was to be "conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). To our finite minds this may seem incredible. Having announced one of the greatest revelations ever communicated to man concerning God's purpose, he then challenged the power of the whole created universe in reference to this operation of God's love (Rom.8:35-39). Listing suffering, the awe-inspiring might of powerful opponents, all dimensions, time itself, and even the grim specter of death, he concluded that nothing could possibly undermine or frustrate the love of God. He further invigorated with a victorious acclamation: "What, then, shall we declare to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (31,32).

GOD OPERATES THROUGH HIS CREATURES

The careful encouragement and guidance of God's indwelling spirit is essential if we are to further understand that we are needed by God in the furtherance of His plans! How may we, with feeble, disabled faith otherwise have the temerity to associate ourselves with Paul's triumphant cry, "Nay! in all these we are more than conquering through Him Who loves us" (Rom.8:37).

"It is supremely important that we acknowledge in worshipful adoration that all is *of* and *for* God. But this should not blind us to the further fact that all is *through* His creatures. Not only creation, but reconciliation, is *not directly* His work, but was done in and through His Beloved. God is our Saviour. But that should not shut our eyes and hearts to His Christ, and His sufferings and exaltation. God chose those who are in the body of Christ before the disruption of the world, yet He also called Paul as the medium *through* whom to make it known. He has predestinated

and foreknown all of His saints, but He has also provided the evangelists through whom they are called. He actually prepares the good works in which He wishes us to walk."[1]

During a recent Scripture study meeting the thought was expressed that nothing new seemed to be emerging from God's precious Word. This opinion was generally and gently rejected, but it turned minds to that scene in Athens, when the "wise" of that world, the Epicurian and Stoic philosophers, assembled at the Areopagus to hear the apostle Paul. Some were heard to observe, "Whatever may this rook be wanting to say?" (Acts.17:18). How significant that an ecclesia was not established at Athens!

During the ensuing group discussion many members paid warm tribute to the dear saints who labor unceasingly, like the apostle, " . . . to be presenting every man mature in Christ Jesus" (Col.1:28). God's precious Word has been wonderfully preserved, and it is from these, and these alone, that we have learned of our Father's loving purpose! These truths are enhanced through patient service.

Firmly insisting on his authority to be bringing the evangel, Paul declared, "For which cause I am suffering these things also, but I am not ashamed, for I am aware Whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard what is committed to me, for that day" (2 Tim. 1:12). In like manner, we need not be ashamed to refer again and again to the revelations unfolded, both from the Word and also from the many studies and articles in our printed literature.

THE VASTNESS OF HIS LOVE

What can it possibly mean to be "*more than conquering*"? Should we make the mistake of thinking that victory alone over the world-mights of darkness is the only reason

1. *cf Unsearchable Riches*, vol.43, p.275.

for suffering, then perhaps we have not fully grasped, the real, universal achievement encompassed within Christ's victorious cry, "It is accomplished!"

"Through death into life everlasting
He passed, and we follow Him there;
Over us sin no more hath dominion,
For more than conquerors we are."

Of course, there is victory. The outcome of our conflict with the Adversary was never in any doubt. Lest this statement may be misconstrued as arrogant, it is hastily added that the victory is ours *in Christ Jesus!* How could the triumphant outcome be otherwise? God rescues us out of the jurisdiction of darkness and transports us into the kingdom of the Son of His love (Col.1:13).

Consequently, reviewing the influence of our Father's wise calling, we can now see that opposition from the Adversary, darkened apprehension, sin and estrangement, disobedience and offence, were all essential in our individual lives. These all serve their purpose in ultimately bringing creation to a final revelation of our great Father's loving purpose. Without such contrasts—and our very last thought is to disparage the pain and gravity of these—there could be no true and reverent comprehension of the vastness of His love.

In Christ Jesus, we rejoice in this realization of the Father, Whose power is infinite, Whose mighty wisdom defies our understanding, Whose love cannot be measured, and Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). If we would behold Him as He desires, then we must stand, in silent adoring wonder before the ugly, hideous cross of Golgotha. There, if our spirits are strengthened, we may hear the tender, compassionate words of our Lord: "According as the Father loves Me, I, also love you. Remain in My love" (John 15:9).

Donald Fielding

THERE HAS COME NEW

Over nineteen hundred years ago in the city of Corinth in Greece there was a group of believers in Christ Jesus. They had accepted the evangel that Christ died for their sins and had been roused to a victory in which they shared (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1-4,20-28,50-57). But like us, who also believe, they had a few problems traced to the fact that they were human beings, descended from Adam, mortals and sinners in the flesh. And stemming from these problems, as must be expected, further problems were created for the whole body of believers in Corinth and for the apostle Paul who had brought the evangel to them.

The evangel was a message of grace and peace from God (2 Cor.1:2), but this was given in the midst of human struggles. There was consolation from God, but this meant there would have also been suffering and affliction (1:3-7). How else could there have been consolation? God was faithful (1:18), but how could this have been apprehended if there had not been disappointments in their lives? The believers were sealed with the earnest of the spirit in their hearts (2 Cor.1:22), but this could not have been appreciated apart from the slippery insecurities of human experience.

SECOND CORINTHIANS

This is a pattern throughout 2 Corinthians, the applying of the evangel to continuing human circumstances. While facing the old problems of human flesh, of pride and jealousy, the apostle meets these problems with powerful and glorious revelations of truth in the evangel he was dispens-

ing. Where the lusts of the flesh had led to dishonorable behavior (*cf* 1 Cor.5) and so to further sorrow and distress among the ecclesia and for Paul (2 Cor.2:1-8), there was also a growing appreciation of God's provisions and the patterns of His operations (2:14-17). Where there was a struggle in heralding a message that was based entirely on faith and not on perception, upheld by spirit and not by flesh, sustained by expectation and not by present comforts and health in the flesh (chapter 3), there was an increasing acquaintance with God's spiritual power in the evangel (chapter 4).

The problems are related to the old things, not merely to problems of the flesh but also to revelations God gave of Himself in the law and His dealings with Israel, which were centered in the flesh. The evangel given to Paul was centered on the spirit. In this respect it was like the "new covenant" spoken of in Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36. But it embraced a wider scope and was removed more fully from the flesh and the earthly concerns than the prophets had envisioned. "So that, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: the primitive passed by. *Lo! there has come new!*" (2 Cor.5:17).

GOD CONCILIATES US TO HIMSELF

At this point in his letter, Paul presents a new revelation of God that is also found in his epistle to the Romans. This is the message of the conciliation.

"God conciliates us to Himself through Christ" (2 Cor. 5:18). God has established a *change* between us and Himself. The Greek word for *conciliate* is a compound term composed of the elements "down" and "change." Without claiming too much concerning these elements, we would, nevertheless, draw attention especially to the idea of "change." This is a concept also involved in the English word "conciliate." To conciliate is to effect a *change* from

estrangement and antagonism to agreement and even good will. A good picture in our own day is the breaking *down* of the Berlin wall, which was (from a human standpoint) a bulwark of enmity.

In the evangel dispensed by Paul we learn that God has effected a change in the relationship of human beings to Himself. And He has done this *through Christ,* that is, through His death. The change is one from *enmity* to *peace* toward God and *access* in God's *grace* into His presence as our *Father.* This is how Paul presents it in his epistles:

"Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having *peace toward God,* through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the *access* also, by faith, into this *grace* in which we stand . . ." (Rom.5:1,2). "For if, being enemies, we were *conciliated to God* through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life. Yet not only so, but we are glorying also in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we now obtained the *conciliation*" (Rom.5:10,11).

"For you did not get slavery's spirit to fear again, but you got the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying, 'Abba, *Father*!' The spirit itself is testifying together with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom.8:15,16) "Now, seeing that you are sons, God delegates the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba, *Father*!'" (Gal.4:6).

In Ephesians and Colossians the word of the conciliation is expanded to a revelation of reconciliation which is applied to the body of Christ and finally the entire universe: "And coming, He brings the evangel of *peace* to you, those afar, and *peace* to those near, for through Him we both have had the *access,* in one spirit, to the *Father*" (Eph.2:17,18). "In [Christ Jesus] we have boldness and *access* with confidence through His faith" (Eph.3:12). "In [the Son of God's love] the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (mak-

ing *peace* through the blood of His cross) . . ." (Col.1:20). This change from enmity to peace, from estrangement to access, from alienation to sonship, is what God establishes in Christ, making Himself known in a new and glorious way. Paul calls it "the secret of the evangel" in Ephesians 6:19, where he speaks of a genuine need when he requests prayers for boldness in making it known.

Although we seem to want things that are new, we also hesitate to give up the old. Believers from Paul's day to the present have often vacillated in their attitudes toward the evangel. We see it is a message of grace, peace and glory that is wholly out of God. "Yet all is of God . . ." (2 Cor. 5:18). But the flesh keeps doubting and even denying that this can be true. It is great that God has conciliated us to Himself, *but,* we reason, there must be some catch. We suppose that it would be safer to qualify this bold declaration of peace with some "if's" and conditions, in order to insure restraints on the flesh. In this way we make the discipline of the flesh dependent on the flesh. Hence the power of the evangel of peace is, in fact, denied.

Let us not hesitate to take these words of 2 Corinthians 5 candidly and unreservedly as they are written. Through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, God has achieved for us the removal of enmity and all the barriers to His heart that we have erected. He has brought forth a change from estrangement to peace toward Himself as our Father. Let us hold to this evangel tenaciously as we continue to live in these perilous times of increasing agnosticism and outright enmity toward God (*cf* 2 Tim.3:1-9).

GOD WAS IN CHRIST

The message of conciliation that Paul was dispensing has as its foundation that God has established a change, channeled through the death of His Son for sinners and enemies. This is a new revelation concerning God. Under

the old covenant associated with Sinai, God was revealed in His power, but as it responds to human actions, whether good or bad. This led to some acquaintance with God's mercy in certain circumstances, and with His indignation and stern judgments in many other circumstances. But in the giving of His Son, God is revealed in His power as it flows from this Gift. Consequently, we are now seeing God in a new and fuller way. He is seen in Christ.

Hence we read, "*. . . God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them*" (2 Cor.5:19).

In ordinary cases, especially when definitions are made, or one thing is being identified with another, the various verb forms of "be" are not needed in Greek. It is not necessary to say, for example, Red *is* a color; all that is needed in Greek is to say, Red color. When the word "is," or, in the present case, "was," appears, something more than identification of being is in view. The figure of speech called "ellipsis" is involved here, where something is left out that can be supplied by the context and general development of thought.

Following the lead of 2 Corinthians 4:6, where Paul spoke of "the knowledge of the glory of God *in* the face of Jesus Christ," we are surely justified in seeing a figure of omission in the words "God was *in* Christ." God was [making Himself known] in [the death of] Christ. We learn of God as He reveals Himself in Christ, bringing about tremendous blessings for the world.

CONCILIATING THE WORLD

Some have thought that by the word "world," Paul must refer to the world of believers only. It is pointed out that Paul addresses the believers in verse 18 in revealing that God conciliates *us* to Himself through Christ, and so it is concluded that verse 19 must be restricted to the same

group. But the context has already spoken of what Christ did for "all" (v.14) and has distinguished the special salvation of believers (*cp* 1 Tim.4:10), by the words "those who are living" (v.15). Indeed, the word "world" is clearly a poor term to use if a restricted portion of humanity is in view.

If something is done by God through the death and resurrection of His Son it is a certainty. It has been done, even though it may not be believed by many and may not be fully realized by any of us. This is why Paul was beseeching all peoples, "Be conciliated to God!" (2 Cor.5:20). He was not entreating them to do something God had already done. Rather he was beseeching that they accept, believe and enjoy what God had already done through Christ. It was at the cross that God was revealing His heart in His Son, by conciliating the world to Himself. And so, as ambassadors, we are beseeching for Christ's sake, "Become even now, in your heart and lives, what God has achieved on your behalf. Be conciliated to God."

For us to be conciliated to God in *awareness* is a matter of *accepting* and *believing* and *retaining* the evangel that God was in Christ conciliating the world to Himself. It is exactly as Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, concerning being saved. What God has done is done. But our present appreciation and appropriation of the blessings announced in the evangel arise from our believing the evangel. For us to experience the joy and peace of our conciliation with God (which is what the entreaty "Be conciliated to God!" means) we need to hold fast to the evangel of 2 Corinthians 5:19. Even though there is no evidence, in what we see and hear and feel with our fleshly senses, that God was actually making Himself known in Christ conciliating the world to Himself, nevertheless we believe it, and consequently we experience in spirit the blessings of the conciliation. We are becoming what God has made

us in giving His Son for us; we are becoming, in increasing appreciation, conciliated to Him.

Since God is conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, there will eventually come a time when all will experience it. This is brought out later in Colossians 1:20 where we learn that "in Him," that is, in the Son of God's love (v.13), there is divine delight to *reconcile* all enemies on earth or in heaven to God, through the blood of Christ's cross.

NOT RECKONING OFFENSES

The world is much involved in offending God. In language that speaks crudely of Him, and in determination to prove its independence of Him there is unspeakable offense. But still God is not reckoning their offenses to them.

Nevertheless, the world's offensiveness is understandable. No faith has been given to the majority of mankind concerning the evangel of God's revelation of Himself in Christ. All of humanity is locked up in stubbornness so that God may be merciful to all (Rom.11:32).

What is perhaps more remarkable than the world's offensiveness, however, is the continuing offense of unbelief among ourselves as believers. Here again we must acknowledge that not all are given the same measure of faith, but it surely is shocking to hear believers speak of God as far less than He claims to be in His Word. Is it not offensive to Him that He is presented as one who takes risks, not knowing how things will turn out, and as one who will consign certain human beings to everlasting torment, or will simply annihilate them even though Christ came into the world to save them? None of us perhaps fully appreciates the certainty of God's peace, the transcendence of His grace, the reality of His righteousness, the greatness of His power or the vastness of His love as it is revealed in Christ. And where we fail in this, lacking confidence in

His declarations and reliance on Him as the living God, we offend. But He is not reckoning our offenses to us. May God increase our faith in this gracious word!

HUMAN OFFENDING HUMAN

We might add a word here about human beings giving and taking offense in relationships among ourselves. This certainly lies behind those "works of the flesh," that Paul terms, "enmities, strife, jealousies, furies, factions, dissensions, sects, envies" in Galatians 5:20. In Colossians 3:8 the apostle speaks of similar practices of the old humanity, including "anger, fury, malice, calumny," and these too are offenses against others. Strife and jealousies and anger invariably arise out of the practice of holding against them, the offenses committed by others against ourselves. Rather than becoming imitators of God as beloved children (*cf* Eph.5:1), we let the offenses of others fester in our hearts, and consequently we miss much of the joy and peace that flows from the evangel.

The solution, Paul says, is: "Let the word of Christ be making its home in you richly, in all wisdom . . ." (Col.3:16). Surely then, this word of Christ which includes what is called "the word of the conciliation" in 2 Corinthians 5:19 is powerful in arbitrating in our hearts to the end that we less and less harbor resentment of offenses committed by others against us and less and less resort deliberately to offending others out of anger and envy and malice.

The word of the conciliation is that God was revealing Himself in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, and not reckoning their offenses to them. God is not reckoning your offenses to you. He is not reckoning my offenses to me. What a gracious and *powerful* word this is! And how blessed we are to be living in this most acceptable era (2 Cor.6:2) when the word of the conciliation is made known!

D.H.H

"WHEN IT DELIGHTS GOD"

(Galatians 1:10-17)

For, at present, am I persuading men or God? Or am I seeking to please men? If I still pleased men, I were not a slave of Christ. (1:10)

With these words, having completed the introductory, preparatory portion of the epistle (1:1-9), Paul now begins his personal defense. The dominant theme of the entire epistle is *Paul's defense of his own evangel.* On this behalf, he would first defend his apostleship. If he has been commissioned by Christ Himself to proclaim this evangel, then it is a true evangel. Therefore, it is to be accepted accordingly by all who are in Christ; and, it is to be heeded and personally applied by all who come under its blessing.

The epistle began with the words, "Paul, *an apostle, (not from men, neither through a man . . . .)*" (1:1). Now, beginning in verse 10, Paul begins to demonstrate the truth of this initial affirmation. He does so through the word "for," which refers us to his repeated, insistent declaration, "If anyone is bringing you an evangel beside that which you accepted, let him be anathema!" (1:8,9). That is, the reason why an "anathema" (i.e., a certain, adversative judgment) must fall upon any who bring a *different* evangel (*cp* 1:6b) to those whom God is actually blessing according to *Paul's* evangel, is because, in announcing his evangel, the apostle is not persuading "[as to] men," but "[as to] *God.*"

Idiomatically, the Greek word for "persuade" (*peithō,* PERSUADE) is also rendered "have confidence" (e.g., "those who *have confidence* in money," Mark 10:24; *cp* Gal.5:7-10).

No one would imagine otherwise than that, in performing

his evangelistic labors, Paul was seeking to persuade *men,* not God. If, however, the word "persuading" is taken literally, without allowance for an ellipsis such as "as to" (i.e., "persuading [as to]"), the sense would then be merely the trite fact that Paul was seeking to persuade men, not God. In that case, however, the causal conjunction "for," in relating us back to verses 8 and 9, would introduce an illogical statement. The sense would then be that the reason why an anathema must befall those who bring a different evangel, is because, in performing his ministry, Paul sought to persuade men! Of course it does not follow from the mere fact that Paul's ministry was on behalf of *men* (not God), that *this* constitutes grounds for the pronouncement of an anathema upon Paul's opposers.

Therefore, the elliptical "as to" ("persuading [as to] men or God?") or "in" ("having confidence [in] men or God?") must be understood when considering Paul's words here. Then, the sense is, "Am I having confidence (in) men or (in) God?" Or, when expressed using the English "persuade": "Am I persuading (as to) men or (as to) God?" The point then becomes that, in proclaiming his evangel, *Paul* is confident in (or persuaded as to) the truthfulness of his message, for his message, first of all, is *God's* message. And, because *that* is so, *therefore* ("For," 1:10a) it follows, "if anyone is bringing you an evangel beside that which you accepted, let him be anathema!" (1:9).

In proclaiming his evangel, Paul's confidence is in *God,* Therefore, the apostle's ministry of seeking to persuade others was first of all founded upon his own persuasion as to what God had revealed to him through Christ.

Hence, Paul must further add, "If I *still* pleased men, I were not a slave of Christ" (1:10b). Paul's words here should be considered in connection with his related declaration in Galatians 5:11: "Now I, brethren, if I am *still* heralding circumcision, why am I *still* being persecuted?

Consequently [i.e., "In that case, then,"], the *snare of the cross* of Christ has been nullified."

For a time, after Saul of Tarsus (as Paul was originally known) first became acquainted with the Lord on the Damascus road (Acts 9:27), he continued on, seeking the righteousness which is in law, according to Moses (Phil.3:6; John 7:23). Saul anticipated the restoring of the kingdom unto Israel, according to the times and eras which the Father placed in His own jurisdiction (Acts 1:6,7).

During this period, Saul was a member of the ecclesia of believing Jews at Antioch. All such ones lived in expectation of Israel's promised kingdom, according to the writings of their prophets, while seeking to become blameless themselves according to the law, in anticipation of that day. Believing Jews were zealous for the law (Acts 21:20); they practiced circumcision and sought to keep the law of Moses (*cp* Acts 15:5). Jesus Himself had warned that any of that calling who were "workers of *lawlessness,*" had no relationship with Him and would *not* enter into the kingdom of the heavens (*cp* Matt.7:21-23; James 2:10).

Therefore, during that early period, before Saul was *severed* from his law-observing brethren for the work to which God ("the Holy Spirit") had called him (Acts 13:2), Saul too must have heralded circumcision. In so doing, he, in a righteous sense, *pleased men* by doing that which those who were seeking to establish their own righteousness according to law (*cp* Rom.10:3,4), rightly deemed essential to entrance into life in the terrestrial kingdom.

Were Paul, *now,* however, to *still* "please men" by *continuing* to herald circumcision, as he says, "I were not a slave of Christ" (Gal.1:10b).

After having been severed from his past associations, that he might now be engaged in the service of that glorious evangel of God which, apart from law, bestows a declaration of righteousness on *all* who are *believing* (Rom.

3:21,22), it would be entirely out of place for Paul still to be pleasing men by heralding circumcision.

That is, such service, now, by Paul, could only "please men" in the case of any who continued to deem such a rite essential for themselves, even though they erred in supposing that it should be imposed as well on the believers of the nations (Acts 15:1,5). In connection with the evangel of the Circumcision and its service, such a rite was indeed essential; even so, it has no place whatever in connection with the evangel which Paul was heralding among the nations (Gal.2:2). Hence, were Paul now to continue to enjoin circumcision even on those of the nations, doing so out of a motive merely to please those who imagined that this was necessary, he could not be "a [worthy] slave of Christ."

Today, when we ourselves become persuaded as to the evangel which God first revealed to Paul, our confidence too is in God. We can no longer have confidence in the false, human traditions which we first embraced. We must now set aside various ceremonies and observances, ones which we should never have practiced in the first place. If we would be faithful, legalistic scrutiny of days and foods, besides giving heed to sundry do's and don'ts as prerequisites to salvation, must all be repudiated. This is so, even if in so doing we should incur the *dis*pleasure of man as a result.

NOT IN ACCORD WITH MAN

For I am making known to you, brethren, as to the evangel which is being brought by me, that it is not in accord with man. For neither did I accept it from a man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. (1:11,12)

Again, the reason why ("for") Paul was not *seeking* to please men, and was *not still* pleasing *men,* was because the evangel which he brought was not in accord with *man.* And, in turn, the reason why his evangel was not in accord with man, was because he neither accepted it from a man nor was he taught it by a man.

"Those who were disturbing the Galatians had no message except what they had received [and corrupted and misapplied] from the twelve apostles. But Paul is unwearied in his insistence that he received nothing from them (*cp* Gal.2:6). His revelation was a fresh revelation made known to him by the Lord Himself. If Paul merely proclaimed what the twelve taught, why did he not receive it through them? What need for the Lord to descend and call him on the Damascus road? Why should he be severed from the rest at Antioch? Why did the *believing* Jews in Jerusalem oppose his ministry among the nations?"[1]

Just as in verse 1 Paul declares that his apostleship is neither of human origin nor derivation, he now makes a similar claim concerning his evangel. Paul's evangel is not "in *accord* with (*kata,* DOWN) *man.*" That is, his evangel itself is not based upon some pre-existing message which was already being taught by someone else. Paul—unlike ourselves, who take our evangel from him—did not simply repeat some extant message which was already in the hands of those who were in Christ before him.

This was because "*neither* did [he] *accept* [his evangel] from a man, nor was he taught it [by a man]," *but he accepted it through a revelation of Jesus Christ, and he was taught it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.*

The way this text is rendered in the Concordant Version, is expedient for the ordinary reader in an idiomatic version. Yet with the added words "it came," even as with no indication of either the ellipsis or of the parallel construction which obtains in the Greek, it lacks the forcefulness and clarity of the more precise sense, as we have sought to bring out in the preceding paragraph.

Paul did not accept his evangel "from [*para,* BESIDE] *a man,*" nor was he taught it by *a man.* The word "man" is in

1. A. E. Knoch, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.280.

the singular, as in the phrase "through *a man,*" in verse 1. In accepting and learning his evangel, since Paul did not stand "beside" *any* man in so doing, neither did he thus stand beside any particular man.

The emphatic intimation here, however, through the repeated, singular form, is implicative of a *particular* man. "It points unmistakably to Peter who figures so prominently in this recital. The circumcisionists asserted Paul's dependence on the elder apostles and the Jerusalem church. They insinuated that he had received his gospel from Peter. Whence, said they, could Paul have derived his knowledge of Christ, but from this fountainhead? This was the fulcrum of the argument which Paul foils."[2]

In a wider sense, neither is Paul's evangel in accord with man, with respect to the entirety of the human race. The Hebrew term for human being is *adm* ("Adam"). The Circumcision evangel is very much concerned with the human race, not just Israel, and God's purpose for it on the earth and in the flesh. So Paul has in mind to distinguish his evangel from that of the Circumcision (which *is* in accord with humanity). The apostle does not simply make a general contrast between a message from God that is divine in nature, and one concerned with ordinary human thinking and philosophy. It is not only that Paul's evangel was not "secular" or was not in accord with human wisdom (this *is* in view in 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, for instance). But Paul's evangel is also different from that of the Circumcision which has much that accords with humanity, though indeed being of God and concerned with Christ.

It seems that, broadly considered, "not in accord with humanity" incorporates both these ideas: (1) not in accord with human wisdom and thinking (as in 1 Corinthians 1), and also (2) not in accord with God's message concerning

2. V. Gelesnoff, Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, p.35.

Israel and the nations, the earth, and the place of humanity as promised from Adam and on through the prophets. Yet the context of Galatians makes it clear that (2) is what Paul has predominantly in view here, "at present" (1:10).

While Paul is indeed relating "his story" in chapters 1 and 2, nevertheless his account focuses on "the grace of Christ" (1:6), "a revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:12), that is, "the evangel which is being brought by me" (1:11). So both Paul's story, and the message given to him, have this one pattern: not in accord with humanity, and being in accord with God and a revelation of Jesus Christ that came from God.

severed from judaism

For you hear of my behavior once, in Judaism, that I inordinately persecuted the ecclesia of God and ravaged it. And I progressed in Judaism above many contemporaries in my race, being inherently exceedingly more zealous for the traditions of my fathers. (1:13,14)

Paul's use of the term "Judaism" in itself by no means implies any disparagement (*cp* his related expression, "judaizing," Gal.2:14; *cf* Acts 15:21). Under Judaism, Paul had been circumcised the eighth day, and, in his majority, had become a Hebrew of Hebrews. In relation to the righteousness which is in law, he had been becoming blameless (Phil.3:5,6), even if he was a member of the sect of the Pharisees, which had added many vain traditions to the law.

The point is that "Judaism" simply refers to the institutions of the Jews, the observance of the law of Moses as understood and practiced beginning with the Babylonian exile. The traditions of Paul's "fathers," were by no means all vain traditions of men, but were, in many respects, a devout and intelligent observance of the law, as handed down from one generation to the next.

Though the expression "Judaism" was perhaps originally coined by non-Jews, of whom some doubtless used the word

with a connotation of contempt, it would, when naturalized among the Jews themselves, lose this idea, and even become a title of honor. The case of the term "Christian," which was likewise originally a term of reproach (*cp* Acts 11:25; 26:28), is a parallel case: "For let not any of you be suffering as a murderer, or as a thief, or an evil doer, or as an interferer in other's affairs; *yet if as a Christian*, let him not be ashamed, yet let him be glorifying God in this name . . ." (1 Peter 4:16).

Paul's *behavior*, however, once, in Judaism, in the days of his unbelief, was another matter. As he says, "he inordinately persecuted the ecclesia of God and ravaged it." Indeed, not only had he endorsed Stephen's assassination (Acts 8:1), but he had continually "breathed out threatening and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1). He had supposed himself bound to commit much contrary to the name of Jesus the Nazarene, and so had acted accordingly. He locked up many of the saints in jails, and even deposited a ballot to despatch them. At all the synagogues, often punishing them, he compelled them to blaspheme. Being exceedingly maddened against them, he persecuted them as far as the outside cities (Acts 26:9-11).

Yet it was *also* true that he had progressed in *Judaism* itself, above many contemporaries in his race, being inherently exceedingly more zealous for the traditions of his fathers (1:14).

Paul's point is that there was nothing in his former career to account for his becoming a herald of the cross. "His prechristian career was such as to exclude all possibility of his receiving any doctrine from the followers of Jesus Christ, least of all from Peter, whom, as leader of the Nazarenes [Acts 24:5], he could only regard as an arch-heretic to be hunted to death."[3] Thus the apostle proves that it

3. V. Gelesnoff, Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, p.37.

was simply absurd to suggest, as certain of his enemies were insinuating, that he had received his evangel from Peter.

Now, when it delights God, Who severs me from my mother's womb and calls me through His grace, to unveil His Son in me that I may be evangelizing Him among the nations . . . . (1:15,16a)

The particle *de* (YET), though sometimes, as here, rendered "now," is often translated "yet," which captures more of its essence. For example, "*Yet* now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . ." (Rom.3:21); or, "*yet* God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us . . ." (Eph.2:4). Though sometimes only slightly so, *de* is an adversative connective, in the sense that that which follows this expression and to which it refers (e.g., God's righteousness, or, His mercy and vast love) stands against the subject which precedes it. Just as God's righteousness, mercy, and vast love, blessedly stand against human sin, thus also God's "delight" to unveil His Son in the foremost sinner (1 Tim.1:15,16), Saul of Tarsus, stood against Saul's Judaism, in which, in his unbelief, he had so ferociously persecuted the ecclesia.

To clarify this point, instead of saying, "Now, when it delights God . . ." we will say, "Yet, when it delights God." Then the sense becomes more apparent: It is true that, as Saul, Paul had once been engaged in *Judaism*, and had progressed in *Judaism* above many contemporaries in his race. "*Yet* when it delights God," He *severed* Paul "from his *mother's womb* and call[ed him] through His *grace*" (1:15).

Thus it becomes evident that "mother's womb," here, is not literal but figurative. Indeed, through the severing of the umbilical cord, all infants, when first born, are severed from their literal mother's womb. But Paul, in the considerations before us, was severed from *Judaism.* Judaism was that which had long been *nourishing* him, as well as being that in which he had enjoyed much *growth.* Hence, he speaks of it as having been his "mother's womb."

Thus, Paul was severed *from* Judaism, and even *from* those of its practitioners who were believers in Christ (*cp* Acts 13:2). Yet Paul was "severed *for* the [i.e., that] evangel of God . . . concerning His Son . . . Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom.1:1-4), which, in its most complete form, has been preserved for us in the epistle to the Romans. This evangel of God—which is also the evangel of Christ (Gal.1:7)—was revealed to Paul by Jesus Christ Himself. Hence, with reference to the one to whom Christ had revealed this evangel, Paul termed it "my evangel" (Rom.16:25). This is the evangel *which* Paul brought (1:11); the evangel *which* he heralded among the nations (2:2).

When it delighted God to unveil His Son in Paul, He simply did so. Nothing is too marvelous for Him (Jer.32: 17,27). In this, Paul becomes "a pattern of those who," even when they do not as yet believe, "are *about to be* believing on [Jesus Christ] for life eonian" (1 Tim.1:16). Even in the days of their unbelief, it may be truly said of them that their faith is "*impending.*" Thus it was that, "whoever were *set* for life eonian," "*they* believe" (Acts 13:48). It is those for whom eonian life has been *arranged,* who believe on Christ. This is because the Lord "*overwhelms*" the unbelief of "those who are *chosen*"(2 Tim.2:10), "with faith and love in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.1:14).

I did not immediately submit it to flesh and blood, neither came I up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I came away into Arabia, and I return again to Damascus. (1:16b,17)

Paul had not received his evangel from those who were apostles before him, and was acting under a sense of a unique divine call that admitted of neither human validation nor supplement. Therefore, rather than seeking out one or more of the twelve *for any reason whatsoever,* Paul instead came away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. J.R.C.

(To be continued)

Contents:

97 Editorial
103 The Prayer of Faith
111 Paul's Promise Epistles
117 "The Truth of the Evangel"
127 For the Sake of His Delight
134 If Not God, Indeed, Who?

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 1996
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-SEVEN

EDITORIAL

In Memoriam
Herman H. Rocke
1908-1996

OUR BROTHER and fellow worker, Herman H. Rocke, has been put to repose. It is with sorrow and with a deep sense of loss that we make this announcement. Yet we are thanking our God and Father for the wise and gracious guidance He channeled to us for many years through this chosen vessel.

Born in Germany on July 21,1908, he, in his own words, "received peace with God through the blood of Christ" as a boy of 15. He spent many years filled with questions, searching for answers in the established churches and schools. He wanted to know as clearly as possible just what God was saying in His Word, and toward this end he studied both Hebrew and Greek as taught in the universities.

It was during the last years of the Second World War that he visited a church in Berlin, pastored by Brother H. Grossman, where A. E. Knoch had enjoyed fellowship several years previously. In a letter to Brother Knoch written in 1946, Herman related: "The answers to my questions [were] given by Grossman's sermons and the Concordant Literature which was made available to me by Brother Wolff at Stepenitz."

His schooling in languages opened up jobs for him as English interpreter and later as coordinator of cultural events for soldiers in the American army. In the meantime he was engrossed in reestablishing the Concordant work in Germany. By 1954 he was living in Hamburg and serving as managing editor of the magazine and other German publications.

Then in the January 1960 issue of *Unsearchable Riches* it was announced, "At the time of writing, we have received word of the impending departure of the Editor of our German magazine, Brother Herman Rocke, and his wife, from Hamburg, for the United States. Our brother plans, D.V., to take up residence in Los Angeles, where he will assume the duties of editorial assistant to A. E. Knoch, the Compiler of the Concordant Version."

Thus, while still continuing his labors with the Konkordanter Verlag, Brother Rocke and his wife Luise, moved to Los Angeles, living for awhile nearly next door to Brother and Sister Knoch, and so he became much involved in the English work as well. I remember well my own first visit to Los Angeles in July 1960, when I was privileged to meet Brother Knoch and his family, and also Herman and Luise, as well as their two children who had previously moved to the United States. The humble setting only made the thrill of witnessing the daily conferring of A. E. Knoch and Herman Rocke, along with David Knoch, on the Concordant Version of Isaiah, all that more striking. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity (as Herman so often repeated)!

My real acquaintance with Brother Rocke began when I moved to California in 1972 and assumed many of the duties previously carried on for many years by Brother Ernest Knoch. The Rockes were then living in Carpinteria, California, in a mobile home near the ocean shore. They would drive to the office in Canyon Country each week, putting in long hours on the Concordant Version of the Old Testament and the preparation of *Unsearchable Riches.*

Herman seldom spoke about himself or family concerns. He immersed himself in his work with great discipline and dedication. It seems to me that I came to know him best during the last few years when we were separated by many miles of distance (after Luise's death in 1992, Herman lived first with his son in Davis, California, and then more recently with his daughter in Beaverton, Oregon). Our communication was principally by mail, sometimes by telephone, but the fellowship of mutual solicitude by prayer and petition as we labored together on the Old Testament translation was the highest of privileges for me in our association for the last 24 years.

Up to about eight weeks ago, Herman was still working 40 hours or more a week on the Concordant translation and on both the German and English magazines. He occasionally mentioned intestinal distress, and his age had taken its toll. But it did come as a shock to me when I learned in early March that he had terminal cancer and had been forced to leave his desk completely. He was able to stay at home under his daughter's care. I spoke with him briefly by telephone on April 22 and felt it was for the last time in this life, as it came to be. He died the evening of April 25.

I would like to share some lines from his letters and reports of the past few years and months. Perhaps his words will be as encouraging and uplifting to others as they have been to me (the first citation is much earlier than the others and seems especially timely in light of Bro. Rocke's death as well as the current studies on the book of Job in the magazine):

April 19, 1985. "I have spent some time on Job 19:25-27 . . . . Job was *inspired* to speak these words; so the expectation of resurrection lies at the very heart of Job's faith. Hence he may be called a prophet in his own right; for by many portions and *modes,* of old, God was speaking to the fathers . . . . Another important point is the fact that Job expected to perceive *Eloah* with his own eyes (i.e., from my flesh), not El, not Elohim. So Job used the divine title that reflects the general direction of Christ's activity, God*wards.*

"The scroll of Job stands out from all the other books of

the O.T. in that the title Eloah occurs 41 times in Job, and only 17 times elsewhere. In this way the scroll as a whole points to Christ, the Redeemer. The expressions, 'with my own eyes, from my flesh, behind my skin,' show that it is indeed Job in person who will be present and stand erect and perceive Eloah, his Redeemer."

September 29, 1991. "My daily prayer is not only for spiritual wisdom and revelation of the divine thoughts, but also for a full mental grasp of the intricacies of the Hebrew texts that will come before me in the course of the day. I also pray for the ability to accurately translate them into English. I pray for the gift of logical thinking and for a good memory so as to be able to recall the occurrence of similar Hebrew phrases."

September 20, 1993. "This morning I woke up at 5:48 (Oregon time). I do not rise this early now, but I wake up around 5:00 almost every morning. Since this is 8:00 your time, I start praying for you and ye all for the Lord's blessing for the new day—blessing for all endurance and patience with joy: that we may be endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory."

July 10, 1994. "If the Lord should ever be willing, and I shall be living (James 4:15), I would like to write a few articles about *Samuel, the Last of the Judges* . . . . About four weeks ago, I became sick with jaundice [and] had to spend 24 hours in the hospital for continuous intravenous drip of antibiotics . . . . Right now, I have no pain. 'Wherefore we are not despondent, but even if our outward man is decaying, nevertheless our inward [man] is being renewed day by day' (2 Cor.4:16)."

August 23, 1994. "Thank you for your mail of Aug. 17 and the description of the star gazing session. This brings to mind Col.3:1-4 . . . . be seeking that which is above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.—So often I am looking up to the heavens from where He will be descending, with a shout of command. Then we will be snatched away together, to meet the Lord in the air. While we are waiting, the Father makes us competent for a part of the allotment of the saints in light. And He says to us: 'Look to the service which you accepted in the Lord, that you may be fulfilling it.'"

October 1995 (Report to the Board of Directors): "The revision of 1 Samuel was completed earlier this year. Then I started rechecking and retyping 2 Samuel. We had found the Hebrew text of 1 Samuel in a relatively poor shape, and we had to add many emendations based on the evidence of LXX and Qumran.

"The Hebrew text of 2 Samuel is in a better shape, though it is often defective in certain respects and must have suffered in the process of textual transmission, mainly due to scribal errors, such as haplographic omissions in particular (the first [or the final] letter or syllable of a Hebrew word dropped out, when it occurred also in the preceeding [or in the following] word). Bro. A. E. Knoch had discovered most of these defects in his sublinear translation; he advised us to compare our emendations with the recommendations of conservative commentators. ('They spent a lifetime on these things, and they know better,' he once said.)"

October 13, 1995. "This week I tried to memorize the Greek text of 2 Cor.12:9. I am so happy and thankful for [these] words . . . . In my bodily weaknesses, the power of Christ is tabernacling over me! On my way to our mailbox, I have to descend fifteen steps; and I remember this verse, while I have one hand on the bannister, and the other on my metal cane."

January 28, 1996. "The snow outside keeps me in the house. In the morning, on my weak legs with the support of my sturdy metal cane, I used to go out to the edge of the sidewalk to our mailbox where I deposited my outgoing mail, and in the afternoon I picked up incoming

mail. I have been thanking the Lord daily for having full vision on my right eye (there is cataract on the left one), and the recent inflammation is receding. Praise the Lord, there is no stomach pain today as has been every day in the past weeks."

The final note from his hand was attached to some work on Amos that he was returning to me; it is dated February 25, 1996, and is here given in its entirety: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you! Yours in Him, Herman."

Brother Rocke nearly completed the revision work on 2 Samuel but was unable to do this for the two books of Kings as he had hoped. Yet always he reminded himself of the praise and prayers of Paul, centered in confidence in the One Who will be completing the work He has begun in us (*cf* Phil.1:6). This is reflected in his study, *The Prayer of Faith*, which appeared in *Unsearchable Riches* for March 1960 and in his book, CHECK YOUR PANOPLY, from which we have excerpted the article beginning on the following page.

The article on 2 Corinthians 5:18,19 that appeared in our March issue was prepared at Brother Rocke's request. For one who lived through two world wars at close hand, this message of God's achievement of conciliation held special meaning, and it seems fitting that he was so concerned in his last months that we continue to give it stress. He knew it was because of the truth that God was in Christ conciliating the world to Himself that our prayers are broadened toward all mankind, and we may find something of what Paul called "a mild and quiet life" (1 Tim.2:2) even in these stressful days.

Memorial services were held by his family in Oregon, and friends in California and Michigan. We say good night for now, in expectation of the morning that begins that blessed time when we will always be together with our Lord.

D.H.H.

THE PRAYER OF FAITH

PUTTING ON THE PANOPLY of God is something which cannot be accomplished without "praying on every occasion" (Eph.6:18). This signifies that the various phases (girding the loins, putting on the cuirass, etc.) should each be accompanied by such prayers and petitions, as were *practiced by Paul* and his associates.

Some people are under the impression that a prayer is nothing more than the opening of their heart toward God, just like the opening of a flower toward the light. They consider this to be their utmost effort. God will have the rest. To a certain degree this may be correct in a case of great personal affliction. If this, however, became our permanent attitude we would remain in the realm of emotion instead of taking the path leading toward the highest praise of God of which the human tongue is capable. We need to learn more thoroughly how to *pray with the renewed mind.* This means we have to abandon any passive attitude in prayer and become as *active* in it as we possibly can. The point should be emphasized that praying is like performing a task for which we have to prepare ourselves. Mature prayer requires our undivided attention in addition to spiritual wisdom and realization of God. If the words are vague and general, this is a sign that something is lacking.

Perhaps we have not yet fully grasped all of *God's promises* that pertain to us. They ought to be studied time and again, and as thoroughly as possible; otherwise our faith is in danger. It may be overshadowed by pious fantasies, leading us to believe that this or that is urgent and valuable

and useful in the work of the Lord. It is not right to bring such arbitrary petitions before God in prayer even if they are well meant and find the approval of pious tradition.

We should become acquainted with the Lord's will before we attempt to do our utmost in His service. We ought to know what He expects from us in this administration, and we should heed His warnings of the traps of the Adversary. It is true that the Lord said that no one is able to be snatching the disciples out of the Father's hand (John 10:29). And nothing shall be separating us from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Rom.8:35). But it is also true that Satan *claimed* even the apostles, to sift them as grain. The Adversary was *authorized* in his attempt to ruin Job's faith. Yahweh told Satan, "He is in your hand!" But there was the restriction, "Only keep his soul alive" (Job 2:6).

Even today the Adversary is requesting such authorization, especially in order to prevent the most fervent of the faithful from growing into maturity. If he cannot hinder their spiritual growth by Job's plagues, he will try time and again to distort God's Word before their spiritual eyes, so that they do not come into a realization of the truth and will not sober up out of the trap of the Adversary (2 Tim.2:25,26).

The most common *deception* is to assume the translation of the Bible to be inspired and therefore infallible. Hence people are reluctant to accept any truth which is apparent in the original Hebrew and Greek Scriptures only, but not in their translation.

Others revel in the delusion that they can request from God as much as they are able to believe, and that, even if it be impossible, God will finally grant it to them. They do not know that what God denies, Satan will readily provide if this provision serves to detain them in deception.

Only by nourishing ourselves daily with the *words of faith and of the ideal teaching* (1 Tim.4:6) may we avoid

the trap of asking for things which God has not promised for today. The prayer of faith is therefore primarily based on the words of faith and teaching which the exalted Christ had Paul write down for us. Concentrating on the Pauline letters we should not overlook, however, that the path leads from immaturity in Corinthians to maturity in Ephesians.

GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

If, praying with a renewed mind, we address the Supreme with these few words, He would consider them far superior to ten thousand uncontrolled words, when we let our emotions run away with us, and fail to glorify the Supreme as we should. By the invocation "God and Father of our Lord *Jesus* Christ" we acknowledge that it was *Jesus* Who took away the sin of the world and became obedient unto the death of the cross on Golgotha; hence there is no longer a barrier between God and us. In addition we are obedient to our *Lord* Jesus Christ and serve Him until all is subjected to Him (1 Cor.15:28). Finally *Christ* is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, and He makes peace through the blood of His cross in order to reconcile all to Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Col.1:15-20). Christ is also the Head of the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all (Eph.1:23).

Whenever we make petitions for something which exceeds the abilities of weak mortals, we should address *God*, the Almighty, the supreme Subjector, the Source of all power, wisdom and love. As a matter of fact we can hardly pray and ignore *Him* Who is all and has all and does all that we are longing for. Anybody else is only channeling those gifts which originate from Him. This is why we always should go back to the fountainhead, to God Himself, in order to give Him all the praise and thanks and glory which are due to Him alone.

When Jesus says, "I am the Way . . . . No one is coming to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6), then He means that henceforth no other way leads to God. Up to that time Israel had approached Yahweh by means of a divine ritual of various sacrifices. Since Golgotha the situation is different. Now we approach the Almighty in the *new Way* which is Christ Who was sacrificed for us. Through Him we now have *direct access* to His Father in spirit.

Let us make ample use of this invocation: *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!* Paul did so and he should have known, for he had seen the exalted Christ repeatedly (Acts 26:16) and had become His spokesman for the highest revelations. Whenever he wants to glorify God with the most sublime words at his disposal he uses this invocation and he occasionally adds "Father of pities" or "Father of glory" (2 Cor.1:3; Eph.1:3,17; Col.1:3).

Certainly He is our God and Father, too; but when we address Him as "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" we grant Him higher honors and greater glory and subjection, as well as our fullest agreement with everything that God did through *Christ,* not only in the creation but also in the reconciliation, not only for us but also for the rest of mankind and the spiritual beings.

Some people are afraid to address God directly and prefer to begin their prayers with the words, "Dear Jesus." This might be due to a feeling or assumption that He Who also walked this earth and died for our sins would be closer to us and perhaps understand us better than His God and Father. There is, however, no reason for such shyness. On the contrary, Jesus said that the *Father* is seeking those who are worshiping Him (John 4:23). God wants us to grow in the realization of His will (Col.1:9,10) until we finally see that *He* is actually and originally everything of which Christ became the Image (Col.1:15). Our acquaintance with the Image should help us to correct our ideas about God Himself and to adore Him in an appropriate manner.

When things overwhelm us, however, there might be no time for us to pray with the renewed mind. Then we will perhaps sigh and groan in ourselves and pray the way we always did under similar distress. God will never weigh our words under such circumstances, for He reads the thoughts from our hearts, regardless of whether we exclaim "Dear Jesus"' or "My God and Father" or whatever had been our habit.

PLEADINGS AND THANKSGIVING

The result of praying should always be to keep out any estrangement between God and ourselves. Whenever addressing the Supreme we may have fellowship with Him, similar to that which everybody is going to enjoy to the fullest extent in the future when God will be All in all (1 Cor. 15:28). In our prayers today, even if He is not yet *all* in us, He is at least *something* in you and in me. When petitions are made in the ecclesia and all those present say, "Amen," God is at least *something* in them. The more mature the prayer, the better; if the hearers are able to follow its trend of thought, God will be even *more* in them. Being true and, in love, making all grow into Him, Who is the Head, Christ (Eph.4:15), we may be coming nearer and nearer, in spirit, to the consummation when God will be *all* in us, too. Thus such hours as lead to estrangement with Him, will become fewer, and continuous harmonious fellowship with Him will become the dominant factor in our lives.

In prayer, our thoughts will go to our fellow men; our superiors, and authorities in this country and elsewhere. In Paul's day the overall situation was by no means peaceful; under the reign of Emperor Claudius all Jews were expelled from Rome; the young ecclesia at Thessalonica went through such persecutions and afflictions that they were alarmed and afraid, thinking that perhaps the day of the Lord was already present; they felt they might have

missed the snatching away. In addition, Paul's personal career was marked by "much endurance in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in blows, in jails, in turbulences, in toils," etc. We can look that up in 2 Corinthians 6:3-10.

It is under the impact of such events during those restless years, and also under the leadership of God's holy spirit, that Paul gives to Timothy, and to us as well, a prayer guide pertaining both to our *inward* peace and the *outward* situation with relation to the people around us. Paul strongly recommends *pleadings* and *thanksgiving* for all of them, including the superior authorities (1 Tim.2:1-4). Since he does so in view of the Roman government of his day, in view of the wicked men and false brethren, we may even more feel like *imitating* him in his attitude.

Only on condition of daily nourishment with the words of faith and of the ideal teaching (1 Tim.4:6), however, will we be able to rejoice in pleadings and thanksgiving for those who seemingly add to our hardships in life. As long as we are not fully aware of the divine truths for today we might be inclined to withstand our superiors and our authorities, quoting Peter to the effect that we should obey God rather than men. But Acts 5:29 does not apply to the political rule or to Roman military government which was in power at that time, but to the Sanhedrin, a Jewish council consisting of chiefs, scribes, and elders. It was to *them* that Peter and the apostles replied, "One must yield to God rather than to men." The words of ideal teaching concerning our relationship to superiors and authorities today are found in Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:22-25 and Titus 2:9,10.

Our prayer guide (1 Tim.2:1-4) tells us that a life in devoutness and gravity is ideal and welcome in the sight of God, that is, a mild and quiet life. God is not only *our* Saviour, but He wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth. This truth is brought out once

more in the same letter (4:10): ". . . for this are we toiling and being reproached, that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers." And the apostle adds: "These things be charging and teaching." In agreement with this fact is Colossians 1:20: ". . . through Him to reconcile all to Him, (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens."

These words of faith and of the ideal teaching contain a *promise* which alleviates the hardships originating from our contact with the outside world: It is God's irrevocable will that everybody be saved and come into a realization of the truth about God and about Himself. We are well aware that this will not happen in our day; but after the eons when all beings will be reconciled with Him in the consummation, then indeed He will be All in *all* and not only in us who believe today.

On the path toward this goal everyone has his individual experience with bitterness, fury, anger, clamor, calumny and malice. This experience may be more or less thorough; it may be gained actively or passively, until all *detest* these things as much as God does. For this purpose most people will have to review their lives before the great white throne (Rev.20:11-15), in order to evaluate it objectively, that is, to see it with God's eyes and agree with His verdict. Later on, every creature will have no other desire but to enjoy and reflect God's love.

As believers it is our immense privilege to know already *now* how intensely God hates sin because it prevents His creatures from enjoying real happiness. Our way of life will indeed be peaceful, mild, and quiet when we consider sin to be a tool used by God to help His creatures realize their absolute dependence on Him until they will *dread any life without Him* so much that they are driven to His heart. When we have recognized this divine line of

thought we will be able to adopt the same attitude toward all men as the Father of pities is showing.

As long as we are conscious of the words of faith and of the ideal teaching as quoted above we will rejoice in always including all mankind in our pleadings, with thanksgiving, not forgetting kings and all those in a superior station. We may be leading a mild and quiet life, not because God will remove wicked men and false brethren and turbulences, but because we will begin to look at them the way *He* does. We will agree with His plans in all their details and be subject to His will in all things. Therefore we cannot but praise Him continually.

H.H.R.

SORROW ON SORROW

The death of Herman Rocke has brought sorrow on sorrow (Phil. 2:27), in that it has followed the death of several other close friends in faith:

Louis Abbott of Stover, Missouri was a brother who so rejoiced in the truth of universal reconciliation that he gave up his work as a full-time minister so that he could speak freely of the certainty of God's victory in Christ for everyone. Hence, as an auto mechanic he studied Greek and shared the truth of God's Word with customers, by correspondence and in travels. He died, with both joy and peace in his heart, on April 17 at the age of 80.

Walter Dane of San Gabriel, California, was also a brother who suffered loss in fellowship because of his conviction that God will be All in all. He also found that this was not a loss in confidence and joy in the Lord, and he was always an encouragement to us in our work and in the fellowship of the faith (Philemon 6). He died on February 8 at 89 years of age.

Theodore Jodar of Edmonds, Washington, was in his 93rd year when he died on March 28. With his wife, Elva, who survives him, he had come to grasp the truth of God's eonian purpose under the ministry of Adlai Loudy and others, many years ago. And more recently he shared in fellowship and support with our friends in the Seattle area.

Yes, these losses bring us sorrow, but not without expectation!

PAUL'S PROMISE EPISTLES

THE blessed expectation of our Lord's return before the day of His indignation is the subject of these, Paul's earliest epistles. It is the early opening wedge between those who received his ministry among the nations and those of the Circumcision, who looked for Messiah's advent after the display of His indignation and the destruction of man's kingdoms.

The historical background for this change is given in the book of Acts, though the teaching itself is not found there because the Acts is a treatise on the kingdom of God for Israel. In the ministry of our Lord and His twelve apostles His coming is always presented in its connection with the promised kingdom. It will be with power and great glory (Matt.24:30; Mark 12:26; Luke 21:27). His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:11,12; Zech.14:1-5). All the predictions in the book of Daniel and in the Revelation of Jesus Christ will find fulfillment from then on. It will follow an era of the most awful and terrific judgments mankind will ever be called upon to endure. So long as the kingdom was impending, these judgments, also, were hanging over a rebellious race.

At first Paul, like all the rest, confined his ministry to the Jews. At Antioch, where the disciples were first called "Christians," there were none except Jews and proselytes. From this he was separated (Acts 13:2). At *Pisidian* Antioch he first turned to the nations, or Gentiles. After that, though he spoke to the Jews first, he proclaimed Christ freely among the nations, preaching grace. One of the first questions for

these believers among the nations was, What shall become of us in the great judgments which precede the coming of the kingdom? Will God visit us also with the terrors of His indignation? In answer to this the apostle is given an entirely new revelation concerning the future presence of the Lord. The believers among the nations were saved on the ground of *grace.* This is to characterize all God's dealings with them. Hence they *cannot* remain in the scene which is visited by His indignation. They must be sheltered or removed. Some saints in Israel are sheltered, but the new company, composed principally of saints from the other nations who have believed Paul's preaching, are to be removed. Paul receives the revelation that, long before the Lord descends in glory to set up His kingdom, He will descend, not to the earth, but to the air, and His saints will be caught up to meet Him there. Thus they will be above the lightnings and thunders of the terrible day of the Lord.

In later epistles, as the truth was gradually developed, more details were added to this glorious revelation. The Corinthian mind found difficulties in this doctrine, so the apostle unfolds to them the secret of the resurrection (1 Cor.15:51,52), that our bodies, which, at present, are adapted only to an earthly environment, are to be *changed* to suit the celestial spheres. The Philippian letter caps the climax by the added revelation that they shall be *transfigured* into the glorious likeness of our Lord Himself!

1 THESSALONIANS

The historical setting and occasion for this epistle is found in the book of Acts (17:1-15; 18:5). By constraint of the Spirit of God, after he had revisited the scenes of his first missionary journey, Paul is led to go across to Macedonia. He perceived a vision in which a Macedonian entreated him, "Cross over into Macedonia. Help us!" In response to this appeal Paul and his party founded an ecclesia in

Philippi, to which also he afterwards penned the epistle of that name. After being beaten and imprisoned, they are besought to leave the city, and came to Thessalonica.

Paul first reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue for three sabbaths, showing from their Scriptures that Christ must suffer and rise from the dead and that Jesus was their Messiah. Some believed, but some did not. As at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:46-48), Paul then turns to those outside the pale of Judaism, and of these a vast multitude believe. But, as at Pisidian Antioch, the unbelieving Jews stirred up a persecution against them so that they were sent away. After going to Berea (Acts 17:10) and Athens (Acts 17:15-34), he came to Corinth, where both Silas and Timothy joined him (Acts 18:5; 1 Thess.3:6) and where he probably wrote this, the first of all the writings of the Greek Scriptures.

Paul did not desire to leave the Thessalonians. They had only just received the evangel and needed to be taught and confirmed in the faith. He was deeply concerned about them and sought twice to return to them, but was hindered. So he sent Timothy in his stead. The report of Timothy greatly comforted him. Not being able to go to them, he pens this epistle.

THE LITERARY STRUCTURE

The literary framework shows that the whole epistle takes its color from the persecutions endured by the Thessalonians. At present they are suffering from the anger of men, but they shall be saved from the indignation of God. The Jews who persecute them are drawing down God's indignation, but the Thessalonians will never be subjects of His wrath (1:10; 2:16; 5:9).

The doctrinal burden of the epistle is based on the truth of the Lord's future presence. He had taught this during the few days he was with them but it needed further explanation.

Some had died and some were indifferent. Would these two classes be left out when He comes? The answer is that those who are asleep will be roused first and accompany the living when they are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. They will not be left behind.

So, too, those who do not watch. The death of Christ provides for their salvation from future wrath quite apart from their present walk. All who are His, whether watchful or drowsy, shall live together with Him.

FRAMEWORK OF 1 THESSALONIANS

Salutation and Benediction (1:1)
  Prayer (1:2-5)
    Thessalonians–Experience (1:2-3:10)
      Prayer (3:11-13)
    Thessalonians–Walk (4:1-5:22)
  Prayer (5:23,24)
Salutation and Benediction (5:25-28)

2 THESSALONIANS

This second letter to the Thessalonians is a sequel to the first. The Thessalonians are still unable to distinguish between the rage of man and the wrath of God. Their continued trial and persecution leads them to conclude that God is against them instead of for them. The kingdom of God, which was proclaimed among them, is to be introduced with divine judgments. The day of the Lord, in which it will be set up, opens with an unparalleled display of divine indignation. They still persist in imagining that this day had begun, especially as, in some way, this was represented to be the apostle's teaching (2:2).

In reply Paul and his fellow workers define these dreaded judgments as those which fall only on those being unacquainted with God and who do not obey the evangel, especially on such as their persecutors. Their main argument is

founded on the teaching of the first epistle in reference to the Lord's presence and our assembling with Him in the air. There they had been definitely taught that this must occur *before* the day of His indignation.

The secret phase of lawlessness has been in operation throughout this economy, but its full development has been held in check by the presence of the saints. When we are taken out of the midst, then, and not till then, will the apostasy bear its bitter fruit. Its presence will be indicated by the presence of the man of lawlessness, corresponding to the head of the wild beast of the Unveiling of Jesus Christ (Rev.13:1) who will be seconded by the false prophet who does signs and miracles to prove his claims (Rev.13:11). By these mankind is deluded to its destruction.

But the Thessalonians are not deceived by God but preferred for salvation and belief of the truth and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The latter part of the epistle is devoted to some practical disorders, especially busybodies who do not work for their living.

FRAMEWORK OF 2 THESSALONIANS

Salutation–Benediction (1:1-2)
  Thanksgiving (1:3-10)
    Prayer for Thessalonians (1:11,12)
      Admonition–Apostasy (2:1-12)
  Thanksgiving (2:13-17)
    Prayer for Apostles (3:1-5)
      Admonitions–Disorder (3:6-15)
Salutation–Benediction (3:16-18)

The literary framework is a simple alternation within the salutations. A thanksgiving, a prayer, and an admonition are found in this order in both the former and latter half of the letter.

If the epistle is read with its leading thought in mind—

that we are delivered from the coming divine indignation—it will be seen to give it color and warmth everywhere, and especially in the assurances of God's mind toward them in their trials.

IN GOD THE FATHER

It is marvelous to trace God's method in revealing His grace. Using the severe trials of the Thessalonians as a background and their fears as a foil, He assures them that they will not be involved in the terrible time when His indignation shall be poured out on the earth. The faithful among the Circumcision will be saved *through* it, but these will be caught away *before* it comes. They are not assigned to indignation but to the procuring of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. This salvation is not based on their faithfulness, but on the fact that Christ died for them (1 Thess.5:9,10).

The two great arguments in these promise epistles are these: The dead are at no disadvantage, for they shall rise first; the drowsy will not be left behind, for it is a matter of pure grace, dependent on Christ's death. All will be caught away from the earth before the indignation of God is manifested.

Thus is the future aspect of our salvation revealed in Paul's earliest epistles. And we submit that the opening words are a key and clue to the character and abundance of its grace, when the Thessalonians are placed *in God the Father.* That those who had so lately bowed down to idols, who still lacked all covenant relations with the God of Israel, should be so described is hint enough of unique and inexhaustible stores of grace which must flow from it. Indeed, the very absence of any covenant leaves the Father's heart free to deal with them untrammeled by their disabilities and failures.

A.E.K.

"THE TRUTH OF THE EVANGEL"

(Galatians 1:18-2:5)

WHEN IT DELIGHTED GOD to unveil His Son in Saul of Tarsus that he might be evangelizing Him among the nations, rather than immediately submitting his revelation to flesh and blood, or going up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before him, he instead went away into Arabia, and then returned again to Damascus (1:15-17). This itself is most striking, for it is most unusual. But what happened next, three years later, is even more remarkable:

Thereupon, after three years, I came up to Jerusalem to relate my story to Cephas, and I stay with him fifteen days. Yet I became acquainted with no one different from the apostles, except James, the brother of the Lord. Now what I am writing to you, lo! in God's sight, I say that I am not lying. Thereupon I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. Yet I was unknown by face to the ecclesias of Judea which are in Christ. Yet only they were hearing that "He who once was persecuting us, now is evangelizing the faith which once he ravaged." And they glorified God in me. (1:18-24)

"The natural course for one in Saul's case would be to go up to Jerusalem and submit to them what he had received from the Lord and seek their patronage and fellowship in its proclamation, or indeed, ask their opinion and permission to promulgate it. But what did he do? He went into the desert where no human influence was at work. He waited three years before telling Peter about it, and then he does not even form the acquaintance of the twelve or of the ecclesia. They actually did not know him personally, though

they were glorifying God for the great change in him. All of this shows conclusively that Paul did not, at that time, derive his doctrine from Peter or the twelve."[1]

The ecclesias of Judea were only hearing concerning Paul that he who had once persecuted them, was now evangelizing "the faith" which once he ravaged (1:23). The faith which once he ravaged, was simply that elemental yet vital faith that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. What the Jews thus had heard concerning Paul undoubtedly reflects the essence of his message at that time. We may not infer from this, however, that this is all that Paul ever taught. Nor may we infer from this that "[that] faith" which, as a body of teaching, is "the expectation of Israel" (*cf* Acts 28:20), which faith, time and again, Paul indeed rehearsed in making known the entire counsel of God (*cf* Acts 20:27), is to be identified with the evangel which he was heralding among the nations.

"They *glorified God* in me" (1:24). The believing Jews gave glory not to Saul but to his God; they glorified God, *in* him. May we be doing the same, not only in considering the faithful career of our apostle, but in taking note of "whatever is renowned" among ourselves ("if there is any virtue, and if any applause"; Phil.4:8b). Let us be imitating Paul in the humble acknowledgement that, "in the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor.15:10).

Thereupon, after the lapse of fourteen years, I again went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also along with me. Now I went up in accord with a revelation, and submitted to them the evangel which I am heralding among the nations, yet privately to those of repute, lest somehow I should be racing or ran for naught.

But not even Titus, who is with me, being a Greek, is compelled to be circumcised. Yet, it was because of the false

1. A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.280.

brethren who were smuggled in, who came in by the way to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, that they shall be enslaving us—to whom, not even for an hour do we simulate by subjection, that the truth of the evangel should be continuing with you. (2:1-5)

Paul was not deficient in anything pertaining to the "paramount" apostles (2 Cor.11:5; 12:11). In fact, in relation to Paul, they were paramount (i.e., of greatest concern or importance; supreme in rank, power, or authority), only in the sense that undiscerning men perceived them thus.

Previously, Paul had "*related*" his story to Cephas (1:18). Now, he "*submits*" (2:2) the evangel which he was heralding among the nations to those in Jerusalem. In each case, he *imparts* something to the others; he does not learn from them. Initially, he had perceived that his evangel of grace apart from law was bound to be disturbing to many. Hence, he had prepared Cephas for this, before the crisis came. And now, fourteen years later, due to the ever-widening rift among many over issues of law-obedience, Paul went up to Jerusalem to place his evangel before them.

In so doing, Paul acted not only in accord with a revelation, but in response to some who came down from Judea to Antioch, with whom Paul and Barnabas had "come to have no slight commotion and questioning" (Acts 15:2). At Antioch, Paul had informed the believers that "God opens to the nations a door of *faith*" (Acts 14:27). Yet these antagonists who had come down from Judea, "taught the brethren that 'If *you* should not be circumcised after the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.' Now as Paul and Barnabas come to have no slight commotion and questioning with them, they prescribe that Paul and Barnabas and some others from among them are to go up to Jerusalem concerning this question" (Acts 15:1,2).

Paul, however, submitted his evangel privately to those of repute, lest somehow he should be racing or run for naught

(2:1,2). Paul was well aware that Peter and James were by no means free from the influences of the circumcisionist party, those who sought to impose the law on the believers of the nations. So Paul constrains these "pillars" to express a definite opinion on this question to him privately, before any further influence from such zealots could be brought to bear upon them. Then, when gathered in assembly together with the circumcisionists, they freely affirmed in public what they had already assured Paul of privately, that they agreed that the law was not to be imposed on the nations (Acts 15:10; 15:19-21).

It was only because of the "false brethren" who were "smuggled in" (2:4) when Paul and his party were received by "the ecclesia and the apostles and the elders" (Acts 15:4) at Jerusalem, that any controversy arose concerning circumcision. It was not that the profession of faith itself in Christ by such ones was false, for we are informed that they had "believed" (Acts 15:5). These included certain Pharisees who rose up in the midst of the Jerusalem assembly saying of those reached by Paul that they "must be circumcised, besides charging them to keep the law of Moses." Instead, Paul's characterization of them as "false" brethren, is in reference to their false testimony and teaching. They were brethren who were acting falsely; thus they were "false" brethren. Yet it is not by being "false," but solely by "being *true,*" that we "in love . . . should be making all grow into Him, Who is the Head—Christ" (Eph.4:15).

GLORYING IN EXPECTATION

It is in an awareness of the importance of proclaiming "the truth of the evangel," that we strive to make Paul's evangel known. In seeking to carry out such ministry, we often point out that Paul's evangel is not a message to the effect that at least some will escape eternal torment, or even that at least some will be exempted from eternal annihilation.

Nor is Paul's evangel some speculation claiming that *most but not all* will be saved, or that *perhaps, but perhaps not,* eventually all will be saved. Further, Paul's evangel is not that, in the end, all believers too will be saved, together with the rest of humanity, while unworthy believers must first be subjected to God's wrath, prior to being put to death once again, for long eons of time. Nor is Paul's evangel to the effect that while all will finally be *made alive,* this will only be so because, even as with believers today, all will have finally *saved themselves* from rejecting Christ by virtue of their own responsible decisions, for which, in the end, God can neither be thanked nor glorified.

Maturely speaking, Paul's evangel is not even the truth that none will be lost; instead, it is the revelation that *God* will be *All* in all. Hence we are glorying not so much in anticipation of our own deliverance, but in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:2). *To God be the glory* in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen! (Eph.3:21).

If we ourselves would affirm the evangel which Paul was heralding among the nations, we can no more deny its present aspect than its ultimate issue. Indeed, the greater part of its teaching concerns not questions of human destiny, but those aspects of the untraceable riches of Christ centered in the present ecclesia. Yet conversely, if we too would proclaim the fulness of the evangel brought by Paul, we must freely herald God's purpose of the eons, the goal and consummation of all.

That God will vivify all mankind and reconcile all throughout the universe, is ever in our hearts and frequently on our lips. Yet we wish to present this glorious revelation not in isolation, but, according as Paul, in its vital connection to the entire divine counsel. Beyond this, we would especially announce God's ultimate in its relation to those revelations which Paul terms, "God's wisdom in a secret" (1 Cor.2:7),

namely, the entire complement of Pauline teachings elsewhere undisclosed throughout the Scriptures.

"THE BLASPHEMY OF THE SPIRIT"

One of the most common claims we encounter is that since some commit the so-called "unpardonable sin," all will not be saved.

There are three accounts as to the sin that is not being pardoned. In Matthew, the reading is, ". . . the blasphemy of the spirit shall not be pardoned . . . . whoever may be saying aught against the holy spirit, it shall not be pardoned him, neither in this eon nor in that which is impending" (Matt.12:31,32). Mark's account reads, ". . . 'whoever[2] should be blaspheming against the holy spirit is having no pardon for the eon, but is liable to the eonian penalty for the sin'—for they said, 'An unclean spirit has he'" (Mark 3:29). The third account, that of Luke, simply reads, "the one who blasphemes against the holy spirit shall not be being pardoned" (Luke 12:10).

"The blasphemy of the spirit consists in attributing the works of *Christ*, done by the power of God's Spirit, to demons or unclean spirits. As these works were the means used to produce repentance and pardon, and this was essential for entrance into the kingdom [prophesied by

2. Like all universal expressions, in all contexts in which they appear, "whoever" (even as "each," "every," and "all") refers to all without exception who come under the purview of the subject of the context. It is not such words themselves, but their present usage which determines their scope. In some instances, in cases in which the subject of the context itself is universal, such terms refer to all universally; but in other instances, such as our present text, such terms refer solely to all of a limited class. Our Lord's earthly ministry concerns the evangel of the Circumcision; it does not contemplate the untraceable riches of Christ for the nations through Paul, or God's ultimate purpose for all, where, in each case, transcendent grace apart from law is the only consideration.

Israel's prophets], it is readily seen that pardon is impossible in such a case. The time, however, is limited to this eon or the coming eon of the kingdom. Eventually, all mankind will be far more than pardoned. They will be justified (Rom.5:18) and reconciled (Col.1:20). But this will not take place until a full eon later, when the kingdom is given over to the Father (1 Cor.15:24).

"We cannot commit the sin against the holy Spirit because our salvation is not based on miracles and signs. It follows faith, not sight. And, [before God as our Judge,] we are not pardoned, but justified (Rom.3:24,26). Condemnation is impossible (Rom.8:1). Moreover, we are explicitly told that, in the latter eras, some will be withdrawing from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and the teachings of demons. Any spirit manifestation [or ostensibly 'spiritual' teaching] not in perfect accord with the scriptures should be given the most severe tests, lest we be among those who are deceived by them."[3]

Similarly, just as our Lord declared that those who blasphemed against the holy spirit would not be being pardoned, He likewise affirmed that the indignation of God "is remaining" on those "being stubborn" as to the Son (John 3:36). Yet even as this latter passage does not address what will be the consequence, in relation to indignation, should such stubbornness be removed, the former texts do not address what will be the result consequent to the time when one who was *not* pardoned is nevertheless *judged.*

We should not reason if a sin should go unpardoned, that therefore those who do not obtain pardon but instead enter the judging, will never be saved. Even in human systems of justice, many who never obtain a pardon, who instead must undergo the full penalty for their lawless deeds, after they have done so, are released from prison,

3. A. E. Knoch, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.27.

having paid their debt to society. It does not follow because they were never pardoned, that they were never released from prison. Even in the case of the most serious crimes where the death penalty is imposed, the state, at that juncture, considers justice to have been met. It does not sentence the criminal to "eternal" death, but simply to death. Should God resurrect and eventually vivify one thus put to death (and He will!), the state could have no objection that the demands of its justice had not been met, in any such case.

Warnings concerning the sin that is not being pardoned, are not addressed to the members of the body of Christ. Instead, Paul's message to us is that we are not appointed to *indignation,* but to the procuring of *salvation,* through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we shall be *saved* from the indignation of God (1 Thess.5:9; Rom.5:9).

Further, we are not saved because we believe, but we believe because we are saved. While it is true that we must believe if we would be saved, this is so simply in light of the fact that salvation is not apart from faith. It is not, however, that we are "required" to believe and accept Christ, for our salvation is in grace, apart from law. Instead, we are graciously granted to be believing (Phil.1:29); God parts a measure of faith to each of His chosen ones (Rom.8:33; 12:3).

God saved us *out of* our unbelief. Even as in the case of Paul, the "faith and love in Christ Jesus," "overwhelms" our unbelief (1 Tim.1:14,16). Like self-control, faith is a *fruit* of the spirit (Gal.5:23); not a prerequisite of salvation. Salvation is not a matter of making some sort of "responsible" decision in favor of a requirement, but of being chosen and predesignated of God, before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4,5).

As presented in Paul's evangel, eonian life is a *gracious* gift (Rom.6:23). Hence, in granting us eonian life, God displays not the generosity of His reward, but the transcendent riches of His *grace* (Eph.2:7). In this provision, He

makes known not His integrity as a faithful Rewarder, but His vast love as a gracious Saviour. Hence, as many do, to make our eonian life hinge on our own obedience, is egregiously to misrepresent Paul's evangel at its very core.

For us, Grace *reigns,* for life eonian (Rom.5:21), any forfeiture of an allotment in God's kingdom that may be incurred by us for unfaithfulness, notwithstanding (*cp* 2 Tim.2:11-13; Gal.5:21).[4] Thus, in this connection, where sin increases, *grace* superexceeds (Rom.5:20). God has designated us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus (Eph.1:5), having chosen us, foreknown us, called us, graced us with faith, and justified us as well, all unto this glorious end (Rom.8:30; *cp* 1 Cor.1:24).

This is the evangel of our salvation; it is the evangel which Paul heralded among the nations (Gal.2:2). It is in accord with the delight of God's will and for the laud of the glory of His grace (Eph.1:6).

Beyond these marvelous considerations as to our own salvation, may we indeed *also* come to realize the glorious truth that our Saviour, God, *wills all mankind* to be saved,

4. It does not follow that if we do not enjoy an allotment in God's reign, that we therefore will not live under its jurisdiction. *Basileia* (translated "kingdom") is simply the corresponding noun of the verb *basileuō* (translated "reign"). It will be helpful for us to be aware that even as *basileuō* literally means "reign" (used as a verb), thus also, *basileia* also literally means "reign" (used as a noun). The former means "to exercise a king's sovereignty"; hence, the latter means "the sovereign power pertaining to [a king's sovereignty]." It is only when *basileia* is used metonymically, as a figure of speech for "a *realm* ruled by a king" (or the territory or people thereof), that it should be understood in the common sense of the English "king*dom*" (i.e., dominion). Yet it is on this basis, that of the common English usage of "kingdom," that it is claimed that those who do not "inherit the kingdom," must necessarily either be dead or in hellfire. Any such notion related to *basileia* here, however, is not only unwarranted but mistaken, for it contradicts the glorious truth that "the allotment of life eonian" (Titus 3:7) is an expectation in *grace.*

and to come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). God has formed the decision that this should occur; and, He is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). All His counsel shall be confirmed, and all His desire will He do (Isa.46:10).

God is not exclusively the Saviour of believers, but *especially* the Saviour of believers. Those who believe, enjoy a special salvation, with unique blessings for the eons to come. God is not only our Saviour, but is also the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10). The fact is that God will one day abolish death and become All in all (1 Cor.15:26,28). It is His purpose as well, through Christ Jesus, to reconcile all, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens; thus, "making peace through the blood of His cross" (Col.1:20).

All contrary claims such as that all "Christ-rejectors" or sundry other sinners will be eternally lost, must be repudiated. Those who make such claims are simply mistaken.

Such ones do not have a realization of "the *grace* of God in *truth*" (Col.1:6), nor of "the *gratuity* in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ" (Rom.5:15). Yet it is only thus, in gratuitous grace, that "Christ Jesus . . . is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all" (1 Tim.2:6). And, it is also only thus, consequently, that, "even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22).

In the question of human destiny, those who oppose the grace of God in truth, either deny that Christ died for the sake of the salvation of all mankind, or, alternatively, *represent* salvation as a *reward for obedience,* while merely *calling it* a "free gift." "As to the faith, they swerve" (1 Tim. 6:21), in advocating any such false teachings.

May we be given eyes to see and ears to hear "the truth of the evangel," the evangel which the apostle Paul heralded among the nations. "Now may the God of expectation, be filling you with all joy and peace *in believing,* for you to be superabounding in expectation, in the power of holy spirit" (Rom.15:13). J.R.C.

FOR THE SAKE OF HIS DELIGHT

THE CIRCUMSTANCES of our lives, our parents, our environment, and even our digestion, all vitally affect our character, and corresponding judgments. The years of our minority have an inevitable influence on what we are pleased to describe as our maturity. If a man is honest with himself he will concede that most of the time he is unable even to think clearly or objectively on any subject under the sun. No matter how many years we may devote to questing after truth, our conclusions will be shaped in some degree by the formative years. Is this the thought that passed through Pilate's mind as he exclaimed, in a somewhat helpless way, "What is truth" (John 18:38). Right there, before him in the pretorium, was his answer, in the royal Person of the Son of God! *Yet this perception was not granted.*

We have no means of understanding why God has designated us for the stupendous blessing of being conformed to the image of His dear Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. It well may be that we might flatter ourselves with the thought that initially, many years before our calling, we realized that the only sure source of all and any truth lay in God's precious Word. Although true, it is vanity which prompts us to make such a claim, as though any interest in divine things arose independently in ourselves; such foolishness is another legacy of human disability. The fact is that long before our realization of God's choice, we were being *prepared,* imperceptibly, often with grievous experience. Small wonder that Paul saw his own painful

memories as something to be left behind, ". . . forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—towards the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus" (Phil.3:13). Incidentally, let those distressed or troubled, who have not yet grasped the loving provision of God's justification, ponder on this, requesting enlightenment of His spirit.

It will not be a palatable thought, but whether we like it or not, we are virtual prisoners, bound by influences which are far more restrictive than any iron bars.

CAPTIVITY

"The real law and apparent functions of the law are very different. And, in order to effect its real object it was necessary that it should not appear on the surface. The apparent object of the law was to give life to all who consistently and constantly kept it. As it never gave life to anyone, for no one was able to fulfill its demands, it appears as if the law has failed of its primary object. And further, as it revived the passions of sin which were dormant, it seems to have defeated its own aim. But the real object of the law was to reveal the inordinate sinfulness of sin, and in this it was most successful."[1]

When one reads the apostle Paul's epistles there is a heart-warming sense of instant rapport. He fully experienced the dilemma of being enslaved, a helpless prisoner in a body of death. What a wonderful relief he expresses as he writes: "A wretched man am I! What will rescue me out of this body of death? Grace! I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Consequently, then, I myself, with the mind, indeed, am slaving for God's law, yet with the flesh for Sin's law" (Rom.7:24,25).

With characteristic boldness, the apostle's words concerning the enslaving grip of our bodies of death are very searching (Rom.7:24). Quite firmly, he acknowledged his own helplessness in striving to please God by obeying the clear mandates of holy and just laws. With evident relief, he turned from such anguish to the blessed freedom assured under Grace.

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.237.

Mindful of the tremendous sacrifice which had achieved this glorious gift of love, he further urged that, as former slaves and prisoners of sin, in righteousness we should now be slaving for the Lord. Indeed, in this epistle to the saints in Rome, he begins by presenting himself as *Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus.*

"Yet you are not in flesh, but in spirit, if so be that God's spirit is making its home in you. Now if anyone has not Christ's spirit, this one is not His. Now if Christ is in you, the body indeed, is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is life because of righteousness. Now if the spirit of Him Who rouses Jesus from among the dead is making its home in you, He Who rouses Christ Jesus from among the dead will also be vivifying your mortal bodies because of His spirit making its home in you. Consequently, then, brethren, debtors are we, not to flesh, to be living in accord with flesh, for if you are living in accord with flesh, you are about to be dying. Yet if, in spirit, you are putting the practices of the body to death, you will be living. For whoever are being led by God's spirit, these are sons of God" (Rom.8:9-14).

FREEDOM OF WILL

Should we question the much vaunted, philosophic vanity of "free will," then rest assured, there will certainly be no lack of opponents. It was Samuel Johnson, English lexicographer (1709-1784), who, in 1769, rather foolishly wrote, "Sir, we *know* our will is free, and there's an end on't." What the particular issue was we are not certain, but of this much we are sure: Doubtless, he was influenced by the circumstances of his birth, and education.

"What is meant by freedom of will is the correspondence between heredity and environment. Lack of friction is mistaken for liberty. If the impulses received from our ancestors urge us into a course agreeable to our surroundings we have the consciousness of being free to do as we please. But to imagine that these seeds of our volition were planted by our own hands, or that they have been conjured forth by us from void vacuity, so that our will arises without root, and flourishes without soil, water or air, is sheer imbecility."[2]

Proponents of such "freedom" will swiftly quote many examples from Scripture, of how the wills of both saint and sinner are frequently in conflict with the will of God! Further, they even refer to our Lord's own words as He entered Jerusalem, "How many times do I want to assemble your children in the manner a hen is assembling her brood under her wings—*and you will not!*" (Matt.23:38); and again, to the Jews: "Search the scriptures, for in them you are supposing to have life eonian, and those are they which are testifying concerning Me, *and not willing are you to come to Me that you may have life*" (John 5:40). Evidently, these dissenters are not only ignorant and oblivious of the true deity of the God and Father of all, but also, in their pride, they display a complete lack of understanding the reasons why Israel is now, *in part,* calloused.

With regard to God's purpose in connection with the nation of Israel, the scriptures are quite plain. These truths are stated so emphatically; not once, but several times. First, they rejected Yahweh (Isa.6:9,10); then they rejected the Lord (Matt.13:14,15); and finally, they rejected the testimony of the spirit (Acts 28:26,27). Here, it must be stressed; Did this nation have any choice? We might equally ask, with reverence, Did any of those involved in

2. A. E. Knoch, The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God, p.137.

the cruel death of our Lord have a choice? We deplore their vile treachery and hate, but without this there would be no cross, no disgrace or public shame, *yet no salvation!*

"not what i will"

Not to be outdone in this debate, many opponents will triumphantly refer to our dear Lord's words in Gethsemane. To what despicable depths will men sink when striving to pit their puny reasoning and empty philosophy against the Creator's wisdom! But those agonizing words of self-effacing devotion, far from supporting the deceptive arrogance associated with foolish, unloving insistence of "free will," demonstrate just the opposite. In the relative sense, Christ's will was "free," but bearing in mind His own words, "Lo! I am arriving . . . to do Thy will, O God" (Heb.10:7), we find Him trustingly submitting His will to His Father, "But not what I will, but what Thou" (John 14:36). Consequently, God's will, which is absolute, is done.

No matter how gentle we are towards all, apt to teach, and bearing with evil, sooner or later in our debate, there will be the usual impatient, exclamation of complaint: "Then if we have no will, we might just as well be robots." *But when did we ever argue that creatures, especially humans, nationally or individually, have no will?* This has neither been taught nor implied in our humble faith. However, we do firmly insist that God does not save men contrary to their will. *He first makes them willing!* "O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways!" (Rom.11:33).

Repeatedly, our Lord insisted that His will was to do His Father's will. He taught His disciples to pray, "Thy will be done." There is not a single incident in Scripture to indicate that He faithfully served His Father through mere obedient compulsion (except the precious and gracious compulsion of love).

As declared above, these bodies of death are yet *temples.* They are habitations for three spirits. The spirits of God and His loving Son take up residence, with our own! It might be concluded that in consequence, all our conduct would then be beyond criticism. Not so! Not so! We all learn, through sad experience, that there is only one deliverance from the disabling, corrupting influence of indwelling sin, and that way is to consider ourselves dead to all its lusts and excesses, yet gloriously alive, in grace, to bring our loving Father the real joy for which He longs. Not negative, grudging, hypocritical lip-service, nor passive indolence, but *willing* response Even commendable selfless service will not satisfy Him unless it is in response to His transcendent gratuity of grace and love.

MATURITY

Nearly two thousand years have passed, and still, like Epaphras (Col.4:12,13), we have much misery over those about us who will not even bear with the truths of God's evangel, much less become mature and established. Some may protest this concern, declaring, "God chooses and calls. Furthermore, He justifies and glorifies (Rom.8:29). To thus trouble yourselves would seem to set at naught the apostle's injunction not to worry (Phil.4:6)."

Whenever scripture is quoted in such disputes, then let this be a warning to us. Our Lord's trial was marked by the Adversary using a similar subterfuge: "It is written" (Matt.4:6). But how do we know that scripture is being misused here? How may we be sure? We have a defensive weapon, the sword of the spirit which is a declaration of God, and we must learn to wield it, opportunely, inopportunely. Only thus will the peace of God garrison our hearts and apprehensions in Christ Jesus. Be assured, whether here or in our future ministry among the celestials, we will not view those who do not rejoice with us in

the wonderful love of God with complacency or indifference. We were not chosen and called for this! The absolute grace of our election must redound to God's glory. His hunger for the love of all creatures must find a like response in ourselves.

The apostle yearned to present every saint mature, ". . . not minors, surging hither and thither and being carried about by every wind of teaching, by human caprice, by craftiness with a view to the systematizing of the deception" (Eph.4:14). This maturity is not arrived at immediately, but through Paul's later epistles we are guided to maturing confidence in God, with blessed relief. How refreshing to discover for example, such reassurance as this:

"So that, my beloved, according as you always obey, not as in my presence only, but now much rather in my absence, with fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation into effect, for it is God Who is operating in you *to will as well as to work* for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:12,13).

"When the spirit of God is received and imparts life to the saint, this is limited to his spirit, his mind, his *will,* and does not affect the flesh directly until the deliverance of the body in Christ's presence. It does not *eradicate* his will, but *forms* it. Unwilling obedience would be most unacceptable to God."[3]

Finally, beloved in the Lord, take heart; be not cast down. Although detained in these bodies of death until our Lord's appearing, now, our whole outlook is being changed. It is God Who is operating in us, for the sake of His delight.

Donald Fielding

3. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.41, p.221.

SUMMER FELLOWSHIP

Weekend Scripture Conferences are scheduled for June 7-9 in Willard, Ohio (phone: 419-935-2027) and in Baldwin, Michigan for August 2-4 (phone: 616-745-7562).

IF NOT GOD, INDEED WHO?

JOB HAS STRUGGLED to keep the focus of the debate concerning his sufferings on God. His associates, however, see his experience as a warning to Job for self-examination and repentance. Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar are united in their conviction that Job is treading on dangerous ground in relating God to the evil that has come upon him apart from the standard and ancient qualifications.

BILDAD'S FIRST ANSWER
(Job 8:1-22)

It is perhaps kindly meant when Bildad calls Job's words "abundant wind" (8:1), as though to suggest an excuse for Job's utterances. In any case, Bildad tries to get Job to think more conventionally about Deity and then get himself better positioned for divine favor.

First of all, Bildad asks, "Does El distort judgment?" (8:3). The associates see Job's evil as divine judgment on human evil. And this means, in their opinion, that Job is responsible for some evil, very much out of the ordinary, that calls for this severe and unusual judgment.

But rather than placing the blame entirely on Job's shoulders, Bildad ingeniously suggests it may have been Job's sons who had committed this evil (8:4). If this is the case, Bildad offers Job a way to extricate himself from the affliction. He should diligently seek early for El and supplicate to Him (8:5). If it is his sons who were at fault and Job himself is "spotless and upright," then Job should look for the return of peace to his homestead, as long, of course, as it is truly a *righteous* homestead (8:6).

JOB 8-10

8 [+]**Then Bildad the Shuhite** [l]**answered,** [+] [l]**saying:**
2 **How** [fr]**long shall you declare these** things,
And the **sayings of your mouth** be such **abundant wind?**
3 Does **El** [l]**distort judgment,**
And should He **Who-Suffices** [l]**distort justice?**
4 **If your sons sin** [›]**against Him,**
[+]**Then He shall cast them out in**to the **grip**
of their transgression.
5 Yet **if you your**self [m]**seek** [l]**early for El,**
And to Him **Who-Suffices you** [l]**supplicate,**
6 **If you** are **spotless and upright,**
[t]**Even now He** would [l]**rouse** Himself **over you,**
And He would [m]**bring peace**
to **your righteous homestead.**
7 [+]**So your beginning will** [b]**seem inferior,**
[+]**Yet your latter** state **shall grow very great.**
8 **For ask,** I **pray,** [›]**of** the **former generation,**
And [so]**survey** [›] the **investigations of their fathers.**
9 **For we** are of **yesterday, and we** [l]**know not**hing,
For our days on the **earth** are but a **shadow.**
10 **Shall they´ not direct you,** [sa]**apprise** [›] **you**
And [c]**bring forth declarations from their heart?**
11 Can **papyrus** [l]**grow** [i]**with no**[t] **marsh?**
Can **marsh grass grow** [l]**great without water?**
12 [fr]**Even** while **it** is **in its** full **pollination,**
though **it be not** [l]**plucked,**
[+]**Yet it** would [l]**dry** up **before all** other **grass.**

Already we see how Bildad has directed attention away from the central issue of God's responsibility and purpose for this evil, just as Eliphaz had done in chapters 4 and 5. This means that the focus is now on Job to take whatever steps are required to get the evil removed.

In 8:8-22 Bildad points Job to the established wisdom that has been passed down from one generation to the next. It does not occur to him that Job's pain and sorrow could be anything but divine correction. The parables of verse 11 bring out the truth that there is always a cause for any effect. This is a fundamental principle, and Job would fully agree with it. But Bildad's error is that he refuses to join Job is searching for the cause of the present evil in the operations of God outside of His works of righteous judgment on human sinning. Hence Bildad assumes that the marsh grass (Job's situation of suffering) must have developed solely from the "water" of human sinning. To be sure, God has brought it on Job, but Bildad would have this seen as God's *re*action to Job's (or his sons') secret sins. Bildad would not have the cause traced back any further than human depravity.

In modern terms, "the buck stops" with Job or his family.

Since Bildad has closed the door on any further investigating he is left with irrelevancies. God disavows the one who forgets Him and who is thus polluted (8:13-19), but He does not reject the flawless man (8:20). Job can still be brought back into blessing, and his enemies will be destroyed (8:21,22).

JOB REPLIES TO BILDAD
(Job 9:1-10:22)

But what does this have to do with what is right there before Bildad's face? Job has not forgotten El, and in relation to other human beings he is flawless and upright. Although Job agrees that what Bildad has said is true (9:2a), it avoids

13 **So** are the **paths** laid for **all** those **forgetting El,**
And so the **expectation of** the **polluted** man **shall perish,**
14 He **whose confidence is cut** ˡ**asunder,**
And his trust is a **spider's house.**
15 **He** ˡ**leans on his house,** ⁺**but it** does **not** ˡ**stand;**
He ᶜ**holds** ˡ**fast** ᶦ**to it,** ⁺**but it** does **not** ˡ**stand firm.**
16 **He** is **moist** ˃**in** the **presence of** the **sun,**
And his young shoots are sent ˡ**forth**
ᵒⁿ**throughout his garden.**
17 **His roots be**come ˡ**tangled** ᵒⁿ**about** a **mound;**
He ~ˡ**holds** on~ a **house of stones.**
18 But **if** one ˡ**swallows him** up **from his** ʳⁱ**place,**
⁺**Then it disavows** ⁱ **him: I have not seen you.**
19 **Behold, this** is the **elation of his** brief **way,**
And from the **soil other**s **shall sprout.**
20 **Behold, El Him**self does **not** ˡ**reject** the **flawless** man,
And He does **not** ᶜ**hold** ˡ**fast** ⁱ**on** the **hand of evildoers**ˡ**.**
21 **He shall** ᶠʳ**yet fill your mouth** with **mirth,**
And your lips with joyful **shouting.**
22 Those **hating you shall be clothed** with **shame,**
And the **tent of** the **wicked, it shall be no** more.
9 ⁺**So Job** ˡ**answered,** ⁺ ˡ**saying:**
2 **Truly I know that** this is **so,**
⁺**Yet** ʷʲ**how** can a **mortal be** ˡ**righteous** ʷⁱ**before El?**
3 **If he** ˡ**desires to contend with Him,**
He could **not** ˡ**answer Him one** time ᶠ**out** of a **thousand.**
4 He is **wise** in **heart and resolute** in **vigor;**
ᵃ**Who has stiffened** himself ˃**against Him**
and ˡ**fared well?**
5 He is **the** One **shifting mountains,**
and they do **not know** it,
Who over**turns them in His anger,**
6 **The** One **disturbing** the **earth from its** ʳⁱ**place,**
So ⁺**that its columns are shuddering,**

8:17 ~~~ ˡ**holds** on: Hb ˡ**perceives.**

the real issue of the origin and purpose of evil. This is what needs to be addressed, and Job insists on doing so.

As a first step, Job asks, "How can a mortal be righteous before El?" (9:2b). He is at an impasse, and his associates do not seem to realize it.

Here Job is not accusing Bildad of saying something untrue, but of ignoring the facts in the case. Job is suffering; it is of God; Job cannot be justified before God; no one seems to have an explanation; and God Himself remains silent about it all (9:3).

What Bildad has said about God, that He rewards the righteous and rejects the sinner, is so inadequate! It just does not deal with the reality of the immediate evil. God is transcendently wise and powerful, doing great wonders and marvelous works (9:4-10). Human beings are not righteous before Him. And life is full of evil. Let these facts all be examined together. Job cannot fit them together, but he is making more progress than Bildad who refuses to associate them clearly.

Job cannot "see" God or "detect" His Character (9:11) or discover what He is up to. Yet he wants to know what God is doing (9:12).

Bildad was not at all helpful because he wanted to limit the discussion to the level of human accountability for their sins and divine justice in dealing with their sins. Consequently, Job turns again to Eloah concerning all these seemingly contradictory facts. But so far He remains silent. Even if Job were righteous, it appears that Eloah would not speak (9:13-16).

INJURED GRATUITOUSLY

Once again Job speaks boldly, even bluntly, to and concerning Deity (17-20). From what Job *knows* concerning his own faults and his present sufferings his injuries are gratuitous.

7 **The** One [sa]**speaking to** the **sun's disk**
so [+]**that it** does **not** [l]**rise,**
And Who places a [l]**seal about** the **stars,**
8 Who **alone** is **stretching out** the **heavens,**
And Who is **treading on** the **high swells of** the **sea,**
9 Who is [d]**making** the **Great Bear, Orion**
And the **Pleiades,** [+]**besides** the **chambers**◊ **of** the **south,**
10 Who is **doing great** wonders
until there can **be no fathoming,**
And marvelous[l] works **until** there can **be no numbering.**
11 **Behold,** when **He** [l]**passes** [on]**before me I** can**not** [l]**see** Him,
And when **He** [l]**passes by,** [+] **I** can**not** [l]**detect** › **Him.**
12 **Behold, should He abduct,** [a]**who** could [l]**turn Him back?**
[a]**Who** could [l]**say to Him, What are You doing?**
13 **Eloah, He** does **not** [l]**reverse His anger;**
The **helpers**[l] **of Rahab**◊ **prostrate beneath Him.**
14 **Indeed,** [t]**how should I´ answer Him**
Or [l]**choose my words with Him?**
15 **I, who,** [if]**though I were righteous,** [7]**am not** [l]**answered~**[c]
When **I am supplicating to my Judge**[l],
16 **If I call** out**, and He should answer me,**
I could **not** [l]**believe that He is** [c]**giving ear** to **my voice.**
17 **He Who is hurting me** [f]**for** the worth of a **hair,**
And Who **has multiplied my injuries gratuitously,**
18 **He** does **not** [lg]**allow me** to **get back~ my wind,**
[t]**But** rather **He** [l]**surfeits me** with **bitter** thing**s.**
19 [if]**As for vigor, behold** the **Resolute** One**,**
And [if]**as for judgment,** [a]**who** can [lf]**summon** [7]**Him**[c]**?**
20 [if]**Though I were** [l]**righteous,**
my mouth would [l]**condemn me;**
Though **I** were **flawless, He** would declare **me** [l]**perverse.**

9:9 chambers: i.e., starry regions.
9:13 Rahab: i.e., audacity, a symbol of Egypt (*cf* 26:12; Ps 87:4; Is 30:7).
9:15 *7-~c* **am not** [l]**answered:** Hb **shall not answer.**
9:19 *7-c* **Him:** Hb **me.**

Yahweh Himself had declared to the Adversary that he was trying to "incite Me against [Job] to swallow him up gratuitously" (Job 2:3). There was no discernable cause for Job's sufferings. When all the suggestions of Eliphaz and Bildad are cleared aside as irrelevant, we are left at the present point in the debate with the harsh assessment that Job is afflicted for no purpose beyond "the worth of a hair," that is, gratuitously (9:17). Furthermore, God, as "the Resolute One," has so far revealed nothing further than this fact of Job's condemnation.

We are aware that Job is not suffering gratuitously, and this by the very fact that it was God Who was swallowing him up. God does not do anything without a reason. God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:11), and this is for good (Rom.8:28). But Job does not have this awareness, and he struggles just to maintain an honest and clear perspective on life as it is (9:21-24).

What Job's associates are urging is a pretence. Job shows that their solution does not get to the root of the problem. God brings "both the flawless and the wicked one" to their end. Even more depressing, there is evidence He has given the earth into the hand of the wicked and blinds the judges (Job 9:24). "*If not He, indeed who is it?*"

That is the critical question. It must not be swept under the rug. The pain is too sharp to indulge in half truths and pious principles. Hence Job speaks frankly about what Eloah has brought upon him. His life is brief (9:25,26); he is physically unable to suppress his grief and smile (27,28); he is condemned and does not know why (29); and even if he could make himself pure before God, He would still dip him in the slough (30,31).

There is no question in Job's mind that it is God Who is doing this. The question is whether or not God is aware of what He is doing and has a reason for doing it. Because of his suffering Job is able to leap miles ahead of his asso-

21 Were **I flawless, I** would **not** ˡ**know my** own **soul;**
I would ˡ**reject my life.**
22 **It** is all **one.**
Therefore I say,
Both the **flawless and wicked** one
Will **He** *m*˙**bring** to their *all*˙**end**ˡ**.**
23 **If** a **scourge** *c*˙**brings** ˡ**death suddenly,**
He ˡ**derides** › the **trial of** the **innocent.**
24 The **earth is given in**to the **hand of** the **wicked;**
He ˡ**covers** the **faces of its judges**ˡ**;**
If not He, **indeed** *a*˙**who** is **it?**
25 + **My days are fleeter** *f*˙**than** a **runner**ˡ**;**
They race **away; they see no***t* **good.**
26 **They pass on** *wi*˙**like ships of bulrush,**
Like the **vulture** that ˡ**pounces down on** its **food.**
27 **If I say¯, Let me** ˡ**forget my concern,**
Let me set my face ˡ**free and** ˡ**smile,**
28 **I** still **shrink** before **all my griefs;**
I know that You do **not** *m*˙**hold me** ˡ**innocent.**
29 **I´ am** already **being condemned;**
Why is **this** that **I should be wearied** in **vain?**
30 **If I washed** my**self** *i*˙**with waters of snow**
And purged my palms in purity,
31 **Then You** would ˡ**dip me in** the **slough,**
And my own **raiments would abhor me.**
32 **For** He is **not** a **man like me** that **I should assert** to **Him:**
Let us come together *i*˙**for judgment.**
33 There **is not** any **arbitrator**ˡ **between us,**
Who could ˡ**set his hand on us both.**
34 **Let Him** ˡ**withdraw His club from** *on* **me,**
And let not the **dread of Him** ˡ**frighten me.**
35 **Let me** ˡ**speak and not fear Him,**
t˙**But I** am **not so with**in **my**self.
10 My soul is disgusted *i*˙**with my life;**
Let me give ˡ**free** rein *on*˙**to my**self and **my concern;**
Let me ˡ**speak in** the **bitterness of my soul.**

ciates in considering the problem of evil in light of the existence of God.

Chapter nine ends with an important step forward in Job's thoughts. Turning from direct address, Job speaks of Deity in the third person (9:32-35). "He is not a man that I should assert to Him." Consequently, the suffering Job (the suffering "enemy") calls for an "arbitrator" between God and himself. This will be mentioned again in later speeches.

THE LABOR OF ELOAH'S PALMS

After this thought of an intermediary Job returns to his pleas directly addressed to Deity. In this there is no thought of telling God what is so, but of bringing what is so out in the open. Nor is there any thought of criticizing Deity, but rather a pressing desire to know that God is truly in charge. Job is a sinner and a creature of earth, but the fact remains that he is "the labor of Your hands" (10:3). Eloah does not see as a mortal sees (10:4); nevertheless "Your hands shaped me and made me" (10:8). All that Job has has come from God (10:11,12).

God has every right to do with us as He wants. But in our experiences of bitterness (10:1), we, like Job, desperately want to hear from Him. Job wants to know why Eloah contends with him (10:2); is there any *good* in this (10:3)? does God understand anything of our mortality and depravity and helplessness, without a rescuer (4-7)?

God brought Job into the world and molded him like clay (8-11). "Life and benignity have You granted to me." And even through his life, Job was aware that God was supervising and guarding him (10:12). But in relation to the present situation of extreme suffering and loss, God has *secluded* in His heart any hint of purpose or meaning (13a). All that Job knows concerning the mind of Deity in this is that whether he is wicked or righteous, Eloah hunts him like a lion, sends marvelous works against him and brings fresh changes of charging hosts upon him (10:13b-17).

2 **Let me** ˡ**say to Eloah,** O **do not** ˡ**condemn me!**
ᶜ**Let me know** *on wt* **why You** ˡ**contend** with **me!**
3 **Is it good to You that You should work harm,**
That You should reject the **labor of Your palms,**
And that **You shine on** the **counsel of** the **wicked?**
4 Do **You** ˃**have eyes of flesh?**
if **Can You** ˡ**see as** a **mortal sees**˂**?**
5 Are **Your days like** a **mortal's days,**
if **Or Your years like** the **days of** a human **master,**
6 **That You should seek** ˃**out my depravity**
And should inquire in**to my sin,**
7 *on* **Although Your knowledge** is **that I am not** ˡ**wicked,**
And there **is no** one **rescuing from Your hand?**
8 **Your hands shaped me and** ˡ*d* **made me;**
⁺**Yet** *7* **after**ward~ **You** ˡ**swallow me** up **round about.**
9 **Remember,** I **pray, that You** *d* **molded me like clay,**
And You shall turn me back to soil.
10 Did **You not** ˡ**pour me forth like milk**
And ˡ**curdle me like cheese?**
11 **You** ˡ**clothed me** with **skin and flesh,**
And ˡ**hedged me** together *i* **with bones and sinews.**
12 **Life and benignity have You** *d* **granted** *wi* **to me,**
And Your supervision has guarded my spirit.
13 ⁺**Yet these** things **You secluded in Your heart;**
I know that this was *wi* **in You**r mind**:**
14 **If I sin,** ⁺**then You observe me,**
And You do **not** *m* **hold me** ˡ**innocent** *f* **of my depravity.**
15 **If I am wicked, woe to me!**
⁺**Yet** if **I am righteous, I shall not lift** up **my head,**
Surfeited with **dishonor and ~satiated**
with~ **my humiliation.**
16 + ~**August~, You** ˡ**hunt me like** a **black** lion;
⁺**Then You** ˡ**again** and again send ˡ**marvelous** works
i **against me.**

10:8 *7*-~ **after**ward: Hb **altogether.**
10:15 ~-~ **satiated** with: Hb **see**ˡ.
10:16 ~-~ **August:** Hb **He is august.**

17 **You** [l]**renew Your testimonies** in **front of me,**
And You [l]**increase Your vexation** [wi]**against me;**
Changes [+]**of host**s come [wi]**upon me.**
18 [+]**Then why** did **You** [c]**bring me forth from** the **womb?**
I would have [l]**breathed** my **last,**
and no[t] **eye** would have [l]**seen me.**
19 **I** would have [l][b]**been just as** if **I had not come** into **being;**
I would have **been** [l]**fetched from** the **belly to** the **tomb.**
20 Are **not** [7]the **days of my transient** lifetime **few**~[c]**?**
[set]**Turn** away **from me** [+]**that I may smile** a **little,**
21 [i] **Ere I** [l]**go** away **and not** [l]**return,**
To a **country of darkness and** the **blackest shadow,**
22 A **country of such faintness as** deepest **gloom,**
Of **blackest shadow and disorder,**
And which [l]**shines like** deepest **gloom.**

10:20 *7-~c* the **days of my transient** lifetime **few:** Hb **my days few** which **are** [l]**left off.**

❁

This is the sort of problem that Job insists on investigating. The associates refuse to touch it with a ten foot pole. And Eloah remains silent. And there does not seem to be a mediator. Consequently, once again Job pleads for a brief respite and then "deepest gloom . . . blackest shadow and disorder" (10:20-22).

But death is no solution, as God has now made clear through Paul (Phil.1:23). It is not an end of pain in the darkness and emptiness of death that solves the problem of pain, but rather the defeat of pain and its justification through the faith of Jesus Christ, with the consummation of the appreciation of the glory of God in life. Job would not see this fully, but he will receive what becomes an early type and picture of the Creator's solution. God is for us; He Who spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all shall be graciously granting us all. D.H.H.

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 Paul's Personal Epistles
154 The Hand of Eloah
167 The Ways of God and Man
169 Concealed in God
175 Not Already Perfected
181 The Evangel of
the Uncircumcision

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 1996
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-SEVEN

EDITORIAL

THE APOSTLE PAUL did not know the details of his immediate future, even though he received many special revelations concerning what lay ahead for him. Yet he made plans and expressed his hopes in prayer. We can see this in Romans 15:22-33 when he wrote concerning his upcoming journey to Jerusalem and his desire to travel from there on to Rome and continuing afterwards to Spain. Anticipating troubles in Jerusalem, he struggled in prayer that he be "rescued from the stubborn in Judea."

He did go to Jerusalem (despite opposition) but was not rescued from severe adversities there. He did reach Rome, though not exactly in the manner he expected. We do not know if he ever saw Spain.

But the point is that he did make plans and set forward with prayer in carrying them out. Of course Paul received unusual guidance from the Lord, but as a whole, this series of incidents is similar to our own experiences in many ways. It is right that we make plans in accord with our responsibilities as God has placed us in the world. Our hearts should *devise* our way, as Proverbs 16:9 puts it, but in making our plans we remain aware that God *establishes* our steps (see also Proverbs 19:21).

Paul's words in Romans and this principle laid down in Proverbs, along with similar passages of scripture, are much in my mind these days, especially in light of the recent loss of our co-worker, Herman Rocke. Friends are asking how this affects the Old Testament translation project, and if any changes are required. It seems a proper time at least to review our plans and assess our situation, and certainly

to make it a matter of prayer in which, hopefully, our readers will join. We know that God will accomplish His will.

Recognizing that our steps are of the Lord, we enthusiastically plan to continue our testimony in this magazine and our other publications to the glories of God's purpose and the grace in the evangel heralded by Paul (see the articles on Paul's Personal Letters and on Galatians in this issue). Concerning this, there remains after more than 1900 years, a *struggle* of considerable amount (*cf* Col.2:1). This is not to say that we are alone in speaking of God's "multifarious wisdom" (see Brother Fielding's article starting on p.169), but it does seem that there is today less and less appreciation of the gratuity of God's grace and less boldness in making it known than ever before. And there also seems to be an increase in stubborn opposition to the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ. Yet how priceless is this message of the riches of grace in Christ Jesus (see the thoughts on contentment and rejoicing, starting on p.175).

Regarding the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, our desire is to complete the translation and then bring it through the publishing process. It is not wholly clear how best to do this in light of our resources and in order to meet the needs of our friends and brethren in Christ most effectively. But our plans are to continue forward in preparing for the publication of the complete "Old Testament," and eventually the whole of the scriptures in a Concordant translation. We hope to make further announcements concerning this project in subsequent issues of the magazine.

In the meantime we want to continue and even expand the use of portions of the Old Testament in the magazine, as we are presently doing with the book of Job.

We ask our readers to struggle together with us in prayers concerning these matters.

D.H.H.

PAUL'S PERSONAL EPISTLES

Both Timothy and Titus are called children by Paul in his letters to them. He is their spiritual father. He deals with them as a father with his son, charging and encouraging them in their career as men of God. In his first letter to each he adds the epithet "genuine," or "legitimate." Just as the actual child cannot but resemble his parents, so we find in Timothy and Titus many of the features of their spiritual father.

Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus are concerned with conduct in service. Not only are they given instructions for their own guidance, but rules are laid down for the selection and service of elders, or supervisors, and servants. These two classes were officially recognized and appointed and their functions defined. Besides this there are exhortations for all the various classes in the ecclesias, old and young, the rich and the dependent widow, and slaves. The second epistle to Timothy is especially applicable to the last days, showing whom and what to avoid, and with whom we may associate.

Philemon makes most gracious provision for those in bondage to believing masters.

1 TIMOTHY

As a guide in understanding the great contrast between Paul's two epistles to Timothy it is important to know *when* the first epistle was penned. If it was written to Timothy in Ephesus while Paul went to Macedonia, we have no situation corresponding to it in the book of Acts,

and it is difficult to understand why the instructions given should be needed in Ephesus where Paul had labored so long and which had the benefit of his personal superintendence for years.

If we reverse the situation and send Timothy to Macedonia to the ecclesias from which Paul had been driven before he could set them in order, and to which he dared not go on peril of his life, every precept in the epistle is full of point, and we have circumstances which exactly correspond in Acts 19:22. This places the epistle at the second crisis in the apostle's ministry (Acts 19:21; Rom.15:19; 2 Cor.5:15). His second epistle was written after the third and final crisis. This places a great gap between them which accounts for the vast difference in the aspect of affairs.

In the first epistle we have the ecclesia described as God's house, the pillar and base of the truth (3:15). In the second it has become a "great house" with utensils of various kinds, both honorable and base (2:20). In the first the pristine power of faith holds all together. In the second the dominant note is apostasy.

FRAMEWORK OF 1 TIMOTHY

Grace (1:1,2)
  Admonitions Regarding Teaching (1:3-20)
    Saviour of All Mankind (2:1-7)
    –Rules for the Ecclesia (2:8-3:13)
      Temporary Instructions (3:14)
      –Secret of Devoutness (3:15,16)
      Subsequent Eras (4:1-5)
      –Exercise in Devoutness (4:6-8)
    Saviour of All Mankind (4:9-16)
    –Rules for the Ecclesia (5:1-6:2)
  Admonitions Regarding Walk (6:3-21)
Grace (6:21)

2 TIMOTHY

Paul's second epistle to Timothy is, perhaps, the last letter from his pen. In all his other epistles he looks forward to further service. Now he tells Timothy that he had finished his career (4:7). The period of his dissolution was imminent (4:6). The whole epistle takes character from this fact.

The first epistle was probably written at that great crisis in the apostle's ministry when he first formed his purpose to go to Rome (Acts 19:21). Its subject is service. Its object was the organization of the ecclesias to uphold God's truth. The subject of the second epistle is suffering (2:3). Even within the "great house" of those called out, there is a swerving from the truth (2:16-20). Separation from such evil becomes the duty of all who wish to please God.

The letter should be especially prized by the Lord's slaves in these last days, for the apostasy which began even in Paul's time has become worse with each succeeding century. The practical question, How shall we serve in the midst of present day departure? is fully answered in this letter.

The first injunction in 2 Timothy is of principal importance today. *"Have a pattern of sound words, which you hear from me"* (1:13). So prevalent is the use of unscriptural words, and so loose are the translations of Paul's words that it is no marvel that the Bible is supposed to buttress the babel which pretends to the dignity of "Christian doctrine."

The corresponding injunction, *"Herald the word. Stand by it"* (2 Tim.4:2) is as critical as the earlier one. After having the proper words it is necessary to proclaim *them*, and not the multitudinous substitutes which today have supplanted the preaching of the Scriptures.

But even if we have the proper expressions and proclaim the Scriptures, there is yet one other injunction which is vital to the truth. Without it there is confusion and error in its most subtle and destructive form. Without it the Scrip-

tures themselves become the exponent and champion of error. With it they are clear and unconfused, upholding the truth. Paul exhorts Timothy to present himself as an unashamed worker, *correctly cutting the word of truth* (2 Tim.2:15). An example follows which leaves us in no doubt as to its meaning. Some said that the resurrection had already occurred. They *misplaced* the truth. They did not deny it, or corrupt it. They put it in the past, when it was still future. Thus it is with the great bulk of Scripture today. *It is misplaced.* That which is truth at one time is destructive error at another. So, today, many things in the Bible are vehemently maintained in all good conscience, when a correct apportionment of truth would leave them for another time.

FRAMEWORK OF 2 TIMOTHY

The remedy for the present distress is clearly shown in the literary framework.

Salutation of Grace (1:1,2)
Timothy's Gift (1:3-7); Paul's Commission (1:8-12)
Sound Words in View of Apostasy (1:13-18)
Exhortation for Endurance (2:1-18)
Exhortation to Remain (2:19-3:17)
Herald the Word in View of Myths (4:1-4)
Timothy's Service (4:5); Paul's Career (4:6-18)
Benediction of Grace (4:19-22)

The epistle proper begins with an exhortation to have the pattern of sound words (1:13). It closes with the charge to herald the word (4:2). Its central subject contains the command to "correctly cut" the word of truth (2:15). The Sacred Scriptures are the one great need for these degenerate days (3:16).

TITUS

The only recorded visit of the apostle Paul to Crete was

when his ship was detained there some time on his journey to Rome (Acts 27:7-12). The writer of Acts was with the apostle, and doubtless others (such as Demas and Crescens) accompanied him, including, it would seem, Titus, as far as Crete. Paul's direction that he should leave the island and meet him in Nicopolis (3:12) seems to confirm this, for, later, Paul writes to Timothy that Titus had gone to Dalmatia (2 Tim.4:10). There was a Nicopolis on the Adriatic near the boundary of Macedonia and Dalmatia. Hence this letter was probably written from Rome not long after his arrival. His early intention to visit Spain (Rom.15:24), and his decision to winter in Nicopolis (3:12), seems to have failed of fruition, for Paul is still in Rome when he informs Timothy of his imminent dissolution (2 Tim.4:6).

FRAMEWORK OF TITUS

Salutation of Grace (1:1-4)
Order in the Ecclesias (1:5-9)
Expose the Contentious (1:10-16)
Ideal Acts of Aged, Young, Slaves (2:1-10)
Advent of God's Grace (2:11-14)
Charge to Speak (2:15)
Charge to Remind (3:1-3)
Advent of God's Grace (3:4-7)
Ideal Acts of Believers (3:8)
Stand Aloof from Contentious (3:9)
Refuse Sectarianism (3:10,11)
Benediction of Grace (3:12-15)

The evident purport of this epistle is hortatory. It deals with the practical duties of life. No doctrine is developed. As Shown by the literary framework, the chief subjects are the appointment of elders who are to serve as supervisors, and the conduct of those who are slaves. The paragraph dealing with elders is logically followed by one describing their duties and difficulties due to the insubjection of

some. The section on slaves is fittingly followed by one on subjection, for even those who are not in physical bondage owe subjection to the government and to their fellow men.

The central subject sets forth the ideal character of men and women, old and young.

PHILEMON

This, the only private, personal letter from the pen of the apostle Paul, is a perfect specimen of its kind. Its powerful yet pathetic appeal is the ripe fruitage of that overwhelming grace which Paul dispensed from his Roman prison. Himself a prisoner, he captures the runaway slave and gives him the freedom of Christ, yet sends him back to the master from whom he had escaped.

This note was doubtless written at the same time as the epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians. Onesimus accompanied Tychicus (Eph.6:21) to Ephesus and Colosse (Col. 4:7-9). From the fact that Onesimus is spoken of as "one of you" (Col.4:9), we may infer that Philemon belonged to the ecclesia at Colosse, and that he was given the message to masters in that epistle at the same time (Col.4:1).

But this little letter goes far beyond what is "just and equal" so far as Onesimus is concerned. No picture of God's grace can better this. Not only a slave, but subject to torture and death for stealing from his master, he is first reconciled to God through Paul's preaching, and then is reconciled to his master through Paul's pleading. He is caught upon the very crest of the great tidal wave of grace which was just then ready to overflow the whole world. The transcendent grace of Paul's perfection epistles was doubtless his precious possession even before it was delivered to Philemon. Can we realize what this must have meant to him? To be taken from the deepest depths of social degradation and to be seated with Christ in the celestial realms, by faith, almost exhausts the possibilities

of grace. And now upon all this, he is given this precious passport to his master's heart!

FRAMEWORK OF PHILEMON

Salutation, Grace (1:1,2)
Prayer of Paul for Philemon (1:4-6)
Paul's Joy, Saints Soothed (1:7)
Paul Entreats Concerning his Child (1:8-10)
Onesimus Useless, Useful (1:11-13)
Onesimus Slave, Brother (1:14-17)
Paul Offers Refund For Onesimus (1:18,19)
Paul's Profit, Paul Soothed (1:20)
Prayer of Philemon for Paul (1:21,22)
Greetings, Grace (1:23-25)

In literary form, too, it is a perfect example of a simple reversion. Every topic is repeated in reverse order, as set forth in detail above.

SUMMARY

Paul is the apostle of the nations, the Uncircumcision: the twelve ministered to the Circumcision, the nation of Israel. They brought mercy to the other nations, conditioned on Israel's blessing: his ministry follows the *defection* of Israel. They were confined to earth: he includes the heavens. They are confined within the eons, Paul propounds a purpose which preceded the eons and which will not be accomplished until after they have run their course. Paul alone gives us present truth. All truth is profitable in that it teaches us the ways of God; but only that truth is *applicable* which was written for the present administration.

Let this sink deeply into our minds and hearts: *Paul's epistles deal with present truth.* May the application of this great principle bring as much blessing to each reader of these lines as it has brought to the writer!

A. E. Knoch

THE HAND OF ELOAH

AFTER seeking to silence Job from his "multitude of words" (11:2-4), which seem so shocking and impious, Zophar cries out, "O that Eloah would speak!" (v.5). In this there is agreement with Job's own longing, if not with his despair as expressed in 9:15,16. But Zophar is immediately ready to speak *for* Eloah.

With patient condescension Zophar explains what sort of thing Eloah would say to Job if He did speak. "Then He would tell you obscured secrets of wisdom." And more to the point as far as Zophar is concerned, Eloah would make Job understand that He "is granting you oblivion of some of your depravity" (11:6). Zophar is convinced that Job has committed some great depravity, but allows that Eloah may have given Job some measure of forgetfulness of what he did.

Yet again, Zophar directs attention to Eloah and His perfection and authority (11:7-11). These verses, like 5:9,10, spoken by Eliphaz, seem to accord with the extended passages in chapters 38-41 when Yahweh Himself does speak. Still, the reason such references to God's deity by Job's associates do not make these words "rightly so" (*cf* 42:7) is that they are voiced for the wrong reason. Like Eliphaz and Bildad, Zophar speaks of the greatness of Eloah in order to lead to the themes of judgment and religious warnings. The concern is not to focus attention on God and the wisdom of His ways, but rather to direct Job in his own personal behavior before the majestic Deity.

Zophar points to possible lawlessness in *Job's hands* that

JOB 11-14

11 [+]**Then Zophar the Naamathite** [l]**answered,** [+] [l]**saying:**
2 **Shall** this **multitude of words not be answered?**
And should this **man of** glib **lips be** [l]**justified?**
3 **Shall your inventions** [c]**turn** [ad]**men** to **silence?**
And shall you keep **deriding**
[+]**while** there **is no** one **criticizing?**
4 [+]**Now you** [l]**say, My doctrine** is **spotless,**
And I [b]**am purified in Your eyes.**
5 [+] **Nevertheless—**[a]**O** [lg]**that Eloah** would **speak,**
[+]**That He should open His lips** [wi]**before you!**
6 [+]**Then He** would [l]**tell** › **you obscured** secrets **of wisdom,**
For reality ›**has double** sides**;**
[+]**Hence know** this**: that Eloah is** [c]**granting** › **you**
oblivion of some [f]**of your depravity.**
7 Can **you** [l]**find** out the **fathoming of Eloah?**
[if]**Could you** [l]**find** out [fr] the [all]**perfection**
of Him **Who-Suffices?**
8 These are **loftier** than the **heavens;**
what can **you** [l]**contrive?**
Deeper [f]**than** the **unseen; what** can **you** [l]**know?**
9 **Its measure** is **longer** [f]**than** the **earth**
And wider [f]**than** the **sea.**
10 **If He should pass by** [+]**or lock** up
[+]**Or** [c]**call** an **assembly,** [+] [a]**who** could [l]**turn Him back?**
11 **For He Him**self **knows** [ad]**men of hypocrisy;**
[+]**When He** [l]**sees lawlessness,** [+] **shall He not consider?**
12 [+] The **hollow**[l] **man shall be**come wise of **heart**
[+]**Whenever** the **colt of** an **onager is** [l]**born** a **human.**

must be put away (11:12-14). This shows us that Zophar really thinks of God's actions as responses to human behavior rather than operations in accord with a divine purpose. If Job would confess his secret sins, then Eloah would be able to bless him, and he would forget his misery and trust with expectation (11:15-19). But the fact remains that Job has always spread out his palms to God (v.13), and his condition currently fits Zophar's description of the fate of the wicked. Job's eyes are "exhausted" *right now* with tears; for Job there is presently no visible "flight to safety," and the only expectation he has for his soul is death (11:20).

None of this advances any understanding of God's dealings with Job. It does not encourage Job's trust in the perfect sufficiency of Him Who-Suffices, or his appreciation of His wisdom. God is aware of all human hypocrisy and lawlessness (11:11), but Job's need is to become more aware of divine faithfulness, wisdom and righteousness.

SO JOB ANSWERED
(Job 12:1-25)

Job's associates have spoken of God but have not helped Job keep focusing on Him as One involved in the events and experiences of our lives. This is because what they have said concerning God has really directed the attention onto Job and what he must do in order to come under divine favor once again. Now in Job's reply to Zophar he stoops to their level and joins the fray, man against man. His attacks take the form of sarcasm. "Truly, you are the people, and with you wisdom shall die!" (12:2). This leads to a defense of himself (12:3), followed by further complaints about his associates' attitudes (12:4,5).

Nevertheless, Job recalls how he had always been one "who was calling on Eloah" (v.4). This leads Job's mind back to the major problem of squaring the presence of evil with the power and righteousness of God.

13 **If you your**self **prepare your heart,**
And you spread out **your palm**s **to Him,**
14 **If lawlessness** is **in your hand,** [c]**put it far** away**,**
And do not [c]**allow iniquity** to [l]**tabernacle in your tents,**
15 [t] **Then** [f]**without blemish, you may lift** up **your face,**
And you will become solidly[l] set **and shall not fear.**
16 **For you**´ would [l]**forget** the **misery;**
You would [l]**remember** it only
like waters that **have passed.**
17 **And** higher [f]**than** the **noonday** sun
your **life-course shall rise;**
Should it be faint, it shall become like the **morning.**
18 [+] **You will trust** [t]**because** there **will be expectation;**
[+]**When you reconnoiter, you may lie** down **in trust.**
19 [+]**When you recline,** [+] there **will be no trembling,**
And many will beseech your face.
20 [+]**Yet** the **eyes of** the **wicked shall be** [all]**exhausted,**
And flight to safety **will perish** [f]**for them**
And their expectation become an **expiring of soul.**
12 [+]**So Job** [l]**answered,** [+] [l]**saying:**
2 **Truly,** [t] **you** are the **people,**
And with you wisdom shall die!
3 [mr]**However, I** [›]**have heart** understanding **as well as you;**
I am **not falling** [f] **behind you;**
[+]**For** [›a]**who is** there **no**t knowing **such** things **as these?**
4 As the **sport** [›]**of his associates am I becoming,**
Who was **calling** [›]**on Eloah, and He** [l]**answered him,**
Made **sport** of, though **righteous** and **flawless.**
5 **Contempt ~for misfortune~** is [›]**in** the **reflections**
of the **self-satisfied** one**,**
Readied[l] **for** those of **tottering feet.**
6 The **tents** [›]**of devastators**[l] **are** at [l]**ease,**
And for those **disturbing El** there is **serenity,**
For him **who brings** along an **eloah in his hand.**

12:5 ~~~ **for misfortune:** MT **torch.**

First of all, Job points out, the wicked seem to get away with their wickedness. Even for those who disturb El there is serenity (12:6). And secondly, "the *hand of Eloah,* it has done this" (12:9)! It is not, as Zophar had insisted, a question of what *Job's* hands have done, whether intentionally or not, whether obvious to others or obscured, but of what *Eloah's* hand has done.

It is the hand of God that has shaped us as living souls, and our spirit comes from Him (12:10). It is as a living *soul,* instilled with spirit by the hand of Eloah, that Job can feel the aching loss of his children. God has made him a sentient being who can know the pain of the boils covering his body and the horror of his destitution. God has granted him spirit that keeps him alive in an existence of searing agony and unrelieved sorrow.

If Zophar would speak for Eloah, why has he not spoken about what is so obvious? Those who disturb El live in comfort, and one who called on Him is made sport of, "though righteous and flawless." And that is a serious problem. Even the beasts of the field, the birds and fish, know this (12:7-9). How can we ever become acquainted with God's power and wisdom unless we face up to the evils we hear and see and feel all around us?

Don't we learn by listening and observing and exercising our senses (v.11)? We begin our education as infants and do not have to wait until we are old before we recognize that God does whatever fits His counsel and wisdom (12:12-15). Both the sinner and the one who leads him down the pathway of error are God's (v.16). God causes counselors and judges to do stupid things and be cheated, kings and priests and solid citizens to be overthrown, elders and patrons and the powerful to fall (12:17-22). The fate of nations and the policies of their leaders are all under God's control (12:23-25).

Evil is a fact, and the perfection of the all-powerful

7 + **Nevertheless, ask,** I **pray,** one of the **beasts,**
and let it direct you,
And the **flyer of the heavens, and let it tell** › **you,**
8 **Or importune to** the **earth, and it shall direct you,**
And let the **fish of the sea recount** it **to you.**
9 [a]**Who** [i]**among all these** does **not know**
That the **hand of** [M]**Eloah**[s]**, it has done this?**
10 **In Whose hand** is the **soul of every living** creature
And the **spirit** in **all flesh of man.**
11 Does **not** the **ear** ˡ**test declarations**
+**As** the **palate** ˡ**tastes its food?**
12 Does **wisdom** come [i]**with** being **hoary headed,**
And understanding with **length of days?**
13 **With Him** are **wisdom and mastery;**
His are **counsel and understanding.**
14 [bd]**If He** ˡ**demolishes,** + **it shall not be** re**built,**
He ˡ**locks** [on]**up** a **man,** + **it shall not be opened.**
15 [bd]**If He** ˡ**restrains** [i] the **waters,** + **they shall dry** up,
+**Or He** ˡ**sends them** forth,
+ **they shall overrun** the **earth.**
16 **With Him** are **strength and prosperity;**
Both the **erring** one **and** the one **causing error** are **His.**
17 **Causing counselors**ˡ to **go** forth **looted,**
He +**also makes judges**ˡ ˡ**rave** as fools.
18 **He unlooses** the **disciplining** authority **of kings,**
And He ˡ**binds** a **belt** [i]**about their waists.**
19 **Causing priests** to **go** forth **looted,**
He +**also** ˡ**overthrows** the **well-established.**
20 **Putting away** the **eloquence** ›**of** the **sure**ˡ**,**
He +**also** ˡ**takes** away the **discretion of elders.**
21 **Pouring out contempt on patrons,**
He +**also makes** the **cordon of** the mighty **repressors**
fall **slack.**
22 **Exposing** the **deep** things [f]**out** of **darkness,**
He +**also** [c]**brings** ˡ**forth** the **blackest shadow to light.**

12:9 *M-s* **Eloah:** Hb **Yahweh.**

God Who has made us is a fact. Job is saying the right thing when he puts these two facts together in his declarations. The hand of Eloah is involved in the failures of worthy human beings and in the stupidity of our most capable leaders. Indeed the word "involved" is not strong enough. Several times, especially in 12:17-25, Job uses the Hebrew verb form that speaks of *causing* the action to happen. God causes counselors and priests to be looted. He causes the putting away of eloquence (v.20) and heart understanding (v.24), and He causes leaders to "stray in wayless wasteland" (v.24).

TO PLEAD WITH EL
(Job 13:1-27)

Job's experience by means of his eyes and ears has made it evident to him that God is the First Cause of all these things. Job is well aware of his own sinfulness, but this should not be related only to divine judgments and divorced from trust in God. His associates obviously cannot explain the involvement of Deity in this evil, nor do they want to discuss it in any clear way. It is the issue of all issues that they most want to avoid.

Zophar wanted to speak for Eloah, which, if he could have done so truly, would have been welcome to Job. But as for Job himself, he would speak *to* God as the One Who Suffices. He longs to plead his case before the Supreme Subjector (13:3).

Verses 4-13 of chapter 13 show us a distracted and frustrated Job, falling once more into sarcasm and outright anger. Job longs to speak to Eloah. Nevertheless, he has had to listen to a man who has already judged his case. And what Zophar has said is "falsehood," and "iniquity." There is no healing for Job in such talk.

It appears to Job that Zophar wishes to curry favor with God, claiming to contend for Him by showing par-

23 [c]**Making** › **nations grow great, He** [+]**also** [l]**destroys them;**
Spreading out › **nations, He** [+]**also** [l]**guides them** away**.**
24 **Putting away heart** understanding from the **heads**
of the **people of the earth,**
He [+]**also causes them** to [l]**stray in** a **wayless wasteland.**
25 **They** [l]**grope** in **darkness** [+]**with no**[t] **light,**
And He [c]**makes them** [l]**stray like** a **drunkard.**
13 Behold, my eye has seen all [7]**these** things[cs]**;**
My ear has heard and [l]**understands** › **it.**
2 [as]**Where you** have **knowledge,** so [mr]**also** do **I′ know;**
I am **not falling** [f] **behind you.**
3 **Nevertheless,** as for **me,**
I would [l]**speak to** Him **Who-Suffices,**
And to plead ›**with El** is what **I** [l]**desire.**
4 [+] **Nevertheless, you** are **smearing** with **falsehood,**
Useless healers[l] are **all of you.**
5 [a]**O** [lg]**that you** would [c]**keep** [l]**silent,** yea **silent¯,**
[+] That would [lb]**be** › **wisdom for you.**
6 **Hear** [pr]**now my pleading,**
And to the **arguments of my lips, attend.**
7 Is it **for El** that **you** [l]**speak iniquity?**
And for Him that **you** [l]**speak deceitfully?**
8 Would **you** [l]**show partiality** toward **Him?**
[if] **Would you** [l]**contend for El?**
9 **Would it be well** [t]**if He were investigating** `**you?**
[if]**Could you** [l]**delude** [i] **Him as** one **deludes¯** [i] a **mortal?**
10 **He shall reprove,** yea **reprove¯** `**you,**
If in secrecy you [l]**show partiality.**
11 Will **His** majestic **bearing not** [l]**frighten** `**you,**
And alarm of Him [l]**fall** up**on you?**
12 **Your maxims** are **proverbs of ashes;**
Your bulwarks are › **bulwarks of clay.**
13 [c]**Keep silent** [f] **before me, and** do **let me′ speak,**
And let whatever comes **pass** up**on me.**

tiality toward Him (13:7,8). But what he says about Job is not true. Zophar himself needs to be investigated; he may delude human beings, but God, Who knows Zophar's secret thoughts, will not be deluded. It would be better if Zophar would simply keep silent (13:5,13).

In 13:9-12 we find Job turning Zophar's warnings against him. This is all very well from a human standpoint, but it is a distraction from the major point of God's place in all the evil that has come upon Job. But once Job gets this out of his system, he seems to get a better hold on himself and prepares for the pleading of his case before God (13:14-19). Like David in later times, Job would have God be his judge (*cf* 2 Sam.24:14).

JOB, THE ENEMY

Job first calls for protection from the One before Whom he pleads (13:20,21). Then he proposes a two-way exchange of thought (22). And finally, evidently without waiting for God to speak, Job bursts out with what he wants to say.

Job's questions and complaints in 13:23-27 center upon the explosive address to Yahweh in verse 24. "Why should You conceal Your face and reckon me as Your enemy?" Because the name "Job" and the word for "enemy" are practically the same in Hebrew, we cannot help but feel there is a great deal of irony packed into this plea.

Job, who, relative to other human beings, "was flawless and upright, fearing Elohim and keeping away from evil" (Job 1:1), nevertheless was reckoned as God's enemy. (Here is a matter that hits home for us all, and for believers this calls for renewed appreciation of passages such as Romans 5:1-11 and Colossians 1:13-23.)

In voicing this significant problem of human enmity and alienation from God, Job is being prepared to receive God's own assurance of divine purpose and ability in carrying out this purpose.

14 ◊ **I shall take up my flesh in my teeth**
And place my soul in my palm.
15 **Behold, He may despatch me,** yet **I shall wait for Him;**
Yea, I shall plead my ways ›before His face.
16 **Moreover, this** will be › **salvation for me,**
For a **polluted** man would **not** ˡ**come before Him.**
17 **Hear,** yea **hear⁻ my declaration,**
And let **my disclosure** come **in**to **your ears.**
18 **Behold** *pr*'**now, I have arranged** a **plea;**
I know that I´ shall be justified.
19 *a*'**Who** is **he** who **shall contend** *wi*'**against me?**
For I would *now*'**then** *c*'**keep** ˡ**silent and** ˡ**breathe** my **last.**
20 *y*'**Only two** things**,** O **do not** ˡ**do** *wi*'**to me;**
Then I shall not conceal myself **from Your face:**
21 *c*'**Keep Your palm far from** *on* **me,**
And let not the **dread of You** ˡ**frighten me.**
22 ⁺**Either call, and I´ shall answer,**
Or I shall speak; ⁺**then,** I pray**, reply to me.**
23 **How** many are **my depravities and sins?**
c'**Let me know my transgression and my sin.**
24 **Why should You conceal Your face**
And reckon me ›as Your enemyˡ**?**
25 Would **You** ˡ**terrify** a **leaf being whisked away?**
And would **You** ˡ**pursue ›dry stubble?**
26 **That You may list bitter** things *on*'**against me,**
And ˡ**impute** to **me** the **depravities of my youth,**
27 **And that You may place my feet in shackles**
And ˡ**keep** watch over **all my paths;**
That **You may** set a **statute** *on*'**for** the **bottoms of my feet.**
28 ⁺ A *s*'**man, like** a **rotten** thing**, he is disintegrating,**
Like a **cloak** when a **moth has eaten it.**
14 A **human, born**ˡ **of** a **woman,**
Is **short of days and surfeited** with **disturbance.**
2 **He** come**s forth like** a **blossom and is** ˡ**snipped off;**
⁺ **He** races ˡ**away like** a **shadow and** does **not** ˡ**stand.**

13:14 Hb begins with **On what** (meaning "why"), repeated from the end of v.13 but absent in LXX.

DESPAIR AND EXPECTATION
(Job 13:28-14:22)

We, even as believers, may often feel a oneness with Job, the enemy, in many of his thoughts, feeling sometimes (rather, often) like a rotting cloak (13:28), "short of days and surfeited [up to the gills] with disturbance" (14:1). It is altogether human to cry out to God as Job does in 14:3-5, saying in effect, "I don't get it! Why make such a big thing of such a miserable, little, temporary creature as I am?" But the great difference between Job and ourselves is that, in faith, we have received the conciliation (Rom.5:11).

As for Job, however, he remains without assurance of divine purpose for this enmity. He can only cry out in "declarations without knowledge" (Job 38:2). Nevertheless, despite all Job's professing of ideas without understanding (*cf* Job 42:3), the Godward directing of his thoughts and words is altogether right. And even here, in the depths of his despair, he is led to a growing confidence in El.

An indication of this developing trust can be seen in Job's use of the little word "until" in 14:6-14. At first Job's only hope is that God would forbear from paying attention to him, "*until*, like a hireling, he may fill in his days" (v.6). Then, in death, the human shall remain in oblivious sleep "*until* the heavens fail," (v.12), which would seem likely a long, long time. Here Job would be concealed by God *until* His "anger turns back (v.13), which is suddenly a more encouraging thought, for indeed God's anger may not be permanent, and there is no need for concealment apart from divine anger.

Finally, as the high point of Job's thoughts in this reply to Zophar, he asks, "If a master dies shall he live again?" and declares, "All the days of my enlistment I shall wait *until* my relief comes" (Job 14:14). Here is a marvelous ray of hope in the midst of Job's despair. Like other passages of

3 **Indeed,** it is **on** one like **this** that **You focus Your eyes,**
And You ˡ**bring** ˋ**me in**to **judgment** *wi***before You.**
4 *a***Who** can ˡᵍ**make** what is **clean from** the **unclean?**
No*t* **one.**
5 *if***Since his days** are **decided**ˡ**,**
The **number of his months** are set ˋby **You,**
And **You have** *d***made his statutory** time**,**
⁺**Which he** can**not** ˡ**surpass,**
6 **Be heedless** of **him, and** *M***forbear~,**
Until, like a **hireling, he may fill in his days.**
7 **For** there **is expectation for** a **tree:**
If it **is** ˡ**cut** down**,** ⁺**then it may rejuvenate** *fr***again,**
And its young shoots **may not be halted.**
8 **If its roots** *c***grow** ˡ**old in** the **earth,**
And its trunk-base ˡ**dies in** the **soil;**
9 *f***At** the **scent of water it shall bud,**
And it will *d***produce harvest** branches **like** a **plant.**
10 ⁺**Yet** a **master shall die and** be laid ˡ**defeated;**
⁺ A **human shall breathe** his **last, and where** is **he?**
11 As **waters depart from** a **lake,**
And a **stream is** ˡ**drained and dries** up,
12 ⁺**So** a **man lies** down **and shall not rise;**
Until the **heavens fail, they shall not awake,**
Nor shall they be roused from their sleep.
13 *a***O** ˡᵍ**that You** would ˡ**seclude me in** the **unseen,**
That **You** would ˡ**conceal me**
until Your anger turns back~,
That **You** would ˡ**set** a **statutory** time **for me**
and then ˡ**remember me.**
14 **If** a **master** ˡ**dies shall he live** again**?**
All the **days of my enlistment I shall wait**
Until my relief comes~.
15 **You shall call, and I´ shall answer You;**
You shall long for the *d***work of Your hands.**

14:6 *M*-~ **forbear:** Hb **he shall forbear.**

16 Even ᵗ**if You are now numbering my steps,**
You shall then **no**ᵗ longer **observe** ᵒⁿ **my sin,**
17 **My transgression** shall be **sealed**ˡ up **in** a **pouch,**
And You shall cover over ᵒⁿ **my depravity.**
18 **Nevertheless,** ⁺**even** the **mountain falls**ˡ and ˡ**decays,**
And the **rock** ˡ**shifts from its** ʳⁱ**place.**
19 **Water** reduces **stones** to ˡ**powder;**
⁷The **flattening** rain ˡ**overflows~** the **soil of** the **earth;**
⁺**So** do **You cause** the **expectation of** a **mortal** to **perish.**
20 **You** ˡ**overpower him** ˃ **permanently, and he** ˡ**goes** away**;**
His face altersˡ**, and You** ˡ**send him** afar**.**
21 **His sons may** attain **glory,** ⁺**yet he** does **not** ˡ**know** it**;**
⁺**Or they may be discredited,**
⁺**yet he** does **not** ˡ**understand** it ˃**of them.**
22 **Yea, his flesh shall be** in **pain over him**self**,**
And his soul shall mourn over his state**.**

14:19 7-~ The **flattening** rain ˡ**overflows:** Hb **She** ˡ**overflows her self-sown** plants.

❁

explosive joy in the midst of deep sorrow, such as Lamentations 3:21-24 and Micah 4:1-8, Job 14:14-17 stands out in brilliant light because of the darkness of its surroundings. Relief will come because God will long for the *work of His hands* (14:15).

No doubt Job says more than he can feel assured about here, for he immediately falls back into morbid thoughts of death and forgetfulness, starting with the word "nevertheless" in 14:18. Job looks at the evidence of his present suffering and lack of expectation, ending his speech with a sob.

"Nevertheless" the damage has been done, or rather the *counter*-damage, in Job's words of hope. Words of mourning are not to be the final words of Job.

D.H.H.

THE WAYS OF GOD AND MAN

JOB'S ASSOCIATES were good men—good, that is, in intention, good in the deepest desire of their hearts, but utterly wrong in their knowledge of God's ways. They knew God, yet did not speak of Him the thing that was right: they were grave, yet uttered folly. Theirs was a pattern case. In them are set forth the flimsy substitutes for divine revelation to which we are ever prone to turn: leaning on *antiquity* and *majority* and *erudition.*

They held tenaciously to their own teaching because it was ancient. "Among us are both the greyhaired and hoary headed, more abundant in days than your father" (15:10). The antiquity of a belief is no proof of its truth. In our quest after truth we should be influenced by nothing save the ruling of Scripture.

They were also much inclined to lean on the number and distinction of those "with them." But majorities and minorities cannot be recognized as factors in establishing the truth.

Again, Job's opponents reposed implicit confidence in *education* and *erudition.* Their speeches are replete with personal observations, profusely seasoned with quotations from the fathers, and abound in reference to arts and sciences, but contain only one reference to the Word of God (22:22).

The knowledge of Job's friends was not of faith. They knew only what is seen. Nature was their text-book. However, they ignored that nature reveals God's *works,* but not His *ways.* These are unfolded by God's Word. Psalm

19 elaborates this distinction; its first part (verses 1-6) is occupied with the revelation of God written in the *heavens,* and its latter part (verses 7-14) with the revelation of God written in the *Word.*

The heavens recount the perfection of God's handiwork; the Scriptures make known God's dealings with His servants. In the universe about us all is order, harmony, law, symmetry. In the world of humanity all is confusion and disorder;—we read of "error," "faults," "sins," "transgressions."

This antithesis between the works of God in creation and His ways with mankind, the friends could not account for, but labored to "reconcile" it with their theory. Grounded on this false hypothesis as to the "course of the world," they inferred that all calamity is a judgment on sin, and prosperity a reward for uprightness. The position of the three friends is substantially the same, only Eliphaz supports it by experience, Bildad by tradition, Zophar by human merit.

In relating Job's sufferings only to divine judgment upon sin, in accord with their established viewpoint, the friends essentially ruled out any association of this evil with God's operations. Because Job knew his troubles were not retribution for secret sins, this viewpoint was devastating to him; it meant that there was no reason at all for this evil.

It is not calamity that oppresses and depresses, but calamity unrelated to any divine purpose, that springs from nothing and leads to nothing. If it is appointed by God for His purposes, whether or not we are aware of His purposes, it can be viewed with equanimity and borne with fortitude. God is in the darkness as well as in the light, in death as well as in life. This is what Job longed to hear, but concerning which his associates had nothing to say.

V. Gelesnoff

CONCEALED IN GOD

"To me, less than the least of all saints, was granted this grace: to bring the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations, and to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all, that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord; in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence, *through His faith*" (Eph.3:8-12).

Such astonishing revelations of God's purpose in creation are rare. Even when they are plainly expressed, without equivocation or sophistry, so as to appear quite simple to understand, comprehension of God's wisdom is nevertheless limited. Concerning recognition of God the Father and His Son, our Lord, Paul had previously declared, ". . . not in all is there this knowledge" (1 Cor.8:7).

The significance of Paul's stupendous announcement leads him to petition God: "On this behalf am I bowing my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, after Whom every kindred in the heavens and on earth is being named, that He may be giving you, in accord with the riches of His glory, to be made staunch with power, through His spirit, in the man within, Christ to dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, having been rooted and grounded in love, should be strong to grasp, together with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and depth and height—to know

the love of Christ as well which transcends knowledge—that you may be completed for the entire complement of God" (Eph.3:14-19).

Secret! Untraceable! Concealed! Were we not designated, called, and justified, then we would be quite unable to understand this transcendent revelation. These words are addressed ". . . to all the saints who are also believers in Christ Jesus." They are the very pinnacle of divine confiding! When such disclosures are confused with the evangel pertaining to the Uncircumcision and their expectation of the kingdom, then this is a clear sign of immaturity or deception.

THE FULLNESS OF TIME

There is a delightful parallel to be drawn between the guardian shepherds on the night of the nativity, and those to whom Paul was writing. Small wonder that these shepherds were startled! Small wonder that they came hurrying into Bethlehem! We may also feel some sympathy with those who remained in the fields to tend the flocks. An essential difference is that not a single one of the ecclesia will be left behind when they are snatched away in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air!

But what news of the nativity! What incredible, glorious news! The heavenly host could not contain their joy at the significance of the birth of the royal Babe. God's great purpose for all creation was centered in the wonderful gift of His dear Son.

These same host could not possibly anticipate Golgotha. When it occurred, how perplexed they must have been until the exaltation, when Christ Jesus was raised and presented in celestial glory. And yet, once more we are able to perceive that full realization and acceptance of His just and worthy honors was not granted to all, *even among the celestials.*

Humanity is apt to become preoccupied with God's purpose here on earth, but those who recognize the glories of His Son soon come to perceive His universal dignity. Indeed, in the astounding announcement which the apostle declared, he stressed that the multifarious wisdom of God was to be made known *"through the ecclesia."* Yet there are some of this privileged body who are inclined to overlook the fact that their very unworthiness is a necessary contrast to enhance the gracious love which the Father lavishes on His children. Lessons concerning the gratuitous grace of this love are made crystal clear when lavished on the least deserving of all.

"For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:8-10).

Paul, who humbly wrote, "Make room for us" (1 Cor.7:2), kept the above glorious revelation to himself for over fourteen years! He fully understood that in the fullness of time he would be able to share his delightful news, but first, paralleling the inevitable ascending from tender faith to maturity, there was a vital need for patience and gentle encouragement. What must that have meant for him? How could we have subdued our elation?

What forbearance and pathos there is in his words; "And I am acquainted with such a man (whether in a body or outside of the body I am not aware—God is aware) that he was snatched away into paradise and hears ineffable declarations, which it is not allowed a man to speak" (2 Cor.12:3,4).

We have no means of knowing what prompted the timing of disclosure of God's revelation through His apostle, but we do know for certain that it would have come as an essential development to those who had carefully followed

Paul's teaching. Even so, none could possibly have speculated the distinct honor which God then revealed. Never before had the celestial destiny of the ecclesia been set forth. But, if the honor was startling to the ecclesia, what must it have meant to the celestial sovereignties and authorities?

AMONG THE CELESTIALS

The entire Ephesian epistle is a comprehensive declaration of God's love for His Son, our Lord, but in a breathtaking blaze of glory, we are uplifted by the statement that as part of the high honors justifiably bestowed upon the Son, He is given, ". . . as Head over all to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all" (1:22,23)!

Already, in spirit, we are confirmed as being seated together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus. Did Paul, as he tenderly entreated and instructed, provide hints concerning the celestial destiny of the ecclesia as he wrote, "Are you not aware that we shall be judging messengers, not to mention life's affairs?" (1 Cor.5:3). In the light of his prior knowledge, there can surely be no misunderstanding that he plainly taught a future, blessed fullness of realization in his words regarding seeing, no longer out of an instalment, but face to face (13:12).

Although he withheld the secret of celestial honors revealed in the Ephesian epistle, he was able to provide a powerful encouragement in divulging the blessed secret of resurrection to the stumbling ecclesia in Corinth.

The reality of our present humiliation is far removed from the glories or our expectation. Together with the apostle we also are considered weak, stupid and dishonored. Our message is rejected, yet we persist. How else may we reflect just a little of the grace which is lavished? Like Paul, we rejoice in infirmities, for Christ's sake.

In the closing words of this mighty epistle of Ephesians,

Paul urges all to receive the defensive armor against the stratagems of the Adversary, emphasizing that we are not to wrestle with flesh and blood, but ". . . *with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials*" (6:12).

This can only mean that these same forces must regard the future exaltation of the ecclesia with some trepidation. If God were *all* in these celestials, then surely they would anticipate and welcome the Lord's brethren in their transformed glory, with open arms. Are these, as with humanity, also indifferent to the glory of God's Son? In their arrogance do they view the terrestrial with contempt? It requires no special imagination to understand that there is a need, and that need is for a realization of the immensity and wonder of God's love. God's wisdom chooses the ignoble and contemptible to be disgracing the wise. This aspect of God's purpose confounds humanity. It is equally enigmatic to the celestials. Once more, we are instructed that this wise choosing was a secret; a wisdom, ". . . *which has been concealed*" (1 Cor.2:7).

BE REJOICING

And thus God's glorious purpose in creation unfolds. There is no experiment; no adaptation. True, there is adjustment. Our Lord made this perfectly clear when He explained to His disciples why He began to speak in parables: "Now answering, He said to them that 'To you has it been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of the heavens, yet to those it has not been given. For anyone who has, to him shall be given, and he shall have a superfluity. Yet anyone who has not, that also which he has shall be taken away from him. Therefore in parables am I speaking to them, seeing that, observing, they are not observing, and hearing, they are not hearing, neither are they understanding' " (Matt.13:11-13).

Jesus then declared the solemn prophecy of Isaiah con-

cerning the nation of Israel, and to this very day, following on Paul's quotation of this same prophecy (Acts 28:26-28), this special people, beloved because of the fathers, are set aside, in callousness. "For unregretted are the graces and the calling of God. For even as you once were stubborn toward God, yet now were shown mercy at their stubbornness, thus these also are now stubborn to this mercy of yours, that now they also may be shown mercy. *For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all*" (Rom.11:29-32). Once again, we must be careful to note that these words were addressed to ". . . the called of Jesus Christ."

"Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:4-7). Worry can cause real physical disability, even death. But genuine peace is imparted when we learn of God's loving, immutable purpose which nothing in this whole wide universe can possibly frustrate. We may indeed be rejoicing in the Lord!

The special revelation which we have been considering is a powerful encouragement for peace in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Just as it was gradually unfolded, then we may rest assured that there are still many such rich disclosures in our Father's superabounding love for all creation.

"Now to Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eons of the eons! Amen!" (Eph.3:20,21).

Donald Fielding

NOT ALREADY PERFECTED

OUR IMPERFECTIONS in the flesh can be a real spoiler of spiritual joy. Our awareness of not perfectly measuring up to the standard set before us by Paul to walk worthily of the calling with which we were called is often overpowering. As a consequence, the peace of God does *not always* fill our hearts and minds. How do we cope with this? We will give twelve points which we hope will be helpful in "endurance and patience with joy" (Col.1:11).

1. As long as we are here in our terrestrial tabernacle, we know that God is not finished fashioning and framing us. From Colossians 1:12 we learn that our heavenly Father is *making us competent* for the allotment awaiting us. Thus, let us not run ahead of Him, but let us be gracious with others and ourselves.

2. For reasons best known to God, we have been given only an earnest of His holy spirit and not as yet a full measure. But how good and encouraging to know that we also have been sealed with the holy spirit of promise for the day of deliverance (Eph.1:13; 4:30). Furthermore, we have not been given a full measure of faith, but a limited measure (Rom.12:3). Some receive more than others. That is one reason why we should never compare ourselves with ourselves (2 Cor.10:12), but be as helpful and lenient as can be, without being presumptuous or condescending. We are all objects of God's grace.

3. The apostle Paul said in Philippians 4:11 that he had *learned* to be content. This means to us that Paul was not born with that blessing, but that in the "school of God" he

had learned it. Some of us may not learn it until the last day in "school." Paul learned a very important lesson spoken of in 2 Corinthians 12:9. We are thankful for the many precious declarations given in this administration of grace, but we should be especially grateful for the one given to Paul when he had earnestly prayed for the removal of an infirmity (imperfection). Paul simply was told, "Sufficient for you is My grace." This might be called one of the understatements of the eons. What more and what better can be granted us in our infirmities than knowing that we have been saved by grace and in grace (that is into the sphere of grace). As a fish in the ocean encounters water always, in all its movements, so we, in all our experiences in "school," encounter God's grace in Christ Jesus no matter how many imperfections we still have.

4. Since we will never come in this life to that degree of perfection that will allow us to say with honesty that we practice flawlessly the standard set before us, it is very helpful to consider what Peter, as a disciple, experienced when he was granted permission to walk on the water toward Jesus (Matt.14:27-33). As long as He kept his eyes focused on His Lord, he was successful. When he looked at the billowing waves, he became afraid and began to sink. Of course, Jesus saved him. One important lesson to learn from Peter's experience is to keep our focus on the truth as it was revealed to Paul by our glorified Lord and Saviour. The truth will be making us free, also from the frustrations of our imperfections.

5. Yes, as we walk on the stormy sea of life (perhaps too many times with a sinking feeling), we would heed Paul's entreaty, "Do not worry about anything" (Phil.4:6). That includes, not worrying about the fact that we are not as yet perfect. How may we accomplish this? Simply by keeping in mind that because of the death of Christ we will be presented holy and flawless and unimpeachable in His sight

(Col.1:21,22). This is a powerful way to cope with such shortcomings as fear and worry, or anything else that tends to make us aware of our imperfections.

6. Someone has said that we must never look back "when trying to plow a straight furrow." For spiritual maturity it is very important not to look back on any successes or any failures we have experienced. This does not mean to be dishonest and to pretend that we are capable through mental acrobatics to remove from our memory past experiences, good and bad. No, it simply means not to live by our experiences and feelings; but to let God's declarations concerning His grace in Christ, and His operation in this administration of grace determine our daily walk *and feelings.*

7. While we are in this tabernacle of flesh, we need to comprehend the meaning of what Paul says when he uses the word "reckoning" in Romans 6:11. "Thus you also, be *reckoning* yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, *yet living to God* in Christ Jesus, our Lord." Now, since "sin" means "missing the mark," then we have here a basis for not looking at our failures. The standing, or position we have with God is secure in Christ Jesus, and since nothing can separate us from the love of God (Rom.8:31-35), we have very much to encourage us to live by *God's success in Christ Jesus.*

8. Sometimes we wonder what would happen if God granted us complete maturity, and mastery over the flesh at this time. Would it not make us difficult to live with? Just suppose that, for instance, we could tell another that we never worry about anything anymore. Would that not sound conceited and unreal? Would that not make us walk about with an air of self-righteousness? How wonderful and humbling to realize that we are given God's righteousness in Christ Jesus in Whom we are instructed to boast (1 Cor.1:31).

9. It is more realistic to *pursue* joyfully that for which

we have been grasped. Paul said it so well in Philippians 3:12-14. "Not that I already obtained, *or am already perfected.* Yet I am pursuing, if I may be grasping also that for which I was grasped also by Christ Jesus. Brethren, not as yet am I reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one thing—forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus."

In this passage Paul plainly acknowledges that he does not consider himself to be perfect. He also states that he is not dwelling on those things that are behind him. And is it not interesting that (as mentioned above under #3) Paul, nevertheless, *has learned to be content.* He is content because he revels in the truths of justification, conciliation and glorification (in spirit he—and we as well—have already been given every spiritual blessing among the celestials in Christ, Eph.1:3). He does not allow his imperfections to make him "uptight." Instead, he is living by the perfection he has in Christ Jesus. This gives him a great amount of energy in the pursuit of grasping and laying hold on eonian life. The marvelous truths he was commissioned to proclaim, plus his constant contact in prayer with the God of all power, wisdom and love, enabled him to live by faith and to cast out frustration. He encouraged us to imitate him.

10. The physical conditions of life can at times be very trying. We are not asked to become unnatural, but the Scripture says that we do not sorrow as the world does (1 Thess.4:13). We do groan, yet our groaning is different from the groaning and moaning that goes on in society. We are entreated to do all without murmurings and reasonings (Phil.2:14), yet the difficulties of life often cause us tears and sadness while we rejoice in the truth that all is out of, through, and for God! We are fully persuaded that all things that are taking place in our lives and in the billions of other human lives, contribute to the universal goal so

succinctly stated in 1 Corinthians 15:28—"that God may be All in all." This must mean that we, as creatures, through the experience of good and evil, have to become nothing in ourselves. Creatures can only find true fulfillment and perfect satisfaction by having the Creator as their all, the Creator Who has revealed Himself as Father, and has told us that we belong to His family (Eph.2:19). How good to know that God is establishing a family relationship with His creatures; not a cold business-like relationship, but a relationship of intimacy and love!

11. It is very interesting to read in Hebrews that Christ learned obedience by the things He suffered. We do not have to learn obedience *but we may learn contentment.* And this while we suffer from many imperfections. It is a great relief that we are complete in Christ (Col.2:10), and live by His faith (Gal.2:20). This indeed, is more than enough to help us forget our own short comings, and to be invigorated for positive living. This positive living is to be understood not merely as being free from worry (although that is very important), but to rejoice in serving the Lord and to remember that the Lord is always near. The more we rejoice in the Lord the less we worry in our imperfections. That it is important to rejoice is clearly indicated in Philippians 4:4, "Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing!"; as well as in Romans 15:13, "Now may the God of expectation be filling you with all joy and peace in believing, for you to be superabounding in expectation, in the power of holy spirit."

12. We feel that it is very important to keep in mind that the Great Potter is ultimately the One Who will achieve all these commendable qualities in us. In Ephesians 2:10 it says that we are *His achievement.* and in Philippians 2:13 it clearly states that God is "operating in us *to will* as well as *to work* for the sake of His delight." Isn't it marvelous to know that it all depends upon Him to what degree we

succeed? This knowledge is invigorating and of tremendous importance in terms of worthy walk. This helps us to avoid indulging in too much introspection or "navel-gazing." Let us *look up,* for our deliverance is drawing near!

May these twelve points help us to cope victoriously with the "painful" awareness of not always being able to perfectly walk worthily, to banish worrying, and to bask in the peace of God. These points, of course, are not given as an excuse for our imperfections. On the contrary, we hope that a proper reading of these may be of great help in becoming more involved in pursuing the goal of walking worthily, in the spirit of contentment and true rejoicing in full appreciation of the perfection we have in Christ Jesus our Saviour and Lord.

Peter Feddema

OCTOBER CONFERENCES

The Autumn Fellowship in Baldwin, Michigan is scheduled this year for October 4-6 at the Grace and Truth Chapel. Andrew Maclarty (editor of *Grace and Truth* magazine) from Nottingham, England, is planning to attend, as well as to bring messages from God's Word. Other speakers planning to attend include Phil Scranton, Jeff Priddy and Dean Hough. Meetings begin at 9:30 Friday morning and conclude about noon on Sunday. For further information contact Dean Hough (daytime phone: 810-798-8131).

Brother Maclarty will also be speaking at the monthly meeting in Waterloo, Ontario on October 12. Harry Watts of Kitchener, Ontario, can supply further information concerning this time of fellowship (phone: 519-745-3154).

REPORTS

Pastor Rick Farwell from Wagener, South Carolina, and Jeff Priddy from Greenwich, Ohio, brought messages of grace and expectation during a weekend conference in Waterloo, Ontario, May 10-12. Four weeks later, Brother Priddy hosted a similar series of meetings in Willard, Ohio. There was good attendance on both occasions with gratifying interest in the evangel given to Paul.

THE EVANGEL OF THE UNCIRCUMCISION

(Galatians 2:6-14)

In Galatians 2:3, Paul refers to the time when "not even Titus, who is with me, being a Greek, is *compelled* to be circumcised." This was during the period of Paul's second visit to the holy city, after the lapse of fourteen years, when he again went up to Jerusalem together with Barnabas, taking Titus along with him (2:1). Yet while not even Titus, who was with Paul, being a Greek, was *compelled* to be circumcised, Paul adds that nonetheless, "it was because of the false brethren who were smuggled in, who came in by the way to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, that they shall be enslaving us—"(2:4). That is—and the sense is so evident that Paul breaks off his words without actually expressing his thought—it was because of the claims (*cp* Acts 15:1,2,5) of certain "false brethren" that Titus *was* then *pressed* by some to be circumcised, even though even these could not well *compel* him to undergo the rite, contrary to the counsel of the pillars of the Jerusalem ecclesia.

Now from those reputed to be somewhat—what kind they once were is of no consequence to me (God is not taking up the human aspect)—for to me those of repute submitted nothing. But, on the contrary, perceiving that I have been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, according as Peter of the Circumcision (for He Who operates in Peter for the apostleship of the Circumcision operates in me also for the nations), and, knowing the grace which is being given to me, James and Cephas and John, who are supposed to be pillars, give to me and Barnabas the

right hand of fellowship, that we, indeed, are to be for the nations, yet they for the Circumcision—only that we may be remembering the poor, which same thing I endeavor also to do. (2:6-10)

In speaking of the twelve as "those reputed to be somewhat," Paul should not be understood as disparaging them. Paul does not refer to any exalted claims which the twelve made for themselves, but to those advanced in favor of the twelve by the circumcisionists, in the interests of their own legalistic devisings.

Those who were apostles before Paul "submitted nothing" to him. The twelve acknowledged the message and ministry of Paul as sufficient unto itself. Paul's evangel needed no *addition*—and received none—from the twelve. But, on the contrary, since God was *operating* in Paul for the apostleship of the nations, as well as in Peter for that of the Circumcision, the twelve *perceived* that Paul had been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, according as Peter of the Circumcision. Hence, James, Cephas, and John "knew" the grace which was being given to Paul. As a result, they gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, acknowledging that Paul and Barnabas were to be for the nations, yet they themselves for the Circumcision. The only word they wished to add was a request that Paul and his fellow workers may be remembering the poor among the Jews, which same thing, as Paul assures us, he endeavored also to do.

Considered in itself, it is possible to understand the phrase "the evangel of the Uncircumcision" as a metonymy for "the evangel*ization* of the Uncircumcision." But it is not translation but interpretation to render this phrase, as in most modern Bibles, "the gospel *to* the Uncircumcision." Such a rendering supports the popular claim that in all respects Paul's gospel is the same as that of the twelve. It gives credence as well to the related common assertion

that by the words "the gospel of Christ," we are to understand a *singular* message of good news which, in all particulars, applies to all who are in Christ.

Both "Uncircumcision" and "Circumcision" are in the genitive case. As will be explained later in this article, the sign of the genitive in English is OF- not TO-. Ideally, objective translation requires the former and precludes the latter. There may be a few cases where, due to the idiosyncracies of English, good diction may be strained if the genitive should be represented by OF. Nearly always, however, and certainly in this case at hand, it makes perfectly good English to say "the evangel of the Uncircumcision," as much so as to say, "the epistles of the apostle Paul." They are not the epistles *to* the apostle Paul, but the apostle Paul's epistles. Similarly, Paul does not speak of the evangel *to* the Uncircumcision, but of the Uncircumcision's evangel.

No one claims that the phrase "the apostleship *of* the Circumcision" (2:8), ought to be translated "the apostleship *to* the Circumcision." Further, it should be noted that by the words which follow in verse 9, "we, indeed, are to be *for* [lit., "in*to*"] the nations, yet they *for* [i.e., "in*to*"] the Circumcision," any general thought of evangelization directed, respectively, *to* both the nations and the Circumcision is thereby adequately expressed. Hence it becomes all the more untenable to render verse 7 as "the evangel *to* the Uncircumcision."

We are plainly told that the One Who operates in Peter for the apostleship *of* the Circumcision, is the One Who operates in Paul also for (the apostleship of) the nations. And, the word to us also is, that *Paul* has been entrusted with the *evangel of* the Uncircumcision, according as *Peter* (with the evangel) *of* the Circumcision. Let us accept the Scripture for what it says, while adjusting our faith accordingly.

Paul speaks explicitly of "the evangel *which* I am heralding among the nations" (2:2); "the evangel *which* is being

brought by me" (1:11); *which* he neither accepted from man nor was taught by man, that instead came to him "through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:12). The apostle himself will inform us as to its particulars. If we *believe* and *understand* both the revelations of Paul's evangel, according to Christ Himself, as well as the teachings of the twelve according as the Lord instructed them, we will soon know whether Paul's evangel "of the Uncircumcision" is a fresh revelation, distinct in various respects from the teaching of the twelve, or is, however expressed, essentially merely a restatement of their teaching.

It is not that the evangel of the Uncircumcision is the exclusive province of those of the nations; nor is it that the evangel of the Circumcision debars all but those who are Israelites by nature. It is rather that the evangel of the Uncircumcision is the evangel which is primarily for those of the nations, as brought to the nations through the ministry of the apostle Paul, who is the apostle of the nations (Rom.11:13; *cp* 1 Tim.2:7; 2 Tim.1:11; Eph.3:8).

Certain Israelites (such as Paul himself) are also called and blessed according to that evangel which, characteristically, is the evangel of the *Un*circumcision. Similarly, certain non-Israelites were themselves called and blessed according to that evangel which, characteristically, is the evangel of the Circumcision.

In the former case, any such descendants of Jacob lose their standing as Israelites and forfeit the advantages of the law—while concomitantly gaining the even greater benefits of the evangel of the Uncircumcision. If they are faithful, like Paul, they gladly forfeit all such benefits of flesh, while deeming them mere refuse (*cf* Phil.3:4-8).

In the latter case, like those of old who sojourned in Israel, any such non-Israelite believers who were nonetheless called and blessed according to the evangel of the Circumcision, were required to heed the law of Yahweh, which

attended that evangel. Any such ones must become proselytes (*cf* Acts 2:10; 6:5; 13:43); that is, they must "come toward" Israel and observe the "one law," which applied not only to the native-born, but to the naturalized citizen as well (Ex.12:49). Initially, such ones had to undergo the rite of circumcision; subsequently, they would make a passover to Yahweh. They would then be deemed "natives of the land [of Israel]" (Ex.12:48,49). As naturalized Israelites, they would also be required to keep from violating the sabbaths, as well as to keep their hand from any evil, according to the law of Moses. Only thus could they hold fast to Yahweh's covenant (Isa.56:1-7; *cp* Acts 15:21) and be *worthy* of the resurrection of the *just* (*cf* Luke 14:14; 20:35; *cp* Matt.5:17-20; 7:21-23).

Thus it is fitting for Paul to declare that God will be justifying the Circumcision "*out* of faith" and the Uncircumcision "*through the* faith" (Rom.3:30). In each case, the faith which justifies is "Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22); "the faith of Jesus" (Rom.3:26). As in Romans 11:36, where it is revealed that all is not only *out* of God, but *through* God as well, here too in Romans 3:30, it is certainly likewise true that, under God, both the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision owe not only the origin but the agency of their justification as well to the faith of Christ.

Yet in the case of the Circumcision believers, who must center much of their attention upon their own observance of the law, it is not so obvious that, even so, their justification is solely out of Jesus Christ's faith. After all, this truth, as such, is not even a part of the evangel of the Circumcision, even though it is certainly true concerning them, even as Paul declares.

However, in the case of the believers of the Uncircumcision, who are not under law at all (Rom.6:14), for whom Grace reigns even where sin increases (Rom.5:20,21), whose very evangel *brings to the forefront* the fact that

their justification is not only out of (the faith of) Christ, but is *through* (the faith of) Christ as well, it becomes fitting for Paul to emphasize that God will be justifying them "*through the* faith [of Christ]."

FEAR AND HYPOCRISY

Now when Cephas came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, for he was self-censured. For, before the coming of some from James, he ate together with those of the nations. Yet when they came, he shrank back, and severed himself, fearing those of the Circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also play the hypocrite with him, so that Barnabas also was led away with their hypocrisy. (2:11-13)

Cephas was "self-censured" concerning his hypocrisy; he knew he was wrong and experienced guilt. Before the coming of "some from James," he had eaten together with those of the nations. "Yet when they came, he shrank back, and severed himself, *fearing* those of the Circumcision." Then the rest of the Jews joined in, and they too played the hypocrite, together with him. They were all aware that even though the believers of the Uncircumcision did not observe the law, this was no reason to decline their fellowship, much less to sever themselves from them. It was those who came "from James" who were in the wrong, not Paul or the believers of the Uncircumcision. In supposing that those of the Uncircumcision must be circumcised and keep the law if they would be saved (*cf* Acts 15:1,2,5), or at this juncture, at least in imposing their own opinions as to practical holiness and perfection upon others, these unnamed men behaved most improperly. Yet to have such a profound influence not only upon Cephas but upon the rest of the Jews and even Barnabas besides, they must have been highly esteemed men of renown. Yet even so, they were in fact but self-appointed authoritarians engaging in shameful (albeit highly effective) fear tactics.

But when I perceived that they are not correct in their attitude toward the truth of the evangel, I said to Cephas in front of all, "If you, being inherently a Jew, are living as the nations, and not as the Jews, how are you compelling the nations to be judaizing?" (2:14).

It was not that they were wholly ignorant of the evangel heralded by Paul, but that they were incorrect in their *attitude* concerning it. They failed to give it sufficient honor and recognition. Thus under the duress of circumstance, their remarkable fear of these Circumcision authoritarians, became the decisive influence in determining their behavior.

Cephas was "inherently" (i.e., originally, by right) a Jew; it was not that he had become a naturalized citizen, but that he was a Jew "by nature" (*cp* 2:15). Even so, in acknowledgement of Paul's evangel, Cephas properly *had been* living "as [those of the] nations" live, and "not as Jews," who commonly had little or no association with non-Jews. This is simply to say that in respect of free intercourse with those of the nations, Cephas, hitherto, had behaved as if he himself were one of the nations. Yet when some formidable ones from James came, due to his fear of these men of the Circumcision, he shrank back and even went so far as to sever himself from those of the nations.

How is it, then, Paul asks, that *you*, Cephas, are *compelling* the nations to be judaizing? It was by no means Peter's *teaching*, in word, that judaizing was compulsory for those of the nations; in fact, earlier, he had spoken against any such claim (*cf* Acts 15:7-11). Even though Cephas did not verbally affirm that it was compulsory for the nations to be judaizing, nevertheless, by his actions, he *effectually* did this very thing. That is, in light of Cephas' own behavior, the non-Jewish believers might well conclude that the only way for them to be accepted as faithful at least by their Jewish fellow believers if not by God Himself as well, would be by their taking up with Judaism. How inconsis-

tent it was of Cephas to behave as he did, in light of the strong, negative influence that this would bring to bear upon the believers of the nations.

THROUGH FAITH *OF* CHRIST, OR FAITH *IN* CHRIST?

In the next article in this series, we intend to consider Galatians 2:16, which is centered in the revelation that "we may be justified through the *faith of Christ* and not by works of law." But in preparation for that study, we first need to consider the translation itself, "faith *of* Christ." This becomes a special need since most modern translations, even as they render "the evangel *of* the Uncircumcision" (2:7) as "the gospel *to* the uncircumcised" (e.g., the NASB), translate "faith of Christ" similarly, as "faith *in* Christ."

This question as to the sense of the phrase, "the faith *x* Christ," is by no means solely a question of grammar; yet it is indeed a question in which grammatical issues are an important consideration. Grammatically, the question as to what is to be understood by *pistis Iesou Christou* (i.e., "faith *x* Jesus Christ"), is a question of the usage of the *genitive* case. Grammatical *case* is the syntactical relationship of a noun, pronoun, or adjective to other words in a sentence, generally indicated by declensional endings in inflected languages (such as Greek), or by prepositions and word order in non-inflected languages (such as English).

The Greek genitive case includes the English possessive case. The genitive's presence is indicated in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT'S sublinear by OF- (when no connective is present; e.g., "son *of* David," Matt.1:20). OF is intended as a neutral means by which to indicate the genitive (that is, to indicate that, in some respect, "this is *of* that").

Though the Concordant Version sometimes renders the genitive as an adjective (e.g., "His messengers OF-POWER" as "**His power**ful **messengers**," 2 Thess.1:7), otherwise,

the CV nearly always represents the genitive case by the English "of."[1]

The genitive case is the case of genus or kind. It is the *specifying* case; the case of appurtenance. The function of the genitive is largely adjectival (e.g., "the day of preparation," was the preparation day; Luke 23:54).[2] Indeed, the Concordant Version renders "[after] the exile OF-BABYLON," as "[after] **the Babylon**ian **exile**" (Matt.1:12). Similarly, "the blasphemy of the spirit" (Matt.12:31), in the Greek syntax, is "THE . . . OF THE spirit blasphemy."

The usual claim, however, is that the genitive "OF-Christ faith" is nonetheless translated true to sense as "faith *in* Christ," since, we are told, this phrase is an "objective genitive." It is said that as the phrase "faith of God" in Mark 11:22[3] concerns man's faith God-ward, the Pauline phrase "faith of Christ" concerns man's faith Christ-ward.

The answer to this, of course, is that it does not follow that if, in the nature of the case, "faith of God" in the preceding text involves man's faith God-ward, "faith of Christ,"

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1. An exception is the genitive "faith OF-TRUTH" in 2 Thessalonians 2:13, which the 1976 edition renders "**faith** in the **truth**." Perhaps the idiom is along the lines of the thought that the Thessalonians' faith partook of the nature of truth. Thus it was "of-truth faith." Truth indeed fosters confidence in itself. Like ourselves, the Thessalonians found faith growing in them as they received truth; hence, "faith OF-TRUTH."

2. *cp* A. T. Robertson, A GRAMMAR OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT, IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH, p.493; Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1934.

3. "And answering, Jesus is saying to them, 'if you have *faith of God,* verily, I am saying to you that whosoever may be saying to this mountain, 'Be picked up and cast into the sea,' and may not be doubting in his heart, but should be believing that what he is speaking is occurring, it shall be his, whatsoever he may be saying." It should be noted that *genuine* "OF-God faith" (as opposed to mere fleshly credulity in its name), necessarily incorporates the ablative sense of faith which is *from* God, according as He has spoken. Only then, in turn, does it become faith that is also God-ward.

as Paul uses this expression, refers to man's faith Christward. By such faulty logic as this, nearly anything can be "proved." Yet beyond such fallacious arguments, there is little to commend the claim that "faith of Christ" means *man's* faith *in* Christ.

In fact, the main reason for the acceptance of this interpretation (which is made a part of the translation itself in most modern Bibles) is the age-old tradition that affirms that one is saved by his own believing. Such a notion is then read into the text. In turn, it is further claimed that through such very passages, Paul himself sets forth the self-same teaching. Thus, through such circular reasoning, the rendering "faith *in* Christ" is justified by its advocates.

All that the Greek says is: OF-Christ faith; that is, faith that, in some respect, has reference, or relates to Christ. The translation "faith *in* Christ," then, is not really a translation at all, but an interpretation. And, as popularly understood, it is certainly a mistaken interpretation as well.

Even on grammatical grounds the case here for an "objective" genitive (i.e., for a faith that is directed Christward) is very weak. Yet if one insists on such an interpretation, it would then become necessary to refer this "faith in Christ" *to God*, not to man, in order for this expression to accord with the evangel itself, the revelation that justification is gratuitous and in grace, through the deliverance *which is in Christ Jesus.*

In the Pauline epistles, apart from the disputed cases in which the genitive is "Christ" or its equivalent, in every case (approximately twenty-four instances) in which "faith" is followed by a proper noun or pronoun in the genitive case, the genitive is unmistakably subjective. Twenty instances refer to the faith of believers; one to the faith of anyone who believes; two to the faith of Abraham; and one to the faithfulness of God.

When Paul wishes to speak of the believer's faith in (i.e., "into") Christ, he does so not by means of a genitive noun apart from a preposition, but by means of an accusative (i.e., objective) noun together with an accusative preposition: ". . . rejoicing and observing your order and the stability of your faith *in* (i.e., "into") Christ" (Col.2:5).

A parallel expression to the *faith* of Christ, is that of the *grace* of Christ: "*grace* which is *of* the One Man, *Jesus Christ*" (Rom.5:15). It would never occur to anyone to translate this text as "grace *in* Christ," much less to claim that it speaks of the *believer's* grace! Yet the only real difference between the genitive "of Christ" here and those which we have considered elsewhere, is that here the phrase is appended as a modifier of grace, while in the others (as in Galatians 2:20) the same phrase functions as a modifier of faith.

Similarly, just as Romans 3:3 speaks of "the faith(fulness) of God," Romans 3:22,26 speaks of the "faith(fulness) of Jesus Christ," the "faith(fulness) of Jesus." Further, the phrase "the faith of Abraham" in Romans 4:16 forms a precise formal parallel to the phrase "the faith of Jesus" in Romans 3:26. Thus, as these parallels between the faith of Abraham and the faith of Christ make clear, "the faith of Christ" refers to His faithful obedience unto death; our Lord's trust in God concerning the cross.

The very notion that those texts which say "faith of Christ" nonetheless have in view faith *in* Christ—*namely the believer's own faith in Christ*—is but the stepchild of the long-standing tradition that affirms that "justification *by* faith" means man's justification not by his performing works of law, but by his acceptance of Christ and assenting to faith in Him. The idea is that man saves himself, or if it is preferred, qualifies for God to save him, not by a former method, that of performing righteous deeds, but by a new method, that of acquiescing in faith.

Traditional theology is not merely saying that salvation comes upon believing in Christ, and not apart from or

prior to. What it is also saying (even if more implicitly than explicitly) is that salvation is of the nature of an exchange, a reward, requital, or compensation. When preachers say that salvation is "by faith [i.e., man's faith]," they are using "by" in a transactional sense, according to the meeting of a requirement (as in, "by doing your work, you are entitled to your wages").

The phrase faith OF-Christ, however, is parallel to and must agree with the essence of the evangel itself, the revelation that we are "being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance *which is in Christ Jesus*" (Rom.3:24). The deliverance is not said to be through *our faith in* Christ Jesus, but through Christ Jesus Himself. Similarly, it is not revealed that we were conciliated to God through *our faith in* the death of His Son, but that we were conciliated to God *through the death of* His Son (Rom.5:10). Further, it will not do to attempt to avoid this truth by artfully claiming that while this is so, it is only so on the "condition" (i.e., based upon a requirement) that we accept and believe on Christ. Any such claim is spurious; for we are not justified on a "conditional" basis that we meet some sort of requirement. Instead, we are justified apart from law, on a gratuitous and gracious basis, which precludes any and all requirements.

Therefore, all passages which declaim "the faith of Jesus Christ," out of which we are justified, must be understood to be referring to a faith which is His own: Christ's own perfect faith—not man's faulty faith in Him.

Of course we ourselves can only *speak* of our justification by means of our own faith, since it is by faith that we apprehend what God has achieved through the work of the cross, even as what He will yet achieve in the eons ahead, when His promises are fulfilled. Still, the saint's own faith only gains for him a recognition of the justification which God has already established for him—through the faith *of* Christ (*cf* Rom.4:25,5:1; 5:9). J.R.C.

Contents:

193 Editorial
195 The Deity of God
203 Salvation and Judgment
in the Book of Matthew
211 Enoch and Elijah
214 A Witness in the Heavens
226 "Through the Faith of Christ"
235 "Be Conciliated to God"

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 1996
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-SEVEN

EDITORIAL

UPON OCCASION, we are asked whether the believer ought to participate in such activities as voting or jury service. We are mindful that for some, such involvements are practically equated with patriotism. One may, as such, however, love and support his country, without necessarily appraising all of the public services of its citizens as being personally expedient for himself. Hence, while I hesitate to speak at all of such things, I would like to say this:

Even though neither voting nor jury service are my personal custom, it is not that I am "against" either of these practices; nor is it that I necessarily "disagree" with other believers who participate in them. I would never wish to make a law about such things; whether for myself or others. It is only that, in general and as a whole, I wish to minimize my own involvement with secular government, even as with human forms of justice. (If I were required to participate, I would not refuse to do so; but, privately, would seek to minimize my *involvement.*)

I do, however, see any such *active involvements* (when that is what they are) as counter-productive to leading a mild and quiet life in all devoutness (1 Tim.2:2). We cannot occupy ourselves with issues of civil or political injustice—much less engage in the practice of heaping contumely upon national leaders—while at the same time thinking on things above. Such ones may *be* a "whitewashed wall" (Acts 23:3), but we should not decry them thus, "for it is written that, 'Of your people's chief you shall *not* be declaring evil'" (Acts 23:5; cit. Ex.22:28).

I realize that others will feel that they should do their part to minimize evil in the world through their participation in

such very activities as voting and jury service. I would reply, however, that, for myself, my participation in any such activities—assuming that this would require my regular or active involvement as a prerequisite to proper service—while not making the world discernibly better, might well make *me* discernibly worse—to all who have eyes to see.

This is not to say that there may not be some spiritual ones who regularly participate in such things. Whether they might not be still more spiritual were it not for such distractions, is a separate question.

It is not the act of minor jury service, not to mention mere formal voting, that concerns me; it is rather the *spirit* attending human politics and civil justice—which the *active* participant therein cannot avoid—which I find spiritually enervating.

Of course for many believers, ones who are not sensitive to such considerations, it may be that their routine participation in such activities has little if any negative impact upon their lives, and in some respects even does them good. In any case, I certainly respect the service of all who participate in these activities, on behalf of societal good. And, I do not at all suppose that for any, mere abstinence from such service will make one either a better citizen or a more consecrated believer.

While I am persuaded as to what is best for me in these matters, I realize that this may not seem best—or even be best—for many others. I trust that for those for whom it is, in fact, expedient to avoid such involvements, this will become evident to them. And, I would say to all, that we should not be "*over*weening, beyond what [our individual] disposition must be." Let each one of us, rather, "be of a sane disposition as God parts to each the measure of faith" (Rom. 12:3). May we all, then, seek to be faithful "where we are," within our present level of maturity, rather than attempting to behave at a level quite beyond ourselves. J.R.C.

THE DEITY OF GOD

The many editorials written by A. E. Knoch for this magazine through the years contain a rich testimony to the deity of God. Reliance on the living God, His power, righteousness and love, as it is centered in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, is a major theme throughout these brief writings. Starting with the following selections, slightly adapted for current needs, we propose to reprint some of these editorial thoughts as a series of meditations on the greatness of our God and His Word. We pray this will be helpful to many in the midst of their personal problems and struggles, directing their hearts into a growing confidence in God and the assurance of faith:

THE POTENCY OF TRUTH

The fancied difficulties arising from a belief in the universal reconciliation are nothing compared with the traditional beliefs about fate of the "non-elect" dead. The millions who never heard the evangel and had humanly speaking not the slightest opportunity to believe—what of them? What of the character of God Himself, Who seems *unable* to bring His creation into harmony with His will and heart? What of the work of Christ as compared with the success of the Adversary?

There is no truth so potent as that of Colossians 1:20 in reaching those whom the traditional teaching has failed to touch. Nothing is so powerful in the case of the open infidel. Much of the gospel effort of today has lost its vitality and knows little of God's sovereign grace. God grant that there may be a little reviving and that the recovery of these precious truths may rekindle the zeal of many, for the furtherance of the evangel!

GOD'S OWN PEACE

THE PEACE OF GOD, which is superior to every frame of mind, should preside in the hearts of all who have grasped the glories and grandeurs of our God, especially those who acknowledge Him as the only Creator and Reconciler of the universe. He commenced all, and He can bring it to its consummation. But, more than this, all is not only out of Him and for Him, but it is also *through* Him. Not only the past and the future, but the present is His concern. He is not unmindful of the stress and strain, the sorrow and the sighing, the confusion and the conflict which surround us now. Let us not be moved by these things, as though the reins had dropped from His hands, or His heart felt no concern in the tiny tribulations of this nether scene.

We have our trials in common with the world, from which we hear, above the din of the daily grind, above the hullaballoo of the medicine men who have remedies for all the earth's varied ills, above the roar of the cannon on the fighting lines, a despairing but persistent cry of "Peace! Peace!" when there is no peace. We need not deceive ourselves as to this peace, or accept the marvelous fable that the pacific dove can only live and thrive in the iron hulls of dreadnaughts and tanks, and in the air perfumed with powder and poison and flame. Armaments are not a sure antidote against warfare. We know that the world can wish for peace, but it *must* prepare for war, for that is soon to appear on God's program. This is not our peace. Indeed, our peace depends, in measure, upon the world's lack of it, for it rests on God's Word, which predicts the opposite.

We have our trials in fellowship with those whom God has called out of the world. In some countries, many have lost their very lives merely because they belonged to Him. Many a believer in other lands has had to suffer severely

in seeking to gain a livelihood. Even in so-called Christian lands the strife in the nominal churches, or between the church and state, has led to much unrest.

Beyond all this there is a special danger to the peace of those whose privilege it is to learn a little of the deeper things of God. Their own fellow sufferers for Christ and for His Word are disturbed when we present for their faith truth long lost, and now not only unknown but despised. They remind us that these things disturb the peace of the saints and, therefore, cannot be of God. They exhort us not to make His glories known, lest we divide His own, and bring further strife into the household of the saints. They want no disturbance, for they fear that God cannot work in the midst of confusion.

How contrary is this to fact and truth? When has the greatest progress been made in the things of God? In times of stagnation, or in times of stress? In the upheavals of a reformation or in the stale sessions of an established church? Let us not be disturbed when God's glorious truth brings trouble in its train. So it has ever been. It should not disturb us. Nay, it should be our delight to see God's spirit at work convicting, troubling sinners, and convincing, distressing saints. These are but the pangs of progress, the precursory pains which must ever be the prelude to light and peace. Just as evil as a whole will eventuate in good, so also will these temporary and local ills lead to a knowledge of God, which is the only sure foundation of lasting peace.

We are reminded of the sons of Israel in Egypt, when Moses and Aaron came to lead them out. What was the first effect? Because they demanded that the people leave Egypt to worship Yahweh in the wilderness, Pharaoh increased their burdens, and they had to rake together their own straw for the bricks they made. Their superintendents were smitten, and they went to Pharaoh, without avail. Then they encountered Moses and said to him,

"May Yahweh see you, and may He judge, since you have caused our scent to stink in the eyes of Pharaoh" (Ex.5:21). Poor Moses, he was a trouble maker. Most of us can sympathize with him. So he went to Yahweh and said, "Yahweh, why have You done evil to this people? And why is this that You have sent me?" (5:22).

At first, the message of light and deliverance often makes matters far worse, and God does not step in to hinder it, for this evil is a necessary part of His purpose. But, in due time, God dealt with Pharaoh, and the people were delivered with a great deliverance. Let us take this to heart. We have a marvelous message for God's dear people. In most cases it brings with it effects the very opposite of those which it promises. Our message brings unsurpassed peace—but it usually starts by stirring up strife. We have the true basis of unity—yet, at first, it may cause division. It displays and evokes in us the utmost grace and love. But its appearance may provoke exhibitions more nearly allied with detestation and hate. However, as in the case of Moses, God is only preparing for the display of His own glory by provoking its opposite at the start.

Let us not follow the example of Israel and berate God's servants when their message seems to bear contradictory fruits at first. Nor let us be like Moses, and actually take God to task for not fulfilling His promises. God sent Moses to deliver Israel from Egypt, and who will deny that He did it? We usually forget the first disappointment. So let us not be disturbed by the effect of our endeavors to make known God's glorious grace to sinner and to saint. Salvation through the blood is worth all the inconvenience it may cost. So also no amount of persecution or persuasion should keep us from proclaiming the grander glories of our God.

Just as, in the midst of the world's unrest, we may be at perfect peace, so also, in the midst of the whirlpool of theological distress, we may rest serene and unafraid, confident that God's hand is at the helm of our frail craft, and no current is too strong for Him to stem, no waves too violent for Him to pacify. He may seem to sleep, and have no care lest we perish, but how can He calm the storm if it does not arise? Let men rant and rage and roar! That is their part, and they must play it. All will subside when God's time comes to calm the commotion. Some of His saints seek to keep the storm from coming. Others fill their lungs with air and blow with all their puny might against it. Let us sit by, unafraid, and see the salvation of the Lord. Let us at least come up to the standard of Job, and bless His Name for the evil we receive at His hands.

The preciousness of our peace springs from the surrounding turmoil. Let us look upon the trials and the tumults, the opposition and the persecution, the strife and the hatred as all from God. Let us not seek to keep Him out of it by lamely alleging that He allows it. It is, indeed, contrary to His will, but necessary for His purpose. Let us value it accordingly. We should not merely endure it, but thank God for it. Then, instead of disturbing and destroying our peace, it will contribute to it.

Peace is to be found only in God. He is the only stable and immovable point in the universe. Yet it is possible for all to be at peace in Him. As sinners we received peace *with* God through the blood of Christ. As saints it is our privilege to go far beyond this, and to enjoy the peace *of* God. God is not worried as to the outcome of His eonian travail with His creatures. He knows all beforehand. But that is because every single detail of the present is not only within His control, but it fulfills its microscopic mission in preparing for and bringing about the grand consummation He has in view. That will be a time of perfect peace, but it could never be enjoyed or appreciated without the preceding panic of the present. Israel must suffer in Egypt before she can sing on the shores of the Red Sea. And God could dwell among them only as among a redeemed race.

May the peace of God preside in our hearts, not *in spite* of the unrest in the world and the strife among the saints, but *because of it!* The God *out* of Whom all is, and *into* Whom all tends, now operates all, and especially the evil, so that, in the consummation, His creatures will know good because of their experience of evil and will be able to praise and adore Him in a degree worthy of His Name and satisfying to His heart. Let us live in the realization that *all* is *through* Him now. Only thus may we really share God's own peace—the peace *of* God.

OUT AND THROUGH AND FOR

WHAT DISTINGUISHES our position from that of many others is briefly summed up in a single passage of scripture, one of the simplest, yet by far the most comprehensive in the Word of God. It is this: "*All* is *out* of Him and *through* Him and *for* Him . . ." (Rom.11:26). We find the *source* of everything in God, the *course* of everything is according to His will, and He is the *goal* of all. The realization of this sublime truth gives comfort and stability and satisfaction, but above all it glorifies God and His Christ.

All Scripture (when properly translated) is in full accord with this majestic summary of God's course with His creatures. While this truth is so simple, it solves almost all of those knotty problems of theology which make the Bible so hard to understand for many people. If those new to these things will have a little patient perseverance they will be rewarded with such a grand and glorious conception of God and His purpose and grace as will turn their theological gropings into the brightness of the noonday sun, and will not only illumine the glory of God, but the lives of those who step out of the shadows into His marvelous light.

OUT OF WHOM ALL IS

THAT *all* is out of God is the basic truth of divine revelation, yet who believes it? Almost all, even men who stand fearlessly for other truths, cannot break the bands of tradition, to acknowledge that evil as well as good is out of Him. The sad effect is that, not being able to glorify Him as *God,* they become vain in their reasonings, in their attempt to spare God the onus of evil. Almost all translators and expositors do their best to expunge this great truth from the Scriptures, so it seldom is allowed to reach our ears. When God says

> See now that I, I am He!
> And there are no other elohim beside Me.
> I Myself put to death, and I keep alive.
> I have transfixed, and I Myself shall heal. (Deut.32:39)

we listen politely, but do not think of believing what He says. God, we say, *allows, permits, bears with evil,* but of course He never began it! We are like the heathen, who usually have at least two gods, one good (whom we do not need to regard very seriously) and one evil (who is dangerous and needs to be propitiated). Yahweh Elohim Himself says:

> I am Yahweh, and there is no other;
> Except for Me, there is no Elohim . . . .
> Former of light and Creator of darkness,
> Maker of good and Creator of evil,
> I, Yahweh, make all these. (Isa.45:5,7)

The most incredible explanations are offered to keep us from the fundamental of all fundamentals, that there is only one God. Satan is usually made the creator of evil. How foolish to flatly oppose God's own words, and give His deity to another! Thanks be to Him that He alone is the Source of all, and has control of all, for only so could He bring His creation to its glorious goal! Let us revel

in one God, the Father *out* of Whom *all* is, even the evil which He will transmute into glory for Himself and blessing for His creatures!

THANKING GOD

WE HAVE the precious privilege of giving thanks at all times and for all things: not for good things only, but for apparently bad things; not in seasons of prosperity alone, but when all seems dark and dismal, even "when all further expectation of being saved" (*cp* Acts 27:20), seems taken from us. All things, whatever their appearance, are cooperating for our welfare, and the keener our realization of God's supervising care and control, the more ready we are to rejoice, even in the midst of sorrow and suffering.

It is not the mission of this little magazine merely to teach the truth, but to put our readers into the most intimate relations with God, Who is Truth.

It is possible to talk about the omnipotence, omnipresence and immanence of the Deity, yet deny them in thought and action. The apostle Paul wished to attain, in his experience, to the resurrection life. So it is our privilege, not only to see the grand vision of God's ultimate, but to allow its rays to illumine our lives even now.

Unless God retains the reins of the universe in His hands today, He can never guide it to the goal. And, since He controls all and cares for His own, we must not only trust, we may not merely acquiesce, we should tune our hearts to continual thanksgiving, unphrased, inaudible perhaps, but grateful to the heart of God. A.E.K.

"The Potency of Truth," vol.13, p.133; "God's Own Peace," vol.26, pp.3-7; "Out and Through and For," vol.15, p.5; "Out of Whom All Is," vol.27, pp.257,258; "Thanking God," vol.16, p.193.

SALVATION AND JUDGMENT IN THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

WHEN OUR LORD came into this world He came to save. This was the meaning of the name given Him, Jesus, which according to its roots in the Hebrew language signifies: Yahweh-Saviour.

Therefore, when Mary "was found pregnant by holy spirit" (Matt.1:18), the messenger of the Lord said to Joseph, "Now she shall be bringing forth a Son, and you shall be calling His name Jesus, for *He shall be saving* His people from their sins" (1:21).

THE PROMISE OF SALVATION

This promise is a most important declaration of God's intention. It forms a solid basis for all that is recorded throughout the book of Matthew. Indeed it must never be forgotten in the midst of stern warnings and fearful events, least of all in the account of the evil and darkness surrounding the rejection and crucifixion of this One Who came to save. The promise remains alive and true even though it is left unrealized at the close of Matthew's account.

In fact, by the end of Matthew, even though unrealized, the great work of saving sinners from their sins had been made certain of eventual realization by the death and resurrection of Christ. This was the Lord's own testimony at the passover meal, when He spoke of His blood "shed for many for the pardon of sins" (26:27,28; see also Matt.20:28). In addition, the truth was stated unintentionally at the very time in which it was being established.

While Jesus was being crucified the religious leaders of Israel scoffed at Him, saying, "Others he saves! Himself he cannot save!" (Matt.27:42). The first statement is absolutely true, and it is true because He *did* not save Himself. Thus the opening clause of their mocking is transformed in grandest irony into the greatest testimony to truth that they had ever spoken!

Behind every struggle and every sermon of warning and instruction recorded in Matthew's account lies the promise of salvation from sins. Behind every failure of Israel, the stubborn resistance to the testimony of the Lord and the scheming and the cries for His crucifixion, the promise still stands. "He shall be saving His people from their sins."

HIS PEOPLE

We recognize that "His people" refers to the nation of Israel in the book of Matthew (*cf* Matt.2:6; 10:5,6; 15:24). But the narrow viewpoint of Matthew's account does not restrict God in His operation of bringing salvation from sin to mankind. As Paul later testified, in words much like those of the messenger, "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim.1:15). Indeed Paul uses the language of Israel's prophets to reveal that every knee shall bow in the Name of Jesus, and every tongue shall acclaim with the avowal of salvation: "Jesus Christ is Lord" (*cf* Isa. 45:23; Phil.2:9,10; Rom.9:10).

The promise of Matthew 1:21 focuses on one nation, but the point we wish to note now is that it is a promise of salvation from sins, and a promise from God. The scope of this salvation will eventually encompass all mankind (*cf* Rom.5:18; 1 Cor.15:22; 1 Tim.2:4; 4:10), but our concern here is the *force* of this promise. Is it possible that other words and events recorded in Matthew can reverse this great declaration of chapter 1?

No! this promise relating to our Lord and the purpose God had in bringing Him into this world remains in operation and can never be set aside until it is fully realized. Jesus will be known and praised by Israel as their Saviour, even as Paul also testified, "thus all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26).

SAVED FROM SINS

The promise of salvation from sins can be traced through the Scriptures even as far back as Genesis 3:15,16, but clearly stated with regard to Israel in a passage such as Psalm 130:7,8. "And He Himself shall ransom Israel from all its depravities."

Ezekiel also prophesied Yahweh's new covenant with Israel: "When I save you from all your uncleannesses I will call to the grain and increase it . . . . Then you will remember your evil ways and your actions which were not good, and you will be disgusted in view of yourselves on account of your depravities and your abhorrences. Not on your account will I be doing this, averring is my Lord Yahweh, let it be known to you. Be ashamed and be mortified for your ways, house of Israel. Thus says my Lord Yahweh: In the day I cleanse you from all your depravities, then I will cause the cities to be indwelt, and the deserted places will be rebuilt" (Ezek.36:29-33).

In pointing to Jesus as Israel's Saviour from their sins, the messenger was directly renewing the promise of salvation given in the Sacred Scriptures. The fact that Israel's depravities continued in the face of many serious warnings and clear instructions from Matthew 3 up to the crucifixion itself does not abrogate this promise. The reality of continued sin and its dire consequences in the very presence of the Lord and His ministry can only make the promise that much more marvelous and needed.

What is recorded in Matthew is that the promise of sal-

vation from sin is renewed in the Person of the Saviour, Jesus. But the fulfillment of that promise does not come about. Yahweh had said through Ezekiel, that *He* would cleanse Israel from all their uncleanness. But in Matthew we find Jesus telling Israel what they must do to cleanse themselves. Before the Lord Himself cleanses Israel, the fact that they are unable to cleanse themselves despite the very presence of their Saviour must be established. The time had not yet come for the salvation to be realized. But it will come, and when it comes it will be perceived and appreciated that it was due to the faithfulness of God and not to the obedience of the nation (*cf* Rom.3:3,4).

COMMANDS, WARNINGS AND JUDGMENTS

The promise was salvation from sins, but starting with John in the wilderness the message recorded in page after page of Matthew is one of commands for repentance and warnings of indignation and judgment to come. It is perhaps understandable, therefore, that the glorious promise of 1:21 has become overshadowed in people's minds by such stern and fearful words as the following:

"Progeny of vipers! Who intimates to you to be fleeing from the impending indignation? Produce, then, fruit worthy of repentance" (Matt.3:7,8).

"Yet already the ax is lying at the root of the trees. Every tree, then, which is not producing ideal fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire" (Matt.3:10).

"He will be scouring His threshing floor, and will be gathering His grain into His barn, yet the chaff will He be burning up with unextinguished fire" (Matt.3:12).

". . . whoever may be saying [to his brother], 'Stupid!' shall be liable to the Gehenna of fire" (Matt.5:22).

"Now, if your right eye is snaring you, wrench it out and cast it from you, for it is expedient for you that one of your members should perish and not your whole body be cast into Gehenna. And if your right hand is snaring you, strike it off and cast it from you, for it is expedient for you that one of your members should perish and not your whole body pass away into Gehenna" (Matt.5:29,30).

"Enter through the cramped gate, for broad is the gate and spacious is the way which is leading away into destruction, and many are those entering through it. Yet what a cramped gate and narrowed way is the one leading away into life, and few are those who are finding it" (Matt.7:13,14).

". . . many from the east and the west shall be arriving and reclining with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens, yet the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness. There shall be lamentation and gnashing of teeth" (Matt.8:11,12).

"And do not fear those who are killing the body, yet are not able to kill the soul. Yet be fearing Him, rather, Who is able to destroy the soul as well as the body in Gehenna" (Matt.10:28).

"And you, Capernaum! Not to heaven shall you be exalted! To the unseen shall you subside, for, if the powerful deeds which are occurring in you had occurred in Sodom, it might remain unto today" (Matt.11:23; *cf* verses 20-24; 12:41,42).

"Every sin and blasphemy shall be pardoned men, yet the blasphemy of the spirit shall not be pardoned . . . neither in this eon nor in that which is impending" (Matt.12:31,32; *cf* verses 36,37).

"Even as the darnel, then, are being culled and burned up with fire, thus shall it be in the conclusion of the eon. The Son of Mankind shall be dispatching His messengers, and they shall be culling out of His kingdom all the snares and those doing lawlessness, and they shall be casting them into a furnace of fire. There shall be lamentation and gnashing of teeth" (Matt.13:40-42; *cf* verses 49-51).

"Now if the blind should be guiding the blind, both shall be falling into a pit" (Matt.15:14).

"For whosoever may be wanting to save his soul shall be destroying it. Yet whoever should be destroying his soul on My account shall be finding it" (Matt.16:25).

"Now if your hand or your foot is snaring you, strike it off and cast it from you. Is it ideal for you to be entering into life maimed or lame, or, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the fire eonian? And if your eye is snaring you, wrench it out and cast it from you. Is it ideal for you to be entering into life one-eyed, or, having two eyes, to be cast into the Gehenna of fire?" (Matt.18:8,9).

"There shall be lamentation and gnashing of teeth. For many are the called, yet few are the chosen" (Matt.22:14; *cp* 24:51; 25:30).

"Serpents! Progeny of vipers! How may you be fleeing from the judging of Gehenna?" (Matt.23:33).

"Jerusalem! Jerusalem! who art killing the prophets and pelting with stones those who have been dispatched to her! . . . Lo! left is your house to you desolate" (Matt. 23:37,38).

"Then shall He be declaring to those also at His left, 'Go from Me, you cursed, into the fire eonian, made ready for the Adversary and his messengers'" (Matt.25:41).

"And these shall be coming away into chastening eonian, yet the just into life eonian" (Matt.25:46).

THE CRUCIFIXION OF THE SAVIOUR

The bleakness increases after these fearful prophecies of Matthew 24 and 25, for the time of the crucifixion has come. Every reader of Matthew should ask now if the question has not arisen before, What has happened to the great promise of 1:21?

It has been shown in chapters 3 through 25 that God's people Israel are sinners and need to be saved from their sins. Matthew 26 and 27 make this indisputable. But also, anticipating what is revealed later, this darkest of all events

recorded in this book becomes the basis for the full and glorious realization of 1:21.

Jesus came as the Saviour. His Name means Yahweh-Saviour. And every knee shall bow in that Name, and every tongue shall acclaim the avowal of salvation, that Jesus Christ is Lord. None of these warnings and none of the coming operations of wrath and judgment can keep Jesus from saving His people Israel, and indeed all the descendants of Adam, from their sins.

THE TEACHING OF EVERLASTING HELL

Inestimable harm has been done by taking passages like those above and stringing them together in such a way that Matthew 1:21 is submerged in our thinking. And this harm has been greatly increased by Bible translations which render the word "Gehenna" by "hell," and the word "eonian" by "everlasting." Few concepts have so effectively distorted the evangel of salvation, centered in Jesus Christ, as the teaching of everlasting hell.

The book of Matthew provides an especially good testing ground for this whole controversy concerning the ultimate fate of mankind. It is filled with statements and phrases, most of which are the Lord's own words, which have been used to adjust radically the meaning of the promise of salvation from sins given at the beginning of the book and long before in the Old Testament. What the Lord speaks is so. But because He speaks of human sinfulness and failure and the certainty of judgment does not move His great Name, Saviour, into second place behind Judge or Condemner. It is necessary that He speak of indignation and judgment upon the wickedness of Israel and the nations and all mankind, but salvation from these very things must have the last word, because Jesus *is* the Saviour.

Is it possible that One Who came to save sinners should end up saving but a few and becoming the great Stumbling

Stone for the rest to their eternal condemnation? All His roles, as Judge, as Condemner, even as Stumbling Stone (*cf* Rom.9:32,33), can only serve to the end of His manifestation as the Saviour.

It is proposed here to examine the many passages in Matthew which are used so often in support of an unending hell, whether of conscious torment or hopeless annihilation, considering them carefully in their context and in the context of the whole of Scripture. It is especially pleaded that the opening promise of this book, the words of Matthew 1:21, never be forgotten. Let these words from a messenger of the Lord help shape our understanding of the many severe and fearful warnings and predictions of the book.

This is necessary, for not only future times of indignation and condemnation but also present evils pressing on us from every side, easily distract our thoughts from the good news of salvation in Christ. The very real dangers spoken of by the Lord and the very actual troubles in our own lives must not turn our eyes from the One Who saves from them. The dangers and troubles and failures, the sins and their judgment as well, all these must be, for otherwise there is no reason for Him to be the Saviour. The fact of human sin and divine judgment on wicked thoughts and words and acts should make the good news of salvation continually more welcome and glorious to us. But to view the condemnation of sinners as beyond the power and province of the Saviour is most shameful and exceedingly harmful to our lives and growth in faith.

Everlasting hell cannot be so if Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners! D.H.H.

(To be continued)

Note: We always regret typographical errors that are missed in proofreading, but one in the July issue calls for special mention. Please change the word "Uncircumcision" to "Circumcision" on page 170, line 10.

ENOCH AND ELIJAH

MANY claim that neither Enoch nor Elijah ever died, and that they remain alive today. It is said that both were "taken to heaven," and that they remain there even at present, living in the very presence of God Himself. Various Jewish and Christian legends, some of them quite ancient, have been handed down in support of these traditions. The scriptural record itself, however, does not substantiate such beliefs.

Very little is known concerning Enoch. He was the son of Jared and the father of Methuselah (Gen.5:18,21; not to be confused with Enoch, son of Cain, mentioned in Genesis 4:17). He was a member of the line of descent through Seth by which the knowledge of God was preserved. The expression "walked with God" is used only of Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Noah (Gen.6:9) in the early chapters of Genesis.

Elijah was the ninth-century B.C. prophet of Israel, the northern kingdom of the divided monarchy during the reigns of Ahab, Ahaziah, and Jehoram. The episodes recorded in Scripture in the life of Elijah, are basically concerned with the clash between the worship of Yahweh and Baal. Ahab fostered a Phonecian variant of Baal worship (which was the nature-religion of Canaan) after his marriage with the Tyrian princess Jezebel; but it was Jezebel who was chiefly responsible for the systematic extermination of the worship of Yahweh and of the propagation of the idolatrous worship of Baal in Israel (1 Kings 18:4,13,19; 19:10,14).

Since the word "heaven" is used in reference to Elijah's removal, it is important that we note which usage of this word is in view in 2 Kings 2:1, concerning Elijah. But since in the case of Enoch, nothing at all is said of "heaven," it is foolhardy to claim that since God somehow transferred

him somewhere, for a period of unspecified duration, He therefore doubtlessly transferred him into the celestial realms themselves, so that he might remain in the divine presence even unto today.

In approaching this theme, may we, first of all, intensely believe the words of the Lord Jesus in which He declares: "And *no one* has ascended into heaven except He Who descends out of heaven" (John 3:13). Our Lord's statement is explicit and correctly rendered; hence it must stand. Heaven, in this case, must be defined according to the preceding context (John 3:12), the celestial regions which are in contrast to the earth.

In the Scriptures, "heaven" is sometimes applied to the vast regions of interstellar space; and, it is used as well in reference to the atmosphere immediately surrounding the earth.

Concerning Enoch, we will do well to believe that "*all* the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years" (Gen.5:23), while noting as well that Enoch is included among the "*all* these" who *died* in faith, as recorded in Hebrews 11 (*cp* vs.5 and 13).

Earlier, God had "taken" Enoch (Gen.5:23), and "transferred" him, so that he would not "be *being* acquainted with death" (Heb.11:5; note the incomplete verb form, as indicated by the superior vertical line in the CV). Yet eventually he died; for all of his days were 365 years.

We are not told where Enoch was taken, or transferred to. But we are informed that God's purpose in transferring him was in consideration of his having pleased Him well, and so that he might not be being acquainted with death (Heb. 11:5; *cp* Gen.5:22b). It may be that God transferred Enoch from one place to another so as to put him beyond the reach of wicked men who were seeking his soul. The environ to which he was relocated is not specified in Scripture. But there is no reason to suppose that he was transferred even to the ends of the earth, much less to the celestial sphere.

Since Elijah ascended heavenward in a *tempest* (i.e., a violent storm, 2 Kings 2:1,11), it is evident that the atmospheric heavens are in view. For that matter, this would be clear enough from the AV rendering "whirlwind," since such a disturbance is as much an atmospheric phenomenon as is a tempest. The atmospheric heavens are the heavens in which birds fly over the earth, "on the face of the atmosphere of the heavens" (*cp* Gen.1:20). Indeed, the word "into" ("into heaven," AV, 2 Kings 2:1) is added; there is no preposition in the Hebrew. It is simply that thus, by a tempest, Yahweh removed Elijah "heavenward."

This was done so that Elisha might assume the office of prophet which Elijah had formerly held (2 Kings 2). From a consideration of the nature of the case in the letter which Elijah wrote which is recorded in 2 Chronicles 21:12-15 (concerning events which themselves had not yet occurred at the time of Elijah's removal from the earth by means of the tempest), it seems clear that this letter was written, on earth, some ten years after the time of that occurrence. Thus we would conclude that after having been removed from the presence of his associates by means of the tempest, Elijah was evidently transported to some other locale, for further divine service, though no longer as a prophet.

Thus, though Elijah's death is not specifically recorded, there is no more reason to suppose that he never died at all and remains alive today, than there is to suppose this of any other biblical figure whose death is likewise not recorded in Scripture.

Moses' death is recorded in Deuteronomy 34:5, 6. When Moses and Elijah are "seen" by the disciples on the mount of transformation (Matt.17:3), their visage is presented as part of a *vision* (Matt.17:9), which is a "mental sight," not a true or actual occurrence (*cp* Acts 12:9). Thus we may be further assured that Christ "*alone* has immortality" (1 Tim.6:15b). J.R.C.

A WITNESS IN THE HEAVENS

THE SECOND series of exchanges between his associates and Job increase in intensity and harshness as the issue of God's place in a world of suffering and sin becomes more pressing. In chapter 15 we find the fear and horror of Eliphaz growing in response to Job's apparent impiety.

Eliphaz, however, judges impiety solely by traditional thinking and fails completely to take the known facts in front of his face into consideration. He stands on principles for right behavior such as given in the book of Proverbs, taking for granted that God does not operate beyond such "rules." Hence he jumps to the conclusion that Job must have indulged himself in great wickedness, even though there was absolutely no evidence of this, but rather just the opposite.

Earlier in the book we saw how serious the sin of scorning God was taken in that day. It was what Job feared his sons might have done, even unknowingly, in their hearts (1:5). It was what the Adversary suggested the impoverished Job would do (1:11). And it was what Job's wife urged her suffering husband to do so that his misery might end in his death (2:9). Now we may suppose that Eliphaz has reasoned that Job has all along been scorning God and sinning most severely in secret by ascribing that which is improper to Elohim (*cf* 1:22). Eliphaz is certain that Job has reversed his spirit against El (15:13).

Rather than readying himself to become better acquainted with God in view of Job's sufferings, Eliphaz much prefers to focus on human sinfulness. "What is a mortal that

JOB 15-17

15 [+]**Then Eliphaz the Temanite** [l]**answered,** [+] [l]**saying:**
2 **Should** a **wise** man **answer** with **windy knowledge?**
[+]**Or should he fill his belly** with the **east** wind**?**
3 Ought he to **plead**[–] [i]**with speech** that **is** [l]**unprofitable,**
And with **declarations** that [c]**have no**[t] [l]**benefit in them?**
4 Yet **you, indeed you** [l]**quash** devout **fear,**
And you [l]**deprecate** pious **meditation before El.**
5 **For your depravity** [l]**trains your mouth,**
So [+]**that you** [l]**choose** the **tongue of** the **crafty.**
6 **Your** own **mouth** [l]**condemns you,** [+] **not I,**
And your lips [l]**answer** [i]**against you.**
7 **Are you** the **first human** ever [l]**born?**
[+] **Were you travailed** in birth **before** the **hills?**
8 Do **you** [l]**hear** [i] the **deliberation of Eloah,**
[+]**Or** do **you** hold a [l]**monopoly for you**rself on **wisdom?**
9 **What** do **you know** [+]**that we** do **not** [l]**know,**
Or [l]**understand, and it** is **not with us?**
10 [i]**Among us** are [mr]**both** the **greyhaired**[l]
[mr]**and hoary headed,**
More **abundant** in **days** [f]**than your father.**
11 Are the **consolations of El** a **little** thing[f] **for you,**
[+]**Or** the **word** [›] **gently** shared **with you?**
12 [wt]**Why** does **your heart** [l]**take you** away,
And [wt]**why** do **your eyes** [l]**scowl,**
13 **That you should reverse your spirit** [›]**against El**
And [c]**send forth** these **declarations from your mouth?**
14 **What** is a **mortal that he should be cleared,**
[+]**Or that** one **born**[l] **of** a **woman should be justified?**

he should be cleared, or that one born of a woman should be justified" (15:14). Looking at Job, Eliphaz says in effect, "Job, you are abhorrent and spoiled and are drinking iniquity like water" (v.16).

But that is not the issue before us in the book of Job. Nor does it accord with the evidence. The issue is God's wisdom and purpose and responsibility in light of the evil of human enmity and pain and sorrow and infirmity.

As he did in 4:18, Eliphaz speaks in 15:15,16 of human insignificance in God's eyes. In the face of evil, Eliphaz wishes to distance God from the human situation. This is wrong, and indeed makes Eliphaz one who "deprecates meditation before El" (*cf* 15:4). If ever Job (and Eliphaz too) needed to set his heart upon the power, wisdom and righteousness of God it is now in the midst of these terrible afflictions.

Again, as in 4:12-16, Eliphaz builds up the suspense in 15:17-19 with a dramatic introduction to a platitude concerning the fate of the wicked. We may well say this is no time for histrionics, but how very like humanity, not only the actor, the lawyer, the politician, but like us all when we really have nothing to offer on a serious matter. "I shall disclose," and "let me recount" what "the wise can tell," who have openly shared their wisdom and are worthy of our respect as evidenced by their prosperity. We almost hear at this point the blare of trumpets and the rolling of drums. What profound truth is Eliphaz about to utter?

This is it: The wicked man suffers. This is what Eliphaz has to say, though it takes him the rest of chapter 15 to say it.

But this is what Job's associates have been saying all along, and Eliphaz's elaborate way of saying it again does not make it any more relevant to Job's situation. We are all sinners and enemies, and we all suffer, not necessarily in direct accord with our wickedness. And in any case, Job's sufferings do not match up with his sinfulness in any way

15 *bd***If** even *i***on His holy** one**s, He** *c***puts no***t* l**reliance,**
And the **heavens are not purged in His eyes,**
16 **How much less** *t* **man,**
Who is **abhorrent**l **and spoiled**l**,**
Who is **drinking iniquity like water.**
17 **I shall disclose** it to **you; hear** › **me;**
+ **This** which **I have perceived,** + **let me** l**recount** it,
18 That **which** the **wise** can l**tell,**
And they suppressed nothing received
from their fathers,
19 **(To them, to them alone was given the countryside,**
And no*t* **alien**l **passed in their midst):**
20 **All** the **days of** the **wicked** man**, he** is **travailing,**
+**Even** throughout the **number of years** that **are stored up**
for the **terrifier.**
21 The **sound of alarming** things is **in his ears;**
*i***When** at **peace,** the **devastator**l l**comes** against **him.**
22 **He** can**not** l**believe** in **restoration**– **from darkness,**
And he must be on **watch**l **for** the **sword.**
23 **He** is **wandering** about ›**as bread** 7for the **falcon~;**
He knows that the **day of darkness** is **ready**l *i***at hand.**
24 **Frightening him are distress and constraint;**
It shall overpower him like a **king equipped**
for onslaught.
25 **For he has stretched his hand out** ›**against El,**
And he makes him**self** an arrogant l**master**
›**against** Him **Who-Suffices.**
26 **He** l**runs** ›**against Him** *i***with neck** armor,
*i***With his thickly bossed shields.**
27 *t***Indeed he has covered his face** *i***with his fat,**
And he l*d***gathers fat pads on** his **hips.**
28 +**Yet he shall tabernacle** in **suppressed**l **cities,**
Houses ›**in which no***t* one **shall** later **dwell,**
*w***That are destined to** become **mounds.**

15:23 7-~ for the **falcon:** MT **where** is it?

that corresponds with the sufferings of obviously wicked human beings in the world of his day. To leave God out of the picture in Job's misery and to focus alone on the human dimension (as we call it today) is cruel to Job and fatal to any understanding of God.

Eliphaz thinks he is putting the matter gently (15:11). He does not come right out and say that Job is outstandingly wicked, but he gets that point across nevertheless. Job is the wicked one who has been caught in his wickedness (15:20-24). Job is the one who has stretched out his hand against El (v.25). Job is the one who has fought against God (v.26), having protected himself with the power of his ill-gained wealth (v.27).

By such attacks Eliphaz effectively increases Job's agony. It is Job's property that has been suppressed and turned to mounds (v.28). All his influence over society (his shadow stretching over the earth) has gone (v.29). His world is one of darkness and loss (v.30), full of futility (v.31), with all his assets snipped off (v.32). In 15:33 Eliphaz, in effect, attributes the loss of Job's wealth to Job himself who by his wickedness has cast it down and flung it off. Such is the word that Eliphaz "gently" shares with Job.

JOB ANSWERS ELIPHAZ

Once again Job begins a reply by lashing out at his associates. He has gotten their meaning. But if they sometimes disguised the viciousness of their attacks by speaking indirectly and in enigmas, he speaks plainly. "Miserable comforters are you all" (16:2). Eliphaz may speak generally about the foolishness of "windy knowledge" (15:2), but Job refers directly to the pain he receives from the "windy words" of these three men (16:3).

However, soon in thinking about how he would speak to one of them if the situation were reversed (16:4,5), Job is convulsed anew by his pain (v.6). Because of the personal

29 **He shall not be enriched;**
+ His estate shall not rise,
And [7]his shadow~ shall not stretch out ›over the **earth.**
30 **He shall not be taken away from darkness;**
The **blaze shall dry** up **his young shoot,**
And his [7]bud~ shall be taken away [i]by the **wind.**
31 **Let him not ¦rely [i]on futility;**
He will be led **astray,**
For his ~palm tree~ shall become futility.
32 **[i]When not** yet **its day, it shall be [7]snipped off~[c],**
And its fronds shall **not** be **flourishing.**
33 **Like** a **vine he shall cast down his unripe grape,**
And he shall fling off **his blossom like** an **olive.**
34 **For** the **congregation of** the **polluted** is **stark,**
And fire devours the **tents of bribery.**
35 They **engender– misery and beget– lawlessness,**
And their belly, it ¦prepares deceit.
16 +So Job ¦answered, + ¦saying:
2 **I have heard many** thing**s like these;**
Miserable comforters¦ are **you all.**
3 Will there be an **end to** such **windy words?**
Or what is so **¦painful** to **you that you should answer?**
4 **I my**self **[mr]also** could **¦speak like you;**
O that your soul were [u]in the place of **my soul:**
I would indeed **¦join [i] declarations** together **[on]against you,**
And I would indeed **¦wag [i] my head over you.**
5 **I** could **make you ¦resolute [i]with my mouth,**
And the **condolence of my lips** would **¦keep back** grief**.**
6 **[if] When I** do **¦speak, my pain is not being kept back,**
+Yet when **I** do **forbear,**
what pain **is going** away **from me?**

15:29 *7-~* **his shadow:** Hb *[f]***what** is **theirs.**
15:30 *7-~* **bud:** Hb **mouth.**
15:31 *~-~* **palm tree:** Hb **remuneration.**
15:32 *7-~c* **snipped off:** Hb **filled.**

nature of his experience Job has an advantage over his associates. Job knows his severe agony is something unique and traceable only to the Supreme, and so he is forced to direct his thoughts of God Who is ultimately responsible for his sufferings as well as the desolating effects of Job's company (v.7).

WITNESS AGAINST JOB

What human beings witness is twisted by preconceptions and prejudices. Job's pain was visible, but this was a witness *against* him (16:8). Job was "arrested," which is a word appearing only one other time in the Hebrew Scriptures, in Job 22:16 where it apparently refers to the effect of the deluge in Noah's day upon the lawless. Job was stopped in his tracks. And this is to be traced to God. It is El Who assails Job, Who assumes the role of Opponent and surrenders Job over to iniquitous men (16:9-11). Job had been at ease, but El quashed him, holding him by the nape of his neck, shattering him as His target (v.12).

With words similar to Psalm 22 or Isaiah 53, and thus foreshadowing the agonies of the cross, Job speaks of his sufferings and traces them in no uncertain terms to Deity. "He thrusts through my kidneys and does not spare . . . . He breaches me, breach adjoining breach . . ." (16:13,14). In this Job is not saying that his sufferings testify "against" God rather than against himself, but God is their Source, and that must not be papered over.

As for Job, his own testimony is clear. He is full of sorrow and in dark despair (16:15,16), but he has not committed violence, and his pleas are spotless (v.17).

A WITNESS FOR JOB

Is there no one to take Job's part? Is there no one to testify on behalf of this man named "Enemy," who keeps

7 [y]**Surely, now it has** [c]**made me tired;**
You have [c]**made all my company desolate,**
8 **And You** [l]**arrest me.**
This **has become** [›] a **witness,**
And it [l]**rises** [i]**against me:**
That is**, my emaciation** [l]**answers** [i]**against my face.**
9 **His anger has found** a **prey and** [l]**assailed me;**
He gnashes [on]**at me** [i]**with His teeth.**
My Opponent [l]**hones His eyes** [›]**against me.**
10 Men **gape** [on]**at me** [i]**with their mouth;**
In reproach they smite my cheeks;
They [l]**mass** them**selves together** [on]**against me.**
11 **El** [l]**surrenders me** over **to iniquitous** men,
And He [l]**precipitates me** [on]**into** the **hands**
of the **wicked.**
12 **I** [b]**was** at **ease, and He** [l]**quashed me;**
[+] **He held** me [i]**by** the **nape** of **my** neck,
And He [l]**shattered me;**
[+] **He** [l]**set me up** [›]**as His target.**
13 **His multitudes** [l]**surround** [on] **me;**
He [l]**thrusts through my kidneys and** does **not** [l]**spare;**
He [l]**pours out my bile** [›]**on** the **earth.**
14 **He** [l]**breaches me, breach adjoining breach;**
He [l]**runs** up**on me like** a **master** of war**.**
15 **I sewed sackcloth over my hide,**
And I plowed down my horn[◊] **in**to the **soil.**
16 **My face is swollen out from weeping,**
And on my eyelids is the **blackest shadow,**
17 [on]**Although** there is **no**[t] **violence in my palms,**
And my prayer is **spotless.**
18 O **earth, do not** [l]**cover my blood,**
And let there [lb]**be no**[t] [ri]**place for my outcry** to rest**.**
19 **Even now, behold, my Witness** is **in** the **heavens,**
And my Guarantor is **in** the **heights.**

16:15 horn: i.e., strength.

crying out, pleading that his outcry and his pain not find a place to be covered over (16:18)?

The answer is bold and resounding: "Even now, behold, my Witness is in the heavens, and my Guarantor is in the heights" (Job 16:19).

Job 16:19-21 is a pivotal passage. It is to be joined to earlier thoughts concerning an "arbiter" in 9:33 (where Job is despairing of such a one) and the coming of his "relief" which Job envisions in 14:14.

There *is* One Who can testify to the truth, a Witness Who can serve as Job's Guarantor so that the charges against him will be proven false and the testimony may be in his favor rather than against him. Somehow Job is convinced of this, but he realizes that such a Witness cannot be found on the earth. Thus He must be "in the heavens," away from the human realm, "in the heights."

With weeping eyes, Job turns away from his associates who mock him by their gentle words, and he directs his thoughts to Eloah (16:20), "that *He* may plead between a master and Eloah" (v.21). The divine title *Eloah* which means *Toward-El* (*cp* John 1:1,2), is especially appropriate in a context speaking of the divine Witness and Guarantor, Who serves as the Mediator. The title "Eloah" at the end of verse 20 refers to Him as Job's Pleader, and this title at the end of the first line of verse 21 refers to Him as the One Who judges and determines human experiences. With such revelations of divine activity Job is becoming acquainted with God in a way that he had not been able to know Him before (*cf* Job 42:2-5). Job is being led in his understanding *toward* God.

SURETY FOR JOB

Chapter 17 is filled with discouragement and dwelling on death, but even here not wholly without hope. Job's spirit has risen to the high level of confidence in Eloah as

20 **My associates** are **my mockers**ˡ**;**
My eye weeps forth to Eloah,
21 ⁺**That He may plead** ›**between** a **master** *ʷⁱ***and Eloah,**
⁺**As** between a **son of humanity** ›**and his associate.**
22 **For** the **years** few in **number** have ˡ**arrived,**
And I shall go on the **path** where **I shall not return.**
17 **My spirit is devitalized;**
My days are extinct;
The **tombs** are ready **for me.**
2 **Assuredly, captious** men are all *ʷⁱ***around me,**
And my eye ˡ**lodges** all night *ⁱ***upon their bitterness˜.**
3 *ᵖˡ***Lay** down**,** I **pray, ˜surety** for **me***ᶜ* **with You**rself**;**
*ᵃ***Who** is **he** that would ˡ**clasp** › **my hand** in pledge**?**
4 **For You have secluded their heart from intelligence;**
Therefore, You shall not exalt them**.**
5 Such a one ˡ**denounces** his **associates for** a **portion,**
⁺**While** the **eyes of his** own **sons are** *ᵃˡˡ***failing.**
6 ⁺ **He has put me** down ›**as** a **proverb** to the **people,**
So ⁺**that I** ˡ**become** one **spit at to** the **face.**
7 ⁺ **My eye** grows ˡ**dim from vexation,**
And my features, all of them, are **like** a **shadow.**
8 **Upright** men **are** ˡ**appalled** *ᵒⁿ***at this,**
And the **innocent** man ˡ**rouses** him**self**
*ᵒⁿ***against** the **polluted** man**,**
9 ⁺**But** the **righteous** one ˡ**holds** to **his way,**
And the one of **clean hands** ˡ**continues** in **resoluteness.**
10 ⁺ **Nevertheless, all of** *ᴹ***you˜***ᶜ***,**
⁺ **come** forward ˡ**again,** I **pray;**
⁺**Though I shall not find** a **wise** man *ⁱ***among you.**
11 **My days have passed;**
My plans are pulled apart,
Even the **˜proposal˜ of my heart.**

17:3 *~~c* **surety** for **me:** MT **be my surety.**
17:10 *M~~c* **you:** Hb **them.**
17:11 *~~~* **proposal:** Hb **tenancies.**

12 **They** [pl]**convert night** in**to day,**
Making **light** seem **near** [f]**in** the **face of darkness.**
13 [if]**Since I** [l]**expect** the **unseen** as **my house,**
I will strew out **my berth in darkness;**
14 **I will call** out **to** the **grave, My father** are **you,**
To the **maggot, My mother and my sister.**
15 + **Where indeed** is **my expectation?**
And [7]**my good** hope[0]**,** [a]**who shall regard it?**
16 **Shall they descend** [7i]**by my side**~Q to the **unseen,**
[if]**Or** will our **rest** be **together** [on]**in** the **soil?**

17:15 *7-0* **my good** hope: Hb **my expectation.**
17:16 *7-~Q* [i]**by my side:** Hb to **components of.**

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his Witness and Guarantor, and though the evil afflicting his flesh and burdening his soul has devitalized his spirit (17:1), Job's reliance on God is still alive.

Job is crushed by the "captious men" around him and the bitterness of their accusations (v.2). Nevertheless, his physical exhaustion does not wholly deflect his attention from God, and he cries out, "Lay down, I pray, surety for me with Yourself" (17:3). No human will "clasp hands in pledge" with Job, but Eloah Himself will provide secure support. That is the bottom line.

Job is even able to see that the lack of intelligence manifested by his associates must be traced to God (17:4). But he is not able to sustain this high view of Deity. The end of his struggle has not yet come, and we find him falling back into despair and vexation through the remainder of this speech.

Yet we see that, though Job has not yet reached the consummation of his experience of evil, much good has already been wrought through his afflictions. Even death itself cannot eternally put an end to Job or his good hope, for Eloah is the Witness, the Guarantor and the Surety.

D.H.H.

RECEIVING EVIL

We have been asked if Job's response to his wife's remarks in 2:9,10 could be rendered, "Yes, we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and not evil." Such a translation (which has been proposed by some) would convey quite the opposite sense of the Concordant rendering: "Indeed, should we receive good from the One Elohim, and should we not receive evil?"

While the Hebrew sign of a question is absent here, it is implied by the construction of the Hebrew, just as it is in 1 Samuel 20:9, for example. There, the question, "Would I not tell you about it?" is clear even though the sign of a question does not appear in the Hebrew. In addition, rendering the Hebrew adverb at the beginning of this sentence by the affirmative "Yes," is misleading. The Hebrew term literally means "moreover," and is used by Job to introduce an explanatory addition to his remark about his wife speaking as "some decadent woman speaks." He is rejecting her advice here, not agreeing with it.

This is supported by the force of the verb "receive" which Job uses in direct response to his wife's advice, "Scorn Elohim and die." Even though he pleads for God to take his life from him, Job steadfastly keeps on receiving the evil God sends his way. James calls this "endurance" (James 5:11), and the Greek word used in the Septuagint translation of Job 2:10 implies "patient endurance." Indeed throughout his speeches with his associates Job maintains that his troubles must be traced to God (*cf* 6:4; 7:20; 9:15-18; 10:2,3; 12:9; 13:24-27; 16:11-14; 19:6-11; 23:14-16; 27:2; 30:20-22).

Most notably, at the very outset of the book we read that in response to the reports of the loss of his herds and herdsmen, and even of the tragic death of his own children, Job fell to the earth, worshiping and declaring, ". . . 'Yahweh, *He* gives, *and* Yahweh, *He* takes away. Blessed be the Name of Yahweh.' In all this, Job neither sinned nor ascribed anything improper to Elohim" (Job 1:20-22).

Of course Job's associates were horrified by such thoughts, and would not accept them. Yet at the end of the book Yahweh says to them, "You did not speak concerning Me what is rightly so as My servant Job has done" (42:7). The great testimony of Job is his readiness to receive whatever God sent him, whether good or evil, and that is certainly Job's thought in 2:10. D.H.H.

"THROUGH THE FAITH OF CHRIST"

(Galatians 2:15-21)

We, who by nature are Jews, and not sinners of the nations, having perceived that a man is not being justified by works of law, except alone through the faith of Christ Jesus, we also believe in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by the faith of Christ and not by works of law, seeing that by works of law shall no flesh at all be justified. (2:15,16)

As Paul herein explains to the Galatians, those who are truly enlightened believers in Christ—even if "by nature" they are Jews (and so inherently zealous for the law; *cp* Acts 21:20)—recognize that a man is *not* being justified by works of law, but through the faith of Christ Jesus.

Those who know the truth, even if they, like Paul, should be Jews from birth, and from their youth fully mindful of all that the law has to say as to the central place of *seeking* justification by works (*cp* Rom.2:13; 10:3), realize that, nonetheless, a man is not *being* justified by works of law—no matter how zealous he may be in his quest for attaining such a goal.

Yet as those who have been enlightened to perceive the evangel, Paul explains that "we" not only become aware of how justification does *not* occur, but of how it *does* occur as well. We perceive, says Paul, that it is through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24), which is to say that it is through the *faith of* Christ Jesus.

Such ones, then, may "also" believe "into Christ Jesus"—thus to restate the case more positively and boldly—that (1) they may be justified by the faith of *Christ;* and (2) *not* by works of law, seeing that, according as it is written, "no living one at all can be righteous before [God]" (cit. Psa. 143:2; *cp* Rom.3:20).

Of course, this declaration that no living one at all can be righteous before God, is a relative statement, made in relation to law. That is, no living one at all can be righteous before God *by works of law.* But, *by the faith of Christ,* we may be justified! *This* is the evangel; and this, Paul would have us know.

That justification is by the faith of Christ, is the answer to the age-old question, ". . . *how can* a mortal be righteous *before El*?" (Job 9:2). It is one thing to be righteous before men, but quite another to be righteous *before God.* It is one thing to be classed as "just," comparatively speaking, in contrast to those who are abjectly defiled; but it is quite another to be just *before God,* and thus to be declared righteous by God Himself.

In this respect, the words of Job's friend, Eliphaz the Temanite, are true enough: "What is a mortal that he should be cleared, or that one born of a woman should be *justified?* If even on His holy ones, He puts no reliance, and the heavens are not purged in His eyes, how much less man, who is abhorrent and spoiled, who is drinking iniquity like water" (Job 15:14-16).

Noble men often have sought righteousness before God on a basis of their own deeds; and, since compared to their fellows, at least they have approached more closely to the ideal, it is the custom among men to term such ones "righteous." But even such exceptional personages have fallen far short of the ideal. They too must be included among the "all" who not only have sinned but who have *also* been found wanting of *the glory of God* (Rom.3:23), which alone is the standard of true righteousness.

Though God has indeed graced such commendable ones

with an uncommon measure of virtue, still, it is a virtue that is neither comprehensive nor constant. Even the noble, then, are themselves extensively corrupted; and, even as the rest, hopelessly lost apart from a Saviour. They too, on a basis of "works of law," can never be just "before God."

"NOT BY WORKS OF LAW"

The 1976 edition of the Concordant Version, in Galatians 2:16, renders the phrase which in the paragraph above I present as "*but* (through the faith of Christ Jesus)," as "*except alone* (through the faith of Christ Jesus)" (2:16). This was an attempt to clarify the 1930 edition of the CV which read, "except it be through . . ." even as the 1966 CV which was translated, "if it should not be through . . . ."

The problem here is that if the phrase in question, which follows the words "a man is not being justified by works of law," is taken as an exception under the circumstance of which a man *is* being justified by works of law, the truth is lost and the context itself is contradicted.

An attempt was made to circumvent this by the addition of the lightface "alone." Yet the undiscerning reader, upon noting that "alone" was added by the translator, may declare that he is not obliged to accept any such "additions." Such a one may then conclude—albeit contrary to the entire tenor of the passage—that Paul's thought is that while ordinarily a man is not being justified by works of law, when these, however, are coupled with faith in Christ, a man *is* being justified by works of law!

Since the Greek is IF-EVER NO (*ean mê*), our translators endeavored to reflect this fact in the English, while still providing a readable translation. Yet their renderings remained obscure, at least to the ordinary reader. We have noted that "but" (as in, "but for the grace of God, there go I") can serve well for this Greek phrase; in fact the Authorized Version renders *ei mê* (IF-NO) thus 53 times, including in this passage. We now propose to do the same, with a superior prefix "ex" (for "except") preceding in small type. Thus, in a future edition, the verse would simply read: "a man is not being justified by works of law *but through the faith of Christ Jesus.*"

Though because of the idiosyncrasies of idiom, the sense of this text may be difficult to convey when rendered more strictly, in principle, the thought here accords with that of 1 Corinthians 12:3, where we read, "No one is able to say, 'Lord is Jesus' except by holy spirit." That is, "No one is able to say 'Lord is Jesus.' *Except by holy spirit,* (this cannot be done)." Similarly, then, "A man is not being justified by works of law. *Except through the faith of Christ Jesus,* (this cannot be done)."

JUSTIFYING THE IRREVERENT

To be "justified," is to be declared righteous; and, it is God Himself Who is our Justifier (Rom.8:33). Through the benefits afforded to us through the faith of Christ, even now, *God* declares us righteous.

We are justified both in a vindicatory sense, as well as in an anticipatory sense. In the vindicatory sense, through the work of Christ, God is able to "justify" us in the sense of "show sufficient reason why" such sinners even as ourselves not only should exist, but should also be saved. It is because it is only through sin, and, the deliverance therefrom, that God's love and grace through the blood of Christ, may be made known. God has need of irreverent sinners, to glorify His own name in their salvation (Rom.4:5).

In the anticipatory sense, God justifies us through Christ, thus, even now, calling what is not as if it were, because, in that day, the day of Christ's glorious advent, we will then actually be *constituted* just. Then, we *will* be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom.8:29). In the day of our vivification, we *will* enjoy immortality and incorruption, even

as great power and glory (1 Cor.15:42,43). We are awaiting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who *will* transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory (Phil.3:20,21). Surely, then, in an anticipatory sense as well, it should not surprise us that, even today, God *already* declares us *righteous.*

Yet this is only so, "through the faith of Christ Jesus" (Gal.2:16). In Christ, "we have boldness and access, with confidence, through *His* faith" (Eph.3:12). Accordingly, like Paul, we wish "to be found in Him, not having [our] righteousness, which is of law, but that which is through *the faith of Christ,* the righteousness which is from God for faith" (Phil.3:9).

Paul intimately associates "the faith of Christ Jesus," with "the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24). He uses both of these phrases in identifying the means through which our justification is effected. It is through Christ's own faith, then, which became His faith*fulness,* that our justification is achieved. Our Lord's trust in God concerning the cross, which led to His faithful obedience unto death, is the sole instrumentality of our justification.

LIVING UNTO GOD

Now if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ, consequently, a dispenser of sin? May it not be coming to that! For if I am building again these things which I demolish, I am commending myself as a transgressor. (2:17,18)

Though a trivial act in itself, Cephas' refusal to eat with those of the nations (2:12), was fraught with serious consequences. Thus he affirmed that the uncircumcised believers were "common and unclean" (*cp* Acts 10:28; 11:3), and set up again the barrier of law. If we should put ourselves under law, by claiming that this is what Christ would have us do, we imply that, effectually, He is the dispenser of sin.

This is because, if He indeed would now have us take up the very agency through which Sin revives, gets an incentive, and produces in us all manner of coveting (*cf* Rom.7:8-10), it is impossible to disassociate Him from our failures. Such, through works of law, was the nature of the old covenant under which God displayed man's failure in all its horror. Such is not the nature of the Pauline evangel, which is, so to say, "a *new* covenant" indeed (*cp* 2 Cor.3:6).

If Paul were to once again establish a policy of law-righteousness, which he had previously discarded (*cp* Phil.3:7), in so doing he would be "commending" himself as a transgressor. That is, thus he would be providing himself with the very means by which he would now have the "standing" of a transgressor. Where no law is, there is no transgression (Rom.4:15). Yet under law, sinners become *transgressors.* Paul refused to put himself in any such jeopardy ever again.

Submitting to public pressures (as Cephas did, and as the Galatians were doing) in a way that suggests we think the law has some force in justification is a sin and may give the impression that justification in Christ encourages such sinful hypocrisy. Yet the Galatians were making law-justification (Rom.2:13) an acceptable thing, at least in relation to circumcision, and so were rebuilding what they had demolished. Were they actually "under law" (in relation to Paul's evangel), their taking up with the law would have been a transgression! (There is perhaps some irony here.)

Under grace we have a "right" to do anything: "*All* is allowed me" (1 Cor.8:9; 10:23). But Paul was very jealous of the evangel and was sensitive to the effects our behavior will have on others. The saving grace of God trains us to act in accord with what we believe, that is out of love and with the glory of God always in view.

This can only be done by the saving power of the evangel itself. This is the message of Galatians 5:25, how it is that "*living* in spirit, *in spirit,* we may be observing the ele-

ments [of the law] also." The essential meaning of the law (love for God and then for our fellow humans) is observed by those who are "living in spirit" (which means living in accord with the evangel; *cf* Gal.3:5).

For I, through law, died to law, that I should be living to God. With Christ have I been crucified, yet I am living; no longer I, but living in me is Christ. Now that which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith that is of the Son of God, Who loves me, and gives Himself up for me. (2:19,20)

"We have endeavored to transcribe this marvelous compendium of the faith as nearly as possible as it is in the Original, for even the order of the words is exquisite. The sentence opens and closes with *Christ*, and a negative *I* occupies its center. It may be shown graphically thus:

'WITH CHRIST
HAVE I BEEN CRUCIFIED,
YET I AM LIVING—
NO LONGER I,
BUT LIVING IN ME IS
CHRIST.'"[1]

FAITH'S LAW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

God has ordained a law for us! It is not a law of works; it is instead, "faith's law; for we are reckoning a man to be justified *by faith* apart from works of law" (Rom.3:28). This law states that: "through Jesus Christ's faith . . . . [we are] being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:22,24). It is through this law of faith that we have died to all law concerned with sin and death. Christ died for our sins! Our sins have been died for, "that we should be living to God." Our living to God depends upon our having died to

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.281.

condemnatory law. Hence, as Paul declares, "With Christ *have I been* crucified." Yet the wonder of it is that though it is true that in this respect we have "died," it is as a result of this very death, together with Christ, that in our spirits we now are living! So in saying "I" am living, Paul must add that it is "no longer I, but living in me is Christ."

It was not the power of the flesh, which is weakness, which was vitalizing Paul, but the power of Christ's spirit in him. As he said, "that [life] which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith that is *of* the Son of God, Who loves me, and gives Himself up for me" (2:20b).

I am not repudiating the grace of God . . . . (2:21a)

To "repudiate" something is to reject its validity, or to refuse to acknowledge it. It is to have "no place" for it, which is the meaning of the elements of the Greek word we translate "repudiate" (*atheteō,* UN-PLACE).

The apostle Paul, decidedly, was not repudiating the grace of God; he was rather exalting it, and giving it its rightful place.

. . . for if righteousness is through law, consequently Christ died gratuitously. (2:21b)

The Galatians, however, in seeking justification through law instead of through the faith of Christ, *were* repudiating the grace of God. "For if," as they fondly imagined, "righteousness *is* through law, consequently Christ died gratuitously" (2:21). A gratuitous act is an uncalled for or unwarranted act, such as that of the hatred of the Jews for Jesus, whereby, in hating Him, since He had done nothing but good, they necessarily hated Him gratuitously (John 15:25).

The Galatians' repudiation of the *grace* of God was their main mistake; indeed, it was the essence of their apostasy. Their error did not simply consist, since they were not called to be proselytes of Judaism, in attempting to put themselves under law (Gal.4:21). The believers of the Circumcision, though under law, were in the true grace of

God (*cp* 1 Peter 1:10; 5:10,12), which all who were faithful to that calling freely acknowledged. The presence of law need not entail the repudiation of grace. Under the Circumcision evangel, while those who are chosen (i.e., "the elect") must qualify for entrance into the terrestrial kingdom by the performance of lawful deeds (*cp* Matt.7: 21-23), it is to the *grace* of God alone that they may ascribe the faithfulness of their service (*cp* Rom.11:5,6; Isa.26:12).

Let us note well that the Galatians' chief wrong was just one thing: their *repudiation* of the *grace* of God. They had been *transferred* from the evangel of the *grace* of Christ, to a different "evangel" (Gal.1:6), which, according to truth, was no evangel at all.

Everywhere in Scripture, especially within the Pauline epistles, "grace" is of the nature of a favor, or gracious gift. It is not granted "out of works," or in return for "services rendered" (*cp* Rom.4:4; 11:6). It is the very antithesis of a reward or compensation. We cannot qualify ourselves for it, nor disqualify ourselves from it. It not only knows nothing of "requirements," but precludes that very notion.

Having presented one's understanding of the nature of the evangel, it will hardly suffice merely to use the word "grace," as a summary term thereof, if one's understanding of the nature of the evangel itself, is not of the nature of *grace.* To do so would be as illegitimate as to describe a thorn and yet call it a rose.

If righteousness *were* through law, there would have been "no just cause" for Christ to have died. Then His death would have been both uncalled for and unwarranted. But since His death was *not* a gratuitous event, it follows that righteousness is *not* through law and that the Galatians and all their imitators are *not* correct in seeking it on that basis.

May it be our privilege and portion, not to be imitators of the "foolish Galatians" (3:1), but of the apostle Paul, the apostle of the nations (Rom.11:13). J.R.C.

"BE CONCILIATED TO GOD!"

"BRETHREN, not as yet am I reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one thing—forgetting indeed those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus" (Phil.3:13,14).

As ambassadors for Christ we are graced with the most glorious and privileged position in the universe. How shall we express the happy evangel of our embassy? What words might we summon to describe adequately this astounding declaration: "For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching for Christ's sake, 'Be conciliated to God!' For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:20,21).

In every denomination of Christendom, incompetent evangelists are striving to "bring men to Christ," when our loving Father would have us all "bring Christ to men." This, rather than the fearful, threatening uncertainty of repentance is the real gospel, or good news.

"How grand it is to fall back upon God Himself! He will see to it that everyone whom He has selected will be invited and justified and sanctified. And He does it in spite of all the stumbling blocks we put in the sinner's way. Some preach law outright, some regeneration, some the spirit's work, some baptism, some repentance—but none of these are *good* news; indeed *there is no good news apart from Christ.*

"Let it be our precious privilege to preach Christ cruci-

fied to those who know Him not; and to those who know Him, Christ glorified. Let Christ be first and Christ be last and Christ fill all between. Let us not look back and vaunt ourselves with, '*I* prayed, *I* repented, *I* was baptized, and *I* . . .' but let us rather shout with the Apostle '*no longer I, but CHRIST!*' If I had a hand in my salvation it must needs contain a flaw, for I find failure fills everything I do. But if Christ *alone* deserves the crown, then all like Him is perfect and immutable."[1]

This loving evangel of conciliation is not the first gratuitous gift from God. It follows upon His complete settlement of the sins of His enemies! Justified by the blood of Christ we can now, in growing appreciation, be conciliated by the death of God's Son. Reconciliation is possible only after our sins have been dealt with. "If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (Rom.8:32).

When God calls out His ecclesia, members of the body of Christ, beloved in the Lord, there are so many variables in each individual circumstance. Common to all in the process is thankful reliance. How may any repulse the love of God which is lavished so unstintingly?

In our various paths to maturity there will inevitably be many grievous memories which will certainly distress. In Paul's case it was how he ". . . inordinately persecuted the ecclesia of God and ravaged it" (Gal.1:13). Recognition of this painful emerging from the slavery of sin prompted the apostle to request a further spirit of wisdom and revelation into the realization of God's loving provision.

Rescue alone, or mere restoration can have no part in God's grand and glorious purpose in creation. Through the loving sacrifice of His own dear Son, He has determined to be, universally, All in all! The declaration that He is ". . . *not reckoning offenses* . . ." and that this is the *day of salvation,* is more than our doubting spirits, disabled through the corrupting and baneful evil antagonism of our adversaries, may comprehend. Holy spirit patiently escorts us into maturity, yet still there is nervousness, and in some cases, a little awkwardness. The following was composed by the writer during these early, maturing years:

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.10, p.275.

RECONCILIATION

When you speak of the love of Christ Jesus
With words which are simple and plain,
You claim that I'm free from chains which bound me,
But, dear friend, I yet feel their pain.

Now you insist that still I am doubting,
And that God has erased the blame,
But molded by years filled with guilt and fears,
This clay is a vessel of shame.

You describe once again our Lord's anguish,
And my spirit is shocked, dismayed.
Oh, how may I face this amazing grace,
Believe that the price has been paid?

All these years I have sought God's forgiveness,
For the sin, the shame of the past.
I thought I could pay in mankind's own way,
Be rid of this burden at last.

Now my spirit stirs, trembling within me,
Beseeching the truth of this grace.
God's love shall increase though sin may not cease
In This weak flesh so vain and base!

Ah, such wonderful, blessed assurance
Of glorious love so divine!
Christ Jesus has bought the justness I sought.
From this moment, Lord, I am Thine!

"GOD'S DESIGNATION"

Initially, we can scarce wait for some opportunity to

share this good news. Naively, we assume that everyone, especially those who are privileged to acclaim our Lord as Saviour, will be only too delighted to discover the peace which such glad tidings impart. Now we may shake our heads and smile at such exuberance. But how it grieves our hearts to be scorned. We heed the apostle's words, and we herald the word, opportunely, inopportunely. We bear with much evil. God's love trains us in meekness and patience.

There is no way for us to know whom God has chosen and is calling. From our individual experience we must conclude that our own case was quite hopeless, yet how we were tenderly led, in grace, to acclaim His beloved Son as Lord!

"Almost all who have attained to maturity have had to put aside some childish and mistaken beliefs. If we, like the man in Thessalonica, had died before we could have learned the later truth unfolded by Paul, would we not, like him, respond to the call of our Lord when He comes to the air? It is a question of God's designating us in love for sonship, not of our understanding or appreciation, or response. Rather, it is in accord with His own purpose, and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian (2 Tim.1:9).

"Paul prays for those who are sealed with the holy spirit of promise, the earnest of our allotment, for a *further* spirit of wisdom to perceive what is the expectation of their calling and the riches of their allotment and the power at the rousing of Christ (Eph.1:14). This makes it evident that they *lacked* this added endowment, and that the earnest of the spirit, which is the portion of all, does *not* include a knowledge of the higher truths for today.

"Yet this does not invalidate our pre-expectancy. Under the law, and even in the Circumcision evangel, some response is necessary, or the blessing is withdrawn. *Not so in grace*, apart from law. Grace operates even better in the

midst of failure and opposition than otherwise, for these provide a background for its display."[2]

"TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE!"

With heartfelt gratitude and praise we embark on our ministry of conciliation here, long before we are snatched away to proclaim this among the celestials. But in this administration humanity spurns the gracious gift of our Lord's loving sacrifice. Again and again our good news is treated with indifference and even contempt. The suffering we experience is bearable, for only thus may we know Christ and the power of His resurrection.

We esteem it a privilege to share in His sufferings, but when the vile opposition is directed against Him then this is so painful that our spirits suffer. We listen to saints in Christendom earnestly sing of amazing grace, but in the next breath they roundly condemn us and our proclamation of conciliation! "This is dangerous!" they charge. "We agree that in grace we are saved, but it just cannot be as simple as that. By your teaching you imply that all our sins are of little consequence! That they are not important!" Sometimes, like the scoffers at Golgotha who sneered, "Others he saves! Himself he can not save" (Matt.27:42), they cynically conclude, "This is just too good to be true!"

When did we ever teach such a thing? When did we ever subscribe to the heresy that God is not judging the world? "Now let God be true, yet every man a liar" (Rom.3:4). We are justified gratuitously. We have God's own righteousness *through the faith of Jesus Christ*, and now, beyond all condemnation, no longer His enemies, we may be having peace.

A great deal has been written concerning the love of God. Well might the apostle Paul stress the paramount grandeur of love. Above all else this deep, unchanging

2. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.45, pp.167,168.

affection of the Creator for His creatures is such, that He yearns toward us and provides us with the most gracious means of comprehending the nature of this love, by granting the tenderness and intimate relationships of parent and offspring. Hence He presents Himself as Father for all the vast numbers of His children. Shall He casually lose one, even one? Would we? Is there any real offense which would irrevocably turn us away from our own beloved?

When attempting to understand the deep significance of what it meant for our Father to turn away from His Firstborn, then we must call on the sacred filial ties of our own dear ones. Corrupt and calloused reasoning or philosophy, resulting from the base influences without and within, can never help us in this understanding. Here, we are on the rare ground of love and faith, which alone will ensure that vital and precious trust.

"May we prayerfully grasp the necessity of evil as a background for the display of God's grandest glories and our perpetual praise of Him. Only then will we be prepared to endure with thankful hearts all the trials and tragedies in the present which He sends to us.

"All of mankind must learn to realize what God is to them by an actual experience of what it means to be without Him. Then they will be able to give Him the unforced outflow of their hearts. Then they will appreciate it when His judgments permanently right all wrongs and eliminate all evil, through the suffering Sacrifice He has provided."[3]

"My faith has found a resting place, not in device nor creed;
I trust the ever-living One, His wounds for me shall plead.
I need no other argument, I need no other plea;
It is enough that Jesus died, and that He died for me."

Donald Fielding

3. A. E. Knoch: The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God, p.7.

Contents:

241 Editorial
243 God All in All
251 O Foolish Galatians!
263 The Voice of One Imploring
271 Dais of Christ
277 How Long?
286 The Living Redeemer

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 1996
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-SEVEN

EDITORIAL

WITH THANKSGIVING we complete another volume of *Unsearchable Riches*, in which we have endeavored to witness to the evangel of the grace of Christ and the glories of His God and Father. No doubt our readers will agree with us that no experience in this life gives strength, satisfaction and encouragement like spending time in meditating on God's Word and sharing the good news with others, whether by speaking or writing, whether privately in conversation or letter, or publicly in gatherings or publications such as this.

This is because God's spirit invigorates us through His tidings (see Brother Coram's comments on pages 257-262). Especially the evangel revealed to Paul and preserved for us in his epistles works continually in those who are believing, bearing the fruit of the spirit in their lives (Gal.5:22,23). But all of God's Word from Genesis to Job to Matthew to Revelation is beneficial for equipping us for good acts (2 Tim.3:16,17).

To be sure, as Brother A. E. Knoch testifies (see pages 243-250), there is a conflict between human thinking and God's declarations. We feel that God could not really have created evil, but God says He does (Isa.45:7). We are fearful that the evangel of grace will break down restraints on human wickedness, but God tells us it is His power for salvation (Rom.1:16). We reason that God's operations of judgment and condemnation are ends in themselves, but God speaks of His delight to bring all into reconciliation through the blood of Christ's cross (Eph.1:10; Col.1:20).

What a joy and genuine source of spiritual invigoration there is in discarding the idea of an everlasting hell and accepting the truth that "God has a goal. He intends to become All in all" (p.246).

This, in turn helps us to distinguish between the process and the goal (p.246). So many apparent contradictions in Scripture and controversies concerning fundamental issues are resolved by this principle, as illustrated in our series on Galatians and Job and Matthew.

"God is our all, in things great and small" (p.250). The great fact of human stubbornness, and all the myriad, little expressions of this stubbornness in individual lives, was the background that led Paul to exclaim with praise that all is out of God and through Him and for Him (Rom. 11:36). This is what Job also was struggling to see in the midst of his massive affliction and loss. Human wisdom, as voiced by Job's associates, which would distance God from such evils (except as expressions of His judgments) only increases despair (see pages 277-287).

The full realization of God as our all is still ahead. But in His grace there is movement toward this goal in our experience as believers. Regarding our faith and walk in faith, Brother Fielding writes, "There is a pattern here that is shared by us all. There is a progression" (p.271). Although such progress is often uneven, and in some instances seemingly truncated altogether, yet God is faithful, and the more we focus on Him as the living God, out of Whom all is, the more our present way will partake of the spirit of the goal.

As we grow in the realization of God we grow out of discouragement and despair. And as we hold fast to the evangel of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we lose our grip on anxiety and fear. "Now to our God and Father be glory for the eons of the eons! Amen!" (Col.4:20).

D.H.H.

GOD ALL IN ALL

DO YOU BELIEVE ALL of God's Word? When I first came to know God I went to the meetings of the "Plymouth Brethren" and learned many a precious truth from them which, at that time, was almost unknown in the nominal churches. The Lord's coming, the need of "rightly dividing," a little as to the body of Christ, the difference between the church and the kingdom—these all found a place in my heart and mind at the very beginning of my life of faith. But I also received warnings against "non-eternity," and "soul-sleep," and "universalism," etc., to which I gave due heed.

At that early date my life course was determined by the acquisition of Wigram's Concordances. Next to the Scriptures, they have been of the greatest value in my spiritual development.

These give a list of each word in Greek or Hebrew and all of its occurrences in English. This has been my lexicon, for the usage of a word is the only safe index of its meaning. These also showed how discordant our English translation is and led me to go back to the original.

The Brethren claimed to be unsectarian, but when I persisted in having fellowship with all of good conduct in the body of Christ they put me out, though this was the original basis on which their movement was founded. This proved a great blessing, for I was now free to believe what is in God's Word apart from all religious restraint.

I had two objects before me: to believe *all* of God's Word, and to suffer the persecution which must necessarily follow. I was conscious that there were quite a few

texts in the Word which made me uncomfortable. I knew the so-called "explanations," but they appeared to be only a form of unbelief.

The salvation of all troubled me from the very first. The Brethren changed God *wills* all men to be saved, to God *wishes,* but my concordance showed me that it was the Brethren who wished it so, not God. He works all things according to the counsel of His will. They also altered "the *Saviour* of all" to "the Preserver of all." Since it was necessary for them to corrupt God's Word on this theme it was clear that they did not have the truth. Romans five and First Corinthians fifteen and Colossians one contained statements which I could not believe because they contradicted many other passages dealing with the fate of unbelievers. It was only after the truth as to the eonian times was opened up to me that I was able to exult in their glorious unfoldings.

I now found myself able to accept and approve of those statements in the Bible which stumble so many saints, and cause so much unbelief, which may be concentrated in the one case of Pharaoh. God hardened his heart, and will judge him for doing that which he was forced to do. Is this right?

Not only that, but God was greatly glorified by Pharaoh's opposition. How then can He judge him? A believer in eternal torment finds it impossible to charge God with such an atrocity, and refuses to believe it, or "explains" it away. But once we see God's ultimate and that judgment, in God's Word, sets matters right, all is clear and acceptable. God's glory demands expression. Pharaoh, earth's highest, is the best means. He is too soft, so he must be hardened. Eventually, at the consummation, he will be reconciled. But that is not possible until he has realized the enormity of his sins, and suffered their just penalty, set by God Who *is just,* not vindictive.

But even then I was not satisfied. There were still passages in God's Word which did not receive my hearty acquiescence. I had a horror of implicating God in sin, so how could I echo the apostle's words "all is out of Him" (Rom. 11:36)? *All* out of Him—the evil, the misery, the opposition to His will? Yet the passage itself insists that He locks up all in stubbornness (Rom.11:32). Other passages, such as the sixth of Isaiah, boldly tell us that He blinds men's eyes so that they cannot see. Pharaoh's is no isolated case. It is very evident that God uses these things in order that His glory may be manifested. Is it then God's will that men should sin? That cannot be. What is sin?

Once I found out that sin is failure, I saw that I had been making God the greatest of all sinners, so long as I believed that He could not save all, or that He had not been able to keep sin out of the universe, or that it was contrary to His purpose. Failure is sin, and if we imagine that God has failed in any particular we make Him the Sinner of sinners. God will not fail, and has not failed.

The first thought which came to me then was, "shall we, then, do evil that good may come?" Never! But immediately I was reminded that this is the very charge that was hurled at Paul! Could there be any better proof that I was on the right track? *God* does evil that good may come, for He is wise and powerful and loving. But men are foolish and weak and hateful, so cannot use evil, except in the most limited degree. A father may be trusted to put his child's finger near enough to the hot stove so as to teach it to fear the fire, for he loves the child. Otherwise it is a most dangerous and erroneous doctrine. But God is not a man. That is the trouble with theology. It is always deifying man and humanizing God.

So it was that I arrived at my goal: to believe all of God's Word and to suffer persecution like Paul. He was falsely charged with teaching men to do evil (Rom.3:5-8), and he

was reproached for saying that God is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10).

But, above all, I now have a *real God,* Whom I can worship and adore without the least reservation. He harms, but He heals, and both together, the harming as well as the healing, is a blessing to His creatures as well as a glory to Himself.

It is our object to lead our readers to this same goal, where they can accept *all* of God's words and give Him *all* the adoration of their hearts.

THE PROCESS AND THE GOAL

GOD HAS A GOAL. He intends to become All in all His creatures (1 Cor.15:28). He will accomplish this by way of reconciling all His enemies by the blood of Christ's cross, by justifying, vivifying, and saving all mankind at the consummation (Col.1:20; Rom.5:18; 1 Cor.15:22; 1 Tim.2:4; 4:10). But before this there is a long and painful preparatory process, a weary way which leads His creatures to this consummation, much of which seems as dark and distressing as the goal is bright and filled with blessing.

Almost all of us are short-sighted. We see a part of the way but we do not see the end. We confuse the going with the goal. Our Bible translations are partly to blame, for they fail to clearly mark the fleeting nature of the process, as it is in the original languages. And if an honest attempt is made to carry this across in a concordant version, it clashes with our conventions and our hard hearts. God grant that we may faithfully witness, in our renderings, when God reveals an absolute fact concerning God and His *purpose,* and when it is only a temporary *process,* for this He has clearly indicated in the ancient manuscripts.

Judgment is God's strange work. He uses it on the way.

Men make it the end. No matter how an unbeliever is dealt with, whether he dies as a result of sin, or by the direct intervention of God, whether he be cast into outer darkness or into Gehenna, *this is not his end.* All who do not belong to Christ will be roused from the dead and judged before the great white throne. There they are not forgiven, or saved, but judged. *But this is not their end.* All these will be cast into the lake of fire, to suffer the second death. *Even this is not their end.* God does not reach His goal in any of His disciplinary measures. These only prepare His creatures for it. Let us not confuse the going with the goal.

Very little is said to us about God's goal until Paul completes the orbit of God's Word with his later revelations. Hints there have always been by which hearts in tune with God have been filled with high hopes. But it is not until the meridian sun of God's grace has come from behind the clouds of sin and law, to reveal the deepest recesses of God's immanent love to the most undeserving of the race, it is not until the truth for the present was made known that God tore aside the veil of the future completely, and gave us an unclouded view of His ultimate. Once we revel in this we will never go back to previous revelation on this theme, for like the curtain of the tabernacle, it seems to hide, rather than reveal the full blaze of the Shekinah glory.

The usual way is to view the goal in the darkness of the way. We go back to passages which deal with judgments and allow them to throw their dark shadows across the consummation. We should *believe* that *God* will *justify all* mankind (Rom.5:18), and view the previous judgments in the light of this final achievement. We bring up passages which tell of death, to darken God's declaration that it will be abolished. We should *believe* that *God* will make death inoperative at the *last*, and view the previous passages in this glorious light. We turn to tests which prove that unbelievers will be lost or destroyed, and, with these

passages, dim the great declaration that God wills the salvation of all. We should illumine them with the later and higher revelation. We find God's enemies in the fiery lake at what seems to be the close of revelation, and misuse this fact to deny God's declaration that all will be reconciled (Col.1:20). We should not take one to destroy the other, but believe *both,* for reconciliation *follows* estrangement, and it alone accords with God's final goal.

How perverse and blind have we often been! When God says *all,* we have said *some.* When God speaks of a very small fraction of mankind, such as the living nations who stand before Christ to be judged according to their treatment of Israel (*cf* Matt.25:31-46)—a mere handful as compared with all mankind—then we make their sentence hopeless and extend it to *all*! Faith has almost fled from the earth. What calls itself faith is mostly a masquerade, for it refuses God's Word for the traditions of men, yet insists that it is genuine.

Let us allow the light of the latest revelation to illumine the earlier, partial unfolding, and let us not use the earlier to eclipse the latest, the highest, and the only complete unveiling of God's mind and heart.

Why should we be Jonahs, sitting under our withered gourd, furious because God does not fulfill the word which we have proclaimed. What about the truthfulness of God's Word? Must it not be upheld? Would it not make God a liar if He repented and did not overturn Nineveh in forty days? The idea that God has a heart as well as a mouth, and had compassion on the creatures He has made was heresy in Jonah's eyes. Are we not far worse than Jonah? He actually had to take back God's express declaration. We need only retract our own false inferences from it, dictated by the heart altogether out of harmony with His loving goal, which our dim eyes have failed to discern, even though it is written in letters of gold across the horizon of the far off

future, and is clearly visible to every heart which has been humbled by His grace, and which beats in unison with His love. God grant that we are no Jonahs!

GOD ALL IN US

Most delightful is it to contemplate that distant day when God will be All in *all.* Because of the unbelief of Christendom we are prone to emphasize the second *all,* and rightly insist that it admits of no exceptions. *Every* creature of His hand will then be close to His heart. Yet we should not confine our contemplations to the number alone, but also maintain the full meaning of the first *All.* God will not occupy a small fraction of our lives, nor even half or three-fourths. He will be *everything* to us. There will be nothing in our experience that will not be divine. Every occurrence, each incident, large or small, important or trivial, will come to us consciously as a gratuity given by God, and it will bring a constant response of adoring worship.

GOD SOMETHING IN ALL

Perhaps it would not be too much to say that God is *something* in everyone in this life. Even the unbeliever and the atheist, especially in their earlier years, have at least a tinge of God-consciousness, especially when overwhelmed with sudden terror or dismay. But it is not until He reveals Himself to His chosen, that they begin to *realize* the part He plays in their lives, and that He becomes the focus of their consciousness. At first this may be very weak, but, as they become mature, He takes a larger and larger place in their experience. The heathen have idols made by human hands. Let us beware lest we also worship a deity who is not and will not be our all, made by human heads.

GOD ALL IN SALVATION

In these days the standard question which is pressed upon the unbeliever is, "What must I *do* to be saved?" This leaves the impression that the sinner must have a hand in his salvation. He must repent, or reform, or join the church. Even Paul's reply to the Philippian warden, "*Believe* on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved . . ." (Acts 16:31) is distorted, as though it were a meritorious deed, when, in fact, it is of *faith* that it may accord with *grace,* not with works (Rom.4:16). And the faith is that of God's chosen (Titus 1:1). Salvation is all of God. It begins with His choice before the disruption (Eph.1:4), which eventuates in His call and justification and glorification (Rom.8:30). Nothing is left to us. He alone gave His Son, the sacrifice that saves. May we add nothing to it!

GOD ALL IN LIFE

But the *believer* need not wait until that day. As he matures he will gradually realize that God is All to him now. At first he seeks to inject himself and his will, and the unknown god of chance into the affairs of life. Then he begins to see that God is in all the great crises, the important decisions. But finally he wakes to the fact that everything, no matter what its size or duration, is under God's control. All space and that which fills it is subject to the Great Disposer. All time and every event that occurs in it is planned and put in its appearance when God wills. God is our all, in things great and small! So we anticipate the glorious goal to which He is guiding His universe. May this be the precious portion of all who have partaken of His peace!

A. E. Knoch

The preceding studies are adapted from three editorials appearing in *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.24, pp.65-69; vol.26, pp.131-134; and vol.42, pp.225,226.

O FOOLISH GALATIANS!

(Galatians 3:1-9)

O foolish Galatians! (3:1a)

It is only because of the extremity of the Galatians' error in their repudiation of the grace of God (*cf* 2:21), that the apostle is led to speak thus, explicitly declaring unto the Galatians that in respect of their repudiation of divine grace they are *foolish* indeed.

By his explicit characterization of the Galatians as "foolish," Paul was prepared to risk initial offense for the sake of eventual good; the eventual good that would come whenever *the Lord Himself* (*cp* 5:10a; Rom.14:4c), through these very words of Paul's, would bring the Galatians to a realization of the truth.

It has been the part of inspiration as well for Paul to speak thus, in consideration of the needs of every believer, down the centuries, whom God would enlighten in the truth of the evangel. Often, that we might truly acquire wisdom, it is needful for us to know not only that of which it consists, but that of which it does *not* consist.

It is not that Paul's appraisal of the Galatians as "foolish" was inaccurate; nor can we charge him with having overstated the case. It is only that, for so long as one *remains* foolish, he cannot be expected to respond favorably to any true appraisal of his condition.

It is to be regretted that in everyday speech the word "foolish" is usually used connotatively, in a disparaging or demeaning sense. It is often a term of belittlement or ridicule. Indeed, it is in a consideration of this common usage

of "foolish," together with an awareness that we do well not to demean or ridicule others, that we hesitate to speak at all of others as being foolish.

The primary definition of "fool," however, is "One who is *deficient* in judgment, sense, or understanding"; likewise, a "foolish" thought or deed, is one "Having or resulting from poor judgment; unwise."[1] This accords with the Greek term for "foolish," *anoêton,* the elements of which signify "UN-MINDed" (i.e., "thoughtless," in the sense of deficiency of proper thought). Any secondary or tertiary definitions of foolish such as "ridiculous" or "gullible," not to mention connotations of derision, denigration, or scorn, are not the essential meaning of either "fool" or "foolish."

It is true that we do well to minimize both our declarations and thoughts in consideration of such ideas as those which these lesser definitions of "foolish," and especially their connotations, call to mind. But it is also true that we do well to note, whether in ourselves or others, that which constitutes deficiency in judgment, sense, or understanding, especially where the measure of that deficiency is extensive.

All such deficiency is "foolishness"; it is a deficiency of *wisdom,* which is the highest and best application of knowledge. Since it is impossible to know what is wise apart from a knowledge as well of that which precludes wisdom, it is vital that we be mindful not only of that which is wise, but also of that which is foolish. Those who are foolish, are those who engage in that which is foolish; in that which is marked by deficiency in judgment, sense, or understanding. To imagine that it is the *sine qua non*[2] of love to avoid appraising others as foolish even where this is the case, is itself a foolish notion.

1. AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY, second college edition, p.274 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983).

2. i.e., indispensable condition or element; Latin: "without which not."

It is rather that, as a rule, it is the *sine qua non* of *prudence* not to *inform* a fool of his foolishness. This is because, "The foolish despise wisdom and discipline" (Prov.1:7); and, because "The way of a fool seems upright in his own eyes" (Prov.12:15). "Wisdom is too high for the fool" (Prov.24:7). Indeed, "Though you bray the fool in a mortar, in the midst of the grist with a pestle, his folly shall not go away from him" (Prov.27:22). Accordingly, then, "Let a bereaved bear encounter a man, but certainly not a stupid [i.e., undiscerning] person in his folly" (Prov.17:12).

"JUSTIFIED IN HIS BLOOD"

Who bewitches you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was graphically crucified? (3:1b)

"Who" is the indefinite pronoun, *tis,* signifying ANY. When possible, the Concordant Version seeks to preserve its indefiniteness by rendering it **any,** [a]**some,** or [a]**certain.** Idiomatically, however, it must often be rendered [a]**who,** [a]**whose,** [a]**which,** [a]**what,** [a]**why,** or with negatives, [a]**one.** Paul's point, then, was not to inquire specifically as to just "who" it was who had bewitched them; nor does he seek to elicit just "what" particular means any such ones had used unto this end. His point is rather—since it was evident that they *had* become "bewitched"—that *something* must have bewitched them. This sense, stated as a rhetorical question, may be expressed thus: "[In light of your profound withdrawal from the faith,] is there not "[a]*something* that *bewitches* you—before whose eyes Jesus Christ was graphically crucified?"

"Graphically" is an idiomatic variant of *prographō* (BEFORE-WRITE), which literally means, "write before" (e.g., Eph.3:3). Paul had "written before" the mind's eye of every one of the Galatians that Christ had died for their sakes, and that—in the bloody death of His crucifixion—they were now justified (*cp* Rom.5:8,9). It was ever the burden of Paul's

ministry to declaim the word recorded in Romans 8:32, which is: "*Surely* He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, *how* shall He not, together with Him, *also,* be *graciously* granting *us* all?"

This is the truth which Paul vividly outlined and clearly set forth concerning "Christ crucified," graphically presenting it before the eyes of the Galatians. It is not at all that he denied the horror of the cross or sought to minimize it, but that he did not specifically rehearse the details of its terror. Much less did he employ any account of our Lord's sufferings merely to evoke the maudlin, thus stirring the emotions while leaving the intellect quiescent, specifically in the knowledge of the evangel itself.

"The phrase 'openly set forth' [ASV; 'graphically,' CV] is regarded by some as proof of the oratorical ability of the apostle. He possessed—so we are told—an eloquence which had at its disposal the whole armory of rhetoric, and he captured an audience by drawing vivid, impressively realistic pictures of the scenes attending the betrayal and death of our Lord.

"Modern preachers, nursed in the artificial atmosphere of academic theories, imagine that eloquence, imagination, descriptive ability, are the most effective weapons of a herald of the cross, and that, equipped with these, the truth is sure to ride on prosperously from conquest to conquest.

"Imbued with the idea, they strive to fascinate an audience with animated word pictures of the scenes enacted in the garden of Gethsemane, the judgment hall of Pilate, and the hill Golgotha. The audience is spellbound and visibly moved. Moist eyes are in evidence everywhere. A solemn hush pervades the room.

"At the conclusion of the service commendatory remarks flow in profusion. The sermon is unanimously pronounced 'wonderful.' The congregation disbands and everybody goes home. By the time the afternoon repast is over, popular

mood turns to a lighter vein. The effect of the sermon has worn off. Its elegant style and rhetorical flourishes have volatilized. Many begin to feel that a visit to the 'movies' would fittingly complement the sermon.

"Why has such a seemingly impressive oration failed to produce a lasting impression? How did it come to pass that it so readily resolved itself into thin air? Just because the preacher's preoccupation with the circumstantial events of our Lord's death prevented his understanding its deep purpose and vital import. In divorcing the external events of our Lord's passion from the underlying purpose, his preaching became sentimental, producing emotional ebulliencies, ecstatic raptures, anomalous and spectacular experiences, outbursts of gush, while the intellect remained inactive and the conscience dormant.

"The apostle disdained the artifices which form the stock in trade of professional evangelists and preachers (*cp* 1 Cor. 2:1-5; 2 Cor.10:10). He never wasted a second in reciting the chain of circumstantial events which brought about the death of God's Son. He pushed his way above and beyond these. The purpose of God for the universe converging in the cross of Christ was the one object engaging his mind. The bearing of the cross on the tremendous questions of law, sin, life—these were the initial truths which he strove to impart to his hearers—these were the truths which he set forth lucidly and convincingly, which he drove home to the mind by the irresistible power of his logic and burned into the heart by the consuming passion of his love.

"So powerfully were these truths presented by the apostle and so profoundly did they grip the Galatians, that they yielded an immediate harvest of precious fruit. So firmly were they convinced of the truth of the evangel that their faith weathered the storm of persecution. They suffered 'many things' for truth's sake. That they should now remove to a different evangel, and meander in bypaths of

legalism, after so splendid a record, was a strange enigma, a positive 'marvel,' which the apostle could only attribute to 'bewitchment.'"[3]

Though in Galatians 3:1, "bewitches" is a figure of speech, it is quite an apt metaphor. When believers withdraw from the faith, their situation is not unlike one in which, in certain religions of the world, a "witch" "casts a spell" upon its victim, thus rendering its captive subject to its own wicked behests and sinister designs.

Similarly, the situation that literally obtains in cases in which even believer's themselves begin to withdraw from the faith, is one in which they now "give heed to deceiving spirits and the teachings of demons, in the hypocrisy of false expressions, their own conscience having been cauterized" (1 Tim.4:1,2).

It is evident that these deceiving spirits themselves are but Satan's own agents. This is because wherever believers are found "antagonizing" (INSTEAD-THRU-PLACing) the words of the apostle Paul, we are to account for this, not by a mere acknowledgement of the infirmity of the flesh, but by recognizing that, at a deeper level, what has occurred is that such ones have fallen into "the trap of the Adversary, having been caught alive by him for that one's will" (2 Tim.2:25,26).

Paul was mindful that, in our response to such fearful encounters, we must, first of all, "*not* be fighting"; then, we must rather, "be gentle toward all, apt to teach, bearing with evil, with meekness training those who are antagonizing, *seeing whether God* may be giving them repentance to come to a realization of the truth (and [whether] they will [then] be *sobering up* out of the trap of the Adversary, [hitherto] having been caught alive by him for that one's will)" (2 Tim.2:24-26).

3. Vladimir Gelesnoff, PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, pp.62,63.

THE SPIRIT'S OWN TESTIMONY

This only I want to learn from you: Did you get the spirit by works of law or by hearing of faith? So foolish are you? Undertaking in spirit, are you now being completed in flesh? So much did you suffer feignedly? Since, surely, it also is feignedly! (3:2-4)

Paul astutely reduces the dispute between himself and the Galatians to a single issue. The strength of his protest lies in its appeal to the Galatians' own experience, which they cannot well deny. Yet the success of his argument assumes that they are honest enough to acknowledge the facts, being sensible enough as well to apply them logically.

The Galatians could not honestly deny that they got the spirit through the glad-tidings of faith, *not* through works of law. Accordingly, they got the spirit of sonship, in which they cried, "Abba, Father!" the spirit itself testifying together with their spirit that they were children of God (*cp* Rom.8:15,16; Gal.4:6).

The sense of the phrase "So foolish are you?" literally, is "*Thus* foolish are you?" That is, rhetorically, Paul asks the Galatians, "Are you foolish in the following way?" Namely, he asks them, Are you foolish in such a way so as to be supposing that while, as you yourselves must acknowledge, you have *undertaken* in *spirit,* you must now, nevertheless, go on and become *completed* in *flesh?*

Having assured them that any such notion is a foolish notion, in a similar vein, Paul then continues on, inquiring, "*So much* did you suffer *feignedly?* Since, surely, it also is feignedly!" That is, the Galatians were as aware that they had genuinely obtained the spirit by the tidings of faith, as they were likewise aware that their sufferings for the name of Christ were not a sham but were altogether real. They could not honestly deny the former fact any more than the latter, though to justify their recent apostasy, they would be constrained to deny both of these propositions.

Paul has the Galatians on the horns of a dilemma. Turn which way they will, they simply cannot (1) remain honest, and (2) continue to acknowledge Paul's authority as an apostle, while at the same time justifying their own departure from his teaching.

When the truth is reduced to a single issue expressed in its simplest form, its acceptance is still dependent upon the integrity and sensibility of those to whom it is presented. Those who will not face the simplest of facts and respond appropriately thereunto, show that, at bottom, their difficulty is not so much intellectual but moral; not so much ignorance as stubbornness. To all that precludes their position, they may indeed interminably continue to respond by the words, "Yes, but." But what they may no longer do for even an hour, subsequent to such a crisis, is to continue to respond thus out of a clean heart governed by a sound mind.

SOURCED IN *TRUTH* AND *GRACE*

Paul is willing to rest his case on this one item of evidence. Verse two (along with its repetition and amplification in verses 5 and 6) is the linchpin of the apostle's argument, the Galatians' own experience of having received the spirit. He deems it irrefutable that they got the spirit not *ex ergōn nomou* ("out of acts of law"), but *ex akoês pisteōs* ("out of hearing [i.e., tidings] of belief [i.e., faith]").

By the phrases "by works of law" and "by the [tidings] of faith," we are not to understand two alternative *methods* of common principle, but two proposed *sources* of mutually-exclusive, antithetical principle. One is false, the other true, in reference to being that out of which the spirit is obtained.

Paul does not present two alternative means by which man, ultimately by his own efforts, secures his acceptance before God; the one works, the other faith. It is not that one human means of gaining the divine acceptance is now

supplanted by another human means of doing the same thing. Even if faith is reduced to acquiescence, assent, or even non-resistance, thus understood, as a human means of gaining God's acceptance, it retains a meritorious nature evoking reciprocity, to which Righteousness itself must grant its just due. Such a schema merely replaces one system of merit with another. "It simply substitutes the mental act of having faith for the bodily one of being circumcised."[4]

"Suppose one man to rely on his own faith and another to rely on his own works; then the faith of the one and the works of the other are equally of the same filthy rags."[5] This is the whole point: if we are relying on *anything* of ourselves, whether our works *or* our faith, we have repudiated grace and are fundamentally mistaken in our understanding of Paul's evangel.

It is not that the Galatians got the spirit on the basis of a believing *act* of hearing, even if most suppose this to be so. Such reasoning is based upon the assumption that since "works of law" describes one type of human action, "hearing of faith" must describe some alternative type of human action. This interpretation attributes to Paul the thought: "You got the spirit not because you did *X* but because you did *Y*." Such an understanding, however, is impossible, not because it is simplistic and naïve (though it is certainly both of these), but because it accords with fleshly glory and human pride, while failing to accord with either monotheism or divine grace.

Akoê literally means "hearing" (e.g., Mark 7:35). Sometimes, however, where it was noted that it was used metonymically of "that which is heard" (e.g., Matt.24:6; Rom.

4. G. M. Taylor, cit. in THE FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST, by Richard B. Hays, p.140 (Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1983); cit. "The Function of *Pistis Christou* ["Faith of Christ"] in Galatians," *JBL* 85 (1966) p.75.

5. William Law, op. cit., p.139; cit. A. G. Hebert, "'Faithfulness' and 'Faith,'" *Theology* 58 (1955) p.379.

10:17), the Concordant Version renders it "tidings," in reference to the message itself which is *associated* with the "hearing" thereof. This clearly appears to be the sense as well in Galatians 3, verses 2 and 5, in the phrase, *ex akoês pisteōs,* which can be better rendered in accord with the context as "*tidings* of faith," instead of "hearing of faith."

This is so, for, in the nature of the case, the Galatians got the spirit *out of* the *tidings* (or "message") of faith, which they subsequently heard and believed. The glad-tidings of Christ which are "of faith" (i.e., which pertain or relate to faith), do so in that they constitute the object of faith; that is, that which is believed, based upon that which is heard.

As "Isaiah is saying, 'Lord, who believes our *tidings?*'" (Rom.10:16; cit. Isa.53:1). Even so, to those who do believe, according as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those bringing an *evangel* of good!" (Rom.10:15; cit. Isa. 52:7). "Consequently, faith is out of *tidings,* yet the *tidings* through a declaration of Christ" (Rom.10:17).

It was not, however, "by," in a transactional sense, the Galatians' *acceptance of* tidings of faith, that they "qualified for," or "met the requirements of," getting the spirit. By their acceptance of the evangel, the Galatians gained a beginning in the knowledge of God, according as it is in Christ Jesus. They did not thereby gain a right to any endowment of the spirit of God.

Instead of gaining a right to spiritual blessing by an acceptance of spiritual truth, it is rather that *out of* the power inherent in the message of the glad-tidings of Christ (the "tidings of faith"), God's *chosen* ones *graciously* obtain the spirit and believe. This occurs in the day when it delights God to unveil His Son in them, according to the pattern which Christ Himself established in the salvation of Saul of Tarsus, who is also Paul, the apostle of the nations (*cp* Gal.1:15,16; 1 Tim.1:12-16; 2 Tim.2:10).

He, then, Who is supplying you with the spirit, and operating works of power among you—did you get the spirit by works of law or by the hearing of faith . . . ? (3:5)

In declaring, "He, then, Who is supplying you with the spirit, and operating works of power among you—" Paul does not complete his thought. Yet he then goes on to repeat the preceding question once again: "Did you get the spirit by works of law or by the hearing of faith . . . ?" Since the only true answer to this question is that they got the spirit by the hearing (i.e., tidings) of faith, Paul then rejoins, "He, *then,* Who is supplying you with the spirit, and operating works of power among you—"

It is as if Paul wishes for the Galatians themselves to be honest enough and perceptive enough to gladly supply the self-evident omission, which is, ". . . will be completing what He has undertaken." Thus the full sense becomes: "He, then, Who is supplying you with the spirit, and operating works of power among you, [will be completing what He has undertaken]" (*cp* Phil.1:6).

. . . according as Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness? Know, consequently, that those of faith, these are sons of Abraham. Now the scripture, perceiving before that God is justifying the nations by faith, brings before an evangel to Abraham, that In you shall all the nations be blessed. So that those of faith are being blessed together with believing Abraham. (3:6-9)

There is a foundational agreement in kind between Abraham's calling and faith and our own calling and faith. Similarly, since the most just thing that any man can do is to believe God's own word, when we ourselves also, even as Abraham, believe the word of His promise, our so doing is reckoned to us "for [i.e., "into"] righteousness" (Rom.4: 22-24). God appraises our believing as being among (and so, thus He accounts it "into") that class of deeds which He deems righteous. Even though faith extends no "rights" to its possessors, and is itself a gracious gift, it is nonethe-

less considered righteous by God Himself, besides being full of practical value for ourselves.

We are to know, "consequently, that those of faith, *these* are sons of Abraham" (3:7). Faith does not make God's promise true; instead, it finds it true. Faith's acceptance of the divine promise does not entitle its bearer to the promise's blessing; rather, it *convicts* its possessor of the *truth* of the promise's blessing. Faith has no value whatsoever as "legal tender." It simply acknowledges that which was already true prior to and wholly apart from its subsequent acceptance thereof. It is not that we will obtain the blessing, "*if* we will believe it true." It is instead, that we *will* be blessed; *and*, we *believe* that this is true.

Since the scripture, "perceiving before" that God is justifying the nations by faith, it therefore, prototypically, "brings before" an evangel to Abraham, declaring that, "In you *shall* all the nations be blessed." "So that," those *of faith* are being blessed together with *believing* Abraham.

Our being "blessed *together*" with Abraham is on the common ground of faith, according to *grace* (Rom.4:16). It is not that our blessing "together" with him affords us the identical future allotment which God has appointed for Abraham. Similarly, while God will grant *us* eonian life even if we should be persisting in sin (*cf* Rom.5:20-6:1), no such principle obtained in the case of Abraham, concerning whom law-obedience still retained a vital place unto the realization of the blessing (*cf* Gen.26:5), its certainty in grace notwithstanding. This is so, even though Abraham's blessing also, even as our own, ultimately depended upon God alone.

A striking commonality of *grace* through faith obtains between ourselves and Abraham. Hence, in respect thereof, we indeed become "sons of Abraham." May we have "confidence in the Lord," that one day not only the Galatians but every believer from every era will be made to stand in faith, full of wisdom, according to truth. J.R.C.

THE VOICE OF ONE IMPLORING

WHEN nearly two thousand years ago, our Lord was generated in the form of humanity in the womb of Mary, a messenger appeared to Joseph and declared: "Now she shall be bringing forth a Son, and you shall be calling His name Jesus, for He shall be saving His people from their sins" (Matt.1:20,21). Jesus came to save. But there was no immediate deliverance of Israel from their sins. In fact Matthew chapter 2 tells of the political opposition to the little Boy as "King of the Jews" (2:2). Instead of saving His people Jesus was saved from a massacre within Israel by being taken outside the land. Joseph and Mary took the child and *fled* into Egypt (Matt.2:13-18).

Meanwhile the sins of pride and jealousy and deceit and murder continued within Israel, and the result was "lamentation and much anguish" (Matt.2:18).

Such intervening events cannot keep the promise of Matthew 1:21 from being fulfilled, but in making the sins of the nation more evident with the resulting sufferings ever multiplying, they prepare the people for the appreciation of God's saving work. They add to the accumulating evidence that Israel is unable to save themselves, and if they are to be saved they must be saved by the Saviour.

THE KING OF THE JEWS

The King had come, but not yet the kingdom. The Saviour had been born, but not yet the salvation born in realization. Nevertheless, when the King reigns He will reign not only as Ruler and Judge, but as Saviour too. God had

promised this as described, for example, by Zechariah the prophet (Zec.9:9):

Exult exceedingly, daughter of Zion!
Raise a joyful shout, daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, *Your King* shall come to you!
Righteous and *bringing salvation is He* . . . .

The saving work of the King is in view in other prophecies as well, though not always expressed with these exact words. In Micah 5:2,4, which is cited in Matthew 2:6, the terms are "Ruler" and "shepherd," but the point is the same. God intends to deliver His people Israel by means of Jesus, the King Who will "shepherd them in the strength of Yahweh" (Micah 5:4).

JOHN THE BAPTIST

More years passed before John comes imploring the nation's repentance, "for near is the kingdom of the heavens" (Matt.3:1). This call for repentance (a change in mind) reflects the words of Yahweh through Ezekiel: ". . . turn about and turn back from all your transgressions . . . and make yourselves a new heart [the symbol for the mind] and a new spirit" (Ezek.18:30-32); and again, "I assuredly am not delighting in the death of the wicked one, but rather that the wicked one may turn back from his way and live" (Ezek.33:11).

To be sure, the message, both through Ezekiel and through John, seems at first glance to place the whole responsibility for changing their mind and turning back and living righteously on the sinners. But the place of Jesus as Saviour is not made clear by a word that centers on what the people must do. Is Jesus to be manifested and known as Saviour from sins simply by telling sinners to stop sinning? Is this the fulfillment of Matthew 1:21?

Indeed it is not. The call for repentance does not bring the changes in thinking and acting that are needed, and

so the imperative must ultimately be seen as a declarative founded on the promise that the Saviour Himself will save His people.

In accord with this, John is presented in Matthew 3:3 as the one spoken of in Isaiah 40:3. He is preparing the way for the Saviour, and the call to repentance is not a limiting qualification to this presentation. The whole of Isaiah 40 defines the Saviour as the One Who actually saves His people, not One Who merely instructs them to save themselves. Note the following declarations from that chapter (verses 1,2,10,11,29):

Comfort, oh comfort My people!
Says your Elohim.
Speak to the heart of Jerusalem,
And proclaim to her
That her enlistment is fulfilled,
And her depravity is dealt with benevolently,
That she has taken from the hand of Yahweh
Shelters from all her sins . . . .
Behold, my Lord Yahweh shall come with steadfastness,
And His arm ruling for Him;
Behold, His reward is with Him,
And His wage is before him.
Like a shepherd He shall graze His drove;
In His arms He shall gather the lambkins together,
And in His bosom He shall carry them . . . .
He is giving vigor to the faint,
And to the one who is without virility
He is increasing staunchness . . . .

In keeping with Israel's calling, the promise was for a *sheltering* from sins; justification as presented in Paul's evangel was not yet in view. But, that salvation is God's provision is true of every calling. The people who are told in Ezekiel 18:31 to make themselves a new heart and a new spirit are themselves to be *made* new by Yahweh,

according to Ezekiel 36:26. "*I will give* you a new heart and a new spirit." Because of His spirit which He grants to them they will obey[1] all Yahweh's statutes and ordinances (Ezek.36:27).

REPENT!

So also with repentance. The people must change their minds, but ultimately it will be seen that doing this is God's endowment. Peter completed the message begun by John when he declared to Israel, "Now the God of our fathers rouses Jesus, on Whom you lay hands, hanging Him on a pole. This Inaugurator and *Saviour,* God exalts to His right hand to *give repentance* to Israel and the pardon of sins" (Acts 5:30,31).

Repentance and the producing of fruit worthy of repentance are presented by John as prerequisites of the kingdom of the heavens. But the people are sinners. The most disciplined of them and the most intelligent are "Progeny of vipers" (Matt.3:7). How can such sinners and hypocrites produce such fruit? It will never happen by human strength in following commands, or by fear of punishment. It can happen only by God's own rescue through His Son, Who will save His people from their sins.

Nevertheless, human inability must be made clear, and that is vividly being made known to us in the book of Matthew, in the account of our Lord's ministry and Israel's rejection of Him. Consequently, we find that the promise of Matthew 1:21 seems shoved to the background as we listen, in chapter 2, to the lamentations and anguish of the "Rachels" of Israel, and follow in chapter 3 the sobering warnings of John.

1. The Hebrew word translated "obey" in Ezekiel 36:27 literally means "do" and is the same word translated "make" earlier in this verse and in Ezekiel 18:31.

THE IMPENDING INDIGNATION

As Jesus would also do after him, John the baptist speaks sternly in strong words to the Pharisees and Sadducees. The words of rebuke are well deserved, and the prophecies of divine indignation ahead are timely, but they must not be severed from their whole context concerning the Saviour-King. Religious zeal, with its failures covered up by hypocrisy (the Pharisees) and outward assurance with its inner weaknesses covered up by practiced pretense (the Sadducees) are great offenses, and there are times throughout human history when the indignation of God is poured out against these and all such sin. But divine indignation is not the end of God's dealings with sinners, nor in any way an end in itself. The end in view is presented in passages like Matthew 1:21 and 2:6, and though that goal is not immediately realized it will not be abandoned or even modified because of inevitable human failure and the necessities of divine judgment.

The idea that God's anger is permanent and that it is to be eternally expressed against a portion of humanity in unending torments of hell, or in the hopelessness of annihilation, is itself an offense against God. It involves the pharisaical notion that certain human beings are considered more important than others by their Creator. It involves as well a sadducean indifference concerning God's operations. It makes confusion, at best, of the meaning of divine love, righteousness and wisdom, if not emptying these terms of all meaning whatsoever.

THE AX AND THE FIRE

Because the kingdom had drawn near it was not only appropriate but necessary for John and the Lord to point to the day of indignation which must precede the blessings of Christ's rule.

"The figure of fire is used freely of our Lord's ministry

in Matthew's account. John the Baptist not only warned them that the ax was already lying at the root of the trees, and those which did not produce fine fruit would be hewn down and cast into the fire, but he characterized our Lord's ministry as two kinds of baptism, one in holy spirit and one in fire.

"He would winnow out the grain in the nation, yet He would also burn up the chaff with fire unextinguished (Matt.3:10-12). So that, even in Israel itself, the kingdom judgments are figured by fire. Our Lord repeats the Baptist's warning with special reference to the false prophets."[2]

This had been made clear by the prophets, who sometimes even used the figures of speech used here by John. Note how Isaiah had spoken of hewing down trees, and of fire in, in describing that future day of vengeance (10:33,34; 34:8-10):

> Behold the Lord, Yahweh of hosts
> Shall lop off the foliage with terror,
> And those high of stature shall be hacked down,
> And the haughty, they shall be abased.
> He will fell the thickets of the wildwood with iron,
> And Lebanon shall fall before the Noble One . . . .
> For Yahweh has a day of vengeance,
> A year of repayment for Zion's cause.
> . . . its earth will become pitch blazing forth;
> By night and by day it shall not be quenched;
> For the eon its smoke shall ascend . . . .

These things will occur, but they cannot stop the salvation provided by the Saviour from eventually embracing the whole of Israel and the nations round about as well, and, although it was not specifically revealed to John, this achievement will eventually embrace all mankind (1 Tim.4:10).

2. A. E. Knoch: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.35, pp.272,273.

UNEXTINGUISHED FIRE

In view of the significance of the Name Jesus and of His purpose in coming into this world it is impossible that Matthew 3:12 can be speaking of an everlasting hell. Nevertheless, as incomprehensible as it may be, this idea which erodes the very foundation of evangelical truth has been implanted into this passage.

To translate this passage using the term "unquenchable" and thus to indicate that the fires must burn forever, is to say that even before our Lord began His ministry, it was possible that He would not save some of His people, even many, from their sins. Indeed, if repentance and a turning away from wickedness is seen as wholly dependent on the individual sinner, it would already seem unlikely, if not impossible, that anyone would ever be saved from their sins.

This problem, however, is easily cleared away by recognizing that the word "unquenchable" is a mistranslation. There is no contradiction between Matthew 1:21 and 3:12 because the Greek adjective here indicates merely that the fire will not be quenched by anyone. It is not that it is some kind of super-blaze that must burn on endlessly, but rather it will burn without interference until it has burned up the "chaff" that fuels it.

The language here, as most agree, indicates a parallel with Isaiah 66:24, which reads in the Authorized Version: "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched . . . ." Let us note this carefully. The passage says the fire will not be quenched, but it does not say it is unquenchable. This is a significant point, for in Isaiah 34:10, quoted earlier, and in at least two other passages from the prophets, the same language is used of fire that clearly is not eternal. Jere-

miah speaks of the gates and citadels of Jerusalem being devoured by fire that shall not be put out (Jer.17:27). And Ezekiel tells of the trees in the Negev being burned with a blaze that also shall not be quenched (Ezek.20:47). In these cases the fire continues without interruption or interference until all that it is burning is burned up.

It is puzzling that this distinction between "unquenchable" and "not quenched" has not been recognized. *The New English Bible* translation, for example, says of the fire, in both Jeremiah 17:27 and Ezekiel 20:47, that it "shall not be put out;" but of the fire in Matthew 3:12 that it "can never go out." In this way, some hope is preserved for those coming under the judgments described by the earlier prophets, for a fire that is not put out can still burn out. But hope is, in effect, entirely cut off for some by this translation of John's introduction to Jesus, the Saviour!

John was no more speaking of some kind of a miracle fire that could not possibly go out than were Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. By translating his words in such a way, the faithful imploring of John is changed to a threat of unbelievable horror that effectively eclipses the evangel concerning the Saviour.

Matthew concludes the account of John's ministry with his baptizing of Jesus and the words of God "out of the heavens, saying, 'This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight' " (Matt.3:17). God has no delight in the death of the wicked (Ezek.33:11), but He does delight in His Son Who is the Saviour of sinners. Uncertainty concerning the results of John's imploring and the certainty of stern judgment against human sin cannot negate the expression of love and delight in this divine announcement, paralleling in fullest harmony the announcement of Matthew 1:21, but rather serve only to make that announcement all the more glorious.

D.H.H.

DAIS OF CHRIST

IT USED to be, "Are you saved?" Later, perhaps as the sad conceit of such an approach began to filter through our vanity, we moderated our question to, "How long have you known the Lord?"

Even this more positive presentation was inadequate. Eventually our viewpoint toward the evangel changes from one of anxiety concerning ourselves to one of thanksgiving and praise concerning God. Now often, when in the company of our brethren, we inquire into matters such as how the truth of God's gracious conciliation first dawned on our imprisoned spirits, and how God has led us to rejoice in the secret of His will.

There is a pattern here that is shared by us all. There is a progression. Not only do we have to relearn much of what we have been taught in our early years, but even then there is no immediate maturity or wisdom. It has been declared that just as we may not ascend several floors in a building without the aid of stairs, so it is impossible to comprehend the wondrous revelations of the perfection epistles of the apostle Paul without the blessings of the prior, rich unfolding wisdom of his letters to Thessalonica, Rome, Corinth, and Galatia.

NOT YOURS, BUT YOU

"Yet Jews from Antioch and Iconium come on, and persuading the throngs, and stoning Paul, they dragged him outside the city, inferring that he is dead" (Acts 14:19).

"Let us remember that Paul was stoned but once (2 Cor.

11:25) *and this by the gentiles just as soon as the evangel breaks through to them.* The Jews reject the evangel and call down judgment. How dire must be the punishment due to these uncircumcised aliens for stoning the chosen vessel God had sent for their salvation! This is surely the opportunity demanded by grace to show its potency. They drag his body, battered and bleeding, outside the city, but his spirit flies far ahead to the paradise of the new earth, and soars into the heights of the third heaven. There he sees the despised, undeserving gentiles . . . ruling the celestial realms as members of Christ's body and 'blessed with all spiritual blessing among the celestials' (Eph.1:3). Here we reach the summit of grace, the secret (1 Cor.2:7) which God had prepared for those who love Him. Though Paul was not really dead, it is well to note that, from this time on, he reckons himself and all believers as having died, and as living a resurrection life (2 Cor.1:9)."[1]

As a father with his beloved children (1 Thess.2:11), Paul delighted to share the evangel of God. Writing to the stumbling ecclesia of Corinth, he declared, "Lo! this third time I hold myself ready to come to you and I shall not be an encumbrance, for I am not seeking yours but you. For the children ought not to be hoarding for the parents, but the parents for the children. Yet with the greatest relish shall I spend and be bankrupted for the sake of your souls, even if loving you more exceedingly diminishes your love for me" (2 Cor.12:14,15).

MINORS IN CHRIST

Can we possibly imagine what it must have been like for the apostle to restrain his elation at the wonder of God's revelations? How he must have yearned to share the glory of it all with them. Yet this was not to be. Using

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.201.

a form of expression known as a simile, Paul was not hesitant in stern rebuke. "And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to fleshly, as to minors in Christ. Milk I give you to drink, not solid food, for not as yet were you able" (1 Cor.3:1,2). May our God and Father patiently escort us in minority so as to avoid these many pitfalls of division and arrogance.

God's Word is full of superb figures of speech. By way of pause or slight digression, may we give some thought concerning these which is provided on page 349, Appendix A of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT:

"God, Who studded the sky with jewels and carpeted the earth with colors, has written His revelation in language which reflects the beauties of His visible creation. The diction of the East and of the Scriptures is full of fine figures, over which we walk with ruthless tread, seldom stopping to admire the blooms beneath our feet. It is the voice of feeling as well as fact. Nor is its beauty merely ornamental. Unless our eyes are opened to their presence and we feel their force, we may fail to enter beneath the surface of bare facts, into the heart of God's truth, and be led astray by mere externals."

The following figure may help illustrate the dilemma which we ourselves will face when bringing the evangel: Despite the present traffic congestion on our roads, we all enjoy the pleasures of driving a vehicle. We visit lovely mountain scenes, picturesque harbors, remote valleys; and we travel many miles to enjoy the grandeur and peace of huge, silent forests. Also, we are pleased to instruct our children in this same skill and mobility. Yet it would be totally irresponsible for us to simply hand them ignition keys to drive some vehicle, without instruction and without escort. What would we give to board a solo aircraft and soar away! But just imagine the dire results if we ventured forth *without adequate instruction and experience.*

JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

In the maturing of our faith there are differing degrees of progress. Some saints have little difficulty in setting aside the gnawing fears of imagined conditions of "backsliding" for example. Yet it takes time *and a thorough grasp of Scriptures,* to be reassured concerning the reality of being chosen, called, and justified. Nothing imparts more profound peace than to learn of our righteousness being based, not on our feeble faith, but rather, *through Jesus Christ's faith!* (Rom.3:22; 5:1).

Despite this supremely comforting reassurance, many of us undergo momentary discomfiture when we read: "Faithful is the saying: 'For if we died together, we shall be living together also; if we are enduring, we shall be reigning together also; if we are disowning, He also will be disowning us; if we are disbelieving, He is remaining faithful—He cannot disown Himself' " (2 Tim.2:11-13). Here, it is urged that we must not make the grave mistake of confusing the award of reigning, with the security of our salvation. As noted above, but for emphasis stated once more, *this great salvation is all based on the sure foundation of the saving grace and faith of the Son of God's love.*

But concerning the reigning, along with our apostle we strive to contend the ideal contest. There may be times when in some distress or distraction we may be disturbed by the haunting memories of the initial pressures and anxieties of an immature understanding of God's loving power and wisdom.

Nevertheless, progress is made in dissipating these anxieties as we focus attention on God and His grace in Christ Jesus our Lord. "Wherefore we are ambitious also, whether at home or away from home, to be well pleasing to Him" (2 Cor.5:9). The evangel stirs us to faithful evangelizing: "For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching for Christ's sake,

'Be conciliated to God!' For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:20,21).

WE TRUST GOD

With the blessed expectation of our being snatched away together with those dear ones who sleep in the Lord, to meet Him in the air, and thus be appearing at the dais of Christ (2 Cor.5:10), one might imagine that all concerns of the security of our salvation would be at rest. Well, with regard to eonian life, this is so, but still there is confusion. Is it possible that here, where there is requital or award for meritorious service, we might possibly forfeit anything at all of those matters which now seem so precious? Certainly; those matters are centered in the self and the flesh. It becomes increasingly obvious, especially in maturity, that our concept of the virtuous or commendable is far from reliable. In this we trust God. We submit, trembling, all the many aspects of our service for His loving consideration. If there is aught remaining, we shall be very, very thankful!

"One of the most gracious aspects of the dais is its influence on our present service and conduct. If all realized that much that we do will be made a bonfire in that day, it would radically revolutionize 'Christian' service. If we would only remind ourselves that the race is not to the swift, unless they observe the rules, we would be more concerned to heed the Scriptures, and not walk disorderly. Even if we attain the highest honors among men for the passing period of our earthly life, what is that if it puts us in the lowest place in the coming eons? That is a very mean motive, but the grace of it lies in the fact that the very same selfish desire to have the pre-eminence, when viewed in the light of the dais, will cure us of it now, when we need such help . . . . Let us learn this precious lesson.

God's grace is not exhausted in effecting our salvation. He continues to be gracious in using us in His service."[2]

As we grow toward maturity in appreciating the dais of Christ we see how vitally it is associated with God's grace. Afflictions and sufferings are graciously granted to us (Phil. 1:29), which in turn produce endurance (Rom.5:3), which is rewarded at the dais with reigning (2 Tim.2:12).

APPLAUSE

"For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is grave, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is agreeable, whatever is renowned—if there is any virtue, and if any applause, be taking these into account. What you learned also, and accepted and hear and perceived in me, these be putting into practice, and the God of peace will be with you" (Phil.4:8,9). Donald Fielding

2. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.39, pp.236,239.

REPOSING IN CHRIST

The following friends in faith were put to repose during 1996, in addition to other brethren whose deaths we announced in previous issues: **Pearson G. Rutter,** age 89, Whittier, California; **Robert A. Racer,** 78, Dunkirk, Indiana; **L. Josephine Hawes,** 89, Los Altos, California; **Charles Fletcher,** 95, St. Catherines, Ontario; **Irma Degen,** Medicine Hat, Alberta; **Myrtle Hansen,** 93, Brea, California; **Clara Snider,** Grandville, Michigan; **Amos D. King,** 94, Richmond, Virginia.

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HOW LONG?

BOTH Bildad's second address and Job's reply begin with the question, How long? This expression indicates impatience with each other, both Bildad and Job finding the "declarations" of the other personally offensive (18:2; 19:2).

We may well consider Job more justified in this than Bildad who sits apart from the pain and sorrow that racks every corner of Job's being. But this does not mean that Bildad does not genuinely feel ill-treated (18:3) and deeply desire an end to the present turmoil.

At one time or another, and increasingly (so it seems) as we grow older, we find ourselves crying out, How long is this going to go on? Our distresses, like those in these chapters of Job, often arise from offenses committed by acquaintances and even those who are close to us. These seem more acute than hurts suffered because of what our world calls "acts of God," such as storms or earthquakes or droughts. This is because we feel we can't do anything about the latter, but we can do something about personal offenses, usually by trying to get the offender to stop his offensiveness.

Of course this only tends to increase the unpleasantness. The question, "How long?" must eventually be asked of God if it is to lead us to any real solution. We have noticed that Job began that way, directing his attention to Eloah, and, though Job becomes more and more occupied by the offenses of his associates, he still is able to rise above the human conflicts and concentrate his mind on the Deity. This struggle to keep the divine operations in

view reaches what may be its highest level in chapter 19. The "How long?" of 19:2, addressed to Bildad, becomes directed to Eloah in the "crying out" and the "imploring" of 19:7. And this leads Job's heart to the stirring *declarations* of 19:23-27a. The question, "How long?" becomes the faithful declaration "I know my Redeemer is living," and the expectant declaration "I shall perceive Eloah."

BILDAD'S SECOND ADDRESS

For Bildad the question, "How long?" introduces a reproof to Job for his continued declarations (*cf* Job's complaint in 16:3) which, in Bildad's eyes, betray a lack of understanding and of proper respect (18:2,3). Addressing Job with sarcasm, Bildad points to his anger as something that harms Job but really has no lasting effect on the larger world (v.4).

The rest of Bildad's speech is a development of a major theme of all three "comforters," namely, that the wicked will suffer for their wickedness. The word "moreover," introducing verse 5 indicates that Bildad means to add these remarks about the fate of the wicked to what he has already said in criticism of Job. Although Bildad speaks in general terms, he intends Job to understand this has direct bearing on his case.

Hence Bildad observes that Job tears his own soul to pieces (v.4); in accord with this, Bildad points out,the wicked one's own counsel shall fling him down (v.7); he will fall into a trap by his own feet (18:8-10). Job is himself the wicked person Bildad describes.

(Perhaps we may be excused in detecting a tone of satisfaction in Bildad's description of the fate of the wicked in 18:11-16. The images of frightful tormentors and the devouring of internal organs were much later incorporated, and expanded, by preachers and theologians and even poets like Dante, in their concept of hell.)

JOB 18-19

18 +**Then Bildad the Shuhite** l**answered,** + l**saying:**
2 **How** *fr***long** before 7**you~**Q **shall** *p*l**make** an **end**
to these **declarations?**
May 7**you~**Q **understand, and after** that **we shall speak.**
3 For **what reason are we reckoned like beast**s
Or counted **unclean in your eyes?**
4 O one **tearing his soul to pieces in his anger,**
On account of you shall the **earth be forsaken,**
And the **rock be shifted from its** *ri***place?**
5 **Moreover,** the **light of** the **wicked shall be extinguished,**
And the **flare of his fire shall not brighten.**
6 The **light in his tent, it will be**come **dark,**
And his lamp above him, it shall be extinguished.
7 **The steps of his virility shall be**come **constricted,**
And his own **counsel shall fling him** down.
8 **For he will be sent** forth **in**to a **net** *i***by his** own **feet,**
And he shall walk about **on** the **mesh.**
9 A **snare shall hold** him *i***by** his **heel;**
A **snag shall** *c***hold fast on**to **him.**
10 The rope **line** is **buried**l for **him in** the **earth,**
And a **seizing device** for **him on** his **track.**
11 **Decadent** thing**s frighten him round about,**
And they hound him ›**at his** every **foot**step.
12 **His virility shall** *b***be** turned to **famishing,**
And calamity stands **ready**l
›**against his reproductive** organs.

18:2 7-~Q **you:** Hb **you,** plural.

To Bildad, Job is *living* proof of the principle that the wicked pay for their evil thoughts and deeds. Job's virility has turned to famishing (v.12). His skin is devoured by boils from head to feet and his organs are attacked by a further infestation of the "firstborn of death" (perhaps a deadly disease), as Bildad expresses it in 18:13.

Finally Bildad declares that the wicked will lose everything, his fame, his habitance, his descendants (18:14-10), with his only legacy being the appalling horror others will feel when they view the ruins of one who knew not El (18:20,21). It is unnecessary for Bildad to add explicitly what he has said implicitly: "How like you, Job!"

However, looking beyond what Bildad implies about Job, we must ask, What does all this say about God? Bildad's words present the Deity as One solely interested in reward and retribution when it comes to His dealings with humanity. Otherwise, God does not involve Himself much in the affairs of earthly creatures.

In the end, as we will see, Yahweh decisively refutes the restrictive view of the three by claiming responsibility for all things. And by the example of Job's "consummation," God shows that He has a purpose for the good of that which He has made.

ELOAH HIMSELF HAS OVERTURNED ME

Job's question, "How long?" is directed to Bildad and his companions in reference to their treatment of him. In 19:2-5 Job gives eye for eye and tooth for tooth. But once again he is able to pull himself away from useless (and generally disastrous) fightings with human opponents and to focus on God.

His associates need to face the fundamental truth that Eloah Himself has overturned Job and encompassed him in His trap (19:6) for His own reasons and purposes. And then they need to contemplate the necessary implications

13 **His skin shall be** ˡ**eaten** ~ⁱ**by sickness**~;
The **firstborn of death shall eat his organs.**
14 **He shall be pulled away from his tent**
where **his trust** had dwelt;
And it shall ᶜ**make him march**
to the **king of decadent** thing**s.**
15 **It shall tabernacle in his tent** ᶠ which **no** longer is **his;**
Sulfur shall be sifted ᵒⁿ**about his homestead.**
16 **From beneath, his roots** ˡ**dry** up,
And from above, his harvest branches **are** ˡ**snipped off.**
17 **His remembrance perishes from** the **earth,**
And he ›**has no**ᵗ **name on** the **face of** the **open place.**
18 **They shall thrust him from light** in**to darkness,**
And they shall chase him from the **habitance.**
19 **He** will ›**have no**ᵗ **progeny and no**ᵗ **posterity**◊
ⁱ**among his people,**
And there **will be no survivor**
in the place**s** of **his sojourning.**
20 ᵃᶠ**Westerners are appalled** ᵒⁿ**at his day** of ruin,
And easterners hold back in **horror.**
21 ʸ**Surely these** were the **tabernacles**
of an **iniquitous** man,
And this was the ʳⁱ**place of** one who **knew not El.**
19 ⁺**So Job** ˡ**answered,** ⁺ ˡ**saying:**
2 **How** ᶠʳ**long shall you afflict my soul**
And crush me ⁱ**with declarations?**
3 **These ten** ᵈᵘ**times** have **you** ˡ**mortified me;**
You are not ˡ**ashamed** that **you** ˡ**ill-treat** › **me.**
4 ⁺**Yet indeed,** even if **I truly have erred,**
My error would ˡ**lodge** `in **me.**
5 **If truly you** would ˡ**magnify** yourselves **over me**
And ˡ**plead** ᵒⁿ**against me my reproach,**
6 **Know indeed that Eloah Him**self **has overturned me,**
And His weir trap **has encompassed** ᵒⁿ **me.**

18:13 ~~~ ⁱ**by sickness:** Hb **components of** [he shall eat components of his skin].
18:19 progeny . . . posterity: Hb word order is **posterity . . . progeny.**

of this fact in light of Job's previous devoutness and walk in the fear of God.

Job cries out: "Violence!" but is not answered, and no right judgment has appeared (v.7). Eloah has blocked Job's path, and placed him in darkness, has stripped his glory from him, has taken him from his high position among mankind, has broken him down and removed his expectation; He has heated up His anger against him (19:8-11).

Furthermore, Eloah has brought opposers against Job and put any friends far from him (19:12-19). Rather than enlightening Job and adjudicating the problem so others can see the truth, God has sent His troops against him with the result that sojourners and servants see Job as a foreigner, and those he provides for see him as repellent.

Indeed, as Bildad noted, Job's skin and bones and flesh are sorely under attack (v.20). Everything about Job is a source of agony and complaint. His list is so long that, like his associates, we feel wearied in listening to them. But in Job's tracing of these evils to God, we are being prepared for a powerful revelation of divine wisdom and goodness.

This preparation for deeper appreciation of God is solidly constructed on Job's unswerving insistence that God is not a disinterested party in all this evil, whose only concern in it all is, at best, to see that the wicked get what they deserve. "Be gracious to me! be gracious to me, you, my associates!," Job shouts out, *"For the hand of Eloah has touched me"* (19:21).

As he has done before, Job has traveled from the position of personal attacks against one who has attacked him to the position of pouring out his soul to Eloah. Now in 19:22 he reverts briefly to ask his associates a question, but one that involves God as much as themselves: "Why are you pursuing me *like El* and are not satisfied with my flesh?"

Job's sufferings involve his flesh, his bones, his organs, his skin. El has brought these afflictions upon him, and

7 **Behold, I am crying** out**: Violence!**
+Yet I am not being answered;
I am imploring,
+Yet there **is no** right **judgment.**
8 **He has diked** up **my path, and I** can**not** |**pass;**
+ **He** |*pl*|**settles darkness over my tracks.**
9 **My glory He has stripped from** *on* **me,**
And He |**takes away** the **crown** from **my head.**
10 **He** |**breaks me down round about,** so +**that I** |**go** away**,**
And He |**uproots my expectation like** a **tree.**
11 + **He** |**heats** up **His anger** *on*|**against me,**
And to Himself **He** |**reckons me as** one of **His foes.**
12 **His troops** |**come together**
And |**heap** up **their road** *on*|**against me,**
And they |**encamp round about** › **my tent.**
13 **He has** *c*|**put my brothers far** away **from** *on* **me,**
And my acquaintances| **have** *y*|**surely estranged**
themselves **from me.**
14 **My near** kinsmen **have shunned** me**,**
And my acquaintances| **have forgotten me.**
15 The **sojourners**| in **my house and my maidservants**
|**reckon me** ›**as** an **alien**|**;**
I have become a **foreigner in their eyes.**
16 **I call to my servant,** +**yet he** does **not** |**answer;**
i|**With my mouth I** |**supplicate to him.**
17 **My scent has** become **alien to my wife,**
And I have become **repellent to** the **sons**
of my mother's **womb.**◊
18 **Even youngsters have rejected** *i* **me;**
I |**rise** up**, and they** |**speak** *i*|**against me.**
19 **All** *ad*|**men of my intimate** group **abhor me,**
And those I have loved are turned *i*|**against me.**
20 **My bones cling** *i*|**to my skin and** *i* **my flesh,**
And I |**escape** only *i*|**with** the **skin of my teeth.**

19:17 mother's **womb:** lit., **belly.**

his associates relentlessly add to every pain by placing the ultimate responsibility on Job himself. Will no one join Job in pleading to God for enlightenment?

MY REDEEMER IS LIVING

It is because Job feels no one is paying attention to what he is trying to say that he exclaims, "O that indeed my declarations were written down! O, that they were delineated in a scroll, with iron pen and lead, that they should be hewn in rock for the future!" (19:23,24).

Perhaps no words of Job are more worthy of being preserved in stone than these that follow in 19:25-27b. Deity is seen here as ultimately concerned with deliverance not simply pursuit (*cf* v.22), and as alive and actively involved toward this end. The visible evidence of diseased skin and physical exhaustion, along with Job's appearance as an alien will give way to a triumphant acquaintance with Eloah as Job's Redeemer.

Even after Job had expressed hope for a heavenly Witness in chapter 16, he fell back into a despair where the best outlook seemed to be the unseen (17:13), and he cried, "Where indeed is my expectation? And my good hope, who shall regard it?" (17:15). Now he has just said of Eloah, "He uproots my expectation like a tree" (19:10). But despite all evidence to the contrary, Job holds fast to a reliance on God, and expectation bursts forth.

As we read Job's words here, we can almost feel the exultation of his voice. Then suddenly he seems to writhe in pain as if convulsed by sharp cramps, and cries, "My innermost being is consumed in my bosom" (v.27c). The burst of conscious assurance is gone, and Job has only strength enough to utter one final word at the human level. If these men are plotting against Job by seeking the cause of all his problems within himself, they need to think about how their principle of retribution can apply to them (19:28,29).

21 **Be gracious** to **me! be gracious** to **me,**
you, my associates!
For the **hand of Eloah has touched** *i* **me.**
22 **Why are you pursuing me like El**
And are not |**satisfied** *f***with my flesh?**
23 *a***O** |*g***that indeed my declarations** + **were** |**written** down**!**
*a***O** |*g***that** + **they** were |**delineated in** a **scroll,**
24 *i***With iron pen and lead,**
That **they should be hewn in rock for** the **future!**
25 +**Yet** as for **me, I know my Redeemer**| is **living,**
And after this **He shall arise on** the **soil;**
26 **And** *af***behind my skin ~I will** stand **erect~,**
And from my flesh I shall perceive Eloah,
27 **Whom I′ shall perceive for my**self,
And my own **eyes will see, and not** an **alien**|**.**
My innermost being is *all***consumed in my bosom.**
28 *t***If you are saying,** *wf***How may we pursue** › **him?**
And: The **root of** the **matter is found in** *7***him~***cs*,
29 **Shrink for you**rselves **from** the **presence of** the **sword**
(For fury brings the =**wretchedness of** the **sword)**
That you may know *w***what adjudication** is**.**

19:26 ~-~ **I will** stand **erect:** Hb **they will encompass this.**
19:28 *7*-~*cs* **him:** Hb **me.**

❋

That may be a good put down and a telling line for the debate, but the climactic point was made in verses 25-27b concerning the Redeemer and the standing erect and the perceiving of Eloah. And that applies to Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar as well as to Job.

With this expectation in view, we can be excused for taking Bildad's and Job's opening words in these chapters and asking, not in frustration but in joyful anticipation, How long? How long before these things shall occur in full?

D.H.H.

JOB'S THOUGHTS jump from complaint and rage to bursts of confidence and hope, but there is a consistency in his overall desire to relate his sufferings to God, with understanding. His impatience with his associates stems from their efforts to direct Job's mind away from this focus. In the meantime God remains silent and apparently distant and unconcerned, which seems to support Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar.

What Job speaks is so (*cf* 42:8), though it is without knowledge and understanding (*cf* 38:2,4; 42:3). Job does not begin to *realize* what it means that we receive both good and evil from God (2:10) until he both experiences the evil and is given God's revelation of Himself. The great declarations of Job 19:25-27b are true, but they are not settled into his consciousness; they are not yet a part of his being.

For Job, the knowledge that his Redeemer is living has not yet become realization in chapter 19. But it is so, and gloriously so.

This is one of the grandest passages in Scripture, which has given many troubled people relief and hope through the centuries. In God's wisdom it speaks of the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus and the expectation of seeing Him Who died and was roused from the dead on our behalf, even though Job could have known nothing of this great evangel.

But there are textual problems related to this passage. Perhaps this is because it stands out so brightly within its context and states that which cannot be confirmed by empirical evidence and human experience. It seems to say too much at this point in the book and for Job in his situation and time. But whatever the reason for this textual corruption, the result is a certain measure of uncertainty in translation. It is clearly an expression of hope, but there is room for debate concerning several of the details.

In earlier stages in the attempt to produce a Concordant Version of this passage, more emendations were made

than presently included in our translation. One of the most significant of these was in the first line of verse 25 which was rendered, ". . . I know the Redeemer shall come to be." The verbs *live* and *become* are very similar in Hebrew and could have been confused in the transmission of the text. Also it is possible that the small Hebrew letter indicating "my" was originally attached to the verb indicating future action.

But we have ended up keeping the reading as given in the extant Hebrew manuscripts, without emendation. It seems especially fitting that Job would speak of the Redeemer as "*my* Redeemer." This parallels similar statements of Joseph (Gen.48:16) and David (Psa.19:14), both of whom endured much affliction and rejection and looked to God for deliverance. That they saw God in this personal way as *their* specific Redeemer seems to support the idea that Job shared this viewpoint.

It is certainly true that Job deeply desired Eloah to appear and speak to him, and this would be naturally expressed in Hebrew by the common verb "become." There was no visible sign of the Redeemer, yet indeed He does come to be, or appear, later as events unfold. But the word "living" is also appropriate in this context, not that Job thought the absence of the Redeemer indicated He was dead, but that Job's afflictions indicated Job was close to death, and this is what made it so important to Job that his Redeemer was continuing to live.

For us, however, in our present experiences of evil and needs for endurance, we know Christ as our Deliverance (*cf* Rom.3:24; 1 Cor.1:30; Eph.1:7), Who is living as the One Who *died* and *rose* from the dead. Indeed, He is more than our living Redeemer, for in Him we have the assurance of justification, vivification and reconciliation. And we, each one individually and personally, shall perceive Him with full appreciation, to the glory of God the Father.

D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME LXXXVIII

Anointed as King . . . 165
Astonished at His Teaching . . . 21
Boasting in the Cross . . . 251
Called in Accord With God's Purpose . . . 211
Cramped Gate and Narrow Way, The . . . 31
Crucified Together With Him . . . 51
Crucifixion . . . 5
Crucifixion of the World,The . . . 242
Day of Judging, In the . . . 172
Disquieting Thoughts . . . 40
Elihu, The Speeches of . . . 281
Enabled to Withstand . . . 61
Face to Face . . . 33
Faith Hampered by the Flesh . . . 217
Galatians Four . . . 103
Galatians, Studies in . . . 11,103,105,183,200,251
Glory and Laud of God, The . . . 211
God's Purpose of Love . . . 33
Graciously Granted Through Promise . . . 11
He Shall Save His People . . . 21,91,117,172,263
Humanity Cruci ed . . . 195
If the Lord is Willing . . . 91
In Three Days I Will Raise it Up . . . 57
Israel's First Two Kings . . . 128
Job, Notes on the Book of . . . 40,68,139,154,228,281
Judgment in Gehenna . . . 29
Lest They Perceive . . . 263
Lord Save Us! . . . 117
Mutually Solicitous . . . 123
Obituaries: V. Faire 199, L. Hibberd 56, H. Silva 96,
R. Van Dyke 153, C. Walters 199
Paul the Prisoner . . . 123
1 Samuel, Notes on . . . 87,128,165,217
Sowing in the Spirit . . . 200
Stupidity and the Wisdom of the Cross . . . 147
Thunder of God's Masterful Deeds, The . . . 139
Transformation . . . 61
Unity by Crucifixion . . . 99
Unpardoned Sin . . . 179
Walking in Spirit . . . 183
Word of the Cross, The . . . 5,51,99,147,195,242
Yet Evil Came . . . 228
You Fall Out of Grace . . . 105

Contents:

2 Unfinished
3 Editorial
5 Crucifixion
11 Graciously Granted, Through Promise
21 Astonished at His Teaching
33 Face to Face
40 Disquieting Thoughts

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Unsearchable Riches

A Bimonthly Magazine
For God and His
Word

VOLUME LXXXVIII

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Unfinished

Unfinished—that is what life seems to be,
A thing of vision—what we *want* to be,
Of futile effort—oasis never found,
Of highest hope—yet hope dashed to the ground,
Of great resolves, though seldom carried out,
Of fine ideals which end in dread and doubt;
E'en if attained, they cannot satisfy;
All earthly things must mock us when we die.

But soon the many things which here we miss
Will gladden in a life of perfect bliss.
The jarring notes of discord and of pain
Resolve in perfect cadence—greater gain,
Far greater gain through having known the ill,
Through having learned of God to just "be still,"
Through having learned that humans all are frail
And *One alone* is strong and will prevail.

L. Cock

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 1997
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

GOD'S GLORY AND PRAISE is the grand goal we have set before us in this little magazine and in our meetings, as well as our translations and other literature. All our efforts to recover and clarify and make known His Word are only means to reveal His wisdom, power and love. All our suffering and endurance have little value if they do not lead to the laud of His name and fame. Worship must arise from all that we do, or it is wasted effort. We depend upon this spirit to hallow every word and every expression in our ministry.

Many dark and dismal clouds in Christendom have come to obscure the brilliance of His radiance, so that few can perceive His honors as the One and only God, the Deity Supreme, Who loves all His creatures and wisely plans all good and all evil to bring them close to His heart when He has achieved His end. Many are not able to see Him as the Creator and Sustainer and Reconciler of the universe. Instead they imagine a mirage in which chaos commences and carries on and concludes creation. His love is eclipsed by such doctrines as eternal torment, His wisdom is blotted out by ignorance of His plans and purpose, His power is diminished by His apparent inability to cope with sin.

To chase these sullen clouds from the sky, to clear away the thick fog from the ground, we reach right back of all human speculation and translation to divine revelation. Nor do we repeat the past processes and offer our own. With our translation we furnish the apparatus to test and confirm it, for we do not desire to stand between anyone and the light. Our concordance, unlike the usual ones of

Bible translations, is a concordance of the *inspired original,* not of a traditional version. The ordinary believer, if his *heart* is in it, can find out what God has said. That this is the best means to bring Him adoration and praise is evident, for nothing can compare with His own Word to reveal His will and unveil His heart. A. E. Knoch

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THERE are many things in the modern world that get us stirred up, mostly distressing changes in attitudes and apparent increases in harmful activities. But Paul tells us not to be noting what is being observed, but rather what is not being observed (2 Cor.4:18), where in fact there are stirring and glorious revelations that are eonian.

Astonishing and very unexpected things happened in our Lord's ministry as recorded in Matthew. The kingdom was near, and yet commandments that exceeded the demands of Sinai had to be followed fully and perfectly for anyone to enter into it. Upright Job was severely afflicted, while wicked people prospered, and Job's associates pontificated about ancient ethical principles that did not harmonize with what was *presently* in front of their eyes. In Galatians we find a reformed blasphemer upset because people who had received the evangel from him were trying to reform themselves.

Most unexpected of all, *crucifixion* as God's purposed means for the death of His Son, channeled through the Roman, Pilate, jolts our complacency. In all of these themes, featured in this issue of our magazine, there is much that is surprising and stirring. Yet also they all lead to a revelation of God's glory. And once something of God's glorious consummation is seen, "face to face," in all these operations we find ourselves exclaiming with Paul, "O, the depth of the riches of God's wisdom!" D.H.H.

CRUCIFIXION

CHRIST *died.* He shed His *blood.* He was *crucified.* These terms differ from one another in their relation to us. Each brings a special benefit, which is its opposite. He *died* that we might *live.* Through His *blood* He *suffered* that we may *enjoy* His *salvation.* He was *crucified* that we may be *glorified.*

Through their sacrifices the Jews were familiar with death and bloodshed. But none of their ritual gave specific foreshadowing of the shameful execution of a criminal. It is in Paul's evangel for the nations that the theme of crucifixion comes to the fore. Here it is revealed that this shameful death brings not only life and joy, but celestial glory.

The fact that the sin offering in Israel, which foreshadowed the great Sacrifice, was neither painful nor shameful, suggests that we consider closely the circumstances connected with the crucifixion of Christ. There we will find that the priests of Israel who were appointed to offer the sacrifice would not and could not use this method. Even Herod could not. Only Pilate, by the authority vested in him by Rome, the ruler of the *nations,* could crucify the Lord of glory (Luke 22:66-23:25).

THE NATION OF ISRAEL

Although the nation of Israel, in the flesh, was not founded on any association with crucifixion, it did commence in *death.* The Creator must not have something with which to work. His glory demands that there be nothing on which to base His achievements. So the nation of Israel

began with the dead bodies of Abraham and his wife. And from such a source will spring the greatest of all nations. Neither were they petted and protected from all harm, so that they could become greater than the rest by their own power. Rather the opposite, so that their future glory will be entirely due to Yahweh Elohim Himself.

The sacred scrolls committed to Israel contained many types and predictions concerning their promised Messiah, not only His glories, but His *sorrows* also. But the latter did not appeal to them, so were largely overlooked. When He came to them in lowliness, as a Man of sorrows, they rejected Him. Even His own disciples had overlooked these, expecting that He was about to be *redeeming* Israel, rather than be rejected and crucified. So, after His resurrection He said to them, "O foolish and tardy of heart to be believing on *all* which the prophets speak! Must not the Christ be *suffering* these things, and be entering into His glory?" And, beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them, in all the scriptures, that which concerned Himself (Luke 24:19-27).

THE CHIEF PRIEST

After He was arrested, Christ was taken to the house of the chief priest (Luke 22:54). Although they charged Him with blasphemy and demanded His death, and would probably have stoned Him if the Roman law had allowed it, the chief priests were compelled to turn His execution over to the nations. If left to Israel and their religious leaders, Christ would probably never have been done to death by crucifixion.

The law of Moses called for sacrifices for sin. The victim had to be without blemish, so that there was no fault in it, no just cause for being killed. It was the duty of the chief priest to see that this was so. In this light, it was right that Caiaphas sought to put the great Sacrifice to death, but

he was very wrong in his motives and in trying to convict Jesus of blasphemy (Matt.26:57-68). Moreover, the sacrifices were not allowed to suffer. The blood was drained from their veins, so that they lost all sensation before they died. But Caiaphas allowed them to buffet Him and slap Him. The blood was not allowed to leave Him until just before He let out His spirit (Matt.27:49-68).

PILATE

Under the law, in Israel, and especially in connection with the sacrifices, crucifixion was unknown. The chief priest and Israel were the instruments God used to accomplish the death of Christ, but not the form of that death or the indignities and sufferings that accompanied it. Pilate was convinced that Christ was not guilty, and sought to assert his own innocence, but he, and the nations whom he represented are the means God used for the *suffering* and *shame* and the curse divine that led Him to be forsaken by His El (Matt.27:46).

Pilate was a "good" politician. Though he was not deceived by the priests and populace, and was convinced that Christ was not guilty, and desired to release Him, yet he judged that the interests of the state demanded that the majority should have their way, even though he washed his hands of it. Here we have a good example of human government in this present wicked world. Justice must often give way to expedience, and God's word concerning His Christ receives no hearing except among the few who have been chosen and called to suffer with Him.

BAPTISM AND CRUCIFIXION

Baptism was only a symbol of spiritual *cleansing* under the law of Moses and the ministries of John and Christ. In Paul's evangel it went much further, so that it signified *death, and entombment*, as well as *rousing* from among

the dead (Rom.6:4; Col.2:12). But there is no thought of shame or suffering or alienation from God, which are the vital features of Christ's death for us, sinners of the nations. Crucifixion on our part goes much further and affects our life far more vitally than baptism, to which no shame is attached.

The reason why Paul no longer baptized, after he had done so is that *baptism makes void the cross* (1 Cor.1:17). This change in the apostle's practice just at the time when the present secret administration was being gradually introduced should show clearly that, as an outward act, it is not in keeping with the foundation truth of this era.

The vast difference between baptism and crucifixion may best be seen in the literal occurrences. The crucifixion degraded Christ to the lowest level of human shame and abasement. What could be more disgraceful and humiliating than to be gibbeted on a pole, suffering not only the insults of men, but the curse of God? In contrast, His tomb (pictured by baptism), with its rolling stone as a door, was that of a rich and honorable counselor, Joseph of Arimathea (Luke 23:50).

CRUCIFIXION, BRIEF IN TIME

The fact that Christ *could* have saved the malefactor at the time, as the unbelieving criminal suggested (Luke 23:39), and, *could* have saved Himself, as some suggested (Matt.27:40; Mark 15:30; Luke 23:37), and indeed, it *would* have been possible to avoid the cross altogether, as His own disciples desired (Matt.16:23; Mark 8:33)—all this suggests that God had a most important object in crucifixion, and that was the revelation of His highest attributes by means of it. He could save none who were not lost, nor manifest the depth of His love except to His enemies. But there is one vital difference, and that lies in the realm of *time.*

The "kenosis" or emptying Himself of the form of God

to become like a human, and the consequent humiliation and obedience even to the death of the cross (Phil.2:6-8), occupied only about thirty-three years, a third of a century. In contrast to this short span of time, His glory in the future as a result of this, will be immeasurably prolonged. The first thirty years of His humanity was a comparatively mild form of lowliness, without much suffering or dishonor. His ministry in Israel for three years was accompanied by a greater measure of humiliation and disrepute due to the priestly and secular rulers and unbelieving Jews, but tempered by the faithful few who loved and adored Him. This lasted for only about a tenth as long as His previous preparatory period.

The climax of His career came when the religious leaders and political powers abused him and reviled Him and mocked His royal rights with a crown of thorns, and prepared to offer Him up as the Sacrificial Victim, finally fixing His human form upon a pole. This was the lowest depth of depravity to which humanity could sink Him. This occupied but a minute measure of His ministry, to be counted in hours. It brought Him as low as man could bring Him, and is the basis for the truth of the cross, which speaks to us of debasement, degradation, dishonor, and brought with it the curse of God Himself. This terrible, intense torment lasted for three hours, but it is the basis of blessing for the infinite future.

SHAME AND GLORY

From this we can see two things clearly, that future glory is based on a contrast with shame, but especially that the shame is comparatively short, the glory of limitless duration. It will be of the greatest help to us to seek to realize this, especially if we are in the midst of humiliation or pain or perplexity, when due to faithfulness to God.

The element of shame and disgrace, added by cruci-

fixion to the sacrifice of Christ, will find its counterpart in the sublime celestial glories which will come to Him and to those who count themselves crucified with Him in spirit. They, along with Him, will become channels of the highest blessing in the future, among the celestials, but, with Him, they must first suffer, in a minute measure, the hatred and contempt of the wicked world.

Although Peter refers to the crucifixion of Christ in the book of Acts (Acts 2:36; 4:10), it is given to Paul, in his epistles, to speak of the crucifixion of the believer together with Christ. It is Christ's cross and our *association with Him* that raises us with Him into glories of the Celestial sphere.

Knowing God's plans for the blessing of those chosen in Christ in the highest place among the celestials, it is easy to see why He was not only a Sacrifice under the law, for those under it, like the offerings in Israel, but had to suffer much direr pain and shame. His death was not merely for salvation from the penalty of sin and transgression, but for justification and reconciliation and glorification of the believer in close association with Christ Himself, in His great work of subjecting and reconciling all to God the Father.

A. E. Knoch

EXCEPT IN THE CROSS

It was as much as a half century ago that Brother A. E. Knoch worked on a series of studies concerning *crucifixion* as the form of Christ's death. It was never completed, as he turned to other matters, especially work on the Hebrew Scriptures. But the article above is selected from the opening pages of his handwritten notes, and we hope to add several more articles from these notes during 1997. Some of his thoughts were left undeveloped, but it is evident that Brother Knoch intended to lay emphasis on Paul's unique use of the words "cross" and "crucifixion" in presenting his evangel. God's highest glories flow from this most shameful form of death and are based on it. Consequently, we say with Paul, "May it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal.6:14).

GRACIOUSLY GRANTED, THROUGH PROMISE

(Galatians 3:10-29)

INITIALLY, the Galatian believers obtained the spirit *out of* tidings of faith, the glad-tidings of faith, which they subsequently heard and believed (Gal.3:2). This is because *out of* the *power* inherent in the evangel of Christ (*cf* Rom. 1:16), God's *chosen* ones graciously obtain the spirit and believe. This is what truly occurs, and, why it truly occurs, wherever one truly enters into faith. Those who believed, were, "*whoever were set* for life eonian" (*cf* Acts 13:48), the grace of our Lord overwhelming their unbelief "with faith and love in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.1:14).

Since the Galatians had "undertaken" (Gal.3:3) in *spirit,* it would be "foolish" to suppose that God would now reverse Himself, somehow expecting them to become completed in flesh. It is on this basis that Paul shows that it is correct to conclude: "He, then, who is supplying you with the spirit, and operating works of power among you [will be completing what He has undertaken]." That is, Paul assures, since you "undertook" in spirit, and even now *God* is continuing to supply you with the spirit and operate works of *power* among you, "*He, then . . .* [will *also* be *completing* what He has undertaken]" (*cf* Gal.3:2,3,5).

It is important for us today to believe and recognize that God is continuing to supply us with the spirit, even as to operate works of power among us. It is to be regretted that to the popular mind the thought of "spiritual works of power" evokes images of the sensationalistic, the pseudo-

miraculous, and the superstitious. While we have no need of these and do well to eschew all such spurious activities, still, we remain in vital need of God's genuine provision of spirit, even as of His faithful works of power within us.

It is with the eyes of faith that we perceive that when we continue in faithfulness, or in cases where we have faltered or failed and yet subsequently recover, that these experiences, ones both of sustenance and deliverance, reflect God's spiritual provision unto us even as His powerful operations, both in us, individually, and among us, collectively. Were it not so, I could not possibly compose this present writing; nor could you, the reader, find spiritual benefit in it. So it is, concerning all our activities of faith: they are the fruit of whatever measure of spirit God has been pleased to grant us, according to His present spiritual operations *in power.*

For whoever are of works of law are under a curse, for it is written that, Accursed is everyone who is not remaining in all things written in the scroll of the law to do them. (3:10)

"How striking the contrast! As many as are of faith [v.9] are *blessed. Accursed* is everyone who does not remain in all which has been written in the scroll of the law to do it. Who would be so perverse as to choose law? Yet the heresy of Galatianism is far more prevalent today than ever. Life under law [with blessing on the basis of law-obedience] can only come to one who keeps every precept perfectly at all times, yet is forfeited at the slightest infringement. Life through faith does not depend on conduct but on the One in Whom the faith is placed."[1]

There are only two conceivable sources of blessing: (1) divine grace; and (2) human works of law. Only one of these, however, divine grace, is a viable source of blessing. The other, works of law, since it is infirm through the flesh

1. A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.282.

(Rom.8:3), has been rendered ineffectual. That being so, whoever are "out of" works of law are under a curse. This is because, "Accursed is everyone who is not remaining in *all* things written in the scroll of the law to do them" (3:10; cit. Deut.27:26; *cp* 28:15).

The fact that under the law some were less sinful than others is not the point. What is important to see is that no one in Israel ever *deserved* blessing, but only cursing, and that in the fullest possible degree. Such is the *righteous* standard of the law. On the one hand, it was so unspeakably severe as to demand perfection from any who, by their own obedience, would obtain a single blessing or escape a single curse. Yet on the other hand, it was this very stringency of the law that ensured that *all* under its jurisdiction would be equally dependent upon God and His grace, if they would enjoy any blessing at all.

It is simply delusion to imagine that some under law were somehow more deserving of blessing than others, according to their works. Since all were sinners, *none* were deserving of any blessing whatsoever, according to the law's own *righteous* standard. Instead, *all* were wholly dependent upon divine *grace*—and grace alone—for any blessing received, however small or great.

It is true that on a basis of strict justice, the least infraction of the law would call forth all its curses. God was often *merciful,* however, and did not impose the law's full penalty, even though it had been repeatedly violated. This is because God is merciful; and, because He has the prerogative to be merciful "to whom He will" (Rom.9:18). For to Moses He is saying, "I shall be *merciful* to whomever I may be merciful, and I shall be *pitying* whomever I may be pitying" (Rom.9:15; cit. Ex.33:19). These words, as such, are Paul's inspired interpretation of the actual divine declaration recorded in Exodus 33:19, which is, "I will be *gracious* to whom I am being gracious and will have *com-*

passion for whom I am having compassion." Thus we learn that mercy is a matter of grace, even as that pity is the fruit of compassion.

It is vital to recognize that, under law, those who were characteristically faithful in their practice of law-obedience, thus were faithful, "according to the choice of *grace*" (Rom.11:5; *cp* Isa.26:12). Hence the blessing of such ones—since they too were sinners—was not *"out of"* law-obedience, but was instead *in* grace (Rom.11:6).[2]

The Galatians, however, having repudiated grace (1:6; 2:21), were simply seeking blessing "out of" law-obedience itself. They did not realize that blessing is never granted from such a source, even under law. How foolish they were, then, ones to whom the law had not even been given, who were not obliged to keep it, nonetheless to attempt to put themselves under it, even as to anticipate blessing on the presumed basis of their own ability to keep it!

Such is ever the confidence of fleshly man; he fails to realize that whatever *is* worthy in his walk is due to the grace of God alone, and that any further obedience rendered by him will itself likewise be dependent upon further grace, apart from which he will surely fail (*cp* Rom.9:29; cit. Isa.1:9). He reasons not, correctly, that since grace has granted him what virtue he has, he will likewise be dependent on grace alone for any increase in virtue, but instead, incorrectly, that since he ultimately has himself alone to thank for what virtue he has, he will likewise ultimately have himself alone to thank for any progress in virtue he may make. If there is a law that is to be kept, for obedience to which one may expect an increase in personal welfare, the fleshly man deems himself a worthy candidate to fulfill it. Such ones having confidence in themselves that

2. These considerations alone show that the popular teaching of free will is but human delusion and vanity.

they are just (*cf* Luke 18:9), therefore proudly declaim, "All that Yahweh speaks we shall do" (Ex.19:8a).

Now that in law no one is being justified with God is evident, for the just one by faith shall be living. Now the law is not of faith, but who does them "shall be living in them." (3:11,12)

It is not the province of law to justify, but to condemn. Effectually, the law merely says, "He who heeds my precepts shall find life in so doing"; which life no one ever finds since no one ever heeds its precepts (*cf* Lev.18:5; *cp* Luke 10:28). Like evil, law, too, is transitory. It lasts only until God's purpose through its agency has been realized. Those who are "just" (as spoken of in Habakkuk 2:4), owe their righteousness not to law, much less to themselves, but to grace. Life comes to them not out of their imperfect (and so disqualified) law-obedience, but out of *faith,* that it may accord with *grace.*

Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes, for it is written, Accursed is everyone hanging on a pole, that the blessing of Abraham may be coming to the nations in Christ Jesus, that we may be obtaining the promise of the spirit through faith. (3:13,14)

The pronoun "us," here, refers to Paul and his Jewish brethren on whom the law weighed so heavily. Christ reclaimed them from the law's grip. Thus, through His death on the cross (His "hanging on a pole"; *cf* Deut. 21:23), Christ cleared "those whoever, in fear of death, were through their entire life liable to slavery" (Heb.2:15), the slavery of the law.

The purpose of His death on the cross, further, was, "that the blessing of Abraham may be coming to the nations *in Christ Jesus,* that we may be obtaining the promise of the spirit through faith" (3:14).

"The sacrifice of Christ made provision for all classes and all contingencies. For those under law He bore its

curse, so that they may receive the blessing of Abraham. And He bore the sins of those not under law as well, so that they, too, may obtain the righteousness of Abraham. So both, through faith, receive the spirit, by which they may exceed the righteous demands of the law."[3]

Since God has graciously granted the allotment to Abraham through the promise—and therefore, accordingly, through promise, has allotted the blessing of justification to us, out of Jesus Christ's faith (*cp* Gal. 2:16)—the burning question is: "*What,* then, *is* the law?" (Gal.3:19). In preparation for answering this very question, Paul first points out the following:

Brethren (I am saying this as a man), a human covenant likewise having been ratified, no one is repudiating or modifying it. Now to Abraham the promises were declared, and to his Seed. He is not saying "And to seeds," as of many, but as of One: And to "your Seed," which is Christ.[4] *Now this am I saying: a covenant, having been ratified before by God, the law, having come four hundred and thirty years afterward, does not invalidate, so as to nullify the promise. For if the enjoyment of the allotment is of law, it is no longer of promise. Yet God has graciously granted it to Abraham through the promise.* (3:15-18)

What, then, is the law? (3:19a)

Here is the answer:

On behalf of transgressions was it added . . . . (3:19b)

"Law changes sin from a mere mistake to the over-stepping of a divine command. It enhances the sinfulness of sin. Transgression is sin against a known law, entailing not only the usual penalties, but the added displeasure of

3. A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.282.

4. Christ, our *only* Saviour, is represented by the *singular* "seed" of Abraham. That is, even as Abraham's offspring *alone* may possess their promised blessings, thus also our blessings in Christ depend *solely* upon His finished work (*cf Unsearchable Riches,* vol.81, pp.46-48).

God against one who defies His precepts . . . . The promises Abraham received [which, incidentally, subsequently, came to be] in connection with the law, were unconditional; [ultimately speaking,] dependent only on God's faithfulness. They were given without any reference to the law and [thus] do not depend on any legal observance for fulfillment."[5]

Charin ("on behalf," CV) is the accusative form of "grace," and is used as a preposition with the genitive case ("*of* transgressions").

The Authorized Version, at least as interpreted by some, is very misleading here in its rendering "*because* of transgressions." The words "*because* of" have led some to imagine that transgression obtained prior to Moses; and that the reference here is merely to ceremonial laws which were temporarily added by Moses to an already extant timeless moral code (namely, to a code which, under Moses, was merely formalized as the "Ten Commandments"). All of this is perfectly false (as well as artful and unreasonable); yet it is instructive to note the lengths to which some will go in order to impose the law upon believers today.

The idea of the Greek word, *charin,* is that of an act done with the objective of somehow bringing favor (i.e., some type of benefit or advantage) to the object in view (*cp* Titus 1:5,11). This is just what the entrance of the law afforded to transgression. Hence the law was given *on behalf* of the resultant transgressions which came into being through the law. Where no law is, neither is there transgression (Rom.4:15); yet the bestowal of law gives rise to its violation, which is transgression. Transgression owes its very existence to law, and cannot exist apart from it. Thus, on behalf of transgressions, "law came in by the way, *that the offense should be increasing*" (Rom.5:20).

5. A. E. Knoch, Concordant Commentary, pp.282.

THE ESSENCE OF THE EVANGEL

. . . until the Seed should come to Whom He has promised, being prescribed through messengers in the hand of a mediator. Now there is no Mediator of one. Yet God is One. Is the law, then, against the promises of God? May it not be coming to that! For if a law were given that is able to vivify, really, righteousness were out of law. But the scripture locks up all together under sin, that the promise out of Jesus Christ's faith may be given to those who are believing. (3:19c-22)

The law, on behalf of transgressions, however, was added "*until* the Seed should come . . ." (Gal.3:19c). This fact is of special relevance to our understanding of the evangel, since we are apt to fear that our sins may bar us from its benefits.

In speaking of himself and of his fellow Israelites who had now obtained the evangel which he proclaimed (*cp* Gal.2:15), Paul declares:

Now before the coming of faith we were garrisoned under law, being locked up together for the faith about to be revealed. So that the law has become our escort to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. Now, at the coming of faith, we are no longer under an escort, for you are all sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. For whoever are baptized into Christ, put on Christ, in Whom there is no Jew nor yet Greek, there is no slave nor yet free, there is no male and female, for you all are one in Christ Jesus. Now if you are Christ's, consequently you are of Abraham's seed, enjoyers of the allotment according to the promise. (3:23-29)

As is true of all scripture, to avoid misinterpretation, this passage must be kept within its context and understood accordingly. The context is that of the epistle to the Galatians which is a defense of the exclusively-Pauline teaching of justification by faith (the faith of Christ). Specifically, the context is that of the evangel of the Uncircumcision (Gal.2:7)—the evangel *which* Paul was heralding among the nations (Gal.2:2).

This evangel is "in accord with the faith of God's chosen, and a realization of the truth which accords with devoutness, in expectation of life eonian, which God, Who does not lie, *promises* before times eonian, yet manifests His word in its own eras by heralding, with which [Paul] was entrusted, according to the injunction of God, our Saviour" (Titus 1:1-3).

These glorious declarations, however, are not revelations of the evangel of the Circumcision, but that of the Uncircumcision (Gal.2:7). Indeed, in a number of vital particulars, they are contrary to the Circumcision evangel. The evangel of the Circumcision consists only of pardon (which may be withdrawn); *it knows nothing of justification.* Under the evangel of the Circumcision, works of righteousness, according to Moses, are essential to life (i.e., to "remaining for the eon"; 1 John 2:17; *cp* Matt.7:21,23).

Yet under Paul's evangel, the evangel which, broadly speaking, is the evangel of the *Un*circumcision, not only are we justified apart from law, but, "where sin increases, graces superexceeds" (Rom.5:20); where there is persistence in sin, grace increases accordingly (Rom.6:1), for life eonian (Rom.5:21). *This is not true under the evangel of the Circumcision.*

NO LONGER UNDER AN ESCORT

Therefore, *as it stands in relation to the Pauline evangel,* the law is nothing more than a *former* escort.[6] It is but

6. adapted from A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.282. It should be noted that in declining to subject ourselves to the particulars of the *Mosaic* instruction, it is not that we have been given over to lawlessness. The entreaties of Paul for service in the evangel, inculcate a far more august (and encompassing) "morality" than that of the demands of Sinai.

an erstwhile servant; a pedagogue-slave which, while useful in its day in its ministrations on behalf of children, is now rendered wholly redundant, since the children have attained their majority.

Thus, on behalf of transgressions, the law was added (yet incidentally so, with respect to the original promises made to Abraham) *until* the Seed should come. Insofar as Paul and those of his fellow Israelites to whom this evangel had been granted are concerned, the law had become their escort to Christ. Now at the coming of the *faith* (through the advent of Christ; *cp* 2 Tim.1:10), *such ones* ("*we*"; Gal. 3:25) are no longer under an escort. Thus, whoever—*among those who are in view in this context;* namely, among those who are blessed according to Paul's evangel—are baptized into Christ put on *Christ,* in Whom—with respect to Paul's evangel and insofar as it is concerned—there is no Jew nor yet Greek, nor any other distinction, for all, thus blessed, are one in Christ Jesus (Gal.3:27,28).

Thus, in a figure, we become "of Abraham's seed"; that is, literally, we become enjoyers of an allotment *according to promise* (Gal.3:29). (It is not "the" allotment, or "the" promise; the definite article does not appear in the Greek.)

In service, or in the *Lord,* the slave was still a slave, the sexes were still recognized; but—under Paul's evangel—in *Christ,* in Whom we are complete (Col.2:10), all physical distinctions vanish. By faith, all who are called according to the Pauline evangel (*cp* Gal. 1:6-9) enter into the same high place of privilege, and are blessed with the common promise and righteousness of which this evangel consists. Thus, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, since all of the evangel's blessings are *graciously* granted to us, through promise, in Him.[7] J.R.C.

7. adapted from A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.282.

ASTONISHED AT HIS TEACHING

John had announced the nearness of the kingdom (Matt. 3:2), and the spirit of God and His voice out of the heavens had identified Jesus as God's Son, the Beloved in Whom He delights (3:16,17). The way seemed to be opened up for the manifestation of Jesus as Saviour and King.

But the kingdom with its deliverance from the many evils of present life did not immediately appear. In fact, the next event recorded in Matthew was the trial of Jesus by the Adversary, in the midst of great weakness and travail (Matt.4:1-11). And here the very blessings of food and safety and rule that characterize the kingdom were set before Jesus, and He refused them. This refusal under the most difficult of situations shows clearly that the kingdom must come in accord with God's ways and will. The death of Christ as a basis for all the blessings of the kingdom must occur first. When our Lord receives the rule it will be as the Saviour Who does not only save and bless, but Who does so on a firm basis established by God.

There would be no blessing in having food and protection and divine rule where there is no power given over sin. For Jesus to have accepted earthly rule from the Adversary would not only mean that the worship is deflected from God, which is horrible beyond thought, but that Israel and all mankind would continue under the effects of sin and weakness of flesh. There was something far more vital than having all physical needs supplied and safety from all harm under perfect and wise rule. And this was salvation from sin.

A GREAT LIGHT

After this Jesus retired into Galilee, far distant from Jerusalem where the kingdom would be centered. Here the people sitting in darkness perceived a great light (Matt. 4:16), as Jesus heralded the very message spoken by John, saying, "Repent! for near is the kingdom of the heavens!" (4:17). The radiant hope of the kingdom drawing near did not seem to have been dimmed by the call for repentance. Loyal and capable followers were called, including Peter, the "Rock," and "immediately" leaving their work and family ties they followed Jesus (4:18-22).

The signs of the approaching kingdom continued in a positive way. Jesus led His disciples throughout Galilee, "heralding the *evangel* of the kingdom, *and curing every disease and every debility* among the people" (Matt.4:23). The type of thing the Adversary recognized Jesus could do as God's Son (4:3), but which He refused to do for Himself under those conditions, He now was actually doing among the sinners of Galilee. And the tidings spread, with *vast throngs* streaming to Him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and the other side of the Jordan (Matt.4:24,25). The kingdom had drawn very near indeed.

But the problem of sin had not yet been dealt with.

THE TEACHING ON THE MOUNT

The mountain was the symbol of rule. Hence, in directing attention to the kingdom, Jesus ascended to a mountain and taught concerning the kingdom that had come so very near. As recorded in Matthew, His words take up the bulk of three chapters, 5:3-7:27. "And it came when Jesus finishes these sayings, that the throngs were *astonished* at His teaching, for He was teaching them as One having authority and not as their scribes" (Matt.7:28,29).

What astonished the Galileans was that Jesus, Who had

lived among them as one of them, could speak with such authority. But there seems to have been no more astonishment concerning the instruction itself than was felt at Sinai when Moses first delivered the message of Exodus 20-23. At that earlier time "Moses came and related to the people all the words of Yahweh and all the judgments. Then all the people responded with one voice and said: All the words which Yahweh has spoken we shall do" (Exodus 24:3). In neither case was there any sign of genuine inner enlightenment concerning human infirmity and need of a Saviour from sins.

Yet whether they noted it or not, there is for us even more of astonishment in what Jesus said than in the authoritative manner in which He spoke. Not even the least of the precepts given in the law could be annulled (Matt.5:19). The required standard of righteousness exceeded that maintained by the most diligent and disciplined of Israelites (5:20). Every precept had to be obeyed inwardly as well as outwardly, so that "You shall not murder" required also that "You shall not be angry with your brother" (5:21,22); and "You shall not be committing adultery" demanded also that "You shall not have any lust in your heart" (5:27,28) as well as severest restrictions on divorce and remarriage (5:31,32). The laws concerning sacrifices, though still in effect, involved important prerequisites such as removing offenses and settling debts (5:23-26). The law against perjury was shown to include a law against making oaths or saying anything that might bring dishonor to God or even Jerusalem or even oneself as an Israelite (Matt.5:33-37).

Not only were the laws given at Sinai intensified in this message, but some were even replaced by higher demands, in light of the approaching times of Jacob's troubles. What was commanded by Jesus could never be obeyed apart from God's spirit. This was especially so of laws concerned with just judgments. The people were to suffer unjust treat-

ment from outsiders and leave all the settling of accounts to God (Matt.5:43-47). And this astonishing requirement was followed by perhaps the most astonishing statement in the entire message: "You, then, shall be perfect (or: mature) as your heavenly Father is perfect" (5:48).

ASTONISHING PROMISES

The promises connected with these intensified demands were equally astonishing. Good deeds were required, but they must be done secretly and not at all motivated by rewards and praises from fellow humans (Matt.6:1-4), but rather in view of wages from God (6:8-13). "For if you should be forgiving men their offenses, *your heavenly Father also will be forgiving you*" (6:14). "Now you, when fasting, rub your head with oil and wash your face, so that you may not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father Who is in hiding, and *your Father, Who is observing in hiding, will be paying you*" (6:17,18). The heavenly Father was aware of their every need, so that they needed to seek first the kingdom and its righteousness, and all these provisions of clothing and food would be added to them (6:31-34).

It was in the following of all these laws, which in fact lay behind the laws as given at Sinai, that these Israelites would enter the kingdom and enjoy its blessings. When all hypocrisy and pride would be removed through the spiritual invigoration of the new covenant, and full reliance and confidence was placed in God, then they would request, and it would be given to them (7:7).

THE NARROWED WAY

The level of righteousness demanded was astonishing. The blessings promised on the basis of achieving this high level of righteousness were also astonishing. But the most astonishing thing about this entire message is the fact that Jesus spoke of these requirements and these blessings, and

the people received them, *as though they were certain to come about!* Yet how can the promises be fulfilled if the level of righteousness demanded for their fulfillment be impossible of attainment?

How is it possible that anyone would find "the cramped gate and narrowed way" which led away into life (Matt.7:13,14)? How is it possible that anyone would produce the "ideal fruit" required (7:16-20)? Would anyone be able to avoid anger toward a brother that makes him liable to the Gehenna of fire (Matt.5:22)? Would anyone be so free of lust and wrong thoughts that there is no possibility of loss in Gehenna (5:30)? Who of all those listening to Jesus on the mount that day could claim that they were perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect (5:48)?

Long before Jesus had finished this message, there surely arose in the hearts of many who listened the question the disciples later asked of the Lord, "Who, consequently, can be saved?" The answer would have to be the same as Jesus gave then: "With men this is impossible, *yet with God all is possible*" (Matt.19:25,26).

YOU SHALL BE PERFECT

The throngs listening to Jesus speak were sinners. They were not perfect even by the humanly manipulated levels of perfection set by the Pharisees. And yet Jesus said they shall be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect!

Here is a statement for the highest astonishment! The Authorized Version renders the future tense as a command: "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father Which is in heaven is perfect," which is not entirely incorrect. The parallel word in the law given to Moses at Sinai is also expressed by an indicative verb: "Holy shall you become, for I am holy, Yahweh your Elohim" (Lev.19:2). But in Luke 6:36, where the Lord's sermon on "an even place" is recorded, the Lord uses the imperative: "Become,

then, pitiful, according as your Father also is pitiful." What is commanded is also promised! It is commanded as a test to display human inability, but it is promised as a revelation of divine ability.

As a command, the astonishment in Matthew 5:48 lies in the fact that it speaks of an impossibility for Israel and indeed for us all! As a promise, the astonishment lies in the marvel of God's achievement. Israel must be brought to the point where they realize they cannot be perfect as God is perfect so that they shall be made perfect and holy and pitiful as their Father is perfect, holy and pitiful.

Ultimately Israel will be saved from their imperfection and immaturity, and so they will reflect the perfection of the heavenly Father. They will be saved from their sins, by their Saviour, Jesus.

IMPOSSIBILITY OF ETERNAL LOSS

It is surely ironic that portions of Matthew 5-7 should be understood and taught in defense of the doctrine of everlasting hell for the wicked. Entirely apart from the fact that the Greek word *aiōnios* (read into this context from Matthew 25:46) does not mean endlessness[1], and the fact that Gehenna does not refer to a place of fiery, conscious torment[2], imposing such a perverse idea on our Lord's sermon makes a complete mockery and confusion of His message.

It can only be claimed hypocritically that Jesus is speaking of an everlasting destiny of misery, from which there is no possibility of escape, for certain individuals (not, of course, including ourselves). The demands placed on our Lord's listeners are demands that no one could keep apart

1. *cf* A. E. Knoch: ALL IN ALL, pp.192-206; James Coram: "The Living God and the Eons," *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.79, p.171.

2. *cf* James Coram: "The Gehenna of Fire," *Unsearchable Riches,* vol. 83, p.279.

from God's gift of a Saviour from sins. God must make His people perfect as He is perfect, or else none of them will enter into the kingdom. Solely on the basis of the standards of righteousness laid down in these chapters, and apart from the Saviour's salvation from sins, no one, whether they are God's people Israel or not, can hope to receive the promises.

If the promise of maturity and perfection is to be fulfilled, God must open the eyes of the blind and give spiritual strength, which in fact He has promised to do in the giving of His Son as the Saviour of His people.

This is not to say that Gehenna and destruction as spoken of here are not serious realities. But we who believe that Christ died for our sins, and that this is the sole basis of our salvation and expectation of life, must surely be prepared in heart to treat our Lord's words concerning future judgments with the greatest care and caution, lest we bring dishonor to His Name. It is well to ask how much anger lies behind the traditional interpretation of these passages. Where is the sense of humility and the turning of the other cheek, demanded by our Lord here, in the scenes of hell so often still presented in sermons of many Bible teachers? Why should we put limits to God's grace and restrict the effectiveness of the cross of Christ by stubborn adherence to such concepts as double predestination[3] or the idea that God has given up a measure of His sovereign will in favor of the free will of man? Why should we confine God's justice to His work of judgment, and His love to His work of salvation, in order to defend the idea of everlasting loss?

It is not the sin of hypocrisy alone that is involved here. There is the sin of disbelief in the attempts to explain a passage like Romans 5:18 in terms of not all mankind being

3. Double predestination is the idea that God predetermined that some people would be saved, and the rest damned to everlasting hell.

justified, or 1 Corinthians 15:22 in terms of not all being vivified in Christ, or Colossians 1:20 in terms of a reconciliation through the blood of Christ's cross that does not reach every enemy in the universe. There is the failure (to our great present loss) of not relying on God as the living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10), and not glorifying Him for His goal of becoming All in all (1 Cor.15:28).

As for our Lord's ministry as recorded in the book of Matthew, we should eagerly view all His words of warning and dire predictions of judgment in the light of such promises as Matthew 1:21 ("He shall be saving His people from their sins"), and Matthew 2:6 ("For out of [Judah] shall come forth the Ruler Who shall shepherd My people Israel") and Matthew 5:48 ("You, then, shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect"). We should take to heart as literal truth the words of Ezekiel 36:25,26 and connect them unreservedly to the promise of Matthew 5:8 concerning the clean of heart: "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idol clods I shall cleanse you. I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I bestow within you, and I will take away the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."

In every way we should avoid a conclusion that sees God as dooming to an eternal hell those whom He does not yet give a clean heart and does not yet make perfect and mature as He is perfect. Here in Matthew God is setting forth astonishing demands, demands which are impossible for anyone to fulfill in their own strength, but He is also preparing Israel for the Saviour from sin and the granting of His spirit for power of righteousness that exceeds that ever shown by their most diligent law-keeper. And what is said about Gehenna and fire and the great fall of the sinner's (the "stupid" man's) house must be taken in relation to the overall goals announced. God can and does use warnings as motivations for repentance, and He can and does use the carrying out of His judgments for enlightening the eyes of the blinded sinners involved, as well as for purposes of discipline, but these are steps along the way and are not ends in themselves. In the consummation it will be seen and appreciated that Jesus is the Saviour from sins so that God may be known and relied on by all as the Saviour of all mankind. D.H.H.

JUDGMENT IN GEHENNA

THE FUTURE JUDGMENT SCENE described in Isaiah 66:23, 24 is much easier to understand when we become aware of what has already taken place at this very same spot, just outside Jerusalem. Here lay the gorge called the vale of the sons of Hinnom. The Israelites once built their high places here for the purpose of sacrificing their own children to the god Molech (Jer.7:31; 19:5; 2 Kings 23:10). Later this same spot was termed "Tophet," that is "Vomit" or "Abomination." This gloomy valley, the setting for Israel's most awful and offensive crimes, had already been turned by Yahweh into a place of judgment, when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem. This was the spot that Yahweh picked to give His sinful people over to the sword so that it became known as the "Valley of Slaughter" because so many were slain on its slopes.

Because of the presence of so many unburied dead, this gorge became especially repulsive to the Jews, so was only inhabited by the birds and beasts of prey.

When these concluding lines from Isaiah's prophecy were read to the Jews in their synagogue, they knew full well that such words could only refer to the cursed vale of the sons of Hinnom, outside the city, which later became

known as the Gehenna. It was obvious to them that this would be the logical spot, in that future day, for God to deal out judgment. For many, many years this same valley had served as the "city dump" for the refuse of the townsfolk. Even the corpses of executed criminals were cast into it, to be devoured by the worms and the fires, which burned incessantly in order to destroy the filth and the stench.

Our Lord's predictions about the coming kingdom closely paralleled those of the prophets, for He not only foresaw bountiful blessings but also fearful judgments. He elaborated upon what had been said about this period in previous predictions, explaining it more fully and shedding further light on many hazy points. He warned His hearers powerfully of the judgment which would one day envelop the vale of Hinnom. Unfortunately, faulty translation has hidden this fact from the eyes of most and severed the connection between our Lord's threats and the warnings of Isaiah 66:24, because in every passage where our Lord referred to Gehenna, these versions mistranslate it "hell." Perhaps this is done to lend support to the sagging doctrine of "everlasting torment," yet it mars and mutilates the important link between those predictions in prior prophecies which deal with the same subject.

Like a diamond in its setting, this judgment scene in Gehenna fits into the framework of our Lord's sermon. He first spoke about entering the kingdom, which at the same time He was still heralding as "near." But, in contrast to this, He also warned them of the possibility that one might forfeit all its blessings by being caught in different snares, which can only mean becoming bound to certain sins . . . . Such will be thrown into Gehenna at the kingdom's inauguration. The severity of this judgment is seen from His dictum that merely calling a brother "Stupid" would make one liable to the Gehenna of fire (Matt.5:22).

On the other hand He offers comfort to those who will

endure affliction in that day because of their faith, with these words: "Now I am saying to you, My friends, be not afraid of those who are killing the body and after this do not have anything more excessive that they can do. Now I shall be intimating to you of Whom you may be afraid. Be afraid of Him, Who, after killing, has authority to be casting into Gehenna. Yea, I am saying to you, of this One be afraid" (Luke 12:4,5).

Here we may see the proper order of the process of this judgment of Gehenna. First the body is killed, and only after that is the corpse thrown into the valley with its smoldering fires and voracious worms. Therefore this is not a judgment in which the sinner suffers, for he is already dead. Likewise, it becomes very evident that this terrestrial tribunal cannot last forever.

Even though the Lord called it "eonian fire," this only indicates that it will burn throughout one whole eon. That it must have an end is not difficult to prove. Scripture says definitely that at the end of the millennium the entire earth will be dissolved by combustion (2 Peter 3:12). Thus this place of judgment located in the vale of Hinnom will also melt and be decomposed like everything else on the earth's surface.

M. Jaegle

THE CRAMPED GATE AND NARROW WAY

How earnestly did we once exhort sinners to leave the broad way which leads to destruction, for the narrow path that leads to life! (Matt.7:13,14). But, thank God, we learned the great truth that we are in Christ and share His life. How then could we be on a road that *leads to* life? I learned, moreover, that the entrance into life was *wide,* not *cramped.* It was entered by *grace,* not by *striv-*

ing (Luke 13:24). The narrow way was not the evangel but the *law.* That leads to life, for those who keep it, but, alas of the few who find it, none observe it. The precept given for life is for death (Rom.7:10).

The word "strait" is no longer understood, hence it is translated *cramped* in the Concordant Version. In its other forms it means *groan, distress.* We westerners do not know what a narrow road is. I lived on a narrow street. It was just wide enough so three automobiles could drive abreast. In the East a street is not narrow if a single auto mobile can squeeze through. It is wide, extra wide. It is narrow if pedestrians must go in single file. The word *cramped* means still more. It is so narrow that it makes one groan to squeeze through. That is the normal experience of one under the law of Moses. But the freedom we have in Christ is like the flight of a bird in the air. Not cramped, but spacious. Full of life, not leading to life. Not groaning, but singing!

The figure of the two ways was used by our Lord in proclaiming the evangel of the kingdom, before His rejection by Israel, with the cross out of sight, long before Paul was given his evangel for the nations, which is in force today. Yet even in that economy the gospel was not cramped. In the tabernacle the entrance was very wide indeed. Our Lord's words were immediately preceded by the basic law of the kingdom. "All, then, whatever you may be wanting that men should be doing to you, thus *you,* also, be doing to them, for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt.7:12). This law is the cramped gate and narrow way. Who can fulfill it?

A. E. Knoch

The above writing, "Judgment in Gehenna," by M. Jaegle, is from *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.52, pp.74,75; the meditation, "The Cramped Gate and Narrow Way," by A. E. Knoch, is from *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.24, p.150.

FACE TO FACE

THE SON OF GOD'S LOVE "is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:18-20).

Of all the many wonderful declarations of God's love for His Son, this surely is the most comprehensive. These words describe the full and glorious honors which are justly bestowed, but in addition, there is also a clear declaration of intent. As Firstborn among many brethren, our Lord is to lead this same ecclesia in a grand consummation of universal reconciliation. Moreover, this is achieved through the only means possible, *the blood of His cross!* How often we forget that it is this supreme sacrifice which will bring God the rich harvest of His heart's desire. We ourselves are graced ". . . in the Beloved: in Whom we are having the deliverance through His blood" (Eph.1:6,7).

GOD'S VAST LOVE

It is of paramount importance that we should not conclude that everything prior to Golgotha was failure or disappointment and that God was carrying out some vague sort of *rescue mission.* Throughout past centuries there have been disasters or tragedies which the casual observer will view as God's discipline and even anger, but a closer look, lovingly escorted by His spirit, must reveal a gradual

unfolding of our Father's immutable purpose, founded in His vast love, righteousness and grace.

"Let us not get the false idea that God, the Subjector, was unjust until the cross of Christ, and that then He set right the evil He had done. He did not change then. But He *manifested* His justice and love in the sacrifice of His Son. In Him, His Image and Likeness, He showed how *He* suffers, along with His creatures, as the victims of evil and sin. He *displayed* His righteousness even when He passed over the penalties of sins in the past, but especially in the current era, so that we can see His righteousness in the sacrifice of His Son. Before the cross His justice was but dimly discerned, as we see in the book of Job. Now it is definitely demonstrated by the suffering, death and resurrection of His Beloved.

"The sacrifice of Christ, the Son of God, although the sorest sin that man ever committed, has virtue in it to counteract and transmute all sin into a source of highest blessing to man and greatest glory to God. All eonian sin is necessary as a somber background for post-eonian blessing, through the value of His mediatorial offering. On the earth, in Israel and the nations, this gradually leads up to the consummation, through the *propitiation* of the kingdom until the *justification* of all (Rom.5:18) at the consummation. But for us, whose realm is among the celestials, justification is already our portion.

"In Christ's cross God displays *His* righteousness, so that He is Himself just, as well as the Justifier of the one who is of the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26). We must not restrict our thoughts to the fact that He is *our* Justifier, through Christ. Before He could be that He must be *manifestly* just *Himself*. We must acknowledge that, to the limited understanding of a human, apart from His revelation, God may appear to be a ferocious fiend. In fact, almost all uninspired religions show Him as such by means of their idols and their

ceremonial rites. Even Christendom presents Him as an eternal tormentor in regard to the unbeliever. But the cross has proven, by the suffering of His Son, that He is far more than just or right, even *gracious* and *loving*."[1]

BEFORE THE DISRUPTION

Writing to the dispersed expatriates who had escaped the cruel Roman persecution, Peter made it clear that they were ransomed, not with corruptible things, ". . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, foreknown, indeed, *before the disruption of the world, yet manifested in the last times,* because of you, who through Him are believing in God, Who rouses Him from among the dead and is giving Him glory, so that your faith and expectation is to be in God" (1 Peter 1:19-21).

Here is clear evidence that God made loving provision long before the apparent intrusion of sin. There was nothing unforeseen, nor should we even consider the appearance of sin as an intrusion. This was introduced as an essentially contrasting factor of revelation into His wise and wonderful affection. The separation and pain were real enough, as was the suffering of God. That the awful sacrifice of His Son was needed is sufficient proof of the infinite dimensions of God's love. Through our Lord's precious words we are granted a brief and quite intimate glimpse into the tender relationship between the Father and Son:

"I glorify Thee on earth, finishing the work which Thou hast given Me, that I should be doing it. And now glorify Thou Me, Father, with Thyself, with the glory which I had before the world is with Thee" (John 17:4,5), and again, ". . . for Thou lovest Me before the disruption of the world" (John 17:24).

"It is with awed hearts and unshod feet that we enter

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.47, p.192.

into the pure precincts of God's love to His Son. We feel most unworthy to listen to such sacred secrets. Before the disruption, before sin or sorrow or a single sigh had sent its shadows across this scene, God's love for His Son had its birth. He came into the world, not to win God's love, but in response to it."[2]

While He hung, crucified, at Golgotha, our Lord's words were charged with profound significance, but what shall we declare concerning the silence of His Father?

"Was it for me He bowed His head
Upon the cross, and freely shed
His precious blood—that crimson tide?
Was it for me the Saviour died?"

IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

There are many startling considerations to be realized by those who are able to accept what this supreme sacrifice accomplished. This present day of grace, a glorious time of conciliation, was just one of many honors worthily lavished upon the Son of God's love.

The incredible revelation that the multifarious wisdom of God was to be made known to the celestials, *through a terrestrial ecclesia,* designated, called, and justified, was now granted. Disclosure of this amazing news, following Christ's exaltation, was first made known through the apostle Paul. For all; but especially the ecclesia, this unique plan in God's purpose, is full of tremendous significance. Firstborn among many brethren! Essential to His glory! ". . . how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (Rom.8:32).

It was not immediately apparent, especially to His disciples, who looked for the restoration of the kingdom, but it now becomes obvious that the nation of Israel *had to reject*

2. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.168.

both King and kingdom. In fact, the kingdom itself could not be restored unless the King was put to death. Further; and here we must pause in profound adoration. The unfolding of this present secret administration of grace, ". . . concealed from the eons in God" (Eph.3:9), was completely impossible *prior to the shedding of His innocent blood on Golgotha's stake.*

The great longing of God's heart is to disclose and share His unbounded love with all creation. His first loving act was the gift of His Son: "Who is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him" (Col.1:16,17).

The divine condescension in this revelation is not at all fully comprehended. There are innumerable terms of endearment which only humans might fully appreciate. "Father," "Son," "Brethren," and all the associated loving intimacy of other family relationships. These terms practically fill the whole of Scripture, and it is through these that we learn just a little of the deep meaning of tenderness and compassion; but especially, love.

The dire influence of death and sin in our members cause us to make the mistake of measuring His infinite wisdom by our own vain folly. In Scripture there are many apparent contradictions, but these only appear so because there is partial revelation of truth. We must not make premature judgments until we have, *not instalments alone, but the whole truth!*

GOD'S SPIRIT IS SEARCHING ALL

When considering the offense in Eden which left such a devastating legacy of death, and then the callousness

of the nation of Israel in first rejecting the offered kingdom and then crucifying the King, we are faced with two questions. (1) Could God not have foreseen these calamities? (2) If those involved, Adam and the nation of Israel, were helpless, being disabled, will they ultimately be held responsible for their deeds?

In love, our gracious Father has anticipated such reverent inquiry. We seek clear perception of His purpose, and we exult in all indications of His deity. At the long awaited consummation it is the glory of the Father and His Son which will ring throughout the whole universe in a grand acclamation of praise. We are urged to examine these matters, ". . . for the spirit is searching all, even the depths of God" (1 Cor.2:10).

"Now we obtained, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we may be perceiving that which is being graciously given to us by God, which we are speaking also, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, matching spiritual blessings with spiritual words" (1 Cor.2:12-13).

Answering the first question it is evident that provision was made for the necessary humbling, self-awareness gained only through a knowledge of good and evil. The bleak estrangement which followed on our parent's disobedience and sin also provided a situation where our gracious Father could reveal His great love. When the last enemy, death, is abolished, so the grievous effects of sin will have run their course. We perceive that the just, divine judgments of God are corrective; which will set matters right, and which will bring Him honor, praise and glory from all creation. Then will come to pass that great consummation, when, through His victorious Son, ". . . God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:28).

We beseech our Father's patience for even posing this second question. It is difficult, nay, hopeless, to view this

from our dying, disabled condition and with our feeble understanding. Whatever thoughts we may venture on this subject will inevitably be based on the subjective values of human justice. How dare we question the loving wisdom of God, ". . . Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11). This imagined dilemma has already been rehearsed and answered in Scripture (Rom. 9:14-25), and as stated above, all God's judgments are corrective. Suffice it then to reiterate this and also note that "God locks up all in stubbornness" (Rom.11:32). None will ultimately be held to be "responsible," and thankfully, God's judgments will not be based on human responsibility.

With hindsight (the ability to understand, after something has happened, what might better have been done or what caused the event), and even with our present bewildering standards of justice, we would no more consider Israel "responsible" in rejecting the kingdom restoration which we now know simply would not, and indeed could not, *in those days*, have happened.

Indeed there is much that God brings into our lives that "is hard to understand, till with a mind discerning, we trace His guiding hand . . . . So keep us, Lord, e'er trusting, supremely in Thy love, our all to Thee confiding, our hearts with Thee above." Both in present struggle and in future judgment God is working out His glorious purpose.

"The knowledge of God's Word is good, an acquaintance with His ways is better, but a realization of Himself is best. Faith accepts His sayings, confidence acquiesces in His ways, love rests in His essence. Let us believe what He says, and we will not only delight in what He does, but exult in what He is."[3]

Donald Fielding

3. A. E. Knoch: The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God, p.340.

DISQUIETING THOUGHTS

THERE is often a conflict between what we think *ought to be* so and what *is* so. This is well exhibited throughout the debate between Job and his associates.

In his second address (chapter 20), Zophar tells Job how things should be, as firmly established by ancient wisdom: "Don't you know this, from long ago, from when humanity was placed on the earth, that the jubilant song of the wicked is brief, and the rejoicing of the polluted lasts but a moment?" (Job 20:5). To think otherwise, as Job seems to have been suggesting, is disquieting to Zophar and creates a hurried sense of nervousness in him (20:2).

Good must be rewarded. Evil must be punished. And this is what Zophar's belief in God is all about. "El shall evict" any gain of the wicked man "from his belly" (20:15). "He shall send against him the heat of His anger and shall rain it upon him as his nourishment" (20:23).

This is true, but what *should* be generally remains for now as what *shall* be fully realized but *is not* yet experienced. The great error with Zophar's position is that he sees God only as an ongoing Enforcer of the principle that good is rewarded and wickedness condemned. To go beyond that and see God, as Job has been maintaining with a great struggle, as responsible for all things, shaping and directing both good and evil in accord with His own unknown design, would upset Zophar's whole philosophy of life.

Consequently, Zophar takes a false position about the current and ongoing fate of wicked people that is easily shown to be wrong by most observable evidence. Zophar

JOB 20, 21

20 **+Then Zophar the Naamathite** **|answered,** **+** **|saying:**
2 **Therefore my disquieting** thought**s**
are causing me to **reply,**
+ *i*__**On**__ *p*__**account of my hurried**__**–** sense with__**in me.**__
3 **I am hearing admonition** meant for **my mortification,**
And the **spirit** *f*__**of my understanding**__
makes **me** **|respond.**
4 Don't **you know this, from** *fr*__**long**__ ago,
From when **humanity** was **placed–** **on** the **earth,**
5 **That** the **jubilant** song **of** the **wicked** is *f* **brief,**
And the **rejoicing of** the **polluted** lasts *fr*__**but**__ a **moment?**
6 Even **if his dignity** **|ascends to** the **heavens,**
And his head **|touches** **›** the **thick** clouds,
7 **He shall perish** **›** **permanently like his** own **ordure;**
Those hav__**ing seen him shall say, Where**__ is **he?**
8 **He shall fly** away **like** a **dream,**
and they shall not find him,
+For he shall be bolted away like a **vision of** the **night.**
9 The **eye** that **glimpsed him** **+** **shall not** *c*__**do**__ so **anymore,**
Neither shall his *ri*__**place regard him further.**__
10 **His sons shall** *m*__**seek benevolence**__ from the **poor,**
+When his hands **|relinquish their virility.**
11 **His bones were filled** by **his adolescence,**
+Yet that gain **shall lie with him** *on*__**in**__ the **soil.**
12 Even **if evil is** **|sweet in his mouth,**
And **he** **|suppresses it under his tongue,**
13 Though **he** **|spares** *on* **it and** does **not** **|forsake it,**
And he **|holds fast to it** *i*__**on**__ the **midst of his palate,**

claims that human history "from long ago" shows that "the rejoicing of the polluted lasts but a moment" (20:5) and that "he shall perish permanently like his own ordure" (20:7). Not only this, but Zophar insists that the children of such evil people will be impoverished (v.10); their estate will be lost (v.15), for El Himself will see to it (20:15,23).

Zophar is not viewing some far future adjudication but claims that serpents (undoubtedly associated with Genesis and the entrance of sin) will soon turn against the person who has followed the leadings of sin (20:16-18). Such a person, like Job, will lose all his ill-gotten gains before he dies (20:17,18). "When his affluence is full" (as Job's has been) "there shall be distress for him; *every means of misery* shall come upon him" (20:22). It is as simple as that. Thus, in this way, Zophar interprets the horrors of Job's situation displayed before his eyes.

With such a narrow viewpoint both of God and of the witness of history, Zophar is setting himself up for a fall. His whole principle that good is currently rewarded and evil clearly punished cannot stand before the facts of ongoing events and past records. If "dread" (v.25) and "total darkness" (v.26) is the "allotment" being assigned to the wicked person "by El" (v.29), then why can't this be seen?

Zophar will take no direct part in the next round of speeches. This may suggest that he is abashed by the way in which Job so easily refutes his arguments. In any case, the exchange of thoughts in Job 20 and 21 makes it evident that if the principle of good being rewarded and evil being put down is to be maintained along with a recognition of God, then God must be involved in more than justly responding to human thoughts and deeds. God must be operating all things with some future and unknown goal in view. And this is the very hope Job has been clinging to and Zophar has been trying to extinguish.

14 Yet **his bread will be turned** sour **in his bowels;**
The **bile of cobras** is **within him.**
15 The **estate he has swallowed** down**,**
+ **he shall vomit it** up**;**
El shall evict it from his belly.
16 **He shall suck** the **poison of cobras;**
The **tongue of** a **puff-adder shall kill him.**
17 **He shall not see** *i* the **rillets,**
The **streams of torrents of honey and clotted cream.**
18 He *c*⌜**must return**⌝ the fruit of his **labor**
and not ⌜**swallow** it down**,**
And *M*⌜**in**~*S* the **estate of his commerce,**
he has **no***t* ⌜**enjoyment.**
19 **For he has maltreated, he has forsaken** the **poor;**
He has pillaged a **house** + which **he** did **not** ⌜**build.**
20 **For he has not known ease in his belly;**
i⌜**From his coveting, he** has **not** *m*⌜**tried** to ⌜**escape.**
21 There **is no**thing in **store** ⌝**of his food.**
Therefore his bounty can**not** ⌜**hope** to last**.**
22 *i*⌜**When his affluence** is **full**⌝
there **shall be distress for him;**
Every means of misery shall come upon **him.**
23 **It shall come** to **be,** in order **to fill his belly,**
That **He shall send** *i*⌜**against him** the **heat of His anger**
And shall rain it up**on him** *i*⌜**as his nourishment.**
24 **He shall** run **away from** a **weapon of iron;**
From a **bronze bow it shall cut into him.**
25 **It will be pulled** out **and** brought ⌜**forth from** his **body,**
And a **flashing** blade **from his bile;**
Dread shall *go*⌜**come over him.**
26 *all*⌜**Total darkness** lies **buried**⌝ **for his secluded**⌝ riche**s;**
A **fire** that **was not blown** upon **shall devour him;**
It shall imperil anything **surviving in his tent.**
27 The **heavens shall expose his depravity,**
And the **earth** will **rise**⌝ ⌝**against him.**

20:18 *M*~*s* **in:** Hb **as.**

JOB'S PANIC

If Zophar is disquieted by Job's attempts to associate his suffering with some divine operation apart from simple retribution for wickedness, Job's spirit is "impatient," (21:4) and he is "filled with panic and shuddering" (21:6) by any suggestion that it could be otherwise. Job believes in God as Judge and Rewarder just as much as his associates, but for Job this operation of adjudication cannot explain either his present sufferings or the facts concerning the present lives of clearly irreverent and wicked people. Job's entire soul shudders at such a narrow view of Deity and the experience of evil. If God's only connection with humanity lies in the realm of discipline then He can have little to do with Job's sufferings, and that cannot be!

"Face me," Job commands, "and be desolated, and place your hand over your mouth" (Job 21:5). If Zophar will look at Job fairly, in view of his own knowledge of Job's history, he will know that his pat explanations for evil will not serve. Then if he will honestly look around at humanity as a whole his disquietude will become desolation.

The great weight of evidence from the past and present shows that the wicked "become masterful with potent power" (21:7). "Their seed is established; their houses remain in peace, . . . *and no club of Eloah is upon them*" (21:8,9). Instead of his sons begging scraps from the poor (*cf* 20:10) "their youngsters go forth like the flock, and their children are dancing" (21:11). Far from their jubilant song being brief (*cf* 20:5), "they take up tambourine and harp, and they rejoice to the sound of the shepherd's pipe. They finish their days in well-being, and they settle down in a quiet moment to the unseen" (21:12,13). It is the exception rather than the rule when the wicked end their days in poverty and distress.

Moreover, those who irreverently mock the Deity, say-

28 The **~deluge~ shall deport his house,**
Spilling over **in** the **day of His anger.**
29 **This** is the **portion from Elohim** for the **wicked** *h* **person,**
And the **allotment** *sa* **assigned him** *f* **by El.**
21 **+So Job** ˡ**answered,** + ˡ**saying:**
2 **Hearken,** yea **hearken**⁻ to **my declaration,**
And let this *b* **be your consolations** to me**.**
3 **Bear** with **me** +**while I´ am speaking,**
And after I have **spoken**⁻**, you may deride.**
4 As for **me,** is **my concern** directed **to** a **human?**
And if so, for **what reason**
should not my spirit be impatient?
5 **Face** › **me, and be desolated,**
And place your **hand over** your **mouth.**
6 + *if* **When I remember** this, + **I am** filled with **panic,**
And shuddering take**s hold** of **my flesh.**
7 For **what reason should** the **wicked live** on**?**
They develop *mr* **and be**come **masterful**
with **potent** power**.**
8 **Their seed** is **established**ˡ **with them** ›**in their presence,**
And their offspring ›**in** front of **their eyes.**
9 **Their houses** remain in **peace** apart **from alarm,**
And no*t* **club of Eloah** is up**on them.**
10 *7* **Their~ bull impregnates and is nev**er ˡ**fruitless;**
7 **Their~ young cow** ˡ**delivers and** does **not** ˡ**miscarry.**
11 **They** *m* **let their youngsters** ˡ**go** forth **like** the **flock,**
And their children are dancing.
12 **They** ˡ**take up** *as* **tambourine and harp,**
And they ˡ**rejoice to** the **sound of** the **shepherd's pipe.**
13 **They** ˡ*all* **finish their days in well**-being**,**
And they ˡ**settle** down **in** a quiet **moment** to the **unseen.**
14 +**Yet they** ˡ**say to El, Go away from us,**
+**For we** do **not desire** a **knowledge of Your ways.**

20:28 ~~~ **deluge:** Hb **crop of.**
21:10 *7*-~ **Their:** Hb **His.**

ing to El, "Go away from us, for we do not desire a knowledge of Your ways" end up holding on to the good they had planned to get. This wicked devising, at least, is as it appears to Job even though he was not in on their counseled plans (21:14-16). Job has not been in on God's counsels either, but assuming that the wicked will eventually receive Eloah's appointed cramps for their lawlessness, he determines that this must be presently secluded (21:17-19), and so reserved for another time.

Job's reply to Zophar in chapter 21 is devastating. It points clearly to observable evidence that Zophar has not admitted but which anyone "passing on the way" could verify (21:29). But Job does not exult in this triumph. It does not end Job's panic and shuddering to prove that wicked people prosper and that El does not bring the club of His anger upon them. Zophar's arguments have been offensive vanity (21:34) because they do not face the fact that an upright person like Job is being afflicted, and wicked people, both in the past and in the present, so often prosper. This is what should have been disquieting to Zophar instead of Job's attempts to relate these apparent inequalities to God. The critical question is why God has *not* brought His club on the wicked. There is something about God and His relationship to evil that cannot be explained simply by the principles of judgment and reward.

In chapter 21 Job makes little progress in this struggle to relate his sufferings to a wise and powerful Deity. He pays more attention to Zophar's arguments in chapter 20 than he has previously done to anything his associates have said. Because Zophar's arguments are so easily refuted, Job becomes more distracted than before from the major issue. The problem of evil in this world where God is in charge is deepened by the evidence Job lays before Zophar and us in this address.

Yet we have gained by this exchange in chapters 20 and

15 **What** is He **Who-Suffices that we should serve Him?**
And what ˡ**benefit** would **we** ᶜ**gain**
that we should make **intercession** ⁱ**to Him?**
16 **Behold,** is **not their good in their hand?**
(Still**, the counsel of** the **wicked is far from me.**)
17 **How** often **is** the **lamp of** the **wicked** ˡ**extinguished**
⁺**That their calamity** ˡ**comes on them,**
That **He** ˡ**apportions cramps in His anger?**
18 Do **they** ˡ**become like crushed straw before** the **wind,**
⁺**Or like trash** that the **sweeping** whirlwind **steals** away**?**
19 **Is Eloah secluding** payment for **his**◊ **lawlessness**
to give **to his sons?**
May He repay › **him** ⁺**that he may know!**
20 **May his** own **eyes see his downfall,**
And may he drink ᶠ**of** the **fury of** Him **Who-Suffices.**
21 **For what** is **his delight in his house after he** is gone**,**
⁺**When** the **number of his months has run out?**
22 Who **shall teach knowledge to El,**
⁺**Since He Him**self **shall judge** the **exalted**ˡ ones**?**
23 **This** one ˡ**dies in his robust plentifulness,**
His whole state **snug and** at **ease;**
24 **His viscera are full** of **fat,**
And the **marrow of his bones is** ˡ**hearty.**
25 ⁺**Yet an**other ˡ**dies** ⁱ**with** a **bitter soul,**
⁺ Who **has nev**er **eaten** ⁱ**of good.**
26 **They** ˡ**lie together** ᵒⁿ**in** the **soil,**
And maggots ˡ**cover** ᵒⁿ **them** both**.**
27 **Behold, I know your devisings**
And the **schemes** that **you** ˡ**wrongly** make ᵒⁿ**against me.**
28 **For you are saying, Where** is the **house of** the **tyrant,**
And where are the **tent tabernacles of** the **wicked?**
29 Have **you not asked** those **passing** on the **way,**
And do **you not** ˡ**admit their evidence,**

21:19 his: i.e., a man's.

30 **That** the **evil** one **is** ˡ**kept back** ˃**in** the **day of calamity;**
˃**In** the **day of rage they are** ˡ**escorted** safely**?**
31 [a]**Who** ˡ**denounces his way** [on]**to his face,**
And [a]**who** ˡ**repays** ˃ **him** for what **he him**self **has done?**
32 [+]**When he´ is** ˡ**fetched to** the **burying ground,**
[+] Watch **is** set ˡ**alert over** the **grave-mound.**
33 The **clods of** the **wadi are sweet to him;**
[+] **All humanity** ˡ**draws** out **after him,**
And there **is no numbering** of those **before him.**
34 **How** [+]**then** can **you** ˡ**comfort me** with **vanity,**
[+]**When** only **offense remains** in **your replies?**

❋

21. We have learned that no matter how true something may be, it cannot be shown true by false claims. It is true that evil will not prosper, and indeed God will see to this. El Himself "shall judge the exalted ones" (21:22). But reliance on this principle cannot be established by pretending that it is observable and verifiable in current experience, or by supposing God has nothing in view beyond such works of judgment. We have also gained in being prepared a little more than before for the revelations of Himself and His operations that God gives in the latter chapters of the book. What we observe and hear and feel at present is not the consummation. D.H.H.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, VOLUME 87

Bindery work has now been completed, and *Unsearchable Riches* volume 87 (1996) is now available for shipment (clothbound, dark green cloth, 288 pages; $20.00 per copy, $2.00 s&h; California residents add sales tax). We regret that we cannot make these volumes available at a lower price; however, our basic production costs alone are substantially in excess of $15.00 per volume, and bindery expenses are more than $6.00 per book additional.

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Crucified Together with Him
57 "In Three Days I will Raise it Up"
61 Transformation
68 That I Might Find Him
80 1 Samuel 1, 2
87 First Samuel: Overview
91 If the Lord is Willing

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 1997
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

THESE are good times for being a believer. People are sinners. There is much sickness in body and weakness in mind. Hate and greed are everywhere, and wars are far from disappearing. We cannot get away from dangers and fears, and the sense of vulnerability keeps seeping into our lives.

But this is not simply because we are approaching the end of the second millennium since Christ came among us or that the characteristics of the last days of our era (*cf* 2 Tim.3:1-9) seem to be growing, but disease and unease have afflicted humanity from the very beginning. And the most powerful and greatest of remedies for this is, as it has always been, faith in God and His Word.

Job spoke of the prosperity of powerful oppressors of his day who arise and make it so "none can put reliance in their lives" (Job 24:22). In the days of Eli, his own sons became disqualified to mediate for sinners because of their own evil deeds (1 Sam.2:22-26). Yet Job, even under crushing affliction, was strengthened by secluding in his bosom the instruction and sayings of God (Job 23:12). Also in Eli's time, Hannah exulted in Yahweh Who *regulates* actions and Who makes destitute and enriches (1 Sam.2:3,7).

Similarly in our Lord's early ministry a leper came to Him with full confidence in His ability to cleanse, and a Roman officer approached Him with conviction concerning His authority to heal, while "the sons of the kingdom" whom Jesus came to save from their sins, continued in the *darkness* of their weaknesses and sorrows (Matt.8:1-13). How was it that Job and Hannah, and the leper and the centurion were blessed with faith, but thousands of others all around them remained in stubbornness, with all its distor-

tions and phobias? Did not Eliphaz and Eli and the sons of the kingdom need confidence in God and assurance in the wisdom and goodness of His ways as much as the others? And even more sobering, we must ask about the outright wicked people Job referred to, and the sons of Eli, and those who sought to kill Jesus: Did they not need to rest with confidence in the wisdom, power and glory of God?

Of course they did. Thus Christ died also for these sinners, these infirm and irreverent enemies who have not yet been given faith as we have been given (*cf* Rom.5:6-11, 18,19). But in the meantime, we can only rejoice that God has graciously granted us faith (Phil.1:29) in these days. The majority of mankind are like the unbelieving malefactor at the cross with our Lord, who voiced "skepticism" and only wanted "a *present* release from their woes . . . . They do not believe God or look for bliss in the future through His Anointed" (see p.55). What a privilege it is, in these dark days while death continues its relentless eroding of human hopes and strength, to believe that God is in control! What a blessing to keep firmly in our hearts the truth that He Who rouses Christ from among the dead (see p.57) will also vivify dying humanity in Him!

But even many who believe that Christ died for their sins have not been given the grace of being assured that in dying for all, all are identified in His death (2 Cor.5:14) and that all enemies in the universe will someday know that reconciliation that has been gained through the blood of the cross (Col.1:20). To believe what Paul writes concerning the oncoming eons and the"full glories of God's consummation" (*cf* p.67) is not granted to all our brethren today. But what a spirit of joy and optimism believing this revelation instills!

May the considerations taken up in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* encourage the reader, day by day, in confidence and assurance in faith, and in thankfulness and praise to our faithful God. D.H.H.

CRUCIFIED TOGETHER WITH HIM

THE CROSS is the basis of the evangel for today. The essential place of Christ's humiliating death was never heralded before Paul, and even he did not proclaim it in the book of Acts, because Israel was still on the scene, and it was not yet recognized in their evangel. For that matter, it is not given its proper place in Christendom today, which does that for which Paul was not commissioned, and is founded on human wisdom and effort. The world, in its wisdom, demands something of man, either the deeds that had to be done under the law, in Israel, such as repentance, baptism, and corresponding conduct, or a life of doing and giving and self-improvement, utterly ignoring the sentence of crucifixion passed upon it by the Supreme.

Nevertheless, with boldness and clarity, the evangel of grace and peace has now been made known in Paul's epistles, firmly founded on the crucifixion of Christ. "Yet we are heralding Christ crucified, to Jews, indeed, a snare, yet to the nations stupidity" (1 Cor.1:23). "For if we have become planted together in the likeness of His death, nevertheless we shall be of the resurrection also, knowing this, that *our old humanity was crucified together with Him . . .*" (Rom. 6:5,6). "With Christ have I been crucified" (Gal.2:20).

When we died with Christ[1] we did not die an ordinary death of gradual dissolution, simply from lack of vitality.

1. See also A. E. Knoch's article "Crucified With Christ," *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.38, p.37.

We died as sinners, as incorrigible criminals, worthy of being wiped off the face of the earth. All this was within us, even if it never showed much on the surface. Christ received our deserts. His death was fraught with a time of terrible torture and disgrace from the hand of man and awful distress from the hiding of God's face.

THOSE CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

It may help us to grasp the momentous truth of our crucifixion with Christ, in spirit, if we consider the literal occurrences when He was nailed to the stake. He was not the only one who was executed in this way on that occasion. Four in all, two robbers (Matt.27:38; Mark 15:27), and two malefactors (Luke 23:32), were crucified *with* Christ on that day. These were representative and illustrative of the great truth that the *world* (Gal.6:14), and the *flesh* (Gal. 5:24), and the *old humanity* (Rom.6:6), and *Paul* (Gal. 2:20) and *we* ourselves are reckoned to have died together with Him (Rom.6:8-11; Col.2:20), on that, the greatest crisis in human history.

THE FOUR CRIMINALS

It is generally supposed that only two others were crucified with Christ, but a careful consideration seems to show that there were two kinds, malefactors and robbers, each of which represents a different division of mankind. *Malefactors* are, literally, simply EVIL-ACTers. It is used only in Luke, which is written about the Son of Adam, and includes a view of all humanity, all of whom do evil. All are sinners. *Robbers,* however, which is used in Matthew, refers especially to the people under law, and the nation who, not only sinned, but transgressed and offended. The A.V. actually uses the word "rob" in Malachi 3:8 where the whole nation is accused of defrauding Yahweh of tithes and heave offerings. In our Lord's day, especially at His

trial and crucifixion, the chief priests were far more guilty than Herod or Pilate.

THE WORLD CRUCIFIED

The simple fact that Christ not only suffered and died, but underwent the shameful, humiliating ordeal of crucifixion *for* the world, should show that it greatly deserves the same sentence. But we will never be able to see this if we do not view it as it appears in God's sight, and consider it in its relation to Him. Not until then will we, like the malefactor (Luke 23:41), acknowledge the justness of our crucifixion, in spirit.

Let us consider mankind as a whole. We have God's opinion of them before the deluge: "And seeing is Yahweh Elohim that much is the evil of mankind in the earth, and every form of the devices of its heart is but evil all its days" (Gen.6:5). And is not the world today altogether deserving of a similar assessment?

When Paul writes, "May it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal.6:14), he is not referring to the *death* of Christ merely, for salvation, but the *cross* of Christ for humiliation. So few make the distinction, but there is a tremendous difference. It is the *shameful* death. *The end of the flesh is in view here.* There are all kinds of movements today to make man better. They have been at it for four or five thousand years, and behold, where we are! We cannot expect any more from human efforts now than in the past, for the simple reason that God has already crucified the world.

THE BELIEVING MALEFACTOR

Even though a malefactor, one of the men who was crucified with Christ had *faith* in Him and looked to the *future.* He did not even ask for present relief, but rebuked his com-

panion for his lack of godly fear. He then acknowledged the justice of his own judgment and recognized the sinlessness of the Saviour. He had evidently heard of His proclamation of the kingdom and believed, so looked forward, in faith, to a future salvation in that day. For those who are crucified with Christ, there is no glorification in this life, but only in that which is to come. We are "joint enjoyers of Christ's allotment, *if so be that we are suffering together,* that we should be glorified together also" (Rom.8:17).

Of the four who were literally crucified with Christ, the believing malefactor comes closest to our spiritual position. The unbelieving malefactor may well be taken as representative of the *world* today. He it was who blasphemed Him, who challenged Him to bring about a *present* salvation from the evils that beset them. But the believer was like us. He acknowledged the justness of his fate, yet justified Christ, and believed in His salvation in the *future.*

THE MALEFACTOR STANDS FOR HUMANITY

Perhaps the most important point about this malefactor is the total *lack* of good works, or any effort whatever to *merit* salvation. Indeed, what could he have done in his position? He acknowledged his guilt, but had no opportunity whatever to do any works fit for repentance. He begs to be remembered by the Lord when He may be coming into His kingdom. But he had not fulfilled any of the conditions for entrance into it. So our Lord does not promise this boon, but assures him that he would be with Him under conditions the very opposite of the suffering and distress which he was enduring. This was best expressed by the term "paradise."

The name paradise is often used in the Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures for a PROTECTED place, or garden. It is the Persian word for a *park.* It describes, no doubt, a literal garden in the new earth (Rev.2:7; 22:1-5), in the

midst of which will be the log of life, yet, at the same time, a symbol of future bliss in the spiritual as well as the physical sphere. Our Lord chose this term as a type of future felicity as a contrast to present suffering. Until He Himself returns in glory, the saints have no promise of physical pleasure or glory apart from His presence. There is an earthly paradise in the new earth. But Paul was snatched away to the third heaven, so it may also be symbolic of future bliss in any location.

PRESENT PAIN AND FUTURE BLISS

The great difference between faith and unbelief came to a focus at the crucifixion. The unbelieving malefactor, representative of mankind as a whole, in accord with Luke's account, voices his skepticism by saying "Are not you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" (Luke 23:39). But he received no answer from our Lord. This exposes the heart of humanity. They want a *present* release from their woes. They will follow a leader who will promise them health, wealth and happiness in *this* life. The world is continually striving to improve the condition of humanity in this eon and will follow any antichrist who promises them immediate relief from their troubles. They do not believe God or look for bliss in the future, through His Anointed.

THE SEQUEL

Like the malefactor on the cross, we have no promise of present relief. Like the Israelites in the wilderness, we are under trial, as a preparation and a contrast to future bliss, so that we will all the more glorify God for it when it comes. God is faithful, so will not try us above our ability, and, as in the case of the malefactor, we are told the *sequel,* in order to enable us to undergo it (1 Cor.10:11-13). The AV gives us a false hope in this passage, when it translates "a *way of escape,* that ye may be able to bear it." This is self

evident, for, if we had a way of escape, what need is there of ability to bear it? No, indeed! Apart from *His presence in glory,* our place is that which the world gave Him, in crucifixion, like the malefactor who died in faith, and will not be glorified until Christ comes in His kingdom.

BLESSING THROUGH DEATH

To the spiritual student, the Scriptures contain intimations of blessing through death from the first, for only thus can God reveal Himself as the Resurrection and the Life. To Adam and the race He gave the experience of dissolution, or dying. In His great love plan we can look at it only as a preparation for resurrection, in which He may reveal Himself as the Life. Later, in preparation for Israel, He gave some special experiences of life out of death. Abraham was as good as dead before He gave life to the chosen nation. Isaac was also doomed and resurrected in a figure. And last and greatest of all, all our blessings come to us, not through the life, but through the death of Christ, His Son.

A.E.K.

LLOYD A. HIBBERD

Our brother in the Lord and fellow worker in the evangel, Lloyd Hibberd, was put to repose on February 18, 1997, lacking only a few days of completing his 86th year. He had been a farmer and carpenter in the Centerville, Ohio area for much of his life before moving to Baldwin, Michigan in 1974 where he labored as pastor at the Grace and Truth Chapel. He also served as agent for *Grace and Truth* magazine for many years and as overseer for the monthly Fellowship gatherings in the area. Even in the last years of infirmity, he continued his mail ministry which had grown during the years. His appreciation for God as a God of order and purpose became reflected in Brother Hibberd's own concern to make plans and set goals in the heralding of God's Word. Yet he knew and came to realize more and more that "man proposes, but God disposes," and always rejoiced in the truth that God was operating all in accord with the counsel of *His* will. Our sympathy is extended to his wife, Dorothy, and the rest of his family. We will all miss him very much.

D.H.H.

"IN THREE DAYS I WILL RAISE IT UP"

QUESTION: In John 2:19, Jesus declared to the Jews, "Raze this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." How did Jesus "raise it up" (referring to His resurrection) if He was dead? In a letter to a correspondent, a friend of mine asked, Who resurrected Jesus if He was truly dead. The answer he received is that Jesus raised Himself, which seems to agree with John 2:19. Do you have any light to shed on this verse?

ANSWER: We should not assume, a priori, that when Jesus spoke the words recorded here, "I will raise it up" (in reference to His body), that He was referring to an act whereby He would give *life* to His erstwhile dead body, or, alternatively, that He was even hereby specifically referring to His own "resurrection" (i.e., His own return *to life*) itself. He speaks of doing something concerning His body; not Himself. And, He does not say that He will do that of which He speaks three days hence *while He is still dead,* but simply that He will do it three days hence, those three days being understood as a period in which He would be dead.

Our Lord's declaration is not, "Three days after you kill Me, I will do something, while yet dead." Much less does He say that the specific thing that He would then do is give *life* to His formerly dead body. Specifically, He does not say, "I will then return My body *to life.*"

Such an assumption is no part of the text itself, nor is it a corollary thereunto. Such a supposition is simply a proposed interpretation. The question at issue is whether it is also a correct interpretation. To presume that it *is* a cor-

rect interpretation (not to mention to presume that it is the phrase in question's only possible reference), is to assume what is at issue, an elementary error in logic. Indeed, to accept such a supposition is to concede the question. Obviously, if Jesus were "dead," and yet, while dead, was able to do *something*—much less something so astonishing as return His own body to life—then, in "death," He was by no means truly dead.

If we believe that Jesus actually died, then we are aware that, while dead, He could do nothing at all.

Further, the Scripture nowhere speaks of resurrecting dead *bodies,* but of resurrecting dead *persons.* Since man has a body, when a man is "resurrected" from the dead, he "stands up." This simply has reference to the normally upright position of a *living* man, in contradistinction to the normally supine position of a dead man, a corpse, when buried. It is understood, by association, that for one to "stand up," one must first possess life, in order to be able to do so. "Stand up" (i.e., "resurrection"), when used of the return to life of men (from the dead to the living), is not actually a literal expression. It is rather a faded figure, the metonymy of the adjunct, by which that which is associated with the object in view is the actual intended reference (i.e., while the body is the object in view, it is the person himself [whose body it is], which is the actual intended reference).

Unacceptable as it may be to many, if we would be faithful, we must hold fast to the principle that "the dead do not live"; they are not alive, until they are *given* life. It does not follow that since when death occurs, a man's body continues to exist, therefore the man himself continues to exist, whether without any body at all or with a new body. Death does not consist merely in not having a body; much less does it consist in merely no longer possessing a former body while nonetheless possessing a new body

instead. Death, rather, consists of *not* having *life.* "Death" is the antonym of "life." One who is alive is not dead; and, one who is dead is not alive.

Much of the confusion over John 2:19 is over the English word "resurrection," even though neither it, in the Version, nor its Greek equivalent, in the Greek text, is a part of this phrase in question. The Version reads "raise," not "resurrect"; and, the Greek word here is not the one that says "UP-STAND," but the one that says "ROUSE." Hence, the English reader might well suppose that the Greek reads "UP-STAND," when it fact, instead, it reads "ROUSE." Much faulty reasoning is involved as well, in the usual considerations of this verse.

It is to be regretted, too, that the Concordant Version found it necessary (and I know of no better workable solution, either) not to distinguish in translation, here, the word which says "rouse" from that which says "stand up." In the Greek, the word which is often rendered "rise," or "raise" (even though this word, *anistêmi,* does *not* appear in John 2:19), is essentially the same word as that for "resurrection." (The only difference is that the former is a verb, and the latter, *anastasis,* is a noun.) All that the word says is "UP-STAND"; that is, "stand up."

It is wholly beside the point that the noun, by metonymy, is often *used* of the *event* which, in English, we call "the resurrection" (i.e., "the great up-standing"; in the words of the Negro spiritual, "the great gettin' up morning"). Our future resurrection from the dead includes not only our "standing up," but first, our being returned to *life* (indeed to a life of vivification, such as Christ's own). Even so, the Greek word for this does not mean "return to life," and it is not always even so used. In Luke 2:34, it appears in the phrase, "[Christ is lying] for the fall and *rising* of many in Israel"; i.e., through Him, many in Israel, one day, would fall under His judgment, while others would arise (i.e., be

caused to "stand") in blessing and righteousness—regardless of specifically how this were to be achieved.

When used literally, "UP-STAND" refers simply to the change in bodily position from supine to erect. When one who, overnight, has been "reposing" (i.e., LYING [down]), in the morning, no longer continues to do so, he "raises" (or "resurrects") himself from bed (Mark 1:35; see the various other literal and figurative usages of this term; p.250, Keyword Concordance).

Our passage in question, however, concerns not the word whose standard is "UP-STAND," but "ROUSE" (see the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT). The solution is simple: It was *God* Who roused the *Person,* Christ, from among *the dead* (e.g., Acts 4:10; 1 Cor.15:15); it was *Christ Himself* Who—once having been returned to *life* by God—subsequently, under God, roused (i.e., "stirred," or "activated") His own *body* (the "it" of John 2:19), with a view toward its subsequent change of position from supine, in death, to erect or upright, now, in vivification.

Every day, even we ourselves manage to "rouse" our own bodies from a drowsy state in a supine position to an awakened state in an upright position, so as, consequently, to stand up erect. There is nothing inherently remarkable that Christ should do the same, at any time, including "three days" in the future from the day on which He spoke. However, what *is* remarkable—indeed astonishing—is that He should do so even three days after His enemies had killed Him! That surely this One is the *Son* of God—"Whom *God* rouses from among the dead" (Acts 3:15)—was the sane conclusion drawn by those who were witnesses of His resurrection.

There is nothing whatever here, in John 2:19, in favor of the claim that Jesus is the Deity Himself; to introduce such accretions, is to distract from the real import and vitality of our Lord's words. J.R.C.

TRANSFORMATION

WE HAVE BECOME ACCUSTOMED to a gentleness and a grace in Paul's words and deeds. All his actions reflect absolute commitment. His life, from that dramatic arrest on the Damascus road, was a vivid testimony of complete dedication to his Lord. He was changed; indeed he was changed! Throughout the whole of his special commission his zeal and devotion for Christ never faltered for one moment. In every sense of that word, he underwent a definite process of transformation. In a vision to Ananias, our Lord describes Paul as ". . . a choice instrument" (Acts 9:15).

A brief consideration of Paul's former qualities will swiftly establish that the change in him was not a loss of strength of character but a transformation of these qualities by grace and in love. God had carefully prepared Paul, His "*choice instrument*." The name of this young man was Saul. He was a Hebrew of very careful upbringing, intensely zealous in the performance of his religious duties (*cf* Phil.3:4-6), but with a mind broadened by contact with the wider life and speculative thinking of the Graeco-Roman world (*cf* Acts 17:18-34). Born in Tarsus of Cilicia, he was yet reared at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3).

This brief review should make us look a little closer at the apostle's background. Immediately, we will become aware that here is no mere *man of straw!* Although he stressed that he considered that his former achievements in flesh were but refuse in comparison with gaining Christ, they must not be discounted if we are to gain some estimation of his very impressive character. Towering above all his contemporaries in intellect, and possessing an intensely

logical and ordered mind, we perceive that in his personality there is tempered steel of the finest quality! Tough, resourceful, and very determined!

His strength of character and his firm belief in the divine commission should not be lightly passed over. Shortly following the confrontation with his Lord outside Damascus, and embarking on his assignment, Paul passed through the island of Cyprus to Paphos. Being withstood by a Jew, Bar-Jesus, named Elymus the "Magician," who sought to pervert the proconsul, Sergius Paul from the faith, Paul demonstrated just a little of the authority of his supreme office (*cf* Acts 13:9-12).

"Sergius Paul was the first individual among the nations who heard the evangel, without first becoming a proselyte of Judaism. Hence his case is typical. Bar-Jesus stands for the Jewish dispersion, who always resisted every attempt to proclaim the evangel to the nations. Seldom, indeed, do we find Paul performing any judgment miracle, but here he blinds the sorcerer for a season. This is the judgment which has befallen Israel during the present administration of God's grace. Israel, in part, has become calloused until the full complement of the nations may be entering (Rom.11:25). Throughout Paul's missionary journeys, when he turned from the unbelieving Jews to the nations, the Jews became jealous and sought to turn the Gentiles against him. They became blind spiritually, as Bar-Jesus became physically."[1]

"THE POWER OF GOD"

Forced by the imprudence of those to whom he ministered in Corinth, Paul catalogued some of the infirmities, outrages, necessities, persecutions and distresses which he gladly endured for Christ's sake. As we read of these in

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.198.

that eleventh chapter of his recorded second letter to the ecclesia of that city, we shake our heads in wonder! But surely his threat of *a rod* in the preceding letter (1 Cor. 4:21), was simply that. May any be so unloving as to imagine Paul literally administering such discipline? However, his closing words of the second letter should make us catch our breath in awe: "I have declared before, and am predicting as when being present the second time and now, being absent, to those having sinned before and to all the rest, that if I should be coming again, *I shall not spare*, since you are seeking a test of Christ speaking in me, Who is not weak for you, but powerful among you. For even if He was crucified out of weakness, nevertheless He is living by the power of God. For we also are weak together with Him, but we shall be living together with Him by the power of God for you" (2 Cor.13:2-4).

"HEAD OVER ALL"

In the great entreaty of Ephesians 6:10-17 we are greeted with the bold salutation, ". . . brethren mine." How encouraging to stand by the unflinching apostle, heed his sound advice, and take up all the accoutrements of our defensive armor in the conflict with our present celestial opponents. Reviewing the impressive forces opposed to us is a daunting task. The apostle openly declares that our evangel, which is covered, is, purely and simply, the heralding of the glory of Christ Jesus, our Lord. He further acknowledges that ". . . we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the transcendence of the power may be of God and not of us" (2 Cor.4:7).

It is this reassurance which enables us, in our puny helplessness, to rise above our fear. Imagine, Sovereignties! Authorities! Powers and Lordships! As we gaze aloft at the vast canopy of stars in such profusion as to be quite beyond human computation, then small wonder if we sur-

render to an overwhelming sense of insignificance. But wait! We are not left thus exposed and vulnerable. Having *received* our helmet of salvation, now let us firmly grasp the sword of the spirit which is a declaration of God.

In the apostle's letters there is a repeated pattern. Prior to setting any task or requesting response, he is careful to present the motivating power. So we first discern his rich presentation of our glorious identity and the very special love gifts which have been lavished. May we review these again, *and again, and again!*

"Therefore, I also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him, the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for you to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength, which is operative in the Christ, rousing Him from among the dead and seating Him at His right hand among the celestials, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending: and subjects all under His feet, and gives Him, as Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all" (Eph.1:15-23).

"THE PRIZE OF GOD'S CALLING ABOVE"

With becoming modesty, we may *roll up our sleeves* and look once more at the conflict which our dear brother, Paul, has advised. Let us identify those who are in opposition. They are not *all messengers,* and since the stars and their respective planetary bodies are so numerous, then what may we surmise concerning the numbers of the celestials? *But not all are opposed to the transcendent glory of our privileged appointment!* At Bethlehem there were many who sang for joy at the birth of God's Son. Also, they must have witnessed the bewildering crucifixion and glorious exaltation. Could all of these have remained indifferent?

The disabled reasoning of humanity might suggest that it is absurd, even arrogant, for us to even suggest that we are accorded the privilege of bringing these celestials into subjection to Christ, but as Paul declared, "Brethren, not as yet am I reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one thing—forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus" (Phil.3:13,14). In like manner, each one of the ecclesia, while eagerly anticipating presentation at the dais of Christ, must also regard even this wonderful time, not so much a climax in God's calling, but rather a glorious commencement of service among the celestials. Until the consummation, we, *and all of God's creatures* are, inevitably, in a loving process of transformation. Those messengers (or angels) who exhibited so close a scrutiny of Paul (1 Cor.4:9), brought him no divine communication, but we may be sure that they relayed vital information concerning him, his experience, and the outcome of his commission. What astonishment for the celestials to learn of our tremendous blessings in the exalted Christ!

TO-SUBJECTORS

God has chosen an ecclesia from humanity which, led by His beloved Son, is to bring all His creatures from the turmoil which prevails across the length and breadth of the universe, into loving submission. "Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is

above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2: 9-11). Already, through the strength of our weakness, all are learning of the multifarious wisdom and gracious love of God! It is patently evident that all positions of *rule* must necessarily imply a condition of *misrule.* Despite the present superiority of the celestials, they also suffer, like humanity, through their present insubjection, or misrule. What joy when in fully transformed glory, into the same image, and then endowed with powers beyond feeble imagination, we, as To-subjectors, will be able to resolve, in Christ, in love, all their distrust and resentment!

God's precious Word teaches that Christ Jesus alone has immortality (1 Tim.6:16). Exposure to the mighty power of celestials would be more than we, in our present corruptible, frail human flesh might endure, but even the greatest among these, Michael or Gabriel, the chief messengers, and even Satan have not that unique immortality which will be granted to those of the ecclesia when they are summoned and snatched away (1 Cor.15:53).

"The highest dignitaries in the universe will gladly bow before the members of Christ's body, which will have the place supreme, not only in rule, but in the dispensation of God's favor and in the reconciliation of the celestial hosts to Him. We who were last have become first. Such is the potency of grace."[2]

Surely through these, all must learn, not of man, but the love of God. But, conversely, what may the ideals and standards of celestials possibly mean to the ones who have been *earthbound,* whose corruptible lives, by comparison, have been, as it were, but a passing thought? In

2. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.60, p.206.

transformed, exalted glory, shall there be empathy, comprehension? What must life from among disabled, dying humanity have meant for our Lord, prior to the commencement of His ministry? The stench of putrefaction is more than we can bear, but what must the charnel house of this earth have been like for Him? What deep sadness for Him to observe the maimed and the blind, or to witness the intense grief and the sad helplessness? Did He soothe them in their restless sleep? How troubled He was to learn of the death of John the baptist. How disturbed in spirit He was to witness the grief of those sisters, Mary and Martha. As He was dying at Golgotha, He grieved for the comfort of His mother.

THE EVANGEL OF LOVE

Knowing His Father's purpose, our Lord faithfully fulfilled every single aspect, even to the prompting of His executioners to comply with the psalmist's words, "*They gave Me poison in My repast, and for My thirst they cause Me to drink vinegar*" (Psa.69:21) He exercised patience, and profound wisdom, but above all, through His great love, He changed the whole course of the history of mankind. It is presumptuous to compare our mission to His, but there is one vital similarity. We also are entrusted with a precious evangel. The evangel of love!

As the apostle Paul lay, unconscious, outside the city of Lystra, he was granted a vision into the future, even as the apostle John was enabled to view the future terrestrial kingdom. But it is to Paul that we must turn if we are to perceive the full glories of God's consummation. From this great apostle, who completes the Word of God (Col. 1:25), we learn not only the reason for transformation, but the full, glorious conclusion of this same transformation. *All achieved, in love, that God will be All in all!*

Donald Fielding

THAT I MIGHT FIND HIM

JOB'S WORLD has become a chaos. It is dark and confused and empty like the world of Genesis 1:2 before God speaks and light appears.

What Job's associates have to say only confirms the chaos because they refuse to relate God to the evil before them except as judgment upon Job for secret sins. That is the source of all despair, the idea that there is no divine origin of, and control over, and positive purpose for, the pain and losses of our lives. In effect, Eliphaz and his companions try to put God out of the picture except for the narrow compass of reward and retribution.

Beginning this third cycle of speeches, Eliphaz asks, "Is it to El that a master is profitable?" (22:2). He tells Job that God has no need of us, but we can profit ourselves by gaining intelligence, by "wising up" as modern Eliphazes put it. God's profit arises in spite of humanity, not because of it. "Is it delight to Him Who-Suffices that you should be righteous? And should it be His gain that your ways become flawless?" (v.3).

Eliphaz wants to put Job in his place and show him that God will go on quite well without him. God's profit, delight and gain do not depend on him. Job may speak all he wants about his history of fearing Eloah, but that will not make any difference to the divine Judge Who has brought this evil on Job because of Job's wickedness and irreverence, and for no other reason. "Is it because of your devout fear that He is correcting you, that He is entering into judgment with you?" Eliphaz asks sarcastically (v.4). Any possi-

JOB 22-24

22 [+]**Then Eliphaz the Temanite** [l]**answered,** [+] [l]**saying:**

2 Is it **to El** that a **master is** [l]**profitable?**
[t]**Rather** the **intelligent**[l] one **is** [l]**profitable** [on]**to him**self.

3 Is it **delight to** Him **Who-Suffices**
that you should be righteous?
And should it be His **gain**
that your ways become [l]**flawless?**

4 Is it [f]**because** of **your** devout **fear**
that **He is correcting you,**
That **He is entering in**to **judgment with you?**

5 Is it **not** because **your evil** is [mn]**great,**
And there **is no end to your depravities?**

6 **For you** have exacted [l]**pledge**
of **your brothers gratuitously,**
And you have [l]**stripped** off the **garments of** the **naked.**

7 **No**[t] **water** have **you** [c]**given** the **faint** to [l]**drink,**
And from the **hungry** have **you** [l]**withheld bread.**

8 [+] The **man of** the **arm** of power**, he** [>]**has the land,**
And he of **repute**[l] **is dwelling in it.**

9 **Widows you have sent** away **empty,**
And the **arms of orphans** [7]**you** have [l]**crushed**~[c]**.**

10 **Therefore, snares** are **round about you,**
And sudden alarm [m]**fills you** with [l]**panic;**

11 [7]**Light has be**come~ **darkness** so **you** can**not** [l]**see,**
And a **concourse of water is covering you.**

22:9 *7-~c* **you** have [l]**crushed:** Hb **it is** [l]**crushed.**
22:11 *7-~* **Light has be**come: Hb **Or.**

ble record of fearing God in Job's life is irrelevant in view of that depravity which he refuses to admit, whatever it may be. "Is it not because your evil is great and there is no end of your depravities?" (v.5).

Eliphaz is so convinced of his conclusion that he makes definite charges against Job without witnesses or evidence of any kind: Job has cheated and stolen from his brothers (v.6); he has withheld water and food from the poor (v.7); he has used his power to take land from others (much as Ahab was later to do in taking possession of Naboth's vineyard, 1 Kings 21), and has crushed the widow and orphan (22:8,9). These are all crimes that God expressly forbids in the law of Moses, as most serious and requiring of condemnation.

"Therefore," Eliphaz explains, snares and alarms and darkness have come upon Job (22:10,11).

The trend of Eliphaz's message is obvious. It is a classic lecture of a type still being heard. God's concern for His creation is overlooked and His anger against the sinner is underlined. The sinner is charged with specific wicked acts, and repentance is called for so that the sinner can get back on the right track before God.

In 22:12 Eliphaz points to the loftiness of Eloah, no doubt trusting Job will be properly abashed for his audacity toward the Deity. This leads to the further charge that because of God's loftiness and murkiness and thick clouds in between, Job assumes El cannot see what he is doing (22:13,14).

Eliphaz then likens Job to the lawless people of Noah's day (22:15-18) and in Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis chapters 19 and 20). From these threats of flood and fire he concludes his masterful sermon by stressing Job's responsibilities in behavior (v.21) and heart (v.22), the need to submit to Him Who-Suffices (v.23) and to put aside worldly wealth (v.24). For "Then He Who-Suffices will become

12 Is **not Eloah loftier** than the **heavens?**
+ **See** the **top**most **stars,** *t*__**how high they are.**__
13 +__**Yet you say, What** does **El know?**__
Can **He** |__**judge through murkiness?**__
14 **Thick** cloud**s** are a **concealment for Him,**
so +__**that He** can__**not** |__**see,**__
And He |__**walks** about the **circle of** the **heavens.**__
15 **Are you keeping** the **path of** the **eon** of old
*w*__**That** the *ad*__**men of lawlessness trod,**__
16 **Who were arrested** +__**when not** yet their **time,**__
When a **river was** |__**poured** over **their foundation,**__
17 ·Who were **saying to El, Withdraw from us,**
And, What can He **Who-Suffices** |__**effect for** *7*__**us**__~*c*__**?**__
18 +__**Yet He Him**self **had filled their houses** with **good;**__
(+__**Still** the **counsel of** the **wicked is far from me.**__)
19 The **righteous** |__**see** it **and** |__**rejoice,**__
And the **innocent** one |__**derides** ›__ **them,** saying**:**
20 **Assuredly** whoever **rose** against **us is suppressed,**
And fire has devoured their surplus.
21 **Be careful,** I **pray,** *wi*__**toward Him, and fare well;**__
*i*__**By these** means **good shall come** to **you.**__
22 **Take** hold, I **pray,** to the **law from His mouth,**
And place His sayings in your heart.
23 **If you** |__**return unto** Him **Who-Suffices**__
*7*__**and you** |__**submit**__~__**,**__
If **you** *c*__**put iniquity** |__**far from your tent**__
24 **And set**¯ aside your **gold ore** up**on** the **soil,**
And wealth of **Ophir** *i*__**among** the **rock**s **of** the **wadis,**__
25 +__**Then** He **Who-Suffices will become your gold ore**__
And rich **pinnacles of silver for you.**
26 **For then you shall find pleasure** for your**self**
*on*__**in** Him **Who-Suffices,**__
And you shall lift up **your face to Eloah.**

22:17 *7*-~*c* **us:** Hb **them.**
22:23 *7*-~ **and you** |**submit:** Hb **you shall be** re**built.**

your gold ore and rich pinnacles of silver for you," (v.25) and you will find your pleasure in Him (v.26). Finally, with stirring words, Job is called to prayers of entreaty and the paying of vows (22:27,28), and is promised power and light and salvation and escape from all his woes (22:28-30).

But we know, as Eliphaz does not, that Job's sufferings are not judgments for hidden sins, but rather they come immediately from the hand of Satan who questioned the enduring strength of Job's *flawlessness*, and behind that lies the responsibility of God Himself. What Eliphaz says so eloquently is irrelevant, and thus both unintelligent and cruel.

JOB'S CONCERN

Job hardly seems to feel the hurt in the words of Eliphaz. His concern is the hand of God which is so heavy on his sighing (23:2). "O that I knew where I might find Him!" (v.3). Rather than Job thinking the thick clouds conceal his own sins from God (as Eliphaz charged in 22:13,14), he feels that God is concealing Himself from him. "I cannot detect Him . . . . I do not perceive Him . . . . I do not see Him" (23:8,9).

Job wants to arrange his plea before God (v.4) in order to hear "the declarations with which He shall answer" (v.5). Job knows that he is not guilty of secret sins that require such affliction and loss as he is enduring, and His confidence in God is that He will not place such false charges against him (v.6). There is no question in Job's mind that the Judge will judge his case rightly and so grant deliverance (v.7) from all the darkness and chaos of the present. In fact, this is what will occur as described in Job 42:7, and it will occur in light, with power and be made evident and clear to all.

In the meantime Job cannot perceive his Judge. But God does know the way that has come upon Job, and Job will "go forth like gold" (v.10).

27 **You shall entreat › Him, and He shall hear you,**
And you shall pay your vows.
28 **+When you |prescribe** a *sa*__matter,__
+ it shall be confirmed to you,
And light will brighten *on* **your ways.**
29 *t*__When they abase,__ **+then you may** *sa*__claim pride,__
+For He shall save the **downcast of eyes.**
30 **He shall** give **escape** to the **innocent ~man~,**
And *7*__you shall escape~__ *i*__by the purity of your palms.__
23 **+So Job |answered, + |saying:**
2 **Today** *mn*__as well, my concern__ will seem **rebellious;**
*7*__His~__*c* **hand is heavy on my sighing.**
3 *a*__O__ |*g*__that I knew__ **+where I might find Him,**
That **I might come unto His establishment!**
4 **I** would |**arrange** a **plea before Him**
And |fill my mouth with **pleadings.**
5 **I** would |**know** the **declarations**
with which **He shall answer,**
And I would |**understand what He shall say to me.**
6 **Shall He contend** *wi*__against me__
*i*__with__ an *mn*__abundance of vigor?__
*y*__Surely He Him__self **shall not place** charges *i*__against me!__
7 **There** an **upright** man could **plead| with Him;**
And I would **be |delivered › permanently**
from my Judge|.
8 **Behold, I |go** to the **east, and He is no**t there,
And *af* **back** again**, and I** can**not |detect › Him.**
9 *i*__When He__ is *d*__working__~ to the **left,**
+ I do **not |perceive** Him;
He |goes back to the **right, +yet I** do **not |see** Him.
10 *t*__But He knows__ the **way with me;**
When **He tests me, + I shall** go **forth like gold.**

22:30 *~~* **man:** Hb **where;** *7~~* **you shall escape:** Hb **he shall be** given **escape.**
23:2 *7~~c* **His:** Hb **My.**

While Eliphaz's speech was a lecture appealing to the sinner to change his ways, Job's speech is a plea directed to God in the midst of crushing pain. Yet Job continues to focus on God's movement and way (23:11). He does not remove himself from "the instruction of His lips" and secludes in his bosom "the sayings of His mouth" (v.12). What an amazing store of endurance has come to Job from this association with God's ways and words! No wonder Job longs for a word from Eloah concerning evil that is unrelated to judgment on sin.

Another great burst of confidence and praise in Job's speeches is set before us in 23:13,14, such as in 16:19-21 and 19:25-27, resounding with hopeful implications: "He is One, and who can turn Him back? What His soul has yearned for He shall do. For He shall accomplish what is marked out for me." With humanity there are as many opinions and aims as there are people. But God is One, and He carries out His plans. What His soul yearns for is not expressed by the present distress of Job's experiences, but it will be expressed in the *accomplishment* of the entire operation marked out in the divine blueprint.

Eliphaz has spoken in health and strength, but Job is flustered because "El Himself has made my heart timorous" (v.16). But he is not effaced, not "perishing" (*cf* 2 Cor.4:9) because of the darkness and gloom that has disrupted his life (v.17). What is marked out for Job is full of chaos at present, but this cannot be the end.

FOR WHAT REASON?

After struggling to a lofty height of assurance Job is pulled down by consideration of the inequalities and unfairness easily perceived in the world. In asking why times for dealing with these wrongs have not yet been provided and why we have not perceived these days when He Who-Suffices will set things right (24:1), Job is not doubting they

11 **My feet have held** closely [t]**to His movement;**
I have kept to **His way and** have **not** [l]**turned aside.**
12 From the **instruction of His lips**
[+] **I** do **not** [l]**remove** myself**;**
I have secluded [7]**in~ my bosom**
the **sayings of His mouth.**
13 [+]**Yet He** is [i] **One, and** [a]**who** can [l]**turn Him back?**
[+] What **His soul has yearned** for [+] **He shall do.**
14 **For He shall accomplish** what is **marked out** for **me,**
And many other plans are **with Him like these.**
15 **Therefore, I am** [l]**flustered** [f]**at His presence;**
When **I** [l]**consider** [+] **I am** [l]**afraid** [f]**of Him.**
16 [+] **El Him**self **has** [c]**made my heart timorous,**
And He **Who-Suffices has flustered me.**
17 [t]**But I am not effaced** [f] **because of darkness**
And [f] **because gloom has covered my face.**
24 For **what reason have times** for judgment
not been set aside [f] **by** Him **Who-Suffices,**
And why do those **knowing Him not perceive His days?**
2 [7]The **wicked**[0] [l]**move away boundary** markers**;**
They pillage the **drove and** openly [l]**graze** them**.**
3 The **orphans' donkey they** [l]**lead** away**;**
They take the **widow's bull** as a [l]**pledge.**
4 **They** [l]**turn aside** the **needy from** the **way;**
The **humbled of** the **earth** must **hide together.**
5 **Behold,** like **onagers in** the **wilderness**
They go **forth early**[l] **for prey,**
In their contriving ~until the **evening;**
Yet **no**[t]**~ nourishment for** their **youths!**
6 **They** [l]**reap in** the **field ~**[i]**at night~,**
And they [l]**scavenge** in the **vineyard of** the **wicked.**
7 **Naked, they** [l]**lodge** at night [f] **without clothing,**
And they [is]**have no covering** [i]**for** the **cold.**

23:12 7-~ **in:** Hb **from.**
24:5 ~~~ **until** the **evening;** Yet **no**[t]**:** Hb **steppe, for it.**
24:6 ~~~ [i]**at night:** Hb **his fodder.**

will come. But the flustered fear and gloom of 23:15-17 has grown into impatience which is only increased as Job turns his attention away from God to human wickedness in the world.

Job denies the charges of depravity hurled against him by Eliphaz, but he readily admits there are such wicked people in the world who cheat and steal and humble the needy (24:2-4). And Job fully agrees that God will deal with these wrongs. But Job's sufferings are not an example of this sort of retribution, and the question remains, Why do these wicked people seem to get away with their evil acts, and prosper?

The sufferings of their victims, children, the poor and the oppressed are recounted in 24:5-12. "Yet Eloah, He does not place charges of impropriety." The association of the wicked with darkness is described in verses 13-17, yet they remain uncondemned, valuing "the decadent things of the blackest shadow."

FLEET OVER THE SURFACE OF THE WATERS

Job 24:18a is one of several lines in this chapter that seem obscure and difficult to fit in the context. Some modern translations drastically emend the Hebrew wording in order to bring out some semblance of sense. Hence the New English Bible has: "Such men are scum on the surface of the water;" and the Jerusalem Bible, which transfers the line to follow 27:23 says: "Headlong he flees from daylight." The King James Version is more literal: "He is as swift as the waters," but the second "as" would better have been rendered "upon" as in Genesis 1:2, or "over" as in the Concordant Version.

This association with the last clause of Genesis 1:2 may offer a clue to the meaning of this line. Eliphaz identified darkness as Job's lot in 22:11, and in 22:13,14, he referred

8 **They are ˡdoused** *f* **by** the **mountain storm,**
And *f* **without** a **refuge they hug to** a **rock.**
9 Yet others ˡ**snatch** the **orphan from** the **breast,**
And they take as a ˡ**pledge** ~the **infant of**~ the **humble.**
10 **Naked they go** about **without clothing,**
And hungry they carry the **sheaf.**
11 **~Without their songs~ they** ˡ**clarify** oil;
They tread the **winevats** ⁺**yet are** ˡ**thirsty.**
12 *f* **In** the **city** ~the **dying~** ˡ**moan,**
And the **soul of** the **wounded** ˡ**implores** for help;
⁺**Yet Eloah, He** does **not** ˡ**place** charges of **impropriety.**
13 **They´** *b***are** *i***among** those **revolting** against the **light;**
They neither recognize its ways
Nor dwell in its tracks.
14 ›**When** the **light** is gone the **murderer**ˡ ˡ**arises;**
He ˡ**despatches** the **humbled and needy** one;
And in the **night he** ˡ*b***continues as** a **thief.**
15 ⁺ The **eye of** the **adulterer**ˡ **keeps** watch
for the **gloaming,**
› **Saying⁻, No***t* **eye** can ˡ**regard me;**
And he ˡ**places** a **concealment** over his **face;**
16 **In** the **darkness he burrows** into **houses.**
By day they seal › **them**selves up;
They do **not know** the **light.**
17 **For altogether morning** is **blackest shadow to them,**
For each one ˡ**values** the **decadent** things
of the **blackest shadow.**
18 **He** is **fleet over** the sur**face of** the **waters.**
May their portion be dishonored *i***on** the **land;**
May he not face the **way** of the **vineyards.**
19 **May aridity** *mr***and warmth siphon** away
the **snow waters,**
And the **unseen** those who **have sinned.**

24:9 ~~~ the **infant of:** MT **and on.**
24:11 ~~~ **Without their songs:** Hb **Between their barricades.**
24:12 ~~~ the **dying:** MT *ad***men.**

to murkiness and thick cloud. Job's great complaint has been that he cannot detect God, though he is not completely effaced because of the darkness and gloom that engulfs him. In addition Job has just been speaking of the darkness as the realm of the wicked, and his continuing longings for God to establish order and deal out judgment would naturally suggest a parallel with God's operations in dealing with the chaos and darkness that engulfed the earth in Genesis 1:2a. The remedy for chaos and darkness in Genesis 1 began with the spirit of Elohim *vibrating* over the surface of the waters, and it continued with the voice of Elohim calling for light.

In Hebrew the word "fleet" is in the same family as the word "sound" and "voice." All of this may suggest that it is Elohim, operating with the invisible power of spirit associated with the sound of His voice, speedily bringing light where there is darkness, and order where there is chaos, Who is in view here in Job 24:18a. Both the darkness of Job's afflictions and the concealment of the wicked one's acts must eventually be brought into the light, and it is God Who will do so. For that is the opening revelation of Scripture concerning Who He is and what He is like.

HIS EYES ARE ON THEIR WAYS

The remainder of chapter 24 consists of Job's maledictions on the wicked. He agrees with his associates that God will bring them to their deserts. But this is not a perceptible operation of God in the present. What is seen is chaos where iniquity and evil prosper "and none can put reliance in their lives" (v.22).

God gives serenity to the wicked person now, but His eyes are on their ways (v.23). The wicked "are exalted a little while, but each will be [exalted] no more; they will be reduced" and shut off (v.24).

20 **May** the ~city **square~** ˡ**forget him,**
The **maggot** find **him** ¯**sweet;**
May he not be remembered any *fr***more,**
So ⁺**that, like** a **tree, iniquity shall be broken** down**.**
21 ⁷**He has** ᶜ**done evil~** to the **barren** one who ˡ**bears not,**
And he has **not** ᶜ**done** ˡ**good** for the **widow.**
22 ⁺ **He draws** forth the **sturdy** one**s** ᶠ**by his vigor;**
He ˡ**arises, and non**e can ᶜ**put** ˡ**reliance in** their **lives.**
23 **He**◊ ˡ**gives** › **serenity to him, and he** ˡ**leans** back**,**
⁺**Yet His eyes** are **on their ways.**
24 **They are exalted** a **little** while**,**
⁺**but** each **will be no** more**;**
⁺ **They will be reduced;**
Like all others **they shall be shut** off**,**
And like the **head of** a **grainstalk**
they shall be snipped off.
25 ⁺**But if not** so**, indeed** ᵃ**who** can ᶜ**prove me** a ˡ**liar**
⁺**Or** ˡᵖˡ**establish my declaration as nothing?**

24:20 ~~~ city **square:** Hb **womb.**
24:21 7-~ **He has** ᶜ**done evil:** Hb **grazing.**
24:23 He: i.e., Eloah.

❋

Even in the consideration of the wicked acts of sinners, Job is not utterly cast down. This is because even here His attention is drawn toward God Who will eventually settle all these inequalities which last only "a little while." The prosperity of the wicked is not permanent; so also the misery of Job is not marked out by God as a permanent condition.

If this "is not so, indeed who can prove" Job a liar (v.25)? If it is so, then also the voice of Him Who is fleet will bring light where darkness reigns and still the chaotic waters without and within Job. D.H.H.

1 SAMUEL 1, 2

1 +**There** [lb]**was** a **certain man from** ˙**Ramathaim** of the **Zuphites, from** the **hill** country **of Ephraim;** + **his name** was **Elkanah son of Jeroham son of Elihu son of Tohu son of Zuph,** an **Ephraimite.** 2 + **He** ›**had two wives;** the **name of** [7]**the**[s] **one** was **Hannah, and** the **name of the second** was **Peninnah. And** › **Peninnah came** to [lb]**have children;** +**but Hannah** ›**had no children.** 3 + **From days** to[d] **days**◊ ˙**this** ˙**man** went **up from his city to worship and to sacrifice to Yahweh of hosts** [i]**at Shiloh.** + **There** [7]**Eli and**[0] the **two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas,** were **priests for Yahweh.**

4 +**When the day** [lb]**came** +**that Elkanah** [l]**sacrificed,** +**then he would give to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and her daughters** their **assigned** shares**.** 5 +**But to Hannah he** would [l]**give one double-sized assigned** share**, for** it was `**Hannah** that **he loved;** +**yet Yahweh had closed her womb.** 6 + **Moreover her rival would vex her** to **vexation in order** to **dishearten**– **her** [t]**since Yahweh had tightly closed** up **her womb.**

7 + [so]**This** [ld]**happened year** [i]**by year. As often as she** went **up**– [i]**to** the **House of Yahweh,** the other would [l]**vex her** in [so]**this** way, so +**that she** [l]**lamented and** would **not** `**eat.** 8 + **Her husband Elkanah** [l]**said to her, Hannah, why are you lamenting?** + **Why are you not eating? And why** does **your heart** feel [l]**bad?** Am **not I better for you** [f]**than ten sons?**

9 **After** [7]**they~** had **eaten**– **and** [af] **drunk**– [i]**at Shiloh,** +

1:3 From days to[d] **days:** i.e., From year to year.
1:9 7-~ **they:** Hb **she.**

Hannah [l]**arose** [7]**and stood before Yahweh**[0] +**while Eli the priest** was **sitting on the covered** seat [on]**by** the door-**jamb of** the **temple of Yahweh.** 10 + **She** was in **bitterness of soul** +**when she** [l]**prayed** [7]**to~**[s] **Yahweh and** [l]**lamented,** yea **lamented**–**.** 11 + **She** [l]**vowed** a **vow,** + [l]**saying,** O **Yahweh of hosts, if You** will [lsee]**look,** yea [see]**look**– [i]**upon** the **humiliation of Your maidservant and will remember me and not** [l]**forget** `**Your maidservant, and** if **You will** [g]**grant** › **Your maidservant** a [mt]**male** [seed]**descendant,** +**then I will** [g]**dedicate him to Yahweh** for **all** the **days of his life;** [7]**he shall not drink wine or intoxicant**Q**, and no**[t] **razor-blade shall** come **upon his head.**

12 + **It came** to **be** [t]**as she multiplied** › her **prayers**– **before Yahweh,** +**that Eli** was **observing** `**her mouth.** 13 +**As** for **Hannah, she** was **speaking** [on]**in her heart;** [but]**only her lips** were **moving,** +**yet her voice** could **not be** [l]**heard.** +**So Eli** [l]**reckoned her to** be **drunk.** 14 + **Eli** [l]**said to her, How** [fr]**long** will **you** behave [l]**drunk? Put away** `**your wine from** [on] **you,** [7]**and go from** the **presence of Yahweh**[0]**.** 15 + **Hannah** [l]**answered,** + [l]**saying, Not** so**, my lord! I** am a **woman** who is **hard** pressed in **spirit;** + **I have drunk no**[t] **wine** +**or intoxicant.** +**Yet I** have **been pouring out** `**my soul before Yahweh.** 16 **You must not** [lg]**take** `**your maidservant** [bf]**for** a **daughter of worthlessness,** [t]**since I have spoken** [bd]**hitherto** [f]**out** of the **magnitude of my concern and my vexation.** 17 +**So Eli** [l]**answered,** + [l]**saying, Go** ›**in peace!** + **May** the **Elohim of Israel** [g]**grant** `**your request** [w]**that you have asked** [f]**of** [wi] **Him.** 18 + **She** [lsa]**replied, May your** hand**maid find favor in your eyes!** +**Then the woman** [l]**went** › **her way** [7]**and** [l]**came to her booth**[0] +**where she** [l]**ate** [7]**and** [l]**drank with her husband**[0]**; and her face** [b]**was no**[t] [fr]**longer** sad **for her**self.

19 + **They** [c]**rose** [l]**early in** the **morning and** [l]**worshiped before Yahweh.** +**Then they** [l]**returned and** [l]**came to their**

1:10 7-~s **to:** Hb **on.**

house at[d] ˙**Ramah.** [+] **Elkanah** [l]**knew** `**his wife Hannah; and Yahweh** [l]**remembered her.**

20 [+]**So it came** to [l]**be** ›**at** the **revolution of the days** [+]**that Hannah** had **been** [l]**pregnant and** had [l]**borne** a **son.** [+] **She** had [l]**called** `**his name Samuel** [7]**and** had [l]**said**[0]**, For** it was [f]**of Yahweh** [7]**Elohim of hosts**[0] that **I have asked** for **him.**
21 [+]**When the man Elkanah and all his house**hold **were** go**ing up to sacrifice to Yahweh** [7i]**at Shiloh**[0] `the annual **sacrifice of the days, and** to pay `**his vow** [7]**and all the tithes of his field**[0]**,** 22 [+]**then Hannah** did **not** go **up** [7]**with him**[0]**, for she said to her husband,** [fr]**When the lad is** [l]**weaned,** [+] **I will bring him;** [+]**for he** must **appear** `before the **face of Yahweh and** [sit]**abide there** [fr]**for** the **eon.** 23 [+] **Her husband Elkanah** [lsa]**replied to her, Do** ˙what seems **good in your eyes.** [sit]**Stay** here **until you** have **weaned**– `**him.** [y]**Only may Yahweh confirm** [7]˙what was com**ing forth from your mouth**~Q**.**

[+]**So the woman** [lsit]**stayed** there **and** [l]**nursed** `**her son until she weaned**– `**him.** 24 [+]**Then she** [c]**took him** [l]**up with her** [7]**to Shiloh**Q**, as** [w]**soon** as **she had weaned him,** [i]**with** [7]a **three**[l] year old bull of the **herd and bread**~Q**,** [+] **one ephah of meal** flour **and** a **waterskin of wine. And** though **the lad** was in his early **youth,** [+] **she** [l]**brought him** to the **house of Yahweh** at **Shiloh.** 25 [+]**Then they** [l]**slew** `**the** young **bull, and they** [l]**brought** `**the lad to Eli.** 26 [+] **She** [l]**said, O! My lord!** As **your soul** is **alive, my lord, I** am **the woman** ˙who was **standing up** [wi]**beside you in this** place ›**and praying**– **to Yahweh.** 27 **For** ˙**this** ˙**lad I had prayed, and Yahweh** has [lg]**granted to me** `**my request** [w]**that I had asked** [f]**of** [wi] **him.**
28 [+] [mr]**Therefore I´ have** [c]**given him** as a **loan to Yahweh. All the days** [w]**that he** [7]**lives**~**, he** is one **requested**[l] **for Yahweh. And he** [l]**bowed down there** ›**before Yahweh.**

1:23 *7-~Q* ˙what was com**ing forth from your mouth:** Hb ˙**His word.**
1:24 *7-~Q* a **three**[l] year old bull of the **herd and bread:** Hb **three** young **bulls.**
1:28 *7-~* **lives:** Hb **becomes.**

2 [+]**Then Hannah** [l]**prayed,** [+] [l]**saying:**

Glad is my heart in Yahweh!
High is my horn in [7]**my Elohim**[cs]**!**
Wide is my mouth over my enemies[l]**,**
For I rejoice in Your salvation.
2 **No** one **is holy like Yahweh;**
[t]**Yea, no** one **is** [7]**holy**[0] **barring You,**
And no one **is** [7]**righteous**~ **like our Elohim.**
3 **Do not** [l]**speak** with **lofty superiority** so [l]**much;**
May no **impertinence** come **forth from your mouth!**
For an **El of knowledge** is **Yahweh;**
And actions are regulated ›**by Him.**
4 The **bows of** the **masters** are **cracked,**
[+]**Yet** those who **stumble**[l] **are belted** with **valor.**
5 The **surfeited have hired** themselves out [i]**for bread;**
[+]**Yet** the **famishing leave** hunger **behind.**
[fr]**While** the **barren** one **has borne seven,**
[+] **She** who was [mn]**abundant** in **sons has wasted away.**
6 **Yahweh** is [c]**putting** to **death and** is [m]**keeping alive;**
He is [c]**bringing down** to the **unseen, and He** [c]**brings** [l]**up.**
7 **Yahweh** is [c]**making destitute and** is **enriching;**
He is [c]**laying low** and is **exalting too.**
8 He is **raising** the **poor from** the **soil** dust
[7]**And**[cs] [l]**exalts** the **needy from** the **ash heaps,**
› **Seating**– them **with patrons** [7]**of peoples**[0]**,**
[+] [l]**Allotting them** a **throne of glory.**
For Yahweh's are the **stanchions of** the **earth;**
[+] **He** has [l]**set** the **habitance** up**on them.**
9 **He is guarding** the **feet of His benign** one**s;**
[+]**Yet** the **wicked shall be silenced in darkness,**
For not [i]**by vigor** has **man** [l]**mastery.**

2:1 *7-cs* **my Elohim:** Hb **Yahweh.**
2:2 *7-~* **righteous:** Hb **rock.**

10 As for **Yahweh,** those **contending** with **Him**
shall be undone;
*on*Against *Sy*them~*c* **shall He thunder in** the **heavens.**
Yahweh´ shall adjudicate the **limits of** the **earth.**
+ **He shall give strength to His king;**
+ **He shall exalt** the **horn of His anointed** one.

11 +**Then** *7*they |left him there before Yahweh and |went~ to*d* `Ramah, *M*to~*s* **his house;** +**as** for **the lad, he** *b*remained in the **ministry**| `to **Yahweh** `in the **presence of Eli the priest.**
12 +**Now** the **sons of Eli** were **sons of worthlessness,** who did **not acknowledge `Yahweh** 13 +**or the priests' due** portion `from **the people.** When **any one** was **sacrificing** a **sacrifice,** +**then** a **young attendant of the priest would come,** *as*while the meat◊ was **cooking**–, +with `a **three-tined `fork in his hand,** 14 +**which he would poke in**to the **chafing-pan or** *i* **large pot or** *i* **caldron or** *i* **kettle. All** *w*that the fork *c*brought |up, the priest would |take *i*for himself. **Thus they** would |*d*treat *i*at Shiloh › **all** the **Israel**ites `who **came**| **there** *7*to sacrifice to Yahweh*0*. 15 **Moreover,** *i* **ere they** *c*made **`the fat |fume,** + a **young attendant of the priest would come and say to** the **man** `who was **sacrificing,** Do *g*donate some **meat**◊ **to roast for** the **priest;** +**for he shall not take from you cooked| meat**◊ *7f*out of **the caldron***0*, **for** it **should** be **uncooked.** 16 +**If the man** |*sa*replied to him, **Let the fat fume,** yea **fume**– *as* **awhile,** +**then take for your**self *as w*what your soul is yearning for, + **he would** *sa*reply, **No***t*, **for you shall** *g*donate it **now; and if not, I will take** it *i*by **brunt** force. 17 + The **sin of the young attendants** |*b*was very **great** `in the **presence of Yahweh, for** `these **men spurned** `the approach **present of Yahweh.**
18 + **Samuel** was in the **ministry**| **`before Yahweh** as a

2:10 *Sy*-~*c* **them:** Hb **him.**
2:11 *7*-~ **they |left him there before Yahweh and |went:** Hb **Elkanah |went;** *M*-~*s* **to:** Hb **on.**
2:13,15 meat: lit., **flesh.**

lad girded| with a **linen ephod.** 19 **His mother** would +**also** |*d*make a **small robe for him, and she would** *c*bring it **up to him from days** to*d* **days,** *i*when she went **up**– `with **her husband to sacrifice `the sacrifice of days.**◊ 20 **And Eli would bless `Elkanah and `his wife,** + –**saying, May Yahweh** *Q*repay~ you and give › **you seed** *f* **by `this `woman** *u*in place of **the loan** *w* *7*she had loaned~*Q* **to Yahweh.** +**Then they went to** *M*their~*c* *ri*place. 21 *Q*And Yahweh |visited~ `Hannah; + she had |pregnancies and gave |birth to **three sons and two daughters,** +**while the lad Samuel |grew up** *7*`in the **presence of~***Q* **Yahweh.**
22 +**Now Eli was very old; and he heard** `of **all** *w*that his **sons were doing to all Israel, and** `*w*how they |lay `with **the women** `who **enlisted|** at the entrance **opening of** the **tent of appointment.** 23 +**So he** would |say to them, **Why are you doing things like `these? *w*For I** am **hearing from `all the people** `about **these things of your**s as **evil.** 24 *7*You*0* **must not** *7*do so*0*, **my sons; for not good** is **the report** *w*that **I hear|** passing about among **Yahweh's people.** 25 **If** a **man |sins ›against** a **man,** +**then Elohim will mediate** for **him.** + **If** a **man |sins ›against Yahweh,** *a*who should mediate for **him?** +**But they** did **not |hearken to their father's voice; for Yahweh desired to** *c*put them to **death.** 26 +**Yet the lad Samuel** was **going** on **and** growing **greater** + in **goodness** *mr*both with Yahweh and *mr* with men.
27 + A **man of Elohim |came to Eli and |said to him, Thus** *sa*speaks Yahweh: Did **I** not **reveal,** yea **reveal**– Myself **to your father's house** *i*when they *b*were– **in Egypt,** *7*servants*Q* **to** the **house of Pharaoh?** 28 + I **chose**– **`him from all** the **tribes of Israel** to be **Mine for** the **priesthood, to ascend** *on* **My altar, to fume incense, to wear** the **ephod before Me. And I** |*g*assigned to your father's house `**all** the

2:19 `the sacrifice of days: i.e., the annual sacrifice.
2:20 *Q*-~ **repay:** Hb **place;** *7*-~*Q* **she had loaned:** Hb **he had loaned;** *M*-~*c* **their** Hb **his.**
2:21 *Q*-~ **And Yahweh |visited:** Hb **For Yahweh visited;** *7*-~*Q* `in the **presence of:** Hb **with.**

fire offering**s of** the **sons of Israel** [7]**for food**[0]**.** 29 **Why are you**[◊] **showing disrespect** [i]**for My sacrifice and** [i]**for My** approach **present** [w]**that I have determined** for My **habitation?** [+]**Why are you glorifying** `**your sons** more [f]**than Me, to** [c]**make you**rselves **plump**– [f]**with** the **first** portion **of every** approach **present** ›**by My people Israel?** 30 **Therefore,** this is the **averring of Yahweh Elohim of Israel: I said,** yea **said**–**, Your house and your father's house shall walk** about **before Me** [fr]**for** the **eon.** [+]**Yet now,** this is the **averring of Yahweh: Far be it** ›**from Me! For** those **glorifying Me shall I glorify,** [+]**yet** those **despising Me shall be dishonored.** 31 **Behold** the **days** are **coming** ([M]this is the **averring of Yahweh**[c]**),** [+]**when I will hack** down `**your seed and** `the **seed of your father's house,** to keep them **from becoming**– **old in your house.** 32 [+]**Then you will look** on a **rival** in My **habitation, in all** [w]**that he** [c]**does good** `with **Israel. And** there **shall not** [b]**be** an **old** man **in your house all the days.** 33 [+]**As** for the **man** ›**of you**rs whom **I shall not cut** off **from** [wi] **My altar,** I will cause › [all]**failure**– `to [7]**his**~[Q] **eyes and** › **pining** `to [7]**his**~[Q] **soul.** [+]**Yet all** the **increase of your house shall die** [7i]**by** the **sword of**[Q] **men.** 34 **And this** is **the sign for you** [w]**that shall** [in]**befall** › **your two sons,** › **Hophni and Phinehas:** [i]**On** the **same day shall both of them die.**

35 [+]**Yet I will raise** up **for My**self a **faithful**[l] **priest; he shall do** [7]**all**[cs] **according** to [w]**what** is **in My heart and in My soul. And I will build for him** a **faithful**[l] **house;** [+] **he will walk** about **before My anointed** one **all the days.** 36 [+]**Then it will** [b]**occur** that **every**one `who is **left**[l] over **in your house, shall come** ›**and bow down**– **to him for** a **gerah of silver** [+]**or** a **loaf of bread, and he will say,** Let **me adhere,** if you [pr]**please, to one of the priestly** duties**,** that I may have a **morsel of bread to eat.**

2:29 you: Qumran and LXX singular; Hb plural.
2:33 7-~Q **his:** Hb **your** (2x).
2:35 7-cs **all:** *cf* 2 S 15:24-37; 1 K 2:27.

Notes on 1 Samuel

FIRST SAMUEL: OVERVIEW

First Samuel is a book containing many contrasts—contrasts carefully woven together to teach specific lessons about the control and rule that is exercised on our lives. There is the rule of the flesh, striving to do what it desires and what it thinks is right, but failing to be dependent upon God. And there is the rule of faith which honors God. Each of these is exhibited in varying degrees, and the struggle between them is most instructive because we, as believers, experience both. All experience the power of the flesh, but, by God's grace, a new power has entered the lives of those who walk by faith (*cf* Rom.7:25; 2 Cor.5:7).

Throughout 1 Samuel these themes of confidence in the flesh and reliance on God are presented in view of the broader theme of God's control of all events. Both in the relative sense of daily experience, and in the absolute sense of God's purposes, we see God actively involved and operating.

THE FLESH: RESPECT FOR PEOPLE, RATHER THAN GOD

Among the contrasts between flesh and faith are those illustrated in the lives of Eli and Saul. Eli shows us first the failing of the flesh when he speaks to his sons about their terrible sins. He said he was hearing reports *from the people* about the things his sons were doing. It is quite true that he knew these acts were sins against God, but it was the grumbling of the people, instead of jealousy for God, which triggered a response from Eli. Soon a man of God came to Eli with God's reproach and the ques-

tion, "Why are you glorifying your sons more than Me?" (1 Sam.2:22-30).

The nation Israel shows the same desire of the flesh in asking for a king. "Now do appoint for us a king, to judge us *like all the other nations*" (1 Sam.8:5). God's response to Samuel's prayer was, ". . . it is Me Whom they have rejected from being King over them" (8:7).

Saul is a premier example of the flesh. He tries repeatedly to serve God, but he continually bases his decisions on the people and circumstances that surround him: "When I saw that *the force scattered from me,* and you, *you did not come* within the appointed days, and *the Philistines were being gathered* . . . I felt compelled to offer up the ascent approach" (13:11-12). Saul explained to Samuel, "Because *I hearkened to the voice of the soldiers* . . . I brought back Agag . . . . Yet *the soldiers took* from the loot some small cattle and large cattle . . . *I have sinned, yet now, I pray, bring glory to me in front of the elders of my people and in front of Israel*" (15:20,21,30). And to David Saul said, "*You are not able* to go against this Philistine to fight with him, *for you are a youth,* and *he* has been *a man of war from his youth*" (17:33). Saul continually had his eye on the flesh and judged according to the flesh, and this was the cause of his replacement by David.

FAITH: AFTER THE HEART OF GOD

The man of God who came to Eli said God would raise up for Himself *a faithful priest who would "do all according to what is in My heart and in My soul*" (2:35). When Israel pleaded with Samuel to help them return to God, Samuel said, "*If it is with all your heart that you are returning to Yahweh,* then put away the foreign elohim and the Ashtaroth from your midst and prepare *your heart for Yahweh and serve Him, Him alone*" (7:3; *cf* 12:20-24). When Saul, overcome with anxiety, offered the sacrifice, instead

of waiting for Samuel, Samuel told him, "Yet now your dynasty shall not be confirmed. Yahweh has sought out for Himself a man *in accord with His own heart*" (13:14). And when Samuel beheld Jesse's sons, God's word to him was, "You must not look at his appearance and at the loftiness of his stature [the outstanding feature of Saul (10:23)], for I have rejected him. For not as a human sees, does the One, Elohim, see. *A human sees the visible appearance, yet Yahweh sees into the heart*" (16:7).

The contrast throughout these passages is the difference between a heart that is fully committed to God, and one that, while it may want to serve God, honors other things as well. "More than any guarding, *preserve your heart,* for from it spring the outflowings of life" (Prov.4:23). This commitment was voiced by Christ during His temptation in the wilderness, "The Lord your God shall you be worshipping, and *to Him only shall you be offering divine service*" (Matt.4:10).

THE CONTROL AND CHOICE ARE GOD'S

The book of 1 Samuel tells of many changing events and patterns of life in the history of Israel. Corruption was increasing in the days of Eli. His sons were profaning the worship and frustrating the worshipers. Israel needed a replacement for Eli—someone strong to lead the nation—someone who could take charge and change things.

Notice the subtle description the Scriptures give of the situation: "The *lad* Samuel was in the ministry before Yahweh under Eli the priest. *In those days the word of Yahweh had become rare; there was no vision being unfolded.* Then it occurred on that day: Eli was lying down in his own place; *his eyes had started to grow dim, and he was not able to see. The lamp of Elohim was not yet quenched, while Samuel was lying down in the temple of Yahweh where the coffer of Elohim was*" (1 Sam.3:1-4). Eli was nearly blind phys-

ically, and this represented his greater blindness toward God. But as long as the lad in an ephod was in the temple (*cf* 1 Sam.2:18), the light of God was not quenched. "A lad cannot replace a priest," we cry! A lad, of himself, could not. But that is all the flesh sees. The flesh is slow to see God, standing strong in young Samuel.

Saul started his era of leadership with victories and a reasonable acceptance by the people. Had we been Israelites then, we probably would have thought Saul was an average king, but needed to have a better replacement. And seeing Jonathan's character and leadership, we would likely have been content to wait for his natural ascent to the throne. But God is in control, and He removes both Saul and Jonathan, even Saul's entire house, in one fell stroke. In His wisdom it was much better to establish David as king.

But perhaps the most striking feature of God's control was His calling of prophets. There was no fleshly succession of the great prophets. One was called from here and another from there. He brought them forth from nowhere to rebuke priests and kings and whatever form of leadership the nation had at the time. Even David was humiliated by the prophet Gad (1 Sam.22:5; 2 Sam.24:11-14). All of this shows that there is no human form of rule—no rule of the flesh—that can permanently guide humanity.

The whole scenario may be summed up best in the song of Hannah. After years of hoping for a child, a new life within her, Hannah flung herself upon God, and canceling all confidence in her flesh, she poured out her heart to Him. Her song at the dedication of Samuel praises a God Who is little known by the terms of her expressions (1 Sam.2:1-10). Here is the God Who is "operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11). He is humbling some and exalting others and His wisdom and power pervades all that occurs. Our expectation is in Him.

J. Philip Scranton

IF THE LORD IS WILLING

In His sermon on the mount, Jesus spoke of the kingdom and the blessings for those who heard and heeded His words. But it is evident, not only in looking back at the failure of Israel but at our own experience of weakness and sin as well, that no one can achieve the perfection described in Matthew 5:17-48 apart from God's deliverance from sin. The words of Matthew 5-7 only make the promise of Matthew 1:21 more clearly necessary. There must be One Who saves from sin.

Otherwise, when the kingdom arrives, all Israel must be cast into Gehenna (Matt.5:22,27-30); they all must collect the wages of hypocrisy (6:3-5); everyone of them will be brought to destruction (7:13,14); the Lord must declare to them all: "I never knew you! Depart from Me, workers of lawlessness!" (7:23). Jesus required that they be doing the will of His Father Who is in the heavens (7:21). Yet for this to happen they must be established under the covenant of Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36. And for that to happen there must be a work of the Saviour that saves from sin.

DESCENDING FROM THE MOUNTAIN

Those who listened to the Lord's message "were astonished at His teaching" (7:28), and when He descended from the mountain "vast throngs follow Him" (Matt.8:1). Yet to begin with, we read of only one individual out of the vast throngs who comes to Jesus as the Saviour. This is a man afflicted with leprosy, who worships the Lord, saying "Lord, if Thou shouldst be willing, Thou canst cleanse me!" (8:2).

The leper is a picture of the sinner, and cleansing from leprosy is a picture of cleansing from sin. This is very promising in light of the message of Matthew 5-7. If He was willing Jesus could cleanse all the sinners of Israel from their sins. The very fact that He was willing to cleanse the leper from leprosy, and that He did so, tells us of His willingness to save His people from their sins and that He will do so.

Nevertheless, it was not the time for this cleansing. Jesus sent the cleansed leper to the priest "as a sign that He is the One Who can cleanse the leprosy of the sinful nation. [The priesthood] should have known that the One Who can do this is the long-desired Messiah. There is no intimation that they heeded this testimony, so that here we have, in a parable, the same truth with which John begins his evangel: His own people do not accept Him (John 1:11). Indeed, this is more striking. For the priests had before them continually the lesson of the suffering sacrifice. If no other class in the nation could understand His rejection and sorrow and death, they should have recognized that this is the One Who was to be led as a lamb to the slaughter. But, in that deeper wisdom of God, they were also the ones who were ordained to be the slayers of the great Sacrifice."[1]

Indeed we may well say that the priests ought to have known that Jesus was the Promised One Who would save His people from their sins. The testimony of the cured leper was clear. But they were blinded to what was right before their eyes, so that they might offer up the Lamb of God Who thus would take away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

What shall we say, however, concerning the results of this blindness as they affect this particular priest who received this marvelous testimony? And what of the priesthood as a whole, which became the instrument for the giving up of

1. A. E. Knoch, Concordant Commentary, p.20.

the Lamb of God? If anyone is destined to hear the Lord's words, "Depart from Me, workers of lawlessness!" surely they must be included.

NO ONE IN ISRAEL

It is not that the priestly unbelief should escape judgment. But we must not make the words of condemnation and rejection spoken by the Saviour mean something that makes it impossible for Him to save such sinners as these. The priest was a sinner as well as the leper. They both needed cleansing from sin. *And so did everyone in Israel and in the entire world.*

This great need even beyond the circle of His people Israel is shown by the next occurrence in our Lord's ministry as recorded by Matthew. A centurion, that is, a Roman military officer, came to Jesus in Capernaum, and pleaded that the Lord would cure his boy who was prostate with paralysis and dreadful torments (Matt.8:5-8). There is much for our learning here, but first of all, let us note that which was so marvelous to Jesus, that this Roman centurion displayed more faith in Him than His people Israel were displaying. "Verily, I am saying to you, With no one in Israel so much faith did I find" (Matt.8:10).

There was *no one in Israel* who had faith like this centurion's. And yet, Jesus was the One Who was to save His people from their sins!

The leper was cleansed, and the boy was cured, but the priest showed no indication of comprehending the leper's testimony, and countless Israelites, as "sons of the kingdom" would be cast out into outer darkness with lamentation and gnashing of teeth when the kingdom arrived (Matt.8:11,12). These are our Lord's words, and they will be fulfilled.

But to make this condemnation an everlasting punishment in hell, without hope, without relief, without any

possibility of Jesus becoming the Saviour and Shepherd of these who are His people (*cf* Matt.2:6) is surely to mistake the mind of God. Unbelief is sin, and its wages must accord with the serious nature of the sin. Nevertheless, it surely is impossible that Jesus will never know in a saving way those whom He came to save, that He can never wipe away the tears of those cast out into darkness away from the light of the kingdom, that all the sons of the kingdom will never bow in the Name of the Saviour and acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord.

THE TEACHING OF HELL

The traditional doctrine of hell is founded on more passages in Matthew than any other portion of God's Word. The King James Version renders the word *Gehenna* "hell" seven times in Matthew (5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33), and two times it uses "hell" for *hades* (11:23; 16:18). From this it is concluded that hell is a place of fire, where the whole body perishes, the soul and body destroyed, where one is brought down in judgment, and where there are strong gates. (There is renewed controversy today over the sense implied by the words "perish" and "destroy," some claiming from these terms that hell involves the annihilation of the sinner and the majority still taking the terms figuratively as symbolic of hopelessness. Very little attention seems to be given in this connection to the fact that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost, *i.e.*, those who are perishing.)

The whole subject of an unending punishment is expanded by taking every warning of future judgment and loss in our Lord's ministry as further revelation concerning hell. Hence, as we have noted, the fire of hell is determined by a further mistranslation to be unquenchable (Matt.3:12), punishment in hell is supposed to be the "wages" of hypocrites (Matt.5:2-5), hell is seen as the place of destruction at the end of broad and spacious way (Matt.7:13), the destiny of workers of lawlessness who are expelled from our Lord's presence (7:23), and despite normal implications of the word "fire" hell is found to be a place of "outer darkness" where those who are destroyed continue to lament and gnash their teeth (8:12).

Many more such details are added from later passages in Matthew, culminating in the use of the terrifying words of Matthew 25:46 as rendered by the King James Version, and followed by most other translations. From the Lord's description of the future judgment of the nations, it is claimed that hell is the place of "everlasting punishment," making punishment an end in itself, and finally securing the impossibility of Jesus ever fully taking His place as Saviour.

HIS WILL AND OURS

The willingness of Jesus to save sinners is not consciously questioned by believers, but in effect many fail to appreciate its importance. Other issues intrude on almost every consideration of our Lord's will, such as: "What about the human will? What if the human being is not willing to be saved?" "What if the divine willingness to save is limited and arbitrarily directed?" Theological problems concerning election, predestination, and free will keep cropping up. Few seem to see our Lord's willingness as such a decisive and determinative factor in salvation as the leper saw it. Few are as clear about the certainty and authority for healing of a word from the Lord as the centurion was. "Lord, I am not competent that Thou mayest enter under my roof, but *only say the word and my boy will be healed!*" (Matt.8:8).

But the willingness of the Lord to save is not held captive to conditions and situations outside of God's control. It is not a well-meaning but hopeless wishing for the best. The casting out of the sons of the kingdom into outer darkness is not proof that Jesus can never be their Saviour from sin, nor evidence that He has no willingness to save them

from such sorrow. They must weep and lament for a time, but this is only part of the process, and not at all the goal, or the ultimate expression of the divine will. Darkness and sorrow serve and do not oppose the operations of the One Who is willing to save.

The critical issue here is the divine willingness to save, not ours to be saved. "It is not of him who is racing, but of God, the Merciful" (Rom.9:16). His people will be willing in the day of His power (Psa.110:3). May we become more and more like the leper who boldly testified to the vital and effective place of the Lord's will, and more and more like the Roman centurion who was unswerving in conviction concerning the Lord's authority and power to heal. No matter how much human stubbornness and blindness, darkness and lamentation come in between, the final resolution is the Lord's Who is willing to save, Who is Jesus the Saviour, Who shall save His people from their sins.

D.H.H.

REPOSING IN CHRIST

Sister Hazel Silva of Boise, Idaho, was put to repose on December 9, 1996, at age 85. Along with her husband Ted, who preceded her in death in 1974, she eagerly embraced the truth concerning God's delight to head up all in the Christ.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bindery work has now been completed, and *Unsearchable Riches* volume 87 (1996) is now available for shipment (clothbound, dark green cloth, 288 pages; $20.00 per copy, $2.00 s&h (California residents add sales tax).

Our current series, *Studies in Galatians,* which began in volume 87, number 1, does not appear in this issue. Since our writings on Galatians 4 (which, sequentially, would be the next portion of Scripture due for exposition at this time) were already published in volume 82 (pp.155-164; 219-231), we intend to resume our publication of these Galatians studies in our next issue, beginning with Galatians 5:1.

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 Unity by Crucifixion
103 Galatians Four
105 "You Fall Out of Grace"
117 Lord! Save Us!
123 Mutually Solicitous
128 Israel's First Two Kings
134 1 Samuel 9 and 16
139 The Thunder of God's Masterful Deeds

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 1997
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

"If" is a little word that sometimes brings big trouble into our minds. It conveys a sense of urgent and even hopeless responsibility many times in the Lord's ministry (*cf* Matt.6:14,15,22; 10:13; 17:20; 21:21). Yet as we have been discovering in the studies on Matthew (see p.117), such instructions must not be divorced from the promise given to Israel in Matthew 1:21. The conditions will be met, but only as God provides His spirit under the new covenant and on the basis of the salvation gained through His Son.

For us as well, Paul's words in 2 Timothy 2:12, ". . . *if* we are disowning, He also will be disowning us," are sobering. Yet again, by keeping this in context, we realize His disowning relates to future reigning and not to eonian life, for He cannot disown us who have been graciously called and placed as members of *Himself*. And this appreciation of the completeness of our salvation, in turn, increases our appreciation for our Lord and strengthens our confidence in Him to Whom we belong.

But these are human *ifs* concerning future and unknown developments. The *ifs* concerning divine operations channeled through Christ are quite different and carry much the same sense as *since*: "*If* God is for us . . ." (Rom.8:31); ". . . *If* One died for the sake of all . . ." (2 Cor. 5:14). In this class is such a word as Romans 6:8, ". . . if we died together with Christ." Here is a way of expressing the evangel that Christ died for our sins; it is a fact, and the *if* is used in order to get us thinking about the significance of this fact.

Thus, very often the *ifs* of Scripture direct our hearts to

joyful and glorious thoughts, away from fearful doubts to exultant assurance. We can even add them to various revelations of truth and connect them to their scriptural conclusions. For instance, in Brother Knoch's articles on the cross (see p. 99), he has been saying in effect: "*If* we have been crucified with Christ, then we all are on the same level as the malefactors and Saul of Tarsus, great sinners in need of grace."

So also Brother Fielding reminds us (see p.123), that *if* we have been chosen and called as members of Christ's body we may be mutually solicitous for one another. Brother Scranton traces a pattern in the lives of Saul and David (see p.128), that can be expressed similarly, using Paul's words in Ephesians 2:1-10. *If* God saves us in grace from a spirit of *stubbornness,* then we are God's achievement for His display of transcendent riches of grace and for good works which He makes ready beforehand.

Again, *if* God was operating with wisdom and power in Job's sufferings (see p.139), then Job could endure them all with expectation. *If* darkness and storm and chaos are under divine control, then they must have a purpose that corresponds with His character of righteousness.

Already with these examples the word *if* is becoming a word of delight. This is because we are noticing the condition upon which the word rests. *If* it rests on God's promise or achievements, the word *if* is full of assurance and joy. *If* our freedom and benefits (see p.105) are dependent on our act of circumcising then we are debtors to do the whole law, but *if* they are dependent on God's grace in and through Christ, then we are brought into the realm of faith operating through love (Gal.5:1-6). *If* Christ truly died for our sins and God actually reconciles us through the blood of His cross, then we are overwhelmed by grace. *If* the evangel is true, then there is joy and peace and endurance and love being poured out into our lives. D.H.H.

UNITY BY CRUCIFIXION

PAUL writes of his personal relation to crucifixion twice. Once, in connection with the Corinthians, he insists that he had *not* been crucified *for* them (1 Cor.1:13). And again, in relation to his own justification, he says that he *had* been crucified *with* Christ (Gal.2:20). As he was the foremost of sinners (1 Tim.1:15), these seemingly contradictory statements may help us to clarify our own relationship to the shameful death of our Saviour and Justifier. The point is that neither Paul nor any other man is the center and unifier. They are all reckoned as crucified criminals. Christ alone was crucified *for* them, and so He is the Center and Basis of unity.

Death by crucifixion is the basis of the unity in the joint body of Christ. Any other method will divide. Baptism is a good example. It united believers of the Circumcision in the Acts period. Cornelius, the proselyte was also joined to them by baptism (Acts 10:47-48). Paul himself was baptized (Acts 19:10), and baptized others. Why did he not continue?

Baptism is not nearly so *offensive* as the cross. Hence Paul says to the Corinthians (1:17), "Christ does not commission me to be baptizing, but to be bringing the evangel, not in wisdom of word, *lest the cross of Christ may be made void.*"

PAUL AND CRUCIFIXION

First of all, let us acknowledge that Paul really had been the greatest of all sinners, for he not only endorsed

the assassination of Stephen, but he devastated the ecclesia, going into the homes, dragged out men and women, and gave them over to jail (Acts 8:1-3). Besides breathing out threatening and murder against the Lord's disciples in Jerusalem, he requested letters from the chief priest, so that he might bind the saints in Damascus and lead them to Jerusalem (Acts 9:1-2). Was there ever any other private person who went to such lengths to wipe out the disciples of Christ? The Saviour endured a most shameful death Himself in order to reconcile and glorify sinners, but Paul sought to deal out distress and death to the saints.

Some might suggest the high priests and Pilate, who actually were responsible for Christ's crucifixion, were the most reprehensible, so they have the foremost places in the rank of sinners. But God does not reckon that way. They were officials, and probably deemed it their duty to please the populace. Pilate, especially, was not doing what he wished to do. Besides, they were under the compulsion of the divine decree, and fulfilled the page of prophecy. Their heart was not in it as was the case with Paul. So we cannot well dispute Paul's claim to the foremost place in the rank of sinners.

PAUL CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

Paul is probably the best example we have of crucifixion *with* Christ. Although easily the foremost and finest example of the so-called "Christian" life, his experience, his sufferings, his debasement, were a tremendous contrast to the fortunate and honorable positions of the leaders of today. Paul sought no following, no glory from men.

For his dastardly deeds Paul was crucified in God's reckoning. The unbelieving malefactor blasphemed Jesus and demanded "Are not you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" Then, "answering, the other one, rebuking him, averred, 'Yet you are not fearing God, seeing that you are in the same judgment! And we, indeed, justly, for we are getting back the deserts of what we commit, yet this One commits nothing amiss' " (Luke 23:39-41). This should be the language of every believer in this era of God's grace. When our eyes are opened to see ourselves in His light, then we acknowledge that the crucifixion of Christ *for* us, demands that, in spirit, we are crucified *with* Him.

PAUL NOT CRUCIFIED FOR US

Negatively, Paul was *not* crucified *for* us (1 Cor.1:13). This is of far greater importance than appears on the surface, especially in these last days. Positively it may be stated thus: In Paul's ministry the *crucified Christ* is the *only Center* of *unity.* No other one was crucified for us, so *He alone* is the focus of our affections. In Christendom great men, good men, pious men, capable men, have risen and gathered disciples about themselves or their teaching, but they have created conflict and confusion, and destroyed the unity which depends alone on Christ and His crucifixion.

CRUCIFIXION UNITY

The Corinthian ecclesia was richly endowed with gifts, yet inclined to division by following human leaders. In the beginning some of the Corinthians became partisans for Paul. Some preferred Apollos, others Cephas. Yet others would not join them, so made their own division under the name of Christ. Thus they not only parted Christ among them, but strove with one another as to the right leader. At that early stage of minority, before most of present truth had even been revealed and some of it would eventually be discarded, when they were still observing by means of a mirror, in an enigma (1 Cor.13:3-13), there was much more excuse. Christendom today is mostly in the same condition.

It is easy to see why some of them were Paulists. He was

the one who brought the evangel to them. As he reminds them later, he *planted*. Apollos came later, and *irrigated* (1 Cor.3:6). There seems to be no record that Cephas ever went there. But none of these proclaimed themselves, but *Christ*. That there is a tendency today to be partial to Paul, especially among those who are, in a measure, mature, can easily be understood. But it is a very different matter than forming an exclusive party. Indeed, Paul personally is not in question, but his teaching, and that should unite *all* the saints, especially as a part of it is this very passage, which bases all unity on *crucifixion*, which applies only to Christ Himself (1 Cor.1:10-13).

Crucifixion is the proper basis of all *vital spiritual* unity among believers among the nations. As offenders against the Divine Majesty we *all* alike deserve crucifixion. Not one is worthy to head a separate party. Especially today, almost all saints are immature, and in different stages of development, and under the influence of false teaching and practice, so they choose, or rather drift, into a "body" with another head than the crucified Christ.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED

There is only one Christ and one cross, and this should be the center and rallying point of all believers in Him. Paul and Apollos and Cephas were all good and great men, but they divided those who followed them. Even Paul, although he is the *channel* of the truth for us today, is not the center. He was not crucified for our sakes! Christ is the focus of all God's operations and the Head of the body. But, for us, He is the Crucified, and we are associated with Him, not in the earthly glories, but in the cross of His shame. There He was the lowest on earth, and we with Him. Only thus can we be with Him as the Highest in glory (1 Cor.1:13-31).

A. E. Knoch

The following abstract of our writings on Galatians 4, summarizes the articles "Getting the Place of a Son" (4:1-16) and "Children of Promise" (4:17-31), which appeared in volume 82 (pp.155-164; 219-231):

GALATIANS FOUR

In Galatians 4, Paul continues in defense of his evangel of justification by the faith of Christ. Earlier he had called the Galatians foolish for thinking they were incomplete apart from maintaining the precepts of the law. The Galatians were *wanting* to be under the law (Gal.4:21) and were looking at Paul as their enemy (4:16). This tendency to bring in law-keeping has increased today where some form of "conditional" salvation is widely taught and defended.

Abraham's enjoyment of an allotment being based solely on God's promise, and therefore in grace, is a prototype of the evangel. Believing Israelites like Paul were once enslaved to the elements of the Mosaic system (Gal. 4:1-3). But Christ coming under the jurisdiction of the law reclaims those under the law giving all believers the place of a son (Gal.4:4-7), a place of great worth, near and dear to the Father's heart.

The blessings we have are given to us gratuitously and are not altered by our obedience or disobedience. To proclaim this evangel is a struggle. Even where it is not opposed it is often accepted halfheartedly and is neglected or ignored.

Prior to receiving the evangel the Galatians were slaves of the jurisdiction of darkness, and now they were wanting to turn again to a condition of slavery, albeit in a new form of law-keeping (Gal.4:8-11).

Paul, who once observed the law, wants the Galatians to become as he was now and as they used to be with respect

to the law (Gal.4:12). In denying the evangel they were only injuring themselves. When Paul first announced the evangel of grace to them the Galatians responded with a happiness of solicitude toward Paul. Now they were occupied with law-keeping and looked on Paul, who kept pointing to God's grace, as their enemy (Gal.4:13-16).

Those who were disturbing the Galatians were jealous, or zealously enthusiastic toward them because they wanted the Galatians to be jealous indeed to their ways and ideas. Despite the fact that the Galatians considered Paul their enemy, Paul sees them as his beloved "little children" and points them to the properly directed jealously or zeal (Gal. 4:17-20). Out of his perplexity he decides to tell them an allegory based on the story of Hagar and Sarah, Ishmael and Isaac (Gal.4:22-31; *cf* Gen. chapters 16,17, and 21).

If the Galatians worked to become such ardent devotees of the law, Paul would have them only to comply with its own dictate as recorded in this story (Gal.4:21,22) which essentially teaches that the works of the flesh debar entrance into God's allotment.

This allotment of glorious life and joy in the presence of Christ Himself in the oncoming eons is promised to us by God in His grace. Thus it is that we now are blessed like Abraham, Sarah and Isaac of old, in accord with God's gracious promise. This word of promise for us is the evangel of the salvation brought by Paul.

Our God has determined to bless us (*cp* Gen.17:2), to take note of us (*cp* Gen.21:1), and grant us our allotment according to His own promise in grace. This is simply to affirm that we have no say in the matter, which is good news indeed.

Thus Paul would have the Galatians toss aside the law as the toys of infancy that they might enter into the glory and freedom of the filial relation: the place of a *son* for God through Christ Jesus (4:1-7; *cp* Eph.1:5). J.R.C.

"YOU FALL OUT OF GRACE"

(Galatians 5:1-15)

THE BLESSINGS of Paul's evangel, which are our allotment in grace, are blessings which the God of all grace, Who does not lie, *promises* "before times eonian" (Titus 1:2b). Even as, if a blessing is out of works, it is no longer *grace* (Rom.11:6b), thus also, if the enjoyment of an allotment is out of law, it is no longer out of *promise* (Gal.3:18a).

Since God has graciously granted Abraham his allotment through promise (Gal.3:18b), and since, in the gracious blessings of the evangel, we, in principle, are of "Abraham's seed," we too, *like* Abraham's seed, are enjoyers of an allotment according to promise (*cf* Gal.3:29). Hence, Paul further joyously declares: "you brethren, *as Isaac,* are children of *promise*" (4:28; *cp* Rom.9:9).

The Galatians did not realize that "the law is *not* of *faith*" (Gal.3:12a). That is, they failed to recognize that law-obedience and resultant blessing, is not of the nature merely of faith, of that in which one simply trusts in God's promise. The law, rather, in one's obedience to its precepts, is of the principle that the one who *does them* "shall be living [i.e., finding life and blessing] *in them*" (3:12b; cit. Lev.18:5).

Since the law is not of faith, neither does it accord with grace (*cp* Rom.4:16). It has no place in relation to the evangel brought by Paul, which bestows the transcendent grace of justification *apart* from law, on *all* who are believing (Acts 13:39; Rom.3:21,24).

For freedom Christ frees us! (5:1a)

In Christ Jesus, Who has become to us wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance (1 Cor.1:30,31), we are *complete* (Col.2:10). Therefore, in

Him, in the benefits afforded us through His sacrificial death, we are *free* from any need to be "justified in law" (*cf* Gal.5:4). Christ is the "consummation" of "law for righteousness" (Rom.10:4). Obeying law in order to become righteous, is something which is quite impossible for mortals (Rom.3:9,10; 8:3,7). In spirit, "law for righteousness" must ever point to Christ, in Whom alone its goal is realized (*cp* Rom.8:3,4). Only in Him is that which the law sought actually achieved. Through the one just award of Christ, life's justifying comes into all mankind (Rom.5:18). Through Him alone, this entire vast company shall be constituted just (Rom.5:19).

While eventually, *all*—whether those in the heavens or those on the earth—will be headed up in the Christ (Eph. 1:10), the Galatians were already in Christ and blessed according to the revelations of Paul's evangel. Therefore, since the blessing of being righteous in Christ had already been bestowed upon them, they had been liberated from any need for following "law for righteousness."

Strictly (since the dative case is used, together with the definite article), it is, "*Into this* freedom Christ frees us!" (5:1). This freedom, allegorically speaking, is the freedom of being "not the children of the maid, but of the free woman" (4:31), which is to say, the freedom of Isaac; the freedom of being children of promise (4:28), according to grace.

It is the freedom of, "At 'this season' I shall come 'and there will be for Sarah a son'" as in the case of "Rebecca also [who] is having her bed of *one,* Isaac, our father. For, not as yet being born or putting into practice anything good or bad, that the purpose of God may be remaining as a *choice,* not out of acts, but of Him Who is calling, it was declared to her that 'The greater *shall* be slaving for the inferior'" (Rom.9:9-12).

Stand firm, then, and be not again enthralled with the yoke of slavery. (5:1b)

"In the Greek, it is simply 'TO-YOKE-OF-SLAVERY.' That is, we must not become 'enthralled' (spellbound or enslaved) by *any* 'yoke of slavery.' Yet any 'Christian teaching' or ministry which takes the position that the believer's righteousness or at least the benefits which this righteousness entails, are granted to him, in the last analysis, not because of what Christ has done but because of what he himself has done, is both a deception and a yoke of slavery.

"This freedom, then, of which Paul speaks, for which Christ frees us, is freedom from any need even to attempt to become righteous by works of law. We enjoy the blessings of the untraceable riches of Christ (Eph.3:8). We are not participants in the economy of the law, and are by no means subject to its curses. Christ *reclaims* us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes (Gal. 3:13). Consequently, since God is for us, who is against us (Rom.8:31)?

"We were conciliated to God not through our faith in God's Son or through our faith in His death, but *through the death of God's Son* (Rom.5:10). God did not, reciprocally, *take* us to Himself consequent to our acceptance of Christ. That would not have been a *choice* (*cf* Rom.9:11), but an obligation. Instead, He actually *chose* us in Christ, even 'before the disruption of the world' (Eph.1:4). God graciously grants faith to all His chosen ones (*cp* 1 Cor. 1:24-29; Rom.12:3; Phil.1:29). Therefore, the believer's faith does not constitute an entitlement to salvation, but a surety of salvation, a surety to the believer that he (or she), indeed, is one of God's chosen ones."[1]

DEBTORS TO THE LAW

Paul's question to the Galatians, who wanted to be under

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* "For Freedom Christ Frees Us!" vol.81, pp.227,228.

law, had been whether they had indeed "heard" the law itself, in its testimony to those who presume that they are able to keep it, and that thus, by their own obedience, gain its proffered blessing (Gal.4:21; *cp* Ex.19:8). If the Galatians truly wished to "hear" the law, that is, act in accordance with its testimony, then they were to "cast out this maid and her son" (4:30), which, in Paul's allegory of the free woman and the maid, is identified as the covenant from mount Sinai with all its legal precepts (4:24,25).

Lo! I, Paul, am saying to you that if you should be circumcising, Christ will benefit you nothing. Now I am attesting again to every man who is circumcising, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Exempted from Christ were you who are being justified in law. (5:2-4a)

Note the emphasis of the apostle's declaration here: "Lo! I Paul am saying to you . . . ." Still, the words "if you should be circumcising, Christ will benefit you nothing," must not be wrenched from their context; much less are they to be understood categorically, for this would contradict not only the entire tenor of the epistle, but the very evangel itself. Paul speaks relatively, in relation to justification in law. The sense is, If you should be circumcising (in the interests of *justification*), Christ will benefit you nothing (*in justification*). Thus, *Christ*—or *Circumcision:* which shall it be?

Indeed, in circumcising, one is only fulfilling a single point of law, not the entirety of the law. This one point of law by no means stands in isolation, as if nothing more need be done. To the contrary, the situation is rather that "every man who is circumcising . . . is a debtor to do the whole law." This accords with Romans 2:25: "For circumcision, indeed, is benefiting if you should be putting the law into practice, yet if you should be a transgressor of law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision"; as well as with James 2:10: "For anyone who should be keeping the whole law, yet should be tripping in one thing, has become liable for all."

The phrase "Exempted from Christ," like the words "if you should be circumcising" is to be understood in connection with justification. Those who saw themselves as being justified *in law* were, as far as their appreciation was concerned, exempted from being justified *in Christ.* That is simply to say that if we hold the position that we *are* justified in law, we are saying we are *not* justified in Christ. One precludes the other. Thus, in one's own perception, one "nullifies" or "makes unproductive" (as the Greek word translated here "exempted" is elsewhere rendered) the work of Christ in justification. Hence, in nullifying the true benefits of Christ, the Galatians repudiated the grace of God (*cp* 2:21).

Any teaching, then, that represents justification as being granted on the basis of obedience to law, is false teaching. This includes the teaching that represents faith in Christ as a lawful requirement of salvation. The essential error consists not in the advocacy of any particular law for justification, but of any law whatsoever for justification.

You fall out of grace. (5:4b)

Indeed, this is just what one does who seeks a right standing before God by means of law, even if he should freely acknowledge the sacrificial death of Christ on behalf of his sins. In one's own recognition, one falls *out of grace,* not by practicing sin, but by falling *into law.* In truth, however, simply because it is *grace,* it is impossible for one to remove himself from its blessing, even by the darkest of deeds.

"In withdrawing from a real relation to the *Saviour,* the Galatians 'fall away' from *grace.* The verb 'fall out' (*ekpiptō*) is applied, in Acts 27:17, 26, 29, 32, to the course of a ship driven out from her course. The image of a drifting vessel is reinforced in verse seven, by the figure of a race. These racers made a fine start, but they have stumbled (3:3; 5:7);

the vessel set out from the harbor in splendid style, but has been caught and set adrift by the 'winds of doctrine.'

"This 'falling out' bears no resemblance to the 'falling away' doctrine. It is rather the exact opposite of 'stand firm' in 5:1. In terms of theology to fall away means 'final and eternal loss.' This theological fiction is a positive hindrance to the understanding and enjoyment of truth. True, Scripture speaks of 'loss'; but that loss is temporary, strictly confined to the creature's experience, and, like Israel's loss, becomes the 'riches' of the world, in the good providence of God."[2]

"'Falling from grace,' is not, as usually supposed, a loss of the benefits of Christ's salvation through *breaking* the law, but is rather a loss of a realization of those benefits through attempting to *keep* the law. He who falls into sin does not forfeit the grace of God. Blessed to relate, grace abounds in such a case (*cf* Rom.6:1). But he who seeks to establish his own salvation by works has no need of the grace of God . . . . He thus repudiates grace. He falls out of the sphere where grace operates."[3]

ENTREATY FOR FAITHFUL SERVICE

For we, in spirit, are awaiting the expectation of righteousness by faith. (5:5)

Until the day of Christ's advent, we, in spirit, "as if present" (*cp* 1 Cor.5:3), are awaiting the *expectation of* righteousness [i.e., of justification], and we are doing so by faith. We await that expectation which relates to righteousness, that is to say, which relates to our conformation to the image of Christ together with the transfiguration of the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of Christ's own glory. Even as, though we are already sons of

2. Vladimir Gelesnoff, PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, p.121.

3. A. E. Knoch, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.284.

God yet are awaiting the sonship, the deliverance of our body (Rom.8:23b), thus also, though we are already justified, we are awaiting the expectation *of* righteousness, that glory which God has appointed for us in coming eons and beyond. Thus, proleptically speaking (i.e., in a spirit of anticipation), we *are* justified; for, literally speaking, we *will be* justified, in that day.

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision is availing anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith, operating through love. (5:6)

Faith, operating through love, alone is that which avails. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision—nor any other human deed either of obeying or of omitting to obey law—avails anything at all, *in Christ Jesus.* It is in Christ Jesus alone that all aspects of salvation are achieved, "through the blood of His cross." Law obedience, as such, with necessarily attendant curses for violation thereof, simply has no place in our salvation.

"*All* is allowed me," says Paul, "but not all is expedient." "All *is* allowed me, but I will not be put under its authority by anything" (1 Cor.6:12). "All is *allowed* me, but not all is edifying" (1 Cor.10:23). The words which immediately follow, then, "Let no one be seeking the welfare of himself, but that of another" (1 Cor.10:24), are not to be understood as a legal requirement under pains of the repeated violation of which one will "lose his salvation," or any other blessing in Christ.

What is achieved in Christ, cannot be forfeited by man. Hence all such entreaties, such as that of 1 Corinthians 10:24, should simply be understood as that which is expedient or edifying, pleasing to God and beneficial to man. Though all such words of entreaty of our apostle have a vital place in our service (even as the counsel of all necessarily universally-applicable words of wisdom throughout all Scripture), even so, no scriptural entreaty of upright-

ness at all, however important, has any place whatsoever in our justification, in which we are complete in Christ.

You raced ideally! Who hinders you not to be persuaded by the truth? (5:7)

These words are reminiscent of Paul's previous fulmination, "O foolish Galatians! Who bewitches you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was graphically crucified?" (3:1). How painful it must have been for Paul to see his own "little children" in faith (4:19), so misapprehend the evangel of their salvation, especially when they had once "raced ideally" (*cf* 4:13-15; Acts 18:23). As with the Corinthians, it was true of the Galatians as well in relation to Paul: "If you should be having ten thousand escorts in Christ, nevertheless not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus, through the evangel, I beget you. I am entreating you, then, become imitators of me" (1 Cor.4:15,16).

Further, Paul recognizes that his opposers have hindered the Galatians from being persuaded by the truth, and this softens the edge of his repeatedly piercing words.

This persuasion is not of Him Who is calling you. (5:8)

Even though, ultimately speaking, *all* is not only out of God, but through and for Him as well (Rom.11:36), relatively speaking, there is much that is "not of God." Such is the case at hand. Faithfully speaking, this persuasion which the Galatians had mistakenly embraced was *not* of God; Paul's teaching *was* of God; for he had received it directly through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:12).

A little leaven is leavening the whole kneading. (5:9)

The Galatians were stark proof of the truth of this saying. Under the law, leaven was a type of sin (e.g., Ex.13:5-7; Matt.16:12). Leaven, such as yeast, may only be a small entity in itself, but it soon permeates and affects the whole kneading, from which many loaves may be made. Similarly, the "leaven" of the misplaced truth of circumcision, a small thing in itself, had given rise to a wider desire among the Galatians to be under law in general. Accordingly, as Paul was informed, they were now "scrutinizing" days and months and seasons and years, all in a sedulous effort to observe the holy times of the law in their precise appointed seasons (*cf* Gal.4:10).

I have confidence in you in the Lord that in nothing you will be disposed otherwise. (5:10a)

Literally, Paul's confidence here, was certainly not "in" the Galatians themselves. It was rather "in*to*" (*eis*) them. That is, they were the objects of Paul's confidence, which was "*in* the Lord," Paul's confidence that "in nothing you *will* be disposed otherwise." Specifically when this would be so, Paul could not say. He simply knew that the infirm in the faith will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand (Rom.14:4). In the meantime, he could only wait, seeing whether God may be giving them repentance to come into a realization of the truth (2 Tim.2:25b).

Now he who is disturbing you shall be bearing his judgment, whosoever he may be. (5:10b)

These words remind us of those of 2 Timothy 2:14, 15: "Alexander the coppersmith displayed to me much evil: the Lord will be paying him in accord with his acts—whom you also guard against, for very much has he withstood words of ours." Such disservice to the saints will surely call forth corresponding requital upon all such bad works when considered at the dais of Christ, and will mean the forfeiture of wages in the case of many in that day (1 Cor. 3:14,15; 2 Cor.5:10).

Now I, brethren, if I am still heralding circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? (5:11a)

It is evident that Paul was faced with opposition on all sides. From certain appearances, some may have inferred the mistaken impression that the apostle, effectually at least, was "still heralding circumcision" (*cf* Acts 21:20-26). These or others, through jealousy and gossip, may have

led still others to suppose that this was actually so. Paul's logic, however, is unassailable: "If I am still heralding circumcision, why am I still being persecuted?" Many knew well that Paul was *not* heralding circumcision, and were most displeased that this was so (*cf* Acts 15:1,2a,5). If he had only continued to do so, all corresponding persecution would have ceased.

Consequently the snare of the cross of Christ has been nullified. (5:11b)

Conversely, however, if Paul had continued to herald circumcision, the *snare of* the cross of Christ would have been nullified. A "snare" (*skandalon*) is "a means of tripping or a cause of falling" (Keyword Concordance, p.275). The glorious truth associated with Christ's cross becomes just this to many, by means of which they trip, and fall into opposing error. That truth is the revelation that salvation is in grace and through Christ alone. This scandalizes both human pride and fleshly ethics, by which most are enslaved.

The evangel is simply unacceptable to those who wish to boast in something of themselves—something that *they* have done. In most circles today, "accepting Christ" (or alternatively, obeying Him as Lord) has supplanted first-century circumcision as the fancied "requirement" for salvation. Among the exponents of such views today, just as surely as among the circumcisionists of Galatia, thus the *snare* of the cross[4] is nullified. By denying its truth, they remove its offense.

Would that those who are raising you to insurrection struck themselves off also! (5:12)

Out of exasperation, Paul resorts to sarcasm. In his ebullient hyperbole and irony, he wishes that those who had roused the Galatians to insurrection, might finish their

4. For an extended consideration of this subject, see the article, "The Snare of the Cross," *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.81, pp.269-278.

work of mutilation of the flesh by striking themselves off also. Then they could no longer deceive the saints. On the principle that a little cutting is good, surely a lot of cutting is better still.

FREEDOM AND FAITHFULNESS

For you were called for freedom, brethren, only use not the freedom for an incentive to the flesh . . . . (5:13a)

The literal reading is, "[You were called] *on* freedom." It is on a basis of freedom from needing to seek "law for righteousness" that we are called. And, into such freedom Christ frees us (5:1)! Far from denying this truth, Paul would only add, "use not [this] freedom for an incentive to the flesh."

Left to ourselves, the "flesh," that is, we ourselves, considered in our own foolishness and weakness, would misuse this very truth, if not through abject abandonment, at least in careless neglect or apathy. In consideration of this tendency, as a complement to the truth of the evangel itself, we need to be reminded that there are still "many foolish and harmful desires which are swamping men [believers not excepted] in extermination and destruction" (1 Tim.6:9).

Though only certain such injurious desires, in some cases, may lead to bodily extermination and destruction, many such fleshly foibles regularly lead to the quenching of the spirit even as to the diminution if not destruction of a life of faithfulness. "So that, let him who is supposing he stands beware that he should not be falling" (1 Cor.10:12).

. . . but through love be slaving for one another. For the entire law is fulfilled in one word, in this: "You shall love your associate as yourself." (5:13b,14)

Truly, love is the greatest thing, for apart from it we are nothing. Of all the sagacities of wisdom, walking in love heads the list. "To no one owe anything, except to be loving one another, for he who is loving another has fulfilled

law" (Rom.13:8); and ". . . if there is any other precept, it is summed up in this saying, in this: 'You shall love your associate as yourself' " (Rom.13:9b).

It is not enough for us to be loving only those loving us. As the Lord declared, "What thanks [or 'grace'] is it" to be doing that (Luke 6:32)? His entreaty was rather, "Be loving your enemies . . ." (Luke 6:35a), even as Paul further confirms in Romans 12:20,21, adding, "Be not conquered by evil; but conquer evil with good."

"Love pervades the Pauline writings. According to him, it is love that imparts to freedom, as to all else, virtue and meaning. It derives from love the element of preciousness. He says, '*through love* be slaving for one another' . . . .

"Love transcends and glorifies all things because it is absolutely disinterested. It is the only thing in all the universe that 'seeketh not its own.' Everything else seeks something, because though other things may be *self*-sufficient [i.e., they may afford sufficiency to themselves], they are not *all*-sufficient [i.e., sufficient for all else as well]. Faith seeks an object to rest on; hope, an object to look to. Love alone seeks naught else but to give—to bestow itself. It is the rest of faith and the goal of hope."[5]

Now if you are biting and devouring one another, beware that you may not be consumed by one another. (5:15)

O the injury to the cause of Christ even as impediment to the furtherance of the evangel, that results from a failure to give heed to this warning! Indeed, being "consumed" is that unto which "biting and devouring" leads. Through anger, bitterness, envy, gossip, and faction, even as disrespect, ingratitude, pride, selfishness, and implacableness, greater evil is repeatedly done from within than the aggregate evil that accrues from without. May God give us grace to spare us from such declension, or cause us to cease and desist therefrom where we have had a part. J.R.C.

5. Vladimir Gelesnoff, PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, p.128.

LORD! SAVE US!

JESUS SHALL SAVE His people from their sins (Matt.1:21). But even after speaking to them of the perfection enjoyed in this salvation and its high standards of thinking and acting (Matt.5-7) there seemed to be no interest in this great operation, at least as the Saviour's achievement. A leper came to Jesus for cleansing from leprosy (Matt.8:2). A Roman centurion came, requesting healing for his boy who was dreadfully tormented in paralysis (8:5-8). They brought to Him many demoniacs, "and He cast out the spirits with a word, and all those who have an illness He cures" (8:16). But no one came to ask for salvation from sins.

The people may have forgotten this mission of the Lord's, if indeed they had ever given it much thought. But Jesus was fully aware of the work He was involved in and the hardships it involved along the way (*cf* Matt.8:20), as well as the ultimate humiliation needed in order for this salvation to be gained. The cleansing of the leper, the healing of the paralytic and curing of the diseased were pictures of that fuller cleansing from sins that God would accomplish through His Son.

WE ARE PERISHING

No one approached Jesus, saying, "Lord! Save us from our sins!" even though all were perishing with that most universal and devastating of diseases. But His disciples who had followed Him aboard a ship approached Him when a storm from an earthquake threatened their lives. They

roused Him, for He was drowsing, and cried out, "Lord! Save us! We are perishing!" (Matt.8:23-25).

What the disciples said here is what all Israel will say when their eyes are opened to the dangers they are in and to their helplessness in themselves and need of the Saviour. But the disciples lacked one essential element that they and all Israel will possess when they are saved from their sins. That is the blessing of faith in the Saviour and reliance on His goodness, power and love. Jesus criticized the disciples for being "timid" and "scant of faith" (v.26). This will not be so under the new covenant when they all shall know the Lord from the smallest of them to the greatest (Jer.31:34). Then the Rescuer will come out of Zion, and He will establish His covenant and eliminate their sins, and all Israel shall be saved (Rom.11:26-28).

The disciples were right in recognizing this helplessness and in going to Jesus for salvation, but they were wrong in their lack of confidence in the Saviour. To be sure this was a very human sin, and something that we all are guilty of time and time again. But that does not make it right and only indicates that the disciples were not yet saved from their sins. Their sin of unbelief was not as great as the sin of unbelief shown by the scribes and Pharisees, but we must not suppose that the Saviour is concerned only in saving from small sins. The fact that Jesus was the Saviour of these disciples from the churning sea and will save them from all their sins, including that of unbelief, is evidence for, not proof against, the eventual salvation of the unbelieving leaders of Israel from their sins including the sins of unbelief and enmity.

COURAGE, CHILD!

In Matthew 9:1-8 we read about the faith of some in the Lord's ability to heal. These "brought to Him a paralytic, prostrate on a couch," and *perceiving their faith,* He healed

this paralytic with the words, "Courage, child! Pardoned are your sins!" This took the people by surprise, and some of the scribes, who correctly associated pardon of sins with God, immediately inferred that Jesus was speaking blasphemy. Powers for healing were sometimes given to certain people, but the power to pardon sins was something most unusual except in prophecy concerning the Messiah. "[Yahweh] is pardoning all your depravity, Who is healing all your ailments" (Psa.103:3; *cf* Isa.43:25; Jer.33:8).

The pardon of sins is not the same as salvation from sins, but it has this great blessing in view. By saying "Pardoned are your sins," Jesus was employing His authority as Saviour. He would be saving His people from their sins, and in view of that certain achievement He could speak the present pardon of the paralytic. For the paralytic, this pardon was the basis for his present physical healing. The healing was given to one who exhibited even more faith than the disciples had shown on the Sea, but the faith of the paralytic was not the cause of his healing, but rather only a means or channel by which the Saviour brought His work of saving from sin (itself in the restrictive form of pardon) into his life.

BROODING WICKEDNESS IN HEART

Some of the scribes who heard Jesus pardon the sins of the paralytic and witnessed this work of healing were "brooding wickedness" in their hearts rather than being invigorated by faith (Matt.9:3,4). They had even less faith than the disciples who were "scant of faith" (8:26). But those (excluding Judas) who were so often scant of faith will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (*cf* Matt.19:28), and these scribes will likely be included among those sons of the kingdom who will be cast out into outer darkness with lamentation and gnashing of teeth (Matt.8:12).

Furthermore, Jesus called many who were "tribute col-

lectors and sinners" (Matt.9:10-13) rather than the Pharisees who were more diligent in heeding the law. Obviously this was not because the tribute collectors had been meeting the standards laid down in Matthew 5-7. Their careers were full of disobedience to laws that were not at all the least of the precepts (*cf* 5:19). But, like the lepers and the crippled and the diseased, many of the tribute collectors and similar sinners, were aware of their need of a Saviour.

Jesus explained to His disciples, "No need have the strong of a physician, but those having an illness . . . . For I did not come to call the just, but sinners" (Matt.9:12,13). Yet the Pharisees also were sinners. They did not admit it, at least outwardly, but more to the point, they had not been given that righteous honesty to recognize their need; they were not granted even that scantness of faith that was given to the disciples.

We observe in this that the lepers and diseased, and the tribute collectors and noted sinners, were more "fortunate" than the highly disciplined Pharisees and the healthy and prosperous leaders of Israel of that day. There was more opportunity in the lives of Matthew and Peter for the display of God's power for salvation, and His mercy to sinners, than in the lives of the scribes and Pharisees. We rejoice in this operation of divine wisdom and glory. But all this glory is obscured and confused by the teaching that the outer darkness reserved for these Pharisees is an everlasting punishment in hell, both for them and for all who are not called into faith.

HE WHO ENDURES TO THE CONSUMMATION

Jesus did indeed make it clear that there would come a day of judging. For Sodom and Gomorrah it would be more tolerable in that day than for the cities of Israel where the message of warning and hope carried by the disciples

would be rejected (Matt.10:15). Those who would persecute and kill the disciples will face the future prospect of the destruction of their soul and their body in Gehenna (Matt.10:28). And those who would disown Jesus in front of men will be disowned in front of His Father (10:33).

In fact, Jesus indicated that even those who start out following His commission of Matthew 10:5-10 but do not endure under persecutions "to the consummation" might not be saved (10:22). Not only must they have faith, but they also must have endurance in faithfulness.

Still, in the end faith and endurance must be seen as gifts of God, connected to His providential placings and shapings of individuals. A woman was given a hemorrhage for twelve years and so was led to seek healing outside of herself and her own efforts (Matt.9:20-22). A tribute collector named Matthew experienced the disdain of his own people and was given the honesty of knowing some of his sins, such as, perhaps, greed and cowardice. We do not know all the factors that were involved, but it is clear that he was well prepared for a deeper revelation of salvation, one that went beyond physical healing or deliverance from earthquakes on the sea.

On the other hand, many in Israel were calloused and given a spirit of stupor (*cf* Rom.11:7,8). The fact that God determined the course of Peter's life, with all his scantness of faith, and that of the scribes who brooded wickedness in their heart, does not change the fact that each will be judged in accord with his acts. And James the brother of John will be given a throne in the kingdom, while Herod who instigated the assassination of James (Acts 12:1,2) will be condemned to the destruction of his soul and body, as we may well infer from our Lord's words in Matthew 10:28.

Exactly how the Judge will judge all these matters, in consideration of all the factors of each one's life, is beyond

our comprehension. Like David we thankfully leave this to God, Who alone knows all these things. But we must not confuse judgment with the work of the Saviour in saving from sin, and certainly not think of condemnation in the eons ahead as a final state that keeps Jesus from being the Saviour of His people from their sins, and that keeps God from being manifested as the Saviour of all mankind.

EVERY TONGUE SHALL ACCLAIM

It is a great source of frustration that our commonly used translations of the Bible should have rendered certain scriptural terms in such a way that our Lord's teaching concerning judgment confuses and even contradicts His teaching concerning salvation from sins. The fact is that none of the warnings and prophecies of Jesus concerning judgment make it impossible for Him to save all His people and all sinners of all time from their sins. Those who are condemned will be brought to a recognition of need for salvation that surely will surpass the recognition of need possessed by the disciples in the fierce tossing of the Sea, and the paralytic in his seeking out of Jesus, and Matthew the tribute collector in the awareness of his disobedience and disloyalty, and Peter after denying the Lord.

It is beyond such judgment and condemnation that the most stubborn and calloused of sinners out of Israel and all mankind will be blessed with both a realization of their need of a Saviour and appreciation of Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Then, they also will look to Jesus and cry out in faith "Lord! Save us from our sins!" And He will do so on the basis of His death for sinners. Then, in accord with God's own timings, they will join Matthew and the ex-Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, in acclaiming the Lordship of Jesus the Saviour, Who is the Christ, and this for the glory of God, the Father (Phil.2:10,11). D.H.H.

MUTUALLY SOLICITOUS

INSTINCTIVELY, most of us enjoy the companionship and support of others. Much of this was denied the apostle Paul when he suffered imprisonment in Rome.

Yet if Paul's incarceration brought a sense of loneliness and frustration, we find also much that is invigorating and encouraging. He was suffering evil unto bonds as a malefactor, *but the word of God was not bound* (*cf* 2 Tim.2:8-10). In the letters which were penned within those prison walls are recorded the most wonderful revelations ever to be confided from our gracious Father to His privileged children. In the light of such gracious blessings already lavished on those least deserving, our glorious expectation assures that God has a vast treasure store of such love gifts. What future precious disclosures might possibly compare with these:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for a place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved" (Eph.1:3-6).

"For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8-10).

"For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also, Who, being inherently in the form of God,

deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and, being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

"Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God the Father" (Phil.2:5-11).

". . . Who is the image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him.

"And He is Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross,) through Him, whether those on earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:15-20).

OF CAESAR'S HOUSE

Just imagine. For two years there was a constant stream of guards, each daily taking their place of duty alongside the great apostle. We talk today of a "captive audience," but in those circumstances just who was the prisoner and who was the guard? These same guards must have witnessed frequent meetings between Paul and his visitors. They must have listened to some truly amazing discussions! It is highly unlikely that they would have the slightest interest in becoming proselytes in the religion of the despised

Jews, yet there was nothing in Paul's evangel which might provoke conflict in their loyalty to the Empire. There is joy for us as we read the closing words of Paul's "love letter" to the believers in Philippi:

"Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. Greeting you are the brethren with me. Greeting you are all the saints, *yet especially those of Caesar's house*" (Phil.4:21,22).

The above italics have been added to illustrate that far from being bound, the apostle's evangel was widely proclaimed and received. The soldier guards must have relayed the prisoner's words to their families, and of course, to their superiors. During the time of Paul's imprisonment the authorities were most sensitive concerning the stability of the empire. Any threat of rebellion was summarily crushed. But the apostle taught with all boldness, unforbidden, that which concerned the Lord Jesus Christ. His authority for this commission was plainly established when he emphatically suspended the heralding of God's kingdom to the apostate nation of Israel. His declaration of Isaiah's prophecy clearly indicated that this apostasy was to remain, ". . . until the complement of the nations may be entering" (Rom.11:25).

"Let it be known to you, then, that to the nations was dispatched this salvation of God, and they will hear" (Acts 28:28).

THE TIE THAT BINDS

During his exemplary service, Paul suffered grievous persecution. The proud believers in Corinth provoked him into listing these (2 Cor.11:22-33), which doubtless served as a rebuke. However, in his thankful letter to those in Philippi, there shines a most ingenuous quality. Here he presented just a little of himself, his impressive background—which he set aside—his complete commitment, and his earnest expectation. This he fervently yearned to share

with all, and especially those who had so generously contributed to his needs while in prison.

Yet he suffered! He lamented! Fully aware that his confinement would be bringing concern to those in Philippi, he expressed real anxiety that they should not sorrow, but rather rejoice. How touching to read of Epaphroditus being depressed because they had heard that he was infirm. What mutual solicitation is here! Although the apostle urged, "Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing" (Phil.4:4), his heartache now as he observed the envy and strife and faction indicates that this was among the sorest trials of his life.

"THE LORD IS NEAR"

As we approach what we discern as the last days of this present eon, we must all suffer more and more the daunting experience of isolation. Yahweh Elohim, the Creator, in His wisdom knew that the condition of aloneness was not good for humankind (*cf* Gen.2:15-18). The members of the ecclesia share the blessed boon of being God's dwelling place, in spirit (Eph.2:22), but cut off from this great communion, ". . . the entire creation is groaning and travailing together until now" (Rom.8:22).

Even we, ourselves, who are awaiting the sonship, the deliverance, are awaiting it with endurance. We have learned not to be downcast with the apathy which often greets our witness. Daily, we find the most encouraging guidance and comfort in God's precious Word. We have this same consolation without, and we have within, the link, the union of love, which is through His indwelling spirit.

In the circumstances of Paul's imprisonment, he suffered from the knowledge that this would bring sadness to those in Philippi. Do we have this same anxiety for each other? Are we so preoccupied with our own pride and vainglory as to be indifferent to the circumstances of

fellow saints? Are we contentious; envious? Our wonderful blessings should so inspire us that our conduct ought to be in stark contrast to the hypocritical, self exaltation which infects Christianity today. We have not so learned of the humility and self-abasement of our Lord.

To be mutually solicitous for one another is a natural outcome of those who are honored with the unique distinction of being chosen to be members of the body of Christ. The apostle expressed this so searchingly: "And whether one member is suffering, all the members are sympathizing, or one member is being esteemed, all the members are rejoicing with it" (1 Cor.12:26).

Beloved in Christ; whoever you are; wherever you are; comforted in companionship; alone or isolated through location, death, or sad divergence of faith; take heart! "The Lord is near" (Phil.4:6).

Donald Fielding

MEDITATION

Lord, let me meditate upon Thy Word.
How pure Thy sayings, sweeter than the taste
Of honey in my mouth. Let me not waste
My thoughts on human teachings, which afford
No lasting happiness, but rather, Lord,
Create in me the will, Thy truth to learn,
And give me understanding to discern
The priceless gems with which Thy Word is stored.

O, let me seek Thee, then, with my whole heart!
Teach me Thy way, that I may lean on Thee,
And from Thy counsels nevermore depart,
For in Thy Word my greatest joy shall be.
Yes, Father, it shall be my chief delight
To meditate upon it day and night.

John H. Essex

ISRAEL'S FIRST TWO KINGS

THE books of Samuel are largely concerned with Israel's first two kings, and a comparative study of details recorded about them is full of instruction.

Saul is introduced by a genealogy which leads back to Aphiah, who is designated as "a master of valor" (1 Sam.9:1). Then Saul himself is described as ". . . a choice youth and good looking; there was no man of the sons of Israel better looking than he; from his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people" (9:2). Saul was a natural choice for a position of leadership. His family was known for military prowess, and Israel needed deliverance from her enemies, particularly the Philistines. Saul had the appearance of a leader. His name means *asked* or *demanded,* and he was the leader Israel was demanding. He represented what Israel desired.

Saul's name is also nearly the same in Hebrew as *sheol,* which may have acquired its name from its insatiable *demand* for humanity (Prov.30:15,16). Saul's reign was a constant struggle: "The war against the Philistines was unyielding all the days of Saul" (1 Sam.14:52). Saul died in battle, sorely frustrated, giving up his life in defeat (1 Sam.31). Such a thought brings to mind the cry of Paul when he spoke of trying to serve God in the strength of the flesh, "A wretched man am I. What will rescue me out of this body of death?" (Rom.7:24).

On the other hand, the introduction to David seems somewhat backward by human standards. God sent Samuel to Bethlehem, telling him *He had chosen* a king *for*

Himself from among the sons of Jesse (16:1). No longer was it Israel's choice; no longer was it the desire of the flesh that would be set in the place of rule. Instead, there was David whose name means *beloved.* He was not the desire of the nation. His only claim was that he was *beloved.* He was the object of Another's love.

This is faith's only claim. We had nothing. We did nothing. But God loves us—we are beloved. It is the realization of this fact that places the reins of life in the hands of faith.

The 16th chapter of 1 Samuel records David's anointing. In the first verse God sent Samuel, saying He had chosen a king from among Jesse's sons. But David's name is not even mentioned until the 13th verse. God required Samuel to follow instructions without disclosing what the end result would be. The king who would rule in faith would even be anointed as an obedient act of faith.

Jesse and all seven of his elder sons were assembled at the feast. But David was still in the field with the sheep. No one had thought it necessary to send for David—he was overlooked. No one saw in David what God saw in David. David was like the greater Beloved One (Matt.3:17; Col. 1:13) Who was to come many years later. He would be the Stone the builders would reject. But like David, He, the rejected Stone, would become the Head of the corner (Acts 4:11; 1 Pet.2:7). "He has no shapeliness nor honor that we should observe Him, and no such appearance that we should covet Him" (Isa.53:2).

Even Jesse himself did not recognize in David what God saw. Perhaps David was too idealistic, or too musical, or too straight-forward, or too artless, too naive or too uncompromising. For whatever reason, David, like the child Samuel at the feet of Eli, was too young and insignificant to merit attention. But when all *seven*—the number of completion— of Jesse's sons had passed by, it was time for the *eighth.* Like the eighth day for circum-

cision (*cf* Luke 1:59; Col.2:11) this *eighth* speaks of a new beginning with the passing away of the flesh, even with its most desirable aspects. As in the case of Noah (2 Pet.2:5), the *eighth* brings us through judgment to a new world and a new creation.

Saul alone is mentioned as a son of Kish. Evidently Saul was the firstborn, and perhaps the only son of Kish. Saul's precedence to David in the kingship is like the precedence of which Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 15:45, "But not first the spiritual, but the soulish, thereupon the spiritual."

THE HAND OF GOD

From Saul's genealogy the narrative leads directly to Saul's search for his father's jennies. The loss of the jennies, even the minute details in the life of Kish that brought about his ownership of the jennies, even Saul's fruitless wanderings in search of the jennies, were all part of the workings of God. God said to Samuel, "About this time tomorrow, *I shall send a man to you* from the area of Benjamin, and you must anoint him as governor over My people Israel" (1 Sam.9:16). The emphasis of the context on God's disposal of this course of events should draw out the question *Why?* Why was Saul searching for the lost donkeys? Why was he not searching for lost sheep or goats or cattle or horses?

Saul was *not* searching for sheep because his leadership could not be characterized as shepherding. In fact, Saul is here being contrasted with the shepherd David. Saul was searching for donkeys because they are characterized by stubbornness. The scenario is remarkably like that of Israel. Israel was stubbornly wandering away from God, wanting to be like the nations, and serving the flesh. Saul would recover neither the donkeys of Kish nor those of his heavenly Father.

THE STUBBORNNESS OF THE FLESH

The donkey is the epitome of stubbornness, and in this respect is ideally suited to represent humanity in its tenacious clinging to the works of the flesh. We speak not so much in this context of the works of the flesh which are universally considered sinful, but we speak of those works in which the flesh strives to please God and simultaneously to perform something in which it can boast.

In Exodus 13:13 Moses parallels humans and donkeys regarding the redemption of the firstborn. In his parleying with Job, Zophar said, "The hollow man shall become wise of heart whenever the colt of an onager [a wild ass] is born a human" (Job 11:12). In other words, the fool is stubbornly and hopelessly lost in his folly, and only God's grace can remove that folly from him. Paul also speaks of human stubbornness, saying, "For even as you once were stubborn toward God, yet now were you shown mercy at their stubbornness, thus these also are now stubborn to this mercy of yours, that now they also may be shown mercy. For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:30-32; see also Eph.2:1-2).

First, notice the stubbornness in Saul. Saul's impatience in offering the sacrifice before Samuel's arrival at Gilgal is a prime example (1 Sam.13:8-14):

[Saul] waited seven days, the appointed time that Samuel had set; yet Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the force was scattering from him. So Saul said, Bring close to me the ascent approach and the peace offerings; and he offered up the ascent approach. Now it came to be, as soon as he finished offering up the ascent approach, behold, Samuel was coming. And Saul went forth to meet him and bless him. But Samuel said, What have you done? Saul replied, When I saw that the force scattered from me, and you,

you did not come within the appointed days, and the Philistines were being gathered at Michmash, then I thought, Now the Philistines shall come down against me to Gilgal, and I have not yet beseeched the face of Yahweh. So I felt compelled to offer up the ascent approach.

Samuel replied to Saul, You acted unwisely! O that you had observed the instruction of Yahweh your Elohim that He enjoined on you! Then Yahweh would now have established your dynasty over Israel for the eon. Yet now your dynasty shall not be confirmed. Yahweh has sought out for Himself a man in accord with His own heart; and Yahweh shall commission him as governor over His people, for you have not observed what Yahweh enjoined on you.

Samuel's remonstrance of Saul shows that God's delight is in the obedience that comes from listening to God rather than the beckonings of the world, and in the devoted attention that weighs actions against the revealed will of God rather than the frantic displays of the flesh (*cf* 15:10-23). Samuel described Saul's actions as *rebellion, insubordination and rejection of Yahweh's command.* These three are a good summation of the stubbornness of the flesh.

Even the place of Saul's stubborn disobedience is significant. It was at Gilgal, which means *rolling away.* Israel, wandering in the wilderness, was an example of the flesh trying to serve God. Failure and grumbling menaced every step. It was Israel's fear and stubborn reliance upon the flesh and its appraisal of circumstances which kept them from entering the promised land earlier. At Gilgal the new generation was circumcised—the flesh was cut off. "Then Yahweh said to Joshua, 'Today I have *rolled the reproach* of Egypt away from you.' So they call the name of that place Gilgal until this day" (Josh.5:9). In the cross, which is the circumcision of Christ, our body of flesh is stripped off (Col.2:11). In His resurrection our reproach is rolled away. The rolling away of the stone from His tomb speaks

of the rolling away of our reproach. And this has its place in the believer's life too, for "those of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together with its passions and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

Israel's stubbornness in the days of Saul was little different than in the days of Christ. Stephen, before the Jews, said, "*Stiff-necked and uncircumcised in your hearts and ears, you are ever clashing with the holy spirit!*" (Acts 7:51). And the nations are no better. Paul to the Galatians wrote: "O foolish Galatians! . . . did you get the spirit by works of law or by the hearing of faith? So foolish are you? Undertaking in spirit, are you now being completed in flesh?" (Gal.3:1-3). "For the flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh. Now these are opposing one another, lest you should be doing whatever you may want" (Gal.5:17). This is all stubbornness to the complete and perfect work of God in Christ Jesus.

Saul never found the jennies. This is typical of our inability ever to reform the flesh. And, in contrast with Saul's failure is the record of David's behavior as a shepherd. When Jesse sent David to check on the welfare of his brothers in Saul's service, it is recorded that David left the sheep in the care of a keeper (17:20). This brings to mind that Christ did not leave His disciples alone, but sent the spirit of truth to console and guide them (John 16). Furthermore, in David's conversation with Saul, he told how he had protected the sheep, even rescuing them from the mouths of lions and bears (17:34-36).

Christ entered Jerusalem riding the colt of a donkey which never before had been ridden (Mark 11:1-11). This shows that His completed work is sufficient to vanquish the stubborn flesh and all its works and transform us into children of God. This is true not only of individuals, but also of Israel nationally, as the future will witness, and eventually of all humanity.

J. Philip Scranton

1 Samuel 9

9 +**There** [lb]**was** a **man from ~Gibeah of~ Benjamin;** + **his name** was **Kish son of Abiel son of Zeror son of Becorath son of Aphiah,** the **son of** a Ben**jamite man,** a **master of valor.** 2 + **He** [b]**came** to ›**have** a **son, and his name** was **Saul,** a **choice** youth **and good** looking; + there **was no man** [f]**of** the **sons of Israel better** looking [f]**than he; from his** [bk]**shoulder**s + **upward** he was **taller** [f]**than any of the people.**

3 +**When the jennies** ›**of Saul's father Kish** got [l]**lost,** + **Kish** [l]**said to his son Saul, Take** [pr]**now** `with **you** `**one** [f]**of the lads;** + **get up, go** and **seek** `**the jennies.** 4 +**So** [7]**they~**[c] [l]**passed** [i]**through** the **hill** country **of Ephraim, and** [7]**they~**[s] [l]**passed** [i]**through** the **area of Shalisha,** +**but they** did **not find** them. + **They** [l]**passed** [i]**through** the **area of Shaalim,** +**yet** they **were no**t there. +**When** [7]**they~**[cs] [l]**passed** [i]**through** the Ben**jamite area, they** +**still** did **not find** them. 5 **They´ had come in**to the **area of Zuph** +**when Saul said to his lad who** was **with him,** Do [go]**come,** + **let us** [l]**return, lest my father** [l]**stop worrying** [f]**about the jennies and be**come **anxious** ›**about us.** 6 +**Yet** [7]**the lad**[0] [l]**said to him, Behold** [pr]**now,** a **man of Elohim** is **in** ·**this city, and the man** is highly **respected**[l]**; every**thing [w]**that he** [l]**speaks** [l]**comes,** yea **comes**– true**. Now let us** [l]**go there; perhaps he shall tell** › **us** `**our way on which we** should **go.** 7 + **Saul** [ls]**replied to his lad,** +**But** [bd]**if we** [l]**go,** + **what shall we bring** › the **man? For the bread** [f]**in our** [all]**bags is used up, and** there **is no** token of **regard** [7]**with us**[0] **to bring to the man of Elohim. What** do `**we** have**?** 8 + **The lad** › **answered**– `**Saul** [l]**again,** + [l]**saying, Behold,** I **find** I have a **quarter of** a **shekel of silver in my hand.** + [7]**We~**[c] may **give** it **to the man of Elohim, and he will tell** › **us** `about **our way.**

9 **Beforetime in Israel,** [i]**when** ·a **man went**– **to inquire** of **Elohim, he would** [sa]**speak thus,** [go]**Come and let us** [l]**go** [fr]**to the seer**[l]**; for beforetime** › the **prophet** of **today was**

[l]**called** ·a **seer**[l]**.—**10 +**So Saul** [l]**said to his lad, Good** is **your word;** do [go]**come, let us** [l]**go.** +**So they** [l]**went to the city where the man of Elohim** was**.**

11 As **they** were go**ing up** [i] the **ascent** to **the city,** + **they´ found maidens** com**ing forth to bail water; and they** [ls]**asked** › **them, Is** there **the seer**[l] **in this** place**?** 12 + **They** [l]**answered** `**them,** + [l]**saying,** He **is** there**; behold before you! Make haste now,** [t]**because today he has come to** the **city; for** there is a **sacrifice today for** the **people** [i]**on** the **high-place.** 13 **As** soon as **you enter**– **the city, you shall** [so]**surely find** `**him** [i] **ere he** goes [l]**up** to[d] **the high-place to eat.** [t] **The people shall not eat until he comes**–**; for he´** must [l]**bless the sacrifice,** [7]**and**[cs] **afterward** those ·who are **invited**[l] **shall eat.** + **Now** go **up, for you shall find** `**him right away.** 14 +**So they** went [l]**up** to **the city.** When **they came**[l] **in**to the **midst of the ~gate~, behold** +**there** was **Samuel** com**ing forth to meet them** ›**on** his [on]**way**– up to **the high-place.**

15 +**Now one day before Saul came**–**, Yahweh Him**self **had revealed** `to the **ear of Samuel,** › **saying**–**,** 16 [as]**About** this **time** to**morrow, I shall send** a **man to you from** the **area of Benjamin, and you** must **anoint him** ›**as governor over My people Israel.** + **He will save** `**My people from** the **hand of** the **Philistines, for I have seen** `[7]the **humiliation of~ My people,** [t]**and their** out**cry has come to Me.**

17 +**When Samuel saw** `**Saul,** + **Yahweh Him**self **responded** to **him:** [bd]**Here** is **the man** of **whom I** [sa]**spoke to you; this** one **shall steer** the course [i]**of My people.** 18 +**Then Saul** came [l]**close** `to **Samuel in** the **midst of the gate and** [l]**said** to him, Do **tell** › **me,** [pr]**please, just where** is the **house of the seer**[l]**?** 19 + **Samuel** [l]**answered** `**Saul,** + [l]**saying, I** am **the seer**[l]**.** Go **up before me** to **the high-place,** +**for** =**you** must **eat with me today.** + **In** the **morning I will send you** off**, and I shall tell** › **you every**thing [w]**that** is **in your heart.** 20 +**As for your jennies** ·that got **lost**[l] **three** ·**days** ago **today, you must not** [lp]**set** `**your heart** ›**on them, for they have been**

found. +Now to *a*__**whom**__ does **all** that is **desirable** in **Israel** belong if **not to you and to all** the **house of your father?** 21 + **Saul** |__**answered,**__ + |__**saying,**__ Am **I not** a **Benjamite, from** the **smallest of** the **tribes of Israel? + My family** is **the** most **insignificant** *f*__**of all**__ the **families of the** *7*__**tribes~***__*c* **of Benjamin. +So why** do **you speak to me** *as*__**in**__ ˙**this manner?**

22 +**Then Samuel** |__**took**__ `**Saul and** `**his lad and** |__**brought them**__ into*d* the **room and** |__**gave**__ › **them** a *ri*__**place**__ *i*__**at**__ the **head of** those ˙who had been **invited**|; + **they** were *as*__**about thirty men.** 23 + **Samuel** |__**said to**__ the *sl*__**cook,**__ Do *g*__**bring**__ `**the assigned** share *w*__**that I gave to you,**__ of **which I said to you,** *pl*__**Set**__ `**it** aside *wi*__**by you.** 24 +__**So the**__ *sl*__**cook**__ |__**raised up**__ `**the leg and the ~fat tail~ and** |__**placed**__ them **before Saul. And** *7*__**Samuel**__*0* |__**said**__ *7*__**to Saul**__*0*__**, Behold,**__ ~˙What was **kept**| reserved~ is *pl*__**set**__– **before you. Eat; for to** this **appointed** time has it been **kept**| **for you,** when I ›**had said**–**, I have invited the people. +So Saul** |__**ate with Samuel**__ *i*__**on**__ ˙**that day.** 25 +__**Then they**__ |__**descended from the high-place**__ to **the city; and he** |__**spoke with Saul on the roof-level.**__

26 + **They** *c*__**arose**__ |__**early;**__ + **it came** to |__**be as the dawn ascended**__–**,** +__**that Samuel**__ |__**called to Saul**__ *7*__**on**__*0* **the roof-level,** › **saying**–**,** Do **get up** +__**that I may send you** off. + **Saul** |__**got up, and** the **two of them, he and Samuel,** went |__**forth,**__ ˙__**outside**__*d*__**.**__ 27 As **they** were go**ing down** *i*__**to**__ the **end of the city,** + **Samuel said to Saul,** *sa*__**Tell**__ › the **lad** +__**that he should pass** on **before us,—and he** |__**passed**__ on—+__**as** for **you, stand** still *as*__**for awhile, and I shall announce** to **you** `the **word of Elohim.**__

❋

1 Samuel 16

16 + **Yahweh** |__**said to Samuel, How**__ *fr*__**long**__ will **you mourn**| **for Saul,** +__**since I´ have rejected him from** being **king**–__ **over**

Israel? Fill your horn with **oil and go! I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have** *see*__**selected**__ *i*__**among his sons** a **king for My**self. 2 + **Samuel** |__*sa*__**replied, How** can **I** |__**go?**__ +__**If Saul hears** of it, + **he will kill me.** + **Yahweh** |__*sa*__**answered,** *7*__**Take~**__*Qc* a **heifer of** the **herd in your hand and** –__**say, I have come to sacrifice to Yahweh.**__ 3 + **You** must **invite** › **Jesse** *7*__**to~**__*c* the **sacrifice, and** then **I´ shall** *c*__**make known** to **you** `*w*__**what you should do.** + **You** must **anoint for Me** `the one **whom I shall** *sa*__**designate to you.**__

4 + **Samuel** |__**did**__ `*w*__**as Yahweh had**__ *sp*__**instructed** him. +__**When he** |__**came**__ to **Bethlehem,** + the **elders of the city** |__**trembled**__ ›**as** they **met**– **him.** + *7*__**They~**__*cs* |__*sa*__**asked,** Are **you coming**– in **peace,** *7*__**O seer**__|*Q*__**?**__ 5 + **He** |__*sa*__**replied, I have come** in **peace to sacrifice to Yahweh. Hallow** your**selves and** *7*__**rejoice today~**__ `with **me.** + **He** himself |__**hallowed**__ `**Jesse and** `**his sons and** |__**invited**__ › **them to** the **sacrifice.**

6 + **It** |__*b*__**came** about *i*__**when they entered**__– **and he** |__*see*__**looked** `at **Eliab,** +__**that he** |__*sa*__**thought,**__ *y*__**Surely,** in **front of Yahweh** is **His anointed.** 7 +__**But Yahweh** |__**said to Samuel, You must not** |__**look**__ ›**at his appearance and** ›**at** the **loftiness of his stature, for I have rejected him. For not** *w*__**as**__ ˙a **human** |__**sees,**__ *7*__**does**__ the One**, Elohim,** |__**see**__*0***.** *t* ˙A **human´** |__**sees**__ › the **visible** appearance**,** +__**yet Yahweh´** |__**sees**__ in**to** the **heart,** 8 +__**Then Jesse** |__**called**__ › **Abinadab and** *c*__**made him**__ |__**pass before Samuel;**__ +__**but he** |__**said, Yahweh has not chosen** *i*__**this** one *mr*__**either.**__ 9 +__**When Jesse** *c*__**made Shammah**__ |__**pass**__ by**, he** +__**again** |__**said, Yahweh has not chosen** *i*__**this** one *mr*__**either.**__ 10 +__**Thus Jesse** *c*__**made seven of his sons** |__**pass before Samuel, and Samuel** |__**said to Jesse, Yahweh has not chosen** any *i*__**of these.**__

11 +__**Then Samuel** |__*sa*__**asked**__ › **Jesse, Are the lads finished?** + **He** |__*sa*__**replied,** There **remains** *fr*__**yet the youngest.** +__**Yet behold,** he is **shepherding** *i* the **flock.** + **Samuel** |__**said to Jesse,**__ Do **send and procure him, for we shall not** gather **around until he comes**– **here.** 12 +__**So he** |__**sent and** *c*__**had**__

him |**come;** + **he** was **ruddy, with lovely eyes and** of **good appearance. And Yahweh** |**said, Rise** and **anoint him, for this** is **he.** 13 +**So Samuel** |**took** `**the horn of oil and** |**anointed** `**him in** the [nr]**midst of his brothers; and** the **spirit of Yahweh** |**prospered** ›**on David from** ˙**that** ˙**day** + **onward.** +**Then Samuel** |**rose and** |**went** to[d] ˙**Ramah.**

14 +**As** for the **spirit of Yahweh, it had withdrawn from** [wi] **Saul, and** an **evil spirit from** `**Yahweh frightened him.** 15 + **Saul's courtiers** |**said to him, Behold** [pr]**now,** an **evil spirit** from **Elohim** is **frightening you.** 16 **Let our lord** [pr]**now** [sa]**order your courtiers,** who are **before you,** that **they should seek** a **man** who **knows**| how to **play**| [i] the **harp.** +**Whenever it** [b]**occurs** [i]**that** an **evil spirit** from **Elohim** [b]**comes**– **over you,** +**then he will play** [i]**with his hand, and it will be well** ›**with you** [7]**and** [c]**give you rest**[0]**.** 17 +**So Saul** |**said to his courtiers,** [see]**Select** [pr]**now for me** a **man** who ›**can play**– **well**|**, and** –**bring** him **to me.** 18 + **One** [f]**of the young attendants** |**answered,** + |**saying, Behold, I have** [see]**observed** a **son** ›**of Jesse the Bethlehemite** who **knows**| how to **play**–**.** + He is a **master of valor,** + a **man of war,** + **proficient**| in **speech,** + a **handsome man, and Yahweh** is **with him.** 19 +**So Saul** |**sent messengers to Jesse,** + |**saying,** Do **send to me** `**David, your son who** is [i]**with** [7]**your**[0] **flock.**

20 + **Jesse** |**took** a **donkey** [7]**and** |[pl]**loaded on it** an **omer**[0] **of bread,** + a **skin-bottle of wine, and one kid of** the **goats, and** |**sent** it **to Saul** [i]**by** the **hand of his son David.** 21 +**So David** |**came to Saul and** |**stood before him.** + Saul |**liked him very** much**, and** later David |**became** a [all]**gear-bearer**| **for him.** 22 + **Saul** |**sent** word **to Jesse,** › **saying**–**, Let David** [pr]**now stay before me, for he has found favor in my eyes.** 23 +**Whenever it** [b]**occurred** [i]**that** an [7]**evil**[0] **spirit** from **Elohim** [b]**came**– ›**over Saul,** +**then David took** `**the harp and played** [i]**with his hand.** + **It inspirited** › **Saul, and it was well** ›**with him.** +**Then the evil spirit would withdraw from** [on] **him.**

THE THUNDER OF GOD'S MASTERFUL DEEDS

WHAT Job's associates say is not absolutely wrong, but it is often wrong in implication and application. Truth concerning God is not used by them to bring strength and assurance to the suffering Job, but rather just the opposite. And there is no real interest in glorifying God for His power and wisdom and righteousness, but rather in defending their own concepts of His glory, thus in effect deflecting glory to themselves.

DIVINE DOMINION AND HUMAN DEPRAVITY

Bildad's final, and very brief, address repeats thoughts that were previously brought forward by others (*cf* Job 4:17-19; 15:14-16) concerning God's power and human insignificance. God has dominion and awesome might (25:2), and man is a maggot and worm before Him (v.6).

The facts are so; the significance given to the facts is "not rightly so" (*cf* Job 42:8). The One with awesome might and numberless troops does establish peace, but if this has application to Job in his present affliction it is not a simple use of divine force in retribution against little creatures for whom God has no very deep interest, as Bildad suggests. It is true, as Job himself has testified, that a mortal (in himself) cannot be justified before El (*cf* 9:26), but Bildad repeats this truism in order to distance God from human humiliation and woe. And this offers nothing to Job except hopelessness and multiplied despair. It is well that the three associates are now silenced.

ONE WITHOUT VIGOR

Job's response is sarcasm in 26:2-4 followed by a magnificent poem concerning ancient operations of what Bildad called God's "dominion and awesome might."

How Bildad has helped Job! He has spoken of God's power to one who is without vigor, and of the counsels of God to one who is without wisdom. But what he has said offers no hope to Job for strength or understanding.

As he has all along, Job turns his attention from his associates and their insinuations, and he endeavors to direct his thoughts to God and His operations. Since Yahweh has not yet spoken to Job, he can dwell only on previous revelations of God as passed down from generation to generation. The superb poem of Job 26:5-14 concerns a "little buzz" of the thunder of God's masterful deeds (26:14) in past times, most particularly as recorded in Genesis 1:2,3.

Job has referred to this passage before, and the reason for his great interest in it is not difficult to see. The chaos (*cf* Job 26:7) and darkness (*cf* 26:10) of Genesis 1:2 parallel that in Job's present existence, and the operation of God's spirit and word in bringing seemliness out of the chaos (Job 26:12,13) suggests a possible parallel to Job's own deliverance. The waters and thick clouds covering the earth and blocking out the full moon (26:8,9) reflect the account of Genesis concerning the abyss covered by darkness. And here also Job sees God acting on the surface of the waters, using again, as he did in 24:18, almost exactly the same phrase used at the end of the second verse of the Scriptures. Whatever God's action is, whether delineating the horizon or circling a limit,[1] over the surface of the waters, He is seen here as bringing order out of chaos. And that is where Job's expectation lies.

1. These two phrases are alternative translations for the opening words of Job 26:10.

JOB 25,26

25 +**Then Bildad the Shuhite** |**answered,** + |**saying:**
2 **Dominion**– **and awesome** might are **with Him,**
Who is [d]**establishing peace in His heights.**
3 **Is** it possible to **number** › **His troops,**
And on [a]**whom** does **His light not** |**rise?**
4 [wt]**How** +**then** can a **mortal be** |**justified** [wi]**before El,**
And [wt]**how** can one **born**| **of woman be** |**spotless?**
5 [bd]**If** [fr]**even** the **moon** + does **not** |**irradiate,**
And the **stars, they are not spotless in His eyes,**
6 **How much less** [t] a **mortal,** that **maggot,**
And a **son of humanity,** that **worm?**

26 +**So Job** |**answered,** + |**saying:**
2 [wt]**How you have helped** one **without vigor**
And **saved** an **arm** [not]**without strength!**
3 [wt]**How you have counseled** one › **without wisdom,**
And the **reality** of things
you have › [mn]**abundantly** [c]**made known!**
4 `For [a]**whom have you told** these **declarations,**
And [a]**whose breath has** come **forth from you?**
5 The **Rephaim, they** |**travailed,**
[f] Those **beneath** the **waters and tabernacling** in **them.**
6 The **unseen** was **naked** in **front of Him,**
And there **was no covering for Abaddon.**
7 He **stretched**| **out** the **north over** the **chaos,**
Hanging the **earth** up**on nothingness.**
8 He **bundled**| up the **waters in His thick** cloud**s,**
And the **cloud was not rent beneath them.**

The opening passages of Genesis say nothing about Rephaim[2] (Job 26:5) or Abaddon (v.6; *cf* Job 28:22; 31:12; Psa.88:11; Rev.9:11) or Rahab (v.12; *cf* Job 9:13; Psa.87:4; 89:10; Isa.30:7; 51:9), though these are used elsewhere in Scripture often in contexts concerning ancient upheavals. As Yahweh Himself will do later, Job draws attention to great and fearful creations of God, human and animal and non-terrestrial, and God's inscrutable judgments (*cf* Rom.11:33) and dealings with them.

In 26:7 Job speaks of the earth in chaos, having been hung upon nothingness; it is seen covered by God's thick clouds which kept back the light of the full moon (v.8). But then in verse 10, using the language of Genesis 1:2, Job sees God marking out a horizon in all the murkiness of water and cloud and diffused and dimmed light, so that light and darkness were separated as in Genesis 1:4 and the waters were divided as in Genesis 1:6. The invisible power of God is at work here so that the "columns" supporting all this cover of liquids and gases were made to collapse (v.11) and the sea is lulled, and "Rahab" (which means "Audacious" and is often used in reference to Egypt, and perhaps refers here to rushing channels of water) is transfixed and brought under control.

Job 26:13 speaks of two pivotal events of enormous significance. By God's spirit the heavens were made seemly, so that clarity and beauty filled the skies. And by His hand He travailed in the creation of the fugitive serpent. Genesis informs us only that God made every creature, and consequently we assume this includes the Adversary who appears as a serpent in Genesis chapter 3. But here in Job we learn not only that God made the Adversary, but that He did so with struggle and pain like the travailing of a woman in childbirth. God is responsible for all these

2. *cf Unsearchable Riches*, vol.22, p.255.

9 He **held**[l] back the **face of** the **~full moon~,**
Spreading⁻ over it His cloud.
10 **~He delineated** the **horizon~ over** the sur**face of** the **waters,**
Unto the [all]**boundary of light with darkness.**
11 The **columns of** the **heavens were made** to [l]**collapse**
And were [l]**stunned** [f]**at His rebuke.**
12 [i]**By His vigor He lulled the sea,**
And [i]**by His understanding He transfixed Rahab.**
13 [i]**By His spirit** the **heavens were made seemly;**
His hand travailed with the **fugitive serpent.**
14 **Behold, these** are but the **fringes of His ways,**
And what a little **buzz of** a **word is heard** [i]**of Him!**
[+]**Yet** the **thunder of His masterful** deeds**,**
[a]**who shall understand** it**?**

26:9 ~~ **full moon:** MT **throne.**
26:10 ~~ **He delineated** the **horizon:** MT **He circled** a **statutory** limit.

❋

epoch-shaping events, both positive and negative. And this is vital to Job's whole struggle and to our own appreciation of God and this portion of His Word.

THE FUGITIVE SERPENT

God brings travail to the Rephaim, exposes the dark and hiddenness of Sheol, and lulls and transfixes the waters. He is greater than all of these, and His triumphs over them are but minor actions in comparison with the immensity of His masterful deeds.

But of all the comparisons in power presented here, that made in Job 26:13 is most remarkable. *By God's spirit the heavens were made seemly; His hand travailed with the fugitive serpent.* A. E. Knoch commented on this passage many years ago:[3]

3. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.15, pp.206-208.

"Note the contrast between the garnishing of the heavens by His *spirit*, and the painful production of the serpent by His *hand*. The spirit is used of intimate and vital association; the hand holds its work at a distance, and suggests power and skill, rather than communion.

". . . Not only is the term *serpent* the same as the name of Eve's tempter in Eden's garden, but Isaiah describes it in precisely the same terms, the *fugitive serpent* (Isa.27:1). 'In that day, Yahweh shall visit with His sword, hard, great and steadfast, upon leviathan, the fugitive serpent, even upon leviathan, the tortuous serpent, and He will kill the monster which is in the sea.' [The] connection with the twelfth chapter of Revelation is too close to deny. If Satan is that 'ancient serpent' (Rev.20:2), how can we help but identify him with Isaiah and Job and Genesis?"

For all their vast proportions, these operations of God in creation and disruption and making seemly are only "fringes of His ways," (Job 26:14). What they say about God's dominion and awesome might (25:2) constitute only "a little buzz of a word." The full "thunder of His masterful deeds" is beyond human grasp.

Having expanded the greatness of God and the power of His deeds far beyond the feeble attempt of Bildad in chapter 25, Job has shown himself as even more insignificant a maggot and worm than Bildad had thought. But the greatness of God and the littleness of the human does not remove us out of the sphere of divine purpose and concern. The buzz of God's deeds as surely and as truly involves the boils and sorrows that engulf Job as the lulling of the raging waters of the inundated earth and the making seemly of the tempestuous heavens of the disruption of Genesis 1:2. Job's afflictions are somehow bound together with God's own travail in forming the Adversary, and the thunder of God's masterful deeds will resound effectively and victoriously over it all. D.H.H.

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 The Stupidity and the Wisdom of the Cross
154 Elohim Understands
165 Anointed as King
172 In the Day of Judging
179 Unpardoned Sin
183 Walking in Spirit

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 1997
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

We cannot walk worthily of the calling with which we were called (*cf* Eph.4:1) if we are not coming to know what that calling is. We cannot walk worthily of the evangel (Phil. 1:27) if we are not familiar with that evangel that Paul was commissioned to bring to the nations. We cannot walk worthily of the Lord (Col.1:10) if we are not acquainted with Jesus Christ as our Lord, or walk worthily of God (1 Thess.2:12) if we are not growing in realization of Him Who calls us into His own kingdom and glory.

The foundation of our calling lies in the crucifixion of Christ, which is the wisdom of God (see p.147). This word of the cross is what alone leads to true "humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love" (Eph.4:2). Hence Paul testifies, "With Christ have I been crucified, yet I am living; no longer I, but living in me is Christ" (Gal.2:20). There is no room for boasting in ourselves or for setting ourselves above others, for our justification is gratuitous, through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24), and reconciliation is through the blood of His cross (Col.1:20).

Recently I have been reading some books that try to defend the traditional teaching of an everlasting hell. Not only is this doctrine unreasonable and untenable in the light of God's Word (see p.172), but it also is bound to have harmful effects on our thinking and our behavior. One writer thinks of evangelizing unbelievers solely in terms of warning the unsaved concerning the torments of hell. Indeed very few who claim to be evangelists give primary attention to the evangel that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1-4). The evan-

gel of our salvation is a message concerning what Christ *has done* for sinners, not what sinners must do in order to escape the drastic consequences of eternal miseries in hell. The love of Christ as revealed in the evangel is that which constrains us in the worthy walk (*cf* 2 Cor.5:14,15).

It is the twisting of the evangel, such as attempts to harmonize it with unscriptural ideas such as an "unpardonable sin" (see p.179), that has drastic consequences, not eternally catastrophic, but with serious loss to our present joy and peace and a worthy walk. When we overlook the fact that God chooses us in Christ before we were born, even before evil and sin had entered the world, and that God calls us in grace and graciously grants us faith, instilling His spirit and operating in us, it is pride rather than humility, and dissension rather than meekness, and strife rather than patience, and callousness rather than love, that are bound to creep into our lives.

Job's concentration on God in the midst of his affliction (see p.154), and David's reliance on God rather than his flesh (see p.165) present ideal parallels for us in our walk. Walking in spirit and bearing its fruit (see p.183) is based on the appreciation of God's love in the gift of His Son. All believers can testify to this. The more we know His grace, the more we grow in grace. But if God's love is not seen as involved in *all* His works, including judgment and condemnation, there is bound to be a stunting of the fruit of the spirit in our lives.

With these concerns in view, we send out another issue of *Unsearchable Riches.* We do so with the prayer that we all be growing in realization of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who calls us with a holy calling, and be becoming more and more acquainted with His Son Who is our Lord and Who is revealed in the evangel founded on His faithful obedience to the death of the cross.

D.H.H.

THE STUPIDITY AND THE WISDOM OF THE CROSS

A DEATH of shame and ignominy is the very opposite of what the world is striving for, and the pathway least able to lead to success and glory. Yet in the case of Christ, His lifework was a failure, and His death was a disgrace as judged by every human standard. No wonder, not only His lowly life, but His scandalous death became a *snare* to the nation of Israel (1 Cor.1:23), and they repudiated Him. They, like the rest of the world, wanted a great Leader and a successful King, Who will not be gibbeted on a pole, but triumph over all who dare to oppose Him. Such a One they will have, in the future, but His earthly glories, as well as His celestial supremacy, will be based on His death for deliverance, His suffering for salvation, and His disgrace for glory.

The fleshly rite of circumcision was given to Abraham and to his people as a sign of the *cutting off* of the flesh. But the chosen nation perverted it to a badge of honor which elevates them above the other nations in the flesh. They reversed its significance and cancelled its power. Not until they are taught to strip off the flesh by the power of the spirit, will they be set over the other nations, not to tyrannize over them and degrade them, but to teach and help them to know the blessing of subjection to their Yahweh, the Subjector.

In Paul's day *many* of the saints were conducting themselves as *enemies* of the cross of Christ, of whom he spoke often with lamentation (Phil.3:18). Today Christendom as a whole adores the ornamental crucifix in their ritual, but

neither knows nor cares about conduct which is in accord with His death upon the accursed stake, and our crucifixion with Him. Paul, in their day, exemplified this, so that they could see it in action. But how few, today, even approach to it, or even desire it? And how many oppose and decry it, even if a feeble attempt is made in that direction!

THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD

Worldly wisdom is the opposite of the word of the cross. The wise of this world can see no sense in the cross of Christ, nor in a way of life according to it. "For the word of the cross is stupidity, indeed, to those who are perishing . . . . Christ crucified . . . [is] to the nations stupidity" (1 Cor.1:18,23). Their chief effort is to obtain as much wealth and honor and power as the world can give, without any regard to the life to come. They do not realize that this life is a very brief preparation for the perpetual hereafter (*cf* 2 Cor.4:17).

Even if they could see the difference in time, it is even more difficult for them to see the sense in undergoing suffering and shame in view of the future, or how this can prepare them for the glory. Alas! Most believers, like the Corinthians, do not realize that this present life is not our goal, but only a prelude to perpetuity. Indeed, they might ask, If God is love, why does He not display it by present earthly, soulish blessing? They cannot see that this brings little or none of the heartfelt response that He craves, or that this prepares us for our great mission of revealing His love to other creatures in the universe.

STUPIDITY IN THE SCRIPTURES

The greatest stupidity, perhaps, is to be ignorant of God's words and ways, and so ignore them. That is the way of the world. The supreme wisdom is to study God's words and conform to them. That should be the aim of all the saints.

Almost everyone has a vague idea of what is meant by stupidity, yet it may help us to comprehend its force in the Scriptures, especially when associated with crucifixion. We will first consider the occasions on which our Lord used it in His ministry. In each case there is an underlying principle that applies at all times, which may help us avoid some of the stupidity with which we are engulfed.

A LASTING FOUNDATION

Even in connection with the kingdom on earth, this principle applies. Our Lord likened His hearers to two men, one *prudent*, the other *stupid*. "Everyone, then, who is hearing these sayings of Mine and is doing them shall be likened to a prudent man who builds his house on the rock. And the rain descended, and the rivers came, and the winds blow and they lunge at that house, and it does not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who is hearing these sayings of Mine and not doing them shall be likened to a stupid man who builds his house on sand. And the rain descended, and the rivers came, and the winds blow and they dash against that house, and it falls: and the fall of it was great" (Matt.7:24-27).

The prudent man looked forward to the future. He knew, even as we all realize to some extent, that the weather is changeable. Hence he reckoned with conditions in the future, where the violence of the wind and water would not damage or destroy his house. Consequently he founded it on a rock. We should also look ahead, and base our doings on the only firm foundation in the universe—the Word of God. But even the rocks will melt in the final conflagration, so we must build on that which will also stand the fire and be found in the new creation, in which we already have a place, in spirit.

Man's doing, man's word, man's world is continually changing and shifting and forms no firm basis on which

to build our lives. It is not merely imprudent, but *stupid,* to found our future on anything less than the immutable, lasting verities revealed to us through the Scriptures. Those to whom our Lord spoke had to conform in order to enter the *earthly kingdom.* We have a much greater and grander outlook. Would it not be stupid of us to base our lives on the present evil and evanescent eon?

DIVINE VALUES

Later, Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees: "Woe to you, blind guides! who are saying, 'Whoever should be swearing by the temple, it is nothing; yet whoever should be swearing by the gold of the temple is owing.' Stupid and blind! for which is greater, the gold, or the temple that hallows the gold? And, 'Whoever should be swearing by the altar, it is nothing; yet whoever should be swearing by the approach present upon it is owing.' Stupid and blind! for which is greater, the approach present or the altar that is hallowing the approach present?" (Matt.23:16-19).

The scribes and Pharisees, the religious leaders of our Lord's day, were *blind* as well as *stupid.* They put material riches above spiritual values. Subconsciously, by their teaching, they exposed the lack of their own hearts. They claimed that swearing by the temple caused no obligation, but swearing by the gold on it was binding. But is not this true in religious circles today? The divine presence is not nearly so binding as financial obligations. A man must pay his debts, but his obligations to the Deity are not important and may be overlooked.

STUPID AND PRUDENT

In the parable of the ten virgins (Matt.25:1-12), Jesus spoke of five who were stupid, who got their torches without a supply of extra oil. "Now in the middle of the night a clamor occurs: 'Lo! the bridegroom! Come out to meet

him!' Then roused were all those virgins, and they adorn their torches. Now the stupid said to the prudent, 'Give us of your oil, for our torches are going out.' Yet the prudent answered, saying, 'No, lest at some time there should not be sufficient for us and you.'"

For this life many *seem* to be prudent by making due provision for the physical needs as long as they live. Like the five stupid virgins, they have enough oil to last until the bridegroom comes, but have made no provision for the final meeting. They prudently provide for this life, which may not last more then a few moments. Even if it stretches out to a century, what is that in comparison to the rest of the eons, or the unending consummation?

WISDOM AND THE CROSS

What is the wisdom of this world? In order to intelligently appreciate the wisdom of God, as exhibited in the cross of Christ, it would be helpful to have some idea of what the world deems the highest wisdom. Recently my attention was drawn to a public address on the subject, "What is wisdom?" As the speaker was an author as well as a philosopher, and an acute thinker, it may be taken as among the best that a godless human can produce. It was introduced by a fine acknowledgment of the author's insignificance: "I feel like a droplet of spray which, proudly poised for a moment on the crest of a wave, undertakes to analyze the sea."

He commences well, as follows: "Ideally, wisdom is *total perspective*—seeing an object, event, or idea in *all* its pertinent relationships. Spinoza defined wisdom as seeing things *in view of eternity.* I suggest defining it as seeing things *in view of the whole.* Obviously we can merely *approach* such a total perspective. *To possess it would be to be God."*

This is really a frank acknowledgement, not only of the *limitation* of human wisdom, but of its *fallibility* and *folly*.

In *time* he can see only a little of the past, and none of the future. In *space* he can see only fragments of the universe. Pure reason alone should convince him that he is in need of a divine revelation.

THE STUPIDITY OF WORLDLY WISDOM

Although the very definition which our philosopher gives to human wisdom leads him to the very gateway of all wisdom, he is so stupid that he will not enter. Since he acknowledges that there is a God Who possesses all wisdom, why does he not seek to learn from Him? He has evidently studied many books by human philosophers, yet is still in darkness as to the greatest and most vital theme of human existence. Indeed, he even mentions "Christ" as one of many wise men, *but not the Bible* as God's revelation, nor even hints that it denounces the very "wisdom" that he possesses and recommends.

As he rejects the totality of divine wisdom as revealed in the Scriptures, he falls back upon patches of human experience: "The first lesson of philosophy is that philosophy is the study of any part of our experience in the light of our whole experience." The individual experiences of the mass of mankind and their vast variety lead them to many and contradictory conclusions, all of which must be mingled with as much folly as with wisdom. All mankind are locked up under sin (Gal. 3:22). Human experience is a very meager source of wisdom.

THE LARGER PERSPECTIVE

"The second lesson," we are told, "is that the philosopher is a very small part of a very large whole . . . not a possessor, but a lover of wisdom . . . fated . . . never to possess, but only to desire and adore" it. This seems a wise acknowledgment in a way, but, if wisdom is unattainable, is it wise to spend a lifetime in seeking it? Later on he speaks of seeing things in a larger perspective, and thus, at least, touching the skirts of wisdom.

In closing he recommends a perception of nature, of science and, especially, of history as recorded in the written works of great men. A list is given of the greatest of these, and, in this long list we read of Confucius, Buddha, Plato, Euripedes, Seneca, etc. Nothing is said of the Word of *God*, which is the repository of the only true wisdom, or even of Solomon, who focused so extensively on the subject, or the very highest of all revelations of the mind of God, God's secret wisdom, *which not one of the men of this eon knows* (1 Cor.2:8).

HERALDING CHRIST CRUCIFIED

"For since, in fact, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom knew not God, God delights, through the stupidity of the heralding, to save those who are believing, since, in fact, Jews signs are requesting, and Greeks wisdom are seeking, yet we are heralding Christ crucified, to Jews, indeed, a snare, yet to the nations stupidity, yet to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor.1:21-24).

A. E. Knoch

RAYMOND VAN DYKE

An era has passed with the death of Brother Ray Van Dyke of Grand Rapids, Michigan, on July 21 in his 89th year. A tireless and enthusiastic herald of the word of God's grace and the glories of His purpose, day by day through most all his life, he awaits the wreath his Lord will be paying in that day. He often challenged others on traditional ideas (especially those that are unclear and mystical) that did not fully agree with the Scriptures or bring glory to God, but he was also ready to adjust his own thinking when others challenged him on the same basis. His family and the family of faith meeting with him through the years are most keenly aware of their loss, but we all join with them in joyful anticipation of his part and that of us all in God's completing operations ahead.

ELOHIM UNDERSTANDS

THE EXTENSION, in chapters 27 through 31, of Job's last response to the vexatious charges of his associates has some intriguing and even puzzling aspects. The specific mention, at the beginning of chapters 27 and 29, that Job *continued* to lift up his discourse, marks off this section as distinct from Job's former speeches. But what Job says here is even more unexpected, often appearing to contradict his former thoughts and to line up with those of his three associates. Then the fact that Zophar is not identified as delivering a third speech, and so the structure of the debate cycle that began with chapter 3 seems to be thrown out of balance, brings up further questions about the Hebrew text as we have it.

Yet because the ancient manuscripts are in agreement in ascribing chapters 26 through 31 to Job, it is the best course to accept this identification and consider the significance of these chapters in this light. Clearly much of the latter half of chapter 27 harmonizes with Zophar's former discourses in chapters 11 and 20, and they do not seem to accord with Job's former thoughts, especially those of chapter 21 where Job directly replies to Zophar. This indicates that Job himself delivers Zophar's final speech!

Several reasons for this surprising development suggest themselves. First of all, as we have previously noted, Bildad's last discourse (chapter 25) was unusually stunted and faltering. And prior to that, Job's reply to Eliphaz in chapters 23 and 24 was especially forceful, concluding with the challenge that if Job has not spoken what is so, who

can prove him a liar? (24:25). The three associates have strongly insinuated, even to the extent of indictment, that Job's afflictions are divine judgments for secret sins. But, while fully agreeing that God will not allow wickedness finally to prosper, Job has insisted on two current, observable facts, namely that the wicked often are prospering at present, and that at least one man who is upright and fearing God, and this to a degree beyond his peers, is suffering with excessive loss and physical and mental pain. Bildad is shown in chapter 25 as completely unable to deal with Job's parting shot of 24:25. And Zophar does not even try.

The arguments of Job's three associates have collapsed. They are unable to prove that Job's afflictions stem from divine retribution for sin. And the silence of Zophar dramatically underscores this collapse.

A second explanation for this unusual speech given by the suffering Job also lies in the realm of the drama of the entire situation. Here is a man who should be completely exhausted by both his afflictions and the tormenting insults of the charges brought against him. Yet he not only *continues* in denying these charges and turning them back upon the accusers, and not only *continues* to cry out to God for *His* response and revelation of Himself in these events and experiences, but Job also takes up the very arguments of the three associates for them, himself completing the cycle of the debate. Nothing else could better test the force of Zophar's argument, and nothing else could more impressively testify to the endurance of Job.

We will watch through these chapters to see if Job is able to put the arguments of his associates in right perspective to the two facts mentioned above concerning the prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of Job. For now, however, we cannot but be impressed, as was James, by the sheer *endurance* of this man, and the perseverance of his struggle to find in Eloah One Who acts in all things, and

Who acts with wisdom and purpose. To see the three who sit apart from Job's evils silenced and to find Job going on and on with words piled upon words concerning God and righteousness and judgment and wisdom takes our breath away. And we are eager to follow it all to its "consummation."

Finally, with the silence of his associates, the focus of our attention is drawn more to Job himself, and even more obviously by Job voicing Zophar's argument. This will aid us in relating the thoughts of Elihu in chapters 32-37 more distinctly to Job himself and what he has been saying. But even more significantly, with Job now standing alone at center stage, as it were, we will be helped in focusing on the way in which Yahweh's words in chapters 38-41, when He takes center stage, apply to the suffering and travail of the individual human being.

JOB'S CONTINUED DISCOURSE

There is a pause between chapters 26 and 27. It is time for Zophar to speak. But he is silent.

Then the miserable Job breaks the silence and continues his discourse with nothing of exhaustion or mildness in his voice. He begins with an oath based on the most dependable of foundations, the indisputable fact that God is the living God (27:2). And what Job says (surely he shouts) is exactly that which has frightened and scandalized his associates so sharply, now stated in no uncertain terms: El has refused judgment to Job! He Who-Suffices has brought bitterness to the soul of one who holds to his righteousness!

We ourselves can hardly keep from gasping as we read these words. What shuddering, what cowering in dismay, even terror, must have come over those present as Job utters these shocking convictions of his heart! Physically and emotionally exhausted, Job nevertheless finds breath (from the spirit of Eloah) to continue to speak what he is certain is true (27:3). He refuses even to consider the possibility that he is suffering divine retribution for unknown sins (though he has readily admitted he is a sinner), and he certainly will not make a lying confession for the sake of relief from his sufferings (v.4). What his associates have implied cannot be justified, and he will have no part of their suggestions (v.5). He has lost just about everything else, but he will not lose that righteousness which consists in speaking honestly (v.6).

Once again, by turning his attention to himself and the false charges of his associates, Job is distracted from his main focus which has been Godward. The implications of his associates have enraged him, so that he "darkens counsel" (*cf* Job 38:2) by indulging in self-defense and in uttering a curse on that person who would be an enemy to him.

The curse of Job 27:7-10 harmonizes more with the viewpoint of Zophar in chapter 20 than with Job's own observations in chapter 21. Zophar saw the wicked man as one who perishes "like his own ordure" and flies away like a dream (20:7,8). On the other hand Job's testimony had been that the wicked "become masterful with potent power" (21:7). Now in 27:7,8 Job maledicts his unnamed enemy (Job would certainly have Zophar consider how he might fit this description) in terms of being clipped off and eased away, very much like the terms Zophar used in his previous sermon of warning to Job (*cf* 11:11,12; 20:5-29).

It is not that Job denies that God will deal justly with the wicked or even that the wicked often suffer in the present day as a direct result of their iniquity. But he has seen how inadequate the fact of divine judgment was in explaining his sufferings. Nevertheless, for now, Job takes up this matter of divine judgment, expressing himself indefinitely as to who the enemy may be and when the adverse effects of wickedness may come. What he is saying here in effect is that if the shoe (which Zophar has previously described) fits, let it be worn.

In Job 27:8-13 there are eight direct references to Deity, twice as *Eloah,* three times as *El,* and three times as *Him Who-Suffices*. But these are all references to God within the narrow viewpoint of the traditional wisdom expressed by Zophar and his companions. This is Eloah, Him Who-Suffices, El, in bringing His hand of judgment against the wicked acts of sinners. For the present Job has taken up the thoughts of his associates and "directs back" to them what they have said in reference to "the hand of El" (27:11). What they have said about God as Judge might well be applied to any person whose words and deeds cannot be justified, such as themselves (*cf* 27:5a).

THIS TRANSITORY BREATH

All three of Job's "comforters" have already said these things that Job is about to voice in 27:13-23. Eliphaz boasted that he had *perceived* that the wicked man is travailing all his days (Job 15:17,20); Bildad testified that such a decadent person will leave no posterity (18:19). And Zophar claimed a spirit of "understanding" concerning the very matters voiced here by Job, while chiding him, "Don't you know this, from long ago?" (20:3,4).

But if they have all perceived (or *claimed* to have perceived) that such things happen to the wicked, why are they vain in their knowledge as though what they say has application to Job's situation (and not to themselves), and as though their thoughts would be helpful to him (27:12)?

Job calls what his three associates have said "transitory breath." This is a rendering of the same Hebrew term translated "vanity" in the concluding thought of Job's last reply to Zophar. "How then can you comfort me with *vanity,* when only offense remains in your replies?" (Job 21:34). The word does not mean "nothingness" or "something false" so much as *something not permanent or weighty,* as in the opening chapter of Ecclesiastes. Even if these things con-

JOB 27,28

27 +**Then Job** |**continued** to **lift**– up **his discourse,**
+ |**saying:**
2 As **El lives,** Who **has taken away judgment** for **me,**
+ He **Who-Suffices,** Who **has** c**brought bitterness**
on **my soul,**
3 t **As long as my breath** is yet **whole** with**in me**
And the **spirit of Eloah** is **in my nostrils,**
4 **My lips shall assuredly no**t **speak iniquity,**
And my tongue, it shall assuredly not coo**utter deceit.**
5 **Far be it** ›**from me should I** ever |**justify** `**you;**
Until I |**breathe** my **last,**
I shall not put away my integrity from me.
6 **I will** c**hold fast** i**to my righteousness,**
and I shall not relax;
My heart shall never **reproach** me
f**throughout my days.**
7 **May my enemy**| **become like** the **wicked,**
And the one **rising** against **me like** the **iniquitous.**
8 **For what** is the **expectation of** the **polluted**
t**when he is** |**clipped** off,
t**When Eloah** |**eases** away **his soul?**
9 **Shall El hearken** to **his cry?**
t**When distress** |**comes** up**on him,**
10 if **Would he find** |**pleasure** on**in** Him **Who-Suffices?**
Would **he** |**call** on **Eloah** i**at all time**s**?**
11 **I shall direct** back `to **you** these matters
i**about** the **hand of El;**
w**What** is wi**concerning** Him **Who-Suffices**
I shall not suppress.

cerning God's judgment upon the wicked were truly occurring all the time (which Job disputed in chapter 21), they do not help in relating the fact of Job's sufferings to the operations of God.

The knowledge that El apportions judgment to the wicked (27:13; *cp* Zophar's words in 20:29) is part of the wisdom called the fear of God which will be centered upon in chapter 28. The wicked man's sons will be preyed on by other people (v.14). There will be a lack of natural affection within his family (v.15). His riches will not last (27:16-19). God can always send greater forces against him than all his strongholds could withstand (27:20-23).

Job has brought the arguments of his associates against them. What they said in application to Job can more surely be said in application to them. Yet in the end these are transitory considerations. God will judge all wickedness, but that cannot be the end of the matter. The hand of El is involved in far more than granting the wicked their just portion, and this assurance that God takes responsibility for His creation, beyond acts of judgment, is what Job is still longing to receive.

A QUEST FOR WISDOM

In chapter 28 Job continues to voice the arguments of Zophar who had spoken in 11:6 of "obscured secrets of wisdom." Now Job describes the quest for such wisdom in carefully crafted, poetic terms, just as we would have expected Zophar to do. Again we are astounded that Job is able to come up with this sort of polished oration under the circumstances. But the fact that he does so gives special weight to the conclusions drawn in verses 23-28. Because Job has been longing to perceive more of God than the traditional knowledge of Him as Judge, the words of Job 28 can be extended beyond the limited meaning they would have when voiced by Zophar. The truth that "Elohim, He

12 *bd***If all of you´ have perceived** this **you**rselves,
+**Then why are you** l**vain** with **this transitory** breath**?**◊
13 **"This** is the **portion of** a **wicked** *h***person** *wi***from El**
And the **allotment terrifiers** l**procure**
from Him **Who-Suffices.**
14 *if***However** l**many are his sons, for** them is the **sword,**
And his offspring shall not be satisfied with **bread.**
15 **In** a **death** plague **his survivors shall be entombed,**
And his widows shall not lament.
16 **If he** l**piles up silver like soil**
And l**lays clothing in** store **like clay,**
17 **He shall lay** it **in** store,
+**yet** the **righteous** one **shall put** it **on,**
And the **innocent** one **shall apportion** the **silver.**
18 **He builds his house like** a **cocoon,**
And like a **booth** that a **field-keeper**l *d***makes.**
19 **He shall lie** down **rich,** +**yet he may not** *7*do so **again~***c***;**
When **he uncloses his eyes** + **it** shall **no**t **be** there**.**
20 **Decadent** thing**s shall overtake him ~by day~;**
A **sweeping** whirlwind **will steal him** away at **night.**
21 The **east** wind **shall carry him** off so +**that he is** l**gone,**
And it shall ~toss **him** away in a **hurricane~**
from his *ri***place.**
22 + **It shall fling** violently *on***against him and not** l**spare**
As **he** runs l**away,** yea **away– from its hand.**
23 **It shall slap its palms** *on***at him**
And hiss *on* **him** away **from his** *ri***place."**
28 *t***Indeed, for silver** there **is** a **mine,**
And for gold a *ri***place** where men **may** *fl***refine** it**.**
2 **Iron may be taken from** the **soil,**
And from **ore copper may be smelted.**

27:12 transitory breath: In vs.13-23 Job cites the "transitory breath" of his associates.
27:19 *7*-~*c* do so **again:** Hb **be gathered.**
27:20 ~-~ **by day:** Hb **like water.**
27:21 ~-~ toss **him** away in a **hurricane:** Hb **horrify him** (*cf* Ps 58:9).

understands" the way of wisdom, "and He, yea He Himself knows its place" (28:23) applies to more than fearing God as the Instrument of indignation against sin.

Job compares the quest for wisdom with a search for silver and gold and other metals and precious stones (28:1,2). Man searches for these in dark mineshafts where birds and beasts have never gone (28:3-8). But though miners have found these metalic treasures by such diligent and courageous searchings, wisdom has been more elusive (28:9-14).

In addition, wisdom cannot be gained by paying gold and silver and precious stones for it (28:15-19). Where can it be found, and how can it be gained (20-22)? The answer is that Elohim understands its way (23-27). And He has shared its secrets so far as saying to mankind "Behold, the fear of Yahweh, it is wisdom, and to withdraw from evil is understanding" (Job 28:28).

This is the foundational revelation of that great piece of wisdom literature, the book of Proverbs. "The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov.1:5). But it is wisdom that Job had already possessed before he was afflicted (*cf* Job 1:1). His associates shared this wisdom with him, but because they were not experiencing what Job was experiencing they were not driven as he was to know God beyond His place as Judge and Discipliner and Rewarder.

Hence the words of Job 28:23 come to express a hope that Elohim has placed treasures of wisdom not only in the fear of God but in the appreciation of God in all our experiences.

The fierce emotions displayed by Job in the early portion of chapter 27 are gone. He is no longer dwelling on the personal insults in the words of his associates. But rather he finds their arguments turning his thoughts back to God Who looks to the ends of the earth and sees under the entire heavens (28:24). With a tone of optimism missing in Zophar's previous speeches, Job speaks of the Elohim

Who created the earth and heavens and all the powerful forces of wind and water and rain and thunder (28:24-26). Job is back on the right track. And indeed, without realizing all its implications, he has surely come upon a great advancement in wisdom when he says that Elohim, He understands its way.

D.H.H.

❋

3 Man [pl]**puts** an **end to darkness,**
And to every [all]**limit** is **he fathoming**
For the **stone** ore in **gloom and blackest shadow.**
4 A **~people~** of **sojourners**[l] **has breached mineshaft**s
In place**s forgotten**[l] [f] **by** the **foot** of man**;**
Far **from mortal** men**,**
they swing down on ropes **and sway.**
5 The **earth, from her is** com**ing forth bread,**
[+]**Yet beneath her,** all **is** over**turned as though** by **fire,**
6 A [ri]**place** where **her stones** are **sapphire,**
And it [›]**has** the **soil of gold;**
7 That **track,** the **bird of prey** does **not know it,**
And the **eye of** the **falcon has nev**er **glimpsed it;**
8 The **strutting beasts**[◊] **have nev**er **tread** along **it;**
The **black** lion **has nev**er **~passed~ over it.**
9 Man **has put forth his hand** [i]**on** the **flint**stone**;**
He has over**turned** [f] the **root of** the **mountains.**
10 **He has rent** open **minetunnels** [i]**through** the **rock,**
And his eye has seen every precious treasure**.**
11 **He has bound up streams from** their **seeping,**
And the **obscured** secret **he** [c]**brings** [l]**forth** to **light.**
12 [+]**But** [·]**wisdom,** [f] **where** can **it be** [l]**found?**
And just where is the [ri]**place of understanding?**
13 **Mortal** man does **not know its appraisal,**
And it is not being found in the **land of the living.**

14 The **abyss says, It** is **not in me!**
And the **sea says,** There **is no** such thing **with me!**
15 **Solid gold** can**not be** |**given** ᵘ**instead of it,**
And silver can**not be** |**weighed** as **its price.**
16 **It** can**not be** |**classed** ⁱ**with certified** gold **of Ophir,**
Or ⁱ**with precious onyx and sapphire.**
17 **Neither gold** ⁺**or glass** can **be its** |**appraisal,**
⁺**Or articles of glittering** gold **its** ex**change.**
18 **Coral and crystal,** such **shall not** even **be mentioned;**
⁺ **Wisdom** is more **attractive** ᴶ**than rubies.**
19 **Peridot of Cush is not its** |**appraisal;**
ⁱ**With pure certified** gold **it** can**not be** |**classed.**
20 **From where** ⁺**then** can ˙**wisdom** |**come?**
And just where is the ʳⁱ**place of understanding?**
21 ⁺ **It has been obscured from** the **eyes**
of every living creature,
And from the **flyer of the heavens**
it has been concealed.
22 **Abaddon and death say:**
ⁱ**With our ears we have heard report** of **it.**
23 **Elohim, He understands its way,**
And He, yea **He** Himself **knows** `**its** ʳⁱ**place.**
24 **For He**´ |**looks to** the **ends of the earth;**
He |**sees under the entire heavens.**
25 ›**When** He ᵈ**granted**⁻ **weight to** the **wind**
And when **He gauged** the **waters** ⁱ**by measure,**
26 ⁱ**When** He ᵈ**imposed**⁻ a **statutory** limit ›**on** the **rain**
And a path**way for** the **thunderbolts,**
27 **Then He saw it and** |**rehearsed it;**
He prepared it and ᵐʳ**also fathomed it.**
28 **And He** |**said to mankind,**
Behold, the **fear of** ˢ**Yahweh**ᵖʰ**, it** is **wisdom,**
And to **withdraw**⁻ **from evil** is **understanding.**

28:4 ~~~ **people:** Hb **from with.**
28:8 The **strutting beasts:** lit., **Sons of strutting;** ~~~ **passed:** Hb **ornamented.**

ANOINTED AS KING

THE INITIAL ANOINTINGS of Saul and David by Samuel are different in a number of ways. An anointing itself represents the spirit of God coming upon the anointed one, endowing the necessary abilities for service. In this they were the same, but the details surrounding the first anointing of Saul and those surrounding that of David are distinct from each other in many instructive points.

The anointing of Saul was accompanied and verified as divine by three signs (1 Sam.10:1-13). Signs were sought by the Jews (1 Cor.1:22), and were an accommodation for unbelief (*cf* 1 Cor.14:22). It becomes evident that Saul is, in many ways, typical of Israel, as well as typical of the flesh. That is because Israel herself displays the flesh with all its failings and shortcomings.

THREE SIGNS

The signs given to Saul are suggestive of special events in Israel's history, events which highlight God's dealings with the flesh. The first sign (1 Sam.10:2) occurs near the tomb of Rachel. It calls to mind the birth of Benjamin-Benoni—"the son of my sorrow," who became "the son of my right hand" (*cf* Gen.35:17-20). This has many applications. Israel, as well as humanity, passes through a vale of tears before entering into power and glory. The bondage of Egypt comes before the reigns of David and Solomon, and the present dispersion precedes the future kingdom. The imprisonment of Joseph precedes his ascent to the throne of Egypt, just as the humiliation and suffering of Christ are preparatory for His ascent to the throne of the universe.

The two witnesses at Rachel's tomb bear testimony that Saul could not recover the jennies. John and Christ bore witness that Israel was yet too stubborn to submit to God's revelation. Israel was subject to the dictates of the flesh. The cross of Christ is the crucifixion of the flesh, and His resurrection is to life in the spirit and power of God. Israel has not yet entered into that as a nation. So the first sign is suggestive of Israel's condition at the coming of Christ. The first sign speaks of failure in the flesh.

The second sign (1Sam.10:3,4) brings a gift to Saul. Saul would meet three men going up to Bethel—where Abraham and Jacob built altars, where worship was held, where Samuel on his circuit judged the people. The men would be carrying their sacrificial gifts with them, and they would give Saul two loaves. Saul was accepting something of God's blessing. To him this testified to the validity of his anointing. The *two wave offerings of bread* (1 Sam.10:4) are suggestive of Pentecost (Lev.23:17), a time of blessing upon Israel. It looks forward to the time when Israel, through judgments will enter into the beginning of her blessings.

The third sign (1 Sam.10:5,6) would be the spirit of Yahweh coming upon Saul, and his prophesying and being *transformed into another man.* These three steps are God's way with Israel after the flesh. God shows them the folly of their fleshly zeal that is *not in accord with recognition* (Rom.10:1-4). He blesses them bringing them through judgments into His blessings, and He pours out His spirit upon them. This is His way with all flesh, apart from special grace.

SAMUEL ANOINTS DAVID

How different this is from David's initial anointing (1 Sam.16:11-13)! "Then Samuel asked Jesse, Are the lads finished? He replied, There remains yet the youngest. Yet

behold, he is shepherding the flock. Samuel said to Jesse, Do send and procure him, for we shall not gather around until he comes here. So he sent and had him come; he was ruddy with lovely eyes and of good appearance. And Yahweh said, Rise and anoint him, for this is he. So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers, and the spirit of Yahweh prospered on David from that day onward."

David did not stumble over Samuel in vain wanderings, but he was in his appointed place, keeping the sheep. We are told of no preliminary conversations with Samuel; no spending the night with Samuel; no preliminary feast; no instructions received concerning a walk down the roadway; no private anointing after which he could mull the situation over. David was summoned to the house. His family was not even to sit down to eat until he arrived. He was anointed immediately in front of his brethren.

David was denied the preparatory words and the confirmatory signs. They were unnecessary, for he was already walking by faith rather than by sight. And such signs were not given so that David would not be tempted to lean on such things.

David's anointing bears many similarities to the baptism of Christ. Both of the anointers, Samuel and the Baptist, were dedicated as Nazirites before their births (see Numbers 6). David's name means Beloved, and when Christ was baptized the Father's voice from heaven said, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight" (Matt.3:17). David was anointed "in the midst of his brothers," and Christ was baptized publicly at John's baptism. When Samuel anointed David, "the spirit of Yahweh prospered on David from that day onward." When Christ was baptized, John testified, "I have gazed upon the spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, *and it remains on Him*" (John 1:33).

As we will see in our considerations of David's expe-

riences, many of those experiences typified Christ and His humiliation and work. No sooner was Christ recognized at His baptism than He was driven by the spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted there. Like David, the anointed King of Israel, *Christ,* the *Anointed One* Who was born King, had many things to suffer before ascending upon His throne.

THUNDERCLAPS AND RAIN

The official coronation of Saul as king bears more resemblance to the giving of the law, or the days of Jacob's trouble, than it does to any aspect of the promised kingdom. Samuel prefaced his address with the statement, ". . . let me enter into judgment with you before Yahweh . . ." (1 Sam.12:7).

The great displeasure of God was demonstrated with the display of power in a storm during the wheat harvest, as announced by Samuel: "Now then, stand by and see this great thing that Yahweh will do before your eyes. Is it not wheat harvest today? I shall call upon Yahweh that He may send thunderclaps and rain. Then give thought and see that your evil deed which you have done, is too great in the eyes of Yahweh, when you requested a king for yourselves. Then Samuel called upon Yahweh, and Yahweh sent thunderclaps and rain on that day, so that all the people feared Yahweh and Samuel exceedingly" (1 Sam.12:16-18).

They had been similarly afraid at Sinai, watching the smoking, quaking mountain, and hearing the blaring voice, and knowing that no one could even touch the mountain, on the penalty of death (Ex.19:12-20). On the other hand, David's anointing was not accompanied by a fear of God, though there was a present fear of the flesh—of Saul (1 Sam.16:2).

The contrast, as we have already seen, is between flesh and spirit, between that which appeals to the soul and

that which is hidden in the heart. Even in their anointings, these two kings picture this great fact of God's ways: "Not first the spiritual, but the soulish, thereupon the spiritual" (1 Cor.15:46).

J. Philip Scranton

❋

1 Samuel 10

10 +**Then Samuel** |**took** `a **vial of** ˙**oil,** + |**poured** some **on his head and** |**kissed him.** + **He** |**said,** Has **not** 7**Yahweh anointed you** ›**as governor over His people, over Israel? And you, you shall steer** the course i**of** the **people of Yahweh.** + **You´ shall save them from** the **hand of their enemies**| f **round about. And this** is **the sign for you**0 **that Yahweh has anointed you** ›**as governor over His allotment:** 2 i**When you** go**leave**– f wi **me today,** + **you will come upon two men** wi**near** the **tomb of Rachel in** the **territory of Benjamin** i**at Zelzah; and they will** sa**tell** › **you, The jennies** w**that you went** out **to seek, have been found; and** bd**now your father has abandoned** `the **matter of the jennies and is anxious** ›**about you,** › **saying**–**, What shall I do** ›**about my son?**

3 +**When you pass on from there and beyond and come as far as** the **oak of Tabor,** + 7**you will find**~c **there three men** going **up to the Elohim** at **Bethel, one carrying three kids, and one carrying three loaves of bread, and one carrying** a **crock of wine.** 4 + **They will ask** ›**after your welfare and give** › **you two** 7**wave** offerings **of**Q **bread; and you** must **take** them **from their hand.** 5 **Afterward you shall come** to **the Hill of Elohim, where** the 7**garrison**~c **of** the **Philistines** is**. And there, as you enter**– **the city, it shall** b**occur** +**that you will come** upon a **group of prophets descending from the high-place,** +**with zither**s, + **tambourine**s, +

flutes **and harp**s **before them; and they** will be **prophesying** in ecstasy. 6 +**Then** the **spirit of Yahweh will prosper over you, and you will prophesy** along **with them;** + **you will be transformed** in**to another man.** 7 +**When it** *b*[b]**occurs that** ·**these** ·**signs are coming to you, do for you**rself *w*[w]**whatever your hand shall find, for the** One**, Elohim,** is **with you.** 8 + **You** must go **down before me** to ·**Gilgal; and behold, I** will be com**ing down to you to** *c*[c]**offer up ascent** approache**s** and **to sacrifice sacrifices of peace** offering**s. Seven days shall you wait until I come⁻ to you; and I will inform** › **you** `*w*[w]**what you should do.**

9 + **It** *b*[b]**occurred as he turned⁻ around his back to** *go*[go]**leave** *f* *wi* **Samuel,** +**that Elohim** ˡ**transformed his heart** into **another; and all** ·**those** ·**signs** ˡ**came** true *i*[f]**on** ·**that day.** 10 +**When** *7*[7]**he**~*cs*[cs] ˡ**came** *7*[7]**from***s*[s] **there** to*d*[d] ·**Gibeah,** + **behold,** the **group of prophets** › **met⁻ him.** +**Then** the **spirit of Elohim** ˡ**prospered on him, and he** ˡ**prophesied in their midst.** 11 +**So it came** to ˡ**be,** when **all the people** who had **known**ˡ **him** *f* **heretofore** + ˡ**saw** him, + *bd*[bd]**how he prophesied with** the **prophets,** + **they** ˡ**said,** each **man to his associate, What** is **this** that **has** *b*[b]**happened to** the **son of Kish?** Is **Saul** *mr*[mr]**also** *i*[i]**among** the **prophets?** 12 + A **man from there** ˡ**responded,** + ˡ**saying, And** *a*[a]**who** is *7*[7]**his**~*c*[c] **father? Therefore it has become** › a **proverb,** Is **Saul** *mr*[mr]**also** *i*[i]**among** the **prophets?** 13 +**When** Saul **had** ˡ*all*[all]**finished** *f* **prophesying⁻,** + **he** ˡ**came** to **the high-place.**

14 + **Saul's uncle** ˡ*sa*[sa]**asked** › **him and** › **his lad, Where** did **you go?** + **He** ˡ*sa*[sa]**replied, To seek** `**the jennies. And** when **we** ˡ**saw that** they **were no**where to be found, + **we** ˡ**came to Samuel.** 15 +**Now Saul's uncle** ˡ**said,** Do **tell** › **me,** *pr*[pr]**please, what Samuel said to you.** 16 + **Saul** ˡ*sa*[sa]**replied to his uncle, He told,** yea **told⁻** › **us that the jennies had been found.** +**Yet** `about the **matter of the kingship he** did **not tell** › **him** *w*[w]**what Samuel had said.**

17 + **Samuel** ˡ*cry*[cry]**summoned** `**the people to Yahweh** at ·**Mizpah** 18 **and** ˡ**said to** the **sons of Israel, Thus** *sa*[sa]**speaks Yahweh Elohim of Israel: I´** *c*[c]**brought** `**Israel up** *f*[f]**out** of **Egypt and** ˡ**rescued** `**you from** the **hand of** *7*[7]**Pharaoh king of***0*[0] **Egypt and from** the **hand of all the kingdoms** ·that were **oppressing** `**you.** 19 +**Yet you´ have today rejected** `**your Elohim Who** has been *c*[c]**bringing salvation**ˡ **to you from all your evils and your distresses.** +**But you** ˡ**said,** *7*[7]**No***t*[t]~*cs*[cs]**, for you should** *pl*[pl]**set up** a **king over us.** + **Now station** your**selves before Yahweh** ›**by your tribes and** ›**by your thousands.**

20 +**When Samuel** *c*[c]**brought** ˡ**near** `**all** the **tribes of Israel,** + the **tribe of Benjamin was** ˡ**selected** by lot. 21 +**When he** *c*[c]**brought** ˡ**near** `the **tribe of Benjamin** ›**by its families,** + **the Matrite family was** ˡ**selected.** *7*[7]+**When he** *c*[c]**brought** ˡ**near the Matrite family** ›**by masters***0*[0]**,** + **Saul son of Kish was** ˡ**selected.** +**Yet** when **they** ˡ**sought him,** + **he was not found.** 22 +**Then they** ˡ**asked** *i*[i] **Yahweh** *fr*[fr]**again, Has** *7*[7]**the***0*[0] **man come here** *fr*[fr]**yet?** + **Yahweh** ˡ*sa*[sa]**replied, Behold, he** is **hiding** ›**among the** *all*[all]**gear.** 23 +**So they** ˡ**ran and** ˡ**took him from there.** +**Then he** ˡ**stationed** him**self in** the **midst of the people;** + **from his** *bk*[bk]**shoulder**s + **upward, he was** ˡ**taller** *f*[f]**than any of the people.** 24 +**Now Samuel** ˡ**said to all the people,** Do **you see** *i*[i] **whom Yahweh has chosen?** *t*[t]**Indeed,** there **is no** one **like him** *i*[i]**among all the people.** +**At** that **all the people** ˡ**shouted,** + ˡ**saying,** Long ˡ**live the king.**

25 + **Samuel** ˡ**spoke to the people** `about the **customary** rights **of the kingship;** + **he** ˡ**wrote** them **in** a **scroll and** ˡ**left** it **before Yahweh.** +**Then Samuel** ˡ**dismissed** `**all the people,** each **man to his home.** 26 + **Saul** *mr*[mr]**too went to his home** at*d*[d] **Gibeah; and going with him were** *7*[7]**sons of***Q*[Q] ·**valor** *i*[i] **whose heart Elohim had touched.** 27 +**But** some **sons of worthlessness said,** *wt*[wt]**How shall this** one **save us?** +**So they** ˡ**despised him and** did **not bring** any **present to him.**

+**Yet he** ˡ*b*[b]**was** *as*[as] **silent**ˡ**.**

IN THE DAY OF JUDGING

THE GOOD NEWS of the nearness of the kingdom was qualified by limitations and sober warnings through much of our Lord's ministry to Israel. The message spoke of glory to come, but it was directed to the nation of Israel alone (Matt.10:5,6; 15:24), with the prediction that only a few would follow the teachings set forth (Matt.7:14). And judgment leading to severe losses and lamentations lay ahead for those who opposed or simply failed to heed the word.

The narrow range of the heralding has seldom been given careful consideration. When it is recognized, it is usually quickly explained that it was only a temporary situation which ended with the commission of Matthew 28:19. But this does not change the fact that the teachings within Matthew appear in a confined context originally directed to a single people out of the whole of mankind.

The constricted scope of the context has been downplayed. On the other hand, the severity and extent of the condemnation has been greatly overstated and applied to the whole of unbelieving humanity in the most horrible of terms for all eternity. Where the biblical revelation of blessing is confined to a certain group, interpreters tend to diminish the importance of the limiting factors. And where the biblical revelation concerns the sobering judgment upon unbelievers and opposers of truth within that group of people, the details are exaggerated and amassed together in a terrifying jumble that is applied to evil people everywhere and at all times, other than ourselves.

THE DOCTRINE OF HELL

We are told that long after the experiences in Eden, and after long eras of wickedness and irreverence, Jesus revealed that sinners who reject Him (or even fail to put their trust in Him) and oppose the truth (or even fail to support it) will be cast into an everlasting hell, where also, it is generally assumed, countless former sinners were already confined. Using phrases and terms especially from the Lord's ministry to Israel, but also from the book of Revelation and other scattered portions of the Bible, and stringing them together without careful consideration of context and proper word meaning, Jesus, Whose name means Yahweh-Saviour, is put forth as a teacher of catastrophic pain and loss. This fate is for others of course, like the Pharisees (who saw something similar for tribute collectors and sinners of their day), and like the mockers and humanists and atheists of our day, and of course those who avoid God and are useless, who are not doing kindness, who defraud with their tongues, with the venom of snakes under their tongues, whose mouth with imprecation and bitterness is crammed, whose feet are sharp to shed blood, and in whose ways are bruises and wretchedness, and who display no fear of God (*cf* Rom.3:12-18).

For now we will look at only three chapters from the book of Matthew to see how this doctrine of final hopelessness is read into the sacred text. Misusing passages from Matthew 10, 11 and 12, the everlasting misery of hell is found to include something parallel to, but more drastic than, the fire and brimstone that fell on the land of Sodom and the land of Gomorrah (Matt.10:15; 11:24), a fate which God Himself executes and which is fearfully worse than human beings could ever institute themselves (10:28), where sinners are disowned (10:33), and all their pleasures destroyed (10:28,39). This hell, it is announced, is full of unending woe greater than that suffered by Tyre

and Sidon of old (Matt.11:22). "Hell," so it is assumed, is located down below "in Hades" where wicked and stubborn people will subside along with those of Capernaum (11:23). We are told on the basis of Matthew 12:31,32 that hell will be bad for everyone who goes there, but especially bad for those who blaspheme against the holy spirit (which is variously explained). Furthermore, it is claimed, often with a touch of pride for having "accepted the Lord" and "continued steadfast," those who reject the Lord will be condemned by those former sinners who repented of their sin before they died (12:41,42), and those who had repented but turned back to their wicked ways will end up worse off than they might have been had they never repented in the first place (12:43-45).[1]

NEITHER REASONABLE NOR TENABLE

The condemnation spoken of by our Lord in these chapters is a serious matter calling for careful and reverent consideration. But it is also a serious matter to make the condemnation more severe and widespread than the context suggests or would be harmonious with the revelation of God in the Scriptures. In no way could Jesus, as the One Who came to save, be speaking here of an everlasting hell for every stubborn and wicked person from Cain to Judas and beyond to our own day.

The traditional doctrine of hell is neither reasonable nor tenable in light of our Lord's ministry and the entirety of God's Word. We do not rest on the reasonableness of our case, for that is a subjective matter. What seems reasonable to one person may not to another. Nevertheless, we

1. It is not intended to suggest that these are the interpretations that every defender of the doctrine of everlasting hell would give to these passages, much less that these are correct interpretations. But this is typical of the sort of hermeneutics used in building up the doctrine.

do contend that the idea of everlasting hell in Jesus' ministry to Israel is unreasonable from every viewpoint, and this needs to be faced. We also contend that this doctrine darkens every revelation of God in Scripture and is not tenable in its light.

Judgment that effectively leads to repentance and understanding, that is not an end in itself or lasts forever, is fully reasonable and appropriate to the Lord's ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But it is not reasonable that the excruciating horror of an everlasting state of misery, or even the haunting nightmare of final annihilation, should not have been spoken of until the first century A.D. It is not reasonable that the details of condemnation to eternal fire and absolute hopelessness should not have been given where it might have made some impression for reform, but instead were given to a narrow audience at the very time when their leadership was most entrenched in hypocrisy and the people themselves were extremely stubborn and contradictory (*cf* Rom.10:21).

It is not reasonable that the warnings concerning such a certain and unchangeable fate for unrepentant sinners should have been given only in bits and pieces and in terms that would not be immediately plain to common people, untrained in all the proper nuances of the expressions used. (Who, for instance, would have understood that the word "Gehenna" referred to a place of torment under the earth rather than a place outside the walls of Jerusalem to which it had always referred previously, or that "hades" all of the sudden referred to this same "hell" instead of the "unseen" abode of the dead, or that the impending eon of 12:32 was eternal in contrast to the present eon?)

But perhaps, as some have explained to us, it may be that such paradoxes only *seem* unreasonable to us who suffer corrupt abilities of reason. But no, this only makes the situation worse, for it would mean that the Scriptures

do not reveal God to us, but only present Him in terms that have no correspondence with our usage of these very terms. Everything about hell as defined above contradicts the testimony of these three chapters about the Character and Heart of God. In fact, when the revelation of God given in these chapters is accepted in faith, the doctrine of eternal punishment in hell becomes not only unreasonable, but *untenable.*

UNVEILING THE FATHER

In His ministry Jesus unveiled the Father to certain individuals as He intended (Matt.11:27). What He unveiled of the Father was that He takes those burdened under toil and turmoil and brings them into rest for their souls, under kindness and lightness of load (11:28-30). It is not tenable that the One Who is revealed this way would impose unspeakably heavy judgments without mercy or even a pretense of equity in matching sin with penalty.

In unveiling the Father, Jesus made Him known as the Source of healing powers granted to the disciples, who were to announce the nearness of God's glorious kingdom (Matt.10:7,8). Jesus revealed that God gives gratuitously, not on the basis of human deservings or efforts (10:9). The Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is "Lord of heaven and earth" (11:25). There is only one conclusion possible. He Who is made known by the cleansing and healing and the granting of sight and hearing and strength recorded in these chapters, cannot by any frank and sane thinking be made out as one who condemns to everlasting hell.

God was not being revealed in these chapters as one whose judgments are unchangeable verdicts of penalties worse than man could ever impose. God's power is revealed in His judging (though not exclusively there), but He is not revealed as one who is other than the God of power for cleansing and deliverance. His ability to destroy is greater

than the ability of human opposers to kill the body, but it is not "worse" in any sense of hopelessness or finality as so many have inferred from Matthew 10:28. He is to be feared with awe that recognizes His true greatness, but not dreaded for terrifying judgments that have no end or purpose beyond themselves. And the work of judging certainly will not be a contradiction to the revelation of God as the powerful Saviour. The One Who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna is the Father of the One Who came to save sinners.

Hence it is untenable that God's judgments should lead to a destiny of everlasting hell. This perverse teaching is untenable in light of all we learn about God in the Person of Jesus Christ, Who shall save His people from their sins (Matt.1:21), Who came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10) and Who gave Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:6). His people Israel remained sinners throughout Matthew 10, 11 and 12, and the most diligent observers of the law continued to refuse even to recognize that they were sinners. But the Saviour will save, and no blindness, no stubbornness, no fortressed hypocrisy, and no judgment to lamentation and destruction can keep Him from being what His Name declares Him to be.

JUDGING AND VICTORY

We have noted above how quickly our brethren point out that the commission of Matthew 10:5,6 was a temporary step toward the broader commission of chapter 28. May it be that many more will come to appreciate the temporary nature of God's judgments which also are steps toward a destination, that greatest of all goals, the glory of God. Divine judgments never represent the end of the line.

In these chapters of Matthew, Jesus referred often to "the day of judging" or "the judging" or simply to the operation of judging (e.g., Matt.10:15; 11:18,20,22,24; 12:36,41,42).

He spoke of them in terms of woe and warning. These are sober and fearful events, even as the many adverse judgments upon Israel throughout their history. So also the judgment that was brought upon Adam and Eve and that passed through into all humanity is sober and fearful, bringing failure and woe, pain and sorrow into all our lives.

Yet it is wrong and harmful to spiritual growth and any clarity in our appreciation of God to suppose that God's judgments are ends in themselves. To speak of divine judgments in terms of pain and destruction that never ends is to empty the words of Scripture concerning them of their power. Such a doctrine robs judgment of any sane balance and meaning.

Jesus Himself in this very section of Scripture testifies that judgment is a means to a good end. In Matthew 12:18-21 He cites a passage from Isaiah (42:1-4) concerning His ministry, in which He would report "judging to the nations" (v.18). Then at some later point He would "be casting out judging for victory." The judging looks ahead to something else. In Isaiah 42:3 judging is seen as serving the end of "truth." Truth and victory are two terms that describe God's goal. Some might see these in a negative light, thinking of truth only as that which exposes irreverence and wickedness and of victory only as that which puts its enemies down. But we are learning that what is true is good, and what is victory is full of joy and peace because of what we are perceiving of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor.4:6).

The day of judging is something to fear, but not with despair. It may involve much sorrow and loss for many, not only of Israel, but of the nations as well, yet it is an operation of our God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In harmony with the assurance of Matthew 12:21 we move forward to the reliance on God as the Saviour of all mankind spoken of in 1 Timothy 4:10. D.H.H.

Concordant Studies

UNPARDONED SIN

PROBABLY most people under biblical influence have been either perplexed or distressed by the alarming phrase "the unpardonable sin." The fear has been aggravated by the way modern evangelists use this idea, finding it a very convenient one with which to frighten those they wish to persuade to seek salvation according to their formula. They will tell their hearers that if they do not respond promptly to the sermon, the holy spirit may cease to operate upon them for conversion, and in that case they will be eternally lost and doomed. One man so taught declared that he was sure he was going to hell, because the spirit had ceased to plead with him to become a Christian. Many others have gone insane and suicidal as a result of this entirely needless worry.

For it *is* needless, because "unpardonable sin" is not found in the Scriptures. And though there are a few texts on which this traditional fear is based, these do not teach the thought as it is being forced upon people in this needless way.

What may be called "unpardoned sin" is discernible in the case of Israel in the wilderness. They were warned that they would not be forgiven when they sinned at that time (Ex.23:21; Josh.24:19). But that did not mean hopelessness, for God forgave them from Egypt to Kadesh-Barnea (Num.14:19-21). The sense in which they were not pardoned, as they were warned in the two references cited above, was that the two penalties imposed upon sin (suffering and death) were inflicted upon Israel in the time of the Judges, as in the wilderness. They suffered many severe

troubles, and in many cases, death. But remember that it was temporary death, until their future resurrection.

We have said that what is called "unpardonable sin" should be named "unpardoned sin." And we should note that it is only temporarily unpardoned, as in the case of Israel just cited. That such sin is merely "unpardoned" can be shown from Hebrews 10:28, for here such offenders are only "dying without pity," but not to remain in death endlessly without hope of relief. When we realize that such withholding of pardon is only for the time being, the gloom of those misinterpretations of Scriptures vanishes, and room is left to rejoice in the infinite mercy and love as manifested on Golgotha. (J. W. Williams, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.36, pp.61,65,66)

THE TIME IS CIRCUMSCRIBED

Anyone reading all of the passages (Matt.12:31,32; Mark 3:28-30; Luke 12:10) attentively will see that the time of action is circumscribed. It is confined within the boundaries of only two eons. With considerable circumstance we are informed that a pardon is not possible—neither in this eon nor in that which is future.

The sin against the holy spirit will not be pardoned in the time specified, the only time when pardon is offered, in this eon and in the next, according as it is written. (Moreover, it is concerned with the proclamation of the kingdom to Israel, and not with the present grace.) The statements where this time limit is not directly included imply the same thing in the form of the verb. Consequently, the fate, after the next eon, of those who commit this sin, is not determined by these passages, but by other explicit declarations.

The sin against the holy spirit shall *not* be pardoned (Luke 12:10). It will be *judged.* Those who commit it will stand before the great white throne and will suffer the penalty imposed by our Lord for this sin. They will be cast into the

lake of fire, which is the second death. Thereafter, when death is abolished, and all are made alive at the consummation, they, with all the rest of mankind, will be justified and reconciled to God through the blood of Christ's cross. (A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.26, pp.60,63)

THE CONTEXT

If Luke 12:10 is wrenched from its context, it might be used to prove that this sin will never be forgiven. However, there are other passages pointing to this same judgment which prove that such reasoning is futile and unsound.

In considering this passage we gain another opportunity to learn the important lesson of how we must interpret God's judicial language. God had often spoken in this same manner in previous revelation. He told Hosea to inform the house of Israel that He would no longer have mercy upon them (1:6). Yet, later, through the prophet Jeremiah (33:8), He promised them that He will pardon all their iniquities. This later statement does not annul His former warning, yet it does prove that Hosea's message does not refer to an *eternal* calamity. And God has never changed His terminology. He has always kept His word. When He threatened to punish, He did so, but He never casts off the offenders "forever." Hence we should not misconstrue His words and use them to "prove" that He intends to punish certain ones with never-ending torture. His judgments are *always* confined by their context to a specific limited period.

This passage, found in Luke 12:10, reveals how careful we must be in dealing with God's Word. It sounds final. "He shall *not be pardoned.*" However, a parallel scripture, which deals with the same judgment, is found in Matthew 12:31,32. In Matthew's account these significant words are added to the phrase "shall not be pardoned": "neither in this eon nor in that which is impending." Here the wrath

of God has a fixed boundary. It will last for two, well-defined eons; this present eon, and the one following, which is also the one in which Gehenna will be operative. The proper meaning of this passage has also been obscured in many of the popular versions, which often translate the word "eon" *world,* or, worse yet, *forever,* and thus tend to teach that there is positively no hope for those who commit the so-called "unpardonable sin."

Nevertheless, the consequences of blasphemy against the holy spirit are serious enough. Not one of those who are guilty of this sin shall enter into the kingdom; instead they must endure much pain and distress. And this will be only just, for this is one of the most serious offenses against God. The Jews accused Christ, Who had been *filled* with holy spirit, of being possessed instead by an *unclean* spirit (Mark 3:29,30). Such was this form of blasphemy. At Pentecost, the stubborn sons of Judah continued to hold this same attitude. Fearlessly Stephen hurled this serious accusation against them: "Stiff-necked and uncircumcised in your hearts and ears, you are ever clashing with the holy spirit" (Acts 7:51).

Many are the saints who, through want of a clear understanding of the place and application of these prophecies, have terrified and tortured themselves by the fear of having committed the "unpardonable sin." Yet Paul never even mentions such an offense, because it is impossible for it to take place in the present administration of grace. The holy spirit, dwelling within each believer, can be *sorrowed,* so that it is made inactive and powerless in the offender's daily life, but it will never depart from him, for it is the *seal* which keeps him for the day of deliverance (Eph. 4:30). (M. Jaegle, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.52, pp.75-77).

Editor's note: The preceding selections are adapted from longer studies appearing in past issues of *Unsearchable Riches,* as indicated.

Studies in Galatians

WALKING IN SPIRIT

(Galatians 5:16-26)

IT IS INSTRUCTIVE to note that Paul's epistle to the Galatians discloses but few particulars as to the Galatians' especial application of the false principles which they had adopted. It is evident that this is because it is not their own particular variety of such errors with which the apostle is primarily concerned, but such mistaken principles themselves, however and wherever they may be applied.

In considering individual passages within this epistle, it is important to maintain an awareness of Paul's overall purpose in writing the epistle itself. Individual texts must not be taken in isolation, as if they were incidental writings; instead, they must ever be related to the epistle's essential theme.

That essential theme is Paul's defense of the evangel, in light of the Galatians' rejection thereof and adoption of false teachings contrary in essence to the evangel of Christ. Insofar as their apprehension of truth was concerned, these false teachings had "transferred" the Galatians from the evangel which had called them in the *grace* of Christ, to a *different* evangel (1:6). Now they repudiated grace (*cp* 2:21), and wanted to be under law (4:21). Hence their position entailed it being so that a man *is* being justified by works of law (*cp* 2:16), and that even if they had *undertaken* in spirit, they must now be *completed* in flesh (3:3).

It is vital to realize that such an appraisal of the Galatians' erroneous beliefs is the language of the apostle Paul, not of the Galatians themselves. Paul describes the true nature of their position; not their own perception thereof. The apostle states that of which their newfangled teach-

ing, effectually, consists; not what they formally ascribed to it. Certainly, they would not have described their beliefs thus, insisting that they now held to something different than grace; that they had repudiated grace; that they were now to become completed in flesh, and justified by works. To be sure, all of this is true of their newly adopted teachings. But this is not to say that they realized this and acknowledged it, it having been their express intention to embrace such views, as such.

Paul, however, recognized what their false persuasions entailed and so actually amounted to. He does not write of matters of flesh and spirit incidentally, but as these themes relate to the truth of the evangel which he was heralding among the nations (2:2). It is in defense of the truth of the evangel of the *grace* of Christ that he says what he does as to flesh and spirit.

Now I am saying, Walk in spirit, and you should under no circumstances be consummating the lust of the flesh. For the flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh. Now these are opposing one another, lest you should be doing whatever you may want. (5:16,17)

Paul uses the phrase, "[this] I am saying" or its equivalent in many passages.[1] He uses such language in order to draw attention to his words and sum up his thought, much as we would say, "In essence, here's what I have to say," or "Here's my point."

How we long not to consummate the lusts of the flesh! And, here is what we must do, in order for this noble longing to be realized: we must be "walking in spirit." Then, Paul assures us, we will not consummate the lusts of the flesh, the many "foolish and harmful desires" which so often plague our path (*cf* 1 Tim.6:9; James 1:14,15).

1. In addition to 5:16, such phrases occur in four other places within Galatians itself (1:9; 3:15,17; 4:1).

Rather than the human condition and situation, however, being such that no reasonable goal is insurmountable, Paul insists that quite the opposite is the case. We are not in control: *Lest* we may be doing whatever *we* may want, there are forces at work to prevent this from happening. These are "the flesh," and, "the spirit."

Our true state may succinctly be described as one in which the flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh. Now these are opposing one another, *lest* we should be doing whatever *we* may want. Wherever the spirit prevails, we are kept from sinning (*cf* Gen.20:6) and caused to walk uprightly (*cp* Rom.8:1b,2; 1 Cor.15:10). Yet wherever the flesh gains the upper hand, the works of the flesh must ever occur. The situation is just that simple. Therefore our need is for a greater measure of spirit to regulate our way, not for a more favorable opportunity in which we must still finally depend on ourselves, in the machinations of our own flesh.

Where our walk, even characteristically, is the outworking of the invigorating power of God's spirit, we do not, characteristically, consummate the lusts of the flesh. We say "characteristically," only because even our best efforts and purest moments are tainted with sin, or at least they are tarnished by its presence, due to discrete imperfections of flesh within us, even in the presence of our noblest deeds.

Since all is out of God, it is not at all that we ourselves have the ultimate jurisdiction in the matter of our walking "in spirit." Still, this in no way diminishes our *need* to be walking in spirit, which is Paul's subject.

The spirit, ultimately speaking, is not controlled by the flesh; it is rather that the spirit must control the flesh. The spirit is not a "tool" in the hands of the flesh, the flesh having lordship over the spirit. The spirit is rather the power which must control "sin's flesh" (Rom.8:3) within the fleshly creature. The spirit, not the creature himself,

must control the creature, directing him into paths of virtue and holiness, lest the flesh, once again, should gain the ascendency.

It must ever be remembered that the flesh *will* dominate—it will dominate *us*—wherever God does not dominate the flesh. Therefore, we rely on God and not ourselves, having no confidence in the flesh.

"ALL IS ALLOWED ME"

Now, if you are led by spirit, you are not still under law. (5:18)

Those who are being led by God's spirit, these are sons of God (Rom.8:14). Since the Galatians had been called and blessed according to Paul's evangel, they too, even as Paul himself, were "sons of God" (4:6,7) whether they realized this and its significance or not. Consequently, they were *not* under law. That is, in relation to the evangel and its allotment, they were not dependent upon obedience to law for blessing, but only upon the faithfulness of God in His promise in grace, apart from law.

The revelation that we are not under law, but under grace, is a revelation made in relation to the blessings of the evangel. It should not be taken categorically, as if we were exempt from all standards of right and wrong and need not concern ourselves as to a faithful walk. Further, the natural law that "for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction," must ever be kept in mind.

It is not that there are no extant divine laws which apply to ourselves. Living justly, is living according to ways, or standards, that are just. Jesus Christ gives Himself for us that He should be redeeming us from all lawlessness and be cleansing for Himself a people to be about Him, zealous for ideal acts (Titus 2:14).

It is rather that we are not under law as a way to justification. We are not under what Paul says in Romans 2:13 about having to do the law in order to be justified, as in the case of one who *is* under law and obliged to keep it.

We are not under law in the sense of the context of Romans 6:14 ("Sin shall not be lording it over you, for you are not under law, but under grace"). The context of Romans 6:14, is the promise of Romans 5:19 that the entire vast company which is in view there, which is "all mankind" (*cf* Rom. 5:18), shall be constituted just. And, the context, most especially, is that of Romans 5:20, 21, where Paul declares that where sin increases, grace superexceeds. There he assures as well that even as Sin reigns in death, thus Grace also should be reigning, through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. The righteousness in view is the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith (Rom.3:22). Now the consummation is life eonian. For the ration of Sin is death, yet the gracious gift of God is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.6:22b,23).

We are not under law with respect to justification, deliverance, eonian life, and other blessings directly related to the evangel. The same holds true for 1 Corinthians 6:12 and 10:23 where the context remains Paul's evangel and the fact that Christ has become to us righteousness and holiness and deliverance, which indeed is God's wisdom. "All is allowed me" as far as justification is concerned because nothing I do changes or even affects the justification that is out of and through the faith of Jesus Christ.

Still, we are not, for example, without the rule of action (or "law") that declares, "Let him who steals by no means still be stealing" (Eph.4:28). Stealing will have inevitable results, perhaps even "equal" in the force of the evil that comes back upon us ("opposite" in its direction). But we are not under any law which prohibits stealing in the sense that it is required for justification.

Even in regard to penalties imposed by the law of Moses, there are differences between us and Israel. There are

effects that can be called penalties produced by our stealing, but they are not the same as the effects that came on Achan (and the nation), for example (Joshua 7:1-26; 22:20). Instead, our act of stealing brings a penalty into our present life in perhaps a quenched spirit, and into our future life in matters of loss of reward. For Achan, and actually every single Israelite throughout their history, disobeying the law (as they all have done) results in the fact that they cannot be justified, besides resulting in all sorts of other effects on their present lives and future place in the Kingdom. Their justification can only come to them as God's achievement "out of faith" of Jesus Christ (Rom.3:30), but they remain under law as a method for justification until God's time when the impossibility of this method becomes clear to everyone.

We have already been removed from every other director for justification, whether law or conscience or common sense or whatever, and placed under the directorship of Grace, the directorship of the evangel which says we are justified gratuitously through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus.

DISTINCT ALLOTMENTS

Now apparent are the works of the flesh, which are adultery, prostitution, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, enchantment, enmities, strife, jealousies, furies, factions, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkennesses, revelries, and the like of these, which, I am predicting to you, according as I predicted also, that those committing such things shall not be enjoying the allotment of the kingdom of God. (5:19-21)

Even if murders, drunkennesses, and revelries, or even adultery, prostitution, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, and enchantment, do not so often attend believers, the sins of strife, jealousies, furies, factions, dissensions,

sects, envies, are by no means uncommon (*cp* 5:15; 5:26). Whether sins of the former group or the latter, those committing *any* of these sins or the like thereof, "shall not be enjoying the allotment of the kingdom of God."

"Enjoy," here, does not represent an individual Greek word, but is needed in translation of this verbal form of the word "allotment." It is not to be understood in the sense of pleasure, but of possession of or participation in. In ultra-literal form, this verse reads: "REIGN OF-God NOT WILL-BE-tenantING." Should it be that, in eons to come, we do not "tenant," or participate in, God's *reign,* even now we may take up our "tenancy" as those whose expectation is life eonian (Titus 3:7).

The word translated here as "kingdom" (the noun, *basileia*) literally means "reign," as a noun, even as the verb, *basileuō,* likewise means "reign." As we have mentioned previously, even as the verbal form means "to exercise a king's sovereignty," the noun means "the sovereign power pertaining to [a king's sovereignty]" (*cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, pp.168, 243).

It is only when *basileia* is used metonymically, as a figure of speech for "a *realm* ruled by a king" (or the territory or people thereof), that it should be understood in the common sense of the English "king*dom*," that is, of a territory or people ruled by a king. This cannot be the case here, certainly not in any sense of "[fail to] *live* under the jurisdiction and within the realm of [the 'kingdom']." Since we have been justified in *grace,* we may be becoming enjoyers, in expectation, of "the allotment of life eonian," quite apart from any consideration of whether we may also enjoy an allotment of God's reign.

Be it remembered, however, that it is "If we are enduring," that "we shall be *reigning*" (2 Tim.2:12). "Be not deceived" (*cf* 1 Cor.6:7-11), those comitt*ing* the works of the flesh shall *not* be enjoying the allotment of the *reign* of God.

THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW

Now the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control: against such things there is no law. Now those of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together with its passions, and lusts. If we may be living in spirit, in spirit we may be observing the elements also. We may not become vainglorious, challenging one another, envying another. (5:22-26)

"The flesh acts; the spirit bears fruit, delicious not only to us but to God. Fruit is not the result of mechanical effort but the natural expression of life and growth. If we love others we will need no legal restrictions to keep us from injuring them. Law is a useless encumbrance to those who walk after the spirit. They need no promptings to do good and are above the penalties imposed on evil doers."[2]

Since the Galatians wanted to be under law (4:21), Paul dryly informs them that there is no law against either love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, or self-control. Since there is no law against any of these things, why not seek to manifest them, giving time and effort to their cultivation instead of to biting and devouring (5:15)?

Let the Galatians realize too that "those of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together with its passions, and lusts." All those "of Christ Jesus" crucify the flesh in some measure. The flesh may be far from dead; but, at whatever rate, as we grow in the growth of God (*cf* Col.2:19), we progress in the crucifixion of the flesh.

This is simply what is so. However limited and imperfect, a new disposition and a new walk is something that we *have;* it is not something that we ourselves create. Its presence is to be accounted for by "*the spirit's law of life* in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:2). We do well, then, to cease from all

2. A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.284.

"vainglorious[ness]," believing and behaving as if the essential reason for our holiness were something of ourselves. Vainglorying only produces "challenging and envy" (5:26), not "God's administration which is in faith" (1 Tim.1:4b).

If it should be that we "may be living in spirit," which is to say, if it should be our experience to be manifesting the fruit of the spirit (*cp* 5:22-25), we will find that *in spirit*, we may also be (i.e., we shall also be) observing the elements (5:25). "The elements," refers to the particulars of the law (*cp* 4:3; Acts 21:24b). In the phrase, "in spirit, we may be observing the elements also," the words "in spirit" are an appositive explaining the sense which Paul has in mind in which the Galatians will, when living in spirit, at once, *also* be observing the elements. Then, besides exhibiting the fruit of the spirit, they will be "observing the law," indeed, though only figuratively, in its spirit or intent.[3] Ideally, the goal of the law was to instil in any who would truly maintain it, these very same holy virtues which Paul rehearses in 5:22,23 (*cp* Lev.19:2; Rom.8:3). In actuality, however, such noble characteristics can only come into existence as fruit of the spirit, not as the force of law acting upon the flesh, which only makes matters worse (Rom.7:7-13).

SPIRITUAL FRUIT OF GRACE

Law is not laid down for the just, yet it is for the lawless and insubordinate (1 Tim.1:9), which sometimes includes believers in their practical affairs. We need to be mindful of the rules, that we might be "competing lawfully" (2 Tim.2:5), contending the ideal contest, so as to finish our career faithfully (*cp* 2 Tim.4:7). Even so, law cannot subject the flesh; and, in the measure that we are influenced by the spirit, law becomes redundant.

3. *cp* Romans 7:6: "Yet now we were exempted from the law, dying in that in which we were retained, so that it is for us to be slaving in newness of spirit and not in oldness of letter."

Once God's spirit moves so as to produce its fruit, its seed is germinated and begins to grow; as the spirit continues its invigorating work, growth proceeds apace, eventuating in the very *fruit* of the spirit itself, whether its growing season should be long or short. It is certainly true that where we quench the spirit's power, we experience a corresponding diminution of the spirit's fruit. In all such cases, however, according as He is intending, God is well able to grant us increased invigoration, thus attenuating our quenching of the spirit's operations, *lest His vine should fail to bear.*

All such illustrations of nature and husbandry are merely metaphors of the literal truth that all growth is of God, including the saint's growth in holiness and practical righteousness. Ultimately, all depends upon God and His grace; nothing depends upon man and his flesh.

It is true that if the Galatians would be faithful, they must be attendant to duty; but in thus engaging themselves, they are to recognize and thank God for their very attention to duty in which they are engaged.

Where the Galatians should fail, they are to account for this as due to their own disposition of flesh, which is out of God. This disposition of flesh is that from which they desperately need a Saviour, One Who will save them according to His own grace. Even if the fulness of His work of salvation must await their resurrection, any portion thereof that is to be achieved even now, must be completed not in flesh but in spirit. The spirit is that which is vivifying. The flesh is not benefiting anything (John 6:63).

Where the Galatians should succeed, they are to recognize this wholly as God's work within them, for they are His achievement (Eph.2:10); His "farm" (1 Cor.3:9); the soil in which *He* produces *His* fruit, according to *His* grace—that no *flesh* at all should be boasting in His sight (*cp* 1 Cor.1:29). J.R.C.

Contents:

193 Editorial
195 Humanity Crucified
200 Sowing Into the Spirit
211 Called in Accord
With God's Purpose
217 Faith Hampered by the Flesh
228 Yet Evil Came

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 1997
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

EXPECTATION of the glory of God (Rom.5:2) is the equivalent of reliance on the living God (1 Tim.4:10). Both terms, *expect* and *rely* are translations of the same Greek word, *elpizō*. We *expect* God's glory to embrace the future, and we *rely* on Him as One Who is ever alive in carrying on His operations with power and purpose in our lives day by day.

Through his afflictions Job came to see that reliance on God was not dependent on human practice and feeling. It was not a matter of: You can depend on God if He can depend on you; or: As long as I feel all right, God is blessing me. Job had always been very careful to "put on righteousness" (Job 29:14) so that he could say, "I shall breathe my last in old age, and I shall multiply my days like sand" (29:18). But later he found, that even though he "expected" good, *yet evil came* (see p.228). Reliance on God, as Job was to learn, is to expect good because God is good, even though evil comes for a period, as it surely does.

We rely on God and expect His glory because He has a glorious purpose and is operating all in accord with that counseled purpose He has willed (Eph.1:10,11). To know that *we are called in accord with God's purpose* (see p.211) builds up our reliance on God and strengthens our expectation of good, even though many evils come into our present experience.

Saul and Jonathan are also good pictures of this truth. Saul was filled with fears and burdened by woes because his faith in God's victory over the Philistines was *hampered by the flesh* (see p.217). His erratic behavior contrasts with Jonathan's trust that "there is no restraint to

Yahweh" in the human situation used in His operations of salvation (1 Sam.14:6).

But does not our future depend on what we do right now? After all, Paul himself wrote, in a portion of his letter to the Galatians discussed in this issue (see p.200), "Be not deceived, God is not to be sneered at, for whatsoever a man may be sowing, this shall he be reaping also" (Gal.6:7).

Yes, there are consequences to our actions, both now and in the future. But this does not change the fact that God has a purpose of the eons which He "makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Eph.3:11). Paul and the Galatians and all of us who believe have "the expectation of righteousness" which is gained by the faith of Jesus Christ (*cf* Gal. 3:22; 5:5). This assurance of being constituted righteous with life eonian becomes the fertile soil for the growth and reaping of the qualities of life eonian, of the fruit of the spirit (Gal.5:22,23), in our lives today. Paul's whole point in Galatians 6:7,8 is encouragement to be "sowing into the spirit." This is a matter of reliance on God Who calls us through the evangel of the grace of Christ (Gal.1:6). What we do not do is to sow our hopes for righteousness in our fleshly abilities (actually, inabilities) to gain righteousness. We sow in reliance on our gracious God and in expectation of the blessings He achieves in Christ.

Once Job thought of Eloah's guarding of him (Job 29:2) as a sort of divine response to Job's upright acts in the fear of God. Later in perceiving God as One Who is actively involved in all things, even fierce and fearful things like storms and beasts, he saw God not simply as One Who responds but One Who initiates according to His will. Consequently Job's upright acts could become the responding factor, the human response to a true perception of God.

Like our apostle, we would "be having no confidence in ourselves, but in God, Who rouses the dead . . . on Whom we rely" (2 Cor.1:9,10). D.H.H.

HUMANITY CRUCIFIED

ACCORDING to his Hebrew name, Adam (*Hb.* ADM, most-LIKE) resembled his Creator more than any other creature on earth, so that he was given the position of subjector over them, as Elohim possessed over him. This was passed on to his posterity. It includes the subjection of the sexes, the elder over the younger, the firstborn over his brethren and of humanity as a whole over the lower creatures. But, in each case, this was to be only an image and reflection of the subjection of the whole of humanity to El, the universal Subjector, so that they would learn to know Him, although He was imperceptible to their physical senses. Their failure, moreover, would enable Him to reveal to them the treasuries of His grace and love; which was His ultimate object.

Ideally, then, humanity is a social order based on subjection, in which each member should be subject to another above it, and all, even the highest be controlled by the Supreme. So it will be in the consummation. Our Lord will subject all to His Father, and then be subject Himself (1 Cor.15:28), and thus transform humanity into a family, with the Subjector as its Father. Since Adam transgressed and offended, mankind as a whole has refused to be subject, so God appointed a To-subjector (Eloah) to subordinate them to Him. But when He emptied Himself of His supernal glories, and came as a lowly Human to woo and win them by goodness and grace, they not only rejected Him and killed Him, but *crucified* Him, putting Him under the curse of God for a time.

That was the spiritual climax of human history. Because He outranks all human nobility in His ancestry, having been the Original of God's creation (Rev.3:14), and having occupied the most glorious place in His presence (John 17:5), being inherently in the form divine so that He need rob Him of nothing in order to appear as His equal (Phil. 2:6,7), being so supernally pre-eminent, and then voluntarily descending to the level of a lowly human, formed like a slave, spreading more physical as well as spiritual blessing among His people, what was His reward? He richly deserved the greatest gift that humanity could give, the highest honor ever handed to a mortal, which, thank God, He will yet receive.

But this was not all by any means. He was God's chosen One to bring the greatest blessing to humanity. He was, even before He came in the form of humanity, the great To-subjector, the Eloah, Who has the power to subdue all to the Father's gentle sway, Who, even then, as a lowly human, could command twelve legions, or nearly a hundred thousand powerful heavenly messengers to do His bidding. Men should have feared Him, they should have honored Him, they should have revered Him, they should have loved Him and showered on Him all the blessings and honors that the race could bestow.

THE DEATH OF THE CROSS

Instead, the spiritual representatives of the holiest earthly nation, Israel, and a ruler of the mightiest mundane power, Rome, joined hands to bring Him down to the lowest most dishonorable death that mankind can devise, and sink Him below the curse of God, His Subjector and Father. As Jerusalem was the only place where these two species of subjection were found together it was necessary that He should go there for this display of humanity's utter failure. There the supreme Priest and Potentate

of the universe delivers Himself into the highest spiritual and political powers of humanity so that they could display their utter failure as subjectors.

Some may surmise that the chief priest of Israel and the proconsul of Rome were especially bad and bloodthirsty men, but the record seems to indicate the contrary. Caiaphas, the chief priest did not pronounce the sentence alone. He put it up to the elders and the whole Sanhedrin, the highest religious heads of humanity (Luke 22:66). The entire multitude led Him to Pilate (Luke 23:1). So with Pilate. He found no fault in Jesus and sought to shift the responsibility to Herod. Even there the chief priests and the scribes took the lead in denouncing Him (Luke 23:10). Twice more Pilate sought to set Him free (Luke 23:13-16,22). It was the multitude of *humanity,* especially *enlightened religious* humanity who encompassed the crucifixion of Christ. They were a sample of the rottenness of the whole race.

What is the just Judge's sentence on such a horrible humanity? What says His holy law? In it we read "Soul for soul, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Deut.19:21). That defines for us the doom which humanity deserves. *It calls for crucifixion,* the same doom it dealt out to Him, and thus the sentence stands against the whole human race for the whole of this administration. That is the judgment against it in God's sight, and should be in ours.

HUMANITY ONE

When Adam sinned, the judgment was not confined to him, but the sentence has passed on to the whole race. Humanity as a unit receives this result of Adam's sin. So it is with the effects of Christ's obedience. His death is reckoned to all: ". . . as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one

just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

Indeed, Christ's death was *for* all, and will yet *release* all from the Adamic doom. Now, in *spirit*, those who believe, acknowledge the crucifixion of humanity, including their own, as the just judgment of God. We see our baptism into the death of Christ as meaning "our old humanity was crucified together with Him" (*cf* Rom.6:3-6). But we also see this as including all mankind: "For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died . . ." (2 Cor.5:14).

CRUCIFIED, GLORIFIED

The grandest of Christ's future glories will not be based upon any eminence that He attained in His earthly career, but rather upon the depth of His humiliation. So, let us not imagine that the future fate of those called into the fellowship of God's Son depends upon the fame and fortune to which they attain in this life, but rather upon the hardship and humiliation that comes to them because of faithfulness to Him. And this is especially true if it comes from the religious dignitaries of the day. Pilate, of himself, would never have harmed the Man of Galilee, but the chief priests, the respected representatives of Israel's Elohim, they demanded that He be crucified.

Humanity being "most like" to the Subjectors, Christ also came to be in the likeness of humanity (Phil.2:7), even though His spirit did not come through Adam, but direct from God. Although He was rejected and crucified by humanity, or, rather, because He, as a Human, descended to the deepest depth of dishonor for humanity, He will ascend to the highest heights of grandest glory. "Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him

with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:9-11).

Included in this exaltation and prior to its full realization, He will call to Himself a selection of saints Who, in spirit, were crucified with Him, and, in a minute measure, have suffered some of the shame and humiliation of His crucifixion. For to us it is graciously granted, "for Christ's sake, not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also" (Phil.1:29).

CONSEQUENTLY, ALL DIED

Furthermore, our hearts leap with still growing exultation as we contemplate the certain *consequences* of the death of all humanity in the death for them of the Son of God's love, Who so loves them. If One died for all, consequently all died (2 Cor.5:14). But if all died, if all are included in the crucifixion of the old humanity, consequently all shall be vivified in Christ (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22) and come to know the joy and peace of living, not to themselves, but to the One dying and being roused for their sakes (*cf* 2 Cor.5:15).

A. E. Knoch

Clyde Walters of Pomona, California, age 52, fell asleep in Christ on September 10. Though he did not attend our local meetings, he was an honored friend in faith and generous supporter of our work. Recognizing the truth that all is out of, through, and for God, and will yet redound to His glory, Clyde was one who could look at the morally challenged or down-and-out, and with genuine sincerity say, "There, but for the grace of God, go I" (*cp* 1 Cor.15:10).

Virginia Faire of Duvall, Washington, age 75, died on September 7. In recent months, Virginia had begun to help us in our project of making the *Unsearchable Riches* volumes available in computer form. Three of her children, Mike, Marilyn, and James, now continue on, in accord with their dear mother's own faith, rejoicing in the God of all grace Who, through Christ Jesus, is the Saviour of all mankind.

SOWING INTO THE SPIRIT
(Galatians 6:1-10)

BELIEVERS may easily offend one another, whether over questions of truth or in countless other ways. Too often, differences of opinion lead to factiousness and "challenging," even as to unacknowledged envy and vainglory (which is the opposite of humility; *cp* Phil.2:3), with egregious mistakes made on all sides (*cf* Gal.5:25).

It is no coincidence, then, that Paul chooses this very juncture in his argument, here in Galatians 5:26, to declare that, "we may not become vainglorious, challenging one another, envying one another." That is, to clarify this statement through recasting in the indicative: We *will not* become vainglorious, challenging one another, envying one another. That is, this will be so, if we are living in spirit.

Brethren, if a man should be precipitated, also, in some offense, you, who are spiritual, be attuning such a one, in a spirit of meekness, noting yourself, that you, also, may not be tried. Bear one another's burdens, and thus fill up the law of Christ. For if anyone is supposing himself to be anything, being nothing, he is imposing on himself. Now let each one be testing his own work, and then he shall be having his boast for himself alone, and not for another, for each one shall be bearing his own load. (6:1-5)

By the phrase, "if a man should be *precipitated, also,* in some offense . . . " we take it that Paul has in view not a first-time offense, but a case in which the offender has engaged in this same offense before, and now has done so again, evoking a response by the offended party.[1]

1. The Greek word translated "precipitated," literally says, "BEFORE-GOTTEN" (*cf* the Keyword Concordance entry, "get before," p.122). While the definition of the English verb "precipitate" as "falling with steep descent; to throw headlong," makes good sense in English, the definition of the English noun, "precipitate," which is, "a product, result, or outcome of some process or action," seems more reflective of the Greek.

It may be that, in forbearance, we refrained from responding to an earlier offense of an associate. But now we feel that a response is called for and should be made. The question then becomes, *Who* shall respond, *How* shall the response be made, and of *What* shall such a proper response principally consist.

Before even considering these particulars, however, let us note well what is the most important consideration of our response, in cases where an offense has occurred. It is that we are to be *dealing graciously,* if we should be having a complaint against anyone: "dealing graciously among yourselves, if anyone should be having a complaint against any. According as the Lord also deals graciously with you, thus also you [be dealing graciously with one another]" (Col.3:13).

Accordingly, then, "Let all bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and calumny be taken away from you with all malice, yet become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, *dealing graciously* among yourselves, according as God also, in Christ, deals graciously with you" (Eph. 4:31,32).

In certain relations, however, some may have so violated our trust through repeated deeds of wickedness or uncleanness, that expedience dictates that we shun them, whether wholly or in part. As such ones pose a significant danger to us, in cases where they give little or no indication of change either of heart or habit, we are not obliged, either in the name of forgiveness or dealing graciously, to put ourselves, once again, in harm's way.

We are obliged, however, truly to forgive them; and, specifically, to deal graciously with them, in whatever way is best suited to their case. We may not be unkind to them, and are to be truly concerned with their welfare. Still, in some cases, where such ones are neither amenable to our counsel, nor otherwise disposed to change their injurious ways, the most gracious thing to do on their behalf, may well be to avoid them. While truly wishing them well, remembering them in prayer, and having them in heart, thus committing them to God and to the disciplines which, in due time, He will grant them for their good, may be our only practical recourse.

It is to be regretted that, both in Colossians 3:13 as well as in Ephesians 4:32, by its interpretative rendering, "forgiving [one another]," for the literal "gracing" ("dealing graciously [among yourselves]," CV), the Authorized Version has obscured an important truth.

Forgiveness, if granted at all, may well be granted begrudgingly; and, among men, it is rarely granted unconditionally. Certainly, "forgiveness" is involved in dealing graciously. Forgiveness, however, in itself, especially if it is more formal than heartfelt, may well not be *gracious* forgiveness at all.

Paul does not instruct us to "forgive one another"; much less does he then leave it to ourselves to decide the way in which we shall do so and the conditions upon which we shall do so. Instead, he entreats us to be "dealing *graciously*" with one another.

"Grace" [*charis*, JOY] is simply that which brings *joy* [*chara*, JOY]. Grace may often come in the form of "tough love." Such grace, though purposed to bring joy, may well not bring joy immediately, nor apart from its own agency of "training" or "discipline" (literally, of "HITting"; *cp* Titus 2:12a; *cf* entry "discipline," Keyword Concordance, p.77).

Not only is grace that which brings joy, but it is that which

is not out of works ("If it is in *grace*, it is no longer out of works, else the grace is coming to be no longer grace"; Rom.11:6a). Therefore, if we would deal *graciously* with an associate, we must do that by which we seek to bring joy to our associate, extending our gracious dealings to him, not upon our own "terms," but unconditionally.

When we have become offended, our thoughts are generally centered upon our own wounded feelings. Bitterness often festers, love is lacking, and the spirit is quenched. In such a state, we not only *have* a complaint against another, but we wish to *give expression* to our complaint as well. Since our thoughts are centered on the wrongness of the other person's actions, we fail to see that the issue here is not at all who is right and who is wrong—as if, if we should succeed in proving the other person wrong, we may then consider ourselves at liberty to be as bitter toward him as we please. Instead, the issue here is just one thing, and it is this: What is *our* obligation, now, now that, rightly or wrongly, we have come to have a complaint against another?

The answer to this question is that, as the offended party, it now becomes *our* duty to deal *graciously* with the offender—"if anyone should be having a complaint against any." And, it now becomes *our* sin if we should fail to do so. According as the Lord also deals graciously with us, then, thus also let us deal graciously with one another.

YOU WHO ARE SPIRITUAL

Specifically, the answer to the question, "*Who* shall respond?" if a man should be precipitated, also, in some offense, is, "You who are *spiritual.*" This is as if to say, "No others need apply." Unless we are empowered to make mention of another's offense in such a way that our response is vitally characterized by God's spirit, our response in such situations cannot possibly be a worthy response.

Similarly, the answer to the question, "*How* shall we

respond?" is, "In a spirit of meekness," while "noting [ourselves]." If, while seeking to attune another, we should fail to keep in mind our "own self," with all its weaknesses and sins, we may very well find ourselves in trying circumstances. By overlooking our own shortcomings in our attempts to attune, we may easily find ourselves offending the very person who had first offended us.

To act in a spirit of meekness, is to act in a "mildly submissive" way (*cf* entry "meek," Keyword Concordance, p.193). One who is meek, is one who is patient and gentle, devoid of acerbity. Even when correcting another, such a one's manner is like that of one who is obliged to be submissive to the other party, even where this may not literally be the case.

By being both sympathetic and empathetic toward the failings of another, apart from all rancor and scorn, we may somewhat bear the burden of the offending party's trial, which issued in his offense. If we are sensitive to the offender's burdens, even if they should be simply those of such a one's own deficiency of character, we will recognize that while he may have offended us in some certain way on occasion, it is he himself who must live with himself continually. Such, in fact, is a burdensome load indeed, whether or not the offender himself realizes this. The point is that, until God should change him, the offender will continue to be under the heavy load which produced his offensive deeds in the first place. We should try to make the situation better for him, not worse, simply because we are displeased with his behavior.

Since the Galatians are so taken with the idea of law, Paul says to them, "Bear one another's burdens [that is, ease the 'heaviness' of one another's loads], and thus fill up 'the law of Christ'" (5:2). Each one must indeed be bearing his *own* load, according to his own character and circumstances. But if we would fulfill "the law of Christ," here, we would seek to ease the other party's burden in

it all by centering our attention not upon our displeasure with him but upon what will help him, even as make his situation less difficult to endure.

Finally, the answer to the question, Of *what* shall such a proper response principally consist? is, "Declarations and deeds of attunement." Since the goal is to "attune" and thus *help* the offender, not to vent our wrath or take vengeance upon him, whatever we say and do in such cases must be conducive to such goals. Unless we are clear as to what is needful and what is not with a view toward edification and are also earnestly desirous of implementing it, we cannot hope to attune another through any efforts of our own.

"For if anyone is supposing himself to be anything, being nothing, he is imposing on himself" (6:3). Those who think highly of *themselves*, who consider *themselves* "quite something" indeed, are, according to Paul, imposing on themselves. They are imposing on themselves a prideful and unclean falsehood. What good qualities they do have (which, decidedly, do not include humility) are entirely the gift of God's grace and in the last analysis are not at all owing to themselves, but to God's powerful operations.

If we should "test" that work which is not of God's grace but which issues out of our own "self" or flesh, taking note of its actual nature, then we shall be having our boast therein, so to say, "into [ourselves] alone," inasmuch as we will not care to direct it into the hearing of another. That is, in that case, we will wish to "keep to ourselves" any such "boast" that might be made, which cannot literally be our boast at all but only our shame.

Now let him who is being instructed in the word be contributing to him who is instructing, in all good things. (6:6)

This is a matter of which Paul speaks but little and of which we would do the same. Greedy teachers are no more noble than niggardly saints. Nor should one who falls down here be excessively criticized. We all are tripping

in much; and, each has his own gracious gift from God, one indeed, thus, yet one thus. Still, Paul's testimony can hardly be faulted for being unclear: "Now let him who is being instructed in the word be contributing to him who is instructing, in all good things."

It is well to note, however, that the apostle simply states what should be done, leaving any particulars as to the form or measure of "all good things" to a consideration of the particular needs of the one instructing, even as to the generosity of the contributor. Any such contributions should be made not only in consideration of necessary needs, but as a matter of honor, in the sense of recognition of value for services rendered (*cp* 1 Tim.5:17). Even so, such contributions, like all gifts, should only be made "according as each has proposed in his heart, not sorrowfully, nor of compulsion, for the gleeful giver is loved by God" (*cf* 2 Cor.9:8).

"GET HOLD OF LIFE REALLY"

Be not deceived, God is not to be sneered at, for whatsoever a man may be sowing, this shall he be reaping also, for he who is sowing for his own flesh, from the flesh shall be reaping corruption, yet he who is sowing for the spirit, from the spirit shall be reaping life eonian. (6:7,8)

The apostle's words here, "whatsoever a man may be sowing, this shall he be reaping also," constitute a truism, a statement the truth of which is obvious. This, however, does not make such words trite or unimportant. Hence we must not let the often prideful and heartless misuse of this saying by some, keep us from giving due attention to its important message.

"Sowing and reaping, planting and harvesting, are procedures well-known to most of mankind; so they are a fruitful source of figures to describe the course of spiritual affairs. Most of us use them to illustrate only one point: whatsoever anyone sows, that shall he reap (Gal.6:7). It is a fact that

every plant produces that which springs from its seed and nothing else. Not from thorns are they culling grapes, nor from star thistles, figs (Matt.7:16). And you cannot harvest wheat if you plant barley. But there are divine operations which do not accord with natural processes. In resurrection, for instance, it is sown in corruption, in dishonor, in infirmity, a soulish body; but it is roused in incorruption, in glory, in power, a spiritual body. *God is not limited by the laws of nature . . . .*

" 'Sowing and reaping' is used in the so-called 'gospel,' to frighten sinners into repentance. But this seems not only unscriptural but unfortunate. Men are turned inward to themselves, where there is no good news to be found."[2]

The idea is that if one sows the seed of a life of sin, he will harvest a crop of the consequences thereof, which, it is claimed, is eternal torment in hellfire. The claim is that since sinful deeds have consequences which bear a direct correspondence to their nature, therefore a lifetime of disobedience to God, will have such terrible consequences as that which can neither be mitigated by mercy nor removed by grace.

We heartily agree that that which is sown is also that which is reaped, and that, in the case of sin, this truism reflects the fact that sinful deeds have adversative consequences corresponding to their nature. But it hardly follows from this that the consequence which ensues from a lifetime of unbelief and sin is eternal torment in hellfire, beyond the reach of all mercy and grace.

Instead of making fantastic, speculative applications of our own concerning "sowing and reaping," we should instead note how and to whom Paul applies this saying. It is not to the lost, but to *the Galatian saints* who were going back to circumcision and the law and the flesh, when they should

2. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.76, pp.251,252.

have been taken up with the spirit, to whom Paul declares: "Be not deceived, God is not to be sneered at, for whatsoever a man may be sowing, this shall he be reaping also."

The Galatians wished to be doing their own part, completing in flesh what God had only begun in spirit. Hence they were repudiating grace and boasting in self, seeking justification not through the faith of Christ but through works of law. The consequence, then, of such sinful sowing, must be the reaping of Paul's sobering edict, "Let him be anathema!" in relation to the truth of the evangel, the one who is "bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you" (1:8,9).

Further, Paul's principle point here is not to be found in the words, "whatsoever a man may be sowing, this shall he be reaping also," but in the following declaration in which he explains the reason *why,* in his application of this saying, these words are appropriate and true. This saying is true with respect to conformity to the evangel, *"for* he who is sowing for [lit., "*into*"] his own flesh, from the flesh shall be reaping corruption, yet he who is sowing for ["*into*"] the spirit, from the spirit shall be reaping life eonian."

"*Nothing is said of the seed sown.* Our attention is concentrated on the *soil* in which it is planted. The question is, Shall we plant our seed in flesh or spirit. It is *the quality of the soil* on which all else depends."[3]

Even the ideal seed of a quest for obedience to God and righteous service in His name, planted into the soil of the flesh, must yield the consequences thereof, which are *the fruit of failure,* in any attempt to realize this very quest. The flesh—that is, man of himself—is of no help at all either in the ascertainment of truth or in the realization of a faithful walk in correspondence thereunto. The Galatians, in denying this truth, albeit unwittingly, were effectually sneering at God!

3. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.76, pp.252,253.

The literal, future allotment of eonian life is our expectation in grace (*cp* Titus 3:7; Eph.2:5-7), and will be granted even where there is persistence in sin (*cf* Rom.5:20-6:1). Therefore, the "*reaping*" of "life eonian," here in Galatians 6:8, which speaks of an attainment as the result of works, must be identified not with future, life eonian itself, but, through the figure of metonymy, with that which is associated with it even now. It is one's faithful relationship to the only true God, as well as with His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: "Now it is eonian life that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Him Whom Thou dost commission, Jesus Christ" (John 17:3). In this same sense, Paul sought to be attaining to the resurrection that is out from among the dead" (Phil.3:11), entreating Timothy similarly to "get hold of eonian life" (1 Tim.6:12).

Now we may not be despondent in ideal doing, for in due season we shall be reaping, if we do not faint. (6:9)

Even in a figure, we cannot expect to "reap" life eonian while at the same time remaining inert, as a consequence of "fainting." That is, a realization of God and His truth will only come through our own protracted effort, not apart therefrom. In the phrase, "if we do not faint," the words "if we do," though needed in translation, are not in the Greek; likewise, the "not," here, is the conditional negative, while "faint" is literally the incomplete form, "fainting," and appears in the middle voice, which reflects the involvement of the one engaged in that which is the activity of the verb. The words "not fainting," following the phrase "in due season we shall be reaping," then, constitute an appositive, elucidating the conditions under which we *shall* be reaping. Our reaping of "life eonian" shall occur, through a process which we ourselves undergo, in which we, rather than "fainting away," remain vigorously conscious, active in the things of God.

The words, "Now we may not be despondent in ideal doing, for in due season we shall be reaping, [while] not

faint[ing]," are said not so much as a warning but as an encouragement. Again, to clarify the sense which the subjunctive mood, which is the mood of dependency, reflects here, in this matter which is dependent solely on spirit, according to grace, we will recast this declaration in the indicative: "Now we *shall* not be despondent in ideal doing, for in due season we shall be reaping, [while] not faint[ing]."

That is, the time will come when the infirm in faith will be made to stand, *through* their own efforts, *by* the grace of God. This is so, for the Lord is able to make them stand (Rom.14:4). As Paul had previously declared to the Galatians: "I have confidence *into* you *in* the Lord that in nothing you *will* be disposed otherwise" (5:10a).

In the face of our own corruption, the wickedness of the world, even as the seeming-tardiness of the Lord's promise, we may, failing hitherto to realize a greater awareness of "eonian life," often become despondent. Is it really worth it all—all the rejection, misunderstanding, loneliness, and hurt? The answer is, Yes! it is worth it all. And the Lord will make this unmistakably evident to each one of us: "in due season."

Consequently, then, as we have occasion, we are working for the good of all, yet specially for the family of faith. (6:10)

It is as a consequence of his awareness of the glorious and assured outcome, that of the day in which each one of us shall "get hold of life really" (*cf* 1 Tim.6:19), that the apostle finds himself, "working for the good of all, yet specially for the family of faith." Since Paul recognized and proclaimed God as the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers (1 Tim.4:10), it was only natural that he should be engaged in labors for the good of all, albeit specially for the family of faith.

May it be our portion to be imitating Paul in these considerations and activities: "Become imitators of me, according as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor.11:1). J.R.C.

CALLED IN ACCORD WITH GOD'S PURPOSE

IN HIS FINAL LETTER to Timothy, the apostle Paul warned that in the last days there would be perilous periods (2 Tim.3:1). Today we can recognize these perils, for there is a disturbing reality in his description. He urged his *child beloved* to ". . . suffer evil with the evangel in accord with the power of God, Who saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian" (2 Tim.1:8,9).

When we examine God's purpose we are confronted with the omnipotence of His intention. Previously, in his letter to the called of Jesus Christ in Rome, Paul had shown that it was extremely foolish for any to protest against this. "O man! who are you, to be sure, who are answering again to God?" (Rom.9:20). In God's intention there is absolute power. This arrests all human reason. The vanity of man's puny knowledge is exposed, and all are subjected.

For many this is a humiliation that is unacceptable, and there is retreat into rationalism, or some such futile philosophy. However, for His ecclesia, who embrace His precious Word, there is serenity and peace. These, who are aware of God's calling in the Son of God's love, acclaim with the great apostle, "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom.8:31).

A HOLY CALLING

May we consider this wonderful part of God's immutable purpose, His calling of us with a holy calling. He intends,

not merely wishes as though it might not be, but clearly intends something which is of profound significance! Further, and this is most intriguing, He also *reveals* this same glorious intention to members of the ecclesia, the body of Christ, unworthy objects of His deep affection:

"Yet God, being rich in mercy, because of the vast love with which He loves us (we also being dead to the offenses and the lusts), vivifies us together in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For in grace, through faith are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:4-10).

The overwhelming wonder of this aspect of God's purpose is multiplied when we note and ponder the fact that three times our calling is presented in connection with *Christ Jesus*. We exult in the very precious relationship we share with respect to His grand title, "Son of God's love" (*cf* Col. 1:13). This is quite intimate, and reserved for those who rejoice in being near and dear to the heart of His Father. But when the official title, Christ Jesus, is used then we may be sure that here is something very important!

HIS ACHIEVEMENT

In spirit we are vivified, roused and seated together in Christ Jesus among the celestials. Thus God is even now displaying the transcendent riches of His grace, for we are His achievement in Christ Jesus. Whether we believe this or not, nothing can possibly affect, undermine, or in any way modify this settled, glorious accomplishment. In

humiliation, we await its fulfillment with endurance. This is noble encouragement indeed.

This unique preference granted to the ecclesia which is the body of Christ is striking, but even more astounding is the fact that this is yet a part of God's determined intention to be All in all! Members of this ecclesia, elected in grace, are to play an integral and vital role in the process whereby God, together with His Son, will bring about that grand conclusion. We must not make the foolish mistake of imagining that He needs a helping hand, but we rejoice that He uses us in displaying the transcendent riches of His grace.

We might be hesitant in accepting full assurance of our privileged position. Indeed, some critics might insinuate that the very suggestion is borne out of arrogance. But we do not make the claim, but simply point to God's Word.

"REJOICING IN MY SUFFERING"

Paul's encouraging words from prison, to the generous saints in Philippi, were that he was praying that their love would be superabounding in realization and all sensibility, that they be testing things of consequence; be sincere, no stumbling block (Phil.1:4-11). Today, we do well to heed these precious words. It has been suggested that a thorough knowledge of God's purpose will shine upon our path and remove much of uncertainty in proceeding along our way. As we realize, we will appreciate and thus mature, being rooted and grounded in love.

In this priceless epistle to the Philippians the great apostle further added (1:29,30) that not only has God graciously granted belief, but has further awarded the privilege of suffering also for the sake of Christ. Did he complain? Not a bit of it! He rejoiced in his suffering—for the ecclesia (Col. 1:24). In the context of this study, we must perceive that any present heartache of humiliation and indignity is an

essential contrast to future exaltation, in Christ. Respectfully, it is submitted that as an exhibition of His love, this suffering compares in a slight way with the awful anguish and pain of His Own Son's rejection.

It is no presumption to call on our Lord's words. "He who is hating Me is hating My Father also. If I do not the works among them which no other does, they had no sin. Yet now they have seen also, and they have hated Me as well as My Father, but it is that the word written in their law may be fulfilled, that they hate Me gratuitously" (John 15:23-25).

These words were shared with the eleven faithful followers after Jesus had dispatched Judas from their assembly into the fateful night. They were spoken concerning the nation of Israel. God concealed so much from that nation. His beloved Son honored this, clearly recognizing His Father's deep purpose: "I am acclaiming Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for Thou dost conceal these things from the wise and intelligent and Thou dost reveal them to minors. Yea, Father, seeing that thus it became a delight in front of Thee" (Luke 10:21).

PRAISE TO HIS GLORY

In the course of announcing God's gracious gift to ". . . the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all" (Eph.1:23), we learn that we are to be instrumental in lauding, or bringing praise to, His glory (Eph.1:6,12,14). What a great and blessed honor!

Even now, whether this is fully realized or not; even now we have full and gloriously free access into the august presence of our God and Father. We are a new creation, whose ". . . realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself" (Phil.3:20,21).

We have no means of knowing how this astounding revelation was initially received among the celestials. So often—to our shame—we are selfishly preoccupied with *our*selves, *our* blessings, *our* future. We pay scant attention to how we might serve to be *for the laud of God's glory.* From the first disclosure of this preferment there has been antagonism. It might be hastily concluded that upon our resurrection to immortality we would then repay. Not so! There is no revenge for all the misery caused. To the contrary; we are so conscious of God's grace that our song throughout the eons will focus alone on His love in the death of His Son for us all.

ALL CREATION

Perhaps one very important point has been overlooked. Our special appointment, with all its grand dimensions, is not confined! Is it at all possible that throughout the whole of this universe of created beings there might be one, just one, who, in despair, regards himself as beyond or beneath the yearning love of the Creator? See; already we long to embark on our mission of bringing grace, love, and peace! Meditate on the wonder that is disclosed: "For the premonition of the *creation* is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God." It is not this planet alone, but the entire universe that is included in this divine expectation of the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom.8:19-23).

Putting aside the embarrassment of our own assessment, may we dwell on what God has already accomplished with us? We are holy and flawless in His sight! By the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, we are guaranteed a role in the administration of the complement of the eras, and are pre-expectant in the Christ. Further, we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise. This is an earnest of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured by our God and Father.

Can there be any doubt concerning the grace of God's election, His choice of us in Christ Jesus? But then, all of this begs the question, How are we to serve for the glory and laud of God? We acknowledge that our very helpless and hopeless condition must surely testify to the pure unmerited favor which God lavishes, and which clearly demonstrates the wisdom and love of His purpose.

LOVE RESPONSIVE

There is surely much more. This is a day of salvation; yet there appears to be so many indications that the presence of the Lord is imminent. We eagerly look for Him with every moment. God's indignation is withheld because we have yet to be caught up to be with His dear Son, and He will not harm the ecclesia. Our tributes to the glory and laud of God are sadly, but inevitably, limited. What might we, in our wretched condition, possibly bring as an offering to our God and Father, to express our grateful wonder? Most humbly, we present words which might reach from our hearts into His, which longs for love responsive.

We recall the words which first changed our lives: "For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also, Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and, being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

"Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:5-11).

Donald Fielding

FAITH HAMPERED BY THE FLESH

THE closing verses of 1 Samuel 13 provide a very important detail for the setting of chapter 14. "No artificer in iron was found in all the land of Israel, because the Philistines had said, 'Otherwise the Hebrews might make swords or spears.' So all Israel would go down to the Philistines, each man to get his plowshare honed, also his mattock, his hatchet, and his scythe" (1 Sam.13:19-20). Israel was virtually weaponless. Some commentators suggest the passage literally means that only Saul and Jonathan possessed full suits of armor, while the rest of the Israelite force would have had only single implements for warfare. Whatever the case may have been, it is certain that they were ill-equipped to battle a formidable foe. This serves to remind us that, in the flesh, we are helpless against the stratagems of the Adversary. The panoply of God is a necessity of the believer today when the fiery arrows of discouragement, self-centeredness and the like are threatening our joy and peace in the Lord.

The 14th chapter of 1 Samuel sets before us a sharp contrast between Jonathan and Saul. Jonathan was motivated and shielded by faith, while Saul was only motivated by what he could perceive with his senses. In later passages conversations between Saul and Jonathan show that Saul intended for Jonathan to be his successor to the throne (e.g. 1 Sam.20:30,31). Perhaps Jonathan, aware of his father's plans, suspected Saul would not allow him to undertake what would surely appear to be foolish chances. Whatever the case, Jonathan moved on a plan of action without his father's knowledge or consent.

FROM THORN TO SHINING

Jonathan and his gear-bearer passed over the wadi to the ascent to the camp of the Philistines, while Saul stayed near Gibeah, under the pomegranate tree (1 Sam.14:1-3). Jonathan's words to his gear-bearer verify his true motive in the situation, ". . . let us pass over to the detachment of those *uncircumcised*" (14:6). Jonathan saw the Philistines in their relationship to God. They had been condemned, and were to be driven out of the land. They were the enemies of God's people. They were the oppressors. And to this he added an artless and exemplary statement of his faith, "Perhaps Yahweh shall act for us, for there is no restraint to Yahweh to save by many or by few" (v.6).

The setting (14:4,5) is very interesting and significant. A wadi separates Geba on the south and Michmash on the north. On each side of the wadi is a cliff, a face of rock, which could be scaled by young, athletic men. The northern rock face would reflect the sun, while the southern face would be shaded. This helps to explain why the crags received their names. The northern rock was named *Bozez* which means *shining,* and the southern was named *Seneh,* or *thorn,* probably from its smooth surface and shape. *Shining* carries with it the idea of *glory,* while *thorn* bears the idea of a *curse.* Israel was camped in the area of the shadow and curse, their priest was of the family of Ichabod (*the glory is departed,* v.3), and their glory lay in crossing over and scaling the heights to *Michmash* (which means a *treasure* or something precious *laid up in store*). But the flesh cannot see the venture as being even remotely feasible.

Jonathan exposed himself to the Philistines, and, believing God was with him, he crawled up the face of the rock on his hands and feet. Jonathan was completely vulnerable at this time (14:11-13). A rock, rolled over the edge, would probably have sent him to his death. But no place

is better than the center of God's will, even if it endangers our life. As they had planned with Samson, the Philistines intended to make sport of Jonathan, but they were soon turned back by his attack. And in a small place, covering about a half acre of ground (v.14), God used Jonathan and his gear-bearer to start an overthrow that spread to "every city in the hill country of Ephraim" (v.23). God chooses the weak things to disgrace the strong, "that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight" (*cf* 1 Cor.1:26-29).

SAUL'S ERRATIC BEHAVIOR

Notice the differences between Saul's approach to service and Jonathan's. Jonathan moved on a course of action which he believed to be consonant with God's will. After reaching a point of uncertainty, he looked for confirmation that he was doing the right thing, before proceeding. He was not presumptuous, thinking that he possessed the insight to know God's will in every situation. He found this confirmation in the response of the Philistines, something over which he had no control.

Saul, on the other hand, was not attuned to God's will and purpose. He was the designated leader of Israel against the Philistines, but he waited under the pomegranate tree for something to happen. When the disturbance and trembling of the Philistine camp began, he determined to consult God through the priest. But the clamor became so great that he stayed the priest, deciding, evidently, that there was either no need to consult God, or there was not time for consulting God (1 Sam.14:16-19).

How ironic it is then, that Saul deferred to take the time to seek God's guidance, yet took sufficient time to invoke a curse upon anyone who tasted nourishment before the evening, "before I am avenged on my enemies" (v.24). He would later find that whatever time was saved by not consulting God was more than lost when he was driven to con-

sult God concerning his own actions (1 Sam.14:36-46). And not only did Saul lose time by not consulting God at the outset, but he may also have traded victory over the enemy for victory in a single battle. No time is better spent than in seeking God's face.

Jonathan saw the Philistines as the *uncircumcised* enemies of God and God's people. And he saw the outcome of battle as issuing from God. Saul saw the Philistines as his personal enemies, and he sought his own vengeance upon them. Furthermore, his invocation of the curse upon anyone who ate before the evening restricted the strength and endurance of the soldiers to what they currently possessed. The weakness of the flesh was not acknowledged. The battle was to be won in their own strength apart from any refreshment or help. This is a common error of the flesh. It desires to win the battle in its own strength, so that it can glory in the victory.

A TASTE OF HONEY

Jonathan was free to live and act and rejoice in whatever transpired. He was on a mission of devoted service and love. He did not know what was going to happen. *Perhaps* Yahweh would act for them (14:6). Jonathan was not under any pressure—from himself or others—to achieve any certain degree of success. "There is no restraint to Yahweh to save by many or by few" (14:6). Jonathan was not battling his enemies, but Yahweh's enemies. Jonathan was not trying to prove or show anything. He was simply seeking to serve God by helping God's people.

On the other hand, Saul was under a great stress, and most of it was self-imposed. 1 Samuel abounds with examples of Saul's attentiveness to the whims of the people. His worst disobediences were decisions to satisfy the crowd. He tried to impress the people with his sincerity and the importance of his office by invoking an oath upon the

people which did nothing but proclaim that *Saul hates the Philistines.* That oath, which is first described as Saul's "great error" (v.24), progressed to become the sin of many: "Behold, the people are sinning against Yahweh by eating [meat] with the blood . . ." (v.33).

How astoundingly different were this father and son in their service to God! And because Jonathan's ear had not listened to the voice that commanded all to be done in the strength of the flesh, he was free, in his service, to taste sweet and refreshing satisfaction. He tasted the honey God supplies to artless and faithful servants. His strength was renewed, while the strength of those around him was exhausted. His eyes lighted up with vigor and power, while others grew faint (14:27-29).

GLORYING IN INFIRMITIES

This experience of Jonathan is very suggestive of many passages written by the apostle Paul. We will focus on one. In 2 Corinthians 11 and 12, Paul relates that he came through many trials—beatings, shipwreck, hunger, robbers, cold and nakedness—yet all these things were minor in comparison to the revelations that were given to him. These phenomenal revelations were something to glory in, but Paul said this, "With the greatest relish, then, will I rather be glorying in my infirmities, that the power of Christ should be tabernacling over me. Wherefore I delight in infirmities, in outrages, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake, for, whenever I may be weak, then I am powerful" (2 Cor.12:9,10). "Yet those stretching toward Yahweh will vary their vigor, and they shall ascend on pinions as vultures. They shall run, and not be weary. They shall go, and not faint" (Isa.40:31).

Jonathan was giving his all in artless simplicity. When he became exhausted, God provided an abundant supply of refreshment—refreshment which those around him

avoided. Saul was still busy serving laws and keeping order and finding someone to blame. Paul left Saul behind. He deemed all the things Saul valued to be refuse, and instead he pursued the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus. Serving the flesh ends in sin. Stepping out in faith promises an invigorating taste of honey.

J. Philip Scranton

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Concordant Version of 1 Samuel 13:19–14:52

19 + **No**t **artificer** 7in **iron**0 **was** l**found in all** the **land of Israel,** t**because** the **Philistines had said, Otherwise the Hebrews** might ld**make sword**s **or spear**s. 20 +**So all Israel** would go l**down** 7**to**s **the Philistines,** each **man to** get **`his plowshare honed–, +also `his mattock,** + **`his hatchet, and `his** 7**scythe~.** 21 + **·Tool-sharpening** b**cost** a **pim for plowshares and for mattocks, and** › a **third of** 7a **shekel~ ~for whetting–~** › **the hatchets and for** st**setting up– the goad-point**s. 22 +**Thus it came** to **be** i**on** the **day of** the **battle of** 7**Michmash**0 +**that no**t **sword** +**or spear was found in** the **hand of any of the people who** were `with **Saul and `Jonathan; +only** › **Saul and** › **his son Jonathan** l**kept hold of** them.

23 +**Now** a **detachment of Philistines** had marched l**forth to** the **pass of Michmash.**

14 +**Then it** lb**came** about ·one **day** +**that Jonathan son of Saul** l**said to** ·his **lad, his** all**gear-bearer**l, Do go**come,** + **let us** l**cross** over **to** the **detachment of** the **Philistines who** are f**over** on **that** p**side.** +**Yet he** did **not tell** › **his father.** 2 +**As** for **Saul,** he was sit**staying** i**at the outmost** part **of Gibeah under the pomegranate** tree w i**by** the **~threshing-site~.** + **With him** was ·a wi**force** w**of** as**about 600 men,** 3 +**also Ahijah** who was **wearing** an **ephod;** he was a **son of Ichabod's brother Ahitub son of Phinehas son of Eli, Yahweh's priest** i**at Shiloh.** +**As** for **the** wi**force, no**t one **knew that Jonathan had gone.**

4 + **Between the passages** by **which Jonathan sought to cross over** to the **detachment of** the **Philistines,** there was ·a **tooth**like **crag** f**on this** f p**side, and** ·another **tooth**like **crag** f**on that** f p**side;** + the **name of the one** was **Bozez, and** the **name of the other** was **Seneh.** 5 **The one ·tooth** was a **stanchion** f**on** the **north opposite Michmash, and the other** f**on** the **south** was **opposite Geba.**

6 + **Jonathan** l**said to** ·his **lad, his** all**gear-bearer**l, Do go**come,** + **let us** l**cross** over **to the detachment of ·those uncircumcised. Perhaps Yahweh shall** d**act for us, for** there **is no restraint to Yahweh to save** i**by many or** i**by few.** 7 + **His** all**gear-bearer**l lsa**replied to him, Do all, whatever** is **in your heart,** ›**what you intend** to do! bd**For I** am **with you;** 7**my heart**0 is **like your heart!** 8 + **Jonathan** lsa**continued,** bd**Here we** are **crossing** over **to** ·those **men** +**where we expose** ourselves **to them.** 9 **If they** l**say thus to us,** Stand **still until we** c**make contact– ›with you,** +**then we** must **stay** u**where we** are**, and we should not** go on **up to them.** 10 +**Yet if they** l**say thus** 7**to us**0, Come **up** 7**to~**s **us,** +**then we** must go **up, for Yahweh has given them in**to **our hand.** + **That** shall be **the sign for us.**

11 +**So both of them** l**exposed** themselves **to** the **Philistine detachment; and** the **Philistines** l**said,** bd**Here** the **Hebrews** are com**ing forth from the holes where they had hidden** them**selves.** 12 + The **men of the detachment** l**responded `**to **Jonathan and `his** all**gear-bearer**l, + l**saying,** Come **up to us, and we shall** c**let `you know** some**thing.** +**Then Jonathan** l**said to his** all**gear-bearer**l, Come **up after me, for Yahweh has given them in**to the **hand of Israel!** 13 **And Jonathan** crawled l**up on his hands and on his feet,** +**with his** all**gear-bearer**l af**behind him.** + The Philistines l**fell before Jonathan** 7+**when he** l**smote them**0**; and his** all**gear-bearer**l was m**putting** them to **death**l af**behind him.** 14 + This lb**was**

the first ˙**smiting** *w*~**when Jonathan and his** *all*~**gear-bearer**| **smote** *as*~**about twenty men** within *as*~**about half** the **plowing line** in an **acre of field.**

15 +**Then** a **trembling** |*b*~**occurred in** the Philistine **camp, in** the **field and** *i*~**among** ˙their **whole** *wi*~**force; the detachment and the raiding contingent, they´** *mr*~**also trembled.** + **The earth was** |**disturbed, and it** |**became** › a **trembling** from **Elohim.**

16 + *i*~**At Gibeah of Benjamin, Saul's** ˙**watchmen**| |**saw** + *bd*~**how the throng was dissolved and** |**went** *7*~**hither**~*cs* **and thither**~**.** 17 +**So Saul** |**said to** the *wi*~**soldiers who** were `with **him,** *pr*~**Now** *n*~**muster** the forces **and see** *a*~**who has gone** out **from** *wi* **us.** +**So they** *n*~**mustered** them**, and behold, Jonathan and his** *all*~**gear-bearer**| **were not** there. 18 +**Then Saul** |**said to Ahijah,** Do *c*~**bring close** *7*~`**the ephod! For he´ wore the ephod~** *i*~**on** ˙**that day** *7*~**before~** the **sons of Israel.** 19 +**Now it** |*b*~**came** about, *fr*~**while Saul spoke to the priest,** +**that the clamor** *w* **in** the **Philistine camp** + |**went** on **and** *go*~**became**~ *mn*~**greater.** +**So Saul** |**said to the priest, Gather** in **your hand!**

20 +**Now Saul and the whole** *wi*~**force** *w* `with **him were** |**convoked.** +**Then they** |**set** out *fr*~**for** ˙a **fight;** +**yet behold,** there *b*~**was** the **sword of** each **man** *i*~**against his associate,** their **discomfiture** being **exceedingly great.** 21 **And** ˙those **Hebrews who had** *b*~**been** ›**with** the **Philistines heretofore** and **had** come **up with them in**to **the camp,** *7*~**turned** back~*c*~**;** + **they** *mr*~**too** › **came** to **be**~ **with Israel,** *w* **with Saul and Jonathan.** 22 +**When all** the **men of Israel,** ˙who were **hiding** them**selves in** the **hill** country **of Ephraim, heard that** the **Philistines had fled,** +**then they´** *mr*~**too** |**followed** hard **after them in** the **fighting.** 23 +**Thus Yahweh** |**saved** `**Israel** *i*~**on** ˙**that day.** +**As for the fighting, it passed** `beyond **Bethaven.** *7*+ **All the people,** *as*~**about 10,000 men,** *b*~**were with Saul; and the fighting** *b*~**was scattered**| **in**to **every city in** the **hill** country **of Ephraim.**

24 +**Yet Saul erred** in a **great error**~*0* *i*~**on** ˙**that day,** +**when Saul** |**invoked** `**the people,** › **saying**~**, Cursed**| be **the man who** |**eats nourishment** *fr*~**before the evening,** +**before I am avenged** *f*~**on my enemies**|**.** +**So none of the** *wi*~**soldiers tasted nourishment.** 25 +**Now all** those of **the land would come in**to a **wildwood** +**when** there |*b*~**was honey on** the sur**face of the field.** 26 +**When the** *wi*~**soldiers** |**came to the wildwood,** + **behold,** *7*~**its bees~ ~had** *go*~**left~! +But no** one *c*~**let his hand overtake**| **to his mouth, for the** *wi*~**soldiers feared** `**the oath.**

27 +**As for Jonathan, he had not heard his father** *i* **adjure**~ `**the** *wi*~**force.** +**So he** |**stretched** out `the **end of the staff** *w* **in his hand and** |**dipped** `**it in**to **the wildwood honey.** +**When he** |**brought his hand back to his mouth,** + **his eyes were lighting** up**.** 28 +**At** this a **man** *f*~**of the** *wi*~**force** |**responded and** |**said, Your father adjured,** yea **adjured**~ `**the** *wi*~**force,** › **saying**~**, Cursed**| be **the man who** |**eats nourishment today. And** so **the** *wi*~**soldiers are** |**faint.** 29 + **Jonathan** |*sa*~**replied, My father has** brought **trouble** `on **the land. See** *pr*~**now** *t*~**how my eyes had lit** up *t*~**when I tasted** a **little of** ˙**this honey.** 30 **How much more so the** *wi*~**soldiers;** *t* **O that they would have eaten,** yea **eaten**~ **today** *f*~**of** the **loot of their enemies**| *w*~**when they found** it**! For now** the **smiting** *i*~**among** the **Philistines** *7*~**would have been** *mn*~**greater~**~*Q*~**.**

31 + **They** |**smote** *i* the **Philistines** *i* ˙**that day from Michmash** to*d* **Aijalon;** +**yet the** *wi*~**soldiers were exceedingly** |**faint.** 32 +**So the** *wi*~**soldiers** |**pounced** ›**on** the **loot;** + **they** |**took small cattle,** + **oxen and** bull **calves of** the **herd and** |**slew** them on*d* the **earth, and the** *wi*~**soldiers** |**ate** them *on*~**with the blood.** 33 +**When they** |**told** › **Saul,** › **saying**~**, Behold, the people** are **sinning** ›**against Yahweh** ›**by eating**~ *on*~**with the blood,** + **he** |*sa*~**replied, Treacherous are you! Roll** a **large stone** *7*~**here~ to me!** 34 **And Saul** |*sa*~**ordered, Scatter** *i*~**among** the **people and** ~*sa*~**tell** › **them, Let** each **man** *c*~**bring his bull close to me, and** each **man his flockling,**

and ¯slay them [i]**on this** stone**, and** then ¯**eat.** [+] **You should not sin** ›**against Yahweh** ›**by eating¯** ›**with the blood.** [+]**So all the people** [c]**brought** ˡ**close,** each **man** [7w]**whatever~** was **in his hand** ˙that **night, and they** ˡ**slew** it **there.** 35 [+]**Thus Saul** ˡ**built** an **altar for Yahweh;** `with **it he started** › **altar building¯ for Yahweh.**

36 [+] **Saul** ˡ**said, Let us** go ˡ**down after** the **Philistines** by **night and let us** ˡ**plunder** [i]**among them until the morning light; and let us not** [c]**let one** [i]**of them** ˡ**remain.** The soldiers ˡ[sa]**replied, Do** [all]**whatever** is ˙**good in your eyes.** [+]**But the priest** ˡ**said, Let us** draw ˡ**near here to the** One**, Elohim.** 37 [+]**So Saul** ˡ**asked** [i] **Elohim, Shall I** go **down after** the **Philistines? Shall You give them in**to the **hand of Israel?** [+]**Yet He** did **not answer him** [i]**on** ˙that **day.** 38 [+]**Then Saul** ˡ**said,** Come **close here, all** you **corner**stone**s of the** [wi]**force, and know and see whereby** ˙**this** ˙**sin has** [b]**come** about **today.** 39 **For** as **Yahweh lives** ˙Who [c]**brings salvation**ˡ `to **Israel,** [t]**even if** it **was** [i]**by him, my son Jonathan,** [t] **he shall** be put to **death,** yea **death¯.** [+]**Yet no** one [f]**of all the** [wi]**soldiers** was **responding** to **him.** 40 [+]**Then he** ˡ**said to all** [7]the **men of**[0] **Israel, You´ shall** [b]**stay** ›**on one** [p]**side, and I and my son Jonathan, we shall** [b]**stay** ›**on** the **other** [p]**side.** [+] **The** [wi]**soldiers** ˡ[sa]**replied to Saul, Do** ˙what seems **good in your eyes.** 41 **Saul** [+]**then** ˡ**said to Yahweh Elohim of Israel,** [7]**Why have You not answered** `**Your servant today? If** ˙**this** ˙**depravity is in me or in my son Jonathan, Yahweh Elohim of Israel,** do **grant** the lot **Urim.** [+]**Yet if it is in Your people Israel,**[0] do **grant** the lot **Thummim.** [+]**Thus Jonathan and Saul were** ˡ**selected, and the** [wi]**soldiers went** forth cleared**.** 42 [+]**Then Saul** ˡ**said, Cast** the lots **between me and** [bt] **my son Jonathan.** [+]**Thus Jonathan was** ˡ**selected.**

43 [+]**Now Saul** ˡ**said to Jonathan,** Do **tell** › **me what you have done.** [+]**So Jonathan** ˡ**told** › **him** [+] ˡ**saying, I tasted,** yea **tasted¯** a **little honey** [i]**with** the **end of the staff** [w]**that** was **in my hand.** [bd]**Here I** am**, let me die.** 44 [+] **Saul** ˡ[sa]**re-**

plied, Thus may Elohim do [7]**to me**[cs] **and thus** ˡ**add** to it. **You shall** [t]**surely die,** yea **die¯** [7]**today~.**45 [+]**But the** [wi]**soldiers** ˡ**said to Saul, Should Jonathan die** [7]**today**[0] **who has** [d]**brought** ˙**this** ˙**great victory** [i]**to Israel? Far be it,** as **Yahweh lives,** [if]**that** [f]**even** a **hair from his head should fall** to[d] the **earth, for he has** [d]**acted with Elohim** ˙**this** ˙**day.** [+]**Thus the** [wi]**force** ˡ**ransomed** `**Jonathan, and he** did **not die.** 46 [+] **Saul** gave ˡ**up** [f] the [af]**pursuit** of the **Philistines, and** the **Philistines went** back **to their** own [ri]**place.**

47 [+]**After Saul had seized the kingship over Israel,** [+] **he** ˡ**fought** [i]**with all his enemies**ˡ **round about,** [i]**with Moab and** [i]**with** the **sons of Ammon,** [+] [i]**with Edom and** [i]**with** the [7]**king~**[Q] **of Zobah, and** [i]**with** the **Philistines; and** [i] **wherever he turned toward** them**, he was** [7]ˡ**victorious~.** 48 [+] **He** ˡ[d]**acted valiantly and** also ˡ**smote** `**Amalek;** [+]**thus he** ˡ**rescued** `**Israel from** the **hand of its** [7]**robbers**ˡ**~**[Q]**.**

49 [+] **Saul's sons** ˡ[b]**were: Jonathan,** [+] **Ishvi, and Malchishua.** [+]**As** for the **name**s **of his two daughters,** the **name of the firstborn** was **Merab, and** the **name of the younger** one was **Michal.** 50 [+] The **name of Saul's wife** was **Ahinoam daughter of Ahimaaz; and** the **name of** the **chief of his** militia **host** was **Abner son of Saul's uncle Ner.** 51 [+] **Kish, Saul's father, and Ner, Abner's father,** were **son**s **of Abiel.**

52 [+] **The war** [on]**against** the **Philistines** ˡ[b]**was unyielding all** the **days of Saul.** [+]**When Saul saw any masterful man** [+]**or any son of valor,** [+] **he** would ˡ**add him to his** host**.**

13:20 7-~ **scythe:** Hb **plowshare.**
14:2 ~-~ **threshing-site:** Hb **Migron,** LXX **Magdon.**
14:18 7-~ `**the ephod! For he´ wore the ephod:** Hb **the coffer of Elohim, for the coffer of Elohim** [b]**was.**
14:26 7-~ **its bees:** Hb **honey.** ~-~ **had** [gy]**left:** MT [gy]**flowing of.**
14:30 7-~Q **would have been** [mn]**greater:** Hb **was not great.**
14:33 7-~ **here:** Hb **today.**
14:34 7-~ [w]**whatever:** Hb **his bull.**
14:41 7-0 The scribe's eye skipped from "**Yahweh Elohim of Israel**" to the words after "**Your people Israel,**" thus omitting the lines preserved by LXX.
14:44 7-~ **today:** Hb **Jonathan.**
14:47 7-~Q **king:** Hb **kings.** 7-~ ˡ**victorious:** Hb ˡ**condemned.**

YET EVIL CAME

THE THIRD and final section of Job's concluding speech is found in chapters 29 through 31 and corresponds in structure with chapter 3. Where the suffering Job had first expressed his misery by indulging himself in wishing he had not been born, he now underlines the depths of his misery by its contrast with his former position of prosperity and honor. The use of first person pronouns, *I* and *my* and *me* is frequent. Only a short time ago "*I* expected good, yet evil came" (Job 30:26).

It is not that Job leaves God out of his thoughts. On the contrary, chapter 29 begins with the testimony that it was Eloah Who had guarded him and watched over his tent (29:2-4). But this was still seen in reference to Job's own upright behavior in the fear of God (Job 28:28). And it was only as Job was blessed that he could say "He Who-Suffices was still with me" (v.5).

The references to Deity in 29:2-5 are all connected with Job's former happiness and greatness among mankind, and starting with verse 6, direct references to God are absent until well into chapter 30. Job speaks of "my goings" (v.6) and "my seat in the square" (v.7). He recalls how youth and the hoary headed stood in awe of him and honored him and called him happy (8-11).

Because Job feared Yahweh he led a model life which shaped him in moral discipline and maturity so that others could rely on him for aid and justice and counsel (29:12-17). This in turn led Job to expect a long life in comfort and safety (18-20).

29 **+Then Job** ˡ**continued** to **lift**⁻ up **his discourse,** +
ˡ**saying:**
2 ᵃ**O** ˡᵍ**that I** were **as** in ᵖᶜ**former months,**
As in the **days** when **He, Eloah was guarding me,**
3 **+When He** caused **His lamp** to **irradiate**⁻
over my head,
And ˃**by His light I** ˡ**went** through the **darkness,**
4 **Just as I** ᵇ**was in** the **days of my autumn,**
ⁱ**When** the **deliberation of Eloah**
watched **over my tent,**
5 ⁱ**When** He **Who-Suffices** was ᶠʳ**still with me,**
And **my lads** were **around me,**
6 ⁱ**When my goings** were **washed**⁻ **in clotted cream,**
And the **rock** ˡ**poured** out ʷⁱ**for me rillets of oil.**
7 ⁱ**When I** went **forth**⁻ to the **gate**
standing **over** the **town**
And ˡ**prepared my seat in** the **square,**
8 The **youths would see me and hide** themselves,
+While the **hoary headed would rise** and **stand.**
9 The **chiefs would restrain** ⁱ their **declarations**
And ˡ**place** the **palm** ˃**over their mouth;**
10 The **voices of** the **noblemen were hidden** back,
And their tongue would cling to their palate.
11 ᵗ**When** the **ear heard,** + **it** ᵐ**called me** ˡ**happy,**
And when the **eye saw,** + **it** ˡ**testified** in **my** favor.
12 **For I made** a way of ˡ**escape**
for the **humble** who **implored**ˡ,
And the **orphan and him** who ˃**had no**ᵗ **helper**ˡ.
13 The **blessing of** the one **perishing** ˡ**came on me,**
And I caused the **heart of** the **widow** to **be** ˡ**jubilant.**
14 **I put on righteousness, and it** ˡ**clothed me;**
My right **judgment** was **like** a **robe and** a **turban.**
15 **I became eyes to** the **blind,**
And feet to the **lame** was **I.**

Job had been a great and good man, commanding respect and well deserving of the honor he received. "Noblemen hearkened to me" (29:21). No one even wanted to alter his wise pronouncements which they waited for with anticipation (22,23). "I would uplift them" (24) and "I would choose the way for them . . . like a king among his troops" (25).

But even though Job now leaves out direct references to Deity, he has not forgotten Him. Hovering over these recollections of his former times of greatness and prosperity is the haunting mystery of its removal and replacement by evil in light of the existence and reality of God. Chapter 29 makes the challenge of Job 2:10 all that more pressing. Should one who fears Yahweh and lives uprightly receive only good from God and not at all receive evil? The good is fully recalled in Job 29, and this is traced directly to the "deliberation of Eloah" when He was "still with" Job as the One Who-Suffices (29:4,5). But the one who would comfort others was cast down to unprecedented depths. The one who would choose the way for others to go, sat in uncertainty and aching anxiety.

YET NOW

Job's longing all along is for assurance that Eloah is One Who is still with him even in afflictions that come *in spite of* a morally upright life in the fear of God. Surely this evil is in accord with the divine purpose, so much so that it must ultimately be traced to God Who alone could bring it all to a wise and good consummation.

"Yet now" (Job 30:1) every experience and every perceptible bit of evidence, as recounted in chapter 30, work against this assurance. Not only has Job lost the respect of noble and honest people, he is made sport of by lawless outcasts of society (30:1-10). His three co-equals in discipline and rule have found Job guilty of secret crimes and sentenced him to penal payments of confession, repentance

16 **I** was **father to** the **needy** ones,
And the **cause of** him **I knew not,**
I would ˡ**investigate it.**
17 + **I** would ˡ**break** the **fangs of** the **iniquitous**
And would ˡ**fling** the **prey from his teeth.**
18 **And** so **I** would ˡ**say ~with**in **my**self~**:**
I shall breathe my **last** ⁷in **old** age~,
And I shall multiply my **days like sand;**
19 **My root** is **open**ˡ **to** the **water,**
And the **night mist** ˡ**lodges** ⁱ**on my harvest** branch;
20 **My glory** will keep **new with**in **me,**
And my bow shall rejuvenate in my hand.
21 Noblemen **hearkened to me, and they waited;**
+ **They** would **stand** ˡ**still for my counsel.**
22 **After my speech they** would **not** ˡ**alter** it,
And my declaration dropped gently **on them.**
23 + **They waited for me as** for **rain,**
And they gaped with **their mouth**
as **for** the **latter rain.**
24 **I** would ˡ**uplift** › **them** when **they were not** ˡ**sure,**
And the **light of my countenance**
they would **not** ˡ**cast** down**.**
25 **I** would ˡ**choose** the **way** for **them**
and would ˡ**sit** as their **head,**
And I would ˡ**tabernacle like** a **king**
ⁱ**among** his **troop**s,
Just as one who ˡ**comforts mourners.**

30 +**Yet now they** make **sport** ᵒⁿ**of me,**
Men **junior** ᶠ**to me** ›**in days,**
Whose fathers I would have rejected
To set with the **dogs of my flock.**
2 **Even** the **vigor of their hands,** › **what** use was it **to me?**
~Their strength~ had ~entirely~ perished.

29:18 ~~~ **with**in **my**self . . . **7-~** in **old age:** Hb **with**in **my nest.**

and reform. But also, those whose fathers Job "would have rejected to set with the dogs of his flock," (30:1) who were driven out from society, (v.5) who were "sons of decadence" (v.8) now mocked him in his misery. "They abhor me; they keep far from me, yet they do not keep back their spitting from my face," (30:10) which conveys a picture of worthless individuals darting forward to insult him and immediately darting back to a safe distance, like dogs in a pack.

HE IS HUMBLING ME

Of all the resounding testimony of chapter 30, Job's words in verse 11a, expanded in verses 17 through 23, most shock and sober us. This has consistently been the direction of Job's thoughts. He would associate the evil he is experiencing with divine responsibility and thus with divine purpose. The pronoun *I* in the presence of affliction must be related to the pronoun *He*. It is *He,* Eloah, Who "has unloosed my cord [of sustained prosperity] and is humbling me."

To the "vile brood" this is motivation for adding to Job's woe, and there is no restraint put upon their attacks (12-14). God had revealed Himself to Job before as a Protector of those who feared Him and One Who restrained wicked men. What is He revealing of Himself now in this astounding reversal of experience?

The lowest members of society who now make Job their jest suffered far less from being driven out from the comforts of life than Job suffers now. Those who lived among the wilderness shrubs, in craters of the wadis found in Job their inferior and their source of mocking declarations (30:3-9). Decadent things have turned against Job, and His soul, all his pleasure and comfort, is poured out upon him in pain and humiliation (30:15,16).

In 30:17-19 Job refers to Deity by the pronoun *He*. What is most essential here is not what others say and do

3 **In lack and in stark starvation**
‘They were **gnawing** on **arid** ground,
Yesternight’s **ruination and wasteness.**
4 ‘They were **plucking** the **orach** *on*-**among** the **shrubs,**
And the **root of** the **broom** bush was **their bread.**
5 **From society they were** ˡ**driven out;**
Men ˡ**shouted** *on*-**after them as** after a **thief.**
6 **In** the **craters of** the **wadis** they ˃ **tabernacled**–**,**
In **holes of dirt and caverns.**
7 *bt*-**Among** the **shrubs they** ˡ**brayed;**
Under the **prickly acanthus**
they were ˡ**huddled together.**
8 **Sons of decadence, even sons** of those
without a **name,**
They ~were cut off**~ from the land.**
9 **And now I have become their jest,**
And I ˡ*b*-**continue** ˃**as** a mocking **declaration** of **theirs.**
10 **They abhor me; they** keep **far from me,**
+**Yet they** do **not keep back**
their **spitting from my face.**
11 Now **that He has unloosed my cord**
and is humbling me,
+ **They have** *m*-**let** the restraining **bridle go**
f-**in my presence.**
12 **On** the **right** hand the vile **brood** ˡ**rise** up;
They have sent forth **my feet,**
And they ˡ**heap** up **their paths of calamity**
on-**against me.**
13 **They have torn up my** own **track;**
They *c*-**add** ˡ**on to my woe;**
No*t* one is **~restraining~** ˃ **them.**
14 **As** through a **wide breach they** ˡ**arrive;**

30:2 ~~~ **Their strength:** Hb **On them;** ~~~ **entirely:** Hb **maturity.**
30:8 ~~~ **were cut** off: Hb **were** made **sore.**
30:13 ~~~ **restraining:** Hb **helping.**

to the increase of Job's sufferings, but what *He* is doing in not restraining the wicked and in multiplying the gnawing pain and insult, the confining misery and horror of Job's treatment, so that Job becomes like dirt and ashes. These are powerful words indeed, and we can appreciate how they stirred and shocked the young man, Elihu, who will soon speak, starting with chapter 32.

But in the meantime, we who know Yahweh's declaration that Job spoke rightly (42:8), must find in Job's bold, and seemingly reckless charges concerning God something that will open Job's eyes to a real perception of the Deity (see again Job 42:5). What Job says concerning the One ultimately responsible for his gnawing pains and fierce sorrows will lead him to an appreciation of the goodness of God's operations that he could not have previously known. It is Job's endurance in continually erupting out of the traps of self-justification and despair into a focusing of his thoughts Godward, that is upright. Once again, in 30:20-23, Job is turned about in the right direction as he implores to God for His answer. Job's charges may not be correct in themselves, but his longing to hear from God is wholly right.

This Godward focusing of Job's thoughts is now made more direct and personal by the reference to Deity as "You." Here Job exposes the key to his complaint: "I implore to You, yet You do not answer me" (30:20). This seems to be more troubling to Job than the cruelty and assailing and his closeness to death which he also traces to Deity (21-23). When, in the past, those in misfortune implored to Job, he would lament for them with commiseration (24,25). Yet in pleading to God, Job expected good and waited for light, but still remains without sunshine and music, in gloom and lamentation (30:26-31).

In noting Job's frustration over the silence of God we are not finding a model for us in our experiences of evil.

They have rolled them**selves** forward
under the **ruination**s.
15 **Decadent** thing**s have turned** *on*__against me;__
My reputation is ˡ**pursued as** by the **wind,**
And my salvation has passed away **like** a **dense** haze.
16 **And now, my soul is** ˡ**poured out** up**on me;**
Days of humiliation are tak**ing hold** of **me.**
17 By **night He gouges out my bones** all *f* **over me,**
And my gnawing pain**s** nev**e**r ˡ**lie** still.
18 *t*__With__ His *mn*__great vigor He__ *7*ˡ__grabs~__*Q* **my clothing;**
He ˡ**belts me** about **like** the **collar of my tunic.**
19 **He has shot me** down in**to** the **clay,**
So ⁺**that I am** made ˡ**comparable** *as*__to dirt and ashes.__
20 **I** ˡ**implore to You,** ⁺**yet You** do **not** ˡ**answer me;**
I stand up**,** ⁺**yet You** do *M*__not__*s* ˡ**consider** *i* **me.**
21 **You are** ˡ**turned** › **cruel to**ward **me;**
*i*__With__ the **staunchness of Your hand, You** ˡ**assail me.**
22 **You** ˡ**lift me** up in**to** the **wind** and *c*__make me__ ˡ**ride** on it**,**
And You ˡ**dissolve me** in the **tumult.**
23 *t* **I know** that **You are turning me back** to **death,**
⁺ To that **house appointed for all** the **living.**
24 **Yea** *7*__I~__ did **not** ˡ**put forth** my **hand**
*i*__~against__ the **humble~,**
If in his misfortune he is **imploring to** *7*__me~.__
25 *if* **Would I not lament for** one in **hardship of days?**
My soul was always **sorry for** the **needy.**
26 *t*__Indeed I expected good,__ ⁺__yet evil__ ˡ__came,__
And I ˡ**waited for light,** ⁺**yet gloom** has ˡ**come.**
27 **My bowels, they boil and are nev**er **still;**
Days of humiliation confront me.
28 **I go** about in **somberness**ˡ **without sunshine;**
I rise up **in** the **assembly** and ˡ**implore.**
29 **I have become** a **brother to wild jackals,**

30:18 *7*-~*Q* ˡ**grabs:** Hb ˡ**disguises.**
30:24 *7*-~ **I:** Hb **he;** ~-~ *i*__against__ the **humble:** Hb **rubbish** heap; *7*-~ **me:** Hb **them.**

Job's association of his afflictions with God and the directing of his thoughts toward Him remain the ideal pattern for every believer. But God has revealed Himself to us in the gift of His Son, so that we are aware that He is operating all together for our good. In Paul's epistles we have received details of God's power and wisdom and concern (indeed, love) way beyond what Yahweh makes known to Job in chapters 38-41. This gives us assurance and joy in a perception of God that Job never yet has received.

Job wanted to know "what is the portion of Eloah from above, and the allotment of Him Who-Suffices from the heights" (31:2). In Romans we already find revelations of an allotment from God for us (Rom.8:17) who glory in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:2). And in Ephesians we are told of our lot cast in Christ as Head over all (Eph.1:10,11,18,23). What a wealth of revelation for our endurance and strengthening and joy and peace!

But in chapter 31 Job still knows God only as One Who can bring calamity and disaster upon sinful humanity (v.3) and Who sees all our acts and knows all our movements (v.4). Despite all his passionate imploring to know more from God about the experience of evil beyond its relationship to judgment, Job remains at the end of these long disputations at much the same level of understanding that he had at the beginning. The fear of God has not led Him to a reliance on God that comes with full confidence that He operates all things with design and purpose.

Job ends these speeches with a closing argument for the defense. If he has walked with hypocrisy (31:5), if he has turned aside from the right way (7), if he has committed crimes of lust and assault (8,9), then that would deserve humiliation and fire (10-12). If he has brought harm to others and rejected their pleas, then he could put forth no defense before El (13,14). He would have nothing to say.

But, in the fear of God (*cf* 31:23), Job has always viewed

And an **associate to** the **ostrich.**◊
30 **My skin, it blackens** and falls **from** *on* **me,**
And my bones burn **hot** *f* **with** scorching **heat.**
31 + **My harp** *lb* **is** turned **to mourning,**
And my shepherd's pipe to the **sound of lamenting.**

31 I contracted a **covenant** ›**with my eyes**
+**So** *wt* **how should I** wrongly ˡ**consider** *on* a **virgin?**
2 +**Yet what** is the **portion of Eloah from above,**
And the **allotment of** Him **Who-Suffices**
from the **heights?**
3 Should **not calamity** be **for** the **iniquitous,**
And disaster for contriversˡ **of lawlessness?**
4 Does **He´ not** ˡ**see my ways**
And ˡ**number all my steps?**
5 **If I have walked with hypocrisy,**
And my foot has ˡ**hurried** *on* **after deceit**
6 **(Let Him weigh me in** the **scales of justice,**
And let Eloah know my integrity),
7 **If my movement** has ˡ**turned aside from the way,**
And my heart has *go* **run after** what **my eyes** see,
And any **blemish clings** *i* **to my palms,**
8 Then **let me** ˡ**sow and another** ˡ**eat,**
And may my output be ˡ**rooted out.**
9 **If my heart has been enticed** *on* **by** another's **wife,**
+**Or I have** waited in **ambush** *on* **at my associate's portal,**
10 **May my wife grind** corn **for another,**
And may others crouch down up**on her.**
11 **For that** would be a **crime,**
And that would be **depravity**
calling for judiciary **mediators.**
12 **For that** would be a **fire** that ˡ**devours unto Abaddon**
And ˡ**roots out** *i* **all my yield.**
13 **If I** have ˡ**rejected** the **plea of my servant**
and my maidservant

30:29 ostrich: lit., **daughters of ostrich.**

others as equally a creature of God's hand (15). He has treated the poor, the widow, the orphan and the needy with compassion and given genuine help (16-19). If he ever displayed anger toward those who received his aid without appreciation, then he would deserve punishment (20-22).

If Job has placed his confidence in gold (31:24) and found his joy in abundance (25), and if he has been enticed to secret idolatry, this would be a disavowal of El calling for judicial trial (26-28). If Job has rejoiced in the misfortune of those who hated him (but he has not done anything like that!), and if his guests have never complimented his treatment of them (he has always opened his door to the sojourner!), and if he has tried to conceal evidence of transgressions and acted cowardly (29-34)—but here the exhausted man breaks off his thought and summons all his remaining strength to gasp out his most pressing concerns: first to be heard, and then to hear from Him Who-Suffices (31:35). If an indictment can be made against him he would bear the document openly and face his accuser "like a nobleman" (31:35b-37).

It is his desire to hear from God that receives Job's mark, the representation of himself, his soul and heart. Yet still there is no answer to all his confusion and dismay over the evil, so like a curse from God, that has come upon him.

In the absence of a direct reply from God Job turns his thoughts in 31:38-40 to what God had already said in that ancient time when a curse was indeed laid upon Adam (Gen.3:17-19), employing a line concerning the ground crying out in connection with God's curse on Cain (Gen. 4:10,11). If Job's ground cries out against him for cheating and depriving another of his life, the curse of Cain might apply to Job. But that is not the case and cannot explain Job's affliction.

"The words of Job are finished" without resolution.

D.H.H.

[i]**When they** have brought an **indictment** [wi]**against me,**
14 [+]**Then what shall I do** [t]**when El** [l]**arises,**
And [t]**when He** [l]**visits, what shall I reply** to **Him?**
15 Did **not** He Who [d]**made**[l] **me in** the **belly**
[d]**make him** also**,**
So [+]**that** the same **One** [l]**prepared us** both **in** the **womb?**
16 **If I** have [l]**withheld** [f] the **desire of** the **poor**
And have [m]**caused** the **eyes of** the **widow** to [l][all]**fail,**
17 **And I** have [l]**eaten my morsel** [›]**by my**self **alone,**
So [+]**that** the **orphan** could **not eat** [f]**of it**
18 ([t]**Indeed from my youth he**[◊] **grew up** with **me**
as with a **father,**
And from the **belly of my mother I** have [l]**guided her**),[◊]
19 **If I** have [l]**seen** anyone **perishing from lack** of **clothing,**
And there **was no covering for** the **needy,**
20 **If his loins** did **not bless me,**
[+]**Since he was** [l]**warmed** [f]**with** the **fleece of my lambs,**
21 **If I have swung my hand** [on]**against** the **orphan**
[t]**Because I** [l]**saw my backing** was **in** the **gate,**
22 Then **may my shoulder fall** away
from the **shoulder blade,**
And may my arm be broken from the **clavicle.**
23 ([t]**Indeed I** [›]**have** an **awe** of **calamity** from **El,**
And I can**not** [l][all]**endure** [f]**before His** majestic **bearing.**)
24 **If I have** [pl]**made gold my confidence,**
And I have said to certified gold**: My trust,**
25 **If I** have [l]**rejoiced that my estate** is **vast**
And that my hand has found [mn]**abundance,**
26 **If I** have [l][see]**looked** at the sun**light** [t]**when it** [l]**irradiates,**
And the **moon** [go]**advancing** like a **precious** gem**,**
27 So [+]**that my heart was** [l]**enticed in secret,**
And my hand [l]**kissed** [›] **my mouth,**
28 **This** [mr]**also** would be **depravity**
calling for judiciary **mediation,**

31:18 he: i.e., the orphan; **her:** i.e., the widow.

For I then **would have disavowed** › **El** [f] **above.**
29 **If I** have [l]**rejoiced in** the **misfortune**
of the one **hating me,**
And I have roused my**self** in joy
[t]**because evil had overtaken him**
30 (+**Yet I have not** [g]**allowed my** [pt]**mouth to sin**
›**By asking**– [i]**with** an **imprecation** against **his soul**),
31 **If** the [ad]**men of my tent have nev**er **said:**
[a]**Who** can be [lg]**found** who has **not been satisfied**[l]
[f]**with his meat?**◊
32 (The **sojourner** has **not** [l]**lodged in** the **street;**
I have [l]**opened my doors**◊ **to** the **traveler**),
33 **If I have covered** up **my transgression like Adam,**
›**By burying**– **my depravity in my lap,**
34 [t]**Because I was** [l]**terrified** of the **vast throng,**
And the **contempt of families caused me** [l]**dismay,**
And I kept [l]**still** and would **not** go [l]**forth** from the **portal—**
35 ([a]**O** [lg]**that I** ›**had** someone **hearing** › **me!**
[bd]**Here** is **my mark; may** He **Who-Suffices**
answer me!
+ Let a **man write** his **indictment** against **me** on a **scroll;**
36 **Assuredly, I** would [l]**bear it on my** [bk]**shoulder;**
I would [l]**wind** it as a tiered **crown** ›**upon me;**
37 **I** would [l]**tell him** the **tale of my steps;**
Like a **nobleman I** would [l]**approach him.**)
38 **If my ground** has [l]**cried out** [on]**against me,**
And its furrows have [l]**wept together** with it,
39 **If I have eaten** of **its vigor without** paying **silver,**
So +**that I have caused** the **soul of its headmen** to
expire,
40 Then **may** the **thistle** come **forth** [u]**instead of wheat,**
And nightshade [u]**instead of barley!**
The **words of Job are finished.**

31:31 meat: lit., **flesh.**
31:32 doors: dual in Hb.

Contents:

241 Editorial
242 The Crucifixion of the World
251 Boasting in the Cross
263 Lest They Perceive
269 Job 32-37
281 The Speeches of Elihu
288 Index

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 1997
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

IT IS ONE THING to declare what is true with the mouth, and another thing to believe it in the heart. For Israel there must be both the avowal and the believing that Jesus is Lord and that God rouses Him from among the dead (Rom.10:8-13) in order for salvation to enter into their experience. It is a great step to speak the truth, a blessed gift of God. But it is often found that our words are contradictory because faith does not prosper along with the avowal of truth.

Hence among the Galatians were those who doubtless affirmed by their words the crucifixion of Christ but denied the significance of the cross (see p.251). It did not speak to them of the end of the flesh and its boasting (see p.242). Elihu (see p.281) affirmed that God was over all the habitance (Job 34:13), but he had trouble believing that God Himself was the Director (*cf* Job 36:22) of Job's sufferings.

However, for the generation of Israelites to whom Jesus ministered, there was little either of avowal of truth or of faith (see p.265). For the majority, their hearts were stoutened, lest they would hear and perceive (Matt.13:14,15). But the purpose of Jesus to save them from their sins will assuredly be realized.

So today, many do not even speak of God as the Creator and Director. And others who, like Elihu, declare that God truly is over all, obscure this truth with further claims about the human will and wickedness that imply God cannot fulfill His will and make His glories known to all. Indeed we often hear our brethren say that God has accomplished our salvation through the cross of Christ, and yet they also insist that there are requirements placed on us in order to complete this "accomplished" work. Faith has not kept up with the avowal.

May God grant us a growing faith that accords with our proclamation of His Word. D.H.H.

THE CRUCIFIXION OF THE WORLD

GOD has three distinct, yet parallel lines in carrying out His grand purpose of revealing Himself. One operates in the material, one in the temporal, and the other the spiritual sphere. One is concerned with the heavens and the earth, the second with the eons, the third with the *worlds.* These run parallel in space, time and spiritual operation. In these there are three major divisions, conforming with the three heavens and earths, or five minor divisions, corresponding to the five eons or worlds. The material changes are comparatively easy to grasp, and the temporal, the eons, are comparatively simple, but His spiritual operations are more difficult, yet they may be seen and apprehended best by their association with the corresponding earths and eons.

The material creation is by far the best example of order which our senses can perceive. The finest human fabrication cannot compare with the solar "system" or with the earth, even in its present state of disintegration. The Scriptures often use this system to illustrate the "world" of humanity, as when our Lord told His disciples, "I am the light of the world" (John.8:12). That is, apart from Him, mankind gropes in the dark, and does not really know what it is doing or whither it is going, or even why it exists.

KOSMOS

The essential meaning of the Greek word for *world,* is SYSTEM, order, or adornment. This is easily remembered by our English derivative *cosmetic,* a substance

used for human adornment. SYSTEM is its basic thought which is largely preserved in the scholarly name for the physical universe, the *cosmos,* which the dictionary explains as an orderly and harmonious system, contrasted with *chaos.* Indeed, the CV translates the verb *adorn.* Slaves are to *adorn* the teaching (Titus.2:10; 1 Tim.2:9). The walls of the new Jerusalem are to be *adorned* with precious stones (Rev.21:19). This should always be remembered when the word is used in a context which implies something good.

The Greek word for "world" may also be rendered "adornment" (1 Pet.3:3). There is an element of beauty in all orderly arrangement, so that the "world," as created, was a beautiful as well as an efficient implement for the revelation of God in the beginning, and will be in the consummation. It may be applied to the constitution of human society, especially before sin entered, and when the relations of Adam and Eve to the lower creatures, to each other, and to Elohim were still unspoiled. And it will also apply, with fuller force, to the future, when all creatures will be in harmony with the Father.

THE WORLD AND THE SAINTS

The fact that the present world is subject to the just verdict of God (Rom.3:19), a criminal as it were ready for trial and sentence, and enemy of the great Judge, while the believer has been justified from all sin and transgression, and is reconciled with God, constitutes the great gulf between the called and the world. But it is not easy to realize how great this chasm is, in practice, and very few, if any, of us are able to walk in fullest recognition of His truth. It may help us, therefore to consider the contrasts as we find them in the case of God's Son, when He was in the world, as revealed in John's account, and then those which apply directly to us, as presented in Paul's epistles.

THE SON AND THE WORLD

The key to the character of the world of mankind lies in its relation to God through His Son. The world came into being through Him, yet, when He became flesh and was in the world, it failed to recognize Him. Even His own nation rejected Him, except the little band who believed on Him and accepted Him, who were especially empowered for this privilege by God. Expressed by means of an illuminating figure of speech the world of mankind had reverted to a chaos like the physical earth at the disruption (Gen.1:2). They were in darkness, and He came as a light. But they did not like the light, but loved the darkness, because their deeds were evil (John 1:8-12).

In such a case the just course would be to judge the world, and deal with men according to their deserts. Our Lord had the power and the right. He could have called more then twelve legions of messengers to enforce His just sentence (Matt.26:53), at anytime. Even the might of Rome could not have withstood His verdicts. But He did not, at that time, seek to assert His power, or to set right the evils of the world. Indeed, the machinations of the Adversary, and the world which was under his influence, were the essential background for the display of His highest and most precious attributes, His grace and love. Apart from His presence we would never have known the wickedness of the world, or the goodness and grace of God. We know so little of the evil of the world today because we offer so little contrast to it.

THE LAMB OF GOD

When John the baptist introduced Jesus to Israel, He did not announce Him as the grand King for Whom Israel was looking and longing, but as the great Sacrifice, the Lamb of God, Who will take away the sin, not merely of Israel, but of the whole *world.* In other words, His attitude toward the world was an expression of God's *sacrificial love,* rather than one of condemnation. Judgment must come, in the future kingdom, but not during His sojourn among them, in His humiliation.

THE HATRED OF THE WORLD

The world did not fully vent its hatred of God's Son until His death upon the accursed stake. Then the two principal divisions of world power, the ecclesiastical and the political, joined in condemning Him, the priests because He exposed their hypocrisy and the political powers because He threatened their authority. Between them both He seemed to sink to the lowest level of human weakness and shame. In reality, however He offered the Sacrifice that settled for all sin, and laid the foundation for all future power and glory. Then it was that the world exposed its true character. It condemned itself when it crucified the Lord of glory. Throughout this eon it is worthy of the fate it dealt out to the Son of God. Let us give it this shameful place in our estimation.

The hatred of the world culminated in the crucifixion of Christ, but it did not cease then. It still continues in the various phases of the world, especially the ecclesiastical, for our realm, unlike that of Israel, is not on earth but inherent in the heavens (Phil.3:20), so we must be subject to the superior authorities on earth (Rom.13:1). But, though we do not wrestle with blood and flesh, we do wrestle with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials (Eph.6:10-13). In place of Pilate and the Roman world power, we are opposed by spirit forces among the celestials. This is the principal difference between our opposition and that of our Lord's day.

There is a widespread idea that, since the crucifixion and the spread of Christianity, the world is becoming better. Indeed, the "church" seems to cherish the mistaken notion

that world betterment is its chief function! The fallacy of this false inference is evident from the fact that, instead of improving in God's sight, it is fast approaching, if it is not already in, one of the perilous periods which characterize the last days. Every one of the twenty indictments of 2 Timothy 3:1-5, from selfishness to a denial of the power of devoutness, is abundantly evident. Politically, notwithstanding the union of the nations, there is perplexity and fear. Morally there is steady deterioration. Religiously, formality and outward show has largely replaced spiritual power. The world is worse and ripe for judgment.

OUR PRESENT PLACE IN THE WORLD

It is of utmost importance that the saints grasp their present relation to the world, for, while they are *in* this world, they are not *of* it. God does not, as a rule, call the wise of the world, or the powerful, or the noble, and those who are something, but rather the stupid, and the weak and the ignoble, and the contemptible, and those considered nothing. The reason is simple. No *flesh at all shall boast in His sight.* There is to be no boasting except in the Lord (1 Cor.1:26-31).

PAUL'S EXAMPLE

In his contact with the Corinthians, Paul had already declared this truth by his actions, which, we may well believe, were more effective than words. No doubt he was far superior to most other men in word and wisdom, and he had an excellent opportunity to display it, especially in Greece, where such gifts were highly esteemed. But his theme, a crucified Saviour, was by no means such as would appeal to his audience, nor could it be enforced by the usual persuasive arguments. Apart from God's intervention by His spirit there was no likelihood of any response. His weakness, fear, and trembling cancelled his

personal power, so made room for the outflow of God's spirit (1 Cor.2:1-5).

The cross, situated at the very center of the eons and the worlds is the climax of all wisdom when viewed from the divine standpoint. No other occurrence during the eons or in the worlds so clearly reveals, not only the ruin of man, but the love of God, as the *crucifixion* of the Lord of *glory,* the utter debasement of the highest of all God's creatures, the divine curse resting on the Beloved of His heart, for the sake of His sinful creatures. It is utterly impossible to even imagine any other action that would so completely demonstrate the fullness of the divine affection.

WORLD CRUCIFIED

The world was crucified to Paul and he to the world by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (Gal.6:14). While the world directly in view here is the world of Judaism, it, in fact, is but a picture of the greater system in which we all presently live. The spirit of both is boasting in the flesh. All such glory is shameful, and will give place to a new creation (Gal.6:15). Most of us have a very vague notion of the force of the term "world" in this connection, and of its place in God's plan. It is used of the various *systems* which He uses during the eonian times. Like the respective epochal eons, the five corresponding worlds are arranged as a reversal. The first world was created good, and so with the last. The second from the beginning and end see the entrance and exit of evil, under the first and the last Adams. The central wicked world, in which we live, is the worst of all and comes to its climax in the cross, the summit of human depravity, and will end in the impending era of God's indignation.

THE VARIOUS WORLDS

There are five different "worlds" mentioned in Scrip-

ture which vary much in character, according to the eon in which each is found. We live in the present *wicked* eon (Gal.1:4), so it is a hateful (John.15:18), corrupt (2 Pet. 1:4), world. But the first and last worlds have no such character. Before the disruption, ere sin had entered and man had not even been created, there is no intimation of wickedness. So, also, in the world of the new creation, after the great white throne judgment, everyone is ready to be subject to God, the Father. These two worlds are not wicked, by any means.

Only because the first, faultless world was *not adapted to bring about God's glorious goal,* was it rejected and ruined and readjusted for the first phase of His dealings with humanity. This was altogether according to God's will, and not in the least due to human failure or transgression, although it prepared for it and foreshadowed it. As the great Subjector of all, He not only had the *right* to work His will in the physical realm, but His innate love demanded reciprocation, and fully justified every temporal evil that would make it possible for Him to reveal His fatherly affection for the creatures of His hand and *heart.*

THE ANCIENT WORLD

The worlds before and after the present wicked world are alike in this, that subjection, or government, is under the first Adam and his sons in the past, and under the Second Adam in the future. There will be a vast advance in the future, but is is still necessary to deal in judgment with individuals and nations. In the ancient world we have the problem of evil, the disruption of the first earth, repeated in the spiritual sphere. We are now distinctly told that Yahweh Elohim Himself caused the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to grow in the garden (Gen.2:9). Adam did not plant it there, nor did the Adversary. It was God's doing, and in later revelation He definitely takes the responsibility

(*cf* Rom.11:32). The reaon is clear. Good cannot be really "known" or appreciated apart from the experience of evil.

THE PRESENT WICKED WORLD

We are now prepared to see why this world is wicked beyond the rest, and should be crucified. Essentially, wickedness is insubjection to the Deity, Who takes the title of Subjector during the eonian times, in which the world systems operate. The worlds before and after this are held in a measure of subjection by Adam and his greater Son, but today there is no head or central authority in charge of mankind. Noah's eldest son did not take over the rule of the rest. The divine right of kings is a myth, except in the case of His own nation, Israel. Even there, *the Only One Who is equipped to subject others to the Supreme Subjector was crowned with thorns and crucified.* The world that committed this accursed crime is fit for nothing else than crucifixion.

THE FOURTH WORLD

As the deluge destroyed the previous world and prepared for the present, so the impending judgments will clear the scene for Messiah's kingdom. As in the days of Noah, so it will come, unexpectedly, and by means of tremendous physical catastrophies, clear the scene for the reign of Christ Himself. Because of His presence and power, it will be a glorious world compared with the previous ones, but evil and enmity will only be supressed on the part of the other nations. So it, more definitely than other worlds, is limited in time (to a thousand years). Then Satan is loosed and deceives the people for the last time. Thus even this world has a share of evil, to set forth the good.

THE FIFTH WORLD

The fifth world is the result of a new creation, and dif-

fers from the first largely in that it is the fruit of its disruption, as well as the other worlds (Rev.21-22). But, even with all its many blessings, it is not the consummation, when God becomes All in all. The lake of fire is still present (Rev.21:8).

The blessings are largely confined to one nation, Israel, and their holy city, New Jerusalem, to which the nations bring their glory. They will still need healing (Rev.22:2). Some will be unjust and filthy (Rev.22:11). Without the city are evil characters (Rev.22:15). Throughout the worlds and eons, evil has its place, as God's means of revealing to mankind the innate operations of His heart.

THE FINAL SYSTEM

Only Paul can carry us beyond the heavens into the celestial regions, or beyond the eons in the course of time. At the consummation all sovereignty and authority and power, the kingdom of Israel and the nations will be abolished. Those who have died, and are in the lake of fire, which is the second death, will be vivified. Even the Son Himself, Who has succeeded in subjecting all to God, will Himself be subject, that God may be All in all. This is the final, perfect system, in which all have been headed up in the Christ (Eph.1:10), Who then brings all under the august Headship of the Father. A. E. Knoch

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BOASTING IN THE CROSS

(Galatians 6:11-18)

Lo! with what size letters I write to you with my own hand! (6:11)

"It seems probable that the rest of the epistle was penned by Paul himself. His usual custom was to write only a short ending to attest the genuineness of a letter [*cp* 2 Thess. 3:17], but here he is so concerned that he rehearses the heart of the argument in his own handwriting. It has been suggested that the writing was in large letters because of his defective eyesight [*cp* 4:15b]."[1]

While this may be so, we cannot help wondering whether it may not also be the case that if, at this juncture, Paul now takes pen in hand himself and inscribes the remainder of the epistle *personally, written in large letters,* he does so more especially to draw attention to the summary of the entire epistle which follows. In any case, it is helpful to picture this brief, remaining portion of the epistle as perhaps having been written thus, that we might take special note of what is said here accordingly:

Whoever are wanting to put on a fair face in the flesh, these are compelling you to circumcise only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ Jesus. For not even they who are circumcising are maintaining law, but they want you to be circumcised that they should be boasting in that flesh of yours. (6:12,13)

Paul does not say that "*some*" among his opposers who wished to put on "a fair face *in the flesh*" were guilty of such unworthy motives as to be practicing such a doc-

1. A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.285.

trine in order to escape persecution for the cross of Christ Jesus, but that "*whoever*" among them[2] were practicing such a doctrine were motivated thus.

The only reason these opposers had so "revised" Paul's message was to avoid persecution, especially such persecution as the apostle himself had undergone because of his heralding of the evangel, uncorrupted. Whether Jew or Greek, the vast majority of men were offended by Paul's heralding, "according as the truth is in Jesus" (*cp* Eph.4:21).

Since the mass of men were scandalized by the truth of the evangel, they persecuted both those who taught it and those who accepted it. Hence, by twisting the evangel—specifically, by giving man himself a key role with a view to his justification—these circumcisionists succeeded not only in contriving a message which would be inoffensive and acceptable to the masses, but one which would deceive even many of God's own, such as the Galatians. This same basic error has prevailed throughout the centuries, even as it continues to prevail today.

"The circumcisionists played for *popularity.* They were after a 'show.' They used the gospel to swell their own ranks. The rite of circumcision, apart from any moral and spiritual considerations, filled them with pride. They 'counted' their converts, and rivalled with each other for Jewish favor on that ground. To be able to point to a bodily condition or some other outward observance as proof of their influence—this was their object. Their policy was cowardly. Their zeal for circumcision was not genuine. In theory, their enthusiasm for the rite was ascribed to its supposed virtue; in fact, they used it as a makeshift to avoid persecution. They were insincere as well as unprincipled and selfish. These men who professed such zeal for the law,

2. The scope of "whoever" here is that of all who were compelling the Galatians to circumcise: "*Whoever . . . these* are compelling *you* . . . ."

neither respected nor regarded it; they used it to secure position and the perquisites of religious place. Insincere, cowardly, time-servers—such were the circumcisionists. They were facing two ways, studying the safest, not the truest course, anxious to be friends at once with Christ and His enemies."[3]

The hypocrisy and inconsistency in such an approach is transparent. It is not as if even those who were circumcising or imposing other points of law for justification were actually *maintaining* law, but at most were only attempting to do so. Yet whoever are of works of law are under a curse, for it is written that, Accursed is everyone who is *not remaining* in *all things* written in the scroll of the law to do them (3:10; *cp* Deut.27:26; 28:15).

The criterion of law-justification is not that the listeners of law are just with God, but that the doers of law shall be justified (Rom.2:13; *cf* Deut.6:25). Nevertheless, since all are under sin (Rom.3:9), no one measures up to this criterion. Hence, by works of law, no flesh at all *shall* be justified in God's sight. Law affords the human not a means of justification but of condemnation, for through law is the recognition of sin (Rom.3:20).

Even those in Israel who were comparatively faithful and worthy, were never "of" works of law in such a sense as to make their own obedience the ultimate basis of blessing. They too had sinned (even if less than many of their fellows), and so had become liable for all the law's curses (James 2:10), even as the rest. They had no more claim on God's blessing than the wicked kings of old, and could only look to His mercy, according to His *grace.*[4]

3. Vladimir Gelesnoff, Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, p. 132.

4. Paul's words in Romans 9:15 in his slightly adapted citation of God's declaration of Exodus 33:19, reads, "I shall be *merciful* to whomever I may be merciful, and I shall be *pitying* whomever I may be pitying." In Exodus 33:19 itself, however, the record is that Yahweh said

Hence, in any ultimate sense, such faithful ones were by no means "resting on law" (*cf* Rom.2:17), even though it remained their duty to heed it. Instead, their only hope, even as our own, was the grace and compassion of God. And, like ourselves again, they could only become willing to obey in the day of God's *power* (*cf* Psa.110:3; *cp* Rom.7:15; 8:7).

SCANDALOUS TRUTH

The theme of the believer's dependence upon God's *spirit,* in His *grace,* both for justification through Christ and faithful service in His name, permeates this entire epistle. Yet alas, in the case of the Galatians, the flesh's native desire to exalt itself through its own sufficiency had gained the day and so had crowded out the evangel of grace.

If Paul had continued to herald circumcision, his later persecutions for *not* heralding circumcision would never have occurred. As he said, "If I am still heralding circumcision, why am I still being persecuted?" (5:11a). Yet, conversely, as he went on to say, "Consequently the snare of the cross of Christ has been nullified" (5:11b).

That is, in that case, those considerations related to the cross which scandalize the mind of man would no longer be a problem since they would no longer exist. So long as man may suppose that he can do something for his own justification, that is, something with a view to that objective being realized, he is content. He is content, because of the gratification of his own supposed virtue thus afforded him. He may have committed many a sin, but at least when it comes to doing those things which he fancies must be done in order to save his own neck, he is really quite an

to Moses, "I will be *gracious* to whom I am being gracious and will have *compassion* for whom I am having compassion." Thus we learn that God's mercy is according to His grace, and His pity according to His compassion.

all-right fellow after all. By doing what he imagines is required of him, then, he will *save himself* from disqualification for heaven so that God will save him from hell.

Indeed, if it should be announced to a believer of such a mind that salvation is granted gratuitously in grace, apart from law, and hence *that all boasting in self is debarred* (Rom.3:27), he or she simply will not tolerate any such affirmation.

The snare or "scandal" (*scandalon*) of the cross consists in its all-sufficiency for justification and attendant blessing of salvation. In the sight of God, man can become justified only through the *gratuitous* and *gracious* deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24).

Yet this truth scandalizes the fleshly mind which in its pride ever seeks to "do its part," that it might gain its own glory. Since to the flesh, the truth of the cross becomes the snare[5] of the cross, those who would stand for its truth, must also bear the persecutions which attend such a stand.

"Persecution" is not confined to retributive acts of extreme bodily injury, but may consist of any type of *mistreatment* of another as a result of such a one's having incurred the displeasure of the persecutor. Many who are actually egregious persecutors would deny the charge, ones who in their religious zeal may be largely unaware of their acts, and attitudes, of persecution.

The Greek word translated "persecution" (*diogmos,* CHASing), as a verb (*dioko*), is translated not only "persecute" but "pursue." It is used both of positive pursuing (e.g., 1 Thess.5:15) and of negative "chasing" (as here, in 5:11 and 6:12). Such "chasing" may be overt or covert, subtle or obvious, even as slight or extreme. Those who take an open stand for the truth of the evangel, however, *will,* in whatever way or degree, be "persecuted" for so doing.

5. i.e., "a means of tripping or a cause of falling," KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.275.

A CORRESPONDENT RANSOM FOR ALL

One may be a friend of *Christ,* and yet an enemy of His *cross* (Phil.3:18b), that is, of its significance and accomplishment. One may speak continually of the crucifixion *event,* while continually denying the crucifixion *accomplishment.* Paul entreats the Philippians to become imitators of him, and to be noting those who are walking thus, "according as you have us for a model." He does so, for, as he says and had often told them before, there are many who are walking as "*enemies* of the *cross* of Christ."

The contrast which Paul draws here in Philippians 3:18, is not between believers and unbelievers, but between those who are imitating him and those who are not imitating him, in relation to the "cross" of Christ. Obviously, Paul does not hereby refer to the wooden instrument itself upon which Christ was impaled, but, by metonymy, to the significance of the Death which occurred thereupon, the death of Christ, and the achievement of the deliverance which was wrought there, that of the salvation of all mankind and the reconciliation of all, throughout the universe.

Unbelievers, as a rule, if they have even heard of it, do not so much oppose as simply ignore God's gracious work of salvation for all through Christ. It is rather *unfaithful believers*—in contradistinction to Paul and those believers who would imitate him—who stand against the truth concerning the cross. The Philippians hardly needed to be told to imitate *Paul* in his acceptance of the mere event of the cross; any believer would do for that. Nor is it at point by Paul's words here for the Philippians to become careful to maintain their wariness of the claims of atheists or idolators, ones who often deny even the event of the cross, who in any case disclaim it of all salvific value.

It becomes evident, then, that in speaking of those who are enemies of the *cross* in contrast to those who are *not,* Paul does not set in opposition believers and unbelievers, but *faithful believers* and *unfaithful believers,* in this relation. He does so in respect of each class of believers' walk in consideration of the *significance* and *achievement* of the cross.

The significance of the cross as to the individual sinner concerns not so much what the sinner has *done,* but what the sinner *is.* One who sins, sins because he *is* a sinner. It is because he is such an awful person that he has done such awful things! The lusts of the flesh, collectively (even if not, perhaps, in some points, individually), are *his* lusts! If he is less guilty than others of certain of the more socially unacceptable works of the flesh, he is still quite guilty himself of various of the more socially acceptable fleshly desires.

The desire of the flesh is a terrible thing. This is so not only in its acknowledged perversions such as rape or murder, but in its perversions which, in its own perverseness, it deems only "minor shortcomings." These include sins such as self-exaltation, coveting, and ostentation, not to mention vanity, impatience, unkindness, strife, and anger.

How one may compare to other men is not the point. Every sinner *himself* is such a terrible sinner that none other than Christ Himself had to die for that sinner alone, let the sins and needs of others be what they will.

Further, every sinner himself is such a terrible sinner that his justification, hence, his salvation, would seem to be impossible. And, unless God should take the most extreme measures at unspeakably great cost both to Himself and to His Son, every sinner is such a terrible sinner that indeed his salvation would be impossible.

To speak as a man, By our sins, we have made ourselves the worst imaginable nuisance to God and caused Him an unfathomable measure of trouble. How would *you* like it if you had to give up *your* most precious child—the only one who had truly loved you and been obedient to you—to death, even a death of *crucifixion*? And most especially,

how would you like it if you had to do this because it was the only way to ransom the rest of your children out of the terrible plight which had befallen them due to their own foolish wickedness?

Thus the significance of the cross, in respect to the sinner, is that such were *our* deserts. It is *we* who are deserving of death (*cp* Rom.1:32), not Christ. To say that crucifixion was the Roman death penalty, not the Mosaic, misses the point. The point is that the sufferings of the cross comprised the death which *God Himself* appointed unto His Son in His death for sinners (*cf* Acts 4:27,28). If some swift, painless, and shameless form of euthanasia performed in private might have sufficed, doubtlessly it would have been employed. No; to ransom such as ourselves, nothing less than an ignominious and public, literally *excruc*iating (i.e., "from the cross") death would suffice.

In relation to the sinner, considered as such, *this* is the significance of the cross. Since it is so exceedingly uncomplimentary of the flesh, however, the flesh does not care for such a message at all. The believer, while actively believing under the influence of God's spirit, loves the word of the cross; for it at once serves to humble him and to exalt his God even as His vast love. Yet let that same believer be removed from vital influences of the spirit and left to himself, which is to say to his own flesh, and he will once again yield to whatever desires of the flesh happen to be his peculiar portion.

Most believers are too pious to join voices with Cicero the Roman orator and openly declare, "No wise man ever thanked God for virtue." Yet not many believers are sufficiently enlightened and devout to thank God alone for virtue, while meaning what they say. Howbeit, the apostle Paul, at the zenith of this summary word in defense of his evangel of grace, plainly declares:

Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (6:14)

The world specifically and immediately in view in the above quotation is the world of Judaism, for this is the world of the context. To be strictly literal, in each case where the above text reads "the world," it should simply be "world." In more literal English, we would render this idiomatically as "a world."

Paul, through the truths contained in his evangel, especially in his prophetic writings of the "untraceable riches of Christ" (Eph.3:8), was vitally aware of "the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" (Phil.3:8) contained therein, which transcended the revelations given earlier to the Circumcision concerning the kingdom and its law.

Hence, to Paul, the world of Judaism with all its laws, rituals, and related service, no longer had any practical existence, insofar as any involvements of his own therein were concerned. That world had been crucified to him. Similarly, Paul the apostle, likewise, who in his evangel of justification apart from law no longer had any place within the environs of Judaism, had become "dead" from the perspective of that world. Thus he had been crucified to it.

No doubt, most today are motivated to make law-obedience or some other form of "requirement-meeting" compulsory, because they think that it *is* compulsory,[6] even in our calling today. Still, the fact remains that to teach that "eternal" salvation can only be obtained by the cross *plus something else* (it makes little difference what) is effectually to boast not only in the cross but in that something else as well, whether intentionally or not.

6. Law-obedience for entrance into the terrestrial kingdom is indeed compulsory under the Circumcision administration. That calling and its blessing, however, is still on a *basis* of *grace* for those who are *chosen*. The blessings of the Circumcision have no more place for prideful notions of free will than the blessings of the Uncircumcision.

Boasting is not confined to overt bragging, but includes all inward glorying and exulting as well, according to a boastful spirit (1 Cor.4:7; *cp* Prov.6:17a, "exalted eyes"). Preachers continually praise their converts for making their "decision for Christ." They are taught to think well of themselves for having used their "free will" aright in "accepting Christ," unlike so many others who have not done so. Indeed, if it is something ultimately of man himself alone which determines whether one enjoys eternal bliss or is subjected to eternal misery, how could one *not,* even if only inwardly, extol his own greatness for an achievement of such stupendous importance?

IN CHRIST, A NEW CREATION

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but a new creation. And whoever shall observe the elements by this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, also on the Israel of God. (6:15,16)

Believers of the Circumcision who were enlightened, who recognized the *grace* of their own calling, albeit of a grace under the law which acknowledged its requisite place in relation to their entrance into the terrestrial kingdom, would therefore continue in the observance of its various particulars, or elements.

It is true that the elements of their system had a vital place in relation to their allotment of *eonian* life in the *kingdom* announced by their prophets. That allotment was only granted as a reward for worthiness of service, according to the criterion of the Mosaic law. Ultimately speaking, however, it would be only those whom God would make worthy, according to His choice in grace (Rom.11:2-5; *cp* Isa.26:12), who would become worthy of that glorious reward. Even so, they themselves must strive and struggle daily that they might not be classed among the doers of lawlessness and thus debarred from the kingdom.

Still, in the case of any such Circumcision believers, as much so as for the rest of mankind, it is through the work of Christ *alone* that sin is taken away, that man is conciliated to God, that justification is afforded, that vivification (with its attendant immortality and incorruption) is granted, and that peace and reconciliation are established.

It is in light of all such considerations that Paul declares: "*In Christ Jesus,* neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but a new creation." In relation to that which God achieves in grace through Christ Jesus, what is true of circumcision is true of all law: *it is nothing.* Instead, in Christ Jesus, what is everything, is the new creation which God achieves for all through the blood of Christ's cross.

Hence, "*whoever* shall observe the elements *by this rule,* peace be on them, and mercy, also on the Israel of God" (6:15,16). Whether, in the case of an observant, believing Jew or proselyte, who thus would observe the elements literally, or in the case of all called according to Paul's evangel, who thus observe the elements in spirit (5:25), Paul invokes peace upon them, considered individually.

Similarly, he goes on to speak specifically of those faithful ones within the nation of Israel considered as a discrete company, invoking peace and mercy upon them collectively. Such ones comprise all out of Israel who through faith are "Israel" indeed (i.e., "upright with El"; Gen.32:28; *cf* Rom.9:6b). More fully expressed, the phrase "also on the Israel of God," is: "also, may peace and mercy be upon the Israel *of God.*"

"Paul does not wish to condemn all of the Circumcision indiscriminately for the sins of his opponents. Those amongst them who acknowledge the power of the cross in the midst of their observances, on these he invokes peace and mercy, for they are the true Israel of God."[7]

7. A. E. Knoch, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.285.

For the rest, let no one afford me weariness, for I am bearing in my body the brand marks of the Lord Jesus Christ. (6:17)

By this sobering word, Paul plainly intimates that this is to be the end of the matter. It is as if he were to declare: "See here; this is the way it is. Period. I am bearing in my body the brand marks [*stigmata*] of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who personally revealed to me the very evangel which I proclaimed to you and must now defend before you. Do not weary me any further with any of your 'Yes-but' retorts."

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren! Amen! (6:18)

Paul's emphasis here on *spirit*, is in line with the overall teaching of the epistle. As the evangel is full of the *grace* of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is to this grace alone which Paul appeals. The apostle thus expresses his longing for the Galatians, his beloved but "foolish, little children" in faith, that the Lord's grace might illumine them and God's spirit empower them, that they might embrace the truth and no longer oppose it.

Paul was confident *in the Lord* that the day would come (whether or not it came, following this time, during his lifetime) when the Galatians would be rejoicing in the truth of the evangel which he was heralding among the nations (2:2) and in nothing would be disposed otherwise (5:10).

Since our Saviour, God, wills not only that the Galatian saints should be saved and come into a realization of the truth, but that "all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4), we would join our voice with Paul's in this same confidence. It is our God and Father Himself, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has formed the decision that such a goal should be realized. How we rejoice to know that all His counsel shall be confirmed, and that all His desire He will do (Isa.46:10). To Him be the glory for the eons! Amen! J.R.C.

LEST THEY PERCEIVE

THE DISCIPLES were told not to herald the kingdom to anyone except "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:5). Now in Matthew 13 Jesus speaks to the crowds in parables, and in fact, "apart from a parable He spoke nothing to them" (13:34). He changes His emphasis from the nearness of the kingdom to the *secrets* of the kingdom which are made known only to the disciples (13:11). The rest are made deaf and blinded with stoutened hearts "lest at some time they . . . should be turning about, and I should be healing them" (v.15).

The way in which our Lord conducted His ministry to Israel is full of surprises. The messenger's prophecy to Joseph had been that Jesus would save His people from their sins (Matt.1:21). Yet this goal has not yet been announced to the people. To the contrary, Jesus has warned that "broad is the gate and spacious is the way which is leading away into destruction, and many are those entering through it. Yet what a cramped gate and narrowed way is the one leading away into life, and few are those who are finding it" (Matt. 7:13,14). The call for repentance has not been heeded by those to whom it was given; hence the Lord declared, "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! . . . For Tyre and Sidon shall it be more tolerable in the day of judging than for you" (11:21,22).

In short, Jesus has not pointed the people to His position as Saviour from their sins. He has predicted that only a few would heed His message about the kingdom and find the way to life. He has told the disciples to go only to Isra-

elites. And now he speaks in parables which He will not explain to the people in general, lest they repent, and He tells the disciples the people as a whole have been blinded.

NOT GIVEN TO KNOW

We can say all we want about the disciples eventually being commissioned to disciple "all the nations" (Matt. 28:19), and we can try to convince ourselves that Jesus kept truth hidden only from those who had already shown they would not receive it, but these facts do not change the fact that the ministry of Jesus did not result in saving the very people who received it, and the testimony of our Lord is that this failure finds its roots in divine prophecy made centuries before. It is clearly the operation of God.

What was happening "filled up" (Matt.13:14a) the prophecy of Isaiah 6:9,10 which says as translated from the Hebrew: "Go, and you will say to this people, Hear yea hear, yet do not understand; and see, yea see, yet do not know. Stouten the heart of this people, and make its ears heavy, and make its eyes squint, lest it may see with its eyes, and with its ears it may hear, and with its heart it may understand."

To the vast majority of the people of Israel it was not given (Matt.13:11b) to understand what Jesus was saying. It was not given to them to perceive and to know, *lest they should be turning about and the Lord be healing them* (Matt.13:15).

Jesus was able to speak plainly. He could have avoided the use of parables, or in using them to give the explanation of them to everyone. But He did not minister to the people this way; He did not tell them openly and plainly these secrets of the kingdom; for if He did take this approach in His ministry the people would have repented and turned about from their ways and He would have saved them. He spoke in parables, *lest* they should be healed! The word

heal comes close to the idea of *save,* and is often used to picture the broader work of deliverance from any danger. But Jesus spoke in such a way that the people would not turn from their ways and be saved.

SPEAKING IN PARABLES

The parables on Matthew 13 are elucidated to the disciples by the Lord. They indicate that only a few Israelites will enjoy the "superfluity" of blessing in the kingdom (v.12). This is in accord with the ways of God, which are not our ways. God blinds the hearts of the many and grants understanding to the few. He sows, or places, the various individual types of people in a situation favorable or unfavorable to the firm reception of the Word (Matt.13: 18-23). Some who heard Jesus speak did so while placed in an environment that was hostile to understanding and appreciating the message, being sown "beside the road," or "in the thorns."

Nothing could so clearly present the truth that the kingdom will come and be administered in a way that glorifies God. To those who were given, more was to be given (13:12). The privileged blessings of the kingdom would not be enjoyed by every Israelite, for only a few would be granted the insight and the faith to treasure these blessings and "shine out as the sun" (v.43) in the kingdom. These blessings are *given* in accord with God's operation in placing Israelites in environments which either are conducive or not conducive to understanding and heeding of the Word.

FIRE AND GNASHING OF TEETH

In view of these many factors limiting the effect of Jesus' teaching in the hearts of His people, we surely must take special care in attempting to understand His warnings of judgment. If someone is sown "among the thorns," that is, receives the word in an environment (in which they were

"sown") of many worries of life and struggles to earn money, they will suffer loss for it. But God's wisdom, in placing only a few in situations where they will understand what they hear, cannot be honored if the lamentation and gnashing of teeth of the many is eternal and hopeless.

From the very lessons of these parables, the meaning of the burning of the darnel (v.30) cannot be everlasting hell. It is more than irreverence, it is a denial of His wisdom and righteousness to speak of God as annihilating or tormenting forever those whom He has blinded, from whom understanding has been taken away, through the instrument of the Adversary.

Their stoutened hearts will bring them eventually to "a furnace of fire" and "lamentation and gnashing of teeth," but to speak of these results of their sins in terms of the traditional hell is to twist the Scriptures and its revelations of the living, wise and powerful God of all goodness, out of all recognition. God Who kept them from turning about from their self-centered and proud ways will bring them to the realization of the evils of these ways. But this too will be for their good and the glory of God.

As the farmer burns up the darnel after it has been separated from the harvested grain, so also God will exclude those deceived by Satan from the blessings of the kingdom. But this "furnace of fire," characterized by intense sorrow over their loss will certainly have benefits of opening their eyes and hearts to the truth and an appreciation of God. The sentence is severe, and we would not minimize the severity of its significance, but it is a judgment of God, Who judges in accord with truth and for purposes that harmonize with His glorious Being. This fire and this weeping are divine operations of condemnation, but they are not expressions of some sort of everlasting, hopeless reprobation. Our Lord is not speaking of hell,

and it is shameful to obscure His place as Saviour by thus twisting His words.

THE SAVIOUR'S WISDOM AND POWER

But also, this fire and weeping is not God's means of saving from sin. It may open up their eyes, but it cannot save these sinners from their sins. Nor indeed does the hearing and believing and heeding of the Word save the disciples from their sins. It is Jesus alone Who saves His people from their sins. Though this is not being made known as He traverses the land of Israel, it will be the solid foundation for all the blessings of pardon and rule and life promised to that people.

But for now, here in Matthew 13, that is not being made known even to the disciples. What is being made known, however, is great and glorious! Even in His own country where He was not honored, the people were astonished at His "wisdom and powerful deeds" (Matt.13:54).

In this the people of Nazareth were not thinking of a kind of wisdom that depends on human beings using their free will to change their thinking and their will in order to make themselves worthy of the kingdom. They were not thinking of a kind of power that is dependent on their own independent decisions in order to be employed. And they were not thinking of a power that sent and kept sinners in pain and lamentation forever, or annihilated what it could not save. Instead, they were thinking of a wisdom that knew hidden things about themselves and revealed secret things from God, and they were thinking of a power that healed and blessed.

THE WISDOM OF THE CROSS

We have been granted further revelations of divine wisdom and power in the wisdom and power of the cross. What was being shown by the blinding of many hearts

and the choosing of a few disciples to understand and heed Jesus' words is shown also in our own calling. "For you are observing your calling, brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh; not many powerful, not many noble, but the stupidity of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the wise, and the weakness of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the strong, and the ignoble and the contemptible things of the world God chooses, and that which is not, that He should be discarding that which is, *so that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight*" (1 Cor.1:26-29).

This wisdom of choosing fishermen over the learned Pharisees, or people like the Corinthians (and us) over others who seem more deserving, is a wisdom that brings out the power and grace and love of God. But it does not exclude His righteousness and involve sending those who are not called to endless punishment. Indeed, the greatest example of stubborn phariseeism was Saul of Tarsus!

The wisdom of the cross is to save in full recognition of the entire helplessness and hopelessness of sinful humanity. "For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14). In reality, those who are wise according to the flesh are not wise; no one can truly be called strong or noble. These value judgments are only temporary, part of what seems to be so for the present. But in faith we see all put to death in the death of Christ, and all headed up in the Christ in vivification and reconciliation.

Since this is so, the teaching of everlasting hell is proven false. It is a doctrine that distorts and hides God's character and that denies His deity. "O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! . . . seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:33,36).

D.H.H.

JOB 32-37

32 +**So** ·**these three** ·**men** |**ceased from answering**– `**Job, for he** was **righteous in his** own **eyes.** 2 +**Yet** the **anger of Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite, from** the **family of Ram,** grew |**hot. His anger** burned **hot** *i***against Job** *on***because he justified**– **his** own **soul** rather *f***than Elohim.** 3 **And his anger** burned **hot** *i***against his three associates** *on***because** *w* **they had not found** an **answer, and** so **they** |**condemned** *S*`**Elohim***ph*. 4 +**As** for **Elihu, he had tarried** *i***while ~they spoke**–~ `to **Job, for they** were **older** *f***than he** was ›**in days.** 5 +**When Elihu** |**saw that** there **was no** further **answer in** the **mouth**s **of the three men,** + **his anger** grew even |**hot**ter. 6 +**So Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite** |**answered** + |**saying:**

I am **junior** to you ›**in days, and you** are **hoary headed;**
Therefore I shrank back and was |**fearful**
From disclosing– **my knowledge** `to **you.**
7 **I said** to myself**, Let days speak**
And many years *c***make wisdom** |**known.**
8 But *so***surely it** is the **spirit in** a **mortal,**
And the **breath of** Him **Who-Suffices**
that *c***gives them** |**understanding.**
9 **Seniors may not be wise**
+**Or elders** |**understand** right **judgment.**
10 **Therefore I say,** Do **hearken to me;**
Let me disclose my knowledge, me too.

32:3 *S-ph* `**Elohim:** Hb `**Job.**
32:4 ~~~ **they spoke**~: MT **speeches.**

11 **Behold, I waited for your words;**
I ⌊**listened** *fr*⌋**for your understanding**
fr⌊**While you were sounding out declarations.**
12 + **I** *m*⌊**gave consideration** *fr*⌋**to you,**
+**Yet behold,** there **was no correcting** ›**of Job**
Or **answer**⌊ to **his** *sa*⌋**arguments from you.**
13 Beware **lest you** ⌊**say, We have found wisdom;**
El Himself **~is our** ⌊**Mentor~, not man.**
14 +**Hence ~I shall not array~** such **declarations** *7*as **these~,**
And *i*⌊**with your** *sa*⌋**arguments I shall not reply** to **him.**
15 **They are dismayed; they** do **not answer further;**
They shift declarations away **from them.**
16 + **I have waited,** but *t*⌊**since they are not speaking,**
t⌊**Since they stand** and do **not answer further,**
17 **Let me answer, me too,** with **my portion;**
Let me disclose my knowledge, me too.
18 **For I am full** of **declarations;**
The **spirit of my inner being constrains me.**
19 **Behold, my inner being** is **like wine** that **is not** ⌊**opened,**
Like new wineskins, it is ready to ⌊**split.**
20 **Let me** ⌊**speak** so +**that it** can **ventilate** › **me;**
I must ⌊**open my lips and** ⌊**answer.**
21 *pr*⌊**Indeed I certainly shall not show**
partiality to any **man,**
Nor shall I flatter › a **human.**
22 **For I** do **not know** how **I** could ⌊**flatter,**
Else **my** *d*⌊**Maker**⌊ would ⌊**carry me** off **speedily.**
33 Nevertheless +**now,** I **pray,**
O **Job, hear my declarations,**
And do *c*⌊**give ear** to **all my words.**
2 **Behold,** *pr*⌊**now, I open my mouth;**
My tongue speaks *i*⌊**on my palate.**
3 **My** *sa*⌊**arguments** reflect the **uprightness of my heart,**
And my lips declare knowledge in **purity**⌊**.**

32:13 ~~~ **is our** ⌊**Mentor:** Hb ⌊**whisks him away.**
32:14 ~~~ **I shall not array:** Hb **he has not arrayed;** *7*-~ **as these:** Hb ›**against me.**

4 The **spirit of El, it has** *d*⌊**made me,**
And the **breath of** Him **Who-Suffices,**
it *m*⌊**preserves me** ⌊**alive.**
5 **Reply** to **me if you** ⌊**can;**
Do **arrange** yourself and **stand up before me;**
6 **Behold, I** am **corresponding** *as*⌊**to you** ›**before El;**
I myself *mr*⌊**also was nipped off from** the **clay.**
7 **Behold, no***t* **dread of me should frighten you,**
And my palm shall not lie **heavy on you.**
8 **Yea, you have** *sa*⌊**spoken in my ears,**
And I have ⌊**heard** the **sound of** these **declarations:**
9 **I** am **spotless, without transgression;**
I am **unstained, and no***t* **depravity** is ›**in me;**
10 **Behold, He** ⌊**finds** reasons to **repudiate** *on* **me**
And ⌊**reckons me** ›**as** an **enemy**⌊ **to Him;**
11 **He** ⌊**places my feet in shackles;**
He ⌊**observes all my paths.**
12 **Behold, I am answering you:**
In **this you are not justified,**
For Eloah is *mn*⌊**greater** *f*⌋**than** a **mortal.**
13 For **what reason** do **you contend** ›**against Him**
That He does **not** ⌊**answer all his**◊ **words?**
14 *t*⌊**Indeed El** does ⌊**speak** *i* **once,**
And *i* **twice,** yet **no***t* one ⌊**regards it,**
15 **In** a **dream,** a **vision of** the **night,**
i⌊**When stupor falls**⌐ **upon men,**
In slumberings on their **bed;**
16 **Then He** ⌊**reveals** matters to the **ear of men,**
And He *7*⌊**dismays them~***c* *i*⌊**with** *7*⌊**admonitions~,**
17 **To withdraw** a **human** *7*⌊**from~***c* his *d*⌊**deed,**
And that **He may ~obliterate~ pride** *f*⌋**in** a **master.**

33:13 his: i.e., man's.
33:16 *7*-~*c* ⌊**dismays them:** MT ⌊**seals;** *7*-~ **admonitions:** Hb **their admonition.**
33:17 *7*-~*c* **from:** Hb lost by haplography; ~~~ **obliterate:** Hb **cover.**

18 **He** ˡ**keeps back his soul from** the **pit**
And his life from passing⁻ into ~the **unseen~.**
19 ⁺**Also he is corrected** ⁱ**by pain on his bed,**
And by **perennial disputing** in **his bones,**
20 So ⁺**that bread is repugnant** to **him,** to **his life,**
And to **his soul,** the **food of yearning.**
21 **His flesh is** ᵃˡˡ**vanishing from sight,**
And his bones are ridges that once **were not seen.**
22 ⁺ **His soul** draws ˡ**near to** the **pit**
And his life to ~the ʳⁱ**place of** the **dead~.**
23 **If** there **is** a **messenger on his** behalf,
An **intermediary**ˡ, **one** ᶠ**out** of a **thousand,**
To tell › the **human** what is **upright** for **him,**
24 **And he is** ˡ**gracious** to **him and** ˡ**says,**
Do **ransom him from descending⁻** to the **pit;**
I have found a propitiatory **shelter;**
25 Then **his flesh will** become **hale** ᶠ**with youth**
And **shall be restored to** the **days of his adolescence.**
26 **He shall entreat to Eloah, and He shall accept him;**
⁺ **He shall see His face** ⁱ**with** joyful **shouting**
And He shall restore to the **mortal his righteousness.**
27 **He shall sing** ᵒⁿ**before men and say,**
I have sinned and contorted what is **upright,**
⁺**Yet He** did **not compensate** it fully **to me.**
28 **He ransomed my soul from passing⁻ in**to the **pit,**
And my life is seeing ⁱ the **light.**
29 **Behold, El is effecting all these** things
Twice and **thrice with** a **master,**
30 **To restore his soul from** the **pit,**
To enlighten him ⁱ**with** the **light of the living.**
31 **Attend, Job; hearken to me;**
Be silent, and I myself **shall speak.**

33:18 ~~~ the **unseen:** Hb **javelin.**
33:22 ~~~ the **place of** the **dead:** Hb those ᶜ**putting** to **death.**

32 **If** there **are declarations, reply** to **me;**
Speak, for I would delight to **justify⁻ you.**
33 **If** there **is no** word from **you, hearken to me;**
Be silent, and I shall train you in **wisdom.**
34 ⁺**Then Elihu** continued to ˡ**answer,** ⁺ ˡ**saying:**
2 **Hear my declarations,** you **wise** men,
And you **having knowledge,** ᶜ**give ear to me.**
3 **For** the **ear** ˡ**tests declarations**
⁺**As** the **palate** ˡ**tastes** › **food⁻.**
4 **Let us** ˡ**choose for our**selves what is **due;**
Let us ˡ**know** ᵇᵗ**among us what** is **good.**
5 **For Job has said: I am just,**
⁺**Yet El, He has taken away my due;**
6 ᵒⁿ**Concerning my due, should I lie?**
My ~lesion~ is **mortal**ˡ, yet I am **without transgression.**
7 ᵃ**What master** is **like Job?**
He ˡ**drinks derision like water;**
8 ⁺ **He travels** ›**in partnership**
with contriversˡ **of lawlessness**
And › **goes⁻** about **with men of wickedness.**
9 **For he says, It is** ˡ**unprofitable** for a **master**
ⁱ**When he** strives to **be acceptable⁻** ʷⁱ**to Elohim.**
10 **Wherefore, men of heart** understanding,
hearken to me:
Far be it ›**from El** ᶠ**to** do **wickedness,**
And Him **Who-Suffices** ᶠ**to** do **iniquity.**
11 **For** the **contrivance of** a **human,**
He shall repay it **to him,**
And according to **man's path,**
He shall provide it to **him.**
12 **El, truly indeed He** does **not** ᶜ**do** ˡ**wickedness,**
And He **Who-Suffices** does **not** ˡ**distort judgment.**
13 ᵃ**Who** gave **supervision** ᵒⁿ**to Him** over ᵈ the **earth,**
And ᵃ**who** ᵖˡ**placed** Him over the **habitance, all of it?**

34:6 ~~~ **lesion:** Hb **arrow.**

14 **If He** ˡ**places** it in **His heart** ˃**concerning him,**◊
He can ˡ**gather** back **His spirit**
and His breath to Himself;
15 **All flesh** would ˡ**breathe** its **last together,**
And humanity would ˡ**return** *on***to** the **soil.**
16 ⁺**Now if** you have **understanding,** do **hear this;**
Do *c***give ear to** the **sound of my declarations.**
17 **Indeed,** can anyone **hating** right **judgment** ˡ**govern?**
And *if***would you** ˡ**condemn**
the **Abundantly Righteous** One,
18 *7-*Who **says**ˡ~*c* **to** a **king, Worthless** one,
And **to patrons, Wicked** one,
19 **Who** does **not repute chiefs,**
Nor is He partial to the **rich-man** *bf***above** the **poor,**
For they all are the *d***work of His hands?**
20 In a **moment they** ˡ**die;**
⁺ At **midnight** the **people** ˡ**reel and** ˡ**pass** away,
And the **sturdy are** ˡ**taken away** *i***by no***t* human **hand.**
21 **For His eyes** are **on** the **ways of** a **man,**
And He ˡ**sees all his steps.**
22 There **is no darkness and no blackest shadow**
To conceal there the **contrivers**ˡ **of lawlessness.**
23 **For** it is **not** *on***for** a **man** that **he may** *pl***set**
an ~**appointed** time~
To go ˃**before El in judgment.**
24 **He** ˡ**smashes** those of **abundance**
*not***without investigation**
And ˡ**installs others** *u***in their stead.**
25 **Wherefore, He** ˡ**recognizes their occupations**
And over**turns** them in a **night, and they are** ˡ**crushed.**
26 **He slaps them** down *u***with** the **wicked,**
In a *ri***place** *w***where**◊ all can **see**ˡ,

34:14 him: i.e., man.
34:18 *7-~c* Who **says**ˡ**:** MT Can one **say**˃**.**
34:23 ~~~ **appointed** time: Hb **further.**
34:26 *w***where:** transposition from v.27a.

27 **Because they withdrew from following Him**
And did **not contemplate any of His ways,**
28 But they **caused** the **cry of** the **poor** one
to be **brought**⁻ *on***before Him,**
So ⁺**that He** ˡ**heard** the **cry of** the ⁼**humbled.**
29 ⁺**When He´ is** ˡ**quiet,** ⁺ *a***who** can ˡ**condemn?**
⁺**When He** ˡ**conceals** His **face,** ⁺ *a***who** can ˡ**regard Him?**
⁺**Yet** He is **over** a **nation and over humanity alike,**
30 *f***Lest** a **polluted human reign**⁻**,**
One **from** the **entrappers of** the **people.**
31 *t***Indeed has** one **said to El, ~I have been lured** away~**;**
I shall not harm ~any *fr***more~;**
32 **~Until~ I** can ˡ**perceive, direct me You**rself**;**
If I have contrived iniquity, I shall not do so **again?**
33 **Shall He repay it** *f wi***on you**r terms
*t***since you have rejected** otherwise,
*t***Since you you**rself **are choosing, and not I?**
⁺**Now what you know, speak.**
34 **Men of heart** understanding **shall say to me,**
And any **wise master** who is **hearkening to me:**
35 **Job is not speaking** *i***with knowledge,**
And his words are **not** *i***with intelligence**⁻**.**
36 **My will** is that **Job should be tested unto permanence**
*on***For** making **replies** *i***like men of lawlessness.**
37 **For he** ˡ**adds transgression** *on***to his sin;**
*i***Among us he** ˡ**slaps** his hands
And ˡ**increases his sayings** ˃**against El.**
35 ⁺**Then Elihu** continued to ˡ**answer,** ⁺ ˡ**saying:**
2 Is **this** what **you reckon** ˃**as** right **judgment?**
Do **you say,** This is **my righteousness** *f***before El,**
3 *t***When you** ˡ*sa***ask,** *wt***How is it** ˡ**profitable to ~me~?**
What more do **I** ˡ**benefit** *f***than** if **I** had **sin**ned**?**

34:31 ~~~ **I have been lured** away: MT **I have borne;** ~~~ any *fr***more:** Hb lost by haplography.
34:32 ~~~ **Until:** Hb **Apart from.**
35:3 ~~~ **me:** Hb **you.**

4 **I myself shall reply** to **you** with **declarations,**
And `to **your associates with you.**
5 **Look** at the **heavens and see;**
+ **Regard** the **skies; they are loftier** *f* **than you.**
6 **If you sin, what** ˡ**effect** do **you have** *i* **on Him,**
And if **your transgressions are many,**
what do **you** ˡ**do to Him?**
7 **If you are righteous, what** do **you** ˡ**give to Him?**
Or what does **He** ˡ**derive from your hand?**
8 **Your wickedness** affects › a **man like you**rself,
And your righteousness › a **son of humanity.**
9 *f* **Under** a **multitude of exploitings they** ˡ**cry out;**
They ˡ**implore** *f* **under** the **arm**
of those with *mn* **great** power.
10 +**But not** one **has said, Where** is **Eloah, my** *d* **Maker**ˡ,
Who is **giving psalms in** the **night,**
11 **Training us** *f* **by** the **beasts of** the **earth,**
And *f* **by** the **flyer of the heavens, He makes us** ˡ**wise?**
12 **There they** ˡ**cry,** +**yet He** does **not** ˡ**answer**
f **Because of** the **pride of evil** men.
13 **Yea,** it is **futility; El** does **not** ˡ**hear,**
And He **Who-Suffices** does **not** ˡ**regard it.**
14 **How much less** *t* **when you** ˡ*sa* **complain**
you can**not** ˡ**find Him out,**
That **adjudication** is set **before Him,**
and you are waiting for Him?
15 **And now** *t* **because He** does **not visit His anger**
And does **not acknowledge** *i*
the 7**transgression~ of ~humanity~,**
16 + **Job is opening his mouth wide** with **transitory** breath;
He *c* **makes declarations** ˡ**abound** *i* **without knowledge.**
36 + **Elihu** ˡ**continued,** + ˡ**saying:**
2 **Compass about** › **me** a **bit,**
and I shall disclose it all to **you,**
For I *fr* **still** have **declarations** ›**concerning Eloah.**

35:15 7-~ **transgression:** Hb **diffusion;** ~~~ **humanity:** Hb **exceedingly.**

3 **I shall bear my knowledge** › **from afar**
And ˡ*g* **ascribe righteousness to my Maker**ˡ.
4 **For truly my declarations** are **not false;**
One of **integrity** in **knowledge** is **with you.**
5 **Behold, El** is **abundant** in **vigor**◊
And does **not** ˡ**reject ~**the **pure of~ heart.**
6 **He** does **not** *m* **keep** the **wicked** ˡ**alive**
+**But** ˡ**gives** the **humble** their **due.**
7 **He** does **not** ˡ**diminish** the guard
of **His eyes** *f* **over** the **righteous,**
+**But** `with **kings** ›**on** the **throne**
+ **He** ˡ**seats them** › **permanently,**
And they are ˡ**elevated.**
8 +**But if** be**ing bound** *i* **with manacles,**
They are ˡ**seized** *i* **by** the cord **lines of humiliation,**
9 +**Then He is telling** › **them** of **their deed**s
And their transgressions, that they are mak**ing**
them**selves** arrogant **masters.**
10 +**Thus He** ˡ**reveals**
to **their ears** › His **disciplining** authority,
And ˡ*sa* **demands that they** ˡ**turn back from lawlessness.**
11 **If they** ˡ**hearken and** ˡ**serve** Him,
They ˡ*all* **finish their days in well**-being
And their years in pleasantness.
12 +**But if they** do **not** ˡ**hearken,**
They ˡ**pass** away *i* **by** the **javelin**
And ˡ**breathe** their **last** *as* **without knowledge.**
13 +**As** for the **polluted of heart** who ~ˡ**nourish~ anger,**
Who do **not** ˡ**implore** *t* **when He binds them,**
14 **Their soul** ˡ**dies in youth,**
And their life ends *i* **among** the **cult-prostitutes.**
15 **He** ˡ**liberates** the **humbled** one *i* **by his humiliations**
And ˡ**reveals** truth to **their ear**s *i* **by oppression.**

36:5 vigor: transposition from v.5b; ~~~ the **pure of:** Hb **abundant** in.
36:13 ~~~ ˡ**nourish:** Hb ˡ**place.**

16 +**Thus also He will allure you**
from the **mouth of distress**
To a **wide** place *not*[n]**without constraint,** *u*[u]**in its stead;**
And for **rest** at **your table He will fill** it with **richness.**
17 **And** with the **adjudication of** the **wicked** one
you will be filled;
Adjudication and right **judgment shall be upheld.**
18 *t*[t]**But ~beware~ lest** one **should** ˡ**allure you**
i[i]**with affluence;**
+ **Let not** the **vastness**
of the **sheltering** gift ˡ**turn you aside.**
19 **Shall He arrange your salvation** *not*[n]**without** *i*[i] **distress**
And all exertions of vigor?
20 **Do not** ˡ**gasp** after **the night**
›**When peoples ascend**⁻ to **their** *u*[u]**place.**
21 **Beware, you must not** ˡ**turn around to lawlessness,**
For on account of **this you have ~been tested~**
f[f]**by humiliation.**
22 **Behold, El is** ˡ**impregnable in His vigor;**
a[a]**Who** is a **Director**ˡ **like Him?**
23 *a*[a]**Who calls His way to account** *on*[o]**against Him?**
+**Or** *a*[a]**who says, You have contrived iniquity?**
24 **Remember that you should extol His deeds,**
Of **which men have sung.**
25 **All humanity have perceived** *i*[i] **it;**
A **mortal, he** ˡ**looks from afar.**
26 **Behold, El** is so **great** + **we** can**not** ˡ**know** it,
And◊ the **number of His years** is **fathomless.**
27 **For He** ˡ**condenses** the **drops of water**
That ˡ**filter** as **rain for His mist,**
28 *w*[w]**That** ˡ**exude** from the **skies**
And ˡ**drip** down **on humanity** ~as **showers~.**

36:18 ~~ **beware:** Aramaic **beware;** MT **fury.**
36:21 ~~ **been tested:** Hb **chosen.**
36:26 And: transposition from middle of line.
36:28 ~~ as **showers:** Hb **multitude.**

29 **Indeed,** *if*[i]**can** one ˡ**understand**
the **spreading, thick** clouds**,**
The thunderous **tumults** from **His booth?**
30 **Behold, He spreads His ~mist~ over it,**
And covers the **roots of the sea.**
31 **For** *i*[i]**with them He** ~gives ˡ**sustenance~** to the **peoples;**
He ˡ**gives food** ›**in abundance**ˡ**.**
32 **He covers light**ning *on*[o]**in** His **palms**
And ˡ**instructs** *on*[o] **it** *i*[i]**with sure aim**ˡ**.**
33 **His ~thunder~** ˡ**tells** *on*[o]**about it,**
The **cattle, also,** *on*[o]**about** what is com**ing up.**
37 **Indeed,** ›**at this my heart** ˡ**trembles**
And ˡ**leaps out** *f*[f]**of its** *ri*[r]**place.**
2 **Hearken,** yea **hearken**⁻
i[i]**to** the **thunderous sound of His voice**
And the rumbling **soliloquy** that comes ˡ**forth**
from His mouth;
3 **Under the entire heavens He unleashes it,**
And His lightning **over** the **wings of the earth.**
4 **After it** ˡ**roars** a **voice;**
He ˡ**thunders** *i*[i]**with His swelling voice**
And does **not** ˡ**stem them** so **that His voice is** ˡ**heard.**
5 **El** ˡ**thunders marvelously**ˡ *i*[i]**with His voice,**
Doing great things +**that we** can**not** ˡ**know.**
6 **For He** ˡ**says to** the **snow, Fall**◊ on the **earth,**
And to the **downpour of rain,**
+**even His strong downpours of rains.**
7 *i*[i]**On** the **hand of every human He** places a ˡ**seal**
So ›**that all ~men~** may **know**⁻ **His** *d*[d]**work.**
8 +**Then** the wild **animal** ˡ**enters in**to its **lair,**
And ˡ**tabernacles in its habitations.**

36:30 ~~ **mist:** Hb **light**ning (*cf* 32a).
36:31 ~~ gives ˡ**sustenance:** Hb ˡ**adjudicates.**
36:33 ~~ **thunder:** Hb **shouting.**
37:6 Fall: Hb word **"be"** has the Aramaic meaning **"fall"** here.
37:7 ~~ **men:** Hb **men of.**

9 **From** its ˙**chamber** ˡ**comes** the **sweeping** whirlwind,
And cold from the **sifting winds.**
10 *f* **By** the **breath of El ice ~is** ˡᵍ**made***c*,
And the **broad waters** becomes *i* a **frozen solid.**
11 **Indeed, He** ˡ**encumbers** the **thick** cloud
*i***with soaking** moisture;
He ˡ**scatters His light**ning **cloud,**
12 **And He** directs them **round about,**
Turning *i***according** to **His strategies,**
›**That their deed**s be **all** *w***that He** ˡ**instructs them**
On the **face of** the **earth's habitation.**
13 *if* **Whether** it be **for** a **club**
~that **He** ˡ**fulfills His approved** plan~,
*if***Or for benignity,** it is **He** Who **causes** it to ˡ**occur.**
14 Do *c***give ear** to **this,** O **Job;**
Stand and consider the **marvelous**ˡ work**s of El.**
15 Do **you** ˡ**know in** what way **Eloah**
*p*ˡ**sets**¯ direction **over them**
And how **He causes** the **light**ning **of His cloud** to **shine?**
16 Do **you** ˡ**know** *on***about** the **balancings of** the **thick** cloud,
The **marvels of** One **flawless** in **knowledge,**
17 **You whose garments** are **warm**
*i***When** the **earth** is **quiet**¯ *f* **because** of the **south** wind**?**
18 Could **you with Him** have *c***made**
the ˡ**atmosphere** ›**in** the **skies,**◊
Steadfast as a **mirror** that is **solidly**ˡ set**?**
19 **Inform us what we should say to Him;**
We can**not** ˡ**arrange** our case *f* **because of** the **darkness.**
20 **Should it be recounted to Him that I** would ˡ**speak?**
if **Would** a **man** *sa***ask that he be** ˡ**swallowed** down**?**
21 + **Now** men can**not examine** the sun**light**
As **it** is **ablaze in** the **skies,**
+**When** the **wind has passed and made them** ˡ**clean,**

37:10 ~–*c* **is** ˡᵍ**made***c*: MT ˡ**gives.**
37:13 ~~~ that **He** ˡ**fulfills His approved** plan: Hb **if for His land.**
37:18 Could . . . **skies:** *cf* Gn 1:6-8.

22 And **from** the **north,** rays of **gold** ˡ**arrive.**
*on***About Eloah** is **fearful**ˡ **splendor;**
23 He **Who-Suffices, we** can**not find Him** out,
Great in **vigor and** right **judgment,**
And *mn***abundant** in **righteousness,** Who ˡ**humbles not.**
24 **Wherefore, men fear Him;**
Do **not all wise of heart** ~stand in ˡ**fear~?**

37:24 ~~~ stand in ˡ**fear:** Hb **He** ˡ**sees.**

❋

THE SPEECHES OF ELIHU

THE BOOK OF JOB, like all Scripture, directs our attention to God. The evil that came upon Job could be directly traced to boils and Sabeans, Chaldeans, fire and storm, and then further back to Satan as recorded in chapters 1 and 2. But behind it all was the hand of God, as Job himself declared in his crucial question to his wife, "Indeed should we receive good from the One, Elohim, and should we not receive evil?" (Job 2:10).

In the debate between Job and his three associates (chapters 3-31), Job tenaciously maintained that his sufferings had a cause that lay within the control and purpose of God. Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, however, would associate Job's troubles with Deity only so far as they were divine responses to Job's secret sins; otherwise, they would put God at a distance from all these great evils as though He were unconcerned with petty, human problems.

Now in chapters 32 through 37 a new character comes before us, Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite. He is a young man with a great deal of self-confidence and ambition,

who trusts he can succeed where the other three failed in answering Job, and more importantly, in justifying God.

What Elihu says about *himself* is invariably bombastic and generally foolish: "Let me answer, me too, with my portion; Let me disclose my knowledge, me too. For I am full of declarations" (Job 32:17,18). But what he seeks to establish concerning *God* is worthy and right, and despite himself, he ends up, especially in chapter 37, contributing to the great revelation of divine glory that is provided by the book of Job as a whole. Ironically, it is when he adopts the very position of Job he was seeking to refute, that Elihu makes a positive contribution in glorifying God.

"LET ME ANSWER"

Elihu is angry against Job because, in his opinion, Job "justified his own soul rather than Elohim" (32:2). Indeed, Job's defense of himself has often struck us this way as well; and Yahweh Himself will later ask Job, "Would you condemn Me that you might be justified?" (Job 40:8). The weakest parts of Job's speeches were those concerned with himself, not because they were untrue but because they did not advance Job's understanding of God.

Job's self defense, of course, was in reply to the charges of his associates that he had committed hidden sins. Indeed, he succeeded in silencing his three accusers on this issue by setting forth his commendable record of righteousness in relation to other human beings. But, although Job had never forgotten that he was a sinner (*cf* 7:20), and consequently Elihu's charge in 33:8 that Job claimed there was no depravity in him is clearly mistaken, nevertheless, Job's defense of himself distracted from the vital question of God's part in these experiences of evil.

Elihu was wrong in thinking Job was placing his own righteousness above God's. But his perception that Job spoke of God as reckoning him as an enemy and placing his feet in shackles (33:10,11) was fully warranted (*cp* 13:24-27).

Again, when Elihu claims Job has said, "I am just" (34:5), there is misunderstanding, but Elihu heard correctly when he concluded that Job believed El had taken away his due (34:5; *cf* 27:2). Job was not comparing himself with God, but rather comparing his record with the accusations of his associates and then relating the facts of his sufferings with the fact of God's supremacy in all things.

PLACED OVER ALL THE HABITANCE

Because he accurately sets forth Job's thoughts relating his afflictions to Deity, Elihu finds himself in 34:10-13 saying more than he intended. He eagerly defends God's righteousness: "Far be it from El to do wickedness, and Him Who-Suffices to do iniquity" (v.10). This, Elihu seems to say, should expose the foolishness of Job's claims about God being involved in his sufferings. But, as though realizing that God may have good reason for bringing certain sufferings, Elihu adds that God does "repay" human beings for their contrivances (v.11). This is expanded in 34:21-27 by recognizing that God does *smash* and *overturn* and *crush* and *slap down* wicked men for their acts. But, Elihu quickly explains, these are not wicked acts, for they are matters of judgment which must not be distorted (34:12).

This means the acts, such as crushing and overturning, are not wicked in themselves but only in accord with the motivation and purpose involved. If the purpose is for good, then the evil, which may well involve much sorrow and affliction, is not absolutely evil, but only serves an ultimate good. If this is true when judgment and repayment are in view, it may well be true in Job's case where repayment does not appear to be involved.

Now, with these remarkable testimonies, Elihu proceeds by praising God with a claim that appears through-

out Scripture and that most of us have echoed, but few have realized. God has supervision over the earth, and He is placed over the habitance, *all of it* (Job 34:13). God Who does not do wickedness is placed over all the earth where Job is in the midst of misery. This is Job's argument; more than that, it is his *hope,* his most fervent longing.

Perhaps realizing the implications of his words in 34: 10-13, Elihu quickly turns to that very argument of Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar that Elihu had promised he would not use (32:14). God does bring evils on people, but only as repayment for human wickedness (34:18-33). Then, almost desperately, Elihu returns to his attacks on Job's sayings concerning God. Any truly wise person, Elihu claims, would agree that Job has not spoken with knowledge (34:34,35). This will also be Yahweh's charge against Job. But, as we have noted, Job's sayings that were without intelligence were those concerning himself; what he said *concerning God* was rightly so (42:8), and not at all "against El" as Elihu thinks (34:37).

In not following through with praise for God's place over all, and in endeavoring to find Job at fault no matter what, Elihu gets caught up in a jumble of thoughts in chapter 35. He first charges Job with complaining his righteousness had not brought him any benefits (35:3; *cp* 34:9). Then Elihu seems to say in 35:5-7 that God is unaffected by either human transgression or righteousness. How these ideas fit together is almost impossible to see.

Yet once again, in 35:10,11, Elihu adjusts his thoughts in order to focus on the greatness of God. Here he points to Eloah as our *Maker*, Who gives psalms in the night, and Who conveys wisdom to us through the lower creatures of His hand.

But he returns to the theme of divine indifference, or at least unresponsiveness, in 35:12-15. This too was an argument occasionally used by the other three. But it is wholly

mistaken, as the Abundantly Righteous One Who is over all the habitance (*cf* 34:13,17) is soon to verify.

DECLARATIONS CONCERNING ELOAH

So far Elihu has not impressed us with the consistency of his arguments. But his determination to speak of God's righteousness coupled with his examination of Job's declarations concerning God is about to bear good fruit. It may be that his words in 35:10 stay with him, while the rest of his arguments in that chapter fade away as his own "transitory breath" rather than Job's (*cf* 35:16).

In any case, the personal title given God in 35:10 appears now in 36:3 as Elihu's own: "my Maker." Elihu does not speak of "my Judge," but of the One Who made me! This is not One Who is distanced from human concerns, but Who is very much involved with deeds of integrity (36:4) and vigor (v.5). Although Elihu continues to see this involvement mostly in terms of judgment (36:6-15), he also sees his Maker as using distress as a pathway to rest and salvation "Shall [El] arrange your salvation without distress and all exertions of vigor?" (36:16-19). Our experiences are part of God's *making* of us.

God teaches us by the testings of humiliation (36:20,21); "El is impregnable in His vigor; Who is a Director like Him?" (v.22). Even in trying to turn this truth about God against Job in verse 23 (as though Job really accused God of contriving iniquity), Elihu finds himself associating God with Job's troubles as the Maker and Director of all. He is to be extolled for His deeds and the greatness of His Being (36:24-26).

With praises like these concerning the supremacy of God, Elihu is beginning to fulfill the meaning of his name, "El-is-He;" indeed such a One as Elihu now describes, He is truly El. All that is wanting now is an association of this One with the afflictions of Job.

THE RAIN AND THE THUNDER

This association begins in Job 36:27 with Elihu's praise of God as the One Who condenses the drops of water in the clouds into rain and mist. God's wisdom and power and ability for good in providing moisture for our needs shows His concern for humanity and responsibility for that which he has made (36:28-31).

God is responsible not only for rain and mist, but also for lightning and thunder (36:32,33). Such forces invariably bring distress and destruction in their wake. This speaks of evils from God for His own purposes, perhaps for discipline and correction, perhaps for unknown ends of the "Abundantly Righteous One" (34:17), Who does not contrive iniquity (36:23).

Then, as Elihu speaks of the rain, a storm arises in view of them all. And Elihu exclaims, "Indeed, at this my heart trembles and leaps out of its place" (37:1). God makes Himself apparent among them, as He is able to do at any time, but rarely does in the present eon.

The last storm of those days, mentioned in Job, involved a great wind or tornado that killed Job's children (Job 1:18,19). Now something like that terrible, destructive force, is appearing again. And Elihu associates it with God! "Hearken, yea hearken to the thunderous sound of His voice and the rumbling soliloquy that comes forth from His mouth" (37:2).

The storm comes not only with thunder but with snow and ice and downpour of rain, with sweeping whirlwind and thick cloud and soaking moisture (37:3-11). It is God Who sends it, directing and turning the clouds "according to His strategies" (v.12). It is El Who instructs it and causes it to occur, "whether it be for a club . . . or for benignity," in accord with his approved plan (37:13). Since this is so in relation to the frightening storm, it is true of the fearful evils that have engulfed Job.

At this point Elihu has adopted the argument of Job, and he turns to Job to give ear to these "marvelous works of El" (v.14). The questions he asks Job are very much like Yahweh's questions to come. Do you know about the marvels of God's ways in cloud and darkness, in warmth and quiet, in sunlight and wind (37:15-21)? These are matters which bring both good and evil into our lives. And they are all from God.

THE SUNLIGHT ABLAZE IN THE SKY

Thus the storm is the final force that leads Elihu to his position of preparing the way for the Lord. It is given to Elihu to describe the magnificent scene of the approach of Him Who-Suffices:

The storm ceases, and the sunlight breaks through so brightly that no one can examine the skies, now completely cleared of clouds (37:21). In front of all who are gathered there about the suffering Job, Yahweh arrives from the north amid rays of gold and fearful splendor (v.22). Elihu had boasted that he would set them all straight concerning God, but now he declares, "He Who-Suffices, *we* cannot find Him out" (v.23).

But God is able to make Himself known. How easily Elihu is directed to turn the focus of his thoughts from a determination to expose the errors of Job to the glories of God in relation to all things, both good and evil! The great lesson given us in the speeches of Elihu is that He Who-Suffices can and will finally make Himself known in light blazing forth in contrast to the darkness which He also had sent. This is what Job has insisted must be so, and it is what Elihu had opposed but now is brought to embrace with exultation.

Now, standing in fear of Him (Job 37:24), Elihu and Job and all the rest are readied for Yahweh to speak.

D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME LXXXIX

Arm and Voice of El, The . . . 121
Babe, Child, Sonship and Firstborn . . . 242
But Now My Eye Sees You . . . 215
By No Means, Till . . . 137
Christ Died For Our Sakes . . . 107
Coming of Faith, The . . . 209
Coming With Power and Much Glory . . . 185
Concordant Studies . . . 51,99,242
David and Goliath . . . 129
Do Not I Choose You? . . . 13
Do You Observe the Travailing? . . . 78
Eon, as Indefinite Duration . . . 170
Flesh, The Best of the . . . 42
Foods, which God Creates . . . 253
For He Was Roused . . . 280
Foreknowledge and Salvation . . . 69
God's Will and Intention . . . 51
He Shall Save His People . . . 19,87,137,185,231,280
Invoking and Avowing . . . 25
It is Yahweh's . . . 162
Jesus: Yahweh-Saviour Revealed . . . 223
Job, Notes on the Book of . . . 36,78,121,162,215,262,266
Judgment of the Nations, The . . . 147
Lessons From Job . . . 266
Lost Sheep of Israel, The . . . 19
Obituaries: W. Wells Hough 18, Damon Klinger 86,
Marion Tenniswood 68, Ken Warner 18
Others He Saves . . . 231
Questions and Answers . . . 69,109,170,223,253
Salvation of the Unbeliever, The . . . 4
1 Samuel, Notes on . . . 42,84,129,181,209,271
Satisfaction, Government, or Conciliation? . . . 195
Soul, Spirit and Resurrection . . . 109
Spirit of Yahweh Transferred, The . . . 84
Then Yahweh Answered . . . 36
To Know the Love of Christ . . . 61
Unachievable Reward, The . . . 181
When it Delights God . . . 203
Who, Consequently, Can Be Saved? . . . 87
Will in God's Word, The . . . 99
Yahweh's Consummation of Job's Captivity . . . 262
Yahweh's is the Battle . . . 271

Contents:

2 Hymn
3 Editorial
4 The Salvation of the Unbeliever
13 "Do Not I Choose You"
19 The Lost Sheep of Israel
25 Invoking and Avowing
36 Then Yahweh Answered
42 The Best of the Flesh

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For God and His
Word

VOLUME LXXXIX

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Hymn

Tis not that I did choose Thee
For Lord that could not be,
This heart would still refuse Thee
Hadst Thou not chosen me.

Thou from the sin that stained me
Hast cleansed and set me free,
Of old Thou hast ordained me
That I should live to Thee.

Twas sovereign mercy called me
And taught my opening mind,
The world had else enthralled me
To heavenly glories blind.

My heart knows none before Thee
For Thy rich grace I thirst,
This knowing, if I love Thee—
Thou must have loved me first.

Josiah Conder–1836

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 1998
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

WE BEGIN our eighty-ninth year with these words of Paul in our heart: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as *He chooses us in Him* before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight" (Eph.1:3,4). Some may hesitate to give concentrated attention to these thoughts relating our blessings to God's choice of us rather than to our seeking of Him and our levels of devoutness, as presented by religious tradition. But we find that the more we focus on the deity of God, that all is out of God and through Him and for Him, the greater is our joy and peace.

Consequently, we start the new year with a hymn praising God for choosing us, and we continue this theme in nearly all the articles in this issue. The evangel itself tells of a great work of salvation, justification and reconciliation that is all of God, in and through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not of ourselves, and so there is no room for us to boast in ourselves.

Furthermore, since we are saved in grace through faith, and this is not of ourselves, we can be certain that even those who die in unbelief will ultimately join us in acclaiming in genuine, heartfelt praise, "Jesus Christ is Lord!" This, too, is savored in the following pages.

But what of our present lives? What of the thoughts that occupy our minds, the words that come out of our mouths, and the deeds of our hands? These too are (and this seems very strange at first) not of ourselves. It is because God blesses us by choosing us in Christ that we are to be holy and flawless in His sight. This also is His achievement. The joyful certainty of our spiritual blessings among the celestials is a daily source of new life to the believer. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. D.H.H.

THE SALVATION OF THE UNBELIEVER

As God is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of those who believe (1 Tim.4:10), we may confidently rest on one grand and glorious foundation truth—*that all salvation is of God, and neither believer nor unbeliever has any part in it.* On the one hand this assures us of the possibility of saving all men, for God alone is able, and, on the other, it bars out all human schemes for their restoration, whether by works, or suffering, by giving them a second chance, or by any cause whatever which originates in man. Those who believe are saved by His grace (Rom.4:16), those who do not believe are saved through His judgments, but in both it is He alone Who is Saviour.

Faith is but the channel of grace; it does not produce salvation. Judgment is but a means He uses, a process which leads to the opening of the unbeliever's eyes. It does not remove his guilt or cleanse a single sin. *That is done wholly and solely by the blood of Christ.* Every effort to bring about the ultimate salvation of all through the purgatorial or penitential sufferings of the sinner is a denial of this great truth. Judgments do not save, but the God Who judges is also the Saviour, and all His dealings with mankind are governed by the grand goal which He has set before Him—to become All in *all* His creatures.

In setting forth the process by means of which God brings the unbeliever back to Himself we must remember that few believers are able to analyze the method used in their own salvation. Now, if we are not able to explain our own experience, how shall we understand His method

with others? Yet, strange as it may seem, God's dealings with the unbeliever are much more easily apprehended than His way with us. The very simplicity of faith baffles us. Most theological systems seek to base belief on evidence, and speak of "Christian evidences" as the foundation of the believer's salvation. This is, rather, the method He uses in the deliverance of the unbeliever.

FAITH AND EVIDENCES

The case of Thomas is an example of the overpowering force of evidence where faith is wanting (John 20:26-29). No man can long withstand the testimony of his senses, even when (unlike Thomas) his interests may be opposed.

The tangible proofs given to support the proclamation of the kingdom affords a rich field for the study of the effect of evidence on the human heart. The unbeliever will be saved by sight. He will yield to the force of facts. He will be convinced by logic. What evidence is most suited for this purpose? In our Lord's ministry we can see both the helps and the hindrances offered by the senses. The consideration of a few cases will reveal what most moves men and what makes them obstinate.

The rich young man was hindered by his possessions. The Samaritans were helped by the Lord's words. The resurrection of Lazarus led many Jews to rely on His acts. These illustrate God's method in the judgment of the unbeliever. He removes hindrances—no earthly acquisitions interfere with the decisions of the heart, for both heaven and earth flee from the face of Him Who sits on the throne. He works the greatest possible miracle, by raising them from the dead. He reads the inmost secret of their hearts. He appears in their very presence in soul-dismaying splendor. They *cannot* doubt His power or His perfections, and no motive remains to lead them to deceive themselves.

The judgment of unbelievers takes place in the inter-

val between the passing of this present earth and the creation of the new. Every tie which bound them to the earth has been burned up. They are the subjects of the most astounding miracle ever wrought, having been raised from the dead. They are in the presence of the Divine Majesty. Their secrets are bared to His awful gaze. The character of their judgment, being adjusted to their acts, not simply as to severity but so as to correct them, will reveal God's purpose to save and reconcile them to Himself. This, followed by their death in the lake of fire and subsequent vivification at the consummation, is the basis of their reconciliation through the blood of the cross (Col.1:20).

The excuses offered by those who were bidden to the great supper (Luke 14:18) are all removed before the great white throne. No fields or oxen or wives will intrude between the spirit and the great Judge.

In the judgment day God will judge the hidden things of humanity (Rom.2:16). We are prone to consider this a mere exhibition of His omniscience, to facilitate the trial of the sinner and to insure his condemnation. But more than this, it cannot but have a most powerful effect on the unbeliever's attitude toward Christ. What was it that impressed the woman of Samaria (John 4:19,29)? It was His knowledge of her hidden secrets. As a result we read that many of the Samaritans of that city believe in Him because of the woman's word that He told her all that she had done (John 4:39).

The blessed results achieved by His exposure of the woman at Sychar's spring will be multiplied by many millions at the great white throne. There is nothing hidden that shall not be manifested (Matt.10:26). As in Corinth, the hidden things of the unbeliever's heart become apparent, and, falling on his face, he will worship God (1 Cor.14:25).

Perhaps no miracle wrought by our Lord and His apostles created a stronger conviction than that of raising the

dead. When Lazarus was raised many of the rulers believed, and the chief priests were concerned lest all should believe on Him because of this sign (John 11:45,48). When Peter raised Dorcas it also was used to convince many who believed on the Lord. Can we imagine what conviction it must have brought to Lazarus and to Dorcas themselves, if they should have had the slightest tendency to doubt? Could there have been any stronger proof of divine power than that their very life had come back to them at the bidding of One Who is stronger than death? In the process of winning the unbeliever we judge their resurrection and final vivification to be ample to account for salvation and reconciliation entering their lives.

SAUL OF TARSUS

The apostle Paul's case is of surpassing significance in its bearing on the salvation of unbelievers. He was the foremost of sinners, and it cannot be denied that, among men, there was no case quite as desperate as his. All question as to God's ability to save vanishes in the light of his call on the Damascus road. The miraculous means employed in his case surely would suffice for every one of God's enemies. And who will deny, on sober reflection, that the appalling power and glory of the august judgment session into which the unbeliever is ushered by his resurrection will be unutterably more impressive?

The apostle's vision passed. He came back to a scene where all was as before. He alone had changed. But the unbeliever sees the power and presence of God not only in his own deliverance from death, but in all around him. The vision does not vanish. The divine presence abides.

GOD AS JUDGE

The change which eventuates in the ultimate salvation of the unbeliever is wrought, not only by his resurrection,

but by the august judgment session, when he stands in the presence of Christ, with all his unbelief swept away by the awful realization of His power and the justice of His throne. We are asked, Is it possible for them to repent? Rather, we would like to know, Is it possible for them *not* to repent, or change their minds? We cannot conceive an unrepentant sinner before the great white throne.

God's thoughts and man's imaginations are nowhere more at variance than on the subject of judgment, or punishment. God is love; man is hate. David was wise when he was given the choice of fleeing before his enemies or falling into the hand of Yahweh. He uttered a great truth when he exclaimed "Let us fall, I pray, into the hand of Yahweh, for His compassions are abundant; but let me not fall into the hand of humanity." And surely his choice was vindicated, for when the messenger was stretching out his hand in destruction toward Jerusalem, Yahweh showed Himself merciful, and said, "Enough, now hold back your hand" (2 Sam.24:10-16).

NINEVEH

Jonah went through the streets of Nineveh, crying: "Forty days more and Nineveh shall be overturned!" (Jonah 3:4). But God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and He regretted the evil He said He would do unto them. "And He did it not" (Jonah 3:10). And what did Jonah do? Was he not pleased at the success of his mission? Did he not glory in the character of His God? Alas! he was like the many today. Like Jonah, they imagine that God has a streak of hate in His character and that He wanted to destroy Nineveh to give it exercise. But He had an object in threatening its destruction. Now that they repented and the object was attained, why should He belie His character and destroy them from sheer vindictiveness? Jonah's God was a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and

of much benignity, and regretting of the evil which He had threatened (Jonah 4:2).

DESTRUCTION

The thought that the resurrection and judgment of the unbeliever is only a prelude to his final "destruction" in the lake of fire must be judged by its moral effect, for it has no support whatever in the Scriptures. In the first place "destruction" (by which annihilation or extinction of being is intended), is *never used of the lake of fire or of the second death.* It is always used of the sinner before his resurrection at the great white throne. Those who are "destroyed" in Gehenna will be there. Those who "perished" in the wilderness and at the flood will be raised. "Destruction" is never annihilation. It never precludes resurrection and salvation. Indeed, *it is a necessary precursor of salvation.* The Lord came to seek and to save the "destroyed" (lost). So that, even if there were a single passage telling us that the unbeliever is "destroyed" in the second death (which there is not) we would still have every reason to believe God when He assured us that all who are dying in Adam shall be made alive in Christ (1 Cor.15:22).

Let no one suppose that we plead for the repeal of God's word regarding the doom of the unbeliever. Far from it. But we do plead for the removal of those harsh, human perversions of His word, which seek to make Him a man like ourselves, hateful and hating one another, vindictive and vicious in our views of the so-called "penalties" of sin. We plead for a revision of our vocabulary on this important theme.

The terms *destroy* and *destruction* are so often used of irrecoverable ruin that a few examples will be given to show how far this is from the truth. The rendering "lost" is always the translation of the word for destroy. It would be the utmost folly for the Son of Mankind to seek, much

less to save those who are annihilated. The lost sheep and the lost coin and the lost prodigal all had been destroyed, yet all were found and saved. Were the whole world lost or destroyed in the lake of fire, that would be no hindrance to salvation. Rather, it would be the very sphere in which alone salvation can operate. Christ cannot save anyone unless first he is destroyed, or lost.

GOD IS THE SAVIOUR

Such is the salvation of the unbeliever. It is not only in absolute accord with every passage in the word of God, but in utmost harmony with the God Who is revealed through that word. How can anyone who truly loves Him rest satisfied with less than this, the only true, the only scriptural solution?

Let those who are fond of reasoning about the destiny of the universe accept their own premises and follow them out logically and the inevitable conclusion will be a universal reconciliation. Try it and see. All will acknowledge these premises:

God is love God is omnipotent	therefore?

God is not love if He will not do all He can for His creatures, neither is He omnipotent if He is unable to save them. Both revelation and reason are arrayed against the false delusion of unending torment for the unbeliever. It degrades the sacrifice of Christ to a mere attempt to remedy an evil which it cannot cure. O, my brethren, why do you limit His love, why do you paralyze His power? Is the Christ Who saved *you* capable of completing His work by saving all like you? Or, if He *can,* why *will* He not?

Confess that this terrible doctrine cannot but lead you to doubt His perfections. It brings you up to a blank wall,

to a pit of dense darkness. But the blessed truth opens up a glorious vista flooded with the love light of God.

THE JUST JUDGMENT OF GOD

But, we are told, God's justice demands judgment. There is truth in this. But if God's justice must be displayed at the expense of His love, the extinction of the unbeliever in the lake of fire, far from forever removing an eyesore from the universe, places a blot upon His character which eternity itself can never erase. If we do not doubt His willingness to save them, then we must acknowledge His inability. If we cannot question His power, then we must limit His love, and then we endanger the very foundation on which all eternal bliss must be established.

But we do not need to rest on reason. At best, it is usually the refuge of unbelief. God has spoken, and real reason rests on His revelation. He is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of those who believe. God give us grace to glory in such a God!

In the opening chapters of Romans Paul lays the foundation on which God's just judgment is based. He closes his indictment of mankind with these words: ". . . God's just statute, that such as are committing them are *deserving of death . . .*" (Rom.1:32). As the first death cannot be the effect of any judicial procedure on God's part, it is evident that the death penalty awaits all who come into the judgment. Whatever may be the variety and degree of the tribulation and anguish meted out to each, one common end awaits them all—the second death.

VIVIFIED IN CHRIST

But, some will ask, if they were condemned to death, how can they be raised again? What right have they to the grace and life that will be their portion? We answer, *none.* They will have no more claim on the ecstatic bliss

of that unending day than I or you, or any believer! What right have we? None at all. But *in Christ* we have a perfect title to every favor. So it will be with the unbeliever. It is not written that "Even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also shall all be vivified," but "thus also, *in Christ,* shall *all* be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22). Adam's death involves all, irrespective of their deserts. Christ's life extends to all, apart from their personal merits.

And here is where the unbeliever learns to love God. The judgment has exposed his own unworthiness. The grace of vivification will illumine his heart with the love of God in Christ. Then shall be fulfilled God's universal goal:

> ". . . to Me will bow every knee,
> And every tongue will be
> acclaiming God."

This is the method He will use to bend the stubborn knees. He will not use physical force but moral suasion. Neither will He wring out a *confession of sin* from every tongue. The Greek word as here used means *acclaim,* which involves a complete acknowledgment and acquiescence in the divine will.

The crowning and conclusive exhibition of God's power and love toward the unbeliever awaits the consummation. The eons are past. All sin is banished. Evil is no more. The Son of God has nearly completed His mediatorial work. All the living are in perfect accord with God. Nothing remains but the conquest of death and the reconciliation of its denizens. It is the only enemy left in all God's universe. Then, and not till then will the vast concourse of mankind emerge from the domain of death never to enter it again. Then death will be despoiled, the last enemy laid low. Then shall all awake to live in the light and love of Him Who will have become the Saviour of all mankind.

A. E. Knoch

"DO NOT I CHOOSE YOU?"

DURING the course of our Lord's brief and turbulent ministry there came a time when His challenging words were unacceptable to the throng which had followed Him. He had fed five thousand of the people with mere five cakes of barley bread and two food fishes, but evading their exultation and intention to be making Him a king, He retired alone into the mountain. Later, He crossed over the sea of Galilee, appearing to His disciples, walking on the waters (John 6:1-21; *cp* Matt.14:13-33).

The next day, this multitude also crossed over to Capernaum in boats which had come from Tiberias. They knew that during the previous evening the disciples alone had crossed the sea in the only boat available. "Rabbi," they questioned, utterly perplexed to find Him on the other side of the sea, "When camest Thou to be here?" (John 6:25).

Perceiving the motivation of this throng, Jesus had to declare the distinctive nature of His royal commission. "I am the Bread of life," He taught. "Do not murmur with one another. No one can come to Me if ever the Father Who sends Me should not be drawing him . . . . Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the Bread which is descending out of heaven that anyone may be eating of it and may not be dying. I am the living Bread which descends out of heaven. If anyone should be eating of this Bread, he shall be living for the eon. Now the Bread also, which I shall be giving for the sake of the life of the world, is My flesh" (John 6:41-51).

There, in a synagogue of Capernaum, Jesus stressed the

importance of spiritual aspiration and sustenance. Here, we learn that many of His disciples came away, dropping behind, and walked no longer with Him (John 6:66). How sad that they had forgotten the ancient admonition to their ancestors that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord (Deut.8:3).

What caused them to turn away? Was it the final realization that they would not be receiving food? Was it the solemn statement, "The spirit is that which is vivifying. The flesh is not benefiting anything"(John 6:63)? Or, was it the repeated statement, "Therefore have I declared to you that no one can be coming to Me if it should not be given him of the Father" (John 6:65)?

Jesus challenged the twelve, "Not you also are wanting to go away?" Peter protested, "Lord, to whom shall we come away? Declarations of life eonian hast Thou! And we believe and know that Thou art the Holy One of God!" (*cf* John 6:67-69).

Despite Peter's earnest plea of devotion, our Lord was not persuaded. "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Do not I choose you, the twelve, and one of you is an adversary?' Now He said it of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, for this man was about to give Him up, being one of the twelve" (John 6:70,71).

"Peter and the rest of the apostles probably had the impression that they had chosen Christ, and in this crisis, they seem to be confirming their choice of Him. With this background, how strange to hear Him reverse their thoughts and emphatically affirm His choice of them! On another occasion He asserted that they had not chosen Him. He reserves the right to choose His Own. A realization of this principle gives strength and stability to vacillating mortals, who look within and find no soundness, and look without on turmoil and strife, and fear for the

future of which they know nothing. To be chosen by One Who has power to keep and knows all gives satisfaction and rest. It is infinitely more precious to be His choice than to have the questionable satisfaction of feeling that we were free to choose Him. If we were, we would have chosen another. There is none that seeketh after God"[1]

NOT UNTIL GOLGOTHA

In connection with this incident on the shores of Galilee, it would surely be inconsiderate of us not to remark on the physical hunger of the throng. Their needs were real enough. On a later occasion, Jesus fed four thousand men, apart from women and little children. How revealing are His tender words, "I have compassion on the throng, for already three days they are remaining with Me, and they have nothing that they may be eating, and I am not willing to dismiss them fasting, lest at some time they may be fainting on the road" (Matt.15:32).

Starvation will wreak havoc with the reasoning process. It is no easy or simple matter to ignore the dictates of the soul! In many such grim circumstances, matters of spiritual moment might even be considered slight or even trivial. But what acceptance will be given to the words of a preacher today who announces the truth that *none may be coming to Christ except and only if God should be drawing them?* Such a teacher will have a lean time in Christendom.

It should be noted that not *all* but *many* of the disciples came away (John 6:66). While we would not condemn these, neither did our Lord or His Father. Jesus knew that His Father was bent on revealing His love through His great sacrifice. Those who turned away from Him in Capernaum or throughout the land of Israel, indeed, all, across the entire length and breadth of the universe, have

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.151.

to be subjected to an experience of evil, sin, and judgment. Not until Golgotha could Israel, and the entire creation, be graced with essential righteous access to God, *through the shed blood of His sacrificial Lamb!* Once more, however, it is emphasized that ". . . God locks up all in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:32).

CORRECTIVE AND PUNISHING JUDGMENTS

There was no independent choice or response due alone to the individual's will among those so chosen by Jesus, and this principle of selection applies equally with all of God's creatures. However, this unequivocal truth, amply attested throughout Scripture, will be vigorously rejected by many who affirm belief in God and His Son. In this present day of apostasy, these, with mock modesty, will concede that while their righteousness is a gift from God, through the sacrifice of His own Son, nevertheless, in their particular experience it could only become reality *through their own belief and acceptance!*

Disabled humanity is completely unable to perceive the absolute distinction between the unique, sublime wisdom and love of omniscient Deity, and inferior yet essential interrelationships of social responsibilities. In consequence, religious leaders have carried over into their beliefs the same uneasy obligations which obtain in human affairs. Disgracefully, in their theology, they degrade the Creator and elevate His creature, impotent man.

Social and political conditions of human society demand a clear recognition of specific rules and regulations. Do this or disobey that, and inevitable consequences will follow. Conformity in behavior to local, national, and even international rules, should, in the main, ensure a degree of peace, sometimes prosperity, and generally, a measure of security. However, because of human inability and disability, many complex judiciary systems have become essential for preservation, even survival. It is accepted that these are far from perfect, but they are the best plain ineptitude may devise. Alternatives of anarchy culminating in nihilism are too terrible to contemplate.

The judiciary systems have made some provision for minors and the insane, but many religious theorists in Christendom shake their heads in vague confusion when questioned about the innocents. Also they have no clear answers concerning the future of those who have not had the doubtful benefits of orthodox conception of truth. Traditional Christian standards of judgment would be unacceptable, even repugnant, in present courts of justice. With doctrines that border on arrogance, many blithely subscribe to a belief that, while they are *safe,* because of their belief, others, particularly those defined as "Christ Rejectors" must ultimately be consigned for eternity to unceasing, excruciating torment!

What stern retribution is reserved for purveyers of such heinous, grotesque distortions of truth? Once more, blessed to relate, these also have no choice. What sadness though, when they stand at the great white throne, before our gracious Lord and Saviour in all His exalted, worthy glory, and there are judged *according to their acts, but subject to His kind and corrective justice!*

THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER

It is a merciful relief to turn from such folly to sober reflection of God's wisdom. Through the glorious gift of His Own dear Son He clearly demonstrated the overwhelming wonder of His love. This is love beyond our comprehension. This is love which will not rest until every creature shall bow in humble adoration, and every tongue shall be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God the Father.

Shall those whom God designates beforehand—before

the disruption of the world—and whom He calls to be part of that august body known as the ecclesia which is termed the body of Christ be aware of this unique privilege of reflecting God's love? Further, shall they, learning of the splendid grace which is lavished, abuse or become indifferent to so great a love which refuses to be reckoning offenses? Let us be clear on these issues. They are of vital importance.

First, there is nothing which might be considered as proof. No documents of title, no evidence other than the precious Word of God. Clearly, this teaches, ". . . God's righteousness is being revealed out of faith for faith, according as it is written: 'Now the just one by faith shall be living'" (Rom.1:17). Care with this record is urged. The superior faith referred to is no less than the faith of our own Saviour, Who died that all might live! Answering the second question concerning response, it must be conceded that of course there will be present abuse. Subject to the enervating influence of dying humanity, how could it be otherwise? Yet, as realization of the awesome cost to God and His Son dawns in our lives of corruption and despair, there is gradual, but certain transformation.

And so the great lesson is learned: Love alone must save. Fear can but enslave. "God is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:12,13).

Donald Fielding

CHOSEN IN HIM

Among those chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4), recently put to repose, is **W. Wells Hough** of Almont, Michigan, at the age of 84. A cousin of our editor, Wells rejoiced, through both the pleasant and the painful experiences given him, in the truth that God is working *all* together for our good.

Another friend in the Lord, **Ken Warner** of Vincennes, Indiana, died late in 1997. Ken was a careful student of the Scriptures, a brother who enjoyed much enlightenment in the the evangel of the gratuitous grace of God in Christ Jesus.

THE LOST SHEEP OF ISRAEL

JESUS WAS COMMISSIONED to the house of Israel. He was commissioned to them, and He was not commissioned to anyone else. Jesus was commissioned to one people only, and they were a people who were lost (Matt.15:24). Furthermore, most shocking of all, this one, lost people to whom Jesus was commissioned to seek and to save (*cf* Matt.1:21; 2:6; Luke 19:10), remain, as a whole, unsaved!

THIS PEOPLE

To be sure, Jesus prophesied that only a few would be finding the way that led into life (Matt.7:14). Furthermore, He announced privately to His disciples that the prophesy of Isaiah 6:9,10, was filled up in this people whom Jesus was commissioned to seek and save: They heard and observed, but their heart was stoutened, lest they should understand and be healed (Matt.13:14,15).

It was not just Herod (*cf* Matt.14:1,2), who was, after all, an Edomite and extremely superstitious, but it was the most dedicated and disciplined out of Israel itself, who remained stubbornly in their lost state despite the miracles and healings and all the powerful deeds performed by the Lord. Again, Jesus cites Isaiah: "*This people* with their lips is honoring Me, yet their heart is away at a distance from Me. Yet in vain are they revering Me, teaching for teachings the directions of men" (Matt.15:8,9; cit. Isa.29:13).

This is the lost people Jesus came to save! Their heart was far from Him, and that warrants judgment, but it also is indisputable evidence that they were lost. We cannot dis-

miss the fact that Jesus did not save them by saying their behavior as lost sheep shows they did not deserve to be saved or calls for His everlasting rejection of them and condemnation to eternal hell. He did not come to save sheep that were well behaved and obedient, but sheep that were lost. And that was the obvious state of His people, Israel.

Even though many of them, "who have an illness" (Matt. 14:35) were "brought safely through" their physical debilities, they were not brought safely through their more serious debility of being lost in sin. Their leaders were blind, and they were leading the people who also were blind, so that they all would "be falling into a pit" (Matt. 15:14). Yet this danger was not pointed out to the crowds of people, but only to the disciples. To these few, Jesus gave warning, though even here not always in clearest of terms: "For whosoever may be wanting to save his soul shall be destroying it. Yet whoever should be destroying his soul on My account shall be finding it. For what will a man be benefited, if he should ever be gaining the whole world, yet be forfeiting his soul" (Matt.16:25,26).

The facts are that Jesus came to save a people He did not save; He spoke to the people in such a way that they would not understand; He explained what He was saying to only a few, who themselves had difficulty grasping it and sometimes denied it outright (*cf* Matt.16:22); God Himself had declared their blindness and stoutened heart centuries before; He alone could reveal the truth to them (*cf* Matt. 16:15), and He was not doing so.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

This does not mean that Jesus does not carry out His commission. Because the sheep were not found during this ministry does not mean they will never be found and saved. Because their hearts were stoutened does not mean they will not be granted mercy and enlightenment (*cf* Rom.

11:32). The truth was hidden from the masses, but the truth is that the entirety of Israel will be saved from its sins, that Israel will be blessed and be a blessing, that Jesus will be known as He is. If Jesus is not realized as Saviour, then it is not true that He saves His people from their sins.

Israel was a people like sheep without a shepherd (Matt. 9:36). Very pointedly Jesus asked those in the synagogue who put their interpretation of the law above the meaning of the law, "What man of you will there be, who will have one sheep, and if ever this should be falling into a pit on the sabbaths, will not take hold of it and raise it?" (Matt.12:11). Later He used a similar picture of a shepherd and a lost sheep to speak of His own work of seeking and saving "the little ones" of Israel, lest they should be perishing (Matt.18:12-14). In John's account the analogy is expanded. Jesus' testimony was that He was "the Shepherd ideal" Who lays down His soul for the sake of the sheep (John 10:11-16).

"YOU ARE PETER"

Peter becomes the privileged example of the lost sheep who is found and saved by the Shepherd. He had witnessed the Lord's power over the storm and raging sea recorded in Matthew 8:23-27, crying out "Lord! Save us! We are perishing!" Now in 14:24-33 when they are again threatened by the raging sea, impetuous Peter asks the Lord to order him to walk on the water as the Lord Himself was doing. Yet fear and lack of faith takes over once again, and Peter cries out, "Lord, save me!"

Time after time Peter rushes ahead, wanders in accord with his own way, and gets himself in trouble, needing to be saved. Yet all these experiences are from God and for Peter's good, so that he would learn to recognize Who Jesus is. The great avowal of Matthew 16:16 is not a formula for salvation, but rather it is the consequence of God's

revelation to Peter through his failures and God's salvation granted to him of the truth: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It is not a creed learned by rote in order to become saved. It is a testimony of having been saved, and of knowing it.

This is how the lost sheep of the house of Israel will be saved and how they will come to avow that Jesus is Lord (*cf* Rom.10:9,10). It will not be revealed by other human beings, but by the Father of Him Who saves them from their sins.

REVEALED BY THE FATHER

It was not given to the people as a whole, at this time, to understand the secrets of the kingdom of the heavens (Matt.13:11). They saw the signs that pointed to Jesus as their Saviour from sins, the miracles of healing and authority over powers of evil, but they were not healed of that universally human, inner leprosy of sin and hypocrisy and self-centeredness that was at the root of all their troubles and was of the essence of their lostness.

They, as a people, did not even recognize Jesus as the Messiah, the Anointed Son of the living God. Instead, some were like Herod, and decided He was John the Baptist risen from the dead, or Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets (Matt.16:14). Only a few were like Peter in recognizing the truth and knew the happiness of believing that here was the Saviour Who was the Anointed One and the Son of the living God (16:16).

Revelation and understanding could come only from the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was not anything anyone could boast in. If the revelation of Christ could come only from the Father, no less would the work of the salvation of the lost sheep of Israel be that of God, *His* achievement, and all to *His* glory!

The revelation of Jesus as Saviour from sins, as the

anointed Christ Who would rule and bless, as the Son of the living God Who would manifest the power, wisdom and love of the Father, did not enter the hearts of this people. But that must ultimately be done. Otherwise Jesus is not their Saviour from their sins, their Good Shepherd Who finds the lost sheep, or the true Son of the living God. What His Name says He is, what He is called and designated to be, He will become in full recognition with joy and praise and thanksgiving.

FORFEITING THE SOUL

In making the saving work of the Good Shepherd dependent on the independent willingness of the sheep to be saved, the severity of the condition of being lost has been exaggerated beyond recognition. Since it was left up to Israel whether or not they would let Jesus save them, it is reasoned to be necessary that the results of a wrong choice be exceedingly harsh. Being lost was not enough. The lostness must involve eventual, everlasting, painful lostness. Otherwise, (it is supposed), the sheep might not think it worthwhile to admit their present lostness, or be motivated sufficiently to keep themselves within the confines of salvation and be faithful in following the Shepherd.

But this is not what is being presented in Matthew 16. Those, like Peter, whose will is directed to picking up their cross and following the Lord (Matt.16:24) would do so because of their recognition of Christ as the Son of the living God, *which recognition is given to them by the Father* (16:16,17). Such a happy recognition was not then given to the scribes and Pharisees or to the majority of that nation. The result for them is that they will be forfeiting their soul (16:25,26).

This is severe enough. But it is not a matter of suffering loss for all eternity in hell. *Soul* speaks of the senses and here especially of pleasant sensations. It has to do with the

joys and pleasures of that great *kingdom* which was promised to Israel, and will surely come and be clearly perceived (16:28). These will be forfeited by those of Israel who do not take up their cross (the temporary sufferings that precede the kingdom).

JUDGMENT IS NOT THE END

We say it is unfair for someone to suffer for something they were not given the grace of avoiding. But being lost in sin involves not only present misery but future suffering as well, as God deems best. The problem here is not the existence of future judgment and loss, but in viewing these future losses entirely as ends in themselves and as penalties entirely divorced from divine responsibility and purpose in wisdom.

The forfeiting of the joys of the kingdom is a sad thing in itself, but it must be viewed in light of God's operations. That sin has future repercussions needs to be made clear. But in making this clear we must never lose sight of God's great and triumphant and gracious dealings with sinners. With reference to Israel and the forfeiting of the soulish pleasures of the kingdom by many lost sheep of that nation, we must always keep in mind that Jesus came to seek and save these lost people of His from their sins. That will help put God's works of choosing some and revealing His truth to them, while still locking up others in stubbornness for awhile and bringing them into judgment as well, in perspective.

So we marvel at God's great grace to us in this day of darkness and human pride. Yet we rejoice that all God's operations, choosing and calling as well as judging and condemning, must finally be related to that great work of the cross and that glorious triumph of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour and Lord of us all.

D.H.H.

INVOKING AND AVOWING

If ever you should be avowing with your mouth the declaration that Jesus is Lord, and should be believing in your heart that God rouses Him from among the dead, you shall be saved. (Rom.10:9)

This verse is probably employed more than any other in today's popular, formularized preaching in which advice is given concerning "how to get saved." Such an interpretation and application, however, is a gross misuse of the Word of God. This important text must not not be taken out of its context, divorced from its setting, and assigned an altogether new purpose of our own devising.

In our consideration of this passage, it should first of all be noted that Paul is not speaking here concerning the nations, but Israel. The subject of the context is the salvation of Israel; the pronouns "you" and "your" are in reference to individuals of that nation. Their salvation was the delight of Paul's heart as well as his petition to God (Rom.9:31-10:1).

It should further be noted that the usage of "if ever," does not speak of a salvation that is in doubt, but of a salvation that is certain to occur—*for Israel.*

In the phrase "if ever," "if" is not the if of doubt but of argument. It is the practical equivalent of "whenever," in reference to the salvation which *will* then be occurring. The sense is, Whenever the sons of Israel should finally be avowing with their mouth the declaration that Jesus is Lord, and should be believing in their heart that God rouses Him from among the dead, they *shall* be being saved.

The teaching of practically the entirety of Romans 10 and 11 is that God does *not* thrust away His people whom He foreknew (Rom.11:2), and hence that the day will yet come when "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26a). Israel will then be saved not only out of her stubbornness and unbelief, but out of the great affliction which shall befall her in the conclusion of the eon. In that day, "Arriving out of Zion shall be the Rescuer. He will be turning away irreverence from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them, *whenever* I [Yahweh] should be eliminating their sins" (Rom.11:26b,27; cit. Isa.59:20,21; Psa.14:7; Jer.31:34).

Thus it is gloriously true that "if ever" Israel should be avowing with their mouth the declaration that Jesus is Lord, and should be believing in their heart that God rouses Him from among the dead, they *shall* be saved. They will then enter into the particular salvation which God has for them, that of life in the terrestrial kingdom in the coming eon, according to the writings of the prophets.

"Intense zeal, religious fervor, coupled with self-righteousness, does not lead to salvation. God demands subjection to His righteousness in Christ. The law should establish Israel's *un*righteousness and thus reveal God's righteousness, which is manifested in Christ. Israel, as a nation, will be saved when they see Him Whom they stabbed, and recognize Him as their Righteousness.

"The law demanded obedience first, and promised life to those only who continued to keep it. But even in the law there was provision for faith. It taught that Yahweh Himself, *He* was their Life (Deut.30:20). In the day when He gathers them out of the peoples and brings them back into the land He will bring the word of faith very near to them (Deut.30:1-14). In place of their own efforts He will put the humiliation and resurrection of Christ before them. Their salvation, under God, will depend on their avowal of Christ's lordship and resurrection.

"In the words, 'Whoever should be invoking the name of the Lord, shall be saved' (Rom.10:13; cit. Joel 2:32), there is an allusion to the ancient custom, still in vogue in eastern lands, of the right of sanctuary (*cp* Num.35:6-28). One who is in danger of death by the hand of the blood avenger, if he cannot reach a safe place in time, may invoke the name of some great and powerful person, and thus find salvation through his name. If the avengers of blood refuse to listen to his appeal, and take his life, it devolves upon the person on whose name he has called to take swift and summary vengeance. He gathers together all his friends and allies to assist him in punishing the outrage and in defending the honor of his name.

"Thus, 'Whoever should be invoking the name of [Yahweh], shall be saved.' When vengeance visits the earth, the only shelter will be the name of Yahweh. Therefore, it will require not only heart belief, but the avowal of the mouth. Thus it is that Israel will be saved and all others who, in that day, will seek refuge in His name."[1]

The full text of Joel 2:32 (from which Paul cites in Romans 10:9 and 10:13) is: "And it comes that everyone who shall call on the name of Yahweh shall escape, *for* in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem *deliverance* shall come to be, just *as* Yahweh says; and among the survivors are those *whom Yahweh is calling.*" All such ones will then call on the name of Yahweh and escape, for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, His deliverance shall come to be. Their invocation of His name will be *because* of His deliverance, according to His calling. Hence their invocation should never be conceived as a means controlled by man in order to gain His deliverance.

It is especially wrong, then, to wrench these words from their context and employ them as a "formula" today, set-

1. adapted from A. E. Knoch, Concordant Commentary, p.240.

ting these words before the listener as "how to" advice as to what requirements he must fulfill in order to "get saved," or, become spiritual.

It is true, incidentally, whenever anyone today is graciously enabled to recognize and avow that Jesus is Lord and to believe in his heart that God has roused Him from among the dead, that he then enters into a certain salvation of his own. But it is a salvation from ignorance and unbelief, not from being unchosen by God prior to this time. And it is certainly not some sort of qualifying step which then obligates God to include him among His chosen ones in return.

Indeed, we were chosen by God long before we were born, in accord with His purpose and the grace given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian. In the counsels of God, it was actually "*given* to *us.*" This is what Paul says (2 Tim.1:9); not that it was merely made "available" to all who might one day qualify themselves for its possession. Membership in the body of Christ is by God's grace, not by human qualification.

As long as we are altogether stubborn toward the things of God, we are "soulish, not having the spirit" (*cf* Jude 19). "Now the soulish man is not receiving those things which are of the spirit of God, for they are stupidity to him, and *he is not able to know them,* seeing that they are spiritually examined" (1 Cor.2:14).

One either has the spirit of God or else he does not. If he does not have it, he does not—he cannot—receive those things which are of God's spirit. Indeed, the truth is, claim what he will, such a person considers them to be so much stupidity. He is unable even to know the things of God, much less to speak of them before others. "No one is able to say 'Lord is Jesus' except by [*en,* 'in'] holy spirit" (1 Cor.12:3).

Those who do not yet have the spirit of God do not

receive Christ at all actually, even if they, in their own flesh, may attempt to do so, having been misled into such a course through false teachings. In such cases, the "faith" is "feigned," in the sense that it is *simulated* (*eikê,* SIMULATEly; 1 Cor.15:2), not genuine. Human efforts toward self-conviction are all in vain; we truly believe only when God *graces* us to do so, in His own time and according to His own powerful operations (*cp* Gal.1:15; 1 Tim.1:16).

Only those who have already been given God's spirit receive Christ; their receiving of Him is a *fruit* thereof, as natural—and as much the work of God—as the spring blossoms on an apple tree.

INVOKING THE NAME OF THE LORD

On this subject, Dean Hough wrote, "It is ironic that these words of Paul [in Romans 10:9] should have been taken as standardized directions which must be followed if a person wants to be saved. Faith itself is thus given a legalistic twist, contrary to the whole tenor of Paul's apostleship. Even in addressing Israel, the apostle is not imposing a set of rules for them to follow in gaining their salvation. Rather he is showing the pathway Israel needs to take, and indeed *will* eventually take, for the enjoyment of the salvation God has provided for them. It is a pathway of discovery, not human achievement. The salvation does not arise from either the avowal or the faith, but is *found* through their exercise . . . .

"The previous verses [Rom.10:6,7] show what Israel must *not* be saying if they wish to exhibit faith in God's words and enjoy the blessings of salvation. This verse shows the opposite. Here is what they *will* be saying in response to true faith in the heart. They will acknowledge the lordship of Jesus, the One Who walked among them as a servant and Who was crucified as a criminal. And they will believe that God roused Him from among the dead . . . .

"The acclamation of the mouth [Rom.10:10], in the Scriptures, is an open expression of what is honestly believed. It must not be false. The Lord said, 'Out of the superabundance of the heart the mouth is speaking' (Matt.12:34). The sacredness of such an avowal can be traced back to the 'ten words' of the law, where it is written, 'You shall not take up the name of Yahweh your Elohim for futility' (Ex.20:7). What is said concerning God and His operations is to reflect His glory and manifest Israel's confidence in Him.

"However, . . . even that future expression of Israel's faith will not actually make them righteous or gain them salvation. What Paul has written concerning us in the earlier chapters of Romans and what he says concerning Israel in chapter 11 will help us supply the ellipses, somewhat along the following lines: 'For with the heart it is believed for [the manifestation of] righteousness [established by God], yet with the mouth it is avowed for [the continuing display of] salvation [gained through Christ's descent, death and resurrection].'

"These matters in brackets, though helpful to us in following the overall teaching of Romans, are not of immediate importance in Romans 10. Here Paul is presenting the way to righteousness (by faith) in a manner most calculated to appeal to and be understood by Israel, so as to make the strength of Israel's resistance all the more evident. He is not concerned here with the basis and purpose of salvation, but with the simple human situation which is the *evidence* of that salvation . . . .

"The attractiveness of the evangel, especially to those zealous for righteousness, is so great that we can only marvel at the strength of Israel's stubbornness. Yet we would be the same apart from the grace of God. Israel remains under the disgrace of disbelieving God, stumbling and tripping, desiring the anathema of rejecting Christ, while

we have the joy and peace of believing on Him Who is the Saviour of all mankind.

"'For everyone, whoever should be invoking the name of the Lord, shall be saved' (Rom.10:13). Once more Paul borrows from the Hebrew Scriptures, this time from Joel 2:32. This continued tying in of Old Testament passages with the message Paul was presenting before Israel should logically have made that message more welcome to them. The harmony of salvation through faith with the proclamations and pleas of the prophets is very striking, especially considering the place of the law in the days of such stalwarts as Isaiah and Joel. No wonder Paul testifies that the evangel of God was promised before through His prophets (Rom.1:1,2), and that the righteousness of God was 'attested by the law and the prophets' (Rom.3:21)!

"The differences between Paul and Joel are obvious to anyone who considers each passage in its context. But the similarities are what the apostle emphasizes here. The pathway to salvation is not distant, complicated or obscure. It is straightforward and near at hand. All Israel needs to do is believe, proclaim and invoke. But still they are *locked up in stubbornness* and will not heed a message of such bountiful mercy.

"As for us, we are aware that God is operating, and He is operating all, even the affairs of Israel. He is operating all these matters together, in a harmonious and glorious way. And He is operating them all together for good. This is the faith that God has implanted in our hearts and which we rejoice in acclaiming with our mouths, to the glory of God the Father."[2]

DECEPTIONS OF SUBJECTIVITY

Spontaneous informal petitions, prayers, pleadings, and

2. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.74, pp.91-96, "Faith in Heart and Mouth."

thanksgiving to God, as circumstance evokes or occasion inspires, are but the natural outflow of our spirits. As the desire or need arises, such prayer and praise, even if very brief, is often most heartfelt and earnest. If we *are* walking in spirit, in the course of everyday life many occasions arise, or may well be before us continually, in which either petition or praise are regularly in our consciousness if not on our lips, even as they become our unintermittent experience, in spirit. Conversely, often, when we are *not* walking in spirit, it is both the painful trials and the special joys of the day that serve to awaken us to reliance upon God even as to thanksgiving and praise unto Him, in the name of Christ.

In order to minimize the intrusion of the flesh, ordinarily, except for brief public blessing or supplication, prayer should be made "in hiding"; that is, either privately or in silence (so to speak, "in your storeroom," after "locking your door"; Matt.6:6). Indeed, it is the "hypocrites" who are "prolix" (i.e., abundant and extended) in prayer (Luke 20:47), who thus engage themselves that they may be seen of men, making "useless repetitions even as those of the nations" (Matt.6:7). Even though such prayers are directed to the God of Israel, faithfully speaking, they are largely but "useless repetitions," even so. The Lord Jesus declared of such ones, "They are supposing that they will be hearkened to in their loquacity. *Do not, then, be like them,* for aware is God, your Father, of what you need before you request Him" (Matt.6:8).

Devoutness in general and communion with God in particular, must be natural and sensible, not contrived, artificial, or sensuous. Yet as a technique by which they suppose they can regulate the flesh and "gain" the spirit, some will repetitively vocalize such phrases as, "O Lord Jesus! O Lord Jesus!" doing so with much zeal and great gusto. Though this mantra-like practice is termed by some,

"Calling on the name of the Lord," it might more aptly be called, "Calling *out* the name of the Lord," since, as ordinarily practiced, with much repetition of phrases, it becomes not so much a prayer of dependence upon God as a mood-altering technique, controlled by man.

Doubtlessly, if such procedures are practiced with sufficient frequency and sincerity, certain positive effects will be obtained as a result—especially if one is taught to expect such results. Such essentially pagan practices will often induce a certain ephemeral euphoria, which, in turn, deters those thus distracted from certain overt sins. One's dependence upon such subjective, self-generated emotionalism, however, hinders if not precludes one's dependence upon God.

Such exuberant vocalizings and related practices are, in fact, as fleshly and injurious in their way as those more conventional fleshly thoughts and deeds which they are designed to attenuate. Self-regulated experiences of ebullience, albeit in the name of Christ, constitute a spurious spirituality. Irrational, self-generated emotionalism is unhealthy, not to mention unwise. For some, such religiosity may gratify the senses or distract the flesh; but it cannot truly nourish the spirit of any. Nor is any such aura of religious euphoria somehow useful in preparation for the spirit's presence—as if the Almighty had need of our crude devices in order that His testimony might be heard or His influences rendered effectual.

"INVITATIONS" AND "ALTAR CALLS"

Many have been deceived into conceiving of the evangel in proud and conditional ways through the false teachings of those who have been unfaithful to its message. Ever so many have been put through the paces of taking part in an "acceptance" of Christ which supposedly only brought salvation to them inasmuch as they fulfilled its "terms." Such

claims and practices have only perpetuated confusion and deception. Wherever God intends, however, the power of the evangel itself still works salvation—in spite of the presence of these errors.

The customary invitation or altar call of today is simply a vain tradition of men (*cp* Mark 7:8). It is used because it "gets results." Through such means, many become converts to the "Christian religion." Such popular techniques are based upon the false idea which has well been termed "decisional regeneration." The number of those from among such throngs whom God Himself has already chosen is known to Him, not to us.

Entrance into the terrestrial kingdom under law is one thing; the apostle Paul's evangel of grace among the nations is quite another. Yet on the basis of Matthew 10:32,33 (and Luke 12:8,9), many today are warned that they must not only believe but also "confess" Christ before men in order to be saved. The scope of these words, however, is confined to the Circumcision. It is true that it was necessary for those called into Christ *through the evangel of the Circumcision* to heed all such instructions if they would enter into life. God, however, graciously fulfilled in His chosen ones all essential obedience (*cp* Isa.26:12). They would have life eonian only if they obeyed; but their obedience was due solely to His grace.

In the Circumcision calling, personal righteousness and endurance are *essential,* but they are not provided by man. Those in Christ of that calling, whether in the beginning or end of their life of faith, are saved entirely in grace, as much as ourselves. The throngs at large, some of whom had a certain recognition of Christ, must be distinguished from those who were truly chosen of God, "begotten anew" and "in Christ."

Such matters as these do not concern us; it is a corruption of Paul's evangel to attempt to incorporate them into

his message, especially when the *grace* which alone can fulfill the essential obedience of that calling is denied.

For ourselves, it is not that we must acclaim Christ, but simply that we gladly do so, according to His grace. We should not speak of "confessing" Christ, but of "acclaiming" Him. When *exomologeō* (OUT-LIKE-LAY [say]) is used in a positive sense, the CV translates it "acclaim" (e.g., Matt.11:25). When it is used concerning sin, it is translated "confess" (e.g., Matt.3:6). If a new believer should wish to share his first joy in Christ with others during a meeting of his fellow believers, this should be encouraged. But such actions must not be psychologically induced, or made into veritable laws or ceremonies.

Many may actually believe for some time before they ever "go forward" at a church service. *If so, they are already in Christ, and complete in Him* (*cf* Col.2:10). But if their faith has lacked commitment and obedience, not yet knowing His grace, they may well suppose that by taking part in this tradition they will somehow motivate God to bless them in return. Indeed, "orthodoxy" teaches this error, and proclaims it as truth.

If any should genuinely believe for the first time during such a meeting, this will be so only because God has decided to grant them faith in the message of "Christ crucified" upon this particular occasion. If so, one should glory in God in it all, in God's good pleasure to be graciously granting faith, and not taint such a marvelous occasion with an abundance of boastful imaginings about "having done one's part" by going forward at the altar call.

May our God and Father give us grace not only to be invoking (calling *upon,* or petitioning) the Lord out of a clean heart (2 Tim.2:22), but to be correctly cutting the word of truth (2 Tim.2:15), heralding the evangel of His grace to the honor of His name.

J.R.C.

THEN YAHWEH ANSWERED

THE TEMPEST described by Elihu in Job 37 forms the background for the appearance and address of Yahweh. It parallels the tempest of sorrow and pain that has struck down Job, and so also the words of Yahweh concerning His wisdom and power and constant involvement in the great world of the earth and skies parallel His wisdom and power and constant involvement in Job's little world.

HUMAN DARKNESS AND IGNORANCE

Job had reached the beginning of knowledge with his fear of God. The Word of God which he had heard was, as we have noted, that great account of creation and the patterns for approach and praise and shelter from divine indignation, which we have today in Genesis.

But Job was darkening counsel, and doing so without knowledge (Job 38:2) when he spoke of his own past record of good acts and pointed to the comparative ease of wicked people round about. These points, for all their truth, would not bring Job to an understanding of Deity. It is only when Job focused his thoughts on God and His connection with his sufferings that he was speaking what is rightly so (Job 42:7). We can know this because Yahweh speaks now only of His responsibility for both the physical and animate creation, whether we fear or enjoy it, or are indifferent to it. Yahweh has nothing to say about Job's moral record. The knowledge that sheds light on counsel and wisdom is the knowledge of God as He reveals Himself.

JOB 38:1–38

38 [+]**Then Yahweh** [l]**answered** `**Job**
from the tempest, [+] [l]**saying:**
2 [a]**Who** is **this** who **darkens**[l] **counsel**
[i]**By declarations without knowledge?**
3 **Belt** up **your loins** [pr]**now like** a **master;**
[+] **I shall ask** of **you, and** you **inform Me.**
4 **Where** [b]**were you** [i]**when I founded**[–] the **earth?**
Tell if you know with **understanding.**
5 [a]**Who** [pl]**determined its measurements—**
for surely **you** [l]**know!**
Or [a]**who stretched out** a measuring **tape** up**on it?**
6 **On what were its sockets sunk?**
Or [a]**who directed its cornerstone** in place,
7 [i]**When** the **stars of** the **morning**
were jubilant[–] **together,**
And all the **sons of Elohim** [c]**raised** a joyful [l]**shout?**
8 [+] Who [l]**shut in** the **sea** [i]**with** double **doors**
[i]**When it rushed forth**[–]**, it** came [l]**forth from** the **womb,**
9 [i]**When I** [pl]**made**[–] the **cloud its clothing**
And murkiness its swaddling band,
10 [+]**When I** [l]**impressed My statute** up**on it**
And [lpl]**set bar and** double **doors,**
11 [+]**When I** [l]**said, Unto here shall you come**
[+]**but shall not proceed** farther,
And here a limit **is** [l]**set** [i]**to your swelling billows?**
12 [f] **In** all **your days have you** ever **instructed** the **morning?**
Have you made known to the **dawn its** [ri]**place,**

EARTH AND SEA AND SKY

Yahweh speaks first of His founding of the earth, but expands on the word given in Genesis 1:1. He informs Job of His exact determining of measurements and laying of foundations (Job 38:5,6). The earth was neither founded without a plan nor without a wise carrying out of the plan. The result was so marvelous that "the stars of the morning" and "the sons of Elohim" exulted with joy.

This exultation of the celestial beings who raised a joyful shout when God founded the earth (Job 38:7) testifies to an expectation of deliverance from the corruption that had entered the universe (compare the language and thought of Romans 8:19-21). There was a feeling that God was doing something especially significant in forming this world. This was a work that was intimately related to the removal of evil from creation, a truly important matter to Job, and to us all.

Hence, Yahweh turns from the glorious, initial act of creation to speak of matters associated with evil, the rushing forth of the sea, of its billows and of murkiness and confusion. These forces were not outside the divine operation, and certainly not beyond His control (38:8-11). They may involve destruction, but by setting bars and limits to their powers, Yahweh makes known His superior power and the direction toward order and beauty of His activity.

This is shown further by the reference in 38:12 to the morning and the dawn. These daily evidences of hope and renewal are also of God. If Job is disheartened by the wickedness around him, the light of each new day should remind him that God will bring all wickedness to an end (13-15).

God knows all about the wickedness of the world, just as He is familiar with all the dark places of the sea and vast expanses of the land, and of death itself (16-18). These are not surprises or mysteries to Him.

13 ›**That** it might take **hold**⁻ ⁱ**of** the **wings of the earth,**
And the **wicked be** ˡ**shaken** ᶠ**out** of **it?**
14 **It** ˡ**turns** it**self** to hues **like sealed clay**
⁺**Till they are** ˡˢᵗ**set like** those of **clothing.**
15 ⁺**Then from** the **wicked their light is** ˡ**withheld**
And the **exalted**ˡ **arm is** ˡ**broken.**
16 **Have you** ever **come unto** the **seepings of** the **sea**
⁺**Or walked** about **in** the **fathoms of** the **abyss?**
17 **Have** the **gates of death been revealed to you,**
And have **you** ˡ**seen** the **gates of** the **blackest shadow?**
18 **Have you comprehended** the ᶠʳ**vast width of** the **earth?**
Tell if you know all of it.
19 **Where** is **this, the** path**way** where **light** ˡ**tabernacles,**
And where is **this,** where **darkness has its** ʳⁱ**place,**
20 **That you may take it**◊ **to its territory,**
And that you may understand the **tracks** to **its home?**
21 **You know, for you were** ˡ**born** back **then!**
And the **number of your days** is **vast!**
22 **Have you entered** in**to** the **storehouses of snow,**
And have **you** ˡ**seen** the **storehouses of hail,**
23 **Which I have kept back for** the **season of distress,**
For the **day of attack and war?**
24 **Where** is **this, the** path**way** where **light is** ˡ**apportioned,**
Where the **east** wind **is** ˡ**scattered over** the **earth?**
25 ᵃ**Who has divided off** a **trench for overflowing** rains
And set a path**way for** the **thunderbolts,**
26 **To** ᶜ**bring rain on** a **land** where **no**ᶦ **man** is,
A **wilderness** with **no**ᶦ **human in it,**
27 **To satisfy** areas of **ruination and wasteness,**
And to cause verdure to **sprout ~from** the **arid** place~**?**
28 **Is** there a **father for** the **rain?**
Or ᵃ**who has begotten** the **globules of dew?**

38:20 it: i.e., either light or darkness.
38:27 ~~~ from the **arid** place: Hb place for bringing **forth.**

SNOW AND WIND AND THUNDER

If Job is going to know God as the One Who is operating all and doing so with power and wisdom, then his mind has to be cleared of any self-centered pride of goodness and achievement, and of blame and independence in control over his destiny as well. He also must view all things in his life, whether good or evil, as of God and under His control. What is relevant in the matter of Job's misery, and alone of purpose and meaning in it all, is centered in God alone.

Therefore, Yahweh speaks of His responsibity for all things. That is the word Yahweh has for Job.

There is divine intelligence and purpose behind the existence of snow and ice in unexplored regions of the earth, and of light and wind in their apportioned pathways and in the movements of the stars. Over all these God has the superintendence (22-32).

These are not accidents or arrangements of arbitrary chance. Wildernesses and deserts are placed by design where God has placed them, no less than the constellations, or the individual stars and galaxies in space that compose them. All of this must put Job's sufferings into perspective. Job is not the master of his fate. If God, in His wisdom, wills to bring pain and loss and sorrow into Job's life, all of Job's human righteousness and noble deeds will not keep it from coming. Satan also is left out of the picture. The creation is under the direction of the Creator, and therefore His purpose for it will be achieved.

God is there laying down laws of physics and superintending over the earth (v.33). He has full control over the clouds and lightning bolts, directing where moisture shall fall and where dry clods of earth shall be opened by the rain, and where they shall still remain (34-38). He is over all things, both good and evil.

D.H.H.

29 **From** [a]**whose belly has the ice** come **forth?**
And the **hoarfrost of** the **heavens,** [a]**who has generated it,**
30 When **water** [l]**hides** it**self as stone,**
And the **face of** the **abyss is** [l]**frozen** over**?**
31 Can **you** [l]**tie** up the **windings of** the **Pleiades?**
Or can **you** [l]**unloose** the **draw-cords of Orion?**
32 Can **you** [c]**bring** [l]**forth** the constellations of the **zodiac**
in their season?
And the **Great Bear** [on]**with her cubs,** can **you** [l]**guide them?**
33 Do **you know** the **statutes of** the **heavens?**
[if]**Or** can **you** [lpl]**establish its superintendence** [i]**over** the **earth?**
34 Can **you** [l]**raise up your voice to** the **thick** clouds
[+]**That** the **accumulation of water may cover you?**
35 Can **you** [l]**send** forth the **lightning** bolts [+]**that they may go?**
And do **they** [l]**say to you,** [bd]**Here we** are**?**
36 [a]**Who has set wisdom in** the **hidden** part**s?**
Or [a]**who has given understanding to** the **intuition?**
37 [a]**Who** can [l]**number** the [sky]**clouds in wisdom?**
And the **waterskins of** the **heavens,** [a]**who** can [l]**tip down,**
38 [i]**When** the **soil** is **solidly** set⁻ in**to** lumpy **cast**s**,**
And the **clods are** [l]**clung** together**?**

NOTES AND NOTICES

The *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Hendrickson, 1997) is a recently published English edition of a work of German scholars, providing current thinking on the meaning of Hebrew terms. Concerning the word *olam* which we translate *eon* or *eonian,* we read: "The Eng. translation 'eternity'. . . is inappropriate for a number of OT passages with *olam,* and, even when it seems appropriate, it may not be permitted to introduce a preconceived concept of eternity, burdened with all manner of later philosophical or theological content." It is satisfying to find this admission, but we wonder how the word "eternity" (or "forever," or "everlasting") could ever be used apart from the burden of philosophical or theological content in Bible translations.

By the time our readers receive this issue of our magazine, Volume 89 (1997) of *Unsearchable Riches* should be available for shipping (hardbound, green cloth, 288 pages; $20, plus $2.00 s&h).

THE BEST OF THE FLESH

"THE war against the Philistines was unyielding all the days of Saul. When Saul saw any masterful man or any son of valor, he would add him to his host" (1 Sam.14:52). "David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; and when his brothers and all his father's house heard, they went down there to him. And others convened around him: every man under constraint, every man who had a creditor, every man bitter of soul. He became chief over them" (1 Sam.22:1,2).

Saul was continually conscripting the best of Israel's men to be added to his fighting force. And yet they were never able to overcome their foes. On the other hand, David did finally see peace. But notice the difference in David's acquisition of those who became his mighty men. They came to him. They loved him. They needed him. And they were not necessarily "the best." So is Christ's acquisition of those who will be His in the oncoming eons and in the complement of the eras when all is headed up in Him.

AMALEK, A TYPE OF THE FLESH

This contrast sets the tone for the fifteenth chapter of 1 Samuel. The first three verses of the chapter are one of those passages which many people consider difficult to understand. God instructed Israel to utterly destroy Amalek, "both man and woman, both infant and suckling, both bull and flockling, both camel and donkey." History has shown that Israel failed to obey such commands repeatedly, and the ultimate result was always the corruption and failure of the chosen nation.

Amalek was a descendent of Esau and represents the flesh—ever struggling against faith, attacking when defenses were weak, and warring with the chosen perpetually. In their journey through the wilderness the children of Israel were attacked by Amalek at a time of great vulnerability, just after their encounter with thirst and the consequent despair and rebellious thoughts that had taken hold of them (*cf* Exodus 17).

Now again, as recorded in 1 Samuel 14, the forces of Israel spent all their energy in the battle with the Philistines. In their exhaustion the hunger of the flesh overwhelmed them, and they sinned grievously. But Jonathan was refreshed and satisfied because he was depending on God rather than on his own strength. Saul had invoked a curse on anyone who stopped to eat before he was avenged of his enemies.

But chapter 15 is where the curse should have been pronounced. "Cursed be anyone who reaches out his hand to take what God has doomed!" But instead of heeding God's simple and uncompromising directive, Saul and the soldiers deemed themselves wise enough and with sufficient discretion to save *only the best* (1 Sam.15:15). The king of Amalek was spared, and the stout fatlings, and only the most desirable of the property (15:9).

Saul's actions betrayed his heart. Saul went to Carmel and raised a signpost to himself. Then he went to Gilgal! (15:12). Saul was glorying in himself and the victory that God had given him, and, in such a frame of mind, he went to the place renowned for the cutting off of the flesh, to sacrifice to God! Gilgal means *rolling.* That is where the reproach of Egypt was rolled off Israel with the reinstitution of circumcision, and the renewal of covenant relationship to God (Josh.5:2-9).

Abraham's circumcision clearly spoke of the deadness and inability of the flesh to perform God's will. Yet Saul

was glorying in the flesh, and he was saving the best and most appealing things of the flesh, and he was offering the fruits of the flesh to God.

GOD WILL NOT ALLOW THE FLESH TO RULE

God's response is that this kind of rule will not continue to reign over His chosen ones. As always the flesh has its excuses: "Blessed be you [God's prophet] by Yahweh! I have carried out the command of Yahweh . . . . I have brought [the animals] from the Amalekite, because the soldiers spared the best of the flock and the herd in order to sacrifice them to Yahweh *your* Elohim" (1 Sam. 15:13-15). (We are reminded of words in Genesis chapter 3: "The woman that You gave me . . . the serpent beguiled me.") Honesty would have been compelled to say, "We saved what appealed to us because I failed to rule what was under my authority."

What is God's opinion of such service? Samuel asked the question (1 Sam.15:22). What does God delight in? What is it that brings joy and satisfaction to God? Can we mortals please God by enriching Him with our gifts? Is there anything we can hold in our hand that will win God's heart after our actions have told God that we believe our wisdom is greater than His and our ways are better than His? Can we fail to live as we understand God desires us to live, and then purchase His smile with presents? Will God deny Himself and His truth for the sake of the works of our hands? To reject God's word and direction is rebellion and insubordination (v.23). It is taking guidance from and honoring other sources.

In accord with God's wisdom, the flesh rules our lives for awhile, for our education. But this is not the permanent rule in the life of faith. And so Samuel cut down Agag at Gilgal (15:33). Samuel showed the true meaning of Gilgal to be the cutting off of the flesh. Then he departed from

Saul, never journeying to see his face again. The Nazirite (*cf* Num.6:2), totally dedicated to God, cannot fellowship where the flesh is exalted over the will of God.

CRUCIFIXION OF THE FLESH

Paul called the death of Christ a circumcision—a stripping off of the body of flesh. It is in accord with the evangel of our crucifixion with Christ that the apostle writes, "Now those of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together with its passions and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

How powerful and solemn it is, coming from God, that this crucifixion of the flesh is so fitly displayed in the command to Saul to utterly destroy man and woman, infant and child and every beast. Nothing the flesh values, no matter how innocent or appealing its appearance is to be carried over into the new life. The cross of Christ says, "Count your life and works as dead and laid in the tomb with Christ, and depend upon God to raise up a new life within you."

J. Philip Scranton

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Concordant Version of 1 Samuel 15

15 + Samuel [said to Saul, It was `**I** whom **Yahweh sent to anoint you ›king over His people, over Israel. +So now hearken to** the **voice of** the **words of Yahweh.** 2 **Thus says Yahweh of hosts, I have noted `[w]what Amalek did to Israel, [w]when he [pl]stood ›against it [i]on** the **way [i]as it** came **up– from Egypt.** 3 7**+So[s] now go, + you** must **smite `Amalek and [7]doom him and~ `all [w]that** is **his. + You shall not spare** [on] **him; +but you will [c]put** to **death [f] both man**

*fr*and woman, *f* both infant and *fr* suckling*l*, *f* both bull and *fr* flockling, *f* both camel and *fr* donkey.

4 + Saul *l*summoned `the *wi*force and *ln*mustered them *i*at Telaim: 200,000 footmen, and 10,000 `men of Judah. 5 +Then Saul *li*advanced as far as the city of Amalek and *7c*lay in *l*ambush~ in the wadi. 6 + Saul *l*said to the Kenite, *go*Come, withdraw, go down from *mid*among the Amalekite, lest I ~*l*sweep you off~ with him. +As for you, you *d*showed kindness *wi*to all the sons of Israel *i*when they came up⁻ from Egypt. +So the Kenite *l*withdrew from *mid*among the Amalekite. 7 +Then Saul *l*smote `the Amalekite from Havilah *7*as far as*s* Shur, which is adjoining Egypt. 8 + While he *l*apprehended `Agag king of Amalek alive, + he doomed `all the people to the edge of the sword. 9 +But Saul and ˙his *wi*soldiers *l*spared *on* Agag and *on* the best of the flock and the herd, + the *M*stout fatlings~*s* and *on* the butting lambs, and *on* all ˙that was good, and they would not doom⁻ them. +As for any ˙property that was despised and ~rejected*l*~, they doomed `it.

10 + The word of Yahweh *lb*came to Samuel, › saying⁻, 11 I regret that I caused `Saul to reign ›as king, for he has turned *af*away from following Me and has not carried out `My *sp*commands.

+Now › Samuel grew *lhot*angry and he *l*cried out to Yahweh all ˙that night. 12 +When Samuel *c*rose *l*early to meet Saul in the morning, +then › Samuel was *l*told, › saying⁻, that Saul had *in*gone to*d* ˙Carmel + *bd*where he *c*erected a monument*l* as a signpost to himself. +Then he had turned *l*about and *l*passed on and *l*descended to ˙Gilgal.

13 + Samuel *l*came to Saul, *7*+just *bd*when he´ had *c*offered up an ascent approach to Yahweh `of the first of the loot *w*that he had taken from Amalek. +When Samuel came *l*near to Saul*0*, +then Saul *l*said to him, Blessed*l* be you ›by Yahweh! I have carried out `the command of Yahweh. 14 + Samuel *ls*replied, What +then is ˙this bleating of

the flock in my ears, and the lowing of the herd *w*that I am hearing? 15 + Saul *ls*answered, *7*I~ have brought them from the Amalekite, *w*because the *wi*soldiers spared *on* the best of the flock and the herd in order to sacrifice⁻ them to Yahweh your Elohim. +Yet we have doomed `the rest*l*. 16 + Samuel *ls*replied to Saul, Hold back and let me *l*tell › you `*w*what Yahweh spoke to me ˙last night. +Then he *l*said to him, Speak.

17 +So Samuel *ls*apprised *7*Saul*cs*: Is it not true that *if*though you were small in your own eyes, you became head of the tribes of Israel? + Yahweh *l*anointed you ›as king over Israel, 18 and Yahweh *l*sent you *i*on a *way*mission, + *l*saying, Go and ⁻doom `those sinners, `the Amalekite; + ⁻fight *i*against them until *7*you~*cs* have *all*finished⁻ `them. 19 +Then why did you not hearken *i*to the voice of Yahweh? +Why did you *l*pounce ›on the loot and *l*do ˙what was evil in the eyes of Yahweh? 20 + Saul *ls*replied to Samuel, *w*Because I hearkened *i*to the voice of *7*the *wi*soldiers~. +When I *l*went *i*on the *way*mission on which Yahweh sent me, + I *l*brought back `Agag, the king of Amalek, and I doomed `Amalek. 21 +Yet the *wi*soldiers *l*took from the loot some small cattle and large cattle, the first parts of ˙what had been doomed, to sacrifice to Yahweh your Elohim *i*at Gilgal.

22 +But Samuel *l*said,
Does Yahweh ›have as much delight
in ascent offerings and sacrifices
As in hearkening⁻ *i*to the voice of Yahweh?
Behold, to hearken⁻ is better *f*than sacrifice,
To *c*pay attention *f*than the fat of rams.
23 For rebellion is like the sin of divination,
+ Insubordination⁻, like the lawlessness +of teraphim.
Because you rejected `the *sp*command of Yahweh,
He has +also *l*rejected you from *7b*being⁻*0* king
*7*over Israel*0*.

24 + **Saul** [lsa]**replied to Samuel, I have sinned, for I have** [p]**transgressed** `the **bidding of Yahweh and** `**your** [sp]**instructions,** [t]**because I feared** `**the** [wi]**soldiers and I** [l]**hearkened** [i]**to their voice.** 25 + **Now** I **pray, bear** `with **my sin and return with me,** so [+]**that I may prostrate** my**self** ›**before Yahweh** [7]**your Elohim**[s]**.** 26 [+]**But Samuel** [l]**said to Saul, I shall not return with you, for you rejected** `the [sp]**command of Yahweh,** [+]**so Yahweh** has [l]**rejected you from** [b]**being**– **king over Israel.**

27 [+]**As Samuel** turned [l]**around to** [go]**leave,** [+] [7]**Saul**[Q] [c]**held** [l]**fast** [i]**to** the **hem of his robe, and it was** [l]**torn.** 28 + **Samuel** [l]**said to him, Yahweh has torn** `the **kingship** over **Israel** [on]**away from you today and has given it to** an **associate of your**s ‘who is **better** [f]**than you.** 29 + **Moreover,** the **Permanent** One **of Israel** does **not** [m]**deal** [l]**falsely and** [7]**the Holy** One **of Israel**[0] does **not** [l]**repent, for He** is **not** like a **human** ›**that** He should **repent**–**.**

30 [+]**But** [7]**Saul**[0] [lsa]**pleaded, I have sinned,** [7][+]**yet**[s] **now,** I **pray,** [m]**bring glory** to **me** in **front of** the **elders of my people and** in **front of Israel.** [+] **Return with me,** so [+]**that I** may **prostrate** my**self** ›**before Yahweh your Elohim.** 31 [+]**So Samuel** [l]**turned back,** following **after Saul, and Saul** [l]**prostrated** him**self** ›**before Yahweh.** 32 [+]**Then Samuel** [l]**said,** [c]**Bring close to me** `**Agag king of Amalek.** [+] **Agag** [l]**went to him haltingly. And Agag** [l]**said,** [so]**Surely the bitterness of death has withdrawn.** 33 + **Samuel** [lsa]**replied, Just as your sword has bereaved** other **women, so shall your mother be bereaved** [f]**among women. And Samuel** [l]**cut down** `**Agag before Yahweh** [i]**at Gilgal.**

34 [+]**Then Samuel** [l]**went** to[d] ‘**Ramah;** [+]**as** for **Saul, he** went **up to his house** at **Gibeah of Saul.** 35 + **Samuel** did **not** come **again to see** `**Saul until** the **day of his death, though Samuel mourned for Saul,** [+]**because Yahweh regretted that He had** [c]**made** `**Saul king over Israel.**

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 God's Will and Intention
61 To Know the Love of Christ
69 Foreknowledge and Salvation
78 Do You Observe the Travailing?
84 The Spirit of Yahweh Transferred
87 Who, Consequently, Can be Saved?

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 1998
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

GOD does the unexpected. He creates the heavens and earth, and He also creates evil (Gen.1:1; Isa.45:7). He allows Satan to bring great suffering to His servant Job, and when He finally speaks to Job about this, without referring to Satan, He tells him of *His own* responsibility in similar cases among animals. He is in charge of all things, including the groaning and travailing of the creation.

It is God Who directs Samuel to anoint Saul as king, then rejects Saul and transfers His spirit to David. He locks up all in stubbornness that He might be merciful to all.

Who would have predicted that God would choose Jacob to be the father of His special, twelve-tribed people? Who would have supposed that in instructing Israel of His *will*, it was God's *intention* that the nation would fail to do His will? Who would have guessed that in sending His Son to save sinners it would be His counsel that the Son be crucified and that this death should be the basis of the promised salvation?

Furthermore, who would have foreseen that just when all God's promises of blessing for His chosen people seemed about to be fulfilled following the death and resurrection of His Son, God would commission a blaspheming enemy of His Son to bring an evangel of grace and peace, on the basis of the Son's death and resurrection, to the nations? Who would have thought He would have designated beforehand and begin calling out from Israel and the nations, a motley group of people like us, wholly and obviously undeserving, and grant us transcendent blessings of grace and peace and glory?

Earlier this month I stood at the bedside of a young man,

Damon Klinger, as he fought for breath while his body struggled vainly to rid itself of the leukemia cells that filled his bloodstream. It had seemed to me in recent years that God would deliver this talented youth from his sickness and grant the mercy given to Paul and the Philippians regarding Epaphroditus (Phil.2:27). Damon felt so, too. Consequently, it was with great perplexity (*cf* 2 Cor.4:8) that Damon cried out on his deathbed, "I did not think it would come to this!"

While death is everywhere and in us all, it seemed especially untimely for Damon that day. Yet it came to him a few hours later.

All is out of God.

Here unbelievers (and some of our brethren as well) will exclaim that if we think this is of God, and is included in His intention, then they will have no part with us in such faith. But Job, who never imagined that God would bring him into such severe afflictions and losses, only turned the more intensely to God and clung the more tenaciously to His words. So also Damon's perplexity never deflected him from his reliance on the living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind.

Consequently, we thanked God together for the gift of His Son, Whose death, alone of all deaths, speaks of good news as the means for the abolishing of death and the assuring of immortal and incorruptible life.

It is not that God's ways are different from our ways for no reason or purpose other than to prove He is God. He acts unexpectedly from our standpoint. But He does not act arbitrarily. God created evil and brought affliction to God-fearing Job and counseled the crucifixion of His Son for the gaining of good that could not have come by any other means. This carrying out of His intention for the achievement of His will does prove that He is God. But it also brings countless blessing finally to everyone.

All is out of God, but all is through Him and for Him as well. To Him be the glory! D.H.H.

Concordant Studies

GOD'S WILL AND INTENTION

In translating the ninth of Romans, verse nineteen, I felt almost as if the text before me was faulty. It should surely read, "who hath resisted His will?" Yet the word is not *will*, but *intention*. There seemed so little difference, at the time, that I did not appreciate the concordant rendering myself. Since then I have been most thankful for it. It helps to solve one of the deepest difficulties and contradictions connected with the place and problem of evil. To the question, Who hath resisted His will? we may answer, *Many,* if not all. But to the query, Has anyone withstood His intention? the reply is the opposite, for *no one* can thwart Him. Even when withstanding His will we are fulfilling His intention.

ROMANS NINE

There are not many passages in God's Word like the ninth of Romans. Seldom are we taken behind the scenes into the realm of the absolute. Much in this chapter *seems* to contradict other portions of the Scriptures, because they deal with processes, as seen by man, while this is concerned with causes, known only to God. God has a goal. In order to reach it He must have had absolute control from the beginning. All the intervening process, no matter what it may appear to be to men, must be the working out of His original intention. He is the great Potter. His creatures are clay. This is true only in regard to God's intention. Viewed in relation to His will they are not at all the passive material suggested by the clay. "Ye will *not*" (*cf*

Matt.23:37) describes man's antagonistic attitude toward God's revealed will.

The case of Pharaoh is the classic example of the chasm between God's will and His intention. His revealed will was very plain. "Let My people go!" It seemed to be fulfilled in the liberation of Israel. But no one who reads the account and believes it can escape the conviction that God's intention included more than His revealed will, and that it involved opposition to that will. This much might be easily inferred if Pharaoh had been hard-hearted enough to play his part. It is put beyond doubt by the action of God in hardening his heart.

God's revealed will was limited to the release of Israel. His intention was to display His own power and glorify His Name in all the earth. This is given us as a specimen of His complete purpose and of the process by which He will attain it. Mankind does not comply with His will; His saints do not comprehend His intention. Yet He uses both the opposition and the ignorance to effect His object. No doubt many in Israel were fervently praying that Pharaoh's heart would soon soften, and he would let them go. God's answer to their prayer was to harden his heart. They sighed for salvation. He wrought with a view to His own glory.

It takes little imagination to picture this scene. Its continuous repetition during the first three eons makes it most important to our spiritual welfare. The same conflicting forces are at work today. It is quite conceivable how the saints would have managed the affair. They would have implored Yahweh to compel Pharaoh to let them go. Perhaps they would call a grand prayer meeting for this purpose. Perhaps they would set aside a week of intercession. "We know not what to pray for" was as true of them as of us. Perhaps they would be "definite" in their petitions, and insist that He melt the heart of the king, and so remove his opposition.

How much there is of this today! Many brethren unite in great "world movements," seeking to soften the heart of mankind, trying to do away with sin, seeking to abolish the many evils that harass us, uniting against war and vice and corruption, for all of these are against the revealed will of God. These efforts, we are told, are *practical.* They are not mere theory, words without works. Of what use is such an article as this, for example, to stem the tide of iniquity? Using the same figure, I would advise all that the tide will become the highest in all history, and that no human effort will be able to stop it, for it is necessary to fulfill God's intention.

The Israelites hoped Yahweh would soften Pharaoh's heart. What they wished was to quietly slip out of Goshen into the promised land. They wanted none of the terrible signs. They did not ask for the passover. Surely they would not have entered the trap which threatened to destroy them. They did not ask for the miraculous passage through the Sea. The forty years in the wilderness was not of their choosing. The most illustrious epoch in their history was forced upon them. It was a continuous exhibition of disobedience to God's will. Yet who doubts for a moment that it was in line with His purpose?

GOD'S WISDOM AND POWER

Now that all is past and we can get a true perspective of these events, who would prefer to have Israel's prayer answered? It was not necessary to soften Pharaoh's heart. It was too soft already. If it had not been hardened the exodus would have been a flat, uninteresting story, with no outward manifestations of Yahweh's power of love. Its glory would be gone. Its God would be unknown. The wisdom and power of Egypt must be exposed by conflict with the wisdom and power of God. His attributes must be revealed by contrast with the mightiest and wisest of humankind.

The antitype of this marvelous period of Israel's history lies just before us, only the miraculous manifestations will be far more wonderful than of old. God is today hardening the world's heart in preparation for that epoch. Men are approaching the wisdom of ancient Egypt in their knowledge of nature, and are far surpassing it in power. Shall Yahweh weaken them before using them as a foil to display His might? Rather it is His wisdom to harden their hearts, so that, in opposing His will, they may fulfill His ultimate intention.

MAN'S WILL, AND GOD'S

Too often we are told that, if man has no free will, he is a mere automaton. This is a mistake. The so-called "freedom" consists merely in the lack of *conscious* coercion. Being ignorant of the constraining or restraining influences which determine his conduct, and altogether unaware of ulterior forces, he subconsciously *yields* at the very time that he imagines he is most independent. His freedom of will is simply ignorant unconsciousness or submission to environment or heredity.

In relation to the will of God, men are consciously independent. They can accept it or reject it, and imagine that no other force but the divinity enthroned within them has anything to do with their decision. But when we find the niche assigned them in God's intention they are (thank God!) the most utterly dependent slaves of circumstance it is possible to imagine. It will be found that, throughout their lives, they were not more masters of their fate than they were of the date and details of their birth.

The doctrine of man's free will peoples the earth with a race of puny gods. We object to the dual gods of Persia or the many deities of the Greek and Roman pantheon, yet these ancient pagans never rose to the absurdity of making every man a god. The possession of a free, untrammeled,

unconquerable will is the exclusive attribute of deity. Only One God can possess it. Our blessed Lord Himself did not claim it. He came, not to do His own will, but the will of Him Who had sent Him.

ILLUMINATION OF DEITY

The failure to recognize both the divine will and the divine intention has led to incalculable confusion and misunderstanding. Those who reject God's intention rob Him of His godhood and deify man. Those who confuse His intention with His revealed will make of Him a love-lacking tyrant, a hard-hearted monster. Others, who wish to believe all the Scriptures have to say, are not clear how to harmonize His character, with the presence of sin, especially when it becomes evident that sin has a place in the attainment of His ultimate purpose.

All evil and every sin reverses its character completely when we take it from the limited light of God's revealed will to the universal illumination of His intention. This is the reason that we do not hesitate to believe the Scriptures that all is of God. No sin remains such when completely illumined by His intention. It is a failure, a sin, and subject to dire penalties when man commits it, but it is no longer a mistake when it finds its place in God's purpose. The same act which brings shame and dishonor on the creature, when subjected to the divine alchemy, is transmuted into a source of glory and peace to God.

Such general observations are apt to be dismissed as bordering on blasphemy. But let anyone take the great sins in the Scriptures and ponder all their aspects. Each one is essential to God's plan. But it is better to be specific. Pharaoh is the great sinner in this scene. He is the one who opposes God's expressed desire. Make him willing or compliant with God's command, and what is left? In that case God would have failed in His object. To avoid this He

finds it necessary to stiffen the opposition. *Yahweh hardens Pharaoh's heart in order that he may sin against Him!* Some insist that God cannot have such a close connection with sin. They would prefer to fix the blame on Pharaoh, or on Satan. But, while Yahweh directly causes Pharaoh to sin, *by doing so He Himself avoids failure of sin.*

NEED FOR CAREFUL DISCRIMINATION

Any lack of discrimination when speaking on these themes is likely to cause confusion. The same statement may be both true and false. Two directly contradictory assertions may both be true or both be false, according as they are related to God's will or to His intention. A beloved brother, who had been meditating on these things, made the statement that Adam's "fall" was really a fall upward. I would strenuously object to such a suggestion, apart from explanation. Adam's sin and transgression and offense were very bad and degrading when viewed as disobedience to God's will. When associated with the work of Christ and God's ultimate purpose it was the very best he could have done. Even its immediate effects were not all evil, for he obtained a knowledge of good, impossible is his previous condition.

So with sin as a whole. We almost dread to speak of it in relation to God's ultimate, for few, even of His beloved saints, have seen behind the scenes, and almost any assertion would be false if related to His revealed will. Is sin good? *No!* It is the worst thing in the world. No words can express our horror and detestation of it. Is sin good? *Yes!* Not, indeed, in itself, but its effect will be beneficent beyond anything else this world can give, when combined with the mediatorial work of Christ and the reconciliation of which it is the occasion.

Perhaps this is why some beloved brethren insist that I teach that God sins, or is the Author of sin. I have never said this or even thought it, so far as I am aware. If I have

unwittingly done so, I humbly retract and recant. But I am informed that various passages in my writings on this subject imply it, though they do not express it in so may words. When I review these passages, I do not see the implication. I did not intend such a thought. I did not express it. To my own consciousness, I did not even imply it. Some inferred from the apostle Paul's teaching that they should do evil that good may come. If *he* could be misunderstood, I count it an honor to be in the same condemnation.

But what is an implication? Is it not the result of combining what we think with another's statement? It is reasoning from two premises, one our own and one supplied by another. In its crudest form the argument may be stated thus: I believe that all is of God. My inquisitors insist that sin is part of the "all." Therefore, I believe that God sins. It seems very logical *to them.* I may object and say that I do not concur in their conclusions. I may even say that my premise is not mine, but God's. But no. My scheme is simply an attempt to exonerate Satan and prepare people for the homage which he will demand at the time of the end! Away with such a fellow from the earth!

This places me in a strange position. I cannot but consider their deduction a mistake in logic, a transgression of morals, and even an offense. In short, it is a full-orbed sin. I am eager to acknowledge, however, that it is of God. But even my small mind, weakened by overwork, and dulled by distress, has not the slightest difficulty in discriminating between the human and the divine aspect of these acts. God is making no mistakes. His servants are. He will justify their injustice, not because they are in line with His will, but because they are carrying out His intention. I have no hesitation in thanking God for this distressing antagonism, for I know that in His hands it is no error. Truth as this needs opposition for its development and dissemination. It takes friction to rub off the rust of centuries.

The difficulty seems to be that we cannot easily view an act from its moral character. We do not readily see that no act is sinful in itself, but in its relations. The act of plucking and eating fruit is not necessarily a sin. Yet it was humanity's primal error. The mistake lay in its relation to the God Who had forbidden it. If He had commanded it, it would have been commendable. Now that we know that it was essential to His intention, that He had provided for it before it occurred, that He arranged everything so that it should occur, we see that, though it was a sin in relation to His will, it was no mistake in view of His benevolent intention.

THE LAW

Perhaps the greatest example of the distinction between God's will and His intention is found in the law promulgated from Sinai. Yahweh made known His will in a complete code of laws, besides the condensed commandments which were carved in stone. The Jew, who was resting on law, is said to "know the will" (Rom.2:18). But if it was God's intention that the nation should keep the law, it certainly was a dismal failure on His part. They broke its greatest precept before it reached them.

But, though the failure of the law seems to be contrary to the will of God, it actually was a fulfillment of His intention. It was really given that "every mouth may be barred, and the entire world may become subject to the just verdict of God, because by works of law, no flesh shall be justified in His sight, for through law is the recognition of sin" (Rom.3:19,20). The law which, ostensibly, was to deter from sinning, actually was given for the detection of sin. It was given to prove that no one could keep it. Beneath the revelation of God's will in it was His intention that it should not be kept, but should accomplish its object through its infraction.

"Law crept in that the offense should be increasing" (Rom.5:20). How differently did Israel, at Sinai, feel about it! They were quite sure that they would greatly lessen the distance between themselves and Yahweh by their obedience to His precepts. Why had He told them what He wanted them to do and to avoid unless it was His will to carry out His instructions? The *will* of Yahweh was clear. But His *intention* was quite concealed. He could not make known His intention at that time without frustrating it.

SIN

This should help us in considering the larger question of sin. Sin is always against the revealed will of God. No one can possibly find any excuse for sinning so far as His expressed precepts are concerned. Both conscience and nature add their voice to restrain us from wrong. But we do sin. How can we be *justified* unless the sin is, in some sense, justifiable? We know that it is God's intention to draw His creatures into loving intimacy with Himself through sin and a Saviour. We know that the temporary term of sin will leave the world infinitely richer in the knowledge and appreciation of God. It will bring God immeasurable treasures of love and adoration. As a whole, its results vindicate its presence for a time. What is true of all sin must be true of every sin.

This truth is the foundation of the doctrine of justification. Because it has been lost, justification has also disappeared, or has been degraded to a pardon or an "imputed" fiction. Few believe that God actually justifies believers. They imagine He only alters the court records, so that no one can legally prove their guilt. It is of the utmost comfort and satisfaction to know that all that we have done is vindicated by the part it plays in carrying out His intention. Do not let anyone sell you an imitation justification! God's is the actual, the genuine, the precious reality.

THE CONSUMMATION

All that the usual theology has to offer us at the consummation, even in the saved, is a partial, patched, repaired and repainted universe. The song of the saints will be in a minor key, "I was a *guilty* sinner." Their joy will be clouded by eternal regret and shame for their part in the tragedy of the eons. The eonian times will be the eyesore of eternity. Oh! if they only had not been! And so will God's wisdom and power be questioned, and His glory dimmed, for He Himself must be the chief culprit in the collapse of His creation.

But away with such unworthy thoughts! The consummation will not reveal a patched, but a perfected universe. We will not be worrying about our past sins, but overwhelmed with God's wisdom and love in their vindication. Much as they distress us now, much as we fear them and avoid them and dread the very possibility of further sin, God will see to it that they will leave no stain, no blot to mar the bliss eternal, but will blend into His benign designs, and discover to a delighted universe the delicious depths of love which could not be displayed by any others device, or appreciated by any other plan.

This teaching is also the substructure for a mature experience in the things of God. It gives stability, a calm confidence in the face of the chaotic conditions which surround and engulf us. We are not worried, as once we were, by the awful opposition to God's will, nor do we fear for the fulfillment of His purpose. The flood tide of evil and sin, however contrary to His will it may be at present, is essential and indispensable to His intention and the ultimate realization of His will.

He is the great Alchemist Who will transmute everything into glorious gold by contact with the accursed tree.

A. E. Knoch

"TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST"

"To me, less than the least of all the saints, was granted this grace: to bring the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations, and to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all, that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord; in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence, through His faith" (Eph.3:8-12).

The apostle Paul bowed his knees to God that we be made staunch and strong, through His spirit, to grasp the marvelous wonder of so great a revelation. A secret is not a mystery as the King James version translates the Greek word *musterion,* but what is mysterious to each one of the ecclesia is why God chose us for so high an honor and privilege. We marvel that He should graciously answer the further prayer that we grasp, ". . . together with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ as well which transcends knowledge—that you may be completed for the entire complement of God" (Eph.3:17-19).

Our service has already commenced! Sovereignties and authorities among the celestials who perceive and resent our future displacement of their privilege and powers, are in present conflict with the body of Christ. Working through flesh and blood, these are our real adversaries.

This was a matter of such grave concern to the apostle that he went to great lengths to urge: "Take up the panoply of God that you may be enabled to withstand in the wicked day" (Eph.6:13). This present time in which we live is, for us, that "wicked day"!

All the armament, described by the apostle as being vital during our severe conflict with these mighty beings, is defensive, for in this eon we wrestle ". . . with the sovereignties, with the authorities, with the world mights of this darkness, with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials" (Eph.6:12). In a distinctly honored way, very similar to the privilege accorded the apostle Paul, ". . . God demonstrates with us ". . . as death-doomed, for we became a theater to the world and to messengers and to men" (1 Cor.4:9). This is not our time to reign, but we all ". . . with uncovered face, mirroring the Lord's glory, are being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory" (2 Cor.3:18).

A SPECIAL ACT

The concept of us, ". . . conformed to the body of His glory" (Phil.3:21) must seem, to our finite minds, to be beyond belief. "Yet we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16). Moreover, although there is a becoming modesty in such incredulity, it should always be remembered that when God created man, it was a very special act: For God said "Let us make humanity in Our image, and according to Our likeness" (Gen.1:26).

"It is hard to express in human words all that it must have meant to God when He created this wonderful creature in His own image. Man had to be god-like to such an extent that the Christ could become Man without sacrificing His real status . . . . Once we grasp that we were made in order that Christ could, in our form and likeness, reveal to the universe what God is, what He Himself is,

and what Satan is, we can only bow our heads in adoration. Such a vision, once it dawns upon us, is overwhelming. It is an answer to the question of our existence that surpasses in its marvellous grandeur all human explanations, as God's wisdom surpasses ours. But there it is, hidden in the Scriptures."[1]

CHANGE AND DECAY

Reflecting on such wonder, I recalled an incident which occurred many years ago in the land of Egypt. For well over an hour I had stood before the great pyramid of Cheops (original name, "Khufu") at El Giza, on the west bank of the river Nile, opposite the city of Cairo. I was contrasting the countless centuries which had elapsed since God's choice of us in Christ, with the comparative brief span of years for all such monuments. Passing through my mind were the words, "Change and decay in all around I see." This tomb was built with over six million tons of stone, 4,500 years ago, and has excited the interest of King Cyrus of Persia; Alexander, king of Macedon, Gaius Julius Caesar, Napoleon, and millions of tourists. Try as I would, I just could not grasp the sheer immensity of such an amazing construction, and I was about to ease the increasing ache in my neck, when a little Egyptian boy requested a few piasters for climbing to the top of the pyramid, where, he solemnly promised he would wave to me. This little gesture seemed to put everything in proper perspective.

I watched his rapid progress for some time, but eventually, when he had climbed over 450 feet, it was not possible to discern his happy smile and his cheerful, waving hand. When he arrived at the summit however, he danced about, waving both arms to me, far below. Acknowledging his salute, I observed him begin the descent and then I

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.35, p.233.

turned away, awaiting his return. Nearby, I was intrigued with a huge hole which had been painstakingly hacked out of the bedrock. There was no mistaking the shape of a boat, but imagine my surprise to note not only the impression of the length and wide beam of the hull, but the clear evidence of the shape of wheels! Of course, the vessel was long gone, but I wonder if this vessel was used to convey huge slabs of marble, which I am given to understand once encased the whole of this impressive heap of stone? Imagine this vast mausoleum thus blindingly reflecting rays of the midday sun. Further, was this same lovely covering and spectacle in place when our Lord was taken as a little Boy to this land?

ON A MANTELPIECE

I was thinking about that amphibious vehicle used in the second world war and known by the code name DUKW, when my attention was distracted by a curious clinking sound. There were tourists nearby, and the activity of one lady was quite incredible. Wielding a small, metal, toffee hammer, once used by many confectioners, she was surreptitiously chipping away at one of the enormous base stones of the pyramid! My immediate reaction was one of horror, but then, as I heard my young friend call, "Effendi!, Effendi!," I shook my head, smiled, and handed the lad the promised reward. Once more, through this incident of vandalism, my thoughts were brought to earth with a dull thud as I reflected that in this present generation, a small portion of the former glories of great and mighty Egypt now has pride of place on some humble mantelpiece.

To show his gratitude, little Metwali; for that was his name, duly escorted me from the "boat grave," explaining that this had been prepared for the sacred *dhow* which had been used in transportation on the surface of the river Nile and across the remaining ground. With my limited

grasp of the Arabic language and his impressive command of English words, he explained where the ancient queens had been buried, and thence we arrived at the huge statue of a sphinx. The head of this is reputed to be a carved portrait of the fourth-dynasty Pharaoh, Chephren. During our progress, Metwali evidently indicated that he would brook no nonsense from the many vociferous would-be escorts, and we were left in peace. Sadly, the time came for us to part, but not before he had taught me the sound of our Lord's name—in his language: "Eesa!" At least, that is what it sounded like. I often wonder what became of this sincere and happy boy, who reflected the mind of his Creator there in that scene of splendid decay that so well reflected the transitoriness of human glory.

"HOT IN YOUR EYES"

Earlier that same day I had spent the dawn hours in quiet meditation. I had read the denouement of that heartbreaking scene when Joseph made himself known to his brothers:

"At this, Joseph was no longer able to check himself before all who were stationed by him, and he called out: 'Have every man go out from me.' So no one stayed with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. He raised his voice in lamentation, and the Egyptians heard it; and Pharaoh's house heard about it.

"Joseph said to his brothers: 'I am Joseph. Is my father still living?' But his brothers were not able to answer him, for they were flustered at his presence. Then Joseph said to his brothers: 'Now come closer to me.' When they came close, he said, 'I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold to Egypt. And now do not be grieved nor let it be hot in your eyes that you sold me hither, because Elohim has sent me on before you for the preservation of life' " (Gen.45:1-5).

Thus Joseph, son of Jacob by Rachel, discloses his under-

standing of the grim suffering which he had endured. All at the hand of Elohim!

"The treatment of Joseph by his brothers is a precious type of the death and resurrection of the Son of God. Joseph's brothers did not actually kill him, even as Abraham did not slay Isaac, but in both cases, there was the intent of the heart, which is what counts with God. The brothers typify the nation which brought Christ's blood upon their heads. Jacob represents the Father, and Joseph the Son.

"It must be noted that the only ones who suffered unjustly because of this sin are the ones who did not commit it. Jacob had no hand in the crime, yet he suffered from its effects. The loss of his son caused anguish of heart which but feebly reminds us of the awful gulf which separated the Father and His beloved at Golgotha."[2]

DELIGHT AND SORROW

What possible significance will the above phrase and condition of "hot in your eyes" have for denizens of the celestial realms whom we shall instruct? How curious they now must be to observe and trace the many causes of tears which overflow! Judging from their present conflict with believers, we will need to administer severe measures to change their present course.

> "Oh, all-embracing mercy, how could I ask for more?
> What shall I do without Thee, when heart and eyes run o'er?
> When all things seem against me, to drive me to despair
> I know Thy heart is open, and Thou shall hear my prayer."

But how shall we make known the multifarious wisdom and love of God to these "morning stars and sons of God," who, when the foundations of the earth were laid, were capable of singing and shouting for joy at every new creation, yet who lacked the capacity to perceive God not only

2. A. E. Knoch, The Problem of Evil, p.164.

as the embodiment of might, but also as the embodiment of love? Not all of these celestial beings rebelled against God and His Son, for when the birth of our Saviour was proclaimed at Bethlehem, the loyal element perceived the divine solution to their problems, and were unable to contain their joyous acclamation of praise.

Is there any kind of relationship among the celestials that thus they might comprehend our praise and wonder of the sacred filial tie between Father and Son? How shall we even attempt to describe our own delight with God's grace, manifested against the deep sorrow of bereavement which we suffer? How explain the crippling pains which wrack these mortal, human, decaying frames? There is only one way. Love's gracious example! Paul declared: "Brethren, not as yet am I reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one thing—forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus" (Phil.3:13,14). Shall the observers of such devotion have learned nothing at all through the manifestation of love in our Lord's life and the corresponding complete commitment in the apostle's adoration?

Whenever we think of the sacrifice and suffering of our Lord at Golgotha, our thoughts are now no longer restricted to our salvation which was thus secured; but rather do we rejoice in the reconciliation which embraces us in our Father's wonderful love. Through the most searching disqualification of all and any human righteousness, we have obtained a righteousness apart from law. ". . . a righteousness of God *through Jesus Christ's faith,* for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:21-23).

Through this experience we have learned to concentrate on God's complete and wonderful purpose to be All in all! Rather than remaining preoccupied with our mis-

erable selves, we are now vitally concerned with the glorious evangel which we will rejoice to bring to the monarchs and rulers among the celestials. Our earnest instruction will certainly carry the unmistakable ring of authority. We shall teach that which we have learned in the stern yet loving school of suffering and endurance.

"No trial has taken you except what is human. Now, faithful is God, Who will not be leaving you to be tried above what you are able, but, together with the trial, will be making the sequel also, to enable you to undergo it" (1 Cor.10:13). Our rule over these sovereignties and principalities among these same celestials, will not be eternal. Our rule is eonian. All sovereignty, as well as authority and power will be abrogated at the consummation.

TO GOD BE THE GLORY

Our loving God and Father will ensure that we shall not require either armament or shield in that day. With Satan effectively prevented from any future interference, we shall as lovingly as possible, enforce obedience, but our primary task will be to disclose—even as our Lord during the full course of His faithful ministry on earth—the multifarious wisdom and love of His blessed Father.

"Now to Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen!" (Eph.3:21,21).

Donald Fielding

Our sister, **Marion Tenniswood,** of Melvin, Michigan, was put to repose on March 5 at age 81. She was a motherly woman who considered the traits of Titus 2:4,5 perfectly logical and harmonious in view of Christ's death on her behalf. We join with her husband and our brother, Clint, and their six children and their families in sorrow over her death and in the joyful expectation promised in God's Word.

FOREKNOWLEDGE AND SALVATION

For, not as yet being born, nor putting into practice anything good or bad, that the purpose of God may be remaining as a choice, not out of acts, but of Him Who is calling . . . . (Rom.9:11)

Question:

"WHEN I was in Bible school at Bethany Fellowship, Minneapolis, they taught us that to be chosen before the 'foundation of the world' (AV) referred only to the service that God would have us serve in and not to our salvation at all.

"Bethany teachers taught us that God chose for salvation only those that He knew beforehand would choose Jesus, and only in that sense did He choose anyone for salvation. They maintained that any reference to God choosing us first refers only to how He wants us to serve Him after we choose Him.

"They insist that the only way God can truly be glorified in our salvation, is if we choose Him of our own 'free will.' Hence they further claim that grace is something that God gives us to use, or not use, to get ourselves saved. We are responsible for how (or even if) we use grace; hence, we are responsible for whether or not we are saved.

"Can you help me better answer their argument? Surely the idea of 'free will' does not glorify *God* at all; in fact, it does just the opposite. Still, it often bothers me that I don't know how to respond to such claims, other than to say that grace wouldn't be grace if our salvation depended on our choice."

Answer:

YOUR REPLY in stating that "grace wouldn't be grace if our salvation depended on our choice," is certainly correct, and is an excellent start in responding to such mistaken claims as those advocated by Bethany Fellowship and indeed by the vast majority of Christian teachers.

In order to gain a true understanding of such issues we must first of all define our terms according to their scriptural usage. The terms in question are "reward" and "grace." This is vital, for it is from the day on which we hear and realize "the *grace* of God *in truth*," that the word of *the truth of* the evangel begins bearing fruit and growing in us (Col.1:5,6).

A reward (or a wage) is a provision granted in return for obedience or service. A Rewarder acts in *reciprocity,* on a *quid pro quo* (this *for* that) basis. Whether explicitly or implicitly, the Rewarder declares to the one to whom he gives a reward, "Because you *did* what I *required* in order to *qualify* for my reward, I now give it to you" (*cf* Rom.4:4).

Conversely, a gracious gift is a provision that is *not* granted in return for obedience or service, but simply in order to bring joy to the one thus blessed. Considerations of fulfillment of requirement or achievement of qualification, are foreign to the concept of a gracious gift. The basis of a gracious gift is found in the will and purpose of the Giver, not in any consideration of the acts of the one to whom the gracious gift is given. Hence, a gracious gift is *not* granted in reciprocity, out of obligation, on a *quid pro quo* basis. Whether explicitly or implicitly, the gracious Giver declares to the one to whom he gives a gracious gift, "I give it to you apart from any consideration of your acts, simply because it pleases me to do so, according to my own will and purpose" (*cf* Rom.11:2b-6; *cp* Luke 6:32-35).

It is far from the truth to affirm that God, in choosing us before the "disruption of the world" (CV; i.e., before sin

entered the scene), did not choose *us,* much less choose us for salvation, but simply chose the service in which He would have us serve, leaving this, of course, to our "free wills" as to whether we should ever do so.

Further, the grace in view here given to us does not consist of some means to be used or not used by ourselves in order to qualify us for salvation, but of the very blessings of salvation themselves which God has appointed for us.

The facts are these: The apostle Paul writes, "To all the saints who are also believers in Christ Jesus [lit., '(to all the saints,) the ones being and believing in Christ Jesus']: . . . Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . *He chooses us* . . ." (Eph.1:1-4a).

"[God] chooses us in [Christ] . . . *to be* holy and flawless in His sight, in love *designating us beforehand for the place of a son* for Him through Christ Jesus" (Eph.1:4,5). He does so, "in accord with [*kata,* DOWN, i.e., on a basis of] the delight of *His will,* for the laud of the glory of *His grace*" (Eph.1:6).

We "are called according to the *purpose* that, whom He *foreknew,* He *designates beforehand,* also, *to be conformed to the image of His Son,* for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. Now whom He designates beforehand, these He *calls* also, and whom He calls, these He *justifies* also; now whom He justifies, these He *glorifies* also" (Rom.8:29,30).

This is the "salvation" for which we are chosen and unto which we are called. Having now called us, He justifies us and will yet glorify us also, as sons of God, holy and flawless in His sight.

It is not that God "foreknew" something *about* us, but that He foreknew *us.* Even as we *are* "known" by Him *now* (1 Cor.8:3), we already *were fore*known by Him *then,* when He designated us beforehand to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Even if it were so that the revelation here had in view "knowledge *about* us," and this was in reference to a divine prior knowledge of our future acts, this would not make such acts "free," but rather inevitable. This is because foreknowledge of events, entails the inevitable occurrence of those very events which are foreknown. It cannot be *known* that an event *will* occur, if perhaps it will not occur. Yet events said to be events of free will, by the very nature claimed for them, are events which may or may not occur, concerning which knowledge of their future existence is therefore impossible, even by one who has a perfect knowledge of all that is a proper object of knowledge.

When "knowledge" is used concerning a fact, it is literal; but when, as here in Romans 8:29, it is used concerning a person, it is figurative. To "know" a person is to have a relationship with that person, even as Adam knew Eve, or God knew Israel alone, of all the nations of the earth.

In the counsels of God, we were already chosen and so "known" of Him before the disruption of the world. Thus, in a proleptic sense, God's "foreknowing" us, is the practical equivalent of His fore-blessing us. In His determinate counsels, we, whom He designated beforehand for glory, already had a "relationship" with Him, when He then pre-designated us to be called, justified, and glorified. Now, being *justified* in Christ's blood, we shall be *saved* from indignation through Him (Rom.5:9). Likewise, having been conciliated to God through the death of His Son, we shall be *saved* in His life (Rom.5:10).

Accordingly, God has graciously granted a measure of faith to all whom He calls (Rom.12:3; Phil.1:29), overwhelming[1] their unbelief with faith and love in Christ Jesus (1 Tim.1:14). The essence of the faith of God's chosen ones, whom He calls and justifies, is that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor.1:24). Those who can truly say from the heart that, to them, Christ is indeed thus, therein find assurance of their calling. Their faith does not qualify them for their place in Christ; it rather affords them assurance that they themselves are included among God's chosen ones.

1. It is idle to say that if this be so, God is guilty of violating our rights—as if perpetual rejection of God's truth were a matter of "human rights"! Whatever God does is right, and so is apart from all guilt. Likewise, the only just claims we truly have are those which God actually gives to us. *A priori* (i.e., presuppositionally), and especially, merely according to our own wishes, we have no rights. The Almighty is no more "guilty" of "violating our freedom" by instilling faith in our hearts than in endowing our minds with a sense of conscience. If it should be true that He overwhelms our unbelief with faith, then it is *right* that He should do so. Since it is true that He *does* overwhelm our unbelief with faith, it is beyond all question that it is right for Him to do so. And, accordingly, it is beyond all question that we have no "rights" in the matter.

Therefore, whatever the nature of the human will and of any sense in which we may be "responsible" to God for our deeds, such questions simply have no place in the matter of our election, of our having been *chosen* of God unto the end of the glorious salvation which He has appointed for us. It is contradictory to the evangel of grace to hold a position which entails it being so that we are somehow "free" to choose contrary to the blessings of that very evangel. Since it is God Who "*graciously* grants us all" of these blessings (Rom.8:32), namely, the blessings of being foreknown, designated beforehand, called, justified, and glorified, *He alone is responsible for our possession of them.*

If this were not so, and instead it was because of some obedience of our own for which we ourselves were finally responsible that we enjoyed these blessings, then these blessings would not be a gracious gift, but a reward for obedience. Yet since they are not a reward for obedience

but are instead a gracious gift, it follows that we are *not* responsible for having been endowed with them.

The issue, then, is not the nature of human freedom, but of divine grace. Whether the popular notion of free will is true or false is beside the point. That is, whether or not man is truly independent of God and *could* refuse a mere conditional offer of salvation were such an offer made to him, the point is that the evangel is not the announcement of a conditional offer but of a gracious gift. Therefore, insofar as salvation in Christ is concerned, the nature of man's will makes no difference, since that question has no bearing on the evangel of our salvation.

Our faith does not "qualify" us for salvation. Indeed, the evangel is true apart from our acceptance of it. The believer's faith simply affords him knowledge of salvation, not salvation itself. Christ died for our sins whether or not we believe that Christ died for our sins. Similarly, God chose us before the disruption of the world, having preferred us from the beginning for salvation (2 Thess.2:13), quite apart from any consideration of our present acceptance of these glorious facts.

It is as foolish and unseemly for us to seek to take the credit for the success of our own salvation as it would be for us to seek to take the credit for the creation of the universe. For us there is no part in either matter. Hence, we wish to repudiate all our proud boastings, and instead simply joyously declare: "Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be *graciously* granting us all?" (Rom.8:32).

❋

Question: re. *Drawing All to Himself*

"In John 12:32, in signifying by what death He was about to be dying (v.33), Jesus said, 'And I, if I should be exalted out of the earth, shall be drawing all to Myself.' I have been told that the Greek word for 'draw,' actually means 'drag.' Is this correct?"

Answer:

The word in question, in John 12:32, is *helkuō.* It is best rendered by the English "draw," not "drag." The idea is simply "to cause to move in a given direction" (e.g., John 18:10); idiomatically, in certain instances, we might say, "to reel in" (*cp* John 21:6,11). Another illustration would be that of drawing water from a well.

When applied to voluntary behavior, the idea is that of "bringing forth through incentive"; to attract (Acts 16:19; *cp* Acts 21:30; James 2:6). Whether one is drawn into sin, or drawn to virtue, one is still caused to move in the direction of, and eventually brought into, the behavioral sphere thus delineated.

The point is that "draw" speaks of effective, causative agency. Hence, this is as true of cases in which it is applied to acts of human behavior as of incidents in which it is concerned with the movements of inanimate objects. Therefore, "draw" is by no means a "weak" term, but a powerful expression.

It is not that "draw" means "drag"; it is rather that an agency which *draws,* is equally as *effective* as an agency which *drags.* When a man is *dragged,* he is moved contrary to his will; when a man is *drawn,* he is moved in correspondence to his will, according to the influences which cause him to choose as he does. Agencies which drag, determine the body; agencies which draw, determine the heart, from which spring the outflowings of life (Prov.4:23).

When one is "*drawn* in" to doing something, he is still *caused* to act as he does; he *must* still do what he, even if gently, is "drawn" to do—as much so as if he were "dragged"

("kicking and screaming") into so doing. It is simply that an agency which "draws," *engages* the will and *instills* the voluntary behavior which follows, in contradistinction to a power that merely *compels* outward acts—"dragging" them forth—without gaining the acquiescence of the will.

To "drag" (*surō*), means to "pull along by force." As applied to human behavior, such force has in view not simply the power of causative agency, but that of a causative agency which compels outward acts, ones to which the will, considered in the abstract, remains opposed (e.g., Luke 12:58). Unlike causal influence which acts upon the heart and *changes* the will—which *draws* forth corresponding, resultant behavior—causative agency which merely *drags* its objects, has in view either the *burden* which attends the pulling of inanimate objects (John 21:8), or the *unwillingness* as well which attends the compelling of outward acts (Acts 8:3; 14:19; 17:6; *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.82).

Thus we rejoice to know that while no one can come to Christ if ever the Father Who sends Him should not be drawing him (John 6:44), in due time, under God, Christ "shall be drawing all to [Him]self" (John 12:32).

❋

Question: re. *The New Earth*

> "Do both Revelation 21 and 22 concern the new earth?" Will righteousness be present only in the new Jerusalem, or throughout the new earth? Also, if there will be no illness, why is there a need for the cure of the nations (Rev.22:2)?"

Answer:

Yes, both Revelation 21 and 22 record John's vision of the *new* earth; the time in view is the final epochal eon

of Scripture, following the thousand years. Peter speaks of the new earth itself (not solely of the new Jerusalem) as the sphere in which righteousness is dwelling (2 Peter 3:13). As kings of the earth, it will be Israel's glory to serve the other nations in God's illumination of them, through His chosen people, which will foster righteousness among all.

The *knowledge* of God, indeed, will greatly increase among humanity during the coming eon (*cf* Isa.11:9). As excellent as this will be, it will be far grander still, in the eon of the eons, when not only knowledge but *righteousness* itself will be "dwelling" in (i.e., will be an abiding characteristic of) the new earth.

The attenuation of sin coupled with the amplification of virtue will radically change the character of the world, or SYSTEM, which will obtain in that glorious eon. The "cure of the nations" by the leaves of the log, will not only bring healing agency to the body, but liberation to the spirit. That which will most significantly determine the character of that eon, however, will be the fact that God Himself will then be *with* humanity. In that day, the tabernacle of God will be with mankind; He will be tabernacling with them, and they will become His own. In perfect correspondence to God's own presence, death will be no more, nor mourning, nor clamor, nor misery (Rev.21:4). These radical blessings will constitute a vast and saving grace among all the peoples of the new earth.

Such considerations call to mind the hymn, "I Need Thee Every Hour . . . temptations lose their power when Thou art *near.*" Surely the sentiments of that hymn will come into their own in that day.

Isaiah 33:24 (the passage to which you refer, re. lack of illness) speaks of Messianic blessings for Israel in the coming eon; it does not contemplate the nations, nor God's provision to them of Revelation 22:2, in the final eon.

J.R.C.

"DO YOU OBSERVE THE TRAVAILING?"

THE FOCUS of Yahweh's words to Job is on forces and creatures that are, for the most part, beyond human control. In Job 38:4-38 Yahweh spoke of physical phenomena, and now in 38:39-39:30 He directs attention to wild animals and birds that bring questioning and dismay to the human heart. All of these are of God's making, and none of them are left outside His operations and responsibility.

Yahweh says nothing here about His power delivering Job from his afflictions or about His wisdom bringing good out of the evil that has enveloped him. Instead He speaks of present operations that parallel Job's own experience. He directs attention to the groaning and travailing of His creation, where His power and wisdom do not yet lead to deliverance and glory.

Yahweh does not speak of the sheep and dove in 38:39-41 but of the lion and the raven. The former might convey thoughts of peace and prosperity, but the latter definitely suggest different ideas entirely. The lion speaks of a ferocious and deadly hunting of prey by ambush, and the raven of neglect and noisy imploring. Yet they both struggle for food apart from human supervision and appreciation.

The pangs of birth as well as unfeeling habits of wild animals must ultimately be traced to God Who created them as they are, and placed them where they are (Job 39:1-6). He observes, without altering the fact, the travailing in birth of the hinds (39:1). Yahweh is the One Who unlooses the bonds of the onager and other kinds of wild donkey, so that they face constant dangers and depravations (v.5).

JOB 38:39–39:30

39 Can **you** ˡ**hunt** the **prey for** the **lioness?**
And can **you** ˡ**fill** the **life** needs **of** the **sheltered** lions**,**
40 ᵗ**When they** crouch ˡ**prostrate in** their **habitations,**
ˡ**Sit for ambush in** their **covert?**
41 ᵃ**Who** ˡ**prepares its provision for** the **raven,**
ᵗ**When its young** ˡ**implore to El,**
Which ˡ**stray ˃from lack** of **food?**
39 Are you acquainted◊
with the **bearing⁻ of** the **ibexes of** the **crag?**
Do **you** ˡ**observe** the **travailing⁻** in birth of the **hinds?**
2 Do **you** ˡ**number** the **months they** must ˡ**fulfill,**
And do **you know** the **time of their bearing⁻?**
3 **They** ˡ**crouch; they ~**ˡ**deliver~ their young;**
They ˡ**put forth** the cause of **their cramps.**
4 **Their young** ones ˡ**thrive; they** ˡᵐⁿ**grow** up **in** the **open;**
They go **forth and return no**ᵗ more **to them.**
5 ᵃ**Who has sent** forth the **onager free,**
And ᵃ**who has unloosed** the **bonds of** the **wild donkey,**
6 **Whose home I have** ᵖˡ**constituted** the **steppe,**
And the **salty wastes** as **his habitat?**
7 **He** makes ˡ**sport ˃of** the **clamor of** the **town;**
He does **not** ˡ**hear** the **tumults of** the **taskmaster**ˡ**.**
8 **He** ˡ**explores** the **mountains** as **his pasture**
And ˡ**seeks after** ᵃᶠ **every green** thing**.**
9 **Is** the **wild bull** ˡ**willing** to **serve⁻ you?**
ⁱᶠ **Would he** ˡ**lodge** all night ᵒⁿ**at your crib?**

39:1 acquainted: Hb repeats the last two letters of this word, meaning "time of" as in v.2b.
39:3 ~~~ ˡ**deliver:** Hb ˡ**slice.**

Such creatures prefer to search the salty wastes and barren mountains for food rather than serve taskmasters who would provide their forage (39:6-8). The wild bull also is not willing to give its strength to harrow and threshing even though this would bring safety and grain to it as well as those it would serve (9-12).

This also is of God. Job has nothing to do with it and no say in it.

Yahweh is not telling Job of His blessed goals of glory and peace but of His place in the present struggle where self-interest and pain abound. Neither is Yahweh pointing to human failures in subjecting the animals and overseeing their affairs. He draws attention to the way things are and reminds Job that He is the One Who has brought this about.

How different this is from Eden! There Elohim had instructed the human, ". . . fill the earth and subdue it. Hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heavens, . . . and over every animal that is moving on the earth" (Gen.1:28). But without speaking of Adversary or human disobedience, God continues to speak of these situations as "constituted" and caused by Him (39:6,17).

The ostrich is both stupid and uncontrolled (39:13-18). Why should Yahweh bring this up? This is not the sort of thing we would expect to build up Job's confidence in God and the wisdom of His ways.

Even the horse which can be trained is never fully submissive, manifesting mastery in the power of its neck, the dreadful splendor of its snorting and its eagerness in battle (19-25). And of all its uses, why should Yahweh speak of its intense and insane delight in the destructive and deadly actions of war? What is this supposed to say to Job pierced by the arrows of Him Who-Suffices (Job 6:4)?

The hawk and the vulture, for all their soaring and nesting on high, are nevertheless creatures feeding on the blood of prey and on the carrion of animals previously

10 Can **you** ˡ**tie** the **wild bull** *ⁱ***with ~curb and rope~?**
ⁱᶠ **Would he** ˡ**harrow** the **vales after you?**
11 Would **you** put ˡ**trust in him** *ᵗ***because his vigor** is *ᵐᵐ***great,**
And would **you** ˡ**entrust your labor to him?**
12 Would **you** *ᶜ***put** ˡ**reliance** *ⁱ***on him that he** would ˡ**return**
And ˡ**gather your seed**◊ to **your threshing site?**
13 The **wing of** the **~ostrich~** flaps ⁻**joyously,**
But is *ⁱᶠ***not** the **pinion of** the **stork** ⁺**with** its **feather**s.
14 *ᵗ***When she** ˡ**entrusts her eggs to** the **land**
And ˡ**warms** them **on** the **soil,**
15 ⁺ **She** ˡ**forgets that** a **foot may press down** on **it,**
⁺**Or** a wild **animal of the field may stomp** on **it.**
16 **She is** *ᶜ***made indurate** to **her young** ›**as** though **not hers,**
Without alarm that **her labor** be **for nought.**
17 **For Eloah caused her** to **be oblivious** to **wisdom**
And did **not apportion** *ⁱ* **understanding to her.**
18 Yet *ᵃˢ***any time she** ˡ**springs up** *ⁱ***on high,**
She makes ˡ**sport** ›**of** the **horse and** › **his rider**ˡ**.**
19 Do **you** ˡ**give to** the **horse** its **mastery?**
Do **you** ˡ**clothe its neck** with **thunder?**
20 Do **you** *ᶜ***make him** ˡ**quake like** the **locust?**
The **splendor of his snorting** strikes **dread.**
21 *⁷***He***ᶜ* ˡ**paws in** the **vale and is** ˡ**elated in** his **vigor;**
He goes ˡ**forth to meet** the **weapon**s of battle**.**
22 **He** makes ˡ**sport** ›**of alarm and is not** ˡ**dismayed;**
Neither does **he** ˡ**turn back** *ᶠ* **because of** the **sword.**
23 **On him** the **quiver is** ˡ**jubilant,**
The **blaze of spear and scimitar.**
24 *ⁱ***With quaking and thunderous sound,**
he ˡ**gulps up** the **earth,**
And he can**not** *ᶜ***stand** ˡ**restfully**
*ᵗ***at** the **sound of** the **trumpet.**

39:10 ~~~ curb and rope: Hb **furrow of his rope.**
39:12 seed: transposition from v.12a.
39:13 ~~~ ostrich: Hb **jubilations.**
39:21 *7-c* **He:** Hb **They.**

slain. This is within Yahweh's *understanding* and of His *bidding* (39:26-30).

In speaking of these things, of the stubbornness of the animals, of the lack of orderly contribution of each animal to the good of all, of ambush and war, of lack of food and shelter, and of a great deal of lack of sense, Yahweh is underlining the reality of evil everywhere in His creation. This is deliberate, and it is Yahweh's point. In claiming responsibility as Creator and Sustainer, He is speaking what is most relevant and meaningful to Job in his private experience of severe evil. This is a powerful endorsement of Job's own original position: "Yahweh, He gives, and Yahweh, He takes away. Blessed be the Name of Yahweh" (Job 1:21).

Why this is so may not be fully revealed in the book of Job, but the fact that this is so is made indisputable.

These are not at all ordinary revelations of divine wisdom and power. Yahweh speaks of the fearful and foolish creatures *of His hand.* Unlike Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, Yahweh does not point to His fearful judgments on the wicked, or, as we might expect, to the schemes of Satan. But with bold clarity He points to things as they are under His authority and within His full understanding.

What is so must never be kept in a separate compartment from a consideration of Deity. If God is to be known He must be known with respect to Job's afflictions and the lion's roaring and the incessant cries of hungry raven chicks. Job's recognition of this will lead him to see better than ever before that God operates in accord with wisdom and purpose, even though he cannot see that purpose. Then Job will describe Yahweh's revelations here as "things too marvelous for me, that I did not know" (42:3), and exclaim, "With the hearing of the ear I had heard of You, but now my eye sees You" (42:5).

Many years later, Paul will speak of God's work of creation in fuller light. In subjecting creation to vanity, God has

25 **As soon as** the **trumpet** sounds**, he** [sa]**shouts, Aha!**
And from afar he [l]**smells** the **battle,**
The **thunder of** the **chiefs and** the **shouting!**
26 Is it [f] **by your understanding** that the **hawk** [l]**glides,**
That **it** [l]**spreads its wings** [›] **south**ward**?**
27 [if]**Or** is it [on]**by your bidding** that the **vulture** soars [l]**aloft,**
And that he [c]**makes his nest** so [l]**high?**
28 **He roosts** on a **crag and** [l]**lodges** him**self**
On the **tooth of** a **crag and** a **fastness;**
29 **From there he reconnoiters** for **food;**
His eyes [l]**scrutinize** [›] **far off;**
30 [+] **His brood** [l]**imbibe** the **blood,**
And where there are the **slain, there he** is**.**

❋

a determined purpose for good, a purpose which involves His own expectation of the deliverance into glorious freedom of the *entire* creation, including lion, raven and bull, ostrich, horse and vulture, and Job, and all of us. Groaning and travailing are not eternal, and are only for awhile, from Eden "until now" and still a little beyond, to be sure, but not forever (Rom.8:18-22).

The experience of evil is not a mistake in light of the goal. Yahweh cannot be blessed for giving if the giving is not appreciated, and He cannot be blessed for taking away if the taking away does not have a purpose for good. It is not necessary at this point for Job to know what good will come out of all his sufferings. It is enough for him to believe that God, as the Creator of all, remains in control, according to His designs, in every situation of every creature of His hand. That is the message Job is now hearing.

D.H.H.

THE SPIRIT OF YAHWEH TRANSFERRED

In the opening verses of the sixteenth chapter,[1] Samuel reminds us of his forefathers. Abraham, at the announcement of Isaac's birth cried, "O that Ishmael should live before You!" (Gen.17:18). The flesh was exhausted. Abraham had no more energy for schemes. Here God reprimands Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go! I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected among his sons a king for Myself" (1 Sam.16:1).

But Samuel replied, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me" (1 Sam.16:2). Is this the same fiery Samuel who rebuked the entire nation of requesting a king? Or is it a shadow of limping Jacob, who trembles, ". . . he will kill me," (*cf* Gen.32:11)?

Samuel had worked long with Saul through his victories and shortcomings. Perhaps he felt that the burden for success was on himself. Perhaps he thought that anointing a new king would mean starting over with another Saul. Samuel was getting old. How many times could he start over? In common with Abraham, Jacob and Samuel, we come to the day when we fear the flesh and feel there is nothing more we can do with it.

But when the flesh is exhausted, the eyes are cleared to see the power of the grace of God. "Fill your horn with

1. The Concordant Version of 1 Samuel 16 appears in *Unsearchable Riches*, vol. 88, pp.136-138 (May 1997).

oil . . . ." The horn is the symbol of power. Saul's anointing was with oil from a vial. But now when the flesh is rejected, the power of God will be seen. And the power of God is known where His Spirit moves.

A CHANGE OF DIRECTION

Verses 13 and 14 are the fulcrum of this pivotal chapter: "So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers, and the spirit of Yahweh prospered on David from that day onward. Then Samuel rose and went to Ramah. As for the spirit of Yahweh, it had withdrawn from Saul, and a evil spirit from Yahweh frightened him."

The following outline shows the progression of events surrounding this part of the book.

Jonathan's victory soured by Saul's oath (chap.14)
Saul's disobedience with Amalek (chap.15)
Samuel in fear comes to trembling Bethlehem (16:1-4)
The spirit of Yahweh prospers on David from his anointing onward (16:13)

The spirit of Yahweh withdraws from Saul and the evil spirit from Yahweh frightens him (16:14)
Saul having depression and fear (16:15-23)
David's great victory over Goliath (chap.17)
Jonathan's covenant of loyalty to David (chap.18)

THE SPIRIT OF YAHWEH DEPARTS

The spirit of Yahweh had prospered on Saul to enable him to govern and lead the people. But Saul's heart was set on himself, his dynasty and the elusive glory of popular opinion. Leaning upon himself, Saul had nothing to shore up his unsteadiness and unpredictability. Saul was seeking his own glory instead of God's, and there can be no peace

for any who follow that path. So he needed the soothing comfort of fellowship with one who rested on the Rock.

Paul cites Scripture concerning Israel: "'. . . God gives them a spirit of stupor, eyes not to be observing, and ears not to be hearing, till this very day.' And David is saying, 'Let their table become a trap and a mesh, and a snare and a repayment to them: Darkened be their eyes, not to be observing, and their backs bow together continually'" (Rom.11:8-10). Just as God sent an evil spirit to trouble Saul when he was rejected from ruling Israel, so also He sent a spirit of stupor to trouble the generation of Israel that was rejected from taking the place of rule over the nations of the world.

We can rejoice in such events, though they may seem abstruse or even unjust, knowing that these are the working of the wonderful God Who ". . . locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all" (Rom. 11:33). It is such events as these that prepare the way for the display of God's powerful grace.

J. Philip Scranton

REPOSING

Brother **Damon Klinger,** of Eaton Rapids, Michigan died, March 7, 1998, after a struggle of more than seven years with cancer. He was 27 and is survived by his grandparents, Leonard and June Bowerman, his parents, Lou and Diane Klinger and his sister, Michele.

In recent months Damon had served as pastor and teacher at the Truth and Grace Chapel in Lansing. He had a keen interest in God's Word, concordantly translated, and rejoiced in the gratuitous justification that comes in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.

At the funeral service, among several speakers, Brother John Krauss shared many of Damon's favorite passages of Scripture, mainly from Paul's prison epistles, and Brother Jeff Priddy spoke of God's "sequel" to our trials. Like Paul, we are aware Whom we have believed, and are persuaded that *He* is able to guard what is committed to us all in the evangel of His grace.

WHO, CONSEQUENTLY, CAN BE SAVED?

GOD'S GOAL of saving the people of Israel from their sins (*cf* Matt.1:21; 2:6) receives steadfast support in the ministry of Jesus, as recorded in the book of Matthew. The healing of the infirm, the feeding of the hungry, the stilling of the storms, and above all else the heralding the nearness of the kingdom—all of these testify to the truth that Jesus is the promised Saviour, the Anointed One and Son of the living God.

A NATION NEEDING SALVATION

Yet this message was not being received. In hearing the words of Jesus, the people were not understanding it; in observing the works of Jesus, the crowds who flocked to Him for physical blessings were by no means perceiving Who He was (Matt.13:14). And beyond the human failure lies the remarkable fact (at first both surprising and even shocking to us) that Jesus did not tell the people the healings and powers were harbingers of the deeper and more essential cleansing from sin that was promised. Rather, the Lord came to the point where He deliberately spoke obscurely to the people, and plainly only to the inner circle of disciples (who still did not fully grasp the import of His words). Indeed, just after Peter made his great avowal of Matthew 16:16 (a revelation that he had *received* from the Father), Jesus "cautions the disciples that they may be saying to no one that He is the Christ" (Matt.16:20).

None of these realities, neither Israel's failures nor the divine operation (most mystifying at first) of locking them

up in stubbornness, should allow us to forget and neglect the promise that Jesus would save His people from their sins. The nation's failures make it all the more obvious that they needed to be saved from their sins. And God's operations of blinding eyes and hardening hearts make it evident that He is the living God, the active and "hands-on" Deity, Whose knowledge is unparalleled and Whose power is unlimited. Such a God will surely fulfill His promises. The stoutening of the hearts of the people of Israel, far from being fatal to their salvation, is for a purpose of good. It is a step toward the goal of salvation, for the manifestation of God's mercy, as made clear in Romans 11:32.

THE RICH YOUNG MAN

The account of the young man who came to Jesus asking about good works, (along with further developments stemming from this event) is of special interest (Matt. 19:16-30; *cp* Luke 18:18-30 where the rich man is identified as a chief). We note that the youth addresses Jesus as Teacher, not as the Saviour. To him, life eonian is something that is achieved by the doing of good by good people. All that is needed is that they be taught what to do so that they might do it. He has no suspicion that Jesus will save him from his sins, nor even that his need was great. "Teacher, what good shall I be doing that I should be having life eonian?" (19:16).

What an opportunity for Jesus to evangelize! What an ideal time for Him to reveal that He is the Son of the living God Who has come into the world to save sinners! Or so it would seem.

As a matter of fact Jesus does proclaim the very heart of every evangel of Scripture. Yet this is hardly noticed, and Jesus does not follow up on the message until the great revelation of the latter half of verse 26. The words, "One is good" (v.17) compose an evangel of great joy. If any-

one wants to know about the doing of good and the having of eonian life, that person need only look to God Who is good. He alone is the One doing the good work of gaining eonian life for sinners, through the gift of His Son.

The young man, however, does not grasp the grand and God-glorifying implications of the Lord's words.

Consequently, Jesus accepts the position of Teacher, which has been His position throughout His ministry, notably in the teaching of Matthew 5-7 (*cf* Matt.5:2, ". . . He taught them"). Since the youth wants to know about the good he himself is required to do, and is not particularly concerned with good in association with God, Jesus instructs, ". . . if you are wanting to be entering into life, keep the precepts" (v.17).

GOOD WORKS

To be sure, this means that all the precepts had to be kept in accord with their full meaning. "For anyone who should be keeping the whole law, yet should be tripping in one thing, has become liable for all" (James 2:10). But taking up the viewpoint of the young man, Jesus refers to certain precepts that He knows the man will feel fairly comfortable with. If he wants to know what good he must do to get eonian life, this is the place to start, with precepts five through nine of the ten given in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5: "You shall not be murdering. You shall not be committing adultery. You shall not be stealing. You shall not be testifying falsely. Be honoring father and mother" (Matt.19:18,19; Exodus 20:12-16). And then, Jesus points to the words of Leviticus 19:18, summing up the five precepts already mentioned with the words, "You shall be loving your associate as yourself" (v.19).

It may have been that the young man had never heard the sermon of Matthew 5-7, or, more likely, since Jesus taught this message on more than one occasion, that hav-

ing heard it, the youth did not understand it. In any case, Jesus had drawn from this same group of precepts, including that of Leviticus 19:18, and showed how demanding they were, how high their real meaning was (Matt.5:17-48). This call to perfection, however, was not grasped by the young man, and he boldly, and foolishly boasts, "These all I maintain. In what am I still deficient?" (v.20).

Jesus could very well have replied: "You are deficient in truly maintaining all of the precepts I have mentioned. Murder, adultery, stealing, lying and dishonoring of your parents have all lurked in your heart in the form of anger and lust, in the swearing of oaths and the hating of your enemies."[1] Instead Jesus adds two instructions showing how the precepts mentioned can be expressed right here in this critical time: "If you are wanting to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and be giving to the poor, and you will be having treasure in the heavens. And hither! Follow Me" (Matt.19:21). This is what obeying the precepts means right now in the demands of this moment as Jesus travels southward to Jerusalem.

FACING TOWARD JERUSALEM

What were the particular circumstances of this time which called for this particular behavior of selling possessions, giving to the poor and following the Lord? These were days of great moment, days of crisis, calling for keen and undistracted attention.

Jesus had just told the disciples that "He must be coming away into Jerusalem and to be suffering much from the

1. Since Jesus also mentioned the precept enjoining the honoring of one's parents, it may well have been that this young man was guilty of the hypocrisy exposed in Matthew 15:3-6, claiming that the presenting of sacrificial gifts in the temple worship was sufficient in fulfilling Exodus 20:12.

elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and the third day to be roused" (Matt.16:21; *cp* 17:12,22,23; 20:18,19,28). His face was set steadfastly toward Jerusalem, in obedience to His Father and with love for mankind.If one is to be avoiding evil and doing good in this dark hour, there must be complete devotion to the Lord.

The young man went away sorrowing (19:22). He had been very confident that he could handle every precept that the Lord gave, but he could not handle poverty and the dependency and reliance associated with following another. He wanted a Teacher Who would challenge him in accord with his abilities, but he had no longing for a Saviour Who would save him from his sins.

If ever one needed salvation from his sins, this man did. He was actually a failure at maintaining the precepts. He had unknowingly testified falsely, and, without being aware of it, he possessed very little love for his associate. But his sorrow was evidence, not of one doomed to everlasting hellfire, but of one in whom some learning was already developing, stirred up by the Teacher, in accord with the purpose of the good God.

Here was a sinner who clearly needed to be saved from his sins. And in this, he was not unique.

WITH THE HUMAN IT IS IMPOSSIBLE

Then, after he had gone, Jesus comments on this incident for the enlightenment of His disciples. He does so at first with apparent exaggeration but with actual understatement: "Verily, I am saying to you that the rich squeamishly will be entering into the kingdom of the heavens. Yet again, I am saying to you that it is easier for a camel to be entering through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to be entering into the kingdom of God" (Matt.19:23,24).

This does not mean that a rich man, or for that matter even a poor man, might occasionally be able to squeeze

his way through into the kingdom. Apart from God's provision, no one is able to keep the precepts perfectly and carry them out exactly in the right way appropriate to every hour and under every circumstance that arises.

Jesus has led the disciples into an impasse. The highest perfection is required for salvation into the kingdom. Yet even an Israelite like this rich youth had failed. As a youth he was vigorous and confident. As a rich man he had all the material means to support a life of disciplined adherence to the precepts. As a chief he enjoyed authority and power and the respect of others which kept him focused on his responsibilities. He had everything a human being seemed to need. And it still was not enough.

Whether or not the disciples comprehended all the implications of this impasse, they ask one of the most important questions of their schooling: *"Who, consequently, can be saved?"* (Matt.19:25).

They were not rich. They were following Jesus. But in light of the demands of the precepts as clarified by the Lord, how can any Israelite, rich or poor, willing or unwilling, be saved? If this man who, from the standpoint of the traditional understanding of the law, was maintaining the precepts, is apparently not to be saved for the kingdom, how can they themselves be saved?

It cannot be by their perfect maintaining of the law. "With [human beings] this is impossible."

There is a solution of good news to this impasse, however, for Jesus shall be saving His people from their sins.

WITH GOD ALL IS POSSIBLE

The solution lies in the revelation here that "with God all is possible" which is the complement of the earlier declaration, "One is good" (Matt.19:17,26).

The word "possible" is not in any sense used here to suggest doubt or obscurity concerning the salvation of human

beings. Jesus is not coyly saying that as to the salvation of sinners, God may do so, or He may not. It is a positive, glorifying truth that God, Who is able to do all things, is the One to look to for salvation.

To those who want to make the word "possible" an opening for the claim that God will actually not save certain individuals (such as the rich man here, or Judas), we can only insist it suggests no such thing. There is power and ability in God for the salvation of Peter and John, and the rich young man and Judas as well, even as there is no power and ability for saving themselves in the young man and Judas, and in Peter and John as well. All their sins, and all the lamentation and gnashing of teeth stemming from their sins, even the fires of Gehenna, cannot stop God from saving sinners such as Peter, the rich man and Judas. The sorrow and losses are necessary lessons being taught by the Teacher. But they do not cancel the salvation gained by the Saviour, in which the lessons learned may bear good fruit.

PETER'S BOAST

The young man was unable to give up his possessions and follow the Lord in this time of great trial. But Peter points out, "Lo! we leave all and follow Thee" (Matt.19:27). In saying this, Peter boasts in what he and the others were doing in contrast to the rich man who found it impossible to do these things. Yet Peter's confidence in his own and his fellow disciples' obedience to the precepts proves premature. This is most obvious in the case of Judas, but the others also, one by one, fail in following Jesus. This will finally include Peter himself.

Nevertheless, with God all is possible. God not only enables the disciples (not yet with the perfection of the new covenant) to give up all their acquisitions and to be following Jesus as He heads toward Jerusalem, but He

enables eleven of them to follow Him somewhat farther than the betrayer, even to Gethsamane. Of themselves, they could not have done this any more than the rich man could do it. In addition, besides enabling them to go as far as they went, God will add to their salvation, granting even greater blessings than other Israelites will enjoy. For Jesus replies, "Verily, I am saying to you, that you who follow Me, in the renascence whenever the Son of Mankind should be seated on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt.19:28).

Apart from God's merciful provision, it was as impossible for Peter as it was for the rich young man to obey the precept, "Follow Me," laid down at the end of Matthew 19:21. However, God enabled Peter to go some distance in obeying this precept. And under the new covenant Peter will be saved even more completely, with the law written on his heart, and God's spirit invigorating him within as he judges among the people of Israel.

Nevertheless, for the time being, Peter still has much to learn from the operations of the One Who is good. He will be saved with exalted blessings, but this will not be because he fully followed the Lord. He will soon come to the point where he denies acquaintance with Jesus. Then the cock will crow, and Peter will be reminded of the Lord's words. "And coming outside," he will lament bitterly (Matt.26: 73-75). Like the rich young man Peter will learn through sorrow. They both will learn of the human impossibility in gaining eonian life and salvation by way of their strength in obeying the precepts.

Yet as for Peter, so also for His people Israel, God will place His spirit in their hearts. Then, in God's own timing, they will not murder or be angry, they will not commit adultery or carry lust in their hearts, they will not steal or lie or neglect their duties, and they will love their associates as themselves. Then they shall be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect (Matt.5:48). That, however, will not be the basis of their salvation. With Israel, obeying the precepts is essential, but it is the provision of the One Who is good, Who gives His only-begotten Son as their Saviour unto life eonian (*cf* John 3:16). It is not a human achievement, but the work of the One Who does the impossible.

We are not to assume, therefore, that these revelations have no significance for the rich young man, or even for Judas. On the contrary, the teaching of the great Teacher here clearly focuses on the certainty of God's good work. The truth that God is good and that all is possible for Him certainly cannot *mean* that the rich young man and Judas will actually end up in hell for all eternity! Nor could these teachings be taken to *imply* such a thing; nor even to *allow* for it. What God did not enable the rich young man to do, and what He did not enable Judas to do, and what He did not enable Peter to do, will not keep God from achieving the good end of salvation.

GOD'S GOOD WORK

Even as the rich young man goes away sorrowing, and as the disciples remain following Jesus, poor in possessions but rich in joyful anticipation of future exaltation, the Lord is making His way toward Jerusalem where the firm basis of the salvation of His people Israel will be laid. Every indication is that "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26).

To this we may add the testimony of John: "For God does not dispatch His Son into the world that He should be judging the world, but that the world may be saved through Him" (John 3:17). And an enlightened Peter wrote as well, that "not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, were you ransomed from your vain behavior, handed down by tradition from the fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:19). Beyond this we have the exult-

ing words of Paul, the former Pharisee, who was "becoming blameless" as to the law: "For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin . . ." (Phil.3:6; Rom.8:3).

Whenever all of Israel are brought fully under the new covenant they will be knowing the Lord, from the least to the greatest. The law will be placed in their hearts, and they will be obeying the precepts, not as they were defined by their traditions, but as expanded by Jesus in Matthew 5 and throughout His ministry.

Nevertheless, the Lord's warnings are to be taken seriously. His words concerning "fire eonian" and "the Gehenna of fire" (Matt.18:7-9) are sobering even when it is understood that the fire is not eternal. But these refer to temporary conditions, involving instruction for Israel and the nations (*cf* Isa.66:23,24), and must not be taken in opposition to the saving work performed by the Saviour. Even those who are executed and whose bodies are cast into Gehenna must, in God's own time, be drawn in joyful subjection to their Saviour and Lord (*cf* John 12:32; Phil.2:10,11).

The principle of Matthew 19:30 seems to point especially to those in Israel who are wealthy and powerful and strong in this life, like the rich young chief. "Many of the first shall be last, and the last first." For one who was among the first in Israel, to become among the last in the kingdom will surely involve instructive disappointment and sorrow. But what joy will be his when he finds that this Teacher Who spoke of the One Who is good, has saved him from his sins!

The final word is not Gehenna or sorrow. These are no more final than the word "poor" is for the disciples. These are part of the process but not the goal. The final word focuses on God, Who is good, and it speaks of salvation and of life and of glory. D.H.H.

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 The Will in God's Word
107 Christ Died for our Sakes
109 Soul, Spirit, and Resurrection
121 The Arm and Voice of El
127 Job 40:1-24
129 David and Goliath
137 By No Means, Till

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 1998
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

IF GOD IS FOR US, who is against us? (Rom.8:31b). As Paul boldly affirms, since God spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all, *surely* He will be *graciously* granting us "all these," namely, the transcendent blessings of being foreknown, designated beforehand, called, justified, and glorified (*cf* Rom.8:32; *cp* vs.28-31a).

In the midst of the struggles and sorrows of life, especially in times of deepest hurt or discouragement, it is vital for us to cling to such glorious revelations of God's grace and good providence, on our behalf.

Certain, indeed many, of our struggles and sorrows are due to evils from without. Many others of our struggles and sorrows, however, are due to evils from within, due to the weakness of our flesh even as the corruption of our heart. This is true of us all, not only of those who may be especially defiled. Even though as believers we enjoy an earnest of the spirit, a surety and foretaste of the purity and glory to come, in ourselves, we remain members of the old humanity, "which is *corrupted* in accord with its seductive desires" (Eph.4:22b).

At times, especially, we observe a law operating in our members, warring with the law of our mind, and leading us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members (Rom.7:23). We find that the flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh, one opposing the other, *lest* we should be doing whatever *we* may want (Gal.5:17). And, in cases where the flesh prevails, we must often experience shame and sorrow, as the consequence of our unworthy deeds.

Now while these *awful* considerations are true, I would especially draw our attention to the *awe-full* fact that it is our very experiences of sin and shame that afford God the occasion, indeed the opportunity, to be our Saviour.

Only those who are subject to a law of sin and death, have any need of a Saviour, whether for deliverance or preservation. It is only as *sinners*—during times in which we *know* that we are sinners—that we may, in the measure of God's grace afforded us through the reawakening of our faith, be led forth both from sin and suffering. And, it is the discipline (lit., HITTing) of God, our Saviour, in His *saving grace,* that results in our "living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon" (Titus 2:12). Such words of Paul are in accord with those of the Lord Jesus Himself where He declared: "The Spirit is that which is vivifying. The flesh is not benefiting anything" (John 6:63a).

Accordingly, then, even as our Lord went on to say, "*The declarations* which I have spoken to you *are* spirit and *are* life," (John 6:63b), Paul, in Romans 12:1 declares, "I am entreating you, then, brethren, *through these*[1] *pities of God,* to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service" (Rom.12:1).

"Pity" is "a feeling for those in distress" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.225), and is often connected with compassion, consolation, and grace (e.g., 2 Cor.1:2-5; Col.3:12). The phrase "the pities of God," is a metonymy for the activities of God, according to His pitifulness (*cf* James 5:11). It is an expression of God's deliverance of us from our sins and from condemnation. "The pities of God" are His operations of justification, conciliation, glorification, and mercy which were recounted in Romans 1–11.[2]

Such revelations of God's grace—these pities of God—*are* spirit and *are* life to us, for they are God's means of grace unto us. It is through their influence that we find ourselves having no confidence in ourselves, but in God, in the One Who is not only our Saviour, but the Saviour of all mankind.

J.R.C.

1. In Romans 12:2, in the phrase "by the pities of God," "by," in the main CV text, is literally "through," and the definite article, "the," has the force of the near demonstrative pronoun, "these."

2. *cf Unsearchable Riches,* vol.76, p.226.

THE WILL IN GOD'S WORD

GOD'S WILL consists of the activity of His spirit in deciding the details planned by His love for His own glory and the blessing of His creatures. As He is love, He seeks to win our will into perfect harmony with His own by the operation of His spirit and the mediacy of His Christ. His heart does not hunt for slaves whom He can force to do His will in opposition to their own, but longs for sons who delight to carry out His will because they are in hearty accord with it.

GOD'S PURPOSE AND COUNSEL

God's *purpose* is the goal of His will and His intention. This is well illustrated by Paul's journey to Rome (Acts 27). As "Ideal Harbors" was not fit for wintering, the majority *counseled* to go to Phoenix (Acts 27:12). When the south wind blew gently they supposed this *purpose* to hold. This *purpose* of the navigator and charterer of the ship and the majority of the passengers was defeated. They never arrived at Phoenix. So it is with human wisdom. They knew nothing about the northeaster and the shipwreck, or they would have altered their *purpose*. On the contrary, however, Paul had often *purposed* to go to *Rome* (Rom.1:13), and, as this was in God's *will,* nothing, not even the hurricane and the shipwreck could prevent it. He came to Rome. *God's purpose will be fulfilled.*

Intention or *resolution* is the effect of *counsel,* as shown by the sublinear, which is COUNSEL-*effect*. Like *will,* it is a determination, but it differs from *will* in that it is not the

direct expression of the divine essence, which is love and light, but arises from the accompanying circumstances in carrying out His will, in which wisdom advises a temporary change of course. This is clearly illustrated for us by the soldiers who brought Paul to Rome. Their *will* was to take him to the city, for that was commanded, but, as they thought he would escape when the ship was wrecked, they held a *counsel* and *intended* to kill him. Their *intention* was prevented by the centurion, who *intended* otherwise. The *will* of all was temporarily set aside, and the *intention* of the centurion prevailed (Acts 27:39-44). So, also, no one can withstand God's *intention,* and, eventually His *will* will prevail. Meanwhile He operates all in accord with the *counsel* of His will, that is, His *intention.*

As it is not easy for most of us to comprehend such an abstraction as the human will, it may help us to see it in action in this incident. At first all were agreed. God had made known His will. He said to Paul, "you *must* testify in Rome also" (Acts 23:11). Paul had said, "I *must* see Rome also" (Acts 19:21). Agrippa and Festus sent him to Caesar, and Julius, the centurion, had orders to take him there (Acts 26:32, 27:1). Although it was God's *will* that he should eventually arrive in Rome, it was *not* His *will* that he should go immediately, or without incidents which would reveal His hand. So He sends evil. He alone controls the weather. He sent contrary winds (27:7,41). Paul, being in the mind of God, warns the men to seek shelter (10), but *they do not believe.* They still *will* to go to Rome, but they make a mistake, or sin, for lack of faith.

So God sends more evil, not merely a wind, but a hurricane, so that they gave up all hope of getting to Rome, and expected to be lost. Their *will* was not changed, but they realize that they are not able to carry it out. Paul tells them plainly that they should have heeded him. Their sin, their mistake, will cost them dearly. Then, however, he gives

them good news, a little cameo of his evangel. God had graciously granted salvation to all who sailed with him (Acts 27:24). Paul *believed* this, but the mariners were unbelievers, so they sought to save themselves and leave the rest to their fate. If it hadn't been a *gracious* salvation, they certainly deserved to die!

Not only the sailors, but the soldiers also, although they still *will* to bring the prisoners to Rome, are influenced by the circumstances to go against God's will. They fear personal punishment if they allow the prisoners to escape. This is a good example of how men are not controlled by their basic will, but by their soulish emotions. But, in this case, the centurion is actuated by higher motives, for he wishes to fulfill his duty in bringing Paul to Rome. Thus we see the *will* of *all* happily *united* and *fulfilled* at the close, but the intermediate *counsel of their wills,* or *intention,* causing a *continual clash.* This is a miniature of God's eonian operation of the universe (Eph.1:11). At present God's *intention* prevails, but man's fails. Eventually the will of all will agree with God's.

WORDS OF SIMILAR SENSE

The significance of the word *will* is of supreme importance to believers, as it deals with an attribute vital to our knowledge of the Deity. One helpful method in attaining an accurate knowledge of God's Word, which is basic in the concordant method, is to distinguish it from other expressions with a similar sense. It is axiomatic that it does *not* convey exactly the same significance as its synonyms, such as *desire, wish, long for, resolve* or *intend.*

Desire enters into the realm of *feeling*. In fact, the original is ON-FEEL (*epithumeō*). This is very intense in the stem, which is rendered *fury*. God's fury will be manifested in dealing with the worshipers of the wild beast (Rev.14:9). *Desire* is also rendered by its close synonym

yearning, and, when evil, by *coveting, lust.* It is connected closely with the flesh, and is often opposed to the *will* of God. It belongs to the realm of the *soul*, while *will* is in the domain of the spirit.

Wish, in the Scriptures, is a higher thought than *desire*, as its elements (WELL-HAVE) indicate. Paul *wished* for the adjustment of the saints (2 Cor.13:9), and John *wished* that Gaius be prospered (3 John 2). We can never substitute *will* for *wish*, and should never water down the meaning of *will* to a mere *wish*, as is so often done. Neither of the apostles would think of using *will* on these occasions.

Long for is an even stronger *feeling* than *desire*, and is usually so rendered in the AV, with an adjective as *great, earnest, vehement.*

STAND FIRM

That we are to exercise our determination is evident from other expressions also, which are used as exhortations in Paul's epistles. We are encouraged to stand firm (1 Cor.16:13, Gal.5:7, Phil.1:27, 4:1). We are not irresolute minors, carried about by every wind of teaching (Eph. 4:14). Figuratively, our Lord described a man with a weak will as having no root in himself, unable to stand affliction or persecution (Matt.13:21, etc.) It is difficult to see how the panoplied warrior of Ephesians six could stand his ground against the spiritual forces of wickedness if he were supinely passive, and let the sword of the spirit hang idle by his side (Eph.6:10-17).

It should be evident from these synonyms that God's *will* is not the fruit of His *counsel* or the effect of circumstances, but the expression of His inherent light and love. It arises from what He *is*, rather than any outward influence, and will accomplish His *purpose,* not withstanding the failures and opposition of His creatures. As circumstances do affect human intentions, as all of us are continually learning, God is using them to expose the futility of man's will when opposed to God's, and also to bring their wills into harmony with His own. Eventually, soldiers, sailors, and all were saved and in full accord with God's will in regard to Paul, in his journey to Rome.

CHRIST WILLED TO DO GOD'S WILL

When Christ entered the world, He said, "Lo! I am arriving . . . to do *Thy* will, O God" (Heb.10:7). He taught His disciples to pray, "*Thy* will be done" (Matt.6:10). His spiritual food was to do the will of Him Who had sent Him (John 4:34). Nevertheless, again and again, He speaks of His *own* will. When a leper came to Him saying, "Lord, if Thou shouldst be *will*ing, Thou canst cleanse me," then He said, "I am *will*ing! Be cleansed!" (Matt.8:3). He fed the throng with the seven cakes and fishes because He was not *willing* to dismiss them fasting (Matt.15:31-39). When He prayed concerning His disciples He did not hesitate to appeal to His Father to carry out His *will* that they should be with Him (John 17:24). Only on one occasion did He so much as suggest that His *will* was not in perfect harmony with His Father's. He did not *will* to drink the cup of suffering set before Him (Luke 22:42). But this only emphasizes the fact that He did not do God's will out of compulsion. At all other times it was *His* will, as well as His Father's.

GOD'S IMMUTABLE WILL

God's will is sourced in Himself, and is determined by what He is. As He is essentially Light and Love, it is His will to reveal Himself, especially His affection. As no other motives can change this, His will is constant and His purpose immutable. As He has all power, nothing is able to thwart His will. But, as He has all wisdom, and revelation is best accomplished by the use of opposites, He uses dark-

ness to reveal the light, evil to give the knowledge of good, and hate to impart a comprehension of His love. These temporary intentions seem to oppose His will, but must eventually serve in fulfilling it. Then there will be no night and no more doom, and all will be reconciled to God.

Since Christ has such power over the raging elements, why did He not subdue His enemies with a word? Many legions of messengers were at His command. Why did He not coerce His enemies to become loyal subjects of His kingdom? Many times He *willed* to gather the children of Jerusalem under His wings, but they *willed* not (Matt. 23:37). Even one of His chosen apostles obeyed Satan, the Adversary, rather than His word (John 13:2; Luke 22:3). His disciples were not won by force, but by the constraint of love. Their *wills* were won to work in harmony with His own. *It is not God's will to reveal His power at the expense of His love.* His worship must be voluntary, not forced. His greatest power lies in the weakness and suffering of the cross. Through that He will gain the adoring allegiance of men's hearts.

Man's will is modified by circumstance. He is influenced by his ancestors, his environment, his associates, his health and his wealth. Unlike God, he does not commence life with a definite determination or a permanent purpose. In many men the will is very weak. They drift with the tide. In all mankind the will of the flesh, due to their dying, as inherited from Adam, inclines them to sin. Besides, as in the beginning, when Eve hearkened to the serpent, so, still, the sinister spirit of the air is operating in mankind to persuade them to go contrary to the expressed will of God (Eph.2:2). As these influences are far stronger than man's will, it is enslaved until God's spirit displaces the evil spirit, and operates in us to will and to work for the sake of His delight.

There is nothing in the Scriptures to show that man's will

is evil in itself, but only when in conflict with God's will. Indeed, our Lord told the people that, if anyone should *will* to be doing God's will *he shall know* concerning the teaching, whether it is of God (John 7:17). Evidently those who do *not will* will *not know.* When our Lord went to Jericho, and two blind men begged for mercy, He asked them, "What do you *will* that I should do to you?" He it was Who put the word into their mouths. And immediately they received sight and follow Him (Matt.20:32). Indeed, among the last words He spoke from the glory were these, "Let him who *will* take the water of life gratuitously" (Rev.22:17).

WILLING AND WORKING

Willing is *not working.* This should be abundantly clear to the humblest saint, not only from the seventh of Romans where the wretched man *wills* to do the ideal, yet *cannot do* what he wills, but from his own experience. What a gulf there is between the two! Those in whom God's spirit dwells are most willing to please Him, but, until they are energized by His grace they are *unwilling* captives of the law of sin. Will is in contrast to work. They are by no means the same. That is why Paul, in his perfection epistles keeps them separate, and, after exhorting the saints to carry their own salvation into effect, assures them that God is operating in them *both* to will and to work.

Even though all power is out of God, and nothing can be accomplished without Him, nevertheless He works *through* others. In fact *all* is *through* His beloved Son. And He also delights to use His lower creatures, even the worst of them, even persecutors like Saul of Tarsus, the foremost of sinners, to accomplish His work, in fact all to whom he has imparted a special measure of His spirit. He does not do this by compulsion or coercion, but by winning their will through the revelation of His love, so that they *want*

to work with Him even when they have not grasped sufficient grace to work together with Him.

Give the human will no place in God's great exposition of Himself, and there will be little left. To begin with, we could never apprehend what God's will is unless we had one of our own. Even the *stubborn* will is essential. If God had not locked all up in stubbornness, He could not be merciful to all (Rom.11:32). God could have made a world of automatons, which would obey the slightest impulse, but without a soul, and incapable of affection. The evangel does not alter us into robots, which respond mechanically to His commands. It engages our hearts with His love, and wins our will so that we are determined, not only to *do* His will, but *delight* in it with all our being.

The consummation of all at the close of the eons calls for *subjection,* which has conquered stubbornness. But it does not, therefore, denote apathy. What a world that would be, filled with indifferent, impassive, callous, will-lacking automatons! That is a sign of serious disease even in mortals today. Surely the Son will not take such a supine and abject place! He will also be subject, but, at the same time the center of universal acclamation (Phil.2:11). We also will be *voluntary* subjects, who have such a regard for God's will that our own will will be completely attuned to His.

Could God not bring about the consummation, when all will be subject to Him, without the terrible tragedy of the eons, apart from sin and suffering, judgment and wrath? By no means! The vital and essential element of love would be lacking. The response would be mechanical, without feeling or affection. His *grace* would be unknown. The creation would be bound with hands of iron, rather than held to His heart by the golden links of love. Our wills must be melted together in the crucible of love before He can be our All.

A. E. Knoch

CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SAKES

OUR EVANGEL is a joyful, glorious proclamation. We present God's conciliatory love to all and sundry with complete confidence in His consummation. "God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes, Much rather, then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from indignation, through Him. For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life" (Rom.5:8-10). "Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation" (2 Cor.5:18,19).

In our privileged role of ambassadors, proclaiming the grace of conciliation, we encounter, with depressing regularity, the grudging opposition of "Yes, but . . . ." On a matter like this which unfolds the depths of God's love and peace, we might reasonable expect that more care would be taken. Certainly, many wasted years of fruitless and often bitter disagreement could have been avoided if, with reverent regard, our Father's loving purpose had been accurately understood, and then had been faithfully preserved and presented. Yet, like the happy man of Romans (Rom.4:4-12), we are neither pessimistic or sad. Who can be with such a message?

Our expectation of glory is not based on our response to God's love, but is founded on His love itself while we

are still infirm, having not the least merit or virtue. Further, God's spirit leads us into the blessed relief of justification, conciliation and glorious reconciliation.

Christ died *for our sakes.* What He did in manifesting God's love was not "in our stead," but for our sakes, ("over us" as the Greek literally expresses it). This exalts God's glory and grace! There is a deadliness in the use of "in our stead" in the context of the evangel of Romans 5:6-8. Christ's death is then seen as a substitution for punishment instead of a blessedly beneficial operation of God for us.

That Christ Jesus should submit to being emptied of all His glories, coming in the likeness of humanity, and being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil.2:8) is an overwhelming truth. We do well to meditate on this, prostrating ourselves in adoration.

The glory is neglected. "Not one is just—not even one. Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God" (Rom.3:9-11). We speak glibly of the love of God, but are not able to comprehend. But what matchless love is this which demands nothing less than the death of His beloved Son!

Thus we read, "Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God *through Jesus Christ's faith,* for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:21-23).

To continually have the thoughts and words of our God and Father, and His Son Christ Jesus, in our hearts and minds, is a veritable store of peace and love. "My song is love unknown; my Saviour's love to me; love to the loveless shown that they may lovely be. O Who am I, that for my sake, my Lord should take frail flesh and die?"

Donald Fielding

Questions and Answers

SOUL, SPIRIT, AND RESURRECTION

Yet God is giving it a body according as He wills . . . . [Concerning] the resurrection of the dead: It is sown in corruption; it is roused in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is roused in glory. It is sown in infirmity; it is roused in power. It is sown a soulish body; it is roused a spiritual body. If there is a soulish body, there is a spiritual also. (1 Cor.15:38; 42-44)

Question:

"To the best of my knowledge, a human being is made up of a physical body, a spirit, and by the combining of these two, has a soul. Again, if I am correct, at death there is a separation of the body and the spirit.

"When the body and the spirit separate, I am aware that the soul goes to hades, the unseen. Does this mean that the soul is temporarily dissolved or non-existent, or is the 'unseen' a reference to some definite place where the souls are kept?

"I also know that at death, the spirit goes back to God. In what state, however, is the spirit when it is with God? Is the spirit 'drowsing' or is it conscious? And, how does vivification come into play?

"At our resurrection, when we are caught up to meet the Lord Jesus Christ when He comes for us, our body will be changed to an incorruptible body. Does this happen to our physical body? How is this possible under the following scenario: A sailor has died at sea and is buried at sea. Some time later, sharks and other fish have totally eaten his body. Fishermen have caught some of the sharks and other fish and sold

them at market, where, in turn, the meat is purchased and then eaten by several other people. How does the body get resurrected when its molecules are in fact in many other living people (obviously, many other similar scenarios exist)?"

Answer:

YOU ASKED whether in death the *soul,* in returning to the unseen, "is temporarily dissolved or non-existent," or is instead sent "to some definite place where . . . souls are kept." To simply state my answer, it is that death entails the dissolution of the soul. Hence, until resurrection, it no longer exists. Since soul is a phenomenon of life, not an immaterial entity which somehow survives death, it follows that, at death, the soul is not sent to some place where it is "kept," whether dead or alive.

In mentioning that in death the *spirit* returns to God, you asked, "In what state is the spirit when it is with God? Is the spirit 'drowsing' or is it conscious, and how does vivification come into play?" My reply to this question is that since spirit is the *imperceptible power of* life, and "power" refers not to some sort of discrete object, but to "the ability or capacity to act," it follows that our *spirit* (i.e., the spirit which pertains to us, as individual persons) is neither conscious nor drowsing even in life; much less do either of these two conditions attend our spirit in death.

In death, spirit, the human's ability or capacity while living to act, "returns" to God Who gave it (Ecc.12:7). This is to say that, in death, the *power of* life dissipates and returns to its Source. The return in death of our spirit to God, is analogous to the return of the current to the electrical line or cable, when a lamp is turned off. Even as the flow of electrical charge is no longer operative within the lamp, similarly, the spirit which sustained a man in life during his lifetime, is no longer operative in death.

Vivification, which entails rousing and resurrection but is not confined to these, is that glorious and indissoluble *life* of which Christ is the Firstfruit (1 Cor.15:23).

Vivification is effected by the transcendently mighty operations of God's spirit. It occurs in "classes" or divisions (1 Cor.15:23a), and is granted to all mankind (1 Cor. 15:22b): the Firstfruit, Christ, has already been vivified; those who are Christ's, shall be vivified in His presence, in the seasons respectively appointed unto them (1 Cor. 15:23b; *cp* John 5:21; 5:29; Dan.12:2; 1 Thess.4:15-17; 1 Cor.15:51,52).

Finally, the consummation of vivification, when the remaining portion of mankind is also vivified (1 Cor.15: 24a), will occur whenever Christ may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power (1 Cor.15:24b). Then it is that "the last enemy is being abolished: death," unto the end that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:26,28).

The thrust of your last question was whether our resurrection body shall be formed from the remaining extant matter, if any, of which our present bodies are composed. Your example is in point in which a body buried at sea is then eaten by sharks and other fish, which are themselves eaten by still other fish, which when harvested, are eaten by people.

Not only in the case of this striking example, but in that of the vast majority of the corpses of men buried in the ground and long dead, the bodies themselves have decomposed and returned to dust, having been amalgamated into the soil. With the exception of bones or teeth (which, depending upon conditions, may have dissolved as well, which, in any case, will eventually dissolve), few if any bodily particles remain.

As such, in most cases, the corpses no longer exist, and

even their original molecules no longer exist. How, then, many have asked, can such "bodies" be resurrected?

We are not told that "our [present] *body*" will be changed to an incorruptible *body,* but that *we* shall be changed from mortal and corruptible, to immortal and incorruptible. It does not follow from the fact that both of these respective conditions are especially concerned with our bodies (bodies which, timelessly, are "ours"), that this change which shall occur for *us* will be effected by a means which shall entail the employment of the particles of our old bodies in the constitution of our new bodies.

Again, even in the case of the living, not to mention that of the dead, Paul does not say that our existing *bodies* shall be changed. Instead, the apostle teaches that *we* shall be changed, and that *we* shall become incorruptible and immortal, which, it is true, entails our having a new body, as is elsewhere explicitly stated.

The essence of your question is whether this marvelous "change" of which Paul speaks, appertains to our "physical body." The phrase, "a physical body," like the phrase, "wet rain," is a tautology, a needless repetition of an idea. Even as all rain is wet, all bodies, including *spiritual* bodies (see below), are physical, that is, material. Your question, then, simply becomes, Shall this change be implemented, in the case of the living, through the use of the particles which comprise our present bodies, and, in the case of the dead, is the resurrection body formed from any existing remains of their corpses.

My reply to the first part of this question is as follows: It is important to recognize that man is not a body, but a living creature who has a body. The living creature himself who formerly was a member of the old humanity, through this glorious "change" of which Paul speaks, will then become a member of the new humanity. There is nothing in this that indicates what molecules will be employed in the formation of the new humanity; nor are we told what will become of the particles which comprised the old body. In the case of the living, should it please God to change the molecules of the old body itself into the molecules of the new body, doubtlessly He will do so. But if not, I would presume that the molecules of the old body will simply be reconstituted in accord with the laws of physics.

In the case of the dead, however, the question remains, Is the resurrection body formed from any existing remains of their corpses. My reply to this specific question is this: The unscriptural expression, "the resurrection of the body," which is then interpreted as, "the quickening of the corpse," is at the root of this problem.[1] "Resurrection" (*anastasis,* UP-STAND-ing) does not refer to a reconstituted and awakened corpse, but instead, speaks of the human himself, who, when returned to life, "stands up" accordingly. Dead persons, *figuratively,* will be "roused." That is, those *persons* who, in death, have figuratively "fallen asleep" and are "reposing," will be "awakened" or "roused" figuratively, in resurrection. Literally, those *persons* who are dead and buried, will be *returned to life.*

The apostle Paul contemplated those of the Corinthians who denied the resurrection, responding to his affirmation thereof with the protest: "*How* are the dead being roused? Now with *what body* are they coming?" Paul's reply to such ones is: "Imprudent one! What you are sowing is

1. The common phrase, "the resurrected body," is a tautologous misnomer masquerading as scriptural truth. This is because (1) bodiliness is implicit in the adjective "resurrected," and (2) in the Scriptures, resurrection refers only to persons, not to bodies. Such an English usage, formally, would refer to a renewal of life within the same body which had had a previous life and consequent dissolution. To "resurrect" such a body, would entail its resuscitation, even as, first, in most cases, its reconstitution, using the residual elements of its corpse. Since resurrection, however, refers to the return to life of dead persons, not dead bodies, such a usage is improper.

not being vivified if it should not be dying. And, what you are sowing, *you are not sowing the body which shall come to be,* but a naked kernel, perchance of wheat or some of the rest. *Yet God is giving it a body according as He wills,* and to each of the seeds its own body" (1 Cor.15:35-38).

"The resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor.15:42), does not refer to a reinstitution of functioning existence within *corpses,* but of the return to *life* of *persons,* ones who formerly were dead. In resurrection, we will be granted *new* bodies, not revitalized corpses. In the case of those who are reposing, there is no reason to suppose that the molecules of which their new bodies will be composed, will be formed from any extant matter which may yet remain, whether in the soil or the sea, which was once a part of their old bodies.

It is not a question whether God could do such a thing, in the case of any particles which may remain. It is instead simply that there is no reason to suppose that He will do so. Likewise, it is fallacious to reason that since the dead will be resurrected (which entails having a body), and once had a mortal body, that their vivified, resurrection body, therefore, will be composed of recovered molecules from their corpse.

Issues of body, soul, and spirit, complex in themselves, have been confused and made inextricable by a false theology which denies death and confounds soul and spirit. Except for complementary comments which are added herein, the material which follows within this present writing, is taken from the exposition, "The Soul and the Unseen," which is the first article in our booklet, "The Soul and the Unseen, and The Gehenna of Fire."

CONFUSION OF TERMINOLOGY

Among the orthodox, while the soul's *pre*-existence is repudiated, its *post*-existence is insisted upon, its survival after death, prior to resurrection. Yet since death is a "return" (Gen.3:19), whatever the lot of the human

soul *after* this life (prior to resurrection), it is that which obtained unto it as well *prior to* this life. Therefore the orthodox view cannot be correct in both of its claims.

Orthodoxy is mistaken as well in conceiving the human soul to be not the human experience itself, but to be instead, an intangible, immortal entity, a spirit (or "ghost") which, while possessing personal traits and partaking of personal experience, is nonetheless not a person or corporeal being at all.

Wherever the Scriptures declare that a certain man "died," or wherever they speak of his "death," the orthodox insist that we are not to understand that that *man* died, but only that his present lifetime ended and that his *body* died. It is not that these traditionalists do not know what death is, but that they insist that it does not appertain to man. Indeed, like the spiritualists, they assure us that they are correct in their claim that, in death, man *does not* die because he *cannot* die.

In order to get a clear grasp of these questions of body, soul, and spirit, we must adhere to a strict and scriptural definition of terms, while logically and consistently expressing ourselves according to a pattern of sound words (2 Tim. 1:13). Since most are unaccustomed to such precision of speech and do not realize its vital necessity in scriptural investigation, they may, at first, find such explanations difficult, or perhaps tendentious as well, notwithstanding such explanations' own inherent objectivity.

THE "SOUL" AND THE "HUMAN"

A "body," or corporeal entity, is physical, morphological, material, tangible, organic (i.e., possessed of a structure or organization). A body is "the organic substance which composes [i.e., constitutes the constituent elements of] a human being or animal" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.35).

A man's body is organic substance, and he is composed

of organic substance, but this is not to say that man himself is simply organic substance. The man himself—that is, the "human" (*anthrōpos*), is the living, sentient being, the creature himself, thus designated. A "human" is, "a *living* sentient *being* of the genus *Homo* (as distinct from the lower animals and from spirits; including all ages and both sexes, men, women, and children)" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.149; entry "human").

That which makes the organic substance of which a man is composed into the man himself, is the *spirit* of (i.e., pertaining to) humanity (*cp* 1 Cor.2:14; Gen.2:7). Even as it is the spirit which vivifies (i.e., gives life beyond the reach of death; *cf* John 5:21; 6:63; 1 Cor.15:36; 2 Cor.3:6), it is God's spirit as well which gives all life to all (Psa.104: 29,30; Acts 17:25).

Bios, the Greek word for life which speaks of the processes or physiology of life, does not occur in the Scripture. *Zoê* (as in the English "zoo") is the scriptural term for life. It speaks of, "the activity of the spirit, especially as manifest in the organic creation. All things have existence; plants and animals have life; [humans and] animals have sensation, or soul" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.178; entry "life").

"Spirit" (*pneuma,* BLOW-*effect*) is, "the imperceptible, intangible *power of* action, life, and intelligence. [By extension, it is often used of] the divine *power* as manifested in His invisible, intangible operations."

A spiritual body (1 Cor.15:44) is not an immaterial existence, but a body *characterized by* spirit, or imperceptible power (*cp* "it is roused in *power* . . . . it is roused a *spiritual* body"; 1 Cor.15:43b,44b).

It is not that man is, as according to traditional theology, "a tri-partite being composed of a body, soul, and spirit," but that man is a living, sentient being composed of organic substance. Man is not *composed* of either a spirit or a soul; instead, he *possesses* both a spirit and a soul.

"Soul" is "the *sensation* resulting from the combination of an organic body with breath or spirit (Gen.1:21; 2:7; [1:21 AV, 'creature']. [Soul] is connected with the blood (Lev.17:14; [AV, 'life'], [and] is possessed by all living creatures that move [or 'roam'] (Lev.11:46). By metonymy, [a soul is] a human being considered from the standpoint of its sensations or experiences (Rev.6:9)" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.279).

In Scripture, man, who is said both to be a soul and to have a soul, returns in death to the "unseen," which is *sheol* or *hadês.*

Since man is a corporeal being which, both by association with and as the representation thereof, *is* a living "*soul,*" it is evident that when he returns to the unseen, his soul returns there as well. Since in death, man, who "is" a "soul," does indeed return to the unseen (e.g., Psa. 9:17), it is correct to say of any certain man who dies, not only that *that* "soul" has returned to the unseen, with reference to the man himself, but that *his* soul has returned there as well, with respect to his sensations or experiences.

Scripturally speaking, the human "soul" is simply the human *experience* . . . . The expression "living souls," speaks of the entire animate creation generally, "every animal of the field and every flyer of the heavens" (Gen.2:19; *cp* 2:24,30), even "the great sea monsters and all the moving living souls with which the waters swarm" (Gen.1:20,21).

Soul is a *phenomenon;* it is the perception of the senses. It encompasses all sensation, all that is experienced by means of the sentient faculties. By association, soul is the capacity for seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling. In itself, soul consists in the sensation of these things themselves.

Man, like the animals, *is* a "living *soul*" (Gen.1:21; 2:7). While both are living creatures, they are termed (by metonymy) living "souls." This is because they are not only *living*

creatures but are living creatures which possess *soul,* that is, sentient capacity. Both man and beast are termed living souls because they are living creatures which, through sentient faculties, are capable of experience.

"Soul" (Hebrew, *nephesh,* Greek, *psuchê*) does not mean "life," though it is often incorrectly translated "life" in the Authorized Version. Soul is not life itself, though it is intimately connected with it. A man's "soul," speaks of a man's sensations or experiences *of* life. A man who is termed a "soul," speaks of a man from the standpoint of his sensations or tangible experiences.

SOUL AND THE USAGE OF "UNSEEN"

In Scripture, it is common to speak of men as "souls." Through this means man comes before us not simply as an organic entity such as a tree, but as a sentient creature partaking of experience. Literally, soul is not something that man is, but something that he partakes of.

When a man is spoken of as a "soul," the word is a figure of speech (*metaphor* [representation] and *metonymy* [association]). And, even when man is spoken of as possessing a soul, technically, this too is a figure of speech (*ellipsis* [omission]).

When man is spoken of as *being* a soul, he thus becomes *representative* of that with which he is closely *associated.* Yet when man is spoken of as *possessing* a soul, the evident thought in view, while understood, is not expressed. This is because it would be both tedious and needless to do so.

The inherent idea which is present though not expressed when man is spoken of as possessing "a" soul is, capacity of or means of experiencing. The full thought is that man has "a [capacity of] soul," or sensation. Strictly speaking, man does not have "a" soul but a capacity of soul, a means by which he engages in sentient activity, a facility by which he *experiences* life.

Having established the meaning of soul, that it is the perception of the senses, we must emphasize that, in death, the human soul undergoes a *return.* It returns to that concerning which, apart from revelation, we can only inquire. Yet we do so because we are interested in the whence and whither of things, especially the whence and whither of man. *From* where did he come, and *to* where does he go?

Now if we should ask, *What* are we, *where* did we come from and *where* are we going? the answer is, From the ground you were taken, For soil you are, And to the soil you shall *return* (*cf* Gen.3:19). But if we should ask, Yet what of the human *soul;* what becomes of it? the answer is, The soul *returns* to the unseen.

That is, the human soul, man's *experience,* has the same status *subsequent* to this life that it had *prior* to this life. If it had life before this present, corporeal lifetime, then, when that which we term "death" ensues, it *returns* to its previous life. Alternatively, if it did *not* have life prior to this present, corporeal lifetime, then, when that which we term "death" ensues, human experience *returns* to its previous status, that of non-existence.

It hardly follows from the fact that the Greek word *hadês* signifies "unseen," that, when speaking of the human soul in death, *hadês* therefore speaks of an unseen *place,* much less that it speaks of an unseen place where "disembodied spirits" abide. An "abode" is the place where one remains or dwells; it is the place where one lives or resides. Our inquiry is that of the nature of the unseen. It will not do simply to make the bald claim that *hadês* is "the abode of disembodied spirits."

"Unseen" is an adjective; functionally, however, it is a substantive, a word used as a noun. In some cases, as in Matthew 16:18, "unseen" (i.e., *hadês,* which is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *sheol*) is used in reference to the unseen *domain* of the Adversary. Yet in Matthew 11:23, in

speaking of the city of Capernaum, it is used in reference to the unseen *state* (as a consequence of its destruction and desolation) to which that city would one day subside. Since "soul" is a phenomenon, or sensation, and soul in *death* returns to the "unseen," it is evident in the nature of the case that in death the soul returns to the unseen state, not to some mysterious, unseen place.

Essentially, death itself is a return. Man is soil and *returns* to the soil (Gen.3:19). The spirit—the imperceptible *power of* life, action, and intelligence—in death, *returns* to God Who gave it (Ecc.12:7). "Death," then, is simply the specialized term signifying the absence of life which follows mortality as contrasted with the absence of life which precedes it.

We may speak of *our* soul even as we speak of *our* body. Even as the compounds, however, which compose our body are decomposed in death, the experiences which comprise our soul are terminated in death. This is because "soul" is that which is produced when an organic body is endowed with spirit or breath, that is, with life-giving, soul-enabling power (Gen.2:7).

In death, the status of the human soul is that of post-existence. Except for the fact that it follows rather than precedes the time of the soul's existence, the post-death status of a man's soul is the same as that of its pre-generative status, namely, that of non-existence. Therefore, we may be certain that any and all who claim otherwise—be they ancient Jews or Greeks or modern scholars—are mistaken in their beliefs.

Let us rejoice that after all other enemies have been subjected, that even the very last of all Christ's enemies will also be subjected. But while we await that day, let us recognize what that last enemy is. "The last enemy is being abolished: *death*" (1 Cor.15:26).

J.R.C.

Notes on the Book of Job

THE ARM AND VOICE OF EL

JOB IS HEARING words from Yahweh Himself. That is what he desired above all else. It does not matter that the words are severe and fearful; they are true, and they clear the air of all pretension and hypocrisy. The knowledge and sufficiency and righteousness of God is all encompassing.

In chapter 40 Yahweh reveals in no uncertain terms that He exercises His power and authority in accord with His ways. What His ways are can be traced by the things that happen, movements of light and stars and water, habits and placings of animals, and indeed afflictions of the individual Job. What is so has become so because of God and Who He is. The human is not consulted and is indisputably unable to attempt the tasks undertaken by God. When it comes to "augustness" and "loftiness" (v.10), God stands alone. When it comes to judgment and discernment for submission and crushing of wickedness (8,11) God alone is responsible. There is no other.

The arm and the voice of El (Job 40:9) are unique. The arm of El speaks of His powerful activities, and the voice of El speaks of His authoritative directings. He knows what He is doing, and He is doing it ably and effectively.

HE WHO-SUFFICES

When Bildad asked, "Does El distort judgment?" (Job 8:3), Job replied, "Truly I know that this [divine righteousness in judgment] is so . . . . how can a mortal be righteous before El? If he desires to contend with Him, he could not answer Him one time out of a thousand" (9:2,3). All of

Job's associates accused him of wanting to justify himself at God's expense. Zophar asked in exasperation, "Should this man of glib lips be justified?" (11:2), and Eliphaz wondered with sarcasm, "Is it delight to Him Who-Suffices that you should be righteous? And should it be His gain that your ways become flawless?" (22:3). Elihu was more direct in expressing his impressions of Job's defense: "For Job has said: I am just, yet El, He has taken away my due" (34:5).

Job had not said he was just, and had actually avowed he was a sinner. But Job continually traced his afflictions to the Deity and loudly denied they could be justly related to any secret wickedness in his life. This silenced his three associates; and Elihu, for all his focusing on the wisdom and power of God, could not sort out all ramifications of Job's sufferings, Job's record of uprightness and God's operations in Job's life.

It is left to God Himself to set out the facts before us all. The One Who-Suffices is the One responsible for every creation, both animate and inanimate. He is the One Who is in charge of all things. Yahweh Himself, Who knows the inner thoughts of the heart, proceeds, without directly accusing Job and without anger or rancor, to set the record straight.

We are brought in Job 40 to the level of recognition of our relationship to God that we find in Psalm 51. There David prays to Yahweh with trust: "So that You may be justified when You speak, and be cleared when You judge" (Psa. 51:4). So also we are brought to Paul's avowal of Romans 3:4, which concludes with the words of David: "Now let God be true, yet every man a liar, even as it is written: 'That so Thou shouldst be justified in Thy sayings, and shalt be conquering when Thou art being judged.'"

First of all, was Job correct in 9:3 when he spoke of the uselessness of contending with El? Could such contending lead to an admonishing or reproving of Him Who-

Suffices (40:3)? No, just as Job had previously avowed, anyone wishing to contend with Deity could not answer Him, so now Job replies, "Behold, I am slight; how can I reply to You?" (40:4).

God has created all things. God places all things as they are. God is God. And no one can contend or plead[1] against Him for the correcting of His ways. He is righteous, and He knows what He is doing. Despite what may *seem* to be so, the wisdom, power and righteousness of God *are* so.

SO YAHWEH ANSWERED

Yahweh's words from the tempest are strong and call for manly attention. "Belt up your loins then like a master; I shall ask of you, and you inform Me" (Job 40:7).

We might suppose that Job, of all people, does not need this harsh tone, uncompromising and severe. But it is exactly what soothes and comforts Job because it clears away the debris of wrangling and confusion associated with sinners trying to deal with sins and judgment of sins. It focuses on the only judgment and righteousness that really matters, that of God Himself. Job's companions had refused to associate his afflictions with God beyond the simplistic and unsatisfactory confining of that association with judgment. And in correctly seeing this was not the case, Job kept getting caught up in self defense, which only compounded the mystery of his troubles. It was only as Job petitioned to hear from Eloah, Who, he insisted, was behind it all, that the ray of hope for the truth was kept glowing from chapter 3 through chapter 37.

1. The English word "plead" as in Job 13:3 and the word "reproving" in 40:2b are translations of the same Hebrew word; the difference is that in chapter 13 Job speaks of pleading *with,* or *before* God, while here in chapter 40 there is no preposition as demanded by English idiom; it is simply "pleading God," which, by the parallel with "contending with" would indicate "pleading against" or "reproving."

Praise to Him, Yahweh's judgment upon Job cannot be annulled, and His righteousness in dealing with Job cannot be condemned (v.8). The *arm of El* and *His thunderous voice* (v.9) in Job's life lie behind Job's afflictions, are involved in Job's sufferings, and are responsible for all of Job's experiences both good and evil. This is what God has judged to be needed for the shaping of Job. This is what God knows is right for Job's greatest good, and for the good of all his associates, and for the glory of God.

Can Job or any human take on God's responsibilities? If so, Yahweh advises that we ornament ourselves in divine splendor (v.10) and ourselves put an end to human pride and wickedness wherever they may be found (11-13). If we don't like the way God is doing things, through the experience of evil, with greed and hate and travail and pain continuing age after age, then we should save ourselves, and God will acclaim us (v.14)!

No one speaks.

Job is silent with his hand upon his mouth.

Eliphaz and Bildad and Zophar have nothing to say.

Elihu is once again hidden from view and unheard.

We also, who sometimes suppose we are our own saviours, or at least are required to contribute somehow to getting ourselves out of the mess into which we have strayed—we also would be wise to listen to what the voice of God has to say about His judgments and His righteousness and about what His arm is doing.

BEHOLD NOW

What does the behemoth have to do with Job's afflictions? What does it have to do with God's righteous judgments? It has everything to do with these because, like Job, it is one of the things God's arm is involved with. He made it (v.15), and it represents one of God's ways of doing things (v.19).

The name "behemoth" is the plural form of the Hebrew word for "beast." When a plural word is used as a singular in Hebrew it often means *grand* or *great* or *high.* One commentator aptly identifies the behemoth as the "brute beast *par excellence.*"[2] It may be the hippopotamus, but whatever it is, it is a most powerful animal, and the important thing is that God has made it, and He has made it as it is.

IS GOD'S MIGHT RIGHT?

We say, "Might is not always right." But does this apply to God? Is God just in the powerful works of His arm and the effectual declarations of His voice?

Yahweh Himself offers a test case, boldly placing before Job certain facts concerning this puzzling beast which Yahweh has made. This is not simply to show the greatness of the divine ability but to confront the human with the issue of the relationship between divine power and divine righteousness. The question is not to be avoided (as Job's associates wished to do).

Here is a brute that eats grass like an ox (v.15) and that is greater in vigor and virility than any domestic beast (v.16), yet it offers no service to humanity. Its stiff tail, its sinews, its bones like bronze and ribs like iron produce nothing for us except our awe (17,18). What is going on here with this creature of God's hand and this use of His power?

There is fodder for the behemoth in the hills where other animals gambol (v.20), but the behemoth prefers concealment among the reeds and marshes and under the lush growth about the wadis, so much so that it remains there even in the flood seasons (21-23). Its finds safety and provisions wholly apart from the rest, especially from humanity, lest we try to trap it (v.24).

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2. Edouard Dhorme: A Commentary on the Book of Job (Nelson, 1984), p.619.

The words of Job 40:19 are of great significance. Yahweh reminds Job that in the order of God's ways in creation, the beast comes first before the human. This leads our thoughts to Genesis 1:24-26 which reveals that beasts were created before humanity, so that they would be on hand for subjection. Humanity, in the image and likeness of Elohim, was to sway over the animals. Humanity was to subject all beasts, including the behemoth, so that it would not be wild and separated away from others, but would be serving some function for the good of all. The "sword" (its horns?) which God gave to the behemoth, will then no longer be used for harmful purposes, but for purposes designed by God in accord with the goal that the whole of creation be "very good" (Gen.1:31).

The ways of God employed at present do not represent the goal of His creation. His power and authority are being exercised, but the behemoth of Job 40:15-24 is not yet the beast envisioned in Genesis 1:24-26. So also with Job. The ways of God with Job do not yet represent the consummation, but they still are God's ways, fully under His power and authority.

Job was familiar with this ancient declaration of God, and he would follow the steps of Yahweh's argument here: God is just. God is all powerful. God has declared that humanity will sway over the beasts. These are all facts that are unseen and unprovable by perception. Consequently, we must rest on God's voice concerning His arm, on what He has said in relation to what He is doing. The human will sway over the behemoth. And both will be blessed, and know their blessings because of the experiences of evil that had intervened between creation and consummation. If it is so with respect to the behemoth, it is certainly so with respect to Job that the arm of God has not slackened and the voice of God has not become false because of present afflictions and losses. D.H.H.

JOB 40:1–24

40 **+So Yahweh |answered `Job, + |saying:**
2 **Will** one **contending– with** Him **Who-Suffices**
~admonish Him**~?**
The one **reproving Eloah, let him answer it.**
3 **+Then Job |answered `Yahweh, + |saying,**
4 **Behold, I am slight;** *wt***how** can **I |reply** to **You?**
I place my hand upon my mouth.
5 **I spoke once +but shall not answer** further**,**
+ Twice, +but I shall not continue.
6 **+So Yahweh |answered `Job from** the **tempest, + |saying:**
7 **Belt** up **your loins** *pr***then like** a **master;**
I shall ask of **you, and** you **inform Me.**
8 **Indeed,** would **you** ever **|annul My judgment?**
Would **you |condemn Me that you might be |justified?**
9 **+** *if***Do you ›have** an **arm like El**'s**?**
And can **you |thunder** *i***with** a **voice like His?**
10 **Ornament** yourself *pr***then**
with **augustness and loftiness,**
And with **splendor and honor you shall clothe** yourself**.**
11 **Scatter** forth the **ragings of your anger;**
+ *see***Discern every proud** one **and abase him.**
12 *see***Discern every proud** one
and *c***bring him** into **submission;**
+ Crush the **wicked** *u***where they** are**.**
13 **Bury them in** the **soil together;**
Bind up their faces in the **burial|** crypt**.**

40:2 ~~~ **admonish** Him: MT be an **admonisher.**

14 +**Then even I My**self **shall acclaim you,**
[t]**Because your right** hand has [c]**brought**
[l]**salvation to you.**
15 **Behold** [pr]**now,** the **behemoth**◊
[w]**that I** [d]**made** [wi]**as** I did **you;**
He [l]**eats grass like** the **ox.**
16 **Behold** [pr]**now his vigor in his waist,**
+ **His virility in** the **muscles of his belly;**
17 **He** makes **his tail** [l]**taut like** a **cedar;**
The **sinews of his awesome** thighs **are** [l]**intertwined.**
18 **His bones** are **tubings of bronze,**
His ribs like bars of iron.
19 **He** is the **first of** the **ways of El;**◊
The One Who [d]**made**[l] **him,**
He [c]**brought** [l]**close** to him **his sword.**
20 [t]**Indeed** the **hills** [l]**bear fodder for him,**
And all the wild **animals of the field** [l]**gambol there.**
21 **Under** the **lotuses he** [l]**lies**
In the **concealment of reeds and marsh.**
22 The **lotuses** [l]**overshadow him** for **his shade;**
The **oleanders of** the **wadi** [l]**surround him.**
23 [bd]**If** the **stream** [l]**threatens he** does **not** [l]**hurry away;**
He is trusting even [f]**if Jordan** [l]**rushes forth**
up **to his mouth.**
24 Can anyone [l]**take him** [i]**by his eyes**
Or [l]**pierce** his **nose** [i]**with** a **trap?**

40:15 behemoth: lit., **beasts** (possibly the hippopotamus).
40:19 He . . . El: *cf* Gn 1:24.

THE WILL OF GOD

A. E. Knoch's article, "The Will in God's Word," is adapted from a longer study by that title which appeared in the September 1950 issue of *Unsearchable Riches* (vol.41, p.209). We hope our readers will find it a helpful complement to Brother Knoch's study of "God's Will and Intention," reprinted in our March number. We plan to publish the two articles together as a booklet.

DAVID AND GOLIATH
1 Samuel 17

THE seventeenth chapter of 1 Samuel readily divides itself into segments. Each segment is a necessary part of the story of David and Goliath, and each segment plays a necessary part in depicting the typical significance of these events which look forward to the cross of Christ.

THE SETTING

17 + The **Philistines** [l]**gathered** `**their** armed **forces** together **for battle;** +**when they were** [l]**gathered** at **Socoh** [w] ›**of Judah,** + **they** [l]**encamped between Socoh and** [bt] **Azekah** [i]**at Ephes-dammim.** 2 + **Saul and** the **men of Israel were gathered and** [l]**encamped in the vale of Elah;** +**there they** [l]**arrayed** themselves in **battle** order **to meet** the **Philistines.** 3 +**Now** the **Philistines** were **standing** [f]**on this** side ›**on** ·a **hill,** +**while Israel** was **standing** [f]**on that** side ›**on** ·a **hill,** +**with** ·a **ravine between them.**

Israel's forces and those of the Philistines were encamped on opposite hills overlooking a ravine. The name of the place, "Ephes-dammim," is a compound of the Hebrew word meaning a *limit* (in the sense of *boundary*), and the Hebrew word for *bloods* (the plural is often used in the sense of *bloodshedding*). Typically it represents death, the boundary which flesh and blood cannot pass.

The name of the valley in which the forces of Judah encamped is also suggestive. It was named "Elah," which

is the Hebrew word for *execration* (or "curse"), as well as being used for the name of a certain tree (rendered "oak" in the A.V. and "terebinth" in the C.V.). This becomes particularly meaningful in light of Galatians 3:13 (*cf* Deut. 21:22,23): "Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes, for it is written, Accursed is everyone hanging on a pole."

THE FOE
(1 Samuel 17:4-7)

4 + ·A **champion** marched ˡ**forth from** the ⁷**array~ of** the **Philistines; his name** was **Goliath** ᶠ**of Gath,** a man of *his* **lofty six cubits and** a **span.** 5 + A **bronze helmet** was **on his head, and he** had **put on**ˡ a **scale body-armor,** ⁺**with** the **weight of the body-armor** being **5,000 bronze shekels.** 6 + He had **bronze greaves** *on* **above his feet, and** a **bronze scimitar between his shoulders.** 7 + The **shaft of his spear** was **like** a **heddle-rod of** the **weavers**ˡ**, and** the **cutting-blade of his spear** was **600 iron shekels.** + **The bearer**ˡ of his **large shield went**ˡ **before him.**

Next the narrative introduces the foe with dread description. Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the description is the number six, which the Bible attaches to man and the wild beast (Rev.13:18). *Six* cubits and a span, over nine feet, was Goliath's height. *Six* hundred iron shekels was the weight of his spearhead. *Six* different pieces of armor are mentioned, counting the shield borne by its bearer. *Six* pieces of armor and weaponry are mentioned as worn or carried by Goliath (one bronze greave for each leg). Goliath's name is mentioned *six* times in the Bible (1 Sam.17: 4,23; 21:9; 22:10; 2 Sam.21:19; and 1 Chron.20:5).

For ages humanity has stood in fear looking into the valley of the shadow of death. There is a giant in the valley! He holds in his hand the sword of death! (*cf* Heb.2:

14-15). We are petrified with fear! Oh, that there were a Hero who could enter that valley and slay the giant!

THE CHALLENGE
(1 Samuel 17:8-11)

8 + **He** ˡ**stood and** ˡ**called** out **to** the **arrays of Israel;** + **he** ˡ**said to them, Why should you** march **forth** ›**in array**‾ for **battle?** Am **I not** ·a **Philistine? And you** are **servants** ›**of Saul.** ⁷**Choose~ for you**rselves a **man and let him** come **down** ›**against me.** 9 **If he should** *all* **prevail** ›**in fighting**‾ `with **me and** ‾**smite me,** ⁺**then we will become** › **servants to you.** ⁺**Yet if I´ should** *all* **prevail** ›**over him and** ‾**smite him,** ⁺**then you will become** › **servants to us, and you** must **serve** `**us.** 10 ⁺**Then the Philistine** *lsa* **vaunted, I´ challenge** `the **arrays of Israel** ·**this** ·**day! Give** › **me** such a **man and let us** ˡ**fight together.** 11 ⁺**When Saul and all Israel** ˡ**heard** `**these words of the Philistine,** + **they were** ˡ**dismayed and exceedingly** ˡ**fearful.**

"Send *one* to fight on your behalf!" What a challenge this is! Immediately it calls for us to examine ourselves. Is there one among us who can meet the challenge with victory? Is there one in all of humanity who can walk into the valley of death and come back out unscathed? Is there one who can destroy the power of death and lead humanity through it like Moses leading Israel through the parted sea? No, no one is qualified, "not one is just—not even one" (Rom.3:10).

"Choose for yourselves a man . . . . Give me such a man . . . " (verses 8 & 10). It is interesting that the concept of headship presented here is so in line with the purpose of God and with much of Paul's exposition of the evangel. Paul repeatedly contrasted Christ and Adam, and designated Christ as "the last Adam *Who became* a vivifying Spirit" (1 Cor.15:45). The importance of Christ becom-

ing flesh was vital so that He might truly be the Head of humanity. There is One "Man, Christ Jesus, Who is giving Himself a *correspondent Ransom* for all" (1 Tim.2:5,6).

David came, an unlikely candidate for the job in Saul's estimation, but he won the victory, and eventually became king, and all of Israel came under his leadership and authority. Christ came as the Lamb of God, the flesh could see nothing in Him to desire as King, yet He won the victory, and all humanity will come under His Headship.

DAVID'S BACKGROUND AND COMING
(1 Samuel 17:12-22)

12 + **David** was the **son of** ˙**this Ephrathite man from Bethlehem of Judah;** + **his name** was **Jesse, and he** ›**had eight sons.** + **In** the **days of Saul, the man was old,** –*in*›**advanced in** 7**years~.** 13 +**Yet the three elder sons of Jesse** had l*go*l**left** and ¯**gone following Saul to** the **war.** + The **name**s **of his three sons who had gone** *i***to** the **war** were **Eliab the firstborn,** + **his second, Abinadab, and the third Shammah;** 14 +**as** for **David, he** was **the youngest.** + **The three elder** sons **had gone following Saul,** 15 +**yet David** would **go**l **and return**l **from** attendance **on Saul to graze** `the **flock of his father** at **Bethlehem.**

16 + **The Philistine** came l**close early**¯ in the morning **and** in the **evening**¯ **and** l**stationed** him**self** 7in **front of Israel**0 for **forty days.**

17 + **Jesse** l**said to his son David, Take** *pr*›**now for your brothers** an **ephah of** ˙**this** ˙**toasted grain and** ˙**these ten** loaves of **bread, and** c**bring** them **rapidly** to **the camp to your brothers.** 18 **And** l**bring** `**these ten** 7**fresh** ˙**milk cheeses~ to the chief** officer **of** their **contingent.** +**Also you should check** ›**about** the **well-being** `of **your brothers and** l**procure** `a **surety of them.** 19 + **Saul and they and all** the **men of Israel** were **in the vale of Elah, fighting with** the **Philistines.**

20 +**So David** c**rose** l**early in** the **morning and** l**let** `**the flock go** *on*›**with** a **keeper**l**;** + **he** l**took up** the supplies **and** l**went just as Jesse had instructed him.** +**When he** l**came** to **the round** camp**,** + **the army** was ˙march**ing forth to the array, and they shouted** *i***for war.** 21 +**Now Israel and** the **Philistines were arranging** in **array to meet array.** 22 + **David** l**let** `**the** *all*›**supplies go from** *on* **him** *on*›**to** the **hand of the keeper**l **of supplies;** + **he** l**ran** to **the array and** l**came and** l**asked** › **his brothers** ›**about** their **well-being.**

Considerable space is given to background information on David at this time. The designation of Jesse as an Ephrathite from Bethlehem echoes Micah 5:2. "And you, Bethlehem Ephratah, inferior to be among the mentors of Judah, from you shall One fare forth for Me to become Ruler in Israel."

David was the *eighth* son (verses 12-14), and is thus a new beginning, typical of the new creation. The eighth day was for circumcision—the cutting off of the flesh. Noah was an *eighth* (2 Pet.2:5), the eighth in genealogy after Adam (Gen.5), and there were eight people in the ark from whom humanity populated the earth. These eighths are one step beyond the perfection or completeness of seven, and represent Christ. He was not only "Firstborn of every creature" (Col.1:15), but also the "Firstborn from among the dead" (Col.1:18), and thereby the beginning of the new creation.

THE TIMING OF DAVID'S COMING

Upon first notice, verse 16 seems misplaced. It is as if the section giving us the background on David was split apart and this verse slid in between. "The Philistine came close early in the morning and in the evening and stationed himself in front of Israel for forty days" (1 Sam.17:16). Except for the mention of the time elements, this information has

already been given. It is inserted here because of the timing of David's arrival on the scene.

Notice first that the challenge comes both in the morning and in the evening. This reminds us of the *shema,* the famous passage from Deuteronomy 6:4-9, which has been considered a Jewish statement of faith: "Hear Israel! Yahweh is our Elohim; Yahweh the only One. So you will love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your intensity. These words which I am instructing you today will come to be in your heart. Repeat them . . . when you lie down and when you arise . . . ."

The words were to be repeated throughout the daily events of life. Two of the times singled out for mention are morning and evening. They were to begin their day and end their day with these thoughts. But how can the day begin or end with anything but fear, when the giant is strutting and mocking and challenging from the valley? This is the question asked by the flesh.

THE TESTING OF THE FLESH

"The Philistine . . . stationed himself in front of Israel for forty days" (1 Sam.17:16). Forty is a number associated with testing, probation, or chastisement. Israel wandered forty years. Christ fasted forty days. Moses' life is divided into forty year periods. The spies searched out the promised land for forty days. Forty days and nights of rain launched Noah into a new world, and many more examples could be given.

But the point of this forty days is about to be made in the following verse. We have said that Israel on the hill represents humanity overlooking the valley of the shadow of death, and that Goliath represents Satan, who holds the sword of death. Humanity is subject to fear and despair. In addition, Israel on the hill, led by Saul, represents service in the flesh. Israel's fear and inability to meet such a foe

represents the flesh's inability to fulfill the just requirements of the law. Death and unrighteousness are inseparably linked.

Immediately upon informing us that Goliath was stationed against Israel for forty days, Jesse sends David to the camp to take supplies to his brothers and to be sure of their well-being. The narrative makes the completion of the period of testing or probation the key factor for the commissioning of David. Saul, and all the array of devoted flesh were defeated by the mere presence of Goliath. They shouted to bolster each other's courage, yet the entire array cowered in fear from the boast of the one foe. Saul stood head and shoulders above all the others of Israel, and this should probably have been his battle, but even he was defeated by fear. The flesh could present no one to meet the foe.

"For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit" (Rom.8:3-4). "The time purposed by the Father" had come, and "when the full time came, God delegates His Son, come of a woman, come under law, that He should be reclaiming those under law" (Gal.4:2-4). We will return to this Galatian passage soon, because its context is the heart of the issue typified by David's coming.

THE PROVISIONS

David (the name is based on the Hebrew root meaning "Fond," or "Beloved," *cp* Matt.3:17 etc.) comes from Bethlehem (meaning "house of bread") bearing grain, loaves of bread and cheeses. His coming delivers Saul's army. To them his coming is typically the *bread of life*. The ephah of grain brought by David is the same amount that was gleaned by

Ruth the day the kinsman redeemer instructed the reapers to leave *handfuls on purpose* for her. That was the day she labored with the reapers and was satisfied with their meal of bread and wine (Ruth 2:11-17).

The *number ten* is indelibly stamped on the provisions that David brought. It is the number of commandments on the tables of stone which summarize the totality of the law. Much more could be said about the number ten, but suffice it to say that this number occurs three times in David's provision. The word itself appears twice, in reference to the ten loaves and the ten cheeses, and once it appears indirectly, in the measurement called an ephah. An ephah is equal to ten omers (Ex.16:36). An omer is the usual amount for a meal offering, especially for those who were too poor to bring anything more (Lev.5:7,11; 6:20; Num.5:15; 28:5). And the omer, one tenth of an ephah, is the amount of manna that each Israelite was to gather each day (Num.16:14-36). So all this provision brought by David represents the provision of the cross of Christ, and its completeness in satisfying our need. As with the brim-filled water pots at Cana's wedding, there is no lack in the supply of Christ.

THE CHARACTER OF THE COMMISSIONED ONE

Jesse's confidence in David to carry out his bidding is seen to be well placed. David rises early to do his father's bidding. David is a good shepherd. He does not leave his sheep unguarded, but leaves them under the protection of a keeper (v.20). ". . . he took up the supplies and went *just as Jesse had instructed him.*" He left the supplies in the charge of the keeper of supplies and ran to the array to see his brothers, even though they were heading to battle (v.21). These are the actions of one who delights to do his father's will (*cf* Psa.40:8).

J. Philip Scranton

BY NO MEANS, TILL

THE CLOSER the ministry of Jesus came to the cross, the more it became evident that the people of Israel were not yet being saved from their sins. This was necessary during that period, for the Lord *must* go away into Jerusalem and suffer much from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and the third day be roused (Matt.16:21) before He could appear as Zion's Redeemer Who eliminates their sins (*cf* Isa.59:20; Psa.14:7; Rom.11:26,27). But this did not stop Jesus from exposing the hypocrisy and stubbornness of the people, especially their leaders. It only increased His sorrow and deep compassion in reference to the present, and His fervent anticipation for the future when all Israel shall be saved.

JERUSALEM! JERUSALEM!

Our Lord's lament over Jerusalem is often cited as evidence supporting the theory of human free will and the idea that despite the gift of His Son for sinners, God must acquiesce in the rejection of the "offer" of salvation. No! His cry indicates nothing of the kind. To suggest this is to make a mockery of the exultant revelation that God locks up all in stubbornness *that* He may be merciful to all (Rom.11:32). And it makes a failure of the One Who came to save His people from their sins.

The sorrow of our Lord over Jerusalem is not made less genuine by His awareness that this people would be willing to be assembled in the day of His potent power (Psa.110:3). Because the sorrow is not everlasting it is no

less real in the heart of the compassionate Saviour for the moment, or for the forty years ahead, or still today nearly two thousand years beyond those terrible hours. Nevertheless, we need to realize that the sorrow is not one of hopeless despair. It is not the horror of hopelessness. Like our own sorrow today over the loss of those who have been put to repose, our Lord's grief is not a disconsolate heartbreak divorced from expectation (*cp* 1 Thess.4:13).

"Jerusalem! Jerusalem! who art killing the prophets and pelting with stones those who have been dispatched to her! How many times do I want to assemble your children in the manner a hen is assembling her brood under her wings—and you will not! Lo! left is your house to you desolate" (Matt.23:37,38).

It is real and heavy sorrow. But it will end, as Jesus avows: "For I am saying to you: You may by no means be perceiving Me henceforth, *till* you should be saying 'Blessed is He Who is coming in the name of the Lord!'" (Matt. 23:39). There is sorrow in the definite and strong negative, "by no means," but there is sure and certain hope in the little word "till."

TILL YOU SHOULD BE SAYING

Jesus is emphasizing the certainty of woes in Matthew 23. No less than seven times he cries out, "Woe to you!" (23:13,15,16,23,25,27,29). So it is not surprising that, when God's promise concerning Jesus is ignored, Matthew 23:37-39 is seen as a message of bleak and hopeless sorrow. But believers ought to be always ready to search for and hold fast to those revelations of expectation and trust, giving the divine rather than the human aspect.

We find Jesus doing two things here: First He faces the present reality of Jerusalem's blindness leading soon to destruction and desolation; and then He grasps hold of a word of God concerning the future enlightenment and

happiness of this same people. The reality of the present sorrow prepares the way for the future reality of exultant joy. The first must be true so that the second will also come about.

The 118th Psalm is the passage of Scripture seized by the Lord as He laments over Jerusalem. "Acclaim Yahweh, for He is good! [*cf* Matt.19:17] for His benignity is eonian. Let Israel surely say, His benignity is eonian . . . . From my constriction [*cf* Matt.26:38,39], I called on Yah; Yah answered me with a wide place. Yahweh is for me; I shall not fear what a human may do to me . . . . I am acclaiming You, for You have answered me, and You became mine for salvation. The stone which the builders rejected, it came to be for the head of the corner. From Yahweh came this; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day Yahweh has made; let us exult and rejoice in it. Oh Yahweh, do save us! Oh Yahweh, do prosper us! *Blessed in the name of Yahweh is he who is coming;* we bless you from the house of Yahweh . . ." (Psa.118:1,2,5,6,21-26).

Do we suppose the constriction and rejection is more certain than the willing acclamation and prosperity? Jerusalem represents the people of Israel. It was the very center of Israel in leadership and worship teeming with the scribes and Pharisees, blind guides, hypocrites, who were whitewashed sepulchers. Like David two thousand years before, and like Jesus in the present hour, they were about to know what constriction was all about. By no means would they perceive Jesus as their Saviour *till* He returns in power and glory.

The traits of stubbornness are necessary. They do not signify evidence of irredeemableness but of the need of a great and true Redeemer. The task is great, but that only makes the glory of God all the greater when He undertakes and carries out His operation of deliverance. It is our lack of faith in God's declarations and our lack of reliance

on His wisdom, power and righteousness when we suggest the desolation is final and everlasting. What a tragedy to think that the sorrows of the week to come, faced by the Lord in Matthew 23, would never bring an end to His cry over Jerusalem or His wider sorrow over the stubbornness and groanings of humanity!

AFTER THE DESOLATION

The word and operations of God do not end with desolation:

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Mankind in heaven, and then *all the tribes of the land* shall grieve, and they shall see the Son of Mankind coming on the clouds of heaven with power and much glory" (Matt. 24:30). *They* will grieve, but, unlike their Lord's cry over Jerusalem, their lament will be a weeping in the joy of realization. For they will know Him as the One Who is loving them and looses them from their sins (Rev.1:5). "Lo! He is coming with clouds, and every eye shall be seeing Him—those, also, who stab Him—and all the tribes of the land shall be grieving over Him. Yea! Amen!" (Rev.1:7).

The scene includes specific people. It includes the Lord coming in the Name of Yahweh-Saviour. It includes those who stab Him, that is those like the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23:13-36, against whom Jesus pronounced the sevenfold woe. It includes all the tribes of the land, the twelve-tribed nation of Israel, whom Jesus came to save from their sins.

These people cannot be facing an everlasting hell. These have experienced desolation, but in the scene of Revelation 1:5-8 the desolation has passed. And yet they have shown themselves no better, and surely much worse, than the scribes and Pharisees of some nineteen hundred years ago. The words of expectation are no less certain of fulfillment than the words of woe.

WHEN WILL THESE THINGS BE?

Unlike Israel as a whole, the disciples heard these promises with some measure of understanding. Hence they asked "When will these things be?" (Matt.24:3). This was not only in reference to the destruction of the temple (24:2), but also in reference to the time when all Israel will raise their voices in exalting the blessedness of the One Who will come in the name of the Lord, that is, the name Jesus, which means Saviour. Not only the sorrow, but even more the joy that follows! When will these *things* be?

Some have felt that this promise was fulfilled in Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem, when the people shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be He Who is coming in the name of the Lord! Hosanna among the highest!" (Matt. 21:9). But although this event appears after the record of the Lord's cry over Jerusalem in Luke's account (*cf* Luke 13:34; 19:38), the sequence in Matthew seems to reflect the historical order of events better. In any case Jesus was not then recognized or appreciated as the triumphant Saviour and exalted Lord, nor could He have been prior to His death and resurrection. That entry into Jerusalem was, at best, a foretaste of the glory to come, and even at that it was loaded with irony. It was not that glory foreseen in Psalm 118:26 and promised by Jesus in Matthew 23:39.

It will begin to occur when the Lord *does assemble* all the children of Israel in the manner a hen is assembling her brood under her wings. It will come about in a time of great distress, when the Son of Mankind "shall be dispatching His messengers with a loud sounding trumpet, and they shall be assembling His chosen from the four winds, from the extremities of the heavens to their extremities" (Matt.24:31). But it will expand even more in significance and realization when the words of Isaiah 45:20-25 are fulfilled: "Convene yourselves and come; come close together, delivered ones of the nations . . . . Turn toward

Me and be saved, all the limits of the earth, for I am El, and there is no other. By Myself have I sworn; from My mouth has gone forth righteousness, a word that shall not turn back; for to Me shall bow every knee, and every tongue shall swear fealty; only in Yahweh—one will say to Me—are righteousness and strength. Unto Him shall each one come, and all who were heated against Him shall be ashamed. In Yahweh shall they be justified, and shall all the seed of Israel boast."

Nothing that has yet occurred has manifested the glory of that declaration. The destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. represented much of what our Lord said about the desolation ahead, and there is still much constriction and sorrow to come. But the boasting of the seed of Israel in their Saviour as Justifier and Lord, and the acclaiming of His great Name by the nations, these glorious events are still to come.

But they will come! They will come, perceived by every eye. And they will come as God's accomplishment, not due to human repentance and faithfulness, but with the display of His own "power and glory" (Matt.24:30).

THE SAVIOUR'S NAME

The great name of the Lord is Yahweh-Saviour. In the Hebrew Scriptures this name is transliterated as "Joshua." In the later Scriptures, translated from the Greek, it appears, in English translations, as "Jesus." This is the name given by God, through His messenger speaking to Joseph, "Now [Miriam] shall be bringing forth a Son, and you shall be calling His name *Jesus,* for He shall be *saving* His people from their sins" (Matt.1:21). This name must not be left unrecognized and unappreciated in blindness and woe.

Now in Matthew 23:39 Jesus says of Himself that He will come in the name of the Lord, which surely will focus on His identification as Saviour. He will come as Jesus, the

Saviour Who is Lord, not as He held that name in humiliation at that time, not as the Saviour in promise, not as the Saviour in establishing the basis of salvation through His death, entombment and resurrection, but as the Saviour in realization.

When Jesus returns to Jerusalem in that day, He will come, as we have noted, with power and glory. The full revelation of His saving operations will not arrive all at once, but the process of revelation will begin, and with each step of revelation, the people will avow, "Blessed is He Who is coming in the name of the Lord!" The desolation and blindness of Israel will be swept away with the words of Revelation 1:5,6, "To Him Who is loving us and looses us from our sins by His blood and makes us a kingdom and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and might for the eons of the eons! Amen!"

WOE TO YOU, TILL

The glory of the Saviour's power is that He saves the stubborn, He saves the sinner, He saves the hypocrite, the stupid and the blind! The woes pronounced on the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23:13-36 are epitomized in verse 38. "Lo! left is your house to you desolate." They are the ones who, by no means, will perceive the Saviour in realization and blessing, *till* He comes in power and glory and they say, "Blessed is He!"

Those cursed by the woes of the judging of Gehenna (Matt.23:33) are specifically in view here. All of Israel suffers from the desolation upon Jerusalem, but this clearly involves their leaders. It is Jerusalem including all its sinners, its poor and oppressed and those called to discipleship, but also its leaders, the scribes and Pharisees, that will rejoice in Him in that day. It is Jerusalem, and it is the entire nation of Israel that will be saved. Their joy will not be satisfaction that they have done well in preparing them-

selves for His coming, but the joy of those who have justly experienced woe but have been saved out of all woe and every curse and entrenched stubbornness by their Lord.

This means there is no such thing as everlasting woe. There is real woe to come, even as the Lord suffered real sorrow and affliction. By no means can it be avoided. But it lasts only till the Lord comes and makes Himself known as the Saviour.

This revelation will increase so that eventually, beyond the thousand year kingdom itself, ". . . death will be no more, nor mourning, nor clamor, nor misery; they will be no more, for the former things passed away" (Rev.21:4). The Saviour will save from sin, and this means He also saves from woe and lamentation and gnashing of teeth. Finally, in the name of Jesus, every knee shall be bowing, and every tongue will be avowing "that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:10,11).

D.H.H.

CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Since the death of Herman Rocke two years ago, my work on the Concordant Version of the Old Testament has admittedly slowed. But I have been able to complete the typewritten translation of 2 Samuel and the two books of Kings, besides the revision of the Minor Prophets which Brother Rocke and I were preparing together at that time. This left revision work only for Genesis through Deuteronomy, and I have completed this for Exodus and Leviticus.

In the meantime all of the "poetry" and much of the historical and prophetic portions have been entered into the computer for typesetting. A great deal of final checking and proofreading lies ahead before the entire CVOT can be published. But we are hopeful that limited editions of some of the previously unprinted portions can be prepared in "notebook" form for those interested. Our plans are to issue the first of these this summer with an edition of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs.

D.H.H.

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 The Judgment of the Nations
162 It is Yahweh's
170 Eon, as Indefinite Duration
181 The Unachievable Reward
185 Coming with Power and Much Glory

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 1998
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

THERE is a measure of irony in Paul's comments to Timothy concerning those who wanted to be teachers of the law (*cf* 1 Tim.1:3-11). In teaching differently from Paul by bringing in the law, they did not know what they were getting themselves into. Those who insist on adding the precepts of the law to the evangel must recognize that they are putting themselves under the authority of the law. If they fail in keeping one of its instructions, they fail in all.

But to teach differently from the evangel is to oppose the sound teaching God entrusted to Paul, and this is against the law. The law clearly states that nothing is to be added or taken away from what God has said (Deut.4:2). To add the law to the evangel is just as much disobedience to the law as (using some of Paul's examples here) to malign or murder or lie! Teachers of the law need to recognize that it is against the law to take away from or add to the evangel of the glory of the happy God, because this evangel is God's word to us.

But, thankfully, we are not under the law. We are under grace (Rom.6:14). It is grace, not the law, that encourages and directs us not to add to or subtract from the evangel, though it is a struggle (*cf* Col.2:1; 1 Thess.2:2) in the face of current philosophy, empty seduction and human tradition (Col.2:8).

Those who oppose the evangel by teaching the law are also under grace, and, by their sin of adding to God's word, they cannot lose what Christ has gained for them. But they certainly lose a great deal of present joy, as well as reward at the dais. And their errors are harmful to fellow believers, especially to those who are not well grounded in the faith.

There are many other teachings, supposedly based on scripture, which oppose the evangel of the happy God. Revelations concerning God's indignation and judgments (added to certain mistranslations), and especially passages from the Lord's ministry to Israel, are often used to support the idea of eternal punishment, despite the fact that Christ came to save sinners (see the articles starting on pages 147, 170 and 185). But do those who teach this terrible doctrine apprehend what they are insisting? In being "stubborn to the truth" of Romans 5:12-19, Colossians 1:16-20 and 1 Timothy 4:9-11, for instance, they stand on shaky ground if their view of God's indignation is correct (Rom.2:8,9).

We have all heard teachers use Job 38:2 as a basis for dismissing Job's faithful confidence in God's deity (e.g., 1:20; 2:10). They have taken the position of Job's associates (despite Yahweh's reproof in 42:7), claiming that Job's sufferings represented God's just judgment against his sins stemming from his wrong choices. This is just the opposite of what we have been finding in the book of Job (see p.162), and it is wholly opposed to the evangel of gratuitous grace (*cf* Rom.3:23,24) and divine glory (*cf* Rom.11:32-36).

On the other hand, teachers will invariably commend David and criticize Saul for their responses to the challenge of Goliath (see p.181). But the view of the evangel, voiced by many, as a message calling for human cooperation with God in the achievement of salvation is not the way of faith. It is purely the way of Saul, founded on confidence in the flesh.

Here again such teachers do not apprehend what they are saying. If they are right, then Job's consummation and David's future, and *theirs* as well, is bleak and hopeless. No wonder Paul kept fighting for the evangel of the glory of the happy God!

D.H.H.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE *NATIONS*

NATIONS have a destiny as well as individuals. Israel is an eonian nation (2 Sam.7:24). Other nations will endure eonian chastening, or receive eonian life, according to their treatment of our Lord's brethren (Matt.25:46). We miss much if we confound nations with individuals, and confuse the time of their judgment and reward with that of the persons who compose them. The fact that Israel *as a nation* is to live and rule until the consummation does not by any means imply that every individual in it possesses eonian life, and will share in the kingdom when it comes. Far from it. Only those who died in *faith* will receive their allotment in the kingdom at the resurrection of the just.

There are many parables in the Scriptures which deal with the individuals, such as the harvest, the darnel, the fishing, etc. But these are not specifically referred to *nations* as we have in Matthew 25:31-46. Individuals in Israel will also be judged at the commencement of the kingdom.

The mere fact that this parable occurs in *Matthew* should settle the matter, for this account is devoted especially to the King, and contains the kingdom charter (Matt.5-7). Here Christ quotes Isaiah (42:1-3) to the effect that *judging* shall He be reporting to the *nations* (Matt.12:18). In this Matthew differs from the other accounts, for in them our Lord appears in different characters. The Servant of Mark, the Man of Luke, and the divine Son of John dealt with individuals, as a rule.

Matthew is the *kingdom* account. It is intensely *national*. In it Christ forbade His apostles even to go on a road of

the *nations* (10:5). The testimony is not merely to men, but to *governors* and *kings* and the *nations* (10:18). At the time of the end *nation* shall rise against *nation* (24:7), and they will be hated by *all* of the *nations*. The evangel of the *kingdom* shall be heralded in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the *nations* (24:14). Therefore there is also a judgment at the inauguration of the kingdom, not of individuals, but of *nations,* as such, under the figure of sheep and kids. It is further illustrated by personifying the nations, comparing them to individuals. This has generally been taken literally, and so has led to much confusion, and to the idea that this is the "general judgment," in which those who do well receive eternal life, and others everlasting punishment (Matt.25:31-46).

THE PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND KIDS

The account as a whole is a *parable*, in which a shepherd's dealings with his sheep and kids are compared with the King's dealings with the nations. Each sheep or kid represents one nation, the former those favorable to Israel and the latter those who did not treat them well. Within the parable are several other figures. First, the *severing* is *as* that of a shepherd, a plain *simile* (25:32). Then, by the figure of *personification,* or *impersonation,* the animals, or the nations, are transformed into human beings. Each one of the sheep at His right hand is given a *kingdom* allotment made ready for them from the disruption. All this is only a graphic illustration of our Lord's dealings with the *nations,* not the individuals.

At the present time God is dealing with the nations *as a whole* (as well as with individuals in them) in contrast to Israel. This also is explained to us by means of a figure, the olive tree, hence has often been misunderstood. We are so selfishly preoccupied with our own personal salvation and destiny that we fail to see God's wider sphere of

operations, which are national in their scope. God deals with Israel as a nation as well as with the saints and sinners in it. He has functions for the other nations, either singly or as a whole, besides calling His own out of them. At the present time the *nations* are enriched through the discomfiture of Israel, quite apart from the few believers in them (Rom.11:12). The whole world is conciliated, not only those who receive this conciliation and are reconciled. The nations, in the olive tree, God's means of world illumination, will be hewn out without affecting the destiny of a single believer in them (Rom.11:16-24).

When the stone from heaven falls from on high upon the great image (Dan.2:45) it smashes all the great political organizations set up by man. On a smaller scale this has often happened to the nations of the earth. In fact it is happening oftener than ever in our own days. Yet practically always, especially when the people are distinct, with their own language and customs and history, the nation arises afresh, even after long periods of non-existence. The Polish nation is a well-known example. It goes far back in history, and has varied much in power and size, from a first-class domination to extinction. When Israel is restored from being no nation in the political sense to the leading world state, then the other nations must be given entirely new forms and proper places in the new alignment. The prophets deal with the place of the nations in that day, but enough is said at the end of the Unveiling to give us an outline. Satan is bound so that he cannot deceive the nations (Rev.20:3). They shall all come and worship Yahweh (Rev.15:4). Later, on the new earth, the nations shall walk in the light of the New Jerusalem and carry their honor and glory into it, and shall partake of the healing of the tree of life (Rev.21:24-26; 22:1-2).

If God deals with the nations, as such, at the present time, when no special nation is singled out to execute His

purpose in the earth, how much more should we expect Him to deal with nations, as such, when the chosen nation takes its place as Christ's complement in ruling the earth? At the commencement of the kingdom there must be a readjustment among the political powers of the earth to conform to the new regime. The King of Israel is also the Son of Mankind. He has all the rights and dignities which inhere in Adam as the head of the race. He is the Suzerain of all the kings of earth, and the Arbiter of the destiny of nations. He will assign to each nation its proper and preordained place in the kingdom.

Under *these* conditions we can readily understand and fully acquiesce in the principles of this judgment. Israel, as a nation, has been variously treated by the different nations of the earth during her long dispersion among them. They have suffered literal hunger and thirst and strangerhood and nakedness and imprisonment, as well as all that these suggest. By governmental action they have been deprived of the means of livelihood, denied the right to own land or become citizens, and have been exposed to the mercies of the populace without legal protection, and have been herded together in ghettos and otherwise robbed of their liberty. On the other hand, they have been so well treated in some lands that they have felt at home and have adapted the language of their hosts to their own use, and attained to wealth and influence far beyond the average.

The nations in the kingdom, during the millennium and in the new earth, will be allotted a place corresponding to their previous political treatment of Israel. Some will receive special blessing because they were kind to them. Others will be most severely disciplined because they had made no efforts to alleviate their lot. "These shall be coming away into chastening eonian, yet the just into life eonian." Such is the only possible import of these much-abused words, when they are kept connected with their context,

and viewed within the scope of the account which contains them. Matthew continues and completes the *kingdom* testimony of the prophets, and is in perfect agreement with it. As Son of Mankind our Lord will adjudicate among the nations. All wrong must be recompensed. It will not be revenge, such as the unregenerate Jew would like to have, but righteous adjudication, leading to the subjection of all to God at the consummation.

THE PROPHETS

Ezekiel is given the same title, "Son of Mankind," when he is told to announce God's judgment on the sons of Ammon: "Thus says my Lord Yahweh: Because you clap your hand, and you stamp your foot, and you are rejoicing with all your disdain from the soul over the ground of Israel, therefore, behold Me! I will stretch out My hand against you and give you as plunder to the nations, and I will cut you off from the peoples and destroy you from the countries; I shall exterminate you. Then you will know that I am Yahweh" (Ezek.25:6,7). So did God deal with the nations while Israel was still before Him. But now He is conciliated, and Israel is not avenged. All waits the day of their restoration. But then the accounts of the nations with Israel must be settled.

The prophet Amos records a series of retributive judgments on the nations round about because they harmed his people Israel. We will quote a few keywords of each, to show their drift. ". . . Because they threshed the pregnant women of Gilead with iron spikes. I will send fire upon the house of Hazael" (Amos 1:3-4). ". . . Because they carried away into exile a total deportation, to surrender it to Edom. I will send fire upon the wall of Gaza" (1:6-7). Tyre remembered not the covenant of brothers, so fire devours her citadel (1:9-10). Edom pursued his brother with the sword, so a fire is sent into Teman. Ammon does evil in

Gilead in order to widen their boundary, so a fire ravages the wall of Rabbah (1:11-14). Vengeance is Yahweh's, and He watched over His people and judged their enemies.

Obadiah actually gives us an example of the judgment recorded in Matthew. Speaking of Edom, he says: "Because of wrong done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off for the eon" (1:10). The basis of the judgment is found in these words (Obad.1:15,18):

> For near is the day of Yahweh over all the nations.
> Just as you do, it shall be done to you.
> Your dealing shall return on your own head.
>
> And the house of Jacob will become a fire,
> And the house of Joseph a blaze,
> And the house of Esau will be straw;
> They will flare up among them and devour them.
> And there shall not be a survivor for the house of Esau,
> For Yahweh speaks.

FIRE EONIAN

The incongruity of putting those who fail to succor the Lord's brethren into a fire not prepared for them (Matt. 25:41) has doubtless caused many a questioning thought. This is further intensified when we find that the Slanderer, or Adversary, for whom it seems to have been prepared, is not cast into it at all at that time, but into the abyss (Rev. 20:3). There is no record that his messengers are ever cast into the lake of fire. Is the failure to help a Jew quite as culpable as the career of the arch enemy of God and man? Does it deserve the same punishment? To punish an individual who is guilty of neglecting the Lord's brethren in the same way as the Adversary himself will raise doubts in every heart that knows God's justice. The words "the adversary" may just as well refer to a class of persons as well as to Satan. All who have been adversaries of Israel belong

to this class.[1] And the nations who have been used by God to afflict them may well be represented under this name, for many of their trials came as the result of false accusations, such as the use of Christian blood in their ritual.

Israel was afflicted in Egypt nearly half a millennium (Gen.15:13,17). This is figured beforehand to Abraham by a smoking stove, and afterward, to Moses, by a burning thorn bush. These figures are worthy of our closest attention. Let us believe the Bible literally, as it stands, whenever this conforms to the facts. But when this is not the case, let us look at it with the eyes of an oriental, and seek the facts behind the figure. No one can take these pictures of Israel's oppression in Egypt as facts. They were not in a literal stove. They did not literally burn. The fire was a figure of affliction, and a most vivid and impressive one. Nevertheless, not only were they *not consumed,* but they *increased* greatly while undergoing it.

Not only nationally, but generally, the inauguration of the day of Yahweh is compared with fire. Malachi (4:1-3) foretells the fate of the wicked at the time under this figure. "For behold, the day is coming, consuming like a stove, and all the arrogant and all doing wickedness become stubble. And the coming day will set them aflame, says Yahweh of hosts, which shall not leave to them root or bough. Yet the Sun of Righteousness will radiate for you who fear My Name, and healing will be in Its wings. And you will come forth and frolic like calves of the stall. And you will tread down the wicked, for they shall become ashes under the soles of your feet in the day which I am making, says Yahweh of hosts." Is it not evident that, in the same era in

1. *Editor's note:* Although the present CV uses "Adversary" with a capital "A" in Matthew 25:41, A. E. Knoch's suggestion that the passage refers to the "adversary [class of nations]" and its messengers has much merit and should be considered in future editions of the Version.

which the *nations* are judged according to their treatment of our Lord's brethren, other evils will be cleared out of the kingdom? All wicked persons, whatever their nationality, will also find affliction, which is figured by fire.

The figure of fire is used freely of our Lord's ministry in Matthew's account. John the Baptist not only warned them that the ax was already lying at the root of the trees, and those which did not produce fine fruit would be hewn down and cast into the fire, but he characterized our Lord's ministry as two kinds of baptism, one in holy spirit and one in fire. He would winnow out the grain in the nation, yet He would also burn up the chaff with fire unextinguished (Matt.3:10-12). So that, even in Israel itself, the kingdom judgments are figured by fire. Our Lord repeats the Baptist's warning with special reference to false prophets (Matt.7:15-20).

This is still more clearly connected with the conclusion of the eon in the parable of the darnel. Even as they culled out the darnel at harvest time, so shall the Son of Mankind cull out of His kingdom all the snares and those doing lawlessness, and they shall be casting them into a furnace of fire (Matt.13:40-42). Should we apply this figure literally, these offenders would be actually burned in a furnace. Then the millennial kingdom would consist only of good, and there would be no need of an iron scepter. Since the darnel is a figure, so must the furnace and the fire be figurative. To carry the figure still further, as in the prophets, the wicked will be as ashes under the feet of those who fear Yahweh (Mal.4:3).

What is indicated by the eonian fire for the nations who do not succor the Lord's brethren in their distress may be apprehended best by considering the sufferings of the chosen nation themselves at the present time, before our very eyes, for this also is characterized as *torment in a flame.*

Antisemitism is called a "flame" in the Scriptures. Is

it not most appropriate to characterize its judgment as "fire"? *In this flame* the chosen nation suffers as it once did in Egypt. But *it is not burned up.* Notwithstanding its painful lot, its numbers have *increased.* And such is quite possible in the kingdom, for at its end Satan mobilizes a tremendous host that threatens to destroy the capital. This revolt could easily be accounted for if these nations, at a distance from Jerusalem, had been reduced to political slavery, and forced to submit by the iron rule. Otherwise why should they object to the fullness of physical blessing with which the earth will be filled at that time? Satan wishes to *rule.* His aim is political. He deceives the *nations.* It is a national uprising.

The unbeliever is usually allowed to monopolize the fire of the future. For them we reserve the flaming judgments of Yahweh's day, the unextinguished fires of Hinnom's vale, and the fiery lake which is the second death. But the believer also has his testing time, not indeed to determine his fate but his reward (*cf* 1 Cor.3:15). No one, perhaps, thinks of literal fire in this connection, for our works are not, as a rule, such as can be tested by actual flames. Yet the figure of fire is there, and we may as well prepare ourselves for a most searching investigation of the character of our deeds. Much of our service, we fear, will feed the flames and disappear.

GOSPEL PREACHING

An equally impossible pass is reached if we take the judgment of the nations as that of individuals. How many who have quoted the last verse of the chapter in preaching the gospel have made it clear to themselves or to their audience that "these" who "go away into everlasting punishment" (AV), do so, *not* because they are *sinners,* but *because they did not succor Christ's brethren according to the flesh*? And how many set forth the only road to

eonian life as the context demands? There is no repentance here, no faith in God, not even good *works,* except those done to suffering Israel. We may be sure that Paul would not tolerate such an evangel for this administration for a moment. Now it is *not* of works, but in *grace* through *faith* in God's word concerning Christ and His *sacrifice.* Physical relationship, which is paramount here, is entirely ruled out (2 Cor.5:16).

It is very little relief to shift this strange evangel (which is no evangel at all) to the time of the end, immediately before the Son of Man comes. No doubt this will be the crucial period, but there is no limitation in the passage. It would be most unjust to punish a nation for their attitude in this short period *alone* if their previous history had been favorable.

Indeed, at that time, *all* nations will hate those of them who are disciples of Christ (Matt.24:9). The time is not limited, and justice demands that the whole history of a nation be taken into account, just as in individual judgment, all the acts of each come under review, not only those in the hours of death.

What sort of an evangel have we here, that promises eonian life to the individuals who succor the Lord's brethren, and eonian chastening to those who do not! It is a message of works, pure and simple, done accidentally, as it were, by those who realize nothing of the gravity or significance of their acts. Now we know that Israel is scattered among *all nations,* so all governments will make contact with them. But will all individuals even find an opportunity to show their benevolence? Perhaps one in a thousand of earth's inhabitants belongs to this favored race. They live in large groups. How little opportunity there would be for most people to avail themselves of the means of obtaining eonian life, even if it seems so simple to perform the necessary duties!

IMPLICATIONS

But that which should make us hesitate is the fact that these works are done without faith in God, and in utter ignorance of His Christ, and without the aid of His sacrifice, without the least reference to His precious blood. Life apart from the death of Christ, and for the eons, sounds suspicious to everyone who knows the value of His work. We read that, apart from faith, it is impossible to be well pleasing to God (Heb.11:6). Even these brethren of His, who are succored, have no title to eonian life unless they believe. Yet, according to this passage if applied to individuals, one who feeds a Jew, whether he is a believer or not, thereby earns eonian life!

None of Israel will get into the kingdom on any such terms. Peter makes this very clear. Jesus Christ is the only one Who can save them. "There is no salvation in any other one, for neither is there any other name, given under heaven among men, in which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Many a Gentile today has fulfilled the conditions here laid down, but I am sure that he will not receive eonian life as his wages, for now God's righteousness comes to him who is *not* working but believing (Rom.4:4). Nationally, this message of succoring Israel no doubt has its place today, but individually it is impossible.

We implore all who use the threat of "everlasting punishment," and the promise of "eternal life" here given, to carefully consider the conditions which are set forth in each case, and fearlessly face the facts. If this is individual, it is eonian life awarded for a few good deeds, or eonian chastening for negligence within a very confined sphere of life, quite apart from God's grace based on Christ's blood, or faith of any kind, or the commission of any positive sin. Then the whole life is overlooked, and will not come into judgment at the great white throne, as this is only for the dead. I feel sure that, the more we inquire into the actual

words here given, the more we will be convinced that a personal application is not only contrary to the words themselves, but to all the rest of revelation.

Contrariwise, the more we investigate the details of this passage, the more we will be convinced of its national application, not only because of the express word to that effect, but because it will harmonize with the words of the prophets, and agree with all other passages on the same theme.

Perhaps no other passage has been so freely used to prove the endlessness of punishment. And now we see that it is an excellent passage to prove the opposite! The life of nations cannot be endless. The nullification or abrogation of every sovereignty and every authority and power at the consummation (1 Cor.15:24) makes nations obsolete. What kind of a nation is it which has no government? The time is coming when the Son, having subjected all, will Himself be subject, and God the Father be the only Suzerain, and His family the only government. The eonian life of nations has its limits, and so, of course, has eonian chastening. Because the life is *limited,* the "everlasting punishment" will end.

ADVANCES IN UNDERSTANDING

One of the greatest advances in truth in modern times was the placing of this passage in its proper time, at the beginning of the reign of Christ, and limiting its scope to the living, thus rescuing it from the "general judgment," with which it is so often confounded. Now we propose another advance, limiting it still further to the *nations* (as such) at that time, according to its own declaration. We have already insisted on this at various times but further study has clarified the details and led to the entire rejection of the thought that it might be applicable to individuals at the time of the end.

This leads to the interesting conclusion that *nations* may

have eonian life, or may be subjected to eonian chastening. That there will be nations in the thousand years and in the new earth is abundantly clear from the various references to them in the Unveiling. It is the essence of Christ's reign that He shall have authority over the nations and that He shall share this with the overcomers in Israel (Rev.2:26, 12:5). Even in the last eon, when priesthood is no more, the glory and honor of the nations will be carried into the holy city, new Jerusalem (Rev.21:26). As they will not war among themselves and will be under the iron club of the great King, there is no reason why the nations which exist when the kingdom is set up should not continue throughout its course, and thus have eonian life or chastening until the consummation.

HEEDING THE CONTEXT

The judgment of the nations as set forth by our Lord in Matthew has long been recognized as such by some, especially in contrast to the judgment of the individual at the great white throne. But even here there have been details which were not satisfactory. Gradually the light has been increasing. The final flash which illuminated the whole to full satisfaction came through the study of figures of speech. The literal interpretation grew more and more untenable. Once it became apparent that the *nations* are intended, not only by the sheep and the kids, but also by those who take part in the judgment, and not individuals, all of the difficulties vanished except that of making it clear to others.

Those who have grown up with the thought that this passage is the general judgment and gives us the destiny of the two classes into which all mankind is divided—the wicked and the just—have evidently never taken the context to heart, for only a small fraction of them have ever visited anyone in jail, or base their hopes upon the giving of

food, drink or clothing. Most of my readers will know how utterly contrary this is to the true evangel of God's grace. We therefore urge them with all kindness to *consider the context.* See how impossible it is to base eonian life for individuals on the action here spoken of. It is in conflict with the kingdom evangel, which demands repentance. It militates against the evangel for today, which excludes works. It is diametrically opposed to God's dealings with His creatures to give eonian life to anyone apart from Christ and His sacrifice.

Those who have already recognized that this judgment is not concerned with sinners as a whole, or with the general conduct of mankind, but is based only on contacts with the Lord's brethren, will find that this gives only partial relief. Even if this is confined to the time of the end, for which there is no adequate evidence, there still remains the impossibility of setting the eonian destiny of anyone on such grounds.

There was a time when I limited the action here to the time of the end. Destiny in the kingdom for each *nation,* it seemed to me, depended upon their attitude to Israel *at that time.* But this has its difficulties. The *judgment* is at that time, indeed, but the action being judged is not thus limited. It seems better to include the whole "times of the Gentiles" or eras of the nations, for at the time of the end the nations are angered, without exception (Rev.11:18) and *all* of them are in the toils of Babylon (Rev.14:8), and *all nations* will hate the disciples of Christ (Matt.24:9). There would be few sheep to stand at His right hand in that case. It seems far more just to deal with the nations according to *all* of their contacts with Israel, for this has varied greatly from time to time.

Now, however, that I see in this judgment the complete squaring of accounts between the nations and Israel, introductory to the setting up of the kingdom, all seems

supremely satisfactory. This is just what we should expect at the end of Matthew's account. It agrees with all the facts, for the Lord's brethren have been scattered among all nations and have been *politically* in distress most of the time, even when they managed to gain a good livelihood or amass wealth. And when the Son of Mankind sits on the *throne* of His glory, with *nations* before Him, what else can it be but the long delayed adjudication between Israel and the nations? Each must be assigned its place according to some standard, and the one given here is in full accord with the righteousness on which the kingdom is founded.

We submit this interpretation to the earnest and prayerful consideration of the saints, well aware that it may not immediately commend itself to all at first glance. As God has been patient with our tardy advance in this matter, so we hope to bear with all who cannot quickly loose themselves from conceptions long held dear. It is startling, at first, and seems incredible, that those well worn phrases, "eternal life" and "everlasting punishment" should have been so universally misapplied to saint and sinner, when the context so clearly contradicts it. But how much added light is thrown upon the page of prophecy when we see that the *nations* will be judged according as they have treated God's nation, and they, not individuals, will receive eonian chastening and eonian life. A. E. Knoch

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"THE OUTCOME OF INFINITE GRACE"

We have prepared a new edition of "The Outcome of Infinite Grace," by Loyal Hurley. This publication, written in a popular style, with Scripture quotations from the Authorized Version, serves as a helpful introduction to the great truth that God is the Saviour of all mankind. "In the end, God will be 'All in all,' 'for out of Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things.'" Included as well are two writings by Joseph E. Kirk, "The *Good* News Gospel," and "The Eons of the Bible with Concordance" (72 pages, plus cover; $3.50; $1.50 shipping; CA residents add sales tax).

IT IS YAHWEH'S

THE PLACE given to Satan in the book of Job is intensely interesting. The Hebrew word "satan" means "adversary" as rendered in the Concordant Version. He is the one who is adverse to God, who opposes that which would glorify God. However, if we carefully follow the revelations of this book it becomes obvious to us that this work of opposition is by no means a threat to either divine authority or responsibility.

The direct references to this personage in the first two chapters show us his subordinate position before Yahweh. He comes in the midst of "the sons of Elohim" on a certain day, presumably set by God. Yahweh Himself initiates the procedure by asking the Adversary to make a report of his activities (Job 1:7). It is Yahweh as well Who brings up the subject of Job's service and upright standing before Him. The power to afflict Job lies in Yahweh's hands alone; it would never have happened apart from His permission (1:11). He sets a certain limit on the Adversary (1:12), and though He reverses it later, it is reversed by His authority alone, as is the imposing of a new limitation in 2:6.

The only question that could remain is whether or not Satan manipulated Yahweh by the cunning way in which he sought this permission and its expansion. Few would want to claim that the Adversary gained the upper hand here. But if not, we must be ready to find what the book of Job says about God's overall purpose for His glory, against the background of Satan's adversity toward Him. Why did Yahweh agree to the Adversary's requests?

We must be prepared to face the possibility that God wanted this testing of Job, that He had His own purpose for Job's sorrows and pains, that this purpose was for Job's eventual good, and that it was ultimately for the glory of God. We must face this possibility boldly and honestly, so that we see that it is more than a possibility. It is a fact.

Throughout the long debate between Job and his associates, and in the speeches of Elihu, there is no direct reference to the Adversary. Job himself centers on Eloah as the cause of his sufferings, and the others seek to redirect the focus away from God and bring it squarely upon Job as a sinner. Satan is mostly ignored.

The most significant *indirect* reference to him occurs in 26:13 where Job says of God: "His hand travailed with the fugitive serpent." And this clearly brings praise to God as a passionate Creator and only disdain for the Adversary.

It is not until chapter 41 that attention is drawn again to Satan, and even here it is indirect. We see him only as he is pictured by a powerful and fearful animal called in Hebrew, *leviathan,* and in Greek, *dragon.* Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu mostly ignore the Adversary, but Yahweh concludes his words to Job with a lengthy discourse that, as a reference to the Adversary, puts this opposer in his proper place.

LEVIATHAN, DRAGON

The Hebrew word transliterated *leviathan* and rendered *dragon* in the Septuagint is associated with "fugitive serpent" and sea-monster in Isaiah 27:1, where all these terms speak of the Adversary: "In that day, Yahweh shall visit with His sword, hard, great and steadfast, upon the *dragon,* the fugitive serpent, even upon the *dragon,* the tortuous serpent, and He will kill the monster which is in the sea." This, in turn, points us to Revelation 12:3-13:4 and 20:1,2.

Here in Job 41 Yahweh refers to a crocodile-like creature with which Job must have been familiar. But it is not only its name that suggests there is an allusion to the Adversary in Yahweh's words. The character and characteristics of this creature parallel those of Satan.

The behemoth avoids contact with humanity, but as for the leviathan, the human is wise to avoid it. Yahweh questions Job about fishing for it (41:1,2). It is not simply that Job is not able[1] to capture the dragon, but that it would also be foolish to attempt it.

Something more than a common beast of the land and sea is indicated by Yahweh's words. It is an uncompromising creature that successfully refuses any submission with tender words in covenant with humanity (3,4). It will contribute nothing to human pleasure or profit (5,6). Job could not deal with it or have any hope of getting the better of it (7-9). Its cruelty debars approach and blocks any thought of bringing it under human control (10a).

In any confrontation between it and a human, the human is helpless. On the other hand, the dragon cannot station himself before Yahweh in confrontation for his gain (41:10b,11a). The Adversary did station himself in Yahweh's presence (1:6), but he only appeared to confront Him with a devious challenge. The consummation of Job's experiences will make it manifest that nothing occurred apart from God's purpose and intention.

Whatever is under the heavens, whether Job or Elihu or you or me, whether reptile or Adversary, *it is God's!* (Job 41:11b.)

This is that climax in the book of Job which leads to Job's exclamation of praise to God, "I know that You can

1. The word "can" is in lightface type, indicating that it is added for English idiom; it is agreeable with the context, but a lightface "do" or "would" might serve as well.

JOB 41:1-34

41 Can **you** ˡ**draw** out the **dragon**◊ ⁱ**with** a **fishhook,**
⁺**Or** ˡ**hold down his tongue** ⁱ**with** a **line?**
2 Can **you** ˡ**place** a **rush** rope **in his nose,**
⁺**Or** ˡ**pierce his jawbone** ⁱ**with** a **gaff?**
3 Would **he** ᶜ**make** ˡ**many supplications to you,**
ⁱᶠ**Or** ˡ**speak to you** with **tender** word**s?**
4 Would **he** ˡ**contract** a **covenant with you**
That **you may take him** ˃**as** a **servant** for the **eon?**
5 Can **you** ˡ**sport** ⁱ**with him as** with a **bird,**
⁺**Or** ˡ**tie him** up **for your maidens?**
6 Would **partners** ˡ**bargain over him**
That **they may divide him** up ᵇᵗ**among traffickers?**
7 Can **you** ˡ**fill his skin** ⁱ**with barbs**
⁺**Or his head** ⁱ**with** the **fishing spear?**
8 **Place your palm on him;**
Remember the **battle;**
you would **certainly not** ᶜ**do** it ˡ**again!**
9 **Behold,** one's◊ **hope is** prov**ed** a **lie;**
Even◊ ˃**at** the **sight** of **him** one **is** ˡ**hurled** down**.**
10 Is◊ he **not** too **cruel that** one **may rouse him?**
ᵃ**Who** ⁺**then** is **he** who can ˡ**station** him**self before Me?**
11 ᵃ**Who** can **confront Me and** ⁷would ˡ**fare well~?**
Whatever is **under the entire heavens, it** is **Mine.**
12 **I shall not** ᶜ**keep silence** about **his** ⁼**constitution**
⁺**Or** the **matter of his** grand **mastery**
that is **~without~ appraisal.**

41:1 dragon: or, **leviathan,** *cf* Jb 3:8; Is 27:1.
41:9 one's: lit., **his.**
41:9,10 Even . . . Is: Hb interrogative sign transposed from v.9b to v.10a.
41:11 7-~ would ˡ**fare well:** Hb **I** would **repay.**
41:12 ~-~ **without:** Hb **and grace of his.**

do all things, and no plan of Yours can be thwarted . . . . With the hearing of the ear I had heard of You, but now my eye sees You" (Job 42:2,5).

All that is said here reflects on God. In speaking of leviathan Yahweh directs attention to Himself as the Creator of this fierce power of adversity, and to His responsibility for such a creature. The words concern the dragon, but Job comes to *see* Yahweh.

THE DRAGON'S CONSTITUTION

Yahweh, Who travailed in making the fugitive serpent, knows all about his constitution and the greatness of his mastery (41:12). God has made him in such a way that he is impervious to human control or even influence (13-17). One after another Yahweh lists features of this reptile that picture those of Satan. Its closed eyes ("doors of his face") and its dreadful teeth (v.14) imply that we cannot know what he perceives or hope to approach him unscathed. But God, Who is over the Adversary both knows and controls him.

Like the coverings of the dragon's body (15-17), the Adversary is strongly shielded from us. The metaphors of the irradiating light of dawn (18), torches and fire (19), smoke and steam (20), and flaming embers and blaze (21) express the dangers of intense pain that the leviathan, whether reptile or spirit being, represents. In neck and body flaps and heart the dragon is immovable (22-24).

As human subjectors shrink back before the reptile, so also invisible subjectors recede when the Adversary breaks forth (25). This occurred in his operations toward Job, where no power or authority interfered. But Job does not need to despair because *whatever* is under the heavens, it belongs to God. Job 41:11 continues to dominate and shape every thought of this chapter.

Yet Yahweh still presses His point, more and more directed concerning the Adversary, less and less concerning a

13 [a]**Who has rolled** back **his surface garment?**
[a]**Who** can [l]**enter** [i]**through his double ~coat-of-armor~?**
14 [a]**Who has opened** the **doors**◇ **of his face?**
All **around his teeth** is **dread.**
15 His **~body~** is made of **channels of shields,**
Closed[l] by a **constricting seal.**
16 **One** [i]**to** the **other, they are** so [l]**close**
[+]**That** the **wind** can**not** [l]**enter between them.**
17 **They are** [l]**clung** together **each** [i]**to its fellow;**
They [l]**seize** each other **and** can**not be** [l]**parted.**
18 **His sneezings** [c]**make** the **light** [l]**irradiate,**
And his eyes are **like** the **eyelids of** the **dawn.**
19 Flaming **torches** [l]**go** out **from his mouth;**
Darts of fire [l]**escape** forth**.**
20 Out **from his snorting** nostril**s smoke** goes [l]**forth**
As from a **steaming cauldron** [+]**or** burning **rush**es**.**
21 **His soul** [m]**sets embers** [l]**aflame,**
And a **blaze** goes [l]**forth from his mouth.**
22 **In his neck** [l]**lodges strength,**
And shock [l]**romps before him.**
23 The **flaps of his flesh cling** together,
Solidly[l] set up**on him; it is** [l]**immovable.**
24 **His heart** is **solidly**[l] set **like stone,**
[+]**Even solidly**[l] set **like** the [q]**lower grindstone.**
25 [f]**At his lifting** up, the **subjectors** [l]**shrink** back;
[f]**At** his **breaking** forth**, they** [l]**recede.**
26 Though the **sword overtakes**[l] **him, it** does **no**t [l]**avail,**
As also the **spear,** the **dagger and** the **short arrow.**
27 **He** [l]**reckons iron** [>]**as crushed straw,**
Bronze [>]**as rotten wood.**
28 The **son of** the **bow**◇ can**not** [c]**make him** run [l]**away;**
Sling stones are turned to stubble for him.

41:13 ~~~ coat-of-armor: Hb **bridle.**
41:14 doors: dual in Hb.
41:15 ~~~ body: Hb **pride.**
41:28 son of the **bow:** i.e., the arrow.

reptilian beast. No human weapon can faze him (26-29). His own weapons explode with destruction (30-32).

"There is no one on the soil comparable to him who was made to be without dismay. He stares down on every haughty creature; he is king over every strutting beast" (Job 41:33,34). Such is the dragon. And with this, Yahweh concludes His speech.

WHO IS OVER WHOM?

What shall we say of this conclusion? Yahweh has not been delivering a lesson in zoology, or before that in physics and astronomy. He has been speaking of His wisdom and power, not simply as objective facts but as subjective realities that are involved in Job's world and experience, and so reflected in every human life.

What Yahweh has been saying has critical application to Job's sufferings and sorrows. God knows all things. God has made all things. The dragon may be greater than all creatures on the soil, but whatever is under the heavens, it is Yahweh's. To say that the dragon is incomparable to any other creature, operating without dismay, intimidating the haughty, and exercising authority over every strutting beast is dreadful praise, if that is all Yahweh has been declaring. But to conclude with this blunt description of entrenched power and authority *under the light of God's own wisdom and power* is masterful. By directing attention to the most daunting and dangerous of creatures, and showing that it belongs to Him and is under Him, Yahweh gives Job assurance and endurance in his woes.

The dragon is great, even as Job's afflictions are great. But the greatness of these evil things is as nothing compared to the greatness of the Supreme Subjector, Who owns all things and can do all things and Whose plans cannot be thwarted.

D.H.H.

29 The **bludgeon ~is reckoned ›by him~ as stubble,**
And he ⌊ridicules › the **whizzing of** the **dart.**
30 **His under**parts are **sharp** pieces **of shard;**
He ⌊strews spike marks **on** the **mud.**
31 **He ᶜmakes** the **shadowy** deep **⌊boil like** a **pot;**
He ⌊pl⌋makes the **sea** appear **like** foaming **ointment.**
32 ᵃᶠ**Behind him he ᶜmakes** his **track ⌊resplendent;**
One would **⌊reckon** the **abyss to** be **greyhaired.**
33 There **is no** one **on** the **soil comparable** to **him,**
˙Who was ᵈ**made⌋ to** be **› without dismay.**
34 **He ⌊stares** down **˙on every haughty** creature**;**
He is **king over every strutting beast.**

41:29 ~~~ is reckoned ›by him: Hb **they are reckoned.**

LEVIATHAN

The term *leviathan* is a transliteration of the Hebrew word. There are six occurrences of the word in the Hebrew Scriptures (Job 3:8; 41:1; Psa.74:14; 104:26; Isa.27:1 [two times]). Much uncertainty exists as to the meaning and identity of the indicated animal. The Septuagint translates by the word *dragon,* and we suggest this rendering has sufficient value to warrant our use of it in the CV. The term, besides being used in the Greek translation, has also come in our language to signify an animal monster.

In Isaiah 27:1 we have the dragon explained as a serpent and a monster of the sea. The details of Isaiah, when carefully considered, do not imply a denial of the redoubtable character of the dragon. Rather, Isaiah, while using the term to figure one who is most formidable, indicates a time when Yahweh is to withdraw the dominance He has afforded hitherto to the dragon. To this end He brings His sword near to him who has so far spurned anything that threatened the loss of the mastery of his office.

E. H. Clayton

EON, AS INDEFINITE DURATION
(Part Three)

God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all. (Rom.11:32)

Indeed though He afflicts, yet He has compassion according to the abundance of His benignities. (Lam.3:32)

God is love. (1 John 4:8)

Question:

RECENTLY I purchased a copy of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT, which you publish. Since I had soon become deeply troubled through reading your version, I asked my pastor concerning it, especially in regard to your renderings "eon" and "eonian," instead of "[for] ever," "everlasting," and "eternal," as in nearly all other translations.

My pastor was somewhat familiar with your translation; however, he said that it was designed and prepared in order to support universalism, which you teach, and to deny eternal punishment, which is the doctrine of all orthodox Christians. He also stated that all scholars worthy of the name repudiate universalism, as well as the translation "eonian," instead of "everlasting." I want you to become aware of some of the things he shared with me, in the hope that it might cause you to reconsider your mistranslations and false teachings.

In support of his claims, my pastor read several passages to me from various books in his library; later on, he furnished me with photocopies as well of the pages of these books from which he had made his citations.

The principal work from which he quoted was FOUR VIEWS OF HELL, from chapter one, "The Literal View," by the famous and acclaimed theologian, Dr. John F. Walvoord, of Dallas Theological Seminary. Professor Walvoord states: "The Old Testament revelation . . . clearly suggests that the sufferings of the wicked continue forever . . . . While the term 'forever' may sometimes be curtailed in duration by its context, such termination is never once mentioned in either the Old or New Testament as relating to the punishment of the wicked. Accordingly, the term continues to mean 'everlasting' or 'unending in its duration' . . . . As Buis points out, the Greek word *aiōnios* in every instance refers to eternity. He writes: '*Aiōnios* [*eonian,* CV] is used in the New Testament sixty-six times: [in fifty-nine of these occurrences] there is no doubt as to its meaning being endless, and seven times of the punishment of the wicked . . . .'[1]

"In support of the idea that *aiōnios* means 'endless' is its consistent placement alongside the duration of the life of the godly [i.e., in Matthew 25:46] in eternity. If the state of the blessed is eternal, as expressed by this word, there is no logical reason for giving limited duration to punishment. As W. R. Inge states, 'No sound Greek scholar can pretend that *aiōnios* means anything less than eternal'[2] . . . . A confirmation of eternal punishment is found in the use of the Greek word *aiōnios.* A most convincing evidence that eternity usually means 'without beginning or end' is found in the definition of this word in Arndt and Gingrich.[3] This word is used normally in the New Testament to mean

1. Harry Buis, THE DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT, p.49 (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1957).

2. W. R. Inge, WHAT IS HELL? p.6 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1930).

3. William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, A GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT *and Other Early Christian Literature,* pp.27,28 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

either 'without beginning or end' or at least 'without end.' None of the passages uses the word in a sense other than infinity in time . . . . [Therefore,] if exegesis is the final factor, eternal punishment is the only proper conclusion; taken at its face value, the Bible teaches eternal punishment . . . .

"Eternal punishment is partly mental, partly physical, and partly emotional. The fact that confinement in hell is pictured also as a place of total darkness is no doubt contributory to mental anguish . . . . The emotional problems of facing eternal punishment are beyond human computation and are certainly a major portion of the judgment that is inflicted on the wicked . . . . The frequent mention of fire in connection with eternal punishment supports the conclusion that this is what the Scriptures mean . . . . There is sufficient evidence that the fire is literal . . . . Punishment is eternal and . . . is painful, both mentally and physically. Scripture never challenges the concept that eternal punishment is by literal fire."[4]

My pastor then read me the graphic illustration of hell contained in one of the sermons of the great eighteenth century theologian Jonathan Edwards: "The wrath of God will be poured out upon the wicked without mixture. Imagine yourself to be cast into a fiery oven . . . and imagine also that your body were to lie there for a quarter of an hour, full of fire, as full within and without as a bright coal fire, all the while full of quick sense: what horror would you feel at the entrance of such a furnace? Oh! then how would your heart sink if you knew that after millions and millions of ages your torment would be no nearer to an end than ever it was. But your torment in hell will be immensely greater than this illustration represents . . . .

4. Four Views of Hell, pp.17,18,23,24,26-28; edited by William Crockett (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992).

"You cannot stand before an infuriated tiger even; what then will you do when God rushes against you in all His wrath? It is *everlasting* wrath . . . . There will be no end to this exquisite, horrible misery. When you look forward, you shall see a long forever, a boundless duration before you . . . . you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, any rest at all . . . . Your punishment will indeed be infinite."[5]

By publishing and using a Bible which denies the truth of eternal punishment in literal fire, you may deceive yourself for now about the reality of this subject. But, unless you repent, you will spend eternity in the very hellfire which, at present, you audaciously deny. My only question to you is, What will you do with this information, now that I have presented it to you?

Answer:

You ask what I now will do with this information which you have set forth. Earlier you had said that you wanted us to "become aware" of some of these things which your pastor first shared with you, in the hope that it might cause us to reconsider our "mistranslations" and "false teachings."

We have long been familiar with such claims as those found in these works which you cite. We have nearly all these books in our library, besides many more such titles. For many years we have spent much time conscientiously considering the "orthodox" claims concerning both *olam* and *aiōn*, not to mention innumerable arguments of every sort in favor of eternal torment.

So in response to your "only question," which is what will I do with this information which you have presented

5. Sermon II, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. ii, pp.7-12 (London: Ball, Arnold, and Co., 1840).

to me, my answer is that I will critique certain points of it, briefly, in the text which follows.

WELL-VERSED OBJECTIVITY

I would like to suggest at the outset that the arbiter of truth is not Christian "orthodoxy," which only speaks of the commonly accepted view, or customary, prevalent opinion. The majority is often wrong, even among those of similar conservative views of Scripture. Indeed, especially in a day of widespread apostasy such as the present, to appeal to majority opinion is not a sign of strength but of weakness.

Similarly, the fact that certain professors or preachers may be "famous" and "acclaimed," or, in some respect, "great," is no indication of the correctness of their opinions. Similar commendations may be made concerning certain of their opponents—with no more benefit to be gained by so doing. The apostle Paul says ideally, "Let *no one* be deluding himself. If anyone among you is presuming to be wise in this eon, let him become stupid, that he may be becoming wise, for the wisdom of this world is stupidity with God. For it is written, 'He is clutching the wise in their craftiness.' And again, The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain. So that, let *no one* be boasting in men . . ." (1 Cor.3:18-21a).

We should not act prematurely, much less rashly, in forming our opinions. Ideally the proverb declares, "He who replies with speech ere he has heard, it is folly to him and confounding" (Prov.18:13). And, "The first pleader seems right in his contention, until his associate comes and investigates him" (Prov.18:17). To apply these aphorisms, then, to our subject at hand, my advice to you is for you to learn a great deal more about this disputed subject than you presently know, before claiming which side is correct. It is important that you become familiar not only

with the arguments of the proponents of the side which, at first, appears to be correct, but for you to become well-versed as well in the arguments of the proponents of the side which initially seems to be mistaken.

You state that unless I repent (of my "universalism"), I will spend eternity in the very hellfire which, at present, I "audaciously" deny. I must confess that according to the first definition of "audacity," which is, "fearlessly daring; bold," I have not always been thus, having sometimes failed to speak out when I should. However, I hope I have not often been guilty of walking according to the second definition of this word, which is, "arrogantly insolent; impudent." Even if I do not always succeed, I seek to write in an irenic spirit and in a gracious manner. In any case, it is not necessarily wrong to reject any opinion, including a majority opinion, simply because any certain man or group of men hold that opinion to be true.

I am confident that in time you will see for yourself that it would be quite impossible for me to "spend eternity" in "hellfire." I say this because Christ died for my sins (1 Cor. 15:3), and because I was conciliated to God through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10). Furthermore, before the disruption of the world, God chose me in Christ to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating me beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus. This was all in accord with the delight of His will for the laud of the glory of His grace (*cf* Eph.1:3-6).

In due time, God called me through His *grace*, to unveil His Son in me (*cp* Gal.1:15,16). After the pattern of Saul of Tarsus, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ overwhelmed my calumny, outrage, and unbelief (*cf* 1 Tim.1:12-16). As Saul, who is also Paul, declares of God, "Now whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls, these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these He glorifies also" (Rom.8:30).

I am assured that whenever Christ, my Life, should be manifested, then I also shall be manifested together with Him in glory (Col.3:4). This is because, even though I still sometimes sin quite badly, according to the blessings of the evangel, "where sin increases, grace superexceeds, that, even as Sin reigns in death, thus Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:20b,21).

PORTENTOUS CLAIMS

The arguments which you have conveyed against the Concordant Version and the teaching of the Concordant ministry together with those in favor of eternal burnings, may be summed up thus, under five headings:

> **(1.)** A pastor declares that the Concordant Version "was designed and prepared in order to support universalism . . . and to deny eternal punishment." This same pastor also states that all scholars worthy of the name repudiate universalism, even as the translation "eonian," instead of "everlasting." Similarly, a theologian claims that "No sound Greek scholar can pretend that *aiōnios* means anything less than eternal."

It simply is not true that the Concordant Version was designed and prepared in order to support universalism and to deny eternal punishment. Such a charge is as false and unjust as it would be for us to claim that the Authorized Version and its many imitators were designed and prepared in order to support eternal torment and to deny the salvation of all mankind. All honorable translators seek to be faithful to the Word of God according to the light given to them, and do not willfully seek to support any certain disputed teaching.

Likewise, it is far from the truth to say that none who are worthy scholars and learned in Oriental languages "can pretend that *aiōnios* means anything less than eternal." Nor do all such ones, by any means, repudiate either universalism or the translation "eonian," instead of "everlasting." The simple fact is that universalism, though likely always a minority view, has at times been a sizable minority view. Many accomplished scholars and recognized theologians have affirmed the teaching.[6]

> **(2.)** A lurid phantasm of the supposed nature of hell is presented, from the pen of Jonathan Edwards.

This fanciful piece of speculation is no proof whatever of the position taken. Such terror-inspiring sensationalism has no place in a sober consideration of revealed truth.

> **(3.)** After appeal to Buis, then Inge, and to a lexicon, Arndt and Gingrich, Walvoord then claims that Scripture always uses *aiōnios* in the sense of "infinity in time," from which he concludes that "if exegesis [i.e., objective, scientific interpretation] is the final factor, eternal punishment is the only proper conclusion."

In reply to this we need only say that Buis and Inge simply make claims, and that the Arndt and Gingrich lexicon (1974; after Thayer, 1886) merely gives the three definitions which it perceives for *aiōnios,* that of (1) without beginning; (2) without end; and (3) without beginning or end. None of this constitutes proof of the position affirmed. Further, Walvoord's claim that valid exegesis requires the conclusion that eternal punishment is the teaching of Scripture, is merely asserted, not proved.

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6. See such works as our reprints: Restitution of All Things (Andrew Jukes, 1891); Christ Triumphant (Thomas Allin, 1890); Eon–Eonian (John Wesley Hanson, 1875); Salvator Mundi (Samuel Cox, 1879); The Ancient History of Universalism (Hosea Ballou, 2nd, 1829); The Modern History of Universalism (Thomas Whittemore, 1830); also see: Thomas B. Thayer, Theology of Universalism (Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1891); F. W. Farrar, Eternal Hope (London: Macmillan & Co., 1892); F. W. Farrar, Mercy and Judgment (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1881).

(4.) Walvoord appeals to Matthew 25:46 ("And these shall be coming away into chastening eonian, yet the just into life eonian," CV), declaring that if the state of the blessed is eternal, as expressed by this word, there is no logical reason for giving limited duration to punishment.

This specious argument goes back at least to Augustine. As has long ago been said, however, due to its unreasonableness, it ought never be heard again. From the fact that the life of the just nations and the chastening of the unjust nations are herein described by the same adjective, descriptive of duration, it does not follow that the latter group of nations, therefore, will be subjected to endless punishment. The argument assumes what is at issue by presuming that the life of the just, here, is termed an endless life. Simply because, on certain grounds, the life of those persons comprising the just nations will prove to be endless, it does not follow that the blessing of life afforded *here* to any such nations is therefore that of endless duration. It is as unreasonable to assume that *eonian* life doubtlessly signifies endless life as it would be to claim that youthful life actually signifies aged life, simply because our presuppositions and predilections may dictate such a conclusion.

Professor Tayler Lewis (who was not a universalist) in commenting on what he calls the *Olamic* or *Æonian* words of the Scripture, affirms that "they denote . . . the world [i.e., in the sense of duration] in *time,* or as a time-existence" (i.e., the "life" of the object thus described or delineated). He insists that these words are, in themselves, wholly indefinite (even though he conceives that, in Matthew 25:46, the scene is one of "finality"). Hence, concerning *aiōnios,* he states: "It would be more in accordance with the plainest etymological usage to give it simply the sense of *olamic* or *æonic,* or to regard it as denoting, like the Jewish *olam habba, the world* [i.e., duration] *to come.*

" 'These shall go away into the punishment [the restraint, imprisonment] of the world to come, and these into the life of the world to come.' *That is all we can etymologically or exegetically make of the word in this passage.* And so is it ever in the Old Syriac Version [i.e., the Peshito], where the one [i.e., uniform] rendering is still more unmistakably clear: 'These shall go away to the pain of the olam, and these to the life of the olam'—the world to come."[7]

(5.) Walvoord intimates that the ordinary meaning of *olam* and *aiōn* is that of endlessness (though this "may sometimes be curtailed in duration by its context"; otherwise, these words continue to mean "unending in its duration").

It is simply contrary to historical fact to suggest that the essence of these time expressions is that of endless duration. As Thomas De Quincey, the nineteenth century essayist and literary critic states: "All this speculation, first and last, is pure nonsense. *Aiōnios* does not mean 'eternal,' neither does it mean of limited duration . . . . What is an *aiōn?* The *duration or cycle of existence* which belongs to any object, not individually of itself, but universally, in right of its genius [i.e., inherent nature] . . . . *The exact amount of the duration expressed by an aiōn* depends altogether upon the particular subject which yields the *aiōn.*"[8]

The British Congregational minister and preacher, G. Campbell Morgan, makes the following remarkable declaration concerning *olam/aiōn:* "Let me say to Bible students that we must be very careful how we use the word 'eternity.' We have fallen into great error in our constant use of that word. *There is no word in the whole Book of*

7. Tayler Lewis, LANGE'S COMMENTARY, vol.5, Ecclesiastes, pp.45,48 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, reprint 1969).

8. Thomas De Quincey, THEOLOGICAL ESSAYS, pp.143-165; cited in EON–EONIAN (John Wesley Hanson, 1875).

God corresponding with our 'eternal,' which, as commonly used among us, means absolutely without end"[9]

Likewise, the Presbyterian Bible scholar, M. R. Vincent, in his extensive note on *aiōn/aiōnios* states: "Neither the noun nor the adjective, in themselves, carry the sense of *endless* or *everlasting.*"[10]

Walvoord's mistaken notion on this very issue, however, comes to the heart of the question whether the Concordant Version is justified in its rendering "eon." After all, not only Walvoord, Buis, and Inge, but all intelligent students acknowledge that *olam* and *aiōn* sometimes refer to limited duration. Here is my point: The supposed special reference or usage of a word is not the province of the translator but of the interpreter. Since these authors themselves plainly indicate that the usage of a word is a matter of interpretation, it follows (1) that it is not a matter of translation, and (2) that it is wrong for any *translation* effectually to decide that which must necessarily remain a matter of interpretation concerning these words in question. Therefore, *olam* and *aiōn* should never be *translated* by the thought of "endlessness," but only by that of indefinite duration (as in the anglicized *transliteration* "eon" which appears in the Concordant Version).

In this response to your "deeply troubled" encounter with the Concordant Version, I have principally sought not to prove my position, but to open a door to its consideration; a door of further inquiry, with a view toward your attaining an awareness of the grace of God in truth, even as of the purpose of the *eons*, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Eph.3:11). May our God and Father be pleased to use this writing unto such an end. J.R.C.

9. G. Campbell Morgan, GOD'S METHODS WITH MAN, p.185; (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1898).

10. M. R. Vincent, WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, vol.2, pp.950-952 (Mc Lean Virginia: MacDonald Publishing Co., n.d.).

THE UNACHIEVABLE REWARD
(1 Samuel 17:23-30)

AT his father's request David came to the vale of Elah where Israel gathered against the Philistines for battle. He brought provision for his brothers and asked about their welfare.

WHAT SHALL BE DONE?

23 +**While he** was **speaking with them,** + **behold, the champion** was com**ing up from** the **arrays of** the **Philistines; his name** was **Goliath the Philistine** *f*__of Gath.__ + **He** |__spoke__ ·__those__ *as*__usual words, and David__ |__heard__ them. 24 + **All** the **men of Israel,** *i*__when they saw__ ‾ `__the man,__ + |__fled__ *f* **before him and were exceedingly** |__fearful.__

25 + The **men of Israel** |__said__ to themselves**, Have you seen** ·__that__ ·__man__ ·com**ing up?** *t*__Surely to challenge__ `__Israel__ is he com**ing up. And it will** *b*__occur__ to **the man who** |__smites him__ that **the king shall enrich him** with **great riches;** + **he shall give to him** `__his daughter, and he shall__ *d*__make__ `__his father's house free in Israel.__ 26 +**Now David** |*sa*__asked__ › **the men** ·who **stood**| *wi*__near him,__ › __saying__‾**, What shall be done for** the **man who** |__smites__ `__this__ ·__Philistine and takes away__ the **reproach from** *on* **Israel? For** *a*__who__ is ·__this__ ·__uncircumcised__ ·__Philistine that he challenges__ the **arrays of** the **living Elohim?** 27 +**Then the** *wi*__soldiers__ |*sa*__told__ › **him** in *as*__accord__ with ·__this__ *sp*__promise,__ › *sa*__declaring__‾**, Thus shall it be done for** the **man who shall smite him.**

While speaking with his brothers, David heard Goliath's challenge and saw the great fear of the men of Israel, who also said:

"And it shall occur to the man that smites him [Goliath] that the king will enrich him with great riches; he shall give to him his daughter, and he shall make his father's house free in Israel" (vv.25,26). This *promise* (v.27), is of undesignated origin. But the following events are suggestive that Saul may have made a formal announcement that a deliverer rising from the ranks would be rewarded in this manner. Probably such an announcement included that the hero for Israel should be brought to the king, and that he would wear the king's armor and use the king's sword, as mentioned later in verse 39. Notice that when the men speak of this great reward, it is only in relation to overcoming a great foe, and it suggests that the deliverer would be worthy of wealth, position and privilege. Any thought of God's glory is absent from the soldiers' discussion.

But when David asks the same question, the focus is on God. "What shall be done for the man who . . . *takes away the reproach from Israel*? For who is this *uncircumcised* Philistine that *he challenges the arrays of the living Elohim*?" (vv.26,27). Here again with the words *reproach* and *uncircumcised* we are taken back to Gilgal and reminded of the inability of the flesh. Saul and the arrays of Israel could not achieve the victory. The flesh can never achieve the works of God, and so the thought of obtaining life by obeying the law is just an illusive pipe dream for the flesh.

David, through faith and the enablement of God, accomplished the great feat of slaying Goliath, but, as he owned, "Yahweh's is the battle" (v.47). But did David receive the promise as the men said? The king did not enrich him with great riches. Instead he hunted and pursued him throughout the country, forcing David to live in caves and hideouts in the wilderness, where he even had difficulty finding his daily food. Saul promised David the hand of his daughter Merab in marriage, yet he gave her to Adriel instead (18:19). Then later he did give Michal to David,

but only with the intent that she would be David's downfall (18:20,21). Did Saul make the house of Jesse free in Israel? David moved his family out of Israel into the land of Moab so that they would be safe from Saul (1 Sam. 22:3,4). The flesh offers no reward to faith. It struggles against it, knowing that the presence of faith is the harbinger of the end of the flesh.

But what does God give to the one who conquers this great foe? In time, David became king. He was not just an *in-law* of the royal family. He was not second to Jonathan and Saul's other sons. He was king. The wealth of Israel was at his disposal. His family was not just free from national taxes, they were part of the royal family. God's gracious workings far surpass even that of which the flesh dreams (*cf* Eph.3:20).

REJECTION

28 +**When his ˙eldest brother, Eliab, ˡheard** *i* **him speaking⁻ to the men,** + **Eliab's anger** grew ˡ**hot** *i*˙**against David, and he ˡsaid, Why** is **this** that **you have** come **down? And** *on*˙**with** *a*˙**whom** did **you let the little flock go,** ˙**those** sheep **in** the **wilderness? I´ know `your arrogance and** `the **evil of your heart, for you have** come **down that** you **may** *see*˙**watch⁻ the battle.** 29 + **David** ˡ*sa*˙**replied, What have I done now?** Was **it not** just a *sp*˙**question?** 30 +**Then he** turned ˡ**around from beside him ›toward another and** ˡ*sa*˙**asked** *as* ˙**this** *sp*˙**question.** +**When the** *wi*˙**soldiers** ˡ**replied** to **him,** their **word** was **like the first word.**

Eliab becomes the voice of Israel. Hearing David speak with the men, he explodes with anger. We can suppose that Eliab wanted to deliver Israel, but, like everyone else, he was frozen with fear. And so, feeling that he could not accomplish what needed to be done, he transferred his feelings of inadequacy and guilt to David. "And with whom [literally, "*on any*?"] did you let the little flock go, those sheep in

the wilderness?" (v.28). "Did you even tell anyone to take care of your responsibilities before you ran off to watch the battle? You arrogant and evil-hearted delinquent!"

Poor Eliab. He was so frustrated by his inability to do what needed to be done, and he was so pre-occupied with his need to justify himself, that the thought seems never to have entered his head—"my brother is here. It must be my father's love for me that has sent him." The Jews of Christ's day were the same. They were frustrated trying to keep a law that none could keep. They were pre-occupied with self-justification. Their response to the possibility that the Messiah had finally come was not to praise God for sending Him, but to criticize Him, and, finally, in their jealousy, kill Him. Their only perception of God was derived from the requirements of the letter of the law. They were ignorant of God's love for them. Such an attitude still, today, plagues those concerned to please God by fulfilling some law; they do not grasp the magnitude of His love.

J. Philip Scranton

NEW CVOT PUBLICATION:
PROVERBS, ECCLESIASTES, SONG OF SONGS

The publication of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) is an ongoing project endeavoring to provide, in a consistent English translation, a closer reflection of the grammar, syntax and wording of the ancient Hebrew manuscripts than can be found in other current versions.

Boldface type is used for words or parts of words having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. Lightface type is used for words or parts of words which have been added to clarify the meaning of the respective Hebrew term. Superior signs and letters give information concerning grammar, more literal distinctions of the Hebrew terminology, and readings based on manuscripts other than the Masoretic Text. These are identified in the Abbreviation Key.

This new CVOT fascicle, consisting of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs, is printed in 8½" x 11" format; 101 pages, perfect bound, heavy cover ($7.00; add $1.50 shipping).

COMING WITH POWER AND MUCH GLORY

ALL ALONG in this study of Matthew we have tried to keep in mind the defining presentation of Jesus given in 1:21. He will save His people from their sins. It has not been easy to see this work of salvation in process. From the very beginning of His ministry, we find Jesus warning of fearful judgment ahead; and we find the nation itself moving farther and farther away from salvation.

We come now to the Lord's discourse on the Mount of Olives recorded in Matthew 24 and 25. And here the theme of future judgment and loss seems to dominate so strongly that special effort is needed to avoid losing sight of the significance of Jesus as the Saviour. The fundamental issue of final glory is easily neglected or relegated to secondary and highly qualified positions, as it has indeed been in the minds of many.

POWER AND GLORY

The Son of Mankind will come with power and much glory (Matt.24:30; 25:31). Because of the emphasis on divine anger and judgment in Matthew 24 and 25, we are apt to overlook the fact that these works of power are also and unreservedly operations of "much glory" and are fully consistent with the promise of Matthew 1:21. The cutting asunder of the "evil slave" from the "faithful and prudent slave" and the lamentation and gnashing of teeth that result (Matt.24:45-51) are not operations of power that block salvation and glory. Likewise, the throne on which the Son of Mankind sits in judging the nations is termed "the throne

of His glory" (Matt.25:31). This means that every manifestation of divine power coming with the presence of the Lord at the conclusion of this eon (Matt.24:3) will bring honor and praise to God.

Glory is that which impresses a highly favorable opinion or evaluation on us (*cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.124). In powerfully gathering His scattered people together and wisely judging both them and the nations, the Lord will be revealing that which favorably impresses them all concerning Himself. The power is not a display that brings abject terror or futile despair but that, sooner or later, creates approval and appreciation in the hearts of *all* involved.

GRIEVING AND LAMENTATION

The coming of the Lord in power and glory follows times of severe suffering, many battles (24:6,7), pangs (24:8), afflictions, snares, deception, lawlessness (24:9-12), abomination and woe (24:15,19). It is *immediately after* the affliction of those days that the sun is darkened and stars fall from heaven and the *powers of the heavens* are shaken (24:29). "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Mankind in heaven, and then all the tribes of the land shall grieve" (Matt.24:30).

Grief is not contrary to glory when it arises from a sense of deeply felt relief. The grieving of the twelve tribes of Israel is over their past unfaithfulness, but it comes with the overwhelming and joyful recognition of the Saviour. It is the weeping of those rescued out of great danger and insecurity. Here we readily see that the divine power being displayed truly glorifies the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. What an achievement, to end affliction with the joy and peace of willing subjection! (*cf* Psa.110:3).

But Jesus explains that there will be a separation between those out of Israel who have been "faithful and prudent" and those who have not. Concerning the latter, as with the

evil slaves of the parable of Matthew 24:43-51, "There shall be lamentation and gnashing of teeth" (24:51). The glory of the Son of Mankind involves powerful works that produce not only the weeping of joyful deliverance, but also the lamentation of loss and separation.

The problem is not with the grief of Israel when their Rescuer comes out of Zion. We all rejoice in such an operation of salvation to the praise of God, knowing that it is only in His mercy that these chosen people are faithful and prudent. The problem comes with the lamentation of those who are separated from the joys and privileges of the kingdom. In what way does this work of separation bring glory to the Son of Mankind in the hearts of those who are condemned? We can see how the blessing of the "faithful and prudent" instills a highly favorable opinion of the Lord among the blessed. But the cutting off from these blessings can bring Him glory only insofar as it is just and beneficial. Even then, this glory is dimmed if it is absent in the mind and heart of those who are cut asunder.

If this separation is eternal, and if it is merely an expression of divine vengeance, and has no further purpose for good, then it does not bring God much glory. The use of power for the endless crushing of sinners, or for their extinction, does not instill a highly favorable opinion. In light of the facts that God created them and willed to save them and gave His Son to save them and is fully able to bring them into the realization and enjoyment of these blessings, justly and effectively, there is no way God can be glorified for such a hopeless state of woe.

MATTHEW 25:46

In speaking of these things to come, the Lord directed attention not only to the separation within Israel of the faithful slaves from the evil slaves, but to the separation of the nations in accord with their treatment of Israel during

its times of hardship. This also involves the grief of loss for many. Yet like the lamentation of Matthew 24:51, the condemnation of 25:41 and 46 is subservient to the glory of God. It also must accord with impressing a highly favorable opinion of God on the hearts of all the nations.

If it is true that Jesus spoke in Matthew 25:46 of "everlasting punishment" for certain people, then His coming as the Son of Mankind will not be with that display of divine power that is welded to divine glory. It is as simple as that. When God's glory is manifested there will be no dark spots of mystery in God's use of His power. It is impossible that woe and weeping and chastening be everlasting. Revelations of the power of God's discipline and of His righteous anger against sin, as they surely are, His operations of condemnation cannot last forever or serve as a vain and purposeless retribution. Everything we learn about God in His Word, especially as He is manifested in His Son, contradicts any concept of eternal hell.

When we stop to think about it seriously, we realize that no one can fully escape the charge of being wicked and slothful. It will be the same for the nations at the conclusion of the eon. No nation will have shown perfect kindness and concern toward Israel in their times of trouble. Some are called "the just," but this is a relative term, in comparison with those nations that are placed on the left. Any group of people or any individual who is rewarded by the Lord for faithful service will find this a humbling experience. Their exultation will be in God Who opened up their hearts to compassion, not in themselves, with self-congratulation. How can such a nation be blessed in the face of everlasting woe for those who were judged to be more wicked than themselves?

EVANGEL

When the disciples asked Jesus, "Tell us, when will these

things be? And what is the sign of Thy presence and of the conclusion of the eon?" (Matt.24:3), they were not thinking only of the destruction of the sanctuary spoken of in 24:1. No stone would be left on a stone, but that would also mean that the Lord will be with them once more as the Blessed One (*cf* 23:39). The words Jesus spoke concerning destruction, lamentation and separation are steadfastly connected with words of glory.

The message will not be simply a word of condemnation, but it will be an *evangel* (Matt.24:14). It is good news. Affliction and hate and snares and deception and lawlessness will be in the past. The kingdom will be joyfully welcome, although indeed it involves the necessary separation, for awhile, of the afflictors from the afflicted.

Those who were afflicted and now are to be blessed are "the chosen" (24:22), whose joy in the kingdom could not be sustained in view of hopelessness for those not chosen, as wicked as they may have been. In every way the kingdom will be good news for these delivered people who have suffered so much.

It is a strange twisting of the word *evangel* to bring in a sense of blessing for the chosen in the face of eternal, inescapable woe for those not chosen. It is more than twisting! At best it is dark confusion, puffing us up with pride and hardening us with hypocrisy. At worst it robs God of all He claims to be.

DANGEROUS CONTRADICTION

This passage does not speak of anything close to "everlasting punishment." The Greek word *aiōnios* does not mean "everlasting." And the Greek word *kolasis* does not mean "punishment." This translation and its defense by countless believers through the centuries is disgraceful enough. But the dishonor to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ and the confusion introduced into God's written revelation by this

concept is of such shameful proportions that it can only be described as profane, reflecting perfectly that corruption and mortality and sinfulness which we all share.

Nothing in the context of our Lord's discourse to His disciples on the Mount of Olives (Matt.24 and 25) could prepare us for such a conclusion. The severity of divine judgment, made clear throughout the ministry of Jesus, is always purposeful, always with an end of glory in view, always a message of the One Who came to save His people from their sins.

Thankfully, many have seen the utter contradiction of Matthew 25:46, as it is generally rendered in translation, with the spirit and message of the Saviour. Different arguments are used, sometimes with misdirected motives, often with wrong and confusing thinking. But at least there is a recognition that something is drastically wrong with the traditional idea.

We do not endorse every argument presented against the traditional translation of Matthew 25:46, but we commend the spirit that recognizes how dangerous and misleading the common translation is. Countless believers must feel this danger even while accepting and defending the usual rendering. It is wise to be cautious. It is fitting to honor those who have brought truth to us. But we all must judge what is taught in light of the revelation of God given in His Word, and in light of that message of power and glory and love and righteousness concerning His Son which we have accepted, in which we stand, and through which we are being saved (1 Cor.15:1,2).

TO GOD BE THE GLORY

Over and above the issues of translation and word meaning stands the central issue of the evangel itself. Our Lord's message to His disciples on the Mount of Olives was delivered soon before He was given up to crucifixion. What He said about woe and fire and chastening is firmly associated with His death and resurrection.

Quite apart from the fact that an examination of the Greek word *aiōnios* in all its occurrences proves it does not mean *everlasting*, stands the fact that Jesus died for sinners. In speaking of their eonian chastening He was steadfastly set on the pathway which would bring life and deliverance to them in God's own time. In His warnings of eonian fire, of sorrows and loss, for individuals and for nations, the Lord had one clear end in view, the glory of His God and Father. God's declarations of good news are themselves the foremost and final argument against the doctrine of everlasting hell.

Those who insist that the Saviour spoke of everlasting fire and everlasting punishment face the task of reconciling this with His agony and sorrow at Golgotha, on the sinner's behalf. They need to show how the power of His resurrection has any significance to those condemned, or even to those who are saved into life while pain and sorrow and death rage on and on and on, without end. When, then, is the victory, and where, then, is the powerful glory of God?

GIVEN UP TO CRUCIFIXION

Matthew 25:46 is followed by these words: "And it occurred, when Jesus finishes all these sayings, He said to His disciples, 'You are aware that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Mankind is being given up to be crucified'" (Matt.26:1,2).

The disciples did not seem to grasp this message. Perhaps their minds were concentrating on the twelve thrones Jesus had promised them, and on the glories they would enjoy in the kingdom. Perhaps, as well, their thoughts were centered on the vengeance the Lord would bring on the nations for their mistreatment of Israel. But Jesus, the

Saviour, Who had just told them of joys and judgments to come, was focused on the cross, which would make those joys certain and the judgments beneficial and finally matters of the revelation of God's glory.

Today also, we do not often hear much of the cross when the subject of divine judgment comes up. Like the disciples, we do not seem to grasp the significance, or even the need, of this astounding sacrifice, not for the chosen alone, but for all mankind, and for all creation. For those of Israel who suffer through affliction, the cross brings a blessed ransom (1 Peter 1:18,19). Because of the cross, our sufferings today do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us (Rom.8:18). And even for those who are condemned in judgment, the cross makes that judgment a manifestation of the power and glory of God, so that both the fruit of His righteous judgment may be manifested and the achievements of the Saviour may be realized and enjoyed. Truly He comes with power and much glory.

D.H.H.

FOR FURTHER READING

The following articles from former issues of *Unsearchable Riches* will help supplement the preceding thoughts regarding Matthew 25:41 and 46:

The Economics of Eternal Torment, by A. E. Knoch, vol.38, p.279.
The Adjective Eonian, by A. E. Knoch, vol.57, p.105.
Is Punishment Everlasting? by A. E. Knoch, vol.66, pp.92,137.
The Glory Throne Judgment, by Adlai Loudy, vol.21, p.255.
The Associates of Israel in the Millennium, by A. E. Knoch, vol.33, p.221.
The Judgment of the Nations, by A. E. Knoch, vol.35, p.263 (reprinted in a slightly abridged form in this issue, p.147).
The Divine Judgments of the Nations, by M. Jaegle, vol.52, p.21.
The Judgment of the Nations, by James R. Coram, vol.84, p.29.
Eonian Fire and Judging, by James R. Coram, vol.84, p.79.
"Punishment" or "Chastening"? by A. E. Knoch, vol.22, p.47.
Contradictions, by A. E. Knoch, vol.44, p.18.

Contents:

193 Editorial
195 Satisfaction, Government, or Conciliation?
203 When it Delights God
209 The Coming of Faith
214 Job 42:1–9
215 But Now my Eye Sees You
223 "Jesus": Yahweh-Saviour *Revealed*
231 Others He Saves

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 1998
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

THE SACRED SCRIPTURES are able to make us wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 3:15). In saying this, Paul was reminding Timothy of the training he had received from his youth in that portion of God's Word commonly called "The Old Testament." We can learn much from these writings concerning God and His operations. In particular we learn about the need of, and find promises and types of, God's work of salvation. They make us wise for, or prepare us for, the understanding of that evangel concerning God's Son, Christ Jesus.

After His resurrection Jesus appeared to two of His followers who were confused about the crucifixion of their Lord. "And, beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interprets to them, in all the scriptures, that which concerns Himself" (Luke 24:27).

We would like to have heard that grand exposition of the Sacred Scriptures. But perhaps it is just as well that we should search the Scriptures ourselves. What an exciting occupation! To look for what the Scriptures, from Genesis through Malachi say about the ways and character of God, and to relate them to the evangel of our salvation—this is something of consequence!

We are doing a little of this in our magazine. In 1 Samuel 17, for instance, we find a type of Christ and His victory over sin and death in His faithful humbling of Himself to the death of the cross (see p.209). It was a victory, not of the flesh, but of faith in and reliance on God. That reaches its highest expression in Christ Who was faithful even to the death of the cross.

In Job we find much to make us wise for a growing

appreciation, not so much of Christ's victory, but of His *endurance* (*cf* Heb.12:2). This is considered in the study beginning on page 215.

In the question and answer concerning the name Jesus, we come to see that Joshua who led Israel into the land, becomes a type of Jesus the *Saviour* (p.223).

Noah in the ark, Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah, the sacrifices—it is not difficult to see the parallels with the cross, though the lessons these parallels hold for us are pretty much inexhaustible. The more explicit revelations given in the prophets (e.g., Isaiah 53) and psalms (e.g., Psa.22) open up many important details concerning God's purpose for Israel (see the study on Matthew, starting on page 231), and His love for the world in the giving of His Son (John 3:16).

But what shall we say about such scriptures as Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs, which were recently published in a concordant version? What they have to say about Christ is less obvious than the psalms and prophets. Yet what Proverbs 8 has to say about wisdom offers important insight for an appreciation of Christ Who has become to us "wisdom from God" (1 Cor.1:30). So also the transitoriness of present conditions, described in Ecclesiastes, sharpens our appreciation of the headship of Christ. And in the Song of Songs there are poetic pictures of some of the glories of Christ's love for His people and their love for Him in the kingdom ahead.

To be sure, there are *untraceable riches of Christ* made known in Paul's epistles (see particularly the articles beginning on pages 195 and 203). Nevertheless, an acquaintance with the Sacred Scriptures of old will greatly enhance our appreciation of the transcendent riches of God's grace. We especially would heed the words of Paul, but whenever God speaks, we would eagerly listen and thankfully learn.

D.H.H.

SATISFACTION, GOVERNMENT, OR CONCILIATION?

THEORIES concerning the value of Christ's death have a special interest for the saints. In glancing through an exchange, I noticed that the theory of *Satisfaction* is taken as the true one, and the *Government* theory is said to be false. I doubt whether the leading exponents of either theory could give an exact definition of their view. In fact, the latter seems to be a reaction due to logical contradictions in the former. I have no doubt that there are elements of truth in both, but the large amount which has been written indicates the impossibility of discovering the truth by using these words, and suggests that there is something amiss in this method of searching God's Word. "Satisfaction," in theology, does not mean that God is satisfied with the sacrifice of Christ, with which we would fully concur, but that it *settles the claims of God against the sinner.* At least so it seems to be used.

To the man of God the question arises, why should there be any "theory" on this subject at all? In science, theories are put forth and tested by the facts of nature. But there is no need for this in revelation, for it is itself the answer to, and explanation of, the questions that arise. However, if any investigation is desirable, we should heed the apostle's admonition, and *cling to the pattern of sound words* which Paul has used in dealing with the subject in hand (2 Tim.1:13). The word "satisfaction" may do to represent a human theory, but *God has not used it to express the divine truth* as to this matter, although it may accord with

some aspects of it. The same is true of the term "governmental." These are unsound words, which not only fail to lead us fully aright, but actually introduce ideas which are contrary to the truth.

Many years ago, when I heralded what I had been taught was the gospel, I told my listeners that Christ had died in their *room and stead* and "satisfied" the claims of God against them, and exhorted them to believe and accept God's grace. But when I walked away, my conscience bothered me, for I was not at all sure that I had told the truth. I could not help thinking that, if Christ had died as their *Substitute,* a righteous God must save them even if they did not believe. If the *price* had been *paid,* how could God refuse to deliver the goods? This troubled me so much that I made a prolonged study of all the words involved, in the original Greek. This led me to discard such terms as "room and stead," "satisfied," "substitute," etc., and form a vocabulary of sound words, patterned after Paul.

Such terms are not even applied to this matter in the popular versions, let alone the inspired Original. Since then I have never felt the need of them, although I have written much concerning the value of Christ's death, in relation to God as well as to man. By means of a concordant vocabulary, and such distinctions as that expressed by *con*ciliation and *re*conciliation, the problems that arise from the use of *Satisfaction* and *Government* are avoided, and the truth emerges clearly and conclusively. I now have the fullest liberty in heralding that *God* has conciliated the world to Himself by the death of Christ, whether they believe it or not. And I can go on and pray *them* to be conciliated to Him. If they believe, then there is reconciliation along with salvation and justification. This needs no theory or explanation, and does not demand that the evangelist preach a palpable falsehood.

This should be a lesson to us, for there is a strong tendency to use unscriptural key-words, or to use the inspired terms outside their proper sphere. This was brought to my mind lately by an effort to prove that God *controls* everything, but *predestinates* only the *essentials*. There are only a few passages which deal with God's activities in relation to *all* things. It is revealed that all is *out* of and *through* and *for* Him (Rom.11:36), and that He is *operating* all (Eph.1:11), and that He is able to *subject* all (Phil.3:21), and that all has its *cohesion* in Him (Col.1:17) and that the Son is *carrying* all (Heb.1:3), but not that God *controls* all. I do not doubt this in the least, but I can find no context to which I can anchor the thought, or test its scope, or fix its limitations. For me it is enough that God is *operating* all according to the counsel of His will. I fear, the term "control" will lead me into theories and theology.

On the other hand, *pre-determination,* or rather, *designating beforehand* is a scriptural thought, which should be considered in its contexts to determine its scope. That it is applied to the *saints* is not in question (Rom.8:29,30; Eph.1:5,11). But it is also applied to the *acts* of evil men, especially at the crucifixion of Christ (Acts 4:28). Paul, in Ephesians, puts us on the right track when he calls attention to the fact that we were designated beforehand according to the *purpose* of the One Who is operating *all* in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). Predetermination is only one aspect of God's larger *purpose.* There is a double harmony in this verse. The pre-determination agrees with the *purpose,* and that agrees with the *counsel of His will.* The latter two are concerned with *all* which is headed up in the Christ, both that in the heavens and that on the earth (v.10).

The same agreement is seen in connection with pre-designation in the conclusion of the first part of Paul's epistle to the Romans. We are aware that God is working *all* together for the good of those who are loving Him, accord-

ing to the *purpose* that, whom He foreknew, He designates beforehand . . . (Rom.8:28,29). God cannot confine Himself in His working to the saints alone because they are vitally affected by their environment, sinners as well as saints, things as well as persons. Consequently, while only those who love God are spoken of as designated beforehand for special blessing, this involves a previous *purpose* in regard to all as well as them. And the purpose must have been formed in God's mind before its execution or it would lack the essential sense conveyed by BEFORE-PLACing in the Original.

The divine process, expressed in human terms, but refined by divine usage, is this: God *wills* to reveal Himself. He *takes counsel* with Himself, as there was none other. As a result, He forms a *purpose* or *plans all* to the consummation. *Some* are *chosen* or selected and *designated beforehand* to be associated with Him in the execution of His purpose, and have a special place in His plan. What is true of them is not said of all, and should not be attributed to them. All will be saved, but only those chosen have *eonian* salvation. Only the members of the government in the United States are *elected.* The rest of us are not elected to be private citizens. Neither are the bulk of mankind chosen not to be saints. Saints alone are selected according to His purpose.

God is not a man, so we cannot reason from our standpoint to His. Yet a *wise* man will act more like God than a fool. As I did much of the work myself on the first house I built, I made no detailed plans, thinking I could save myself that effort. But experience taught me the folly of this. So, when I built my last house, I had an architect make detailed drawings from my full sketches. Alterations, while building, are vexatious and expensive. That is doubtless why God's plans show so much detail. Of course it could not all be revealed to us because of our limitations. But some

prophecies of the future are most minute in their descriptions, and these are only samples of God's foreknowledge.

What a marvelous revelation it was for our hearts when we first saw that God had a purpose, or plan! He knows all beforehand because He created all and operates all according to the counsel of His will. This word, *purpose,* is the one which tells us of God's activity in respect to *all* things before they enter the sphere of His *operations.* Nothing is left to chance. And the purpose is based upon *counsel,* not guesswork, and conformed to His *will.* He has a definite object in view, and has planned all beforehand, so that He will be All in all at the consummation. Let us keep this order. God's will leads to counsel, and counsel presents a plan or purpose which is for *all,* and not till then are election and pre-designation introduced for *some.*

Can we be sure that anything is not *essential* (another unscriptural term!) in His plan? In itself, apart from its consequences, which were not apparent at the time, how insignificant was the eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil! What a small thing was the cry of the infant Moses! A sleepless night on the part of a king led to the deliverance of Israel and the feast of Purim, which they observe to this day. And so, throughout the record of God's dealings with mankind. God chooses the weak things and that which is not, in order to exclude man's boasting (1 Cor.1:27-29).

To be sure, if we walk in a circle, with no destination, no purpose, *no* step is essential, for we always arrive where we began. But if we have a goal and wish to get somewhere, *every* step is necessary. If we leave one out, we fail to fulfill our destiny. God has a purpose, and every step is essential, if He is to accomplish His will.

And in our daily lives, how delightful to leave *every*thing in His hands! Often it is the trivial matter that threatens to disturb our peace and mar our ministry. Just now,

when I wished to write this article, the electricity failed, and I had to do some of it by candlelight. Such a thing is apt to be very upsetting when one is in the throes of composition. But if we take everything from God's hand with thankful hearts, it transforms our lives and encourages our hearts. Then faithless friends, false brethren, subtle opposition, slander, even the fiery arrows that undoubtedly come from the spiritual powers of darkness, though they arrive through some unwary saint, and most of them are concerned with non-essentials, all these may be borne with endurance, nay, with thankful appreciation, when we realize that they ultimately and actually come from His loving hand and heart.

He who knows the number of the stars has also counted the hairs of our heads. No sparrow falls to the ground without His notice. Not only the mighty sun in its magnifical course is guided by His arm, but the tiny glowworm is dependent on Him for its light. When He willed and counselled and purposed to save mankind, He did not send mighty Michael to execute the stupendous task, but sent One Who emptied Himself and came as a tiny Babe, a poor Palestinian Artisan, Who was done to death as a criminal. He is not only the God of the vast universe, but of the various parts of the atom. There also He reveals His power. What says the law? Our Lord taught His disciples "Whosoever should be annulling one of the *least* of these precepts . . . ." And again, "till heaven and earth should be passing by, one *iota* or one *serif* may by no means be passing by from the law till all should be occurring" (Matt. 5:18,19). Nothing could be smaller than this. *In God's ways there are no non-essentials.* Such is the God Who speaks to us in His revelation, and such is His way with us in our experience.

Such an experience is the very opposite of fatalism. For the greater part of a year I lived among a people who attributed everything to *kismet* or Fate. Its effect is quite the reverse of a joyous submission to a God Who is operating all for our welfare. They had not the least idea *why* things were as they are, or that they were co-operating for their benefit. Many were submissive, but depressed, hopeless and despondent, and some were quite sure that fate was against them and always would be. I object to the word *fatal*ism on philological grounds. It ought to be fate-ism. But I would not change it, for its effect is *fatal* and deadening. The result of seeing God's hand and heart in even the most trivial of our experiences, in contrast, is a continual solace for the bitterness of our existence and fills the heart with the continual joy and rejoicing, even in the severest strokes of apparent misfortune. It is an elixir of life and happiness.

What a puzzling task it would be to sort things out into essential and otherwise! Theologians could make this an eternal battle-ground, such as the age of responsibility, or just how much must the sinner hear in order to become a Christ-rejector, etc., etc. When I lose something, I almost subconsciously leave it in the hands of God lest it disturb my work, and manage without it meanwhile, if possible. In almost every case it turns up of itself, and I am thankful that its loss did not disturb my spirit, as it ordinarily would have done. Essential! I would say that every step is essential, and if taken out of fellowship with God, it could easily transform my ministry from one of edification to destruction, from one of gracious forbearance, to reviling, or even from close adherence to the form of sound words to the darkening of counsel by abandoning the patterns presented to us in Paul's epistles. *Are any of us essential?*

OUT OF, THROUGH, FOR

Is it not a sorrowful sight to see how the saints, who have believed for their own salvation, refuse to believe in

His glorification? Almost all reject some phase of it. Some refuse to believe that all is *for* Him and denounce the reconciliation of all. Others will not give Him His place as the One *through* Whom all is being operated today. Still others, such as we have been considering, have difficulty in accepting the basic truth of the beginning, that *all* is *out* of Him. May He be gracious to us in our feeble efforts to grasp His glories, and grant that we give to Him the praise that is His throughout the times eonian!

A. E. Knoch

ECCLESIASTES AND PAUL

Undertaking an investigation with a view of finding out what is good for Adam's sons, [the Assembler arrives], by various processes and successive stages, at some positive conclusions, doctrinal and practical. The characteristic doctrinal feature is insistence on the absolute supremacy of God, Who is Creator of both good and evil, and, as the Highest, watches over His creation and leads it through blood and strife to a golden age of peace. The unraveling of the universal plan is not complete; for the totality of things is pronounced imcomprehensible.

But the sovereignty of God in nature and human events is the bedrock on which his faith is anchored. The fact that the unfolding of the plan is imperfect casts no reflection on Ecclesiastes. He is shut up within the circle of God's economy of self-unveilment. In the very nature of things his field of expansion and range of vision is confined within the limits of Old Testament revelation, which is restricted to earth, in point of sphere, and to the close of the Messianic age, in point of time. It was reserved for the apostle to the Gentiles to complete the word of God and unravel the length and breadth and heighth and depth of the Divine purpose. In [Paul's] epistles the vista widens to embrace the heavens, and we are borne onward on the stream of time to the very conclusion of the ages.

V. Gelesnoff

"WHEN IT DELIGHTS GOD"

EXULTING in his unique commission for the ecclesia, members of the body of God's dear Son, the apostle Paul joyously relayed the most wonderful revelations confided to mortal man. The call and commission of Paul was, in fact, the delight of God revealing His delight to believers' hearts. Often Paul spoke of this grand occasion on the road to Damascus "when it delights God, Who severs me from my mother's womb and calls me through His grace, to unveil His Son in me . . ." (Gal.1:15).

SEVERED

Following the miraculous restoration of his sight in Damascus, the apostle could not wait to be in the synagogues, heralding Jesus as the Son of God. But here he found himself in a serious predicament. On the one hand he was regarded with deep suspicion by the "Christians" whom he had previously persecuted, but on the other hand, he was now thoroughly detested by those with whom he had waged pitiless eradication of a sect which he had judged to be both sinister and disruptive.

Escaping from the clutches of these who sought his assassination, Paul left the city, being lowered, ignominiously, down the wall in a hamper. In Jerusalem, Caesarea, and also in Tarsus, his presence and his heralding caused utter confusion.

What economy of detail there is in those brief words, "Thereupon, after three years, I came up to Jerusalem to relate my story to Cephas, and I stay with him fifteen

days" (Gal.1:18). Oh! To have been there and listened to their blessed conversations!

"ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED"

Because of their mutual concern for Israel, the two apostles must have given special attention together to God's delight for that nation. Paul would surely have spoken many things that he later recorded in his epistles.

"Yet even if we have known Christ according to the flesh, nevertheless now we know Him so no longer" (2 Cor.5:16). This impression of distance from these matters may seem cold or indifferent, but it is imperative that, within the important context of Paul's words, we should understand that the apostle is stressing the tremendous spiritual transformation of one who is in the new creation—not as of a new birth (regeneration of Israel into the kingdom)—but rather, astoundingly, complete *recreation*! Members of the body of Christ!

Yet the strength of devotion and loyalty to the apostle's nation is clearly demonstrated in Paul's words: "The truth am I telling in Christ, I am not lying, my conscious testifying together with me in holy spirit, that my sorrow is great, and unintermittent pain is in my heart—for I myself wished to be anathema from Christ—for my brethren, my relatives according to the flesh, who are Israelites, whose is the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the legislation and the divine service and the promises; whose are the fathers, and out of whom is the Christ according to the flesh, Who is over all, God be blessed for the eons. Amen" (Rom.9:1-5).

Here we begin to see what it is that delights God in calling out His chosen instruments through His grace. What unbounded love is here! Not anguish or despair! No one could possibly know, better than Paul, the depth of callousness and blindness that had come upon Israel. But also no one could have appreciated the certainty of God's mercy to Israel more clearly than this one who was severed from his relationship to that nation. "And thus all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26).

With these and all similar compassions, God consoles. Thus the apostle comforts, "Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing!" (Phil.4:4). Not a single one of God's creatures will be absent from the reconciled, complete, universal assembly, which Christ Jesus shall present in wonderful adoration, to His God and Father! (1 Cor.15:28).

BE CONCILIATED TO GOD

In 2 Corinthians 5:18-6:2 Paul begins by presenting God's assurance of conciliation, through the sacrifice of His Son, and follows this by beseeching a response of grateful deportment. It becomes a source of pure delight for all who rejoice in the wonder of such grace to thankfully present, in meekness or humility and in all our varying circumstances, lives of resulting, happy transformation.

"So that we, from now on, are acquainted with no one according to the flesh. Yet even if we have known Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now we know Him so no longer. So that, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new! Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation. For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching for Christ's sake, 'Be conciliated to God!' For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:20,21).

A PRISONER OF CHRIST

Imprisonment in Rome was not irksome for the apostle Paul. To the contrary, he recognized that nothing in the whole wide universe could confine, or suppress disclosure of God's purpose for creation, "in accord with His delight."

In fact, he cheerfully perceived that the restriction of his chains enriched the communication and grace of such purpose. When creature participation becomes absolutely impossible, then the illuminating omnipotence of God and the certainty of His glorious consummation imparts serene optimism!

"To me, less than the least of all saints, was granted this grace: to bring the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations, and to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all, that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord, in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence, through His faith. Wherefore I am requesting you not to be despondent at those of my afflictions for your sake which are your glory" (Eph.3:8-13).

Heed the apostle's recognition of this: "Now I am intending you to know, brethren, that my affairs have come to be for the progress of the evangel, so that my bonds in Christ become apparent in the whole pretorium and to all the rest, and the majority of the brethren, having confidence in the Lord as to my bonds, are more exceedingly daring to speak the word of God fearlessly. Some, indeed, are even heralding Christ because of envy and strife, yet some because of delight, also; these, indeed, of love, having perceived that I am located for the defense of the evangel, yet those

are announcing Christ out of faction, not purely, surmising to arouse affliction in my bonds. What then?—Moreover, seeing that, by every method, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being announced, I am rejoicing in this also, and will be rejoicing nevertheless" (Phil.1:12-18).

Thus in Paul's prison letters, which have become known as the Perfection epistles, there are in the first—*addressed to all the saints who are believers in Christ Jesus*—revelations of glorious secrets for the chosen members of His body, and a corresponding urging of appropriate doctrines which clearly exhibit these truths.

Following on this, *a loving communication to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi,* he then beseeches full and happy recognition to be reflected in loving deportment.

In the third—*for the saints and believing brethren in Colosse*—there is confirmation of the wonderful revelations, and also a delicate anxiety that all be on guard against enervating dangers of vain philosophy, human traditions, and empty, repetitive ritual.

SEALED

How can there still be apathetic insouciance when the evangel is most lovingly presented? It remains a frequent source of complete amazement that there could still be indifference, even when the grace of such loving conciliation is presented, and God's "approach present" (Eph.5:2), is stressed through earnest, competent ambassadors.

What mysterious, almost incredible transformation occurs when first we become aware of God's calling? Is it instantaneous? Or is it the culmination of many years of searching and questions? In either case, we may be sure that when it finally happens, *it is at the precise time and in the exact place or circumstance of God's ordering.*

The explanation of this transformation is very simple,

but profound. It rests on the gift of God's spirit. We do not choose it. We certainly cannot lose it. But we might abuse it.

"For is any of humanity acquainted with that which is human except the spirit of humanity which is in it? Thus also, that which is of God no one knows, except the spirit of God. Now we obtained, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we may be perceiving that which is being graciously given to us by God, which we are speaking also, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, matching spiritual blessing with spiritual words" (1 Cor.2:11-13). ". . . you are sealed with the holy spirit of promise . . ." (Eph.1:14).

It is God's delight to save through the stupidity of the heralding those who are believing (1 Cor.1:21). "Now if it is in grace, it is no longer out of works, else the grace is coming to be no longer grace. Now, if it is out of works it is no longer grace, else the work is no longer work" (Rom. 11:6). Those from Israel and the Nations who are chosen of God are the ecclesia, distinguished members of the body of His Son, Christ Jesus! Joint enjoyers! A joint body! Joint partakers! The complex details of how, when, and where we first became aware of God's choice and calling are so diverse, but, together with the apostle, we bow in humble adoration before the wisdom and love of our God and Father, lauding the grace which is lavished on us through His dear Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Economy of expression in God's precious Word is stated above. This must not be misinterpreted as criticism. Indeed, it is the brief, simple word which conveys the mightiest revelation! The most wonderful revelation of God's purpose is expressed in just three simple words, eight letters! Three words! Could anything be more compressed and yet break through and beyond the furthest reaches of this universe! "*All in all*!"

Donald Fielding

THE COMING OF FAITH
(1 Samuel 17:31-40)

SAUL'S initial work in leading Israel was the deliverance of Jabesh-gilead from the hands of Nahash, king of Ammon. At stake was the servitude of Jabesh-gilead to Ammon, and the right eyes of all the men. Saul slaughtered a team of oxen and sent the pieces throughout Israel with the threat that any who did not follow him in delivering Jabesh-gilead would have their oxen slaughtered also (1 Sam.11). This is the service of the flesh, responding to threats of loss and physical pain. David's initial work after his anointing was the slaying of Goliath. He also came to those stricken with fear and despair. He came bringing comfort, speaking of God's glory and exuding faith in everything he said and did.

David's arrival and Israel's cowering before Goliath occasioned the delineation of the promised reward to the deliverer (1 Sam.17:25). Then twice more David asked the question, "What shall be done for the man who smites this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel?" (17:26,30). Both times he received the same answer (17:27,30).

David was astonished that no one had stepped forward. Primary in the heart of David was his jealousy for Yahweh. How could everyone sit idly by when the glory of God was being scorned? And if jealousy for God was not enough, was there nothing to be gained for Israel and for the deliverer who would step forward? And perhaps there was also an unasked question in the back of David's mind: "How can the entire arrays of the living God be void of the confidence that their God will deliver them?"

YAHWEH SHALL RESCUE

31 + **The things which David spoke were** [l]**heard and** [l]**told before Saul; and** [7]**they~** [l]**took him** [7]**and brought him to Saul**[0]**.** 32 +**Then David** [l]**said to Saul,** The **heart of** [7]**my lord~ must not** [l]**fall** [on]**because** of **him. Your servant, he shall go, and he will fight with** ·**this** ·**Philistine.** 33 +**Yet Saul** [lsa]**replied to David, You are not** [l]**able to go** ›**against** ·**this** ·**Philistine to fight with him, for you** are a **youth, and he** has been a **man of war from his youth.** 34 + **David** [lsa]**replied to Saul, Your servant became** a **shepherd**[l] **for his father's** [i] **flock.** +**When** ·a **lion** +**or** `a **bear came and he carried** off a **flockling from the drove,** 35 +**then I would** go **forth after him and smite him and rescue** [M]**it**[c] **from his mouth.** +**If he** [l]**rose** [on]**against me,** + **I would** [c]**hold** him **fast** [i]**by his beard and smite him and** [c]**put him** to **death.** 36 **Your servant has smitten** [mr]**both** `**lion** [m]**and** ·**bear;** + ·**this** ·**uncircumcised** ·**Philistine will become like one** [f]**of them, for he has reproached** the **arrays of** the **living Elohim.** 37 +**Then David** [lsa]**declared, Yahweh Who rescued me from** the **paw of the lion and from** the **paw of the bear, He´ shall rescue me from the hand of** ·**this Philistine.**

+ **Saul** [lsa]**replied to David, Go! And Yahweh, He may** [b]**be with you!** 38 +**Then Saul** [l]**clothed** `**David** in **his coats,** + [g]**placed** a **helmet of bronze on his head and** [l]**put on** `**him** a **body armor.** 39 +**Then David** [l]**girded** `**his sword** [f] **on to his coats;** +**yet he** [7l]**tired** himself~ ›**while walking**– [7du]**once** +**or** [du]**twice**[0]**, for he had not tried** them out**.** +**So David** [l]**said to Saul, I am** [l]**unable to walk in these, for I have not tried** them out**; and David** [l]**took them off.** 40 +**Then he** [l]**took his stave in his hand,** + [l]**chose for him**self **five smooth stones from the wadi and** [l]**placed** `**them in the shepherds**[l]**' wallet** [w]**that he** ›**had** + [i]**for** a **pocket.** +**With his sling in his hand,** + **he** came [l]**close to the Philistine.**

A ROCK OF FAITH

David's questioning soon draws enough attention that he is brought before Saul. David comes before Saul with confidence. He whose heart was set on God (1 Sam.13:14; 16:7) is accused of having an evil heart (17:28), but he comes, and his presence is the comfort that strengthens man's heart (17:32). David is a lone rock of faith towering above a sea of doubt. He offers his service to Saul, but Saul's response is quick, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth" (v.33). Saul can see nothing but flesh. God, His power, His working, His desire for His people, all these things are absent from the thoughts of Saul. Faith is the backbone of courage and of a positive outlook. David possesses faith. Saul does not.

THE FAITH OF CHRIST

Faith is one of the key elements of the coming of Christ. The magnitude of this truth is so great that Paul even speaks of the coming of Christ as "the coming of faith" (Gal.3:23). The faith of Abraham and all those of Hebrews chapter eleven notwithstanding, the faith of Jesus Christ is so overwhelmingly superior and more significant, that His coming may be designated *the coming of faith.* And so the coming of David, with his faith in God, is a type of the coming of Christ "when the full time came," to deliver those whom "the scripture locks up . . . together under sin . . . garrisoned under law, being locked up together for the faith about to be revealed" (Gal.3:19-4:5).

David recounted his experiences as a shepherd to Saul (vv.34-37). The mundane events of daily life are the finger of God, forming our character and teaching us truth. David had learned well as a shepherd the things that Saul failed to learn in searching for the lost donkeys. The rescuing of sheep from lions and bears may have shaken David with

fear at the time, but bolstered him with courage before the giant. He accredited his safety and the saving of sheep to his God, and he was confident now that his God would deliver from the giant also. "Affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness expectation" (Rom.5:3-4).

THE ARMOR

"Saul replied to David, Go! And Yahweh, He may be with you! Then Saul clothed David with his coats, placed a helmet of bronze on his head . . ." (vv.37,38). The spirit of Yahweh had departed from Saul, and his exhortation to David and for Yahweh's presence to be with him seems empty. Then he puts his armor on David. It's hard not to be suspicious that Saul may have been thinking, "If by some outside chance this boy does kill the giant, at least I can say he was wearing *my* armor and using *my* sword." The flesh will claim any shred of merit it can find.

But faith does not march into battle wearing the armor of the flesh. Faith runs into battle (v.48,51) looking confidently to God. And so David's armor is the trappings of a shepherd or pilgrim—the stave, the shepherd's wallet, the sling and the stones. This is how Christ came. He was a Pilgrim, having neither a nest like the birds nor a den like the foxes. The soldiers gambled for His only possession—His cloak. He came armed with the self-sacrificing love of a shepherd. His heart was set on pleasing His Father.

What does God consider armor? Shamgar had an oxgoad (Judges 2:31). Gideon had 300 people with torches and pitchers who could shout (Judges 7). Joshua had trumpets to bring down the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6). Jehoshaphat placed the choir out in front to meet the armies of Moab, Ammon and Mount Seir (2 Chron.20). An orphan Jewess had prayer and fasting (Esther 4:3). A shepherd boy with a sling slew the heavily armed veteran warrior Goliath. And,

in the weakness of human flesh, Jesus Christ stripped off the sovereignties and authorities of the spiritual administration which had been ruling since the sin of Eden. The flesh does not need armor. The flesh needs to be stripped off (Col.2:11). "But the stupidity of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the wise, and the weakness of the world and the ignoble and the contemptible things of the world God chooses, and that which is not, that He should be discarding that which is, so that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight" (1 Cor.1:27-29).

J. Philip Scranton

CVOT NOTES

As we publish added portions of the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, we hope to provide, in the magazine, both studies on these sections of the Scriptures and brief notes on various translation features. The following concerns two unusual renderings in Job 42 (see page 214).

Originally we worded the first line of Job 42:2 and the last line of 42:3 much as found in other English translations: "I know that You can do all things," and "Things too marvelous for me, that I did not know." But the verb in 42:2a, "can" or "be able," puts the emphasis on God's ability or power to do what He does. The thought is not concerned with a theory about what God can do. Job is not speculating concerning God's ability, but is speaking of His ability as shown in what He actually does.

As for the last line of verse 3, we had earlier rendered the Hebrew preposition "from" by the preposition "for," adding a superior "f" to show what the term literally meant. This is quite proper, for the idiomatic sense of prepositions varies from one language to another. But in this case, the literal Hebrew phrase, *marvelous-ing from-me* parallels the phrase at the beginning of the previous line, *I-have-professed.* Job is referring to the thoughts he has been voicing, to what has been coming *from* his mouth. It was not so much that they were too marvelous for him to understand, but they were marvelous things that he believed but did not yet *know* on the basis of God's own word, and which he had obscured by his self-defense.

JOB 42:1-9

42 [+]**Then Job** [l]**answered** [`]**Yahweh,** [+] [l]**saying:**
2 **I know that You are** [l]**able** in **all** things,
And no[t] **plan** [f]**of You**rs can **be** [l]**thwarted.**
3 **"**[a]**Who** is **this** who **obscures**[l] **counsel**
without knowledge?"[◊]
Wherefore I have professed ideas
[+]**when I was not understanding,**
Marvelous[l] thought**s from me,** [+]**that I** did **not** [l]**know.**
4 **"Hearken** [pr]**now, and I My**self **shall speak;**[◊]
I shall ask of **you, and** you **inform Me."**[◊]
5 [›]**With** the **hearing of** the **ear I had heard** of **You,**
[+]**But now my eye sees You.**
6 **Therefore I** [l]**recant and repent**
On soil and ashes.

7 [+] **It** [l]**came** to **pass after Yahweh had spoken** [`]**these** [`]**words to Job** [+]**that Yahweh** [l]**said to Eliphaz the Temanite: My anger is hot** [i]**against you and** [i] **your two associates** [t]**because you** did **not speak** [›]**concerning Me** what is rightly **so**[l] **as My servant Job** has done. 8 [+] **Now take for you**rselves **seven** young **bulls and seven rams.** [+] **Go to My servant Job, and** [c]**offer** [¯]**up** an **ascent** offering [i]**on** [fr]**behalf** of **you**rselves. **And Job, My servant, he shall pray** [on]**for you. For** [if]**then I shall lift** up **his face** [›]**by no**t [d]**inflicting**[–] [wi]**on you** any **disgrace. For you** did **not speak** [›]**concerning Me** what is rightly **so**[l] **as My servant Job** has done. 9 [+]**So they** [l]**went, Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite** [7]**and**[cs] **Zophar the Naamathite, and they** [l]**did just as Yahweh had spoken to them. And Yahweh** [l]**lifted** up [`]**Job's face.**

42:3 [a]**Who . . . knowledge:** *cf* 38:2 [Job quotes Yahweh's words].
42:4 Hearken . . . speak: *cf* 33:31; **I . . . Me:** *cf* 38:3 and 40:7.

BUT NOW MY EYE SEES YOU

YAHWEH has spoken, and Job is quick and brief in agreement. There is no desire for delay; indeed what Yahweh has said is what Job had longed to hear. God is, by the authority of His own word, responsible for the creation of the earth and sea and air and has established their movements and boundaries (Job 38:4-11). He has authority over light and darkness, wind and weather, the gates of death, the stars and lightning bolts and rain (38:12-38). He knows all about the travailing and stupidity and ferocity of beasts and birds, for He has constituted and caused their situations and traits (38:39-39:30). The arm and the voice of El are powerful, determinative in all things, in judgment and justification, in humbling and saving (Job 40). Not only the independence of the behemoth (40:15-24), but the fearful dangers of the dragon (Job 41) belong to God (41:11).

GOD'S ABILITY AND PLAN

In the light of the divine word just given, Job avows, "I know that You are able in all things, and no plan of Yours can be thwarted" (Job 42:2). From the beginning of his experience of suffering Job has held firmly to his conviction that "Yahweh, He gives, and Yahweh, He takes away. Blessed be the Name of Yahweh" (1:21), and "Indeed should we receive good from the One, Elohim, and should we not receive evil?" (2:10). Now he *knows* that this is true because God Himself has said so. And not only that, but Job *knows* from Yahweh's own declarations that all things that occur are evidence of the *ability* of God in carrying

out His plan. This speaks of both the power and wisdom of God, His divine power in carrying out what He has purposed in His wisdom. Behind all the seeming confusion and apparent setbacks to peace and happiness is the powerful God Who is operating steadfastly and successfully in accord with His plan.

The testimony of Job 42:2 fully supports and clearly adds to the avowal of 1:21 and 2:10. Job has come to recognize that in giving and taking away, and in bringing both good and evil into our lives, God is operating in accord with a blueprint, a *plan* that cannot be frustrated or altered. Job's experience of affliction and loss has appeared chaotic and meaningless. From a human standpoint it has no explanation. But if it is true, as Job has insisted all along, that God is responsible for this experience of evil, and it is part of God's plan, and God is able to carry out His plan, then all is well.

The "all things" of Job's life included, first of all, that he "was fearing Elohim and keeping away from evil" (Job 1:2). His concern that his children may have displeased God indicated that Job believed God could bring evil into people's lives in response to their sin. Like his associates and most God-fearing people today, Job appreciated the righteousness of such judgments, and he was careful to avoid them.

But that was not the whole truth concerning the experience of evil and God's doing of all things. As soon as Job lost his wealth and authority and family he related that evil to the blessed God's operations, and as soon as his own health was gone he declared that both good *and evil* come from God's hand. This was the great test. The test was not the experience of evil itself, but the experience of evil that cannot be explained in relation to human sin, but solely must be related to God and His operations.

In the days when Job's "goings were washed in clotted cream," and he "became eyes to the blind, and feet to the

lame" (29:6,15), it would have been fairly easy to say "Yahweh gives, and He takes away." But it would not have had the personal impact to Job that it now holds. It was when the affliction came that the truth that both good and evil are received from God became not only personally meaningful but essential to Job. It was sanity in an insane world. It was the source of the endurance and hope; it was this principle concerning God's deity, a principle that Job had heard and accepted, that sustained Job.

It had sustained Job to believe (and God had given Job strong faith) that "The hand of Eloah, it has done this" (Job 12:9). But it was not until Yahweh Himself traced storms and darkness and dreadful beasts to His powerful operations and plan that Job came to know, by God's own word, that the evil he was experiencing was not only to be traced to the hand of God but to God's plan being carried out powerfully and ably by God Himself.

When God speaks we know it is true.

JOB'S IGNORANCE

In commending Job for his reliance on God, however, we must not suppose that all Job's words have been commendable. He has obscured counsel, as Yahweh had charged (38:2). Job's many words of self-defense have distracted from the truth of the right things he has said concerning God. "Who is this who obscures counsel without knowledge?" It is Job in trying to defend himself.

The more we talk about ourselves, rushing to point out our critics' errors, defending ourselves by setting forth the truth about ourselves, the more we obscure the truth about God. Job faced deep problems, losses of wealth and position, sufferings of extreme pain and weakness, followed closely by condescending advice and self-serving strictures from his associates. But the only wise counsel for endurance is to focus wholly on God. Let what others say go in

one ear and out the other. Turn to God's word as Job kept doing in recalling words and phrases from Genesis.

Job had professed much truth right from the start, but not until Yahweh Himself spoke of His power and wisdom in relation to both good and evil, did the bold words of Job's professings reach to Job's understanding. Job finds now that he had spoken *marvelous thoughts* which came from him but which he did not truly *know.* In chapters 38-41 Yahweh did not allow obscurity to enter into His speech. Job's record of good works and godly fear is beside the point. The marvelous truth is indeed that God gives us what we receive. To this truth is added the marvel, verified by God's word, that He knows what He is doing, and He cannot fail to reach His goal.

YAHWEH'S CHALLENGE

Job continues to focus his thoughts on God's words. In 42:3 he recalled Yahweh's question "Who is this who darkens counsel by declarations without knowledge?" recorded in 38:2. Now in 42:4 Job cites Yahweh's repeated challenge of 38:3 and 40:7, "Belt up your loins now like a master; *I shall ask of you, and you inform Me.*" The citation is not a direct quotation. Job leaves out Yahweh's instruction that he act like a man, which shows Job has learned a good lesson. He will not get sidetracked into talk about himself and the way he acts. For this line, he substitutes some words of Elihu (33:31) that reflect the implications of Yahweh's address. "Hearken now, and *I Myself* shall speak."

It is what God says that counts. The words of chapters 38 through 41 are the climax of the book. Here the daring thoughts Job had professed at the beginning and had struggled to hold on to in debate with his associates are opened up by Yahweh Himself in the grandest and most far reaching of ways. That God gives and takes away, giving both good and evil, is not simply a hope of one individual sinner, but it is a reality for all of creation and all that goes on.

At this point, therefore, Job avows (42:5):

> *With the hearing of the ear I had heard of You,*
> *But now my eye sees* You.

The meaning is clear. Job has clung to the truth that he had heard. But now the experience of evil joined together with the vivid revelations from God Himself has opened Job's eyes to *see.*

RECANTATION AND REPENTANCE

"Therefore," Job avows, "I recant and repent on soil and ashes" (42:6).

Yahweh is about to declare before Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar that Job had spoken what was so. Yahweh's own testimony in Job 38-41 shows clearly that Job spoke rightly concerning God's responsibility to His creation and involvement in what occurs. What Yahweh claims for Himself is what Job had held to without understanding or seeing its marvelous reality. It is not concerning his words in 1:21 and 2:10, continually upheld during his speeches, that Job is recanting or repenting.

It is the obscurity that Job introduced into the true counsel he had professed that he now turns away from and now regrets. His words concerning his own righteous works and diligent reverence only served to distract from and cover up the truth about God. As far as Job's afflictions were concerned, his defense of himself only made them more pressing and puzzling. But when he was given grace to turn his thoughts toward God, then his hope revived and his endurance was strengthened. Now Yahweh has multiplied that grace by granting Job the firm foundation of His own word.

Concerning his self-indulgence, Job recants and repents on soil and ashes.

THE THREE ASSOCIATES

Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar had indeed spoken about God. But what they had to say concerning the Deity was mostly intended to chastise and instruct Job. It did not magnify God but rather magnified the sinfulness and responsibility of the suffering human. There was great caution in their words lest they speak disrespectfully of God. They seemed to want to keep Him at a distance as One to be feared only and wholly, but not bothered by human complaints. In this they spoke what was religiously so, but it was not rightly so with respect to the situation of suffering in front of their eyes; it was not relevant to Job's miserable condition and was not directed toward a growing appreciation of God in light of that misery.

Eliphaz: "Just as I have seen, those who plow lawlessness and sow misery are reaping it. By the hand of Eloah are they perishing, and by the spirit of His nostrils are they being consumed" (4:8,9). "If you return unto Him Who-Suffices and you submit . . . then He Who-Suffices will become your gold ore" (22:23,25).

Bildad: "Behold, El Himself does not reject the flawless man, and He does not hold fast on the hand of evildoers" (8:20). "Dominion and awesome might are with Him, Who is establishing peace in His heights . . . . How then can a mortal be justified before El?" (25:2,4).

Zophar: "Hence know this: that Eloah is granting you oblivion of some of your depravity" (11:6). "Dread shall come over him. Total darkness lies buried for his secluded riches . . . . This is the portion from Elohim for the wicked person" (20:25,26,29).

YAHWEH'S SERVANT JOB

On the other hand Job has spoken very personally toward God in his pleadings, and bluntly in his pain. He has not uttered pieties that were inadequate under the circumstances, concerning punishment and rewards. Instead he expressed his hope for a Redeemer out of his great need of deliverance. He has held to what he knew of God from the limited revelation available in his day, and he has longed for further enlightenment. Job has not been able to divorce his experiences of evil from his thoughts about God, and consequently he has asked relevant questions and spoken what was rightly so concerning God.

"Why is He giving light to the miserable and life to the bitter of soul?" (3:20).

"For the arrows of Him Who-Suffices are in me" (6:4).

"Let me say to Eloah, O do not condemn me! Let me know why You contend with me!" (10:2).

"Why should You conceal Your face and reckon me as Your enemy?" (13:24).

"El surrenders me over to iniquitous men, and He precipitates me into the hands of the wicked" (16:11).

"Know indeed that Eloah Himself has overturned me, and His weir trap has encompassed me" (19:6).

"El Himself has made my heart timorous, and He Who-Suffices has flustered me" (23:10).

". . . the thunder of His masterful deed, who shall understand it?" (26:14).

"He has shot me down into the clay, so that I am made comparable to dirt and ashes" (30:19).

A TYPE OF CHRIST

In many of Job's words we find a solemn foreshadowing of our Lord's cries on the cross. In his sufferings and endurance of these sufferings Job is a type of Christ. We are directed to the endurance of Job (James 5:11), and this points the way to the perfect endurance of "the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, Who, for the joy lying before Him, endures a cross" (Heb.12:2). Jesus prayed that the cup would pass by from Him (Matt.26:39,42). On the

cursed tree He asked the question, haunting because it was so honestly appropriate to the event, "My God! Why didst Thou forsake Me?" (Matt.27:46). Far from being indications of distrust, they are expressions of greatest reliance and trust. "Not as I will, but as Thou!" (Matt.26:39) is fuel for endurance, an endurance that remains and continues without knowing the answer to *Why?* when it reaches its most pressing significance.

In his humiliation and in God's silence toward him for awhile, Job pictures that greater humiliation and forsakenness of Christ.

Similarly, it is in Job's presence that the three associates are to offer up an ascent offering on their behalf (Job 42:8). His prayers for them also point forward to Christ Who pleads for our sakes (Rom.8:34). Finally, it is recorded of Job that it would "lift up his face" when Yahweh responds to his prayers by not inflicting disgrace on Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. It was God's special favor to Job that those who were so anxious to indict him would be blessed by his advocacy of them. So also, in that highest fulfillment of this picture in Job 42, is Christ graced with the Name that is a blessing to all to the glory of God (Phil.2:9-11).

If we fail to see, in the book of Job, a type of God's plan centered in the sufferings of Christ on behalf of sinners, we will miss the bulk of Job's significance for us today. The "why" of Job's afflictions is partly answered in the lessons for endurance and faith which the book supplies. Even more so the book of Job instructs us on the deity and ways of God and His responsibility for all that occurs. But highest of all is what is contained here (and what we have hardly begun to search out) concerning that greatest work of God on behalf of His creation, the giving of His Son to the sufferings and loss of Golgotha and the tomb.

D.H.H.

Questions and Answers

"JESUS": YAHWEH-SAVIOUR *REVEALED*

Now the soulish man is not receiving those things which are of the spirit of God, for they are stupidity to him, and he is not able to know them, seeing that they are spiritually examined. (1 Cor.2:14)

Question:

"WHY do you use the word "Yahweh," instead of "Jesus" in your translation? Don't you know that Jesus' own name can be found in the Hebrew Bible more than 100 times? See for yourself in the enclosed tract. Since I am an active soul-winner, I think this is wonderful information, and I want to help get the word out. Years ago, when I first made my decision for Christ, it would have been easier for me to do so, had I known about this back then. By using "Yahweh" instead of "Jesus"—besides using a strange-sounding word—you are hiding the testimony which the Old Testament itself contains concerning Jesus.

Answer:

YOU ASKED why we use the word "Yahweh" instead of "Jesus" in the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. I have considered the tract you enclosed as well, "Yeshua in the Tenach (the name Jesus in the Old Testament)."[1] As you know, the tract claims that "the very name Jesus [is] found in the Old Testament about 100 times, all the way from Genesis to Habakkuk!"

1. Arthur E. Class (Osterhus Publishing House, 4500 W. Broadway, Minneapolis, MN 55422).

"Yahweh" is the divine *Name.* It is composed of the elements of the verb "to become." (Depending on varied customs of transliteration, this Hebrew word is alternatively rendered, "Jehovah," "Ieue," or "Yahveh.") As explained in our booklet, "The Incommunicable Name," it means, "Him Who was and Who is and Who is coming"; or, strictly, "WILL-BE-ING-WAS."

To assist us in remembering this, it is helpful to keep in mind the words of Hebrews 11:6: "He who is coming to God must believe that He *is.*" Similarly, John seems to point his Greek readers to the meaning of the Name, when saying that the Lord God, the Almighty, is He "Who *is* and Who *was* and Who is *coming*" (Rev.1:8).

"Yahweh," however, is only a part of the name, "Jesus." Since the name Jesus (Greek: *Iêsous; Hebrew: Ieushuo* [or, "Yashua" or "Yeshua"]) is *not* the equivalent of the Hebrew "Yahweh," it would be incorrect to use "Jesus" to represent the divine Name (or "Tetragrammaton," the group of four Hebrew letters which constitute the Name) in English.

Instead, "Jesus" is the equivalent of the Hebrew for "*Joshua.*" That is, the Greek word for "Jesus" corresponds to the Hebrew word for "Joshua" (*cf* Acts 7:45; Heb.4:8).

"Joshua" or "Yeshua" (to use the spelling given in the tract which you shared with me), signifies WILL-BE-ING-SAVIOUR or "(Yahweh)-SAVIOUR." Joshua, Moses' assistant, was called "Yahweh-SAVIOUR," because he was the *saviour* provided by Yahweh (Numbers 13:16). The *-shuo* portion of *Ieushuo* (or "Yeshua") adds the thought of *saviourhood* to the stem (or basic portion) of the divine Name.

"Yeshua" appears in many places in the Old Testament *as* a personal name, and was the name of a number of different men, most notably, the "Joshua" who was the assistant and successor to Moses. A very similar Hebrew term, *Ishuoe* [or as sometimes transliterated: "Yeshuah"], is often used in reference to the One Who will be Israel's Saviour. It is doubtful that this term is the exact Hebrew equivalent of "Joshua" (or "Jesus"), but putting that consideration aside, the usage of this term is as a title not a name.

This is the case in Isaiah 62:11,[2] one of the passages mentioned in the tract, as in many places in Scripture. Consequently, the Concordant Version translates accordingly into idiomatic English, "[your] *Saviour* is coming" (the AV is similar, "[thy] salvation cometh").

The fact is that this word is simply not used as a personal name in either Isaiah 62:11 or in the many other Old Testament texts in which the tract claims that the "very name, Jesus" appears. Since, when reading the Original, it would be absurd to read such texts as speaking of a personal name, it would be wrong to render them in such a way in a translation.

Perhaps an example would help to illustrate this. Even in English, if we should read in a magazine account concerning an athletic competition that a certain man was said to have been the *victor,* and, should we, in the course of our life subsequent to reading this report, be introduced to a man *named* Victor, we would be foolish indeed to imagine that this gave us any reason to believe that this man was the "victor" mentioned in the athletic contest. Likewise, if the account of the athletic competition were to appear in the magazine's Spanish edition and the Spanish word *vencedor* (which is Spanish for "victor") be used in the text, how foolish it would be to claim that *vencedor* should be removed from the translation and replaced with "victor." Worst of all, imagine what we would think of the family of my new acquaintance should they seek to prove

2. "Behold, Yahweh announces it to the outmost part of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your Saviour is coming! Behold, His hire is with Him, and His wage is before Him!'"

to the people of Mexico that their relative is undoubtedly the renowned and victorious athlete of the magazine article—since, after all, his name *is* Victor.

It is true that YESHUA signifies "saviour" (actually, WILL-BE-ING-SAVIOUR). It is also true that, *in Hebrew,* this is the equivalent word for the Greek "*Iêsous*" which appears in Matthew 1:21 in reference to a baby who was to be given this name. This, however, proves nothing. That is, it proves nothing if one's goal is to show that the account in Matthew is true, and worthy of our acceptance and trust.

Though I heartily concur in this tract's *intent*—and sympathize with its author, a brother who seeks to identify our Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour Who is prophesied in the Old Testament—nonetheless, the tract itself is less than clear and will be misleading to most of its readers. This is because—quite understandably—they will conclude (even though the author does not explicitly make this claim) that the tract somehow presents proof to the effect that our Lord Himself is actually spoken of in the various Old Testament passages mentioned, in which the word YESHUA [or YESHUAH] appears. *This is simply not true.*

Some, in reading this tract, as in your own case, will even be led to wonder why the word "Jesus" does not appear in translations of the Old Testament, whether in the Concordant Version, Authorized Version, or others. As a result, since these Old Testament translations have not incorporated the word "Jesus" into their texts where the Hebrew reads YESHUA [or YESHUAH], no doubt some will suppose that these versions are in serious error, due to this "omission."

The fact that certain writings *exist,* namely, those writings commonly known as the New Testament which boldly affirm that the coming glorious Saviour (or YESHUA) of the Old Testament is none other than a certain lowly, despised and crucified, first-century Nazarene—a man, like various others before him, who was simply *named*

Yeshua (Jesus)—is hardly any reason to believe that *he* is the Saviour to Whom such passages as Isaiah 62:11 refer. Nor is it any reason to believe that this account of his life and ministry is true, whether concerning his purported saviourhood, or lesser matters.

Indeed, in Mexico the name "Jesus" (which is actually an English word) is quite a common name. Another such name is "Salvador," which is Spanish for "saviour." If the fact that a man today happens to be named Joshua, Jesus, or Salvador is no proof that *he* is the prophesied Saviour of the Old Testament, then surely neither is the mere fact that a story exists in a book called the New Testament, a story which claims that a certain first-century couple had a son whom they named "Yeshua" (or "Jesus"), any reason whatever to believe that this baby is the coming Messiah, even the Saviour.

Any clear-thinking, albeit unenlightened, Jew or other unbeliever would realize that this is the case and would hardly find any reason to believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the prophesied Saviour of the Old Testament simply because the book of Matthew, for example, speaks of a baby who was named Jesus (or "Yeshua").

Most likely, such unbelievers would be stumbled by this tract, considering it, at best, only circular reasoning. Consequently, they would be hindered still further from accepting the very message which the tract's author seeks to make known.

Such testimonies may appear "convincing" to many who already believe that Jesus is the Messiah. Too often, however, they also serve as a means through which many of these same believers find grounds to scorn the unbeliever for his rejection of Christ (since, after all, "the very name Jesus," *so we are told,* appears over 100 times in the Old Testament). In any case, such writings do not afford any additional real evidence at all for the sake of those whom

they aim to reach. It is to be regretted that many dear believers will nonetheless be convinced that such tracts somehow supply special evidence for our faith. Yet far more regrettable is it that the intelligent unbeliever, upon considering such presentations, will likely be bolstered in his opinion that, in matters related to their faith, Christians are simply illogical.

I would stress, however, that for myself, overall, I enjoyed the tract and found blessing through the experience of considering it, even as in sharing these thoughts with you. And I expect that some will be led to Christ through its goodhearted message. May it be so. So in seeking to answer your question and share a few thoughts concerning the tract's subject matter, I want to emphasize that my criticisms must not be understood in any harsh sense at all, even toward the tract, much less toward its author.

Faith, however—true God-given faith—comes by *tidings* (what is heard), yet the tidings *through a declaration of Christ* (Rom.10:17). Faith results from that which is *believed,* not from that which is *proved.* Even valid proof, significant and pertinent, presented for the sake of leading others to a valid conclusion, must still be received. Yet the most basic propositions upon which we depend to prove something else, cannot themselves be proved; they can only be *accepted* or *rejected.* That is why, ultimately, we either have to witness an event for ourselves or take someone else's word for it.

A man may be able to *prove* that his affirmation is true; but the ultimate principles upon which his proof depends cannot themselves be proved. If they could, they would not constitute the true foundations of his proof. There is no way around this; it is a simple consequence of the fact that every argument has a finite number of steps.

Consequently, to those of us who *believe* it is so, to us, both the Greek Scriptures and the Hebrew Scriptures are

God's own Word; and, accordingly, are inspired by Him (2 Tim.3:16). As the apostle Paul declares, "In accepting the word heard from us, from God you receive, not the word of men, but, according as it truly is, the word of God, which is *operating* also in you who are *believing*" (1 Thess. 2:13). Faith, however, is neither evidence nor proof; instead it is *conviction* and *acceptance,* which lead to *trust.*

The New Testament record teaches us that Jesus Christ is indeed the prophesied, coming Saviour. It alone makes evident that Christ, representatively speaking as the Image of the invisible God (2 Cor.4:4), is indeed Yahweh Elohim—the One Who is the very God and Saviour revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures.

We believe this because we believe God, in Whom we trust. We can only do this, however, because God has made Himself known to us and convinced us that He actually speaks through these writings and is truthful in all that He says and recounts. We can hardly expect others, however, ones whom He has not yet called and convinced, to accept the proposition that a mere book called the Bible—one among many which claim to reveal divine truth—is actually what it claims to be.

Even so, to those of us who are *called,* Christ is the very wisdom and power of God. Thus it becomes evident that God's call is an effectual call. Hence there is no such thing as being called of God and yet remaining fundamentally disbelieving concerning Christ (*cp* 1 Cor.1:23-25).

But it is the burden of the New Testament writings themselves to make Christ known to us, and, by God's holy spirit, to bring us conviction. Therefore, unto this end, we by no means need to make *appeals*—which in themselves are weak and vain—to the fact that the Man of Nazareth was named Yeshua (Jesus) and that a form of this word, which signifies -SAVIOUR, appears in such passages as Isaiah 62:11.

It is well for us *as believers* to know what "Jesus" means,

that we might be growing in a knowledge of our *Saviour;* and it is certainly fine to mention this meaning to the unbeliever as well when sharing the gospel with him. But to suggest that the meaning of the word "Jesus" itself somehow gives credence to our *belief* that Jesus *of Nazareth* is the Saviour and Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament, will be viewed by the sensible unbeliever as absurd, for so it is.

We believe *because God gives us faith.* We do not believe that the Lord Jesus is our Saviour because of some sort of illogical notion derived from the Hebrew word for "saviour."

May we not be among those who boast in their fancied "decision for Christ." No one *can* truly choose *Christ,* to whom Christ is not *choice.* We are not believers because we are somehow better than others, and so, in our acceptance of Christ, have acted accordingly. Instead of our being superior to others, the opposite appraisal may well be closer to the mark (*cp* 1 Cor.1:26-31).

To the contrary, like the wicked Saul of Tarsus, we ourselves only truly "decide for Christ," when God, through His *grace, calls* us and *unveils* His Son in us (*cf* Gal.1:16; 1 Tim.1:12-16; *cp* Acts 13:48; Matt.16:15-17). Since God gives us eyes to see, we merely see Christ as He already is. He *is* Choice (*cp* Luke 23:35).

Accordingly, in seeing Him as He is, we therein *find ourselves* choosing Him. It then becomes too late to add any legalism to this glorious event with respect to something that we ourselves supposedly "must do" (or, more accurately, that we ourselves supposedly must *contribute*).

Those who genuinely believe, only do so because God *overwhelms* their unbelief and wickedness with sufficient power to bring them into a measure of faith (*cf* 1 Tim.1:12-16). It is not that they are forced against their wills, but that God gives them a renewed will, as the product of His own powerful operations.

What a joy it is to be graciously granted to be believing (Phil.1:29)! J.R.C.

"OTHERS HE SAVES"

When Jesus had finished the glorious promises and solemn warnings of Matthew 24 and 25 He turned to His disciples and said, "You are aware that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Mankind is being given up to be crucified" (Matt.26:1,2).

It had come to this. The One Who was to save His people from their sins (Matt.1:21) was to be given over by His people to death. And the One Who came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15) was to be delivered into the hands of sinners to be crucified.

Yet this is not a message of despair but one which becomes the basis of good news. The crucifixion of the Saviour is the solid foundation and effectual channel of salvation.

YOU ARE AWARE

The disciples were aware that the Passover was near. Until this point that festival had been a ritualistic reminder of deliverance from Egypt (*cf* Ex.12:1-17). But it was also a type of a solemn Passover to come, when a greater deliverance would be established. This Passover again would come in association with blood being shed on behalf of the people.

Moreover, the disciples were aware of Jesus' own words concerning His death and resurrection, though they did not seem to be able to penetrate the implications of this prophecy (*cf* Matt.16:21-23; 20:20-28; 26:8,9). It was to be the most important Passover of the ages, the great Antitype Passover, when the Saviour from enslavement to sin would

die, and in His death and resurrection it would open the way to the fulfillment of all God's promises of blessing.

The Passover in Egypt had not been the first type of this most crucial event of all time. The coverings of skins which God made for Adam and Eve came by way of an animal's death (Gen.3:21). Abel's sacrifice from his flock was accepted by God (Gen.4:4,5) because it pictured the death of His Son Who would save sinners, including both Abel and Cain in the appointed time. Abraham, in obedience to God's instructions, raising his hand to slay Isaac (Gen.22:10), foreshadowed God's own approach present (Eph.2:8) when He spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all (Rom.8:32).

The types are multitudinous. Year after year, countless animals were slain and burned on the altar, which in themselves gave no pleasure to God, but which pointed ahead to this fateful day when the Son of Mankind would be crucified. None among Israel had asked Jesus to save them from their sins. But He was about to do so. Few of mankind since that day have comprehended the need and the achievements of His death for sinners. There is much of which we are still not aware concerning that day and what it means for us and all humanity and all of God's creation. But like the disciples, we are aware that it was to be, and we are more and more coming to perceive and appreciate its vital importance.

THE SON OF MANKIND CRUCIFIED

If Jesus had spoken, in Matthew 25:46, of everlasting life for a portion of humanity based on their acts, and everlasting punishment (whether unceasing torment or hopeless destruction) for the rest based on their failures, what would be the purpose and need of His crucifixion? The closing verses of Matthew 25 are presented, over and over again, as the principal proof-texts for the traditional doc-

trine of eternal damnation. Repeatedly, we are told that here our Lord Himself declared there will be final separation of mankind into two states of heaven and hell, continuing without end.

Yet has the Lord no thoughts about such a tragic outcome? If He actually had just spoken of life for some of humanity continuing forever while countless others of the race exist in conscious torment without hope, or even eternally annihilated, then how do His present words in Matthew 26, concerning His death, relate to this view of human destiny?

It might be said that the crucifixion was needed in order for the "life eternal" to be gained. But Jesus had spoken of this judgment of blessing for those who took Him in and clothed and fed Him by doing these acts of kindness for His brethren. "Well then," we hear, "it must be understood that the good works are but our contributions to the process of salvation that is centered in and finally dependent upon the work of Christ."

If this is to say that "life eternal" could never be given to anyone unless Christ had been crucified, we find some ground for agreement, though the relative value of Christ's death to human works is seldom made clear. But, even then, that would still fail to relate the judgment of "everlasting punishment" to the crucifixion. It is unconvincing, at the very least, to bring in the work of Christ for only one part of the judgment (and that vaguely presented), but leave it out of the other. Our question remains: How does Matthew 25:46 lead forward to Matthew 26:2?

All of the preceding chapters of Matthew anticipate chapters 26 and 27. The word of salvation from sins in 1:21 and pardon of sins in 9:6, and teachings concerning the kingdom, as well as warnings about Gehenna and judgment, and the mounting evidence of Israel's stubbornness and human wickedness, all of this prepares the way to the cru-

cifixion. Neither salvation nor condemnation can be carried out to God's glory apart from Golgotha.

It is for mankind that the Son of Mankind was crucified. In Psalm 8 (verses 4 and 5) David asks Yahweh, "What is a mortal that You are mindful of him, or a son of mankind that You are visiting him? You make him lack a little of the messengers, and with glory and honor You crown him." Many years later these words were explained in reference to Jesus, "Who has been made some bit inferior to messengers (because of the suffering of death, wreathed with glory and honor), so that, in the grace of God, *He should be tasting death for the sake of everyone"* (Heb.2:5-9).

If Jesus, as the Son of Mankind, tasted death for the sake of everyone, He tasted death for those who will be cast out in outer darkness and those who are members of the chastised nations in the kingdom, as well as those who are rewarded with superfluity and those belonging to nations rewarded with privileges and joys described by the expression "eonian life" (*cf* Matt.25:26-30; 41-46). Such judgments do not speak of final and everlasting destinies, though they do speak of future conditions far better in every way from the present.

The connection between Matthew 25 and Matthew 26 is that the future of mankind, both Israel and the nations, with all the various rewards and losses described, is fully dependent on the work of the Son of Mankind. The Saviour suffered as the Son of Mankind (Matt.12:40; 17:12; 26:2), and He will be seated on the throne of His glory as the Son of Mankind (Matt.19:28; 25:31; 26:24). But the judgments to come (which we have tended to distort into dreadful acts of misjudgment) and the blessings of righteous rule ahead do not extend in an eternal division of "sheep and goats." Salvation fully based on the work of the Saviour will have the final word. "For the Son of Mankind came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke19:10).

THIS EVANGEL

The woman who poured attar on our Lord's head "in the house of Simon the leper" (Matt.26:6,7) indicated faith in His words concerning His death. Jesus explained, "For she, spraying this attar on My body, does it for My burial" (26:12). But this was not all: "Verily, I am saying to you, Wheresoever *this evangel* may be heralded in the whole world, that also which she does shall be spoken of for a memorial of her" (v.13).

Her faith, expressed by her actions, was centered in Jesus' words that "the Son of Mankind is being given up to be crucified" (Matt.26:2). The crucifixion of Christ lies at the heart of *this evangel* which will be heralded in the whole world. The "well message" or good news that will be heralded is not "You must believe," but "Christ crucified, entombed and roused." What is heralded is to be believed, and this woman's believing is a grand testimony to be remembered. The evangel is not the believing, but the message to be believed. It is not fundamentally about the woman or any of us, or what we must do, but it is about Christ, and what He has done.

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus heralded the evangel of the kingdom to Israel (*cf* Matt.4:23; 9:35). This evangel was then restricted to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt.10:5,6; 15:24). But the kingdom could not come apart from the death of the One Who came to save His people from their sins. The coming of the kingdom is good news only if it actually comes, and that is dependent on the death of Christ. Hence the very *foundation* of "this evangel" is not the announcement of the kingdom itself, but the announcement of the finished work upon which the kingdom and all God's promises of blessing are based.

After Christ's resurrection, this most essential evangel centered on the crucifixion of our Lord, will be made known, not to Israel alone, but throughout the world.

"And heralded shall be this evangel of the kingdom [based on the crucifixion] in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations" (Matt.24:14). Then the promise given to Abram in Genesis 12:3 will finally begin its fulfillment: "In you all the families of the ground will be blessed."

In the book of Acts we have a record of this great work of evangelizing commencing. Peter, who could not accept and had strenuously opposed the very idea of the Lord's death, was first and foremost in its proclamation. "Let all the house of Israel know certainly, then, that God makes Him Lord as well as Christ—this Jesus Whom you crucify!" (Acts 2:36). "This is the Stone that is being scorned by you builders, which is becoming the head of the corner. And there is no salvation in any other one, for neither is there any other name, given under heaven among men, in which we must be saved" (Acts 4:11,12).

Nevertheless, Israel has not yet been blessed with this kingdom, nor have they become a channel of blessing to all the nations. Yet the evangel of the kingdom still speaks of a certainty because it is based on the crucifixion of our Lord, and that has occurred. Because the Saviour was crucified, all Israel will be saved, and all the nations of the earth, even those which experience eonian chastening, will be blessed.

In the meantime, an evangel was given to the apostle Paul to bring to the nations (*cf* Gal.2:7), concerning justification apart from law (Rom.3:21,11), the conciliation of the world (Rom.11:15) and a celestial kingdom (2 Tim.4:18). Furthermore, the salvation was for all mankind (1 Tim.4: 9,10).This also was based on the crucifixion of Christ (see, for example, Rom.5:6-19; 1 Cor.1:18-31; 15:3,4; 15:20-28; Eph.1:7-11; 2:8), which clearly becomes the solid foundation of all blessings, the focus of all good news, the center of all our faith.

THE HANDS OF SINNERS

The Son of Mankind was to be given into the hands of sinners (Matt.26:45). These are the people Jesus came to save. They included, first of all, those who were most devoted and loyal to the sacred scriptures and traditions, the chief priests and elders (26:3-5; 26:57-68; 27:1-10). From the very ranks of the twelve disciples, it included Judas (26:14-16; 26:23-25; 26:46-50; 27:3-5). But "lest any man should be boasting," the denials of Peter involved him, as the representative of the best of human loyalty and sincerity, in the giving up of his Lord (Matt.26:69-75).

Pilate, representing the highest form of human government, was deeply involved (Matt.27:11-26). The Saviour of sinners was also given into the hands of sinful soldiers, the very enforcers of law and order (Matt.27:27-31).

Finally, we read that He was rejected by "the entire people," who cried, "His blood be on us and on our children!" (Matt.27:25). There is no doubt that they and their children have suffered much because of this sin, and have much yet to face. Nevertheless, once again, there is marvelous irony in their words before Pilate, for the blood of Christ *will* be applied to them and their children.

Although he does not speak of its fullest realization, Peter himself well expresses the evangel of God's fulfillment of these words concerning Christ's blood: ". . . not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, were you ransomed from your vain behavior, handed down by tradition from the fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, foreknown, indeed, before the disruption of the world, yet manifested in the last times because of you, who through Him are believing in God, Who rouses Him from among the dead and is giving Him glory, so that your faith and expectation is to be in God" (1 Peter 1:18-21). No longer is Peter an adver-

sary to the message of the Lord's death and resurrection (*cf* Matt.16:21-23).

"SAVE YOURSELF"

At no time did Matthew 1:21 seem so preposterous. The One Who was to save His people from their sins was being crucified, and "those going by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, 'You who are demolishing the temple and building it in three days, save yourself'" (Matt.27: 39,40). These were certainly Israelites, for they mocked Him for His parables concerning the temple of His body which they had taken in reference to their boasted building (*cp* John 2:18-22; Matt.26:61). But the cruel, deriding advice, "Save yourself!" are the words of sinful and foolish humanity as a whole. Our strongest and fondest conviction is that reliance on God is expressed solely by reliance on ourselves.

Jesus had already testified that He was able to entreat His Father, and He would station by His side more than twelve legions of messengers (Matt.26:53). From the standpoint of personal ability and authority He was able to save Himself, but it was not His Father's will (26:39,42).

Christ could not do what He would not do. From the standpoint of faith and trust He could not do what He had the power to do. Consequently, the charge of the mob was true from the standpoint of Who He was and what He was like, when they shouted, "Himself he can not save!" But the other half of their charge was also true, though they spoke in mocking unbelief: *"Others He[1] saves!"* (Matt.27:41).

Never has a mob spoken greater truth in their mindless and hateful exultation. This One dying on a cursed tree

1. The CV uses a lower case "h" here to indicate the people's frame of mind, but we use the capital letter "H" now to indicate the viewpoint of God's spirit which they had not yet received.

was their Saviour. He was Jesus, now in His role as the Son of Mankind (*or:* Son of Humanity), undoing what Adam (whose name means "human") did, and opening the way to their enlightenment and blessing in the Father's love. They could not have known. They were all like the chiefs of this eon, of whom Paul writes, "if they know, they would not crucify the Lord of glory" (1 Cor.2:8).

But we as believers are aware that "while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). If He died for us, how can we think that He did not die for all sinners? And if He saves sinners such as us, how can we think He does not ultimately save all, and do this on the same basis of Christ's finished work?

THE KING OF ISRAEL

But this is to get ahead of the story. The book of Matthew focuses on God's operations concerning the nation of Israel (and other nations in relation to Israel). Jesus was to save that people from their sins, and by dying, He was doing that which had to be done to this end of national deliverance and blessing.

Above His head was the declaration, intended as a charge against Him, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews" (Matt. 27:36). Here also was a statement, made in derision, that was faithful and true. Similarly, the mob mocked, "If he is king of Israel, let him descend now from the cross, and we will believe on him!" (Matt.27:42).

Before He takes His place as their King, He must become Israel's Saviour from their sins. He will be their King, but first they must and will believe that He is their Saviour precisely because He died for them and did not descend from the cross on that Passover day.

In accordance with this pattern of blindness, many believers today are not able to appreciate the full and glorious irony of these words shouted at our Lord as He hung

on the cross. They may see themselves happily included among the "others" whom Jesus saves, but they often limit the graciousness of this salvation as a finished work of the Saviour, and the extent of the sinners included under the term "others" whom Jesus saves. But also they are unwilling to see the truth in the words "King of the Jews" and the truth behind the mob's words, intended by them as ridicule, and stated in unbelief, ". . . king of Israel."

Many who have seen that the Bible teaches universal reconciliation have failed to see that it is not immediately ahead, but a consummation of a process occurring in the oncoming eons. We long for the time when God becomes All in all, but this does not occur until the work of Christ's kingdom, both on the earth and in the heavens is carried out (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22-28).

WE WILL BELIEVE ON HIM

Hence we can see there is further irony in the words of the unbelieving mob. Speaking with confidence that Jesus could not save Himself, the mob claimed that they would believe on Him if He did descend from the cross. Nevertheless, they will believe on Him indeed when He comes, not in His humiliation, but in His power and glory. Like Saul of Tarsus, who exceeded them all in blasphemy against the Lord (*cf* 1 Tim.1:13,16), all those who mocked Him on that fateful day, and all those who have joined in that calumny since, they will come to believe on Him.

The account of the amazing happenings during the three days of Matthew 26 and 27 thoroughly destroys any basis for the doctrine of everlasting hell. The sufferings of Christ leads to the evangel of Israel's salvation from their sins. It also leads to the evangel of our salvation announced by Paul, and ultimately to the realization of the salvation of all mankind.

D.H.H.

Contents:

241 Editorial
243 Babe, Child, Sonship and Firstborn
253 Foods, which God Creates
262 Yahweh's Consummation of Job's Captivity
266 Lessons from Job
271 Yahweh's is the Battle
280 For He was Roused

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 1998
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME EIGHTY-NINE

EDITORIAL

THE TWO scripture references given on our front cover, Ephesians 3:8, 9 and 2 Corinthians 3:18 indicate the stress our magazine lays on the ministry of the apostle Paul. He was granted the grace of bringing "the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations" which leads us "from glory to glory." The treasures of grace and peace in Paul's evangel contain revelations that cannot be traced through the sacred scriptures of old, from Genesis through Malachi, or even in our Lord's ministry recorded in Matthew through John, and the writings of His followers of the Circumcision. Hence the magazine has given special attention through the years to the secrets Paul made known concerning the transcendent grace in our calling today as members of the body of Christ, our blessings among the celestials, and the glories of Christ in relation to all of creation.

In accord with this, A. E. Knoch's article on the human terms of growth applied to the believer and to Christ (see p.243) points us toward an appreciation of Christ's highest designations of *Son* and *Firstborn* as presented in Ephesians and Colossians. On a more practical plain, James Coram discusses the way in which Paul's evangel, "apart from law," guides us in matters that were regulated by the law of Moses formerly (see p.253).

However, the rest of this issue is taken up with studies from the books of Job and 1 Samuel as well as the ministry of Jesus to the nation of Israel as it is presented in Matthew. Obviously such portions of God's Word cannot deal directly with riches of revelation that cannot be traced in them! But as Paul wrote Timothy, the sacred

scriptures with which Timothy had been acquainted from his youth, are able to make us "wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.3:15). They are *beneficial* for teaching, exposure, correction and discipline in righteousness (v.16). We cannot trace in them the distinctive features of Christ's glories revealed by Paul, but we will find much for paving the way and indeed establishing the patterns of these revelations. This is shown in the articles by Brothers Knoch and Coram as well as in those by Brother Scranton and myself and the brief comments by others on the book of Job.

Now, especially because of our work on the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, we anticipate more and more space being given in our magazine to those portions originally written in Hebrew, termed by Paul, "the sacred scriptures." Not exclusively, of course, but in giving more attention than usual to these ancient scriptures, we are trying to focus on the ways in which they aid us in making us wise for understanding and appreciating the evangel of the glory of Christ found in all of Paul's epistles, and the untraceable riches of Christ found in his prison epistles as well.

We do not want to give the wrong impression, as though to say there are no distinctions, or that if one is clever enough one can trace what is untraceable. But we do not want to neglect the benefits of all of God's Word, from the book of beginnings (Genesis), through the writings of the twelve and their associates, unto Paul's own completion of the Word of God in his letters from the Roman prison (Col.1:25). Neither do we forget that beyond acquaintance with the sacred scriptures, we all need to be praying that great prayer of Ephesians 1:15-23 to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, for "a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him."

D.H.H.

BABE, CHILD, SONSHIP AND FIRSTBORN

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD are common to all the descendants of Adam. *Sonship* is reserved for the adult males. Only some of these enjoy the high privileges of the *firstborn*. These distinctions among humanity have been instituted in order to reveal to us the place and portion of Christ, the Firstborn Son of God by creation (Col.1:15), and the Firstborn of Miriam by birth (Luke 2:7), besides being the legal son of her husband Joseph (Luke 3:23), as well as the Firstborn from among the dead (Col.1:18).

A human being, in its succeeding stages of growth, is given various descriptive designations to indicate its physical age or sex, or its spiritual stature, such as *babe, little boy* or *girl, child, minor,* and *son.* Each of these has a lesson, not only as applied to the sinner and the saint, but as revealing the place and portion of Christ, and, indirectly, the fashion of God's affection. Men, by instinct or nature, care for their offspring or their successors, and this should teach them the greatest of all lessons, the love of God for His creatures, for He relates them to Himself, in a series of figures, by calling them His children, His sons or His firstborn.

BABE

Even before He was born, John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Saviour, was called a "babe" (Luke 1:41,44). Our Lord Himself first appeared as a "Babe," when the messenger announced His advent. Although He was the Sav-

iour, Who is Christ, the Lord, come to the city of David, He came as a new-born Babe, swaddled, and lying in a manger (Luke 2:12,16). Of the saints, only Timothy's literal babyhood is mentioned, for he had a good start, being acquainted with the sacred Scriptures from his infancy. Figuratively, however, Peter wanted the Circumcision saints to be like recently born babes, longing for the unadulterated milk of the Word, that by it they might be growing into salvation (1 Peter 2:2). This figure fits perfectly into that of regeneration (1 Peter 1:3,23). The AV mistakenly uses it of Paul (1 Cor.13:11) and of the Corinthians (1 Cor.3:1). In these cases it should be "minors."

LITTLE CHILDREN, BOY OR GIRL

Some time after His birth, when He was no longer a Babe, or in reference to this time, Jesus is called a little Boy (Matt.2:8,9,11,13,14,20,21). Matthew presents Him as the Son of David, the King of Israel, and, as a consequence, he emphasizes the fact that He was born in Bethlehem, the city of David. We know that His mother, although a native of Bethlehem, did not live there at that time, but in Nazareth. Yet Matthew makes no mention of this, and says nothing of the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem or the census which caused it, for these are foreign to his theme: He simply says, "Jesus being born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod, the King, lo! magi from the East came along into Jerusalem . . ." (Matt.2:1). I do not blame anyone thinking that all this occurred in Bethlehem.

Luke, however, who is concerned with His humanity, tells us that, after the days of their cleansing were fulfilled, according to the law of Moses (that is, seven days and thirty-three days, with His circumcision on the eighth day), His parents left Bethlehem to take Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord, and to give a sacrifice, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. Evidently they were not able

to bring a lamb for an ascent offering (Lev.12:8,12). Then they left Jerusalem for Galilee, and returned to their own city, Nazareth, and probably remained there until the visit of the magi, about two years later (Luke 2:21-40).

The fact that He is now consistently called a "little Boy," not a "Babe," should arrest our attention. Herod, informed by the chief priests and scribes that Christ would be born in Bethlehem, sends the magi there, after inquiring accurately as to the time of the star's appearing. Judging by Herod's later actions, Jesus, our Saviour, was not over two years old, for Herod had all the boys in Bethlehem massacred, who were two years old and below, "according to the time which he ascertains exactly from the magi" (Matt.2:7,16). So it seems certain that the magi were wise enough not to heed Herod's directions, but to follow the star, which led them to Nazareth. There they found the little *Boy* with His mother. And thence His parents took Him to Egypt, and so fulfilled all the Scriptures concerning Him, for He was not only born in Bethlehem according to the prophet Micah (5:2), but was a Nazarean (Matt.2:23) and was called out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1).

When the magi found the King of the Jews, He was not in a stable, lying in a manger, as the shepherds had found Him, but in a *house* (Matt.2:11), so it could not have been at the same time, as the popular pictures present it. To be sure, there were no real stables then, for the ordinary houses were divided into two parts, a raised platform, where the people lived, and a lower division, which housed the usual domestic animals, which were a part of the household. The manger was between these two. But the manger of a *caravansary* was a different matter. It is most remarkable that this term occurs only at the entrance and exit of His career! It is translated as "guest-chamber" in the AV, and described as "a large upper room" (Mark 14:14, Luke 22:11). This could not very well contain a stable. The ani-

mals would be kept in the court, with a very scant shelter over their manger.

It is most marvelous to see how God fulfilled His own Word in this case. The predictions, loosely considered, seemed to be contradictory, for one distinctly said that the Messiah should come from the city of David, *Bethlehem,* concerning which we will have much to say at another time. But another declared that He would be a *Nazarean,* while still another insisted that He would be called out of *Egypt.* Yet the most remarkable thing was that God used the highest dignitaries in order to carry out His predictions. He caused *Caesar Augustus* to time and condition his census so that Mary had to go to Bethlehem at a most unlikely juncture. He brought the *wise men* to Nazareth by means of a star, and the child was compelled to go to Egypt by the murderous malice of *Herod.*

BOY, GIRL, OR PAGE

In the Scriptures we see divisions of a man's life that differ from those to which we are accustomed. The "little boy" period seems to have lasted until the age of twelve. We read of Jesus that the "little Boy grows up," and then, "when He came to be twelve years," the "Boy" (not *little*) remained behind in Jerusalem (Luke 2:40,43). His conduct corresponds to this, for He would not have acted so independently before, when He was a "*little* Boy." Here He began His *service* for His heavenly Father. The word for boy is also applied to Herod's *pages* (Matt.14:2), so reaches beyond mere generation into the sphere of service. In fact, it is rendered *servant* eleven times in the venerable Authorized Version, which translates seven distinct words with "servant." A concordant version cannot do this, so is compelled to fall back on the fact that, in English, *boy* is also used of a male servant, with even more latitude as to age than in the Scriptures.

This word (*pais*) is a good example of the need of a consistent translation, and of the strong prejudices which it must encounter among those who use a popular but inaccurate version. The revered Authorized Version makes a mad mixture by rendering it *child, maid, maiden, servant, manservant, son* and *young man.*

As we shall see, it certainly should never be rendered *son.* Herod evidently did not slay all the *children* in Bethlehem and its boundaries (Matt.2:16), for only the males were massacred. Neither did *children,* including *girls,* cry in the sanctuary (Matt.21:15). Girls would not be permitted there. "Child," also, as we shall see, should not be confounded with this term. I have always shrunk from the expression "child Jesus" (Acts 4:27,30, AV), when used in connection with His *service.* A child is not old enough to serve. But a boy between twelve and thirty can do many things to help his parents. I assisted my father in his work long before that.

CHILD

This term is used as in English, with a very wide range. In Greek it denotes BROUGHT-FORTH, so literally applies to all who are *born,* and is the complement of *parent.* This is usually literal, but may be figurative, as children of Rachel (Matt.2:18), of Abraham (Matt.3:9), etc. Our Lord uses it of His disciples (Mark 10:24). It implies more than mere birth and includes the bonds and obligations that spring from it, such as affection and care. yet is also implies a considerable chasm in some regards, between the parent and child, due to inexperience and immaturity. Children usually have traits similar to their parents, but in an undeveloped state. Those who *believe* are children of Abraham as far as faith is concerned, for that is the trait which distinguished him, and this would lead to conduct conformable to it. A child is more trusting than an adult.

MINORITY AND MATURITY

In the Scriptures those who are too young to have a voice in affairs, who need a guardian, are *minors* or, literally, YOUNG-sayers. The AV renders this *babe, child,* and *childish,* but none of these carry over the central idea of *immaturity*. It is in contrast to the wise and intelligent, yet such are able to *believe* God's revelation (Matt.11:25), and to become a *mature* man (1 Cor.13:10,11). In modern times the age at which a person becomes legally competent seems to be about twenty-one years. But our Lord did not begin His ministry until He was thirty.

The thought of *maturity* is almost absent in the Authorized Version. It is dimly seen in such a rendering as *"full* age" (Heb.5:14), and *"men"* (1 Cor.14:20). It uses the word *"perfect,"* as does the CV, but this has the sense of flawlessness rather than FINISHED, which is the meaning of the Greek standard. Physically humans attain their full development somewhere between twenty and thirty years, but they may remain minors in spiritual things all their lives.

In Israel a male was mature physically when he arrived at the age of twenty (Lev.27:3,5). Then he was drafted into the host, or army, and was liable to military service, being considered a mature member of the nation. But mentally a man is not mature at that age. Spiritually men need another ten years to develop. Is not this the reason why our Lord did not commence His ministry until He was thirty years old? Men are, indeed, not ready to *rule* as an elder even at that age, for they lack the wisdom that comes only from long experience, but their faculties are fully developed, and at their peak about three decades after birth.

SONSHIP OR ADOPTION

Jesus, our Saviour, was a legal *son* of Joseph but not his *child* (Luke 3:23). He was physically descended from Adam and Abraham and David through Miriam, His mother, but

He was also the *Son* of Adam, in relation to mankind as a whole, and the *Son* of Abraham in relation to the land of Israel, and the *Son* of David in relation to the kingdom. This implies far more than mere descent. A son must be a male. He must be mature, in the case of our Lord, about thirty years of age. He must be spiritually able to enter into and take over all the rights and privileges and dignities of his father, or forefathers.

A son need not be a man's literal offspring. Not long after I believed, I came under the tutelage of those who laid great stress on being "born again." They had difficulties with the AV rendering *adoption* (Rom.8:15,23; 9:4; Gal.4:5; Eph.1:5), and rejected it, rightly contending that it should be *sonship,* for the Greek literally means SON-PLACing. The rendering in Ephesians, the "adoption of *children*" was most misleading, for it refers only to *maturity* (Eph.1:5). But there was a custom prevalent in ancient times by which a man who had no offspring, or at least no male heir, could *adopt* one. In some respects this was an advantage. A child by birth may turn out to be utterly unworthy of his father's station and responsibilities. A father would be much safer if he could choose a mature man whose character was established and known to him. This was often done, and the place or position of a literal son or heir became the portion of the one adopted. The term was also applied to the time when this occurred (Rom. 8:23). To us it comes with the deliverance of our bodies.

In the past the term "sonship" was used of the special privileges of the *nation* of Israel, as Yahweh's representative on earth (Rom.9:4). It had no reference to their origin, but to their preponderant position, their divine prerogatives. At the same time, *individually,* they were under law, minors, under guardians and administrators. At present the saints are no longer in this position, but have the place of a son because we have received the *spirit* of son-

ship (Gal.4:1-5). One of the special blessings accompanying the present superlative grace is this, that God, in love, has designated us to have the place of a son through Christ Jesus (Eph.1:5). This is unutterably more than the "new birth" for the nation of Israel.

SONSHIP OR SON-STATION

Sonship, literally son-*placing*, the station in life accorded a son, lacks a satisfactory English designation, so we suggest, with some trepidation, the equivalent of the German *Sohnesstand*, which fits perfectly. The word *son-station* occurs only in Paul's epistles, and is only for saints who are no longer minors, but mature, who have been reclaimed from under the law (Gal.4:1-7). The Authorized Version has the special rendering here "adoption of sons." This is far preferable to "adoption of *children*," which it uses in Ephesians 1:5. It does *not* refer to childhood at all, but is in contrast to it. We were not adopted as babes or little children, so that we must wait until we are mature in order to claim that place of a son. We need no guardians or administrators to look after us because, by faith, we are adopted into God's family as full grown sons.

FIRSTBORN

The Son of God is the Firstborn in relation to creation, in the beginning, to the other children of Miriam, his mother, and to the dead, in resurrection. His headship of humanity was by a literal birth, but His precedence in creation and resurrection are figurative expressions. The firstborn son, as a rule, is accorded, not merely the first place in time, but in privilege and honor and allotment. This is the real import of the expression. It is usually used in this figurative sense. We should never reason, from the syllable *born*, that it must involve a literal birth. This is clearly not the case with His pre-eminent place in creation or in resurrection. In neither case can we ever imagine any mother, or even a begettal on the part of a father. It is the resultant position which is described as like that of a male offspring come of age who is endowed with the principal possession and privileges of his father.

So it is that we are taught the spiritual essence in the title firstborn. The fleshy and fleshly firstborn, Reuben, is set aside, and his position divided between Judah and Joseph. Besides this, it is significant that Judah saved Joseph's life when his brethren plotted to kill him. Is not this a suggestion of resurrection? And will not the blessing of Joseph be withheld from Israel until after the rejection and resurrection of Messiah?

Thus also will it be with all mankind and all creation. The dignities and the glories that should have come to Adam he forfeited by his offense. On the contrary, Christ, Who came later than he, on account of His sufficient sacrifice, will be clothed with all earthly honors in place of Adam. He is the sinless and superior Son of Adam, or Son of mankind.

In creation, however, the peerless Son of God was first in time as well as station. God created all else *in* Him and *through* Him, not *by* Him. The Authorized Version is very loose in its renderings of the Greek connective *hupo* UNDER (accusative) and *by* with the genitive. Without due discrimination it renders it *among, by, from, in, of, under,* and *with.* Unlike most connectives, there are no idiomatic passages that keep the translator from carrying it over uniformly by *by,* except before an object, when it is always *under.* Thus we can say that all was created by God, or God's creation. But *this is never said* of the Son of God, His Firstborn, in the inspired Original.

For example, the AV in Matthew 1:22, says that "all this was done, that it might be fulfilled *of* the Lord *by* the prophet." This gives the false impression that the prophet

was the original speaker and that he spoke about Christ. But a prophet does not speak from himself. God speaks *through* him. It is not *his* word which is fulfilled, but *Yahweh's.* In the CV we read: "Now the whole of this has occurred that that may be fulfilled which is declared *by* (*hupo*) the Lord *through* (*dia*) the prophet."

In 1 Corinthians 8:6, according to the popular version, we have the confusing statement, "to us there is but one God, the Father, *of* whom are all things, and we *in* him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, *by* whom are all things, and we *by* him." What is the difference between "*of* him" and "*by* whom"? Do not both indicate the efficient source? And how can we be *in* Him if all is *of* him? This is all clarified by a concordant version: "for us there is one God, the Father, *out* of Whom all is, and we *for* Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is, and we *through* Him." Creation is always *out* of or *by* the Father, but *through* the Son. He is not the Source, but the *Channel.* He Himself is *out* of God, or He would not be His Son.

This is confirmed, not contradicted, by the highest revelations concerning Christ, in Paul's Colossian epistle. The AV misreads it thus (1:15): Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For *by* Him were all things created, that are in the heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created *by* him, and for him: And he is before all things, and *by* him all things *consist."* But how much clarity and consistency is gained if we translate, as elsewhere, *in* Him is all created, and all is created *through* Him and *for* Him, and He is before all (literally, before *of* all), and all has its cohesion *in* Him. As elsewhere expressed, He is God's creative Original (Rev.3:14), or as the AV renders it, the beginning of the creation of God.

A. E.Knoch

FOODS, WHICH GOD CREATES

Now the spirit is saying explicitly, that in subsequent eras some will be withdrawing from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and the teachings of demons, in the hypocrisy of false expressions, their own conscience having been cauterized; forbidding to marry, abstaining from foods, which God creates to be partaken of with thanksgiving by those who believe and realize the truth, seeing that every creature of God is ideal and nothing is to be cast away, being taken with thanksgiving, for it is hallowed through the word of God and pleading. By suggesting these things to the brethren, you should be an ideal servant of Christ Jesus, fostering with the words of faith and of the ideal teaching which you have fully followed. (1 Tim.4:1-6)

Question:

"I have been taught that the Bible laws against unclean meats are still in effect today. My pastor says that the Bible reveals that such food sources as pork and shellfish are "unclean," hence are unfit for human consumption. He often says that all who wish to obey God will not eat such foods. What is your understanding of this subject?"

Answer:

MANY believe that both Christ's words in Mark 7 and Peter's experience in Acts 10 constitute an effectual divine pronouncement, giving approval to all, to the effect that one may now eat all animal flesh, specifically, those animals

the eating of which was strictly forbidden under Moses' law. In my judgment, however, neither of these texts actually gives any indication of such an idea. Indeed, in light of the administrational setting of these respective passages, it would seem entirely out of place for such a teaching to be found within the scope of these writings.

PETER'S VISION

Concerning Peter's vision, surely it is correct to judge the command "sacrifice and eat!" (Acts 10:13), not as a literal imperative, but as a figurative one. Thus it is not that Peter was literally to "sacrifice and eat" all manner of—insofar as Moses' law is concerned—unclean quadrupeds, reptiles, and flying creatures. Instead, it is that Peter, like a man who thus would involve himself with all manner of *creatures,* was, for the purpose of evangelization, to become willing to involve himself with all manner of *men,* even if the common Jewish perception of such peoples was that they were utterly "unclean" and to be avoided under all circumstances.

At the beginning, Peter was bewildered in himself as to what the significance of the vision which he perceived should be (Acts 10:17). "Now, as Peter is engrossed, concerned with the vision, the spirit said to him, 'Lo! three men are seeking you! But, rising, descend and go with them, nothing doubting, for I have commissioned them'" (Acts 10:19,20). A short time later, Peter averred to these men (as well as to the others with them), "You are versed in the fact how illicit it is for a man who is a Jew to join or come to another tribe, and [yet] God shows me [obviously, through the vision which God had given him] not to say that any *man* is contaminating or unclean" (Acts 10:28).

Thus Peter grasped the fact that "God is not partial, but in every nation he who is fearing Him and acting righteously is acceptable to Him" (Acts 10:35).

Under the evangel of the Circumcision (Gal.2:7), it is through fearing God and acting righteously that one, by His grace (*cf* Rom.11:5), becomes acceptable unto Him. Yet under the evangel of the Uncircumcision (Gal.2:7), Paul's evangel for the nations, we are justified apart from law (Rom.3:21,24) and graced in the Beloved (Eph.1:6). We have boldness and access with confidence, not out of works of righteousness which we do (*cf* Titus 3:5; Rom.4:5), but through Christ's faith (Eph.3:12).

"Acting righteously," in itself, is a relative term. That is, "righteousness" must be judged in relation to one's calling and allotment; its scope encompasses all that is right for a man to do, according to the divine administration which pertains to him, under which he is called, and called upon to be faithful to his God.

The law of Moses, however, is not a timeless standard of righteousness. For example, it is not because of the law of Moses but because of the law of conscience, according to nature, that we become aware of our duty to honor our parents (*cp* 2 Tim.3:2,3). And, if it should be that our conscience has become so defiled that its testimony on this question is weak or clouded, we have Paul's words in Ephesians 6:1-3 explicitly entreating believing children thus to behave with regard to their parents. In this passage, Paul employs Moses' words even as he does in many other instances; for in this matter, God's instruction to Israel is essentially the same as His instruction for us today. But in doing this, the apostle by no means subjects us to Moses' writings, as such, or otherwise to the law of God which He gave to Israel. That is, it is not determinative, but incidental, to our own obedience that the sons of Israel were commanded to honor their parents.

While "sons" is the correct translation, in such instances the word is not used literally in reference to gender but metonymically (i.e., by association), in reference to all

the descendants of Jacob, both male and female. That is, while the "sons" are spoken of, it is understood that by association, the daughters are included along with them. Paul too uses the word "sons" in a figure when he terms all the believers, male and female, "sons of God" (Gal. 3:26,28). Thus "all the saints" (Eph.1:1) have been designated beforehand for "the place of a son" (Eph.1:5); that is, for a place of great significance and worth, near and dear to the Father's heart.

MARK 7:19

The words "—cleansing all the foods" in Mark 7:19 do not appear in the parallel account in Matthew 15:11, 17-20. They appear to be a contracted (elliptical) phrase, a phrase in which the obvious is understood but not expressed. While Matthew's account does not include these words, it does supply the summary statement which makes evident the parable's significance: "Now to be eating with unwashed hands is not contaminating a man" (instead, it is the uncleanness of man's own heart which "contaminates" him; Matt.15:18-20).

Accordingly, I would suggest that the thought to be grasped from the words of Mark 7:19, "—cleansing all the foods," is simply that the ordinary impurities which are carried along with or attached to foodstuffs (which may not be fully removed before eating, with or without washing), cannot contaminate a man since they do not go into his "heart," but instead into his bowels (the contents of which, subsequently, passing out of the body altogether, go out into the latrine).

The words "—cleansing all the foods," in the CV, are preceded by a dash in an attempt to indicate that there is something other than standard word flow here. It should be noted as well that the definite article ("the") is in the Greek. In succinct form, the idea contained in these words

is this: "—cleansing all the foods [occurs by this means]." Through digestion and elimination, the foods which one eats (whatever foods these may be) are cleansed from any dirt or other impurities which may have attended them.

Peter, even as all those identified with the evangel of the Circumcision, continued to be under the law and subject to its precepts, including those concerning unclean meats (*cp* Isa.65:4; 66:17; Matt.5:17-20; James 2:10). The law was never "done away"; it is simply that it was never given to the nations; even the Israelites who receive Paul's evangel are to imitate him and deem the law's righteousness as refuse, as that which they are to discard (Phil.3:8).

PAUL'S TEACHING

Consequently, insofar as righteousness before God is concerned, we today declare, "*Every* creature of God is ideal and *nothing* is to be cast away, being taken with thanksgiving" (1 Tim.4:4). "Thanksgiving" is the only proviso. And, of every creature, Paul declares, "it is hallowed through the word of God and pleading" (1 Tim.4:5b).

Yet even though Paul plainly states that it is so, some still do not believe that every creature of God is now hallowed for food. They justify their unbelief through the claim that since "hallow" means "set apart (from)," then those animals which are holy must be set apart (as approved) from the remainder of animals, which, therefore, are not set apart and are not approved. Since they are aware that under Moses only certain animals are hallowed, and since they believe that "hallowed" means "set apart (from)," they conclude that when Paul speaks of hallowed creatures in 1 Timothy 4:4, he is speaking of the same limited group of hallowed creatures of which Moses writes in the law.

In reply, we simply point out that this reasoning cannot be correct, for Paul says, "every creature of God"; not, "every creature of God deemed holy under Moses."

If this latter thought were Paul's meaning, the apostle would have said so.

We also point out the fact that it is not true that "hallow" means "set apart (from)." In essence, "hallow" signifies "consecrate" or "devote" to a certain purpose. By extension, it is often used of that which is "set apart (from)" others of the same general kind; yet this is incidental to its basic meaning and is not the essential thought. It is incorrect to say that "holy" means "set apart (from)." Indeed, "hallowing" does not require the exclusion of certain of the entities of a given kind. Therefore, it does not follow that if there should be such a thing as "holy" animals, there are also unholy animals. In any certain usage, this may or may not be the case. For example, the entire tribe of Levi and the entire nation of Israel were hallowed for God's service and according to His purpose; none were exempted from this designation.

That which is hallowed is that which is identified with a certain purpose, whether a holy harlot (*cf* Gen.38:21,22) or holy animal flesh (in the case of Leviticus 11, holy insofar as Israel is concerned). That which is holy is that which is devoted to (i.e., used for or involved in) a certain practice or activity.

Leviticus 11 (or Deuteronomy 14), however, is not the place in Scripture where "every creature" is hallowed, but where only certain creatures are hallowed and the rest are deemed unholy! Yet Paul speaks of a "word of God" which affirms the devotion (the hallowing) of *every* creature of God as being that which may be partaken of as food. In this respect, he deems every creature "ideal"; that is, nothing need be cast away or refused, so long as it may be partaken of with thanksgiving.

According to Paul, every creature thus is hallowed (i.e., connotatively, *approved,* or correctly identified as serving for food; *cp* 1 Cor.7:14); and this is so, both "through the

word of God," and also through "pleading." (Note that the term here is not "prayer," but "pleading.")

Apart from this first epistle of Paul written to Timothy, it is only at the time prior to Moses and subsequent to the flood that we find a "word of God" in which it is evident that no formal divine restrictions are placed on what may be eaten. Indeed the situation for Noah and his sons was very plainly this: "Be fruitful and increase and fill the earth and subdue it. And the fear of you and the dismay due to you shall come on every living animal of the earth, even on every flyer of the heavens, and in all which is moving on the ground, and in all the fishes of the sea. Into your hand are they given. And every moving animal which is living is coming to be food for you. *As the green herbage* [which was given without restriction], I give to you *all.* Yea only flesh with its soul, its blood, you shall not eat" (Gen.9:1-4).

With respect to creatures which may be eaten for food, it is evident that Paul likens our present situation as members of the body of Christ to that of those who lived following the flood. In a parallel sense today, in accord with the ancient precedent of Genesis 9:1-4, every creature of God is now hallowed for food. Even as in that day of old, in which every moving animal was permitted for food, thus also today, every creature of God is ideal and nothing is to be cast away, being taken with thanksgiving.

Of course even as one might prefer not to eat certain green herbs (finding a certain herb less desirable, or even offensive and quite undesirable), one might prefer not to eat various animals. Yet such judgments of desirability, even as of nutritional value and healthfulness, will vary considerably from nation to nation and person to person, according to one's culture, education, and personal preference.

Similarly, Paul recognizes that, in the lives of some, perilous circumstances might well arise in which survival would demand the eating of certain animals ordinarily deemed

objectionable. Yet under such circumstances, if one were able to receive such life-sustaining food with thanksgiving (even if only through earnestly pleading to God for the ability to partake), one may freely partake of it. Indeed, Paul would have us know that thus, through heartfelt *pleading* (in contradistinction to a mere routine, formal request), even the most ordinarily undesirable food is "hallowed" (and so, approved) for eating; even as, according to precedent, it is hallowed as well by the word of God (recorded in Genesis 9:1-4).

So it is evident that it is a withdrawal from the faith—indeed that it is a teaching of demons—now to advocate "abstaining from foods, which God *creates* [even if He does not approve, under Moses] to be partaken of with thanksgiving by those who believe and realize the truth, seeing that every creature of God is ideal and nothing is to be cast away, being taken with thanksgiving, for it is hallowed through the word of God and pleading" (1 Tim. 4:3-5; *cp* v.1).

If some of us, because of habit, preference, opinion, or merely former teaching, even now choose not to eat certain meats, that is fine. But if others of our brethren, not having our notions or not having shared our experiences, wish to eat the very foods which we prefer to set aside, that is fine as well.

Paul declares, "I have perceived and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is contaminating of itself [i.e., nothing is intrinsically "unclean"], except that the one reckoning anything to be contaminating, *to that one* it is contaminating" (Rom.14:14).

PURSUING PEACE

Even so, in our conversations, and especially during fellowship meals shared with other believers, let us be discreet and sensitive to the convictions of others, ones who,

even as ourselves, are precious to God. As Paul wrote in Romans 14:15-18, "For if, because of food, your brother is sorrowing, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not, by your food, destroy [i.e., induce loss or retrogression, to] that one for whose sake Christ died. Let not, then, your *good* be calumniated, for the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in holy spirit. For he who in this is slaving for Christ, is well pleasing to God and attested by men."

"Consequently, then, we are pursuing that which makes for peace and that which is for the edification of one another. Not on account of food, demolish the work of God. All [food today], indeed, is 'clean' [in the sense of not being prohibited], but it is evil to the man who with stumbling is eating. [So] It is ideal not to be eating meat, nor yet to be drinking wine, nor yet to do aught by which your brother is stumbling, or is being snared or weakened" (Rom.14:19-21).

For us, then, the kingdom of God, even as its associated righteousness, is not concerned with matters of food and drink. Yet since God's reign in our lives today does encompass all those matters of "righteousness" with which we *are* concerned, even as "peace and joy in holy spirit" (Rom. 14:17), let us accordingly be "pursuing righteousness, faith, love, peace, with all those who are invoking the Lord out of a clean heart" (2 Tim.2:22).

James Coram

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

A Scripture conference and fellowship gathering is to be held in Union, Washington, January 15–17, 1999. The theme for these meetings is: "Praise and Prayer in Accord with the Evangel." The guest speakers include Jim Coram, and Dan Newell. For directions or information concerning lodging, please contact Erin Westeren (253-565-6677 or 253-208-7214).

YAHWEH'S CONSUMMATION OF JOB'S CAPTIVITY

YAHWEH'S revelation of Himself as the One Who is ultimately responsible for all things has become the solution to Job's agony and is now seen as the true theme of the book.

10 +**Then Yahweh Him**self **turned back** `the **captivity of Job** *i*'**when he prayed**– *i*'**on** *fr*'**behalf** of **his associates. And Yahweh** |'**added** `to **all** *w*'**that Job** ›'**had** ›'**by** a **double** portion. 11 + **All his brothers and all his sisters** |'**came to him and all his acquaintances**| from **before, and they** |'**ate bread with him in his house.** +**Then they** |'**sympathized** ›'**with him and** |'**comforted** `**him over all the evil** *w*'**that Yahweh had brought** up**on him.** + **Each** of **them** |'**gave to him one kesitah, and each, one pendant of gold.**

12 +**Thus Yahweh Him**self **blessed** `the **latter** years **of Job** more *f*'**than his beginning.** + **He** |*b*'**came** to ›'**have** a **flock** of **fourteen thousand** sheep, + **six thousand camels,** + a **thousand pair of oxen and** a **thousand jennies.** 13 +**Also he** |*b*'**came** to ›'**have seven sons and three daughters.** 14 + **He** |'**called** the **name of the first Jemimah,** + the **name of the second Keziah, and** the **name of the third Keren-happuch.** 15 + **Women** so **lovely as** the **daughters of Job were not found in the whole country.** + **Their father** |'**gave** ›' **them** an **allotment in** the **midst of their brothers.**

16 + **Job** |'**lived after this** a **hundred and forty years. And he** |'**saw** `**his sons and** `**his sons' sons** to **four generations.** 17 +**Then Job** |'**died, old and satisfied** with **days.**

Job's experience, filled with unrelenting pain and grief is well expressed by the term *captivity* in 42:10. He had been captured by calamity and could not escape.

Even more sobering, Yahweh Himself was the One Who had brought him into these bonds of affliction. That was what Job had maintained all along, despite his lapses into self-pity and self-defense. And that was what Yahweh had just confirmed in the stirring poems of chapters 38-41. Now, Job's surviving family members, long absent from the scene, appear to sympathize and console Job *over all the evil that Yahweh had brought upon him* (Job 42:11).

The root and responsible cause of Job's captivity is to be traced, not to Job's sinfulness and enmity, not to the guile of the Adversary, but to God. Therefore, if there is to be an end of Job's captivity, it must be God Who achieves it; if there is to be a reversal away from the sorrow and into blessing and satisfaction, it must be God Who brings it about.

James calls this *turning back* of Job's captivity, "the *consummation* of the Lord" (James 5:11). It is not simply an end, and far more than a return to a former condition. The turning back is a return to prosperity by means of a process that consummates in its goal; it speaks of both an end and a gain. God has put an end to the evil He had brought on Job, but also God has brought Job into a great gain of good. It is through God's imposing of this great evil and the endurance granted Job, that he now *sees* Yahweh (42:5) with a happiness and a peace that he could not otherwise have known.

JOB'S LATTER YEARS

In the account of Job's former years, given in chapter 1, the focus was all on Job. Job was "flawless and upright" (1:1). Job "came to be the greatest of all the sons of the East" (1:3). Job was assiduous in following the practices of worship and sacrifice laid down by God (1:4,5). The

Adversary drew attention to the weak basis of Job's flawless behavior and suggested that Job would act quite differently if Yahweh would withdraw His special protection and take away his blessings. Then Job would scorn Him to His face (1:9-11).

But now specifically and directly traced to the evil Yahweh had brought on Job and the consummation gained by Him, the focus is all on the Deity. "Thus," through the very experiences described throughout the book of Job, "Yahweh *Himself* blessed the latter years of Job more than his beginning" (42:12).

If someone should say that Yahweh blessed Job because of Job's endurance, we still see that Job's endurance must be traced to the operations of God within and round about Job. In the words of James, Job's endurance is something we *hear* of, but God's consummation is what we *perceive.*

The consummation provided by the Lord includes the sheep and camels and oxen and jennies, the sons and daughters and Job's long life and satisfied days.

There is also Job's heightened expectation. "Affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness *expectation*" (Rom.5:3,4). Job's expectation goes beyond the years of prosperity just ahead. In his distress Job had asked, "If a master dies shall he live again?" (Job 14:14), and he proclaimed in faith, "I know my Redeemer is living . . . Whom I shall perceive for myself" (19:25,27). This expectation is now sealed by God's own words concerning His wisdom and power in chapters 38 through 41 applied to Job's experience of affliction. Nothing is without a cause or a purpose because God is as He reveals Himself to be. Death and sin and sorrow cannot be final things.

Consequently, although Job is given double the number of sheep and camels and jennies that he had before, he has the same number of sons and daughters (*cp* Job 1:2,3; 42:12,13). The only way Job's children will be doubled

in number is by deliverance from death. This becomes, therefore, Yahweh's answer to the question of 14:14, and the fountain of Job's continuing satisfaction.

His current blessings crowned with expectation reveal the character of the Lord's consummation of Job's experience. But even more so, the fullest expression of the consummation achieved by God is found in Job's exultant words in 42:5, *"But now my eye sees You."*

SATISFIED WITH DAYS

Yahweh has turned back the captivity of Job. He has reversed the very evil He Himself had brought upon him. This evil has done its work and has opened blessings of many sorts, wisdom and riches and children and "satisfaction of days." This last blessing is more than longevity. It is long life with thankfulness and peace. If there were hard times and occasions of sorrow and frustration during these extended years, there was still satisfaction. For Job there would be no more whining, no more wishing he had never been born, no more defendings of self. Satisfaction comes with the appreciation of God that Job has gained. Indeed there must have been further experiences of evil for Job, though surely not so severe, and certainly not so sharp a test. But, except for one matter, these are not mentioned in light of Job's testedness.

Yet there is one evil for Job that remains in view. "Job *died."* This means that God's final consummation of good is still put in abeyance for him as with all mankind. It awaits the realization of the results of Christ's faithfulness in dying for God's enemies. That realization is described in Romans 5:18 in terms that parallel but transcendently exceed the words "satisfied with days." Because of the One, Jesus Christ, Job, whose name means "enemy," and all mankind will ultimately enjoy "life's justifying."

D.H.H.

Selected Thoughts on Job

LESSONS FROM JOB

THE book of Job has captured the minds of many writers, including several associates of our work in the past and contributors to our magazine. We conclude our series of studies on the book of Job with the following summations by these valued teachers on various themes of the book:

GOD'S BLESSED CONSUMMATION

Job has justified God and condemned self. The flesh is abased. The "consummation" is reached. Satan's blows have produced the desired effect. The captivity is "turned back" and made to yield "the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow therewith." The consummation has justified and vindicated the strange, inscrutable process. Let us not chafe, then, if He startles us from the even tenor of our ways, neither let us measure His dealings by the small span of our mind. Nature, as we know it, is but one circle of the limitless whole, over which God reigns. What is beyond the circle we know as nature, we are ignorant of. The place we live in is so narrow, and the facts we deal with are so familiar, that we feel far too knowing, and are prone to forget that our knowledge is limited and defective. When we are passing through deep waters, and all seems contrary to us, let us know that all around the vast sphere, the unseen God is operating, in accord with a law that is above our understanding, and a light that is not for our eyes. Amid the mystery of the present condition of

affairs, He leads all things toward final order and rest and perfection. Let us trust Him, then; let us give Him glory in all things; let us justify Him at all cost, and the smile of His face will soon brighten our path.

V. Gelesnoff

JOB'S FAITH

Job was sifted, as was Peter, and his faith held. In spite of his recriminations he looked beyond the immediate, regarding his affliction as of God. And this is the strong note of the narrative. The origin and purpose of evil is of and with God. There is a meaning in its existence beyond human knowledge. Men do evil but apparently no good comes of it. But when God employs it, it is only and essentially for good. The ordering and the end are His own. Yet because man is not always permitted to see this, its presence is assigned to Satan, or the gods many of this mundane system.

Yet Satan is but an instrument, powerful as may be his office. Men, too, are unconscious agents of God's supreme will. Through all, however, the Lord's consummation is sure. Did they but know it, it is men's great mainstay. The infliction of evil is for our learning, and thereby we are shown, as was Job, the nearness of God. But how revealed are the divine compassions as we see and know them in Christ! How almost inexpressible our position as "in Him," and our indebtedness for so great a revelation! Job had no such light. It was given him, however, to see in most marked ways, a wonder-working God.

Now, Job can pray indeed, and its ministry blesses his friends. He becomes to them a channel of real knowledge. They see "the Lord's consummation." And, that God has a wiser and more beneficent purpose in evil and calam-

ity than chastening or correction. There is an outcome of good that few may see. Yet, it is always there. And one day, when the lessons that evil engenders are truly learned, creation far and wide will find but good, and that in God.

William Mealand

GOD'S USE OF THE COUNTERWORKER

At the conclusion of this most unique book we can perhaps ask: What objective is behind the book? Undoubtedly many aspects lie within the chapters of the book. For instance, the supremacy of God is there, as it is in every book of the Scriptures. The book certainly shows God using evil, though that is not a feature exclusive to Job. It records many thoughts of a number of persons, formed and expressed in thorough ignorance of what El was doing, yet each claiming to have much actual understanding. Because this is so large a part of the book, it must have a relation to the object designed around it.

The debate is certainly not the plot of the book, but it is a background or network necessary to carry forward that which was set in motion in the two introductory chapters. Surely then we cannot be mistaken when we suggest that the object of the book is to set out, once and for all, that El uses one who works contrary to Himself, and through this one is afforded the circumstances wherein El reveals Himself to His creatures to a fuller degree than is possible otherwise. The counterworker or adversary is thus lifted out of that obscure position which lacks either reason or value, and is shown as a factor *needed in the ways of Yahweh.*

The implications of this idea are such as to suggest the need for a sequel arising out of the main discussion of the book. Moreover, the sequel is hinted at when the book tells, in concrete terms, what blessings came to Job. This

comes in chapter 42 after we hear of Job's increased understanding of Yahweh.

In the epistle of James, this result is taken out of the form of being a simple display in family and estate, and it is put into definite words: Job endured. That is the great point. Patience is not really in the picture. Job's endurance led to the revelation that Yahweh is very compassionate and pitiful, and that He leads events to His own consummation. To this conclusion all matters and items of the book contribute, and it is the truth brought out in the wider range of the eons.

Thus the Adversary fills that part for which he was intended. And the result is that El is able to reveal the glories of His righteousness and His love. These are glories which show Him to be the Father, the One Who is to be All in all His creation.

E. H. Clayton

GOD'S UNDERLYING PURPOSE

The underlying purpose of God in dealing with mankind is brought before us in the book of Job, who lived before the law was given. According to popular notions prevailing in religious circles today, Job should never have suffered, for he was a just man and feared God. The evil that came upon him was not for any ill that he had done, or as punishment for any crimes that he had committed. He did not break any law and suffer its just penalty. God did not deal with him on the ground of law or of retribution at all. Even when sorely tempted to curse God, he did not yield to it. Nevertheless his trial continued until we are almost tempted to join his false friends and insist that he must be getting his just deserts, for God must not be accused of treating him unjustly.

We do not consider the *end* that the Lord has in view. We imagine all evil must be related to something *bad* in the *past* instead of something *good* in the *future.* We do not realize that evil is a *gift* from God, designed to bring us *down* to our proper place and raise God *up* to the position His deity demands in the glorious consummation, when He will be All in all. We need evil for what we *are,* and *shall be,* not merely for any wrong that we have done. Evil is not essentially a *penalty,* but a *preparation.* It is *humbling* and *revealing* and necessary for the appreciation of good and of God.

A. E. Knoch

THE NEED OF TRIALS

Trial, probing, experiment is a thing God does not need for Himself, since He knows all. But His creatures need it, for they are here to learn, like Job, not only what is in themselves, but also what is in God.

God's attitude toward Job is very different from that which we usually associate with trial. Like Job's false friends, we imagine that His object was to expose the evil in Job. But it was rather to reveal the good. The first trial was the loss of what Job had, but he endures and exclaims: Yahweh, He gives, and Yahweh, He takes away. Blessed be the Name of Yahweh!

Yet Satan is not satisfied, which leads to the touching of Job's bone and flesh. It is no longer a question of mere reward for deeds, or of Job's possessions, but of heart loyalty to God under the most trying personal affliction. This it is that God values in His creatures. For this His heart hungers. And this it is that He got from Job, and will yet get from everyone, when He is All in all.

A. E. Knoch

YAHWEH'S IS THE BATTLE

(1 Samuel 17:41-58)

In the confrontation of David before Goliath we see God's chosen one armed with faith, opposing the mighty champion armed with sword. The battle belongs to Yahweh; consequently, it is brief and decisive.

THE PROVING OF FAITH

41 +**Now the Philistine** |go**came walking** + **near to David, and the man carrying the large shield** was **before him.** 42 +**When the Philistine** |**looked** up **and** |**saw** `**David,** + **he** |**despised him, for he** b**was** only a **youth,** + **ruddy with** a **well-favored appearance.** 43 + **The Philistine** |**said to David,** Am **I** a **cur that you** are **coming to me** i**with staves** 7**and stones?** + **David** |sa**replied, No**t**,** t**unless** you **should** be more **vicious** f**than** a **cur**0**.** + **The Philistine** |**maledicted** `**David** i**by his elohim,** 44 **and the Philistine** |**said to David,** Do go**come to me and let me** |**give** `**your flesh to** the **flyer of the heavens and to** the **beast of the field.**

45 + **David** |sa**replied to the Philistine, You** are **coming** ›**against me** i**with sword and** i **spear and** i **scimitar;** +**yet I** am **coming** ›**against you in** the **Name of Yahweh of hosts,** the **Elohim of** the **arrays of Israel, Whom you have challenged** 7**today**0**.** 46 **Yahweh shall lock you** up **in my hand** ˙**this** ˙**day.** + **I will smite you and** c**take off** `**your head from** on **you;** + **I will give** 7**your**0 **corpse** 7**and** the **corpses**0 **of** the **camp of** the **Philistines** ˙**this** ˙**day to** the **flyer of the heavens and to the** wild **animal of the earth.** +**Then the whole earth shall know that** there **is** an **Elohim** ›**in Israel.** 47 **And**

`this whole `assembly shall know that Yahweh shall [c]give victory [not]without [i] sword +or [i] spear. For Yahweh's is **the battle, and He will [g]deliver `you in**to **our hands.**

Goliath showed that he felt insulted by David's presence by asking if they thought he was a wild dog that could be driven away with a club or stones. David's response is most serious: Anyone defying the living God is more vicious than any wild cur. So Goliath curses David by his gods and bids David to come close so he can slaughter him and feed him to the birds.

David responds simply by giving a voice to his faith. Goliath was armed with sword, spear and scimitar, but David was coming "in the Name of Yahweh of hosts." Yahweh would lock Goliath up in David's hand, the whole earth would come to know the true Elohim is in Israel, and Israel would come to learn "Yahweh's is the battle," Who gives the victory without a sword or spear. For David, the entire purpose of the battle was the glorification of God.

THE IMPOSSIBLE BATTLE WON
FLESH IMMOBILIZED

48 +**Then it [b]occurred [t]when the Philistine arose and [go]came + [l]near to meet David, +that David [l]ran + [l]quickly** toward **the array to meet the Philistine.** 49 + **David [l]stretched `his hand** in**to the wallet and [l]took from there** a **stone. + He [l]slung** it **and [l]smote `the Philistine `on his forehead. + The stone [l]sank [7]through the helmet[0] in**to **his forehead, and he [l]fell on his face** to[d] the **earth.**

50 + **David, [i]with sling and [i] stone, was [l]faster [f]than the Philistine; + he [l]smote `the Philistine and [c]put him** to **[l]death. +But** there **was no sword in David's hand;** 51 +**so David [l]ran** up **and [l]stood [7]over~[cs] the Philistine, + [l]took** hold `of **his sword and [l]pulled it from its scabbard; and [i]with it he** put **him** to **[l]death and [l]cut** off **`his head. +When the Philistines [l]saw that their master** of war **was dead, + they [l]fled.**

52 +**Then** the **men of Israel and Judah [l]arose and [l]shouted and [l]pursued `the Philistines as far as** [7]the **entrance~ of Gath~ and as far as** the **gates of Ekron.** + The fatally **wounded of** the **Philistines [l]fell [i]along** the **Shaaraim road + [fr]to Gath and [fr]to Ekron.** 53 +**When** the **sons of Israel [l]returned from dashing~ after** the **Philistines, + they [l]robbed `their camps.** 54 +**Then David [l]took** `the **head of the Philistine and** was about to **[l]bring it ~to Saul~, +but he [pl]put `his [all]weapons in his tent.**

What were the arrays of the living God doing at this time? It is interesting that Israel with a king (Saul) was in the same condition as Israel without a king when the coffer of Yahweh was taken and the glory was departed from Israel. Israel was simply standing by, in fear, waiting for God to do something. The astounding thing, which the book of Samuel has testified to Israel, is that the very presence and power of God can reside in a human, in His anointed. In 1 Samuel 5:1-5 the god of the Philistines falls on its face before the coffer of Yahweh. After the Philistines stand it up again, Yahweh causes it to fall again, cutting off its head and hands. The same things Yahweh did to the idol of Dagon, David did to Goliath. The message here is the Word of God becoming flesh and delivering humanity.

FAITH UNLEASHED

The shepherd who ran after bears and lions to deliver the lambs they were carrying away now runs toward this dog to deliver the flock of Israel. His hands and fingers were quite familiar with the inside of the shepherd's wallet and the sling and the placing of stones. He could focus his eye on the enemy. "David with sling and stone was faster than the Philistine" (v.50). Faith did not hesitate to fulfill its destiny.

John's account of the life of Christ presents Him as the Son of God. In doing so John omits the struggle in prayer in Gethsemane, in which the will of the flesh is subjected to the will of God. The boldness of Christ in John's account of the Gethsemane incident exhibits His undaunted faith. Knowing fully everything that was about to happen, Jesus *came out to* the squadron of soldiers, and *He asked them,* "Whom are you seeking?" He told them again He was the One they were looking for, and, if they really wanted Him, to let His disciples leave. He would remain there alone for them to take. And when Peter tried to protect Him, the Lord rebuked him and healed the enemy. This iron faith of Christ was prefigured in David, running to slay the giant. And here, in the account in which the words, "if it be possible let this *cup* pass from Me," are absent, the words of Christ resound with purpose and amazement, "Thrust the sword into the scabbard. The *cup* which the Father has given Me, may I by no means be drinking it?" (John.18:4-11).

THE ENEMY'S HEAD

"He slung it and smote the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank through the helmet into his forehead . . . so David . . . took hold of his sword . . . and cut off his head" (vs.49-51). "And I shall set enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He shall hurt you in the head, and you shall hurt Him in the heel" (Gen.3:15). From the beginning it has been prophesied that Christ would be injured, but not lastingly, while He would totally vanquish the Adversary. This is the reason for the sevenfold mention of Goliath's head in this chapter. Christ's victory over Satan and death, in the weakness of human flesh, focuses all glory on God and His purpose.

"Then David took the head of the Philistine and was about to bring it to Saul" (v.54; some manuscripts read, "brought it to Jerusalem"). The head of the opponents'

hero or king was a trophy of war. When the Philistines finally killed Saul, they took his head and placed it in the temple of Dagon (*cf* 1 Chron.10:8-10). As with the ark being placed in the temple of Dagon, it seems to have been common practice for such trophies and weapons to adorn a nation's temples. In this case, the head of Goliath may have been taken back to a significant place in Israel and had a mound of stones raised over it for a memorial.

If the reading of this passage cites Jerusalem as the destination for Goliath's head, some suggest the passage is an anachronism—a statement that is out of time with the context. Since Jerusalem was not yet the capitol, it may seem unlikely for it to be taken there. However the writer of Samuel may have been well aware of events occurring later and filled in details here. Israel, Benjamin in particular, did possess the area of Jerusalem, but not the stronghold of the Jebusites (Judg.1:8,21; 1 Chron.11:4-8). It is probable that David made a return visit to Bethlehem, even though he did not remain there as shepherd for Jesse's flock. He may have taken the sword and head of Goliath back with him. The sword came to rest in Nob, just north of Jerusalem, where David received it later from Ahimelech (1 Sam.21:1-9). Goliath's skull may have been memorialized on some hill in the area of Jerusalem at that time, or it could also have been moved there from another place during David's reign later.

GOLGOTHA

A memorial mound of stones over Goliath's head would probably be called *Gal*-Goliath (meaning *heap* or *mound of Goliath*). With the passing of time, it may have become known as *Golgotha* (*skull,* or *the place of a skull*).[1] When

1. Suggested in HIDDEN PICTURES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT (Ada R. Habershon; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1982).

Jesus Christ died on the cross, He made the hill of Golgotha the place where the serpent's skull was crushed. It may well be that in God's providence the hill of Golgotha would receive it's name when the son of Jesse placed the giant's head there.

THE ADVERSARY'S WEAPON

"So David ran up and stood over the Philistine, took hold of his sword and pulled it from its scabbard" (v.51). The weapons of Goliath were unused against David. Perhaps this too speaks of Christ. Christ's death was not a fatal blow from the Adversary, rather it was a laying down of His life. "Therefore the Father is loving Me, seeing that I am laying down My soul that I may be getting it again. *No one is taking it away from Me, but I am laying it down of Myself.* I have the right to lay it down, and I have the right to get it again. This precept I got from My Father" (John. 10:17,18). "For the Chief of the world is coming, and in Me it has not anything" (John.14:30). "For Thou wilt not be forsaking my soul in the unseen, nor wilt Thou be giving Thy Benign One to be acquainted with decay. Thou makest known to me the paths of life. Thou wilt be filling me with gladness with Thy face" (Acts 2:27,28).

"David . . . stood over the Philistine, took hold of his sword . . . and cut off his head" (v.51). Goliath was beheaded with his own sword! Haman was hung on his own gallows! (Esther 7:9,10). Pharaoh thought the Israelites were trapped between the wilderness and the sea, but the sea became his death, not theirs (Exodus 14). But greater than these is the victory of Christ! "Since, then, the little children have participated in blood and flesh, He also was very nigh by partaking of the same, that, through death, He should be discarding him who has the might of death, that is the Adversary, and should be clearing those whoever, in fear of death, were through their entire life liable to slavery" (Heb.2:14,15). Death was the sword in Satan's hand, and by death Christ defeated him. No wisdom or devising can approach to God's. On this thought Paul quoted from Job, "He is clutching the wise in their craftiness" (1 Cor. 3:19; *cf* Job 5:12,13; Psa.7:15,16; 9:15,16).

FAITH MULTIPLIED

David's victory over Goliath instantly collapsed the courage of the Philistines and inflated the courage of the Israelites. Similarly, the faith of Jesus becomes our faith. Paul said, "Now that which I am now living in flesh, I am living in *faith that is of the Son of God*" (Gal.2:20). Faith is a gift of God to us (Eph.2:8), and with it He will also supply the competence that we may fulfill His purpose for us (Col.1:12).

And so the Israelites charged down into the valley they feared as death itself. Hurdling Goliath's corpse they rushed up the other side, pursuing the Philistines to their fortresses. It sounds so like the words of Christ, ". . . the gates of the unseen shall not be prevailing against it," *My ecclesia* (Matt.16:18). Death cannot hold those who are Christ's. They will be raised to live and reign with Him.

WHOSE SON IS HE?

55 + *as*When Saul had seen– `David going forth to meet the Philistine, he had said to Abner, chief of the military host, *a*Whose son is this `lad, Abner? And Abner had *lsa*replied, As your soul lives, `O king, how should I know? 56 +Then the king had *lsa*ordered, You *ask*inquire! *a*Whose son is this `stripling? 57 +So, *as*when David had returned– from smiting– `the Philistine, + Abner had *l*taken `him and *l*brought him before Saul, +while the head of the Philistine was still in his hand. 58 + Saul *l*said to him, *a*Whose son are you, `young man? + David *lsa*replied, The son of your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite.

Perhaps Saul was planning to make David's family exempt from national taxes, according to the promise, and needed to know more about the family. But it is somewhat surprising to see how much space in this chapter is given to identifying David and his origin. The following outline briefly highlights the prominence given to this topic.

David's Background and coming (12-22)
The Unachievable Reward (23-30)
The Coming of Faith (31-40)
The Proving of Faith (41-47)
The impossible Battle Won (48-54)
Whose Son is He? (55-58)

Yet this too is a shadow of things concerning Christ. One of the major themes of John's account is the identity and origin of Christ. The first chapter abounds with descriptions of Christ: the Word of God, the One through Whom all came into being, the One in Whom is life, the Light of life, the only-begotten of God, the One on Whom the Spirit of God remains, the Baptizer in holy spirit, the Son of God, Rabbi, Teacher, Messiah, the One of Whom Moses wrote, the King of Israel, the Son of Mankind, and many more.

But despite the signs and abundant proofs of His identity, we read, "Can anything good be out of Nazareth?" (1:46); "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, with whose father and mother we are acquainted? How, then, is he saying that 'Out of heaven have I descended?'" (6:42); "But this man, we are aware whence he is, yet the Christ, whenever He may be coming, no one knows Him, whence He is" (7:27); "For not out of Galilee is the Christ coming! . . . . Search and see that out of Galilee no prophets is roused" (7:41,52); "We are aware that it was to Moses that God has spoken. Yet this man—we are not aware whence he is" (9:29); "When, then, Pilate hears this saying, he was the more afraid . . . and is saying to Jesus, 'Whence are

you?'" (19:8,9). And what was the reason the Jews determined that Christ must be crucified? It was His identity. He said He was the Son of God.

Even though David had played sweet music to soothe Saul's mind, and even though Saul thought he had sent David to his death, he knew not who he was or where he was from. So was Israel with Christ. Before his stoning, Stephen told Israel that Joseph was not known to his brothers till the *second* time, and that Moses was *rejected the first time* he came to deliver his brethren (Acts 7). So also, Christ is unknown and rejected until His second coming to Israel.

David stood before Saul with the head of Goliath in his hand, and Saul didn't know who he was. Christ healed the sick, made the lame walk, gave sight to the blind, raised the dead, and they asked, "Till when are you lifting our soul? If you are the Christ, tell us with boldness" (John10:24). The leaders of Israel were like the chief of the dining room in Cana. They did not know the origin of the wine. They could taste it, they could smell it, they could see it, but it wasn't given to them to recognize it. But in God's grace, it was given to the servants who drew the water to know, and those who are called know that He is the Son of God.

J. Philip Scranton

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FOR HE WAS ROUSED

THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST settles once and for all the fact of human sinfulness. If any are to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect (Matt.5:48) they must be saved from their sins. If anyone of God's people, Israel, is to find and follow the way into life (Matt.7:14; 19:17-21) that one must be saved from sinning with the law written on his heart. To be saved from outer darkness and lamentation and gnashing of teeth, from Gehenna and its fires, from condemnation and loss, there must be a Saviour Who saves from sins.

ALL ARE SINNERS

When the apostle Paul developed important and basic details of the evangel of God in his epistle to the Romans, he began with a lengthy exposition of the fact that "Not one is just" (Rom.3:10); "no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight" (3:20), "for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (3:23).

Since this is true, then all are "defenseless" (Rom.2:1), and all are hoarding for themselves "indignation in the day of indignation and the revelation of the just judgment of God" (2:5). Every single human being fails in the matter of "endurance in good acts" (2:7), and therefore we all face "indignation and fury, affliction and distress" (2:9).

But of course Paul brings us to this impasse in order to show the grace and glory and power and goodness of the evangel. "Yet now," he writes, "apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing" (Rom. 3:21,22). The faithfulness of Christ even to the death of the cross is what makes the difference.

It is God's sparing not of His Son (Rom.8:32) that brings salvation out of affliction and distress, so that despite our racewide failure of being workers of good, glory and honor and peace (*cf* Rom.2:10) will ultimately come to all. "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

DARKNESS CAME

In a similar way, the entire book of Matthew has led us to the conclusion that not one human being is righteous; all are sinners. Matthew's account has focused on Israel, so that their sinfulness is especially evident in the crucifixion of Christ, but all mankind were represented and thus involved. When the "darkness came over the entire land" from the sixth to the ninth hour of that solemn passover (Matt.27:45), and when Jesus cried, "My God! My God! Why didst Thou forsake Me?" (27:46), and when He cried with a loud voice and let out the spirit, while the earth quaked (27:50,51), who can conclude otherwise than that "all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God"?

Despite the occasional act of selfless kindness and loyalty and trust, the disciples and followers of Jesus, including Peter and John and the Mary's as well, were sinners needing to be saved from their sins. In view of the demands of perfection in the law, no one among the Lord's people, Israel, could plead full exemption from the condemnatory judgments spoken of by Jesus throughout His ministry.

The view for all Israel at the point of the three hours of darkness when Christ hung on the cursed piece of wood, is just the same as Paul described it for all mankind in Romans 2:9. The darkness encompasses them all, so that the impending indignation of God (Matt.3:7) hung over them all.

They all stood "liable to the Gehenna of fire" (Matt.5: 22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33) in the coming kingdom. Since no one had destroyed his own soul on His account (nor could anyone have done so) when the forces of evil were united against Him, they all stood there facing the destruction of their souls when the Son of Mankind would come in the glory of His Father, with His messengers, paying each in accord with his practice (*cf* Matt.16:24-27).

It was evident that in the end they all had spent time in the broad and spacious way into destruction (Matt. 7:13). Who among them was worthy to escape lamentation and gnashing of teeth (Matt.8:12; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30)? How could this nation, as a whole, from top to bottom, become exempt from the condemnation experienced by Sodom (11:23), and how could Jerusalem avoid unfavorable comparison with repentant Nineveh (12:41)? The nation of Israel had shown itself guilty of treating the Lord *directly* as the "goat" nations will have treated Him *indirectly* by their treatment of His people in their time of trouble (*cf* Matt.25:41-45). The condemnation for that sort of failure is described by the Lord as "chastening eonian" (Matt.25:46).

THE LIGHTING UP

Even as Matthew 27 supports the truth of Romans 3:10-20,23, so also there is a parallel between Matthew 28 and the central chapters of Romans. The full light of Paul's evangel, introduced with the blazing noonday sun on the road to Damascus, is not found in Matthew. But there is

a *lighting up* of God's work of salvation that comes with "the lighting up into one of the sabbaths" that is spoken of in Matthew 28:1.

It is on the basis of the death of Christ and the darkness He endured, added to His resurrection, that God's promises of blessing to Israel will be fulfilled. Jesus came to save His people from their sins, and this will be realized because of the events of those three days set forth in Matthew 27 and 28. The glorious significance of Christ's death and resurrection, especially as Paul unfolds it in Romans and even more transcendently in Ephesians is not perceived in Matthew. But, as Paul also was graced to reveal, these events become the solid basis of the fulfillment of Matthew 1:21. It is now established that, in God's appointed time, Israel will be avowing with their mouth that Jesus Is Lord, and be believing in their heart that God rouses Him from among the dead, and so they shall be saved in personal realization and living manifestation (Rom.10: 9;11:26). The truth of this consummation is even now in Matthew 28 lighting up in the words of the Lord.

REJOICE!

The first word of the risen Lord noted in the book of Matthew is "Rejoice!" (Matt.28:9). Because of His death and resurrection Jesus can now speak in the context of salvation and the joys of the kingdom. Whereas Jesus began His public ministry with the word, "Repent!" (4:17), just as John the Baptist had done (3:2), His message now to the disciples begins with "Rejoice!"

Yet the people have not repented and have not come into appreciation even of their need of salvation from their sins. There is joy in our Lord's salvation out of death, but His greeting must mean more than that. Unless His resurrection means salvation and life for His people whom He came to save from their sins, then the joy is greatly restricted.

Even the repentance of the disciples has been slow and halting. But now with the resurrection, their thinking is being greatly changed from that type of rebuke and opposition voiced by Peter in Matthew 16:22 and the jealousies of 20:24, and above all else from their failures to understand the import of our Lord's words. True repentance comes with the opening of eyes to see, and that is now stirring with progressive increase in the eleven.

The greeting "Rejoice!" is the complement of the promise of Matthew 1:21. It also is the beginning, within the hearts of the eleven disciples, of appreciation for and assurance over the character of the kingdom, first presented in Matthew 5:3-12 by the word "Happy." It is not that there would be no sadness and affliction in the days to come. Far from it, for opposition and struggle remained strong and would continue until the Lord's return. But with the resurrection of the Saviour, the joy and happiness of salvation and life are certain to come.

FEAR NOT!

The next message by the risen Saviour is "Fear not" (Matt.28:10). This repeats the message first heard by the two Mary's from the messenger at the sepulcher, "Fear you not! For I am aware that you are seeking Jesus, the Crucified. He is not here, *for He was roused*" (Matt.28:5,6). "Rejoice!" and "Fear not!" are words that speak of achievement and expectation. They speak of good that is done and is to come. They stand in contrast to the "Beware" and the "woe" heard in the Mount of Olives discourse prior to the crucifixion (Matt.24:4,19). But even then the Lord spoke of happiness for certain ones who were "faithful and prudent" (24:45-47).

The question may then arise: How does anyone become faithful and prudent? What level of faithfulness, goodness, even perfection (*cf* Matt.5:48), does one have to reach to

escape the woe and the lamentation and the gnashing of teeth? But that is not exactly the right question as Matthew 5:48 should make clear. It rather should be: Since no one can reach the level of faithfulness, goodness and perfection described by the Lord, what must *God* do in order to save anyone from his and her sins?

That question may have been developing in the hearts of the eleven. The letters of Peter and John certainly indicate progress in this sort of thinking (*cf* 1 Peter 1:18,19; 1 John 2:2). In the giving of His Son for the world (John 3:16), God laid the solid foundation of His work of salvation. In opening their eyes to the truth, God was already enriching the lives of the eleven with faithfulness and goodness.

But this was not instantaneous. We recall how Thomas could not believe Jesus had been roused until he saw the nailprints in His hands and felt the wound in His side (John 20:25). But Thomas did believe when God mercifully provided the evidence demanded.

Consequently, it is all of God. First of all God does the work of salvation for sinners. Then, for some, He grants faith to believe what He has done, not perfect faith yet to any, but nevertheless faith, and that from God.

Now after the resurrection this growing light starts to shine, dimly at first, but more and more forcefully in the lives of those whose eyes are opened. Words of judgment and condemnation still speak truly, but they are now seen in the new context of the resurrection. Lamentation and gnashing of teeth are no more permanent than the darkness of Matthew 27:45 or the abyss of our Lord's death. The light will strengthen now because of what the Saviour endured and because He was roused "according as He said."

Just how the Lord's commission of Matthew 28:16-20 is to be understood has long been a controversial subject. Many have seen it as a general pattern for Christian leaders, considered somehow as heirs of the eleven disciples, to

spread the gospel and bring others into the "church." Others point out that the disciples themselves never seem to have undertaken the task, while Paul's commission to the nations did not include the specific feature of baptism mentioned here and included many new and distinctive features that are notably absent in the Lord's ministry to Israel.

Many years ago, A. E. Knoch pointed out that this commission begins with the Lord's "*presence* and exaltation and is to be carried on while He is *with* them, to the very close of that yet future eon."[1] It takes place during the opening years of the millennium. The blessing of the nations is in view, and so this commission stands in contrast to that of Matthew 10:5-8 where the disciples were charged not to pass forth into a road of the nations. That former commission directed the disciples in the past. This present commission is for the future.

Since these words are spoken regarding the promised kingdom, we can see how they fit in with the Lord's many teachings concerning blessings to come. The fifth chapter of Matthew especially has that time in view.

ALL AUTHORITY

Our concern here, however, is not so much with the details of those promises of glory to come, but with whether or not the many warnings and prophecies of judgment to come dim the light and goodness of that glory. Does the Lord's authority in establishing the kingdom extend to the imposition of everlasting sorrow and suffering, or of eternal destruction?

This cannot be. Fire and destruction, lamentation and chastisement never can be independent of the glory. They cannot be permanent expressions of divine authority, ends in themselves, standing apart from the blessings forever.

1. A. E. Knoch: MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL, pp.107,108.

They must be constructive, ultimately edifying to those who undergo them, just as Job was blessed through the experience of affliction in conjunction with Yahweh's revelation of Himself.

It is fitting, therefore, that the Lord speaks in Matthew 28:18 of His authority in relation to discipling the nations and identifying them with the name of the Father Who loves them and gives His Son for them, and of the Son Who died for them, and of the holy spirit which enriches their lives with rejoicing and peace. There is no doubt whatsoever that the judgment of the nations is carried out with authority. But now, at the close of Matthew, the divine authority is seen directed entirely to that which is embraced in the word *salvation.* Hence the authoritative judgments serve as temporary steps toward the authoritative glory.

LO! I AM WITH YOU

We began this article with the claim, "The crucifixion of Christ settles once and for all the fact of human sinfulness." Now we can say that the *resurrection* of Christ settles once and for all the fact of salvation by the Saviour. The teaching of everlasting hell is proved false by the resurrection of Jesus, Who is the Saviour. The sinner cannot save himself from his sins. But the Saviour can and will do so. He shall save His people and all sinners from their sins.

Now Jesus can speak to His disciples concerning the authority given Him for the discipling of all the nations. There is a basis for the kingdom and all its features. Even the judgments are settled on this foundation so that they can be constructive and edifying to all concerned. But Jesus does not speak of them now. All is encompassed in the grand assurance of His closing words in this account of His ministry: "Lo! I am *with* you all the days till the conclusion of the eon! Amen!"

Dean H. Hough

INDEX TO VOLUME XC

Atmosphere and the Waters . . . 195
Book of Beginnings, The . . . 7
Concerning Disputations about Free Will . . . 255
Departure Stone, The . . . 269
Developments in Genesis 1:2 . . . 69
Disruption and the Power of Spirit . . . 55
Disruption Darkness and Light . . . 63
Divine Foreknowledge and its Significance . . . 123
Dry Ground and Vegetation, The . . . 243
Ecclesiastes Studies . . . 39,45,87,92,135,141,176,189,229,237,273,283
Elohim Creates . . . 17
Elohim has Made All Our Days . . . 283
Elusiveness of God's Anointed, The . . . 173
Even the Death of the Cross . . . 225
From Darkness to Light . . . 63
From Genesis to Romans . . . 155
From Light to Life . . . 249
Genesis, Studies in . . . 7,55,103,147,195,243
Genesis, Translation and Analyses . . . 13,51,99
God's Spirit Making its Home . . . 75
Human Will and the Ministry of Law . . . 213
Initial Actions of God, The . . . 117
Intuitive Anticipation . . . 75
It is Becoming So . . . 201
Jonathan and David . . . 33
Light and Luminaries . . . 147
Light of Life and Love, The . . . 103
Obituaries: L. Bowerman 240, V. Brehm 86, A. Cronk 240,
D. Downie 86, L. Fisher 86, H. and B. Hoffman 212,
R. C. Kent 240, A. Robinson 282, L. Stafford 86, E. Taylor 86
One Who is Operating All, The . . . 23,123,163,213,255
Rejoicing Nevertheless . . . 112
1 Samuel, Notes on . . . 33,80,173,210,269
Saul's Persecution of David . . . 80
Saul's Schemes and God's Spirit . . . 210
Soul's Yearning and God's Humbling, The . . . 229
Times and Seasons, The . . . 176
Why, Then, is He Still Blaming? . . . 163
Wisdom and Toil . . . 135
Words and Works . . . 87
Work of God, The . . . 273
Written for this Teaching of Ours . . . 23

Contents:

3 Editorial
7 The Book of Beginnings
13 Genesis 1:1
14 The Verb "Create"
17 Elohim Creates
23 Written for This Teaching of Ours
33 Jonathan and David
39 Introduction to Ecclesiastes
45 What Elohim has Given
to the Sons of Humanity

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Unsearchable Riches

A Bimonthly Magazine
For God and His
Word

VOLUME XC

co-editors:
Dean H. Hough
and
James R. Coram

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Found of them that sought Him not

I will arise and to my Father go;
This very hour the journey is begun.
I start to reach the blissful goal, and, lo,
My spirit at one bound her race has run.
For seeking God and finding Him are one.
He feeds the rillets that towards Him flow.
It is the Father Who first seeks the son,
And moves all heavenward movement, swift or slow.
I dare not pride myself on finding Him.
I dare not dream a single step was mine.
His was the vigour in the palsied limb—
His the electric fire along the line—
When drowning, His the untaught power to swim,
Float o'er the surge, and grasp the rock divine.

John Charles Earle

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 1999
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY

EDITORIAL

ACQUAINTANCE with those sacred scriptures originally written in Hebrew is most beneficial for believing and teaching and standing by the evangel brought by Paul (2 Tim.3:14-17). Every article in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* is built around passages from this portion of God's Word. But also, every article either leads to a consideration of parallel passages in Paul's epistles or prepares our hearts for the revelations of the evangel.

All Scripture leads us to Christ, and thus to a full revelation of God. The revelation of God in creation is not enough. The deeper revelation of God opened up by the entrance of evil into the creation is not enough. God must be revealed in and through His Son, through His faithful obedience "even to the death of the cross" (Phil.2:8) if the "breadth and length and depth and height" of His power and wisdom and *love* are to be grasped (*cf* Eph.3:18).

Consequently, in meditating on Genesis and 1 Samuel and Ecclesiastes and the rest of the ancient, Sacred Scriptures, we feel a special need for vigilance lest we neglect the "evangel of the untraceable riches of *Christ*" which Paul brought to the nations (*cf* Eph.3:8; 6:18-20). It seems especially critical in these days, not so much because of the humanly devised date (1999), but because of strengthening signs of "the last days" described in 2 Timothy 3:1-7, that we hold firm to and announce clearly and joyfully the evangel graciously granted to Paul.

The trend of the current series of studies in this magazine is toward this end. In the twenty-seven years during which I have been closely involved in the production of this magazine, I cannot recall an issue of *Unsearchable*

Riches, that has caused me more struggle than this current one. This is partly because I just underwent major surgery for the second time in fifteen months (I am thanking God for bringing me through these operations safely and that I am recovering well). It is also partly because of added work required in bringing the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT toward publication, though we are excited and happy to see that the long project of translation is nearly complete. Above all else I feel certain that most of the struggle must be traced to that spiritual opposition Paul spoke of in Ephesians 6:12,16.

Yet my happiness in this work continues to grow, and I find much peace in the hope that the thoughts expressed in this magazine will be beneficial to many. If the passages from the "Old Testament" centered on in this issue direct the reader's attention toward Christ and the evangel concerning Him, then this hope is sure of realization.

Finally, I am pleased that Brother Jim Coram has accepted the position of co-editor of the magazine with me. We have worked together since 1981, with Jim not only contributing his unique studies in depth on often controversial, scriptural themes, but also overseeing all, and handling much, of the publishing and distributing chores, besides serving as business manager. Now he will join me more extensively than before in compiling and editing the magazine. He will also be contributing more regularly to this editorial section.

I know our readers will remember us in prayer concerning these changes, not only regarding the magazine but the added work we are taking on in bringing the CVOT to a more finished and complete form of publication. God is faithful. He knows the longings of our hearts, and He will give wisdom and strength in accord with His will. To Him be the glory!

D.H.H.

❋

I first learned of the ministry and teaching of the Concordant Publishing Concern in 1974. The following year I met Dean Hough. Ever since, I have been asking him questions, and receiving helpful answers. Dean has taught me many things about language and critical thinking, not to mention about exegesis and hermeneutics; and it was through Dean that my own interest in academic theology and philosophy blossomed.

But the most important things that I found in Dean were fairness and honesty, founded upon devoutness, in an awareness of the importance of competency, yet in the presence of the further awareness that competency, even as all else, is out of God.

I have often said that the three happiest days of my life were the day I married my wife, Suella, the day our son, Marc, was born, and the day the first box of *Unsearchable Riches* magazines arrived in our mail.

It goes without saying that the most important day of my life was the day that I first heard and believed that Christ died for my sins, that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day, all of these, according to the scriptures—which I suddenly found myself believing! Now that day (which occurred several years before I first heard of the Concordant ministry) was a happy day, indeed. Still, it was also a day in which my joy in Christ promptly became stifled by the fear-based, man-centered, and anti-grace teaching which I also then accepted.

Like most others, in the most artful of terms (ones not designed to deceive yet no less effectual unto that end), I was taught that though Christ, potentially, was my Saviour, I nonetheless must save myself from disqualification for His actually being my Saviour! Above all (and most frightening of all, too, for I knew my own heart), it was insisted

that I must not only endure unto the end to be saved, but that I alone must determine my own destiny, based upon my own "inner resources." At the critical juncture, I could not look to God to save me, for that would not do. When it mattered the most, I myself must independently save myself from "disqualification."

In a word, the "gospel" I received was that the gate was strait and the way narrow which leads to eternal life, *and few there be* that find it. Hence, it was unlikely that I would find it. Furthermore, those who would find it, would only do so finally thanks to themselves, not to God. (While this was never said, this was precisely the notion advocated, albeit in more delicate language.) If I should fail to be sufficiently upright and cooperative, then God would have no recourse but to subject me to endless punishment (so I was told, "only" an endless punishment consisting of death, not conscious torment).

Until I first heard and realized the *grace* of God in truth through the printed and spoken ministry of the Concern and its friends, I too held to the usual, mistaken teachings. It was solely through the *power* of the marvelous message of God's overwhelming grace, the evangel of our being justified gratuitously in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, that the spell of delusion was broken for us (for my wife Suella, too, as well as myself).

What a privilege and joy it is for us to continue on in the ministry of the Concern, now in its ninetieth year. Especially as we approach the final work (though that consists of so much) in the translation and publication of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, we covet your prayers on our behalf that God would grant us strength of mind and will, together with diligence of heart in the completion of this tremendous task. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity (2 Cor.9:15). And, thanks be to God for His goodness and faithfulness to us all. J.R.C.

THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS

THE BEGINNING of *both* creation and generation is the burden of the scroll the Greeks called "Genesis," which denotes *Generating.* Since the first and foremost function of this book is a record of God's *creation,* we use the Hebrew heading, *B-rashith,* IN-HEAD, or IN-BEGINNING, as a title of the whole book. Thus we discover the inspired summary of this sacred scroll, which presents God's creative work, as well as the first generations of mankind, which fill the balance of the book.

It is characteristic of mortals, when estranged from God, to look back to the *time* of creation, rather than to the creation itself. The rendering "In the beginning," is probably as close to the significance of the Original as English idiom will allow; still it is sufficiently inexact to cause cloudy conceptions and questionings to arise. It seems to fix a definite point of *time,* and to be limited to the single act of creation, whereas the Hebrew is not the name of a specific instant in the past, but a descriptive term, giving *priority* or *origination* to the contents of the whole book.

The Hebrew stem, *rash,* denotes HEAD, and is used idiomatically in the sense of *principal, summit, top, beginning, first* (in time). The special form used here, rash*ith,* must usually be rendered by *first of,* or *beginning of* in English, as "the *beginning of* his kingdom" (Gen.10:10), "the *first of* the firstfruits" (Ex.23:19). The very phrase with which the Bible begins, B-rash*ith* (B is IN), occurs four times elsewhere, and is translated "In the *beginning of*" (Jer.26:1; 27:1; 28:1; 49:34), and is always followed by a noun,

"the reign of." But in Genesis it is followed by the *verb* create—In the beginning [of] He-creates . . . . This seems to show that it is not a part of the sentence, but the title.

The beginning spoken of in this section is *creation,* in contrast to the rest of Genesis, which speaks of *generation.*

CREATE

"To make something out of nothing," that is the usual definition of *create.* This is confirmed by the dictionary, which makes it: "To bring into being; to cause to exist . . . the world is regarded as brought into being out of nothing." But we have been unable to find any confirmation for this in God's Word. Indeed, the only passages which throw any light upon this point teach the opposite. Peter wrote to the dispersion, "You may be subject to every *human creation* . . . (1 Pet.2:13). No man can create anything out of nothing. When God created the Circumcision and Uncircumcision into one new humanity, these were already in existence (Eph.2:11-15). He simply made both one by putting them into Christ.

The Scriptures teach that all is *out of God* (Rom.11:36; 1 Cor.11:12; 2 Cor.5:18), not out of nothing. This includes all the substance of all later creations, for God's creative acts are not confined to the beginning. Not only was the joint body of Ephesians created out of the Circumcision and Uncircumcision, but we are a new creation, created in Christ Jesus, just as all was created in Him in the beginning (Eph.2:10; Col.1:16).

In Christ we can see clearly that creation was not out of nothing. He calls Himself "God's creative Original," or, as the AV has it, "the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev.3:14). And He Himself also said, "I *came out* and am arriving *out of God*" (John 8:46). What is better evidence than a double witness from the lips of Truth Himself? It is further confirmed by our apostle, Paul, who calls Him

the "Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created . . ." (Col.1:15,16). All was in Him in the beginning, even as all humanity was in Adam at first. And we feel sure that all who love Him and have tasted of His grace will be slow to say that He was nothing, when they would never think of saying that Adam, in whom we were made sinners, was nothing.

God, when He created Adam, and humanity in him, did not create it out of nothing. He used previously created soil and atmosphere. These must be continually renewed in order to keep human beings alive. If we had been created out of nothing, then it might have been our lot to live out of nothing. This, I suppose, would be very welcome to some. But those who have tried it have returned to the soil from which they sprang.

Probably the worst effect which this false view of creation produces, is the warping of our thoughts as to the future. If creation came out of *nothing* it could easily return to oblivion. This would lend color to what is usually termed annihilation. On the other hand, if creation originated in *God,* then it is almost impossible for a sound mind to be fully content with any other ultimate than an enriched return to its Origin. This is marvelously expressed for us in the summary of the didactic portion of the book of Romans (11:36). There we are told that, not only is all *out of Him* in creation, but also *through Him* in the eonian times, and *for Him* in the consummation, when He becomes All in all.

TOWARD-SUBJECTORS

After the heading, "In the beginning," the Word of God says that creation was by *Elohim,* by *Toward-Subjectors.* The key to this use of the plural soon follows, in the third verse. "Yet the *spirit* of Elohim is vibrating over the surface of the water." God is *spirit,* and *He works by means of His spirit,* yet through *those to whom He has imparted it.*

Not only the Father, as Subjector, but also His Son was engaged in the creation of the heavens and the earth. God was the *Source,* for all is *out* of Him (Rom.11:36), but all is created *in* the Son of His love (Col.1:16). It also may have included such as those sons of Elohim who were present at the foundation of the earth (Job 38:7).

An absolute beginning is unknown to the Scriptures, as well as an absolute end. Such a thing is beyond human comprehension, even were it mentioned in the Word. The beginning of Genesis is not *the* beginning of all things, but only of the material heavens and earth. As all was created in the Son of God's love, He is *before* all else, and all has its cohesion in Him. Although there were no *human* beings before Adam, there *were* sons of Elohim present at the founding of the earth, as made known to Job. In order to put him where he belongs, with all the rest of humanity, Job was asked some pointed questions (Job 38:4-7):

Where were you when I founded the earth?
Tell if you know with understanding.
Who determined its measurements—for surely you know!
Or who stretched out a measuring tape upon it?
On what were its sockets sunk?
Or who directed its cornerstone in place,
When the stars of the morning were jubilant together,
And all the sons of Elohim raised a joyful shout?

Here we are introduced to those who were present in this work of creation. They were powerfully and joyfully impressed by the founding of the earth. It seems to have been a prolonged process, a period of time, rather than an instantaneous miracle, which is here likened to the erection of a great edifice on earth.

God's spirit is literally imperceptible, even when present in others. It would be impossible to describe it in literal terms, so that these early sons are also presented

under the figure of stars. The coming of Christ was predicted by a Star out of Jacob (Num.24:17), which guided the magi to His birthplace (Matt.2:2). Abram's seed are compared with stars (Gen.15:5). The moon and stars are messengers of the ecclesias (Rev.1:20), and the Root of David will be the resplendent Morning Star, harbinger of the coming kingdom (Rev.22:16). So, in the beginning, the stars of the morning celebrated the advent of the earth. This is most suggestive. When the earth was founded, the day was about to dawn, for it was to be the means of God's fullest revelation to all His creatures.

THE EXERCISE OF DIVINE POWER

The Disposer, or Subjector, *created* the heavens and the earth. This shows that that title *God,* in English, or *Elohim* (Alueim), in Hebrew, or *Theos,* in Greek, is broader and more comprehensive than *Creator,* and includes it. The meaning of the title Elohim, Toward-Subjectors, is by no means limited to creation. In the first chapter of Genesis Elohim goes on to *vibrate* by His spirit, and so inaugurated all *motion,* which resulted in the light and the atmosphere and the waters and the dry land. In other words, His power was exercised in subjecting or placing all the elements He had created to prepare the earth for the living souls which He was about to create.

May we not take this as a primitive example of His way of working? There is to be a future new creation. Is the Disposer idle meanwhile? Is He not doing as He did in the beginning, operating in the present creation in preparation for the new? By His spirit He has already introduced His saints into the new creation, in anticipation of that which is to come. This should show us that God is far more than Creator. He is the *Operator,* the Controller of that which He has made. Otherwise how could He make any advance toward the consummation?

All intelligent creatures are overwhelmed with awe when they contemplate the innumerable, immeasurable, infinitesimal, incomprehensible marvels of creation. Nothing is so great and nothing so small but it reveals the wonders of His workmanship. We cannot except the tiniest atom from His attention, for who else could create it? Nor can we excuse Him from the task of making such an incalculable number, for no one has the power or the skill to form even one. It is well for believers to contemplate these things, and meditate upon them, for they are tangible and material, so present no problem to faith. These marvels of the *Creator* should prepare us for the more marvelous movements of the *Subjector,* Who *operates* the creation in order to work out His will.

If God, the Subjector, had simply flung the stars into space, and did not hold them to their orbits, all would soon be confusion, and chaos. Their *movements,* as well as their creation, are due to His disposal. If He did not regulate the times and seasons on the earth, life would soon vanish from its surface. His revelation tells us very little about creation. It is almost altogether concerned with His operations among the sons of Adam. The unbeliever does not see His hand, or realize His presence. Although the Scriptures are full of examples of His directive and corrective influence, few of the saints fully realize the pervading power of His spirit. Indeed, it was not fully revealed until Paul's full and final unfoldings show us that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is operating *all* in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). May He give us grace to receive it and believe it!

A. E. Knoch

The preceding article is compiled from portions of studies by Brother Knoch, appearing in *Unsearchable Riches,* volumes 40, 42 and 45.

GENESIS 1:1

1 In the **Beginning:**
Elohim created `the heavens and `the earth.

SKELETAL STRUCTURE

1:1-2:3 Heavens and Earth—eneological Annals *2:4-50:26*

1:1 Creation—Disruption *1:2a*

NOTES AND CROSS REFERENCES

in-beginning: preposition prefixed to noun, *beginning,* which belongs to the Hebrew family, HEAD, ENGLISHMAN'S CONCORDANCE (E.C.) p.1147 (*cf* Prov.8:22; John 1:1).

Elohim (Toward-Subjector-s): Title of Deity, plural in form but generally used with singular verb, occurs over 2000 times, belonging to Hebrew word family, SUBJECT; E.C. p.76 (*cf* Psa.136:2-6; Isa.45:5-10; John 1:2; 1 Cor.15:25-28).

created: simple, active, complete verb form, third person singular, CREATE; E.C. p.270 (*cf* Psa.148:4,5; Col.1:16).

`the heavens: direct object particle with definite article prefixed to plural noun, *heavens,* in the Hebrew family PLACE; E.C. p.1286 (*cf* Psa.8:3; 96:5).

`the earth: direct object particle with definite article plus singular noun, *earth,* in the Hebrew family LAND; E.C. p.776 (*cf* Job 38:4-7; Psa.102:25; Prov.3:19; Isa.40:28; 45:12,18; Jer.51:15).

THE VERB "CREATE"

A CONCORDANT STUDY of scriptural words is the best approach for understanding their meanings. In the absence of a Concordant Keyword Concordance of Old Testament words, we hope to provide lists of references for certain important terms in passages being studied in the pages of this magazine. The first of these is presented herewith for the verb of Genesis 1:1, "create."

All the occurrences of this verb in its simple form, as given in ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW CONCORDANCE, page 270, are provided. This list does not include references to the uses of the "make" and "cause" aspects of this Hebrew verb, which are used for actions that cannot well be expressed by the English verb *create.* This list of references for the occurrences of the simple aspect of this verb is divided into various forms of the verb, such as active and passive, complete and incomplete, infinitive, participle and imperative.

The Concordant Version does not recognize the verb "create" in Isaiah 4:5 even though it appears in the Masoretic Hebrew Text (based on manuscripts dating back about one thousand years). On the basis of the Septuagint Greek translation (based on even older manuscripts), we conjecture that the original Hebrew manuscript read differently here and that the verb "create" was introduced into the Hebrew text in error. But we include Isaiah 4:5 in the list and provide our translation as it would be if we had accepted "create" as the correct verb, with the entire reference put in square brackets.

We hope our readers will find a survey of these occurrences of the Hebrew verb for "create" edifying and enlightening.

CREATE

SIMPLE, ACTIVE, COMPLETE:

Gen.1:1 Elohim *created* the heavens and the earth.
Gen.1:27 male and female He *created* them.
Gen.2:3 ceased from all His work that Elohim had *created*.
Gen.5:2 Male and female He *created* them.
Gen.60:7 wipe out humanity that I have *created*,
Dt.4:32 from the day that Elohim *created* humanity
Ps.89:12 The north and the south, You *created* them;
Ps.89:47 have You *created* all the sons of humanity?
[Isa.4:5] [Yahweh *will create*]
Isa.40:26 Who *created* . . . these?
Isa.41:20 the Holy One of Israel, He *created* it.
Isa.43:7 for My glory I *created* him;
Isa.45:8 I, Yahweh, I *create* it.
Isa.45:12 And *created* humanity on it;
Isa.45:18 He did not *create* it a chaos;
Isa.54:16 I Myself *created* the craftsman,
Isa.54:16 I Myself *created* the ruiner.
Jer.31:22 For Yahweh *has created* a new thing.
Mal.2:10 Did not one El *create* us?

SIMPLE, ACTIVE, INFINITIVE:

Gen.5:1 On the day Elohim *created* Adam.

SIMPLE, ACTIVE, IMPERATIVE:

Ps.51:10 *Create* for me a clean heart,

SIMPLE, ACTIVE, INCOMPLETE:

Gen.1:21 Elohim *created* the great sea monsters.
Gen.1:27 Elohim *created* humanity in His image.
Nu.16:30 should Yahweh *create* an unprecedented

SIMPLE, ACTIVE, PARTICIPLE:

Ecc.12:1 Yet remember your *Creator*
Isa.40:28 *Creator* of the ends of the earth;

Isa.42:5 *Creator* of the heavens
Isa.43:1 Your *Creator*, Jacob
Isa.43:15 *Creator* of Israel
Isa.45:7 and *Creator* of darkness,
Isa.45:18 *Creator* of the heavens;
Isa.57:19 *Creating* the produce of the lips.
Isa.65:17 behold Me *creating* new heavens and
Isa.65:18 future which I shall be *creating*,
Isa.65:18 *creating* Jerusalem an exultation
Am.4:13 And *creating* the wind,

SIMPLE, PASSIVE, COMPLETE:

Ex.34:10 marvels which *have* not *been created*
Ps.148:5 He Himself determined, and they *were created*.
Isa.48:7 Now *are* they *created*,
Ezk.21:30 place where you *were created*,

SIMPLE, PASSIVE, INFINITIVE:

Gen.2:4 the heavens and the earth when they were *created*
Gen.5:2 on the day they were *created*.
Ezk.28:13 In the day of your *creation*
Ezk.28:15 From the day of your *creation*,

SIMPLE, PASSIVE, INCOMPLETE:

Ps.104:30 send forth Your spirit; they *are created*

SIMPLE, PASSIVE, PARTICIPLE:

Ps.102:18 a people yet *being created* shall praise

❋

In an idiomatic translation, Hebrew verb classifications termed "complete," "incomplete," "infinitive" and "participle" cannot always be rendered by the corresponding forms in English. In such cases the particular Hebrew verb form used is indicated in the CVOT by small vertical or horizontal strokes before or after the English verb used, as shown in the Abbreviation Key accompanying the translation.

ELOHIM CREATES

THE FIRST sentence of the Sacred Scriptures lays the foundation of divine revelation. God's Word begins with the simple and momentous claim that Elohim creates everything. He is the Cause; we are a small part of the caused.

God is the Cause. Consequently He is responsible, and He receives the glory or blame in accord with the end results. With creation comes the responsibility of the Creator for what He has created, but if He brings the creation to a good consummation, the glory for creating and following through to this good outcome is His alone. There is no room for dualism in Genesis 1:1. It is true that the title, Elohim, is plural, referring to the fact that the Subjector (the Father) is operating in and through the Toward-Subjector (the Son), but the work is singular, by one spirit and under the hand of the Supreme. God is the One Who achieves creation, and He is the One Who will be finally acclaimed when the heavens and the earth and all connected with them reach the glorious position He has purposed.

THE BEGINNING OF GOD'S REVELATION

All revelation from here on stems from this revelation. The whole of Scripture finds its point of reference from this statement in Genesis 1:1. What is said concerning humanity and its various divisions, needs and hopes must ultimately be seen in relation to the fact that God has brought everything into existence and takes full responsibility for what He has done. We must never lose sight of the truth that God is the One Who created this universe

in which we live. Passing pleasure or continuing pain can never change the facts set forth here concerning the power and intelligence of the Creator.

It would be difficult to find a claim that is more fundamental. Yet it is stated with the greatest of simplicity. It says nothing unnecessary and everything essential for beginning our acquaintance with God.

God's existence is assumed. This is unacceptable for many today; those, however, who believe that "God is" (Heb.11:6), and that He speaks to us in His Word and in His Son (Heb.1:1,2) should eagerly accept what is said here in Genesis 1:1, without qualification. Three revelations of God in this passage are irrefutable. God has the powerful ability to create the heavens and the earth. Furthermore, God has the intelligent skill to do so. And finally, God actually puts this power and knowledge to work, and thus creates the heavens and the earth.

DIVINE LIMITATIONS?

The first verse of the Bible instructs us clearly that there are no limitations to God's power and knowledge. It is foolish and irreverent to claim that God cannot accomplish something He promises or wills to do. If God tells Abram He is going to bless him and make him a blessing, both him and his seed, and allot to him a certain piece of land, He will do so. God knows how to do so and has the ability to do so. If God declares that He wills to save all mankind and bring them into a realization of the truth, nothing can keep Him from this achievement. Since God was able to create the heavens and the earth, He is able to bring the world to the consummation He has set. Such conclusions are drawn both logically and convincingly from the facts of Genesis 1:1.

The creature is the one with limitations. No created being can rise up above the Creator and spoil his work.

Evil is not a power independent of God. The human will can never change God's will, let alone defeat it. God is supreme, and this is made clear from the beginning.

THE COMPLEMENT OF GENESIS 1:1

In a sense, the entirety of the rest of God's Word, from Genesis 1:2 forward, is the complement of Genesis 1:1. It is the *complement,* not only a *supplement* to the first verse. We cannot leave the truth of Genesis 1:1 carefully wrapped and put aside in its own compartment and look (for example) at Genesis 1:2 or Exodus 20:3 or Matthew 25:46 or Philippians 3:20 by themselves without any recognition of the fact that God is responsible for the whole of creation.

We cannot glorify God as God without seeing that as the Creator of the heavens and the earth He is glorious, indeed glorious in purpose, glorious in operation, glorious in achievement. The fact that God creates the universe is not enough. A universe that is without order or meaning or contains that which never contributes to the glory of its creator is not the creation of the God of Scripture.

Therefore, when we come to Genesis 1:2 and learn that the earth became a chaos, there is only one solution bringing glory. This darkness and lifelessness and disorder cannot be absolute waste if the powerful and intelligent Creator is still employing His power and exercising His intelligence in accord with a purpose beyond the present chaos. Surely Genesis 1:1 tells us He is *able* to carry out a purpose for good even in and through the chaos itself.

We will hold to the revelation of Genesis 1:1 as vitally relevant to the evil that bursts forth in Genesis 1:2. God is powerful and God is intelligent, and therefore the evil of the second verse of Scripture is firmly within the province of God. It *must not* be something beyond the Creator's power to handle or an unexpected development that escaped His all-knowing foresight.

The whole question of responsibility has been established. As the Creator, powerful and intelligent, God must be recognized as the ultimate Cause of everything. Consequently He holds ultimate responsibility. We must not shrink from this truth. It is to God's glory.

GOOD AND WISE

However, the revelation of God in Genesis 1:1 is only two-dimensional. We have learned, as noted above, that God has tremendous ability and intelligence, but Genesis 1:1 does not, in itself, show us that God's power is fully directed to good or that His knowledge is employed wisely. On the other hand, the entrance of darkness, chaos and vacancy into the world, if deliberately and specifically counseled by the Creator, introduces a third dimension. We are seeing not only God's ability and skill but also are seeing an extraordinary test of His *character.* Are His powerful works ultimately for good, and are they wisely carried out so that even those temporary elements which are not good in themselves are truly needed for the achievement of that good consummation? These are vital concerns that Genesis 1:1 does not answer.

This is exactly what is shown in Genesis 1:2-31. Within the overall responsibility of God Who created the heavens and the earth, evil enters in the form of chaos and vacancy and darkness. Then God, Who created the heavens and the earth, speaks, and light and order and life come about, ending with the revelation that "it is very good."

Genesis 1:1 is not enough to reveal the goodness of the Creator. We do not *know* anything about the goodness of the heavens and the earth apart from a contrast with the evil of chaos, vacancy and darkness. But now that Genesis 1:2-31 is added as a complement of Genesis 1:1 we glorify the Creator indeed. He is wise beyond our greatest

thoughts and able beyond our highest hopes. His power and knowledge are employed for the highest good.

THE LOVE OF GOD

This test of the divine character is rehearsed anew starting with the creation of humanity and the deception in Eden which leads to the entrance of death into our world. For "through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind" (Rom.5:12). The goodness of the powerful and all-knowing God is put to the test, and throughout the rest of Scripture this remains the pivotal question until God reveals Himself in His Son.

Then, in the most fearful and astounding act of God giving His Son for sinners, in the death of Christ and the results of His death, entombment and resurrection, the full truth is set before us. God is not only able to create humanity, but with supreme wisdom and the purest of righteousness and love, God's goodness is displayed as never before. The God of Genesis 1:1 is revealed in all His glory, though none of us have yet been able to grasp its dimensions.

It is with the commendation of His love in the giving of His Son (Rom.5:8) that all questions of God's character are finally and completely settled. This love of God is such a glorious aspect of divine goodness that Paul had to speak of it in a measure of four dimensions. Thus he prayed that believers, "having been rooted and grounded in love" should be strong to grasp what is the breadth and length and depth and height of this revelation as it affects us and ultimately all in the heavens and on the earth (Eph. 1:10,11; 3:14-19).

STRONG TO GRASP

Only God can give us spiritual strength for grasping the vastness of His love as revealed through the sufferings and

exaltation of His Son, and the operations of His choice and call and blessing of us in Christ. But this is true of every revelation of Scripture. For us who are called there is an awareness that God is working all together for good (*cf* Rom.8:28). This is why we claim that in creating the heavens and the earth, God was beginning a good work that will ultimately bring Him glory in every aspect, in everyone, everywhere and always.

Chaos will give way to order, to a glorifying of God that could never come about apart from the temporary chaos.

Vacancy will give way to life and activity, to the praise of the Creator Who intended that vacancy to exist for awhile.

Darkness will give way to light that will be fully appreciated to the honor of the One Who planned even the darkness itself for its time.

These glories will come about because God will bring them about. The Creator will be revealed as the Saviour, the Reconciler, the wise and loving Subjector of all.

THE CREATOR

When the Scriptures are complete, the revelation of God given in the first verse is greatly enlarged. There we saw One Who commands power and intelligence effectively. But now we are seeing that He is wise and righteous, and above all, He is love. The Creator never turns away from His creation or ceases to carry forward His purpose for its good and His glory.

Today we still live in the midst of darkness and sufferings. "For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it" (Rom.8:20). But this vanity is a transitory state; it is not everlasting. The Creator has subjected His creation to this vanity "in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:21). D.H.H.

WRITTEN FOR THIS TEACHING OF OURS

OUR THEME in this series of writings is the *deity* of God (commonly termed His "sovereignty"). By this we mean His "GOD-ness"; that is, His *subjector*ship or *placer*ship (*cf* "deity," KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.71: "*theotês*, PLACERship, 'that which pertains to God'").

Humanity's fundamental sin is its failure to glorify and thank God *as God* ("not *as God* do they glorify or thank Him"; Rom.1:21). Nevertheless, that which *is* known of God is apparent among them, "for God manifests it to them" (Rom.1:19). This is because God's invisible attributes are "descried" (i.e., "made out" or "detected") from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements, besides His imperceptible *power* and *divinity* (*theiotês*, PLACERship). Hence man is "defenseless" (Rom.1:20b) in making the claim that since nothing can be known of God, therefore he is to be held guiltless in neither honoring nor serving Him, in neither glorifying nor thanking Him as God.

Any such defense will fail, for however limited their knowledge may be—and however insistent they may be in seeking to deny it—*humanity knows God.* That is, even if they will not admit it and may not *realize* it, they *have* a "relationship" with Him, according to the knowledge which they possess concerning Him. To be sure, their relationship to Him is largely one of estrangement. Nevertheless, just as surely as a former husband or wife continues to sustain a certain relationship to his or her former mate, humanity, in the midst of its darkness and estrangement from God, still sustains a certain relationship to Him.

Humanity's problem is not that they do not know God at all, but that they do not know Him well. The apostle Paul declares that they *do know* Him, saying that they *are* ones "knowing God" (Rom.1:21a). It is not that men do not know God at all, but that, "*knowing Him,* not *as God* do they *glorify* or *thank* Him" (Rom.1:21b).

This failure to glorify and thank God as God, common to mankind, remains our failure as well, even though we are believers in Christ Jesus and are growing in the growth of God (*cf* Col.2:19). During this present lifetime, the "growth of God" is a very slow growth and a very limited growth, even for those who may have been granted comparatively more progress therein. All who are saints are still members of the old humanity, which is corrupted in accord with its seductive desires (*cf* Eph.4:22). Considered in ourselves, we are but "flesh," and, even as our Lord, can do nothing of ourselves (*cf* John 5:30; *cp* John 15:5; Rom.8:7).

Yet we do not *think* that we can do nothing of ourselves; hence neither do we *believe* that this is so. We are taught to have confidence in ourselves; that God helps those who help themselves; and that *self*-confidence is essential to success.

Now it is true that we must first act before the grace which is appointed to follow such initial acts will be granted. Likewise, practical confidence in one's own abilities, *under God,* is ideal. There is nothing, however, in any of this that denies that the vital first act, or any other needful acts of our own along the way toward the achievement of a goal, is something for which we should neither glorify nor thank God.

In accord with the wisdom of the world, most of us, in fact, embrace the sentiment of the Roman statesman and orator Cicero, who declared, "No wise man ever thanked God for virtue." Our notion is that while the grace of God is indispensable, it is also insufficient. In our fancied independence of God, we imagine that were it not for ourselves, we would be "even as the rest of men."

Many have convinced themselves that such a schema is essential to "human dignity." This artful phrase, however, is little more than a euphemism for self-pride. For most of us, it is not that we sometimes fail to ascribe our all to God, but that the thought of doing so does not even cross our mind. And, it is not that we simply fail to ascribe our *all* to Him, even the evil, which will eventuate in our good and His glory, but that we fail even to ascribe our virtue to Him! Never mind gracing Him with our trust concerning His purpose in our shortcomings, we refuse even to thank Him for whatever goodness we do possess. Instead of thanking God for His saving grace which alone has wrought our salvation, we insist on claiming that He has merely made our virtue possible. Our claim is that while we could not have succeeded apart from Him, still, all His help notwithstanding, it was finally something of ourselves (hence, thanks to ourselves) that turned defeat into victory.

The reason why we both entertain and maintain such stupid notions (notions from which, at least in spirit, perhaps none of us have been fully delivered), is because, *knowing God,* not *as God* do we glorify or thank Him. Consequently, we ourselves, in our own measure, "even as the rest," have been made vain in our reasonings, even as darkened in our unintelligent heart (*cf* Rom.1:21b).

From this fearful foundation have proceeded all of the evils which continue to dog us all our days. We may not have crafted idols of stone, but who among us has not engaged in "prostitution [i.e., sexual impurity], uncleanness, passion, evil desire and greed—which *is* idolatry" (Col.3:5)? It may be true, in our circle of acquaintance, that not many have "effected indecency" by altering the natural use of their bodies, taking part in passionate acts with those of their own gender (Rom.1:27). But even if

so, who among has not effected various *other* indecencies himself, ones such as envy, strife, guile, whispering (i.e., gossip), vilification, pridefulness, ostentatiousness, stubbornness, implacableness, or unmercifulness (*cf* Rom.1:29-31)? Do we realize that these too are acts of indecency, just as surely as unnatural sexual relations?

It is my prayer that through the ongoing careful consideration of our theme, which is, "The One Who is Operating All," both the reader and the writer might be built up together in faith and love. Therefore we would not cease praying for one another, requesting that we might be filled full with the realization of God's *will,* in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, we to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in *the realization of God;* being endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, for all endurance and patience with joy (*cp* Col.1:9-11).

The reality of our situation is that for mortal sinners, it is difficult to walk by faith, not by perception. Indeed, beyond difficult, it is impossible for us to do so, that is, for us to do so of ourselves. How, then, we rejoice to learn that when we *are* walking "beside God," all is possible ("with [lit., 'beside'] God [all is possible]"; Matt.19:26). We therefore soberly look to Him in His grace that He might condescend truly to grant us discernment of His will and acquaintance with His mind. Thus, and only thus, may we be learning to glorify and thank Him truly "as God."

MOTIVE AND INTENTION

"Whoever should smite his associate without knowledge when he was not hating him heretofore, or he who should come with his associate into the wildwood to chop trees, and his hand may be impelled with the axe to cut down a tree, and the iron head flies off the wooden handle and finds his associate so that he dies, that man, he

shall flee to one of these cities [of refuge] that he may live" (Deut.19:4,5).

"The smiter of a man that dies shall be put to death, yea death. But if he had no malicious intent, *yet the One, Elohim, He had fated him into his hand,* then I set for you a place where he shall flee" (Ex.21:12,13).

With this striking example of God's deity, we begin our endeavor, that of gaining a realization of the great truth that God is the One Who is *operating all* in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11).

Note that in this precept of Moses the general rule was that the smiter of a man that dies was to be put to death. In a case, however, in which the one effecting the killing had no malicious intent, such a one was not to be put to death, and was rather appointed a place where he might justly flee from any who sought to injure him for the evil done, albeit unintentionally.

From this we learn that divine judgment is concerned with intent, or motive, not simply with action, considered in itself. No act is wrong of itself, but only in relation to its motive and purpose. For example, the removal by incision of the human heart from the chest cavity in order to save a life by organ transplantation, is surely a noble deed. Yet if the same surgeon, with equal skill and expertise, should excise a human heart in order to effect murder even as to engage in cannibalism, it is recognized by all that such a one has committed an ignoble deed. How can this be so, in reference to the same act? It is because it is not, in itself, the act of excising the organ that we either praise or condemn, but the surgeon's purpose in so doing, even as his subsequent acts, in consideration of the consequences thereof to the patient, or victim.

Note especially, however, that, in Israel, in any such cases as above in which a man killed another accidentally, as when the iron head of a workman's axe flew off and fatally

injured his associate, or, in any other instances in which one man killed another unintentionally, such acts were to be accounted for as having occurred by God's appointment.

If the smiter of a man unintentionally killed another, it was to be understood that Yahweh must have fated him into his hand. Any such tragedy, though accidental from the human standpoint, was to be recognized, according to truth, as having been purposed of God.

Now rather than jumping ahead and presuming that God does or does not appoint all evil events—ones of whatever kind—to occur, from this present text itself, one should simply learn that whenever accidental or otherwise unintentional homicide occurs, it is because God has wisely determined that it should come to pass. It is not that He merely "allows" such things to happen, but that, having *appointed* all such events to occur, He then, also, allows them to come to pass.

We should therefore appraise all similar events in our own lives today in a similar light. Hence, when, due to a complex chain of unintended events, a great ocean liner sinks resulting in the deaths of many hundreds of souls, it must be because God had determined beforehand that this should occur, according to His own wise counsels. Or, when a school bus driver accidentally drives over a cliff and a large group of children die bringing sorrow to an entire community, it must be because God had fated this to occur.

Unless we accept those occurrences of both good and evil recorded in the Scriptures which are expressly declared to have been decreed of God as indeed having been decreed of God, not only will we be disbelieving, but we will lose the benefit of realizing that such events are not exceptions to the rule but are rather the rule itself. Only as we view such occurrences as, first of all, *true,* and then, as *representative* rather than exceptional, will we be in a position to realize that, "*Whatever* was written before, was written for this teaching of ours, that through the endurance and the consolation of the scriptures *we* may have expectation" (Rom.15:4).

If we do at least acknowledge that whenever accidental evil events occur, they occur because God has purposed them to occur, we will then be in a position to receive the still more astounding revelation that *all* is out of God (Rom. 11:36). This is even as Isaiah is saying, "O Yahweh our Elohim, You shall *set* peace on the hearthstones for us, *for* indeed, *all our doings* You have *made* for us" (Isa.26:12).

KEPT BACK FROM SINNING

Let us now take note of a number of further specific revelations of God's deity, recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures.

In Genesis 12, God makes certain promises to Abraham. Specifically, He promises him that He will *make* his descendants a great nation, and that He will give them the land which He had appointed unto them. Then, in Genesis 15: 1-5, God further promises that Abraham shall have an heir, even as an innumerable posterity. Most significantly, in Genesis 17:1, God declares that He is "the El-Who-Suffices," that is, the Almighty God or Subjector. God can do whatever He pleases to do. He can operate upon an elderly woman's body so that she can bear a son; *and,* He can also cause Abraham to choose to migrate to Palestine and later cause Jacob to migrate to Egypt in order to fulfill the prophecy of Genesis 15:3, "Behold, You have given no seed to me; and now a son of my household will take over from me."

In light of this prophecy we should ask, Was it possible for Jacob to will never to descend to Egypt? Can man "choose" to prevent God's predictions from coming to pass? Must not man rather will to fulfill them?

Though it may seem odd at first, it follows from the fact of God's promise to Abraham that he should have both an heir and a vast posterity, that Abraham could neither commit suicide nor decline to have sexual relations. If God

promised to give Abraham's seed the land of Palestine, then it was certain that Abraham would have children. He had no free will by which to commit suicide. God controlled Abraham's will so that he could not choose otherwise.[1]

Consider, too, another verse where Abraham had moved south to Gerar, in the kingdom of Abimelech. Abimelech immediately was attracted to Sarah. He took her. God then spoke to the king in a dream. "Elohim came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him: Behold, you are to die on account of the women whom you have taken, for she is the spouse of a possessor. Now Abimelech had not gone near her, and he said: My Lord, are You going to kill even an unknowing and righteous nation? Did not he himself say to me, She is my sister? And moreover, did not she herself say, He is my brother? In the sincerity of my heart and in the innocence of my palms have I done this. The One, Elohim, replied to him in the dream: I too know that you have done this in the sincerity of your heart, and *I was also keeping you back from sinning* against Me. Therefore I did not allow you to touch her" (Gen.20:3-6).

Abimelech had no free will. He simply could not have chosen to lie with Sarah that night because God controlled his will and caused him to refrain. This is because God is Almighty, because He is the All-Sufficient One. *He did not need Abimelech's help to achieve His own purpose.*

Perhaps most notable of all in Genesis in relation to God's deity concerning human events is Genesis 50:20. Joseph declares to his brothers: "You devised evil against me, *yet Elohim devised it for good* in order to accomplish, as at this day, to preserve many people alive."

Joseph's jealous brothers had originally entertained murdering him; later, however, they changed their minds and

1. *cf* Gordon H. Clark, Predestination in the Old Testament, p.5 (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1978).

sold him into slavery. They could not have remained resolute in their proposal to kill their brother, since God had determined that Joseph should go to Egypt, later to save his family from starvation. The brothers were neither free to kill Joseph, nor to let him go. Their motives were impure; but God's purpose was good and could not fail. In the same event, *they* devised evil against Joseph, yet *God* devised it for good, according as He was intending.

In Exodus, God's deity is presented in most striking terms concerning Pharaoh. In Exodus 4:21, Yahweh says to Moses: "When you go to return to Egypt, see to all the miracles which I place in your hand, that you do them before Pharaoh. Yet I shall make his heart *steadfast,* and he shall not dismiss the people."

In Exodus 3:19, God had already declared: "*I know* that the king of Egypt *shall not* give you leave to go yea not even by a steadfast hand." Since God had made Pharaoh's heart steadfast in its resolution not to let the people go, how can anyone say that Pharaoh was "free" to let the slaves go? Is not God omnipotent, and is not His knowledge perfect? Now, we may hedge and say that God *can* control His creatures, but out of respect for their "dignity," He *will* not control them. However, what we may say God will not do, Exodus 4:21 says He did do.

Moreover, God expressly declares that, "I Myself shall *harden* the heart of Pharaoh and increase My signs and My miracles in the land of Egypt" (Ex.7:3).

The facts are these: Moses said, "Thus says Yahweh, Elohim of the Hebrews . . . . Dismiss My people that they may serve Me!" (Ex.7:16). Pharaoh said, "Go!" (Ex.10:8). "Yet Yahweh made the heart of Pharaoh steadfast, so that he did not dismiss the sons of Israel" (Ex.10:20).

This is all according as Paul recounts, "For the scripture is saying to Pharaoh that 'For this selfsame thing I rouse you up, so that I should be displaying in you My

power, and so that My name should be published in the entire earth.' Consequently, then, to whom He will, He is merciful, yet whom He will, He is *hardening*" (Rom. 9:17,18; cit. Ex.9:16).

The vital thing to see is that God was *operating* counter to His revealed will, and yet according to His intention. His preceptive will was, "Let My people go!" Yet His decretive will was to make the heart of Pharaoh steadfast, so that he would not dismiss the sons of Israel.

Similarly, in Deuteronomy 2:30 we are told that "Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass through it, for Yahweh your Elohim *made* his spirit obstinate and *made* his heart resolute, that He might give him into your hand (as is known this day)."

Finally, in considering various passages from the writings of Moses about God's deity, let us turn our attention to Deuteronomy 30:6. This is not a text concerning God's causing of evil but of His determining good. The day will yet come concerning Israel when, "Yahweh your Elohim will circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed so as to love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may stay alive."

This will occur in the coming eon, in the day when He *cleanses* them from *all* their uncleannesses. In that day, He will bestow His law in their inward part, and write it upon their heart (Jer.31:33). Gloriously, He will give them a new heart and bestow a new spirit within them. Indeed, He will bestow His own spirit within them, and *make it* that they will go in His statutes even as that they will observe and do His judgments (Ezek.36:26,27).

In order that we might truly believe the Scripture's own testimony regarding God's deity, may we be given an awareness that whatever God actually does is right, even if it should go counter to the popular ethics of our day. To Him be the glory! J.R.C.

JONATHAN AND DAVID

THERE is no mention of Jonathan in the seventeenth chapter where Israel stood trembling before Goliath. He was among the crowd of the fearful. His previous exploits showed a faith in God unknown to his father Saul. Yet his faith was one which looked for signs and direction (1 Samuel 14:6-10), while David's faith was one of much greater confidence in God and self-abandonment. Perhaps the complexities of court life had affected Jonathan. Though he had a follower who could say, "My heart is like your heart" (14:7), it seems he himself had no one on whom to lean and with whom to fellowship.

1 SAMUEL 18:1-5

18 + **It** |b**came** about as**when he** had all**finished**– › **speaking**– **to Saul,** +**that Jonathan's soul was tied** i**to David's soul; and Jonathan** l**loved him as his** own **soul.** 2 + i**On** ·**that day Saul** l**took him and would not** g**allow him to return** to **his father's house.** 3 + **Jonathan** l**contracted** a **covenant** +**with David,** i**since he loved**– `**him as his** own **soul.** 4 **And Jonathan** l**stripped** him**self** `of **the robe** w**that** was **on him and** l**gave it to David** along +**with his coats and** fr**even his sword and** fr **his bow and** fr **his girdle.** 5 +**Then David** went l**forth** with the men of war**;** i **wherever Saul** l**sent him, he** c**proceeded** l**intelligently,** so +**that Saul** lpl**set him over the men of war; and it** seemed l**good in** the **eyes of all the** wi**soldiers and** mr**also in** the **eyes of Saul's courtiers.**

JONATHAN CAPTIVATED

"It came about when he [David] had finished speaking

to Saul, that Jonathan's soul was tied to David's soul; and Jonathan loved him as his own soul" (18:1). Saul may have been expecting to learn something from David's lineage that might explain his courage and military prowess. Perhaps David's grandfather or great uncle had been a valiant warrior. Saul would look for such explanations that were acceptable to the flesh. But Jonathan, witnessing David speak with Saul, was totally captivated by something he recognized—something to which Saul was blind.

Jonathan had been a military leader for some time, and would have been familiar with all the ploys used by soldiers to curry favor with their leaders. Probably he had been standing by when David was brought before Saul on the field of battle and refused Saul's armor. What did Jonathan see in David now? Perhaps it was something in his answer to Saul. "Saul said to him, Whose son are you, young man? David replied, The son of your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite" (1 Sam.17:58). David's humility was remarkable. There were no claims of glory, either for self or family. And his simplicity and humility gave credence to his actions and all he had said before.

David continued acting intelligently and humbly, and his favor with all the people grew. In this respect he represents Christ, Whose disposition led to His emptying, His service, His humility and His unparalleled obedience (Phil.2:5-8). Paul exhorts us to possess and display this same disposition (Phil.2:1-5).

TIED

"Jonathan's soul was *tied* to David's soul; and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." The word *tied* simply means *to bind* or *tie* together. But when it is *souls* that are bound, the strands that unite are something other than can be touched with hands. It is very interesting that the Hebrew word here translated *tie* is frequently translated *conspire*.

Conspire is from the Latin, a compound of "con" (together) and "spire" (breathe). The thought is "breathe-together." Those who are so united in purpose that they are willing to give up self for the common goal are conspirators. They are not only united in purpose and action, but the unifying cause is so dear it is as if they even "breathe together."

Conspire, of itself, has neither a good or evil connotation; it simply refers to those who are bound together for a common goal or purpose. But perhaps the evil conspirators of our day illustrate it best. Revolutionists bond together with a common purpose, willing to give up their lives to accomplish the goal and what they consider the ultimate good of the many.

It seems that Jonathan had yearned for a *conspirator* who shared his devotion to Yahweh and his patriotism and his values. Jonathan's persuasions and arguments with Saul show that they truly had little in common. But in David, Jonathan not only found one who hungered and thirsted for the same things as he, he found one who excelled himself. In David, Jonathan found someone with whom he could share all that was truly precious. His response was love and self-abasing devotion.

Christ was once so tightly surrounded by listeners that His own mother and brothers could not reach him. His response to one questioning this was, "For anyone whoever should be doing the will of My Father Who is in the heavens, he is My brother and mother!" (Matt.12:50).

ACCEPTANCE OF THE SAVIOUR

The 17th and 18th chapters of 1 Samuel speak of four different sets of armor. There is the armor of Goliath, David's armor (if a stave, a sling and a shepherd's bag with stones may be termed armor), Saul's armor and Jonathan's armor. Both Saul and Jonathan offer their armor to David with respect to his being their deliverer. But

their means and attitudes in offering it are strikingly and instructively different.

Saul greeted his deliverer with denial, "You are not able . . ." (17:33). Upon David's insistence of God's faithfulness and care, Saul consented and pronounced an affirmation of Yahweh's presence, but his actions denied that he believed Yahweh's presence would be sufficient. "Then *Saul clothed David* in *his* coats, placed a helmet of bronze on his head and put on him a body armor" (1 Sam.17:38). This is as if to say, "You may, in fact, save me, but you must wear the armor I provide and use my weapons to do so."

Jonathan met David, accepting him as his deliverer, declaring his love and allegiance to him and making a covenant of loyalty to him. No effort does Jonathan make to regulate David, but "Jonathan *stripped himself* of the robe that was on him and gave it to David along with his coats and even his sword and his bow and his girdle" (18:4). Jonathan offers to David, not only all that he has, but also all that he is. David went forth with the men of war and became their leader—this was Jonathan's position. Jonathan could easily have required that David be second to him, but his disposition was, "You shall reign over Israel, and I myself shall become second to you" (1 Sam.23:17). Saul's attitude was, "I shall retain you in my service. You will fight my battles and lead my warriors and avenge me of my enemies."

These same attitudes are displayed daily a millionfold. There are many that would say to Christ, "You may be my Saviour, but you must wear the robes of my righteousness and the coats of my works, and you must wield the weapons of my strength." The armor of the self-righteous is heavy, and they prize it highly. But to those, like David, who know something of grace, it is only wearisome.

Then there are those with Jonathan's attitude who say, "I will love the Lord my God with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my understanding" (*cf* Matt. 22:37). Or, with the Baptist they say, "He must be growing, yet mine it is to be inferior" (John 3:30). Or with Paul they say, "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death . . . . I am also deeming all to be a forfeit because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, because of Whom I forfeited all, and am deeming it to be refuse, that I should be gaining Christ, and be found in Him, not having my righteousness, which is of law, but that which is through faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God for faith" (Phil.1:20; 3:8,9).

JOINED IN SOUL

Not only should the believer be united with Christ and the Father in love and devotion, but there should also be a great and deep unity between members of the body. ". . . Fill my joy full, that you may be *mutually disposed,* having *mutual love, joined in soul,* being *disposed to one thing* . . ." (Phil.2:2). Paul gave the Philippians an exhortation (Phil.1:27-2:4) which he followed with four examples (Phil.2:5-30). The exhortation was to be united and steadfast regardless of circumstances.

The first example was of Christ, Who emptied Himself of the glory inherent to His form, and took a lower form in which He manifested God's love. His complete and selfless emptying was a display of His equality with God in love and truth. Secondly, Paul testified of his willingness to give up his life in the service of the evangel to the Philippians. Timothy was the third example, one who was "equally sensitive" (or, *equal-souled*) with Paul, and who would be genuinely solicitous to the Philippians' concerns (2:20). Finally there was Epaphroditus, who risked his soul to perform the ministry of the Philippians (2:30).

All these examples hark back to the giving up of one's

own life and the display of the love of God. They are examples of Paul's exhortation to the Ephesians, "Become, then, imitators of God, as beloved children, and be walking in love, according as Christ also loves you, and gives Himself up for us, an approach present and a sacrifice to God, for a fragrant odor" (Eph.5:1,2). How closely do we approximate this in our fellowship?

J. Philip Scranton

❋

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON GENESIS 1:1

The Concordant Version of Genesis 1:1 given on page 13 differs in several respects that given in the 1957 edition. These changes are generally made in the interest of consistency with similar expressions elsewhere in the Version, or because of demands of idiomatic English when these do not conflict with Concordant principles. Two of these changes may call for special explanation, as follows:

Brother Knoch was surely correct in his insistence that the Hebrew title of this book does not refer to some sort of absolute beginning. Yet the use of "the" in lightface type, does not, in itself, indicate such an inconceivable idea (see the Concordant rendering of John 1:1). The whole book deals with beginnings, especially the beginning of creation as far as the earth is concerned, and the beginning of generation on the earth.

It is also correct that the verb "created" appears before the subject "Elohim" in the Hebrew word order of the first sentence of Scripture. But this is the normal word order for a simple, direct statement in Hebrew (verb, subject, object). It seems to us that this sentence ought to be expressed in the normal word order for a direct statement in English (subject, verb, object). In this way the emphasis is given to the entire statement itself rather than to any particular word.

D.H.H.

INTRODUCTION TO ECCLESIASTES

UNDER the general title, "The Words and Work of God and Man," I am presenting a series of studies in Ecclesiastes. While the exposition developed in these pages must be allowed to speak for itself, a few explanatory remarks regarding the process by which the conclusions advanced have been reached seem both desirable and necessary.

Those seeking the mind of God through the Scriptures are confronted with a critical obstacle of an unusual kind. The current versions of the Bible often translate the same Hebrew word in various ways, and quite as often one English word is made to do the duty of several words in the Original. In this way a veil of mystery has been thrown over many a passage, and a certain amount of human opinion and guesswork has been imported into God's truth.

The Book of Ecclesiastes has severely suffered from this inconsistency in translation. Evidence of this fact will come before us in these studies. Meanwhile an illustration will serve to show the way in which the Scriptures have been unconsciously obscured. The noun *chesbon* in verses 25, 27 and 29 of the seventh chapter, is represented by "reason," "account," and "invention" in the AV. It must be evident to the least critical reader that the author's thought is necessarily obscured when in a brief paragraph with a sustained argument the same word is rendered by different terms conveying divergent, and even unrelated, ideas.[1]

1. The CV of Ecclesiastes renders this word "design" and "devisings" in these passages.

Another powerful factor in determining one's conception of Ecclesiastes is the question of the Hebrew text. The Massoretic accents are used not only as signs of interpunction, but often as a Rabbinical commentary on the text. We are not bound by the accents in any case and should scrutinize them carefully, especially in Messianic prophecies. Of great value, yet they are *no part of the sacred text.* It is possible also that we may not fully know the reasons of their location in important places, and may impute wrong motives to the Jewish editors of the text. That they can be perverted is plain enough from the fact that the vocalization often foists upon a passage a meaning out of harmony with the context.

AIM

No sacred book has ever been so much misunderstood in its whole aim and spirit as Ecclesiastes. The opinions of learned men have been put on a level with sacred writings. Eventually the views which became popular have been considered "authoritative"; and to this day theology is unable to free itself from the trammels of tradition and confess that authority in matters of exegesis rests exclusively with facts derived from the Bible itself. Our aim should always be to adjust our thoughts to the facts, and never to adjust the facts to our thoughts.

Applying this principle to the matter in hand, our prime concern is to ascertain what the book of Ecclesiastes has to say about itself. In the epilogue we read, "The terminus of the whole matter has been heard: Fear the One, Elohim, and keep His instructions, for this is the whole duty of humanity. For the One, Elohim, shall bring every deed into judgment concerning all that is obscured, whether good or whether evil" (12:13,14). Hence we may say the book aims at achieving a threefold object: (1) Recognition

of God as God; (2) Reception of His revelation; (3) Regulation of life in view of a future rectification or judgment.

CHARACTER

What the author wrote was upright and true. "The Assembler sought to find words of delight, and what was written is uprightness and words of truth" (12:10).

This statement explodes the idea in vogue which reads into Ecclesiastes the pessimism of a broken-spirited debauchee. Some have even placed this gem on a level with the works of Byron, Heine, and the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.

To substantiate this theory appeal is made to the speeches of Job's associates as examples of utterances by misguided critics, who had less understanding of God's ways in providence than the man whom they sought to correct. Concurring in this opinion of the discourses of Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, we would point out that the case of Ecclesiastes is by no means analogous. At the end of the book of Job, Yahweh informed his associates that they had not spoken concerning Him what was rightly so (Job 42:7). The opposite is true of Ecclesiastes. The categorical statement of the epilogue describes its contents as words of uprightness and truth.

AUTHOR

We are now prepared to consider whether Ecclesiastes asserts itself as the work of Solomon. When we turn to the prologue and epilogue, where it is most natural to expect information respecting authorship, we find no mention whatever of Solomon, nor anything to suggest his personality. On the contrary, there are many things in the book incompatible with the historic Solomon. But it may be said, While Solomon is not mentioned by name, the designation "Son of David" is equivalent to it. This seemingly decisive argument is in reality of no weight. The Hebrew "son" may

equally well mean "descendant;" hence evidence from the book itself must decide between the alternative meanings.

The thrice repeated reference to those who were "over Jerusalem before me" (1:16; 2:7,9) proves that Ecclesiastes looks back on a series of predecessors, a thing Solomon could not do. To say that the writer may have had in mind the old Jebusite princes is gratuitous. What Israelite, not to say anointed of the Lord, would think of identifying himself with the rulers of an accursed nation?

There are three problems which preoccupy Ecclesiastes—death, succession, the just suffering as a sinner. Death occupies a large place (*cf* 2:16; 3:19; 4:2; 7:1,17,26; 8:9; 9:3-5), the special point of perplexity being the just dying the death of the unclean. The prominence given to Succession (2:18,19; 4:8; 6:2) is not surprising, seeing the writer himself is a king, for with royalty it is a paramount question, especially in Israel, where the Messianic hope was bound up with the perpetuity of the Davidic house. Hence the kings of Judah occupied a place which no other kings ever have, or could, occupy—they were *forerunners* of the Messiah. The violent fate overtaking the just—his being carried off from the holy place—is also a matter of grave concern (7:15; 8:10-14; 9:2,3).

A moment's consideration will show that the problems contemplated in Ecclesiastes do not fit with Solomon's experience. As to death, in his old age Solomon lapsed into idolatry; therefore death in a manner indicating the Lord's displeasure—a possibility which dismays Ecclesiastes—would, according to Hebraic conceptions, be a just reward of his deserts. As to succession, Solomon reigned forty years. As Rehoboam, his son and heir, was forty years of age at the time of accession to the throne, he must have been born the very year of his father's coronation. Solomon's succession was thus assured from the beginning of his reign. As for the trials of the just, the calamities which

marred the close of Solomon's tranquil reign were inflicted by the Lord because of his apostasy.

The author of the book, being a king of the Davidic line, the question of date is restricted within definite bounds. It cannot be earlier than Rehoboam, nor later than Zedediah. Now, there is only one king possessing the necessary requirements: Hezekiah of Judah.

The problems which engage Ecclesiastes present a striking analogy with Hezekiah's experience. When Israel came out of Egypt Yahweh promised not to put on them the diseases of Egypt, if they would heed His commandments, and keep His statutes (Ex.15:26). King Hezekiah gave himself to Yahweh's service, loved His law supremely and trusted in Him implicitly. Yet he is smitten with the disease of Egypt, and his death is decreed by the God he served: "Thus speaks Yahweh: Give instruction to your household, for you are going to die; and you shall not remain alive" (Isa.38:1). Surely here is an experience to stagger faith and arouse questionings.

Succession was no less pertinent with him. He faced a dynastic, and therefore a Messianic, crisis, when brought to the gates of the Unseen having neither "son nor second." The word of Isaiah announcing his certain death involved another grave fact—as his disease was a species of leprosy, it meant burial with the unclean, and this, coupled with childlessness, was to him, and to the nation at large, a sign that Yahweh had rejected him.

The problems in Ecclesiastes find an echo in the psalm of Hezekiah (Isa.38:9-20). Here is mourning over death and the rejection by Yahweh which parallels the somber mood prevailing in the first part of Ecclesiastes. "My lifespan is uprooted and is deported from me like a shepherd's tent; I have rolled up my life as a weaver does; He is clipping me from the thrum. From day unto night, You are finishing me up" (Isa.38:12). And even as hopeful-

ness is on the ascendency in the second part of Ecclesiastes, so also Hezekiah's psalm concludes with acclamation: "The living! the living one! he is acclaiming You as I do today" (Isa.38:19).

The conclusion emerging from these considerations is that to designate the Book of Ecclesiastes as a "dissertation" and its author a "skeptic" is to ignore the practical intention or purpose enunciated in the book itself. The purview of this book is much broader and grander than Bible students have hitherto been willing to allow. It approaches no less a theme than the place of evil in the Divine plan.

This need not surprise us after what we have already seen of the relation it sustains to King Hezekiah. The character and experience of the man preeminently fitted him to assume a representative capacity in his discussion of the universe.

The affliction of Hezekiah, which paved the way to a glorious aftermath of prosperity and peace, furnished a concrete illustration of the gracious purposes subserved by evil. We cannot but believe that such unique experience would crystalize into a masterpiece of literature.

The view here advanced puts a different complexion on the alleged materialistic ideas. If we identify the words of Ecclesiastes with the unusual trial of a particular personage—Hezekiah, for instance—then the texts can be put into context. The so-called "materialistic" ideas are but reflections on the possible meaning of events which were suggested to the writer as he observed life. The occasion which brought this book into existence enables us to discern in it the plaint of a saint, holding fast to his faith in God, who is brought into perplexity before the strange dispensation of God's providence. V. Gelesnoff

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The original study from which the preceding article was selected appeared in *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 3.

WHAT ELOHIM HAS GIVEN TO THE SONS OF HUMANITY

We might well suppose that the theme of Ecclesiastes is the *vanity,* or *transitoriness,* of life, the world and its affairs. This is indeed one of the most obvious issues of the book, a very apparent point of interest. But this is no dissertation on resignation or despair. Rather it is an honest recognition of these evils viewed in the light of, and with firm attachment to, the existence of God.

There is all the difference in the world between the secular, sophisticated cynic or scholarly epicurean, who may soberly and calmly observe this vanity of things, recording it as boldly and grandly as the Assembler himself, and the writer of Ecclesiastes. The Assembler sees and states what we all see and feel but may not often state. But he observes and speaks always with God in view. And he never views the transitoriness and the seeming unfairness of things as they appear without relating them to God. God is the Creator. He is the First Cause. He has the ultimate responsibility.

Thus the book becomes a source of hope and praise. We are thankful that the scriptural sense of vanity is not eternal meaninglessness, but rather transitoriness. In recognizing God as the One responsible, we begin to realize that there is power and purpose behind the vanity. This means that the vanity finally is not in vain. We are caught up by the Assembler's frank recognition of vanity and stirring description of disorder, but if we listen carefully to the writer's contextual connection of this evil with the existence of God Who is wholly involved with all His creation

and its sad situation, we will not despair. Instead indeed we will say with exultation and thankfulness, "All is well."

The theme of Ecclesiastes is vanity and struggle and hurt *in relation to God* Who knows what He is doing with His creation and where He is going with it.

THE ONE, ELOHIM

Elohim, the One Who subjects all through His chosen channels and means is the Protagonist of this book. Since this is so, we are assured that our own experiences of weariness and being cast down are not meaningless or matters of absolute vanity, but are part of God's operations within the province of His purpose. They enlighten us concerning Elohim, or as the Assembler often designates Him, *the* Elohim. The Concordant Version renders this divine title which is preceded by the definite article, **the** One, **Elohim.** The word "One" in lightface type is not intended in the sense of "singular," but is used as a pronoun (so as to say, "that One, Elohim") in order to indicate the emphasis which the definite article suggests. *The* One being spoken of is Elohim, the Supreme Subjector.

It may be helpful to separate certain references to God in this book, stringing them together apart from the details concerning human experience and observation which occupy so much space. This may aid us in keeping this necessary aspect of Ecclesiastes in view later when we look more closely at the various details. The writer never loses sight of God or of His operations as he writes. Neither should we as we read and meditate on his writings.

The Assembler, therefore, reminds us:

Elohim has given us our experience of evil (1:13). He gives wisdom, knowledge and rejoicing (2:26). He gives experience (3:10) and makes everything and does His work (3:11). To eat and drink and see good is a gift of Elohim (3:13). What Elohim is doing shall be for the eon and cannot be added to or subtracted from by others; He does it (3:14). The One, Elohim, shall seek out (3:15) and judge (3:17). He manifests and shows (3:18). The One, Elohim, is in the heavens (5:2), and He gives us the number of our days (5:18). He gives riches and substance and good (5:19) and keeps our hearts occupied (5:20). With His giving of riches He may not give power to enjoy them (6:2). He is mighty (6:10). He has overturned (7:13). He makes all kinds of days (7:14). The One, Elohim, made humanity upright (7:29) and gives us toil (8:15). The righteous and the wise are in the hand of the One, Elohim (9:1). He gives us the days of our transitory lives (9:9). The One, Elohim, made everything (11:5) and shall bring us into judgment (11:9; 12:14). The spirit will return to the One, Elohim, Who gave it (12:7).

Remember your Creator (12:1).

These are not words for discouragement. They are full of promise and hope, assurance and expectation. God is our Creator. Remember Him in all situations and at all times.

GOD HAS GIVEN EVIL TO US

In contemplating the experience of evil he has seen, the Assembler is not caught up in a feeling of hopelessness or selfish cynicism because he begins with the premise that God has given the experience of evil to us. The vanity and the apparent unfairness of our lives and the ways of the world "is an experience of evil Elohim has given to the sons of humanity to humble them by it" (Ecc.1:13; *cp* 3:10). There are two major revelations here that we must keep in view as we go through this book. First of all, this vanity and apparent injustice is given to us by God. And then: What is given to us by God is given to us for a purpose.

The particular evil that has captured the mind of the Assembler is the experience of not getting anywhere despite toil and honesty in our deeds and reverence in service to

God. But this is only apparent. It cannot be eternal if God does exist and He has a goal. To be humbled is a goal, and even if we cannot appreciate its goodness, at least it speaks of an end which God has in view. In time we will become thankful for this humbling, and so we will become prepared for the further glories God has for us, all of which will be realized with joy because of the background of evil that we experience during the brief years of the present.

THIS TREASURE FROM GOD

For us today the revelation of God is far more glorious than the Assembler could have discovered. In the evangel we are given "the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6).

This does not mean that we will not observe or experience hurts and pressures and perplexities. In our transitory days there will be apparent injustices and real discouragements. When we see the foolish exalted and the wicked applauded, as we will, it will dishearten us. Death is all around and within us. But we have the awareness of the treasure of the love of Christ, Who died for the sake of all (2 Cor.5:14).

Having this treasure, the apostle Paul penned his own "Ecclesiastes" from time to time. "In everything, being afflicted, but not distressed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down but not perishing" (2 Cor.4:9). "For what is being observed is temporary, yet what is not being observed is eonian" (2 Cor.4;18). "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, being rich, because of you He became poor, that you, by His poverty, should be rich" (2 Cor.8:9). As we experience the vanity to which God has subjected the entire creation (Rom.8: 20-25), we are aware that He is working all together for good (8:28), for He spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all (8:32). D.H.H.

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Genesis 1:2
55 Disruption and the Power of Spirit
63 Disruption, Darkness and Light
69 Developments in Genesis 1:2
75 Intuitive Anticipation
80 Saul's Persecution of David
87 Words and Works
92 Elohim Gives Experience

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 1999
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY

EDITORIAL

THE FOLLOWING PRÉCIS of the foundations of our faith is set forth in response to the many requests which we have received, asking us to provide a "statement of faith." This we gladly do, as submitted herein:[1]

We believe that all scripture is inspired by God, and is beneficial for teaching, for exposure, for correction, for discipline in righteousness . . . (2 Tim.3:16; 1 Thess.2:13). The pattern of sound words must be preserved as given in the Originals (2 Tim.1:13). The word of truth must be correctly cut (2 Tim.2:15), and each part applied to those to whom it was written: our Lord's ministry (Rom.15:8) and the twelve apostles to the Circumcision, and Paul to the nations (Eph.3:8; 1 Tim.2:7). All scripture is *for* us, but it is not all *about* us.

Our faith is founded upon the *deity,* or subjectorship, of God; that is, upon the revelation that *all* is out of, through, and for God (Rom.11:36)—the One Who is *operating all* according to the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), the One Who is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph.1:16) and the only true God (John 17:3).

Thus we believe that there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is, and we through Him (1 Cor.8:6).

Accordingly, then, we believe that as to divine blessing, it is not of him who is willing, nor of him who is racing, but of God, the Merciful (Rom.9:16). To whom He will, He is merciful, yet to whom He will, He is hardening (Rom.9:18).

How we rejoice in believing that all those who are in Christ today, were chosen by God before the disruption of the world, and were designated beforehand for the place of a son for Him,

1. A wider summary-affirmation of our faith is provided in the document, "Some of the Special Truths for which We Stand," available on our Internet site (http://concordant.org/about/special_truths.html), or upon request, by postal mail.

through Christ Jesus. This was in accord with the delight of His will for the laud of the glory of His grace (Eph.1:4-6).

Further, how we especially rejoice in believing that God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all (Rom.11:32); that He is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim. 4:10); that, at the consummation, the last enemy is being abolished: death (1 Cor.15:26); that all shall be subjected to God that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:28); that, even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified (1 Cor.15:22).

Indeed, we even believe that it is the secret of God's will to head up all in the Christ, both those in the heavens and those on the earth (Eph.1:10), and that, through Christ, it is God's delight to reconcile all to Himself (making peace through the blood of Christ's cross), whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Col.1:20).

Now concerning all of these things we declare: "*Righteous* is Yahweh in *all* His ways, and *benign* in *all* His works" (Psa.145:17).

In our quest for truth, we must begin by realizing that beloved pastors and renowned scholars may well be mistaken. Let *no one* be boasting in men (1 Cor.3:21). Likewise, whatever God actually reveals is true, and whatever God actually does is right. It is of no significance as to truth, if any certain teaching should fail to gain the approval of our conscience. The conscience is often governed by false tradition; it is not the arbiter of truth. The conscience may be weak, or defiled (1 Cor.8:7; Titus 1:15); or, it may be cauterized (1 Tim.4:2).

All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge—however plainly and explicitly expressed in Scripture—*are concealed* in Him, in the God and Father, of Christ (Col.2:2,3). A man cannot get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven (John 3:27). It is God to Whom we owe our all; and, specifically, it is God Who makes our faith "grow up" (1 Cor.3:6).

The greatest need for every believer is to be granted *a spirit of wisdom and revelation* in the realization of God, the eyes of our heart having been enlightened (Eph.1:17). In providing this brief word in testimony of our faith, then, we are praying on behalf of all the saints for this very spiritual endowment, giving thanks to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory.

J.R.C.

GENESIS 1:2

2 +**As** for **the earth, it came** to **be** a **chaos and vacant, and darkness** was **over** the sur**face of the abyss.**

And the **spirit of Elohim** was **vibrating over** the sur**face of the waters.**

NOTES AND CROSS REFERENCES

As for the earth, it: The conjunction usually rendered "and" is used disjunctively here; the unusual Hebrew word order of subject before verb puts emphasis on the subject, *earth,* which is indicated here by the use of the pronominal suffix of the verb ("it").

came to be: simple, active, complete verb form, third person singular; ENGLISHMAN'S CONCORDANCE (E.C.) provides only a few examples of the some 3,560 occurrences, pages 360, 361; when not translated by forms of *become* or *come to be,* a superior italic *b* is placed immediately before the term used; *cf* Isa.45:18; Jer.4:23; 2 Pet.3:6.

chaos: masculine, singular noun in the Hebrew word family CHAOS, E.C. p.1336, rendered *chaos,* and idiomatically, *ineffectual, ineffectual idols, wasteland:*

Gen.1:2	the earth, it came to be a *chaos*
Dt.32:10	in a *chaos*, a howling desolation.
1 S.12:21	*ineffectual idols* which neither benefit nor rescue.
1 S.12:21	since they are *ineffectual*.

Job 6:18 They ascend into the *wasteland* and perish,
Job 12:24 to stray in a wayless *wasteland*.
Job 26:7 He stretched out the north over the *chaos*
Ps.107:40 to stray in a wayless *wasteland*
Isa.24:10 The town of *chaos* is broken down;
Isa.29:21 turning aside the righteous into a *chaos*
Isa.34:11 measuring tape of *chaos*.
Isa.40:17 Less than nil and a *chaos*
Isa.40:23 makes judges of the earth to be like *chaos*.
Isa.41:29 Wind and *chaos* are their molten images.
Isa.44:9 all of them are *ineffectual*,
Isa.45:18 He did not create it a *chaos*;
Isa.45:19 I did not say . . . Seek Me in a *chaos*;
Isa.49:4 exhausted My vigor for *chaos*.
Isa.59:4 Trusting in *chaos* and speaking futility,
Jer.4:23 and behold it was a *chaos* and vacant,

vacant: masculine, singular noun, E.C. p.188, 3 occurrences (always in association with *chaos*): *vacant* Gen.1:2; Jer.4:23; *vacancy* Isa.34:11.

darkness: masculine, singular noun in the Hebrew word family KEEP BACK, E.C. p.470; *cf* Ex.10:21; Deut.4:11; 5:23; Job 19:8; Psa.88:12; 105:28; Isa.45:7; 60:2; Ezek. 32:8; Joel 2:2.

over the surface of: literally: *on the face of*, a phrase occurring twice in this verse; see also: Gen.1:29; 6:1; 7:3,18,23; 8:9; 11:4,8,9; Job 5:10,10; 24:18; 26:10; 37:12,19; 38:30; Amos 5:8; 9:6; the preposition *on* is frequently used in the sense of *over*, E.C. p.932 (partial list); the masculine noun in the Hebrew word family FACE is always plural in Hebrew, E.C. p.1023; among several idiomatic variants used in the CVOT are: *facade, presence, surface;* this Hebrew word also serves in certain cases for the preposition *before.*

abyss: feminine, singular noun in the Hebrew word family CHAOS+SEA, E.C. p.1336, based on the Greek word used in the Septuagint translation; the former CV rendering, *submerged chaos,* reflected a sense here of the earth in chaos surrounded by a thick, sea-like atmosphere, but *abyss* maintains that sense of deep chaos and is appropriate for all occurrences. A complete concordance listing follows:

Gen. 1:2 darkness was over the surface of the *abyss*.
Gen. 7:11 all the springs of the vast *abyss*.
Gen.8:2 The springs of the *abyss* and the crevices
Gen.49:25 With blessings of the *abyss* reclining beneath,
Ex.15:5 *Abysses* covered them;
Ex.15:8 The *abysses* were congealed
Dt.8:7 springs and from the *abyss*
Dt.33:13 water from the *abyss* reclining beneath,
Job 28:14 The *abyss* says, It is not in me!
Job 38:16 walked about in the fathoms of the *abyss?*
Job 38:30 the face of the *abyss* is frozen over?
Job 41:32 reckon the *abyss* to be greyhaired.
Ps.33:7 Bestowing the *abyss* in treasure vaults.
Ps.36:6 Your judgment like the vast *abyss*:
Ps.42:7 *Abyss* to *abyss* is calling in the sound
Ps.71:20 bring me up from the *abyss* of the earth.
Ps.77:16 Indeed the *abyss* was disturbed.
Ps.78:15 let them drink from the *abyss*,
Ps.104:6 You covered it with the *abyss*
Ps.106:9 enabled them to walk through the *abyss*
Ps.107:26 they descended to the *abyss*;
Ps.135:6 In the seas and every *abyss*;
Ps.148:7 Sea monsters and every *abyss*,
Pro.3:20 By His knowledge the *abyss* broke forth,
Pro.8:24 When there were no *abysses*
Pro.8:27 the horizon on the face of the *abyss*,
Pro.8:28 set the springs of the *abyss*
Isa.51:10 the waters of the vast *abyss*,
Isa.63:13 Who conducted them in the *abyss*

Ezk.26:19 when I bring up the *abyss* over you,
Ezk.31:4 The *abyss* made it rise high;
Ezk.31:15 I will cover the *abyss*,
Am.7:4 it is devouring the vast *abyss*,
Jon.4:5 The *abyss* is surrounding me;
Hab.3:10 The *abyss* sounded forth its voice;

spirit: feminine, singular noun in the Hebrew word family WIND, E.C. p.1160; occurs often, usually rendered *wind, windy* or *spirit,* but rendered idiomatically as *direction* (1 Chron.9:24), *scent* (Job 19:17), and in a plural usage, *motives* (Prov.16:2); *cf* Psa.104:30; Ezek.1:4,12,20.

Elohim: Divine Title, meaning: To*ward-Subjector-s; cf* John 1:2,18; 10:30-38; Col.1:16-20; 1 Cor.15:28.

vibrating: participle in the "make" branch of a Hebrew verb that occurs only three times, E.C. p. 1169, rendered *be-tremulous* (Jer.23:9), *hover* (Deut.32:11), and *vibrate* (Gen.1:2).

the waters: definite article prefixed to masculine, plural noun in the Hebrew word family FROM+SEA, E.C. p.694.

The spirit vibrating *over the surface of the waters* will lead, in association with Elohim's words, to a separating of the waters (Gen.1:6). This brings order to the confused mixture of liquids, gases and solids of the abyss. The waters of the deluge in Noah's day had mastery over the earth and brought death (Gen.7:17-24). Again the solution was given by Elohim Who caused a *wind* to pass over the earth, "and the waters subsided" (Gen.8:1). Later, in the midst of his own personal chaos, Job was reminded of these passages in Genesis, and, speaking of God, he exclaimed, "He stretched out the north over the chaos . . . . He delineated the horizon over the surface of the waters, unto the boundary of light with darkness" (Job 26:7-10). So also David sang: "The voice of Yahweh is over the waters . . . . The voice of Yahweh sounds with vigor" (Psa.29:3,4).

DISRUPTION AND THE POWER OF SPIRIT

THE first physical disruption is recorded in the forefront of revelation, after the creation of the heavens and the earth, by which the earth became a chaos and vacant.

"As for the earth, it came to be a chaos and vacant, and darkness was over the surface of the abyss" (Gen.1:2a).

This primeval cataclysm is referred to in the Scriptures as if it were the most important event in the past history of the earth, second only to its destruction by fire in the future. Other vital events are dated either *before* or *from* the disruption. *Before* it the Father loved the Son (John 17:24). Then it was that He chose us in Christ (Eph.1:4). Then also Christ, as the *flawless* and *unspotted* Lamb was *foreknown* (1 Pet.1:19-20). *From* the disruption the Lambkin was *slain* (Rev.13:8). There is the shedding of *blood,* beginning with Abel (Luke 11:50-51), besides the making ready of the kingdom (Matt.25:34).

The apostle Peter explains the relation of the earth to the cosmic arrangements upon its surface by calling the latter a "world." He speaks of the *earth* cohering out of water and through water, by the Word of God; through which the then *world,* being deluged by water, perished. This is accurately described by the phrase "*the disruption of the world.*" The earth itself was not disrupted, only the system upon it. The same was true of the ancient *world* of Noah's day (*cf* 2 Pet.2:5; 3:6). Then, of course, it included all land life, as well as mankind, with the exception of those in the ark.

We do not know the underlying cause that produced the two deluges which disrupted the earth in the past. Some of the contributing causes are revealed. In the past the *water* stored in the earth played a large part in the catastrophe. The corresponding future disasters will be due, in part, at least, to the fact that the earth now is stored with *fire* (2 Pet.3:7). Volcanoes are clear evidence that the fire is there. I have visited Vesuvius, and have seen what it did to Pompeii when it buried it under ashes many feet deep. We are not told that the subterranean fire will burst forth during the judgment period, which corresponds with the second deluge, but fire is used to dissolve the present earth just before the new creation (2 Pet.3:10; Rev.21:1).

THE SPIRIT OF ELOHIM

If we do not know the underlying cause of this disruption, we do know the cause of its correction and the restoration of the earth. "The spirit of Elohim was vibrating over the surface of the waters" (Gen.1:26).

The operations of God's spirit in imparting *motion* and *life* and *intelligence* transcend human expression, and are usually too abstract for us to grasp in literal language. Hence we are introduced to it by a series of illustrations. Indeed, much of the truth of God's earliest revelation comes to us as if it were a picture book for children. So it is that in the first intimation of the mode of the spirit's operation, a word is used which is elsewhere applied to the vibratory motion of a bird's pinions when it is *hovering* in the air. The *tremulous action* of the vulture's wings suggest the mode of operation of the spirit in restoring the earth. Repeated and powerful impulses were given to the ruined wreck which resulted in its restoration. First there is light, as distinct from darkness. Then the gases are separated, and the fluids are parted from the solids, to form the various layers of which the present earth is composed.

THE MEANING OF SPIRIT

How difficult it is to define spirit in literal language! It takes about half a column in our Greek-English Concordance, and is longer than any other. But God provides a picture of it preceding even those of light and life. In the original Hebrew the word is WIND. It was a "wind" of God that vibrated over the waters and brought light. It is a pity that we cannot use this for both in other languages, for it is the inspired illustration of *spirit.* The wind *itself* cannot be perceived by our faculties. We can feel and see and hear and smell its *effects,* but the power itself lies beyond our apprehension. Our Lord compared its action to a powerful blast (John 3:8). So it is that nature provides us with the clearest definition of the most intangible and spiritual of all things, the very essence of God, for He is not merely *a* spirit, but *is* literally Spirit.

A clear understanding of the very first action of the spirit of God may be of value in apprehending its further operations. The AV says that the spirit *moved.* This is correct, but it gives us no clue as to the character of its motion. The Hebrew word occurs only three times. The most helpful is found in Deuteronomy (32:11) where we read of a vulture that "*fluttereth* over her young" (AV). In Jeremiah 23:9 the prophet says "all my bones *shake.*" Not many of us have seen a vulture hovering over her fledglings. But some of us have observed a hawk or other bird of prey, hovering in mid-air, before plunging downward, or a humming bird, as it vibrates its wings when draining the nectar from a flower. Perhaps all of us have experienced the shaking of our bones.

THE SPIRIT OF LIGHT

The contexts give us the kind of movement which is attributed to God's spirit. It was a fast to and from motion, which is best expressed by the world, VIBRATE; hence we

have chosen this for the standard of this stem, though it cannot well be used of birds or of man. This meaning is confirmed by the first result, which was *light.* This is now generally taken to be the effect produced by etherial vibrations on the eye. I would never seek to conform the Scriptures to the *theories* of so-called "science." But when God's revelation agrees with the evidence of *nature,* I am convinced. All the more so, as the following events also are in agreement with our present knowledge of natural phenomenon.

In bringing us back from death into life when we first believe, the spirit of God pursues the same course. "The God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts" (2 Cor.4:6). First the spirit hovers over the sinner in his darkness and enlightens him through the power of God's Word. One is a fine figure of the other, in a higher realm. The Son of God, anointed by the spirit, is the Light of the world (John 1:9). We also, who have the spirit dwelling in us, are light (Eph.5:8), and children of light (1 Thess.5:5). We must understand the meaning of the literal operation in this passage before we can fully appreciate its force in these figures.

CREATION

Creation is not confined to the making of one plant of each species, in the beginning, but of including in it all the plants of that species that will ever exist in the future. It is not a question of *ev*olution and constant change to correspond to environment, but of *in*volution, not in its restricted biological sense of degeneration, but of having in itself all that eventually comes out of it. Out of nothing nothing comes. Each species remains true to its original, and reverts to it when left free to do so. Each plant was created *for its species*, or, as the Hebrew more exactly expresses it, "*for* its FROMS" or from-kind, that is, those

that spring *from* it. It never changes to make another species. As a result there is not a single species in the world today that was not created in the beginning. There are species that have died out, but no new ones that have evolved from the original, or have been produced by crossing.

What a relief it is to read God's own account of His creation! A single line of it is worth more than all the books ever written on evolution. Life began with verdure (Gen. 1:11). Here are a few phrases that settle the "origin of species." When God spoke verdure into being by His spirit, He made "herbage *seeding seed for its from-kind*." Marvelous is it, and utterly beyond the power of any of His creatures, how God makes a single living thing. Men might imitate a blade of grass so as to appear like a real one, but *it would not grow.* How utterly impossible would it be to even make a dead member of the human body! Even if our eyesight were deceived, a microscope would soon detect its imperfections. But how can we give it life? Who can see with a glass eye? Wherever there is life we should perceive the "finger," or spirit, of God.

On a memorable occasion I was most powerfully impressed with the greatness of God in the smallest things. I stood before General Sherman, as the biggest of the "big trees" is named, and marveled at its tremendous bulk, the largest living thing on earth. I had seen large pine cones, or seed containers, and reasoned that its cones must, of course, be the largest of all. Instead, they were rather small. Its seed, instead of being the largest of all, was a tiny thing, light as a feather. Indeed, one could not feel its weight. So may a most insignificant act, almost unnoticed at the time, contain the potentials of great things in the future. The mere execution of an alleged traitor, long ago, will result in the restoration of all of God's creation at the consummation.

But some will be sure to say that it is impossible to put

the life and the form of millions of millions of living plants into the microscopic part of one single seed. Yes, so it is, for a *man*. But God not only *can,* but *has done so.* If He will pry open our closed eyes to acknowledge this, one of the minor marvels in the grand revelation of His power and wisdom and foresight in the realm of life, it may help us to go on and *believe* His Word in reference to the higher manifestations of His love and prescience in dealing with man himself. He, too, along with millions of his fellows, originated in an invisible speck of spirit, which has determined beforehand, not merely his species, but his form and destiny. All was *in*volved in Adam when he was created, and *in* Christ, even before, as God's Creative Original.

CONTRAST AND REPETITION

David, the sweet psalmist, has phrased these simple yet solemn thoughts most marvelously in one of his psalms (19:1-4): He says,

> The heavens are *recounting* the glory of El,
> And the atmosphere is telling the work of His hands.
> Day after day is uttering a saying
> And night after night is disclosing knowledge.
> There is no audible saying, and there are no words;
> Their voice is unheard.
> Yet into the entire earth their voice goes forth,
> And into the ends of the habitance their declarations.

The heavens do not only *declare* the glory of God, but *recount* them continually. The Hebrew word comes from the stem *sphr* NUMBER. Literally it means *enumerate.* A single glimpse of the glorious galaxies of the celestial sphere, especially as seen in the clear sky of a Palestine night, would amaze us and make us marvel. But it needs to be repeated night after night to be transformed into *knowledge.* Sight is the most spiritual of the senses, for it reaches far beyond the air, in which alone a sound can be heard. In solemn silence we may sit in the great school room of the universe each night and listen to the atmosphere as it tells us of the glories of His celestial handiwork.

In God's book of nature the lessons are emphasized by contrast, impressed by repetition, and enlarged by variety. Darkness is contrasted with light, day and night are constantly repeated, and almost an infinite variety of forms and colors are created for the sense of sight alone. Even the function of darkness is clearly revealed by the night. For by it alone can we see the stars, which thrill us with a glimpse of His celestial glory. We are thankful for the darkness as well as the light, for it suggests to our hearts the great truth that His highest honors are revealed through sadness and suffering.

Not only does each succeeding day repeat the tale that God is light and life, but the seasons add their lesson of the eons. The annual change, from cold to heat, winter and summer, constitute the best treatise that we have on the eonian times. The dark and dismal seasons, when death reigns in nature, when the trees shed their leaves and the vegetation vanishes, speaks eloquently of the evil eons, in which we live. But, when winter gives place to summer, then life reappears, and the plants not only live, but give life to the souls that cannot get it from the soil. Here we have a picture of the eons of the eons, when resurrection recalls the dead to life and blessing will abound. Each year is a miniature rehearsal of God's grand circle of the eons.

THE LESSON OF LIFE

God is the *life* of all that lives. This also is a daily occurrence in our experience. While we do not die daily, we enter into a state which is so like it that sleep is the figure employed to denote death in view of resurrection.

Normally, at night we are worn out, our activity ceases, our faculties become dormant, so that we are "dead to the world," until the morning. Then we become alive again. God gives us this recurrent contrast in order to teach us what life and death are, and that He alone supplies the light of life.

SPIRIT

Spirit is the power that God used to restore the ruined earth. Later, when Adam caused an even greater ruin in a higher sphere, *only spirit* could restore humanity to God. Only God's Word can dispel the darkness with light, and replace death with life. This is the chief lesson found here, at the very forefront of revelation. *And nothing else was needed.* God begins here with spirit, and this remains the power throughout unto the end. During man's immaturity spirit was displaced by many material forms, which were only tangible representations of spiritual things, but these are laid aside when man becomes mature.

The lack of God's spirit, and the futility of all man's efforts to satisfy and save himself by any other means, lies at the basis of all history, human or divine. Notwithstanding the tragedy of the last six thousand years, man is still seeking for peace and plenty from many other sources. Even those whom God has called, who hear His Word, and have learned to rely upon Him for salvation, for the most part have not fully learned the lesson taught us at the very beginning of the Bible. The spirit of God is the only power to restore the wreck that man has made.

We, who have all *spiritual* blessing as our peculiar portion, should be better able than all others to learn the lesson of God's spirit, and enjoy the light and life and love that He imparts. May all who read these lines be partakers of this bliss!

A. E. Knoch

DISRUPTION, DARKNESS AND LIGHT

GOD CALLS the darkness night. The darkness existed before God commenced His six days of reconstructive work. It was merely a new name, for the darkness was not an accompaniment of the first heaven and earth. It was an outcome of the disruption, that event which called God's kingdom into His counsels, and before which He chose and designated in Christ those whose salvation is to be glorified as the ecclesia which is Christ's body.

Light was the first requirement of the work of God, which in some measure restored the ruin of the disruption and rehabilitated the earth for the moving forward of God's ways. The character of life and conditions on the present earth were controlled by the disruption, for God formed and shaped the ruin to suit His ways whereby He will reach a greater and grander display of His glory than could be otherwise.

When, on the fourth day, God locates the light in heavenly luminaries, then the light of the luminaries functions with darkness to continue that cyclic activity which we know as the alternation of day and night. And, doing this, all life forms, on earth or in the sea, or atmosphere, plants, animals, and humans, are constituted agreeable to this phasic movement. At the same time, in retaining the darkness as night, God indicates the temporary character of the present heavens and earth. This fact is rounded out by God's later revelation regarding the new heavens and earth, when we learn of the absence of the sea, as well as

night. Not until we reach the consummation will there be permanence in God's creation.

DISRUPTION

The rendering in Genesis 1:2 of the Hebrew verb *eie* (more usually known as *hayah*) by our English word *was* has been most unfortunate. The meaning of the infinitive is TO BECOME, not TO BE, and the grammatical forms of the several species of this Hebrew verb must take their significance from *to become.* Many times is the word rendered *it came to pass.* Had even this been used in this instance, then the minds of the students of the Scriptures would not be started falsely, burdened by the idea that chaos and darkness prevailed before God's creation.

The cataclysm of Genesis 1:2a is termed a disruption in the later Scriptures. It gave rise to (1) a *waste* earth in which state all life thereon was effectually stifled; (2) a *vacant* condition as to vegetation, with no possibility for the growth of plant life; (3) *darkness* on the surface of the abyss of water out of which and through which the earth cohered; (4) the *abyss* itself which arose with the disruption. These were the characteristics of the desolate situation out of which God's disrupted creation was raised by His six days of work.

The first three days were mainly devoted to repairing the *waste,* by separating the elemental solids and liquids and gases to their respective spheres, so making life again possible. The second three days corrected the *vacant* condition by putting living things anew on the earth.

The darkness was partially dispelled and controlled on day one, when God commanded light, separating between it and darkness. The atmosphere of the second day, and the seas of the third day, put the gases and the waters and the abyss within limits. The waste was nullified by the draining off and regulation of the waters into one place on the third

day, and on the same day was the vegetation dealt with by the production of verdure, herbage and fruit trees with their seeds. The darkness was further controlled, when, on the fourth day, it is brought within the serial days, and luminaries are made and appointed. The days preceding have made the waters and the atmosphere suitable for life, and so, on the fifth day, living souls appear in the waters and flyers in the atmosphere. On the sixth day God creates living souls on the land, and also humanity. Here we reach the peak of God's six days of reconstructive work, and history moves forward to unfold that which God plans from the disruption, as well as a period during which God reverts to His decisions which antedate that signal event.

The evil of the disruption has not been fully eliminated, but light with its possibilities has been introduced, and so there is a partial respite from the ruin of creation, and God's world moves forward again under His ordering.

DARKNESS

Darkness did not exist before the eons. Then God was All, and, even as during the eons, so then, before the eons, in Him is no darkness. Nor was the forming of darkness related to God's creative activity which initiated the eons. True it is that God in His word claims to create darkness as well as light, but that statement is no criterion of God's original creation. It speaks of His ways in this sinning world of humans and nations. Darkness is due to interference which produces inertia. It indicates a lack of harmony and is not an element agreeable to a perfect creation.

The literal meaning of the Hebrew word *chshk,* which as a noun signifies dark or darkness, can be seen in the verbal form; it is KEEP-BACK. To Abraham, Yahweh said: You have not *kept back* your son, your only one, from me. Joseph, speaking to Potiphar's wife, said: Potiphar has not *kept back* aught from me save you. So in the darkness ensu-

ing during the period when the first heavens and earth lay in ruins, God's glory is being *kept back*.

The figurative usages in Scripture of this noun are several. In Isaiah 9:2 darkness denotes the absence of God, while in Psalm 107:10 it has an analogy to the shadow of death. Amos 5:18 uses the word to describe an aspect of the day of the Lord. Darkness illustrates the condition of Israel in particular, and the world in general, when the Word came to illuminate humans (John 1:5). It was the jurisdiction of darkness which operated in the hours preceding the arrest and crucifixion of the Lord (Luke 22:53). And from the authority of darkness the saints of the present administration are rescued (Col.1:13).

We may well conclude that darkness *overtook* the first heavens and earth in the sense of the figure in John 12:35. The whole evidence of the Scriptures regarding darkness is that it is an intruder, an evil related to sin. But in the present heavens and earth God has harnessed it to His system and made it serve His ways, which function to lead forward to His glorious ultimate. God is only partially revealed at present, even as light over the earth is only partial.

DAY ONE

"And Elohim said: Let light come to be! And it became light. And Elohim saw the light that it was good. Then Elohim separated the light from the darkness. Elohim called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And it became evening, and it become morning: day one" (Gen.1:3-5).

A cardinal day! Of prime importance! Light is becoming! Light called forth and caused to shine out of darkness by the word of God. Such are the features around day *one.* And *that* light, more than any other consideration, had the major aspect that it illuminated God's glory as above all and any ruin which could arise in His creation. This was

not any resurgence of nature because of its own potential, but it was God directly and immediately filling creation's lack, and without even using any medium to do so.

Light, as relative to darkness, was at *that* point an innovation. It had not been so in the first heavens and earth, for night and day were not features of that world and eon. God now uses light and its opposite, darkness as features and factors in the present heavens and earth.

LIGHT

God speaks according to His glory and power, but humans think and speak in terms of matter, and can only appreciate light as one of the phenomena of matter. To them it is that portion of the energy band of substance which emits radiations with such rhythmic vibrations as to enable humans to see. For light to be before and apart from the sun has been deemed to be one of the ignorant conceptions, spread by the folklore of the Hebrews. Science could not admit such a conception. It was a matter for faith, which sees God transcending His creation, as well as constituting creation to accord with His ways and intention at any given point or period of the eons. God is not limited by His creation, nor does creation display His limits. The luminaries He has given are serving according to His appointment, and yet He is still able to give light other than that emitted by these.

Saul was arrested by a considerable light, above the midday sun. God is the Father of lights, and the associated statements seem to suggest that He can give light without shadows. Isaiah shows God as able to step up the light of His luminaries, for the prophet speaks of the light of the moon being as the light of the sun, while that of the sun becomes sevenfold as the light of seven days. Still farther ahead, the sun is no more Israel's light, but Yahweh is their eonian light.

Light excels darkness, and is diffusive and dispensing, for it constitutes the condition of life as we know it at present. It gives health and happiness and blessing upon the earth, and without its favor we would have nothing but death.

When God next intervenes to make His presence known in creation, He will make it evident by showing His control over the stars of heaven and the constellations, for they shall not give their light. The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not cause light to shine. The gloom He then introduces will be the prelude to His judging among the nations on behalf of His people Israel. Then will be the establishing of God's kingdom on earth through Israel, and it will become more widely understood that Israel is the light of the world, because associated with their Messiah Who in a more pre-eminent sense is also the Light of the world.

We are so accustomed to the features of our experiences that we are prone to view them as being permanent, yet if we truly believed God's Word, and studied it to gain knowledge and wisdom from Him, then would our mind and understanding benefit. We should learn that He is leading creation (and not the reverse) to His glorious end. There is no such thing as a self-running nature. Darkness is but a temporary agent. Light is the permanency to which God moves. So death is but transient, and abnormality due to sin's presence. God will eliminate both darkness and death by repudiating sin. This will be through His Son, because in Him is Deliverance, Light and Life.

E. H. Clayton

WEEKEND CONFERENCES

Besides the regular monthly Fellowships, there are 3 weekend Scripture Conferences scheduled this year in the Great Lakes area. Jeff Priddy (phone: 419-752-7383) will host the meetings in Willard, Ohio, scheduled for June 11-13; the Baldwin, Michigan meetings are scheduled for August 13-15 and October 1-3 (Grace and Truth Chapel, PO Box 84, Baldwin MI 49304).

DEVELOPMENTS IN GENESIS 1:2

GOD REVEALS Himself by His works. In Scripture, first of all, He reveals His incomparable power and intelligence by creating the heavens and the earth (Gen.1:1). But this revelation is now put to the test by the entry of chaos, vacancy and darkness capturing the earth (Gen.1:2a). This disruption, in turn, prepares the way for the deeper revelation of God which comes through His activities in dealing with it. God's response to chaos and darkness begins with the vibrating of His spirit.

A THREEFOLD PATTERN

God's work of creation is not chaos and vacancy (Isa. 45:18). Genesis 1:2a describes neither the state of things before creation nor a first step of creation. Chaos, vacancy and darkness are subsequent to creation. Nevertheless, the Creator holds primary and ultimate responsibility for all that happens to His creation. Elohim is the only One in view in the opening verses of Genesis, and we trust that the chaos has not come to Him as a surprise, but is rather within the province of His established power and intelligence.

Later He speaks of Himself in no uncertain terms as the "Maker of good and Creator of evil" (Isa.45:7). He reveals Himself as the One Who created the ruiner to harm (Isa. 54:16). Passages such as Ecclesiastes 1:13 and Romans 11:32 will eventually make plain that God has a purpose for good in human experiences of evil. But much has been provided already by Genesis 1:1 to assure us that nothing is outside God's ability to control powerfully and intelli-

gently, and direct events toward His goal. Furthermore, Genesis 1:3-31 will present God as bringing His creation out of its disruption into that which is "very good."

The pattern is clear: 1. God creates; 2. Evil enters; 3. God reverses evil, and good is perceived to the glory of God.

This pattern begins again in Genesis 2 with the making of humanity, and continues in chapter 3 and throughout much of the rest of Scripture with the entrance and extension of death and sin into the world. God's work of dealing with the evil (step number 3) is spoken of in promises and types, all directed to the revelation of God and His glory in His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

GENESIS 1:2

In the second verse of Genesis we can distinguish the second step and the beginning of the third of this threefold pattern. Chaos, vacancy and darkness define the evil that comes upon the earth. And the vibrating of God's spirit over this chaotic abyss that has engulfed the earth is the beginning of the revelation of God, not merely as a God of power and knowledge, but as a God of glorious power, wisdom and goodness.

As far as humanity is concerned, we have been created (step number 1), and evil has captured us in the form of death and sinfulness (step number 2). But also, God's spirit has begun to stir, in a special sense, in the lives of certain ones of His choosing, so that, as it was in the single verse of Genesis 1:2, there is represented both step number 2 and step number 3 in the single world in which we live.

GOD'S WORK

As noted above, Genesis 1:1 speaks plainly of God's work. Genesis 1:2b speaks of the beginning of God's operations by means of His spirit. But Genesis 1:2a makes no mention of God. We must assume, on the basis of the revelation of His immense power and ability revealed in verse 1, that God holds ultimate responsibility, and this is verified by later revelations in His Word. The entrance of evil is first presented in Scripture, as something that comes to be, without direct reference to God.

This is as it should be. The great, positive work of creation and the equally great work of ridding the earth of evil are directly attributed to God. The verbs themselves are striking, dynamic and full of glorious and specific implications: *create,* and *vibrate.* But the verb in Genesis 1:2a, though by no means static, is, by its common and wide usage, less likely to attract our attention. Evil is temporary and certainly does not, in itself, bring glory. It exists only for the purpose of contrast with that which is really glorious, such as the work of creation or the powerful movement of divine spirit.

The place of evil, and indeed its great purpose, is to bring the goodness of God to the creature's perception and appreciation. Consequently, the action of bringing chaos, vacancy and darkness into God's creation is secondary, subservient and indirect. The action itself does not reveal God, but serves to bring those actions that do reveal God into sharp focus.

COMES TO BE

It is certainly misleading to translate this verb by the English word "was." In creating the earth, God did not create something that was chaos. God created the earth, and it *came to be* a chaos. Again, we insist that God is fully responsible to the earth that He created, and the chaos must ultimately be traced to Him. But the wording of Genesis 1:2a by means of the verb "became" directs our attention, not to God's place in this development, but to the development itself, so that our focus can be on the actions of God in dealing with this development.

Nevertheless, most English translations of the Scriptures follow the lead of the King James Version and use the verb "was" here. The commentaries generally explain this to mean either (1) that the earth was in a state of wasted emptiness before God "created" it as described in the rest of Genesis chapter one; or (2) that the chaos and darkness were first stages of God's creative work.

But it is a mistake, and highly unscriptural, to think of chaos as a condition independent of God and His operations. This is a tenet of dualism and a direct contradiction to the truth that all is out of God (*cf* Rom.11:36). On the other hand, it is also a mistake to see chaos as a phase of creation. It is obviously a phase in the history of the earth, but the work of creation spoken of in Genesis 1:1 is a matter of positive achievement. The entrance of evil is a separate matter which direly influences creation and ultimately leads to an appreciation of its goodness, but it is not a part of that goodness.

EVIDENCE FOR "BECOME"

It is unfortunate, then, that most translations of Genesis 1:2 in English use the word "was" here rather than "became." This is compounded by current commentaries which, when they consider the question at all, dismiss the use of "became" without a careful consideration of the evidence.

It becomes a special source of gratitude, therefore, to read such a book as WITHOUT FORM AND VOID by Arthur C. Custance.[1] Without agreeing with all of Dr. Custance's points, we appreciate his efforts here in gathering together historical and linguistic evidence for translating Genesis

1. First published by Doorway Publications, Brockville, Ontario, in 1970, and reprinted in 1989; we presently have a small stock available, $9.95 plus $1.50 postage and handling; CA residents add sales tax.

1:2 as a later development that occurred after the heavens and earth were initially created.

This evidence leads him to conclude that the Hebrew verb here is "not *normally* employed to express the simple copula" (to say that one thing *is* or *equals* another thing). Furthermore, this verb "is employed only when change of a specific kind is involved. This does not mean change in the sense that a past situation is no longer true in the present, but rather that a present situation is changing, has changed from what it was, or will change in the future" (p.59).

Chaos, vacancy and darkness were changes that came about after the heavens and earth were created. They were in accord with God's purpose, but the fact that they entered later than the creation of Genesis 1:1 agrees fully with the fact that they are temporary and can have no place when God's purpose for creation is complete.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD VIBRATING

God's spirit was certainly the power for the creation of Genesis 1:1. But this, and all other details, both major and minor, was not noted in the opening revelation of God. However, now that evil has entered into God's creation, many details will be presented, starting with this most fundamental and critical detail, the identification of God's means for carrying out His works, *the spirit of God.*

The divine power for life, intelligence and action begins to vibrate over the chaos and darkness of the wasted earth. This will be channeled first through what God *says.* His spirit operates in His word.

Again we find that a vital pattern of divine activity is being set forth in the early verses of Genesis. The spirit of God operates in His speaking, in His word, in what He is saying.

This pattern is found again in Genesis 3 after the chaos of death has come into humanity. Adam and Eve "heard

the *sound* of Yahweh Elohim walking about in the garden in the *windy part* of the day" (Gen.3:8). The Hebrew word for *spirit* is also used for *wind* (in this case: *windy part*). The word *sound* anticipates the words that Yahweh Elohim soon speaks to the serpent and the two human beings. These words begin a process of reestablishing order, including powerful words of promise concerning the seed of the woman: He shall hurt the head of the serpent (Gen.3:15); and concerning the husband who shall be a channel of restoration (3:16).

These were not sounds without meaning or power. The spirit of God was in these words to the extent that the Seed *has come* into the world to save sinning humanity (*cf* Gal.3:16; 4:4; 1 Tim.1:15), "giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all" (1 Tim.2:6). It is written, furthermore, that when He came, just before His ministry, that the spirit of God descended on Him, as if a dove, in association with God speaking of Him as His beloved Son (Matt.3:17). (Here the parallel with the vibrating wings in Deuteronomy 32:11 is noteworthy.) And still God's spirit vibrates in opening up hearts of sinners who hear the word of truth, the evangel of salvation, and believe, becoming *sealed* with the holy spirit of promise (Eph.1:13). Our believing of the evangel is a work of God's spirit and invigorates with spirit (*cf* Gal.3:2-5).

Will God's spirit cease before it completes this process? To ask the question is to answer it. "For even as in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22).

Thus we see in the second verse of Scripture, a pattern of the entrance of evil and the initiating force for its removal. Already, then, we are beginning to see God as God and exult with praise in the depth of His wisdom and power and love.

D.H.H.

INTUITIVE ANTICIPATION

"BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world" (Eph.1:3).

"The act of God in raising Adam above the beasts by blowing into his nostrils the breath of life not only raised him and his posterity to a place superior to the other creatures, but is a sample and intimation of His method in raising mankind to the highest place in creation. It was only the first step in its elevation."[1]

FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The oncoming of holy spirit ensures a gradual but certain refinement. We ". . . are sealed with the holy spirit of promise (which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured) for the laud of His glory" (Eph.1:14). This very special and gracious influence tenderly escorts us from the misery of sin's enslavement into the glorious freedom reserved for the children of God. "Yet you are not in flesh, but in spirit, if so be that God's spirit is making its home in you. Now if anyone has not Christ's spirit, this one is not His" (Rom.8:9).

For many, it must seem that those who identify with the ecclesia and this unique privilege, are suffering from the effects of megalomania. However, there is a way to mea-

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.43, p.267.

sure this. Is there conceit, bigotry, or indifference for the rest of creation among the believers? Or, to the contrary, are the fruits of the spirit; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self control, clearly in evidence among those who unceasingly give thanks to God for the transcendent grace of His love?

"For you are observing your calling, brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh; not many powerful, not many noble, but the stupidity of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the wise, and the weakness of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the strong, and the ignoble and the contemptible things of the world God chooses, and that which is not, that He should be discarding that which is, so that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight" (1 Cor.1:26-30).

Almost at once, we yearn to trace the footsteps of our Lord. Is there humility and compassion? Is there devotion, love and a becoming modesty in this? Already we strain to commence our service in bringing such good news of our Lord's supreme sacrifice to the celestials! The transfiguration of these bodies of our humiliation into conformation to the body of Christ's exalted glory is absolutely essential for us, in His worthy name, to achieve the eventual reconciliation of such mighty beings!

INHERENT IN THE HEAVENS

"All down the centuries covered by the Hebrew Scriptures the ecclesia was hidden, as it were, in Christ, oblivious of the passage of time, oblivious even of its existence, unknown and unseen by anyone. It was, however, from the very beginning a great reality in the mind and purpose of God. In due course, God caused a deep stupor to fall upon His Son, the stupor of death. For three days He lay in the tomb, and was then roused by the mighty power of God, and from that time, in God's sight, the ecclesia

began a separate existence—a glorious celestial existence to accord with the status of the risen Lord, for its realm is '*inherent* in the heavens' (Phil.3:20)—and is to be presented to Christ, without spot or blemish, as His complement—that without which, even in His highest exaltation, He would not be complete.

"Christ's death was, as we know, for all, but in a very special sense indeed it was for the ecclesia, that it too, might have a conscious and separate existence. And so we read, 'according as Christ also loves the ecclesia, and gives Himself up for its sake . . . that He should be presenting to Himself a glorious ecclesia'—an ecclesia in which, through its union with Christ, God Himself would be able to find glory throughout all the generations of the eons of the eons. Amen!

"Thus, not the least of the blessings accruing to Christ as a result of His being obedient unto death is the fact that He now has a complement, the ecclesia, which He dearly loves (Eph.5:25), and which should be reciprocating that love."[2]

This wonderful revelation of God's unique purpose for the ecclesia is fully expressed in those precious words, ". . . and gives Him, as Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all" (Eph.1:23).

GROANING AND TRAVAILING

The precise explanation of God's *choosing* and *calling* and *justifying* (Rom.8:30), is, for many of the saints, quite overwhelming! It is possible that disclosures which preceded this grand revelation, and which also concerned the rest of creation, might have passed unremarked. Yet the

2. John H. Essex, "The Origin of the Ecclesia," *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.66, p.70.

Scriptures are so explicit! Surely, we might be forgiven as we imagine how Tertius, the scribe, writer of the Roman epistle, would have rejoiced as he recorded each precious sentence which the apostle Paul dictated. May we pause for a while as once more we read the intriguing words:

"For I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us. For the *premonition* of the creation is *awaiting* the unveiling of the sons of God . . . . For we are aware that the entire creation is groaning and travailing together until now. Yet not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruit of the spirit, we ourselves also, are groaning in ourselves, *awaiting* the sonship, the deliverance of our body. For to expectation were we saved. Now expectation, being observed, is not expectation, for what anyone is observing, why is he expecting it also? Now, if we are expecting what we are not observing, we are *awaiting* it with endurance" (Rom.8:18-25).

INTUITIVE

When we study the word *premonition*, (FROM-SKULL-SEEM), we learn that this is defined in context as *an intuitive opinion*. A dictionary definition of the word, *intuition,* is "knowledge or belief obtained neither by reason nor by perception." *This premonition is something which is shared by the ecclesia and the rest of creation!* The ecclesia is awaiting exaltation, deliverance from bodies of humiliation, and the rest of creation is awaiting this unveiling of the ecclesia.

We are aware that these present bodies, even in humiliation, are temples of God by virtue of the spirit of God making its home in us. Thus we perceive and are sustained through our expectation of being caught up to be with our Lord at His summons! This will be operative whether we are reposing or living! (1 Thess.4:13-18). *But what is that which causes groaning and travailing among the rest of creation who have been subjected to vanity and stubbornness?* Although stubborn and conceited, mortal man is persuaded by a spirit—which often he will not even admit exists—that there is more! There surely must be more than can be traced in the brief life-span of mundane, human experience.

With the solitary exception of His beloved Son, all are subjected, through the experience of evil and suffering, to humility and estrangement from God. Paul skillfully explains this necessity in the illustration as it affects the nation of Israel (Rom.11:25-36).

Through obedience, caused by imposed stubbornness, God thrusts the object of His love away in order that the resultant *temporary* enmity will enhance the wonder of His gracious love. Without the patient guidance of the spirits of God and His Son, together with our own spirit, we could not possibly learn and comprehend these verities, which are regarded as stupidity and foolishness by the wise of this world!

THE SCRIPTURES PRESERVED

The preservation of the administration of the secret, entrusted to the apostle Paul, yet concealed from the eons in God, is miraculous. Despite bitter conflicts in Christendom, and often, paradoxically, as a consequence of such conflict, the Scriptures have been carefully protected. Continuous disputes and debates have ensured that many scholars and critics have been unwitting guardians of precious revelations which were but dimly perceived, yet *intuitively* treasured! In recent years there has been a marked acceleration in recover of truth, but there has always been, even in the dark ages of suppression, some evidence of sacred intuition.

Donald Fielding

SAUL'S PERSECUTION OF DAVID

BOTH Moses and Elijah came to a time when they fled for their lives into the wilderness. Other prophets were persecuted, and even killed. But the Hebrew Scriptures give record of no one whose life was so relentlessly stalked as David's. 1 Samuel 18:6 through chapter 20 lists eight schemes and direct attempts by Saul to kill David. Chapters 21 through 27 detail notable events occurring while David was a fugitive, fleeing for his life from one hideaway to another. No less than one third of this book, which records events from Eli through the lives of Samuel and Saul, treats the topic of attempts on the life of David.

The trouble began with celebration (1 Sam.18:6-9).

THE SONG OF CELEBRATION

6 + **It** |*b*|**came** about *i*|**as they** were **coming**– home, *i*|**when David** had **returned**– **from smiting**– `**the Philistine,** +**that the women from all** the **cities of Israel** went |**forth** › **singing**– **and** dancing in ·**choruses to meet** ·**king Saul** *i*|**with tambourines,** *i*|**with rejoicing and** *i*|**with three-**stringed instrument**s.**
7 + **The gamboling** ·**women** sang in |**response,** + |**saying:**

Saul has smitten *i* **his thousands,**
+Yet David *i* **his myriads!**

8 + **Saul's** anger grew **exceedingly** |**hot;** + ·**this** ·**matter was** |**displeasing in his eyes, and he** |**said, To David they have** *g*|**ascribed myriads, and to me they have** *g*|**ascribed** only ·**thousands.** +**What** *fr*|**more** can **he** ›**have** *y*|**but the kingship?** 9 + **Saul** |*b*|**was** jealously **eying** `**David from** ·**that** ·**day and beyond.**

The celebration of chanting and dancing by the women of the cities, welcoming Saul and their soldiers back from the war against the Philistines, glorified David above Saul. The chant, failing to honor God, was not consonant with the character of David. Neither did it follow the example of Miriam and the women who sang and danced before Yahweh at the deliverance of Israel through the sea (*cf* Ex.15: 20,21). But it was in character with the reign of Saul. And it was the occasion for inciting the jealousy of Saul against David. The very deliverance Saul was unable to provide became the focus of his jealousy and hatred. The flesh is ever furious that it cannot deliver itself.

TROUBLED SAUL

The trouble was intensified on the morrow by God sending an evil spirit upon Saul, and this led to further sufferings (1 Sam.18:10-30).

10 + **It** |*b*|**came** about *f*|**on** the **morrow** +**that** an **evil spirit** from **Elohim** |**prospered** ›**on Saul.** + **He** |**prophesied inside the house,** +**while David** was **playing** the harp *i*|**with his hand, as** he did **day** *i*|**by day;** +**but** there was ·a **spear in Saul's hand.** 11 + **Saul** ~|**lifted up**~ `**the spear** + |*sa*|**thinking, I shall smite** *i* **David** + **in**to the **sidewall.** +**Yet David** got |**around** *f* **his presence** *du*|**twice.**
12 + **Saul was** |**fearful** *f* **because** ›**of David's presence** *t*|**since Yahweh came** to **be with him,** +**but had withdrawn from** *wi* **Saul.** 13 +**Hence Saul** |**put him away from** *wi* **him**self; + **he** |*pl*|**made him his chief of** a **thousand** + who marched |**forth and** |**came** in **before the** *wi*|**soldiers.** 14 + **David** |*b*|**continued** to *c*|**proceed intelligently**| 7|**in**~*cs* **all his ways,** +**for Yahweh** was **with him.** +**When Saul** |**saw** *w*|**that he** was *c*|**proceeding very intelligently,** + **he** |**shrank** away **from his presence.** 16 +**Yet all Israel and Judah loved**| `**David, for he** marched **forth**| **and came**| in **before them.**

17 +**Then Saul** |**said to David,** [bd]**Here is my** ˙**older daughter Merab; I shall give** `**her to you** ›**as** a **wife.** [y]**Only become** › a **valiant son for me and fight** the **battles of Yahweh.** +**As** for **Saul, he** [sa]**thought, Let my hand not** [b]**be** [i]**against him;** +**but let** the **hand of the Philistines** [b]**be** [i]**against him.** 18 + **David** |[sa]**replied to Saul,** [a]**Who** am **I, and** [a]**who** are **my kinfolk, my father's family in Israel, that I should become** son**-in-law to** the **king?** 19 +**But** [i]**at** the **time** that `**Merab, Saul's daughter, should have** [b]**been given**– **to David,** + **she**´ **was given to Adriel the Meholathite** ›**as** a **wife.**

20 +**Now Saul's daughter Michal** |**loved** `**David.** +**When they** |**told** › **Saul,** + **the matter was** |**upright in his eyes.** 21 +**So Saul** |[sa]**thought, I shall give her to him;** + **let her** [b]**be** › a **trap for him, and let** the **hand of** the **Philistines come** to **be** [i]**against him.** +**Hence Saul** |**said to David** [i] a **second** time**, You may be**come son**-in-law** [i]**to me today.** 22 **And Saul** |**instructed** `**his courtiers, Speak to David** [i]**by stealth,** › **saying**–**, Behold, the king** takes **delight in you, and all his courtiers like you;** +**so now be**come son**-in-law** [i]**to** the **king.** 23 + **Then Saul's courtiers** |**spoke** `**these** ˙**words in**to **David's ears.** +**Yet David** |[sa]**replied, Is it lightly** esteemed **in your eyes** [M]**to**[s] **be**come son**-in-law** [i]**to** the **king,** [i]**when I** am a **man destitute**| **and inconsequential**|**?**

24 + **Saul's courtiers** |**told** › **him,** › **saying**–**,** ˙**These** are [as] the **words** that **David has spoken.** 25 +**Then Saul** |**said, Thus shall you say to David, No delight** ›**has** the **king in** a **bride-price,** [7]**but rather**~[s] **in** a **hundred foreskins of** the **Philistines, to** take **vengeance** [i]**on the king's enemies**|**.** +**As** for **Saul, he devised to cause** `**David's fall**– [i]**by** the **hand of** the **Philistines.** 26 +**So his courtiers** |**told** › **David** `**these** ˙**words, and the matter was** |**upright in David's eyes, to be**come son**-in-law** [i]**to** the **king.** +**When the days were not** yet **fulfilled,** 27 + **David** |**rose and** |**went, he and his men, and he** |**smote** [i]**among** the **Philistines** two **hundred men.** + **David** |**brought** `**their foreskins, and** [7]**he**~ [m]**delivered them**

in |**full to** the **king, to be**come son**-in-law** [i]**to** the **king.** +**So Saul** |**gave** › **him** `**Michal his daughter** ›**as** a **wife.** 28 + **Saul** |**saw and** |**knew that Yahweh** was **with David and** that [7]**all Israel**~ **liked him,** 29 +**yet Saul** |**continued to be** [fr]**even** more **fearful**– [f] **because** of **David's presence;** +**so Saul came** to |**be** `**David's enemy all** his ˙**days.**

30 + **Then** the **chiefs of** the **Philistines** would march |**forth** to battle**;** +**yet it came** to |**be, as often as they** sallied **forth**–, that **David was** more **intelligent** [f]**than all** the other **officials of Saul,** +**so** that **his name be**came **very** highly |**esteemed.**

THE NEED FOR A SEPARATION

The 18th chapter provides one of the reasons God sent an evil spirit to trouble Saul. Apart from the troubling of Saul, it would have been quite easy and natural for David to become part of Saul's family. Jonathan would have fully accepted him and submitted to his leadership. Merab was soon promised to David as wife. When Merab was given to Adriel, Michal soon became her replacement. But it was a marriage that was shortly fragmented by the rage of the tormented Saul. Had Saul been able to accept David as his replacement, the transition could have been smooth. But Saul represents the flesh, and David faith.

As surely as it was necessary for Christ to be pure, so surely will God not accept a mixture of faith and the works of the flesh. The fruit of our vineyard should spring from a single kind of seed. Our service is not to be the plowing of a donkey and an ox yoked together. Stubbornness and contemplative contentment do not blend. Our covering is to be the fine linen of righteousness, not a mongrel fabric of flax and wool (Deut.22:9-11). David's faith and Saul's disposition of the flesh are oil and water. Even the most vigorous efforts to combine the two can only yield a cloudy mixture, which will eventually separate again. The uniting of David and Saul would have been analogous to Christ

compromising with the Pharisees, instead of denouncing them as the spawn of vipers.

Saul was envious of David, as the religious leaders of the Jews were envious of Christ (Matt.27:18; Mark 15:10). As Saul feared David would take his position as king, so the Jewish leaders feared for their position if Christ was allowed to live (John 11:49-53). When his initial efforts to kill David failed, Saul resorted to cunning plans in which the Philistines were to dispose of David. When the Jews initial efforts to silence Christ failed, they tried to entrap Him with questions and ritual observances. David came, with no ulterior motives, and artlessly served God, his country and Saul. Christ came to His own people to save them, and they crucified Him. The evil spirit that God sent to trouble Saul prevented Saul from accepting David, and thereby forced David to follow a path on which he would be a display of the sufferings of Christ.

DAVID AS A TYPE

Typically, David pictures both the nation Israel and Christ. On the national plane, Israel is God's anointed, and will eventually rule in righteousness and peace. But, before that time of rule, that nation is persecuted and slain throughout the world. From the slavery of Egypt, through the captivities of Babylon and Persia, through the holocaust of World War 2, and to the future persecutions of the tribulation, God's anointed is hunted as "a partridge in the mountains" (1 Sam.26:20) and slaughtered like a sacrifice.

But while David may typically represent Israel, Israel itself is a type of Christ, and so in Him alone is to be realized the depths of truth and instruction which these persecutions of David teach.

This beckons us to pause and consider the accounts of Christ's life from a specific viewpoint. We are led to look at Christ as the coming Saviour Who must not only die for

the sins of the world but must also struggle for the preservation of His life until He comes to the cross. This is a human perspective rather than one from the standpoint of the Deity's total control, but it is a perspective from which Christ viewed His life.

ATTEMPTS ON THE LIFE OF CHRIST

After the visit of the magi to Herod, Joseph fled to Egypt with Mary and Jesus (Matt.2:14,15), because the dragon stood ready to consume the woman's child (Rev.12:1-6). Part of Christ's temptation was to cast Himself down from the top of the temple edifice (Matt.4:5-7; Luke 4:9-12), an act presented by Satan as a means of verifying to all what His true identity was. And yet, coming from the Adversary, it may also be construed as an attempt on Christ's life. In the beginning of His ministry in Nazareth, the congregation of the synagogue threw Him out of the city, and carried Him to the brow of the mountain to throw Him over the precipice. Yet He escaped from their midst, evidently by the use of supernatural power.

When He healed on the Sabbath, the Jews plotted to kill Him for breaking the Sabbath (Matt.12:14-16; Mark 3:6; Luke 6:6-12; John 5:15-18). When He spoke of Who He was, they picked up stones to stone Him for making Himself equal with God (John 5:15-18; 8:57-59; 10:27-31).

They plotted to entrap Him with questions so they might accuse Him of crimes and execute Him (Luke 11:53,54; John 8:4-6). Finally they planned His execution (Matt. 26:3,4; Mark 14:1,2; Luke 22:1,2) and bought His betrayal (Matt.26:14-16; Mark 14:10,11) because of their envy (Matt.27:18; Mark 15:10) and fear of losing their position of authority (John 11:49-53).

The crucifixion of Jesus Christ was no isolated incident precipitated in the midst of a festival. Attempts were made on His life from the cradle to the cross. The years of His

public ministry are marked with continual roaming from place to place, not only because of the press of the crowds and the desire to evangelize others, but also because of the intensity of efforts to kill Him (John 7:1,2,19-25,30,44-46; 11:8; Luke 13:31-35).

The recorded accounts of Christ's life are brief, and the events written were recorded for the specific purpose of teaching truth. They do not include details designed to inspire fleshly people with awe at the things Christ endured. There is no way of knowing how many attempts were actually made on Christ's life, or how many such attempts He thwarted by taking a course which avoided conflict. But David's word to Jonathan, "There is but a small step between me and death" (1 Sam.20:3), could have been spoken of Christ at any time.

In addition to the attempts on Christ's life, His teaching of the disciples is filled with references to His death. These are recorded in contexts which emphasize the reasons for His death. In more ways than one, the life of Christ was all about His death. Perhaps bearing these things in mind will enlighten our eyes to see, in the struggles of David, more of what Christ suffered for our sakes. J. Philip Scranton

CVOT REPORT

Only the books of 2 Chronicles through Esther need to be gone over for final checking before typesetting. The rest of the CVOT is ready for typesetting, or has been entered into our computer files.

REPOSING IN CHRIST

We sorrow to report the deaths of the following brethren in Christ; yet we rejoice in contemplation of their happy expectation in Him as well: **Vincent Brehm,** of Leavenworth, Washington; **Dorothy Downie,** of Castlecrag, New South Wales, Australia; **Leona Fisher,** of Cosmopolis, Washington; **Letha Stafford,** of Clearwater, Kansas; **Everett Taylor,** of Bozeman, Montana; **Margery Yoder,** of Murrieta, California; **Clarence Young,** of Independence, Missouri.

WORDS AND WORKS

WHILE the place of evil figures large in Ecclesiastes, it must be borne in mind that the problem of evil, rather a certain phase of it, is not faced at once; it is approached gradually and arrived at by successively subjecting to review the strange riddles of individual and racial experience.

The introduction, or prologue to Ecclesiastes (1:2-11), touches two subjects: The vanity of "works," and the weariness of "words," and marshalls an array of facts in support of each thesis. Subsequent chapters embody a detailed discussion of those themes. Of the five "books" of the treatise the first (1:12-2:26) and the third (5:10-7:12) analyze the *works* under the sun; the second (3:1-5:9) and the fourth (7:13-11:6) discuss *words* relating to God's plan of the universe; while the fifth (11:7-12:7) takes in both fields at once, and dwells on the two positive thoughts which analysis has yielded. The epilogue (12:8-12) draws the inference from the data attained and formulates the moral.

THE PROLOGUE

2 **Vanity of vanities, says** the **Assembler;**
Vanity of vanities, ˙all is **vanity.**
3 **What advantage ›has** a **human in all his toil**
Which he ˡtoils under the sun?
4 One **generation goesˡ, and** another **generation comesˡ,**
+Yet the earth is **standing for** the **eon.**
5 **+ The sun** *ra*-**rises, and the sun sets**
And gaspsˡ back **to its** *ri*-**place,**
That **it** may *ra*-**riseˡ there** once more**.**

6 **Going to** the **south and** turn**ing around to** the **north,**
Around[l] and **around**[l] **the wind** is **going,**
[+]**Yet on its courses the wind returns**[l]**.**
7 **All the watercourses** are [go]**flowing to the sea,**
[+]**Yet** it **is no**t **filling the sea;**
To the **place** from **which the watercourses**
are [go]**flowing,**
There they return[l] **to go** forth again**.**
8 **All the words** are **weary;**
A **man** [l]**cannot** [›] [sp]**utter**[–] it**.**
The **eye is not** [l]**satisfied** [›]**with seeing**[–]**,**
Nor is the **ear** [l]**filled** [f]**with hearing**[–]**.**
9 **What** [w] [b]**occurred** once**, it** [w] **shall** [b]**occur** again**,**
And what [w] **was done, it** [w] **shall be done** again**.**
[+] There **is no**thing at **all new under the sun.**
10 **Is** there any**thing** of **which** one **may say:**
See this, it is **new?**
It has already [b]**occurred**
[›]**In eons** [w]**that** [b]**were** [f] **before us.**
11 There **is no remembrance** [›]**of former** generation**s,**
And [mr]**also for** those **who shall** [b]**come** [›] **after** us**,**
A **remembrance** [›]**of them shall not** [b]**continue**
With those **who shall** [b]**come** [›] **after**ward**.**

The prologue (1:2-11) states the two questions which the quest is to answer:

(1) "Vanity of vanities, says the Assembler; vanity of vanities, all is vanity" (1:2). This is not everything in the universe, as the reading "all is vanity" might imply, but every department of human toil, as indicated in verse 3. The word "vanity" is used of that which soon vanishes. The point here is the fleetness of the works done under the sun, which is elaborated, in verses 7-9, in a series of illustrations from the natural world. In things of nature, as in the succession of events, there is no advance; everything moves in a circle, like motion in a treadmill—an unceasing round of monotonous repetition without novelty or progress. "What was done, it shall be done again."

(2) "All the words are weary; A man cannot utter it" (1:8). The Hebrew term *dbrim* is best rendered here by its primary meaning of "words;" besides being more natural than the AV "things," this emphasizes a differentiation between words of weariness and words of delight and truth, a differentiation sustained all through the book and finally established in the epilogue (12:10-12).

The verses immediately following expand the thought by showing that the continually recurring circle of history underlines the inadequacy of human theories to account for the vanity of man's works under the sun (Ecc.1:9-11). Existing theories are insufficient, and fail to satisfy the mind. Though one theory has replaced another, nothing new has been evolved; the changes that have taken place have only modified their form. Formulae have changed, methods of expression have altered to suit the speech of succeeding generations, but the substance of man's theories of the universe is unchanged.

THE EPILOGUE

8 **Vanity of vanities, says the Assembler,**
The whole is **vanity.**
9 [+]**Yet furthermore,** [w]**because** the **Assembler** [b]**was wise,**
He [fr]**still taught** [`]**the people knowledge,**
And he listened and investigated
And **set in order many**[–] **proverbs.**
10 The **Assembler sought to find words of delight,**
And what was **written**[l] is **uprightness**
and **words of truth.**
11 The **words of** the **wise** are **like goad points,**
And like imbedded[l] **bolts** is the **possessing**
of gathered saying**s;**
They are given [f] **by one shepherd**[l]**.**

12 +**Yet furthermore, my son,** *f* **beyond these, be warned;**
Of the *d*__making__ of __many__ **scrolls** there **is no end,**
And much study is **weariness** to the **flesh.**

At the close, then, we get the epilogue (12:8-12), in which the author returns to the questions with which he started his quest, and restates them in the light of the results which his analysis of things has yielded. The vanity of man's works upon the earth is reaffirmed (12:8). Extensive experiment embracing various fields of human toil has but accentuated and confirmed the transient character of present activities.

Examination of the various theories of the universe, however, has demonstrated certain fundamental principles which carry a self-evident, self-manifest light, by which the truth is sealed to the conscience in the sight of God with a certainty transcending all conjectures, and superior to all changes of human feeling. We can surely appreciate the contrast between the words of weariness and those words of delight and truth, which, in the absence of power to solve the mystery of the whole, warn us against indulging in fruitless speculation and profitless discussion.

The Divine purpose behind things as they are is so far off and so exceeding deep, that man can never reach it; nevertheless reason can lay hold of principles which instil reverence for God and enjoin conformity with His instructions. To discover these principles was the aim or "terminus" of our author's word or treatise. The function of reason is limited to the gathering of wise thoughts which stimulate an ordering of life in the light of a coming rectification or "judgment," but to go further is to take a leap into the realm of fancy.

THE SUMMARY

It only remains to sum up all duty in one conception—

human works regulated by wise words pointing to a future readjustment (12:13,14).

"The terminus of the whole matter has been heard: Fear the One, Elohim, and keep His instructions, for this is the whole duty of humanity. For the One, Elohim, shall bring every deed into judgment concerning all that is obscured, whether good or whether evil."

V. Gelesnoff

❋

ANALYSIS OF ECCLESIASTES

Title: Words of the Assembler, Son of David, King in Jerusalem (1:1)

- Prologue: Works of Vanity and Words of Weariness (1:2-11)
  - Book 1: Man's Work—Wisdom and Toil; a Survey of what is done Under the Sun (1:12-2:26)
    - Book 2: God's Work—Antagonism between Good and Evil (3:1-4:8)
      - —notes: (4:9-5:9)
    - Book 3: Man's Work—Desire; a Study of the Principles underlying Activity Under the Sun (5:10-6:11)
      - —notes: (6:12-7:12)
    - Book 4: God's Work—Relation of Good and Evil (7:13-9:15)
  - Book 5: Review; Human works conditioned by Divine Appointments (11:7-12:7)
- Epilogue: Works of Vanity and Words of Purpose (12:8-12)

Summary (12:13,14)

ELOHIM GIVES EXPERIENCE

THE haunting lines of Ecclesiastes 1:2-11 strike us at first, not with courage and determination, but with the very familiar, human feeling of melancholy. The repetition of human experience is paralleled by nature's cycles, sunlight and darkness, rain and evaporation. "What has occurred once, it shall occur again, and what was done, it shall be done again. There is nothing at all new under the sun" (Ecc.1:9).

Yet even though there is transitoriness in all this, it is not absolute vanity because above it all is God. The Assembler inquired and explored concerning all that is done, but in doing so he never forgot that it was what "Elohim has given" (Ecc.1:12,13).

CONCERNING ALL THAT IS DONE

12 **I my**self, the **Assembler, came** to **be king over Israel in Jerusalem.** 13 + **I** [g]**applied** `**my heart to inquiring**⁻ **and** › **exploring**⁻ [i]**by wisdom** [on]**concerning all** [w]**that is done under the heavens: it** is an **experience of evil Elohim has given to the sons of humanity to humble** them [i]**by it.**

These lines which begin the survey of human deeds and wisdom should also be associated with the prologue concerning vanity and weariness. What the Assembler said in 1:2-11 came from his own observation, from his inquiring and exploring of that which is done and occurs under the heavens. Consequently, the repetitious experiences of generation after generation, and the weariness and lack of satisfaction that come from these experiences are given to us all by God to humble us by them.

Why is it important that we see that this transitoriness is given to us by God? The answer is that since it is given by God it has meaning. If it is given by God, it has a purpose. If it is given by God it is something we need for ultimate good.

EXPERIENCE OF EVIL

The Hebrew words translated "experience" and "humble" here belong to the same general word family to which we have assigned the name RESPOND.

The former word occurs only in Ecclesiastes (1:13; 2:23,26; 3:10; 4:8; 5:3,14; 8:16), and is translated "experience" in every case but one. In Ecclesiastes 5:3 we use the word "responsibility" to express the idea of pressing experiences of daily life leading to nightly dreams. This indicates that the Hebrew word connotes a sense of negative experience. And this is verified by the other usages, many of which occur in association with the word "evil." This is the reason many other translations use such English words as "travail" or "affliction."

God gives us burdensome experiences developing response, and the response that these produce is that we are humbled.

In the experience and its results themselves there is nothing we would desire. But in seeing that God has given this whole process to us there is much that should encourage and assure us. Because we rely on God we can expect that the experiences we would rather avoid eventually will be appreciated as truly for our good and His glory. That is the great value of Ecclesiastes and the reason why it rises above the dark and despairing poetry of humanistic artists.

TO HUMBLE US

The Assembler, as a descendant of David, had many privileges as well as responsibilities. But the special advantages

he enjoyed were greatly tempered by the unique measure of "sore travail" in his experiences. What might have made him proud and forgetful that his blessings were from God was balanced by hard experiences which also, like all things, were from God. The result was that he was humbled.

Humility in the human is not an evil. It is a blessing, consisting in itself of wisdom and power for endurance and compassion.

As believers we are aware that we are special people, chosen and called of God, blessed with every spiritual blessing among the celestials. But our experiences keep us humble, reminding us that indeed we have been chosen and called more because we are less powerful and noble and wise and strong than others who are not chosen and called (*cf* 1 Cor.1:26,27).

We do not have to sign up for these hard knocks. They will come because God graciously *gives* not only the blessing of believing but the suffering as well (Phil.1:29).

These are given, as they were to Paul, lest we should be lifted up by the transcendence of the blessings (*cf* 2 Cor.11:7). And they bring us, as they did Paul, a sharper acquaintance with the happiness and power in the blessings of grace. "With the greatest relish, then, will I rather be glorying in my infirmities, that the power of Christ should be tabernacling over me" (2 Cor.11:9).

Through his experiences, given to him by God, Paul became aware what it is to be humbled (Phil.4:12). In accord with the evangel and its faithful impression on the one believing, we may be "being led away to the humble" (Rom.12:16). Humility and humbleness are not produced simply by command and desire. They result from acquaintance with sufferings and discouragements and realization that we must place reliance on God to bring out justly and gloriously the values of our experiences.

In contemplating the sad, repetitious failures of humanity to learn from the past, to make real progress and know true satisfaction, the Assembler was being led toward a growing appreciation of God. Because his blessings were merely physical and terrestrial he could not reach the level of enlightenment given Paul, nor be given the level of humbling. Nevertheless, there was, for the Assembler, a beginning, which parallels more closely the levels of humbling that mankind in general are given through their lives. But, indeed, the Assembler was given something that has so far not been given to the majority of mankind. This was the gift of knowing that the experiences and their results are given by God.

VANITY AND WEARINESS

Hence we would listen to the words of Ecclesiastes 1:2-11 in the context of verse 13. All human toil is transitory, all is vanity, but God has given this frustrating experience to us. The very experience of needing to toil and then finding the need to start all over again, and never reaching the point where we can be satisfied that all has worked out well, is given to us by God.

What the Assembler says is true, and we have all observed it. As a whole, humanity does not progress or bring to an end the need of toil and learning lessons previous generations had also learned. The pictures afforded by the patterns of nature, the sun, the wind, the water cycle, all these are reflections of the transitoriness and repetitiousness of human toil and wisdom.

But this must not cast us down in despair because God remains over it all. He uses all these hard experiences for our eventual good and His glory.

There is weariness in human words, in the cycles of ideas and philosophies and discoveries. We think we have come up with something new, but it turns out to be only a different way of expressing old ideas or facing old responsibilities.

But this must not discourage us. We need these experiences, and because God gives them to us, they will accomplish His purpose.

WHAT IS HUMAN

The book of Ecclesiastes is not a discourse in human philosophy but, while recognizing that much of human philosophy speaks truly, the book directs us beyond those truths to God and what He is doing. It speaks of what is human and what is so concerning human history, *because God has made it so.* We should not dismiss these words as pessimism unworthy of believers who have been blessed with every spiritual blessing among the celestials in Christ. For we are also human beings, sinners, infirm, living in this current, wicked eon. And we need to be reminded that our own experiences of transitoriness and weariness are from the hand of the living God Who is our Saviour.

Paul also speaks of human realities. "No trial has taken you except *what is human*" (1 Cor.10:13). As human beings we experience much of the disquietude and depression described in Ecclesiastes. Along with everyone else we discover that we cannot escape the cycles of toil and disappointment that God has given to humanity. But as believers we recognize God in the trial, not simply the existence of God, but God as One involved in the experience. We have been given faith to see that God is *faithful.* God has given us the experience, but He is also faithful in bringing a sequel, or issue, an "out-stepping," out of the troublesome experience.

God gives us our experiences and purposes their sequels. The experiences are transitory, and often wearying, but they are part of what God has designed for us. This is of tremendous value for us to know, and the book of Ecclesiastes greatly helps to bring this truth before us.

D.H.H.

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 Genesis 1:3–5
103 The Light of Life and Love
112 "Rejoicing Nevertheless"
117 The Initial Actions of God
123 Divine Foreknowledge and Its Significance
135 Wisdom and Toil
141 From the Hand of Elohim

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 1999
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY

EDITORIAL

THE SACRED SCRIPTURES bring God into our lives. They are very honest about human weaknesses and never avoid the unpleasant things of human experience. But in doing so they always keep God in view, sometimes even in disconcerting ways.

My own studies recently in the book of Job, and now in Ecclesiastes, have helped me immensely in facing personal struggles and losses. It is not simply a matter of misery loving company. These books speak of the very universal, human experience of evil in full recognition of God's supremacy and responsibility. Consequently, they are powerful in preparing us for the evangel of God which we find in Paul's epistles.

In Job, the Scriptures speak of physical misery and pain. The evil faced by the Assembler was of a different sort: the psychological sorrow and despair that comes by the transitory nature of every human gain. The evil that came to Job was more basic, more down-to-earth, and more obvious. That faced in Ecclesiastes was more subtle, more obscure perhaps, but in certain ways no less devastating.

Physical pain on one hand, or mental travail on the other, both are part of human experience. We may not experience the intensity of pain and despair of Job or the Assembler; but we know something of such evils. And like these men of God we can never endure and mature apart from the recognition that God gives these experiences for His own reasons and purposes, under His directing hand of faithfulness and by His wise heart of love.

The lessons learned from nature, as Brother Knoch points out (*cf* p.108) aid us in becoming acquainted with

God. What we perceive in the world around us and what we experience in our lives work together to give meaning to what is written in God's Word. Certainly any suffering and discouragement we receive helps in grasping and appreciating the riches of God's love and grace made known in the evangel.

Yet from the human standpoint, the message of the gratuity of God's grace in Christ Jesus is not prospering. The truth that all is out of God and comes about through His operations and is for His glory is made secondary to considerations of human morality and daily activities. Human religious tradition holds back much of the light in God's Word, even in these days of increased availability of ancient manuscripts and means for accuracy in translation.

This would be discouraging to the point of downright despair if we forget that God is still God, and He is still operating all together in accord with His purpose. The very revelation of God given in the Sacred Scriptures is that He knows what He is doing and is doing it wisely and effectively. The evangel of His love, commended in the death of His Son for sinners, is the foundation and the strong tower of our faith. In this we have so much more than Job or the son of David. Once we catch a glimpse of the reliability of God and the vastness of His love, we are given peace and even thankfulness in our little troubles, knowing they have a place in God's purpose and will, for our good and His glory.

May the circumstances of our lives not distract us or blind us to the greatness and glory and grace of God. May we be like Job and the Assembler in acknowledging God as the great Disposer of both our temporary experiences and lasting blessings. May our experiences of evil not turn us away from reliance on the living God and rejoicing in His Word. Faithful is God Who is calling us and will be doing it also. D.H.H.

GENESIS 1:3-5

3 **And Elohim ˡsaid: Let light come** to **be! And it ˡbecame light.** 4 + **Elohim ˡsaw ˋthe light that** it was **good.** +**Then Elohim ˡseparated** *bt* **the light** + *bt* **from the darkness.** 5 **And Elohim ˡcalled** › the **light Day, and** › the **darkness He called Night.**

And it ˡbecame evening, and it ˡbecame morning: day one.

NOTES AND CROSS REFERENCES

And: common Hebrew conjunction used here adjunctively to carry forward the previous thought.

And Elohim said (literally, *And He-is-saying, Elohim*): conjunction joined to simple, active, incomplete form of verb SAY (Englishman's Concordance, p.105), followed by Divine Title as subject of verb; this clause occurs ten times in Genesis 1 (verses 3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26,28,29).

Let . . . come to be! And it became (literally, *it-is-becoming . . . and-it-is-becoming*): both verbs are simple, active, incomplete forms of *become* (E.C. p.360), first used to express a command, then its exact fulfillment; *cf* the expression, *so it came to be,* in Gen.1:6 [7],9,11,15,24,30.

light: masculine, singular noun, E.C. p.32, occurs six times in Genesis 1 (verses 3,4,5,18); *cf* 2 Sam.23:4; Job 26:10; 29:3; 38:24; Psa.27:1; 36:9; 43:3; 97:11; 119:130; Isa.2:5; 45:7; 51:4; 58:8,10; 60:1,3,19,20; 2 Cor.4:6.

Elohim saw (literally, *and-He-is-seeing, Elohim*): conjunction added to simple, active, incomplete form of verb SEE (E.C. p.1141) followed by Divine Title as subject of verb.

`the light: direct object particle followed by definite article and masculine, singular noun.

good: masculine, singular adjective in the Hebrew word family, GOOD, E.C. p.476, entry 3 (or: simple, active, complete form of verb, *be-good,* E.C., p.476, entry 2); occurs seven times in Genesis 1 (verses 4,10,12,18,21,25,31).

Elohim separated (literally, *and-He-is-separating, Elohim*): simple, active, incomplete form of verb SEPARATE, E.C. p.187, followed by Divine Title as subject of verb; a complete listing of the occurrences of the verb *separate,* classified by grammatical form, follows:

Simple, Passive, Complete

1 Ch.12:8 these *separated* themselves to David
Ezr.9:1 have not kept themselves *separate*

Simple, Passive, Imperative

Nu.16:21 *Separate* yourselves from the midst
Ezr.10:11 and *separate* yourselves from the peoples

Simple, Passive, Incomplete

1 Ch.23:13 yet Aaron *was set apart* to sanctify
Ezr.10:8 he himself *be separated* from the assembly
Ezr.10:16 Ezra the priest *set apart* various men

Simple, Passive, Participle

Ezr.6:21 by *separating* himself from the uncleanness
Neh.10:28 everyone who had *separated* himself

Cause, Active, Complete

Ex.26:33 The curtain *will separate* for you
Lv.20:24 Elohim, Who *separates* you from the peoples.

Lv.20:25 you *will make* a *separation* between clean
Lv.20:25 Which I have *separated*
Nu.8:14 you *will separate* the Levites from
Nu.16:9 the Elohim of Israel *has separated* you
Dt.10:8 Yahweh *separated* the tribe of Levi
Dt.29:21 Yahweh *will separate* him from all the tribes
1 K.8:53 You Yourself *separated* them to be
Ezk.22:26 they do not *differentiate*

Cause, Active, Infinitive

Gen.1:14 *to separate* day from night,
Gen.1:18 *to separate* light from darkness.
Lev.10:10 *to differentiate* between the holy and
Lev.11:47 *to differentiate* between the unclean and
Isa.56:3 yea *separate* me from His people
Ezk.42:20 *to separate* the holy from the profane

Cause, Active, Incomplete

Gen.1:4 Elohim *separated* the light from the darkness.
Gen.1:7 *separated* the waters under the atmosphere
Lev.1:17 its wings, yet *shall* not *separate* it.
Lev.5:8 its nape, yet *shall* not *separate* it.
Lev.20:26 I *am separating* you from the peoples
Dt.4:41 Then Moses *separated* three cities
Dt.19:2 you *shall separate* for yourselves three
Dt.19:7 Three cities *shall* you *separate* for yourself.
1 Ch.25:1 *set apart* for service the sons of Asaph,
2 Ch.25:10 So Amaziah *separated* them out
Ezr.8:24 I then *separated* twelve,
Neh.13:3 they *separated* out of Israel all those
Isa.56:3 saying: Yahweh *shall separate*
Ezk.39:14 they *shall set apart* men for continual

Cause, Active, Participle

Gen.1:6 that it may be *separating* waters
Isa.59:2 depravities have become *separators*

between the light . . . between the darkness: preposition (E.C. p.212) occurring twice, followed by nouns with definite article attached.

Elohim called (literally, *and-He-is-calling, Elohim*): conjunction added to simple, active, incomplete form of verb CALL, E.C. p.1117, followed by Divine Title as subject of verb.

Day: masculine, singular noun, DAY, E.C. p.508; *cf* Psa. 19:2; 74:16.

and . . . He called: conjunction added to simple, active, complete form of verb CALL, E.C. p.1117; *cf* Gen.2:19; 3:20; 17:5; Ex.2:10; Isa.9:6; 54:5.

Night: masculine, singular noun in the Hebrew word family KEEP-BACK, E.C. p.470; *cf* Psa.92:2; 104:20.

evening: masculine, singular noun in the Hebrew word family MIX, E.C. p.975; *cf* Gen.8:11; Ex.12:6,18; Psa. 104:23; Zec.14:7.

morning: masculine, singular noun in the Hebrew word family QUEST, E.C. p.266; *cf* Psa.5:3; Ecc.11:6.

day one: masculine, singular noun in the family, DAY, followed by the cardinal number ONE, E.C. p.41, *cf* Gen.1:9; 11:1; Ezek.37:16-24.

"Where is this, the pathway where light tabernacles, and where is this, where darkness has its place? . . . I am Yahweh, and there is no other. Former of light and Creator of darkness . . ." (Job 38:19; Isa.45:6,7).

"And the light is appearing in the darkness, and the darkness grasped it not . . . . It was the true light—which is enlightening every man—coming into the world" (John 1:5,9).

"For the God Who says that out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ . . . . For you were once darkness, yet now you are light in the Lord. As children of light be walking . . ." (2 Cor.4:6; Eph.5:8,9).

THE LIGHT OF LIFE AND LOVE

THE RESTORATION of the earth from the chaos of the abyss was effected by *vibration*, as apparent in *light* (Gen.1:2,3). But this was a recurrent phenomenon, for it was alternated with *darkness*. Darkness, however, is not a positive, forceful manifestation in Hebrew, but a negative, impotent thing, as is evident from the Hebrew word, which signifies KEEP-BACK. This is well illustrated by Abraham, who did not *keep back,* or *withhold* (AV) Isaac, his son, when he was called upon to offer him up to God (Gen. 22:16). It is simply the absence of light. It is practically ignored, however, in the following account, for it effected nothing. At *first* the light alone is called "Day" (Gen.1:5). Thereafter, however, except on the seventh day, the evening and the morning are added to it; yet it is still reckoned a "day." We also use the word day as distinct from darkness or night, and also for the whole period of twenty-four hours, which includes both.

It was the recurrent *light* that accomplished the restoration of the earth. It separated the atmosphere and the seas from the dry land. It provided the vitality for the verdure and the soul life in the water and the air and on the land. The stages in this restoration were marked by the recurrence of darkness. The work was evidently done during the day, for the vibratory power of God's spirit not only made the scene visible, but provided the energy that separated the waters and made the atmosphere and supported the verdure, as well as the living souls which can-

not exist without these to this day. Yet *after* the day's work was done, we read "*and* it became evening" (skipping the night), "*and* it became morning," which made a whole day. "Evening" is just before the night, and "morning" follows it. In the night no work is done (*cf* John 9:4).

THE LENGTH OF THE DAYS

Much has been made of the *length* of the days by scientists, falsely so called, with the purpose of discrediting the inspired account of *creation*, although these days are not concerned with the original *creation* at all, but the *restoration* of the earth. Now, however, the latest scientific theory, based on the study of atomic energy, claims that creation took a very short time, much less than six days!

The length of time it takes to accomplish a given task is altogether dependent on the conditions under which it is done. I am told that a process somewhat similar to that of the restoration, in which the solid, liquid, and gaseous elements of the abyss were separated into land, water and air—that of refining crude oil into asphalt, the various liquid products, and gas—has been greatly accelerated by newer methods. As we know nothing of the precise conditions which obtained during the six days, we have no real premises on which to reason out the length of time. Under some conditions it might have taken what we call billions of years, under others an infinitesimal part of a second. We cannot measure absolute time without a standard, and the day itself is the basic unit of chronology.

It is quite true that the word "day" is used, with a figurative force in divine revelation. The "Lord's day," or the day of Yahweh, seems to last somewhat over a thousand years. Man's day has already run much longer than that. That these are figurative "days" is evident from the fact that, while they are *like* ordinary days in some respects, they *differ* from literal days, not only in their length, but

in being composed of many such days in time. Moreover, they are not repeated with periods of darkness between. But the days of the restoration have every feature of literal days such as we are acquainted with in our own lifetime, which have been recurring throughout man's history. The days of the restoration are composed, not only of light, but of evenings and mornings. As such they would make a rather complicated figure of speech.

The length of time consumed in any action is not an infallible measure of the result. I have often been criticized because of the briefness of my messages. But I would rather speak a minute to the heads and hearts of my hearers for their edification, than an hour to their hulks to their stupefaction. When I was in Europe, my relatives showed me an old church in which one of my ancestors had preached. They also exhibited the collection bag at the end of a long pole, so as to reach down the rows, with bells on it to wake up the drowsing. They told me that it was not only used for that purpose, but also to prod anyone who snored too loudly. I am told that, in these days, a modern audience can endure only about twenty minutes of solid sermon.

Time, like space, is only relative. If we should travel around the earth at the same speed as the sun, we would live only one continued, literal day, from our standpoint. Theoretically, if we had a vine with us we could transform water into wine in a single day. God is independent of time as He is of space. So Christ could transmute water into wine without either time or effort (John 2:1-10). Consequently, I would have no difficulty, on that score, in believing modern scientists, that creation was the work of an instant. Then, of course, it would not strain my faith at all, to believe God, when He tells us that He took six days for the restoration of the earth.

But, just as we cannot fully learn the lesson of light during the night, unless it is followed by the day, so, on the

larger spiritual scale, men cannot learn the larger lesson of God's illumination during the evil eons. They sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and grasp it only after the rousing from among the dead, when they live in the sevenfold radiance of the eons of the eons, or stand before the great white throne. Only those whose hearts have been illuminated by God's holy spirit, get a glimpse of the glory. But even their eyes must look through a dark glass, lest the blazing brilliance blind them, so long as they are in the flesh.

BECOME, NOT BE

Fault has been found with the CV rendering: *Let light come to be! And it became light.* It is a great pity that, throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, the difference between the simple (be) and the *causative* form (become) of the so-called substantive is practically ignored in our popular versions. During the restoration of the earth there was continual *change*, not merely a repeated *state*. Translators into English have our profound sympathy in this case, however, for English idiom makes it almost impossible to be faithful to the original in this matter. So the CV often changes it to [b]**come**, and sometimes into [b]**be**, where the context directs it.

NATURE THE HANDMAID OF REVELATION

Nature is God's primer, full of illustrations, with words, which give us the vocabulary of His revelation. The first lesson is taught us daily at the rising of the sun. Darkness gives place to *light*. God is light. In Him is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5). This constant contrast is given us in order that we may grasp His glory. Just as the light unfolds to our admiring eyes the wonders of the visible creation, so the power of His spirit reveals to our minds and hearts the marvels of the spiritual realm. In the beginning, His initial act in the restoration of the earth was to illuminate

the scene by the vibration of His spirit in producing *light*. We know what this was because He rehearses this in our experience every day.

Missionaries to the heathen who have never heard of God have grave difficulties, I am told, in making Him known. I have sometimes thought that they should first begin with the book of nature and interpret it by the Scriptures. Beginning with light and darkness, the day and the night, which are known to the most ignorant savage, they could reveal Him Who is light, as well as the powers of darkness, and His Son Who is the Light of the world. Showing first that all life depends on light in nature, they could go on to make known the Life of all that lives, as well as His Son, Who descended into the darkness of death for their sakes in order to express His love and win them for Himself. Nature is known by all, and God has given it to illustrate His revelation.

We are all training to be missionaries among the celestials, so we should be deeply interested and sympathetic to the problems of our missionaries on earth. Their greatest task is to reveal God to those who do not know Him. One of the first difficulties is a name. Choosing one they already have is fraught with many dangers, for none is like Him. In China there was much discussion on this theme for many years, for none of the pagan titles fully fitted. Even in English, we attach only a vague notion of deity to the title "God," instead of the definite idea of the Subjector. I have often wished that we could change to this, but it seems to be impracticable, so I seek to associate this idea to the title as much as possible. The Greek version has it better, for there He is called *Theos*, the Placer.

Nature speaks a universal language. In order to reveal God as Light and Life and Love, I would point to the lesson of light as illustrated every day and night, and show how good the light is compared with the darkness. Life

and death may be used in the same way to show that He is the Living One. I would press the point that man's life depends upon death, for all his food must die that he may live, and so prepare for the death and resurrection of the Saviour. I would use the many examples of love and hate among mortals to prepare for the revelation of the love that gave His Son to reconcile all to Himself.

NATURE TEACHES

The apostle Paul has given us the highest revelation of God and His Christ. But this by no means supersedes or abolishes the teaching of nature. Paul himself appeals to the Corinthians, who were going contrary to natural instincts. He does not refer them to previous revelation or give them fresh instructions, but asks the question: "Is not even *nature* itself *teaching* you . . . ?" (1 Cor.11:14). Even the nations, by nature, fulfill some of God's law, although their great mistake is to go contrary to nature (Rom.2:14; 1:26). Yet some of the saints, doubtless influenced by the false rendering of *soulish* by "natural" (1 Cor.2:14; 15:44, 45,46), seek to be unnatural in their speech and conduct, as if nature were sinful. This leads to an unnatural, artificial, unwholesome mode of life, which is to be deplored. Let us be natural.

But let us also learn from nature the lessons which God teaches through it. We cannot understand the Scriptures themselves without this preparation. "God is light" means nothing at all to one who has not learned what light is from the primer of nature. The greatest of scholars dare not forget his abc's. And, conversely, let us not fail to use the Scriptures to reveal to us the full *lesson* of nature, the great and glorious truth that it is not a meaningless jargon, without significance, purposeless and vain, but a revelation of the Deity, through which His creatures may learn of His attributes and divinity, and, moreover, by means of

which He can reveal His inmost affection for them in His written revelation.

NIGHT AND DARKNESS

Darkness, the "keeping back" of light, may furnish the most instructive lesson in all nature. We usually take the night for granted, as if it were normal, an essential and indispensable feature of human existence. Quite the contrary is the truth. In the new earth there will be no night and no darkness. (Rev.21:25). The literal meaning of the Hebrew stem, as usual, gives us a correct clue as to its place in God's plans. It signifies KEEP-BACK. It is abnormal. God is *keeping back the light during* the first few eons in order that men may appreciate the light. It is a daily lesson that all have learned to some extent. It has made many sun worshipers, but it leads none to worship the God Who made the sun. Like sin, it is a temporary and intermittent evil, introduced as a foil to reveal the light.

Because it gives us a temporary respite from the duties of the day, and helps us to recuperate our failing faculties by entering into a death-like sleep, we welcome the shades of night, and fail to see its essentially evil character. This is shown us in the Scriptures, where the darkening of the sun, moon and stars and the kingdom of the wild beast (Matt.24:29; Mark 13:24; Rev.8:12), are shuddering portents of judgment. Some of the sons of the kingdom will be cast into outer darkness where there will be lamentation and gnashing of teeth (Matt.7:12).

But all this is only a picture of the *spiritual* darkness which holds sway in the world today. At the advent of Christ, even Israel, the one nation to whom God had revealed Himself, is represented as sitting in darkness and the shadow of death (Isa.9:2; Luke 1:17). If that was true of them, how much more so of the nations today! The unintelligent hearts of the so-called "heathen" nations are certainly

as dark as ever (Rom.1:21). Even so-called Christendom, with all its religion and ritual, has far more darkness than light. Few, indeed, have turned their backs on the light of nature and reason, and entered the holy place and revelled in the light of revelation. And, of these, far fewer bask in the bright blessings of the Shekinah glory, for they do not see that the curtain has been rent, so that the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God beams upon them in the face of Christ (2 Cor.4:6).

The *activity* of God's spirit is manifested in the three *"ells," light, life* and *love.* The *passivity* of His power is evident in the three "hells," *darkness, death,* and *indifference,* if we take the word "hell" in its true meaning of that which is *imperceptible.* We *perceive* light and *experience* life and *revel* in love, but our senses are *numbed* by darkness, we enter the *imperceptible* in death and we are *calloused* in indifference. So far as the earth is concerned, God created light in one verse in Genesis, and life in the first chapter, but it takes the whole Bible to create love. Figuratively speaking, light is only the root, and life the tree on which love is the fruit. These are three stages in God's revelation, but the highest is love.

Many years ago a manuscript was sent in by a very intelligent and beloved brother, seeking to show that all *evil* is due to the *absence* of God. At that time we did not know the vast difference between evil and sin, so that there seemed to be much evidence in its favor. Adam sinned when God was absent from Eden. But there were other Scriptures which seemed to show that evil occurred in His *presence*. In fact many of His judgments consisted in the infliction of evil. Why, He is even said to be the Creator of evil. I was very much inclined to publish the article of this beloved brother, even if I had my doubts. Now I am most thankful that I did not do so, for it led to the study and separation of evil and sin.

It is *sin,* not evil, that comes from the withholding of God's spirit. Adam and Eve indeed had light and life, nevertheless they were in a measure of darkness, for their eyes were closed to spiritual light, even if they did see the forbidden fruit. The serpent predicted that their eyes would be unclosed if they ate of it, and, sure enough, they had never seen *themselves* until after they ate! More than that, although they had more light, which should have kept them from sinning, death was now operating in them. The lack of life is even more provocative of sin than the lack of light. And the lack of life led to the lack of love, so that they feared God and hid themselves.

For the present, let us thank God for the darkness that enables us to appreciate the light, yet, at the same time, we may exult in the future, when we will bask in the full blaze of His effulgence without being blinded by His glory. Then the light that restored the ruined earth will restore us, and enable us to enjoy its full fruitage of eonian life, and everlasting love. A. E. Knoch

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"REJOICING NEVERTHELESS"

"FOR is any of humanity acquainted with that which is human except the spirit of humanity which is in it? Thus also, that which is of God no one knows, except the spirit of God. Now we obtained, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we may be perceiving that which is being graciously given to us by God, which we are speaking also, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, matching spiritual blessings with spiritual words" (1 Cor.2:11-13).

Throughout the precious words of Scripture we are able to trace many delightful parallels. These are not contrived by our fancy, but the spirit which is of God leads us, with clear perception and refreshing joy, to observe what is there. They seem to draw our eyes and hearts for consolation into every relevant and wonderful page. May we consider the following example from incidents which occurred during the ministry of our Lord and His *choice instrument*, the apostle Paul:

"John averred to Him, saying, 'Teacher, we perceived someone casting out demons in Thy name, who is not following us, and we forbade him, for he followed not with us.' Yet Jesus said, 'Be not forbidding him, for there is no one who will be doing a powerful deed in My name, and will be able swiftly to speak evil of Me. For who is not against us is for us. For whosoever should be giving you a cup of water to drink in the Name, seeing that you are Christ's, verily I am saying to you that by no means should he be losing his wages'" (Mark 9:38-40). Compare this expression of profound wisdom with the like understanding of the apostle:

"Now I am intending you to know, brethren, that my

affairs have rather come to be for the progress of the evangel, so that my bonds in Christ become apparent in the whole pretorium and to all the rest, and the majority of the brethren, having confidence in the Lord as to my bonds, are more exceedingly daring to speak the word of God fearlessly. Some, indeed, are even heralding Christ because of envy and strife, yet some because of delight, also; these, indeed, of love, having perceived that I am located for the defense of the evangel, yet those are announcing Christ out of faction, not purely, surmising to arouse affliction in my bonds. What then?—Moreover, seeing that, by every method, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being announced, I am rejoicing in this also, and will be rejoicing nevertheless" (Phil.1:12-18).

Without the spirit of God which is searching all, *even the depths of God*, we would not presume to examine such verities. In similar manner to those who stood together with Job awaiting the words of Yahweh, we also would be in fear and trembling. With Elihu, we also would declare, "He Who-Suffices, *we* cannot find Him out" (Job 37:23). Yet to us it is confided, "For who knew the mind of the Lord? Who will be deducing from Him? Yet we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor.2:16)!, and again, ". . . you may become blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse among whom you are appearing as luminaries in the world" (Phil.2:14).

MONOTHEISM

Life in Egypt for the Hebrews was, for a time, very pleasant. This was not to last, and indeed, a time came when persecution was intolerable. The story of the exodus and the effective leadership of the patriarch, Moses is well known. During the forty years which were spent in the wilderness of the Sinai peninsula, something happened that was to have a resounding effect on this people,

and not on these alone. In a region which was known for worship of a multiplicity of gods, for the first time, *monotheism*, that is, a religious system based on the belief that only one God exists in the universe, became known!

Loathe to yield to this unique faith, the surrender of adherence to idols came slowly, but as the nomadic and divisive social patterns of these Hebrews changed, and conquests of the Canaanite cities led to increasing prosperity, so it appeared to the other nations that this belief in one God and the imparted code of laws was very impressive. Certainly it seemed that God was fulfilling His promise to watch over the interests of this nation.

PURPOSE OF THE EONS

If the revelation of belief in one God was quite overwhelming for the neighboring tribes among the Canaanites, then imagine the staggering effect among the celestials to learn of God's plan for the ecclesia, ". . . which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all"! (Eph.1:23). Let us revel in the glorious words:

God is ". . . to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all, that now may be known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Eph.3:9-11).

Yes, how the celestials must have been completely astonished! But the spiritual forces of wickedness among these must have been utterly frustrated! Everything they had done in their hatred had not changed a single thing. To the contrary, their opposition had provided the essential contrast to God's gracious gift of love, in the all-embracing sacrifice of His beloved Son. What divine wisdom is brought to light through this amazing revelation! It is evident that this is not kept secret from the celestials. As Israel was to the Canaanites, so the body of Christ is to the celestials. This is a delightful parallel, illuminating the wisdom of God.

FAITH AND OBEDIENCE

Whenever a child of God manifests nobility in unselfish love or compassion, wherever some devotion is expressed in striving, without any hope of reward, to present God's precious Word sincerely, in brief, when we are walking in newness of life, we are not just bringing the celestials a foretaste of the future blessings for them when these bodies of our humiliation are transfigured. But rather, and this is to be preferred, most humbly, such walk is for Him Who gave Himself for all, a fitting tribute of unintermittent thanksgiving.

This leads into another heart-stirring illustration. This time, may we turn to the wondrous words of our Lord: "And Jesus, being seated facing the treasury, beheld how the throng is casting the coppers into the treasury. And many rich cast in much. And one woman, a poor widow, coming, casts in two mites, which is a quadrans. And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, 'Verily, I am saying to you that this poor widow casts in more than all who are casting into the treasury. For all cast out of their superfluity, yet she, out of her want, casts in all, as much as she had—her whole livelihood'" (Mark 12:41-44).

"Twice we are exhorted by our apostle to reclaim the era (Eph.5:16; Col.4:5). Let us remind ourselves that, in all the glory and perfection which we will enjoy above, we will lack one way of honoring our Lord and glorifying Him, that is, by a walk in faith and obedience. And just this brings Him an honor which we cannot accord Him when above. Therefore we should prize such occasions and use them to the full" (*Unsearchable Riches*, vol.46. page 253).

MORE COMPASSIONATE, NOT LESS

All God's acts are dictated by love. Though the evil of humanity *grieved His heart,* and He regretted making humanity on the earth (Gen.6:6), the deluge was not a detached judgment. He sympathizes with His creatures and His heart goes out to them even when they are disobedient.

The spirit of humanity is not at any time able to comprehend why the apostle should be rejoicing in his sufferings that Christ should thus be heralded (Phil.1:18). But, conversely, graced with the glory of the spirit of God and awaiting the summons of our Lord, are we at present indifferent to the groaning and travailing of creation?

Does the sheer prodigality of human life after years of miserable pain and sorrow which afflict humanity leave us unmoved? Surely, this same spirit makes us *more compassionate, not less!*

We are awaiting the sonship, the deliverance of our bodies. "Now, similarly, the spirit also is aiding our infirmity, for what we should be praying for, to accord with what must be, we are not aware, but the spirit itself is pleading for us with inarticulate groanings" (Rom.8:26).

On every side we witness unceasing research and investigation. There is a helplessness in it all. Timothy was warned that in the last days many would be immoral and vain, ". . . always learning and yet not at any time able to come into a realization of the truth" (2 Tim.3:1-9). With Paul, from whom we all derive so much strength, we must be, ". . . reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us. For the premonition of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God" (Rom.8:18,19). May we always keep the glory of the consummation foremost in our minds, but especially in our hearts. Donald Fielding

THE INITIAL ACTIONS OF GOD

THE ACTIONS of God are expressive of His being. The fact that God *creates* (Gen.1:1) tells us much about His power and ability. But this has been put into question by the introduction of chaos, vacancy and darkness into the scene (Gen.1:2). Now, starting with Genesis 1:3-5, we are becoming more acquainted with God by means of His further actions, which deal with the chaos and darkness. These initial actions of deliverance are expressed by the common verbs, *say, see, separate* and *call.* These activities, especially the first two, are basic in human affairs, and it is not without significance that we find God dealing with the emptiness and darkness of Genesis 1:2 by means of these very elementary actions.

The vibrating of God's spirit (1:2) is directed through His words "Let light come to be," and is then centered in the light that came to be. So also God powerfully enlightens us by His Word, revealing Himself while dealing effectively with the chaos and darkness of our individual lives. What He says identifies the goal of good, which is then perceived.

The further actions of God in this passage certainly have the goal of good in view. God separates between two opposites, dividing the evil from the good, and identifies each by a name by which they are called. These actions, however do not, in themselves, speak of the goal, but are directed toward it. They bring order where there once was chaos. But The darkness which is called "night" is only a temporary part of the process toward the goal of permanent, and fully appreciated light.

GOD IS SAYING

The second action, therefore, directly attributed to God in Scripture is that He *says* or speaks a thought. He did not speak in English of course, saying the words, "Let light come to be," or, even more literally, speaking in the form of a declaration, "It is becoming light." Even if we could reproduce the Hebrew words here accurately, we would not grasp by that means what is being revealed in Genesis 1:3. It is unimportant as far as we are concerned what the words *sounded* like. The likeness that we are interested in is the likeness to God which His message conveys. The vital point is that these words were spoken *by God,* and that they were keen and operative (*cf* Heb.4:12), reflecting His glory.

We did not hear this commanding declaration, but we who believe know something of the character of the words of God. We know something of the traits of this first recorded message of God because we have become acquainted with the power and music and enlightenment of God's words to us. "The opening of Your words is enlightening . . . . Refined is Your promise exceedingly" (Psa.119:130,140). His words are *inspired* and *beneficial* in countless ways to the believer (*cf* 2 Tim.3:16,17).

On hearing the evangel of our salvation, and on believing also, we "are sealed with the holy spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13). The word has come to us that Christ died for our sins, that He was entombed and has been roused (1 Cor. 15:3,4). With the hearing and accepting of this faithful saying (*cf* 1 Tim.1:15), we received spiritual enlightenment and invigoration (Gal.3:2,3), like Abraham many centuries ago (Rom.4:20).

Anyone who has ever heard and believed the word of gratuitous grace (*cf* Rom.3:24), no matter the measure of faith, will have had some inkling of the glory of that

which God *says.* His words are powerful and effective, enlightening and invigorating.

We read these words of Genesis 1:3-5 over and over again, and we discover anew each time how fitting they are, how basic and fundamental, yet profound and inexhaustible. They encourage and assure us, for once God has spoken of good to come, that good cannot fail of coming.

The words declaring the coming of light and order and life in Genesis chapter one are, according to the psalmist, still going forth, day after day, into the entire earth, recounting the glory of God (Psa.19:1-6). So also His words to Israel restore and rejoice the hearts of His people (Psa.19:7-14). Even so believers today are lifted up and strengthened by "the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God" (2 Cor.4:4). For we have heard a word of truth and love, paralleling the words of Genesis 1:3, given by "the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining . . . Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (4:6).

Human disbelief is merely darkness. Human stubbornness and irreverence and enmity are only chaos. They cannot withstand the power of life-giving light. As soon as God removes the ignorance, whether by graciously granting faith or by showing the truth visibly in the Person of His Son, the light will come forth and do its work until all are enlightened and the darkness is eliminated everywhere.

GOD IS SEEING

God's direct activities have led to good. His work of creating and then of speaking in conjunction with the vibrating of His spirit have dealt with disorder and darkness and ended with good. This is what God always looks forward to. Through "world mights of . . . darkness" (*cf* Eph.6:12) He has subjected His creation to the vanity of suffering,

corruption, groaning and travailing, but He has done so "in expectation." He anticipates with a sure and certain hope that it will end in good, so that "creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:18-25).

What will God see when the present corruption is finished? To what end is God leading the current situation of a creation groaning in chaos and darkness? The evangel that light shall shine out of the darkness in and through the faith of Jesus Christ leads to good. Every knee shall bow and every tongue avow that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, and God will be All in all (Phil. 2:10,11; 1 Cor.15:28).

God will not rest until He *sees* that which He set out to achieve. "From the toil of His soul He shall *see* light, and He shall be satisfied by His knowledge" (Isa.53:11). That is the great and glorious goal of God, toward which all His actions are directed. In Genesis 1 God's seeing of light came "from" what He said, from His word. The light which God will see in the consummation will come "from the toil of His soul," centered most specifically in that toil of the suffering and shame of His Son, foretold in Isaiah 53.

GOD IS SEPARATING

God's work of separating light from darkness is a great work. But it is not a goal in the same sense as the seeing of good. It is, as we have noted above, part of God's process in reaching that goal, but it is not the goal itself. As long as darkness remains, even though it is separated from light, the goal has not been reached. Eventually there will be no more darkness at all, fully in accord with John's vision of the new earth (Rev.22:4). We who believe are rescued out of the jurisdiction of Darkness and transported into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in accord with God's delight to reconcile all to Him through His beloved Son

(Col.1:13-20). The purpose of God will not be realized until all darkness is gone.

Hence the separation of darkness from light represents an important step forward, while further manifesting God's wisdom and power. A period of darkness remains, of necessity under current conditions, teaching us daily, by contrast, the values of light. In this sense we can say that darkness clarifies light. But once it has fulfilled its purpose it can be removed so that light alone remains. The jurisdiction of darkness continues now separately from the kingdom of the Son of God's love, but that kingdom of light and love must increase and broaden until all creation comes under its sole sway.

There is a pattern here which is carried through in many of God's eonian operations. Abram is separated from his family, and Israel is separated from the other nations. Saul and Barnabas are severed from the other apostles, Paul from his birth connections, the believers from the unbelievers. These separations are channels for many blessings, but none of them represent final states. All separations will come to an end, and the light and the joy and the peace and the love which is gained through the blood of the cross will remain alone.

GOD IS CALLING

God gives names to the channels of blessing and those of ignorance and shame which stand in contrast to them. These names speak of the place and function of the thing named in God's eonian operations, but more than this they are evidence of the purposefulness of the Supreme Subjector. The fact that God gives names to the darkness and the light is an indication of God's control over them. God calls the separated period of darkness "night" and continues to see to it that its function is carried out; once that occurs, night will be no more. And God calls the separated

period of light "day" and, through the accomplishment of the cross and the victory of the resurrection, God patiently but surely calls the day into its uninterrupted destiny.

The name *night* is not permanent; the name *day* will always remain and increase its scope. Peter speaks of the "day of the Lord," while hurrying forward to "the presence of God's day" (2 Pet.3:10-13).

Paul says to us that we who are "of the day" are not appointed to indignation "but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess.5:8,9). This is our calling, to be of the day. We might truly say that God calls us "those who are of the day," for indeed we are called "sons of the light and sons of the day" (5:5). By thus calling us, we are certain that we will come into the full enjoyment and appreciation of all that the day of God means. "Faithful is He Who is calling you, Who will be doing it also" (5:24).

All the grand designations by which God calls us will be realized in full by His faithful operations. We are called "saints," hallowed in Christ Jesus (1 Cor.1:2), and named Those-Who-Are-Called-Into-The-Fellowship-Of-God's-Son (1:9). We are The-Called-In-The-Grace-Of-Christ people (Gal.1:6; 2 Tim.1:9). But those who are not given these callings today are not doomed to remain outside of God's callings of light and love forever. For Christ has died for sinners, and God is the Saviour of all mankind.

The darkness is needed for awhile in order to learn about the light. The light is brought into our lives by what God says. God's Word continues to separate for us between the darkness and the light. But the *day* is coming because of the faithful operations of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ when there will not be any more night. Thus God will call all into the light, and He will see that the light is very good.

D.H.H.

DIVINE FOREKNOWLEDGE AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

WE LEARN that man's volitions and actions cannot be such that they occur apart from all necessity by a consideration of God's certain foreknowledge of such very events as those which are comprised of voluntary human behavior.

To make this clear, I wish first to show that God has a certain foreknowledge of man's voluntary acts; second, I would prove that it follows from this that man's voluntary acts cannot be such that they are devoid of all necessity or causality.

One might suppose that it would be wholly unnecessary to set forth such arguments on behalf of any who are sincere and impartial. Do not the Scriptures give abundant testimony to the foreknowledge of God, and is not causality the first dictate of common sense? Yet some deny God's foreknowledge of voluntary acts; and nearly all wish to claim that—the infallible prophetic word of God notwithstanding—voluntary behavior is devoid of all necessity. It therefore becomes needful to prove (1) that God already knows that of which the future consists, and (2) that voluntary behavior, therefore, cannot be such that it is devoid of all necessity.

By way of introduction to our present topic, that of divine foreknowledge and its significance, it should be noted that our interest here is not simply to learn whether God knows the future, but to perceive what this entails, if indeed He knows the future.

The question before us is whether foreknowledge precludes free will. But before we address that specific ques-

tion, we will do well to recognize what the fundamental issues concerning free will are, in any case—whether or not God knows the future.

In philosophy, the view that man's volitions and actions ultimately occur apart from all necessity or causality, is termed *libertarianism.* The similar popular view commonly termed "free will," likewise entails it being true that human choice is ultimately uncaused, that is, that it is finally "indeterministic" in nature.

Proponents of free will recognize that if it should be so that human behavior, in fact, is of a deterministic nature, the notion of freewill moral responsibility (i.e., of categorical could-have-done-otherwiseness) would thereby be precluded. Such ones, however, not only wish to *hold* men responsible (i.e., accountable or liable), but wish to claim that men *are "morally responsible."* What is intended by this phrase is the claim that men are responsible (i.e., liable) for their moral deeds *because* they possess a power of "free will" over them.

By such artful use of the term "responsible," cleverly seeking to get what they want by using a legitimate term in an illegitimate way, proponents of free will do not intend merely an affirmation of the fact of the accountability of the doer of the deed. Instead, they wish to claim and give credence to the necessarily false notion that within the human there exists an ever-present, absolute power of contrary choice, a faculty of choice which is finally undetermined by all influences and conditions, whether of heredity, environment, present state of mind, immediate circumstance, or anything else whatsoever.

Such ones suppose that through their denial of determinism, they will be able to maintain this very notion of absolute contrary choice. Hence, in considerations of ultimate issues of human choice, they opt for and affirm indeterminism while denying determinism. It is not that they are, *ipso facto,* against the proposition of determinism in relation to human behavior. It is only because they are against what the proposition of deterministic human behavior entails, that they therefore have decided against determinism.

Such a bias-based rejection of determinism, however—especially of the *divine* determinism of God's operation of all—is not wise. What of it if a certain proposition (determinism) precludes a certain popular notion and ethical opinion (free will)? That does not make the proposition false; hence it should not be rejected on such a basis.

It is not as if the Scriptures, whether by declaration or corollary, actually affirm the notion of free will. Free will is merely presupposed, and is therefore read *into* the Scriptures. It is not that it is *found* there; it is rather that advocates of that view, inferring its presence and abhorring any thought of its absence, unwittingly seek to *put* it there.

In denying determinism, the free willer necessarily involves himself in indeterminism. Yet indeterminism is just as incapable as determinism in affording any room for free will. This is because an ultimately uncaused event is truly an unaccountable event. Being due to nothing, it can be traced to nothing; hence no one is responsible for it. It is an event of sheer chance: uncontrolled, and uncontrollable. Specifically, it is not an event over which one might even conceivably exercise control, whether to bring it to pass or to prevent its occurrence.

Since both determinism and indeterminism (or any combination of the two) preclude free will, free will, therefore, cannot be true. Further, since in all possible worlds, free will is precluded, it is impossible to give any objective account of how it might exist. That which is necessarily unreal, cannot be made real by the mere force of rhetoric. All that one can do in the interests of free will is to engage in circular arguments on its behalf, special pleading, on the assumption of a necessarily incorrect premise,

that of the validity of traditional ethics, which demand the existence of free will.

VOLITION CONNECTED TO ACTION

In this first principal section, I wish to demonstrate that God foreknows what man will do; that, specifically, He has an absolute and certain foreknowledge of the voluntary, moral actions of men. If God did not foreknow, He could not foretell, peremptorily, and to a certainty. If God had no more than an uncertain guess, He could declare no more than an uncertain guess.

It should similarly be noted that if God did not already know what men's future choices will be, neither could He foreknow those events which are dependent on and the consequences of these choices. The knowledge of the existence of the one depends on the knowledge and existence of the other. Hence, one cannot be more certain than the other.

"Therefore, how many, how great, and how extensive soever the consequences of the volitions of moral agents may be, though they should extend to an alteration of the state of things throughout the universe and should be continued in a series of successive events to all eternity and should in the progress of things branch forth into an infinite number of series, each of them going on in an endless line or chain of events, God must be as ignorant of all these consequences as He is of the volitions whence they take their rise. All these events, and the whole state of things depending on them [i.e., upon the volitions of moral agents]—how important, extensive, and vast soever—must be hid from Him."[1] That is, it must be so that

1. Jonathan Edwards, FREEDOM OF THE WILL *(A Careful and Strict Inquiry into the Prevailing Notions of that Freedom of the Will Supposed to be Essential to Moral Agency, Virtue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame)*, p.62 (New York: 1881, Robert Carter and Brothers).

God knows nothing of future events which are the outcome of the choices of moral agents, if He knows nothing of the future choices of moral agents.

In light of these considerations, I would now observe the following:

Men's moral conduct—their virtues and their vices, their uprightness and their wickedness, things rewardable and punishable, praiseworthy and blameworthy—have often been foretold by God. Pharaoh's evil moral conduct, in refusing to obey God's command in letting His people go, was foretold (Ex.3:19; *cp* 7:4; 9:30; 11:9).

Josiah's righteous moral conduct in opposition to idolatry was foretold over three hundred years before he was born (1 Kings 13:1-6,32). This prophecy, effectually, was also a prophecy of the idolatry which Josiah would oppose.

1 Kings 21:20-22 foretold the wicked and foolish conduct of Ahab in which he would refuse to obey the word of Yahweh which came to him by the prophet Micaiah, choosing instead to hearken to the false prophets in going to Ramoth Gilead to his ruin.

In 2 Kings 8:12 the wicked moral conduct of Hazael, king of Aram, is foretold, to the consternation of Hazael himself. The prophet Elisha spoke of that which he knew, not what he conjectured, when saying that of the sons of Israel, Hazael would slay their young men, dash their infants to pieces, and rip up their pregnant women.

Long before his birth, the moral conduct of Cyrus is foretold, in his mercy to Yahweh's people and regard to the true Elohim, in turning the captivity of the Jews and promoting the building of the temple (Isa.44:28; 45;13; *cp* 2 Chron.36:22,23; Ezra 1:1-4).

Nathan's prophecy against David (2 Sam.7:11,12) was fulfilled by the horrible wickedness of Absalom, in rebelling against his father, seeking his life, and lying with his concubines in the light of day.

The prophecy against Solomon (1 Kings 11:11-13), was fulfilled by Jeroboam's wicked rebellion and usurpation. The prophecy against Jeroboam's family (1 Kings 14), was fulfilled by the conspiracy, treason, and cruel murders of Baasha (1 Kings 15:27).

The future cruelty of the Egyptians in oppressing Israel, and God's judgment of them for it, was foretold long before it came to pass (Gen.15:13,14).

The final obstinancy of those Jews who were left in the land of Israel, in their idolatry and rejection of the true God, was foretold in Jeremiah 44:26,27. In Isaiah 48, God tells the people that He had predicted those things which would be the consequences of their treachery and obstinancy, because He knew that they *would* be obstinate, and that He had declared these things beforehand for their conviction of His being the only true God.

The destruction of Babylon, together with many of its circumstances, was foretold as God's judgment for the great pride and haughtiness of king Nebuchadnezzar and his successors, for their wickedly destroying other nations, and especially for their exalting themselves against the true God and His people. Yet the prophetic word concerning these things was foretold before any of these monarchs existed (Isa.13,14,47; *cp* Hab.2:5-20; Jer.1; Jer.51)! The immorality which the people of Babylon, particularly her princes and great men, were guilty of in the very night that the city was destroyed (the revelling and drunkenness at Belshazzar's idolatrous feasts) was foretold (Jer.51:39,57).

The return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity is foretold in detail, peremptorily, and with many circumstances (Jer.31:35-40; 32:6-15, 41-44; 33:24-26). The very time of their return was announced (Jer.25:11,12; 29:10-12; 2 Chron.36:21; Ezek.4:6; Dan.9:2), and yet the prophecies represent their return as dependent upon their repentance, which itself is expressly and particularly foretold (Jer.29:12-14; 31:8,9,18-31; 50:4,5; Ezek.6:8-10; 7:16; 14:22,23; 20:43,44).

The sufferings pertaining to the Christ and the glories after these (*cp* 1 Pet.1:10,11), are abundantly foretold in Scripture. That the Messiah should suffer greatly through the malice and cruelty of men is both typically and literally set forth (*cp* Psa.22; Micah 5:1; Matt.27:35,43; John 19:24). Indeed, these things had to happen ("thus it must occur," Matt.26:54), that the scripture may be fulfilled. The event of the crucifixion was, at once, the outworkings of the malicious wickedness of men, and, the loving sacrifice of God. "For of a truth, in this city were gathered against Thy holy Boy Jesus, Whom Thou dost anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the nations and the peoples of Israel, *to do whatever Thy hand and Thy counsel designates beforehand to occur*" (Acts 4:27,28).

At the deepest level, the death of Christ was the work of God, according to the wisdom of His counsel, for the achievement of the desires of His heart in the salvation of all mankind (1 Tim.2:4; 4:10; 1 Cor.15:22-28) and the reconciliation of all, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Col.1:20). Ultimately speaking, though He does no wrong, and no conceit is in His [i.e., Christ's] mouth, yet *Yahweh desires* to crush Him, and *causes* Him to be wounded (Isa.53:10).

Following the resurrection of Christ, and the severing of Barnabas and Saul (who is also Paul), for the work to which God had called them, Paul met with many grievous persecutions. And yet these persecutions were foretold. The Lord said concerning Paul: "He is a choice instrument of Mine, to bear My name before both the nations and kings, besides the sons of Israel, for I shall be intimating to him how much he *must* be suffering for My name's sake" (Acts 9:15,16). As Paul himself declared, "And now, lo! I, bound in spirit, am going to Jerusalem, not being aware what I

will meet with in it, more than that the holy spirit, city by city, certifies to me, saying that bonds and afflictions are remaining for me" (Acts 20:22,23).

Likewise, the prophet Agabus declared, picking up Paul's girdle, binding his own feet and hands, saying, "Now this the holy spirit is saying, 'The man whose girdle this is, *shall* the Jews in Jerusalem be binding thus, and they *shall* be giving him over into the hands of the nations'" (Acts 21:11).

Similarly, Paul himself asseverated to the Ephesian elders, saying, "Now I am aware that, after I am out of reach, burdensome wolves *will* be entering among you, not sparing the flocklet. And from among yourselves *will* arise men, speaking perverse things to pull away disciples after themselves" (Acts 20:29,30).

The entirety of the book of Revelation comprises, "The Unveiling of Jesus Christ, which God gives to Him, to show to His slaves *what must occur* swiftly" [i.e., in swiftness] (Rev.1:1). This is so whether concerning the character of the various Jewish ecclesias of Asia Minor which will obtain there in the day of the Lord, or the many fearful judgments that will come upon the earth in that day, rehearsed throughout the scroll in such detail.

Most notably, the day will come when "the seventh messenger trumpets. And loud voices occurred in heaven, saying, 'The kingdom of this world became our Lord's and His Christ's, and He shall be reigning for the eons of the eons! Amen!'" (Rev.11:15). Though Satan is to be bound during the thousand years' glorious reign of Christ, this is only "until the thousand years should be finished. After these things, he *must* be loosed a little time" (Rev.20:3b). Then, "Satan *will* be loosed out of his jail. And he *will* be coming out to deceive all the nations which are in the four corners of the earth" (Rev.20:8a).

Indeed, in Revelation 17:17, we are told why the nations who serve as the men of God's counsel in bringing such fearful judgment upon the Jews in Babylon will do so: "*for God imparts to their hearts to form His opinion,* and to form one opinion, and to give their kingdom to the wild beast, until the words of God *shall* be accomplished" (Rev.17:17).

The various prophecies rehearsed above, are but a few of the far greater number of prophecies that might also be set forth in still more abundant testimony of the fact that God foreknows the moral volitions and actions of men.

THE OUTCOME OF GOD'S OPERATIONS

Beyond the rehearsal of the prophetic word, no doubt the greatest proof that God knows the future is because God controls the future. *Seeing that* out of Him and through Him and for Him is *all,* Paul therefore rhetorically affirms that no one *knew* the mind of the Lord, became His adviser, or gives to Him *first* (*cf* Rom.11:34-36). Thus it becomes evident that the all that is out of, through, and for God, is all that exists and all that occurs.

Since all is *out of* God, God certainly knows all that will occur, prior to its occurrence. Since all is *through* God—Who is *operating all* according to the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11)—it is evident that God is by no means ignorant as to the outcome of His own operations. Since all is *for* God and will yet redound to His glory (*cf* "to Him be the glory," Rom.11:36), we may be certain that God *knows* what He will do before He does it, of which the events of history are the result, according to His own unspeakably wise designs and powerful operations.

THE NECESSITY OF THE CONSEQUENCE AS RELATED TO PROPHECY

Finally, I would prove, apart from other demonstrations of the same conclusion, that on the ground of divine foreknowledge alone, human volition cannot be of a nature such as to debar all necessity. That is to say, it cannot be

of such a nature as is claimed under the banner of "free will," which therefore is necessarily a false concept.

It is true that foreknowledge does not *cause* future events. But it is just as true that foreknowledge *proves* that both future events and the human volitions from which they result, *are caused.* Therefore, the volitions and events of which the future is comprised, cannot be volitions and events of "free will," since free will is claimed to be an ultimately uncaused phenomenon.

It is evident with regard to a thing whose own existence is infallibly and ineliminably connected with something which has or has had existence, that the existence of that thing itself is necessary. Even as the existence of knowledge of the past makes it so that the events of the past are necessary, the existence of knowledge of the future makes it so that the events of the future are necessary. The existence of actual knowledge of past events, makes it too late to alter the past. Likewise, the existence of actual knowledge of future events, makes it too late to alter the future.

Most cannot believe that, "Yahweh has *made everything* for its own pertinent end, yea even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov.16:4). Hence, they speak of His "permissive decree," or of His "allowing" the occurrence of evil, the implication being that God *only* "allows" events to transpire while causing none of them to occur—whether the good or the evil—within the sphere of human conduct.

It is the *inevitability* of the future and *the lack of ultimate human control* concerning it, to which they object, when seeking to distance the Deity from the course of history and the affairs of His own universe, having no room in their view of things for the fact that God makes the world and all that is in it (Acts 17:24).

The fact is, however, that there is no more *fatality* (i.e., inevitability) in the universal *operations* of God, than that which already obtains in the universal *foreknowledge* of God, this latter proposition being affirmed at least formally by nearly all who are naming the name of the Lord. Hence, to be consistent, if one wishes to object to the deity of God (i.e., to His Subjectorship in the operation of all), one should object as well both to His omniscience and to His prescience. Our teaching of God's universal deity no more entails it being so that free will is false, than the teaching of God's universal knowledge, including universal foreknowledge, likewise entails it being so that free will is false. Hence it does not become those who decry our teaching concerning God's deity to do so because of its preclusion of free will, when their own teaching of God's foreknowledge is open to the same fleshly objection.

In light of all the things we have considered here, it becomes evident that not only is the popular notion of free-will responsibility a seriously mistaken concept, but that the freewill suppositions commonly associated both with *praise* and with *blame* are gravely confused and mistaken as well. Hence our attitude concerning matters of praise and blame, and our response to actions which evoke either praise or blame, have become in need of adjustment.

Since the notion of free will is demonstrably false, it follows that the practice of either praising or blaming *because* of one's supposed exercise of free will in the acts for which one is praised or blamed, should be repudiated. The viability of praise and blame stands alone, apart from free will. Both praise and blame are already practicable and enjoy a proper sphere of operation, prior to the introduction of any spurious notions of free will. All that is necessary here is to rid both of these terms from the freewill *inferences* which many have made concerning them, which inferences they have consequently foisted upon these words themselves.

Both praise and blame must be confined to the excellence, or ignominy, of that which one *does* or that which one *is,* even as for the *motive* from which one acts. To praise is to laud and acclaim; to blame is to charge with wrongdo-

ing, even as, often, to connote liability. Thus understood, even in a world devoid of "free will," praise and blame retain a vital place and maintain an important sphere of service. The glory of virtue and the horror of vice, the importance of the advocacy of righteousness and the condemnation of sin, even as the incentive of reward for good and the deterrence of punishment for evil—none of these practical realities or salutary practices are diminished whatsoever by one's repudiation of free will.

It is a wonderful thing to view others, and yes, to view oneself as well, as those whose ways and deeds are "of God," both in cases in which one's actions are of God faithfully speaking as well as decretively speaking, and in cases, too, in which one's actions are not of God, faithfully speaking, even though, decretively speaking, they are of Him.

It is true that even with this realization, we will still have our reactionary attitudes of pleasure or displeasure, and, sometimes, even of anger or pride. But when these things arise in us, as we accept anew that the offense at hand was "part of the all" that is out of, through, and for God, *our outlook on life will be revolutionized,* and that in a most helpful way. Then, according as God gives grace, we may become more mindful of our own duty to deal graciously with the offense of others (Col.3:13) than desirous to maintain offense and bitterness.

In closing, we can only say, O, the *depth* of the riches and the wisdom and the *knowledge* of God! How inscrutable His judgments, and untraceable His ways (Rom.11:33)! We marvel and praise our God and Father in consideration of His operation of all and His knowledge of all. As the Psalmist declares, "Your eyes saw my embryo, and my days, all of them were written upon Your scroll; the days were formed when there was not one of them" (Psa.139:16). What a joy, and what a peace, in believing (Rom.15:13)!

J.R.C.

WISDOM AND TOIL

WITHIN the book of Ecclesiastes there are five "books" presenting the words of the Assembler concerning the works of the human, viewed finally as God's word concerning His works. In the first "book" (1:12-2:26) the author analyzes the perplexing problems of *individual* experience in the spheres of wisdom and toil. First of all he takes up wisdom, and in tracing knowledge finds that the condition of affairs under the sun is not what it should be, and that it is beyond man's power to correct. "What is distorted cannot be set in order, and what is lacking cannot be counted" (1:15).

Further pursuit of knowledge yields nothing beyond this positive idea. To go beyond is useless labor ("a grazing on wind"), which, while augmenting vexation and pain, contributes nothing of value towards the solution of the riddle (1:12-18):

12 **I my**self, the **Assembler, came** to **be king over Israel in Jerusalem.** 13 + **I** [g]**applied `my heart to inquiring⁻ and › exploring⁻** [i]**by wisdom** [on]**concerning all** [w]**that is done under the heavens: it** is an **experience of evil Elohim has given to the sons of humanity to humble** them [i]**by it.**

14 **I saw `all the** [d]**deeds** [w]**that are done under the sun,**
And behold, the whole is **vanity and** a **grazing** on **wind.**

15 What is **distorted**[l] [l]**cannot ›** be **set in order⁻,**
And what is **lacking** [l]**cannot ›** **be counted⁻.**

16 **I´ spoke with my heart, › saying⁻,**
Behold, I´ have [e]**grown** [mn]**great**
and have added in **wisdom**

Over all who [b]**were over Jerusalem before me;**
[+] **My heart has seen much**[–] of **wisdom and knowledge.**
17 [+]**Then I** [lg]**applied my heart to know wisdom,**
[+]**As** well as to **know**[–] about **raving and frivolity;**
I realize [w]**that even this, it** is a **grazing** on **wind.**
18 **For in much wisdom** is **much vexation,**
And he who [l]**adds knowledge** [l]**adds pain.**

DEEDS AND TOIL

The Assembler turns to the sphere of toil. As a king, he is endowed with the combination of all objects of human envy, and enters upon an experiment, by which the several kinds of good things are successively subjected to review. First, he accumulates without limit all possible objects of pleasure, and then engages in all kinds of human effort. The experiment includes the pleasures that are called frivolities; he gives himself freely to them, but while experimenting in frivolity he retains all the while "wisdom of heart" that could reflect on the frivolity.

The experiment is successful considered as an experiment. Success in achieving these enterprises brings with it an impression of pleasure; but when reflection is turned upon them there is no satisfaction. Ability to gratify his every wish and carry out his extensive undertakings has, after all, only met the wants of physical existence. Rich delights have pandered the soul, pleased the eye, tickled the palate, but have only appeased the feeling of hunger the same as a common meal, providing nothing for the spiritual cravings (2:1-11):

2 I′ said in my heart: Do [go]**come** [pr]**then,**
Let me probe you [i]**with rejoicing;**
[+]**Now** [see]**look** [i]**at** what is **good.**
[+]**But behold, even this** was **vanity.**
2 [›] **Mirth, I said,** is a **raving,**

And [›] **rejoicing, what then** is it [d]**achieving?**
3 **I explored** with**in my heart**
[›]**by stimulating**[–] [`]**my flesh** [i]**with wine**
(**[+]While my heart** was **leading** [i]**with wisdom)**
And [›]**by** getting a **hold**[–] [i]**on frivolity,**
Until [w] **I should see just where good** may be
for the sons of humanity
In [w]**what they** [l]**do under the heavens**
during the **number of days** in **their lives.**
4 **I** [c]**made great** things as **my** [d]**works;**
I built houses for myself;
I planted vineyards for myself;
5 **I** [d]**made gardens and parks for my**self,
And I planted in them trees of every fruit.
6 **I** [d]**made reservoirs of water for my**self,
To irrigate from them the **sprouting grove of trees.**
7 **I acquired** men**servants and maid**servant**s,**
And any **sons** born in the **house**hold **became mine;**
Moreover, [mn]**abundant**[–] **cattle, herd**s
and flocks **became mine,**
More [f]**than all who** [b]**were** [i]**over Jerusalem before me.**
8 **I collected** [mr]**also silver and gold for my**self,
[+] The **valuable** treasures **of kings and** [·]**provinces;**
I [d]**provided** male **singers**[l] **and** female **singers**[l]
for myself,
And with the **rich delights of** the **sons of humanity,**
[7]a wine **waiter**[l] **and** wine **waitresses**[l~].
9 [+]**As I** grew **great**er **and added** more [f]**than anyone**
who [b]**was** [i]**over Jerusalem before me.**
Indeed my wisdom, it stayed [›]**by me.**
10 [+] **All** [w]**that my eyes asked** for **I** did **not deny** [f]**to them;**
I did **not withhold** [`]**my heart from any rejoicing,**
For my heart had **rejoicing from all my toil,**
And this itself [b]**was my portion from all my toil.**

11 +**Yet** when **I′ faced** *i* **all my** *d*__deeds__
*w*__that my hands had done,__
And *i* the **toil** *w*__that I had toiled__ ›__in doing__‹ them,
+ **Behold, the whole** was **vanity and** a **grazing** on **wind,**
And there **was no**thing of **advantage under the sun.**

TO SEE WISDOM

Next, with burdened heart, the Assembler turns reflection on to wisdom itself, together with its opposites, raving and frivolity (2:12), to see if here any genuine satisfaction is to be found. He sees at once that wisdom excels its opposite as light excels darkness; but this is neutralized by the further consideration that both are involved in the same destiny of death; so that in the presence of the King of Terrors the pursuit of wisdom, despite infinite superiority to its opposite, seems not only profitless but "evil" (vs.17). "Since the destiny of the stupid man is also mine, and it shall befall me, to what advantage then have I been wise? Hence I spoke in my heart, This too is vanity" (2:15).

12 +**Then I′ turned around to see wisdom**
compared +**with raving and frivolity**
(For what will **the** *h*__man who__ |__comes after the king__ do
`Beyond *w*__what__ others **have already done?),**
13 **And I′ saw** *w* there **is** more **advantage**
for wisdom *f*__than__ for ˙__frivolity__
Just **as** there is more **advantage** for ˙__light__
*f*__than__ for ˙__darkness;__
14 **The wise** man uses **his eyes in his head,**
+**While** the **stupid** man **walks**| **in darkness;**
+**Yet I′ realized** *mr*__indeed__ *w*__that__ the **same destiny**
|__befalls `them all.__
15 +**So I′ said in my heart,**
*as*__Since__ the **destiny of the stupid** man is *mr*__also mine,__
and **it shall befall me,**

+ **To what advantage then have I′ been wise?**
+**Hence I spoke in my heart,** *w* **This** *mr*__too__ is **vanity.**

FRUIT OF TOIL

Next he returns to survey the fruit of his toil wherein he had toiled under the sun. But this again appears hateful in the light of death, and the necessity of leaving it to a successor, who may prove to be frivolous. The thought and energy expended in the accumulation of goods do not even guarantee that after his departure they will be used in accordance with his wish. The survey has in all its departments ended in illusion (2:18-23):

16 **For** there **is no remembrance** ›__of__ the **wise** man
*wi*__or the stupid__ man **for** the **eon;**
In the days which are **already** ˙__coming__
˙__every__one **is forgotten;**
+ *how*__Alas, the wise__ man |__dies__ along **with the stupid** one**!**
17 +**Then I hated** `__life,__
For *on*__to me the__ *d*__work__ was **evil**
*w*__that was done under the sun,__
For the whole is **vanity and** a **grazing** on **wind.**
18 **And I′ hated** `__all__ the fruit of **my toil**
for **which I** was **toiling under the sun,**
*w*__That I__ would |__leave to__ the *h*__man__
who shall *b*__come after me.__
19 + *a*__Who knows__| if **he shall be** ˙a **wise or** a **frivolous** man**?**
+**Yet he shall** have **authority** *i*__over all__ the fruit
of **my toil** for **which I toiled,**
And in **which I was wise under the sun;**
This *mr*__too__ is **vanity.**
20 +**So I′** turned **around** again ›__with despair__‹ `in **my heart**
Over all the fruit of **toil** for **which**
I had toiled under the sun.
21 **For** there **is** a *h*__man whose__ fruit of **toil** is
in wisdom and in knowledge and in success,

+Yet to another [h]**man who has not toiled** [i]**for it,**
he must [l]**give it** as **his portion;**
This [mr]**too** is **vanity and** a [mn]**great evil.**
22 **For what** is [b]**coming to** a [h]**man** [i]**for all his toil,**
And [i]**for** the **shepherding of his heart**
which he is **toiling under the sun?**
23 **For all his days, pains and vexation** are **his experience;**
Even in the **night his heart will not lie** still;
This [mr]**too, it** is **vanity.**

THIS TOO IS FROM ELOHIM

The knowledge the Assembler has gained is now summed up and wisely related to the hand of Elohim (2:24-26):

24 There **is no**thing **better** [i]**for** a [h]**man**
than [w]**that he should eat and ¯drink**
And cause `his soul to **¯see good** [i]**from his toil;**
This [mr]**too I´ see that it** is **from the hand of Elohim.**
25 **For** [a]**who** can [l]**eat, and** [a]**who** can **have** [l]**pleasure**
outside [f]**of** [7]**Him~**[cs]**?**
26 **For to** the [h]**man who** is **well pleasing before Him,**
He gives wisdom and knowledge and rejoicing;
+Yet to the **sinner**[l] **He gives** the **experience**
`of gathering¯ and `of collecting¯ together**,**
To give it **to** one who is **well pleasing**
before the One**, Elohim;**
This [mr]**too** is **vanity and** a **grazing** on **wind.**

These concluding verses gather up the results. Thus far the experiment has shown that while the processes have been satisfactory and enjoyable the result has invariably been disappointing, even despairingly so when considered in light of the future. Evidence forces the conclusion that present enjoyment is man's only portion. But the important thought occurs that even appreciation of life as it passes is a gift of God, and is not in the power of the seeker.

V. Gelesnoff

FROM THE HAND OF ELOHIM

OUR EXPERIENCE of evil (Ecc.1:13) includes the discovery that nothing on earth is permanent. "All the deeds that are done under the sun, . . . behold, the whole is vanity and a grazing on wind" (1:14). All our efforts and all our gains of good are transitory. We toil and strive with our hands, concentrate and examine with our minds, seeking for our wants and needs, but the pleasures and satisfactions do not last. The figure of speech used here is appropriate; it is like "grazing on wind."

Yet this is *given* to us by God. It is from His hand (Ecc. 1:13; 2:24-26).

GIVEN BY GOD

None of us are rulers in Jerusalem, of the line of David, and few have the means and opportunity to apply our minds and hands as the Assembler could do. But his endeavors and investigations were given to him by God, and our toil and learning have also been given to us by God. We do learn from his reports here in Ecclesiastes, but we verify the truth of what he says by our own experiences. The important lesson for us in this book is to recognize, as the Assembler recognized, that whatever experiences we have and whatever lessons we learn from them are from God's hand.

It is true that we make decisions and do things with our hands. But if we trace our experiences only to ourselves and do not recognize the hand of God behind them all, then we must despair. The Assembler faced all *his deeds* that

his hands had done (2:11). But in the end he associated the experience and the lessons learned with the hand of *Elohim* (2:24).

HUMAN EXPERIENCE AND LEARNING

The Assembler applied his heart, or as we would say today, his mind, "to know wisdom" and such opposites of wisdom as "raving and frivolity" (1:17). This brought him a great deal of *vexation* and *pain* (1:18). He sought mirth (2:2) and frivolity associated with wine (2:3). He accumulated houses, vineyards, gardens, parks, reservoirs of water, servants, cattle and flocks, silver and gold, music and rich delights (2:4-8).

Most of us cannot accumulate such riches, though, to be honest, we do struggle for things that appeal. But wisdom acknowledges in truth, they do not give us lasting pleasure or real contentment anymore than his accumulations gave lasting pleasure to the Assembler.

To be sure, the Assembler found that this wisdom of knowing the vanity of frivolity was far better than the frivolity (Ecc.2:13). But this only temporized the frustration, for "the destiny of the stupid man is also mine, and it shall befall me. To what advantage then have I been wise?" (2:14,15).

This led the Assembler to exclaim, "Then I hated life . . . and I hated all the fruit of my toil for which I was toiling under the sun, that I would leave to the man who shall come after me" (2:17,18).

THIS TOO

All advantages are temporary and relative. Wisdom is better than frivolity, but in the end the wise toiler dies and the stupid, frivolous person dies. If they have gained some good, it is left to someone else. "This too is vanity" (2:19); "this too is vanity and a great evil" (2:21). Not only this,

but even while alive, those who toil diligently with pain and vexation are troubled with unrest even in the night, and "this too, it is vanity" (2:23).

As a whole, the best that can be said is that the enjoyment of good is better than stupidity, even though both are transitory. "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink and cause his soul to see good from his toil" (2:24).

Having said this, the Assembler changes his refrain from observing "This too is vanity," to "This too is from the hand of Elohim." The good of enjoying the fruit of one's labor is fleeting, and so it certainly is vanity, like everything else. But it is good, nevertheless, and the Assembler seizes the point, adding to it that vital recognition of God that gives Ecclesiastes its special place and value among human assessments of human experience.

The new observation, "This too is from the hand of Elohim," is like the old observation, "This too is vanity," in one respect at least. Both assessments include the little word "too." All these human experiences are vanity, or transitory. But they also are all from the hand of God.

"HE GIVES"

It is Elohim Who *gives* the relative goodness of "wisdom and knowledge and rejoicing" to the one who "is well pleasing before Him" (2:26a). It is also Elohim Who *gives* the experience of gathering possessions which ultimately must be given to others (2:26b). He gives the fleeting goodness to some, and He gives the fleeting-ness of gathering and collecting to all, for all are sinners.

In this, as we have insisted, lies the value of the Assembler's wisdom. Compared with the revelations given to Paul, for example, the book of Ecclesiastes takes us only a small step forward in appreciation of God. But the recognition of God as the One Who gives human experience

is essential to our appreciation of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The death of Christ on the cross tells us nothing great or glorious about God unless it is from the hand of God. The salvation of sinners tells us nothing of God's power and love unless it is from the hand of God. Our calling and expectation reveals nothing about God's grace and purpose unless they are from His hand.

PRESENT DANGERS

We live in a world where the recognition of God is denigrated. The traditional, religious presentation of God as an arbitrary tyrant full of eternal wrath against bad people and favoritism toward others for uncertain purposes, is much to blame for this. There are other powerful influences involved, indeed, but whatever the reasons, the fact remains that agnosticism is growing in the minds of modern humanity.

In anger, even in mild annoyance, God is cursed in everyday speech apart from much confidence in His existence, let alone a recognition of Him as the Source of all things. The language is intended to tell more about the speaker than anything whatever about God.

God is also sometimes spoken of more favorably, even prayed to, in formal, ritualistic, pious ways apart from any deep conviction that He is there. This also is done more to bring attention to the human being than the One Who gives us all, and upon Whom we rely for breath and life and meaning for existence.

Consequently, the book of Ecclesiastes is a most valuable portion of God's Word for mankind today. It faces the issues and problems of human experience honestly and forcefully. But more than this, it does so, clearly tracing these experiences to the hand of God, from which all experiences truly come.

D.H.H.

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 Light and Luminaries
155 From Genesis to Romans
163 "Why, Then, is He Still Blaming?"
173 The Elusiveness
of God's Anointed
176 The Times and Seasons
189 Elohim Does It

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 1999
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY

EDITORIAL

We have long given more attention to important, scriptural revelations which have been neglected (and often denied) by other ministries than we have to those we hold in common with all our brethren. Faith in God, our Creator and Father, finding joy and peace in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ Who died for our sakes, was roused from the dead, ascended and exalted, Who is our life and expectation—these, and many other teachings of God's Word are shared with us by thousands upon thousands who have never heard of our little magazine or even the Concordant Version. And among those who *have* heard of our ministry are many who bitterly oppose it, and yet we recognize that we stand together with them on vital and basic issues at which the world in general scoffs.

It would seem better and wiser from the standpoint of human power and influence to seek out ways toward agreement so that the fundamental truth of God's love in Christ might be advanced without all the present in-fightings and jealousies and political ambitions. Yet this is not the way set forth in the Scriptures; indeed it is rightly so that it should not even be considered. For truth is truth, and if it is diluted or compromised, whatever the motivation, it can no longer be the truth that mankind so desperately needs.

This is not to say that we see our ministry as wrestling with those of our brethren who have distorted the truth of the evangel. This would be contrary to Paul's reminder in Ephesians 6:12. Like Paul, we would speak boldly and beseech prayers from our readers that we may do so (Eph. 6:18-20). But we must speak apart from anger and self-promotion, in accord with the disposition of Christ (Phil.2:5-8).

We would speak the truth with the realization that we all are members of one another (Eph.4:25).

It is difficult to understand how the evangel of God's gratuitous grace and vast love can appear so dangerous to believers, and how the truth of God's deity, that He is operating all things toward a goal of universal reconciliation and good can seem so threatening to spiritual growth, yet God's Word has made it plain that this would be so. We continue to point to such revelations from the Scriptures.

God is the Source of all things (a continuing theme throughout this issue). He has a purpose for evil, for judgment, for the many puzzling and transitory experiences of our lives. And He brings out the good end which He has purposed, apart from any contribution of our good works, in His grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.

We testify to these true declarations of God's Word not in fear of the opposition they seem to arouse, and not in any spirit of pride or self-advancement, but with feelings much as Paul expressed in 1 Corinthians 9:16. "For if I should be bringing the evangel, it is not for me to boast in, for necessity is lying upon me, for it were woe to me if I should not be bringing the evangel!" How can we not speak of the living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind? For we rely on Him. How can we not speak of the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God? For He has commended His love to us while we are still sinners.

We rejoice when other believers announce such a message of grace and seek to glorify God as He reveals Himself in Christ, even if they seem to oppose what they proclaim by additions from human traditions. We would avoid such distortions, though we recognize our own frailties. May God hasten the day when we all will be enlightened with realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). In the meantime, let us go forward together as God gives us grace, in making known His Word. D.H.H.

LIGHT AND LUMINARIES

OUR popular versions do not discriminate between the Hebrew words, *aur* light (Gen.1:3,4), and *maur,* light-(bearer), or luminary (Gen.1:14-16). The herbage of the third day (Gen.1:11-13) could not have lived in total darkness. In my very early years we lived in a four-apartment house with a rather small yard in the rear. I wanted to grow a garden, and was very serious about it. But where? I had a brilliant idea. I would dig a cave under the back-yard and grow my garden in that! I dug quite a hole, but, to my chagrin, we moved to another place, where I could not dig at all. Not till I came to California did we have a garden, and I learned that gardens do not grow without *light!*

Whatever light there was on the earth up to the fourth day seems to have come from invisible sources. The luminaries, with which we are now so well acquainted, could not be seen. These play a very important function during the eons, for they not only give an appreciation of the source of light, and, through it, of God Himself—for He is light—but they are the basis of all time periods. We could hardly measure time without them. We could not set any dates or fill any appointments without such a calendar, or time-piece.

Besides being God's great clock, they are the visible representations of the invisible celestial powers. As the sun "rules" the day, so Christ as the *sun* of righteousness will rule in the day of Yahweh. The moon is not a true luminary, for it only reflects the light instead of giving it forth. So the rulers of darkness have a pale adumbration of the

true light. Moreover, the moon, unlike the sun, is variable, and so the rulers of this darkness, now waxed to the full, will wane to almost complete extinction when the sun competes with it in the day of Christ's glory.

The little phrase "the stars also" (Gen.1:16, AV), marks a crisis in my life. I was intensely interested in the stars, and awed by the immensity and glory of the universe, and intended to make astronomy my life work. I also decided to read all the great books. Being too poor to buy any, I commenced with the Bible given to me some time before by my parents. But I insisted on *understanding* what I read. Nevertheless I did not dally with the first part of creation, as I supposed it to be. But when I came to the "lights," and read that God made "the stars also," as if they were a mere side issue, I was quite overwhelmed. In my studies I had been utterly amazed at their number and immensity. To dismiss them with the terse touch, "the stars also," seemed incredible. It greatly enhanced my awe of the Bible, and led me to study it closely. But, as I expect to take up astronomy later, when I visit the stars, I have changed my vocation to the study of the Scriptures.

THE LAMPSTAND

The light within the tabernacle was very different from that without. Its source is full of significance. The process by which it was made is in highest harmony with the elementary truths of the evangel. It was not a "candlestick," which burned tallow tapers, but *lamps* which used *olive oil.* It is not by chance that this was produced by *beating* and *crushing* or *pounding.* These bring to our mind the great Antitype, Who is the Light of the world (John 8:12). Just as the olive berries are beaten with a rod in order to loose them from the tree, so He suffered at the hands of the soldiers (Matt.27:30). I once was witness to the beating of an olive tree just outside the window of the

Jewish pension at which I stayed in the new part of Jerusalem. Alas! How little did the Jewish children who did the beating understand of the sufferings of their Messiah which they rehearsed!

THE CRUSHING OF THE BERRIES

But the beating given the berries on the tree did not turn them into oil for the light. A much more painful process was pictured by the various ways in which the oil was expressed. First they are usually crushed into pulp in a stone mill. But this does not extract all of the oil, so that the pulp was sometimes sewn up in canvas or horsehair bags and trodden by the feet of the women. More often still it was put into small flexible baskets and placed under a wooden press operated by a screw or lever. But the clearest oil, such as was used for the lampstand in the tabernacle was extracted by *pounding* (Ex.27:20; 29:40; Lev.24:2; Num.28:5; 1 Kings 5:11 (25). The same Hebrew stem is used in the recurrent phrase *"pound* their swords into plowshares" (Isa.2:4; Joel 3:10; Micah 4:3).

Thus is provided the illumination which comes from the oil in the seven-branched lampstand. This is the light that is shed abroad in the hearts of all the saints who are privileged to go inside the portiere. This is the illumination which is indispensable for all who desire to have fellowship with God, as set forth by the bread of the presence, and who wish to worship Him, as typified by the golden altar of incense. This is the light that Cain lacked. He sought to have communion with God and to sacrifice to Him in the darkness of unbelief. And today, even in Christendom, are there not myriads of pious religionists who are worshiping in the way of Cain?

The fact that oil is one of the symbols of God's spirit is evident from its use in *anointing* for spiritual *power* in ordaining a priest, a prophet, or a king. But its special sig-

nificance, as seen in the tabernacle, makes it the source of *light.* Darkness hides the *false,* light reveals the *truth.* Hence it is essential in any present offering to the Deity. It was absent from Cain's offering, which shows that it was false. This was confirmed by his later actions. In literal language we are told that, by *faith,* Abel offers to God more of a sacrifice than Cain, through which he was testified to that he is just (Heb.11:4). The light that he had came from believing God, and the lack of light on Cain's part arose from his refusal to accept God's Word. Apart from oil, from truth, from the light of faith, no worship or sacrifice can possibly be acceptable to the Deity.

THE DIM LIGHT

Notwithstanding the fact that the lampstand had seven lamps, the light it shed was not very bright. It was not to be compared with the Shekinah glory behind the inner curtain. Visiting the sites of archaeological explorations, I have seen hundreds of very ancient lamps. They were mostly quite small, shaped like a sauce dish, with an outlet for a wick opposite the handle, and could hardly have given as much light as a modern lamp with a chimney. They were burned all night through, for it was usually considered impossible to sleep in the dark. To say that a man's light had gone out was a feelingful figure of his death.

IMMATURITY

But even this had its significance. The holy place was not perfection. It was only the anteroom to the most holy. It typifies the time which the apostle Paul declared to be immature, an installment, when they saw by means of a mirror, in an enigma (AV, "through a glass darkly," 1 Cor. 13:9-12). Up to the time when Christ, the great Antitype of all the sacrifices, expired on the cross, the curtain between the holy and most holy places kept out the light

of the glory, so it was comparatively dim in the first compartment, even as it was in Israel before Christ, the Light of the world, offered Himself to God.

THE CURTAIN RENT

But now the curtain is rent! The blinding light of the glory, such as Paul saw when he was called, is illuminating all as never before. Its full significance was never realized by the earlier apostles. Only in Paul's writings do we see the full and final and perfect illumination of the divine presence above the propitiatory. The glory light now shines, not only in the holy of holies, but illumines the holy place also. The very lampstand itself is glorified by its beams. Literally, where there was pardon, there is now justification, where there was redemption, there is now reconciliation. Where there was access to God only through intermediaries, through one nation, now all have access in one spirit to the Father Himself (Eph.1:18).

THE LIGHT OF THE GLORY

In the far future, the new Jerusalem will need no sun or moon to give it light, for the *glory* of God illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lambkin (Rev.21:23). Then the Shekinah will not be enclosed in walls, hid from mortal gaze, as in the tabernacle and in the temples, for there will be no temple on the new earth. But long before that blessed time, even today, we have this light, in spirit, for we are already a new creation in Christ (2 Cor.5:17). We also have been given a literal intimation of this when the apostle Paul met our God on the Damascus road. He saw a light *above* the brightness of the sun (Acts 26:13). What an appropriate introduction to his ministry! He it is who leads the saints beyond the light of nature, and even beyond the shadowy revelation given to the sacred nation in their holy place. He goes beyond the "veil."

LIGHTS WHOLE TABERNACLE

But we do not enter the holy of holies and close the curtain behind us, so that we no longer have the light of the lampstand or the communion of the table or the worship of the golden altar. No indeed! "Within the veil," that is, inside the central curtain, there is no provision for fellowship or adoration. Shall we then cease to commune with God or offer praise to Him? By no means! The curtain has not been pulled back behind us, so that we are shut out of the holy place. It was not pushed aside to let us through. It was *rent* from the top to the bottom. Now the two holy places are one! *All* is a holy of holies!

THE THREE LIGHTS

The tabernacle brings before us three distinct stages of light. All are of God and were made by Him to reveal Himself; yet they are very different, especially in the degree in which He is illuminated by them. Outside, in the court, the cosmic luminaries, the sun, the moon and the stars, shed the light of *nature.* This was not present inside of the tabernacle, for there were no windows, and the portiere at the doorway had no provision for holding it open. Indeed, it was so arranged that the worshiper had to turn his back to the rising sun in order to enter. Within was the light of *revelation,* the seven branched lampstand in the holy place, which shed its rays upon the bread of communion, and upon the golden altar of worship. And beyond the inner curtain was the Shekinah.

A clear differentiation of these three distinct kinds of light will help much to clarify God's grand methods in revealing Himself. The light in the court was the same as that given to all men in every place. The light in the holy place was only for the priests, the holy ones, the saints. And the glory light in the most holy was only for the chief priest, who entered once a year. He was a type of the entrance

of Christ into the divine presence after His sacrifice for the sin of the world.

LIGHT OF NATURE

Let us never despise the light of nature! *It was created to reveal God.* If men had eyes to see they would find Him and some of His attributes displayed on every side. By means of it God has manifested Himself to all men. His invisible attributes are descried from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements, besides His imperceptible power and divinity. God's indignation is not revealed against the irreverence and injustice of men who have no means of knowing about Him. In that case they would not be defenseless. But, with the light of nature, they have no valid excuse (Rom.1:18-23).

But the light of nature fails woefully in eliciting the *worship* of Adam's race. Notwithstanding the knowledge of the Deity which it does impart, they do not glorify or thank Him as God. They reason, but their heart is not intelligent. Even today the scientists seek to awe the rest of us with their superior wisdom. Yet their continually changing and conflicting theories show them to be stupid. No man, such as I am, is in a position to prefer such a grave charge against his fellows, for he must include himself. But, in His revelation, God has convicted us all of these crimes. It is because of *this* that the race is sunk in a morass of immorality and corruption and contention. Every effort to cure this condition, apart from the recognition of God, is doomed to failure. Only the lights within the tabernacle can bring about eonian bliss.

The book of nature is full of lessons about the Deity. Scripture itself assures us of this. Where else is His infinite power so fully displayed as in the starry heavens? Where else are His inexhaustible resources so evident as in the visible creation? No matter where we look, whether it be

above at the mighty sun stars in their parabolic paths, or at the tiny insect beneath our feet, our hearts exclaim, "The hand that made you is divine!" Why, even if we were blind and deaf and bereft of the sense of smell, our own bodies are replete with superhuman wonders, so that we should bow down in the dust before its mighty Maker.

NATURE IN SCRIPTURE

Indeed, nature provides the illustrations for the book of revelation. It is not merely in accord with it, but much of it could not be understood without it. If there were no heavens and no earth, who could understand the very first sentence? All the way through it, nature provides most of the background, the figures, the symbols which are needed to understand it. Even the material types and shadows, such as the sacrifices and the tabernacle, depend on nature to a large extent for their significance. The natural qualities of wood and metal, plant and animal are woven into the fabric of divine revelation.

LIGHT OF REVELATION

But, alas, men are blinded by the god of this eon. The apprehensions of unbelievers are unable to perceive the Deity in the world about them, and they cannot see through the thick curtain of unbelief which bars God's revelation from them. Is this not typified by the thick portieres which made it impossible for outsiders to see the lampstand, the presence (or "show") bread, and the golden altar, inside the holy place? Christ is the Antitype of them all. All knowledge of God, all communion with Him, and all worship of Him must come through Christ as the Mediator. Yet He is hid behind a thick portiere of unbelief from all except the saints who have been hallowed by His blood, and called by His spirit, through His Word.

A. E. Knoch

FROM GENESIS TO ROMANS

THE PATTERN established in Genesis 1, at the very beginning, is followed throughout the Scriptures. First of all, anything and any person or group treated in God's Word must be seen as created by God. He is responsible for creation (Gen.1:1). Then this basic revelation of divine power is put to the test by the introduction of evil into the situations under consideration, as first traced in Genesis 1:2a. Finally God is seen again in each instance as the One Who successfully deals with the evil toward an appreciative realization of the good which He achieves, as foreshown in Genesis 1:2b-2:3.

SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLES

Certainly this is so with all the scriptures concerning Israel, a nation brought forth and chosen by God which experiences centuries of failure and sorrow, while God all along leads them toward His fulfillment of His promises to them. David, one of many key and characteristic individuals in this nation, was formed by God and brought into many troubles. Often, indeed, these can be traced immediately to David's own faults, but even then, the Word makes it clear that nothing happened to David apart from God. At the end we also see that all the experiences of David are marked out for good, and for the glory of God Who is operating all. Hence David sang (Psa.139:1,5,13,14):

O Yahweh, You have investigated me . . . .
Back and front, You have besieged me,

And You set Your palm upon me . . . .
For You Yourself achieved the making
of my innermost being;
You overshadowed me in my mother's belly.
I shall acclaim You,
for You are fearfully distinguished;
Marvelous are Your works.

We can trace this pattern in other portions of the Sacred Scriptures, in the experiences of Job, in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt to the promised land, in the lives of the prophets such as Elijah, Jonah and Jeremiah, and of individuals such as Joseph and Hezekiah and Daniel.

The pattern is especially delineated in the life and ministry of Jesus, culminating in the cross and God's glorious victory, resurrection and exaltation of His Son.

SEVERED FOR THE EVANGEL

The book of Romans, in which Paul presents the evangel of God for which he was severed and which he announced, is a portion of God's Word of great and unique importance to us. And here this pattern established in Genesis 1 is especially apparent, for the evangel expounded in Romans is the revelation of a supremely critical operation of God in carrying out His purpose from creation, through darkness, into glory. Let us trace this pattern through some of the key statements of the evangel in Romans:

ALL OUT OF GOD

"Elohim created the heavens and the earth" (Gen.1:1).

God manifests His power in creating the world and displays it continually in the world that He has created. "For His invisible attributes are descried from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements, besides His imperceptible power and divinity" (Rom.1:20).

All is *out* of God (Rom.11:36), including humanity. He has caused our existence.

ALL HAVE SINNED

"As for the earth, it came to be a chaos and vacant, and darkness was over the surface of the abyss" (Gen.1:2a).

But mankind has become irreverent and unrighteous (Rom.1:18), even as the earth became corrupted by chaos, darkness and vacancy. "For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it . . . ." (Rom.8:20). Mankind has become involved in this corruption. "All sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23).

Romans 1:18 through 3:20, summarized in 3:23 and recalled often throughout the epistle, corresponds with Genesis 1:2a. Sin and offense has corrupted the human race so that "God's indignation is being revealed from heaven on all the irreverence and injustice of men . . ." (Rom.1:18). "Wherefore God gives them over" (Rom. 1:24,26,28). "Wherefore, defenseless are you, O man!" (Rom.2:1). "For there is no partiality with God, for whoever sinned without law, without law also shall perish, and whoever sinned in law, through law will be judged. For not the listeners to law are just with God, but the doers of law shall be justified" (Rom.2:11,12); ". . . for we previously charge both Jews and Greeks to be all under sin" (Rom.3:9); ". . . by works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in His sight" (Rom.3:20).

"Therefore . . . through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned" (Rom. 5:12); ". . . it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation" (Rom.5:18); ". . . through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners" (Rom. 5:19). "For I am aware that good is not making its home in

me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not" (Rom.7:18).

"Consequently, then, it is not of him who is willing, nor of him who is racing, but of God" (Rom.9:16). "Or has not the potter the right over the clay . . . ?" (Rom.9:21). "For God locks up all together in stubbornness" (Rom.11:32). All is "through" God (Rom.11:36).

GRATUITOUS GRACE

"And Elohim said: Let light come to be!" (Gen.1:3a).

Now, corresponding to these words of Genesis 1:3, God speaks to us with His good news. His words are true and full of power:

"Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . . yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing . . . . Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus . . . where, then, is boasting?" (Rom.3:21,22,23,27). ". . . God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes" (Rom.5:8).

"The grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds" (Rom.5:15); ". . . it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying" (Rom.5:18); ". . . through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:19).

"I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom. 7:25). "For what was impossible to the law . . . did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us" (Rom.8:3). "Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God, who are called according to the purpose that, whom He foreknew, He designates beforehand also, to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. Now whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these He glorifies also" (Rom.8:28-30). "Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (Rom.8:32).

It is "of God, the Merciful . . . that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.9:16; 11:32). "O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and *for Him* is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:33-36).

LET GOD BE TRUE!

"And it became light" (Gen.1:3b).

The question regarding the evangel now becomes, "Will the righteousness and power and love spoken of in the evangel actually come to pass? Will that which the evangel declares to be so come about in realization and appreciation? Is it true, as the evangel declares, that God justifies and glorifies us whom He has foreknown and designated and called? Who would say no to this? Surely the declarations of good news in the evangel of God will become a fully realized reality for the believer. And this will be so not for the believer alone, but for all of whom the evangel speaks.

This is *because* of God, Whose expectation is "that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:21).

Despite all the traditions viewing God's justice in terms of final, eternal torment or hopeless annihilation and view-

ing God's grace in terms of a divine offer requiring human cooperation or in terms of an arbitrary divine election as an end in itself, despite all the claims of mature and respectable teachers in support of such mysterious dogmas, and despite the human failures and obscurity of those who have shared our viewpoint, we still must see the "well-message" of our deliverance and justification and expectation of glory as fully out of God, granted gratuitously in God's grace, solely through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. The account of creation which opens the Scriptures themselves should guard against perversions of God and His ways.

"Now let God be true, yet every man a liar, even as it is written: 'That so Thou shouldst be justified in Thy sayings, and shalt be conquering when Thou art being judged" (Rom.3:4). Paul speaks here of God's promises for Israel, which he insists will be faithfully performed by God despite Israel's unfaithfulness. It is true for us as well. What God has said, He will perform, just as His words in Genesis 1 concerning life and light on the earth came to be so.

GETTING IT RIGHT

This is not to say that teachers and theologians and clergymen and Bible students always get it wrong. The message concerning Jesus Christ is so clearly given in God's Word that we cannot escape it altogether. Indeed as believers we must be impressed and humbled with rejoicing, at least to some measure of realization at some point, by the overwhelming grace of our Lord (*cf* 1 Tim.1:14). A case in point is the remark of one of the editors of a popular "evangelical" magazine recently made in introducing an attempt to define the gospel: David Neff writes, "Human beings seem to have an infinite capacity for getting things wrong, and unfortunately, we have often gotten the gospel wrong, looking for ways to take some of the credit for our

own rescue or fearing that giving God all the credit robs sinners of responsibility."[1]

Even here, the use of the word "responsibility" suggests that the evangel (or "gospel") places an obligation on the sinner which, whether claimed or not, opens the way for us to take some of the credit. A better term might have been "responsiveness" since the evangel does produce a response in the one who believes it as Paul shows us in Romans 6:2-17, for instance. But our response to the evangel is not the evangel itself, much less a requirement on our part that makes the evangel true. It is of greatest value to us in our response to the evangel to avoid the human tendencies this brother speaks of, and to see that the evangel is all of God, wholly in His grace.

THAT WHICH CALLS US

The sinner's response in faith, our daily walk, divine judgment, appreciation and praise and prayer and spiritual growth, these are all scriptural topics that have been wrongly presented and used as though they were part of the evangel. The evangel is not a set of instructions or even some sort of offer, but an *announcement* of good news concerning what God *has done* in Christ.

The Galatians distorted that evangel which called them in the grace of Christ (Gal.6,7). It announced that we are justified "by the faith of Christ and not by works of law" (Gal. 2:16). Paul says it tells of the Son of God, "Who loves me, and gives Himself up for me" (Gal.2:20), and this is what it says to each of us personally. "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal.6:14).

The testimony of Galatians is the testimony of Romans and that of all of Paul's epistles. It is in the pattern of Genesis 1 where the facts of God's deeds in creating and speak-

1. *Christianity Today,* June 14, 1999, p.50.

ing and calling and seeing are recorded. What is said in Genesis 1 impresses and affects those who believe it, especially in appreciation of God. Similarly, the evangel speaks of facts, and the facts concern what God does and what He achieves. And this has good effects on the believer.

OBJECTIVE TRUTH

We may complain that this makes the evangel itself too objective; it may seem academic and lifeless, a matter of "cold, hard facts." The evangel certainly is a message of uncompromising facts. But the facts are not cold. We are sinners and helpless, but the warm and vitalizing fact is that Christ died for our sins. The truth is not something we have made true by our acts or feelings or the carrying out of responsibilities. God is the One Who foreknew and designates and calls and justifies and glorifies us (Rom.8: 29,30). This is a message of happiness, comfort and peace, and a message of power.

The objective facts announced in the evangel do become subjectively part of the believer's thinking and living. It is the fact that God's love is commended to us in the death of His Son for sinners which led Paul and leads us into the subjectively felt, joyful and assuring persuasion that nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom.8:38,39). It is the objective truth that in the death of Christ "we died to sin" and that even as He was roused from among the dead "we shall be of the resurrection also" that we are invigorated to be walking in newness of life (Rom.6:2-11).

It is ideal, then, to understand the lessons of Genesis which center, of necessity, on God Himself. It is ideal to appreciate this pattern, and also to recognize it again and again throughout the Word of God. And it is especially ideal to understand and recognize and hold fast to this pattern as it exists in the evangel of our salvation. D.H.H.

"WHY, THEN, IS HE STILL BLAMING?"

IT IS a great advance in faith to truly accept the basic truth of divine revelation that *all is of God.* Even so, while one may *accept* that it is the teaching of Scripture that, ultimately speaking, all is out of, through, and for God, one may still find this teaching problematic or even troubling.

Such unrest and worrisomeness over questions of God's deity is by no means surprising among members of our society, in which the teaching of free will holds such a central place and is considered to be the touchstone of righteousness. As the English mathematician and philosopher Whitehead so astutely observed, "Western peoples exhibit on a colossal scale a peculiarity which is supposed to be more especially characteristic of the Chinese. Surprise is often expressed that a Chinaman can be of two religions, a Confucian for some occasions and a Buddhist for other occasions . . . . But there can be no doubt that an analogous thought is true of the West, and that the two attitudes involved are inconsistent. A scientific realism, based on mechanism, is conjoined with an unwavering belief in the world of men and of the higher animals as being composed of self-determining organisms. This radical inconsistency at the basis of modern thought accounts for much that is half-hearted and wavering in our civilisation. It would be going too far to say that it distracts thought. It enfeebles it, by reason of the inconsistency lurking in the background."[1]

1. Alfred North Whitehead, SCIENCE AND THE MODERN WORLD, p.73 (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1925).

If all is of God, however, it does indeed follow that the popular notion of freewill responsibility is false. This is so notwithstanding the fact that freewill responsibility is the foundational assumption of western ethics and jurisprudence, even as the implicit if not explicit dogma of the home, the church, and the school.

Ironically, those who rail against the teaching of God's deity, in so doing, only expose their own worldliness. They fail to realize that the present state of one's conscience is not the arbiter of truth, even as that societal mores are not decisive in the determination of righteousness.

It is not difficult to see how, long ago, free will became the morally-acceptable, societal norm, every way of a man seeming right in his own eyes and the wish becoming the father of the claim. The Latin saying, *Abeunt studia in mores,* sums it up well: "Practices zealously pursued pass into habits."

There is nothing more characteristic of the flesh than its desire to be independent of God; hence, its aversion to any thought of divine determination and control in the affairs of men. And, there is nothing more desirable to the flesh than the maintenance of self-pride; hence, the repudiation of the teaching of God's deity, since it leaves no room for self-pride.

It is often confidently claimed that the teaching that God judges men for their acts even though their acts fulfill His intention, "makes no sense," and is "unjust." In saying that this teaching of God's deity makes no sense, the thought is that it is absurd; and, in saying that it is unjust, the thought is that it is contrary to morality.

Any such claims, however—which are the principal bulwarks of free will—are purely subjective in nature, and can only be true themselves, if free will itself, first of all, is true. Obviously, if the teaching of free will is true, then the teaching of God's deity which contradicts it, is absurd

and unjust. But to assert, *a priori,* that the teaching of God's deity is absurd and unjust—apart from having proved free will to be true—is, at once, the moral failure of conceit as well as the fallacy of circular reasoning.[2]

The fact that such invalid arguments are nonetheless so persuasive and pervasive, and seem so upright to nearly all, merely evinces the power of conceit and prejudice—as well as the baneful, widespread effects of paucity of reasoning skills.

Let us not somehow feel "guilty" for believing that all is of God (and that free will, therefore, is false). We should instead recognize that the fact that to most people the denial of free will seems deeply absurd and unjust, is not any indication whatsoever that it *is* absurd and unjust.

Even if unwittingly, those who advocate free will nearly always appeal to their own sense of rectitude concerning this issue, implicitly equating that which *seems* right to them with that which actually *is* right, in fact. Yet if we who deny free will were to appeal to *our* own sense of rectitude concerning this question, likewise implicitly equating that which seems right to us with that which actually is right, our opposers, quite properly, would not be slow to expose any such "appeals to man."

Those who cannot wholeheartedly and unreservedly affirm that whatever the Scriptures actually reveal is true, and whatever God actually does is right, are disqualified even to approach this issue concerning God's deity and the question of free will. Those who claim that they would gladly believe that all is of God if this were truly the scriptural teaching who at the same time insist that this selfsame teaching is unreasonable and unjust, expose their own hypocrisy.

2. Circular reasoning, or "begging the question" (*petitio principii*), occurs when the premises presume, openly or covertly, the very conclusion that is to be demonstrated.

Few there are who are not ready to join voices with Paul's representative *protestor* of Romans 9:19 in declaring, "Why, then, is He still blaming? for who has withstood His intention?" This protest is entered in response to the protestor's own consideration of the preceding propositions made by the apostle: (1) The children not of the flesh but of the promise are those whom God reckons for the seed (Rom.9:8); (2) The blessing of Jacob instead of Esau was such that the purpose of God might be remaining as His own choice, not out of acts (Rom.9:11); (3) God will be merciful to whomever He may be merciful and be pitying whomever He may be pitying (Rom.9:15); (4) Consequently, then, it is not of him who is willing, nor of him who is racing, but of God, the Merciful. For the scripture is saying to Pharaoh that, "For this selfsame thing I rouse you up, so that I should be displaying in you My power, and so that My name should be published in the entire earth." Consequently, then, to whom He will, He is merciful, *yet whom He will, He is hardening* (Rom.9:16-18).

It is at this juncture that the *protestor* rejoins (as Paul puts it, "You will be *protesting* to me, then"): "*Why, then,* is He still blaming, for who has withstood His intention?"

It is vital to note that these words are not those of an innocent inquirer, asking in faith, nothing doubting, but of a vocal *protestor,* one who does not hesitate to drag the Deity before the bar of his own justice.

The protestor is not actually asking a question at all, but is instead entering a criticism. He is using a figure of speech, termed Rhetorical Question, in which a question is asked merely for effect, with no answer expected. The sense of the protestor's rhetorical question is this: "*It is wrong, then,* for God to blame Pharaoh [for example], since God Himself hardened his heart, and, since his disobedience in which he resisted the revealed will of God was the fulfillment of God's own intention."

In replying, Paul answers this *protest* thus, by a rhetorical question of his own in which he declares:[3]

"O man! *who are you,* to be sure, who are answering again to God? That which *is* molded will not protest to the molder, 'Why do you make me thus?' Or has not the potter the right over the clay, out of the same kneading to make one vessel, indeed, for honor, yet one for dishonor?" (Rom.9:20,21).

The protestor entirely ignores that it is *God* Who does these things. No one has the right to be "answering back" to God; by insinuation, effectually informing Him of what He must do if He should wish to maintain His righteous character. O man! *who are you,* to be sure, who are answering again to God?

Remarkably, in replying to his protestor, rather than somehow "backing off" under the supposed weightiness of the protestor's argument, Paul seeks instead to put him in his place through the use of metaphors, ones which, far from constituting a denial of God's deity, rather illustrate and confirm it. Paul has gone to considerable lengths to show that the human is that which *is* molded of God, and now only adds that it is not befitting that which is molded to *protest* to the Molder, saying, "Why do you make me thus?" (that is, "How dare you, God, if indeed You are righteous, *make* me the way that I am?").

By speaking of the *right* of the potter over the clay, out of the same kneading to make one vessel, indeed, for honor, yet one for dishonor, Paul makes it clear that, among men, God has the right—and is right in exercising that right—to make men thus: some as "*vessels* of indignation, adapted for destruction" (Rom.9:22), and others, as "*vessels* of mercy,

3. The apostle does not herein directly respond to the literal question which one might well ask who is simply seeking enlightenment as to *why* it *is* so, in fact, that God nonetheless "blames" those who fulfill His intention.

which He makes ready before for glory—us, whom He calls also, not only out of the Jews, but out of the nations also" (Rom.9:23,24).

WISDOM AND GOODNESS IN JUDGING

In the preceding exposition, "Divine Foreknowledge and Its Significance," I proved that the correct understanding of Paul's words in Romans 11:36, "seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all," is that all that exists and all that occurs, except for God Himself, is out of, through, and for God. Accordingly, I affirmed that since this truth precludes the validity of the ethical notion termed "free will," free will cannot be true. I also proved that since both determinism and indeterminism or any combination of the two preclude free will, free will is therefore not only a false notion but a notion concerning which it is impossible to give any objective account of how it might exist. Finally, in addressing the subject of divine foreknowledge, I proved that the existence of God's knowledge of those events of which the future consists, entails the necessity of the consequence, namely that of the inevitability of the events foreknown, which teaching also precludes free will.

Now, at present, on behalf of those who have understood and accepted those previous considerations, as well as that stressed already in this present writing as to it being so that God *is* righteous and wise in blaming men for their wrongdoing even though their wrongdoing is according to His intention, the following thoughts are set forth.

Only one who has come this far is in any position to go any farther. This is because, logically, acceptance of truth precedes understanding of truth. God, first of all, *informs* us of what is true and what is right. It is only through His further granting of wisdom and insight that the *wisdom* of truth and the *rightness* of righteousness become more evident, and, more explicable.

Those whose settled response to truth is to pass it by unrecognized, since, to them, it is "absurd and unjust," seem beyond human help. Still, we must remember that those who may indeed be beyond our ability to convince, are by no means beyond God's ability to enlighten. We may be assured that in God's own time, all will come into a realization of truth, for it is the will of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will that this should occur (*cp* 1 Tim.2:4; Eph.1:11).

Since even after we accept the truth that God nonetheless judges those who, ultimately, are not responsible for their actions, we may not see why this should be so, let us freely make our requests known to God concerning this question. That is, let us, then, prayerfully and reverently, in humility and meekness—not at all in a spirit of protest and unbelief, but in an attitude of faith and trust—simply *ask* our God and Father to enlighten us as to why it is so—seeing that it *is* so—that He "blames" His creatures for their wrongdoing, even though, therein, they have fulfilled His intention.

Now, for some, it may be God's wisdom for them to remain in such a spirit of confidence and trust for an extended period, without His granting their request for understanding. If so, however, this may become a most salutary experience in itself, for how wonderful it is for us to grow simply in confidence and trust in God, which, at least for a time, may be taught best in the absence of the justification of truth instead of through its presence.

I would say, however, that insofar as the Scripture enlightens us on this issue and I myself am able to perceive, the answer to our question here may be found in the answer to the wider question, Why does evil exist? specifically, Why, in the universe of the almighty and all-wise God, Who is love, does evil exist? The answer to this question is that God is doing all things well; that, specifically, in order that

His own glory as *Saviour* might be made known, and that His creatures might enjoy the greater blessing of *deliverance* from sin and evil than that of never having experienced these maladies, God has wisely ordered that sin and evil should exist. If Christ would become our Saviour, He must first be crucified. Sin and evil, then, are indispensable to the greater, permanent good.[4]

It is not casting any disagreeable reflections on the Almighty to say He determined all things for good. Indeed, it is glorious to learn not only that there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, but that we are "for Him": "There is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, *and we for Him*" (1 Cor.8:6a). Why are we here? For what purpose do we exist? The answer is, "for God"; that is, for God Himself, even as for His purpose in which we have a place. Just think of it: God actually has a *purpose* for each one of us, that we should exist rather than not exist and that His goal concerning us should be realized. Each one of us, then, is important to God; and, lest His purpose concerning any one of us should fail, He has ordered the universe in such a way that all is out of Him and through Him; all, in the end, being for Him as well.

To say that God "blames" us for our sins (even though

4. It is true that the measure of evil which exists will result in greater glory and blessing than that which would have resulted from a lesser measure of evil. It does not follow from this, however, that a greater measure of evil ought to obtain than that which, in fact, obtains. The will of God is not confined solely to issues of ultimate glory and salvation. It encompasses His present desires as well, including whatever present experiences of life He wishes to grant to each one of His creatures. In kind and degree, God gives humanity that particular "experience of evil" (Ecc.1:13; *cf* John 3:27) which accords with His wisdom and desire. This is evident, for all that God desires, He does (Psa.115:3; *cf* Isa.46:9-11). God is not simply operating all, but He is doing so according to the counsel of His own perfect will. Therefore, all things considered, our world is the best of all possible worlds.

our sins are ultimately sourced in His counsels), is simply to say that God *charges* us with wrongdoing where we have done wrong.[5] As the Authorized Version has it, God "finds fault" with us. Hence, since we thus *are* "at fault" (that is, simply in the sense that we *have* done wrong), it should not be surprising that God charges us accordingly.

It is true, however, that our *liability* for our wrongdoing, is also hereby connoted, indeed, that it is entailed. That is, it is true that we who have engaged in wrongdoing, are not only charged therewith, but are also subject to whatever consequences God deems appropriate for that selfsame wrongdoing.

Pragmatically, however, why should this surprise us? It is simply a fact—however we came by our sinfulness—that, in so many things, both our deeds and our motives *are* sinful; frequently, they are very sinful. Those who are sinful both in heart and hand, are sinful indeed, *and, are therefore in need of judgment.* That is, the sinner is in a terrible way. He must not be left to himself, simply to continue on in his refractoriness interminably. Here it is not a question whether the sinner is ultimately freewill-responsible for his own corrupt condition; the vital consideration is simply that neither Justice nor Love can ignore Sin.

It is true that our injustice serves God's purpose, in that by way of contrast, it commends His own righteousness. It is not true, however, that God—Who, through Christ, Who is the Emblem of God's assumption (in this case, that of God's assumption of "indignation"; Heb.1:3)—is unjust in "bringing on indignation" (that is, in subjecting the sinner to His own wisely contrived indignation, notwithstanding the good purpose which man's injustice serves; Rom.3:5). Even as Paul declares, "May it not be coming to that! Else

5. Nothing concerning free will follows from this fact; hence no such notion should be read into the text.

how shall God be judging the world?" (Rom.3:6). That is, since man's injustice serves God's *purpose* (and, it is true, is purposed of Him), it must not be imagined that man is therefore somehow to be exempted from judgment. Else (that is, If that were true), it would be impossible for God to judge the world at all.

Therefore, the sinner—*for the glory of God as well as for his own good, and certainly according to his own need*—is to be subjected to God's own *justice,* which, like all of the divine attributes, is in accord with the essence of God's nature, which is *love* (1 John 4:8). For the unbeliever, this will consist of "*chastening* in the day of judging" (2 Peter 2:9). "Chastening" (*kolasis*) is judgment which, though it may entail penality, is nonetheless imposed *with a view to amendment* (*cf* Acts 4:21). Aristotle distinguishes "chasten," which is *disciplinary* (*cf* Heb.12:7-13) and has reference to the one who suffers, from "punish" (*timōreō*), which is inherently penal and has reference to the satisfaction of the one who inflicts (*cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entries "chasten" [p.47] and "punish" [p.236]).

Thus, through such considerations as these, we are learning why God, Who is love, is "still blaming" men for their sins. While their sins fulfill His present intention, they do so only with a view to the realization of His ultimate goal, which is to glorify His own name as Saviour, and to bless His creatures in such a way that would be quite impossible apart from the temporary presence of sin. O, the *depth* of the riches and the *wisdom* and the knowledge of God! (Rom.11:33a). How we marvel and praise our God and Father in consideration of His operation of all and His wisdom concerning all. Even as the Psalmist declares, "Behold, You delight in truth even in the hidden parts, and in the secret parts You cause me to know wisdom" (Psa.51:6). Hence we declare again, What a joy, and what a peace, in believing (Rom.15:13)! J.R.C.

THE ELUSIVENESS OF GOD'S ANOINTED

(1 Samuel 19:1-10)

19 + **Saul** [sp]**urged** › **his son Jonathan and** › **all his courtiers to** [c]**put** `**David** to **death**¯. +**But Saul's son Jonathan had** taken **intense delight in David.** 2 +**So Jonathan** [l]**told** › **David,** › **saying**¯**, My father Saul** is **seeking to** [c]**put you** to **death.** + [now]**Therefore** [pr]**do be** on **guard in** the **morning!** + **You** must [sit]**stay in concealment and hide** yourself**.** 3 +**As** for **me, I shall** go **forth and I will stand** ›**by** the **side of my father in** the **field where you** are**.** + **I´ shall speak** [i]**about you to my father;** +**then what I** [see]**observe,** + **I will tell** › **you.**

4 +**So Jonathan** [l]**spoke well** [i]**of David to his father Saul.** + **He** [l]**said to him, Let not the king sin** [i]**against his servant,** [i]**against David, for he has not sinned** ›**against you, and** [t] **his** [d]**deeds** have been of **very good** service **to you.** 5 +**When he** [lpl]**took** `**his soul in his palm and** [l]**smote** `**the Philistine, and Yahweh** [ld]**wrought** a **great victory for all Israel, you saw** it **and** [l]**rejoiced. Why** +**then should you sin** [i]**against innocent blood** ›**by** [c]**putting** `**David** to **death**¯ **gratuitously?** 6 + **Saul** [l]**hearkened** [i]**to Jonathan's voice, and Saul** [l]**swore,** As **Yahweh lives, he shall assuredly no**t **be** [c]**put** to **death!** 7 + **Jonathan** [l]**called** › **David, and Jonathan** [l]**told** › **him** `**all** ·**these** ·**words.** +**Then Jonathan** [l]**brought** `**David to Saul, and he** [lb]**was** ›**in his presence as heretofore.**

8 +**When** there › [b]**was**¯ ·**war** [l]**again,** + **David** sallied [l]**forth and** [l]**fought** [i]**against** the **Philistines;** + **he** [l]**smote** [i] **them** with a **great blow** so +**that they** [l]**fled** [f]**in view of him.** 9 +**Now** the **evil spirit** from **Yahweh** [lb]**came** ›**on Saul,** +**while he** was **sit-**

ting in his house [+]with his spear in his hand, and David was **playing** the harp [i]**with** his **hand.** [10] [+] **Saul** [l]**sought to smite** [i] **David** [i]**with** the **spear** [+] **in**to the **sidewall; [+]yet he** [l]**dodged from Saul's presence, [+]as he** [l]**smote `the spear in**to the **sidewall. [+]So David fled and** [l]**escaped.**

A TYPE OF CHRIST

IT WAS no secret that Saul was seeking to put David to death. Jonathan knew it (1 Sam.19:1-7) along with all Saul's courtiers; Michael knew it (19:11-17), and certainly David knew it well from those who warned him and from his own personal experience. For the third time in two chapters, we read that Saul tried to kill David by thrusting a spear through him (two times in 1 Samuel 18:10,11, and then here in 19:9,10). These three attempts were all made, while David sat in the same room with Saul, playing the harp, trying to comfort the troubled man. Should the martial skills of the king be called into question? How does one armed only with a harp escape in such close quarters? How does one repeatedly escape, who is chased all over the countryside by the king and his army? And, amidst his fugitive ramblings, the hunted repeatedly finds time to deliver and aid the very nation that is hunting him.

David was typical of Christ in the many attempts that were made upon his life, and he also represents Christ in his elusiveness to Saul's persecution. How did the Lord Jesus escape, when the whole synagogue and a growing crowd thrust Him from the synagogue and the city, and then carried Him to the bluff to throw Him headlong to His death (Luke 4:16-30)? How did He twice escape when they had picked up stones to stone Him (John 8:59; 10:31-39)? The answer is hidden in the very reason the Jews wanted to kill Christ.

The identity of Christ was the crucial question in all these circumstances. At Nazareth they asked, "Is not this

Joseph's son?" (Luke 4:22). In Jerusalem, the Jews could not abide such a statement as, "Ere Abraham came into being, I am" (John 8:58). Who was Christ, and who was David? In both cases it can be answered that they were God's Anointed. They each represent the start of the dynasty of the kingdom of God, David as the foreshadow, and Christ as the Reality.

Yet the perfections of Christ so far excel even the character of David. Christ is the Light of life. "And the light is appearing in the darkness, and the darkness grasped it not" (John 1:5). The elusiveness of Christ in those situations was much more than a simple use of supernatural power. It was an illustration of truth. Darkness cannot overtake, or overwhelm, or limit light in any way. Light is a positive emanating force. Darkness is the absence of that force. Darkness is negative. Christ is truth and light, and the darkness of mortal humanity, even in the garb of God's chosen nation, could by no means clutch this Light and Truth.

"They pick up stones, then, that they should be casting them at Him. Yet Jesus was hid and came out of the sanctuary. And passing through the midst of them, He went and thus passed by. And, passing along, He perceived a man, blind from birth" (John 8:59-9:1). Even while "escaping" Christ made time to help the needy. And this healing of the blind man stood as a testimony to the very Jews who would have killed Him (John 9:30). To the man born blind, the Jews' quandary over Christ's identity was far more inscrutable than the fact of his healing. As Christ said in the close of the chapter, the Pharisees who were observing were becoming blind to what was before their eyes (John 9:39-41). And the Brilliance surpassing the noonday sun walked through the midst of the blind, and they could not lay their finger on Him, until the Father's appointed time.

J. Philip Scranton

THE TIMES AND SEASONS

In the First Book, or chapter, of his work Ecclesiastes was wholly occupied with the problems of individual experience in the sphere of mental and technical activity; the Second Book (3:1-4:8) is wider in its outlook: The writer approaches the task of surveying the work of God.

3 **For every**thing there is a **stated** time,
And a **season for every event under the heavens:**
2 A **season to** give **birth and** a **season to die;**
A **season to plant and** a **season**
to chop down what is **planted**[l],
3 A **season to kill and** a **season to heal;**
A **season to breach and** a **season to build;**
4 A **season to weep and** a **season to make merry;**
A **season of wailing**[–] **and** a **season of dancing**[–]**;**
5 A **season to fling** away **stones and** a **season**
to **collect**[–] **stones** together**;**
A **season to embrace and** a **season**
to stay **far from embracing**[–]**;**
6 A **season to seek and** a **season to** [m]**count** as **lost;**
A **season to keep and** a **season to fling** away**;**
7 A **season to tear and** a **season to sew;**
A **season to hush and** a **season to speak;**
8 A **season to love and** a **season to hate;**
A **season of war and** a **season of peace.**

The times and the seasons as a whole are subjected to review. They are introduced with the phrase, "To everything there is a stated time, and a season for every event under the heavens" (3:1). These important words indicate the special points dealt with in this section. Two distinct terms are used, referring to stated (or set) times and appropriate times (or seasons):

The word rendered "stated times" signifies a time definitely set apart for a special purpose, by royal edict or divine appointment, as is clear from its occurences. It is used in Ezra to denote the time specified by the chief officials for the adjustment of the mixed marriages among the returned captives (Ezra 10:14). Similarly it is used concerning the leave of absence granted to Nehemiah by letters of Artaxerxes (Neh.2:6), the Divine appointments relative to the temple services (Neh.10:34, 13:31), and the establishment of the feast of Purim by decree of Esther and Mordecai (Est.9:27,31).

The meaning which inheres the word translated "season" is clear from its usage in other parts of Ecclesiastes. We will take two of the most typical occurrences. "The wise heart shall know *season* [appropriate time] and judgment" (Ecc.8:5b). Note the setting of the passage. The whole section deals with subjection to authority, and the thought is emphasized that within the limits of obedience to the king there is safety: "He who observes instructions shall know no evil matter" (8:5a). In what follows, Ecclesiastes seems to have in mind the possible objection that resistance to evil is as much of an obligation as submission to right, to which answers Ecclesiastes that the wise know when each is in proper order. Akin to this is a passage further on, "Happy are you, O land, whose king is a son of notables, and whose chiefs eat in *season* for mastery and not for a drunken bout" (Ecc.10:17). The idea is doing a thing in the proper manner at the proper time; its meaning is what we should express by the metaphor of *place:* "Everything is good in its proper place."

The connections, therefore, in which the two terms are used suggest the ideas of divine appointment and appropriateness, so that the import of 3:1 is that, since for every work there is a time divinely determined, the events of our lives must be seen in relation to God's arrangement of things. Hence the idea (developed in Book Four) that events are neither good nor evil in themselves, but according to their relation to God's time of approving them. Hence, too, the thought (which forms the special subject of Book Five) that human happiness does not consist in carrying out one's every wish, but in fitting them with God's season; so that while the drift of things is irresistible, the individual can, by adapting himself to it, achieve satisfaction in his undertakings.

HISTORIC EPOCHS

The times and seasons spoken of in Ecclesiastes 3:1, then, are the predetermined times which pass over Israel and over all the kingdoms of the countries (1 Chron.29:29), the phases in the experience of nations which constitute historic epochs, the historic stages which mark the accomplishment of God's purpose among the nations of the world.

That this is the meaning is abundantly clear, not only from the scope of the passage, but also from the usage of the same phrases in other parts of Scripture. Can anyone believe, for example, that there is a proper time for any individual to kill and to heal? What are we to make of "a time to heal" according to this interpretation? Can one heal or restore the life of his fellow man which he has taken away? When all the passages where the same phrase is used are read together it becomes evident that the expression "kill and heal" refers to the administration of justice, the sentencing and pardoning of transgressors against civil law. In this poetic enumeration of the times and seasons our author unfolds a procession of history,

the great underlying principles of historic movements. The piecemeal experiences which make up the history of nations are passed in review, each touched with that marvelous felicity of descriptive suggestion which is the chief charm of the Assembler's style.

The seasons are twenty-eight in number. They commence with "birth," (3:2a) i.e., creation, when God gave outwardness, *e*xpression, to the archtypal thoughts of His mind, and they conclude with "peace" (3:8d). The intervening times are times of estrangement, marked by confusion, waste, ruin, toil, sweat, pain, passion, and blood. They are an epitome of the history of mankind: they begin with "death" (3:2b), pointing back to the sentence pronounced in Eden, and end with "war" (3:8c), looking forward to the great battle (later prophesied on the fields of Armageddon) which closes the history of Man's day.

FITTING IN ITS SEASON

9 **What advantage** does **the** [d]**worker**[l] have
in [w]**what he** is **toiling?**
10 **I see** `**the experience** [w]**that Elohim gives**
To the sons of humanity to humble them [i]**by it.**
11 **He has** [d]**made** `**every**thing **fitting in its season;**
[mr]**However, He has** [g]**put** `**obscurity in their heart**
[f]**So** [no] [w]**that the** [h]**man may not find** out `His [d]**work,**
That **which the** One**, Elohim, does**
from the **beginning** + [fr]**to** the **terminus.**
12 **I know that** there **is no good** [i]**for them**
[t]**But** [if] **to rejoice and to** [d]**achieve good in** [his]**one's life;**
13 **And, moreover, any**one **of** ˙**humanity,**
[w]**That he should eat and** ¯**drink**
and ¯**see good** [i]**from all his toil,**
It is a **gift of Elohim.**
14 **I know that whatever the** One**, Elohim, is doing,**
It´ shall [b]**be for** the **eon;**

Onto **it** there can **be no**thing **to add,**
And from it there can **be no**thing **to subtract;**
+ **The** One**, Elohim, He does** it
[w]**that they may fear** [f] **before Him.**
15 [wt]**That which** [b]**is, it already** was**,**
And [w]**what** is **to** [b]**come already has** [b]**been;**
And the One**, Elohim, He shall seek** out
`what has **been pursued**[l] away**.**

Having stated the times in poetic form, Ecclesiastes proceeds to consider them. First, he draws respecting them certain deductions which necessarily follow from the revealed character of God (3.9-15); then he considers them from a matter-of-fact view of the actual condition of things (3:16-4:8). Considering the times which God has appointed for Adam's sons in the light of the Creator's character, Ecclesiastes expresses the conviction: "He has made everything fitting in its season; however, He has put obscurity in their heart, so that the man may not find out His work, that which the One, Elohim, does from the beginning to the terminus" (3:11).

No one can find out how God is working His purpose out through the "seasons." His ways transcend human thought, but He has made everything fitting in its season and is working from the beginning to the terminus.

GOD'S APPOINTED PURPOSE

Ecclesiastes next gives expression to the thought that God's appointed times were in the very nature of things intended for man's profit and enjoyment. "I know that there is no good for them but to rejoice and to achieve good in one's life, and, moreover, any one of humanity, that he should eat and drink and see good from all his toil, it is a gift of Elohim" (3:12,13). Whatever *is,* is for a purpose, and that purpose is God's thought in creation.

This is true, not only of the works of nature, but also of the events of history.

Another fact which follows from the truth of the Creator's supremacy is the immutability of the times. God acts on fixed principles which no effort of the individual will ever influence or alter. "I know that whatever the One, Elohim is doing, it shall be for the eon; onto it there can be nothing to add and from it there can be nothing to subtract" (3:14). The tremendous importance of this truth in its bearing upon man's conduct Ecclesiastes will develop in a subsequent chapter, meanwhile he ventures to suggest one of its practical values—to foster man's dependence on God.

The One, Elohim, He does it
that they may fear before Him. (3:14)

In this statement Ecclesiastes is borne out by Paul, who, in his sermon to the Athenians, declares that God has determined the seasons of the nations that they should seek Him (Acts 17:26,27).

Ecclesiastes concludes this side of the survey with voicing the oft reiterated belief (emphasized at the close as the chief aim of the book) in a future rectification. "That which is, it already was, and what is to come already has been; and the One, Elohim, He shall seek out what has been pursued away" (3:15). Here are two ideas: the law of "recurrence," in virtue of which the times ever repeat themselves; and the seeking out or "inquisition" of the times. He has already stated, in the preceding verse (14), that the times are leading up to *the eon*: They contain the seeds which will then yield their fruit. In other words, we may compare the times to a flight of stairs, leading step by step to the golden age of peace.

PRESENT CONTRADICTIONS

16 +**Yet further, I have seen under the sun,**

Where **the** [ri]**place of judgment** is,
there[d] is ˙**wickedness,**
And where **the** [ri]**place of justice** is,
there[d] is ˙**wickedness.**
17 **I´ said in my heart:**
As for `**the righteous and** `**the wicked, the** One,
Elohim, shall judge both of them.
For ~He has [pl]**set~** a **season for every event**
and [on]**for every** ˙[d]**deed.**
18 **I´ said in my heart:**
It is **on** [sp]**account of the sons of humanity**
That **the** One**, Elohim,** seeks **to manifest them**
And to show › **them** [w]**that they them**selves are **beast**s.
19 **For** the **destiny of the sons of humanity**
And the **destiny of the beast,**
+ It is **one destiny for them;**
As death is for **this** one**, so** is **death** for **that** one,
And one spirit is **for all;**
+ There **is no advantage** for **the human** [f]**over the**
beast,
For the whole is **vanity.**
20 ˙**All** are **going to one** [ri]**place;**
˙**All have** [b]**come from the soil, and** ˙**all return to the**
soil.
21 [a]**Who** is **knowing** about the **spirit**
of the sons of humanity,
Whether **it** is ˙**ascending** › **above,**
And the **spirit of the beast,** whether **it**
is ˙**descending** › **below to** the **earth?**
22 +**So I saw that** there **is no**thing **better** for ˙a [h]**man**
[f]**than** [w]**that he** |**rejoices in his** [d]**works**
[t]**Since that** is **his portion;**
For [a]**who** can |**bring him to see**
[i] **what** [w] **shall** [b]**come after him?**
4 And ¯**again** + **I´** |**saw** `**all the exploitings**

[w]**that** are **done**| **under the sun;**
+ **Behold,** the **tear**s **of** ˙those **being exploited,**
And there **is no comforter**| **for them;**
+ **Vigor** is [f]**in** the **hand of their exploiters**|,
And there **is no comforter**| **for them.**
2 +**So I lauded**¯ `**the dead**|, those **who had already died,**
[f]**Over the living, those who** are [fr]**still alive;**
3 +**Yet better** [f]**than them both** is `the one
who [fr]**still has not come** into **being,**
Who has not seen `**the evil** ˙[d]**work**
[w]**that is done under the sun.**
4 **And I´ saw** `**all** the **toil and** `**all** the **success**
of the [d]**work** done,
That it was **jealousy of** one **man** [f]**over his associate;**
This [mr]**too** is **vanity and** a **grazing** on **wind.**
5 **The stupid** man **folds**| `**his hands**
And eats| `**his** own **flesh;**
6 Yet **better** is one **palm full** with **rest**
[f]**Than both hands full** with **toil and** a **grazing** on
wind.
7 **And** ¯**again** + **I´** |**saw** a **vanity under the sun:**
8 There **was one** person, +**but** there **was no second;**
There **even was no son** +**or brother for him;**
+**Also** there **was no end to all his toil,**
[mr]**Yet his eyes were not** |**satisfied** with his **riches.**
+**Then** he said**, For** [a]**whom** am **I toiling**
And making `**my soul lack** [f] **good?**
This [mr]**too** is **vanity, and it** is an **experience of evil.**

In these verses Ecclesiastes proceeds to show that the previous representation is not borne out by the actual state of things. “Yet further, I have seen under the sun, where the place of judgment is, there is wickedness, and where the place of justice is, there is wickedness” (3:16). In spite of the reasonableness of the earlier deductions, they are

at variance with actual experience. The actual condition of things in the world tells a very different tale. The times are often seen reversed: wickedness is seen in the place of justice, and while this fact may be construed to argue for a future rectification, it more often leads to the view that man is not different in his end from the beasts (3:16-22); suffering under oppression which makes death preferable to life (4:1-3); skill attained at the price of baneful rivalry and bitter competition fostering idleness in some and egotism in others (4:5-6); tireless effort dismayed by the recognition of its lack of its satisfaction (4:7-8)—all these realities which cannot be ignored force totally different conclusions.

The survey has yielded the following result: the theoretic side, founded on deductions flowing from the character of the Creator, argues that the "times" are for man's good; the practical side, resting on stubborn facts which everywhere stare us in the face, argues that the times and seasons contribute to man's misery and suffering. The reflective process has established an antagonism between good and evil. Here for the present the consideration of God's work is allowed to rest. But the clash between the ideal and the actual—the discrepancy between the traditional adoration of the works of the Lord, and the growing difficulty of the recognition of evil in the world—has given rise to a number of perplexing practical questions. These are dealt with in a string of "notes" (4:9-5:9).

NOTES

When studying the form of this work we find that the intervals between some of the "books" are filed with strings of sayings, which sustain some relation to the preceding matter; in fact, they are in the nature of "notes" dealing with the practical side of certain points that have emerged in the course of investigation.

In the group before us we have a series of four maxims arranged in pairs, each pair being founded upon an antithesis.

1. The Value of Friendship (4:9-12)

9 ˙**Two** are **better** *f*|**than** ˙**one**
w|**Because** there **is better reward for them in their toil;**
10 **For if they** ˡ**fall,** ˙**one** can ˡ**raise** up ˋ**his partner;**
⁺**But woe to him, the one who** ˡ**falls** ⁺**when** there **is no second** person **to raise him** up**.**
11 *mr*|**Also, if two** ˡ**lie** down together ⁺ **it is warm for them,**
⁺**Yet for one, how** can **he** keep ˡ**warm?**
12 **And if** somebody can ˡ**overpower him** ˙who is **single,**
Then ˙**two** can ˡ**stand** firm in **front of him** who attacks**.**
⁺ ˙A **three**fold˙ ˙**thread** can**not** *i* **quickly be** ˡ**pulled apart.**

In a previous paragraph our author has been speaking of competition as fostering idleness in some (*The stupid man folds his hands,* 4:5), and isolation in others (*Better is one palm full with rest,* 4:6) In this maxim Ecclesiastes seeks to show that both these attitudes towards rivalry are as harmful as rivalry itself. The word "toil" is elsewhere rendered by "misery" (e.g. Judges 10:16). The point is, that the trouble involved in human associations, arising from differing mental attitudes, interests, temperaments, etc., is amply rewarded by such advantages as sympathy, help, strength. *Two can stand firm* (4:12) here has the sense of *holding one's own*: two or three can hold their own where one would be overpowered.

2. The Vanity of Adulation (4:13-16)

13 **Better** a **boy, provident and wise,**
f|**Than** a **king, old and stupid, who** does **not know** how **to** take **warning**⁻ any *fr*|**more.**

14 **For from** a **house of** ˙**prisoners**ˡ one came **forth to**
reign,
Even though in his kingdom he was born destituteˡ**;**
15 Yet **I saw** `**all the living** ˙who were **going**
about **under the sun**
Staying **with the second** ˙**boy**
who ˡ**stood** up *u***in his stead.**
16 There **was no end to all the people,**
to all before whom he *b***was** set**,**
*mr***Yet** ˙those coming **later were not rejoicing in him;**
*t***Indeed this** *mr***too** is **vanity and** a **grazing** on **wind.**

There is no historical allusion here: it is a pictorial representation of matters of general experience. "Better is a boy, provident and wise, than a king, old and stupid, who does not know how to take warning any more. For from a house of prisoners [i.e., the womb] one [the foolish king] came forth to reign; even though in his kingdom he was born destitute. I saw all the living who were going about under the sun, staying with the second boy [i.e., the successor, as in 4:8] who stood up in his stead. There was no end to all the people, to all before whom he [the successor of the stupid king] was set, yet those coming later were not rejoicing in him; indeed this too is vanity and a grazing on wind" (4:13-16). The thought of the whole is: In essence, apart from the trappings of royalty, the king is as destitute as any youth born in obscurity; both were born naked (*cf* 5:15) and what does this external finery amount to? When the old king is gone, all the world flocks to his successor; but that successor will equally be forsaken in his turn.

3. The Vanity of Folly (5:1-7)

5 Guard your feet *as***when** *w* **you** ˡ**go**
to the house of Elohim;
+ To go **near**¯ **to hear** is better *f***than** that **the stupid**
should *g***offer**¯ **sacrifice,**

For they knowˡ **no**thing but **to do evil.**
2 **Do not be** ˡ**rash** *on***with your mouth,**
And your heart must not ˡ**hasten to** bring **forth**
speech before the One**, Elohim;**
For the One**, Elohim,** is **in** the **heavens,**
And you are **on the earth;**
Therefore, let your words become few.
3 **For** as ˙a **dream comes**ˡ *i***with much responsibility,**
+**So** the **voice of** a **stupid** person comes
*i***with many words.**
4 **Whenever you** ˡ**vow** a **vow to Elohim,**
do not ˡ**delay to pay it,**
For He *is***has no delight in** those who are **stupid;**
`That **which you** ˡ**vow, pay.**
5 It is **better** *w***that you should not vow**
*f***Than** *w***that you should vow and not** ˡ**pay.**
6 **Do not** ˡ*g***allow `your mouth to cause `your flesh** to **sin**¯**,**
And do not ˡ*sa***protest before the** temple **messenger**
that it was an **error.**
Why should the One**, Elohim,**
be wrathful *on***at your voice**
And *m***bring harm** `to the *d***work of your hands?**
7 **For in many dreams and vanities,**
+ there are **many**¯ **words;**
*t***Therefore fear `the** One**, Elohim.**

This has obviously in mind the materialism produced in some by the spectacle of wickedness seated in the place of justice. Two maxims enjoining reverence in things divine are contrasted with the folly of speaking against God. The drift of thought is best apprehended from the parallelism of clauses:

Obedience better than sacrifice (5:1)
Ignorance better than neglected light (5:4,5)
Hasty words improper because God is greater
than man (5:2)

Hasty words dangerous because God may
requite man (5:6)

Image: Dream (5:3)
Image: Dreams (5:7)

Speaking against God is like the talking in sleep of an overworked brain.

4. The Value of Wisdom (5:8-9)

8 **If you should see extortion of** the **destitute**[l]
And pillage of judgment and justice in a **province,**
Do not be [l]**amazed over the event,**
For one **lofty** official **above**
another **lofty** official is **observing,**
And other **lofty** officials are **over them.**
9 [+]**Yet** an **advantage** to the **land in all** respects is **this:**
A **king** devoted **to** the **field** that **it be served.**

The writer has before him the effects of oppression noticed in the survey. We follow the reading of the Septuagint: "If you should see extortion of the destitute and pillage of judgment and justice in a province, do not be amazed over the event, for one lofty official above another lofty official is observing, and other lofty officials are over them" (5:8). The object of the passage is to emphasize the fact that, strange as it may seem, God has a purpose in all that takes place. Verse 9 seems to illustrate the effects of recognizing or ignoring that truth by rulers: the one looks upon the province as a thing to be developed, the other looks upon it as a field of extortion. V. Gelesnoff

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ELOHIM DOES IT

THE SECTION of Ecclesiastes under consideration (3:1-5:9) presses the point that all our experiences are out of God and they are given for some reason. The experience of changing times and seasons (3:1-8) are given to the sons of humanity to humble us (3:10).

Whatever happens, whether we are able to rejoice in it (3:13), or we would like to see it changed (3:14a), God does it to the end that we grow in awe-inspiring fear of Him (3:14b).

But, according to Ecclesiastes 3:11, we cannot always trace the reasons and purposes of God very clearly. Nevertheless, He is working "from the beginning to the terminus" (3:11).

He is responsible for the cycles of human experience (3:15), for judgment and its consequences (3:16-21) and our ignorance of the future (3:22). This means that exploitations of humans, one against the other, our tears and jealousies, our stupidities and dissatisfactions (4:1-8), these all are given to the sons of humanity by God for His own reasons. Whatever is done, Elohim does it (3:14).

It was wisdom in the days of the Assembler, and it is wisdom today, to know that God is behind our experiences. But for us who have been given revelations of God's grace and purpose in Christ Jesus, there is less of "obscurity" concerning that which God does than in those ancient times. We do not know why God gives terrible seasons of war and sorrow and loss as well as happy times, and this not in apparently strict equality, though we do learn that no

one escapes the experience of evil altogether (Ecc.1:13). But, as believers, we are aware of many things about God's operations that the Assembler did not know.

"We are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God" (Rom.8:28). God is making known to us "the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in [Christ Jesus]) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth—in Him in Whom our lot was cast also, being designated beforehand according to the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:9-11). We are aware of the One we have believed, Who indeed abolishes death, yet illuminates life and incorruption (2 Tim.1:9-12).

ECCLESIASTES 3:11

The exact meaning of the Hebrew term in Ecclesiastes 3:11 translated "obscurity" by the CVOT is in dispute. It is the word generally rendered "eon" in our translation, and others, including Vladimir Gelesnoff, have preferred that sense here as well.

In his comments of this passage, Brother Gelesnoff wrote: "The phrase, 'He has set the eon in their heart,' is very striking. The rendering 'world' in the current versions, and the marginal alternative 'eternity,' rob the passage of its grand meaning. In perfect harmony with the whole cast and character of Hebrew prophecy, the 'times' of Ecclesiastes culminate in the golden age of peace. The character of the Messianic age is painted in colors most gorgeous and brilliant in the prophets; but the crowning glory of the Messianic eon is peace."[1] Hence our brother felt that such a "far-off, vague, indistinct" presentiment

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.5, p.113.

in the hearts of mankind was what the Assembler had in mind in this passage.

Yet many, including Brother A. E. Knoch, have concluded that some such sense as "obscurity" is intended here. Brother Knoch has defended this rendering in an article appearing in *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 29, starting on page 371. The following selections from that article have guided in the current CVOT rendering:

HE HAS SET THE WORLD IN THEIR HEARTS

"Obscurity, in more than one sense, gathers around this passage (Ecc.3:11, AV). It is not clear what is meant by the words themselves, and they give no ground for what follows. The tendency of translators and expositors is to render it as the Septuagint, changing the word *world* to *age* or *eon*. Some prefer to make it *eternity,* and the teaching that God has set eternity in men's hearts (whatever that may mean) is quite popular in some circles. But why should this keep men from finding out what God is doing? Indeed, would it not be a help rather than a hindrance.

"First let us note the context. It concerns the fact that there is a *season* for everything (Ecc.3:1-9). Then the assembler of these sayings asks, 'What profit has the doer in what *he* toils?' The answer is, 'I see the experience which God gives to the sons of humanity, to be humbled by it.' Our life is not the aimless, purposeless, empty thing which it appears to be. Its evil and toil is a gift from God in order to lay us low before Him. With all our striving, how little do we accomplish! But the main object, the real profit, lies in our failure, so that we may take our true place before God.

"*In its season* God makes everything lovely (verse 11). See how beautiful is the flower in its bud and bloom! But soon thereafter, what a change! The season is past. One who had never seen the flower until its petals are faded and decayed, could not conceive how beautiful it was in

its time. This is the picture which is presented to us as introductory to the statement which we are studying. That which is disintegrating does not give us a proper idea of its beauty when it is in its prime . . . .

"Men see things out of season, in the time when they are disintegrating, and their hearts are too dark to recognize this and look back to their origin or forward to their consummation. They see only a small portion of the process, and even this at its worst stage, hence are sure to be led astray without a revelation from God Himself. Those who have this may exult that all begins in God's love and will terminate in its full display, even though, at present, it may appear to some as if His hate were the ruling factor in His dealings with mankind.

"But why translate *obscurity* in place of *eon* or *age*? The Hebrew stem *olm*, which is here used denotes OBSCURE. This is clear from the fact that it is rendered *secret, hide, blind,* and *dissemble* in the Authorized Version. The meaning *eon* or *age* is only a derived one, seeing that the eons were obscure to them. It also denotes an adolescent damsel or stripling. It is quite in order to fall back upon the basic sense when this is manifestly in accord with the context. We know that it is true that God gives men obscurity and that they do not know God's doing on account of it. All other renderings fail to satisfy the context. It must be something which incapacitates men mentally. Obscurity does this."

GOD IS THE PLACER

We conclude that the context does support the translation "obscurity" in this passage. God Himself *puts* (or "gives") this obscurity into the human heart. Since He has done so, we may be certain that He will be the One Who removes that obscurity, as indeed He has begun to do through the later revelations of His Word, in the hearts of those who believe. D.H.H.

Contents:

193 Editorial
195 The Atmosphere and the Waters
201 It is Becoming So
210 Saul's Schemes and God's Spirit
213 Human Will and
the Ministry of Law
225 "Even the Death of the Cross"
229 The Soul's Yearning
and God's Humbling
237 God Gives and God Withholds

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BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY

EDITORIAL

MOST of our readers are acquainted with the words of the apostle Paul where he declares, "Have a *pattern* of *sound* words . . ." (2 Tim.1:13). Still, in my experience, it seems that we all need to endeavor to heed this counsel more faithfully. By doing so, many misapprehensions and misunderstandings may be avoided.

Paul's fuller statement here is as follows: "Have a pattern of sound words which you hear from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. The ideal thing committed to you, guard . . . ."

The apostle would not have us use a pattern of sound words, even those which we hear from him, except in a way that is reflective of "faith and love," indeed, of "faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." In order that one's custom here might be a *living* and *holy* custom, one's employment of a pattern of sound words cannot simply be "technically correct"; it must also be exhibited in a spirit of faith and love as that which is in Christ Jesus. Or to be more "sound" concerning this very point, our employment of a pattern of sound words, must be according to the work of Christ in us, engaging us thus, for any such faith and love is not native to ourselves; it must come from Him.

The "ideal (thing)" committed to us, is the very words of the sacred scriptures themselves (*cf* 2 Tim.3:15-17). This we are to "guard," yet not through the weaponry of fleshly tactics, but through the power of the indwelling holy spirit of God: "The ideal thing committed to you, guard through the holy spirit which is making its home in us" (2 Tim.1:13,14).

Most strikingly, immediately after declaring this solemn adjuration to Timothy, Paul then declares: "Of this you are aware, that *all* those in the province of Asia were turned from me . . ." (2 Tim.1:15).

Here Paul juxtaposes two thoughts: (1) "Beloved Timothy, it is imperative that *you* have a pattern of sound words, which you hear from *me*"; and (2) "Of this, Timothy, *you* are aware, that *all* those in the province of Asia were turned from *me.*"

By his evident interrelating of the two statements, Paul plainly intimates the connection between the two facts, and, the deeper considerations concerning each one. Drawing on facts explicit to each statement itself yet also intimately related to its counterpart, we may state the wider thought thus: An instrumental cause of all in the province of Asia turning away from Paul, was their failure to maintain a pattern of sound words which they heard from him, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. And, therefore, if, under God, Timothy would save himself as well as those hearing him (*cp* 1 Tim.4:16) from a similar fate, he *must* "have [and use] a pattern of sound words" himself, even the pattern of sound words which he heard from Paul.

In an originative and essential sense, the only sound expressions which can be identified with our faith, are the very words of Scripture itself, of which our faith consists. These are the words—"taught by the spirit" (1 Cor.2:12,13)—with which, fundamentally, we are to *speak.*

We cannot rightly judge the sense and application of any certain scriptural declarations until we are first of all able to distinguish Scripture itself from those contrary words which are merely those of human "wisdom"—however zealously, sincerely, and seemingly spiritually, expressed.

"Now the spirit is saying explicitly, that in subsequent eras some will be withdrawing from the faith . . . [doing so] in the hypocrisy of false expressions, their own conscience having been cauterized" (1 Tim.4:1,2). "O Timothy, that which is committed to you, *guard,* turning aside from the profane prattlings and antipathies of falsely named 'knowledge,' which some are professing. As to the faith, they swerve. Grace be with you! Amen!" (1 Tim.6:20,21).

J.R.C.

THE ATMOSPHERE AND THE WATERS

6 **And Elohim** |**said: Let** an **atmosphere come** to **be in** the **midst of the waters,** +**that it may** *b*|**be separating** *bt* **waters** ›**from waters.** 7**And it came** to |**be so~.** 7 + **Elohim** |*d*|**made** `**the atmosphere and** |**separated** *bt* **the waters** *w f* **under** › the **atmosphere** + *bt*|**from the waters** *w* **above** › the **atmosphere.** 8 **And Elohim** |**called** › the **atmosphere** =**Heaven.**

And it |**became evening, and it** |**became morning:** the **second day.**

THE SECOND SAYING of God is involved in the first, as we have seen. The action of separating the gaseous envelope of the earth from the fluids was provided for in the creation of light. Indeed, the light was but the result of the activity of God's spirit.

And so it is with all of God's achievements. All are found first in Himself, and are only the outworking of what was within Him. By the multiplicity of His wonders we are bewildered, and fail to trace all to their Source. But here, at the very outset, the matter is simpler, and the chain complete. God is Spirit, the vibration of which produces light, the energy of which separates the atmospheric gases from the watery fluids (Gen.1:6).

We easily overlook the Deity in His operations. And we are not logical enough to trace them to their first and ultimate Origin. We do not realize that mere "natural" forces are not intelligent enough to act independently. Not only the *power* is divine, but its *control* is in His hands. It was not the light that thought out the idea of separating the

air from the waters. God provided both the energy and its direction. To remind us of this we are not told that the effect of the light was such that the gas ascended and the water separated of itself. To forefend such silly, "scientific," atheistic ideas, *God* once more *spoke.* And so it was at the beginning of each day. Nothing evolved of itself. But all unfolded its divine potentialities at a simple statement of His will.

Once more we hear the simple, yet magnifical statement of what is to be. The Deity does not need to use the imperative voice in nature in order to express His will. As He alone supplies the power, all He needs to do is *use* it, and foretell the result just as He does in all predictive prophecy.

The Original reads, "There is coming to be an atmosphere in the midst of the water, and there is coming to be a separation between water and water." In the first instance (v.3) the statement is simply repeated, "It is becoming light." Now, however, the record simply reads, "And it came to be so." This formula is used in the Hebrew in all the following cases, but here it does not appear in the Hebrew text until the end of verse 7. As it was preserved at this point, following the divine declaration, in the ancient Greek translation, we restore it.

THE STAMPING

The "firmament" of the Bible has been the sport of scholars. It is given as conclusive proof that this book is full of ignorant fables. We are told that the ancient Hebrews thought the heavens were a "firm" hollow shell on which the stars were fixed. It is true that the Septuagint Greek translation uses a words which means "solid," and that the Vulgate Latin version made it *firmamentum,* from which the AV took its "firmament." But the inspired Hebrew term, in the STAMP family, does not give support to these

ideas. It gives us the divine viewpoint, not the human. It looks at it as a whole from above, not as man sees it from the surface of the earth (Gen.1:6-8).

Like water, air *flows.* Water flows downward into the lowest hollows of earth's surface, and the atmosphere fills all the rest and rises far above both. To put it another way, water and air fill all the low spots and seek their level. The land is very uneven, but the waters fill the seas, and the air forces its way into every depression on the dry land.

This characteristic is figured for us in the highly pictorial vocabulary of the Hebrew tongue by comparing it to the thin layer of foil which was STAMPED out of metal, such as copper, silver or gold, to overlay the wooden parts of the tabernacle (Ex.39:3; Num.16:38,39), and the carvings of idols (Isa.40:19; Jer.10:9). This Hebrew stem, *rqo* STAMP, as a noun, *rqio,* is their name for the atmosphere. It covers the contours of the earth like the thin foil which was stamped out to overlay the sacred furnishings of God's dwelling place. The atmosphere is the costly covering of the earth. Next to light, it is the principal factor which changed it from a chaos into a fertile, life-sustaining habitation for plant and soul life.

THE ATMOSPHERE

So accustomed are we to the air in which we live that its marvels escape us. As we have seen, we can live without food or water for hours at a time, yet a very short time without air is usually fatal. Normally, we go without food or water for hours at a time, but we breathe in or out almost constantly.

Neither can we stand very great changes in quantity of air. This is dependent largely on the pressure, and changes with elevation above sea level. It takes time for the body to adapt itself to even small variations, for the pressure of the air within cannot be suddenly altered. As a conse-

quence, mankind is confined to the surface of the earth, and finds it difficult to climb the higher mountains.

The most important functions of the atmosphere for humanity are connected with *life* and *light.* It makes the celestial luminaries visible to our eyes and provides our bodies with vital oxygen apart from which we cannot survive, and which is joined with the other elements of which living tissues are formed. About one-fifth of it is a vitally essential gas, without which there could be no soul-life on the earth. It may be that this is referred to in the formation of Adam, when Yahweh Elohim blew into his nostrils the *breath of lives* (Gen.2:7), for the oxygen is that part of the air which is absolutely essential to life. When man ascends to the higher altitudes, where it is scarce, it is necessary to supply it by artificial means.

THE SEPARATIONS

A striking feature of the restoration of the six days is the sevenfold recurrence of the word *separate.* God *separated* between the light and the darkness (Gen.1:4). The atmosphere is the *separation* between the waters above and beneath (Gen.1:6,7). On the fourth day the luminaries *separate* between the day and the night (1:14) and *separate* between the light and the darkness (1:18). It will be noted that the first one separated abides, while the second eventually vanishes. Darkness and night will be done away (Rev.21:25; 22:5). So also with the waters. Those beneath the atmosphere are found on the new earth as a river of life (Rev.22:1; 22:17), while those above became the deluge of death (Gen.7:21).

THE TWO WATERS

Had we written this, we probably would have said that the atmosphere is *above* (not in the *midst* of) the water, and would not have made a separation *between* the waters, for

we seldom consider how much water or moisture there is in the upper reaches of the atmosphere. In order to appreciate God's marvelous mercy in placing water above as well as beneath the atmosphere, we will imagine that the water, being heavier than air, must always remain below. Then the ground, even if it was once saturated, would dry out and become absolutely unfit to support life of any kind. As it is, there are lands with so little moisture that they cannot be inhabited. Water is more necessary for life than food. Plants, as well as soul life, will shrivel up and die apart from a proper supply of moisture. Nevertheless, there are regions, in the center of continents, more than a thousand miles from a sea, which have more than enough water, especially in the equatorial belt.

How wise is the wonderful provision that water is not only heavier than air but can also be changed so as to float in it! It is very variable, changed by heat from a solid to a fluid and a gas. We are well acquainted with the fluid, water, but some know little of it as solid ice, while most of us seldom recognize its invisible gaseous condition unless it cools enough to show its shape in clouds or fog.

BEFORE THE DELUGE

But we must not take the present conditions as normal for antediluvian days. We never read of rain falling on the earth until the deluge. Indeed, we are distinctly told that Yahweh Elohim did *not* bring rain on the earth. At that time humidity came *up* from below and irrigated all the surface of the ground (Gen.2:5,6). Subirrigation is a much better method of watering plants than surface flooding or rain. It would be much more used in arid regions if it were not so expensive. It is probable, however, that in those days, the moisture was not only absorbed by plant life, but *rose* through it into the air and was stored *above* until the deluge, when it descended for forty days and forty

nights. Combined with the water from beneath and that which came through the crevices of the heavens, it covered the whole earth (Gen.7:11). Under present conditions it soon descends as rain. But then it may have been stored as invisible vapor. It may be that the limits of this method were reached at the time of the deluge, so that it gradually came down.

THE RAINBOW

God has given us a continual reminder of this in the rainbow. This was not visible to the antediluvians because the atmospheric conditions were not such as would refract the light into the multicolored arch which we see today. *Now* this is God's guarantee that no repetition of the deluge is possible. The moisture repeatedly forms globules of water which fall as rain. They had neither rainbow nor rain in Paradise or in the rest of the earth in that eon. As the moisture went up for two thousand years, more or less, depending on which chronology we take, it is not at all astonishing that the deluge covered the earth. That is nearly as long, or longer, than from the birth of Christ to the present.

I have seen magnificent rainbows, with an unbroken arch showing all the colors of the spectrum. At the grand canyon of the Colorado, I saw it as a rainround, a full circle, without ends. In the yawning depths of the abyss the "ends" continued to form another inverted bow, completing the upper semicircle.

But the most soul-stirring of them all I saw on the hills above the lake of Galilee. What a picture! What solemn associations! In the center, below me, was the lake, recalling all the sacred scenes centered around my Lord and His disciples, while high above the sign of God's unconditional covenant spanned the lake from shore to shore. God and His Beloved were brought very near by these visible tokens of their presence. A. E. Knoch

IT IS BECOMING SO

THE earth and the heavens about it had come into such a state of chaos and vacancy that only God, the One Who created the earth in the first place, could revive it. No fortuitous combination of elements or circumstances could change the situation. It was a world lost in darkness and disorder, hostile to life, cold and empty. God Himself must act, and when He does act it will necessarily be evident that all that occurs must be traced to Him.

Popular theories speak of movements and interactions of celestial bodies, of physical and chemical forces, of time and chance, all involved in bringing out some primordial spark of life. It is claimed that one thing led to another, though perhaps through billions of years and billions upon billions of misses and near misses. But what caused the "one thing" and the conditions required for the whole process?

Beginnings of life and development of good cannot be traced to blind chance. They must be traced to God Who possesses enlightened purpose and the power to carry it out. This One is Elohim, being now presented by His words and deeds in the first chapter of Genesis.

Blind chance is no explanation for light and life and order. It is like chaos, though far worse because it is thought of as something that replaces and excludes God.The chaos and vacancy and darkness of Genesis 1:2 plead for God as One responsible for and to what He has created.

Now in Genesis 1:6 God speaks again, this time saying, "Let an atmosphere come to be in the midst of the waters, that it may be separating waters from waters." These are

words which speak of putting things in order. God is the Placer (in accord with the Greek word *Theos*), the Subjector (in accord with the Hebrew title, *El*), Who orders things effectively and well.

Elohim's opening words of Genesis 1:6 may be expressed in English more literally as "It-is-becoming, atmosphere. . . ." This helps us see that the verb declares or announces a *developing* change. But the Hebrew verb could also properly be rendered "It-shall-become," thus emphasizing the *prophetic* nature of the words which Elohim uttered. These words are God's declaration of what will come to be. His command is actually a proclamation. What He says here can be relied upon.

In the CV the clause (literally rendered) "and it is becoming so" is moved from the end of verse 7, where it appears in the Masoretic Text, to the end of verse 6 where it appears in the Septuagint. This is in harmony with the pattern of verses 9, 11, 15, 24 and 30 (see also verse 20, CV), where it follows immediately after declarations of Elohim. The statement is a certification that what God has spoken is faithfully carried out.

Are we willing to apply this principle to all of God's declarations? What God has spoken is certain of coming to be so. Often there is no problem because, as with the words of Genesis 1:6, what God says has clearly been shown to be true and experienced with appreciation. But much of what God says in Scripture has not yet been realized. It remains as a promise and must be taken in faith apart from sight.

Even though much of what God has spoken has not yet come to be so in experience, it must become so. The first chapter of Genesis reminds us to be patient and expectant concerning the great promises of good that God has made. Very many scriptural declarations of God concern "things to come" which have not yet come. And the human tendency has been to dilute or alter the sense of these

unfulfilled promises because of the long periods of time between the declaration and its coming to be so. Motivations may be sincere, but if the fulfillment is not clearly and exactly a becoming so of what God has said, we may surely question the claims of fulfillment.

Let us consider a few examples:

THE SERPENT'S HEAD

When, by its craftiness, the serpent had usurped authority over humanity in the garden of Eden, Yahweh Elohim declared in terms very much the same as found in Genesis 1:6, "And I shall set enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He shall hurt you in the head, and you shall hurt Him in the heel" (Gen.3:15).

The second half of this curse is sometimes called the "protoevangel," or first presentation of the evangel, the good news of God's deliverance of sinners through the gift of His Son. The prophecy is expressed in figurative language, but its sense is easily discerned. It concerns the Descendent of the woman, Who will take away the headship or authority that the Adversary had seized in the garden, doing so at His cost, suffering in the very act of triumphing over the enemy. It concerns God's Son, Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.1:1,3,5), His death on the cross (*cf* Rom. 3:24; 5:6-9) and the annulling of Satan's authority and acts (*cf* 1 Cor.15:24-27; 1 John 3:8).

Numerous human traditions have weakened the sense of Genesis 3:15, suggesting that its fulfillment will not be quite *so* as stated. Foremost are those teachings which, at best, confuse the issue of the Adversary's loss of headship, if they do not contradict it altogether. Another field of warfare against this prophecy is the advancement of ideas concerning supposed human contributions to the nullifying of Satan's authority. In this way the truth of Christ's victory and the centrality of His cross is drastically diluted.

No matter how loud and continuous the claim that everlasting hell or irreversible annihilation is no victory for Satan may be, such outcomes still would stand as triumphs of his authority. He led humanity into disobedience, and the doctrines of eternal loss must, in effect, trace that loss to his original usurpation of leadership. The doctrines of eternal loss might still allow the hurting of Satan's head to mean that he fails to gain *all* he wants. But an incomplete annulling of Satan's authority, or the exercise of divine authority over the creatures of God's hands with the tools of suffering and loss could never stand as a true triumph of the Seed of the woman.

The subjection of all under the feet of Christ is the coming-to-be-so of Genesis 3:15. Then He will "be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power" (1 Cor.15:24-27). Whenever this occurs, the protoevangel becomes the realized evangel in the hearts of all, so that "in the name of Jesus," the Saviour, every knee will bow and every tongue will avow the Lordship of Christ (Phil.2:10,11). For then God's delight and purpose to head up all in the Christ will be achieved in recognition by all throughout the universe, both that in the heavens and that on the earth, (Eph. 1:9-11) to the glory of God the Father. Peace will have spread everywhere, embracing all, because of the Seed of the Woman and the blood of His cross (Col.1:20).

That is the testimony of God's Word as to the fulfillment of His word to the serpent in Genesis 3:15. It shall become so.

HUMAN COOPERATION

The promise concerning the Seed of the woman was spoken to the serpent. Humanity stood in the position of hearers, or rather overhearers. They were not invited to participate in the hurting of the serpent's head, nor even offered the message of triumph as a matter of their choice,

as though it needed their verification by a faithful response. It was simply a declaration of what would become so.

The travail of the woman spoken of in Genesis 3:16 and the sweat of the man spoken of in 3:19 were channels for the continuance and preservation of the human race, but the promised victory was centered solely in the Seed Who would come. When Cain ("Acquired") was born, Eve centered upon what she had "acquired," naming him accordingly.

The groaning and travailing, in toil and in child-bearing, whether that given to the male or to the female, is not something we can boast in as our humanly contrived contribution to the defeat of the Adversary. Like humanity's hate and cruelty at the cross, our infirmity and enmity through the centuries only emphasizes our inability to rid ourselves of Satan's headship. If Mary was blessed, or made happy, or we are graciously granted experiences of suffering along with our believing, this is evidence of God's operations in and for us. What we do is only evidence of our need of a Saviour. When Genesis 3:15 becomes "so" it will be recognized that the annulling of the Adversary's headship was the victory of Christ alone.

THE PROMISED LAND AND KINGDOM

When His disciples came to Jesus after His resurrection and posed the question that was so dominant in their mind, "Lord, art Thou at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?" Jesus gave a very important reply. He said, "Not yours is it to know times or eras which the Father placed in His own jurisdiction" (Acts 1:6,7). All through His ministry Jesus had directed attention to the kingdom, which, by His own testimony, had drawn near. But the promises of this great realm to be centered in a definitely prescribed area of the earth, and directed through a chosen people, go back to the twelfth chapter of Genesis and extend

through all the sacred scriptures of old. Not one of them can fail of realization.

At least two thousand years had passed since Yahweh had declared to Abram, "I shall make you into a great nation, and I shall bless you; I shall indeed make your name great, and you will be a blessing; I shall indeed bless those blessing you, and I shall curse the one maledicting you. In you all the families of the ground will be blessed" (Gen.12:2,3). And about a thousand years had come and gone since He had said to David, "Your house and your kingship will be authenticated before Me for the eon; your throne, it shall become established for the eon" (2 Sam.7:16).

We cannot be satisfied in thinking these declarations were fulfilled in the days of Joshua or Solomon. What was said has not even yet *become so.* The disciples were not confused into supposing that they were enjoying the blessings spoken of by Yahweh in Genesis and all the prophets. Christ had been with them, manifesting many of the powers of the kingdom, granting some of its blessings as a foretaste now and again, but that was not the fulfillment of the promises. The "times of restoration of all which God speaks through the mouth of His holy prophets who are from the eon" (Acts 3:21) had not arrived. They were still praying as Jesus had directed, "Thy kingdom come" (Matt.6:10).

Later, when it became obvious that the coming of the kingdom was still being delayed, Peter wrote, "Now of this one thing you are not to be oblivious, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not tardy as to the promise, as some are deeming tardiness, but is patient because of you, not intending any to perish, but all to make room for repentance" (2 Pet.3:8,9).

This theme is similarly taken up in the book of Hebrews with the recognition that they had not yet entered into the Lord's "stopping" (Heb.3:7-4:13). "You should not, then,

be casting away your boldness, which is having a great reward, for you have need of endurance that, doing the will of God, you should be requited with the promise. For still how very little, He Who is coming will be arriving and not delaying . . . . By faith we are apprehending the eons to adjust to a declaration of God, so that what is being observed has not come out of what is appearing" (Heb. 10:35-37; 11:2). The signs that had been appearing, and the great work of the cross, in their own days, had indicated the Lord's soon return and the establishment of the kingdom. And yet what they observed was that Rome still ruled, and what was promised in the prophets remained *not so.* The message was faith and endurance, steadfastness in "looking off to the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, Who, for the joy lying before Him, endures a cross, despising the shame, besides is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12:2).

SPIRITUALIZING THE WORD

If the words of Genesis and Samuel concerning the land and the kingdom cannot be found fulfilled in the reign of Solomon with all its splendor and the extent of its sway, then we must take it that the standard of exactitude in fulfillment is as high as it was in Genesis 1. If the disciples living under the ministry of Jesus for three years and more did not find in His presence with them the fulfillment of the promised kingdom, then we surely can express the strongest of doubts that this fulfillment has existed even in the hearts of the most faithful and reverent of saints from the first century until now.

We have made the standards for the "becoming so" of what God has said too low. Not just preterists who claim the kingdom was set up in the year 70 A.D. or amillennialists who see it as existing today in the "church," but all of us who believe fall short in appreciation of the glory and real-

ity of God's fulfillments of His promises of blessing. How can we fully appreciate them until they have become so? But we can, as God gives us grace, believe what He has said and expect it will become so in fullest harmony with what He has said.

To be sure, we are not always clear about what exactly it is that God has said. But this is not the fault of what He has said, but of the corruption of our understandings by our traditions and imaginings, as well-meaning as these may be. Poor translations of the Scriptures, pride and stubbornness, these all have their parts as well. But we must insist that (to use two passages of scripture that have often been used to suggest the kingdom is currently in operation) if the kingdom of God is inside the chosen (Luke 17:21) and is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in holy spirit (Rom.14:16,17) it is not here in the body of believers today in any sense of wholeness, no matter how mature and faithful one may be, or righteous by human standards. It is surely *reflected* in the lives of believers, but until *all* of God's declarations concerning it have become so, it still remains a matter of promise and expectation, both for Israel in its terrestrial aspects and for us in its celestial aspects.

We will be greatly aided in joyful patience by holding fast to these foundational lessons concerning God, His word and His ways, given in the first chapter of Genesis. "God said . . . and it came to be so." Like Abraham, let us not be infirm in faith despite all that we observe to the contrary (Rom.4:19).

EXPECTATION IS NOT MORTIFYING

It is because of God's declarations of good news to us that we are able to endure afflictions with joyful anticipation. In His evangel to us God has spoken concerning gratuitous justification "through the deliverance which is

in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24). Furthermore He has said in His Word, "Being, then justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ," and added, that through our Lord Jesus Christ "we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand," and even beyond this, "we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.5:1,2). God's grace at the cross and in our expectation bears the gracious fruit of endurance in our lives.

All around us there is much to discourage and distract us. This good news concerning righteousness and deliverance that God has spoken has not come to be so in fulness of experience and realization. Infirmity and failure and affliction make that evident. But "we may be glorying also in afflictions, having perceived that affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness expectation. Now expectation is not mortifying, seeing that the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is being given to us" (Rom.5:3-5).

We have heard God's declarations of grace, and we believe that all He has declared concerning us He is able to bring to pass; we fully anticipate that what He has said will come to be so. Like Abraham we are invigorated by faith, "giving glory to God, being fully assured also, that what He has promised, He is able to do also" (Rom.4:20,21). "For the saving grace of God made its advent to all humanity, training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon, anticipating that happy expectation, even the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who gives Himself for us, that He should be redeeming us from all lawlessness and be cleansing for Himself a people to be about Him, zealous for ideal acts. Speak of these things and entreat and expose with every injunction" (Titus 2:11-15). D.H.H.

SAUL'S SCHEMES AND GOD'S SPIRIT

SAUL continued to try and grasp David. He was like humanity groping in the darkness (Acts 17:26, 27), and like Israel struggling with Christ's "hard sayings" (John 6:60). He simply could not catch him. Realization of the truth comes by revelation from the Spirit of God, not from the efforts of the flesh. Apart from God's enablement we cannot discern between an idol in a cloak and the truth.

1 SAMUEL 19:11-24

11 7**It** *b***occurred**0 **in that night** +**that Saul** l**sent messengers to David's house to observe him and to** c**put him** to **death in** the **morning.** +**But Michal his wife** l**told** › **David,** › **saying**–**, If you are not** m**providing** `for **your soul** an **escape**l **tonight,** to**morrow you** will **be** c**put** to **death**l. 12 + **Michal** c**had** `**David** l**descend through the window** +**that he might go and** run l**away and** l**escape.** 13 + **Michal** l**took** `**the teraphim and** l**placed** them ›**on the couch.** + **She** *pl***laid** `**goats'** hair **gauze** where **his** 7**head~** should be**, and** l**covered** it *i***with** his **cloak.** 14 So +**when Saul** l**sent messengers to take** `**David** in**,** + **she** l**said, He** is **ailing.** 15 +**Yet Saul** l**sent** `**the messengers** back **to see** `**David,** › **saying**–**,** c**Bring** `**him up to me** *i***on** the **couch to** c**put him** to **death.** 16 +**When the messengers** had l**come** in**,** + **behold,** there were **the teraphim** ›**on the couch, and** ·**goats**l hair **gauze** where **his** 7**head~** should be**.** 17 +**So Saul** l**said to Michal, Why** did **you deceive me thus and** l**send** `**my enemy**l away so +**that he might escape?** + **Michal** *sa***replied to Saul, He´ said to me,** m**Let me go! Why should I** c**put you** to **death?**

18 +**As** for **David, he** ran **away and** l**escaped.** + **He** l**came to**

Samuel at*d* ·**Ramah and** l**told** › **him** `**all** *w***that Saul had done to him.** +**Then he and Samuel** l**went** away **and** *sit***stayed in** the **homestead.** 19 +**Now** › **Saul was** l**told,** › **saying**–**, Behold, David** is **in** the **homestead** *i***at Ramah;** 20 +**so Saul** l**sent messengers to take** `**David** in**.** +**When** 7**they~***cs* l**saw** `**the assembly of prophets prophesying and Samuel standing stationed**l **over them,** +**then** the **spirit of Elohim** *b***came on Saul's messengers, and** *mr***together they´** l**prophesied** in ecstasy**.** 21 +**When they** l**told** it **to Saul,** + **he** l**sent other messengers;** +**yet they´** *mr***too** l**prophesied** in ecstasy**.** +**So Saul** l**sent messengers** + l**again,** the **third** group**;** +**yet they´** *mr***too** l**prophesied** in ecstasy**.**

22 7+**Now** the **anger of Saul** grew l**hot**0**, and he him**self *mr***also** l**went** to*d* ·**Ramah.** +**When he** l**came as far as** the **cistern** 7**of the threshing site which** is *i***on** the **ridge~,** + **he** l**asked,** + l**saying, What about Samuel and David?** + 7**They~***c* *sa***replied, Behold,** they are **in** the **homestead** *i***at Ramah.** 23 +**As he** l**went** 7**from there~ to** the **homestead** *i***at Ramah,** + the **spirit of Elohim** *b***came on him,** on **him** *mr***too,** +**while he** l**went** on **walking**– **and** l**prophesying** in ecstasy **until he came**– *i***to** the **homestead** *i***at Ramah.** 24 +**Then he´** *mr***too** l**stripped** off **his clothes, and he´** *mr***too** l**prophesied** in ecstasy **before Samuel;** + **he** lay l**fallen naked all** ·**that** ·**day and all** ·**night. Therefore they** l**say,** Is **Saul** *mr***also** *i***among** the **prophets?**◊

A SIGN GIVEN TO SAUL

David escaped to Samuel at Ramah, and Saul sent messengers three times to apprehend him. The prophesying of Saul's messengers, and also of himself, should have called to Saul's mind his own appointment to the position of king. He had received three signs, one of which was prophesying in ecstasy (1 Sam.10:1-7). The same God Whose Spirit came upon Saul to verify his appointment to the throne now restrained Saul. This served as a divine sign that Saul was not to touch David. But Saul, like the flesh and like Israel, failed to heed the signs.

The failure of the messengers to apprehend David is similar to the messengers sent to Christ to question Him or entrap Him with His words. Their mouths were stopped, and they bore witness, "Never speaks a man thus!" (John 7:46; Luke 20:40).

This incident also calls to mind the sending of messengers to Elijah three times to apprehend him. (2 Kings 1:1-18). The first two groups sent to Elijah were consumed by fire. In 1 Samuel 19:20,21 the messengers sent to David were not injured. In both cases the problem was a failure to recognize and revere God's will and words. The differences in the examples show that they represent different aspects and times. David represents Christ coming in grace. Elijah's time represent the times of tribulation and the "rod of iron" rule.

There is great comfort for us in seeing that God's arm is never short to deliver His chosen. Whether the opposers simply fall backward to the ground (John 18:6), or whether they are plagued (Ex.7-12; 1 Sam.5-6; Rev.8-9), they can do no more or less than God determines. And God's hand should be seen in it all. Dagon, Goliath and Saul all fall prostrate before God (1 Sam.5:3-4; 17:49; 19:23-24). Whether the Presence is testified by the ark of the covenant, by God's anointed, or by His prophet, the same God is powerful in all situations.

J. Philip Scranton

HEINZ AND BRIGITTE HOFFMANN

We sorrow to report the deaths of our beloved brother and sister **Heinz and Brigitte Hoffmann** of *Konkordanter Verlag* (Concordant Publishing Concern of Germany). Heinz died on June 20, after an extended illness; his wife Brigitte, suddenly on August 12.

On two occasions, Heinz and Brigitte made extended visits here, to the Concern in California, conferring with Brothers Herman Rocke and Dean Hough in their common translation work, that of the *Concordant Version of the Old Testament.*

HUMAN WILL AND THE MINISTRY OF LAW

For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen! I am entreating you, ***then,*** *brethren, by the pities of God . . .* (Rom.11:34-12:1a).

Now to Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be the glory in the ecclesia . . . I am entreating you, ***then,*** *I, the prisoner in the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called* (Eph.3:20-4:1).

Question:

I find your logical argument against free will compelling: Either human behavior occurs deterministically or indeterministically (or some combination of the two). If determinism is true, then whatever occurs is the effect of those causal factors which produce it; hence free will is false. But if determinism is false, then whatever occurs is either a thing of chance itself or else the outcome of a random event; hence free will is also false.

That settles it, then; free will is false. It is wonderful to see, however, that "determinism"—that is, *divine* determinism or causality—is scripturally *revealed* to be both true and universal. You made that point clearly as well by showing that the scope of the "all" that is

out of, through, and for God (Rom.11:36), is necessarily all that exists and all that occurs. This is evident, since the entire point of Paul's rhetorical questions of Romans 11:34,35 together with the apostle's causative expression, "*seeing that*" ["out of Him, through Him, and for Him is all"], requires this sense.

Your point is also well taken where you emphasize that we must not reject this truth simply because it is so unpopular, and since, at first, even to ourselves, it seems wrong. We should hardly expect such an important truth to be "popular" in the world in which we live; likewise, the unenlightened conscience is by no means a reliable guide. I have already conquered most of my uncomfortable feelings concerning the teaching of God's universal deity simply by *believing* the teaching of God's universal deity!

This brings me, however, to my question, which is this: Since men do *not* possess free will, why, then, do the Scriptures nevertheless contain such an abundance of commandments and entreaties, whether through Moses, for the nation of Israel, or through the apostle Paul, for believers of this present administration?

My pastor claims that the very fact that the Bible is replete with laws and exhortations, and, with punishments for disobedience, proves that free will is true. His argument is that it would be foolish and unjust to command men to do the impossible. Besides this, if free will were not true, then freewill-based moral responsibility would be an impossibility. Since God is not foolish and unjust, and since any suggestion that freewill-type moral responsibility is unwarranted is unthinkable, therefore, free will is true.

While I realize that, somehow, my pastor's arguments must be mistaken, it is not fully clear to me how this is so. I would appreciate your help.

Answer:

It is important for believers to understand the place of

entreaties and exhortations in relation to their walk and service. Clearly, all who are naming the name of the Lord are to "withdraw from injustice" (2 Tim.2:19). This is even as Paul is saying, "As children of light be walking (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth), testing what is well pleasing to the Lord. And be not joint participants in the unfruitful acts of darkness, yet rather be exposing them also, for it is a shame even to speak of the hidden things occurring, done by them" (Eph.5:9-12).

Even though we are justified apart from law (Rom.3: 21,24), and, for us, grace reigns for life eonian (Rom.5:21), this in no way diminishes the importance of an obedient walk, which remains essential to faithful service.

The apostle Paul's writings are filled with "the imperatives of faithfulness," with the many instructions and warnings which are vital to our walk in the Lord.

There can be no doubt of the importance of our obedience; and, therefore, of the importance of the many corresponding entreaties and exhortations given to us with a view toward our heeding of their testimony. Insofar as our duty is concerned, it is clear that God's "directions" to us rehearse the various particulars of which our duty consists. As Paul declares, "What I am writing to you is a precept of the Lord. Now if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant!" (1 Cor.14:37b,38).

In this respect, there is little confusion as to the purpose of entreaties of virtue and exhortations of righteousness. Nevertheless, much confusion remains in connection with any such words of instruction. The confusion and error related to issues of our obedience consists primarily in our failure to recognize the Source of our obedience and to rely on God alone with a view toward the fulfillment of that very obedience. Our failure is that of failing to recognize our need of *the saving grace of God* in order for our obedience actually to occur.

Reasoning from the fact that the sons of Israel of old were entreated to obey all the law of Moses lest they become subject to all of the law of Moses' curses, one ancient school of thought, known as Pelagianism, concluded that, therefore, man, in himself, at all times, is able to obey the entirety of God's law, *doing so apart from* (any further) *divine grace.* The teaching of Pelagianism has been aptly summed up thus: "Since no grace is needed, none is given."

Since your pastor claims that duty proves ability (otherwise God is foolish and unjust), he should become a Pelagian. According to the Pelagians, men have no further need of divine grace—no need of the holy spirit of God and its powerful workings—in order for them to perform plenary obedience. Insofar as obedience is concerned, regeneration is unnecessary. Like the Israelites of the wilderness, the Pelagians' slogan is, "All that Yahweh speaks we shall do" (*cf* Ex.19:8). If it is their duty to live lives of purity and righteousness, then they will live such lives in their own strength, albeit while thanking God for their native powers.

As might be expected, the propagation of thoroughgoing Pelagianism did not have great success, and was soon replaced with semi-Pelagianism. This is because all but the blindest of sinners recognize at least something of their own insufficiency. Therefore Pelagianism's specious argument that sinners already have all the grace that they need, seemed simply unbelievable. Hence semi-Pelagianism soon gained the day, and even today remains by far the most popular means of deception in opposition to the truth of the evangel and the realization of God.

Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism can be both summed up and compared by the following illustrations: The Pelagian's prayer to God is, "I thank you for already having given me all that I need in order to obey You, in the gracious gift of my native powers, which gift, when joined with my own exercise of free will, will ensure my success in all my moral endeavors." By way of contrast (however slight), the semi-Pelagian's prayer to God is, "I thank you for already having given me much that I need in order to obey You, in the gracious gift of my native powers, and, for offering to give me the rest that I need, in the gracious gift of Your holy spirit, which gifts, when joined with my own exercise of free will, will ensure my success in all my moral endeavors."

More specifically, Pelagianism says to God, "Thanks for Your help. Since You have already given me all that I need except for ensuring the proper use of my will, on which all depends, I will now get about the business of doing what I must in order to *save myself* from being disqualified for reward and/or for exemption from eternal punishment. If I succeed in my endeavor, I will then call *You* my Saviour." Semi-Pelagianism says to God, "Thanks for Your help. Since You have already given me much that I need and offer to give me the rest that I need except for ensuring the proper use of my will, on which all depends, I will now get about the business of doing what I must in order to *save myself* from being disqualified for reward and/or[1] for exemption from eternal punishment. If I succeed in my endeavor, I will then call *You* my Saviour."

Semi-Pelagianism has the tremendous advantage over Pelagianism not only of being more credible, but of affording a greater place to piety—while, just as surely even if

1. The careful reader will note that even the believer in the divine graces of the final salvation of all and/or of the saint's election in Christ who nonetheless holds to free will with regard to moral behavior, is likewise of the semi-Pelagian position in this respect. The self-righteousness of the Universalist or Calvinist who holds to free will in practical affairs is no better in this vital aspect than that of the self-righteousness of the Arminian who does the same, while maintaining this same pride-filled doctrine as well even in relation to his own salvation.

more furtively, in the end, effectually making men their own saviours, according to their own "free wills." Since semi-Pelagianism still leaves ample room for self-pride and autosoterism (i.e., "self-salvation") while at the same time granting a needful place to a measure of further grace, the more creative and sincere of its proponents are able to convincingly represent it as being the very truth of God.

Since your pastor is a "conservative, non-Calvinistic evangelical," even if he should be unfamiliar with the term "semi-Pelagianism," he nonetheless holds the above-described view, known historically as semi-Pelagianism, or in modern times, as evangelical Arminianism. While semi-Pelagianism claims that the grace termed "the *assistance* of the holy spirit," is *indispensable* both to regeneration and faithful service, it also claims that this grace is *insufficient* for the realization of these same objectives. While semi-Pelagianists may place great stress upon the sinner's need of "grace," it is not the all-sufficient and saving grace of God which they have in mind, but only the "possibility-making" grace of their own imaginations.

By whatever name, this is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, and, of nearly all present-day Protestant bodies as well. It is a fact that semi-Pelagianism (not to mention Pelagianism) was repudiated and strenuously opposed by all of the original teachers of the Reformation. Indeed, it was the primary goal of the original reformers to overthrow this very teaching, which, as the mainstay of the Papacy, was the reformers' principal objection to Catholicism.[2]

2. As Martin Luther, in opposing the doctrine of free will, declared in replying to his opponent Erasmus, "You alone . . . have attacked the real thing, that is, the essential issue. You have not worried me with those extraneous issues about the Papacy, purgatory, indulgences and such like—trifles rather than issues—in respect of which almost all to date have sought my blood . . . . You, and you alone, have seen the hinge on which all turns, and aimed for the vital spot. For that I heartily thank you . . . ." (Martin Luther, THE BONDAGE OF THE WILL, *Historical and Theological Introduction,* p.42 (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1957).

Now, in reply to your pastor's arguments, let me respond to his second argument first, which is that, since, to him (and to nearly all others as well), it is "unthinkable" that freewill moral responsibility should be a non-reality it is therefore to be considered a vital constituent of all true reality, let me say the following: Such a claim is idolatrous. You, I, *and your pastor as well,* are but poor, stupid sinners. Nothing could be more imprudent than for any of us to approach this question of free will with the conviction that since free will is necessary as the very basis of moral responsibility as ordinarily understood, therefore free will must be deemed an unquestionable truth.

What, did the Word of God come out from us? And, what, are popular ethics in a world of darkness to be deemed that to which God Himself must submit if He would retain His righteousness? By no means. Whatever God actually does is what is right; and, whatever God actually reveals is what is true.

Likewise, whatever follows from true premises is that which constitutes a valid conclusion. A valid conclusion is necessarily a true assertion, not merely a logical conclusion; therefore, it constitutes conclusive evidence of a proposition. Indeed, apart from careful, correct engagement in such considerations of critical thinking, it is impossible to determine the true sense in which the Scripture is to be understood. To say that we care nothing about such "intellectual" disciplines, and since, purportedly, being spiritual, have no need of them, is tantamount to saying that we care nothing about and have no need of the only basis upon which any question may actually be decided. Further, we may hardly, at any time, much less *a priori,*

reject whatever fails to please us or meet the approval of our conscience, or, whatever is unpopular in the world, including in the world of Christianity.

Now, in reply to your pastor's first argument, let me say the following: You will recall that, succinctly stated, his claim is that since it would be both foolish and unjust to command men to do what is impossible, and since God is neither foolish nor unjust yet He instructs men to obey Him and imposes penalties upon their disobedience, therefore, free will is true.

Your pastor's first error here, of course, is the egregious one of presuming that whatever may seem foolish and unjust to him, is necessarily foolish and unjust. Amazing as it may seem to some, it might just be that God would have wise and righteous reasons for doing what we fondly imagine to be foolish and unjust.

Secondly, it hardly follows that if God's purpose in instructing men to obey Him is not what we presumed it to be—namely, that of affording the human a venue within which he might exercise free will—therefore, God could have no other purpose in instructing men to obey Him.

Thirdly, your pastor misrepresents the actual scriptural presentation. In the Scriptures, God does not command men to do the impossible, that is, to *do* that which they cannot *do.* Instead, He commands them to do that which it is impossible for them to do *ultimately of themselves.* It is altogether righteous and wise to command a blind, self-reliant sinner to do that which he can by no means do of himself—even as, also, to impose temporary disciplinary penalties upon him for his disobedience—that he might learn of his true condition and desperate situation and turn to God and be saved.

Similarly, it is altogether righteous and wise for God to instruct His saints as well to do that which they can no more do of themselves than the most wretched of sinners

can do of themselves, that they might turn to God more fully and be saved from the sin of ignorance of their own intrinsic, fleshly condition, even as from their dreadful self-glorying in fancying themselves as the key to victory.

KNOWLEDGE OF OUR IMPOTENCE

In their disputation over free will, Erasmus, in his *Diatribe* against Luther, had argued that such words as found, for example, in Deuteronomy 30:19 ("Life and death I have put before you, the blessing and the malediction. Now *choose life* that you may live . . ."), constitute evidence of free will. As he claimed, "What could be more clearly stated? It leaves man freedom of choice."

Luther's reply to all such arguments was as follows: "What could be more clear than that at this point you are blind? [Is your argument here] in [the text's] use of the word 'choose'? Does it, then, come to pass that as soon as Moses says 'choose,' they do choose? In that case, there is . . . no need of the Spirit.

"Here is the matter in a nutshell: . . . By statements of this sort, man is not told what he can do [of himself], but what he ought to do [in his duty to God]. It is true that [in our voluntary behavior] we stand where two roads meet, and only one of them is open—indeed, neither is open [in a 'free will' sense]; and the law shows us how impossible is the one, that leading to good, *unless God bestows His spirit,*[3] and how broad and easy is the other if God [leaving us to ourselves] lets us go that way.

3. It is a great advance when we are able to recognize that all of the virtue and goodness that is, indeed, present in unbelievers, is not the outworkings of their "free wills," but is the result of common grace, of the operative power of the *spirit* of God, according to the counsel of *His* will (*cf* Eph.1:11). A man can not get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven (John 3:27), out of God Himself, Who makes the world and all that is in it, Who is giving to all, life and breath and all (Acts 17:24,25).

"'By the law is knowledge of sin,' says Paul (Rom.3:20). He does not say: *abolition,* or *avoidance* of sin. The entire design and power of the law is just to give knowledge, and that of nothing but of sin; not to display or confer any power. This knowledge is not power, nor does it bring power; but it teaches and displays that there is here no power, and great weakness. What can 'knowledge of sin' be but knowledge of our weakness and badness?

". . . What if I prove that the nature of words and use of language, even among men, is not always such as to make it an act of mockery to say to the impotent, 'If thou art willing,' 'If thou shalt do,' 'If thou shalt hear'? How often do parents thus play with their children, bidding them come to them, or do this or that, only that it may appear how impotent they are, and that they may be compelled to call for the parent's hand? How often does a faithful physician tell an obstinate patient to do or stop doing things that are impossible or injurious to him, so as to bring him by experience of himself to a knowledge of his disease or weakness, to which he cannot lead him by any other course?

"And what is more common and widespread than to use insulting and provoking language when we would show our friends what they can and cannot do?

"I merely mention these things to show Reason how stupid she is to tack her inferences on to the Scriptures, and how blind she is not to see that they do not always hold good even in respect of the words and the dealings of men . . . .

"If, now, God, as a Father, deals with us as with His sons, with a view to showing us the impotence of which we are ignorant; or as a faithful physician, with a view to making known to us our disease; or if, to taunt His enemies, who proudly resist His [preceptive] counsel and the laws He has set forth (by which He achieves this end most effectively), He should say: 'Do,' 'Hear,' 'Keep,' or: 'If thou shalt hear,' 'If thou art willing,' 'If thou shalt do'; can it be fairly

concluded from this that therefore we can do these things freely, or else God is mocking us?

"Why should not this conclusion follow rather: therefore, God is trying us that by His law He may bring us to a knowledge of our impotence, if we are His friends; or else, He is really and deservedly taunting and mocking us, if we are His proud enemies? For this, as Paul teaches, is the intent of divine legislation (*cf* Rom.3:20; 5:20; Gal.3:19,24).

"The *Diatribe* dreams that man is whole and sound (as to human view, in his own sphere, he is); hence it argues from the phrases: 'If thou art willing,' 'If thou shalt do,' 'If thou shalt hear,' that man is being mocked, unless his will is free. But Scripture describes man as corrupted and led captive, and, furthermore, as proudly disdaining to notice, and failing to recognise, his own corruption and captivity; therefore, it uses these phrases to goad and rouse him, that he may know by sure experience how unable he is to do any of these things."[4]

THE PURPOSE OF ENTREATIES

In our concerns over issues of free will, beyond all these important logical considerations which demonstrate the untenableness of the freewiller's position, it is especially wonderful simply to learn that the apostle Paul, as God's spokesman, in at least two places, explicitly *tells* us why God entreats us to heed His word. *Since all* is out of, through, and for Him, *therefore,* our God and Father entreats us to heed His counsel: "*Seeing that* out of Him and through Him and for Him is all . . . . I am entreating you, *then* . . . to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, [which is] your *logical* divine service" (Rom.11:36-12:1).

Since it is evident, then, that we are the men of God's

4. Martin Luther, *op.cit.,* pp.151-153; 157,158.

counsel (*cp* Isa.46:11), the *agents* of that of which He Himself is the first cause, a most important consideration follows from this fact. That consideration is that we should therefore be apprised of and instructed in the particulars of His will, "good and well pleasing and perfect" (Rom. 12:2b), even as come under the influence thereof accordingly *with a view to the realization of His intention in our lives.* "For *His* achievement are we, *being created* in Christ Jesus for good works, which *God makes ready beforehand* that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:10).

Similarly, in Ephesians 3:20-4:1, Paul declares, "Now to Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us—to Him be the glory in the ecclesia— . . . I am entreating you, *then* . . . to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called."

Since *God,* according to the *power* that is *operating* in us, is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, and since the glory in the ecclesia is ultimately to be ascribed not to the members of the ecclesia themselves but to their God, Paul declares, "I am entreating you, *then.*" Here, too, in Ephesians, even as previously, in Romans (*cp* Rom.9:20-23; 11:33-12:2), since we are the agents of the divine counsels, the clay being formed in the Potter's hands in order to become His eventual, finished achievement, it is obviously the part of wisdom that we should be entreated in His faithful ways. This is so as surely as it is His goodness to us to nourish us in the word of His vast love, together with the word of His all-sufficient grace by which He has *chosen* to save us (*cf* Eph.2:5,7; Rom.9:11).

May these considerations serve to foster us in the word of God's grace, that we may be learning to be relying on our God and Saviour (1 Tim.2:3; 4:10), while having no confidence in flesh (Phil.3:3). J.R.C.

Life and Peace

"EVEN THE DEATH OF THE CROSS"

WE FIND in the first chapter of Colossians a plain statement of God's grand consummation: "And [Christ] is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all he may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:18-20).

That the ecclesia is privileged to be presented as holy and flawless and unimpeachable in God's sight (Col.1:23), and to serve in connection with this glorious achievement of peace, beneath so great a Head, is rich sustenance for the spirit which defies all human description. This unique revelation, which should constantly impart life and peace (Rom.8:5-8), is treasured by us all.

Yet what an awesome cost! However diverse might be the individual circumstance or personality—whatever nationality, gender, or vocation—this one deep and abiding truth is profoundly etched upon our hearts and our spirits: *The blood of His cross.*

Heed the overwhelming wonder of so great an obedience. He Who emptied Himself in form and likeness and fashion humbled Himself in obedience unto death, "even the death of the cross" (Phil.2:6-8). How did God receive this presentation of evident love and humility? We know that as Jesus stepped up from the Jordan river, His Father declared, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight" (Matt.3:17), but surely through the words of the

great apostle we may subsequently read the answer to that heartbreaking, orphan cry, "My God! My God! Why didst Thou forsake Me?" (Matt.27:46), when he wrote: "Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:9-11).

HIS SACRIFICE DEMEANED

This glorious message of God's vast love is entrusted to the ecclesia and is published in millions upon millions of copies of the Scriptures. All around this world, which is beset with conflict, oppression, frustration and misery, this evangel is available. Here is the answer to all the problems which afflict humanity.

Why is this not welcomed with eager hearts? It is "because, knowing God, not as God do they glorify or thank Him, but vain were they made in their reasonings, and darkened is their unintelligent heart. Alleging themselves to be wise, they are made stupid, and they change the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an image of a corruptible human being and flying creatures and quadrupeds and reptiles." Accordingly, "they alter the truth of God into the lie . . . and offer divine service to the creature rather than the Creator, Who is blessed for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.1:21-25).

Brother A. E. Knoch has written on this passage, "There is no surer road to degradation than to degrade the object of our worship."[1] But what should be declared concerning those who make no distinction between the declarations of Scriptures *prior* and those *subsequent* to the death and

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.230.

resurrection of God's beloved Son? By such means His sacrifice is demeaned, made of little consequence. For such the precious shed blood of Christ's cross changes nothing! This surely must rank as the most shameful offense.

GRACE WILL BE INCREASING

God's purpose, through the great sacrifice at Golgotha, is largely unknown today. Members of the ecclesia are denounced, even persecuted, when they request that God's righteousness, wisdom, power and love in the cross of Christ be honored. There is great opposition to the revelations of gratuity and grace in God's giving of His Son for sinners.

Yet all knowledge is relative. Equally, grace will be increasing where necessary, and, in God's own time, each will receive the knowledge of the truth and sing for joy. It is consoling to reflect that when the grievous error of restricting the exaltation of Christ is exposed to them, then the perpetrators will in their despair be lifted up through the grace of God's love. In his summation Paul declares, "Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:21-23).

AN UNASHAMED WORKER

In the meantime, let us be apprised of the real dangers of deception. "Satan himself is being transfigured into a messenger of light" (2 Cor.11:14). Can there be a more despicable deception than this, that many who are, as far as we are aware, sincere believers, should hold lightly the most significant and valuable Gift in the universe?

Inevitably, we will have occasion to fellowship and worship with others. From a variety of many well-meaning preachers we may listen to sermons based on the Scrip-

tures. But frequently, it is soon apparent from their words that there is not merely a lack of understanding, but some, perhaps like the ones to whom the apostle Peter referred, in connection with an apprehension of the Scripture, are twisting what Paul wrote, "as the rest of the scriptures also, to their own destruction" (2 Pet.3:14-16).

Revelation imparted foreknowledge to the apostle when he urged young Timothy, "Endeavor to present yourself to God qualified, an unashamed worker, correctly cutting the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15). And further, he wrote, "yet from profane prattlings stand aloof, for they will be progressing to more irreverence, and their word will spread as gangrene" (2:16,17).

In speaking of the qualifications of a teacher, Brother Knoch reminded us that, "Most of the believers today need adjusting quite as much as those to whom Ephesians was addressed. Their doctrine and experience is limited to the teaching of our Lord while on earth, or his apostles in the book of Acts . . . . How few go to Paul's final presentations and modify even his previous ministries to accord with these transcendent truths! This is the task of the true teacher today. He must, first of all, be an adjuster.

"He must also be a dispenser. Much of the teaching we hear fails to emphasize the grace of God and the gracious character of His gifts. He is not running a bargain counter or a commercial enterprise, but a free dispensary. Very few believers even know what He has for them. It is the duty of the teacher to put them into possession of their riches in Christ Jesus."[2]

"Furthermore, brethren, rejoice, adjust, be entreated, be mutually disposed, be at peace, and the God of peace will be with you" (2 Cor.13:11).

Donald Fielding

2.*Unsearchable Riches,* vol.64, p.247,248.

THE SOUL'S YEARNING AND GOD'S HUMBLING

BEFORE proceeding with our studies in Ecclesiastes it may be well to point out a peculiar morphological feature of this author. The five books, though they are independent, are yet "dove-tailed" together by the way in which the final thought of each leads directly to the next. The effect is that each successive composition is of the nature of a digression from the composition standing before it, but a digression which is expanded into an independent piece of writing.

The Third Book (5:10-6:12) resumes and carries forward to completion the train of thought developed in Book I. There the Assembler was engaged in surveying the various departments of human activity; here he analyzes the spring of all activity under the sun—the soul's desire, or yearning (6:2). The mode of treatment is both simple and methodic. The thoughts are drawn in orderly sequence: maxims (5:10-12); illustrations (5:13-6:6); reflections (6:7-12). The Book opens with a series of maxims setting forth the vanity of desire in its several phases. These are followed by a number of typical instances supporting the ideas expressed in the maxims. Then follow practical reflections suggested by what has been gleaned in the course of investigation.

Like the preceding, this Book is also followed by a string of "notes" responding to the questions of 6:12. These embody in pithy sayings the results which wise thinking has yielded (7:1-12).

In the First Book, where the author successively subjected to review the various phases of human activity, with the only result that each was found wanting, the sentiment was voiced that all labor, though bringing a sense of pleasure, fails to give genuine satisfaction. Now this line of thought is carried one degree further: What has been found to be true of outward activity is found to be equally true of the inward principle which prompted it. Ecclesiastes asserts that the soul is not satisfied with the attainment of the objects yearned for. This is the starting-point of the present book:

10 One who **loves**ˡ **silver is nev**er ˡ**satisfied** with his **silver,**
And one [a]**who loves**ˡ [i] **superabundance**
never has enough **income;**
This [mr]**too** is **vanity.**

Having thus stated the main thesis of the present discussion, the Assembler proceeds to establish it. He points out that attainment without satisfaction is a familiar experience. He then observes the added fact, attested by concrete examples in actual life, that attainment is frequently attended by hurt and followed by failure, while on the other hand genuine happiness is found to exist where the most coveted objects of human envy are absent—

11 [i]**When** ˙**good**s **increase**⁻
those who **devour**ˡ **them multiply;**
And what profit are they **to their possessor save**
for the **sight of his eyes?**
12 The **sleep of the servant**ˡ is **sweet,**
[if] **Whether he** ˡ**eats little** ⁺**or** [if] **much**⁻**;**
⁺**Yet the plenty** which the **rich** man ›**has,**
it does **no**t **permit**ˡ › **him to sleep.**

These considerations have paved the way for introducing the two contrasts which occupy the place of prominence in this book: On the one hand is a picture of God-given prosperity and God-given satisfaction in it, and on the other hand is the opposite picture of the same God-given prosperity and the satisfaction withheld. These companion pictures emphasize the idea, which is unweariedly reiterated, that happiness is not within the power of man, but is the direct and special gift of God to the individual:

13 There **is** a **travailing evil I have seen under the sun:**
Riches are **kept**ˡ ›**by their possessor to his peril;**
14 ⁺**Then** ˙**these** ˙**riches perish**
[i]**through** some **experience of evil;**
⁺**Then he begets** a **son,** ⁺**when** there
is not **anything** left **in his hand.**
15 **Just as he** came **forth from his mother's belly,**
Naked shall he return, to go as [w] **he came;**
⁺ **He shall not take up anything** [i]**from his toil**
which he may [go]**carry in his hand.**
16 ⁺ **This** [mr]**too** is a **travailing evil;**
Exactly as [w] **he came, so shall he go,**
And what advantage is it **to him**
[w]**since he** ˡ**toiled for wind?**
17 **Moreover, all his days** are **in darkness** [7]**and mourning~,**
⁺**With much**⁻ [7]**vexation and illness~**[c] **and wrath.**
18 **Behold,** that **which I´ have seen**
that is **good,** [w]**that** is **fitting,** is:
To eat and to drink and to see good in all [his]**one's**
toil [w]**that he is toiling under the sun,**
During the **number of days** in **his life**
[w]**that the** One**, Elohim, has given to him,**
For that is **his portion.**
19 **Moreover,** concerning **any** ˙[h]**man to whom the** One**,**
Elohim, gives riches and substance,
And [c]**gives him power to eat** [f]**of it and to obtain**
`**his portion and to rejoice in his toil,**
This good**, it** is a **gift of Elohim.**

20 **For he shall not be much⁻ mindful**
of ˋthe **days of his life,**
For the One**, Elohim,** is [c]**keeping** [7]**him**[c] **humble**
in the **rejoicing of his heart.**

In 5:19 Ecclesiastes speaks of natural happiness as being God's gift to the individual. The thought is amplified in verse 20 by the assertion that natural happiness, like all things belonging to the eonian system, is alloyed with humbling (*cp* 1:13; 3:10).

That which is wrought under the sun, as also the times and seasons, has been designed by God for man's discipline and training. Parents spoil their children by giving free vent to their wishes; rulers corrupt manhood by lavish prodigality of favors to their supporters. But God's methods are adapted to man's present constitution, which is a strange admixture of good and evil. All His ways have in view the debasing effect of unstinted gratification. His dispensation of the good that gladdens the heart is tempered by the humbling which chastens the spirit. In all His methods is discernible a subtle combination, an exquisite balance of goodness and severity whereby spiritual aspirations are developed and heightened and baser instincts are curbed and subdued.

The vanity or transitoriness of the soul's yearning appears most fully in the light of death. "This too is a travailing evil; exactly as he came, so shall he go, and what advantage is it to him since he toiled for wind?" (Ecc.5:16). In concluding this composition Ecclesiastes dwells on this thought.

6 There **is** an **evil under the sun** [w]**that I have seen,**
And it lies [mn]**great** up**on** ˙**humanity:**
2 When a **man to whom the** One**, Elohim,**
[l]**gives riches and substance and glory,**
And he [is]**has no lack to his soul**
[m]**of all** [w]**that it** [l]**yearns** for**,**

[+]**Yet the** One**, Elohim,** does **not** [c]**give**
him [l]**power to eat** [f]**of it**
[t]**Because** a **foreign man** [l]**eats it,**
This is a **vanity, and it** is a **travailing evil.**
3 **If** a **man** [l]**begets** a **hundred** children
and [l]**lives** for **many years,**
[+]**So** [w]**that** the **days of his years** [l]**become** a **multitude,**
[+]**Yet his soul is not** [l]**satisfied** [f]**with** ˙**good,**
And [mr]**also** there [b]**is no**[t] **tomb for him,**
I say, ˙A **stillborn** child is **better** off [m]**than he.**
4 **For it comes in vanity,**
And in darkness it [l]**goes** away**,**
And in darkness its name is [l]**covered** over**.**
5 **Moreover, it neither saw** the **sun nor knew** anything**;**
Thus **this** ˃**had** more **rest** [f]**than that** man**,**
6 [+]**Even supposing he lived** [du]**twice** a **thousand years**
and saw no[t] **good;**
Are **not** ˙**all going to** the **same** [ri]**place?**

Only two points need to be noted here. He has been describing the spectacle of accumulated wealth with happiness withheld by God, and pronounced it the worst of all fates—an abortion is better than he. He passes on to practical reflections:

7 **All of** ˙a [h]**man's toil** is **for his mouth,**
[+]**Yet even** then **the soul is nev**er [l]**filled.**
8 **For what advantage** ˃**has** a **wise** man
[f]**over the stupid** one**,**
And **what for** the **humble** man who **knows**[l]
how **to walk** in **front of the living?**

The recognition of ability to enjoy the details of passing life as a God-given thing and the spectacle of the man to whom Elohim does not give the power to eat of his wealth (6:2) naturally lead on to the thought that God acts on fixed principles which the individual is powerless to alter.

9 **Better** the **sight of** the **eyes**
*f*__than__ the *go*__roving__⁻ **of** the **soul.**
This *mr*__too__ is **vanity and** a **grazing** on **wind.**
10 **What** *w* **has come** to **be has already**
been called by **its name,**
And *w*__that__ *s*__which__ *h*__man__ is has been fore__known__ˡ;
+ **No***t* one ˡ**can** › **adjudicate**⁻ *wi*__against__ Him
Who is **mightier** *f*__than he.__

And since man is incapable of resisting his Maker, what is the use of following "words" ("theories" or "doctrines") which pretend to further man's welfare but in reality only multiply vanities?

11 *t*__When__ there **are many**⁻ **words** the **vanity increases**ˡ;
What advantage is that **to** *h*__man?__
12 **For** *a*__who knows__ˡ **what** is **good for** a *h*__man in life__
During the **number of days** in **his transitory life,**
Seeing +__that He__ ˡ*d*__makes them like__ a **shadow?**
*w*__For__ *a*__who__ can ˡ__tell__ › a *h*__man what shall__ *b*__come__
after him under the sun?

Who can tell what is good for a human in this life, or who can tell what shall come afterwards? These questions are dealt with in the notes which fill the interval between this Book and the next.

NOTES

7 A **good name** is better *f*__than__ the **best attar,**
And the day of one's **death** *f*__than__ the **day of his**
birth⁻**.**
2 It is **better to go to** a **house of mourning**
*f*__than to go to__ a **house of feasting**
In *w*__that it__ is the **terminus of every** ˙**human;**
+__Thus let the living__ *g*__lay__ this ›__on his heart.__
3 **Better** is **vexation** *f*__than mirth,__
For *i*__with__ a **troubled countenance**

the **heart may** be made **better.**
4 The **heart of** the **wise** is **in** the **house of mourning,**
And the **heart of** the **stupid in** the **house of rejoicing.**
5 **Better to hear** the **rebuke of** a **wise** man
*f*__Than__ for **one** to **hear**ˡ the **song of** the **stupid.**
6 **For as** the **sound of the briars under the pot,**
So is the **mirth of the stupid** man;
+ **This** *mr*__too__ is **vanity.**
7 *t* ˙__Extortion makes__ a **wise** man ˡ__raving,__
And a *g*__bribe__ ˡ__destroys__ `the **heart.**
8 The *af*__end of__ a **matter** is **better** *f*__than its beginning;__
A **long**-suffer**ing spirit** is **better** *f*__than__ a **haughty**
spirit.
9 **Do not be** ˡ**rash to be vexed in your spirit,**
For vexation ˡ**rests in** the **bosom of** the **stupid.**
10 **Do not** ˡ**say,** *wt*__Why__ *b*__is it__ *w*__that the former__ ˙__days__
*b*__were better__ *f*__than these__ present times**?**
For it is **not** *f*__in wisdom__ that **you ask** *om*__about this.__
11 **Wisdom** is **good with** an **allotment**
And an **advantage to** those **seeing the sun.**
12 **For in the shadow of wisdom**
it is as **in the shadow of silver,**
And the **advantage of knowledge** is that
˙**wisdom** *m*__keeps__ ˡ**alive** those **possessing it.**

This series of sayings (7:1-12) is suggested by the two questions which concluded Book III, and which relate to the present life and the hereafter. *Who knows what is good for a man in life . . . Who can tell a man what shall come after him under the sun?*

I understand these questions as the interposition of an imaginary objector, and the notes that follow as the rejoinder of the Assembler.

The keynote to these sayings is found in the recurring word "better," which reveals both the point and purpose

of these sayings and the relation they sustain to the discussion standing before them.

To the roving soul (6:9) casting an envious eye on another's wealth Ecclesiastes says (in view of the instances considered): Since appearances are often misleading, it is not possible to decide that one's life is truly prosperous and happy until we know how it terminates. To the questions bearing on what is good in life and the hereafter the Assembler answers: (1) What is really good is not determined by personal preferences, but by the general effect of a thing upon humanity. (2) Man's future may, in a general way, be inferred with a certain degree of probability from the present. The thought developed in this string of sayings rests upon a series of "oppositions" arranged in two groups, which must be taken together, though the proverb of 7:7 separates them:

A good name, established at death and the consideration of death as the terminus of our lives exert a wholesome influence on the living (7:1,2).

Vexation and a troubled countenance and the seeking of self-improvement in the house of mourning work to improve the heart (7:3,4).

Rebuke from the wise is better than giddy mirth which is transitory (7:5,6).

The end of a matter, establishing the truth of a forecast, is better than the beginning where questions are raised as to the possible outcome (7:8).

Patience is better than a rash spirit which is a sign of stupidity (7:9).

It is not wisdom to judge the present, which is incomplete, by the former days, which afford a complete view by their entirety (7:10).

Both wisdom and silver defend against external attack, but wisdom also affects the life—the life of character (7:11,12).

V. Gelesnoff

GOD GIVES AND GOD WITHHOLDS

PROSPERITY WITH SATISFACTION is a rarity. But if it occurs even briefly in our lives it is the gift of God. The book of Ecclesiastes looks at human experiences with God in view, and throughout it remains consistent in its testimony that all that we experience is given to us by Elohim.

Ecclesiastes 5:10-7:12 considers a number of human situations including, specifically, prosperity with satisfaction and prosperity without satisfaction both of which are from God. But along with these considerations, the Assembler points to one experience that we all share alike, and that is our mortality and the certainty of death. In this also Ecclesiastes keeps God in view as the One Who gives what we receive.

This "high" view of Deity is unusual outside the Scriptures, and by itself it may tend to pessimism and bitterness, but within the context of God's Word as a whole, it is most edifying and uplifting. When God is seen not only as the wise and powerful Subjector and Placer but also as the God of expectation and goodness, His deity in giving and withholding is seen as full of purpose and glory.

Like the book of Job and much of the book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes stands out from most other books of the Sacred Scriptures in that it does not deal in a special sense with the nation of Israel and God's distinct promises concerning that chosen people. What is said concerns humanity as a whole and its common, transitory experi-

ences of struggle, gain and loss. Yet it accords fully with all of God's Word in focusing attention on God.

ELOHIM IS GIVING

Hence in speaking of the days of life given to each of us, all filled with times of much vexation and toil as well as times of repast and good, the Assembler observes that these are given to us by that One, Who is Elohim (5:17,18). If some of us are given riches and substance, along with the power and occasion for rejoicing in them even for a short while, Elohim is the One Who gives them. Such good "is a gift of Elohim" (5:19).

ELOHIM IS NOT GIVING

On the other hand, for some who are given illness and toil and then granted riches and substance and glory, all given by Elohim, there is no strength and time and occasion for the enjoyment of the riches. This also is from Elohim Who does not give such a one the power or opportunity to eat of the fruit of his toil (6:2,3). Entirely apart from whether or not a pattern of fairness and needed discipline or deserved reward may be detected, this is a fact of human life, and more importantly *a fact of divine operation.*

God gives toil and vexation. He gives riches and substance. He gives joy and satisfaction. And He withholds that joy and satisfaction. Our days as human beings, whether Israelites or not, and our many experiences are all to be traced finally to God.

HE WHO IS MIGHTIER

In Ecclesiastes 6:3-6 the Assembler gives an example of human experience in life, a unique life of one individual which is not different in its ending and its vanity from the life of anyone else. God gives a certain individual many years and many children, but He also gives this man the

experience of never getting to enjoy the good he has and even being denied a tomb commemorating his memory. His life ends exactly the same way as that of a stillborn child who never saw the light of day.

At this point the whole problem that is greater than the transitoriness of life, that is, the problem of death, is brought before us once again in Ecclesiastes. The stillborn child "comes in vanity, and in darkness it goes away" (6:4). But the same fate awaits us all. "Are not all going to the same place?" (6:6).

That is tragic and sad and depressing. But it is true to the human situation. But what is hopeful and uplifting in all this is the truth that God has given the life and experience of both this man and the stillborn child. It is a great blessing to know that "no one can adjudicate against [God]" (Ecc.6:10). God is mightier than any human being, and this is our hope and the source of great satisfaction for us all.

WHO KNOWS WHAT IS GOOD?

It may seem that we have jumped too quickly from the Assembler's words of apparent pessimism concerning mankind to conclusions of optimism concerning God. Yet this is poetry, and it calls for interpretation based on what is suggested as much as on what is said. "Who knows what is good for a man in life during the number of days in his transitory life?" (Ecc.6:12). Only God, Who is in charge of our days, and Who "makes them like a shadow" to us, can know what is truly good for us in life and in the times that shall come after us. Only He can know. And it follows that since He *can* know He *does* know, and in truth He Who is making them like a shadow to us, is making them for good even though we cannot see that this is so.

But we who have heard the evangel of God's righteousness and love in the giving of His Son for sinners, the truth of a good purpose and consummation is no longer like a

shadow. For "we are aware"—it is clear to us "who are loving God" *that God is working all together for the good* (Rom.8:28). Where the Assembler could only hope with poetic suggestion we believe with explicit expectation.

We do not apologize for bringing the evangel presented in Romans into the shadowy longing for an evangel presented in Ecclesiastes. The Assembler records the facts of the human situation, and he points to Elohim as responsible and involved, and he expresses the questions that arise from these facts. Now we who believe find that what we are believing is indeed the answer to the Assembler's questions. "For even as in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22). D.H.H.

THE FIRSTFRUIT OF THOSE REPOSING

We are continually being reminded, by the death of a fellow believer, of the importance of Christ's resurrection. Paul wrote with exultation: "Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing" (1 Cor.15:20). This is our consolation and expectation in the recent loss of two diligent teachers of the Word. **Pastor R. Clay Kent** of Palm Harbor, Florida, died on August 12 after many years of boldly and eagerly heralding the message of grace and reconciliation that is in Christ Jesus. Then on August 29, **Pastor Leonard A. Bowerman** of Lansing, Michigan, who always labored with good humor and zeal, was put to repose, anticipating that happy expectation when we will all be always together with our Lord. They will be greatly missed by their families and friends and the many who profited from their toil and enthusiasm. Since they both were "believing that Jesus died and rose, thus also" for them both, who are now reposing, "will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with Him" (1 Thess.4:14).

Also on September 11 our Brother **Arthur Cronk** of Norwalk, Ohio, was put to repose at the age of 84. A great encouragement to our work for many years, we are thanking God for the way in which Art's staunch faith is still being echoed in the life of his son, Charlie, and other family members and friends. Jeff Priddy spoke of these things at the funeral on September 14. Being justified in the grace of Jesus Christ, our Saviour, "we may be becoming enjoyers, in expectation, of the allotment of life eonian" (Titus 3:7).

Contents:

241 Editorial
243 The Dry Ground and Vegetation
249 From Light to Life
255 Concerning Disputations About Free Will
265 1 Samuel 20
269 The Departure Stone
273 The Work of God
283 Elohim has Made All our Days

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 1999
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY

EDITORIAL

IN VIEW OF the "new millennium" and the predicted problems with computer operations, is this the last issue of *Unsearchable Riches*? To the believer this question, besides its absurd jumping to conclusions, is inherently incoherent in that it is asked without having God in view. In the past ninety years there have been numerous, real hindrances, including wars and depressions, harsh criticism and rejection, illness and death, that could just as easily have been immediate factors leading to an end to this effort. In truth any undertaking is only temporary. It is God's grace that any issue of the magazine is published and if it has any value for spiritual growth and enlightenment.

Financial situations and health factors and mechanical means for printing and mailing are all, in the final analysis, in God's province. (Yes, we have made our computers "Y2K compliant," and we labor each day at our tasks, but our confidence is in God.) As the Assembler observed long ago, "See the work of the one, Elohim . . . . In a day of good be resting in the good, and in a day of evil, be vigilant; *indeed the One, Elohim, has made this one along with that one*" (Ecc.7:13,14; *cf* p.273).

So revising the question, Is it possible that *God* will bring about a situation of crisis and disorder within the next few weeks, channeled through computer failure or economic depression or social upheaval, that will make this the last issue of our magazine? But this question concerning possibilities is still defective because while it has God in view, it does not have His word to us in view. Our evangel speaks of grace, not of fear.

The character of God's message to us today is one of joy

("grace") and peace. Our expectation is one of consolation (1 Thess.4:18). "Yet we, being of the day, may be sober, putting on the cuirass of faith and love, and the helmet, the expectation of salvation, for God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (5:8,9). There will be troubles and disappointments, hard times as well as good times, but the evangel trains us to be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon and to be engaged in our own affairs (*cf* Titus 2:11-13; 1 Thess.4:9-12).

Consequently, the question, so far, is found to be irrelevant. We are aware that God is working all together for good (Rom.8:28), so that whatever occurs we are thankful for it as God's provision, remaining eager to share the evangel with others, anticipating our happy expectation.

If we now ask, is it possible that God will bring about the rescue described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 before another issue of our magazine can be published, the answer is a resounding Yes! We do not look for signs or compute dates, but are watching and waiting for our Lord Who will descend for us at exactly the right time. It is also possible that we may be put to repose before then, and indeed we all are dying. Times and experiences are in the hands of God Who does all orderly and well (see p.249).

Our faith is centered in good news. And with such a message of grace and glory concerning Jesus Christ, His death, resurrection, exaltation and descent for us that we may always be together with Him, we are encouraged to continue in the tasks set before us, anticipating we will continue to greet you through the pages of this magazine, until God directs otherwise. We do not know when God will end this temporary effort, but we are persuaded that nothing present or impending can remove us from His love, and who can change this viewpoint into one of dread and dismay? D.H.H.

THE DRY GROUND AND VEGETATION

(Genesis 1:9-13)

9 **And Elohim** [l]**said: Let the waters** [f] **under the heavens flow together** in**to one** [ri]**place,** [+]**that the dry** ground **may** [l]**appear. And it came** to [l]**be so.** 10 **And Elohim** [l]**called** [›] the **dry** ground **Land, and** [›] the **flowing together of the waters He called Seas. And Elohim** [l]**saw that** it was **good.**

11 **And Elohim** [l]**said: Let the land** [c]**become verdant** with **vegetation:** with **herbage yielding seed on the land** [7]**and**[ncs] the **fruit tree** [d]**bearing fruit** according **to its kind, whose seed** is **in it. And it came** to [l]**be so.** 12 [+] **The land** [c]**brought** [l]**forth vegetation: herbage yielding seed** according **to its kind, and** the [7]**fruit**[0] **tree** [d]**bearing fruit, whose seed** is **in it,** according **to its kind. And Elohim** [l]**saw that** it was **good.**

13 **And it** [l]**became evening, and it** [l]**became morning:** the **third day.**

THE THIRD DAY

The new earth of the future will differ from the present one chiefly in this, that there will be no sea (Rev.21:1). There is no evidence that the *first* earth, when originally created, before it became a chaos and vacant, had a sea, either. It is confined, in time, to the present unsettled condition. In fact, the word "earth" is the same as *land* in Hebrew, and really refers only to the *dry* land, so that, when God created the heavens and the *earth,* we are not warranted in including the sea. This came later, after the disruption. Then, to begin with, there was no land. All was covered by the abyss. When the Spirit began its work of restoration,

it vibrated over the surface of the *water* (Gen.1:2). It was not until the third day that the water flowed together to form seas (Gen.1:9).

THE SEA

This, the temporary and transitory character of the sea, gives the term color in every passage in which it appears. It is a symbol of *impermanence, restlessness, turbulence,* and *strife.* Isaiah associates it with evil and wickedness. He says (57:20,21):

Yet the wicked are like the disgorging sea,
When it cannot be quiet,
And its waters are disgorging foulness and mud.
There is no peace, says my Elohim, for the wicked.

It remains as long as enmity and offense are present, but disappears when God is reconciled with the denizens of the earth. Along with the disappearance of the sea we read: "Lo! the tabernacle of God is with mankind, and He will be tabernacling with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them. And He will be brushing away every tear from their eyes. And death will be no more, nor mourning nor clamor, nor misery . . ." (Rev.21:3,4).

In the meanwhile, the dry land is used to figure any approach to this, such as Israel, the nation among whom Yahweh tabernacled in the past. The sea is a symbol of the other nations, with their changing and clashing governments, their Godless legality and unrighteousness, and their temporary term. The history of mankind is a record of disturbances and wars. Some have objected to this and sought to place prominence on its peaceful "evolution" and advance in civilization. But this is unimpressive, compared with its terrible revolutions and lapses into barbarism. Since the days of Cain the *methods* of murder have

been vastly improved, yet its victims have multiplied, and its operation is legalized.

DRY LAND APPEARS

It would seem that the waters were in great turmoil during the first and second days of restoration, for, although there was not sufficient to cover the entire earth when at rest, yet it all was submerged. On the third day, however, it responds to the normal force of gravitation, and falls from the higher elevations of the earth into the deeper hollows. Thus it flowed together, much as it still does in a minor measure, to form the seas. Consequently, the greater part of the earth's surface, being beneath the water, is not suitable for the support of land life, such as herbage and trees, or the soul life which is dependent on these. That this was not the case before the disruption, is evident from Isaiah's assertion that the earth was formed to be indwelt (45:18).

After the land was drained, it was fit for further restoration. It must be furnished with various forms of life, first plant life, and, thereafter with soul life, including humanity. On the third day only the plant life appears. In itself it is a great step in preparing the earth for habitation, not only providing the animals and man with food and shelter, but revealing to all the soul life an exhibition of God's wisdom and power and glory.

VEGETATION

"Let the earth *bring forth grass*" is the reading of the AV. The italicized verb and noun come from the same stem in Hebrew, and should show this, if possible, in translation. Moreover, the AV renders four different stems by *grass* and nearly a score by *bring forth.* Besides, this passage has a much wider scope than a single class of plants, for it seems to include both herbs and trees. This Hebrew stem is rendered by the AV not only *grass* and *bring forth,* as

here, but also *herb* and *spring.* Literally the original reads, "*Causing-to-be-verdant* the land (with) *verdure.*"[1]

A TREASURE OF VARIETY

We might well marvel, even if God had formed only a single specimen of plant, but it ought to spur our hearts to wondering worship when we find myriads of *varieties* of vegetation, clothed in all the colors of the rainbow. Each one has its own exclusive shape and shade and contributes to the good of the higher forms of life. And each one seeds seed for its species, so that it has potentialities far beyond even our most daring dreams. God saw that it was "good." That seems far too modest an appraisal! To one who gets only a glimpse of the glory that it reveals it seems splendid, superb, super-excellent!

But if the herbs are so good, what shall we say of the trees and their fruit? Daily I enjoy samples of the wide range of God's goodness. In the morning, besides my grapefruit and orange juice, I partake of the seed food provided by the grains, wheat, or barley, or oats, or maize, or rice. Then, at noon, I eat vegetables with my meat, carrots or peas or chard or tomatoes, with a few olives. The rest of the day, at intervals, I revel in a variety, the pineapple, the banana, the grape, and the fruit of the trees, the apricot, the apple, the peach, the fig and the date. In this way I have a taste of many of the courses on the table He has set before me, and receive the benefit of the special and distinct virtues He has stored in each. In such a diet there is not only substance to repair the body, but vitality to keep the mind vigorous and in tune. And each contributes its particular benefits, not only enriching the life, but adding a note to the scale of praise that ascends to Him for His terrestrial goodness.

1. The CV now uses the more familiar term *vegetation* for the noun. While this does not reflect the etymological connection between the Hebrew verb and noun, it does express the wide range of plants in view, including non-green vegetation.

THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION

The erroneous theory of evolution has had every opportunity to prove its correctness, but the more we learn of God's creation, the more we are convinced that it is as contrary to nature as it is to revelation. Different "species," or, as the Hebrew calls them, FROMers, cannot interbreed and reproduce. Even when man interferes and makes a mule, it is sterile. But, if it cannot be done with man's artificial help, how could it ever have taken place naturally? The fossils present an enormous amount of evidence, yet there is not the least trace of the multitudinous intermediate forms which should have connected the various species. In historical times there has been no record of any transmutation.

The early evolutionists thought that the reproductive cells of all animals were alike. A powerful microscope would have disillusioned them. Now, however, we know that *each species, or* FROM-KIND, has a different cell structure, and it always remains the same. The reproductive cell has a nucleus and a number of minute rods, called chromosomes, which contain the essential factors which are transmitted. *This cell structure is immutable in each species.* "Evolution" is impossible.

Even within species, the variable characteristics are regulated by natural law, so that small variations, such as size or color, cannot accumulate, so as to form entirely new species.

The wonders of creation are by no means exhausted by the *number* of each living creature involved in creation of the first one, great as that is. Still more astonishing is the fact that practically all *differ* in some slight degree from

the original and from each other. This is due to the process of *generation.* Two are always united to form the offspring, and, as they differ, only the dominant traits of each appears. The other factors are not apparent, but may reappear in future generations.

So it is that there are so many kinds of dogs. They are all of the same FROM-KIND or "species," but, in creating the first pair, all these varieties were provided for. And so it is with the human race. In creating Adam, God did not only make the first man, but all humanity, and all differ from him in some degree in body, soul and spirit. He was not merely the "head" of the race, but, as the Scriptures express it with scientific exactitude, all were *in* him, and, literally and vitally, partake of the spirit that was imparted to him.

For many years increased investigation led to arrogant assumptions, based on inadequate knowledge, and illogical reasoning, which threatened to destroy all faith in the Word of God. Now that scholars are learning more, the tide shows signs of reversing. Even men who do not claim to believe in inspiration are convinced that previous objections, especially in the realm of archaeology, were unfounded and false.

Whenever nature and revelation are correctly interpreted they are in complete harmony. In our comparative ignorance of the world about us, the only logical course is to accept the word of the Creator Himself.

A. E. Knoch

STUDIES CONCERNING EVOLUTION

Recent studies exposing fundamental weaknesses in the theory of evolution include the books, DARWIN ON TRIAL, by Phillip E. Johnson; INTELLIGENT DESIGN, by William A. Dembski; and DARWIN'S BLACK BOX, by Michael J. Behe. These may be found in many libraries or ordered through bookstores.

FROM LIGHT TO LIFE

GOD is operating all in accord with His will which, in turn, accords with His counseled purpose (Eph.1:9-11). He is doing this with orderliness, thoroughness and success. But in the midst of His operations this pattern of authority, wisdom and goodness is difficult to see. Not until a particular work is finished can we perceive its perfection and glory.

In Genesis chapter 1, however, the record of an operation begun and brought to completion provides us with a pattern which gives assurance concerning God's activities. God's rescue of the earth out of chaos and into light and life is presented in two series of "days" followed by a seventh day of ceasing and commemoration, making three stages in all:

First Stage

1. LIGHT
2. ATMOSPHERE, WATERS
3. DRY GROUND, VEGETATION

Second Stage

4. LUMINARIES
5. WATER AND FLYING LIFE
6. LAND ANIMALS, HUMANITY

Third Stage

7. CEASING AND HALLOWING

The two stages leading from light to life, culminating in the third stage of hallowed stopping remain for mankind a picture in miniature of the character of God's operations, so that in the midst of His ongoing, eonian activities

we may be assured of the rightness and purposefulness of things even though disorder and chaos seem, to our perception, to be in charge. The more we focus on the revelation of God given in the details of Genesis 1 (brief as they may be), the more we become settled with confidence in and reliance upon God and His power and goodness.

THE THIRD DAY

The record of God's activity on the third day (Gen.1: 9-13) calls for special attention. It is a day of *life.* The light of day one and the separating of water and air on the second day as well as the flowing together of the water and appearance of dry ground early on the third day, all can be seen as vital preparations for the life that now bursts forth. Each step was initiated by the powerful word of God, each was necessary, and each led orderly to the next.

Step by step, God Himself is solely and fully responsible for the achievements recorded here. In just the right order He has called forth the presence of light, the separated air and water, and dry ground with irrigation at hand, to the end that the earth would be covered by living and productive vegetation.

The light was the channel of energy for growth and reproduction. The air and water and ground each contributed a necessary part of the whole plant body. All was arranged ahead of time by Elohim, with plan and purpose. God is a God of order, Who does each thing He does at the right time and in the right arrangement, for His purpose of good.

TRIUMPH OVER EVIL

The progressive steps of Elohim from light to life successfully win over the opposition described in Genesis 1:2. The light of day one deals with the *darkness* that had enveloped the earth. The separation of waters from waters by the atmosphere brought in on the second day, and the

flowing together of the surface waters and appearance of the dry ground achieved at the beginning of the third day are set against the *chaos* which had corrupted the planet. And finally, the sprouting of plants bearing seeds and fruit transformed the *vacant* earth into a living and productive world.

What we especially perceive about God in this triumph over the evils of darkness, chaos and vacancy, is that He does not overlook any wrong or fail to deal with them thoroughly and successfully. The evils are abolished, but the creation is saved.

This principle is a sure foundation for reliance on the living God. God will never leave any element of evil undefeated. The whole idea of an eternal hell or final and hopeless death is as irreverent as it is absurd, if the God revealed in the Scriptures is kept in view.

THE WORDS OF ELOHIM

A third pattern of divine operations in these opening words of Scripture is that of God's perfect economics. Elohim has a needed place and use for everything that He makes. Every part contributes to the glory of the whole. We can trace this in the details of His language recorded in Genesis 1:3-13.

On the first day the words of Elohim were directly focused upon the object in view which was light. "Let light come to be!" But the value of light does not lie in itself alone, but in its essential role in all the divine operations that follow. As Elohim continues to bring the earth to a state of goodness, it becomes evident that light is fundamental and absolutely needful for every further step. This is made clear by the fact that God's work is always done in a time of "day" which is the name given to light in Genesis 1:5.

A further advancement is traced by Elohim's words on the second day. In Genesis 1:6 He again speaks directly

concerning the object in view. "Let an atmosphere come to be." But Elohim's words are more complicated than in verse 3. They direct attention not only to the provision of the atmosphere but to a distinct purpose for this provision. The atmosphere was to come in the midst of the waters, "that it may be separating waters from waters." In this quotation of Elohim's words we see that what God brings about leads forward to another provision. Each step is a link in a chain of achievements.

Now on the third day there is another and noteworthy change in Elohim's wording. He does not say (as in the pattern of verse 3), "Let vegetation come to be," or even (as in the pattern of verse 6), "Let dry ground come to be so that vegetation may come to be." Instead Elohim's declarations speak directly of the waters and land as channels for the emergence of living plants. Elohim brings about vegetation on the earth, but He does this *indirectly,* by means of His direct, preparatory activity.

In accord with this pattern presented in the third day, God directly sends His Son to save sinners, and *through* His Son He gives life.

FURTHER THREE-DAY PERIODS

Three is the number of completion as indicated by this high level of achievement on the third day. But even this was not the completion of these operations of God regarding the earth. There would be another cycle of three days of activity before a day of ceasing. That further cycle would begin with luminaries and end with the creation of humanity, a form of life that would become a vehicle for the display of the most transcendent of all revelations of God, His righteousness, His grace and His love.

There were other three day periods noted in Scripture. The three days and three nights of Jonah's distress in the bowels of a great fish (Jonah 1:17) are noted by

our Lord, Who pointed to them as a sign to the disciples of His approaching crisis and rescue out of death (Matt. 12:39; 16:4). They did not follow the pattern of light to life, but they did represent a critical operation of God leading toward His goal of bringing light and life to the Ninevites.

CHRIST'S DEATH, ENTOMBMENT AND RESURRECTION

The three days Jesus spoke of, long after the times of Genesis 1 stand as a climax in the pattern we find there. Considering the day of crucifixion from the standpoint of its ultimate meaning for humanity and all creation, it was a day of astounding *enlightenment.* It is in the day of Christ's faithful obedience to the death of the cross that God's righteousness is manifested (Rom.2:21,22). Gratuitous justification of sinners (Rom.3;24), the commending of God's love as it shines out against the background of sin and infirmity (Rom.5:8,9), and conciliation to God (Rom.5:10), are glorious divine achievements, among others, established on the day of Christ's death.

Further, for us as believers, we "were entombed together with Him through baptism into death" (Rom.6:40). These are operations of authority and power, and they are timely and orderly steps leading toward life.

But it is on the third day that the parallel with Genesis 1:9-13 is most striking. In presenting the evangel, the apostle Paul would announce it in three steps, corresponding to the three days involved: "For I give over to you among the first what also I accepted, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been *roused* the *third* day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3,4). "Christ has been roused from among the dead" (1 Cor.15:20).

The resurrection of Christ holds such significance of life for Him and in Him for all humanity that a special word must be used to express its vibrant character. "For

even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be *vivified*" (1 Cor.15:22).

This message of glad tidings is "according to the scriptures." In a very real way it is first presented in Genesis chapter one, at least by analogy.

THREE CLASSES OF VIVIFICATION

As the three days from the cross to the empty tomb speak of God's completed work in dealing with sin and death by bringing in righteousness and vivification in Christ, so this vivification occurs in three stages. "Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father . . . that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:23-28).

These are all days of both light and life. But the full scope and brightness of this operation of vivification is not reached until the third order is achieved and all are brought into a level of life that knows God as their All.

GOD'S TIMING

In this study we have drawn attention to the timing and glory of God's works. In bringing the earth out of darkness and emptiness into goodness He does not begin and complete His work instantaneously, but rather He follows a grand pattern of steps, each leading forward to the next. This is marvelously illustrated in the first chapter of Genesis.

We live in the midst of God's great, eonian operation, which includes the temporary experience of evil, of sin and infirmity and enmity, but which is being directed by God toward a goal of immortality and reconciliation to the glory of God, the Father. Let us not become impatient or ever despair. God will complete the work He has begun, and He will do so in exactly the right way.

D.H.H.

CONCERNING DISPUTATIONS ABOUT FREE WILL

Yahweh has made everything for its own pertinent end, yea even the wicked for the day of evil (Prov.16:4).

O Yahweh our Elohim, You shall set peace on the hearthstones for us, for, indeed, all our doings You have made for us (Isa.26:12).

. . . This One am I announcing to you: The God Who makes the world and all that is in it . . . (Acts 17:23b-24a).

. . . the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will . . . (Eph.1:11b).

Question:

Thank you for your reply to my previous questions concerning the place that remains both for dutifulness and entreaties even in a world devoid of "free will."[1] I am finally beginning to grasp what I heard you say years ago in a recorded message, along the lines that, Obedience remains as important as we always (correctly) supposed it to be. The only thing that we lose—and good riddance!—is self-pride. Yet what we gain is vast indeed: we gain the recognition of God *as God,* together with the privilege of truly thanking Him for all things (Eph.5:20).

My pastor gave me a list of verses which he says "make no sense" unless free will is true, verses which, according to him, it would be "absurd" to interpret except in a freewill sense. The list is as follows: Mat-

1. see "Human Will and the Ministry of Law," *Unsearchable Riches* vol.90, pp.213-224.

thew 7:13,14; 21-23; Matthew 23:37; Matthew 24:13; John 5:40; 2 Corinthians 8:3,17; Revelation 3:20; Revelation 22:17.

While I realize that not one of these verses actually teaches (or requires) free will, I can certainly appreciate why my pastor would suppose this to be so. Still, while I commiserate with him in his feelings of "obligation" to defend free will (since he considers its denial "immoral"), as you say, his sense of obligation itself arises merely out of traditional teaching and ethics. This is so in the case of his feelings concerning free will, as much so as is the case with those who feel obliged to defend the veneration of Mary.

I would appreciate your comments on each of these verses, as well as on the practical matter of my pastor's feelings and concerns in opposition to "Concordant truth." By the way, he also says that you are "too intellectual."

Answer:

As I explained more fully in my previous letter, your pastor's inability even to consider that free will may not be true even as his "righteous indignation" against our teaching, is simply because he has made popular opinion together with his own conscience, the arbiter of both truth and righteousness. He thinks that these things are ever so important. Until *God* makes it clear to him (*cf* 2 Cor.10:4) that they are worse than useless, our best arguments will fall on deaf ears. In the meantime, we can only be kind and patient toward him.

Even if some cannot accept this, our whole purpose of ministry continues to be to convey the importance—the *primary* importance—of our becoming rooted and grounded in love, apart from which we are nothing, *while also* seeking to gain a competency in the perception of truth, according to the means of grace which God has provided, which

is discipline—albeit *enlightened* discipline—in language and logic, as relevant to scriptural issues.

Our message has never been that we need the "head" *instead* of the "heart," or, *less than* the heart, but that we *need* the "heart" *and* the "head." Because some dislike (or are simply lazy concerning) learning, and others somewhat hold to mystical, gnostic ideas in which critical thinking is greatly attenuated if not practically supplanted by supposed, personal divine communiqués, it has been convenient for some to claim or suppose, especially in my own case, that we are somehow spiritually cold, if not altogether lifeless. In any case, it is better to make any such perceptions more a matter of prayer than of criticism.

REINFORCEMENT IN TRADITIONAL ERROR

In responding now, first of all, to your pastor's feelings and concerns in opposition to our teaching which arise out of the ethics and traditional mores of western society, I want to emphasize that I truly understand and sympathize with him in his outlook. After all, I myself once believed as he does; and, I am certainly no stranger to western ethics. Curious as it may seem at first, perhaps I can best convey to you something helpful in relation to your pastor's feelings and concerns, by speaking frankly concerning certain of my own feelings and concerns.

Within the previous writings in this series and elsewhere, I have *briefly and simply* stated why I find free will to be false, explaining that, on any rational account, it is simply impossible for it to be true. If others will not read or cannot grasp this testimony even to the degree of understanding at least why *we* believe free will to be false, there is nothing I can do about this.

I will admit that it is sometimes unsettling and discouraging to observe that many simply do not seem to care what the truth may actually be here, but only wish

to live an unreflective, undisturbed life according to the dictates of their own conscience, attitudes, wishes, and reactive emotions.

Until I remember that it must ultimately be of God that it is so, it is troubling to note that in many cases even friends and acquaintances of many years (not to mention so many of the general reading public who come in contact with our work), cannot even say why we teach as we do, on the issue of free will. They seem only to be clear that certain ones—ones who seem to have their attention more than ourselves—claim otherwise, and, that such ones have their (purportedly) "good reasons" for so doing. Thus, they merely become reinforced and further persuaded in the nearly universally-held views which they too already had long embraced, in previous years, before they had ever heard of so-called "Concordant truth."

I realize that the phrase "Concordant truth" was, many years ago, only introduced in an attempt briefly to refer to that which was affirmed as truth, according to a certain ministry. In such a trite sense, however, we might as well speak of "Baptist truth," "Pentecostal truth," "Calvinist truth," or "Roman Catholic truth." Since the phrase "Concordant truth" is problematic, confusing, and unneedful, we will do well to discard it, replacing it simply with "Concordant teaching," if by this one means the teaching of the Concordant Publishing Concern.

We have often been asked *why* our ministry, throughout its ninety-year career, has remained so small and its message reached so few, especially in a deeper way in the interests of maturity. Our reply is simply that this is according to God's intention, at present, in the current wicked eon. Indeed, in a world in which God Himself locks up all in stubbornness (Rom.11:32), such a message and perspective—however glorious and true—which is nonetheless contrary to such an abundance of popular, cherished

traditions, can hardly expect to succeed. That is, it cannot expect to succeed except in those special instances in which God mercifully and graciously grants enlightenment.

Indeed, even among those acquainted with and more or less in general accord with our work, whether wittingly or unwittingly, it is usual to criticize, compete against, or simply ignore us, while unusual truly to complement and support our efforts in common cause. Therefore, if the question, Why are we not more "successful"? is asked not rhetorically, in a spirit of suspicion, but literally, it is a question which is not only easy to answer but one concerning which there need be no mystery whatsoever.

FREEDOM FOR ENLIGHTENMENT

Concerning scriptural truth, we neither acknowledge nor exercise any hierarchy of human authority. Whatever the Scriptures truly teach, alone is the truth. And, now that the scripture record itself has been both declared and completed, no man can do any more than affirm its testimony, praying for grace that he might do so faithfully. Hence, we say to all, You are free to believe and do as you please; in fact, we encourage you to do so. Only remember that you are not free from your own selves and the limitations and pleasures thereof, while being mindful as well that the foolish neither perceive their foolishness, nor their lack of perspicacity.

Now it is at this juncture that many are stumbled: If today there is no "true church," nor even any *necessarily-correct* faithful ministry, it will then be asked, How can I know what to believe? As many will say, "I am no scholar; how, then, can *I* know what is true?" We would only add to this that scholarship, even when helpful, is no sure guide to truth. Scholars are in disagreement among themselves over nearly every issue. And even though, in some things, there is a consensus among most scholars, there is hardly

ever a unanimity of opinion even among recognized scholars. Furthermore, in an era of widespread apostasy, majority views, often (though certainly not necessarily always), will be incorrect; and yet, conversely, neither is there any virtue in being in the minority, especially among such a diversity of minority opinions.

Our only recourse, then, is to do what we should have done in the first place and rely on God alone to reveal and teach us His truth, while at the same time deeply acknowledging (especially to ourselves) our own fallibility and susceptibility to error. It then becomes our prayer that *God* would make us competent, even if others should be unaware or even deny that He has done so. Then, we will believe and soberly realize Paul's words that, "Our competency is of God" (2 Cor.3:5).

INSTRUCTION IN THE EVANGEL

One who is an evangelist must actually herald the evangel of Christ, not "a different evangel" from that brought by Paul (*cf* Gal.1:6b); a pastor must truly "shepherd" those whom he serves; he must not be, as to the truth, a burdensome wolf in sheep's clothing (*cf* Acts 20:29,30); likewise, a teacher must be one whose work is characterized by faithful instruction and guidance, not misguidance and misinstruction (*cf* Col.1:7b; *cp* 2 Cor.11:13-15).

Hence, while recognizing that, *through mortal human agency* (*cf* Eph.4:11-14), with a view toward our maturity, God has given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, we certainly are in need of wisdom and enlightenment in order to recognize and discern the teaching of any such ones. Even so, we will not care to speculate as to the "identity" of any such persons. From the Scripture record itself, we are aware of those who are our apostles and prophets; and, as we ourselves truly mature, we will not be ignorant of but grateful toward those who served us along the way, in whatever faithful capacity.

Remember, no person is any such servant except to the degree that he actually heralds, holds, and gives instruction in, the evangel. Indeed, some may do substantive, good evangelistic, pastoral, or teaching work, who may nonetheless hold to serious error. And, even those who truly may be most able to guide us toward maturity, can hardly make any claim of perfection.[2]

THE GIFT OF LEARNING

Our work is principally that of a *teaching* ministry, which in the nature of things can only be of service to those who wish to be "students"—however informally, and regardless of grade. Yet few indeed, so it seems, are "in the business of learning," or disposed even to engage themselves thus from time to time, infrequently and briefly.

Learning—learning anything at all—is certainly a gift. It is at the heart of our teaching that those who believe, who may have learned little more than the elements of "Christ and Him crucified," who are indisposed to substantial further learning, are nonetheless in Christ and complete in Him.

We sincerely honor and care deeply for all believers; it is only that we find it impossible to *teach* those who are disinclined to learning or at least to learning through us. Still, if this should be so in any individual case, it is so in the wisdom of God; and, all are to be at peace accordingly. We only ask that those who may choose to follow a path separate from our own, join with us, in spirit, in mutual regard and love.

MISUNDERSTOOD TEXTS

Now, I will briefly consider the various texts provided

2. As a friend of mine once put it, "I fear that even the clearest-headed among us, may still be a little mixed up."

by your pastor, which he supposes to be practically demonstrative of free will.

(1) **"Jerusalem! Jerusalem! who are killing the prophets and pelting with stones those who have been dispatched to her! How many times do I want to assemble your children in the manner a hen is assembling her brood under her wings—and you will not!"** (Matt.23:37).

(2) **"Yet he who endures to the consummation, he shall be saved"** (Matt.24:13).

(3) **"Enter through the cramped gate, for broad is the gate and spacious is the way which is leading away into destruction, and many are those entering through it. Yet what a cramped gate and narrowed way is the one leading away into life, and few are those who are finding it . . . . Not everyone saying to Me 'Lord! Lord!' will be entering into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who is doing the will of My Father Who is in the heavens. Many will be declaring to Me in that day, 'Lord! Lord! Was it not in Your name that we prophesy, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name do many powerful deeds?' And then shall I be avowing to them that 'I never knew you! Depart from Me, workers of lawlessness!'"** (Matt.7:13,14; 21-23).

(4) **" . . . not willing are you to come to Me that you may have life"** (John 5:40).

It is the leaders of the people of Jerusalem in our Lord's day who, at least principally, are in view here, in Matthew 23:37 (*cf* Matt.23:1-36). On many occasions, throughout their history, it was the heart-desire of God to draw near and assemble the people of Jerusalem unto Himself, in a manner even as a hen is assembling her brood under her wings. And yet the corrupt leadership of the people, who wished to maintain their own fleshly advantages even as their own human traditions, "willed not," thereby thwarting God's revealed counsels concerning the people as a whole (*cf* Matt.23:13; *cp* Prov.1:20-30). That this was so in the wisdom and purpose of God, is a matter of the depths of God, and is a consideration not addressed here. Still, this is no reason to impose a foreign philosophy of free will upon the text, simply because we ourselves are accustomed to and may be gratified by the contemplation of such notions.

Similarly, in the evangel of the Circumcision, the words, "Yet he who endures to the consummation, he shall be saved" (Matt.24:13), simply mean what they say. One should not from this, however, imagine that one who endures to the consummation does so not by the all-sufficient grace of God but by the self-reliant "free will" of man. In the Circumcision calling, eonian life is a reward for obedient endurance; hence, to enter into life, they must actually *do* the will of God, not be "workers of lawlessness."

The fact that the Jews, broadly, were "not willing" to come to the Lord Jesus that they may have life (John 5:40), was, indeed, the essence of their problem. But this is by no means to say that they had it within themselves to make themselves willing (*cf* Rom.8:7,8; 1 Cor.2:14). It is written, "Your people shall be willing in the day of Your potent power" (Psa.110:3), not prior thereunto, whenever they care to exercise aright their fancied free wills.

(5) **" . . . of their own accord . . ."** (2 Cor.8:3); **" . . . of his own accord . . ."** (2 Cor.8:17).

Especially considered in their contexts, these phrases are anything but an indication of the presence of free will activity. Paul, in making mention of the ecclesias of Macedonia having given generously, states that they did so, "*of their own accord*" ("they were *willing of themselves,*" AV; 2 Cor.8:3). Similarly, in 2 Corinthians 8:17, in speaking of Titus' diligence in his service for the Corinthians, the apostle declares, "he, indeed, receives the entreaty . . . [and] *of his own accord* he came out to you." Stating, however, that in a certain matter one acts of his "own accord," is simply to say that in so doing one therein acts voluntarily, as opposed to acting due to a requirement or out of compulsion (i.e., by being made to do what one does not want to do; *cf* Philemon 14).

Here in 2 Corinthians 8, Paul plainly tells us that this noble, voluntary service of the Macedonian ecclesias was

"through the will of God," and, that it was a manifestation of "the *grace* of God" which *He* had bestowed (2 Cor. 8:1,5). Likewise, Paul declares, "Now *thanks be to God,* Who is *imparting* for you to the heart of Titus [this] same diligence" (2 Cor.8:16) to which the apostle refers when stating that of his own accord Titus came out to the Corinthians, that he might serve them faithfully.

(6) **"Lo! I stand at the door and am knocking. If ever anyone should be hearing My voice and opening the door, I will also be coming in to him and dining with him, and he with Me"** (Rev.3:20).

This passage, too, like those of 2 Corinthians 8, merely indicates that the Lord deals with men as intelligent, voluntary agents, whom He does not compel to act contrary to their own wills. It does not address the issue of how we are ultimately to account for the state of one's heart, out of which spring the outflowings of life (Prov.4:23 *cp* Matt. 12:34), in one's chosen course of action.

(7) **"Let him who will, take the water of life gratuitously"** [". . . *whosoever will,* let him take the water of life freely," AV] (Rev. 22:17).

This familiar passage simply speaks of the joyous, voluntary activity in which the blessed ones of that future day will gladly engage themselves. It is well worth noting, however, that they are to do so "*gratuitously,*" that is, in a way in which they recognize that their privileges therein are "gratuitous," which is to say, uncalled for with reference to anything that is of themselves (*cp* John 15:25). This alone debars any thought of meritorious free will.

CONCLUDING WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ Who *blesses* us; Who does so in accord with the delight of His will for the laud of the glory of His grace (Eph. 1:3,6). Now thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity (2 Cor.9:15)! J.R.C.

1 SAMUEL 20

20 + **David** ran [l]**away from** the **homestead** [i]**at Ramah;** + **he** [l]**came and** [l]**said, facing Jonathan, What have I done? What** is **my depravity? And what** is **my sin before your father that** he is **seeking** `for **my soul?** 2 + 7**Jonathan**0 [lsa]**replied to him, Far be it! You shall not die. Behold, my father will not do** any **great matter or small matter** +**that he** does **not** [l]**reveal** `to **my ear.** +**Now** for **what reason should my father conceal** `**this** ˙**matter from me?** There **is no**thing to **this!**

3 +**Yet David** 7[l]**replied**~ *fr***again,** + [l]**saying, Your father** must **know,** yea **know**–**, that I have found grace in your eyes;** +**so he** has [lsa]**decided, Jonathan must not** [l]**know this lest he should be grieved.** + **Nevertheless,** as **Yahweh lives, and your soul lives,** there is *t***but** *as* a **small step between me and** *bt* ˙**death.** 4 +**So Jonathan** [l]**said to David, What**ever **your soul** 7**is yearning** for~**,** + **I shall do for you.**

5 +**Then David** [lsa]**explained to Jonathan: Behold,** to**morrow** is the **new moon;** +**as** for **me, I should sit,** yea **sit**– **with the king to eat.** +**Instead you** must **send me** away, **and I will conceal** myself **in** the **field until the third** ˙**evening.** 6 **Should your father** [ln]**miss,** yea *n***miss**– **me,** +**then you say, David asked,** yea **asked**– **leave** *f***of me to run** 7**as far as**s **Bethlehem, his city, for the whole family** ›**has the annual sacrifice there.** 7 **If he** then [l]**says thus,** Very **well!** It means **peace** ›**with your servant.** +**Yet if his** *hot***anger**– grows [l]**hot,** then **know that** ˙**evil has been** *all***determined** *f wi***by him.** 8 +**Now you** must *d***deal kindly** *on***with your servant, for you have brought** `**your servant in**to a **covenant of Yahweh with you.** +**But if** there **is** any **depravity in me,**

[c]**put me** to **death your**self. [+] **Why then should you bring me** [fr]**to your father?**

9 [+] **Jonathan** [sa]**replied, Far be it** [›]**from you! For if I should realize,** yea **realize**[–] **that** [·]**evil has been** [all]**determined** [f wi]**by my father to come over you,** [+] would **I not** [l]**tell** [›] **you** `about **it?** 10 [+]**Then David** [sa]**asked** [›] **Jonathan,** [a]**Who shall tell** [›] **me** [7]**if**~[c] **your father should answer you harshly?** 11 [+] **Jonathan** [l]**said to David,** Do [go]**come! [+] Let us** go **forth** into **the field!** [+]**So both of them** went [l]**forth** into **the field.**

12 [+]**Then Jonathan** [l]**said to David,** By **Yahweh Elohim of Israel!** [t] **I shall sound out** `**my father** [as]**about** this **time** to**morrow** or **the third** day; [+] [bd]**if he is well** disposed **to**ward **David, shall I not then send** word **to you and** [–]**reveal** it `into **your ear?** 13 **Thus may Yahweh do to Jonathan and thus add** to it! [t]**But should** it [c]**seem well to my father** to do [on] **you** `**evil,** [+]**then I will reveal** it `into **your ear and send you** away [+]**that you** can **go unharmed.** [+] **May Yahweh** [b]**be with you, just as He** [b]**was with my father.** 14 **Nor,** [if]**while I** am [fr]**still alive,** [+] **shall you** [not]**fail** to [d]**show** [wi] **me** the **benignity of Yahweh; and** [7]**even if**~ **I** [l]**die,** 15 [+] **you shall not cut** off `**your kindness from** [wi] **my house** [fr]**for** the **eon, not** [+]**even** [i]**when Yahweh cuts**[–] off `the **enemies**[l] **of David,** each **man off** the sur**face of the ground.** 16 [+]**Thus** has **Jonathan** [l]**contracted with** the **house of David; and Yahweh will seek** it out **from** the **hand of David's enemies**[l].

17 [+]**So Jonathan** [l]**continued to** [7]**adjure**~ `**David, in his love** `for **him, for he loved him** with the **love of his** own **soul.** 18 [+]**Then Jonathan** [l]**said to him,** To**morrow** is the **new moon, and you will be** [n]**missed, for your** empty **seat shall be noted.** 19 [+]**When you** count [–]**three** days**, you shall descend very** quickly; **and you** must **come to the** [ri]**place where you were concealed** [i]**on** the **day of the** [d]**deed, and you** must [sit]**stay beside the departure** [·]**stone.** 20 [+]**As** for **me, I shall shoot three** [·]**arrows** to one **side of it,** [›] **pointing**[–]

to a **target for my**self. 21 [+]**Now behold, I shall send** `**the lad,** [7]**saying**[0]**, Go, find** `**the arrows. If I shall say,** yea **say**[–] **to** the **lad, Behold, the arrows** are [+] [bd]**this** way **from you, take them,** [+]**then** do **come! For** there is **peace for you, and** there **is no** [sp]**plot,** as **Yahweh lives!** 22 [+]**But if I shall say thus to** the **stripling, Behold, the arrows** are [+] **beyond** [f] **you,** then [go]**leave, for Yahweh has sent you** away. 23 [+]**As** for **the** [sp]**promise** [w]**that we have** [sp]**discussed, I and you, behold, Yahweh** is [7]**witness**[0] **between me and** [bt] **you** [fr]**for** the **eon.**

24 [+]**So David** [l]**concealed** himself **in** the **field.** [+]**When the new moon** [lb]**came,** [+] **the king** [l]**sat** down **to eat** [on] [·]**bread.** 25 [+] **The king** [l]**sat on his seat as** he had done [du]**time** [i]**upon** [du]**time,** [›]**in the sidewall seat;** [+] **Jonathan** [7]sat [lpc]**opposite**~ him [+]**while Abner** [l]**sat** [f]**at Saul's side.** [+]**But David was** [n]**missing** from his [ri]**place.** 26 [+] **Saul** did **not** [sp]**say anything** [i] [·]**that day, for he** [sa]**thought, he** is absent by some **chance, he** is **not clean,** [t]**surely** he has **not** been **cleansed.** 27 [+]**Then it came** to [l]**be** [f]**on** the **morrow** after **the new moon, the second** day, [+]**that David was** [n]**missing** from his [ri]**place.** [+]**So Saul** [l]**said to his son Jonathan,** For **what reason has** the **son of Jesse not come to** eat [·]**bread** [mr]**both yesterday** [mr]**and today?** 28 [+] **Jonathan** [l]**answered** `**Saul, David asked,** yea **asked**[–] [f wi]**of me** [7]**to go**[0] [fr]**to Bethlehem,** [7]**his city**[0]**.** 29 [+] **He** [l]**said,** [pr]**please** [m]**let me go, for our family** is holding a **sacrifice in** the **city.** [+]**As** for [Q]**me**~**, my** [7]**brothers**~ [m]**gave** [›] **me instructions.** [+]**So now, if I have found grace in your eyes,** [pr]**please let me** [l]**slip away and let me see** `**my brothers.** [on]**For** [so]**this** reason **he has not come to the king's table.**

30 [+] **Saul's anger** [i]**against Jonathan** grew [7]**exceedingly**[Q] [l]**hot, and he** [l]**said to him, Son of** [·]a **revolting** [7]**maiden**~[Q]**!** Do **I not know that you** are [7]**partner**~ [›]**with** the **son of Jesse, to your** own **shame and to** the **shame of your mother's nakedness?** 31 **For all the days** [w]**that** the **son of Jesse lives on the ground, you and your kingship, you shall not be established. Now** [+]**therefore send** out **and take** `**him** in **for**

me, for he is a **son of death.** 32 + **Jonathan** |**responded** `to **his father Saul,** + |**saying to him, Why should he be** c**put** to **death? What has he done?** 33 At +**that, Saul** ~|**lifted up**~ `**the spear** on**at him** as if **to smite him; and Jonathan** |**realized that** 7**evil had been** all**determined**~ f**upon** wi**by his father, to** c**put** `**David** to **death.**

34 +**So Jonathan** 7|**jumped up**Q **from** wi **the table in** the **heat of anger;** + **he** did **not eat bread** i**on the second day of the new moon** festival**, for he was grieved for David,** and t**because his father had put him to shame.** 35 + i**When** the **morning** lb**came,** + **Jonathan** went |**forth** to **the field for** the **appointment** with **David, and** a **young lad** was **with him.** 36 + **He** |**said to his lad, Run! Find** pr**now** `**the arrows which I** am **shooting.** 7+**While**s **the lad** was **running,** + **he´ shot the arrow to** c**make** it **pass** beyond **him.** 37 +**When the lad** |**came** fr**to** the ri**place** w**where Jonathan had shot the arrow,** +**then Jonathan** |**called after the lad,** + |**saying,** Is **not the arrow,** + **beyond** f **you?** 38 **And Jonathan** |**called after the lad, Quickly!** Do **hurry! Do not stay** there**!** +**So Jonathan's lad** |**picked up** `**the arrows and** 7|**brought** them~ **to his lord.** 39 +**As** for **the lad, he** did **not know anything** about it; y**only Jonathan and David, they knew** `of **the matter.**

40 +**Then Jonathan** |**gave** `**his** all**gear to the lad who** was ›**with him, and he** |sa**told** › **him, Go! Bring** them to **the city.** 41 When **the lad** had in**gone**|, + **David arose from beside the** 7**departure stone**~**;** +**he** |**fell** ›**with his nostrils** to d the **earth and** |**bowed down three** du**times.** +**Then** each **man** |**kissed** `**his associate; and they** |**wept,** each **man** `with **his associate,** fr**while** their ~**affection**~ **magnified.** 42 + **Jonathan** |**said to David, Go** ›**in peace!** w**Since we, both of us, we have sworn in** the **Name of Yahweh,** › **saying**–**, Yahweh** lb**is** 7**witness**0 **between me and** bt **you, and between my seed and** bt **your seed** fr**for** the **eon.** +**Then** 7**David**Q |**arose and** go**departed,** +**while Jonathan** was **entering the city.**

THE DEPARTURE STONE

CHAPTER TWENTY of 1 Samuel marks a change in David's relationship to the royal family. From this time until the death of Saul, David becomes a homeless fugitive. Much of his time will be spent among the surrounding nations. He will not again return to the palace, nor will he lead the hosts of Israel until he is recognized as her king. This departure occurs at the time of the new moon festival. Apparently all the officers of the king's court were expected to assemble at this time (1 Sam.20:5,24-27).

The Jewish year is typical of the course of the eons in which God's purpose for humanity is completed. Each year the same events were repeated. Each year had one day of atonement, signifying the cross, and one each of the three primary festivals. The Passover speaks of deliverance, Pentecost speaks of the outpouring of God's Spirit, and Tabernacles speaks of the final ingathering to peace and stability. The new moons represent administrational changes of rule during the course of the eons.

There are many similarities between these events and those at the time of Christ. Many believed in Christ and wanted to make Him king, just as Jonathan knew that David would one day be king. But the established administration of rule wanted to destroy Christ, seeing Him as a threat to their position, just as Saul did David (compare 1 Sam.20:31 with John 11:48). It was a time for an administrational change, but the change that was to occur was not the expected one. The Jews were ready to celebrate Tabernacles, tearing down branches and heralding Christ

as God's anointed Deliverer. But it was the time when the Anointed was to be rejected. The Passover Lamb would be killed when Israel shunned Him to choose Barabas. On the national plane of God's plan, Israel would be cast away that the nations might be conciliated (Rom.11:15).

JONATHAN AND DAVID

1 Samuel 20 focuses on Jonathan's relationship to David, and reiterates the covenant between them. Viewing this as typical of Israel, it represents God's love for Israel. The difficulty with which David and Jonathan parted should provide us a window of view into the heart of God. Though Israel was hardened and disobedient, they are God's beloved, and their casting away cost Him dearly. Even though Israel is currently cast aside (*cf* Rom.11:15), she will ultimately be saved (Rom.11:26). In God's timing, Israel will fulfill His purpose of that nation being a blessing to all the nations. And God will then find great joy in Israel. The covenant between David and Jonathan represents the faithfulness and love of God.

STONE MEMORIALS

There are a number of stones mentioned in 1 Samuel. Large stones were a natural element to serve as memorials, tables on which to offer sacrifices or places of meeting. The departure stone (20:19,41) is called by that name before David and Jonathan part company. The narrative would have been written at a later time, probably as recounted by David to some scribe. The naming of this stone as the departure stone shows that it was a memorial in the mind and heart of David, and that his covenant with Jonathan before Yahweh was not forgotten. David's treatment of Jonathan's descendants shows his faithfulness to his promise (2 Sam.9). In this respect Mephibosheth represents Israel at Christ's return. God's grace will then be

manifested to Israel, and it will be in view of what caused their casting off, of God's "departure" from them.

EBEN-EZER

Earlier in 1 Samuel we read of another famous stone, Eben-Ezer. Like the departure stone, Eben-Ezer is called by its name before the incident occurred which was responsible for its naming (*cf* 1 Sam.4:1; 5:1; 7:12). Evidently the name Eben-Ezer became affixed to that place and was used to define that location when the history was recorded. But there are also some very interesting correlations between Eben-Ezer and the departure stone.

Eben-Ezer is the name of the place where Israel was encamped to battle with the Philistines (1 Sam.4:1). Israel was sorely losing the battle to the Philistines. The elders of Israel decided to bring the coffer of the covenant to the scene of the battle. Their expectation was that Yahweh would then help them to win the battle. The coffer was brought, and the morale of the Israelites received a tremendous boost, but Israel lost the battle, and the coffer was captured by the Philistines (1 Sam.4:2-11).

How ironic that this place should be named "Stone of the Helper" (1 Sam.7:12), and yet the first mention of the name comes when Israel believed they were insuring themselves of God's help, but they were utterly defeated! And not only were they defeated, but Eli, Hophni and Phinehas were all killed. And in the acute trauma of the situation, Phinehas' wife delivered her son and named him "Ichabod, meaning, the glory has departed from Israel" (1 Sam.4:19-22).

The coffer of Yahweh caused much trouble for the Philistines, and was eventually returned to Israel (1 Sam.5,6). Yet even this did not bring immediate blessing on Israel. It was not for another twenty years, and until Israel became plaintive after Yahweh and repented under Samuel's direc-

tion, that Yahweh showed Himself their Helper. This is described in 1 Samuel 7:1-14.

Israel put away her foreign gods and idols, and convened at Mizpah to seek Yahweh with sincerity. There Samuel sacrificed and prayed for them. The Philistines heard that Israel was gathered, and arrayed themselves to do battle, suspecting that Israel was planning to revolt against their domination. God thundered over the Philistines and discomfited them before Israel. Then Samuel set up the stone, calling it Eben-Ezer, "for he said, Hitherto Yahweh has helped us" (7:12).

THE HEAD OF THE CORNER

This course of events is similar to both the events at the departure stone and also to the events surrounding the coming of Christ. The priesthood was corrupt. Israel was dominated by another country. Israel needed to repent and seek God with a full heart. Christ is both the "stone of stumbling" and the "Head of the corner" (Luke 20:17; 1 Peter 2:7,8) At the rejection of Christ, the glory departed from Israel, and that nation was crushed for rejecting their Head. Yet in the future, Israel will become plaintive after God, and Christ will return as Head of the corner.

The cross of Christ is the place where God is known as mankind's Helper. But it began as the place where mankind rejected God's help. How marvelous it is in our eyes that God brings such glorious good out of our evil (Matt.21:42).

J. Philip Scranton

ALVIN ROBINSON

Our dear friend in the Lord, Alvin Robinson, age 67, of Marietta, South Carolina, was put to repose on October 15. We had known Brother Robinson for many years, and had enjoyed much good fellowship with him, rejoicing together in the all-sufficient grace of God. Alvin, even as his daughter, Debbie Rollins, who survives him, was an unusually kind and gracious believer.

THE WORK OF GOD

IN the Fourth Book (Ecc.7:13-9:15) Ecclesiastes returns to the subject dealt with in Book II—the work of God. There he emphasized the antagonism between good and evil. Here he considers the relation between the two opposites. The opening sentence strikes the keynote of the whole section.

13 **See** `the [d]**work of the** One**, Elohim;**
For [a]**who** [l]**can** ›**set in order**‹
`that which He has overturned?
14 **In** a **day of good** [b]**be** resting **in** the **good,**
And in a **day of evil, be vigilant;**
[mr]**Indeed the** One**, Elohim, has** [d]**made**
`this one ›**along with that** one
[on]**For** this **reason,** [w]**that** ·a [h]**man** can**not**
[l]**find** out **anything** about **his hereafter.**

This is an epitome of the thesis which our author proposes to consider. In accord with God's Word as a whole, the Assembler traces all to God.

A detailed exposition is not in harmony with the suggestive character of these studies. Hence we must content ourselves with noting the general drift of thought and offering a few remarks on the more obscure passages.

Having stated that God has made the day of good along with the day of evil, Ecclesiastes instances familiar experiences supporting the assertion (7:15-22), and then, surveying the totality of things, expresses the conviction that man lacks the power to solve the mystery of the whole.

15 **I have seen** `**all** this **in my days of vanity:**
There **is** the **righteous** man who **perishes**[l]
in his righteousness,
And there **is** the **wicked** man
who is **prolonged**[l] **in his evil.**
16 **Do not** [lb]**be** [mn]**abundantly**⁻ self-**righteous,**
And do not be think**ing** your**self superlatively wise;**
Why should you make your**self desolate?**
17 **Do not be** [mn]**abundantly**⁻ [l]**wicked,**
and do not [lb]**be frivolous;**
Why should you die [i]**when** it is **not your season?**
18 It is **good** [w]**that you** [l]**hold** [i]**to this,**
And from that [mr]**also do not** [c]**let** `**your hand** [l]**rest;**
For he who is **fearful of Elohim**
shall come **forth** `from **them all.**
19 ·**Wisdom it**self gives more [l]**strength to** the **wise** man
[f]**Than ten** men of **authority who** [b]**are in** a **city.**
20 **For** there **is no righteous** [h]**man in** the **earth**
Who [l]**does good and nev**er [l]**sins.**
21 **Moreover, to all the words** [w]**that** people [l]**speak**
do not [l]**give your heart**'s attention,
[w]**That you may not hear** `**your servant**
maledicting you;
22 **For even many** [du]**times your heart knows**
[w]**That you your**self [mr]**also have maledicted others.**
23 **All this I probed** [i]**by wisdom;**
I said, I shall be wise,
[+]**Yet it** was **far from me;**
24 **Far** away is [wt]**that which has** [b]**been, and deep, deep—**
[a]**Who** can [l]**find it** out**?**

Accordingly, in what follows, Ecclesiastes endeavors to find a partial solution answering the practical ends of life.

25 **I**′ turned **about** [+]**that my heart**
may › **know**⁻ **and** › **explore**⁻**,**

[+]**That** it may **seek**⁻ out **wisdom and design**
And may › **know**⁻ the **wickedness of stupidity**
and the frivolity in **raving.**
26 [+] **I found**[l] more **bitter** [f]**than death:**
`**That** kind of ·**woman whose heart**
is like **weir** traps **and seine** nets**,**
And **her hands** like **bonds;**
The man doing **well before the** One**, Elohim,**
he shall escape from her,
And the **sinner**[l]**, he shall be seized** [i]**by her.**
27 **See, this** is what **I found, said** the **Assembler:—**
Adding **one** thing **to** an**other to find** a **design,**
28 **Which my soul** [fr]**still sought,** [+]**but I** could **not find,**
I found one [h]**man** out [f]**of** a **thousand,**
[+]**Yet I** could **not find** a **woman** [i]**among all these—**
29 **See, I found this alone:**
[w]**That the** One**, Elohim,** [d]**made** `**humanity upright,**
[+]**Yet they**′ **seek many devisings.**

In seeking to understand this portion of Ecclesiastes the student is confronted with a formidable obstacle. The AV translates the noun *cheshbon* in three different ways: "reason" (7:25), "account" (7:27) and, later on, "device" (9:10). In addition, the feminine form of this noun is rendered "invention" in 7:29. It must be evident to the least critical reader that the writer's thought is necessarily obscured when a Hebrew term is represented by such different words in English. When attention is given to the usage of these terms and their adjective and verbal forms it becomes clear that the sense of "device" or "scheme" is in view. [The CV uses "design" when the terms are used of divine or truly wise devisings.]

This whole paragraph, more especially verses 26-28, has occasioned many gratuitous remarks. As regards verse 27 the difficulty lies in determining to what the phrase "one

to one" may refer. Since the topic consistently discussed throughout the section is the relation between good and evil, the likely point is that to arrive at an intelligent understanding of the universe, good and evil must be considered together as parts of the divine plan. This fits with the special scope of this "book," and throws light on many otherwise obscure passages.

Relating the words of verse 28 to verse 26, the idea develops that one God-pleasing man among a thousand succumbing to feminine temptation can be found; a God-pleasing woman among courtesans is not yet found.

In the progress of his quest concerning all that is done under the sun Ecclesiastes has arrived at the truth that God is universally supreme. This conclusion is reached not by a process of consequence-making resting on presumed premises. It is forced upon our thinker by the existing order of things. When his inquiring mind turned from the consideration of the problems of individual experience to the larger problems of the universe, the world seemed a house hopelessly divided into two irreconcilable rival factions scrambling for the mastery. Chaos and anarchy seemed to reign. Then flashes the idea that good and evil are integral parts of one great plan, and therefore must be taken together and considered as a whole. The thought is firmly grasped that God is absolutely the first great cause; absolutely all things are of Him; all things are His servants working out His will. With the dawning of this truth a mighty change steals over Ecclesiastes. He breaks away from his gloomy thoughts, to apostrophize in a tone of rapture the man who has found wisdom:

8 [a]**Who** is **like the wise** man**?**
And [a]**who knows**[l] the **interpretation of** a **matter?**
Wisdom for a [h]**man** [l]**lightens** up **his countenance,**
And the harsh **strength of his face is** [l]**altered.**

2 **Observe** [7`]the[~c] **king's bidding,**
And that **on** [sp]**account of** the **oath of Elohim.**
3 **Do not be** [l]**rash** in [l]**going from his presence;**
Do not [l]**stand in** an **evil matter,**
For all [w]**that he** [l]**desires he** [l]**does.**
4 [i w]**Since** a **king's word** has **authority,**
+ [a]**Who** can [l]**say to him, What are you doing?**
5 He who **observes**[l] **instruction**
shall know no[t] **evil matter,**
And the **wise heart shall know season and judgment.**
6 **For** there **is season and judgment for every event,**
[t]**Since the evil** for a [h]**man** is [mn]**abundant** up**on him.**
7 **For no** [him]**one knows**[l] **what** [w] **shall** [b]**come,**
For just as it shall [b]**be,** [a]**who** can [l]**tell** › **him?**
8 **No** [h]**man** has **authority** [i]**over** the **spirit**
to detain `the spirit,
And no one has **authority** [i]**over the day of death;**
+ There **is no dismissal in war,**
And wickedness shall make
no[t] way of **escape** `for **its possessor.**
9 **`All this I have seen and** have [g]**applied**– **`my heart**
to all [d]**work** [w]**that is done under the sun,**
At a **season** [w]**when** `a [h]**man** has **authority**
[i]**over** another [h]**man to his peril;**
10 + **In** [so]**such** a case **I saw** the **wicked entombed**[l],
+ Those who used to ¯**come and** [l]**go**
from the **holy** [ri]**place**
And [7]**were** [l]**lauded~ in** the **city** [w]**where**
they had done [so]**such** things**.**
This [mr]**too** is **vanity.**
11 [w]**Because** there **is no sentence**
–[d]**executed quickly** against **the evil** [d]**deed,**
Therefore the **heart of the sons of humanity**
in them is fully given **to do evil.**
12 [w]**Though** a **sinner**[l] **does**[l] a **hundred evil**s

and days are **prolonged**[l] **for him,**
[t mr]**Yet I know**[l] [w]**that good shall** [b]**come**
to those **fearful** of **the** One**, Elohim,**
Who stand in [l]**fear** [f] **before Him.**
13 [+]**Yet good shall not** [b]**come to** the **wicked** one,
Nor shall he prolong his **days** which are **like** a **shadow,**
[w]**Because he** [is]**has no fear** [f] **before Elohim.**
14 There **is** another **vanity** [w]**that is done on the earth:**
[w] There **are righteous** men **for whom retribution**[l]
is **according** to the [d]**work of the wicked,**
And there **are wicked** ones **for whom retribution**[l]
is **according** to the [d]**work of the righteous;**
I say [w]**that this** [mr]**too** is **vanity.**
15 [+]**So I´ lauded** `**rejoicing,**
[w]**Since** there **is no good for** a [h]**man under the sun**
Save to eat and to drink and to rejoice.
And it´ shall be allied with **him in his toil**
through the **days of his life,**
Which the One**, Elohim, gives to him**
under the sun.

The difficulty which many experience with 8:9 arises from considering the verse by itself. The passage becomes clear (though not free from all difficulty) when 8:9-13 is treated as a whole paragraph elaborating one phase of the common argument. The thought is: There is a time (season) when one individual has the power to oppress another. The wicked tyrant who brings evil to another is buried without having received quick sentence for his evil, and the sight of this transitory vanity of providence encourages sin.

Though a sinner does evil, and his days are prolonged, yet I know that good shall come to those who fear God. A paradox: In spite of appearances it is not so; or in spite of individual cases the principle of judgment on the wicked is sound. Ecclesiastes impresses the importance of maintaining moral principle side by side with our inability to perceive the justice of God's ways.

16 [as w]**When I** [g]**applied** `**my heart to know wisdom,**
And to see `**the experience**
[w]**that is** [d]**appointed on** ˙**earth**
(Even though [i]**by day and** [i] **night,**
[he]**one** [is]**does no**t **see**[l] **sleep** [i]**with his eyes),**
17 [+]**Then I saw** `in **all** the [d]**work of the** One**, Elohim,**
That ˙a [h]**man is not** [l]**able to find** out
`the [d]**work** [w]**that is done under the sun,**
Forasmuch [w]**as** ˙a [h]**man may toil** ›**in seeking**‾ it out
[+]**but shall not find** it;
And even if ˙a **wise** man [l]**says** › he **knows**‾**,**
he is not [l]**able to find** it out**.**
9 For I [g]**laid** `**all this** ›**on my heart,**
and [7]**my heart saw**~[c] `**all this:**
[w]**That the righteous and the wise and their services**
are **in** the **hand of the** One**, Elohim;**
[mr]**Whether** it will be **love** [mr]**or hate,**
˙a [h]**man is no**t able to **know**[l]**;**
˙**Every**thing **before them** is [7]**vanity**~**.**
2 **Just as to all,** there is **one destiny**
for the **righteous** one **and for** the **wicked** one**,**
For the **good** one [7]**and for** the **bad** one[cs]**,**
[+] **For** the **clean** one **and for** the **unclean** one**,**
[+] **For** the one who **sacrifices**[l] **and for him**
who [is]**makes no sacrifice**[l]**,**
[as]**So** it is for the **good** person **as** for the **sinner**[l]**,**
For **the** one who **swears**[l] **just as**
for one **fearful** of an **oath.**
3 **This** is the **evil in all** [w]**that is done under the sun:**
That one destiny is **for all;**
[+] **Moreover** the **heart**
of the sons of humanity is full of **evil,**

And ravings are **in their heart**
[i]throughout their lives,
[+]Yet after it, they are joined **to the dead[l].**
4 **[t]Indeed** for **any**one **who is [l]joined**
[›]with all the living there **is trust;**
For it is **better to** be a **living cur [f]than** [·]a **dead[l]** [·]**lion.**
5 **For the living know[l]** [w]**that they shall die,**
[+]But the dead[l] know[l] nothing **whatsoever;**
[+] There **is no further reward for them;**
[t]Indeed remembrance of **them is forgotten.**
6 **[mr]Both their love [mr]and their hate [mr]as well as**
their jealousy have perished already,
And there **is no further portion for them for** the **eon**
In all [w]that is done under the sun.
7 **Go, eat your bread [i]with rejoicing,**
and drink your wine [i]with good heart,
For already the One**, Elohim,**
has approved of **`your [d]works.**
8 **In every season, let your garments [b]be white,**
And oil on your head, let it not be lacking.
9 **See life with** a **wife whom you love**
all the **days of your transitory life,**
Which He gives to you under the sun—
all your transitory days,
For this is **your portion in life**
And in your toil [w]that you are **toiling under the sun.**
10 **All [w]that your hand [l]finds to do, do [i]with your vigor,**
For there **is no doing [+]or devising**
[+]or knowledge [+]or wisdom
In the **unseen where[d] you** are **going.**
11 **[–]Again I´ [+] saw[–] under the sun**
That the race is **not to** the **fleet,**
Nor the battle to masters of war**,**
Nor even bread for the **wise,**
Nor even riches for the **understanding,**

Nor even favor for the **knowing,**
For a **season [+]of mischance shall happen**
`to **them all.**
12 **For, moreover,** [·]a **[h]man** does **not [l]know `his season;**
Like fish [w]that are **held[l] in** a **vicious weir,**
And like birds [·]that are **held[l] in** a **snare,**
[as]So the sons of humanity themselves
are **trapped[l] [›]by** a **season of evil,**
[as]When [w] it [l]falls on them suddenly.
13 **I [mr]also saw this wisdom under the sun,**
And it seemed **great to me:**
14 There was a **small city [+]with** only a **few mortals in it,**
And a **great king came [›]against it**
and surrounded `it,
And he built great [7]siege work**s~[cs] [on]against it.**
15 **[+]Now** a **man was available in it, provident [M]and[cs] wise,**
And he´ would have [m]provided escape
`for **the city [i]by his wisdom,**
[+]Yet not one **[h]person remembered**
`that [·]**provident** [·]**man.**

ALL OF GOD

The tone of confidence deepens as the thinker advances toward his conclusion. From the vantage point of God's immutable, sovereign "design" he can, with perfect composure, look down upon the "many devisings" of puny men with the assurance that they work out the will of God. Can the knowledge that all things have their origin in a divine forepurpose, that they are under absolute divine control, and that neither wicked men, nor any other evil power, nor all of them combined, can act independent of God, fail to give rest to the heart? Under the shadow of this great truth we may abide in perfect safety.

The word "mischance" is connected with the term "season" in 9:11 and refers to the season, not when things are

favorable to man, but are adverse to him. It is a fresh reiteration of the dominant thought of the book that adverse and favorable seasons take place in accordance with God's pleasure and affect all men alike, irrespective of character, ability or personal accomplishments.

Ecclesiastes dwells with all possible emphasis on the absolute deity of God. Herein lies the reason why his book is neglected and misrepresented. The dualistic theology of Christendom, with its Manichean idea of conflict between two rival deities and its dogma of the permanence of evil, found itself at irreconcilable variance with the absolute supremacy of God postulated by the Assembler. Accordingly, theology contrived to set aside the testimony of this unique book by throwing over it the veil of false interpretation. V. Gelesnoff

DESTRUCTIVE DELUSIONS

If it is so that God will either annihilate or eternally torment most of His creatures, the thought will arise, Could He not save all His creatures in the past, how can He preserve all His saints in the future? If sin came in and ruined His fair creation against His will, what will hinder a repetition in the eternity to come? Even if we believe His promises, can we rely upon His love and power when they have been fulfilled, and there is no further guarantee? The more closely one considers the false doctrines of annihilation or eternal torment, the more it will be apparent that they make it utterly impossible for God to gain the full confidence of His creatures. A.E.K.

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ELOHIM HAS MADE ALL OUR DAYS

GOOD AND EVIL, we know them both. But as believers in the God of the Scriptures we accept something else also as true. All that is, including both good and evil, must be traced finally to God. "See the work of the One, Elohim . . . . In a day of good be resting in the good, and in a day of evil, be vigilant; Indeed the One, Elohim, has made this one along with that one . . ." (Ecc.7:13,14).

THE VIEWPOINT OF ECCLESIASTES

The book of Ecclesiastes has sometimes been dismissed as a philosophical dissertation that gives a mostly human viewpoint of life, and might even, in certain passages, undermine the divine requirements of moral behavior and devoutness. As a whole, the book does just about the opposite. It relates all human experience, both upright and sinful, both happy and miserable, to the operations of God. It refuses to leave God out of the picture no matter how dark and confused and unpleasant the picture may be.

Now in the "fourth book" (Ecc.7:13-9:15) the Assembler brings up the truth that we all will have good times and bad times in our lives, and the best way to deal with this in the current situation is to rest in the good and keep vigilant in the bad. There are many things in our lives that are intrinsically good and need to be enjoyed as long as they can be (*cf* Ecc.9:7-10). Yet these are uncertain, and mischance and a season of evil are certain to come eventually (9:11,12). That indeed is, by itself, a very human sort of philosophy. But the writer does not treat this by itself. He

has brought up such matters because they are included in "the work of the One, Elohim" (7:13).

The attention given to Elohim in all these considerations of the human experience of good and evil is extremely important. It takes these accounts of human activities, and of human experiences that are apparently allotted unevenly, and places them ultimately in the hands of God. It does not deny the human part in doing deeds of good and evil, but going beyond that it recognizes that God maintains His divine responsibility in it all; He is over all these experiences and is operating all.

LEARNING BY EXPERIENCE AND KNOWING BY FAITH

One of the reasons why there is such confusion about the book of Ecclesiastes is that we have often failed to distinguish what the Assembler has perceived by way of his *investigations* and what he has come to know by *faith.* These often seem contradictory. In his investigations, Ecclesiastes has found, "There is the righteous man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is the wicked man who is prolonged in his evil" (7:15). By his own experience he has observed, "There are righteous men for whom retribution is according to the work of the wicked, and there are wicked ones for whom retribution is according to the work of the righteous" (8:14). Nevertheless, Ecclesiastes *knows* "that good shall come to those who stand in fear before the One, Elohim. Yet good shall not come to the wicked one, nor shall he prolong his days which are like a shadow" (8:12,13). This conviction of eventual settling of accounts is based not on what Ecclesiastes has found by observation but what he has found by his recognition of God in his heart.

What Ecclesiastes has observed with his senses is honestly recorded. But what he knows in his heart is that there

is a God Who is responsible and Who will do the right thing, no matter how much experience may contradict. Present facts observed do not contradict the fact of God and the fact of His righteousness.

ACQUAINTANCE WITH VANITY

This descendant of David, had the time and means to investigate many kinds of human experiences. We might well wonder why, if he were such a wise person, he did not avoid some of the very stupid experiences he sought out. But we must admit that no matter how foolish they were, these experiences were truly characteristic of human behavior.

Fleshly indulgences do produce many problems and corrupt our characters. But it is also true that the wicked sometimes seem to live more comfortably than the righteous.

Of course, no one is truly righteous in the full sense of the term. "There is no righteous man in the earth who does good [absolutely] and never sins" (7:20). It is all very relative. But things are not balanced out perfectly in this life. In our experiences at present, those who are more selfish and grasping may indeed have longer lives and less misery than those who are more God fearing and caring toward others. The only certain equality is death. "Just as to all, there is one destiny for the righteous one and for the wicked one, for the good one and for the bad one, for the clean one and for the unclean one, for the one who sacrifices and for him who makes no sacrifice, so it is for the good person as for the sinner . . . .One destiny is for all; moreover the heart of the sons of humanity is full of evil, and ravings are in their heart throughout their lives, yet after it, they are joined to the dead" (Ecc.9:2,3).

The facts are set before us. And most of us would agree that these are facts of life. But Ecclesiastes does not leave the facts alone in their harsh pessimism. He has insisted that *Elohim* has made our days what they are. And this is

what makes this book so unique, and indeed important to the whole of Scripture as the Word of God.

God would not have us ignore the reality of evil or pretend that it is otherwise than it is. But faith in God and His righteousness puts this reality into the right perspective.

Much of our misunderstanding related to this book is that we think of the term "vanity," so frequently used throughout, as a sort of everlasting uselessness, a kind of annihilation of the experience. This is wrong. Our life and experience are vain in that they do not last; they are transitory. But this is not absolute. In fact, in the light of the truth that God has made both the good and evil experiences, they must have a purpose toward a goal. When the factor of DEITY is brought into the equation, the pessimism turns to a reliance on God to bring about a righteous culmination.

THE SEEING OF THE HEART

But this is, to the Assembler, a matter that he cannot find out by present experience. He knows from the fact of God and the fact of human sin and suffering that there must be a setting right. But as far as the work of Elohim is concerned, he learned "that a man is not able to find out the work that is done under the sun, forasmuch as a man may toil in seeking it out but shall not find it; and even if a wise man says he knows, he is not able to find it out" (8:17).

The wise Assembler says he knows that God will judge, and that He will judge justly. But he has not found it out in all his searchings. Experience says otherwise, but a recognition of God in the heart brings us to the conclusion that God is operating and will judge rightly and will deal triumphantly with present vanity. "For I laid all this on my heart, and my heart saw all this: That the righteous and the wise and their services are in the hand of the One, Elohim" (Ecc.9:1). All will die, and "the dead know nothing whatsoever . . . and there is no further portion for them for the eon" (Ecc.9:3-6). But there is that which the Assembler has not observed by experience, and which rests on God, and goes beyond the eon.

The experiences of Ecclesiastes would all lead toward pessimism and despair. His honest account of what he perceived with his senses would strengthen a conclusion of meaninglessness. But he does not reach that conclusion. This is because of his faith, of the seeing of his heart. Because of this he knows that all human experience is finally in the hand of God. This is the solid foundation of the Assembler's knowledge of a righteous outcome to things, despite his accumulation of indisputable evidence in the present life against such an assurance.

Because of the evidence of God's presence within Israel, His personal dealings with them and their enemies and His personal word to them, the Assembler's faith in God was based more on sight and experience, more like that of Thomas (*cf* John 20:24-30), than it is for us today. But we may also say that we have a greater revelation of God's purpose for good than Ecclesiastes had because we have become acquainted with Christ. What is important for us from this book is its testimony that reliance on God as Deity over all things, both good and evil, is a great blessing.

We cannot prove from our experiences that there is a pattern of order and meaning and value in life. But we believe there is and have good reason for believing so. We believe that God will reward good acts and condemn wicked acts. And we will go much further now that we are believing that God sent His Son into the world to save sinners. The revelation of God in and through our Lord Jesus Christ trains us to praise God as our Saviour and as the Saviour of all mankind. This is the testimony of God's evangel to us, and this is what we believe.

D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME XCI

All Vivified in Christ . . . 222
Believing and Understanding . . . 258
Christ Alone has Immortality . . . 55
Correctly Cutting . . . 127
Correspondent Ransom . . . 124
Creature Complements . . . 245
DavidintheWilderness . . . 135
Death of all in the Death of Christ, The . . . 39
Displays of God's Power . . . 159
Divine Illumination . . . 5
Elohim is Blessing . . . 129
Elohim is Giving . . . 11
Fifth Day, The . . . 51
For All Mankind . . . 181
Forming of Adam, The . . . 195
Goat Rocks, The . . . 174
God and His Work . . . 129
God Takes and Gives . . . 229
God's Righteousness and Human Unrighteousness . . . 63
Grace Under Law . . . 170
If One Died for the Sake of All . . . 35,39,63,107,181,222,277
Invigorated by God's Grace . . . 159
Just Judgments of God, The . . . 99
Light Amid the Shadows . . . 87
Lo! Now is a Day of Salvation . . . 73,217
Lucifer or Howl! in Isaiah 14:12? . . . 58
Making of Humanity, The . . . 147
Most Acceptable Era, A . . . 73
Not become Diversely Yoked . . . 165
Notes on Ecclesiastes . . . 25,87,93
Notes on 1 Samuel . . . 15,78,135,174,229,271
Obituaries: F. Grifhorst 206, G. Swart 276
Object of Divine Judgment, The . . . 99
Pledge of Our Allotment . . . 217
Questions Concerning Grace . . . 207
Sabbath Day, The . . . 15
Saul's Final Pursuit . . . 271
Studies in Genesis . . . 5,51,147,195,245
Testing What is the Will of God . . . 31
That God May be All in All . . . 277
Through our Lord, Jesus Christ . . . 107
Turning Point, A . . . 78
Understand and Assurance . . . 116

Contents:

2 The Will of God
3 Editorial
5 Divine Illumination
11 Elohim is Giving
15 The Sabbath Day
25 Further Thoughts
On Good and Evil
31 Testing What is the Will of God
35 Introduction:
39 The Death of All
in the Death of Christ

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For God and His
Word

VOLUME XCI

co-editors:
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and
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The Will of God

The will of God will never take you
Where the grace of God cannot keep you,
Where the arms of God cannot support you,
Where the riches of God cannot supply your needs,
Where the power of God cannot endow you.

The will of God will never take you
Where the Spirit of God cannot work through you,
Where the wisdom of God cannot teach you,
Where the army of God cannot protect you,
Where the hands of God cannot mold you.

The will of God will never take you
Where the love of God cannot enfold you,
Where the mercies of God cannot sustain you,
Where the peace of God cannot calm your fears,
Where the authority of God cannot overrule for you.

The will of God will never take you
Where the comfort of God cannot dry your tears,
Where the Word of God cannot feed you,
Where the miracles of God cannot be done for you,
Where the omnipresence of God cannot find you.

Anonymous

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2000
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-ONE

EDITORIAL

IN MANY CASES, we have made personal replies to questions which we have received, but have not published these exchanges within the pages of our magazine. It is our plan to make such Questions and Answers a regular part of the magazine during the coming year. Sometimes noteworthy questions arise over little-considered points. The questions which follow herein are good examples of such rarely-asked yet worthwhile thoughts.

Question: "Paul says not to engage in controversy for nothing useful (2 Tim.2:14). Is there, however, *useful* controversy?"

Answer: Good may sometimes eventually result from controversy, and in this respect alone, in retrospect, we may say that the controversy was useful. Paul's sense, however, seems to be that whenever the present results of any disputation simply are not useful and only upset those hearing, one should cease from any such involvement. Indeed, it is unwise even to enter in, much less to continue on, in any such arguments whenever it is evident that such consequences are a practical certainty.

Question: "We are to pursue fellowship with all who are invoking the Lord out of a clean heart (2 Tim.2:22). What, however, constitutes a clean heart?"

Answer: As the Proverb declares, "Preserve your heart, for from it spring the outflowings of life" (Prov.4:23). Figuratively, the heart is "the center and core of man's spiritual being," hence, the core of one's motives, understanding, and reason (*cf* Keyword Concordance, p.141). If one's motives seem honorable, one's understanding honest, and one's reasons for believing as one does sincere, we should pursue

the course outlined in 2 Timothy 2:22 with all such ones. Of course this is to be done *in whatever way and degree seems expedient,* to accord with each case.

Question: "Paul declared, 'Herald the word. Stand by it, opportunely, inopportunely, expose, rebuke, entreat, with all patience and teaching. For the era will be when they will not tolerate sound teaching . . .' (2 Tim.4:2,3). My question is, Just *who* or *what* should one expose, rebuke, and entreat?"

Answer: Where we are able to do so, we should "expose" (i.e., "shed light" on) that which is *contradictory* to truth (Titus 1:9), as well as expose the truth itself.

The Greek for "rebuke" is also translated "warn," and covers the entire range of thought included in these terms. By its elements, it is ON-VALUE. The idea of the English "rebuke" is "reprimand" or "criticize." We should be very cautious, however, in making personal rebukes of individuals; certainly it is only appropriate to do so in cases where the erring individual recognizes and accepts the position of leadership or the prerogative of the one who is constrained to rebuke the other party. We must be circumspect even in warning another, not to mention in rebuking him. Indeed, if to him we are, at most, a peer—not to mention, an inferior or subordinate—he may well reject or ignore what we say in such a way that shows that we were unwise in initiating our criticism of him. At least *as a rule,* we should confine our criticisms to principles, and not include persons. We ourselves simply do not sustain the same relationship to the other members of the body of Christ as that enjoyed by Paul or Timothy.

While we may, as seems expedient, attempt to entreat our fellow believers concerning most any points of truth and virtue, when it becomes evident that our services are not welcome, we should not press our views upon those who do not wish to hear them. J.R.C.

Studies in Genesis

DIVINE ILLUMINATION

14 **And Elohim [l]said: Let luminaries come** to **be in** the **atmosphere of the heavens to separate** [bt] **`day** + [bt]**from `night,** +**that they** may [b]**be for signs,** + **for appointed** seasons**,** + **for days and years.** 15 + Let **them** [b]**be for luminaries in** the **atmosphere of the heavens to** [c]**give light on the earth. And it came** to [l]**be so.** 16 + **Elohim** [ld]**made `two `great `luminaries, `the `greater luminary for dominating the day and `the `smaller luminary for dominating the night, and** also **`the stars.** 17 + **Elohim** [lg]**placed `them in** the **atmosphere of the heavens to** [c]**give light on the earth,** 18 + **to dominate** [i] the **day and** [i] the **night, and to separate** [bt] **`light** + [bt]**from `darkness. And Elohim [l]saw that** it was **good.**

19 **And it [l]became evening, and it [l]became morning:** the **fourth day.**

LUMINARIES

Corresponding to the section on light (Gen.1:2-5) we are informed as to the celestial light-givers (14-19). There is nothing said here as to the time of their *creation,* which was already indicated, when God created the *heavens* and the earth (Gen.1:1). We do not read thereafter of the *creation* of the earth, but of its disruption and restoration. So, also, we do not read again of the *creation* of the heavens, but of the making of the heavenly luminaries and their placement in the atmosphere, indicating their relation to the earth.

God's gift of these luminaries has many later parallels:

A PARALLEL WITH REVELATION 12:1

The first "sign" in the Unveiling, specifically so called, is that of the sun-clothed woman: "And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a wreath of twelve stars" (Rev.12:1).

In the restoration of the earth brought before us in the first chapter of Genesis, we are first introduced to the three heavenly features of this sign. There the sun and moon are set to be luminaries on the earth, the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night, as well as the stars (Gen. 1:14-18). These luminaries are said to be signs. They figure the spiritual illumination and rule of the earth. Only He Who called Himself the Light of the World can be suggested by the sun. He will rule when earth's day dawns. The moon's dim reflection of His glory was seen in the law, and the stars are beautiful similes of Abraham's spiritual seed just as the seashore sand is of his physical progeny.

When is earth's day? Hitherto we have had man's "day," but it has been very dark. The sun certainly has not been shining. Earth's illumination waits until the Sun of righteousness arises. The light we have makes us sons of light and sons of the day, but we can never claim to disperse the darkness. Only in the day of Yahweh shall the knowledge of God flood the earth. Not till then does the sun arise. At that time we, the members of His body, will not be here. We will shine in other, celestial spheres. The illumination of the earth is Israel's prerogative. She is clothed with Christ to enlighten and to rule the earth.

The stars speak of Abraham's promised spiritual seed. The twelve stars, like the twelve foundations of the new Jerusalem (Rev.21:14), can be no others than the twelve apostles who are Israel's spiritual heroes. The number twelve is peculiarly and appropriately confined to the

twelve-tribed nation. The fact that Paul has no place in this wreath is sufficient to rule us out of the picture, for he is the apostle of the nations, the Uncircumcision. Here we are concerned only with the Circumcision. It may be that the twelve stars also suggest the patriarchs, and the twelve tribes, as in Joseph's dream (Gen.37:9).

ILLUMINATION ON THE ROAD

The apostle Paul, before Agrippa, described his experience on the road to Damascus in terms of great enlightenment:

"I, indeed, then, suppose myself bound to commit much contrary to the name of Jesus the Nazarene, which I do also in Jerusalem. And besides, many of the saints I lock up in jails, obtaining authority from the chief priests. Besides I deposit a ballot to despatch them. And at all the synagogues, often punishing them, I compelled them to blaspheme. Besides, being exceedingly maddened against them, I persecuted them as far as the outside cities also. Among which persecutions, going to Damascus with the authority and permission of the chief priests, at midday, on the road, I perceived, O king, a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining about me . . ." (Acts 26:9-13).

The call of Saul is the most marvelous of all the manifestations of God's grace. It is a pattern for us who believe in this day of grace. He was the foremost of sinners, yet God made him the foremost of His saints. The grace of the Lord overwhelmed him, with faith and love in Christ Jesus (1 Tim.1:12-16).

The twelve apostles were called by the Lord on earth, before His ascension. Saul was called by the ascended glorified Lord from heaven. They were called in the land. He was called outside the land. Their ministry was confined to the land and the Hebrews of the dispersion. Paul's service was outside the land among the Hellenists and aliens.

They were concerned with the earthly life of our Lord before His ascension. Paul begins with the Lord in glory.

Only those acquainted with the glare of the Syrian sun at midday, can grasp the full significance of this scene. Nature's brightest light is eclipsed by the glorious grace into which Saul is ushered by his call.

ILLUMINATION OF GLORIOUS GRACE

Speaking of this glorious grace, Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Now if the dispensation of death, by letters chiseled in stone, came in glory, so that the sons of Israel were not able to look intently into the face of Moses, because of the glory of his face, which was being nullified, how shall not rather the dispensation of the spirit be in glory? For if in the dispensation of condemnation is glory, much rather the dispensation of righteousness is exceeding in glory" (2 Cor.3:7-9).

The account of Moses' reception, after his forty-day session on Sinai, is found in Exodus 34:28-35. It is evident that they saw Moses' face even though they could not look intently at it. Moses did not hide the glory from them. He did not put the covering on his face *until* he had done speaking with them, but *when* he had finished (Ex.34:33). Later he put it on again "*until* he went in to speak with Him." He hid the *fading* of the glory, which indicated the transient, fading character of the law. As Paul says (2 Cor.3:13), it was done so that the sons of Israel should not observe the *consummation* of that which is vanishing.

Now, instead of a covering on Moses' face, there is one on Jewish hearts, which hides from them the true character of the covenant of Sinai. It had a glory once, but it has long since been eclipsed in Christ. This they will not discover until they turn back to the Lord.

A bright torch, which will illuminate the night, becomes black when held up to the noonday sun. So the law, a bright

exhibition of the righteous character of God, turns to blackness before the transcendent effulgence of grace which is now revealed. It had a glory but lost it all by contrast to the glory excelling. Since, then, the law's glory is darkened by a greater glory, how much greater must be the glory of this dispensation of grace!

"Now the Lord is the spirit; yet where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Now we all, with uncovered face, mirroring the Lord's glory, are being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the spirit" (2 Cor.3:17,18).

The ancient mirror was a burnished metal surface which reflected the light as well as the image of the one who used it. Paul did not climb the steeps of Sinai and bring back a transient reflection of the Lord's glory, as Moses did. He beheld Him continually, as we behold our faces in a mirror. The glory of the Lord irradiated him. It did not fade, but became brighter and brighter. Contemplation of the Lord led to likeness to Him.

This is a beautiful epitome of Paul's ministries. He began with grace on the road to Damascus. He dispenses justification at Pisidian Antioch. He reveals the conciliation to the Corinthians. He teaches the truth transcendent from his Roman prison. Grace upon grace and glory upon glory! His successive ministries led onward to the transcendent glories contained in his Perfection Epistles.

A PRAYER FOR ENLIGHTENMENT

With respect to the transcendent glories revealed to Paul, we would like to direct the hearts of our readers to the opening prayer of the epistle to the Ephesians. No petition can be presented which is so welcome to our spiritual welfare.

"Therefore I also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving

thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you a spirit of wisdom and revelation of Him, the eyes of your heart having been enlightened . . ." (Eph.1:15-18).

After having set forth the marvelous grace which culminates and transcends all previous revelation in the first fourteen verses, the apostle is burdened by the fact that all this is quite beyond human comprehension apart from a special enduement for its understanding. That this is actually the case has been amply proven in the history of the church. It is today not only unknown, but beyond the spiritual range of the vast majority of the Lord's dear saints.

To the ear not fully attuned to God, these words are as idle tales. They would ask, What *secret* was made known in Ephesians which was not revealed long before and known to all the apostles? Those whose hearts echo this question are the ones to whom I would appeal. They should join the apostle in his prayer for them, for they have not yet the spirit of *revelation* which is necessary for the apprehension of these, the highest and most blessed of all God's revelations.

Consequently, we urge our readers to read and ponder and pray the prayers of the apostle Paul, but most of all as in this prayer in Ephesians, for the spirit of revelation, a special enduement to *enlighten* the eyes of their hearts.

A. E. Knoch

EDITOR'S NOTE

The preceding article was compiled and adapted from several studies written by A. E. Knoch. The original thoughts regarding the theme of illumination, beginning with Genesis 1:14-19, appeared in *Unsearchable Riches*, volume 15, pages 257-259; volume 17, page 220; volume 42, page 62; and volume 43, page 57; and in THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, pages 191, 221 and 269.

ELOHIM IS GIVING

THE ACTIVITY of Elohim on the fourth day is expressed by four verbs, *say, make* (literally, *do*), *place* (literally, *give*), and *see* (Gen.1:14-18). What God *says* introduces two luminaries which give light, the larger dominating the day, and the smaller dominating the night. What God says comes to be, and He *sees* it to be good. The verb *make* (literally, "do") was first used in Genesis 1:7. Like the other verbs used in this chapter to describe God's works, the verb *make* speaks of God as responsible for creation. It testifies especially to His power and knowledge. Altogether these verbs contribute to a picture of Elohim as supreme, fully involved in all that occurs and praiseworthy in His achievements.

As we have noted in previous studies these very basic works of God speak of fundamental truths concerning God. What He does is effective and is for good. We are not concerned here with scientific or historical details as might be found in a textbook, but with the significance of the language used in Genesis for the revelation of God. The passage does not deny that the creation of the luminaries had already occurred before this fourth "day." No doubt what is said here is from the standpoint of the earth, God's actions being described as they would have appeared from this viewpoint. But what we would learn from this account concerns the Creator and not some scientific explanation of laws and procedures involved in creation. Our concern is what this is saying concerning the ways and character of God as expressed by these accounts of His actions.

The common verbs *say, do* and *see* all contribute much

to our appreciation of God and His glories. But the verb *give,* which first appears in Genesis 1:17,[1] is especially rich in its implications. A specific *kind* of doing is in view, an action that reflects the nature of God's doing. The action of giving is not forced but is freely done for the Giver's own reasons and purposes. It is directed outward and expresses concern for a perceived need.

THE GREAT GIVER

The Scriptures are filled with God's givings. This first giving of God refers to His action of "giving" luminaries "in" the atmosphere, which is not the way English idiom would normally express the thought. Hence the CV uses the verb "place" with a superior "g" to indicate the Hebrew "give," and it uses a vertical stroke to indicate the Hebrew imperfect, or incomplete verb form. Literally verse 17 begins, "And He-is-giving, Elohim, . . ." The *-ing* form lays stress on the activity as action going on, rather than emphasizing the fact of the action. But the important thought for us now is that God's placing of the luminaries in the atmosphere and the appearance of the stars as well is a gift from God satisfying a real need within His creation.

The context shows us that God was giving [the appearance of] the sun and moon in the atmosphere for several specific purposes. They were for signs and appointed seasons. They were to serve as luminaries to give light on the earth. They were to dominate both days and nights. They were clocks and lights and provisions for order and direction. And still today we recognize the importance of these provisions from the hand of God.

1. The CV rendering "give light" which is used in verse 15 represents a Hebrew verb form which means literally, *cause light* (note the superior letter "c" before "give"); it is the causative form of the Hebrew verb *to light,* or *enlighten,* and does not include the actual Hebrew verb *give.*

GOD GIVES WISELY

Yet it is remarkable that the need of these great provisions of the Great Giver was not clearly evident when they first appeared in the atmosphere. God gave them before He brought forth living souls on the earth. It was the living souls, especially humanity itself, that would be served by these gifts. The diffusing of light through the waters and gases above the earth was sufficient for plant life, but the marking of time and organizing of activity in accord with the movements of the luminaries would become a great blessing for living *souls.*

Thus we see that God's activities on the fourth day are clearly activities of preparation. The account of God's works so far has taken us from light to water, air and land, and finally to plant life. But with the fourth day, God prepares the way for something more. The luminaries prepare the earth for higher forms of life, living souls, which are conscious of the creation of which they are a part, which see and hear and feel, smell and taste, and which can respond or react to these provisions for enlightenment and direction.

GOD'S GIFTS TO US

God's gift of luminaries announced in Genesis 1:14-19 reveals a pattern of God's giving to each of us personally. He has given us His Son as our Lord and Saviour, as the One Who becomes to us "wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance" (1 Cor.1:30). In each of our lives, in God's own time, we began to see the value of this Gift which was already there for us.

God is always way before us. Besides the gift of Christ, beyond compare in value, God had also given, through His glorified Son, the apostle Paul and his associates and pastors and teachers to make known this evangel (Eph.4:11,12).

This is brought forward to each of us personally. Hence

each of us can now look back to the men and women God placed in our path as luminaries, in word or in deed, who served as channels of enlightenment.

THE GIFT OF BEING A GIFT

If the apostle Paul is a luminary to us, given by God to reflect the light of the evangel in his letters, and if others who came later in our own times were given the privilege of illuminating the Word of God to our hearts, then, in God's grace, He may use us as well to reflect that light to others. This is surely what Paul was saying in Philippians 2:15 when he spoke of the believers "as luminaries in the world, having on the word of life."

This is not of ourselves even though there may be long hours of reading and meditating on the Word, and much schooling from experience at least. And certainly there will be toil and struggle involved in sharing the evangel with others. Yet to be appearing as a luminary in this world requires in all cases that *God is operating in us* as Paul recognized in Philippians 2:12. It is God Who "*gives* to each" of us any service in the faith, and it is God Who makes the service *grow up* and be fruitful (1 Cor.3:5-7).

OTHER GIFTS OF GOD

So also God gives us "an eonian consolation and a good expectation in grace" (2 Thess.2:16). He graciously grants to us, for Christ's sake, "not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also" (Phil.1:29). We are not all apostles and teachers, but God has given to us all, in some measure, those graces which are suited to transcendence: faith, expectation and love (1 Cor.12:29-31; 13:13). Even as death holds us down, we can still say in expectation, "Now thanks be to God, Who is giving us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.15:57).

D.H.H.

THE SABBATH DAY

THE OPENING verses of the twenty-first chapter tell of David's flight to Ahimelech the priest. David was at loose ends. He had probably been without food during the three days of hiding near the departure stone, and he had nowhere to go. In his time of need he went to the tabernacle of God.

21 + **David** ⌊**came to Ahimelech the priest** at[d] **Nob.** + **Ahimelech was** ⌊**overanxious** ⌋**when** he **met**⁻ **David, and he** ⌊**said to him,** For **what reason** are **you´ alone and no man is** ⌈with **you?** 2 + **David** ⌊[sa]**replied to Ahimelech the priest,** It was **the king** who [m]**gave me instructions** in a **matter and** ⌊**said to me, Let no**[t] **one** ⌊**know anything** ⌈about **the matter** on **which I** am **sending you,** +**nor** [w]**what I instructed you.** +**As** ⌈for **the lads, I** [7]**appointed**~[Q] them **to** a [ri]**place so and so.** 3 **Now** +**then, what** [is]**have you** [u]**on hand? Five** loaves of **bread?** Do **give** them **in**to **my hand, or** ⌈whatever is **available**⌋. 4 + **The priest** ⌊**answered** ⌈**David,** + ⌊**saying, I** [is]**have no profane bread** ⌋ [u]**on hand,** [t] [if]**but** there **is holy bread; if** [y]**only the lads have kept** themselves **from women,** [7=]**you** may **eat**[f] **it**[Q]**.** 5 + **David** ⌊**responded** ⌈to **the priest,** + ⌊**saying to him, But rather, women** were **restrained**⌋ ⌋**from us, as heretofore;** [i]**when I** went **forth**⁻**,** + [7]**all**~ **the lads** [lb]**were hallowed** +**even** if **it** was a **profane** [way]**mission.** +**Yet** [t] **today indeed,** [7]**they are** ⌊**hallowed**~[c] [i]**with** their [all]**vessels.** 6 +**So the priest** ⌊**gave** ⌋ **him holy** bread**, for** there [b]**was no**[t] **bread there save the bread of presence** ˙**taken away**⌋ **from before Yahweh,** in order **to place warm bread** [i]**on** the **day it** was **taken**⁻**.**

7 +**Now there** was a **man** f**of Saul's officials** i**on** ·**that day, retained**l **before Yahweh;** + **his name** was **Doeg the Edomite,** the **sturdiest of the ~runners**l~ w**belonging to Saul.**

Christ's reference to this incident is recorded in Matthew 12:1-8, Mark 2:23-28 and Luke 6:1-5. There the Pharisees criticized Christ and His disciples for rubbing a few handfuls of grain together that they might allay their hunger. This was legal. It was not considered stealing (Deut.23: 24,25). But the Pharisees considered it harvesting, and it was the Sabbath when no work should be done. One wonders if the presence of the Pharisees betrays an effort to follow Christ so that they might measure the length of His walk and accuse Him of journeying on the Sabbath also.

There are many similarities between this day in David's life and the coming of his greater Son. When David came to the tabernacle, the ark of the covenant was absent, still residing at Kirjath-jearim. When Christ came to the temple, the glory had long since departed. David came to find an Edomite, Doeg, in the tabernacle. When Christ came, it was an Edomite, Herod, who had rebuilt the temple. David and Christ were both the rejected and persecuted kings of their nation.

HOLY BREAD

It may have been a Sabbath when David came to Ahimelech. Verse 6 mentions the removal of the bread of presence in order to replace it with warm bread. This was done on the Sabbaths (Lev.24:5-9). This bread was to be eaten by the priests in a holy place. It was a holy of holies for them.

Christ, like David, was of the tribe of Judah. That tribe has no rights in the priesthood of Aaron's order (Heb.7: 11-14; 8:4). Yet David and those accompanying him were

permitted to eat of the priest's bread. Perhaps in David is foreshadowed some aspects of Christ as a Priest of the order of Melchizedek. In David are seen aspects of both king and priest. David inquired of God with the priest's ephod (1 Sam.23:9-12; 30:7,8), and even wore a linen ephod when the ark was brought to Jerusalem (2 Sam.6:14; 1 Chron. 15:27). Saul was rebuked for intruding into the priestly functions of sacrificing to and beseeching God—those things were to be performed by Samuel (1 Sam. 13:8-13).

It is satisfying to think that, though David was fasting in the field instead of enjoying the feast of the new moon in the king's palace (1 Sam.20:5), yet he went to the house of God and was fed with the holy bread of the priests. Christ hungered many times in the days of His service here, and yet He also had bread to eat of which those around Him were not aware (John 4:6-8, 31-34; Psa.40:8). Israel left Egypt to become the wandering Hebrews who ate the bread of heaven, and so David too received holy bread when he became a fugitive. God sustains His pilgrims. Yet how different the sustenance of the perfect Pilgrim!

LORD OF THE SABBATH

Christ knew no end to His work in His earthly life. "My Father is working hitherto, and I am working," He said (John 5:17). The hungry, the sick, the truth seekers, the curious, those seeking self-justification, the jealous—an endless and diverse stream of humanity flowed to Him for relief day after day. Sometimes He had to leave and hide just for a moment of peace or rest or prayer. But the work of that Life brought a completion to the work of God, so that we might enter into His stopping. In grace we may cease from all efforts to justify self, and rest in Him and His completed work.

David's life was typical of this. From the time of his anointing, his life became a struggle. Indeed, there were

difficulties when shepherding his father's flock. Yet, in those days, he had enjoyed simplicity, peace and freshness of faith. In contrast, life in Saul's household was continual turmoil. For David this simplicity was followed by a wearying life of wandering in the wilderness, searching for some fastness in which to take refuge. And, when he became king, there were still the final wars of liberation from the Philistines and of displacing the Jebusites and others. David's life was full of work and weariness.

But David's life was the means of preparing for the reign of peace and prosperity under Solomon. David established Israel as a powerful nation. He strengthened and united the nation. He brought the tabernacle to Jerusalem. He accumulated the wealth of materials needed for the building of the temple. In a sense, David brought Israel to a Sabbath.

THE CONTEXT OF CHRIST'S REFERENCE

Matthew's account, which especially emphasizes Christ's office as King, places this passage in which He identifies Himself as the Lord of the Sabbath, in a most appropriate setting. It is an "apricot of gold in a picture of silver" (Prov.25:11). In Matthew 11:28-30, Christ calls the weary and laden to come into His rest. They are to take His yoke, which doesn't chafe, and bear the burden of His purpose, which exhilarates the heart.

Then, in Matthew 12:1-8, Christ refers to this episode in David's life, and He declares to the Pharisees that they did not understand the nature of the Sabbath. And they certainly did not recognize that He was Lord of the Sabbath. And then in verses 9-13 Grace stoops to demonstrate once again what the Sabbath, the stopping, is about. On a Sabbath Christ healed the man with a withered hand. Yet even this demonstration is despised and misunderstood.

Those whose hearts revolted at Saul's injustices, those who were bankrupt, those who were burdened in some

way, gathered around David. And he became their leader. They bore his yoke and carried his burden, because they knew he was honest and right and they believed in him. In this way that motley bunch became his mighty men. They traded in their burdens for his, and they found purpose and peace and rest and glory, in the midst of many dangers.

WHAT THE PHARISEES MISSED

Christ employed a strong and forceful contrast to illustrate a truth to the Pharisees. In effect, He said to them, "You complain that the hungry men pick a few handfuls of grain to curb their appetite. What would you do if we went to the temple and took the holy bread and ate it? In fury and rage you would stone us! But that is what David did. You who teach the scriptures, have you not read them? What does it mean, 'Mercy am I wanting, and not sacrifice?'"

The Pharisees had misunderstood the Sabbath. They could only see what man does. They did not see that God is working even now, and they did not realize the nature of His work. To them the Sabbath was only a time to stop man's labor. They were obeying a command and imitating God by stopping like He did.

But the Sabbath was not a restriction on man; it was a blessing for man. It was meant to be an entering into what God has done. As long as we, like the Pharisees, think our salvation and peace as dependent upon what we do, we will never enter into the completed work of God.

The need of David, the needs of those who gathered to him, the needs of those who sought out Christ, the need of the man with the withered hand and all the other needs teach us something. The Sabbath cannot be truly enjoyed, nor can God be thoroughly honored in its observance, when those keeping it are burdened in heart, mind or body. It is in our entering into the completed work of Christ, resting fully upon what God has performed for us, that we find relief and God receives glory.

It is not man's work to provide the Bread of Life. That is God's work. He Who is the Bread of Life is also He Who accomplishes the work of God. And, because He finishes the work of God, there can be a stopping. And because He is the One Who completed the work of God, He is the Lord of the stopping.

LEARNING THE ROLE OF FUGITIVE

The twenty-first chapter of 1 Samuel shows a side of David not seen before. We relish thinking of him with stalwart faith, standing before the giant and the whole Philistine army, while Israel cowered in the background. But here he runs in fear and fabricates a false story to use in begging bread and weapons for protection. The sword he is given did not avail against himself, when he was strong in faith. But now he says, "There is none like it; give it to me" (verse 9).

But even the giant's sword failed to comfort and encourage David. He left his homeland and fled to Gath, the giant's home city. David probably hoped to be unrecognized and unnoticed in a foreign land. He was looking for a corner to hide in. But God would not allow him to hide. He was recognized there as slayer of the giant and the virtual king of Israel. This enflamed David's fear even more, and he feigned insanity to escape from the responsibility of who and what he was.

8 + **David** ˡ**said to Ahimelech,** + **Is** there **no**thing that **you** *is*˒**have here** *u*˒**on hand,** a **spear or** a **sword? For I** did **not take** *mr*˒ **my sword** +**or** any *mr*˒**other** of **my** *all*˒**weapons in my hand,** *t*˒**because the king's matter** *b*˒**was urgent**ˡ**.** 9 + **The priest** ˡ*sa*˒**replied,** The **sword of Goliath the Philistine whom you smote in the vale of Elah, it** is *bd*˒**here, wrapped**ˡ **in raiment,** *af*˒**behind the ephod. If you are taking `it for you**rself**, take** it**, for** there **is no other except it in this** place**.**

+ **David** ˡ**said,** There **is no**ne **like it; give it to me.** 7+**So he** ˡ**gave it to him.***0*

10 + **David** ˡ**arose and** ran ˡ**away** *i*˒**on** ˙**that day from** the **face of Saul.** +**When he** ˡ**came to Achish king of Gath,** 11 + the **courtiers of Achish** ˡ**said to him,** Is **this not David** the **king of the land?** Did **they not** ˡ**respond** ˃**about this** one *i*˒**with** dancing in **choruses,** ˃ **saying**¯**,**

Saul has smitten *i* **his thousands,**
+Yet David *i* **his myriads?**

12 + **David** ˡ*pl*˒**took `these** ˙**words** *i*˒**to his heart, and he was very** ˡ**fearful** *f*˒**in view of Achish king of Gath.** 13 +**So he** ˡ**altered `his sanity in their eyes and was raving** while **in their hand;** + **he was** 7˒**tambourining~ on** the **doors of the gate and** *c*˒**let his spittle** run ˡ**down** ˃**on his beard.** 14 +**Then Achish** ˡ**said to his courtiers,** *bd*˒**Here you** ˡ**see** a **man** presen**ting** him**self** as **mad. Why** do **you** ˡ**bring `him to me?** 15 Do **I lack mad**ˡ men **that you bring `this** one **to** present him**self** as **mad**¯ *on*˒**for me? Should this** one **enter** ˃ **my house?**

What happened to David? What caused this great change in him? This question is important to us, because, like David, we also experience this strange mixture of faith and flesh. Paul spoke of it in the seventh chapter of Romans. Like the days of creation, our lives show periods of light and order and increasing life. But these good times are interspersed with periods of darkness. Yet God's arm is not short to bring good, even through this, as each succeeding day brings life and order of higher form.

While shepherding the flock, David was free in his mind to meditate on God. The hours may have been long, and at times the work may have been difficult, but, in his heart and mind, David was able to focus on God. And when he was focused on God, his faith was strong.

When David entered a career of service to Saul, his life became increasingly complex. There may have been

many times when the work was not physically exhausting, but there was never a time when he was freed from the responsibilities and cares of his position. He became a great leader of Israel's army. He became son-in-law to the king. Saul's jealousy grew and he experienced fits of rage and insanity when he would try to kill David. David was forced to work closely with and serve someone who might at any time try to stab him in the back. It seems that all this pressure and stress caused David to lose the clarity of his focus on God.

PSALM 34

The superscription of Psalm 34 identifies it with David's flight to Gath. This Psalm and a meditation are found in *Unsearchable Riches*, volume 66, page 268. The Psalm is very helpful for understanding David's frame of mind during these events. And it also enlightens our understanding of how God uses these dark times in life to strengthen us.

David begins the Psalm with the exhortation to, ". . . bless Yahweh *in every season*" (verse 1). David had experienced the season of strength when he ran to meet the veteran warrior, Goliath with only a sling and stone. And David had also experienced the season of weakness and "shrinking fear" (Psa.34:4), when he fled from Saul. David's encouragement to others is very like Paul's to Timothy. ". . . God gives us, not a spirit of timidity, but of power and of love and of sanity . . . . Stand by it, *the word of the evangel*, opportunely, inopportunely" (2 Tim.1:7; 4:2). Only by experiencing seasons of both strength and weakness was David enabled to realize that God was actually present with him always. And that is reason to rejoice, always.

Yahweh is near to the broken of heart,
And He shall save those crushed of spirit.
Many are the evils on the righteous one,

But Yahweh shall rescue him from them all,
He Who is guarding all his bones
So that not one of them is broken. (Psa.34:18-20)

David was deeply humbled by these experiences. His feigning insanity was the mortification of David as politician, military leader and son-in-law to the king. Once again he became just a son of Jesse, thrust upon God for help and hope.

EVILS ON THE RIGHTEOUS

"Many are the evils on the righteous one." David suffered many evils. These were not caused by his imperfections, but they were necessary for his perfecting. Many will be the evils on all righteous ones, but, like David's, these evils will be for good (*cf* Genesis 50:20).

Psalm 34:19,20 should also be considered with regard to Christ. "Many are the evils on the Righteous One." The One not knowing sin, God made to be sin for our sakes (2 Cor.5:21). Could there be a greater weight of evil than the sin of the world, which rested upon Christ when He was on the cross? "But Yahweh shall rescue Him from them all." Could there be a greater rescue and deliverance than to be raised from death to sit at the right hand of the Majesty in the heights of the heavens in immortality?

This Psalm describes Yahweh, the Rescuer and Ransomer, as the One "Who is guarding all his bones so that not one of them shall be broken." A broken bone in David's day was a serious injury indeed. To a fugitive, a broken arm or leg would be even more serious. To a fugitive soldier who must flee across the countryside and fight for his life, a broken bone would be nearly insurmountable. With these words David assures us that, even though the evils may be piled high upon us, God's protection is intact. And even while we are overwhelmed, He is guarding and protecting every delicate and vital part.

Christ is a literal and perfect example of these verses. Just as no bone of the Passover lamb was to be broken (Ex.12:46), so Christ's legs were not broken at His crucifixion (John 19:31-33). Resting upon Christ was the sin of the whole world and the judgment of that sin. Yet even under such a colossal weight of evil, the Father guarded each and every one of His bones. God limits the effects of the evil we endure according to the need.

Psalm 34 exhorts us to steadfastly rejoice in the Lord, regardless of circumstances. This message pervades the Scriptures. "A stabilized bent You shall preserve in peace, in peace, because it trusts in You" (Isa.26:3). The "bent" in this verse is the inclination or frame of the mind and heart. Genesis 8:21 makes this clear: ". . . for the bent of the human heart is evil from its youth."

EVERY FRAME OF MIND

The same encouragement is given to us by Paul in his letter to the Philippians. "Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind [bent], shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:4-8).

Paul's exhortation continued with instruction to focus the mind and heart on things that are true, just, pure, agreeable and renowned, and to reckon, or meditate on those things. As believers, we need to focus on what is good and prevent the mind from always being busied with the things of the world. "The worry of this eon and the seduction of riches" will stifle the word (Matt.13:22). Rejoice in the Lord always!

J. Philip Scranton

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON GOOD AND EVIL

THE prevailing notion which stigmatizes Ecclesiastes as "the book of the natural man" roots itself in the dualistic creed of Christendom. It is the makeshift of pious men who think more of traditional theology than the truth of Scripture—an exigency demanded by creeds which foster pagan fables, creeds which make evil an interloper in a scheme of good, instead of a foreappointed means designed to *reveal* the good, and thus deny the omnipotence, traduce the character, and impeach the wisdom of the Creator. With interpretations such as this a study of the Bible resting on the sure foundation of grammatical connections and relation of parts to the whole of a book, is in uncompromising antagonism.

NOTES

The "notes" given in Ecclesiastes 9:16-11:6 sustain a relation to the preceding matter. At the end of the Fourth Book, the Assembler described a mournful incident where wisdom was able to achieve where strength failed, but the wise and provident man was not remembered (9:13-15). This leads to a series of reflections on how the efforts of wisdom may be neutralized by folly:

16 [+]**So I′ said, Better** is **wisdom** [f]**than mastery,**
[+]**Yet** the **wisdom of** [g]a **provident** man is **despised**[l]**,**
And his words are no longer **hearkened**[l] to**.**
17 The [i] **rest**ful **words of wise** men**, hearkened**[l] to**,**

Are better *f*than the **outcry of** a **ruler**[l]
*i*among the **stupid.**
18 **Wisdom** is **better** *f*than *all*weapons **of attack,**
+**Yet one sinner**[l] [l]**destroys much**– **good.**
10 As **dead gadflies cause** a *7*compound~*c* of **oil**
to [l]**stink,** to [l]**bubble forth,**
So a **little frivolity outweigh**s *f* **wisdom** *M*and*cs f* **glory.**
2 The **heart of** the **wise** man inclines **to his right,**
+**Yet** the **heart of** the **stupid** man **to his left.**
3 + **Even as** *w* the **frivolous** man **walks**[l]
*i*along the **way, his heart** betrays a **lack**
And *sa*affirms **to all** that **he** is **frivolous.**

This calls up to mind the most formidable handicap to wisdom—the misconduct of rulers:

4 **If the spirit of** a **ruler**[l] [l]**ascends** *on*against **you,**
do not [l]**leave your** *ri*place,
For a **healing** time *c*gives [l]**rest** to **great sins.**
5 There **is** an **evil I have seen under the sun**
Like an inadvertent **error** *w*that comes **forth**[l]
from before one in **authority:**
6 **Frivolity is** *g*put **in high** positions;
The *mn*great **and** the **rich** nobles [l]**sit in low** ones.
7 **I have seen slaves on horse**back
And chiefs walking upon **the earth like slaves.**

The next paragraph turns from the political to the common life. The favoritism of rulers results in relaxation of law and outbreaks of violence. Verses 8 and 9 exhibit various ways of encroaching, by removing boundaries, on the common land; in other words, violations of the commandment "You shall not move away the boundary marker of your associate" (Deut.19:14). In verses 10 and 11 the advantage of putting wisdom to use is stressed:

8 He who **delves**[l] a **pit-hole may fall in**to **it,**
And he who **breaches**[l] a stone **dike,**

a **serpent may bite him.**
9 He who **quarries**[l] **out stones**
may come to **grief** *i*by **them;**
He who **splits**[l] **timbers may be endangered** *i*by **them.**
10 **If the iron** tool **has be**come **blunt,**
and *s*one does **not polish** the sur**face,**
+**Then he** must **be** [l]**masterful** with **potency,**
+**yet wisdom** would **succeed**– for **advantage.**
11 **If** a **serpent should bite**
*i*when there was **no***t* **snake-charm,**
+**Then** there **is no advantage to the possessor**
of a charming **tongue.**

The topics treated in 10:12-11:6 follow the same order. First wisdom and folly are contrasted in their effects (10:12-15). Then the misery of a land governed by an incompetent ruler and drunken nobles is contrasted with the happiness of a land whose king and officers are dominated by a sense of honor and discretion (10:16,17). Once again the evils of misgovernment call to mind the debasing effects of perverted judgment, and these in turn call forth a series of wise precepts (10:18-11:6).

The gluttony and drunkenness of the chief officials leads to a contemplation of a triplet of evils of which intemperance is the sire—slothfulness, misuse of money, and disrespect for lawful authority (10:18-20).

In 11:1-3 the thought is that as the seasons of prosperity (rain) and devastation (the storm uprooting the trees), so visitations of good and evil take place in accordance with God's plan and come alike to all. In what follows, the fact of providential dispensation is made a basis for conduct. Weather forecast founded on observation of winds and clouds is uncertain (11:4,5), but this should not paralyze fruitful exertion. Verse 5 focuses on man's ignorance of the laws governing the movements of wind and clouds

which are determined by God Who does the whole. We cannot know God's work, but knowing Him as the Doer of all encourages us in the doing of our tasks (11:6).

12 **Words** from the **mouth of** a **wise** man are **gracious,**
+Yet the **lips of** a **stupid** man |**swallow him** up**.**
13 At the **start** the **words of his mouth** are **frivolity,**
And at [af]**last** from **his mouth** comes **evil raving.**
14 **+ The frivolous** man |**multiplies words;**
But `a [h]**man** does **not** |**know what** [w] **shall** [b]**be,**
And [w]**what shall** [b]**come** [f] **after him,**
[a]**who** can |**tell** › **him?**
15 The **toil of the stupid** |**wearies him,**
Seeing [w]**that he** does **not** even **know** how **to go to**
the **city.**
16 **Woe to you,** O **land, whose king** is a **youth,**
And whose chiefs [eat]**feast in** the **morning.**
17 **Happy** are **you,** O **land,**
whose king is a **son of notables,**
And whose **chiefs** |**eat in season**
[i]**For mastery and not** [i]**for** a **drinking** bout**.**
18 [i]**Because** of **slothfulness the rafters shall sag,**
And [i]**because** of **laziness of hands,**
the house shall leak.
19 The [d]**making** of **bread** is **for mirth,**
And wine [m]**gives** |**rejoicing** to **life,**
+While `**silver** |**answers** `for **every**thing**.**
20 **Even in your thinking do not** |**maledict** a **king,**
And do not |**maledict** a **rich** man **in your bed chamber**
[t]**Because** a **flyer of the heavens may** [go]**carry**
`the voice,
And a **possessor of** `**wings may tell** your **speech.**
11 Send forth **your bread on** the sur**face of the water,**
For [i]**after many** `**days you shall find it.**
2 **Give** a **portion to seven, +yea even to eight,**

For you do **not** |**know what evil**
may [b]**come** up**on the earth.**
3 **If the thick** cloud**s are** |**full** for a **downpour,**
They shall empty out up**on the earth,**
And if a **tree** |**falls** [i]**to** the **south, +or if** [i]**to** the **north,**
The [ri]**place** [w]**where the tree** |**falls,**
there shall it [b]**rest.**
4 He who **observes**| the **wind** does **not** |**sow,**
And he who **examines**| [i] the **thick** cloud**s**
does **not** |**reap.**
5 **Just as you** [is]**do no**t **know**|
what the **way of the wind** may be**,**
Or [as]**how bones** are formed **in the full womb,**
Thus you can**not** |**know** `the [d]**work of the** One,
Elohim, Who |**does `the whole.**
6 **Sow `your seed in** the **morning,**
and do not [c]**let your hand** |**rest** ›**at evening,**
For you [is]**do no**t **know**| **wherein**
this may succeed, whether `**this or that,**
+Or [if]**whether both** of **them alike** are **good.**

Thus the passage by successive gradations, spans the entire range of God's operations. We have: (1) the mystery of nature; (2) the mystery of generation; (3) God's work as a whole extending over nature and mankind. The idea is that man's uncertainty in regard to natural processes and the course of human history, instead of encouraging idleness, is—or should be—a stimulus to tireless effort. Since it is not possible to know whether one kind of labor or another will prosper, prosecute both with diligence. The sentiment expressed is equivalent to Paul's injunction to teachers of God's Word, "Stand by it, opportunely, inopportunely" (2 Tim.4:2).

Undertaking an investigation with a view of finding out what is good for Adam's sons, our thinker has arrived by

various processes and successive stages at some positive conclusions, doctrinal and practical.

ELOHIM DOES THE WHOLE

The characteristic doctrinal feature is insistence on the absolute supremacy of God, Who is Creator of both good and evil, and, as the Highest, watches over His creation and leads it through blood and strife to a golden age of peace. The unraveling of the universal plan is not complete; for the totality of things is pronounced incomprehensible:

"Just as you do not know what the way of the wind may be, Or how bones are formed in the full womb, thus you cannot know the work of the One, Elohim, Who does the whole" (Ecc.11:5).

Nevertheless, the sovereignty of God in nature and human events is the bedrock on which the Assembler's faith is anchored. He has found that, in the practical matters of life, wisdom will direct man to do the tasks set before him despite uncertainties and frequent failures. He cannot know the work of God above and beyond his comprehension, but he is aware that, in the final analysis, all is the hands of the One, Elohim, Who does the whole.

The fact that the unfolding of the divine plan is imperfect casts no reflection on Ecclesiastes. He is shut up within the circle of God's operations for Israel. In the very nature of things his field of expansion and range of vision is confined within the limits of Old Testament revelation, which is restricted to earth in point of sphere, and extends no further than the close of the Messianic age in point of time. It was reserved for the apostle to the nations, who also testified that all is out of God, to complete the Word of God and unravel the breadth and length and depth and height of the Divine purpose.

V. Gelesnoff

TESTING WHAT IS THE WILL OF GOD

I am entreating you, then, brethren, by the pities of God, to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service, and not to be configured to this eon, but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, for you to be testing what is the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect. (Rom.12:1,2)

Question:

"Please be so kind as to comment on Romans 12:2 in which Paul says for us to be 'testing what is the will of God.' How are we to be testing what is the will of God?"

Answer:

HERE "the will of God" has in view, not God's decretive will, according to which He is operating all, but His preceptive will, according to which He instructs His creatures in the ways of righteousness.[1] Passages that are concerned with what has well been termed God's "decretive" *will*, speak of that which God has determined should occur, according to His own will or decision. Such a usage of God's "will" has in view God's *intention* (though it speaks of it from the standpoint of His will or decision concern-

1. The theological terms "the decretive will of God" and "the preceptive will of God," are valid and useful clarifying expressions. This is because, in the nature of the case, when speaking of the will of God, the Scripture in some cases has in view God's will concerning that which He has decided should occur, while in other cases this same phrase refers to that which God has decided is constituent to man's duty.

ing it). God's decretive will refers to that which God has appointed to occur, *even if it should be contrary to His preceptive will* (e.g., *cf* Matt.26:42; *cp* Acts 4:27,28; *cf* Eph. 1:11 *cp* Rom.9:19).

In Romans 12:2, however, Paul speaks of "the good and well pleasing and perfect [will of God]" (note that the phrase is an appositive, used to clarify the phrase "the will of God"; and, note the definite article before "good"). It is "the good and well pleasing and perfect [will of God]" which is associated with the entreaty to present our bodies a sacrifice, "living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service, and not to be configured to this eon, but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom.12:1,2a).

Paul's objective (it is the objective case, grammatically) in entreating us thus, is "*for*" us "to be *testing* what is the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect."

"Testing," decidedly, is not "tempting" (AV), or rather, "putting on trial" (CV). We may not be putting God on *trial* (e.g., Matt.4:3-7), seeking to oblige Him to act in response to our situation or predicament in order to prove Himself.[2] Instead, "testing" means, "[to] form a careful opinion by subjecting the senses or mind to impressions" (Keyword Concordance, entry "test," p.300). By association, this definition has in view the activities in which we must involve ourselves in order to arrive at such "careful opinions."

This usage of "test" is a synonym for "prove," not so much in the sense of logical proof (though that is by no means excluded), but in the sense of a "proving ground," where, for example, an automobile might be tested out or "proved." The failure of humanity has been that of *not* "test[ing] God, to have Him in recognition" (Rom.1:28).

2. We must never attempt to oblige God to prove Himself to us; instead, it is we who are obliged to "have Him in recognition" (Rom.1:28), as a result of our own careful "testing."

Instead of *not* testing God (and therefore not having Him in recognition), we are to "*Taste and see* that Yahweh is good" (Psa.34:8a).

The reason that humanity fails truly to recognize (or "realize") God, even though in a very limited way they "know" Him (or have a [very limited] relationship with Him; Rom.1:21), is because "they do not *test* God." It is vital for us to recognize this common failure for the serious omission that it is, that we might be roused to action to *test* God through the practice of following His faithful ways.

Thus Paul would have us "test God," *by practicing those things which are His will, good and well pleasing and perfect.* We will then be growing in a realization of God (Col.1:10); and, by "the renewing of our mind," become "transformed."

Here, in Romans 12:2, "trans*form*" is not literal; nor does it speak of our outward appearance, but of our inward "form," metaphorically, in our renewed mind. Others, indeed, may notice something different about us; but we, in any case, will notice something quite different about ourselves: as a result of testing God, to have Him in recognition.

Paul's words here are at the heart of the matter of the believer's walk. It is something that we must go back to, over and over again, for there are so many distractions which we encounter, so many pulls upon us in the wrong direction, of which we succumb to some.

These things are easy to neglect; and of course that is just what the flesh wishes to do. It is no great thing to fail, to withdraw from (or simply ignore) the faith and/or its faithful service. Nothing could be more common; it happens everywhere, continually. Therefore, if we would be pleasing to God, in His mercy and grace He must somehow lay hold of us, giving us a caring heart, one that desires to please Him and is serious to do so. If at times our walk seems more to approximate that of a utensil for dishonor

than for honor, we must "purge" ourselves from what is dishonorable. Then, we will, faithfully speaking, be "a utensil for honor, hallowed, and useful to the Owner, made ready for every good act" (2 Tim.2:20-22). Then, too, we will acclaim, "in the *grace* of God I am what I am" (1 Cor.15:10).

The ideal passage, it seems to me, in reply to your specific question, "How are we to be testing what is the will of God?" is Philippians 4:9: "What you *learned* also, and *accepted* and *hear* and *perceived in me,* these be putting into *practice,* and the God of peace will be with you."

In the Greek, here (note the boldface "ing" on "putting" in the CV), "practice" is not a noun but a verb, in the imperative mood: "be *practicing.*" Like the elementary music student, whose "practicing" may leave much to be desired, thus also, our "practicing" of these ideals, may only be at quite an imperfect level. Even so, in our practicing, we would be "little children" who *care,* who are *serious,* who *wish to please* our Teacher, and who have a *heart* for the endeavor which we have undertaken.

How wonderful it is, sometimes, that we can truly be walking in good works, in those good works which God makes ready beforehand, that we should (i.e., would) be walking in them. For His achievement are we (Eph.2:10).

J.R.C.

PHILIPPIANS 4:4–9

"Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus. For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is grave, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is agreeable, whatever is renowned—if there is any virtue, and if any applause, be taking these into account. What you learned also, and accepted and hear and perceived in me, these be putting into practice, and the God of peace will be with you."

INTRODUCTION

THERE are three compelling reasons for us to believe that all humanity will be saved. First and foremost God is truly what He reveals Himself to be in the Scriptures. Secondly, Christ died for sinners. And finally, we all are sinners.

I believe these claims are pivotal teachings of God's Word. The first claim centers on God and His revelation of Himself in and through His Son, Jesus Christ. The second, focusing on God's Son, and His death and resurrection, lies at the very core of our faith. The third claim, which deals with humanity, is clearly witnessed to in Scripture and by our own common experience. All three points are essential elements of the evangel of our salvation and vital to our appreciation of the grace of God.

Gathering evidence from God's Word for these three claims, I propose to support the teaching that God is truly the Saviour of all mankind, in a series of articles under the general heading "If One Died For the Sake of All." This phrase is taken from 2 Corinthians 5:14 which will be the leading, scriptural passage for the first study.

In the context of the opening chapters of 2 Corinthians, the apostle Paul speaks very personally about his work as an evangelist, reminding us that the message he was commissioned to bring to the nations illuminates "the knowledge of *the glory of God* in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6). This glory of God is revealed in the love of Christ, in that *Christ died for all.* The result, according to Paul, is that the entirety of the sinful race of humanity, as a unit, is put to death.

To be sure, the thrust of Paul's message relates to the many blessings the death and resurrection of Christ brings to the believers, who are identified in 2 Corinthians 5:15 as "those who are living." I do not want to overlook this emphasis while concentrating on the relationship our special salvation has to the widely overlooked fact that God is the Saviour of all. For indeed, as it seems to me, a full appreciation of God's grace to *us* is hardly possible apart from a recognition of God's achievements for *all.*

This evangelical pattern of speaking of the ways the death of Christ reveals the glories of God by its achievements for sinners as a whole is supported by all of God's Word. But it is expressly developed in Paul's epistles. Besides 2 Corinthians 5:14-21, the following passages are especially relevant:

1. After his lengthy exposure of the irreverence and unrighteousness of all humanity, both Israel and the nations, Paul announces in Romans 3:21,22, that a *righteousness of God* is manifested through *Jesus Christ's* faith, for *all* as well as being on all who are believing. The problem is the fact that all are sinners, not simply that we, who now believe, are sinners. And it is *this* dilemma of human sinfulness, enmity and infirmity that God solves in the death of His Son (*cf* Rom.8:3,20,21).

2. Romans chapter 5 expounds on the *love of God* which is commended to us in the *death of His Son,* graciously gaining for us justification, conciliation and expectation of life (Rom.5:1-11). But along with this unfolding of the evangel, certain results of Christ's obedience are associated with all mankind. Having introduced the theme of race-wide mortality and sinfulness because of Adam in verse 12, the apostle completes his parallel showing race-wide justification through Christ in verses 18 and 19. "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is *through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying.* For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, *through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.*"

3. In accord with Romans 5, Paul writes in 1 Corinthians that all, including specifically those who are Christ's when He is present, will be vivified *in Christ.* "For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, *in Christ, shall all be vivified.* Yet each in his own class; the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon *those who are Christ's in His presence;* thereafter the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father . . . . Now, whenever *all* may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects *all* to Him, that *God may be All in all*" (1 Cor.15:22-24,28).

4. This subjection of all, including believers, is described in Philippians with words partly borrowed from Isaiah: ". . . being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto *death, even the death of the cross.* Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus *every knee should be bowing,* celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and *every tongue should be acclaiming* that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the *glory of God the Father.* So that, my beloved . . . be carrying your own salvation into effect" (Phil.2:8-13).

5. In Ephesians Paul blesses "the *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, *in Christ*" (Eph.1:3). Among these is that in Christ "we are having the deliverance *through His blood*" (verse 7). But beyond these special blessings of grace, we learn of the secret of *God's will* (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Christ) "to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up *all in the Christ*—both that in the heavens

and that on the earth—in Him in Whom our lot was cast also" (Eph.1:10,11).

Here God's operations are found to be "in Christ," which clearly must be related to His blood, and which reach a climax in the heading up of all in the heavens and on the earth. The glorious allotment God has given to us accords with this monumental goal involving the entire universe, *to the laud of God's glory* (Eph.1:6,12,14).

6. Colossians also tells of God's work of reconciliation *through Christ* which will embrace the universe even as it has begun to operate in our lives today. Here Paul prays for the realization of God's will which leads forward to the *realization of God* (Col.1:9-11). *Through Christ,* God intends "to reconcile *all* to Him (making peace *through the blood of His cross*), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:20). It is in relation to this grand outlook that the apostle adds, "And *you,* being once estranged and enemies in comprehension, by wicked acts, yet now He reconciles *by His body of flesh, through His death*" (Col.1:21,22).

7. Such revelations are summed up by the faithful and welcome word of 1 Timothy 4:9,10, masterfully prepared for by earlier declarations speaking of Christ's death for sinners and God's will for their salvation (*cf* 1 Tim.1:15; 2:4-6): "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome . . . that we rely on the *living God,* Who is the *Saviour of all mankind,* especially of *believers.*" Christ came to accomplish what God willed for all mankind. It seems clear to me from 1 Timothy 4:10 that the apostle Paul was convinced this mission was successful.

In this series of studies I intend to examine each of these portions of Scripture, noting other passages within and outside of Paul's writings that support this theme of God's wise, righteous and loving purpose for all mankind.

D.H.H.

THE DEATH OF ALL IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST

THE EVANGEL of God concerns His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.1:1-5), and it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing (Rom.1:16). In 2 Corinthians 5:14,15, we find this evangel stated in especially striking terms and see its powerfully saving effects on the apostle Paul and the believers to whom he wrote:

"For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died. And He died for the sake of all that those who are living should by no means still be living to themselves, but to the One dying and being roused for their sakes."

Here the evangel is presented in terms of Christ's love. To humanity in general it would seem odd, at the very least, to speak of the *death* of the One Who is loving and the *death* of those who are being loved as an evangel. Such might be a story of thwarted love as in some romantic tragedy, but it would hardly be called glad tidings, or good news. But the evangel brought by Paul always centers, as here, on death. Most essentially the evangel speaks of the death of Christ (e.g., Rom.5:6-9; 1 Cor.15:1-4; 1 Tim.1:15), but His death somehow involves the death of sinners, and in that often overlooked fact lies a blessing of matchless value.

A LIVING FAITH

From the context of 2 Corinthians 5 we perceive that Paul's life was constrained and shaped in every detail by the love of Christ as revealed in His death for sinners. He

lived what he believed. Paul endured affliction and sorrow and the slanders that continually seemed to plague his ministry in order to bring the evangel to the Corinthians and encourage their spiritual growth. "In everything being afflicted, but not distressed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not perishing . . . we also are believing, wherefore we are speaking also, being aware that He Who rouses the Lord Jesus will be rousing us also, through Jesus, and will be presenting us together with you. For all is because of you, that the grace, increasing through the majority, should be superabounding in thanksgiving to the glory of God" (2 Cor.4:8,9,14,15).

If the Corinthians thought he had some ulterior purpose for personal gain in any particular action (such as boasting over the Corinthians), they would be far off the mark (*cf* 2 Cor.5:12,13). Paul was motivated and directed by that love which led Christ to die for sinners like Saul of Tarsus and which embraced the entire human race.

Indeed it was more than the fact that Christ died for him that invigorated Paul to labor and suffer to bring this message of love to others. It was Christ's love in dying for everyone with the result that the entirety of the old, corrupt human race died in the death of Christ, that led the apostle in his toil and afflictions to love and encourage, admonish and commend people he formerly would have despised and shunned. Paul does not say here that if One died for *us* (who are the elect), consequently *we* died, though that would have been a true statement and even appropriate to the context. Yet it would not have sufficiently expressed the motivations and genuine concerns that were in the apostle's heart.

Therefore, in speaking of what constrained him in his actions, Paul had to point to the all-encompassing scope of the evangel of Christ's love. It is only after this association of all sinners with the love of Christ in His death that Paul distinguishes the believers as "those who are living." All have been identified with Christ in His death, though only some, called out from the whole, are now being invigorated in new life by the evangel.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

It was soon before writing here of the love of Christ that Paul reminded the Corinthians that his message illuminated "the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God" (2 Cor.4:4). The glorious love of Christ is paramount in this evangel, and in loving us by dying for us Jesus Christ is illuminating "the knowledge of the glory of God" (4:6). As the Image of the invisible God, Christ is making known the glory of God, and as the One Who dies for all, Christ is making known the love of God.

The love of Christ, illuminating the love of God, is very real. It is not only an emotion of good will, affection and commiseration, but is also a preeminently wise and righteous and powerfully active seeking of good for its object. Christ's death would not illuminate the glory of God if it were merely a *picture* of the intensity of His love. The death of Christ is not a sort of ultimate gesture but is a desperately needed action leading surely and effectively to the desired good.

Therefore, it is love that cannot fail. Not only does it act in accord with its goal of good, but it is certain to achieve that goal.

Divine love faces the problem of human sin and death and does the very thing needed in order to solve that problem. It expresses the deepest of affection but does so by faithfully carrying out and gaining the good that is so direly needed. This is a love that could never envision nor ever allow defeat. It could never clash with God's power, for God's power is great enough to achieve what His love

desires. It could never be in competition with God's righteousness, for God's righteousness is revealed in the very evangel which declares His love. It can never stand in opposition to any aspect of the character of God, for He is love.

ONE DIED

The death of Christ was required by the terrible corruption that engulfs humanity. Nothing else could have ended this corruption, and no one else could have done it. The old humanity must be put to death, effectively and finally.

How was this to be done? The testimony of the evangel shows us it had to be done by the death of the *One* Who is responsible for humanity, in Whom we had our origin. Paul reminds us in Colossians 1:16 that "in Him, is all created." There is a vital connection between Christ and humanity that goes back to Genesis 2:7, before sin and death corrupted the race, when Yahweh Elohim formed Adam and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Hence we read in 1 Timothy 2:5,6, of Christ as the one Mediator of God and mankind, Who, as a Man, is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all.

In both 2 Corinthians 5:14 and 1 Timothy 2:5, Christ is referred to as "One" in contrast to "all." This is a reflection of the fuller development of this contrast in Romans 5:12-19. Like Adam, but in a greater way, Christ is *One* Whose actions affect *all* humanity, including Adam. In the final analysis, the destiny of the human race is dependent on the work of the One, Jesus Christ, rather than on all the various activities, good and bad, of the many individuals.

In accord with the principle of "sin for sin" ("an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"), the sin of the death of our sinless Lord puts to death the sin-corrupted human race. Christ was made to be Sin, or the Sin Offering, for the sake of sinners, as Paul expresses it at the end of our chapter (2 Cor.5:21). As the Sin Offering Christ died for

all humanity since all are sinners. He could not have died for me as a sinner unless He died for us all. But now, having done so, the way is opened up for my salvation, and of necessity for the ultimate deliverance of all.

The more we learn from Scripture concerning the death of Christ, the more firmly we understand what Paul meant when he wrote, "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal.6:14).

The death of Christ on Golgotha, nearly two thousand years ago, is the darkest event of history. Yet it is our glory, our boast, because of what it accomplished.

We must be willing to acknowledge and prepare ourselves to exult in the fact that we would not have the blessings of faith, expectation and love in our lives if Christ had not died for sinners. The evangel tells us of something that has happened. It occurred long before we believed. Our believing that Christ died for our sins did not make Christ's death for our sins happen. Our believing does not make what we believe true. It has been true for nearly two thousand years. To be sure, our believing does bring the power of the evangel into our lives, and by its means God seals us with the holy spirit of promise to the deliverance of that which *has been procured* (Eph.1:13,14). This unique and special salvation for our present lives and into the oncoming eons is not promised to the unbeliever. Nevertheless, as important as our believing is, it does not in any measure take away from what Christ has done for all and must surely be realized by all in God's own time.

ONE DIED FOR THE SAKE OF ALL

We have come to know "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," that, being rich, because of us He became poor, that we, by His poverty, should be rich (2 Cor.8:9). The

difficulty, however, comes not simply in realizing that the death of Christ proves to be a good thing for us, vital to our present lives and our future salvation, but also seeing that it is a good thing for all and vital to the glory of God. This death of Christ on the cross, so shameful, so evil in itself, so base and miserable and abhorrent, has come to mean to us power for our present lives and the solid basis of our expectation for the future. But how much more is this so for us when we come to realize that Christ's death is for all.

This is stated twice in 2 Corinthians 5. "One died for the sake of all" (v.14), and "He died for the sake of all" (v.15). It is a matter to be emphasized. It should never be diluted by conclusions about human sinfulness and stubbornness that do not take Christ's death for sinners into account. Even less should it be qualified and altered by traditional ideas about divine wrath and judgment which place God's justice and love in separate compartments. What Christ has done for all must have the final say about the destiny of all. Our understanding of the words "One died for all" must correspond with the revelation of the love of Christ and accord with the evangel which we believe.

ALL DIED

Already the love of Christ has achieved something very important for the human race. When He died, all died. That is, the old humanity has been put to death. In saying this we are indeed speaking of what is objectively true and not yet of what is true subjectively, or experientially. We are pointing to an accomplishment that has not yet become realized subjectively, in experience. Even for the believer the old humanity is still with us, though in believing that we died we are spiritually strengthened to be putting away the acts of the old humanity. But the point we must make here is that what God has declared is objectively true must and certainly will become wholly, subjectively so. The death

of the entire old humanity in the death of Christ is a true and beneficial achievement and must ultimately lead to the salvation of all, truly enjoyed and appreciated to the glory of God.

How then, can the death of all be a good thing? Only as it represents a real and final end of the old dying and sinful race. Paul had been writing of the operation of death in our bodies in the preceding paragraphs of 2 Corinthians: "our outward man is decaying" (4:16); "we are groaning" (5:2); ". . . being burdened" (5:4). In love, Christ died, and He died for all so that their sinfulness and suffering and weakness and dying might be put to death. This was an act of supreme love, requiring drastic sacrifice and producing transcendent benefit.

The apostle Paul clearly apprehends *our* death in the death of Christ as beneficial. He uses much the same language as 2 Corinthians 5:14 elsewhere in speaking of the believer's involvement in the death of Christ. "We, who *died* to sin, how shall we still be living in it? Or are you ignorant that whoever are baptized into Christ Jesus, are baptized into His *death*? We, then, were entombed together with Him through baptism into *death* . . . planted together in the likeness of His *death* . . . our old humanity was *crucified* together with Him . . . we *died* together with Christ . . ." (Rom.6:2-11). "If, then, you *died* together with Christ from the elements of the world . . . for you *died*, and your life is hid together with Christ in God" (Col.2:20; 3:1-3). "With Christ have I been *crucified*" (Gal.2:20).

The involvement of all in the death of Christ must ultimately be beneficial to all, even as in such rich ways it has begun to benefit us.

THOSE WHO ARE LIVING

The passages just quoted show that identification with Christ in His death is to be followed by identification with

Him in His life. "Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet *living* to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:11). However, it would be wrong to claim that the whole of humanity is now living to our Lord, even though all have died in the death of Christ. Nevertheless, we can surely say in accord with Romans 6:8 that if anyone died together with Christ, that one shall eventually be living together with Him also. The love of Christ cannot fail.

For the apostle Paul the conviction that Christ died for all, and that consequently all died, changed his life. Once full of bitterness and hate toward Gentiles and even toward those Jews who were less narrow minded than he was, Paul was now expecting good things of the fleshly Corinthians (v.11) and even boasting over them (v.12). This was the love of Christ in action in Paul's own life.

This sort of behavior is not something forced. It is not something motivated by a desire for commendation, nor even by a sense of obligation. It is simply the operation of the evangel of God's love within us. Paul genuinely sought the good of the Corinthians and found every opportunity to encourage them in their faith. This is the kind of living that is unto "the One dying and being roused" for our sakes.

The fact that Christ died for me, and that I died in the death of Christ brings love for Christ into my life, so that I am not living to myself but to Him (*cp* Gal.2:20). The further evangel that Christ died for those chosen in Christ, and that the old humanity of my fellow believers has been put to death in the death of Christ, increases my love for Christ and is reflected in my concern for these brothers and sisters in Christ. Furthermore, the revelation that Christ died for all, and that all died in the death of Christ can only multiply and widen this love for my Lord and become reflected in my outlook toward the human race of which I am a part. Of such an evangel, who could be ashamed? (*cf* Rom.1:14-16).

OBJECTIONS

There are a number of theories, all too popular within Christianity, that oppose this testimony to the love of Christ. Often these objections are mutually exclusive; they contradict each other as well as obscure the evangel.

One theory is that Paul is speaking only of a restrictive "all" in passages such as 2 Corinthians 5:14,15. This view sees Paul as thinking of believers only, of "all the elect" and of no other individuals. But, to their credit, those who take this view still acknowledge that what Christ has done, even though for a select few, cannot fail to be realized.

Another concept is that while Christ died for everyone, without exception, not everyone will enjoy the benefits of His love. This, it is explained, is because the human has the free and independent power to reject what Christ has done, and so His death actually gained nothing of lasting value for many sinners. In recognizing that God's Word teaches that Christ died for everyone, this evangel is drastically distorted by claiming that Christ's death for the sinner is not sufficient in itself for the sinner's salvation. Exactly what the sinner must do is in dispute and often kept vague. But the result is that in the final analysis salvation is dependent on us.

Certain terminology is used in order to give the impression that the evangel of 2 Corinthians 5:14,15, is not as glorious as it appears to be. We are to understand the word "all" as "all kinds of people," that is, "all without distinction" but not "all without exception." Or, alternatively, we must see the verb "died" at the end of verse 14 as speaking of a "potential" identification with the death of Christ. And this potentiality is to be understood as something that indeed will never become an actuality for all.

Such explanations are traitorous to the evangel. They constrict the love of Christ. They obscure the contrast

between the *One* and the *all.* They limit the value and effects of the death of Christ. They distort the character of Christ's life now in resurrection and exaltation, and in so doing they lessen the power of the evangel in the believer's present life. Above all else they hide the glory of God that is illuminated in the death of Christ for all.

AN APPEAL

No one would use these arguments unless there was a conviction that many sinners suffer everlasting condemnation. The idea of eternal hell is set against the revelation that all have been identified in the death of Christ. My appeal is to reverse this line of thought and set the scriptural teaching concerning the significance of Christ's death and resurrection against these traditional concepts of everlasting loss.

The Word of God does not contradict itself. It certainly does not oppose a portion of itself to its highest revelation of glory and victory in Christ. The evangel concerning our Lord Jesus Christ must be the final arbiter of all controversies concerning human destiny. The identification of sinners in the death of Christ is evangelical truth of the highest order. It does not eliminate the biblical revelations concerning God's wrath and judgment but helps make them meaningful as processes along the way rather than final goals. There have been mistakes in traditional interpretations and in the translation of certain scriptural terms. But there is no mistake in what the Scriptures say about the purpose and results of Christ's obedience to the death of the cross.

If Christ has died for the sake of all, and if the consequence of this is that all have died, then it must be true, as we read in 1 Corinthians 15:22-28, that all shall be vivified in Christ, and God shall become All in all.

D.H.H.

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 The Fifth Day
55 Christ Alone has Immortality;
"Lucifer," or "Howl!"
in Isaiah 14:12?
63 God's Righteousness
and Human Unrighteousness
73 A Most Acceptable Era
78 A Turning Point
87 Light Amid the Shadows
93 Remember Your Creator

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 2000
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-ONE

EDITORIAL

WHY should we spend so much time and space in the magazine on the subject of God's purpose to become All in all? While Paul writes of justification for all mankind and the vivification of all in Christ, this theme is only one aspect of the evangel he brings to us. Yet the apostle's whole ministry assumes this welcome message of truth. All is out of God and through Him and for Him. God is righteous, powerful, wise and loving. Christ died for sinners. All are sinners (*cf* p.63).

There is little in God's Word to us that can be fully appreciated apart from appreciation of God's delight to reconcile all enemies through the blood of Christ's cross. The earliest revelation of God in His Word, that of the wise, powerful and purposeful Creator (*cf* pages 51 and 93) is a bedrock of assurance that nothing will be finally lost, for all creation is the work of God's hands.

Our present experiences in this world of darkness are deeply troubling in themselves, but in focusing our attention on the living God (Who is the Saviour of all mankind) we find there is "light amid the shadows" (p.97), and such a great light it is! "Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ . . . . For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5: 18,21). In that light we say with Paul, "Lo! Now is a most acceptable era!" (*cf* p.73).

Perhaps it is possible for some to feel that the curses and judgments upon sinners like Saul and Doeg (*cf* p.78) must stay in force forever, and that the blessings reserved for suffering saints (who also have sinned) like David are

enhanced by this vicious display of hopelessness. But evangelically speaking, that is, speaking in light of the evangel, and in light of the revelation of God given by the evangel, such a consummation is impossible. Babylon will not howl forever (*cf* p.55), but instead will (along with all humanity) acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord for the glory of God the Father!

We want to defend the truth, but it is the practical and spiritual needs of the believer that especially press us to meditate on and speak so often of God's glorious goal of becoming All in all. The idea of eternal hell has been forced into the Scriptures themselves by wrong translation and false interpretation, and we would expose this great evil. But the harm it has done to the believers' spiritual growth and their testimony to the grace and power and righteousness of God distresses us even more.

The sickness that can say God will be satisfied to see some of His creatures suffering forever, and the saint will rejoice in this as a display of God's justice, is hardly relieved by saying that while God will regret this loss, He will acquiesce to man's free and independent choices. Such ideas cripple our faith and stifle the spirit.

To understate the case, we are greatly harmed in bearing the fruit of love, joy, peace and goodness (*cf* Gal.5:22) when we hold to a message involving everlasting hate, sorrow, turmoil and evil. The believer cannot grow in faith, expectation and love with such a message, and God cannot be glorified.

To be sure the denial and even the neglect of any aspect of Scriptural truth affects our appreciation of the whole. We lose much in spiritual growth and in joy and peace by any misunderstanding or rejection of what God has said. But the denial of the reconciliation of all through the blood of Christ's cross has certainly proved to be an insidious error in the hearts of God's people. D.H.H.

THE FIFTH DAY

[20] **And Elohim ˡsaid: Let the waters swarm** with **swarming** things**, living soul**s**, and let flyer**s **fly** *on*ˡ**above the earth on** the **face of** the **atmosphere of the heavens.** [7]**And it came** to ˡ**be so**⁰**.** [21] + **Elohim ˡcreated ˋthe ˙great** sea **monsters and ˋall the moving ˙living soul**s with **which the waters swarm** according **to their kind, and ˋevery winged flyer** according **to its kind. And Elohim ˡsaw that** it was **good.** [22] + **Elohim ˡblessed ˋthem,˃ saying⁻: Be fruitful and increase;** + **fill ˋthe waters in** the **seas, and let the flyer**s **increase** *i*ˡ**on earth.**

[23] **And it ˡbecame evening, and it ˡbecame morning:** the **fifth day.**

LIVING SOULS

In the corresponding section of the account of earth's restoration (Gen.1:6-8), we were told of Elohim's work in bringing forth the atmosphere and separating the waters. Now in Genesis 1:20-23, on the fifth day, soul-life is created for the waters and the atmosphere. The air and the sea were provided with *swarming* and *moving* souls before the land-life was placed on the ground on the sixth day. Preceding this, on the third day, *life* had appeared on the dry land, but it was insensate, soulless, plant life. It could not feel or hear or see, but, more than that, it was rooted in the soil, stationary, dependent largely upon constant contact with the ground in which it grows for its sustenance. In these things it differed from the life created in the water and the atmosphere.

SWARMING, MOVING SOULS

The words *swarming,*[1] *moving* and *soul* indicate differences between living animals and living plants.

For "Let the waters *swarm* with *swarming* things," the AV reads, "Let the waters *bring forth abundantly* the *moving* creature." But plants also *bring forth abundantly.* In its second occurrence, the AV translate the word "moving." This is much nearer the mark, as the usage of the word in the following passages indicates.

". . . bring them forth with you, so they can *swarm* in the earth and be fruitful and increase on the earth" (Gen.8:17).

"As for you, be fruitful and increase, *swarm* in the earth and hold sway over it" (Gen.9:7).

"The waterway will *swarm* with frogs, and they will ascend and enter into your house" (Ex.8:3).

"This is unclean to you among the *swarmers swarming* on the land" (Lev.11:29).

"It will come to be that every living soul that *swarms* wherever the watercourse is coming shall live" (Ezek.47:9).

The AV has "living *creature* that moveth" in verse 21. The word rendered "creature" in the AV has no connection with the Hebrew word *create,* but is the word *nphsh,* usually rendered *soul.* It is used here to differentiate *plant* life, which has no sensation, from *animal* life, which has many means of sensing the world about it.

FLYERS AND MARINE MONSTERS

Hebrew has a special term for *bird (tzphur*), which does not appear in Genesis 1:20. The term used here is

1.*Editor's note*: While Brother Knoch felt the word "swarm" was better than the AV rendering "bring forth abundantly," he preferred the word "roam" as a translation of the Hebrew term used here. Yet the word "swarm" does suggest movement as well as abundance and may fit all the occurrences even better than "roam."

the noun of the verb *fly* (which immediately follows), so it should read "and let flyers fly." The context here calls for *all* winged creatures which mount up into the atmosphere.

The AV reads "whales" in verse 21, but the Hebrew term is not so specific. It seems wisest to choose a more inclusive term such as *monster* which may be used in other contexts where this Hebrew word appears.

HABITATS AND MOTIONS

Scientists have varied much in the classification of the animals. Most of them are based on differences of *structure.* The divine division seems to be based on habitat and mode of motion. There are *flyers above* the earth, *moving souls* in the waters and *land animals* on the earth, besides *creepers* of the ground.

Swarming animals are also classified by their means of locomotion. The flyers have *wings* as well as legs, the beasts have legs, and the lowest of all, which bend their bodies with a sinuous motion, such as fish and those amphibians and reptiles that have no legs.

FRUITFULNESS AND INCREASE

After God had created the many species of these living souls, He adds the blessing of fruitfulness, so that they increase and fill the water of the seas, and the air of the atmosphere.

I once had a very realistic experience, which gave me a little idea of the results of these words. I was out fishing from a small rowboat near the island of Santa Catalina, off the shore of Southern California. As I passed another boat, I asked if they knew where the fish were. All they said was, "Look down." Shading my head with a large sombrero, I was astonished as I saw such a solid school of fish that I could not see through them! I can't say I enjoyed fishing that day. It came to be tiresome to let down a hook and

pull one up, without a wait between. So I left an innumerable shoal of fish when I departed.

Another time I was standing on the shore of the lake of Galilee, north of Tiberias. I could not see any fish from where I stood. Suddenly a man came down from the hill behind me and hurled a small bomb into the water. Within a minute the surface was dotted with floating fish, and he jumped into the water and gathered up a few dozen in a bag. Even in such a small body of water it was possible to net one hundred fifty-three large fish (John 21:4-11). The stem of the word *fish* in Hebrew means PROLIFIC. Genesis 48:16 should read, concerning Ephraim and Manasseh, "And that they may *proliferate* to a multitude within the land." These two were "fish-like" in that they out-numbered the other tribes.

Thus God has provided an account of the origin of the soul life with which He populated the atmosphere and the waters before the deluge. In this way He prepared the scene for a habitation for humanity, in such a way as to reveal Himself to the creatures of the heavens as well as the earth. *–adapted from* A. E. Knoch

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A LESSON OF CREATION:
MEDIATION

Nature supplies the illustrations for the book of revelation. On all sides are pictures of mediation. Our life is not inherent in ourselves, but depends, first of all upon our parents. Although we can extract the vital elements from the air directly, our physical frames cannot feed upon the soil. Its vitality can only come to us through *death.* Some may not believe that our eonian life will come to us through the death of a Mediator, but who can deny that our bodies can only be sustained by the *death* of plants and animals? Unless we are blind, every morsel of food should tell us of life *forfeited* for our sakes. Every edible plant, every food animal, is a reminder that, apart from mediation, we are doomed to death. Mediation is not an obscure doctrine of theology. It is plainly pictured for us in the primer of God's creation.

A.E.K.

CHRIST ALONE HAS IMMORTALITY;
❊
"LUCIFER," OR "HOWL!" IN ISAIAH 14:12?

Question:

In your article, "Enoch and Elijah" (vol.87, pp.211-213), you conclude by saying, "May these present considerations increase our faith, affording us further assurance that Christ 'alone has immortality' (1 Tim.6:15b)." This statement in 1 Timothy 6:15, however, is made about One Who "is making His home in light inaccessible, Whom not one of mankind perceived nor can be perceiving." How can this text be talking about Christ? Would it not, instead, be talking about the God, "Who no one has ever seen," mentioned in John 1:18?

Likewise, if you are saying that Christ alone has immortality, which Strong's defines as "deathlessness," then how can it be that He died?

In addition, in regard to your saying that Christ alone has immortality, what about Melchizedek, of whom it is said that he had "neither a beginning of days nor consummation of life," and even that he had an "indissoluble life" (Heb 7:3,16)?

Answer:

As a preliminary word, I would note that in approaching the issue of this phrase in question (1 Tim.6:15b,16), we must carefully read the entire passage (vs.13-16) as a whole:

"I am charging you in the sight of God, Who is vivifying all, and of Jesus Christ, Who testifies in the ideal avowal before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this precept unspotted, irreprehensible, unto the advent of our Lord, Christ

Jesus, which, to its own eras, the happy and only Potentate will be showing: He is King of kings and Lord of lords, Who alone has immortality, making His home in light inaccessible, Whom not one of mankind perceived nor can be perceiving, to Whom be honor and might eonian! Amen!"

Thus read in its context, the thought appears to be that *God*, Who is vivifying all, Who is the happy and only Potentate, will, in that day, be *showing Christ* thus: (1) as the One Who, even today, is King of kings and Lord of lords; and (2) as the One Who, today, alone has immortality . . . ." Understood thus, the scope of "alone" (in reference to the One "Who alone has immortality") is relative, not absolute. That is, it is Christ "Who alone" *among men* (*cp* "a Man, Christ Jesus," 2:6) has immortality.

Hence this phrase in question ("Who alone has immortality") is not an absolute, universal statement in reference to all beings that exist so that even God Himself comes under its purview, but is a relative statement, made in relation to humanity. We would then understand what follows, as being in reference to Christ as He is today, in His present glory: "[He is] making His home in light inaccessible, Whom not one of mankind perceived nor can be perceiving." Christ, then, is the One of Whom Paul speaks as well, in further ascribing to Him, "honor and might eonian! Amen!" Thus Christ, Who *died* for our sins, *now* alone enjoys immortality, or deathlessness. In that day, however, we too shall be granted this blessed gift, for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality (1 Cor.15:53).

Now, as to your question about Melchizedek: Hebrews 7:16 does not speak of Melchizedek but of *Christ* coming to be according to the power of an indissoluble life. It speaks of "a *different* priest [Who] is rising according to the likeness of Melchizedek, Who has not come to be according to the power of a fleshy precept [as was the case

with those of the Aaronic priesthood], but according to the power of an indissoluble life" (Heb.7:15,16).

This statement indicating that Christ enjoys an indissoluble life does not say nor does it entail that Melchizedek also has such a life (or, certainly, it does not entail it being so, as some have claimed, that Melchizedek actually was Christ Himself). The text merely speaks of a "different priest," Christ—Who *has* come to be according to the power of an indissoluble life—as being the One Who, in some respect, is rising according to the *likeness of* Melchizedek; that is, as One Who, in coming into His office, sustains *a certain likeness* to Melchizedek.

The question concerning Melchizedek—who, in a certain respect, "*pictures* the Son of God" (7:3)—being "fatherless, motherless, without a genealogy, having neither a beginning of days nor consummation of life" (Heb.7:3), is whether these things are so concerning him *inherently* (i.e., according to his own intrinsic nature) or *referentially* (i.e., insofar as the Scriptural record is concerned). I would conclude that the latter sense is surely the correct one, since, reading the text carefully, there is no reason to suppose that Melchizedek himself was other than an ordinary man, insofar as his own nature is concerned.

In any event, such suppositions as many have made as to the supposedly immortal nature of Melchizedek are a distraction, and, largely if not entirely, miss the point of the passage.

The Ideal Priest combines the office of king with that of priest, even as the characteristic of being without genealogy. *Insofar as the scriptural record is concerned*, these ideals of Christ were typified in Melchizedek.

"Melchizedek is notable chiefly for what is *not* recorded of him. There is no reason to believe that he was, personally, the mystical and miraculous character which is his as a picture of the priesthood of Christ. He doubtless was a man like other men . . . .

"The Melchizedek priesthood should be studied in its contrasts with the Aaronic priesthood. Its greatest difference lies in the fact that it combines the office of king with that of priest. This is the ideal way. It was only because of the failure of Moses that Aaron was given a share in his mediatorial office. It is God's purpose that the nation of Israel shall be a kingdom of priests (Ex.19:6), a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9). They will rule the nations for God and bring the nations' offerings to God. So it behooves their Head to be both Priest and King.

"The other great point of dissimilarity lies in the point of succession. The continuance of the Aaronic priesthood was made a matter of descent, and nothing was so vital to a priest as his genealogy. He must be able to tell his father and his mother and trace his lineage clear back to Aaron or he could not even be a priest. And he must provide for this succession by marrying within the priestly caste. In notable contrast to this we have no recorded genealogy of Melchizedek whatever, no mention of father or mother, and no succession, for his death is carefully excluded from the fleeting glimpse we get of him on the pages of inspiration. These omissions are intentional, for only thus can his priesthood picture the priesthood of Christ, Who does not require a genealogy or a successor."[1]

❊

Question:

A year or so ago I bought your book The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God by A. E. Knoch, and have enjoyed it immensely. On page 41 it explains that the word "Lucifer" should never really appear in the Bible and is actually the word "howl." All of the texts in which this Hebrew word in question is used are given as well as a fairly detailed explanation of the problem, which is adequate for me.

However, when I try to tell others about this, they look in Strong's Concordance and say, "No, the word 'Lucifer' is a totally different word from 'Howl.' They each even have different numbers in the concordance." And, in Strong's Concordance, if you look at the Hebrew word for "Howl," in the Hebrew letters of which it is therein comprised, the word obviously does look different from the word translated as "Lucifer."

Now, I admit, this is like the blind leading the blind, as I am not a Hebrew scholar, nor are the people to whom I am talking. However, these folks then point out that the Hebrew scholars who translated all the other versions of the Bible we know of (including the Authorized Version, New International Version, etc.), evidently (i.e., since they translate accordingly), understand that the word for "Lucifer" is different from the word for "Howl." So, these folks conclude, "Why should we believe the Concordant people when they claim that the word is the same?"

Answer:

Your question concerns Isaiah 14:12a, which the Concordant Version translates, "How you have fallen from the heavens! Howl, son of the dawn!" yet the Authorized Version renders, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" This, as you know, is a principal text from which the traditional doctrine known as "The fall of Satan" has been derived.

"In this text, Isaiah's description of the king of Babylon in the yet future day of Israel's restoration, is . . . taken as referring to Satan's fall in the past (Isa.14:3-20) . . . . As this is still future, it can hardly refer to Satan's primeval 'fall.' At that time, Satan will have been literally cast out from heaven (Rev.12:9; *cp* Luke 10:18). But these facts

1. A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.341.

give us no license to identify the two. There will be a king of Babylon who will arrogate divine honors to himself and who will lord it over the kings of the nations, and who will shake kingdoms. Yet he is a *man* (Isa.14:16), and Satan is not a man.

"Moreover, *an examination of the Hebrew text* will convince anyone that the evidence for the title 'Lucifer' is exceedingly slight. It is precisely the same word which the translators [themselves] rendered 'howl' in Zechariah 11:2. In the feminine it occurs again in this very chapter, at the beginning of verse 31. In slightly different forms, it is found again in Isaiah ten times, and it is always rendered *howl* (13:6; 15:2,3; 16:7; 23:1,6,14; 52:5; 65:14). There is no valid reason why Isaiah 14:12 should not be rendered, 'Howl!' instead of 'Lucifer.' This name is a human invention, and should have no place in the Scriptures."[2]

Your friends, however, having been taught that Satan was once a righteous angel named "Lucifer," who, long ago, through the misuse of his free will, one day "fell" into sin, are reluctant to accept these simple facts. In addition, since they have noted in Strong's Concordance that the entries "Lucifer" and "Howl" have different numbers and reflect different spellings according to the typeset Hebrew corresponding to these respective entries, they suppose that what we say must be mistaken. They further suppose that such a conclusion is warranted, since popular theology approves the doctrine of Satan's fall, and popular, modern translations follow the Authorized Version in the rendering "Lucifer" or its equivalent.

In giving consideration to scholarly opinion, it is necessary to investigate much more widely and probe far deeper than Strong's Concordance. In addition, most not only do

2. A. E. Knoch, The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God, p.41.

not appreciate its limitations, but more especially fail to recognize their own. Hence they often reason to mistaken conclusions as the result of their own misuse of this potentially helpful tool.

The simple fact is that "'Lucifer' was . . . manufactured by translators. The Hebrew word *ill* is translated 'howl' by them more than twenty-five times. Once only, for decorative effect, they rendered it 'Lucifer' (Isa.14:12). It occurs with precisely the same letters in Zechariah 11:2 and Ezekiel 21:12, where they have rendered it *howl.* Our word *yell* is practically the same in sound and significance."[3]

In Strong's Concordance, the word used in Isaiah 14:12 is assigned the number: *1966.* But the Hebrew word used in Zechariah 11:2 and Ezekiel 21:12 is assigned the number *3212.* This is simply because the verb "howl" is *listed* under its main form, *ill* which has different spellings in different places, depending on the form of the verb. The spelling of the verb "howl" in Zechariah 11:2 and Ezekiel 21:12 is just the same as the spelling of the word translated "Lucifer" in Isaiah 14:12. In all these places the word has an extra letter, which we might show in English as: *eill.* In each of these texts, the word is a verb, in the Hiphil (cause) form, imperative mood.

Most modern commentaries and lexicons do not identify the word in Isaiah 14:12 as associated with the verb in Zechariah 11:2, etc., even though the spelling is the same. But we found this information from the Hebrew and English Lexicon of John Parkhurst (1823): "[The word in Isaiah 14:12] is in its form more like to the verb . . . *howl,* than to the noun, and accordingly the Syriac translation renders it here *howl,* and even *Jerome* on the place [i.e., in that location] observes that it literally means *howl*" (p.152).

3. A. E. Knoch, "The So-Called Angel World," *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.25, p.160.

In this comment, Parkhurst was citing another lexicon, that of Michaelis, which we assume was a German lexicon. In light of the above and related considerations, Michaelis concludes (cited therein), "Therefore . . . I translate, 'Howl, Son of the morning' . . ." (p.152).

Another well-known scholar, Edward J. Young, states: "To fall from heaven is to fall from a great political height . . . . The form *helel* has been derived from a root, "to howl" which is followed [i.e., affirmed] by Aq[uila], Peshitto and Jerome . . . .

"Tertullian, Gregory the Great, and others have referred this verse to the fall of Satan, described in Luke 10:18. But the present passage [i.e., Isaiah 14:12] pictures the end of a tyrannical reign. The Babylonian king had desired to be above God, and so 'fell from heaven.'[4] He falls to Sheol [i.e., to the "unseen," the state in which he is no longer seen], and his power is done away . . . . Inasmuch, then, as this passage describes a king's downfall and removal from the scene, it cannot apply to Satan."[5]

There simply is no evidence for the notion of the primeval perfection of the devil, much less for the sentiment that it was from this same one's misuse of his free will, that sin thus entered the universe.

Whether or not these considerations help you in becoming more convincing in your presentations, I do hope that they will be instrumental in reaching those who are open to the facts. Let us look to God Who is able to do superexcessively above all we are requesting, graciously granting faith and assurance in the testimony of His Word. J.R.C.

4. *cp* Matthew 11:23, where our Lord uses similar language concerning the city of Capernaum: "And you Capernaum! Not to heaven shall you be exalted! To the unseen shall you subside . . . ."

5. Edward J. Young, THE BOOK OF ISAIAH, *Volume I, Chapters 1 to 18,* pp.440,441 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company).

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HUMAN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

THE EVANGEL which Paul evangelized, for which he was severed from his former associations, is called "the evangel of God." It concerns God's *Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord* (Rom.1:1-5).

In 1 Corinthians 15:3,4, the apostle presents it this way: "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and . . . He was entombed, and . . . He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures." Here in Romans Paul expresses this good news as follows: "While we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). In our previous study in this series we concentrated on 2 Corinthians 5:14,15, where this evangel concerning the death of Christ for sinners is related to the whole of humanity: "Christ died for the sake of all." With more detail, this truth is brought out in Romans 5:18,19, where we read that it is through one just award, through the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ, that "life's justifying" comes to all mankind, who are "the many" who shall be "constituted just."

NOT ASHAMED OF THE EVANGEL

This evangel of God concerning His Son is expounded in the book of Romans. Right from the start it is apparent that this evangel is a message of salvation from sin that is all-encompassing. What is said points surely and effectively to the conclusion that all mankind will be blessed because of the death of Christ. This is indicated by the fact that God reveals His righteousness in this evangel concerning

Christ's death for sinners, and in the emphasis given to the fact that all mankind are sinners.

Hence, Paul writes: "To both Greeks and barbarians, to both wise and foolish, a debtor am I. Thus this eagerness of mine to bring the evangel to you also, who are in Rome. For not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well. For in it *God's righteousness is being revealed,* out of faith for faith, according as it is written: 'Now the just one by faith shall be living.' For God's indignation is being revealed from heaven on all the irreverence and injustice [unrighteousness] of men [human beings]" (Rom.1:14-18).

In strikingly similar terms Paul introduces the evangelical theme of justification in chapter three: "Yet now, apart from law, a *righteousness of God* is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a *righteousness of God* through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:21-23).

God would have us see His righteousness in the way in which He deals with universal, human unrighteousness. It is in view of the fact that all are sinners that God's righteousness is publicly manifested through the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. The challenge is no minor one. To the measure that we comprehend God's achievement in saving irreverent and wicked people, we will be able to comprehend the revelation given here of God's righteousness.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN SALVATION

Is God righteous? Yes, God is righteous!

Do we see that God is righteous? That's another question.

It is impossible to see God's righteousness with any clarity at all in a message that includes a doctrine of everlasting torment in hell or hopeless annihilation. Such corrupt

doctrines lie at the root of the failure to associate God's righteousness with His work of saving sinners through the faith and faithfulness of Christ. The idea that God's indignation and fury will forever engulf a certain portion of humanity, of whom God is the Creator, while the rest are spared that fate, in God's grace, and granted everlasting bliss, makes the whole subject of divine righteousness an insolvable mystery.

Few portions of the Hebrew Scriptures speak more of the righteousness of God than the Psalms. Whoever composed Psalm 71, it well expresses a human longing for salvation from troubles by the righteous God: "In Your *righteousness,* rescue me and deliver me . . . . My mouth, it shall recount Your *righteousness* the entire day, Your salvation, for I do not know their number . . . . Your *righteousness,* O Elohim, reaches unto the height . . . . Moreover, my tongue shall soliloquize of Your *righteousness* the entire day" (Psa.71:2,15,19,24). Yet even more impressive are the words of David in Psalm 51 when his own sinfulness is in view: "Rescue me from bloodguilt, O Elohim, the Elohim of my salvation, that my tongue may be jubilant at Your *righteousness*" (Psa.51:14).

These psalms speak of God's righteousness in God's works of salvation and rescue from outward enemies, and also from the inner enemy of one's own unrighteousness. The "number" of instances where God's righteousness and His works of salvation merge in the psalmist's experience or in his longing were beyond measure. They occupied him continually with praise and thanksgiving regarding his blessings, and with hope and supplication in view of his sins. He had full confidence in God's righteousness and in the way in which it operated in His works of salvation.

These psalms do not speak simply of God as the psalmist's righteous Judge, but of Him as his righteous God of salvation! It was with respect to God's saving work that

the psalmist directed his thoughts concerning God's righteousness. This is what Paul also does in Romans 1:16,17 and 3:21-23. It is in the evangel which is God's power for salvation that God's righteousness is being revealed.

But, because of the evangel, Paul is able to go beyond these psalms. Paul speaks of salvation in a higher and more critical sense, a deliverance from sin and death into righteousness and life. But also Paul speaks not only of "everyone who is believing" who are now finding the evangel to be "God's power for salvation." The apostle adds mention, even mention at great length, of the fact that all mankind are in need of God's righteous salvation. What Paul does, and the psalmists did not do, is to bring the Philistines and Babylonians, besides Saul and Uriah and Bathsheba, and every single human being from Adam on down, into the theme of the manifestation of God's righteousness.

It is the revelation of God's righteousness with respect to the abominable and pitiful state of irreverence and injustice that exists throughout humanity that Paul is speaking of in these passages from Romans. The stakes are much higher than the rescue of one afflicted and sorrowful sinner such as David. And they are higher than the salvation of us who are now believing.

HUMAN FAILURE

Paul does not give light treatment to the problem of human unrighteousness. Between Romans 1:17 where Paul first speaks of God's righteousness and Romans 3:21 where he speaks of it again, there are 63 verses dealing with the unrighteousness of humanity. In no uncertain terms he exposes our hopeless condition apart from the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. We human beings are irreverent, unrighteous, vain and stupid (1:18-23). We have been given over by God to uncleanness and dishonor, effecting indecency, filled with all injustice and are deserving only

of death (1:24-32). *Every* human being is defenseless and unqualified to judge others because each of us is a sinner like everyone else (2:1,2).

The just statutes of the law demand our endurance in good acts if we would earn life eonian (2:3-10). If we would be found righteous under God's righteous judgment, we must be faithful doers of righteousness whether Circumcision under the law or Uncircumcision who have the guidance of "nature" (2:11-3:8). But not one human being is righteous; no one will be or can be justified by his works (3:9-20).

The universality of the human condition of sinfulness is made absolutely clear. Paul writes of *humanity* without qualification (*cf* 1:18; 2:1). The *Jew* is charged with transgressing the law and dishonoring God (2:17-24), and the Gentile is no more able to follow the instruction of conscience and nature. In truth there are no doers of righteousness in view of God's standards.

The Scriptures speak of individuals who are "righteous," but that is only in relation to other human beings who are more unrighteous. It is a figure of speech, not a literal assessment based on God's standards of perfect righteousness. Romans 1:18-3:20 is clear. We are all in the same boat. The problem is universal. All sin and are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23).

THE PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION

It is against this extensive, thorough, and uncompromisingly honest account of the human condition that Paul presents the evangel of God concerning His Son Jesus Christ. God's righteousness is revealed in that evangel and is set forth in connection with universal, human unrighteousness. Paul does not overstate his case. He is not presenting a problem that is beyond the actual extent of God's solution. The apostle knows exactly what he is doing here in this work

of evangelizing. Every accusation made in 1:18-3:20 must be met and overset by the righteous, saving work of God in the gift of His Son.

THE JUST JUSTIFIER

The evangel speaks of the justification of sinners, but in doing so it reveals the righteousness of God. Sinners are righteously saved because Christ died for their sins. God justifies sinners through the deliverance which is in Jesus Christ, in His blood (Rom.3:24; 5:8,9), and in this His righteousness is revealed. He is both just and a Justifier (Rom.3:26).

We are not justified by our works but by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ which He faithfully carried out. For us, this justification is fully gratuitous. But it has a real and righteous basis in Christ's death for us.

But if God righteously saves me, a sinner, gratuitously justifying me in His grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, how can I grasp His righteousness if the fate of other sinners is ultimately based only on God's righteous judgments?

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENTS AND CHOICES

At two points in Romans Paul brings up questions that have arisen in people's minds concerning the rightness of God's ways. While the apostle quickly affirms the righteousness of God in all His operations, he nevertheless finds these objections relevant to his theme. The first problem has to do with God's righteous judgments, and the second with His righteous choices.

In Romans 3:5-8 the question concerns the fact that human unrighteousness makes God's righteousness much more obvious and glorious than it would appear otherwise. "If the truth of God superabounds in my lie, for His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner?" Why

should God condemn sinners for their unrighteous acts when His glory is enhanced by the contrast afforded by these unrighteous acts?

The second question appears in Romans 9:14-24 and concerns the justice of God's choices as well as the judgment that comes on those who are not chosen for honor and glory. "What, then, shall we be declaring? Not that there is injustice [unrighteousness] with God? May it not be coming to that!" (v.14). "You will be protesting to me, then, 'Why, then, is He still blaming? for who has withstood His intention?'" (v.19).

The apostle immediately dismisses any implication of divine unrighteousness. He does so simply by pointing out that God must be judging the world (Rom.3:6) and that He has the right to choose some to be "vessels for honor" and others to be "vessels for dishonor" (Rom.9:21). Within the light of the evangel of God and the revelation of God's righteousness placed in that evangel, these replies of Paul are reasonable and fully satisfactory. Since God has dealt effectively with human unrighteousness through the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ, all will finally be delivered into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom. 8:21). Humanity's unrighteousness and God's indignation against that unrighteousness are not final conditions but experiences along the way toward the time when God grants all the righteous effects of Christ's obedience. The evangel assures us that all of God's processes toward this goal have their purposes for good in God's great wisdom and knowledge, even though we cannot grasp all the reasons for His judgments or comprehend the intricacies of His ways (*cf* Rom.11:33).

But the common mixture of the gospel with the irreverent concept of eternal hell for some along with eternal happiness for others makes Paul's arguments in Romans 3 and 9 more than puzzling. If God, Who was not merciful to

Pharaoh because He wished to display His power in him, condemns Pharaoh to everlasting damnation, then Paul's words, "O man! who are you, to be sure, who are answering again to God?" can hardly dispel the objection. The believer who wishes to glorify God as God will still maintain that God is righteous. But with such a distorted view of the evangel, we must still cry out with dismay that we cannot *see* God's righteousness in these works of judgment and choice; at best we can think of them only as operations independent of the evangel and independent of the revelation of God's righteousness that is in the evangel.

It is the evangel in which God's righteousness is revealed that gives us understanding of the righteousness of God's judgments and choices. These operations are important pieces of experience given to humanity during the eons for wise and good reasons by God. But they are not in themselves the good news announced by the evangel; rather they are operations that are good and glorifying to God only as the good news of God's grace for sinners is true and operative. In fact, God's choices and God's judgments could never be justified had Christ not died for sinners.

GOD'S POWER FOR SALVATION

Indeed, the judgments of God are righteous (Rom.2:5). But they have no power for salvation. In righteously judging humanity God "will be paying each one in accord with his acts" (2:6). And since all are sinners, and not one human being is righteous, the righteous judgment of God inevitably results in all being brought under "indignation and fury, affliction and distress" (2:9). As a consequence solely of God's just judgments no flesh at all can be justified in God's sight (3:20).

"Yet now" (Rom.3:21) we turn to listen to the words of the evangel. This is where the evangel comes in. This is where the death of Christ for sinners comes in. This is the

only channel for justification and salvation. God can justify sinners only one way: "gratuitously in His grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24).

VIEWS THAT OBSCURE DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS

If we say that Christ died *only* for the elect (a fantastically twisted concept), we must admit that God's righteousness remains a mystery, operating on the basis of Christ's blood for some and on the basis of judgment for the rest. Under such explanations the dilemma presented in Romans 1:18-3:20 remains a dilemma. And for the believers, the real issue is no longer the revelation of God's righteousness in dealing with sinners through the faith of Christ. Instead, those involved in this sort of thinking, if they are able to accept the idea of eternal hell for the non-elect and still keep their sanity, must be occupied, not with the evangel, but with themselves.

First of all they must find assurance that they are truly among the elect. And then they must develop some sort of rationalization for any real, "Christian" concern for the mass of mankind who are, in their view, doomed to everlasting hell. Most devastating of all, they must become adept at explaining how it is that the qualities of love and righteousness and wisdom can be attributed to God under such a scheme, apart from reference to the death of Christ for sinners as a whole. Even for the believer (one might even say *especially* for the believer) the entire subject of God's righteousness is made bitter and painful to the heart.

On the other hand, if we say that Christ's death will not ever be effectual for many sinners because God can never interfere with their free will (is this not basically an idolatrous idea?), then we are once again obscuring the righteousness of God manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ. The center of attention has shifted from the evangel to what the human must do. Once again we are occupied

with problems centered on ourselves, just exactly what we are to believe, and how genuine and pure our faith must be, and whether or not our believing must be accompanied by deeds (and, if so, what these deeds must be).

Again, under this scheme, there is a continuing need for clever rationalization in speaking about God. His love is enclosed by the perimeters of what He would like to do if we would let Him, and His power is limited to doing the best He can without violating human freedom. As for His righteousness, it is pretty much confined to His works of future judgment. If there is any room for grace in the believer's salvation it is not particularly appreciated as a matter related to divine righteousness.

It is not that such thinking overlooks the great problem of human sinfulness. Romans 1:18-3:20 remains a popular basis for many sermons and "evangelistic" efforts. But the fact of universal unrighteousness is seldom truly related to the revelation of God's righteousness through His act of giving His Son for sinners. The problem and the solution are not matched up.

It is the *evangel* that is God's power for salvation, not election and not the human will, "free" or otherwise. And it is in the *evangel* that God would have us grasp the full measure of His righteousness. It is in the evangel that we will find God's achievements of righteousness in relation to His works of salvation becoming our song of praise the entire day, for "their number" (Psa.71:15) is as great as humanity's need.

Romans 1:14-18 does not say specifically that all will be constituted just. But the charge of universal human unrighteousness recorded here in association with the righteousness of God which is being revealed in the evangel concerning God's Son already offers assurance of the race-wide justification spoken of Romans 5:18,19.

D.H.H.

A MOST ACCEPTABLE ERA

THERE is much acute suffering for the believer in the present era. As our years increase, so also the dangers of weariness and bitterness are intensified. Indeed, were it not for the sustaining strength of God's revelations, we would have drowned in a veritable sea of despair. But with that sustaining strength we may be appearing as luminaries in these perilous periods. With personal experiences and blessed foreknowledge, the apostle Paul realized that, inevitably, we would appear as beacons in a world of increasing moral darkness and gloom (*cf* Phil.2:15; 2 Tim.3:1-13).

Brother Donald Hayter once wrote, "Bitterness results from the loneliness and misunderstanding that are part of the pathway of truth. But bitterness is a spoiler of joy. Let it be taken away, writes Paul in Ephesians 4:31. It defiles and annoys, says God in the Hebrew epistle (12:15). Those who advance in the ways of truth are most prone to it. But we need not be defiled by its presence, for the grace of the Lord can take it away, and replace bitterness by sweetness of thought, disposition and action!"[1]

Yet in this "crooked and perverse" generation it is frustrating to observe the many corrupting influences. Some years ago, my grandson, on vacation from his university, completely stunned me with the report of a question which had been imposed by one of his tutors: "Did God make man, or did man make God?" "Alleging themselves to be wise, they are made stupid, and they change the glory of

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.77, p.96 (cited from *Grace and Truth* magazine).

the incorruptible God into the likeness of an image of a corruptible human being" (Rom.1:23).

GOD'S PURPOSE FOR GLORY

What are the blessings of God's revelations? "That inner calm and happiness, which we all desire because of the turmoil of the eon, can be found in lasting measure only by a realization of God and His superabounding glory (*cf* Col.1:10-12). We sing, 'In acceptance lieth peace,' yet we should not mean merely an acceptance of our lot but a triumphant acceptance of our lot as a part of God's purpose for glory. The appreciation of God's love, power and wisdom in everything is the key to real peace and genuine joy. It is with this in view that we enter into Paul's great hymn of praise in Romans 11:33-36 and come to recognize and experience its power to settle our fears and lift up our spirit.

"We learned in Romans 3:23 that the great human lack is the glory of God. We are hopelessly removed from the perfect bliss of security and blessing in His presence as far as our own abilities are concerned. Yet we have also discovered that, as believers, 'we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God' (Rom.5:2). Finally and most joyfully we have been shown that the whole creation 'shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God' (Rom.8:21)."[2]

THE GRACE OF HIS LOVE

Recalling the above incident of my grandson's tutor, I thought at the time that the proposition was so cunning in its deception as to disclose the real author of such base evil. This in turn led me to reflect that were it not for the supreme ordering of God on Satan, this same "messenger of light," we would be completely helpless before

2. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.76, p.139.

the onslaughts of his wicked power. Yet Paul confidently declares: "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor power, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.8:38,39).

This is invigorating reassurance. Yet how sobering to reflect that such evil is no longer subtle, but blatant! However, we have the further delight of learning from the Scriptures (how precious these words are to our spirits) that our very presence restrains the evil and the awful hurt instigated by Satan (*cf* 1 Thess.5:8,9; 2 Thess.2:6-9). We already know that this one will be confined during the impending eon when all the promises made to Israel shall be confirmed (Rev.20:1-3), but how glorious to note that our God and Father exercises such tremendous control in protection of His beloved ecclesia, members of the body of His Son (Eph.1:22,23).

A TIME OF CONCILIATION

The indwelling of God's spirit enables the ecclesia to identify the effects of continuing deterioration. It must often appear somewhat drastic, but when confronting depression or sadness, I have to lift a victim from some despair by challenging the current media headlines. Someone once observed, "Bad news is good news, since it sells newspapers." I ask whether matters are so grave. Above all that we *see,* stands the word we *believe.* "Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18). "For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching for Christ's sake, 'Be conciliated to God!' For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (5:20,21).

The best news that we can ever present is not that we are bringing humanity to Christ, but rather, we are bringing Christ to humanity. Here is conciliation. Let us anticipate the consummation and rejoice in this. This is our evangel. This is our good news.

With such a message to share, we can say with Paul, "Lo! Now is a most acceptable era! Lo! Now is a day of salvation!" (2 Cor.6:2).

This should not be misconstrued as indifference to the troubles of our times. Sadly, the soulish appetites increase, yet through the refining influence of God's spirit, we become acutely sensitive to the grievous conduct of this world. Day after day, on all sides, we witness the shameful behavior of those with disqualified minds.

How might we survive amid this degradation? Our dear brother, A. E. Knoch points the sure and certain way, urging a resting in trust and confidence in all of God's loving wisdom: "The knowledge of God's Word is good, an acquaintance with His ways is better, but a realization of Himself is best. Faith accepts His sayings, confidence acquiesces in His ways, love rests in His essence. Let us believe what He says, and we will not only delight in what He does, but exult in what He is."[3]

NOT ALWAYS

What a marvelous boon God has granted in providing fellow believers who present His precious Word through writings and gracious fellowship. May I share one such delightful memory which occurred in the happy days of fellowship with the late Alan Reed:

My own brother was visiting from Canada and had indicated that he would like to meet others at our annual fellowship in England. Somewhat timorously, I escorted him

3. The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God, p.340.

to the meeting and then to where Alan was. There I introduced them. "Alan," I began nervously, "This is my own brother, Tom. He is here on a visit from Canada." Then, boldly, but undeterred, I added, "He claims to be an atheist." I waited, but noted a twinkle in Alan's eyes. With a loving smile and in his delightful Scottish brogue, he replied, "Donald, he'll not always be!"

At the consummation, every knee bows, and every tongue acclaims Christ Jesus as Lord! Goodness and glory abounds, and evil, in all its many aspects, is completely eradicated. Indeed it then would be redundant. During the eons and because of creature disability, there is need for the experiences of evil, but when the last enemy, death, is abolished, this need will have ceased.

A dictionary definition of the word, *optimism*, is "Doctrine of the ultimate triumph of good over evil." Here is an implied suggestion that the influence of both good and evil are independent concepts, which are outside or apart from God's ordering. This is a mischievous heresy which should be recognized and immediately rejected.

As we ponder these verities, rest assured we can certainly trust our loving God and Father. From His beloved Son, He shall receive a universe, resplendent and glorious, in which He will rejoice to be All in all. Amen!

Donald Fielding

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES VOLUME 90

Volume 90 (1999) of *Unsearchable Riches* is now in stock. In addition, we are able to supply printed *Unsearchable Riches* volumes for all years of publication, 1909–1999, volumes 1–90 (hardback, bound in green cloth; most volumes are 288 pages; 1–10 volumes: $23.00 each; 11 or more volumes: $18.00 each; extensive Topical and Scripture Reference Index: $15.00; shipping and handling to U.S. and Canadian addresses: add 7% [foreign orders: inquire concerning shipping costs and methods; California residents please add sales tax; foreign orders payable in U.S. funds]).

A TURNING POINT

THE TWENTY-SECOND CHAPTER of 1 Samuel describes a new beginning. As Saul's persecution escalated, David became more and more lonely and isolated. Anyone found with him would also be in danger from Saul. David was alone.

At Gath, with his feigning madness, David's humiliation reached a peak. But after reaching this measure of humiliation and persecution, a number of people began to assemble to David. It became obvious that David and Saul could never peacefully coexist. And so, in David, those who were at odds with the current administration found one to whom they could turn as their hope for a better day. It became common knowledge that Saul intended to kill David, and so all his family was in danger from Saul also.

Similarly, Christ would be at odds with the leadership of His day. And for Him also, Headship comes after times of humiliation.

DIFFERING LEADERSHIP

22 + **David** |*go*|**departed from there and** |**escaped to** the **cave of Adullam; and** when **his brothers and all his father's house** |**heard,** + **they** went |**down there***d* **to him.** 2 **And** others |**convened** ›**around him: every man** under **constraint,** + **every man who** ›**had** a **creditor**|**, and every man bitter of soul.** + **He** |**became** › **chief over them, and** there |*b*|**were** *as*|**about 400 men with him.**

3 + **From there David** |**went** to **Mizpah of Moab and** |**said to** the **king of Moab,** *pr*|**Please let my father and my mother** come **forth** and stay `with **you, until** *w* **I** |**know what Elohim may do for me.** 4 +**So he** *Syl*|**left them~** `in the **presence of** the **king of Moab, and they** |**dwelt with him all** the **days** that **David** *b*|**remained**– **in** the **fastness.** 5 +**Yet Gad the prophet** |**said to David, You should not** *sit*|**stay in** the **fastness;** *go*|**depart!** + **You** must **come your**self to the **area of Judah.** +**So David** |*go*|**left and** |**came** to the **wildwood of Hereth.**

6 +**Then Saul** |**heard** *t*|**where David was known** to be**,** he **and** the **men who** were `with **him;** +**now Saul** was *i*|**at Gibeah, sitting under the tamarisk** *i*|**on** the **high** place**,** +**with his spear in his hand and all his courtiers stationed**|*on*|**by him.** 7 + **Saul** |**said to his courtiers** ·**stationed**|*on*|**by him, Hear** *pr*|**now, sons of Benjamin!** Will the **son of Jesse** *mr*|**also** |**give fields and vineyards to all of you?** Will **he** |*pl*|**constitute** › **all of you chiefs of thousands and chiefs of hundreds,** 8 *t*|**because all of you have conspired** *on*|**against me, and no** one **was revealing**| `in **my ear** *i*|**when my son contracted**– 7a **covenant***0* **with** the **son of Jesse?** + **No** one *f*|**of you was** 7|**sparing**|**~** *on* **me and revealing**| `in **my ear** *t*|**when my son set up `my servant** *on*|**against me to** wait in **ambush**| **as** he does ·**this day.**

Verses 1-4 are set in contrast with verses 6-8. David "escaped to the cave of Adullam" (verse 1), while Saul is seen "sitting under the tamarisk on the high place, with his spear in his hand and all his courtiers stationed by him" (verse 6). Those who came to David are described as ". . . every man under constraint, every man who had a creditor, and every man bitter of soul" (verse 2). But those convened around Saul were the recipients of fields and vineyards and political position (verse 7). Saul reminded those with him that he was the source of their enrichment, and then charged them with disloyalty in their failure to make known to him Jonathan's league with David. On the other hand, David had nothing to offer his followers but devotion

to common goals and mutual loyalty (1 Chron.12:16-18). Saul's followers had immediate temporal blessings, which carried obligations. David's followers had acceptance without obligation, and they had expectation. Also, their association with David brought them under contempt.

ILL GOTTEN GAINS?

Saul's gifts of fields and vineyards and positions (verse 7), to his officers may indicate the slaughter of the Gibeonites referred to in 2 Samuel 21. Kish, Saul's father, appears to have been a man of some substance. He had some servants and a number of donkeys. But there is no apparent evidence that Saul had any substantial wealth, other than what he accumulated while he was king. These gifts bestowed upon his officers and adherents were likely the spoils of military conquests. In this case, it may have been a campaign which broke Joshua's treaty with the Gibeonites (Josh.9). The Gibeonites lived in the area of Benjamin, Saul's tribe. And Saul addresses his officers as "sons of Benjamin." It is not at all unlikely that there would be prejudice against foreigners in the land, especially by those who shared a border with them. Such prejudice could lead to conflict, especially if Saul saw the opportunity to use the acquired possessions to secure his dynasty.

Saul's actions are reminiscent of the deeds of the unjust steward in Luke 16. Saul bought loyalty and service, probably with means which were not his to use. His close relationship with Doeg, an Edomite, also seems misplaced. All the nation of Israel was at his disposal. Were there none in Israel of equal skill? In Christ's day there was the unlikely collaboration of Pilate, Herod and the Sadducees, as they bonded together against God's Anointed.

That Saul despised David is also seen in the way he refers to him repeatedly as "the son of Jesse." He would not even speak his name. Similarly, Christ was referred

to as "the Nazarene." "Can anything good be out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46).

PSALM 142

Psalm 142 displays David's frame of mind and heart at the cave. This Psalm and comments on it may be found in *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 84, pages 175,186. David's needs caused him to cry out in prayer to Yahweh. God's answer to the prayer may be seen in the assembling of the band of malcontents to David. David's spirit was encouraged, and many of his needs met in his meeting the needs of others. Fellowship has great power to encourage, and hardships shared become a source of strength. "Affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness expectation" (Rom.5:3,4).

David was alone, but at the cave he became the nucleus of a traveling city. Gad the prophet came to be with David (1 Sam.22:5), and he instructed David to return and remain in Judah. Soon Abiathar, the priest, would be with David also. God's anointed king, God's prophet and God's priest are soon joined in a band with those people of conviction, who believed God's people must have new leadership. The early verses of Psalm 142 show the depths of loneliness, but verse 7 closes, "The righteous shall compass about me, for You shall deal bountifully with me."

Saul's course is a downward spiral. His persecution of David soon betrays the obvious—that he has refused to submit himself to God. Saul rejects God and God's anointed. He slays God's priests, destroying the channel of approach to God. He adamantly believes that he can rule God's people and serve God without submission, guidance or worship. Such is the mind of the flesh.

DOEG AND AHIMELECH

9 +**Then Doeg the Edomite** l**responded;** + **he** was **sta-**

tioned[l] over the **courtiers of Saul, and he [l]said, I saw** `the **son of Jesse coming** to**ward Nob to Ahimelech son of Ahitub, [7]the priest[0]. 10 + He [lask]inquired [i]of Yahweh for him and gave provision**s **to him; he [+]also gave › him** `the **sword of Goliath the Philistine.**

11 **[+]Then the king [l]sent to call `Ahimelech son of Ahitub, the priest, and `all the priests** of **his father's house [w] [i]at Nob. [+]So all of them [l]came to the king. 12 + Saul [l]said, Hear [pr]now, son of Ahitub! + He [lsa]replied, [bd]Here I** am**; [7]speak[0], my lord. 13 [+]Now Saul [lsa]asked › him, Why have you conspired [on]against me, you and** the **son of Jesse, in** that **you** have **given[–] › him bread and** a **sword and** have **[ask]inquired[–] [i]of Elohim for him, ›that** he should **rise[–] ›against me** and › wait in **ambush[l] as** he does **`this day? 14 + Ahimelech [l]answered `the king, + [l]saying, [+]But [a]who [i]among all your servants** is as **faithful[l] as David, + the king's** son**-in-law, + [7]chief~ ›over your household-guard, and illustrious[l] in your house? 15** Did **I start** `that **day to [ask]inquire [i]of Elohim for him? Far be it ›from me! Let not the king [l]place** any**thing [i]against his servant [7+]or[0] [i]against any of my father's house; for your servant knew not**hing **[i]at all** about **this matter, small or great.**

Doeg had been present at the tabernacle when David received bread from Ahimelech (1 Sam.21:7). His reason for being retained there was not given. Perhaps he was fulfilling a purification, or becoming a proselyte, or simply stopping on a Sabbath because his journey was too long. But he kept an opportunistic eye on all around him.

Doeg, like Saul, referred to David as "the son of Jesse" (1 Sam.22:9). He said that Ahimelech had done three things for David: inquired of God, given him provisions, and given him Goliath's sword. The previous chapter bears out the record of the provisions and the sword, but is silent regarding whether Ahimelech inquired of God for

David. The fact that David went to Achish upon leaving the priest may indicate that he was acting without specific guidance from God.

Saul sent for Ahimelech to interrogate him regarding David. His threatening interrogation was suggestive that Ahimelech had inquired of God to aid David in revolting against him. Ahimelech protested such an insinuation on the basis of David's history of service and faithfulness to Saul. Ahimelech asked the question, "Did I start that day to inquire of Elohim for him?" (1 Sam.22:15).

This statement may be understood in a couple of ways. It may be true that Ahimelech inquired of God for David that day. If so, Ahimelech's response to Saul should probably be understood in this sense: "Would that have been the first time I inquired of God for David? No! Many times when he went forth to fight the king's battles against the Philistines, I inquired for him. And that was to the king's delight and service! Why would I hesitate to inquire of God for him?"

On the other hand, Ahimelech may not have inquired for David. The sword which Ahimelech gave to David was said to be "wrapped in raiment, *behind the ephod* (verse 9). This seems to suggest that Ahimelech was not wearing the ephod at that time. Usually the priest would wear the ephod when inquiring of God (*cf* 1 Sam.23:9-12; 30:7,8). Perhaps then Ahimelech's statement should be understood in the sense: "I did not even don the ephod that day to inquire of God!" Whichever sense is intended, his next statement, "Far be it from me!," certainly makes it clear that Ahimelech did nothing with the intent of disloyalty to the king.

16 **[+]But the king [lsa]replied,** To **die[–] shall you die, Ahimelech, you and all of your father's house. 17 [+]Then the king [lsa]commanded ›** the **runners[l] `stationed[l] [on]by him,** Turn **around and [c]put** the **priests of Yahweh** to **death, for their**

hand *mr*also is **with David** + *t*since they knew that he was runn**ing away and** did **not reveal** it `to **my ear.** +**But the king's servants would not** › **stretch**– forth `**their hand to come** up**on** *i* the **priests of Yahweh.** 18 +**So the king** |**said to Doeg, You,** turn **around!** + **Come** up**on** *i* the **priests!** +**Then Doeg, the Edomite** turned |**around and** |**came** up**on** *i* the **priests him**self; + *i*on ·**that day, he** *c*put to |**death 85 men wearing** the **linen ephod.** 19 +**Also** `**Nob,** the **city of the priests, he smote** ›**with** the **edge of** the **sword** *f* **both man and** *fr* **women,** *f* **both infant and** *fr* **suckling**|, +**also bull,** + **donkey, and flockling,** all ›**with** the **edge of** the **sword.**

20 +**Yet one son** ›**of Ahimelech son of Ahitub** |**escaped;** + **his name** was **Abiathar, and he** ran |**away** following **after David.** 21 +**Then Abiathar,** |**told** › **David that Saul had killed** `the **priests of Yahweh.** 22 + **David** |*sa*replied to Abiathar, I **knew** *i*on ·**that day,** *t*when **Doeg the Edomite** was **there, that he** would |**tell,** yea **tell**– › **Saul.** As for **me, ~I am debtor~** *i*to **every soul of your father's house.** 23 Do *sit*stay `with **me; do not** |**fear, for he who** |**seeks** `**my soul is seeking** `**your soul** too; *t*but **you** are under **guard with me.**

Saul was furious with Ahimelech. He ordered the slaughter of Ahimelech and all his household. The same Saul who rejected God's command to obliterate the Amalekites, Israel's enemies (chapter 15), now commands the obliteration of God's priests. The Benjamites balked at such an outlandish command, but the Edomite saw this as his chance to curry favor with the king. There was not enough reverence for God in his heart to keep him from slaying God's priests when there could be personal gain. He slaughtered the men, women, children, and even the beasts of Nob, a city of priests.

YAHWEH PURGES THE PRIESTHOOD

"Soon I shall do something in Israel about which both ears of anyone hearing it will tingle" (1 Sam.3:11).

"Behold the days are coming (this is the averring of Yahweh), when I will hack down your seed and the seed of your father's house, to keep them from becoming old in your house. Then you will look on a rival in My habitation, in all that he does good with Israel. And there shall not be an old man in your house all the days . . . . And this is the sign for you that shall befall your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: On the same day shall both of them die" (1 Sam.2:31-34).

Yahweh pronounced a curse on the house of Eli (2:27-36), and confirmed this curse through the mouth of the child Samuel (3:11-14). The death of Hophni and Phinehas on the same day was not the fulfillment of the curse but only the verification of it. This was a terrible evil performed by Saul and Doeg, yet it was the hand of God.

The books of Samuel show us failings in worship and rule. These are personified in the characters of the books, and that is why Christ is typified in these events. In Him we find the perfection of priesthood and rule. To us is given the challenge of applying to ourselves the principles illustrated regarding our worship and the rule and submission of our life before God. Our worship and approach to God should not be beset with the failings of Eli, who honored his own sons above God. Nor should the rule of our heart and actions reflect the failings of Saul, who continually rejected God's instruction in favor of what seemed expedient to himself. In events so horrendous as the massacre of a city of the priests and so despairing as the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, we may find a deeper insight into Paul's exhortation to us to "crucify the flesh" (Gal.5:24; 6:14; Rom.6; Col.2:10-12).

PSALM 52

The superscription of Psalm 52 relates it to Doeg's recounting to Saul of David's visit to Ahimelech. This Psalm

and a meditation are found in Volume 68 of *Unsearchable Riches* on pages 87-91.

When Doeg related the events at Nob to Saul, he said nothing of the facts that Ahimelech was anxious about David's presence there or that David asked Ahimelech to supply these things for him. Apparently Doeg knew what would incite Saul's anger, and he emphasized his statement that Ahimelech inquired of God for David by mentioning it first. The Psalm shows that David had insight into Doeg's character, "Your tongue devises woes, like a honed razor, you who practice deceit" (Psalm 52:2).

There are some interesting figures in the Psalm. The evil one who worked woe with his mouth is like a plant that would be *broken down*, its branches *raked up,* and its *roots* pulled out of the ground (verse 5). Its leaves would wilt and its roots and branches would dry in the sun. This would be done, not by David in retaliation, but by God in righteous judgment. On the other hand, David is likened to a *flourishing olive tree* (verse 8). Olive trees are known to live for hundreds of years, and have been said to reach 1000 years of age. Throughout the Psalm, David makes a contrast between the short-lived existence of evil and the endurance of the chosen for "the eon and further" (verse 8). The wicked weed would be torn from his tent, while the flourishing olive is planted in the impregnable "House of Elohim" (Psa.52:5-8).

These are tremendous words from David. In the previous chapter he was fleeing in fear. But when David was finally and fully cut off from Saul, God strengthened David's heart. In spite of the massacre of the priests, and in spite of still being a fugitive, the strength and conviction of David's faith returned. David had passed through the darkness of night, but now the light of morning was bright and full and warm upon him. Evil would not endure, and God's power and goodness will not fade. J. Philip Scranton

LIGHT AMID THE SHADOWS

7 + **The light** is **sweet,**
And it is **good for** the **eyes to see `the sun.**
8 **For if** ·a **man** ˡ**lives many⁻ years**
he should rejoice in them all,
⁺**Yet he should remember `the days of darkness,**
For they shall *b*__be many⁻__**;**
All *w*__**that will come**__ is **vanity.**
9 **Rejoice, choice** youth**, in your childhood,**
And let your heart *c*__**make you cheerful**__
in the **days of your prime;**
+ **Walk in** the **ways of your heart**
and *i*__**by**__ the **sight of your eyes,**
⁺**Yet know that** *on*__**for all these the**__ One**,**
Elohim, shall bring you into **judgment.**
10 + **Take away vexation from your heart,**
And *p*__**expel evil**__ sufferings **from your flesh,**
For ·**childhood and** ·**early** days are **vanity;**
12 ⁺**Yet remember `your Creator**ˡ
in the **days of your prime,**
*fr*__**While**__ *w* **the evil days** have **not** yet ˡ**come,**
⁺**Or** the **years encroach** *w*__**when you shall say:**__
There **is no delight for me in them,**
2 *fr*__**While**__ *w* **the sun and the light is not** yet ˡ**darkened**
⁺**Or the moon and the stars,**
And before **the thick** clouds **return after the downpour:**
3 **In** the **day** *w*__**when**__ the **keepers**ˡ **of the house**
ˡ**stir** in a **sweat,**
And the men of valor bend down,

+When the grinding maids **halt t because**
they are few,
And those **seeing** out **i through** the **crevices**
are darkened,
4 **+When** the double **doors i to** the **roadway are closed,**
i When the **sound of the grinding** becomes **low,**
And one **l rises › at** the **sound of the bird,**
+Yet all the daughters of song are l prostrate;
5 **Moreover,** one **l fears f lofty** heights,
And catastrophes are **i on** the **road,**
+When the almond tree **l flowers,**
And the grasshopper is l burdensome,
And the caperberry's effects are **l annulled,**
t When h man goes l to his eonian home,
And those **wailing** turn **about in** the **roadway;**
6 Remember Him, **fr while the silver cable**
is not yet **7 pulled away~,**
And the golden bowl is l splintered,
And the **jar is broken on at the fount,**
And the rolling wheel **is splintered › at the cistern,**
7 **And the soil l returns on to the earth just as it b was,**
And the spirit, it l returns to the One,
Elohim, Who gave it.

BOOK FIVE

The fifth book of Ecclesiastes (11:7-12:7) gathers up the threads. Its opening phrase breathes the serenity springing from a faith grounded on the hope that creation's goal is the perfection of the Creator.

The light is sweet,
And it is good for the eyes to see the sun.

In this sweet, winsome spirit the Assembler brings home to the heart the moral in his own inimitable way.

Remove vexation from your heart, and expel evil sufferings from your flesh, for childhood and early days are

vanity (11:10). The brevity of life is a reason to make the most of it. Old age with its infirmities will soon overtake you; do not indulge in follies lest your declining years be saddened by regret (12:1).

Then follows a most exquisite *tour-de-force* of symbolism under which are veiled the symptoms of senile decay followed by death. Probably some of the symbols are lost; but on the whole it is possible, without straining, to see a possible interpretation for each. The poetic beauty of the passage is marvelous.

In interpreting symbolism as with all the higher forms of allegory, the first critical requirement is restraint. To press details to too literal significance is gratuitous and risky exegesis. I attempt no more than a simple suggestion for each detail.

While the sun and the light is not yet darkened or the moon and the stars (12:2, lines a and b). Since the opening words of Book Five take the *light* and *sun* as symbols of the happiness of conscious existence, it seems evident that the *darkening* of this light is the gradual fading of the joy of living.

And before the thick clouds return after the downpour (12:2c). This symbol carries the idea of the preceding a step farther. In our prime we quickly rally from the overstraining of health; this is a storm that quickly clears up. In old age the rallying power is gone: "the clouds return after the downpour."

–*The keepers of the house stir in a sweat* (12:3a), probably the trembling of hands and arms.

–*The men of valor bend down* (12:3b), the stooping frame.

–*The grinding maids halt because they are few* (12:3c), the teeth.

–*Those seeing out through the crevices are darkened* (12:3d), sight becoming dim.

–The double doors to the roadway are closed (12:4a), probably refers to the clenched jaws.

–When the sound of the grinding becomes low, and one rises at the sound of the bird, yet all the daughters of song are prostrate (12:4), failing appetite, early waking or short sleeping, low tone of the voice.

–Moreover, one fears lofty heights, and catastrophes are on the road (12:5, lines a and b), the unsteady gait of old age compared to the gait of a frightened person.

–When the almond tree flowers, and the grasshopper is burdensome, and the caperberry's effects are annulled (12:5, lines c through e), the last stage of the decay.

The failing powers at last give way, and then the symbolism is dropped: *When man goes to his eonian home, and those wailing turn about in the roadway* (12:5, lines f and g).

So far we have had symbols for failure of powers; now the Assembler speaks figuratively of actual death and dissolution. *Remember Him, while the silver cable is not yet pulled away, and the golden bowl is splintered, and the jar is broken at the fount, and the rolling wheel is splintered at the cistern* (12:6). The picture refers to life becoming extinguished with the sudden cessation of everyday functions. Then follows the dropping of the symbolism: *And the soil returns to the earth just as it was, and the spirit, it returns to the One, Elohim, Who gave it* (12:7). The latter part of this sentence by analogy with the preceding line must be interpreted to mean no more than that the man becomes just what he was before he was born.

THE EPILOGUE

8 **Vanity of vanities, says the Assembler,**
The whole is **vanity.**

9 +**Yet furthermore,** [w]**because** the **Assembler** [b]**was wise,**
He [fy]**still taught `the people knowledge,**

And he listened and investigated
And **set in order many⁻ proverbs.**

10 The **Assembler sought to find words of delight,**
And what was **written**[l] is **uprightness**
and **words of truth.**

11 The **words of** the **wise** are **like goad points,**
And like imbedded[l] **bolts** is the **possessing**
of gathered saying**s;**
They are given [f] **by one shepherd**[l]**.**

12 +**Yet furthermore, my son,** [f] **beyond these, be warned;**
Of the [d]**making⁻** of **many⁻ scrolls** there **is no end,**
And much⁻ study is **weariness** to the **flesh.**

13 The **terminus of the whole matter has been heard:**
Fear `the** One**, Elohim, and keep `His instructions,
For this is **the whole** duty **of humanity.**

14 **For the** One**, Elohim, shall bring `every** [d]**deed**
into **judgment** [on]**concerning all** that is **obscured**[l]**,**
[if] **Whether good** +**or** [if]**whether evil.**

The salient points of the Epilogue (12:8-12) have been dealt with in connection with the Prologue.[1] There remains a word to be said regarding the conclusion of the book expressed by the writer in 12:13,14.

THE TERMINUS

The terminus of the whole matter has been heard: Fear the One, Elohim, and keep His instructions, for this is the whole duty of humanity. For the One, Elohim, shall bring every deed into judgment concerning all that is obscured, whether good or whether evil.

In Hebrew the word rendered "matter" is the same as that rendered "word." "The whole *matter*" points to the precise discourse of this book, and therefore to the entirety of the "*words* of the Assembler" (1:1). This Hebrew term

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.90, p.90.

is frequently used in such a collective sense (e.g., 1 Sam. 3:17; Josh.21:43).

By "instructions" neither the decalogue nor the observances of the law are meant. This is evident from the fact that neither are mentioned. The reference is rather to the "times," or God's seasons of approving things. Ecclesiastes has already spoken (in Book Four) of God's "design" in contrast to man's many plans, and now the ground thought is advanced that man's whole task is to attune his whole life with God's plan.

The necessity for this is reinforced in the final verse by the thought of a coming season of rectification. "For the One, Elohim, shall bring every deed into judgment concerning all that is obscured, whether good or whether evil" (Ecc.12:14). Many have been misled as to the real import of the concluding statement by the wrong idea which confounds judgment with punishment. Judgment implies the thoughts of doing right and setting right. Thus the terminus to the book lays stress on the idea expressed in the course of investigation, that rectifying judgment is one of the appointed "seasons" (8:6) in the working out of God's plan.

V. Gelesnoff

FREE WILL AND HELL

In a recent publication discussing his "eschatology" (study of "last things"), the European theologian, Jürgen Moltmann, identifies "the logic of hell" with "the logic of free will," and argues against both concepts. He writes: "The logic of hell seems to me not merely inhumane but also extremely atheistic: here the human being in his freedom of choice is his own lord and god. His own will is his heaven—or his hell. God is merely the accessory who puts that will into effect" (Richard Bauckham, editor: GOD WILL BE ALL IN ALL, p.45 [Edinburh: T&T Clark, 1999]). It is heartening to see such a bold criticism of entrenched errors, pointing to reliance on the living God of the Scriptures (1 Tim. 4:10). We hope that this testimony may give a push to some for re-examining what God's Word says about the future on the basis of what was done on Golgotha's hill.

REMEMBER YOUR CREATOR

THE RICH WISDOM of the Assembler was his conviction that his experiences were all from the hand of Elohim (*cf* Ecc.1:13; 2:24-26; 3:10-17; 5:18-20; 6:1,2; 7:13,14; 8:15; 9:1; 11:5). It was given to him to avoid the evil of not recognizing God as God (*cf* Rom.1:21). As a consequence his words have timely force for us for guidance in our lives in the face of transitoriness and the inevitability of death. But of necessity, Ecclesiastes could not view the operations of God as they are channeled through the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ.

It is wisdom for us in our days also to recognize, glorify and thank God as God. But in His Word especially as centered in the evangel concerning God's Son, God has revealed Himself in a way that transcends beyond the wisdom of Ecclesiastes. We see that God Who gives us our experiences of evil is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who commends His love to us in Christ's death for sinners. We see that whatever happens to us and around us, it is from the hand of God, but we also see the depths of God's glory as revealed in Christ. We perceive there is a purpose for good in all the events of life, and this purpose is centered in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Nevertheless, the wisdom given to the Assembler is truly instructive and beneficial for us as God's creatures in this present world. We do well to recognize God as our Creator, Who places us and sets the events of our lives, and Who has prepared the future. Whatever is our "portion" in life it is given to us by God (*cf* Ecc.5:18).

IN THE DAYS OF OUR PRIME

When the Assembler says, "Remember your Creator in the days of your prime" (Ecc.12:1), he is not thinking so much of our youth as the time when we are most tempted to feel we can make our way by ourselves. This most often comes after our childhood when we are at the height of our strength. The recognition of our place as creatures created by the Creator is needed at all times, but in those times when we feel most self-sufficient we require special reminders of this need.

There is probably no more elementary truth in the Scriptures than the revelation of God as Creator. This is the message of Genesis 1:1, and it remains a fundamental revelation throughout the Scriptures. When Yahweh finally speaks directly to Job He speaks first of all of His works of creation. He "founded the earth" and "determined its measurements" (Job 38:4,5). No word could have been more welcome and more beneficial to this suffering mortal whose personal resources, both mental and physical, had been obliterated.

But it is so easy to forget that we are creatures, especially when things are going well. We are creatures who have been created. And God is the Creator Who created us. To imagine otherwise is to get above ourselves and put ourselves in God's place.

IDOLATRY

The irreverence of humanity reaches its height in idolatry. This is a sure sign of forgetting that God is our Creator. In His indignation upon this irreverence God has given idolaters over "to the uncleanness of dishonoring their bodies among themselves" (Rom.1:18,24,25). This can certainly be traced through many incidents recorded in the Scriptures concerning Israel and the nations.

In modern times this sin of idolatry has taken on more subtle forms than the veneration of wood, stone and metallic images in animal and human shape. Yet the results are very much the same. Glory is given to the creature rather than the Creator.

A most mischievous example of our tendency to honor ourselves for attributes that are God's alone is the dogma of human "free" will. We certainly have a will, but God alone is its Creator. God is not limited in the exercise of His will by human choices, sovereignly exercised by us. It is idolatry to say that God cannot do something that He wills to do because stubborn, willful sinners refuse to let Him.

We hear such things as: "God is willing to take the risk of losing His creation." "God knows that it is best in the long run that His creatures be free moral agents."

Free from what? Not free from the influences of evil forces! Not free from the selfishness and lusts and greed of the flesh! The idea boils down to the creature being free only from the Creator's molding and shaping and directing of His creation.

If God has the ability to create us He has the ability to bring us to the end He has in view for us. If He has accepted the responsibility of creating us, why should we suppose He relinquishes the responsibility of completing what He has begun? To remember God as our Creator is to recognize with thanksgiving and praise that He is powerful, wise and reliable.

The fact that God is our Creator is relevant to all that happens to us and all that we are and have. This is true even with respect to the highest blessings God grants the believer. We never reach a level where it is no longer essential for us to recognize God as our Creator. When Paul speaks about "the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God," he adds the reminder that God is the One *"Who creates all"* (Eph.3:9).

God's vast love and the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us are not matters to be traced to our wisdom or faithfulness but to God Who is the Creator of all, Who makes the eons and establishes their purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph.3:11).

THE CREATION FREED

As part of God's creation in its present state, human beings are subjected to vanity under the slavery of corruption. Yet as Creator, God can free, and expects to free, and will free creation from this slavery into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom.8:20,21). We do not have a free will, for we are enslaved to corruption. But the Creator will perfect His creation, and He will bring us all into a glorious freedom where there is no stubbornness or willfulness contrary to that which is good and well-pleasing to God.

Romans 11:32 settles the question: "For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all." God's creation never becomes independent of the One Who creates it. Its destiny is in His hands, and He will not fail to achieve that which He has purposed.

"O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:33-36).

This is not only a fitting conclusion to Romans 9-11, but also to the words of the Assembler. He recognized that all is out of God, and learned that all that occurs comes through His operations. Paul completes the revelation by the message that all is directed to God and to His glory.

D.H.H.

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 The Object of Divine Judgment
107 Through Our Lord, Jesus Christ
117 Understanding and Assurance
129 Elohim is Blessing
135 David in the Wilderness

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2000
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-ONE

EDITORIAL

BROTHER A. E. Knoch's 20-page article, "What is Judgment?" originally appearing in *Unsearchable Riches*, volume 34, pages 315-334, is excerpted in the present issue under the title "The Object of Divine Judgment." I hope that the abridgment will invite a wider consideration of this important study in our own times. But I recognize that, in the process of editing, some helpful insights have been omitted. I have been mulling over one paragraph in particular among those deleted, and would like to share it here in this editorial. Brother Knoch was commenting, in a personal way, on his translation work:

"I have been the center of much friction in connection with the translation and interpretation of God's Word. My experience has taught me some valuable lessons. Each critic, of course, considers himself right. I have noticed that those who are gracious, diffident, and reluctant, usually are right. Those who are confident, or insistent, or impatient, often are not. And those who are self-assertive, absolutely sure, and abusive, even when they are capable, are almost always wrong. It is just the reverse of what should be expected. A humble spirit seems a better safeguard than great gifts. One thing is sure, it leads to harmony and truth, while pride precipitates strife, and promotes error" (p.326).

This, of course, is a conclusion based on human observation, but it does accord with Paul's instruction concerning the believers' disposition toward others: We should be "mutually disposed, having mutual love . . . with humility, deeming one another superior to one's self" (Phil. 2:2,3; *cp* Eph.4:1-3; Col.3:12,13). In our association with

others, especially with fellow believers, the humble recognition that we are sinners saved in grace, gratuitously justified through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (see p.107) is vitally appropriate. But this is important also in such service in the Lord as Scripture translation, evangelizing and teaching. Yet in this context Paul does not stress a spirit of humility but one of boldness. Hence he reminded Timothy: "God gives us not a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and of sanity" (2 Tim.1:7).

A spirit of power, love and sanity is not opposed to a spirit of humility. No matter what we are doing we must never forget that, like Paul, we are what we are by the grace of God (1 Cor.15:10). Indeed God has His ways of bringing us into "wilderness experiences" as He did David (see p.135) where our ministries may seem drastically curtailed (as Paul's was in prison), and these certainly teach humility.

But the point is that a spirit of humility is not identical with a spirit of timidity. Brother Knoch speaks boldly against the "orthodox" doctrine of hell (p.101). I call the same teaching "unfaithfulness" (p.115). Similarly, starting on page 117, Brother Coram exposes errors in thinking and in interpreting God's Word. This is not being "self-assertive" but assertive for the word of truth. It is not being "abusive" but being filled with a desire to help others in pulling down bulwarks against the evangel of Christ (*cf* 2 Cor.10:4).

Whether or not we always succeed in following these ideals we are thankful for what God's grace has done for us, and we do not forget in dealing with human opposition that only God can open eyes to the truth. We are blessed with astounding blessings (*cf* p.129) which we long for our fellow believers to recognize. There are definite dangers, to be sure, in heralding revelations which are widely rejected and opposed. But God is working all together for our good, and ultimately for the good of all.

D.H.H.

THE OBJECT OF DIVINE JUDGMENT

IT IS A SAD COMMENTARY on the human race to find that the word "judgment" is so unstable and liable to deterioration. This must be because men are so unjust and vindictive themselves. The word has come to mean condemnation and punishment almost exclusively, when it ought to be neutral. How seldom is it used in a good sense among us! It will be worth a good deal of effort to restore its true meaning, if only to keep us from distorting it in connection with the great white throne. Let us note first what company it keeps in the Greek Scriptures.

The Pharisees were not slow to *condemn* others. Yet our Lord rebuked them for passing over *judgment* and the *love of God.* They neglected the reparatory side of judgment. The *poor* (Prov.29:14; Psa.72:4) they failed to judge, and the *fatherless* (Isa.1:23; Psa.10:18); that is, they did not protect them in their rights. Our Lord combined *judgment* with *mercy* and *faith.* These, the weightier matters of the law, they neglected. Such a "judgment" certainly did not mean punishment. Instead of so judging, the scribes devoured widows' houses, though they were swift to condemn those who did not keep the traditions (Mark 12:40).

Perhaps the best place to show that judgment is always *right,* is found in Abraham's appeal to the Lord, when He spoke of the state of Sodom. The AV reads, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do *right?*" (Gen.18:25). I agree that they expressed the sense correctly, yet I deplore the fact that, in doing so, they passed up a notable opportunity of anchoring the true meaning of the word *judgment* in

our language. The Hebrew reads, "the Judge of the whole earth, is He not doing *judgment?*" It is clear that anything wrong would not be judgment in Abraham's eyes. If anyone in Sodom should suffer unjustly that would not be *judgment,* and would be wrong. *There is absolutely no injustice in divine judgment.* It is rather, *the righting of what is already wrong.*

THE CONDEMNATION OF ALL

About a dozen times the AV renders the word *judgment condemnation* or *damnation.* This itself is to be drastically *condemned,* for when the translators damned others, they themselves were far more guilty, because they sinned against light and mutilated the most precious possession of mankind. With this before him, the editor of the Concordant Version text was inclined to choose the word *judge* rather than *condemn,* when the reading of the original was not absolutely certain. In the final occurrence of *judge,* dealing with the fate of those before the great white throne (Rev.20:13); however, he was compelled against his inclination to read *condemn,* where the AV has simply *judge.* The Greek texts differ at this place, but the best of them, Sinaiticus, reads *condemn.* In this text there are many omissions and, as the three letters (*kat*) which make the difference, could easily be omitted, but hardly be added, they deserve a place, as they probably were found in the original. Even if rendered *judge,* the fact that all were condemned is clearly established from other passages.

The apostle Paul makes it clear that Adam's one offense brings condemnation to all mankind (Rom.5:18). Not only shall God *judge* the world (Rom.3:6), but not one will be found just—not even one (Rom.3:10). One sin brought condemnation (Rom.5:16). These things are racial, and go back to Adam for their origin and scope. It is not an individual matter. The great white throne judging does

not determine this. It was known long before. It simply confirms the previous verdict, after considering the acts of those who inherited mortality from Adam. The same is true of justification. It will not depend on the acts of those who enjoy it, but upon Christ, and *His* obedience. When Paul, upon a later occasion, speaks of condemnation, he makes it worldwide (1 Cor.11:32). Moreover, everyone who accepts Christ thereby acknowledges condemnation apart from Him. Only in Christ Jesus is any mortal of Adam's race free from condemnation (Rom.8:1).

"Punishment" is a word that I have come to hate, for men have so fearfully misused it of God's operations. Once we see that all of God's dealings are with a view to the eventual reconciliation of all, the idea of punitive retribution, introduced by corrupt theology, will become abhorrent. If the great white throne sentenced all those who stand before it to eternal torment or annihilation, such a thought might be entertained. But we must remember that the object of all God's operations are rooted in love and fruited in reconciliation. If God is love, He cannot be "orthodox." The experience before the great white throne must prepare each one for the consummation, for that is what lies before him. Before there can be a universal reconciliation, each one must be set right with God, and this is accomplished at the judging. Such, indeed, is the true meaning of judgment, which is almost lost, because of the penal character of human adjudication.

The orthodox "hell" completely nullifies all judging and justice. What is the sense of bringing anyone before a judge if he has already been suffering torment for a thousand years and is due to undergo the same eternally, no matter what his sentence is? Such a system would not be tolerated even among the most unjust and cruel of mankind. Justice demands that the sentence suit the crime. It must be adaptable to the most innocent infant as well as the

most ungodly adult. This is impossible if the term is infinite, for infinity does not admit of gradations. Moreover it is highly immoral to torment anyone without some useful end. A man who would be guilty of such a thing would be adjudged mad, and confined to an asylum.

RIGHT AND WRONG

What is right and what is wrong? There are multitudinous questions which crowd into our daily life, and which must be set right before the great white throne. The debts of the unbeliever, his unfulfilled obligations, his trespasses, his crimes, as they affect his fellow men may be very great as viewed from the usual standpoint, but the enormity of his obligations to God throw these debts into the background, and they are judged automatically, as a rule, when God's claims are settled. The few actual previews we have been given of the judging are not so much concerned with questions between man and man, but between man and God. Those very wicked cities, Sodom and Gomorrah, on which men would pass the severest sentence, will be treated with more toleration than those cities in our Lord's day which rejected one of the twelve disciples of Christ. The implication is that they were on a much higher plane of morality than the cities of the plain, which were destroyed by fire for their iniquity (Matt.10:15). But this may refer to kingdom judgments, commencing the thousand years. So it was with cities in which our Lord did most of His mighty deeds. They would not receive the consideration shown to Tyre and Sidon, because they did not give Christ His rightful place when He appeared among them.

Ninevites and the queen of the south did not live at the same time as the men of our Lord's generation, and they will not have a place in the kingdom, so that, in this case (*cf* Matt.12:41,42), we seem certain that we have an actual preview of the great white throne judgment. Our Lord did

not bring up the personal sins of anyone, though the Ninevites probably had plenty of them. The crucial point is, How did they treat the representative of God? The contrast is a double one. Jonah and Solomon cannot compare with the far greater Prophet and King Who was rejected by Israel. The Ninevites *repented* at Jonah's heralding, and the queen of the south *came to hear* Solomon, while the men of that generation *rejected* Christ. Condemnation will come to those of His generation because of their failure to treat God's Anointed rightly. This will overshadow their individual iniquities. But we may be sure that, when they see Him on the judgment throne, they will not only accept the condemnation of the Ninevites, but will condemn themselves, and their whole lives, and thus be set right in their attitude toward God, which is the prime necessity preceding their reconciliation.

The fundamental and underlying sin is the failure to have God in recognition (Rom.1:28). The judgment is not primarily to set right the relations between man and man. That is accomplished indirectly by bringing the sinner into a realization of God. Believers are exempt from judging because they have already acknowledged God. Men who seem to be moral and who appear to lead an exemplary life cannot escape the judging, for they still need to realize their great lack and their failure to give God His place, apart from which He cannot be All in them.

GOD'S RIGHTS ARE PARAMOUNT

The only possible way to determine right from wrong is to acknowledge first of all the place and purpose of God. None of our rights can rest on injustice to Him. We cannot have any clear idea of the nature of the great white throne judgment unless we know what will accrue to God by means of it. Perhaps the most terrible misconception of its function has come from the unscriptural and abomi-

nable teaching that all who are judged will be tormented forever in the lake of fire which follows it. In that case it is utterly futile and harmful, and so it is sheer injustice to God, for He will lose all and gain nothing as a reward for His vast expenditure of creative power and provision. The injustices that men have practiced toward men—and how great is the sum of them!—not all of them together would amount to so unspeakable an injustice as that men's acts should not be righted in their relation toward the *Deity,* so that *He* may reap the harvest of His work.

What is right? Man has no standard by which to determine this except the feeble flicker of conscience and the monitions of nature. We will probably discover, some day, that most of his rights were wrongs, and even that which seemed altogether right contained an admixture of wrong. This is difficult to discuss unless we take a concrete example. The best is property rights. You have a certificate of title to a piece of land. You can trace its ownership back until someone took it "by right of discovery" perhaps. But what right is that? The land was created by God, and belongs to Him until He gives a valid title, which He will never do because you cannot pay for it, and it is not for sale. Property rights! They will never be right until they revert into the hands of the only rightful Owner and Creator. All human rights will be found only in Him. So He will become their all.

The fatal failure in almost all human justice is that the relations between men are adjusted without any regard for the rights of the Creator, the Sustainer, the true Beneficiary. All is *for Him,* first of all. This modifies and may cancel every right that we seek to claim for ourselves. The innumerable and inextricable maze of man's inhumanity to man would present an almost impossible and interminable problem at the judgment if human rights were not adjusted to God's.

The Son of God will be there to affectionately press His Father's claims, which will open the eyes of mankind to see that the "rights" for which they otherwise would contend are selfishness, egotism, unfounded pride, the repudiation of God's rights. The Pharisee will not stand up in the judgment to boast in his tithes. He once imagined that he had settled his score with God, that he had given Him what was right. Then he will see that he had robbed God of nine-tenths of His due, for *all* that he had was a gift from the All-Sufficient. The Pharisee prayed to himself, and was well pleased with his treatment of the Lord, but all his righteousness was iniquity (Luke 18:11,12).

The tribute collector did not talk to himself, or compare himself with others, but anticipated the judgment by renouncing all claims to righteousness. He had no confidence in himself that he was just, so asked only for a propitiatory shelter. Yet *he* was justified, rather than the Pharisee (Luke 18:13,14). I suppose that, from the merely human viewpoint, this was a gross miscarriage of justice. The Pharisee probably was an exemplary character, who tried to keep the law, and was orthodox in his interpretation of the Scriptures. He claimed that, if others were unjust, he was not. Under ordinary circumstances such people would rise in the judging and contend for their own righteousness. The Pharisees would insist that they are right and the tribute collectors are wrong. What an endless debate there would be if all of those before the great white throne should try to settle all disputes among themselves as they do in this life! But if all is made bare and open, the opposite will be the case. All will be condemned by the realization of their utter failure to be just to God.

GOD'S JUST JUDGING

In contrast to human judgments, our Lord emphasized the character of His judging. It is always *just* and

true (John 5:30; 7:24; 8:16). He will not condemn without cause. Indeed, it would almost seem as if, in judging, He will not need to condemn at all, for men themselves will attend to this (compare Rom.2:3). Ninevite men, who heard and heeded the heralding of Jonah, will condemn those who heard and did not heed our Lord. The queen of the south will condemn them also, for she came from far to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and they would not listen to the One Who is the Wisdom of God (Matt.12: 41,42). I am practically certain that the judging will be of such a nature that all will condemn each other, and be themselves condemned when all is exposed and made bare in the presence of the great white throne.

Today all is camouflaged. No act is seen as it is. Sin seeks to work in secret. Motives behind men's acts are hid. Men pay more attention to the outward appearance than to the inward reality. In the judging this will be reversed. Everything that is now covered shall be revealed. What is hidden shall be made known (Matt.10:26; Mark 4:22; Luke 12:2). Then the hidden things of humanity will be judged (Rom.2:16).

This will probably reverse many a human judgment automatically, without any tedious investigations, or any attempts to evade or distort the open evidence. To my mind this, though painful, will be most wholesome for all concerned, and is absolutely essential to their future welfare. There can be no consummation without it. No reconciliation with God can be considered apart from it. How can God be All in anyone who harbors secret sin, and who does not begin to realize how far he falls short of His holiness? Once we see that judging is the necessary preparation for reconciliation, we will not only bear with it, or acquiesce in it, but we will be thankful for it, and praise God for this provision.

A. E. Knoch

THROUGH OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST

As we follow Paul's presentation of the evangel in Romans we are directed more and more to the conviction that God is wise and good, loving and righteous, and powerful beyond the most optimistic of human imaginings and hopes. Regarding the destiny of the human race as a whole we are prepared for the conclusion of Romans 5:18,19 long before it is given.

We have already noted that God's righteousness is revealed and made manifest in the evangel (Rom.1:17; 3:21). All mankind are sinners and can never be justified by human efforts (Rom.1:18-3:20,23), but since Christ died for the irreverent (Rom.5:6) we may anticipate that "life's justifying" will be granted for all mankind as we are told specifically in Romans 5:18, and that the "many" who are constituted sinners through Adam's disobedience will be constituted just through the obedience of Christ (5:19).

Despite more than nineteen centuries of wear and tear, failures in translation, stumblings in heralding and obscurities in understanding, this evangel set forth in Romans still stands sure and uncompromising. God's good news concerning His power, righteousness and love channeled through the death of His Son for sinners is still there in His Word, and is still being heralded even if often mixed with error:

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

It is the evangel of God *concerning His Son Jesus Christ* that Paul is announcing. The good that is in the good news is built upon *the work of Jesus Christ,* upon His faithful-

ness and obedience in His death for sinners, followed by His resurrection out from among the dead.

The evangel tells us: God's righteousness is manifest *through Jesus Christ's faith* (Rom.3:22). In light of the fact that all sin (3:23), justification can be gained and granted in only one way, gratuitously in God's grace, *through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus* (3:24). *Jesus our Lord was given up* because of our offenses, *and was roused* because of our justifying (Rom.4:25). For *Christ,* while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, *died.* (Rom.5:6). God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, *Christ died for our sakes* (5:8). We are justified *in His blood* (5:9). We were conciliated to God *through the death of His Son* (5:10). We are glorying also in God, *through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom* we now obtained the conciliation (5:11). *Through the obedience of the One,* the many who were constituted sinners through Adam's disobedience, shall be constituted just (Rom.5:19).

The fact that Jesus Christ died for sinners is the most sacred tenet of our faith, the most important and most central revelation of the evangel. The Son of God has faithfully and obediently endured the fearful shame of the cross and has died for us all. This is what was required for the salvation of sinners, and this is what He has done.

CHRIST DIED FOR SINNERS

What Christ did was fearful, but what He accomplished is so vast and good that we cannot comprehend its full significance. Yet that does not mean we should not try to grasp its glory and seek prayerfully to appreciate its meaning for us and the entire world, and for God, at least as far as this is made known in the Scriptures.

In these studies I am focusing on the meaning of Christ's death for humanity as a whole. I see that Christ died for

all, and I believe this must finally result in good for all. This is important not because I want to win an argument or exalt myself over someone else, but because of what it means to God and to the believer. It glorifies God, exhibiting His evangel as it truly is, as God's good news. Furthermore, the good this truth does for the believer especially in these times of indifference to God and the revelation of Himself in His Son, Jesus Christ, is incalculable.

All of the passages cited above from Romans tell us of God's way of righteously justifying sinners. He does this *through the death of Jesus Christ,* followed by His *glorious resurrection.* This is the channel and the only channel through which God brings about a righteous elimination of sin and a righteous establishment of a righteous human race.

This is made clear in Romans 5:12-19, but even before that exultant shout of triumph over sin and death, the apostle sets forth the evangel as a work of God that is bound to bring good to all. It is because the evangel centers on God's achievement through the gift of His Son for sinners that we trust this achievement will embrace all.

JUSTIFIED GRATUITOUSLY

Immediately after, and grammatically connected with, the declaration that all sin and are wanting of the glory of God, we are told that God's achievement in justifying sinners through the deliverance which is Jesus Christ is *gratuitous* as far as human works and deservings are concerned (Rom.3:23,24). The death of Christ is the means of deliverance. God purposed Him as the great Antitype of the propitiatory shelter which in the Hebrew Scriptures spoke of access to God opened up by the sprinkling of the blood of animals (Rom.3:25; *cf* Lev.16:1-16). Justification is out of the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26); it is solely based on Christ's faithfulness in dying for sinners; it is not due to our works or even our faith.

The gratuity of justification as far as human actions are concerned is made doubly clear in Romans 3:27 where the apostle concludes, "Where, then, is boasting? It is debarred!" Justification is in the blood of Christ (*cf* Rom.5:9), not in the activities of humanity. It is so gratuitous that there is no room whatsoever for us to do something in which we could boast.

Boasting is debarred because of "faith's law" (Rom. 3:28). It might be supposed at first that Paul is placing us under a law which says, "You must believe in order to be justified." But no, if that were so, then we could boast in carrying out a law that tells us what we must do. "Faith's law" is the authoritative truth that says, "You are justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus." It does not speak of requirements placed upon us, but rather it is a law that operates upon us from outside ourselves (even as, for instance, the law of gravity operates and influences us) as we believe what God tells us. As we believe that we are justified gratuitously, apart from our works, boasting in ourselves is effectively evicted.

DELIVERANCE IN CHRIST JESUS

But the gratuity of justification applies not only to the believer. If our present believing does not earn the justification which comes through Jesus Christ's death, so also anyone's present failure to believe does not lose the justification that comes through Jesus Christ's death.

The deliverance which is in Christ Jesus is deliverance *from* sin and *from* our want of God's glory, and it is deliverance *into* justification. It is not that we made our way from sin to righteousness, but that God delivered us from the one to the other. And He did so in the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. This deliverance is not established by our believing, but by the faithfulness of our Lord and Saviour. It is reckoned to us when we believe (*cf* Romans 4), and so we begin to enjoy its authoritative effects, but it has been gained as the divine response to the fact that all sin and are wanting of the glory of God.

POSSIBLE, PROVISIONAL AND POTENTIAL

If we are believing that Christ died for our sins, that He was entombed and has been roused the third day, we are not now making it true by our believing it. If we are believing that we are justified gratuitously through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus, we are agreeing that it is already so that there is deliverance in Christ Jesus into gratuitous justification.

Some will speak of justification as possible or provisional or potential for all, but never to become actual for all. If such terms are used in order to allow for eternal damnation of some sinners, we must object. The motive is all wrong. Restrictions and doubts are being introduced on the basis of wrong translation and false assumptions. If such terms must be used, the believer will say that what God has made *possible* will become actual, and what God has made *potential* will be realized. If God has *provided* for the salvation of sinners in the death of His Son, sinners will be saved. There is no place in the evangel for doubts as to its goodness. There is no warrant for believers limiting the gratuitous justification which is established in God's grace through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus.

CHRIST DIED FOR THE IRREVERENT

The gratuity of justification makes it difficult to maintain that some people will be condemned forever because of what they themselves did or did not do. Similarly, the fact that Christ died for the irreverent (Rom.5:6) makes it difficult to maintain that Christ died only for the elect.

God does justify us whom He designates beforehand and calls (Rom.8:29,30); but Christ died for us as sinners

(Rom.5:8), not simply as His chosen ones. In proclaiming the evangel Paul identifies us with all mankind. We are not distinguished from the unbeliever in our need for a Saviour, and the fifth chapter of Romans is especially forceful on this point. Christ died for us who are infirm, irreverent, sinners and enemies, and in this respect we are no different from anyone else.

Romans 1:18 speaks of God's indignation against the *irreverence* and *injustice* of humanity. Romans 5:6 speaks of Christ dying for the sake of the *irreverent* in connection with being *justified.* There in a nutshell is the need for the evangel and the provision for that need made in God's gift of His Son. We must not forget that we are part of that race of descendants of Adam who are effecting evil and are unable to stand justified in God's sight by works of law. We have this in common with all mankind, and it is with respect to what we have in common with all that Christ died for us. It is wholly mistaken to suggest, as some seem to suggest, that Christ's death for us distinguishes us from sinners who remain unbelievers during their present lives. God's choice and designation beforehand of us do distinguish us as objects of His grace in the present and in the oncoming eons, but we are not distinguished from the rest of humanity with respect to the evangelical pronouncement that Christ died for the irreverent and infirm, for their justification.

THE FOCAL POINT OF FAITH

The cross of Christ should always be the focal point of our faith. We begin by believing the evangel of our salvation, that Christ died for our sins and was roused on the third day. Then as we mature we see how central that revelation is to our "walking in newness of life" as Paul shows in Romans 6:2-11. The evangel concerning the death and resurrection of Christ is basic to our walk and expectation, but it is also the fundamental issue in the matter of the destiny of all mankind.

So it is puzzling to find believers speaking of the death of Christ in a restricted way. In his book offering "A Case for Unlimited Atonement," where he takes up the question of whether Christ died for all or for only the elect, Robert Lightner assures us that "the cross was not an accident which defeated the purpose of God or which caught Him off guard. It is true that Christ was crucified by wicked hands, but it is also true that He was 'delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God . . .' (Acts 2:23) and 'slain from the foundation of the world' (Rev.13:8). If the crime and gloom of Golgotha are evidenced by the sin committed there, the glory is seen in the divine accomplishments and exaltation of the Savior. For the Father took Christ, the rejected one, and brought triumph to Himself through the very event men view as a tragedy. He took the gloom and sorrow and turned it into glory, grace and salvation."

Yet almost immediately after bringing this evangel to the readers' attention, Dr. Lightner declares that "Evangelicals on both sides [Calvinists and Arminians] agree that not all will be saved."[1]

This is certainly *not* an evangelical way in which to proceed with a discussion of the meaning of the death of Christ. God's triumph spoken of so clearly and evangelically on one page is narrowed and restricted and tragically darkened by the strange and unaccountable stand of "Evangelicals" recorded a page or so later. The evangel is no longer the premise of the discussion. Acts 2:23 and Revelation 13:8 are made submissive to human philosophy. God's determinate counsel in the giving up of

1. Robert P. Lightner, THE DEATH CHRIST DIED, (Regular Baptist Press, Schaumburg IL, 1967, pages 29,30,33).

His Son to death included, in the view of "Evangelicals," the premise that not all will be saved. The One Who was slain, in this "view of the atonement," did not remove the greatest gloom of all and turn it into glory and salvation.

Another writer, R. B. Kuiper, dealing with the same matter in a "Study of the Divine Design of the Atonement" finds that the Scriptures "unmistakably" teach "the eternal punishment of the wicked." Consequently, he agrees that not all will be saved. But in this case there is a recognition that the death of Christ must have some good effects for all, even the unbeliever. "Certain benefits of the atonement accrue to men generally, including the non-elect."[2] The difficulty comes in defining these benefits and then in scripturally relating them to the death of Christ. Expressions such as "common grace" and "universal offer of salvation," are introduced, but the real problem still remains: Since all mankind are sinners and irreverent, and Christ's death for the irreverent is the basis for gratuitous justification, how can the believer believe some sinners will not be saved but will suffer forever in hell?

All these efforts to find scriptural evidence for "common grace" or a kind of "universal reconciliation" that will exclude salvation for those in hell would be much better spent in examining the evidence for possible mistakes in understanding passages dealing with judgment. In that way it could very well be found that God's works of judgment are affected for good by the obedience of Christ. In any case, these works of judgment cannot alter the plain meaning of the evangel. Christ died for sinners.

THE EVANGELICAL PREMISE

As long as we keep to the premise of the evangel we will

2. R. B. Kuiper, FOR WHOM DID CHRIST DIE? Baker Book House, Grand Rapids MI, pp.16,78).

not be led astray concerning God's goal for all mankind. If our premise is that Christ died for irreverent and unrighteous humanity, so that God's righteousness is made manifest in gratuitous justification, we cannot end up supposing that God's Word teaches, or even allows for, the everlasting loss of anyone. If, for instance, Matthew 25:46 or 2 Thessalonians 1:9 suggest such a calamity to us, then there is a problem of translation or of our understanding of these passages, or some other failure in human thinking. Let God be true, and every man a liar!

Believers who believe that Christ died for their sins must never build on the premise that not all will be saved. That is as presumptive as it is pessimistic. Even more so it is unscriptural and contrary to the evangel that we believe. It is unfaithfulness.

But it is not surprising. Like Israel of old our faith wavers, and we become discouraged and disheartened by what we see all around us of sin and corruption and insubjection and disdain toward God and our Lord Jesus Christ. We are all prone to be influenced more by what we see than by what God has said in His evangel which we believe. This is how the Adversary deceives us. We judge by present experiences and situations which are apparent to us and not by the Word of God.

It will be objected that it is the Bible that speaks of divine indignation and judgments, of death and Gehenna and the lake of fire. But it is the gracious privilege and glorious advantage of the believer to see all these consequences of human sin in light of the evangel that Christ died for sinners.

In considering the unbelief and sinfulness of humanity and God's just judgments of unbelievers and sinners, our premise should not be that all will not be saved but that Christ died for all. The sinfulness of the human race is great, and God's judgments of humanity is serious and sure.

There can be no disputing that. But we who are believing that Christ died for our sins must bring this conviction into any consideration of the ultimate destiny of mankind.

EVANGELICAL OPTIMISM

Of all people, believers should be the most optimistic about ultimate human destiny. We see what a great change has come about because of God's grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. If for no other reason than that Christ died for a sinner like me, I must believe His death will bear its blessed fruit for all. It is because of the evangel of God concerning His Son Jesus Christ that I know there is something radically wrong with the common translation and traditional interpretation of Matthew 25:46 and 2 Thessalonians 1:9 and similar passages.

The need of humanity is so great, the cost to our Lord so truly sufficient and the benefits so sure that we can harbor no doubts about the significance of what God has done *through His Son.* There can be no limitations in accomplishment and realization.

D.H.H.

REPOSING IN CHRIST

Our brother, **Willard Breckenridge,** of McAllen, Texas, was put to repose on April 4, 2000, at age 84. He was one who meditated deeply on the Word of God and, like many saints of old, he often expressed his faith in what God has said in poetic terms. In this there is great consolation, not only for his wife, Berniece, who survives him, but for all who knew him.

Our friend Ron Voth of Oxnard California recently reported to us the passing of our brother in the Lord, **Terry O. Thompsen,** of Clinton, Washington, on May 7, 2000: "I had occasion to visit with Terry and his family just before his death. His wife Jan, and sons Per, Hans and Ian were with him when he succumbed. I knew Terry for 33 years. He was a strong believer in God's infinite grace, and an inspiration to all who had contact with him. It was he who introduced me to Dean Hough and the Concern way back in 1974."

UNDERSTANDING AND ASSURANCE

⁂

"CORRESPONDENT RANSOM"
"CORRECTLY CUTTING"

Question:

I long to be "sound in the faith," even as Paul instructs (Titus 2:2). Yet I realize that practically every teaching is disputed by someone, and, that the Concordant teaching is usually a minority view, often even an extreme minority view. Can you help me in my quest for understanding and assurance?

Answer:

In our quest for faithfulness, let us realize and rejoice that, ultimately speaking, maturity in faith is not our own work but is the Lord's work in us. While the usual claim that the believer "must cooperate with the Holy Spirit" is, strictly speaking, true, yet as popularly understood, it is false. The self-control which one must exercise in order not to quench the spirit is itself the fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5:23). Therefore, if it may truly be said of us that we have been "cooperative," let us not boast in ourselves that this is so, but thank and praise God that this is so.

Each believer belongs to the Lord; thus we are His "slaves." Accordingly, we are, so to say, His "household servants" (AV), His "domestics" (CV, Rom.14:4). Since we are but domestics ourselves, it is not our place to be judging *Another's* domestic (Rom.14:4a). We are not in charge. Consequently, not to us, but "to his own Master he is standing or falling" (Rom.14:4b).

Concerning the fellow domestic who has been "infirm in the faith" (Rom.14:1), the good news is this: the time will come when "*he will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make Him stand*" (Rom.14:4c).

Accordingly, then, in our quest for a faithful walk, my best advice is to take Proverbs 4:7 to heart, which is: "The principal thing is *wisdom;* acquire wisdom, and with all your acquisition, acquire *understanding."* Similar wise counsel is found in Proverbs 23:23: "Buy the truth, and do not sell it, [even as] wisdom and *discipline* and understanding" (Prov.23:23).

When we "understand" a certain thing, we truly discern its meaning. "Wisdom" is the faculty by which we make the highest and best application of knowledge. Since all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed in God (Col.2:3), "the assurance of understanding" (Col.2:2) is that which we have when God makes our faith grow up (1 Cor.3:5-7). Until then, "it is the glory of Elohim to conceal a matter" (Prov.25:2).

A man cannot hunger and thirst for that for which he has no taste. Apart from desire—*sufficient* desire—we cannot and therefore will not apply ourselves sufficiently to reach our goal. While progress in the faith is *by* and *in* the grace of God, it is *through* our own efforts, according to our strongest desires. One who is wise, therefore, will realize that "a man cannot get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27).

May the following thoughts be helpful to you in *slaving* for the living and true God, while *waiting* for His Son out of the heavens, Whom He rouses from among the dead, Jesus, our Rescuer out of the coming indignation (*cf* 1 Thess.1:9,10).

REALIZATION IN PRAYER

Just as proficiency in any field requires training and

experience, progress in the faith is impossible apart from *prayer* and education. This is God's *way;* it is His "means of grace." It is unrealistic and foolish to minimize the importance of either of these two entities.

In prayer, as in our walk in general, we are to become imitators of the apostle Paul; as he says, "according as I also am [an imitator] of Christ" (1 Cor.11:1). Thus we have the apostle "for a model" (Phil.3:17). We do well to note that his concerns and petitions to God are not for soulish welfare but for *spiritual enlightenment.* Among Paul's most notable prayers are these; may they be our guide as we seek wisdom from above and spiritual understanding:

"Therefore, I also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you *a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him,* the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for you to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength" (Eph.1:15-19; *cp* 2 Cor.4:13).

"Be rejoicing *in the Lord* always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:4-7).

"We are thanking the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, always praying concerning you, on hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints, because of the expectation reserved for you in the

heavens, which you hear before in *the word of the truth of the evangel,* which, being present with you, according as in the entire world also, *is bearing fruit and growing,* according as it is among you also, *from the day on which you hear and realized the grace of God in truth,* according as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow slave, who is *a faithful dispenser of Christ* for us, who makes evident to us *your love in spirit.*

"Therefore we also, from the day on which we hear, *do not cease praying for you* and requesting that you may be *filled full with the realization of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,* you to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in *the realization of God;* being endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, *for all endurance and patience with joy;* at the same time *giving thanks to the Father,* Who makes you competent for a part of the allotment of the saints, in light" (Col.1:3-12).

FOUR VITAL QUESTIONS

In studying any passage of Scripture, we must always ask ourselves: (1) *What* does it say? (2) *Whom* does it concern? (3) *When* does it apply? and (4), *In what sense* is it true?

Unless we have no opinion at all concerning a certain subject, it will be impossible for us not to make some type of judgment concerning it with respect to these questions, even if we do not consciously rehearse these points or even know they exist. Therefore, it is by far the wiser course to keep these questions ever before us as we seek further light, and, as God grants it to us.

(1) *What* does it say? In order to judge correctly here it is essential that we learn the difference between an actual scriptural declaration and a mere human inference therefrom. We need to be especially clear as to the enormous difference between a *corollary* (that which, though not

expressed, must be true, in light of what *has* been said) and an *inference* (that which not only has not been expressed, but may well not be true at all, and, in any case, cannot be known to be true). We must not self-confidently presume that a writer is making an implication when it may well be that it is only we ourselves who are making an unwarranted inference.

It will not suffice to note that a certain translation may state a certain thing in a certain passage; for, for all their accord, there are many differences in rendering among translations, from one version to another. These differences are often by no means trivial or confined simply to choice of phrasing or even to significantly distinct ideas though only concerning minor points of teaching. To the contrary, in some cases, differences in translation declare completely opposite thoughts, even concerning subjects of the greatest consequence.

It is totally inadequate, not to mention dangerous, to approach the Word of God with no more in hand than the Authorized Version or some other all-too-frequently lawless and discordant translation. Indeed, we need much guidance and wisdom even with a faithful translation before us, and cannot hope to gain a good understanding without an accurate, concordant version.

If we would not blindly follow others, our only recourse, then, is to the authority of the Scriptures themselves, through a careful consideration of their own definitive usages of the words of inspiration. Such a pursuit entails, at minimum, at least some measure of intelligent, personal use of a concordance, one which provides access to all occurrences of those words of the Original concerning which the meaning is disputed.

(2) *Whom* does it concern? and (3) *When* does it apply? It does not follow from the fact that a certain revelation is "in the Bible," is "in the New Testament," or is included

among "the very words of Christ," that such a revelation therefore concerns ourselves. *This may or may not be the case.* Furthermore, some things that have a vital application, whether for Israel or the nations, are nonetheless only applicable within a certain era or under a certain administration. They are not necessarily in effect continually and interminably even for those to whom they do apply, much less with respect to all.

Such important questions as these must be intelligently and patiently considered; we must endeavor not to make rash judgments, decisions that are the fruit of our own imprudence and impatience, according to our ignorance and prejudice.

For example, in the matter of determining the scope of those who come under the purview of any certain passage, the word "all" is frequently misunderstood and misinterpreted. It must be recognized that even where the word "all" or any other "universal" expression is used (e.g., "each," "any," or "every"), the reference is always to *all*—to "each" and "every" one—of *those who are in view* within the scope of the subject matter of the text in question.

In some instances, the reference is to all believers (or, as the case may be, to all saints, humans, or even creatures) without distinction—apart from any limitations—whether of era or administration. In other cases, either the actual *context* of a passage or the nature of the case *limits* the application of such "universal" terms. It limits them solely to all those of a certain group or class, to those living at a certain time or under a certain administration or economy. Similarly, it is essential to recognize that a phrase which possesses mere *close proximity* to a *different context,* is not at all the same thing as a phrase which is inherently a part of the subject being addressed.

(4) *In what sense* is it true? Even if we have succeeded in discerning what has been said, whom it concerns and

when it applies, we are not ready to come to a conclusion until we resolve the vital question which remains, *In what sense* is this declaration true? That is, is it to be understood literally or figuratively; absolutely or relatively; and, peremptorily or provisionally?

All literature is comprised *primarily* of literal expressions, even if many figurative expressions should also be employed. Indeed, without an understanding of the literal it is impossible to discern the message of the figurative, for literal meaning is the basis of figurative application.

Therefore, the adage "whenever possible, literal" is essentially sound advice. We would prefer to refine this slightly, however, and say, "Whenever *viable*—all things considered—literal." Taking this approach will not close the door to the recognition of true figurative passages or otherwise diminish our insight to discern that which is *spiritual* (which is an entirely different matter from that which is *figurative*). To the contrary, it will form a sound basis for our study of literary figures and will tend toward awakening us to their presence. Though there are many figures of speech, by far the most common ones, metaphor and metonymy, are concerned, respectively, with either likeness to or association with the literal. Of course, when considering literal meaning, we must not confound essential *meaning* with derived *usage.* Similarly, we must note the difference between the many lexical *definitions* of a word's usage, and the vital, definitive *essence* of the word itself, which distinguishes it from other expressions.

When judging between the literal and figurative, if, because it would entail absurdity or contradiction to take a phrase literally we are constrained to deem it figurative, we must still ask ourselves, Of what does the figure consist and what is the literal *idea* behind the figure, which it merely serves to convey?

Yet wherever there is no compelling reason to take a

statement figuratively and we therefore judge it to be literal, we must still decide whether this literal statement is *absolute* or *relative.* If we should judge it to be truly absolute, we must regard it as universally so, without limitation of any kind. If we should regard it as relative, we must decide the *scope* of the subject matter to which this literal statement may be *applied.* Few scriptural passages are fully absolute, without limitation of any kind, even if they should be practically absolute. And many statements are by no means absolute, but are true only as they relate to a certain subject. It is strictly a matter of wisdom and discernment, based upon our total knowledge of all facts that have a bearing on a matter, as to whether we should judge a statement in one way or another.

It will not suffice merely to make bold claims as to the significance of a passage, especially when, if the truth be known, we may never have realized that such a thing as varied senses in which a passage may be taken even exists.

All these matters are concerned with wise and astute judgment. They are matters of "interpretation," which is merely to say they are matters concerning which we must make correct decisions. Though it is not *literally* true that "the Scriptures interpret themselves," nonetheless, the spirit of this aphorism is certainly true, as expressed through this metonymical figure!

The literal idea intended is that if we would truly *understand* (i.e., make out the meaning of) a certain text, we must make many correct decisions concerning it as we are guided by the many related scriptural matters with which it is associated or otherwise connected or dependent.

❊

Question:

Why, in 1 Timothy 2:6, did Mr. Knoch translate using the two words, "correspondent Ransom"? My wife asked me, "What does that mean?" I told her that I did not know why Mr. Knoch chose to use two words; and since the single word here in the Greek, *antilutron,* is only found once, there is nothing else to compare it with. I figured that what was meant by "correspondent [Ransom]," is "equal to the whole," or something similar. But it does not seem that the word "correspondent" was necessary in order to convey that thought, since it is followed immediately by "on behalf of all."

Answer:

I am pleased that your wife asked about this, that I might share a few words with you both concerning it.

Please see the *Unsearchable Riches* article, "For or Instead?" concerning this question (vol.81, pp.145-151; this article also considers the Greek word *huper* [OVER, or "for the sake of"], and is quite helpful in responding to the common claim that Christ is our "substitute").

While the compound *antilutron* only appears in 1 Timothy 2:6, *anti* is found in quite a few passages and *lutron* in several. The first element of *antilutron,* of course, is *anti;* it is sometimes rendered "for" in the CV (with a superior "id")—in the sense of "an eye *for* an eye" (i.e., "an eye *corresponding to* an eye").

The verb *lutroō* (LOOSEN) is translated either "ransom" or "redeem." "'Loosen' is used many times in the Septuagint for each of two Hebrew words, *gal* ('redeem') and *phde* ('ransom'). 'Ransom' is used only in relation to the claims of Yahweh, especially as to the firstborn of man and beast (Ex.13:13,15; 34:20; Num.3:46-49), as well as of vows involving death (Lev.27:3; 1 Sam.14:45).

"'Redeem' is used of human rights, as property (Ruth 4:4,6; Lev.25:25,54; 27:13,33), and the avenger (Num.5:8; 35:12,27). 'Ransom' involves the divine; 'redeem,' the human: the former is religious in scope; the latter, social,

and is seldom used in the later Scriptures (Luke 24:21; Titus 2:14)" (Keyword Concordance, p.239).

While, as a standard, we have assigned INSTEAD to *anti,* nevertheless, the essential thought, common to all contexts, is that of "corresponding to."

For example, Matthew 2:22 contains the phrase, "hearing that Archelaus is reigning in Judea *in the stead of* his father Herod . . ." concerning which it is evident that the sense is that Archelaus was now reigning *in correspondence to* the fact that Herod was now dead.

Similarly, in Luke 11:11 Jesus declared: "Now of some father of you a son will be requesting bread. No stone will he be handing him! Or a fish, also. *Not, instead* of a fish, a serpent will he be handing him!" (Luke 11:11). Even as every father knows that there is no suitableness in giving a stone to a son who asks for bread, he likewise knows that there could be no fit correspondence in handing a serpent to a son who had requested a fish: "Not [in correspondency to] a fish, a serpent will he be handing him!" since he knows very well that there is no fitting correspondency in acting thus in response to such a request.

Hence it is evident that the literal "instead" should not be understood in the sense of a replacement or substitute, but in the sense of an equivalence or correspondence. For example, the phrase "an eye for [lit. "instead"] an eye" (Matt.5:38), does not have in view the *substitution* of the aggressor's eye for his victim's, so that the eye of the victim was spared, and only the aggressor's eye was destroyed. "This was not true. Both eyes perished. One eye did not replace the other. The law demanded an *equivalent,* not a substitute."[1]

Indeed, in those instances where *anti* is idiomatically rendered "for," the discerning reader will recognize that

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.81, p.148.

the sense, in fact, is "corresponding to." Thus such passages constitute definitive evidence of the actual force of this word.

In order to incorporate the literal "instead" in the case of the common phrase "evil *for* (*anti*) evil," we might, however awkwardly, express Romans 12:17 thus: "To no one render [a new act of] evil *in the stead of* [i.e., in correspondence to the former act of] evil."

Thus, through these considerations of the essential meaning of *anti,* we learn that Christ is giving Himself as a "*corresponding-to*-Ransom" (i.e., idiomatically, as a "correspondent Ransom"), a *correspondent* Ransom which is given for the sake of *all.* That is, His sacrifice constitutes a ransom that *corresponds* to the needs of all sinners: a *Saviour* Who would die for the sake of *each and every* individual, and thus actually *save* each one for whom He died.

❊

Question:

Since all of the New Testament is true and is written by Christians for Christians, how can you say that only part of it applies to us?

Answer:

All Scripture is truth for today concerning the subject with which it deals and with respect to those who are concerned in it. All Scripture is *for* us in the sense that it is in some way beneficial to us, whether for teaching, exposure, or correction; and it is all given to us with a view toward our instruction in righteousness (2 Tim.3:16), so that we might know what is true. This is all unto the end that the man of God might truly be "equipped, fitted out for every good act" (2 Tim.3:17).

Yet if we should wish truly to engage in *faithful* acts, we must come to "know that which concerns [ourselves]"

(Col.4:8), and to distinguish it from what does not concern us, insofar as any certain act of human obedience, divine blessing, curse, promise, warning, or other teaching is concerned.

It is by no means ideal for us to take to ourselves those things in the Bible which do not belong to us. Such practices are mere religious thievery, no matter how hallowed by antiquity. The apostle Paul refers to those who (however sincerely) were taking up with those things which are concerned with the flesh and with the nation of Israel, as "curs," as "evil workers," and entreats the Philippians to "beware" of them (*cf* Phil.3:2-9).

It is true that we must not contrive artificial distinctions, imagining differences that simply do not exist. Yet it is just as true that we must not fail to note and heed all genuine distinctions; no matter how many of our own traditions may have to be set aside as a result.

Misplaced truth becomes insidious error, for it seems to have scriptural support. As little as it may be heeded, at least the principle of proper application seems to be acknowledged among virtually all believers. For example, hardly any seek to apply *all* the laws of Moses to themselves, or even *all* the imperatives of the Lord Jesus, which He declared within the compass of His personal ministry to Israel. We have yet to hear of any today who wish to make either male circumcision or animal sacrifices compulsory for salvation. This is so however much these same ones may differ among themselves or seek to press other "requirements" into service unto the same end.

Therefore, nearly all, even if tacitly, at least assent to the *principle* of "correctly *cutting* the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15), insofar as this entreaty has in view the fact that while all Scripture is for us, it is not all *to* us; it is not all applicable to believers today, to those who are the members of the body of Christ. J.R.C.

ELOHIM IS BLESSING

GOD'S GREAT WORK of blessing is mentioned three times in the opening portion of Genesis. In these references we see a further reflection of divine wisdom and power beyond what is revealed in His operations of creating and making, speaking and seeing, calling and separating. The activity of *blessing* is an expression of purpose for good which God has in view and intends to fulfill. We can also see a development in this activity starting with the prospect of good directly for the individual being blessed, going forward to the blessing of being a blessing to others, and culminating with a blessing that draws attention to the blessedness of God.

God's work of blessing is first mentioned with His creative activities on the fifth day: "Elohim created the great sea monsters and all the moving living souls with which the waters swarm according to their kind. And Elohim saw that it was good. Elohim *blessed* them, saying: Be fruitful and increase; fill the waters in the seas, and let the flyers increase on earth" (Gen.1:21,22). Here Elohim blesses the creatures of the sea and air in multiplying them and making them prosper in their realms. This work of blessing is concerned with direct good to the creatures being blessed.

This activity of God is noted again on the sixth day with the creation of humanity: "Elohim *blessed* them, and Elohim said to them: Be fruitful and increase; fill the earth and subdue it. Hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heavens, over every domestic animal, over all the earth and over every animal that is moving on the

earth" (Gen.1:28). Here the blessing not only involves the personal prosperity of humanity which is being blessed, but also it is directed to the good of other creatures over which humanity is to hold sway. The good extends beyond the self to others.

The third reference to blessing takes us a step farther, beyond the self and beyond other creatures to God's blessing as it honors God. Thus we read in Genesis 2:3, "And Elohim *blessed* the seventh day and hallowed it, for in it He ceased from all His work that Elohim had created by making it."

GENESIS 1:22

The first occurrence of the verb *bless* in Scripture appears in Genesis 1:22. The Hebrew might be rendered more literally as follows: "And He is blessing, He, Elohim, them." Or, in order to bring out the distinctive verb form used here, we might even read the Hebrew verb as "He is *making* blessed." This will help to lay emphasis on the blessing being established in God's own activity and in accord with His skill and design.

The unadorned, direct wording of English idiom, "Elohim blessed them," is excellent in conveying the simple fact. The various features of the Hebrew verb which bring out thoughts of an on-going activity in accord with intelligent design add emphasis and clarification to the simple fact. Since it is Elohim Who blesses, the activity of a continuing bless*ing* is that which accords with what Elohim is. And since it is Elohim Who is making these creatures blessed, we are becoming acquainted with Elohim through this activity.

The verb itself expresses a wish or desire. Yet when human beings bless God or one another, a sense of uncertainty often enters into the thought simply because of the limitations of humanity. In fact, the Hebrew word comes

to be used for the act of *kneeling* (*cf* 2 Chron.6:13; Psa. 95:6). It is connected with prayer as well as being a term of greeting and benediction. But because of Who He is, when God blesses, the desire is backed up by supreme power, divine design and certainty.

What is the good, then, that God desires and will certainly provide for the creatures of air and water? It is that they will increase and fill their environment. They will have and hold a specific and unique place in the world. They will be where they belong and prosper in accord with what is both fitting to their environment and pleasing to God. That is blessing indeed.

GENESIS 1:28

Humanity also is blessed with a unique place in the world, but this place is more specifically defined. It embraces more than abundance within a location. The place with which Elohim blesses humanity includes a position of positive function upon the earth. Not only does God bless humanity with the prospect of fruitfulness and increase, but He gives them a distinctive and beneficial place in relation to the other creatures. This blessing of position over other creatures is neither a challenge to the human nor a ground for human pride. *It is a work of God.* The fact that humanity is not presently subduing and swaying over the lower creatures in any ideal sense does not mean that it will not be blessed in holding this place effectively for good. It is God Who blesses humanity with this function.

Furthermore, God's blessing of humanity is for the good of the earth and all creatures of the earth. God's blessing of humanity gives humanity the blessing of being a blessing.

In the meantime creation is subjected to vanity by God "in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (*cf* Rom.8:18-25). The promise of

Genesis 1:28 will be fulfilled, as we are reminded by God's blessing of the seventh day in Genesis 2:3.

God always brings His blessing into realization.

GENESIS 2:3

The full realization of God's blessing, however, will involve a recognition of the blessedness of God Who blesses. This is suggested in His blessing of the seventh day. God blessed the seventh day, "for in it He ceased from all His work that Elohim had created by making it." Later, in the law given at Sinai, the seventh day is said to be "a sabbath *to* Yahweh your Elohim" (Ex.20:10). The seventh day is blessed by being set apart and distinguished. It is also blessed because it brings a blessing to humanity (*cf* Mark 2:27). But it is blessed even beyond this by being an instrument for the blessing of God. The sabbath is "to Elohim." It is a time especially set apart or hallowed for reminder and appreciation of God as Creator.

Although Genesis 2:3 is not concerned with God blessing us, it does complete the significance of Genesis 1:28. Humanity is blessed with its own increase. It also is blessed by becoming a blessing to other creatures of the earth. And finally it is blessed by blessing God in its realization of God's achievements. We can trace this pattern of the divine work of blessing throughout the Scriptures. The following examples seem especially significant:

YAHWEH BLESSES ISRAEL AND THE NATIONS

When Moses conveyed the law to Israel in the wilderness he spoke of their special relationship to Yahweh their Elohim. Within this great discourse, and in terms of blessing very similar to Genesis 1:22,28, Moses declares of Yahweh, "He will love you and *bless* you; He will multiply you and *bless* the fruit of your belly and the fruit of your ground, your grain, your grape juice and your clarified oil,

the calving of your domestic animals and the lambing of your flock, on the ground about which Yahweh had sworn to your fathers to give to you. *Blessed* shall you come to be above all the peoples" (Deut.7:13,14).

Yahweh's certain desire for Israel's good is associated with increase within a particular environment in which He places them. But part of this blessing, which was often forgotten by Israel, was that all the other nations would be blessed in Israel. Thus Yahweh said to Abraham immediately when He called him out from his kindred: "I shall bless you; I shall indeed make your name great, and you will indeed be a blessing . . . . In you all the families of the ground will be blessed" (Gen.12:2,3).

Psalm 67 exults in God's blessing of Israel which shall embrace His salvation among all nations, a salvation that involves the awe ("fear") and acclamation of God with rejoicing and jubilant song. The environment is the earth and the abundance is all the peoples of the earth:

May Elohim be gracious to us and bless us;
May He light up His face toward us.
In knowing Your way in the earth,
Your salvation among all nations,
May the peoples acclaim You, O Elohim!
May the peoples acclaim You—all of them!

This is God's blessing of Israel, but like God's blessing of humanity the blessing involves becoming a blessing to others. And it involves very clearly the blessing of God, as expressed again in Psalm 72:17-19.

His Name shall remain for the eon;
Before the sun shall His Name be propagated,
And all nations shall bless themselves in Him
and call Him happy.
Blessed be Yahweh, Elohim, the Elohim of Israel,
Doing marvelous works by Himself alone,

And blessed be His glorious Name for the eon!
The entire earth shall be filled with His glory!

GOD BLESSES US

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ" (Eph.1:3).

Both abundance and environment are in view here. Our "realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil.3:20). "God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us . . . vivifies us together in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:4-6).

The spiritual blessings among the celestials, in Christ, with which God blesses us involve His purpose to display "the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:7). Once again God's work of blessing involves the blessing of being a blessing to others. And like the preparation of light and air and water and soil, so the good works in which we will be walking are prepared beforehand by God (Eph.2:10).

But more than this, all of God's blessings in making His chosen ones a blessing to others also bless God. "For *His achievement* are we" (Eph.2:10). Paul does not refer to the seventh day in speaking of the blessing of praising God for bringing His works to their consummation. But he reminds us that "the consummations of the eons have attained" to us (1 Cor.10:11). It is God's vast blessing to us that He has brought before the eyes of our hearts the view of the consummations of all His glorious works of the eons, when He will be All in all. Hence Paul speaks three times in Ephesians chapter one concerning the blessing of lauding God's glories (Eph.1:6,12,14). Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! D.H.H.

DAVID IN THE WILDERNESS

23 + **They** l**told** › **David,** › **saying**–**, Behold, Philistines** are **fighting** *i***against Keilah, and they** are **robbing** `**the threshing sites.** 2 +**So David** l*ask*i**nquired** *i***of Yahweh** › **saying**–**, Shall I go and** –**smite** *i* ·**these Philistines?** + **Yahweh** l*sa***replied to David, Go!** + **You** must **smite** *i* the **Philistines and save** `**Keilah.** 3 +**Yet David's men** l**said to him, Behold, we** are **fearful** while **here in Judah;** + **how much more so** *t***if we** l**go** to **Keilah** ›**against** the **arrays of** the **Philistines!** 4 +**So David** l**proceeded to** *ask***inquire** *i***of Yahweh** *fr***again, and Yahweh** l**answered him,** + l**saying, Arise,** go **down** to **Keilah! For I** am *g***delivering** `the **Philistines in**to **your hand.** 5 +**Then David and his men** l*go***marched** to **Keilah and** l**fought** *i***against** the **Philistines.** 7+**When they fled before him***0***,** + **he** l**drove** away `**their cattle and** l**smote** *i* **them** with a **great smiting.** +**Thus David** l**saved** `the **dwellers**l **of Keilah.** 6 + **It came** to l**be,** *i***after Abiathar son of Ahimelech** had run **away**– **to David,** 7+**that he***'0* went **down** 7›with **David***0* to **Keilah** with the **ephod in his hand.**

7 +**When** › **Saul was** l**told that David had come** to **Keilah,** +**then Saul** l*sa***thought, Elohim** 7**has sold**~ `**him in**to **my hand; for he has locked** himself **up** ›**by entering**– *i* a **city** with double **doors and bar**s. 8 +**So Saul** l**summoned** `**all the** *wi***soldiers of war, to** march **down** to **Keilah** and **to besiege** › **David and** › `**his men.**

DAVID DELIVERS KEILAH

In the last chapter Gad, the prophet, had instructed David to return to Judah. The anointed leader of his peo-

ple should be in his home country. Yet Saul's persecution of David was intense, and trying to hide oneself in a country the size of Judah was difficult, not to mention the increased difficulty of hiding with an entourage of 600 men. The circumstances forced David to be unrestingly vigilant. Whenever David and his men would perform a military rescue of some city, such as Keilah, the country's attention would focus on David's whereabouts. Then David and his men would be forced back into hiding.

This is very similar to the situation of Christ in His later ministry. Especially in John's account may be traced visitations and withdrawals from Jerusalem. He would go to Jerusalem, teach, perform a sign and prod the religious leaders with the goad of truth. This repeatedly inflamed the jealousy and persecution of the Pharisees and Sadducees. So Christ would withdraw until their fervor waned, and then would return again, with untiring efforts, laboring to woo the stubborn with the truth. The birds have nests, and the jackals have dens, but David and his greater Son lacked a place to lay their heads.

THE RESCUE OF KEILAH

In the first verse of chapter 23, David was told that the Philistines were raiding Keilah. He knew that he was God's anointed, but he did not presume that having knowledge of a situation designated him as its champion. He inquired of God first.

Receiving God's instruction to deliver Keilah, David prepared to go, but his men balked. "We're already in danger for our lives, and you want us to go to war also?!" This sounds much like the complaint of the Lord's disciples, "Rabbi, the Jews now sought to stone Thee, and art Thou going there again?" (John 11:8). Saul disobeyed God and lost the throne, because he took direction from those who were his followers (1 Sam.15:10-26). But David inquired

of God again, to receive specific instruction, and then led his men to Keilah. The result was the deliverance of the Jews in Keilah. True spiritual leadership requires a devotion to God which will act with or without the approval of those around.

INQUIRING OF GOD

9 +**Since David** ˡ**knew that Saul** was **engrossed**ˡ in planning ˙**evil** *on*˙**against him,** + **he** ˡˢᵃ**told** › **Abiathar the priest,** Do ᵉ**bring close the ephod!**

10 +**Then David** ˡ**said,** O **Yahweh Elohim of Israel, Your servant has heard,** yea **heard**⁻ **that Saul seeks**ˡ **to come to Keilah to wreck** › the **city** ⁱ**on** ᵖ**account of me.** 11 Will the **possessors of Keilah** ˡ**surrender me in**to **his hand?** O **Yahweh Elohim of Israel, I pray, tell** › **Your servant!** + **Yahweh** ˡˢᵃ**replied, He** will come ˡ**down.** 12 + **David** ˡˢᵃ**continued,** Will the **possessors of Keilah** ˡ**surrender** ˋ**me and** ˋ**my men in**to the **hand of Saul?** + **Yahweh** ˡˢᵃ**replied, They** will ˡ**surrender** you**.**

Verses 9-12 give some details of David's inquiry. It is interesting to see that the inquiries appear to be given in the form of questions that may be answered with a simple yes or no. Other passages, such as 1 Samuel 14:36-42, seem to suggest a simple "choice A," or, "choice B," as might be obtained in a casting of lots.

The Urim and Thummim were located in the breastplate of the priest's ephod. This explains the repeated mention of the ephod. In cases where detailed information needed to be given, God had spoken through prophets and dreams. How wonderful it is today to have a completed revelation that could only come after God had spoken through His Son. How wonderful that the cloudy reflections of the previous eras have given way to "face to face" clarity (1 Cor.13:12).

As a final thought on this topic, it seems that it would

have been difficult for David to inquire of God at the tabernacle through Ahimelech (chapter 21). Would he ask of God regarding success on a mission for Saul, when, in fact, he was on no such mission? The fact that David was not truthful at the tabernacle raises some doubt that he would have inquired of God. If that is true, then Doeg's report that Ahimelech had inquired of God for David was a lie.

SAUL'S SUPPOSITIONS

When Saul heard that David had delivered Keilah, he took it for granted that David would oblige himself of Keilah's hospitality. Therefore he prepared to march against Keilah, fully expecting David to remain there. Saul's opinion was that the deliverer, especially himself, was entitled to rewards. He saw himself as the active deliverer, not God. David realized that deliverance was a gift from God. "Yahweh's is the battle," he had proclaimed to Goliath's face. And if the battle is won with God's direction, then the course taken after the battle should also meet with God's approval and direction. The flesh forgets this.

Keilah has been interpreted as meaning "citadel" or "fortress." It was a strong, walled city. But Keilah was not to be the place of David's throne. David's throne would be situated on a mount so impregnable that it could be guarded by the lame and blind (2 Sam.5:6). But David was not allowed a place of rest. Those of faith are not to become quickly wearied in their ideal deeds. God will provide a better place of rest at the proper time (Gal.6:9).

THE FEAR OF SAUL

Without a doubt, the news that Saul had ordered the slaughter of the priests, spread throughout the land. The excuse that the priests had conspired to commit treason was an unfounded and extraneous detail. The stark truth of which the nation became aware was that no one could be

guaranteed exemption from Saul's wrath. Further evidence of this was the slaughter and disposition of the Gibeonites. No city or group of people or individual, could take their safety for granted. The city of Keilah would give up David. They might be grateful and secretly devoted to him, but the threat of death to their families and the loss of all their properties was too great and real for them to take a stand against the king and armies of their own nation. David did not have a place of refuge within the walls of Keilah.

WHERE IS SAFETY?

13 +**So David** ˡ**arose** +**with his men,** ᵃˢ**about 600 men;** + **they** marched ˡ**forth from Keilah and** ˡ**went** ⁱ ʷ**wherever they** could ˡ**go.** +**When** › **Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah,** + **he** ˡ**desisted** ›**from** going **forth¯.** 14 +**So David** ˡˢⁱᵗ**stayed in** the **fastnesses** ⁱ**of** the **wilderness;** + **he** ˢⁱᵗ**remained in** the **hill** country**, in** the **wilderness of Ziph.** + **Saul was seeking him all** ˙these **days,** +**but** ⁷**Yahweh**ᵠ did **not give him in**to **his hand.** 15 +**Yet David ~was** ˡ**fearful~ that Saul had** come **forth to seek** ˋ**his soul** +**while David** was ⁱ**at**ᵈ **Horesh in** the **wilderness of Ziph.**

16 +**Then Saul's son Jonathan** ˡ**arose and** ˡ**went to David** at**ᵈ Horesh;** + **he** ˡ**encouraged** ˋ**his hand in** ⁷**Yahweh**ᵠ 17 **and** ˡ**said to him, Do not** ˡ**fear, for** the **hand of my father Saul shall not find you.** + **You´ shall reign over Israel, and I my**self **shall become** › **second to you.** + **Even my father Saul knows**ˡ this is **so.** 18 **And** the **two of them** ˡ**contracted** a **covenant before Yahweh.** + **David** ˡˢⁱᵗ**remained** ⁱ**at**ᵈ **Horesh;** +**as** for **Jonathan, he went to his** own **house.**

David was living in fear of Saul (v.15), and Jonathan came and strengthened David in the Lord. It was a great encouragement to David. Then Jonathan returned to his house, and David remained hiding in the wilderness. Who was more safe, David or Jonathan?

Jonathan's love and devotion to David was true, but he would never be David's right hand man as he said (v.17). This was the last time these friends would see each other. Jonathan would fall on Mount Gilboa.

"Jesus said . . .'No one, putting forth his hand on a plow and looking behind, is fit in the kingdom of God'" (Luke 9:62). What if Jonathan had given up his position as heir apparent to the throne? What if he had taken his wife and family and lived in the wilderness with David? Had he done so, he would probably have been rescuing the inhabitants of Ziklag while his father and brothers were dying on Mount Gilboa (*cf* 1 Sam.30,31). Perhaps he planned to wait until the throne was his, and then he would be the gracious benefactor who placed the royal scepter in David's hand.

We struggle daily with decisions of priority, safety, devotion and loyalty. We know not where safety is. But we know the One in Whom we are safe.

THE ZIPHITES

19 + Some **Ziphites** went ⌊**up to Saul** at*d* ·**Gibeah,** › **saying¯,** Is **not David concealing** him**self** *wi*⌋**among us in** the **fastnesses** *i*⌊**at***d* **Horesh** *i*⌋**on the hill of Hachilah which** is *f* **south of the desolation?** 20 +**So now,** according **to all your soul's yearning,** ·O **king,** come **down,** yea › come **down¯! And our** ›**part** shall be to **surrender¯ him in**to the **hand of the king.** 21 + **Saul** ⌊*sa*⌋**replied, Blessed**⌊ be **you** ›**of Yahweh, for you spare** *on* **me.** 22 **Go** *pr*⌊**now** *7*⌊**and***0* **prepare further! Be**come **acquainted** `with **his** *ri*⌋**place and** *see*⌊**observe where his** *7*⌊**swift~ foot comes** to ⌊**be; for** someone *sa*⌊**told** › **me, he´ is** ⌊**crafty,** very **crafty¯.** 23 +**Hence** *see*⌊**observe and** get to **know** *f* **all the hiding** places **where he** ⌊**hides** him**self!** + **You** must **return to me** › **prepared**⌊**;** +**then I will go** `with **you.** + **It will come** to **be** that**, if he is in** the **area, I will** +**also search** › **him** out *i*⌊**among all** the **thousands of Judah.**

24 +**So they** ⌊**arose and** ⌊**went** to**ward Ziph, before Saul,**

+**while David and his men** were **in** the **wilderness of Maon, in** the **Arabah** › **south of the desolation.**

The superscription of Psalm 54, 1 Samuel 23:19 and 1 Samuel 26:1 are nearly identical. Saul tried repeatedly to capture David, and he was helped by the Ziphites more than once. The Ziphites, like David, were of the tribe of Judah, but they treated David as if he were a foreigner. Their loyalty was to Saul. David was well acquainted with the bitter sting expressed in John's words: "To His own He came, and those who are His own accepted Him not" (John 1:11). Psalm 54 and comments on it may be found in *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 68, pages 132,133.

FLESH AND FAITH

We have seen throughout the book of 1 Samuel that Saul displays a life in which the flesh rules, and David displays a life in which faith rules. The theme of the flesh struggling with the spirit is repeated from many perspectives throughout the Scriptures. Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, Ishmael and Isaac, and Saul and David are but a few.

1 Samuel 23 suggests a close analogy between David and Paul. David was God's anointed king of the dynasty that would follow Saul. Paul was God's chosen herald for the administration of grace that would reign with the displacement of the flesh and law. Saul persecuted David relentlessly. The Jews persecuted Paul relentlessly. Both David and Paul labored tirelessly to deliver their nation. Both David and Paul were betrayed by their nation, yet neither of these men would retaliate against their nation.

David inquired of God, receiving revelations and direction for what he should do. Paul received special revelations defining the evangel he was to bring. David's receiving of direction from God came after God had stopped speaking to Saul. Paul's revelations came with the setting aside of Israel in God's purpose, and the cessation of prophets and

signs in Israel. Saul's headquarters were in Gibeah, meaning "hillock" or "small hill." David's headquarters would be Mount Zion, Jerusalem. The Jews' allegiance was to Mount Sinai and the law. Paul's allegiance was to that which calls us in the grace of Christ.

THE PERPLEXING TRIANGLE

Occasionally we find there are relationships between things or people which seem to be contradictory. One of these is the threefold relationship between God, those seeking to serve God in the flesh, and those seeking to serve God in faith. This is the relationship noted above and displayed in God, Saul and David, and then again in God, the Jews and Paul. Both Saul and the Jews of Paul's day claimed to be serving God. In this service, they struggled against the enemies of Israel. Saul fought the Philistines, and the Jews struggled under Roman domination. Saul and the Jews considered this a divine service. And they also considered it their divine duty to persecute and eradicate anyone that might take their place. Notice that when Saul thought he would catch David, he expressed the sentiment that God was delivering him into his hand (1 Sam.23:7,21). And Christ Himself said to his disciples, ". . . Coming is the hour that everyone who is killing you should suppose he is offering divine service to God" (John 16:2).

But the perplexing part is that faith must struggle on two fronts. It must struggle against the foes of God's people, and it must struggle to bear with those who believe they are serving God. And, in the latter struggle, there must be no retribution. Notice how David suffered at the hands of Saul, but never lifted his hand against him. Remember how Paul was forced to flee from city to city, and yet proclaimed, ". . . the delight of my heart and my petition to God for their sake is for salvation" (Rom.10:1). And today also, those whom God has chosen to be bearers

of the truth may suffer as much at the hands of those who are outwardly God's people, as they would at the hands of God's enemies. The maturity, of which Paul spoke so frequently, is evidenced in this attitude.

THE CRAG OF APPORTIONMENTS

25 +**Then Saul** +**with his men** |**went to seek** 7**him**0**;** +**yet** › **David** was |**told** of it**, and he** went |**down** 7**to**0 **the crag and** |sit**stayed in** the **wilderness of Maon.** +**When Saul** |**heard** of it**,** + **he** |**pursued after David** 7**in**to0 the **wilderness of Maon.** 26 + **Saul** 7**and his men**0 |**went** f**on** one **side** f**of this** ˙**mountain,** +**while David and his men** were f**on** the other **side** f**of this** ˙**mountain.** +**So David** |b**was hurrying away,** › go**running**¯ **from** the **presence of Saul;** +**but Saul and his men** were **encircling** › **David and** › **his men** in order **to apprehend them.** 27 +**Yet** a **messenger came to Saul,** › **saying**¯**,** Do **hasten and** go**come, for** the **Philistines** are ¯**ransacking** on **the land.** 28 +**So Saul** |**returned from** his **pursuit**¯ af**of David and** |**went to meet** the **Philistines. Therefore they called** › ˙**that** ri**place the Crag of Apportionments.** 29 +**Then David** went |**up from there and** |sit**stayed in** the **fastnesses of En-gedi.**

The twenty-third chapter closes with David's deliverance from Saul. David was trapped. Saul's troops were encircling him from both sides of the mountain. David had nowhere to run or hide. At the last possible moment, word came to Saul that the Philistines were ransacking the land, and he had to leave off pursuing David to protect Israel. "Therefore they called that place the Crag of Apportionments" (1 Sam.23:28).

The relationship of this name to the event is not fully clear. The word is used for both the sense of "slick" and "portion," leading some to associate it with a certain "smoothness" of David's escape, and others to speak of the "division" established between David and Saul. The Hebrew term clearly

carries the idea of "portion," but the "portioning" taking place in the text was the division of Saul's men into separate companies so that they might surround David. The writer is not fully satisfied with any of these suggestions, nor that the following thoughts sum it up either.

Nevertheless, it may be worthwhile to consider the "portions" given to the characters of this chapter. The chapter highlights the inquiries to God, and keeps the reader mindful that all which is occurring happens by divine purpose. It was the portion of Keilah to be delivered from the Philistines, but not to be the city of the king. It was not Jonathan's portion to stand at David's right hand. All that is of the flesh, no matter how lovely, must be cut off. It was not the portion of the Ziphites to be the captors of David nor recipients of rich rewards from the king. Saul's portion was to struggle continually and unsuccessfully against the Philistines.

David's portion was Yahweh. "Yahweh is the assigned share of my portion and my cup; You are the One upholding my lot. The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, the allotment is seemly for me. I shall bless Yahweh Who has counseled me; indeed, in the nights my innermost being has admonished me. I poise Yahweh in front of me continually; because He is at my right hand, I shall not slip at all" (Psalm 16:5-8). God denied David a home and place of rest. God denied David a feeling of security. God denied David the comfort of open friendship and a place in his community. But in denying these things to David, God showed David that he had a much greater treasure: "Behold, Elohim is my Helper; Yahweh is the Grand Supporter of my soul" (Psalm 54:4). When those whose lives he rescued had turned their backs on him, and when his kindred betrayed him, and when Saul's army had him surrounded, he found that the only One with the indisputable power to save was caring and providing for him.

J. Philip Scranton

145 Editorial
147 The Making of Humanity
159 Displays of God's Power
165 Not Becoming Diversely Yoked; Grace Under Law
174 The Goat Rocks
181 For All Mankind

JULY, 2000

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2000
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-ONE

EDITORIAL

IT IS IN THE MIDST of a world of sin and sorrow that the apostle Paul declares, "For I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory *about to be* revealed for us" (Rom.8:18).

When something, literally, is "about to happen," our *confidence* that it *will*, indeed, *certainly* occur, is greatly strengthened. Similarly, that is what happens as well when something, figuratively, is said to be "about to be" occurring—in cases in which we truly *believe* that this is so.

That is, when we are actively engaged in *believing* that God's promises *will* come to pass, our perspective concerning them becomes *like* that of one who has just been informed of some certain-to-occur, impending event.

The eyes of faith make God's promises "impending," or "about to be," figuratively speaking, apart from any question of the time of their literal, historical realization. That is, the eyes of faith grant the believer the conviction that God's promises will *certainly* occur.

Walking by faith, however, is often a great struggle. We prefer sight; and, sometimes our faith is weak. Further, we are informed by many that in believing the evangel of Christ, we have taken a "leap" of faith, the implication being that such an act is unwarranted.

From a logical consideration alone, we might well agree.[1] Indeed, I would never wish to suggest that I have a "warrant" to believe, but only that, simply in the grace of God, I do believe, having been given the faith to do so.

1. This is by no means to suggest that I find even the best works of Christian apologetics to be without merit, but only that it is impossible for any such human writings truly to prove the divine inspiration of the Scriptures or the veracity of its principal teachings.

I do not desire to justify my actions here, as such, nor do I suppose that I can do so, even to myself.

Since I *do* believe, however, I am willing not only to *appear* foolish to others in my believing, but even to *be* "foolish" in respect to the activity itself of accepting specific declarations as true apart from empirical evidence of their validity.

According to Paul, the reason *why*—against all odds—I believe, is because, "the grace of our Lord overwhelms" (1 Tim.1:14). We are hereby informed that Paul's own salvation from being a calumniator and a persecutor and an outrager, in ignorance and unbelief (1 Tim.1:13), is set forth "for a pattern of those who are *about to be* believing on [Christ] for life eonian" (1 Tim.1:16). In the counsels of God, the Giver of faith, the future faith of His chosen ones is so certain to exist that it may be said that it is "about to be."

Now, *being* believers, we are rejoicing in the Lord, offering divine service in the spirit of God, glorying in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in flesh (Phil.3:3; 4:4). What a tremendous change we have undergone! Though the sentiment, "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it," is all too true concerning ourselves, it is to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself to Whom we make this confession. And, in so doing, becoming exercised in faith, we are sometimes thereby delivered from our wandering.

We are mindful that it is only to the degree that we first understand that which constitutes "the faith," that we are in a position to be faithful. Therefore, while we long for Christ to dwell in our hearts, we must honestly acknowledge that this is to occur, not through some form of religious mysticism, but *through faith* (Eph.3:16). Hence we are shut up to the conclusion that in seeking, and finding, the Lord Jesus, our principal request to God through Him can only be that of imploring that He would reveal the truth of His Word to us, training us in it, in accordance with His saving grace, motivated by His love (*cf* Titus 2:11,12; Eph.2:4).

J.R.C.

THE MAKING OF HUMANITY

GENESIS 1:24-31

24 **And Elohim** [l]**said: Let the earth** [c]**bring forth living souls,** each according **to its kind:** domestic **beasts,** + **creepers and land animals,** each according **to its kind. And so it came** to [l]**be.** 25 + **Elohim** [ld]**made `the land animal** according **to its kind,** + **`the** domestic **beast** according **to its kind, and `every creeper of the ground** according **to its kind. And Elohim** [l]**saw that** it was **good.**

26 **And Elohim** [l]**said: Let Us** [d]**make humanity in Our image** [7]**and**[n] **according** to **Our likeness.** + **Let them** hold **sway** [i]**over** the **fish of the sea and** [i]**over** the **flyer of the heavens,** + [i]**over** the domestic **beast,** + [i]**over every land ~animal**[c] **and** [i]**over every creeper** that is **creeping on the earth.**

27 +**So Elohim** [l]**created `humanity in His image, in** the **image of Elohim He created `it: male and female He created `them.** 28 + **Elohim** [l]**blessed `them, and Elohim** [l]**said to them: Be fruitful and increase;** + **fill `the earth and subdue it.** + Hold **sway** [i]**over** the **fish of the sea and** [i]**over** the **flyer of the heavens,** [7+] [i]**over every** domestic **animal**[n]**,** [7+] [i]**over all the earth**[0] **and** [i]**over every animal** that is **moving on the earth.**

29 **And Elohim** [l]**said:** [bd]**Since I have given `you `all seed-yielding herbage** [w]**that** is **on** the **face of the entire earth, and `every tree** [i]**on which** there is the **fruit of** a **seed-yielding tree, it shall** [b]**be yours for food.** 30 **And to every animal of the earth,** + **to every flyer of the heavens, and to every creeper**[l] **on the land in which** there is a **living soul,** I have given **`all green herbage for food. And so it came**

to [l]**be.** [31] **And Elohim [l]saw [`]all [w]that He had [d]made; and behold** it was **very good.**

And it [l]became evening, and it [l]became morning, the **sixth day.**

SOUL LIFE

Here in Genesis 1:24-31 we once more deal with the dry *land,* yet not with *plant* life as in verses 9-13, but with *soul* life. These two forms of life differ radically, in that plants are fixed immovable in the soil which is the source of their sustenance, and, having no sensation, neither see nor hear nor smell nor feel. But soul life has all these senses, and roams freely over the surface of the land, in the air, and in the water. Soul life is evidently divided into three classes, for which the English language does not seem to have precise equivalents. The CV has domestic *beasts, creepers,* and *land animal.*

As this is the only account of the creation of soul life, we may be sure that the list here given includes not only all the kinds of each class but every class also, those *in* the earth as well as those that live *on* its surface.

ADAM, HUMAN, HUMANITY

In Hebrew the same name, *adm*, is used for the first individual and for the race which has sprung from him. In Wigram's Englishman's Hebrew Concordance the occurrences of the name Adam are not listed by themselves in the list of proper nouns, but the student is referred to the appellatives, or common nouns. There we find it translated both *man* and *Adam*, etc. How are we to know which is meant? The only safe way is to keep in accord with the context. Here the following pronouns are *plural*, hence *adm,* though singular, is a collective noun and refers to the race. Moreover what follows was not confined to the first human, but is the portion of all humanity, according

to other scriptures. The scholastic rules of grammar often do not work in practice, in idiomatic languages.

Therefore, Genesis 1:26 should read, "Let Us make *humanity* in Our image." So also in the next verse. In any case, more than Adam is included, for the account proceeds, "Let *them* hold sway," and "male and female He creates *them*." The fact that the same word is employed for Adam and humanity expresses a great truth in a terse form. It is especially precious when referred to Christ, for Adam was only a type of Him. *All* were created in Him. When He was created, then *they* also were included, even as every human was incorporated in Adam. No doubt the same name was given to its progenitor as to the race in order to express the vital fact that *all were in him*, and so provide a clearly comprehensible picture of the creation of all in Christ long before.

A very striking anomaly is found in between these two plurals, for Adam and humanity. The singular *it* is used for humanity as well as the plural *them* (v.27). This expresses the solidarity of the race. Not only Adam is in God's image. This is also true of all his progeny. One man alone is not enough to make the image. It takes a composite portrait to complete the picture. Incidentally, this is a good example to show that, in the Word of God, grammatical forms are not always literal. They must sometimes give place to a higher harmony and spiritual accord.

THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS

It is not until after the elements are in order, and the light is regulated, and the animals are brought forth, that the earth is ready for humanity. As distinct from the rest, man is made in God's image and likeness, and is given the place supreme in his sphere. It is most helpful to note that, in the account of creation and restoration, only the title *God* the SUBJECTOR, is used. The image of God, there-

fore, consists in this, that man also is a *subjector* in his own realm, and is to *sway* over the other creatures. Let us not imagine that this *likeness* makes us a deity, or gives us control over ourselves or the rest of the universe. Humanity's realm is first limited to the lower creation on the earth, and we have largely forfeited even that, due to our insubjection to our Subjector, and the resultant lack of vitality, and our decadent condition due to the operation of death in our bodies.

HUMANITY AS GOD'S LIKENESS

Adm, the inspired name given humanity is probably the noun of the stem *dm* LIKE, so means LIKENESS. Being a likeness of God, Who is *spirit*, it is limited to a *spiritual* resemblance. Indeed, this account says nothing of man's *form*. That is dealt with when man's formation is in view (Gen.2:7). As God is invisible (1 Tim.1:17), it must refer to the unseen attributes which characterize the human race which eventually qualifies it to reveal God to the rest of creation. This is not very apparent when we look at humanity as it is today, but even now mankind dominates all the other creatures on the earth. The size and the strength of a man may be less than other animals, and the senses may be inferior, but his spirit sets him above them, and they must be subject to his will.

Man's superiority over the animals is not due to his physical size, but to his spiritual supremacy. The elephant is many times as big and heavy as the largest human, yet he obeys his mahout like a child. The horse is several times man's weight, yet the driver or rider bends him to his will. Indeed, God gave us a striking picture of the weakness of flesh in His sight when He created great monsters. We would be tempted to think that *these* would dominate the animal world, and that even man today would be in terror of their enormous paws and jaws. Instead, they are *extinct*.

Nothing is left of them but their bones. But how few who view their towering skeletons learn the lesson that they teach! Not by valor nor by vigor, but rather by My *spirit*, says Yahweh (Zech.4:6).

His Son is the Image of the invisible God (Col.1:15). Human eyes are affected by only about one-fiftieth of the vibrational impulses which have been discovered, so man is very limited in the range of his perceptions. There are even some solid substances, such as glass, which hardly register on the retina of the human eye. But it is only through our perceptive organs that we can acquire knowledge of the tangible, so that God, if He wishes to reveal Himself to His creatures, must do so through some medium, which can be sensed. Foremost of all, His Son, Who is His creative Original in Whom and through Whom He made all, is the great Mediator, Who will fulfill this function. In a much lower degree, humanity also has this office. Indeed, God's Son condescended to become a Man for this purpose, for in no other way could God's immanent love be displayed.

PRONOUNS WITH THE TITLE "GOD"

The title, God [*Alue-im,* or *Eloh-im*], has the plural ending, but is usually referred to by a singular pronoun, *I*. This shows us that it is not a *grammatical plural* but *rhetorical*. Here, however, we find the plural pronoun, *We* ["Us" and "Our"]. Even though it is grammatically correct, why is He referred to as *We* on this occasion? We will find the key to this enigma in this very passage, for here we find Him making others in His image and likeness, who, in their place are also *subjectors,* for they sway over all the denizens of the air, the sea and the land.

In reality and ultimately there is only *one* Subjector out of Whom and for Whom all is. But He is spirit, and cannot be perceived by any of His creatures, so He works *through* them in order that He may reveal Himself to them. He

imparts a measure of His spirit to them so that they also have authority to subject those beneath them in the scale of creation. Essentially and indirectly, He alone operates all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). Yet He does not do this directly in all cases, but through others whom He created for this very purpose, as in this verse. Adam, and the race in him and through him, represent God, the Subjector, to the rest.

"WE" INCLUDES THE SON

But here the *We* cannot refer to them, but must refer to a previous delegation of this authority. Was there an Image and Likeness of God before the creation of Adam? There certainly was! The Son of His love is the first Image of the invisible God. In Him all was created, as all mankind was in Adam. And all was created *through* Him (Col.1: 15,16). Adam was created by God through His Son, hence *two* were involved in this creation. God had committed all authority to His Son, so could only delegate a part of it to Adam and His race in concurrence with Him. He, as God's creative Original (Rev.3:14), received God's spirit *without* measure (John 3:34).

THROUGH MANKIND

We can understand how the Subjector could delegate His power to subject all to the Son of His love, for He was the channel of its creation, and will be the means of its reconciliation. But how could He delegate authority to humanity over the other creatures on earth, when He knew beforehand how they would abuse it, and turn against Him? Because our very unworthiness and failure are the needed foil to display, not merely His power as the Subjector, but His love as Saviour and Father. It is one of the most overwhelming of truths, that God not only works *for* humanity through Christ, but He also operates *through*

humanity for other realms of creation. He not only subjects all on earth beneath his feet (Heb.2:8), but, as the body of Christ, we will rule the rest of the universe for the eons to come.

SUBJECTORS

Not only was the race, as such, given the place of subjectors, but the man was especially chosen to be the image and glory of God, while the woman is the glory of the man (1 Cor.11:7-10). And even among men there are some specially distinguished in this way. In Noah's day human government was instituted, to deal with murderers, on the basis that humanity was made in the image of God (Gen.9:6). Paul insists that we be subject to the superior authorities, because they are under God. If we resist them we withstand God's mandate. They are God's servants. He operates through them. We dare not say that God will carry out His intentions without them, for it is His will to do it through them.

The name subjector (disposer, or arbiter) was used of men who exercised authority over their fellows. In order to show the futility of Pharaoh's opposition, God put Moses in the position of a subjector or arbiter to him (Ex.7:1). Moses played this part in relation to the sons of Israel, also, and, when it became too great a burden, he followed his father-in-law's advice and appointed others under him (Ex.18:21). To them men came on decisive occasions (Ex.22:8, AV judges). They were not to be slighted, because God was carrying out His will through them (Ex.22:28). The name "subjector," or arbiter, is freely used of false gods when these usurped the place which belonged to the true.

Creation, disruption, restoration, and salvation, rule, ruin, redemption and reconciliation, all could have been done by God directly, without intermediaries. But that would not have accomplished His purpose to reveal His

heart as well as His head. It is by working *through* His creatures that He harvests their affection and becomes All in all. We may be weaned from a selfish interest in our *own* salvation by an active interest in God's side, and by being used as a channel to bring it to others.

HUMANITY A UNITY

Humanity's *unity* is a factor which persists. Even now, when male and female are distinct persons, the Scriptures insist on the important truth that God makes out of *one* every nation (Acts 17:26). Moreover, even the entrance of sin, which some might insist came in through *two*, Adam and his wife, or if one is insisted on, one *woman*, even this came in through *one human* (Rom.5), for they were *one* flesh and, as such, are types of Christ, the *One* Antitype. In the resurrection neither are they marrying nor taking in marriage (Matt.22:26). Adam was created bi-sexual, like many plants. The woman was built from a part of him. Even so were we created *in* Christ. The separation between the sexes will lapse after their function is fulfilled. It is not permanent, but temporary.

In order to picture the great truths that all is out of God, and that all was created in Christ, it was necessary to show how all humanity was in *one* human, Adam. For this revelation it would not do to *create* two, one of each sex, for that would spoil the picture. What a help it is to see all humanity in the first human! This we can comprehend. Without such an example, it would be almost impossible for us to apprehend how all could have been in God, or created in His Son. On the other hand, it is also essential for the revelation of God's love that there be two distinct sexes. By *creating* mankind in one human, and then by making or building the woman out of a part of him, God has wisely provided us with illustrations which reveal His *love* as well as His *power*.

MAN'S SWAY

Christ, the last Adam, the Antitype of the first, holds His high place by reason of His anointing with the oil of exultation *beyond* His partners. Because He has the fullness of God's *spirit*, He has the right to sway over all creation, and to subdue all that are opposed to the Deity. The same is true, in a minor measure of the first Adam, and of humanity, in relation to the creatures of the earth. And a fuller endowment with God's spirit, which will be ours when we are vivified by His presence, will raise the saints of today to sway over the celestial spheres with Him, in the future.

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, is a *Man*, and as such He is the Head, not only of humanity, and of the ecclesia, but of every sovereignty and authority among the celestial hosts as well (Col. 2:10). Indeed, the secret of Christ consists in His headship over *all*, that in the heavens and that on the earth (Eph.1:10). But why should a Man be given the place supreme? Indeed, why was it necessary for Him to *empty* Himself and descend from the highest height to the lowest depth, in order to sway over all? It is only when we see that the object of rule is not simply the *subjection* of God's creatures to Himself, but their heartfelt *reconciliation*, that we will understand the need of humiliation and suffering, as well as power in rule that is pleasing to God. In the final phase of rule God will not be *King*, but an affectionate *Father*.

CELESTIAL RULE

Man was not equipped to rule in the heavens at his creation. Neither physically nor spiritually was he able to subdue the celestial realms. A soulish body cannot even leave the earth and ascend into the empyrean without taking its environment with it. And the heavenly hosts are greater in power and might. This is doubly true since Adam offended

God, and man became a dying creature, with gradually diminishing vital powers. Indeed, he cannot even fulfill his earthly function, and subdue the creatures below him, even though he was created and endowed for this place. His spirit store is too small, and ebbs away.

Even Christ, our Lord, who had an abundance of holy spirit, was prepared for His future glories as the Head of every sovereignty and authority (Col.2:10) by His humiliation. Even He was perfected through sufferings (Heb. 2:10). Only those who have tasted of evil can realize and appreciate the good that God showers upon them, and only their hearts can respond in thankfulness and praise to Him. This might be called the priestly side of rule. It is the element in government which perfects it to the point where it will vanish in hearty obedience to God, as Father. Both the first and the last Adam, and the race which they head, must be prepared in the school of suffering for their function as rulers on earth and in the heavens, before their rule will be successful, and fulfill the purpose for which God created them.

PREPARATION FOR RULE

Therefore it is that the sovereignties and authorities now in the heavens, like mankind on the earth, are not able to subdue and subject all to God. Indeed, sin was introduced into Adam's race through an adversary from above. And so it is that Christ, the Saviour and future Sovereign of all, emptied Himself and descended to human form and humbled Himself to death to shameful crucifixion. This prepares Him to rule, not alone with might, but with sympathy and affection, and in such a way that all will not only be *subject* to God, but *reconciled* with Him. A corresponding experience is the necessary equipment of all the saints who will rule with Him, either on the earth or in the heavens. The lower we descend, the higher will we ascend. So it

is that those who will be with Him in His celestial glories, are now called upon, in spirit, to share His crucifixion.

Adam, as created, seems to have had sufficient superiority in spiritual power to subdue the lower creation, but he lost this with the advent of death and disintegration. Now there is only a feeble flicker of this left remaining. As a result, many of the animals are at enmity with man even as he has become the enemy of God. But this will be remedied at the advent of Christ, when man's sovereignty will be restored to him on the earth.

MAN A MEDIATOR

Man is a *mediator*. Christ became a Man in order to mediate between man and God. But humanity, in its turn is being used by God to reach and reconcile the rest of creation. The earth is the stage and the eons the story in the tragedy in which He is revealing Himself to the universe. In close accord with this is man's place in nature. He is neither a microbe nor a mammoth, but a medium in his physical makeup. He is not placed in the deep, nor yet in the air, but roams upon the surface of the earth.

Man was not created to rule over man. Human government was not instituted until after he had demonstrated his insubjection to his Subjector, God, before the deluge. The ideal and proper state for humanity is to be immediately subject to God, and so it will be in the consummation, when all will be obedient children of the Father. Indeed, rule of man over man is an impossibility, for, in that case, some must take the place of subjection to man, rather than rule. And usually this is the subordination of most men to a very few. Neither was man made like the Subjector merely to exalt him to a superior place. Rather man was given sway over a small portion of creation in order to reveal to himself and other creatures in the universe, the universal sway of the One to Whom he is likened.

Because man was made in the image and likeness of the Subjector we must not reason that he is the highest of God's creations. He is not. Spirit messengers are greater in strength and power than he (2 Peter 2:11). The heads of the heavenly host look down upon him. Michael and Gabriel far outshine him in their exalted station. Above all, our Lord Jesus Christ *humbled* Himself when He was found in fashion as a human (Phil.2:8).

The highest creatures are elevated to their position by spirit, not by flesh. Man's sway over the lower creation is his by right of spiritual preeminence, not by physical force. We might reason that the great monsters that God created (Gen.1:21) would soon dominate the scene and thrust man from his throne by their terrific strength. They certainly could destroy all the rest of the creation, including man, if it were a matter of muscle and bulk. Instead, they themselves were destroyed, and are now extinct. Only their bones remain as mute witnesses of the weakness of physical strength to sway over God's creation.

REVELATION OF GOD

Nevertheless, man's middle position gives him a vast advantage as the mediatorial messenger between God and His creation. Even Christ, the great creative Original (Rev.13:14), found it necessary to descend to human form in order to be completely furnished for His mediatorial office. Man is in sympathetic touch with all souls on the earth because he also suffers and dies. By his spirit he can reach the spirit sphere. And when a select company has been given spiritual bodies so they can leave the earth and reach the celestial spirits, then God will have a complete mediatorial staff equipped to reach the lowest and the highest creatures in His universe with the revelation of Himself, as given in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A. E. Knoch

Invigorated by God's Grace

DISPLAYS OF GOD'S POWER

GOD'S WORD gives witness to His power. Paul speaks of one such occasion in Romans 9:17. "For the scripture is saying to Pharaoh that 'For this selfsame thing I rouse you up, so that I should be displaying in you My power, and so that My name should be published in the entire earth.'"

Concerning this occurrence of God dealing with Pharaoh, John Essex wrote, "Yes this was a deliverance of God's people, not just from Pharaoh, but from all the forces of evil that were ranged behind Pharaoh at that time, and which undoubtedly sought the destruction of Israel as God's people. As a rescue operation, it became the standard of God's power to save His own, and as such it is mentioned over and over again in the sacred records concerning Israel. For that nation, it contains an assurance for the future. Though Israel might be persecuted to the limit, she could not be exterminated; the bush might burn with a fierce flame, but it would not be consumed.

"But surely there is still more behind the matter than this. If all that was at stake was the deliverance of God's people, why the succession of plagues? It was because the Egyptians worshipped a multitude of false gods and regarded all kinds of things as sacred. Each of the plagues attacked one or more of their gods and proved that the God of Moses was superior to them all!

"The things that the Egyptians worshipped became an abomination to them. The idol river, the Nile, was turned into blood in the first plague and became abhorrent. The goddess Hekt, with the head of a frog, could not prevent

swarms of these creatures invading the homes; the sacred scarab could not stop the invasion of beetles or flies; Ra, the sun-god, could not dispel the darkness that could be felt. Apis, the sacred bull, could not protect his species from the murrain. Not one of the gods of Egypt—not all the gods combined—could save the country's firstborns. When God pronounced the destruction of Egypt's firstborns, He said, 'Against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment. I am the Lord.' Yet He could save all the firstborns of Israel, and also deliver His own firstborn, the nation itself, for He spoke of Israel as 'My son, even My firstborn' (Ex.4:22)."[1]

TRANSCENDENT GREATNESS OF POWER

There is a record of God's power for us that exhibits many similarities to the account in Exodus while exceeding in greatness. "Therefore," writes Paul, "I also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him, the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for you to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and what *the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing,* in accord with the operation of the might of His strength, which is operative in the Christ, rousing Him from among the dead and seating Him at His right hand among the celestials, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending: and subjects all under His feet, and

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.60, pp.94,95.

gives Him, as Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all" (Eph.1:15-23).

What is the significance of this demonstration of God's power concerning which Paul writes to the Ephesians?

Just as God's deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt was an assurance for the future for them, this contains an assurance for the future for us. Here we are told concerning the power of God in rousing Christ from among the dead. This is our assurance that He has power over death (*cf* 1 Cor.6:14; Rom.4:25). Consequently sin and death have been dealt with through the power of God.

There are other similarities in these displays of divine power. Israel was slaving for the Egyptians; we were slaving for Sin (Rom.6:6). Moses was the physical instrument of God's deliverance of His people Israel; Jesus Christ is the physical Instrument of God for the deliverance of all creation. In Egypt God triumphed over all the so-called gods; Christ was roused from among the dead and seated among the celestials over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending.

RESTLESS IMPERMANENCE

The power of God displayed in Israel's passage through the sea has special meaning to us in our days. A. E. Knoch observed that the sea "is used to figure restless impermanence, as seen among the changing gentile nations, in this eon. It must be reckoned among the evil things which He uses as a background for the good."[2] In Exodus 14:21-31 we read about Yahweh's salvation of the children of Israel on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

The sea, figuring "restless impermanence" was held

2. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.46, p.227.

back by a strong wind. Since wind figures spirit we see here the power of God holding back the waters. All the time that the Israelites were passing through the sea they were totally dependent upon God's power for their salvation from death and for their safety.

While in this world, we who are God's chosen ones, like the Israelites, are in the midst of the restless impermanence figured by the sea. God's spirit through Jesus Christ keeps us while in this world through faith and the renewing of our minds through His Word. We are totally dependent upon His power for our salvation from death and for our safety. As Paul writes in 1 Timothy 1:12, "Grateful am I to Him Who *invigorates* me, Christ Jesus our Lord," so we are thanking God that Christ has become to us "the *power of God,* and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor.1:24).

A DISPLAY OF GOD'S PATIENCE

While we are in this present, restless impermanence, God has provided us a display of all His patience in Paul (1 Tim.1:15,16). As a pattern for those who are believing, Paul said, in writing to Timothy "Now you fully follow me in my teaching, motive purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance" (2 Tim.3:10). Each of these seven items involve revelations of God's power as displayed through God's patient dealings with Paul, the sinner.

Paul's *teaching* is built on the evangel, which he brought, which we accept, in which we stand and through which we are being saved (1 Cor.15:1-4). Paul was not ashamed of this evangel, "for it is *God's power* for salvation to everyone who is believing" (Rom.1:16). For to us who are being saved, the word of the cross is the *power of God* (1 Cor.1:18).

The *motivating* force in Paul, that which led him to action, was not something that originated in his mind. It was from God Who is operating in the believer to will as well as to work for the sake of God's delight (Phil.2:13).

"Yet, in the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace, which is in me, did not come to be for naught, but more exceedingly than all of them toil I—yet not I, but the grace of God which is with me" (1 Cor.15:10).

The power of God and the wisdom of God is displayed in the pattern of Paul's *purpose*. Hence we find the former proud and disdainful Pharisee writing to the Galatians, "Little children mine, with whom I am travailing again until Christ may be formed in you" (Gal.4:19). And in 2 Corinthians 4:11, he testified, "For we who are living are ever being given up to death because of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifest in our mortal flesh."

The next three items patterned by Paul and fully followed by Timothy are fruit of the spirit. *Faith, patience* and *love* are all included in the definition of this fruit in Galatians 5:22. It is in grace, through *faith* that we are saved (Eph.2:8), and it is in *believing* that God fills us with all joy and peace in the power of holy spirit (Rom. 15:13). God also endues us with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, for all endurance and *patience* with joy (Col.1:11,12). And the *love* of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is being given to us (Rom.5:5).

Endurance is a gift from God that is especially characteristic of our calling in this time of restless impermanence, and uniquely patterned by Paul. Of the 32 occurrences of this term in the New Testament, 16 are in the writings of Paul.

Paul certainly displayed endurance in bringing the evangel. In 2 Corinthians 6:4-10 he speaks of "much endurance" granted to him and empowered by God, "in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in blows, in jails, in turbulences, in toil, in vigils, in fasts." But besides endurance through such troubles as these, he testifies to "the power of God" in giving him endurance in heralding the word of truth "in

pureness, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in holy spirit, in love unfeigned."

What is the value of endurance? As with the apostle Paul, it arises out of affliction, but it leads to testedness (Rom.5:3-5). While enduring we are consoled through the Scriptures by the God of endurance and consolation, that with one accord, with one mouth we may be glorifying the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom.15:5,6).

Paul writes, "For all I am strong in Him Who invigorates me—Christ!" (Phil.4:13). The pattern that God produced in Paul is a pattern of God's power operating in one who is shown mercy and grace. So also, Paul speaks to us, as he did to Timothy, "You, then, child of mine, be invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.2:1). S. Cooper

REJOICING IN GRACE

Most seem to conceive of one's obtaining of the holy spirit, in a way similar to that of Simon, the magician. Like him, they "*infer* that the *gratuity* of God is [somehow] to be *acquired*" (*cp* Acts 8:20). Whenever one seeks to *acquire* the holy spirit—whether through money, faith, or some sort of fancied independent human "cooperation"—the principle is the same. Peter's testimony to those who would *represent* (whatever they might *say*) salvation in Christ as an acquisition for which men may qualify is: "Your heart is not straight in front of God. Repent, then, from this evil of yours" (Acts 8:21,22).

Most today do suppose that the holy spirit may be acquired—indeed that it must be acquired if it would be possessed at all—through the meeting of ultimately-human-dependent divine requirements. Such a notion can only be inferred, for the Scriptures do not say this, nor is this idea a corollary of anything which they do say. To the contrary, there is abundant Scriptural evidence which precludes the validity of any such notion. All such concepts dishonor the evangel of grace, and egregiously misrepresent the truth of Scripture.

May we be given eyes to see that God neither wants nor needs our help in order to bless us. If we would carry our own salvation into effect and save ourselves from much that would otherwise befall us, we would be mindful that we do so only according to His grace, for it is in His grace that we are what we are (1 Cor.15:10). J.R.C.

NOT BECOMING DIVERSELY YOKED

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GRACE UNDER LAW

Question:

My daughter is seriously considering marriage to a young man who is not a Christian. I am very mindful that believers are not to become diversely yoked with unbelievers. My daughter, however, is not too concerned with this. She has been raised in a believing home and exposed to much Bible teaching. She honors us, her parents, in our faith, and is a good daughter. If she does believe herself, however, she is, in any case, not active or (apparently) committed, having grown more "worldly-wise" in recent years. I long for my child truly to know Christ, and am deeply concerned for her welfare as a young adult. Can you help us?

Answer:

WELL, I certainly want to help you, and pray that what I share will be beneficial. And, too, I sympathize with you in your concerns and fears, having many of my own. The need for us all is to be built up together in faith and love. May we be relying on God, being mindful that He is the Saviour—the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers (1 Tim.4:10).

Though we long to see our families and friends receive the gift of faith, God's calling and one's membership in the body of Christ simply is not "up to us" to pass on to whomever we may wish. It is *God* Who places the members, each one of them, in the body according as *He* wills

(1 Cor.12:18). "For of what are you aware, O wife—if you will be saving your husband—or of what are you aware, O husband—if you will be saving your wife—*except as the Lord parts it to each?*" (1 Cor.7:16,17). We could as well say here, in your case, For of what are you aware, O mother—if you will be saving your daughter—except as the Lord parts it to her?

We do not know whom God has already chosen ("before the disruption of the world"; Eph.1:4) for membership in Christ's body and for life eonian. But we do know that whenever anyone genuinely believes and, due to God's work in him, truly finds Christ *choice,* he will surely decide accordingly (or rather, it will become evident that he has already done so).

There is so much weak talk today about getting "decisions for Christ" from those who give us no assurance that they honestly believe. Many, it seems, have only chosen the Christian "religion" or a certain church's activities, never having come to personal heart conviction concerning Christ Jesus Himself.

We are aware that faith is out of "tidings" (what is heard), yet the tidings, through a declaration of Christ (Rom. 10:17). So we want to share our faith with anyone who will give us the opportunity to do so. Still, it is only those whom God had already chosen long ago who will respond. As many as *were set* for life eonian—*they* are those who believe (Acts 13:48).

It is not just our faith in the distinctives of Paul's evangel that we would share with others, though these things are surely very important. First of all, we want to share our foundational faith that Jesus is the Christ, that He died for our sins, and that the Scriptures are the Word of God.

No one should be looked down upon for a moment for not believing. We cannot scientifically prove the vital elements of our faith even to ourselves, much less to others.

Therefore we should not act as if we could, or, conversely, feel guilty about not being able to do so. At the bottom line, *we simply believe,* and that is the end of the matter. We realize this appears foolish and unsatisfactory to unbelievers. How can it *not* be so from the perspective of the flesh? Faith is not sight, and sight is not faith. Yet the Lord declared, "Happy are those who are not perceiving and [yet] believe" (John 20:29).

We do not have empirical knowledge of our faith. In the Scriptures, whenever the things we accept by faith are spoken of as being our "knowledge," this is so in the elemental sense of that which is evident through the perception of the mind. Scriptural knowledge, however, is not knowledge in the empirical sense, what is based on scientific observation or experiment. However, like the one who possesses empirical knowledge of a subject, we assume (take to ourselves) the things we believe, and are convicted of them (*cf* Heb.11:1).

We become convinced, not because we have scientific evidence of our faith, but because of the convicting power of Scripture itself, through the holy spirit of God, which operates effectually in the hearts of God's chosen ones.

Now, in the matter of not becoming "diversely yoked" with unbelievers (2 Cor.6:14): We might first of all mention that it can be a great problem not only to be diversely yoked with unbelievers, but with either disinterested, intolerant, or markedly contrary-minded believers as well.

We especially think of this entreaty, and rightly so, in consideration of its application to marriage. Even so, this is by no means its only province. This is because any type of especially close, deep involvement with those who would pull us away from a more faithful walk, is bound to be a problem for us. This is due to the "diverse" pulls upon each person, "tuggings" which tug in very different directions, yet upon those who are "yoked" to one another.

We are weak enough as it is, in ourselves; at the very least, additional deterrents, instead of additional incentives, are simply disadvantageous to us in our walk of faith. Ideally, of course, before we even think of these obvious practical problems of diverse yoking, we should wish to avoid such involvements simply because God has said that this is what we should do.

The possession of such a laudable attitude here is certainly a gracious gift; yet it is one that is not possessed by all believers. Indeed, due to other constraints, many become diversely yoked with unbelievers even though they are not altogether unmindful of the inevitable problems this will bring them. Nevertheless, where such diverse yoking has occurred, rather than scorning those who have acted unwisely in this regard, we should be sympathetic and understanding, bearing one another's burdens, being mindful that each one must carry his own load (Gal.6:2-5).

Often, when a believer takes part intimately with an unbeliever, the unbeliever may be a commendable person, possessing many good traits. It does not follow from this, however, that Paul's entreaty to avoid diverse yoking should therefore be disregarded. Yet, such as in the case of those who are in love and are considering marriage, the apostle's counsel here can truly be a hard saying.

As is the case with all instruction for right behavior—such as being honest, peaceful, kind, humble, gracious and loving, not separating from a mate, or where separation has occurred, living singly and chastely—the entreaty not to become diversely yoked with unbelievers is ideal counsel. It advises the best course; indeed, the only faithful course.

Nevertheless, it may be that the heeding of a certain word of teaching as to upright behavior, though it be pleasing to God and of true benefit to the believer, may not be within the compass of one's present abilities: "I want all men to be as myself . . . . *but* each has his own *gracious gift* from

God, one indeed, thus, yet one thus" (1 Cor.7:7). This is simply to say that, at present, I may not be able to do what you can do; and you may not be able to do what I can do.

We must never lower God's standards so as to accommodate them to our weaknesses. Yet we are all very weak, and only have whatever strength He gives us. So, in light of the apostle's wise counsel, while we could never *advise* a believer to marry an unbeliever, we can certainly understand if one should do so. We are not in the other person's position, and can only try to share a word of advice and encouragement.

Whatever decisions we make reflect our present heart or state of mind; and, at the deepest level, this is what God has given us. We would seek to be faithful and we long to be true. Yet, "A man cannot get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27). We have nothing but what we have received (1 Cor.4:7), and so cannot boast in anything we have or do. His achievement are we (Eph.2:10).

At the deepest level of things, concerning your daughter, God will give the decision in the matter—whatever it may be, whatever accords with His intention and serves His wise purpose. This is so whether or not the decision that is made should be in accord with His revealed will. Whatever, then, your daughter may decide concerning marriage, we wish to give both you and her the assurance of our abiding friendship, desiring as well to assure our fellow believers of their completeness in Christ (Col.2:10), however they may decide concerning life's affairs. "As we have occasion, we are working for the good of all, yet specially for the family of faith" (Gal.6:10).

"So that, my beloved brethren, become settled, unmovable, superabounding in the work of the Lord always, being aware that your toil is not for naught *in the Lord*" (1 Cor.15:58).

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Question:

I don't see how it can be true that the salvation of those under law—who had to keep the law in order to be saved—can be, as you claim, a gospel of grace, as much so as that brought by Paul. After all, if the Israelite believers could only be saved if they kept the law and endured to the end, then there must have been a key human element in their salvation, which determined it. Yet you say that their salvation was wholly of God. How can this be so?

Answer:

There is much in our writings that cannot be grasped apart from the acceptance of the great truth that *all* is out of, through, and for God (Rom.11:36). We have many expositions on this theme, which I commend to you, with the prayer that God would grant you an awareness of this foundational revelation.

I would agree that there was "a key human element," in the salvation of the Circumcision saints. But in acknowledging this, I only mean to say that while their law obedience determined their salvation, it was the grace of God which determined their law obedience.

This is the key to the puzzle. I realize that this represents God as ultimately fully responsible for their salvation. But that is the very point of the fact that their salvation was *in* the grace of God, albeit *under* law and *through* law. I realize it follows that, therefore, in the end, the Israelite saints themselves were *not* responsible for their own salvation (since it was "of God").

I would like to stress that this only seems wrong initially, because of the mistaken religious notions and ethical ideas which we have long been taught. In due course,

upon accepting the evangel of grace, it will be those contrary religious notions and ethical ideas instead—which are wrong—which will then themselves seem wrong.

Not only the popular teachings of today about "eternal hell," but even the Scripture's own testimony and its many warnings concerning fiery judgment have made it difficult for most even to perceive, and, certainly, to find assurance in the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus. This difficulty is only compounded when it is observed that there are indeed quite a number of passages within the Circumcision writings which speak of the grace of God and the gratuity of the holy spirit and give assurance and expectation concerning salvation. This is so, even though these same writings also contain an abundance of fearful warnings and predict a terrible fate for the lawless and wicked.

Under the *gracious evangel* of the Circumcision (*cf* Rom. 11:4-6), it is, nonetheless, only "he who endures to the consummation [who] shall be saved" (Matt.24:13). In order to enter into the kingdom of the heavens, one must keep the precepts of God which are enjoined upon him (Matt. 5:17-20; 19:17). Even the disciples were warned concerning Gehenna and its "unextinguished fire" (Mark 9:43-48). Only those who *do* the will of God will enter into life and remain for the eon (Matt.7:21; 1 John 2:17).

The workers of lawlessness will be told by the Lord, "I never knew you! Depart from Me!" (Matt.7:23). Though "many will be seeking to enter," they "will not be strong enough" (Luke 13:24), and so will not be "deemed worthy" (Luke 20:35). In a word, "What a cramped gate and narrowed way is the one leading away into life, and few are those who are finding it" (Matt.7:14).

On the other hand—and with equal explicitness—the Lord declared, "Verily, verily, I am saying to you that he who is hearing My word and believing Him Who sends Me, has life eonian and is not coming into judging, but has

proceeded out of death into life" (John 5:24). "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who is beholding the Son and believing in Him may have life eonian and I shall be raising him in the last day" (John 6:40). Indeed, Peter instructed the chosen expatriates to "*expect perfectly* the *grace* which *is* being brought to you at the unveiling of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:13).

It is only when God is recognized, glorified, and thanked *as God* that we will be able to understand how these apparently contradictory sayings are actually entirely complementary. Indeed it was necessary for those of the evangel of the Circumcision to heed the law's precepts if they would enter into life. God, however, graciously fulfilled in His chosen ones all essential obedience (*cf* Isa.26:12; Heb.13: 20,21; Jude 24). They would have life eonian only if they obeyed; but their obedience was *due* solely to God's grace.

Therefore, all in Christ who had a part in the Circumcision calling heeded His words: "For this is the love of God, that we may be keeping His precepts. And His precepts are not heavy, for *all* that *is* begotten of God *is conquering* the world" (1 John 5:3,4a; *cp* John 3:15,16; 5:24; 6:37-40). Many others, however, rejected Him from the beginning or eventually renounced Him: "Out of us *they* come, but *they* were not of *us* for if *they* were of us, *they would have* remained with us" (1 John 2:19).

In the Circumcision calling, personal righteousness and endurance is *essential,* but it is not provided by man. Those in Christ of that calling, whether in the beginning or end of their life of faith, are saved entirely in grace, as much as ourselves. The throngs at large, some of whom had a certain recognition of Christ, must be distinguished from those who were truly chosen of God, "begotten anew," and "in Christ."

Such matters as these do not concern ourselves; it is a corruption of Paul's evangel to attempt to incorporate them

into his message, especially when the grace which alone can fulfill the essential obedience of that calling is denied.

Neither Acts 2:38 nor any other passage in which obedience is commanded is any exception to this principle. After repentance and baptism had occurred, for the pardon of their sins, it was still "the *gratuity* of the holy spirit," which the believing Jews obtained. Therefore, such antecedent obedience did not constitute the meeting of a "requirement" at all (much less, a humanly-controlled requirement), but instead was merely the essential behavior which was *suited to* the giving of the gratuity of the holy spirit during that administration.[1]

The obedience performed by the believing Jews at Pentecost was solely the result of the divine power, according to God's operations through Christ: "To you first, God, raising His Boy, commissions Him to *bless* you by *turning away* each of you from your wickedness" (Acts 3:26). Similarly, Saul of Tarsus who is now Paul the apostle, having been extricated from the people and from the nations, was commissioned by the Lord "to *open* their eyes, to *turn them about* from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God" (Acts 26:18). As with Christ Himself, under God, it is the apostle's responsibility to accomplish this commission. The work is the Lord's, and He is able to do it. "The word of God is living and *operative*" (Heb.4: 12a); and, through the power inherent in the evangel, this saving work continues on even today. J.R.C.

1. That which is granted in return for the meeting of a *requirement* is a reward or compensation. That which is granted *not* in return for the meeting of a requirement but simply in order to bless and give happiness, is a gratuity or gracious gift. The former is granted in consideration of obedience. The latter is granted apart from any consideration of obedience. This remains so even in cases such as this present one in which antecedent obedience—for other reasons—is *essential,* and, therefore, *imperative.*

THE GOAT ROCKS

24 + **It came** to ˡ**be, just as Saul returned from** following **after** the **Philistines,** +**that they** ˡ**told** › **him,** › **saying**–**, Behold, David** is **in** the **wilderness of En-gedi.** 2 +**So Saul** ˡ**took 3,000 men, chosen**ˡ **from all Israel, and** ˡ**went to seek** `**David and his men on** the sur**face of** the **rocks of the ibexes.** 3 + *on*Along **the way he** ˡ**came to** the stone **dike** sheepfolds for **the flock; and there** was a **cave** +**where Saul** ˡ**entered to overshadow** `**his feet.** +**Now David and his men** were **sitting in** the **recesses of the cave.**

4 + **David's men** ˡ**said to him,** *bd*This is **the day** of **which Yahweh said to you, Behold, I** am **giving** `**your enemy**ˡ **in**to **your hand;** + **you** may **do to him just as** seems ˡ**good in your eyes.** +**So David** ˡ**arose and** ˡ**cut** off *i*by **stealth** `the **hem of the robe** *w*that was **Saul's.** 5 + **It came** to ˡ**be afterward** +**that David's heart** ˡ**smote** `**him** *on*because *w* **he had cut** off `the **hem** 7**of the robe***cs* *w*that was **Saul's.** 6 +**Then** 7**David***cs* ˡ**said to his men, Far be it** ›**from me,** *f* **by Yahweh,** *if*that **I should do** `**this** ˙**thing to my lord,** › **Yahweh's anointed, to stretch** forth **my hand** *i*against **him, for he** is **Yahweh's anointed.** 7 + **David made** `**his men** 7ˡ**hearken**~ *i*to these **words and** did **not** *g*allow **them to rise** up ›**against Saul.** +**As** for **Saul, he got up from the cave and** ˡ**went** *i*on his **way.**

8 + **Afterward David** ˡ**got up and** came ˡ**forth from the cave;** + **he** ˡ**called after Saul,** › **saying**–**, My lord, the king!** +**When Saul** ˡ**looked** *af* **behind him,** + **David** ˡ**bowed** his **head and** ˡ**prostrated** him**self** with his **nostrils** to*d* the **earth.** 9 + **David** ˡ**said to Saul, Why** do **you** ˡ**hearken** `to the **words of**

*h*anyone who › **says**–**, Behold, David** is **seeking evil** against **you?** 10 **Behold,** ˙**this** ˙**day your eyes have seen** `*w*how **Yahweh has given you today in**to **my hand in** the **cave.** +**Yet** 7**I** ˡ**refused**~ **to kill you,** +**for** 7**I**~ ˡ**commiserated** *on*with **you.** + **I** ˡ**said, I shall not stretch** out **my hand** *i*against **my lord,** *t*since **he** is **Yahweh's anointed.** 11 +**Now my father, see,** *mr*yea **see** `the **hem of your robe in my hand; for** *i*when **I cut**– off `the **hem of your robe,** + **I** did **not kill you. Know and see that** there **is no evil** +**or transgression** *i*on **my hand, and I have not sinned** ›**against you;** +**yet you** are **hunting** `**my soul to take it.** 12 + **May Yahweh judge between me and** *bt* **you!** + May **Yahweh** take **vengeance** *f*upon **you** for **me,** +**yet my hand shall not** *b*be *i*against **you.** 13 **Just as the proverb of aforetime** ˡ**says, From** the **wicked** ones goes ˡ**forth wickedness.** +**Yet my hand shall not** *b*be *i*against **you.** 14 **After** *a*whom **has** the **king of Israel** gone **forth?** *af* *a*Whom are **you pursuing?** *af* A **dead**ˡ **cur?** *af* A **single flea?** 15 + **Yahweh will** *b*be › **Adjudicator, and He will** rightly **judge between me and** *bt* **you.** + **May He see and contend** `**my cause** +**with** ˡ**redress** for **me from your hand.**

16 + **It came** to ˡ**be, as David** *all*finished– › **speaking**– `**these** ˙**words to Saul,** +**that Saul** ˡ**said,** Is **this your voice, my son David? And Saul** ˡ**lifted** up **his voice and** ˡ**wept.** 17 + **He** ˡ**said to David, You** are more **righteous** *f*than **I; for you**´ **have requited me** with ˙**good,** +**yet I**´ **have requited you** with ˙**evil.** 18 +**As** for **you, you have told** me **today** `*w*how **you have** *d*dealt **well** `with **me;** `*w*although **Yahweh surrendered me in**to **your hand,** + **you** did **not kill me.** 19 + *t*When a **man** ˡ**finds** `**his enemy**ˡ 7**in distress***0*, **will he** *m*let **him go** *i*on his **way** with **goodness?** +**Therefore Yahweh, may He repay you** with **good** *u*for *w*what **you have done to me** ˙**this** ˙**day.** 20 + **Now behold, I know that you shall be king,** yea **king**–**, and** the **kingship of Israel will** *ri*prosper **in your hand.** 21 + **Now** do **swear to me** *i*by **Yahweh** that **you shall** *if*not **cut** off `**my seed after me** +**or** *if* **exterminate** `**my**

name from my father's house. 22 +**Then David** |**swore to Saul, And Saul** |**went to his house.** +**As** for **David and his men, they** went **up** *on*|**to the fastness.**

RESCUED FROM THE HAND OF SAUL

The superscription of Psalm 18 shows that it may be applied to many incidents in David's life: "Concerning the servant of Yahweh, concerning David, who spoke to Yahweh the words of this song on the day Yahweh rescued him from the palm of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul."

This psalm is a very appropriate reading to accompany 1 Samuel 24. Two verses of the psalm are especially reflected in the opening of the chapter. "En-gedi" means "fountain of the kid." This oasis town was located high on the mountain elevation, in an area known for numerous wild goats (CV, ibexes). Perennial streams and mild climate have caused some to describe it as a miniature paradise. In 1 Samuel 24:2, "on . . . the rocks of the ibexes" may be related to "The One poising my feet like hinds', and on my high-places He causes me to stand" (Psa.18:33). The "stone dike sheepfolds" may be referred to in Psalm 18:29: "So that by You I may run over a stone dike, and by my Elohim I may leap a barricade."

David had spent considerable time as a shepherd, and would be very familiar with the movements of animals in rugged terrain. Perhaps on his arrival to this area he had watched wild goats with swift agility scale the steep rock faces and, beyond an archer's reach, stand, contentedly chewing their cud, watching. It seems that, as David looked back on this event in his life, he likened the deliverance God gave him to the escape of the goats to their safe high places.

Many of the caves in the area simply appear as black holes. So dark are they inside, that someone approaching from outside can see nothing within, but someone

hiding inside could easily see anyone entering the cave. Saul entered the cave "to overshadow his feet." This is a euphemism for responding to the necessity of nature. Saul would have laid his cloak or robe aside, perhaps on some rock, providing the opportunity for David to cut a piece from it unnoticed.

INTERPRETING THE SITUATIONS OF LIFE

As soon as Saul returned from fighting the Philistines, someone told him of David's whereabouts (v.1). Saul looked upon such situations as a God-given opportunity to avenge himself of any supposed injustice (*cf* 23:19-22; 24:18,19). When Saul entered the cave, David's men whispered to him, "This is the day of which Yahweh said to you, Behold, I am giving your enemy into your hand; you may do to him just as seems good in your eyes" (24:4). The tables were turned. The fugitive, David, was presented with the opportunity to take vengeance on Saul and be freed from Saul's continual hounding. But David did not avail himself of the opportunity. David did not have the same disposition as Saul. David only cut a piece from Saul's robe, and then felt guilty for having done anything against the one God had anointed as king before him. Further, he restrained his men, who would gladly have killed Saul for him.

Saul had attempted to murder David many times. Surely, if anyone has ever had reason to seek personal revenge, David had reason. But David was self-controlled and submissive. He had previously been submissive to Saul as his king. And here he showed submission to God. Regardless of personal feelings and hardships, Saul was the one whom God had chosen to be king, and David would not attempt to modify God's schedule. It was not a question of what Saul had done. It was a question of what David would do. Would he move himself by force into the position God had promised him, or would he wait upon God?

VENGEANCE IS THE LORD'S

David won a battle we often lose. "I refused to kill you . . . . I said, I shall not stretch out my hand against my lord, since he is Yahweh's anointed . . . . May Yahweh judge between me and you! May Yahweh take vengeance upon you for me, yet my hand shall not be against you" (1 Sam.24:10-13). This was faithful waiting upon the Lord by David. "He is the One, El, Who is rendering vengeance for me, and He subdues the peoples under me, the One delivering me from my enemies . . . . From the man of violence have You rescued me" (Psa.18:47-48).

In our present era of grace, our instruction is to emulate conduct even higher than David's. We need not call, as David did, for God to judge between us. He will certainly judge all things. We would simply be gracious and wait upon Him. It requires grace to wait when there is nothing we can do. But it may be even more difficult to deal graciously in a situation of advantage, than in a situation of disadvantage.

"Bless those who are persecuting you: bless, and do not curse, . . . To no one render evil for evil, making ideal provision in the sight of all men, if possible that which comes out from yourselves. Being at peace with all mankind, beloved, you are not avenging yourselves, but be giving place to His indignation, for it is written, Mine is vengeance! I will repay! the Lord is saying. But 'If your enemy should be hungering, give him the morsel; if he should be thirsting, give him to drink; for in doing this you will be heaping embers of fire on his head.' Be not conquered by evil; but conquer evil with good" (Rom.12:14,17-21; *cf* Lev.19:18; Prov.25:21,22; Matt.5:38-45).

It is well and good to say we should not take vengeance. But to actually overcome our own fury, frustration and anger may be quite difficult. In fact the twenty-fifth chapter of 1 Samuel will show us that on another occasion, David failed in this respect. Yet God prevented him from carrying out his intentions.

An incident in the life of Jacob may illustrate for us the turning point where we begin to wait upon God rather than trying to resolve matters ourselves. Jacob and Esau present the struggle of flesh and spirit, much as do David and Saul. When Jacob returned from Laban, he did not send word to Esau to prepare for him the double portion which he was coming to claim. Rather, in fear, he sent gifts.

The night before meeting Esau, Jacob was left alone in the dark, struggling with a messenger of God. During the entire time of darkness, Jacob wrestled unsubmittingly. God patiently allowed this struggle, but when the time of enlightenment was come, the messenger touched Jacob's thigh, causing him to limp from that time on. Then the struggle changed from wrestling to clinging, and asking for a blessing. Then Jacob's name was changed to "Israel"—"straightened," or perhaps, "ruled, by El." Jacob was changed from the "heel-grabbing supplanter" to one made upright or ruled by God.

Jacob named that place "Peniel," meaning "facing El." He related his experience as "seeing Elohim" (Gen.32:30). In this name the idea of believing, faith and expectation is suggested. Of Abraham we read, "A father of many nations have I appointed you—*facing which, he believes it* of the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were—" (Rom.4:17).

"And irradiating him is the sun as he passes Peniel. Yet he is limping on his thigh" (Gen.32:31). Three thoughts are here woven together: 1. enlightenment; 2. realizing or seeing God; 3. weakening and inability of the flesh.

David faced Saul with the same humility with which Jacob faced Esau. He did not taunt Saul with the fact that Samuel had anointed him to be king in Saul's stead. He

showed no confidence in his own power, but referred to himself as "a dead cur," and, "a single flea" (1 Sam.24:14). Neither had he any confidence in the goodness, mercy, or dependability of Saul's word. He could count only on God. With Abraham, David believed that "what He has promised, He is able to do also" (Rom.4:21).

The apostle Paul teaches us the same lesson. When he had prayed for the removal of his splinter in the flesh, the Lord protested to him, "Sufficient for you is My grace, for My power in infirmity is being perfected." And Paul responded "With the greatest relish, then, will I rather be glorying in my infirmities, that the power of Christ should be tabernacling over me" (2 Cor.12:7-9). The thoughts of enlightenment, realization of God in Christ, and the weakness of the flesh are still interwoven. Dependence upon God to fulfill His own promises is the key.

SAUL BLESSES DAVID

Perhaps the most amazing aspect of this scenario is Saul's reaction to David's gracious conduct. He wept, he apologized, he declared that David was more righteous than he, he said he knew that David would become king of Israel, and he asked for mercy for his family under David's rule. Even though Saul's evil heart was not changed permanently, David's faithful conduct received a confirming witness that God would fulfill His promise that David would be Israel's king.

May we like Abraham believe that "what He has promised, He is able to do also" (Rom.4:21). May we like Jacob cease from our heel-grabbing to receive a greater blessing. May we like David wait in expectation and patience. May we like Paul emulate the disposition of our Lord, Jesus Christ and find that God's grace is sufficient for our every need.

J. Philip Scranton

FOR ALL MANKIND

IN the law God has demanded that which is right and perfect and good. This is also that which humanity cannot achieve. And this is that which God has achieved for humanity in the gift of His Son. God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord died for sinful and infirm humanity. Even though all of us sin, we are justified gratuitously in God's grace, through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:23,24). While we are still sinners Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8).

GOD'S POWER AND DIVINITY

In the evangel we are brought to perceive God as He has never before, from the time of creation itself, been manifested. Humanity as a whole fails to acknowledge the power and divinity of God as reflected by His creation (Rom.1:20,21). Yet now, in the grace of God, some are granted faith to see His righteousness and power and wisdom and love in the evangel of God concerning His Son (Rom.1:1-5,14-17).

What we learn is that the chaos of sin and the darkness of death, gripping the human race, cannot be cleared away by humanity. And the blessing of righteousness and joy of life immortal cannot be gained by us. Nevertheless God can and has gained these blessings in that swift and incisive and surprising act which He had specifically counseled (Acts 2:23), the death of His Son (Rom.5:6-11; 8:3,32).

In this act sin is put to death to be replaced by righteousness, and death itself is abolished to be replaced by

life. God is the One Who does this, not our works and not even our faithfulness, but God in the giving of His Son. This is the evangel *of God.*

The evangel of God is a true evangel. *Therefore* we can say that even as sin and death came into the world through the one man, Adam, gratuitously affecting the entire human race and leading to much woe and loss, so also righteousness and life come into the world through the One Man, Jesus Christ, which will also gratuitously affect the entire human race.

ROMANS 5:12

Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned . . . .

There is a surprising controversy among scholars about the sense of the word "therefore" in Romans 5:12. Many have difficulty in seeing how Romans 5:12-21 develops out of the preceding passages. Some suggest possible connections between the two sections, but even then the latter half of Romans 5 is hardly ever appreciated as a *conclusion* to all the preceding thoughts of Romans, as might be suggested by Paul's use of the Greek words *dia touto,* ("through-this," or "because-of-this"), usually rendered by the English word "therefore."

But Paul's thoughts are clearly expressed and clearly lead forward from the beginning of the epistle to the conclusions of Romans 5:12-21 and beyond. The good news of which Paul is not ashamed (Rom.1:16) is a message telling of God's righteousness in dealing with the great evil of universal, human unrighteousness. It speaks of gratuitous justification apart from any possibility of human boasting. It focuses on the faith of Jesus Christ in His death for sinners and the assurance of success exhibited in His resurrection.

All the key points of Romans 1:1-5:11 concerning right-

eousness and life and sin and death, concerning God's grace and the gratuity in Christ and concerning the entirety of the human race and the faith of Christ are brought together in the conclusions of Romans 5:12-21.

THE ONE MAN ADAM

That sin and death came through the one man Adam is the corollary of the truth that all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God. It is in Genesis 3 that we first learn of God's indignation revealed on human irreverence and injustice. There also after being introduced to the lessons taught by God's work of creation we first find humanity, "knowing God" but (in that they hearkened to the serpent) not glorifying or thanking Him "as God" (Rom.1: 20,21). It is not long afterwards that the corruption of the race becomes indisputable in the murder of Abel and the wickedness that led up to the deluge of Noah's day. Not even Seth and Enoch and Noah himself can escape the effects of Adam's disobedience. Consequently, "Not one is just, not even one." There is no way for any of us, by our own efforts, to avoid the condemnation of death and divine indignation (Rom.2:9).

This reference, in Romans 5:12, to race-wide condemnation is an important part of Paul's message in announcing the evangel of God. Not only does it establish the universal need of the evangel, but it also affords essential points of comparison and contrast with the achievements of God through the One, Jesus Christ.

In all of this the *gratuity* of Christ's work and the *fullness* of the blessing in the blessed achievement is brought on center stage. As we listen to Paul's words in Romans 5:12-21 we hear the apostle's previous words about the power of God and the righteousness of God in contrast to the infirmity of unrighteousness displayed in humanity. We hear his announcements of grace and gratuity in light

of universal human failure to do the right thing, whether under law or in human strength guided by conscience and nature. We hear above all else what the apostle has proclaimed concerning *Jesus Christ*, concerning His faith, concerning His death, concerning the shedding of His blood, concerning His obedience, and then concerning the glory of His resurrection out from among the dead.

Romans 5:12-21 is the summing up of all Paul's arguments for not being ashamed of the evangel.

SIN AND DEATH THROUGH ONE MAN

There is great resistance to Paul's message in Romans 5:12-21 even among those who believe that Christ died for their sakes. But there is no room for logical denial of his point that sin and death are both gratuitous and certain. Sin entered into the world through one human. Through this entrance of sin came death, and death then passed through into all mankind.

We may not like that idea, but there should be no doubt Paul teaches, in Romans 5:12, that sin and death are race-wide and unavoidable. And he does so as a recapitulation of Romans 1:18-3:20, which was already summed up in Romans 3:23.

What people today especially do not like about Romans 5:12 is that it traces this condition of sin and death to the one sin of Adam without qualification. As to the cause of corruption Adam's descendents are left out of the picture. As far as we are concerned, the condition of sinful mortality is gratuitous.

Furthermore, this claim that we are sinners and die because of Adam's sin is repeated no less than five more times: "By the offense of the one, the many died" (5:15). "The judgment is out of one [act of sinning] into condemnation" (5:16). "By the offense of the one, death reigns through the one" (5:17). "It was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation" (5:18). "Through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners" (5:19).

What Paul says here is so contrary to the dominant human philosophy of our day that many who see their own personal dependence on God's grace in the gift of His Son actually undercut the clarity of Paul's presentation of that message by unabashed compromise with this popular philosophy. In essence this widespread, secular viewpoint is, as noted above, one of denying God's "imperceptible power and divinity," as though human beings are little gods determining their own life and death issues by personal and independent action.

We may not like the idea that sin and death came into the world apart from what we have done, whether good or bad (*cp* Rom.9:11). We may think it is unfair and even insulting. It may well be our conviction that Paul's words here will encourage wickedness by their "fatalism." We may consider his thoughts dangerous if taken without qualification. Yet when all is said and done, in Romans 5:12 Paul clearly traces our sinfulness and mortality to one man who lived long before we were born. This inevitability of human failure and death has something important to say about God and about His evangel concerning His Son.

EVEN AS—THUS ALSO

Paul draws attention to the unavoidable effects Adam's offense has on the human race in order to show the certainty of the effects of Christ's obedience. This has been the theme all along in Romans. Paul has been writing about God's power and divinity, and we can never glorify or thank God as God if we think the great issues of righteousness and sin and of life and death are basically in our own hands.

Just as sin and death infected humanity gratuitously because of the sinful act of one man, so righteousness and

life will infuse humanity gratuitously because of the righteous act of One Man. "The grace of God and the gratuity in grace [is] of the One Man, Jesus Christ" (5:15). "It is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying" (Rom.5:18). "Through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (5:19).

These conclusions concerning God's grace in the gift of His Son are built on Paul's previous declarations concerning Christ. God's righteousness is manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.3:21). Sinners are justified gratuitously through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter (3:24,25). There is no room for human boasting (3:27). Jesus our Lord was given up because of our offenses and was roused because of our justifying (4:25). Christ died for the sake of the irreverent (5:6). While we are still sinners Christ died for our sakes (5:8). We are justified in His blood and shall be saved from indignation through Him (5:9). We were conciliated to God through the death of His Son (5:10).

However, Paul does not immediately complete the point of comparison begun in 5:12. Before speaking directly of God's grace in Christ the apostle dwells on the gratuitous effects of Adam's sin in verses 12 through 14. Just as he spent about one eighth of his letter establishing the point that all mankind are sinners (Rom.1:18-3:20,23), so also he takes time here in Romans 5 to establish the conclusion that sin and death came through Adam and are unavoidable (Rom.5:12-14).

Then in verses 15 through 19 the apostle carries out his pattern of comparison and contrast in a series of thoughts about Adam as type and Christ as Antitype. Here we are reminded that the effects of the grace and gratuity associated with Christ superabound in every way beyond the effects of Adam's offense (verse 15), that His grace had to deal with all offenses not just the one offense of Adam

(verse 16), and that there is, through Christ, a gift of "superabundance of grace" in contrast to the present reign of death (verse 17).

But it is in verses 18 and 19, beginning with the term "consequently," that Paul most directly completes the conclusion begun with the word "therefore" in 5:12. Here the "even as" in reference to Adam, which was introduced in verse 12, is finally set in parallel to a "thus also" in reference to Christ. Here we come to see clearly why Paul was so careful to draw attention in the opening chapters of Romans to the fact that every human being is a sinner.

ALL MANKIND

Paul's thought encompasses all mankind in Romans 1:18-3:20 and in 3:23. The disease of sin infects the entire race. That is the stark and sinister problem that Paul deliberately sets before us, at length, before he expounds the evangel. But why should Paul dwell on the race-wide extent of this miserable situation if the greater part, or any part at all, whether great or small, is left as it is, or made worse by an everlasting damnation, despite the faithfulness of Christ in dying for sinners? The evangel of God, revealing God's power, righteousness and love, would have then failed to address the enormity of the problem as presented by Paul.

But Paul now writes deliberately of "all mankind" in 5:12 and again in 5:18, and of the "many" who are dying, in verse 19. He does so because the evangel he is presenting gloriously and fully meets the dire need he has described. The blessings for the believer which Paul sets before us in Romans are dependent on the faithful obedience of Christ in His death on behalf of all sinners.

THE ONE AND THE ALL

Consequently it was through one offense that death came on all, and so all sinned (Rom.3:23; 5:12), and this leads

steadfastly to the condemnation of all mankind (Rom.2:9; 5:18). In Genesis 3:17-19 Elohim told Adam of the just effects of his disobedience, including grief and toil and death. Paul has noted these in Romans 1:18-3:20 and at one particular point spoke of God's "just statute" (JUST-*effect*) that those committing such unrighteous acts "are deserving of death" (Rom.1:32).

In Romans 5:18 Paul employs the same distinctive term, JUST-*effect,* rendered "just statute" in Romans 1:32 (and "just requirement" in 2:26), speaking now of God's gift of His Son for sinners. The term now refers, not to what God said and did in Genesis 3 or in Exodus 20 but to what God is saying and doing for sinners in the death of His Son (*cf* Rom.5:6-8). This just-effect, or "just award" is put in contrast to what Adam has done. Adam's sin was an offense against God, while Christ's death was the means for the revelation of God's righteousness in the justification of sinners (*cf* Rom.3:21,26,27). Adam's offense brings the condemnation characterized by grief and death infecting all humanity. The revelation of God's righteousness in Christ's faithful obedience to the death of the cross leads to the good of "life's justifying" for all humanity.

But there is not only a matter of contrast here. There are two great matters of likeness between what Adam did and Christ did, and Paul boldly draws our attention to them. Both Adam's act and Christ's act were *single* acts, and both single acts unavoidably affect *all mankind.* There is no getting around it. Nothing needs to be added to the one act of Christ, and what Christ has done in this one act results in life's justifying for all mankind.

THE ONE AND THE MANY

The multitudinous members of the human race, estimated at over twelve billion individuals (both living and dead) so far, are dramatically affected by two single individuals, Adam and Christ. Paul reaches a climax in Romans 5:19 in expounding the evangel of God. *Even as,* through the disobedience of the one man, these billions of human beings have been constituted sinners, *thus also,* through the obedience of the One, these same billions shall be constituted righteous.

We recoil in horror at the levels of depravity and corruption that have become rooted in the human constitution. We wonder how certain individuals can ever be justly made just. We cannot see how they could be saved, and often, in our human reasoning, would hardly want them saved. Can God save them, and would He want to save them?

Even without turning to 1 Timothy 2:4 and 4:9,10 (which certainly address these questions), we find enough in Romans 5:18,19, as the conclusion of all Paul has been saying about the evangel of God, to convince us apart from any trace of doubt. If one individual has been constituted less of a sinner than another, there is no way even such a "relatively righteous" sinner could be constituted truly righteous apart from the obedience of the One Man, Jesus Christ. And there is no way that the obedience of Christ could establish in righteousness a smaller "many" than the many who are constituted sinners through the disobedience of Adam.

Yes God wants the justification of all humanity. That He wills it and that He achieves it through the death of His Son is His evangel, revealing His righteousness and commending His love. This is the reason for the cross of Christ, the reward of Christ's faithfulness to the glory of God.

UNWORTHY PREJUDICE

If we could all rid ourselves of those disgraceful, ungodly and unscriptural dogmas of the past which distort what God has said, and then look at God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ afresh and without prejudice

we would be immensely saved in our lives today. For the evangel of God is God's power for salvation to those who are believing (Rom.1:16).

Yet believers often continue to hold unworthy prejudice toward unbelievers, as though our believing were an achievement apart from God's gracious giving (*cf* Phil. 1:29). The fact that we believe is something to be thankful for, not something to make us proud; on believing we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured (Eph.1:13,14). But that which has been procured is procured by God in and through His Son, and it cannot be negated. So also what God has done for sinners as a whole cannot be negated whether or not they presently believe. It is not a question of their sinfulness but of God's divinity.

It is not an excusing of sin to recognize that unbelievers who have not been granted faith, will and must eventually rejoice in what Christ has done for them (whether through faith or through sight). In the meantime they still must face judgment and condemnation. But the fact remains that Christ died for us all, and His obedience to the death of the cross must finally result in everyone, including present unbelievers, being constituted righteous.

The Unseen (Sheol or Hades), the second death, smoke of torment, destruction, perishing, being cut off, being condemned to Gehenna, none of these, nor even unbelief, can keep the achievements of Christ in His death and resurrection from being finally realized. Paul saw himself as the foremost of sinners, yet he was overwhelmed by the grace of our Lord (1 Tim.1:14-16). All believers are sinners saved in grace (Eph.2:8). How can we speak of God's judgments as eternal and without purpose, and set them against God's righteousness and love manifested in the death of Christ for sinners? How can we set the stubbornness of the human will against the will of God for the salvation of all mankind?

If lack of faith and condemnation in the lake of fire cannot keep the evangel from its full expression, even less can God's choice and call of Israel and the body of Christ for certain eonian blessings keep the truth of Romans 5:18, 19 from being realized. The death and resurrection of Christ have opened the way to righteousness and life for all.

A LIMITED ALL?

It is not only the false concept of an incomplete and provisional salvation that keeps the evangel of Romans 5:18, 19 from being appreciated. Some find in the reference to "those obtaining the superabundance of grace" (v.17) a pretext for limiting the "all mankind" of verse 18 and the "many" of verse 19. In this view "all mankind" are all those (select) human beings who obtain God's grace, that is, not all mankind absolutely.

I have tried to be fair with this argument. Still, it does strike me as being forced and contrary to sane principles of language and logic. Why should Paul speak of a limited group as "all mankind"? Why can he not speak of a limited group of human beings in verse 17 and the entirety of humanity in verses 18 and 19, even as he spoke of all mankind in verse 12 and of a limited group in verse 14? The "all mankind" of verse 18 connects directly with the "all mankind" of verse 12. This is verified by the connections of "consequently" with "therefore" in the two passages, by the uses of the word "one" and by the "even as" in verses 12 and 19.

But even more than these linguistic evidences, the evidence of Paul's cohesion of thought must convince us that Romans 5:18 and 19 proclaim good news for the whole of humanity.

Along with Paul's exactitude of expression there is a lively

exuberance which reflects his joyful zeal over this evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ. He begins with a high and all-embracing thought in Romans 5:12 and completes it in 5:18,19. But in the meantime he takes time in verses 13 and 14 to reinforce his point that all mankind are sinners, even those who lived before the law was given. He speaks of everyone without exception. And then in verses 15-17 he develops various aspects of the glory of God's remedy in the gift of His Son (it superabounds over the offense; it deals with all the many offenses of humanity; it includes superabundant grace for the believer).

The superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness which lead to reigning in life for the believer does not exhaust the gratuitous justification channeled through the deliverance in Christ Jesus for sinners. That we who believe shall be saved from indignation and be saved in Christ's life (Rom.5:9,10), does not and cannot limit the effects of Christ's death for sinners as a whole.

Hence Paul reaches a fitting climax with the exultant good news of Romans 5:18, 19. All mankind will enjoy life's justifying because of what Christ did on their behalf, and the many countless individuals who have been constituted sinners because of Adam's disobedience will be constituted righteous because of the obedience of Christ.

Let believers of the evangel hold fast to the evangel. It says that Christ died for the irreverent. It reveals God's righteousness in replacing the effects of Adam's sin by the effects of Christ's righteous obedience. It commends His love for sinners in the death of His Son. What God has achieved through our Lord Jesus Christ superabounds in all its effects of life and righteousness and salvation beyond what came through Adam, including death and sin and condemnation. And as for the scope of these effects, it cannot be less than the scope of the entire race, as the apostle Paul has now explicitly declared. D.H.H.

193 Editorial
195 The Forming of Adam
207 Questions Concerning Grace
217 Pledge of Our Allotment;
222 All Vivified in Christ
229 God Takes and Gives

SEPTEMBER, 2000

Volume XCI **Number 5**

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 2000
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-ONE

EDITORIAL

OUR EXPERIENCE in the flesh in this present life stands in contrast to our faith. What we *perceive* is not what we *believe* (*cf* 2 Cor.5:7). I was reminded of this again in preparing comments on 1 Corinthians 15:19 for this issue (see page 225). Paul was exposing the error that said "There is no resurrection of the dead," pointing out that "if we are having an expectation in Christ in this life only, more forlorn than all men are we."

The believer has accepted a message of justification in the blood of Christ, of conciliation through the death of God's Son, of victory and reigning and membership in the body of Christ which is the complement of the One Who is completing the all in all. These blessings in Christ are ours now in spirit, and certainly, as we believe them, they affect our present life with joy and peace, with assurance and thankfulness to God. But the full realization and experience of what we have in Christ must await the future. They are a matter of expectation for the life ahead.

Paul does not deny that we can expect blessings in Christ in this life. The evangel is God's power for salvation right now from ignorance and fear and despair and countless evils that plague humanity in general. But the measure of salvation we presently enjoy is by no means the full measure of salvation that Christ has gained for us and which we will be given in the coming day of deliverance. Today the blessings of faith and spiritual enlightenment are given in the midst of many troubles and weaknesses. In the oncoming eons the realized blessings of glory and grace will be enjoyed in vivified bodies conformed to the image of God's Son (Rom.8:29; Phil.3:21).

It is present salvation to realize the grace of God in truth (Col.1:6; see p.207). How much anxiety and despondency in present experience is left behind when we learn and believe that Christ died for our sins! But we also expect this appreciation of God's grace and the pleasure and strength arising from this appreciation of grace to be even more keen and true and joyful for us when we are always together with our Lord.

Similarly, acceptance that all is out of God and through Him and for Him (see p.229) fills our present lives with peace and assurance in accord with the measure of our awareness of this rich revelation. Surely that confidence in God will not only remain but become more pervasive and potent when our expectation is fully realized.

The present power of God's spirit in our lives, implanting faith and enlightening us as to God's ways and purposes, and reassuring us concerning His revelations will only give way to full and fully active realization when we are vivified, immortal and incorruptible. (I trust the reader will find much help concerning the operation and effects of God's spirit in the articles beginning on pages 195 and 217.) All that we have now in limited measure we will have and retain in fullness and perfection in that future day which God has prepared for us.

Consequently we would enjoy the blessed effects on our lives today of believing that Christ died for our sins and was roused from among the dead. How we need this evangel! How we need its encouragement in this life full of harassing discouragement! May the present appreciation of the joy, the peace and the power of the evangel of our salvation be increasing. But also let us not suppose that the value of the evangel stops here. The glory of the evangel will multiply to perfection in that day when its saving effects will constitute our very being.

D.H.H.

THE FORMING OF ADAM

2 [+]**Thus the heavens and the earth were** [\all]**finished, and all their host.** [2] [+] [i]**On the** [7]**sixth**[nc] **day Elohim** [\all]**finished His work** [w]**that He had** [d]**made; and He** [l]**ceased** [i]**on the seventh day from all His work** [w]**that He had** [d]**made.** [3] **And Elohim** [l]**blessed `the seventh day and** [l]**hallowed `it, for in it He ceased from all His work** [w]**that Elohim had created** [›]**by** [d]**making**[–] it**.**

[4] **These** are the **chronological** record**s of the heavens and the earth** [i]**when they** were **created**[–]**.**

In the **day** that **Yahweh Elohim** [d]**made**[–] **earth and heavens,** [5] [+] there [\b]**was not yet any shrub of the field** [i]**on earth, nor** had **any herbage of the field yet been** [l]**sprouting, for Yahweh Elohim had not** [c]**made** it **rain on the earth, and** there **was no human to serve `the ground.** [6] [+]**But mist** [l]**ascended from the earth and irrigated** `the **whole** surface **of the ground.** [7] [+]**Then Yahweh Elohim** [l]**formed `the human** out of **soil from the ground and** [l]**blew in**to **his nostrils** the **breath of life; and the human** [l]**became** [›] a **living soul.**

[8] [+] **Yahweh Elohim** [l]**planted** a **garden in Eden,** [f]**in** the **east, and there He** [\p]**put `the human whom He had formed.** [9] [+] [7]**Further**more[0] **Yahweh Elohim** [c]**made** [l]**sprout from the ground every tree desirable**[l] **to** the **sight and good for food,** [+]**with the tree of life in** the **middle of the garden, and** also the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil.**

[10] [+] There was a **river** flow**ing forth** [f]**out** of **Eden to irrigate `the garden;** [+] **from there it** [l]**parted and became** [›]

four headstreams**.** 11 The **name of the** first **one** is **Pishon; it** is **the** one **surrounding** `**the whole land of Havilah where the gold** is**.** 12 + **The gold of** ˙**that land** is $^{S}$**very**$^{n}$ **good;** ˙**pearl**s are there and ˙**onyx stones.** 13 + The **name of the** ˙**second river** is **Gihon; it** is **the** one **surrounding** `the **whole land of Cush.** 14 + The **name of the** ˙**third river** is **Hiddekel, it** is **the** one **going east of Ashur; and the** ˙**fourth river** ^{it} is the **Euphrates.**

TWO VIEWS

The *forming* of Adam (Gen.2:7) differs from the *making* or *creating* of humanity (Gen.1:26) in four principal particulars. The first deals with his beginning from the *celestial* side, the second from the *terrestrial*. He is made a subjector *like God* (1 Cor.15:27); then he is made a living soul *like* the *animals*. That is why the title, *Elohim* alone is used of his *creation*, while *Yahweh* is introduced in the later account of his *formation*. First humanity is *one*. Later the *sexes* are separated when the woman is formed. *Subjection*, at first, is over the *lower animals*. In the second it relates to the *woman*, and, by implication, includes the *family*. It is of a very different character. It will be well to consider all of these contrasts at some length.

The first division of Genesis (Gen.1:1-2:3) uses only the title God (*Elohim*, the Subjector or Placer), because it is confined to the *origin* and *subjection* of creation. In the second (Gen.2:4-50:26) the name Yahweh (Who is and Who was and Who will be) is added, because in it man is formed to be a living *soul*, which *experiences* the course of *events*, and the woman is built in order to *generate* the race as a basis for its *history*.

The object of the Scriptures is to reveal the Deity. In doing so, they gave Him *titles* appropriate to each *character* He assumes, to each *position* He takes in His relation to His creation, or action in which He is engaged on

its behalf. That is why the opening section of revelation is dominated by the title *Elohim*, the *Subjector*, for He it is Who creates the heavens and the earth, and the life upon the earth, culminating in humanity, which, *like* Him, is the subjector on the earth. All of this is closely connected with the idea of *space*, for it has to do with the *objects* which occupy the world.

YAHWEH ELOHIM

When *both* space and time are in view, the Scriptures combine the title, Elohim, with the Name, Yahweh. The concise, condensed, consecutive account of the earth's creation and restoration (1:1-2:3) gives place to a detailed, extended, involved record of the beginnings of human history, which occupies the rest of the scroll, and especially with the *incidents* and *time* connected with the first human. Instead of the *earth* or land as a whole, we consider the *ground* and the *soil* and the *garden*. Instead of the waters beneath and above and in the seas, we are concerned with the *rivers* and the *humidity* that irrigates the surface. More particularly we are informed that man is made of these parts of the earth. Instead of the *atmosphere* we are concerned with the *breath* which man must have in order to live.

The close association of the name *Yahweh* with the eons and the generations is seldom fully appreciated. To Moses He said, "This is My Name *for the eon*, and this the remembrance of Me for *generation* after *generation*" (Ex.3:15). The day of Yahweh coincides with Israel's thousand years of ascendancy. In the day of God this retires.

SOIL AND BREATH

The elements of which Adam was formed are worthy of close study. He was a composite of earth and heaven, the ground and the atmosphere, soil and breath. His body

is soil, his life is in his breath. The soil is a compound of the solid ground with the fluid water, and his breath of the atmospheric gases. So he is really a regrouping or formation of the same elements which were mingled together in the abyss of the ruined earth, which were subsequently separated into air, water and land on the first three days of restoration. But there was more than this. It was a *vital* combination. This is partly concealed in our popular translations.

The *vital* element in mankind comes, not from the earth, but from the *heavens*. Not only does the sun supply us with light and warmth, but it furnishes us with vitamins in foods which our organs can assimilate, and which sustain life. We not only see this and feel it and inhale it directly as we live, but our flesh and bones are made, not merely of inert minerals, but of sun-drenched ground, the surface of the land, disintegrated and vitalized by rays of sunshine and the oxygen of the air. This is hid from us by the usual rendering "dust" (Gen.2:7). Dust is composed of fine, dry particles of matter so light that it may be wafted away by the wind. It is not suited even to sustain verdure, unless combined with water to form *soil*. In fact it is harmful when breathed by the lungs.

SOILISH FLESH AND BLOOD

Not only was the first human *formed* of the soil, but he and all the rest of us continue *to build* and *renew* our bodies from the soil. As Paul says, the first man was *soilish*, the second Man is the Lord out of heaven. We now wear the image of the soilish, but we shall be wearing the image of the celestial. He goes on to characterize the soilish man as "flesh and blood" (1 Cor.15:47-50). The flesh is the substantial part of our frames which is built up and renewed by elements taken from the soil, mostly through the medium of plants, their roots and stalks and fruit and

seeds. The blood is the carrier of these substances from the digestive organs to the tissue of the flesh.

Plants are more soilish than animals. Their roots must be in immediate contact with the soil in order to live. Cut off from their native habitat and transferred to heaven would mean decay and death. In a lesser degree this is true of humanity as at present constituted. The ecclesia which is figured by Christ's body has a celestial destiny, but we could never live apart from the soil with our present bodies. They must be changed. The soilish must be transformed into celestial. We must derive our sustenance, our life, through other channels than the soil. As this is not the ultimate source, but only an intermediary, our life must come through the sun or direct from God Himself, through His spirit.

THE BREATH OF THE LIVING

The body unites humanity with the earth, but the spirit links us with the heavens. The flesh is tied down to the soil, which gives it substance; the breath associates it with spirit, which gives it life. When breathing ceases the spirit of life departs. The flesh remains, but gradually returns to the soil. The fact that a perfect body can be put to death, with all its parts intact, by merely shutting off the air, shows that the breath supplies the life. This is further confirmed by the fact that life can be restored to such a body if breathing can be renewed, as in the resuscitation of the drowned. Moreover, in miraculous resurrections, the decaying body can be restored, as in the case of Lazarus (John 11-12). The overwhelming proof is found in the death of our Lord, Whose mortally mutilated body saw no decay, and was resumed in resurrection, *without* the blood.

LIFE NOT IN THE BLOOD

Were the life in the blood (AV Gen.9:4), as is generally

supposed, we would expect our Lord, in resurrection life, to have a superabundance of blood. On the contrary, He had flesh and bones, but *no* blood whatever (Luke 24:39). His hands were pierced by the nails and His side by the spear, so that the blood flowed forth (Matt.27:49; John 19:34). It seems that all the blood was withdrawn, otherwise He could not have gone about with such open wounds. He showed them to His disciples, and, a week later, invited Thomas to thrust his hand into His side (John 20: 20,27). He had life, abundant life, without any blood. Since He had no blood, His body was not dependent on the soil for its sustenance. It was not soilish. It was celestial.

CHRIST EXHALED VITALITY

Our exhalation is poison now, but it will not be so in resurrection. Our Lord, though He had no blood, so could not derive His life from the atmosphere, nevertheless could *exhale life*! By this means it was that He imparted holy spirit to His apostles, and empowered them to fulfill their commission (John 20:21,22). This shows clearly that vital spirit power may be dispensed by God directly without the usual intermediate agencies such as the sun and the breath. It is His *spirit* that is the ultimate source of all life. At present it vivifies our *mortal* bodies by making its home in us (Rom.8:11). In the future it will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory (Phil.3:21). Then it will no longer be a *soilish* body but a *spiritual* one.

THREE FORMS OF LIFE

Three distinct forms of life were created on the earth, plant life and soul life and spirit life. They are alike in that they depend upon the soil for substance and upon the atmosphere for life. But plant life is fixed and motionless, without sensation. It is able to transform the soil into

organic food, containing vitamins, fit for the consumption and sustenance of soul life. Soul or sensation is in the blood. It is an intermediate form, dependent on plant life and the atmosphere. The blood is also a medium for carrying nourishment and oxygen to the organs of the body and for removing the waste. Spiritual life needs neither soil nor air nor blood, but depends on a direct, though intangible, connection with God's spirit, the source of all life. The body and the blood are like the wiring, the spirit like the electricity of a light.

BLOOD AND SENSATION

The inspired assertion that the soul is in the blood (Gen.9: 4) may be readily confirmed by experience. Cut off the supply of blood from any part of the body and it becomes numb. Feeling vanishes with the blood, even if the nerves, which some suppose are the seat of sensation, are not cut or impaired. Sensation returns as soon as the blood courses freely once more. This is the basis for the part that the blood plays in the sacrifices of Israel, and the death of the great anti-typical sacrifice. It explains why the carcass of a slain animal was to be drained of the blood (Lev.17:13). Once the blood is gone, physical suffering is impossible.

Sensation and *suffering* are essential factors in the revelation of God's grace and love. Relief from the experience of evil is cause for great thankfulness. It was with this in view that the first human was formed a living *soul*. Physical pleasure and pain are needed to acquaint us with the heights of happiness and the depths of despair. We would not be able to fully appreciate one without an experience of the other. Even then we could not respond to the love of God apart from the sufferings of Christ. When He came in the likeness of humanity and was found in fashion as a human (Phil.2:7,8), it was in order that He might *suffer*.

The blood of animals had to be poured out immediately in order to prevent suffering. Not so with the anti-typical Victim. He suffered to the end, for he retained His blood until after death. They could not take His life from Him even by crucifixion (John 10:18). He had to yield it up of Himself. We need not waste our sympathy on the animals slain in sacrifice on Jewish altars. They suffered little, if at all, for the first duty of the priest was to drain away the blood. After that suffering was impossible.

HUMAN LIFE

Since both animals and man are soul life, wherein does man differ from the other animals? So far as the soul goes, there seems to be nothing to distinguish them. Animals can feel and see and hear and smell, even as we can. In some cases they are not as sensitive as we are, but in others more so. An eagle can see further, some insects seem to have a wider hearing range, and bloodhounds certainly excel us in scent. Man and the lower animals are *alike* in respect to the *soul*, in nature as well as in revelation. The animals themselves are a higher expression of life than the plants, because they also have the breath of the spirit of life in a lower degree, than mankind.

Let us remember that, essentially, God is spirit. He is not merely *a* spirit, limited in place and power, but the life of all that lives. Hence He is the Source and Supply of spirit wherever it is found. Thus it is easy to see why all life and power is utterly dependent on Him and the impartation of His spirit. And the measure of this dispensation determines the nearness to Himself and the elevation above the balance of creation. Figuratively we might say that the measure of Himself that God has imparted to us fits us for our place in His universe. In Him we are living and moving and are (Acts 17:28).

In Scripture the distinction between humanity and the

animals is in *likeness* to the Subjector, so that man is to *sway* over the lower order of living souls, and is empowered by the act of Yahweh Elohim, when He Himself introduced the breath into his nostrils, which gave him a *spirit direct from the Creator*, beyond and superior to that possessed by his subjects. Man has a somewhat different physical form from other animals, but the difference between them as to size and shape and internal structure is not nearly so great as there is between the various classes of animals themselves. The vital distinction is *spiritual*, not physical. It consists in an extra endowment of spirit, which makes him more like the Creator, Who is spirit, and gives him his name Adam, or human, that is, Likeness.

BREATH OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE

Later on the phrase "breath of life" is amplified by inserting the word *spirit*. All soul life that expired in the deluge of Noah is described as having "the breath of the *spirit* of the living" in its nostrils (Gen.7:22 CV). This shows the close relation between *breath* and *spirit* in living souls, and their vital connection with life. So far as is revealed, the *bodies*, the flesh and blood of those drowned in the flood, were not mutilated in any manner, as is the case in strife or war, nor was death due to gradual decay. The water cut off the supply of air. It made breathing impossible. With the air the spirit left the body, and death ensued. In souls life is directly dependent on breath. The oxygen of the air is indispensable as fuel for feeding the life process, and preserving the spirit.

BREATH LIKE BLOOD

The breath is not literally the spirit, even as the blood is not actually the soul. As the soul of the flesh is dependent on the blood, so, perhaps, we may consider the breath as the carrier, the medium used by the spirit in soul life, such

as the animals and man possess on the earth. It is not necessary in a bloodless, spiritual body. Now, it cannot function without the blood to intervene between it and the flesh. Moreover, a special lung tissue is needed to transfer its oxygen to the blood and return the carbon to the air, for the outer skin is not fashioned for this purpose. As the digestive organs prepare the food for assimilation into the blood so the lungs bring the breath into contact with it and vitalize it so that it provides us with sensation.

MAN'S SWAY OVER ANIMALS AND SPIRITS

In this we can dimly perceive, not only the place of humanity, but God's purpose in regard to it, and the method He uses to prepare it for its final function at the consummation. Then will be perfected, not only its rule over the living souls on the earth, but a selection out of mankind will reign in the heavens. If we seek to seize and hold fast to the sequel that God has set before us, it will help us to endure the hardships of our present training period. Not only will the experience of evil humble us, but the sufferings we are called upon to bear will prepare us for a place of authority in the celestial kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Head of all sovereignty, not only on earth, but in the heavens also.

The vivification of Christ's mutilated, bloodless body, is one of the greatest exhibitions of the life-giving power of God's spirit. Not only was He alive, but, like Yahweh Elohim when imparting life to Adam and the race in Eden, He imparted holy spirit to His disciples by *exhaling* upon them (John 20:22). At Pentecost they received power by the spirit *coming upon* them by means of a violent *blast* (Acts 2:2,3). In the manifestations of the spirit *in connection with the earth*, it is usually associated with the air, the breath, a blast, for this is essential to soul life, and is the best illustration of God's vital energy which produces

life and provides power. But, apart from its physical manifestation in soul life and the special enduement given to humanity to raise it above the animals, it was not a permanent possession, but was present on special occasions, and for particular purposes.

In explaining the operation of God's spirit with Israel to Nicodemus, our Lord compared it to a blast of air. This is probably the best illustration that can be given, especially when we connect it with begettal, as He did, for it is not only a powerful, intangible *force*, but imparts *life*. Ezekiel's prophecy concerning Israel's regeneration uses a similar figure (Ezek.37:9). He says, "Come from the four winds, O spirit, and blow into these who were killed, so that they may live." They were no longer dry bones, but were covered with flesh and sinews, and encased in skin. But they had no life. This was figuratively imparted by *wind*. Literally, they began to *breathe*, even as Adam, when he first became a living soul.

The life imparted to Adam by means of the breath could not suffice our Lord in resurrection, for He had no blood, and, even if He had, He could never have ascended into the heavens, where there is no air. Neither can we live among the celestials equipped only with our present breath of life. So we find, in Paul's epistles, a much greater and more permanent supply of holy spirit than ever before. Even as the priests and prophets and kings and apostles and disciples were distinguished from the rest of mankind by special dispensations of God's spirit, so we are distinguished from them by becoming the *permanent home* of the holy spirit. At present we have only the earnest, but it is, at the same time, the seal of the fullness that is to follow.

So we see that "the breath of life" imparted to Adam was almost the last and lowest of a series of dispensations of life and power through God's spirit. This, however, was not sufficient for carrying out God's operations, so priests

and kings, prophets and apostles were empowered by the spirit to work His will. This raised them above the rest even as Adam was above the lower creation, for they are not only like God in respect to them, but are used by God to reach the God-like human race. And now He is imparting His spirit permanently, and will even transform our soulish bodies, such as Adam had, into spiritual frames so that we may become His intermediaries to the celestial hosts. Thus we, as the body of Christ, being most vitally and spiritually united to Him, will be the highest achievements of His holy spirit, to the glory of His grace.

Resurrection, the return of the spirit to the body is, perhaps, the greatest of all the miracles wrought by our Lord during His ministry. Dead and decaying Lazarus was called back to life by the spirit of His voice. But how much greater will it be when all of Israel's saints, long since returned to the soil, will be roused from their tombs after His advent? They will not return to mortal bodies, doomed to die again, but receive life eonian, until death itself is abolished. Their bodies will not continually decay and cause them to sin against their inclination. They will enjoy a perfect and perpetual life. In a word, they will be *vivified*. Yet we will not only be made *alive* beyond the reach of death but *transformed*. Our soilish, soulish bodies will become celestial and spiritual. Our infirm, mortal frames will become powerful and immortal. Not till then will we realize what it is to be *like* Him and *beloved* by Him. To Him be glory for the eons of the eons! A. E. Knoch

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It was with confidence in God and the work of His Son that **Frances Grifhorst,** of Marne, Michigan, endured long months of weakness and suffering, without complaint. She left her family and friends a rich testimony of faith, succumbing to death on September 6 at the age of 49. Yet, as she fervently believed, she will be vivified in her Lord's presence, and death itself will ultimately be abolished that God may be All in all.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING GRACE

❊

Question:

I have noted that, in various places within his writings, A. E. Knoch makes the claim that only the apostle Paul taught an evangel of "pure grace." But since Peter taught that the believing Jews were believing "through the *grace* of the Lord Jesus . . . . [and were] to be saved in a manner even as they" [those in association with Paul] (Acts 18:11), how can this claim of Mr. Knoch's be correct?

Answer:

Brother Knoch coined the expression "pure grace" (with respect to Paul's evangel alone) in an attempt succinctly to refer to several important points which relate to Paul's evangel.

Perhaps it would be best, first of all, to state what Mr. Knoch did *not* mean by this expression. He did not mean that the grace by which the Circumcision saints were saved was somehow impure or, alternatively, was not actually grace. Instead, he meant that, since, under the Circumcision calling, *to all appearances*, the basis of the believer's entrance into life was his own obedience to the law, many might well mistakenly conclude that such ones were not saved by grace at all.

In an attempt to contrast the Circumcision evangel—where works are essential to life eonian—to the Uncircumcision evangel—where works are *not* essential to life

eonian, Brother Knoch spoke of the latter message as a message of "*pure* grace." By this he meant that under the evangel of the Uncircumcision, eonian life is a matter of grace *alone*—grace *apart from* human obedience.

Throughout the Circumcision writings, however, eonian life is presented as a reward, a reward to be granted solely to those who are "*doers* of the word"; "everyone who is not *doing* righteousness is not of God" (1 John 3:10); "he who is *doing* the will of God is remaining for the eon" (1 John 2:17). Indeed, the Lord Himself declares to the "workers of lawlessness," "Depart from Me!" (Matt.7:23).

Nonetheless, with respect to those who were obedient, since all things are of God, we must realize that such ones only qualified themselves because of God's own operations in their lives, according to His *grace* (*cp* Rom.11:1-6). Since the basis of their obedience was the grace of God, this very grace—*not* the obedience which it produced—was the actual basis of their salvation.

Under Paul's evangel, however, insofar as membership in the body of Christ and the allotment of eonian life is concerned, human obedience has no place at all. In this respect, such questions as precisely which scriptural instructions apply to ourselves or what is the true nature of human volition, are entirely beside the point. Concerning our subject at hand, the point is this: "where sin increases, grace superexceeds . . . for life eonian" (Rom.5:20,21).

Consequently, it is evident that the most fundamental *difference* between Paul's evangel and the Circumcision evangel with respect to salvation from indignation and into life eonian, is that under Paul's evangel these very blessings *themselves* are gracious gifts, where under the Circumcision evangel they are rewards for obedience.

Conversely, the most fundamental *likeness* between Paul's evangel and the evangel of the Circumcision, is that under both of these callings salvation is solely for the *chosen*, and

is entirely a matter of the *grace* of God. The apostle's words are ever true: "It is not of him who is willing, nor of him who is racing, but of God, the Merciful" (Rom.9:16).

❊

Question:

I believe that the time of the rapture is very near, and that it is important that we make ourselves ready. I notice that you don't put much emphasis upon current events, unlike the prophecy teachers I am familiar with. They say that those who aren't living for the Lord will be left out, while you seem to be saying that even backslidden Christians will be saved. I appreciate your ministry, but admit that I am somewhat troubled by the teaching of unconditional grace.

Answer:

Actually, since grace is not out of works (*cf* Rom.11:6), therefore, there is no other kind of grace than "unconditional grace." I realize that the very idea of actual *grace* is foreign to most believers today. So I would like to suggest that to better familiarize ourselves with the grace of God, we give special attention to the words of Colossians 3:1-4: "If, then, you were roused together with Christ, be seeking that which is above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Be disposed to that which is above, not to that on the earth, for you died, and your life in hid together with Christ in God. *Whenever* Christ, our Life, should be manifested, *then* you also shall be manifested together with Him in glory."

How wonderful it is to know that we are so identified in the saving work of Christ, in His death and resurrection, that the apostle Paul speaks of us as *already* having been roused from among the dead ourselves. This is because our future vivification is absolutely *certain.* Hence, in a

figure, it is spoken of as already having occurred—that which is not, being affirmed as if it were (*cp* Rom.4:17). The likeness consists of this: Just as it is now impossible for any past event not to have already occurred, likewise, it is equally impossible for this particular event not to occur in the future, in God's own appointed time.

Let us not be distracted from the glorious and yet simple thought of Christ's actual appearing, by the extravagant claims of those who would insist upon its imminency, some even setting specific dates for the occurrence of the rapture. It is not that we believe that Christ will *not* return within the next few years, or are even inclined toward such an opinion. It is instead that we find *no vital identity* between current world events, including those in the Middle East, and those key events of Matthew 24 which will truly comprise the conclusion of the eon. Therefore, we find the great majority of popular, prophetic teachings to be more sensational than sound; more inciting than insightful. At best, these prognosticators are a distraction, if not a positive deterrent to faithful service.

Those who gratefully recognize and happily perceive the *grace* of God in all aspects of their own salvation—being justified "apart from law" (Rom.3;21)—do not need to be "stirred up" unto obedience by fearful warnings of impending judgment. Indeed, no such warnings apply to them, and it is a serious corruption of the evangel to claim otherwise. Instead, they need to be reminded of, and so invigorated by, the *grace* which is in Christ Jesus.

Besides, in a practical sense, in any event, the Lord's appearing *is* imminent, for all those who are put to repose in Him! Regardless of the time of the believer's death, whether many centuries ago, today, or in times ahead, *all* will be roused from the dead simultaneously. Then, the living believers, those who are surviving into the presence of the Lord, will all be snatched away at the same

time, together with those who until now had been dead, to meet the Lord in the air and thus always to be with Him (1 Thess.4:17).

Then "the dead" will no longer be dead; instead, they will be vivified! They will be immortal and incorruptible, conformed to the image of God's Son, their very bodies having been transfigured so as to conform to the body of Christ's glory. It will seem that the moment of death was the very moment of His appearing, even though, for the vast majority, this was not actually so. Let us not be robbed of (or even distracted from) the joy and certainty of this great truth by the reasonings of mere speculative chronologists. Indeed, in nearly all cases, such ones do not truly believe in either the resurrection of *the dead,* or in salvation by *grace* anyway. Yet it is the wonder and majesty of these revelations themselves—not mere matters of "timing"—which constitute the primary glory of the scriptural teaching concerning the presence of our gracious Lord.

Let us simply be "slaving for the living and true God, and . . . *waiting* for His Son out of the heavens, Whom He rouses from among the dead, Jesus, our Rescuer out of the coming indignation" (1 Thess.1:10). "For God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for our sakes, that, *whether we may be watching or drowsing,* we should be living at the same time together with Him" (1 Thess.5:9,10).

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Question:

For years I have been associated with prosperity teachers, who also put much emphasis on good health. While many in the movement are not prosperous or even very healthy, still, I think it is important to be "prospering and sound" (3 John 2). It seems to me that

even if this is "Circumcision teaching," you should put greater emphasis upon it, stressing that *we* need to *let* the word of Christ on this subject dwell in us richly (Col.3:16).

Answer:

I too think that it is important for us to be prospering and sound. But, I also think that the popular notion of what constitutes true prosperity and soundness is generally far from the mark.

In accord with what is ideal, John writes to his fellow Circumcision believers, that he is wishing that *they* "be prospering and sound, *according as your soul* is prospering." In English, the elements of "prosper" (*euodoō*) are WELL-WAY. It is wrong to practically equate "prosperity" with financial prosperity or wealth. This is merely common English usage; financial prosperity is not the central idea even of the English term "prosper," and it is certainly not the signification of the Greek *euodoō.* One who "prospers" is one who is in a state of "well-wayness" with respect to that which is in view.

It is important to note that John practically identifies prosperity and soundness here with "walking in *truth,*" adding that, "I am having no greater joy than this, that I am hearing of my children walking in *the truth.*"

Many whose *soul* is prospering as the result of good physical health and financial security, are by no means prospering as to truth. Yet prosperity in the truth of God is that true prosperity for which the apostle John longed on behalf of his fellow believers; and, that is the prosperity as well for which we should long. With respect to those whose principal plans and primary desires are, in fact, centered upon the acquisition of financial wealth, we can only say with Paul, "Now those intending to be rich are falling into a trial and a trap and the many foolish and harmful

desires which are swamping men in extermination and destruction" (1 Tim.6:9).

It is certainly true that we do well not only to wish for soundness and health, but to practice that which fosters soundness and health. Nevertheless, it is important to realize that while the word "soundness" does indeed refer to matters of "health," neither of these terms should be confined to physical well-being.

Both mental and physical training are ideal when engaged in with humility in a spirit of grace, being mindful that each one has his own gracious gift from God, one indeed, thus, yet one thus (*cf* 1 Cor.7:7). However, whenever we find our own good habits and self-discipline resulting in an increased measure of pridefulness within ourselves—even in the scorning of those less disciplined than ourselves—then it is evident that our own discipline is itself in need of greater discipline, for the sake of training in, so to say, the weightier matters of the law (*cp* Matt.23:23; Luke 11:42).

In the phrase, "Let the word of Christ be making its home in you richly" (Col.3:16), the idea is not "let" in the sense of "permit," but "let" in the sense of, "Let each one be fully assured in his own mind," or, "Let there be light." It is the imperative mood, not the thought of cooperation. The duty to obey is our own. We, who are nothing (Gal.6:9), are nonetheless given this imperative. It is *our* obligation to heed it. If we have any hope in doing so, however, it is not to be in ourselves. The confidence that we have is "through Christ toward God" (2 Cor.3:4). "Not that we are competent of ourselves, to reckon anything as out of ourselves [would be to err], but our competency is of God" (2 Cor.3:5). "*He,* then, Who is supplying you with the spirit, and operating works of power among you—[will be completing what He has undertaken]" (Gal.3:5; *cp* Gal.3:3).

Concerning the one who is infirm in the faith, the apostle declares,"He will be made to stand, for the Lord is

able to make him stand" (Rom.14.4). Patience will wait upon God, and for His appointed time. Similarly, Wisdom will shun all human help, while recognizing and accepting God's wise counsels as to "what must be" (Rom.8:26).

We simply wish to be meek and humble, to rely upon God instead of man, to boast in our Saviour instead of ourselves. It is not that we wish to be lax in the meantime, until God gives us further saving grace. Not at all. To the contrary, as in all things, we long to be faithful and we seek to be faithful. Indeed, we are thrilled that, in measure, we are faithful; and, we give God all the glory.

But when we fail, as we often do, we wish to recognize that this is because of what we are in ourselves. We are members of the old humanity. We sin because of what we are. We are flesh. "The disposition of the flesh is death . . . because the disposition of the flesh is enmity to God, for it is not subject to the law of God, for neither is it able" (Rom.8:6,7). Indeed, whenever we obey or disobey, we act due to a cause, and therefore must act as we do whenever we do act as we do.

Until we face and recognize this simple fact, we can never be humble of heart. Regardless of what we may say, so long as we finally see something of ourselves as the key to our problems, we are boasting in the flesh and not relying on God. The question is not what is popular, but what is true; it is not what "works," but what is faithful; not what seems right, but what actually is right.

Everyone wants to succeed, even those who have no interest at all in obeying God or in pleasing Him. No one enjoys the suffering which attends failure. Since all genuine believers have a new disposition and walk, it would seem that each one would have some measure of interest not merely in success, but in *faithfulness.* However, unless we have a greater desire to be faithful than merely to be successful, we will care more about success than faithfulness. Even if we have a considerable desire to be faithful, nonetheless, if our desire to succeed—to have what we want—is greater than our desire to be faithful, we will surely be disqualified as to the faith (2 Tim.3.1-7).

We may well attain a great many of our goals, even including an externally upright walk, while all the while being remarkably unfaithful. Unless our desire for faithfulness is greater than our desire for success, we will not enjoy the former even if we should have the latter in abundance. If we do not care *how* we succeed, we will never actually succeed at all. The only true success is found in faithfulness to God. Yet faithfulness is impossible apart from *the faith.*

Knowing the truth and loving the truth—while making some progress in pursuing righteousness even though falling far short of the ideal—is ever so much better than being ignorant of the truth or willfully repudiating what is actually true, even if we should manage to gratify many of our desires for success and happiness by so doing.

The withdrawal (or "apostasy") from the faith is inevitable, for the spirit is saying "explicitly" that it *will* occur (1 Tim.4:1,2; 2 Tim.3:1-13; 4:3,4). The only question, from the human standpoint, is whether we will be a part of it. Therefore, under God and in His grace, we wish to save ourselves from such a course (*cp* 1 Tim.4:1,16).

Paul's words to the Ephesian elders serve ideally as a solemn entreaty for us as well: "Now I am aware that, after I am out of reach, burdensome wolves will be entering among you, not sparing the flocklet. And from among yourselves will arise men, speaking perverse things to pull away disciples after themselves. Wherefore, watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I cease not admonishing each one with tears. And now I am committing you to God and to *the word of His grace*, which is able to edify and give the enjoyment of an allotment among all who have been hallowed" (Acts 20:29-32).

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Question:

The Bible says that "faith without works is dead." Therefore, how can you teach that we will be saved whether or not we practice good works?

Answer:

While it is always ideal to be believing, James explains that even so, "faith apart from works is dead" (James 2:20). A faith that fails to produce good deeds is certainly a "dead" faith. In a *practical* sense—for all the good that it *does*—it does not exist. This is obviously true, and the principle involved applies today as much as in any other era.

Indeed, if our subject is that of *practical* salvation—being saved out of our failings and then enduring in a commendable walk—we agree with James that such a "dead" faith (even if it should actually exist) cannot save us, it can exercise no saving influence upon us at all. Such a faith—a faith that does not do anything or affect us in any practical way—"*That* faith cannot save [us]" from following a most destructive course (*cp* James 2:14).

A satisfactory level of obedience and endurance is essential in the Circumcision calling, which is the province of James' ministry (*cp* James 1:1; 2:1,2,14). Under Paul's evangel, however, insofar as membership in the ecclesia and the provision of eonian life is concerned, not only is personal righteousness not essential, but it has no place at all. That is, our confidence is not in our obedience to law, but in Christ's obedience to God, even unto the death of the cross. We do not care to scrutinize days, but we long to realize Christ. For we know the *grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, being rich, because of us He became poor, that we, by His poverty, should be rich (2 Cor.8:9).

J.R.C.

PLEDGE OF OUR ALLOTMENT

AS BELIEVERS, we have emerged from the dire gloom of despair into the glorious enlightenment of conciliation. Yet a sense of anxiety may often persist. Anticipating such timidity, our loving Father has ensured approval and authority. Indeed, His declaration is: "That which the eye did not perceive and the ear did not hear, and to which the heart of man did not ascend—whatever God makes ready for those who are loving Him . . . *God reveals [these] through His spirit*, for the spirit is searching all, even the depths of God" (1 Cor.2:9,10).

How wonderful! God's own spirit invites and escorts us into His very heart, into the deep, deep recesses of His mighty purpose! Who could possibly have anticipated this gracious resolution of creation's dilemma? Those to whom this revelation was first entrusted could not have fully realized the glorious intention of such loving provision.

CONCILIATION

Paul's recorded letters to those in the city of Corinth, were, respectively, ". . . to the ecclesia of God which is in Corinth, hallowed in Christ Jesus, called saints, together with all in every place who invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." and ". . . to the ecclesia of God which is in Corinth, together with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia."

In that second recorded epistle to the ecclesia of Corinth, we, having the temerity to associate with Paul, are described by the apostle as ambassadors for Christ, beseeching, "Be

conciliated to God!" The wonder of such high honor is great encouragement. In his fine commentary on this, Brother A. E. Knoch writes as follows:

"God insists on being at peace with the world, no matter how they treated His Son, or Paul, or any of His ambassadors. He will withdraw us, His ambassadors, before He declares war, in the coming day of His indignation. What a marvelous token of His grace and love that *God* (not the sinner) does the beseeching now! Nothing can be so foreign to this evangel as a sinner praying to God, for it closes his ears to God's entreaties. We are ambassadors for the high court of heaven, proclaiming peace and conciliation. When the sinner receives the conciliation there is mutual reconciliation between him and God. Sinner, God is beseeching you, through us, 'Be conciliated to God!' Your sins are no hindrance, for He has made Christ a Sin Offering for our sakes that we may become God's righteousness in Him. There is nothing for you to do but to accept His proferred love. Simply thank and adore Him for His grace."[1]

SECRET

Revelations of God's gracious purpose are kept secret from all, save those for whom these are intended. For all others, they remain, in His wise counsel, untraceable. This conclusion might seem contrary to the above truths, but remember, even in this day of grace, Israel is yet apostate. Contrast this with the compassion of the apostle for his relatives according to the flesh (Rom.9:1-5), and the recorded pattern of the apostle's own ministry:

Residing in peace for eighteen months at Ephesus, Paul wrote to the saints in Corinth. Eventually, crossing over Macedonia, as far as Illyricum, he came there, in person. "Can we imagine his feelings as he approached

1. Concordant Commentary, p.271.

the city? How he shrank from being severe! Yet he must be severe, should it be necessary. Doubtless the majority would receive him with hearts full of joy and affection. But what of the rebellious minority? It was with such powerful emotions that he followed this [second recorded] epistle some months later."[2]

Many years were to elapse before Paul was brought as a prisoner before the governor, Porcius Festus, and King Agrippa. Establishing his innocence from the charges of breaking the laws of the Jews or defiling the sanctuary, he invoked his Roman citizenship and appealed to appear at the dais of Caesar. While awaiting trial as a prisoner in Rome, he was visited by many who were foremost of the Jews. He spoke plainly, "from morning till dusk." Some were persuaded, yet others disbelieved. He then declared that momentous revelation of Isaiah, and previously announced by our dear Lord (Acts 28:23-27; *cf* Isa.6:9,10; Matt.13:14,15).

Israel had rejected Yahweh, the Lord, and, through His apostles, the testimony of holy spirit. But what of this nation, who still, to this very day, are set aside in apostasy? What of those whom Jesus had addressed as "little children," and to whom He had promised so much? Heed the solemn words of our Lord: "For verily I am saying to you that many prophets and just men yearn to perceive what you are observing, and perceive not, and to hear what you are hearing, and hear not" (Matt.13:17).

We have learned from Scriptures that God is conciliating the world, and we know also that the promises made by our Lord concerning the establishing of the kingdom for Israel (Matt.19:28), will be faithfully confirmed to this people. Again, God's spirit guides us:

"For I am not willing for you to be ignorant of this secret,

2. Concordant Commentary, p.277.

brethren, lest you may be passing for prudent among yourselves, that callousness, in part, on Israel has come, until the complement of the nations may be entering. And thus all Israel shall be saved, according as it is written, 'Arriving out of Zion shall be the Rescuer. He will be turning away irreverence from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them, whenever I should be eliminating their sins.' As to the evangel, indeed, they are enemies because of you, yet, as to choice, they are beloved because of the fathers" (Rom.11:25-28).

FELLOW CITIZENS

Many of this nation, in addition to those in Corinth; Barnabas, Aquila and his wife, Priscilla, Apollos, and so many others who are referred to in the Roman epistle (16:5-16), happily responded to Paul's evangel of conciliation and so form part of the joint body of the ecclesia; members of the body of Christ (Eph.2:13-22).

While there is scant record of the apostle reaching out to those who were awaiting the promised glorious kingdom, we do read of resentment from some of these toward Paul's evangel. Notwithstanding Peter's bold and noble urging in the assembly (Acts 15:6-11), that both Jews and the nations are saved, not by law or ritual, but by grace alone, this was not understood or heeded. Even Peter himself denied it by his own acts soon afterwards (Gal.2:11-21). How courageous and stern was Paul's denunciation of such treachery: "But if ever we also, or a messenger out of heaven, should be bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you, let him be anathema! (1:8). How appalled he would be at the present corruption in Christendom!

MATCHLESS GRACE

Was not disclosure of God's gracious conciliation specifically intended to coincide with the calling of those

He had previously designated? Consequent on the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of His beloved Son, God intends, thus so graciously at this present time,to prepare this means of lovingly escorting His miserable, repentant, timid saints. How else may they be coaxed, weaned, and encouraged into the wonders of justification? It must initially seem incredible that we are members of the body. There is need for reassurance.

Conciliation! How may this be fully realized prior to a revelation of God's calling and justifying? What gracious order, leading still further to the wonderful assurance of glorification and immortality! To such heights we ascend, "Conformed to the body of His glory! (Phil.3:21). This is the earnest of the spirit in our hearts (2 Cor.1:22).

O condescension wonderful!
O boundless love surpassing thought!
That Christ the mighty Counsellor,
From heaven to earth salvation brought!

O love divine! O matchless grace!
O mercy flowing full and free!
With wondrous love and winning voice,
We hear Him whisper, "Come to Me."

O joy to know that He is mine,
This wondrous Friend, beyond compare!
O joy above all human joy,
He will a place for me prepare!

O peace that passeth human thought!
The peace of God so freely giv'n!
The world cannot this peace destroy,
This peace that fills the soul with heav'n!"

God's spirit testifies: This is indeed an acceptable era, a day of salvation!

Donald Fielding

ALL VIVIFIED IN CHRIST

THE fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians begins with the evangel. Once again, as he often does, Paul focuses our attention on that message which composed the foundation and characterized the spirit of his ministry. In his epistle to the Romans Paul shows us what makes the evangel so welcome to the sinner. There he lays down the basic teaching of the good news. But in his letters to the Corinthians, the apostle builds on the evangel that he had already brought, concentrating on the practical value the evangel has for the believers' current lives.

The evangel guided Paul's behavior every step of the way in bringing the evangel (1 Cor.9:12-23). It also directs the believer both in behavior and thinking. If there is schism, fleshly depravity, greed, selfishness and disorderliness, then it is the word of the cross, our faith that we were justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we are bought with a price—it is the evangel that corrects us and strengthens us in a more faithful walk (see, for example, 1 Cor.1:10-31; 4:16; 5:7; 6:11; 7:23; 8:11). It is a message that says *we* can do nothing to save ourselves, and so it fosters real dependency on God in the evangelist and in the evangelized. But it is also a message that says *God* has saved us; He has graciously delivered us from sin and death, in Christ Jesus, through His death and resurrection, and so in believing it we are strengthened in confidence in our God and roused to His praise. What is happening here is that we are being so affected by the message we believe that our lives become more and more attuned to faithfulness.

AN UNFAITHFUL CLAIM

What applies to sinful acts of the flesh also applies to failures in our thinking and our fleshly tendency to alter the truth as God has spoken it. There were those among the Corinthians who were saying there is no resurrection of the dead (1 Cor.15:12). Consequently in exposing the dangers of this unfaithful concept the apostle draws special attention to the evangel which he now expresses in clearest of terms: "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and . . . He was entombed, and . . . He has been roused the third day, according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3,4).

Those who have been evangelized need to be evangelized again and again. We cannot lose the justification that has been reckoned to us (Rom.4:11), but, on the other hand, we never lose our need to hear and stand in and retain the evangel which says that Christ died for our sins and was roused from the dead. Those who believe need to grow in believing and be established in faithfulness.

CHRIST HAS BEEN ROUSED

The resurrection of Christ is a pivotal point, fundamental to our faith in two directions, looking back to the cross and forward to immortal life. In truth our present believing, our life of faith, is vain, without purpose and value, if Christ has not been roused from among the dead. First of all, if Christ has not been roused, we are still in our sins (15:17). And also, if Christ has not been roused we are left forlorn and without expectation concerning the life to come (v.19).

CHRIST'S DEATH FOR OUR SINS

Christ *died* for our sins. This is well established in Romans where we learn that He *died* for the sake of the

irreverent (Rom.5:6), for sinners (5:8) who are now justified in His *blood* (5:9), and for enemies who are conciliated to God through the *death* of His Son (10). But we also learned in Romans that Christ "was roused *because of* our justifying" (4:25).

It was our offenses that resulted in Christ being given up to death, and it was our justifying that opened the way to the rousing of Christ. He was not roused in order to justify sinners but because justification had been established. He was roused because the sins of sinners had been dealt with successfully by His death.

We should not think of Christ's resurrection simply as a recovery out of a tragic circumstance. The death of Christ did not catch God by surprise, calling for new strategies and a rescue plan. God's Son was "given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). The resurrection of Christ which was also part of God's counsel is the exultant revelation that God's purpose for giving His Son for sinners has been achieved. This is why Paul has given a list of witnesses to the risen Christ immediately after and in connection with his restatement of the evangel in 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. The resurrected Christ was seen by over five hundred brethren and the apostles and Paul himself in a special revelation. This is not only evidence of God's power in giving life where there had been death, but is also the proof of the defeat of death and sin.

This is for all mankind, since all have sinned and all are dying. We have seen that the truth of race-wide justification is dramatically and thoroughly attested in the book of Romans. It was not the Corinthians' faith that gained their justification. It was the death of Christ that put away sin. Although it is true that, on believing the Corinthians were sealed with the holy spirit of promise (Eph.1:13), and, as believers, righteousness had been now put to their account (Rom.4:5,11,24), and in this respect they differed from the

unbeliever, nevertheless, what Christ did, He did for all. The sins of all the sinners of every era were dealt with by the faithful obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ.

FOR OUR EXPECTATION

But the evangel which announces that the sinner has been put to death in the death of Christ, also proclaims that there is now the certain and happy expectation of life in the future apart from sin. The death of Christ achieves the death of sin, and the resurrection of Christ announces that this is achieved and that the new life apart from sin and death is certain to come.

Hence Paul points out that if Christ has not been roused those who have died in Christ have perished (1 Cor.15:18), for this means the death of Christ would have failed of its object. And the apostle adds, "If we are having an expectation in Christ in this life only, more forlorn than all men are we" (1 Cor.15:19). The present life does not satisfy our hopes. We enjoy blessings in Christ, but these are in spirit and by faith. This is a time when our experience is often characterized by weakness and failure, standing in contrast to what we will enjoy in the future in Christ.

But, even as the death of Christ for sinners means that all mankind will eventually be constituted just, the resurrection of Christ points to a future which involves all humanity in life. Paul is writing to believers, and he has much to say about the implication of Christ's resurrection for us. We will be vivified in Christ's presence (15:23). Later in the chapter the apostle offers many details concerning our resurrection body and the change that will occur when we put on incorruption and immortality (15:35-53). But Paul startles the reader (or at least the reader today) by clearly connecting the truth of our future life in Christ with that of the future life of all. And that future life of all will also be *in Christ*. What Paul reveals about us here in 1 Corin-

thians 15 is associated with what is true of everyone. We will be vivified in Christ in His presence. Yet this is not the end of the glorious outcome of Christ's resurrection, which ultimately encompasses the vivification of all in Him.

VIVIFICATION

In 1 Corinthians 15:21,22, Paul reaches a crescendo of evangelical truth implied by the resurrection of Christ. "For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:21,22).

Here is the evangel worded in similar terms to Romans 5:12,18,19, but expressed anew in a context especially centered on the resurrection of Christ. The expectation of future glory which is opened up by Christ being roused from among the dead, in a resurrected body, embraces the view of all being vivified.

Later in this chapter Christ is described as a "vivifying Spirit" (1 Cor.15:45). This is said in a context speaking of the resurrection body as roused in glory, in power, a spiritual body (15:42-44). God *vivifies* our *mortal* bodies (Rom.8:11). This is more than a resurrection like that of Lazarus (John 11:43,44), for it is a rousing to life that is apart from mortality (1 Cor.15:53).

Indeed the comparison in 1 Corinthians 15:22 is between "dying" and "vivification," not between "death" and "resurrection." It is in Adam that we are dying; this speaks of our mortality, the process of weakness and decay that continues throughout our life and eventually leads to death. It is this condition of mortality that God puts to an end in the death of His Son and which He replaces with a life that is immortal and incorruptible, "in Christ," that is, by identifying the human being with Christ in His death *and* resurrection.

Although it may not have been apparent to any of us when we first believed, the undeniable implications of the rousing of Christ from among the dead include the certainty that all will eventually be, and must be, made alive, gloriously, powerfully, dominated by spirit, immortal and incorruptible. This of necessity is what will be when anyone is made alive *in Christ.* And Paul tells us here that this will be true of all.

This aspect of the evangel is important to us because it once again places the certainty of our expectation on the solid foundation of the work of Christ. We *know* that we will be vivified in Christ because all shall be vivified in Christ. Race-wide vivification is a certainty because it is accomplished by God Himself in the giving of His Son to death, and it is sealed by the resurrection of Christ out from among the dead.

We look at the human race with our eyes of flesh, and we tremble with weeping. We look at the human race with the eyes of faith, as pictured here in 1 Corinthians, and we tremble with happiness. Furthermore, we look at ourselves with the eyes of flesh and experience, and we tremble with doubts and dismay. But because we believe that Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing and the One in Whom all shall be vivified, we look at ourselves in Christ with the eyes of faith and are strengthened with assurance. All that God has said about our future life will come about because it is based on the death and resurrection of Christ.

THE BASIS OF UNIVERSAL VIVIFICATION

The basis for the ultimate vivification of all humanity is the death and resurrection of Christ. The evangel is the issue on which human destiny rests. If God is ever to achieve His will to save all mankind (1 Tim.2:4) and manifest His position as the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.

4:10), then it will be because Christ died for all, and, in accord with His resurrection with power from among the dead, all will be vivified in Him.

Judgment and the severity of condemnation, torment, destruction, the meaning of the Greek word *aiōnios*, issues of divine sovereignty and election, human will and choice, all of these are certainly related to human destiny, and they need to be faced and tested by the Scriptures. But at the very foundation of our considerations on this theme lies the revelation of God in the giving of His Son for sinners. The believer must let this evangel be the deciding factor in determining every issue of truth, not the least of which is God's purpose for humanity as a whole.

Revelation 20:11-15 speaks of condemnation of human beings into the lake of fire which is termed "the second death." But 1 Corinthians 15:22 speaks of all who are dying in Adam being vivified in Christ. God can and will raise certain, sinful human beings and condemn them on the basis of their acts. But because of what Christ did God can and will finally vivify all in Christ, on the basis of the cross of Christ, on the basis of the price He paid, on the basis of the justification gained in His blood, on the basis of Christ's death followed by the triumphant verification of the defeat of death which His resurrection affords.

For this to be true, which the evangel says is true, the Greek word *aiōnios* cannot mean "forever" or "eternal." Any chastening and destruction of human beings cannot be endless. They must be only steps in the process of experiences and events still to come, but they cannot last forever. They do not speak of the goal. Only that which God does in Christ can reveal to us what He has in view for the consummation.

God will vivify all *in Christ* to the end that God may be All in all.

D.H.H.

GOD TAKES AND GIVES

(1 Samuel 25)

25 + **Samuel** [l]**died, and all Israel** [l]**convened and** [l]**wailed for him.** + **They** [l]**entombed him in his home**land [i]**at Ramah.** +**Then David** [l]**arose and** went [l]**down to** the **wilderness of** [7]**Maon~.**

[2] + There was a **man in Maon,** +**yet his** [d]**business** was [i]**at Carmel.** + **The man** was **very wealthy;** + **he** [›]**had** a **flock of 3,000** sheep **and 1,000 goats;** +**now he** [lb]**was** [i] **shearing**– [`]**his flock** [i]**at Carmel.** [3] + **The man's name** was **Nabal, and his wife's name** was **Abigail.** + **The woman** was **of good intelligence and of lovely shape;** +**as** for **the man,** + **he** was a **Calebite, obstinate and evil** in his **actions.** [4] +**When David** [l]**heard in** the **wilderness that Nabal** was **shearing** [`]**his flock,** [5] + **David** [l]**sent ten lads.**

+ **David** [l]**said to** the **lads,** Go **up** to[d] **Carmel.** +**When you come to Nabal,** + **you will ask** [›] **him in my name for peace.** [6] **And thus you** must **say to ~my brother~,** + **Peace** to **you!** + **Peace** to **your house, and peace** to **all** [w]**that you** [›]**have!** [7] **And now,** [7]**behold**[0]**, I have heard that you** [›]**have shearers**[l]**. Now** [w] **your** [`]**shepherds**[l] [b]**were with us** [7]**in** the **wilderness**[0], and **we** did **not mistreat them, nor was anything** of **theirs** [n]**missed all** the **days they** [b]**were**– [i]**at Carmel.** [8] **Ask** [`]**your lads and they shall tell** [›] **you.** +**Hence may** [`]my **lads find favor in your eyes, for we have come on** a **good day.** Do **give** [pr]**now,** [`w]**whatever your hand may find, to your servants and to your son** [›] **David.** [9] +**So** when **David's lads** [l]**came,** + **they** [l]**spoke to Nabal according** to **all** [`]**these** [`]**words in** the **name** of David. +**When they** [l]**stopped,** [10] + **Nabal**

|answered `David's servants + |saying, [a]Who is David? And [a]who is the son of Jesse? Nowadays there are ¯many servants ˙who are breaching away, each one from the face of his lord. 11 + Should I take `my bread and `my [7]wine~ and `my slaughtered meat [w]that I have slaughtered for [7]the shearers| `of my sheep~[Q] and ¯give it to men whom I do not know from where they are!

12 +So David's lads |turned back to their way and |returned. + They |came and |told › him [as]about all ˙these ˙words. 13 +Then David |said to his men, Gird on, each man `his sword! And they |girded on, each man `his sword, +while David [mr]too |girded on `his sword. + [as]About 400 men went |up following David; +yet 200 [sit]remained [on]with the [all]gear.

14 + One young man [f]of the lads told › Nabal's wife Abigail, › saying¯, Behold, David sent messengers from the wilderness to bless `our lord; +but he |pounced [i]on them. 15 +Yet the men were very good to us, + we were not mistreated, and we did not [n]miss anything all the days that we went about `with them [i]when we [b]were¯ in the field. 16 They [b]were a wall [on]for us [mr]both by night [mr]and by day, all the days that we [b]were¯ with them grazing the flock. 17 + Now know this and [see]consider what you should do! For ˙evil has been [all]determined ›against our lord and [on]against all his household. + He is [f]too much of a son of decadence to speak¯ to him.

18 + Abigail |quickly + |took 200 loaves of bread, + two crocks of wine, + five [d]dressed| flocklings, + five seahs of toasted grain, + a hundred clusters of raisins and 200 pressed dried fig cakes, and [lpl]loaded them on the donkeys. 19 +Then she |said to her lads, Pass on before me! Behold me coming after you! +But she did not tell › her husband Nabal. 20 + It came to be that she was riding on the donkey and descending in the concealment of the mountain, + [bd]when David and his men happened¯ to be

descending toward her. +So she |encountered `them.

21 +As for David, he had said, [y]Surely for a false hope have I guarded `all [w]that this one ›had in the wilderness; + there was not anything [n]missed [f]of all [w]that belonged to him. +Yet he has |paid › me back evil [u]for good! 22 Thus may Elohim do to the enemies| of David, and thus may He add, if I [c]let |remain until ˙morning anyone [f]of all who are his, any man-child|.

23 +When Abigail |saw `David, + she |quickly + got |down off ˙her donkey, + |fell [7]before~[c] David on her face and |prostrated herself to the earth. 24 +When she |fell [on]at his feet, + she |said, [i]On me´, my lord, be the depravity! + I pray, let your maidservant speak in your ears! + Hear `the words of your maidservant! 25 I pray, let not my lord [lpl]set `his heart ›against ˙this man of ˙decadence, [on] Nabal; for as his name, so is he: Decadent is his name, and decadence is with him.

+As for me, your maidservant, I did not see `my lord's lads whom you sent. 26 And now, my lord, as Yahweh lives and as your soul lives, [w]since Yahweh has withheld you from coming¯ [i]to bloodshed and from [c]getting victory¯ for yourself by your own hand, + may now your enemies| and ˙those who seek| evil for my lord, become like Nabal. 27 +So now, let ˙this ˙blessing gift, which your maidservant has brought to my lord, + be given to the lads walking in the footsteps of my lord.

28 I pray, bear ›with the transgression of your maidservant! For Yahweh shall [d]grant, yea [d]grant¯ › my lord a sure| house, [t]because my lord is fighting the battles of Yahweh, and evil is not |found in you [f]throughout your days. 29 + Should [h]anyone rise up to pursue you and to seek `your soul, +then my lord's soul will come to be tied up| in the bundle of the living `with Yahweh your Elohim. +But `the soul of your enemies| He shall sling [it] out as [i]from the midst of the palm of the sling. 30 + It will come

to **be** [t]**when Yahweh** [l]**does for my lord according** to [`]**all the good** [w]**that He** [sp]**promised** [on]**concerning you, and commissions you** [>]**as governor over Israel,** 31 [+]**then this shall not** [b]**be for you** a cause **for remorse** [+]**or** [>] a **stumbling block** to the **heart** [>]**of my lord,** [+] [>]**by shedding**[–] **blood gratuitously and** [>]**by my lord**'s own [7]**hand**[0] [c]**getting victory**[–] **for him**self. [+]**When Yahweh has** [c]**dealt well** [>]**with my lord,** [+]**then you** must **remember** [`]**your maidservant!**

32 [+] **David** [l][sa]**replied to Abigail, Blessed**[l] be **Yahweh Elohim of Israel, Who sent you** [·]**this** [·]**day to meet me.** 33 [+] **Blessed**[l] be **your discretion, and blessed**[l] be **you who has detained me** [·]**this** [·]**day from coming**[–] [t]**to blood**shed **and** from [c]**getting victory**[–] **for my**self by **my** own **hand.** 34 [+] **Nevertheless,** as **Yahweh Elohim of Israel lives, Who has withheld me from** [c]**doing evil**[–] [`]to **you, for unless you had** [¯]**quickly** [+] [l]**come to meet me,** [t] **assuredly no man-child would have been left to Nabal until the morning light.** 35 [+]**Then David** [l]**took from her hand** [`][w]**what she had brought to him; and he said to her,** Go **up** [>]**in peace to your house! See, I have hearkened** [i]**to your voice** [+]**that I may lift** up **your face.**

36 [+]**When Abigail** [l]**came to Nabal,** [+] **behold, he** [>]**had** a **banquet in his house like** [·]a **king's banquet.** [+]**So Nabal's heart** felt **good** [on]**in him, and he** was **drunk unto excess.** [+]**So she** did **not tell** [>] **him** a **thing, small** [+]**or great, until the morning light.** 37 [+]**Yet it came** to [l]**be in** the **morning** [i]**when the wine** had gone **forth**[–] **from Nabal, and his wife** had [l]**told** [>] **him** [`]**these** [·]**things,** [+]**that his heart** [l]**died** [i] **within him, and he**[´] **became** [>]**like** a **stone.** 38 [+] **It** [l][b]**was** [as]**about ten** [·]**days** later [+]**that Yahweh** [l]**struck** [`]**Nabal and he** [l]**died.** 39 [+]**When David** [l]**heard that Nabal was dead,** [+] **he** [l]**said, Blessed**[l] be **Yahweh Who contended** [`]my **cause** concerning **my reproach from** the **hand of Nabal and kept** [`]**his servant back from evil.** [+]**For Yahweh has reversed** [`]the **evil of Nabal** [i]**on his** own **head.**

[+]**Then David** [l]**sent** word **and** [l][sp]**proposed** [i]**to Abigail to take her for him**self [>]**as** a **wife.** 40 [+]**So David's servants** [l]**came to Abigail** at[d] [·]**Carmel and** [l]**spoke to her,** [>] **saying**[–]**, David has sent us to you to take you for him**self [>]**as** a **wife.** 41 [+] **She** [l]**arose and** [l]**prostrated** her**self,** with her **nostrils** to[d] the **earth, and** [l]**said, Behold, your maidservant** is [>] a hand-**maid to wash** the **feet of my lord's servants.** 42 [+]**Then Abigail** [l]**quickly** [+] [l]**arose and** [l]**rode on** [·]her **donkey,** [+]**with five** of **her maidens** [·]**walking** [>]**at her feet.** [+]**Thus she** [l]**went after David's messengers and** [l]**became his** [>] **wife.**

43 **David had** [+]**also taken** [`]**Ahinoam from Jezreel; and** [mr]**so both of them** [l]**became his** [>] **wives.** 44 [+] **Saul had given** [`]**his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Palti son of Laish who** was **from Gallim.**

THE DEATH OF SAMUEL

This chapter tells one of the most captivating stories from the life of David. It has scenes of passion, suspense and romance, and at the same time it gloriously displays the hand of God in all that transpires. And amid all this, the narrative takes us one step further in the development of David for his role as God's anointed king.

In most abbreviated fashion, the first verse relates the death of Samuel. This was surely a blow to David. Samuel had anointed David king. David had fled to Samuel when he was alone and desperate with nowhere to go. Samuel was certainly a prominent, and perhaps solitary figure in the mind of David as one whom he revered and on whom he could depend.

Probably David could not publicly mourn this beloved mentor. His presence in public would have provided opportunity for Saul to attack him and would have endangered other mourners of the beloved Samuel. David was bereft of a stalwart of unparalleled spirituality.

The two closing verses of the chapter relate that David was further separated from the house of Saul. Saul gave

his daughter, Michal, David's wife, to Palti. If there had been any faint glimmering of a hope left in the heart and mind of David that somehow, finally, he would be reunited with Saul's house, this act extinguished that hope.

And so David lost a wife, and, in Samuel, a spiritual confidant. Yet God gave him both of these back in Abigail. She became his wife, and, as the story will show, she was blessed with wisdom and was one in whom David could confide.

RESPONDING TO LIFE'S CIRCUMSTANCES

In both the previous and following chapters David admirably restrains himself from taking vengeance on Saul. Yet sandwiched between these events we see his abject failure as he plans vengeance on the house of Nabal. David's inconsistency reminds us of our own.

Sheep shearing time was traditionally a time of feasting and rejoicing and generosity (*cp* v.7 with Gen.38:12*ff*; 2 Sam.13:23-29). David humbly requested a gift of provisions, at Nabal's discretion, in return for the protection David and his men had provided Nabal against marauding Philistines. Verses 14-17,21,22 show that David's men had truly provided such service, and that the gift requested was more than deserved.

Nabal was wealthy and could easily afford to be charitable to David. There is a contrast here between the homeless David and Nabal who had dwellings both in Maon and Carmel. But he answered David's messengers with arrogant disdain, degrading David as a vagrant rebel. When David's messengers related Nabal's response to him, he was incensed. "Surely for a false hope have I guarded all that this one had in the wilderness; there was not anything missed of all that belonged to him" (v.21). David ordered his men to prepare for battle that he might take vengeance on Nabal (25:12,13).

Meanwhile one of the servants of Nabal's household

related to Abigail Nabal's treatment of David's messengers and the service of David and his men in the wilderness. "Now know this and consider what you should do! For evil has been determined against our lord and against all his household" (v.17), said the servant. How the servant knew evil was determined is not told. Abigail hastily prepared a generous gift for David and his men.

THE HAND OF GOD

"It came to be that . . . she encountered them" (1 Sam. 25:20). Now begins a course of events, all of which are accredited to God, and all of which result from the responses of people to the circumstances around them and to their convictions and passions. There may have been several routes available to travel between Abigail and David, but they met in a small concealed valley between the mountains where their paths were forced to cross.

"Since Yahweh has withheld you from coming to bloodshed and from getting victory for yourself by your own hand" (v.26), were the words of Abigail upon meeting David. She took their meeting as an assurance that David's evil intentions would not come to fruition. Still she addressed him with deep humility and sincerity. She also presented her plea from the perspective of David's welfare and benefit, not just that of her own household.

In verses 32-34 David accredits Abigail's coming not to her fear, but to Yahweh. "Blessed be Yahweh . . . Who sent you this day to meet me" (v.32). He also sees that it was Yahweh Elohim Who kept him from doing evil. The changing of his mind may indeed have been implemented, from the relative standpoint, by the charming humility Abigail displayed. But it too was of Yahweh "Who has withheld me from doing evil" (v.34).

Neither the hand of Nabal nor the hand of David are independent of the hand of God. "Blessed be Yahweh

Who contended my cause concerning my reproach from evil. For Yahweh has reversed the evil of Nabal on his own head" (v.39).

Even the smallest and least significant elements of life are of Him Who is the Ultimate Cause of all. "Out of Him and through Him and for Him is all" (Rom.11:36). Nabal acted out of drunken arrogance and selfishness. David acted out of anger. Abigail acted out of fear and expediency. Someone spoke to Abigail, and we can only guess at their motives. Yet the Scripture says that all this was of God.

"All is of God." What does that mean? It does not mean that we are puppets. Neither does it mean that God intends for us to live our life apart from the passions and convictions and desires which are the ingredients of who and what we are. But it does mean that in the design of God's wisdom and power we are participants in the grand course of events through which God is making Himself known to His creation. And it means that no detail of our lives is void of purpose and lasting significance. "In Him we are living and moving and are" (Acts 17:28). Believing that all is of God enables and empowers us to live in humility and patience with joy and expectation. But to separate our actions and life from God is to rob us of reason and purpose for existence.

ROMANTIC ENCOUNTERS OF THE PATRIARCHS

There are some interesting comparisons to be made between David's divinely appointed tryst with Abigail, and those of some other of Israel's leaders. The encounters, when several of Israel's patriarchs met their wives, are recorded, and there are some surprising similarities between them. These accounts bear meaningful details that are relevant to the patriarch in view and to his relationship to the nation of Israel.

These encounters follow a similar arrangement of events,

with variations in each case. Jacob's scene seems to trace the standard in most detail (see Genesis 29). He was in a foreign land. He stopped at a well. He met a woman at the well. He draws water for the woman. The woman leaves speedily with glad tidings. The man and woman are married.

In Genesis 24 there is a similar scene for Isaac and Rebecca: the meeting at the well and the drawing of water, and the marriage that follows. So also in Exodus 2:15-22 we read of Moses' encounter with the daughters of the priest of Midian, one of whom he later married.

Jacob had to move a stone to water Laban's flock tended by Rachel. There were many stones in Jacob's life—stones for pillows and stones for memorials. And the heel-grabber who deceived to gain his brother's birthright was deceived on his wedding night, because the elder sister was to be married first. Further wrestling and deceiving characterized his career.

Moses "saved" and "rescued" the daughters of Reuel (Ex.2:17-18) and provided water for them. He was drawn out of the water, as his name indicates, and he saved Israel through the waters of the Red Sea and by providing water in the desert from the rock. Reuel's daughter's stressed the fact of his drawing water: "and, moreover, he drew, yea drew out water for us and let the flock drink" (Ex.2:19).

THE ESPOUSALS OF THE KINGS

In 1 Samuel 9 it seems as if a similar scene is about to unfold for us. Saul was searching for the lost donkeys of his father. He was about to become king of Israel. He was in the nation of Israel, but in an unfamiliar area. He came to a city and met maidens coming out to bail water (v.11). He learned from them of the presence of Samuel, the seer in the city, but then the scene seems to abort. No water was drawn. There is no flock or herd to be watered. There was no recognition or joyous reunion. No marriage followed.

With the kings, the new element of anointing was intimate to their espousal to Israel. But even Saul's anointing was done secretly (9:26-10:1). The whole scenario is shadowed by an ominous cloud of doubt that Saul's leadership and dynasty will ever be established.

On the other hand, there seems to be no espousal scene at all for David, just this divinely staged meeting with Abigail. He is indeed accredited with the capture of Zion by capturing the water access and supply—the spring of Gihon, from which Jerusalem drinks. But no maiden is met at a well or spring. All we see is Abigail, hurrying in fear and apprehension to meet David, then leaving in peace.

With Solomon is the most wonderful espousal scene—the Song of Songs. It is filled with beauty, fragrances, delicious tastes, pleasant touches and pleasing restful sounds. And it's final outcome is the satisfaction of the soul's yearnings.

Solomon was anointed king at Gihon, and the day of his anointing is called the day of his espousal (Song 3:11). Solomon means "peace," and Shulamite means "peaceful."

With Saul, there was no finding of his father's donkeys. He never corralled his stubbornness. He never completely delivered Israel from her foes. His dynasty was never established in Israel. There was no account given of his marriage.

But what of David? We have details concerning David and three of his wives, Michal, Abigail and Bathsheba, before marriage. In all of these encounters there is a unifying characteristic—bloodshed. David paid for the hand of Michal with the blood of two hundred Philistines (1 Sam.18:20-28). David met Abigail when intending to kill Nabal and all the males of his household. And David took Bathsheba after killing Uriah with the sword of the Ammonites. David's public career began with the killing of Goliath (1 Sam.17). He led the forces of Israel, warring with her enemies on every side, and finally liberating Israel from the Philistines—something none of the

judges nor Saul had been able to do. Because of David's sin, Nathan spoke God's word to him saying, "The sword shall not withdraw from your house for the eon" (2 Sam. 12:10). When David's kingship was finally established, he desired to build a house, or temple, for Yahweh. Yet God would not allow him to do so, because his life was characterized by so much bloodshed (1 Chron.22:6-11; 28:2,3).

Through this portion of David's life, he represents Christ as the suffering and rejected Messiah. It is appropriate, therefore, that he would not have an espousal scene that would depict a union of himself to Israel as her head. David's relationship to Israel was that of a replacement king. Saul was the first king, and so Israel should have been espoused to him. Paul's figure of speech in Romans 7 could be used here to describe the change in relationships. By death comes freedom from the law to become Another's (Rom.7:1-6). Similarly, David's wives were freed to become his on the basis of a death.

Still, a proposal is made at the hands of the servants of him who was anointed king (v.39). And though we do not see the well for drawing water, nor the flock standing ready to drink, she to whom the proposal came declares herself a handmaid, to wash the feet of her lord's servants (v.41). Then she arose quickly and departed to meet her betrothed (v.42).

Isaac was the son of promise. His passiveness shows that the promise is dependent on the One Who made the promise, not the one receiving the promise. Jacob, the heel-grabbing deceiver shows that no amount of cunning strategy can obtain what is graciously given to halting flesh. Moses shows that life and the promises are reached through death: the death of the Passover, and the death typified in the Red Sea. The course as a whole is: (1) God's promise, (2) man's ineffective wrestling to obtain the promise, (3) God's final deliverance in a salvation through death.

Kings personify rule. Saul shows that the flesh can never rule itself. David shows that those beloved to live out the struggle of flesh and faith will continually battle with the bloody uncleanness of the flesh. "The soul of the flesh, it is in the blood" (Lev.17:11). All that characterizes our life is linked back to the blood. Solomon brings us to a reign of peace, enjoyed when the struggling of the flesh is finished in its death. "Those of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together with its passions and lusts" (Gal.5:24). The course as a whole is: (1) failure of the flesh, (2) death of the flesh, (3) peace.

LESSONS OF THE SCENE

The practical lessons to be learned from this passage are many. The humility and sincerity of Abigail exhibit true beauty. David's turning away from wrath to wait upon God, and his thankfulness to God that he did so speak volumes. Nabal speaks to us of the foolishness and end of self-indulgence.

And perhaps we should also see here a beautiful picture of things to come. Samuel's death figures the death of Christ as a prophet. Israel is figured by Nabal, unaware and ignorant of the blessings provided by the anointed King they rejected, and Whose origin they questioned. Abigail would represent that remnant of Israel, meeting the Messiah in secret because Israel's leadership had rejected Christ. She exhibits the grace of those five prudent virgins with oil in their lamps who entered with the bridal party at Messiah's return. The list of provisions at Nabal's sheep-shearing begins with bread and wine. The list of provisions in Abigails blessing gift also begins with bread and wine. These suggest the provision of Christ for Israel and for the world. Nabal, in his death, represents those of Israel who will be cast out of the kingdom.

J. Philip Scranton

241 Editorial
245 Creature Complements
258 Believing and Understanding
271 Saul's Final Pursuit
277 That God May be All in All

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Volume XCI **Number 5**

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 2000
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-ONE

EDITORIAL

"LET GOD BE TRUE" and "He is faithful" are two scriptural principles that mean much to me in my life. The articles in this issue remind me of these principles at several points. The pattern of "complements" (see p.245) in the outworking of God's purposes are faithfully being carried forward. He is imparting faith to His chosen ones (see p.258). Human experiences may often seem so flawed and tragic (see p.271) that we are tempted to think they are outside of God's operations. But this is not so; they all are part of the great and faithful plan of God and have their contribution to that glorious enlightenment and fulfillment described by the words "God All in all" (see p.277).

With these principles in mind, I would like to present the following brief history and report concerning the preparation of the *Concordant Version of the Old Testament* (CVOT):

The initial work on our translation of the Hebrew and Aramaic Scriptures was undertaken by Vladimir Gelesnoff in the early 20th Century. Brother Gelesnoff "did considerable preparatory work of a critical nature," marking his Hebrew lexicon with suggested English terms for a new translation.[1] Judging from his writings he was especially concerned with the need for consistency in the use of these suggested terms. But his poor health ending in his death at age 43 in 1921 put the project in abeyance.

After Brother Gelesnoff's death, A. E. Knoch, who had begun work on the CV of the Greek Scriptures, made plans to resume the phase of the work which his co-edi-

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.13, p.76.

tor had begun, using the "concordant" principles that the two had developed.[2]

Under Brother Knoch's direction Hebrew-English interlinear sheets were prepared containing the Hebrew text typed in English letters from left to right with English standards and grammatical information written below by hand. The principal tool for searching out the occurrences of each original term was, and continues to be, *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance.*

Brother Knoch then inserted his idiomatic translation below the line containing the standards on most of the interlinear sheets. Through all these years Brother Knoch's major assistant was E. H. Clayton of England who considered many difficult translation problems with Brother Knoch. Brother Clayton gave special attention to grammatical details in both the Greek and Hebrew languages, writing out a multitude of notes on small slips of paper sent back and forth between California and England.[3] In later years he also began the job of typing the idiomatic translation for use by the linotype operator.

A. E. Knoch died in 1965 after the publication of the CV of Genesis and Isaiah. Reviewing Brother Knoch's many years of labor toward a completed Concordant Version, Brother Clayton wrote at that time, "God's grace always sustained, for the work had been begun in the fear and love of the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it had continued in His strength and the regard for the needs of the saints who looked to the inspired Scriptures God had given to humanity."[4]

The work went forward with the publication of Daniel in 1968. Also a facsimile edition of Brother Clayton's typewritten sheets of Jeremiah was issued.

2. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.56, p.125.
3. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.63, p.222.
4. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.56, p.129.

After Brother Clayton's death, the preparation of the CVOT was continued under the direction of Herman Rocke who soon began to get other co-workers, including myself, acquainted with this project. Many details needed re-checking, including consistency in translation and in indication of grammatical distinctions, especially with the verbs.

We prepared a thorough list of English words used for each Hebrew or Aramaic term as keyed to Englishman's Concordance. Emendations of the Hebrew text based on the Septuagint, Syriac and Hebrew manuscripts other than the Masoretic Text, and most importantly the Dead Sea Scrolls, called for careful review. (Only recently has all the information from the Dead Sea Scrolls and fragments been made available.) And beyond all these considerations, Brother Rocke was concerned that the idiomatic translation be made more readable, that is, more in accord with English idiom and syntax.

During these years the CV of Ezekiel, the Minor Prophets, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Psalms were published in booklet form. Also two short books, Ruth and Lamentations, were published in issues of *Unsearchable Riches.*

When Brother Rocke died in 1996, the review of the entire Old Testament translation was nearly complete. There are still details of consistency and idiom to be checked, especially in the Pentateuch, and much proofreading, but the tentative translation of the entire CVOT has been entered into computer storage. Most recently a notebook-sized, large-print booklet containing Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Song was produced from this stored information. Also the book of Job has appeared in sections in the magazine as also portions of 1 Samuel in the current issues.

Because of the great bulk of material needing to be

checked and corrected, with footnotes added, we cannot hope to publish the entire CVOT within the next five years. Judging from such outward conditions as the size of our staff, health and physical strength, I would despair of any hope for finishing the task even that soon. Yet I am encouraged that we can publish the "Former Prophets" (Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings) within the next few months. We have given special attention to this section in the past year and have it ready now except for an introduction, page headings and cover work.

Looking beyond this publication of the Former Prophets, I trust we can follow in a timely manner with those books not yet published in any form: 1 Chronicles through Esther, and perhaps also with our revision of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Besides the Version itself, we are aware of the need for a concordance of the CVOT. It seems to me that the best course at this point would be the publication of an index to *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance* based on our vocabulary "key" mentioned above. Yet of course all this is in God's hands.

Our small staff joins me in thanking all of you for your prayers and patience. And above all else we all can be thankful that God is true and faithful through and in spite of all our failures and weaknesses. D.H.H.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

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CREATURE COMPLEMENTS

(Genesis 2:15-25)

15 +**Then Yahweh Elohim** |**took** `**the human and** |**settled him in** the **garden of Eden to serve it and to keep it.** 16 + **Yahweh Elohim** |**instructed** *on* **the human,** › **saying**–**: From every tree of the garden you may eat,** yea **eat**–**.** 17 +**But** as *f*for the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you** must **nev**er |**eat from it; for** *i*on the **day you eat**– **from it,** to **die**– **you shall be dying.**

18 **And Yahweh Elohim** |**said:** It is **not good** for **the human** to *b*be– **alone** by **him**self**. I shall** *d*make **for him** a **helper as his complement.** 19 + **Yahweh Elohim** had |**formed from the ground every animal of the field and** `**every flyer of the heavens; and He** |**brought** each one **to the human to see what he** would |**call** › **it. And whatever the human** would |**call** › **it,** each **living soul, that** was **its name.** 20 +**So the human was calling** the **names** ›**of all** ·domestic **animals,** + ›**of** *7*all*cs* **flyers of the heavens and** ›**of all animals of the field; +yet for the human no***t* **helper was available as his complement.**

21 +**Then Yahweh Elohim caused** a **stupor** to |**fall on the human. +While he was sleeping,** + **He** |**took one** *f*of **his reproductive** organ**s and** |**closed** up the **flesh** over **its** *u*place**.** 22 + **Yahweh Elohim** |**built** `**the reproductive**– organ *w*that **He had taken from the human** in**to** a **woman and** |**brought her to the human.** 23 + **The human** |**said: This** *du*time**,** it is **bone** *f*of **my bones and flesh** *f*of **my flesh.** › **This shall be called woman, for this was taken from** *7*her*n* **man.**

24 **Therefore** a **man shall forsake** `**his father and** `**his mother;** + **he will cling** *i*to **his wife, and** *7*both **of them***nc*

will [b]be [›] one flesh. [25] [+] Both of them [lb]were naked, the human and his wife; [+]yet they were not [l]ashamed.

GOD MAKES A COMPLEMENT FOR ADAM

"It is not good for the human to be alone by himself. I shall make for him a helper as his *complement*" (Gen.2:18). God Himself was once alone, so He created Christ as His complement (Col.1:19; 2:9). Christ also was once alone, so He was given His figurative body, the saints of the present secret administration, as His complement (Eph.4:13), and His figurative bride, believing Israel, fulfills this function on the earth. The physical complement given to the first man should help us to apprehend the same truth in the spirit realm, as connected with God and Christ. Adam's was not a singular incident in human history, but is being repeated continually before our eyes and in our experience. The sexes are not a mere method of continuing the human race, but are primarily a parable of the relation between God and His creatures.

In a very profound sense, this statement is the most remarkable and revealing expression in this record of the beginning. It is the first intimation of *feeling,* of *affection,* of *love*, as expressed in the desire for companionship. We have been overwhelmed with the divine exhibitions of power and wisdom in creation and restoration, but so far there has been no intimation of God's inmost essence, which would tell us *why* He made all these marvels. Indeed, they do show us that He is *spirit,* but they do not reveal that He is *love.* After all is finished and pronounced very good, Yahweh Elohim finds a lack in the highest and most perfect of earth's creatures, and, by means of the tree in the midst of the garden, intimates that the history of mankind, is concerned with *evil* as well as good.

One of the very striking contrasts between the creation accounts and the later record is connected with the word

good. At first we read again and again that the light, and the heavens, and the land and the herbage and the luminaries and the animals are *good.* Then we are told that all of it is *very* good (1:31). This is said only of the *gold* in the second section (2:12). There we read of the tree of the knowledge of good *and evil* (2:9,17). Then we read of the human that his solitary state was *not good* (2:18). From then on most of the history of mankind is concerned with *evil,* rather than with good. This is no contradiction. In one case the *good* applies to the *work of God.* The other deals with the *history of mankind* during the eons of evil, in which this is used by God to produce a much greater spiritual good, and fits man to fill the need that God feels in fellowship with His creatures. That is the ultimate good.

GOD ALONE

Love is lonely when it is alone, with no object upon which to lavish its affection, or to reciprocate in kind. How many of mankind have felt the longing for a kindred spirit to rejoice with them in joy, and to sympathize with them in sorrow! The brightest pages of history are those which portray the unselfish sacrifice and the severe suffering endured for love's sweet sake. The earliest and greatest event in the history of the universe had its roots in the Deity's desire for love responsive. And the last and culminating consummation will see the realization of this longing, when God has transformed the enmity of His creatures into deepest filial affection.

ADAM ALONE

Adam lacked companionship. He was fully supplied with everything needed for life and comfort. Far more than that, the name of the garden in which he was placed shows that he lived in *luxury,* for that is what *Eden* means in Hebrew. The AV renders it *pleasure, delight, delicacies,*

as a common noun. Adam had almost everything which men covet today, for which they spend their time and strength, their wealth and health. His surroundings were ideal. His food was not only sufficient but delicious. He had work to keep him occupied and strength to do it. All that he lacked was the fond fellowship of a kindred soul. His *body* was amply provided for, but his *heart* was still *hungry.* God Himself had known this before creation, so He saw that it was not good.

ANIMALS NO COMPLEMENT

God knew very well that there was no satisfactory companion for the human among the animals, but He wished Adam to discover this for himself, and, at the same time, put before him, and all his descendants, an illustration of the manner in which He satisfies the hearts of His creatures. God had already made the animals of the ground and of the air, so these were brought to the human and named by him. He evidently had such an intuitive knowledge of their characteristics that he was able to give them an appropriate appellation. It may be that some of these are still preserved in Hebrew, such as the partridge, which is called *qra,* from its *call.* Indeed, this name is used for the stem CALL, as in Genesis 1:5, "the darkness He *calls* [*qra*] night." If only all the animals had descriptive names today! They would make zoology as delightful a study as nature. This example may also show how natural is the original language of revelation.

A HELP "MEET" FOR HIM

What is the force of the AV rendering, "an help *meet* for him?" The expression "meet" is vague, and suggests *suitable, fit, proper,* and the like. The Septuagint renders it, literally, *according to,* in the first instance, and *like* in the second. Both of these are probably included in the Hebrew

expression, which is made up of two words AS and FRONT. As these are the only two occurrences of this combination, we cannot deduce or confirm the sense by means of other contexts, so must make full use of this one. The sense is not satisfied if we render it simply *like,* for the woman was to fill a *lack* that Adam felt. This calls for a measure of likeness, but also demands difference, for the two became one flesh. In English the most suitable term to describe this is *complement,* which denotes the part that completes or perfects the whole.

As there was no suitable complement for the human among the animals, where could one be found? We may be sure that non-earthly, spirit creatures would not fill the need, for they were more unlike the human than the animals. *Likeness* is the vital feature of a complement, and it must fill a *lack.* But the human had no physical lack, and there was no other soul sufficiently *like* him, for God had endowed him with more spirit than they. The only possible course was to fulfill both of these conditions by taking the complement *out of him.* The female part of him was removed and built into another human *like* him and *completing* him, so that the two together, although two bodies, are one flesh, and are needed to make a complete human.

OUT OF GOD

Can we not see a similarity here to that primeval position which called forth creation in the beginning? As God could find nothing to satisfy His heart outside of Himself, He created Christ, with all the rest of creation through Him, *out of Himself* (*cf* Rev.3:14; Col.1:15,16). This should help us to grasp, in some measure,the nearness and the dearness of all to Him, first of all to the Son of His love. The whole creation is the product of His yearning for communion with a kindred spirit. Seen in this light it has a halo even in its present passing condition of darkness and despair,

for this is only a preparatory and temporary phase necessary to bring about His desire.

Lack of sufficient spirit, such as was imparted to Adam by Yahweh Elohim Himself, when He blew into his nostrils the breath of lives, kept the animals from filling the void in Adam's heart, and from becoming his helper and complement. And is not this the one great requisite for fellowship with God? All humans are made in the likeness and image of God, in relation to the animals below them in the spiritual scale. But they themselves have not sufficient spirit for communion with the Deity above them, unless He endows them with an added supply of His spirit for fellowship and service. Once more, Yahweh Elohim must breathe upon each one in order to enable him even to believe His Word.

The very first time when we believe God's evangel concerning His Christ, we have fellowship with Him, and fulfill the longing of His love for communion. The very first service that we perform in the power of His spirit makes us fellow-workers with Him. Yet none of this can be accomplished in the power of that spirit which we receive by generation. This, however, was possible for Adam before he sinned. Spirit gives life. Sin always operates to destroy spirit, and induces death. We no longer have the measure of spirit that Adam had in the beginning, hence cannot fulfill the longing of God for fellowship as Adam did in Eden. Instead of believing and obeying God's Word, our first parents ate of the forbidden fruit. Their unbelief brought dying, which produces death. Our faith promises life eonian.

MORALS IN MARRIAGE

Only as we see this basic truth, which underlies the relation of the sexes to each other, can we understand why God lays such stress on human conduct in this regard. God's supreme desire to enter into a perfect and permanent love union with His creatures, to become All in all of them, is violated when a married couple is not true to each other, or a faulty or impermanent union is formed. The dire damage to the individual and the race need not be emphasized here, for there are enough educators and reformers who seek to hinder the evil and help humanity by exposing the distressing physical and moral results which accompany lawlessness in this matter. As such social evils are growing worse rather than better, the saints need to be shown a much higher and more powerful motive to help them in this evil day. This is found in its relation to God and His loving union with His own.

THE MYSTERY OF MARRIAGE

The mystery, or secret, of marriage is brought before us in Ephesians, one of the highest and most spiritual of all the sacred scrolls. Even there it is called a *great* secret (Eph.5:32). It is based upon the truths which we have been considering, that the woman was taken out of the man, and in marriage, the two become *one flesh.* In the physical realm it parallels our position in the body of Christ. A man cannot help caring for his own body. Since he and his wife are one flesh, he should have the same *selfish* love for his wife, and it should lead him to nourish and cherish her. The greatness of this secret lies in the fact that it portrays the "selfish" love of Christ for the ecclesia which is His body, and this, in turn, reflects the love of God for Christ and all creation. It is the chief exhibition in the physical realm of the most intimate and heart satisfying revelation which God has given of Himself. In the highest sense of the word, He loves us because He loves *Himself.*

How did God know that Adam would be lonely? So far as the record goes, there is nothing to show that Adam had realized it himself, or had given expression to it. He had not yet named the animals or sought for a companion

among them. It is not enough to say that God is omniscient. Love, in a very real sense, transcends mere knowledge. We could, with equal right, say that God could have made him like the celestial spirits, of whom we read nothing as to this matter. Indeed, God must reveal even His multifarious wisdom to these heavenly hosts through mankind (Eph.3:10). No doubt this great secret is based on the fact that man (whose very name means "Likeness") was made like God, not only as the Subjector, to sway over the earth, but also as to the desires of his heart. God Himself felt the need of fellowship when He was alone, so created Christ, the Son of His love. Anticipating his loneliness, He built Eve as Adam's complement.

EVANGELISTS, PASTORS, TEACHERS

God could save everyone without an evangel or an evangelist. If He has predestinated them they are bound to be delivered! But that would defeat His desire for fellowship with those whom He has called. It would leave Him in the exalted but lonely place which He has always had. He wishes to work through those who have received a special portion of His spirit, whether it be evangelists, pastors, or teachers. He is by no means dependent on them, but rather yearns to share His work with them, for the more honors He heaps upon the unworthy, the greater will be the luster of His love in the eyes of all the universe at the consummation.

ONE—TWO SEXES

In the first account of man's *creation* (Gen.1:26-28), nothing special is said as to the operation of God's *spirit* in creating Adam. He differs from the previously created animals, in that he is made in the image of God, so is himself a subjector in regard to the other creatures, and is to sway over them, and subdue the earth. He was created *both*

male and female. It is all strictly confined to the *creation,* and was the final, *finishing* touch. The woman had not yet been built, for, in God's great plan, mankind is *one.* Adam, the head of the race, is not nearly so important as Adam, the type of the second human, the Lord from heaven, the last Adam (1 Cor.15:46,47). All life, even Eve, the mother of all living, sprang from *one,* even as all life in the new creation comes from Christ. Eve was *created in* Adam, not separate from him.

GENERATION

Our regard for anything depends upon our relation to it. We cannot be unduly concerned with everything in the world. It would be too distracting, and exhausting, for we do not possess the faculties, or the capacity for it. That which is ours, which has cost us something, is far more in our minds than the possessions of others, as a rule. But we are even more interested in what our own hands have made, or our own minds have designed. I have planned and built three houses, largely with my own hands, and have lived in each for sometime. I cannot help having a very special interest in them. It hurts me to see them changed or even painted with colors that do not harmonize with the surroundings.

God, as the Maker and Former of all must have an intense feeling for His handiwork. Whether it be the lustrous orbs of the empyrean or the fair flowers of the field, what must they mean to Him! It stirs my heart even to contemplate their brilliance and beauty. If I had designed and fashioned even the lowliest blossom that blooms, it would be my pride and joy. Though I have only a very remote right even to look at them, they give me a pleasure as the achievements of One whom I have learned to love, whom I can claim as my own Maker. This very morning I rose early, before the sun, hoping to get a glimpse of a comet

which has wandered into view. I once made a long journey in order to experience an eclipse of the sun. It was a wonderful exhibition of the majesty of our mighty Maker.

THE CREATOR'S AFFECTION

But the mere making of a thing does not create so close a tie as the invention of something new and novel. My hands have made many things in their time, but my heart is much more taken up with the makings of my mind, which demanded much original thought, and created forms unknown before. These, in a very real sense, are part of me, for they come out of me. They are my brain children, and I cannot help caring for them, no matter what may be their fortunes in the world. Inventions such as these seldom make much money, and most of them receive a very skeptical reception by a cold and unsympathetic public, but that does not diminish the inventor's regard for them. They are their own, and they cannot help liking them.

How immeasurably more must the great Maker of all think of His achievements! Notwithstanding their number, they are all perfect for their place, the product of His heart and head and hand. His hand did not form them merely, though that alone were wonderful. His head invented them before His hands could form them, and, we may be sure, His heart had planned them in the recesses of His being, for essentially, He is love. What His love evolved, and, His will resolved, His spirit has solved. His great heart of love embraces all creation, for it is His by virtue of His close relation to it, while we, vain insects of a second, can only contain what our puny hands can reach.

THE COMPLEMENT, OUT OF ADAM

When God's love demanded a response, when His heart yearned for fellowship, His only recourse was to find it *in Himself, in the creation of His own spirit.* Our spirit is out

of Him. This is figured for us in the building of the woman. A complement for Adam was nowhere to be found, even among the living souls which were somewhat like him in their structure and composition. There is a certain degree of affinity between man and the animals. Some men are very fond of their dogs and have considerable affection for them. But these living souls are a complete unit in themselves. What is needed, to bring out the innate love of one creature for another, is to *lack* something that the other supplies. God was complete in Himself yet lacked an object through which to reveal His glories. Adam also was complete, but lacked an object by which to show God's excellencies, so a part was taken *out* of him to be his *complement.* Through this he can mirror many of the excellencies of his Maker.

The key to the affection of the sexes for each other lies in this great truth. Just as a man would feel the lack of one hand to complement the other, so he feels the lack of those organs of generation which were taken out of him to build the woman. That the human Adam once possessed these is quite evident in his present body.

But, of course, a *rib,* more or less, would not be much of a basis for a change in sex. Any number of ribs might be taken from a human, yet it would not affect the sex. The translators of the AV seem to have been quite at a loss to find the meaning of *tzlo,* for they rendered it *beam, board, chamber, corner, halting, leaf, plank, rib, side,* and *side chamber.* It is used of the "sides" of the tabernacle, which were made of two boards, joined at the top, but separated at the bottom, forming a hollow taper. Corresponding to this, it was also used of the "chambers" in the sides of the temple, which were smaller at the top than at the bottom. So the "rib" taken out of Adam was evidently the hollow *organ* which differentiates the female from the male.

THE HUMAN

One of the gravest defects in the English language is the lack of a usable, common noun for *human being,* either man or woman, male or female, the equivalent of *anthropos* in Greek, *adm* in Hebrew, and *Mensch* in German, to differentiate it from *aner,* man, *gune,* woman, in Greek, *aish,* man, *ashe,* woman, in Hebrew, and *Mann,* man, and *Frau* or *Weib,* woman, in German. So we are using *human* for an individual of either sex, wherever this can be tolerated, a *superior* ^{h} or ^{h}man, where not. As it is, womankind has a very small part in the blessings of the evangel. Christ Himself, as the Son of *Man,* seems to overlook the women entirely. Even when He "is the savior of all *men*" (1 Tim. 4:10, AV), they seem to be excluded. He was the Son of *humanity.* He never referred to Himself as a *man,* though of course He was, and was so called by others (John 1:30; Acts 2:22). Having been begotten by God, it seems possible, as some think, that He was bisexual, so represented women as well as men in His sacrificial work.

Very few seem to realize or recognize the main and underlying *object* of the relationships resulting from generation. They play a much greater part in the revelation of the Deity than creation. Even if humanity cannot *create* life, it can *generate* it. As a result of the two complements, husband and wife, we have a child, and its various stages of growth, from infancy to maturity. Again and again we have this repeated, so that we have, at all times, intimations of the Divine love and care and provisions, not to speak of the opposites. For even divorce and destitution are eloquent examples of God's dealings with His creatures. In fact, the grounds of divorce vary with God's administrations, and are in harmony with His operations.

Husband and wife are *complements,* two parts of one whole. Neither of them is complete in him or herself, just as man is incomplete without God. First a search was made among the animals to find a helper for Adam.

There can be a very close bond between living souls, such as a person and his pet. While still a child I had a little yellow dog, which I loved very dearly. All the more so, as the family on the floor below us were Roman Catholics and objected to my calling him Leo, which was the name of the Pope at that time. How could I help it if they named the Pope after my dog? A lion could have gulped him down whole, but I did not realize that Leo meant *lion.* When we came out west to California, I suffered more in parting from my Leo than from anything else. Later it made me very sad to hear of his death under the wheels of a train. After nearly seventy long years it all comes back to me. Poor little Leo!

If we do not grasp God's ultimate in the creation of mankind, we might get the impression that His spirit made a mistake in creating the race as one, and then separating it into two sexes. So, also, He later divided it still further into languages and races and nations and religions, and introduced slavery. Like sin, these are necessary to illustrate and emphasize the enmity between man and God and the utter dependence of man upon his Creator during times eonian. But all of this is eonian. Already, *in Christ,* there is no Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female. By faith, we are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal.3:28).

The attraction between the sexes probably produces the strongest attachment in human experience. It probably arises from the fact that they are complementary, and need one another to be complete. This is doubtless intended to give us an experience akin to that between the Creator and the creature. It is perhaps the closest tie in the realm of nature, and so the best adapted to display the greatest of the graces.

A. E. Knoch

BELIEVING AND UNDERSTANDING

Question:

We have been blessed by receiving *Unsearchable Riches* for many years, and always enjoy the thoughts of each one who writes articles in it.

I have noticed, however, that, many times, you speak of the so-called "Christian churches" as "our brethren in Christ," stating that they are included among the called and chosen ones who will be vivified in the presence of Christ.

Paul taught you must believe that Jesus died, and was dead and then resurrected after three days. Most all, however, teach that Jesus never really died (nor that anyone else ever really died, for that matter), but that He went on living while His body remained in the tomb, preaching to spirits in prison during that time. This is contrary to what the Bible plainly teaches concerning the state of the dead.

Most churches more or less teach the gospel of the Circumcision, claiming that one must be baptized, pay tithes, do good works, and so forth, in order to be saved. Also, they teach that if you don't believe like they do, then you will be put in hellfire and tormented forever and ever. Isn't this a different evangel than what Paul taught, and subject to his "anathema"?

Do you believe that those who "believe in Jesus" (including the majority of Americans who make this very claim) are really members of the ecclesia of God? While I believe that all mankind will eventually be saved, I don't believe that those who believe and teach a different evangel than that of the apostle Paul are members of the body of Christ nor that any such opposers will be granted eonian life in Christ's presence.

If you believe I am wrong here, please show me, because I want to know and am willing to learn.

Answer:

WE APPRECIATE your kind words concerning our ministry. The affirmation which you make here is concerned with the question of what it means to be a believer. This is a perennial question which we receive. Sometimes, as in your case, it arises independently, as a result of one's own studies. More often, as has been the case a number of times over the years and happens to be so at present as well, various ones of our friends become exercised concerning this question, as the result of some mutual friend's having adopted such a position, contrary to our own teaching on this subject.

Such a course should never be presumed to be wrong nor viewed as necessarily a bad thing, even if, due to the human weakness of all concerned, regrettable incidents will sometimes occur as a result of the public consideration of such "new teaching."

If our findings should be mistaken, and one truly has eyes to see that this is so, then they should be rejected. This is the case just as surely as it is also true that if our teachings should be correct, and one truly has eyes to see that that is so, they should be accepted.

For that matter, even if our position itself should be correct, it may be that hitherto we have failed to adequately explain it, at least with respect to certain questions, ones that even a thoughtful and conscientious reader might still have, having reviewed our existing literature.

That which the Scriptures actually *reveal,* directing our hearts into a true understanding of their declarations, alone is the arbiter of truth. Every one of us is quite up to the task of being mistaken; neither is it any great achieve-

ment simply to *happen* to be correct. What we are *not* able for, of ourselves, however, is the achievement of that most formidable task, not simply of being correct, but of being correct according to the ascertainment of the conclusive evidence which actually proves the veracity of our position.

In replying to the various issues which arise in respect to your inquiry, perhaps it would be best for me to begin simply by clarifying a few incidental points which you introduce, related to our consideration of the principal issue which we wish to evaluate. That issue is whether it is so that one who misunderstands something, therefore necessarily disbelieves it as well.

You are surely correct in suggesting that the traditional teachings of Christendom are, and that to a great degree, a "different evangel" than that brought by Paul, and that those heralding such an evangel must therefore be subject to the apostle's "anathema" upon all who follow such a course.

But the question remains, Of what does Paul's anathema consist? We can only know the answer to this question if we first of all know the nature and particulars of Paul's evangel, which entails a knowledge as well of the delimiting factors determinative of the boundaries of that company to whom it applies.

The nature and particulars of Paul's evangel entail it being so that this evangel is for all who are called and chosen of God, according to that evangel, irrespective of their faithfulness, whether of deed or doctrine. Such ones, even if unworthy of service, have nevertheless been granted a measure of faith (*cp* Rom.12:3). They are at least believing that Jesus died and rose (*cp* 1 Thess.4:14), and give evidence of their calling in their testimony of heart, "Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor.1:24).

All who believe that Jesus died and rose are believers; and, all such ones are included in the "ecclesia of God."

Should any be disbelieving, God will be remaining faithful to His blessed promises concerning them (*cf* 2 Tim.2:13). These include, even today, membership in the ecclesia, and for the future, eonian life and glory, even if, due to their own lack of faithfulness, they should forfeit an allotment of eonian reigning in that day. Therefore, it must be that the nature of the anathema which will befall any among them who may bring a "different evangel," is confined to the loss of the present knowledge and appreciation of much important truth. Indeed, in this practical sense of present-day "destruction," that of forfeiting a life lived according to truth together with the enjoyment of a concomitant spiritual walk, any course which precludes such blessed privilege is certainly a most destructive course. It is a pathway which evinces a corresponding utter failure to get hold of eonian life, and to do so "really" (*cp* John 17:3; 1 Tim.6:12; 6:19).[1]

"BELIEVING IN JESUS"

Of course we would not speak of those groups or congregations themselves, as such (i.e., as collective entities), commonly termed "Christian churches," as being "our brethren in Christ." We would, however (based on such passages as Ephesians 4:11-14), suppose that there are individual persons within at least some such groups who are in Christ. Insofar as religious affiliation is concerned, God's chosen ones may well be members of various diverse communions, or of no formal community at all.

Where you ask whether we believe that those who "believe in Jesus" (I take it that you mean, as their Saviour) are really members of the ecclesia of God, you first of all point out the fact that there are many millions of per-

1. For a more detailed consideration of the question of the necessary scope and sense of the apostle Paul's declaration in which he avers, "Let him be anathema!" see *Unsearchable Riches,* "Let Him Be Anathema!" vol.87, pp.9-22.

sons, both past and present (including, according to polls, vast numbers of Americans), who profess such very faith. Hence you wish to know if it is our opinion that, factually, all such persons are also members of the ecclesia of God, called and chosen of Him.

Our answer to this question is, No. Surely not all who claim to "believe in Jesus" are truly in Christ. Many who *profess* faith, may nevertheless not *possess* faith. Whether due to some type of peer pressure (in the interests of, for example, civil, political, or social advantage), or merely concern for one's own personal safety (for example, out of fear that the teaching of the eternal torment of unbelievers might somehow be true), many may profess to believe—and even seek to believe—who nonetheless do not, in fact, believe.

But as to any question of what even the approximate percentage of those who are naming the name of the Lord may be who are also truly in Christ, we simply do not have an opinion. Perhaps it is a fairly high percentage; perhaps it is quite a low percentage; we do not know. But since we do not wish to be disposed above what is written, and, hence, do not wish to place confidence in human speculations, we prefer simply to avoid all speculation concerning that particular question.

CAREFULNESS IN EXPRESSION

You made mention of the apostle Paul, stating that he taught that we "must believe . . . ." I would only suggest here (and I trust you will agree with me), that, apart from the question of, specifically, that which is to be believed, it was not Paul's custom, as such, to speak baldly in such terms. Instead, it is so, simply corollarially to what Paul *did* declare that we, indeed, "must believe."

I mention this only because most, when hearing that which is true in itself here, namely, that we must do something in order to be saved, will mistakenly conclude that our doing thereof is not under God's ultimate control but our own. Most will further suppose if there is something that we *must* do in order to be saved, that it follows from this that whatever we *must* do, God therefore *requires* us to do. Any such notion, however, is simply a presumption; it is not necessarily a fact. And, it is a presumption which cannot be a fact, since it is contrary to the truth that our salvation and eonian life is a gracious gift apart from works. This includes all human efforts to believe, as well as all of man's supposed own endeavors of non-resistance in response to the operations of the spirit.

It is not that we are *required* to believe, but that we are *graciously granted* to be believing (Phil.1:29). Indispensable antecedent obedience need not be that of the meeting of a requirement; it may instead be (as is the case in the evangel of our salvation) simply the fulfilling of an essentiality.[2] This is a vital distinction to a correct understanding of the nature of the evangel. Therefore, it is important for us to be circumspect and careful not to leave the wrong impression in any instance in which we may speak of it being so that, in some respect, we "must believe."

INCONSISTENT ARGUMENTS

You further spoke of Paul as teaching that "Jesus died, and was dead and then resurrected after three days." I am sure you will be glad for me to quote exactly the passage to which you refer: "Now I am making known to you, brethren, the evangel which I bring to you, which also you accepted, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved, if you are retaining what I said in bringing the evangel to you, outside and except you believe feignedly. For I

2. For definition of terms, as well as a consideration of the tremendous difference between a "requirement" and an "essentiality," see *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.91, p.173.

give over to you among the first what also I accepted, that *Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures . . .*" (1 Cor.15:1-4).

There are many things to consider here, and judge correctly, if we would possess a full and accurate understanding of these words comprising the evangel. This is true of certain related points as well, such as the matter of the present aspect of salvation (*cf* "through which . . . [we] are being saved"), that is, as Paul indicates, except in the case of one who is believing "feignedly" (i.e., not genuinely).

One issue here, it is true, is that of attaining to a full and correct understanding of what is meant by the words, "Christ *died . . .*" even as by the declarations which affirm that, "*He* was entombed . . ." and "*He* has been roused . . . ."

There is, however, an additional important issue to take notice of here as well, in this summary declaration of the evangel, one which, even as the question of death, is also capable of being either correctly or incorrectly understood. That issue is this: In what sense is it so that Christ's death, entombment, and resurrection occurred "according to the Scriptures"?

Is it that one need only truly believe that this was so according to whatever the Old Testament may have to say concerning the coming Anointed One, or is it instead that one must first possess a full, accurate knowledge of the grand and complex theme of Hebrew Christology, both typically and prophetically, in all its ins and outs, within the compass of the entirety of the Hebrew Scriptures?

If our argument is that one must understand the subject of death correctly, else one cannot "really believe" that Christ died, our argument must likewise be that one must also understand the subject of Hebrew Christology correctly, else one cannot "really believe" that Christ's death was according to the Scriptures. It would be inconsistent and absurd to insist that one's incorrect knowledge of the

former theme (including one's holding of incompatible doctrines, contrary to the truth thereof), precludes one's membership in Christ's body, while denying that one's incorrect knowledge of this latter theme does not preclude one's membership in Christ's body.

I have considered the difficult subject of Hebrew Christology in some detail for over thirty years, having read learned books on the subject, besides doing my own further, incidental research, together with informal reflection and meditation from day to day. Though it may be so that I know somewhat more about this subject than many others, it is undoubtedly so that I know much less about it than those scholars who have made this theme their specialty.

In any case, it is beyond question that I do not understand the subject of Christology "correctly." This is because, first of all, I am not even fully cognizant of it, which makes it impossible for me to understand it correctly.[3]

It is a practical certainty as well that I am at least somewhat mistaken in my consideration of this subject, whether these errors should be sins of commission or omission. Therefore, I do not fully grasp all that is an object of faith relative to this subject. For that matter, we may be likewise certain that the same is true not only of myself but even of the most learned specialists in this field as well. Yet if it is so that one must correctly understand the entirety of that which comprises the evangel in order to partake of future eonian life, then not only are those who believe in immortal souls precluded from this blessing but those as well who fail to understand the doctrines of Christology.

DELUSIONS OF EQUIVOCATION

More fundamentally, however, we need to see that the

3. It is impossible for one to understand *correctly* any discrete topic or subtopic of which he is simply ignorant, concerning which he therefore possesses no understanding at all.

claim is simply wrongheaded which effectually asserts that failing to understand a subject correctly is tantamount to a failure to believe it. "Understand" signifies "make out the *meaning*" (see Keyword Concordance, p.314); "believe" means "*be convinced by* testimony (concerning matters outside the sphere of observation)" (see Keyword Concordance, p.28; *cp* Hebrews 11:1: "faith is [1] an *assumption* . . . [and, 2] a *conviction* . . .").

Understanding (i.e., discernment of true meaning), is the result of correct interpretation, that is, of correct judgment of *the sense* in which what is said was intended to be understood. Belief, however, consists merely in the acceptance of testimony and the conviction that it is true. One may very well genuinely believe that which he does not truly understand. It is only because we ourselves often speak imprecisely[4] that we are confused concerning this theme, saying that a man does not *believe* a statement to be so, when our actual thought, *fairly and accurately stated,* is that he does not *understand* the statement according to truth, according to the sense in which it is truly intended.

4. The error of argumentation termed the Fallacy of Equivocation is at the root of the mistaken position which equates misunderstanding with unbelief. It is committed in relation to the problem we are considering when in one instance we say a man "does not believe," when our thought is that he [a^1] "is not convinced by the testimony of," and yet in another instance say that he "does not believe," when our thought is that he [a^2] "does not make out the meaning of." That is, this fallacy is committed when [a^2] is the situation which obtains, and yet, by force of the same language, we argue *as if* (for our argument to have any possible merit) [a^1] were the situation which obtains—even though it does not obtain, nor is it even our thought that it does obtain. This insidious error is the cause of many a false conclusion even as of the unwitting propagation of many a myth. Hence, wherever it exists, we should do our utmost to discern its presence and to reject all arguments based upon its employment.

In addition, it is also wrong to claim that someone "does not really believe" a certain scriptural testimony (e.g., the testimony that Christ died for our sins), in any case in which the person, in fact, not only is honestly convinced that the proferred testimony is true, but in which he simply holds, *in part,* to a wrong opinion concerning it.

Let us be fair. Traditionalists freely believe the account that on the cross, Jesus suffered and died. It is simply incorrect for anyone to deny the fact that this is their faith. It is only that traditionalists differ with non-traditionalists as to *the sense* in which He died. The traditionalist affirms that Jesus died corporeally, with reference to the demise of His body. The non-traditionalist affirms that Jesus died entirely, with reference to the demise of the entirety of His being.

It is not that one party believes that Christ died and the other does not, but that there is a difference of opinion between the two parties as to the correct sense in which it is so that Christ died.

In arriving at any opinion at all concerning a certain declaration of faith, whether or not one should do so consciously and formally, in any case, one must necessarily engage in interpretation concerning it. Opinion—any opinion at all—is impossible apart from interpretation, whether witting or unwitting. And, correct interpretation is no less interpretation than incorrect interpretation. Hence it is naive besides mistaken for any one of us to take the position in respect to himself in contradistinction to his fellows with whom he differs that, "*I* simply believe the Scriptures as they stand, unlike *you* who merely 'interpret' them. I furthermore say this even though I must admit that you, just as surely and in as conservative a way as myself, honestly accept the same writings as I do as constitutive of the very word of God."

It is most remarkable that many have adopted such a perspective toward those with whom they differ doctrin-

ally, some even going so far as to imagine that those who are their theological opponents as to various important issues, are therefore not even in Christ.

MISCONCEPTIONS OF FAITH

The spurious argument that if one does not believe that Jesus died entirely, he does not believe that Jesus died, and so is unsaved, is based on the false assumption that in order to believe any certain statement, it is necessary to possess a true knowledge of its particulars. This simply is not true.

One may believe a declaration, itself, while *also* believing mistakenly concerning certain of its particulars. Perhaps this fact can be helpfully explained by way of the following examples:

There are many statements concerning technical computer topics, ones which I have accepted and believe to be true. I *do* believe these things are true, and I accept them accordingly.

Even so, for years I continued to misunderstand certain aspects of some of them, long after I first believed them to be so. And indeed, in the case of certain other such technical facts, I am aware that even today, after many years engagement in complex computer activities daily, I still do not properly understand them. Indeed, I no doubt continue to hold certain misconceptions concerning various computer-related subjects, ones which I nevertheless *believe* to be true.

Now my son Marc, who is trained in computer science, would never say that I do not *believe* this or that technical proposition to be true, things which he has taught me concerning or otherwise represented to me as true. Instead, he would simply say what is so: that I still *misunderstand* various things concerning some of these subjects.

Another example of honest belief in the presence of much ignorance is that of the belief which I once held, as

a small child with limited spelling skills, concerning pasteurization. I knew that cows lived in pastures, and had been taught that it was good to drink pasteurized milk. So I supposed that pasteurization was somehow concerned with cows that lived in the field as opposed to in a barn.

It is true that I then held a mistaken belief about pasteurization; and, it is true as well that even today I only know a little about that process. In fact, it may also be true that even today I still hold to some mistaken opinion or another concerning pasteurization. Nonetheless, from early childhood, *I have believed* that Borden Company milk is pasteurized.

Indeed, as I have already indicated, when I first believed this declaration, I did not even know what pasteurization *is*, much less did I hold to a fully correct definition thereof. This, however, did not change the fact that I believed what I was told. This is because I simply trusted the Borden Company to be telling me the truth in stating right on their carton that their milk was subjected to a certain process, thus named. My belief in their statement was dependent upon my trust in them; it was not dependent upon any knowledge of my own of the process claimed to have been performed. I did not possess either knowledge or understanding of pasteurization; nevertheless, I possessed *faith* that a process, termed pasteurization—whatever it may consist of—claimed to have been performed, had been performed.

FAITH IN GOD'S WORD

The truth concerning those who are called and in Christ, is not that they will correctly understand this or that "fundamental doctrine," but that they will perceive in Christ, God's own wisdom and power. They will be convinced of the declaration of faith that Jesus died and rose, whether or not their knowledge should be flawless concerning the correct sense of either "die" or "rise," in this connection.

For the reasons already stated, the notion that one is simply not a believer or in Christ until he accepts certain important correct doctrines while rejecting certain other incompatible, incorrect doctrines, is necessarily mistaken.

It is true that popular myths such as the Trinity, free will, immortal souls, and eternal torment, are incompatible with and militate against the truth of the evangel. Because of their adherence to such contradictory views, many are kept back, whether to a great degree or even entirely, from a true understanding of the evangel.

We feel this tragedy deeply, and frequently need to be reminded that this, too, even as all else that is wrong with the world, is in God's purpose and will eventuate for good. Yet we rejoice that wherever God gives faith even though He does not yet grant understanding, faith remains, even as all the positional benefits which are afforded to God's chosen ones, who, *incidentally,* are also those who are believing.

How wonderful it is to know that faith is a privilege, not a requisite. Albeit that it is indispensable and essential, in relation to our present exalted position in Christ and our future eonian life and glory, it is but a concomitant: ever an accompanying means of further blessing; never a contrivance of human merit (*cf* Rom.8:28-32; *cp* 1 Cor.1:21-25).

We have no promise that within the course of our present lifetime even relative maturity of faith will be given to all who are chosen. We only know that, whether sooner or later, concerning the one who is infirm in the faith: "he will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand." In the meantime, the ecclesia will continue to consist of all those who are *chosen and called,* to whom it is *given* to believe that Christ is the wisdom and power of God and that Jesus died and rose—however limited or faulty their apprehension of these glorious declarations may be.

J.R.C.

SAUL'S FINAL PURSUIT
(1 Samuel 26)

26 + **The Ziphites** ⌊**came to Saul** at*d* ˙**Gibeah,** ˃ **saying**⁻**,** Is **not David concealing** him**self** ⁷**with us***s* *i***on the hill of Hachilah, adjoining the desolation?** 2 +**So Saul** ⌊**rose and** went ⌊**down to** the **wilderness of Ziph, and** `with **him 3,000 chosen**⌋ **men of Israel, to seek `David in** the **wilderness of Ziph.** 3 +**While Saul** ⌊**encamped** *i***on the hill of Hachilah** *w* **adjoining the desolation,** *on***by the road,** + **David** was *sit***staying in** the **wilderness.** +**When he** ⌊*see***discerned that Saul had come after him** to*d* **the wilderness,** 4 + **David** ⌊**sent** out **spies**⌋ +**that he might know that Saul had come** ˃ **prepared**⌋ ⁷**from Keilah***0***.** 5 +**Then David** ⌊**rose** ⁷**in stealth***0* **and** ⌊**came to the** *ri***place where Saul had encamped, and David** ⌊**saw `the** *ri***place where Saul lay, and Abner son of Ner,** the **chief of his** military **host.** +**Now Saul** was **lying** with**in the round** camp, +**while the** *wi***soldiers** were **camping round about him.**

6 +**Then David** ⌊**responded and** ⌊**said to Ahimelech the Hittite and to Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother,** ˃ **saying**⁻**,** *a***Who** will go ⌊**down** `with **me** in**to the camp to Saul?** + **Abishai** ⌊*sa***replied, I´ shall** go **down with you.** 7 +**When David and Abishai** ⌊**came** ˃**upon the** *wi***soldiers** by **night,** + *bd***there** was **Saul lying asleep in** the **round** camp, +**with his spear stuck**⌋ **in**to the **earth** by **his headrest;** + **Abner and the** *wi***soldiers** were **lying round about him.** 8 + **Abishai** ⌊**said to David, Today Elohim has surrendered `your enemy**⌋ **in**to **your hand.** + **Now** *pr* **let me smite him** *i***with** the **spear** + **in**to **the earth only** *du***once, and I shall not repeat** this

to him. 9 +**But David** lsa**replied to Abishai, You must not** c**bring him** to l**ruin, for** a**who** could **stretch** forth **his hand** i**against** the **anointed of Yahweh, and be innocent?** 10 As **Yahweh lives, David** lsa**continued, but rather Yahweh Him**self **should strike him** down, **whether his day** l**comes and he will die, or he** goes l**down in battle and is swept away.**

11 **Far be it** ›**from me,** f**by Yahweh,** f**to stretch**– forth **my hand** i**against** the **anointed of Yahweh! Now** +**then,** pr**do take** `**the spear which** is by **his headrest and** `**the cruse of water, and let us** l**go** ›**on our** way. 12 +**So David** l**took** `**the spear and** `**the cruse of water from** beside **Saul's headrest, and they** l**went** ›**on their** way. + There **was no** one **seeing and no** one **knowing and no** one **waking;** t **all of them** were **sleeping, for** a **stupor** from **Yahweh had fallen on them.**

13 +**Then David** l**passed** on to **the** other p**side and** l**stood on** the **summit of the hill afar off,** with ˙**much** ri**space between them.** 14 + **David** l**called** out **to the** wi**soldiers and to Abner son of Ner,** › **saying**–**, Are you not answering, Abner?** +**At** that **Abner** l**responded and** l**said,** a**Who** are **you** that **you call** out **to the king?** 15 + **David** lsa**replied to Abner,** Are **you not** a **man? And** a**who** is **like you in Israel? Why** +**then** did **you not keep** guard ›**over your lord the king? For one of** ˙our w**soldiers came to** c**bring ruin** `to **the king your lord.** 16 **Not good** is ˙**this** ˙**thing** w**that you have done.** As **Yahweh lives,** t **sons of death** are **you** all **who** did **not keep** guard **over your lord, over** the **anointed of Yahweh.** + **Now** see**look! Where** is **the king's spear? And ~where~** is **the cruse of water** w**that** was by **his headrest?**

17 + **Saul** l**recognized** `**David's voice and** lsa**asked,** Is **this your voice, my son David? And David** lsa**replied,** It is **my voice, my lord the king.** 18 +**Then he** l**said, Why then** is **my lord pursuing after his servant?** t **What** 7**sin**0 **have I done?** + **What evil** deed 7**is found**0 i**on my hand?** 19 + now**Therefore,** I **pray, may my lord the king hearken** `to the **words of his servant. If Yahweh incited you** i**against me, let Him**

smell an approach **present.** +**Yet if the sons of mankind** did it, **cursed**l are **they before Yahweh! For they have driven me out today from adhering**– i**to** the **allotment of Yahweh,** › **saying**–**, Go, serve other elohim.** 20 + now**Oh, let my blood not** l**fall** to d the **earth aloof from** the **presence of Yahweh! For** the **king of Israel has** come **forth to seek** `a **single flea, just as** one l**pursues** ˙a **partridge in** the **mountains.**

21 + **Saul** lsa**replied, I have sinned. Return, my son David, for no**t fr**longer shall I** c**do evil to you, inasmuch as my soul has been precious in your eyes** ˙**this** ˙**day. Behold, I have** c**acted unwisely, and I am very much**– in l**error.** 22 + **David** l**responded and** l**said,** bd**Here** is **the king's spear.** + **Let one** f**of the lads cross** over **and** l**take it.** 23 +**As** for **Yahweh, He shall recompense** › each **man** `for **his righteousness and** `for **his faithfulness.** w**Though Yahweh gave you in**to 7**my**cs **hand today,** + **I would not** › **stretch** forth– **my hand** i**against** the **anointed of Yahweh.** 24 **And behold, just as your soul was great** ˙**this** ˙**day in my eyes, so may my soul be great in** the **eyes of Yahweh, and may He rescue me from all distress.** 25 + **Saul** lsa**replied to David, Blessed**l be **you, my son David! You shall** mr**surely** d**accomplish,** yea **accomplish**– all, **and you shall** mr**surely** all**prevail,** yea all**prevail**–**.** +**Then David** l**went** ›**on his way, and Saul, he returned to his** ri**place.**

Again the Ziphites betrayed David's presence to Saul. Saul brought his standing army of 3000 men and encamped at the hill of Hachilah. David sent out spies to get an accurate knowledge of Saul's whereabouts, forces and supplies. The biblical narrative has frequently told us of Saul's inner thoughts and the motives behind his actions. But it has locked us up with David's words and actions, and left us to ponder these if we would know his heart. Most of our light on David's inner feelings is found in the Psalms. In passages like the present, we can only surmise what prompted him to enter Saul's camp. Because of this the narrative

becomes more suspenseful, and it draws us to place ourselves in David's sandals, questioning his actions and comparing them with our own.

Zeruiah (v.6) was a sister of David (1 Chron.2:16-17). Her three sons, Abishai, Joab, and Asahel were all loyal to David. These dauntless brothers won their places of leadership by proving their prowess and fearless daring (*cf* 1 Chron.11:10-25). When David asked, "Who will go down with me into the camp to Saul?" seemingly a suicide mission, Abishai was a ready volunteer.

SAUL'S SPEAR

A king's or chieftain's spear had much the same significance as a scepter. This explains its presence at Saul's side when he tried previously to thrust it through David, and when he had aimed it at Jonathan (1 Sam. 18:10-11; 19:9,10; 20:33). This was not a javelin, but a large heavy spear. The spear was pointed on the butt end also, providing a warrior with a weapon he could thrust backwards at a pursuing enemy, as Abner did to Asahel (2 Sam.2:23). The rear point was also used to plant the spear in the ground.

It was customary, even into modern times, that the chieftain's spear would be stuck in the ground at his place of encampment, or outside the door of his tent. It served as a standard or ensign to identify the vicinity of the chieftain. This explains why, even from a considerable distance, David would be able to determine Saul's location in the camp. The camp was circular. The circumference of soldiers provided protection for their leaders within.

DARING DAVID

David and Abishai stole into Saul's camp. When they reached Saul, Abishai asked permission to kill Saul using only one, swift, merciful stroke. David refused on the grounds that Saul was God's anointed. Needless to say,

David was also God's anointed, and Saul would not desist from continually stretching forth his hand against David. But David's reverence for Yahweh restrained him.

With Saul's spear and water cruse in hand, David and Abishai retreated from the camp to the top of a hill across the valley. From this vantage point David called out to Abner. Abner's reply carries the sense, "Who are you who dares to call to the camp of the king and disturb the king!?"

Then David ingeniously turned the tables on Saul and Abner. In calling out to Abner, as he did, David presented the claim that Saul would be safer if his care were entrusted to David! Abner was speechless. Saul was embarrassed and ashamed to the point he could not continue his pursuit of David.

PSALM 7

It may have been that David had bitter enemies in Saul's court. He said to Saul, "Yet if the sons of mankind did it [incited you against me], cursed are they before Yahweh! For they have driven me out today from adhering to the allotment of Yahweh, saying, Go, serve other elohim" (v.19).

The superscription of Psalm 7 makes reference to the words of Cush, a Benjamite. "Save me from all those pursuing me, and rescue me! Lest he should tear my soul to pieces like a lion, tearing it off while there is no rescuer" (Psa.7:1b-2). Verses 3-5 bear a resemblance to David's rebuke of Saul in both chapter 24 and 26: "O Yahweh, my Elohim, if I have done this, if there is iniquity in my palms, if I have requited evil to one at peace with me—I, who pulled off valueless spoils from my foe—may the enemy pursue my soul and overtake it, may he tramp my life into the earth, and may he cause my glory to tabernacle in the soil." Perhaps Saul would have been more lax in pursuing David had there not been an instigator close by who continually provoked Saul's emotions. Probably it was

someone who stood to lose position and authority if Saul's family ceased to rule.

PROPHETIC NATURE OF THE SCENE

At the cave, David had cut off the "wing" of Saul's cloak. The wing of the clothing is that portion with which the redeemer overshadows those whom he protects. (Compare Ruth 2:12 and 3:9 with Ezekiel 16:8 and their contexts.) That scene foreshadows that David would take Saul's position as Israel's protector and redeemer. The scene in this chapter foreshadows another aspect of the same truth. David took the spear and cruse of water which are repeatedly said to be located at Saul's headrest. This represents David taking the headship and scepter of rule over Israel.

It was as if David walked among the dead bodies of Saul and his leaders, and picked up the implements of kingship, to begin his rule in Saul's stead. Even David's words in this passage are suggestive of Saul's death: "But rather Yahweh Himself should strike him down, whether his day comes and he will die, or he goes down in battle and is swept away . . . for a stupor from Yahweh had fallen on them . . . . As Yahweh lives, sons of death are you all" (verses 10,12,16). And, indeed, the day was soon to come when Saul would fall in battle.

Christ the Lord will return and take the rule of Israel while those who pursued and killed him lie silent in the grave. But their time will come to be raised. And they will be raised by the voice of Christ. And like Saul, they will repent of their deeds. J. Philip Scranton

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During her many years of human experience including much toil and sadness, **Grace Swart** not only was strengthened with faith, expectation and love but grew in appreciation of the goodness of God. In recent years, she lived near her sister, Wilhelmina Packard, in Hazel Crest, Illinois, with whom she enjoyed close fellowship. She died on August 16 at age 91.

THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL

LIKE the sudden, resounding chord of Haydn's "Surprise Symphony," 1 Corinthians 15:22 startles today's reader with its powerful clarity. There is no mistaking what the apostle has said. The same "all" who are dying "in Adam" shall be vivified "in Christ." Yet commentator after commentator and preacher after preacher asks, "Does Paul actually mean to say what he says?" And instead of looking back to see how truly Scripture has prepared the way, and how harmonious this word is with the evangel, the strains of divine indignation and judgment are seized upon, not as unresolved issues now being resolved, not as part of God's means toward His desired end, but as the end itself for millions of human beings, and an end beyond which God is either unable or unwilling to go. We are told that what Paul says elsewhere about judgment and loss are dominating themes which prove that Paul has overreached himself here in 1 Corinthians 15. "He did not mean what he said because elsewhere even Paul himself speaks of those who perish and are condemned without hope, for ever and ever."

THE HARMONY OF GOD'S WORD

Yet the conclusion that all humanity will possess and enjoy the life gained by Christ and manifested in His resurrection is fully in accord with Scripture and harmonious with the revelation of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, as Paul puts it in 2 Corinthians 4:6. Paul's letters indeed are addressed to *us who believe,* but they tell of what *God has done,* and what God has done, He has done *through His Son,*

our Lord Jesus Christ. The dominant theme of 1 Corinthians is the word of the cross; it is centered on *Christ and His saving work.* What it says about sinners, those saved by grace and those who are perishing, must finally be related to the primary fact that Christ Jesus came into this world to die for them (1 Tim.1:15). Against this, no arguments based on highly questionable translations (such as, "everlasting" and "for ever and ever"), or even more highly questionable explanations (such as, "Some people must be eternally damned in order for God to display His justice") can stand. The truth of what Christ came to do and what He did and the results of what He did must always be the determining factor in our understanding of Scripture, and most certainly of disputed passages.

1 Corinthians 15:22 is dramatic. If we are drowsing, it will wake us up. If we have become complacent, it will reinvigorate us spiritually. If we are indulging in a bit of self-congratulation because of all our blessings as believers, it will expand our appreciation of what Christ's resurrection means to the entirety of God's creation and to His own reputation. The exultant note of this passage in *contrast* to more somber sections of the Word, does not mean it is in *conflict* with the rest of the epistle or with God's Word as a whole. It is, in fact, the logical development of the evangel that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor.15:3) and the fact that "Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing" (1 Cor.15:20). It does not clash with the rest of Scripture but awakes us to the overall triumphant theme that radiates in it against the dark, contrasting sub-themes.

THE GLORY OF GOD

In our Lord's ministry to Israel He increasingly spoke solemn words of pain and loss. He prophesied that He will someday say to certain people, "I never knew you! Depart

from Me, workers of lawlessness!" (Matt.7:23). To whole nations He will declare, "Go from Me, you cursed, into the fire eonian" (Matt.25:41). In the book of Revelation we are told of other enemies who will be "drinking of the wine of the fury of God, blended undiluted in the cup of His indignation," who will be "tormented in fire and sulphur . . . and the fumes of their torment are ascending for the eons of the eons" (Rev.14:10,11). Moreover, there is to be a judgment before the great white throne when many of mankind will be condemned to the lake of fire which is the second death (Rev.20:11-15).

But for all their frequency these are not the dominant theme of Scripture. They only serve to impress the goodness of the evangel upon us more solidly. The Lord spoke of condemnation for those who do wicked acts, for enemies and hypocrites and the irreverent, but He is still Jesus, the *Saviour,* the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

The often quoted words of Revelation 14 and 20 concerning the lake of fire and torment within the time frame of "for ever and ever" must be carefully and seriously reexamined. A number of critical questions need to be asked. If these passages speak of everlasting torment for sinners from Cain to the Antichrist, why was such a destiny not mentioned, let alone spelled out clearly in Genesis and, indeed, throughout the Old Testament? And if they speak of all such sinners throughout all the ages why is torment for ever and ever applied in Revelation to certain wicked individuals only? And is there a difference between "smoke of their torment" and the actual experience of torment?

But beyond all this lies the all important factor of the revelation of Jesus Christ as "the Alpha and the Omega" (Rev. 1:8), "the First and the Last" (Rev.1:18; 2:8), and "the Origin and the Consummation" (Rev.21:6; 22:13). He is not only unveiled as the One bringing divine wrath upon corrupt

humanity, presiding as their Judge, but above these great works He is to be seen as "The Faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Suzerain of the kings of the earth" (Rev.1:5). He is the Lion out of the tribe of Judah, but He is also the Lambkin Who was slain (Rev.5:5-8).

This fully accords with 1 Corinthians 15:22-28. Christ is not "the Consummation" for those condemned to the second death until He is known and appreciated by them as the One Who died for their sins, Who is their Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The glory of God is revealed in and through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. God's just judgments cannot be the channel for a full appreciation of His glory. His indignation against sinners is not the final word concerning sinners, but only emphasizes the need for the final word which is God's love commended in the death of His Son.

THE SEED OF THE WOMAN

That earliest of depraved, selfish, cruel and violent sinners, Cain, the firstborn of Adam and Eve, was put under God's curse, and he will stand before the great white throne, and he will be condemned to the second death. But before Cain was born, the promise of God was given that Eve would have a Seed Who will hurt the *head* of the serpent (Gen.3:15). The promise is that there would be One Who would take back the authority that Satan had usurped. That word is fulfilled in Christ, as 1 Corinthians 15:24-27 explicitly declares, but even in Genesis 4 when we read of the tragic history of Cain, the words of Genesis 3 must still be heard.

Cain and Lamech, the Egyptians and the Canaanites, Assyria and Babylon, Herod and Judas and the worshippers of the wild beast, these are among the enemies of God. And we ourselves were numbered among them. All of us know the power of sin and the authority of corruption, both physical and moral, in our lives. The Scriptures speak loudly and at length of these things. Yet always there is the faithful and steady word of promise that this authority of evil over us is dealt with by the One, and this One is our Lord Jesus Christ, God's beloved Son, Who died for all.

ALL VIVIFIED IN CHRIST

In 1 Corinthians 15:22-28, the apostle Paul establishes the evangel that absolutely all of humanity will ultimately enjoy life like that of Christ Himself because of His death and resurrection.

The parallel with "in Adam all are dying" directs us to see that the "all" who shall be vivified in Christ includes everyone of Adam's descendants. This is verified by the following thought concerning "each in his own class." Many attempts have been made to make the second *all* mean less than all mankind. One claim is that verse 23 defines this *all* as all "those who are His." But if this were so, then there is no discernable reason for Paul to speak of "each in his own class." Each individual among the all who are Christ's would be in the same class.

But his wording shows that Paul had three classes in view, which are introduced by the words *Firstfruit* [FROM-ORIGIN], *thereupon* and *thereafter* (*cp* the use of these two latter terms in verses 5-7 of this chapter). These terms indicate a sequence of events in which the vivification of all occurs, "each in his own class." The first rank includes Christ alone, Who leads the way, with His vivification occurring at His resurrection. The second class, introduced by the term "thereupon," includes all who belong to Christ as God's chosen ones. They will be vivified *in Christ,* at a future time of Christ's presence with them, in accord with the various promises God has made in His Word. "Thereafter" comes "the consummation" of vivification *in Christ*

when all enmity, including death itself, is done away with, just as prophesied in Genesis 3:15.

It is significant that vivification in Christ is associated here with the nullifying of enmity and the abolishing of death during Christ's reign. Life immortal and incorruptible is based on the death and resurrection of Christ, but it is experienced under the reign of Christ in His exaltation over all evil forces (*cf* Phil.2:9-11).

CHRIST THE FIRSTFRUIT

Christ is the One Who died for sinners, and He is the Firstfruit of vivification. He establishes the pattern of what vivification is. In the Law the "firstfruit" is the first ripened grain or fruit which is gathered and then presented before God in view of His rich provisions to follow (*cf* Ex.23:19; Deut.26:2-10). It is given to God Who supplies abundantly what is needed.

The vivified Christ is Himself the great Source of praise and thanks to God for God's astounding provision of vivification to come. The *need* of vivification is race-wide, because, in Adam, we all are dying, we all are wanting of the glory of God, and we all are unthankful.

The extraordinary value of Christ's resurrection continues to amaze us. It was not simply a rescue of the Son of God from death, but an achievement by God of the defeat of all that is evil and the inauguration of all that is good. This is what is encompassed in the deliverance of Christ out of death into life, and it has positive repercussions for all.

THOSE WHO ARE HIS

Paul's emphasis on God's grace to the believer, His choice of us and the breathtaking future He has prepared for us is not being questioned here. But the evidence of this and other passages being examined in this series of studies leads me to the conclusion that Paul relates the salvation

of the believer with the salvation of all. "God is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers" (1 Tim.4:10). All will be vivified in Christ, but "those who are His" will be vivified in their own rank, or class.

I am aware that this view calls for quite an adjustment in thinking of the part of many believers. The idea that judgment determines people's final and eternal destiny has to be discarded. It is Christ Who has settled this matter once and for all in dying for sinners and in His resurrection as the Firstfruit of vivification.

Accepting this view, which is certainly in full accord with Paul's language here, can only add to our assurance concerning our own (gracious and special) calling and strengthen our faith. The truth of the ultimate vivification of all in Christ is centered on Him and His faithful obedience to the death of the cross. It honors God for His wisdom and power and love, and indeed far more truly for His righteousness than the traditional defenses made for the concept or everlasting damnation.

THE CONSUMMATION OF VIVIFICATION

The third class of vivification is the last in the series. The word *consummation* does not itself mean "the rest of humanity," but rather it refers to the finishing of this process of vivification which was begun with the resurrection of Christ out from among the dead. Nevertheless, this necessarily is made up of those who were not included in the second class of vivification; they are the only ones left of the all who were dying in Adam.

This consummation is centered and fully dependent on Christ. When God finishes any work He has undertaken He does so in and through His Son. What God does through His Son is not experimental; it is not a binding of wounds or a covering over of errors; it is fully and perfectly and gloriously a solution and a triumph and blessing. It is impos-

sible that there could ever be any vivification apart from Christ, and it is inconceivable that God's work of vivifying all in Christ not be consummated.

FORCES OF ENMITY NULLIFIED

The consummation of verse 24 cannot refer to a situation where millions of human beings are doomed in a hopeless hell, for Paul goes on to speak of enmity being nullified. Along with the consummation of vivification there must be an end of those forces of evil that have led to mortality and corruption. The cross of Christ is the basis for this removal of enmity (*cf* Col.1:20), but for the unbeliever the actual experiencing of willing and heartfelt subjection comes in connection with the reign of Christ, whether on earth or among the celestials. The reign of Christ brings about the abolition of all enmity so that what He has gained by His faithfulness in His death for sinners can be realized by all. It is a process in which the harvest, provided by God through the death of His Son is brought in.

The most tenacious and lasting source and force of enmity is death. But it is to be abolished (1 Cor.15:26). This is more than an end to dying; it is the death of death itself, including "the second death" (Rev.20:14). Now we see, if we had any doubts, what vivification means. It is life that is entirely freed from the tyrannizing and debasing influences of death. It is life like the life of Christ itself.

Therefore, if death is abolished, then all must, in God's own time, become alive with such a life as Christ possesses, which is exactly what Paul was saying in the latter half of verse 22. There will eventually be a time of vivification for those belonging to the class that was not earlier found to be Christ's. Then all will be found to be vivified in Christ.

Once there are no longer any forces of enmity in the universe there can be no more enemies. When all are vivified in Christ there can only be welcome and peaceful subjection.

ENEMIES SUBJECTED

Hence Paul speaks not only of the forces of enmity but of the creatures who have been held by these forces. All who have experienced the process of dying because they were in Adam will be brought under Christ's feet (1 Cor. 15:25). They will all become subject to Him (15:27,28).

If we are going to speak evangelically of subjection, that is, viewing it with reference to the cross and resurrection of Christ as the basis of Christ's reign, we cannot introduce terms of hate and stubbornness and enmity. They must be done away with, be taken away with the elimination of death. Christ's reigning can only lead to good. Subjection of enemies cannot be outward alone, but must be inward for the sake of the individual who is subjected and even more so for the sake of the One Who subjects. In the final analysis, subjection under the feet of Christ must be of the highest nature in full accord with His disposition of ever seeking the glory of God.

This is the revelation of Philippians 2:10,11, which speaks of everyone bowing and acknowledging the Lordship of Christ "for the glory of God the Father." In view of Christ's death for sinners and His triumphant resurrection, how can we think of His kingdom in terms of human rule with all its corruption and injustice and the inner insubjection, bitterness and hate that results? The subjection Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 15 is a subjection under *Christ* Who died for sinners, achieved by God Who commends His love in the giving of His Son.

CHRIST SUBJECTED

Much loss of honor for and appreciation of our Lord has resulted from denial of the ultimate, vivified subjection of those enemies who are not His in His presence. Perhaps even more loss has resulted from failure to appreciate the

glory of Christ's climactic act of giving up the kingdom to His God and Father.

Under Christ's reign vivification and subjection are partners to the glory of God. The nature of vivification is defined by the nature of Christ's vivification, full of life and power and for the glory of God. So also the nature of the subjection of all enemies under the feet of Christ is defined by the nature of the Son's subjection of Himself to God being described here in 1 Corinthians 15:28.

God's Son has always been subject to His God and Father. This is exhibited conclusively in His emptying of Himself of His former glory and then His humbling of Himself, "becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil.2:7,8). But in that future time when He reaches the pinnacle of His exaltation with all former enemies placed under His feet, in that highest exercise of power and authority and achievement of well being and peace, when all that is good is gained and realized, then He becomes subject to His God and Father in a new way. Then He, as the authoritative, powerful and universal Saviour and Justifier and Reconciler, *to Whom all have been made subject,* becomes subject to God.

There is only one place better for Christ than His place of exaltation as Subjector over all who have been at enmity toward God. And that is the position of the Subjected Subjector Who leads the way into that place of subjection for which all were made. For our Lord this is not a position of loss, not in any way, but one of joyful fulfillment.

All who once were enemies are thus brought, in Christ, into that most blessed place of subjected sonship before God, the glorious place for which they were created and in which alone they can also find their fulfillment and peace. They will fully and perfectly realize God as their All.

ALL IN ALL

"Then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him

Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:28).

It is highly irreverent to make this grand expression, *God All in all,* to mean that God will be All only in a part of the human race, and that part oblivious or insensitive to the misery of the rest. Equally irreverent is to suppose that, while God will be All in all, this will only mean a sullen and forced pacification for some.

If we know God's righteousness only as it is revealed in His judgments we do not know the whole of His righteousness. His righteous judgments are means to an end, and there will come a time when they are no longer needed. But God's righteousness manifested in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ (Rom.3:21,22) is permanent and full. If we know God's love only as it is revealed in His choice and call of us we do not know the whole of His love. His love toward us is vast and will bring much glory to Him for the transcendence of its grace. But His love commended in the death of His Son for His enemies (Rom.5:8), must ultimately be expressed in realization and enjoyment by all, including the enemies mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15. When God is All in all He will be manifested to all as He is manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As mentioned in the introduction to this series of studies, the "first and foremost" compelling reason for us to believe that all humanity will be saved is that "God is truly what He reveals Himself to be in the Scriptures."[1] As God, He cannot fail to achieve His purpose. As the wise God, the faithful God, the righteous God, the God of all power and peace and love, He will bring His creation into the recognition and appreciation of Himself. He will become ALL in all.

D.H.H.

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1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.91, p.35.

INDEX TO VOLUME XCII

Advent of God's Grace, The . . . 261
All is For God . . . 71
Among the Philistines . . . 133
Appointed by God . . . 254
Battle of Mount Gilboa, The . . . 217
David Leaves the Land of Israel . . . 35
Encouragement in the Word . . . 221
Father's Hands, In the . . . 117
First Offense, The . . . 147,197,243
God at Work in Genesis Two . . . 136
God Highly Exalts Him . . . 55
God Sees . . . 157
God, The Saviour . . . 179
God's Purpose in Christ . . . 25
Growing in the Realization of God . . . 66
If One Died for the Sake of All . . . 25,55,109,179,235,261
Insight and Discernment . . . 13
Lessons of Contrast . . . 173
Marriage and the Believer . . . 121,162,226,269
News of Saul's Death, The . . . 279
Not by Vigor . . . 187
Notes on 1 and 2 Samuel . . . 35,89,133,187,217,279
Noting what is Not Being Observed . . . 66
Obituaries: K. Berry 48, R. Lounsbury 178, M. Mann 12,
B. Mullen 178, M. Tutterrow 82, B. and L. Wimmer 210
Pattern of Sound Words, A . . . 83
Philippians 2:9-11 . . . 51
Prophetic Text, A . . . 39
Questions and Answers . . . 13,71
Reconciliation of All to God . . . 109
Salvation is a Journey . . . 173
Saul and the Medium of Endor . . . 89
Saviour of All, Especially of Believers, The . . . 235
Saviour's Exaltation, The . . . 51
Septuagint Contributions . . . 94
Spirit in Generation . . . 5
Studies in Genesis . . . 5,83,136,147,157,197,243
Suggested Translation of Titus 2:11 . . . 285
That in All He May Be First . . . 101
Translating the Former Prophets . . . 39,94
Universal Dignities of Christ, The . . . 101
Yet Now They are Holy . . . 275

2 New Year's Soliloquy
4 Editorial
5 The Spirit in Generation
13 Insight and Discernment
25 God's Purpose in Christ
35 David Leaves the Land of Israel
39 A Prophetic Text

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Unsearchable Riches

A Bimonthly Magazine
For God and His
Word

VOLUME XCII

co-editors:
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and
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New Year's Soliloquy

The sacrifice You made for me
Has caused a change within;
You've filled my heart with love and peace,
Where once was hate and sin.
I've seen the love that filled Your heart
On that accursed tree
To justify the human race
And thus set all men free.

You gave me faith to see the gift
Of life You purchased there,
And now I have a blessed hope,
Where once there was despair.
Now as I walk my daily life,
I live it by Your grace,
For I have seen the love that flows,
And the smile upon Your face.

And when the ones who injure me
Would scoff upon Your name,
I'll gladly suffer there with You,
To shed abroad Your fame—
To make men see how great You are
And that You love them so,
You'll reconcile them all to God,
And this, one day, they'll know.

I have no fear when I should fail—
It's in God's grace I stand.
I've glimpsed the wondrous future that
For them in grace is planned.
I'm glad that though great sin abounds
(And sin must needs increase),
You've made of me an instrument
Of Your eternal peace.

Sheila Osgood

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2001
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-TWO

EDITORIAL

NO DOUBT, when the first issue of *Unsearchable Riches* was prepared more than 92 years ago, the editors, Vladimir Gelesnoff and A. E. Knoch, had no thought of it still being published in 2001. The consoling words of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 centered their expectation on Christ and not on distant prospects for this effort they had undertaken. Nevertheless, they did have a continuing goal in mind as outlined in the editorial for the first issue, dated October, 1909: "The aim we have in view is *recovery* of truth. Much of it was lost immediately after Paul's departure from this earthly scene. Some has been recovered, but a great deal still remains buried beneath the rubbish of decayed theology. Current teaching, especially on the subject of Paul's ministries, needs readjustment."

This task remains far from completion. But much truth that has been preserved as well as that which has been recovered needs repeating and, sometimes, restating in more scriptural terminology. We try to keep this in mind as we prepare the magazine.

Of course, since we have the Scriptures in translations from Hebrew and Greek (and Aramaic for some small portions), and the manuscripts on which our translations are based are copies of copies many times over, the task of "recovery of truth" is no small one. There are many opportunities for discouragement. Yet the endeavor, both that relating to translation and that relating to listening to, considering and sharing the Word, is exciting and rewarding.

Perhaps the reader will feel some of my own excitement in the investigations leading to the CV of 1 Samuel 10:1 and 10:27 described in the article beginning on page

39. Many years ago, Brother Knoch had directed that the CV of 10:1 should include the passage about Saul steering and saving Israel, as preserved in the Septuagint translation. Now in seeing how important this prophecy was as God's *declaration,* not challenge, but His *promise,* to Saul concerning Saul's kingship, I have a greater appreciation of the value of this insertion as well as conviction of its genuineness.

Brother Knoch, however, was not aware of the addition at the end of the chapter supplied by a small fragment of 1 Samuel found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. A few years ago, Brother Herman Rocke and I procured some studies concerning this fragment, published by scholars working with the Dead Sea Scrolls, and we discussed its possible value for the CVOT. The result was that we decided, just a few months before Brother Rocke died, that we should include a translation of this paragraph about the Ammonite king, Nahash, in a footnote. We felt there was good support for its genuineness.

Then, looking again at the evidence and relating the passage to the whole context of chapters 10 and 11, and the issue of Yahweh's great work of salvation of Israel from the enemy, Nahash, led me within this past year to the decision to put the passage in the CV text itself. I have tried to bring out the value of its contribution to this portion of God's Word in my article.

I mention all this here, not to suggest we always make the right decision on translation or scriptural studies, but to indicate something of our struggles in the "recovery of truth" (as well as the "restating of truth") and certain of our standards in reaching our decisions. It is our conviction that truth glorifies God, and in doing so is beneficial to our lives of faith. That is the bottom line.

May God give us all grace and peace in believing.

D.H.H.

THE SPIRIT IN GENERATION

GENERATION, which seems to be confined to humanity and the creatures subject to it on the earth, is, in some respects, even more wonderful than creation. The spirit, or breath of life (literally, breath of *lives*) breathed into Adam, is still alive in his posterity. His body, and those of billions of his descendants, lie moldering in the grave, or have become entirely one with the soil. Indeed, its elements may have formed part of many other men, or even of animals or plants, since its death. But, even though Adam's spirit has returned to God Who gave it, its life and power has been transmitted to all the race, so that there is an unbroken life line from the first human to all who are alive today. His body never could have provided the material for all his progeny, but his *spirit* was the spark which lit the torch of life in every human ever since.

Spirit must be distinguished from breath. In Greek they come from the same stem. *Pnoe* means *breath*. With *ma* added to it, *pneuma*, we have breath-*effect*, *spirit*. So that spirit is the effect of breath in humanity. When breathing stops, the spirit leaves. The spirit gives life to all that lives. It is the vital, essential part of every plant and animal. The body may change from moment to moment, but this does not affect its so-called "identity." Plants may be pruned, animals shorn, or these may even lose a large part of their frame; so long as the spirit remains they retain enough to carry on the vital functions, and their identity remains. By generation they may even pass on a part of their spirit and body to form a new and distinct life, but they still remain themselves.

The unbeliever today has a spirit, which he received from God through Adam, and which will return to its Giver (Ecc.12:7). But the believer has more than that. Besides possessing the spirit that vitalized his body even in unbelief, he is the *home* of God's holy spirit, which gives *divine life* to all the saints, and which *anoints* them for service.

We have already marvelled at the myriads of seeds which spring from one life germ created by the spirit of God. In living souls this marvel is multiplied many many times, for the spirit is the force giving a life-long *experience* to each one, and each act is due only to the spirit's power and direction. An infant's wail may seem immaterial to us, but the fate of Israel hinged on the lament of the little laddie Moses, and this people's whole history was influenced by his cries. Our Lord Himself assured His disciples that not one sparrow is forgotten in God's sight. Yea, the hairs of our head are all numbered (Luke 12:6,7).

Let us not despise seemingly insignificant events. They may lead to tremendous sequels. It is said that a pig started the war of 1812, between England and the United States. Two friendly neighbors of the same political party lived on adjoining lots. One had a garden. The other bought himself a pig. The pig got into the garden, and ended their friendship, so that, when the gardener ran for Congress, he was defeated for lack of his friend's vote. When the question of war came up in the House of Representatives, it would have been defeated had he been there. So it seems that the pig was the deciding factor in a war which cost much bloodshed and even the destruction of the capital itself. Yet it was not even the pig, but only one of its acts that turned the tide of a nation's history.

Man was formed of the *soil*, not dust, as the AV has it. Nothing can *grow* in the dust (*cf* Job 8:19). The human frame is not dry as dust, but very moist indeed. Soil is that part of the earth or the ground in which plants can

grow. It is that portion of the surface which has been oxidized by the sun's rays and the weather, so that the roots of plants can absorb its elements. Here we see repeated the operation of God's spirit as in the beginning of the restoration of the earth. Sunlight acts upon the ground and gives it life-giving force from which plants are sustained. Then the animals and man share this vital force when they eat the plants. Of such *vitalized ground* was the first human formed. Indeed, *adm* [Adam] was taken from *adme* [ground].

It is interesting to note, in this connection, that one of the five Hebrew words the AV translates *world*, means *disintegrate* (rendered "habitance" in the CV, as in 1 Sam.2:8) which is quite the opposite in sense from *kosmos*, the one that is rendered *world* in the Greek Scriptures. Different derivatives of the same stem *bl* are *decay, disgrace, carcass, deluge, Babel*, and *Bul* (a month, about our October, when the vegetation disintegrates). Ever since the disruption, the earth has been eroding and decomposing. We do not realize that this would finally wash all the dry land into the sea, and we would have none left to live on. Yet the story is repeated for us every year by the dissolution of much of the plant life, and we are given a preview of the new creation when Spring revives all the dormant flora of the earth.

God has named the present earth a "disintegrating" habitance since the disruption, and the deluge was given a name from the same stem *m-bul*, for it greatly accelerated this process. The previous earth was *not* like this, neither will the future new one be. In them all was and will be permanent. The present one is in accord with the life that lives upon it. It is in harmony with decaying humanity. It lacks spirit power to sustain a life without gradual disintegration and death. How few of the learned scholars who explore and study the surface of the earth see the sense

of it all, or grasp the great truth that *the insufficiency of God's spirit* leads inevitably to decay and dissolution.

As with the soil, so with the breath. Man cannot use all parts of the air, any more than he utilizes all of the ground. Only *vitalized* air, which has some oxygen, can be absorbed by the lungs. Much of the air is inert, dead. Only about a quarter of it is oxygen, fit to sustain life in animals. Some of it is combined with carbon to fit it for plant life. The same vital element, oxygen, which makes the *soil* life-sustaining, is found in much larger quantities in the *air*. We may trace all this back to the very beginning, when the spirit of God's vibrations produced light, for it is sunlight which vitalizes both the soil and the air, and this comes from the divine spirit.

The bodies of all living things are composed of soil. This is that part of the earth's surface which, having been oxidized by sun and air, contains the minerals of which these bodies are built. But, in a soilish body, such as mankind has at present, the soil is not permanent or stable, but is continually changing. It is constantly renewed by the ingestion of food and drink, and at the same time, broken down and eliminated by catabolism. So long as this operation is balanced after maturity, and the body gains as much as it loses, and its organs operate properly, this process of dying will not be fatal. But when its functions fail, or the body is not renewed, then the spirit leaves, and the body returns to the soil.

DEATH IS A LACK OF SPIRIT

The body apart from the spirit is dead (James 2:26). Even Adam, who received the breath of life direct from God (Gen.2:7), lived only so long as God's spirit remained in him. After he had transgressed and offended God, and mankind began to multiply, Yahweh Elohim said concerning it, "My spirit shall not abide in the human for the eon, in

that he too is flesh" (Gen.6:3). The AV translates, "my spirit shall not always *strive* with man." But the word *dun* does not signify "strive," but *adjudicate*. They could not very well translate this "judge," their usual rendering of this stem, for Yahweh Elohim was not judging at that time. Moreover, the Greek version renders it *reside* [*katameine*]. The change of a single letter in Hebrew makes it *abide*, which fits perfectly into the context. Hence the CV so renders it. When man sinned, God's spirit was withdrawn in some measure, and death began to disintegrate his body. At the deluge all, except a single family, perished.

LIVING SOUL

Few renderings in the AV are more deplorable than the substitution of *creature* for *soul* in the first chapter of Genesis. The matter is made worse, rather than better, when it suddenly changes to the correct rendering in the formation of Adam. The impression is given that the animals are *not* souls, and that man *alone* has a soul. This false idea is further strengthened by reverting to *creature* in the rest of Genesis when animals are in view (2:19; 9:10,12,15,16), but using *soul* or *person* when man is mentioned. The confusion is further confounded by changing to *life* on some occasions (9:4,5,5; 19:17,19; 32:30; 44:30).

The Bible is generally supposed to be a bloody book. The implication is that the sacrifice caused untold *suffering to innocent animals*. Some shudder with horror at a religion that would give so much pain and agony to harmless, inoffensive, blameless beasts. But this is due to a misunderstanding of the function of the blood, for the fact is that the bloodiness of the Jewish ritual was largely due to the desire to make it *painless*, and *save* the animals all unnecessary suffering. The hunting law, which demanded that the blood of the prey must be poured out, is also a provision to save the animal suffering. Where there is no

blood, there is no sensation. An animal whose blood has been poured out cannot feel either pleasure or pain, and is past all suffering. The many thousands of sacrificial victims slain on Jewish altars probably suffered very little when they were killed, for the blood was immediately drained away (Lev.17:13).

The havoc which this discordant rendering has wrought may be seen in the following quotations from an encyclopedia: "SOUL: The principle of life, regarded as existing as a *separate* entity apart from the body of men and animals." [There can be no soul sensation apart from the body.] "The ancient Hebrews conceived it to be the principle of life in living creatures, and this idea persists throughout the Bible." The reason for this false conception of the soul is due to the fact that, in our Authorized Version, we read *life* where it should be *soul*, one hundred and fifty-nine times! No wonder it is defined as "the principle of *life*" in standard works of reference, even though it is *never* so in the Original.

SOILISH, SOULISH, AND SPIRITUAL

But for those who have a celestial allotment a great change is needed. A soulish body can breathe only near the surface of the earth. Even if we ascend a high mountain we find it hard to get sufficient air to keep active. In the high altitudes we must take our air with us or we would "black out." What good would it do if we went to "heaven" and lost all consciousness for lack of air to breathe? The celestial saints must not only be resurrected, like the Circumcision, but their bodies must be *changed*, from *soulish* and *soilish*, to *spiritual* bodies (1 Cor.15:52). These will not depend on the soil for food, or the blood for sensation, but directly on the spirit of God for life.

Although Christ was human, and like the rest of the race in most things, we must not drag Him down to our level

in the matter of *life* or *vitality*. His superiority to other humans lay in the realm of *spirit*. Others receive their spirit by generation from Adam, but He was generated directly by God's holy spirit, without any human intervention. It is called the *power* of the Most High. Although He became a Son of *humanity* from His mother's side, He is the Son of *God* on His Father's. This power continued with him through life, and not only vivified Him but enabled Him to heal the sick, and even restore life to the dead. The life He had, no man could take from Him, even if they broke His body or drained His blood. He Himself gave it up and committed it to His Father (Luke 23:46; John 19:30).

The crucifixion could not take His life. He could cry out with a loud voice just before He voluntarily let out His spirit. His body saw no decay. When He was roused, He had no blood, and His body became a spiritual body, such as ours may become when He descends and calls us to Himself. In Him we can see the operation of God's spirit at its highest, hence the clearest.

MAN'S RULE IN GENERATION

The *character* of human rule, as connected with *generation*, is very different from the sway over the lower creatures in *creation*. Generation led to the rule of the husband over the wife, although she was not beneath him, but his complement. It also involved the rule of the parent over the child, due to its immaturity, not its rank. Each son, in his turn, inherits the place of his father. This rule is based on close relationship, common interests, and natural affection, and foreshadows the rule of God, as Father, in the consummation.

This rule in marriage and family life is not eternal, but *limited in time* to the eons. That is why it is associated with Yahweh, the One Who is and was and is coming. It is not a permanent institution, or an end in itself. It is intended to

teach us our heart relationship to God. It is connected with our souls, our feelings, rather than our wills or wisdom.

A human infant is said to be the most helpless of all living things. Without care by parents or others, it would soon perish. It must be nurtured for many a long day before it is mature and able to fend for itself. Eventually all mankind will learn the lesson that this teaches, for we are just as helpless, in relation to God, as babes are in reference to their parents. This is doubtless the object in generation. Not only is it meant to teach us our own helplessness, but also to put us in the place of God toward our families and to demonstrate to us how God cares and provides for and loves His spiritual children. Our affection is drawn out unselfishly by our offspring. So is the love of God for us.

The rule of man over the living souls below him seems to be permanent, but the rule of the father of a family is continually shifting, from generation to generation. The child of today is the father of tomorrow. Normally, each man goes through all the experiences of childhood, maturity and parenthood, in order to fit him for a realization of God's relations to the race. He first sees God's provision, care, and love in his parents, and then experiences it himself with his own offspring. But this passes on from one generation to the next, and is probably unknown in the resurrection. At the consummation God Himself becomes the All-Father, and all other rule is superfluous. This will be the fair fruitage of generation when all will find their peace in loving obedience and communion with God as their Father.

A. E. Knoch

Our sister in the Lord, **Margaret Mann,** age 90, passed away on December 4, 2000. Margaret and her husband Bromley (who died some years ago) were our faithful friends in Christ for well over fifty years. They hosted Bible classes at their home in North Denver on a consistent basis. These studies always proclaimed the great truth of universal reconciliation as well as other precious gems of wisdom and truth.

INSIGHT AND DISCERNMENT

Question:

Can you explain 1 Corinthians 4:7 to me? In the Concordant Version it reads, "For who is making you to discriminate? Now what have you which you did not obtain? Now if you obtained it also, why are you boasting as though not obtaining?" Yet in the Authorized Version this verse is translated, "For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" The AV rendering here is easier to understand; but it seems to convey somewhat a different thought than the CV.

Also, I am troubled by the fact that so many different and conflicting doctrines are held among believers; this is so to quite an extent, even among those who are acquainted with your ministry. I realize that each one needs to think and decide for himself; and, I realize too that, by the grace of God, some are more able and enlightened than others. Still, I do not like controversy, even as its usual consequence, that of strained personal relations if not outright estrangement between believers.

Answer:

A FRIEND recently mentioned to me that perhaps not a single disputation which he had ever had over the years, between himself and other believers, had ever been fruitful. He spoke of such contentions instead, as being an object lesson in, "How to lose friends together with any ability to influence people." I replied by saying that I expect that all

challenges even as contentious disputes among believers are condemned by Scripture.

Perhaps we have all failed (I certainly have) in this matter, even as in so many other aspects of our walk. Yet may we be learning from our mistakes, becoming transformed by the renewing of our mind, for us to be testing what is the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect (Rom.12:2).

If we suppose others to be mistaken, we should still consider them "in the faith" (since they are believers) even if "infirm in the faith." The sense of Romans 14:1 seems to be that we are freely to take those who are simply "infirm in the faith" (ones who are not mean or troublesome) to ourselves; yet we are to do so in a way that does not result in "discriminations [ones which are the fruit] of reasonings."

Such discriminations "of reasonings" are those discriminations which follow from the misuse of the ratiocinative (i.e., reasoning) process. It is not that Paul is being critical of good logic (which we can hardly do without), but of bad "reasonings," and especially of the usual consequences associated with them. "Discriminations" are differences; connotatively (and that is the sense here), those who make such "discriminations" do not merely note such differences of opinion as may exist, but become "puffed up" concerning the correctness of their own views, the result being that "one [is] over the one, against the other" (1 Cor.4:6). Such is not the result of merely judging one's own findings correct, but of being proud and unloving concerning them.

To correct this problem, Paul declares, as rendered in the Concordant Version, "For who is making you to discriminate? Now what have you which you did not obtain? Now if you obtained it also, why are you boasting as though not obtaining?" (1 Cor.4:7). Yet most versions translate along the lines of the New King James Version, which is, "For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?"

Paul's main point, however, comes through in both these renderings. Yet in the first sentence here, in the CV, in the words, "who is making you to discriminate?" we may wonder if the sense is, "Who is teaching you to make such discriminations? It must be someone among yourselves, for neither Apollos nor myself have encouraged any such behavior" (*cf* v.6).

Or perhaps we might take Paul to be saying the following: "Who is [or, 'Are there any who are'] discriminating *you* [i.e., thus treating you improperly]"? Since there are indeed those who thus discriminate against us, the rhetorical implication would then seem to be, Since you do not like it when others treat you in such a way, do not treat anyone else in such a (unjustly discriminatory) way yourself (*cp* Matt.7:12).

It seems to me that Paul's thought is along these lines. But even if so, it is impossible to bring out such an idea simply in translation alone.

Even if it is not so easy to grasp, it appears that the Concordant Version of 1 Corinthians 4:7a is an accurate rendering. Still, however, grasping the true sense here is difficult. Indeed, for most readers, our rendering of this text no doubt tends to confuse more than clarify the overall passage. This would seem to be so, even though the remainder of the verse is quite clear as it stands, as rendered in the CV.

Yet according to the context, and especially in consideration of the rhetorical flow of the three questions which Paul herein asks, it might seem "truer to the truth" to render the first of these questions as, "Who is making you to differ?"

Such a rendering, however, would be contrary to the concordant method; and, it would fail to convey what is actually being said. The Greek is THROUGH-JUDGING (*diakrinei*). This word does not mean "to [be made to] dif-

fer," (i.e., so that, as a result, one person is different than another). Therefore, we cannot render it by such an English expression. We say this, however, being zealous ourselves for the *sentiment*, "Who maketh thee to differ from another?" (AV) to which the only answer is: God alone. It is evident, on other grounds, that this is a gloriously true thought; it would not, however, seem to be an accurate translation of this text. Since all is out of, through, and for God (Rom. 11:36), we may be certain that He alone "makes us to differ," that is, to be different than others, wherever we may be worthy. Even so, let us not merely presume that such is therefore necessarily the revelation of 1 Corinthians 4:7a.

Diakrinō speaks of the process of judging, with a view toward adjudication, or, in an adjudicatory sense, with a view toward "discrimination." (It is rendered "doubt" in instances where, in the process of adjudication, one is uncertain how to decide.) As a consequence of judging, or decision, one certainly will distinguish one thing from another, or one person from another. Differences do exist. Yet while we need to recognize them, we must not, in a connotative sense, *unjustly* discriminate among ourselves because of them.

It is not that we may not note whatever distinctions there may be between the faith of one believer and another, but that we must not act unjustly in consideration of those differences. The primary injustices which we must avoid are self-pride and an unloving spirit. If we are "puffed up" (i.e., proud) or are boasting, we will taint the very truth for which we would stand. It will not do merely to attempt to keep such prideful attitudes within, for that is impossible, and will only make us hypocrites as well. Instead, we are to get rid of such attitudes; we are to "put them out" that they might be "taken away" (*cf* Eph.4:31).

For this we need a Saviour from ourselves. The good news is that Christ Jesus is our Saviour from ourselves.

As we attend to the reading, the entreaty, and the teaching (*cf* 1 Tim.4:13), we find it to be so that He is our Saviour too, even in the practical affairs of our daily lives. Let us be invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim.2:2). Let us not seek for invigoration from the world, or from within our own selves. Let us rather "be invigorated in the Lord and in the might of *His* strength" (Eph.6:10). Paul does not entreat us to "do our part," in some independent way that finally looks to man for the victory. Instead, he entreats us to be doing what is faithful; and, while we are so doing, to be thanking God that we are indeed so doing.

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Question:

Does not Romans 11:19-24 show that the church is spiritual Israel, and, as well, that we can lose our salvation?

Answer:

No, Romans 11:19-24 does not show that the church is spiritual Israel, or that we can lose our salvation. Here is the complete text of that passage:

You will be declaring, then, "Boughs are broken out that I may be grafted in." Ideally! By unbelief are they broken out, yet you stand in faith. Be not haughty, but fear. For if God spares not the natural boughs, neither will He be sparing you! Perceive, then, the kindness and severity of God! On those, indeed, who are falling, severity, yet on you, God's kindness, if you should be persisting in the kindness: else you also will be hewn out. Now they also, if they should not be persisting in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were hewn out of an olive wild by nature, and, beside nature,

are grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much rather shall these, who are in accord with nature, be grafted into their own olive tree! (Rom.11:19-24).

Note that the nations (*cp* v.13) are not grafted in to Israel; they are grafted in to the "olive tree." It is not true (as some claim) that "olive tree" is a figure of speech for Israel. Instead, "olive tree" is a figure of speech for *God's agency of enlightenment in the world,* and, in certain eras, this service is appointed unto the nation of Israel.

It is not at all that "gentile Christians" become, in the sight of God, effectually, "Israelites" (so-called "spiritual Israelites"), much less that if they should backslide they will "lose their salvation" and be sent to Hell. It is rather that, in this era, the *nations* (the non-Israelite national groups themselves) are "grafted in," that is, *placed into a [temporary] service* which, "by nature" (i.e., by God's original appointment) belonged to Israel, that of being God's agency of enlightenment in the world. Even as the time came when Israel disqualified herself for such service and so was removed therefrom, the day will come as well when the nations, in the fullness of their own unbelief, will fully disqualify themselves for such service and will likewise be removed therefrom. Subsequently, however, as Paul explains, this service will return to Israel, whose ministry it is "by nature."

The passage is not concerned with personal salvation, but with the respective service of both Israel and the nations, each in its own era, as the divine means of enlightenment among men. Israel has already lost this privilege (though they will regain it in the future; *cp* vs.23,26). And those peoples, those of the nations, whose portion it has been during the past two thousand years to have been engaged in such service (in the figure, who have been "grafted in" to the olive tree) will lose it as well, in due time, as the conclusion of the eon approaches.

The common error is to claim that Israel is herein "identified" as the olive tree, and then to reason that therefore "the church," in turn, is to be spiritually identified as Israel. It is true that Israel, in her own eras, *serves as* the olive tree, and that we may say that, in former and future eras, Israel will be "the olive tree." But this is only to say that, in such instances, Israel "is" (representatively) the olive tree; that is to say, that Israel, originally, was placed into the service of being God's agency of enlightenment in the world, which of course is true. But it does not follow from this that *wherever* we read of the "olive tree" here, we are to think "Israel."

Paul, effectually, merely says that Israel, by nature, and in certain eras, is *put into the service of* being "God's olive tree." He nowhere says that Israel, timelessly and abstractly, is God's sole means of human enlightenment, and that hence if we would be faithful to Him we must become some sort of Israelites and then take up with Israel's law!

It is not true that Israel is *abstractly and timelessly* to be identified as the agency of light—much less that believers of the nations are somehow to be reckoned as Israelites!

The nations' service in the "olive tree" (their service as the present agents of divine enlightenment among men) has nothing whatever to do with the question of whether any individuals among such national groups should personally observe any certain portion of the law of Moses. To suggest that it does, much less to claim that it is because of such service that such ones must keep portions of the law, is simply illogical.

Paul, primarily, is the apostle of the *nations,* and his evangel, that of the *Un*circumcision (Gal.2:7; even though, according to God's choice, certain ones of Israelite descent enjoy its blessings as well). According to his evangel, we are chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world, and designated beforehand for the place of a son for God

Himself (Eph.1:4,5). It is according to this evangel, that where sin increases, grace superexceeds, for life eonian (Rom.5:20,21). And, it is according to this evangel as well that God vivifies us *together* in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us *together* and seats us *together* among the celestials, in Christ, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:5-7). Consequently, then, we would imitate Paul and deem the righteousness which is of law (the righteousness which comes from heeding the law's precepts) simply as refuse, as that which, however suitable and needful in its place, we now have no need of whatever (Phil.3:6,8).

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Question:

While not intended in a sense of personal disrespect, let me say this about the Concordant "ministry": Since you do not, in the Trinitarian sense, believe that Jesus is God, you are therefore lost and not in Christ.

Therefore you should not complain when someone such as myself states that you are not really Christians but only members of a non-Christian cult.

Does it not speak to you at all that your doctrines are contrary to the teachings of so many devout and learned scholars? Since your views in favor of various ancient heresies such as universalism, soul-sleep, and dispensationalism, are also contrary to the teachings of the historic Christian church, it is a practical certainty that you are mistaken on such lesser subjects as well.

What I would like to know at present, however, is whether you have anything available about your translation principles. It troubles me particularly that "eternity" is nowhere to be found within the Concordant Version, which includes only the renderings, born of wishful thinking, "eon" and "eonian."

Answer:

It is difficult to know how to reply to your letter helpfully. I accept that you mean us no personal disrespect in stating your opinions concerning our teachings, which you believe to be mistaken. However, all you have actually claimed is that since our teachings are not "orthodox" and are deemed "heretical" by those who identify themselves as members of traditional orthodoxy, it is therefore "a practical certainty" that our views on the subjects you mention are in error. Beyond this, you only add the further claim that since our teaching concerning the nature of Christ, again, is not "orthodox," we are therefore necessarily in error here, insisting that in this case the error is so egregious that it even precludes our membership in the body of Christ.

I can only assume that you simply wished to state your opinion about us directly to us, personally, and, that you feel that no further proof against us is needed beyond the fact that we do not hold to "orthodox" doctrine. Since you have not asked for my help here, I will simply accept your "non-disrespectful," nevertheless extremely negative evaluation as it stands without further comment.

You did ask, however, whether we have anything in print setting forth the Concordant translation principles. I would say at the outset that our translations "eon" and "eonian" are made in an endeavor to be faithful and objective in our work of consistently translating the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Scriptures. I would even suggest that if you should gain an understanding of our actual principles of translation, you will no longer presume or suppose that these renderings are "born of wishful thinking."

Actually, we have a great deal in print (and on the internet as well: *www.concordant.org*) concerning issues and principles of translation. In fact, how familiar are you with the Concordant Literal New Testament? In any case,

if even a modest portion of the explanatory matter in this volume (especially within pages 613-624) together with similar sections in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT is understood, one will then possess a reasonable idea of what is comprised in Concordant translation principles. In addition to such introductory, explanatory matter, there are many articles within the writings of *Unsearchable Riches* which, incidentally, give much additional information concerning our translation principles.

In brief, our principles of translation are simply this: We seek to discover the essence (or basic significance) of scriptural terms through their usage in definitive contexts. Definitive contexts are not contexts in which a certain idea can fit, but are contexts in which a certain idea alone can fit. We take the knowledge gleaned from definitive passages and apply it to indefinitive passages. After all, since indefinitive passages are, at least, less than decisive, and, in many cases, are of no definitive value at all, we can hardly consult them for definitive information.

Now in any certain passage, a given word may be used in a wide variety of different ways, whether literal or figurative. While varied usage will not change a word's essence, it will indeed change the leading idea that may be in view in any certain passage. Such considerations, however, since they are matters of interpretation, not translation, should not be introduced in translation. A translator must (1) note the ideas inherent in the vocabulary terms and grammatical forms of the Original, and then, as much as possible, while seeking to preserve good diction, (2) convey and reflect those ideas in translation.

Nearly all will acknowledge that, in many passages, the Greek *aiōn* refers to a long period of time, that is, an age or eon. It is claimed by most, however, that in some places it means instead, that which is without end, that is, (for) ever.

All advanced (and indeed, most elementary) dictionar-

ies give two definitions for the English "eon": (1) a long period of time; (2) endlessness.

The Concordant translators, having found definitive scriptural evidence that *aiōn,* itself, simply signifies *duration,* translate the Greek accordingly, simply by the *anglicized transliteration,* "eon." They do so being aware both of the theological dispute concerning the meaning of this word in some passages, even as of the two diverse English definitions of "eon". What could be more sensible, fair, and non-interpretative than this? (Any hermeneutical opinions of the Concordant translators related to this matter are entirely beside the point.)

When employing solely the Greek text itself, one may, as a matter of interpretation, affirm whatever his judgment may be concerning any connotative sense perceived to attend any certain usage of *aiōn.* But, in any event, he will read, and say, *aiōn,* not some other word. One may do the same thing when reading and saying "eon" from the Concordant Version. Whether the notion of endlessness is correct or incorrect with respect to a concept which may attend any certain usage of "eon," is, in any case, a matter of interpretation, not translation. Most translators are evidently simply blind to the fact that their renderings are often not translations at all, but interpretations.

The great majority of Bible students, for the most part, merely copy scholarly opinion in order to "build their case." Such ones themselves possess hardly any real knowledge of a linguistic nature. At best, they are like the high school biology student who may do an excellent job of memorizing the many assertions of his teacher. Such a one himself, however, does not really grasp the issues involved, and so is quite at a loss to tell where it is that his teacher leaves the realm of proven science and enters the realm of speculation or even of proven error.

The rendering "eon" ought to be applauded, not crit-

icized. Nothing could be more unfair and presumptuous than the claim that the motivation for this translation, eon, was the propagation of the universalist views of the Concordant Version's translators. It would be just as "fair" to claim that the renderings "everlasting" and "eternal" by orthodox translators are the product of their desire to teach eternal punishment. Besides, the issue is not the presumed motives of any certain translators for their renderings, but the actual validity of their renderings themselves. "Eon" is the only possible non-interpretative rendering for the Hebrew *olam* and the Greek *aiōn.* Rather than "eon" being unfair, it alone is fair.

In many instances, a single term in the Original can be faithfully represented by a single, corresponding term in a translation. In many other instances, however, the idiom between languages is such that a variety of synonyms are necessary in order to reflect the sense of the Original as closely as possible in the translation. Often there is a close idiomatic "match" between words in both languages; often as well, there is not such a match.

Now few believers have the aptitude for, nor even the inclination toward the serious study of any such considerations. Indeed, whether due to prejudice or blindness, even a person of much linguistic expertise may nevertheless not have the special ability truly to keep these things straight and to make objective, wise judgments concerning them.

Aptitude, intelligence, and education are vital for many things. They are not, however, sufficient in themselves. What is needed as well is the provision of conclusive evidence and the grace to recognize and accept it accordingly.

It is no great thing to "critique" and "disprove" our views, even after having convinced oneself that our views have been given an adequate hearing. But to grasp the truth (whether or not any certain Concordant teaching is the truth), that is a great thing indeed. J.R.C.

GOD'S PURPOSE IN CHRIST

THE book of Ephesians begins with a stirring blessing-song of praise to the laud of the glory of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph.1:3-14). It speaks in superlatives of God's blessings of love and grace and wisdom in Christ. The passage is one sentence, one complete thought made up of about 170 Greek words grouped into 15 to 20 clauses, often compounded, and expanded by numerous prepositional phrases. It flows with wave after wave of revelation of God as He is made known in, and operates through, His beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE BLESSED GOD WHO BLESSES

Paul's heart is filled with applause for the blessed God Who blesses us in and through His Son. God blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials (1:3), three of which, centered in His love, grace and wisdom, are distinguished here: (1) God chooses us in Christ before the disruption of the world, in *love* designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus (1:4,5); (2) God lavishes His *grace* on us in the Beloved with deliverance through His blood and forgiveness of offenses (1:5-7); and (3) in all *wisdom and prudence,* God makes known to us the secret of His will (1:8-12).

We will look at the first two of these operations briefly, but our main interest here comes under the third heading, especially verses 9-11 where the apostle speaks of God's purpose for all and His operating of all. The emphasis throughout is on God's blessings for the ecclesia, His

choosing of us, His deliverance of us through the blood of His beloved Son, and *His* revelation to us of the glorious future He has purposed in Christ, and the part He allots us in that purpose. But none of these blessings, for all their special and transcendent favor with respect to us, are narrow and coiled inward. And, in fact, all of them are founded on what God has done and purposes to achieve in Christ for all.

THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

God would have us appreciate His blessings as specifically centered in and carried out by His Son, Who is the Saviour, anointed with power and authority. God does not operate alone. It is in relation to His love for His Son and His love channeled through His Son that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ chooses us in Christ before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4). In love, commended in the death of His Son for sinners, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ designates us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus (Eph.1:5).

PREDESTINATION AND HELL

There is no doubt that Ephesians 1:4,5 teaches that God chose us long before we were born, and He determined ahead of time that we would have the place of a son for Him. We had nothing to do with it. This has become known as the doctrine of "predestination," which in turn has become a great source of contention and division. However, the cause of division is not in the idea of God predestinating us but in divorcing Ephesians 1:4,5 from its context and in relating the blessing of predestination to the idea of an eternal hell.

Many of those who accept Paul's words concerning God's choice, in the distant past, of certain individuals to become sons to God connect this, not with God's purpose to head up all in the Christ, but with the fantastic idea that the chosen are predestined to no other end than a subjective happiness, and with the hideous idea that those who are not chosen will be given over (by default, as it were, not having been predestinated to salvation) to an everlasting hell of shame and distress, or of final and irreversible destruction.

In reacting against this distortion of Paul's beatitude of praise to God, many others have gone so far as to deny, in effect, the blessings of divine choice and predestination altogether and make them seem to be divine payments to certain individuals who have made themselves bless-able, the rest being left to their fate in eternal hell. In both cases the end for the unbeliever is pretty much the same. And whether or not either view can truly lead the believer to bless God for His blessings to us, under such circumstances of loss for countless others, is seriously questionable.

THROUGH THE BLOOD OF GOD'S BELOVED SON

God lavishes the riches of His grace on us who were chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world. This is the "evangel of [our] salvation" (Eph.1:13), which is expounded in Romans. In view of the fact that all have sinned and offended God (*cf* Eph.2:1), we can only be delivered from this miserable condition "through the blood of Christ" (Eph.1:7), "justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24).

When Paul writes in Ephesians 1:7 concerning the deliverance through the blood of Christ for us, he is saying first of all that there *is* deliverance through the blood of Christ. Because of the lavishing of God's grace on us, this deliverance is being given to us in Christ, but God's work of deliverance does not disappear in relation to other sinners. Part of the vital interconnecting of thoughts in Ephesians

1:3-12 is the reminder of the evangel that there is deliverance for sinners, in Christ and through His blood. This fact of deliverance in God's beloved Son must not be disconnected from what Paul writes next concerning the secret of God's will to head up the all in the Christ.

GOD'S WILL AND DELIGHT

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ graces us lavishly in the Beloved. Through Christ's blood God has provided us with deliverance and the forgiveness of offenses.

But why should He do this?

It is His *will* (Eph.1:9,11).

It is His *delight* (Eph.1:5,9).

But it is that will and that delight of God's which He has *purposed in Christ* (Eph.1:9). God Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will has a purpose in view. He knows exactly what He is doing and where it all is leading. In many ways, for us who live in the current era, this assurance of God's deity and purpose is the greatest blessing of all.

BLESSED IS GOD

Therefore we bless and honor God, not only because He Himself blesses us, but because He has a purpose in blessing us and is carrying out that purpose in His Beloved Son. When Yahweh called Abram from his father's household, He promised to bless him and make him a blessing. There are two factors here that have been often overlooked and sadly forgotten by Israel. First of all it was *Yahweh* Who would bless Abram and his descendants. The word was not given as a challenge for the human to become blessed, but as Yahweh's promise that He Himself would make Abram great, and He Himself would bless him. And, secondly, Yahweh not only promised that He Himself would make Abram into a great nation and bless

him and make him great, but He promised that Abram would have the blessing of becoming a blessing. In Abram (Father-high), whose name would be changed to Abraham (Father-most-high), "all the families of the ground" would be blessed (Gen.12:1-3).

If these features of God's blessing of Abraham were often overlooked and neglected by Israel, it certainly is not outside the realm of possibility that we might overlook and neglect the very same features in God's blessing of us. After all, we are human beings, corrupted by death and sin within us. It is easy for us to think of our blessings as somehow related to some sort of superiority in ourselves, and from this deception it is easy for us to suppose our enjoyment of our blessings is the sole end for which they are given.

It certainly is a fact that Ephesians 1:3-14 prominently features the grace of God's achievements in Christ, not our own, and presents God's purpose as it embraces more than ourselves alone. It is God Himself Who blesses us in Christ. We are not called upon to become bless-able; we could not do so if we tried with every ounce of our being. And we are not blessed as an end in itself, or to an end that we devise. God's blessing of us is in line with God's own purpose, toward the end that He has in view. For this very reason it is all to the laud of the glory of God (Eph.1:6,12,14).

God purposes to bring all into a willing and glorious subjection to the One Who shed His blood for sinners. Then all will find their all in the God of all power, wisdom and love. It is our blessing now to know of this blessed purpose. It will be our blessing in the oncoming eons to be associated with Christ in the display of God's transcendent grace. We will have the blessing of being a blessing, and of being part of that great future process leading to the goal of all being headed up in the Christ.

MAKING KNOWN THE SECRET OF HIS WILL

God has chosen us and designated us ahead of time for the place of a son and has graced us in His beloved Son with deliverance from offenses and sins, and in addition He is making known to us His will and delight concerning the future which He has purposed in Christ. As He did with Abram long ago, so in telling us of His blessings for us, God points to His purpose for choosing us out from the rest and bringing us into a close association with His Son even now. This purpose in which we play a special part embraces more than ourselves. All in the heavens and on the earth are to be granted a glorious association with Christ, headed up in Him, finding their being wrapped up in Him Who becomes their Head.

Let us rehearse the thought in the words of this epistle, not only in 1:9-11 but in later passages as well: The secret of God's will is to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth (Eph.1:9,10). God seats Christ at His right hand among the celestials, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending: and subjects all under the feet of Christ, Who is the One completing the all in all (Eph.1:20-23). God, *Who creates all,* will make known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials His multifarious wisdom, in accord with the purpose of the eons which God makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Eph.3:9-11).

I have deliberately omitted the references to the ecclesia in these passages so the reader can reflect on the broader purpose of God, embracing the universe. The grace which God lavishes on us is that we are given a uniquely blessed relationship to Christ in His work of completing the all in all. In the oncoming eons, God will display the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For in grace, through faith, are we saved, and this is not out of us; it is God's *dōron* (His sacrificial present for approach unto Him), lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them (Eph.2:7-10). What God does for us has grand implications for the all.

ALL HEADED UP

There has been much discussion concerning the application of the word "all" in this passage and the meaning of the Greek verb, *anakephalaioō,* translated "be headed up" in the CV. Any attempt, however, to limit or confine "the all," so that it excludes certain sinners or situations, runs into difficulties when the revelations of God made in this passage are taken into account. The apostle speaks of God in relation to His Beloved Son, and to His delight and glory. To speak of God's will and of His delight within a context centering on the revelation of God in the Lord Jesus Christ encourages us to give the word "all" its widest scope. And this is well supported by the phrase "that in the heavens and that on the earth."

But what is intended by the verb "headed up"? The idea of "recapitulation," or "summing up," is certainly supported by its use in Romans 13:9. The precept, "You shall love your associate as yourself," gives all the other precepts their meaning, and brings them all together in close association under the character of love.

Yet this significance is seldom explored. We read of "the unifying" and of "the gathering up" of the alienated universe, all to be "subsumed" under Christ's feet. But along with such views of universal order under Christ, many expositors struggle to preserve the traditional views of everlasting loss for those found to be God's enemies at

His future judgments. This means evidently that, in being headed up in the Christ, they will be brought together in some association with Christ involuntarily against their own wishes, obedient but sullen, acquiescent and pacified, but without any appreciation or enjoyment of God as He is revealed in Christ.

Such an idea is wholly contrary to the view of God given here in Ephesians. What God is to us is what God *is.* He is not putting on a mask of love and glory for us and a different mask for others, but He is truly a God of love and glory. The revelation of His indignation against sin and upon the sinner does not make it impossible for Him to reveal Himself to all as He has revealed Himself to us. Rather, the revelation of divine anger must be, like all experiences of pain and sorrow, only a dark background for the illumination of God's blessedness.

What can be meant if we say that the God Who blesses us is blessed and we also say God will not bless others because He is unable to do so or has sovereignly decided not to do so? What is the nature of a love which is lavished on a few but eternally denied to others? Replies to questions such as these invariably seek to divert attention from what is being said about God to philosophical questions that go round and round but never stop.

GOD IS OPERATING ALL

We learn from Ephesians 1:3-14 that God graces some but He also wills to head up all in the Christ, both that in the heavens and that on the earth. We also read that God chooses some, but He also is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. We must be willing to accept the connections of thought which are made in this passage. God's choice of us does not keep Him from bringing all into a blessed relationship with Christ. God's will and delight to bless us does not exhaust the operations that He has counseled to carry out. We must be prepared to take this which speaks of God's will, His purpose and intention, and the comprehensiveness of His operations as God's Word. We cannot suppose that the words are meant to say less than they say, especially since they speak of God's glory!

Why should we find the claim that God is operating all a matter needing qualification? Especially since His operating of all is shaped by the counsel of His will, where is ground for objection? Do we feel that when God's will differs from ours, as it often does, that His will must submit to ours? Do we suppose His counsel could be thwarted?

No! God has said His will and delight and purpose is to head up all in the Christ. And He has also said that He is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. These claims of supreme deity are not overstated. Since God is operating all in and through His Son, all will be headed up in the Christ, to the glory and laud of God.

ALL HEADED UP IN THE CHRIST

The words "in the Christ" in Ephesians 1:10 have the same Reference as the words "in the Beloved" in Ephesians 1:6. In the earlier passage He is presented as God's beloved Son Who achieves deliverance for us through His blood. In this evangel of our salvation we see Christ in His death for sinners. Now in Ephesians 1:9-11 the Same One is presented as the Christ in Whom God is carrying out His purpose. He is not presented here as Avenger or Judge, which indeed are temporary roles. In the place of authority presented here He is God's Beloved Son Who shed His blood for sinners, and He is the One, Anointed by God, by means of Whom God carries out the desires of His heart which He has purposed and willed.

In His exaltation of His Son, God will have no less than all entering into this grand consummation.

OUR LOT ALSO

The doctrine of everlasting hell has kept many believers from a proper and productive appreciation of their own blessings in Christ. It breeds callousness in heart (*cf* Eph.4:19) toward those it claims are eternally doomed. In allowing God's love to be eternally restricted to themselves, or to be expressed in terms of damnation as well as in terms of salvation, any progress toward walking in love (*cf* Eph.5:1,2) will surely be impeded.

What is this vast love (Eph.2:4) and this transcendence of power for us who are believing (Eph.1:19) if they cannot ever break through the bulwarks of unbelief and stubbornness that infest God's creation? In the end, is the cross of Christ to be ineffective for many, and must we who are graced with deliverance and peace because of the cross become resigned to such limitations? And how are we to suppose God, as He is revealed through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, could or would be satisfied with such a fragmentary and partial appreciation of His love?

The allotment God has graciously given us is firmly and essentially associated with God's purpose to head up all in the Christ. It is not an exclusive privilege with no purpose other than our enjoyment. We are not blessed in a vacuum. Just as all are to be headed up in Christ, so do we *also* find our lot in Him. The "also" joins us with the all, albeit in a special way, chosen beforehand and graced with the riches of God's grace.

What could be more blessed than to be given the place of a son for God, as a part of God's operation to head up all in the Christ? What a great blessing it is for our present lives, as believers, for our peace and joy, to be graced with the awareness of this wise purpose of God! Indeed the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is blessed!

D.H.H.

DAVID LEAVES THE LAND OF ISRAEL

27 + **David** |**said** ›**in his heart, Some day now I shall be swept** away [i]**by** the **hand of Saul.** There **is no**thing **better for me** [f]**than** to |**escape,** yea **escape**¯ **to** the **land of** the **Philistines.** +**Then Saul will despair** [f]**of me to seek me further in all** the **territory of Israel, and I will escape from his hand.** 2 +**So David** |**arose, and** |[p]**crossed** over, **he and six hundred men** [w] **with him, to Achish son of Maoch, king of Gath.** 3 + **David** |[sit]**stayed with Achish** [i]**at Gath, he and his men,** each **man** +**with his house**hold, and **David** +**with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail,** former **wife of Nabal, the Carmelite.** 4 +**When** › **Saul was** |**told that David had** run **away** to **Gath,** + **he** did **not continue to seek him further.**

5 + **David** |**said to Achish,** [pr]**Now if I have found favor in your eyes, let them** [g]**grant** › **me** a [ri]**place in one of the field cities, and let me** |**dwell there.** + **Why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you?** 6 +**So Achish** |[g]**granted** › **him** `**Ziklag** [i]**on** ˙**that day; wherefore Ziklag has** [b]**belonged to Judah's kings until** ˙**this** ˙**day.** 7 + **The number of days** [w]**that David dwelt in** the **field of** the **Philistines** |[b]**was** a years' **days and four months.**

8 + **David** +**with his men** went |**up and** |**ransacked** › **the Geshurite,** + **the Gizrite and the Amalakite; for they** were the **dwellers**| **of the land** [w] **from** 7**Telam**~ as **you come**¯ to[d] **Shur,** + **as far as** the **land of Egypt.** 9 +**When David smote** `**the land,** + **he** would **not** [m]**leave** a **man** +**or** a **woman** |**alive;** +**yet he would take flock**s **and herd**s, + **donkeys and camels, and garments.** +**When he** |**returned and** |**came to**

Achish, [10] [+]**then Achish** would [lsa]**ask,** [7on] **Whom~ have you ransacked today? And David** would [lsa]**reply,** [on] The **Negev of Judah,** [+]**or** [on] the **Negev of the Jerahmeelite,** [+]**or** [›] the **Negev of the Kenite.** [11] [+] **David** would **not** [m]**leave** a **man** [+]**or** a **woman** [l]**alive to bring** them to **Gath,** for he [›] [sa]**thought¯, Lest they** [l]**denounce** [on] **us,** [›] **saying¯, Thus did David.**

[+] **Thus** was **his custom all the days** [w]**while he dwelt in** the **field of** the **Philistines.** [12] [+]**Now Achish** [c]**put** his [l]**faith in David,** [›] **saying¯, He has** [c]**made** himself a **¯stink,** yea a **stink¯** [i]**among his people in Israel, and** so **he has become mine** [›]**as** a **servant** for the **eon.**

In the previous chapters David had repeatedly escaped Saul, being delivered in God's protective care. But, believing Saul would only return to pursue him later, David became exasperated and decided to leave the country. His frustration had shown through in his reply to Saul, "They have driven me out today from adhering to the allotment of Yahweh, saying, 'Go, serve other elohim'" (1 Sam.26:19).

This statement associates God's presence with the promised land. To leave that land was viewed as going into the lands of other gods. This thought is reflected in some of the Psalms and exilic literature, and in customs such as Daniel's praying while facing toward Jerusalem (Dan. 6:10). This highlights one of the great differences between God's relationship to Israel and to the body of Christ. God's Spirit is making its home in us (Rom.8), and we have no geographical focus on this earth. Our realm is inherent in the heavens (Phil.3:20).

David formed a subservient alliance with Achish, the Philistine king of Gath. Achish gave David the city of Ziklag as a place for him, his 600 men and their families to dwell in. From there David raided other enemies of Israel. Yet he was always in fear of Achish discovering his true allegiance, so he was always careful to leave no living witnesses from the cities he raided. Achish believed David's false reports and came to trust him.

DOUBLE WORDS

Like David, many of us have come to the point where we have thrown up our hands in despair and said, "That's all! That's the straw that broke the camel's back! I give up." The wonderful thing about those situations is that they become benchmarks for us to compare the faithfulness of God to our own unfaithfulness.

Several times in these later chapters of 1 Samuel words are repeated for emphasis of an idea. These double words emphasize the thought of David's unfaithfulness in contrast to God's faithfulness. The first three occurrences of double words were all spoken by Saul. The first at the cave where David cut the hem from his robe, and the other two when David had stolen his spear and cruse of water. "Now behold, I know that you shall be king, yea king, and the kingship of Israel will prosper in your hand" (1 Sam. 24:20). "You shall surely accomplish, yea accomplish all, and you shall surely prevail, yea prevail" (1 Sam.26:25). Saul himself spoke these words to David, prophesying David's success.

But David's frustration could not find enough encouragement to sustain him, either in these words, or those of Samuel at his anointing. "David said in his heart, Some day now I shall be swept away by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than to escape, yea escape to the country of the Philistines" (1 Sam.27:1).

Achish desired to have David as his servant and ally. By allowing David to dwell with him he felt sure that he could manipulate David's loyalty. "He has made himself a stink, yea a stink among his people in Israel, and so he has become mine as a servant for the eon" (1 Sam.27:12). And when the time came that Achish was to fight with the rest of the Philistine lords against Israel, he said to David, "You

realize, yea realize that with me you shall march forth into the army camp, you and your men" (1 Sam.28:1).

God delivered David even from these circumstances into which his faithlessness had brought him. And on returning to Ziklag, David found that all the families and possessions belonging to him and his men had been carried away by the Amalakites. Furthermore their city was burned. At such a point David could easily have said, "This is my fault, I should never have left the land of Israel. God has punished me. I got what I deserve!" But he did not. Instead, David encouraged himself in Yahweh and inquired of Him for direction. Yahweh answered, "Pursue, for you shall overtake, yea overtake, and you shall rescue, yea rescue" (1 Sam.30:8).

God's faithfulness is independent of our faithfulness. And David learned a great lesson from this. When they had rescued their people and possessions, some did not want to return the possessions of the men who stayed behind, since they had not helped in the rescue. David replied, "You shall not do so after what Yahweh has given to us. He guarded us and delivered into our hand the raiding party that had come against us" (1 Sam.30:23).

It is a great thing when we can separate ourselves from our works and see the hand of God in them (Phil.2:12-13; Eph.2:10).

PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

David's absence from Israel before he came to them as king is similar to that of Moses before his deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and that of Joseph before he saved his family from famine. In all these examples may be seen a representation of the absence of Christ before His reception by Israel as their Messiah.

J. Philip Scranton

A PROPHETIC TEXT

TWO MAJOR ADDITIONS to the traditional, "Masoretic" Text of 1 Samuel 10 appear in the Concordant Version. The first is a widely accepted expansion of the first verse based on the ancient Greek translation called the Septuagint (LXX). And the second is an entire paragraph added to the last verse of the chapter, based on the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS). Both insertions make important contributions to our understanding of this portion of God's Word concerning the early days of Saul's kingship.

In addition, a small insertion in verse 26, based on both LXX and DSS, helps draw our attention to a valuable distinction between those who scorn God's words and those who are strengthened by them.

Unlike *emendations*, these changes do not replace readings in the Masoretic Text. They are *additions* which we view as restorations of original passages which, for one reason or another, dropped out in the course of time, generally because of errors in copying the text by hand.

The evidence that these readings are original is strong. Both the extant manuscripts of the Septuagint in Greek and the Dead Sea Scrolls in Hebrew (mostly fragmentary) are older than the oldest manuscripts of the Masoretic Text in Hebrew still in existence. Even though this by itself may not be enough to establish their originality, in these cases these ancient readings supply details that are altogether harmonious with the theme of this portion of God's Word and enrich our appreciation of that theme. They clarify and complete the thoughts of the context.

The books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings are called the "Former Prophets." They are not simply books of history. Rather they center on revelations from God to man, mostly delivered by means of chosen prophets. The message spoken is not always predictive of the future (though it often is), but it is always directed from God to man.

The tenth chapter of 1 Samuel opens with the prophet Samuel's first anointing of Saul as governor over Israel.[1] The anointing is in itself a message for Saul and Israel from God. But in association with this anointing, Samuel brings a word of prophecy to Saul revealing God's objective in empowering this young man. It is this prophetic message that was lost from the Masoretic Text by scribal error.

1 SAMUEL 10:1

10 +Then Samuel |took `a **vial of ˙oil, + |poured** some **on his head and |kissed him. + He |said,** Has **not 7Yahweh anointed you ›as governor over His people, over Israel? And you, you shall steer** the course *f*of the **people of Yahweh. + You´ shall save them from** the **hand of their enemies***|f*round about. **And this** is **the sign for you***0*, **that Yahweh has anointed you ›as governor over His allotment . . . .**

The reader will notice here that the words concerning Yahweh anointing Saul occur twice in this passage, first as a rhetorical question: "Has not Yahweh anointed you as governor over His people, over Israel?" and then as a declaration: "Yahweh has anointed you as governor over His allotment." It appears, as indicated by the Septuagint, that somewhere along the line in the transmission of the Hebrew text, a scribe's eye jumped from the first occurrence of the clause to its second occurrence, thus skipping the words in

1. *cf Unsearchable Riches,* vol.86, p.119; vol.88, p.165.

between (the words between the superior *7* and superior *0* in the CV). Anyone who has copied a piece of writing by hand knows how easily this kind of omission can occur.

Two important prophetic revelations from God were thus lost, at least partially:

1. Saul would steer the course of the people of Yahweh.
2. Saul would save Israel from the hand of their enemies.

THE SIGNS

Immediately after making this prophecy Samuel informs Saul that Yahweh would give him a sign "that Yahweh has anointed you as governor over His allotment." This series of events are foretold in great detail in 1 Samuel 10:2-6. But why did Saul need such strong supporting evidence? It was surely because of the serious significance of the anointing and Saul's own personal shortcomings. To be the first ruler over all Israel involved, as the restored words of verse 1 implied, great wisdom and courage in steering the course of the people, as well as courage and steadfastness in meeting the enemy. In 1 Samuel 9 we learned that despite his physical superiorities Saul was not naturally a steady or able leader; he could not find his father's lost jennies and would have returned home early on had it not been for the advice of his servant lad.

Consequently, it is imperative that Saul recognize and appreciate the reliability of Yahweh in invigorating him and granting him wisdom and valor in leadership.

"And all these signs came true on that day" (1 Sam.10:9).

Samuel was the human instrument for the anointing of Saul, *but Yahweh anointed him.* And Samuel was the human instrument for the prophetic revelation that Saul would steer and save Israel. But this revelation was from Yahweh, and *it is Yahweh Who must fulfill these words!* The signs which also were from Yahweh are meant to encourage Saul, to assure him and give him confidence

in Yahweh's words through the prophet. Because the signs all occurred as Samuel said they would, Saul should have been strengthened in reliance on Yahweh and in conviction that he would be God's instrument for guiding the course of Israel and saving them from their enemies.

But Saul's transformation was only temporary, and his absorption with himself returned.

SAUL HIDES

17 + **Samuel** [l][cry]**summoned** `**the people to Yahweh** at ˙**Mizpah** 18 **and** [l]**said to** the **sons of Israel, Thus** [sa]**speaks Yahweh Elohim of Israel: I´** [c]**brought** `**Israel up** [f]**out** of **Egypt and** [l]**rescued** `**you from** the **hand of** [7]**Pharaoh king of**[0] **Egypt and from** the **hand of all the kingdoms** ˙that were **oppressing** `**you.** 19 +**Yet you´ have today rejected** `**your Elohim Who** has been [c]**bringing salvation**[l] **to you from all your evils and your distresses.** +**But you** [l]**said,** [7]**No**[t~cs]**, for you should** [pl]**set up** a **king over us.** + **Now station** your**selves before Yahweh** ›**by your tribes and** ›**by your thousands.**

20 +**When Samuel** [c]**brought** [l]**near** `**all** the **tribes of Israel,** + the **tribe of Benjamin was** [l]**selected** by lot. 21 +**When he** [c]**brought** [l]**near** `the **tribe of Benjamin** ›**by its families,** + **the Matrite family was** [l]**selected.** [7]+**When he** [c]**brought** [l]**near the Matrite family** ›**by masters**[0]**,** + **Saul son of Kish was** [l]**selected.** +**Yet** when **they** [l]**sought him,** + **he was not found.** 22 +**Then they** [l]**asked** [i] **Yahweh** [fr]**again, Has** [7]**the**[0] **man come here** [fr]**yet?** + **Yahweh** [l][sa]**replied, Behold, he** is **hiding** ›**among the** [all]**baggage.** 23 +**So they** [l]**ran and** [l]**took him from there.**

But when Samuel calls the people together for introducing Saul as their king, Saul is reticent. He had already been anointed once and had heard the words of prophecy. He had seen the signs and had experienced God's spirit on him and had been transformed. Nevertheless, his former traits reassert themselves, and his doubts and fears send him into hiding (1 Sam.10:21,22).

SONS OF WORTHLESSNESS

+**Then he** [l]**stationed** him**self in** the **midst of the people;** + **from his** [bk]**shoulder**s + **upward, he was** [l]**taller** [f]**than any of the people.** 24 +**Now Samuel** [l]**said to all the people,** Do **you see** [i] **whom Yahweh has chosen?** [t]**Indeed,** there **is no** one **like him** [i]**among all the people.** +**At** that **all the people** [l]**shouted,** + [l]**saying,** Long [l]**live the king!**

25 + **Samuel** [l]**spoke to the people** `about the **customary** rights **of the kingship;** + **he** [l]**wrote** them **in** a **scroll and** [l]**left** it **before Yahweh.** +**Then Samuel** [l]**dismissed** `**all the people,** each **man to his home.** 26 + **Saul** [mr]**too went to his home** at[d] **Gibeah; and going with him were** [7]**sons of**[Q] ˙**valor** [i] **whose heart Elohim had touched.** 27 +**But** some **sons of worthlessness said,** [wt]**How shall this** one **save us?** +**So they** [l]**despised him and** did **not bring** any **present to him.**

In addition to Saul's own uncertainty, and no doubt partly because of his reticence, some among Israel, called "sons of worthlessness," rejected Saul as their king (1 Sam.10: 27a; *cp* 10:11,12). On the basis of both LXX and DSS, the CV has restored the words "sons of" before "valor" in verse 26. This draws attention to a definite and intentional contrast between the *sons of valor* and the *sons of worthlessness.* The former supported Saul, and the latter scorned him. And in so doing, the former group indicate faith in Yahweh's anointing of Saul for guiding and saving Israel, while the latter group indicate rejection of that prophecy.

DOUBTS

Saul is now presented to the people. But the truth of Samuel's words of prophecy given in verse 1 is left in doubt. How is Yahweh to use such a one as Saul, timid in disposi-

tion even though imposing in figure, to steer the course of the people and save them from their enemies? We will find the answer to that question in the next recorded events, starting with the paragraph inserted on the basis of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

AN ENEMY ARISES

[Q+]**As** for **Nahash king of** the **sons of Ammon, he had oppressed** `the **sons of Gad and** `the **sons of Reuben** [i] **unyieldingly.** [+] **He had gouged out all their right eye**s, [+]**thus** [g]**allowing** [›] **Israel no saviour**[|]**.** [+] **No**[t] **one remained** [i]**among** the **sons of Israel** [w] **in Transjordan** [›]**of whom Nahash king of** the **sons of Ammon had not gouged out every right eye. But 7,000 men had fled before** the **sons of Ammon and had come to Jabesh-gilead.~**

[7+] The following [|b]**occurred** [as]**about** a **month** later~[Q]**:**

11 [+] **Nahash the Ammonite** marched [|]**up and** [|]**encamped** [on]**against Jabesh-gilead.** [+] **All** the **men of Jabesh** [|]**said to Nahash, Contract** a **covenant** [›]**with us, and we shall serve you.** [2] [+]**But Nahash the Ammonite** [|sa]**replied to them, I shall contract** a [7]**covenant~**[cs] [i]**with you** [i]**on this** condition, [i]**that all your right eye**s are **gouged**[–] **out;** [+] **I will** [pl]**make** [it]**this** a **reproach** [on]**for all Israel.** [3] [+] The **elders of Jabesh** [|]**said to him, Hold back** [›]**from us** for **seven days, and let us** [|]**send messengers** [i]**throughout** the **whole territory of Israel;** [+] **should** there **be no saviour**[|] `for **us,** [+]**then we will** come **forth to you.**

[4] [+]**When the messengers** [|]**came** to **Gibeah of Saul and** [|sp]**reported** ˙these [sp]**events in** the **ears of the people,** [+]**then all the people** [|]**lifted** up **`their voice and** [|]**lamented.** [5] [+] [bd]**Now Saul came** in **from the field, following the herd** of cattle**. And Saul** [|sa]**asked, What** [›]**ails** the **people that they should lament?** [+]**So they** [|]**related to him** `the [sp]**message of** the **men of Jabesh.**

[6] [+] The **spirit of Elohim** [|]**prospered over Saul** [i]**when**

he heard[–] `˙**these** ˙**words; and his anger was exceedingly** [|]**hot.** [7] [+] **He** [|]**took** a **team of oxen,** [+] [m]**cut them** in [|]**pieces and** [|]**sent** them [i]**throughout** the **whole territory of Israel** [i]**by the hand of messengers,** [›] **saying**[–]**,** Should [w]**anyone no**t come **forth**[|] **following Saul and following Samuel, thus shall be done to his oxen!** [+]**Then** the **awe of Yahweh** [|]**fell on the people, and they** came [|]**forth as one man.** [8] [+]**When he** [|n]**mustered them** [i]**at Bezek,** [+] there [|b]**were 300 contingents** of the **sons of Israel and 30 contingents** of the **men of Judah.** [9] [+] [7]**He~**[c] [|]**said to** the **messengers** ˙who had **come**[|]**, Thus shall you** [sa]**speak to** the **men of Jabesh-gilead:** To**morrow victory shall** [b]**be yours** [i]**when the sun** is brightly **warm.** [+]**When the messengers** [|]**came and** [|]**told** this **to** the **men of Jabesh,** [+] **they** [|]**rejoiced.** [10] [+]**So** the **men of Jabesh** [|]**said** [7]**to Nahash the Ammonite**[0]**,** To**morrow we shall** come **forth to you, and you** may **do to us** [all]**just as** it seems ˙**good in your eyes.**

[11] [+] **It** [|b]**was** [f]**on** the **morrow** [+]**that Saul** [|pl]**positioned `the** [wi]**force** in **three bands.** [+] **They** [|in]**advanced in**to the **midst of the camp** [i]**during the morning vigil and** [|]**smote** `the [7]**sons of**[cs] **Ammon until the day** was brightly **warm.** [+]**Thus it came** to [|]**be** that ˙those **remaining** [+] [|]**scattered, and not two** [i]**among them remained together.**

[12] [+]**Then the people** [|sa]**asked** [›] **Samuel,** [a]**Who** was it ˙who **said**[|]**, Saul, he shall** [7]**not**[cs] **reign over us! Give** us ˙these **men, and we shall** [c]**put them** to **death.** [13] [+]**Yet Saul** [|sa]**replied, No**[t] **man shall be** [c]**put** to **death** [i]**on** ˙**this day! For today Yahweh has** [d]**given** a **victory in Israel.**

PROPHECY FULFILLED

Thus the prophecy given through Samuel becomes truly operative in the events of chapter 11. The spirit of Elohim "prospers over Saul," and he becomes actively involved as a leader. In the fields following the herds, Saul was insulated from the troubles of his brethren east of the Jordan.

He was not concerned about the dangers that threatened the whole nation from Ammon. But now we find Saul filled with anger over the cruelty of Nahash, sending a stern message throughout Israel, gathering an army together, reassuring the men of Jabesh-gilead, positioning the forces, advancing to battle and smiting the sons of Ammon. Here Saul is actually steering the course of Israel and saving them from their enemies.

Added to this, the spirit of Elohim leads Saul to utter words of prophecy himself. In rejecting the request to put the "sons of worthlessness" to death, Saul says, "Today Yahweh has given a victory in Israel" (1 Sam.11:13). That is probably the greatest prophetic message from the lips of Saul. Even if it did not penetrate into his own heart, it was true, and it was a truth that must eventually be realized by Saul and all those involved in this battle.

But here again, the introductory information for the important events of chapter 11 was omitted by scribal error in the transmission of the Masoretic Text. But it was not entirely lost. The information concerning Nahash's violence among the sons of Gad and Reuben and the escape of 7,000 men, which we have added to 1 Samuel 10:27, is preserved in a fragment of an ancient scroll of Samuel found near the Dead Sea. It was also known to Josephus, the Jewish historian of the First Century A.D. (*Antiquities of the Jews,* Book 6, Chapter 5).

In this case, to be sure, the passage does not supply such a vital piece of prophetic information, as the LXX supplies for 1 Samuel 10:1. But it does add very helpful background information which makes the fulfillment of 1 Samuel 10:1 even more striking than it is in the traditional text. This information concerning Nahash's *unyielding oppression* enhances our appreciation of Yahweh's victory through the instrumentality of Saul. By showing that Nahash's tyranny was his established policy, the restored information lays

additional emphasis on the prophetic revelation of Yahweh's power for victory (or *salvation*) in Israel. In "allowing Israel no saviour," Nahash prepares the way for Yahweh to save Israel from their enemies through Saul.

Thus some of the details of chapter 11 are made more understandable with the background information now recovered. The character of Nahash stands in more obvious contrast to the timidity of Saul. Whereas Saul hid himself from the people, Nahash thirsted after conquest. The Ammonite king was not satisfied with his defeat of the Israelites in the territory of Gad and Reuben east of the Jordan, but pursued those who escaped to the north in Jabesh-gilead far from Nahash's home base. Seeing this, we perhaps can better understand why Nahash was willing to hold back from seizing Jabesh-gilead until reinforcements could come from the other tribes of Israel west of the Jordan (1 Sam.11:3). He was confident of victory and desired the glory that would come from defeating an enlarged force.

But through the invigoration of Saul with the spirit of Elohim, Nahash is defeated and Yahweh is glorified. Saul is transformed into a leader who recognizes that deliverance is from Yahweh.

No doubt this information now given in 10:27, had it not been lost, would have appeared in our translations as the opening verse of chapter 11. But because a small part of this restoration replaces the very last words of chapter 10 as rendered in our translations of the Masoretic Text,[2] we have placed the entire passage at the end of the tenth chapter (as done also by the *New Revised Standard Version*).

Admitedly, there is a certain awkwardness in placing the

2. The clause, "It occurred about a month later," which appears in both DSS and LXX, replaces (by changing a single Hebrew letter) the Masoretic reading, "Yet he was silent."

restored information about Nahash at the end of chapter 10. And yet it has this advantage, that the events of chapter 11 are thus connected more closely in the reader's mind with the prophecies of chapter 10. Nahash's vicious treatment of certain Israelites opens the way for the display of Saul's leadership. And this in turn supports our appreciation of the greater prophetic revelation that it was actually Yahweh Who saved Israel, Saul being simply Yahweh's chosen instrument for this rescue.

This revelation of God as the Saviour is the high point of these two chapters. Whether or not Saul or Israel realized it, this testimony of Saul as He was enlightened by God's spirit, is the greatest prophecy of the whole passage, the most significant word from God to Israel (and indeed mankind) in this portion of Scripture. All else simply serves to highlight the truth that God saved Israel on that day.

Hence we trace in these two chapters a prophetic pattern. A word of prophecy is given but is not fulfilled until it is apparent that God Himself must fulfill it, so that the greater prophetic revelation that God Himself is the Saviour can be heard. D.H.H.

KEVIN J. BERRY

Kevin J. Berry, of Williamston, Michigan, died on December 25, 2000 at the age of 46. Kevin not only was our good friend, but was a cheerful evangelist as well, one who loved to make new friends, telling them of the living God, the Saviour of all mankind, Who will someday be All in all.

For many years, Kevin endured severe physical afflictions; yet he found consolation that, at his not "noting" these afflictions, they were producing for him a "transcendently, transcendent eonian burden of glory" (*cp* 2 Cor.4:17,18).

Kevin's smile, sense of humor, and love for God and His Word will not be forgotten. His encouragement and support of brothers and sisters in ministry is fondly remembered. We look forward to greeting you once again, Kevin, in that happy day of the presence of Christ.

49 Editorial
51 The Saviour's Exaltation
55 God Highly Exalts Him
66 Growing in the Realization of God
71 All is For God
83 A Pattern of Sound Words
89 Saul and the Medium of Endor
94 Septuagint Contributions

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 2001
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-TWO

EDITORIAL

"GOD does not forget us when we do not live close." A beloved friend shared these touching, encouraging words with us in a recent letter.

We must all acknowledge the truth captured in the words of the hymn "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing," where it is declared, "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it."

That we are indeed "prone to wander," can hardly be denied. Even if we should be spared from departing into darkened deeds of utter uncleanness and depravity, we may nevertheless by no means be spared from lapsing into a course that is shameful enough itself, one which, at once, is filled with inattention to the things of God, and yet with an abundance of attention to the desires of the world.

Scripturally speaking, "*worldly* desires" (Titus 2:12), have in view that collective whole of sinful desires connected with human society as presently constituted. The apostle John speaks directly to this issue, declaring: "*Be not loving* the world, neither that which is in the world . . . everything that is in the world, the desire of the flesh, and the desire of the eyes, and the ostentation of living . . . is of the world" (1 John 2:15,16).

It is not that we are not to *like* or may not *enjoy* those glorious objects and wholesome activities which exist in our society, but that we are not to *love* that which is "in the world." Our perspective is not to be Sin's perspective, which may be briefly summed up as, "the desire of the *flesh,* and the [associated] desire of the eyes, [even as] the ostentation of living."

In the highest sense, then, we would reserve our *true love* for God alone. Indeed, all else is idolatry.

It is no more sinful to take pleasure in one's sensible use

of a man-made object such as an automobile, than to find enjoyment in the natural beauty of a sunset. Ultimately speaking, both the automobile and the sunset are a part of God's creation, one as much as the other.

What *is* wrong, however, is whenever we begin to offer "*divine service* to the creature [or creation] rather than the Creator" (Rom.1:26). The simple test of any human activity as to its appropriateness for our involvement, is whether—for ourselves, in *our* application of it—it *fosters,* or *hinders,* our "closeness to God."

If it fosters, or at least does not hinder, our pursuit of "righteousness, faith, love, and peace" (*cf* 2 Tim.2:22), then we may accept its presence in our experience. In the case of whatever does not hinder our "divine service," we may at least not be concerned that it has a place in our life. And in the case of those activities which we find conducive to or supportive of our quest for faithfulness, we should seek to maintain if not increase the time and toil which we allot to them.

It is only that even these may not have "first place" in our hearts, or within the sphere of our attentive devotedness. This is because anyone or anything that "takes us away from God," in so doing, effectually causes us to offer that service to the creature which must be reserved for the Creator alone.

How we rejoice in knowing that "God does not forget us when we do not live close." This is simply to say that He is not unfaithful to us even if we should be unfaithful to Him. Whether sooner or later, we shall be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make us stand (Rom.14:4). And, to whatever degree we should indeed be enabled to stand faithfully, we would recognize this blessed equipoise for what it is: the "*saving grace* of God . . . training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon, anticipating that happy expectation, even the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13). J.R.C.

Philippians 2:9-11

THE SAVIOUR'S EXALTATION

Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial, and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father.

There are some seven salient statements here in Philippians 2:9-11 which prohibit our supporting the exaltation of the Saviour upon a heartless subjugation of His enemies.

These are:

1. God *graciously* gives Him the highest name.
2. All *bow* the knee.
3. *In* the name.
4. The name itself signifies *Saviour*.
5. It is *acclaimed*.
6. *All* both bow and acclaim.
7. It is to the glory of God the *Father*.

First, then, the words "graciously gives" ["graces"] introduces us into an atmosphere of grace, ill suited to the thought of judgment. It is used once before in this letter. "To you," says the apostle, "it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also" (Phil. 1:29). The saints have the privilege of suffering at the hands of His enemies; the Saviour has the higher privilege of effecting their salvation.

Christ emptied and humbled *Himself,* but *God* exalts Him. As the result of His descent to the deepest humil-

iation God has now placed Him on the way to the highest place in the universe. Already, in countless hearts, His name ranks far above every other name.

But all, we are told, will *bow* the knee. This is a sign of fealty and worship. In one of the darkest days of Israel's defection God reserved seven thousand men who had not *bowed* the knee to Baal (Rom.11:4). It is clear from this that this is no mere perfunctory performance, but that it involves a hearty homage. If He spared those who did not bow the knee to Baal, how much more will He save those who bow the knee to the Saviour of His selection?

And this is vastly strengthened by the preposition here employed. It is not merely "at," but "*in*." Its meaning is manifest in the opening of the chapter: "If then, there is any consolation in Christ," and again in verses 19,24 and 29 where Paul speaks of "in the Lord." "In the name" has the force of "by virtue of the name," "in the power of the name," as is evident from its other occurrences (*cf* Matt. 7:22; 10:41; 18:5-20; 21:9; 24:5-9; John 2:23; 5:43; 16:24-26; Eph.5:20; Col.3:17). This gives us the key to the passage, which is the divine declaration (Rom.14:11; Isa.45:23):

"Living am I, the Lord is saying,
For To me shall bow every knee,
And every tongue shall be acclaiming God."

When this august oath is fulfilled, it will be found that it was only by virtue of the name of a *Saviour* that every knee shall bow and tongue acclaim.

The name "Jesus" signifies "Yahweh-Saviour." It is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Joshua. This seems to be shortened from Yahweh-Hoshea, Yahweh-Saviour. Yahweh is the Name of the Deity as associated with time, especially the eonian times, in the midst of which stands the cross, through which God will transmute all the evil into

good. Yahweh is He Who will be and is and was. Hoshea is added to describe His work.

Jesus is the appropriate name of the *Saviour* Whom God has given to rescue the creation from the thralldom of sin and destruction and death, during the eonian times. The Christ was given this ineffable name because"He shall *save* His people from their sins" (Matt.1:21). Never is it used alone in connection with judgment, but always in conformity with its import. To bow in this name can indicate but one thing, the acceptance of Him as their Saviour and all the benefits which that involves.

A concordance will show that a simpler form of the word rendered "confess" in the AV means *to avow.* It is always used in a voluntary avowal without the least suggestion of constraint. Those who avow Him before men He will avow before His Father (Matt.10:32). The Jews had agreed to put out of the synagogue anyone who should avow Christ (John 9:22). Even some of the rulers believed, but did not avow Him (John 12:42). But a most conclusive passage is that where we are assured that if Jesus is avowed as Lord, salvation results (Rom. 10:9). The word in Philippians, however, is the strengthened form which occurs when we read of the confession of sin (Matt.3:6; Mark 1:5; Acts 19:18; James 5:16). And yet it comes so close to worship that twice the AV renders it "thank" (Matt.11:25; Luke 10:21), while the Revisers suggest "praise." It is a matter of *acclaiming,* by consent, not constraint. It never denotes a forced confession in the Scriptures.

And this is confirmed and clinched by the fact that *every* knee and *every* tongue are included in these acts of adoration. Even now His saints adore His name, and own His lordship in their feeble way. How unlikely that they should ever need compulsion! But this is inevitable if these words have any such force. There is no distinction between believer and unbeliever in this passage at

all. Celestial, terrestrial and subterranean—all will bow the knee in worship and use their tongues to acclaim the Crucified before the eons end. Low as was His humiliation so high will be His exaltation.

"For the glory of God, the Father." This is the object of it all, as well as the key to our understanding of it. Christ descended in obedience in order to glorify God, His Father. He is exalted for the same reason. And it is for this cause that every knee shall bow and every tongue acclaim Him Lord—because this not only elevates Him to the place supernal, but at the same time brings to God the glory which is His due.

How beautiful to see that His exaltation detracts nothing from the glory of the Father, but rather is the means of its display. But how can God's *Father-hood* be revealed in crushing God's creatures beneath His heel? Would a *Father* be glorified in grinding his enemies into subjugation? As Father He may chide His children, but the exaltation of Jesus here enforced must be established on grace and its gifts, for it leads to God's recognition as a Father and glorifies that phase of His effulgence.

To appreciate these points at their best, the words we have emphasized should be carefully considered by means of a concordance. These seven statements, which culminate in the glory of the *Father*, conspire with all other Scripture to crown the work of Christ with consummate kindness in the consummation, when comes surcease of eonian sorrows and the Fatherhood of God becomes the heritage of all His creatures.

A. E. Knoch

The preceding article was adapted from two studies of Philippians 2:9-11, appearing in *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 4, pages 281-283, and volume 29, pages 57-59.

GOD HIGHLY EXALTS HIM

THE CONSEQUENCES of Christ dying for all include more than the death of all in the death of Christ as expressed in 2 Corinthians 5:14. Because of His faithful obedience in dying for sinners, everyone will eventually bow in the name of Jesus (Yahweh-Saviour) and acclaim Him Who is the Saviour, as their Lord. The consequences of the death of Christ for sinners include the worshipful recognition of Jesus Christ's Lordship and appreciation for His saving work at the cross, to the glory of God the Father.

Christ Jesus "humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. *Wherefore, also,* God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:8-11).

The "wherefore also" of Philippians 2:9 corresponds with the "consequently" of 2 Corinthians 5:14. It introduces the results of Christ's death for sinners. In 2 Corinthians the result of Christ's love in dying for all is the identification of all in His death. In Philippians the result of Christ's obedience in dying on the cross is His exaltation by God as the Saviour-Lord of all.

THE NAME ABOVE EVERY NAME

During the long years of His humiliation, our Lord bore the name *Jesus.* And like Abram through his many years of childlessness, bearing a name that meant "Father-high,"

then changed to Abraham ("Father-most-high"), our Lord's name did not reflect the perceptible reality. In fact, it was belied by most of the visible evidence. There were cases of healing and rescue and even resurrection, but they were few and mostly unrecognized, and the people He came to save (Matt.1:21) remained unsaved. Most astounding of all, in those dark hours on Golgotha He did not even save Himself from the death of the cross. We may indeed say that, as far as anyone could *see,* His name, Jesus, was an ongoing contradiction, which seemed to add to His humiliation.

But once God's Anointed One had reached the lowest point of humiliation and was made to be a sin offering, or rather (as literally expressed), made to be sin (2 Cor. 5:21), then God highly exalts the vivified Christ with the name that is above every name. From this point on, the name of Yahweh-Saviour is graciously granted to Christ as a glorious and true reflection of what He is, and which will ultimately be realized and honored from the heart by all. Nothing less could express God's "super-exaltation" of the obedient Son.

This, as Paul tells us, is an act of divine grace. The verb "graces" in Philippians 2:9 is the same verb translated "graciously granted" in Philippians 1:29. He Who had been made to be sin as the Antitype of those offerings of old which had to be burned outside the camp (*cf* Lev.4:11,12), is now exalted as Lord over all! The favor is not with respect to Christ's faithfulness or obedience (for that, in itself, calls for honor), but with respect to what that obedience involved, the realities of shame in His becoming a curse (Gal.3:13,14). The grace of His exaltation is with respect to Christ as the Sin Offering, which was indeed sin.

The shame of the cross would still remain to the extent that the name, Jesus, does not become a reality. The doctrine of eternally unsaved sinners is a denial of God's exaltation of Christ and a disgrace to the One bearing the name

of Saviour. Nevertheless, as this passage in Philippians makes clear, out of that temporary reality which engulfed Jesus in His death, God brings forth a new reality where the name Jesus reflects salvation glorious and true everywhere throughout the universe. God exalts Christ to the position of Lord over all with that *Name,* formerly identified with humiliation but now identified with exaltation. He is Lord, but He is Lord, not as an unfeeling enforcer of submission, but as the Saviour Who draws forth willing and loving and joyful obedience from all, to the glory of God the Father.

JESUS CHRIST IS LORD

The bowing and acclaiming of all is a recognition of God's Anointed One as Lord, but not that alone. At any time God could have placed His Son as Lord over all and brought all under His authority, but Philippians 2 speaks of Christ's Lordship arising from His humbling of Himself to the death of the cross. It is in relation to His obedience in dying for the salvation of sinners that Christ is exalted.

When the Adversary tried Jesus in the wilderness, at a time of extreme physical weakness before He died to save sinners, he showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and offered them to Him (Matt.4:9). What great things He could have done for the world then! All would submit to the lordship of Christ. But His high position would have been only as Lord, and that at the price of falling down and worshiping the Adversary. There would have been no cross, and no salvation from sin.

Is this what is envisioned for the majority of mankind by those who believe in everlasting hell? Are these supposedly, eternally unsaved sinners to be forced against their will to acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, apart from salvation from sin? Has His crucifixion done nothing more for them than His lordship would have provided apart from

the cross? No, all bow and acclaim Him as the One Who is their Saviour.

When we who believe acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, it is a very personal matter. We are drawn to God's Son as Saviour and Lord. We know that He died for each of us personally, individually, knowing who we are and all about us. We know Him as Lord, but we know Him as the One Who loves us.

That love constrains us, as the passage we began with in these studies, 2 Corinthians 5:14, reminds us. And that love is expressed in Christ dying for all. The exalted Christ will be Jesus in fact as well as name, and when He is acclaimed as Lord by all He will be known by all as their personal Saviour, Who died for them and loves them.

Consequently, when all bow and acclaim that *Jesus* Christ is Lord, they appreciate and recognize not only His power and authority but His faithfulness in dying for their sins. They grasp in keenest of experience the meaning of His name, Jesus, and they acknowledge it both in bowing and in acclamation from the heart even as we do today, who have been graciously granted to be believing. He is known as Saviour by all because they know and appreciate the truth expressed by His name.

GOD'S WORK OF HIGH EXALTATION

This *high* exaltation is all to the glory of God the Father. It is God Who was *operating* in conceiving and carrying out this marvelous work of salvation. To this plan of His Father's Christ was obedient. Therefore, it is all to God's glory, revealing not only His Deity but the nature of His heart which can only be expressed in human terms by the word "Father."

The scene pictured here in Philippians 2 is not of human glory. There is no flaw, no pretense or hypocrisy, nothing unwilling or resentful. God, as He is made known in and

through His Son, will do and have only that which is perfect and honest and good. The high exaltation of Christ as Lord under the name Jesus must be manifested by the happy and open bowing and acclamation of all. Every feature of this passage supports and clearly demands that to be known as their Lord Christ must be known as their Saviour by everyone.[1]

It is true that this subjection of all must be on God's terms. It is *gloriously* true that it *will* be on God's terms. It must not only be a recognition of Jesus, the Lordly Saviour from sin, but be itself the evidence that He has saved sinners in His death on their behalf. Nothing less would harmonize with God's requirements for the exaltation of His Son and the worshipful submission of His creatures.

OBJECTIONS

Nevertheless, sadly and almost unaccountably, the glory of God's achievement here in exalting Jesus, the One Who successfully saves, as Lord is often obscured in order to preserve a limitation to the work of salvation. It is widely taught today that the name God gives to Christ is *Lord*, not *Jesus.* The bowing and acclaiming, it is also claimed, is unwilling on the part of some. Or, on the other hand, we are informed that the subjunctive mode of the verbs *bow* and *acclaim* suggests the possibility that some will never even bow and acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord at all, whether from the heart or not.

It is claimed that because the bowing is not said to be in the name Jesus, but rather in the name *of* Jesus, Paul is speaking of a certain name belonging to Jesus that can relate both to believers and sinners lost in hell. And this (so we are told) is the name "Lord." It might be enough to point to the phrase "the name *of* Paul" in 1 Corinthians

1. *cf* the article "The Saviour's Exaltation" in this issue.

1:13, where clearly the name *of* Paul *is* Paul, or note that "Jesus" is a name, while "Lord" is a title. But beyond replying to a technical point of language with other technical points of language, we would urge all (and encourage ourselves as well) to see the passage in its context and in accord with the revelation of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

That is why it is so important to keep Philippians 2:6-8 in mind when we look at verses 9-11. What God does in exalting Christ comes out of His obedience in dying for sinners. God's exaltation of Christ is not simply giving honor to One Who has suffered in His obedience, but giving honor to the One Who has obediently endured shame and affliction *for the salvation of sinners.* The concern of Paul's whole ministry is the evangel (*cf* Phil.1:7,16). It may be conceivable that in using the Greek genitive construction, "name *of* Jesus," a person may have in mind some name given to Jesus which is different from "Jesus." But it is not conceivable that Paul could have meant the exaltation of Christ is something that stands apart from His work as the Saviour.

The objector speaks truly in pointing out that the exaltation of Christ is to the position of *Lord* over all. But He is exalted to this position as Jesus, as the Saviour, which is the name above every name with which God graces the Lord Who is over all.

BOWING AND ACCLAIMING

Another claim, sometimes made, is that the subjunctive mode of the verbs "bow" and "acclaim" implies that some actually will never honor Christ's Lordship at all, let alone recognize Him as their Saviour. The idea is that all ought to bow and confess, but not all will do so, either willingly or unwillingly. What Paul's purpose would be to suggest such a possibility (the objector evidently thinks of this refusal to submit to Christ's Lordship as a certainty

for some people) in connection with thoughts about the exaltation of Christ and the glory of God is puzzling.

Still, what shall we say about Paul's use of the subjunctive mode, as indicated in English by the word "should"? Why not use the declarative "shall" as in Romans 14:11?

The subjunctive mode here has a valuable contribution to the overall glory of the passage. It does involve a point of contingency, but not in the sense of "maybe all will bow and maybe not." The effect of the subjunctive is not simply to indicate contingency but to point us to the prior action upon which the contingency rests. Whether or not everyone will bow in the name of Jesus rests on the force of God's action in highly exalting Christ. God highly exalts Christ *in order that* something should occur. That something is the worshipful recognition of Christ's exaltation as Saviour and Lord.

I may say, for example, that I am struggling to express the meaning of this use of the subjunctive, *so that* the reader *may,* or *should* enjoy its significance as I do. Whether or not I succeed is problematical. But whether or not God succeeds in His exaltation of the Saviour is certain. He is God! He *shall* succeed. All shall bow and all shall acclaim, and they shall do so in a way that brings glory to God, revealing the certainty of His operations, and that brings glory to the Father, revealing the power of His love.

The contribution made by the subjunctive mode is thus its effect in causing us to search out and measure again the glory of God's work of exalting His obedient Son to the reality of Lordship as Saviour. The subjunctive directs us to test the significance of the declarative clause, "God highly exalts Him."

THE CONTEXT

The context of Philippians 2:9-11 is one of salvation. Paul expected that "in the defense and confirmation of the evan-

gel" (1:7) he would be saved from shame despite his bonds and the envy and strife exhibited toward him (1:14-20). By standing firm in one spirit and one soul in the faith of the evangel, against opposition, the Philippians display evidence of salvation (1:27,28). The apostle guides the Philippians, by his review of the evangel in 2:6-11, toward an effective expression of their salvation (2:12-15). This focus on the way the evangel of our salvation brings salvation from the despondency and despair that opposition and injustice and struggle tend to create is truly in accord with the account of Christ's humbling and exaltation as the Lord Who is the Saviour.

This contextual association with salvation is found also in Isaiah 45:23, that great passage of Scripture addressed to Cyrus which is the basis of Paul's language in Philippians 2:10,11. There, God declares, "By Myself have I sworn; from My mouth has gone forth righteousness, a word that shall not turn back; for to Me shall bow every knee, and every tongue shall swear fealty." In that earlier context, all peoples of the earth, ignorant of God and far from Him, idol-worshippers, are envisioned as coming close to Him in a grand future day. "Turn toward Me," says Elohim, the righteous El and *Saviour,* "and be *saved,* all the limits of the earth" (Isa.45:21,22).

The subjection is not to a cruel autocrat. It is to the righteous God Who is the *Saviour.* The people spoken of will not simply be made submissive, but in some sense that is genuinely to the glory of God they will *be saved.*

Paul's use of Isaiah 45:23 serves only to strengthen the association of Christ's exalted Lordship with His name Jesus, and the work of salvation that it represents. That the vision is broadened to include more than nations on the earth in the future kingdom with the words "celestial, terrestrial and subterranean" can only underscore the advancement in revelation given through the apostle Paul.

Where both passages are similar or the same in language and theme we are aided by the agreement. And where the one goes beyond the other, we would let the revelations of the more complete passage enlarge our thoughts on the other, rather than let the other restrict the meaning of the expanded thoughts.

CURRENT SALVATION

But while Paul also speaks of a future bowing and acclaiming he does so as a power for the believer in their current lives. In believing that the name Jesus will someday be fully reflected by the actual experience of salvation by all throughout the universe, you and I can enjoy the salvation of mutuality toward our fellow believers and a good testimony in the midst of a perverse world.

The apostle does not simply tell us of this future bowing and acclaiming in order that we can have the knowledge of God's future plans. He reminds us of this future glory because, like every revelation of God's good news, it is of great practical value for our current salvation.

What does this assurance of the future bowing and acclaiming of Jesus as Lord have to do with believers being mutually disposed to one another apart from vainglory (Phil.2:1-4) and with our obedience in carrying our salvation into effect (Phil.2:12-15)? How, further, does it relate to the fact that God has graciously granted faith and suffering for Christ's sake to us, and not to others (Phil.1:29)?

God's exaltation of Christ after His time of suffering and humbling gives to us in our time of struggle much encouragement. Such parallels as the word "humility" in 2:3 with the word "humbling" in 2:8, and the word "obedient" in 2:8 with the word "obey" in 2:12 have been often noted, and ideally so.

But humility and obedience are glued to the evangel. They are vitally connected with the truth that our salvation

is fully established by the work of the Saviour Who died for us, graciously granted to us who believe, with the believing also being graciously granted to us. Nothing of salvation is our accomplishment, to our glory. We are not believing if God has not graciously granted faith to us. We are not obeying if our walk is not due to God operating in us.

This entire truth of grace and joy in the Lord and praise to God the Father, this whole message of the evangel of our salvation, is clouded over and weakened if we suppose that others who are not graciously granted faith today will be consigned to hell forever due to their own fault. Again, if, on the other hand, we suppose God has sovereignly decided ahead of time not ever, through all eternity, to apply the salvation that has been gained through the obedience of Christ to certain individuals, how can we avoid at least a tinge of vainglory and a touch of insecurity concerning God's grace to us?

exulting in His exaltation

How blessed we are to be believing! To be believing that Christ died for our sins, for each one of us personally, and that He loves us, this gives us joy and peace and assurance that God shall be filling our every need in accord with His riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Phil.4:19). And when we are believing that Christ died for the sins of everyone and will thus be exalted as Lord and Saviour of all, how much greater is our happiness and peace and assurance!

Not only the simple and clear thoughts of Philippians 2:9-11, but the obvious concerns of the context as well direct us to the conviction that God will exalt Christ as the Saviour and Lord of all. Christ's obedience even to the death of the cross leads to the "wherefore also" of God's high exaltation of Him. That high exaltation is centered in His name standing for what He is. In that name of Jesus *every* knee will *bow, celestial, terrestrial* and *subterranean. Every* tongue will *acclaim* that *Jesus Christ is Lord.* And this will be for the *glory* of *God the Father.*

Everyone will exult in Christ's exaltation as Saviour and Lord.

It is the evangel that lies behind Paul's entreaties for worthy walk. Here in Philippians 2 it is the revelation that all will bow in the name of Jesus and acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord that lies immediately behind the entreaty to carry our own salvation into effect. The fear and trembling that Paul talks about in Philippians 2:12 is not built on a concept of deserved, everlasting damnation for some and eternally exclusive salvation for others, but on the glad news of God's high exaltation of Christ as Saviour and Lord of all. It is the view of God's glory as God and Father that overwhelms us with trembling and joyful awe toward Him Who has made us and saved us and operates toward such a great good.

I am aware of the numerous roadblocks that keep many who believe Christ died for them from accepting the words of Philippians 2:9-11 at face value. The impression that God's Word teaches everlasting damnation (though it does not) remains strong, but lurking below that misconception is usually a fear that there is something dangerous to our current behavior and something impossible in light of God's holiness in the claim that all will know Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Just the opposite is true, as I have tried to show here. Accepting this exaltation of Christ by faith leads forward with powerful effect to the walk entreated in Philippians. And it clearly exposes the glory of God in all His holiness and love. My prayer for those caught up by the mistranslations and unscriptural traditions which are used to support the concept of everlasting damnation is that they may be freed from that dark nightmare by the gracious gift of believing this shining revelation of the future enjoyment by all of the salvation gained by our Lord Jesus Christ. D.H.H.

Noting What is Not Being Observed

GROWING IN THE REALIZATION OF GOD

"For I suppose that God demonstrates with us, the last apostles, as death-doomed, for we became a theater to the world and to messengers and to men" (1 Cor.4:9). "In everything, being afflicted, but not distressed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not perishing" (2 Cor.4:8,9).

How was it that the apostle's afflictions did not engulf him in despair? How was he enabled to write of these as being of "momentary lightness" (2 Cor.4:17)? Further, how was he strengthened to record, "Wherefore I delight in infirmities, in outrages, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake, for, whenever I may be weak, then I am powerful" (2 Cor.12:10)?

The answer must surely rest in his awareness that this "is producing for us a transcendently transcendent eonian burden of glory, at our not noting what is being observed, but what is not being observed, for what is being observed is temporary, yet what is not being observed is eonian" (2 Cor.4:17,18).

ENDURANCE AND PATIENCE WITH JOY

Mercilessly stoned by Jews from Antioch and Iconium, these, concluding Paul to be dead, callously dragged his body outside the city of Lystra (Acts 14:19). Then it may have been that his spirit was snatched away into paradise, and he received revelations which he later described as "ineffable," of which he was not allowed to speak (2 Cor. 12:3,4). We should bear in mind and heart that Paul kept

the full wonder of his glorious visions secret until the Circumcision evangel was placed in abeyance and he was confined in Roman custody. This very fact clearly displays his loving patience.

So often we are prone to despair when our "good news" is ignored, even sternly opposed. Such frustration should give place to a mild and quiet life in all devoutness and gravity. This peace becomes real as we grow in the realization of God, for which Paul prayed in the opening prayer of his Colossian epistle. The apostle then added a wonderfully sustaining note: ". . . being endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, for all *endurance and patience with joy,* at the same time giving thanks to the Father, Who makes you competent for a part of the allotment of the saints, in light, Who rescues us out of the jurisdiction of Darkness, and transports us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Col.1:9-13).

At Bethlehem, there was absolute astonishment! The messenger who appeared to the shepherds in the field fold astounded them with a startling proclamation! But *suddenly,* there was a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

Glory to God among the highest!
And on earth peace,
Among men, delight!

Such a visitation, *a multitude, no less!* Should anyone question the supreme pre-eminence of the Son of God's love, then they should carefully consider this. The heavenly multitude testifies to God's glory in this wonder of wonders, this emptying of the One, through Whom all comes into being, appearing as a Babe, swaddled and lying in a manger. But amid the rejoicing, while the host would perceive something of God's love in the gift of His Son, were they prepared for the horror of His sacrifice at

Golgotha? Or could they possibly see beyond this to His rousing and exaltation? In all this, how could they imagine the glory of the consummation and the resolution of creature estrangement?

AMONG THE CELESTIALS

"It is not God's plan that we should know much of the affairs of the celestials, but rather that they should learn the lessons of His dealings with us. The earth is the stage on which the tragedy of the eons is enacted. No other place can claim a Golgotha. No other sphere has sunk so low in sin or has received such rich grants of grace. The apostle claims that he is a gazing stock, not only to men, but to messengers (1 Cor.4:9). Peter tells us that they are yearning to peer into the salvation of the Circumcision. Paul makes it evident that the sovereignties and authorities among the celestials are even now aware of the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus (Eph.3:10).

"The fact that most of the celestial beings who have visited the earth are called *messengers* has led to the idea that all of the celestial host are "angels." They are only the couriers between the earth and the heavens. Those who were gazing at Paul certainly brought him no message, so we may rest assured that their message was about Paul, and was delivered to those who sent them. It seems as though the heavenly hosts took a livelier interest in Paul and his experiences than did his fellow men on earth.

"The significance of human events is better known in the heavens than on the earth. Until the heavenly host apprized the shepherds, men paid no heed to the birth of the Saviour."[1]

We believe there is good warrant in concluding that the revelations committed to Paul were quite exclusive. Indeed,

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.18, p.341.

his very words seem to confirm this: ". . . and hears ineffable declarations, which it is not allowed a man to speak."

Some small part of the precious revelations were divulged, especially the expectation. But not until the grand presentation of Paul's prison epistles, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, is the glorious secret *fully* revealed. Then, and only then, are we assured of this very important distinction. Heed the apostle's own words:

"To me, less than the least of all saints, was granted this grace: to bring the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations, and to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all, that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord; in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence, through His faith" (Eph.3:8-12).

THIS NOBLE COMPANY

Entrusted with so great a revelation it is not surprising that the apostle should have the sense of scrutiny, of becoming a theater! We have no way of knowing the means of communication among the celestials. Perhaps with the speed of thought? Rarely are we permitted the briefest glimpse into these realms. One such occasion was in reference to Job when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord (Job 1:6).

All these considerations are often beyond our limited comprehension, but what is the understanding among creatures scattered across the length and breadth of the entire universe? The Son of God, in exaltation, is seated in glory at the right hand of the Father, "up, over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every

name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending" (Eph.1:20,21).

In majestic splendor, He is to lead forth an ecclesia of such might and power that this defies description. This noble company are even now being prepared, are being made competent for a part of the allotment of the saints.

How worthy is He, Who always seeks only to laud the glory of His Father's love, how worthy indeed to be thus honored! Small wonder that yet another of Paul's revelations was confided. He just could not contain his exultation that at the consummation, Christ Jesus lovingly presents a reconciled creation to His Father (*cf* Col.1:20). A glorious finished work which lacks but one thing more for complete perfection. Before the entire universe of adoring, delighted creatures, the Son shall present His Own fealty and love, in order that God, His Father, shall be All in all!

Come now with me adown the years,
all ye whom God hath richly blessed,
At Bethany His dear Son weeps,
His loving spirit sore oppressed.
Ask not with whom we should unite,
or doth the faith of all agree,
Be still, and listen to the words
He sighs in dark Gethsemane.
Do we despair when none believe;
would we, like Peter, stand aloof?
Could we stay silent, or protest,
when Pilate questions, "What is truth?"
There are no words which might describe
the anguish of that Orphan cry.
God turns from His beloved Son,
Who, helplessly, beseeches, "Why?"
Yet God, responding to this plea,
exalted Christ to heights above.
For at His name each knee shall bow,
and every tongue acclaim His love!

Donald Fielding

Questions and Answers

ALL IS FOR GOD

CONCILIATION IN ACT AND FACT

Question:

When I recently attended one of your services, I heard you say, "To God be the *glory,* concerning *all* that we experience, even those things which are sinful and hurtful." I realize that you were speaking sincerely and soberly, not sensationally, seeking to incite controversy. Still, your very calmness in saying this makes yours words all the more shocking to me. Since, so far, I have only attended this one meeting and have only read a little of your literature, could you elucidate to me what you had in mind in making this statement?

Answer:

YOU are correct that I was not seeking to be controversial in stating the words which you cite. Truth, itself, is controversial; hence we do well to present what we judge to be the truth in a gracious manner even as in an irenic spirit.

We believe that truly all is "for" God, that objectively, all accords with His purpose. Even at present, then, it is faithful to say concerning whatever subject may be in view, "to God be the glory" (Rom.11:36). Here Paul speaks of "the glory" which attends (i.e., that is connected with) all that exists and all that occurs. This is so, whether that glory should be intrinsic or telic.[1] Therefore, there is glory asso-

1. Such ultimate, final good, derived from ephemeral, intrinsic evil, is termed *telic* good, or *consummative* good (from the Greek *telos,* which means "consummation").

ciated with everything, no matter how inglorious any certain thing may be in itself. This is simply to say that there is something *glorious* with which every inglorious thing is *connected*—some glorious outcome which depends for its existence and fulfillment upon the previous existence of something which, in itself, is inglorious.

The permanent, greater good that God will bring into existence as the consequence of temporary evil, justifies the existence of temporary evil. Deliverance from sin and evil is the greatest good that can ever exist. This is because it is only thus that God can be glorified as *Saviour;* and, only thus that His creatures can know the blessing of *salvation.*

It follows, then, since God is good and these things are so, that with respect to the achievement of the divine purpose, the world in which we live is the best possible world.

If it were best that the world should contain some different kind or degree of good and evil than that which it does contain, then God would make the world in just such a way. But since God makes the world and all that is in it (Acts 17:24), not otherwise but precisely as we find it, it follows that the world in which we live is the best possible world. After all, it is *God*—Who is love, Whose goodness and wisdom know no imperfection—Who makes the world and all that is in it. Consequently, with respect to God's purpose, it would not be best if the world existed in some different form than the form in which it, in fact, exists.

Believing this to be true (indeed, being aware that it is so), we boldly say, "to God be the glory" with respect to the marvelous good which He will one day bring out of even the most horrible of tragic, present occurrences.

Where these things are truly believed, believers no longer contend for a fancied freewill responsibility consisting of a power of categorical could-have-done-otherwiseness. Instead, they realize that whatever happens accords with "what must be" (Rom.8:26), for the achievement of God's purpose.

This realization, however, does not deter those who believe accordingly from seeking uprightness of walk; that is, from a quest for proper role-responsibility. They are aware that only that which is good in itself is pleasing to God and of present benefit to themselves.

Yet this realization, that all is for God's purpose, to the degree that it is truly a *realization,* does free such believers from the usual forms of both pride and contempt. They realize that both the good things and the bad things attending each person, constitute the counsel of God's will as to what should be or occur (Eph.1:11; Rom.8:26). They certainly prefer, both in themselves and in others, the fellowship of good rather than evil, and will seek to order their lives accordingly. But in so doing, they will boast only in God concerning their own or anyone else's virtues. And, concerning their own or anyone else's failures, while abhorring the sin itself, they will say, "to God be the glory which will surely issue from this dreadful deed which *He* has wisely purposed."

As a consequence, their attitude toward their enemies and toward those who injure them becomes more Christlike. God giving the grace, in the process of time, they find this simply to be so. How glorious is the type of Christ exhibited in Joseph, where he declares to his brothers: "'Do not be grieved or angry with yourselves that you sold me hither, because Elohim has sent me on before you to preserve lives . . . . Elohim sent me on before you to set up for you a remnant on earth and to preserve lives for you in a great deliverance. So now, not you sent me here, but the One, Elohim . . . . You devised evil against me, *yet Elohim devised it for good for me,* in order to accomplish, as at this day, to preserve many people alive. So now do not fear; *I myself* shall sustain you and your little ones.' *Thus he comforted them and spoke to their hearts*" (Gen.45: 5,7,8; 50:20,21). May God, thus (*cf* Rom.15:4), comfort and speak to our hearts as well.

❊

Question:

How can it be that God *wants* to display His indignation (Rom.9:22)? Likewise, how can it be that God is "*bringing on* indignation" (Rom.3:5)? Any such thoughts seem wrong to me and certainly go against all that I have been taught. Yet these are the apostle Paul's own words, I must admit.

Answer:

You are off to a good start in acknowledging that these declarations are indeed the apostle Paul's "own words." The next step, then, since what Paul says *seems* so wrong to you, is to accept that it must not actually be what Paul says but your own ethical perspective which needs to be adjusted.

Any who are at all sensitive to sin while also being acquainted with their own heart, are shocked by the terrible thoughts, whether deeds or not, which sometimes spring forth from the depths of their being. And when we attempt to ponder the multiplied billions upon billions of awful sins which, for thousands of years, have occupied and nearly consumed the human race, we are completely overwhelmed. We cannot bear the tremendous strain of such terrible contemplations.

Yet even though man's injustice in itself is indeed transcendently terrible, this awful entity's presence in the universe is by no means gratuitous. This is because man's unrighteousness serves an unspeakably glorious *purpose.* The most notable purpose in human injustice is that it serves in the commendation of its opposite, *the righteousness of God.* What a tremendous contrast man's uncleanness and wickedness makes to God's purity and holiness! How glorious the white and great the light when set against such a black background! It is evident, then, since it is needful that God's righteousness should be clearly revealed, not hidden from view, that Wisdom will not hesitate to ensure its marvelous unveiling.

Similarly, since God *wants* to display His indignation and to make His powerful doings known (Rom.9:22), it must not be left to chance that there should be dishonorable men, but rather it must be incorporated within the divine counsels that there should be just such persons, ones who are in fact *vessels* for dishonor (Rom.9:21).

Paul had not expressly stated, though some were "averring that [he was] saying, that 'We should be doing evil that good may be coming'" (Rom.3:8).

It is certainly true "according *as*" Paul was being "*calumniated*" by others—"according *as*" they averred (or claimed) with respect to these words ascribed to him which they presented in a false and wicked *way*—that the apostle did not *thus* wish to be identified with the proposition that good would come from evil.

It was being said that Paul taught that, "We should be doing *the* evil that *the* good may be coming" (note the definite articles in the CV text). The sense intended, even by his detractors, however, was not that Paul was proposing that evil "should" (i.e., ought to) be done, as if he were advocating a wicked lifestyle. Rather, the thought is that it was being asserted that Paul, somehow, was "saying" that, "We should be doing the evil that the good may be coming."

It is a subjunctive construction which expresses not the thought of advocacy, but the idea that a purpose is being served by a first entity of which the second is the result, the latter being dependent for its own existence upon the former.

The sense is, So that the good *which God intends* may be realized, "we should be doing" (i.e., we will be doing, since it is needful for us to be doing) the evil upon which this good depends.

This saying (that, "We should be doing the evil that the good may be coming") evidently was originally only a deduction from Paul's own teaching concerning God's deity, made by one of the apostle's calumniators, not a statement which Paul himself had explicitly declared. Nevertheless, Paul plainly affirms that the judgment of such opposers—their judgment that, according to Paul, evil thus is necessary in order that it might serve the good—is a "fair" or "just" judgment (Rom.3:8).

It is a judgment which, *in itself,* is within the bounds of that which is right and true ("fair," *endikon,* IN-JUST), no matter how unworthy the motives of Paul's detractors may have been in putting these words into his mouth.[2]

Therefore, awful as it is in itself, since man's injustice does indeed serve God's wise purpose, the presence of human injustice in the world is justified. To be sure it is not justified intrinsically; but it is justified telically.

God, then, though *all* is the product of His own operations (Eph.1:11), is *not* unjust in actually "*bringing on* indignation" (Rom.3:5). That is, He is not unjust in making it certain that there will be certain specific persons on whom to visit His fury. He is the Potter, and He has the *right* over the clay to *make* utensils for dishonor (*cp* 2 Tim.2:20)—indeed, "*vessels* of indignation, *adapted for destruction*" (Rom.9:22).

2. The sense of the phrase, "whose judgment is fair," cannot be, "they will receive a fair *punishment* for making such a false statement." For it is *true* that "we should be doing the evil *that the good may be coming.*" Any foolish claim that this saying is intrinsically false and hence is worthy of punishment, is contrary to the truth of the context, the truth that our injustice serves the purpose of commending God's righteousness (e.g., "the truth of God superabounds in my lie, for His glory"; Rom.3:7), even as the truth that it is *God* Who is bringing on indignation. God's purpose in our evil deeds is that we might know the *good* of being delivered from them; and, that we might know Him, Who is our Deliverer.

Ultimately speaking, it is not that man, by his sinful deeds, is bringing the indignation of God on himself, but that *God*—by His righteous design and operation of those very deeds—is "bringing on" indignation. That is, seeing that all is out of Him, through Him, and for Him (Rom. 11:36), God is making the future presence of His indignation an inevitability.

In the depths of His heart, it is not at all that God, at any time, is enraged or filled with fury. Indeed, "Who has withstood His intention?" (Rom.9:19). In this respect, there is nothing for God to be indignant about. Consequently, God is the *happy* God (1 Tim.1:11), even as the God of peace (Phil.4:9). God is love (1 John 4:8), and love is not incensed; neither is it taking account of evil (1 Cor.13:5).

It is only that God, in the day of His *chastening* judging (2 Peter 2:4,9), as an *expedient,* will *manifest* Himself in the assumed character (*cp* Heb.1:3) of One Who is indignant. It is for the sake of rebellious and stubborn humanity that He will do so, *for their good, to provide for their need.* Further, since God *wants* to *display* His indignation and to make His powerful doings *known,* there must be those who would serve in this capacity—as vessels of indignation, as objects of indignation.

Though it will be a period of divine severity instead of divine mercy, nothing at all will occur in the day of His just judging to which any wise man will have the slightest objection. The judgment of that day will not be one instant longer or a single degree more severe than that which is needful, for it will be the judgment of One Who is love, Who is "God, the Merciful" (*cp* Rom.9:16; 11:32).

When, at the consummation, God becomes All in all (1 Cor.15:28), including All in all of those who were once, briefly, the objects of His indignation, undoubtedly all such ones will glorify Him accordingly (*cp* Phil.2:10,11). For they will realize that, as former *vessels* of indigna-

tion, which once they were, they too had a place of necessary and useful service, a vital role in the achievement of God's purpose.

❊

Question:

Your literature sometimes says that *God* is now conciliated to man; yet in some places it says that *man* is conciliated to God. Just what is it that you are trying to say? Besides this, if we were already conciliated to God, why does Paul say, "Be conciliated to God"?

Answer:

"Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation. For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching for Christ's sake, 'Be conciliated to God!'" (2 Cor.5:18-20).

The fact that God has conciliated the world to Himself and is not reckoning their *offenses* to them, affirms the fact that man's sinfulness continues to be offensive to God. It is not that man's sinful ways are no longer offensive to God. That is far from the case. It is instead that now that the Sin Offering has been made, God is no longer reckoning (i.e., accounting) man's *offenses* to him.

It must be emphasized that the conciliation does not exempt man from his close and often painful connection with the generally attenuated yet sometimes full-toned indignation of God which, even now, is being revealed from heaven upon sin itself ("on all the *irreverence* and *injustice* of men"; Rom.1:18). We become acquainted firsthand with God's appraisal of sin whenever we ourselves

experience the practical retribution which often attends our failures (*cf* Rom.1:18-32; *cp* 1 Tim.6:9).

It does not follow from the fact that, legally speaking, sin has been taken away, nor from the companion fact that, "personally" speaking, offense is not being reckoned, that God will therefore do nothing at all insofar as personal adjudication is concerned with respect to the dreadful deeds of His beloved creatures. God will still bring every act into judgment (Ecc.12:14), both in the case of the believer (at the dais of Christ; 2 Cor.5:10) and of the unbeliever (before the great white throne; Rev.20:11,12).

Divine "judgment," however, simply speaks of divine decision. For the sake of the accomplishment of the divine purpose, it remains expedient that the various "judgments" in which God would engage in response to man's wickedness, still be carried out. Through these means, God will further make known the awfulness and injuriousness of sin.

Yet it must be recognized that the indignation in the day of the indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God (Rom.2:5), will itself proceed "according to" (literally, "down," i.e., based upon) that glorious body of divine revelation which Paul terms "my evangel" (Rom.2:16). Paul's evangel is the evangel which reveals the eventual justification and reconciliation of all mankind through the saving work of Christ (Rom.5:18,19; Col.1:20). How we rejoice to know that the events of the day of judging will proceed on the basis of and in the light of the glorious consummation when God becomes All in all.

In all future, adversative judgments, then, God will be mindful that the "sin in the flesh" of those undergoing judging has already been condemned and taken away through the sacrifice of Christ. He will be mindful as well that, through Christ's sacrifice, every sinner, even the most wicked, is already joined to Himself. That is, this is so *in fact,* all human unbelief notwithstanding.

It is true that, in the current era, God *acts* in conciliation toward mankind. It is true as well that, in coming times of indignation, He will not thus *act*. Though it may then appear that God surely is reckoning the offenses of humanity against them, actually, in the depth of His heart, this will not be so. This is because, at the cross, God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself; accordingly, He is not reckoning their offenses to them. The recognition that, practically speaking, this is a "dispensational" truth, must not be misused so as to obscure the realization that, factually, it is a timeless and abiding truth.

In the grace of God, Christ tasted death for the sake of everyone (Heb.2:9). "Christ Jesus is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for the sake of all" (1 Tim.2:6).

"For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14). And, "one who dies has been justified from Sin" (Rom.6:7; i.e., "freed from Sin," *cp* Rom.6:18).

This justification from "Sin" which is now the portion of all, is wholly the achievement of the cross. "What was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh" (Rom.8:3). Thus in Christ we behold "the Lamb of God Which is taking away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

"Sin in the flesh" does not await condemnation; it has already found condemnation. Sin in the flesh is not to be condemned in a future judgment (such as in the second death); it has already been condemned in a past judgment, the judgment of the cross. The sin of the world has been "taken away" through the sacrificial offering of the Lamb of God, Christ Jesus our Lord.

God made Christ ("the One not knowing sin") to be a sin offering (2 Cor.5:21). Indeed, strictly literally, "He makes Him [to be] sin" that thus sin might be "condemned" and "taken away."

Consequently, God has not only conciliated (i.e., united or joined) us to Himself through Christ, but has, in Christ, conciliated the world to Himself as well. Accordingly, He is not only dealing graciously with all our offenses (Col. 2:13), but, concerning the world as well, He is "not reckoning their offenses to them" (2 Cor.5:18,19).

Positionally speaking, not only were we conciliated to God through the death of His Son, but the world was conciliated to Him as well. Nevertheless, practically speaking, there is still a great need for conciliation. Hence it is in consideration of this practical truth that Paul entreats that we are to become in practice what we already are in position. Thus it is to those who are now conciliated, that Paul yet earnestly declares, "Be being conciliated to God!"

"Sin" (*hamartia,* UN-MARKing) speaks of failure; it speaks of that which "misses the mark," the mark or "target" of that which is inherently good, well pleasing, and perfect (*cp* Rom.12:2). Sin in the flesh ("the sin of the world") has met its judgment through the One Who is the Sin Offering. Now, through the work of Christ, man is "justified from" the evil slaveowner Sin (2 Cor.5:14; Rom.6:7b). Man is declared to be in the only right relationship to Sin, which is to be freed from its jurisdiction. "Sin," personified (literally, man's sinful deeds), no longer has the prerogative concerning man's judgment. Instead, God, through Christ, has gained the prerogative!

Therefore, God, not Sin, will now determine each man's judgment and final destiny. And, He will do so according to His own purpose, not according to individual merit. Indeed many who will be subjected to God's indignation are far less deserving of it than others who will be saved from it. The vessels of mercy enjoy mercy solely because of God's gracious purpose, not because of any deservedness of their own (1 Tim.1:12-16; Rom.9:15,16).

Insofar as "just deserts" are concerned, all are deserving

(i.e., "worthy") of death (Rom.1:32). Considered in themselves, in their own sinfulness, apart from the divine purpose, humanity is well suited to and worthy only of death. If this were the only consideration, it would be altogether fitting not only to put man to death, but to leave him there on a permanent basis.

This is true of the entirety of humanity, not merely of some. Remember, all sinned; and, all are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). The glory of God represents the only ideal standard of righteousness. It is not merely that man "come[s] short of" the glory of God (AV) that is significant. It is that he is found "*wanting* of" the glory of God (CV). Not only have all mankind sinned, but all mankind including those who are least offensive are members of the old humanity which is corrupted in accord with its seductive desires (Eph.4:22).

Howbeit, in the end, God, Who loves all (*cp* John 3:16), and wills to save all (1 Tim. 2:4), will become All in all (1 Cor.15:28). In that day, God will fully manifest Himself as the One Who indeed is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10). J.R.C.

MARY TUTTERROW

Together with her husband Harold, who died a few years ago, Mary Tutterrow faithfully and enthusiastically attended our Fellowship meetings in the Los Angeles area for many years. Mary was put to repose on March 9, at the age of 89; she was one who believed that "Jesus died and rose" (1 Thess.4:14), and that His death was for her sake and for the sake of all mankind, since we all are sinners (Rom. 3:23). This was a real source of blessing and comfort to her. Now we also are comforted, knowing that in accord with the pattern of our Lord's death and resurrection, God will, through Jesus, lead forth Mary and all believers with Him, that we may always be together with our Lord (1 Thess.4:14,18).

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A PATTERN OF SOUND WORDS

PERHAPS all sin stands related to the Word of God. Certain it is that there is nothing new in sin since our first parents transgressed, and that was an offense against His Word.

Any pattern of sound words does not appeal to the soulish man. His concepts of truth are decidedly impressionistic—a snatch here, a phrase there, according to the way he feels. It cramps his style to have a pattern. "I like to think . . . it seems to me . . . I feel that," such remarks often betray too much. He synthesizes, he makes it up to suit himself, rather than give heed to what God has said. He invents rather than discovers, which last, he feels, is such an unoriginal thing to do. He would be like the Living Word in that all things that are made are made by him. But that desire is not original either; for it was present back yonder in the dawn of human doings.

God had made Adam, and set him in the garden which was eastward in Eden and had instructed him to serve it and to keep it (Gen.2:15). Then one prohibition was laid on him. He was not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen.2:16,17). God did not demand that man relinquish something that he already had. God did not demand that he perform some irksome and laborious work. Not *bidden* but *forbidden* was man. Everything that was there he could have and enjoy. There was just one thing which he must forego; to take that meant death. He was merely to forego something that was not his own; forego one good thing which he never possessed. Could that be called a temptation, a trial, a testing?

Ah! to forego that which we do not have and still desire

is the hardest thing of all. The hardest struggle and the bitterest toil wherein we strain our every power of mind and body to the utmost is easy compared with quiet, selfless resignation. Things possessed are not half so happifying to the soulish man as that which is denied him. Yea, more willingly would he give of that in his hands than that he demurely fold his hands and say: I forego, my God, because it is Thy will.

The permit to eat of all but one tree had been given before Eve's creation, but Adam evidently conveyed the facts to her; for theirs was a *joint* dominion (Gen.1:28).

Adam knew how to deal with the animals and with the fowl of the air (Gen.2:20). There were no subtleties of feeling, instinct, thought, or practice which he could not understand in them. But there came one whose motives were not so easily read as those of the beasts of the field. He was too crafty, too wily, too capable a deceiver to be met by human wisdom. Eve was beguiled (Gen.3:1; 2 Cor.11:14,3).

Faith takes God at His word. Unbelief takes God's word and messes it up to suit itself. This the Slanderer proceeds to do with Eve.

The Slanderer *questions* God's Word. Is it really true that God hasn't given you *carte blanche* to everything in this wondrous pantry? Have I heard aright? I am loath to believe such a thing! One jar of jam which you dare not taste? And God's voice which forbade had hardly more than died away in the peace and happiness of the garden!

The seed of doubt was planted. Eve was becoming part of the intelligentsia, if you please. She claimed the "right to doubt." And the fruitage sprang up like a stalk of corn under a medicine man's conjurings. Inside of forty-four English words (nineteen in Hebrew) Eve does all the damage to God's word that any of her children ever did. It might be said to her credit that she at least did it in less space than most of her offspring.

The toxin of doubt was in her system now. She did not need to be as smart as her seeming benefactor. All she needed to do was to rely on what God had said; and that reliance she had already eschewed in favor of "advanced thought" of the more progressive minds.

God said:

From *every* tree of the garden you may eat, *yea eat.* But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, *to die you shall be dying.*

Eve said:

We may eat [omission] of the fruit of the trees of the garden; yet of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, Elohim said, You shall not eat from it, *and you shall not touch it* [addition], *lest you should die* [twist].

Like Achan, the son of Zerah (Josh.7:21), who, seeing the goodly Babylonish garment, some silver and some gold, which, as the first booty of the land, were devoted partly to destruction and partly to the Lord's treasury, *omitted* to destroy the garment, *committed* to steal from the Lord, and *dissembled* in the whole, so Eve sinned against God's word after the manner of the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes.

She omitted the repetition of the verb "eat" (literal Hebrew, eating you may eat), because that gave a gracious, open-hearted and open-handed tinge to God's provision. He had provided. He had provided largely—"according to His riches in glory"—; they were to eat, yea eat, freely help themselves and have some more. But now before this brilliant and dapper stranger the voice of God had lost its sweetness; His love had lost its grace. Her concept fell short of the glory of God, and that short-falling was sin.

But can there be more? Yes, more. She makes God a tyrant with purposeless restrictions. "And you shall not touch it." She made void the commandment of God by her human accretion. That was *transgression*.

More yet: Eve changed the inexorableness of the penalty to a risk. God had been very specific. She was very hazy and indeterminate, substituted one thing for another, which was a cutting *offense*—as though God did not know how to express Himself!

THE SERPENT SAID

That old Shiner (for such is the significance of the Hebrew word), which is the Slanderer and Opponent (Rev.12:9), first questions God's word, then denies God's word, then affirms a falsehood in the midst of truth:

"Did Elohim say indeed, You shall not eat from any tree of the garden? . . . . Not to die shall you be dying . . . . Elohim knows that on the day you eat of it your eyes will be unclosed, and you will become like Elohim, knowing good and evil."

Nothing new has been done since that time. A new line of attack has been unnecessary, the old one works so well. The outward transgression which followed was but an amplification of what had already taken place in Eve's attitude toward God's word. Satan's questioning planted the seed, his denial cultivated the growth, and his affirmation fertilized it.

THE WOMAN SAW

"Then the woman saw that (1) *the tree was good for food*, that (2) *it brought a yearning to the eyes*, and that the tree was desirable (3) for gaining insight. So she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave some to her husband with her, and he ate" (Gen.3:6).

So it happened, the dreadful thing, sin. It was not merely the eating of the fruit, but much more. Man flagrantly sundered the bond of love and confidence which held him to Yahweh; it was a blow in the face of his Father and his God—because he, in Eve, listened to the voice of the serpent, because he believed God to be a liar, because he believed that the Father of every good envied him his blessings and wished to set bounds thereto.

Eve first sank slowly into sin, like one who contested and struggled with herself. She sinned, but tremblingly. She stood and listened until her conscience grew confused. She started out by parleying with the wicked one; she entered into discussion and argument.

She not only answers the tempter, but lends her ear to his flattering voice. Ever sweeter sounds that voice, and ever sharper and more strident clangs the voice of God. His lovely and most gracious countenance transforms itself before her mind into the face of a cold and envious tyrant.

She looks at the fruit, the forbidden fruit; and lovelier and more fragrant and more to be desired and ever more to be desired and more indispensable becomes that fruit—every drop of blood within her seethes and glows. Impossible, she can*not* refrain— there, it is done!

Before and after sin, what a difference in the human heart! Before, sin seemed so sweet; it would surely bring pleasure and repose; it would surely enrich the perceptions and faculties. Then afterwards, ah, afterwards. Unrest seized on the heart; fevered, downcast, man sought to hide himself in outgrowths of the earth. But God, the ever gracious God, seeks the sinning pair.

THE LORD AND SATAN

The beginning of strife among the sinner race lay in their effort to shift the blame. The end of all dissension is found in God's Son, Who, though holy and blameless, willingly takes the blame of the unholy upon His shoulders.

Instead of with (1) the desire of the flesh, (2) the desire of the eye, and (3) the ostentation of living, which things are not of the Father but of the world (1 John 2:16), our Lord met the same Tempter on the same standardized temptation, not by being deceived or beguiled, but by faithfulness to the word of God. "*If* you *are* God's Son" (Matt.4:3). And God's voice had hardly died away, saying, "This is My Son, the Beloved" (Matt.3:17).

Hunger, the desire of the flesh, was legitimate—just as it was legitimate for Eve to desire the fruit. But it was not right to predicate the satisfaction of that desire on a doubt inspired by the Slanderer; and our Lord did not do it. The Tempter was repulsed by what was written, and again when the appeal was to the spectacular (Matt.4:5) and to the ostentatious life of a worldly potentate (Matt.4:8). In all of these respects our Lord was faithful to the pattern of sound words. And in all of these respects will the Beast be unfaithful, unbelieving, in the end time (Rev.13:4).

HERALD THE WORD

The question is, are we in any measure miscreant to the word of God, which we are given to herald (2 Tim.4:2)? Do we ignore the pattern of sound words, even if we resist the so-called modernist tendency to doubt, and to glory in it? But among those who sincerely affirm faith in the word of God as such there are many who do not one whit better than Eve, in that they mangle, add to, and garble that word. Where is the creed of "Christendom" that does not do all these things?

It cannot be hoped that any of us is free from tinges of all of these iniquities. But there is one thing certain and that is that our favorable reward as teachers or handlers of the word will be in proportion to our freedom from them. May God give us grace in keeping to a pattern of sound words.

F. H. Robison

SAUL AND THE MEDIUM OF ENDOR

28 + **It** [lb]**was in** ˙**those days** +**that** the **Philistines** [l]**convened** `**their** fighting **forces for enlistment to** make **war** [i]**against Israel. And Achish** [l]**said to David, You** [l]**realize,** yea **realize**¯ **that** `with **me you shall** march **forth in**to the army **camp, you and your men.** 2 + **David** [lsa]**replied to Achish, Wherefore,** [7]**now**~[s] **you** [l]**know** `[w]**what your servant** can [l]**do. And Achish** [l]**said to David, Therefore, I shall** [pl]**constitute you keeper**[l] ›**of my head all** ˙your **days.**

3 +**As** for **Samuel, he had died, and all Israel** had [l]**wailed for him;** + **they** had [l]**entombed him in Ramah,** + **in his** own **city. And Saul, he had caused the mediums and** `**the wizards** to **withdraw from the land.**

4 +**When** the **Philistines** [l]**convened,** + **they** [l]**came and** [l]**encamped** [i]**at Shunem,** +**while Saul** [l]**convened** `**all** [7]the **men of**[0] **Israel; and they** [l]**encamped** [i]**on** Mount **Gilboa.** 5 +**When Saul** [l]**saw** `the army **camp of** the **Philistines,** + **he was** [l]**fearful, and his heart** [l]**trembled exceedingly.** 6 + **Saul** [lask]**inquired** [i]**of Yahweh,** +**but Yahweh** did **not answer him,** [mr]**either** [i]**by dreams** [mr]**or** [i]**by Urim** [mr]**or** [i]**by prophets.** 7 +**Then Saul** [l]**said to his courtiers, Seek for me** a **woman,** a **possessor of** a **medium,** +**that I** can [l]**go to her and** [l]**inquire** [i]**through her.** + **His courtiers** [lsa]**told** › **him, Behold,** a **women,** a **possessor of** a **medium,** is **in Endor.**

8 +**So Saul** [l]**disguised** him**self;** + **he** [l]**put on other clothes and** [l]**went** out, **he and two men with him.** + **They** [l]**came to the woman** by **night, and he** [l]**said, Divine** [pr]**now for me** [i]**by medium and** [c]**bring up for me** `the [w]**one I shall** [sa]**tell** › **you.** 9 + **The woman** [lsa]**replied to him,** [bd]**Now you´ know** `[w]**what Saul has done,** [w]**how he has cut** off `**the mediums**

and `the wizards from the land. +So why are **you** lay**ing** a **trap** *i*for **my soul to** *c*put **me** to **death? 10 + Saul** |**swore to her** *i*by **Yahweh,** › **saying¯,** As **Yahweh lives, assuredly no depravity shall befall you in** ·**this matter. 11 +At** that, **the woman** |*sa*asked, `*a*Whom **shall I** *c*bring **up for you? + He** |*sa*replied, `Samuel, *c*bring him **up for me. 12 +When the woman** |saw `Samuel, **+ she** |cried **out** *i*with a **loud voice. And the woman** |*sa*spoke **to Saul,** › **saying¯, Why have you deceived me? + You** are **Saul! 13 + The king** |**said to her, Do not** |**fear.** *t* **What** do **you see? + The woman** |*sa*replied **to Saul, I see elohim** com**ing up from the earth. 14 + He** |*sa*asked › **her, What** is **his shape? + She** |*sa*answered, An *7*erect~ **man** is com**ing up, and he** is **muffled**| in a **robe. +Then Saul** |**knew that it** was **Samuel; +so he** |**bowed** his **head** low, **nostrils** to*d* the **earth, and** |**prostrated** him**self.**

15 + **Samuel** |**said to Saul, Why have you disturbed me** ›**by** *c*bringing `**me up¯? + Saul** |*sa*replied, **Utter distress is mine.** + The **Philistines** are **fighting** *i*against **me, and Elohim has withdrawn from** *on* **me and** does **not answer me** any *fr*longer, *mr*either *i*by **means of the prophets** *mr*or **in dreams. +So I** did |**call** ›**on you to** *c*let **me know what I should do. 16 + Samuel** |**said, + Why are you asking me +when Yahweh has withdrawn from** *on* **you and** |*b*is *7*›**with your associate~***c***? 17 + Yahweh is doing to** *7*you~*s* **just as He spoke** *i*by **means of me. + Yahweh is tearing `the kingship from your hand and is giving it to your associate, to David, 18** in**as**much *w*as **you** did **not hearken** *i*to the **voice of Yahweh and** did **not** *d*execute the **heat of His anger** *i*on **Amalek. Therefore Yahweh does** ·**this** ·**thing to you** ·**this** ·**day. 19 + Yahweh shall** *mr*also **give `Israel with you in**to the **hand of** the **Philistines. +** To**morrow you and your sons with** *7*you shall **fall**|**~.** *mr*Indeed **Yahweh shall give** `the army **camp of Israel in**to the **hand of** the **Philistines.**

20 + **Saul** |**fell + |headlong** down, **his full stature** to*d* the **earth, +for he was exceedingly** |**fearful** *f* **because** of **Samuel's words.** *mr*Besides, there *b*was **no***t* **vigor in him, for he had not eaten bread all** ·**day and** ·**all night. 21 + The woman** |**came to Saul and** |**saw that he was utterly flustered. + She** |**said to him, Behold, your maid**servant **hearkened** *i*to **your voice; + I** |*pl*put **my soul in my palm +when I** |**acquiesced** `to **your words** *w*that **you spoke to me. 22 +So now,** I **pray, you** *mr*also **hearken** *i*to the **voice of your maid**servant**! + Let me** |**place before you** a **morsel of bread. + Eat** it**! +Then** there **shall** *b*be **vigor in you** *t*when **you** |**go** *i*on your **way.**

23 + **He** |**refused, + |saying, I** will **not** |**eat. +But his courtiers and even the woman** *7*|**urged~***s* *i* **him, and he** |**hearkened to their voice. + He** |**got up from the earth and** |**sat** *7*on~*s* **the couch. 24 +** The **woman** ›**had** a **stall-fed calf** *i*at the **house; + she** |**quickly + |***sc***slaughtered it. +Then she** |**took meal** flour **and** |**kneaded** it, **and** |**baked unleavened** bread **of it. 25 + She** *c*brought this |**close before Saul and before his courtiers, and they** |**ate. +Then they** |**rose and** |**went** away *i* ·**that night.**

SAUL'S NEED FOR GUIDANCE

The twenty-eighth chapter of 1 Samuel exposes Saul's great need for divine guidance. Verse 3 sets the stage with a reminder of Samuel's death and Saul's expulsion of the mediums and wizards from the land. The assembling of the Philistines to war against Israel prompted Saul to inquire of Yahweh for guidance (v.5). This was the great need of Israel's kings, words of counsel and direction from Yahweh.

But Yahweh did not answer by dreams directly to Saul. Saul's time of leadership was over. Neither did He answer by Urim (Num.27:21). Saul had murdered the priesthood, and the ephod was with Abiathar in David's camp. Nor did He answer by prophets. Samuel was dead, and Gad, who seems to have been chief among the prophets at that time, was with David (v.6). Saul's previous actions had cut off his access to God's guidance.

Saul's expulsion of the wizards and mediums from the land (1 Sam.28:3) was done in accordance with the law (see Lev.19:31; 20:27; Deut.18:9-14). But without direction from God, Saul became desperate and sought out a medium to direct him. Of such seeking Isaiah said, "And when they say to you, Inquire of the mediums and the wizards, who chirp and who coo, ask, Should not a people inquire of its Elohim? What do they inquire of the dead about the living?" (Isa.8:19).

THE APPEARANCE OF SAMUEL

Frequently this passage is said to be proof that the dead continue to exist in a conscious condition. Else, how could the medium have produced Samuel? But the Bible is clear that there is no conscious existence in death (Psa.6:5; Ecc. 9:5,10). The giving up of life is the giving up of the soul (Acts 15:26; Phil.2:30). And apart from resurrection, those who have died have perished (1 Cor.15:12-19; 29-34).

How then is the appearance of Samuel to be explained? Verse 12 makes it apparent that the woman possessing the medium was quite surprised to see Samuel. She may have seen apparitions through the medium previously, but there was obviously a different character to this appearance. The fact of her surprise at the true appearance of Samuel suggests that her customary dealings with the dead should be discredited.

The explanation for Samuel's appearance may be found in Ezekiel 14:1-10. There God said to Ezekiel, "Son of humanity, these men have set up their idol clods in their heart, and they have put their stumbling block of depravity before their faces. Shall I let Myself be inquired of, yea inquired of by them? . . . For each man of the house of Israel . . . [who] is placing his stumbling block of depravity before his face, yet comes to the prophet to inquire of Me through him, I, Yahweh, I will answer him by Myself. I will

set My face against that man and place him for a sign and for proverbs, and cut him off from the midst of My people; then you will know that I am Yahweh" (Ezek.14:3,7,8).

The ensuing events followed the course of what God spoke by Ezekiel. Saul's fleshly insubordination was the idol of his heart. Samuel was a prophet, and Saul sought him, though the means were wrong. God Himself answered Saul by producing Samuel to speak to him. Saul was soon cut off from the midst of Israel. Indeed, Samuel's words spoken while he was still alive (1 Sam.15:23) are most appropriate, and correlate closely with the words of Ezekiel: "For rebellion is like the sin of divination, insubordination, like the lawlessness of teraphim. Because you rejected the command of Yahweh, He has also rejected you from being king over Israel." Indeed, 1 Samuel 15 is the foretelling of 1 Samuel 28, and the intervening chapters unfold the necessity of the fulfillment.

PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

With Israel's rejection of Christ, they are in much the same state as Saul. The priesthood and prophets are gone. Like Saul, they have slain them (Matt.23:29-37; Acts 7:51-53). Having rejected the Messiah and her future, Israel has left herself with naught to call on but her history and those who have died. Indeed, a resurrected prophet, Elijah, must come to restore all things.

Saul fell "headlong" (v.20), and was as if life had left him. The words used are reminiscent of those describing Judas' death (Acts 1:18). Israel would be defeated and scattered by the Philistines until she convened under David's leadership. Israel was dispersed after rejecting Christ, and waits to be assembled under Him.

There was no word of guidance in leadership for Saul, but in these words there was a promise of another leader, who would be a type of Israel's great King to come.

J. Philip Scranton

SEPTUAGINT CONTRIBUTIONS

THE HEBREW of the two Samuel scrolls, as given in the traditional, Masoretic Text (MT), contains numerous errors which need to be corrected by evidence from other sources. One of the best of these sources is the ancient Greek translation, the Septuagint (LXX). In this article we will look briefly at seven emendations appearing in the CONCORDANT VERSION of 1 Samuel 28 (see page 89 of this issue). All of these are based primarily on LXX readings.

1. The word "now" in verse 2 replaces the emphasized "you" appearing in the MT. It is possible that David wished to stress the pronoun in reference to Achish. But the LXX (indicated in the CVOT by the superior *7*) and certain Hebrew manuscripts other than the MT (indicated by the superior *s* at the end of the word "now") lead us to the conclusion that the original text had the common time indicator, *now.* The symbol ~ is used in the CVOT to indicate that there is some support in the MT itself for the change. (In this case, the support comes from the fact that the Hebrew words for "you" and "now" differ only in their initial letters and could have been easily confused in the process of copying the text).

Hence, to put it idiomatically, David was saying to Achish, "By *now* you should know that I am reliable."

2. The emendation, "an *erect* man" rather than "an *old* man" in verse 14 is of special interest. The LXX reading and the fact that the words "erect" and "old" are similar in Hebrew support this change. In addition, in the case of two different readings it is generally best to choose the more difficult as correct. This is because copyists are more likely to change an unusual term to another that is more familiar in common speech than the other way around.

But also the word "erect" may well serve as evidence that this man was truly Samuel in resurrection. He was standing up. This was not a vision conjured up by the woman, but Samuel himself resurrected from the dead by the power of God.

3. The Hebrew text is clearly suspect in the latter part of 1 Samuel 28:16. If we translated the last word of the text as it is generally understood, Samuel's prophecy would read "Yahweh . . . is [or: is becoming] your city." The AV translators evidently saw the word usually signifying "city" as having a distinctive meaning here (and in Psalm 139:20), paralleling an *Aramaic* word used in Daniel 4:19, which the CV renders "foe." Also there are similarities in appearance between the Hebrew word for "city" and the regular *Hebrew* term for "foe."

The LXX translators, however, saw the Hebrew word "associate" which is composed of the very same letters as the Hebrew word for "city," but in reverse order. This is the term used of David in verse 18 as well as in 1 Samuel 15:28. In addition, the Hebrew text from which the LXX translators worked evidently had a preposition connected to the word "associate," signifying "with."

This is also the reading of the Syriac translation, as indicated in the CVOT by the superior letter *c* at the end of the word "associate."

In preparing the CV of this passage, we felt that the LXX and Syriac readings likely reflect the original Hebrew. This is not only because of the similarity between the Hebrew words for "city" and "associate," but also because of the parallelism of verse 16 with verse 17, and with 1 Samuel 15:28. The opening revelation of this prophecy is that Yahweh is rejecting Saul and is giving the kingship to David.

There is nothing elsewhere in Scripture about Yahweh being Saul's Foe (or more literally, "Distresser"). And such an idea here in verse 16 would certainly detract attention from the theme of fulfillment for the prophecy of 15:28.

4. We believe Samuel was referring to Saul rather than David in the opening clause of verse 17. This is supported by the context which focuses on Saul's loss and by the Septuagint's use of the pronoun "you" rather than "him" as in the MT. Since the pronoun is usually indicated in Hebrew by a single letter added to the verb, as it is here, it was fairly easy for changes to develop in the process of transmitting the text during hundreds of years.

5. In the case of 1 Samuel 28:19, the traditional reading, "Tomorrow you and your sons with me" is generally taken to mean that Saul and his sons [would be] with Samuel [in sheol?] on the next day. The LXX, however, offers a more direct prophecy with a specific verb; Saul and his hopes as the founder of a royal dynasty, would *fall*. Worded this way, the prophecy is complete and to the point.

6. It is clear that the MT misspells the Hebrew verb meaning "urge" in 1 Samuel 28:23. It has the verb for "breach," but all translations recognize the mistake made by copyists in reversing two of the letters. The same mistake appears in the MT of 2 Samuel 13:25,27 where a fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls spells the verb correctly. Again the LXX indicates the correct reading.

7. Confusion between the Hebrew words for "on" and "to" is frequent in the Hebrew text. The MT uses "to" in verse 23, but we follow the LXX, other manuscripts and contextual requirements in using "on."

We do not follow every variant reading provided by the Septuagint. But it often proves itself to be a helpful witness in correcting errors that have entered into the traditional Hebrew text.

D.H.H.

97 Editorial
101 The Universal Dignities of Christ
109 The Reconciliation of All to God
117 In the Father's Hands
121 Marriage and the Believer
133 Among the Philistines
136 God at Work in Genesis Two

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2001
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-TWO

EDITORIAL

GOD is. This is not a matter for us to prove but to recognize and appreciate. But what is He like?

A great deal about God can be discerned in His handiwork. "His invisible attributes are descried from the creation of the world" (Rom.1:20). He is often acknowledged in prayer in times of sorrow and trouble as a Source of comfort, as the One to Whom we turn when there is obviously no other. Although done so irreverently, God is frequently called upon in times of anger and frustration, in curses, and this is a kind of backhanded acknowledgment of His supremacy. But, apart from God's grace, mankind avoids God (*cf* Rom.3:12).

However, the Israelite could say, "By many portions and many modes, of old, God, [spoke] to the fathers in the prophets" (Heb.1:1). God made Himself known to one people by words which were given though human spokesmen. The Sacred Scriptures recorded and preserved these words which were words of promise but also of law and thus necessarily of judgment. The testimony was to God's knowledge and power and perfect standards of righteousness. Yet this did not change the fact that all avoid Him; rather it tended to increase the reality of that sad situation by the fruit of dread or hypocrisy and callousness.

But then, as the writer of Hebrews adds, "in the last of these days [God] speaks to us in a Son" (Heb.1:2). Similarly, John writes, "God no one has ever seen. The only-begotten God, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He unfolds Him" (John 1:18). It is when God makes Himself known as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Who is blessed, 2 Cor.1:3; Eph.1:3; 1 Pet.1:3; and Whom we

thank, Col.1:3) that we really begin to realize Who God is and what He is truly like. The *grace* of God, the *wisdom* of God, the *righteousness* of God, the *power* of God for salvation and life and peace and joy, and above all else the *love* of God, these are all discovered in God's gift of His Son, in the death of Christ for sinners, in His triumph over enmity and death in resurrection, and in all the assurance of good to come through Him.

AN EVANGELICAL MINISTRY

Our aim in our ministry is to point to the revelation of God made in Christ Jesus our Lord as recorded in the Scriptures. In the true sense of the word this is an *evangelical* mission. It announces good news. Someone recently said that whenever he hears the gospel he gets scared. If so, he cannot be hearing the gospel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ. If we present God only as He is revealed in His righteous anger without speaking of Him as the righteous Justifier through the faithful obedience of Christ and as the Saviour and Reconciler of all through the blood of Christ's cross, then we are not being evangelical.

A sister in the Lord has been collecting the favorite passages of Scripture of her friends for a small publication. I gave Romans 5:8 as my choice: "God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes." This is pure evangel. It speaks of God's revelation of Himself in the gift of His Son for sinners, and it tells each of us individually that we are loved, and not only loved, but loved by God.

But now as I write this editorial I am thinking I should have used Romans 8:31,32, which asks, "If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" The force of the negative verb, "spares not," along with the positive verb,

"gives," never fails to astound me. God's love is not only seen in the giving of His Son for sinners and enemies but in the fact that God did not lighten in any way the necessary burden that fell on His Beloved.

That's the problem with "favorite verses." When the evangel is the theme, they all seem to outshine each other, or at least shine forth with distinct and special light.

DIRECTED TO GOD'S WORD

We hope that the readers of our magazine will often find their thoughts directed to this evangel which reveals the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor.4:6). This is perhaps most easily done with the two articles on Colossians 1:20 which begin the current issue, and with the brief meditation entitled "In the Father's Hands." As we grow in realization of God's will and delight to reconcile all on the earth and in the heavens we are consoled and edified with assurance and praise.

But the considerations of such human matters as marriage problems or wrong choices (such as David's sojourn among the Philistines) are also very much concerned with the evangel. The revelation of God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus continually works in the believer in our personal lives in a way that the law could never do. Paul testified, "In the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace, which is in me, did not come to be for naught" (1 Cor.15:10). "For the saving grace of God made its advent to all humanity, training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon" (Titus 2:11,12).

Finally, the extremely difficult and crucial matter of God's relationship to the entrance of sin and death into this world, as brought up in the article on Genesis 2, can only be fully appreciated in light of the evangel of God concerning Christ's death for sinners. Clinging to the rev-

elation of God as given in the first chapter of Genesis, as Job seemed to have done, is certainly of great benefit in understanding the experience of evil. But the evangel announces that God not only has a good purpose for all He does, but that He has indeed assured the realization of that purpose in the gift of His Son.

When Paul wrote that "God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all" (Rom. 11:32), he did so in light of the evangel of God, concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord (Rom.1:1-5) which he expounded in Romans 3:21-8:39. The stubbornness which God Himself brings upon Israel and the nations is for the purpose of the revelation and appreciation of God's mercy. And to achieve that good consummation, God spared not His Son but gave Him up for us all.

The minister at a wedding told us God had known before they were born that the bride and groom would come to this happy day of their marriage, and that God had prepared the steps all along the way to this event. This was good, but when he later spoke of troubles and sorrows that were inevitably ahead for the couple, I could not help but notice he did not relate these to God. Perhaps it was just as well under the circumstances. But I prayed silently for the newly-weds that when they do experience hardships and disappointments they will see them as part of God's purpose for them. May God lead us all to relate our experiences, both happy and sad, to the operations of His hand, and in turn relate this view of the Deity of God to His gracious and loving gift of His Son for us. Indeed God would have Himself known ultimately to all by means of His evangel concerning His Son. The God Who is operating all things in accord with the counsel of His will is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ Who commends His love in the death of His Son for sinners.

D.H.H.

THE UNIVERSAL DIGNITIES OF CHRIST

THE SUPREMACY of God's Son depends on the *universality* or *totality* of His many dignities. How extraordinary is the emphasis laid on this vital fact in Colossians 1:16-20! Within the compass of five verses we read no less then *eight* times that the given glory is all-inclusive. He is the firstborn of *every* creature. *All* is created in Him, and *all* is created through and for Him. He is before *all*. *All* has its cohesion in Him. In *all* He is becoming first. The *entire* complement dwells in Him. He reconciles *all* through the blood of His cross. And on two occasions this is amplified and defined as all that is in the heavens and on the earth. It is said to include both visible and invisible. What more could be said to impress us with the universal scope of the Son's activities?

Here we have a gem of purest ray serene, fit for the diadem of universal majesty! He was first in time and He must become first in all else. How many of mankind have striven for supremacy! Some have drenched the ground with blood in order to attain the highest place for themselves among the rulers of the earth. Many more in other walks of life have sought to reach the top, above their less fortunate fellows. These all exalted themselves, finding a futile and a fleeting eminence. How marvelous the contrast! He Who never sought His own advancement but only God's glory, Who abased Himself beneath all, He will become first in all.

Let us be very jealous for His glory, and allow no one else to filch it from Him. Let us be very zealous for His supremacy, and accord it to no other name but His. And

let us guard each glory as we would a treasure trove. And, since His crowning glories as Complement of the Deity and Reconciler of all are so often denied to Him, let us make these the special theme of our meditation, and, if need be, let us maintain them and defend them to the last. In Him, the Firstborn from the dead, through the blood of His cross, God is completely equipped to consummate the purpose of love, and bring every enemy back to His bosom, not only saved, but reconciled.

THE ENTIRE COMPLEMENT

It is quite possible to imagine that God would delegate the honor of creation to one mediator and that of reconciliation to another. God needs both to carry out His purpose, so that each, in his measure, would contribute to the fulfillment of His plans. Then the honor of being God's complement would be shared by them. To put it figuratively, one would receive a place at His right hand, the other at His left. Indeed, some have taught that God's complement consisted of a whole series of beings, independent of His Son, to whom He delegated creation. Not so! The *entire* complement, *all* that is needed by God in order to fulfill His will in connection with His creatures, finds its fit residence in His Son.

In Him the complement *delights* to dwell. It is not alone that He has the ability, the fitness, the competence to cope with all that is involved in this most marvelous function in the universe. All this He has, and far more. At His baptism, when the heavens were opened to Him, the voice declared, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I *delight*" (Matt.3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22). So again, when He was transformed on the high mountain, a voice came out of the cloud and testified to the delight of the Father in His Beloved (Matt.17:5; Mark 9:7). Peter reminds us of this in his epistle, and tells us that it brought Him honor and

glory from God the Father (2 Peter 1:17). Long before, Isaiah records the same fact (Matt.12:18; Isa.42:1): "My Beloved, in Whom My soul delights."

Is it not striking that this recognition of the Son is one of the very few statements directly spoken by the Deity in the later Scriptures? This should give it the prominence which is its due in our hearts. What a contrast to His testimony concerning the rest of mankind! When the Lord stooped down to see how they are, He found nothing in which to *delight*. Not one was even just or kind (Rom.3: 10-18). Certainly there has never been one among Adam's descendants, apart from His grace, in whom He could find pleasure. In none of them could the complement find any place whatever.

The complement (*plêrōma*) is here personified (Col. 1:19). It is represented as seeking a suitable dwelling place from which to carry out the purposes of God. In Him it has found a delightful abode, for He is not merely a means of bringing back creation to what it was, but of bringing it on to fulfill its purpose. All too many of us imagine that we would be satisfied with a universe brought back to its pristine perfection, a world without sin, a sorrow-free existence. No such result would satisfy the heart of God. That would never justify the travail of the eons. That would never win the admiring approval of the universe. That would be vanity, a feeding on wind, a reaping of less than was sown, a losing venture.

And such would creation be, had it not been begun in the Son of His *love*, and should it not be finished by the same One through the blood of His cross. Love cannot be revealed without a background. Every blessing imaginable poured into the lap of a sinless creature is merely a matter of course, which evokes no thankful feelings, and provokes no response of love. I feel certain that Adam never thought of thanking his Maker for his superb health and

strength. Yet I am profoundly grateful for the very little vigor needed to pen these lines. And when we, who have suffered much from illness and weakness, once attain our body of glory, how deep and lasting will be our thankful love to Him for all His superabundant grace!

In this passage nothing is said directly of the entrance and course of evil and sin, because this is no part of the work of the Son. But the introduction of estrangement is clearly implied by His death and His cross and the necessity of the reconciliation of all. It is no glory or honor to destroy God's work. This must, indeed, be done, but woe to him who does it! His course must be down and not up. The glory of the Son lies in this, that He undoes the work of the Adversary. Great as were His glories in creation, now that all have been estranged by sin He gains far greater glory by His suffering for all, so that all will be saved and reconciled, and so attain the original object of their creation.

God pity us if we see our salvation from our own side only! The object of all is God, rather than His creatures. And the glory of God demands the exaltation of His Son. These are the chief considerations in the reconciliation of all. If a single one of those whom He created in love should fail to find the final goal which His love has set, then it is His wisdom and power which are brought into question, and *His* love which is open to doubt. Likewise, if one who was created in the Son of God's love should fail to be reconciled by the blood of His cross, would that not drag the Son down from the high place which God has given Him? Let us not darken the splendor of His achievement by our own dismal unbelief.

WHAT ARE "THINGS?"

The neuter gender, in English, is used only for *things* as a rule, not for persons. In Greek, however, the so-called "neuter" seems to be much wider in its scope, and to

include, rather than to exclude, the genders. This is evident in such passages as Galatians 3:22 ("the scripture locks up all together under sin") and John 6:37 ("All that which the Father is giving to Me shall be arriving to Me"). In Colossians 1:20 it is of considerable importance to be clear on this point. The more the passage is studied the more it seems evident that *not things*, but persons are intended. These "things" are *on* the earth and *in* the heavens, hence they cannot refer to the material creation as a whole. And how can *things* be reconciled? Were the Colossians (1:21) among these *things*? Reconciliation is possible only where enmity has prevailed. The introduction of the word "things," it seems to us, though warranted by the grammars, has thrown a veil over the whole passage and made it unintelligible to some extent.

PEACE THROUGH THE CROSS

Enmity has come in through the entrance of death and sin. All of mankind, without exception, are estranged from God. It is more than likely that this discord has affected the whole creation, in varying degrees. To make peace between God and His unfriendly creatures is the greatest of all achievements. In this world of strife and contention the role of peacemaker is a difficult and discouraging one. For the most trivial causes enmity arises between man and man, section and section, country and country. We talk of peace, yet there is unrest and misunderstanding almost everywhere, and the din of arms does not cease.

The cross, the inglorious, the disgraceful, the infamous, the opprobrious, the outrageous stake, the most disreputable death that man can devise, where weakness and shame combine to dishonor the High and Holy Son of God—here is where peace was made for all who are estranged, where the world was conciliated to God. With this as a basis, the Son will reconcile all God's enemies with Him when the

eons have run their course. In the cross we see the utter worthlessness of man as well as the supreme exhibition of the love of God. Reconciliation is effected by the revelation of God's love in the deepest display of human hate.

The cross, like a lightning flash, reveals the heart of man. He Who hung upon it was the Touchstone by which all things may be tested. When He appeared among His people humanity manifested itself as it really is. He should have been welcomed and honored and adored. By the condemnation of the only One Who deserved to live, mankind has condemned itself, and sealed its own death warrant. By the shameful crucifixion of the Lord of glory men made it manifest that they, not He, deserve the death detestable. O that we all may learn what we really are in the light of the cross! This will burn out all our pride and prepare the way for peace. And thus it is that reconciliation comes. The cross will abase all into the dust, and humble their hearts before the Deity, and prepare them for the revelation of His love.

But if the cross only revealed what is in man it could not reconcile the race but would rather destroy it. Thanks be to God that it also reveals what is in God! It is the fullest revelation of His love. In it He seemed to side with man. Instead of rescuing His Beloved from their hate, He sends fire from above into His bones. He makes Him to be sin, Who knew no sin. He forsakes Him instead of the ones who deserved His displeasure.

The divine alchemy which transformed the Victim of human hate into the Sacrifice for their sins is almost too wonderful for human apprehension.

THE BLOOD OF THE CROSS

The cross was the supreme crisis in universal history, an event unique, unparalleled in the annals of time. Nothing has ever occurred which has such a profound effect upon

the world. It will transform an alienated universe into adoring worshipers. It is a permanent, an abiding power which will never lose its potency. Today the cross avails to conciliate the world, and to reconcile those who receive the conciliation. But this will by no means exhaust its power. It will be the basis of all blessing in the eons to come, and will bring immortality and peace to all at the consummation. Death cannot stop its course, for Christ arose, the Firstborn, and all for whom He died (and He died for all!) will share His life when death is finally abolished.

The blood of *Christ* is a most expressive figure of the permanent power of His sufferings. The soul, sensation, feeling (not the life) of the flesh is in the blood. In the days of old this was sprinkled in the holy of holies once a year on the day of propitiation, and for a twelve-month preserved the potency of the sacrifice. So it is with the suffering of Christ. Thank God it is past, but its potency is permanent. It avails today, and will never lose its power. The blood remains, as it were, within the holiest in heaven, to witness to His offering.

But the blood of His *cross*—this goes far deeper still. Only here do we have this notable expression. It is not a mere literary variant, but a deliberate endeavor to distinguish between the death of God's Son and the *manner* of it. This is done because here we have not merely the salvation or the justification of all, but the *reconciliation* of the universe. It is not a question of sin so much as of offense and enmity. In fact this passage is concerned with salvation only insofar as it is included in reconciliation. *Peace* is made by the blood of His cross. The blood is a reminder of its permanence.

This blood does not merely remind us of His death and suffering, but of the *shame* and *enmity* of *man*, and the *darkness* and *distance* from *God* endured by Him because of the *crucifixion*. Stoning would have brought death, but

would have avoided much of the suffering and the curse of the Deity which rested upon the One Who was hanged upon a tree. The marvelous truth that all will be reconciled to God is based, not only on the suffering and death of Christ, but especially on the abject abasement involved in the manner of His death, coupled with the curse which it drew down from above.

The cry of the august Sufferer, "My God, My God, why didst *Thou* forsake Me?" finds its answer in the *cross*. With any other form of death God would not have forsaken Him. He would rather have turned against His murderers. It would have increased the distance and estrangement between God and His creatures. It would have made enmity, not peace. But because He voluntarily placed Himself beneath the curse of God for the sake of His enemies, the result was reconciliation.

May God graciously give us faith to believe it! May our love for His Beloved constrain us to receive it! May mistaken translations of other passages not bar our way into this holy of holies, beyond the veil of His eonian dealings with His creatures! May not the false philosophical terms "everlasting" and "eternal," or "eternity," blind our eyes to the eons, the scene of the Son's glories, their commencement in love, and their consummation in reconciliation!

A. E. Knoch

MALAYSIA FELLOWSHIP

From April 13–25, Jim, Suella, and Marc Coram enjoyed fellowship with friends in faith in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. As in their previous visit there in December, 1995, the Corams' time was occupied with many scheduled meetings besides tourist activities and further informal fellowship. The theme of the meetings was, "Seeing God as God," and all the messages presented related in some way to this theme.

It was encouraging to note the stability of faith among many of our brethren there. And so we are remembering these honored friends in prayer to God in their work of faith and toil of love and endurance of expectation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE RECONCILIATION OF ALL TO GOD

ALL who are estranged from God will be brought into the enjoyment of that reconciliation and peace toward God which has been established through the blood of Christ's cross. This is assured in the words of Colossians 1:19,20: *For in [Christ] the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens.*

A PIVOTAL POINT

This passage is a pivotal point in Colossians. It is the climax of the hymn of 1:13-20 which focuses on Christ as the Son of God's love, the Image of the invisible God in Whom the entire complement delights to dwell. As such Colossians 1:20 is vital for the realization of God (1:10) as He is revealed as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (1:3). It is also the major basis for our appreciation of the reconciliation God has made and for persistence in the faith day by day, as presented in the rest of the epistle. Colossians 1:20 cannot be passed over lightly. All believers should take this announcement of universal reconciliation very seriously and with the highest degree of optimism.

Indeed Colossians 1:20 is a vital key for the realization of God and our honoring of Christ. It is also fundamental for our appreciation of the evangel and enjoyment of the peace and assurance that the evangel holds for us. These are Paul's particular concerns in writing this epistle. The truth of universal reconciliation is critical to our realiza-

tion of God, our recognition of the honors of Christ and our daily lives as believers.

THE REALIZATION OF GOD

In Colossians 1:10, Paul prays for growth in the realization of God. The great impediment to this realization is the presence of sin and estrangement which keeps God's creatures at a distance from Him. It is in the removal of this estrangement that God would make Himself known to us, and this operation is carried out in His Son. Hence, Paul precedes his prayer for the realization of God Himself by reference to the realization of God's *grace* (1:6) and the realization of God's *will* (1:9), both of which relate to the death of Christ. God would have us become acquainted with Him effectively and deeply, as He is presented as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God's *grace* is made known to us in the evangel which declares that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and has been roused (1 Cor.15:3,4). We are sinners, being justified gratuitously in God's *grace,* through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:23,24). In *grace,* through faith, are we saved, and this is not out of ourselves; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting (Eph.2:8,9). The evangel tells us that God gives and we receive. It declares that God acts and we are blessed.

God's *will* is similarly revealed in the message of Christ's death for sinners. God *wills* that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). Hence God counseled (intended) the death of His Son (Acts 2:23; 4:27,28), sparing Him not, but giving Him up for us all (Rom.8:32). Not only was this God's intention, but because of the glorious results of the cross it was God's *will,* as our Lord indicated in Gethsemane (Matt.26:42).

We cannot grasp the riches and power and glory of God's grace or perceive the righteousness and wisdom and love

of His will as they are manifested in the death of His Son apart from seeing their results. His will involves the giving up of His Son to death in light of the good it would achieve (and it alone could achieve) not only for human sinners, but for all of estranged creation in blessing and realization.

In Colossians this evangel is expressed most strikingly in Paul's outstanding hymn of praise in 1:13-20.

THE CHRIST OF COLOSSIANS

In this marvelous passage Paul sings of Christ, of Whom God is the God and Father, and in Whom all are reconciled to God (Col.1:13-20). This hymn speaks of Christ in relation to God three times. First of all He is the Son of God's love (1:13). Then He is the Image of the invisible God (1:15). And finally He is the One in Whom the entire complement [of the Deity] delights to dwell (1:19).

Colossians 1:19,20 is the climax of this hymn. All else leads forward to this conclusion. Christ reveals God as the One Who brings estrangement and enmity and evil itself to an end by means of one astounding act at the cross.

THE SON OF GOD'S LOVE

Thus the apostle begins with reference to the Son of God's love, and he ends with reference to the blood of His cross. Colossians 1:15 also involves a similar connecting of good with Christ's death, for the deliverance which we have in Christ is through His blood (Eph.1:7) in God's grace for sinners (Rom.3:24). So also the phrase "pardon of sins," in a remarkable condensation of thought joins the truth of justification through the blood of Christ and conciliation through the death of Christ expounded in Romans 5:1-11. Such a direct relating of God's love for His Son with the death of His Son seems wholly incongruous. God not only associates His will with the death of His Son, but He associates His love with the cross.

Once again, this is beyond hope of realization, unless we see the glorious purpose of the cross, including the reconciliation of all.

THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

As the One in Whom, through Whom and for Whom all is created (Col.1:16,17), Christ reveals the invisible God. In the work of creation Christ images God's power and intelligence. But until the cross He could not reflect God's love which shapes His power and which infuses His wisdom.

We cannot realize God as He is if we see Him only as a God of supreme ability and power. Christ as Creator mirrors God's power and divinity (Rom.1:20). We must also know the joy and peace that comes with a realization of God in reconciliation. Consequently, in His love for His Son, God counseled that Christ would not only be the Image of His hand, but also be Image of His heart. In all things Christ becomes first (Col.1:18).

Other creatures, created in Christ Who is the Firstborn of every creature, are referred to in verse 16 as "thrones, lordships, sovereignties and authorities." But they cannot reflect the love of God. Certain among them might be able to bring creation into an imposed order, but they could not gain what God wills for His universe in expressing the righteousness and wisdom and, most importantly, the love which is in His heart. The Image of the invisible God must be also the Son of His love in order to convey this love to all His creatures personally.

This Christ does for us as the Head of His body which is that out-calling of human beings, chosen and called in grace, delivered from sin and death into righteousness and life by His death and resurrection. He also does this as Sovereign over all the powers of the universe, exalted as Saviour and Lord in light of His obedience to the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8-11). And again He does this as the

"Firstborn from among the dead," the One in Whom all who are dying will be vivified, He Himself leading the way (1 Cor.15:22).

Consequently, Christ is the Image of the invisible God, not simply by the work creation itself, but also by His loving and powerful work of bringing all of creation to its intended completion. This is the theme now of the dramatic, closing lines of the hymn.

IN WHOM THE ENTIRE COMPLEMENT DWELLS

The Son of God's love, the Image of the invisible God, is now to be seen as the One in Whom the entire complement delights to dwell. It may have been that some people, known to the Colossians, were referring to spiritual lordships and sovereignties as the "pleroma" or complement of God. History records such a religious concept some years later, and the terminology used here suggests it was already appearing to the dilution of Christ's honors in people's minds.

Christ is One and the only One in Whom the "entire *complement*" is making its home. In Colossians 2:9 we learn that this "entire complement" is the "entire complement of the Deity." It refers to that which makes God complete. God delights to reveal Himself in the fullness of His love in Christ as the One Who shed His blood at the cross for the reconciliation of all. As the One in Whom the entire complement [of the Deity] delights to dwell, Christ brings all the estranged universe into reconciliation to God. In doing this, Christ makes God fully known and appreciated everywhere throughout the universe.

"AND YOU"

Paul has finished his hymn recounting the glories of Christ, ending with Christ as the One through Whom God reconciles all to Himself. Now he turns back to the

"brethren in Christ" (1:2), and addresses us personally: "And you, being once estranged and enemies in comprehension, by wicked acts, yet now He reconciles by His body of flesh, through His death, to present you holy and flawless and unimpeachable in His sight" (Col.1:21,22).

All the requirements for reconciliation are accounted for. There is estrangement and enmity. That is the sorry but necessary contribution we have made to the process. There is the death of God's Son Who has come among us in a body of flesh like ours. And there is the God and Father of Christ Whose will and delight is to bring us to Himself in realization and appreciation of Himself.

What God intends the blood of Christ's cross to accomplish for all who are estranged from Him, He has already granted to us. What we have now is based on what Christ has gained for all. In seeing the certainty and the grace of this peace which we have received on the basis of Christ's death for us, and in "persisting" in this faith (Col.1:23) we will surely be experiencing much of the peace of this reconciliation today. This is the basis of the believers' assurance and walk in these present times of uncertainty and struggle. We believe this evangel which says that God has doomed the estrangement of His creation through the death of His beloved Son. And in believing this our hearts are consoled (Col.2:2) and our faith stabilized (2:5).

TRIUMPH AT THE CROSS

In such a context of grace and peace, how can thoughts of everlasting enmity and separation be introduced and sustained? God's will in sending the Son of His love to die for His enemies is specifically directed to their reconciliation with Him. Our faith is centered on the certainty of this reconciliation for ourselves. No matter how contradictory what we see and experience in the flesh may be to this evangel, we believe it and, in God's grace, are becoming grounded and settled in assurance and thanksgiving. Our reconciliation to God is certain because Christ has made peace for all through the blood of His cross.

The message is so simple. God has not based His work of reconciliation on human requirements. It is a work of grace. And God has not entrusted the work of reconciliation to a group of intermediaries but to Christ alone, Who has done the work by putting enmity to death in His death.

This work of Christ at the cross is brought before us not only in Colossians 1:20 ("the blood of His cross") and 1:22 ("by His body of flesh, through His death"), but again in Colossians 2:14,15, when the apostle speaks of hostility of "sovereignties and authorities." Concerning this hostility, the apostle assures us that God nailed it to the cross, "stripping off the sovereignties and authorities, with boldness He makes a show of them, triumphing over them in it."

In Colossians 1:20 the cross is associated with peace. In Colossians 2:15 it is associated with triumph. And taking these two points, some have claimed that Christ's triumph over hostile forces defines the nature of their reconciliation as one of disarmament and pacification. The estrangement, enmity and hostility remains, but these creatures, these wicked beings, are forcefully subdued and kept from exercising their hostility. In effect, this is a bringing in of everlasting hell into the book of Colossians and its presentation of God as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

What a twisted conclusion!

Colossians 2:15 is in full accord with Colossians 1:20. The triumph of Christ is over hostility and over estrangement and enmity as well. It nails the enmity of human beings to the cross as well as the hostility of spiritual forces of wickedness. In losing their sovereignty and authority they also lose their hostility and become willingly subject to the One Who has conquered them in His work of love at the cross. As long as estrangement exists between God

and the creatures of His hands, the triumph and reconciliation of Christ through the shedding of His blood is unrealized. If enmity continues to exist "throughout eternity" the triumph is exposed as a sham and the reconciliation as a shameful pretense.

PERSISTING IN THE FAITH

According to Colossians 1:23, if we believe that we have been delivered from estrangement and enmity by the death of Christ and have been brought into reconciliation by His blood, apart from our own works, and we persist in this faith, we will be experiencing this reconciliation even now. The evangel is full of riches of assurance. But the horror of unending torment or annihilation debilitates faith. And the view of God that such concepts demand constantly erodes the peace of reliance on Him and the assurance of His glorious will in Christ that the evangel of Colossians 1:20 presents.

We cannot grow in realization of God's wisdom and power or His goodness and love if we suppose He is not able or not willing to bring all into that peace and happiness which the cross of Christ has gained. It is what such a tragedy painted by traditionalism says about God and the cross of Christ that should convince us that all passages of Scripture dealing with judgment and condemnation speak of temporary means and not everlasting states. There is no deficiency in the effectualness of the cross of Christ and no dualistic contradiction in the will of God.

Christ did die for all, and therefore all will be reconciled to God.

We are thanking the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for His glorious triumph in the cross of Christ. It is a triumph over our enmity and hostility, and that of all His estranged creatures, and it will be manifested in the deeply felt and truly appreciated reconciliation of all.

D.H.H.

Grace and Peace from God, our Father

IN THE FATHER'S HANDS

As we emerge from the shadows of confusion into the realization of the glories of our God and Father, we begin to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment. With the apostle Paul we thrust behind us those things which brought us, through distress and pain, to humility, then adoration.

MEANS AND END

From the Seventeenth Century there is a proverb, "The end justifies the means." All of us are subjected to the results of Adam's disobedience, but these are means, not God's goal.

The need for subjection is presented through the disobedience of our ancient parents in Eden and the judgment that followed. Concerning this, Yahweh Elohim declared, "Behold, man has become like one of Us in knowing good and evil. Now lest he should stretch out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live for the eon—" (Gen.3:22).

The silence of this unfinished declaration yet speaks volumes. Heed the judgment: "Because you hearkened to your wife's voice and ate from the only tree that I instructed you, saying, 'You must not eat from it,' cursed is the ground on your account; in grief shall you eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and weeds shall it sprout for you, and you will eat the herbage of the field. By the sweat of your brow shall you eat your bread, until you return to the ground,

for from it were you taken. For soil you are, and to soil you shall return" (Gen.3:17-19).

PRAISE CANNOT BE COMMANDED

A precious blessing lavished by God upon humanity was to confer the riches embodied in the relationship of *Father and children.* This is not a mere figure of speech. God addressed our Lord as ". . . My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight" (Matt.3:17). Such a bond is very important. Before the Deity we are prostrate in dread and awe, but this loving title of *Father* invites and welcomes us into His very presence. It reveals His care, provision and affection. "If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be granting us all?" (Rom.8:31,32).

We earnestly beseech our gracious Father's patience in the use of a human proverb in considering His judgments in Eden. The grim record of human history reveals, when the means become an end in themselves, then this could lead to shameful brutality. It is not so with our God and Father.

Mankind could not be created as they will ultimately be at the consummation. When God is All in all, a mighty acclamation of loving praise shall resound throughout the universe.

Obviously, *such exultation cannot be commanded.* This would be contradictory, and an affront to His loving wisdom and mighty glory. Ask parents, "Could you . . .would you simply trust in a spontaneous love from your offspring?" It is impossible for them to adequately present conclusive proof of their love for their children, no matter how profound their heart's desire. And even if this were possible, what the response? Such comparison is feeble,

a mere shadow of God's omnipotent love, but there are some thoughtful similarities.

REVEALED THROUGH HIS SPIRIT

There is something God cannot do. He cannot lie! What He has declared concerning His purpose will be fulfilled.

Thus far, we have been considering the means toward a desired end. But what of this end? The importance of this determines the severity or otherwise of these same means. It might be erroneously concluded that the fearful toll of suffering is disproportionate. So reasons puny man of these perilous periods, "always learning, and yet not at any time able to come into a realization of the truth" (2 Tim.3:7).

As proposed above, parents are not sufficiently able nor wise enough clearly to demonstrate a love which knows no limits, a love which reaches far, far beyond all weak, human capacities. Our Father reaches out to His helpless children, presenting His relationship with His blessed Son, Christ Jesus. The tremendous significance of this is full of compassion, for it communicates as nothing else could. But in our weakness we must always be reminded that our spirits are entering hallowed revelation.

"That which the eye did not perceive, and the ear did not hear, and to which the heart of man did not ascend—whatever God makes ready for those who are loving Him. Yet to us God reveals them through His spirit, for the spirit is searching all, even the depths of God" (1 Cor.2:9,10).

RECONCILIATION FOLLOWS ESTRANGEMENT

"The usual way is to view the goal with the darkness of the way. We go back to passages which deal with judgments and allow them to throw their dark shadows across the consummation. We should *believe* that *God* will *justify all* mankind (Rom.5:18), and view the previous judgments in the light of this final achievement. We bring up

passages which tell of death to darken God's declaration that it will be abolished. We should *believe* that *God* will make death inoperative at the *last,* and view the previous passages in this glorious light. We turn to texts which prove that unbelievers will be lost or destroyed, and, with these passages, dim the great declaration that God wills the salvation of all. We should illumine them with the later and higher revelation. We find God's enemies in the fiery lake at what seems to be the close of revelation, and misuse this fact to deny God's declaration that all will be reconciled (Col.1:20). We should not take one to destroy the other, but believe both, for reconciliation *follows* estrangement, and it alone accords with God's final goal . . . .

"Let us allow the light of the latest revelation to illuminate the earlier, partial unfolding, and let us not use the earlier to eclipse the latest, the highest, and the only complete unveiling of God's mind and heart."[1]

This brief contemplation of the means and the end of God's vast purpose is best concluded with words from the sacred Scriptures:

"For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also, Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless empties Himself, taking, the form of a slave, coming to be in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

"Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the *Father*" (Phil.2:5-11). Donald Fielding

1. A. E. Knoch: The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God, pp.338,339.

Grace and Peace in Christ

MARRIAGE AND THE BELIEVER
(Part One)

Some churches or fellowships today are believing and teaching that death alone dissolves the marriage union. Consequently, they forbid their members to marry (*cp* 1 Tim.4:3); that is, they forbid them to remarry if one of the previous mates is yet living on the grounds that "in the sight of God" the partners in the original marriage are still bound to one another. Consequently, all such second marriages are viewed as being of the same essential nature as any other sexual relationship which is engaged in outside of wedlock.

They insist upon this view regardless of what the nature of the second marriage relationship may be. Any who wish to remain or become members of such groups are told they must renounce the sinful union immediately, either to return to their first mate or to live singly in celibacy.

No doubt, such beliefs are sincerely held and expressed. Indeed, since in the eyes of those holding such views, such is the teaching of Scripture, they feel it is their duty to "cry aloud and spare not."

We realize this is a sensitive subject. Many, especially among those who have living first mates who are partners in second marriages, simply reject as false the claim that marriage can only be terminated by death. Yet they do so being aware that if somehow this claim is true, they are "living in sin." Many sincere believers who enter into a second marriage while their first mates are still living do so simply out of human desire and in less than a clear con-

science (or at least in less than a good understanding) as to the disputed passages which, in the views of some, preclude such a second marriage.

Many others, though they may not actually *forbid* such marriages, nonetheless look upon those believers who thus remarry as somehow "second class" members of the body of Christ.

We disapprove of adultery, separation and divorce, even as we hate the evil and love the good. Similarly, we wholeheartedly concur with the Lord's own imperative, "What God, then, yokes together, let not man be separating" (Matt.19:6). Let no one say that we make light of sin or seek to encourage it. Our only counsel is: Though it is true you were called for freedom, brethren, do not use this freedom for an incentive to the flesh (*cf* Gal.5:13).

The question, however, is not whether adultery is a sin, but whether those who are divorced are yet somehow married. Likewise, the question is not, where both are believers and divorce has occurred, *should* such ones either remain unmarried or be reconciled to one another, but, how does God view and deal with the matter with which we are concerned.

"A GENERATION, WICKED AND AN *ADULTERESS*"

It is important to recognize that Christ's own personal teaching on this subject was directed solely toward the sons of Israel. They alone were the adulterous "wife" of Yahweh. In that day, the days of His flesh, our Lord's *only* commission was to that *adulterous* nation. Though they were indeed, "a generation, wicked and an *adulteress*" (Matt.16:2), even so, the Lord Jesus "was not commissioned except for the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt.15:24) as He said.

It is taken for granted that our Lord has risen out of Judah (Heb.7:14). Christ came to His own (John 1:11); He came

under law (Gal.4:4); He came as the Servant of the Circumcision (Rom.15:8). While, in His ministry, Christ elucidated the law (e.g., Matt.5:28) and evinced His lordship over it (e.g., Mark 2:23-28), He by no means annulled it (*cf* Matt.5:17-20). The law of Yahweh, which came through Moses, remains in full force today; even so, it is *applicable* solely to the nation of Israel and to her proselytes.

In due time, the twelve also became associated with Christ in His work and were commissioned of Him themselves, both to herald the kingdom and to make His teachings known. If any non-Israelites who believed should wish to approach Israel as proselytes and serve her Messiah faithfully, they were free to do so. But, it was as essential for any such to obey His words as it was essential for those who were Jews by birth.

THE SCOPE OF "ADULTERY"

The sin of adultery is always *connected with* "marriage." But it does not follow from this that it is a sin that can only be committed *by* those who are married (i.e., by those who themselves are either husbands or wives). "Related to marriage," and "committed by those who are married," are not the same thought. For example, while in itself a single man's unlawful intercourse with a married woman, with respect to the man's own deed, would be an act of "prostitution" (*porneuō*, "fornication," AV), with respect to its *adulterating* effect upon the woman's marriage, it would also be an act of "adultery." Such a man's act, indeed, is related to marriage; but it is not committed by a married person.

It is true that the common English definition of "adultery" is "voluntary sexual intercourse *of* a married person with someone other than his or her lawful spouse" (THE RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY, p.12). It must be noted, however, that "of" is not "by." "Of" signifies "pertaining to" or "concerning"; "by" refers to "the one who acts," or

"the performing agent." Much of the false reasoning on this subject is based upon a failure to recognize this fact, and otherwise to reason in reverse, from English to Greek. Yet modern, non-scriptural definition can never be the basis of ancient, scriptural meaning.

We have found nothing in the Hebrew (Old Testament) or Greek (New Testament) Scriptures themselves which confines the thought of adultery to the idea of "unlawful intercourse *by* a married person." It does not follow from the fact that adultery can be committed by those who are married, that it cannot be committed by those who are not married.

Indeed, in Leviticus 20:10, we do not read, "As for a *married* man who commits adultery with another man's wife," but simply, "As for a *man* who commits adultery with another man's wife . . . the *adulterer* and the adulteress shall be put to death, yea death."

In the Hebrew Scriptures, the word "adultery" is not formally defined. While its usage is often constricted, it seems to possess an essentially wider sense.

Since "marriage" is the righteous union between man and woman (between husband and wife), it would seem that "adultery" is *any maritally-related injury,* inclusive of but not confined to unlawful intercourse between the sexes.

The rich man of Mark 10 included Moses' prohibition of adultery as a precept which he had maintained "from [his] youth" (Mark 10:17-22). A righteous youth would not wish to engage in any uncleanness which would be injurious to his future marriage, upon reaching his majority. In this sense, he too would seek to obey the precept against committing "adultery."

It would seem that "*prostitution*" (*porneia*) simply speaks of the unlawfulness of illicit sexual intercourse in general (whether or not for pay), apart from the thought of *marital* infidelity, as such (whether or not the violation of a

proper marriage should be involved as well, in any certain instance of this sin). On the other hand, "adultery" (*moicheia*) draws our attention to the thought of such a sin's *injuriousness* to the institution of *marriage.*

"Adultery" and "prostitution" appear together in Matthew 15:19, Mark 7:21, Galatians 5:19, and Matthew 19:9. In Hebrews 13:4 and in 1 Corinthians 6:9, "adulterers" appears in conjunction with "paramours" (*pornous;* a male who commits "prostitution"; i.e., not merely a "male prostitute" in the common, secular sense, but any man who uses his body for unlawful intercourse, whether or not for pay).

FURTHER RAMIFICATIONS OF MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

In the Greek Scriptures, however, the Lord Himself makes evident the full scope of that which constitutes "adultery." According to Christ, "adultery" includes not only the act of the man who lies with another man's wife, but includes as well, "*every* man *looking* at a woman to *lust* for her"; such a one "*already* commits *adultery* with her in his heart" (Matt.5:28), even if he does not consummate his desires by means of his bodily members.

In light of the practical conditions in Israel which the Lord encountered during the days of His ministry, He said, "Now it was declared, Whoever should be dismissing his wife, let him be giving her a divorce [*cf* Deut.24:1-4]. Yet I am saying to you that everyone dismissing his wife (outside of a case of prostitution) is making her commit adultery, and whosoever should be marrying her who has been dismissed is committing adultery" (Matt.5:31,32).

In the economy of our Lord's time on earth, a wife was wholly dependent on her husband for her subsistence, her needs for living. She could not go out and get a job and support herself. A dismissed wife no longer had the husband's provision for her needs. What was she to do? Become a

prostitute? Starve to death? Become a "homeless person"? Yet according to the Lord, if she should indeed take up with someone else, even so, she would be committing adultery. In addition, He plainly said that, in so doing, the one marrying her would himself commit adultery.

Similarly, if the original husband, upon dismissing his wife, should marry someone else, he too would commit adultery (Matt.19:9; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18). For that matter, if a wife, upon dismissing her husband, should be marrying another, she likewise would be committing adultery (Mark 10:12), even as the man marrying her (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Luke 16:18).

Thus, under such circumstances, all involved would become "adulterers"; for all involved would be engaging in one form or another of maritally-related wrongdoing or injury.

Having been informed thus by the Lord (Matt.19:9), the disciples declared, "If the cause of a man with a woman is thus, it is not expedient to marry" (Matt.19:10). Jesus replied, saying, "Not all are containing this saying, *but those to whom it has been given.* For there are eunuchs that are born thus out of their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who are emasculated by men, and there are eunuchs who emasculate themselves because of the kingdom of the heavens. The one *able* to contain it, let *him* contain it" (Matt.19:11,12).

Only those who were chosen of God and begotten anew by His spirit, could possibly endure such drastic, albeit metaphorical, "emasculation." Even then, such continence would be quite impossible if it were to be the work of man of himself. Instead, in the case of those to whom it was *given* "from heaven" (*cf* John 3:27) to emasculate themselves, their faithfulness was the work of God in them; such ones alone were able to contain this saying (*cp* Matt. 19:26; 1 John 5:3,4).

The Lord's point in such a case as that in which the husband had divorced the wife and simply cast her out on her own, seems to be that by so doing and yet making no further provision for her, he was, effectually speaking, "making" her commit adultery. That is, in most cases, if not all, the woman would have little practical recourse but to turn to some other man.

Moses had neither *approved* nor *promoted* divorce; but merely, in view of the hardheartedness of the people, had *permitted* them to dismiss their wives (Matt.19:8). Yet where this dismissal occurred, he directed that the wife should not merely be sent away, but be provided with a scroll of divorce (Matt.19:7). In order for legal dissolution to be effected and the woman thus be in a position to remarry, this scroll must be supplied.

Indeed, she might well marry the second man only to find that since this latter husband simply "disliked" her, he too would dismiss her. However, under Moses, if he too should send her away or even if he should die, then the former husband who had originally dismissed her was not permitted to reverse himself to take her back to become his wife "after she had had herself *defiled*" (Deut.24:2-4).

In the nature of the case, the second marriage obviously "defiled" (i.e., violated the chastity of) the first marriage. Likewise, we are told that any subsequent remarriage between the original parties was "an abhorrence before Yahweh" and was "a sin in the land which Yahweh your Elohim is giving to you as an allotment" (Deut.24:4).

Yet it simply does not follow from these facts, however, that if similar acts should occur today, God will or will not deem them a sin, even an abhorrence, any more than one's refraining from circumcision or sabbath observance.

This is because believers today are not under the corpus of law given to Israel of old. God has not imposed these laws upon us, notwithstanding the excellence we may per-

ceive in them or any suppositions of our own as to their perceived appropriateness for our obedience today.

One may not "pick and choose" which of Moses' precepts he will take to himself and which he will not, according to his own speculations and reasonings. Intrinsically, the *entire* law—even in its most minute particular—was holy, just and good; and it was ideal for the Israelite to follow it.

But it by no means follows from this that its precepts and statutes constitute timeless righteousness with respect to the personal behavior of all men, everywhere, regardless of era or divine administration. Therefore, it is both false and foolish to claim that if we would be holy and do what is just and good, we must do what Moses declares.

If God would have us know what is pleasing to Him with respect to the walk of the believer today, He must send us an apostle to make this known to us. And if it should be that any particulars encompassed within His will for us at present should include certain explicit counsel which, *incidentally,* was once also His counsel to Israel of old, then He will need to send us a spokesman or prophet to make this clear.

May the reader be given the eyes to see that God has done this very thing; and that He has done so through the ministry of the apostle Paul, as recorded in his prophetic scriptures (*cf* Rom.11:13; 16:26).

"LET NOT MAN BE SEPARATING"

The Lord, however, would not have his listeners merely comply with Moses' accommodation, *but would not have them divorce at all.* Consequently, He boldly declared, "What God, then, yokes together, *let not man be separating*" (Matt.19:6). Moses had never said that they *may* divorce, or that there was no evil in so doing. Furthermore, Christ did not *rescind* Moses' instruction as to what should be done in case of dismissal, but made it explicit

that divorce should not occur in the first place. Instead, having pointed out that whenever man and woman unite in matrimony there is no longer division but *unity* (Matt. 19:5), Christ simply forbade separation altogether.

In the Scriptures, there is no vital distinction between "separation" and "divorce." Both speak of essentially the same thing. Separation is practically a divorce, and may be legalized as such. With respect to each other, these terms are synonyms; with respect to "unite" and "marry," they are antonyms.

In Matthew 19:9 (where the Lord's words, "not for prostitution" are found), Christ is speaking in response to the Pharisees' trying questions, (1) "Is it *allowed* one to dismiss his wife for every cause?" (Matt.19:3) and—if according to the Lord man is simply not to separate what God yokes together—(2) "Why, then, does Moses direct to give a scroll of divorce and to dismiss her?" (Matt.19:7).

These words in Matthew 19:9, "not for prostitution" (*cp* Matt.5:32), have reference to the *only* case in which it was *not* an act of *adultery* to dismiss a woman taken in marriage (whether, in a case, with respect to an event prior to marriage, in which charge of iniquity was made and no proof of virginity was found, or in a case of infidelity by the married; *cf* Deut.22:20; *cp* Deut.22:13-20; 1 Cor.6:18; 10:5-8).

One cause for which Moses *permitted* dismissal of wives was the unfavorable appraisal of the wife by the husband due to discovery of some aspect of her "nakedness" (Deut. 24:1) upon consummation of the marriage. Evidently, this discovery concerned bodily imperfection, or perhaps simply unattractiveness.

Certainly the woman, however, once she became *divorced,* was no longer still *married.* To deny this fact would be to accept a contradiction in terms. Moses did not say that those who divorced did *not* commit adultery. Similarly, Christ did not say that those who divorce are still

married. Indeed it becomes evident from the fact that if when a divorced woman's second husband should die and the former husband should wish to reverse himself to take her back "*to become* his wife" (Deut.24:4), that she could hardly *become* his wife once again if she were *still* his wife already; or to say the same thing, if they were still married. This example alone shows that those who become divorced are no longer married. "Divorced" is a synonym for "separated," which is a synonym for "unmarried."

To review, let us recall a case in which the wife had *not* committed "prostitution," and yet, even so, the husband had dismissed her and married another. Under these circumstances, the husband was, first, committing adultery "against her" (Mark 10:11), second, making her commit adultery (Matt.5:32), and third, creating a situation which would entail the act of adultery by the one marrying her (Luke 16:18). The husband, by having effected the separation, involved not only himself but also his wife and potentially any future husband of hers in maritally-related injury.

It is not that the original husband and wife were still married, for since they had divorced, they surely were not. Nonetheless, should the former wife be marrying a second husband, and should a second husband be marrying the original wife, both actions cause her to be defiled making it illegal for her to remarry her original husband under any circumstances (Deut.24:4). These sins all had a most injurious effect upon the *original* marriage; thus they constituted maritally-related injury, or, to say the same thing, adultery.

In a case in which the wife *had* committed prostitution, since this act entailed her "leaving" her husband (even if only for a short time and solely for this unclean purpose) and *joining* herself to another man, she, in so doing, disunited herself from her husband and united (or "married") herself to the second man. Since, in such a case, she thus

had already defiled herself and entered into an unholy second union, strictly speaking, she was no longer *married* to her husband but to a *paramour.* Consequently, if under such conditions, her husband should "put her away" (*cf* Matt.1:18,19 AV; John 8:41), he would not be committing *adultery* (i.e., *maritally*-related injustice or injury). Since the "marriage," actually, would no longer exist, the dismissal of the defiled woman would not entail *adultery.*

"THE TWO SHALL BE *ONE* FLESH"

Thus we perceive the awful consequences, wherever "prostitution" is engaged in. The formal, civil marriage may remain, but the actual "marriage" not only has been violated, but has been nullified as well. This is so, even if, upon forgiveness, the original "married couple" should "come together" again. Civil law and formality is beside the point. Not man's formalities, but that which is so in the nature of things—and therefore, in the sight of God—is the stark reality.

The accounts in which the so-called "exception clause" is not *recorded* (Mark 10:11,12; Luke 16:18), neither deny nor preclude the words, "outside of a case of prostitution," which is *recorded* in Matthew 5:32, or, the similar phrase, "not for prostitution," which appears in Matthew 19:9. There is nothing that requires that these accounts, those of Mark and Luke, be appraised in a "without-exception" sense. Consequently, there is actually no contradiction between the various accounts.

Mark's and Luke's accounts should be understood in reference to the *ordinary circumstances* under which men dismissed their wives. Most commonly, wives were dismissed when, after the passage of time, their hardhearted husbands, having come to *dislike* them (*cf* Deut.24:3), simply no longer desired their presence. Matthew's account merely adds the apposite word of clarification, "not for

prostitution," in order to make reference to those less frequent circumstances under which a wife was dismissed; namely, in case of the woman's own infidelity.

These respective inspired accounts all record substantially the same events, in which, as a matter of history, the Lord spoke the precise words which those present actually heard. Whether or not any certain account has actually preserved the entirety of His exact words, is beside the point. Each account, correctly understood, is *true.* In the nature of the case, then, if Matthew's record of these events is to be received as the work of divine inspiration, Mark's and Luke's accounts must be understood in a way that allows essential accord between all three of these slightly varied *accounts.*

Much of the confusion surrounding these records is due to the common supposition that the words "for prostitution" (Matt.19:9; rendered, "for fornication" in the Authorized Version) refer to a special circumstance under which *divorce* is no longer merely tolerated but is now *sanctioned* and *justified* (i.e., to a circumstance under which an "innocent party" may, with divine approval, obtain a divorce from a "guilty party"). This is simply factually incorrect. Christ's words here—that is, the *primary* statement comprised in Matthew 19:9—refer to a circumstance under which *adultery will* occur, should dismissal be made. The only exception is in the case of "prostitution." Since it is true that, if a man dismisses his wife *not* for prostitution, he commits adultery, it seems clear that, if a man, instead, dismisses his wife *for* prostitution, he does *not* commit *adultery.* But it hardly follows from this, that, where prostitution has occurred, divorce is thereby *sanctioned.* Similarly, the fact that it was right for *God* to "divorce" the ten-tribed kingdom (Jer.3:8), constitutes neither warranted precedent nor divine sanction for men to dismiss their wives.

J.R.C.

AMONG THE PHILISTINES

29 + The **Philistines** ˡ**convened** ˋ**all their** armed **forces** at[d] **Aphek,** +**while Israel** was **encamping** [i]**by** the **spring** [w] **in Jezreel.** 2 +**As** the **chieftains of** the **Philistines** were [p]**advancing** ›**with** their **hundreds and** › **thousands,** + **David and his men** were [p]**advancing in** the [af]**rear with Achish.** 3 + The **chiefs of** the **Philistines** [lsa]**asked, What** about ˙**these** ˙**Hebrews?** + **Achish** [lsa]**replied to** the **chiefs of** the **Philistines,** Is **this not David,** the **servant of king Saul of Israel, who has** [b]**been** ˋwith **me this** year's **days or this** [7]**second year~?** + **I have not found anything** [i]**against him from** the **day he fell**⁻ away [7]**to me**[0] **until** ˙**this** ˙**day.**

4 +**But** the **chiefs of** the **Philistines were** ˡ**wrathful** [on]**against him; and** the **chiefs of** the **Philistines** ˡ**said to him,** [c]**Make** ˋ**the man return!** + **Let him** ˡ**turn back to his** [ri]**place where you posted him.** + **He should not** march **down with us** [i]**to** the **battle** +**that he may not become** › an **adversary to us in** our [7]**camp~.** +**For** [i]**with what** could **this** man ˡ**approve** him**self to his lord,** if **not** [i]**with** the **heads of** ˙**these,** ˙our **men?** 5 Is **this not David** ›**about whom they** ˡ**responded** [i]**with** dancing in **choruses,** › **saying**⁻**,**

Saul has smitten [i] **his thousands,**
+Yet David [i] **his myriads!**

6 +**So Achish** ˡ**called** › **David and** ˡ**said to him,** As **Yahweh lives,** [t] **you** have been **upright, and your** marching **forth**⁻ **and your coming**⁻ ˋwith **me in**to the army **camp** has been **good in my eyes, for I have not found badness in you from** the **day you came**⁻ **to me until** ˙**this** ˙**day.** +**Yet in** the **eyes of the chieftains you** are **not good.** 7 +**So now return and go in peace** +**that you may not do** anything **bad in** the **eyes**

of the **chieftains of** the **Philistines.** 8 + **David** [lsq]**replied to Achish,** [t]**But what have I done?** + **What have you found** [i]**against your servant from** the **day** on **which I came** to **be before you until** ˙**this** ˙**day, that I should not come** +**to** ⁻**fight** [i]**against** the **enemies**[l] **of my lord the king?**

9 +**Then Achish** [l]**answered and** [l]**said to David, I know that you** are **good in my eyes, like** a **messenger of Elohim.** [y]**Only** the **chiefs of** the **Philistines, they have said, He shall not** go **up with us in**to the **battle.** 10 +**So now,** [c]**rise early in** the **morning,** [7]**you**[0] **and your lord's servants who came** `with **you,** [7]**and you will go to the** [ri]**place where I posted** `**you.** + **You must not** [lpl]**keep** any **decadent word in your heart, for** ›**in my view you** are **good.**[0] +**So you will** [c]**rise early in** the **morning;** +**when** there **is** ⁻**light for you,** +**then go!** 11 +**So David** [c]**rose** [l]**early, he and his men, to go in** the **morning** ›**and return**⁻ **to** the **land of** the **Philistines,** +**while** the **Philistines** went **up** [7]**to fight Israel~.**

DAVID'S FALSE POSITION

1 Samuel 29 recalls the events mentioned in 28:1-4, giving more specific details regarding David's experiences at this time. Chapters 27 through 31, and the first two chapters of 2 Samuel should be read together to get a view of the events that closed out the rule of the house of Saul, and brought in the accession of David to the throne.

God had told David to stay in the land of Judah (1 Sam. 22:5), but in fear of Saul he went among the Philistines. Now this disobedience was about to bear its fruit. Accepting favors places one under obligation. David placed himself under obligation to Achish by accepting the city of Ziklag (1 Sam.27:5-7). Circumstances were about to force him into fighting against his own countrymen as an ally to Achish. We think, like the lords of the Philistines, that David's loyalty in battle would have been with Israel. His

whole time of allegiance to Achish was feigned (1 Sam. 27:8-12). He was fighting Israel's enemies, while pretending before Achish to be fighting Israel and her allies.

"Withdraw the false way from me, and favor me with Your own law" (Psa.119:29). "Behold, You delight in truth even in the hidden parts" (Psa.51:6). A number of times David resorted to lying in order to deliver himself from awkward situations. He asked Jonathan to fabricate a story for Saul when he was absent from the new moon feast (20:5-6). He lied to Ahimelech the priest when he was fleeing from Saul (21:1-2). And David lied to Achish regarding his military campaigns (27:8-12). Later, when David reflected on his life and composed many of the psalms, he realized that there must always be a better way than resorting to falsehood. The same principle applies to us. "Wherefore, putting off the false, let each be speaking the truth with his associate, for we are members of one another" (Eph.5:25).

For the third time the song of the women celebrating David's victory over Goliath is rehearsed. "Saul has smitten his thousands, yet David his myriads!" (18:7-8; 21:10-15; 29:5). Flattery seldom reaps any benefit. The first instance of the singing of the song incited Saul's jealousy against David, and initiated his persecution of David. The second mention was when David was hiding from Saul at Ziklag, and had to feign madness before Achish in order to escape with his life. The third instance, here in the 29th chapter, was the focal point of the Philistine lords for sending David back from the battle.

It is primarily David's shortcomings and unfaithfulness that come before us in this chapter. David left Israel because Saul's persecutions had exhausted his patience. But David's failing serves as a backdrop for the glorious faithfulness of God. God's faithfulness and deliverance of His chosen is dependent upon Him, not on their faithfulness.

J. Philip Scranton

GOD AT WORK IN GENESIS TWO

THE ACTIVITIES OF GOD recorded in Genesis 1:1-2:3 are fundamental and vast in scope and significance. Elohim *creates* and *speaks* and *sees*; He *makes* and *separates* and *calls*; He *gives* and *blesses.* These basic actions inform us that God is the Primary Cause of all that occurs, that what God says goes and that the eventual result is very good. As a whole, Genesis chapter one reveals God's power and divinity (*cf* Rom.1:20), but it does not reveal His depths of wisdom and love. That will come through a long process which continues during the present eons leading up to the revelation of God in and through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ which involves finally the reconciliation of all through the blood of Christ's cross.

YAHWEH ELOHIM ACTS

The early glimmers of this revelation of the depths of God begin immediately with His preparation for humanity on the earth, His forming and placing and instructing of the human and the building of the woman recorded in Genesis 2, starting with verse 4. At this point the Name *Yahweh* is added to the title *Elohim,* thus presenting the powerful and majestic Creator on a more personal level, within the events of human history. He is not only the supreme Subjector, towering above His creation, but He also is here with us in time, past, present and future.

Including one negative ("not make it rain") there are twenty-two action words in Genesis 2:4-25 with Yahweh Elohim as the subject. Altogether they present God as the

One Who is operating all the affairs of our world in accord with a plan, that is, "in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11). "Out of Him and *through* Him and for Him is all" (Rom.11:36). The record as given in the CONCORDANT VERSION is as follows:

Yahweh Elohim *made* earth and heavens.
Yahweh Elohim *had not made it rain* on the earth.
Yahweh Elohim *formed* the human out of soil from the ground.
He *blew* into his nostrils the breath of life.
Yahweh Elohim *planted* a garden in Eden.
There He *put* the human whom He *had formed*.
Yahweh Elohim *made sprout* from the ground every tree desirable to the sight and good for food.
Yahweh Elohim *took* the human and *settled* him in the garden.
Yahweh Elohim *instructed* the human, *saying* . . . .
Yahweh Elohim *said,* It is not good for the human to be alone.
I *shall make* for him a helper as his complement.
Yahweh Elohim *had formed* from the ground every animal of the field.
He *brought* each one to the human to see what he would call it.
Yahweh Elohim *caused* a stupor *to fall* on the human.
He *took* one of his reproductive organs and *closed up* the flesh over its place.
Yahweh Elohim *built* the reproductive organ that He *had taken* from the human into a woman.
He *brought* her to the human.

ADDED DETAILS

The acts of God in Genesis 2 are more specialized within a narrower scene than in the opening chapter, but what

they say about God is no less significant. Now Yahweh Elohim is seen *making* things and *saying* words in relation to humanity within a limited locality. First of all, in repeating the opening revelation of the Scriptures, Genesis 2:4 mentions the creation of earth first, and then verse 5 immediately narrows our view in focusing on shrub and herbage and field. The detail that plants need water is noted as God's responsibility. He had not yet caused it to rain, but the irrigation from mists is obviously due to His arrangements. This speaks of God's creative ability, as in chapter 1, but more than that it shows God's involvement in preparing the earth for the human.

Furthermore, in drawing attention to vegetation and irrigation as provisions of God, the passage prepares the reader for important revelations of God ahead concerning a fruitful tree in a well watered garden.

MAKING A LIVING SOUL

Then Yahweh Elohim *forms* the human out of soil and *blows* into his nostrils the breath of life so that the human becomes a living *soul* (2:7). A living soul is one who responds to the environment, who has emotions and sees and hears and feels.

Yahweh deliberately makes plants and supplies water for them; He is the Cause of these provisions. He also personally forms the human body, and He Himself blows into it the breath of life with the result that the human becomes a living soul. Again God is responsible for this.

PLANTING A GARDEN

Next we learn that Yahweh Elohim *plants* a garden and *sprouts* trees which are "desirable to the sight and good for food" (2:8). And particular reference is made to two specific trees that are included in His work of planting and sprouting (2:9).

God is responsible for making the human in such a way that he has desires, and God is responsible for making vegetation that is desirable to the human's sight as well as good for the human's food.

As though to emphasize this provision of an environment that would both meet his needs and appeal to the human, Genesis 2:10-14 tells of rivers and gold and precious stones in the area of Eden. Although not directly stated, these also must be associated with God's deliberate arrangements.

PLACING THE HUMAN

"Then Yahweh Elohim *took* the human and *settled* him in the garden of Eden to serve it and to keep it" (Gen.2:15). Here God takes the human He has formed and made to be a living soul, and He puts him in the garden He has planted with trees that are attractive to the soul. By *settling* the human in the garden, He makes him comfortable in a place that exactly fits his needs and wants. These are not simply miscellaneous actions of God which serve as representative indicators of His abilities. They are important and significant actions, each adding another point in the list of God's responsible involvement for the events of Genesis chapter 3.

The garden, the trees, the human, the soulish constitution of the human and the desirability of the fruit, all of these are products of the purposeful actions of God. They all have their necessary place in the drama about to unfold.

INSTRUCTING THE HUMAN

At this point the Scriptures introduce a different type of divine activity, one which is repeated often afterward. Yahweh Elohim *instructs* the human (Gen.2:16). The verb "instruct" is like the verb "say" which was first used in Genesis 1:3, but there is an important difference in what the

two actions tell us about God. When Elohim *said,* "Let light come to be!" light came to be. The word and its fulfillment involved God alone. But when God *instructed,* "But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it," it did not come to be that the human did not eat. God instructed, but His instructions were not followed.

God's act of instructing involved the human.

Many people would stop there; they seem satisfied with the inference that the human kept God's act of instruction from being a successful operation.

But the Scriptures will not permit us to stop there. They will not permit us to think of God as being thwarted by the human, or even being surprised at his response. In fact the Word makes it clear that God Himself made it highly unlikely, in truth He made it impossible, that the human could keep His instructions. God Himself made the human as he was. God Himself made the tree as it was. God Himself settled the human in the garden where He had planted and sprouted the tree. And God Himself drew the attention of the human He had formed to the forbidden tree He had planted.

If God is as He is revealed to be in Genesis 1, then we must conclude that God did not intend that the human would keep His instruction. And if God is as He is revealed to be throughout all of Scripture, then we must conclude that God did not intend the disobedience and the judgment of that disobedience to be the final outcome of His act of instruction. The instructing of Genesis 2:17, as well as its similar and extensive development in the law given at Sinai, is a deliberate act of God as a step in a whole process of acts and experiences leading forward to the revelation of God's wisdom and power and love through that most holy act of God in all the eons, the giving of His own Son in death for sinners.

THE OTHER TREE

Yahweh Elohim, of course, had planted another distinctive tree which He had made sprout. This was the tree of life. The eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil led to the blocking off of access to the tree of life. But God had planted it in accord with His own counsel and placed it in the midst of the garden, and in this there is great promise.

The fruit of this tree was beneficial, and so there was no need to draw special attention to it by way of instructions. From Genesis 3:23 we infer that this tree was for the sustaining of the life of living souls. It would not be a blessing to corrupting humanity today, but it appears again in the new earth as described in Revelation 22:2. This means that God will provide ongoing life for humanity in the future, but a humanity that is acquainted with good and evil. This will be a humanity that is able to appreciate the goodness of God because of its experience of evil.

A THIRD TREE

But how can the evil of sin, offense and dying be removed so that the ongoing life can truly be beneficial? This would occur in connection with a *third* "tree," when, in Peter's words, Christ would carry up our sins in His body "on to the pole [wood]" (1 Peter 2:24). For as Paul puts it, "Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes, for it is written, Accursed is everyone hanging on a pole . . ." (Gal.3:13,14).

All of this was in God's purpose, and the indication given in Genesis 2 of His responsibility for the events of Genesis 3 extends to the preparation He was making for the cross in His work of the planting and sprouting of trees. We know this after the fact, as believers who have accepted that "all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through

Christ, . . . for the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:18,21). And yet even in Genesis 2 God's responsibility for making the human a living soul and making trees associated with sustained life and with knowledge of good and evil gives assurance that He has all under control and will deal successfully with the intervening evils.

MAKING A COMPLEMENT

Genesis 2 closes with a further act of God that can only serve to establish more decisively the point we have been making. "Yahweh Elohim *said:* It is not good for the human to be alone by himself. I shall *make* for him a helper as his complement" (Gen.2:18). With the making of the woman, God was simply adding to the arrangements He had planned. Altogether these preparations made it impossible for the human to keep God's instructions.

God first spoke of the real need of the human for a complement, and then He *caused a stupor* to fall on the human and *took* an organ out of the human and *built* it into the woman (2:21,22). All of this was excellent in itself, but it definitely contributed to the events of chapter 3. It all was in accord with God's intention as steps toward His ultimate goal of good.

Within the passage concerning the making of Eve we learn that Yahweh Elohim *brings* the animals He *had formed* to the human for naming. But unlike the instruction not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Yahweh Elohim had not set any roadblocks to this human assignment. And it is carried out. Genesis 2:19-20 foreshadows the happy conditions and good effects of God's words on human actions when God saves and justifies and reconciles His chosen ones, and ultimately all of humanity, and God becomes All in all.

KEEPING GOD IN VIEW

Genesis 2 tells us with clarity and power that we need to keep God in view through all the records of human failure and the serious consequences of sin which follow in the rest of God's Word. Before and above and beyond human activity is God's activity. This does not mean that human disobedience does not lead to suffering and loss. It surely does, and we cannot and should not cover it over. But it does mean that God's activity accords fully with God, authoritative and wise, purposeful and determinative, and good.

God had not yet spoken the evangel concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. We do not learn from Genesis 2 of that great work of God to come, when He would *send* His own Son for the condemnation of sin (Rom.8:3). God was about to subject creation to vanity and the slavery of corruption, but He was doing so "in expectation" that it will ultimately be freed from this corruption and delivered into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom.8:20,21). Yet even as early as Genesis 3 there are intimations of this future deliverance (*cf* Gen.3:15,16). And there is assurance in the actions of God recorded in Genesis 2, for they are actions *of God Himself,* not actions of some malignant force beyond Yahweh Elohim, taking Him by surprise and placing Him in a bind. They are orderly and intentional and accord with Deity.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF GOD

God's direct involvement in laying the groundwork for the disobedience and resultant curses of Genesis 3 may startle us at first. But it is plainly set forth. And in recognition of the fact that sin does exist, there is no better prospect (in fact no other prospect at all) for its removal than that all is in the hands of God. God is not experimenting in Genesis 2. He is not acting in ignorance or arbitrarily.

There is no dualism, as though the God of Genesis 2 is a different God from the God of Genesis 1.

The Book of Beginnings, Genesis, is our primer. The first lesson concerns God. All is out of Him. He is successful in what He seeks to do. And it is for good. The second lesson concerns God also. But it is far more puzzling, and consequently far more difficult for us to accept because we do not yet see the good result. Nevertheless, even in chapter 2, God does not cease to operate, and He is ultimately responsible for all that occurs. This truth of divine responsibility is of the greatest value to us as we live in this present wicked eon and as we hear and believe the evangel concerning God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Genesis 2 is like Genesis 1 in that God alone is acting. But in this second chapter God's actions do not lead directly to an end that is very good; rather His actions prepare the way for the entrance of sin and death and the long centuries of toil and sorrow, selfishness and greed, anger and hate that have characterized human history. To put it bluntly, God is making certain that all will be locked up together in stubbornness (Rom.11:32).

From Genesis 3 forward we will meet up with human corruption and failure along with divine instruction and judgment. But there is also the good word of God which speaks of His faithfulness to the revelations of Himself given in Genesis 1. There will be the Seed of the woman. There will be the Sin Offering. Because it is the God Who is revealed in Genesis 1 Who is responsible for the events of Genesis 2 which lead inevitably to the events of Genesis 3, we are assured that ultimately the highest of good will be achieved, that good which could not have otherwise been gained.

The God Who prepared the way for human failure has provided the way of deliverance through the death of His Son.

D.H.H.

145 Editorial
147 The First Offense
157 God Sees
162 Marriage and the Believer (Part 2)
173 Salvation is a Journey
179 God, the Saviour
187 Not by Vigor

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2001
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-TWO

EDITORIAL

WHEN David fought Goliath or other idolatrous enemies of the true God such as the Amalekites (see p.187), Yahweh gave him visible victory. God made Himself evident throughout Israel's history in His protection and blessings and most powerfully in the displays of His indignation against the persistent human tendency to turn from Him to idols.

In our day, in that God is conciliated to the world, not reckoning their offenses against them (see p.173), God does not bring Himself before people's consciousness in dramatic ways as He did in ancient times. We do not have these visible evidences of God's operations, but it is our privilege to believe that God is truly operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, and that He will bring all into the righteousness and subjection and reconciliation He has gained through His Son.

Indeed the secret of lawlessness continues to operate (2 Thess.2:7), and human beings turn to modern ways of idolatry. More and more, mankind tends to place its greatest hope in and give its highest praise to itself, or rather to those among us who best demonstrate ability and intelligence for providing what is wanted. And they change the glory of God into that of the creature (Rom.1:23).

It is especially sobering (and would seem despairing if we did not know these things must be and will be brief) to find some who claim to believe in the God of the Bible teaching that he is like us in not knowing the future and is doing "the best he can" under circumstances he cannot fully control (see p.157). This is a further enlargement of what had begun in Paul's day with distortions of the evan-

gel of Christ (Gal.1:7). There is a distrust of divine grace and a turning to human endeavor for salvation, which leads forward as in 1 Samuel 30:22 to expectations of special rewards at the expense of others who did not contribute. That God is our Saviour is both necessary and wise.

Perhaps not many who think they are defending God would deny God's Deity so boldly as the theologians mentioned above, but how few of those who profess faith glory in relying on God as the living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind (see p.179)! As well, there seems to be less and less appreciation of the significance of the evangel of God's grace in practical problems of our present lives (see p.162).

Brother Knoch's warning on page 256 bears repeating here: If an idea set forth by a teacher "does not give God His proper place as Supreme in wisdom, power and love, or is contrasted to the gracious conduct which accords with His present operations, take care."

We are aware of this growing spirit of lawlessness and offensiveness. But we, who, in His grace, are loving God, are also aware that God is working all together for good (Rom.8:28). We see that we are few and weak, but we are believing with Paul, that our Lord's grace is sufficient, for His power is being perfected in infirmity (2 Cor.12:10). The immediate future is uncertain except that it will not all be just what we want. Yet we are not worrying, letting our requests be made known to God, Who provides His peace (Phil.4:4-7).

To testify this way is not to claim that we are always right in disputes about the details of God's Word. But it is to affirm again that God is faithful and true, strong and wise, righteous and loving, and that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all. To Him be the glory!

May He increase our faith and that of each one reading these words.

D.H.H.

Studies in Genesis

THE FIRST OFFENSE

THE FIRST HUMAN OFFENSE followed right after the first display of Divine affection. Adam's first recorded act after Yahweh, the Subjector, had kindly provided a complement for him, so that he was no longer lonely, was to wound his Benefactor's heart by questioning His fondness and disbelieving His word, and acting contrary to His wise warning. It was a mistake, a *sin,* to eat the death-dealing fruit. It was a *transgression* to disobey His word. But, far deeper and more malignant than these, it was a frigid, frightful *offense* to hurt His *feelings,* when He had just manifested His *affection* in a most marvelous manner. Except it be to reveal His own love to His creatures through it, the main motive in building the woman was to fill the void in the heart of Adam with happiness. It should have called forth the most thankful obedience and heartfelt trust.

The fact that Adam's sin and transgression was an *offense* against God's feelings, due to the surrounding circumstances, is clearly conveyed by the record, yet it is but dimly discerned by the saints, even though the Authorized Version always uses this term when referring to it in the fifth of Romans. This rendering is excellent, yet it would have been even better if the AV had used the same English term, offense, elsewhere when the same Greek word occurs in the original. This is especially true in 2 Corinthians 5:19 where God is dealing with the descendants of Adam at the present time. Instead of not imputing their *trespasses,* to make them immune from *judgment,* He is not reckoning their *offenses,* which frees them from His *displeasure* in the present period of superabundant grace. It is an affair of the heart, rather than of the hand or head.

Because, at the present time, God is more concerned with the display of His *grace* than His justice, with *love* than judgment, it is important that the other occurrences in Paul's epistles be correctly rendered. Galatians 6:1 should read, "if a man should be precipitated . . . in some *offense,*" rather than overtaken in a fault. In Ephesians 1:7, "the forgiveness of *sins,*" and 2:5 "dead in *sins*" should be *offenses,* as *forgiveness* deals with *feelings,* and these offenses separate men from God in figurative death. In Colossians 2:13 we have both of these thoughts in one sentence ("dead to the offenses . . . dealing graciously with all our offenses"), but the AV renders it "dead in your *sins* . . . having forgiven you all *trespasses.*" God is *love,* and the clearer this appears on the pages of His revelation, the better it will be for us. This should govern the underlying motive of all our dealings with Him and with one another.

It is exceedingly helpful to note that the beneficent attitude Yahweh Elohim had toward Adam, in whom the whole race was hidden, was very much the same as at the end, when humanity is once more on friendly terms with Him. But here it is followed by the first offense, and then by final reconciliation. The *feelings* play the principal part in the tragedy of the eons, especially at these prominent points in human history. This throws much light on the present, which began very much the same, with a new creation in which the old is passed by, and all is new in the spiritual sphere, as it was then in the material. Now again we learn to know evil, and are dying. Yet the way to life is not barred.

Satan, also, is present, not in a serpent, but in humanity itself. He needs no intermediary, and can speak all languages to and through the descendants of Adam. His enmity is greater than ever, and his stratagems much more refined. Most of humanity, like Eve, hearken to his voice and are used as his mouthpiece. Even many who are saved

and justified through the sacrifice of Christ hearken to his blandishments and are wounded by his fiery arrows unless they wear, not fig leaves or even furs, but a panoply of truth, righteousness and peace, and hold up the large shield of faith, with which to quench his fiery darts, for now he has gone on the offensive. There is a new creation, and few of the saints have heard of it and they try to live in the old!

ALL VERY GOOD

A question which stumbles many students of the Scriptures is this: If all was "very good," how could there be a bad serpent? We read that the light is good (Gen.1:4), the land and sea (10), the verdure (12), the luminaries (18), the monsters and the souls in the water and air (21), the earth life, the beasts and moving animals of the ground (25), and finally, that all that He made is *very* good (31). This must include the serpent. But things can change. We are not told that the serpent *was* more subtle, as commonly rendered, but it *became* so. Its craftiness was due to an evil spirit by which it was obsessed *after* its creation. Such seemingly slight mistranslations may be a serious stumbling block to sincere faith.

FIELD LIFE

It is a significant fact that the *animal of the field* is omitted in the list of those subjected to Adam (Gen.1:26), although it is specifically mentioned twice when the animals are brought before Adam when a complement was sought for him (Gen.2:19,20). This suggests that he needed the opposition of the Adversary to round him out as well as the companionship of the woman. Indeed, how could the final reconciliation come about apart from the previous enmity here introduced? This is one of those exquisite touches which reveal to the spiritual mind the divine authorship of the Scriptures. There can be little doubt that

all the animals were put under Adam's dominion, or that he understood this to be the case. But its usurpation by one species of field life was not only foreknown, but foreordained, for it was a part of God's purpose as much as the planting of the tree of the knowledge of evil in the garden. Its omission opens the door to the subjection of mankind to the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the Adversary and Satan (Rev.20:2).

THE SERPENT

Any departure from divine order is certain to lead to disaster. This is especially true of *subjection.* Man was made to *sway* over all life moving on the land (Gen.1:28). In this he is made in the Subjector's image and likeness. Man should not tyrannize over the lower creatures simply to display his own superiority and supremacy, but he should illustrate God's paramount position as the Subjector of all. How great is the contrast between the failure of the first human to subject one of the lowest of the animals, a mere serpent, in the beginning, and the success of Christ at the consummation, when He subjects all to the Subjector, and, in conformity therewith, is Himself subjected! Here we have humanity's first offense, the sin primeval: *subjection to the serpent* instead of swaying over it, and obeying God's word.

The question has often been raised, "How could Eve converse with an animal?" If we remember that conditions on earth before sin came in were ideal, and that we have only faint vestiges of our former state today, such a query would never arise. How could Adam talk with Yahweh Elohim, his Subjector, never having learned? Because humanity was created with *intuition,* only remnants of which remain. In its perfection Adam was the greatest zoologist of all time, able to give an appropriate name to all the animals. Even today the animals themselves are able to communicate with

one another without any scholastic training. Yes, they are able to understand much without it. Just now a large dog was about to sneak into our garden. All I needed to say was "Home!" in the proper tone of voice, and he obeyed. When living at Eden, California, I was resting in the open, under a bush, when a rattlesnake warned me it was about to strike, so I moved swiftly out of its way. There is still a vestige of the language of Eden. Even I knew that much of the rattler's language, but I was not bitten, like Eve. As the subjector of the animals, Adam had to be able to talk to them; and they to understand.

We should remember that Adam was created a full-grown man, not only physically, but mentally and spiritually as well. Had he been an infant, who would have taken care of him? Had he lacked knowledge, who would have taught him? Creation is an entirely different matter from generation. In matters mundane he was perfect and complete, fit to sway over the realm which was confided to his care. Language before Babel was a natural thing, not the confused jabber which is in the world today. It was like the speech of the animals is yet. Some of the most comforting sounds heard by the traveler in foreign lands, where the people speak a strange tongue, is the bark of a dog, the crowing of a rooster, or the cackle of a hen, for they still speak the language of Eden.

Many a domesticated animal has acted as if "possessed by the devil." And, indeed, many a mortal *has* been entered by Satan, as Judas was, and had power to do things quite beyond the power of a human, including the speaking of foreign languages. In Eden this was much simpler, for there was only one nature language, understood and used by all. Even inanimate things like a bottle mentioned its own name, buq-buq, whenever a liquid was poured out of it! In this case it was Satan, not a serpent, who was speaking, and that was nothing worth mentioning for so subtle a spirit.

Adam must have been able to communicate with the animals in order to subject them and sway over them. Even today those domestic animals which are still somewhat subject to man, as the horse and the donkey and the elephant and the camel and the dog, as well as others, must learn to obey his voice, or they are practically useless. So also the masters of these animals must understand them to some extent, by their cries or actions in order to keep them in subjection. But it is all only a vestige of the edenic state.

Had the Adversary appeared to Eve in the form of a messenger of light, who had *not* been put in subjection to Adam, she would have had some excuse for hearkening to him. By using an animal over which humanity was to sway, her offense was magnified. If it had been one of the higher animals, it would not have been quite so bad. In order to effect His purpose, El, the Subjector, made use of one of the lowest forms of field life, over which Eve had full authority and power. She could and should have judged it severely for its deviation and contradiction, as El did later. Yet she could not have dictated to Satan, had he appeared in the form he later took to tempt our Lord (Matt.4:1-11).

Before God put enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, it was, doubtless, quite as harmless as the rest of the animals. But, just as the human is the visible deputy of God to the animals, so the serpent is the symbol of Satan, the Adversary of humanity. This is quite enigmatic in the Hebrew Scriptures, but is clearly revealed in the Unveiling, where the ancient serpent, called Adversary and Satan, deceives the whole inhabited earth, not merely the mother of mankind (Rev.12:9), and is bound in the abyss a thousand years (Rev.20:2). Here in Genesis 3 is the first conflict between the representatives of the Subjector and the Adversary on the earth.

From this it is evident that sinister spirit powers were already rampant in the universe. Adam was not given the

rule over them as Christ and His body will be. That would not have suited God's purpose. Had Satan appeared as the dreadful dragon that he is, she might not have been deluded. The Subjector had not pronounced the celestial realms good, though He did call the atmospheric "heavens" good (Gen.1:8). Under the Subjector these sinister spirits are used to produce *eventual* good by means of *immediate* evil. That there was evil in the world even then is enforced by the function of the tree that God planted in the midst of Eden, which gave the *knowledge* of good *and evil.* Indeed, the evil was necessary, to impart the *knowledge* of good. Judging by their actions, Adam and Eve had failed in this very matter. If Eve had *known* of the good that she already possessed, she would never have been lured to commit the first offense.

GENESIS 3:1-3

3 [+]**Now the serpent became** more **crafty** [f]**than any** other **animal of the field** [w]**that Yahweh Elohim had** [d]**made.** [+] [7]**The serpent**[n] [l]**said to the woman:** [t] Did **Elohim say** [t]**indeed, You shall not eat from every tree of the garden?** [2] [+] **The woman** [lsa]**replied to the serpent: We may eat** [f]**of** the **fruit of** the **trees of the garden;** [3] [+]**yet** [f]**of** the **fruit of the tree** [w]**that** is **in** the **midst of the garden Elohim said, You shall not eat from it, and you shall not touch** [i] **it lest you should die.**

SATAN'S STRATAGEM

At first sight it seems that Satan, in the serpent, quoted the words of the Subjector quite closely. But a keener look will show that his deviations though few and apparently trivial, utterly departed from Yahweh Elohim's kindly and conciliatory *spirit.* Satan alters the positive instruction into a negative prohibition. Yahweh Elohim had said, "From every tree of the garden, you may eat, *yea eat*" (Gen.2:16).

This is degraded into the negative command: "Did Elohim say indeed, You shall not eat from every tree of the garden?" (Gen.3:1). Besides he leaves out the repetition of the word "eat" which lays emphasis on the divine provision and its freeness. This was designed by the Adversary to make them discontented and resentful.

EVERY—NOT . . . NOT

This is, perhaps the best example of what a change in the *emphasis* and the *order* of words can do. Yahweh Elohim began with *every.* Satan started with *not.* "From *every* tree you may eat, yea eat. But . . ." "You shall *not* eat from every tree." These express the same thought. The ordinary reader hardly notices the emphasis unless it is called to his attention. Satan makes much use of this device. Indeed, the most terrible doctrine of Christendom, which stamps God with a character infinitely worse than even Satan did in this first expression we have from him, depends on false emphasis. Many are the passages which agree with the final reconciliation of all (Col.1:20), but these are ignored, and the few places concerning God's temporal and local judgments are *over-stressed,* so that He is transformed from a Friend of unlimited love to a fiend of everlasting hate.

Two points in Eve's conduct should be brought home to us today. That is, she *altered* and *added* to the words of Yahweh, the Subjector. He had emphasized the generous provision of eating of every tree, with a single exception. She also neglected to quote the repetition of "eat.". This is often essential to the *spirit* of a statement, even if it does not alter the meaning. Here she began to offend, for she omitted to note how *heartily* they had been invited to partake of the fruits of the garden. On the other hand, she *added* "and you are not to touch it," to the prohibition, which makes it appear needlessly harsh and distrustful. Touching a poisonous tree will not kill. She made a pretense of believing and obeying, but was taking the first steps toward disaster, by misrepresenting the Subjector's *loving attitude.* She certainly knew nothing of the good which had been their portion, the Edenic bliss, to which all mankind has looked with mistaken longing ever since.

EVE SUBTRACTED FROM GOD'S WORD

Eve failed in two ways. First the sin of omission, and then of commission. Both are typical of her descendents today, so deserve careful consideration. She left out two significant words, *every* and the repeated *eat.* The original pair needed food. They probably could have managed to exist by eating the fruit of a few of the trees, possibly only one. Yet Yahweh Elohim did not restrict them to a bare subsistence, but provided for an "Edenic," which means a *luxurious* life. The pulp of fruits does not merely nourish. Seed-food is better for that. But tree fruit has the most delightful flavors of any.

The fruit provided should have given them pleasure and awakened thankfulness. The word *every* should not only have led Eve to repeat it in her reply to the serpent, but to indignantly repudiate the implication that God was withholding something good from them. Moreover, she should have emphasized the genial goodwill of Yahweh, in giving them the fullest freedom in selecting from the many luscious, life-lengthening trees, and warning them against the one, death-dealing specimen in the midst of these. In this she reveals the vital fact that the first sin was due to their lack of appreciation, and alienation from Yahweh, and ignorance of evil, even as the final consummation will be based on humanity's knowledge of evil and appreciation of God's love, and reconciliation. The end will be the counterpart of the beginning.

The first offense has many helpful lessons. The fact that it was an offense against the *feelings* of Yahweh Elohim,

should teach us to look at the *spirit* shown by those who speak of His revelation, as well as the sense. It may be that what they say seems quite right and convincing to us, but if it is presented in a way that does not give God His proper place as Supreme in wisdom, power, and love, or is contrasted to the gracious conduct which accords with His present operations, take care. Examples abound. The average scientist turns his back to the Deity. The theologian omits and adds to His Word. Even those who apparently seek to defend the truth, if they are harsh and contentious, are very likely to be in error.

Worse even than Eve's omissions is the one addition to God's words. By exaggerating His prohibition He is made to appear unduly harsh. First of all, God had not said that *touching* the tree would lead to dying, and it was probably untrue. But it is important in revealing her attitude, and the stratagem of the Adversary, for he uses it still. How many things in theology are merely exaggerations, due to alienation from God, even when apologizing for God! We should be on our guard against this subtle attempt to misrepresent His loving heart interest in His creatures, especially humanity, which is His image and likeness, through whom He desires to reveal Himself to the rest of His creatures.

In these days of divine conciliation and transcendent grace, it is especially helpful to note the character of Eve's omission, for it expresses the loving attitude of Yahweh Elohim toward humanity. Almost all "gospel preaching" today omits the conciliation. The very word and thought is almost unknown. Nearly all the emphasis is laid on the opposite, the certainty of vindictive judgment in an eternal hell, of which God has never spoken. This is due to the suggestions of the Adversary, who has nearly all of Eve's descendants listening to him, even those who, in spirit, live in a garden more gracious than Eden.

A. E. Knoch

GOD SEES

SEVEN TIMES in Genesis 1 we read that God *sees* the effects of His words in relation to creation (Gen.1:4,10, 12,18,21,25,31). These are all pronounced good, the last being "very good." Once in Genesis 2 we find God seeing the effects of His acts in relation to the human. This occurs in Genesis 2:19 where having Himself *formed* the animals and birds, God *brings* each of them to the human "to *see*[1] what he would call it." In Genesis 3 we read of the woman *seeing* the desirability of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (v.6), but nothing is said there about God seeing the critical events of deception and disobedience that are recorded; in fact, Yahweh Elohim speaks rhetorically to Adam and Eve as though He had *not* seen what had occurred (Gen.3:9-13). Here in these opening chapters of the Scriptures God's act of seeing is associated only with the good effects of His works.

God sees all things, including human wickedness (*cf* Gen.6:5) and righteousness (*cf* Gen.7:1), but the opening chapters of Genesis relate divine sight solely to the good achievement of divine purposes. In God's seeing that the effects of certain of His actions are good we are assured God will eventually see good results to all His actions.

1. I overlooked this act of God in my list of divine activities in Genesis 2 on page 137 of our May number, although I noted that this passage treats of "happy conditions and good effects" of God's actions (p.142). The verb "see" here is an infinitive form ("to see"), but this does not make it any less a specific reference to an act of God Himself.

Ultimately, God's actions in creating the human as he was and placing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as He did and settling the human in the garden and instructing him as He did will all contribute to the good outcome He has purposed. This accords with Isaiah 53:11 where we read concerning the suffering Christ, "From the toil of His soul He shall *see* light, and He shall be satisfied by His knowledge."

GOD'S SEEING IN GENESIS ONE

The lessons of Genesis 1 must not be forgotten when we come to the second chapter. What is revealed about God in the first chapter remains *true* throughout the rest of Scripture, and, of equal importance it remains *relevant.* All of God's activity of creating and separating and calling will ultimately be followed by His act of seeing and being satisfied with the great goodness of it all.

It was not a surprise to God when He saw that the light was good (Gen.1:4). He knew that light was good and intended that light would be a good thing for the earth. To see that this was so was for God a matter of experiencing the goodness He had purposed and brought upon the earth by the power of His word. What God had envisioned was now actually activated; its goodness was now enjoyed in experience and not simply in anticipation.

The lesson about God is that His works result in a real good, a good that will surely be fully appreciated and sensed with pleasure and satisfaction. This is the significance of the verb "see" in the two opening chapters of Genesis.

GENESIS 2:19

But the wording of Genesis 2:19 has led some to conclude that in this particular incident God's seeing was a matter of learning something previously unknown. This passage is taken to suggest that God did not know, even in

mind, what Adam would name the animals; He brought them to the human to find out what the human would call them. From this, it is further reasoned, God did not know ahead of time the outcome of His other actions in Genesis 2. God made humanity and the tree and the serpent, and He made them as they were, but, it is insisted, God did not know ahead of time what would happen when He put these elements together and turned His back.

God's purpose in forming and then bringing the animals to the human was indeed *to see.* But this seeing was connected with God's prior actions just as surely as God's seeing the goodness of the light was connected with God's declaration of Genesis 1:3 and His seeing of the great goodness of the finished creation was connected with all His acts noted in the first chapter. God's forming of the animals and bringing them to the human are important and very influential elements in man's naming of the animals. In addition, God had revealed that humanity (also created and formed by God) was to sway over the animals (Gen. 1:28). All that God did shaped the human act of naming the animals, including the particular names given.

When God saw Adam give each animal its distinctive name and heard that particular name God was not learning something that had been outside of His counseled will (*cf* Eph.1:11). There is no reason to doubt that the human acted willingly, but his will was not independent of God; it was part of what God had made in forming the human. The human did not name each creature arbitrarily, apart from causation. He was influenced, even directed, by what the animal was as formed by God and by his entire environment both inner and outer as prepared by God. What God saw was what God had intended for the human. And, knowing what we have learned about God in Genesis 1, we can be sure that each name the human gave was *the* good and right name for each creature. Indeed, we would infer

that the particular name given to each animal drew forth the right response of subjection to the human which was ideal and beneficial for all.

DIVINE PURPOSE

Why do the Scriptures draw attention to this particular incident? Why is it important to relate God's actions of forming birds and animals and bringing them before humanity with the human work of naming these lower creatures? The record in Genesis 2:19 is certainly not to indicate some sort of human independence. But it does focus attention on the intended place of humanity on the earth, a principal function of mankind and one of real value in God's plan. God prepared and directed the way for the human to name the animals (not capriciously, but intelligently and appropriately) as an essential and effective beginning of human sway over the animals.

Each name given established a relationship between the human as the subjector and the animal willingly responding, as is dimly seen even today between domestic animals and their owners. This initial step was successful for the time being. God "saw" with satisfaction what names were given. He enjoyed the realization of this initial step of human subjecting that He had planned.

As previously indicated, this incident stands as a witness to the success of God's operations. The pattern that we find in Genesis 1, of God acting, His actions being effective and the effects being seen with satisfaction is repeated in Genesis 2 on this one occasion. Genesis 2:19 testifies to us that God will achieve the entirety of His purpose. Eventually all of His creatures will willingly take the part that God has prepared for them.

For sinful humanity, this place in the image and likeness of God as subjectors (Gen.1:27,28) is assured because of the death of Christ on their behalf. There will come a

time when God will see the appropriate names once again being given to the animals by humanity, and He will see their sway over the lower creatures being righteous and effective and good. This will be for God's glory, for it is all out of Him and through Him.

(As for us who are called today in God's transcendent grace, the words of Ephesians 2:7-10, accord with the lesson of Genesis 2:19. We may be sure that in the oncoming eons we will be doing the good works which God Himself makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them. God will see it so.)

HUMANITY'S PRIVILEGED POSITION

Far from trying to denigrate the human's work in naming the animals by pointing out God's place of supremacy in this operation, I am saying that Genesis 2:19 underscores the importance of humanity. But this importance is there exactly because God remains the God of Genesis 1. God is the First Cause. He is operating all together for good (Rom.8:28). The human works, but he does not work independently. He does not work apart from causes, and those causes are centered in God.

It was humanity's privilege to hold this important function of naming the lower animals. It accorded with the place God had assigned humanity on the earth. We might reason that the privilege is restricted in measure as it is influenced by God. But this would only show that we do not yet know the real horror that independence from God would be. The animals are not to be independent of humanity, and none of God's creatures are outside of His purposeful and operative and effective doings.

God acts in order to "see" the good results, not in the sense of learning, but in the sense of experiencing. We also shall see these glorious effects of God's operations. How great and wise He is! D.H.H.

MARRIAGE AND THE BELIEVER
(Part 2)

THERE are so many misconceptions about what the Scriptures in general, and the law of Moses in particular say about marriage, divorce and remarriage that it seems best, in examining this issue, to review the instructions and teachings given to Israel through the law, and later by our Lord, before we look into the teachings given us through Paul. What God has to say to us with respect to the believer's walk today is the critical issue, and this will be found in Paul's epistles. But it is well for us to have a clear concept of the scriptural usage and meaning of such terms as "adultery" and "prostitution" as well as what exactly was said to Israel concerning these matters.

In this present article we will continue this background examination of scriptural teaching on this topic. But we will also begin our consideration of God's word to us today given through the apostle Paul.

DISMISSAL BECAUSE OF PROSTITUTION

Contrary to popular claim, the phrase, "for prostitution," does not at all refer to an instance in which *divorce* is *justified,* but to a situation in which *adultery* is *not* committed. The words "for prostitution" refer to a situation in which dismissal of a wife has occurred under circumstances in which prostitution had first occurred; that is, a case in which a man's wife had become joined to a "paramour." It is loose and misleading (as well as incorrect) to say that these words constitute "Christ's justifiable grounds for divorce." That is a base explanation indeed. Instead,

the words "for prostitution," merely explain that dismissal, under such circumstances, in so doing, will not entail an act of *adultery* on the part of the one who thus dismisses.

It is far from the truth to say that whatever is not a transgression of the law of Moses is not a "sin." Conversely, it is equally far from the truth to say that whatever does not accord with Moses' words is sinful. Immanent sin is neither comprised in nor confined to whatever may "transgress" the law of Yahweh, which was given through Moses. "Sin" is by no means necessarily committed where that law is not heeded. Sin is *not* "transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4, AV), notwithstanding the fact that the single Greek word, *anomia,* is so poorly and confusingly rendered thus in the Authorized Version, by means of this lengthy four-word phrase. Instead, sin is simply *"lawlessness."* 1 John 3:4 is correctly translated accordingly, "sin is lawlessness," in not only the Concordant Version, but in the American Standard Version, the New American Standard Version, and the Revised Standard Version.

Even though ancient Israel, in the wilderness, never heeded a single entreaty of the apostle Paul, this omission did not constitute sin. Likewise, neither do believers today sin in not observing either the precepts of Moses, Christ's entreaties to Israel concerning those precepts, or any related instructions through those associated with Him in that ministry (viz., "the twelve"; *cf* 1 Cor.15:5; *cp* Gal.1:9; 2:7).

To "sin" is to "miss the mark" (*hamartonō,* UN-MARK; *cf* Judges 20:16). To sin is to err; to make a mistake. Sin is not sin in itself but as it is related to a "target." It is a relative term; an expression which must be related to a standard or criterion.

For example, under the law of Moses, with respect to its precepts, it was not a "sin" for a man to have multiple wives or concubines (secondary or inferior wives). The

institutions of Moses related to polygamy, even so, were not to justify the practice, but to deter excess and abuse (Ex.21:7-11; Deut.21:10-17).

Indeed Moses *permitted* the people to dismiss their wives. "Yet from the beginning, it has not come to be thus" (Matt. 19:8). Such practices and their toleration were not a development based on God's original, ideal design for humanity, but were mere civil expedients for a fleshly people.

As the Lord declared, "Did you not read that the Maker from the beginning makes them male and female, and He said, 'On this account shall a man be leaving father and mother and shall be being joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh'? So that no longer are they two, but *one* flesh. What *God,* then, yokes together, let not man be separating" (Matt.19:6; Gen.1:27; 2:24).

In the beginning, the Maker, having made them male and female, on this account, instructed that a man shall be *being* (i.e., *continuing* to be) joined to his *wife* (not to his wives) and that the *two* (not "the three" or "the thirteen") shall be *one* flesh. Similarly, the man, having become *one* flesh with his *wife,* was by no means instructed to divorce his wife and become "one flesh" with some other woman, whether a second *wife* (whether concurrent or consecutive) or a first *prostitute.*

MARRIAGE IS A UNITING

A "prostitute" is any woman with whom a man *unites* (or becomes "married"), even though she is not *considered* to be or *treated* as the woman to whom the man is *married* (that is, she is not treated as a *wife;* as a woman who is *accepted* and *recognized* as one's mate in marriage). However, the fact is, that one *is* "married" to the one to whom one is *married.* This is so whether one leaves his father and mother in order to accomplish this (Gen.2:24), or leaves his or her mate and does the same (*cf* 1 Cor.7: 12,13; *cp* 1 Cor.6:15,16).

As Paul says, "Are you not aware that he who *joins* a prostitute is *one* body? For, He is averring, the two [i.e., regardless of which two] *will be one* flesh" (1 Cor.6:16). In the Scriptures, and in fact, neither *marriage* nor *divorce* is actually effected either by a wedding *ceremony* or by a *legal* divorce. In such cases, both marriage and divorce are thus effected merely incidentally.

By way of illustration, when someone opens the shutters of a tightly-shuttered room, the sun is the actual cause of illumination (modern scientists call it the "sufficient" cause), and the opening of the shutters the incidental or "necessary" cause of illumination.

Even though a "necessary" cause is "essential to the case" (i.e., to a *particular* case in which a certain thing occurs), it does not follow that it is essential to all cases in which that same thing occurs or comes into being.

For example, in another case, in which the windows in a room are without shutters (or, certainly, in a case in which one leaves a building and stands outdoors), the sun, the sufficient (i.e., actual) cause of illumination, will produce its illuminating effect just as surely as in the former case in which the incidental cause of the opening of certain window shutters was "necessary," incidentally speaking.

Therefore, practically and actually, with or without any attendant formality (whether ecclesiastical or civil), once a man and woman join together in sexual union, they are "married" (even if one should be joined to a "prostitute"), and, unless one or both should *separate* the union, they will remain united for the rest of their days.

There may be many things that, under the law of Moses, man is not *prohibited* from doing; but this does not mean that such things *should* be done. Nor does it mean that any such acts are pleasing to God, *or that they are not sin with respect to a higher law.* Love is "*forgoing* all" (1 Cor.13:7). That is, Love refrains from doing what, by a lower standard,

it may well be "permitted" to do, because, by its own higher (indeed highest) standard, it is constrained to do not what it *may* but what it *should,* to accord with what is ideal.

So much for the self-justification of those who put away their mates, "on account of prostitutions," having falsely imagined that since they are believers in Christ, they are therefore subject to Christ's teachings to Israel with respect to marriage. They do so as well, having noted that, for those under such teaching, under the circumstance of prostitution, one *may* put away one's mate without committing adultery oneself in so doing. Yet it does not seem to occur to them that in thus avoiding adultery, they have by no means fulfilled love.

In speaking of these things, we are not speaking of what, under such circumstances, we ourselves *might* do, *would* do or *could* do, but of what all *should* do, ideally speaking. Let us not lower God's perfect standards (nor diminish our esteem for them) through the frenzied failure of the flesh to repudiate these very principles, and to justify itself in the process.

WE, BEING MANY, ARE ONE BODY

Now let us turn to the writings of the apostle Paul, to consider what we can find in his words concerning this matter of separation and divorce. As we begin, let us note that the *untraceable* riches of Christ were made known through the apostle Paul alone (Eph.3:8) well after the time of our Lord's ministry. The untraceable riches of Christ are those revelations concerning Christ which were formerly undisclosed; they were hid in God and kept secret prior to being revealed by Paul. These revelations are the words of Christ as well, as much so as the declarations personally spoken by the Lord to Israel, whether to and through His disciples or to the throngs at large.

Our Lord's teachings through Paul are not directed

toward the *nation* of Israel at all; nor were they directed to those believing Israelites during the Acts period who remained under law, in anticipation of the terrestrial kingdom according to the prophets.

Instead, Paul's teachings are the teachings of Christ for "the ecclesia which is [Christ's] *body*" (Eph.1:22), to whom "the evangel which [Paul was] heralding among the nations" applies (Gal.2:2). This is the glorious calling which obtains even today, during the current era in which the nation of Israel continues in darkness, having rejected her Messiah.

While there is considerable accord between Paul's ministry and that of the twelve, nevertheless, his teachings are by no means identical to theirs. Indeed, there are many vital differences between these two bodies of truth, even as in the corresponding economies which result from them. One of these distinctives with respect to Paul's ministry concerns his teachings on the theme of marriage.

WALK IN ACCORD WITH OUR CALLING

By means of his writings, the apostle Paul provides those who are blessed according to the glorious Pauline evangel not only with a complete unfolding of that glorious revelation, but with an entire complement of practical instruction for their walk. This includes specific instruction related to marriage; instruction that accords with and typifies the unparalleled union which the believers enjoy with Christ as the very members of His "*body*" (*cp* 1 Cor.12:12,13).

The ancient scroll of divorce under Moses is no rule for us today. Simply because the civil government under which we live may make provision for divorce, is no indication that we should avail ourselves of this provision. Ideally, even as in all situations, the believer should always be kind and gracious (let the offense of another be what it will), thus also, in marriage, the husband and wife should always be forgiving and conciliatory, regardless of the offense com-

mitted by the other mate. All sorts of reasonings offered in an attempt to justify wrongdoing, concerning "worst-case scenarios," will not change this fact.

We must be careful not to switch issues. The commission of an offense against us by another, affords us no "circumstantial license" to commit offense against the offender. We may not *lie* to someone else because they have *stolen* from us. Neither, then, may we be *ungracious* to our mates (much less utterly "divorce" ourselves from all association with them) because they have committed *prostitution.*

Let the husbands be loving their wives according as Christ is loving the ecclesia (Eph.5:25). Let the wives attend to their duty to be *fond* of their husbands (Titus 2:4); being subject to their own husbands, as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is Head of the ecclesia, and He is the Saviour of the body (Eph.5:22-24). Yet if we would approximate these ideals, God must *give* us such a disposition and response; for His achievement are we (Eph.2:10).

The omission of righteous acts (not to mention the commission of unrighteous acts) is simply *wrong.* The fact that our own shameful behavior may well have been induced by the egregious deeds of another, neither changes its nature nor warrants its performance. What is right is right; what is wrong is wrong. There is no such thing as "grounds for wrongdoing," *including sins of omission, not merely commission.* Nor are there any "excuses" which *justify* our failure to do what is right, even if they should fully *account* for it.

We should be deeply sympathetic and understanding concerning all who fail; even so, we realize that recompense and suffering must ever attend all evil. That is, they must do so until the day when God completely removes evil from His universe and replaces it with good. We do well to exhibit unfeigned love and pity toward all. Even so, we must never seek to justify sin for that is not our province.

Scripturally speaking, where both are believers, there is no proviso for divorce in this economy. This should not be surprising; for we are the body of Christ and no one *can* be separated from His own body! "Our union with Him is unbreakable. This should be reflected in our earthly relationships."[1]

Indeed our union with Christ *should* be reflected in our earthly relationships. Consequently, and especially in the marriage relationship, the members of the ecclesia will do well to reflect their union with Christ by their union with one another—enduring all, bearing with one another in love.

TRUTH AND UNWARRANTED INFERENCES

It is certainly true that to married believers who are also themselves married to believers, the Lord's own charge is: "A wife is not to be separated from her husband. Yet if she should be separated also, let her remain unmarried or be conciliated to her husband. And a husband is not to leave his wife" (1 Cor.7:11). This is clear indeed. *Nonetheless,* it by no means follows, if any today should fail to heed this imperative, that any subsequent second marriages are themselves sinful relationships. Much less does it follow that God will neither forgive nor deal graciously with those who fall or that peace, joy, reconciliation with God and even salvation itself can never be the portion of any such, so long as they do not renounce their second marriages and live in celibacy as some would demand.

In light of this grave charge of the Lord addressed unto married believers, any *counsel* of our own to such ones can only accord with His charge. In order to heed this charge, however, one's faith must be strong enough to believe it and one's will sufficiently inclined to act accordingly.

1. A. E. Knoch: Concordant Commentary, p.254.

It is ideal for a husband and wife not to separate in the first place ("A wife is not to be separated from her husband . . . a husband is not to leave his wife"). Yet where separation has occurred, it then becomes ideal for the parties either to remain unmarried or to be "conciliated" to one another, thus becoming mutually reconciled.

"Conciliation" speaks of that which is "down" (i.e., "in accord with") "change" (*katalassō,* DOWN-CHANGE); it refers to the gracious act of one party toward the other, where estrangement has occurred. In this case (1 Cor. 7:11), since it is used in reference to one who is separated, it refers to a change from the unmarried state to the married state, once again.

"BECAUSE OF PROSTITUTIONS"

It is clear, then, where separation has occurred, that the separated believer *should* either remain unmarried or remarry his or her first mate. However, even where there has been strong resolution to follow this course, if one should find himself or herself becoming incontinent (*cp* 1 Cor.7:5), no longer having authority over his or her own will (*cf* 1 Cor.7:37; Rom.7:15-23), Paul's explicit word to such ones who are unmarried, even as to widows (1 Cor.7:8), is, "if they are not controlling themselves, *let them marry,* for it is better to marry than to be on fire" (1 Cor.7:9; i.e., to be aflame with lustful desire). It simply is not true that such a one must continually struggle with such passions, continually failing, perhaps even engaging in "prostitution" (1 Cor.6:15-18), yet, as one who must not marry, ever attempting to live celibately.

To those who are separated, the Lord's *charge,* is either to remain unmarried or to be conciliated to one's former mate. Nonetheless, if any, lacking continence, should find themselves failing to heed this charge, Paul's *imperative* is, "*let them marry*" (1 Cor.7:9). Under such conditions,

not only *may* they marry, but they *must* marry. The Lord's charge is one thing; Paul's imperative is the other.

One who is unmarried is "loosed" from a wife, and does not sin in marrying again. "You have been loosed from a wife? Do not *seek* a wife. *Yet* if ever you *should* be marrying, *also* [i.e., if ever you too should do so, the same as anyone else who marries], *you did not sin*" (1 Cor.7:27,28). Except for those who have the *gracious gift* of celibacy, granted to them by God (1 Cor.7:7), since every believer must "flee from prostitution" (1 Cor.6:18), Paul declares, "if they are not controlling themselves, let them marry" (1 Cor.7:9). "Because of prostitutions, let *each* man have a wife for himself and *each* woman have her own husband" (1 Cor.7:2).

One is either married or unmarried. There are many today who are unmarried. Some of them were never married; others were formerly married, but are now unmarried. All such considerations, however, are beside the point. The point is this: if one is unmarried and continence is lacking, Paul's imperative applies.

HOLD FAST TO THE FAITH

Those who, through their own reasonings and unbelief, deny these clear words and are "forbidding to marry" (1 Tim.4:3), are withdrawing from the faith (i.e., from the genuine body of truth; 1 Tim.4:1). They are giving heed to deceiving spirits and the teachings of demons; doing so in the hypocrisy of false expressions, their own conscience having been cauterized (1 Tim.4:1,2).

In our society today, such a full separation so as to produce the unmarried state, includes a legal divorce as well. Very often, at least one of the parties soon marries someone else. In any case, considerable estrangement usually continues to exist indefinitely between the original partners. Even where this is not the case, only in rare instances do both wish to remarry one another.

Where the remarriage of one of the original partners to a new partner has occurred and so long as such a second marriage continues, even if the remaining, now single, partner of the original marriage should wish to do so, there is no longer any possibility for him or her to remarry his or her original mate. Nor should the single party from the original marriage seek to win back his or her original mate now that that former mate is married to someone else.

If such a divorced, unmarried person, out of a sincere sense of moral obligation to an original, possibly unconditional, "lifetime" marriage vow should choose to remain unmarried the rest of his or her days, we could only honor such a decision. But where, in such a confusing world and wicked eon as that in which we live today, any such "stranded" individual should himself or herself decide to marry another (any original "vows" which may have been made notwithstanding), we may be certain that any offense unto God which might result from such a course will be dealt with by Him in the utmost grace.

What many have overlooked is that sexual continence, like all "self-control," is a *fruit* of the spirit (*cf* Gal.5:23). That is, it is the *result* of discrete, spiritual empowerment, according to God's own purpose and grace. While it is true that Paul wanted all to be as himself with respect to all such matters of self-control, he was swift to add: "*But* each has his own gracious gift from God, one indeed, thus, yet one thus" (1 Cor.7:7; *cp* John 3:27).

For example, one person might have the gracious gift of self-control while lacking the graces of kindness and meekness; yet another might enjoy these graces, while nonetheless lacking the grace of self-control.

May God grant us grace to accept the word of His grace, that it might be ours to be boasting not in ourselves, but solely in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

J.R.C.

SALVATION IS A JOURNEY

"Second Corinthians is an epistle for the heart. It engages us with the fond solicitude which stirs the affection of the apostle for his much loved Corinth. It was written because he wished to spare them and dreaded the severity which his presence might demand.

"This loving epistle reveals an aspect of the evangel which is well-nigh lost. This is the *conciliation.* God is love. He will not rest satisfied in merely justifying us. He wished to clasp us to His heart. To restore His creatures to righteousness may indeed erase the stain of sin, but offers no valid reason or excuse for sin's intrusion into the universe. But if the entrance of sin is to bear the precious fruit of reconciliation, if it is to bring us infinitely nearer to God than is possible without it, if it is the means of revealing God's love to us, then may we give thanks even for the sin which is the source of our sorrows . . . .

"This is but another example of the function of evil. Had the Corinthians been exemplary in their conduct, this marvelous interchange and expression of affection would never have found occasion. Men cannot bring good out of evil: that is God's prerogative. But God can, and does, control all the evil in the universe, so that its ultimate result will be blessing far beyond what could have been had evil never entered and marred His perfect creation."[1]

We perceive the anguish of the apostle prior to welcoming his fellow worker, Titus, in Macedonia (2 Cor. 7:6,7). The news which he brought from Corinth would

1. A. E. Knoch: Concordant Commentary, p.266.

have brought tears of thankfulness from Paul as they both knelt in prayers of joy. What wonderful love is here, that, completely distraught with anxiety, he now learns that far from causing resentment, the discipline contained in his former letter had resulted in stirring the hearts of the saints to sorrow and repentance.

ENLIGHTENMENT

The apostle Peter declared that much of Paul's wisdom was "*hard to apprehend*" (2 Peter 3:16). In Peter's case we clearly understand that this was due to considerable deviation in their respective evangels. But at present, whenever we hear this same opinion expressed, it is a cause of profound sorrow. For example, what is more apparent in the above epistle than the inexpressible relief afforded by the news which Titus brought? We fully comprehend and rejoice in the exultation of this praise of the apostle:

"Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of pities and God of all consolation, Who is consoling us in our every affliction to enable us to be consoling those in every affliction, through the consolation with which we ourselves are being consoled by God, seeing that, according as the sufferings of Christ are superabounding in us, thus through Christ, our consolation also is superabounding" (2 Cor.1:3-5).

Through the revelations entrusted to the apostle, we have come, slowly, and often painfully, to maturity. Yet even this is but a subjective condition. As indicated in the former epistle to Corinth, we also have been led by the spirit to recognize that which was out of an instalment (1 Cor.13:12). Issues once considered vital were identified as rungs in a virtual ladder of progress from confusion to enlightenment. They served their purpose, and, as the focus of our limited vision was gradually widened to perceive God's ultimate goal, these were thankfully discarded.

Now we correctly partition the word of truth which gloriously culminates in every creature acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father.

Deeply impressed upon our hearts is the truth that salvation is a journey, not a destination! Ours is a "logical, divine service." In all ministries of faith there will be crises or disappointments, but these should not divert us from eager anticipation of the gracious consummation which our loving Father has assured. The consummation will reflect the nature of our God, Who is love.

VULNERABLE

Many years ago, Pastor George L. Rogers, in his studies in the Roman epistle, wrote as follows, "Had God not forbidden Adam and Eve to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the serpent would have had no weapon against them, and no transgression would have demanded the death which had been threatened. That precept was for the preservation of their lives, but it turned out to be for death. In the same way sin now uses the precept to fix attention on and create the desire for the forbidden object, and to desire adds her solicitation. Sin whispers that the prohibited objects are desirable and beneficial and thus *deludes me.*"[2]

Hence we discern that our *ancient, innocent parents,* knowing neither good or evil, were helpless. Vulnerable to a degree unthinkable! Deprived of any *lever,* or means of influencing Adam or Eve, what could the Adversary have done? In every sense of the word, they were really immature! How intriguing though to note that Satan was unable to comprehend!

LOCKED UP IN STUBBORNNESS

"To speak like a human, God is the embodiment of love

2. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.24, p.305.

as well as wisdom. He was not satisfied with conditions in the garden of Eden. Adam and Eve lived in Luxury, for this is the meaning of Eden. Without any background of evil this was taken as a matter of course, which generated no feeling of thankfulness, no response of love in their hearts, for this could not be produced directly. There had to be a counter irritant. This He had already implanted in them at their creation. They were *stubborn.* To give them occasion, He planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and warned *them* not to eat, even though He *intended* that they should do so."[3]

Inevitably, confused and bewildered, humanity, stricken by conscience at the shame of disobedience and sin, becomes preoccupied with all the weary aspects of estrangement from God. For many, if not most, this results in despair, leading to apostasy, atheism, even nihilism. Sincerely, we have to acknowledge that the homing of God's spirit, leading to revelation of His choice, calling and justifying, is the one and only way in which we ourselves have emerged from such misery. Truly, ". . . out of Him and through Him and for Him is all; to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:36).

PERILOUS PERIODS

In these present days, described by the apostle as perilous periods, there is greater need to become aware of the acute despair which will afflict the ecclesia. More than ever then, there is urgent need of loving consolation. God provided the apostle with support through the ministries of many fellow workers. Prominent among these of course, are young Timothy, Titus, Epaphroditus, the beloved physician, Luke, and others, who were dear to the heart of God's great ambassador. How ill-equipped they were to

3. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.49, p.215.

embark on so great a task. Yet it is not until the apostle is restricted in chains, that God proclaims His great revelations of love! Now, at last, the mighty secrets are revealed. Now, as last, God provides the superabounding consolation for His beloved.

We began this study with a due consideration of *the intrusion of sin.* The false belief that Satan and his cunning deceptions are out of control or beyond the Creator's purpose dishonors God. Despite the testimony of Scriptures that this one is bound for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3), sadly, many cannot, or will not accept that in like manner to the raising up of Pharaoh (Rom.9:17), so this one serves in providing the essential contrastive gloom of sin. Unmoved by the rousing and glorious exaltation of Christ Jesus, apprised of God's great consummation, he yet remains obdurate! But God will abolish all such enmity and bring all under the feet of Christ (*cf* 1 Cor.15:25-28).

"What if mankind had never become acquainted with evil? Then we would have been neutrals, unable to really enjoy anything. All of God's goodness and grace and love would be wasted on us. Not only the present, but the future also would be a monotonous apathy, without pleasure or affection, with no appreciation, for this depends on contrasts. But when we rejoice in Christ Jesus as Saviour from *sin,* and as Redeemer from *enmity,* then our hearts overflow in the knowledge of His goodness and His grace" [4]

DID GOD SUFFER?

It would be most reprehensible for any to assume that the prohibition, penalty, and, most important still, the suffering, were all detached and dispassionate. We pose the question: Did God suffer? For answer, our eyes and hearts look up at that cruel stake on which His loving Son

4. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.49, p.207.

died, *"Thou art My Son, the Beloved; in Thee I delight"* (Mark 1:11).

"Eloi! Eloi! Lema Sabachtani?"
In what grievous strait He framed that plea, with speech once shared by His mother's knee.
Now, spirit-led in loving grace, with broken heart, to Calvary
I grieve before His anguished face, and hear His, "Why abandon Me?"

Mine all the bleak words which cursed His name; mine the confusion, the sin and shame.
"Others He saves" rebuke the crowd, beneath a sombre, midday sky.
"But not Himself!" I challenge loud; then silent, watch the Saviour die.

Donald Fielding

REPOSING IN CHRIST

Rosemary Lounsbury, of Wiarton, Ontario, died suddenly on July 22, at age 63. Her husband Richard, and family, and brothers and sisters in the Lord, are comforted to know as she did, that she will be vivified when the Lord returns. She rejoiced in 1 Timothy 2:4 because it told her that all mankind would be saved and come into a realization of the truth.

Barbara Gaw Mullen, formerly of East Sound, Washington, was put to repose in December, 2000. Her unshakable faith in God's eonian purpose and the truth and scope of His grace brought her great peace in her hard life, right up to her passing. Though she knew much suffering, she also knew much grace, including the recognition that our suffering is purposed of God and is according to His wisdom.

Now, faithful is God, Who will not be leaving us to be tried above what we are able, but, together with the trial, will be making the sequel also, to enable us to undergo it. Hence we are anticipating that happy expectation, even the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who gives Himself for us. Surely, then, we may confidently declare that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us.

GOD, THE SAVIOUR

GOD is the Saviour. He saves sinners, not just from the consequences of sin, but ultimately and in the final analysis from being sinners. His work of salvation is a work of love, power and righteousness, a work of great cost to Himself in the death of His Son, a work of deliverance into righteousness (*cf* Rom.3:21-24; 5:18,19) and life (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22-28) and reconciliation (*cf* Col.1:20) carried out against enormous opposition, and a work achieving excelling good for all.

For the believer this salvation has already begun to operate in our present lives with joy and peace, in faith and expectation and love (1 Cor.13:13) and the earnest of the spirit (Eph.1:13,14). We who have heard and accepted and who retain the evangel are being saved (1 Cor.15:1-4), so that our salvation is not only a matter of the future, when it will be full and complete (1 Thess.5:8-10; Col.3:4), but, in accord with our response to the evangel, of the present as well (Phil.2:12,13).

This salvation is God's grace and achievement (Eph. 2:8-10). But it is not for the believer alone. Ultimately it embraces all mankind because that is God's will and Christ died for all.

1 TIMOTHY

God's work of the salvation of sinners is presented with special clarity in Paul's first letter to Timothy. God is our Saviour (1 Tim.1:1), for, when Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners in grace, with faith and love (1 Tim.

1:14,15), He was revealing the heart of God. It was in light of the fact that our Saviour, God, *wills* the salvation of all humanity along with their realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4), and in accord with the truth that our Saviour, God, is the *one* God, that the one Mediator of God and humanity, the Man, Christ Jesus, gave Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:5,6). Therefore, God is the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers (1 Tim.4:10).

These things are to be charged and taught (1 Tim.4:11).

THE THEME OF SALVATION

These words on the great theme of salvation are faithful and welcome (*cf* 1 Tim.1:15; 4:9). They are good news, and they are true. They are "gospel truth," evangelical, enlightening and edifying for the believer, and glorifying to God. They tell us God is our Saviour and the Saviour of all mankind. They tell us He saves sinners by means of Christ Jesus giving Himself for them. They tell us the salvation of all sinners is God's will. They tell us that the will of God is the will of the One; there is no power in heaven or earth that can successfully or eternally impose its will against His. They speak of Christ, in His giving up of Himself for all, as perfectly positioned and fully able to carry out God's will for the salvation of all, for He is the one Mediator of God and humanity Who came into this world of human sinners as a Human, getting to the root of the problem that infects the entire race. They assure us that God is reliable as the living God Who is fully involved in this work of salvation. These are powerful and glorious revelations, and they should be taught by every teacher of the Word.

The theme of salvation throughout this letter is centered on God and the faithful work of Christ, but it is deeply concerned with the believer and his thinking and action; it is for our lives. What it says about all mankind

is important for that small portion of humanity who, like Paul, have had their lives overturned and overwhelmed by God's grace (1 Tim.1:14-16). It is exceedingly beneficial for those who enjoy God's special (1 Tim.4:10) work of salvation for now and the oncoming eons. It is a revelation from God that endows the believer with a disposition of devoutness and opens up for us a mild and quiet life. Hence it has promise "for the life which now is," as well as that which is impending (*cf* 1 Tim.2:2; 4:8).

False teaching, such as the idea of eternal hell, or concepts of God as one who wants to save all but can't, or one who can save all but won't, have just the opposite effect. They do not encourage reliance on God; they do not bring quiet and devoutness into our lives; they do not honor God fully as the Saviour or the work of Christ in accord with its true value.

GOD IS THE SAVIOUR

As *our* Saviour (1 Tim.1:1; 2:3) God is made known to us in a unique and joyful way. Here we see His power and wisdom and love in their vast measure and wealth, their perfect goodness and righteousness and their matchless glory. As the Saviour of *all mankind* (1 Tim.4:10), He cannot be finally manifested as anything less than what He is manifested to be to us now as our Saviour.

The teacher or evangelist brings the good news that God is the Saviour, and in doing so such a person may be said to save himself and others (*cf* 1 Tim.4:16). But the human can only save in a figurative way, as God's instrument in conveying the message of God's great work of salvation to sinners. The salvation is still God's work in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It continues as God's work in His provision of evangelists and teachers; it remains God's work in the gracious granting of faith to the chosen; and it does not cease continuing as God's work until

all receive and believe the testimony in God's appointed eras (*cf* 1 Tim.2:6).

There are few passages of Scripture that express the will of God for humanity as succinctly as 1 Timothy 2:4. The mass of unsatisfactory and conflicting arguments against its plain statement, accumulated through the centuries, testifies to its clarity. It is extremely difficult to explain away. The context speaking of Christ's coming to save sinners and His giving up of Himself for the sake of all, the immediate association of salvation with realization of the truth, and certainly the identification of the salvation of all mankind with the will of God, all of these features leave little room for maneuvering.

We have read and heard the arguments. There is the old gloss dating back to the days of Augustine: "The all mankind in this passage are not all without exception, but all without distinction. It refers to 'all the elect' only." But this makes many people who know what the Scriptures say about God's love uncomfortable, so we are more likely to find commentators taking another tack nowadays: "God's will is His wish, and what He desires does not always come about." There are even those who combine these explanations and end up teaching that God wants all kinds of people to be saved, but this desire may not necessarily be fulfilled. These are desperate attempts to preserve the doctrine of everlasting hell in the face of the glory of God presented in the evangel and highlighted in this passage.

The "all mankind" spoken of in 1 Timothy 2:4 are the "sinners" of 1 Timothy 1:15. These include blasphemers like Saul of Tarsus, who now writes this letter as a pattern of the power of God's grace in those who are believing, but also these sinners include "kings and those in a superior station," few, indeed, of whom are believers at present. The "all mankind" of the context are "all without exception," for all are sinners. Concerning God's will, it will be

done, for He is the *one* God. He is the living God, Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:11). His desire to save all and bring all into a realization of the truth will be realized!

A RANSOM FOR ALL

Christ is first presented in this letter as "our Expectation" (1 Tim.1:1). It is our great blessing that we have been made aware of this. But He is also the Sure and Certain Hope for all humanity, whether or not they are aware of it. We believe this because we believe the faithful and welcome evangel that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And we also believe that in giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all, in dying on the cross, Christ was doing what He came into the world to do, establishing the basis for the salvation of all sinners.

What He came to do has been done even though the salvation gained has not been experienced by all. Because God has not yet brought all into the enjoyment of their salvation (and in fact the majority do not presently have any idea of this salvation) does not mean Christ did not succeed in doing what He came to do, or that God will never *actually* be in experience what He is said to be as a result of Christ's faithfulness.

The figure of "ransom" is used in 1 Timothy 2:6. It speaks of the high price paid for the deliverance of sinners, the death of Christ. It was in the giving up of Himself for all humanity that our Lord is identified as the correspondent Ransom for all. His death was the ransom price paid by our Saviour, God for the salvation of all.

The Greek preposition, *anti* (meaning "instead") which is suffixed to the word for "ransom" in this passage signifies that the provision corresponds precisely to the need. The death of Christ fully and exactly meets the need for the salvation of every sinner.

We are speaking about our Lord Jesus Christ. What He has done for all cannot ultimately be found to have been in vain for any.

It also should be noted that Christ is referred to here as the "one Mediator of God and humanity" Who gave Himself as a "Human." We have used the English words "humanity" and "Human" here to reflect the association of the original Greek terms. Christ Jesus is not being spoken of as a Male, but as a Human. He stands between God and estranged humanity in intimate association with the entire race, male and female of every era and ancestry. The meaning of His death cannot be separated either in intent or result from any member of the human race. We do not yet see "all for One," but in the evangel we do indeed see "One for all."

If there are doubts about this salvation being realized, they ought not to come from anyone who believes that Christ's death was sufficient for his or her salvation in grace and apart from boasting.

PROMISE FOR THE BELIEVER'S LIFE

These various aspects of God's work of salvation, of course, are not immediately connected together in 1 Timothy as I have arranged them above. The various passages quoted are all true, but they do not all lead directly to one another *except by association of language and theme.* The revelation of God as the Saviour is not developed point upon point as the evangel of God's righteousness and His work of justification is developed in the opening chapters of Romans. Here in a personal letter to the young evangelist and teacher, Timothy, Paul has no need to instruct in the particulars of the evangel of our salvation and its revelation of God as the Saviour. But he brings out certain of these particulars concerning the purpose of Christ's death and the will of God and His reliability as Saviour,

as they relate to Timothy's service and the lives of those to whom he ministers.

These are practical matters. The truth affects our lives. The evangel shapes our behavior and thinking. God's will to save all mankind is the strong and effective basis for concern and prayer for all mankind, including civil authorities who so often seem to make our lives difficult, and who seldom have any appreciation for the evangel. We pray for their welfare, for intelligence and justice and sanity in their thinking and acting, so that we may live a mild and quiet life even in these troubled times.

How could we be led to such a disposition of prayer and quietude if we thought that most of those who are presently unbelievers will end up being tortured, or annihilated, for ever and ever? What are the practical effects in our lives of these twisted concepts of God's will that we hear so often? If the destiny of certain sinners is divine wrath (despite God's will, or in accord with His hidden will) for all eternity, how can men pray "apart from anger" (1 Tim.2:8) for those who trouble them, and women become quietly occupied with "good works" (2:10) within the corrupt societies of our world?

DEVOUTNESS

The mind set and the behavior that Paul encourages in this letter is that which accords with and develops from the evangel he is bringing. This is what is meant by "devoutness." The great importance to us of believing that God is the Saviour of all mankind is not the satisfaction of being right where others are wrong but the satisfaction, the joy and peace and spiritual growth that comes with this reliance. We are dismayed at the distortion of the evangel that is found in traditional glosses on these passages. But this dismay includes not only a sense of horror but of sorrow over the loss of happiness (*cp* Gal.4:15) that surely must

be experienced both by those who teach these distortions and those who are swayed by them. The benefit of believing that God is truly the Saviour of all mankind is a growing reliance on God and confidence that all the hate and greed and cruelty that infects humanity will ultimately be completely removed from the universe because of the price paid in the death of Christ.

In that it is addressed to the *teacher,* Timothy, we see that this theme of race-wide salvation by God through Christ should be taught and defended today by faithful teachers of the Word. This is not only because it is true, but because it is vital as a driving force for ideal acts and sound thinking in the believer's present life. What is taught here about God's will and Christ's faithfulness and love is critically connected with the believer's progress in enjoying and manifesting the character of life for which we are saved. In Paul's expressive terminology, it is a matter of *getting hold* right now *of eonian life.* "Now you, O man of God, . . . pursue righteousness, devoutness, faith, love with endurance, suffering, and meekness. Contend the ideal contest of the faith. Get hold of eonian life, for which you were called" (1 Tim.6:11,12, *cf* also v.19).

What is explicitly stated about the extent of salvation in 1 Timothy 2:4 and 4:10 is firmly supported by the revelation of God given in those passages and throughout the epistle. It is clearly implied by the good news concerning Christ given in 1 Timothy 1:15 and 2:5,6 and again throughout the epistle. Finally, it vitally accords with the patterns for ideal living and devoutness in disposition and behavior which Timothy was to exhibit and teach.

"On these things meditate. In these be, that your progress may be apparent to all. Attend to yourself and to the teaching. Be persisting in them, for in doing this you will save yourself as well as those hearing you" (1 Tim.4:15,16).

D.H.H.

Notes on 1 Samuel

NOT BY VIGOR

30 + **It** [lb]**was** [i]**on the third day** [i]**that David and his men came**– to **Ziklag.** +**As** for the **Amalakite, they had ransacked** › the **Negev and** › **Ziklag.** + **They** had [l]**smitten** `**Ziklag and** [l]**burned** `**it** [i]**with fire.** 2 + **They** had taken `**captive** `**the women** [7]**and** `**all**[0] **who** were **in it, from** the **smallest** + **unto** the **greatest. They had not** [c]**put** any**one** to **death;** +**rather they** had [l]**driven** them along **and** had [l]**gone** › **their way.** 3 +**When David and his men** [l]**came to the city,** + **behold,** it was **burned**[l] [i]**with fire, and their wives and their sons and their daughters had been** taken **captive.** 4 + **David and the** [wi]**soldiers** [w] `with **him** [l]**lifted** `**their voice and** [l]**lamented until** [w] there **was no** more **vigor in them to lament.** 5 +**As** for **David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail** (former **wife of Nabal) the Carmelite, they had been** taken **captive** too. 6 + **It was very** [l]**distressing to David, for the** [wi]**soldiers** [sa]**spoke** ›**of stoning**– **him** [t]**because all the** [wi]**soldiers were bitter** in **soul,** each **man** [on]**for his sons and** [on]**for his daughters.**

+**Yet David** [l]**encouraged** him**self in Yahweh his Elohim.** 7 + **David** [l]**said to the priest Abiathar son of Ahimelech,** Do [pr]**now** [c]**bring the ephod close to me!** +**So Abiathar** [c]**brought** `**the ephod** [l]**close to David.** 8 +**Then David** [lask]**inquired** [i]**of Yahweh,** › **saying**–**, Shall I pursue after** ˙**this** ˙**raiding** party**?** Will **I** [l]**overtake it?** + **He** [lsa]**replied to him, Pursue, for you shall overtake,** yea **overtake**–**, and you shall rescue,** yea **rescue**–**.** 9 +**So David** [l]**went** forth, **he and** the **six hundred men** [w] `with **him; and they** [l]**came** [fr]**to the Wadi Besor** +**where** those **stayed** ˙who were **left**[l] behind**.** 10 +**While David** [l]**pursued, he and** his **four hundred men,** + two **hun-**

dred men ˡ**stayed** behind **who were** too **fatigued** ᶠ**to cross**¯ over ˋ**the Wadi Besor.**

11 + **They** ˡ**found** an **Egyptian man in** the **field and** ˡ**took** ˋ**him to David.** + **They** ˡ**gave** ˃ **him bread and he** ˡ**ate, and they** ᶜ**gave him water** to ˡ**drink.** 12 **They** +**also** ˡ**gave** ˃ **him** a **slice of pressed dried** fig cake **and two clusters of raisins; and** as **he** ˡ**ate** + **his spirit** ˡ**returned to him, for he had neither eaten bread nor drunk water** for **three days and three nights.** 13 +**Then David** ˡˢᵃ**asked** ˃ **him, To** ᵃ**whom** do **you** belong, **and from where** are **you?** + **He** ˡˢᵃ**replied, I** am an **Egyptian lad,** the **slave** ˃**of** an **Amalekite man.** +**Yet my lord** ˡ**forsook me** ᵗ**because I had be**come **ill; today** it is **three** ᴹ**days**ᶜ**.** 14 **We´ had ransacked** the **Negev of the Kerethite and** ᵒⁿ ʷ**that** ˃**of Judah and** ᵒⁿ the **Negev of Caleb.** + ˋ**Ziklag we burned** ⁱ**with fire.** 15 +**Then David** ˡˢᵃ**asked** ˃ **him,** Can **you** ᶜ**lead me** ˡ**down to** ˙**this** ˙**raiding** party**?** + **He** ˡˢᵃ**replied,** Do **swear to me** ⁱ**by Elohim, you assuredly shall no**t ᶜ**put me** to **death,** + **you assuredly shall no**t **surrender me in**to the **hand of my lord, and I shall** ᶜ**lead you down to** ˙**this** ˙**raiding** party**.**

16 +**So he** ᶜ**led him** ˡ**down** ⁷**there**⁰**; and behold,** ⁷**they**⁰ were **deployed**ˡ **all over** the sur**face of the countryside, eating and drinking and celebrating** ⁱ**because** of **all the great** ˙**loot** ʷ **they had taken from** the **land of** the **Philistines and from** the **land of Judah.** 17 **David** ⁷**came** up**on them**⁰ **and** ˡ**smote them from the** morning **gloaming** + **until the evening** ˃**of** the **morrow;** + **none** ᶠ**of them escaped** ᵗ ⁱᶠ**except four hundred youth**ful **men who rode on** ˙**camels and** ˡ**fled.** 18 +**Then David** ˡ**rescued** ˋ**all** ʷ**that Amalek had taken.** +**Even** ˋ**his two wives David rescued.** 19 + **Not**hing of **theirs was** ˡᵃᵍ**missing, from the smallest** + ᶠʳ**to the greatest,** +**including** ᶠʳ **sons and daughters.** + **From** the **loot and** ᶠʳ**from all** ʷ**that they had taken for them**selves, **David restored** ˙**every**thing. 20 +**Then David** ˡ**took** ˋ**all the flock**s **and the herd**s, which **they drove before** ˙**that** other

˙live**stock; and they** ˡ**said, This** is **David's loot.**

21 +**Then David** ˡ**came to the** two **hundred men who had been** too **fatigued** ᶠ**to go**¯ along, following **after David.** +**So they** had **been** ᶜ**left** ˡ**seated** ⁱ**at the Wadi Besor.** +**Now they** came ˡ**forth to meet David and to meet the** ʷⁱ**soldiers** ʷ ˋwith **him.** +**As David** ˋwith ˙his ʷⁱ**soldiers** came ˡ**close,** ⁷**they~**ᶜ ˡ**asked** ˃**after their well-being.** 22 +**But all** the **vicious and worthless one**s ᶠ**among the men who had gone with David** + ˡˢᵃ**spoke** up + in ˡ**response: Because** ʷ **they** did **not go with** ⁷**us~**ᶜˢ**, we shall not give** ˃ **them** any ᶠ**of the loot** ʷ**that we rescued, save** to each **man** ˋ**his wife and** ˋ**his** ⁱⁿ**children.** + **They may lead them** off **and go.** 23 + **David** ˡˢᵃ**replied, You shall not do so** ⁷**after~** ˋʷ**what Yahweh has given to us.** + **He** ˡ**guarded** ˋ**us and** ˡᵍ**delivered in**to **our hand** ˋ**the raiding** party ˙that had **come**ˡ ᵒⁿ**against us.** 24 +**So** ᵃ**who** would ˡ**hearken to you** ˃**in** ˙**this matter? For, as** his **portion** is ˙who goes **down**ˡ **in**to the **battle,** + ᵃˢ**so** shall be the **portion of the** one **sitting** ᵒⁿ**by the** ᵃˡˡ**gear; they shall apportion alike.** 25 **And it** ˡᵇ**came** about **from** ˙**that** ˙**day** + **onward,** +**that he** ˡᵖˡ**constituted it** ˃**as** a **statute and** ˃**as** a **custom for Israel until** ˙**this** ˙**day.**

26 +**When David** ˡ**came to Ziklag,** + **he** ˡ**sent** some ᶠ**of the loot to** the **elders of Judah, to his associates,** ˃ **saying**¯**,** ᵇᵈ**Here** is a **blessing** gift **for you from** the **loot of** the **enemies**ˡ **of Yahweh.** 27 He sent **to** ʷ**those in Bethel,** + **to** ʷ**those in Ramoth-negev,** + **to** ʷ**those in Jattir,** 28 + **to** ʷ**those in Aroer,** + **to** ʷ**those in Siphmoth,** + **to** ʷ**those in Eshtemoa,** 29 + **to** ʷ**those in** ⁷**Carmel~,** + **to** ʷ**those in** the **cities of the Jerahmeelite,** + **to** ʷ**those in** the **cities of the Kenite,** 30 + **to** ʷ**those in Hormah,** + **to** ʷ**those in Bor-ashan,** + **to** ʷ**those in Athach,** 31 + **to** ʷ**those in Hebron,** + **to all the** ʳⁱ**places where David had** ᵍᵒ**roved, he and his men.**

The theme of new life wends its way throughout this chapter. It begins with reference to "the third day," which

carries with it the thought of resurrection. David and his men returned to find their families carried away captive as good as dead, but they received them back again. They lamented till even their strength to mourn was depleted, and many of them spoke of stoning David; then David received the strength to lead them into pursuit and battle. They found an Egyptian slave who was sick and left for dead, and revived him.

THE RETURN FROM APHEK

An Amalekite band had pillaged their city while David and his men were away. Not only were their families gone, but their city had been burned. It is hard to imagine the despair that gripped. them. They were weary from carrying their battle armor and marching for six days. There was no shelter or food, and they could only imagine what their wives and children had experienced, and what they might still be enduring.

God had promised in the law of Moses that Israel's families and homes would be safe when their men traveled to His feasts in Jerusalem. But David and his men were not even living in the land of promise. And they had not traveled to a feast of the Lord, but to do battle with God's chosen people! Even if they secretly planned to fight the Philistines, the appearance of their actions was that they would fight God's people. It is doubtful that either David or his men could escape the thought that God was punishing them for their actions.

NOT BY VIGOR

"For not by vigor has man the mastery" (1 Sam.2:9). This line from the song of Hannah provides an interesting key word for drawing a comparison between Saul and David. In 1 Samuel 28:20 Saul fell to the earth and had no vigor to stand up, due to the terror of Samuel's words

to him and also due to his fasting. In 30:4 David and his men lamented the loss of their families till there was no vigor in them to lament any longer.

When Saul had reached the point of having no strength, he was coaxed and encouraged by his courtiers and the woman with a medium, and food was prepared for him. When David had reached the point of having no strength he received no encouragement or sustenance from his men; instead, they spoke of stoning him. But David encouraged himself in Yahweh, his Elohim. Saul came to the point of weakness disguised in strange clothing, but when David reached the point of weakness, he called for the ephod, to inquire of God. He would be found before God with priestly garments rather than a disguise. Saul met the trial of his circumstances with self-pity, and God's word to him was one of death. David responded to his chastening circumstances with humility and a turning to God, and God's word to him was one of victory and restoration.

GRACE IN PURSUIT

David and his men started their pursuit, but at the Wadi Besor (generally understood to mean "good news") one third of the men were so exhausted they could not continue. There David and the 400 who continued lightened their load to the bare essentials, leaving their gear with the weary.

At this point the Egyptian slave was found. A traveling band such as these Amalekites would maintain a set order to their camp. This slave would know the organization of the camp. He could tell David and his men where the leaders would be located, where the guards would be stationed, where the camels and horses would be penned, where the most valiant soldiers were camped and where the captives were held. All this would be vital information for a successful overthrow, especially by such an undersized troop.

The "third day" is mentioned twice again (vs.12,13). The thought of resurrection is present, not only in the details regarding the Egyptian slave, but also in the group of David's men who stayed behind. One commentator translates their condition saying they were "corpsed," which was a figure of speech for exhaustion. Those who figuratively died at the stream termed "good news" shared in the spoils of victory from a battle they did not fight.

There is a great similarity between the events here and the parable of the Lord in Matthew 20:1-16. There, some laborers toiled all day while others toiled only a short time, but all received the same pay. Eonian life is a great treasure. Some will receive it after years of faithful service, and some will receive it as a gracious gift bestowed near the end of their life. The Beloved would not have us be overtaken with a self-righteous, Pharisaic spirit. Instead we should realize it is a gracious gift that enables some to serve long, just as it is a gracious gift that gives life at the eleventh hour. As Paul said, it is God Who places the members in the body according to His will and purpose (1 Cor. 12:18), and it is God Who makes us competent for whatever measure of service we are privileged to perform.

Grace is the keynote of the chapter. Saul, the rule of the flesh, commands such things as "None shall eat anything till I am avenged of my enemies." David, the "beloved," the rule of faith, commands that those who stayed with the gear shall share alike with those who bore the heat of battle.

And faith is seen rewarding those it will rule. David sent gifts of the booty to all the areas where he and his men had stayed when running from Saul in Judah. This helped prepare them to receive him as their king. Saul lost the kingship because of failure to utterly destroy the Amalekites (1 Samuel 15). David's accession to the throne commences with victory over the Amalekites.

J. Philip Scranton

193 Editorial
197 The First Offense
(Part 2)
211 Yahweh Elohim in Genesis Three
217 The Battle of Mount Gilboa
221 Encouragement in the Word
226 Marriage and the Believer
(Part 3)
235 The Saviour of All,
Especially of Believers

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 2001
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-TWO

EDITORIAL

IT IS in light of these recent calamitous, tragic events of death and destruction here in the United States, in New York City, in Washington, D.C., and in Pennsylvania, that we are all brought to an awakened sense of our own vulnerability.

It is not that we are ignorant of the fact that horrible accidents and terrible diseases, even as criminal acts and violent deeds claim their victims all around us daily. Added to these are such recurrent, periodic "natural" disasters as floods, fires, hurricanes and earthquakes. The aggregate suffering and sorrow, misery and pain wrought by the collective evil inherent in the world is practically incalculable. No, it is not that we are ignorant of the evil extant in the world; it is rather, until it somehow touches our own lives, that, to a considerable degree, we tend to ignore its presence.

Indeed, in light of the sheer volume of evil in the world, if we were actually to give active, deeply heartfelt attention to a sizable portion of the evils even within our own communities, we would soon be overcome and utterly undone by the experience. It is not that we do not care about human suffering; it is instead, even in the case of the most caring of persons, that there are severe limitations upon our ability to be actively involved in the sufferings of others while still retaining sufficient will and fortitude for the accomplishment of our own duties of work and family.

Not only should we be caring of heart, but we should show our care by our deeds. Let us, then, help where we are *led* to do so, and in a way that seems feasible to us, according to God's direction. We cannot help every worthy cause; and, in deciding which ones we shall help, we should not respond to those which are the most demanding or intimidating, but to those which God simply lays it upon our hearts to assist, leaving it to Him to grant His overall benefactions through the men of His counsel, according as He is intending.

REJOICING, EVEN IN AFFLICTION

In seeking wisdom and understanding as to the existence of evil in general or as to the existence of any specific evil in particular, we must be careful not to exclude any certain explanation peremptorily, leaving no opportunity for its validation, on the grounds that it is contrary to the popular conscience, even as received ethics. We should act "apart from prejudice, doing nothing from bias" (1 Tim.5:21). One who fails to seek truth on this basis, who gives mere lip service to the need for impartiality, is not only unworthy of truth but is incompetent to judge concerning it.

We continually experience both good and evil. Hence it is important that we recognize the singular Source of each. Here, the Scriptures are explicit. It is according to their testimony that we affirm that God Himself, Yahweh Elohim, is the Maker of good and Creator of evil: "Former of light and Creator of darkness, Maker of good and Creator of evil. I, Yahweh Elohim, make all of these things" (Isa.45:7).

In accordance with this grand testimony to the deity of God over all, we would add the declarations of Job concerning "all the evil that Yahweh had brought upon him" (Job 42:11): "Yahweh, He gives, and Yahweh, He takes away. Blessed be the Name of Yahweh" (Job.1:21). "Indeed should we receive good from the One, Elohim, and should we not receive evil? In all this Job did not sin with his lips" (Job 2:10).

Similarly, "concerning all that is done under the heavens: it is an experience of evil Elohim has given to the sons of humanity to humble them by it" (Ecc.1:13). "Indeed though He afflicts, yet He has compassion according to the abundance of His benignities . . . . Who is this who speaks and it comes about if Yahweh does not determine it? Do not both the evil and the good come forth from the mouth of the Supreme?" (Lam.3:32; 37,38).

To these we would only add: "Would there come to be evil *in a city,* and Yahweh not have done it?" (Amos 3:6b).

In consideration of our recent national tragedy here in America, I wrote to a friend, saying, "God is perfect in wisdom, even as in goodness and in love; so we may be certain that neither this recent tragedy nor any other evil, large or small, would

or could exist unless, at the deepest level, He deemed it best that it should exist, according to His good purpose. God makes the world, and all that is in it (Acts 17:24); so it becomes our privilege to believe that this is so, and to trust and rely on Him accordingly."

It is not that God is the immediate, or proximate, cause, or the intermediate or otherwise to some limited degree even distant cause of that which obtains, but that He is the *ultimate* Source, Origin, and Cause of that which obtains, both of the good and of the evil.

This does not change the fact that everyone acts voluntarily, according to each one's own will, in concert with each one's own desires. Under all normal circumstances, we are not compelled to act as we do, forced to do that which we do not choose, against our own will. To the contrary, we not only do as we please, but choose according to our own pleasure as well. As popularly expressed, we are free to do whatever we want, and to choose whatever we please.

What we are not free from, however, is our own selves, our own constitutions, which are created by God. Specifically, we are not free from our own pleasures and our own immediate desires—whatever we may most desire at present.

Nevertheless, our greatest present desire, often, is for the immediate enjoyment of that which considered in itself is sin (*cp* Heb.11:25), not righteousness.

This is so even if in the abstract we would honor and choose what is right. The sinner's lament, according to which he declares the painful truth is, "It is not the good that I will [abstractly speaking] that I am doing, but the evil that I am not willing [abstractly speaking], this I am putting into practice. Now if what [in this sense] I am not willing, this am I doing, it is no longer I who am effecting it, but Sin which is making its home in me" (Rom.7:19,20).

Of course one's desires may well change, even from one moment to the next. But for so long as they remain the same, in the present moment, one cannot choose contrary to one's desires but only according to one's desires. To claim otherwise would be to claim that we can presently desire what we do not

presently desire, and presently choose what we do not presently deem choice, decisively speaking.

Our major premise needs to be that whatever God actually does is right for Him to do (*cp* Psa.145:17), and accords with that which He is, which is love (1 John 4:8). And, our minor premise needs to be that He is the Maker of good and Creator of evil, the One out of, through, and for Whom all is (Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor.8:6).

Then our conclusion will be that evil is purposed for good; hence its temporary presence is needful and will be justified in the end. Since God is perfect in wisdom, the amount and kinds of evil which exist, even as the amount and kinds of evil which become the portion of each individual person, must accord with His wisdom, which itself rests upon His goodness and love.

At the consummation (1 Cor.15:23,28), all will be saved (1 Tim.4:10), vivified (1 Cor.15:22), constituted just (Rom.5: 18,19), reconciled (Col.1:20), and headed up in Christ (Eph. 1:10). Surely, in that day, then, the perpetrators of this recent evil of which we are presently especially mindful, will be embraced by the very ones who suffered at their hands.

This is in accord with the words of Joseph: " 'Do not be grieved or angry with yourselves that you sold me hither, because Elohim has sent me on before you to preserve lives . . . . Elohim sent me on before you to set up for you a remnant on earth and to preserve lives for you in a great deliverance. So now, not you sent me here, but the One, Elohim . . . . You devised evil against me, *yet Elohim devised it for good for me,* in order to accomplish, as at this day . . ." (Gen.45:7,8; 50:20,21).

Even so, during the current era, we are mindful that the "superior authorities," to which we are subject (even as thankful for their protection), are set under God. And, "to accord with what must be" (*cf* Rom.8:26), they must do whatever they deem best. Concerning such authority, we say that "it is God's servant for [our] good"; and, "not feignedly is it wearing the sword. For it is God's servant, an avenger for indignation to him who is committing evil. Wherefore it is necessary to be subject, not only because of indignation, but also because of conscience" (*cf* Rom.13:1-5). J.R.C.

THE FIRST OFFENSE
(Part Two)

In reporting Yahweh Elohim's instructions to the serpent, Eve omitted terms which reflected God's good will and added a thought which exaggerated His prohibition.[1] She did not directly deny what God had said. Indeed, she seemed to defend Him. But she departed sufficiently from the *spirit* of it to show how little she appreciated it, and that she was ready to entertain further doubts. The serpent takes due advantage of this and boldly denies the death that the Subjector had warned against. He ascribed the prohibition to jealousy on the part of Elohim, lest they become more like Him. But this is buttressed by a certain amount of truth, that they would know good and evil. This was implied in the name which had been given to the tree. Now that Eve's confidence in the Subjector's motive had been undermined, she abandons faith altogether, and decides to depend on sight.

GENESIS 3:4-24

4 +**But the serpent** |**said to the woman: Not** to **die**– **shall you be dying;** 5 **for Elohim knows**| **that** |**on** the **day you eat**– *f***of it your eyes will be unclosed, and you will become like Elohim, knowing good and evil.**

6 +**Then the woman** |**saw that the tree** was **good for food,** + **that it** brought a **yearning to** the **eyes and** that **the tree** was **desirable**| **for** *c***gaining insight.** +**So she** |**took** *f***of its fruit and** |**ate.** + **She** *mr***also** |**gave** some **to her husband**

1. *cf* our July issue, pages 155,156.

with her and he ˡ**ate.** 7 ⁺**Then** the **eyes of both of them were** ˡ**unclosed, and they** ˡ**realized that they** were **naked.** ⁺**So they** ˡ**sewed fig** ⁷**leaves**ⁿᶜ together **and** ˡᵈ**made girdle** skirt**s for them**selves**.**

8 ⁺**Then they** ˡ**heard** ˋthe **sound of Yahweh Elohim walking** about **in** the **garden** ›**in** the **windy** part **of the day, and the human hid** him**self** ⁺**with his wife from** the **face of Yahweh Elohim** ⁱ ᵐⁱᵈ**among** the **trees of the garden.** 9 ⁺ **Yahweh Elohim** ˡ**called to the human and** ˡ**said to him:** ⁷**Adam**⁰**, where** are **you?** 10 ⁺ **He** ˡˢᵃ**replied** ⁷**to Him**ˢ**: I heard** ˋthe **sound of your** ⁷**walking**⁰ **in** the **garden, and I was** ˡ**fearful** ᵗ**because I** was **naked;** ⁺**so I** ˡ**hid.** 11 ⁺**Then He** ˡˢᵃ**asked:** ᵃ**Who told** › **you that you** are **naked** ⁷**unless**⁰ **you have eaten from the** ⁷**only**⁰ **tree** ʷ**that I instructed you** by **no** means to **eat**⁻ **from it?** 12 ⁺ **The human** ˡˢᵃ**replied: The woman whom You have given** to be **with me—she´ gave** › **me** ᶠ**of** ˙that **tree, and I** ˡ**ate.** 13 ⁺ **Yahweh Elohim** ˡ**said to** the **woman: What** is **this, you have done?** ⁺ **The woman** ˡˢᵃ**replied: The serpent—he lured me, and I** ˡ**ate.**

14 ⁺**Then Yahweh Elohim** ˡ**said to the serpent:**
ᵗ**Because you have done this,**
Cursedˡ shall **you** be
Away **from every** ˙domestic **beast**
And from every animal of the field!
On your torso shall you ᵍᵒ**crawl,**
And soil shall you eat all the **days of your life.**
15 **And I shall set enmity**
Between you and ᵇᵗ **the woman**
And between your seed and ᵇᵗ **her seed.**
He´ shall hurt you in the **head,**
And you´ shall hurt Him in the **heel.**
16 ⁷**And**ⁿᶜ **to the woman He said:**
I shall increase, yea **increase**⁻ **your grief**
And ⁷the **groanings of**⁰ **your pregnancy.**
In grief shall you bear sons;

⁺**Yet** ›**by your husband** is **your** ⁷**restoration~.**
And he´ shall rule ⁱ**over you.**
17 **And to Adam He said:**
ᵗ**Because you hearkened to your wife's voice**
And ˡ**ate from the** ⁷**only**⁰ **tree**
ʷ**That I instructed you,** › **saying**⁻**,**
You must **not** ˡ**eat from it,**
Cursedˡ is **the ground** ⁱ**on your** ᵖ**account;**
In grief shall you eat of **it all** the **days of your life.**
18 ⁺ **Thorns and weeds shall it sprout for you,**
And you will eat ˋthe **herbage of the field.**
19 ⁱ**By** the **sweat of your brow**
Shall you eat ⁷**your**⁰ **bread,**
Until you return⁻ **to the ground,**
For from it were you taken.
For soil you are,
And to soil you shall return.
20 ⁺ **The human** ˡ**called his wife's name Eve, for she´ would become** the **mother of all** the **living.** 21 **And Yahweh Elohim** ˡᵈ**made for Adam and** › **his wife tunics of skin and** ˡ**clothed them.** 22 ⁺**Then Yahweh Elohim** ˡ**said:** ᵇᵈ**Since** ˙man **has become like one** ᶠ**of Us** ›**in knowing**⁻ **good and evil,** ⁺ **now lest he should stretch** out **his hand and** ⁻**take** ᵐʳ**also of the tree of life and** ⁻**eat and** ⁻**live for** the **eon—**23 ⁺**So Yahweh Elohim** ˡ**sent him** ᶠ**out** of the **garden of Eden to serve** ˋ**the ground from where he was taken.** 24 ⁺**After He** ˡ**drove** ˋ**the human out,** ⁺ **He** ᶜ**made** ⁷**him**⁰ ˡ**tabernacle** ᶠ**at** the **east** ›**of** the **garden of Eden** ⁷**and He set**⁰ ˋ**the cherubim and** ˋ**the flame of the revolving sword to guard** ˋthe **way** to **the tree of life.**

FAITH FAILS, SIGHT PREVAILS

Had Eve believed and adored God for His goodness, she would never have eaten of the forbidden fruit. But, on the other hand, as long as she had not eaten, she did not

possess the knowledge of good. Consequently her faith failed, and she yielded in favor of sight. She saw the outward appearances that it was good for food, attractive, and producing intelligence. How she "saw" all of this is hard to see. Few have such good eyesight today! But when we seek for evidence against the Subjector's word, how easy it is to see what is not there, and fail to see what really is present! Before she ate her eyes were closed. Is that not true of all who do not believe? She not only saw, but *reasoned* from the evidence of her senses. She probably had eaten many kinds of fruit, and this *looked* to be edible and nutritious, judging from the others. This is one of the foremost foes of faith, for man is not able to see the inward essence. For that we must depend on the Deity and His word.

ESTRANGEMENT

At first, evil *further* estranged Adam and Eve from Yahweh, the Subjector, and separated them from Him. This is the greatest of all evils. Yet it prepares for the appreciation of His goodness and His grace, and a reconciliation in which there will be mutual love, and the adoration and worship which will not only bring the highest happiness to His creatures, but suffice to satisfy the Father's primal passion for responsive affection.

THE FIRST JUDGMENT

The first judgment is still in operation. It affects us today, hence we should be vitally interested in its every aspect. We should understand, not only the reason for it, but its object and its scope. It was not confined to Adam and Eve, but includes the race which springs from them, and which was in them when they first offended. We can look back and see ourselves there in a very practical way, for we are serving the sentence, even if we did not personally commit the offense. Many are embittered by this,

and claim it is not just, because they do not see that it was passed for Adam's sake, and for *our benefit*. Vindictive *punishment* breeds hate, but God's *judgments*, though bitterly hard to bear, are rooted in love, and will bear the blessed fruit of final filial affection.

HAD ADAM NOT SINNED

How many have wished that Adam had not sinned! Some have even gone so far as to assert that *they* would not have done so if they had been in his shoes! In this they are sadly mistaken, not only as to their conduct, but as to the desirability of Adam's sin. Even Adam, *after he had eaten of the tree*, and had the knowledge of good and evil, would not have eaten, and it is most likely that he did not do so again. But, if we had not such knowledge, we all would have done the same. The knowledge of good is one of our most precious assets. What a dreary life we would live if we appreciated nothing that is given us, and were utterly devoid of thankfulness! A few spoiled children are like that to some extent, and are a trouble to themselves and a trial to others. This might have resulted in endless misery, not only for the race, but for the Creator Himself.

How valuable, therefore, is the knowledge of evil! It may not be pleasant, or prized for itself, but it is the essential prelude to the enjoyment of good and the worship of the Supreme. Good, by itself, cannot be appreciated unless contrasted with evil. Children born to poverty and pain are often happier than those of the rich and noble.

JUDGMENT IS CORRECTIVE EVIL

Judgment is *corrective* evil. In judging, the Subjector does not inflict pain in order to deter from a repetition of the act, nor merely right the wrong, as is common among men. He adds another evil which will operate to produce the good for which the evil was originally intro-

duced. He does not simply stand by and allow the evil to fulfill His intention. He Himself steps in, in judgment, in order to emphasize the personal fear of Him, which precedes reconciliation. Otherwise it might be taken as blind fate, an impersonal and loveless operation of undirected force. It is most important that men learn that the judgments of Genesis three under which they live and suffer, are the direct effect of the counsel of Yahweh's will, and are *for their benefit*.

DYING BRINGS SHAME

The first effect of eating the fruit affected their feelings. They became *ashamed* of themselves and *afraid* of God. They realized that it was much more than a mere mistake, or sin, and even exceeded transgression. They now recognized the *evil* that they had done and the *good* that they had failed to appreciate. This is one of the great crises in the history of humanity. Hitherto they had experienced nothing but good, but had never enjoyed it or thanked the Giver for it. On the contrary, at the very first assault of the Adversary, by sinning and transgressing against their Benefactor, they offended Him. The remedy for this is evil, as many of us know from practical experience. Good cannot be recognized or appreciated apart from its opposite. That is the significance of the tree in the midst of Eden. As saints who know El, and realize His purpose in creating evil, we have the precious privilege of seeing the ultimate good in evil, and thanking Him for *both*.

ONE GOOD-EVIL TREE

A lesson of tremendous import lies in the fact that *both* good and evil were taught by the fruit of a *single* tree although it seemed to produce only evil. This could not be inculcated by means of separate trees. The knowledge of one is dependent on an acquaintance with the other.

Their Creator had been blessing Adam and Eve richly, above all the other creatures of the earth, yet they did not realize it and failed utterly to appreciate it and bless Him for it. As the prime purpose of creation is to draw forth the response of love from hearts overflowing with affection, so that, as Father, He becomes All *in all*, evil was introduced as a transitory, yet indispensable necessity for the accomplishment of the Subjector's will. For this reason the Adversary was created and the tree was planted in Eden. And this explains the part played by the serpent. Evil leads to the appreciation of good.

GIRDED NAKEDNESS

The first man-made covering for human shame and nakedness was only a girdle, made of fig leaves sewn together. It was found so unsatisfactory, even to them, that they hid themselves from the face of Yahweh Elohim, when next He came to them in the garden. How was it that the eating of the forbidden fruit robbed them of their primeval robes of light? This we will discuss more fully later when we consider the divine substitute for their fig-leaf costume. We should not miss the picture this presents to us, however. All human efforts to hide their mortal shame is no more effective, especially before the Deity, than that of the first sewing circle, and lasts no longer. We, however, find our robe of righteousness, although it was made at the cost of bloody death, not of animals, but of the suffering Christ, far more satisfactory.

EXPERIENCE AND JUDGMENT

More than a theoretical knowledge of evil is needed. It is the *experience* of evil that humbles the human heart, and *judgment* must follow in order to clarify and emphasize the lesson. Therefore, following the first offense, God *judged* all who took part in the evil, and intensifies rather than

heals it, so as to give it full force. That this is needed is evident, for all seek to evade their guilt by shifting the blame to another. The man accused the woman, and the woman passed it on to the serpent. But none of the excuses were accepted, and each was judged in such a way as to impress upon them the knowledge of evil, so as to prepare them for final restoration and the enjoyment of the abundant blessings still in store for them. Then they will be able to give Him the praise and adoration which His heart desires.

We need not, indeed, learn *all* we know of evil by suffering ourselves, for this also prepares us to perceive it in others, and to sympathize with them even if we are not ourselves involved. Many who are comparatively free from pain themselves have tasted enough of it to feel for others. Apart from this how could we apprehend the fearful sufferings of our Saviour which stir our heart to its depths, and move our lips to thankfulness and praise and worship? Is not the cross of Christ the greatest evil in the history of the universe? Yet it will bring about the greatest good!

CELESTIALS LEARN

Not only will mankind benefit by the evil introduced through Adam, but celestial beings also will profit by our experience. Not having blood, hence lacking sensation, physical suffering may be unknown to them. But the long record of evil in the history of the human race, as chronicled in the Scriptures, culminating in the crucifixion of Christ, is their textbook, which will enable them not only to apprehend His wisdom (Eph.3:10) but learn of His love, so that those that are estranged from God will be reconciled (Col.1:20).

THE JUDGMENT OF THE SERPENT

The serpent did not pass on the blame to anyone else. As a matter of fact, it fulfilled the function for which it was

created, like the Adversary which it represented. Nevertheless, for the sake of mankind it was necessary to put it in its proper place. Even to this day, most of us have an intuitive horror of serpents, but there is little intelligence as to the reason for this aversion. In contradicting the word of Yahweh Elohim, the serpent exalted itself, not only above all the animals and man, but also above its Creator. Eve should never have listened to it or acted on its word, but should have submitted to the Subjector and to her husband. Because it had usurped the highest place, the serpent is degraded to the lowest.

It has been suggested that the *nchsh* which spoke to Eve was not a serpent. Some say the word means *stranger*, and others something else. But the evidence for serpent is plentiful and conclusive, for it occurs about thirty times. In Genesis it occurs again in Jacob's prophecy concerning his son Dan (Gen.49:17).

> Dan becomes a *serpent* by the way,
> A horned snake on the path,
> That bites the horse's heels,
> So that its rider falls backwards.

The parallel, a horned snake, and the action, lying in the way and striking the lowest part of a horse, clearly indicates an animal of the serpent tribe.

This is confirmed by other occurrences. Moses' rod was turned into a serpent which could be handled by its tail (Ex.4:3). The serpents in the wilderness were poisonous and bit the people. Moses then made one of copper, much the same color as a serpent. Indeed, the same stem, *nchsh*, is also used for this metal. Adam seems to have named it so because its color was the same as copper. The bite is often referred to (Prov.23:32; Ecc.10:8; Amos 5:19). Its close connection with the soil comes before us again

in Isaiah 65:25 and Micah 7:17. The fact that it can be charmed by whistling is conclusive evidence, added to all the rest (Ecc.10:11). Moreover, the verb denotes to *augur*, or use enchantment.

The Septuagint translates it by *ophis* (serpent) twenty-seven times and *drakon* (dragon) thrice. When we remember that these two are identified in the Unveiling (Rev.12:9), there remains no doubt that this is its meaning. Indeed, it is called the *ancient* serpent who is deceiving the whole inhabited earth. Literally, this is Satan, the Adversary, but the animal which represents him is a serpent.

The question arises, How did the serpent move about before it was degraded, to go on its torso? We do not know, but even yet, when it strikes, or moves the fastest, it has little more than its tail on the ground. I once encountered a snake coming out of a gopher hole in the wall of our cellar. It was almost out, yet retreated with such speed that I could not strike it, using only what might be called its tail. There is no reason to reject the natural explanation, that it went on its tail. This could easily be coiled on the ground and support the torso in an erect posture.

SATAN'S AUTHORITY

The fact that Satan showed our Lord the kingdoms of this world and their authority, and said to Him "it has been given up to me" (Luke 4:6), has led some to suggest that the serpent may have had a place of authority in Eden, and was not altogether wrong in using it at that time. But what Satan claimed to have and offered to share with our Lord was an entirely different matter. It was the *kingdoms* of the earth. In Adam's day there were no kingdoms.

This power was later promised to Abraham's seed, and should have been in the hands of Israel. But they forfeited it by their transgressions, so it was turned over to the nations in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. These are under the influence of Satan, the spirit that is now operating in the sons of stubbornness (Eph.2:2).

Even though the Adversary had been given this place when Christ was on earth, our Lord did not follow Eve's example and accept the kingdom from him. He knew that only the *suffering* Saviour would be fit to be the reigning King. He knew that the kingdom could come only after the head of Satan had been crushed.

Our place on earth today is different still, as we are not disposed to the terrestrial (Phil.3:19). We have no authority on earth, so must submit to the superior authorities, even though they are controlled by the Adversary. We look beyond them to the Subjector, Who is using them temporarily to fulfill His *intention*, if not His will, until we are called above, where we will be associated with Christ in His celestial reign, with Satan crushed under our feet (Rom.16:20). Thus will we have part in the fulfillment of the primeval promise.

THE ENMITY OF THE SERPENT

Instead of winning the thanks and friendship of humanity for the gratuitous advice given, which promised to make them like Toward-Subjectors (AV, "God"), and raise them higher in the scale of creation, the serpent won the enmity of the woman and of the race of which she is the mother. Intuitively women seem to hate the serpent tribe even more than men do. But even I, who find it hard to kill any animal, when I lived where serpents were numerous, had no compunctions about killing a snake, especially if it was poisonous. In a fine figure it strikes at the heel of the seed of the woman, in particular Christ, the greatest of them all, but its head is crushed by that very heel. As Paul says, "the God of peace will be crushing Satan under your feet swiftly" (Rom.16:20). Meanwhile, however, we are often wounded in our walk as Eve was by the delusive

craftiness of the serpent (2 Cor.11:3), even when we think we are opposing it.

THE ADJUDICATION OF THE WOMAN

Grief and groaning, specially suited to her functions in the perpetuation of the race, were allotted to the woman, corresponding to the part she played in the offense. So far as the record goes, she was not told to abstain from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil by Yahweh, the Toward-Subjector, but by Adam. So she was subject to neither when she ate the forbidden fruit. Nothing is said before this as to her subjection to Adam, but now this is definitely asserted, since, in disobeying him, she also offended his Subjector. But this experience of evil is accompanied by a promise of restoration, through this very function. With her husband the race will be perpetuated until the second Man, the last Adam (1 Cor.15: 45,47), will bring about its *restoration*.

The revered Authorized Version says nothing of any restoration, but renders it "thy *desire* shall be to thy husband." Just what is intended by this is not very clear, but it does not seem to deal with the matter in hand. Another Hebrew word means *desire* (2 Sam.23:5). The Septuagint has *apostrophê* FROM-TURNing, restoration. The equivalent Hebrew would be *thshube*, which differs from the Hebrew text in one letter only. In place of the *b* the Hebrew has a *q*. Even as an English, *b* looks like *q*, and could easily be mistaken for it, so it is in the Hebrew also. There seems to be little question of the original reading in such a case, as the Septuagint was translated from much earlier manuscripts than any that we now possess, and has preserved for us many other similar passages. The same mistake was made in the case of Cain's sin offering (Gen.4:7).

When the earth became waste and vacant (Gen.1:2), God immediately gives us a record of its restoration by

His spirit. Strange to say, few have recognized this fact. They think He is still creating the earth. Corresponding to this, as soon as humanity was wrecked by sin, God not only starts their restoration, but actually announces it, and explains that it is to come through the seed of the woman (Gen.3:15,16). But not only are the saints blind to this great evangel, but it has been deleted from the record and anyone who would suggest such a thing is driven out of the camp of Christendom. Is there any worse heretic than a "restorationist?" Yet this is one of the most precious of the love tokens which light up this dark scene. In the midst of judgment God remembers the great object He has in view, for the judgment is only the first step in preparing the race for the appreciation of His love.

Adam should have decided that they would *not* eat of the forbidden fruit. He should not have obeyed an animal or his wife, especially as it involved insubjection to the Toward-Subjector, and was a serious affront to Yahweh. He should have been more thankful and obedient than Eve, for she was a love token to allay his loneliness. But even such a good present did not seem to heighten his appreciation, for he lacked the knowledge of evil. It made little impression on his mind or heart. He seems to have taken it as a matter of course. Unlike the serpent, he was not cursed himself, but the curse was laid upon the ground, *for his sake*, for it provided the food needed for his nourishment. Hitherto the trees of Eden had provided an easy and agreeable source of sustenance. But now the ground would demand arduous labor, toil and sweat, even as it does today.

SHAMEFUL MORTALITY

Mortality is a combination of living and dying, like constant creation and daily dissolution. The flesh which was taken from the soil to form Adam's body is continually

being renewed, and regularly returned to its source. The breath, which gave life, is incessantly being inhaled and expelled. The resultant soul, which is evident in conscious sensation, is dormant in sleep and active only when awake. Just as darkness acquaints us with the virtues of light, and evil gives the knowledge of good, and as enmity blesses us with an appreciation of love, so God has wisely provided us with a constant course of lessons in the understanding and realization of the luxury of *life*.

Our eyes are dimmed by dying. They no longer can see further than an eagle's. Our ears are not as acute as a dog's. Our smell is not as sensitive as a bloodhound's. Far worse than that, we have become positively disagreeable to ourselves and others. We exhale poisonous, death-dealing gas. Our bodies exude ill-smelling sweat. We turn our tasty food into foul, filthy manure. We may rest assured that this was not so in the beginning, nor will it be so in the consummation. It is the effect of decay and death. Not only do men die and their bodies decay, and become so offensive that they must be disposed of, but we are already dying and decaying. We never had an undying body like Adam, so cannot realize the contrast as he did, but we should know enough to be thoroughly ashamed.

A. E. Knoch

BRUCE AND LUCILE WIMMER

God gives each believer a place in the ecclesia as He wills (1 Cor. 12:18,27). We do not know our future places except that God will use us in the display of the transcendent riches of His grace. But looking back at their lives we can see how God displayed His grace in Bruce Wimmer, who died on May 13 at age 87, and his wife Lucile (Johnson) Wimmer who died on August 25 at age 82, in Baldwin, Michigan. Bruce was always eager to serve, and Lucile was ever ready to calm and cheer with a timely word of Scripture. Those who knew them will miss their strong testimony of faith, even as the encouragement in faith which they conveyed to others on so many occasions.

YAHWEH ELOHIM IN GENESIS THREE

OUR ATTENTION is more easily drawn in Genesis 3 to the actions of the creature than to those of the Creator. But God is still the First Cause of all that is and all that happens. His activities are primary, and theirs are secondary. The activities of God shape the activities of the human pair in a way that corresponds with the pattern of the first chapter of Genesis. The divine doing is unfailingly effective and unwaveringly purposeful. But unlike God's works of creation which were direct (God Himself speaks, and it is done), God's operations are now carried forward indirectly, as the results of His preparations in chapter 2 and the constitution of the human as well as of the serpent whom He had made. Nevertheless, God remains in charge, knowingly and intentionally and effectively directing all to the end He has in view.

What we have learned of God in Genesis 1 and observed of Him in chapter 2 remains operative and true in chapter 3. All is out of Him, and all is channeled through His counseled activities.

ACTIONS AND REACTIONS

To be sure, Yahweh's actions in Genesis 3 appear as *reactions* to the human acts of disobedience and the serpent's acts of deception. What the creature does is now viewed as producing a response from Yahweh. But that is not the whole truth. The actions of Yahweh Elohim in Genesis 2 make it evident that the actions of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 do not develop apart from Him. Fur-

thermore, the actions of the serpent reflect the spirit of enmity and opposition that God had given it (*cp* Job 26:13; 1 John 3:8), and the actions of the human beings are in full accord with their inexperience within the setting in which God had placed them.

The chain of activity starts with Elohim. He made the creatures and made them with the traits and character they exhibit. Yahweh Elohim prepared the garden and planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He instructed the human and then made the woman who was left alone to face the crafty serpent whom He had also *made* (Gen.3:1). It is in relation to what God had made them to be and the situation He arranged that the deception and sin occurred. Therefore, it is as a third link in the chain, that God reacts to what His creatures have done.

But even here the chain is not complete. The divine actions of exposure and judgment recorded in Genesis 3:8-24 are responses to the acts of the serpent's enmity and the human pair's offense. But within those verses of Scripture Yahweh Elohim speaks of good to come. His works of curse and separation are complemented by a work of clothing the human beings and by words of promise which look ahead to the future.

The promises of good to come are not divine reactions to human actions but issue directly from the heart of God, looking forward to actions of God which He had planned ahead of time, before humanity sinned. They stem from the divine purpose which had indeed been stated in the terse words of Genesis 1:26, "Let Us make humanity in Our image and according to Our likeness."

In order for this goal of the making of humanity in Elohim's image and likeness to be achieved, it was necessary that the human race come to *know* good and evil. The craftiness of the Adversary by means of the serpent involved a mixture of truth and false insinuation, and without the

Adversary intending it, what the serpent says in Genesis 3:5 ultimately glorifies God. "Elohim *knows* . . . you will become like Elohim, knowing good and evil."

Therefore, we can see that the first two verbs connected with God in Genesis 3 are very revealing. He *had made* the serpent (3:1), and (in the words of the serpent) God *knew* (3:5) that humanity would become like Himself in knowing good and evil. But what the Adversary did *not know* was that this experience of humanity will eventually lead to their appreciation of God as their Saviour and Subjector and their All. Indeed we may well say, adapting the highly significant words of 1 Corinthians 2:8, had the serpent known God's wisdom behind the human acts of Genesis 3, it would never have done what it did.

The actions of God in Genesis 3, His *making* of the serpent, His *knowing* of the consequences of the human disobedience, and His *saying* of words (and *doing* of deeds) of exposure, judgment and promise, all of these are directed to the consummation of glory He has purposed. When they are related finally to the revelation of God made in and through His Son, Jesus Christ, they will all be seen as wise and right and good.

THREE CATEGORIES

As suggested above, the acts of Yahweh Elohim in word and deed in Genesis 3:8-24 can be grouped under three headings: Exposure, Judgment and Promise.

(1) EXPOSURE

His *walking* in the garden, His *calling* to the human pair and what He *says* to them in the form of questions (Gen.3:8-13) are all for the purpose of bringing their sin and condition out in the open. The human hides, and God makes manifest. Knowing what we are is necessary for our appreciation of what God is. (Hence Paul speaks first of the

human irreverence of unrighteousness in Romans 1:18-3:20 before he presents the grace and glory of God in the evangel of Jesus Christ's faithfulness in Romans 3:21-8:39.)

(2) JUDGMENT

The words and deeds of exposure are followed by words and acts of judgment in Genesis 3:14-24. In this category are Yahweh's *cursing* of the serpent and the enmity He *sets* between it and the Seed of the woman. Regarding the woman, Yahweh speaks of grief and groaning. And regarding Adam, Yahweh tells of grief and sweat and the return of his body to the soil. Finally Yahweh Elohim *sends out* the human, *driving him out* with his wife from the garden, and He *makes him tabernacle* elsewhere, *setting* cherubim to guard the way to the tree of life.

Yet in certain words of verses 15 and 16 and in His actions of verse 21, God points ahead to future actions of His which bring all His activities of Genesis 2 and His works of exposure and judgment in chapter 3 to the level of Genesis 1:31. It will all ultimately be seen as *very good.*

(3) PROMISE

There is no distinct word in Hebrew for "promise," but the verbs *say* and *speak* convey that sense when they refer to future blessings. The promises of Genesis 3 foreshadow the evangel concerning God "sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin," thus condemning sin in the flesh (Rom.8:3).

First of all, in cursing the serpent, Yahweh Elohim spoke of the removal of its usurped authority by the Seed of the woman. "He shall hurt you in the head, and you shall hurt Him in the heel" (Gen.3:15). To the Adversary the first part of this prophecy was and continues to be the very opposite of good news. But when all the sovereignty and authority of all the spiritual forces of wickedness is nullified in the reign of Christ (which results from the cross), he will become subjected in the process by which God becomes All in all (1 Cor.15:24-28), and this will be good for all without exception. By "hurting" Christ at Golgotha, the Adversary will be defeated. But in this defeat he and all enemies will be brought to bow most willingly before Him, to the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:9-11).

In His words of promise here in Genesis 3:15 we have the assurance that God will bring about the good of nullifying the Adversary's authority through the death of the One Who would be born of the woman. This coming of the Seed and His great "hurt" at Golgotha has occurred. Therefore, the good end of subjection and glory will also come to pass.

A second word of promise relating to Christ is found in Genesis 3:16. Here in addressing the woman, Yahweh speaks of *restoration* which is to come by her husband. Eve is told she may look to Adam as her husband for a return to the blessings of access and life they had enjoyed in the garden. But as with the expression "Seed of the woman," which points most particularly to Christ many years later, the restoration will not be fulfilled immediately by Adam fathering a son for Eve. Rather it will come much later through One Who would come into the race of which Adam is the progenitor.

These *words* of promise which Yahweh Elohim "said," are complemented by an *act* of promise noted in Genesis 3:21. His *making* of a covering, and His *clothing* of Adam and Eve served a particular need at that time. But these acts also are types of what God would do later for sinners in the gift of His Son. God would *make* Christ to be not merely a covering, but the Sin [Offering] that would rid the human race of sin; by means of the death of His Son God would provide not clothes of skin but His own righteousness as our very constitution (2 Cor.5:21; *cp* Rom.5:19).

WHO BECOMES GOD'S ADVISOR?

A Bible teacher recently asked me, "Do you believe that Adam and Eve made a genuine choice to rebel? Or do you accept the Calvinist claim that it was God who predestined them to sin, caused them to sin and then punished them for sinning?"

The actions of God in the second and third chapters of Genesis make it clear that this "Calvinist claim" is on target. As much as we may suppose this is unjust and contrary to what God would do, the Scriptures say He did do those things which made it impossible for Adam and Eve not to disobey. We would probably have advised God not to make the human so soulish, not to plant the tree in the garden or not to place man where He had planted the tree or not to make the fruit of the tree so desirable, not to draw Adam's attention to the tree and not to make the crafty serpent. But we are not His advisors. And that is a good thing (*cf* Rom.11:33-36).

When we consider the revelation of God's love in the giving of His Son for us, how can we hesitate to see God as doing the right and wise and good thing in every action of these opening chapters of His Word? I cannot speak for Calvinists, but I would hope they would reply to the critic above, as I do, by pointing out that God's actions which led to the disobedience of Adam and Eve, and His actions of judgment on them for doing what they could not avoid doing, are followed by His predetermined actions of sending His own Son to die for our sins and of making Christ to be a Sin Offering for our sakes and of vivifying Him and exalting Him above every power in the universe. We may be sure that, entirely apart from human reasonings about "genuine" choices, Adam and Eve will ultimately praise God with genuine praise and love Him with genuine love. And so will we all.

D.H.H.

THE BATTLE OF MOUNT GILBOA

31 **+When** the **Philistines fought**[l] [i]**against Israel,** + the **men of Israel** [l]**fled**[f] **before** the **Philistines, and** many [l]**fell slain** [i]**on** `**Mount Gilboa.** 2 + The **Philistines** [l]**followed** hard `after **Saul and** `after **his sons, and** the **Philistines** [l]**smote** `**Jonathan,** + `**Abinadab and** `**Malchishua,** the **sons of Saul.** 3 +**Then the fighting was** [l]**heavy** >**around Saul;** + **the shooters**[l], the **men** [i]**with** the **bow,** [l]**found him; and he** 7**was** [l]**wounded~ very** severely [f]**by the shooters**[l]. 4 +**So Saul** [l]**said to his** [all]**gear-bearer**[l]**, Draw your sword and stab me** [i]**with it, lest** `**these** `**uncircumcised** [l]**come and** ¯**stab me and** ¯**abuse** [i] **me.** +**Yet his** [all]**gear-bearer**[l] did **not comply, for he was very fearful.** +**Then Saul** [l]**took** `**the sword and** [l]**fell** up**on it.** 5 +**When his** [all]**gear-bearer**[l] [l]**saw that Saul was dead,** + **he´** [mr]**too** [l]**fell** up**on his sword and** [l]**died with him.** 6 +**Thus Saul** [l]**died, and his three sons and his** [all]**gear-bearer**[l]**,** [i]**on** `**that day, even all his men—~they died~ together.**

7 +**When** the **men of Israel who** were [i] **across the vale and who** were [i] **across the Jordan** [l]**saw that** the **men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead,** +**then they** [l]**forsook** 7**their~ cities and** [l]**fled.** +**So** the **Philistines** [l]**came and** [l]**dwelt in them.**

8 + **It** [l][b]**was**[f] **on** the **morrow** +**when** the **Philistines** [l]**came to strip** `those **slain,** +**that they** [l]**found** `**Saul and** `**his three sons, fallen**[l] [i]**on** `**Mount Gilboa.** 9 + **They** [l]**cut** off `**his head,** + [l]**stripped** him `of **his** [all]**gear, and** [l]**sent** messengers [i]**to** the

31:3 7-~ **was** [l]**wounded:** MT **was** in [l]**travail.**
31:6 ~-~ **they died:** *cf* 1 Ch 10:6.
31:7 7-~ **their:** Hb **the,** *cf* 1 Ch 10:7.

land of the **Philistines round about to** [m]**bear** the **tidings** to the **house of their fetishes and** `to ˙their **people.** [10] + **They** [l]**placed `his** [all]**gear** in the **house of Ashtaroth and fastened `his body** [i]**to** the **wall of Beth-shan.** [11] +**After** the **dwellers**[l] **of Jabesh-gilead** had [l]**heard ›about him (**[w]**what** the **Philistines had done to Saul),** [12] + **all men of valor** [l]**rose** up **and** [lgo]**marched all ˙night;** + **they** [l]**took** down `the **body of Saul and** `the **bodies of his sons from** the **wall of Beth-shan.** +**When they** [l]**came** back to[d] **Jabesh,** + **they** [l]**burned `them there.** [13] +**Then they** [l]**took `their bones and** [l]**entombed** them **under the tamarisk**◊ [i] at[d] **Jabesh; and they** [l]**fasted seven days.**

A BATTLE LOST

The battle was located in the valley of Jezreel (1 Sam. 28:4; 29:1,2), in the land of the tribe of Issachar. Apparently Saul and his three sons led the central battalion, and Abner and others led flanking divisions. The Philistine thrust was so strong that the Israelites were forced back. Saul and his division were ascending Mount Gilboa in retreat. The Philistines overpowered Saul; and when the flanking divisions saw that their king was lost, they fled for their lives, evacuating the cities in the immediate area.

Evidently, the battle extended into the darkness of the evening hours, because the prize of Saul and his sons was not fully realized by the Philistines until the following day. In the meantime, an Amalekite found Saul, and stole the insignia from his head and his armlet (2 Sam.1:10). The Philistine campaign gained holdings for them extending to the Jordan valley, and particularly the city of Beth-shan, a walled city which may well have been the main fortress in northern Israel. The account is also recorded in 1 Chronicles 10.

31:13 tamarisk: or, terebinth (1 Ch 10:12).

SAUL'S REIGN ENDS

The first seven verses of chapter 31 stand in sharp contrast with David's recovery of family and possessions from the Amalekites. David recovered all—wives and children—while Saul and his sons were killed. David came back to Ziklag, and retained possession of it, but the Israelites under Saul fled from their cities, losing their homes and possessions to the Philistines who came and dwelt there.

So also is the end of the rule which seems right to man in the flesh. Saul was the king Israel had asked for. Saul is the personification of the king the flesh would always choose to rule.

1 Samuel gives three symbols of rule all of which pertain to the flesh, and all of which were beheaded. Dagon was a Philistine god, and represents false religion that would rule God's people in the promised land. The statue of Dagon fell on its face before the ark of the testimony, and after being righted, it fell again and the head broke off (1 Sam.5:1-4). Goliath, the giant warrior, represents all the strength and skill and armament the flesh can amass. He fell dead on his face before the shepherd boy, and then David beheaded him with his own sword (1 Sam.17:49-51). Saul fell prostrate before Samuel's prophecy of his death, and he fell on his sword (face down) in the battle. Later the Philistines came and beheaded him (1 Sam.28:20; 31:4,9).

The rule of the flesh by the flesh ultimately comes to death while trying to establish itself. It cannot succeed. The rule of the flesh by faith crucifies the flesh that it may live in the power of His resurrection.

Nothing remained of Saul for his entombment other than his bones. Like the works of our flesh, judged by fire, nothing remains. Saul's weaponry was satirically hung in the house of a female god, and his body taken to Beth-shan, "the house of quietness."

LOYALTY

"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity" (Prov.17:17). "Greater love than this has no one, that anyone may be laying down his soul for his friends" (John 15:13).

Despite the many contrasts of Saul to David we should remember that he labored endlessly to deliver Israel from her foes. He was God's anointed and the best the flesh could offer.

It was his deliverance of Jabesh-gilead from the cruel slavery of Nahash the Ammonite that established Saul as the chosen king for Israel (1 Sam.11). Now came the day when Saul's reign ended. His body was abused and flaunted in mockery by the Philistines. Israel was infuriated, but too terrified to act. But those of Jabesh-gilead responded differently. Their gratitude and respect for their deliverer gave fear no place, but moved them with adamantine resolve to give their king the dignity of honorable burial. A number of valiant volunteers from Jabesh-gilead marched all night, took down the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, and brought the bodies back to Jabesh for burial. Then they fasted in mourning for seven days.

This act of respect and loyalty by the valiant of Jabesh brings to mind the day Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus came out of the closet and confessed their belief in Christ by providing for His burial. It recalls the morning when Mary came to face the Roman guard of soldiers at the tomb, even before the security of daylight had dawned. There are times when love demands loyalty that is deaf to all our pleadings of self-preservation and self-respect. The love of those from Jabesh-gilead gave hands and feet to their loyalty to their king. May our love make us as loyal to our Lord. "Fear is not in love, but perfect love is casting out fear" (1 John 4:18).

J. Philip Scranton

All Scripture is Inspired by God

ENCOURAGEMENT IN THE WORD

IN THESE present days of perilous periods, days when all who want to live devoutly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted, the need of encouragement or comfort is vital. When our trials seem beyond relief, when physical pain or anguish of soul seems more than we can bear, when our hearts are filled with despair, may we be still, recalling the apostle's words:

"What shall be separating us from the love of God in Christ Jesus? Affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? According as it is written, that 'On Thy account we are being put to death the whole day; we are reckoned as sheep for slaughter.' Nay! in all these we are more than conquering though Him Who loves us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.8:35-39).

Commenting on these words, Brother A. E. Knoch wrote,"God's love never lets us go. The trials and tribulations we endure are not tokens of His displeasure. They are all tempered by His loving heart. A sense of His love hovering over us in the midst of our distresses is the most blessed of all balms and will enable us not only to endure them but to enjoy them. Here all the great forces of the universe are arrayed, and none of them, no, nor all of them together, can come between us and the unconquerable love of our God as displayed in Christ Jesus.

"Death will be swallowed up by life. Life may lead us far from Him, but not beyond the reach of His love. The present perplexes us, the future fills us with fear, but only when we lose the sense of His love. Powers, celestial or terrestrial, are subject to His sway. Nothing above or beneath, nothing at all has the power to break the bond that binds the humblest and most unworthy saint to the throbbing breast of our great and glorious God. This is more than salvation from sin! *This is reconciliation!*"[1]

ALL SCRIPTURE IS INSPIRED

The warning of future apostasy and opposition is contained in the apostle's last letter addressed to "Timothy, a child beloved." How uplifting to note the tender love and concern. Realizing that his work is ending, and despite the terrible afflictions which he suffered in bringing the evangel, Paul now emulates the genuine compassion of his Lord: ". . . I have an unintermittent remembrance concerning you in my petitions, night and day, longing to see you, remembering your tears, that I may be filled full of joy, getting a reminder of the unfeigned faith which is in you, which first makes its home in your grandmother Lois, and in your mother Eunice. Now, I am persuaded that it is in you also" (2 Tim.1:3-5).

These touching reminders of former times of fellowship that Paul enjoyed with Timothy draw attention to Timothy's unfeigned faith which is traced back to his mother and grandmother. The apostle speaks again in this letter concerning Timothy's early acquaintance with the sacred scriptures which are able to make him wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Then Paul adds: "All scripture is inspired by God, and is beneficial for teaching, for exposure, for correction, for discipline in right-

1. A. E. Knoch, Concordant Commentary, p.239.

eousness, that the man of God may be equipped, fitted out for every good act" (2 Tim.3:14-17).

We must not devalue the Hebrew Scriptures. They are both beneficial and relevant to our lives.

GOD'S GRACIOUS REVELATIONS

How often our Lord referred to these consoling words! Even as a young Boy He was found by His distraught parents in the sanctuary, seated in the midst of the teachers, hearing them as they taught from the Word, as well as inquiring of them. And all those hearing Him were amazed and astonished at His understanding and answers (Luke 2:46,47).

In the synagogue at the commencement of His ministry, Jesus read from a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Indeed, all the prophets declare His arrival. John the baptist called on the records of the prophet (Isa.40:3) to herald His advent.

Thankfully, there are so many examples in the fulfillment of God's gracious provision of revelation. How often the Son of God's love quoted from these. May we turn to the ones which directly guide into the understanding of God's purpose. All such enlightenment must inspire and encourage.

GOD'S EVIDENT DELIGHT

As the ministry of Jesus progressed it swiftly became evident that, not only would His heralding of the kingdom be rejected, but soon His life would also be in jeopardy! Far from becoming frustrated, He perceived in this the unrevealed purpose of His Father. Without the encouragement and guidance of holy spirit His response and noble words would be completely enigmatic. However, for the ecclesia, they are words of life:

"At that season, answering, Jesus said, 'I am acclaiming Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for Thou hidest these things from the wise and intelligent and Thou dost

reveal them to minors. Yea, Father, seeing that thus it became a delight in front of Thee.

"'All was given up to Me by My Father. And no one is recognizing the Son except the Father; neither is anyone recognizing the Father except the Son and he to whom the Son should be intending to unveil Him. Hither to Me, all who are toiling and laden, and I will be giving you rest. Lift My yoke upon you and be learning from Me, for meek am I and humble in heart, and you shall be finding rest in your souls, for My yoke is kindly and My load is light'" (Matt.11:25-30).

Again, Brother Knoch's comments seem especially appropriate: "Though His ministry seems to be a failure, the Lord recognizes the fact that this is in accord with God's unrevealed purpose. He acquiesces in God's evident delight in hiding the truth from those who were wise and intelligent in the things of this life. He does not fret because He cannot reach them, because God's work is apparently without the anticipated results, for He has the consciousness that, in the final analysis, it is God Himself Who is operating all for His Own purpose and glory. It is not that those who rejected Him were blinded by some act of their own for which God disclaims responsibility. They do not see because God positively hides it from them.

"It is this God-consciousness, this recognition of His hand in all things, and more especially in that which is opposed to His apparent will, which gives His slaves heart's ease and rest in spirit. This is especially needed in days of apostasy. When we see the success of His enemies, the failure of His friends, when His own are enmeshed in the delusions of the last days, shall we blame those who must bear this load as they toil? How hard it is for their pride to be involved in failure! How great the temptation to throw off the yoke and insure success by methods of their own! O that they would learn to yoke themselves with Him, to bow humbly

beneath the failure that is according to God's underlying purpose! Then they will acquiesce when He blinds, as well as when He blesses. Then the yoke will no longer gall, and the load will float from their aching shoulders."[2]

THE PEACE OF GOD

In Scriptures there are many testimonies to the fact that Christ Jesus was the Firstborn of every creature. In the Colossian letter this is plainly stated without any equivocation (Col.1:15). Moreover, all is declared to be created in Him!

Thus in His sacred prayer Jesus declared, "Thou lovest Me before the disruption of the world" (John 17:25). The apostle Peter also was inspired to record that Christ was "as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, foreknown, indeed, before the disruption of the world" (1 Pet.1:19,20). Here is the One Who carries out the Father's determination and delight that all be reconciled through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Col.1:20).

Presenting Christ in this way, the Scriptures strengthen and encourage us in reliance on God and enjoyment of His peace in all times. It is as we perceive God's ultimate intention to be All in all, that we find all the satisfactory answers to the dilemmas of life. All of Scripture is powerful in fostering this endurance and peace.

"Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:4-9).

Donald Fielding

2. A. E. Knoch, Concordant Commentary, pp.25,26.

MARRIAGE AND THE BELIEVER
(Part Three)

PAUL'S WORDS REQUIRE WISE JUDGMENT

IN the case of the believer who has been forsaken by the unbeliever, since "a brother or a sister is not enslaved in such a case" (1 Cor.7:15), the forsaken believer may freely marry whomsoever he or she wishes. That is, such a one may do so "in the Lord" (*cf* 1 Cor.7:39b; *cp* 2 Cor.6:14). In so doing, not the slightest dishonor will come upon the name of God or upon any of His saints. Most particularly, no dishonor at all will fall upon the forsaken believer who now decides to marry someone else.

For that matter, even if the forsaken believer, regrettably, should fail in this and should marry an unbeliever, we should deal graciously and sympathetically with such a brother (or sister) with respect to any such disobedience. Indeed, God will surely deal graciously with any such offense, for He deals graciously with *all* of our offenses (Eph.1:7; Col.2:13b).

As we consider this theme further, let us not insist upon our own unwarranted suppositions, but seek to judge the words of the apostle *wisely.* After considering *all* Paul has to say bearing on the question, the reader may judge for himself whether the claim that death alone dissolves the marriage union is true or false.

The claim, as made by some, is that even those who are forsaken by their mates are *not* free to marry because such ones are married "for life" to their original partners.

Consequently, it is further claimed that any divorced believer whose first mate is still living must never even date, much less remarry. Also if it should be that any such person has already remarried, he or she must repudiate all such ties and live singly. It is insisted that such ones must do so no matter how awful their first marriage may have been or how excellent their second marriage may be, and even if the second marriage has brought forth children and resulted in a happy family.

It is said that while God will *forgive* all *sin* connected with such first marriages, nonetheless He will not *unbind* the marriages themselves; the only exception being if one or the other of the partners in the marriage should die. It is usually claimed as well, that unless the divorced believer (whose mate from a first marriage is still living) will live both singly and celibately, he or she cannot be saved.

Those who accept such teachings, yet fail to heed them, live under a terrible burden of misery and guilt. And even those who heed them, though finding satisfaction in their obedience, nonetheless nearly always experience much misery of their own, due to the deprivation and sorrow that results from their decision. This is especially true in those cases in which a good second marriage is destroyed and a happy family made miserable, all because either the father or the mother has become convinced that he or she, "for righteousness' sake," must now become a "spiritual eunuch."

The teachings about "being married for life" are propagated, primarily if not exclusively, because of an incorrect understanding of Paul's words in two passages, 1 Corinthians 7:39 ("A wife is bound by law for whatever time her husband is living") and Romans 7:2, 3a ("For a women in wedlock is bound to a living man by law. Yet if the man should be dying, she is exempt from the law of the man. Consequently, then, while the man is living, she will be styled an adulteress if she should be becoming another man's").

Perhaps the primary difficulty here, however, is in the Authorized Version's dreadful corruption of the Greek in Romans 7:2a, by its rendering, "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband *so long as he liveth.*" It should be, as in the Concordant Version, "For a woman in wedlock is bound to a *living* man by law" (the sublinear ultraliteral is: "THE for under-man woman to-THE LIVING MAN HAS-*been*-BOUND TO-law"; CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT, p.463).

To approach the Word of God with no more in hand than the Authorized Version or some other all-too-frequently lawless and discordant translation, is totally inadequate, not to mention dangerous. We need much guidance and wisdom even with a faithful translation before us, and cannot hope to gain a sound understanding without an accurate, concordant version.

Scriptural statements are correctly understood only as they are properly related to their actual subject. Correct judgments concerning any certain text are strictly a matter of wisdom and discernment, of competency and enlightenment, according to our total knowledge of all relevant facts. True understanding is the product of the employment of pertinent facts in a valid way, with a view toward a correct conclusion.

It will hardly suffice merely to make bold claims as to the significance of a passage, especially when, if the truth be known, we may never have realized that such a thing as varied senses in which a passage may be taken even exists.

THOSE WHO ARE SEPARATED ARE UNMARRIED

Concerning the question of the forsaken believer, we have the explicit testimony of the apostle Paul: "If the unbeliever *is* separating, let him separate. A brother or a sister is *not* enslaved in such a case" (1 Cor.7:15). In the nature of the case, the unbelieving man, who *has separated* himself, *is* separate and so *is no longer bound* to the believing woman. Likewise, then, neither is the believing woman from whom the unbelieving man has separated himself, bound to him. As Paul says, "A brother or sister is not enslaved in such a case." This can only be so because the forsaken believer is no more bound to the forsaking unbeliever than the forsaking unbeliever is bound to the forsaken believer.

What God yokes together, man is not to be separating (Matt.19:6); and indeed it is a sin when man makes such a separation. But when such a separation is made, it is made; *when* it is done, it *is* done.

The fact is that those who are *separated* are *un*married; they are "loosed" from their original mate, and so are no longer bound (*cp* 1 Cor.7:27). Let us take note of this fact in 1 Corinthians 7:11, a passage which we have already considered: "A wife is not to be *separated* from her husband. *Yet* if she should be separated also, *let her remain unmarried* (or be conciliated to her husband)."

Plainly, even in the ecclesia, the believing woman who becomes separated from her believing husband *is* unmarried. Such a woman is not *married,* but *un*married! Therefore it is ridiculous to claim that even the woman who was *formerly* married to an unbeliever, is *still* married to him—even if he has forsaken her!—and that, "in God's sight," she will be "living in adultery" if she should now marry someone else.

Even so, many will continue on in their error, glibly claiming that, "There are a great many people who are divorced in *the eyes of man,* who are nonetheless married in *the eyes of God*"; and, "God does not 'recognize' second marriages which result from divorce as proper marriages but only as sinful unions." The truth, however, is that there is no more reason to say that God declines to "recognize" (that is, to accept as such, apart from any appraisal

of inherent sinfulness) the human act of a second marriage (while one's first mate is still alive) than there is to say that God declines to recognize the human act of a first marriage. All such claims are merely false assertions and illogical reasonings based upon twisted views of certain scriptural passages. No one should believe them, for they are not *of faith;* that is, they are neither a scriptural declaration nor a corollary of a scriptural declaration. Instead, they are both *non*-scriptural and *un*scriptural.

The Scriptures know nothing of any relationship between a man and a woman which remains a marriage "in God's sight," notwithstanding the fact that one or both parties have *separated* from the other. God sees things as they are, and inspires His apostle to speak of them accordingly, the apostle Paul, to whom it was granted to convey the Lord's charge that those who have *separated* are to *remain unmarried* (or be conciliated to one another).

If the apostle had stated the obvious, perhaps clarification among some would not be so needful as it is. Yet since Paul, according to the wisdom of God, did not find it necessary to state that which of necessity is true, those who seem incapable of the most rudimentary deduction, continue to find some degree of plausibility in their error. Yet that plausibility evaporates when one observes that, in order to *remain* unmarried, one must of necessity *be* unmarried. Therefore one who is separated *is* unmarried. This is final and completely settles the matter for all who believe God.

No matter how popular and persuasive any such slogans such as "divorced in man's sight, yet married in God's sight" may be, the fact remains that they simply are not true. Yet due to their appeal and tendency to facilitate or even induce memorization, such catch phrases are not only dangerous to faith but ruinous to faith as well.

To help us grasp the truth, let us picture a children's

puzzle of two intertwining metal rings. While they are entwined, they are "married," "joined" or "united." Now, even if he should be told not to do so, if a clever child should figure out how to *separate* one of the rings from the other and should then do so, the rings *will be* separated, or, to say the same thing, they will no longer be married, joined or united. This is as true of one ring as it is of the other.

Another illustration is that of a book, a *bound* volume. As long as a given page remains glued to the spine, the page remains bound to the book. But if the page should be *separated* from its binding and removed from the book, it is no longer bound but is now *unbound.* Similarly, then, if one or the other of the partners in a marriage should separate from the former marriage partner, *neither* party is bound to the other any longer.

"TO ACCORD WITH WHAT MUST BE"

In all cases of divorce and remarriage, the sin consists not in the state of being remarried, but in the prior acts of separation and divorce which produced the unmarried state.

That which is ideal for those who are separated, and thus now unmarried, is, of course, not to marry someone else, but either to remain unmarried or be conciliated to their original mates. Nonetheless, except where special *saving grace* (*cf* 1 Cor.7:7; Titus 2:11) is given in order that the ideal might truly be effected, the flesh can no more heed (*cf* Rom.8:7) any counsel to follow the ideal than the dead can walk or speak.

While we do well to hold (correctly) that *man* is not to be separating what God has joined, we also do well to reserve to God the right to dissolve any union He has made. The Potter is in charge of the clay. In accord with His own inscrutable wisdom, God uses our injustice to commend His righteousness (Rom.3:5), and to accomplish His purpose.

The wider problem concerning this whole matter of divorce and remarriage is not the dreadful sins of adultery and divorce in themselves, but the hideous sins of self-righteousness and pride by so many—ones who themselves have never been divorced—when considering the failings of those who have become divorced. Such *self*-righteous believers, *in fact,* do not *actually* thank God *alone* that they have not committed adultery or become divorced. They pridefully imagine that those who have sinned in these ways could have avoided their course, any conditions being as they were notwithstanding.

This proud notion, however, is a false notion as well, for it is evident that no one can avoid what he is somehow caused to do. Indeed, few would care to say that human behavior is due to nothing at all. Besides, even if a certain act were somehow exempt from all causality, this would not afford a power of contrary choice to such an act. This is simply because a man could no more prevent engaging in an act of sheer chance than he can avoid doing that which is the effect of a cause.

The one who judges wisely and accepts the truth will see that, "to accord with what must be" (Rom.8:26), ultimately speaking, *all*—and therefore all human failure even as all human success—is out of, through, and for God (Rom. 11:36). As a result, our blessed Creator and Saviour will be glorified precisely as He *intends* to be glorified, and His creatures will be blessed accordingly, not otherwise. During the eons, God's wisdom dictates both the specific details concerning, as well as the precise degree of, both good and evil, according as He apportions them to each one of His creatures (*cf* Ecc.1:13; Isa.26:12). That is, God operates *all* according to the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11) toward a specific goal that otherwise could never be reached.

Men may indeed "mean it for evil"; even so, God "means it for good" (*cf* Gen.50:20, AV). As Joseph declared to his

brothers concerning their evil deeds against him, "'Do not be grieved or angry with yourselves that you sold me hither, because Elohim has sent me on before you to preserve lives . . . . Elohim sent me on before you to set up for you a remnant on earth and to preserve lives for you in a great deliverance. So now, not you sent me here, but the One, Elohim . . . . You devised evil against me, *yet Elohim devised it for good for me,* in order to accomplish, as at this day . . ." (Gen.45:7,8; 50:20,21).

How glorious to know, as the apostle Paul declares, that, "Whatever was written before, was written *for this teaching of ours,* that through the endurance and the consolation of the scriptures *we* may have *expectation*" (Rom.15:4).

Adultery is a sin not because of some imaginary concomitant power of contrary choice, but because it *adulterates,* thus debasing a pure and holy union by the introduction of an unclean foreign element. Separation and divorce are sinful simply because they do indeed *separate* what God had originally yoked together.

We are not to commingle with one who is named a brother "if he should *be* a paramour, or greedy, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner" (1 Cor. 5:11). We may by no means, however, continue to refuse fellowship to any such person once he no longer engages in such sinful ways. What he once *was* is of no consequence to our present fellowship. In this matter, we are not concerned with what he *was* but with what he *is.*

A believer who is living uprightly in a second marriage, a believer who is faithful to his present mate, should no more be stigmatized or shunned because he once separated from and divorced his wife, than the now-sober believer who was once a drunkard should be stigmatized or shunned because of his former drunkenness.

Our Saviour, Christ, *died* for these sins of our brethren, even as for our own dreadful and unclean acts, of which

we are now ashamed (*cf* Rom.6:21). Let us rejoice that in Christ we *all* are having the deliverance through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His grace which He lavishes on us (Eph.1:7). Indeed, the one who has committed adultery or separated and divorced from his mate, is not only forgiven, but is now even being "*justified* in [Christ's] blood" as well; and he, like ourselves, shall be saved from indignation accordingly (*cf* Rom.5:9).

The work of Christ is unspeakably great and transcendently powerful. Let us not lose sight of its true glory through our ill-disguised self-righteousness with respect to the failings of our brethren in matters of marriage. Let us not forget that we have many offenses of our own that are in at least as much need of the grace of God as the sins of those who have failed in marriage.

Of course it is ideal to remain married for whatever time one's mate is living; even as it is ideal for all the members of the ecclesia, whether married or not, to present their bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, and to be cleansing themselves from *every* pollution of flesh and spirit, completing holiness in the fear of God (Rom.12:1; 2 Cor.7:1). Even so, we will be in a position to bring special criticism and contumely upon those who have failed to live ideally in matters of marriage only when we ourselves have consummated the fullness of our own obedience with respect to all other matters (*cp* 2 Cor.10:6).

Just as all believers need to be *bearing with* one another *in love* (Eph.4:2), husbands and wives must be especially conscientious in heeding this mutual duty. It is true that none of us can go beyond the bounds of our own disposition, according to the measure of faith granted us by God (*cf* Rom.12:3). Therefore we need to be praying for a spirit of power and of love and of sanity, that we might truly be useful and pleasing to our spouses, our beloved partners in marriage. J.R.C.

THE SAVIOUR OF ALL, ESPECIALLY OF BELIEVERS

When Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15) He carried out this purpose by becoming the correspondent Ransom for all of them (1 Tim.2:6). God's will that all mankind be saved (1 Tim.2:4) was thus carried forward with assurance of its full and exultant realization in God's own time. Paul expresses this assurance later in 1 Timothy by these faithful and welcome words: *God is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers.* These words are not obscure, nor are they trifling. What they say is as clear and as significant as it seems.

1 Timothy 4:10

God is the Saviour of humanity, for He is the incorruptible, invisible, only and wise God (1 Tim.1:27), the One Who must save us if we are to be saved, and the One Who is willing to save us all (2:4). He Who is the Saviour of all mankind is the one God (1 Tim.2:5), the living God (4:10) and the happy God and only Potentate (1:11; 6:15), Who Himself offered up the gift of His Son for our approach in salvation to Him (*cf* Rom.8:32; Eph.2:8), Who will not fail in reaching His goal of good (*cf* Rom.8:28; 11:32-36; Eph.1:11). To Him be the honor and glory for the eons of the eons! Amen! (1 Tim.1:17).

God is the *Saviour* of mankind. From the beginning He has revealed Himself as Creator and Placer and the One Who chooses and blesses, judges and condemns. Through the ages, in His mercy, He has saved some of His chosen

from certain dangers and miseries and has spoken to them of future happiness and peace. But Paul speaks here of the salvation of sinners from sin (1 Tim.1:15), and a salvation into the realization of the truth (2:4). It is a salvation of sinful humanity, involving justification, vivification, subjection and reconciliation (*cf* Rom.5:1-9; 1 Cor.15:22-28; 2 Cor.4:6;5:21; Eph.1:7,15-23; Phil.2:9-11; Col:1:9-20). To be the Saviour where salvation is needed is God's way. He will not be content with the Title only.

God is the Saviour of *all mankind*, for there is no distinction among us when it comes to being sinners (Rom.3:23). The first revelation of God in Scripture is as Creator of all (Gen.1:1), and this is where we must begin our acquaintance with Him (*cp* Acts 17:23-25; Rom.1:20). But God has not made Himself fully manifest until all humanity perceives His saving grace and glory in the gift of His Son (Titus 2:11-14), and all are constituted righteous, vivified in Christ and reconciled to Him. This has been the major theme of these studies, sadly overlooked except to be disputed. But as witnessed by the important passages from Paul's epistles that we have examined, God's purpose to save all through the faithful obedience of His beloved Son is eminently scriptural and vitally evangelical.

God is the Saviour of *believers* in a *special* way, for He has already brought us into that experience of grace of which the apostle Paul was the pattern, overwhelmed with faith and love in Christ Jesus (1 Tim.1:14-16). And in the future, whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, then we also shall be manifest together with Him in glory (Col.3:4).

FAITHFUL AND WELCOME

It is a faithful saying which is worthy of all welcome that we may truly rely on the living God as Saviour. Who would doubt that? Even those who question the existence of God,

or who feel that if he exists he cannot be able (or willing) to save us, might still agree that what is said in 1 Timothy 4:10 would be welcome if the apparent meaning of the passage were true. Would it not be a good thing if every human sinner would be saved from sin? Wouldn't it be a convincing testimony to the power, wisdom and goodness of God as a living and active and victorious God if He saved all through the death of His Son? And wouldn't it give the believer increasing confidence in God and lead to a steadily growing reliance on Him in our current lives if we could believe these scriptures without qualification, accepting our God and Saviour as the Saviour of all mankind, Who will be manifested as such when He becomes All in all?

Yet here we are, nearly two thousand years after these words were penned, and this significant passage does not appear to capture much sustained interest among those who search and teach God's Word. For the most part, it seems to be shunned. If any passion is aroused over these words, more often than not it is negative, focused *against* any race-wide application of the words "all mankind" or sense of salvation from sin connected with the term "Saviour." Otherwise there is mostly a kind of subdued controversy over just what interpretation of these words will be most effective for showing they do not indicate the salvation of all mankind.

THE "POTENTIAL" SAVIOUR OF ALL

On one side of this dispute are those who connect 1 Timothy 4:10 with 1 Timothy 2:2-6 (surely correctly) where God is also spoken of as Saviour. They agree that Christ provided for the salvation of all in His death on the cross as the Ransom for all. Hence (so they maintain), God is to be seen as the *potential* Saviour of all, but (they insist) He is not and never will be the *actual* Saviour of all mankind. In this view, the divine potentiality will never be real-

ized, despite Christ's death on the cross for all sinners, and despite God's power and will and love.

Just why Paul would bring up a point that seems to say too much about the goodness of God and the achievements of the cross is difficult to perceive and explain. And why did he use the word "especially" if he meant "actually"? How did he happen to write in such a careless way that later generations of his "friends" would be kept busy putting the right spin on his words?

The melancholy effect of this reasoning is that a passage of Scripture speaking of the greatness and glory of God in the work of salvation is forced to indicate divine dependence on the sinner's will and faithfulness, both of which are weak and corrupt and lie at the very root of the calamity from which we need to be saved. In the work of salvation, what God is revealed to be ends up being highly qualified and dependent on what the human is thought to be.

THE "PROVIDENTIAL" SAVIOUR OF ALL

On the other side are those (relatively few) Christians who refuse to believe (surely correctly) that God can fail in achieving His purpose in the giving of His Son for sinners. Yet they also refuse to believe that God will save all mankind without exception through the death of Christ. In explaining 1 Timothy 2:4 they are generally satisfied with the claim that Paul was speaking of God willing the salvation of "all the elect" only. But that argument, unconvincing as it is even for the earlier passage, does not fit at all here because Paul adds that God, being the Saviour of all, is the Saviour of the believers (e.g., the elect) in a special way.

Nevertheless, because they are convinced the Bible teaches that, in God's sovereign counsels, some people will be damned to everlasting hell, these teachers doggedly fashion an explanation which will allow some sense to be found in the passage and still keep it from indicating the salvation of all human beings from sin. Consequently, it is somehow discovered that the passage speaks of God's merciful providence, His provision of life and sustenance for all humanity, or perhaps refers to a certain measure of divine protection from dangers and troubles that would otherwise occur.

This "general" salvation is not perhaps to be precisely defined, but it is associated with certain other passages of God's Word, such as Psalm 36:6 and Acts 17:25. The claim is that Paul brings in the idea of a saving Divine Providence at this point in order to encourage the believer who can expect a special measure of salvation of this sort in his or her life.

Again we may wonder why Paul would express such a point by the words of 1 Timothy 4:10 in the very epistle where he wrote of God as Saviour in direct association with the Ransom paid by Christ for all and with realization of the truth. Surely he has not forgotten the terminology he used in presenting the evangel both in this letter (e.g., 1:15 and 2:4,6) and throughout his ministry (*cf* 1 Cor.15:3, 22-28; Eph.2:8). Is not the believer's devoutness, spoken of in 1 Timothy 4:8, based on the "words of faith" and the "ideal teaching" (1 Tim.4:6) which Paul brought concerning Christ Jesus?

It is not Paul's intent to point to a general, divine provision of life and preservation as the basis for our reliance on God as Saviour. Paul's focus on God as Saviour centered on Christ Jesus Who came into the world to save sinners by His death on the cross, and so also should our reliance on God as our Saviour center wholly on His gift of His Son for sinners. All of us, believers and unbelievers alike are dying, and all of us face trials that are human (*cf* 1 Cor.10:13). But it is because Christ died for our sins that we can rely on God giving us endurance and patience and grace in our afflictions (*cf* Rom.5:3-5).

THE EVANGEL OF OUR SALVATION

The evangel which Paul brought is that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and has been roused the third day (1 Cor.15:1-4). This is an evangel of grace. Salvation from our sins is achieved by God in giving up His Son in His death for sinners. Our salvation is not *achieved* by our believing, but rather our believing is the channel through which God grants us that which has been gained for us. We are not asked to believe that our believing saves us from our sins, but that God saves us in the death of His Son.

We are not our own saviours. When we read in 1 Timothy 4:10 that God is the Saviour of all mankind, the whole theory of the eternal damnation (whether torment or annihilation) is shattered. Christ has already died for every sinner, and the sinfulness of any individual, no matter how great and strong, cannot change that evangelical fact.

The major loss to us in accepting that ours is a special salvation, not an exclusive one, is likely to be a loss of pride. Of course there will be many changes in our thinking about God and about the cross of Christ and about the details of future judgment and glory. This will not be easy for those who are well trained in traditional Christian doctrine. But the appreciation of the living God as the Saviour of all mankind is certain to enhance our appreciation of the goodness of our salvation and its power in our present lives. To know God as the Saviour of all mankind will strengthen our faith in God as our Saviour and our enjoyment and expectation of the special blessings He gives us in Christ.

In summing up the many passages of Scripture examined in this series of studies, 1 Timothy 4:10 can only increase our reliance on God as it explicitly verifies the wideness of His powerful and active work of salvation of sinners. Our Saviour is the Saviour of all mankind.

D.H.H.

241 Editorial
243 The First Offense
(Part 3)
254 Appointed by God
261 The Advent of God's Grace
269 Marriage and the Believer
(Part 4)
275 "Yet Now They are Holy"
279 The News of Saul's Death
285 A Suggested Translation
of Titus 2:11

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 2001
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-TWO

EDITORIAL

THE FORMER PROPHETS are the books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings. The publication of the Concordant Version of these portions of the Sacred Scriptures should be ready by the end of the year. This large print edition presented with the various typographical features and consistent renderings offered in previously published portions should make for welcome reading and re-examination.

If we read these books as history, noting only the deeds of the people involved, they will have to be classified as tragic literature. They begin with Israel's entrance into the promised land, and they end with the powerless king of Israel living a meaningless life of ease in Babylon.

But the value of these scriptures for admonition (1 Cor. 10:6,11), and for teaching, exposure, correction and discipline in righteousness cannot be truly appreciated until we see these writings as prophecies, declarations of God revealing Himself and pointing to Christ. This latter purpose is the key point of 2 Timothy 3:15-17. All of the Sacred Scriptures are able to make us wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Hence we should make special note of the evidence of the human need of salvation and of God's ability to provide it, while reading these books. At the very beginning of Joshua, Yahweh declares, "Every place on which the sole of your foot shall tread, I give it to you, just as I promised Moses" (Josh.1:3). Yet by the time we finish 2 Kings 25 it will have become abundantly clear that this promise is left unfulfilled. Nevertheless, examining these scriptures with faith in God and assurance that He speaks truly (*cf* 1 Cor.

2:14), we hold to the promise of Joshua 1:3 despite all the evidence to the contrary. Israel will be saved and possess the promised land, and this will be because the One Who is the Antitype of Joshua, holding the very same name in its Greek form, Jesus, will save and bring them safely into this promised possession.

It is this conviction of God's ability to bring about what He promises that led Joshua to aver, "I and my house, we shall serve Yahweh" (Josh.24:15). So also Gideon and David and many others, at notable intervals of time throughout these books, were given a trusting reliance on God and obedience to His word. In this they testified to their recognition of their own insufficiency and their dependence on God.

These occasional testimonies of faith and examples of faithfulness are joined with the overwhelming accumulation of testimonies to human stubbornness and failure throughout the Former Prophets, making the reader wise and ready for the evangel of our salvation centered in Christ Jesus our Lord. These scriptures make it clear that no promised blessing can come unless God gives it. And to this testimony we add that of the evangel: God's blessings will be given only through His Son.

Romans 3:3,4 can be taken as an ideal guide for appreciation of the Former Prophets. "For what if some disbelieve?" The word "some" seems an understatement as we read through these accounts of Israel's history from the time they entered the land until they were taken to Babylon. "Will not their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God?" That is the critical question which must be asked when we finish these books. And the answer to that question must be that of Paul, "May it not be coming to that!"

God is faithful. What He has said will be is what will be. "Now let God be true, yet every man a liar."

D.H.H.

THE FIRST OFFENSE
(Part Three)

SPIRIT is a force. Flesh is a substance. The life of the flesh comes from the spirit's presence. When the spirit leaves, the flesh dies and decays. In mortality this process is continually going on, but it is seen more clearly in death. When the spirit-imparting breath no longer renews the flesh, its organic structure disintegrates, and its particles return to their elements, unless they are used as food by other life forms. For this reason the word *flesh*, in the Scriptures, as distinct from *body*, is used as a figure of what is bad in mankind, because it becomes foul and fetid apart from life-giving spirit.

THE SENSE OF SIGHT

The sense of sight detects the amount of life in any organism. To use a simple example, what a difference there is between a rose in full bloom and the same flower, with petals faded and sear, or fallen to the earth! But much greater is the contrast between the blooming cheek of a child and the haggard horror of decrepit old age! And this is nothing compared with the sight of a cadaver from which all life has fled.

THE SENSE OF SMELL

The soul senses the presence of spirit by means of smell as well as sight. A living rose may fill the air with its fragrance, yet the same rose, plucked from the source of its life, begins to decay, and before long it may smell anything

but sweet, so that it will poison the air of a sick room. And so it is with food. Fresh from its source, it smells appetizing, for there is still much life in it, which it imparts to the eater. But if its decay is not checked, it soon informs the nose that it is not fit for food. This is a real source of life-force for the flesh, because the vitality of the food can be transferred to other living forms, without decay.

Plants, as well as animals, thrive best if they can absorb their life from previous living forms, notwithstanding the fact that they can derive their substance direct from the soil. Some plants, like animals, seem to have a round of life that corresponds to mortality in man. They shed their leaves and reabsorb their substance with their roots.

SPIRIT AND LIGHT

The first manifestation of the spirit's vibration was *light* (Gen.1:2,3). All forms of life emanate a form of vibration, which can be sensed, but is not always visible to human sight. There are also forms of vibration, which might be called light, which are invisible, yet can be perceived with other senses than sight, or by other means. We hear much about it these days under the name of electricity, or radio, or radar, or atomic energy.

Life is a higher stage of spirit radiation than light, yet its highest form, as we have seen, is accompanied by light. Even the human body has a kind of aura, a subtle, invisible emanation, effluvium or exhalation, akin to the odor of flowers, or better still to the field of a magnet. Most of us can sense the presence of another person in a dark room by this aura. Human life is not altogether confined within the body. It has a wide electrical field. Were the vibrations of the proper strength and frequency, the body would glow like a neon light and be enveloped in a luminous aureole. As the psalmist put it, it would be clothed with light as with a garment (Psa.104:2).

Adam and Eve, When first created, were not mortal in the sense that they were dying. Death was not operating in them at all. Such was their vitality that their aura was not the weak remnant we possess, but powerful enough to clothe them with luminous robes of light. Their flesh was hid behind its emanations. That is why, although they were naked, they were not ashamed. Had we such a living covering of light, we would have a more glorious garment than any of earth's dignitaries. We would be welcome to show ourselves in the highest circles with no other covering.

WHAT DYING INVOLVES

When mortality came to Adam and Eve, and they commenced the dying process, their diminished vitality manifested itself first of all in the practical disappearance of the aura of light which had adorned them before. Hence the first effect was a feeling of shame. They probably still were more beautiful than any couple since their day, but the vast deterioration offended their senses. They began to look bad and smell bad. Even now we speak of "body odor" as something to be ashamed of. It is, in reality, the odor of our *dying flesh*, due to lack of life, or spirit.

The first effect of dying upon Adam and Eve was to make them feel ashamed, because of their lack of clothing. There is a great spiritual truth indicated by this, but first let us consider the literal side. They lacked a material covering before this, yet were not ashamed. What change took place to arouse this distressing feeling? The word dying indicates a gradual loss of life, of vigorous vitality. We have never seen anyone who possesses the life imparted to Adam and Eve before they began the dying process. A very feeble intimation may be seen in nature. So long as fruit is growing on a tree it does not lose vitality. But when it is plucked, severed from the source of life, it begins to decay. This is very slight, at first, but eventu-

ally it rots and returns to the soil from which it came. So is it with humanity when severed from the life of God.

THE TRANSFORMATION

Perhaps a good intimation of the appearance of a fully vitalized body is given us in the transformation of our Lord. Then His face shone as the sun (Matt.17:2). But that was not His normal appearance, as He still was mortal, with the possibility of dying on the cross. Better still is His appearance to Saul, after He had been raised from the dead and possessed immortality. Paul saw the Lord (1 Cor.9:1) but in the account of his first meeting Saul perceived only a considerable light flashing about him, so bright, indeed, that it blinded him (Acts 9:4; 22;6). No doubt, His was a celestial glory, such as we will have when our soulish bodies will become spiritual, and the soilish will become celestial. It is not likely that the bodies of our first parents were as glorious as this. Yet it may help us to see what change is wrought by an unlimited supply of vitality. The mortal Man of sorrows did not have the glory of the transformation (Matt.17:2).

KILLERS

Not only are we ourselves dying, but we lead a killing, murderous existence. Before they sinned, the primal pair seem to have fed on the pulp of fruits. This provided them with the vitality of the tree without destroying it. After sin came in, humanity has turned largely to the seeds and other parts of plants, and to the flesh of animals, which necessitates their death. Many who would shrink at the very idea of killing any living creature, live largely on slaughtered flesh. All Israel ate the paschal lamb. The priests lived mostly on the sacrificial victims. Their bread was made by crushing the seed of the grains. This is God's will, and His way of teaching us the great lesson that there is no

spiritual life apart from the death of the great Sacrifice. Daily we are reminded that our life depends on the death of another. How many animals have been slain, and how many millions of seeds have been crushed, to provide us with the means of prolonging our slow death! Is it not a humiliating shame?

PROPER CLOTHING

The sense of shame induced by the loss of their glowing aureole induced Adam and Eve to improvise a covering. Their first flimsy device consisted of a girdle of dying fig leaves. As man's first attempt to conceal the shame of sin, this is probably meant to symbolize all human efforts in this direction. Figuratively speaking, man has never been able to do much better. One thing is sure, it did not seem sufficient, even to them, to meet the eyes of Yahweh Elohim. Otherwise, why did they hide themselves from Him in a tree? Later on, Yahweh Elohim made them a better covering, a tunic made of the skin of an animal. The tunic was the usual foundation garment in the orient, and covered the most of the body. In this case it consisted of the dead skin of a living soul. Here we seem to have the first faint hint of a propitiatory shelter. Adam and Eve made the mistake similar to that made by Cain later, of ignoring the suffering which alone can suffice to shelter them from sin. Blood from a soul must flow to clothe them in the eyes of Yahweh.

Nakedness is shameful because it exposes the mortality of man. Clothing does not remove the shame, but only covers it from dim-sighted mortal eyes. Garments are an acknowledgment and a badge of shame, and should be worn as such, and conform to this basic idea. Only those who are blind to this and do not realize the truth, will seek to make it a means of adornment and pride. That is why it is to be decorous, modest and sane, rather than decora-

tive. The only real adornment these days consists of spiritual virtues and good deeds. The exceptions to this are those costumes which represent and symbolize the true spiritual covering which will eventually displace the shame of mortality with the glories of immortality, or the glories of our spiritual covering in Christ.

Why did Adam and Eve's girdle skirts of fig leaves displease Yahweh, yet the tunics of skin suffice? Probably the girdles covered only the middle of their bodies and the tunics much more, but that is no vital difference. In both cases there was death. The fig leaves, severed from the tree, would soon dry up and die. The skins would probably last much longer, but they, also, would eventually wear out and disintegrate. The difference lies deeper, in the *character* of the death which provided the covering. The tree had no sensation, no soul, so did not *suffer* when the leaves were severed from it. The animal was a living *soul*, and, having blood, it *suffered* in its death to provide cloaks for their shame. The leaves spoke of the cursed ground and the sweat of Adam and were the *work* of their hands. The tunics indicated the suffering of the slain animal, and were the work of Yahweh, the Subjector. One was a type of human deeds, the other of the propitiatory shelter in Christ's blood.

The tunics of skin were eloquent tokens of the Saviour's sacrifice, which fully sufficed to cover their shame and shelter them from any storm which would utterly sweep away their fig-leaf girdles. But it did not set forth His higher glories. Later on, when the mediatorial mission of God's Christ was to be symbolized, the mortal shame of the high priest was covered with a white robe of righteousness and garments for glory and beauty (Ex.28:2). *Here adornment was in place*, for the chief priest represented the immortal Messiah, clothed with all the spiritual graces and glories for His mediatorial mission.

THE RACE DOOMED

Apart from Eve the human race was doomed to death and extinction. Mankind might continue to generate billions upon billions, but all would be mortal, and only help to turn the earth's surface into a vast cemetery full of foul corruption and dead men's bones. All would be mortal and sin and suffer in their short span of life, so that earth would become one vast purgatory, but without any purging of their sins. No man could *generate* a saviour, but a woman could *bear* the Saviour, Who would transform this house of sorrow and death into the home of life and unending joy. Satan used Eve to channel death to the race, but God has used Mary (Bitterness) to bear the One Who will abolish death, and provide it with resurrection life and immortality.

EVE REVIVES THE RACE

Notwithstanding the fact that, in creation, *Adam* was the one who was given life directly from God, and the further fact that Eve was used as the means of bringing in *death*, Adam named her "Eve" (*Chue*, Living). He was looking forward, not backward. She was to channel his life to all the race, but far more than that. The present life was under the doom of death, and eventually, almost all would return to the soil. But through a *woman*, Mary, the mother of our Lord, *apart from the Adamic seed*, the Life Giver would come and bring the boon of life eonian for the saints, and immortality for all when death is finally abolished. So Eve, rather than Adam, is the real channel of life for the human race. She is well named *Living*!

THE SPIRIT IN EVE

Elohim did not blow into Eve's nostrils the breath of life as He had done to Adam (Gen.2:7,22). She received

the spirit while still a part of Adam. Neither does she pass it on to her progeny. Although possessing the spirit of life, she could not pass it on. Neither could Adam apart from her. This is shown by the hen. Her eggs look the same whether fertile or not. Put an infertile egg into an incubator, and keep it warm for a time and it will spoil. It has not received the life-giving spirit from the male. But a fertile egg put in the incubator will generate another chicken. The spirit gives life, not the flesh.

THE SPIRIT IN MAN AND CHRIST

There is this difference between Christ's spirit and our human spirit. We receive ours by generation from Adam, who received his by inspiration from Elohim, the Subjector. Christ did not partake of this spirit, for He had no human father. His came by generation, direct from Elohim, which made Him the only *begotten* son of Elohim, commonly called "God." His was purely divine, although His body was human, derived from Adam through His mother Miriam, or Mary. Believers also receive a measure of this spirit by faith when they believe, so that they become members of Christ's spiritual "body" in this life. They lose their human spirit in death. Christ vivifies them when He calls them into His presence in resurrection (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22,23).

CHRONOLOGY IS MASCULINE

Hebrew chronology is counted only through the male line. The female is not reckoned. In some cases women, even foreign ones, are so frequent that, if the female counted the same as the male, and, in each case, halved the percentage, and thus affected the purity of the pedigree, there would be little left. In that case, even the line of our Lord could be called in question, with such characters as Rahab and Thamar to spoil His pedigree back to Abraham.

It appears from this that the vital element in generation is provided by the father, and the physical from the mother This may account for the strong predilection for sons, in the orient. A wife who does not bear sons for her lord is liable to be dismissed, no matter how many daughters she may have borne for him. Even in western lands, especially Europe, the whole of heraldry and the laws of inheritance recognize the primary place of sons, especially the firstborn.

RECEIVING THE SPIRIT

When we believe and receive the spirit of God through His Word, there is no radical change in our physical frames or our mental machinery, as will be the case when we are resurrected and vivified, and our bodies changed from soilish and soulish to celestial and spiritual. But even a single word from God will *affect* our souls and our bodies, because it is spirit and is life.

THE TREE OF LIFE

Beside the tree of the knowledge of good and evil the garden also contained the tree of life, which evidently had the power to prolong life indefinitely, even while suffering the effects of dying. Had Adam had access to it he might be living today. What a sorry spectacle he would make! Many men become a burden to themselves and others when they are only one-tenth as old as he became. If he had any of his faculties left, they would only enable him to suffer. The days of extreme old age are evil (Ecc. 12:1). Therefore the human pair were driven from the garden, and the cherubim were stationed between them and the tree of life, to hinder him from prolonging the evil indefinitely. *Evil is not a permanent feature of the universe*. One lifetime and its judgment suffices to fulfill its function of revealing good.

In the future, in the new earth in which there will be no more doom, when the lesson of evil has been learned, mankind will have access to the "tree" of life once more (Rev.22:2). But it will be a radically different kind of life. In the original Greek the "tree" is called a "wood," a log, a *dead* tree. This is hard to express in English. I once translated it "the *log* of life," but everyone seemed to find it an impossible rendering. Nevertheless we have translated it the "*wood* of life," *Holz des Lebens* in German. The thought underlying it seems very wonderful. It is the symbol of life *after death, resurrection* life. That life may well be eonian, and last until death is abolished, when all receive endless life (1 Cor.15:26; 2 Tim.1:10), for it will be filled with good, because mankind has been restored to fellowship with Elohim on the basis of the knowledge of evil.

THE CHERUBIM

The name cherubim is similar in sense to *Adam*. We might paraphrase them thus: Adam means LIKE (one), and cherubim denotes AS-MANY. Adam was like God, but the cherubim were a composite similar to many animals of the land and air, including man. The four heads of the soulish creation, the human, the calf, the lion and the vulture, are represented. Accompanied by a flaming, revolving sword they kept Adam from the tree of life. All the soul life on the earth; even mankind itself hinders the return of the race to the luxury which it enjoyed in the garden of Eden.

THE LOSS OF GOD'S LIKENESS

When Adam was banished from Eden he lost much of his likeness to God. This consisted of his sway over the lower animals. In the garden they were completely subservient, but, when he was expelled, he no longer had the same power over them as before. The tables were turned. Adam's sway over the animals was broken. This is still evident in the wilds of the earth and will not be recovered until the second Adam sways over the earth in the future.

TABERNACLE EAST OF EDEN

No shelter seems to have been necessary in Eden. But, when Adam was driven out into the open ground outside, he built a temporary tabernacle. At the same time, however, Yahweh also moved out with him, so that he and his family, especially his sons, still lived in communion with the Subjector, able to converse with Him. Thus ended the first episode in human history. It is concerned with the introduction of evil through the offense of Adam. The next movement is associated with Cain, and is concerned with *worship*.

A. E. Knoch

THE FORMER PROPHETS

As indicated in our Editorial, we anticipate having THE FORMER PROPHETS in stock in late December (8½"x11" page size, large print, 331 pages; perfect bound with laminated cover; price to be announced). The Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings) are *prophecies,* not in the predictive sense, but in the divine-spokesman sense. Prediction is only incidental to prophecy, not essential thereunto. God *speaks* through the mouth of His *prophets* (Luke 1:70); hence, the prophet (*prophêtês,* BEFORE-AVERer) is the one who avers or asseverates the word of God *before* (i.e., in the presence of) His people.

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Unregretted is the Calling of God

APPOINTED BY GOD

Sweet is the work, my God and King,
To praise Thy name, give thanks and sing,
To show Thy love by morning light,
And talk of all Thy love at night.

How gracious is our God and Father. How lovingly He cherishes as the wise unfolding and outcome of His great purpose approaches. For Him, there are no surprises; no disappointments; certainly, no impatience.

Consider then, that His dear Son should *marvel,* that He should *wonder with astonishment*! This very rare reaction happened when a centurion requested that his servant, a paralytic, should be healed. How deeply impresssed was our Lord at such implicit trust that one word, just one, would suffice (Matt.8:8-10).

GOD IS NOT INDIFFERENT

God's operations both with Israel and the body of Christ are essential for humanity and also the celestials. The great Subjector has determined that through such records all creation should learn, not just the hopelessness of being apart from His sustaining love, but the absolute dependence and precious filial state of Father and children. God's purpose is thus inexorable, but it should not, at any time, be considered as being undertaken with implacable indifference. What God has counseled involves much sorrow and pain, but He directs these necessary events forward from His heart. Through His Son He shall be All in all.

NO HIDING PLACE

As often noted by our Lord, the immediate future of Israel is set, immutable. In view of its fearful history and near-genocide, we pause in awe as we recall those ominous words: "His blood be on us and on our children!" (Matt.27:25).

The lamentable condition of believers, misled by the deceptions prevalent throughout Christendom, is, in many respects, similar to the deplorable behavior of those in Galatia. It is recorded that the apostle *marvelled*, but his astonishment was unmistakably filled with dismay.

"He put them under an anathema, because they had distorted the evangel of Christ by mixing law-keeping into the pure grace which he had given them, making it into a different evangel, which is not another. In this way he did the ecclesia a valuable service. For its whole history he explains this contest as follows: 'to whom, not even for an hour do we simulate by subjection that the truth of the evangel should be continuing with you' (Gal.2:5). By this we can see that there may be cases, when mistaken amiability must never interfere."[1]

Thus, whether of Israel or the nations; throughout all humanity, there is not one single exception to this bleak estrangement from the Creator. As the Scriptures declare, "Not one is just—not even one. Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God" (Rom.3:11). As our ancient parents discovered, *there is no hiding place*! "And hiding are the human and his wife from the face of Yahweh Elohim, in the midst of a tree of the garden" (Gen.3:8).

"LET HIM BE CRUCIFIED"

There can be no denying a charge of brutal, callous mur-

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.47, p.95.

der against those who, calling for the release of Bar-Abbas, demanded, "Let Him be crucified" (Matt.27:11-26).

"It seems almost incredible, when His Own nation is against Him, His Own disciples afraid to speak a word in His favor, that an alien woman steps in to plead the cause of a just man she may never have heard of before. True, it was the direct cause of divine intervention. But every other act and attitude in this scene can, in its last analysis, be traced to God's foreordination. It must remain a marvellous intimation of God's ways that she alone should voice a solemn protest against the travesty of justice in which Pilate was weak enough to become involved."[2]

PARADISE

Speaking of the unfolding of prophesied blessings for Israel, our Lord urged that when men are filled with apprehension and fear, and when the powers of the heavens are being shaken, then they shall be seeing the Son of mankind coming in a cloud with power and glory. "Now at the beginning of these occurrences, unbend and lift up your heads, because your deliverance is drawing near" (Luke 21:27,28).

Christ Jesus, He Whom His people violently rejected, shall then confirm all the blessings for Israel. Callousness shall be removed, and all Israel shall be saved, according as it is written, "Arriving out of Zion shall be the Rescuer. He will be turning away irreverence from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them whenever I should be eliminating their sins" (Rom.11:26,27).

He shall then be giving authority to Israel over the nations, and shall be shepherding these with an iron club. A measure of this discipline was learned—to their cost—by Ananias and his wife Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). This period

2. A. E. Knoch, Concordant Commentary, p.53.

of a thousand years, when the Adversary is restrained in the submerged chaos (Rev.20:1-3), is a glorious time of peace and happiness. Jesus Himself described it as paradise (Luke 23:43). Such then, has been promised to Israel upon their restoration. Our Lord, the great To-Subjector, keeps His promises!

PREDICAMENT

As declared, among humanity, and even those denizens of the celestials there is helpless estrangement from God. Here on earth this shall be lovingly resolved through the service of Israel, Christ's beloved, because of the fathers. (Rom.11:28). But the celestial predicament persists.

Once more, in this situation, we perceive from the precious records, that God's purpose unfolds. Speaking to the disciple, Ananias, in Damascus, concerning a bitter enemy, Saul, our risen Lord declares, "Go, for he is a choice instrument of Mine, to bear My name before both the nations and kings, besides the sons of Israel" (Acts 9:15). Thus Paul, as he became known, was enlisted to bear the revelation of the secrets of the evangel for the ecclesia, which is Christ's body, "the complement of the One completing the all in all" (Eph.1:23).

Writing to the saints in Rome—these whom God designates, calls and justifies—Paul declares, "For unregretted are the graces and calling of God. For even as you once were stubborn toward God, yet now are shown mercy at their stubbornness, thus these also are now stubborn to this mercy of yours, that now they also may be shown mercy. For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:29-32).

CONFORMED

We now turn our thoughts to those who await a Saviour out of the heavens. These whether living or reposing, shall

be summoned by the Lord Himself, changed, in an instant, in the twinkle of an eye, and caught up together to meet Him in the air. And thus shall they always be together with the Lord (1 Thess.4:13-18).

In all this universe there is not one creature who is more noble, majestic, or omnipotent than the Son of God's love. Seated now in celestial glory, at the right of God, He anticipates an unfolding of the great secret, this most wonderful portion of creation's love story, the revelation concerning the ecclesia which is His body. The members of this body, this complement of the One completing the all in all—every single one—are to be transfigured, *conformed to the same body and nobility of Christ Jesus*! With One single exception, there shall be none more blessedly approved and appointed by God than these. Oh, the privilege of such expectation!

This is so momentous a disclosure of the future that we do well to present it faithfully:

"For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself" (Phil.3:20,21).

Except and only should the wonder of such stupendous blessing be revealed through God's spirit, it must remain, until such revelation, not merely enigmatic, but positively hidden from all, save those for whom these glories are reserved. Messengers, couriers, are even now waiting this transfiguration. To these, together with those whom God has designated, the secret which speaks of God's "multifarious wisdom" has already been confided (Eph.3:8-13). Today, at this very moment, every move, each word or gesture, is being relayed to the celestials. What are they learning? How may the misery of our present deep humiliation instruct?

THE WORKS OF GOD

Twice in one letter to the saints at Corinth, Paul stresses, "All is allowed me, but not all is expedient" (1 Cor.6:12; 10:20). He enjoins each one to be remaining in the calling in which they were called (7:20). He faced a serious challenge in this city (2:3). Such was the certainty, that although he remained there for eighteen months, engaged—to their shame—in menial labor, he was unable to confide the marvels of his later revelations.

Once more, as the proximity of our Lord's summons draws near, we perceive the wise provision of God for this present day—for the inevitable difficulties of bringing the evangel. Throughout Scriptures we perceive how characters, incidents, and examples prepare for that which is ahead. Even the most reprehensible serve. Is there immaturity? Are there divisions? Is there a fearful wresting of Scriptures? Is there disgraceful immorality? All these have occurred and have been duly recorded.

Yet God continues to operate toward His goal. We are reminded of the occasion when the Jews questioned our Lord concerning a man born blind. The answer which Jesus gave surely supports the above observation: "Neither this man sinned, nor his parents, but it is that the works of God may be manifested in him" (John 9:1-7). In these days of apostasy, many will hastily murmur that this seems hard, but let us read on and learn how the man answers the mischievous challenge of the Pharisees, "Except this Man were from God, He could not be doing anything" (9:33). Nothing occurs apart from God's counseled will (Eph.1:11).

THE TRANSIENT EXPERIENCE OF EVIL

Regarding the experience of this man who was born blind, Brother Knoch observed:

"The experience of evil and sin is transient: the mem-

ory of it will never pass away, but will always remain as the essential background apart from which God's goodness and grace never could be revealed. God's heart would always remain hidden apart from evil and sin. If this man's blindness had never been removed it would have revealed God's impotence and hate. So, if evil and sin are eternal, they will throw their darkest shadow upon the character and feelings of God, and thus defeat the very object for which they exist"[3]

DIVINE SERVICE

In commencing his letter to the fleshly and immature Corinthians, Paul did not speak with thunderous, indignant denunciation, no indeed! but with thanksgiving to God: "I am thanking my God always concerning you over the grace of God which is being given you in Christ Jesus, for in everything you are enriched in Him" (1 Cor.1:4). Here is the gracious example set for all. May these closing words reach all our hearts to emulate such devotion in offering our own divine service:

"I am entreating you, then, I the prisoner of the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, with all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace: one body and one spirit, according as you were called also with one expectation of your calling; one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all" (Eph.4:1-5).

My heart shall triumph in the Lord,
And bless His works, and praise His Word.
Thy works of grace, how bright they shine,
How deep Thy counsels, how divine.

Donald Fielding

3. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.155.

THE ADVENT OF GOD'S GRACE

THE BASIS of the salvation of all mankind is Christ's death for sinners, followed by His resurrection and exaltation. The faithfulness of the One Who shed His blood for all is what brings about life's justifying for all (Rom.3:22; 5:8,18,19). It is in Christ Who died for our sins and was roused that all who are dying in Adam will be vivified (1 Cor. 15:3, 4,22). The exaltation of Christ with all bowing in the name of Jesus, the Saviour, and all acclaiming His Lordship for the glory of God the Father arises from His obedience to the death of the cross (Phil.2:8-11). The reconciliation to God of all on earth and in the heavens is accomplished through the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love (Col.1:13-20). That God is the Saviour of all mankind is God's accomplishment through Christ Who gives Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:4,6; 4:9,10). It is all of God through Christ, gratuitous and full of grace.

Paul's concern in writing is the edifying of the believers. Consequently he focuses on the evangel of God as it particularly relates to us. But since our blessings are based on God's purpose for all mankind, on what Christ has done for the entire human race, it is altogether natural that he will bring this wider view forward at significant points.

As we have seen, for example, the apostle guides us toward a prayerful concern for all mankind on the basis of God's will to save all (1 Tim.2:1-4), and encourages us in devoutness in light of the fact that God is the Saviour, not only of the believers, but of all mankind (1 Tim.4:8-12). A similar pattern is displayed in Paul's letter to Titus.

THE GRACE OF GOD

In Titus 2:11,12, Paul writes, "For the grace of God made its advent for salvation to all humanity,[1] training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon."

The *advent* of God's grace is the *intervening, rescuing appearance* of God's joyful favor to humanity in the gift of His Son. In Titus this revelation of God's grace focuses, as it does throughout Paul's ministry, on the death of Christ and its effects. It is the evangel that Christ "gives Himself for us, that He should be redeeming us from all lawlessness" (Titus 2:14); it is the saving and justifying work of God which is channeled through Jesus Christ (Titus 3:4-7). This is the evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.1:1-5), that Christ died for our sins and was entombed and has been roused the third day (1 Cor. 15:1-4). This appearance of God's grace in Christ's death for sinners lies at the very root of what Paul calls *the faithful word* and *sound teaching* (*cf* Titus 1:1,4,9,13; 2:1,8,10).

This grace of God is consistently presented throughout Paul's epistles in the clearest of terms:

1. It reveals God's righteousness (Rom.1:17; 3:21) rather than demanding our righteousness, and it commends God's love (Rom.5:8) and is His wisdom and power (1 Cor.1: 23-25) rather than being conditioned on human acts.

2. Not only is God's grace of justification and salvation wholly of God, it fully recognizes that we are sinners (Rom.3:21), and even features this fact by the type of people being called today, so that no one can boast in themselves (1 Cor.1:26-29; Eph.2:3,8,9).

1. This rendering differs from the current Concordant Version in English but follows the wording of the German CV and is in general agreement with many recent English versions. See the article, "A Suggested Translation of Titus 2:11," elsewhere in this issue.

3. God's grace is founded solely on the faithfulness of Jesus Christ in His death for human beings, all of whom are sinners (Rom.3:22; Gal.2:16; Col.1:20,22).

Even in this letter to a "genuine child according to the common faith" (Titus 1:4), to one well acquainted with the revelation of God's grace which Paul was heralding, this evangel is everywhere assumed and often specifically mentioned. Throughout this letter it is the grace of God in saving sinners that shapes and directs the apostle's thoughts and words. He cannot entreat and instruct and guide Titus in the everyday concerns of his own tasks without continued reference to this foundational message of grace.

SALVATION TO ALL HUMANITY

Paul's principal concern in this passage is to remind Titus of the practical power of the evangel in the believer's life. The evangel of God's grace trains *us.* But in referring to God's grace, the apostle makes special reference to its relation to *all.* We have seen that this connection of God's purpose for all with His special purpose for us is found in other passages from Paul's writings, such as Romans 5:17-19, Colossians 1:20-22 and 1 Timothy 4:10. Now once again we find that the disciplining value of God's grace in our lives is related to the truth that this grace involves the salvation of all humanity.

Note how this is brought out in Darby's translation where we read: "For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared, teaching us . . ." and the New Revised Standard Version: "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us . . . ." No doubt it is because such renderings seem to the traditionalist to say too much about the effects of God's grace that the Jerusalem Bible paraphrases the passage as follows: "You see, God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race;" and, giving

a different slant, the New World Translation has: "For the undeserved kindness of God which brings salvation to all sorts of men has been manifested."

Of course Paul did not use the word "possible" or speak of "all sorts of" people, and even if he had it would not mean that what is "possible" for God to do will not be done (especially since He wills this very salvation of all humanity, 1 Tim.2:4), or that Christ's death for all sorts of people excludes any of the human race. But such attempts to qualify Paul's actual words appear designed to preserve the doctrine that *not* all humanity will be saved. The effect is to suggest that Paul used an expression that seemed to honor God's grace more than he intended.

Why mention salvation in relation to all humanity in this context at all if these or other loopholes are to be understood? The use of the term "possible" seems intended to qualify the significance of God's grace; it suggests that what God has done in saving sinners is not sufficient for saving anyone unless we do our part. It implies that nothing was actually achieved for anyone when Christ died for sinners, and that it depends on the human being for the cross to have any meaning to the sinner. It is meant to restrict and dilute what the apostle says.

The use of the gloss "all *sorts of*" is equally puzzling. It is generally defended by noting Paul's reference to "aged men" and "aged women" and "younger men" and "slaves" in Titus 2:1-10. These are certainly different sorts of people. But the fact that those being saved today include old people and young, slaves and free, only confirms the truth that Christ died for everyone and that salvation is not at all dependent on human works or standing. We rejoice that God's present calling includes sinners of all ages and vocations, all nationalities and races, male and female, young and old. But if a corollary of this present inclusiveness is that many people of every sort will eternally be excluded

from God's gratuitous grace, then the joy and strength we get from this passage is considerably dimmed and our comprehension of God's grace considerably confused.

When this feature of diversity among believers is associated with a conviction that present unbelievers can never be saved, the whole point of the passage becomes strangely twisted. This sort of thinking is more likely to train human beings in callous self-satisfaction and hypocrisy, or, on the other hand, in crippling anxiety and anguish over the lost, or even more likely in continued fluctuation between these evils of mind, than in a spirit of sanity, justice and devoutness.

It is the grace of God as manifested in the death of Christ and its effects for the salvation of human beings that is in view here, and it is this alone that serves to discipline the believer in his and her daily living. The words "salvation to all humanity" must not be made to draw attention away from God or distort and confuse the meaning of His wisdom and righteousness and love. To do so is to lead us away from faithfulness and reverence.

TRAINING US

The apostle is concerned with the effects of the grace of God on believers in their present lives. These effects are reflected in our thinking as well as our action. The grace of God trains the believer in a good state of mind as well as good conduct. It leads to sanity and devoutness as well as right and just behavior.

These are qualities that are essential to Titus' service. But in pointing to God's grace, which motivates such thinking and acting, Paul is concerned that God's grace be seen in relation to its significance for all people. God's grace (to use various connecting terms inserted by different English translations) "brings" or "comes with" or is "for" salvation to all humanity. The grace of God which has

made its advent in the death of Christ for sinners *means* salvation to all humanity. And in that God's grace has this wide and glorious significance it has a powerful impact on us who believe, a sure and effective impact of sanity in relation to the world in which we live, and justice (or righteousness) in our deeds, and a healthy and growing reverence toward God.

Paul has already drawn attention to this. Slaves who are believing that in His grace God is their Saviour and that His grace means ultimately the salvation of all mankind are led appropriately and naturally to a sane and just subjection to their owners and a devout and faithful walk before God (Titus 2:9-13). Under the effects of God's grace, they are not obsessed with fears and resentment and covetousness as so often happens in human affairs. Their realm is inherent in the heavens. God is working all together for their good. Their afflictions are momentary and light in relation to the glory to come. But beyond themselves, they are aware that God's grace means that everyone, including their masters who may not be presently saved from dependency on their transitory riches and power, having no enjoyment of Christ as their expectation—God's grace means salvation for them as well, in God's own time.

What could be more sane? What could be more productive of righteousness and devoutness than a faith centered upon the blessed advent of God's grace for salvation to all which is revealed in the evangel?

Hence Paul instructs Titus to "be speaking what is becoming to sound teaching" (Titus 2:1). It is the sound teaching which centers on the advent, the coming into this world, of God's grace for salvation to all humanity, even on His kindness and His fondness for humanity (Titus 3:4), that will guide the believers, both aged and young, both men and women, into sober and sound and good lives (Titus 2:1-8).

It is this evangel which ultimately embraces the whole of

humanity in the saving work of God that *trains* us who are believing. At the root of the Greek word for "train" is the term *hit*. Nothing can hit us so constructively and effectively as the grace of God in its vast scope and rich blessedness, keeping us from irreverence and worldly desires and transforming our lives in the current eon.

THE EFFECTS OF ERROR

On the other hand, the dogma of everlasting hell is likely to train its supporters in restlessness and worry or in callousness. More often than not these qualities are all mixed together. There are frequently feelings of dread and heavy responsibility, mixed here with depression and hopelessness, mixed there with self-satisfaction and pride along with a spirit of prideful scorn toward others. With such focusing on the human aspect there can be little room for growth in realization of God and reverence toward Him.

This is not sanity as shown by the tone of much that passes itself off for "evangelization," or by the popular dogma of future eternal dualism in heaven and hell. What a disaster human tradition and inconsistent Bible translation have made of the scriptural teaching concerning the significance of God's grace in the giving of His Son for sinners! What a mess has been made of the evangelical truth of salvation to humanity through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!

IF ONE DIED FOR THE SAKE OF ALL

When Christ came into the world He came to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15). All mankind are sinners (Rom.3:23). Consequently, Christ came to save all mankind. He died for all (2 Cor.5:14; 1 Tim.2:6). As it is true for us who believe, it is true for all that God commends His love in that while we are still sinners Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8).

But it is not simply that what Christ has done for us He

has done for all, or that since God is our Saviour He is the Saviour of all. As we have seen in our survey of key passages from Paul's epistles concerning the significance of Christ's death and resurrection, God would have us appreciate that what He has gained for us as believers is solid and true and blessed because He has gained it for all.

Hence it is in Christ Who died for our sins and was roused (1 Cor.15:3,4) that all will ultimately be vivified, including us who will be vivified in our own class in His presence (1 Cor.15:22,23). Our subjection to the Lord is one part of that great process of rule which ends with God All in all (1 Cor.15:24-28). Because Christ was obedient to the death of the cross, God exalts Him with the highest of names, that in the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord for the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:7-11).

So also with Romans 5 and Ephesians 1 and Colossians 1 and other passages we have considered. God is the Saviour of all mankind, and thus in a special way He is the Saviour of us who are believing. But this is not something we have achieved or even contributed to. It tells us what God has done in giving His Son for us. It reveals God's heart of love and speaks of His wisdom and power and righteousness.

If we can see what is so clearly stated by these passages of scripture, we will be greatly helped to appreciate and retain the evangel in which we stand and through which we are being saved (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1,2). The effectiveness of the apostle's guidelines for a mild and quiet life (1 Tim.2:2) and the genuineness of his understanding of the disciplining power of God's grace (Titus 2:11,12) are discovered and testified to most surely where there is an appreciation of the full scope of God's work of salvation through the gift of His Son. It is indeed the evangel of the glory of the happy God (1 Tim.1:11).

D.H.H.

MARRIAGE AND THE BELIEVER
(Part Four)

WHEN Paul declares that a wife is bound by law for whatever time her husband is living (1 Cor.7:39) and that, while the man is living, the woman shall be styled an *adulteress* if she should be becoming *another* man's (Rom.7:3), it is evident that the apostle does not speak of the unmarried or simply of any and all "females" and "males" at large, but strictly concerning those who are married. Paul's words, then, are to be related solely *to normal, proper circumstances*, circumstances *in which separation has not occurred.*

Consequently, these passages (1 Corinthians 7:39 and Romans 7:3) simply do not address the question of what may be entailed when any certain illicit acts are engaged in by those who are unmarried (whether formerly married or not). And, it must be remembered that those who are separated and divorced *are* unmarried. Therefore, it is a terrible abuse of these passages to employ them as proof texts in support of the false notion that those who are now remarried, whose mates from an original marriage are still living, thus are living in sin. To the contrary, it is not that such a second *marriage* is a sin, but the false charge that such a second marriage is a sinful union—*that* is the sin in its misuse of Scripture.

Since Paul has already made it clear in 1 Corinthians 7:11 that those who separate are, in fact, unmarried, it is wholly unwarranted to take his words in 1 Corinthians 7:39 in any sense which denies this. Yet this is just what is

done by those who claim that, "in God's sight," marriage can only be dissolved by death.

It is quite true, as Paul explains in Romans 7:3, if a woman should simply begin to take up with *another* man and should somehow "be becoming his," that, in so doing, she will be styled an adulteress (whatever the parties involved in such an affair may or may not do with respect to any certain civil law is irrelevant and is not in view). In the nature of the case, however, this can only apply to a woman who is *presently* married. She could hardly take up with *another* man, becoming an adulteress in so doing, without forsaking an initial man (namely, her husband) in the process. It would be impossible for her to do this if she were not married.

However, it by no means follows that a *presently* married woman who acts as an adulteress by leaving her husband and becoming some other man's, will—even *after* becoming separated and divorced from her first husband—*continue* to be an adulteress simply in virtue of having become *married* to a second husband while the first husband is still living. This is so whether this new marriage should be to the man with whom she once committed adultery or to someone else. It does not follow because the act of "becoming another's"—whether solely through separation and divorce or through a host of other sins as well—is sinful, that, so long as one's original mate remains alive, any subsequent second marriage is a contemptible union.

"BOUND BY LAW"

Even as the pages of a book are bound by "law" (specifically, laws of physics) for whatever time the glue on its spine should continue to adhere to its pages, thus also, a wife becomes "duty-bound," hence, in this respect, "lawfully bound," for whatever time her husband should be living.

The sublinear ultra-literal of 1 Corinthians 7:39 is: "WOMAN HAS-*been*-BOUND TO-LAW ON as-much-as TIME IS-LIVING THE MAN OF-her."[1] The woman who agrees to marry and subsequently becomes married, is lawfully bound therein *on* a for-whatever-time-her-husband-is-living basis. This is all that this verse says. It speaks of that to which one "legally" *obliges* oneself upon entering into marriage. Consequently, its words by no means prove the proposition to be true that once the woman thus is legally bound, it is *impossible* for her to become unbound even in marriage itself unless her husband should die.

While it follows that a woman who becomes lawfully bound in marriage on a for-whatever-time-her-husband-is-living basis will act unlawfully if she should separate, it by no means follows that, if she should *attempt* to do so, she will find it impossible *actually* to do so. Yet it is this very notion that those who claim that death alone dissolves the marriage union both affirm and seek to maintain. Their artful claim that "many who are unmarried in man's sight remain married in God's sight," is nothing more than an exigent invention on behalf of their foundational position, a position which is an erroneous conclusion based upon a false premise; a false premise which itself is the product of a false inference; an inference that is false because it is (1) illogical and (2) contradictory to a plain scriptural declaration.

It is true that, "if the husband should be reposing, she [the wife] is *free* to be married to whom she will . . ." (1 Cor. 7:39b), even as it is true that, "if the unbeliever is *separating*, . . . a brother or sister is not enslaved . . ." (1 Cor.7:15).

While this is so, there is nothing in this fact that precludes a married person from *becoming* free (i.e., free from a mate, or unmarried) *through separation and divorce.* Indeed, since Paul speaks of those who have separated as being those who are now "unmarried" (1 Cor.7:11), it is

1. CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT, p.497.

simply a fact, even if one's mate is still living, that if one of the mates should indeed *separate* from the other mate, the marriage will no longer exist. Even as certain fine books are manufactured with a "lifetime binding," marriage is designed as a lifetime union. Nevertheless, just as surely as the pages of such a book are no longer bound (or "married") once they are ripped from their spine, when man *separates* what God has joined, this law or "rule" concerning husbands and wives is *broken* and *separation* occurs. Where separation and divorce occur, as a result, the parties involved are no longer husband and wife; this is because *they are no longer married* (or, to say the same thing, since they are separated, they are no longer bound).

BECAUSE OF THE ACT OF ANOTHER

In Romans 7, Paul is by no means giving us a treatise on wedlock, but only introduces the subject incidentally for the purpose of enforcing a point concerning the utter despotism of the reign of grace with respect to life eonian. The law is only lording it over a man for as much time as he is *living*, even as a woman is bound to a *living* man by law, but is not so bound to a *dead* man. Therefore, in the accounting of God, since *we died* together with Christ (Rom.6:8) when He died for our sakes, there is no law that can speak our condemnation. This is because law has no jurisdiction over a dead man.

"So that, my brethren, you *also* [like the woman whose husband has died] were put to death to the law through the body of Christ" (Rom.7:4a). Even as, *solely because of the act of another* (viz., the man who dies), the woman, should she become another man's, will not be styled an adulteress, thus also, *solely because of the act of Another*, even Christ the Lord, God will only deem us His saints and will not treat us as sinners *even if we should be persisting in sin—even if we should be increasing in sin* (Rom.5:

20,21; 6:1). This is because Sin shall *not* be lording it over us; for, having died together with Christ, we are not under law but under grace (Rom.6:14). While it is true that our awful enemy Sin has nothing better to give than the terrible rations of *death*, since, being under *grace*, Sin shall *not* be lording over *us*, we need not fear the forced imposition of any such rations! Let Sin's despicable rations be what they will, they will never be our portion.[2] Indeed, "the ration of Sin is death, *yet* the gracious gift of God is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:23). "*Nothing, consequently*, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:1). In essence, this is the evangel, the evangel of our salvation. To any who deny this, we can only say, "O foolish Galatians! Who bewitches you . . . ?" (Gal.3:1).

DEALING GRACIOUSLY AMONG YOURSELVES

May it be that the believing man will rejoice in the wife of his youth (*cf* Prov.5:8) all his days, and that the believing woman will cleave only to her husband "until death do us part." But where separation has occurred not by death but by divorce, let us recognize, just as surely as in the case of death, that it *has* occurred. Such persons, ones who thus are now unmarried, if they should marry again (or if they have already done so), must not be viewed by their fellow

2. That is, they will never be our portion according to our deeds. Dying and death come to us because of the offense of Adam, not because of our own offenses (Rom.5:12,15). Even so, Sin (personified), being against us, would seek to condemn us still further. That is, literally, our own sins, too, stand against us, not for us, and, in themselves, can only lead to death. Our gracious God, however, for the laud of the glory of His grace, has purposed to grant us life eonian. Consequently, in relation to life eonian, where sin increases, grace superexceeds. This is so, that, even as Sin reigns in death, thus Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord (Rom.5:20,21).

believers as "second class Christians," much less as those who are "living in sin."

Where penalty is due, the inevitable, and often tremendous, burden of suffering and pain which these brethren have endured as the result of the failure of their original marriage (not to mention their awareness of the displeasure of God) is penalty enough.

As well, it should not be forgotten that the believer will be manifested in front of the dais of Christ to be requited for that which he puts into practice through the body, whether good or bad. This requital will consist of the payment, or forfeiture, of certain "wages" (*cf* 2 Cor.5:10; 1 Cor.3:12-15; *cp* 1 Cor.4:5). Nonetheless, in Christ, God has dealt *graciously* with *all* our offenses, including those having to do with failure in marriage.

Just as we wish for others to be forgiving and gracious toward us in respect to our past sins from which we have repented, let us be similarly forgiving and gracious toward others.

May we, then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, be becoming well pleasing to Him, putting away all bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and calumny (Eph.4:31). And, in their place, let us put on, "pitiful compassions, kindness, meekness, patience, bearing with one another and *dealing graciously* among yourselves, if anyone should be having a complaint against any. According as the Lord also deals graciously with you, *thus also you*" (Col.3:12,13). "Become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, *dealing graciously* among yourselves, according as God also, in Christ, deals graciously with you" (Eph.4:32).

Above all, let us be patient, friendly and kind—not merely theoretically, but in a way that is evident to all. In a word, "Become, then, imitators of God, as beloved children, and be walking in *love*" (Eph.5:1).

J.R.C.

"YET NOW THEY ARE HOLY"

We are sometimes asked concerning the matter of the "hallowing" of the unbelieving mate, even as the children of such a union, in the case of a family in which only one parent is a believer (1 Cor.7:14). The question is this: Of what does this hallowing consist? As always, we will do well to pay close attention to the context in which our passage in question is found.

Now to the rest am I speaking, not the Lord. If any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she approves of making a home with him, let him not leave her. And a wife who has an unbelieving husband, and he approves of making a home with her, let her not leave her husband. For the unbelieving husband is hallowed by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is hallowed by the brother, else, consequently, your children are unclean. Yet now they are holy. Yet if the unbeliever is separating, let him separate. A brother or sister is not enslaved in such a case. Now God has called us in peace. For of what are you aware, O wife—will you be saving your husband—or of what are you aware, O husband—will you be saving your wife—except as the Lord parts it to each? (1 Cor.7:12-17)

There is indeed a certain"hallowing" of the unbelieving mate which results from his (or her) being married to a believer. As Paul says, "else, consequently, your children are unclean" (1 Cor.7:14). The unbeliever is hallowed "by" (literally, "in") the believer. This verse begins with the causal conjunction "for." It refers to the preceding entreaty for the believer who is married to an unbeliever not to leave his (or her) mate, if the unbeliever approves of making a

home with the believer (7:12,13). The thought of the context, then—indeed, the causal conjunction demands this thought—the subject to which the "hallowing" being spoken of here refers, is the unbelieving mate's acceptableness as a mate for a believer. And this is so, that the children, similarly, might be "clean" (i.e., acceptable or "touchable").

Though such a union with an unbeliever is not ideal (2 Cor.6:14; 1 Cor.7:39b), Paul explains that, even so, in the person of the believing mate, the unbelieving mate is thus "hallowed" *as an acceptable mate* for the believing mate. That is, in such a case as this, a case in which a marriage already exists and children have already been born—a case in which one mate becomes a believer but the other remains an unbeliever—the believer might well be concerned as to the propriety of remaining married to such a one. After all, the unbelieving mate neither believes in Christ nor recognizes Him as Lord. Much less does he serve Him.

The apostle, however, assures the believer that, even so, the unbelieving mate is consecrated (i.e., "set in place" [in the sense of "approved"]) as an acceptable mate, not in what the unbeliever is in himself (or herself), but by the acceptableness which accrues to the unbeliever due to his (or her) intimate union with the believer. Therefore, as Paul explains, the unbeliever's unbelief notwithstanding, if he (or she) approves of making a home with the believer, the believer may not leave the unbeliever. The unbeliever thus is to be deemed "holy" (i.e., approved or acceptable) as a mate.

"*Else,* consequently, your children are unclean. Yet now they are holy" (1 Cor.7:14b). If it were not that, first of all, in the person of the believing mate, the unbelieving mate was thus "constituted" (i.e., "placed" as) an acceptable mate, the children, consequently, would be "untouchables" themselves (*cp* 2 Cor.6:17b). Yet now, now that the unbelieving mate thus is "hallowed" as an acceptable mate, the children likewise are not to be rejected but are to be accepted as well. The children of such a marriage are not the fruit of an "unholy" union, but of a hallowed one. Therefore, they are by no means to be deemed "unclean," but are to be freely embraced, loved and cherished.

These are the matters which Paul is addressing in 1 Corinthians 7:14; it is in this sense which (with respect to these issues) he speaks of the unbelieving mate, even as the children of a marriage between a believer and an unbeliever, as being "hallowed" and "holy." If there should be any additional sense in which such a mate and such children are hallowed, in any case, such a sense is not in view here; consequently, this passage (1 Cor.7:14) may not be viewed as constituting either evidence or proof of any such additional sense.

Even if we should find some other passage elsewhere which truly reveals that such mates and such children are hallowed in some other sense besides that which is addressed here, this passage at hand could not be properly appealed to in order to establish such a sense.

Therefore, for example, if it should truly be so (as some are hoping and believing) that unbelieving mates and children are hallowed in such a sense, that, as a result of such hallowing, they will, in that day, be saved from indignation and snatched away to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess.4:13-17), it would still be wrong to make any appeal to 1 Corinthians 7:14 as either revealing, entailing, or constituting an entailing agency, with respect to such a conviction. (It does not follow because such ones are hallowed in a certain specific sense, that they are therefore also hallowed in some other specific sense.)

If the proposition that unbelieving mates and children are to participate in the rapture is to be demonstrated, 1 Corinthians 7:14 must, first of all, be recognized as irrelevant to the proposition. Instead, in order for us to believe

such a proposition (a proposition with which we sympathize), it would be necessary for us to possess either an explicit scriptural statement (in whatever words) that substantially expresses this thought, or some scriptural declaration which, by corollary, requires this thought. Otherwise, we are only speculating, not believing. As Paul says, "In us [in Paul and Apollos] you may be learning not to be disposed above what is written, that you may not be puffed up, one over the one, against the other" (1 Cor.4:6).

As such, it is not wrong to *wish* for something—something good in itself which we would like to be true—to actually be true. For example, we may *wish* not to die, but to be among those who will be vivified, never having been put to repose (*cf* 1 Cor.15:51). Similarly, we may *wish* for our unbelieving mates and children to be saved from indignation and for life eonian, even as ourselves. But since there is no passage of Scripture which declares or entails that either of these things is true, we should neither *believe* nor *expect* that either one of these wishes which we may hold will actually be realized.

Instead of confounding one's own wishes with God's own Word, may we rather simply be believing what God *has* declared, and be attending to our logical divine service (*cf* Rom.12:1b), while eschewing all "reasonings" (i.e., convictions which are the result of the misuse of the ratiocinative process; specifically, "beliefs" which are merely the result of inferences, false premises, illogical deductions, and so forth). By refusing to accept such false ratiocinations, thus we will preclude the "discriminations" (i.e., differences, even disputes) which they so often engender (Rom.14:1).

The faith which you have, have for yourself in God's sight. Yet happy is he who is not judging himself in that which he is attesting (Rom.14:22). Consequently, then, we are pursuing that which makes for peace and that which is for the edification of one another (Rom.14:19). J.R.C.

THE NEWS OF SAUL'S DEATH

1 + **It came** to |**be after** the **death of Saul** +**when David him**self **had returned from smiting**– `**Amalek,** +**that David** |**dwelt two days** *i*__**at Ziklag.**__ 2 +**Now it** *lb*__**was** *i*__**on the third day, and** *bd*__**here** a **man** was **coming from the** army **camp, from** *wi*__**Saul,** +__**with his clothes torn**|__ **and** dust from the **ground on his head. And** so **it** |*b*__**was,** *i*__**when he came**– __**to David,** +__**that he** |__**fell** to*d* the **earth and** |__**prostrated** him**self.** 3 + **David** |__**said to him, From where** do **you** |__**come?** + **He** |*sa*__**replied to him, I have escaped from** the army **camp of Israel.** 4 +__**Then David** |*sa*__**asked** › **him, What** *b*__**is the matter? Tell** › **me** *pr*__**now.** + **He** |*sa*__**replied,** *w* __**The people fled from the battle.** + **Moreover, many**– *f*__**of the people had fallen and** |__**died.** + *mr*__**Also Saul and his son Jonathan, they are dead.**

5 +__**Now David** |*sa*__**asked** › **the lad** `who **told**| › **him** this, **How** do **you know that Saul is dead, and his son Jonathan** too**?** 6 + **The lad** `who **told**| › **him** this |*sa*__**replied, I happened,** yea **happened**– to be *i*__**on** `**Mount Gilboa** + *bd*__**when Saul** was **leaning on his spear, and** *bd*__**there the charioteer**s **and the** *ps*__**commanders of cavalry followed** hard after **him.** 7 +__**When he** |__**faced** around *af*__**behind him,** + **he** |__**saw me and** |__**called to me. And I** |*sa*__**answered,** *bd*__**Here I** am. 8 +__**Then he** |*sa*__**asked** › **me,** *a*__**Who** are **you?** + **I** |*sa*__**replied to him, I** am an **Amalekite.** 9 __**And he** |__**said to me,** *pr*__**Please stand over me and** *m*__**put me** to **death, for the shroud** of anguish **has** taken **hold** of **me** *t*__**because all my soul** is *fr*__**still in me.** 10 +__**So I** |__**stood over him and** *m*__**put him** to |__**death, for I knew**

that he would **not** remain ˡ**alive after his fall**–. ⁺**Then I** ˡ**took the insignia** ʷ**that** was **on his head and** the **armlet** ʷ**that** was **on his arm, and I** have ˡ**brought them** ᵇᵈ**here to my lord.**

11 ⁺ **David** ᶜ**took** ˡ**fast** hold ⁱ**of his clothes and** ˡ**tore them, and** ᵐʳ**so** did **all** the **men who** were `with **him.**
12 ⁺ **They** ˡ**wailed and** ˡ**lamented and** ˡ**fasted until** ˙**evening over Saul and over his son Jonathan,** ⁺ **over** the **people of Yahweh and over** the **house of Israel** ᵗ**because they had fallen** ⁱ**by** the **sword.**

13 ⁺ **David** ˡˢᵃ**asked** › **the lad** ˙who **told**ˡ › **him** this, **From where** are **you?** ⁺ **He** ˡˢᵃ**replied, I** am the **son of** a **man** who was a **sojourner,** an **Amalekite.** 14 ⁺**Then David** ˡ**said to him, How** did **you not fear to stretch** out **your hand to wreck** `the **anointed of Yahweh?** 15 ⁺**So David** ˡ**called** › **one** ᶠ**of the young** attendants **and** ˡ**said,** Come **close, come** upon ⁱ **him!** ⁺**So he** ˡ**smote him, and he** ˡ**died.** 16 ⁺ **David** ˡ**said to him, Your blood** be **on your head! For your** own **mouth has asserted** ⁱ**against you,** › **saying**–**, I my**self ᵐ**put** to **death** `the **anointed of Yahweh.**

17 ⁺**Then David** ˡ**intoned** `**this** ˙**dirge over Saul and over his son Jonathan,** 18 ⁺ ˡ**saying, to teach** the **sons of Judah** ~in **verity~. Behold,** it is **written**ˡ ᵒⁿ**in** the **Scroll of the Upright.**

19 ˙Your **stateliness,** O **Israel,**
Was wounded to death **on your high-places;**
How the **masters** of war **have fallen!**
20 **Do not** ˡ**tell** it **in Gath,**
Do not ᵐ**bear** the ˡ**tidings in** the **streets of Ashkelon,**
Lest the **daughters of** the **Philistines** ˡ**rejoice,**
Lest the **daughters of the uncircumcised be** ˡ**joyous.**
21 O **hills** ⁱ**of Gilboa,**
Let there be **no**ᵗ **night mist,**
⁺ **Let** there be **no**ᵗ **rain on you,**

1:18 ~_~ in **verity:** Hb **bow.**

And no **fields of heave** offerings**,**
For there the **shield of** the **masters** of war **was loathed,**
The **shield of Saul, no** longer **anointed** ⁱ**with oil.**
22 **From** the **blood of** those **wounded** to death,
From the **fat of** the **masters** of war,
Jonathan's bow, it was not turned away ᵃᶠ **back;**
And Saul's sword, it did **not** ˡ**return empty.**
23 **Saul and Jonathan,** ˙be**loved**ˡ **and** ˙**pleasant in their lives,**
⁺ **In their death they were not parted.**
They were fleeter ᶠ**than vultures;**
They were more **masterful** ᶠ**than lions.**
24 **Daughters of Israel, lament** ᴹ**over~**ᶜ **Saul,**
˙Who **clothed**ˡ **you** in **scarlet, with fineries,**
˙Who ᶜ**set up**ˡ **ornaments of gold** upon **your clothing.**
25 **How** the **masters** of war **have fallen in** the **midst of the battle!**
O **Jonathan, wounded** to death **on your high-places!**
26 **Distressed am** › **I over you, my brother Jonathan.**
You have been very pleasant to me.
Your love was marvelous for me,
More ᶠ**than** the **love** from **women.**
27 **How** the **masters** of war **have fallen!**
⁺ The ᵃˡˡ**weapons of war** have ˡ**perished!**

DAVID RECEIVES THE NEWS

On the third day of David's victorious return to Ziklag, he received a bearer of news from the battle. The man's clothing was torn, and there was dust, or dirt, on his head. These were customary signs of great grief and mourning, so the man's appearance foretold that his news was not good. The man was an Amalekite sojourner in the land of Israel. He told David that Israel had fled before the Philistines, and that Saul and Jonathan were dead.

It is apparent that David was very worried about Saul

1:24 *M-~c* **over:** Hb **for.**

and Jonathan, as indicated by his questioning of the man and by his grief and mourning that followed. Probably he wished that he could have stayed at the battle behind Achish and attacked the Philistines from their rear, causing Israel to be victorious.

A CONTRADICTION?

It has been suggested that the Scriptures contain a contradiction in this passage. 1 Samuel 31:5 and 1 Chronicles 10:4-6 say that Saul died by suicide. The testimony of the Amalekite here in 2 Samuel 1:9, 10 was that he killed the wounded Saul, at Saul's request, that Israel's king might be spared a torturous death at the hands of the Philistines. There are other variances in the accounts as well. Apparently the Amalekite found Saul dead before the Philistines did, and he stripped him of the royal insignia—a crown or band worn around the helmet and the armlet.

The Amalekite saw the death of Saul as an opportunity to better himself. Being a sojourner in Israel, he knew David was quite likely to be the next king. He expected that bringing the crown and armlet to David would endear him to the new king, and ensure him of a position in public office. He probably supposed that his fabrication about killing Saul would cause David to feel indebted or grateful to him as the direct means by which David obtained the throne. Such a course of events was common in that day and culture.

But the Amalekite had not reckoned on David's reverence for Yahweh. How could the man who refrained from stretching forth his own hand against the Lord's anointed condone someone else doing so?

It is a rare thing for any of God's children to wait upon the Lord as David did. If we are aware that something is part of God's purpose, we are frequently impatient for it to happen. So often we are like Abraham, fretting over

God's timing. We would prefer that Ishmael could live before Him (Gen.17:18), rather than wait for the son of promise. But David believed that, "What He has promised, He is able to do also" (Rom.4:21). Indeed, David's humble spirit so despised his own deeds that he seems to have preferred that God's promise go unfulfilled rather than that he overreach to fulfill it himself. May our ambitions be tempered with that same spirit.

THE LAMENT FOR SAUL AND JONATHAN

In the light of Saul's persecutions, it may be difficult to believe that David could maintain the sincere love and respect for Saul that is voiced in this song. But David had grown up with Saul as king, looking to Saul as God's deliverer of his nation. And David had seen Saul in his good days as well as his bad days. David had no desire for ill to befall any of Saul's house, especially Jonathan.

The author of the books of Samuel informs us that David's lament was first recorded in the "Scroll of the Upright," which is also mentioned in Joshua 10:13. Apparently this book contained records of notable events in Israel's history. The previous reference was to a great victory, while this was a great loss.

There are three movements, or strophes, in the song, each beginning with the repeated line, "How the masters of war have fallen!" (2 Sam.1:19,25,27). The first strophe comes from the perspective of the nation of Israel. It speaks of the fear and uncertainty that accompanies the loss of leadership as Israel cowered before Philistia at this time. The next thought is that the battlefield should become a desolation as a monument to those who had fallen there. Then the virtues of the fallen are extolled, and remembrance made of the benefits from their leadership, who were fleeter than vultures and more masterful than lions.

The second strophe is more brief, and is a personal salute

from David to his beloved friend Jonathan. The third strophe is shorter still, closing with the metaphor that Saul and Jonathan were Israel's weapons of war. It leaves the hearer to wonder, How will they ever carry on?

THE EULOGY

Again one wonders how David could speak so highly of Saul after being the object of such relentless and undeserved persecution. The typical significance of changing from the reign of Saul to the reign of David includes such overwhelming polar shifts as the change from law to grace, from works to faith, from the flesh to the spirit.

When we remember the apostle Paul's continual struggles with the Judaizers, it would be easy to think that Paul must have had days when he cursed, or wanted to curse the law. But he did not. In fact, he said, "The law, indeed, is holy, and the precept holy and just and good" (Rom. 7:12)! Those Jews who sincerely tried to keep the law, in their delusion and jealousy, persecuted Paul endlessly. Yet Paul never had a disparaging word for the divinely-anointed schoolmaster that had pointed him to Christ. So also, David spoke no ill of Saul.

BLESS, AND DO NOT CURSE

"Bless those who are persecuting you: bless, and do not curse . . . . To no one render evil for evil, making ideal provision in the sight of all men, if possible that which comes out from yourselves" (Rom.12:14,17). "Let all bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and calumny be taken away from you" (Eph.4:31). "Remind them to be subject to sovereignties, to authorities; to be yielding, and to be ready for every good work, to be calumniating no one, to be pacific, lenient, displaying all meekness toward all humanity" (Titus 3:1,2).

J. Philip Scranton

A SUGGESTED TRANSLATION OF TITUS 2:11

THE CONCORDANT VERSION is a translation from Hebrew (and the closely related language, Aramaic) and Greek manuscripts into English. It attempts to reflect the Original readings as exactly as possible while still being idiomatic. That is, it intends to indicate the meanings and linguistic features of the terms and expressions of the original texts in a way that is understandable to the English reader. But English words and idioms seldom correspond exactly with words and idioms in these ancient languages. This means that no matter how carefully a translation may be made it is well to look upon it as tentative and remain open to possible adjustments as indicated by reexamination.

In every edition of the English CV so far, Titus 2:11 has read, "Now the saving grace of God made its advent to all humanity." Other English Versions, especially the older ones, give a similar thought, including the Authorized Version which reads: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." However, many English versions have offered a wording which conveys a somewhat different sense. Here the term "saving" (or "salvation") is directly associated with the phrase "to all humanity" rather than with the subject, "the grace of God." The American Standard Version (1901), for example, has: "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men." More recent translations read similarly, and this is much the sense indicated by the German edition of the Concordant Version. Such a rendering seems especially appropriate in the context.

THE GREEK TEXT

As shown by the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT sublinear, Titus 2:11 begins with the verb *it-on-appeared,* followed by the conjunction "for." Next comes the subject which is literally: *the-grace of-the-God.* Although the word order seems strange to us, it is perfectly normal for Greek. If we wanted a literal reading of the clause in normal English syntax we would have: *For the grace of the God on-appeared.* This is quite straightforward.

The problem comes in with the next term which is a form of the Greek word for "save." This particular form of "save" is identified as an adjective, which would lead us to associate it with the Greek word for "grace," as in the present English CV. But because there is no definite article ("the") in front of the word "saving" Greek grammar allows it to be associated with the predicate rather than the subject.[1] Hence the Greek wording indicates the term "saving" is to be associated with what Paul wants to say *about* God's grace rather than directly with the word "grace" itself. As such it is best to render it as a noun in English, i.e., "salvation."

English idiom, however, calls for some connecting term between the verb (*made . . . advent*) and the thought of salvation to all humanity, which together as a predicate express what Paul wants to say about the subject. The apostle wishes to speak about the grace of God, and what he wishes to say about it is, first of all, that it has appeared or made its advent in some relation to this salvation which pertains to all humanity. And this is not all either. Besides

1. This principle is expressed by Nigel Turner in his volume on syntax in the series entitled: GRAMMAR OF NEW TESTAMENT GREEK (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1963), as follows: "An adjective or participle which follows a genitive always takes the article, unless it be understood predicatively . . . [as in] Titus 2:11" (p.186).

what the grace of God means to mankind as a whole, it holds special meaning for *us* who are believing. The advent of God's grace concerns salvation to all people, and additionally for the believer it concerns training.

The English preposition, *for,* seems ideal for supplying the connection between the opening clause and the following thought. Hence, I suggest translating Titus 2:11 much as is in the German edition of the CV: *For the grace of God made (its) advent, (for) salvation to all humanity.*

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS

As noted in our KEYWORD CONCORDANCE (p.10), the Greek word translated "advent" is "said to be a special term in classical Greek for the appearance of the gods." Such appearances were generally acts of intervention in battles or situations of dire need. In Scripture the verb "(make) advent" is used of the birth of Jesus in describing it as an event for directing Israel from darkness and the shadow of death into the path of peace (Luke 1:79). It is also used in Titus in reference to Christ's future advent (2:13). It is thus typically associated with *salvation* provided by Jesus Christ, whether in His birth and ministry, in His death and resurrection or in His future works of rescue.

This association of God's grace with salvation is preserved in both the present CV translation of Titus 2:11 and the rendering suggested here. What is different is the connection with the words "all humanity." Yet in following this suggested change, placing the term *saving,* or *salvation,* in the predicate rather than the subject, not only are grammatical principles of Greek idiom being observed, but the connection between God's grace and the His work of salvation is made clearer and more in accord with passages such as 1 Timothy 4:10 and Titus 3:4. God's grace for salvation to all humanity, and His kindness and fondness for humanity have appeared in the gift of His Son. D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME XCIII

Abel's Sacrifice . . . 53
Cain's Stubbornness and Fear . . . 18
Conflicts with the Philistines . . . 232
Creation by God . . . 191
David's Household . . . 90
Disqualification and Faith . . . 35
Establishing of David's House, The . . . 176
Fear in its Relation to Love . . . 124
Grace of God in Truth, The . . . 207
God has Spoken . . . 121
God Sets . . . 157
God Speaks in a Son . . . 273
God's Evangel Concerning His Son . . . 79
God's Kindness, Forbearance, and Patience . . . 113
In Flesh, Apart from Christ, and Without God . . . 163
In the Days of Noah . . . 247
In the Eyes of Yahweh . . . 261
In the Name of Jesus Christ, We Must be Saved . . . 65
Increase of Humanity, The . . . 195
Insubjection in the Line of Cain . . . 101
Israel Under New Rule . . . 43
Jews, Israelites and Judeans . . . 38
Notes on 2 Samuel . . . 43,90,133,176,232,279
Obituaries: B. Bell 156, H. Christensen 136, C. Fassler 136, J. Goerzen 232, D. Hibberd 112, R. Killen 112, E. Martin 60, F. Orton 96
Outside the Garden . . . 23
Paul to the Romans . . . 79,137,183,219
Paul's Will for Us . . . 183
Perceiving What is Spiritual . . . 128
Present Resurrection?, A . . . 33
Questions and Answers . . . 33,65,124,163,207,269
Remember Paul's Bonds . . . 87
Return of the Coffer, The . . . 279
Saul's Dynasty Ends . . . 133
Saving Grace for All Mankind . . . 213
Studies in Genesis . . . 5,23,53,61,101,113,146,157,195,201,247,261
Subjection in the Line of Seth . . . 146
Through the Prophets . . . 235
Way of Cain, The . . . 5
Why All the Suffering? . . . 229
Yahweh Heeds Abel . . . 61
Yahweh Regrets and Grieves . . . 201

2 A Sonnet
3 Editorial
5 The Way of Cain
18 Cain's Stubbornness and Fear
23 Outside the Garden
33 A Present Resurrection?
Disqualification and Faith;
Jews, Israelites, and Judeans
43 Israel Under New Rule

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Unsearchable Riches

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For God and His
Word

VOLUME XCIII

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and
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A Sonnet

I would praise God's righteousness and love,
But not as though they were great mysteries
Where right was shown below by miseries,
And love forever set apart above.

I would know that everything God is
Is harmony, and good as it is true,
That right is in His making all things new,
And all shall bow in love because they're His.

They certainly are wrong who say that grace
And love are one, but not displays of right—
That wrath and woe bring justice to our sight,
But there's no hope for love seen there, no trace.

But see! The cross of God's beloved Son!
Both right and love win there and stand as one.

D.H.H.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2002
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE

EDITORIAL

Over half of this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* is concerned with Genesis 4:1-16. This is an especially important passage of Scripture because it initiates a theme that is reflected throughout the Word. The act of disobedience in the garden of Eden spreads into a spirit of stubbornness and pride that increases the alienation between humanity and our God and Creator.

In accord with the dominance of this theme of human corruption in Genesis 4, the character of Cain, rather than that of Abel, dominates our attention. Cain works hard, and Cain does wrong and Cain is angry. Yahweh addresses Cain, and Cain murders his brother. Cain complains, and Cain is given a sign. Cain leaves the family and builds a city. God's Word has a great deal to say to us concerning Cain and his "way."

We hope the comments here concerning "The Way of Cain" and the background information concerning worship and offerings, the place of conscience in regulating human affairs in those days and observations concerning God's dealings with Cain will be helpful to our readers. The topic, of course, is by no means exhausted with these articles, but perhaps they will stir up further interest and meditation and investigation on your part as well.

As for Abel, isn't it interesting how passive he is, how inconspicuous in relation to his older brother? We will give special attention to his part in this passage in our next issue, but clearly Cain gets the headlines.

We never hear Abel speak. All we know of him is that his name meant "Vanity," or "Transitory," and that he brought an acceptable offering to Yahweh, and that he was mur-

dered. But from this small testimony, we see, as did the writer of Hebrews (11:4), that Abel had been given a gift of faith from God. And that says it all.

At one point when I was preparing my article on this passage, I found myself thinking about Abel and exclaiming, "Happy was Abel!" Yahweh heeded him and his approach present.

And happy are we! "For you are observing your calling, brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh; not many powerful, not many noble . . ." (1 Cor. 1:26). "For to you it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also" (Phil.1:29).

And to know Christ, Whom Abel could hardly know except as He was made known in the types provided by the present he offered, how happy are we! "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus" (Eph.1:3-5).

Because so many influential teachers have concluded that Cain's final destiny is everlasting damnation, we have made special effort, in commenting on Genesis 4, to point to God's saving purpose for all mankind, including Cain. But what a special and overwhelming grace it is to be included with Abel as a vessel of mercy and to believe what God has said to us in His Word.

Other themes treated in this magazine concerning resurrection and faith, concerning God's faithfulness in His callings and examples of His favor, are actually not different themes. For they treat of these same ways of Cain and Abel and of God's operations in the affairs of humanity in accord with His purpose. D.H.H.

THE WAY OF CAIN

THE WORSHIP of Yahweh is the sphere into which we are introduced by the first sons of Adam and Eve. After noting the love life of the first human and Eve as his complement, who bore him two sons on whom to lavish his fatherly affection, the narrative turns back to the subject of it all, the worship and adoration which is due to the Giver of all this good. Meanwhile, however, Adam and Eve had offended their Benefactor, and had been driven out of the garden of Eden.

Communion with Yahweh characterized His first contacts with mankind, and will be more than regained at the consummation. The intervening eons are evil because of the lack of His presence. They are largely devoted to efforts to restore this communion, on the part of both man and God. We are not informed of any exertion on the part of Adam and Eve to heal the breach which their sin and offense had brought about. Indeed, as typical characters, we cannot expect them to undertake anything in this direction. The promised restoration was not to come through their efforts, but through the Seed of the woman. We do not read of any such activity until their sons come upon the scene.

GENESIS 4:1-16

4 +**Now the human knew** `**Eve his wife.** + **She** became |**pregnant and** gave |**birth** `to **Cain,** + |**saying: I have acquired** a **man** `through **Yahweh.** 2 +**Then she** |**again** › gave **birth**–**,** `**to his brother** `**Abel.**

+ **Abel** |**became** a **shepherd**| **of** the **flock,** +**while Cain** *b*__was__ **serving** the **ground.** 3 **And it came** to |**be** *f*__at__ the **end of days** +**that Cain** |**brought** an approach **present to Yahweh from** the **fruit of the ground.** 4 +**As** for **Abel** *mr*__however, he´__ **brought** *f* some **firstlings of his flock and** *f* **their fat** portions**. And Yahweh** gave |**heed to Abel and** › **his** approach **present.** 5 +**But to Cain and** › **his** approach **present He** did **not** give **heed;** +**so Cain's** anger grew **very** |**hot, and his face** |**fell.** 6 +**Then Yahweh** |**said to Cain:**

Why is your anger **hot?**
And why is your face fallen?
7 **If you** had *c*__done__ |**well,**
Would you **not lift** up your face**?**
+**But** *if*__since you__ have **not** *c*__done__ |**well,**
There is a **sin** offering**,**
A flockling **reclining** ›__at__ the **portal,**
And for you is 7__restoration~__ in **his** sacrifice**;**
+ **You´ are** |**dominant** in authority *i*__over him.__

8 + **Cain** |**said to his brother Abel:** 7__Let us go__ into **the field***nc*__.__ +**Now it** |**came** to **pass** *i*__while they__ *b*__were¯ in__ the **field** +**that Cain** |**rose** up ›__against his brother Abel and__ |**killed him.** 9 +**So Yahweh** |**said to Cain: Where** is **your brother Abel? And he** |*sa*__replied: I__ do **not know.** Am **I my brother's guardian**|**?** 10 +**Then He** |**said: What have you done?** The **voice or your brother's blood** is **crying** out **to Me from the ground.** 11 + **Now you** are **cursed**|**,** away **from the ground which has opened wide `its mouth to take `your brother's blood from your hand.** 12 *t*__When you__ |**serve `the ground, it shall not continue** to **give¯ its vigor to you.** A **rover**| **and** a **wanderer**| **shall you become** *i*__on earth.__

13 + **Cain** |*sa*__replied to Yahweh:__ Too **great** is **my depravity** *f*__to bear¯.__ 14 *bd*__Since You drive `me out today, off__ the sur**face of the ground, and** since **I shall be concealed from Your presence and will become** a **rover**| **and** a **wanderer**| *i*__on earth—__+__it will come__ to **be** that **any**one **finding me shall kill me.**

15 +**Yet Yahweh** |**said to him:** 7__Not so__*c*__; any__one **killing Cain—sevenfold shall he be avenged.** +**So Yahweh** |**placed** a **sign for Cain,** by **no** means **to smite¯ `him,** should **any**one **find**| **him.** 16 +**Then Cain** went |**forth from** the **presence of Yahweh and** |**dwelt in** the **land of Nod, east of Eden.**

CAIN AND ABEL

Just as the darkness precedes the light, in order to make it apparent, and the night still alternates with the day, so worship was introduced by way of its opposite, and adoration by hatred, which still continues to teach us by their terrible contrasts. What greater gift could Yahweh give to Eve than a son? How many mothers' hearts have been filled to overflowing by the advent of their first child! Eve's thankfulness to God should have filled her whole being with the deepest of adoration. Adam had the utmost incentive to worship his Creator for giving him the woman He had formed for him to love and cherish. Both should have prostrated at His feet for these great and gratuitous gifts. But we read of no word of worship from either Adam or Eve. They had to be taught in the hard school of evil before they could bow the knee before their Blesser.

Abel became a grazier, or shepherd, but Cain became a server of the ground, or farmer. These two modes of obtaining a living are most significant. Cain seeks to sweat his livelihood directly out of the cursed ground. Abel gets his by means of *mediation*. The firstborn sustains himself by consuming soulless plants, which cannot suffer when he takes their life. But his inferior, Abel, subsists on the life of souls, who live and suffer for his sake. One had a bloodless, sweaty occupation. The other probably had a bloody, mediatorial method of evading the curse which had come upon the ground through Adam's disobedience.

Cain had a bad start, which really determined his life's

course. His mother imagined that *her efforts* had brought forth the promised Restorer. So she called him *Qin*, Cain, ACQUIRED, or *Bought*, or Paid-for. Here we have the first discernable trace of that great curse of mankind, *salvation by works*. It seems, however, that the conduct of Cain soon taught Eve her mistake, for she named her next son *Ebl*, Abel, VANITY. These two set before us the two main varieties of approach to God. One is based on man and his presumed ability to please his Maker by his unaided efforts. The other acknowledges that all human help is *vain*, and blessing comes only from the gratuitous grace of the Subjector. This is further elaborated in the *occupation* and *worship* of Cain and Abel, and the *presents* they offered to Yahweh.

All mankind is laboring under the illusion that they can earn something, and possess the exclusive right and title to its enjoyment. I like the spirit of William Penn, who bought Pennsylvania from the king of England, but denied his right to sell it, and paid the Indians also. So he paid for it twice, but I do not recognize his title even then, for the Indians, also, had no valid claim. The right of discovery is a sham, and is not recognized when there is a human owner. If I pick up a purse when the possessor is not apparently present, it does not belong to me, and I commit a crime if I make it mine. Even Israel does not *possess* Palestine. The Jews are tenants, who were evicted because they did not pay the rent.

The Creator is the exclusive Owner of the earth, and He does not renounce His rights for the benefit of beggars, who have no inherent title to anything. All of us are debtors to Him for all we have. Before we were born He provided us with parents who spent much on our care and upkeep. The food we eat, the air we breathe, the clothes we wear all come out of His storehouse. Our physical strength, our mental energy, our power of perception, our very life, is His

handiwork. We are not our own, and all we "own" is only a loan, to be used for our great Owner alone. How can we "acquire" anything? Cain was not "acquired" by Eve, but the name may have led to the murder which he committed, even as acquisition has led to many a slaughter since.

What's in a name? Contrary to the popular conception, very much indeed, especially in the Scriptures. There are many parallel passages in the predictive prophets in which *Jacob* (Heel) balances *Israel* (Uprightness-of-Subjector), and they usually have an appropriate and contrastive context. Many of the prominent characters in the Bible would be more easily understood if their names were translated rather than merely transliterated. David, for instance, is practically Fond, or Darling, and this expresses his loving relationship to Yahweh at all times.

TYPES

We would not insist that Adam and Eve did not worship God, for the action of Cain and Abel seems to suggest that they had learned it from them. But it is of paramount importance to note that the Scriptures give us no hint that they were at all grateful or ever brought any thank-offering to Yahweh, let alone a sin offering or an ascent offering. Adam is a typical character and stands for the old humanity, in contrast to the new, which has the second and last Adam as its Head. No acceptable worship can come through our fleshly relationship with Adam, but must be presented in the name of his greater Son. We see this portrayed in this typical scene where Adam's *son*, Abel, is the first to offer a sacrifice well pleasing to God, and himself became the victim of human hate. In this he was a most marvelous type of the Son of humanity and His sacrifice.

The Father is seeking *worshippers* (John 4:23). That is the full and final fruit of His eonian operations. At the beginning, His beneficence seems wasted on Adam,

because he had no knowledge of good or evil. At the end His *grace* will bring Him universal homage and adoration. Every knee will bow in token of undeserved blessing received and appreciated. Now, indeed, He is seeking sinners, in order to make them saints. But this is so because only saved sinners have had their hearts filled with responsive love to enable them to worship in spirit and in truth.

CAIN'S PRESENT

The worship and adoration of the Deity is the ultimate object of all creation. Since this is so, there can be no doubt that the Creator implanted in the hearts of His creatures an inclination which would unerringly lead them to this goal. Even a murderer, like Cain, brought a present to Yahweh in recognition of benefits received. His present, however, was more in the nature of repayment, so that he would not owe Yahweh anything more, and left no room for thanks or adoration for undeserved gratuities. Cain ignored the sin and offense of his parents and his own depravity, and simply wished to square accounts with the Subjector. This is the way of Cain (Jude 11). It is the path pursued by all religionists today. All deathless, bloodless worship is unacceptable to God, because it utterly fails to provide the love-link which is needed to unite His creatures to His heart.

Some of the lessons of nature go much deeper than mere appearance. For instance, the various animals used in sacrifice portrayed characteristics which correspond closely to that of the Antitype. The lamb is meek and dumb when mistreated. But we can go much deeper than that. The ground was cursed, so that it takes labor and sweat to make it produce food for mankind. But a sheep can live off a very poor, untilled pasture, and the shepherd can live off the milk and meat of his flock, as well as cover his shame with the wool. So that the lamb is a living, moving picture of the great Mediator even before it is offered to God in sacrifice.

Not only are such intangible forces as light, life, and love, used to set forth the divine essence, but actual substances, such as *flesh* and *blood*, *bread* and *wine*, *gold* and *silver*, *frankincense* and *oil*, to mention but a few, are used by God in His written revelation, to symbolize spiritual thoughts by the figure of association. This is especially true of the sacrifices offered to God in worship, and all connected with them. They are nothing in themselves, and are repugnant to Him unless they represent precious spiritual contents. Cain's offering lacked this, hence was not acceptable to Yahweh.

ABEL'S PRESENT

By *faith* Abel offered to God more of a sacrifice than Cain, through which he was testified to that he was just (Heb.11:4). Cain was not irreligious. He also brought a sacrifice. So far, there was no apparent difference, but Cain's did not suffice in kind or quantity. Before Adam offended, it might have sufficed as a token of his obligation to Yahweh. But, now that death had entered, and man was a mortal sinner, much more is required than that. Yahweh Elohim had already shown the way when He covered the shame of mortality with a tunic of skin, by sacrificing an animal. Abel knew that fig leaves would not do. He believed Elohim, and imitated Him by his sacrifice of a sin offering.

Human *life* on earth is sustained by *death*. Most of it comes from plants or animals that give up their life to perpetuate that of humanity. Very few fully realize this or learn the spiritual lesson which it inculcates. Killing are we continually, in order to live, yet who knows why? Every leaf or stalk or seed, and all flesh that we eat, is a mild form of murder. All yield up their lives for our sake. Were our eyes open, we would see that almost every mouthful that

we eat is an intimation of the death of Him Who is the Bread of life, Whose death for our sakes does for our spirits what all other food does for our bodies and far more, for it need not be repeated, it makes the dead live, and it will yet make man immortal, beyond the reach of death.

THE PLACE OF SUFFERING

Just as life, to be appreciated, must come from death, so blessing, to be enjoyed and bring adoration and worship to the Blesser, must come from the suffering that precedes death. Our personal experience of evil will lead us to heartfelt thankfulness to God for His goodness. But the suffering of His Son will not only save us, but enable us to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Hence every acceptable sacrifice which was offered to Yahweh had to be a true type of the suffering Saviour or at least be accompanied by such an offering.

Although the animals which were offered of old were typical of the sacrifice of Christ, there was a tremendous difference as regards the blood. The law demanded that the blood should be poured out immediately, so that there was no suffering. This was contrary to the great Antitype, but was dictated by the sympathetic heart of Elohim, which, despite all appearances to the contrary, will not allow any needless suffering on the part of the creatures of His hand and heart. It will be a relief to many to know this, for much has been said and written to blaspheme the God of the Old Testament Who demanded the death of innocent animals. When slain according to the law, their death caused them no suffering as soon as the blood flowed out of their veins.

In the beginning, toil and suffering were indicated by *sweat*. Adam's judgment, which has passed down to his descendants, demands that they suffer from their efforts to provide themselves with food from the accursed ground. Terrible distress and excruciating pain makes men sweat

because of their agony. So also was it with our Saviour. He, figuratively, was crushed as an olive berry in the presses of Gethsemane. There He sweat, as it were clots of blood (Luke 22:44). The blood speaks of suffering. It would have been a great relief if He had actually sweat blood. But He did not lose it then. He retained it in order to suffer on the cross.

Olive oil was made by *crushing* the olives with a large stone roller. The oil ran down into a trough below. This is what gave Gethsemane its name, for it means Oil Trough. I once spent some time there in meditation on the sufferings He endured in that sacred spot. It would be well for all of us to visit it often in spirit, for there it is that we may learn one of the basic lessons of God's Word, the function of *suffering* in revealing the love of God. It was not the ordinary oil of an olive that flowed into the trough on this occasion, but *sweat* (the token of accursed toil) that resembled *blood* (the seat of sensation and suffering), which fell from His frail form. He was not crushed under a heavy stone, but under the weight of humanity's sin and offense.

It is notable that we read of sweating in only two connections in the Scriptures. In one case it is a part of the penalty imposed upon the first human because of His sin and offense, and was implemented by the curse upon the ground (Gen. 3:19). In the other it is the penalty borne by the second Human, because He was about to bear that sin in His own body, due to the curse of the cross (Luke 22:44).

OFFERINGS

An ancient eastern custom decreed that an approach present be sent to a dignitary when *nearing* him, or when desiring an audience with a superior. Jacob sent a munificent *present* to Esau, his brother, whom he had estranged by his circumvention long before (Gen.32:13). This is the special offering brought by Cain and Abel. It is not likely

that they knew of the various offerings which were given to Israel, but only intended to honor and worship the Elohim of whom their parents told them, by offering Him a *present* and thus restore communion. The notable fact is that Cain fell far short of the present offering prescribed by Moses, and Abel went far beyond it. In the book of Hebrews this is clearly indicated, for, by faith, Abel offers to God *more* of a sacrifice than Cain (Heb.11:4).

Cain brought the fruit of the ground which God had cursed (Gen.3:17; 4:3). All of the other offerings under the law were *souls* from the beast or the herd or the flock, but the "[cereal] approach present" was composed of *soulless* fruits of the ground, probably grain (Lev.2:1-16). However, it was *beaten* into *flour*, and *toasted* or *baked* or *cooked*, with the addition of *salt*, and *oil* and *frankincense*, and a memorial of it was *fumed* on the altar, so that it ascended above to God as a restful *odor*. We read of none of these things in connection with Cain's present. Without this the fruit he brought probably rotted on the ground and rose as a sickening stink.

There is a modicum of truth in Cain's sacrifice, for the fruits died, and death is necessary for restoration to God. *But there was no suffering*. Neither was there actual suffering on the part of the grain used under the law. But it is clearly indicated in a variety of ways. The grain was *beaten* into fine *flour*. It was subjected to *fire* when *toasted* or *baked* or *cooked*. And it was actually *burned* as incense when *fumed*. Cain did not realize his need of a *suffering* Mediator. He was not aware that, if Adam's offense brought suffering on him and his, so his own shortcomings called for judgment, and this must at least be indicated by the offering which was to mediate between him and Yahweh. It is not the Saviour's *life* that saves, but His *suffering* and *death*.

Moreover, he needed far more than a mere substitute.

God isn't trying to repair mankind and bring it back to Eden. The suffering and the sacrifice must lead to a fellowship infinitely finer and more perfect than that. So under the law *oil* and *frankincense* must be added to the present, in order to indicate the great *Anointed* Saviour, the Son of God's love in Whom He *delights*.

By the marvelous figure of condescension Yahweh speaks to us in terms a human can comprehend. Not only does He speak plainly through later revelation, telling us that the Father is seeking worship in *spirit* and *truth*, but, in the shadowy language of the types, the present offering *must* be accompanied with *frankincense* and *oil*. When the first is fumed as incense it gratifies His sense of *smell*. When the oil is burned it produces *light* to illuminate His *sight*. But the connections between these are not very clear in an English translation or the ordinary course of life. We must look for their significance in Hebrew and in the service of the tabernacle, Yahweh's dwelling place in Israel.

In the offerings, the effect of frankincense was a delightful *odor*. In Hebrew the stem *ruch* is used for *wind, smell, odor* and *spirit*. When we read that Elohim is *smelling* a restful, or fragrant *odor* (AV a sweet savor) it suggests the word *spirit*, to the reader of the Original. He is *spirit*, and those worshiping Him must be worshiping in *spirit* (John 4:24). This Cain did *not* do. God's spirit was not rested by his present.

All of the frankincense was fumed with fire on the altar. We do not read that it disseminated its odor until it was *burned*. So it speaks also of *suffering*. Hence it is particularly symbolic of our Lord's *spiritual* humiliation and the agony of separation from His Father, endured on Golgotha. This is the highest aspect of His sacrifice, which brought the greatest pleasure to the heart of His Father. While it speaks of the only time when He was *forsaken* by Him, it is the basis on which all will be *reconciled* to Him. If we

approach the Father with the plea that His Son was forsaken by Him for our sakes, our present offering will be most acceptable. It will be a *restful* smell, and He will welcome us to His heart. At the consummation it will bring all His estranged creatures back to Him, to enjoy His permanent rest.

In nature the connection between the sense of smell and *moving* air is very evident. The hunter, in stalking games, is careful to get to windward of it, for most animals are exceedingly sensitive in this regard, and can detect the odor given off by another at a considerable distance. They can scent a man afar off even if they cannot see or hear him, if the wind is in their direction.

A SIN OFFERING

The AV reads "sin lieth at the door"(Gen.4:7). This is generally taken to mean that Cain had committed some sin, with the implication that Abel had *not* sinned. This is a serious misconception. *Both* were sinners. If that had caused Yahweh to ignore his present offering, then He would have rejected Abel's as well.

In Scripture the simple word *sin* is frequently used for the sin *offering*.

Yahweh Elohim pointed out Cain's mistake and made provision for it. Cain probably had no flock, as he was not a grazier like his brother, but a farmer. Nevertheless, God actually *provided* a sacrifice for him. He did not even need to tend a flock and raise a lamb, as Abel had done. There was one lying right at his door. He, like his father, Adam, had the right to sway over all the animal creation (Gen. 1:26). So Yahweh Elohim reminds him that he has authority over it. How simple it would have been for him to obey and sacrifice the sin offering which lay at his very door! Only thus could he be restored to Yahweh's favor.

RESTORATION

The reading of the Authorized Version, "unto thee shall be *his desire*" (Gen.4:7), yields little satisfaction. The Greek version is altogether different. It reads "for you is *restoration of him*." The Hebrew here is *thshuqe* RUN-ABOUT. Change the q to b (half of which has almost the same shape as q) and we have *thshube*, return, or: restoration. The evidence seems conclusive that this was the original reading of the inspired text. Cain needed to be *restored*. The sin offering reclining at the opening was just what was needed to do this. Had he obeyed the voice of Yahweh, he would have been restored to favor. But this he refused to do.

Instead of sacrificing the sin offering, Cain killed his brother. Thus it has been ever since. Enmity toward God is the source of dissension among mankind. This is especially true of the attitude of the unbeliever toward the believer. Sainthood and suffering go together. And it all springs from man's enmity to God. *It can never be rectified apart from restoration to the favor of God*. All the welfare work, the peace conferences, even the religious associations, cannot restore mankind apart from the light of revelation. Nature's light is not sufficient.

Even as Cain was provided with a sacrifice, which he had *not* "acquired," either by work or purchase, so it is today. The Lamb of God has been provided by God Himself. Indeed, it is not necessary to offer it up, for He has done this already. All that is required is to accept it and enter His presence with rejoicing. Do not attempt to draw nigh to Him with any offering of your own providing! Far more than this, He has also provided a sin offering for your misdeeds, and a peace offering for your offenses and an ascent offering for your worship. He is conciliated to all, and He prays all to be conciliated to Him through the death of His Beloved Son.

A. E. Knoch

CAIN'S STUBBORNNESS AND FEAR

THE FAMILY of Adam did not live under any established government. Conscience was the principal directing factor, formulating all needful institutions and practices to regulate life and its affairs in those earliest of days. Since nature could lead humans to discharge the law's demands, and of this conscience would testify (*cf* Rom.2:14,15), it became plain that conscience could be a potent factor in restraining human failure. This was agreeable to the simplicity of that period.

Moreover, at this point, the position of Adam as the father of the race would be very important, even as, in subsequent days, precedent and custom vested great authority in the father of the family.

But beyond the directing force of conscience and the authority of Adam, Yahweh added to human understanding in those days of beginnings by revealing matters concerned with His worship. In Genesis 4 we even find Him intervening and discriminating between the earliest of Adam's children.

CONSCIENCE

The regulation of life by conscience did not provide for the redress of wrongs such as the law later offered. There was no stated penalty for Cain's acts. However, though humans were constituted sinners, nature and the capacity to recognize rightness and wrongness remained unaltered as guides for ethical behavior. Joined with this testimony was the authority vested in Adam.

In this circumstance, the position of Adam's firstborn is seen in its importance. Conscience pressed upon Cain the privileges and duties that he held as the eldest son, and which were vital in family life and affairs.

YAHWEH'S INSTRUCTIONS

Yahweh supplemented human conscience and knowledge by revealing His instructions concerning offerings and specifying their significance. In later revelation we read that "*By faith* Abel offers to God more of a sacrifice than Cain" (Heb.11:4). That Abel's sacrifice was *by faith* tells us that Yahweh had directed the requirements of sacrifice before Him, pointing Adam and his family to the important distinctions around the offerings as related to sin, or as approach presents. Here we perceive how Abel believed God and obeyed, whereas the elder son, though engaging in sacrifice, presumed to approach Yahweh in a manner which has come to be termed the "way of Cain."

Nevertheless, though Cain was grossly presumptuous, Yahweh Elohim did not leave him to the folly of his own way. Yahweh intervened to instruct Cain more exactly. In Genesis 4:6,7, it was shown to Cain that the foremost need was a sin offering, and for him it was immediately at hand, reclining at the portal.

By that lamb was to be Cain's own restoration. Thus Yahweh Himself proclaims to Cain an evangel, which followed the pattern set in Genesis 3:21 when Yahweh Elohim had made tunic coats for clothing Cain's parents. The full covering came by way of the sacrifice of an animal.

But Cain refused to heed the intimation; he was blind and perverse to God's ways. When rising against Abel (Gen.4:8), Cain was attempting something on behalf of his own prior wicked acts. In the slaying of Abel, he sought to consummate the issue developed by his stubbornness toward Yahweh.

Now once again Yahweh addressed Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" (Gen.4:8). The wording is most pointed. Yahweh was not simply inquiring about Abel, but He added to the name the significant words, "your brother." Yet, in his reply, Cain showed his scorn for the privileges belonging to the firstborn, for he attempted to evade any duty he held as the elder brother.

YOUR BROTHER

The occurrences of the words *Abel* and *brother* are most interesting, and their use, both together and singly, confirm that God was stressing the aspect of Abel's particular relationship to Cain, and thus He was pointing to the special position belonging to Cain as the elder brother. In this way Yahweh Elohim called to Cain's mind, not only a relationship, but also the associated duty of caring for and protecting his brother.

The name *Abel* occurs seven times in Genesis 4:1-16, and so also does the word *brother.* In three instances the word *brother* is attached to the name Abel, in verse 2 when noting Abel's birth, and then in verse 8 when Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and finally in verse 9 when Yahweh asked Cain about his brother Abel. For the purpose of the narrative the use of the two words together is not necessary. In fact, immediately after the first question has been addressed by God to Cain, the record uses *brother* alone, and the name, *Abel*, is not used further.

Cain discerned the implication. His reply to Yahweh omitted the personal name, and by using the word of relationship alone, Cain dealt directly with that matter. "I do not know. Am I my *brother's* guardian?" (Gen.4:9). By this Cain not only replied to Yahweh's question, but he also repudiated that which his conscience taught.

Cain was aware that he had obligations, yet he now sought to establish that there was no propriety in Yahweh's

suggestion of obligation to his brother. He was attempting to evade the accountability of his position as the elder son. Yet by nature and conscience Cain realized his duties as firstborn. There was nothing in Yahweh's words concerning his brother which surprised Cain.

In Yahweh's intimations concerning Cain's position as the elder brother, we see the beginnings of those customs concerning the firstborn which agreed with God's later claim of the firstborn under the law, they who were redeemed in favor of the sons of Levi (*cf* Ex.13:2; Num.3:11-13).

CAIN DISMISSED FROM HIS FATHER'S FAMILY

Cain was fully aware that he was his brother's guardian. Yet he not merely failed to carry this into effect, but he created a situation whereby Abel needed to be guarded from the very one who ought to have guarded him.

God was invoked by the blood of Abel. It cried to Him from the ground. God, hearkening to this cry, charged Cain, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying out to Me from the ground" (Gen.4:10). Forthwith God dismissed Cain from his position in his father's family, for he had violated his privilege. He would not be allowed to remain with the family, but was to become a rover and a wanderer on the earth. From the ground would come Cain's curse, for it would no longer yield its vigor to his service. This would drive Cain about as he sought to augment the sparse results of his labor.

THE KINSMAN REDEEMER

Cain began to feel the effects of his ways. He perceived the significance of God's words to him. He had failed, and now, degraded from his position in the family, he came to see that his father must become the one by whose hands conscience would be resolved into justice. For it was not only Cain's brother, but it was also Adam's own son who

had been slain. The father must seek, and if he *finds*—? Cain was dimly apprehending the basic aspect of the kinsman redeemer of blood which became approved and established as a regulating custom.

The singular word *anyone* and the verb *find* speak of one seeking. Later, in Numbers 35:19, the law declared, "The kinsman redeemer of blood, he shall put the murderer to death; when he comes upon him he shall put him to death." Although Yahweh provided cities of asylum, yet if the murderer should leave, "and the kinsman redeemer of blood *finds* him outside the boundary of his city of asylum, and the kinsman redeemer of blood murders the manslayer, there is no bloodguilt on him" (Num.35:27).

Cain would not fear the wildness of any population since it was still composed of one family, and thus control remained simple and single. Interest in, and knowledge of, Cain's crime could not be outside the family circle. With the head of the family all authority was invested.

Cain feared "anyone" who would stand as redeemer of Abel's blood. And as long as Adam lived this would certainly refer to him. Cain feared lest the one who held responsibility for orderly governance, as directed by conscience, should seek to redeem the blood of Abel, his brother.

GOD'S LENIENCY TO CAIN

The decision of Yahweh Elohim forced home to Cain's understanding what his depravity entailed. It was a consequence he had not fully estimated. He claimed God's leniency on the ground that he was unable to bear its results. Yet conscience had taught him that murder deserved death, even though it be not specified in an established law.

Nevertheless, Yahweh Elohim, though maintaining that Cain should become a rover and wanderer, affords protection to Cain agreeable to the regulation of life by conscience. A sign was given for Cain, and he was preserved.

E. H. Clayton

OUTSIDE THE GARDEN

THE ACTIVITIES of *Yahweh* in Genesis 4 are primary. What Cain and Abel do is instructive, but what Yahweh does is critical. The two human brothers represent two lines of divine operations. A dualism is established which is reflected from this point forward in Scripture. Cain begins a "way" (*cf* Jude 11) of pride and stubbornness that is followed by most of humanity, while Abel represents a humble way of faith (*cf* Heb.11:4) directed by what God has said.

But it is God Who locks human beings up in stubbornness (*cf* Rom.11:32), and it is God Who gives faith (*cf* Rom. 12:3; Phil.1:29). It is God Who creates human beings as living souls and places them in the environment in which they live. He planted the trees of the garden and made the crooked serpent and cursed the ground when the human pair had sinned and cast them out of the garden. He is God.

Therefore, what *He* does is of first importance.

GOD IS OPERATING

In His first recorded dealings with humanity outside the garden, God would have us know Him as One Who is Supreme, not only as Creator but also as Subjector Who is vitally concerned with humanity, particularly in humanity's great need of approach and access to Him.

In Genesis 4:1-16 there are three different verbs used with *Yahweh* as the subject: *heed, say* and *place.* Yahweh *heeds* (or does *not heed*) the offerings of the two brothers (4:4,5); He *speaks* ("says") words of good (Gen.4:6,7), words of judgment (4:9-12) and words of protection (4:15*a*);

and He *places* a sign of protection for Cain (4:15*b*). The record of these divine actions exhibits a pattern that can be arranged as follows:

God heeds (or does not heed) man and his offerings.
God speaks words of evangel.
God speaks words of judgment.
God speaks words of protection.
God places a sign for protection.

After humanity was driven from the garden, God continued to operate *all* in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). His heeding and saying and placing as recorded in Genesis 4 were not His only activities. But they are the only acts of God mentioned for this time period at the very beginning of the long human history severed from the blessings of Eden. As such they call for special attention.

The first and last operations of God in this chapter are distinctive actions which seem to stand in contrast to each other. God's heeding or not heeding is a matter of strictness, while His placing is a matter of mercy. The middle three operations are all expressed by the same verb, *say;* but what Yahweh says also provides apparent contrasts. His message is first an announcement of good news, then a pronouncement of judgment and finally a promise of mercy.

There is a strictness in God's act of heeding that may seem at first unwarranted. Both Cain and Abel were sinners who had surely done many other deeds both commendable and fleshly. Now they both approached near to Yahweh with presents, which certainly seems commendable in itself. What they brought corresponded to their vocations and represented what they had. But the uncompromising response of Yahweh makes His displeasure with Cain very clear.

On the other hand, God's act of placing a sign for Cain's protection after Cain had murdered his brother may seem

too lenient, setting a bad precedent and giving the wrong impression concerning the seriousness of Cain's crime.

That is how it appears from the human standpoint. God begins with inflexible discrimination and ends with a leniency that may strike us as an act of capitulation to the whining of a murderer.

It is also remarkable that God's verbal response to Cain's wilfulness in bringing the wrong kind of offering begins with the announcement of good news, and only when this is ignored and Cain murders his brother does God pronounce a curse. And then, in the end, God's message becomes definitely one of patience and forbearance.

SEVERITY AND LENIENCY

Although the leniency of Genesis 4:15 by no means reverses the severity of divine rejection in verse 5 or the curse of verses 11 and 12, it is important that we see it as having a positive relationship to the acts of judgment. God is not sending a mixed message with His acts in Genesis 4:1-16. He is not doing something harsh and then, as though suspecting He has gone too far, reversing His direction and being unusually lenient, and then hedging again toward severity which He finally modifies by mercy. The divine activities are cohesive components of the divine purpose, directed to the common goal of good and glory.

God's actions of mercy do not contradict His actions of severity, but rather they help define the significance of His severity. They remind us that severity in and of itself is not God's object. His goal is to bring humanity into a relationship with Him that is blessed and ideal. If we suppose that God intends to send Cain to an everlasting hell of torment or destruction, the pattern of God's actions in this first account of human stubbornness after the events of Genesis 3 does not lend its support.

One might argue that Genesis 4:1-16 still *allows* for the

everlasting condemnation of Cain, especially in view of his continued stubbornness. The words of Romans 2:3-10 seem particularly relevant. Was not Cain despising the riches of God's kindness and forbearance and patience, being ignorant that the kindness of God should have led him to repentance? In continually shunning God's instructions and rejecting His forbearance, Cain, in his hardness and unrepentant heart was hoarding for himself indignation in the day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God. What is ahead for him is indignation and fury, affliction and distress, for whoever sinned without law, without law also shall perish.

This is true. But Romans 2 is not teaching everlasting condemnation for anyone, and it is not speaking of divine indignation as an end in itself. Even more clearly than Genesis 4, the testimony of Romans 2 is to be understood in light of the evangel. In Genesis the message concerning Christ as the Sin Offering appears in type, as a shadow. But in Romans it is presented boldly as a message of real justification and deliverance.

In order to understand the activities of God in the first sixteen verses of Genesis 4, we need to keep in view, first of all, the revelation of God in the first two chapters of Genesis, and then note carefully the exact relationship between His acts of judgment and mercy in the present context. And finally we must relate all this to the promise of the Seed of the woman as we note the ways in which this passage speaks of Christ.

Romans 1:18-3:20 offers important parallels to Genesis 4, but we must not focus solely on what these and many other passages of Scripture say about human beings, to the neglect of what they say about God. What do the judgments of sinners say about God Who is the Creator of us all and Who has a goal of good for His creation? What is God doing when He makes us as we are and places us

where we are and rejects and judges and is merciful? Are all these things part of a plan, involving the death and resurrection of Christ at its very core, and leading forward to God's glory?

Indeed they are.

TYPES OF CHRIST

There is an optimism in the structural pattern of God's acts in Genesis 4:1-16. The divine severity is joined with divine forbearance and mercy. But far superior to that evidence of optimism is the message behind these acts. Continually throughout these verses, God points ahead to Jesus Christ and His death for sinners. He heeds Abel's approach present because it reflects the death of God's Son for the conciliation of His enemies, and He does not heed Cain's present because it fails to speak of Christ. By His words of evangel to Cain God directs attention to an animal that could serve as a type of the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. In addition, God's acts of leniency are reflections of the disposition of Christ even as these acts themselves are justified by Christ's faithful work on Golgotha. As for the words and actions of judgment, these are shadows of our Lord's afflictions and His forsakenness, which, like the acts of mercy, receive their eventual justification from the achievements of the cross.

Whenever a passage of Scripture speaks to us of Christ, then there is optimism.

DIVINE HEED

Approach to God was one of those experiences Adam and Eve had in the garden but which they had no way of appreciating. Within the garden the blessings of reliance and thankfulness in worship could not be understood, for vulnerability and uncertainty were then outside human experience. Now, however, when the experience of com-

ing near for worship could be appreciated, the barrier of sin had intervened. Any approach to God must take this into account, and this means that God's provision for deliverance from sin needed to be recognized. It is in this context that Cain and Abel come near to God with presents.

What happens now is that God makes clear that access to Him by sinners can be made in one way only. He does this by heeding the one who takes the right way, or rather the way that is *good*, and not heeding the one who takes the way that is not "well."

As we have noted, Abel's present pointed to Christ, and Cain's did not. Yahweh was aware of Cain's toil and sweat in serving the ground, and He was aware that this was due to the curse He had placed on the ground because of the sin of Cain's parents, and He was also aware that He Himself had prepared the conditions which led to this sin. Furthermore, Yahweh was aware that He had not given Cain faith as He had given faith to Abel. (Happy is the human who is given the blessing of faith!) But the fact remains that Cain sinned in his attempt to give that which glorified himself, a present of works and not of faith.

Consequently, Yahweh refuses to heed Cain and his present. And in this act of silence and severity, Yahweh draws attention even today, thousands of years later, to the one way of approach.

Yahweh had testified to this one way in the garden when He provided coverings for Adam and Eve in their experience of shame expressed by their nakedness (Gen.3:21). The slaying of an innocent animal was a picture of the crucifixion of God's Son for sinners. It did not eliminate their sins and clothe them in righteousness, but it was a type of Christ's death for sinners, and that faithful work of Christ would deal righteously and truly and effectively with their sins.

THEN YAHWEH SAID

But because God did not heed Cain and his approach present of the fruit he had worked for and harvested, we must not conclude He is through with this firstborn son of Adam and Eve. And we also must not conclude that by His act of "silence and severity" in not heeding Cain, God had no further concern for this creature of His hands. In refusing to recognize Cain's offering because it did not point to Christ, God was not refusing to recognize the way of deliverance which is in Christ Jesus and its significance for Cain and Cain's approach to God.

Cain had not been given faith, and consequently he had sinned by rejecting God's way for approach to Him, and as a further result Yahweh did not heed him and his approach present. But God persists with words that point to Christ, *saying* to Cain: "Why is your anger hot? And why is your face fallen? If you had done well, would you not lift up your face? But since you have not done well, there is a sin offering reclining at the portal, and for you is restoration in his sacrifice" (Gen.4:6,7).

TO DO WELL

These words, spoken by Yahweh, are words of evangel, a *well-message*, directing Cain in a way which will be well for him. It is a way for *restoration*, as the Septuagint translation indicates. The Hebrew for "do well" is the verb form of the word "good." Even as God sees that His finished creation is very *good* (Gen.1:31), so all His ways are directed to the good. This is the goal He has set. For the human to approach God in the way which is good there must be a witness to the Saviour Who would shed His blood for sinners. This could only be done at that time by a picture, a type of the real Approach Present and the real Sin Offering, Who is Christ Jesus our Lord.

There was a sin offering reclining at the portal. Cain

had not done well because he had brought a present that could not speak of Christ. It spoke only of Cain's works. It was *Cain's* own gift that he had labored for (though actually it also was from God) and now gave to Yahweh.

But God's message to Cain concerns God's provision for Cain's approach to Him with his sin covered. And in effect this sin offering points to the Lord Jesus Christ Whom God would make the Means by which the sinner's sins would not simply be covered, but by which he will be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19).

LOCKED UP IN STUBBORNNESS

However, Cain is still locked up in stubbornness. He refuses this provision and adds evil to evil by murdering his brother Abel. This is horrible! Yet it is only a further development of Cain's self-centeredness. He is unable to look beyond himself. He is completely unable to grasp the meaning of God's words to him and appreciate their goodness.

YAHWEH SPEAKS JUDGMENT

This is followed by Yahweh *saying* to Cain, with words of stern judgment, "Now you are cursed away from the ground . . . . When you serve the ground, it shall not continue to give its vigor to you. A rover and a wanderer shall you become on earth" (Gen.4:11,12).

This is well deserved. But later in the law it was declared, "The murderer shall be put to death, yea death" (Num. 35:16). What is God doing here? Why didn't He destroy Cain on the spot? The tragedy must have been wrenching for Adam and Eve. The evil that came upon them in the garden had spread and affected more than themselves alone.

And what did all of this mean to the mind and heart of God? We can see by His actions that God Himself focuses on His purpose in the gift of His Son for sinners and the

goal of reconciliation through His blood which He Himself has determined and willed.

This judgment that came on Cain did not put an end to God's dealings with Cain. We misunderstand condemnation if we think of it as an end in itself. God's acts of mercy here in Genesis 4 testify to the fact that His acts of righteous severity do not speak of final things.

GOD'S WAYS

Hence, as we have already noted, Yahweh exhibits here what Paul later called "the kindness and forbearance and patience" of God, which is to lead to repentance (Rom.2:4). Furthermore, this leniency is multiplied when Cain complains, and Yahweh provides a special measure of protection from human revenge. "So Yahweh placed a sign for Cain, by no means to smite him, should anyone find him" (Gen.4:15).

Yahweh's firmness in refusing Cain's offering may be hard for us to understand until we see the issues of faith and works, of human pride and divine glory, involved. But Yahweh's leniency in dealing with Cain in the murder of his brother, and following that, in responding to Cain's fearful plea, is often even more difficult to understand.

God's leniency is not immediately justified by its results. Cain accepted the protection but shunned Yahweh's word once again by dwelling in the land of Nod and eventually building a city (Gen.4:16,17). He was not led to repentance, to a changing of his mind and way.

But God's message concerning the sin offering and His acts and words of leniency added to His acts and words of severity must be taken into account before we leave Cain. What God had to say to Cain about the way of restoration remains viable and essential and triumphant. The Sin Offering will be made.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

God is faithful. Cain's lack of faith in the sin offering and his refusal to do *well,* does not keep God from making Christ to be the Sin Offering (2 Cor.5:21), nor does it keep Christ as the Sin Offering from ultimately being any less the Saviour of vessels of indignation like Cain than the Saviour of vessels of mercy like Abel. The fact that God did not choose Cain as a vessel of mercy and the associated fact that Cain was stubborn in his sinful acts can neither of them keep God from saving him by means of the death of His Son.

THE MAN, CHRIST JESUS

Cain was condemned for his sin of unbelief and pride, but God did not destroy him on the spot. Indeed in the day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God, God will pay Cain in accord with his acts (Rom.2:5). But this does not speak the last word in the saga of this first human being born of a woman. God's lenient treatment of Cain is a *witness* that God is not through with Cain. And God's judgments against Cain *testify* that God has more in view for him. But more than this, the coming of God's Son into the world in the likeness of humanity, born of a woman, to save sinners, giving Himself, the Man Christ Jesus, a correspondent Ransom for us all, is the *proof* that God has not finished His work of bringing this one who first rejected God's way of deliverance and approach into that deliverance and blessed approach.

In considering Cain we learn much about the evil of human pride and anger and hardness of heart. But in considering God's actions with regard to Cain we learn much about the goodness and purpose of God which can only strengthen our reliance on Him as the living God and Saviour of all mankind.

D.H.H.

Questions and Answers

A PRESENT RESURRECTION?
⁂
DISQUALIFICATION AND FAITH
⁂
JEWS, ISRAELITES, AND JUDEANS

Question:

Isn't "the resurrection" as presented in most of 1 Corinthians 15 referring to a spiritual awakening to truth, *not* to the raising of the body from the grave? Also, concerning the resurrection, notice that the *present* tense is used (for example, "the last enemy *is* be*ing* abolished" [v.26]; "if the dead *are* not be*ing* roused" [vs.29,32]; "How *are* the dead be*ing* roused? Now with what body *are* they com*ing?*" [v.35]. Does not this clearly prove that the resurrection spoken of in these passages is a present-day event and not a future event, after death?"

Answer:

IN REPLY to your question concerning a present-day, figurative "resurrection" being the teaching throughout much of 1 Corinthians 15, my answer is as follows: It is the *kind* of UP-STANDING (rendered "resurrection" and "rising" in the CV), according to the context, which establishes the usage at hand, in the passages in question. And, that kind of UP-STANDING, is the kind which Christ Himself experienced in connection with His "rousing" (awakening from the sleep of death). Therefore, the "rising" which is in view is that of a rising from literal death (1 Cor.15:12), namely, bodily rising from bodily death. Further, UP-STANDING,

anastasis ("resurrection" or "rising"), is neither used here nor elsewhere of the spiritual enlightenment (or endowment) which comes to mortal believers in this present life as a result of receiving God's spirit.

In reply to your second question: No, the presence of *is* (or *are*) along with *-ing* forms within various verses in 1 Corinthians 15 by no means proves that the resurrection is a present-day occurrence. In fact, the presence of these forms entails no such thing. The *-ing* endings on participles, or within participial phrases (as in 1 Corinthians 15:35, "How are the dead be*ing* roused?") do not signify present action, but instead, grammatically speaking, incomplete action. That is, they speak of action go*ing* on, *regardless of the time in which this action occurs.*

Whether this participial ending is being *used temporally* with respect to action going on at the present time, or instead, either *abstractly* (in a general way), or *proleptically* (in anticipation of a future event), is not a question of grammar but of sensible judgment.

Temporal usage of *is/are* and *-ing* speaks of an action which is presently taking place (e.g.: I am writ*ing* this article). Abstract usage incorporating these forms, however, considers the mere *being* (or occurrence) of such an act, apart from any consideration of when an act occurs (e.g.: Farm animals are need*ing* attention). Yet proleptic usage of these forms speaks of that which has not yet occurred as if it was already taking place, in confident anticipation of its futurity (e.g.: God is vivify*ing* all).

Accordingly, the mere fact that in such cases the English employs the "present" substantive verb even as the present participial form, is beside the point.

The substantive verb (*be*, in whatever form) merely expresses being or existence. When used in conjunction with incomplete action, the presence of the substantive verb is simply indicative of grammatical agreement between

the substantive verb (e.g., "are") and the participial phrase (e.g., "being roused").

In the nature of the case, "On Thy account we are being put to death the whole day" (Rom.8:36), is a temporal declaration, in reference to the present life. Yet, according to contextual usage, it is evident that, "How are the dead being roused?" (1 Cor.15:35), is an abstract question, concerning a future event. Similarly, and quite obviously, "The last enemy is being abolished: death" (1 Cor.15:26), is a proleptic affirmation concerning a future event.

The "present" form of the substantive verb, in itself, is actually the *factual* (or timeless) substantive. When we say, "God is love," "two plus two is four," or "sunsets are beautiful," we are merely expressing factuality or truth. Similarly, then—insofar as the words themselves are concerned—should we incorporate a participle into one of our statements, and say, for example, "God is abolishing death," or, as the Scripture declares, "the last enemy is being abolished: death," the only essential thought is the *factualness* of the declaration, concerning an activity which consists of ongo*ing* action—apart from any question of the time or duration of the action.

That is, the essential idea is that abolish*ing* death is something that God *does;* that the do*ing* of which is a divine operation. Likewise, in the latter example, the pre-interpretative affirmation is that the abolish*ing* of death is something that *occurs;* that the occur*ing* of which is something that actually happens. Beyond this, we must *judge* of the temporal, the abstract, or the proleptic—not by any grammatical form but by usage—according to context, in the nature of the case.

❊

Question:

In the May, 1990 issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, on

page 144,[1] you refer to those whom Paul speaks of as workers of dishonor as being nonetheless in Christ and possessors of life in the coming eons. I doubt that you are correct about this. Some so-called "Christians" live a very sinful life. It is one thing to say that they will be saved eventually, after the day of judgment and after the second death, but quite another to say that they too will be given eonian life, along with those who have lived a good life and remained faithful Christians. Paul says that some are "disqualified," and I would think that this must apply to those who are very sinful.

Answer:

In the article to which you refer, I spoke of "any few who believe this evangel [i.e., the Pauline evangel of gratuitous grace] and yet become 'utensils for dishonor' (2 Tim.2:20) as to their walk." I had in mind, as I indicated, those who actually believe the truth concerning the "reign" of grace and how it will prevail whether or not the believer walks worthily of his calling ("even if we should be persisting in sin—even if we should be increasing in sin"; p.143). Of course there are others who are believers in Christ (who, therefore, are members of the ecclesia as well) who may also walk dishonorably, even though they do not correctly understand passages such as Romans 5:20,21; 6:1, or others to which I refer in the article.

My point, however, was that regardless of what the believer believes (beyond his basic acceptance of Christ's death and resurrection; 1 Cor.15:2-4; 1 Thess.4:14)), and even if his walk should be, and remain, most dishonorable and unrepentant, he "*will* be vivified in that day—just as surely as the apostle Paul."

The "utensils of dishonor" of 2 Timothy 2, may well

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* "Because of Another," vol.81, pp.143,144.

include many who are merely naming the name of the Lord, but who do not have genuine faith (2 Tim.1:9; 1 Cor.15:2). But even so, genuine believers are also naming the name of the Lord themselves, though they do so out of genuine faith. In various places, the apostle Paul speaks explicitly of the dreadful sins of many of his fellow believers. Some of these sins were common acts of uncleanness, deeds that are repudiated by all honorable men; others were sins of unbelief and opposition to the truth, even if those committing them were otherwise above reproach.

My point is that, not only nominal "believers," but some genuine believers as well, walk dishonorably indeed; that is, they too are "utensils . . . for dishonor." This, however, is actually God's purpose concerning them, according to His intention, even though their unworthy deeds are contrary to His revealed will.

It is true that the man who committed prostitution in 1 Corinthians 5 was given up to Satan by Paul. (Many others, however, among the Corinthians, were very fleshly themselves, even if not in a way that called for this same discipline.) Yet we cannot say that this particular man (or perhaps someone else who committed this same sin) was the lowliest and most fleshly among the Corinthians. Perhaps, in God's sight, some who were self-righteous, proud boasters (a sin that is not often considered serious or even recognized by many; 1 Cor.4:6-8), were even more lowly and fleshly than the man who committed prostitution.

But trying to decide which person among the Corinthians was the most fleshly, or who was or who was not given up to Satan, is entirely beside the point. The point is that even that most fleshly one—whoever he or she may have been—*will* be vivified in that day, just as surely as the apostle Paul.

You also spoke of those who are "disqualified." What Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:8 is that various ones are "disqualified

as to the faith." The various failings mentioned by Paul, lead to a disqualification *about* the faith. This refers to a consequent failure to grasp what "the faith actually consists of." The failings Paul mentions here are common ones; and surely these lead to disqualification *as to* "the faith."

Being disqualified as to the faith, however, has nothing to do with being "in Christ" at present, or with enjoying the allotment of eonian life in the oncoming eons. If the believer is "disqualified," whether specifically as to the faith itself, or concerning a worthy walk in general (*cp* 1 Cor.9: 24-27), he will forfeit wages (1 Cor.3:14,15); and, if, failing to endure, he is one who is characterized by the works of the flesh, he will not participate in God's reign (2 Tim. 2:12; Gal.5:21). Even so, he is still complete in Christ (Col. 2:10), and will be glorified in His presence in that day.

There is no such thing as qualifying or disqualifying for membership in the body of Christ, or for the allotment of life eonian. The unworthy are quite as secure in Him as the worthy. Besides, the worthy are only so because of Him, according to God's grace, through the greater measure of faith which has been given to them.

❊

Question:

I notice that you use the word "Jew" in your translation. Why do you subscribe to the dictionary definition of the word "gentile" (namely, "anyone who is not a Jew")? But what I really want to know is why do you use the word "Jew"? Whenever you read the word 'Jew' in the N.T., it is an *incorrect translation* of the original Greek words. This is a word which you use too much, but ought not to use at all. Don't you know any better? Don't you know there is a distinction between Judah and Israel?

Answer:

We only acknowledge that "one who is not a Jew," is the

common definition of the word "gentile." Dictionary definition merely records ordinary usage. Consequently, we can hardly claim that such a dictionary definition is "false." You are confusing disparate themes: (1) the dictionary definition of "gentile," and (2) the confusing rendering in most Bibles in which *ethnos* is translated "gentile."

You should not presume that we "subscribe" to the usual false notions concerning this subject. Indeed, we do not use the word "gentile" in our translation at all, for it would be most confusing to use gentile as the equivalent of *ethnos,* which it is not, and yet it does not correspond to any other word in the Original.

Instead, where *ethnos* appears in the Greek, we always use the word "nation." Indeed, we hardly ever use "gentile" even in our expositions, unless it should be in reference to secular usage or to the teachings of others, and even then only rarely. Again, we are well aware of the various points which you zealously seek to point out to us on this subject. We earnestly concur with you with respect to all the popular confusion attending this word.

Concerning your objection to our use of the word "Jew" (a word which we do use in our translation, and to a corresponding degree, in our teaching ministry), let me say at the outset that, fairly considered, I think you will find that we do not use this word incorrectly (or excessively), at least in any practical sense.

A. E. Knoch, very early in his career, when he was engaged in the early stages of his work on the Concordant Version, considered using the word "pole" or "stake," instead of "cross" in rendering the Greek *stauros* (STANDer). Yet, as he once mentioned (albeit whimsically), that when he proposed this to certain others, they nearly "crucified" him!

Brother Knoch was a man hardly given to improper compromise. Yet he was unhesitating, albeit with some regret, in implementing the word "cross" in the Concordant Ver-

sion. He wished not to stumble others needlessly, or only over matters of little consequence. The goodhearted, discerning believer may readily say the word "cross" while conceiving the idea of a stake or pole, and do so apart from any notion (whether pagan or Roman Catholic) of an object in the form of a lowercase "t."

Thus we compromise neither our own faith, nor disturb the immature needlessly, whom we wish not to stumble over trifles, that we might win them concerning incomparably more important issues. Within our writings, however, incidentally along the way, we freely speak about nearly all such minor matters. But we do not present them as things of consequence, for they are not.

Now concerning the distinction between Judah and Israel which you mention, even as your related comments concerning the word *ethnos* (which we translated "nation"), your points are well taken. But I should add that, at least in our case, they are also well known; and, in the course of our writings, have been extensively expounded.

The name Israel belongs to *all* the sons of Jacob and their descendants, when viewed from the spiritual standpoint. That is not to say that they were spiritual in themselves (for this was so in the case of only a few), but that in God's ultimate counsels concerning that nation, and concerning all individuals comprised therein, by God's spirit, through Christ, one day, they will indeed all be "upright with El [God]" (which is what "Israel" means).

It is to be regretted that most who seek to point out the worthy historical distinction between Judah and Israel, do so not in the interest of mere accuracy or of the wholesome general education of others, but in preparation for their advocacy of either the teaching commonly known as British Israelism or of some other similar racial notion.

In approaching us concerning matters which you may feel we need to correct, it may be more expedient and helpful (for your sake as well as our own, should questions still remain after having carefully considered our writings), if you would simply ask us why we translate or teach as we do—if you still merely do not understand. If an inquirer, one who truly has endeavored to grasp our presentations, whether through the printed page or spoken word, simply requires additional clarification, we are glad to help.

But I would suggest, and primarily for your sake, not merely our own, that it is simply not helpful baldly to set forth unfounded claims such as, "Whenever you read the word 'Jew' in the N.T., it is an *incorrect translation* of the original Greek words."

After all, you are only writing to us in the first place because you have noted, disapprovingly, that we use the word "Jew" in our translation. One would hope that you might surmise that at least we have our reasons for so doing, and that they appear sound to us. Therefore it will take something more than a bold affirmation of our error to set us on the true path.

A PRACTICAL EQUIVALENT

We are not oblivious to the fact that "Judean" is the *anglicized, transliterated form* of the Greek adjective *Ioudaion,* nor that the English word, "Judean," which, being transliterated Greek and adjectival in form, maintains a closer formal correspondency with the Original than does the English noun "Jew." The customary form "Jew," however, is merely a contracted adaptation of "Judean"; hence, it may hardly be deemed a "mistranslation."

The fact of the matter is that, through figurative usage, this Greek word (*Ioudaion*), in the New Testament Greek text, is usually used as a noun. In other instances, ones, in principle, of a parallel nature (such as in the case of the word "all," which, though an adjective, both in Greek [*pan,* EVERY or ALL] and in English, is often used as a

noun), it is possible to maintain a more literal (though, in the nature of the case, non-transliterative) formal correspondency in translation while still preserving good diction and ordinary language.

In later times (unlike in earlier eras) *Ioudaion* was usually not used strictly of the tribe of Judah (in contradistinction to members of the other tribes), but by association (technically, this figure is termed metonymy of the *adjunct*), was applied to *Israelites* who had returned to the *land* of *Judah* (*Iouda*) and again involved themselves in the divine service of the law, as practiced in Judea (*Ioudaia*), the southern part of Palestine. Thus, by figure of association, all such *Israelites*—regardless of their tribal lineage—came to be known as "*Ioudaion* [ones]," that is, as "Judeans," (or as this same thought is more commonly *and yet perfectly correctly* expressed today), as "Jews."

Our exposition, "Re*fuse* the *Re*fuse," which is a reply to British Israelism, presents ample evidence of this fact, a fact which few indeed (apart from those who are deeply entrenched in British Israelism) would care to dispute in the first place.

Since the common English noun, "Jew," *in English,* is ordinarily defined (as in the RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY; 1980, p.476) as, "a descendant of the Biblical Hebrews," and since "Hebrew" is defined as, "a group of Semitic peoples inhabiting ancient Palestine and claiming descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (p.406), it would be needless (and so unwise) to introduce the uncommon term "Judean" into an English *idiomatic version.* This is evident to anyone who is impartial.

All the questions considered here have long been addressed by various teachers in contradictory ways. So we can only say on behalf of all: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren! Amen!" (Gal.6:18).

J.R.C.

ISRAEL UNDER NEW RULE

2 + **It** |*b* **was afterward** + **that David** |*ask* **inquired** *i* **of Yahweh,** › **saying**–**, Shall I** go **up** *i* **to one of** the **cities of Judah?** + **Yahweh** |*sa* **replied to him,** Go **up!** + **Then David** |*sa* **asked, Whither shall I** go **up?** + **He** |*sa* **answered,** To*d* **Hebron.** 2 + **So David** went |**up there,** + *mr* **along** with **his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail,** the former **wife of Nabal the Carmelite.** 3 + **As** for **his men who** were **with him, David** *c* **brought up** each **man** + **with his house**hold**; and they** |**dwelt in** the **cities of Hebron.** 4 + **Then** the **men of Judah** |**came, and there they** |**anointed** `**David** ›**as king over** the **house of Judah.**

+ **When they** |**told** › **David,** › **saying**–**,** It was the **men of Jabesh-gilead who entombed** `**Saul,** 5 + **then David** |**sent messengers to** the **men of Jabesh-gilead and** |**said to them,** May **you** be **blessed**| ›**by Yahweh** *w* **because you** *d* **showed** ·**this** ·**kindness** *wi* **to your lord,** *wi* **to Saul,** + **when you** |**entombed** `**him** 7 **and his son Jonathan**0**.** 6 + *now* **Therefore may Yahweh** *d* **show** *wi* **you benignity and faithfulness; and I** *mr* **too, I shall** *d* **repay** › **you** ·**this** ·**goodness** *w* **because you have done** ·**this** ·loyal *sp* **deed.** 7 + **Now let your hands be steadfast,** + *b* **be** › **sons of valor, for your lord Saul is dead, and** *mr* **also** the **house of Judah has anointed** `**me** ›**as king over them.**

8 + **As** for **Abner son of Ner, chief of** the military **host** *w* **that Saul** ›**had, he had taken** `**Ishbosheth son of Saul and** had |**transferred him** 7 **from the** army **camp**0 to **Mahanaim.** 9 + There **he** *c* **made him** |**king** ›**over** ·**Gilead and** ›**over** ·**Asher**◇**,** + ›**over Jezreel and over Ephraim and over Benjamin,** +

2:9 ·**Asher:** lit., **the Ashurite.**

over all of *it* **Israel.** 10 **Ishbosheth son of Saul** was **forty years old** *i*⌜**when he be**came **king**⌝ **over Israel, and he reigned two years.** The **house of Judah** *y*⌜**however, they** *b*⌝**were followers** of **David.** 11 + **The number of days** *w*⌜**that David** *b*⌝**was king in Hebron over** the **house of Judah** ⌊*b*⌋⌜**was seven years and six months.**

12 + **Abner son of Ner,** together +⌜**with** the **servants of Ishbosheth son of Saul,** marched ⌜**forth from Mahanaim** t**oward Gibeon.** 13 +⌜**Also Joab son of Zeruiah**◊**,** together +⌜**with David's servants,** marched **forth** *7*⌜**from Hebron**⌝*0* **and** ⌜**encountered them;** they met **together** *on*⌜**at** the **reservoir of Gibeon.** + There **they** ⌜**sat** down, **these** *on*⌜**at the reservoir** *f*⌝**on this** side **and those** *on*⌜**at the reservoir** *f*⌝**on that** side**.**

14 +⌜**Then Abner** ⌜**said to Joab,** *pr*⌜**Now let the lads rise** up **and make** ⌜**sport before us.** + **Joab** ⌊*sa*⌋⌜**replied, Let them rise** up**.** 15 +⌜**So they** ⌜**arose and** ⌜**crossed** over **in** equal **numbers**, **twelve for Benjamin,** + that is **for Ishbosheth son of Saul, and twelve from David's servants.** 16 +⌜**Then** each **man** *c*⌜**took** ⌜**fast** hold of **his associate** *i*⌜**by** the **head and** thrust **his sword in**to **his associate's side;** +⌜**so they** ⌜**fell** down **together.** +⌜**Therefore** ›⌝ ·⌜**that** *ri*⌜**place was** ⌜**called Helkath-hazzurim**◊**, which** is **in Gibeon.**

17 + **The fight** ⌜**became obstinate unto excess** *i*⌜**on** ·⌜**that day, and Abner and** the **men of Israel were** ⌜**struck before David's servants.** 18 +⌜**Now** the **three sons of Zeruiah** ⌊*b*⌋⌜**were there, Joab,** + **Abishai, and Asahel.** + **Asahel** was **fleet** *i*⌜**on his feet, like one of the gazelles** *w*⌝ **in** the **field.** 19 +⌜**So Asahel** ⌜**pursued after Abner and** did **not turn aside, to go** *on*⌜**to the right** +⌜**or** *on*⌜**to the left, from following Abner.** 20 +⌜**Then Abner** ⌜**turned around,** *af*⌜**behind him and** ⌊*sa*⌋⌜**asked,** Is **that you, Asahel?** + **He** ⌊*sa*⌋⌜**replied,** It is **I.** 21 +⌜**Now Abner** ⌜**said to him, Turn aside,** off ›⌝⌜**with you** *on*⌜**to your right or** *on*⌜**to your left!** + Take **hold** of **one** *f*⌜**of the lads** ›⌝⌜**as you**rs, **and take** `⌜**his**

2:13 Zeruiah: a sister of David.
2:16 Helkath-hazzurim: lit., **The-Portion-of-Sharpness.**

outfit for yourself**.** +⌜**Yet Asahel would not** ›⌝⌜**withdraw**⌝ **from following him.** 22 +⌜**So Abner** ⌜**continued to** *sa*⌜**warn** ›⌝ **Asahel** once *fr*⌜**more: Withdraw from following me,** off ›⌝⌜**with you! Why should I smite you** to*d* the **earth? How** could **I** +⌜**then** ⌜**lift** up **my face to your brother Joab?** 23 +⌜**But he** ⌜**refused to withdraw.** +⌜**So Abner** ⌜**smote him** *i*⌜**with** the **butt end of** ·his **spear** ›⌝⌜**on the fifth** rib, **and the spear** came ⌜**forth** *f*⌜**through his** *af*⌜**back.** + **He** ⌜**fell there and** ⌜**died** on the *u*⌜**spot** where **he** was**. And it** came to ⌜**be** +⌜**that they** ⌜**stood** still, **every**one ·who **came**⌝ **to the** *ri*⌜**place where Asahel had fallen and** ⌜**died.**

24 +⌜**Yet Joab and Abishai** ⌜**pursued after Abner. And the sun was** ⁻⌜**setting** +⌜**as they them**selves **came as far as** the **hill of Ammah,** *w*⌝ **overlooking Giah** on the **road** to the **wilderness of Gibeon.** 25 + The **sons of Benjamin** ⌜**convened** themselves *af*⌜**behind Abner;** + **they** ⌜**became** ›⌝⌜**as one phalanx and** ⌜**stood on top of one hill.** 26 **Abner** +⌜**then** ⌜**called** out **to Joab,** + ⌜**saying, Shall** the **sword devour** ›⌝ **permanently?** Do **you not realize that** there will ⌊*b*⌋⌜**be bitterness in** the **latter** end**?** + **How** *fr*⌜**long** will it be**?** Will **you nev**er ⌊*sa*⌋⌜**order** ›⌝ your *wi*⌜**soldiers to turn back from following their kinsmen?**

27 + **Joab** ⌊*sa*⌋⌜**replied,** As *7*⌜**Yahweh**~*c* **lives,** *t* **if you had not** *sp*⌜**challenged** us, *t* **then** *f*⌜**by** ·⌜**morning the** *wi*⌜**soldiers would have** moved *on*⌜**away,** each **man from following his kinsmen.** 28 +⌜**So Joab** ⌜**blew** *i* the **trumpet, and all the** *wi*⌜**soldiers** ⌜**stood** still**.** + **They** did **not** ⌜**pursue after Israel** any *fr*⌜**longer and** did **not** ⌜**continue to fight them** any *fr*⌜**more.**

29 +⌜**As** for **Abner and his men, they** *go*⌜**marched all** ·⌜**that** ·⌜**night** *i*⌜**through** the **Arabah,** + ⌜**crossed** `⌜**the Jordan,** + ⌜*go*⌜**marched** through **the entire Bithron** gully **and** ⌜**came** to **Mahanaim.** 30 +⌜**As** for **Joab, he returned from following Abner and** ⌜**convened** `⌜**all** ·his *wi*⌜**soldiers;** + **nineteen men from David's servants were** ⌊*n*⌋⌜**missing,** +⌜**besides Asahel.** 31 +⌜**Yet David's servants, they had smitten** those *f*⌜**of Benjamin and** *i*⌜**of Abner's men** of whom **360 men had died.** 32 +

2:27 *7-~c* **Yahweh:** Hb **the Elohim.**

They [l]carried `Asahel and [l]entombed him in his father's tomb [w] at **Bethlehem. [+]Then Joab and his men [lgo]marched all [-]night [+]until** dawn **was lighting** up **for them** [i]**at Hebron.**

DAVID INQUIRES OF YAHWEH

David's few days at Ziklag were a time for earnest retrospect. What did God intend for him to learn from the experiences of the last two weeks—two of the most traumatic weeks of his life?

And where did he go from here?

His move to Ziklag had obligated his alliance to Achish and forced him to march against Israel. This allowed for the captivity of the families of all David's men by the Amalakites. The swift and strenuous march to save their families removed David further from the battle scene, making the removal of Saul from the kingdom something in which David could have no influence. Now David was travel worn, battle torn, mourning for Jonathan and his people, and his home city had been burned. Emptied of himself, David waited upon Yahweh, Who was about to have him anointed king again.

David was faced with several hard decisions at Ziklag. Should he rebuild Ziklag and remain there? How could he continue living in the land of the Philistines, after they had killed his king and many of his people? Saul's jealous persecution was ended. Was it time to go home?

David inquired of Yahweh, and was directed to return to Judah. But David showed less of the impulsiveness that had prodded his earlier move to Ziklag. He inquired of God again and was directed specifically to Hebron.

HEBRON

Hebron had been the primary area of sojourning in the land of promise for Abraham and Isaac. There Abram's name had been changed to Abraham. Hebron is the burial

place for Sarah (Gen.23), Abraham (Gen.25:7-10), Isaac (Gen.35:27-28), and Jacob (Gen.49:29-50:13). It is the place where the bones of faith rest in the promise of God.

In addition, Hebron was designated as one of the cities of refuge (Josh.20:2,7), and it was situated in a defensible position. We can appreciate the divine wisdom exercised in the selection of this city as the place where rule that is characterized by faith would commence.

COMMENDATION OF THE GILEADITES

David commended the valiant of Jabesh-gilead for their loyalty to Saul in rescuing the bodies for honorable burial. This was much more than a diplomatic gesture. David claimed an indebtedness to these men—an indebtedness that was required by his own patriotism and citizenship in Israel as well as his close association and love for the members of the royal family.

ABNER

Abner, a commander of Israel's army, was a cousin of Saul (1 Sam.14:50,51). He was an ambitious man. Abner took Saul's son, Ishbosheth, and set him up as king in Mahanaim (v.8). Apparently Ishbosheth's realm was small and scattered, but it grew until it included "all of Israel" (v.9) except Judah. The extension of the rule of Saul's house probably coincided with the reclaiming of territory in central Palestine from Philistine domination through military campaigns led by Abner.

David is said to have reigned over Judah in Hebron for seven years and six months. The reign of Ishbosheth as king of Israel is said to have been only two years. Probably these two years were contemporary with the last two of David's seven and one-half years before the kingdom was united under David.

CIVIL WAR

Abner moved an armed force from Mahanaim to Gibeon. Mahanaim was east of the Jordan, where Abner took Ishbosheth after the defeat by the Philistines, when Saul was killed. Gibeon was west of the Jordan, in the land of Benjamin, and was close to Gibeah, Saul's old capital.

This move may have been part of a plan by Abner to restore the kingdom as it was in Saul's day. Gibeon was also the home of the Gibeonites, whom Saul had killed (2 Sam. 21:1-14), probably for the purpose of making their properties gifts for his courtiers (1 Sam.22:6-8). Abner is likely to have been a benefactor of that episode, and may have had considerable property in Gibeon. That would have made Gibeon a desirable place to Abner for his headquarters.

Gibeon was in close proximity to Hebron, and the presence of Abner's army there posed a potential threat to David and the kingdom of Judah. Joab brought a force from Hebron to meet Abner.

The ensuing contest between a dozen of Joab's men and a dozen of Abner's men may have been intended as a means of avoiding war—"winner takes all"—like the challenge of Goliath. Of that we are unsure. What is sure, is that a bloody civil war was to follow before Israel would be united under David.

WOUNDS OF BITTERNESS

Joab, Asahel and Abishai, the sons of David's sister Zeruiah, were every bit as hard and battle-proven as Abner. They intended to bring all Israel under David's rule, and the sooner the better. "The fight became obstinate unto excess" (2 Sam.2:17), and as Abner warned Joab from the hilltop (v.26), deep and lasting wounds of bitterness were inflicted that day.

J. Philip Scranton

Contents:

49 Editorial
53 Abel's Sacrifice
61 Yahweh Needs Abel
65 In the Name of Jesus Christ, We Must be Saved
79 God's Evangel Concerning His Son
87 Remember Paul's Bonds
90 David's Household

MARCH, 2002

Volume XCIII **Number 2**

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BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE

EDITORIAL

"NOW, if our evangel is covered, also, it is covered in those who are perishing, in whom the god of this eon blinds the apprehensions of the unbelieving so that the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God, does not irradiate them. For we are not heralding ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, yet ourselves your slaves because of Jesus, for the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Now we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the transcendence of the power may be of God and not of us" (2 Cor.4:3-7).

Our evangel is that Christ Jesus *died for our sins* (1 Cor. 15:3), God having made Him a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him (2 Cor.5:21).

Our evangel is that Jesus our Lord was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying (Rom.4:25). God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes. Much rather, then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from indignation, through Him. For if, being enemies we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life (Rom.5:8-11).

Our evangel is that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the

place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus. This is in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved (Eph.1:3-6).

And, our evangel likewise is that God, our Saviour, *wills* that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). That is, God has *formed the decision* that this should occur, and, unto this end, is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:10,11).

Accordingly, then, our evangel is that *God is the Saviour of all mankind,* especially of believers (1 Tim.4:10). While as the recipients of life and glory in the oncoming eons it is evident that God is *especially* the Saviour of believers, it is nevertheless first of all true that He is *factually* the Saviour of all mankind.

Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man "the many" were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, "the many"[1] shall be constituted just (Rom.5:18,19).

Hence it is our evangel that Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing.

1. Even though the word "many" (*polu*) can be *used* in reference to "less than all," it nevertheless does not *mean* "less than all." Instead, it is a relative term used in contradistinction to a few, or, as here, in contradistinction simply to one. When used in reference to quantity or to advancement in time, it is translated "much" (2 Cor.8:2; Mark 6:35). It often appears together with *ochlos* (THRONG), and in such cases is translated "vast" (e.g., John 12:12). Hence the sense here in Romans 5:18, 19, is that since it is true, first of all, that it is through the disobedience of the one man that "*this vast* [throng]" (of which we are speaking, namely, all mankind) were constituted sinners, and that thus also, through the obedience of the One that "*this vast* [throng]" (of which we are speaking, namely, all mankind) shall be constituted just, it is *therefore also* true that as it was through one offense for *all mankind* for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for *all mankind* for life's justifying.

For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation. The last enemy is being abolished: death. Thus God subjects all to Christ, that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:20-23,26,28).

Though our evangel is wholly glorious, truly "worthy of all welcome" (1 Tim.4:9), there is a great problem involved here even so. The problem is that men love the darkness rather than the light (John 3:19). This is because God has not yet given them repentance to come into a realization of the truth, leaving them instead in the trap of the Adversary, where they have been caught alive by him, for that one's will (2 Tim.2:25,26).

At the deepest level, however, men continue to love the darkness rather than the light, imagining themselves to be free while all the time bound in the Adversary's trap, because God locks up all together in stubbornness, albeit doing so that He should be merciful to all (Rom.11:32).

Most continue on throughout their lives locked in stubbornness in relation to God and to His Word. This is because, as God Himself declares, "I shall be merciful to whomever I may be merciful, and I shall be pitying whomever I shall be pitying" (Rom.9:15; *cp* Ex.33:19: "I will be gracious to whom I am being gracious and will have compassion for whom I am having compassion").

Thus it is that our evangel is "covered"; and, thus it is that it is covered in those who are "perishing," in those who are, in one respect or another, undergoing "loss" in relation to it.

It is true that the god of this eon blinds the apprehensions of the unbelieving so that the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible

God, does not irradiate them. Yet it is also true that this will not always be so. This is because our Saviour, God, is also the Saviour of all, Who wills accordingly that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth.

Therefore, we are not heralding ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. We do not wish to distract from His message by calling attention to ourselves, as if we ourselves were somehow important. Instead, the apostle Paul together with any who would join him in common ministry "belong to" ("we are your slaves because of Jesus") the members of the ecclesia. That is, this is so with respect to their fulfillment of the task of certifying and teaching the evangel to their fellow saints.

These things are so, since "the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6).

As Paul says ideally concerning our evangel, "Now we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the transcendence of the power may be of God and not of us" (2 Cor.4:3-7).

Rather than announcing this marvelous evangel of God directly from heaven in great glory and majesty, in the wisdom of God, it is instead conveyed through lowly "earthen vessels." It is proclaimed and made known through the agency of common sinners, albeit ones who themselves now have been graciously granted faith in the evangel of Christ, which Paul terms accordingly, "our evangel."

In the face of great opposition and frequent rejection, even as in the midst of an abundance of apathy, it often seems impossible to continue. After all, our own faith is not always strong, and many are opposing, whether wittingly or unwittingly. "Our evangel," however, is still our evangel; it is not covered to us, even if it is covered to most. We would continue, then, to announce it and teach it, according as God Himself enables us to do so. J.R.C.

ABEL'S SACRIFICE

ABEL, in contrast with Cain, brought of the *firstlings* of his *flock*, and of their *fat* (Gen.4:4). He evidently *believed* and *understood* the story of the fig leaf girdle skirts and the tunics of skin. His name Abel denotes VANITY. It is quite a contrast to that of his brother, Cain, ACQUISITION, and seems to indicate a vast change on the part of his parents, in their attitude toward human life. They seem to have had a premonition of the conclusion reached by the Assembler, Ecclesiastes, when he summed up the total of human endeavor: "Vanity of vanities: all is vanity." But, from the divine standpoint, he did far more than Cain, the city builder, the progenitor of a long line of descendents. *Abel worshipped Yahweh!*

GOD SUPREME

It would almost seem that Abel, when he offered the *firstlings* of his flock, already by faith recognized the great truth that the Supreme and His sacrifice are not on an equality with man, but infinitely high above all. Ever since then, man has been shown lesson upon lesson upon the screen of human experience, which will one day enable all the rest of the race, and even the celestial host, to realize, in some measure, His infinite superiority to all of His creatures. Let us seek to learn it now, and put it into practice in our contacts with those whom He has placed above us. A great blessing lies in the anticipation of the final subjection of all to the great Subjector. Let us be subject for His great name's sake!

THE BLOOD

The principal difference between the two sacrifices lay in the *blood*, which was absent from Cain's and present in Abel's. The priests poured out or sprinkled the blood on or about the altar, which Abel could not do. It is significant, however, that the blood of the sin offering went right into the divine Presence, beneath the *cherubim*. These guarded the garden in Abel's day, and marked the limit, beyond which he could not go. It may be that he offered his sacrifice and carried the blood there, as it was as close as he could get to the divine Presence.

BLOOD

As Abel's *present* is also called a *sacrifice* (Heb.11:4), he must have shed the blood of the victim. Apart from blood shedding comes no pardon (Heb. 9:22). The suffering which it symbolizes is absolutely essential to salvation. When the great Antitype of all the sacrificial victims faced the sufferings that really save, and He cried out in the agony of His soul to have the cup pass Him by, *it was not possible to do so* (Mark 14:26). And so it became the symbol of *pardon* and *justification*. We are justified in His blood (Rom.5:9). In Abel's case Yahweh accepted his present, and his sins were set aside, so that his deeds, unlike his father's, did not bring down judgment on his head. Instead, Yahweh testified that he was *just* (Heb.11:4). He will rise in the resurrection of the just.

THE FIRSTLING OF THE FLOCK

Abel's present offering was of the *firstlings* of his flock. Of Cain's present nothing of this kind is said, so it seems evident that he made no effort to bring the *best* of the fruit of the ground, but just the common kind. This difference may seem trivial when looked at with the eyes of a man, but the distinction becomes vital when viewed from the divine standpoint. God is not in need of either flesh or fruit, so it has no value for Him as far as nourishment is concerned. But He does covet the loving regard of His creatures, and is supremely blessed by the highest token of affection which He will ever receive—the sacrifice of Christ, Who gave *Himself*, not only for our salvation, but, first of all, as a love gift to His Subjector and Father.

Every other offering received its value from His, inasmuch as it is a reminder of His, and in the measure in which it is saturated with the same spirit as His. He was the commencement of El's *creation*, the *First*, in whom all the rest were created (Rev.3:14). Moreover, He is also the First-*born*, Who later entered the human race by means of generation. Moreover, He is also the Firstborn from among the dead (Col.1:18). In all three spheres, creation, generation, and vivification, He is *first*, in order that He may become the highest. Such is the great Offering, the Antitype of all other gifts that are given to God by His creatures. Hence they should, as much as possible, conform to this ideal in whatever sphere they may be found.

CHRIST FIRST IN ALL THINGS

Christ was not a common man, like the rest of us. It was His humiliation from the greatest glory which He had with God before the world was, down to the deepest depths of shame and suffering, that gave infinite value to His sacrifice. Had He merely been the highest of the heavenly host, or the highest human of Adam's race, that would never have qualified Him to be the Saviour of all mankind, or the Reconciler of the universe, or brought to the Supreme the infinite satisfaction and delight which His great heart craved. He was *First* in time as well as position. Hence this spirit should pervade every present offered to Him, in order that it may be acceptable to Him. Abel's present offering was

a *firstling*. Hence Yahweh gave heed to it. Cain's present lacked this flavor, hence God gave it no heed.

Throughout His revelation to mankind God repeats this lesson. It is especially stressed in connection with His earthly people Israel and the divine law and ritual that He gave to them. As soon as He had them for Himself in the wilderness He spoke to Moses, saying, "Hallow to Me every *firstborn*, opening up every womb among the sons of Israel, among human and among beast. It is *Mine*" (Ex.13:2). Later on He explained that, when they were in Egypt, Yahweh killed all the firstborn, both human and beast. Only the firstborn sons in Israel, under the shelter of the blood of the passover lamb, did not die. Therefore they had to ransom all the firstborn. Otherwise they were to behead them (Ex.13:13-16; 22:29; 34:19). An ass could be ransomed by a flockling. An unclean beast could be appraised, with a fifth added, and paid for (Lev. 27:26).

Later on Yahweh took the tribe of Levi instead of the firstborn, and they became His, to serve only Him and to lead His people in His worship. This applied to their beasts also (Num.3:12,41; 8:16-18).

THE FAT

Abel's present offering, besides being firstlings, include the fat which was on their viscera. This speaks to us of the deep, inner *richness* of God's compassions. Abel gave Yahweh, not only the first, but also the *finest* and most *feelingful*. All through the Scriptures the inner emotions are associated with the vital organs which are contained within the torso. The very word for *compassion* is, literally, entrails, or viscera, or intestines, in the Greek Scriptures. In the Hebrew it is *womb*.

In the later elaboration of the details concerning the present offering, all the fat on the internal organs was burned on the altar as a fragrant odor to Yahweh. Most of the third chapter of Leviticus is concerned with the fat. *All the fat is Yahweh's* (Lev.3:3-17).

JUDAS' LACK OF COMPASSION

We shudder at the grisly horror of Judas' suicide, and wonder why we should be told that his intestines, or entrails, were poured out (Acts 1:18). It is only as we learn the significance of these that we grasp its import. The same word *splagchna* is elsewhere always *compassions*. Even in old English, it is rendered bowels. Paul writes to Philemon, according to the AV, "refresh my *bowels*" (Philemon 1:20), where the CV has "soothe my *compassions*." Judas was entirely lacking in compassion or he never would have sold his Saviour for silver. So it was most fitting that the part of his physical frame that represented the kindly compassions which he lacked should all flee from his carcass in disgust, for he had no compassion.

The common Hebrew greeting, *shalom*, commonly translated *peace*, has a wider range of meaning than this, and includes *well-being*. The stem *shlm* denotes REPAY, as in Exodus 21:34, where the AV reads, "the owner of the pit shall *make* it *good*." Again, in Genesis 29:6, Jacob inquires concerning Laban, "Is he *well*?" And they said, "He is *well*." In Exodus 18:7 we read, "They asked each other of their *welfare*." We have no English word with this wide range, so must remember that *peace* in the Scriptures implies general well-being, not merely absence of strife. This is the significance of the peace offering. We already know that war includes all that is ill, and peace implies what is well.

FAT, PEACE, WELL-BEING

It was an eonian statute in Israel that they were not to eat the *fat* or the *blood*. All the fat is for Yahweh (Lev.3: 16,17). Nothing is said about the fat in the ascent offering, which was *all* for Him, and was primarily concerned

with *worship*. Yet fat has a large place in the *peace* and *sin* offerings, which have to do with man's well-being. But in the latter case it is to be offered *as in the peace offering*. So it primarily speaks of *peace* or well-being. Although they were not to eat the fat, Pharaoh promised Jacob the *fat of the land* (Gen.45:18). This, and such phrases as "the fat of the oil" (Num.18:12), "the fat of the wheat" (Psa. 81:16), which is translated "the *finest* of the wheat" (AV Psa.147:14), shows that the *best* part is typified by the fat. This is what pleased Yahweh Elohim in Abel's offering. Only this part of an animal will burn. He may have fumed this in his offering.

THE FAT AND BLOOD ARE YAHWEH'S

The Israelites were not to eat either the *fat* or the *blood*. These belonged to Yahweh (Lev.3:17), and should be offered up to Him. Both speak especially of the immolation of Christ in its exclusively divine aspect, the blood as a sacrifice, and the fat as an offering *to God* for a fragrant odor (Eph.5:2). In our self-centered souls, we lay far too little stress upon the *divine* side of Christ's work, as if the all-important issue were the salvation of mankind. But this is not the first consideration. We must not forget the higher and greater aspect. Above all it was for God and His glory.

To the thoughtful saint, the fact that *fatness* is not even mentioned in connection with Israel in the Greek Scriptures, is very significant. There must have been tons of fat consumed on the altar of the temple in the days of our Lord and afterward, but its antitype was definitely lacking. Not only Judas, but the whole nation, as such, was disemboweled. Had they possessed any compassion at all, let alone richness of it, would they have crucified their Christ? Their sacrifices were a sham; the fat was an insult to Yahweh, for it had nothing to correspond to it in their lives. As

in Isaiah's day, He was surfeited with the fat of fed beasts. Their offerings were vain (Isa.1:11,13). They ate the fat themselves, as in Ezekiel's day (Ezek.34:3).

FAT, PEACE, CONCILIATION, COMPASSION

As the fat is so closely connected with the *peace* offering, it is most suggestive of *conciliation* and *reconciliation*. Just as the blood reminds us of justification, so the fat speaks of peace with God, which comes *through* it, yet is the *richest* part of the sacrifice. As, in the ritual, it is closely associated with the internal viscera, which represent the compassions, so conciliation is a declaration of God's clemency and compassion toward the world in refusing to reckon their *offenses* against them. The blood is concerned with justice, the fat with peace, and its *rich* results, which will spread beyond the limits of the earth, and include the heavens also (Col.1:20).

THE FATNESS OF THE OLIVE

In later revelation, the idea of *fatness* occurs only once. Paul tells us that the nations are now joint participants of the *fatness* of the olive. The sense of this is clear in the context, where it is expressed in literal terms. The discomfiture of Israel is the nations' *riches* (Rom.11:12,17). And is it not a fact that the nations, as such, are not only *conciliated* to God, but have been favored far more than Yahweh's earthly people? And their well-being, during this administration, has been dependent, to a large extent, on divine revelation. Where the Bible has had even a superficial place in human government, the people, as a rule, are not only more enlightened, but better off. Europe and America have not suffered from the dire distress and degradation of Asia and Africa during the course of Christianity. But the real riches were not in the material but in the spiritual realm.

LIGHT MAKES FAT

Perhaps we can see this in the olive berry itself. It not only provides light, when crushed and burned, but is a source of fat when used as a food. The fat of the olive seems to be the richest of foods, yet a very digestible fat. So the light of revelation is not only healthful and wholesome for the spirit, but is the source of the only *true riches* which cannot be lost or stolen, nor is doomed to decay. It is the redundance of these riches that should accompany our present offerings, for with such worship God is well pleased.

Yahweh Elohim was pleased with Abel's present because it not only set forth the way of salvation by suffering and reconciliation by death, but also gave Him His place supreme. Abel did not insult Him by giving the last and worst, but the first and best. How often do men give Him that for which they no longer care and which they can well spare, instead of the choicest and dearest that they have! Abraham offered his best, the darling of his heart. How rich was God's response! The widow who gave all her living, although it was an insignificant sum, gave most. It is the gleeful giver that God loves. May God help us not only to shun the way of Cain, but to revel in the way of Abel!

A. E. Knoch

ERNEST L. MARTIN

Dr. Martin, who died suddenly on January 16, will be greatly missed by his many students and friends. Nearly fifty years ago, while he was a student at Ambassador College in Pasadena, California, he came across a copy of the Concordant Version and became so interested in it that he paid a visit to Brother A. E. Knoch at his home to learn more of his work, especially of his studies related to the eonian times revealed in Scripture. Although Ernest carried on his work independently, he introduced others to the Concordant Publishing Concern and maintained a cordial friendship. His great interest was in the field of scriptural research, writing a number of books and studies, and becoming involved even with archaeological excavation in Israel.

YAHWEH HEEDS ABEL

In His activities after the disobedience of Adam and Eve, Yahweh exhibits a continuing focus on the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus, that is, on the great work of the Seed of the woman (Gen.3:15). The promise of restoration by means of the husband (Gen.3:16) looked ahead to this One Who would come into the human race which would be preserved by propagation. The clothing of the sinful and vulnerable pair by skins of a slain animal (Gen. 3:21) spoke of that provision of God which would not simply be a "cover-up," but a real taking away of sin by means of the Lamb of God (*cf* John 1:29). When Yahweh heeded Abel's approach present and did not heed Cain's, He was centering on the One Who would be God's Approach Present for salvation (*cf* Eph.2:8). And Yahweh's own provision of an animal as a sin offering for Cain (Gen.4:7) directed attention to Christ as the One Whom God would make to be the Sin Offering for sinners (2 Cor.5:21).

Furthermore, the fact that in expelling humanity from the garden and the tree of life, and in driving Cain out from family and home, Yahweh still sustained the corrupted race, speaks of a divine purpose beyond the acts of judgment. Again, for the believer at least, Yahweh's reference to the cry that came to Him from the blood of Abel (Gen.4:10) adds to the many striking points of comparison between the murder of Abel by his brother and the death of Christ. And in doing so, God impresses our minds on all the similarities of meekness and faithfulness between Abel and God's beloved Son in Whom He delights.

Never, in all His activities in connection with humanity, does God forget His purpose in Christ Jesus. Nothing is done without that in view, not His callings, not His judgings, not His mercies, not His indignation, not His grace, not any of His promises and blessings, not any of His acts of severity or kindness or any of His dealings with mankind.

THE REASON FOR DIVINE HEED

It is true that God heeded Abel and his offering because Abel acted in faith. Abel is distinguished in later Scripture for his faith. "By *faith* Abel offers to God more of a sacrifice than Cain, through which he was testified to that he is just at God's testifying to his approach presents, and through it, dying, he is still speaking" (Heb.11:4). But Abel's faith pointed to Christ. And as far as his act of believing was concerned it was a gift; it was nothing Abel could boast in as though it was of himself. In fact, Abel, whose name meant "vanity," exhibited no confidence whatsoever in himself. His present was patterned after the remarkable and single gracious act of Yahweh toward his parents in the garden, after they had sinned, the provision of animal skins as a covering for their nakedness (Gen.3:21). Abel's present was a recognition of God's present to Adam and Eve which was, in effect, a present for all of this first family of human beings.

This needs to be repeated: The fundamental reason for God's heed of Abel lies in the fact that this second son of Adam and Eve and his offering spoke of Christ and God's purpose in Him. For it is only through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ that Abel himself can be justified.

Abel is still speaking. In Genesis 4 we do not hear one word spoken by Abel. But by means of his offering and his dying he has been speaking for thousands of years and is still speaking. What Abel speaks has to do with God's way of dealing with the shame and misery of sinful humanity, which involves the death of His Son as typified by the death of an animal in Genesis 3:21 and again in Genesis 4:4. What Abel is speaking has to do with Jesus Christ.

Hence, to us who are privileged to live now after the actual humbling of Christ to the death of the cross and, as God's chosen ones, to be believing the evangel concerning His Son, Abel is speaking of God's great gift of salvation which Paul calls God's approach present. "In grace, through faith, are [we] saved, and this is not out of [us]; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8,9).

THE WAY OF ABEL

The Scriptures do not speak directly of a "way of Abel" as they do of the "way of Cain." The way taken by Abel, like the way taken by Abraham, was the way of believing what God says to him, apart from seeing that it is so (*cf* Rom.4:17). This way of faith does not celebrate Abel but the One Who is the Inaugurator of faith (Heb.12:2). We may certainly speak of "the way of Abel" or "the way of Enoch" or "the way of Abraham," but we must see this as the way of faith that is graciously granted to God's chosen ones. It is a way that draws attention to God and honors Him rather than the person involved.

And in honoring God, this way of faith draws attention to *God's way* of deliverance and righteousness centered in Christ. Yahweh heeded Abel in his way of bringing an approach present not because this way made Abel righteous but because it pointed ahead to the One Who, in the grace of God, would be tasting death for the sake of everyone (Heb.2:9).

BLESSINGS OF FAITH

We note that this way of faith involved enduring the hatred of his brother, and it led to Abel's death. That was

necessary as a type of Christ. But, as for Abel's afflictions while living, which indeed pointed ahead to the hate Jesus received from His brethren (*cf* John 15:24,25), these also had important values for Abel in his life. "All who are wanting to live devoutly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted" (2 Tim.3:12). Nevertheless, "affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness *expectation*" (Rom.5:3,4). Abel was blessed in looking forward to something better (*cf* Heb.11:39,40).

EXCEEDINGLY DEEP

God's actions in Genesis 2-4 are astounding. "How great are your works, O Yahweh," exclaimed the psalmist, "exceedingly deep, Your designs!" (Psa.92:5). But God's works are deep, not so much in being mysterious or obscure, but in being so exceedingly *great* in glory.

In Genesis 2-4 God acted in accord with His righteous and loving purpose of deliverance and reconciliation through the death of His Son. In doing so, He intended that Cain would bring an offering that He would not heed, and graciously granted Abel not only to be believing but to be suffering also as a type of Christ. Since God is righteous and wise and good, what He did in preparing the way for generations of sin and shame, judgment and death, along with mercy and forbearance, He did for right and wise and good purposes, which are centered in Christ Jesus. What God did is for His glory.

No wonder then that the actions of God in these early scenes of Genesis continually involve types and promises of Jesus Christ and His death for sinners. God always keeps that in view. As His Word testifies, this is what God *heeds*. And it is our privilege to do so too, to note with faith and expectation what God does and heed the direction of His deeds toward His glorious purpose in His beloved Son.

D.H.H.

IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, WE MUST BE SAVED

Question:

I believe that God, in His justice, will subject the lost—which is to say the non-elect—to endless punishment for their sins, albeit to a punishment consisting not of endless torment but of permanent death.

Likewise, the gospel is that Christ died for *our* sins, that is, for the sins of the elect. Christ's work on the cross was designed to save the elect alone, who are saved by grace alone, and who alone will be saved, though not apart from faith in the gospel.

Since you, too, as a universalist, like the Arminians, do not believe the gospel, you, too, are unsaved, and will remain unsaved and perish for eternity unless you repent and believe the gospel.

In correspondence to the above considerations, I also believe that the dictates of justice are determinative of the acts of love, not that the dictates of love are determinative of the acts of justice. Therefore, whatever God does is right; this includes all instances in which He, in love, grants blessing, and, all instances in which He, in accord with His will and purpose, instead, imposes punishment. Accordingly, then, I would ask you this: To be righteous, does God *have to* save anybody?

Answer:

IN REPLY to your statements and question, let me first say that I agree with you in several important points.

Certainly you are correct in your finding that the final

adversative judgment of Scripture, to which all the lost will be committed, is that of *death,* not conscious torment, endlessly experienced.

The only question is whether death is to be the destiny of the lost temporarily or permanently. When considering their fate insofar as this is contemplated in John's vision of the new earth, we acknowledge that, "their part is in the lake burning with fire and sulphur, which is the second death" (Rev.21:8).

This fact notwithstanding, however, there is no reason to conclude that therefore this is their final destiny, claiming thus that since, here, it is their lot to be subjected to the second death, therefore the second death will always be their portion. Indeed, even if John's vision of the new earth (Revelation 21, 22) were the only scriptural revelation pertinent to this question, it would still be wrong to insist that the lost will never be delivered from the second death. Instead, in that case, we could only say that the Scripture does not inform us whether or not they will one day be delivered therefrom.

Likewise, and with much enthusiasm, I join you in acclaiming the gospel that Christ died for *our* sins, we who are His *elect,* or *chosen* ones (1 Cor.15:3; *cf* Rom.8: 28-33). The apostle Paul does indeed hereby declare "the evangel of [*our*] salvation" (*cf* Eph.1:13), not some other message of glad tidings, concerned with a different theme.

Accordingly, I certainly agree with you in your affirmation that the elect are saved by grace alone, even as in your further testimony that their salvation by grace alone is not apart from faith in the gospel.

God truly *chooses us,* singling us out from the rest. He does so in His grace, according to His purpose. Even though He has not disclosed to us His specific reasons for choosing us instead of others, we do know that before the disruption of the world, *He chose us* (Eph.1:4).

Salvation is not a matter of reciprocity, but of gracious blessing. Under Paul's evangel, it is not that we are required to believe or to live uprightly, but that we are privileged to do so, each in the measure appointed unto him. We cannot boast either in our faith or in our good works. Our faith is a gracious gift (Phil.1:29), not a requirement to be saved. Our good works are not a "ticket" giving us the right to salvation, but a provision of God, which He makes ready beforehand that we should be walking in them (Eph.2:10).

The evangel of our salvation, however, is not the only evangel of salvation revealed in Scripture. And, while it is true that we are God's "elect" and that we alone enjoy the blessings thereof, election has reference to *eonian* life, life in the oncoming eons (*cf* Acts 13:48; 1 Tim.1:16; Eph.2:7). It does *not* preclude blessing beyond the eons for those who, with reference to eonian life, are indeed the "non-elect."

It is ironic that Calvinists who, unlike Arminians, enjoy the great truth of their own election in grace, have nevertheless seen fit to endow the phrase "the non-elect" with the notion of eternal reprobation.

I strongly object to this common practice of Calvinists in which they glibly speak of the "non-elect" as being non-elect with respect to salvation itself—as if this very term entailed preclusion from salvation for all persons thus identified. It does not follow simply because God does not "elect" to bless a certain man with vivification at a certain point in time, that He will therefore never bless him thus at all, at any point in time.

All scriptural references which are concerned with the elect and their particular salvation are confined to blessings of the oncoming eons; they do not address issues of vivification at the consummation or life subsequent thereunto. Therefore, it is begging the question to argue as if the question were already settled in the negative whether all will finally be saved inasmuch as there are those who may justly be termed "the non-elect."

Indeed, as God's chosen ones, we—and we alone—are saved *from* indignation (Rom.5:9), and *for* life eonian (Rom.5:21). But we should not conclude since the non-elect will not enjoy life eonian, that they will therefore never be delivered from death. The question is not, Is there a second death? but, Will death be abolished?

The answer to this vital question is explicitly declared by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:26: "The last enemy is being abolished: death." Even as President Lincoln's emancipation proclamation which decreed the abolition of slavery entailed the deliverance from slavery for all those formerly enslaved, thus also, the apostle Paul's grand pronouncement decreeing the abolition of death, entails the deliverance from death for all those who were formerly dead.

There can be no question that Paul's vision of "the consummation" (1 Cor.15:23), at which juncture death will be abolished (1 Cor.15:26), contemplates a time subsequent to that of John's vision of the new earth, recorded in Revelation 21,22. This is because at the time envisioned by John, Christ is still reigning (*cp* Rev.11:15), and the saints of that allotment are continuing to reign as well (Rev.22:5b). Likewise, in that day, the second death is still extant (*cp* Rev.20:15; 21:8).

Paul, however, in speaking of the consummation, envisions a day which, of necessity, is subsequent to the time of John's vision. This is because, in that still later day to which *Paul* refers us, Christ will *no longer* be reigning (*cf* "whenever He may be *giving up* the kingdom [i.e., the 'reign'] . . . . He must be reigning *until* He should be placing all His enemies under His feet"; 1 Cor.15:24,25). Similarly, it is evident that the saints of the new earth, by that time, will have ceased to reign as well, for Christ will then *nullify all* sovereignty and *all* authority and power (1 Cor.15:24).

Accordingly, while at the time contemplated in John's vision, death is still *present* (Rev.21:8; even though even in that day no *more* will be *added to* the dead; *cp* "death will be no *more*"; Rev.21:4), in the day perceived by Paul, which is "the consummation" (1 Cor.15:23), death will be abolished. And, as noted above, this entails deliverance from death for all those formerly dead.

"The consummation" is the day in which God's great work of vivifying all (1 Tim.6:13) will finally be realized. Not only does "the consummation" speak of a day in which "vivification" will occur (which is to say, that glorious life of which Christ is the Firstfruit; 1 Cor.15:23a), but it speaks of the day in which the remainder of those who will enjoy this blessing will be granted it: "in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit [of vivification], Christ; *thereupon* those who are Christ's [shall be vivified] in His presence; *thereafter* the consummation [of vivification shall occur], whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father . . ." (1 Cor.15:22-24).

We are told that, "even as, *in Adam,* all are dying, thus also, *in Christ,* shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22).

As we have explicated in a previous writing,[1] the usage of "in" in these phrases is instrumental (as in, "In you [i.e., Abraham], shall all the nations be blessed"; Gal.3:8; or, "in Christ is it [the old covenant] being nullified"; 2 Cor. 3:14); it is not locative (as in, "[those] who . . . came to be in Christ before me"; Rom.16:7).

As stated in that article: The instrumental usage of "in" in the phrase, "in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22), reveals *how* we are vivified (we are vivified, "in Him").

Indeed, the phrase, "in Christ is it being nullified" is parallel to, "in Christ, shall all be vivified." "In Christ, shall all be vivified," then, no more means "those who are in

1. "Crucial Questions About Resurrection," vol.85, pp.163-177.

Christ shall be vivified," than "in Christ is it being nullified," means "those who are in Christ is it being nullified," which, means nothing at all.

It should be noted that in 1 Corinthians 15:22, Paul does not say, "all in Adam" and "all in Christ," but, "in Adam, all," and "in Christ, all." It is unconscionable to reverse the scriptural syntax as so many do, when interpreting this passage. It is unconscionable as well, when the apostle's words already express a clear thought as they stand, to revise his words so as to express a *different* clear thought than *his* clear thought.

We may not change the scripture syntax when by so doing we change the scripture sense. The syntax we are considering is the syntax of these scriptural phrases in question in 1 Corinthians 15:22, "in Adam, all . . ." and, "in Christ, all . . . ." The words "in Adam" and "in Christ," are prepositional phrases. Prepositional phrases may be used as adverbs or as adjectives. When we say, "in Christ, shall all be vivified," we are using the words "in Christ" adverbially, so that "in Christ" modifies "vivified." Such a construction answers the question how, or where, all shall be vivified. The sense is: "*all* [in this case, all mankind] *shall* be vivified," but they shall be vivified, "in Christ [i.e., not otherwise or elsewhere]."

The *non*-scriptural construction, however, "all in Christ," presents us with a different thought from that of the scriptural syntax, "in Christ, all." And, as it is popularly understood, this non-scriptural syntax presents an *unscriptural* thought. In the construction, "all in Christ," the phrase "in Christ" is used adjectivally, so that it modifies the adjective (used as a noun) "all." In this case, the sense is that "the 'in Christ' all" are "the all" who shall be vivified.

Before we even attempt to judge the sense or scope of such a phrase, we must realize that such a phrase does not declare Paul's idea. Whether or not, on other grounds, such

a thought, in some sense, may be true, such a thought is not revealed here.

CHRIST, THE FIRSTFRUIT

The purpose of 1 Corinthians 15:22 is to tell us why it is so that "through a *man* came death, [and] through a *Man,* also, comes the resurrection of the dead" (verse 21). The text explains that this is so, "*for* even as, in Adam, *all* are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall *all* be vivified" (verse 22). The antecedent, then, for "all" in both clauses of verse 22, is "man" (i.e., "human"), from the word "human" in both respective clauses of verse 21. Therefore, the elliptical noun to be supplied following "all" in both clauses of verse 22 ("in Adam, all . . .", "in Christ, all . . .") is "humans,' that is, "mankind."

The theme which is in view throughout this entire section, to which Paul makes the extended reply of verses 20-28, is that of the universal forlornness of *all mankind* if there is no resurrection of the dead (*cp* vs.12,19). Further, it is in the context not merely of believers, but of *all mankind* (v.19), in which Paul declares that Christ is the Firstfruit of those who are *reposing* (v.21). "Repose" is the figure of euphemism by which, in gentleness, we make mention of the dead who are lying in their graves. Those who died in unbelief are lying in their graves quite as much as those who died in faith. Hence it is vain to claim that "the reposing" are confined to dead believers. Clearly, the expression comprises all the dead, not merely those of a certain class.

Let us rehearse again the theme that is in view and the considerations attending it. The overriding theme is the universal hopelessness of *all mankind* apart from resurrection. Yet the marvelous point to note is that while it is indeed the case that, considered in themselves, the dead are utterly hopeless, *Christ* is the *Firstfruit* (*cp* Acts 26:23) of a company which comprises *all* the dead! Christ, in vivi-

fied glory, is the Firstfruit of the "reposing," that is, of the dead. "Firstfruit" speaks of the first fruit to ripen and be presented to God (*cp* Lev.23:10). If the firstfruit is holy, so are the rest (*cf* Rom.11:16) . . . .

Christ is the Firstfruit of those who are reposing, "for since, in fact, through a *man* came death, through a Man, *also,* comes the resurrection of the dead" (v.21). Notice, the subject is not the resurrection of some certain company among the dead; it is rather simply the resurrection of "the dead" (literally, the "standing up of dead ones"). It is the case that through a *man* came death, and that through a *Man,* also, comes the resurrection of the dead, "for even as, in Adam, *all* are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall *all* be vivified" (v.22).

The theme, the hopelessness of *mankind* apart from resurrection, is established in verses 12-19. The fact that Christ has been roused out from among those who are dead as the Firstfruit *of* the ones "having been reposed" (literal rendering), is declared in verse 20. That in verses 21 and 22 Paul's subject continues to be all mankind, is made evident by the overall logical flow of the text. And, that this is and necessarily continues to be, the true range of his subject, is protected against all intelligent denial by the subject-maintaining causal conjunctions "for" at the beginning of both verses 21 and 22.

The fact is that the noun "human" appearing in both clauses of verse 21, constitutes the identification of the elliptical adjective "all" appearing in both clauses of verse 22. This makes the scope of the "all" in both clauses of verse 22, all *mankind.*

To claim that at least in the second "all" of verse 22 (the all who will be vivified), this refers *not* to all mankind but only to all who believe and even then only to all who believe during this life, is to do extreme violence both to the text and the context.

LOVE *AND* JUSTICE

You asked, "To be righteous, does God *have to* save anybody?" In leading up to this question, you stated that you believe that, "the dictates of justice are determinative of the acts of love, not that the dictates of love are determinative of the acts of justice. Therefore, whatever God does is right; this includes all instances in which He, in love, grants blessing, and, all instances in which He, in accord with His will and purpose, instead, imposes punishment."

Although I think that most of what you say here, in itself, is quite good, still, I think it is a mistaken perspective to set justice over love. This is because God *is* "love" (1 John 4:8), and, because, though He is just, we are not informed that He is "justice." It is evident that while God would have us ever mindful that all that He does is right, He would especially have us realize that His very essence is that of love (*cp* 1 Cor.13).

Therefore, I would instead say that neither God's love or justice needs to be judged by the other. This is because God's love is righteous, and His righteousness is loving. It is the cross of Christ which shows this to me.

I wholly concur with you, however, in the principle that *whatever* God actually does is right. We are *informed* by Him as to what is right; we ourselves are by no means the arbiters of righteousness. Neither conscience, intuition, nor "the consensus of scholars" is determinative, either of what is true or of what is right.

It is to be regretted, however, that the adjective "just" and the noun "justice," for many, have been burdened with an exceedingly negative connotation. How frequently we are told, "Since God is *just,* unrepentant sinners will be punished in hell for ever." And, "Since God's *justice* must be satisfied, all Christ-rejectors must be subjected to the eternal punishment of the damned."

Of course, since in making such astonishing claims even

those setting them forth are often affected by their sheer horror, they feel constrained to say at least something in their favor. Since they can hardly claim that since God is *love,* it is therefore that the lost will spend eternity in hell, groping for something to accommodate their need, they fall back on the claim that since God is *just,* it is for that reason that the lost will always be lost, their punishment unremitted for all eternity.

This is especially ironic since the wider evangel, as it is set forth in Romans 3, is that since God is *just,* He sees to the need of sinners for justification. Since all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God, every mouth is barred from being righteous in God's sight through works of law. The entire world, then, must become subject to "the *just* verdict of God" concerning this grave situation. What will His "just verdict" be concerning our awful predicament when all come under His justice (literally, become "UNDER-JUST" to Him; Rom.3:19)? We anxiously await His reply:

How glorious! In manifestation of the *righteousness* (i.e., justice) of God, His word is not one of malediction but of blessing. It is a declaration as to "righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith." It is a pronouncement that is "for all" (and, "on all who are believing")—for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.

The evangel, here declared, which is "for all, and on all who are believing," is the blessing of: "Being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24; *cp* 3:9-24).

It is in this light that we rejoice even in God's most severe judgments, since we know that even in judging ("in the day when God will be judging the hidden things of humanity"), God will be doing so "according to [lit., DOWN, i.e., based upon) my *evangel,* through Jesus Christ" (Rom. 2:16). "This Jesus," He it is Whom God dispatched into

the world, that the world may be saved through Him (John 3:17), He Who is "the Lamb of God . . . taking away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

Obviously, then, to answer your question, while we would not assume *a priori*[2] that God will (much less, must) do this or that, even so, now that we have been given faith and have perceived God's achievement at the cross, we freely say, Yes, "in the name of Jesus Christ . . . . we *must* be saved" (Acts 4:10,12). God *must* save not only some (your term was "anybody"), and, not only those who are elect for life eonian, but even all mankind. This is because God, our Saviour, is also the Saviour of all mankind. *He* has formed the decision that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth. Accordingly, Christ is giving Himself *a correspondent Ransom* for the sake of *all* (1 Tim.2:4,6; 4:10). It is in this character that we rely on the living God (1 Tim.4:9), Who does not lie (Titus 1:2). Therefore, by the necessity of the consequence, it becomes evident that He must save not only "somebody," but "everybody."

ASSURANCE OF UNDERSTANDING

You said concerning me, "Since you, too, as a universalist, like the Arminians, do not believe the gospel, you, too, are unsaved . . . ."

Since I *do,* however, believe the evangel that "Christ died for our sins," which is the evangel to which you refer, your claim can only truly be that I do not believe *your interpretation* of the evangel, which is that Christ died for our sins *alone.* Now while I acknowledge that I do not accept your interpretation of the evangel, it does not follow from this that I do not believe the evangel itself, and so am not in Christ and remain unsaved. Nor is it so that your inter-

2. i.e., in the sense, as innate knowledge (of our own), prior to examination.

pretation of the evangel—*whether or not it should be correct*—is constitutive of the evangel itself.

Even as various others, you confound believing with understanding, the declaration of the faith with the interpretation of the faith. We must all make judgments, which is to say, interpretations, as to the sense, scope, and corollaries of God's Word. Interpretation is central to understanding. This is a simple fact, even if some should deny it, fail to see its significance, or ridicule us for having pointed it out. Indeed, if we should have any understanding at all as to how any certain declaration is to be understood, this is only because, wittingly or unwittingly, we have made a certain judgment as to its sense or interpretation.

Much of the confusion surrounding issues of believing and understanding, is born out of the unsophisticated notion that one need not (perhaps even, must not) interpret the Bible in order to understand it. Then, we have the influence of simplistic aphorisms such as, "the Bible interprets itself," and, "the Bible says what it means and means what it says."

Now we agree with and honor much that is meant by such sayings. Yet the first of these—acknowledging the helpful truth to which it points—simply overlooks the fact that the reader, nonetheless, must have the *insight* rightly to take note of whatever internal governance of sense Scripture may well afford us in settling any certain question. And the second of these sayings—acknowledging its higher intent to affirm the truth of inspiration—in itself, is sheer tautology, if it has any content at all.

In the case of a short, subjectively simple statement, most are apt to imagine, "There is nothing to interpret; just believe what it says." If you think about it, this is surely foolish, besides false (we recall that it is false when we remember that the question of usage is ever present). That such a claim is also foolish is evident inasmuch as

any long, complex statement is nevertheless comprised of short, discrete parts, many of which, usually at least, being subjectively simple.

Even short statements, however, including ones universally recognized as simple, still always call for interpretation. Take for example: "Greet one another with a holy kiss" (Rom.16:16); and, "Jesus weeps" (John 11:35). While we may have confidence that our (presumably, literal) interpretations of these normally uncontroversial statements is correct, *that* does not make them correct, nor does it make them anything other than interpretations. This is because it is neither impossible nor absurd (whether likely or not) that the "kiss" was spoken of in some sort of metaphorical/metonymical way, and that even the "weeping" was metaphorical, an internal "shedding of tears," within the heart. Indeed, in speaking of my own sorrows, I have sometimes spoken of having "wept" over a certain matter in cases where no actual tears were shed.

Perhaps I can illustrate what I have in mind still more clearly, by the words of Jesus which have puzzled so many: "Verily, I am saying to you that by no means may this generation be passing by till all these things should be occurring" (Matt.24:34).[3]

Now since this has been a very controversial passage which has been *interpreted* in various ways, not many would be apt to say that those who interpret it differently than themselves, therefore do not believe what it says. Any of good sense would say instead that while those of opposing views believe what it *says*—the statement itself—they misinterpret what it *means*—that of which it truly speaks, and the way that that was intended to be understood. And, in saying this, in the case of the one holding

3. Our findings concerning this passage are presented in the exposition, "This Generation," vol.86, pp.121-132; 145,146.

the correct interpretation of this text, he would be correct in speaking thus.

In parallel, then, in considering the text, "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor.15:3), no one should say that those who interpret it differently than themselves, do not believe what it says—are unbelievers as to this declaration—but that they (to some degree) misinterpret its proper sense. And, in saying this, in the case of the one holding the correct interpretation of this text, he likewise would be correct in speaking thus.

Therefore, all who are convinced that the declaration, "Christ died for our sins" is true, are our fellow believers in Christ, joint enjoyers of salvation even with ourselves. Concerning either the term "died," or the phrase "our sins," whether one should understand Christ's death for our sins as having occurred either categorically, in every way, or only corporeally, or, for ourselves alone, or for ourselves as well as for others, is irrelevant insofar as the question of one's *faith* in this statement itself is concerned.

Faith is in what is said. Whether or not we should also understand the *sense* in which what is said is so, is a separate issue, one which is irrelevant (i.e., non-determinative) insofar as the question of the existence of faith itself is concerned.

When an intrinsically-coherent, cognizable proposition has been declared, and then—the hearer knowing the basic meaning of the words of which the declaration consists—that same intrinsically-coherent proposition becomes (1) that of which the hearer is cognizant, and (2) that of which the hearer is convinced, *faith* then becomes the portion of the hearer.

We are mindful that for many these various considerations will be difficult to grasp, or simply unacceptable. So our prayer is that God might grant a measure of competency in the discernment of His Word. J.R.C.

GOD'S EVANGEL CONCERNING HIS SON

FROM the very start, Paul's letter to the Romans directs attention to the evangel of God concerning His Son. The introduction (Rom.1:1-7) is a series of phrases that run together like a long eighteenth century book title, establishing the theme and identifying the writer and those to whom he writes. Yet every point in verses 1-4 directs our thinking forward to *Jesus Christ our Lord* as He is made known in the evangel. And every point in the remainder of the paragraph speaks of grand effects of this evangel concerning *our Lord* in the lives of Paul and the believers. This pattern can be set forth structurally as follows:

Paul, (1) *a slave of Christ Jesus,* (2) *a called apostle,* (3) *severed for the evangel . . . .*

the evangel (1) *of God,* (2) *which He promises before through His prophets in the holy scriptures,* (3) *concerning His Son . . . .*

His Son, (1) *Who comes of the seed of David according to the flesh,* (2) *Who is designated Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead,* (3) **Jesus Christ our Lord** . . . .

our Lord, (1) *through Whom we obtained grace and apostleship* (2) *for faith-obedience among all the nations,* (3) *for His name's sake, among whom are you also . . . .*

you also, (1) *the called of Jesus Christ:* (2) *to all who are in Rome, beloved by God,* (3) *called saints.*

The basic pattern is clear: We are first directed to the evangel of God which concerns His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Then we find that this evangel concerning Jesus Christ our Lord influences our current lives. The central Figure connecting the evangel to our lives is God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The letter as a whole follows the same pattern. The first eight chapters present the evangel of God concerning His Son, His faith in His death for sinners, concluding with the declaration that nothing is able to separate us from the love of God in *Christ Jesus our Lord.* The last eight chapters illustrate, with concrete examples and human situations, ways in which this evangel affects us under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

It is most important that we keep this pattern in view as we look into the details of the evangel and its significance in our lives. What Paul writes, for instance, in Romans 1:18-3:20 concerning the irreverence and unrighteousness of humanity must be related to the evangel concerning God's Son. The bleak description of the human predicament does not stand by itself. It serves an essential part in bringing out the goodness of the evangel, not only in making clear the desperate human need of deliverance from sin, but, even more importantly, in showing the extent of the calamity that had to be faced and that was overcome with power and righteousness in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The magnitude of the problem defines the need, but it also makes us more keenly aware of the measure of glory in the solution gained by our Saviour.

Similarly, in chapters 9-11, Paul writes of his own personal sorrow over Israel's current apostasy. Here is a matter which calls for divine direction, that is, where the *Lordship* of Jesus Christ is needed. The result for Paul is that his very real sorrow does not become a matter of hopelessness, but an experience that draws the apostle into a stronger reliance on God than he would have had apart from the sorrow. Hence he brings the reader forward with him to the stirring words of praise to God given in Romans 11:32-36. The power and authority of Christ's Lordship in dealing with Paul's distress lies in the revelation of God's righteousness and faithfulness and especially His love given in the evangel concerning Jesus Christ.

This is very practical. The bleak background of human sinfulness, described in the early chapters of Romans, involves daily burdens of unrest and grief, such as those described in the latter chapters. These can be eased and transformed only by a true message of assurance of victory and goodness, which is exactly what the evangel of God concerning His Son is. The believer meets his own personal sorrows and struggles in the current eon, as Paul always did, by that confidence in God as He is revealed in His evangel concerning His Son.

THE INTRODUCTION

Romans 1:1-7 does not expound the evangel of God but establishes its principal features. It is a message of good, reflecting the goodness of God; it is scriptural; it concerns Jesus Christ.

Every thought in Romans 1-7 is important, but the stress is on *Jesus Christ our Lord* as He is made known in the evangel of God and as He affects the lives of those who are believing the evangel. It is important to note what the introduction says about Paul, but this must be related to the message he brings concerning Jesus Christ. It is immensely important that we see that the evangel originates in and reveals the character *of God,* and it will greatly help us understand this evangel if we see its roots in the holy scriptures. But we must never forget that this revelation of God is made known in God's Anointed One (Christ) Who saves (Jesus), and that the promises of good

spoken by the prophets will never be fulfilled apart from Jesus Christ. Again, rule and resurrection are critical features of the good news, but these cannot occur apart from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ upon which the good results are based. They are His works, and they will reveal Him as He reveals God.

SLAVE, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

The story of Saul the Pharisee becoming Paul the slave is a stirring one, not to Paul's glory, but to God's. It does not tell us of a poor, weak man who rises to riches and fame and power, but of a strong and proud leader of religious zealots who is brought into loving subjection to the very One he hated above all others. Where once he supposed himself "bound to commit much contrary to the name of Jesus the Nazarene" (Acts 26:9), he became a slave of Christ Jesus, Who invigorated him and overwhelmed him with His grace (1 Tim.1:12-14). His boast came to be in Christ Jesus, in that which is toward God, and he did not dare to speak of anything that might possibly commend himself rather than be directly seen as effected by Christ (Rom.15:17,18).

It is not exalting Paul to distinguish his unique calling as an apostle. But rather it is to honor Him Who called him. Paul was not our Saviour or Lord. The evangel does not concern him. But our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, commissioned Paul to bring the evangel concerning Himself, to us. And He enslaved him in this commission. If we are to appreciate the goodness and power of the evangel we must listen carefully to the one who received this evangel and obtained the grace and apostleship to present it to us.

THE EVANGEL

It is true that the evangel which Paul brought is *from* God, but in terming it the evangel *of* God, the apostle is

speaking rather of its character than its source. It is God's power for salvation and reveals the righteousness of God (Rom.1:16,17). Yet in manifesting God's righteousness, the evangel does so *through Jesus Christ's faith* (Rom.3:22). The deliverance that God graciously grants in His grace is *in Christ Jesus* (Rom.3:24). Propitiation is through faith *in His blood* (Rom.3:25). The message is a commendation of God's love in *Christ's death* for us while we are still sinners (Rom.5:8). God grants conciliation *through the death of His Son* (Rom.5:10; *cp* Rom.8:35). The culminating word of the evangel of God as recorded in Romans 1-8 is that nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God *in Christ Jesus, our Lord* (Rom.8:39).

The roots of this evangel concerning God's Son are found in the holy scriptures which spoke of the Seed of the woman (Gen.3:15) and are filled with types of God's blessings channeled through the death of His Son, especially in the sacrifices, and in the lives of certain individuals such as Abel, Noah, Joseph and Joshua. Many features of our calling were kept secret, but the message of deliverance for sinners, of approach and access to God, of life and peace, all based on the blood of an innocent sacrifice, can be traced from Genesis onward.

CONCERNING GOD'S SON

The evangel which Paul evangelized is that Christ died for the sake of sinners (Rom.5:8; *cp* 1 Cor.15:3,4). But these lines of introduction do not speak directly of justification and conciliation through the death of Christ, or our spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, as Paul does in Romans 3:21-8:39. They do not present the details of the evangel. But they establish the critical point that the evangel concerns God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who has been in view throughout God's Word, and Who brings good.

Two very needed goods are mentioned: God's Son is

the means of *rule* and *resurrection.* In His relationship to David, according to the flesh, He will fulfill the promise spoken concerning Solomon of reigning for the eon like a son to God (2 Sam.7:12-16). Even greater than this, in accord with the spirit of holiness given Him, He is the One Who resurrects the dead, which powerfully exhibits Him as the Son of God.

Human misrule plagues us every day. Death is everywhere, inside us and all around us. The evangel concerns God's Son Who puts an end to these great evils and brings ideal rule and life in their place. Consequently, in speaking of the good that comes to human beings, the evangel is speaking most essentially of the One Who gains and gives them this good.

JESUS CHRIST

How good is the good news? It is as good as the One it concerns, and as good as that which He has done. The evangel of God is not made good by our acceptance of it as true. It *is* good. Jesus Christ does not die for our sins when and if we believe He has died for us. He *has died* for our sins. We believe that which the evangel tells us has already happened. Jesus does not become Saviour by our acceptance of Him as Saviour. He *is* Jesus, the Saviour. Christ does not become the Anointed One by our believing that He is the One anointed by God with power. He *is* the Christ.

Our believing does not make it so. His doing is what makes it so. Our believing is a gracious and special gift given to us before we see it is so. But what is so is what is stated by the evangel to be so. And that is wholly and gloriously good.

Here in the introduction, the goodness of the good message concerning God's Son is contained in the words: *Jesus Christ our Lord*. It is not found so much in what it

says about His coming of the seed of David and about His work of resurrecting the dead, as in this identification of God's Son as the anointed Saviour. In order to rule and to give life to the dead God's Son must be God's empowered Saviour. And He is this because of His death for sinners. It is because He saves that He is Jesus, and because God anoints Him in His work and position that He is Christ.

OUR LORD

Jesus Christ is Lord. But not all yet know this (as all shall know, according to Philippians 2:9-11). We know Him as our Lord in accord with the measure of faith God has imparted to us, the measure of believing that Jesus Christ died for our sakes. Christ's Lordship is the effect of believing that while we are still sinners He died for our sakes. His Lordship is the effect of this revelation of God's love and righteousness on our lives right now, in this present wicked eon when all that we see seems to contradict what the evangel says and we believe.

The Lordship of Jesus Christ brought grace and apostleship into Paul's daily life. He *obtained* these blessings. He did not seek them, but He obtained them, nevertheless.

This Lordship of course was first made evident to Paul when he was "breathing out threatening and murder against the disciples of the Lord" and was cast to the ground by "a light out of heaven," as indicated by his cry, "Who art Thou Lord?" The great light, and the force of this appearance on Saul led Paul into a recognition of lordship at work. But surely it was the identification of this Lordship with the One Who was his Saviour and the evangel that the risen Lord gave to him, saying: "I am Jesus . . ." (Acts 9:1-5), that made that Lordship effective in his life.

We also, like those in Rome, addressed by Paul, are affected by Jesus Christ as our Lord, as God grants us faith to be believing that He is the anointed Saviour, Whom

God spared not but gave up for us all. Faith-obedience comes into the lives of the believers under the Lordship of Christ. His saving work affects us as God graciously opens up the eyes of our hearts to it. We also obtain grace, though not apostleship, but certainly we obtain grace as believers who are called of Jesus Christ, beloved by God, called saints.

The evangel tells us it is not of ourselves but of God (Eph.2:8,9). God loves us by giving His Son for us, and so we are loved! God calls us and sets us apart on the basis of what Jesus Christ has done for us, and so we are called! What a powerful influence this evangel of God concerning His Son has!

GRACE AND PEACE

There is still a line from Romans 1:1-7 that has not yet been quoted here. Paul concludes verse 7 with his greetings, with words that appear in all his letters, nearly the same as here, but which should not be dismissed as mere standard courtesy, but appreciated as continually felt from the heart of the apostle to the believer:

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The evangel of God concerning His Son is a message of grace and peace, and it brings grace and peace into our lives. Traced from God as our Father and Jesus Christ as our Lord, a greeting centered in the blessings of grace and peace is most ideal and meaningful.

I have much to learn yet about the evangel of God concerning His Son, and I expect that you who read this also share in this need. Consequently, even though we have often examined Romans, it should be a welcome experience to do so again in this way in our magazine.

D.H.H.

REMEMBER PAUL'S BONDS

GOD'S PRECIOUS WORD abounds with fascinating insights into the amazing complex personalities of so many individuals. Temperament, ambition, patience, strength or weakness of character, all these and many other traits of genetic and environmental influence, can be identified in those who have been privileged, blessed with some part in this wondrous revelation. Many were chosen for mighty and noble circumstances. Some, for slight or ignoble incidents. Whatever their lot or outcome of their portion, be it great or small, in the unfolding of God's purpose, it is certain that each and every one, either at the dais or consummation, shall rejoice and give thanks for God's subjection and choice.

A most blessed perception is granted to the ecclesia. This is the realization that true significance of the above placements is *primarily* for disclosure of God's wisdom, grace, and especially, His vast love! None, save our dear Lord, was more conscious of this than the apostle Paul. It was this awareness that shaped his character in his years of toil in dispensing the evangel and strengthened him in his afflictions.

OVERWHELMED BY GRACE

With overflowing hearts, we praise our gracious Father for submitting to the snares of self-esteem, one of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, a Pharisee, righteous in law, becoming blameless, and then extricating him from them so that he deemed prestige and position to be

refuse. This one came storming to Damascus bearing the chief priest's warrant. Listen to his own words before king Agrippa: "Besides, being exceedingly maddened against them, I persecuted them as far as the outside cities also" (Acts 26:9-12). He sought the arrest of those followers of Jesus. Who could have believed that but a few days hence, he would be escaping assassination, being lowered ignominiously down the walls of the city in a hamper!

The account of our risen Lord's confrontation with Paul is quite vivid. He describes it in the Roman citadel in Jerusalem (Acts 22) and before king Agrippa (Acts 26). It is in view in Paul's staunch defense to those in Galatia (*cf* Gal. 1:13), and when he writes to Timothy about the effects on him of the Lord's overwhelming grace (1 Tim.1:12-16). The relevant point which might possibly be overlooked is contained in our Lord's words to Saul, "It is hard for you to be kicking against the goads" (Acts 26:14).

A dear friend confided that for some time he was helplessly involved in a sect which was very confused and misled, but, like the apostle, he also was liberated. "Brother," he declared, "God placed me in that state, and God took me out of it. Now I am enabled to rejoice in the freedom, the sheer love of all this grace!" How long had Paul endured the hypocrisy and harrowing pain engendered through vainly striving to observe the strictures of law keeping? "For through law is the recognition of sin" (Rom.3:20).

EMANCIPATION

From the time he heard those words, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" his life would never be the same again. Significantly, he was arrested! Returning down from Damascus, he was to face persecution, pain, imprisonment, shipwreck. He was beaten, flogged and stoned. Being left for dead outside the walls of Lystra, he was snatched away into paradise and heard ineffable declarations. So stupendous were these revelations that he was given "a splinter in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, that he may be buffeting me, lest I may be lifted up" (2 Cor.12:7-11). The turbulent years of his ministry eventually led him to Rome to appear before Caesar. During the two year term of house arrest he was restricted in body, but not in words. Here, he was inspired by God to record those epistles of perfection which crown his ministry.

"Writing to the Colossians, he affectionately asks them to remember his bonds. He concludes, 'The salutation is by my hand—Paul. *Remember my bonds!*' (Col.4:18). He desires to excite their sympathy that, in their prayers, the saints may remember his afflictions and beseech their heavenly Father that He should open a door of utterance *'to speak the secret of Christ'* because of which he had been bound.

Underlying the superficial meaning of the words 'remember my bonds' we can see the pointer to the great truths back of his chains. The beloved apostle would desire that we appreciate the reason for his bondage—*the secret of the evangel,* and *the secret of Christ* (Eph.6:19; Col.4:3). His chains were a symbol of the evangel which he heralded and which he could call *his* evangel. The transcendent revelations of the conciliation and the universal headship of Christ required a *chained ambassador* to make them manifest, that the reality of accomplishment should be demonstrated in entirety. *Remember Paul's bonds!*"[1]

So great is our loving Father, Who, not only carefully presents and preserves His precious revelations, ensures that competent teachers are thus prepared. In the name of our Lord and Saviour, we praise and laud His holy name. Amen.

Donald Fielding

1. Alan Reid: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.30, p.84.

DAVID'S HOUSEHOLD

3 +**Now** there [lb]**was** ·a **long war between** the **house of Saul and** [bt] the **house of David;** +**but David** was [go]**growing** + [fast]**stronger** +**while** the **house of Saul** was [go]**growing** + **weaker.** 2 + **Sons were** [l]**born to David in Hebron:** + **his firstborn** [lb]**was Amnon,** ›**by Ahinoam the Jesreelite;** 3 + **his second** was **Chileab,** ›**by Abigail, Nabal's** former **wife, the Carmelite;** + **the third** was **Absalom son of Maacah, daughter of king Talmai of Geshur;** 4 + **the fourth** was **Adonijah son of Haggith;** + **the fifth** was **Shephatiah son of Abital;** 5 **and the sixth** was **Ithream,** ›**by David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.**

6 + **It came** to [l]**be,** [i]**while** there [b]**was**– ·**war between** the **house of Saul and** [bt] the **house of David,** +**that Abner** [b]**was** [fast]**strengthening** his hold [i]**on** the **house of Saul.** 7 +**Now Saul** ›**had** a **concubine, and her name** was **Rizpah, daughter of Aiah; and** [7]**Ishbosheth**[cs] [l]**said to Abner,** For **what reason** did **you come to my father's concubine?** 8 +**Now** › **Abner** grew **very** [lhot]**angry** [on]**at** the **words of Ishbosheth, and he** [l]**said,** Am **I** a **cur's head** [w]**that** belongs **to Judah?** Until **today I** have [ld]**shown kindness** [wi]**to** the **house of your father Saul, to his kinsmen and to his associate, and I** did **not** [c]**let** [i] the **hand of David come upon you;** +**yet you** [l]**call** [on] **me to account today** for a **depravity** concerning ·this **woman!** 9 **Thus may Elohim do to Abner, and thus may He add to it, for just as Yahweh swore to David,** [t] **so I** will [ld]**accomplish** it **for him:** 10 **To transfer the kingship from** the **house of Saul and to set up** `the **throne of David over Israel and over Judah from Dan** + **unto Beer-sheba.**

11 + [7]**Ishbosheth**[c] [l]**could** › **reply**– **nothing** [fr]**more** `to **Abner** [f]**because he feared**– `**him.**

12 + **Abner** [l]**sent messengers** on **his** [u]**behalf to David,** › **saying**–**, To** [a]**whom** does the **land** belong**?** And he › [sa]**added**–, Do **contract your covenant** `with **me, and behold, my hand** shall be **with you to** [c]**bring around** `**all Israel to you.** 13 + [7]**David**[cs] [lsa]**replied, Good! I my**self **shall contract** a **covenant** `with **you; I** am **asking** [y]**only one thing** [f]**of** `**you,** › **saying**–**, You shall not see** `**my face** [i]**unless** [if] **you bring**– **before** me `**Saul's daughter Michal** [i]**when you come**– **to see** `**my face.** 14 +**Then David** [l]**sent messengers to Saul's son Ishbosheth,** › **saying**–, Do **give** over `**my wife** `**Michal whom I betrothed to my**self [i]**with** a **hundred Philistine foreskins.** 15 +**So Ishbosheth** [l]**sent** word **and** had **her** [l]**taken** away **from** [wi] [7]**her**[0] **husband, from** [wi] **Paltiel son of Laish.** 16 +**Yet her husband** [l]**went** `with **her,** + **lamenting**– while **going**– [af]**behind her as far as Bahurim.** +**When Abner** [l]**said to him, Go, return,** + **he** [l]**turned back.**

17 +**Now** there **had** [b]**been communication** by **Abner with** the **elders of Israel,** › **saying**–**,** [mr] **Heretofore,** [mr]**indeed, you have** [b]**been seeking** `**David** ›**as king over you.** 18 +**So now** [d]**act; for Yahweh Him**self [sa]**promised to David,** › **saying**–**,** [i]**By** the **hand of My servant David** [7]**I shall save**~[cs] `**My people Israel from** the **hand of** the **Philistines and from** the **hand of all their enemies**[l]**.** 19 + **Abner** [mr]**also** [l]**spoke in** the **ears of Benjamin.** +**Then Abner** [mr] [l]**went in**to **Hebron to speak in** the **ears of David** `of **all** [w]**that** seemed **good in** the **eyes of Israel and in** the **eyes of** the **whole house of Benjamin.**

20 +**When Abner** [l]**came to David** [7]**in**[cs] **Hebron, and** `with **him twenty men,** + **David** [ld]**made** a **feast for Abner and for** the **men who** were `with **him.** 21 +**Then Abner** [l]**said to David, Let me** [l]**rise and** [l]**go, and let me** [l]**convene** `**all Israel to my lord the king.** + **They shall contract** a **covenant** `with **you, and you will reign** [i]**over all** [w]**that your**

soul is yearning for. +**So David** l**dismissed** `**Abner, and he** l**went** away **unharmed.**

22 + **Just then David's servants and Joab came**l **from** ·a **raid, and they brought much loot with them.** +**As** for **Abner, he was no** longer **with David in Hebron, for he had dismissed him, and he** had l**gone** away **unharmed.** 23 +**When Joab and all the** military **host** *w*[**that** was `with **him came** in, + **they** l**told** › **Joab,** › **saying**–, **Abner son of Ner came to the king;** +**yet he** l**dismissed him, and he** l**went** away **unharmed.** 24 +**So Joab** l**came to the king and** l**said, What have you done?** *bd*[**Here Abner** was **coming to you; why then** did **you** *m*[**let him go,** so +**that he is** l**gone,** yea **gone**–**?** 25 **You knew** `of **Abner son of Ner that he came to dupe you and to** get **knowledge**– `about **your** goings **forth and** `**your comings**, **and to** get to **know** `**all** *w*[**that you** are **doing.** 26 +**Then Joab** went l**forth from** *wi* **David and** l**sent messengers after Abner; and they** l**brought** `**him back from the cistern of Sirah;** +**as** for **David, he** did **not know** of it. 27 +**When Abner** l**returned** to **Hebron,** + **Joab** l**turned him aside to** the 7**flank~ of the gate**way **to speak** `with **him** *i*[**at ease.** + **There he** l**smote him** on **the fifth** rib. +**Thus he** l**died** *i*[**for** the **blood of his brother Asahel.**

28 **Afterward,** +**when David** l**heard** of it, + **he** l**said, Innocent** am **I and my kingdom** *f*[**of blood**guilt for **Abner son of Ner** *f wi*[**before Yahweh** *fr*[**for** the **eon.** 29 **May it travail** up**on** the **head of Joab and** 7**on~***Qcs* **all his father's house. And may ne**ver **be cut** off **from** the **house of Joab** one who has a **discharge**l, +**or** is **leprous**l, +**or** *c*[**holding fast**l *i*[**to** the **crutch,** +**or falling** *i*[**by** the **sword,** +**or** having **lack of bread.** 30 +**Now Joab and his brother Abishai had killed** › **Abner** *on*[**because** *w* **he had** *c*[**put** `**their brother Asahel** to **death in** the **battle** *i*[**at Gibeon.**

31 +**Then David** l**said to Joab and to all the people who** were `with **him, Tear your clothes,** + **gird** on **sackcloth, and wail before Abner!** + ·**King David** himself was **walking** *af*[**behind the bier.**

32 + **They** l**entombed** `**Abner** *i*[**at Hebron;** + **the king** l**lifted** up `**his voice and** l**lamented** ›**at Abner's tomb; and all the people** l**lamented** too.

33 + **The king** *m*[**composed** a l**dirge** ›**over Abner,** + l**saying:**

Should Abner have **died** *as*[the **death**
of a **decadent** person**?**
34 **Your hand**s were **not bound**l**,**
And your feet were not en**closed** ›**in bronze** fetters**.**
Yet **you fell as** one **falls**–
Before sons of iniquity.

And all the people l**continued to lament over him.** 35 +**Then all the people** l**came to** *c*[**urge** `**David** to have a **repast**– of **bread** *i*[**while** it was *fr*[**still** ·**day.** +**Yet David** l**swore,** › **saying**–**, Thus may Elohim do to me, and thus may He add,** *t* **if I should taste bread or anything** at **all before the sun sets**–**.** 36 + **All the people recognized** it, **and it was** l**good in their eyes. Like every**thing *w*[**that the king did, in** the **eyes of all the people** it was **good.** 37 +**Thus all the people and all Israel** l**knew** *i*[**on** ·**that day that it had not** *b*[**come from the king to** *c*[**put** `**Abner son of Ner** to **death.** 38 +**Then the king** l**said to his servants,** Do **you not** l**know that** a **chief,** + a **great** man **in Israel, has fallen** ·**this** ·**day?** 39 **And today I** am **timid,** +**even** though **anointed**l **king;** +**as** for ·**those** ·**men,** the **sons of Zeruiah,** they are too **obstinate** *f*[**for me. May Yahweh repay** › the one **doing** ·**evil according** to **his evil.**

IMPERFECTIONS IN LIFE

Polygamy was a current practice by kings of the east, and it was followed by Saul and David and many others, even though it was forbidden in the law (Deut.17:15-17). David's polygamy became a source of severe trial to him in later years. He had a daughter raped by a half brother,

a son murdered by a half brother, and several sons contending for the throne. The jealousies in his house would be deep and bitter.

But there are other lessons in these verses as well. As with Abraham, Sarah and Hagar, the names of David's wives and children speak of various qualities of life that are brought forth when one embraces different virtues and principles. Embracing law produces a life of restrictions and failure, and embracing grace produces a life with joy and freedom.

It is significant that the mention of these names comes when David begins to reign. It is when the "Beloved" rules in our lives that we bring forth fruit. The meanings of the names speak of faithfulness, peace, sufferings, rejoicing in the Lord, providential protection and growth. Such things we realize in our own lives when Christ rules in us. Yet, while we continue in this flesh, we will have areas in our life—like Joab in David's life (v.9)—which seem to defy rule.

THE INTRIGUE OF ABNER

When the Philistines defeated Israel, the power of the twelve tribes was broken, and the unity of the country was disintegrated. There were many throughout the land who believed that David should be king, and there were many who had close ties to Benjamin and Saul's house. Most of the tribes vacillated, waiting to see what would happen, refusing to risk any action themselves.

Abner was the dominant figure left from Saul's regime. He set up Ishbosheth, a weak son of Saul, as a figurehead king. Later, when the time was right, he intended to take over the rule himself. Abner was "strengthening his hold on the house of Saul" (v.7), and appropriated to himself Rizpah, a member of Saul's harem. Ishbosheth objected to this, because it was an established custom that the past king's harem belonged to his successor, along with the rest

of the kingdom. Thus Abner was showing that his intention was to become king himself.

Though Abner had no fear of Ishbosheth, evidently he thought he needed his support to accomplish his scheme. Angered by the weak king's complaint, Abner changed his course of action. He decided there was probably a better position for him in David's court than in the house of Saul. Abner sent messengers to David, and agreed to bring the heads of the tribes together with David, and establish David as king over the whole nation. God was using Abner's ambition and influence to draw the whole kingdom together to David.

DAVID'S RESPONSE

David had only one requirement in his agreement with Abner. David required that Michal, Saul's daughter, who had been given to him in marriage, be restored to him. Apparently David was concerned with diplomacy at this point. With six wives already, it is not likely that love was his motivation.

David's desire was to show an outward joining of his house with Saul's. By acceding to the throne in this way, David could be more readily accepted by the whole nation without intimidating loyalties to Saul.

Abner brought Michal, along with an embassy of twenty elders of Israel, to contract a covenant with David. David received them splendidly with a banquet.

JOAB AND ABNER

Joab was Abner's counterpart in David's administration. Joab returned victoriously from a raid to discover that David was contracting a covenant with Abner. Joab was infuriated, and warned that Abner was dangerous and was conspiring to overthrow David. Unbeknown to David, Joab sent a message after Abner, recalling him in David's

name. On his return Joab murdered Abner to avenge the death of his brother Asahel, whom Abner had killed at the battle of Gibeon.

THE BURIAL OF ABNER

David pronounced a curse on Joab for killing Abner, but he inflicted no other penalty. David was conspicuous in his attendance of Abner's funeral, and he mourned him vehemently. When some urged David to cease his mourning and take nourishment, he refused and proclaimed he would fast all that day. He also composed a dirge to be sung, lamenting the nation's loss.

David showed a genuine sorrow for the loss of Abner. In recognizing and honoring Abner's service to the country as a whole, David showed his love for all of Israel. This helped to strengthen the bond of the country under his new leadership.

J. Philip Scranton

FRANK ORTON

Brother Frank Orton, of Nottingham, England, was a man of zeal for God's Word and perseverance in toil for the spreading of its truth. He served diligently and boldly as our British agent for many years and relished every opportunity to let others know about the Concordant Version and the ministry of this magazine. Along with his wife, Joyce, he welcomed many visitors to his home and encouraged fellowship among the brethren in England. For those of us who knew his vitality and keen interest in the Scriptures, the announcement of his death early in the morning of March 19, at age 89, was especially sobering, even though we knew of his increasing infirmities. But, as our brother anticipated with joy, mortality will be replaced by immortality, and death swallowed up by victory (1 Cor.15:51-55). And the dead in Christ shall be rising first (1 Thess.4:16).

We extend our condolences to his wife Joyce, their children and their families, and his many fellow believers in Great Britain. Thanks be to God for His blessings in Frank's own life and for the testimony of faith granted through him to others.

Contents:

97 Editorial
101 Insubjection in the Line of Cain
113 God's Kindness, Forbearance and Patience
121 God Has Spoken
124 Fear, in It's relation to Love; Perceiving What is Spiritual
133 Saul's Dynasty Ends
137 The Apostle's Concerns

MAY, 2002

Volume XCIII **Number 3**

Concordant Version of

The Former Prophets

(Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings)

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We cannot press too strongly that the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings belong among the *prophecies.* They foretell nothing, it is true, yet the histories they contain all revolve about the man of God who was the one link which still united Israel to their God.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2002
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE

EDITORIAL

As the apostle Paul's "dissolution" became imminent he declared, "I have kept the faith" (2 Tim.4:7). Faith was given to Paul as a matter of grace that overwhelmed him (1 Tim.1:14), and his faithful toil was not of himself but of God's grace which was always there together with him, and it was not for naught (1 Cor.15:10).

During the first week of this month, two close associates of our work were put to repose (see p.112). Both our dear sister, Dorothy Johnson Hibberd, of Baldwin, Michigan, and our good friend and brother, Robert B. Killen, of Centerville, Ohio, were strong in the faith and unswerving in support of the evangel of God's grace. It was my privilege to testify, at their respective funerals, to the faith God had given them. I would like to speak of this faith in this editorial, not simply as a memorial to these good friends, whom I will miss very much, until that day, but also hopefully as an encouragement to those of us who still remain.

In her missionary work with children in rural areas, Dorothy often told the story of Lydia whose heart was opened by the Lord to heed what was spoken by Paul (Acts 16:13-15), for she felt a kinship to this woman of Thyatira, not far from Philippi. There was no dramatic experience such as Saul had on the road to Damascus, but there was the happy and assuring *discovery* that she believed Christ died for her sins.

For Bob Killen also, God opened the eyes of his heart to the evangel which declares he was saved "in grace, through faith," and this was not out of himself, but was God's approach present, not of works, lest he should be boasting (Eph.2:8,9). For him also there was a strong desire

to share the evangel of God's love and righteousness with others. (Ironically, before his death, which was quite unexpected, I had selected for this issue of *Unsearchable Riches,* the first installment of a series of introductory studies on the value of the Scriptures which our brother had written for his grandchildren.)

In commenting on Romans 1:8-12, elsewhere in this issue, I suggest that when Paul thanked God for the announcement of *the faith* of the Roman believers "in the whole world," he was not thinking so much of their personal faithfulness (or even only of the fact of their believing), as of the message of good news from God that they believed. I spoke of this evangel which composes "the faith" at both funerals, but, at Brother Killen's prior request, I particularly dwelt on what he believed. The following are some extracts from that message:

THE FAITH BEING BELIEVED

Our friend believed in the existence of the invisible God of all the universe. He believed that the God Who exists has spoken to us in the Scriptures. He believed that the God Who speaks in His Word is a God Who knows what He is doing and is reaching toward a goal which He has purposed to achieve. He believed that what God has spoken concerning His operations and purpose centers in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, especially in His death for sinners, His resurrection and exaltation. He believed, that what God is doing in and through His Son will bring everyone to a glorious consummation that could not be achieved in any other way.

As it is expressed in Hebrews 11:6, God *is*. This has serious implications for anyone who notices that everything is not perfect in this world. How can God exist and evil exist? Is it possible that things have gotten out of hand, that God was surprised by the entrance of sin into the world and

is forced to accept many things He does not like? Or on the other hand, perhaps: Does God, for some inscrutable reason, want an eternity of evil in some form and place? It surely cannot be.

God has spoken to us in the Scriptures. Although God's invisible attributes of power and intelligence are revealed in the creation (Rom.1:20), His attributes of power for salvation, and of righteousness and wisdom and love are unfolded in the Scriptures, especially in the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.1:1-5,16,17; 8:31-39; 1 Cor.1:18-25). All of Scripture points to Christ and His obedience in faith unto the death of the cross and to the blessings that result from this great work.

What a happy favor to believe the Scriptures when they teach God has a purpose, with a goal in view, and knows what He is doing. Jesus once asked the throng, following Him, "For which of you, wanting to build a tower, is not first seated to calculate the expense, to see if he has the wherewithal?—lest at some time, he laying a foundation and not being strong enough to finish up, all those beholding should begin to scoff at him, saying that 'This man begins building and is not strong enough to finish up!'" (Luke 14:28-30). Likewise, God has a purpose which is made in Christ Jesus and covers all the eons (Rom.8:29; Eph.1:10; 3:11).

God's purpose centers in Christ Jesus, most importantly in His death, resurrection and exaltation. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15). The believer finds continuing joy and peace in the truth that we are being justified gratuitously in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). He believes that God, Who chooses us in Christ (Eph.1:4), is commending this love of His to us, seeing that while we are still sinners Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8). Consequently, like Paul, the believer is persuaded that

neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, would be able to separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom.8:38,39).

Furthermore, because of the death and resurrection of Christ God will achieve His goal of becoming All in all. God, Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11) wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). The One Who came into this world to save sinners gave Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:6). "Even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22).

But why all these ages of sin and suffering and death? Here our faith in God Who has spoken in His Word concerning His purpose made in His Son, Who died for sinners, directs us most marvelously to the glory of God. In Ecclesiastes 1:13 we read, "I applied my heart to inquiring and exploring by wisdom concerning all that is done under the heavens: it is an experience of evil Elohim has given to the sons of humanity to humble them by it." In contemplating God's operations with Israel and the nations, at different times blinding the one and blessing the other, Paul declares, "God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:32). In His great wisdom and grace, God manifests His righteousness and love against the dark background of our present experience.

"O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:33-36). D.H.H.

INSUBJECTION IN THE LINE OF CAIN

(Genesis 4:17-24)

17 + **Cain** |**knew** `**his wife;** + **she** became |**pregnant and** gave |**birth** `to **Enoch.** +**Then he** |*b*engaged in **building** a **city and** |**called the city's name** *as*|**by** the **name of his son Enoch.**
18 + **To Enoch was** |**born** `**Irad, and Irad begot** `**Mehujael, and Mehujael begot** `**Methusael, and Methusael begot** `**Lamech.**
19 + **Lamech** |**took to him**self **two wives;** the **name of the one** was **Adah, and** the **name of the second** was **Zillah.**
20 +**Then Adah** gave |**birth** `to **Jabal; he´ became** the **father of** the **tent dwellers**| **and** the **cattle**men**.** 21 **And** the **name of his brother** was **Jubal; he´ became** the **father of all** who **handle**| the **harp and** the **shepherd's pipe.** 22 +**As** for **Zillah, she´** *mr*|**too** gave **birth** `to **Tubal-cain** who **forged**| **every artifact of copper and iron.** + **Tubal-cain's sister** was **Naamah.**
23 + **Lamech** |**said to his wives:**

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice!
Wives of Lamech, *c*|**give ear** to **my saying!**
f|**Truly** a **man I have killed for my injury,**
And a **boy for my welt.**
24 *t*|**If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,**
+**Then Lamech seventy-seven**fold**.**

THE LINE OF CAIN

Insubjection is the leading theme at the commencement of human history, even as the subjection of all is the culmination at its close. It begins by introducing the Deity

in the character of Subjector, and humanity is made in His likeness in this regard. Yet almost the first recorded act was motivated by *in*subjection! Moreover, Cain, the very first human who was born, committed the crime of crimes, the murder of his brother. Beyond that he generated a whole line which so corrupted humanity that it had to be drowned with a deluge of water. This line is worthy of our close consideration, for it is the primal background by which to apprehend and appreciate the final subjection of all.

One of the greatest tragedies in the history of humanity was staged by the line of Cain. It began with the murder of Cain's brother and ended by the ruin of the whole race in the deluge.

GOD, THE SUBJECTOR

The discovery that the title, usually translated "God," denotes Subjector or Placer, has shed much light on the whole course of divine revelation, from the creation to the consummation, when all will be subject. The insubjection of Adam and Eve, and their first descendant are the primary pictures we are given by the Subjector in order to teach us the tragic results of conduct which is contrary to His will and His Word. By developing this to include the whole line of Cain, we are greatly helped in grasping the purpose and plan of God in the eonian times. The background of all is the insubjection in the first eon, which led to the adjudication of the deluge.

Adam not only sinned and introduced death, but he also failed in his family relations. Not only did he obey the serpent instead of Elohim, but he did not sufficiently train his son in obedience to Yahweh, or to himself. We do not read of a single effort on his part to restrain Cain or the race of which he was the head. We see the same sins on all hands today. If these things were understood and taught in the

homes it might help to stem the tide which is rushing the world into another cataclysm, which the Scriptures compare with the deluge of that day.

SACRIFICE

True subjection is based on sacrifice and worship. It was because Cain would not acknowledge his own insubjection, his mortal incapacity to reach the divine standard, that he refused to bring an acceptable present to Yahweh. This revealed his inner state of self-righteousness, which built a barrier between him and the Subjector, and led his whole line to live in opposition to His will and way, until it spread to the rest of mankind, and brought on the deluge, which swept them all away. Cain did not only kill his brother, but inaugurated a line of conduct which eventually led to the violent execution of nearly the whole race. None of his line survived the deluge, or are living today.

Adam, for his offense, was excluded from the garden of Eden. Cain, for killing his brother, was still further banished from the divine presence. The ground was cursed for Adam's sake. Cain was driven far away from Yahweh. Adam evidently stayed near the garden, but Cain was sentenced to be a rover and a wanderer far from his father's home. In every way his fate was more fearful than that of his father. But there was worse than this. Adam was doomed to be dying, along with his offspring. But Cain was marked as a murderer, and in constant fear of his life, so had to receive a sign lest his fellows kill him. Let us not fail to note the rapid *deterioration* of human society in the very first generation.

THE SUBJECTOR'S DEALINGS WITH CAIN

We have here an excellent example of the great difference in the Subjector's dealing in various eons. In the present world, after the deluge, Cain's killing would have

cost him his life. It was first degree murder. Instead, he becomes the forefather of a long line of evildoers, principally responsible for the ruin of the earth. Had he been executed, there would not have been a line of Cain, nor would all have been corrupted. The evil might have been stamped out at the beginning. But, evidently, Elohim did not wish to do this. A line like this was absolutely necessary, at the very beginning, as a foil for the display of the line of Abel, or Seth, and to provide a background for the final subjection of all.

That the primal pair had a numerous offspring beside the two lines of Cain and Seth is nowhere directly stated, but it is clearly implied when Cain expressed his fear that someone would kill him, and the fact that he married a wife (Gen. 4:14,17). But what an enormous book the Bible would be if it contained a short sketch, or merely the names of all who lived before the deluge! Therefore we are given a brief, but characteristic account of the principal characters only, with some of their deeds and their sons. This suffices to give us a faithful picture of the times, and especially of men's attitude toward the Subjector.

PREHISTORIC MAN?

We hear much of "prehistoric man," and have been shown skulls and skeletons supposed to go back millions of years, long before the time of Adam. We have come to the era when men are turning away from the truth and are turned aside to myths (2 Tim.4:1). There were no "prehistoric" men. There is no valid evidence whatever for the presence of humanity on the earth before Adam. On the earth today there are millions of men far more backward than the men before the deluge. The terrific upheavals indicated by the pre-adamic disruption, when the earth became waste and vacant (Gen.1:2), and the later deluge, account fully for the condition of the earth's surface

today. In fact, these fully confirm the inspired record, rather than confute it.

Most of us have been taught that mankind gradually emerged from a condition akin to that of the beasts, and has ascended through barbarism to what we call "civilization," in which there are great cities, centers of culture, of music and the arts. But the short sketch given us of the line of Cain tells a very different story. The first *city* was built by Cain, the first man to be born, in the opposition to the will of the Subjector—It seems to have been the home of several generations, until Lamech and his sons left the city to dwell in tents and herd cattle. The city goes back almost to the beginning of humanity's sojourn on the earth.

If believing parents would teach their children these simple truths clearly and intelligently, it might save them from being deceived by the many myths which parade as "science," and are taught as such in our higher institutions of learning. These fantastic fancies, however, are never related to the purpose or the plan of God. They reverse the downward trend of humanity, so that there was no need for a deluge. They blind their dupes to the grave realities of these degenerate days, when men are once more facing the fearful terrors of divine indignation, rather than a restored paradise due to human achievements and cultural advancement.

CAIN'S LINE INSUBORDINATE

Cain refused to offer the sin offering provided by Yahweh Elohim for his restoration (Gen.4:6,7). The sacrificial lamb was subject to his will (he was "dominant in authority over it"), but he was not subject to his Subjector. Instead of slaying the lamb for his *restoration*, he slew Abel, to his *degeneration*. The very ground, which had opened its mouth to receive his brother's blood no longer would give its vigor to him. Indeed, he was afraid that he would be

killed, even as he had killed Abel, so he was given a sign, so that no one should kill him. He was banished to the land of Nod (Wandering), east of Eden. There he was supposed to rove about for a livelihood. But, at a distance from the Subjector, he continued his career of insubjection, and built a city, contrary to the sentence passed upon him.

It has been suggested that the sentence of Cain, that he should be a rover and wanderer, was passed in order to keep the way of Cain from becoming established in the earth. On the other hand, Cain desired to give it a permanent foothold. This is confirmed by the builders of Babel. They said: "Building are we for ourselves a city . . . lest we are scattering over the surface of the entire earth" (Gen. 11:4). They wanted to make a name for themselves. Probably Cain also had such a selfish motive.

Why did Cain build a city? He was afraid, even with the sign given him to protect him. He had no confidence in it, and wished to live in a safe place, where he could defend himself. In ancient times cities were built for protection. Indeed, the names of many of them still have endings, such as -fort, or -burg, which show that they began as a shelter from dangerous foes. Ancient cities were walled to keep out enemies, and the gateway was guarded, to prevent their entrance. So it was that Cain, refusing divine protection, denuded a spot of its vegetation (such is the meaning of the word "city"), and built a walled enclosure in which to live, instead of wandering about in the country east of Eden, as he had been charged to do. He was more afraid of his fellows than of the Subjector. The first city was built to shield a murderer from the vengeance of his fellows!

There is very little definitely declared as to the history of Cain's descendants, but we are given their names for some purpose. These all have a meaning, and, as in the case of Adam and Eve, it may give us a clue to their place in God's plan. So we will consider their significance

and see if they may help us to comprehend the course of events. We know their end was in the deluge, so the general trend was insubjection. This will help us to give the names the proper slant, especially where the same name occurs in the line of Seth also.

ENOCH

Cain named both his son and his city Enoch, that is, "Dedicated." Later on, there was another of this name, in the line of Seth. He was the seventh from Adam, and prophesied concerning these early days (Jude 14,15). He speaks of "their irreverent acts in which they are irreverent, and concerning all the hard *words* which irreverent sinners speak against Him." We have seen the irreverent act of Cain in building a city contrary to the Subjector's decree. Now we find Cain's irreverence expressed in a *word*. The term "dedicate" usually has a good or even reverent usage. Yet Cain's son, Enoch, and the city were *dedicated* to the way of Cain. Later, when the temple was built in Jerusalem, it was *dedicated* to the way of Yahweh Elohim (1 Kings 8:63; 2 Chron.7:5).

IRAD-CITY SUFFICES

Irad *(Oird)* is the name Enoch gave his son. The stem, *(ord)* is used of the wild donkey (Dan.5:21) in Chaldean. But it is not easy to see any connection with this context, especially not with the city. On the contrary, the first three letters *(oir)* denote "city," so seem most appropriate. The last letter *(d)* elsewhere has the force of *suffice*. May this not be another irreverent insult, to indicate the apparent success of the city in protecting and sustaining Cain and his descendants? The Subjector had doomed them to a roving, wanderer's life, such as the Bedouin live today, but they made a city suffice them, in spite of His words.

MEHUJAEL

Mehujael, the next in the line of Cain, is a compound including the title of the Subjector (El), so seems out of place among Cain's descendents. But it appears that the patience of the Subjector, in allowing the city to exist, led them to further defy Him, so they used His title. The first stem *(Mch)*, denotes Wipe, and the last *(El)*, means Subjector. The two letters in between may give the thought of causation—wiping-(out)-Subjector! In view of the future deluge, when Elohim would wipe mankind off the surface of the earth (Gen.6:7; 7:4,23), this seems a very appropriate challenge for one of Cain's descendants to make. All of Cain's line were wiped off. Noah was of the line of Seth.

METHUSAEL

Methusael *(Mthushal)* is the next in the line of Cain. The first stem *(mth)* can only mean DIE, and the second *(shal)*, ASK. In contrast to this, Seth had named his son Enosh, which means *mortal*. A free rendering of Methusael would be *Death-is-questionable*. When we realize that no one, not even Adam, had died of natural causes up to this time, as well as their attitude of unbelief, it is no wonder that they prefer the saying of the serpent, "Not to die shall you be dying" (Gen.3:4), to the Subjector's emphatic statement to Adam. For us it is easy to acknowledge that death reigns, for we see it operating on all sides, and our cemeteries are filled with innumerable graves. But to them it was something outside their experience.

LAMECH

We now come to a crisis in the history of Cain's line. This seems to be suggested by the name Lamech *(L-mk)*, which may come from the prefix *(L)* TO-, and the word *(mk)* REDUCE. It means *impoverish*, or *reduce to poverty,*

and is rendered *become poor* in the AV (Lev.25:25). He and his family seem to have left the protection of the city, for, of his sons, Jabal is the forefather of the tent dweller and the cattleman, while his brother Jubal made the music of a shepherd, and Tubal-Cain became a maker of copper and iron tools. Such men must have been rovers and wanderers, so that they carried out the Subjector's decree in spite of their violent insubjection.

This is the sixth generation of humanity in the line of Cain, and the narrative, as well as the living conditions, change greatly. No longer have we a simple list of the succeeding sons, of which we know nothing except what can be gathered from their names, but a whole family, with two wives, three sons, and a daughter. Descendants of the sons are not named. Two of the sons are called forefathers of occupational classes, connected with cattle and sheep, living in tents. This shows that they no longer live in the shelter of a city, but protect themselves by means of weapons made of copper and iron, made by the third son.

JABAL, JUBAL, TUBAL

The remarkable feature of the names given to the sons of Lamech is this: they all have the same stem, *-bl* (I-*bl*, Iu-*bl*, and Thu-*bl*), with the basic idea of DISINTEGRATE. Coming, as this does, at the end of the line of Cain, it may indicate the break-up of the family as a unit. It is certainly most appropriate as a register of the result of insubjection to Elohim. If Jabal was a cattleman, living in tents, he would be forced to leave the city. And so with Jubal with his shepherd's pipe. To get his iron and copper, Tubal also would probably need to depart. The whole family of Lamech (For-reducing) was *disintegrated*.

We have arrived at a similar condition today.

Never have men been so proficient in killing one another or in ruining the earth, so that there is pressure of nations

and perplexity and chilling of men from fear and apprehensiveness of that which is coming on the inhabited earth (Luke 2:25,26), even before the celestial signs have appeared that herald the coming of the Son of Mankind. The whole race has gone through a test, as before the deluge, and stands before a judgment, from which its great ability to destroy will not save it.

TUBAL-CAIN

The word *thbl*, from which the first part of this name is derived, is used many times of the earth as the habitation of mankind. It is usually mistranslated "world" in popular versions, but refers to the fact that the surface of the present earth, unlike the new earth of the future, is continually crumbling to pieces. Sun and wind and water from without, and internal heat and upheavals from within, are destroying it. These forces also formed the mineral deposits. As Cain means *acquire*, Tubal-Cain may indicate that he had acquired mineral deposits from which he obtained his iron and copper ore.

These, moreover, provide a fruitful basis for strife. Even the graziers of Abram and Lot had a contention (Gen. 13:8). Wherever there are cattle ranges and flocks of sheep there is a possibility of dispute. The same is true of mines of metal. Tubal-Cain seems to have been the first to make metal implements for fighting. This gave Lamech a considerable advantage, and he used it to kill some who injured him or struck him hard enough to leave a welt. He is so elated over this that he immortalizes it in a poem, and threatens all comers that, if they harm him in any way he will avenge himself seventy times as much as Cain would be. Here we have the beginning of armaments, and the proud boasting of those who possess superior weapons.

Until we come to Lamech we are not given the name of any of the wives in the line of Cain. His wife is mentioned but not named. But Lamech has two wives, and these are named. From his overbearing attitude toward them, in his grandiloquent eulogy of himself, we can see that he considers them of no more account than an Ornament (Adah), or his Shadow (Zillah). We suspect that these names are not intended so much to describe the wives, as to heighten the picture of haughty Lamech. So with his daughter, Pleasant (Naamah).

LAMECH AND NOAH

In some respects there is a similarity between the end of the line of Cain and the line of Seth. In both cases, in place of a single successor, a whole family of three sons is brought before us. But in one there is *disintegration*, and they disappear from the scene in an environment of strife and death. In the other, there is *salvation* and a fresh commencement and a new life in a renovated world. One was the fruit of *in*subjection to the voice of Elohim, the other of persevering *faith* and works. Cain refused to offer the lamb for his restoration, Noah labored for years in building the ark for his preservation.

One of the important lessons that the course of Cain should teach us is that lenience is not a cure for disobedience. It does not lead to subjection. Cain and his line were allowed to go their way without divine interference until they had done their part in ruining the earth. Evil had accumulated until nothing but a great catastrophe could restore order. How much better will it be in the Kingdom of Christ when judgment will be swift and summary! And how unutterably ecstatic will it be in the consummation when subjection will be constant and instinctive!

The line of Cain is, perhaps, the blackest and best background for the final subjection of all. It begins with the refusal of Cain to kill the present offering and the murder of his brother, who was subject to Yahweh; it ends

with the murder of two men by Lamech, the manufacture of metal weapons of death, and the threat to murder more, leading to the death of all except those in the ark, by means of the deluge. In front of this dark backdrop of insubjection, hatred and death, the Subjector, with wonderful wisdom, will stage the highlights of life, love and universal subjection.

A. E. Knoch

DOROTHY HIBBERD

Our dear sister, Dorothy (Johnson) Hibberd, widow of Brother Lloyd Hibberd, was put to repose on May 3 at age 81, in Baldwin, Michigan. Along with her three brothers and four sisters she became acquainted with the sacred scriptures through her mother, much like Timothy of old (2 Tim.1:5). Later, she herself acquainted hundreds of children in rural schools and at the Grace and Truth Chapel in Baldwin with God as He is made known in His Word and through His Son. Scriptural songs, summer Fellowship Conferences, weekly meetings at the chapel, hospitality, visits and letters, these were her delights as well as realms of service. But she would always recognize her labors were not of herself, but graciously granted to her by God, as well as the inevitable hardships. To her such expressions as: "saved in grace," and "God All in all," and "to God be the glory!" became not simply words of hope, but of assurance, confidence and expectation. In this she was greatly blessed by God, Who made her also a blessing to others.

ROBERT B. KILLEN

Brother Killen died suddenly in his sleep in the early hours of May 7, 2002. For many years, following the death of his mentor, Frank Lyons, he had taught a Bible Class in his home in Centerville, Ohio. Methodical and thoughtful, humbly solicitous of the needs of others, he held fast to the word of truth in the evangel. It was his special joy to speak of God's grace and love with his wife, Amber, and their two sons and two daughters, all of whom survive him and are comforted by the same truth that so invigorated him. His son, Timothy, and three grandchildren participated in the funeral service, in word, prayer and song. A brief introductory article on the Word of God, which he wrote for his grandchildren, appears in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches*.

GOD'S KINDNESS, FORBEARANCE, AND PATIENCE

ELOHIM CREATED the entire world in which we live, and when it was finished, "behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). He alone is responsible for it. When He spoke of what would come to be, it came to be so. What He did was done. And when He saw what was done, He saw that it was good. As Paul wrote in Romans 1:20, God's invisible attributes of power and divinity are descried from this achievement of creation. God is responsible for the planet on which we live, for the light and its separation from darkness, for the air and the water and the dry land and their separation from each other, and for all living creatures. With His vast knowledge and supreme power He made living plants and animals and crowned His work with the creation of humanity in His image and likeness.

What a marvel is a kernel of grain or a grapevine full of fruit! And what a marvel are creatures of the sea and air and land . . . and a human being! Intricate and filled with multitudinous components each seed and fruit meets a need that the human requires. Even more marvelous and complex in body, the human is a living soul that responds to sights and sounds and touch and taste and smell, being made so by God Who breathed into us the breath of the living. All of God's works in Genesis 1 show forth His intelligence and ability beyond compare, and His power and divinity beyond imagination. This is what is revealed about God from the creation of the world. He is the Creator, Who is blessed for the eons! Amen! (Rom.1:25).

Yet it has come about that human beings are filled with irreverence and injustice (Rom.1:18); they are vain in their reasonings and darkened is their unintelligent heart (Rom. 1:21). God has given them over to uncleanness and dishonor; they are filled with all injustice, wickedness, evil, greed, distended with envy, murder, strife, guile, depravity, whisperers, vilifiers, *detesters of God* (Rom.1:14-32)!

How can this be? And what does it say about the Creator?

"I MAKE ALL THESE THINGS"

Since God is so powerful and so intelligent that He was able to create the world in which we live, in such a way that it was very good, how can it be that it has become corrupt and filled with death? We can answer that Adam and Eve were disobedient, and that is true. But they are part of *His* creation, the very climax of His creation as recorded in Genesis 1. God needs to be taken into account in any answer to questions about the existence of evil.

Even without Genesis 2 we would need to bring God into our answer. But with the revelation in Genesis 2 that God formed man in such a way that he became a living *soul,* that God planted the garden and placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden, where he placed the human, the question is made more pressing. Yahweh testifies of Himself that He is "Former of light and Creator of darkness, Maker of good and Creator of evil, I Yahweh make all these things" (Isa.45:7).

We ask the question with all reverence, apart from any thought of dishonor to God, and, in fact, only because of His honor. The reality of our experience and the record of God's Word both force the question upon us. He Himself asked Job, "Where were you when I founded the earth?" (Job 38:4). We were not there. God would have us be aware that He founded the earth, and He alone bears ultimate responsibility.

Consequently, we have looked honestly at Genesis 2-4 and noted carefully what God did, accepting every action as something that God wants us particularly to know He Himself was responsible for. But we have not looked at these actions apart from the testimony of Genesis 1.

Some of the verbs associated with God in Genesis 2-4 are the same as those associated with Him in chapter 1 (e.g. *make* and *place* and *say*), but the immediate results are often quite different. When God speaks in Genesis 3, what He says does not so clearly become so. There is no finishing and no seeing of good. In blessing humanity whom He had created, Elohim said, "Be fruitful and increase; fill the earth and subdue it. Hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heavens, over every domestic animal, over all the earth and over every animal that is moving on the earth" (Gen.1:28). Then in verse 30 we read that this "came to be so," and in verse 31 that "it was very good." Nevertheless, beginning with the subjection of the human pair to the serpent in Genesis 3 it is clear that this place of humanity has not continued to be so. Again in Genesis 2:15 humanity is placed in the garden to serve and keep it, and this has been made impossible by their later expulsion from Eden. Furthermore, this definitely has not been maintained, in any ideal way, in other locations where mankind has been settled on the earth apart from that luxurious environment.

In addition to this blessing of humanity as subjectors of the animals and caretakers of the earth wherever they are placed, God's words of judgment upon sinful humanity have also not always immediately come to be so, and much is still held back. This is very noticeable in the case of Cain and his line of descendants listed in Genesis 4:17-24. Cain's avoidance of Yahweh's sentence to become a rover and a wanderer on the earth (Gen.4:14) and Lamech's defiant boast of murder in Genesis 4:23,24 are particularly strik-

ing. Why did God protect Cain from the avenger and permit his line to develop as it did?

LEADING TO REPENTANCE

Part of the answer is certainly provided by Paul in Romans 2:4, when he writes of the riches of God's kindness and forbearance and patience in reference to the withholding of His indignation. This *kindness* of God is said there to be leading to repentance (change of mind). But even this is clearly not the whole explanation, for Paul then speaks of the human "unrepentant heart" by which indignation in the day of indignation is being hoarded up. For the most part, God's patience and forbearance and kindness have not led to repentance.

The Ninevites in Jonah's day were not led to repentance by God's kindness in holding back judgment, but by the proclamation of immediate destruction. In Noah's day the descendants of Cain did not change their mind even in the face of his heralding, "when the *patience* of God awaited" (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5).

It is most evident that Cain and his descendants were not led to repentance by God's delayed indignation, but to greater wickedness, multiplied until the earth was ruined before God (Gen.6:11).

Nevertheless, the testimony of God's Word is that in holding back His indignation God *is leading* the sinner to a change of mind. This change did not occur for Cain and his line, but it is what God's kind delay of judgment had in view.

SALVATION IN OUR LORD'S PATIENCE

Peter also expresses much the same thought, using the term "patience": "The Lord . . . is patient because of you, not intending any to perish, but all to make room for repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). Whereas Paul related God's patience

and kindness directly to a delay *in executing His indignation* and also had a wider view, including all humanity in his consideration, Peter focused on the nation of Israel and the delay of *the coming of salvation* which God had promised. Consequently, he spoke of "deeming the patience of our Lord salvation" (2 Peter 3:15). God does not immediately bring about the fulfillment of His promises, but He is not tardy in doing so, for repentance and salvation will come in God's own time.

When Peter wrote, the nation of Israel had not come into repentance despite the focus on that change of direction in mind and heart in the ministry of John the Baptist and then of Jesus Himself (*cf* Matt.3:2; 4:17). Indeed they would soon experience the effects of God's indignation, and even yet have much to endure in that respect. Nevertheless, God's object in all this was for repentance and salvation. God's intention in delaying the fulfillment of His promises is to make room for repentance. It is not done in order that there be greater indignation, even though it necessarily involves greater measures of indignation. But it is done in order to bring repentance and salvation.

Again we must stress the object of these acts of divine kindness, forbearance and patience. These acts may involve much temporary affliction for the believer and much indignation on the unbeliever, but they nevertheless have as their ultimate object the change of human hearts and salvation from suffering and infirmity and sin.

CARRIES WITH MUCH PATIENCE

Paul brings up the matter of God's patience again in Romans 9. And here he sheds further light on the purpose of God's forbearing actions toward even the most hardened sinners (who are hardened by God Himself, Rom. 9:18). "Now if God, wanting to display His indignation and to make His powerful doings known, carries with much

patience, the vessels of indignation, adapted for destruction, it is that He should also be making known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He makes ready before for glory" (Rom.9:22,23).

This is so clear and so blunt that most people who read these words try to make them say something else than what they are saying. Here the word "carries" conveys much the same sense as "forbear." God holds on to His indignation for awhile, not bringing it upon the sinner. He patiently puts up with those He has hardened in order to display the greatness of His power and indignation on them later, and in order to make known, by contrast, the riches of His glory on the ones He has chosen for mercy and honor.

Translating this principle into the events of Genesis 4 we see that God was patient and forbearing to Cain in order to display His indignation on him in no uncertain terms, as a foil to the greatness and glory of God's mercy to Abel. Again, God was forbearing toward the wicked descendants of Cain and multiplied their numbers in order to display His power in the deluge and His grace to Noah and his family.

But again, this is not the whole story.

PERCEIVE THEN

In Romans 11 Paul brings the entire discussion begun in Romans 9 to its conclusion. "Perceive, then, the kindness and severity of God!" (Rom.11:22). We see God's *kindness* to some, such as Abel and Noah and Israel in the past, who are shown mercy, but we also see His severity to others, such as Cain and Pharaoh and even Israel at present in apostasy, who are locked up in stubbornness. But God will show mercy again in the future to Israel. "And thus all Israel shall *be saved*" (Rom.11:26).

Abel and Noah and we ourselves were born into stubbornness and irreverence and injustice, but God showed them and us the kindness of His choice and gave us the

kindness of His grace. Cain and Pharaoh and countless others of Israel and the nations have been born into stubbornness which, in God's forbearance, grew, and grows for many today, into stronger and stronger defiance and irreverence. But they will be led to repentance and be saved on the basis of the blood of Christ Jesus. "For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:32).

Here are clear words that somehow even fewer than those who accept the clear words of Romans 9:22,23 seem to be able to accept. Yet the "all" of Romans 11:32 are all the stubborn, including Pharaoh, mentioned in Romans 9, and the nations and Israel, indeed every human being, for stubborn is what we all are apart from God's grace.

The reason for God's kindness and forbearance and patience to Cain is for the display of God's power in judgment and a contrastive revelation of His mercy and grace on Abel and Noah and all God's chosen ones. But once that goal is achieved, then God can proceed, as indeed Romans 11:32 declares He will, to bring His kindness to Cain leading to Cain's repentance and salvation. This will be so, as it can only be so, on the basis of the blood of Christ, Who came into the world to save sinners, spoken of in type by the sin offering Cain refused.

IN THE FORBEARANCE OF GOD

Therefore, recalling again the lessons of Genesis 1 where we learned that what God says comes to be so and is seen as good, we are bold to see the words and acts of God in Genesis 4, as also having a good and certain goal.

How does God accomplish this? We who believe the evangel know the answer as it relates to His chosen ones. In Christ Jesus there is deliverance and propitiation for a display of God's righteousness "because of the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before in

the *forbearance* of God" (Rom.3:25). God's *forbearance* in not bringing the penalties of their sins on His chosen ones is now displayed as righteous because of the blood of Christ Jesus.

But does this evangel concerning Christ, which is so powerful for the salvation of believers, and indeed for Abel and all in his "line," have any significance ultimately with respect to those (like Cain) who are not chosen and who must endure God's indignation, even though that judgment itself is delayed in God's forbearance, patience and kindness? We have seen evidence for this in the principle that God's kindness leads to repentance, and in the conclusion that God locks up all in stubbornness that He might be merciful to all. But the most decisive evidence is supplied by the evangel concerning Jesus Christ and His shed blood for sinners.

FOR ALL MANKIND

Romans 1:18-3:20 has the evangel of God in view. Romans 2:4 is incomplete without the evangel being proclaimed later in chapters 3 through 8. So also, Genesis 4:15-24 is incomplete without this evangel, particularly as it is presented in Romans 5:18,19. "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just."

The view of God given in Genesis 1 has prepared us for this great result of God's forbearance worked out through the obedience of Christ Jesus.

Thus what God said about humanity will come to be so, and God will see that it is very good.

D.H.H.

GOD HAS SPOKEN

IN this brief outline, we will show the ways God has spoken in the past, and how He is speaking to us today. The student will be helped by looking up the scripture references, carefully considering their context. God has spoken in creation, through the prophets, in His Son, through the apostles and through the Sacred Scriptures.

IN HIS CREATION

In an elementary and general way, God is manifested in His creation. For those who are unfamiliar with (or do not have) God's Word, "that which is known of God is apparent among them, for God manifests it to them. For His invisible attributes are descried from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements . . ." (Rom.1:20). One of the shames of mankind is to attribute the creation to impersonal, theoretical processes such as evolution and other theories which do not glorify God as God, the Source of all, "seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all" (Rom.11:36).

THROUGH PROPHETS

Before the Scriptures were completed, God spoke directly to men who then relayed His messages to mankind. Examples abound. He spoke to Noah (Gen.7:1), to Abram (Gen.12:1), to Moses (Ex.2:2; John 9:29).

Sometimes the Speaker was in the form of a man; sometimes a voice came from a burning bush or a cloud. But the word that came had its ultimate source in God. If we were

to examine all of the revelations to prophets, we would come to realize that most became concentrated toward one nation, Israel.

IN HIS SON

"By many portions and many modes, of old, God, speaking to the fathers in the prophets, in the last of these days speaks to us in a Son . . ." (Heb.1:1).

When the Lord Jesus was transformed before several disciples, "a luminous cloud overshadows them, and lo! a voice out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight. Hear Him!'" (Matt.17:5).

The Lord Jesus said: "My teaching is not Mine, but His Who sends Me" (John 7:17). ". . . from Myself I am doing nothing, but, according as My Father teaches Me, these things I am speaking" (John 8:28).

Even the deputies sent to arrest Him knew that He was not as other men. They testified: "Never speaks a man thus!" (John 7:46). "The declarations which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life" (John 6:63).

THROUGH THE APOSTLES

God spoke not only through the prophets of old but also through apostles (commissioned-ones). Some apostles (and prophets) not only delivered God's messages orally, but were also inspired by God to write portions of His Word. Apostles had an official, authoritative commission. Our standing as members of God's family is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the capstone of the corner being Christ Jesus Himself" (Eph.2:20).

The Scriptures which the prophets and apostles wrote were inspired words. For example, Paul could write that: "in accepting the word heard from us, from God you receive, not the word of men, but, according as it truly is, the word of God . . ." (1 Thess.2:13).

THROUGH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

Whereas God once spoke directly to men and women, to prophets and apostles, He is not now doing so. The Scriptures are completed (*cf* Col.1:25). He is not speaking directly to humanity, or revealing His will by dreams and signs. The reason is not far to seek: *In the Scriptures* He has revealed Himself and His will, and now He is proceeding to fulfill His will.

His Word is inspired. "All scripture is inspired by God [GOD-SPIRITED]" (2 Tim.3:16). Just as God breathed into Adam, and he became a living soul (Gen.2:7), so God has put His spirit into His Word so that it is "living and operative" (Heb.4:12). The evangel "is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing . . ." (Rom.1:16). There is something in those words ". . . that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures . . ." (1 Cor.15:3,4), that changes a person who is believing it, that changes his behavior, that changes his life both now and for the future.

We should "have a pattern of sound words, which you hear from me [Paul] . . ." (2 Tim.1:13). Be careful to express your beliefs in the language of the scripture. That practice will protect you from errors.

Robert B. Killen

FOR FURTHER READING:

We suggest the following materials for further information on the topic, "God Has Spoken."

1. THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL, by A. E. Knoch, pages 97-155 (various commissions).
2. GOD'S EONIAN PURPOSE, by Adlai Loudy, pages 9-53 (The Sacred Scriptures).
3. *Unsearchable Riches*, July 1989, vol.80, pages 145-192 (articles on creation).

FEAR, IN ITS RELATION TO LOVE
*
PERCEIVING WHAT IS SPIRITUAL

Question:

There are many things in this world that cause me fear. I would like to be less afraid, not more afraid than I already am. This is why, frankly, it disturbs me to learn that in the marriage union, it is important that "the wife may be *fearing* the husband" (Eph.5:33). And, it seems just as strange (as this same verse indicates) that the wife's *fear* of her husband would result from the husband's *love* for his wife. Love and fear; fear and love. These things do not seem to belong together.

Also, should I love my husband more than I love my children?

Answer:

FEAR (*phobos,* as in "phobia") literally means to "be afraid." In many passages of Scripture it is actual fear that is obviously in view when this word is used. Yet in others, "fear" is used as a figure of speech which points us to such associated thoughts as *attentiveness, obedience,* and *commitment,* even to *reverence* and *awe.*

Figuratively (by the figure of metonymy), one who is motivated not by being literally *afraid* of another, but by simply being *devoted* to him, may be said to "fear." Such a person, it is true, may also literally fear to offend, yet not out of terror of retribution, but out of a desire to please and serve. In many passages, the idea of actual fear itself as well as that of these associated ideas are both present.

An example would be Psalm 111:10: "The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom." This is true not only for Israel of old, but for believers today as well.

A measured fear of God is expedient for all who are not perfected in love, even for those who are under His grace. Though *we* are saved from the *coming* indignation (Rom.5:9; 1 Thess.1:10; 5:9), we are by no means exempted from the present consequences of our fleshly desires, those *things* concerning which God's indignation is *being* revealed at present (*cf* Rom.1:18-32).

Each passage in which the word "fear" appears must be considered in its context, with consideration given to the nature of the case, especially to the scriptural administration under which the event spoken of has occurred. The *meaning* of the word "fear" does not change, but its application, or *usage,* certainly does.

In all our writings concerning God's saving grace, much stress is laid upon service, even though this is not done from the vantage point of those who see man as the key to his own welfare. As to *motive,* deeds that are upright in themselves yet done out of self-reliance and with pride in the flesh, are as bad as outwardly wicked deeds. Our service in the Lord must be out of love and with gratitude toward God; in devoutness, with a recognition and appreciation of grace. In a word, it must be effected with reliance upon God, not man.

This approach is never more important than in the area of marital responsibility, whether concerning the duties of the husband or the wife. As with all ideals, we can only commend them and entreat concerning them; God must raise up people to do them.

In Ephesians 5:33, the apostle Paul gives a word of entreaty to believing husbands, saying, "Moreover, you also individually, each be loving his own wife thus, as himself, yet that the wife may be *fearing* the husband."

In light of the woman's place of subjection under her husband (1 Cor.11:3; Eph.5:22-24), even as the weakness of the old humanity, a measure of fear may well be expedient. Therefore, the idea of actual fear (of the wife toward the husband) is no doubt included in the apostle's words in this passage.

Of course, the husband's headship over the wife is confined to domestic matters, to practical marital and familial relations. It must never include the believing woman's service in the Lord. Christ alone is her Head in matters of faith. *Faithfulness* is simply the practical outworking of *faith;* it is impossible to separate the two. If the husband should either command the wife to accept teachings which she considers false or demand that she commit immoral acts, she is under no obligation whatever to follow after him in his sin and wickedness. Practically speaking, Paul's instructions concerning headship are only for saneminded believers who have some power to live uprightly. They are not intended to cover hypothetical situations involving deranged individuals of a depraved mind.

A good marriage is one which is under the leadership of a *loving* and *faithful* husband, a man who loves his wife as his own body, nurturing her and cherishing her as Christ nourishes and cherishes the ecclesia. And, a good marriage is one in which the wife is *fond* of her husband and *subject* to him as to the Lord in everything. She is sane, chaste, domestic, good (Titus 2:5). Such a woman, then, will become much less occupied with actual fear and much more occupied with its noble associations, *obedience* and *devotion.*

"Fear is not in love, but perfect love is casting out fear, for fear has *chastening.* Now he who is fearing is not perfected in love" (1 John 4:18). Fear, itself, is no part of love. Indeed, *perfect* love may freely toss it to the winds, never to know fearfulness again. It is true that anyone experiencing fear has not been perfected in love. Yet fear, *for those who are not yet perfect,* "has chastening." "Chastening" (*kolasis*) entails suffering; it is discipline which is dispensed "with a view to amendment" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.47). Properly instilled, and within the sphere of love, fear can be an expedient leading toward obedience. Yet true love can well afford to be casting fear aside, more and more, day by day.

Insubjection and lack of devotion, however, require fear's chastening hand and salutary discipline. Perhaps no married couple within the ecclesia today has matured sufficiently for the wife to consider fear of her husband completely unnecessary.

The problem is, of course, that even as most women have very little desire, or even sense of duty, to be subject to their husbands, most husbands are perhaps even less concerned with actually *loving* their wives, loving them according as Christ loves the ecclesia, loving them *self-sacrificially* and in *grace,* expecting nothing in return (*cf* Eph.5:25; *cp* Luke 6:34).

Concerning both husbands and wives, each can see the other's obligations quite clearly indeed. But it may well be that we do not possess a commensurate longing and sense of duty toward our own responsibilities. In any good marriage, there has to be a great deal of patience, bearing with one another in love (*cp* Eph.5:32). Yet it is true as well that, over the years, there must also be a significant measure of obedience to these instructions of the apostle Paul by *both* partners in the marriage, *each* one heeding his or her part in these entreaties, any failures along the way notwithstanding.

Rather than saying that a wife should love her husband *more* than her children, I would say that she should surely love him *no less* than her children. The woman who has natural love both for her husband and for her

children, will have that love which gives to each his own. Love never incites competition or jealousy. Neither are its resources either limited or partial. After it gives its all to its beloved, it finds its stores not depleted but replenished, yet only that it might spend them again on still other objects of its affection.

"Love is patient, [love] is kind. Love is not jealous . . . . Love is not self-seeking, [love] is not incensed" (1 Cor. 13:4,5). "Become, then, imitators of God, as beloved children, and be walking in love" (Eph.5:1).

❊

Question:

I find your ministry oriented far too much toward technicalities and not nearly enough toward spirituality. Christians need to center upon their *relationship* with the Lord, not upon complicated issues of language and intellect. I agree that truth is important; but our main need is for an awareness of Christ *living* in us, not for us to be living in constant examination of complicated issues.

The gospel itself is really very simple. If we will just accept Christ and make Him the Lord of our lives, then we will be saved; but if we choose not to do so, then He has no alternative but to let us do what we want, even though this means leaving us to suffer the eternal consequences of our disobedience. Beyond these basics of the gospel, we should mostly just worship the Lord and let Him have His way with us ("Let go, and let God"). Can't you see that the gospel is so simple that even a child can understand it?

Answer:

Actually, I would agree that the evangel itself is indeed so simple that even a child—an enlightened child—can

understand it. But I would insist that the evangel consists in the fact of Christ's death for our sins, together with His entombment and resurrection (1 Cor.15:3,4), not in the notion, as you claim, that, "If we will just accept Christ and make Him the Lord of our lives, then we will be saved; but if we choose not to do so, then He has no alternative but to let us do what we want, even though this means leaving us to suffer the eternal consequences of our disobedience."

Now you cannot have it both ways. You cannot simply claim that what you say here is, or is the corollary of, the evangel itself, and then charge us with being unspiritual and unduly attentive to mere technicalities should we beg to differ.

Your précis of faithfulness, as summarized in the slogan, "Let go, and let God," literally, is to the effect: (1) Stop doing what is wrong, and (2) permit God to do in you what is right.

While we surely concur in the spirit of much that you say here in our own affirmation that it is ideal for us all to cease from what is wrong, even as not to resist God's operations of righteousness in us, this, in fact, is not the same thing as is usually intended by the sentiment, "Let go, and let God." But again, the difference between the common notion here and our own is significant. It simply will not do for you merely to insist on the validity of your own opinion by appealing to its simplicity, while effectually precluding our questioning of it on the grounds that if we should attempt to do so, in so doing, we will necessarily embroil ourselves in unspiritual, needless complexities. In fact, it is largely because of your claim that the evangel is of such a nature as you affirm it to be, that laying hold of the truth here may not be as simple an undertaking as either one of us might wish.

We too desire a stronger faith and a closer walk with our Lord. We long to see our own soulish tendencies subdued

and subjected to that which is truly spiritual. Yet we are aware that "all that glitters is not gold," and wish to remind our fellow believers of this as well.

Truly, I rejoice to note your emphasis on the importance of the believer's awareness of Christ living in him. But I would suggest that the scriptural pattern for those who are walking by faith, not by perception, is that this awareness will come as the fruit of consecrated *faith.* This, then, entails that "awareness" here be understood essentially metaphorically, not experientially. Conviction of faith and resultant reliance upon God, even with much joy in holy spirit, is not in itself phenomenal; hence it cannot be empirically discovered. Therefore, to hold up those who exhibit a certain religious zeal and mannerism as exemplars of personal spiritual awareness is to confound spirituality with soulishness, even according to human sentiment and tradition.

Zeal, good intentions, and devoutness are extremely important. Yet misdirected zeal—zeal that is not in accord with *recognition* (which itself results from *knowledge* of *facts*)—is misplaced zeal. It is a grave and indeed irrational error to minimize the importance of knowledge. Even so, "knowledge puffs up" (1 Cor.8:1b). That is, while this is not literally true, it is all too true in a certain sense, that of the metaphor.

As to feeling, it is *as if* knowledge itself is the guilty culprit and is the cause of our pride. It is instead, however, that *we* are at fault when we become puffed up with respect to our knowledge (even if our knowledge itself should be faultless) because we do not have love. This is because it is love that builds up, or edifies.

It is not that knowledge is bad and love is good; that while love is constructive, knowledge is destructive (or at least not very important), hence we should seek to have as little of it as possible. It is rather that knowledge—an

entity which in itself is vital and essential to our true welfare—when in the presence of the *flesh* and devoid of love, can only lead to pride, not to any true edification worthy of the name. Thus, "Knowledge puffs up, yet love builds up." May we be humble and thankful to God concerning our ability to understand this very verse, while bearing with those who claim it as a proof text in support of the notion that all knowledge beyond the most rudimentary is unneedful and *unspiritual.*

Humility, however, can *only* come as a product of *recognizing* God's love *and* God's deity. That is, if there are things that must be done and we must do them, humility will see that only God can provide the "A to the Z" of whatever may be necessary unto such an end. Yet pride will want to do its part, and insist on making the difference between failure and success, even if, often, it is not manly enough to present its true colors forthrightly.

To the extent that we see something of ourselves (such as cooperativeness or non-resistance) as the key to faithfulness or to the spiritual life in general, to that extent also we will not actually be being faithful and we will not actually be having a spiritual life.

We are entreated to obey; we are not entreated to create those influences which will produce our obedience. This fact is as undeniable as it is revolutionary.

If we must look at things on the surface, and if we cannot express ourselves except by means of popular jargon, we at least need to get the order straight: Cooperativeness and non-resistance are not the key to God; God is the key to cooperativeness and non-resistance. If we are "cooperative" or "non-resistant," it is only because God has made us so through the influence of His grace, in which we are what we are (1 Cor.15:10) and in which we glory.

It is better to have a little that is significantly faithful—and therefore *spiritual*—than much that appears ever so

grand and yet is not truly *spiritual* at all. Therefore, let us cease looking at things simply on the surface, but according to their actual nature (*cp* 2 Cor.10:7; Luke 20:21).

We can hardly expect to be led into the truth by those who are disqualified as to the faith. Such ones are in no position to lead others into light. Some, initially, will put great stress upon their claim that they do not emphasize "doctrine," but merely seek to promote the unity of the spirit. Yet, in fact, such indeed have their own specific teachings, quite as much so as anyone else, and are often among the most demanding of all in matters of church authority and group conformity.

Laying hold of these principles and considerations, and keeping hold of the message of *grace* whether for our place in Christ or our service in the Lord, is the most *spiritual* thing you can do. This is so regardless of whatever measure of peace and joy you may enjoy as a result. These blessings, as such, are not determinative of truth, and will vary according to God's particular graces for each individual.

Do not seek simply to "feel good," selfishly seeking to be at peace or to experience joy: *seek to be faithful.* Seek *first* the kingdom and its righteousness, and these coveted blessings—all in God's time and measure—shall be added *to* you (not, "by" you; *cp* Matt.6:33).

Though it is humiliating to the flesh, the fact is that if we would do what is pleasing to God, God alone must bring to pass any such endeavors. While this is disastrous to our pride, it is essential to the glory of God's grace. God not only does not need our help, but He will not have our help. He will bless us as He intends and when He intends, not otherwise or before. God is our Source; He is not a resource.

In due time you will learn that there is simply no such thing as anyone suffering the "eternal consequences" of sin. Indeed, the only permanent consequences of sin will be that of blessed deliverance therefrom, and this eventually will be enjoyed by all (1 Cor.15:22-28). J.R.C.

SAUL'S DYNASTY ENDS

4 **+When Saul's son |heard that Abner had died in Hebron, +then his hands |slackened, and all of Israel were flustered.** 2 **+Now** to **Saul's son** *b*|**belonged two men, chiefs of raiding** parties**;** the **name of the one** was **Baanah, and** the **name of the second** was **Rechab, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite,** *f*|**of** the **sons of Benjamin,** *t*|**since Beeroth** *mr*|**too was |reckoned** *on*|**part** of **Benjamin.** 3 **+ The Beerothites** had run |**away** to*d* **Gittaim and** had |**become sojourners**| **there until ˙this ˙day.**

4 **+ Saul's son Jonathan ›had** a **son, smitten** on both **feet. He** *b*|**was five years old** *i*|**when** the **report** about **Saul and Jonathan came– from Jezreel, and his foster**| mother |**carried him and |fled.** **+ It** |*b*|**came** about *i*|**as she hurried away– to flee +that he |fell and was |lamed.** **+ His name** was **Mephibosheth.**

5 **+Now Rechab and Baanah, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite,** |*go*|**started** out **and |came** *as*|**in** the **warmth of the day to** the **house of Ishbosheth +while he** was **lying `abed** at **˙noon.** 6 7**+Now** the **gate**keeper **of the house** had been cleaning **wheat** from **stones|; +yet she |slumbered and |slept~. And** *bd*|**so they |came** *fr*|**to** the **midst of the house and |smote him ›on the fifth** rib**.** **+Then Rechab and his brother Baanah slipped away.** 7 **+ They** had |**entered the house +while he** was **lying on his couch in his bedchamber +where they |smote him and** *c*|**put him** to |**death.** **+ They |took off `his head and** |*go*|**traveled the Arabah road all ˙night.** 8 **+ They |brought `the head of Ishbosheth to David** 7|**in***s* **Hebron and |said to the king,** *bd*|**Here** is the **head of your enemy|,**

Ishbosheth son of Saul, who sought `your soul. + ˙This ˙day Yahweh has |**given to my lord the king vengeance** *f*|**upon Saul and** *f* **his seed.**

9 +**But David** |**answered `Rechab and `his brother Baanah, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and** |**said to them,** As **Yahweh lives, Who has ransomed `my soul from all distress:** 10 *t* **The** one who **told**| › **me,** › **saying**–**, Behold, Saul is dead,** + **he**´ *b*|**was in his** own **eyes** *as* a *m*|**bearer** of *7*|**good***0* **tidings**|**. +But I** took |**hold** *i*|**on him and** |**killed him in Ziklag, to whom I** ought **to** have **given**– a reward for the **tidings.** 11 **How much more,** then, *t*|**when wicked men have killed** `a **righteous man on his bed in his** own **house!** + *now*|**Therefore, should I not seek `his blood from your hand**s **and ¯wipe `you out from the earth!** 12 +**Then David** |**instructed** `his **lads,** + who |**killed them,** + |**cut away `their hands and `their feet and** |**hanged** *7*|**them***0* *on*|**by the reservoir** *i*|**at Hebron. And they took** `the **head of Ishbosheth and** |**entombed** it **in Abner's tomb** *i*|**at Hebron.**

DEATHS OF ABNER AND ISHBOSHETH

The first verse of chapter 4 shows how truly Abner was the head of Israel. He may not have been their king by title, but it was a fact, accepted by everyone, that he was the man who ran the country. At the news of Abner's death, king Ishbosheth was trembling and all the tribes were flustered. If Abner had not already laid the foundation for the country to unify under David's leadership, there could have been a significant delay in reaching that goal.

This chapter relates the final events leading up to the coronation of David as king of all Israel. Verse 4 supplies information about Mephibosheth for two apparent reasons: (1) there were no more suitable candidates in the house of Saul to sit on the throne; (2) it lays the foundation for showing David's faithfulness to his covenant with his

beloved friend, Jonathan. The sad demise of Ishbosheth is a commentary on the times and gives us a window of understanding into what life was like in Israel in those days.

MURDERERS

The murderers of Ishbosheth were men of Beeroth. Beeroth was originally one of the cities of the Gibeonites (Josh.9:17), whom Saul slew (2 Sam.21:1) in violation of the treaty made between Joshua and the Gibeonites (Josh.9). At this time Beeroth was considered part of the territory of Benjamin (2 Sam.4:2,3). Baanah and Rechab may have received properties in the city of Beeroth from Saul (1 Sam.22:6,7), and in view of that were called Beerothites. The native Beerothites had fled for their lives. The heinous murder of Ishbosheth by two of his captains is sobering evidence that loyalty is often unstable and something which cannot be bought.

THE CIRCUMSPECT LEADERSHIP OF DAVID

David's behavior through these difficult years was key to the uniting of Israel under his leadership. His refraining from taking vengeance on Saul, his mourning for Saul and Jonathan, his honoring and mourning for Abner, and his public execution of Ishbosheth's murderers all showed that his heart was set on a peaceful unification of his whole country that would strengthen and secure it. David's respect for the previous administration provided assurance of his good motives to all the tribes.

THE FLESH AND THE PHILISTINES

We have maintained throughout that Saul represents the rule of the flesh as it would strive to please God in its own power. His intentions were mostly good. Early in his career Saul experienced some great victories. But the task of rule is too difficult to be achieved by efforts of out-

ward control. Successful rule must spring from the heart. Ishbosheth, a mere puppet king, shows the final impotence of the flesh to rule. Like his father, he was beheaded.

Saul was never able to deliver Israel from the Philistines; in fact, the Philistines crushed him and scattered his country. The Philistines are descendants of Mizraim (1 Chron. 1:11,12), which is the Hebrew name for Egypt. Egypt, of course, was the place of Israel's slavery and oppression. So the Philistines may typically represent those who would bring the rule of Egypt upon God's chosen in the land of promise. But the Philistines themselves seek to exercise this rule without passing through the Red Sea or Jordan themselves. They would rule without ever experiencing the baptism or death of the flesh. Such are like the Pharisees of whom Christ said, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are locking the kingdom of the heavens in front of men. For you are not entering, neither are you letting those entering to enter" (Matt.23:13). It is the coming of the Beloved Son of David that brings deliverance from such domination and frees us into a rule which springs from our hearts.

J. Philip Scranton

HELENA "FAITH" CHRISTENSEN

Our dear friend of many years, Faith Christensen of Hillsboro, Oregon, age 95, was put to repose on February 22. A strong believer in our Lord Jesus Christ and in His saving work on behalf of all mankind, Faith was a loyal friend and generous supporter of our work. She is survived by her daughter Esther and her husband Robert Hiatt, who are also our friends in faith.

CLAIRE FÄSSLER

We sorrow to hear of the recent death of Claire Fässler, a retired nurse from Chicago, Illinois, who for many years, subsequently, was a resident of Zürich, Switzerland. The letters we received from Claire were always elevated in tone and full of encouragement, as she shared words of spiritual grace with us. Both in her deeds and demeanor, she was a teacher of the ideal, in love, in faith, in endurance.

THE APOSTLE'S CONCERNS

As God's gift, through Jesus Christ, Paul *obtained* grace and apostleship (Rom.1:5). This was the operation of God, Who severed him from his fleshly kinship in order to unveil His Son in this former calumniator (*cf* Gal.1:15; 1 Tim.1:12-14). All believers have obtained grace from God, in fact, "superabundance of grace" (Rom.5:15), but Paul obtained both grace and *apostleship*.

PAUL AND US

Paul's apostleship was directed among all the nations, for the sake of the name of Jesus Christ (Rom.1:6). This included believers in Rome, most of whom Paul had not seen, and to whom he had not directly ministered. But it also includes us in the twenty-first century, whom also Paul had obviously not seen when he composed this epistle. The special relationship, however, that existed between Paul and the believers in Rome, which is manifested throughout this letter, exists between him and us. He is the one God commissioned to deliver to us a message of justification and peace and love concerning God's Son and sinful humanity, and concerning our calling in grace.

All of God's Word is beneficial for us. But what Paul writes is marked out specifically *to* us, for he is our apostle.

Hence, before the apostle Paul turns directly to the evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ, he turns his attention, in a personal way, to his God, Who gives the evangel, and to his fellow believers, who are believing the evangel (Rom.1:8-13). In a real way, he writes to us.

These first thoughts of personal concern can be arranged as follows in a fivefold structure:

First, indeed, I am **thanking my God** *through Jesus Christ concerning all of you, that your faith is being announced in the whole world.*

For God is my Witness, to Whom I am **offering divine service** *in my spirit in the evangel of His Son,*

how unintermittingly I am making mention of you, always in my **prayers** *beseeching, if somehow, sometime, at length I shall be prospered, in the will of God, to come to you.*

For I am **longing to see you**, *that I may be sharing some spiritual grace with you, for you to be established: yet this is to be* **consoled together** *among you through one another's faith, both yours and mine.*

FAITH, THE EVANGEL AND PRAYER

We see from the above arrangement that verse 8, dealing with *thanksgiving* regarding *faith,* is related to verse 12, dealing with *consolation* by means of *faith*. Then verse 9, dealing with *offering divine service,* in *spirit,* by means of heralding the *evangel,* is associated with verse 11, dealing with *longing to share spiritual grace*. The pivotal point is *prayer* (verse 10).

This is not a matter of Paul's personal advancement, but a personal expression of devoutness and genuine solicitude. Paul's thanksgiving is to God, and it concerns the faith which God has granted. The apostle's divine service, in spirit, is centered in making known the evangel of God's Son, the message of good from God, which lies behind Paul's prayer. In making mention of the believers in prayer, Paul beseeches God that he might come and share further aspects of the divine revelation which he terms "spiritual grace." These thoughts from Paul's heart

console the believers because they focus on, and accord with, the faith which we all share.

The evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ which we believe is constantly in view in Romans. The message of justification and grace, conciliation and peace, through the blood of Christ, is carefully laid out before us in this letter. It is a matter of certainty. It speaks of what God has done, is doing and will achieve, and in making God's works known, it reveals what God is.

But we are human beings, and we do not determine the future. This does not mean there are no certainties in our lives, for indeed the evangel speaks wholly of certainties since it speaks of God's achievements in Christ. Nevertheless, as far as our own wants and hopes are concerned, no matter how selfless and good they may be, "A man's heart devises his way, yet Yahweh establishes his steps" (Prov.16:9).

Paul exposes here the devisings of his heart. He writes of his concerns in a world of uncertainties. But he writes in accord with the evangel which speaks of certainties, that is, in accord with the revelation of God's power, righteousness and love given in the evangel. Hence he is led to beseech God for the opportunity to come to Rome and share spiritual grace. The point is not whether this plan becomes realized (in fact, it was mostly realized, but not exactly as Paul had envisioned it), but that this is the sort of thinking that the evangel produces in the believer. Because Paul centers on faith and the evangel of God's Son he does not pray without thanksgiving and a solid recognition of the determining place of God's will.

THANKSGIVING REGARDING FAITH

Paul's references to the Romans' faith (literally, "the faith of you") in verse 8, and to each other's faith (literally, "the in-one-another faith") in verse 12, direct attention to

the fact of believing which God has brought about, as a gift implanted in the heart (*cf* Rom.12:3; Phil.1:29). Consequently, Paul thanks God for it, rather than praising the Romans. Whenever and wherever there is faith, our hearts are led in thankfulness to God.

Yet also the words, "the faith," as a figure of association, are sometimes used of that which is believed (see, for example, Rom.10:8; Eph.4:13). And that is certainly in Paul's mind as well in this passage. The verb "announce" is generally used in the sense of presenting a message, and then, most always, a message of good concerning Christ (*cf* Acts 13:38; 16:17; 1 Cor.9:14; 11:26). The announcing of the faith of the Roman believers included, not simply the fact of their faith, but the message itself which composed their faith. In this sense too, the apostle is expressing thanks to God, for in its very substance the message believed is of God and concerns His glory and grace.

If this is so, Romans 1:8 brings us into Paul's thanksgiving, not just as spectators to the miracle of faith in Rome nineteen hundred years ago, and its testimony throughout the world at that time, but as participants in that miracle ourselves. We join Paul in this word of thanksgiving, not simply for something occurring so long ago, but for the continuance of the faith, as a message concerning Christ Jesus, in our own day and its spread "in the whole world."

OFFERING DIVINE SERVICE

"Cut off, in large measure, from the ceremonial worship of his nation at Jerusalem, Paul carries it on wherever he is, in spirit, by the proclamation of this evangel, for the exaltation of Christ's sacrifice in the evangel is a far sweeter fragrance to God than the literal offerings of the law."[1]

We know very little of our fellow believers who lived in

1. A. E. Knoch: CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.230.

Rome nearly two thousand years ago. But, because of his apostleship, extended by way of his letters into our times, we are acquainted with Paul, almost as well as they were before he came among them. He was commissioned by God to bring the evangel to us, as surely as to the chosen among the nations of his day. We read the personal words of our apostle, long ago, to the "called of Jesus Christ" (Rom.1:7) in Rome, and we feel included with the Romans as objects of Paul's labors and of the concern and longing of his heart, just as personally as our brethren of ancient times.

Consequently, we are comforted and consoled by Paul as the faithful dispenser of the revelations of God for us (*cf* Eph.3:7). We are also much encouraged, for he was graciously granted faith, and so are we, and God's grace operated in him, and so does it operate in us. God may not have parted the same measure of faith and faithfulness to us, but God nevertheless has given us a measure as He wills, just as He did for our apostle.

Now he writes of his efforts and prayers as matters of "offering divine service."[2] Paul's divine service was in spirit. He did not bring animal sacrifices, but he approached God with boldness and access on the basis of the blood of Jesus Christ by which he was justified. This could not be seen by eyes of flesh. If it was mostly invisible to physical sense, it still was very real.

This service as it is expressed in Romans 1:8-13 involved prayer and beseeching and longing. But also it involved much labor in evangelizing, in teaching and ministering to the believers throughout the world as he knew it. In

2. For a helpful scriptural study of the term "divine service," the student is referred to Paul's use of it in Romans, here in 1:9 in reference to the *apostle's* attention to the honor of God in his prayers and deeds, in 1:25 in reference to *irreverent humanity* in its worship of the creature rather than the Creator, in 9:4 in reference to *Israel's* service under the law, and in 12:1 in reference to us as *believers* in our daily living.

Romans 15:16 Paul speaks of his work as "the minister of Christ Jesus for the nations, acting as a priest of the evangel of God." This was divine service which blesses us today, many of us living in areas of the world that Paul surely knew nothing about. Yet he was thanking God for our faith, that is, for our believing, and for the message we believe.

Perhaps we can feel the love of our apostle toward each of us personally as we note it here expressed toward our ancient brethren in Rome. We cannot have the experience of him physically coming to us. But we do have the opportunity of learning through the printed page, not only what he wrote to those in Rome in this epistle, but what he later wrote in the grand epistles he penned to other believers *from* Rome.

IN PRAYERS

Later in this letter Paul wrote, ". . . what we should be praying for, to accord with what must be, we are not aware" (Rom.8:26). But the "spirit of sonship, in which we are crying, 'Abba, Father!'" (Rom.8:15) aided the apostle in this infirmity. God, Who searches the heart, was aware of the disposition of the spirit in Paul (Rom.8:27) as he made mention of his fellow believers and beseeched God for the opportunity to share spiritual grace with them.

It may seem unwarranted to see in Paul's prayer of over nineteen hundred years ago something that concerns us personally. He could not have mentioned us by name or have the slightest inkling his prayer would remain relevant this far into the future. But it is a great comfort and source of consolation to know that our apostle was so deeply concerned to share the spiritual revelations given to him for the believers in all parts of the world, so concerned that he made mention of the believers unintermittingly. The prayer does truly extend to us.

Paul prayed for one thing, and, in accord with what must

be, God gave much more than Paul could have imagined. The apostle prayed with the consciousness that the *will of God*[3] would be done. And in this case, God's will was in full accord with Paul's longing. Through multiplied years Paul has come by way of his letters to places throughout the world, and he still comes with "some spiritual grace." We are eager to read in written form what we cannot hear directly from his mouth. And we thank God for this prayer.

SHARING SPIRITUAL GRACE

In this passage, the expression "spiritual grace" corresponds with "the evangel of God's Son" which Paul proclaimed with great sacrifice as he offered divine service to God "in his spirit." The spiritual grace Paul longed to share with the believers in Rome was associated with the evangel concerning the death and resurrection of Christ.

This message of spiritual grace has not been lost. Much of it is surely found in Romans, especially in that great unfolding of the evangel given from 3:21 to the end of chapter 8. We hear his words: "Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.5:1,2).

But even further, this spiritual grace is found in the letters Paul wrote after he got to Rome, when what he then shared with the Romans was set down in writing. There we hear our apostle's voice on the printed page, in revelations such as the following: "In *spirit* the nations are to be joint enjoyers of an allotment, and a joint body, and joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the

3. "Prosperity is found only in the will of God, and in all the wide world there is only one safe place for the child of God, that is where God places him" (George Rogers: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.20, p.88).

evangel of which I became the dispenser, in accord with the gratuity of the *grace* of God" (Eph.3:6,7). And: "The Son of God's love . . . is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:13,18-20).

CONSOLED THROUGH ONE ANOTHER'S FAITH

The word "console" comes from the Greek word literally meaning BESIDE-CALL. It speaks of being called close to one's side. When the need is comfort in sorrows and distresses it is rendered "console," and when the need is guidance and good counsel, it is rendered "entreat." We are *called* close *beside* each other and our apostle, because of our mutual faith. Again, as in verse 8, the term *faith* seems to refer not simply to the fact that we are believing but especially to the message we believe. We believe that "Christ died for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). "If God is for us, who is against us? surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (Rom.8:31,32).

The revelations of grace which Paul still brings by way of his letters, and which compose your faith and my faith, even as they composed the faith of our apostle and of our Roman brethren some nineteen and a half centuries ago, are our great sources of consolation and entreaty. As we call each other close and speak of God's grace to each of us in Christ Jesus we are consoled in our distresses and guided rightly in our conduct.

We are thanking our God and Father for this faith and its announcement everywhere.

D.H.H.

Contents:

145 Editorial
146 Subjection in the Line of Seth
157 God Sets
163 In *Flesh*, Apart From Christ, and Without God
176 The Establishing of David's House
183 Paul's Will for Us
191 Creation by God

JULY, 2002

Volume XCIII **Number 4**

Reprints from the series:

He Shall Save His People

by Dean Hough

When our Lord came into this world He came to save. This was the meaning of the name given Him, Jesus, which according to its roots in the Hebrew language signifies: Yahweh-Saviour.

Therefore, when Mary "was found pregnant by holy spirit" (Matt.1:18), the messenger of the Lord said to Joseph, "Now she shall be bringing forth a Son, and you shall be calling His name Jesus, for *He shall be saving* His people from their sins" (1:21).

This promise is a most important declaration of God's intention. It forms a solid basis for all that is recorded throughout the book of Matthew. Indeed it must never be forgotten in the midst of stern warnings and fearful events, least of all in the account of the evil and darkness surrounding the rejection and crucifixion of this One Who came to save. The promise remains alive and true even though it is left unrealized at the close of Matthew's account.

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EDITORIAL

AT the height of World War II, Brother A. E. Knoch wrote: "God stands at the helm, and is steering the course He laid out before the eons. His eye is on the star that leads to the predetermined goal. The winds may rave and the waves may roar, but all is under the control of His almighty hand. As we enter one of the greatest crises which mankind has ever faced, let us do it in calm reliance upon our God, knowing that it is all a part of His plan and will fulfill His intention. More than that, let us seek to understand His ways so that we may rejoice in spirit in that which seems to defeat His purpose" (*Unsearchable Riches*, vol.35, p.3).

It is not that the present is filled with such warfare and distress as the time when Brother Knoch wrote these words. Yet times of crisis are always with us in one form or another during this eon. Not just political and economic turmoil, but within everyone's personal life there are afflictions and perplexities (*cf* 2 Cor.4:8) as well. Readers of this issue of our magazine will see that this was so of Adam and Eve, of Seth and David, and of Paul and those who hold to the word of truth which he brought.

Consequently, our days, too, provide excellent opportunities to be relying on the living God. There are sufferings in the current era that sharpen our anticipation of the glory about to be revealed for us (*cf* Rom.8:18). All is under the control of God's almighty hand.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has purposed to head up all in the Christ, and Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:3-11).

D.H.H.

SUBJECTION IN THE LINE OF SETH

SUBJECTION is the underlying subject in the line of Seth (SET) who was substituted in the place of Abel, whom Cain had killed. It is worthy of note that nothing is said of Seth and his line until Cain's whole line is out of the way. The two lines were not chronicled together, for they will not mix. We are not told how long Cain's descendants lived, though there is little doubt that they lasted till the deluge. But time is not reckoned when out of fellowship with Yahweh. So the narrative drops the Cainites and goes back to Adam and Eve. It commences afresh with Seth, whom Elohim *set* in place of Abel. They are the first in the lines of faith, in which the firstborn according to the flesh are rejected, as in the case of Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob. Abel and Seth together form the first type of Christ in death and resurrection, for it is through them and their line that salvation comes.

The difference between the two lines seems to be this: Cain and his line failed because of *in*subjection to the Subjector, Yahweh. Seth and his line failed in subjecting *others*. Adam's first failure, also, was as the subjector of the serpent and of Eve, who were in his domain. His own sin in eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil followed later. So it was in his line. Each member lived about two hundred years after the death of his predecessor, when he took over the place of Adam as the head of humanity. Yet, at the end of the line, only Noah, with his family, are free from the prevailing insubjection.

This same method of having two lines on the scene

at the same time continues throughout the evil eons. In general, they might be termed the lines of faith and of unbelief, or of subjection and insubjection. The contrast between them, even when faith also fails, is essential to reveal their character fully. A prominent example is found in the divided kingdom, Judah and Israel. Judah was true to the royal line, and should have retained the sovereignty over all Israel. Israel was not in the line of faith, so was deported long before Judah, and will not return until they are united again in Messiah's kingdom.

"Subjection" is a term of wide significance, which includes many forms. Therefore it is used to express the final state in which all are *set under* the Subjector. It not only includes swaying (Gen.1:26,28) over the animals, but our obedience to the superior authorities (Rom.13:1), and wives to husbands (Eph.5: 22), and also the conduct of younger men to elders (1 Peter 5:5), and children to fathers (1 Tim.3:4). Even Jesus was subject to Joseph and Mary (Luke 2:51). Adam was subjector over all his children, and passed on to his successors the subjection of the whole race.

SETH'S LINE

25 + **Adam** [l]**knew** `7**Eve**[c] **his wife** [fr]**again.** 7**She** became [l]**pregnant**[cs] **and** gave [l]**birth** to a **son.** + **She** [l]**called** `**his name Seth,** 7› **saying**–0**:** [t]**Truly Elohim has set for me another seed** [u]**instead of Abel, for Cain killed him.** 26 +**As for Seth,** to **him** [mr]**too** a **son was born; and he** [l]**called** `**his name Enosh. Then** 7**this** one0 ~**was wounded;** ›**yet** he **called~** [i]**on** the **name of Yahweh.**

There are two records of the line of Seth (Gen.4:25,26 and Gen.5:1-32). The first one is very brief, and seems to be prophetic in its implications, for it ends with Seth's son Enosh. As this cannot be seen in the usual versions, we will seek to find a better rendering of the Hebrew. In

the AV of Genesis 4:26 we read: "And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enosh: *then began men to* call upon the name of the Lord." The last sentence the CV renders: "Then *this one was wounded;* yet *he* called on the name of Yahweh." There is no evidence whatever for the word *men*. Indeed, the men of the line of Cain did *not* call upon the Lord at this time. The Septuagint reads "*this* one," and the context confines the statement to Enosh.

The stem of the Hebrew word which the AV translates "began" is *chl*, which conveys the general idea of PERFORATE. By the addition or insertion of other letters it is used for many related ideas, as tunnel *mchluth*, and illness *chli*, travail *chil*, violate or wound *chll*, as in "He was *wounded* because of our transgressions" (Isa.53:5). We suggest that this is its meaning here. Enosh, like Abel, was attacked, but was saved from death by calling on the name of Yahweh Elohim. Following, as this does, the triumphal song of Lamech, who killed those who injured him (Gen. 4:23), it is a striking testimony to the faith of Enosh, and in full harmony with his name, which means "Mortal."

GENESIS FIVE

5 This is the **scroll of** the **genealogical** record**s of Adam.** [i]**On** the **day Elohim created⁻ Adam, in** the **likeness of Elohim He** [d]**made `him.** 2 **Male and female He created them and** [l]**blessed `them and** [l]**called `their name "human"** [i]**on** the **day they** were **created⁻.** 3 + **Adam** [l]**lived** [7]**230**[0] **years and** [l]**begot** a son **in his likeness** and [as]**after his image;** + **he** [l]**called `his name Seth.** 4 **And** the **days of Adam, after his begetting⁻ `Seth, came** to [l]**be** [7]**700**[0] **years, and he** [l]**begot sons and daughters.** 5 +**So all** the **days of Adam which he lived came** to [l]**be 930 years;** +**then he** [l]**died.**

6 + **Seth** [l]**lived** [7]**205**[0] **years and** [l]**begot `Enosh.** 7 + **After his begetting⁻ `Enosh, Seth** [l]**lived** [7]**707**[0] **years and** [l]**begot sons and daughters.** 8 +**So all** the **days of Seth came** to [l]**be 912 years;** +**then he** [l]**died.**

9 + **Enosh** [l]**lived** [7]**190**[0] **years and** [l]**begot `Kenan.** 10 + **After his begetting⁻ `Kenan, Enosh** [l]**lived** [7]**715**[0] **years and** [l]**begot sons and daughters.** 11 +**So all** the **days of Enosh came** to [l]**be 905 years;** +**then he** [l]**died.**

12 + **Kenan** [l]**lived** [7]**170**[0] **years and** [l]**begot `Mahalalel.** 13 + **After his begetting⁻ `Mahalalel, Kenan** [l]**lived** [7]**740**[0] **years and** [l]**begot sons and daughters.** 14 +**So all** the **days of Kenan came** to [l]**be 910 years;** +**then he** [l]**died.**

15 + **Mahalalel** [l]**lived** [7]**165**[0] **years and** [l]**begot `Jared.** 16 + **After his begetting⁻ `Jared, Mahalalel** [l]**lived** [7]**730**[0] **years and** [l]**begot sons and daughters.** 17 +**So all** the **days of Mahalalel came** to [l]**be 895 years;** +**then he** [l]**died.**

18 + **Jared** [l]**lived 162 years and** [l]**begot `Enoch.** 19 + **After his begetting⁻ `Enoch, Jared** [l]**lived 800 years and** [l]**begot sons and daughters.** 20 +**So all** the **days of Jared came** to [l]**be 962 years;** +**then he** [l]**died.**

21 + **Enoch** [l]**lived** [7]**165**[0] **years and** [l]**begot `Methuselah.** 22 + **Enoch** [l]**walked** `with **the** One**, Elohim. After his begetting⁻ `Methuselah,** [7]**Enoch** [l]**lived 200**[0] **years and** [l]**begot sons and daughters.** 23 +**So all** the **days of Enoch** [7]**came** to [l]**be~**[ns] **365 years,** 24 +**while Enoch was walking** `with **the** One**, Elohim.** +**Then he was no**t found**, for Elohim took `him** away**.**

25 + **Methuselah** [l]**lived 187 years and** [l]**begot `Lamech.** 26 + **After his begetting⁻ `Lamech, Methuselah** [l]**lived 782 years and** [l]**begot sons and daughters.** 27 +**So all** the **days of Methuselah came** to [l]**be 969 years;** +**then he** [l]**died.**

28 + **Lamech** [l]**lived** [7]**188**[0] **years and** [l]**begot** a **son.** 29 + **He** [l]**called `his name Noah,** › **saying⁻: This** one **shall console us** [f] **because** of **our** [7]**doings~**[ncs]**, and** [f] **because** of the **grief of our hands** resulting **from the ground** [w]**that Yahweh has cursed.** 30 + **After his begetting⁻ `Noah, Lamech** [l]**lived** [7]**565**[0] **years and** [l]**begot sons and daughters.** 31 +**So all** the **days of Lamech** [7]**came** to [l]**be~**[ns] [7]**753**[0] **years;** +**then he** [l]**died.**

32 + Noah came to |**be 500 years old; + Noah** |**begot** 7**three sons**0**, `Shem, `Ham and `Japheth.**

GENEALOGICAL RECORDS

The second record of the line of Seth gives us more than the "generations" of Adam. It not only states the names of the succeeding patriarchs in the line of faith, but gives the number of years they lived, and such particulars as are needed to round out the record (Gen.5:1-32). So we prefer to call it the "genealogical *records*." The first one of these concerned the heavens and the earth in which there were no *generations* at all (Gen.2:4). The third one is the record of Noah (Gen.6:9). In this book there are eleven of these altogether. The remaining nine deal with individual patriarchs or their sons, Noah, his sons, Shem, Terah, Ishmael, Isaac, Esau, his sons, and Jacob. The annals of Adam include the whole line of Seth, up to and including Noah before the deluge.

Twice Adam is said to be in the *likeness* of the Subjectors. In the first case he is to sway over the lower soul life in the sea and air, and on the land (Gen.1:26). Now, once again, we read of Adam, "in the likeness of Elohim (Subjectors) He made him." But here there is no reference to the lower soul life, which entitles all humanity to sway over the animals, but it is connected with those who have the position of firstborn in Adam's line, with Seth and Enosh, etc. Indeed, of Seth himself we read that Adam begot him in his likeness, according to his image (Gen.5:3). This seems to show that, first of all, Adam was the subjector of *humanity* while he lived, and that he passed this on to all those mentioned in his annals. Later they are called sons of the subjectors (Gen.6:2).

SON OF ADAM

Christ is presented as the Son of Adam in Luke 3:23-38.

In this list we have all the names of the sons of Adam, as the subjector, given in the genealogy of Adam's successors, or firstborn sons. As they were the channel through which Christ's right to rule all mankind has come to Him, they, themselves, must have possessed this right, or they could not have channeled it on to Him. Not only in ancient times, but today, also, regal rights pass to the oldest son as a rule, and are reckoned even if they are in abeyance. In English we use the term "successor" to express this, hence we can call a long line of them "successors." The title Son of David limits His rule to Israel. But Son of Adam, enlarges His realm to include all humanity. This also was the case with the firstborn sons in the line of Adam before the deluge.

THE LINE OF SUCCESSION

Not until we see that the line of Seth gives us the succession to the headship of the race, can we understand why so little is said of the later ones. Only the vital facts are usually given. This list later leads up to Christ, in Whom they all end. In the genealogy of Jesus all of these names appear again (Luke 3:23-38), but there we have nothing but the names. Yet these alone prove His claim to be the Son of Adam or Mankind, and so the Head of the race. Here we have the names of Adam's immediate successors, not merely to establish their own title as heirs of Adam, but to be a link in the chain of final subjection to Adam's greatest Son.

Here however, more is necessary than the mere names, for only one was subjector at a given time. In order to fix the time when they were subjectors of the race, following the death of their fathers, we are given the age of each father when his firstborn son and successor is born, and thence on to his death. These are two vital events. In this way there were usually four successors in training, before the oldest was at the head. Each one was nearly seven hun-

dred years old before he took office and kept it about two hundred years, to his death.

CHRONOLOGY

No chronology was given in connection with Cain's line, for time out of fellowship with Yahweh is wasted and cannot be counted. But, in the line of faith, every year spent beneath the sun is reckoned. Yahweh had planned all beforehand, and everything has its proper season. Therefore we are given the comparative time for the appearance of all the principal actors in the history of humanity on the earth. Each man is connected by an interlocking chain link to the one before and the one after him. As we are given his age at the birth of his firstborn son, the sum of the years to all the firstborn will give the length of the whole period.

SONS AND DAUGHTERS

There can be no subjectors without subjects. So there is always an addition to the effect that there were further sons and daughters. As this is a list of subjectors only, their wives are not even mentioned. But in referring to their subjects, both sons and daughters are referred to. These later-born sons would be subjectors of their own families, but they did not inherit the headship of the whole race, as the successive firstborn did.

ADAM

While much is told us of Adam's early experiences, when the whole race was in him, very little is said of his personal affairs after the birth of Seth, except that he had further sons, and also daughters. He lived seven hundred years after that, but may not have exercised his office for the last hundred and twenty. Mankind was all one great family, and all should have been subject to him, as well as their own

fathers. On a smaller scale this form of rule still continues among some peoples. It is, indeed, the ideal and final form, for the Subjector Himself will eventually become the loving Father of all at the consummation. It seems that matters gradually grew much worse, especially after his death, when his sons were left in full control. Nations are not mentioned until after the deluge. They belong in the present eon. There were none then. The rule was paternal or patriarchal.

THE LINE OF FAITH

The line of faith and subjection really began with a dead man, Abel. We have an intimation here of the death and resurrection of Christ, for His death is the greatest example and basis of all true subjection. Abel was the victim which Cain slew in place of the sin offering. In type, the line of Seth began as believers do, crucified with Christ, and risen in Him. The name "Set" does not tell us what he was like or what he did. Eve acknowledged that Elohim had given him, to take the place of Abel, who was righteous (Matt. 23:35) and a man of faith (Heb.11:4). So the line of faith started with death rather than with life. This is shown in its double beginning in Abel-Seth. Abel was not allowed to continue, but the name "Set" indicates that he was securely established as the living progenitor of those who were subject to the Subjector, through whom, on the physical side, all the race today has come, for all others, including the whole line of Cain, were wiped out in the deluge.

ENOSH

Enosh means *mortal*. In naming his son thus, Seth recorded his faith in the death sentence passed upon Adam and the race (Gen.4:25). It is just the reverse of Methusael (Death-is-Questionable), who was in the line of Cain (Gen. 4:18). We must remember that life was long in those days.

All those mentioned in this list had a life span of close to a thousand years. When "Mortal" was born it would be about half that much before Adam succumbed to mortality. So it took faith to give a son such a name. Today it would take none at all. Now it takes faith to believe that some of us may not die at all, in case we live until the Lord calls us to be with Him in the air (1 Thess.4:13-18).

CAINAN

Enosh named his son Cainan. This is a lengthened form of Cain. In the case of Cain it seems clear that Eve claimed she had *acquired* him (Gen.4:1), that is, she did not take him as a gift, but rather as a purchase, for which she had paid the price. The affix *-n*, added to a stem, usually makes it a noun, so the name Cainan would mean *Acquisition*. It is used in Genesis 31:18 of the acquisition which Jacob acquired in Padan, Syria. But this difference does not help much. However, there is a similar word in Hebrew which means *dirge*. This is so appropriate for a son of Mortal, that we are tempted to suggest this as the probable original. The next name follows Dirge much better than Acquisition.

MALALEEL

Malaleel means Praiser-of-Subjector. As in the line of Cain, the opposition to El reached its summit in the name Mehujael (Wipe-out-Subjector!), so, in the line of Seth, the highest point is indicated by this name, which calls on all, not only to acknowledge and obey the Supreme Subjector, but to *praise* Him. Adam was still alive, but he died before Malaleel's son Jared was born. Adam's death seems to have been the principal crisis in the ante-diluvian eon.

As we have noted above, the name Mehujael (Wipe-out-Subjector) expressed the desire of Cain's descendants to wipe out the Subjector from the earth. And they came near being successful, for only Noah's family seem to have

remained who worshiped Him. So it was only right that Elohim should wipe *them* off the surface of the ground by means of the deluge.

JARED

Jared (It-is-descending) was born soon after the death of Adam, so that the father of humanity no longer exercised control. As a result there was a downward trend. The name does not clearly indicate just who or what was going down, whether it is a call for Yahweh to descend as later predicted by his son Enoch, or simply that *humanity* is deteriorating. It cannot refer to Jared himself, but fits the times perfectly. These were described by Enoch, his son, as most deplorable.

ENOCH

Enoch (Dedicated) was dedicated to the way of Seth, even as Enoch, son of Cain, was dedicated to his father's way (Gen.4: 17). Abel, Enoch, and Noah are the great examples of faith in the ante-diluvian era. "By faith Enoch was transferred, so as not to be acquainted with death, and was not found, because God transfers him. For before his transference he is attested to have pleased God well" (Heb.11:5). We have his prophecy in Jude 1:14,15 as follows: "Lo! the Lord came among ten thousand of His saints, to do judging against all, and to expose all the irreverent acts in which they are irreverent, and concerning all the hard words which irreverent sinners speak against Him."

METHUSELAH

Methuselah means "Dying-He-sends." The faith of Enoch was clearly exhibited and certified by making his son a living witness to his prediction concerning the coming judgment, for the deluge came only six years after

Methuselah's death. At the same time he is an example of the longsuffering of the Subjector, for he lived longer than any other of the patriarchs, and even outlived his son, which was very unusual at that time.

LAMECH

Lamech (To-Reduce), the last name in the line of Seth, before Noah begins a new genealogical record, is the same name as the sixth in the line of Cain. It is evident that, by this time, the condition of mankind was very much *reduced*. When naming Noah, Lamech said, "This one shall console us because of our doings, and because of the grief of our hands, resulting from the *ground* that Yahweh has cursed" (Gen.5:29). The curse on the ground had been in effect for over a thousand years by this time. Continuous cropping would not be likely to improve it. Even the line of Cain, who originally was a server of the ground, turned to cattle at the end. After the deluge this curse was lifted. Yahweh Elohim said, "Not anymore will I maledict again the ground on account of humanity" (Gen.8:21).

NOAH

Noah (STOP) was so named because his father believed the predictions of Enoch. The end of the eon before the flood was like that which will close this eon. In the days just before the flood the people were restless, self-seeking, without faith in the future. Noah's name carried him beyond all this into the restful era which followed the deluge. At the same time the literal meaning, STOP, predicted the end of that eon.

A. E. Knoch

E. BARTON BELL

E. Barton Bell of Hamilton, Ohio died on February 7. For many years Brother Bell together with his wife Lillian who survives him, attended Concordant Bible classes at the home of Robert and Amber Killen in Centerville, Ohio, rejoicing in common faith.

GOD SETS

WHEN Seth was born, Eve gave him the name which means "Set." This was her testimony that "Truly Elohim has *set* for me another seed instead of Abel" (Gen.4:25). She had in view the words of Yahweh to the serpent in Genesis 3:15 where He spoke of *setting* enmity between the seed of the serpent and her *seed*, an enmity which would culminate in the hurting of the head of the serpent's seed and the heel of the *Seed* of the woman.

Although God had set an operation of enmity He also sets the One Who will both experience that enmity to its fullest extent and bring it to an end.

THE BIRTH OF SETH

Since the time of the promise concerning her seed, Eve had learned much. By means of her experience with Cain she had learned that the fulfillment of the promise was not dependent on her. It was true that the promised seed would not come apart from her and the burdensome travail of giving birth, but this was graciously granted to her by God. When Cain was born, Eve boasted, "I have acquired a man through Yahweh" (Gen.4:1). Even though she recognized Yahweh in this first experience of the miracle of human birth, Eve saw the birth of Cain, at most, as a cooperative achievement between Yahweh and herself, and the "I" of Eve took precedence.

Now, with the birth of Seth, she sees herself only as one who is blessed by Elohim, and she rejoices in what *He* has done and yet shall do.

WHAT GOD SHALL DO

Eve's "I" of Genesis 4:1 came back to haunt her when Cain murdered his brother. Her exultation in her accomplishment through personal suffering brought her human frailty and ignorance to light when Cain was caught up in the ways of insubjection in which the serpent had earlier entrapped her.

Yahweh's "I" of Genesis 3:15 ("I shall set enmity . . .") is another matter altogether. Elohim's promise of setting enmity, followed by that of increasing the grief and groaning of Eve in her pregnancy (Gen.3:16), are parts of His judgments upon the serpent and the human pair. They are among the many sad effects of the events of Genesis 3:1-6. Nevertheless, by His own words in Genesis 3, all of these evils must be traced to God. He imposes these experiences of enmity and pain upon these particular creatures of His hands, the forces of deception represented by the serpent, and the human race as included in Adam and Eve.

THE SETTING OF ENMITY

We are concerned especially here with God's operation with respect to the serpent. The serpent was expressing enmity against God when it brought the woman into subjection to its lie. God's response is, first of all, to set enmity between it and the woman, whom it had brought under its own headship. For the woman this enmity has come to mean added woe due to the stratagems of the Adversary in seeking to prevent the birth of the promised Seed. For the serpent, it has meant vigilance in forestalling and opposing that particular birth through a woman which would bring it hurt.

But it is in the enmity which God set between the serpent and the seed of the woman that the great issue lies. This will eventually lead to the annulling of all the works of

the Adversary (1 John 3:8) and of all its authority (1 Cor.15: 24) by means of Christ as the great Seed.

It is Elohim Who sets this enmity. Just as He planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden, so He sets a struggle of enmity in the world after the human pair had eaten of its fruit and had begun to die. This enmity brings *hurt*, that is, a painful experience of trouble and loss.

EVE AND GOD'S WORD

In Genesis 3 Eve was deceived by a *denial* of God's word, putting herself under the authority (headship) of the serpent. In doing this she was failing to follow the instruction of Yahweh concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen.2:16), and she was also acting contrary to the instructions given to Adam to sway over the lower animals (Gen.1:28). But these instructions had not been given directly to Eve. They had been given to Adam before Eve was formed.

In the case of the naming of her first son, Eve is not involved in a *denial* of God's word, but a *misunderstanding* of what He had said. Let us note again the words of Yahweh Elohim to the serpent: "I shall *set* enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He shall hurt you in the head, and you shall hurt Him in the heel."

When Yahweh Elohim said this to the serpent, Eve was standing right there and heard every word firsthand. There was no room for denial of what God said. But also there was no temptation to alter what He said. Nevertheless, unless God opens up our understanding, the human mind is so constituted that it manages to misinterpret what is said by Him.

No doubt Eve was very interested in these words concerning the hurting of the one who had deceived her and the fact that she would play a special part in that develop-

ment. But Yahweh Elohim's words, "I shall set [this development of] enmity" did not seem to catch her interest like the words "the woman . . . and her seed."

Then also, although she might have been glad to know the serpent would get hurt (in relation to its usurped headship), we can question whether she appreciated anything about the Seed also being hurt from all this enmity. The naming of Cain indicates Eve was more interested in what the words of Genesis 3:15,16 said about *her* than in what they said about God and about the hurt of her Seed.

But what is said about God and the hurting of the Seed are *the* major points of this passage.

EVE'S ENLIGHTENMENT

Let us review some of the points of enlightenment which were given to Eve and manifested now in the naming of Seth:

After Cain killed Abel—after all the shock and turmoil and humiliation of that experience—then, when a third son was born, Eve named him *Seth,* which means "set," the very word God had used with the pronoun "I" in Genesis 3:15. Thus she exulted, "Truly Elohim has set for me another seed instead of Abel" (Gen.4:25).

Furthermore, not only does she use the word "set" from Genesis 3:15, she also uses the word "seed" from the same verse. She is doing better in using a pattern of sound words.

For "I" in reference to herself, she now uses the word "Elohim" as the One doing the action.

For the verb "acquire" in reference to herself she now uses "set" in reference to Elohim.

For "man" in reference to Cain, she now uses "seed" in reference to the one God had set to contain within himself (like a seed) that which will lead to the Promised One.

Instead of "Yahweh" as an object in association with her acquiring a man ("through Yahweh"), she now speaks of

what "Elohim" does *for* her. She now sees herself only as an indirect object, for whom Elohim had done something full of comfort and expectation.

GOD IS FAITHFUL

Now let us look at some passages of Scripture speaking of the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15, a fulfillment that occurs beyond the birth of Seth by several thousand years and which is not even yet fully realized. Clearly it is a fulfillment which is wholly due to God in the gift of His Son.

"This One, given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God, you, gibbeting by the hand of the lawless, assassinate" (Acts 2:23).

"Now when the full time came, God delegates His Son, come of a woman" (Gal.4:4).

"For this was the Son of God manifested, that He should be annulling the acts of the Adversary" (1 John 3:8).

"For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power. For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet" (1 Cor.15:22-25).

". . . looking off to the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, Who, for the joy lying before Him, endures a cross, despising the shame . . ." (Heb.12:2).

"He empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and, being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, also God highly exalts Him . . . that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaim-

ing that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God the Father" (Phil.2:7-11).

". . . through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:20).

In all these passages, as in Genesis 3:15, the emphasis is on God operating through Christ Jesus for the good of human beings. What God does in dealing with enmity is setting enmity against His Son for the establishing of peace and reconciliation.

But it all takes time.

And it is done in God's own way—always through the death and resurrection and exaltation of Christ.

Seth is the seed of the woman: Within Seth were all his descendants, including Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ would be hurt in the death of the cross. Sin removes sin; enmity removes enmity; hurt removes hurt.

Jesus Christ is the Seed of the woman: In Christ there is deliverance for the human and an eventual annulling of the headship and authority of the Adversary.

The enmity which Yahweh Elohim sets leads to an annulling of that enmity by the Seed Whom Elohim sets.

TRULY ELOHIM HAS SET

In our translation of Genesis 4:25, we render the Hebrew term *ki* by the word "truly." The Hebrew term is a conjunction usually corresponding to the English connective "that" or "for," but it is often used to indicate emphasis, as is suggested by the English words "indeed" or "truly." The context of Genesis 4:25 supports this note of exclamation and emphasis. In naming Seth, Eve was honoring God and His promise, not herself and her self-centered interpretations of His Word.

"Now let God be true, yet every human a liar" (Rom.3:4).

D.H.H.

IN FLESH, APART FROM CHRIST, AND WITHOUT GOD

Question:

Why do you translate the Greek word for "stranger" as "guest[s]" in Ephesians 2:12 and 2:19? This seems especially strange (pardon my pun) since you yourselves translate it as "stranger" in Matthew 25:35 ("a stranger was I and you took Me in," CV). Your translation of this word as "guests" in Ephesians 2 seems without merit, and appears only to expose your own bias, in favor of your own variety of dispensationalism.

After all, it is plain that in Ephesians 2:11-19, Paul is simply saying, to quote the Authorized Version, that "in time past," the Gentile Christians were "without Christ," and, "having no hope," were "without God" (v.13).

This obviously refers to the time before they became Christians. At that time, they were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise" (v.12). "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (v.13) "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (v.19).

Once they became Christians, the Gentile Christians became "fellowcitizens" of Israel, which is to say, they themselves, spiritually speaking, became Israelites, hence heirs to Israel's blessings.

All Christians, therefore, spiritually, are "Israelites," which is to say that God reckons them as Israelites. What this amounts to is that He therefore grants them Israel's blessings. Of course since the literal nation of

Israel, itself, is not Christian, its non-Christian citizens forfeit Israel's blessings which are therefore given to the church instead. Like all non-Christians, non-Christian Israelites as well, will be eternally doomed. Neither your fanciful dispensationalism nor your heretical universalism will be able to save them.

Answer:

First of all, I would suggest that you seriously take to heart the fact that simply because our translation seems "strange" to you, this does not make it wrong. The question is not what does or does not seem strange to any certain person, but what does the Scripture truly reveal.

Likewise, it does not follow because we ourselves translate by the term "stranger" in Matthew 25, that we are therefore doing something improper in our rendering "guests" in Ephesians 2. Again, the fact that the way we translate here, *to you, "seems* without merit, and *appears* only to expose [our] own bias, in favor of [our] own variety of dispensationalism," is merely a speculation of your own, born of excessive suspicion of what you are not well acquainted with and do not understand, being mindful only that our translation is deemed unscholarly and our teaching heretical by those whom you highly esteem.

You say, "Of course since the literal nation of Israel, itself, is not Christian, its non-Christian citizens forfeit Israel's blessings which are therefore given to the church instead." In reply I would simply ask, how does it follow from the fact that evidently only a small percentage of the descendants of Jacob today are believers in Christ, that therefore the promises which God made to that nation will not be given to that nation after all, but will instead be given to "the church"? I would suggest to you that in making this illogical claim you are simply repeating a popular tradition of men, one that is without basis in fact.

Similarly, you likewise claim, "Once they became Christians, the Gentile Christians became 'fellowcitizens' of Israel, which is to say, they themselves, spiritually speaking, became Israelites, hence heirs to Israel's blessings."

In response I would point out that even in the Authorized Version translation of Ephesians 2, there is nothing said that states or entails that the Gentile believers became—whether spiritually speaking or otherwise—effectual Israelites; much less is anything said from which it would follow that they somehow further have become "heirs to Israel's blessings." The believers of the nations now became "fellow-citizens" (which is to say, enjoyed equal standing and privileges) together with the Israelite believers, not in the nation of Israel but within the body of Christ. Hence your claim that they instead became, effectually, Israelites and so heirs to their blessings, is far from the mark.

In closing, you said, "Like all non-Christians, non-Christian Israelites as well, will be eternally doomed. Neither your fanciful dispensationalism nor your heretical universalism will be able to save them."

Since you are already aware that we believe that all mankind will eventually be saved and vivified, and also believe that the evangel brought by Paul is, in certain respects, unique, and is distinct from the teaching of the twelve, we would simply commend to you a careful study of our writings on these respective themes. Mere scornful claims that our views are "fanciful" and "heretical," neither help us nor intimidate us. Similarly, your mere insistence that all unbelievers will be "eternally doomed," says nothing in support of this claim. Even if you should find gratification in thus giving us "a piece of your mind," I suggest that you try another approach.

Now, I would like to begin to address the substantive subject of your enquiry by setting forth the text of this portion of Scripture under consideration, as it is translated in the Concordant Version:

Wherefore, remember that once you, the nations in flesh—who are termed "Uncircumcision" by those termed "Circumcision," in flesh, made by hands—that you were, in that era, apart from Christ, being alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and guests of the promise covenants, having no expectation, and without God in the world. Yet now, in Christ Jesus, you, who once are far off, are become near by the blood of Christ. For He is our Peace, Who makes both one, and razes the central wall of the barrier (the enmity in His flesh), nullifying the law of precepts in decrees, that He should be creating the two, in Himself, into one new humanity, making peace; and should be reconciling both in one body to God through the cross, killing the enmity in it. And, coming, He brings the evangel of peace to you, those afar, and peace to those near, for through Him we both have had access, in one spirit, to the Father. Consequently, then, no longer are you guests and sojourners, but are fellow-citizens of the saints and belong to God's family. (Eph.2:11-19)

You asked, "Why do you translate the Greek word for 'stranger' as 'guest[s]' in Ephesians 2:12 and 2:19?" The Greek word in question, *xenon,* is *not* "the Greek word for 'stranger,'" in the sense that one is the equivalent of the other, as if *xenon* itself signifies "stranger." *Xenon* is often *used* to *refer to* one who is a stranger; this, however, is not its essential meaning.

Concerning Ephesians 2:11-19, most merely reason that since the idea in view in passages with which they are familiar in which this word in question appears, such as Matthew 25:35 ("a stranger was I and you took Me in"), is "stranger," and since, to them, this same idea makes sense in Ephesians 2:12, 19, therefore, in our translation of these same verses by the term "guests," we must necessarily be mistaken and biased.

Those who would dismiss the Concordant Version, will

find it easy to do so, being afforded an abundance of seemingly legitimate reasons for so doing. Yet others, ones who may be more open-minded, are still often hindered from understanding the true issues and principles involved in the resolution of various important questions of translation. Careful thinking and discernment are essential; yet these are the fruit of God's gracious operations.

It is certainly true that the *usage* of *xenon* in Matthew 25:35 is in reference to one whom we would term a "stranger." This, however, is not the issue. It is beside the point that "stranger" is the thought in view in such a passage. In the Concordant *Version,* in such cases, *we do not render it thus because this is its meaning but because of the demands of idiomatic, good diction.*

Usage is not meaning and is not inherently transferable from passage to passage. Yet most, not discerning the unvarying essence of a word nor distinguishing meaning from usage, confidently assume that our translation must be wrong and the usual renderings correct.

The meaning of any original Hebrew or Greek word is not determined by the subjective practice of merely noting the clearest idea that seems to fit a certain passage or passages. Instead, meaning is discerned through the objective testing of all occurrences of a word with a view to the determination of the *essential* idea that is *common to all* occurrences of that word—whether or not this idea can be smoothly and uniformly expressed in another language.

Every Scriptural expression has a basic meaning or essence. This is constant, even if the many usages of a word (whether literal or figurative) should vary considerably. It is vital to grasp the *meaning* or *denotation* of a word and to distinguish it from the word's own varied *usages* and *connotations* which often attend it, in certain contexts.

Xenon (LODGer, noun; also *Xenizō,* LODGize, verb, and *Xenia,* LODGing, verbal noun) is an excellent example of

what I have in mind.[1] In fact, problems of translation which may appear at first to reflect the "bias" of the Concordant Version translator, may later on be seen to point simply to the inadequacies and shortcomings of those translations which present contrary renderings. Indeed, in consideration of what we may suppose a translator's own perspective to be, if in the case of a certain translator the possibility of "dispensational bias" cannot be ruled out, in the case of another translator, neither may the possibility of lack of administrational enlightenment (whether or not the product of anti-dispensational bias) be ignored.

The meaning of this term in question, *xenon,* is simply, "lodger," as a noun, and "lodge," as a verb. For example: "This man is *lodging* with a certain Simon, a tanner, whose house is beside the sea" (Acts 10:6). Similarly, "And, shouting, they inquired to ascertain if Simon, surnamed Peter, is *lodging* in this place" (Acts 10:18). And, "Send, then, into Joppa, and call for Simon, who is surnamed Peter. He is *lodging* in the house of Simon, a tanner, beside the sea" (Acts 10:32).

All the occurrences of *xenon* which demand "stranger" in an English version are figurative. Indeed, since figurative usage depends on literal meaning for its force, the fact that, as a figure, the thought intended is that of one with whom one is unfamiliar, which is to say, a stranger, is itself proof that *xenon* means "lodger," which, idiomatically, is "guest."

In most cases, the noun, *xenon* (LODGer), is used with the connotative idea in view of that of one who is a "stranger." This is a compound figure, both of association (metonymy) and likeness (simile/metaphor). Fully expressed, the sense of "a *stranger* was I [and you took Me in]" (Matt. 25:35), is "I was *like* a lodger—with respect to the *associated* thought that I was *unfamiliar,* which is to say, *a stranger*—to you [and (yet) you took Me in]." This could be expanded into, "I was one who reminds one of a lodger, and yet you took Me in."

1. See Keyword Concordance, entries "guest," "lodge," and "lodging"; pp.136,137; 182).

Nevertheless, *xenon* does not mean "stranger"; and, neither can it always be rendered by this expression. We cannot say, "Greeting you is Gaius, my *stranger*" (Rom.16:23), but must translate, "Greeting you is Gaius, my *host,*" for Gaius was Paul's "lodger" (lit., "GAIUS THE LODGer OF-ME). As the one by whom Paul was lodged, Gaius was his "host."

Similarly, if we give this word its proper sense, we can hardly speak of "repatriated *strangers*" (Acts 17:21). In this verse, the Authorized Version translates "the Athenians and the *strangers* which were there," practically ignoring the word *repatriate* (which it renders by "which were there"). Confounding the issue still further, in Acts 2:10, the AV translates the Greek for "repatriates" (*epidêmeō*) *strangers,* even though it clearly refers to returned Jews or proselytes who had come back to their own country. So, in Acts 17:21, the repatriated Athenian "lodgers" were probably those who, incidentally, had *been* "strangers" in other countries, but now had returned to their own land, but lived as lodgers (which is to say, as *guests* of their hosts) in Athens. Hence we translate, "repatriated guests."

EXTENDED CONNOTATIONS OF USAGE

Actually, if it is a question of a translator's own bias in the case of a passage such as Ephesians 2:11-19, this would be reflected not by the translation "guest" but by the rendering "stranger." "Guest," unlike "stranger," covers both possible classes of lodgers (namely, familiar and unfamiliar guests); hence it is neutral, *not* interpretative.

Similarly, we should only conclude that a word is used figuratively when its literal meaning is necessarily prohibited. To insist upon a figurative sense when, rightly under-

stood, a word's literal sense clearly fits the context, is simply misinterpretation. Yet this is just what is done by those who insist that in Ephesians 2:11 and 19 *xenon* should be rendered "strangers."

Even further afield from the meaning "lodge," the idea being developed first from "lodge" and then second from "stranger," is the practice of using this same word for the thought, "be strange."[2] These occurrences are marked as figures of association (note the small cap "A") in the Keyword Concordance, which explains: "As lodgers were usually wayfarers from distant places, [*xenizō*] came to signify 'be strange,' [even] as our [English] '*far* fetched.' As there were few public khans in ancient times, a traveler was at the same time a guest and a stranger in the private family where he found entertainment [i.e., lodging, hospitality]."[3]

IN RESPECT TO *FLESH*

Few seem to be able to grasp what the actual "rule" of concordant rendering truly is. It has to do with grasping the essence of a word and always keeping that in mind, even where it cannot be ideally expressed. Also, one must distinguish between the most *common* English lexical *definition* of a word which appears in a translation, and the *intended* thought which the translator wished to convey. An example of what I have in mind here may be found in the preceding paragraph in the word "entertainment." Upon hearing this word, most would conceive the idea of amusement or diversion, and yet that is not the intended thought at all.

The point of our Ephesian 2:11-19 passage is that "in

2. e.g., ". . . Can we know what this new teaching is, which is spoken by you? For *strange* is what you are bringing to our hearing . . ." (Acts 17:19,20); and, "Beloved, do not think *strange* the conflagration among you, which is becoming a trial to you, as of something *strange* befalling you" (1 Peter 4:12).

3. Keyword Concordance, p.182.

that era" to which Paul refers, *in flesh* (i.e., *in this respect,* as Paul even repeats himself for emphasis), those of the nations who are members of the body of Christ were without God *in the world.* In the system of things (i.e., "the world"), in the era of which Paul speaks, such ones (namely, the "Gentile believers")—*in the sense to which the apostle refers*—were apart from Christ, *being alienated from the citizenship of Israel.* Then, they could only be termed temporary "lodgers" (or "guests") of the promise covenants of old (*cp* Rom.9:4; 15:27).

The context (see verse 11) deals with the believers of the nations as a group ("you," plural), in an era in which they were, corporately, mere "guests" of the promise covenants, in contrast to "now"—at the very time of the penning of this epistle with its mature revelations—when they have become fellow-citizens of those saints of Israel who were themselves members of the body of Christ.

In flesh, such ones had no expectation given to them; therefore, in this respect and considered corporately, they had no expectation. Hence, *in flesh* and *in the world*—in ethnic heritage, and in the system of things as then constituted—they were indeed "without God" ("without" is plural; they were the "withouts"; that is, in flesh and in the world, then they were outside that sphere of blessing which pertained to Israel and to her proselytes alone).

Now in the period before they first believed, they certainly had not had even this much of a standing. That is, they were by no means then, in the days of their unbelief, lodgers or guests of the promise covenants! Therefore, the phrase "in that era," to which Paul refers, cannot refer to the time before they believed, as popularly assumed.

Even if we were to translate as "strangers" (instead of "guests") the sense would not be that of those who had no connection with the promise covenants at all (as most assume is the sense of the passage, from the Author-

ized Version's misleading rendering "strangers *from*"), but rather, that of those wayfarers who had a certain "temporary dwelling" *with* these divine provisions (inasmuch as they were "strangers" or "guests" *of* them).

The Authorized Version in particular and perhaps all versions whose translators have not recognized the nature and place of Paul's evangel and ministry, have corrupted the true sense of this passage. The Greek word for "from" (*apo*) is not in the text; and, the case is not dative (which signifies "to," which, by extension, could entail a similar thought to "from"), but genitive (which signifies "of").

Neither should the genitive form be interpreted in an ablative sense (i.e., "from"), for at least three good reasons:

(1) Paul is referring to a period in which what he says of these Gentile believers was true concerning them simply in a specific, limited sense, "in flesh." (2) Considering this passage objectively, there is no reason to suppose that in characterizing the believers of the nations as being then, literally, "lodgers of" the promise covenants, the apostle has in mind any connotative thought in which he contemplates them especially as "strangers" with respect to these covenants, especially in any sense which would wholly bar such persons from any positive connection with them. And (3), within the wider context which Paul has been considering throughout the epistle even unto this point, the phrase "in *that* era" naturally refers back not to the days of their unbelief, but to the period in which they first believed: "In Whom you also—on hearing the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation—*in Whom on believing also,* you are sealed with the holy spirit of promise . . . . Therefore, I also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers . . ." (Eph.1:13,15). Clearly, *that* is the era to which the phrase "in *that* era" refers.

This entire passage (Ephesians 2:11-19) concerns a *physical* difference between the Uncircumcision and Circumcision members of the ecclesia which is Christ's body. This difference was once ("in that era") significant among them, but now, it is no longer so. It has nothing to do with the *spiritual* blessings which the Uncircumcision believers once enjoyed.

Paul's point is that while those of the Uncircumcision who were blessed according to his evangel in that early era of the revelation of his evangel surely had a certain range of blessing (though a position that precluded any place for them before God "in flesh"), now, with the fullness of his message made known, they have become fellow-*citizens* of their fellow believers in the body of Christ, who are Israelites; now they are no longer mere sojourners or guests at Israel's board but men of full rights themselves. (The AV rendering "foreigners" in Ephesians 2:19 is false and misleading; it should read "sojourners," as the AV translators themselves sometimes render the Greek; *cp* Heb.11:9; Acts 7:6.)

Even in flesh, the Israelite member of the ecclesia now has no ascendancy over the non-Israelite member, for he himself has no standing in flesh (*cp* Phil.3:4-9). Indeed, neither does he need any such standing in flesh, for the privileged position which he now enjoys *in spirit* renders all such fleshly advantages wholly redundant.

This great truth had not yet been revealed at the time of Paul's earlier writings. Only "now" has it been made known. It should especially be noted that this glorious benefit—accomplished through the work of Christ's cross—is not a blessing of the evangel of the Circumcision, which precludes all who are not proselytes and demands circumcision even of these (*cf* Isa.56:1-7).

"This section deals only with the place that believers among the nations occupied *in flesh,* as physically uncir-

cumcised, in the era before this epistle was penned . . . . *Physically* only may it be said that they had been apart from Christ, aliens, having no expectation, without God. Trophimus, the Ephesian would understand this, for when he was in Jerusalem the mere rumor that he had approached as near to the reputed dwelling place of God as a Jew, caused the whole city to rise up against Paul who, they supposed, had brought him into the sanctuary (Acts 21:29). What Paul was accused of doing then, physically, he does now, in spirit, and far more, for we have free access to the Father's presence.

"[As to Christ's razing of the central wall of the barrier in Ephesians 2:14, we note that] the central wall of the barrier was the so-called 'soreg,' a stone wall, for a partition, with inscriptions which forbade any foreigner to go in under pain of death. One of these was recently unearthed with the following inscription: 'No alien is to enter within the balustrade and embankment about the sacred place. Whoever is caught will be responsible for his death, which will ensue.'"[4]

Paul speaks as well of Christ as "nullifying the law of precepts in decrees, that He should be creating the two, in Himself, into one new humanity, making peace; and should be reconciling both in one body to God through the cross, killing the enmity in it" (Eph.2:15,16).

Here I would especially note the decrees issued from Jerusalem by the apostles (Acts 15:20; 16:4). While these dogmatic directives once may have had their place, this is no longer so for the members of the body of Christ.

Also I cannot help but think as well of the innumerable "authoritative decrees" which have been issued down the centuries, set forth by church leaders, to which they ever sought to subject their followers. If even the decrees of the

4. A. E. Knoch, Concordant Commentary, p.290.

Jerusalem apostles are now to be deemed null and void, since Christ alone is our Head apart from any human hierarchy, how much more should we repudiate all the myriad claims of the hosts of others who would seek to lord over us in matters of faith and faithfulness?

Christ dealt with "the enmity," by dealing with it "in His flesh." He did so by "killing" it through the cross (*cf* Eph. 2:15,16). This enmity, which has been justly *killed* through the cross of Christ, is the national or race hatred between Jew and Gentile. Since God reckons it as killed, it can have no legitimate place in the body of Christ, in which there is neither Jew nor yet Greek, for we all are one in Christ Jesus (*cf* Gal.3:28).

"Our teaching that the believers of the nations, in flesh, were *guests of,* rather than *strangers to* the covenants is fully confirmed by coupling it with *sojourners* in verse 19. Now to sojourn in a place you must *be there,* as Abraham was in the land of promise (Heb.11:9), or as the sons of Israel in the land of Egypt (Acts 7:6; 13:17), or Moses in Midian (Acts 7:29). Abraham was in the land and lived on its produce. Israel was in Egypt and found sustenance there. So the believers of the nations were *sojourners* in that which belonged to Israel. This is only a slightly different aspect of their guesthood. Those who sojourn in a land can hardly be strangers to it in the sense of having no part of it."[5]

It is the secret of God's will to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth. And, through Christ, it is God's purpose to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Eph. 1:10; Col.1:20). Since this is so, how I rejoice in meditating on this most glorious truth. J.R.C.

5. A. E. Knoch, from our companion study on this passage: "Guests *Of* or Strangers *To?*" *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.31, pp.149-160.

THE ESTABLISHING OF DAVID'S HOUSE

5 + **All** the **tribes of Israel** |**came to David** at[d] **Hebron and** |[sa]**declared,** › **saying**–**, Behold us, your bone and your flesh** are **we!** 2 [mr] **Heretofore,** [mr] [i]**while Saul** [b]**was**– **king over us, you**´ [b]**were the** one [c]**bringing** `**Israel forth** to war **and** ·**bringing** it in**; and Yahweh** |**said to you, You**´ **shall shepherd** `**My people** `**Israel, and you**´ **shall become** › **governor over Israel.** 3 +**So all** the **elders of Israel** |**came to the king** at[d] **Hebron; and** ·**king David** |**contracted** a **covenant** ›**with them in Hebron before Yahweh; and they** |**anointed** `**David** ›**as king over Israel.**

4 **David** was **thirty years old** [i]**when he** became **king**–**,** [7]**and**[cs] **he reigned forty years.** 5 **In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.**

6 +**After** this ·**king** [7]**David**[cs] |**went** +**with his men** to **Jerusalem** ›**against the Jebusite dwelling** in **the land,** + who |[sa]**declared to David,** › **saying**–**, You shall not enter** [bd]**here, for** [if]**even the blind and the lame** will **ward you off**–**,** › [sa]**thinking**–**, David shall not** ever **enter** [bd]**here.** 7 +**Yet David** |**seized** `the **fastness of Zion,** [s]**which** is now the **City of David.** 8 + **David** |**said** [i]**on** ·**that day,** Who**ever** would **smite**| the **Jebusite should assault** [i]**through** the **conduit** +**both** `**the lame and** `**the blind, hated**| by **David's soul. Therefore they** |**say,** The **blind and** the **lame shall not enter** › **the House.**

9 + **David** |**dwelt in** the **fastness and** |**called** › **it** the **City of David.** +**Then David** |**built** up the **surrounding** area, **from the Millo** bulwark + **inward.** 10 +**Thus David** |**went** on [go]**get-**

ting– + **greater, and Yahweh Elohim of hosts** was **with him.**

11 + **Hiram king of Tyre** |**sent messengers to David** +**with cedar timber,** + **carpenters and sidewall masons** + who |**built** a [in]**palace for David.** 12 +**Thus David** |**realized that Yahweh had established him** ›**as king over Israel and** [t] **had** up**lifted his kingship** [t]**for** the [p]**sake of His people Israel.**

13 + **After coming**– **from Hebron, David** |**took** [fr]**more concubines and wives** [f]**in Jerusalem, and** [fr]**more sons and daughters were** |**born to David.** 14 + **These** are the **names of** ·those **born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua,** + **Shobab,** + **Nathan, and Solomon;** 15 + **Ibhar,** + **Elishua,** + **Nepheg, and Japhia;** 16 + **Elishama,** + **Eliada, and Eliphelet.**

THE FIFTH CHAPTER gives a summary of several events in David's reign and does not list them in chronological order. The building up and fortifying of Jerusalem, the commercial ties with king Hiram of Tyre, and the growth of David's family are all things which developed over a number of years. The contents of chapter five are all preparatory for chapter six, which begins a new page in Israel's history, with the coming of the coffer of the covenant to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was about to become the place with which the name of God would be associated for all future time (Psa.132, esp. vs.13,14).

THE THRICE ANOINTED KING

David was anointed king by Samuel (1 Sam.16:1-13) when he was but a youth. Later, he was anointed king over the house of Judah (2 Sam.2:4). And, finally, he was anointed king over all Israel. These anointings divide David's career into three segments which typically represent different aspects of the reign of Christ. The Lord Jesus was born King of the Jews (Matt.2:2). Yet, like the period of David's first anointing, the Lord reigned only

over those who were burdened and poor and dissatisfied with the current regime. Similar to the second anointing, Christ will be seen as King at His return as the Lion of the tribe of Judah when He comes to lead Israel and rule with the millennial rod of iron. And finally He will rule as the Lamb, when He brings all into subjection to God with the blessings of life and peace.

The first three verses of 2 Samuel 5 and 1 Chronicles 11 relate the fact of David's coronation, but the scope of the inaugural celebration is passed over. 1 Chronicles 12:23-40 records numbers of military hosts from the different tribes that were in attendance. Some 350,000 warriors and their leaders were counted. There was a three day festival of celebration with great joy for the whole country. It was a most notable time, and may be a representation of a future reception of David's greater Son in Israel.

THIRTY

"David was thirty years old when he became king" (2 Sam.5:4). There is some symbolic significance attached to this age. Joseph was thirty when he became co-regent with Pharaoh (Gen.41:46). Thirty years was commonly the age for beginning Levitical service (Num.4:3,23,30; 1 Chron.23:3). And Jesus Christ was thirty years old when He was baptized by John and commenced His public ministry. All of these associations with the age of thirty have in common the idea of a fresh or new beginning, and of an anointing or dedication for special service.

David, being the eighth son of Jesse, speaks of a new beginning. He received this new commission after his long persecution by Saul which culminated in self-exile to another country. Joseph was brought to the throne after being symbolically killed and cast into a pit by his brothers, and after being condemned and sentenced to prison. The Levites were a fresh beginning in that they were the

replacements for all of the firstborn of all the tribes of Israel (Num.8:14-18). And they were dedicated especially to the service of the tabernacle and the priesthood.

All of these thoughts come before us in Christ at the age of thirty. His baptism suggests several things. With the descending of the Spirit of God in the form of a dove is His anointing. The baptism also speaks of the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom.6:4). And His death and resurrection, in turn, bring to mind His persecution and murder by jealous brethren, His condemnation for sins He did not commit, His birth as Firstborn from among the dead, His entry into heaven itself performing the service of the Melchizedekian priesthood, and the absence of the long awaited King.

CAPTURE OF THE IMPREGNABLE FORTRESS

David's first recorded action upon his final anointing, was the capture of Jerusalem (2 Sam.5:6-9). The parallel in Christ's ministry would be the reign during the eon of the eons. The first event of that final eon recorded in John's vision is the new Jerusalem descending on a new earth through a new heaven.

The account in 1 Chronicles 11:4-9 informs us that David's campaign was supported by all the tribes. Apparently David made the acquisition of the new capital the determining factor for selecting the commander in chief for the nation's armed forces. David had pronounced a curse on Joab for the murder of Abner, and he opened the position of commander in chief to the leader who was first in storming the stronghold of Zion. Joab succeeded in winning the position.

The terrain of the area made Jerusalem virtually impregnable. From the time Joshua brought Israel into the promised land, Jerusalem had never been completely subjected to Israelite control (Judges 1:21). The name "Jerusalem"

means the "tenancy or possession of peace." With this in mind, the personal application is beautiful. The elusive possession of peace is something for which all humanity strives. It is only with the coming of the Beloved, Who knows the secrets of the water of life, that this great acquisition of peace can be made.

The Jebusites held Jerusalem. "Jebus" means "trodden," or, "trample." Certainly the situations and pressures of life trample any hope we have of obtaining a lasting peace by ourselves. This may also hold future prophetic significance since Jerusalem is to be "trodden by the nations, till the eras of the nations may be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). The Jebusites were so confident of their security that they boasted it could be safely guarded by the blind and the lame (vs.6-8). There is a similarity between this and the condition of Jerusalem when the Lord Jesus came there. He should have been received as their King—the King of Righteousness and King of Peace. But Jerusalem was held by those who were blind to the truth and those who would not walk in the truth they understood. Jerusalem continues to be trodden, because, in her condition of callousness, Israel is like savorless salt—fit for nothing except to be cast out and trampled by men (Matt.5:13).

But David captured Jerusalem from the Jebusites. He did so by gaining access to the fortress through a conduit (*cf* 2 Sam.5:8). most likely to the city's only natural water supply, the spring Gihon. The site of Jerusalem is so high and rocky that it could not have been a fortress if there had not been a perennial water supply. But the spring Gihon has been such a supply, enabling Jerusalem to be a continual habitation for several millennia. Warren's shaft, a forty foot vertical access shaft, is believed to have been the Jebusite water access that Joab used to make a surprise entrance into Jerusalem. Later king Hezekiah had another passage dug through the hill and had the spring

covered over to deprive the Assyrians of water and provide Jerusalem with water during Assyrian siege (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chron.32:3,4). The pool of Siloam was then created as the receptacle for the spring's flow (2 Chron. 32:30). The idea of "conduit" is very similar to "sent" or "commissioned." This explains this name "Siloam" (meaning SENT) referred to in John 9:7. Today Gihon is known as the Virgin's Fountain.

The name "Gihon" means "to gush forth." The spring received this name because once or twice daily the flow of the spring increases and gushes forth a large quantity. In wetter seasons it may gush forth several times a day. Gihon is also the name of one of the four original rivers from the fountainhead of Eden (Gen.2:13). The thought of gushing waters comes to us throughout the Scriptures. "Now on the last, the great day of the festival, Jesus stood and cries, saying, 'If anyone should be thirsting, let him come to Me and drink. He who is believing in Me, according as the scripture said, out of his bowel shall gush rivers of living water'" (John 7:37,38).

Paul speaks of "gushing grace" in the last half of Romans 5 when he uses the word "gratuity." The thought is a giving that gushes forth freely. And if that were not enough, he heightens it further with his use of the words "superabounds," "superabundant," and "superexceeds," to show that the "gush-giving" of God is of an "all-encompassing" nature. Christ is the channel of God's Gihon of grace.

This theme flows throughout the scriptures, whether it be found in the passages mentioned, or in the river that issued from the sanctuary in Ezekiel 47:1-10. Again, in Revelation 22 the river issues out of the throne of God and the Lambkin. "To him who is thirsting I shall be giving of the spring of the water of life gratuitously" (Rev.21:6). The river Gihon encompasses the whole land of darkness ("Cush" means *dark; cf* Gen.2:13). The throne of the Maj-

esty in the heights is the true source of this spring of grace that gushes forth, and its flow encompasses all. In Christ is the peace of God that is superior to every frame of mind, the peace that garrisons our hearts and apprehensions in Christ Jesus (Phil.4:7).

The Beloved has won the impossible battle that secures our permanent possession of peace, freely giving us the water of life. One day Israel too will bathe off the double blindness of her callousness that was added to the natural blindness we mortals inherently possess. This is pictured in the mud Christ applied to the eyes of the man born blind, which he was instructed to wash away in the pool of Siloam, fed by the spring Gihon (John 9). When the Beloved secures Jerusalem, Israel will fulfill her commission, and Jerusalem will become the place of the fountain from which the world's thirst is quenched. The mention of Hiram is typical of the future subjection of the nations to Israel in that time of blessing. There is another chapter to the Beloved's acquisition of Mt. Zion from the Jebusites, but that must await the final chapter of 2 Samuel.

THE INCREASE OF DAVID'S FAMILY

In the third chapter the sons born to David were all listed with their mothers. We noted how this typified the fruit borne in one's life when various virtues are embraced. In the fifth chapter the mothers are omitted because the emphasis is not on the experiences of life and how these things shape us. Instead the emphasis is that which follows experience—the realization of Who God is and glorying in Him. The gifts of peace and new life which result from God's choice bring forth a glorying evidenced in the "Eli-" names: "God of supplication," "God of hearing," "God [is] knowing," and "God of deliverance." These things characterize our lives more as we progress in maturity.

J. Philip Scranton

PAUL'S WILL FOR US

PAUL leaves us in no doubt what lies at the center of his mind. He is a slave of *Jesus Christ,* a called *apostle,* severed for the *evangel of God* concerning *His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.* He obtained *grace and apostleship* for faith-obedience among *all nations.* He offers divine service to God in the *evangel of His Son.* His prayers focus on the sharing of *spiritual grace* with the *called of Jesus Christ.*

The apostle has a WELL-MESSAGE, an evangel, a good word concerning Jesus Christ, to bring for those God has called among all nations. It is a message of grace to be taken by faith (which is the source and foundation of obedience). As such it is unique, surprising and unexpected. As Paul continues to unfold this message in this epistle it becomes abundantly clear that it has to do with what Christ has done, not what we must do. And it is concerned with what Christ has gained for us, not with what God requires of us.

NOT WANTING IGNORANCE

Paul does not want us to be ignorant of his single-minded focus on his commission to bring God's evangel of grace concerning Jesus Christ to the nations. The Greek word for "want" is generally rendered "will" in the CV, and speaks of a choice of the mind. It parallels the word "purposed" in the following clause. Both one's *will* and one's *purpose* are decisions of the mind which direct one's actions. Of course only *God's* will and purpose are certain to be achieved, and the human will and purpose may

be thwarted. But that does not change the fact that Paul's will in this case is not simply a wish, but a decisive choice which engages both his mind and action.

Paul is clear in what he wants and what he does not want for the believer. Elsewhere he states he does not want the believer to be ignorant of the secret concerning Israel's callousness (Rom.11:25), of the types in the Hebrew Scriptures which are for our admonition (1 Cor.10:1-13), of the spiritual endowments (1 Cor.12:1), of his affliction in the flesh and confidence in God (2 Cor.1:8-11), and of our expectation of being always together with our Lord (1 Thess.4:13-18). Now here in Romans 1:13 we learn that Paul's will for us is that we not be ignorant of his focus on the evangel and its proclamation. These all are concerns that occupied the apostle's heart and directed his deeds, and they all relate to the evangel and its meaning to the lives of the believers.

ROMANS 1:13-16*a*

We have seen in Romans 1:1-12 that Paul was focused on the good news from God concerning His Son, and fully aware that God had sent him to bring it, not simply to those who had not heard of Christ before, but as a word from God that went beyond anything that had been heard before.

Now **I do not want** *you to be ignorant, brethren,*
that often **I purposed** *to come to you (and was prevented hitherto)*
that **I should be having** *some fruit among you also, according as among the rest of the nations.*
To both Greeks and barbarians, to both wise and foolish, a **debtor am I.**
Thus this **eagerness of mine** *to bring the evangel to you also, who are in Rome.*
For **not ashamed am I** *of the evangel . . . .*

Paul is not occupied with himself but with the commission God had given him. What Paul did not want, what he purposed, what he would have, his feelings of indebtedness and eagerness and lack of shame, all centered on the evangel. Beginning at verse 8 and ending here with the opening clause of verse 16 almost every verb is in the first person with the pronouns *I* and *mine* predominating. But this is always in connection with the message of grace that Paul had received from the risen Lord. The apostle does not boast in himself, but he is acutely conscious of what God has set before him to do. Paul is not a boaster, but, as he acknowledges here, a debtor.

What Paul writes here corresponds with his insistence in Galatians that "the evangel which is being brought by me is not in accord with man. For neither did I accept it from a man, nor was I taught it [by a man], but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal.1:11,12). This was so crucial that he exclaimed, "If ever we also, or a messenger out of heaven, should be bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you, let him be anathema!" (Gal.1:8).

Hence it was important that the evangel as Paul accepted it (*cf* 1 Cor.15:3) be brought to Rome. Furthermore, Paul's recording of this evangel by pen in this and other letters, would become God's means for conveying it to us. Paul's stress in the first chapter of Romans on his will and purpose and eagerness to carry out the commission God gave him should serve to draw our frank and serious attention to what he has to say. The apostle's intensity calls for our concentration.

PURPOSE OFTEN PREVENTED

It is as true of the believer as of the unbeliever that "A man's heart devises his way, yet Yahweh establishes his steps" (Prov.16:9). Paul's will and purpose were fully in accord with his commission and reflected the spirit of the

evangel. It was a message of grace and love and power, and with such it motivated Paul's heart. Nevertheless, for a long while, he was prevented from carrying out his purpose.

This prevention must finally be attributed to God. Circumstances, indeed, the stratagems of the Adversary, were more immediate causes. But Paul was aware that all is out of God, and God has His reasons for hindering (*cf* Rom.15:22) Paul's coming to Rome for the time being. God would see that he later came to Rome, but it would be in God's own time and under unusual and humanly unforeseen circumstances which God would clearly arrange for all to see.

Looking back, we can see that Paul had to come to Rome through the furious turbulence in Jerusalem, recorded in Acts 21:27-36, which was underlined by the united voice of Israel, saying (hauntingly reflecting their cry against the Lord), "Away from the earth with such a one, for it is not befitting for him to live!" (Acts 22:22). Paul would come to Rome, but as a prisoner who had testified as to the evangel before kings and soldiers and sailors, through riot and storm and shipwreck, in humility and dishonor. Although Paul often was prevented, nevertheless God was to assure him, through a messenger, "Fear not, Paul! Before Caesar you must stand" (Acts 27:24).

"And thus to Rome we come . . . . Now when we entered Rome, Paul was permitted to remain by himself together with the soldiers who guarded him" (Acts 28:14,16). "Now he remains two whole years in his own hired house, and he welcomed all those going in to him, heralding the kingdom of God, and teaching that which concerns the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unforbidden" (Acts 28:30,31).

HAVING FRUIT

By the time Paul came to Rome, this letter, with its spiritual grace, would have reached them, and fruit would have begun to be borne in their lives. The fruit which Paul wanted

to have among them was not an increase in the number of his converts for his boasting. It was indeed fruit from his labors in bringing the evangel, but it would never exist at all unless God made the evangel effective in them. "Now what is Paul? . . . I plant . . . but God makes it grow up" (1 Cor.3:6). Paul's "living in flesh" meant "fruit from work" (Phil.1:22), but it also meant fruit for their account (Phil. 4:17). It was the results of the operation of God's spirit in those who are believing His word to them. "Now the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control" (Gal.5:22,23).

The spirit of God bears this fruit in the ground of the evangel. It comes "by the hearing of faith" (Gal.3:3,5). The message of grace concerning the faith of Jesus Christ, brought by Paul and accepted in faith by those chosen by God, brings love and joy and peace into our lives.

In this letter to the Romans, Paul will already speak of this fruit. "Now thanks be to God that you were slaves of Sin, yet you obey from the heart the type of teaching to which you were given over . . . . For when you were slaves of Sin, you were free as to Righteousness. What fruit, then, had you then?—of which you are now ashamed, for, indeed, the consummation of those things is death. Yet now, being freed from Sin, yet enslaved to God, you have your fruit for holiness" (Rom.6:17,20,21). And, as he shares more riches of spiritual grace in this letter, the fruit would increase as God imparts faith.

In not wanting the Romans to be ignorant of his continuing purpose to come to them, he was wanting them to know the power of the evangel for salvation even in their present lives. He wanted to see the fruit of the spirit being borne in their hearts and actions. The evangel Paul was bringing was the means, as God graciously granted faith, for love and joy and peace and patience, for kindness and goodness and faithfulness and meekness, and for self-con-

trol to become established in the character of the Romans and in us as well.

PAUL THE DEBTOR

No one really likes to be a debtor, least of all this proud Hebrew of Hebrews, who as to the righteousness of the law was becoming perfect. Under the sway of a strong military regime in a world dominated by the wisdom of the Greeks and Roman legalism, Saul of Tarsus had stood aloof in his superiority and privilege of birth and knowledge of the Scriptures and the offering of divine service.

But God had made Paul a debtor to these people who were so ignorant of God and far off from Him, not just Greeks but Barbarians as well. It was the evangel God had revealed to Paul that made Paul the debtor of such sinners. The evangel recognized that all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God, and this was the background for the revelation of gratuitous justification and peace. As it rescued Saul out of his own wretchedness, so would it rescue sinners, regardless of fleshly relationships, in accord with God's own purpose.

We can understand Paul's conviction of indebtedness as we read his testimonies to God's grace in his own life. "A wretched man am I! What will rescue me out of this body of death? Grace! I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.7:24,25). "Grateful am I to Him Who invigorates me, Christ Jesus, our Lord, for He deems me faithful, assigning me a service, I, who formerly was a calumniator and a persecutor and an outrager: but I was shown mercy, seeing that I do it being ignorant, in unbelief. Yet the grace of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, foremost of whom am I. But therefore was I shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ should be displaying all His patience, for a pattern of those who are about to be believing on Him for life eonian" (1 Tim.1:12-16).

THE EAGERNESS OF FAITH

This message of overwhelming grace produced an eagerness in Paul to share it with others. When Paul cited Isaiah 52:7 in Romans 10:15, "How beautiful are the feet of those bringing an evangel of good!" he was expressing the happiness the evangel brings to both the evangelist and those who are believing it. But whether or not God gives faith to the hearer, there is an eagerness in heralding the evangel that stems from the evangel itself.

We observe also that Paul's eagerness to bring the evangel given to him, stirs a response of eagerness in the believer to listen to and heed its every detail, an eagerness such as the Bereans had for the Sacred Scriptures (Acts 17:11). This also, like Paul's eagerness to evangelize, is an eagerness which stems from faith. What we believe is such good news, so exactly what is needed in this world of greed and struggle, selfish prejudice and hypocrisy, turmoil and death, that we long to become well acquainted with it. We believe this great message of good is true, and because it is true we are eager to know its every feature and encourage its proclamation.

NOT ASHAMED

When Paul expresses his enthusiasm for the evangel here, he expresses it negatively. In Galatians 6:14 he speaks of boasting in the cross of Christ Jesus. But here at the beginning of Romans he expresses this same thought in a way that boldly denies the most common objections to it. The evangel is a message of the shameful death of the Son of God. It is a message of gratuitous justification, apart from demands of human works and self-improvement. It speaks of human weakness and God's power. It

speaks of human unrighteousness and God's righteousness. It speaks of human enmity and of God's love. It is contrary to our religious notions of giving to God so that He can give to us. By saying he is not ashamed of the evangel, Paul is saying that none of these aspects of the evangel, which would have stunned him as Saul of Tarsus, cast the slightest shadow on the message he is bringing.

In speaking of Christ's shameful death as the Sin Offering (2 Cor.5:21), the evangel declares that this alone saves humanity from sin and death. This is entirely apart from human contributions, apart from law and human works, apart from any human achievements. It says we are hopeless and helpless in ourselves. And it says that our most shameful sin, the crucifixion of God's Son, is the very channel of our deliverance from sin.

There is so much bad and bleak about humanity. But this message says that we cannot do any good to make the slightest change in our ultimate situation. Paul's letter to the Romans will make this clear. The evangel says that God Himself must deliver us and do so gratuitously in His grace, and that *He does so* in and through the death of His Son at the hand of sinners. The consequence is "life's justifying" (Rom.5:18).

The evangel recognizes the shame of humanity, and it spells it out clearly, but Paul is not ashamed of the evangel. That is because, in speaking of the shame of humanity, the evangel makes known the glory of God in saving and justifying the sinner.

With this thought at the beginning of Romans 1:16 we leave the theme of Paul's enthusiasm for the evangel and come to the evangel itself of which the apostle and the believer are not ashamed. With eagerness we are prepared to listen to it once again.

D.H.H.

CREATION BY GOD

IN THE FIRST instalment of this series, we listed five ways God has spoken to humans: in creation, through prophets, in His Son, through the apostles, and presently through the Sacred Scriptures. In this second brief article on things of consequence, we want to examine in more detail the creation of God.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD

We commonly think that in Genesis we find reference to the absolute beginning: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen.1:1 AV). It is puzzling, therefore, at first, to find these words in Revelation 3:14, "Now this is saying the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, and *God's creative Original.*"

There was Someone Who was the beginning of the creation of God. He could speak, and was the First of creation. Who was this? Who was speaking to the messengers of the ecclesias?

It was Christ, Who is "the First and the Last, and the Living One: and I became dead, and lo! living am I for the eons of the eons" (Rev.2:18). There can be little doubt that God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the speaker Who was the beginning of the creation of God!

This is further supported by a passage in Colossians: ". . . the Son of His love, in Whom we are having the deliverance, the pardon of sins, Who is the Image of the invisible God, *Firstborn of every creature*, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the

visible and the invisible . . ." (Col.1:13-16). Examine the context here; the Subject again is surely Christ, Who is identified here by the significant and magnificent title, "the Son of God's love."

The facts set forth in the Colossians context are truly awe-inspiring. Christ is God's Complement! He is visible, and the Image of *the invisible God*. In Him is *all* created. He is Firstborn from among the dead. He is First in the universe, not only in time but in position as well. *All* will be reconciled through Him. He will reconcile not only mankind but the celestials as well. All of this, and more, is found in only a few verses in Colossians 1:12-20. Read them carefully and prayerfully.

Both of the two paramount points in all history are recorded there: the creation ("Firstborn of every creature" in Whom all is created) and the resurrection of the Son of God ("Firstborn from among the dead"). His creation was *long* before His birth in Bethlehem *and before* the creation of the heavens and the earth.

FOR IN HIM IS ALL CREATED

God put into the Son of His love the power and the resources to create *all*. The remainder of creation was Christ's work. That included not only the earth, but the heavens, the visible and the invisible, the beings grouped under ". . . thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him" (Col.1:16-18).

Robert B. Killen

FOR FURTHER READING:

1. God's Eonian Purpose, by Adlai Loudy, pages 55-64 ("The Beginning of Creation").
2. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.70, pages 245-260 ("The Secret of Christ," by A. E. Knoch).

Contents:

193 Editorial
195 The Increase of Humanity
201 Yahweh Regrets and Grieves
207 The Grace of God in Truth;
Saving Grace for All Mankind
219 The God of the Good News
229 Why All the Suffering?
232 Conflicts with the Philistines
235 Through the Prophets
238 Hebrew Prophecy

SEPTEMBER, 2002

Volume XCIII **Number 5**

New Edition:

The Divine Calendar

As in the affairs of daily life, we need the kindly offices of a calendar to tell us the day or week or month or year, so, God has given us a calendar in order that we may locate ourselves in His grand affairs with which we are identified and in which we take an active interest.

Universal history may be considered from various viewpoints. Its divisions vary according to the special aspect. It falls into: (1) Two Grand Creations (besides three special creations); (2) Three Heavens and Earths (as to its material basis); (3) Five Worlds (as to moral Constitution); (4) Five Eons (as to the duration, character and disposition of each world); (5) Twelve Economies (for purposes of human administration); (6) A Week's Work (for the restoration of the second earth); (7) Four Monarchies (in regard to governing principles); (8) Three Days (as regards the direction of affairs), besides various Periods or Eras, concerned with special occurrences or extraordinary dealings which arise.

In order to group these grand arrangements at a glance, we have prepared a chart synchronizing the various divine activities.

Accordingly, this new publication features a high-quality reproduction of our original, large wall chart, now in reduced 11" x 17" format. This chart may also be viewed or printed on line, linked from:

http://concordant.org/expohtml/TheEons/TheDivineCalendar.html

The Divine Calendar (chart with booklet)

($6.00; includes 11" x 17" color chart and companion booklet; shipping and handling: add 10%, $1.50 minimum; California residents please add sales tax; foreign orders payable in U.S. funds).

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 2002
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE

EDITORIAL

WHEN two passages of Scripture concerning God seem to clash, the one which most truly reflects His power and wisdom directed to a good end, as presented in Genesis One, must govern our understanding of the other. In 1 Samuel 15:11 and 35 we read that Yahweh regretted making Saul king, but in verse 29 of the same chapter we read that the Holy One of Israel does not regret (or repent). Because 1 Samuel 15:29 regards the rejection of Saul and the choice of David, and thus points ahead to Christ, we see that it must shape our understanding of verses 11 and 35. Similarly, we read in Genesis 6:5-7 that Yahweh regrets and grieves that He made humanity and intends to wipe them off from the surface of the ground. But this is immediately followed in the next verse by the announcement that Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh (Gen.6:8) so that humanity is actually preserved through him and his family. Here we must again understand the divine regret and also the divine acts of condemnation in light of divine grace. What is said about God's purpose in Christ shapes our understanding of what is said about His interim attitudes toward and dealings with humanity (see the articles starting on pages 195 and 201).

In connection with David and Noah, and God's dealings with them, we find types of Christ and of divine deliverance and subjection which are centered in Him. In Noah's contemporaries and in Saul, and in God's dealings with them, we see evidence of the temporary processes which make the glory of God's achievements in Christ manifest. The great bulk of Scripture testifies to these processes involving human irreverence and unrighteousness and failure and to

the divine judgments that result. Nevertheless, throughout God's Word there are continuing reminders of God's gracious and triumphant and good purpose in Christ Jesus. Indeed it is true that the prophets "focused ultimately on Christ" (see p.238), and this is true of all Scripture. We see this in Genesis 6:8 and more fully and plainly in the direct message of the evangel of God's grace given to the apostle Paul (see the articles starting on pages 207 and 219).

We find this pattern even in the accounts of conflicts between Israel and the Philistines (see p.232). In David's seeking of direction from Yahweh and in Yahweh's going before Israel in battle, we are pointed ahead to God's defeat of human irreverence and the instituting of the true worship and appreciation of God which will ultimately be established through David's greater Son.

God's grace is absolute; His regret and indignation are relative. In like manner, the sufferings of the current era are not to continue forever. They only serve to make known the glorious freedom God has purposed for His entire creation (see p.229).

As we are believing we are growing in realization of God as He shall manifest Himself in the consummation. This is how God is unchangeably and absolutely, apart from the current and temporary presence of sin and failure in the world. This is how He is made known in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. This is how He is made known in His love commended to us even while we are still sinners, in the death of Christ for our sakes. What shall separate us from this love of God in Christ Jesus? Like Paul, we are persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation is able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

D.H.H.

THE INCREASE OF HUMANITY

6 [+]**Now it** had [b]**occurred** [t]**when** [·]**humanity had started to increase on** the sur**face of the ground and daughters had been born to them,** [2] [+] the **sons of the elohim** [l]**saw** [`]the **daughters of the human that they** were **good-looking.** [+]**So they** [l]**took wives for them**selves **from any whom they chose.**

[3] **And Yahweh** [l]**said: My spirit shall not abide in** the **human for** the **eon, in** [w]**that he** [mr]**too** is **flesh.** [+]**So his days will** [b]**continue 120 years.**

[4] [7+]**As**[n] for **the distinguished, they** [b]**were** [i]**on earth in** [·]**those days and** [mr]**also afterward,** [w]**when** the **sons of the elohim were coming to** the **daughters of the human, and they bore** [›] **them** offspring**. They** were **the masterful** one**s, who** were **from** the **eon, mortals of** [·]**renown.**

[5] **And Yahweh** [l]**saw that the evil of humanity** was **multiplying** [i]**on earth, and every form of** the **devisings of its heart** was **surely evil all the day.** [6] [+] **Yahweh** [l]**regretted that He had** [d]**made** [`]**humanity** [i]**on earth, and He** [l]**grieved** [›]**in His heart.** [7] [+]**So Yahweh** [l]**said: I shall wipe** out [`]**humanity** [w]**that I have created, off** the sur**face of the ground, from human unto** domestic **beast, unto** the **creeper and unto** the **flyer of the heavens; for I regret that I have** [d]**made them.**

[8] [+]**Yet Noah found grace in** the **eyes of Yahweh.**

FAMILY RULE

EXPOSITORS and students have found the first few verses of the sixth of Genesis exceedingly difficult to understand.

This arises partly from discordant versions. As far back as the Septuagint, two words, meaning "distinguished" and "masters," were both translated "giants." This has led to fallacious fables. The phrase "sons of God" was taken to mean spirit beings, resulting in unnatural monstrosities. Even the earnest and reverent student, sincerely desiring to get the truth by careful attention to detail, may not be able to arrive at a satisfactory solution. To these we commend a study of the structure of Genesis, and a comparison of the complementary parts:

5:1-5 Sons and Daughters
  5:6-31 Firstborn
    5:32 Noah begets Sons
6:1-3 Daughters and Sons
  6:4-7 Distinguished
    6:8 Noah finds Grace

Note that the first section, Genesis 5:1-5, is concerned with Adam and his wife, *personally*, their creation, lifetime, sons and daughters. The corresponding section, Genesis 6:1-3, should also be applied to Adam and his wife and their daughters and sons. The theme here concerns the *subjection* of the great *multitude* to which Adam and his wife had increased by the time he was eight hundred and ten years old.[1] Adam himself, as head of his great family, was the subjector of all. But, when they became too numerous, he would naturally associate his firstborn sons with him, as his assistants. So they were sons of the elohim, the subjectors (the Adams). In order to keep this function in the family they married the daughters of these subjectors. This custom has often been followed in royal houses, in order to perpetuate their social superiority.

1. Taking Yahweh's words of Genesis 6:3 in reference to Adam (the "human") who would live 120 years longer.

The name *Adam* may be used of one human alone, or of the first man and his wife, or of all humanity. When it is followed by a plural pronoun, *they* or *them*, it usually denotes all mankind, yet it may be limited to the first man and his wife in the beginning. In 5:2 we read that He is calling *their* name *Adam* ("human"). The parallel passage (6:1) may be rendered: "The Adam had started to increase on the surface of the ground, and daughters had been born to *them*." Until we come to these sections nothing is said of daughters, although it is self-evident that there were such, or where would Cain and Seth have found their wives? They married their sisters. This was not as close a relationship as that between Adam and Eve, for she was largely a part of him. This method of marriage seems to have continued within the family of Adam and gave rise to an inner ruling class, which took over after his death.

THE TO-SUBJECTORS

As it was in Israel later, the term *elohim* ("judges," AV) was used of men, before the deluge (Ex.21:6; Gen.6:2,4). Adam, the head of humanity, had probably kept his large family in some order, until they became so multitudinous that the firstborn sons were needed to help him rule them, even when he was still alive. These are "the sons of God" or Adam (as *like* Elohim), and so also subjectors. These sons greatly strengthened their positions by marrying the daughters of Adam, for the closer the relationship to him the better. They evidently sought to make a name for *themselves*, not for Yahweh, and so contributed to the ruin of the race before the deluge. These titles seem to show that there was family rule in those days, rather than an entire lack of control, or anarchy, as is generally supposed.

SONS OF GOD

The fact that the title *Elohim* means Subjector, and

that Adam was made a subjector, in His image (Gen.2:27), should help us to understand the phrase "sons of God," as it is usually rendered. If Adam was made a subjector, then his firstborn son, was the son of a subjector. The word *son* denotes far more than *child*. In the case of Christ, Who is also the Son of Adam, it does not merely assert that He *descended* from him, but that He *inherits his titles and the right to rule*. And this has come to Him through a long line of ancestors, the first of whom exercised these rights, in antediluvian days. Since the change in the form of subjection in Noah's day, it has been in abeyance, but will be revived in Christ, when He reigns over all humanity.

This genealogy does not include all the male children of Adam and all theirs, for then every man would have been a subjector, and there would be no subjects! Then all would be distinguished, and mortals with a name! So this is restricted to the firstborn. Adam was the first and supreme subjector so long as he lived, or possibly until 120 years before. After that Seth took over, and then his firstborn son, and the successive firstborn grandsons.

THE DISTINGUISHED

According to the skeleton, Genesis 5:6-31 balances Genesis 6:4-7. That is, the line of Seth to Noah are the "distinguished" who were in those days. These were not physical "giants," or "Nephilim" (fallen), but the *firstborn* sons of each succeeding generation from Seth. Their names are given us, Seth, Enosh, Cainan, Malaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech and Noah. The fact that there is a record of their *names*, and the length of their lives should be enough to show that they really *were* "distinguished." Their place as firstborn in a direct succession from Adam was sufficient to give them a special place. They were "successors" to the Adamic dignities. They were also distinguished *from* the line of Cain.

The special relationship of these men to the head of the race set them apart, and secured to them the succession, *distinguishing* them from the rest and made them the supreme subjectors of humanity when their own father died. They were the masters, and so distinguished from the rest, that their *names* have been preserved and have come down to us in the annals of Adam, for they took over the position of subjector after his death. They alone channeled Adam's office of subjector to Adam's greater Son, Who inherited it through them (Luke 3:23).

For us, indeed, they surely are distinguished, for they are our grandest fathers, next to Adam. Every one of them is in our genealogy, they adorn our family tree. Their names occur twice in the Bible, not only in the book of the Beginning, but also in the genealogy of our Lord, Jesus Christ. That alone, should distinguish them! We did not come through any others of the antediluvian. Moreover, we were saved from the flood while in Noah, and came through it in the ark. Not only we, but all men today have been saved once already, while they were in him. The miracle is, not that so many single kinds of creatures could be saved in the ark, but that all that have lived since and live today, including all mankind, were in the ark, and were saved through the flood.

GIANTS

The deluge was due to the evil of *humanity on the earth* (Gen.6:5-7), not to an intrusion of spirit beings, sometimes called angels, or nephilim, or giants, etc., which produced a hybrid race. Mankind lived very much longer in those days than at present, so it may well be true that they were of extraordinary size and strength, for such men, as Goliath, lived in David's day. The name *nphlim* comes from the same stem as is used in Exodus 11:7: Yahweh is *distinguishing* between the Egyptians and Israel. This did

not consist in size or race, for Egyptians as well as Israelites were of average stature.

FAMILY RULE A FAILURE

Adam and Eve were tested in the garden under ideal conditions, and failed. Their *family* was tested on the cursed ground, and failed. The line of Cain was in open opposition to the Subjector. The line of Seth was *headed* by distinguished men who kept in touch with the supreme Subjector. Indeed, Enoch walked with Him, and was taken away without being acquainted with death. *Nevertheless*, humanity, *as a whole*, became utterly, incurably evil. This is the first great lesson taught by the history of humanity. It has been recorded for future generations, but how seldom is it taken to heart! Paternalism, the natural and ideal form of government, which will be most successful in the consummation, when the Subjector Himself is at the head, was a dismal failure apart from His presence and power. Such is humanity!

We must never judge the former eon by the present one, for now subjection is on an entirely different basis. At that time there was no organized political government, no nations, no kings, no judges. When Cain shed the blood of Abel, his blood was not shed. On the contrary, he was given a sign, so that he should *not* be killed. He was sentenced to wander on the cursed earth at a distance from Yahweh Elohim, but there was no provision for the enforcement of this sentence, so he barricaded himself behind city walls. Lamech, at the end of his line, was even worse. He killed two men, and threatened to kill more if he were held to account. Such a lax control filled the earth with violence. It teaches the great lesson that insubjection brings destruction and ruin on mortal men, and subjection to the subjector is the only way of safety and happiness.

A. E. Knoch

YAHWEH REGRETS AND GRIEVES

IN GENESIS ONE, God reveals Himself by mighty and successful works of creation. Every verb is a triumphant one despite the fact that they are mostly common and general terms such as *say, do* (make), *become, see* and *call.* All that God says comes about, and all that He does is seen to be good.

The picture of Deity in charge of all things is continued in the second chapter with God's actions of planting and placing and instructing, but the goodness and even the success of His works are less obvious. Nevertheless, in considering the second chapter, the pattern displayed in Genesis one reassures us that God's preparations for the human failure and loss of chapter three must be necessary for an outcome of good. We then hold firmly to the words of promise concerning the Seed of the woman as we follow the events through Genesis three and four. We especially find confidence and expectation in Eve's testimony upon the birth of Seth, "Truly Elohim *has set* for me another son instead of Abel" (Gen.4:25).

The present may be filled with grief and sweat and travail, and humanity corrupted with pride and greed, but God as He is first revealed in Genesis one is still supreme. The fact that these evils are so obviously associated in these early portions of His Word with deliberate preparations of God should only strengthen the believer in assurance that they have a wise and good purpose, that they will not be permanent and will serve His end of glory.

Yet as we follow the record given in the Scriptures it

becomes easier to forget the elementary lessons of Genesis one. What God does appears more and more to be reactive to what the human does, actions of disapproval and judgment, and, as we now will note in Genesis 6:6, of regret and grief. Hence it becomes increasingly important that we remind ourselves of the deity of God, of His power and wisdom and of the goodness of His ways.

It is depressing for us to read in Genesis 6:5 of the multiplication of evil as humanity increased, however much our own experience supports the likelihood of this account. Yet how are we to understand the words of the next verse concerning God's response to this situation: "Yahweh *regretted* that He had made humanity on earth, and He *grieved* in His heart" (Gen.6:6)?

We must not conclude that these verbs place limitations on God or on His purpose of creating humanity in His image and likeness. The limitations instead must be placed on the application of the verbs.

DIVINE REGRET

The Hebrew STANDARD for the word translated "regret" is WARM. The particular verb form used in Genesis 6:6 (also in verse 7) corresponds generally to the English passive, suggesting the literal rendering: "Yahweh was warmed." But, while that may help us in understanding the force of the word in Hebrew, it does not solve the problem. The sense of the verb in this particular form is shown to be close to our idea of "regret" in other passages where it is used of human actions (e.g. Ex.13:17; Jer.8:6). Even the sense of "repent," speaking of a change in one's thinking, is indicated in Job 42:6, where we read that Job recants and *repents* on soil and ashes.

Since the use of this Hebrew verb (listed on page 808 of ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW AND CHALDEE CONCORDANCE) in certain contexts calls for the sense of "comfort"

or "console," it becomes evident that it embraces a wide range of ideas under the general concept of *warm* feelings or actions. The grammatical form of the verb sometimes helps in identifying the particular sense, but context must finally be the decisive factor.[1]

The warm feeling of regret is certainly in view in Judges 21:15 which tells of Israel's attitude toward the decimation of the tribe of Benjamin. But how are we to understand "regret" on the part of Yahweh?

FIGURE OF SPEECH

We have previously noted that there is a figure of speech here (called anthropomorphism), "in which God assumes human attributes in order to reveal His attitude."[2] But the figure stands for something literal *within the viewpoint* of the context. In view of His glorious goal involving humanity God does not regret creating them. But in view of the temporary evil, however necessary and determined by God it may be (and is), God is not impassive and unfeeling. God's regret in Genesis 6:6,7 is associated with what He *sees* (v.5). Within the confines of that evil, apart from its ultimate purpose, He truly feels something akin to human regret and grief.

This distinction of viewpoint is brought out in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Samuel. With respect to the temporary evil of Saul's reign over Israel, Yahweh expresses "regret" in making him king (1 Sam.15:11,35). But Yahweh, as the *Permanent* and Holy One of Israel, was not regretting (or, repenting) with respect to tearing the kingship from Saul (1 Sam.15:29). The setting up of Saul as king (at the peo-

1. For an enlightening study on the translation problems connected with this Hebrew term, see A. E. Knoch's article, "Regret or Repent, Comfort or Console?" *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.40, p.61.

2. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.18, p.234.

ple's request) represented a delay in establishing the royal line leading forward to Christ. But the removal of Saul as king opened the way to the line of David, which is directly associated with God's goal for Israel. With this goal in view, nothing akin to human regret would be appropriate.

Similarly, in Genesis 6, God's "regret" for creating humanity is wholly confined to the temporary condition of the multiplied evil of humanity. In view of the completion of humanity in the image and likeness of God, the Permanent One does not repent or even regret.

These outbreaks of the "way of Cain" which dominate human history during the preceding and present eons are necessary, as we have noted, for the eventual appreciation of the glory of God's goal. But they are not permanent; once their purpose has been served, they will no longer be a part of human experience. There will no longer be occasion for expressions of regret and grief on God's part.

Nevertheless, while the evils are present, even though God knows the outcome He has purposed, He feels the force of the temporary evil with an acuteness and depth that corresponds fully with His character. That is what Genesis 6:6 is saying. It is not literally regret and grieving (as humans regret and grieve, which is often associated with despair and despondency) over creating humanity. God's "regret" is an expression of a revulsion that burns warmly (to use human terms again in a figurative way) in God with respect to the (temporary) condition of that race of creatures called humanity which He brought into being.

DIVINE GRIEF

That God should be said to grieve is no less a figure of condescension (anthropomorphism) than that He should be spoken of as regretting. The grieving of God, mentioned in Genesis 6:6, is not identical to human grieving. But it does reflect a true sadness over the temporary situation of evil to which His creation of humanity has now led. God does feel the evil involved in the process He planned beforehand. To express that divine emotion for human understanding, the Scriptures must, of necessity, use terms commonly used to describe human attitudes. There can be no sense of hopelessness in divine regret, and no sense of helplessness in divine grief. But there is genuine divine concern for, and genuine divine comprehension of the evil.

DIVINE FEELINGS AT THE CROSS

The cross of Christ is the touchstone of all that concerns God. With respect to the experience itself, God expressed His displeasure, we may even say, His grief, by means of the darkness and storm that covered the scene. But with respect to the *outcome* of the the wounding of His Son, God *desired* (another anthropomorphism) to crush Him (Isa. 53:10). By all these, and similar terms, commonly used to describe human feelings and attitudes, truth is conveyed to us about God, when kept in context.

THE WIPING OUT OF HUMANITY

The context of Yahweh's regret and grief in Genesis 6 is also the context of His pronouncement of judgment. Hence He *says* that He will *wipe out* humanity, whom He had *created* (Gen.6:7). This, however, is still within the confines of the viewpoint of a temporary situation. It is assuredly not an eternal condition which would keep God from completing His purpose for mankind. All of God's pronouncements of condemnation are relative; that is, they are limited to the process which leads to the goal. The preservation of Noah and his family shows us that Yahweh did not intend to wipe out humanity in an absolute sense.

This vast operation of divine indignation is to be understood in light of a further operation of God which is hardly

noticeable at first, but which keeps the destruction of humanity from being absolute as well as the regret and grief of God from being despair. There is a little word of good news which sets these terms of condemnation and sadness into proper perspective.

NOAH FOUND GRACE

Hence we read that "Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh" (Gen.6:8).

Of all the acts of God mentioned in Genesis 6:5-8, this is the most important. Yet it is stated indirectly. *Yahweh* is the One Who acts here, but *Noah* is the grammatical subject of the sentence. Nevertheless, what Noah does is to find what Yahweh gives. Noah's righteousness and flawlessness, mentioned in Genesis 6:9, must be seen as relative, in comparison with all the rest, and even then it was the result of God's grace, not the cause. The grace came to Noah as an act of God.

God's grace to Noah governs the meaning of His regret and grief and shapes the significance of His condemnation of humanity. We can see now, looking back, that it pointed to Christ and God's achievements through Him. While experiencing sorrow and expressing indignation over the evil that had infested His creation, God continues to operate toward the removal of that evil and the completion of His purpose for humanity. But He does so quietly in almost hidden ways.

We will look further at this crucial act of God in showing grace to Noah, and why it should be stated indirectly, in our next article. But we see it makes all the difference in understanding God's regret and grief and His great work of indignation in wiping out humanity. These latter acts are not ironclad. They are limited by the requirements of grace and the glorious purpose of the Permanent One.

D.H.H.

THE GRACE OF GOD IN TRUTH
⁂
SAVING GRACE FOR ALL MANKIND

Question:

I have noticed that all churches teach that salvation is "by grace." Well, true enough, no one would dare to say that salvation is *not* by grace. But still, since one group differs from another as to how salvation is obtained, it must be that they actually likewise differ in what they mean by "grace." Can you point me to what the Scriptures themselves mean by this important word?

Answer:

YOU make an excellent observation in noting that all Christian groups wish to affirm that salvation is by grace. Your point is also well taken that no one would say explicitly that salvation is *not* by grace. This is so, even if one's actual position should represent salvation as not being a matter of grace. Any teaching, however, that *represents* salvation as *not* being by grace, effectually denies—even if tacitly and unwittingly—the very thing which it seeks verbally to affirm. After all, for all who wish to claim that salvation is "by grace," the question remains, Just what do you mean by grace?

These facts make it clear that we are interested solely in genuine, true grace, not in nominal, spurious grace, which is "no longer grace" (*cp* Rom.11:6), or rather, which never was grace in the first place.

Most will say that grace is "undeserved favor." By "favor" they correctly have in mind the thought of "blessing" or "benefaction." This, however, is an entailed thought, not the meaning, as such, of "favor," which itself is simply a close synonym of "grace." Similarly, when they say that grace is "undeserved," they are saying something that, as far as it goes, is certainly true. After all, if we were to receive what we *deserve,* we could never be saved, and could only be committed to death (*cf* Rom.1:32), never to live again.

While these considerations related to grace are correct and important, even so, they are *not* constitutive of the scriptural definition of grace.

This fact becomes especially significant when we see that most wish to claim that while grace is "undeserved," it is *not* "unconditional."[1] It is felt that even if God is the Saviour, still, the notion of man's moral responsibility must somehow be maintained. Even though it is formally acknowledged that we do not *deserve* to be saved, it is artfully insisted that we must nevertheless *qualify* to be saved.

Fundamentally, however, this is a distinction without a difference; indeed, it is one which was only introduced in the first place in a labored attempt to maintain a worldly, ethical notion.

The reason why there is no fundamental difference between "deserve" and "qualify," is because the essential idea common to both of these expressions is that of *eligibility.* The question is not whether parity obtains between the intrinsic worth of man's obedience and God's blessings, but whether or not we must do something in order to make ourselves eligible for salvation. If so, then salvation is a reward, not a gracious gift. If not, then salvation is a gracious gift, not a reward.

1. The idea is that man, even by his strongest faith and most virtuous behavior, could never truly *deserve* (which is to say, be *worthy* of) the unspeakably great blessing of salvation. Even so, it is claimed that man must still "do his part" by meeting the "conditions" (i.e., requirements) of salvation.

Therefore, while it is true that no sinner deserves the blessing of salvation, this is simply not the point, when it comes to defining what grace *is.* Any question of "just deserts" aside, the actual position that most wish to maintain, is that grace is the *conditional* blessing of God.

In consideration of ultimate issues, this is an altogether mistaken notion. Even under the evangel of the Circumcision, where personal righteousness and endurance to the consummation are the proximate (i.e., nearest) cause of salvation, the ultimate cause is nevertheless the *grace* of God, according to God's own *choice* (Rom.11:5).

Grace, rather than being something that acts reciprocally, in response to works, is that which precludes and debars works, insofar as its own power both to initiate and to achieve is concerned.

Since it is from the day on which we hear and realize the grace of God in truth, that the word of the truth of the evangel is bearing fruit and growing in us (Col.1:5,6), it follows that a correct perception of God's grace is foundational to a correct perception of God's evangel, in the glorious truth which it reveals.

The apostle Paul's entire career, indeed the burden of his ministry, was both to "certify" (in the sense of explicate, that is, clearly "mark out" so as to set forth the facts) and "conjure" (which is to say, "solemnly entreat") concerning "the evangel of the *grace* of God": "But of nothing have I a word, nor yet am I making my soul precious to myself, till I should be perfecting my career and the dispensation which I got from the Lord Jesus, *to certify the evangel of the grace of God*" (Acts 20:24; *cp* 1 Tim.5:21).

In an attempt to imitate Paul in conveying to others vital, salient facts concerning the meaning of "grace," I have prepared the following brief meditation:

PERCEIVING THE MEANING OF *GRACE*

"And if you are loving those loving you, what *grace*[2] is it to you? For sinners also are loving those loving them. And if you should be doing good to those doing good to you, what *grace* is it to you? For sinners also are doing the same. And if you should ever be lending to those from whom you are expecting to get back, what *grace* is it to you? For sinners also are lending to sinners, that they may get back the equivalent. Moreover, be loving your enemies, and be doing good, and be lending, *expecting nothing* from them, and your wages will be vast in the heavens, and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Become, then, pitiful, according as your Father also is pitiful" (Luke 6:32-36).

Here our Lord makes it clear that grace rather than being a response to the love and the goodness of others directed toward ourselves, is instead one's own gift of love and goodness to others in spite of the fact that they have *not* exhibited love and goodness to us. Similarly, we are by no means "doing a favor," or extending grace, to those to whom we lend for the purpose of getting something back for ourselves as a consequence of our original action. Grace is exhibited not in loving one's friends and doing good for one's benefactors, but in loving one's opposers and doing good for one's enemies. We manifest grace when we *expect nothing* in return for the blessings which we bestow.

It is in walking thus that we become imitators of God, comporting ourselves in a love that accords with grace. In respect to our practical walk, only then do we become "sons of the Most High," of the One Who is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Even as our Lord declares, "Become, then, pitiful, according as [i.e., in the same basic *kind* of way] your Father also is pitiful."

2. "Thanks," literally, is "grace."

"Thus, then, in the current era also, there has come to be a remnant according to the choice of grace. Now if it is in grace, it is no longer out of works, else the grace is coming to be no longer grace. Now, if it is out of works, it is no longer grace, else the work is no longer work" (Rom.11:5,6).

Grace, then, is that which *graciously* brings joy, which itself, in Greek, is practically the same word as grace. In simplest terms, grace is that which is *not out of works* (Rom.11:6), which exists in order to bring *joyous* blessing to its beneficiaries (*cp charis,* JOY, "grace"; *charisma,* JOY-*effect,* "[the result of] grace"; *chara,* JOY, "joy").

While grace is not *partial* (i.e., unjustly preferential), it is nonetheless *purposeful.* Any gracious gift, then, that is not intended for all, through its very purposefulness, necessarily excludes those for whom it was not designed, as much so as would be the case if its motivation were that of sinful preferentiality.

In relation to God, "grace" refers to God's *work* or *action of* grace; it is the work which He does for us and in us, *as* a *favor* or gracious gift.

As ordinarily used, the expression "God's grace" is a figure of speech. It is a metonymy (i.e., figure of association) for "God's *work of* grace," in reference to whatever gracious gift may be in view. That is, literally, grace is not an action, but the *character of* an action.

The grace of God is *effective,* for it, like everything else, only exists according to God's own intention and purpose (*cf* Eph.1:11; Ex.33:19; Isa.46:10,11). Indeed, it is the *saving* grace of the *Almighty* God (Titus 2:11; Rev.11:17).

Consequently, then, since it is effective, grace is a *causal* entity. This entails the necessary and inevitable existence of its achievements. That is, *grace cannot fail.*

Grace is the very antithesis of a wage, reward, or requital in response to service or cooperation (Rom.4:4). Instead, it constitutes a *favor.*

In the Scriptures as in everyday life, wages (or "reward") are that which accrue to the *worker* in consideration of his labors. Specifically, they are *not* to be viewed as a favor or gracious gift, but instead, according as they are: as a debt which is owed, to which one is entitled (Rom.4:4). Therefore, nothing is more incongruous than formally to speak of "grace" when the idea one has in view, in fact, partakes of the nature of a reward.[3]

Grace acts in order to bless. It does not offer to bless, but actually effects blessing. Therefore, at the deepest level, grace always *initiates,* out of its own intrinsic virtue. Though it responds to need, it is never under extrinsic obligation to do so, and can never be put under such obligation.

Popular affirmations of grace are lacking the contents of true grace. This is because popular conceptions of grace are, at bottom, indistinguishable from a reward.

In the Scriptures, in cases under law where obedience antecedent to blessing is commanded, the fulfillment of that very obedience is ultimately the work not of man but of God in turning the hearts of His creatures to heed His directives (*cf* Isa.26:12). It is ever the work of God to *bless* us by *turning* away each one of us from our own wickedness (*cp* Acts 3:26). This is so, for, in consideration of any virtue we may enjoy, it is in the *grace* of God that we are what we are (*cf* 1 Cor.15:10).

Our God is in the heavens: He has done whatsoever *He* has pleased (Psa.115:3; *cp* Psa.135:6). Though He loves His creatures and provides for them ideally, He is never beholden to them. "For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? *seeing that* out of Him and through

3. Few things evince the darkness and irony of the teaching of nominal grace more clearly than the virtual "Freudian slip" popular saying in reference to the believer's death, that he has now "gone to his reward."

Him and for Him is *all:* to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:36).

"The word of the truth of the evangel . . . is bearing fruit and growing . . . [in] you"; that is, this is so, "from the day on which you hear and realized *the grace of God in truth*" (Col.1:5,6).

❊

Question:

Your point is well taken that a saviour is one who actually saves, and that God is the Saviour of all mankind. I believe that He will eventually vivify all and become All in all. My question is, however, Is all mankind already saved or will they only finally become saved at the consummation?

Also, can you tell me what are the basic teachings of Calvinism and Arminianism concerning salvation, as well as what are the differences between these two systems?

Answer:

THE simple answer to your first question is that, in some respects, all mankind are already saved, and that, in some other respects, they are not already saved. Therefore, we cannot say categorically and without explanation, either Yes, all mankind are already saved, or No, all mankind are not already saved.

Let me begin by more fully addressing your second question, and then, afterward, commenting further on your first question.

The two great questions concerning the work of the cross are: (1) For whom did Christ die, some or all, and, (2) Does His sacrifice actually achieve salvation, or only make salvation possible, for those for whom He died?

If Christ did not die for all, that is, if His sacrifice were

not made on behalf of all but only on behalf of some, then it would be impossible for all to be saved. Similarly, if His sacrifice did not secure salvation but only made salvation possible, then, from a consideration of the work of the cross alone, we could not know whether even a single person would ever be saved.

Yet thanks be to God, the true evangel affords us a far more glorious perspective on human destiny than that of the Calvinist's *gloomy* perspective from which it is deemed certain that many will never be saved since Christ's sacrifice was not even made for all but only for some. Similarly, the true evangel also affords us a far more glorious perspective on human destiny than that of the Arminian's *ignorant* and *prideful* perspective from which, from a contemplation of Christ's work itself, it cannot be known whether even a single person will ever be saved; all that can be known is that if any should ever be saved, they will finally have themselves alone to thank for it.

How glorious, then, it is to know that Christ died not for some only but for *all*—for all mankind ("Christ Jesus . . . is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all," 1 Tim. 2:5b,6a; *cp* "God . . . wills that *all mankind* be saved . . ." 1 Tim.2:4).

And, how glorious as well to know that the sacrifice of Christ—which was made on behalf of all mankind—is a matter of "the *grace* of God and the *gratuity* in *grace*" (Rom.5:15); hence its benefits cannot be a reward for obedience. Therefore, Christ's sacrifice, rather than merely making salvation possible, actually *achieves* salvation for those for whom it was provided, namely, *all mankind.*

Now in an era in which men will be withdrawing from the faith in which sound teaching will not be tolerated, it must be that these primary, foundational truths of the evangel be rejected and opposed, scorned and dismissed, even ridiculed and mocked.

To accord with His purpose of providing a foil for His truth, God has ordained that two basic theological systems should prevail within Christendom, the one, termed Calvinism, and the other, known as Arminianism. While these respective schools of thought, in certain ways, are deeply opposed not only to the truth but to one another as well, in at least one very important respect, they are fully united, joined in soul even as in commitment.

Their united front coheres in their common affirmation of the doctrine of eternal punishment. Though they account for this frightful prospect differently, each group, one as insistently as the other, claims that vast numbers of God's own human creatures (as most claim, that indeed the great majority of the human race) will be permanently consigned to some type of unspeakably horrible punishment.

Calvinists and Arminians alike affirm that this awful allotment will consist either of unspeakable pain or eternal destruction. In addition, it will be unspeakably defeating and ruinous of all life-hopes simply in consideration of its duration, which, it is insisted, will be interminable: never ceasing, ever enduring onward throughout the entire endless future. But, as referred to above, Calvinists come to this astonishing conclusion by one road, while Arminians do so by another.

Calvinism teaches that Christ the Saviour did not die for all but only for the "elect." Under Calvinism, it is claimed that Christ died only for certain chosen ones for whom salvation is certain inasmuch as God, through Christ, has graciously determined to save them—and them alone. Thus Calvinism denies the truth as to the *scope* of Christ's work (it's provision on behalf of all mankind) while affirming the truth as to the *nature* of Christ's work (its gracious character, in which God alone is the Saviour and man is not at all the saviour).

Conversely, Arminianism insists that Christ died on

behalf of all mankind, that His sacrifice was made with a view to providing salvation for each and every member of the human race. But, it is *also* insisted that Christ's sacrifice was only made on behalf of all provisionally: with the proviso that men must make themselves eligible for the salvific benefits of the cross by doing whatever it is that God requires of those to whom He will grant these salvific benefits. However expressed, the notion is that those who fail to save themselves from ineligibility for the benefits of the cross, will be refused the benefits of the cross. Thus Arminianism affirms the truth as to the *scope* of Christ's work (it's provision on behalf of all mankind) while denying the truth as to the *nature* of Christ's work (its gracious character, in which God alone is the Saviour and man is not at all the saviour).

Ironically, Calvinists and Arminians alike have convinced themselves that it simply cannot be that Christ died for all *and* that salvation is by grace. After all, if that were so, why, all would finally be saved—and that just can never be!

After all, is there not a second death (Rev.20:14,15)? Is there not a sin that is not being pardoned (Luke 12:10)? Is it not so that those who are being stubborn as to the Son shall not be seeing life, but that the indignation of God is remaining on them (John 3:36)? And certainly, do not Christendom's most renowned oriental scholars affirm that by *kolasin aiōnion* (Matt.25:46) we are to understand, "everlasting punishment"?[4]

Instead of fighting among themselves besides dismissing as heretics those whom they both scornfully term "universalists," what is needed instead is to concentrate on these two critical issues of soteriology, namely, (1) that it was in the *grace* of God that Christ tasted death, and (2) that in tasting death, Christ did so for the sake of *everyone.* This is so, even as it is written: "Yet we are observing Jesus, Who has been made some bit inferior to messengers (because of the suffering of death, wreathed with glory and honor), so that, in the grace of God, He should be tasting death for the sake of everyone" (Heb.2:9).

4. To these rhetorical questions, we would add only one more, one of our own: Is it not true that in our Concordant literature we address each of these scriptural texts (and many more) thoroughly and with great care, showing plainly that in fact there is nothing whatsoever in any such verses that precludes it being so that Christ died for all and that salvation is by grace, hence that God will finally become All in all?

CRUCIFIED TOGETHER WITH CHRIST

To return now to your first question: All that is necessary for the realization of all aspects of "salvation," has already been accomplished in the death and resurrection of Christ:

"Christ Jesus . . . humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, *that* in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing . . . and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:5-11).

Christ has already died for our sins (1 Cor.15:3). In perceiving Jesus, we observe the One of Whom it is truly declared: "Lo! the Lamb of God Which is taking away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). This is even as John affirms: "He is the propitiatory shelter concerned with our sins, yet not concerned with ours only, but concerned with the whole world also" (1 John 2:1,2).

Accordingly, the word of the conciliation is that "God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, *not reckoning their offenses to them . . .*" (2 Cor.5:19).

Similarly, ". . . the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of *all,* consequently, *all died*" (2 Cor.5:14); and, " . . . one who dies has been justified from Sin" (Rom.6:7). Through the death of Christ

suffered on their behalf, *God reckons sinners as having been crucified* (*cp* Rom.6:6), thus satisfying the claims of Sin which would otherwise stand against them.

One who dies, is now "*freed* from Sin" (Rom.6:22), which Paul terms being "justified [i.e., declared righteous] from Sin" (Rom.6:7). This is said, for surely the only *right* relationship to Sin is one in which we are now declared to be freed from its lethal grasp even as from its fearful claims against us.

Each and every human being, then—be he ever so unworthy of and ignorant concerning—already possesses the *positional* salvation of one for whom Christ died, namely, (1) that of having had one's sin's taken away by the great Propitiatory; (2) that of having been conciliated (i.e., united) to God Himself accordingly, through the death of Christ, with the concomitant blessing that his *offenses* are not being reckoned against him; and (3) also through Christ, that of being accounted by God Himself as one concerning whom the claims of Sin have now been satisfied, of whom it may truly be said that he is *freed* from Sin. As Jesus Himself plainly declares, "If ever, then, the Son should be making you free, you will be really free" (*cf* John 8:36).

These invaluable *positional* aspects of salvation are the portion of all the descendants of Adam even today. Therefore, the future *constitutional* aspects of salvation in the provision of immortality and vivification, one day, will be fully granted as well.

The fact that instead of eonian life, various severe judgments even as the second death, lie ahead for unbelievers—ones who decidedly are not in Christ, who neither know Him nor wish to know Him—in no way militates against this glorious salvation which, even now, has been gained by God for all humanity. Truly, the Most High God, the Saviour of all mankind, is kind indeed, even to the ungrateful and the wicked (Luke 6:36). J.R.C.

THE GOD OF THE GOOD NEWS

THE EVANGEL OF GOD makes God known. It does so more truly and fully than any other message in Scripture. In his letter to the Romans, Paul presents this message of good with particular emphasis on its fundamental features and, therefore, on what he calls elsewhere "the depths of God" (1 Cor.2:10).

THAT WHICH IS OF GOD

Consequently, when the evangel *of* God is presented in Romans it is first presented in terms of *God's power* and *God's righteousness.* Furthermore, what the evangel says about God's power and righteousness is then set against the background of human irreverence and injustice, which long has led to the revelation of *God's indignation.* In every way the evangel focuses on God, both in its positive and contrastive features. The evangel itself speaks of God's power and God's righteousness; the revelation of God's indignation brings this evangel of God into high relief.

The evangel indeed tells us about good things given to us. But these good things are given to us by God. Because they are of God, it is certain that the full measure of salvation, justification, peace, which God has gained, will be enjoyed in the future. But, in God's grace, there is a measure of enjoyment of these even now, which stems from the assurance that the full measure of blessing, having been gained for us, is certain of future realization.

In Romans 1:16,17, Paul speaks most particularly of the blessing of salvation as it relates to the believer's pres-

ent life. But if he were speaking more of what the evangel says about our future life, the same stress on God would be needed. The most vital matter of the good news is that it is God's good news and it makes us acquainted with Him as He truly is.

A WORD OF SPIRITUAL GRACE

For not ashamed am I of the evangel

For it is **God's power for salvation** *to everyone who is believing—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well.*

For in it **God's righteousness** *is being revealed, out of faith for faith, according as it is written: "Now the just one by faith shall be living."*

For God's indignation is being revealed from heaven on all the irreverence and injustice of men . . . .

Here, accordingly, in a series of four clauses, each beginning with the conjunction "for," Paul introduces the evangel of God to us in terms which focus our minds on God. The first clause catches our interest: The apostle says he was not ashamed of this message which so obviously centers on the shameful humiliation of God's Son. The expressions, "God's power for salvation" and "God's righteousness," are closely associated here and set in the center of the passage as key aspects of the evangel itself. They provide paramount, positive reasons for Paul not being ashamed of this message. The last clause here begins a detailed account of the dire situation surrounding humanity which has created the great need of God's powerful and righteous salvation of which the evangel speaks.

The whole section explains Paul's eagerness to bring the evangel. It is because ("for") he is not ashamed of this message, and he is not ashamed, first of all, because ("for") the evangel is identified with God's power for salvation, and, in the second place, he is not ashamed of the evangel because ("for") it speaks of God's powerful work of salvation in such a way that God's righteousness is revealed. Finally, he is not ashamed of this message, which focuses on an event that apparently is full of dreadful weakness and injustice, because ("for") it actually speaks of God's power and righteousness in dealing with desperate circumstances involving human irreverence and unrighteousness and divine indignation and judgment.

THE EVANGEL

The message *seems* to be badly named. Why should an account centered upon the death of the Son of God be called good news (literally, WELL-MESSAGE), even *God's* good news? The basic message, as Paul summarizes it in 1 Corinthians 15:3,4, is: "Christ died for our sins . . . He was entombed . . . and He has been roused the third day" (1 Cor.15:1-4). To be sure, the resurrection of Christ keeps the death of Christ from being an unmitigated disaster, but still, that God should have allowed (actually intended!) His Son to be crucified in the first place suggests, by every human standard, weakness and stupidity as Paul points out in 1 Corinthians 1:18,23.

Is Paul struggling to put the best face possible on a message that has dark aspects of mystery? By no means! In Galatians 6:14 he even writes, "Now may it not be mine to be boasting [glorying], except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Indeed he has much to say about the good news that Christ has been roused from among the dead. But his message clearly is solidly built on the death of Christ, on His blood, on His obedience (indeed His faithfulness) to the death of the cross, on Him being not spared and being given up by God.

No, we do not have the message wrong. It is a message from God telling of something superabundantly good which involves at its very core the ignominious death of His Son.

Why, then, was Paul so eager to bring this message and so utterly unashamed of it, even declaring that it was the very substance of his steadfast boasting?

In 1 Corinthians 15:3, the answer lies in the words "for our sins." Here in Romans 1:16,17, the answer lies most particularly in the words concerning God's power and His righteousness. For us, it certainly also lies in the word "salvation" which has past, present and future aspects as God's powerful and righteous work for us. All that God does powerfully and righteously for sinners is the subject of the evangel, and many details of this gracious work will be given in the rest of this epistle.

GOD'S POWER

God exhibits His power in impossible situations by means which involve, to all appearances, the greatest of weakness. What was impossible to the law, God did, and He did so by sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh (Rom.8:3). The evangel tells of One Who was inherently in the form of God, Who did not deem it pillaging to be equal with God, but He did not come in this exalted form; He came in the form of a slave and in the likeness of humanity; He emptied Himself and humbled Himself to the death of the cross (Phil.2:6-8). This was how He came to save sinners, and this is the basis by which He shows even richer mercies to certain of those sinners who are least deserving (1 Tim.1:15,16).

God's Son came in weakness and was crucified out of weakness (2 Cor.13:3). He was crucified, which is to say without possibility of contradiction that He died in humiliation and shame.

This was the means by which God does for humanity that which human beings could never do. The history of the nation of Israel makes this indisputable. Even after their deliverance from Egypt, and with the highest of intentions and strongest of determinations, they immediately began to grumble against God. In the wilderness, under the direction of the clearest of instructions given under the most secluded conditions apart from distractions they turned from God to idols. With all necessary provisions and with the presence and guidance of the Lord visibly evident to them day and night they continued in irreverence and unrighteousness. And so do we of the nations today, despite God's mercy and the blessing of the conciliation. The power for salvation must be all of God, or it will not exist at all.

In grace are we saved, and this is not out of us; it is through the faith of Jesus Christ. It is God's present, His oblation, bringing us near to Him; it is not of human efforts whether great or infinitesimally small, lest anyone should boast in themselves. For us to be saved is God's achievement (Eph.2:8-10; *cp* Rom.3:21-28).

FOR SALVATION

But humanity goes on in sin and irreverence. The complete realization of salvation is future. When God is called the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10), this means that in God's power He has done that which assures the salvation of all mankind. Nevertheless it remains for this to be realized and manifested and enjoyed to the full in His purposed time still to come. Even the believers are not yet experiencing the perfection of salvation that God has gained for them by His power. We know it only by faith and by the powerful effects of that faith on our lives.

But that acquaintance by faith with God's power for salvation and His righteousness in dealing with sin, is no small thing. Because He has granted us faith today, He is our Saviour in a *special* way.

On believing the evangel of our salvation, we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is an *earnest* of that

which has been procured by the power of God (Eph.1: 13,14). God's power for salvation has entered the lives of the believers as an earnest, or pledge in kind, of the full deliverance of that to come.

BEING SAVED

The evangel speaks of God's powerful work of salvation involving the giving up of His Son. Now in Romans 1:16 Paul tells us that this message concerning God's powerful defeat of sin and death in the death of Christ brings power for present salvation into the lives of those who are believing. In speaking of the evangel as God's power for salvation to those who are believing, the apostle is going beyond making the announcement of God's powerful achievement of the salvation of sinners established when Christ died on the cross. Now he speaks to the believers of the effects of believing that evangel on their lives.

Here in Romans 1:16,17, Paul turns to those in Rome and to us all who have heard and accepted this message of good news, and he says that this message is God's power for salvation in our daily actions and thoughts, as we are *believing*.

There is a figure of speech here as indicated by the Greek word translated "is." When a doctor reports to worried parents that their sick child will fully recover, the report brings happiness to the parents. We can say, figuratively, that the report *is* happiness to the parents. In a similar way, the evangel *is* God's power to those who are believing, in that it brings God's power for salvation to them as an earnest of that which is to come. That which speaks of God's power in saving us through the shameful crucifixion of Christ brings God's power for salvation into our minds and behavior even while we encounter disappointments and depression and stumble in human weaknesses.

ALL OF GOD

It is all of God that we have been saved (Eph.2:8). This is what the evangel of God actually says. It is all of God that what has been procured will be fully and gloriously delivered to us.

But more than this, the evangel which announces that Christ was given up because of our offenses and was roused because of our justifying brings God's power for salvation into our lives while we still are in the flesh. The message that tells of the powerful achievement of God in saving sinners, and doing so righteously, operates in us now. And this is still all of God. This ongoing salvation is *God's* power, not human power. It does not arise from fear of judgment or human determination to reach a goal or the force of the law or conscience. It arises from the force of God's grace in our hearts.

God has packed His power for ongoing salvation in His evangel concerning His Son. And it comes into the lives of those who are believing as He imparts faith to them (*cf* Rom.12:3).

Let us look at Ephesians 1:13,14 again, where this word of truth, the evangel of our salvation achieved by God in the death of His Son, is associated with "the holy spirit of promise" which is described as an "earnest," a pledge of the full deliverance of spirit and life which has been procured and will come. In 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, with language that is very similar to Romans 1:16, the apostle testifies that "the word of the cross," which is a message of stupidity and weakness to the unbeliever, "is" the power of God and the wisdom of God "to us who are be*ing* saved." Again in the opening verses of 1 Corinthians 15, where Paul reminds the Corinthians of the very words of the evangel as he had brought it to them, he is concerned that they might be retain*ing* that message through which they

are *being* saved. (as the verb in verse 2 literally expresses it). What a happy blessing, to be retaining the evangel in mind and heart!

PAUL'S TESTIMONY

Paul himself testifies to this earnest of God's power in the evangel of God's grace for salvation with respect to his own personal needs. God's *grace* changed wretchedness to thanksgiving (Rom.7:24,25) and distress to delight (2 Cor. 12:7-10). Throughout Romans (and all his epistles), the apostle points to the message of God's powerful work of salvation in the giving of His Son for sinners, as the channel though which God directs His power to us now in our fleshly infirmities. God has placed His power for the ongoing salvation for us who are believing in the message of His powerful and finished salvation that we are believing.

This present operation of God's power in the evangel is particularly in view in Romans 1:16. Paul had been talking of "fruit" among the Romans in verse 13, and now in verse 16 he uses the present participle active form of the verb *believe* to refer to the believers. The believers are those *who are believing.*

THOSE WHO ARE BELIEVING

The reason we need to stress the words "power of God for salvation" in Romans 1:16 is that the words "everyone who is believing" in Romans 1:16 can easily become the major point of interest distracting attention from the evangel itself. It is important to understand the significance of this reference to believers, but we must keep what is said here about *us* firmly connected with what is said about *God*. The power for salvation is God's, not ours in our act of believing. It is for everyone who is believing, but our believing does not do the work of salvation. The work is done by God, by His power, and it is a finished

work, whether we believe it or not. It is done, effectively and righteously in the death and resurrection of Christ, long before we believe.

Our believing does not actually save us. Our believing is that gracious provision of God which He gives to us in the current era, by which He brings the salvation He has gained into our present lives, and by which He distinguishes us for the special salvation both now and in the oncoming eons. Believing the evangel and its effects for the present and the future is a marvelous, astounding, blessed and glorious gift of God, which is not given to every human being. But it is not itself the power which brings salvation about. It is the channel of that power.

Believing is a gracious gift of God (Phil.1:29), parted to us by God in measure as He wills (Rom.12:3). As He did for Lydia in opening up her heart to the evangel which Paul spoke (Acts 16:10,14), so *God* has opened up our hearts in believing this message concerning what God has done through His Son. All our considerations of the matter of believing should remain in the context of what God has done for us. They should never lead us away from recognition and appreciation of faith as a gracious provision of God which directs attention to His glory.

Even in speaking of believers the emphasis needs to be placed on God. Paul speaks of believing as a blessing given to us by God, not a challenge that we must meet. God parts to each the measure of faith which he or she has. And on this basis the power of God for salvation is becoming operative in our lives.

If this is not so, and faith is not a gift, it is a human achievement which opens the way to self-congratulations. Then boasting is no longer barred.

If we look at our believing as it truly is we come to see it as a matter of joyful surprise. It certainly is not a matter involving self-congratulation any more than the message

we are believing calls for human works. I am believing; to God be the glory!

REVEALING GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The powerful impact of the evangel on the thinking and acting of the believer arises first of all from the fact that God Himself has saved us by His power, in dealing with sin by giving His Son for sinners. But this impact, great as it is, is even increased as we begin to realize this gift of God is not simply a work of power without considerations of divine justice and righteousness. The evangel reveals God's righteousness. And it is revealing God's righteousness to us as we are believing it.

The revelation of God's righteousness issues out of Jesus Christ's faith, and it is for our faith. Jesus Christ was fully and perfectly faithful and obedient unto the death of the cross. In that stupendous act of faith God was righteously ridding the world of sin. God does not save arbitrarily, simply by decree as an act of divine proclamation. There must be a righteous basis. And since that basis cannot be in human efforts, it must be established by God Himself. And so it is, as the evangel declares. "Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . . through Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:21,22). The basis of God's righteous salvation is the faith of Jesus Christ, Who endured the cross and despised the shame (Heb.12:2), in giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:6).

This theme of the revelation of God's righteousness in the evangel and its importance to the believer in these current times is stressed in this epistle to the Romans, especially the first half. It likely holds a prominent place in what Paul termed "some spiritual grace" which he longed to share with the Romans (Rom.1:11). It seems best to give this subject more attention as it is treated in verse 17 in our next installment. D.H.H.

WHY ALL THE SUFFERING?

THE world is full of suffering. "The entire creation is groaning and travailing" (Rom.8:22). The question is, *Why* is there all this suffering? In view of the fact that God exists, why is His creation burdened down with pain and struggle and sorrow?

The Scriptures do not allow us to separate suffering from God. We cannot be like Cyrus who had been taught there were two gods, one the god of good, and the other the god of evil and suffering. Hence the prophet spoke these words to the Persian ruler long before he was born (Isa.45:6,7):

I am Yahweh, and there is no other.
Former of light and Creator of darkness,
Maker of good and Creator of evil,
I, Yahweh, make all these things.

And Yahweh added:

Only among you is El,
And there is no other, no other Elohim.

God tells us that He is among us, and He makes our sufferings. But in doing so, He does not sin, for sin is a failing. All have sinned and are *wanting* of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). We lack the glory of God, the glory of never failing to accomplish the good He has purposed. God will hit the mark He has set; He will achieve His goal.

What is His goal?

"For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the First-fruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His pres-

ence; thereafter the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power. For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He subjects all under His feet. Now whenever He may be saying that all is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him. Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:22-28).

God's goal is to become *All in all!*

THE PROCESS OF DYING

In order for God to become All in all death must be dethroned. It has entered into our world through the disobedience of Adam. Yahweh Elohim had instructed: ". . . as for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying" (Gen.2:17). Consequently there has come a long drawn-out process of suffering, of groaning and grief, for each human being . . . "until you return to the ground, for from it were you taken. For soil you are, and to soil you shall return" (Gen.3:19).

What then is it to be living now? It is to be in a process of dying, which involves suffering.

Yet dying ends with "to die." To die is to *return.* Job said, "I know that You are returning me to death" (Job 30:23). At death the spirit returns to God Who gave it (Ecc.12:7); the soul returns to the unseen (*cf* Psa.9:27; Acts 2:27,31); and the body returns to the soil (Gen.3:19).

But at present, God, Who is among us, has appointed that we should be dying, which means that we will be suffering during this life. Nevertheless, God, Who is among us, has not made suffering an everlasting condition or as

an end in itself. It is temporary, and it will serve, by way of contrast, to make His glory known.

THE GLORY OF GOD

We are now wanting of the glory of God. For God has subjected the creation to vanity. But He has done so in expectation.

"For I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us. For the premonition of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God. For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that the creation itself also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God."

J. W. Goerzen

IN EXPECTATION

Brother Jacob W. Goerzen, of Edmonton, Alberta, was put to repose on August 18, 2002, at the age of 86. Our condolences in their loss go out to his wife, Suzanne, and their seven daughters and their families.

He had prepared the notes on the purpose of suffering arranged in the article above for a talk several years ago. That God had subjected the creation to vanity *in expectation* of the whole being freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God was a source of deepest joy to him. Born in an ethnic German village in the Ukraine, fleeing in his youth with his family to a pioneering, farm life in Canada, eventually becoming a student and teacher of languages, he increasingly became occupied with the treasures of God's Word. Combining this love of the Scriptures with his interest in languages, he prepared a Concordant translation of several portions of the Word into his native "Low German" tongue. There were many struggles, but he saw that these also were given to him by the faithful God. And along the way, God gave him many hours of pleasure among the mountains and prairies and with his family.

His translation of portions of Scripture into *Plautdisch* is still available. Inquiries concerning it should be sent to: Saviour of All Fellowship, 6800 Hough Rd., Almont MI 48003

CONFLICTS WITH THE PHILISTINES
(2 Samuel 5:17-25)

17 +**When** the **Philistines** |**heard that they had anointed** `**David** >**as king over Israel,** +**then all** the **Philistines** marched |**up to seek** `**David;** +**but David** |**heard** of it **and** went |**down to the fastness.** 18 +**As** for the **Philistines, they came and were** |**deployed in** the **vale of Rephaim.** 19 + **David** |*ask***inquired** *i***of Yahweh,** > **saying**–**, Shall I** go **up** >**against** the **Philistines?** Will **You** |*g***deliver them in**to **my hand?** + **Yahweh** |*sa***replied to David,** Go **up, for I** will |**give,** yea **give**– `**the Philistines in**to **your hand.** 20 +**So David** |**entered** *i* **Baal-perazim, and David** |**smote them there.** + **He** |**said, Yahweh has breached** `through **my enemies**| **before me like** a **breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of** ·**that** *ri***place Baal-perazim.** 21 +**Since they** had |**forsaken** `**their fetishes there,** + **David and his men** |**carried them** off**.**

22 + *fr***Once** |**again** the **Philistines** > came **up**– **and were** |**deployed in** the **vale of Rephaim.** 23 +**So David** |*ask***inquired** *i***of Yahweh;** +**yet He** |*sa***replied, You shall not** go **up** *7***to meet them***0***.** Go **around** > *af***behind them,** so +**that you come** >**against them** *f* **opposite** the **aspens.** 24 + **Let it come** to **be,** *i***when you hear**– `the **sound of marching in** the **tops of the aspens, then** make your |**decisive** move, **for** by **then Yahweh will have** gone **forth before you to smite** *i* the army **camp of** the **Philistines.** 25 + **David** |**did so, just as Yahweh had instructed him; and he** |**smote** `the **Philistines from Geba as far as your entry**– to **Gezar.**

THE COFFER TAKEN

THE early chapters of 1 Samuel tell of the corruption of the priesthood, particularly that of Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli. This corruption occasioned serious conflicts with the Philistines. Israel suffered a debilitating loss to the Philistines, and her elders counseled to bring the coffer of the testimony to the battle front. At the coming of the coffer, the Israelites shouted with one voice—a shout that shook the earth and struck terror in the Philistine camp. Nevertheless the Philistines encouraged themselves and determined to fight. They succeeded in defeating the Israelites soundly, and even captured the coffer of the covenant (1 Sam.4:1-11). They brought the coffer back into their territory where it plagued them on every hand. For Israel, this initiated a period of "Ichabod," a period when the *glory was departed* from Israel.

YAHWEH GOES BEFORE THEM

The passage in 2 Samuel 5:17-25, quoted above, also details two battles between the Philistines and the Israelites. In the first battle, Israel was victorious, and the fleeing Philistines left behind a large collection of their idols. The Israelites collected these, and, at David's command, burned them (*cf* 1 Chron.14:12; Deut.7:5,25).

As with the first battle, David, the servant of Yahweh, consulted Him before advancing to fight the Philistines in the second battle. But this time they were to go around behind the Philistines rather than meeting them at the fore. In contrast with Israel's earth-shaking shout in 1 Samuel 4:5, God instructed David and his army to listen for the sound of marching in the tops of the trees. When hearing this, they were to advance, knowing that God was going before them into battle.

These battles preceded the time when Israel would

enjoy greater glory and Jerusalem would be established as the place of Yahweh's Name.

PSALM 78

The final twelve verses of Psalm 78 tie 1 Samuel 2:12-7:2 together with 2 Samuel 5:6-6:19. There are a number of interesting parallels between these passages. The earlier conflicts with the Philistines resulted in the loss of the coffer. In accord with this we read that Elohim "sent His strength into captivity, and His beauty into the hand of the foe" (Psa.78:61). But in these later battles, described above in 2 Samuel 5:17-25, "He smote His foes backward" (Psa.78:66). God's abandonments are never permanent and serve a purpose for eventual blessing.

J. Philip Scranton

NEW PUBLICATIONS

We are glad to announce that UNSEARCHABLE RICHES VOLUME 92 (2001) is now in stock (bound in green cloth, gold-stamped, 288 pages; $23.00). Nearly all *UR* volumes from volume 1–92 are available in print ($23.00 each, 1–10 volumes; $18.00 each, 11+ volumes).

THE ANCIENT HISTORY OF UNIVERSALISM is now back in print (by Hosea Ballou, 2nd; paperback, ivory book paper, 328 pages; $15.00). This ancient history of universalism covers the period from the apostles, to its condemnation in the fifth general council, 553 A.D., with an appendix tracing the doctrine down to the era of the Reformation.

In 1828, the author wrote, "Thus far, I may venture to pronounce this History complete, in one sense: it contains an account of every individual of note, whom we have now the means of knowing to have been a Universalist . . . . By the popular terms *orthodox* and *heretic*, I mean, not the true and the false creed, but the predominant, or catholic, and the dissenting, or anathematized. To conclude, I have frequently spoken of the *Western* or *Latin* Churches, in distinction from the *Eastern* or *Greek;* though they were not actually separated from each others' communion, till the ninth century."

Please specify book or volumes you wish to order (shipping and handling: add 10%; California residents add sales tax; foreign orders payable in U.S. funds).

THROUGH THE PROPHETS

GOD SPEAKS in creation, through prophets, in His Son, through the apostles, and presently through the Sacred Scriptures. In this article we will concentrate on His communication to and through the prophets.

In the past, prophets not only foretold the future, but they also gave out God's word to man in their day. Israel's history in the land is dominated by the succession of prophets speaking for God. It distinguishes Israel's history from any other nation.

CHRIST AS A PROPHET

Christ was a Prophet (Luke 24:19). We speak of Him first in our discussion because God has placed Him first in all (Col.1:19,20). But we will not include very much material on His ministry here because our next instalment will be exclusively on God speaking through His Son.

Perhaps we don't think often of Jesus Christ as Prophet, for we know Him best as the Son of God's love and as our Saviour. Yet it is well to be aware of His prophetic role, as He walked the land of Israel.

He started this work by interpreting the time to His listeners. His first public announcement soon after reaching His majority age, and after severe testing, was this: "Repent! for near is the kingdom of the heavens!" (Matt. 4:17). The primary theme of His earthly ministry was the offer of the kingdom of the heavens, and its characteristics. In that ministry Christ became "the Servant of the Circumcision [the Israelites] for the sake of the truth of

God, to confirm the patriarchal promises" (Rom.15:8). The kingdom was promised early in Israel's history and was the subject of much of the Old Testament.

Well could He make such an offer—He was to be the *King!* (Matt.2:6). Although His offer was rejected, He will yet be King (Rev.11:15). *The promised kingdom will yet be established, and Israel shall receive it willingly* (Psa.110:3).

Christ had more than the role of Prophet, for He will be King, and also He will have another role, that of Chief Priest (Heb.2:17). Not only so, He was to be the Sacrifice! With the Scriptures complete and the veil removed, we now see that God purposed from the beginning the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. "Yet what God announces before through the mouth of all the prophets—the suffering of His Christ—He thus fulfills" (Acts 3:18). And we see that He was "given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). So the removal of the pervasive sin of mankind is provided for. The sin that Adam introduced upon the race will be thus justified. "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense [Adam's] for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

OTHER PROPHETS

In the Hebrew Scriptures many books are classified as *The Prophets,* including the *Former Prophets* (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings) and the *Latter Prophets* which are, in turn, often divided into the *Major Prophets* (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel) and the *Minor Prophets* (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi).

Abraham was called a prophet (Gen.20:7). Moses was a

prophet (Deut.34:10). These were among the first we read of in the Scriptures. God progressively revealed Himself through these and other prophets.

We often wonder about the world. Where is it headed? Will mankind ever be taught to behave? Will mankind ever be brought into righteous government?

Yes! And one of the first hints of this is given to Abraham. About nineteen hundred years after the creation of Adam, God singled out Abraham and told him: "In you all the families of the ground will be blessed" (Gen.12:3). He also told him He would make of him "a great nation" (Gen.12:2).

God moved this along through Moses. It was through Moses that the Israelites started on their tedious journey back to Canaan, which God had promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as a home for their descendants.

The kingdom on earth, its development through Israel in relation to the nations, is the major theme of prophecy in the Hebrew Scriptures. Christ will be King. When He walked the earth, He instructed His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come" (Matt.6:10). Then righteousness will reign, and sin will be suppressed. The knowledge of Yahweh will cover the earth (*cf* Isa.11:9; Hab.2:14). In the messages of the prophets the thought is reiterated that Yahweh will visit His people Israel and restore them to their land and bless them through the Saviour, and will extend blessings to the nations. In fact, several of the prophets' names reflect this. Joshua means *Salvation of Yahweh.* Isaiah has practically the same meaning. Hosea also means *Salvation.* These names are all linked to the Greek name *Jesus.*

PICTURES OF CHRIST

God often used events as prophetic pictures of the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ. One that will immediately occur to the reader is the instruction God gave to

Abraham to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac. Although he was stopped, what a picture it gave of the supreme sacrifice when God gave His only Son! (*cf* Gen.22). There are similar prophetic messages in the story of Joseph in Genesis 37-45 (where Christ's death, entombment, resurrection, and even His exaltation are foreshadowed). Jonah was in the sea monster three days and three nights, a picture of the entombment of Christ.

These prophetic events give us confidence that God is in control, that He is in the process of revealing Himself and has provided a Saviour Whom He purposed at the very beginning of history, *before* mankind had compiled the sorry record of sin.

All that was said through the prophets and shown through prophetic events is focused ultimately on Jesus Christ, Who reveals the heart and purpose of God.

Robert B. Killen

HEBREW PROPHECY

In the national structure of Israel there were two prominent institutions: priesthood and prophecy. Each had its special characteristics, and performed distinct functions.

The priestly office was hereditary. From the very outset it was invested with the character and insignia of official rank. Prophecy, however, was not bound to office and order, but was subject to God's pleasure: He chose whomsoever He would.

The first meeting of Saul and Samuel affords a striking illustration of the function of prophecy (1 Samuel 9 and 10). Kish lost his donkeys and sent Saul to recover them. Who would have thought that God's purpose relating to the kingdom hinged on this insignificant occurrence? Who would have discerned in this common incident the turning point

in Israel's fortunes? Donkeys have been lost many a time before and since; but this is the only instance when their loss was fraught with developments of most momentous consequences to the whole world. God opened the mind of the prophet Samuel so that he readily distinguished this occurrence from others of a like kind; he discerned that it served ends beyond itself, grasped its bearing on current developments, and handled the situation accordingly.

Prophecy was a gift bestowed on men by the Spirit of God. The endowment of seers and prophets consisted in an extraordinary heightening of the perceptive faculty. The prophets were primarily observers; they watched the unfolding of events, and their perception enabled them to discern the significance of particular events and visualize the effects emanating therefrom. This accounts for the ability of the prophets to sharply sever the things perceived from their own feeling and opinion. How differently Nathan was instructed by divine revelation from what his individual opinion suggested (2 Sam.7:3,4)! The contents of prophecy are consequently not something thought out, inferred, hoped, or feared by the prophets, but something directly perceived by the revelation of God. This explains the categorical certainty with which prophets announced their messages. They knew these messages to be independent of their own subjectivity.

What had thus unfolded to the prophet as divine certainty, he then felt compelled to utter. The divine causality which enabled the prophet to see, impelled him to tell what he saw. This compelling power of utterance is pictured most vividly in Amos: "The lion roars—who will not fear? My Lord Yahweh speaks—who will not prophesy?" (Amos 3:8). Just as involuntarily as one starts in terror when the mighty voice of the king of beasts roars, must the prophet prophesy when God's revealing word came to him. Only false prophets were led by outward human con-

siderations to proclaim what pleased the crowd or brought gain to themselves.

But when the prophet had discerned in the events a thought which he clearly distinguished from his own thoughts and feelings, he proclaimed it not as his own conviction, but as a divine revelation, demanding the obedience and trust due to God. He was God's speaker, bringing a message, the organ through which the Invisible God spoke audibly to His people. This is evident from the fact that the Hebrew word for *prophet* is interchanged with the word *mouth* in Exodus 4:16.

While it is a necessary part of the character of the true prophet to be a seer of God and His spokesman, it is not equally necessary that what he saw and announced should relate to the *future.* The popular idea that the prophet was a prognosticator may appeal to people of a wonder-loving frame of mind, but affords no aid in understanding their writings. We find that prophetic writings which illumined the foretime were called *annals* because they recorded God's ways in the past (2 Chron.9:29).

The essential element to be maintained in prophecy is, that it traces and makes known God's ways of working in the world. Prophecy is significant for the future only because it reveals the unchanging principles of divine working. From the initial fulfillment in the prophet's day, it looks forward to some consummating event in the distant future.

Prophecy is not abstract teaching regarding the future independently of the historic circumstances of the time. It had a basis in concrete facts: in personal experience, and historic situations; it had a near object as well as a remote goal. The prophets saw the absolute in the particular and finite, saw the working of God in nature, His action in history, and thus spoke to the intelligence and conscience of individuals.

V. Gelesnoff

Contents:

241 Editorial
247 In the Days of Noah
261 In the Eyes of Yahweh
269 "Neither Will He be Sparing You!"
The Sovereign and the Supreme
273 God Speaks in a Son
279 The Return of the Coffer

NOVEMBER, 2002

Volume XCIII **Number 6**

New Edition:

The Divine Calendar

As in the affairs of daily life, we need the kindly offices of a calendar to tell us the day or week or month or year, so, God has given us a calendar in order that we may locate ourselves in His grand affairs with which we are identified and in which we take an active interest.

Universal history may be considered from various viewpoints. Its divisions vary according to the special aspect. It falls into: (1) Two Grand Creations (besides three special creations); (2) Three Heavens and Earths (as to its material basis); (3) Five Worlds (as to moral Constitution); (4) Five Eons (as to the duration, character and disposition of each world); (5) Twelve Economies (for purposes of human administration); (6) A Week's Work (for the restoration of the second earth); (7) Four Monarchies (in regard to governing principles); (8) Three Days (as regards the direction of affairs), besides various Periods or Eras, concerned with special occurrences or extraordinary dealings which arise.

In order to group these grand arrangements at a glance, we have prepared a chart synchronizing the various divine activities.

Accordingly, this new publication features a high-quality reproduction of our original, large wall chart, now in reduced 11" x 17" format. This chart may also be viewed or printed on line, linked from:

http://concordant.org/expohtml/TheEons/TheDivineCalendar.html

The Divine Calendar (chart with booklet)

($6.00; includes 11" x 17" color chart and companion booklet; shipping and handling: add 10%, $1.50 minimum; California residents please add sales tax; foreign orders payable in U.S. funds).

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 2002
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-THREE

EDITORIAL

"NOW the infirm in the faith be taking to yourselves, but not for [i.e., in such a way so as to lead into] *discrimination of reasonings* . . . . The faith which you have, have for yourself in God's sight. Happy is he who is not judging himself in that which he is attesting. Now he who is doubting whether he should be eating is condemned, seeing that it is not out of faith. Now everything which is not out of faith is sin" (Rom.14:1; 22,23).

"Reasoning" is the process of "lay[ing] facts in relation to one another so as to be the basis of opinion."[1] Reasoning is something that we all do, and must do, continually. Whenever we reach a conclusion as to what to think or how to act, this is as the result of a process of reasoning. A logical conclusion is the result of the ratiocinative (i.e., reasoning) process.

The Scriptures by no means condemn reasoning, as such; instead, they condemn the *application* of reasoning which most make of it. Whenever our reasoning is ill-motivated, even if it should be logically sound, it becomes sinful or even wicked reasoning.

In so many cases, however, our reasoning is not even logically sound. And, even if it should be not only sound (i.e., deductively correct) but valid as well (i.e., also based upon true premises), it often fails to consider all that should have been considered. Common reasoning, then, as applied to scriptural themes, is often mistaken and perhaps even more often inadequate. It is even more disturbing to note of our reasoning that whether it is sound and adequate or

1. Keyword Concordance, p.240.

not, it is often motivated by sinful desires. Perhaps there is no better example of wicked reasonings than when we wish to exalt ourselves through demonstrations of our own correctness.

Therefore, while we *are* to take the infirm in the faith to ourselves, we are *not* to do so in any way which would further them in their "discrimination of reasonings," which, to them, are important findings of truth. If they have not asked for our help and see themselves as in no need of it, we should not try to convince them to the contrary. Even if they should make mistaken charges against us or misrepresent our teaching, let us not seek to vindicate ourselves. This is unnecessary for most, and for others it may only foster strife.

"Discriminate," means to make distinctions, or to distinguish. Like reasoning, discriminating is something that we can hardly avoid doing. Distinctions exist; and we need to distinguish between them. Indeed, ". . . solid nourishment is for the mature, who, because of habit, have faculties exercised for *discriminating* between the ideal and the evil" (Heb.5:14).

It is not at all that we should not seek to discriminate between the false and the true. It is simply that, even as most cannot properly reason, neither can they properly discriminate truth from falsehood. We must live with the reality that this is the way things are, while enduring the difficulties which this so often entails.

All such troubles notwithstanding, the object of our faith remains. Our faith is in "the *declaration* of faith" which is made known by God's spokesmen (*cp* the words of the apostle Paul, "the declaration of faith which we are heralding," Rom.10:8b). "Consequently, faith is out of tidings, yet the tidings through a declaration of Christ" (Rom.10:17). Fundamentally, then, when we believe, *we believe God.*

The fact that we may not believe the correct interpretation of what God has said, does not preclude us from being among those who believe what God has said.

For example, there are many who teach that the Abrahamic promises are to be understood allegorically (i.e., symbolically) while others such as ourselves are convinced that they are to be understood literally. Both groups know what the Abrahamic promises are, and know as well what the words of which they are comprised mean, while accepting them as God's own word accordingly.

Therefore, it would simply be incorrect to say that whichever group misinterprets the sense in which these promises are to be understood, are unbelievers as to these same promises. The allegorists know what the literal interpretation is; it is simply that they think that the literal interpretation is unwarranted in this case, being persuaded of the correctness of their own allegorical interpretation. Hence, even if the literalists should be correct in their interpretation of these promises themselves, they will nonetheless be mistaken and foolish in any dismissive claim that they may make to the effect that the allegorists are simply "unbelievers" as to the promises made unto Abraham.

In addition to in some cases misjudging the sense of God's word, it may be that we also hold to certain mistaken notions which are contrary to the true interpretation of His word. Nevertheless, whenever we are convinced by His testimony and take His word to us accordingly, we become, by definition, believers.

That is, when "holy men of God speak,"[2] and we believe their testimony, we become believers in what God has said.

Beyond this, to the degree that we are "sane" (i.e., sensible, mentally sound and able), we will also accept the

2. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture at all is becoming its own explanation. For not by the will of man was prophecy carried on at any time, but, being carried on by holy spirit, holy men of God speak" (2 Peter 1:20,21).

corollaries to (i.e., what follows from) what God has said, while likewise repudiating whatever is contradictory (i.e., contrary) to His testimony.

The recognition, however, on the one hand, of corollaries, and on the other hand, of contradictions, is a significant ability, one which is certainly a gift of God. While most have such abilities to some extent, not many have them—or at least not many are able to accurately employ them—with regularity and depth, point by point, when considering the scriptural testimony.

Yet in ever so many cases, where corollaries fail to be noted and contradictions go unrecognized, *inferences* nevertheless are freely made, believed, and accepted as truth. Strictly, "inference" is the comprehensive term for the formal drawing of conclusions. But, in the ordinary problematic sense we have in mind, an inference is the conclusion one draws when one *thinks* that a certain thing is "implied" by a speaker (in the sense of hinted at or at least somehow involved) within the compass of what he has said.

In this sense, an inference, at best, cannot be known to be correct, and so must not be believed as if it were known to be correct. And, as a practical matter, many such inferences not only cannot be known to be true but, in light of what *is* known to be true, can be known to be untrue, by those who are sufficiently skilled in critical thinking.

Yet inferences are very appealing. Their appeal is often an appeal simply to one's vanity. But in any case, in the end, they can only be an appeal to, by whatever name, some sort of extra-scientific ability to detect and discern truth which one more or less fancies oneself to possess. Even so, those who thus "go by" what are in fact nothing more than purported involvements or supposed hints, usually view such inferences as if they were veritable truth.

In fact, such persons' logic-related skills are inadequate, even though they suppose that they are adequate. They see

little need rigorously to *test* their ratiocinative skills, nor would they be able to do so accurately. Yet because of the *confidence* they have in their perceived intellectual proficiency (or at least sufficiency), they are unable to recognize what is actually their not inconsiderable deficiency.

In our dealings with any such persons thus confused, what are we to do? Explicitly inform them of our opinion as to their actual state? Certainly not, for that would be to confront a fool in his folly. What we are to do instead is to be patient, kind and humble, gentle and meek, "training those who are antagonizing," training them at least in any way and to any degree that they will give any heed at all to our discipline.

While waiting for God to grant them a change of mind (i.e., "repentance"), we are to be "bearing with evil," while remaining "apt to teach" (2 Tim.2:25). We are to continue to be "TEACHic" (*didaktikon*), which is to say fitted or suited to teaching (as in the Latin *aptus* or the English "aptitude"), just in case God should one day make one of our opposers into a willing student, one of our own.

And, in the meantime, we would be apt to teach as well especially for the sake of those who are already our willing students even if they should sometimes be stumbled by certain of the claims of our critics.

The way that we respond to what, in our considered judgment, are but faulty discriminations of reasonings, is a matter of great practical importance. None of us are apostles or prophets; and, in ourselves, we are all prone to err. In response to Paul's rhetorical question, "from *you* came out the word of God?" (1 Cor.14:36), we must freely acknowledge, No, it most certainly did not.

Even if such "infirm" believers should acknowledge us as their fellow saints, this is all that they will acknowledge us to be, for at best this is all they perceive us to be; and, *this is all that we are.*

We are decidedly neither their apostle nor their prophet. Nor can we ever become even their teacher either, unless *they* should perceive in us a capacity well-suited to such a role. It would be useless and foolish for us to claim any such fitness before them, even if we should to some extent possess it. This is because, where a capacity for helpfulness is not perceived, for all *practical* purposes, it does not exist.

It is in light of these considerations, then, in our dealings with those whom we perceive as infirm in the faith, that while taking them to ourselves, we would do so in a particular way. And that way is in whatever way is suitable and viable so as to minimize any attention to their discriminations of reasonings, which is to say, to their mistaken judgments as to truth which are the fruit of their own faulty reasonings. If others would draw us into a "discussion" which if continued is bound to become a quarrel, may God give us the grace not to take the bait.

In personal exchanges, there is much else that can be discussed and ought to be discussed besides contentions over doctrine, which instead should be avoided. If we are asked for our opinions and for our reasons for our opinions, if it seems appropriate to do so, we may state them. But where receptivity to our thoughts is lacking and yet opposition is not lacking, we should not continue to argue for our opinion any longer.

Having failed in making such a worthy response many times in years past myself, and having seen countless fellow believers themselves similarly fail, doing so upon ever so many occasions, my only thought is that surely it is time that we resolve to do what is expedient and wise in this regard while giving no place to what is inexpedient and foolish.

May God graciously grant us the will to do what is expedient even as the heart to speak according to wisdom: imitators of God, beloved children, walking in love (Eph.5:1,2).

J.R.C.

IN THE DAYS OF NOAH

(Genesis 6:5-22)

5 + **Yahweh** ˡ**saw that the evil of humanity** was **multiplying** *ⁱ***on earth, and every form of** the **devisings of its heart** was **surely evil all the day.** 6 + **Yahweh** ˡ**regretted that He had** *ᵈ***made** `**humanity** *ⁱ***on earth, and He** ˡ**grieved** ›**in His heart.** 7 +**So Yahweh** ˡ**said: I shall wipe** out `**humanity** *ʷ***that I have created, off** the sur**face of the ground, from human unto** domestic **beast, unto** the **creeper and unto** the **flyer of the heavens; for I regret that I have** *ᵈ***made them.**

8 +**Yet Noah found grace in** the **eyes of Yahweh.**

9 **These** are the **genealogical** record**s of Noah: Noah** was a **righteous man; he became flawless in his generations; Noah walked** `with **the** One**, Elohim.** 10 + **Noah** ˡ**begot three sons,** `**Shem,** `**Ham and** `**Japheth.**

11 +**Now the earth was** ˡ**ruined before the** One**, Elohim, and the earth was** ˡ**full** of **violence.** 12 + 7**Yahweh**0 **Elohim** ˡ**saw the earth, and behold, it was ruined, for all flesh had ruined** `**its ways on the earth.** 13 +**So** 7**Yahweh**0 **Elohim** ˡ**said to Noah:** 7The **era of**0 the **end of all** 7**human**0 **flesh has come before Me, for the earth is full** of **violence** *ᶠ***because** of **their presence.** +**Now behold, I** am about to **ruin**ˡ **them** `with **the earth.**

14 ˡ*ᵈ***Make for you**rself an **ark of sulphur wood;** with **nests shall you** *ᵈ***make** `**the ark, and you will shelter** `**it from** the **inside and from** the **outside** *ⁱ***with** a **sheltering** coat. 15 + **This** is *ʷ***how you shall** *ᵈ***make** `**it: 300 cubit**s the **length of the ark, 50 cubit**s **its width, and 30 cubit**s **its rise.** 16 7**Narrowing~ ~from its middle~ shall you** *ᵈ***make** it**, and to** a

cubit shall you [all]**finish it from above.** [+] **You shall place** the entrance **opening of the ark in its side** and [l][d]**make** [u]**lower, second and third** decks**.**

17 [+]**Now behold, I My**self am about to **bring**[l] `a **deluge of water on the earth to wreck all flesh** [f] **under the heavens which** has the **spirit of life in it. All** [w]**that** is **in** the **earth shall decease.**

18 [+]**Yet I will set up `My covenant** `with **you, and you** must **come** in**to the ark, you and your sons,** [+] **your wife and your sons' wives** `with **you.** 19 7+ [f]**Of every** domestic **beast,** [+] [f]**of every creeper**[0]**,** [+] [f]**of every** `wild **animal,** [f]**of all flesh, you shall bring pairs from all** in**to the ark to** [c]**stay alive** `with **you; they shall** [b]**be male and female.** 20 [f]**Of the flyer** according **to its kind,** [+] [f]**of the** domestic **beast** according **to its kind,** and [f]**of every creeper of the ground** according **to its kind, from all shall they come** in **pairs to you to** [c]**stay alive.** 21 [+]**As** for **you, take for you**rself **from every food which is** to be [l]**eaten;** [+] **you** must **gather** it up **for you**rself, so [+]**that it will come** to **be** › **food for you and for them.**

22 [+]**Then Noah** [l]**did according** to **all** [w]**that** [7]**Yahweh**[0] **Elohim had instructed `him; he did** just **so.**

THE DELUGE prepared the earth for this eon, or world, in which we live, so is of special interest to us today. Before this, mankind lived under very different conditions, and usually ten times as long, and in a drier climate. They were in subjection to their fathers, under a very lenient form of family rule, without nations or political boundaries, or the resulting wars and hardships which we endure. That paternal form of subjection led mankind to ruin the earth in the days of Noah (*cf* Matt.24:37). The deluge inaugurated a much harsher system of subjection, which still continues.

Why was there a deluge? To really get a grasp of any event in human history, we should first seek to see the

Subjector's *purpose* in it, and the *result* He has in view. The first earth, in the first eon, seems to have been perfect in a sense, but not like the new earth of the future. Why wasn't humanity started on that? And when the race was begun on the restored earth, why was sin and death forthwith introduced? The answer is clear. Because the experience of evil is essential to the appreciation of good. It alone can produce the subjection and worship and adoration for which all was created. Even as the disruption prepared the earth for the first failure of human government under Adam and his sons, so the deluge set the stage for the present exhibition of human insubjection to God, and inability to govern himself or the race.

It seems to be the general impression that the deluge was sent as a punishment or judgment on all the inhabitants of the preceding world. But this cannot be, for it involved only the surviving residue, only a part of those who had lived in the preceding eon. Adam, for instance, and his succession of firstborn sons, had all died, except Noah and Shem, and these were saved through it. Noah and his sons and their wives were needed to start the race anew. Death had already reached most who lived in that eon, before those were drowned in the flood. Death was due to Adam's sin. Others, even murderers, as Cain and Lamech, were shielded from a violent death. All of these will be judged at the great white throne. During the evil eons, from the disruption by water (Gen.1:2) to its combustion by fire (2 Peter 3:7), the earth itself is disintegrating, as well as its inhabitants. In Hebrew the inhabited earth (CV "habitance") is called the *disintegration.* The lesser disturbances, the flood and the period of fiery indignation, are similar in kind, but not nearly so destructive, or the changes so great, as the disruption after the beginning or the fiery cataclysm before the new earth.

In this light, the deluge of Noah's day is worthy of special

study, for it introduced a new method of human subjection, which exists at the present time. It will continue until further judgments destroy the kingdoms of this world, in order to prepare for the kingdom of Christ. This, our Lord told Pilate, is not to be of this world (John 18:36), but will be the characteristic feature of the next eon. There were no nations or kingdoms before the deluge. There are many in this eon, and there will be only one King of kings in the next. The Subjector is using all of these worlds and their various forms of rule to prepare humanity for its future and final subjection to Him.

Humanity, all flesh, ruined the earth, especially the surface of the ground before the deluge came. We read that all *flesh* ruins its ways on the earth. Only then are we told that the Subjector said to Noah, "Now, behold I am about to ruin them with the earth" (Gen.6:11-13). We are in a similar position today, so that there is actually much apprehension lest the latest of man's weapons of warfare may lead to a chain reaction which will explode the whole. That such a thing can be done, and will later take place, seems evident from Peter's reference to the end of the present earth, when it will be dissolved by combustion (2 Peter 3:10-13). But this cannot take place until after the next eon, so is not possible at present.

COSMIC CHANGES

In order to reveal Himself through His work and His ways, the Subjector uses five different "worlds," or arrangements as a background. The earth, as originally created, was perfect for the purpose of displaying the might and majesty of the Creator, but was not suited to set forth those deeper moral excellencies which demanded the presence of evil and sin as a foil for their display. To carry out this desire of His heart the first earth was caused to become chaos and vacant and dark (Gen.1:2). It was restored, but

only in part, with night as well as light, and water as well as land. The new earth of the future will have no sea and no night (Rev.21:1,25). But the intervening three worlds must have these, because they correspond to the imperfections which are in mankind at the same time.

The ancient world, from the disruption to the deluge (2 Peter 2:5), was designated to be a background to show the bitter and hopeless evil of the human race when under the control of Adam and his sons. Not only did the first man who was born kill his brother, but the last generation filled the earth with ruin and wrong. This present world, from the deluge to the coming kingdom, introduces control by means of *nations,* or human governments. The world wars, to which this has recently led, should show its hopeless failure. The need for a new set up is very evident. We seem to be near the great crisis, or turning point, when the Subjector puts the earth under *His own King* and a *chosen nation.* After that, in the new earth, as the Son of the Subjector, He brings all into subjection so that, at the consummation, all will be willingly subject.

The fact that the evil of humanity *grieved the heart* of Yahweh shows clearly that the deluge was not a vindictive and unfeeling act, dictated by disappointment or anger. So also with the further fact that He *regretted* that He had made humanity on the earth. As far as His *feelings* were concerned, He would not have had it so at that time. All His acts are dictated by love, with a view to the blessing of His creatures and their *eventual* happiness, so He *sympathizes* with them, and His heart goes out to them even when they are disobedient. He has the consummation always before Him in His dealings with humanity. It would be well if we also looked at them in the same light. Then we, too, would regret the need of such judgments, even though we know the future goal, and realize their absolute necessity to bring it about.

This grief is the cue to our attitude toward the superior authorities, to whom we are subject (Rom.13:1). We are not exhorted to seek to become one, for our rule is to be among the celestials, in the future, but we are to be sympathetic. Therefore our apostle entreats that petitions, prayers, pleadings, and thanksgiving be made, not only for all mankind in general, but especially for those in a superior station, that we may lead a mild and quiet life. They are in a difficult position. Their superficial function is to govern well, but their underlying function is to display their inability to rule ideally. We should be most lenient in our criticism of their acts, for they are quite helpless to subject those who are not subject to the supreme Subjector.

Mankind is now given an opportunity to display its utter incompetence to rule. This is so all imaginable forms of government may be tried in order to exhibit their weaknesses and shortcomings. For some time all the world was under one head. There have been many great empires and numerous smaller kingdoms. In some the authority is vested in a single head, in others in a group. In some it is exercised by the people. The trial has now lasted over four thousand years, and today there seems to be more contention as to the best form than ever. None have been entirely satisfactory, as God intended.

WHY A DELUGE?

If mankind has continually improved by evolution, why was there need for a deluge? The scriptural account reveals to us a Deity Who has a reason for all that occurs, but the evolutionists base their theory on willful ignorance of the historical facts. Humanity is inherently sinful, and needs to know this, and to be given a new start. Had there been no deluge, mankind would have become so saturated with sin that it would have rotted away by a much more painful and prolonged death than drowning. By God using the

best family as a new start, *they have been saved much suffering*. If the present trend were eternal, the world would become a theological "hell" for men *before* they die. It seems to be about time for a change, and a fresh start under a Ruler Who is destined to succeed!

NOAH

The name Noah (*Noe* STOP, rest), is usually explained as meaning *rest*. But its stem is used to cover a somewhat wider area of thought than simply desisting from labor or exertion, as may be seen in connection with the ark. We read, "resting is the ark . . . on the mountains of Ararat" (Gen.8:4). Figuratively this is a very fine rendering, but, literally, the ark was not weary, so that it needed rest. It *stopped* because it was no longer water-borne. Noah lived at the *end* of the second eon or world, which was *stopped* by the deluge, and it seems very fitting that Noah's name included a reference to this, one of the greatest crises in the earth's career. Lamech, his father, the son of Methuselah and grandson of Enoch, must have known of the terrible state the world was in, and was consoled by the thought that his son was the one who would see it *stopped*. Nothing that happened before this seems to have brought any cessation.

Noah, being a firstborn son in the line of Seth, belonged to the "distinguished" of those days (Gen.6:4). Not being in the line of Cain, who typify *in*subjection, but a head in the line of Seth, which was subject to Elohim, he was "flawless in his generations," and was chosen to start the new world, in which the great lesson of subjection would be further developed by a different method of enforcing it. Hitherto there always had been *several* of these first-born sons on the scene simultaneously. There were four before Adam died. Now however, at the time of the deluge, there were only Noah and his son, Shem. None of his sons were drowned in the deluge. Through his *three* sons Noah not

only commenced the present world in which nations and kings stage another failure, but, through Shem, he started one nation and one King, Christ Jesus, by which the *next* world will be a success in bringing humanity under the rule of the Subjector.

With this in view, Noah was shown *grace* in the eyes of Yahweh. This implies that he was favored, not because of any personal merit, but because of God's purpose. He needed such a man, and how else could He get one but by means of His own grace? Hence we find Noah listed with Daniel and Job, as highest examples of mortal righteousness (Ezek.14:14). The present race of humanity was given the best possible start by excluding all the men who were the cause of the deluge, from its line, and coming only through one who was graced with divine righteousness by faith. Later, when He began a special nation, Israel, He graced Abram with this righteousness. Now in this secret administration of transcendent grace, all His saints are given this gracious and glorious gift.

When we compare Noah with Adam, who started the previous world, we find a great advance. Adam was innocent, without the knowledge of good and evil, so that he failed at the very first test. But Noah was not only well acquainted with evil, but had overcome it. Adam had walked with Elohim in the midst of great goodness, but later hid from Him, and was driven from His presence. Noah lived in the midst of an evil generation, which was opposed to the Subjector. Nevertheless, he walked with Elohim in the midst of it all. Noah condemned the world about him by building the ark when there was no indication of any deluge. He embodied a great advance, due to the knowledge of evil, in being the inaugurator of the present world. It was commenced by a man of *faith* (Heb.11:7). He is like Adam in that he is the ancestor of us all.

NOAH'S FAITH

Noah displayed what is, perhaps, the most public and persistent exhibition of *faith* ever given. For a considerable period he was engaged in building a ship on dry land. If anyone should attempt this today, his sanity would be in serious doubt. Yet, in essence, believers in Christ are in the same position. Because of their faith they are not appointed to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess.5:9). We will not be saved by an ark from a watery deluge, but by being snatched away to meet the Lord in the air, and to rise to realms celestial. That will be the signal for the outpouring, not of a flood of water, but of divine indignation, to prepare the earth for the next world.

As shown below, the so-called "pitch" which was applied to the ark, was really a *sheltering* coat. The name *kphr* is often rendered *atonement* in our versions, *propitiatory shelter* in the CV. It was a type of Christ's sheltering sacrifice. The ark itself is the first illustration or type of propitiation. It should aid us in getting a good grasp of that much-misunderstood doctrine.

NOAH'S JUSTIFICATION

Noah was a *righteous* man who became flawless in his generations and walked with Elohim (Gen.6:9). How, then, need he find *grace* in the eyes of Yahweh? This is very important, standing, as it does, at the very portal of the present eon, in which the grace of God reaches its fullest exhibition. Abram, in the next administration, was reckoned righteous, although he seemed to fail occasionally. Since Noah, also, was strong in faith, and the recipient of grace, we can hardly escape the conclusion that his was a faith righteousness, based, not on his *acts*, but his *belief*, as it is today.

JUDGMENT BY WATER

Water and fire, the usual means of judgment, are cleansers or purifiers. When approaching the Deity in the tabernacle or temple, the priests must pass the brazen altar for burnt offerings, and the laver for cleansing. So is it with humanity as a whole. It was washed with water in the past, and must be purified with fire in the future (2 Peter 3:12). Superficially these judgments seem to be the result of vindictive vengeance, intended only to destroy. But this is not the case. Even as on the path approaching God's dwelling place, so also they are waymarks in human history, leading to divine presence at the consummation.

THE ARK

Noah was told to make an "ark" (Gen.6:14) It is a pity that our versions use this term also for the *coffer* of the covenant, which was in the holy of holies, for it was entirely different, in shape as well as use, and there is no connection between them whatever in the Hebrew.

The first specification given to Noah, when he was charged with building the ark, was the kind of wood to be used. Judging by its prominent position, this matter must be important, so we will seek to settle it satisfactorily first. The dictionary tells us that "gopher" is the unidentified wood used in the construction of Noah's ark. The name is usually applied to a rat-like animal which burrows in the soil. Luther tells us that the ark was built of *fir*. This seems likely, but is only a guess. Let us then, turn to the original and see if we can get a clue there. The Hebrew stem is *gphr*, and occurs thus here. But, with the affix *-ith gphr-ith*, it denotes SULPHUR, always rendered "brimstone" in the AV. It is associated with disinfection and is a symbol of the complete elimination of corruption. The ark was constructed of *sulphur* wood (Gen.6:14; 19:24).

SULPHUR WOOD

There is always a good reason for such things in God's Word, so we may ask, "Why did Noah use this kind of wood?" To house such a collection of mortal, decaying, putrefying flesh for a whole year in such a confined space would require a wood that will not rot, and, if possible, disinfect. There is a class of such woods, eminently suited for this purpose, some of which, most remarkably, are the only living things which have survived the thousands of years since the deluge. The big trees of California, closely related to the cypress and fir, and including the redwoods and the gigantea, are the oldest, largest, hence most incorruptible timber known to man. It may be that we get the name *cypress* from the Hebrew *gphr*. At first it was applied to the whole group, including both the cypress and the sequoias.

NESTS IN THE ARK

No *rooms* were in the ark. That would give the idea of spacious cabins, for which there would not be room within the ark. They were *nests* (Gen.6:14). This word not only indicates close quarters, but suggests that the animals were *young*. This was probably true of all the animals, but we may be quite sure that the clean animals were very young, for they were to be offered as a sacrifice a year later, and should not be much over a year old at that time (Lev.9:5, etc.). This seems to have provided ample space for a single pair of each species of animal, for it left room enough for seven pairs of the clean animals, six of which were not required for the purpose of future propagation.

"PITCH" OR SHELTER

We read that Noah was to "pitch," or "cover" (RV) the ark within and without with "pitch." Possibly Noah used some such substance to protect the wood of the ark from

the water and the weather, but there is nothing in the inspired text to indicate that it was *pitch*. The stem is *kphr* SHELTER (6:14). To this day it is used among the Jews, in the phrase *yom kippur,* the day of *atonement.* It is often translated *atonement,* but denotes a *shelter.* This first occurrence of the word gives us the key to its meaning. As this coating, which Noah put on the ark, *sheltered* it from the action of the elements, so Christ's propitiatory sacrifice *shelters* from divine indignation. The chief feature of the present world is the sacrifice of Christ, so at its very beginning we are given an illustration of it. This connection should be retained by translating, "*Shelter* it . . . with a *sheltering* coat" (Gen.6:14).

SIZE AND SHAPE OF THE ARK

As the approximate length of the cubit is eighteen inches, a foot and a half, half a yard, the ark was about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. After having given the dimensions, the next needed information is its *shape.* We cannot form any picture of the ark in our minds without this. The AV says, "A *window* shalt thou make to the *ark,* and in a cubit shalt thou *finish it above.*" The Standard Revision has changed this to "Make a *roof* for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above" (Gen.6:16). The Septuagint reads literally ON-TOGETHER-LEADING in place of the Hebrew *tzer* noon (window AV, roof RSV). If we change this to *tzr,* CONSTRICT, then the Greek and Hebrew agree, and convey the sense of *narrowing,* rather than *window* or *roof.*

Just how a "window," or a "roof," is to be "finished in a cubit above," is not at all clear. Up to this point we have the dimensions of an oblong, box-shaped vessel, quite unlike any water-born ship of today. But the Septuagint suggests a constriction or narrowing. This must apply to the shape of the ark itself. Besides this, the Hebrew for the word ark, *thbe,* looks very much like *thk,* a stem which means *middle.* Trying this, we have, "Narrowing are you making it from the middle." That is, make it like a modern ship, with ends narrower than the middle. Then the next sentence is clear, "to a cubit are you to finish it from above." It was 50 cubits wide in the middle, at the top, but it narrowed to a single cubit, like the keel of a wooden ship. Briefly, the ends and the bottom would be narrowed to a cubit in width. We do not insist on this, but insert it as the most probable early form of the text.

Later on we read of a *porthole* in the ark (8:6), through which Noah sent the raven and the dove. What we would understand by "window" is not at all suited to the ark. But there must have been "Perforations" (as the Hebrew reads), or portholes, which could be opened when necessary, to admit air and light, and large enough for the dove to find its way. The real entrance, or opening of the ark was in its side. This seems to have been closed by Yahweh Elohim when the deluge began (7:16).

Unlike a ship, the ark had no masts or sails or steering wheel, so there was no need for a weather deck. All it had was some sort of a covering to shield the upper deck from the elements. This was taken off when the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat (Gen.8:4,13).

NO FLESH-EATING ANIMALS

Originally, green herbage was the food of all land life, and for every flyer of the heavens, and for every moving animal on the land (Gen.1:30). This continued throughout the second eon, up to the deluge. That this is by no means impossible is evident from the fact that it will be so again in the next eon (Isa.11:7). The present flesh-eating animals are abnormal, like much else which we mistakenly imagine to be natural. It would not be practical to take wild, carnivorous beasts into the ark, for they would devour all the rest. Man's control of the animals during the

preceding eon was much greater than at present. Wolves and dogs were not distinguished. The word "wild" does not occur in the Scriptures as a separate word. Noah had to store a supply of all the food needed. This could not include flesh (6:21).

UNIVERSALITY

The universality of the deluge is doubly affirmed. It was to wreck *all flesh* which has in it the spirit of lives from *under the heavens. All* that is *in the earth* expired. The only exceptions were found in the ark. If salvation could have been had by any other means, it failed of its purpose, which was to give the race a new start, under different conditions.

This is enforced by the fact that Noah and his household were the only righteous ones in that generation. After the deluge Yahweh Elohim made a covenant not to slight the ground for the sake of mankind, and this applies to *all* living flesh (8:21). In the deluge, death was by suffocation, the withdrawal of air. This corresponded to their spiritual state. They already lacked the spirit with which God inspires all who are alive to Him.

The ruin of the deluge is said to extend to *all flesh . . . from under the heavens.* The word heavens, in the plural, can hardly be confined to a limited location (Gen.6:17).

The word *flesh* is very wide in its range. It includes not only mankind, but "all which has in it the spirit of lives" (Gen.6:17). This is so comprehensive that no living, moving thing can be excluded. It is expanded into human and domestic beast, and creeper and flyer (Gen.6:7). All these cannot be found in a single "land." Nor can we limit it to a single race of mankind. If only the animals in *one land* were drowned, there was little need of an ark, for many more could have escaped to other lands, especially the birds.

A. E. Knoch

IN THE EYES OF YAHWEH

EVEN THOUGH it is not worded directly as Yahweh's work, Genesis 6:8 speaks of what Yahweh did for Noah. For Noah to find grace in the eyes of Yahweh it must be that Yahweh Himself *graced* Noah. Furthermore, the words "in the eyes of Yahweh" speak of God's act of *seeing* the operation of grace as it applied to Noah's life, in faith and righteousness, as well as in his deliverance through the deluge. But more than this, the eyes of Yahweh saw beyond the immediate operation of His grace in Noah's life to its highest significance in relation to Jesus Christ, and thus to its broadest application in relation to all humanity.

This is a far different viewpoint from Yahweh's *seeing* humanity with *regret* and *grieving* (Gen.6:5,6) leading to His saying that He would *wipe out* the race He had made (Gen.6:7; see also verses 12 and 13).

These divine acts of gracing and seeing, implied in Genesis 6:8, ultimately dominate over and complete God's other actions in Genesis 6:6,7, which are attributed directly to Him. God's seeing in Genesis 6:8, expressed by the words, "in the eyes of Yahweh," corresponds to His seeing in Genesis 1:4-28 ("Elohim *saw* that [it was] good"). These words also correspond to the direct wording of Genesis 7:1 which speaks of God *seeing* Noah righteous in his generation. If Genesis 6:8 presented the divine viewpoint, as given in the first chapter and in Genesis 7:1, rather than the human viewpoint, it would read something like this: "Yahweh is saying, 'I give grace to Noah,' and He is seeing that it is good."

WHY INDIRECT?

But why should such a critical work of God be expressed indirectly? Why should it be expressed in terms of human finding, or receiving, rather than of divine providing?

This is wholly in line with Scriptural revelations after the opening chapters. Increasingly the focus is on what human beings do, and, by contrast, direct references concerning what God is doing, apart from reacting to human actions, are fewer and less prominent, although, as a consequence, most precious to the believer.

In Genesis 1 and the beginning of chapter 2, God's deeds reflect His deity and point to His goal. But beginning with the revelation that God *instructs* the human He had made (Gen.2:16), the account gives more and more space to the acts of humanity. And that which is said about God's activities is most often related to what the human does, as apparent reactions, in instructions and judgments.

This is surely because it is man's day.

Those acts of God which are noted after Genesis 2:16 are increasingly less absolute, and determinative. God says things that are not attended to by humanity, at least for the time being; He pronounces judgments that are not immediately carried out because of His patience and forbearance; He expresses feelings (such as regret and grief) that must be understood in a restrictive sense, seen in relation to limited situations. When the Scriptures do speak of God apart from direct response to human acts, as One Who initiates and implements in accord with His own purpose, such passages must determine our understanding of those passages which concern interim operations. The divine acts of patience and forbearance, of indignation and judgment, of regret and grief are subordinate to the divine acts of creation and salvation, choosing and calling, blessing and gracing.

For us, the divine activity lying behind the wording of Genesis 6:8 becomes more apparent because of the perception of our hearts in believing the evangel. Like Paul, we avow, "In the grace of God I am what I am," and to the extent in which our lives have been changed we trace that change to God's grace, which has not come to be for naught (1 Cor.15:10). If we have found grace, it is because we have been graced (*cf* Eph.1:6). Since Noah found grace, it cannot be otherwise than because God graced him.

We also come to suspect that if God had graced Noah, it must be that what God did for Noah was somehow related to Jesus Christ, to His crucifixion, resurrection and exaltation when He Himself is graced with the name that is above every name (Phil.2:10,11). And so it proves to be.

THE EYES OF YAHWEH

In an earlier study I suggested that God's actions of *seeing* in the opening chapters of Genesis were with God's goal in view.[1] Of course God always has His goal in view. But this viewpoint of glory is not obvious in Genesis 6:5,12, where we read that God *saw* the evil of humanity. The evil is necessary for the glory of good to be manifested, but God was viewing the evil itself and not its lessons when He regretted and grieved over its presence in Noah's day. But the divine viewpoint of gratified achievement breaks through the darkness again here in Genesis 6:8, and certainly in 7:1.

In the eyes of his contemporaries as he built the ark, Noah did not appear to have been given much of a favor. As for Noah himself, we must suppose he sometimes was impatient at the very least. But the words, "in the eyes of Yahweh," assure us that God never lost sight of His operation of grace in Noah's life and the glorious results He intended to achieve.

1. "God Sees," *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.92, p.157.

What Yahweh's eyes saw was more than a deliverance of eight souls through the deluge. He saw in this deliverance a definite connection with His purpose centering in the perfect faith and righteousness of One Who would deliver humanity from their corruption and evil ways once and for all. What He saw was grace that would even go beyond His grace to Noah. It would be apart from human works and any possibility of human boasting. It would be grace that would lead to justification, not merely a righteousness in comparison with other human beings. It would eventually result in the completion of humanity as envisioned by the Creator.

God's eyes, therefore, when they looked at the operation of His grace, looked beyond the hard and difficult times of the construction of the ark, and even beyond the long ordeal within the ark, to the association this rescue of Noah would have with our Lord Jesus Christ in His great work of rescue. God's grace always has Christ in view.

THE SENTENCE AND THE EXCEPTION

The judgment of Genesis 6:7 was that God would *wipe out* humanity, and every animal as well. This sentence is expressed in all-encompassing terms in Genesis 6:13, when Yahweh told Noah "The era of the end of *all human flesh* has come before me." But, God made an exception to the doom He had just announced. The sentence which is expressed in all-inclusive terms was not carried out in all-inclusive terms. This is not like Genesis 1:3 where God spoke, and what He said came to be so. The condemnation turns out to be relative. It was not absolute.

The operation of God's grace, however, is *expressed* in exclusive terms. It apparently applied only to Noah. But later we learn that this was understood to include Noah's wife and his three sons and their wives. And then, contemplating its extended significance, we become aware that

God's grace in Genesis 6:8 embraces all those millions of human beings who have since descended from Noah. All of humanity was evidently to be wiped out. Yet because of God's grace millions of human beings were not wiped out by that deluge proclaimed and carried out by God.

Included in those millions who have been born into this world because God gave grace to Noah was Jesus Christ, Who gives Himself a correspondent Ransom for all. Consequently, we read that the righteous effect of what Christ did is "for all mankind for life's justifying," and "through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just," and "in Christ shall all be vivified." Even the wicked of Noah's day will eventually be blessed, indirectly because of God's grace to Noah.

The sentence pronounced in all-inclusive terms turns out to be limited and temporary. The exception, expressed in limited terms turns out to be all-inclusive in its ultimate and permanent effects to the glory of God. This is because God's work of grace to Noah pointed ahead to Christ.

LAMECH'S PROPHECY

In accord with this divine viewpoint of the operation of grace in Noah's life is the prophecy which Noah's father made when he was born. Lamech said of Noah, "This one shall *console* us because of our doings, and because of the *grief* of our hands resulting from the ground that Yahweh has cursed" (Gen.5:29). It was given to Lamech to see that there would be a stopping of the grief that had come upon mankind because of Yahweh's curse on the ground given in Genesis 3:17-19. Hence he named his firstborn son, Noah, which means "stop." This prophecy saw Noah as a means of consolation.

But even though, after the deluge, Yahweh promised not to malediction the ground again as He had done when our first parents disobeyed (Gen.8:21), grief and sweat

are still our lot. There was a limited, immediate fulfillment of Lamech's prophecy. But its full meaning will come through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. "Surely our illnesses has He borne, and our pains—He was burdened with them" (Isa.53:4). "Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (Rom.8:32). "Through Christ, our consolation . . . is superabounding" (2 Cor.1:5).

It is not without significance that Lamech used the Hebrew verb, *warm*, which has the sense of "console" in its active mode, but generally indicates the sense of "regret" when used passively (*to be warmed*). Hence there is a parallel in terminology between Genesis 5:29 and Genesis 6:6. Noah would be a means of *warming* (consolation) to humanity because of their *grief*. Yahweh also, in relation to the temporary situation, presents Himself as *being warmed* (regretting) and *grieving*. But in God's operation of grace, begun in the life of Noah, there will come to be an end to all grief, and all regret will be overwhelmed with consolation.

NOAH'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

In Genesis 6:9, *after* we learn that Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh, we are told that Noah was a righteous man who became flawless in his generations. Noah's faithful and exemplary walk was the *result* of God's grace, not the *cause*. If it is of grace it cannot be of works (*cf* Rom. 11:6). Noah became flawless among the generations of humanity in his day, because of God's grace in choosing him and calling him out from all the rest of humanity as a vessel for honor, granting him faith (*cp* Heb.11:7; 12:2), as a preserver of the race. God's grace operated in Noah's life, shaping his behavior and making him what he was in toil and faithfulness. But this was not the perfect right-

eousness that is gained through Christ and will eventually be granted to Noah in God's own time.

Genesis 6:9 speaks of Noah's relative righteousness because of God's grace to him. But later, as noted above, just before Noah enters the ark, God Himself speaks of Noah's righteousness as *He sees it* in His grace. The way in which the eyes of Yahweh viewed Noah in grace is most remarkable. "Come, you and all your household, into the ark, for I have *seen* you righteous before Me in this generation" (Gen.7:1). Similarly, the writer of Hebrews, declares of Noah that he "became an enjoyer of the allotment of the righteousness which accords with faith" (Heb.11:7). Genesis 7:1 anticipates Noah's justification in the blood of Christ (*cf* Rom.5:9).

God does not see those to whom He gives grace as He sees others. He did not see Noah as He saw the rest of humanity then living. He was fully aware that Noah was, in himself, a sinner; he was a part of the mortal and unrighteous race, *but God saw him righteous*! He saw Noah as he would someday be because of the (then future) death of Christ.

In giving grace to Noah and in doing so *in His eyes*, God was viewing Noah as he will be in the future when he will be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19). Thousands of years before the "obedience of the One," Jesus Christ, led Him to die for sinners, God's eyes *saw* the good that would result from Christ's death as it applied to Noah.

This is God's good and gracious gift of justification through the blood of Christ (*cf* Rom.5:9). Genesis 7:1 expands on the thought of Genesis 6:8. Where Genesis 6:8 speaks indirectly of God's acts of giving grace and seeing it operative, Genesis 7:1 speaks of this directly. The grace of God affected Noah so that he was righteous and flawless in relation to the generations of people round about him. But, in *seeing* the full meaning of His grace to Noah, God

Himself *saw* Noah as he will be, righteous and fully justified through the faith of Jesus Christ.

Even though it was hushed, like the secret of Romans 16:25, the theme of God's grace, its gratuitous character and glorious results, begins here in Genesis 6:8. But it does not end with Noah. God's eyes never lose track of this great operation.

HOLY AND FLAWLESS IN HIS SIGHT

The astounding application of this divine viewpoint to us is strikingly described in Ephesians 1:3-7 (*cp* Col.1:22). God graces us in Christ, "according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless *in His sight* . . . for the laud of the glory of His grace, which *graces* us in the Beloved, in Whom we are having the deliverance through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His grace, which He lavishes on us."

The apostle Paul speaks of this great work of God, as it applies to us, openly and directly, with exultation. The death of Christ for sinners has occurred. He has been roused and is exalted at God's right hand. The evangel has been announced and has reached us, and God has opened our hearts to believe. God's viewpoint of sinners justified, holy and flawless, is set before us. "In His sight" we are what we will be when we put on incorruption and immortality! "Now thanks be to God, Who is giving us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.15:52-57).

When this righteousness "which has been procured" is fully delivered (*cf* Eph.1:14), then God's sight will no longer be anticipatory. It will be realized in the keenest of experience.

And when God is All in all, He shall see the blessing of life's justifying enjoyed by all mankind (Rom.5:18) because of the obedience of Jesus Christ. D.H.H.

"NEITHER WILL HE BE SPARING YOU!"

*

THE SOVEREIGN AND THE SUPREME

Question:

Does not Romans 11:19-24 show that the church is spiritual Israel, and that we should therefore obey Israel's law? Likewise, does not this passage also make it clear that we can lose our salvation?

Answer:

NO, Romans 11:19-24 does not show that the church is spiritual Israel, that we should keep the law, or that we can lose our salvation. Here is the complete text of that passage:

You will be declaring, then, "Boughs are broken out that I may be grafted in." Ideally! By unbelief are they broken out, yet you stand in faith. Be not haughty, but fear. For if God spares not the natural boughs, neither will He be sparing you! Perceive, then, the kindness and severity of God! On those, indeed, who are falling, severity, yet on you, God's kindness, if you should be persisting in the kindness: else you also will be hewn out. Now they also, if they should not be persisting in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were hewn out of an olive wild by nature, and, beside nature, are grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much rather shall these, who are in accord with nature, be grafted into their own olive tree! (Rom.11:19-24).

Note that the nations (*cp* v.13) are not grafted in to Israel; they are grafted in to the olive tree! It is not true (as some claim) that "olive tree" is a figure of speech for

Israel. Instead, "olive tree" is a figure of speech for God's agency of enlightenment in the world, and, in certain eras, this service is appointed unto the nation of Israel.

It is not at all that "gentile Christians" become, in the sight of God, effectually, "Israelites" (so-called "spiritual Israelites"), much less that if they should backslide they will "lose their salvation" and be sent to Hell. It is rather that, in this era, the *nations* (the non-Israelite national groups themselves) are "grafted in," that is, *placed into a (temporary) service* which, "by nature" (i.e., by God's original appointment) belonged to Israel, that of being God's agency of enlightenment in the world. Even as the time came when Israel disqualified herself for such service and so was removed therefrom, the day will come as well when the nations, in the fullness of their own unbelief, will fully disqualify themselves for such service and will likewise be removed therefrom. Subsequently, however, as Paul explains, this service will return to Israel, whose ministry it is "by nature."

The passage is not concerned with personal salvation, but with the respective service of both Israel and the nations, each in its own era, as the divine means of enlightenment among men. Israel has already lost this privilege (though they will regain it in the future; *cp* vs. 23,26), and those peoples, those of the nations, whose it has been during the past two thousand years to have been engaged in such service (in the figure, who have been "grafted in" to the olive tree) will lose it as well, in due time, as the conclusion of the eon approaches.

The common error is to claim that Israel is herein "identified" as the olive tree, and then to reason that therefore "the church," in turn, is to be spiritually identified as Israel. It is true that Israel, in her own eras, *serves as* the olive tree, and that we may say that, in former and future eras, Israel will be "the olive tree." But this is only to say that, in such instances, Israel "is" (representatively) the

olive tree; that is to say, that Israel, originally, was placed into the service of being God's agency of enlightenment in the world, which of course is true. But it does not follow from this that *wherever* we read of the "olive tree" here, we are to think "Israel."

Paul, effectually, merely says that Israel, by nature, and in certain eras, is *put into the service of* being "God's olive tree." He nowhere says that Israel, timelessly and abstractly, is God's sole means of human enlightenment, and that hence if we would be faithful to Him we must become some sort of Israelites and then take up with Israel's law!

It is not true that Israel is *abstractly and timelessly* to be identified as the agency of light—much less that believers of the nations are somehow to be reckoned as Israelites!

The nations' service in the "olive tree" (their service as the present agents of divine enlightenment among men) has nothing whatever to do with the question of whether any individuals among such national groups should personally observe any certain portion of the law of Moses. To suggest that it does, much less to claim that it is because of such service that such ones must keep portions of the law, is simply illogical.

Paul, primarily, is the apostle of the *nations,* and his evangel, that of the *Un*circumcision (Gal.2:7), even though, according to God's choice, certain ones of Israelite descent enjoy its blessings as well. According to his evangel, we are chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world, and designated beforehand for the place of a son for Him (Eph.1:4,5). It is according to this evangel, that where sin increases, grace superexceeds, for life eonian (Rom.5: 20,21). And, it is according to this evangel as well that God vivifies us *together* in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us *together* and seats us *together* among the celestials, in Christ, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:5-7). Consequently, then,

we would imitate Paul and deem the righteousness which is of law (the righteousness which comes from heeding the law's precepts) simply as refuse, as that which, however suitable and needful in its place, we now have no need of whatever (Phil.3:6,8).

❊

Question:

You claim that "Ultimately it is the Deity Himself Who alone is our God and Saviour" [*Unsearchable Riches,* vol.79, p.267]. I feel that your words here do much damage to the cross of Christ. How can you justify this claim?

Answer:

Our affirmation here in no way "damages" the truth of the cross of Christ. This is because Christ Jesus is not the Supreme God, but His Son even as His Christ.

It does not follow because God Himself was not impaled and did not die but instead appointed that His Christ should do so, that it is untrue that, *ultimately speaking,* the Father alone is our God and Saviour.

God is the Source of our salvation; *Christ* is the Agent of our salvation. All is *out of* God, and yet all is *through* Christ (1 Cor.8:6).

The statement that God is our Saviour is an absolute one. When we say that Christ is our Saviour. this is a relative statement. Like any other basic concept, this cannot be expressed at every turn. Instead, it is to be learned, and then, where such considerations arise, subsequently applied.

Under God, Christ is our Saviour. God alone is Supreme; Christ is Sovereign (in the sense of having the highest *delegated* authority), not Supreme. Apart from God, Christ could do nothing at all and would be nothing at all; much less could He be our Saviour. J.R.C.

GOD SPEAKS IN A SON

GOD HAS SPOKEN. In this fourth article on this matter of consequence we will discuss some of the ways God has spoken, or will speak, to mankind in His Son. We stand in awe and bow in the name of Jesus Christ Whom God highly exalts, and graces with a name that is above every name, in Whose name every knee shall bow, and every tongue acclaim "that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:9-11). Thus it is a privilege, not to be taken lightly, to discuss this subject, and we pray it will accord with God's Word.

THE BEGINNING OF COMMUNICATION

"In the beginning was the word, and the word was toward God, and God was the word. This was in the beginning toward God. All came into being through it, and apart from it not even one thing came into being which has come into being" (John 1:1-3). Hence we see that speech was the first of the ways God communicated with mankind. The "word" pointed toward and revealed God to mankind. The God of the Hebrew Scriptures spoke. The prophets heard the words, but the Speaker was usually unseen, or His glory was veiled.

Just Who was the Speaker of the words heard by the prophets and others that we read in the Old Testament? Of course you already know, for only a few verses farther we read: "And the Word became flesh and tabernacles among us, and we gaze at His glory, a glory as of an only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

It was Jesus Christ; indeed it was the Son of God's love! His was the voice ". . . of old, God, speaking to the fathers in the prophets" (Heb.1:1). God was the word! This is the One "Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God" (Phil.2:6,7), representing God through the spoken word to the prophets, and later became flesh. He was not only the Word, but also the "Image of the invisible God" (Col.1:15; 2 Cor.4:4), and He represented God through sight as well. His glory was dimmed to accommodate the eyes of mankind when He walked in the land of Israel, but later Paul (then Saul) was temporarily blinded by a glimpse of Him when He appeared to him on the Damascus road (Acts 9:3-9; 22:6-11; 26:13).

ALL CAME INTO BEING THROUGH THE WORD

We have already referred to John 1:3, that majestic statement that "all came into being through it, and apart from it not even one thing came into being which has come into being." So His words were not only the initial means of God's communication with mankind, they were also the means of creation.

All around us we see the results. The creation itself speaks to us of the power and wisdom of God. What a disgusting teaching of men is the insanity of evolution! But we should not be surprised, for when the Word became flesh, the world knew Him not. To His own He came, and those who are His own accepted Him not (John 1:10). Is it not a stupendous fact that the One through Whom all was created was unknown and rejected? He was the One Who created mankind. But we already know that this very rejection led to one of the two paramount points of history—the crucifixion of the Son of God! It was the greatest mistake (sin) of mankind, yet it will bring the highest blessing, not only to mankind, but to the celestial hosts as well.

HE SPOKE TO ADAM

Yahweh Elohim (AV "Lord God") planted a garden in Eden for the human He had formed, and placed there in the midst of the garden the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He instructed the human: "From every tree of the garden, you shall eat, yea eat. But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying" (Gen.2:17).

This is one of the very earliest recorded communications from God to mankind. There are many circumstances we could profitably study here. Let us cite but two. First, the tree contained the knowledge of both good and evil. There is much to say about this fact, but suffice it for now to note that *mankind cannot have the knowledge of good without the knowledge of evil.* Second, there was something in that fruit which caused Adam and Eve to begin the experience of dying to the end that they would die. The AV has it: ". . . for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This is a mistranslation that has caused much confusion. The Hebrew gives the meaning that a process of dying started on that day which eventuated in death.

When Adam and Eve ate of that fruit and the dying process began in their bodies, it involved the whole race descended from them. It not only results in dying and death, but it so weakens mankind that we sin; mankind not only commits crime and the more spectacular sins, but makes constant mistakes, failures to reach perfection—sin. We are all involved!

How do we know this? Romans 5:12 tells us very clearly: "Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, *on which all sinned*."What a valuable thing it is to know this. It explains so much of mankind's

behavior. The sequence is: Adam and Eve ate; the fruit so altered their vitality that the dying process started in their bodies, eventually causing death; their children, and so on to all their descendants, inherited this weakness of dying and death; and the weakness results in unrighteousness, irreverence, lawlessness and mistakes, called sin.

HE SPOKE CONCERNING A SAVIOUR

What is the solution to mankind's condition? *We* cannot solve it! It must come from Someone Who can give us *real* life—a Saviour. Many are the references in the Old Testament predicting Him. There are types, as well as words of God speaking to and through the prophets. Some are relatively veiled, and some are startlingly clear and direct. Look up the familiar words of Isaiah 7:14 (quoted in Matthew 1:23) and Isaiah 53:4,5. Of course, He spoke in these words concerning Himself.

These words were written over 700 years before their fulfillment. When the One Who spoke them to Isaiah was present on the earth He spoke to a throng: "'Now is the judging of this world. Now shall the Chief of this world be cast out. And I, if I should be exalted out of the earth, shall be drawing all to Myself.' Now this He said, signifying by what death He was about to be dying" (John 12:31-33). He was "exalted" on the cross. He said: "And my soul am I laying down for the sake of the sheep" (John 10:15). When He spoke to His Father, saying, "Yet now to Thee am I coming" (John 17:13), He was contemplating His ascension after His approaching death on the cross and resurrection.

HE SPOKE FROM THE CROSS

That the scripture may be perfected, He said, "I thirst!" (John 19:29; *cf* Psa.22:15; 69:22). At the moment He gave up the spirit, He said, "It is accomplished!" (John 19:30).

What was accomplished? Christ died for our sins! This

was so we should have *life*, not this process we are experiencing of dying, but life beyond the power of death, sinless! It will be ours upon our resurrection. It is accomplished, and will be realized. This is the greatest message of all given to mankind, not only by words but by the obedience of the Saviour.

It is accomplished! No works of ours are to be added. "And you are complete in Him" (Col.2:10). No law keeping, not even service will add to our standing in Christ Jesus.

HE WILL SPEAK AS FIRST IN THE UNIVERSE

We have previously mentioned the kingdom of the heavens, and that Christ will be King. It will be established *on the earth*, and then will be fulfilled: "The kingdom of this world became our Lord's and His Christ's, and He shall be reigning for the eons of the eons! Amen!" (Rev.11:15). As King, He will speak often. John, one of the apostles, had a preview of a scene when new heavens and earth were created, and was instructed to write about it. Here is part of his report: "And He is saying, 'Write, for these sayings are faithful and true.' And He said to me, 'I have become the Alpha and the Omega, the Origin and the Consummation. To him who is thirsting I shall be giving of the spring of the water of life gratuitously'" (Rev.21:5-7).

Yes, the kingdom on the earth will be marvelous, and the government will be righteous. Living conditions, health, all will be ideal.

Yet our realm is inherent in the heavens (Phil.3:20). Christ is destined to head up the earth, and that was made known very early. What had been a secret until it was given to Paul to reveal was that Christ would head up the heavens as well! Listen to these wonderful words: ". . . making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, *to head up*

all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth" (Eph.1:9,10).

We will be among the celestials under His direction, for we will have a job to do there. All of the believers, since Israel was temporarily set aside, have become members of an ecclesia (AV "church") which is to make known to the sovereignties and authorities among the celestials, the multifarious wisdom of God (Eph.3:10,11).

"For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself" (Phil.3:20,21).

There, where we will be with Him in transformed bodies, He will speak to us!

Robert B. Killen

We suggest the following materials for further information on the topic, "God Speaks in a Son":

John H. Essex: *The Purpose of God,* Concordant Publishing (CPC).
Robert B. Killen: "The Power of the Word," *Unsearchable Riches* (*U.R.*), vol.81, p.163.
A. E. Knoch: *Christ and Deity,* CPC.
A. E. Knoch: *The Pre-existence of Christ,* CPC.
A. E. Knoch: "God was the Word," *U.R.,* vol.37, p.163.
Herman H. Rocke: "Aspects of Logos," *U.R.,* vol.61, p.60.

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THE RETURN OF THE COFFER
(2 Samuel 6)

6 + **David** *fr*__again__ |__gathered__ `__all__ the **choice**| men **in Israel, thirty contingents.** 2 +__Then David and all the people__ *w* `with **him** |__set out and__ |__went__ *f*__to Baale of Judah to__ *c*__bring up from there__ `the **coffer of the** One, **Elohim, over which** the **Name is called,** the **Name of Yahweh of hosts, dwelling** over **the cherubim.** 3 + **They** *c*__let__ `the **coffer of the** One, **Elohim,** |__ride__ 7__on__~*Qs* a **new cart and** |__carried it__ away **from** the **house of Abinadab** *w* *i*__on__ the **hill.** + **Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab,** were **leading** `__the new cart.__ 4 +__Thus they__ |__carried it__ away **from** the **house of Abinadab** *w* *i*__on__ the **hill with** the **coffer of the** One, **Elohim; and Ahio** was **walking before the coffer.** 5 + **David and all** the **house of Israel** were **gamboling before Yahweh** *i*__with all__ their 7__strength and__ *i*__with songs__~, + *i*__with harps and__ *i* __zithers,__ + *i*__with tambourines,__ + *i*__with sistrums and__ *i* __cymbals.__

6 +__When they__ |__came__ *fr*__to__ the **threshing site of Nacon,** + **Uzzah** |__stretched__ forth 7`__his hand__*Qcs* __to__ the **coffer of the** One, **Elohim, and** took |__hold__ *i*__of it, for the oxen were restive.** 7 **And** the **anger of Yahweh** grew |__hot__ *i*__against Uzzah.** + **The** One, **Elohim,** |__smote him there__ *on*__for__ ·his **carelessness; and** so **he** |__died there__ *wi*__by__ the **coffer of the** One, **Elohim.** 8 +__Now__ the distress ›__of David__ grew |__hot__ *on*__because__ *w* **Yahweh had breached** a **breach** *i*__against Uzzah; and__ one has |__called__ › ·__that__ *ri*__place Perez-uzzah until__ ·__this__ ·__day.__ 9 + **David be**came |__fearful__ `of **Yahweh** *i*__on__ ·__that day;__ + **he** |__said, How** can the **coffer of Yahweh** |__come to me?__ 10 +__So David__

would not › **take away**– `the **coffer of Yahweh to him**self [on]**into** the **city of David; and David** [c]**had it** [l]**turned aside** to the **house of Obed-edom the Gittite.** 11 +**So** the **coffer of Yahweh** [l][sit]**remained** with the **house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and Yahweh** [l]**blessed** `**Obed-edom and** `**his whole house**hold. 12 +**When it was** [l]**told to king David,** › **saying**–**, Yahweh has blessed** `the **house of Obed-edom and** `**all** [w]**that he** ›**has** [i]**for** the [p]**sake of** the **coffer of the** One, **Elohim,** +**then David** [l]**went and** [c]**brought** [l]**up** `the **coffer of the** One, **Elohim, from** the **house of Obed-edom** to the **City of David,** [i]**amid rejoicing.**

13 + **It came** to [l]**be** [t]**when** the **bearers**[l] **of** the **coffer of Yahweh had marched six steps,** +**that he** [l]**sacrificed** a **bull and** a **fatling.** 14 + **David** was **frisking** [i]**with all** his **strength before Yahweh; and David** was **girded**[l] with a **linen ephod.** 15 +**Thus David and all** the **house of Israel** were [c]**bringing up** `the **coffer of** [M]the **covenant of**[s] **Yahweh** [i]**with shouting and** [i]**with** the **sound of trumpet**s**.** 16 +**As** the **coffer of Yahweh** [b]**was entering** the **City of David,** + **Saul's daughter Michal gazed** out **through the** window **shutters and** [l]**saw** `**king David prancing and frisking before Yahweh; and she** [l]**despised** › **him in her heart.**

17 +**Thus they** [l]**brought** in `the **coffer of Yahweh and** [l]**put** `**it in its** [ri]**place in** the **midst of the tent** [w]**that David had pitched for it.** +**Then David** [c]**offered** [l]**up ascent** offering**s before Yahweh, and peace** offering**s.** 18 +**When David** had [l][all]**finished** [f] [c]**offering up**– **the ascent** offering **and the peace** offering**s,** + **he** [l]**blessed** `**the people in** the **Name of Yahweh of hosts.** 19 **And he** distributed [l]**portions** ›**among all the people—**›**among** the **entire throng of Israel,** › [f]**both man and**[fr] **woman—to each one perforated** loaf **of bread,** + **one date cake and one raisin** cake**.** +**Then all the people** [l][go]**left,** every**one to his home.**

OXCARTS

We learn from 1 Samuel 5:1-6:18 that the coffer of the covenant caused great havoc in Philistine territory. The Philistines counseled to return it to Israel, with an offering, in a new, unattended oxcart. Their method was a test, designed to reveal if Yahweh was truly the cause of their plagues, and an expression of reverence. The reverence was shown in the cart being new, and in the recognition that a true Deity would have power to overrule the natural instincts of living creatures. In returning the coffer by this method, the Philistines were acknowledging their ignorance of Yahweh.

The Israelites received it jubilantly, but the sons of Jeconiah stared into the coffer, and God smote 70 of the men of that family for their irreverence. The jubilation was turned to fear and mourning, and the coffer was turned aside into the house of Abinadab in Kirjath-jearim (1 Sam.6:19-7:2).

After the battles described in 2 Samuel 5, David determined to bring the coffer of the covenant to Jerusalem. Again, the coffer was carried on a new cart. Israel's use of the oxcart betrayed a significant shortcoming in their realization of God. The coffer was attended by Ahio and Uzzah. When they reached the threshing floor of Nacon, the oxen were restive, and Uzzah stretched forth his hand to steady the coffer. God smote him for this carelessness. This act showed less reverence than the Philistines had shown by leaving the cart unattended. The great jubilation of the event was turned to dread, and David was angry and fearful. The ark was turned aside into the house of Obed-edom, a Levite (*cf* 1 Chron.26:4-8), and the celebrating nation went home sorrowfully (2 Sam.6:1-10).

As noted in our last study, the language of Psalm 78 is especially interesting with respect to these events. This

psalm spans a long period of time, providing a snapshot of Israel's history, displaying it in the light of a surprising perspective. It reminisces how God had brought Israel out of Egypt with a mighty hand and driven out many peoples before them. Still Israel was repeatedly unfaithful, making Him jealous. And here is the different perspective: "Then He [Elohim] abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent He had made to tabernacle among humanity. He sent His strength into captivity, and His beauty into the hand of the foe" (Psa.78:60,61). Notice that the emphasis is not on Elohim abandoning Israel. Elohim sends His strength into captivity, and His beauty into the hand of the foe. Israel remained in their land, and the throne of God on earth was taken captive. Why did God respond in this way?

APPROACH TO GOD

In the heat of distress, fear and anger, David asked an extremely radical question: "How can the coffer of Yahweh come to me?" (2 Sam.6:9). What is so unusual about this question?

The purpose of religion is to provide humanity with an approach to the Deity. In this respect, the law of Moses was very similar to all the religions of the nations. In fact, Paul placed Judaism on a par with pagan religions, from the perspective that both were dependent upon the elements of the world (Gal.4:1-11).

The approach to God which the law provided was very difficult. There were festivals and holy days to be kept, tithes to be paid, and offerings to be brought. But none of these things actually brought the worshipper into the presence of God. The ceremonies and rituals brought him to the priesthood, and of the priesthood, only one, the chief priest, entered the presence of God. This the chief priest did, only once a year, and then only with offerings and confessions and prayers and fastings.

The coffer of God was the tangible seat of God's presence in the holy place. The coffer functioned simultaneously as the throne of God and also as the propitiatory shelter. It was from above the coffer, from between the cherubim, that God communicated with Israel. The coffer is what made the "holy of holies" holy. And in brazen distress David asked, not how he might approach God, not how he might be sufficiently cleansed to enter before God, but how the very seat of God's holy presence might come to him!

According to the laws of religion, David had it backwards. But Paul also had it backwards, and, thankfully, so did God. "For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present" (Eph. 2:8). It is God Who has provided the approach present—no one else. What grace!

PARALLELS

David's bringing of the coffer, or ark, to Jerusalem, and the return of the coffer from the Philistines, are paralleled in the Greek Scriptures most emphatically by the event referred to as the "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem. When the Christ came to His people, the priesthood was corrupt, as in the days of first and second Samuel. The coffer was placed on new carts, never before used, and Christ rode an ass's colt that had never before been ridden. When Christ came He was joyously received with shouts of "Hosanna!," just as there was joy at Beth-shemesh and pomp and rejoicing with David's approach to Jerusalem. But the joy was soon to become sorrow, as the sons of Jeconiah stared into the coffer and were slain (*cf* Psa.22:17), and Uzzah was smitten, and Christ was crucified. God abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh—the tent He had made to tabernacle among humanity (John 1:14; Psa.78:60).

God sent His Strength into captivity, and His Beauty into the hand of the foe (Psa.22:1,20; 78:61). These events

in Samuel prophesy typically the callousness of Israel and her being set aside, seeing that the coffer was not received to its proper place, just as Christ was not received as the Son of God.

Christ came in a most humble and uncharacteristic fashion for a king, and this was a stumbling block to Israel. Zechariah had prophesied of this humility and the peaceful nature of Christ's work (Zech.9:9,10). It is also interesting that the context of Zechariah's prophecy (verses 5-10) mentions the Philistines repeatedly and the Jebusites, seeing that they are involved in these contexts in Samuel which tell of the coming of the ark to Israel.

In the coming of Christ was the revelation of God to humanity. Yet this coming was so out of keeping with humanity's deluded concepts that Christ was not recognized for Who He was, and His Father was not recognized in Him. In Christ Jesus, we discover the quickening truth that the glorious and majestic God, Who is seated in the heights of the heavens, is a Fisher of men, a seeking Shepherd, and a patient and yearning Father of prodigals. God reveals Himself in Christ, just as Zechariah had prophesied. What grace!

ABANDONMENT

God abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh that the coffer of the covenant might bring the neighboring peoples under awe and reverence of Yahweh. God abandoned Christ on the cross to bring about a great deliverance for all creation, and to ultimately exalt Christ. God abandoned Israel to the Babylonian captivity, just as he had abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh (Jer.7:12,14; 26:6), yet it will ultimately be for the salvation of the world. God has abandoned humanity to the philosophies and religions of demons and humanity, yet it is temporary and preparatory for the joy and salvation of creation when it's premonition of the unveiling

of the sons of God is fulfilled (Rom.8:18-21). God's glory left Jerusalem in Ezekiel's vision (Exek.11:22,23) for its time of abandonment, yet the glory of God will return to remain (Ezek.43:1-7). God abandons that He might later exalt and bless.

THE ENTRY ACCOMPLISHED

1 Chronicles 15 and 16 and Psalm 132 should be read with 2 Samuel 6:11-19. David came to realize that the coffer should only be borne by the Levites (1 Chron.15:2) as God had instructed Moses (Num.4:15). The Levites were representative of the firstborn of Israel. The significance of this symbolism is that only the Firstborn may bear the presence of God. Christ is the Firstborn of all creation (Col.1:15; Rev.3:14), and as Firstborn from among the dead (Col.1:18; Rev.1:5), He is also Firstborn of the new creation. He has experienced evil, redemption and deliverance. His resurrection is the basis for His being the "begotten Son," Who is the Firstborn (Acts 13:33; Psa. 2). As God's Firstborn, Christ alone is the Channel through Whom the Spirit of God may be received. "And there is no salvation in any other one, for neither is there any other name, given under heaven among men, in which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Israel experienced typically the bondage of sin and death, redemption, and deliverance in the exodus from Egypt. They came forth from Egypt symbolically as God's firstborn son (Ex.4:22) to conquer the world before them and enjoy the fullness of God's promises. Similarly, in fulfillment of these things, God will lead forth the Son, the Firstborn, into the inhabited earth in authority and glory (Heb.1:6).

Associated with Him, in the oncoming eons, will be those who are typically firstborn ones in Him (1 Thess. 4:14; Rom.8:19)—those who are firstfruits, having the firstfruit of the spirit (Rom.8:23). Then all will be brought into

subjection to the Son (1 Cor.15:28), and all will acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father (Phil.2:11).

The homing of God's Spirit in the believer is God's coming to us in peace. "Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ . . ." (Rom.5:1).

"Possession of peace" is the meaning of Jerusalem. So, to the believer, God's presence has "entered Jerusalem" upon our believing and the homing of God's Spirit within us. The goal then becomes the growth in maturity that is needed for us to "attain to the unity of the faith and of the realization of the son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). When this goal is reached, we will truly reflect the image of the Firstborn in our lives.

Apart from God we experience a condition that may be termed "Ichabod," or, "the glory has departed." This is like Israel's condition without the coffer, and like Ezekiel's vision where the glory of God departed from the temple. "For all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23). But through the faith of Christ Jesus, "we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.5:2).

THE THRESHING SITE

"He Who is coming after me is stronger than I, Whose sandals I am not competent to bear. He will be baptizing you in holy spirit and fire, Whose winnowing shovel is in His hand, and He will be scouring His threshing floor, and will be gathering His grain into His barn, yet the chaff will He be burning up with unextinguished fire" (Matt. 3:11-12).

The purpose of threshing is to remove the chaff from the grain. This process is likened to the purifying of Israel that must take place before they receive their Messiah, and before the kingdom is established on earth. The end of this

eon is likened to a harvest (Matt.13:39; Rev.14:14-16; etc.), and threshing follows the analogy as the judgments necessary for setting up the kingdom. John the Baptist prophesied it. Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream used threshing to describe figuratively the destruction of the earth's kingdoms when they are replaced by the kingdom of God (Dan.2:31-45). Malachi also prophesied the same things, especially with reference to the priesthood, but he likened the judgments to a refiner's fire for purifying metals, and to the strong soap of a launderer (Mal.3:1-6).

UZZAH AT NACON

The smiting of Uzzah at the threshing site of Nacon (2 Sam.6:6,7) sets before us, in type, the purging that must accompany Israel's receiving of her King at Jerusalem. The name Nacon means "prepared," shadowing forth the preparing of the way of Yahweh (Isa.40:3-5; Matt. 3:1-3; Mal.3:1; etc.) Uzzah means "strength." "Perez-uzzah" (2 Sam.6:8) is the "breach," or, "breaking of strength." Israel must surely be broken (Isa.30:12-14; Jer.19:1-11), just as God's Strength, Jesus Christ, was abandoned when His body was broken. But God's Strength will return in power to break the nations. Like the broken walls of Jerusalem, Israel will be rebuilt to become strong and sound, and the implement of God's strength in the earth.

MICHAL

David's wife, Michal, the daughter of Saul, despised David as she saw him openly dancing before the Lord during the celebration (2 Sam.6:20-23). She is the descendant of him who represents the flesh. Her envy and jealousy represents those same feelings of the Jews toward Christ. And her childlessness represents the setting aside of fleshly Israel.

J. Philip Scranton

INDEX TO VOLUME XCIV

Abram's Faith . . . 255
After the Deluge . . . 51
Babylon in the Scriptures . . . 158
Christ, in Judgment and Salvation . . . 18
Contrast and Agreement . . . 277
David and Bathsheba . . . 269
David's Unusual Kindness . . . 115
Death of the Cross . . . 13
Deluge, The . . . 4
Disintegration of Language at Babel . . . 147
Divine Operation and Control . . . 171
Effects of Divine Righteousness . . . 192
Extension of David's Kingdom, The . . . 71
Faith and Righteousness . . . 75
From Shem to Abram (Gen.11:10-32) . . . 225
God and His Work . . . 67,98,231,261
God's Just Judgment . . . 209
God's Righteous Salvation and His Indignation . . . 131
God's Righteousness Revealed . . . 34
House of God and House of David, The (2 Sam.7) . . . 43
Memorial Address, A . . . 217
Mindfulness of God, The . . . 98
Notes on 2 Samuel . . . 43,71,115,235,269
Obituaries: Ewald Degan 170, June Ferguson 240, George Knowles 240
Paul, the Evangelist . . . 195
Paul to the Romans . . . 34,75,131,183,209,277
Promise and Faith . . . 245
Questions and Answers . . . 13,83,119,171,217
Righteousness . . . 143
Salvation from What? . . . 183
Spirit of Wisdom, A . . . 203
Studies in Genesis . . . 4,51,99,147,225,245
Things of Consequence . . . 31,94,143
Through the Apostles . . . 31
Through the Sacred Scriptures . . . 94
Unveiling of the Sons of God . . . 25
What Must Occur Swiftly . . . 83
What Must I Do to be Saved? . . . 119
What was God Thinking of? . . . 231
Yahweh Sets up Covenants . . . 67
Yahweh Speaks to Abram . . . 261

Contents:

2 A Hymn
3 Editorial
4 The Deluge
13 The Death of the Cross
Christ, in Judgment and Salvation
25 Unveiling of the Sons of God
31 Through the Apostles
34 God's Righteousness Revealed
43 House of God, House of David

JANUARY, 2003

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For God and His
Word

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and
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A Hymn

Mark how the swift winged minutes fly
And hours still hasten on!
How swift the circling months run round!
How soon the year is gone!

Let us indulge a serious thought,
The year that's past, review;
What good, what evil, have we wrought?
What work have we to do?

How is our debt of love increased
To that sustaining Power,
Who hath upheld our feeble frame,
And blest each rolling hour.

For all Thy favors, O our God,
Thy goodness we adore;
Thou hast our cup with blessings filled,
And made that cup run o'er.

What shall befall in future life
We would not, Lord, inquire:
To be prepared for all thy will,
Be this our chief desire.

Author unknown

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2003
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-FOUR

EDITORIAL

SOMETIMES when people are going through hard times they are cheered by a sort of vague thought that it all will work out in the end. Others criticize such thinking as unrealistic and even harmful in the long run. The fact is, according to the Scriptures, that ultimately the first viewpoint will prove correct. God's word on the matter is not at all vague. God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). He is working all together for good (Rom.8:28).

We are aware of this by faith, not by appearance. It is realistic because it is based on what God has said, and what God has said is true. What God has said about His works of salvation, past, present and future, about His commissions and judgments, about His righteousness, about the abolishing of death, about the kingdom on earth and our allotment among the celestials, and all the other matters discussed in this issue of our magazine, it all is true. We may be wrong in our understanding of these matters, but we rely on the living God that what He says about them fully accords with His goodness, His righteousness, His power and wisdom and love, as manifested to us in the death and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

This does not mean we believe things will always be pleasant and good right now. But we have this outlook, which is both optimistic and realistic, concerning the consummation because we are believing the evangel concerning the cross of Christ. And it spills over into the present with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control (Gal.5:22).

We *hope* our magazine will help direct our readers along these lines. We *expect* God will faithfully work all together for good. D.H.H.

THE DELUGE

7 +**Then Yahweh** 7**Elohim**ncs |**said to Noah: Come, you and all your house**hold, in**to the ark, for I have seen** `**you righteous before Me in** ·**this generation.** 2 f**Of every** ·**clean** ·domestic **beast you shall take** ›**with you seven** by **seven,** the **sire and his dam, and** f**of the beast** w**that** is **not clean,** of it**them pairs,** the **sire and his dam.** 3 mr**Also,** f**of** 7**the clean**n **flyer of the heavens seven** by **seven, male and female,** 7**and** f**of** the **flyer** w**that** is **not clean,** of them **pairs, male and female**0**, to** c**keep seed alive**¯ **on** the sur**face of the entire earth.** 4 **For** ›**in seven days further I** will **cause** it to **rain**| **on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will wipe** out, **off** the sur**face of the** 7**entire**0 **ground,** `**every**one ·who has **risen, whom I have** d**made.**

5 + **Noah** |**did according** to **all** w**that Yahweh** 7**Elohim**0 **had instructed him.** 6 + **Noah** was **600 years** in**old** +**when the deluge** of **waters came** to **be on the earth.** 7 +**So Noah** |**came** in**to the ark, and** `with **him his sons and his wife and his sons' wives,** f**because of** the **waters of the deluge.** 8 f**Of the clean** ·domestic **beast and** f**of the beast** w**that is not clean, and** f**of the flyer and** 7f**of** nc **every**thing w**that** is **moving on the ground,** 9 **pair** by **pair they came to Noah** in**to the ark, male and female, just as Elohim had instructed** `**Noah.**

10 + **It** lb**occurred** ›**after the seven days** +**that** the **waters of the deluge** b**came** up**on the earth,** 11 **in** the **six hundredth year** ›**of Noah's life, in the second month** i**on** the 7**twenty-seventh**¯ **day** ›**of** the **month.** i**On** ·**this day all** the **springs of** the **vast abyss broke forth, and** the **crevices of the heavens were opened,** 12 **and the downpour was** b**coming on the earth forty days and forty nights.**

13 i**On** ·**this very** ·**day Noah came** in**to the ark** +**with Shem,** + **Ham, and Japheth, Noah's sons, and Noah's wife, and** the **three wives of his sons** `with **them,** 14 **they and every** `wild **animal** according **to its kind, and every** ·domestic **beast** according **to its kind, and every** ·**creeper** ·that was **creeping on the earth** according **to its kind, and every** ·**flyer** according **to its kind, every bird, every winged** thing. 15 + **They were coming to Noah** in**to the ark, pair** by **pair** f**of all** ·**flesh which** has the **spirit of life in it.** 16 **And** ·those **entering, male and female** f**of all flesh, came just as Elohim had instructed** `**him.** +**Then Yahweh** 7**Elohim**0 |**closed** 7**the ark**0 **about him.**

17 +**Now the deluge was** b**coming forty days** 7**and forty nights**0 **on the earth, and the waters were increasing.** + **They** |**lifted** up **the ark** so +**that it was** |**high above the earth.** 18 +**While the waters were** gaining the |**mastery over the earth and were exceedingly** |**increasing,** + **the ark was** go**floating on** the sur**face of the waters.** 19 + **Exceeding exceedingly, the waters** gained the ¯**mastery over the earth, and all the lofty** ·**mountains** w**under the entire heavens were** |**covered.** 20 At **fifteen cubits upward, the waters had** gained the ¯**mastery,** so +**that** 7**all the lofty**0 ·**mountains were** |**covered.**

21 + **All flesh** ·that had been **moving on the earth** had |**deceased,** i**of** the **flyer,** + i**of** the domestic **beast,** + i**of** the wild **animal,** + i**of every** ·**swarming** thing ·**swarming on the earth, and every** ·**human.** 22 **Every**one **who** had the **breath of** the **spirit of** the **living in his nostrils,** f **every**thing w**that** had been **in** the **drained** area, **they** all **died.** 23 +**Thus He** had |**wiped** out `**every**one ·who had **risen** w **on** the sur**face of the ground, from human unto** domestic **beast, unto** the **creeper and unto** the **flyer of the heavens,** + **they were** |**wiped** f**off the earth;** + y**only Noah** |**remained and** w**those**

`with **him in** the **ark.** [24] + **The waters** had the ˈ**mastery over the earth** for **150 days.**

THE QUANTITY OF WATER

Seeing that there is enough water to cover the entire land surface even today to a depth of more than a mile, shows the possibility of a universal flood. Even now marked changes are going on. Islands disappear. Near the tip of South America the water has recently increased ten feet in depth. Moreover, the previous earth, after the disruption, was entirely covered by water (Gen.1:2,3). Then the water was stored both below and above the atmosphere. The water on the land flowed together to form the seas (1:6-8).

The deluge was simply the reverse of this. Much of it was in the vast abyss. This came up. The rest was in the heavens. This came down (7:10-12). These together formed the deluge. Nothing new was created. It was simply shifted from one place to another.

THE FIRST RAIN

We are distinctly told that, at first, there was no rain on the earth. Instead, humidity ascended from below, from the vast abyss, and irrigated all the surface of the ground (2:5,6). This continued throughout that eon, so there must have been an immense storehouse of water in the abyss. There must also have been a very different climate, with none of the extremes of moisture or drought, which makes some of the earth unhabitable in this eon. This may be one reason for the long lives at that time. The two sources together sufficed to cover all the land. The earth had been prepared beforehand for the deluge of water, just as it is now stored with fire for the future conflagration.

In the second day's restoration (Gen.1:6-8) the atmosphere is made a separation between the *water* which is

above the atmosphere and that *beneath* it. There is no record that this water ever descended before the deluge. Then we are told that it came down from the heavens through "windows" or rather *crevices*, for forty days and forty nights (7:11,12). It evidently was not allowed to fall down as a whole, all at once, but to descend in small drops, as rain, for a prolonged period.

THE FUNCTION OF RAIN

Rain did not commence until the deluge, and it seems that it will be absent in the new earth, for there will be no sea and all is permanent. Some other means of feeding the rivers was used in the days of Adam, and it may be used again in the future. As long as this earth lasts, with day and night, there will be rain (Gen.8:21,22). But in the new earth, when there is no night (Rev.21:25), this may not apply. Between these two, the earth is sometimes given a name in the DISINTEGRATE family, rendered in the CV by the word "habitance." This word, *thbl*, comes from the same stem as deluge, *mbul*. The rain today is the cause of many miniature floods, and is gradually disintegrating the surface of the earth.

MOUNTAINS RISE

We may ask, what became of all this water? The answer may help to solve another mystery. How high were the mountains which were covered by it? This we do not know. The height of the land surface is continually changing in the three evil eons. Before the restoration of the first of Genesis there seems to have been no very high places at all before the dry land first appeared. As the lands rose, the water flowed to the low areas. There is no mention of mountains at all during the thousands of years before the deluge. Such changes are still taking place. So we cannot reason from the condition of the earth's surface at pres-

ent, when the mountains seem to be much higher than before the deluge.

THE WIND

After forty days the waters reached their maximum, and remained so for a hundred and fifty days (7:17-24). This sufficed to cause all that had the *breath of the spirit of the living* in their nostrils to die (Gen.7:22). This is a notable and instructive expression, showing the relation of breath to life in the creatures on the surface of the earth. Humanity cannot live on food alone. It needs air to breathe. The deluge did not kill by cutting off their food, but their air. It is here called the breath of the spirit of the living. It is the spirit which gives life, through the breath. This is not only literally true, but a fine figure of the spirit of God, which gives real, divine life. The earth dwellers were already dead in the higher sense, so the deluge simply conformed their physical condition to their spiritual state.

GENESIS EIGHT

8 **+Yet Elohim was |mindful** `of **Noah and** `of **every** ˙**animal and** `of **every** ˙**beast** *w*__**that**__ was `with **him in** the **ark. +So Elohim caused** a **wind** to **|pass over the earth, and the waters |subsided.** 2 + The **springs of** the **abyss and** the **crevices of the heavens were |held in check, and the downpour from the heavens was |shut up.** 3 + **The waters were returning off the earth, going⁻ and returning⁻, and** *f*__**at**__ the **end of 150 days the waters were abating.** 4 **+Then in the seventh month** *i*__**on**__ the 7__**twenty-seventh~ day** ›__**of**__ the **month the ark |rested on** the **mountains of Ararat.** 5 + **The waters** *b*__**continued**__ to **go⁻ and** to **abate⁻ until the tenth** ˙**month. In** the 7__**eleventh~**__ month, *i*__**on**__ day **one** ›__**of**__ the **month,** the **tops of the mountains appeared.**

6 + **It** *|b*__**was**__ *f*__**at**__ the **end of forty days +that Noah |opened** `a **porthole of the ark** *w*__**that he had made** 7 **and |sent** out `˙a **raven** 7__**to see**__ if **the waters were slight**0**. And it was** faring **|forth** to fare **forth⁻ and**◊ to **turn about⁻ until the waters** had **dried⁻ off the land.**

8 **+Then he |sent** out **from** `**him** `˙a **dove to see** if **the waters were slight above** the sur**face of the ground.** 9 **+Yet the dove** did **not find** a **resting** place **for** the **sole of her foot and |returned to him to the ark, for** there was **water on** the sur**face of the entire earth. +So he |stretched** out **his hand and |took her and |brought** `**her to him** in**to the ark.**

10 **He +then |waited** *fr*__**still another seven days and |proceeded**__ to **send⁻** out `**the dove from the ark.** 11 **+When the dove |came** back **to him** ›**at eventide, + behold,** a **torn-off olive leaf** was **in her beak. +Then Noah |knew that the waters were slight above the earth.** 12 **+So he |waited** *fr*__**still another seven days and**__ 7once *fr*__**more**__0 **|sent** out `**the dove; +yet not ⁻anymore** did **she return⁻ to him** *fr*__**again.**__

13 + **It** *|b*__**occurred in**__ the **six hundred and first year** 7›__**of Noah's life**__0**, in** the **first** month *i*__**on**__ day **one** ›__**of**__ the **month,** that **the waters had drained off the land. +When Noah |took off** `the **covering of the ark, + he |saw, and behold,** the sur**face of the ground had drained.** 14 + **In the second month,** *i*__**on**__ the **twenty-seventh day** ›__**of**__ the **month, the land was dry.**

15 + 7__**Yahweh**__0 **Elohim |spoke to Noah,** › **saying⁻:** 16 Come **forth from the ark, you and your wife, + your sons and your sons' wives** `with **you.** 17 **Every** ˙wild **animal** *w*__**that**__ is `with **you,** some *f*__**of all flesh** *i*__**among** the **flyer and** *i* the domestic **beast, +also** *i* **every** ˙**creeper** ˙that is **creeping on the earth,** *c*__**bring**__ them **forth** `with **you, +so they** can **swarm in** the **earth and be fruitful and increase on the earth.**

18 **+So Noah** came **|forth, and** `with **him his sons, + his wife and his sons' wives.** 19 **Every** ˙wild **animal, every** ˙**creeper and every** ˙**flyer, every**thing **moving on the earth, they** came **forth from the ark** ›**by their families.**

20 +**Then Noah** |**built** an **altar to Yahweh** 7**Elohim**0**;** + **he** |**took** some f**of every** ·**clean** ·domestic **beast and** some f**of every** ·**clean** ·**flyer and** c**offered** |**up ascent** offerings **i**on the **altar.** 21 + **Yahweh** 7**Elohim**0 |**smelled** `**the fragrant smell, and Yahweh** 7**Elohim**0 |**said** ›**in His heart: Not** |**anymore** will **I** › **malediction**– f**again** `**the ground** i**on** p**account of** ·**humanity, for** the **bent of the human heart** is **evil from its youth. And not** |**anymore** will **I** › **smite**– f**again** `**every living** 7**flesh**0**, just as I have done.** 22 In the **future,** for **all** the **days of the earth, seed**time **and harvest,** + **cold and warmth,** + **summer and winter,** + **day and night shall not cease.**

WIND OR SPIRIT

When the deluge reached its highest point it was reversed by means of a *wind*, or *spirit* (Gen.8:1). The Hebrew word *ruch* may be translated either way. In the corresponding passage, it is rendered *spirit*. "And the *spirit* of Elohim was vibrating over the surface of the water" (Gen.1:2). Then, as here, it caused the water to flow together into seas, and leave the land dry (Gen.1:9,10). Spiritually speaking, mankind had brought the world back into a condition corresponding to the earlier disruption, and the deluge only conformed them to it in the physical sphere. And now, once again the spirit steps in to provide for a new beginning.

Ever so much greater will be the changes in the future new creation. There the sea will vanish entirely (Rev.21:1), as it was in the beginning. So we see that the sea never was a permanent part of the earth. It is found only during the evil eons. It probably attained its highest level during the deluge. Its Creator disposes of it to suit His plan and purpose, and is able to change it, or the chemical elements of which it is composed, to work His will. It is used to figure restless impermanence, as seen among the changing gentile nations, in this eon. It must be reckoned among the

evil things which He uses as a background for the good. This is best seen at the deluge.

GOING AND RETURNING

When we consider the present tidal variations of the ocean, it is easy to see that these would be much greater if they were not hindered by surrounding continents, for then they would not be checked. Therefore, the waters did not simply sink, but rose and fell, while they were subsiding. In the higher places, it would actually leave for a time, and then return as it does on our beaches today. Such a rush of water over the land would fully account for the many deposits of shells on the earth, far from the sea, especially where hills or mountains would tend to check the rushing water. Therefore we do not read that the waters simply subsided, but were "going and returning" (Gen.8:3). Later on the phrase is changed to "go and abate" (8:5), when the water was much lower, and hindered by the irregularities of the earth's surface and the wind.

THE RAVEN AND THE DOVE

Noah, in sending out a scout to search the scene and see if the time had come to leave the ark, picked out a raven. As it did not return, he sent out a dove (Gen.8:6-12). Are these not significant, as indicating what kind of world it was to be? The raven eats anything, and could live on carrion. It was the first inhabitant of this world, and has had many human followers. It no longer needed the shelter of the ark, so did not return. The dove, however, could find no place to light and rest, so it came back to the shelter of the ark. It is a symbol of peace and holy spirit (Matt. 3:16). So is the one who has the spirit and the peace it gives. There is no place for him to rest down here. Refuge can be found only in Christ.

The later trip of the dove, when it plucked off the olive

leaf (Gen.8:10,11), may well suggest the state of this world, after God was conciliated to all humanity. The cultivated olive, and even the wild olive, after being grafted into the cultivated, light up this dark scene, so that it is liveable again. It is worthy of note that the dove, unlike the raven, even after it found the olive tree, did not stay away from the ark, but returned to it. So it is in the antitype. Even though we are *in* the world, we are not *of* it, but return to the Ark for shelter.

According to the figures given during the deluge, the flood year contained only 360 days, and the month 30 days. We find the same in the book of Daniel and the Unveiling, where forty-two months are equal to 1,260 days, which allows 30 days for each month. It is usually called the "prophetic year" as though it applied only to the future predictions in the Scriptures. But is it at all likely that such a reckoning be without the least foundation in nature? The present reckoning of 365 and a fraction is not ideal, and neither is anything else in man's day. Could it not be that the great cataclysm which introduced it caused the change, and the fearful seismic disturbances introducing the next eon will speed things up, so that it will be set right again in the day of Yahweh?

In a very real sense, all mankind since the flood is not only in Adam in Eden, but also with Noah in the ark. All were saved with him from the waters of the deluge. This puts them in a dearer relation to the Subjector than those living in the previous eon. Then He had *created* men and *made* them. In this eon He has also *saved* them through a great cataclysm, which is a clear intimation of the future, when He will once more become the Saviour of all mankind, not in the ark, but in *Christ* (1 Tim.4:10). Not by creation, but through *salvation*, will the Father bring all under His beneficent and loving sway at the consummation.

A. E. Knoch

THE DEATH OF THE CROSS
*
CHRIST, IN JUDGMENT AND SALVATION

Question:

Can you inform me as to the meaning of the word "cross" as well as concerning the meaning of the phrase "the death of the cross"? I have been told, since the common symbol of the cross is pagan and the Greek word translated cross does not actually mean *cross* but simply "stake" (without any crosspiece), that symbols of the cross should not be used and that even the word "cross" itself should not be used in reference to the death of Christ.

Answer:

THE Greek word translated "cross" is *stauros,* to which we have assigned the standard STANDer.[1] *Stauros* is apparently derived from *stau,* which was the name of an ancient Greek letter which "stood between" "E" (*epsilon*) and "Z" (*zayta*) and was retained as a numeral = 6.

The noun *stauros* ("cross," CV) is used simply of an *upright pale* or *stake* in the ancient Greek epic poem *Odyssey* (traditionally attributed to the ninth century B.C. poet Homer).[2]

1. That is, an upright device (see entry "cross," Keyword Concordance, p.63); *cp* the term "stanchion," in the sense of a *standing* support.

2. On *stau* and *stauros:* LIDDELL & SCOTT'S GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1850, p.1378; ref. *Odyssey,* 14, 11; *cf Iliad,* 24, 453).

While the verb *stauroō* ("crucify," CV), similarly, is used in early antiquity in the sense of "to fence with pales," the later use, as an instrument of death as in the New Testament and as corresponds to the modern "crucify," may be seen as early as the second-century B.C. in the works of the historian Polybius.[3]

It is evident, then, that by our first century A.D., the use of *stauros* for the Roman instrument of death by affixation to a wooden device, was well established. It spoke of a vertical-standing, fearful instrument of death, by affixation thereunto and hanging thereupon; but it said nothing as to the particular form of any particular *stauros*-instrument.

Under Moses' law, death was by stoning (e.g., Deut. 21:20,21; 22:20-24). Afterward, the corpse was sometimes hung upon a tree (Deut.21:22,23). This served at once as a warning to others (*cp* Joshua 10:26) as well as an especial mark of God's malediction ("one being hung is under a malediction of Elohim"; Deut.21:23).

This explains Galatians 3:13: "Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes, for it is written, Accursed is everyone hanging on a pole . . . ."[4]

The cross (*stauros*) is often called a "pole" (Acts 5:30; 10:39; 1 Peter 2:24). The Greek word here, *xulon* (WOOD), however, unlike the English "pole" which speaks of shape, refers not to the shape of the object, but to the material from which it is made. Thus, by means of the word *xulon* (WOOD), the cross (*stauros*) is connected with the Hebrew

3. THE VOCABULARY OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT, James Moulton and George Milligan (London: Hodder and Stoughton, Limited, 1949, pp.586,587; ref. Polybius i. 86. 4).

4. "Pole" is one of the idiomatic variants used in the Concordant Version for the Greek *xulon*, for which we have assigned the standard WOOD. *Xulon* is "the solid fiber of the trunk and branches of a tree, *after cutting*, hence [is used] of many things made of wood" (Keyword Concordance, p.331).

Scripture concept of deepest humiliation and shame (*cf* Heb.12:2; *cp* Deut.22:23).

In the Hebrew Scriptures, we discover the awful associations connected with one who was hanged upon a tree. And, in the Greek Scriptures, we perceive something of the horror of the ignominious pain and shame of "the death of the cross" (Phil.2:8). Through a familiarity with these considerations, we begin to understand one of the reasons why the heralding of "Christ crucified" so thoroughly *scandalized* the Jews (*skandalizō*, SNARE; 1 Cor. 1:23), thus entrapping them in their snare of unbelief.

Crucifixion was originally an Oriental punishment. That is, it was practiced in the countries east of the Mediterranean or the ancient Roman empire. It was practiced by the Persians, the Phoenicians, the Carthaginians, and the Egyptians. Later, it was practiced by the Greeks, probably in imitation of the Persians, and by the Romans who likely learned it from their enemies the Carthaginians. Being mindful of its horror and tortuous nature, the Romans reserved it for slaves, for especially egregious criminals, and for provincials, deeming it too deep a disrespect to impose it on a Roman citizen.

"There were two kinds of cross [*stauros*]:

"(1) The *crux simplex*, which was a single stake. Sometimes the victim was fastened to it by his hands and feet, the former being extended above his head. Usually, however, it was a sharpened stake, and the victim was impaled upon it. It passed through the length of his body, issuing from his mouth.

"(2) The *crux compacta* [i.e., joined together], which was composed of two pieces. It had three forms: (1) The *crux decussata* [i.e., in the shape of an "**X**"] . . . . (2) The *crux commissa* [i.e., set together, at the start of the beam] . . . resembling the letter '**T**' . . . . (3) The *crux immissa* [i.e., growing out, in the sense of 'above'], which had the top

of the upright protruding above the transom, '**t**.' From the middle of the upright there projected a peg . . . on which to support its weight, the body rested as on a saddle."[5]

Since it is evident from the Scripture account that our Lord was not impaled upon a sharpened stake, and it seems unlikely that the less common practice of attachment by the hands and feet to a post was employed, it has generally been assumed that Christ was executed upon a two-piece device according to the most common prevailing custom, upon which the hands would be outstretched upwardly and then nailed to a crossbar or *patibulum.* Whether the terrible tool of death were in the shape of a '**T**' or a '**t**,' there would have been room in either case for the attachment of the board inscribed with His name and accusation put up over His head (Matt.27:37).

Thus, by *stauros,* all that can be known is that it was a vertical-standing device composed of wood, which served as the means of execution. Since these fearful contrivances were fashioned in various shapes, and we possess neither declarative nor corollarial evidence of the shape of the particular *stauros* upon which Jesus was put to death, we therefore do not know its shape. We do know, however, that the word *stauros* does not speak of any certain shape, and therefore that it provides us with no evidence concerning this minor question.

Instead of giving undue attention to minutiae, we would instead center our thoughts on things of consequence, namely, upon the purpose and achievements of God as a result of the death of Christ and our justification "in His blood" (Rom.3:25; 5:9).

As to the historical issue of certain cross-shaped pagan images, let me say in reply that what pagans may have

5. Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, David Smith, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917, p.397).

done with cross-like symbols before the death of Christ has nothing to do with how the Romans crucified people.

It is well to become acquainted with the fact that various popular traditions such as the religious observance of Christmas or Easter are not to be found in the Scriptures. Indeed it is true that certain of the accouterments attending such traditional observances have been adapted from their earlier "heathen" connections and pressed into "Christian service." As is our own practice, if one considers such things unfitting, one may simply decline to incorporate them into one's own customs. We need not become preoccupied with such things and their perceived evils, nor should we make overmuch of our knowledge concerning them while diminishing much that is excellent in the faith and lives of many of those devoted to such enshrined traditions.

We have nothing to do with the customs of ancient pagans nor with any more or less t-shaped objects of veneration which some among them evidently possessed.

We would say, however, that a common symbol need not have a common identification. Further, the *appropriateness* or *tastefulness* of the use of any such "logo" is manifestly a subjective question. Certainly, in a particular culture, some might well and with a clean heart see fit to exhibit such an emblem of their faith, while others, equally sincere, might deem it inappropriate to do so.

Let us not confound the issue here, by confusing those who "venerate" or worship a cross with those who consider the cross as a symbol of faith in Christ, and so view it as a symbol of their own faith in Him accordingly. While it is not our custom to employ such a symbol personally or as a part of our ministry, we realize that many see fit to do so, and we see no reason to think less of them because of this.

Even though the meaning of the word *stauros* does not include the notion of "cross member," *neither does it exclude it.* The question is not, What was its import in the

most ancient usage of this word, but, What is its essential meaning and what was its referential meaning in first century Palestine under Roman rule.

Of the latter there can be no question. There, the term *stauros* was used of the awful wooden instrument of death—whatever its shape—which served as the means of execution of convicted persons in the Roman world.

The learned definition of "cross" found in Webster's New International Dictionary is as follows: "A structure, *typically* an upright supporting a horizontal beam, anciently used in the execution of malefactors."[6]

Since this accords fully with both the New Testament usage of *stauros* as well as with the best historical records concerning crucifixion practices, it follows that the modern word "cross," rather than being a supposedly improper term that we should somehow repudiate, is instead the ideal word to use when translating the Greek *stauros.* Therefore, in speaking of the instrument of Christ's death, not only *may* we use the word "cross," but we may do so freely, without reservation.

❊

Question:

I was always taught that Jesus suffered for our sins on the cross, bearing our sins away, so that we who believe would be saved. But if all will eventually be saved, why is there still a future day of judgment, a "day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God"? Concerning the judgment of that day, Paul says that "indignation and fury, affliction and distress," will come upon those "persuaded to injustice," even

6. Webster's New International Dictionary, second edition, unabridged (Springfield, Mass.: G & C Merriam Company, Publishers, 1957, p.630).

"on every human soul which is effecting evil" (Rom. 2:5-9). In a word, if Jesus suffered once for all, taking away the sin of the world, why should there be a day of judging and a second death?

I am struggling with the teachings in the last three chapters of the book of Revelation. It is difficult to square these chapters with a belief in universal salvation.

Also, if it is true that Jesus died for everyone and that everyone will be saved in the end, why, then, are only certain ones to receive an eonian salvation?

Answer:

In replying to your questions, I would like to begin by making a general comment regarding the last three chapters of Revelation, chapters 20–22. In fact, concerning salvation, it is no more difficult to square these chapters with a universalist belief than with a partialist belief.

Let me explain what I mean. You are correct that (*a*) there is nothing in Revelation 20–22 that teaches the eventual salvation of all. But I wonder if you have also noted that (*b*) neither is there anything within this section of Scripture which precludes the eventual salvation of all. Statement (*a*) *and* Statement (*b*) are *both* fully true.

Revelation 20–22 neither affirms nor denies the eventual salvation of all. It simply does not address the question. In fact, if this portion of Scripture were all that had been provided us concerning distant future events, we could neither say that all will or will not be saved. In that case, we could only say that we have no testimony either affirming or denying either proposition.

As far as the apostle John is concerned, he simply speaks of the second death; he does not address the question of whether there is any life beyond the second death for those having been committed to it.

But it does not follow since John does not address this question here, that neither does any other writer inform us concerning it elsewhere. Much less does it follow because *John* is not granted a vision of a day when those who had entered the second death will finally be delivered from it, that there simply is no deliverance from the second death.

Paul necessarily sees farther into the future than John; and, unlike John, Paul alone—to whom it was given to *complete* the word of God (Col.1:25)—deals with ultimate issues:

"For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22). The vivification of all, however, will occur in "classes": the *Firstfruit* of vivification is Christ Himself; *thereupon,* in due course, those who are Christ's will be vivified; and, *thereafter,* the consummation of the vivification of all will finally occur.

This will be whenever Christ may be giving up the kingdom (lit., the "reign") to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power. He *will* achieve this, since He must be reigning *until* He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. *The last enemy is being abolished: death.* And, this *will* occur, since He subjects *all* under His feet. Finally, "the Son Himself" also shall be subjected to God, "Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all" (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22-28).

It follows, then, that at the consummation, every person who entered the second death will be fully returned to life, but this time to unspeakably glorious life, in immortality and incorruption, no longer subjected to vanity but instead truly constituted just—vivified—fit for the indwelling of God Himself in such a way that He may be All in all.

From these considerations it follows as well that the apostle John's vision is one of an epochal period, not of endless duration. We know this simply because while John, in Revelation 21 and 22, speaks of the reign of Christ, of saints, and

of kings of the earth, while affirming the presence of the second death, Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15, speaks of Christ reigning until He gives up the reign (the kingdom); indeed, of the time when all sovereignty and authority is nullified (which therefore includes that of both the saints and the kings of the earth), and even of the time when death itself is abolished, the glorious day when all will finally have that life of which Christ is the Firstfruit, all unto the end that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:28).

SET FOR LIFE EONIAN; SIN, OFFENSES, AND ACTS

You also asked, "If it is true that Jesus died for everyone and that everyone will be saved in the end, why, then, are only certain ones to receive an eonian salvation?"

In reply, I would simply say that while the living God, on Whom we rely, is the Saviour of all mankind, He is *especially* the Saviour of believers (1 Tim.4:10). Eonian salvation is the "special" salvation granted to God's chosen ones, who are also graciously granted faith.

That is, to a very *special* extent or degree, the One Who is the Saviour of all mankind is also the Saviour of believers *in particular,* to whom alone, eonian life is given.

Here it is important to keep in mind that faith is *the consequent gracious blessing* given to those who are, first of all, chosen, foreknown, designated beforehand, and then, in due time, called and granted faith (*cp* Eph.1:4; Rom. 8:29,30,33; Acts 13:48; 1 Cor.1:24; Phil.1:29).

We are not told why we are chosen and others are not, with respect to membership in the ecclesia and the blessing of eonian life. We simply know—as concerns untold other things as well concerning which we are likewise not informed as to the particular "why" of things—that God has actually *chosen* (i.e., "willed") that things be as they are, not otherwise, to accord with His purpose (Eph.1:11).

We stand in awe of it all, relying on Him as the Almighty, trusting in His wisdom, goodness, and love.

Now, finally, let me address your primary concern, which you yourself summed up as follows: "In a word, if Jesus suffered once for all, taking away the sin of the world, why should there be a day of judging and a second death?"

I would first of all stress, since the Lamb of God did indeed take away the sin of the world (John 1:29), not only do we who are God's chosen one's not suffer for our *sins,* but neither does any one else suffer for his or her *sins.*

This, however, in no way denies the consideration—which is another matter—that in this life, "God's indignation *is being revealed* from heaven on all the irreve*rence* and injust*ice* of men who are retaining the truth [i.e., whatever truth they do know] in injustice." This is, "the retribution of their deception which must be" (Rom.1: 18,19,27b). That is, God's "indignation" here is upon the irreverence and injustice itself; a consequence of this, it is true, is that the effects thereof are experienced by those engaged therein.

This consequence, however, is not in the form of "maledictions" along the lines of the "curses" of the law. Instead, though often dreadful deeds do indeed result in present-day suffering, this is by no means always the case.

It seems evident that "the retribution of their deception" has both a subjective and an objective aspect. That is, we human beings are deceived and led astray both in and as a result of our deeds of irreverence and injustice. If we were not already corrupted, we would never do these things; and, as those who have done them, we must also experience something of what God thinks of them, even if the penality here consists in continuing on in our darkness (which is by no means a trivial judgment in itself), whether or not it also includes consequent, corresponding suffering.

There are three terms to consider: (1) "sins" (which

refers to one's *failures;* lit., "missings" of the mark); (2) "offenses" (which speaks of that which wounds the feelings); and (3) "acts" (i.e., actions, or "works," which speaks simply of deeds themselves, without, at least as such, noting their "missing" or "offending" aspects).

As the Lamb of God, the Sin Offering, Jesus takes away the *sin* of the world (John 1:29); and, God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself (i.e., uniting them unto Him; *cp* 1 Cor.7:11), which entails His not reckoning their *offenses* to them (2 Cor.5:19).

Therefore, men's ongoing practices in which they continue to miss the mark of God's ideals, and continue as well to be offensive therein, do not stand in the way of their salvation. In Christ, God has made provision for their needs concerning both their failings and the offensiveness thereof. Therefore, neither men's sin's nor their offenses inhibit their salvation: God has formed the decision (1 Tim.2:4) that all mankind be saved; and, in Christ, all *shall* be vivified (1 Cor.15:22).

These considerations, however, glorious and significant as they are, do not change the fact that God will bring every *act* into judgment (Ecc.12:14; God's "judgment," simply speaks of that which God decides to do or bring to pass). Now, in judgment, there are two grand classes of humanity: (1) vessels of mercy, and (2) vessels of indignation (Rom.9:22,23; it should be kept in mind that even the vessels of indignation will subsequently enjoy mercy themselves; *cf* Rom.11:32).

All God's judgments (i.e., everything that He decides to accomplish) are ultimately salutary and corrective. In judgment, in His judging of a part of mankind, God will display His mercy therein, according to His grace ("mercy" is the mitigation, or diminution, of the severity of judgment). And, in His judging of the remainder of mankind, God, Who is love (1 John 4:8; *cp* 1 Cor.13:5), in the person of

His Son, will *assume* the role (*cf* Heb.1:3) of One Who is indignant, thus *manifesting* a corresponding severity, with a view toward displaying His indignation and making His powerful doings known (Rom.9:22).

This is what God has determined to do, and He will do it. He has a purpose in it all, and that purpose is to glorify Himself and bless His creatures—to the degree and in the way that He intends.

In consideration of the second death, we need only note that it is not according to God's purpose for all to live during the eon of the eons, which is the final duration, prior to the consummation (it is this eon which is the object of John's vision of Revelation 21,22). It was not God's purpose for us to have lived in times of old. For such a long expanse of time, there was no life for us to be found. Similarly, then, even as we ourselves were not afforded life in millennia past, neither will the majority of mankind be endowed therewith during the eon of the eons.

But it is according to God's purpose for the day of judging to transpire subsequent to the thousand years, and yet prior to the eon of the eons. And, in that "day" (we do not know its duration, but take it that even if comparatively brief it will not be an insignificant period; *cf* Matt.12:42), the *acts* of the *vessels* of indignation will be judged; where appropriate, in severity. Following the day of judging, those brought forth for judging (*cf* John 5:29b) will be returned to death, being *cast* into the lake of fire: "This *is* the second *death*—the lake of fire" (Rev.20:14b).

We who are God's chosen ones, who are vessels of mercy, will enjoy eonian life until the consummation when we *together with all mankind* will enter upon the field of endless life which follows.

In closing, I would only declare, "Now thanks be to God, Who is giving us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.15:57). J.R.C.

THE UNVEILING OF THE SONS OF GOD

UNVEILING! This strong emphasis on the spectacular transformation of the sons of God is quite deliberate. Such is the importance of this long-awaited revelation, that it were well to carefully consult God's holy Scriptures:

"For I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us. For the premonition of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God. For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God. For we are aware that the entire creation is groaning and travailing together until now" (Rom.8:18-22).

The apostle Paul earnestly besought that God, the Father of glory, would be giving us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him, the eyes of our hearts having been enlightened, for us to perceive what is the expectation of His calling (Eph.1:17,18). Down through the years these searching words reach out to the spirits of those beloved in Christ Jesus; precious members of the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all (1:23). But just what is the expectation of God's calling?

Each one must carefully note the occurrence of the word "creation" in the above text from Romans. *Four times* is this term set before us! In very truth, while most privileged to be graced with the firstfruit of the spirit, we are certainly

not exempted from the grievous travailing, so much in evidence during these perilous periods. Despite this, and often in anticipation of that advent of the glory of God and our Saviour, we, in these bodies of humiliation, whose realm is inherent in the heavens, are consoled by this same spirit! This experience of God assuring Paul that "Sufficient for you is My grace, for My power in infirmity is being perfected," surely prompted the apostle to record: "Wherefore I delight in infirmities, in outrages, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ sake, for, whenever I may be weak, then I am powerful" (2 Cor.12:10).

"When clothed in His brightness transported I rise,
To meet Him in clouds of the sky,
His perfect salvation, His wonderful love,
I'll praise with the millions on high."

MESSENGER OF LIGHT

"It is only by stealth and deception that [Satan] holds fast the homage of humanity. If men knew that the serpent of Eden had been transformed into a messenger of light in order to better carry on his work of weaning men's hearts away from God, if they knew that the angelic glory hid the serpent's heart, would they so blindly do his bidding? Our adversary is the god of this eon. He is worshipped in Christendom as well as among the heathen. Everywhere is found his worship, except among the feeble few who to Christ are true. He it is who blinds the minds of unbelievers so that the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God, does not irradiate them (2 Cor.4:4)."[1]

In the account of Satan's challenge with our dear Lord in the wilderness, he was summarily defeated, in abject failure, with declarations of the Word of God. However, our

1. A. E. Knoch: *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.65, pp.152,153.

timid spirits are quite daunted to discover that not until his instant dismissal do messengers approach to minister to the Lord. We may not underestimate the eminence of the adversary.

But wait! In one very vital blessing we are by no means inferior or helpless. Heed Paul's exultation: "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.8:38,39).

The blessing? Immortality! Again we quote, for here the matter is so incredible, so wonderful, that our spirits leap within as we read the very words: "For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself" (Phil.3:20,21).

"Face to face with Christ, my Saviour,
Face to face—what will it be?
When with rapture I behold Him,
Jesus Christ Who died for me.
Face to face I shall behold Him,
Far beyond the starry sky;
Face to face in all His glory,
I shall see Him by and by."

Can this possibly be true? Is the ecclesia—unique in all creation, apart from One Who is the Son of God's love—to be graced with immortality? Here we tread with great care! Heed our Lord's exaltation: "He is King of kings and Lord of lords, *Who alone has immortality*, making His home in light inaccessible, Whom not one of mankind perceived nor can be perceiving, to Whom be honor and might eonian! Amen!" (1 Tim.6:16).

In support of this revelation, we further learn the status of our own transfiguration: "We all, indeed, shall not be put to repose, yet we all shall be changed, in an instant, in the twinkle of an eye, at the last trump. For He will be trumpeting, and the dead will be roused incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, *and this mortal put on immortality*" (1 Cor.15:51-53).

The more we search out this stupendous, gracious blessing, the more we gain courage. Still timid and hesitant, we read: "Now the God of peace will be crushing Satan under your feet swiftly. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you!" (Rom.16:20). All this is so amazing that we might lapse into a stupor. Did not Michael, the chief messenger, not daring to bring on a calumniating judgment, declare to Satan, "May the Lord rebuke you!" (Jude 9)?

We are aware that the role of the Adversary, was in like manner to that of Pharaoh. In the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, we can perceive how Satan can only be an instrument in God's hands. Satan's vilest act of malevolent hatred advances the Subjector's purpose!

AMONG THE CELESTIALS

With all these transcendent blessings, we might become prone to a blissful indifference to the plight of those with whom we share life's heartaches. Be not misled. Until we are summoned, our lives should always be a literal reflection of thankfulness and peace. "Now you did not thus learn Christ, since, surely, Him you hear, and by Him were taught (according as the truth is in Jesus), to put off from you, as regards your former behavior, the old humanity which is corrupted in accord with its seductive desires, yet to be rejuvenated in the spirit of your mind, and to put on the new humanity which, in accord with God, is being created in righteousness and benignity of the truth" (Eph.4:20-24).

"If we realize the great truth that we are a new humanity in Christ, and that the old was crucified with Him, we will not disgrace ourselves by entering the lists against the decaying and decrepit humanity to which our bodies still belong but which we should put off, by the power of the spirit, just as we discard garments too worn and filthy for further use. Let there be no conflict with the old humanity. With men we are at peace, even as God is conciliated toward them now. For them our feet are sandaled with the readiness of the evangel of peace, for our feet alone are in contact with the earth. Our very panoply provides for a truce with mankind (Eph.6:15). Only as we mount, by faith, to our celestial allotment, will we wage war."[2]

We began this study with emphasis on the unveiling of the sons of God. Frequent reference has been made into the disclosure of so momentous an occasion. True, there is a premonition of so great and wonderful a change, ". . . in an instant, in the twinkle of an eye," but as this startling figure suggests, the speed with which this occurs will be so swift as to be beyond the observation of all ultra-high frequency point-to-point radio waves.

Our allotment is among the celestials, bringing "good news" to those vast regions. Who better qualified than those who have suffered so much agony of the spirit, so much loneliness and sorrow? This earnest of spirit surely makes us not less, but more sensitive. Between the time of the "snatching" away of the ecclesia, and the binding of Satan for one thousand years, this one, now crushed swiftly beneath our feet, will have undergone a distinctive change—a drastic diminution of his powers! How else account for the very fact that there a messenger (note: not Michael), descends out of heaven, lays hold on Satan, and peremptorily arrests all his further intrusive mischief

2. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.65, p.149.

during the thousand years in a kingdom once described by Jesus Himself as paradise, a time when God confirms His promise of great blessings for the nation of Israel.

GLORY AND HONOR

One last question remains. *Why* is the ecclesia thus honored? Why, among all the myriads of God's creatures, are these present, lowly, insignificant beings chosen for such high and mighty distinctive blessing? The method, the wonderful and glorious grace of it all, now seems so simple to ourselves. The basic lesson was plain. Among all the many impressive creatures in God's great universe, one only, mankind, was chosen to represent His loving, obedient Son. Small wonder that the centurion was heard to declare: "Truly this was God's Son!" He witnessed obedience, defying all comprehension!

Following the course of the eons, leading to the consummation, these same images of the mighty Subjector, shall be bringing the message of His great and gracious love. When, ultimately, His dear Son, our Lord and Saviour, lovingly abdicates, all, including His servant, Satan, shall be joyfully embraced by God, Who shall then, be All in all!

Donald Fielding

WEEKEND CONFERENCES

February 22: The Grace Evangel Fellowship, P.O.Box 6, Wilmore KY 40390, has scheduled an all-day conference to be held at the Holiday Inn-Lexington South. For further details phone Bob and Jill Evely (859-858-3652).

March 15,16: The theme, "Be Seeking That Which is Above," has been set for a conference to be held at the Pilgrim Manor Chapel, 2000 Leonard St. NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan, sponsored by the Bible Fellowship (contact Orville Hunt, 616-457-2213).

April 4-6: The Richmond Bible Fellowship has scheduled meetings to be held at the Days Inn, 2100 Dickens Road, Richmond, Virginia (for reservations phone 804-282-3300), Friday evening at 7:00, during the day on Saturday, and Sunday morning.

THROUGH THE APOSTLES

GOD HAS SPOKEN through the apostles. The word *apostle* is a transliteration of the Greek word *apostolos;* its nearest equivalent in English is "commissioner." Often it is instructive to look at the English equivalents of the Greek elements making up a Greek word. In this case they are FROM (*apo-*) and PUT (*-stol-*). Hence, the fundamental sense is, FROM-PUT, referring to someone who is *put* aside as a representative, as citizens do when they elect a *commissioner.*

An apostle was given a commission, with authority to enforce it. The commissions for the twelve were given them by the Lord while He was yet with them. Paul also received his commission from the Lord, but after His resurrection. Paul was not numbered among the twelve, nor did he receive his commission from or through the twelve (Gal.1:1,12).

What commissions did the apostles receive? How were they selected? What were their messages, and what did they do? To discuss these questions, the apostles must be divided into two groups.

THE TWELVE

Early in His earthly ministry, the Lord selected the twelve apostles and gave them their commission. His clear instructions and explanations of their authority and conduct are recorded in Matthew 10. Included there are the following surprising words:

"Into a road of the nations you may not pass forth, and into a city of the Samaritans you may not be entering. Yet be going rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Now going, herald, saying that 'Near is the kingdom of the heavens!'" (Matt.10:5-7).

You might well wonder, Why the restrictions on going to those of the nations (Gentiles)? Why specifically restrict their message to the "house of Israel"? Why are the nations excluded from receiving the message?

The answer to all these questions is very simple, yet often overlooked. *Israel had been promised a kingdom centuries before through the prophets.* The kingdom was promised to Israel as its administrator, not to the nations. Hence its proclamation was restricted to Israel. There was nothing sinister in the "discrimination."[1]

Of course you know the result of the proclamation. It was rejected! Not only so, the King was crucified!

The door to the kingdom was opened again at Pentecost. Peter, the leader of the apostles to whom was given the keys to the kingdom opened it. The proclamation of the kingdom resumed, and again rejected. You can read of the formal cessation of that gospel when Paul publicly proclaims the apostasy of the nation of Israel (Acts 28:23-28). Now Israel is temporarily set aside—the *nation*, that is, not individuals. During this pause in the establishment of the kingdom of the heavens on earth, what is God's program?

PAUL[2]

Why do we separate Paul? We see a hint of this in the Acts reference just cited from Acts 28. Another hint opens

1.See Matthew 28:16-20 for a preview of the actual establishment of the kingdom. The nations will be wonderfully blessed under the kingdom administration of the apostles

2.Apostolic authority was not confined to the twelve. For the kingdom, under Israel, there must be twelve, for Israel's twelve tribes call for twelve rulers. For the nations, there is no such limit. Paul, however, is so great that he overshadows the apostles associated with him in his ministry to the nations, and so we mention only him in this heading.

the book of Romans. There he writes that he was "severed" for the evangel of God. More directly: "To me, less than the least of all saints, was granted this grace: to bring the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations . . ." (Eph.3:8). ". . . For which I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the nations in knowledge and truth" (1 Tim.2:7).

This can't be misinterpreted: ". . . perceiving that I have been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, according as Peter of the Circumcision (for He who operates in Peter for the apostleship of the Circumcision operates in me also for the nations), and, knowing the grace which is being given to me, James and Cephas and John, who are supposed to be pillars, give to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we, indeed, are to be for the nations, yet they for the Circumcision . . ." (Gal.2:7-9).

Paul (and those apostles associated with him) were given a *different commission from the twelve*. He is to be for the nations. That is, the people comprising the nations other than the "nation," or Israel. When Paul was given his commission, Israel had not yet been formally and officially set aside. But when that took place, the proclamation of the kingdom ended, Paul's evangel is the only evangel, and it is for all. Paul could write "there is no Jew nor yet Greek, . . . for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3:28,29).

Paul is the apostle for the present; his epistles contain the gospel for the present, the good news about our wonderful place in God's purpose *for the celestials* to be carried out through Christ Jesus, our Lord. Paul's epistles will not fit the past nor the future on the earth.

On the other hand, the writings of the twelve apostles concerning the kingdom, its law and glories on the earth will not fit the present. They apply to the past and to the future on the earth.

Robert B. Killen

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS REVEALED

GOD has sent the welcome word to us that we are justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). When we first believe this evangel, we certainly do not grasp all that it means, both in terms of *what happened* when Christ died for our sins and *what it means* to us, to the world, and, most essentially, to God Himself. But we receive this word as a most welcome message of salvation, for our need is critical. In every way it is an evangel (WELL-MESSAGE).

Paul's eagerness to bring this evangel of God testifies to his deep-rooted pride in it. He was not ashamed of it (Rom.1:16). On the surface, it spoke of a dreadful experience of humiliation and weakness endured by the Son of God in view of a glory that can be known at present only in spiritual terms of faith and expectation. Nevertheless, spiritual blessings are far from being *mere* provisions when they are centered in truth. It is *true* that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes, and all that was accomplished by this great act of faithful obedience will be realized! Since it is true, its benefits are real.

The spiritual blessing of believing the evangel had stirred Paul's enthusiasm for it and its proclamation. This longing pulsed at the very center of his life (Rom.1:9-15). But Paul's zeal was not simply focused on what the evangel said concerning humanity in general and the believer in particular, but at the very core on what it made known concerning God. It was the evangel *of* God (Rom.1:1), not simply *from* God, but reflective of His very essence.

WHAT THE EVANGEL IS

The evangel *is* the *power of God for salvation* (Rom. 1:16). The evangel itself is a message of God's power for salvation. Salvation, whether its past accomplishment or its future realization or its present enjoyment, is all of God. Sin and infirmity are entrenched in us. Corruption and mortality are everywhere and do not go away. But the evangel is a message of powerful deliverance.

THE THEME OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Now in Romans 1:17 our thoughts are directed to the righteousness of God. This is the first direct reference to the theme of righteousness in Romans, where the various terms based on the Greek root, *-dik-* (JUST), occur, as a group, nearly seventy times. In the first half of the epistle, from Romans 1:17 to Romans 8:33, where Paul expounds the evangel, such words as *righteous* (or *just*), *righteousness* and *justify* appear no less than fifty times. And to these usages we should add eight occurrences of the words *unjust* and *injustice* (which could also be rendered "unrighteous" and "unrighteousness").

This major theme of righteousness is opened in Romans as a matter applying to God, being revealed in the evangel. Paul speaks of God's righteousness quite literally here, much as he does in Romans 3:25,26 ("display of His righteousness"), and, using a slightly different Greek construction, in Romans 3:5 ("if our injustice is commending God's righteousness"). Before the apostle expounds the evangel as it relates to our justification, he draws our attention to God's glorious attribute of righteousness as it is brought to light in the evangel. What the welcome message of God's power for salvation tells us about God's righteousness is basic to our lives and ongoing appreciation of this evangel, of which Paul was not ashamed.

If we miss this order of divine priority, we will miss much of the powerful and saving influence of the evangel on our lives, while we deal with the perils of the present era. The righteousness of God as it is made known in the evangel of God concerning the death and resurrection of His Son undergirds all that is said in Romans about justification, righteousness reckoned to the believer, and the believer's enslavement to righteousness and confidence in God, the Justifier. And it undergirds our assurance in what the evangel says and our reliance on God day by day. The righteousness of God as we apprehend it in believing the evangel is a continuing source of happiness and strength.

It is not only that we take for granted that God is righteous. In believing the evangel, we are believing that which *reveals* God's righteousness to us. The justification of sinners is a righteous work of God, revealing that God's righteousness leaves nothing wrong. No sin or offense, no deed or thought of irreverence or unrighteousness is ignored, and no wrong is left unrighted by God's righteousness in the giving of His Son for us all. As we continue to follow Paul's presentation of the evangel in Romans, especially as it relates to justification, we will see how these features of God's righteousness are brought out.

RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

As in Romans 1:1-7, which draws attention first to *God,* Who has an evangel for us, then to His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, concerning Whom the evangel speaks, and finally to us who receive this evangel, so also Romans 1:17 speaks first of God. The passage speaks also indirectly of Christ, in the word "evangel" which is God's welcome message concerning His Son, and in the phrase "out of faith" which corresponds to the phrase "through the faith of Jesus Christ" in Romans 3:22. And, in third place, Romans 1:17 speaks at length about the believer in the words "for faith" and

the citation from Habakkuk. But what it says about God stands at the head of Paul's thought and shapes our understanding of what follows. The following arrangement may help to make this emphasis more visible:

1. *For in [the evangel]* **God's** righteousness is being *revealed,*
2. *out of faith*
3. *for faith, according as it is written: "Now the just one by faith shall be living."*

This same order appears in the further development of Romans 1:17 which is found in Romans 3:21,22, as follows:

1. *Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of* **God** is *manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of* **God**
2. *through Jesus Christ's faith,*
3. *for all, and on all who are believing . . . .*

It is not often this way in our experience. When we first hear and accept the evangel almost our full attention is centered on what it means for ourselves. Martin Luther's testimony regarding the effects of this very passage on his life seems to be fairly typical. It is indeed a great breakthrough to be rescued from slavery to religious works into the happiness of faith. But how few seem to be taken further into an appreciation of Jesus Christ's faith! It is Christ's faithful obedience leading to His death for sinners that will ultimately be appreciated as the real cause, the critical source, of justification, and the fullness of God's righteousness will be known and honored specifically in light of that supreme act of faith.

Our faith must not be focused on our believing, as blessed as it is to be believing and to be blessed by God on the basis of believing, rather than carrying out requirements of law. More fundamental is the faith of Jesus Christ, which is the basis of salvation gained for all and reckoned now to

us who are believing. And standing behind the evangel of justification through the faithful obedience of Christ and reckoned to those who are believing, is the glorious, personal righteousness of God.

The evangel speaks of God's work through the death of Christ on behalf of sinners. It tells of God's achievement of salvation and justification and reconciliation through the gift of His Son, but also in doing so (and this seems often to be missed) it makes God Himself known as no other work of God could ever do.

appreciation of god's righteousness

The fact that God's own, personal righteousness is made known in the evangel should help open up its glories to us and strengthen our appreciation for it. The insight into God's righteousness which the evangel provides is a guard against much wrong thinking about salvation.

The idea, often vaguely felt, and sometimes clearly expressed, that salvation is a matter of God's grace but not of His justice (which is His righteousness), is mistaken. God's grace harmonizes fully with His righteousness. In fact, because of the nature of His righteousness God's grace would not be exercised apart from a sure and righteous foundation. If the death of Christ on the cross does not provide an actual, righteous basis for salvation, then it accomplishes no more than the sacrifices of sheep and goats. Christ is the *Antitype* of the propitiatory shelter (Rom.3:25) and of the sin offering (2 Cor.5:21) and of the approach present (Eph.2:8; *cf* 5:2). The types could only be a shadow of the operation of God which really brings an end to sin and offense, enmity and infirmity and death. God's righteousness in dealing fully and finally with sin is now revealed.

Salvation is all of God, entirely based on His giving of His Son. It is His power at work. But also in God's powerful work of salvation we see God's very own attribute of righteousness at work. The joy and peace of the believer grasps with tight hold to this revelation of God.

psalm 98

As he often does in his epistles, whether consciously or unconsciously, Paul employs the language of the Hebrew Scriptures here as he introduces the theme of righteousness. In this case he particularly borrows from Psalm 98 which anticipates the marvelous works of the kingdom and the praise of Yahweh the King. The psalm speaks of a "new song" (Psa.98:1) which is one of good news, and Paul speaks of the evangel of God (Rom.1:16):

Sing to Yahweh a new song,
For He has done marvelous works;
His right hand and His holy arm
have brought His salvation.

For not ashamed am I of the evangel,
For it is God's power for salvation . . . .

But Paul is speaking of the message of Christ's death for sinners, not of Israel's delivery from their enemies and from the evil they represented. God's salvation of Israel was limited in extent. Yet indeed it was given with that absolute salvation which is announced in the evangel in view. Every divine operation of salvation is based on the truth of the faithful and welcome message that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15). None of the promises of future glory concerning Israel, and reaching to the nations of the earth as well, can be fulfilled apart from the cross of Christ. That is the real basis of all God's works of salvation and of the revelation of God's righteousness in His works of salvation. Apart from God's giving up of His Son for us all, there is no real and lasting salvation, and no possibility of a full revelation of divine righteousness.

Hence certain key words of Psalm 98:2 appear in Romans 1:17 in a wider and deeper context:

Yahweh has made known His salvation;
To the eyes of the nations
He has **revealed His righteousness**.
For in [the evangel]
God's righteousness is being revealed . . . .

How is it that God's work of the salvation of Israel, by His powerful arm, revealed His righteousness to the nations? God's righteousness was seen in His dealings with the idolatry and wickedness of the nations. Yet the psalm does not focus on the defeat of the enemy but on Israel's salvation from the enemy's influence of idolatry and wickedness. God's righteousness was not seen so much in paying back the enemy for its wickedness as in ridding Israel of that wickedness. In effect, the wickedness was taken away. Hence what the nations learned was that God's righteousness demanded the removal of evil. Irreverence and unrighteousness would not be tolerated.

To be sure, these displays of God's righteousness in His acts of deliverance of Israel from idolatry and its wicked associations, were impermanent and incomplete. In relation to the general situation of humanity when, in His patience and forbearance God does not execute His judgments on human unrighteousness, these works of temporary salvation gave a glimpse of divine righteousness to the world. But it was not the full orbed revelation that the evangel of God provides.

In addition of course, Israel itself was sinful, continually falling into idolatry and participating in corrupt practices. The salvation given them internally and externally was neither perfect nor permanent, and consequently the revelation of divine righteousness was limited.

But that is not the case with God's work of salvation

through the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ. This work deals with all unrighteousness and does so to a *finality,* as the writer to the Hebrews expresses it (*cf* Heb.10:1-14).

IRREVERENCE AND UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

Immediately after telling us that God's righteousness is revealed for our faith in the evangel, the apostle connects this revelation with the subject of God's indignation upon all the irreverence and injustice [unrighteousness] of human beings (Rom.1:18). The revelation of God's indignation is not the same as the revelation of God's righteousness, but they are associated. The victory sung about in Psalm 98 was, in fact, a revelation of divine indignation, but the psalmist does not mention that. It showed forth God's anger against irreverence and unrighteousness. But it also showed God's righteousness in that it got rid of the idolatry (relatively speaking), and this is stressed.

Now the righteousness of God in getting rid of human irreverence and unrighteousness absolutely, as revealed in the evangel, is brought forward before us in connection with His indignation against human irreverence and unrighteousness. This is by way of contrast, but that is surely not the whole purpose for Paul bringing up the matter. We will need to look at it more fully when we come to verse 18. But let it be said for now that Paul is leading us to see that God's indignation and judgment, His forbearance and giving of prerogatives, and all His operations during the current eons, find their justification in that one supreme and grand work of the giving of His Son.

LIFE'S JUSTIFYING

God deals with human irreverence and unrighteousness righteously in His judgments. But they do not lead to salvation. It is the cross of Christ that leads to salvation. And it is in that righteous dealing with sin, the death of Christ

for sinners, that all irreverence and unrighteousness are righteously eliminated. The subject of God's righteousness is appropriate within the context of God's judgments. But it is most gloriously appropriate within the context of the evangel that Christ came into the world to save sinners!

Yet if in the end there is a dualism where the unrighteousness of some people is finally dealt with only by their condemnation, and that of others by the cross of Christ, the subject of God's righteousness will invariably lead us into mysteries.

Everlasting pain and hate in hell for some people involves the permanence of irreverence and unrighteousness in God's universe. The annihilation of the irreverence and unrighteousness of some people by the irreversible destruction of the people means a permanence of loss and a permanence of sorrow for both Creator and creation.

Such theories do not seem to take thorough account of the evangel as to what it says and how it serves as a source of revelation of God's righteousness. Let us note again a truly relevant presentation of the evangel given in Romans:

"As it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

It is in the evangel that we see the righteousness of God as it never had been made known before. It is a righteousness which results in the justification of life for all mankind, so that those who were constituted sinners through Adam's disobedience will be constituted righteous through Christ's obedience. It is, in fact, a righteousness which justifies all the operations of God, His patience and mercy and choosings, as well as His acts of indignation and judgment which can now be seen to have a purpose as well as a cause. D.H.H.

THE HOUSE OF GOD AND HOUSE OF DAVID
(2 Samuel 7)

7 + **It came** to [l]**be** [t]**when the king was** [sit]**settled in his** [in]**palace, and Yahweh Him**self **had** [c]**granted** › **him rest from all his enemies**[l f] **round about,** 2 +**that the king** [l]**said to Nathan the prophet, See** [pr]**now, I** am **dwelling in** a [in]**palace of cedars,** +**while** the **coffer of the** One, **Elohim,** is **dwelling inside** ·a **sheet-**tent. 3 + **Nathan** [lsa]**replied to the king, Go** ahead, **do all** [w]**that** is **in your heart, for Yahweh** is **with you.**

4 +**But it** [lb]**was in** ·**that** same **night** +**that** the **word of Yahweh** [lb]**came to Nathan** [M]**the prophet**[c], › **saying**¯, 5 **Go and** ¯**say to My servant** › **David, Thus said Yahweh: Should you**´ **build** › **Me** a **house** for **Me to dwell** in**?** 6 **For I have not dwelt in** a **house** › **from** the **day** that **I** [c]**brought** `the **sons of Israel up**¯ **from Egypt** + **until** ·**this** ·**day,** +**but I** have [lb]**been** [go]**moving** about **in Tent** and [i] **Tabernacle.** 7 [i] **Wherever I** [go]**moved** about [i]**among all** the **sons of Israel, have I** ever **spoken** a **word** `to **one of Israel's ~judges~ whom I commissioned to shepherd** `**My people** `**Israel,** › **saying**¯**, Why have you not built for Me** a **house of cedars?** 8 **And now, thus shall you say to My servant** › **David, Thus** [sa]**speaks Yahweh of hosts: I My**self **took you from the homestead, from following the flock, to become governor over My people, over Israel.** 9 + **I shall** [b]**be with you** [i] **wherever you go, and I shall cut** off `**all your enemies**[l] **from before you.** + **I will** [d]**make for you** a **great name, like** the **name of the great** one**s who** are [i]**on** the **earth.** 10 **And I will** [pl]**provide** a [ri]**place for My people** › **Israel;** + **I will plant them** so +**that they** can **tabernacle** [u]**by them**selves **and shall no**[t]

*fr*longer be disturbed; + the sons of iniquity shall not continue to humiliate them just as *i*at the first, 11 + ›ever *f*since the day *w*when I commissioned judges| over My people Israel. + I will *c*give › you rest from all your enemies|.

+Moreover Yahweh tells › you that Yahweh shall *d*establish a royal house for you: 12 *t*When your days are |fulfilled and you lie down `with your fathers, +then I will raise up `your seed after you *w*that shall come forth from your internal parts; and I will establish `his kingdom. 13 He´ shall build a House for My Name, and I will establish `the throne of his kingdom *fr*for the eon. 14 I Myself shall become for him ›like a father; and he´ shall become for Me ›like a son. *w* *i*When he *c*sins out of depravity¯, +then I will correct him *i*with the club of men and *i*with the contagions of the sons of humanity. 15 +As for My benignity, it shall not withdraw from him as *w* I withdrew it from *wi* Saul whom I took away from before you. 16 + Your house and your kingship will be authenticated before *7*Me~*cs* *fr*for the eon; your throne, it shall become established| *fr*for the eon.

17 According to all ·these ·words and according to all ·this ·vision, so did Nathan speak to David.

18 +Then ·king David |came and |sat before Yahweh; + he |said: *a*Who am I, my Lord Yahweh, and *a*what is my house that You have brought me as far as hither? 19 +While this may be *fr*still small in Your eyes, my Lord Yahweh, +yet You are speaking *mr*also ›about Your servant's house for *f* the far future; and this is the law for humanity, my Lord Yahweh. 20 + What *fr*more could David |add ›in speaking¯ to You? +For You Yourself know `Your servant, my Lord Yahweh. 21 *i*For the *p*sake of Your word and according to Your own heart You have done `all ·this ·greatness, ›and *c*made it known¯ `to Your servant. 22 Therefore You are great, my Lord Yahweh, for there is no one like You, and there is no Elohim except You *i*among all of whom we

have heard *i*with our ears. 23 And *a*who is like Your people, like Israel, the only nation *i*on the earth *w*that Elohim went to ransom for Himself ›as a people, + to *pl*make for Himself a Name and to do for *M*them~*c* ·great and fear inspiring deeds: *7*to drive out~*c* nations and their elohim *f*before Your people *w*that You ransomed for Yourself from Egypt? 24 + You have |established `Your people Israel for Yourself ›as Your people *fr*for the eon; and You Yourself, O Yahweh, have become their › Elohim.

25 And now, *7*my Lord Yahweh~*s*, confirm *fr*for the eon the word *w*that You have spoken *on*concerning Your servant and *on*concerning his house; + do just as You have spoken. 26 + May Your Name be magnified *fr*for the eon, › saying¯, Yahweh of hosts is Elohim over Israel; and the house of Your servant David, may it become established| before You. 27 For You, O Yahweh of hosts, Elohim of Israel, You have revealed `to the ear of Your servant, › saying¯, I shall build a house for you; therefore Your servant has found courage `in his heart to pray to You `with ·this ·prayer. 28 And now, my Lord Yahweh, You are He Who is the One, Elohim; +as for Your words, they *lb*are trustworthy; and You are speaking to Your servant `of ·this ·goodness. 29 + Be disposed now and bless `the house of Your servant ›that it may come to be¯ before You for the eon; for You, my Lord Yahweh, You have spoken. +So *f*by Your blessing let the house of Your servant be blessed ›for the eon.

THE EVENTS OF THE SEVENTH chapter occur during a peaceful interval in David's reign. They are not likely to have taken place immediately after the events of chapter six, but the events of both chapters are tied together by a common theme. 1 Chronicles 16 fits well between these chapters, and it records the establishment of music and praise as part of the regular worship of Israel at the taber-

nacle and places of sacrifice. That was a significant change. 1 Chronicles 17 is parallel to 2 Samuel 7.

David took time to reflect on his success when he "was settled in his palace" (2 Sam.7:1) and found himself dissatisfied that he should be enjoying the comfort of a permanent palace "while the coffer of the One, Elohim, is dwelling inside a sheet-tent" (v. 2). Perhaps David was thinking of Yahweh's instruction to Moses that a central place would be established for worship and the abiding of Yahweh's Name when the nation was settled in peace (Deut.12:10-14).

David shared his desire to build a temple for Yahweh with the prophet Nathan, but before any action could be taken, God revealed to Nathan that David was not to build a temple. In Yahweh's gentle reprimand of David He said, "you will not build a permanent house for Me, but I will build a permanent house for you." The permanent house for David would be a dynasty in which David's descendants would rule Israel when God's promises to that nation would be fulfilled. And David's Seed would indeed build a house for God.

SETTLED IN GRATITUDE

David was humbled and filled with gratitude by God's message. There is an interesting repetition of words in this chapter. The word "settled" in verse one is the same verb as "sat" in verse eighteen. Sitting in a palace of cedar, David's heart was yearning for God. But sitting in a tent, praying before God, David was praising and giving thanks, overwhelmed with God's provision for him.

The revelation that God would bless all nations through Abraham (Gen.12:1-3), the revelation that Judah would be chosen to rule, even over his elder brethren (Gen.49:10; Num.24:17), the passing by of the judges and the rejection of Saul's house all showed that God had chosen and

directed a channel through which all the promised blessings would flow. (These thoughts are present in David's psalm in 1 Chronicles 16.) And David was a key turning point in that channel. David's house would build a House for Yahweh, but not until Yahweh had built David's house. Herein lies a tremendous truth. God's glory shines brightest through His blessing of those who will be honoring Him. Humanity is dependent upon God for everything, even the revelation necessary to recognize the truth and to honor God. God blesses us first, before we can bless Him.

This chapter does not tell why David was not allowed to build the temple. Other passages give the reason that David was a man of war, and thus unsuited to build God's house of peace (1 Chron.28:3; 1 Kings 5:3). But in 2 Samuel 7 this thought is unmentioned, leaving the reader with the thoughts that the God Who went to Israel and brought them out of Egypt and brought them through the wilderness and raised up leaders for them will also raise up the builder of His temple. God is doing all these things from start to finish. And so David fittingly basks in the assurance that God is performing all.

THE TRUE TEMPLE

David's son, Solomon, would build a temple. But God's message to David went far beyond Solomon to the Son of David, Who is more than Solomon (Matt.12:42; Luke 11:31), and Greater than the sanctuary (Matt.12:6). Christ will fulfill this prophecy completely. The book of Hebrews verifies this when it quotes the fourteenth verse, "For to whom of the messengers said He at any time, . . . I shall be to Him for a Father and He shall be to Me for a Son?" (Heb.1:5).

In the study of 2 Samuel 6 it was noted that the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem was typical of the coming of God to man in peace, and establishing that Jerusalem, or, pos-

session of peace. Chapter seven amplifies that thought. In order that the place of worship and communion with God be established in peace, the promised Seed must come.

The theme of God's dwelling place is expressed in a variety of ways in the later prophets, and in the Greek scriptures as well. Paul writes of "God's house, which is the ecclesia of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth" (1 Tim.3:15); ". . . the solid foundation of God stands . . . a great house . . ." (2 Tim.2:19-21); ". . . being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the capstone of the corner being Christ Jesus Himself, in Whom the entire building, being connected together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord: in Whom you, also, are being built together for God's dwelling place, in spirit" (Eph.2:20-22).

Whether the context speaks of Israel or the body of Christ, the use of the terms build, building, house, and temple are used throughout with the common thought that God's chosen ones have the spirit of God within them—they are the dwelling of God. And when God is All in all, the unbelieving will have been "built together" as well.

Since the ultimate fulfillment of 2 Samuel 7 is realized with God dwelling in people, it is readily seen that even the building of Solomon's temple was only an interim fulfillment, serving as a type of that to come. The true fulfillment is dependent on the homing of God's spirit in believers. Therefore the fulfillment could not precede the sacrifice of Christ, the approval of Christ's sacrifice, and the coming of God's spirit on that basis (Acts 2:32,33; John 7:37-39; 14:16-20,26; Rom.1:1-6; 8:1-11).

The dedication of Solomon's temple was a most outstanding celebration of the festival of Tabernacles (1 Kings 5-8; 2 Chron.4-7). Typically it celebrated the chosen ones being finally home in God's promises, and God being home in His people.

J. Philip Scranton

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 After the Deluge
67 Yahweh Sets Up Covenants
71 The Extension of David's Kingdom
75 Faith and Righteousness
83 "What Must Occur Swiftly";
"Even While in Bonds"
94 Through the Sacred Scriptures

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EDITORIAL

THE COUNSEL of God's will! God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will!

This is a message from Paul that is especially vital to us these days. Not that there have been any days since the apostle wrote it that it was not important, but this word definitely resounds to the needs of believers today. Unrest and war, insubjection and irreverence are all with us and multiply along with schemes for security and stability that directly lead away from reliance on God and real happiness and peace. So also, many are clinging to religious deceptions without knowing God at all as He reveals Himself in Christ Jesus.

But that is in accord with the counsel of God's will. God intends to get what He wants, and all that is and all that happens ultimately contributes to that goal.

That is the astounding claim of Ephesians 1:11.

The apostle had just written about the *blessedness* of God. We think and speak highly of God in that He blesses us in our Lord Jesus Christ. He chooses us in Him, and God sees us as we will be: holy and flawless. God loves us by designating us beforehand for the place of a son, through the blood of His beloved Son. Grace, deliverance, "forgiveness" (used here figuratively to express God's personal love in the work of justification and conciliation through the death of Christ), these all enter in the lives of believers today, in accord with the counsel of God's will.

Then Paul writes of the glory of God which God wills to manifest. It is expressed in terms of the secret of God's will, to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ. With this in view the apostle tells of the place God has purposed for us in these completing operations which are all centered in Christ. And

he continues through Ephesians chapter three to expound on these blessings God is giving us in Christ. All of these are in accord with the counsel of God's will.

But our present experiences, both pleasant and hard, must also come under this heading. For Paul, there was prison and the need to conduct an embassy in a chain (Eph.4:1; 6:20). For us there is need for a worthy walk in humility and meekness and love. There are fiery arrows of the wicked one directed specifically our way. They come against us in the midst of the general dangers and troubles mentioned above. But they are pointed at the believer to weaken faith and growth in the realization of God.

Are these also in accord with the counsel of God's will? Indeed they are. God has intended that our present lives be blessed with faith and assurance while all the time external opposition comes against us. This is so that His goodness and love and grace and glory be realized in full against the background of present evils. He has counseled these evils and provided the protection of truth, of righteousness reckoned to us, of the evangel of peace, of faith and salvation and of His written Word, to extinguish these fiery arrows of doubt and fear and discouragement.

As for us in preparing this magazine, in working at the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, in hearing of the struggles of fellow believers with whom we come in contact, and in dealing with our own personal frustrations, we encounter many things that are not our will. Nor would we have ever counseled them, not knowing the value that God has purposed to gain from them later.

But that does not matter. All that matters is that our experiences are part of God's operations and that they are in accord with the counsel of His will.

God is operating. He is operating all. And He is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will.

D.H.H.

AFTER THE DELUGE

THE PRESENT wicked eon began with a portrayal of its most important and most dastardly deed, the sacrifice of the Son of God. Noah offered up *ascent* offerings of every kind of clean animal.

THE ASCENT OFFERING

Such a sacrifice had not even been alluded to before this time. It was not a sin offering such as would have restored Cain to fellowship with Yahweh. Neither was it a *present* offering, such as Abel offered to gain access into the presence of Yahweh, for Noah already walked with Elohim. It was the response to the great deliverance God has wrought. It was entirely and only an act of *worship,* the odor of which rose and affected the heart of God, so that He was most favorably inclined toward humanity when this eon began.

GENESIS 8:20-22

20 +**Then Noah** l**built** an **altar to Yahweh** 7**Elohim**0**;** + **he** l**took** some f**of every** c**clean** domestic **beast and** some f**of every** c**clean** f**flyer and** e**offered** l**up ascent** offerings **i****on** the **altar.** 21 + **Yahweh** 7**Elohim**0 l**smelled** `**the fragrant smell, and Yahweh** 7**Elohim**0 l**said** ›**in His heart: Not** l**anymore** will **I** › **maledict**– f**again** `**the ground** i**on** p**account of** c**humanity, for** the **bent of the human heart** is **evil from its youth. And not** l**anymore** will **I** › **smite**– f**again** `**every living** 7**flesh**0**, just as I have done.** 22 In the **future,** for **all** the **days of the earth, seed**time **and harvest,** + **cold and warmth,** + **summer and winter,** + **day and night shall not cease.**

NOAH BUILT AN ALTAR

The first *altar* of which we read in God's Word immediately followed the first great catastrophe which drowned almost all of mankind in destruction. Perhaps most of us would have looked for the earliest symbol of worship amidst the luxurious lodges of Eden, where there was no lack of soulish satisfaction. Later, Abel did offer a *present* offering, but now Noah offers up ascent offerings in recognition of the great salvation which he had experienced. This shows that soulish blessings, without a background of evil, do not lead to worship, but deliverance through disaster is the best incentive to thankful adoration. This shows the need and value of the evil eons to prepare men's hearts to worship their Deliverer. Other sacrifices may have been offered before the deluge, but this is not revealed, so is not the basis of truth.

The ascent offering, usually known as the "burnt" offering in our versions, was wholly for the Subjector's delectation. Noah's offerings were a type and fore-shadowing of that future Sacrifice which will remove every barrier between humanity and the heart of God, so He begins to take away some of the obstructions which sin had raised. When Adam sinned, the ground was cursed. The effect of that was the growth of thorns and weeds (Gen.3:18).

Even as the sacrifice of the Son altered God's attitude toward the whole race in the spiritual sphere, so His heart was touched by Noah's ascent offering, which resulted in blessing in the physical domain. We already have a foretaste of the conciliation in the realm of nature. The ground is beneficent to all alike. The rain and the rainbow appear to the unjust as well as the just. One fact had been established in the previous eon, and needed no further proof. The heart of humanity is evil from its youth. There would be no further slighting of the ground than that which followed Adam's transgression (3:17-19). Neither would God wipe out all flesh by another deluge.

The Scriptures know no artificial seasons, such as Spring and Autumn. In them we have more useful divisions, such as seedtime and harvest, cold and warmth, summer and winter. It has been suggested that these periods divided the year as follows: *Seedtime* lasted, roughly speaking, from late October to early December, after the early rain had softened the ground, while *harvest* lasted from Passover in April to the feast of Ingathering, or Pentecost, fifty days later in May or June. *Cold* came about February and March, and heat followed harvest, and lasted till August. *Summer* was from August to October, when fruit was gathered. *Winter* came about December and January. These were self-evident, and practical divisions, much more apt and helpful than our somewhat arbitrary seasons of Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. In the Greek Scriptures the word for Winter does not imply cold, as with us, but means tempest also (Acts 27:20), and a winter brook. The Hebrew watercourse seldom has much water except in winter. It is called the *wet* season in southern California.

Not only is the curse not to increase, but the deluge is not to be repeated. Not only had all living flesh been smitten, but, for a whole year, no seed was sown or harvest reaped. These are to continue so long as this earth lasts. After that heaven and earth shall be passing by (Matt.24:35). There will be no night in the new earth (Rev.22:5), so this promise is evidently limited to the present world.

GENESIS CHAPTER NINE

9 [+] **Elohim** [l]**blessed** `**Noah and** `**his sons and** [l]**said to them: Be fruitful and increase,** [+] **fill** `**the earth** [7]**and subdue it**[0]**.** 2 [+] The **fear of you and** the **dismay** due to **you shall** [b]**come on every** wild **animal of the earth and on every flyer of the heavens,** [i]**on every**thing [w]**that is moving** on **the ground, and**

[i]on all the **fishes of the sea; they are given in**to **your hand.** 3 **Every moving** animal **[w]that** is **alive, shall [b]be yours for food; as** with the **green herbage, I give to you `every**thing. 4 **[y]Only flesh [i]with its soul, its blood, you** must **not [l]eat.**

5 + **[y]However I shall require `your blood for your souls; from** the **hand of every** wild **animal I shall require it, and from the hand of humanity. From** the **hand of** each **man,** as regards **his fellow** man, **I shall require `the soul of** a **human.** 6 Whoever **sheds[l] the blood of** a **human, [i]by** a **human his blood shall be shed; for in** the **image of Elohim He has [d]made `humanity.**

7 +**As** for **you, be fruitful and increase, swarm in** the **earth and [7]hold sway~ [i]over it.**

8 +**Then Elohim [l]said to Noah and to his sons** `with **him, › saying¯:** 9 **And** as for **Me, [bd]now I** am **setting up `My covenant** `with **you and** `with **your seed after you,** 10 + `with **every ·living soul [w]that** was `with **you, [i] flyer, [i]** domestic **beast and [i] every** wild **animal of the earth** that was **`with you, [f] all** that came **forth[l]** from **the ark, › every animal of the earth.** 11 **And I will confirm `My covenant** `with **you:**

+ **Nev**er **[fr]again shall all flesh be cut** off **[f]by the waters of** a **deluge, and nev**er **[fr]again shall** there **[b]be** a **deluge to wreck the [7]entire[0] earth.**

12 **Elohim +further [l]said: This** is the **sign of the covenant [w]that I** am **giving, between Me and [bt] you and [bt] every living soul [w]that** was `with **you, for eonian generations.** 13 **`My bow I have [g]set in** a **cloud, and it will [b]be for** a **sign of** the **covenant between Me and [bt] the earth.** 14 **And it will [b]occur [i]when I make** the sky **cloudy¯ over the earth** with **clouds and [7]My[0] bow appears in** a **cloud,** 15 +**then I will remember `My covenant [w] between Me and [bt] you and [bt] every living soul [i]among all flesh,** so +**that nev**er **[fr]again shall the waters become ›** a **deluge to wreck all flesh.** 16 +**When [7]My[0] bow comes** to **be in** the **cloud,** + **I will see it to remember** the **eonian covenant**

between Elohim and [bt] every living soul [i]among all flesh which is **on the earth.**

17 +**So Elohim [l]said to Noah: This** is the **sign of the covenant [w]that I have set up between Me and [bt] all flesh which** is **on the earth.**

18 + The **sons of Noah** `who came **forth[l] from the ark [lb]were Shem,** + **Ham and Japheth (+As** for **Ham, he** became the **father of Canaan.)** 19 **These three** were **Noah's sons, and from these the entire earth** became **¯inhabited.**

20 + **Noah,** a **man of the ground, [l]started +to [l]plant** a **vineyard.** 21 +**When he [l]drank** some **[f]of the wine,** + **he** became **[l]drunk and [l]exposed** him**self inside his tent.** 22 +**When Ham,** the **father of Canaan, [l]saw** `the **nakedness of his father, [7]he** came **[l]forth[0] and [l]told › his two brothers [i] outside.** 23 +**Then Shem and Japheth [l]took `raiment** + **[l]placed** it **[on]against both their back**s, **and, [l]walking** in **[af]backward,** + **they [l]covered their father's `nakedness.** +**While their faces** were turned **[af]away,** + **they** did **not see their father's nakedness.**

24 +**When Noah [l]awoke from his wine and [l]realized `[w]what his ·youngest son had done to him,** 25 + **he [l]said: Cursed[l]** be **Canaan;** a **slave of slaves shall he become for his brothers.** 26 **And he [l][sa]added: Blessed[l]** be **Yahweh,** the **Elohim of Shem, and let Canaan become** a **slave for him.** 27 **May Elohim [c]make [l]room for Japheth;** + **may he tabernacle in** the **tents of Shem, and let Canaan become** a **slave for him.**

28 + **Noah [l]lived after the deluge 350 years.** 29 +**So all** the **days of Noah came** to **[l]be 950 years;** +**then he [l]died.**

TERRESTRIAL FEAR

Noah and his sons received a charge similar to that given to Adam (1:28; 9:1-7). They were to be fruitful, and increase and fill the earth and subdue it. But, to Adam, nothing is said of *fear*. The animals came fearlessly before him in order to be named. Yet, after the deluge, there is a change,

so that they are dismayed by man's presence (9:2). There is an estrangement between the animals and their subjector, humanity, even as there is between humanity and its Subjector. One is the sign and symptom of the other. It is not fitting that all the beasts should be friendly and obey their subjector, the human race, when it is itself estranged and hostile to its Subjector.

FLESH FOOD

There seems to be no definite indication that flesh food was eaten before the flood. After Adam sinned, seed food of trees and herbs were given to humanity, and green herbage to the animals (Gen.1:30). After the deluge, every moving animal was added to human diet, even as the green herbage was before (Gen.9:3). But there was one restriction because animals have blood, which is their source of consciousness, sensation and feeling. The sap of plants does not seem to circulate, and has no sensation. Neither has flesh without the blood. But, so long as an animal has blood in its veins, it can feel, it can suffer, and should not be eaten. The blood should be drained off as soon as possible, as was done with the sacrifices in Israel.

When Cain killed his brother, the Subjector said, "The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground" (Gen.4: 10). Literally, Abel's blood probably did go into the ground, but it made no audible sound. Rather the *suffering* he endured appealed to the Subjector for judgment. As a recompense, Cain was sentenced to prolonged *hardship* in providing himself with food. The ground had already been cursed because of Adam's transgression, so Cain probably had a prolonged struggle to provide himself with sustenance. He realized that he deserved to die, and feared that someone would kill him. So he received a sign so that his blood should *not* be shed (Gen.4:8-16). The significance of this phrase is usually overlooked. To shed

blood does not merely denote death, but implies inability to suffer. Cain was to remain in a state in which he could feel the effect of his judgment.

In this eon, however, Cain would not have received the protecting sign. On the contrary, someone would be appointed to *shed his* blood. *Now* the Subjector requires blood for the souls of those whose blood is shed. "The shedder of the blood of a human, by a human is his blood to be shed for in the image of the Subjector has He made humanity" (Gen.9:6). The animals were not made in the likeness of the Subjector, so they may be killed if the blood is drained from them to prevent suffering. In this eon the judgment of a murderer should be left to the proper authorities where these exist.

It should be noted that this requirement does not read he who takes a *life, his life* shall be taken, or that the murderer shall be *murdered,* or *hanged,* or *electrocuted,* but his *blood* is to be *shed* or *soul* shall be taken for *soul* (AV *life,* Deut.19:21). There is no indication of *painful* punishment. As with other animals which are killed, especially the sacrifices offered on the altars in Israel, there is no torture or torment. As to sacrificial animals, indeed, there is no call to punish them, for they surely do not deserve to suffer. But it is the same with humans. Even if they do deserve to suffer, it is not man's place to inflict it, for such a penalty belongs to God alone, Who will deal justly with such cases after their trial before the great white throne. All that was delegated to human hands was to painlessly let out their blood. But, as in almost everything committed to humanity, it has become inhuman in our hands.

If every animal slain for food suffered prolonged agony in order to be an exact type of our great Sacrifice, what an awful shadow that would cast on the character of the Subjector! As it is not absolutely essential to the type, so it is also used to teach another side, that is, God's pity and

compassion. He requires the blood to be *poured out* when animals are killed.

Let us note carefully that Christ's *death* was due to the absence of *spirit,* yet brings us *life.* His *suffering,* however, is connected with *soul,* and brings us *blessing.* They are closely associated, yet each has its own special sphere in God's great plan, and we should carefully keep them apart, when referring to these, the principal features of our salvation.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is not named or described, but may be identified further by the effects produced by eating its fruit. Instead of prolonging life indefinitely, its fatal fruit reversed the vital process, so that the life lessened and led to suffering and ultimate dissolution. The immediate effect seems to have been very marked outwardly in the appearance of Adam and Eve's bodies, but the process lasted nearly a thousand years in some cases before the flood. Now, life needs to be continually prolonged by killing and assimilating the vital force of other living forms. Since then the human race survives only by robbing the lower forms of life of their animation. They must die that we may live a little longer.

Many have objected to the death penalty, on various grounds, but seldom is its true basis understood. The divine sentence is usually ignored, especially the manner in which it should be carried out. The foundation of human government in this eon is found in this basic regulation, or else there would be no security for human life, as is the case when there is no governmental restraint.

The reason given for this rule is the fact that the human is the *Image* of the Subjector, Elohim. Subjection is now put into the hands of humanity as a whole, by being given the right to shed the blood of one who, like Cain, is guilty of this same crime. This seems to be the basis of human government in this present world. It is in contrast to the

patriarchal rule exercised by Adam and his firstborn sons, who were delegated no such means of enforcing their authority. Consequently they lost all control of their subjects. Now man-slayers are severed from their fellows by death, but their real judgment awaits their appearance before the great white throne, where the great Judge of all will deal out corrective judgment.

GENESIS 9:7

The popular version of Gen.9:7 reads, And you, be ye fruitful and *multiply:* bring forth abundantly in the earth and *multiply* therein. The attentive reader will note that the word *multiply* is repeated. There are times when a repetition is helpful, especially when a thought needs to be emphasized. But here it seems weak. There is an evident parallelism, as follows:

Be ye fruitful and *multiply.*
Bring forth abundantly in the earth and *multiply.*

In such doubled statements, the second line usually varies the thought much more than this. Here all of the words express nearly the same idea. The AV often renders *bring forth abundantly,* by *creep.* It denotes *motion*. We translate it uniformly *roam.* Noah and his sons were not to settle in one spot, as Cain did, and as was done a little later, at Babel, but to spread out over the surface of the earth.

One of the early Greek versions has the equivalent of *sway over* instead of the last *multiply,* making this a confirmation of the charge given to humanity in the beginning (1:28). The differences between the Hebrew stems (*rd* or *rb*) is very small. In this way this charge to Noah and his sons agrees closely with the parallel passage, and should read:

"And you, be fruitful and increase,
And *roam* in the earth and *sway* in it."

The subjection of humanity by Adam and his successors

was an utter failure. The *form* was ideal, for the Subjector, *as Father,* will finally succeed in bringing all beneath His beneficent sway (1 Cor.15:28). But it was evidently too lenient, for even the murders were not adjudicated. So, after the deluge, a different system of government was instituted, in which murderers are executed, and those rule who have the inherent or delegated authority to restrain evil. Instead of one man at the head of the whole family, it was grouped into smaller units, which were scattered over the earth.

Humans, before the flood, under independent, lawless conditions, became so wicked that they were better off dead than alive, so God, in mercy, destroyed nearly all. In order to prevent a repetition, government was instituted, so that such wicked creatures would be killed off, to deter others of like inclination. But rule involves inequalities, the superior and the subordinate, the sovereign and the subject, and demands *subjection* of all but a few of Adam's descendants.

Many attempts have been made to avoid subjection, or at least to give no appearance of being under restraint. But believers in the Bible are favored with a foretaste of the future, and already know that man's day will culminate in the most absolute of despotisms, under the man of sin.

Only the man of faith possesses the key to this problem. He looks to the far future and sees that the ideal is not self-determination, which may degenerate into libertinism. Rather, it demands *subjection to El, the Subjector. The grand and glorious goal, not only of mankind but of its Head, is subjection to God.* This reveals to us the reason why we are called upon to be subject to others. God has created the inequalities in the world, in our social and ecclesiastical order, that we may be taught, by many examples and experiences, the holy and wholesome truth that *He is the Supreme Subjector, and there is no lasting bliss possible so long as we are not subject to Him.* This is the great lesson the present social *dis*order should teach us. In the next eon the world will be taught the positive complement of this, by the blessings enjoyed under the iron club of Messiah.

In these last days the insubordination everywhere, even under the restraint of human rule, is fast creating a condition like that before the deluge, so God is about to mercifully interfere by means of the sore judgments of the great indignation, and once more wipe off a fifth of humanity from the face of the earth. Among other things, humans are incontrollable. Even children are stubborn to parents as never before (2 Tim.3:2,3). Far worse than that, in the ecclesia novices defy their elders, even when the Scriptures demand that they be accorded double honor (1 Tim.5:17). The saints surely should excel all others in being subject to the superior authorities (Rom.13:1), wives to husbands (Eph.5:22), slaves to owners (Titus 2:9), and, in general, to one another (Eph.5:21).

LESSON OF THE COVENANTS

Seven principal covenants are used to teach mankind its own sinfulness and helplessness, and its need of God's power and grace. The first one was made with Noah, to preserve earth's living souls through the deluge. The second is with humanity and all soul life, not to repeat the flood, and is signified by the rainbow. The third was with Abram, and leased him the land; the fourth, with Abraham, assured him a seed, signified by circumcision. The fifth, with Israel in the wilderness, gave them the law, which they could not keep. The sixth will be a "new" covenant with them, to be fulfilled in the future, in the presence of their Messiah. The seventh is our spiritual "covenant," today. The lesson they teach is this: *God alone is able to keep a covenant*. When it is left to human efforts, it fails utterly. This long lesson of human impotence is one of

the main means of preparing mankind for subjection at the consummation.

The dictionary defines a covenant as an agreement between *two or more* persons or parties. In theology it seems to refer to the promises of God, with *conditions to be fulfilled* by man, such as *obedience, repentance, faith,* etc. According to this, the first covenant God made can hardly be called a covenant at all, for there were no stipulations whatever, simply instructions. I am convinced that it is intentionally called a "Covenant," in order to reveal the vital feature of all covenants made, with Deity, in contrast to human covenants. God can, and does fulfill His side, but, that which depends on man, he cannot and does not fulfill, unless empowered by God's holy spirit. This is further illustrated by the other early covenants, in which the human element is given its true place. Not so was the covenant under the law which Israel was supposed to keep, for they failed utterly.

A COVENANT OF PRESERVATION

Before Noah or the animals entered the ark, God made a one-sided covenant with him alone (Gen.6:18). No particulars are given. Simply that he was to go into the ark with his family and the animals, with the implication that they would be preserved alive through the flood. As this is the very first "covenant" mentioned in divine revelation, it deserves exceptional consideration, especially as it concerns *the preservation of all soul life.* There are no stipulations, no if's or shall's. That Noah and the animals should enter the ark is taken for granted. Is not this a precious foreshadowing of the final preservation of all humanity (1 Tim.4:10)? The fact that *all later life,* in this eon and beyond, *was saved then,* in the ark, is an intimation of the eventual salvation of God, Who wills that all mankind be saved (1 Tim.2:4). The ark is a marvelous type of Christ and

salvation in Him. All covenants made by Elohim alone are really one-sided, like this. When stipulations are added for others to fulfill, there is *temporary* failure, but God eventually carries it out through the power of His spirit.

THE RAINBOW COVENANT

No rain fell on the earth before the deluge. We read that "Yahweh Elohim does not bring rain in the earth . . . yet humidity is *ascending* from the earth and irrigates all the surface of the ground" (Gen.2:5,6). The conditions which cause rain and storms are abnormal, and are due largely to changes in the atmosphere, of which there is no record before the flood. The second time rain is mentioned, and the first time it occurs, it is used to produce the deluge. Yahweh Elohim said, *I* (emphatic) will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights (7:4). Since then, ever after the deluge, this condition remains, so that we continue to have rain, and even local floods. So the question arises, Is there not continual danger of another deluge? There is not, for God alone has taken the responsibility that it shall not occur.

SIGN OF THE RAINBOW

The visible evidence of the *first* covenant with Noah is the presence of soul life on the earth at the present time. Each one of us is a token of God's preservation in the past and an intimation of His salvation in the future. But God has given humanity much more than that. He has made a covenant, not only with Noah, but all flesh, his descendents, as well as all forms of soul life. This salvation is not confined to those who believe, but includes all mankind. Therefore God condescends to give a visible token of this covenant, where all can see, and continues it throughout two eons, until such an assurance will no longer be needed. It is a *sign,* therefore has *significance.* But how few know

its marvelous meaning, or worship in its presence! Every rain should remind us of the gradual disintegration of the earth. Yet the rainbow, which often accompanies it, assures us that this will never reach the proportions of a deluge. The very agent of destruction has now been made the bearer of the good tidings that it will never occur again!

As the rainbow is due to the refraction of sunlight by myriads of globules of water in the atmosphere, it is closely connected with clouds and rain. The water, during the previous eon, was *above* and *beneath* the atmosphere, not *in* it as at present. So they probably had a very dry climate with no excess of moisture in the air. The AV says that a "mist" went up and watered the face of the ground (Gen.2:6). But that would have been impossible. It was moisture from *below* which was drawn *up* to the surface by capillary attraction. As there were no clouds or rain, there could have been no rainbow. But, at the deluge, the crevices of the heavens were opened (7:11), so that the waters above the atmosphere came down through them, and caused the forty days' rain. So long as the water is stored *in* the atmosphere, and not *above* it, there seems to be no possibility of another deluge. The rainbow assures us that the moisture is *suspended* in the air.

Who has not admired the beautiful colored arch that God has given us as a sign of His covenant with all flesh on the earth! But who fully realizes and responds in his heart to the grand and glorious assurance which it conveys? It transforms the very element once used in man's destruction, into a glorious promise of future preservation! Earth-dwellers have been threatened with many calamities, mostly from the hands of man. They have suffered from wars and famines and even from minor local floods, but never has there been the fear of another deluge. On the contrary, rain is usually a great blessing to many areas of the earth. In the coming kingdom it will be a boon which

will be withheld from those nations who do not send up their quota to worship at Jerusalem (Zech.14:17).

The rainbow is said to be an "everlasting" covenant between God and every living soul of all flesh which is on the earth, in our popular versions. But this implies the need of such an assurance forever. When the eons are past, there will be no possibility of another deluge, so such a covenant will have lost all significance. It is only during the eons that it can apply. Therefore it is more correctly called an *eonian* covenant.

NOAH AND CANAAN

In the beginning of the human race, *all* sinned in Adam, so his sentence extended impartially to everyone. At the commencement of this eon, however, Noah was *not sentenced at all*, not even for his drunkenness. What a contrast with Adam! He and his posterity were severely condemned. Noah himself was not. Only a small fraction of his family was cursed. Yet he was not affected! And he is the *first man to be called righteous!* (Gen.6:9).

Indeed, he is reckoned with the three most righteous men of the Hebrew Scriptures, Noah, Daniel and Job (Ezek.14:14). Why was he not cursed, only a young man who merely saw him and was not drunk? Because Noah's failure was needed by God in His eonian operations, and will result in great good to Israel and the race. He was not tolerated, or forgiven, but justified. Those who have God's spirit and act in harmony with God's purpose, as revealed in His Word, are justified because it results in great good. They do not take advantage of it like those who lack God's spirit would do. We never read of Noah being drunk again.

God foretold the future of *four divisions* of the race, to accord with their behavior when Noah himself sinned. To put it briefly but very broadly, his sons who covered him will be blessed. The son of the son who exposed him

will be cursed. The other sons of Ham are ignored (Gen. 9:25). Canaan is thrice cursed, while Shem and Japheth are blessed. In this eon, in dealing with the earth, Yahweh is blessed as the Elohim of Shem, which includes the nation of Israel. In this way we are gradually prepared for the bulk of revelation which concerns the chosen nation, which comes from Adam, Noah and Shem, through Abram, Isaac and Jacob.

There is no record of the curse of Canaan being carried out personally, but it is often referred to in the history of his descendents.

It seems that, when the lands were distributed in the days of Peleg, Canaan settled in the land called by his name. They were there in the days of the patriarchs and still remained when Israel entered the land under Joshua. Thus even this decadent stock was used, in the plan of Yahweh, in training the chosen nation for their future part in subjecting the nations to Elohim. The rest of Ham's descendants settled further south. It seems that their thrust to the north was contrary to God's ultimate plan, so they were destroyed by Israel.

In view of Abraham's place in God's plan, that, through him and his seed, the nations would be subjected, it is helpful to see that he was consulted when Sodom and Gomorrah were judged. These were Canaanite cities which had followed the immorality of Canaan too far to be allowed to continue. So the matter was left to Abram to decide in such a way as to win his approval of their destruction, and to teach him the ways of the Subjector in this eon. In line with this, Abram is told that the depravity of the Amorites would not be repaid until the return of Israel from Egypt (Gen.15:16). Then it was that Israel was used to judge the Canaanites. Such will be Israel's function in dealing with the nations throughout the next eon also.

A. E. Knoch

YAHWEH SETS UP COVENANTS

THE FIRST two covenants set up by Yahweh speak of His deliverance and protection of the human race at a point of its extreme degradation and corruption. When humanity's course was decisively downward Yahweh *raised* these covenants, the first before the deluge, and the second afterwards.

The deluge was clearly deserved; there is no question of its justice. It is the preservation of the race through Noah and the pledge not to repeat a flood of that sort again that seem contrary to strict demands of right judgment. Yet these actions cannot be evidence of divine weakness or ignorance or unrighteousness. It must be that God knows a way in which the demands of righteousness are upheld, but still the race can be saved and fulfill its purpose in the image and likeness of God (Gen.1:27,28).

And so He does, as we are learning. In the death of His beloved Son on behalf of sinful humanity, God deals righteously with all sin toward the realization of His will to save all mankind.

YAHWEH'S ACTIONS IN GENESIS SIX

The grace which Noah found in the eyes of Yahweh (Gen.6:8) distinguished him radically from the rest of mankind. Yahweh *saw* humanity and *said* He would *wipe them out* (Gen.6:5-7). He *saw* that the earth was ruined and *said* He would *ruin* all human beings who were on the earth (Gen.6:11-13). He would *bring* a deluge of water on the earth to *wreck* all flesh under the heavens which had the spirit of life in it (Gen.6:17).

The conspicuous acts of God in Genesis 6 are wiping out and ruining and bringing a deluge and wrecking. These affected everyone on the earth . . . except Noah (and his immediate family), and every living thing except those which were in the ark. Instead of wiping out these few along with all the rest, Yahweh set up His covenant with them (Gen.6:18-20).

RAISING A COVENANT

The root meaning of the verb translated "set up" in Genesis 6:18 is *rise*, or *raise*. It is used first in Genesis 4:8 where we read that Cain "rose [up]" against his brother. God's acts of ruin stand in contrast to His act of raising up a covenant. (The particular grammatical form of the verb used here signifies: *cause*-rise; Yahweh caused a covenant to rise.) The very visible acts involving the entire earth and its inhabitants were downward, but this one private word of promise, given, in God's grace, to one chosen individual, was upward.

One word of promised good from God is more far reaching in significance than all His proclamations of condemnation. He causes it to rise above all the declarations of ruin, and ultimately it will be appreciated to the glory of God by all who deceased in the deluge. This is because the covenant of deliverance which Yahweh set up with Noah concerned Christ.

A PLACE OF LIFE

As we find the cause of this upward establishment of the covenant in God, so also we find the cause of deliverance into life in the operations of God. Noah and his family and the animals with them were to come into the ark in order, as the Hebrew expresses it, to be "*caused* to live" (CV: "stay alive," or "preserve alive") through the deluge (Gen.6:18-20). But this coming into the ark, and the

human acts of building it and gathering the animals, rested entirely on Yahweh holding to His word. Noah exhibited extraordinary faith-obedience, but it all must be traced to that grace from Yahweh which he found. In the end the preservation of these few human beings would be meaningless apart from their eventual vivification *in Christ*, Who was to die for their sins (*cf* 1 Cor.15:3,22).

Consequently, the ark was a type of Christ, in Whom there is deliverance and vivification. This first covenant of the Scriptures foreshadows that upwardly-directed word of the glory of the happy God which declares that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:11,15). "For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and mankind, a Man, Christ Jesus, Who is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all" (1 Tim.2:5,6).

God carried out His words of condemnation, but not completely. He carried them out along with an act of grace that not only revealed there was an "escape clause" in the divine sentence of ruin but also would lead to the condemnation of all condemnation. God carried out His word of condemnation, but He also carried out His word of deliverance and life. That word of life shines out today in the evangel concerning Jesus Christ which it pictured. It still does not dominate the scene; but in the midst of present evil and violence it dominates the hearts of the believer. And it will be realized by all in God's own time.

A COVENANT WITH ALL LIVING SOULS

After the deluge Yahweh *raised up* a second covenant (Gen.9:8-17). Unlike the first, it directly and continually becomes a blessing to all humanity and all living souls during the present wicked eons. But it would never have been set up at all had it not been for the first covenant that directly involved only a chosen few. First God gives prominence to His promise of deliverance for an "elect"

remnant, and then He gives prominence to His promise of protection for all. The Scriptures have much to say about the chosen few, but they are not silent about the all.

However, as with the first covenant, this second one cannot have any lasting significance apart from Christ. In themselves these covenants do not reflect the true glory of God's goodness. We must see them in relation to the evangel concerning Jesus Christ if we are fully to understand why Yahweh raises them high above His other words. The salvation of the chosen could never be justified or made permanent without the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, of which it is a type. So also, the relatively narrow and confined blessing for all in protecting them from destruction by a worldwide deluge is dependant for ultimate meaning on the cross.

All of God's operations of mercy and patience in delay of condemnation, as well as the execution of judgment itself, are like His works of favor and rescue in this one major respect: They all depend fully on that greatest of all divine operations which is the key to all His other works, *His giving of His Son for sinners.*

When we who believe this evangel concerning Jesus Christ see a rainbow and recall the covenant God set up in Genesis 9, we should see more than an eonian act of kindness toward humanity. We should see, in faith, that this leniency is related to that grace of God for salvation to all humanity that Paul speaks of in Titus 2:11.

Consequently, we see that God set up a covenant with Noah that preserved certain ones during the deluge, and in doing so pointed ahead to the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus. Furthermore, we see that when He also set up a covenant with all mankind and all soul life that protects them from a repetition of the deluge, He did so in view of His operations of deliverance and salvation in Jesus Christ.

D.H.H.

THE EXTENSION OF DAVID'S KINGDOM
(2 Samuel 8)

8 + **It** [lb]**occurred afterward** +**that David** [l]**smote** `the **Philistines and** [c]**made them** [l]**submissive. David** +**also** [l]**took** `**Metheg-ammah from** the **hand of** the **Philistines.**

2 +**Then he** [l]**smote** `**Moab and** [l]**measured them** off [i]**with** a **line,** [c]**making** `**them lie**– down on[d] the **earth.** + **He** [l]**measured** out **two lines for** [c]**put**ting to **death**– **and** ·a **full line for** [c]**preserv**ing **alive**–**.** +**Thus** the **Moab**ite [l]**became David's** › **servants carrying** tributary **present**s**.**

3 **David** +**also** [l]**smote** `**Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah,** [i]**as he** was **going**– **to restore his hand** [i]**at** the **stream Euphrates.** 4 + **David** [l]**seized from him** [7]**1,000 chariot**s **and 7,000 horsemen**~Q **and 20,000 men** on **foot.** + **David** [l]**hamstrung** `**all** ·**chariot** steeds, +**yet he** [l]**reserved from them** enough for **one hundred chariots.** 5 +**When** the **Syrian**s **of Damascus** [l]**came to help** › **Hadadezer king of Zobah,** + **David** [l]**smote** [i]**of** the **Syrian**s **22,000 men.** 6 +**Then David** [l]**placed garrisons in Syrian Damascus;** +**thus** the **Syrian**s [l]**became David's** › **servants carrying** tributary **present**s**.** +**So Yahweh** [l]**saved** `**David** [i] **everywhere he went.** 7 + **David** [l]**took** `**the golden arrow-cases which** [b]**were** carried ›**by Hadadezer's servants, and** [l]**brought them** to **Jerusalem.** 8 **And from Betah and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer,** ·**king David took** a **very** [mn]**great**– amount of **copper.**

9 +**When Toi king of Hamath** [l]**heard that David had smitten** `the **entire army of Hadadezer,** 10 + **Toi** [l]**sent** `**his son** [7]**Hadoram**~ **to** ·**king David to ask** › **him** ›**about** his **well-being and to congratulate him** [om]**because** [w] **he fought** [i]**against**

Hadadezer and [l]**smote him; (for Hadadezer had** [b]**been** a **man** engaged in **warfare** against **Toi).** [+] **In his hand** [b]**were articles of silver,** [+] **articles of gold and articles of copper.** 11 [`]**King David sanctified `them to Yahweh,** [mr]**along with the silver and the gold** [w]**that he had sanctified from all the nations** [w] **he had subdued:** 12 **from Syria and from Moab,** [+] **from** the **sons of Ammon and from** the **Philistines,** [+] **from Amalek and from** the **loot of Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah.**

13 [+] **David** [ld]**made** a **name** for himself [i]**at his return**[-][f]**after he** had **smitten**[-] [`7]**Edom**[~cs] **in** the **Salt Ravine, 18,000** in all**.** 14 [+]**Then he** [l]**placed garrisons in Edom. In all of Edom he placed garrisons, and all** the **Edom**ites [l]**became servants to David.** [+]**So Yahweh** [l]**saved `David** [i] **everywhere he went.**

15 [+] **David** [l]**reigned over all Israel; and it came** to [l]**be** that **David** was [d]**dealing** out right **judgment and justice to all his people.** 16 [+] **Joab son of Zeruiah** was **over the** military **host; and Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud** was the **recorder**[l]**.** 17 [+] **Zadok son of Ahitub and** [s]**Abiathar son of Ahimelech**[~c] were **priests; and Seraiah** was the **scribe**[l]**.** 18 [+] **Benaiah son of Jehoiada** was [M]**over**[~c] **the Kerethite and the Pelethite;** [+]**as** for **David's sons, they** [b]**were** [7]royal **stewards~.**

This chapter summarizes the military campaigns of David, showing how Yahweh gave him victory in extending the boundaries and influence of Israel, in accord with His promise to Abraham (*cf* Gen.15:18-21). The conquering of the Philistines and the peaceful alliance David had with Hiram, king of Tyre, secured the western front. The alliance with Hamath to the north lent control of trade routes for countries toward the Black and Caspian seas. The conquest of Syria took in the northeast area, gaining Damascus, a significant stop for the caravans from the fertile crescent. Israel's possession of these common trade

routes was not only beneficial to David's kingdom, but also to Tyre's maritime commerce. Ammon and Moab finished the eastern border, and the conquest of Edom secured the south. Israel was seated to have great control of commerce, and the spoils of war and tribute allowed David to amass great sums of wealth in preparation for the building of the temple.

In verse one the term "Metheg-ammah" has also been translated "the bridle bit of the mother." From the parallel passage in 1 Chronicles 18:1 it is clear that this refers to Gath and its surrounding cities. In the days of the judges there were five principal cities of the Philistines. Apparently they consolidated their government over the years, and Gath became the chief city. It was a common figure of speech for a metropolis to be referred to as a mother, and the surrounding cities as her daughters (*cf* Psa. 48:11; 97:8). Holding the bridle or bit refers to control. So Gath, the mother city, held the bridle of control for the rest of the Philistine cities. But David took the bridle, or control of all the cities.

NO BOAST IN HORSES

The kings of Israel had been instructed not to increase horses (Deut. 17:16) because it would be easy to depend upon the strength and speed of these animals, rather than depending upon God (Psa.20:7; Isa.31:1). God instructed Joshua to hamstring the horses and burn the chariots of the armies they defeated (Josh.11:6,9).

David followed this instruction, but not fully, as indicated in verse 4. The hamstring is a tendon of the leg muscles. When horses were hamstrung, that tendon was cut. This crippled the horse to the extent that it could not run and thus could not pull the speeding chariots of warfare. It seems that God intended Israel not to copy the nation's means of warfare. Israel was to depend upon God in bat-

tle. This supplied a motivation for faithfulness in peacetime. It is similar to Paul's exhortation that we "crucify the flesh" (Rom.6:12,13; Gal.5:24; 6:14).

CIVIL CHANGES IN ISRAEL

When Saul first became king, Israel was governed primarily by tribal heads. Military forces were not continually maintained, but had to be gathered in times of need (*cf* 1 Sam.11:6-8). Eventually Saul formed a standing army with Abner as commander in chief and some others under him. But Israel did not have a thoroughly organized governmental system with permanent heads of departments. And, after the death of Samuel and the slaughter of the priests by Doeg, worship was cowering in the shadows.

David changed this situation dramatically. With the expansion of Israel's kingdom, and the increased revenue of tribute, it was possible to fund a more elaborate system. Yet David did not abolish tribal headship. Tribal counsels were still called, and national problems were discussed and policies formed (*cf* 1 Chron.27:16-22).

The last three verses of this chapter give a brief summary of leadership, which actually represents extensive civil and political changes. The record of these changes here in 2 Samuel is quite abbreviated in comparison to 1 Chronicles 18. David's re-organization enabled the kingdom to function more effectively, and it also prepared the way for Solomon's reign, the building of the temple and the building of Solomon's house. Courses were set, both for the priesthood (1 Chron.23-26), and for military service (1 Chron.27:1-15), so that these positions were filled throughout the year. By serving one month a year, the Israelites were free to maintain their domestic responsibilities through the rest of the year, and the country was served by a full complement of servants all year.

J. Philip Scranton

FAITH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

THE EVANGEL joins the theme of righteousness with that of faith. It speaks of righteousness and justification, but the righteousness of which it speaks is *sourced* in the faith of Jesus Christ, and it is *directed* to us today on the basis of faith imparted to us by God.

As for Christ, He faithfully carried out what His God and Father had given Him to do for the revealing of God and justification of sinners. And He did so with perfect faith in what His God and Father had set before Him.

As for ourselves, we cannot verify the truth of the evangel by our senses, such as was demanded by Thomas regarding the resurrection of the Lord (*cf* John 20:24-29). Rather, by faith alone (staunch or faltering as the case may be), without perceiving, we accept and retain (*cf* 1 Cor. 15:1,2) the welcome message of justification and all that it says about God.

PREPOSITIONAL PARTNERS

It is not unusual for Paul to employ two or more prepositions with the same object, within a single statement, as he does in Romans 1:17. "For in [the evangel] God's righteousness is being revealed, *out of* faith *for* faith . . . ." Here he uses "out [of]" (Greek, *ek*) and "for" (Greek, *eis*, literally, "into"), each with the object, "faith." Again, in Romans 3:22, we find the prepositions "for" and "on," each with the object "all." We also note 2 Corinthians 3:18 where Paul writes of the progress of revelation *from* glory *to* glory.

This latter example causes the English reader little prob-

lem; both "from" (Greek, *apo*) and "to" (Greek, *eis,* as in Rom.1:17) make distinctive and easily discernible contributions to the thought. This is also clear in Romans 11:36 where the three prepositions, *out*, *through* and *for,* all with the object, *Him,* inform us that God is the Source, Channel and Goal of all that happens.

But the apostle's purpose in using two prepositions with the object, *faith,* in Romans 1:17 is more puzzling. Some have suggested the "out of" and the "for" in Romans 1:17 convey a sense of a continuing or growing faith, much as indicated by the "from" and the "to" of 2 Corinthians 3:18. Others claim that the two prepositions are used simply to emphasize one idea, such as "*by* [our] faith."

But taking the Greek preposition *ek* in the sense of "out [of]," pointing to faith as a source of the revelation of God's righteousness in His work of justification, and the preposition *eis* in the sense of "for," pointing to faith as a means of reception, is both warranted and edifying. To be sure, the English words, "*by* faith," appearing later in this very verse represent the same Greek words rendered "*out of* faith" here in the center of the verse. But this is only a matter of English idiom, for the thought of faith as a *source* (of living) still pertains. The point is that faith is both a source for the revelation of God's righteous operation of justification and a blessing given for the reception and appreciation of that revelation.

A DOUBLE RELATIONSHIP

Hence Paul is speaking of a double relationship between this revelation of righteousness and faith. There is a faith that brings about this revelation. And there is a faith that receives this revelation and its effects.

Yet it is not the same faith. In the former instance it is Christ's faith. In the latter it is our faith. This was suggested by A. E. Knoch when he wrote that "the only clear explanation" of our phrase in Romans 1:17 "seems to be *out of* [Christ's] faith *for* [our] faith."[1] The development of Paul's presentation of the evangel in Romans bears this out.

There is wordplay here with the word "faith" having two distinct relationships with the revelation of God's righteousness. There is action or movement with this revelation coming out of [Christ's] faith and going into [our] faith. In all, even though the statement is not fully explicit, there is a dramatic expression of truth.

But indeed Paul does state the distinction more explicitly in Romans 3:21,22, which parallels 1:17 at several points. His thought is not exactly the same in the two passages, but there are important similarities. In the later passage the apostle uses three prepositions, the first one ("through") corresponding in position to the "out of" in our passage, and the second and third ("for" and "on") corresponding with the "for" in our passage:

1. God's righteousness
  2. is being revealed
    3. **out** of faith
      4. **for** faith

1. a righteousness of God
  2. is manifest . . .
    3. **through** Jesus Christ's faith
      4*a*. **for** all
      4*b*. and **on** all who are believing

OUT OF FAITH

Our faith could never be the source of a revelation of divine righteousness. The righteousness of God is made known by means of Christ's perfect faith and His unparalleled faithfulness in dying for our sake, for the sake of

1. A. E. Knoch: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.29, p.380.

unrighteous enemies and irreverent sinners. What Christ has done in faithful obedience is the source of this revelation of God's supreme righteousness.

"Thus the manifestation of divine righteousness was made possible *by the faith of Christ,* and our faith in God is now rooted and grounded in His faith, a faith brought to its highest and fullest expression at the cross . . . . God's righteousness is being revealed out of Christ's faith into our faith."[2]

Again, our believing that Christ died for our sins is not the cause of justification. Rather it is Christ faithfully dying for our sins that is the source of justification. In believing that Jesus Christ died for our sins we are believing that in His death, *He* is the source of justification. And in believing, the righteousness that Christ has gained is reckoned to us (Rom.4:11).

THE FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST

There is no evangel apart from Christ and His faithfulness. The apostle makes this clear starting from the very beginning of the epistle, when he writes that the evangel *concerns* God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.1:3,4). Besides the important parallel in Romans 3:22, noted above, we learn that gratuitous justification is through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). God purposed Christ Jesus as the Antitype of the offering and place of propitiation, and He is such, not through the channel of our faith in His blood, but, as it surely must be, *His* faith in the shedding of His blood, for a display of God's righteousness (Rom.3:25,26).

The message revealing the righteousness of God in His work of justification is centered in the faithfulness of Jesus our Lord, that is, in His being given up to death.

2. Herman H. Rocke: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.67, p.146

He was given up because of our offenses, and then He was roused because the work of our justifying had been achieved (Rom.4:25).

In Romans 5:1, also, the words "out of faith" (translated: "by faith"), have a special application to Christ's faith.[3] Just as peace toward God comes *through* our Lord, Jesus Christ, so also justification comes *out of* His faith. Further on, Paul makes it evident what he means by Jesus Christ's faith, when he writes that "while we are still sinners, *Christ died* for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). Hence, he expresses the evangel of justification by the plain words "being now justified in *His blood*" (Rom.5:9).

And beyond the grace of justification reckoned to the believer, Paul heralds the ultimate application of the righteous results of Christ's death for all mankind. Life's justifying is for all mankind, and so all will be constituted righteous through the righteous effects of the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:18,19).

All of these passages testify to the truth that the faithfulness of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners is the basis for our justification and the revelation of God as the righteous Justifier.

FOR FAITH

The apostle does not say this is "for those who are believing" (although that is also true; *cp* "on all who are believing" in 3:22), but that the evangel and the revelation of God's righteousness in it are "for faith." He referred to "everyone who is believing" in verse 16, and will soon speak of "the just one," but he is now concentrating on the man-

3. The believer's faith must not be excluded from Paul's thought here. But as indicated above on the basis of Romans 4, we see that our faith is the means by which justification is being *reckoned* to us, not the means by which justification is *achieved.*

ner in which the revelation is received rather than on the people who receive it. The revelation, in the evangel, of God's righteousness and the blessings of which the evangel speaks are gained by Christ and received by us on the basis of faith.

FAITH APART FROM PERCEPTION

The fact that I have faith is not indicative of any achievement on my part but of incredible grace on God's part. Indeed, what a marvelous gift is faith apart from the evidence of sight!

The risen Jesus said to Thomas, "*Happy* are those who are not perceiving and believe" (John 20:29).

Paul wrote, "Jews signs are requesting, and Greeks wisdom are seeking, yet we are heralding Christ crucified" (1 Cor.1:22). To us it is *graciously granted* to be believing on Christ (Phil.1:29).

It is not that Thomas did not believe when he perceived the nailprints, nor that signs are never effective in the support of faith. But at present it is graciously granted to us that we walk by faith and not by perception (2 Cor.5:7). God parts to us a measure of faith (Rom.12:2) concerning matters unaccompanied by visible evidence or even the support of signs.

What God says concerning the meaning of Christ's death is altogether good news. It is exactly that which solves all the puzzles of His character and our existence.

AS IT IS WRITTEN

This aspect of the evangel, that it is enjoyed in the realm of faith at present, not of perception, is part of what was in Paul's mind when he declared he was not ashamed of the evangel. From the human standpoint it would seem to be an incredibly weak link in the message Paul was heralding

to say that its truth cannot be verified or even supported by the witness of our sense organs.

Nevertheless, as our Lord said, this kind of faith brings *happiness* to us while we live in perilous and stressful times.

As he does so often, the apostle uses the language of the Hebrew Scriptures to bring out special values of his subject. This time he adapts some words from the prophet Habakkuk who wrote: "Yet the just one by his faith shall live" (Hab.2:4). This is a translation of the passage as it appears in the Masoretic Hebrew Text. In the ancient Greek translation, the Septuagint, the passage speaks of "*My* faith," referring to Yahweh's faithfulness, rather than "*his* faith," in reference to the just one. Paul, however, does not use a pronoun at all. He speaks simply of faith, but the context indicates that both our Lord's faith and the faith given to us are in view.

Whether it is the faith of Jesus Christ as He faced the horror of Golgotha and the shedding of His blood on behalf of sinners, or whether it is the faith given us today in our own sorrows and hurts, it is a gracious provision of God for our living.

SHALL BE LIVING

Habakkuk lived in a time of great troubles, in which he cried out, "How long O Yahweh, must I implore, and You are not hearkening? I am crying out to You of violence, and You are not saving!" (Hab.1:2). It was a time when the law was "torpid," and "the wicked one [was] compassing about the righteous one" (Hab.1:4). But Yahweh gave the prophet a vision of the defeat of the enemy and of salvation: "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of Yahweh's glory, as the waters are covering the sea" (Hab.2:14).

Nevertheless, even though the fulfillment of this vision "shall come, yea come, and it shall not be late," it had not yet come. Consequently, Yahweh spoke the words that still

reverberated in Paul's heart, "Yet the just one by . . . faith shall live."

In the message God brings to us, the enemy is not Babylon but sin and irreverence, yet, like Babylon, these enemies multiply pain and sorrow and insecurity in our lives. The vision of the evangel is of God's glory encompassing the entire creation, involving the revelation of God's righteousness in such a justification that all those who are constituted sinners because of Adam, will be constituted righteous because of Christ. And this shall come. Even as the vision given to Habakkuk was "for an appointed time" (Hab.2:3), so also the evangel given to Paul will be realized and experienced in its own era (*cf* 1 Tim.2:6).

LIVING OUT OF FAITH

Nevertheless, it is given to us who are believing, who have been reckoned righteous and are already blessed in spirit with what Jesus Christ has gained for us—it is given to us to be living *out of* faith.

Again, there is a double meaning here. The words speak of the life to come which comes out of Christ's faith for us who are believing. But they also speak of a quality of present living, which also is sourced in the faith of Jesus Christ and takes place in us who are believing. Even as we have died together with Christ, "we believe that we shall be living together with Him also" (Rom.6:8; *cf* Rom.5:10). In view of such an evangel, Paul entreats us to be reckoning ourselves now "to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom.6:11; *cp* Rom.12:1).

It is a great blessing to be believing God as we live in surroundings which not only provide no evidence that what He says is so but in fact continue to indicate the contrary. By God's grace, we find ourselves living by faith in His righteous work of salvation sourced in the faith of Jesus Christ.

D.H.H.

"WHAT MUST OCCUR SWIFTLY"
*
"EVEN WHILE IN BONDS"

Question:

I have read some of your articles in which you teach that the coming "eon" will continue for one thousand years, and that Christ will reign on the earth during such a future period. However, the Bible plainly teaches that during the lifetime of the apostle John, the events of the book of Revelation were those which "*must shortly* come to pass" (Rev.1:1).

Rather than pointing out your related errors as well in favor of "millennialism," for now I wish simply to challenge you on this one point: the Bible says that, in the first century, these prophecies "*must shortly* come to pass"; you say, "Oh, no, that is not necessary; they will not occur until after at least two thousand years have gone by first."

Answer:

IN ORDER for our approach to be truly "spiritual" (and so, truly helpful) as we seek to attune others concerning the faith, it is necessary that we address our fellow believers in a spirit of *meekness* (Gal.6:1). Even if many, as a matter of tactics, should advocate and commend the practice of "*challenging* one another," such activities are actually an exhibition of "vainglory" (*cf* Gal.5:26); that is, they are a pompous show of pride.

Now, to address the actual issue which you have raised concerning the words of Revelation 1:1:

Many have been perplexed over the words in Revelation 1:1 as translated in the Authorized Version which represents John as saying that these events are "things which must *shortly* come to pass." For this reason, some have believed that the prophecies of the book of Revelation were fulfilled within the first century A.D., it being claimed accordingly that the second advent of Christ occurred at that time along with all related events.

John's words in Revelation 1:3 that "the era is *near,*" were certainly true. However, one must judge correctly *in what sense* it was so that the era was then "near." The question is, Was it near in time, or was it near in a realized prophetic sense in relation to Hebrew prophecy concerning "that era" (*cf* Dan.12:1). To claim that since it was "near," it was therefore near in time, does nothing to prove the validity of this claim; it merely assumes what is at issue.

In fact, the era for the fulfillment of the Unveiling was not then actually near in time (though many early believers may have supposed this was so). As a matter of world history, the fearful, august judgments of the day of the Lord simply did not occur in our first century. Every eye did not then witness His second advent (Rev.1:7); much less did the kingdoms of this world then become those of the Lord God and His Christ (Rev.11:15). Decidedly, the nations did not then beat their swords into plowshares, nor their spears into pruninghooks, so as not to learn war any more (Isa.2:4).

It must be, then, that the sense in which the era termed "the conclusion of the eon" (*cp* Matt.24:3) was then near, was not that of historical nearness (i.e., nearness in time), but was instead that of nearness of *prophetic fulfillment within the purview of Hebrew prophecy.*

In a similar way, the kingdom of the heavens was also "near" at that time (Matt.3:2; 4:17). Indeed, the kingdom had become near to them as well in the very person of

Christ, due to His presence among them as the One Who "is" (i.e., represents) "life eonian" (1 John 5:20).

The "segregated" (CV) seventy sevens' (i.e., 490 years') fulfillment of Daniel 9:24 will indeed result in bringing "the righteousness of the eons" and the establishment of the kingdom under Messiah, the Governor. However, it is evident that God established a "pause" or interim period prior to the last seven years of the fulfillment of this prophecy, the length of which has not been revealed.[1] This must be the case, for the calamities written in the scroll we know as the book of Revelation have not occurred, and Christ is certainly not reigning over the nations of the earth, according as it is written.

This present era, is the result of Israel's rejection of her Saviour and King. It exists as well because of God's purpose to form the ecclesia which is Christ's body at this time, with all its unique blessings, ones which transcend those of God's saints who were chosen to be in Christ under the evangel of the Circumcision (Gal.2:7).

It was by no means requisite that the seventy sevens should all transpire in immediate succession. However, those things which clarify this entire question, are only revealed through the teachings of the apostle Paul; it is not likely that John was acquainted with them. In any event, his writings do not reflect any such pertinent Pauline revelations, and are concerned only with Israel's expectation, according to the declarations of Israel's prophets. Therefore, *from John's viewpoint* (from what had been revealed

1. The Messiah, or Christ, was "cut off" after sixty-nine sevens (i.e., after 483 years of this "490-year" prophecy had been completed. Counting 360 days to the year, reckoning from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (Neh.2:1-5), this period of "seven sevens and sixty-two sevens" from the faring forth of the word to cause a return of the people and to rebuild Jerusalem, leads us to Christ's entry into Jerusalem upon a colt (*cf* Dan.9:25,26; *cp* Neh.2:1-5; Ezra 1:1-4; Luke 19:32-44; Zech.9:9).

to him), in that sense, indeed the era was "near" when he first wrote these words; consequently, his writings unfold accordingly, from this perspective.

In Revelation 1:1, as in three other places, the Authorized Version has mistranslated *tachos* as "shortly," even though the AV itself presents the actual sense of this Greek word correctly as "quickly" or "speedily" in its seven other occurrences. The adverbial form of this word, *tacheion* (SWIFTerly), is used so strikingly in John 20:4 that we may be confident of its true significance. We may thereby become certain as well that the notion of "soon-to-occurness" (or "shortly") is not the force of the word-stem *tach-* common to these various related terms which only differ as to part of speech.

When John and Peter *ran* to the Lord's tomb, neither one started any sooner than the other, for "the two raced *alike*"; even so, John ran "more *swiftly*" (CV) than Peter and so "came *first* to the tomb" (John 20:4).

Tachos is actually a noun (SWIFTness). The CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT English ultra-literal sublinear gives the sense of these words in Revelation 1:1 exactly: what IS-BINDING TO-BE-BECOMING IN SWIFTness ("what must occur swiftly," CV). As is noted in the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT by the small superior italic "i" before the word "^{i} **swift**ly," the word "in" (*en*) appears in the Greek text. That is, John wrote that these events must be occurring "in swiftness": once they begin, they must follow in quick succession, for these judgments are dreadful indeed and must not be unduly prolonged (*cp* Rev.2:16; 3:11; 11:14; 22:7,12,20, for similar passages on this same theme, that of *swiftness* in judging).

Paul did not declare to the Romans that quite soon or "shortly" God would be crushing Satan under their feet (Rom.16:20). Instead, he revealed that *when* He judges Satan ("under [their] feet"), this will occur "*in swiftness,*"

or "swiftly." The length of time between Paul's writing of his Roman epistle and the accomplishment of this act is not addressed.

ISSUES OF INTERPRETATION

The Concordant Version can be an invaluable tool to all who use it, in order to bring us closer to the Word of God in the Original. However, as with all tools, we must learn how to use it well. Concerning any passage of Scripture, we must always ask:

(1) *What* is revealed? while distinguishing between the Scriptural declaration itself (even in an accurate translation) and any mere inferences of our own concerning it;

(2) *Whom* does it concern? All Scripture is for us, and is beneficial to us in various ways, but it is not all about us (i.e., many of its warnings and promises are not made to ourselves, the members of the body of Christ);

(3) *When* does it apply? (since certain matters are only applicable even to those whom they do concern during specific time periods); and

(4) *In what sense is it true?* Is it a categorical statement or a provisional one? Is it a universal declaration, or a limited declaration confined to a specific subject? Is the word or phrase in question a literal expression or a figurative expression? If figurative, what figure is employed, of what does it consist, and what is the literal idea for which it stands? If literal, it is still necessary to determine from the context or in some other way from the nature of the case whether a statement is made absolutely or only in some non-absolute way, only in relation to a particular matter.

Much grace is needed for us all if we are to make real progress in dealing with the Word of God in a faithful way. Though ideal for all, it is especially vital for those who would teach others to heed the words of 2 Timothy 2:15: "Endeavor to present yourself to God qualified, an

unashamed worker, *correctly* cutting the word of truth." A. E. Knoch said it well, concerning the day when the work of each one of us will become apparent and be made evident: "Let all who teach take this to heart: their work will be tested to see *what kind it is.* It is better to have a little *after* the fire than much *before* it."[2]

❊

Question:

I have been incarcerated for nearly five years, and will not be eligible for parole until about five years from now.

I am so *ashamed* of my lawless and sinful past! Even so, I am so *thankful* to God for finally bringing me to settled faith in Christ, primarily through my reading of the Concordant Version and *Unsearchable Riches* magazine during the past three years. I can follow most of what you say just fine; sometimes I have to use my dictionary, but dictionaries are made to be used, and I don't mind using mine.

At present, the main challenge to my faith comes from certain fellow Christians, ones who are locked up with me here in this same institution. I see them at least twice a week, at prayer meeting and chapel service. During times for testimony and discussion, I have spoken plainly to the group of my faith in the eventual salvation of all mankind, saying as well that for any of us who are truly in Christ today, our salvation is not a matter of our having chosen Christ, but of God having chosen us—before the disruption of the world, with grace given before times eonian (Eph.1:4; 2 Tim.2:9).

Previously, the chaplain hadn't really objected to anything I had said; he tries to take an ecumenical

2. The Concordant Commentary, re. 1 Corinthians 3:14; p.251.

approach with us and generally lets us say what we think as long as it doesn't result in too much discord within the group. More recently, however, he has asked me no longer to share any of the differences of my faith, since these really upset some of the other members. He is right; two or three of the other members are very upset with what I have shared about grace, against eternal punishment, and especially what I have said in denial of free will (though generally I have spoken not in terms of being against free will as such, but in terms of being for, and dependent upon, God's grace).

As things now stand, I am not allowed to say anything that goes against popular belief; yet others can still say just about anything they want that is said in support of popular belief, especially the guy that does so in sort of a "supernatural" way, who claims to have the gift of prophecy.

If all of this weren't bad enough, for all the change for good that God *has* made in me (sufficient that I very much doubt that I would ever criminally offend again), I am sad to say that even if I am no longer "criminal" in my ways, my ways are still far too sinful (this is so, however they may truly compare to the behavior of others). I need more saving grace; and yet *this* God has not given.

I think what disturbs the especially antagonistic men in our group about my testimony even more than what I have said about grace and salvation of all, is what I have said about our completeness in Christ. All I have said is that our salvation doesn't depend upon our works, but upon God's work through Christ. Therefore, we would still be saved even if we were to backslide into the worst sort of immoral conduct and die unrepentant.

I meant this as an encouragement to them, so that they would not have to worry about and center upon fear of falling into sin, so that they could instead center upon serving the Lord out of gratitude, not fear

of damnation. But, having misunderstood me, they claimed that I was encouraging sinful behavior.

Anyway, any words of advice or encouragement you could share relevant to my situation here would be very much appreciated.

Answer:

We have all done untold things "of which [we] are now ashamed" (Rom.6:21). The apostle Paul, as Saul of Tarsus, had been the "chief" or "foremost" sinner (1 Tim. 1:16). With regard to his past career, he was "less than the least of all the saints" (Eph.3:8). "*Yet,*" he declared, "in the *grace of God* I am what I am [now]" (1 Cor.15:10).

In order to deal with our failings faithfully, whether ones of past years or of the past moment, Paul emphasizes that we need to give special attention to just "one thing—forgetting, indeed those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus. Whoever, then, are mature, may be disposed to this, and if in anything you are differently disposed, this also shall God reveal to you" (Phil.3:13-15).

The main thought here (the "one thing" of which Paul speaks) is not about forgetting those things which are behind. Instead, the "one thing" is our becoming occupied in pursuing toward the goal. *The goal is faithfulness to the Lord in our service to Him.* This is the underlying theme of this entire epistle.

"The Philippian epistle is a divine commentary on the latter half of Ephesians, and, like it, is especially concerned with the deportment demanded by the transcendent doctrines developed in the first half of the Ephesian letter. This is the key to its contents. *It does not deal with doctrines, but with deportment . . . .* [The two themes of] suffering and service, pervade the whole epistle, from the

introduction, where Paul and Timothy style themselves *'slaves,'* rather than apostles, to the end where the grace of the *Lord,* or *Master,* rather than Christ, is invoked."[3]

Since the phrase, "—forgetting, indeed those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—" is interjectory in nature, we have set it off by long dashes in the text. Hence, when we wish to center our thoughts upon the "one thing" which is here in view, Philippians 3:13, 14 should be read as follows, omitting this interjectory phrase: "Brethren, not as yet am I reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one thing . . . *toward the goal am I pursuing* for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus."

Even so, in order to be in a position to dedicate ourselves to the "one thing" contemplated by Paul, and thus be pursuing toward the goal for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus, it is necessary that we preface this singular activity, by "*forgetting,* indeed those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front."

Many things lie ahead for us to do, simply in the area of our giving attention to necessary needs and meeting the practical obligations of our daily affairs. Most of them may not be very exciting, but they nonetheless call for our attentiveness and make their demands upon both our time and strength. If we are to attend to them properly, as we "stretch out" to what is "in front" (i.e., to what lies ahead), we simply cannot afford to be continually reflecting upon and rehearsing those negative things which are now "behind" us, namely, our past failures.

Rather than "remembering" our past sins, Paul says that we need to be "forgetting" them! Now of course "forgetting " here is a figure of speech. It is not that we are somehow literally to lose all memory of our past doings, ones which we regret; indeed, if Paul's entreaty here were lit-

3. A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.296.

eral, it would be quite impossible for us either to regret them or to be ashamed of them, seeing that then we would have lost all ability even to call them to mind, whether vividly or vaguely.

It is not that we are somehow to lose all memory of our former sins, but that we, *like* someone who actually has no recollection of past events since he has forgotten them, are not to give attention to those things. Pondering them can only weigh us down; hence Paul counsels us thus to be "forgetting" about them so that we may instead, like a runner in preparation for a race, be "stretching out," giving due attention to those things lying ahead, perceiving our course from the things about us (*cp* Phil.2:23).

We may not be able to do what Paul could do, but we can see that we will do well to follow his example. Regardless of the degree of our success, honoring the ideal and longing to follow what is faithful while *seeking* to live uprightly, is a great blessing in its own right. For myself, I often have to be content with such an experience, while praying for increased ability and self-control, and especially for *patience* to endure, should God decline to grant my requests as soon as I might wish for Him to do so.

I can appreciate something of the strain you are under from your fellow inmates, those who, though professed believers (and it may be so that they are truly believers), are nonetheless hostile to the teaching of God's grace apart from acts and of salvation for all. Too often the adage, "The only thing worse than a sinner is a reformed sinner," is proven true. This is certainly the case with many Christians in prison as well as with those outside.

It is proud and self-righteous for *any* man who perhaps has not sinned (or does not now sin) as frequently or in the same way as another, to think that it is thanks to himself that this is so. It is interesting to note that the Pharisee who externally and formally thanked God that he was

"not even as the rest of men," actually "prayed this toward himself" (Luke 18:11).

The truth is that—through one means or another—it is always the grace and power of God that makes the difference among men, whether believer or unbeliever. Ultimately speaking, God has all power; He is the Omnipotent; we are the impotent. We only have whatever we are given from heaven (John 3:27; *cp* 2 Cor.3:5). It is true that some make better choices or are more willing, exercise more self-control or try harder. But what do any of us have but what we have now obtained (i.e., come to have)? That being so, why, then, are we boasting in ourselves, imagining that it is due to us, instead of God, that we are as we are (1 Cor.4:7)?

In its present aspect, like the effort of "getting hold" of eonian life, "really" (*cp* 1 Tim.6:12,19), "God's calling above in Christ Jesus," is indeed a "prize" (Phil.3:14). This is to say that it is something that is the result of our own efforts, which is awarded to us accordingly in consideration thereof.

In its future aspect, God's calling above in Christ Jesus, is a gratuity in grace, concerning which, Grace reigns, for life eonian. *There,* even where sin increases—even if one should be persisting in sin—grace superexceeds (*cf* Rom. 5:20-6:1). But *here,* in our present endeavors in faith, forgetting what is behind and stretching out to those in front, if we would gain the prize, that of *a present involvement and experience* in God's calling above in Christ Jesus, we must be pursuing toward the goal. The goal is that of living a life of consecrated, *truly faithful* service to our Master: for the Lord Christ are we slaving (Col.3:24).

Even while in bonds, may it be that God will grant you endurance and patience with joy, in your "logical divine service" for Him (Rom.12:1). Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

J.R.C.

THROUGH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

WE HAVE CONSIDERED how God has spoken to mankind in creation, to and through prophets, in His Son, and through the apostles. Now, for the time being, He no longer speaks directly to individuals such as prophets and apostles, or through visions and dreams. The reason? His written word is complete! It was given to Paul "to complete the word of God" (Col.1:25). His written word provides all we need to know about God, His Son, His purpose and how He will bring it about.

Indeed, there was a time before the Scriptures were completed when direct communication was required, but no longer. When we hear someone claiming to have a new revelation directly from God, or that God has appeared in a vision or dream, we do not need to consider the matter. It is false. We need to understand this clearly.

There are no more prophets and apostles about. The true ones are in the foundation of God's family. The foundation is complete, for Christ Jesus Himself is the capstone of the corner. God is building His family on it, and it is growing into a holy temple for God's dwelling place in spirit. As believers, we are a part of that temple (*cf* Eph.2:20-22).

INSPIRED BY GOD

"All scripture[1] is inspired by God" (2 Tim.3:16). The

1. While it is evident Paul had Israel's "sacred scriptures" (which we call the "Old Testament") particularly in view here (*cf* v.15), what he says here also includes the "prophetic scriptures" of his own era, including especially his own writings (*cf* Rom.16:25-27; *cp* 2 Tim.1:13; 3:14).

words "inspired by God" represent one Greek term, which means literally, GOD-BLOWN, or, "God-breathed." When He created the human, God "blew into his nostrils the breath of life" (Gen.2:7). In a similar way, the scriptures are God's creation, and are living, in a figurative sense. Knowledge about the physical creation is gained by intense observation, analyzing, using microscopes, cataloging. That is the way scripture should be studied.

There are no flaws in the original documents of the scriptures, but we who do not speak Hebrew and Greek must depend on translations, which often are seriously flawed. In fact, anything that human beings do will have mistakes, but they can be minimized by using methods which to a large degree bypass the translators' limitations.

CORRECTLY CUTTING

The most common problem when a difficulty is encountered is that of failing to observe the "address on the envelope." We should ask of any part of scripture, Is it addressed to us? Is it about us? Remember to "Endeavor to present yourself to God qualified, an unashamed worker, *correctly cutting the word of truth*" (2 Tim.2:15). "All scripture is inspired by God, and is beneficial for teaching, for exposure, for correction, for discipline in righteousness, that the man of God may be equipped, fitted out for every good act." But it is not *all* about us or addressed to us. Paul is the apostle of the nations; his epistles are directed to us. The remainder of scripture is truth, is precious, and we learn much from it (*cf* Rom.15:4,5). But we will not find the evangel for today, the conduct that accords with our place in Christ, or our expectation there.

FIGURES OF SPEECH

Many times our difficulty may be with figures of speech. They are freely used in scripture. Consider this passage:

"And taking bread, giving thanks, He breaks it and gives to them, saying, 'Take. This is My body, given for your sakes. This do for a recollection of Me'" (Luke 22:19). It should be obvious that the bread was not His literal body, but a figure (metaphor) of His body. Nevertheless, misunderstanding of this elementary figure has caused conflict and division. A study of figures of speech is invaluable.

THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

We have previously noted that it was granted to Paul "to complete the word of God" (Col.1:25). Colossians may not have been the last to be written chronologically, but Paul completed the scriptures in scope, going beyond the confines of the earth.

Hence, the apostle reveals that Christ will head up *all*, the heavens as well as the earth. In doing so, all on earth and in the heavens will come into the enjoyment of the reconciliation Christ has gained through His cross. He will use us of the nations among the celestials. His operations through Israel for the earth were well known; Paul revealed a secret previously unknown: *Christ among the nations, a glorious expectation.* The riddle of the universe is solved, tracing God's operations from creation to reconciliation.

"God's word is mankind's most precious possession. What are all the treasures in the world compared with it? Do they even begin to approach the riches which are brought to us by the knowledge of His mind, the appreciation of His love? Indeed, it is God Himself Who is revealed in the Sacred Scrolls."[2]

In the scriptures, and there only, can be found the basis for joy and peace in these troubling times.

Robert B. Killen

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2. Concordant Literal New Testament with Keyword Concordance, Introduction, p.7.

Contents:

97 Editorial
98 The Mindfulness of God
99 The Sons of Noah
115 David's Unusual Kindness
119 "What Must I Do to be Saved?" Justification Out of Faith
131 God's Salvation and Indignation
143 Righteousness

MAY, 2003

Volume XCIV **Number 3**

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2003
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-FOUR

EDITORIAL

THE NATIONS are the units of power and rule during the present eon. Their character of irreverence and injustice (see p.131), lying at the root of their inevitable failure, will be succeeded by the glory of Christ's kingdom in the next eon (*cf* Gen.12:2,3; 18:18; Psa.22:27,28; 67:2-4).

The beginnings of the nations are traced by Brother A. E. Knoch in this issue (p.99). Most of those great city-states established in the early centuries after the deluge by Noah's descendants continued, for many centuries, to play major roles in what we call "world history." And once again they seem to be emerging as important centers of influence. Babylon, Egypt and Assyria, these are especially noteworthy because of their relationship to the promised land, which first was held by Canaan and his descendants.

God's Word, especially in the books of Daniel, Matthew and Revelation, tells of the central place of these nations at the end of the present eon. So it is of great interest to us that these places and their politics occupy so much attention in the news today. Not just the modern states of Israel and Palestine (Philistia), but now Iraq, in which the ancient city of Babylon is still represented by the nearby and important center of Hillah, is brought to our attention almost daily, along with Syria and Egypt.

Yet the unveiling of the man of lawlessness in that very region is detained by the present operation of God spoken of by Paul most extensively in Romans 11:11-25; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17. What we see is not the *fulfillment* of prophecies concerning the Middle East but accords with them as *preparations.* And this is a reminder to us of the sureness of God's promises as well as the grace of our calling. D.H.H.

THE MINDFULNESS OF GOD

GOD IS AWARE of all things, but starting with the early chapters of Genesis, the Scriptures often speak of specific objects of His attention. They sometimes do so in Hebrew by a word generally denoting "remember." When we remember something, it becomes prominent in our thinking. When God is said to remember something, we do not suppose He had forgotten, but we become aware of His mindfulness.

The Hebrew verb for "remember" is *zkr,* which is sometimes rendered "be mindful" in the CV. Its first occurrence is in Genesis 8:1 where we read: "Yet Elohim *was mindful* of Noah and of every animal and of every beast that was with him in the ark. So Elohim caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided."

Later, Elohim said to Noah that when He saw the rainbow, "then I *will remember* My covenant between Me and you and every living soul among all flesh, so that never again shall the waters become a deluge to wreck all flesh. When My bow comes to be in the cloud, I will see it *to remember* the eonian covenant between Elohim and every living soul among all flesh which is on the earth" (Gen.9:15,16).

Here in these earliest scriptural references to God's action of remembering we see that His mind was vigorously occupied, first of all, with *creatures of His hand* and then with *His word* directed to them in the form of a covenant.

His creatures and His word, these are deeply etched on the mind of God.

D.H.H.

THE SONS OF NOAH
(Genesis 10)

10 + **These** are the **genealogical** record**s of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth:** + **Sons were** ˡ**born to them after the deluge.**

2 **Japheth's sons: Gomer,** + **Magog,** + **Madai,** + **Javan,** + **Tubal,** + **Meshech and Tiras.** 3 + **Gomer's sons: Ashkenaz,** + **Riphath and Togarmah.** 4 + **Javan's sons: Elishah,** + **Tarshish, Kittim and** 7**Rodanim**ns**.**

5 **From these the nations** of the **coast**lands **parted in their lands—each** ›**with its spoken language—**›**by their families, in their nations.**

6 + **Ham's sons: Cush,** + **Mizraim,** + **Put and Canaan.** 7 + **Cush's sons: Seba,** + **Havilah,** + **Sabtah,** + **Raamah and Sabteca.** + **Raamah's sons: Sheba and Dedan.**

8 + **Cush begot** `**Nimrod. He**´ **started to become** a **master in** the **earth;** 9 **he**´ b**was** a **master hunter before Yahweh. Therefore it is** ˡ**said, Like Nimrod,** the **master hunter before Yahweh.** 10 + The **principal** cities **of his kingdom** ˡb**were Babylon,** + **Erech,** + **Akkad and Calneh in** the **land of Shinar. (**11 **From** ˙**this** ˙**land Ashur** came **forth; and he** ˡ**built** `**Nineveh,** + `**Rehoboth-ir,** + `**Calah,** 12 **and** `**Resen between Nineveh and** bt **Calah, that** is **the great** ˙**city.)**

13 + **Mizraim begot** `the **Ludim,** + `**Anamim,** + `**Lehabim,** + `**Naphtuhim,** 14 + `**Pathrusim,** + `**Casluhim (from where** the **Philistines** came **forth) and** `**Caphtorim.**

15 + **Canaan begot** `**Sidon, his firstborn, and** `**Heth,** 16 **and** `**the Jebusite,** + `**the Amorite,** + `**the Girgashite,** 17 + `**the Hivite,** + `**the Arkite,** + `**the Sinite,** 18 + `**the Arvadite,** + `**the**

Zemarite, and `the Hamathite. + **After**ward **the Canaanite families scattered;** 19 + **so the Canaanite boundary came** to [l]**be from Sidon** (as **you come**⁻) to**ward Gerar as far as Gaza** (as **you come**⁻) to**ward Sodom,** + **Gomorrah,** + **Admah, and Zeboiim as far as Lasha.**

20 **These** are **Ham's sons,** ›**by their families,** ›**by their spoken languages, in their lands, in their nations.**

21 + **As for Shem (father of all** the **sons of Eber** and **the oldest brother of Japhet),** to **him** [mr]**also** sons **were born.** 22 **Shem's sons: Elam,** + **Ashur,** + **Arphaxad,** + **Lud, and Aram.** 23 + **Aram's sons: Uz,** + **Hul,** + **Gether, and Mash.**

24 + **Arphaxad begot** [7]`**Kenan,** + **Kenan begot**[0] `**Shelah, and Shelah begot `Eber.** 25 + **To Eber were born two sons;** the **name of the one** was **Peleg; for in his days the land was distributed.**

+ **His brother's name** was **Joktan.** 26 + **Joktan begot `Almodad,** + `**Sheleph,** + `**Hazarmaveth,** + `**Jerah,** 27 + `**Hadoram,** + `**Uzal,** + `**Diklah,** 28 + `**Obal,** + `**Abimael,** + `**Sheba,** 29 + `**Ophir,** + `**Havilah, and `Jobab. All these** were **sons of Joktan.** 30 + **Their dwelling** place **came** to [l]**be from Mesha** [7]**as far as**[0] **you come**⁻ to**ward Sephar,** the **hill** country **of the East.**

31 **These** are **Shem's sons** ›**by their families,** ›**by their spoken languages, in their lands,** ›**by their nations.**

32 **These** are the **families of Noah's sons** ›**by their genealogical** record**s, in their nations; and from these the nations parted** [i]**over** the **earth after the deluge.**

NOAH DISAPPEARS

A NOTABLE FACT about Noah is his almost total disappearance from the record after the flood. He was then six hundred years old (Gen.7:6), and he lived three hundred and fifty years in the new order of things (Gen.9:29), *but we hear nothing about him ruling in this period*. Like all

the firstborn sons of Adam he had been the subjector of the race, but, like many later in the royal lineage, such as Abraham and Jacob, Boaz and Obed, up to David, he did not reign as king. We do not read that he interfered when they built Babel, or when Nimrod founded his kingdom. But there seems to have been a *spiritual* succession, for eight hundred years after he died Abram was born, and Abraham's place was filled by Jacob, Joseph and Moses, who was born long years after Joseph died. With Moses began the theocracy, over a single nation, the highest form of government in this eon, but which doomed a whole generation to death in the desert.

No doubt Noah was master as father, over his own family, after the deluge, for this form of subjection was never abrogated, seeing that it is the final and perfect form. But even in this his convivial drinking made him a failure and he lost the mastership to more energetic characters, like Nimrod and Ashur.

GEOGRAPHICALLY

The race started afresh on a high elevation. There is nothing to show that the ark stopped on Mount Ararat itself, although it could have, as this is the highest peak, at the western end of the mountains of Ararat. These form a long range, with another, but lower peak at the eastern end. Somewhere from this elevation Noah and his family descended. Their southward course was probably determined by two rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, whose headwaters were found in the Ararat range. It was natural for them to follow one of these downward, for they not only provided water to drink, but went through well watered and fruitful country, which provided them with food.

If they came down the Euphrates, which seems most likely, then we have Eden, the first home of mankind at one end, and the second commencement, beginning on a

much higher level, at the other. But their course was always a *descent*, and this became apparent at Babel, even before they came to erstwhile Eden.

There is no intimation, however, that Noah, the just man, descended as far as Babel. He was not like the previous sons of Adam, and did not rule as they had done. That is why he is ignored in the record.

The Hebrew revelation is chiefly concerned with Israel and their eastern neighbors, who were also Shemites. But they were also in touch with the Hamites, to the south. But they had little to do with the northern peoples, the Japhethites, until the writings of the apostle Paul. Physically, on the earth, they are the last and the least. Spiritually, among the celestials, many of them will be first and foremost. So will flesh be abased and spirit exalted.

THE MEANING OF THE NAMES

As some of the names given in this genealogy are Hebrew before Babel, we may be able to find their probable and appropriate meaning. But, after the confusion introduced at Babel, there is not much trustworthy material to go by, so most of them will not be considered. Yet it is not easy to draw the line, as no ages are given. Those born before Babel will be Hebrew and those after will be confused, except in the line of Shem. References are given to their recurrence, when helpful.

GENEALOGICAL LINKS

As in the line from Adam to Noah (Gen.5:3-32), little detail is given us except the links in the genealogy, so, once again, we are carried quickly over the interval from Noah to Abram (Gen.10,11). These two are key characters, and indicate a *change* in the dealings of Yahweh Elohim with humanity. Noah and his line introduced the present form of government by nations. This continues in the succeeding administrations, to the present day. We are still ruled as nations. This will have its climax in the next administration of judgment, under the man of sin. It will be changed to government under one nation in the next eon, under the righteous rule of the Son of Mankind. Even it will vanish when all sovereignty and authority and power is abolished and God, the Father, becomes All in all (1 Cor.15:20-28).

THE LINE OF JAPHETH

Japheth had seven sons (Gen.10:2). The first was named Gomer (*Gmr* LAPSE, Ezek.38:6; Hosea 1:3). Of his three sons, Ashkenaz (*Ash-k-nz* FIRE-AS-SPATTER, Jer.51:27) was the oldest, the second Rephath (*Riphth* LAX), and the third Togarmah (*Thugrme* PICK-CLEAN, rib, Ezek.27:14; 38:6). So far is Gomer's line.

The second son of Japheth, Magog (*Mgug* TOP, Ezek. 38:2; 39:6) has no line. Also no line is given for Madai (*Md-i* MEASURE-ITE,), the third son of Japheth, but he seems to have the name later given to the Medes, a great nation east of the upper reaches of the Tigris river (2 Kings 17:6; 18:11; Esther 1:3,14,18,19; 10:2; Isa.13:17; 21:2; Jer.25:25; 51:11,28; Dan.8:20; 9:1).

The fourth son of Japheth was Javan (*Iun*, perhaps denoting "dove," Isa.66:19; Ezek.27:13,19; Zech.9:13). He is supposed to be the ancestor of the Ionians, or Greeks. He had four sons (Gen.10:4), the first being Elishah (*Al-ishe*, SUBJECTOR-IS-EQUALIZING, Ezek.27:7) who may have been the ancestor of the Aeolian Greeks. The *second* son was Tarshish (*Thrshish* TOPAZ). The name occurs quite often (e.g., 1 Kings 10:22; Jonah 1:3) and seems to belong to a seafaring people found chiefly in the western Mediterranean. The *third* son of Javen was named Kittim (*Kth-im* POUND-ers) which was a seafaring folk of the eastern Mediterranean (Isa.23:1,12, etc.). 1 Chronicles 1:7, the Septuagint, Samaritan and a few Hebrew manuscripts identify

the *fourth* son of Javen as Rodanim ("Dodanim" in the Masoretic text, the letters R and D being much alike in Hebrew). If "Rodamin" is the correct spelling, this son may have been the forefather of the people of Rhodes.

No lines are given for Japheth's fifth and sixth sons. But Tubal (DISINTEGRATE) and Meshech (DRAW) are the names given to peoples who probably lived in central and eastern Anatolia, the Tabali and Mushki (*cf* Isa.66:19; Ezek.27:13; 32:26; 38:2,3). The seventh son of Japheth, Tiras (*Thirs*), is not mentioned elsewhere except in 1 Chronicles 1:5, but his name may indicate he was the founder of "Thrace" (northeastern Greece).

THE SONS OF HAM

Ham had four sons (Gen.10:6). Their names occur often in later Scripture, Cush being termed "Ethiopia" in Greek (not modern Ethiopia, but apparently areas of the upper Nile), Mizraim referring to Egypt, Put referring to Libya, and Canaan to the promised land. They formed a solid front of nations south of the central Shemites, corresponding to the sons of Japheth, on the north.

Cush (*Kush* BURLY) spread out most extensively in the south, below Egypt. Mizraim (*Mtzrim* CONSTRICTS), Egypt, is well named, for it consists of two long narrow stretches along the Nile river. Put (*Phut*) is part of the names Putiel (Ex.6: 25), Potiphar (Gen.37:36; 39:1), and Potiphera (Gen.41:45,50; 46:20). It occurs in Jeremiah 46:9; Ezekiel 27:10; 30:5 and Nahum 3:9.

Canaan (SUBMIT, usually used in the sense of "Trafficker") had an important place in Yahweh's plan with Israel. He alone of Noah's grandchildren had a part to play in the first act of the tragedy of this eon, and was cursed because of it. He took land that was being prepared for Israel, and his descendants were exterminated because of it. The word family SUBMIT suits them well,

for the Subjector will force them to *submit* to His plans. So with the variant, *Trafficker,* for they were the medium of trade between the chief centers of population, Egypt and Syria, that is, between the sons of Shem and Ham. The great trade routes went through their land.

THE SONS OF CUSH

Cush, the oldest son of Ham, seems to have had six sons (Gen.10:7,8), and the sixth of such importance that he is given a whole paragraph, more than any other man in this list, because he founded *the first kingdom* among men. First, however, Cush had five sons of lesser note, of which four are merely mentioned by name: Seba (*Sba, cf* 1 Chron.1:9; Psa.72:10; Isa.43:3), Havilah (*Chuile, cf* Gen.2:11; 10:29; 25:18; 1 Sam.15:7; 1 Chron.1:9,23), Sabtah, Raamah and Sabteca. One of these sons, Raamah, had two sons, Sheba (*Shba, cf* Gen.10:28; 25:3; 1 Chron.1:9,22,32; 2 Chron.9: 1,3,9,12) and Dedan (*Ddn, cf* Gen.25:3; Jer.25:23; 49:8; Ezek.27:15,20; 38:13).

NIMROD

The most famous of the descendants of Ham was his grandson, son of Cush, whose name was Nimrod (Gen. 10:8-12, *Nmrd,* perhaps meaning REVOLTer). He is the first one in this eon to be called a *master*. This was the title given in the previous eon to all firstborn successors of Adam, "masterful ones, who were from the eon, mortals of renown" (Gen.6:4). So here is the beginning of rule in this eon. It started with a grandson of Ham, and is applied to certain descendants of each son of Noah, and to a mixture of them all, at various times in this eon. Each one must be given an opportunity to show that no mortal is capable of wielding a scepter ideally over his fellow men. Only the One Who died for all of them and is alive again can rule so that all will be subjected to Elohim at the consummation.

The important point for us to ponder is the fact that here we have the first mention of a *kingdom* (Gen.10:10). Nimrod was the first king in this eon of human government. Here first the authority given through Noah is crystallized into an organized unit, with a royal head. This is the system which, with modifications, has been used ever since, and which will be perfected under the To-subjector, the Anointed Son, in the next eon. In this eon, however, it began with a city, Babel (*B-bl* IN-DISINTEGRATION), and will end with that same great city, which will have a kingdom over the kings of the earth (Rev.18).

This first kingdom seems to have been based principally on Nimrod's individual prowess, so that his name became a proverb in his day (Gen.10:9), even as the masters before the flood (Gen.6:4). His first subjects, so to speak, were wild animals. He was a master hunter before Yahweh Elohim. He began by mastering one city, Babel, and then added others to it. This is the first example of how great nations are usually formed. Some masterful man seizes power on a small scale and enlarges it to become a great kingdom.

As the influence of Babel, in those days, was limited, Nimrod seems to have built three other centers, probably along or near the Euphrates, and controlled the whole land of Shinar *Shnr*. This seems to have been changed to Babylonia later, from the name of its principal city. These cities were named Erech (*Ark*) and Akkad (*Akd*) and Calneh (*Klne*). This seems to be as far north as the rule of the sons of Ham ever went.

ASHUR'S KINGDOM

At this point a parenthesis is introduced, for the next *kingdom* was founded by Ashur (Gen.10:11,12), who was a son of *Shem* (10:22). This shows that the real subject is rule, not only the names in Noah's family tree.

Ashur (*Ashur* PROGRESSING), a grandson of Noah

through Shem, seems to have retraced his steps northward along the Tigris. There *he*, like Nimrod, built cities, for a great capital is characteristic of the kingdom eons. Jerusalem will be the center of rule under the coming King. So it was from the days of David. Babylon is its opposite. To begin with, however, the Shemite sovereignty was centered in the land of Ashur, or Assyria.

The first city was Nineveh (*Ninue* PROPAGATRESS), a very suitable name for the beginning, for it is immediately followed by three more. This seems to have been an attempt to concentrate the sons of Shem in one district, *out* of which Abram was called to go to the real spiritual center of rule in Jerusalem in the promised land.

The second city was Rehoboth-ir (WIDES-city, Gen. 26:22; 36:37), the third Calah (*Klch* MATURE). The last city was called Resen (*Rsn,* bridle), indicating the general idea of restraint, which is quite fitting for a large city.

The way the passage reads, one might think that Resen or Calah is the great city, instead of Nineveh. The statement that Resen is between Nineveh and Calah seems to indicate that these cities grew together, and thus formed the truly great metropolis and capital of the Assyrian (Ashur) empire.

CITIES

Cain built the first city, in opposition to Elohim's command (Gen.4:17). Adam and Noah built none. Nimrod built the first city in this eon at Babel, the very spot whence God had dispersed mankind. What is wrong with cities? They display the highest achievements of mortals and glorify mankind. The name "city" (NAKED) indicates that the ground has been denuded of vegetation. But living, growing plant life is God's achievement.

Nevertheless, God also has made buildings and temples, and will make a city, New Jerusalem, in which His

glories are manifested. These alone will remain. All the rest will perish, and all glory will be given to God, not to the achievements of mortals.

MIZRAIM

Ham's second son seems to have separated from his brother Cush after Babel, and migrated into the Nile valley. It was quite natural for these early pioneers to settle near fresh water, for that is as essential as land. We have already seen the basis of two empires, one on the Euphrates and one on the Tigris. Now we have the third, on the Nile. The name Mizraim (*Mtzrim* CONSTRICT-S, Narrows) is exceedingly apt, for the land is so dependent on the river for moisture that only a narrow strip on each side can sustain life for many people.

As the name Mizraim and the names of his sons (Gen. 10:13,14) are all given in the plural (-im), they serve in pointing to the peoples who descended from them. The Ludim are the Lydians, mentioned in Jeremiah 46:9. The Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim and Casluhim probably remained in Egypt. The Philistines come before us often in the history of Israel, and the Caphtorim are mentioned in relation to Gaza and the Philistines (*cf* Deut. 2:23; Jer.47:4 and Amos 9:7).

PUT-PHUT-LIBYA

The AV has these three renderings for the Hebrew *Pht*: Put (1 Chron.1:8; Nahum 3:9); Phut (Gen.10:6; Ezek. 27:10); Libya (Ezek.30:5; 38:5; *cp* Acts 2:10); Libyans (Jer.46:9; Dan.11:43). As the occurrence in Acts is from the inspired Greek, it identifies the ancient Put with later Libya. As it is mentioned with Ethiopia on four occasions it must be in Africa, and we may be quite sure that the descendants of Put, the third son of Ham, settled on the Mediterranean coastland west of Egypt.

CANAAN AND HIS DESCENDANTS

A curse had been pronounced on Canaan (Gen.9:25), so the fate of the Canaanite is of special interest. It is a remarkable fact that, at first, they settled in the land of promise. Later, they were destroyed by Israel. This seems to be anticipated in the list given in Genesis 10:15-19, for most of the names are not those of the sons, but the *nations* which later sprang from them. We do not read of Jebus, but of the Jebus*ite*, and the Amor*ite*, and the Girga*site*, and the Hiv*ite*, and the Ark*ite*, etc. These names are those of the dwellers in the land, whom the sons of Israel were charged to exterminate.

The name Canaan should not be confused with Cain, which means *Acquired*, for it denotes one who *Submits*, or *Trafficks*. Canaan seems to have been under the authority of Egypt much of the time, until Israel came and replaced them. Meanwhile they were on the main roads between the sons of Ham, in the south and the sons of Shem in the east, and also traded by sea with the sons of Japheth on the north shores of the Mediterranean, especially the cities of Tyre and Sidon.

Sidon (*Tzidn*, side, Provision) founded a city on the seacoast which, at times, controlled the northern part of the promised land, and, with Tyre, carried much of the commerce on the Mediterranean.

Heth (*Chth* CRACK, Dismay), the second son of Canaan, was the ancestor of the Hittites, with whom the patriarchs came into contact during their sojourn in the southern part of Palestine. We will come across them often in our studies in the life of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It is well to note how they kept aloof from them because of the curse upon Canaan (Gen.23:3-20; 27:46; 49:32). They were in the south, especially in Hebron.

Now (Gen.10:16) the form of the names change from

the patronymic to the -ite form preceded by the article, *the*. These seem to be located mostly between Sidon and Heth. The first one is near the center, the Jebusite *I-bus-i* TRAMPLE-ITE). They dwelt in the region where Jerusalem now is and maintained their independence until the time of David (2 Sam.5:6).

The Amorites (*Amr-i* SAY-ITE) come before us very often, for they had two kingdoms east of the Jordan when Israel entered the land, and later spread to the other side. Abraham dwelt with them (Gen.14:13), and Jacob took land from them (Gen.48:22).

The Girgasites (*Grgsh-i* STIR-CLOSE-ITE, close-sojourner) do not seem to have had much to do with Israel. They are not named after the time of Nehemiah (9:8).

The Hivite (*Chui* LIVE-ITE) seems to have been in Shechem, but later is found near Mount Hermon (Josh. 11:3) and Lebanon (Judges 3:3).

The Arkite (*Orq-i* GNAW-ITE), and the Sinite (*Sin-i* THORN-BUSH-ITE), and the Arvadite (*Arud-i* DOWNING-ITE), and the Zemarite (*Tzmr-i* WOOL-ITE), and the Hamathite (*Chmth-i* WARM-ITE) are mentioned only here and in the genealogy in Chronicles.

BOUNDARIES OF CANAANITES

The west boundary of the Canaanites is very distinct, as it is the sea-shore from Sidon in the north to Gaza in the south, but thence eastward is indefinite, along the south-rim to Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah (*Adm-e* human) and Zeboiim (*Tzb-im* STATIONS) and Lasha (*Lsho* TO-SAVE), supposed to be a medicinal spring east of the Dead Sea (Gen.10:19). As the eastern border was desert it was necessarily indefinite. The north may have reached to Hamath, between the Lebanons, as one of the sons of Canaan had this name.

Hence the sons of Ham are divided by families, by languages, in their lands, and each was a nation for itself (Gen.10:20).

THE SONS OF THE HEBREW

Shem, in our versions, is said to be the father of all the sons of *Eber*, his great-great-great-grandson (Gen.10: 21,24). Shem was the forefather of *all* in this list, so there must be some special reason for bringing in this name. Eber (*Obr*, PASS), with the ending *-i* (*Obri* PASS-ITE) is transliterated "Hebrew," and is used of Abram (Gen.14:13), and of the Hebrew nation (Ex.1:15). As these are the principal objects in view in the rest of this book, it seems more likely that Shem is pointed out as the progenitor of the Hebrew people, who are not indicated otherwise in the annals of Noah. Later on it is also used of the Hebrew language so may imply that these alone passed on the original speech of Adam in the confusion of tongues, which followed.

SHEM'S DESCENDANTS

Shem had five sons, as follows (Gen.10:22-31):

Elam (*Oilm* OBSCURITY) is mentioned first, later applied to a province of Persia (Dan.8:2), of which Chedorlaomer was king (Gen.14:1,9).

Ashur (*Ashur* PROGRESSING) is second in this list. This seems to be the one who left Shinar and built Nineveh (10:11,12).

Then we have Arphaxad (*Arphkshd*), the first son, who is in the line of promise, so is repeated in 11:10-13.

Lud (*Lud* GENERATING) is next. His descendants are mentioned in Isaiah 66:1 and Ezekiel 27:10, to be distinguished from the Lud*im*, descendants of Mizraim, in verse 13.

Aram (*Arm* HIGH) is generally rendered Syria, the high country north of the promised land.

Aram had four sons (Gen.10:23): Uz (*Outz* FIXING), later

used for the land where Job lived; Hul (*Chul* PERFORATING, sand); Gether (*Gthr*); and Mash (*Msh* REMOVE).

Arphaxad generated Kenan (*Qinn* NEST) according to the Septuagint (given as "Cainan" in Luke 3:36), who begot Shelah, who in turn begot Eber (*Obr* PASS). Eber, as noted above, is an important and significant link in the line of our Lord's genealogy. His first son was Peleg, and Joktan was his brother (Gen.10:24,25).

LAND DISTRIBUTED

The name Peleg (*Phlg*) finds its nearest equivalent in our DISTRIBUTE. As a noun it is usually rendered "river" in the AV, but *rillet* in the CV. The tree in the first psalm was not planted by a *river*, for rivers are scarce in the holy land. Almost all the water-courses are steep and carry water only occasionally. A tree planted near one of them is in double danger. It may be washed away by a winter flood or dried out in a summer drought. How much more comforting if we picture it as planted in a garden by an irrigation ditch! Then the water comes when needed most, in the heat of summer.

The *phlg* was a *distributor* of water, a rillet (Psa.119: 136; Prov.5:16; Isa.30:25; 32:2; Lam.3:48), which could be turned where needed (Prov.21:1), or it might be oil (Job 29:6). Peleg, however, was the distributor of the land. Hitherto there was so much land that probably no one thought of claiming any special part as their own. Now that Noah introduced government, the need for some regulation in this regard seems to have been met by Peleg, so that he was called the *Distributor*, something like a modern land agent. A few verses further on (Gen. 10:32), the subject is again broached, for there we read, "from these the nations *parted* over the earth after the deluge." A rillet of water *parts* a garden into plots. While its function is not to separate, but distribute, yet in effect it makes a division. So

with the nations. At first, the boundaries were natural features, especially water, so, like the rivulets in a garden, the nations were separated by streams. Nations, today, find this a good boundary. But this distribution has probably led to more strife and bloody warfare than anything else in man's day. The rivers east of the Jordan and the Dead sea were often used as boundaries. The Euphrates is the future north and east border of the promised land.

Peleg's father was Eber, PASSER, the first "Hebrew." Like Abram, he probably left his birthplace and passed elsewhere (Gen.14:13). The sons of Israel were called Hebrews in Egypt, for they were a foreign element in the population. It is well to remember that, with his surname, he was Peleg Hebrew. The Israelites were emigrants, Hebrews in the land of promise, and so they are today, once more. That is the cause of the war with the Arabs. In Peleg's day, men were beginning to scatter over the surface of the entire earth. That is what led to the building of Babel (Gen.11:4).

As Yahweh Elohim's plan for this eon and the next calls for one nation to rule and bless many nations, so His early efforts all tend to divide humanity, first into three divisions, Shemites, Japhethites, and Hamites, and these into many nations. In Deuteronomy (32:8) we read:

> When the Supreme gave the nations allotments,
> When He parted the sons of Adam,
> He stationed the boundaries of the peoples
> According to the number of the sons of El.

Yet the promised land was first given to the descendants of Canaan, who is specially mentioned along with Noah's three sons. They received the land from Sidon through Sodom, to Lasha. It looked as if no land had been reserved for the chosen nation.

The land was not reserved for Israel in the days of Peleg. Even the small portion they have hitherto occupied had

been given to seven other nations (Acts 13:19), and rem nants were left in order to test them. The slavery of Egypt afforded Yahweh an opportunity to be their Saviour, and the trials of the wilderness taught them His provision. The conquest of the land not only revealed His power, but the inviolability of His promises. He had promised the land to Abram, to Isaac and to Jacob, yet they never occupied any of it, except a burial place, as theirs. After they had developed into a nation, in Egypt and the wilderness, then they immediately began to exercise their function as the head of the nations, by judging the descendants of Canaan and taking over their land.

THE SONS OF JOKTAN

Joktan had a large family, including thirteen sons (Gen. 10:26-29). As most of these do not play any further part in divine revelation, we will merely mention the names with probable meanings where possible: Almodad (COMPRESS-FOND); Sheleph (PULL); Hazarmaveth (ENVIRONDYING); Jerah (Spirited); Hadoram (OBTRUDE-HIGH); Uzal (DEPARTING); Diklah; Obal; Abimael (FATHER-FROM-SUBJECTOR); Sheba (RETURN); Ophir (ASH); Havilah (PERFORATE, travail) and Jobab (Interior).

Why are these given? Could it be that they represent Arabian tribes near the border of Israel and others which settled on the shores with whom Solomon had dealings? But the following note (v.30) as to the location of these families is very vague in our versions, and in the Hebrew. The Septuagint has *as far as,* for the Hebrew "as," so gives Mesha as the western boundary and Sephar as the eastern hill country border, which probably refers to the short chain of hills on the Persian gulf.

Thus the nations were distributed over the central part of Eurasian Africa after the deluge and Babel.

A. E. Knoch

DAVID'S UNUSUAL KINDNESS
(2 Samuel 9)

9 + **David** [sa]**inquired,** [t] **Is** there anyone [fr]**still** [w] −**left** ›**of** the **house of Saul,** +**that I may** [d]**show kindness** [wi]**to him** [i]**for** the [p]**sake of Jonathan?** 2 +**Now** there was a **servant** ›**of** the **house of Saul, and his name** was **Ziba.** +**When they** [l]**called** › **him to David,** + **the king** [sa]**asked** › **him,** Are **you Ziba?** + **He** [sa]**replied,** I am **your servant.** 3 + **The king** [sa]**continued,** Is there **nobody,** [fr]**even** one **man,** left ›**of** the **house of Saul,** +**that I may** [d]**show** [wi] **him** the **kindness of Elohim?** + **Ziba** [sa]**answered** › **the king,** There is [fr]**still** a **son** ›**of Jonathan, smitten** on both **feet.** 4 +**Then the king** [sa]**asked** › **him, Where** is **he?** + **Ziba** [sa]**replied to the king, Behold, he** is in the **house of Machir son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar.**

5 +**So** ˙**king David** [l]**sent** out + to [l]**take him from** the **house of Machir son of Ammiel** [f]**at Lo-debar.** 6 +**When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan son of Saul** [l]**came to David,** + **he** [l]**fell on his face and** [l]**prostrated** him**self.** + **David** [l]**said, Mephibosheth! And he** [sa]**replied, Behold,** I am **your servant.** 7 + **David** [sa]**told** › **him, Do not** [l]**fear, for I shall** [d]**show,** yea [d]**show**− **kindness** [wi]**to you** [i]**for** the [p]**sake of your father Jonathan.** + **I will restore to you** `**all** the **field of your** grand**father Saul; and you´ shall eat bread regularly** [on]**at my table.** 8 **He** [l]**prostrated** him**self** +**again and** [l]**said, What** is **your servant, that you turn around to** ˙a ˙**dying cur** [w]**such as me?**

9 +**Then the king** [l]**called** › **Ziba, Saul's lad, and** [l]**said to him, I give to your lord's** grand**son all** [w]**that** [b]**belonged to**

Saul and to all his household. 10 + **You will cultivate `the ground for him, you and your sons and your slaves.** + **You will bring** in the yield, +**that** there **will** *b*]**be bread for your lord's** 7]**house**hold, **and they** can **eat~.** +**As** for **your lord's** grand**son Mephibosheth, he shall eat bread regularly** *on*]**at my table. (**+ **Ziba** ›**had fifteen sons and twenty slaves.)**

11 + **Ziba** [*sa*]**replied to the king, According** to **all** *w*]**that my lord the king** has [**instructed `his servant, so shall your servant do.** +**So Mephibosheth ate**[*on*]**at** 7]**David's~***c* **table like one** *f*]**of the king's sons.** 12 + **Mephibosheth** ›**had** a **young son, and his name** was **Mica.** + **All** those **dwelling** in **Ziba's house**hold became **Mephibosheth's servants.** 13 +**Yet Mephibosheth** was **dwelling in Jerusalem, for he ate**[**regularly** *on*]**at the king's table.** + **He** was **lame** in **both his feet.**

MEPHIBOSHETH

THE NINTH chapter of 2 Samuel provides a wonderful foreshadowing of God's grace. David inquired of the whereabouts of any descendants of Jonathan, that he might show them "the kindness of Elohim" (v.3). And truly the kindness that David showed went far beyond the human norm. Twice he mentions that it was for the sake of his beloved Jonathan (2 Sam.9:1,7).

Ziba had been a servant of Saul, and had taken control and possession of Saul's property since Saul had fallen before the Philistines. Ziba had become quite wealthy by this time, having a large household and a number of servants (v.10).

Mephibosheth, fearing that the king might massacre Saul's house, was living in self-exile. Mephibosheth's lameness was due to an accident that occurred when the Israelites were fleeing from the Philistines at the time of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam.4:4).

There is some difference of opinion on the meaning of

Mephibosheth's name, but, clearly, the meaning is related to shame. This may be a name, like Ichabod (1 Sam.4:21), that is related to a national catastrophe, or perhaps to the laming accident. Mephibosheth was dwelling in Lo-debar (v.4), which may mean, a place of "no pasture," or even a place of "nothing." In either case, the name harmonizes with Mephibosheth's own testimony in verse 8 that he was desolate.

When David had Mephibosheth brought to him, Mephibosheth prostrated himself before him. David was the first to speak, and he told Mephibosheth that he would receive kindness for the sake of another. David restored all of Saul's holdings to him and made him part of the royal household. This was a great financial loss to Ziba.

A STRIKING PARALLEL

All of this is like God's approach to us. We are alienated and distant from Him. He seeks us out and draws us to Himself. He speaks first, blessing with blessings greater than all our losses. Making us part of His household, He even graces that we may share in the allotment of Christ, for Whose sake we are blest.

"For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, died . . . . God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes" (Rom.5:6,8). "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, being rich, because of you He became poor, that you, by His poverty, should be rich" (2 Cor.8:9). "For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8,9).

EFFECTS OF GRACE

But the story of Mephibosheth does not end here with

its foreshadowings of God's grace. We see also, through testing, that David's gracious kindness also bore good fruit in Mephibosheth's life.

During Absalom's rebellion, when David was forced to flee Jerusalem, Ziba provided David with donkeys and food supplies. David asked Ziba where Mephibosheth was, and Ziba replied that he was staying in Jerusalem hoping to be made king when the dust settled after Absalom's attempted coup. At this reply, David returned all of Saul's property to Ziba, from whom he had taken it to give to Mephibosheth (2 Sam.16:1-4).

However, when David was finally able to return to Jerusalem, he was met by Mephibosheth, who had not cared for himself, or shaved or changed clothing since David had left Jerusalem—thus he waited for the king to return in peace (2 Sam.19:24).

At this point we have a glimpse of the wisdom that was passed on to Solomon (*cp* 1 Kings 3:16-28). David asked Mephibosheth why he had not gone with him. Mephibosheth replied that he had intended to but was left behind and had been vilified by Ziba. David, seemingly in frustration, replied that his decree was for Ziba and Mephibosheth to divide all Saul's property between them. This is quite similar to Solomon's command to divide the living child and give half to each one claiming to be its mother. Mephibosheth's answer rang true with his loyalty to David when he said, "Just let him take the whole, inasmuch as my lord the king has come to his home in peace" (2 Sam.19:25-30).

We are told of David's kindness to Mephibosheth again in 2 Samuel 21:5-9, when he spared him from the claims of the Gibeonites. Apparently David realized Mephibosheth's loyalty and Ziba's cunning. The story began with grace, and so it ends.

J. Philip Scranton

"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"
⁕
JUSTIFICATION OUT OF FAITH

Question:

I would like to know what I actually have to do to be saved. I have been taught that if I will accept Jesus as my Saviour, then I will be saved. Even so, at church, the pastor often asks backslidden members *truly* to accept Christ for the first time. He thinks that they must not have done so to begin with, since they continued to be quite sinful for years afterward, following their first profession of faith. He always says, "You can't be walking in the spirit until you're in possession of the spirit"; and, "The mark of the true Christian is self-control."

⁕When he gets angry, he says that his anger (which he calls, "indignation") is "of a righteous spirit and is a righteous indignation against wrongdoing," even though it seems to me that he is not always right and that the way he acts in such cases is the same as the way I act when I lose self-control. I wonder: Is it all right to be angry sometimes, at least when it is in response to wrongdoing?

Another thing: our denomination teaches that "the sinner is justified through Christ on the condition of his or her confession of faith and repentance." Yet you seem to say that no conditions are required. Regardless, I do desire to please the Lord, even though sometimes I have a stronger desire simply for my own pleasure.

In any case, I wonder what it means to be really

"walking in spirit," and to be having self-control therein (Gal.5:16,23). It seems to me that your teaching about "all-sufficient grace" doesn't leave any room for free will; yet everyone I know (not just my pastor) says that it is by our own free choice that we will be saved or lost, so as to be responsible for our own destiny.

Answer:

I will try to address your various questions concerning walking in spirit, issues of anger and self-control, as well as about grace, choice, and conditions of salvation.

Israel, in the coming eon, provides an ideal illustration of walking in spirit. Yahweh had said to Moses concerning Israel, "O that their heart might become this way with them: to fear Me and to observe all My instructions all the days, that it might be well with them and with their sons for the eon" (Deut.5:29).

Under the old covenant, however, Yahweh had not given them a disposition subject to His law, one which was able to keep it (Rom.8:7; *cp* Deut.29:4).

Even so, under the new covenant, all of this will be gloriously different. Then, rather than merely commanding them from without to obey His law (especially since they were unable to do so of themselves), Yahweh will bestow His law within them, writing it on their hearts (Jer.31:33). Accordingly, He will give them a new heart, and bestow a new spirit within them. He will take away the heart of stone from their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh (Ezek.36:26).[1]

Then He will become Elohim to them indeed; and they

1. Here the sense of the figure is that He will take away from their flesh its former unyieldingness toward obedience (i.e., its "heart of stone"), and, in its place give them a new center and core of spiritual being (a "new heart"), one which is soft and malleable, receptive to the influence of His spirit (a "heart of flesh").

will become His people, worthy of the name (Jer.31:33). Thus He will *cause* them to observe and do His judgments, and *make it* that they go in His statutes (Ezek.36:27).

Israel's salvation under the new covenant, in principle, is the only scriptural kind of salvation. Indeed, whatever their form, in essence, there are only two possible concepts of salvation: (1) human; (2) divine. The one effectually affirms that man must *save himself,* even if it is cleverly claimed that this saving of oneself is merely from disqualification for God's reciprocal, further deliverance. The other affirms that "if he is to be saved at all, he must be saved by a power outside himself, that in the strict sense of the word there is no such thing as a self-saved man, that the saved man is ever one who says with Paul, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' The contrast between these two [views of salvation] is clear and unmistakable. The one calls upon man to save himself; the other brings him into contact with a Power that saves him."[2]

Paul has made it plain that the only sphere in which one may be walking if one would avoid consummating the lusts of the flesh, is that of *spirit* (Gal.5:16). The fruit of the spirit is all good; the works of the flesh are all bad. No flesh at all shall be justified by works of law, because no flesh at all is able to obey law. In instances where man does obey law, it is not of his own flesh—his own self—that he does so. It is rather that he does so as a fruit of the spirit; that is, as a consequence of the operations of the imperceptible power of God, in Whom all move, live, and are (Acts 17:28), the One Who gives to all life and breath and all (Acts 17:25; *cp* John 3:27). Hence, Paul makes it plain that one must not only *undertake* in spirit, but *complete* in spirit as well (*cp* Gal.3:3,5).

2. Samuel G. Craig; biographical preface in Biblical and Theological Studies, by Benjamin B. Warfield (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1968), p.xxxvi.

LOVE IS NOT INCENSED

You mentioned that when your pastor gets angry, he says that *his* anger is "righteous indignation against wrongdoing," even though it appears to you that his anger is really no different than your own loss of self-control when you become angry. Undoubtedly you are correct that when your pastor becomes angry, he too does so as the result of his own loss of self-control, the same as anyone else whenever he or she becomes angry. Your pastor is simply deceiving himself in thinking that *his* anger is a "righteous" indignation, unlike that of so many others whose anger, clearly, is an unrighteous indignation.

Practically all anger is against (perceived) wrongdoing. Your pastor's practice of terming his anger "indignation" (which is a close synonym for "anger") and claiming that since it is somehow of a "righteous spirit" and stands against wrongdoing that it is therefore justified, is delusional.

The only "righteous indignation" in the universe is the indignation of God; it is manifested through Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God. God's indignation is expressed against human irreverence and injustice. It is not reflective of the depth of His heart, which is love; instead, it is an expedient manifestation which He *assumes* in accord with His purpose, through His Son, Who is the Emblem of His *assumption* (Heb.1:3). In the depth of His Being, God is love (1 John 4:8); and, love is not incensed, neither is it taking account of evil (1 Cor.13:5).

Paul asks rhetorically, "Are *you* indignant [*orgizō*], *and not sinning*? Do not let the sun be sinking on your vexation, nor yet be giving place to the Adversary" (Eph. 4:26,27). And, "Let *all* bitterness and fury and *anger* [*orgê*] and clamor and calumny be taken away from you, together with all malice, yet become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, dealing graciously among yourselves, according as God also, in Christ, deals graciously with you" (Eph.4:31,32).

When we become angry, this is because certain things *cause* us to become angry. Therefore, it is not as if, in the last analysis, we could have avoided becoming angry, whenever we do become angry. Even so, since our anger still misses the mark of the ideal, therefore it is a sin; and, we will do well to ask God for grace to soon dissipate our anger, lest the sun should be sinking on our vexation.

THE POWER OF THE ALMIGHTY

The very idea of human moral responsibility in the sense of man's having ultimate control over his own behavior, is not only unscriptural in various other relations, but is especially incompatible with Paul's epistle to the Galatians. If the flesh is in control, then the spirit is, at best, a needful tool in its service; then, the spirit is no longer the supreme power of salvation over all, upon which all our hopes are based and aspirations depend. Then, we no longer rely on the living God Who is our Saviour (1 Tim.2:3b; 4:10), but on the dying old man which becomes its own saviour.

Self-control is not immanent within the flesh. Furthermore, since self-control is itself a *fruit of* the spirit, it is evident that it is a dependent, not independent, capacity. All exercise some measure of self-control, at least in certain areas of behavior. Yet anyone who exercises self-control in any behavioral field, does so as a fruit of the spirit, which is to say because of the power of the Almighty and supreme God Who has produced such self-control within the creature.

Since the phenomenon of self-control itself is the effect of the cause which produced it, it is unintelligent to say that self-control is a matter of free will or contrary choice. Self-control *must* exist as it does exist, and not otherwise, even where there is much disciplined choice and delib-

erative choice, in one's struggles of self-discipline in the pursuit of righteousness. Consequently, wherever virtue is present, boasting in self is debarred.

PREVAILING DESIRES

The main thing that prevents believers from grasping the true message of Galatians, is their belief in freewill responsibility. The notion of categorical contrary choice, commonly termed "free will," is the foundation stone of worldly ethics even as of traditional morality. Free will is the ultimate sacred cow. It must be given leave to roam where it will; all who deny its sanctity are either evil, delusional, or both. To most, it is simply unthinkable that it should be a mistaken belief. Here, the church is in hearty accord with the world, and does much to promulgate and sustain this moral ethic, wherever its influence is felt.

A power of categorical contrary choice, however, is a power that no man has, or can have. No one can choose contrary to his own present disposition; not even God, for He cannot deny Himself (2 Tim.2:13).

Whatever we may choose, we choose it because of who we are and the way that we are. That is, "from their *fruits* you shall be recognizing *them*" (Matt.7:16a). Each tree is known by its fruit. It is ever true that grapes are not culled from thorns, nor figs from star thistles. Thus every good tree *is* producing ideal fruit, yet the rotten tree *is* producing noxious fruit. A good tree *cannot* bear noxious fruit; neither is a rotten tree producing ideal fruit (Luke 6:43,44; Matt.7:16b,17).

Just as one cannot desire what one does *not* desire, one cannot choose what one does *not* find choice, else choice is no longer *choice*. We enjoy the practical freedom to do what we want, according to our own pleasure, as opposed to being compelled to act, contrary to our own choice. Though we may do as we please, this is not to say that we

may have whatever pleasure we may wish to have, but only whatever pleasure we do have.

Neither our past or present desires, according to which we choose as we do, are a matter of choice, but rather of nature, or developed state of mind. Desires are not something that one *chooses*, but something that one *possesses*. One either *has* a certain desire or else he does not. And, any certain desire, in relation to some conflicting desire, is either the greater desire of the two or else it is not. In time, one may well cultivate new desires; but if so, it is as a consequence of one's previous desires that one does so.

We may *do* many things that, considered in themselves, we do not find choice. But whenever we do something that we do not actually choose, per se, this is because of the inextricable connection which exists between what we do and something else, something that we do find choice and actually choose. A nursing mother may subject herself to much that is most wearisome and undesirable in the care of her infant child. But if so, it is because of her strong desire to nourish and care for the child that she does so. Therefore, the fact that we often do things that, considered in themselves, we do not find desirable or choice, has no bearing on the issue of free will.

We act voluntarily; that is, we choose according to our greatest desire, in the moment of decision. This is so, even in the case of choices made in favor of immediate gratification, ones which may preclude our realization of cherished goals. Considered in the abstract, we may well love righteousness more than the pleasures of sin. However, if our greatest desire with respect to our present behavior is to gain the gratification of a certain desire, albeit a certain desire with adverse consequences, we will nevertheless choose to act according to our greatest present desire (*cp* James 1:14,15). It is because of this fact, that we need a real Saviour, One Who will change our desires. Admin-

istered by the flesh, good advice and useful techniques simply will not suffice (*cf* Rom.7:12,14b-25).

Over the years, various ones have asked me this same question which you have asked me now in your present letter: "What must I do to be saved?" to which my earnest response has always been thus: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be being saved [*cf* Acts 16:30,31]. This is the simplest answer I can give you. While there is much more to say here, this much, itself, is true and vital to know. When you want to know more about this question, please ask me further. In the meantime, be careful not to infer anything concerning it, since inferences are not of faith and may be mistaken."

DECEPTIONS OF LEGALISM

The teaching that affirms, or simply entails it being so, that a man is justified because of his obedience to law, nullifies the truth that justification is *in Christ*, not in law. This is so whether the law, thus conceived, should be that of circumcision, or of simply "accepting Christ." The principal error is that of legalism itself, not the particular form of legalism that is presently being championed. It is because of their failure to see this main point that most today do not realize that, in principle, the teachings of salvation which they themselves embrace are just as legalistic and false as those once accepted by the Galatians, in their apostasy from the apostle Paul.

It is not at issue that none are justified apart from faith. The question, rather, is whether one's acceptance of Christ and faith in His sacrificial death, constitutes the fulfilling of a requirement or lawful obligation. If it does, then we are justified by something that we do, *not* by what Christ has done.

To say that we are justified by what Christ has done, but on the "condition" of something that we do, does not

change the case, in respect to legalism. In such a usage, "condition" is the equivalent of "requirement"; and requirement is the equivalent of rule of law. Legalism disguised, is still legalism.

The usual artful claim is that the sinner's faith does not justify him, but rather *qualifies* him for justification in Christ. The word "qualification," however, like "condition," speaks of the fulfilling of requirement.

When one fulfills a requirement, he does what is right. And one who does what is right is one who is declared righteous, or justified, in respect of what he has done. Therefore, the claim that in meeting a supposed requirement to believe, the sinner's faith still does not justify him, is an inconsistent statement. Obviously, if there is a requirement that must be met and one meets that requirement, one *is*, ipso facto, declared righteous or justified in respect of having met that requirement.

To say that Paul in his teaching of the sinner's justification through Christ is to be understood as speaking solely of the sinner's further and primary justification, and that this—once one qualifies oneself for it—is solely through Christ, is truly an artful invention. It is one of the many artful notions in support of autosoterism (i.e., self-salvation) and free will which Luther termed "tropes" (Greek, *tropos*, a turning).

A trope is "the use of a word or [phrase] in a different sense than that which properly belongs to it, for giving life or emphasis to an idea." When used pejoratively, a trope refers not to a legitimate, figurative turn of expression, but to an unnatural sense or forced interpretation imposed upon a particular word or phrase, in the interests of the defense or justification of some wider subject.[3]

3. Webster's New International Dictionary, second edition, unabridged (Springfield, MA: G & C Merriam Company, 1957), p.2721.

It is contrary to a straightforward and unforced reading of the word of the evangel to say, where Paul affirms that we are justified solely *through Christ* and not by our own works, that while this is so, this may only be understood to be true on the condition of our confession of faith and repentance. How can it be that the sinner is justified solely through Christ and not because of anything of himself, if the ultimate reason for his justification is solely that of his own obedience, and that by means of his own free will?

Besides, Paul nowhere teaches, whether explicitly or by corollary, that we are only justified through Christ on the condition of our confession of faith and repentance. But he explicitly teaches that it is in the *grace* of God that we are justified through Christ, and that this debars boasting in self in consideration of our possession of the blessing of justification (Rom.3:27). Justification through Christ's obedience on the condition of our own obedience, is the equivalent of the salesman's "buy one, get one free," or "free with every purchase." The "free" item is not really free at all, but is gained as a reward in consideration of satisfied obligation. It is not a gracious gift, but an incentive to buy. In the case of the usual teaching concerning heaven and hell, it is an incentive to buy on pains of eternal burnings for failure to comply with the demands of the so-called "free gift." What extreme inventions or tropes to which men are driven in seeking to justify their false claims, contrary to the plain teaching of the evangel itself!

An illustration of what I have in mind here concerning law, flesh, and spirit, is afforded us in the case of those who come under the proclamation of the evangel. However graphic and frightening the preacher's imagery may be of the wrath to come which will befall all who fail to make their decision for Christ, those to whom Christ remains veiled, cannot even "see" Him; much less can they find Him choice and so choose Him accordingly. Yet,

in an instant, should Christ be unveiled by God's spirit (*cf* Gal.1:15,16) and the *former* unbeliever be given eyes with which to see Him according as He is—as the Chosen One of God (Luke 9:35)—and so be graciously granted to be believing in Him accordingly (*cp* Phil.1:29), the former unbeliever will no longer be an unbeliever.

Such is the nature of the phenomenon termed "fruit of the spirit." The fruit of the spirit is not only love, joy, peace, kindness, and goodness, but it is also patience, meekness, faithfulness, and self-control, these latter four virtues being especially important to the preservation of the former five. Even so, every one of these virtues, Paul insists, are the *fruit* of the *spirit.*

❊

Question:

Since we are not justified apart from faith, but rather, are justified *by* faith (Rom.5:1), how can you say that we are not required to believe?

Answer:

It is a mistake to take Paul's words "justified by faith" (Rom.5:1), as if justification were an acquisition instead of a gracious gift—an attainment which God, in reciprocity, grants to the sinner only in response to his having fulfilled a divine requirement by believing. Nothing could be more false! We are God's *chosen* ones (Rom.8:33), not, with respect to our justification, God's qualifying ones. Justification is granted to us *gratuitously and in grace* (Rom. 3:24), not reciprocally or as a reward.

Traditional Christian authors write as if the only way that "by" (in "justified by faith") could possibly be employed is in a transactional sense, as in, "By doing what is required, you will qualify for your reward." It never seems to dawn

on them that any such sense must be an erroneous sense, for it is contrary to the gratuitous and gracious nature of the evangel.

Besides, the Greek is not some English transactional "by," but simply *ek,* meaning "out [of]." Our justification, *intermediately speaking* (for ultimately our justification is out of God), is sourced in "faith." But Paul declares not that it is out of our faith but that it is out of the faith of Jesus Christ. It is "*through* Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom. 3:22); and, in this relative sense, it is "*out* [of] *the faith of Christ*" (Gal.2:16). The saint's own faith only gains for him a knowledge of the justification which God has already achieved for him through Christ (*cf* Rom.4:25,5:1; 5:9).

It is not that God *requires* us to believe. What a terrible error is such a claim! The Scriptures nowhere declare nor entail any such thing. Rather, since we are chosen in grace and justified gratuitously, it becomes evident that all such claims are wholly unscriptural. Instead of *requiring* us to believe if we would be chosen, God graciously grants a measure of faith to each of His chosen ones (Phil.1:29; Rom. 12:3). Our faith, whether in the grace which first granted it to us, or in its present sustenance, is a blessing in grace (*cp* 1 Cor.15:10,11). Besides, long before we first believed, according to His grace (Eph. 1:6), God chose us in Christ before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4). He did not, as a Rewarder and only at a much later time, choose us in reciprocity in response to our having accepted Christ.

The entire notion which in fact represents salvation as a transaction, is completely mistaken. Our salvation is not a matter of our "meeting the conditions," whether we suppose the conditions to be specific deeds of law or simply a spirit of non-resistance which results in faith. Anyone who supposes that, in the last analysis, salvation is granted to us because of something of ourselves, is thoroughly deceived as to the very nature of the evangel. J.R.C.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS SALVATION AND HIS INDIGNATION

GOD'S EVANGEL of justification, conciliation and glorification through the death of Christ brings God's power for salvation into our lives, and it reveals God's righteousness to our hearts. But immediately after this welcome word in Romans 1:16,17, we read of God's *indignation* because of human *irreverence and unrighteousness* (Rom.1:18). This, in itself, is not such a welcome piece of information. Yet Paul connects it clearly with what he wants to say about the evangel and with his zeal in bringing the evangel.

What is said about human activity in Romans 1:16,17 is confined to the matter of believing. The emphasis there is on God, and what is said about God is welcome and glorious. But in Romans 1:18-3:20 a great deal is said about human beings (much to our discredit), and what is said about God throughout this long section of scripture is sometimes disturbing in itself even though it speaks of His power and righteousness and faithfulness.

It is, therefore, quite striking that the three themes, (1) God's power for salvation, (2) the revelation of God's righteousness in the evangel, and (3) the revelation of God's indignation against the irreverence and unrighteousness of human beings, are tightly bound together. There is a certain and significant connection between Romans 1:16,17 and Romans 1:18-3:20. Yet we can misunderstand, and often have misunderstood, the connection. Romans 1:18-3:20 is not good news, nor is it "the dark side of the gospel," but it is of great consequence to Paul in his enthusiasm for

the evangel, and to all believers in our appreciation of the evangel. Even more so, it plays an important role in the revelation of the glory of God. God's indignation is not a part of the evangel, but it contributes critically to the value of the evangel.

THE LITTLE WORD "FOR"

The apostle has already explained that, in feeling an indebtedness to all kinds of people, he was eager to bring the evangel (Rom.1:14,15). And he has gone on to explain this enthusiasm for the evangel:

For not ashamed am I of the evangel,
for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing . . . .
For in it God's righteousness is being revealed, out of faith for faith . . . .
For God's indignation is being revealed from heaven on all the irreverence and injustice of men . . . .

At the beginning of Romans 1:16, the Greek connective word, *gar,* rendered "for" in the CV, introduces Paul's evidence for his eagerness to bring the evangel. He is not ashamed of the evangel, that is, he rejoices with pride in what it has to say.

But this is only to enlarge the expression of his enthusiasm. The specific reasons for Paul's eagerness and lack of shame are three in number, all of which are introduced to us by this same little connective, "for," in verses 16b, 17 and 18. These draw attention to *God's* power, righteousness and indignation.

We are especially concerned, in this article, with the third reason for Paul's pride in the evangel.

It is well to place this third reason for Paul's pride in the evangel at the beginning of a new paragraph. The first two reasons for Paul's lack of shame in the message center on

features of the evangel itself, while this third reason centers on the dark background which brings out the goodness of the evangel. The first two reasons are positive in every way; this third reason, which Paul develops through sixty-four verses, makes the glory of the first two stand out by the dismaying features it discusses.

Nevertheless, as we have noted, the apostle connects Romans 1:18-3:20 solidly with his enthusiasm for the evangel. He does so by the same connective he used to join his thoughts in 1:14-17. The connective, "for," is a *coordinating conjunction*. There is a contrast in thought between Romans 1:16,17 and Romans 1:18-3:20, but the whole of Romans 1:14-3:20 (and beyond) is coordinated in exposing the evangel as a genuinely and supremely welcome message from God.

A CRITICAL CONNECTION

The connection between Romans 1:14-17 and Romans 1:18-3:20, therefore, is that the latter establishes the great need of the evangel in no uncertain terms. In doing so, this long passage of scripture greatly enhances the goodness of the evangel, which meets this need and ultimately is realized in the justification of all mankind (Rom.5:18,19).

The need is twofold. In relation to *humanity* there is the dire necessity of the righteous salvation God provides. But more important than this, in relation to *God* there is the critical need of the fulfillment of His purpose for humanity and all creation. This involves the incorporation of all God's dealings with humanity—His placings and choosings and His indignation, His mercy, His grace, His patience, His forbearance, His judgments and callings—into our considerations of the evangel.

It is imperative that we relate the problem of human unrighteousness set before us in Romans 1:18-3:20 with the solution of the faith of Christ, set before us in much

of the remainder of the epistle. Romans 1:18-3:20 is not a sermon exhorting us to do our part in God's work of salvation. It tells us the honest truth. We cannot do anything to make us right before God. It tells us our only hope is in that grace of God which is announced in the evangel of God revealing the righteousness of God in His powerful work of salvation. If Romans 1:18-3:20 is treated apart from the evangel, or is treated as a call for us to get back to the work of reforming ourselves, it comes to speak against the evangel.

GOD'S INDIGNATION BEING REVEALED

From heaven God views the vast race of humanity that He has brought into existence. And viewing them as they are in themselves, He displays His indignation.

Of course He has counseled that humanity would be this way during the present eons; He planned it to be so, and indeed planned for the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. But that does not mean He is not indignant or that He will not judge. He intended that which He knew would call for the expression of indignation and the execution of a judgment leading to condemnation.

This displeasure of God takes different forms. At present it consists of God giving humanity over to uncleanness, dishonor and disqualification (Rom.1:24-32). At times in the past and still to come in the future God appoints a distinct but limited period of indignation in which He pours out great fury, affliction and distress (Rom.2:5-10).

The indignation of God is righteous. The day of indignation reveals the righteous judgment of God, Who will be paying each one in accord with his acts (Rom.2:5,6). But it does not reveal God's righteousness in justifying the irreverent or lead to the achievement of God's objective in creating humanity in His image and likeness (Gen.1:27). God's indignation is justified in the short run; it restrains

the progress of evil and deals fairly with wicked acts (*cf* Rom.3:6). But in the long run, in relation to God's will for humanity, it only seems to add another obstacle that must be overcome. There are many puzzles about God's indignation that can only be solved by the evangel.

It is an essential part of the goodness of the evangel that it shows us God's indignation is not actually an obstacle to the achievement of God's purpose. Rather the evangel shows us that God's indignation is a limited and temporary operation that calls for that achievement and makes its glory known. God's indignation educates, but it does not save. It is a necessary part of the process toward the goal, but it is not the goal and does not achieve the goal. Only the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners, only that which is spoken of by the evangel of God, can finally justify all the steps of the process, both the experience of human unrighteousness and the divine indignation against that unrighteousness.

THE VAST NEED

God's indignation is directed against *all* the irreverence and injustice of human beings. No wicked act against God or man is excepted. Apart from the obedience of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners (i.e., apart from what is announced in the evangel), not one is righteous, not even one.

But if the evangel speaks of a solution to the problem of human unrighteousness and God's indignation against this unrighteousness, with respect to the believer, does it have anything good to say, anything evangelistic, with respect to the problem of *all* human irreverence and injustice?

What a mass of failure and offense! The apostle spares no details. In line after line he lists the record of human wickedness and its consequences.

At the head of the list is the failure to acknowledge and appreciate God as He is and has made Himself known to

be. This is expressed by three specific charges: (1) Human beings retain the truth concerning God in unrighteousness. (2) They do not glorify or thank God as God. (3) They change His glory into the likeness of corruptible beings. These are elaborated as follows:

> *[Human beings] are retaining the truth in injustice, because that is which known of God is apparent among them, for God manifests it to them. For His invisible attributes are descried from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements, besides His imperceptible power and divinity,*
>
> *for them to be defenseless*
>
> *because, knowing God, not as God do they glorify or thank Him, but vain were they made in their reasonings, and darkened is their unintelligent heart.*
>
> *Alleging themselves to be wise they are made stupid, and they change the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an image of a corruptible human being and flying creatures and quadrupeds and reptiles.*

THAT WHICH IS KNOWN OF GOD

The first charge against humanity is that we retain the truth in injustice. The "truth" spoken of here is truth about God. It is "that which is known of God." To be more specific, Paul tells us he is referring to God's "invisibles," which, fortunately for us who may find the term a bit obscure, he further associates with God's *achievements* and His *imperceptible power.* Life and energy, intelligence and emotions, patterns and order, and all the phenomena that science investigates and we all give some thought to, these are all of God and tell us of Him.

We come to know a person best by what that person does. Just to see what someone looks like is seldom much help. So also with God (Who is invisible). In another series of articles I have been focusing on the actions of God as recorded in the opening chapters of Genesis to see what they may say about God and what He is like. A brief review of these considerations might be relevant here:

In the first chapter of Genesis, what God says comes to be so, and this is seen to be good, even *very* good.

Taking these acts of God, His speaking and His seeing, as definitive of the truth about Him, we must conclude that God is One Who powerfully brings about what He says as an achievement that is good. When we read in subsequent chapters of Genesis and later Scriptures of God saying things that do not immediately become so or do not directly appear as achievements of good, we relate these matters to the definitive divine actions of Genesis 1:1-2:3. We affirm that they eventually will be seen as important contributions to His glorious goal. Similarly, in our lives, we find God bringing experiences and situations which cannot yet be seen as good. And for those familiar with God's Word, there is continually the experience that much good that God has spoken is not yet so, for God calls that which is not [yet so] as though it were (Rom.4:17). Nevertheless, we hold firmly to the conviction that God is One Who surely and successfully brings about the good of which He speaks.

In holding to this conviction we are retaining the truth about God in righteousness. But this is only because God has given us a measure of faith. Otherwise, human beings retain this truth in unrighteousness.

People may, for instance, deny that God exists. This is unjust. Or they may outwardly recognize God mostly on occasions of great anger or dismay and speak of Him as One Who ought to damn the cause of our anger. As human beings, we know of His power but retain that knowledge unrighteously, distorting it. Or we may be hypocritical

about what we know of God, or contradictory, saying, for example, that He is wholly in charge but has given mankind a libertarian, free will to which He must submit.

These are serious sins of irreverence and unrighteousness. But their very seriousness and prevalence makes the proclamation of God's work of power for salvation in righteousness such good news. How good that message of salvation is depends on how true and extensive the salvation is. The death of Christ must deal with every human expression of irreverence in holding the truth about God in unrighteousness.

GLORIFYING AND THANKING GOD

In human beings, as we are, irreverent reasonings about God replace the good and healthful activity of glorifying and thanking Him (Rom.1:21). But it is the evangel that gets us back on track. The indignation of God may lead to a measure of outward praise for God's just judgments, as long as it is someone else who is experiencing it. But it is the evangel that leads to genuinely full reverence where praise and thanksgiving arise freely and unfailingly. This will be so for everyone when they recognize that Jesus, the Saviour, is their Lord (Phil.2:10,11).

Paul is not dealing here with lying and stealing and murder but with irreverent and unrighteous thinking and speaking about God. To be sure, what we think affects how we act and what we do. But Paul is speaking here of the root problem which is centered in our thought processes, for the heart is used figuratively of the mind. At the very bottom of the vast cesspool of human wickedness is the sin, the *failure* which we exhibit with respect to honoring God.

For one thing, we seem unable to fit the fact of God in with the fact of evil. I am not suggesting that this is avoidable; it is very understandable for descendants of Adam, apart from the gift of faith. Nevertheless, the history of

human thought about suffering and death is filled with unintelligent conclusions about God. Where there is the recognition that God exists there is often a denial that God has the qualities of Deity. It is often reasoned from the fact of evil that God is somehow not fully divine in power and wisdom and love. Of course we can find exceptions (Job was a notable one), but, like Noah, they are only exceptions to the rule (and even then not *fully* so) because they have found the grace to believe God knows what He is doing and that His way is right. The very message of the evangel, which Noah and Job could know only in the form of types and foreshadowings, verifies that this is so. Evil is not eternal, and it will serve God's purpose of good.

But that purpose of God is not yet attained in realization. There is still a great amount of irreverent and unjustified reasoning about God around, which calls for divine judgment. Nevertheless, according to the evangel, this irreverence is finally dealt with, not by God's indignation, but by God's power for salvation. "For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, died" (Rom.5:6).

The evangel explains the whole process of the experience of human irreverence followed by the operation of divine indignation and judgment. Apart from the faith, the obedience, the humiliation and the extraordinary love of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners, there can be no salvation from the irreverence and uselessness being described in Romans 1:18-23. But when the evangel is known and believed, human irreverence and unrighteousness, and God's indignation against these evils are put in such a happy perspective that we are led toward the true glorifying and thanking of God.

Apart from believing the evangel it is not reasonable, indeed it is hardly possible, to thank God *in* every situation (1 Thess.5:18) and certainly not to give Him thanks

for everything (Eph.5:20), as Paul entreats us. Even then, we who believe still may become so overwhelmed by evils that we fail to remember the message God has given us of grace and righteousness and certain glory. We fall from the grace, the joy of God's welcome word of gratuitous deliverance in Christ Jesus. A corollary of the evangel that Christ died for us while we are still sinners (Rom.5:8) is the fact that whatever God gives us is for our good (Rom.8:28), and thus a matter that will ultimately bring Him glory (Rom. 11:33-36; 16:25-27).

CHANGING THE GLORY OF GOD

It is humiliating to see how we still keep holding onto this kind of irreverence and unrighteousness even after we have believed the evangel of our salvation. (I use the pronoun "we" in order to include myself, although I should not presume to speak for every other believer. Yet it is at least rare for even a believer to be fully delivered from wrong concepts of God.) If we limit God as to His power or wisdom or righteousness or love we make Him less than He is. We change His glory into the likeness of things we see.

Not only in ability, but in character and motivation, God is unique and always good. The Creator is greater than His creation. He is not arbitrary, not absorbed by the present, not impatient or unfeeling. He is certainly not like reptiles or quadrupeds or flying creatures, and He is not like human beings, but rather His goal is to bring them into *His* image and likeness.

DEFENSELESS

Human beings are defenseless against these charges listed in Romans 1:18-23. It is only as the believer is, *in Christ,* that these charges cannot be made, and even that is not so as we are in the flesh. True reverence and true righteousness are presently *reckoned* to us, in God's grace.

This has a powerful and saving effect on us. And we shall indeed know and glorify God as He truly is.

The fact that we are blessed in Christ with reverence and righteousness (presently with the earnest of the spirit, and fully in the eons to come) is exactly the point. The evangel is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing. In the evangel God's righteousness is being revealed, out of the faith of Jesus Christ, for our faith.

For us who are believing, there is this connection between Romans 1:16,17 and Romans 1:18, that because of the faith of Jesus Christ, God has saved us righteously from His indignation against all our irreverence and unrighteousness.

Yet having said that, have we seen the whole of the connection between Romans 1:16,17 and Romans 1:18?

No we have not. For Romans 1:18 speaks of *every* act of irreverence and unrighteousness of human beings. All human sin is in view. This is not disposed of by divine indignation. Furthermore, apart from the evangel, no provision is made for profit to all concerned from the lessons learned by judgment. Only the righteousness of God which is being revealed can meet the problem of every human sin and result in life's justifying for all mankind.

IMPASSE

The necessity of relating Romans 1:18-3:20 with the evangel is made more and more evident as we go through the rest of this portion of Romans. Apart from the evangel what is said, especially in chapter two, is an insolvable impasse.

Every time Paul seems to open a way of solution to the human dilemma, other than the evangel, it is blocked by the realities of human sin. He speaks of those "who by endurance in good acts are seeking glory and honor and incorruption," and says that they will receive "life eonian" (Rom.2:7). He asserts that "the doers of law shall be justi-

fied" (Rom.2:13), and mentions those of the nations who "by nature may be doing that which the law demands" (2:14), and the Uncircumcision "who, by nature, are discharging the law's demands" (2:27).

But who are these people who will be justified by their own works? They do not exist! "Not one is just—not even one. Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God" (Rom.3:10,11). By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20). This is true of Job and Noah and Abraham and Joseph and Daniel. This is true of you and me.

There is only one solution to this impasse. "Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . . . through Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:21,22). Absolute, literal justification is gratuitous as far as the human is concerned, gained for us in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). It is in God's righteousness as revealed in the death of His beloved Son for sinners that human unrighteousness is disposed of and replaced by life apart from all sin.

THE VAST SOLUTION

Therefore, all of Romans 1:18-3:20 must be related to the evangel. Paul writes with the evangel in view. The death of Christ for sinners must deal with *all* the irreverence and unrighteousness of all human beings. We are not being faced with a problem that is larger than the saving righteousness of God can solve. If God's indignation is on all the irreverence and injustice of human beings, God's righteousness is also to be related in its saving operation to every sin of every individual. The need is vast, but it is not greater than the solution.

To the powerful and wise and righteous God be all the glory and unceasing thanks.

D.H.H.

RIGHTEOUSNESS

MANKIND faces a dead-end in its quest for righteousness. "Not one is just—not even one. Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God" (Rom.3:10,11). How can God save an unrighteous person?

There is nothing in a human, that is, in his flesh, that is righteous (Rom.7:18-20). We got into this situation because of our inheritance from Adam; we had nothing to do with Adam's sin or the inheritance of death from him (Rom. 5:12), nor did Adam invent his conduct. Our efforts to effect righteousness are vain. *For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God* (Rom.8:20).

Man's only recourse against sin is to "pass a law." Each nation has vast libraries full of laws and regulations, yet we are seeing more lawlessness, apparently, than ever. The world has a gigantic demonstration of a nation under a perfect law, and of its ineffectiveness, culminating in the murder of God's own Son. We are not advocating abolition of law among the nations; without them we would have anarchy. But we are pointing out the failure of law to make mankind righteous. The same is true of the law of Moses, a perfect law, even God's law given to Israel.

The law cannot provide a human with righteousness (Gal.3:11). It is impossible for the law because of the flesh (Rom.8:3). *By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight, for through law is the recognition of sin* (Rom.3:20).

So where are we to turn? The act which provides the answer for all was foreknown by God "before the disruption of the world" (1 Peter 1:20). It is a precious fact that the experience of humanity has been in the purpose of God, and in His planning He provided the solution for the dilemma of mankind before they became involved in it! The solution was established when the Son of God was crucified, the greatest sin in the annals of mankind.

Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:21-23).

Humans are unable to establish their own righteousness. God brought about the circumstances which made them that way. He wants to be All in all, to supply all their needs, and most important, to provide their righteousness. The words,"Yet now," in Romans 3:21, speak of a great turning point. A righteousness of God is manifest through Jesus Christ's faith, and it is for all, and it is on all who are believing.

Robert B. Killen

GOD'S EONIAN OPERATIONS

To comprehend God's eonian operations, involving the creation of evil (Isa.45:7), let us wing our way, in spirit, into the consummation, and *look back* upon His activities from that clear height. Then the outcome will vindicate all that He has brought about, for *all* mankind will not only be *justified,* but *satisfied* and *loving* children of their Father. This most gracious and glorious goal could not have been attained by any other means than by recourse to their opposites, temporary injustice and estrangement and hate. Our own unrighteousness will enable us, not only to perceive, but to *appreciate* His righteousness. This will lead us to *admire* and *adore* Him, and to willingly *serve* and *worship* Him. He has been fully justified in making men sordid sinners that He may transform them into appreciative subjects.

A. E. Knoch

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 The Disintegration of Language at Babel
158 Babylon in the Scripture
171 Divine Operation and Control
183 Salvation From What?
191 Effects of Divine Righteousness

JULY, 2003

Volume XCIV **Number 4**

"The Kingdom in the 'Old Testament'"

Vladimir Gelesnoff

"The Kingdom in the 'Old Testament,'" was among the first publications of the Concordant Publishing Concern. From the San Diego address for *Unsearchable Riches* magazine included on the original copy of this study, kept in our archives, we conclude that it must have been issued in 1909 or 1910, before the mailing address was changed to Los Angeles.

In introducing the revised edition of this exposition in 1938, upon which this reprint is based, A. E. Knoch stated: "[This writing] was first published many years ago, and has long been out of print. As nothing equal to it seems to have appeared in the meantime, we welcome the opportunity of reissuing it . . . . The careful consideration demanded by the work of revision has once more impressed me with the extraordinary excellence and value of this exposition. The great need for clarity on this elementary theme is evident on all sides, and grows as the apostasy proceeds apace. Hence I take this opportunity of commending it to all who wish to aid their fellow saints to gain an insight into God's grand purpose through the nation of His choice and their Messiah, Christ Jesus our Lord." (*Unsearchable Riches*, vol.29, p.210).

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2003
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-FOUR

EDITORIAL

We live in this world and cannot come out of it (1 Cor. 5:10) even though our realm is inherent in the heavens (Phil.3:20). While thus living, the believer sees the wisdom and fittingness of Paul's advice: "Be observing accurately, then, brethren, how you are walking, not as unwise, but as wise, *reclaiming the era*" (Eph.5:15; *cp* Col.4:5).

At the very root of such a pattern of living is the recognition of God in all our experiences and the events of our times. It is set forth in Romans as the ideal for all humanity that they know and recognize God as God and glorify and thank Him (Rom.1:19-21;28), but they do not do so apart from God's grace, and they change God's glory and alter His truth (Rom.1:23,25; *cf* p.183).

It is God's great goal that all mankind will recognize Him as God and glorify and thank Him for *all* things. With joyous conviction and sincerity we will all praise Him in terms such as Paul uses in Romans 11:33-36. For indeed *all* is out of God and through Him and for Him (*cf* p.171).

In the meantime it is God's grace to us that we can have this transcendent view of His will and intention. The evangel of God's grace and peace which we are believing not only fills our present lives with expectation and thanksgiving in relation to our calling, but it also creates in us a better perspective of the present course of the world as God works out His purpose. Along with our focus on God's revelations for us given through the apostle Paul, we are much interested in what the Scriptures as a whole have to say about the future of the nations and Israel and changes that will occur in the arrangement of things on this earth. In fact, we are given a broader outlook of God's

plans through Paul's writings which center so consistently on the cross of Christ and His resurrection and exaltation. Thus we are learning to look at current events in view of the truth of the evangel and the verity of God as the God of all goodness and glory.

The articles by Brother A. E. Knoch in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* concerning Babylon seem particularly timely. Many readers will feel, as I do, that his studies from Daniel and Revelation, written as early as 1916 and continuing into the 1950's are astoundingly fresh and meaningful today.[1] But our perspective on these matters is shaped by our appreciation of the evangel and God's purposed delight to reconcile all to Himself.

Hence we see events in the Middle East as possible preparations for developments described in Scripture concerning Israel and the nations. But we also see these prophecies as dealing with temporary steps in God's overall purpose to head up all in the Christ. We understand that, in the present era, God is holding back the full execution of these events (2 Thess.2:6). But we also are given peace in knowing that, when they come, they will occur swiftly (Rev.1:1). They exhibit human failure. But the evangel which has been given to us speaks of God's triumph of righteousness, life and peace which will embrace all His creation.

Consequently, we rejoice with reliance on the righteous and living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind as we continue to watch His hand at work in these present, eventful days.

D.H.H.

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1. The first article appeared originally in *Unsearchable Riches*, volume 48, beginning on page 65; the second is combined from studies in volumes 8 (p.223) and 18 (p.361). Both are edited for present use, but these and other studies about Babylon, as originally written, are still available in bound volumes of our magazine. (An index to volumes 1-90 is also available from our office.)

THE DISINTEGRATION OF LANGUAGE AT BABEL

11 [+]**Now the entire earth** [lb]**continued** to have **one language and** the **same words** [7]**for all of them**[0]**.** [2] [+] **It** [l]**came** to **pass** [i]**when they journeyed**[–] **from** the **east,** [+]**that they** [l]**found** a **valley in** the **land of Shinar, and they** [l]**dwelt there.** [3] [+] **They** [l]**said,** each **man to his associate: Grant** attention**! Let us mold bricks, and let us burn** them [›]**with** a **burning** process**.** [+]**So the brick** [lb]**served** [›]**as stone for them, and** [·]**asphalt** [b]**served** [›]**as mortar for them.** [4] [+]**Then they** [l]**said: Grant** attention**! Let us build** [›] **our**selves a **city, and** a **tower** [+]**with its top in** the **heavens.** [+] **Let us** [d]**make** a **name for our**selves**, lest we be** [l]**scattered over** the sur**face of the entire earth.**

[5] [+]**Then Yahweh** [l]**descended to see** [`]**the city and** [`]**the tower** [w]**that the sons of humanity had built.** [6] [+] **Yahweh** [l]**said: Behold,** they are a **single people** [+]**with** the **same language for all of them; and this** is what **they start**[–] **to do.** [+] **Now any**thing [w] **they** [l]**plan to do** will **not be** [l]**restricted** [f]**for them.** [7] **Grant** attention**! let us descend and let us disintegrate their language there,** so [w]**that** each **man may not hearken** to the **language of his associate.**

[8] [+]**Then Yahweh** [l]**scattered** [`]**them from there over** the sur**face of the entire earth, and they** [l]**left off** [›] **building**[–] **the city** [7]**and the tower**[0]**.** [9] **Therefore** one **called its name Babel,** [t]**because there Yahweh disintegrated** the **language of the entire earth, and Yahweh scattered them from there over** the sur**face of the entire earth.**

In God's grand purpose to reveal Himself, He needs contrasts. In the eon before the flood, He parted mankind into only two divisions, the line of Cain and the line of Seth. After the deluge, in the present eon, He uses many divisions. First, there were three, based on Noah's sons. But these were not enough to engender the confusion and strife which His plans demand. The strongest tie holding mankind together was the use of the same language. They could all communicate with one another, and probably employed the natural language with which, like the lower animals, mankind had been endowed at creation, as we find it recorded in the inspired oracles. Many attempts have been made to return to this ideal condition, in the hope that it would diminish strife among the peoples. But they do not succeed, because this is contrary to the divine counsels for this eon.

THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE

What language did Adam and the antediluvian use? All living souls seem to have some means of communicating with one another, and the higher ones use sound to some extent. Adam was the head and highest of them all. There was no one to teach him a human tongue. Yet he was endowed with the organs of speech and hearing. He did not use English when he said: "The *sound*-of-Thee I-*hear*" (Gen.3:10). Probably he made sounds like the Hebrew *Ath qul-k shmo-thi*, for there is no reason to suppose that he used any other language when he wrote his annals. So we are quite sure that he was endowed with an ideal, natural language, and understood that of the animals (Gen.3:1,2). The latter can be learned by us to a limited extent, and so can Hebrew, although it has come to us only with an impure "lip," or pronunciation, and will be purified in later generations.

We do not read of any change in this language during the eon before the deluge. Indeed, until Babel, the entire earth was of one lip, one speech (Gen.11:1). This is ideal, and it is possible that, in the new earth, when all is restored, this same language will again prevail. It is a terrestrial language, suited to the earth, so it may not be used by us among the celestials, but it may be necessary for us to speak it in our contacts with terrestrial souls. As divine revelation has come to us in two distinct forms of speech, we may suppose that both Hebrew and Greek will be used in that eon, without the need of translations.

FROM THE EAST

The first migration of mankind was "from the east" to the west. Mount Ararat was considered to be east. Indeed, so it is, from the divine center of operations, which is the land of promise. This is the center of the surrounding continents, Eurasia and Africa. But they do not seem to have gone very far west at first, for they wished to establish the center at Babel, in the land of Shinar. In fact, Mount Ararat is almost due north of Shinar, and near the sources of the two rivers which bound that land. Their movement was *down,* for, in traversing the high country which lies between, they probably followed the course of the Euphrates, which flows almost due west at first, then east, and could not do otherwise than descend.

Lower down their journey westward was stopped by the desert between Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean. I crossed it by automobile, and found only one place, Rutba Wells (Ar-Rutbah), where there was any amount of water. Even though it took only a day and a night to go clear to Baghdad, on the Tigris, it was so trying that I did not want to return that way, but found no other route except along the upper course of the Euphrates, to come into Palestine from the north. But there was no transportation at that

time. So it was of old. The westward march of mankind was stopped by the hardships of the desert and the allure of the Mesopotamian plain. Here was level land with a stream of water on both sides, the most favorable conditions for luxurious living. It is possible that most of them migrated to the east, for there we find the densest centers of population today.

THE LAND OF SHINAR

The name *Shn-or* has two stems which may denote Double-city. Hitherto we do not read of any city after the deluge, so Babel probably was the first. If it was built on both sides of the Euphrates, as it was in later times, under Nebuchadnezzar, then the idea of *double* was well warranted. Indeed, they did not want a land, but a city, yet they needed land to feed the people. It may be translated the land of, or belonging to Double-city. What a contrast to Jerusalem (Tenancy-of-Well-Being)! It needs no tower to reach the heavens, and no stream to furnish it with water. Babel is low; Jerusalem is high, and its liquid refreshment comes from the heavens above. Shinar was the most fertile, well watered land they had come to in their migration from the ark. It seemed useless to search further, although they had been expressly told to roam in the earth (Gen.9:7).

PLANNING, HUMAN AND DIVINE

Yahweh has marvelous plans for the blessing of humanity, and for His own glory. Men, however, are concerned about their own name and ambitious designs. His charge to them had been very plain: "Fill the earth and subdue it" (9:1). Instead of doing this, they propose to settle in one spot. Then they followed the lead of Cain, in the previous eon, who built a city instead of becoming a rover and wanderer in the earth (Gen.4:12-17). So now they not only

build a city, but a tower (a "great", in Hebrew), in order to elevate themselves rather than God. To this day such a motive is deemed laudable, and has a large place even in the service of the Subjector.

The exclamation, *Grant attention*! (Gen.11:7) stands for the Hebrew word meaning GRANT (*cf* Zech.11:12). The AV "go to," means nothing to us today. They are seeking each other's support in a very popular measure. This seems to have occurred before Nimrod established several cities in the land of Shinar, so there was no central power or leading spirit, but only spontaneous, common consent. They all wanted to share in their mutual magnification. They would build a big city and live together, and erect a permanent memorial of their greatness by means of a high tower, which all of them could see from their residences. This would keep them together. By cooperation they could get along without God. This was the first cooperative. All creation is for *God's* glory, but they seek to make a name for *themselves.* But it came no nearer to His, than their tower reached into the heavens.

THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES

In those days houses were mostly built of clay. Such buildings were surprisingly comfortable and permanent. They were much used in the early settlement of the southwestern portion of the United States which has a climate similar to Shinar. They probably used this for their homes, but it would not support a high tower. This should be built of *stone.* But there is none in Shinar. So they made imitations by burning the bricks and using asphalt for mortar. Hence they built a tower, and *made a name for themselves, lest they be scattered over the surface of the entire earth* and thus fulfill the will of the Subjector. But He did not allow them to have their way, as He did Cain. If He had used compulsion, it would probably not have been perma-

nent, and His plans required a prolonged cause of division. So He simply confused their "lip," as the Hebrew has it, so that they could not understand one another. This has continued to the present, and is still the cause of much misunderstanding and strife.

THE MEANING OF BABEL

The name Babel (*B-bl*) is composed of two Hebrew stems, the common connective *B*, which means IN, and *bl* which means DISINTEGRATE, or, idiomatically, confuse. This main stem *bl* is used in several words which may help us to see its significance, such as *decay, carcass, deluge, fail.* These suggest that the languages were not only different from the original one which had been spoken by all heretofore, but are *decadent,* changing for the worse. So are most of earth's languages to this day. Not only do they differ from one another, but each one is deteriorating with time. The original language, Hebrew, was not so. Even if, at present, it is so fearfully spoiled, outside of the Scriptures, it will be restored in the future (Zeph.3:9).

The stem *bl,* DISINTEGRATE, denotes more than merely *different* languages. Each of these, like the mortals who speak them, are dying, and some of them are dead. In most countries we can see the process going on. They deteriorate into dialects. English is so pronounced in some regions that most of my readers might not be able to understand it. So in Germany. In France they have the patois *pa twa* in the provinces. So it is in the Orient also. The dying race speaks different and decaying dialects.

TRANSLATION

The lack of a pure natural language is a very serious hindrance today, especially in making translations of the Scriptures, and in international diplomacy. Such words as "democracy" have very different significations in the East

from those they have in the West, so that no genuine agreement seems possible. This leads to misunderstandings and strife. In the Scriptures the many loose, discordant versions have created untold confusion. The only escape from this seems to be the closest possible conformity to the inspired originals, in which the confusion is effectively counteracted by the *usage* of the spirit of God.

THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGES

The attempt to account for the great variety of languages by evolutionary development has failed. There are related languages which were probably developed from one original tongue, but many tongues bear no recognizable relation to the rest. This condition confirms the Scriptural account, that they did *not* all spring from one source, but are the result of some external disturbance. Missionaries have found the languages of some of the most backward people very complicated, and able to express nuances which are absent in the so-called "civilized" tongues. The most damage is done when we treat Hebrew as derived from other tongues.

DECADENT LANGUAGES

As this is written in English, it will be our best illustration of this process. Going no further back than old German, it developed a dialect, named low German, in the lowlands which became Dutch, and crossed the channel with the Angles and Saxons, with still less grammar, which we call English. Perhaps we should go one step further and call the language of North America the lowest German, but it differs too little from European English to deserve a distinct appellation. Of one thing we may be sure, and that is that most languages spoken today do not go back very far and even those that do, as Greek and Hebrew, have suffered from misuse. There is quite a difference between

classical and modern Greek, and even between ancient Hebrew and the way it is spoken and written today. American slang is evolution in reverse.

The very name, Babylon, is a sample of this confusion. In the pure lip, used before this time, the name was *Bbl,* and it remains so throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. But in the Greek, one of the other early languages, they have altered the involuntary vowel between *b* and *l* to *u,* and have added *-on.* Moreover, though we are distinctly told that its name is called *B-bl,* because there Yahweh disintegrates (*bl*) the lip of the entire earth (Gen.11:9), nevertheless in the Encyclopedia Britannica we read that Babylon is "the Greek form of Babel or Bab-ili, 'the gate of God'"! This is found in the German Meyer's Conversations-Lexikon also. Moreover, Davidson's English translation of Fuerst's Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, by many considered the most scholarly and weighty (over five pounds!) of them all, says "it is not impossible that the name was originally formed from *bb bl* court (gate) of Bel, or from *br-bl bir* Belus-town, or the like." (!) Just a lot of *babble*!

INSPIRED HEBREW

But this is only a very simple example of what the scholars do with the whole Hebrew vocabulary, so that they force the confusion into God's inspired revelation. Not only this name, but most Hebrew words they seek to trace back to the languages which were the result of the confusion introduced at Babel! Unless a name is Hebrew, and so a part of divine revelation, its significance is not important. If it is Hebrew and especially where the context expresses its force, then we should not seek elsewhere for its meaning.

But why and how was Hebrew preserved? In order to reveal Himself to the inhabitants of the *earth,* it is absolutely essential that God employ a natural, unalterable, terrestrial language. He gave an appropriate medium of

expression to all the animals at creation, which they have retained to this day. They have obeyed His primeval law to fill the earth, so they still retain the tongue imparted to them at their creation. Only humanity refused to obey His eonian mandate, and it has suffered for it ever since, as we do today. But, during this wicked eon, God still speaks to mankind, so He selected and segregated the line of Shem-Abraham-Israel, and revealed Himself to them by means of the *records* written before the deluge, and continued to use the same language in further revelations. These were in the tongue inherent in Adam at his creation. He could also speak and understand the languages of the animals, which have not changed.

Hebrew (*obr-i*) denotes PASS-ite. As a descriptive term it is first used of Abram (Gen.14:13). It cannot refer to the descendants of Eber (Gen.10:24) for that would include Joktanites and others. It is used only of Israelites in contrast to others. Later is was used for the *language,* as in Luke (23:38), John (5:2; 19:13, 17, 20), Acts (21:40; 22:2; 26:14), and the Unveiling (Rev.9:11; 16:16). It was used of those who were true to the traditions and the language, in contrast to Hellenists, who no longer used Hebrew in common conversation. It was not used in later revelation or in reaching the Uncircumcision while Israel is stubborn and cut out of the olive tree, and time stands still, so the name Yahweh (*Ieue*) cannot be used in them, for it is an earthly language, and not adapted to a celestial revelation. To prepare for this the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek. When Israel no longer was true to Yahweh, their Elohim, He no longer spoke to them in Hebrew, as Isaiah had foretold (Isa.28:11), but in a tongue adjusted to it by the Septuagint, and to the celestial revelations which have come through the Anointed, Who came from above and Who will reveal the Father to the whole universe.

Even Hebrew has sadly disintegrated. When Judah was

deported they *passed back* to Babel from Yahweh and His land, they took up the language spoken by the descendants of Shem who had not passed on to the promised land, and used what is later called the "vernacular" *dialektos* in the Greek Scriptures. But when the Jews later did much worse than this, by rejecting their Messiah, and were deported among the nations, then they corrupted the pronunciation so fearfully that they could not even converse with one another when they met. They tried to remedy this by *adding* the points, but these only preserved and perpetuated their fearful fallacies. There were two clashing schools, one at Tiberias and one at Babylon, the latter working on the spot where the, confusion first began. But they introduced it into the one language which had escaped before. So Hebrew today needs to be purified, and rid of all the false ideas and additions and pronunciation derived from the nations where they are deported.

MAKING A NAME

God, the Subjector, Who Will-be-ing-was, is making a name for Himself by means of His creation and His creatures, especially mankind on the earth. The heavenly hosts are learning of His might and majesty, His wisdom and His love, by His dealings with the sons of Adam. Now when they oppose His plans and seek to make a name for themselves, and to live together in one place, He could have once more drowned them as He had done, and so put an end to their self-adulation. But He had promised not to repeat that adjudication. His further plans called for mortals scattered over the entire earth, at enmity with one another, to form a foil for the future kingdom of His Christ. We are all witnesses of the success of His plan. But when men manage to rebuild Babylon and unite mankind under a single ruler, then He will use the terrible judgments of the Apocalypse to put a full end to their opposition.

BABEL'S LATER HISTORY

Peter, the principal apostle of the kingdom, should have occupied his throne in Jerusalem and ruled one of the tribes of Israel (Matt.19:28). But where do we find him? In Babylon! And there, instead of living for the eon and reigning, he became decrepit and was executed against his will (1 Peter 5:13).

Such is also the fate of the erstwhile "Hebrews"! In the language of symbols, which was not affected at Babel, it indicates that Israel, the nation through whom Yahweh will rule the nations is in *confusion,* especially as to the kingdom ecclesia, of which Peter was the foundation. This is signified also by its present plight. It has become a nation in the land once more, but it lacks the great King-Priest Who alone can establish them in the land in accord with the promises.

True Israel is figuratively called the wife of Yahweh, but the false nation, the rejectors of their Messiah, after the present secret administration, when the body of Christ has been called to Him in the air, *it* will be figured by the false woman brought before us in His unveiling (Rev.17:1). This woman, Babylon the Great, in the time of the end, before the advent of their Messiah, will have a kingdom over the kingdoms of the earth, a false imitation of the Messiah's millennial reign. It will be headed by Hebrews (Passers), but in the opposite direction from that taken by Abram. They will be taken from the land back to Babylon. It will be a financial sovereignty, so they return to Babylon in an ephah, a commercial measure, borne on the wings of a stork (Zech.5:5-10). This is still future, but is partly fulfilled, for the Jews are back in the land of promise, from which they will fly back to Babylon, and set up a kingdom by their own strength, a financial might, before Christ comes, which will be doomed to utter destruction.

A. E. Knoch

BABYLON IN THE SCRIPTURES

THE first kingdom among men was begun at Babel, in the land of Shinar, by Nimrod (Gen.10:9,10). The descendants of Noah congregated in this area after the flood. Here they built a city and a tower, with its head in the heavens, and made themselves a name in case they should disperse to other lands. Here we have the germ of all future world empires (Gen.11:1-4). Its essence is the concentration and exaltation and perpetuation of human power and achievement. God's name and glory must be banished to give place to human self-adulation.

The early supremacy of Babylon does not seem to have lasted more than a few hundred years, for in Abraham's day Amraphel, king of Shinar, is a subordinate to Chedorlaomer, king of Elam (Gen.14:1-5). From that time until Babylon reappears in the sacred records the Cushite character of the kingdom seems to have been completely banished by the inroads of the Arabians and Assyrians. The rise of Assyria between the land of promise and the plain of Shinar kept them from contact with each other, so that the sacred historians give us no account of Babylon in this interval.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S BABYLON

When, however, the God of heaven determines to punish the nation He has chosen for Himself, and to turn over the world empire which He purposes for them into the hands of the other nations while they are apostate, He chooses the king of Babylon as the first great head of world dominion (*cf* Jer.27:6; Dan.2:37,38). Thus, in Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon, the first of the kingdoms in order of time, becomes once more the first in rank. Not since its earlier days had there been a ruler whose sway extended over the whole earth, for Babylon, and Babylon alone, is the seat of world empire, under the nations.

It is remarkable to find how exactly the ancient inscriptions tally with the Scriptures in their account of this kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar's boast, "Is not this great Babylon, *which I have built?*" (Dan.4:30) is fully borne out by the immense preponderance of his bricks over all the other kings on the site of Babylon. He was the great builder, or founder or restorer of almost all the temples and public buildings in the country. His dominion extended over the whole known earth.

How much more trustworthy God's history is than the works of secular historians and their modern followers is well illustrated by the account of the fall of Babylon as recorded by the prophet Daniel (5:30,31). Were it not for the discovery of a small fragment of stone on which we are informed that "Nabu-nahed, king of Babylon," in his later years reigned conjointly with his eldest son, Bil-shar-uzar, we would still be gravely informed by modern "scholars" that Daniel cannot be taken as authentic, that it teems with "historical inaccuracies" and contradicts "trustworthy profane writers." If modern destructive criticism ever received a rebuke, it was when that fragment of clay fell upon its blasphemous words against the God of Daniel. The account of Babylon's fall was found to be far more accurate than they knew how to be, for Belshazzar offers Daniel, not the *second* place in the kingdom (which he assuredly would have done if he had occupied the first) but he says that "whosoever should read the writing...should be...the *third* ruler in the kingdom" (Dan.5:7). Nabonidus, his father, though not a descendant of Nebuchadnezzar himself, had probably married into his family so that Belshazzar looked upon

Nebuchadnezzar as his "father" (Dan.5:13). Nabonidus was probably in Arabia, away from Babylon, and probably lived some time longer, but Belshazzar was slain the night the city was taken, and the capital of the kingdom fell into the hands of Darius the Mede. Then Daniel, instead of being slain, as the *third* ruler in the Chaldean kingdom, is exalted to the *second* place in the conquered realm.

WORLD DOMINION

The image of world dominion seen by Nebuchadnezzar (Dan.2:31-35) and the vision of the ram and the he-goat (Dan.8:20-22) assure us that the Babylonian supremacy was succeeded by the Medo-Persian, and this by Javan, or the Grecian. Darius conquered Babylon and thus made himself master of the world. Alexander, in his turn, bore rule over all the earth by making Babylon his capital.

It is thus probable that each of the sons of Noah has had the helm of human government. The descendants of Ham first founded the kingdom. The Babylonians and Medo-Persians probably sprang from Shem. The Grecian, as Javan their Hebrew name indicates, came from Japheth (Gen.10:2). As each, in turn, enters Babylon in triumph and the banner of earth's sovereignty is unfurled, so it will be in the coming conquest of the world. A city will have a "kingdom over the kings of the earth" (Rev.17:18), and the city is no other than Babylon, once more the Mistress of Kingdoms.

BABYLON NOT YET DESTROYED

Before enlarging upon the future dominion of Babylon it will be well to pause and consider the oft-repeated objection that Babylon has already been destroyed "like God's overturning of Sodom and Gomorrah" never more to be inhabited nor dwelt in from generation to generation, and that the Arabian shall never again pitch his tent

there, nor shepherds recline their flock there (Isa.13:20). It would be well for each one to turn to the Load of Babylon as detailed by Isaiah in his thirteenth chapter, and the humiliation of the city described in his forty-seventh chapter, as well as the judgments Yahweh pronounced upon Babylon through Jeremiah in his fiftieth and fifty-first chapters and note especially the *suddenness* of Babylon's destruction and desolation. It is a matter of history that, until recent years the city gradually fell into decay so that only a portion has been continuously inhabited. It certainly was a city in the days of the apostles, for Peter sent his first epistle from Babylon (1 Peter 5:13). A half century later the Babylonian Talmud originated from the colony of Jews which still inhabited the place. Indeed, it has *always* been inhabited.[1]

From these few facts it is clear that the prophecies concerning it have not yet been fulfilled. Indeed its destruction is in the Day of Yahweh (Isa.13:6), when there are signs in the heavens (Isa.13:10; Matt.24:29; Rev.6:12,13). It *has* been tabernacled through all the years "for generation after generation," the Arab *does* tent within the boundaries of the ancient city, and the shepherds have continued to recline their flocks there. Does this look as though the prophecy has been *fulfilled*? By no means. There is not a single item in these definite predictions which will fit the city at any time so far in her history.

No desolation has come upon Babylon suddenly (Isa. 47:11), but her decadence has been gradual hitherto, while her rejuvenation promises to be a speedy one.

YAHWEH'S WORD TO JEREMIAH

The word which Yahweh spoke to Jeremiah is that "In

1. Its present successor, the city of al-Hillah, Iraq, has a population of more than a half million souls.

those days and at that era, averring is Yahweh, the sons of Israel shall come . . . and seek Yahweh their Elohim" (Jer. 50:4). Babylon's doom and Israel's restoration are to occur together. If one is future, so is the other (Jer.50:1-5). Jeremiah confirms Isaiah's words that "she shall not be indwelt again permanently nor be tabernacled in for generation after generation" (Jer.50:39). He assures us that "the designs of Yahweh" against Babylon, are "to make the land of Babylon a desolation without a dweller" (Jer.51:29). In view of all these solemn words it is ours to bow before them and acknowledge that they have never yet found fulfillment but will find it in the day of Yahweh, even as it is described to us in the book of Revelation. Jeremiah tells Seraiah to tie a stone to the scroll which contained the evils which should come upon Babylon, and to fling it into the midst of the Euphrates. Thus will Babylon sink and not rise from the evil which shall destroy her (Jer.51:60-65). But now, she is rising from the dust, and no city in the world has such prospects of regaining its former greatness. If God be true, then Babylon must be rebuilt. Until recent years such an idea was likely to rouse ridicule, but now it is rapidly becoming a matter of course.

The Euphrates and Tigris valleys once supported a dense population and can easily do so again. By means of irrigation the desert may be made to blossom as the rose. The work of restoration is comparatively simple. The ancient canals, by which the water was distributed over the land, are in ruins but the levels still exist, making it an easy task to restore them. The intensely fertile soil and the tropical heat of summer combined with the life-giving stream of water will transform the barren waste into a veritable garden. And, indeed, a part of this land was once the garden of Eden itself.

It is a notable fact that great commercial cities are not usually built near the open sea, but at some protected

point at a distance from the ocean, accessible by means of a river or inlet. London is on the Thames. New York harbor is surrounded by land, and is approached through a narrow sound. Hamburg is far from the shore line. Antwerp is many miles up the Scheldt. These examples make it evident that the greatest maritime cities prefer sheltered inland waterways to nearness to the open sea.

So will it be with Babylon. The Euphrates will once more be made navigable for ocean going craft. That this will be the case seems certain from the description of her doom found in Revelation:

"And every navigator, and every one who is sailing at the place, and mariners, and whoever are working on the sea, stand afar off, and, observing the smoke of her conflagration, they cried, saying, 'Is there any like this great city?' And they cast soil on their heads, and cried, lamenting and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, by which all who have ships on the sea are rich as a result of its preciousness, for in one hour it was desolated!'" (Rev.18:17-19).

Those whose hearts are stirred within them at the sound of His approaching footfalls will do well to mark the progress of events as they cluster around two cities, Jerusalem and Babylon.

BABYLON IN THE BOOK OF THE UNVEILING

Under the seventh bowl of Revelation sixteen Babylon the great is brought to remembrance before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His furious indignation (Rev. 16:19). The very wording of this sentence is cryptic. Babylon is a city, yet is presented under the figure of a woman (Rev.17:3-6). This suggests that there is something not seen on the surface which is so utterly detestable to God that He singles out this city for the supreme display of His fury. All of the cities of the nations fall, but one of them is reserved for a special doom. "The great city," Jerusalem,

is spared, though trisected, but Babylon is so offensive to Yahweh that it is finally sunk out of sight.

This is not the first time that Babylon's doom has come before us in this book. In the corresponding part of the previous temple section, immediately after the eonian evangel has been proclaimed, a second messenger declares, "*It falls! It falls!—Babylon the great has made all nations drunk with the wine of the fury of her prostitution*!" (Rev. 14:8). If Yahweh is to fulfill His covenant with faithful Israel, He must rid the earth of the demoralizing influence of this great city. If He vindicates His broken law, He must hurl it into oblivion.

We hardly need to press the importance of the part Babylon plays in the divine drama of the end time. More than two long chapters of Revelation are given to the elaboration of her career. About one-ninth of the whole book is devoted to a description of her doom. There must be a secret of great moment associated with the city, which the saints of that day should understand, that they may be saved from her sins, and from her destruction. It is only as we, in spirit, transport ourselves into that era that we have a clear conception of her crimes and will be able to discern, in the world movements of today, the dim outline of the scarlet woman, already possessed of much of the wealth and power which will drag her down to perdition.

CONFUSING INTERPRETATIONS

A summary of the babel of interpretations which have made the utmost confusion out of this section of Revelation would convince us of only one fact, that the expositors of Christendom have utterly missed the meaning of these unfoldings. With a few notable exceptions, all insist on interpreting the literal explanation, and insist that Babylon is symbolic of Rome or some other city or system. As a consequence the secret of the city is unknown. Hence we

insist on certain fundamental principles of interpretation which will bring harmony out of the confusion, and initiate us into one of the most subtle and surprising secrets in all the realm of revelation.

If we had the trumpet of one of the messengers of this Revelation, and could reach the ears of all of its expositors, we would shout with a voice of thunder, "*Do not explain God's explanations*!" There is no wrong in considering, comparing, or discussing them. But do not change them. When He says that the seven lampstands are seven ecclesias (Rev.1:20) insist that they are actual called-out companies, not an epoch in the history of Christendom. When a place is "spiritually" called Sodom and Egypt (Rev.11:8), on the other hand, insist that these places are not meant (for only one could be), but are figures for Jerusalem. But Babylon is not figuratively so called. It is not explained. It is the explanation.

The divine exposition is that the woman is a city (17:18). It is not a literal woman. It is a literal city. The people comprising the city are figured by a dissolute female. But they live in a real, not an ideal metropolis. The city is not in Egypt or Italy, England or the United States. It is on the plain of Shinar, on the banks of the Euphrates. Nothing could be more striking than to find this city, the first capital among the nations to rule the world at the beginning of the "times of the gentiles," once more exalted to a supremacy over the kingdoms of the earth. It is the Babylon restored by Nebuchadnezzar, the conqueror of Israel, the place of their captivity in the long ago, which will emerge once more to resume a headship over the nations.

BABYLON IS NOT ROME

It is a striking fact that *Babylon is the only city, which has even had universal sovereignty* in the past. It was not only the capital of the Babylonian empire, the head of

gold of Nebuchadnezzar's image, but also of the succeeding empires. Alexander made it the seat of his government. These kingdoms practically ruled the known world. In contrast to them, the Roman empire had definite limits, in the north and in the east, which it was unable to pass. Rome never was able to subjugate parts of Europe. Under Trajan there was a brief possession of Assyria, but it never formed an integral part of Roman territory. Babylon was always beyond or at the very bounds of the empire. It never was its capital.

As much of the confusion among students of prophecy arises from the injection of Rome into the prophetic outlook, we feel it our duty to graciously urge them to reconsider their position. The deductions they themselves make should show the fallacy of this teaching. For years many have been looking for a revival of the Roman empire, for it is clear that the iron kingdom and the wild beast are present at the end time. But such a restoration would be far from sufficient. Rome's territory was but a small fraction of the earth's surface. The kingdom of the wild beast will include all the earth.

If we must reason, let us deduce our conclusions from acknowledged facts. We know that the iron kingdom of Daniel two appears at the close of the eras of the nations and that it includes all peoples on the face of the earth. Reviewing universal history, we will find many great empires, some of which attempted to establish a worldwide rule. Napoleon conquered territory which Rome could not subjugate. Great Britain more recently comprised far more territory than Rome could ever claim. Russia covered a vastly greater area. The difficulty with all of these is that they are not universal, hence are not the subjects of Daniel's prophecy. Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece were invincible. Their boundaries were never defined. Their authority was undisputed. Rome was surrounded by enemies that defied them. They built a wall across England to keep out the northern invaders.

The imperial Roman edict which ordered the entire inhabited earth to be registered (Luke 2:1) was one of those grandiloquent gestures which characterizes the arrogance of Rome. Caesar Augustus could easily vanquish the world on paper, but his legions could not conquer Ireland or Scotland or Germany or Syria or the Scandinavian or Russian territories. We may be assured that no one in these regions was enrolled. Contrary to this, we are certain that the iron kingdom of the end time includes all nations, all peoples.

The study of prophecy is continually discredited by those who follow false beacons. The prophetic waste basket is overflowing with discarded dates, and its calendar is full of days that will be thrown away. The revival of the Roman empire is another of these distracting diversions. It not only confuses, but makes it impossible to get a clear view of the prophetic outlook.

THE FUTURE BABYLON

Instead of reasoning that the kingdom of the future will be limited to the territory of the past, we should accept the divine declaration of its worldwide extent, and deduce from this that Rome was not the world empire foretold by Daniel. Then we are free to examine the prophecies afresh, with the result that they unroll before us with a seven-fold scope and magnificence. It is not a local Mediterranean conflict they present, but a tragedy embracing the east and the west, the Orient as well as the Occident, the heathen countries as well as Christendom.

Another disturbing fallacy is the assumption that the wild beasts of Daniel seven are the divine counterparts of the various divisions of the great image. The parts of the image are successive. They follow one another on the stage

of history. The wild beasts are contemporaneous. They are all present at the end time. It is true that in Daniel, as in Revelation, the beasts give us the religious aspect, while the image emphasizes the political history of the gentile supremacy. But it does not follow that the two visions deal with the same empires or the same time. Indeed, at the time Daniel received the vision of the wild beasts, Nebuchadnezzar, the head of gold, had passed into history.

THE SECRET OF BABYLON

There is something very remarkable and astounding in the secret of great Babylon and the wild beast. John certainly did not "admire" it. He *marveled* at it (Rev.17:6). It seemed unbelievable. This, we submit, is the touchstone which will test our understanding of this secret. Do we also feel dazed at it? Can we join with John in wide eyed wonder at the possibility of such a thing? If we find ourselves in sympathy with his mood we are probably in possession of the truth.

In the previous section of Revelation we have the same characters, a wild beast and a woman. Throughout, however, there is the utmost enmity between the two. The woman is Israel, the faithful remnant. She is the victim of the world's religious powers, combined under the figure of the wild beast. The federated faiths of the world, Christian, Buddhist, Brahman, and Mohammedan, merged in one Godless, Christless, lifeless cult, to worship the human head of the world empire, try to exterminate the handful of Jews who remain faithful to the God of their fathers. John does not marvel at this. In a lesser degree he had experienced the hatred of the world himself.

But what is this? Here is a woman and the wild beast again. But *there is no enmity*. They are on the best of terms. In fact, the wild beast supports, instead of persecutes her! Can it be that Israel—even apostate Israel—will

be in league with the enemies of Yahweh? Will she be the recipients of their favors? And, while thus allied with the powers of evil, she is not smitten by the wrath of God, but actually seems to enjoy the very favors which she should forfeit. Instead of losing the right to rule the nations, she seems to have put them into subjection and under tribute without the help of Yahweh!

This is what astonished John. This is the secret of Babylon and the wild beast. It lies in the relation of the apostate people to the godless religion of the end time. Instead of suffering like the saints, these supreme sinners seem to receive every token of divine approval. Without waiting for the return of Messiah, they rule a rebellious earth. The treasures of the nations are theirs without the intervention of Yahweh. They have taken their own destiny in hand, and have succeeded in gaining supreme control of the earth. They have established a super-government which dictates the policies of all cabinets and demands tribute from all treasuries.

THE UNFAITHFUL WOMAN

The very name given to this woman should be sufficient to identify her. Only those in covenant relationship with God can be guilty of a breach such as is charged to her. No one who enters into relationship with God in this day of grace can possibly come under this condemnation. We are not under a covenant. Apostate Christendom is already accounted for. It is a part of the wild beast. God entered into covenant with Israel in the flesh, but with no other people. We have just seen how He remembers His covenant. Now we are to see how He deals with the covenant breakers, who are presented to us under the figure of a woman who is not true to her marriage vows. Babylon must have been married to Yahweh, otherwise she could not be judged for faithlessness.

The evidence of her perfidy abound, and may best be appreciated by contrast with the faithful woman of the preceding section, who is presented in the midst of pain and persecution, depending upon divine intervention for succor and sustenance, hated and hounded by the dragon, the wild beasts and the nations. The purple woman is the antithesis of all this. She is riding the wild beast. She has every appearance of worldly wealth and regal opulence. Purple and scarlet, gold and gems and pearls are the sure signs of her royal magnificence. She consorts with kings. What higher place could be given to her on earth? Her picture could be painted in no brighter colors.

The full significance of the purple robe upon the scarlet beast may not dawn on us until we read that she has a kingdom over the kings of the earth (Rev.17:18). As these kings are incorporated in the scarlet wild beast, her sway is suggested by the fact she is sitting on it. It not only is her support, but is under her control. She is a suzerain. This is the place which Israel will possess during the thousand years. Hence she is enjoying a false and premature millennium. It is a satanic travesty of Yahweh's kingdom, when His people will reign over the nations under the leadership of Messiah.

A. E. Knoch

EWALD DEGEN

Our good friend and brother, Ewald Degen, was put to repose May 20, 2003, in Medicine Hat, Alberta. He was born in the Ukraine on January 7, 1911, and had emigrated to Canada following the turmoil of World War II. Keenly interested in God's Word, concordantly translated, he hosted a number of Scripture Conferences in his home, along with his late wife, Irma. He served as our agent for Canada for many years, distributing literature and giving support to missionary work.

We will miss his steadfast encouragement, but his firm testimony of faith continues to console and comfort those of us who knew him.

D.H.H.

DIVINE OPERATION AND CONTROL

Question:

I would like to know: Does God actually control *everything?* I know that this has always been the Concordant teaching, even if some of us have not been fully settled about this issue.

It would seem that this teaching is true, at least when certain of the things which it entails are not actively before the mind. But, when I think about the fact that this doctrine means that God is responsible for [i.e., is the source and final cause of] all of the sin and evil in the world, I become uneasy.

This also means that when He blames and punishes men for their wrongdoing, He is blaming and punishing them for what He Himself has caused them to do. It would seem that under these circumstances, they do not deserve the blame and punishment which they receive.

Similarly, concerning good behavior and virtue: Why should one be praised and rewarded for doing what it was appointed unto him to do?

And finally, likewise, if my love for my wife is something that "has to be," how can my love for her be genuine? I have to confess that these things do not seem right, at least in the sense that they do not "sit well" with me.

Answer:

YOU asked, Does God control everything? Before addressing your question itself specifically, I would like, first of all, to say the following:

It has been my experience that we who are believers must first *believe* what God has truly spoken, subsequently coming to understand His intended sense correctly, according as He gives light. Only then, while retaining living faith concerning God's deity, may we grow in understanding of *why* and *how* it is that what God, in His deity, actually does is right.

Most, however, never follow this course. Instead, they simply assume the validity of their own worldly ethics (specifically, the notion of free will), and then, albeit unwittingly, impose their own ethics upon the Scriptures.

It is not as if most folks have carefully investigated and analyzed this subject, astutely discerning the issues and scrupulously testing the competing theories, while only then objectively deciding in favor of libertarian freedom. To the contrary, it is merely, since they so intensely dislike and disapprove of the idea of God's deity over all, that they simply reject it out of hand, opting for their cherished "free will" instead.

We *like* free will and *want* it to be true. This is because free will appeals to our pride, even as to our lust for vengeance (or "payback"), which we euphemistically term, "justice." Free will seems to give us a measure of room even as warrant to embrace such attitudes, longings, and practices. Beyond this, allegiance to free will gains us the approval of our peers, simply by our indication of our acceptance of this popular belief.

Because of the strong opposition we receive from nearly all quarters to our findings on this subject, perhaps you can understand why we do not always speak as fully as we might concerning it, even though we regularly speak *of* it, though without greatly stressing it or considering it in detail. We wish to avoid needless controversy. When we speak, we would like to be helpful; this includes giving an adequate accounting and explanation of our views.

Yet many are either too prejudiced or have insufficient interest to give adequate time and effort to things of consequence, at least in cases where this may require careful reevaluation of received teaching.

THE SCOPE OF THE "ALL"

Perhaps your question, "Does God control everything?" can best be answered scripturally from a consideration of the words of Paul in Romans 11:34-36. Here, in this passage, each one of the apostle's rhetorical questions require the obvious answer, "No one."

QUESTION 1: "Who *knew* the mind of the Lord?"

ANSWER 1: No one ever already knew the mind of the Lord, apart from being informed thereof.

QUESTION 2: "Who became His adviser?"

ANSWER 2: No one ever became His adviser, affording Him needed counsel as a supplement to His own resources.

QUESTION 3: "Who gives to Him *first*, and it will be repaid him?"

ANSWER 3: No one ever gives something to God *first* (something that God Himself had not already given to the human), and then is repaid for so doing.

Paul says that it is so that no one ever does any of these things, "*seeing that all* is *out of, through,* and *for* God, adding as well the ascription of praise, "*to Him* be the glory."

Now, unless "all" in the universal sense (i.e., in reference to all that has come into existence), is Paul's intended sense, his very rhetorical questions could not be answered according as he manifestly intends that they should be answered.

This is to say that if all that exists and all that occurs, ultimately, is *not* out of God, then perhaps (1) at least once, someone already knew the mind of the Lord; and (2) at least once, someone along the way became His adviser, having apprized the Deity of something of which He had been ignorant, or otherwise afforded Him some type of

"outside help"; or (3) at least once, someone gave something to Him *first,* thus giving something to God that He had not first given to the human.

But since Paul effectually declares that no one—not even once—did any of these things, and insists that this is so "seeing that" (i.e., according to the necessity of the consequence) *all* is out of, through, and for God, it becomes evident that the apostle here in speaking of "all" is not speaking within some limited sphere and saying only that all within that limited sphere is out of God, but is saying instead that all, universally, is out of, through, and for Him.

Therefore, it must be true that God does indeed "control" all; or to express this thought in Paul's own language, it must be that God is "*operating all.*"

We know what it means to *operate* something: it means to act, or work, in order to bring about a certain effect. That God, then, does indeed "control everything," is merely a corollary of the fact that He is *operating all,* doing so according to the counsel of *His* will (Eph.1:11).

JUST LIABILITY

The question then arises, "Why, then, is He still blaming? for who has withstood His intention?" (*cp* Rom.9:19). If the creature merely fulfills the Creator's intention, it will be said that man, therefore, should not be held accountable (since he is ultimately not "responsible," in the sense that he could have done otherwise, categorically speaking).

God's "judgment" (i.e., that which He decides to do, here, in response to sin), however, is to do that which will glorify His own name through the salvation and blessing of His creatures. God does *not* consider men "responsible" in the sense as defined above; even so, He is mindful that those whose motives are wicked and whose deeds are evil—*apart from any question of how they came to be as they are*—are, for their own good, *in need* of "chastening [in the day of] *judging*" (*cf* 2 Peter 2:9). This He will grant in the day of His just judging.

Even though man is not responsible in the mistaken, libertarian-freewill sense, this is not to say that there is not a proper sense in which he is responsible. It is in consideration of God's just judging, that we note that in the primary sense of "responsibility," which is the judicial sense, man is indeed "responsible before God." The judicial sense of responsibility is simply the idea of being *duly accountable* and *justly liable.*

Anyone who believes that each of us shall be giving account concerning himself to God (Rom.14:12), must acknowledge that we are duly accountable. Likewise, anyone who is aware that, whether as vessels of mercy or of indignation, God will bring every work of every man into judgment (*cp* Ecc.12:14), must acknowledge that we are—and justly so—*liable* for our own actions (i.e., *subject to* the consequences thereof, as opposed to being *exempted from* the consequences thereof). This is all that is properly meant when affirming that we are *responsible* for our actions, and that we will be *held* responsible accordingly.

Now of course many will say that the reason *why* we are responsible (i.e., justly liable) for our acts is because we did them "of our own free will." Even so, the putative reason for something must be kept separate from the thing itself. Before God, we *are* responsible—justly held liable—for our actions, regardless of why this is so.

According to popular usage, insofar as the issue in dispute is concerned, to say that we behave as we do of our own free will, is to say that we do what we do in such a way that while we ourselves cause what we do to be done, we ourselves, nevertheless, are *not caused* to cause what we do to be done. It is claimed that since we, however mysteriously, are somehow exempted from the governance of causation, we therefore enjoy ultimate control

over the occurrence of our actions, over whether they do or do not occur.[1]

In philosophy, this notion just described is termed "indeterministic" or "libertarian" freedom (it is also sometimes termed contra-causal or Cartesian freedom, after René Descartes, a proponent of this view). Yet to the ordinary person, it is known simply by the moniker, "free will."

Libertarian freedom, however, even though it is an extremely popular belief, is nevertheless a demonstrably false belief. It is not just that it is not necessarily true, but that it is necessarily false, and so cannot possibly be true. This has been known for a long time; it is simply that any argument can be resisted, especially when a cherished notion is at stake.

The thesis that libertarian freedom cannot be true may be set forth as follows:

"All of our actions and choices are either alien-deterministic events—events such that there are causal factors beyond our control by virtue of which they are causally determined, or truly random events—those that are not produced by anything at all, or partially random events—those for which factors beyond the agent's control contribute to their production but do not determine them, while there is nothing that supplements the contribution of these factors to produce the events . . . .

"[However,] an action is free in the sense required for [freewill-based] moral responsibility only if it is not an alien-deterministic event, nor a truly random event, nor

1. This claim, however, does not follow and will not hold. This is because it is simply a fact that one has no more ultimate control over what one does due to nothing, than over what one does due to something. One could no more prevent the occurrence of an uncaused, unexplainable event, than one can avoid the occurrence of a caused, explainable event. To appeal to mystery here, is simply the last bastion of stubbornness.

a partially random event . . . . Agents cannot [thus] be responsible for actions that are alien-deterministic events . . . . [and] there is no more reason to hold that agents can be responsible for truly random or partially random events than there is to maintain that they can be responsible for alien-deterministic events. Thus, there are good reasons to believe that agents cannot be responsible for actions and choices that are events anywhere on this continuum."[2]

RIGHTEOUS CREATION OF EVIL

You mentioned that, at least on some level, it would seem to you that our teaching concerning God's deity (i.e., His GOD-ness) is correct. But you indicated, when reflecting upon the fact that if this is so then this would entail that God is the source and final cause of all of the sin and evil in the world, that this same teaching then began to appear troubling to you, if not dubious as well.

This need not be so. The basic idea of "sin" is to *miss* the mark; it is to make a mistake, or fail of the ideal. Even though a sin is that which misses a certain mark, such as the law, the entreaties of Jesus, or those of Paul, if God has determined that it should occur to accord with His own good purpose, then in "missing" any certain one of those previous marks, it at the same time "hits" this latter mark. Therefore, sanely and calmly considered, there is no reason whatever to be shocked at the proposal that "sin" is out of God.

Nor is there any more reason, likewise sanely and calmly considered, to be shocked at the related proposal that "evil" is also out of God. Evil is that which *smashes,* and often carries with it a train of suffering and sorrow. Evil itself is universally abhorred. Is evil good? Of course evil is not

2. Derk Pereboom, LIVING WITHOUT FREE WILL (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp.127,128.

good, since it produces only that which is bad, injurious, and hurtful. Evil is terrible; evil is awful.

That, however, is not the question. The question instead is, Is it wrong *for God* to create evil and to bring it to pass? Since we are expressly told that God is the Creator of evil (Isa.45:7) and yet that all His ways are righteous judgment (i.e., decisions; Deut.32:4) and that Yahweh is righteous in all His ways (Psa.145:17), the question ought never be asked.

In light of such considerations as these, then, all who unreservedly accept God's deity are constrained to declare not, Would there come to be evil in a city, and Yahweh have done it? but, "Would there come to be evil in a city, and Yahweh *not* have done it?" (Amos 3:6).

THE NECESSITY OF SIN AND SUFFERING

Still, even though it is so that God *is* the Creator of evil, and it is so that it is *right* for Him to be its Creator, the question remains, *How* is it right for God to be its Creator?

The answer to this question is actually as simple as it is glorious. It is *right* for God to cause evil to exist, because it is His servant, not His master. That which men contrive for evil, God designs for good, that in the end things might work out according as He is intending (*cp* Gen.50:20). This will be unto a glorious consummation, one far more glorious than would have been otherwise possible, apart from the temporary presence of evil.

There *must* be sinners and sufferers if God is to be glorified as the Saviour of sinners and sufferers, and, if men are to be blessed in a greater way than would have been possible had they never been sinners and sufferers. Sin and suffering, therefore, must not be left to chance (which is to say, to free will), but must be wisely ordered and governed by the Almighty Himself.

God's plans and purposes are unspeakably vast and complex. Therefore, it would be vain for us to speculate as to just why it is necessary for a particular evil, its particular degree of attendant suffering, its particular subjects, or its particular prevalence in the world, to exist instead of not to exist. It is enough to know that God does all things well, and that "because of Him Who subjects it," even though the entire creation is groaning and travailing together until now, this is only so in *expectation* that the creation itself shall finally be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom.8:20,21).

We may learn through "exploring by wisdom" concerning all that is done under the heavens that, "It is an experience of evil Elohim has *given* to the sons of humanity to humble them by it" (Ecc.1:13). Suffice it to say, then, that we may be confident that God, Who is love, would see to it that any certain evil did not exist, unless it were wise and needful to His purpose that it should exist.

"Now, faithful is God, Who will not be leaving you to be tried above what you are able, but, together with the trial, will be making the sequel also, to enable you to undergo it" (1 Cor.10:13b). "Sequel" (*ekbasis*), literally, by its word elements, is OUT-STEPPing. Even as we may be assured that God has made our trials themselves, we may be assured as well that He will "also" make the experience of good in that which follows them as their sequel, whenever it is time that we should be graced to "step out" of them, into a new and better experience. Some sequels are granted us within this present lifetime; others remain, to be granted in that day, that of our resurrection and glorification.

ANALYSIS OF OBJECTIVE SENSE

Your difficulties concerning the propriety of the existence of blame and just desert in the absence of free will, are due to the fact that you customarily even though unwittingly read the notion of free will into these words them-

selves. Once you see your error here and are able to break this habit, your difficulties in this regard will vanish.

I have had some success in pointing out to others the circular reasoning involved in reading into the word "choice," the notion of "avoidable, freewill-kind of [choice]." As a result, quite a few are now aware that a choice is simply that which is chosen or selected, from a field of two or more objects. That is, the word choice tells us nothing about the metaphysics of choice.

Now, I need to point out the circular reasoning similarly involved in reading into the words "blame" and "deserve," the notions, respectively, of "freewill-based [blame]" and "freewill-based [deservedness]." As much so as in the case of the word "choice," it is unintelligent to read the notion of "free will" into these terms as well; and, it is also unconscionable to do so, to any who at all perceive the fallaciousness and unfairness of so doing.

To "blame" (CV) or "find fault" (AV), is simply to *charge with wrongdoing*, regardless of the particular nature of the volitional activity of which the wrongdoing was the result.

Similarly, that which one "deserves," merely speaks of that of which one is *justly due.* That which is given as that which is "deserved," is that which, duly considered, *ought* to be given, since it is fitting and right to give it. The word itself says nothing of the grounds of justice, in the determination of that which *is,* in fact, "justly due."

Even "retribution" and "vengeance" only speak of deserved, "reciprocal penalty," or "repayment" in the interests of "the satisfaction of justice." The unenlightened human opinion, however, varies greatly from that of the divine opinion in regard to what penalty ought to be given and for what purpose, with a view to the satisfaction of that justice which *God* deems to be true justice.

That all is out of God, does not change the fact that punitive sanctions should still be imposed upon wrong-

doers. These should be meted out with sufficient force to be effective while in segregation from others as may be necessary. This is for the wrongdoers' own good. Such may also serve as a deterrent to others, while at the same time affording protection to society, as needed.

That all is *for* God, however, makes it unmistakably clear that punishment is not an intrinsic good or end in itself. Punishment must be "forward-thinking," sympathetic to the needs of the wrongdoer and dispensed for the good which it can produce, certainly including for the good of the wrongdoer himself. It must not be "backward-thinking," given out for the gratification of blood-lust, or even for the gratification of any sort of lesser retaliatory longing according to which one wishes to impose "evil for evil," that is, corresponding injury in return for injury received.

You also expressed concern as to the appropriateness of praise and reward apart from free will. In the absence of free will, clearly, praise and reward are not given for the commendable use of one's free will, which does not exist. Instead, praise and reward for doing good are given in consideration of effort expended and faithful service engaged in, in the interests of fostering and instilling habitual virtue through association with the honor and benefits thereof. To "praise," is simply to esteem and acclaim in the commendation of virtuous practice. Accordingly, a suitable "reward" (i.e., compensation or benefit), serves as an incentive to the pursuit of excellence, even as equitable sanctions (or "punishments") serve as deterrents to wrongdoing.

The absence of free will certainly does nothing to render either praise or blame, or punishment or reward, either redundant or unsuitable. The only things that need to be "given up" in light of one's repudiation of free will, are prideful, freewill-based praise and reward, and unmerciful and mean-spirited, freewill-based blame and punishment.

Rightly understood, praise, blame, desert, punishment,

reward, retribution, and vengeance, all have their rightful place—in the *absence* of free will. I hasten to add, however, that *vengeance* belongs to God; it is He alone Who can and will justly *repay.* As for ourselves, let us heed the entreaty, "Bless, and do not curse . . . . To no one render evil for evil . . . . be not conquered by evil; but conquer evil with good" (Rom.12:14-21).

Finally, you spoke of your concern as to whether your love for your wife could be "genuine" if it should be that it is something that "has to be." This, however, is a needless concern, though as an argument it is something that is regularly pressed upon us by advocates of free will.

Genuine love is love which accords with the virtues of 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, not that which accords with the delusional suppositions of free will. Love does not become non-genuine simply because, where it exists, it exists since it is caused to exist. Love, or any other virtue, loses neither its existence nor its excellence simply because it is created, as opposed to arising out of nothing, as a matter ultimately of sheer chance. Causation does not preclude either deliberation or volition; to the contrary, it produces them. Neither does simple causation entail either coercion or compulsion (being made to act contrary to one's own desires and wishes); it merely entails efficaciousness, however gently produced.

Though regrettable in themselves, beliefs and practices in accord with freewill notions and attitudes, are out of, through, and for God. These things, too, will redound to God's glory, in the day when He saves His creatures out of all such mistaken beliefs, granting them a realization of the truth (*cp* 1 Tim.2:4b).

In the meantime, as those who are walking in love, it becomes our privilege to bear with those holding such egregious errors—while at the same time not compromising our own faith in the truth. J.R.C.

SALVATION FROM WHAT?

THE EVANGEL is not a message of divine indignation and judgment, but of God's power for salvation. It frankly *recognizes* human sinfulness and its dire consequences as demanded by divine justice, but it clearly *reveals* God's righteousness in relation to the *salvation* of sinners rather than their condemnation. The subjects of God's righteous indignation upon human irreverence and injustice (Rom.1:18) and of His just judgment of human sinfulness are necessarily involved in the announcing of the evangel (Rom.2:16); however, they do not speak of salvation, but rather of that which calls for salvation.

The apostle Paul does not write about human failure and divine judgment in Romans 1:18-3:20 in order to hedge the goodness of God's power for salvation and the revelation it makes of God's righteousness. Nor is he presenting an alternative means of salvation, one that calls for human contributions of righteousness and faithfulness. What Paul writes here establishes the great and universal need of the evangel. It is not part of the evangel itself but rather serves as the dark background which brings out the glory of the evangel.

GOD GIVES THEM OVER

In speaking of human irreverence and unrighteousness and their effects, Paul solidly relates these to God. In the first place, human sinfulness is, at its most fundamental level, failure *toward God.* And the effects of human sinfulness are established *by God* in His indignation and

judgment. But most important, all that is said here about *God's* operations of indignation and judgment directs us to the evangel and what it says about *God's* operations of justification, conciliation and salvation and all the glory of His great achievements through the gift of His Son. Finally, when related to the evangel, what is said here will be seen in the light of Romans 11:36, for *out of God and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!*

The first effect of human unrighteousness brought out by Paul in this section of Romans is that of God giving sinners over to their uncleanness, dishonor and disqualified minds (Rom.1:24-32). It is a downward spiral. We sin, and God gives us over to a condition in which sin is multiplied. It is *God* Who gives us over to these expressions of His indignation. God Himself locks us up in the stubbornness of our disqualified minds (*cf* Rom.11:32).

Yet nothing that is written here is said apart from the fact that God's righteousness is being revealed in His work of salvation which is sourced in the faith of Jesus Christ. The great impasse of this section of Romans, where God's response to human sin increases the separation between Him and His creation, effectively prepares us for the glorious message of justification and conciliation.

God *gives over* irreverent and unjust humanity to the lusts of their hearts and dishonorable passions and a disqualified mind. But also God *gives up* His own Son for us all (Rom.8:32).

As we contemplate the horror of the current human situation in the following words of Romans 1:24-32, we must not forget the evangel. That is the whole point of the passage. It is not written to justify a doctrine of hopelessness in some kind of eternal hell, but rather to prepare us for the greatness and glory of God's evangel of salvation. From what are we saved? Paul begins to tell us here:

1. Wherefore **God gives them over,** in the lusts of their hearts,
   (a.) to the uncleanness of dishonoring their bodies among themselves,
      (b.) those who alter the truth of God into the lie, and are venerated, and offer divine service to the creature rather than the Creator, Who is blessed for the eons! Amen!
2. Therefore **God gives them over**
   (a.) to dishonorable passions. For their females, besides, alter the natural use into that which is beside nature. Likewise also the males, besides, leaving the natural use of the female, were inflamed in their craving for one another, males with males effecting indecency, and getting back in themselves the retribution of their deception which must be.
      (b.) And according as they do not test God, to have Him in recognition,
3. **God gives them over**
   (a.) to do that which is not befitting, filled with all injustice, wickedness, evil, murder, strife, guile, depravity, whisperers, vilifiers, detesters of God, outragers, proud, ostentatious, inventors of evil things, stubborn to parents, unintelligent, perfidious, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
      (b.) those who, recognizing the just statute of God, that those committing such things are deserving of death, not only are doing them, but are endorsing, also, those who are committing them.

OUR NEED OF SALVATION

This passage from Romans thoroughly defines our need of salvation. That to which God gives us over (shown in the "a" sections in the preceeding arrangement) is full

of shame. And the description of humanity given in the "b" sections is so accurate and penetrating as to leave us without hope apart from God's own righteous provision of deliverance. He alone can save us from these depravities and from the condemnation to which they lead.

Every charge against us and every expression of divine indignation given in this passage of Scripture call for the evangel which is the power of God for salvation, in which God's righteousness is being revealed.

THE CREATOR

God gives over those who offer divine service to the creature rather than the Creator, to the uncleanness of dishonoring their bodies. There are two major problems here. The first and most noticeable one to us as human beings is that we are put into an impossible situation in which sin leads to further alienation from God, which leads to further and more dishonorable sin. The second and most critical problem, though often overlooked, is that the Creator Himself brings about this "impossible" situation which seems to complete the ruin of His creation. What God has created cannot be seen as good.

God is the Creator of humanity, and because humanity dishonors Him, He gives them over to that which dishonors themselves but also appears to discredit His skill as Creator. What God does is fair and just in light of human sin. But it does not lead to the creature's blessing of blessing God as Creator. It does not lead to salvation and glory.

God's solution to both these problems is found in the evangel. God has subjected the creation to vanity, but He has done so "in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:21). The giving over of humanity to self-dishonoring and self-defeating acts is not the goal of the Creator. It is His present intention, yet a matter of *transitoriness,* as expressed by the word "vanity." It is part of that from which God saves humanity through the death of His Son. The Creator's blessedness embracess His righteousness in His powerful work of salvation. Humanity will be saved to the place of blessing God as the "faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4:19), Who indeed is "blessed for the eons, Amen!" (Rom.1:25;3:25;9:5).

Thus we see that the apparent, impossible situation described in Romans 1:24,25, is one which God deals with powerfully and gloriously in the sending of His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin (*cf* Rom.8:3). "For the One not knowing sin, [God] makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:19).

THAT WHICH MUST BE

The Scriptures often speak of things which must be. They are *binding*.[1] In giving over mankind to dishonorable passions in which they deceive themselves and their associates, and which effect indecency, God sees to it that they also get back retribution in themselves (Rom.1:26,27). The Greek word rendered "retribution" is made up of two elements meaning INSTEAD-HIRE, literally referring to payment for work that one is hired to do (*cp* AV "recompense"), but in this figurative usage referring to the harmful effects of human dishonorable deception on them. These effects are inevitable, for they are part of God's intention for the present. They are expressions of divine indignation, and they must be.

Again we see the downward spiral. Adam sinned, and so death passes into his descendants, on which they sin (Rom.5:12). As sinners they grow in irreverence and un-

1. *Cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.32; *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.80, p.52; vol.83. p.67.

righteousness, and (unless He intervenes with mercy) God gives them over to dishonorable passions, which involve built-in and harmful effects.

Adapting the language of Romans 7:24, we ask, "What will rescue us out of this wretched situation?" The answer, as in Romans 7, is: "Grace!" We all sin and are wanting of the glory of God, yet now, as the evangel declares, God's grace brings gratuitous justification, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:21-24).

Then, are the effects of God's grace in giving His Son for sinners as inevitable as the effects of human depravity? What *must be* so regarding God's indignation is met by what *shall be* so because of the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ. The entire, vast multitude of sinners who are under condemnation *shall be* constituted righteous (Rom.5:19).

All people have the need of salvation. What Paul writes here in Romans 1:19-32 has application to us all. In presenting the great need of humanity for salvation, Paul glories in the cross of Christ which provides and establishes that salvation.

HAVING GOD IN RECOGNITION

God would have His creatures have Him in *recognition,* or *realization.*[2] He would have them realize in fullness of comprehension Who He is and what He is like. This, as Romans makes clear, involves especially a recognition of God's righteousness and love. But in their irreverence and unrighteousness, human beings do not test God to have Him in recognition (Rom.1:28). God must reveal His glory to them, and He does so "in the face of Jesus Christ" (*cf* 2 Cor.4:6; Col.1:15). God's righteousness is made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.

2. The CV uses both these English words as a translation of the Greek term, ON-KNOWledge; *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.242.

3:21,22,26). His love is commended in Christ's death for the sinner's sake (Rom.5:8; 8:31-39).

God's indignation cannot provide sinners with such a recognition of God. It is only the message of His righteous and superabounding love and peace in the gift of His Son that opens up the heart of God to our comprehension. The bleak assessment of Romans 1:24-32 prepares us well for the revelation of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ which the evangel makes.

THE JUST STATUTE OF GOD

The words of Romans 1:29-31 concerning human depravity leave no room for any of us to claim innocence. At certain points in this list of dishonorable acts each one of us will feel Paul knew us pretty well. Indeed in all honesty we must admit some acquaintance with all these evils lurking within ourselves. We are all sinners, and no matter how righteous one may be in relation to other sinners or in relation to written rules (Saul of Tarsus was becoming righteous in relation to the law; Phil.3:6), there is no question about the outcome of God's judgment if it is based solely on His searching examination of what we do and endorse.

We know this. And we *recognize* the righteousness of God in establishing the death penalty for this sort of thing; it is the "just statute of God, that those committing such things are deserving of death" (Rom.1:32). God set this forth with regard to Adam right at the beginning (Gen.2:17), and death passes on into all of us (Rom.5:12). What else can a just God do? He must get rid of such unrighteousness.

But, in His blessedness, and indeed in His righteousness, God does do something else which goes way beyond His works of judgment. And that is made known to us in the evangel.

In the Concordant Version, the Greek term translated "just statute" in Romans 1:32 is translated "just require-

ment" in Romans 2:26 and 8:4. And in Romans 5:16 and 18 it is rendered "just award." Literally it means: JUST-*effect*. In our *Keyword Concordance*, we read that this word signifies "the result of a right standard" (p.166). As such, it refers to the effects of righteousness. In Romans it seems particularly to refer to the effects of *God's* righteousness. Because such effects issue from the standard of divine righteousness they are themselves truly righteous or just. But the Greek word itself directs special attention to righteousness as the *source* of the righteous statute, requirement, award or whatever matter is in view as indicated by the context.

Here in Romans 1:32 we learn that when God pronounces sinners deserving of death, He does so as a product of His righteousness. Later we see that, as a result of His standard of righteousness, God lays down righteous standards of behavior in the law. But these effects of God's righteousness do not display the *fullness* and the *matchless glory* of God's righteousness. Once again, what is said here in Romans 1 prepares us for the presentation of the evangel especially, in this case, as given in chapter 5.

It is the evangel that tells us about an effect of God's righteousness in view of human sinfulness which goes beyond the verdict of Romans 1:32. This is spelled out magnificently in Romans 5:18. There the JUST-*effect* of God is His giving of His Son, Who was faithful even to the death of the cross. There we learn that God's righteousness had the effect on Him, operating through His Beloved Son, to do that which would put an end to all sin and death and evil and would ultimately bring forth life's justifying for all mankind. His righteousness led God to give up His own Son because of our offenses and rouse Him because of our justifying (Rom.4:25).

Romans 1:24-32 is most profitable in paving the way for our appreciation of the evangel. What this section says

about human depravity and God's righteous response to this depravity is not good news in itself, but it prepares for the glory of the good news that Christ Jesus died for sinners. The obedience of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners is the highest of all the effects of God's righteousness. It is the source of every blessing to come for humanity and of every avowal of glorification and thanksgiving and blessing given to God, Who is blessed for the eons! Amen!

D.H.H.

EFFECTS OF DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Greek word, *dikaiōma*, which is translated in the Concordant Version by such terms as "just statute," "just requirement" and "just award," draws attention to the righteous source of the just statute, requirement or award. The statutes, requirements and awards of God are truly just, or right, but this Greek term informs us that their right-ness is the effect of God's own just standards. Consequently, the word, as it is used in Romans, has a great deal to say about God's righteousness in speaking about the right or just effects which He brings about.

This important feature of *dikaiōma* is almost impossible to express in an English translation in a succinct, idiomatic manner. We have no English term or expression that corresponds exactly with the Greek word. Perhaps we could invent a term such as "just-ized," although that could not be used in an idiomatic translation. Indeed, to speak of "God's just-ized statute" would probably puzzle the reader more than help in conveying the rich nuances of the Greek word.

Nevertheless, these nuances are valuable to the believer, and if we can grasp them truly we may be sure they will be helpful for growth in our appreciation of God. We may not be able to express them fully in our translations of the Scriptures, but this should not stop us from the search for exactitude.

Continuing, then, with the uses of the word *dikaiōma* in Romans, when Paul speaks of the just requirements of the law

in Romans 2:26 and 8:4, we see that he uses a term directing attention to these requirements as effects of a right standard, even that standard held to by God. In giving the law to Israel, God required those things which accorded with His own standard of righteousness; they were, and are just requirements, but they are so because of the standard that produced them. This again leads our minds to an increased appreciation of God.

With this in view, we can see that the rendering, "just award," in Romans 5:16 should be understood as an award that is just because it issues from God's standard of righteousness. The passage speaks of God's grace, but it also has something to say about God's righteousness by way of the word *dikaiōma*. The blessing of justification (which seems to be the "award" in view) that we receive from God in contrast to the curse of condemnation is the achievement of His grace as sourced in His righteousness. Justification has a righteous basis, but this basis is not human works of righteousness; it is God's attribute of righteousness as revealed in the evangel. It is that which results from God's action of giving up His Son for sinners. Justification is not an arbitrary favor, but rests on that right standard of God that demands that every sin of every sinner be dealt with.

All these considerations indicate that it would be better for us to use the words "just act" for *dikaiōma* in Romans 5:18. This was the rendering suggested by Brother Knoch ninety years ago in an early study of this passage (*cf Unsearchable Riches,* volume 4, pages 102 and 110). But perhaps because of the usage of the word in verse 16, it must have been felt that Paul would have an award or blessing in mind when he penned the thought of verse 18. Consequently, all editions of the English CV since 1926 have used "just award" here.

But if *dikaiōma* refers to an effect of God's right standards, it can be used of an *act* as well as an award or a statute or requirement. In this way the translation would bring out the parallel between "one offense" and "one *dikaiōma*" more clearly. The faithful *act* of Christ in giving Himself for sinners is contrasted with the offensive act of Adam. God's own righteousness is what lays behind that great giving of His Son, which thereupon leads to life's justifying for all mankind. D.H.H.

Contents:

193 Editorial
195 Paul, the Evangelist
203 A Spirit of Wisdom
209 God's Just Judgment
217 A Memorial Address
225 From Shem to Abram
231 What was God Thinking of?
235 Conflicts and Leadership

September, 2003

Volume XCIV **Number 5**

"The Kingdom in the 'Old Testament'"

Vladimir Gelesnoff

"The Kingdom in the 'Old Testament,'" was among the first publications of the Concordant Publishing Concern. From the San Diego address for *Unsearchable Riches* magazine included on the original copy of this study, kept in our archives, we conclude that it must have been issued in 1909 or 1910, before the mailing address was changed to Los Angeles.

In introducing the revised edition of this exposition in 1938, upon which this reprint is based, A. E. Knoch stated: "[This writing] was first published many years ago, and has long been out of print. As nothing equal to it seems to have appeared in the meantime, we welcome the opportunity of reissuing it . . . . The careful consideration demanded by the work of revision has once more impressed me with the extraordinary excellence and value of this exposition. The great need for clarity on this elementary theme is evident on all sides, and grows as the apostasy proceeds apace. Hence I take this opportunity of commending it to all who wish to aid their fellow saints to gain an insight into God's grand purpose through the nation of His choice and their Messiah, Christ Jesus our Lord." (*Unsearchable Riches*, vol.29, p.210).

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EDITORIAL

WHEN Paul spoke to Philemon about the *fellowship* of his faith (v.6) he was referring to an expression, or appreciation, of that which we have in common with other believers. The Greek word for "fellowship" signifies COMMON-BEING, and is sometimes translated "communion" or "contribution" in other contexts. Philemon had his believing of the evangel concerning Jesus Christ in common with Paul and also with the slave Onesimus. Now, in writing his letter, Paul wanted his beloved friend and fellow worker to keep this commonness in mind in dealing with a particular situation that involved all three of them.

"The faith" which Philemon had (v.5) was the same that we all have. It concerns God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and sees in His death a work and achievement of God for salvation, justification, conciliation, vivification, subjection and reconciliation. In God's grace, we have believed the evangel, but also (again in His grace) we have the joy of retaining it and finding it *operative* (another word Paul used in Philemon 6) in our lives (*cp* 1 Cor.15:2). Paul was continually entreating believers to live in accord with what they believe. Thus he wrote, for example: "Become, then, imitators of God, as beloved children, and be walking in love, *according as Christ also loves you*" (Eph.5:1,2). As for Philemon, this love of Christ which he shared with Paul and Onesimus should become operative in the way in which he received his slave back again.

That is both a simple and a marvelous human story involving three believers and their common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Versions of this story can be repeated in the lives of multitudes of believers since that day, including ourselves today.

I like to think of you who receive and read this magazine in light of our fellowship of faith. In many ways, of course, we hold faith in common with many others who do not feel kindly disposed toward us with respect to much that we believe. This is surely due to the fact that God does not grant everyone the same measure of faith and understanding with respect to what God has said in His Word. Hence, in particular, where there is strong emphasis on traditional teachings of men, and where the evangel is distorted from a message of grace and gratuity and triumphant love to one mixed with religious requirements and dreadful threatenings, the fellowship is sadly constricted. So it is that, even though we also may have our differences, there is a happy communion of faith where that which calls us "in the grace of Christ" (Gal.1:6) becomes and remains our foundation, and where there is a growing reliance on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:9,10).

It is with this in view that the present issue of *Unsearchable Riches* begins with some of the words (in translation) of the evangel we believe, as expressed by our apostle Paul nearly two thousand years ago. These are selected from all of Paul's letters with no comments or insertions except for the headings. There is very little from Philemon because it is not involved with presenting the evangel but with living it, which is partly why I am commenting on it here in the editorial.

May these words concerning Christ's death for sinners, His resurrection and exaltation, become operative in your lives and mine "in the realization of every good thing which is in us for Christ Jesus" (Philemon 6). We all have our own rough spots to get through and our own dealings with other people. The pattern in Philemon is particularly relevant in dealing with fellow believers, but it must surely have value in all of life's affairs.

D.H.H.

PAUL, THE EVANGELIST

PAUL, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, severed for the evangel of God . . . concerning His Son, . . . Jesus Christ, our Lord . . . . (Rom.1:1-4)

God . . . severs me from my mother's womb and calls me through His grace, to unveil His Son in me that I may be evangelizing Him among the nations. (Gal.1:15,16)

For if I should be bringing the evangel, it is not for me to boast in, for necessity is lying upon me, for it were woe to me if I should not be bringing the evangel! (1 Cor.9:16)

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS REVEALED

Not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing . . . . For in it God's righteousness is being revealed, out of faith for faith. (Rom.1:16,17)

By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight . . . . Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God. Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter, through faith in His blood, for a display of His righteousness because of the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurrred before in the forbearance of God, toward the display of His righteousness in the current era, for Him to be just and a Justifier of the one who is of the faith of Jesus, where, then, is boasting? (Rom.3:20-27)

THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

[He] was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying. Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God. (Rom. 4:25; 5:1,2)

For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, died . . . . God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes. Much rather, then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from indignation, through Him. For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life. (Rom.5:6-10)

THROUGH ONE, CONCERNING ALL

Even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned— . . . But not as the offense, thus also the grace. For if, by the offense of the one, the many died, much rather the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds. And not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity. For, indeed, the judgment is out of one into condemnation, yet the grace is out of many offenses into a just award . . . . Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just act, for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just. (Rom.5:12-19)

GOD'S OWN SON

For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh. (Rom.8:3)

What, then, shall we declare to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all? (Rom.8:31,32)

GOD'S LOVE IN CHRIST JESUS

What shall be separating us from the love of God in Christ Jesus? Affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? . . . I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. (Rom.8:35-39)

CHRIST CRUCIFIED

We are heralding Christ crucified, to Jews, indeed, a snare, yet to the nations stupidity, yet to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. (1 Cor.1:23,24)

I am making known to you, brethren, the evangel which I bring to you, which also you accepted, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved . . . . For I give over to you among the first what also I accepted, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures. (1 Cor.15:1-4)

CHRIST ROUSED FROM AMONG THE DEAD

Christ has been roused from among the dead, the First-

fruit of those who are reposing. For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power. For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He subjects all under His feet . . . . Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all. (1 Cor.15:20-28)

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died. And He died for the sake of all that those who are living should by no means still be living to themselves, but to the One dying, and being roused for their sakes. (2 Cor.5:14,15)

YET ALL IS OF GOD

Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was, in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation . . . . For the One not knowing sin, [God] makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him. (2 Cor.5:18-21)

THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that,

being rich, because of you He became poor, that you, by His poverty, should be rich. (2 Cor.8:9)

GRACE AND PEACE

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who gives Himself for our sins, so that He might extricate us out of the present wicked eon, according to the will of our God and Father, to Whom be glory for the eons of the eons. Amen! (Gal.1:3-5)

THE FAITH OF CHRIST

We also believe in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by the faith of Christ and not by works of law, seeing that by works of law shall no flesh at all be justified . . . . With Christ have I been crucified, yet I am living, no longer I, but living in me is Christ. Now that which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith that is of the Son of God, Who loves me, and gives Himself up for me. (Gal.2:16,20)

BLESSED IS GOD WHO BLESSES

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, . . . in Whom we are having the deliverance through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His grace . . . . (Eph.1:3,7)

GOD'S OFFERING FOR APPROACHING NEAR

For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. (Eph.2:8)

Become, then, imitators of God, as beloved children, and be walking in love, according as Christ also loves you, and gives Himself up for us, an approach present and a sacrifice to God, for a fragrant odor. (Eph.5:2)

HUMBLED AND EXALTED

Christ Jesus, . . . being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and, being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father. (Phil.2:5-11)

ALL CREATED AND RECONCILED IN HIM

[The Father] rescues us out of the jurisdiction of Darkness, and transports us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in Whom we are having the deliverance, the pardon of sins, Who is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible . . . . And He is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens. (Col.1:13-20)

ASSURANCE AND EXPECTATION

For the evangel of our God did not come to you in word only, but in power also, and in holy spirit and much assurance . . . . And therefore we also are thanking God unintermittingly that, in accepting the word heard from us, from God you receive, not the word of men, but, according as it truly is, the word of God, which is operating also in you who are believing. (1 Thess.1:5; 2:13)

For, if we are believing that Jesus died and rose, thus also, those who are put to repose, will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with Him. (1 Thess.4:14)

For God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for our sakes, that, whether we may be watching or drowsing, we should be living at the same time together with Him. (1 Thess.5:9,10)

THANKING GOD

Now we ought to be thanking God always concerning you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, seeing that God prefers you from the beginning for salvation, in holiness of the spirit and faith in the truth, into which He also calls us through our evangel, for the procuring of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . . Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, our Father, Who loves us, and is giving us an eonian consolation and a good expectation in grace, be consoling your hearts and establish you in every good work and word. (2 Thess.2:13-17)

THE EVANGEL OF THE HAPPY GOD

The evangel of the glory of the happy God, with which I was entrusted: . . . Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. (1 Tim.1:11,15)

God . . . wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth. (1 Tim.2:4)

For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and mankind, a Man, Christ Jesus, Who is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (the testimony in its own eras). (1 Tim.2:5,6)

Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome . . . that

we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. (1 Tim.4:9,10).

DEATH ABOLISHED, LIFE ILLUMINATED

Suffer evil with the evangel in accord with the power of God, Who saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian, yet now is being manifested through the advent of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, Who indeed, abolishes death, yet illuminates life and incorruption through the evangel of which I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher of the nations. (2 Tim.1:8-11)

THE GRACE, KINDNESS AND FONDNESS OF GOD

For the grace of God made its advent for salvation to all humanity, training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon. (Titus 2:11)

The kindness and fondness for humanity of our Saviour, God, made its advent, not for works which are wrought in righteousness which we do, but according to His mercy, He saves us, through the bath of renascence and renewal of holy spirit, which He pours out on us richly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that being justified in that One's grace, we may be becoming enjoyers, in expectation, of the allotment of life eonian. (Titus 3:4-7)

AMEN

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit! Amen! (Philemon 25)

A SPIRIT OF WISDOM

"O, THE DEPTH of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? Or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:33-36).

When we are first given faith in the Lord, we do not fully comprehend the breadth and length and depth and height of the love in which we are grounded (*cf* Eph.3:17-19). It is in addressing *believers in Christ Jesus* that Paul bows his knees in prayer for this very enlightenment (Eph.3:14-19), and also earlier wrote, "Therefore, I also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him" (Eph.1:15-18).

INSTRUCTED IN THE WAY OF GOD

Even Apollos, although well instructed and fervent in spirit, had to be instructed in the way of God more accurately by Priscilla and Aquila when he arrived at Ephesus (Acts 18:24-26). In accord with the testimony of Romans 11:36, quoted above, that all is out of God, it is instructive to note that this worthy couple were with Paul on this occasion because they had been expelled from Rome by order of the Roman emperor, Claudius (Acts 18:2).

When we read thus of God's wise provision, we are reminded of the words of Jacob's son, Joseph, in Egypt, as he sought to comfort his remorse-stricken brothers: "And now, not you sent me here, for it was the One, Elohim" (Gen.45:5-8). Meditate on the far-reaching consequences of his brothers' evil act: "And saying is Judah to his brothers, 'What gain is it that we kill our brother and cover his blood? Go, and we will sell him to the Ishmaelites, and our hand must not come to be against him, for our brother and our flesh is he.' And hearkening are his brothers" (Gen.37:26,27).

In this dreadful deed and hideous hypocrisy we can yet perceive deep, emotional, moving images of the glorious outcome. Consider the anguish of the father, Jacob. Mark well the meek acceptance of all the unjust accusations and imprisonment suffered by Joseph. His interpretation of Pharaoh's dream brought Joseph great blessings, but also, it proved to preserve the mighty nation of Egypt from extinction. But wait! There is far more important occasion than even these! "Now he [Joseph, husband of Mary], being roused, took along the little Boy and His mother by night and retired into Egypt. And He was there till the decease of Herod that that may be fulfilled which is declared by the Lord through the prophet, saying, 'Out of Egypt I call My Son'" (Matt.2:15; Hos.11:1).

CREATOR OF EVIL

The truth that all is out of, through and for God is clearly stated in Isaiah 45:5-7, where Yahweh claims to be

> Former of light
> And Creator of darkness,
> Maker of good
> And Creator of evil
> I, Yahweh, make all these things.

Those who determine right or wrong in accord with their own ethical principles will dissent, claiming that this declaration refers only to physical and not moral evil, pointing especially to the disruption of war. "Now war . . . is the direct result of wrongdoing; war results from racial prejudice; pride, greed, ambition, revenge, covetousness, and every other wicked passion that simmers in the human breast. So-called physical evils are inseparable corollaries of war, but they are the *result* rather than the cause of it."[1]

What prompted Claudius to banish all the Jews from Rome? Could their own bitterness of jealousy account entirely for the reprehensible cruelty of Joseph's brothers? Was it mere vanity which caused Caesar Augustus to issue his arrogant decree of registration? Plainly, each was an evil act, but ultimately, each served the wise and loving purpose of our God and Father, out of Whom, and through Whom and for Whom is all.

THE BLINDING OF ISRAEL

Yet what might we declare concerning the disabling of the nation of Israel?

"And approaching, the disciples say to Him, 'Wherefore art Thou speaking in parables to them?' Now answering, He said to them that 'To you has it been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of the heavens, yet to those it has not been given. For anyone who has, to him shall be given, and he shall have a superfluity. Yet anyone who has not, that also which he has shall be taken away from him. Therefore in parables am I speaking to them, seeing that, observing, they are not observing, and hearing, they are not hearing, neither are they understanding And filled up in them is the prophecy of Isaiah, that is saying, *In hearing, you will be hearing, and may by no means be under-*

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.5, p.63.

standing, and observing, you will be observing, and may by no means be perceiving'" (Matt.13:10-13).

"This quotation from the sixth chapter of Isaiah is quoted more frequently than any other passage from the prophets. It occurs at the two great crises in the spiritual history of Israel, the rejection of the kingdom ministry of Christ, and the repudiation of its renewal by the holy spirit in Acts (28:25-28). It always marks the cessation of the evangel of the kingdom. Henceforth He is not seeking to open their eyes, but to blind them. After Paul's pronunciation of Israel's doom, the kingdom proclamation ceased. The history of the kingdom ended. It will not be resumed until the present administration of God's grace, in which the evangel goes direct to the nations apart from Israel's mediacy, is finished. Then once more the evangel will not only go to Israel, but through them to all the nations."[2]

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Here, our human spirit confused and bewildered, we are gently escorted by a spirit of wisdom and revelation in realization. Was this judgment of apostasy a good or evil action? Reverent consideration and the attendant adoration at the glory of our gracious calling leave us with but one thankful conclusion. It is all of God, for good.

In recognizing this, there can be no sense of detachment toward the immense pain and anguish involved in Israel's apostasy (*cp* Rom.9:1,2). It is rather that we are led to see value in the evil in seeing that it has a purpose determined by God.

To note the ordering and placing of Deity in all things is indeed a matter of spiritual maturity. Just as, physically, we all must learn to walk before we can run, so also we are tenderly escorted and enlightened by the spirit

2. Concordant Commentary, p.28.

which is of God toward a comprehension of the wisdom of God's purpose.

"Now he who is spiritual is, indeed, examining all, yet he is being examined by no one. For who knew the mind of the Lord? Who will be deducing from Him? Yet we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor.2:15,16).

NOT MANY WISE

Many must recall their first impression upon reading 1 Corinthians 1:26. "For you are observing your calling, brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh . . . ." Did we not assume that here was a presentation of humility alone? How could we have recognized that the apostle was not only introducing us to a fitting meekness, but also was preparing us for the profound realization fully disclosed through his prison epistles? Was this a *first step* for many?

We are not many wise, and yet we pray for a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory.

It was a word of encouragement when we read of the expectation of our calling, but how can we compare even such words with the revelation of God's intention to create a joint body both from the nations and certain privileged ones of the nation of Israel?

An ecclesia, we are chosen by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ "to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved" (Eph.1:3-6).

Thus were we apprised of just one of the secrets of Christ Jesus. Ephesians blazes forth the secrets of the evangel, and Colossians presents in a hush the secret of Christ Himself. An awed whisper! Rejoice in this realiza-

tion! Bend the knee and heart to the exalted Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords! Throughout the entire universe none more mighty and noble than He!

TO HIM WHO IS ABLE

How delightful to stand in awe before the multicolored wonders of a glorious sunset! And how heightened is this same delight when shared in the company of some loved one! "Look!" we whisper. "See!" we gasp, when first we witness the grandeur of some mighty cascading waterfall or the strange alien sight of a rare eclipse. Listen! we whisper on hearing the sweet notes of a bird song.

How utterly disarming then to read the apostle's words and grasp some slight measure of the compulsion which gripped his heart: "For if I should be bringing the evangel, it is not for me to boast in, for necessity is lying upon me, for it were woe to me if I should not be bringing the evangel!" (1 Cor.9:16).

This insatiable hunger, this driving compunction to share, to communicate, is a God-given blessing.

There was a weary excess of worldly wisdom in the city of Athens when Paul visited. Small wonder that the apostle, sensing the rejection of the evangel he was bringing, described as "announcements of strange demons" (Acts 17:16), should depart from thence. How familiar this rejection seems. Especially today there is an abundance of trivia. How the words of faith concerning the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and the delight of His will and purpose shine forth through the murkiness and confusion!

And so we pray for a spirit of wisdom and realization.

"Now to Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen!" (Eph.3:20,21). Donald Fielding

GOD'S JUST JUDGMENT

IN A REMARKABLE WAY Romans 1:18-3:20 is a summation of the course of *humanity* as recorded in the Sacred Scriptures from Genesis 2:4 to Revelation 22:21. It speaks of human wickedness and God's indignation on this wickedness and His judgment of sinners. Adam and Eve in the garden, Cain with his offering, Israel in apostasy, humanity at Golgotha, the multiplication of wickedness at the end of this eon—all of this accords with the description of human irreverence and unrighteousness set before us in this section of Romans.

But these themes of human sin and divine judgment are embedded here in Romans in the themes of justification and grace in the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ. They serve, by contrast, to clarify the glory of the evangel which is the power of God for salvation. They speak of that from which God saves us, and by their pain and sorrow and darkness bring out the glories of God so that we might know Him as He truly is.

DESERVING OF DEATH

We have learned from Romans 1:32 that, apart from the evangel, the just effect of divine righteousness, in view of human irreverence and unrighteousness, is the statute that those who commit acts of unrighteousness are deserving of death. God first declared that this would be so in Genesis 2:17 when He warned Adam not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: "For on the day you eat from it, to die shall you be dying." God may delay the exe-

cution of this sentence, in patience and forbearance, but the principle remains: "The soul that is sinning, it shall die" (Ezek.18:4,20).

But who are those who are sinning?

FROM "THEY" TO "YOU"

In Romans 1:18-32 Paul spoke of humanity in the third person plural: "Vain were *they* made in *their* reasonings, and darkened is *their* unintelligent heart, . . . and according as *they* do not test God, to have Him in recognition, God gives *them* over to a disqualified mind." In chapter 2 he changes to the second person singular, for the most part: "Wherefore, defenseless are *you,* O human!"

As long as we look at those who commit the particular, habitual and engrained acts of wickedness and irreverence that are listed in Romans 1, we might convince ourselves of a certain detachment from the sorry situation. If we do not make the definition of such things as pride and whisperings too strict some might even suppose Paul is not talking about us at all.

But that is to miss, altogether, the value of this portion of Romans. Paul is not himself whispering about others as though to exclude us and himself. He is speaking boldly about a race-wide problem. Every single one of us and every single failure and offense are all in view. It is essential to see this if we are to grasp the glory of the evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ, of which Paul was not ashamed. The evangel confronts the immense darkness of Romans 1:18-3:20.

THE LARGER CONTEXT OF ROMANS

For indeed, as we have noted above, this section of Romans is not the whole of the letter. The subjects of human sin and divine judgment are subservient to what Paul has to say about the evangel. They prepare us for the

greater and fuller display of God's righteousness which is made known in the evangel and the glorious effect of that righteousness on sinners.

Even in Genesis and Ezekiel and the book of Revelation the evangel is never wholly out of view. It is there in the types (such as the offerings), in the promises of future good and in the operations of divine grace and mercy to God's chosen ones. It is there in the pattern laid down in the first chapter of Genesis, and it is there in the continued testimony to divine wisdom and power and righteousness. And by implication the truth of the evangel is there in the patience and kindness and forbearance of God toward sinners in general. All of these themes find their completion in the death of Christ for sinners, and none of them can have any real meaning and justification apart from this pivotal and crucial work of God in the giving of His Son.

ALL SIN

The recognition that we *all* are sinners is basic to our appreciation of the evangel. There is much difference today (but not forever!) between believers and unbelievers, but it does not lie in what we are in ourselves. It lies in the bestowing of God's grace. At its very core it lies in the measure of faith graciously granted (Rom.12:3; Phil. 1:29) and in God's choice before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4).

To be sure, this grace leads forward to the gracious and powerful influence of God's spirit in the believer, as it did for Paul, so "that the just requirement of the law may be being fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit" (Rom.8:3,4). But when it comes to what we are in ourselves, or as Paul puts it, what we are in our flesh, we stand with all human beings in being unrighteous and irreverent and deserving of death. None of us are exempt from sin.

Consequently, Paul now looks at each of us personally and addresses us all directly as *you, O human!*

ROMANS 2:1-6

a. Wherefore, defenseless are **you, O human!** everyone who is judging, for in what you are judging another, you are condemning yourself, for you who are judging are committing the same things.

b. Now we are aware that **the judgment of God** is according to truth against those who are committing such things.

a. Yet are **you** reckoning on this, **O human,** who are judging those committing such things and are doing the same,

b. that you will be escaping **the judgment of God?** Or are you despising the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, being ignorant that the kindness of God is leading you to repentance?

a. Yet, in accord with your hardness and unrepentant heart **you** are hoarding for yourself indignation

b. in the day of indignation and revelation of **the just judgment of God,** Who will be paying each one in accord with his acts:

O HUMAN!

The human being, as shown in the "a" sections above, is defenseless against the charge of sin and liable to the judgment of God, hoarding for himself indignation in the day of indignation. This, viewed apart from the evangel, applies to everyone.

Consider Abel, as an example, one who is called "just" (*cf* Matt.23:35; Heb.11:4). He was a human being and a sinner, even though, in comparison with Cain, he was righteous with respect to glorifying and thanking God by means of

an approach present. From the evidence available to us, *we,* as human judges, could not say that Abel was guilty, like Cain, of altering the truth of God or of offering divine service that paid homage to himself rather than the Creator (Rom.1:25). But what of a judgment that would take into account the standards Jesus set before Israel in Matthew 5:21-45? Abel could never be Cain's judge without exposing the fact that he also was a sinner. If one fails in one requirement of law, he fails in all (James 2:10). In the final analysis, apart from the evangel, no one can put up a successful defense before a tribunal based entirely on truth. This is so even of Abel and Joshua and Daniel and others who are called "righteous" in the Scriptures, in relation to their contemporaries.

As for Abel, he was aware whether or not he had ever been angry with Cain (*cf* Matt.5:22) or had never felt envy, or always, at every moment, kept God before him in recognition (*cf* Rom.1:28). And, more to the point, God was aware. We do know this for certain: that death passed on to Abel from Adam, on which Abel sinned (Rom.5:12). Had not God purposed that His Son would come into the world to save sinners, and had Christ Jesus not done so, Abel's position before God would be no different from Cain's. In himself he was deserving of divine indignation and death. That is what is demanded by the righteousness of God, and that is what would result for all mankind had Christ not died for our sins.

(Yet since Christ has come into the world to save sinners, can Cain's ultimate state be different from Abel's? But this is to anticipate the revelations of Romans 5.)

ACCORDING TO TRUTH

The judgment of God (as shown in the "b" sections above) is according to truth. For good and righteous reasons God may display His kindness and forbearance and

patience, forgoing judgment for a time. But in view of the actual record of human behavior, as we are in ourselves, each one individually, there is no escape in God's determined time from condemnation and death. Every thought in this section of Romans pleads for the evangel.

Hence Paul continues with this view of things as they exist apart from the achievements of God in the gift of His Son, in order to prepare us well for that message of divine achievement:

ROMANS 2:7-10

God will be paying each person in accord with his acts:

to those, indeed, who by endurance in good acts are seeking glory and honor and incorruption, **life eonian;**

yet to those of faction, and stubborn, indeed, as to the truth, yet persuaded to injustice, **indignation and fury, affliction and distress** on every human soul which is effecting evil, both of the Jew first and of the Greek,

yet **glory and honor and peace** to every worker of good, both to the Jew first, and to the Greek.

GOD'S JUST JUDGMENT

Is there an evangel here? Is there hope that some will endure in good acts and so receive life eonian? The judgment of glory is mentioned twice here (verses 7 and 9), while that of condemnation appears only once (verse 8). Indeed that reflects the character of God's heart and purpose. The consummation will be glory, but it will never come through God's works of judgment. It will come as the result of Christ's faithful obedience in His death for sinners.

Nevertheless, we hear of those who find a hope of salvation by human works in these verses. Surely (it is supposed) there are some who endure in good acts and seek

glory and honor and incorruption. Jesus spoke of a few who enter the cramped gate and follow the narrowed way[1] of righteousness demanded by the law (Matt.7:13,14). There must be some who persist in good acts, who will receive the payment of life and glory and honor and peace. Everyone who effects evil will be paid with divine indignation and fury, followed by death. See, (it is said), Paul speaks here of those who endure and those who do not. God rewards the first class and damns the second. This is fair, and it is exactly what a gospel should be, according to popular, human reasoning.

Yet if any human beings could endure in good acts without taint of sin, which means "missing the mark," always reaching the mark of righteousness by the exercise of their will and the strength of their moral discipline, they would receive life and incorruption as wages well earned. Boasting in themselves would not be debarred; in fact it would be fully appropriate, and not to do so would be a sin of hypocrisy.

The fact is, however, no one endures in good acts, for all sin. This will be Paul's conclusion when he comes to Romans 3:9-20. Not one is just—not even one. All face indignation and fury, affliction and distress and are deserving of death.

Therefore, apart from the death of Christ for sinners, *no one* will be honored with life as their just recompense. What is written here in Romans 2:7-10 is no evangel of salvation. What is written here is critical in making God's work of salvation the evangel that it is.

Yet the evangel of God does, in fact, speak of life and

1. All those to whom Jesus spoke failed to maintain the law, both as presented at Sinai and as the Lord defined it in Matthew 5; they all, including the twelve, denied Him in His darkest hour. But God will give Israel a new heart and a new spirit so that they do the works of righteousness (Ezek.36:26,17), yet this also will not be apart from the death of Christ (*cf* Heb.9:13-15).

glory and honor and peace for human beings. The *wages* mentioned here for endurance in good acts are the very *gracious gifts* of God which are given to the believer. It is because of the faith of Jesus Christ that we are being justified and may be having peace toward God and may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:1,2). It is because of the obedience of the One that the many who are constituted sinners because of Adam's disobedience will ultimately be constituted just (Rom.5:19).

PAUL WAS NOT ASHAMED

Romans 1:18-3:8 comes from the heart of a man who had once given all he had to the belief that he could be justified by works of law, and Romans 3:9-20 is his admission, no, rather his avowal that it never can happen. He does not toss away the law, but he adamantly rejects it as a means for justification and life. We may sometimes tend to overlook the passion of Paul's conclusions in 3:9-20, but all that he wrote from 1:18 forward leads inevitably to this great cry of realization: "no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight, for through law is the recognition of sin!"

And this, in turn, leads to the triumphant exposition of the evangel, starting in Romans 3:21.

What a change in thinking! What a change in theology! What an enlightenment! What a transformation of the heart!

First came the recognition of the truth of his complete defenselessness and helplessness, and then came the joyful thankfulness to God in believing the evangel of God's righteousness revealed and love commended in the death of Christ for sinners.

As we follow Paul's thoughts through this section of Romans, we also are led to a similar joy and heartfelt thankfulness to God.

D.H.H.

A MEMORIAL ADDRESS

Question:

I wonder if you have available a Scripture message which I could read at the funeral of my mother, whom I do not expect to live another year.

Answer:

The message which follows is one that I have presented at quite a few funerals, upon the death either of various ones among our friends in faith, or on their behalf upon the death of one of their family members. At such gatherings, I try to speak in such a way so as not to offend others, while at the same time speaking in a clear and positive way in order to be encouraging to those who have asked me to present my testimony.

⁂

[Words of Introduction; Opening Prayer; Biographical Sketch; and Hymn.]

"For more than seven millennia generations of men, like shadows, have appeared and disappeared. From what source do they come, and where are they going? . . . Unquestionably, the problem of final destiny is for mankind the question of questions. Nothing else equals it in practical importance . . . . What is life to us if we do not know the end toward which we are borne on the wings of time?

"Croesus, King of the Lydians, surrounded by everything that heart can wish and eye desire, asked the wise man if he did not consider him the happiest of mortals.

The philosopher replied, 'It is not possible to decide that one's life is truly prosperous and happy until we know how it terminates.' This is preeminently true of man's existence. All that this world can give does not satisfy heart and mind, with the inborn instinct of a hereafter, apart from some reasonable assurance as to whether that hearafter is to be one of infinite happiness or of infinite horror. So long as this point remains uncertain, everything is precarious and peace is impossible."[1]

Notwithstanding the scope and intensity of all of the evil extant in the world today, surely the permanent good that God will one day bring out of all evil and suffering will be so marvelous and all-encompassing that we can well thank Him for its temporary presence today—"giving thanks always for all things, in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, to our God and Father" (Eph.5:20). The suffering will not have occurred in vain; instead it will all serve God's beneficient purpose on behalf of all, for His own glory. The apostle Paul said it best: "I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us" (Rom.8:18).

It is axiomatic that one must be in need, in order to have one's needs met. The infirm, weak and suffering are the very ones in a position to need and appreciate a Saviour, One Who is able to fill their every need, in due time to deliver them from all of their failings and pains of every sort. The words of Jesus to the Pharisees, who had asked His disciples why their teacher saw fit to eat with "tribute collectors and sinners," were simply these: "No need have the strong of a physician, but those having an illness" (Matt.9:12). Yet, in their undying pride, through self-sufficient eyes, they could not recognize their own infirmity.

1. adapted from "The Ages," p.1, by Vladimir Gelesnoff; Concordant Publishing Concern.

Much that passes for strength and glory is, in truth, but weakness and dishonor in disguise. They were those who were justifying themselves in the sight of men—which is easy enough to do—yet God knew their hearts. "For what is high among men is an abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15).

In the face of death, it is well for us to consider its nature. Death is the opposite of life. Very simply, death is the absence of life. It is the absence of life which *follows* mortality in contrast to the absence of life which *precedes* mortality.

In the Scriptures, death is described as a "return"; conditions become as they originally were, prior to life's inception: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou *return*" (Gen.3:19).

The body returns to the soil. The soul, or bodily sensations, ceases to exist. Apart from a living body, with its sentient faculties and brain activity, there can be no bodily sensation. In the Scriptures, "soul" is the sensation resulting from the combination of an organic body with breath or spirit (Gen.2:7). Since this sensation, or "soul," is no longer seen, it is said to return to "the unseen," the unseen state (the Greek word for "unseen" is *hadês; cp* Acts 2:27,31; Matt.11:23). The spirit returns as well, it returns to God Who gave it (Ecc.12:7). "Spirit" speaks of the intangible power of action and intelligence. In death, this marvelous power returns to the One Who originally employed it in order to give us life in the first place.

A good likeness to life and death, to the human body, soul and spirit, may be seen through the illustration of an electric light bulb when the flow of current is caused to cease: Let the bulb represent the body, the light and heat from the bulb, the soul, and the electrical current, the spirit. The power is no longer transmitted; consequently the phenomena which had attended the functioning bulb

dissipates and the dissolution of the object itself begins. As the Psalmist says of God, "You send forth Your spirit, they are created . . . ." "You gather away their spirit, they die, and return to the soil" (Psa.104:29,30).

In the Scriptures, there is no expectation in death, but in life. Death is an enemy not a friend. Expectation is in resurrection—life out from among the dead. As the apostle Paul said before King Agrippa, "Why is it being judged unbelievable by you, if God is rousing the dead?" (Acts 26:8).

The earliest inspired testimony concerning death is given to us in the book of Job: "The Lord, He gives, and the Lord, He takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this, Job neither sinned nor ascribed anything improper to God" (Job 1:21). In the midst of his terrible time of trial, Job said, "Why did I not die from the womb, from the belly come forth and breathe my last? For what reason did two knees anticipate me, and why the two breasts that I could suck? For now I would lie and be quiet; I would sleep; then there would be rest for me . . . . There the wicked leave off all disturbance, and there those wearied from vigor are resting. Prisoners are tranquil together; They do not hear the voice of the taskmaster. Small and great, he is there, and the servant is free from his lords" (Job 3:11-13,17-19).

"A human, born of a woman, is short of days and surfeited with disturbance. He comes forth like a blossom and is snipped off; He races away like a shadow and does not stand . . . . His days are decided, the number of his months are set by You, and You have made his statutory time, which he cannot surpass . . . . His sons may attain glory, yet he does not know it; Or they may be discredited, yet he does not understand it of them . . . . If a man dies shall he live again? All the days of my enlistment I shall wait until my relief comes. You shall call, and I shall answer You; You shall long for the work of Your hands" (Job 14:1,2,5,14,15,21).

"As for mortal man, his days are like grass, like a blossom of the field, so is he blossoming" (Psa.103:15). "Let me praise Yahweh throughout my life; let me make melody to my Elohim through all my future. Do not trust in patrons, in a son of humanity with whom there is no salvation. His spirit shall go forth, and he shall return to his ground; in that day his reflections perish" (Psalm 145:2-4). Similarly, in Ecclesiastes, we read, "No man has authority over the spirit to detain the spirit, and no one has authority over the day of death" (Ecc.8:8). "This is the evil in all that is done under the sun: that one destiny is for all: . . . . For the living know that they shall die, but the dead know nothing whatsoever . . . . All that your hand finds to do, do with your vigor, for there is no doing or devising or knowledge or wisdom in the unseen where you are going" (Ecc.9:3,5,10).

James said, "Let the humble brother be glorying in his exaltation, yet the rich in his humiliation, for, as the flower of grass, shall he pass by" (James 1:10); we " . . . are not versed in that which is the morrow's, for what is your life? For a vapor are you, which is appearing briefly and thereupon disappearing" (James 4:14).

The promise to and so the expectation of the believer, is "to be conformed to the image of [God's] Son" (Rom. 8:29), to enjoy a characteristic likeness to Him. As well, "We are awaiting a Saviour, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself" (Phil.3:20,21).

It is surely a cause of rejoicing that it may be said of God that, "He does not humiliate from His heart, nor is He afflicting the sons of humanity, to crush beneath His feet all the prisoners of the earth . . . . Indeed though He afflicts, yet He has compassion according to the abundance of His benignities (Lam.3:32). It is true that "God locks up

all together in stubbornness," yet it is just as true that He does so "that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:32).

God disciplines those of whom He is fond (*cp* Heb.12: 7-11; Rev.3:19), and He is fond of humanity (Titus 3:4). We can be sure that God will be doing all things well, exercising judgment founded upon His love, for He cannot deny Himself (2 Tim.2:13), and "God is love" (1 John 4:8).

The Scripture speaks in many places of manifestations of divine indignation, of sorrow, of suffering, and of the retribution which must be. It must be that all these things are true. While we must not seek to mitigate them or deny them, neither must we increase their severity or protract their duration. That is to say, in the Scriptures, all of the bad news, is true news, but none of it denies the good news.

The good news is that "our Saviour, God, . . . wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth": that "Christ Jesus is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all . . . I am telling the truth I am not lying" (1 Tim.2:4,6,7).

The good news is that "the living God . . . is the Saviour of *all* mankind, *especially* of believers"—not exclusively of believers (1 Tim.4:10). The good news is that "God is vivifying all" (1 Tim.6:13), that "Christ Jesus . . . abolishes death, yet illuminates life and incorruption through the gospel of which [Paul, the apostle] was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher of the nations." As he said, "For which cause I am suffering . . . , but I am not ashamed, for I am aware Whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that what is committed to me, for that day" (2 Tim.1:10-12).

"Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying" (Rom.5:18). "Being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus," this good news, is

"for all, . . . for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:22-24).

The good news is that God "is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11b), and that "the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in [Christ]," is, one day, "to have an administration of the complement of the eras." The purpose of this future divine operation is "to head up all in the Christ, . . . in Whom our lot was cast also" (Eph.9:2-11a), and, "to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through [Christ], whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:20). God is saying, "Should it not, as I likened it, so come to be, and as I counseled it, be arising?" (*cp* Isa.14:24). "All My counsel shall be confirmed, and all My desire will I do . . . . Indeed, I speak! Indeed, I will bring it about!" (Isa.46:10,11).

Ultimately speaking, the needs of all men, one as much as another, are fully met in the saving work of Christ, Who tasted death for the sake of everyone (Heb.2:9). "For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14). And, "one who dies has been justified from Sin" (Rom. 6:7b). "For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh" (Rom.8:3). "Behold! the Lamb of God which is taking away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

The gospel is an *announcement* of glad tidings to *sinners*, not a selfish scheme for gain for the sake of opportunists. One may possess great riches of which he is ignorant. As with the slaves during the American civil war who heard and believed the news of their emancipation, we do not make the gospel of our salvation true by believing it. When we believe, we only enter into a realization and appreciation of what is already true.

"For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, all will be made to live. Yet each in His own class: The First-fruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter, the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power. For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He subjects all under His feet . . . . Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:22-28).

The glorious word of expectation for the believer personally is this: "For, if we are believing that Jesus died and rose, thus also, those who are put to repose, will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with Him. For this we are saying to you by the word of the Lord, that we, the living, who are surviving to the presence of the Lord, should by no means outstrip those who are put to repose, for the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the Chief Messenger, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall be rising first. Thereupon we, the living who are surviving, shall at the same time be snatched away together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be together with the Lord. So that, console one another with these words" (1 Thess.4:13-18).

To [the reposing believer], to his consciousness, this glorious moment will occur instantaneously to the moment of his death, rejoicing to be reunited with his [wife, his children,] his fellow believers, and eventually with all whom he knew throughout his many years of life. For the rest of us who are called upon to wait for that day, the day of Christ's appearing, we say, May it come soon (*cp* 2 Tim.4:8)!

James Coram

FROM SHEM TO ABRAM
(Genesis 11:10-32)

[10] **These** are the **genealogical** records **of Shem:** Two **years after the deluge,** when **Shem** was **100 years old, [+] he [|]begot `Arphaxad.** [11] **[+] After his begetting– `Arphaxad, Shem [|]lived 500 years and [|]begot sons and daughters.**

[12] **[+]As** for **Arphaxad,** when **he had lived [7]135[0] years, [+] he [|]begot `[7]Cainan[0].** [13] **[+] After his begetting– `[7]Cainan[0], Arphaxad [|]lived 403 years and [|]begot sons and daughters.**

[7][+]**As** for **Cainan,** when **he had lived 130 years, he [|]begot `Shelah. [+] After his begetting– `Shelah, Cainan [|]lived 330 years and [|]begot sons and daughters. [+]Then he [|]died[0].**

[14] **[+]As** for **Shelah,** when **he had lived [7]130[n] years, he [|]begot `Eber.** [15] **[+] After his begetting– `Eber, Shelah [|]lived [7]330[0] years and [|]begot sons and daughters.**

[16] **[+] Eber [|]lived [7]134[n] years and [|]begot `Peleg.** [17] **[+] After his begetting– `Peleg, Eber [|]lived [7]270[n] years and [|]begot sons and daughters.**

[18] **[+] Peleg [|]lived [7]130[n] years and [|]begot `Reu.** [19] **[+] After his begetting– `Reu, Peleg [|]lived 209 years and [|]begot sons and daughters.**

[20] **[+] Reu [|]lived [7]132[n] years and [|]begot `Serug.** [21] **[+] After his begetting– `Serug, Reu [|]lived 207 years and [|]begot sons and daughters.**

[22] **[+] Serug [|]lived [7]130[n] years and [|]begot `Nahor.** [23] **[+] After his begetting– `Nahor, Serug [|]lived 200 years and [|]begot sons and daughters.**

[24] **[+] Nahor [|]lived [7]79[n] years and [|]begot `Terah.** [25] **[+] After his begetting– `Terah, Nahor [|]lived [7]129[n] years and [|]begot sons and daughters.**

26 + **Terah [lived 70 years and [begot `Abram, `Nahor and `Haran.**

GENEALOGICAL RECORDS OF SHEM

As the purpose of Yahweh was to rule the world through a chosen nation, and this was to come through Noah's son Shem, he is given two genealogies (Gen.10:21-31; 11:10-26). The first, like that of Ham and Japheth, traces his descendants in a general way, with no special future nation in view. The other is confined to what may be called the Messianic line, as it is repeated in Christ's genealogy in Luke (3:23-28). These two genealogies coincide as far as Peleg (Distributor), for then the land was distributed (10:25). Beyond that the annals complete the gap up to Abram, for through him Yahweh purposed to raise up a nation through whom all the rest should be ruled and blessed (11:10-26).

GENESIS 11:27-32

27 + **These** are the **genealogical** record**s of Terah. Terah´ had begotten `Abram, `Nahor and `Haran. And Haran´ had begotten `Lot.** 28 +**Then Haran [died** *on*__**in** the **lifetime of his father Terah, in** the **country of his birth, in Ur of** the **Chaldeans.**

29 + **Abram and Nahor [took to them**selves **wives.** The **name of Abram's wife** was **Sarai,** +**while** the **name of Nahor's wife** was **Milcah,** the **daughter of Haran,** the **father of Milcah and** the **father of Iscah.** 30 + **Sarai** *b*__**was barren; › she** *is*__**had no child.**

31 + **Terah [took `his son Abram, and `his son's son Lot son of Haran, and `his daughter-in-law Sarai,** the **wife of his son Abram, and** 7__**he***n* went [**forth** `with **them from Ur of** the **Chaldeans to go** to*d* the **land** of **Canaan.** +**When they [came as far as Charan,** + **they [dwelt there.** 32 +

The **days of Terah came** to [**be 205 years.** +**Then Terah [died in Charan.**

GENEALOGICAL RECORDS OF TERAH

After the annals of the sons of Noah have been briefly presented, we are introduced to a group through whom would come the nation and the To-Subjector of all the rest. Terah, like Noah, had three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran, and a grandson Lot, like Canaan. But Haran died, and Nahor did not go with them all the way, so our chief interest is centered in Abram. His name signifies Father-high (*Ab-rm*), but he had no son, or any prospects of having one. He was nothing but "a lost Aramean" (Deut.26:5) who served other elohim (Joshua 24:2). Yet through him and his seed, under His greater Seed, the subjection of the nations will be accomplished in the next eon, the messianic millennial kingdom.

IDOLATRY

Both the beginning and end of this eon find the world steeped in idolatry. At the end, after the saints have left this scene at the call of Christ in the air, the man of sin will demand the worship of all (*cf* 2 Thess.2:7-10; Rev.13). In the beginning almost every division of mankind had its false god. Even the line of Shem and the ancestors of Abram no longer worshiped Yahweh Elohim, but had their own idols (*cf* Gen.31:19; 35:2).

THE STATE OF THE WORLD

The general tendency of humanity is to avoid God (Rom. 3:11,12). There were times in the world's history, such as the period we are now considering, when all had turned away from Elohim. As Psalms 14:2-3 puts it:

Yahweh, He gazes down from the heavens

on the sons of humanity,
To see whether there is anyone acting intelligently,
Anyone seeking after Elohim.
All withdraw aside; together they are spoiled.
There is no one doing good; There is not even one.

Since the time of Abram there seems to have been a continuous line of those who worshiped Him. So also before the deluge, and afterward in the line of Shem, until we come to Terah and his sons. Joshua, at Shechem, speaking to Israel, told them that Terah, the father of Abram and Nahor, served other elohim (Joshua 24:2-3). So such seems to be the crisis in which Abram was called, and the new administration of Promise was begun. When the situation was most unpromising, and there seemed to be *no* possibility of future blessing, then the promises began which eventually lead to the blessing of all.

Abram's relatives in the east continued to worship other elohim as is shown in the conversation between Jacob and Laban, when Jacob ran away and Laban overtook him on his return to Canaan. Laban said, "The Elohim of *your* father yesternight spoke to me," and, "Why have you stolen *my* elohim?" (Gen.31:29,30).

THE DEATH OF TERAH

The genealogical annals of Terah are very long (Gen. 11:27-25:11), yet he himself died almost at the beginning. Abram has no annals for himself, even though the record of his activities (12-25:11) are about the longest in the whole record. Terah started Abram's history by *leaving* Ur (LIGHT) of the Chaldeans (Demoniacal). It is possible that this indicates their forsaking the teaching of demons. Terah headed his party for the land of Canaan. But he went no farther than Charan (HEATED), for he died there.

ABRAM'S PHYSICAL SIDE SUPPRESSED

When musing upon the book of the Beginning we may wonder why there are no genealogical records of Abraham. We have annals of Adam, Noah, Shem, Terah, Ishmael, Isaac, Esau, and Jacob, but none of the one who has the most prominent place, and, in some ways, influenced this eon more than any other. These all, however, are concerned primarily with the physical aspect, in which there is *generation*. But, in Abram's case, this side is suppressed as much as possible. Figuratively speaking, he had no physical offspring. Even when he did generate the promised seed, he sacrificed him in a figure. This is the side of his history which is stressed, and which calls for the *lack* of *physical annals*, but an unusually long *spiritual record* (Heb.11:12; Rom.4:19).

Abram (FATHER-HIGH) had a very appropriate and suggestive name. To be sure it must have been very tantalizing to him during the long years when he was a father without a single child, let alone a son. This may account partly for the actions of his wife. In those days this was deemed a downright disgrace, altogether apart from his suggestive appellation. Yet how fine it is, when applied to his *spiritual* family! (Rom.4:11). *All who believe* are his offspring. Most of those who read these lines have the right to call him my Abram, my exalted father, in faith.

ABRAHAM

The name Abram refers to his spiritual seed, while he was figuratively dead. When his physical seed is promised, the name is enriched by a single letter, in order to conform to this further blessing. Instead of *Ab-rm*, he is now *Ab-r-e-m*. This seems to be abbreviated from *Ab-rm-em* (FATHER-HIGH-CLAMOR, or -throng), and is based on the fact he is to become the forefather of a throng of nations (Gen.17:5-6). These were to be identified by the sign of

circumcision, to remind them of their spiritual heritage, for even his physical seed sprang from flesh already deadened (Rom.4:19). He had to be invigorated by faith, which they also greatly need.

A. E. Knoch

SEPTUAGINT READINGS IN GENESIS

The ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, indicates that the Hebrew text from which it was translated was different in certain instances from the Hebrew text available to us today (called the Masoretic Text). The Concordant Version of Genesis often follows the Septuagint readings, placing the Masoretic Text reading in a footnote. This is especially so when the Samaritan text is in agreement with the Septuagint.

A special case is the addition of a generation in the list of Shem's descendants between Arphaxad and Shelah in Genesis 10:24 and 11:12,13 (also in 1 Chronicles 1:18,24). That Arphaxad's son was Cainan, and Shelah his grandson, is confirmed by Luke 3:36. (We have recently used the spelling "Kenan" for both the son of Enosh in Genesis 5:9-14 and the son of Arphaxad in Genesis 10:24, as was done by the AV in 1 Chronicles 1:2, but revert now to the more familiar spelling of "Cainan" in all these passages.)

We also use the Septuagint readings in Genesis 5 and 11 (sometimes supported by the Samaritan text) for the ages of the patriarchs when the particular son being listed was born. The effect is to extend the length of time noted by Scripture both from Adam to Noah and from Shem to Abraham.

These and associated details were discussed in an article by Brother E. H. Clayton, entitled "The Genealogies of Genesis," in *Unsearchable Riches*, volume 40, pages 223-239.

WHAT WAS GOD THINKING OF?

THE WISDOM of God is so great, says the apostle Paul, that even those divine acts which seem stupid are wiser than human wisdom (1 Cor.1:25). Actually Paul is referring to one particular divine operation, the crucifixion of Christ. God's wisdom, power and righteousness are displayed here as in no other work; indeed all the acts of God ultimately find their reason in the cross of Christ and its results.

But before the death of God's Son, God first laid down the pattern of His wisdom in His work of creation. What was God thinking of when He created the heavens and the earth? He was thinking of that which would be *very good* (Gen.1:31). This is not altered by the coming in of chaos, vacancy and darkness as recorded in Genesis 1:2. In fact the great goodness of Genesis 1:31 could not have been manifest apart from the contrast with the great evil of Genesis 1:2, which also must be traced finally to God (*cf* Isa.45:7).

Here is a most important scriptural principle: *Evil is never God's goal, but rather a means to His goal of good.* Evil cannot be permanent; it is not eternal. The cross of Christ sees to that.

THE CREATION OF THE HUMAN

What also was God thinking of when He created humanity? Again, according to the first chapter of Genesis, He was thinking of a vast throng of human beings which would fill the earth and subdue it and sway over the creatures of sea and air and land (Gen.1:27,28).

The first chapter of God's Word sets forth the glory of God's thinking. Darkness and chaos are necessary, but they

are not permanent and are only a means for the light and magnitude of His greatness to be made known and appreciated and enjoyed by His creatures.

THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL

Let us look again at the details as they developed in Genesis chapter two. What was God thinking of when He created the human as a living soul with eyesight and desires, and then placed the human where He had planted a tree with desirable fruit which He warned Adam not to eat, and then, having travailed in forming the fugitive serpent (Job 26:13), left Eve, whom He had formed out of Adam, alone with that embodiment of the Adversary? We have traced the story over and over. We take it as a word from God, a beginning word, a very basic revelation of a very fundamental operation of God with respect to humanity. And we ask this question which we certainly ought to ask, What was God thinking of?

Was He thinking of a great test to find out those who really are deserving of life and glory because they freely choose to honor Him, apart from His interference in any way, in the midst of the temptations and pressures of a wicked world? Did He not know that there would be only a few, like Abel, Noah and Abraham, who would stand out from the rest in their trust in Him, and they only as they were given grace and faith from Him, and even then they would be without perfection in righteousness? Did He have in mind a great and eternal division of His creation, a hell of hopelessness filled with darkness and stubbornness, selfishness and depravity, forever and ever, and a heaven of bliss with no burden of concern for those in hell?

No, in all His operations as He paved the way for the drama in Eden, God was thinking of His goal which is the achievement of that which is very good. God subjected the creation to vanity "*in expectation* that the creation itself,

also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:20,21). "God locks up all in stubbornness that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:32).

GOD DOES NOT FORGET HIS GOAL

When we see this, and then see the significance of Christ's death and resurrection, all the mysteriousness of God's operations recounted from Genesis 2:4 forward, and continuing in the experience of everyone even today is on the way to disappearance.

DIVINE DEEDS AT BABEL

In reviewing God's actions in Genesis, we have come now to chapter eleven and the account of the tower of Babel:

"Then Yahweh **descended** to see the city and the tower that the sons of humanity had built. Yahweh said: Behold, they are a single people with the same language for all of them; and this is what they start to do. Now anything they plan to do will not be restricted for them. Grant attention! Let us **descend** and let us **disintegrate** their language there, so that each man may not hearken to the language of his associate. Then Yahweh **scattered** them from there over the surface of the entire earth, and they left off building the city and the tower. Therefore one called its name Babel, because there Yahweh **disintegrated** the language of the entire earth, and Yahweh **scattered** them from there over the surface of the entire earth" (Gen.11:5-9).

What was God thinking of in these works of descent, disintegration and scattering?

God's Word here provides the immediate reason for these actions. It was because the people God had made were attempting to work out their plan to make a name for themselves and unite together in the land of Shinar. They were doing what leaders throughout the world still long

to do in joining together in a common effort for their own glory. This will indeed be undertaken again as we read in the book of Revelation. But here at the beginning of the present eon, God stopped it by confusing their means of communication.

We can thus see what God was thinking of as far as the immediate situation was concerned. But God had not forgotten His purpose for humanity in accord with His design and will for good. His works of descending and disintegrating and scattering in Genesis 11 were temporary steps. They show forth the folly of human ways and contribute to the great lesson of reliance on God and appreciation of His will. So also Yahweh's later works of descent for the purpose of disintegration and scattering spoken of in passages such as Psalm 144:5,6 and Isaiah 64:1-3 and the descent of the Lord in the last days of this eon prepare the way for God's operation for good centered in His Son, Jesus Christ.

HE WHO DESCENDS

We need to look at the very most important descent of all, to get a glimpse of what was in God's mind even in Genesis 11. This descent was that of our Lord to the lower parts of the earth, where He would humble Himself even to the death of the cross (Eph.4:9; Phil.2:8). And concerning that descent, the Scriptures testify that "He Who descends is the Same Who ascends also, up over all who of the heavens, that He should be completing the all" (Eph.4:10).

This completion of all was in God's mind in Genesis 11 and always in God's works of indignation, judgment and destruction, as it is also more obviously in His works of grace and rescue. What a great blessing there is for us in keeping this also in our mind as we live in this present wicked eon.

D.H.H.

CONFLICTS AND LEADERSHIP
(2 Samuel 10)

10 + **It** [|b]**occurred afterward** +**that** the **king of** the **sons of Ammon** |**died, and his son Hanun** |**reigned** [u]**in his stead.** 2 + **David** |**said, I shall** [d]**show kindness** [wi]**to Hanun son of Nahash, just as his father** [d]**showed kindness** [wi]**to me.** +**So** [i]**by means of his courtiers, David** |**sent** word **to console him** ›**over his father.** +**But** when **David's courtiers** |**came** [7]**to**[c] the **land of** the **sons of Ammon,** 3 +**then** the **chief** officials **of** the **sons of Ammon** |**said to their lord Hanun,** Is **David glorifying `your father in your eyes** [t]**because he sent consolers**| **to you?** Is it **not** rather **in** [p]**order** to **sound out**– **`the city,** + **to spy** in **it and to** over**turn it** that **David sent `his courtiers to you?**

4 +**So Hanun** |**took `David's courtiers and** |**shaved** off `a **half** side **of their beards;** + **he** |**cut `their coats in half** up [fr]**to their buttocks and** |**sent them** away. 5 +**When** others |**told** › **David** about it, + **he** |**sent to meet them, for the men had** [b]**been utterly put to shame**|**.** +**So the king** |**said,** [sit]**Remain in Jericho!** [fr]**When your beard** |**sprouts,** +**then you** can **return.**

6 + The **sons of Ammon** [|see]**discerned that they were** in **bad odor** [i]**with David.** +**So** the **sons of Ammon** |**sent and** |**hired `Syrians of Beth-rehob and `Syrians of Zobah, 20,000** men on **foot, and** `the **king of Maacah** with **1,000 men, and Ish-tob** with **12,000 men.** 7 +**When David** |**heard** of it, + **he** |**sent `Joab** +**with `the entire** military **host** and **the masters** of war. 8 +**Then** the **sons of Ammon** marched |**forth and** |**arranged** themselves for the **battle** at the **portal of the** [7]**city~,** +**while** the **Syrians of Zobah and Rehob,** +

Ish-tob and Maacah were **alone** by **them**selves **in** the **field.**
9 +**When Joab** |**saw that the battle-line** *b***was** ›**against him** both *f* **front and** *f af***rear,** +**then he** |**chose** some *f***of all** the **choice**| men *i***of Israel and** |**arrayed** them **to meet** the **Syrians.** 10 + `The **rest of the** *wi***soldiers he gave in**to the **hand of his brother Abishai and** |**arrayed** them **to meet** the **sons of Ammon.** 11 **And he** |**said, If** the **Syrians are** too |**steadfast** *f***for me,** +**then you** *b***come to my** › **salvation.** +**But if** the **sons of Ammon are** too |**steadfast** *f***for you,** +**then I will go** ahead **to save** › **you.** 12 **Be steadfast and let us encourage** our**selves in** *fr***behalf** of **our people and in** *fr***behalf** of the **cities of our Elohim.** +**As** for **Yahweh, He shall do** `what is **good in His eyes.**

13 +**When Joab and the** *wi***soldiers** *w* **with him** drew |**close for** the **battle** *i***against** the **Syrians,** + **they** |**fled** *f***before him.** 14 +**As** for the **sons of Ammon, they saw that** the **Syrians had fled, and** so **they** took to |**flight** *f***before Abishai and** went |**into the city.** +**Then Joab** |**returned from** his campaign *on***against** the **sons of Ammon and** |**came** to **Jerusalem.**

15 +**When** the **Syrians** |**saw that they were stricken before Israel,** + **they** |**gathered** themselves **together.** 16 + **Hadadezer** |**sent** messengers **and** *c***brought** |**forth** `the **Syrians who** were **from across the stream;** + **they** |**came** to **Helam** +**with Shobach, chief of Hadadezer's** military **host before them.** 17 +**When** this **was** |**told to David,** +**then he** |**gathered** `**all of Israel**'s men, + |**crossed** `**the Jordan and** |*in***advanced** to*d* **Helam.** +**Now** the **Syrians** drew up in battle |**array to meet David and** |**fought** *wi***against him.** 18 +**Yet** the **Syrians** |**fled** *f***before Israel; and David** |**killed** *f***of** the **Syrians seven hundred charioteers and 40,000** *7***men** on **foot~. He** +**also smote** `**Shobach,** the **chief of their host,** + who |**died there.** 19 +**When all the kings,** the **servants of Hadadezer,** |**saw that they were stricken before Israel,** +**then they** *c***made** |**peace** `with **Israel and** |**served them; and** the **Syrians** |**feared to save** `the **sons of Ammon** any *fr***more.**

HUMILIATION AND WARFARE

THE TENTH CHAPTER of 2 Samuel gives further details of some of the military conquests summarized in chapter eight. It is not surprising that Nahash would have shown some kindness to David (2 Sam.10:2). Nahash would have been an embittered enemy with Saul since the events of 1 Samuel 11, and he could easily have perceived David as a threat to Saul. David's intentions toward the son of Nahash were friendly, but Hanun's advisors did not interpret them as such (10:3). Israel had been successfully expanding its borders all around, and the Ammonites assumed that David had aggressive, ulterior motives. Their response was probably impulsive, and it lacked little of being a formal challenge to warfare.

BEARDS IN THE ANCIENT EAST

Beards were a mark of manliness, and in some cases freedom. In some cultures of that time slaves were required to shave their beards. There are even records of men dying in battle rather than allowing their beards to be shaved. Beards were generally well kept and an object of pride. When David feigned madness at the gates of Gath, the convincing detail of his pretense was letting his spittle run down on his beard (1 Sam.21:13).

The half naked, half shaved emissaries of David (2 Sam. 10:4) would have been ridiculed and mocked their whole journey departing from Ammonite territory. Hanun's treatment of the emissaries was a formal declaration of his opinion of King David and of Israel as a nation.

THE ENSUING CONFLICT

Realizing the severity of their offense to Israel, the Ammonites hired Syrian mercenaries to fight the Israelites. The Syrians probably expected they would eventu-

ally have to battle the ascending Israelite nation, so the Ammonite wages were just a help to their own preparations. The Ammonites stationed themselves in front of one of their walled cities, providing themselves with safe retreat, and the Syrians were left to earn their wages in the open field (10:6-8).

The Syrian force was the more formidable of the two, and Joab chose to meet them himself with hand-picked troops. The Israelites were in a compromising situation, but God caused both the Ammonites and the Syrians to flee before them (2 Sam.10:9-14).

The greatest benefit of this initial victory was a temporary deliverance of Israel from a precarious situation. Neither foe was actually defeated. The Syrians regrouped and returned in full force against Israel. David led the full force of Israel against the Syrians and defeated them soundly (10:15-19). After this Joab led a large Israelite force against the Ammonites. Israel dominated that battle, and the Ammonites retreated to the royal city, Rabbah. Joab then lay siege to Rabbah, a condition which continued for quite some time (*cf* 2 Sam.11:1;12:26).

CONFLICTS WITH AMMON

This was the third significant conflict between Israel and the Ammonites of which we have biblical record. In all three of these instances the Scriptures take note of shame and reproach on Israel as they underwent trial at the hands of the Ammonites. In each case the shame was related to Israel's leadership.

The first instance is recorded in Judges 10:6-11:40. Israel had forsaken Yahweh and was worshipping the gods of neighboring countries, even of countries which they had defeated. In poetic justice, the unfaithful nation was only granted victory and freedom after naming Jephthah, the shamed son of a prostitute, their leader. The vow involving Jephthah's only daughter left him without descendants, showing that Israel had not yet found continuing leadership that would bring them peace.

The second conflict with the Ammonites was that which confirmed Saul's anointing as king and leader of Israel (1 Sam.10:27b [restored text]-11:11). The words of Nahash, king of the Ammonites, showed that his intention was to reproach the entire Israelite nation by his cruel treatment of the Gadites and Reubenites (1 Sam.11:2).

After the victory Samuel and the people went to Gilgal to renew the kingship of Israel (1 Sam.11:4). Nahash was mentioned in Samuel's speech to Israel as being a cause for Israel's request for a king (1 Sam.12:12). This desire for a king was to Israel's shame, for it was the voicing of their rejection of Yahweh as their King (1 Sam.8:7).

The third conflict with Ammon begins here in 2 Samuel 10. It continues to unfold through chapters 11 and 12 which relate the most shameful episode of David's life, his affair with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah. Uriah would die at the walls of the Ammonite city, Rabbah, and David's house would suffer unending turmoil and conflict because of his actions during that siege (2 Sam.12:7-12).

OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST

The believer's leadership in life is God's guidance through Jesus Christ. The Lordship of Christ is vital in every aspect of our lives. The declaration of saving faith, that God has raised Christ from the dead, goes hand in hand with the avowing that Jesus Christ is Lord (Rom.10:9). The Lordship of Christ is also preeminent in bringing the fulfillment of God's purpose to the universe. It is through the universal acclamation of Jesus Christ as Lord that God receives the greatest glory, and His purpose is completed (Phil.2:9-11).

Jephthah and Saul brought great deliverance to Israel,

and yet both of these fell far short of David's representation of Christ. Yet even David is only a dim shadow of the glorious One to Whom we are devoted. Whenever the leadership of our lives becomes something other than His Lordship, it is always to our shame. By His grace, may we honor Him daily and be faithful to the One Whom God has designated as Lord.

J. Philip Scranton

JUNE FERGUSON

Our good friend and sister in the Lord, June [Mallory] Ferguson, was put to repose on August 11, 2003, in Grangeville, Idaho. She loved the Word of God and deeply appreciated the grace of God which is revealed in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. For her, personally, and continually in her life, the evangel was the power of God for salvation.

God gave her many blessings of family, home and a setting among the mountains and streams of the northwest, yet, as must be, there were struggles and sad times along the way. Her disposition was a positive one in accord with her faith in God and reliance on Him as the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. She was preceded in death by her husband, Dale, but is survived by their four children and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

GEORGE KNOWLES

George Knowles, of Deerfield Beach, Florida, passed away on July 15. Brother Knowles was a good friend and a long-time supporter of our ministry.

In his youth, George became acquainted with the Concordant ministry and with the teaching of the eventual salvation of all mankind, through the evangelistic work of Adlai Loudy, through whom he learned both a strong reverence for Scripture and the importance of giving careful attention to its declarations, accurately translated.

On many occasions we were encouraged not only by George's kindness to us personally, but by the strength and stability of his faith. His quiet way, thoughtful speech, and unusually strong faith were a blessing to many. We share a sense of loss with all his family and friends, finding consolation and comfort where he also always found it, in faith and expectation centered in Christ Jesus.

Contents:

241 Editorial
245 Promise and Faith
255 Faith Righteousness
261 Yahweh Speaks to Abram
269 David and Bathsheba
277 Contrast and Agreement

NOVEMBER, 2003

Volume XCIV **Number 6**

GRACE IN FAITHFUL SERVICE

It is by no means inconsistent to call to duty those who are wholly dependent upon God for the fulfillment of that very duty. The voice of entreaty does not implore us to do what we *can* do, of ourselves, but what we *must* do if we would be faithful and well pleasing to God.

The word of entreaty affirms that which we *ought* to do, that which it is imperative that we *do* do, not that concerning which we have no need of saving grace.

Indeed, upon occasion, entreaty must become rebuke (*cf* 2 Tim.4:2), even if tempered with compassion. Yet even here it does not approach the objects of its severity as ones who are somehow in possession of a power of self-sufficiency by means of which they are well able to do the ideal, even if they have never done so. To the contrary, the one who would faithfully entreat others, first of all, is keenly aware that the disease of the sinner is no trivial infirmity in the presence of which the constitutionally able, nonetheless, mysteriously, sometimes err, but is rather a *disabling* malady of vast proportions which *proves* its presence by the fallen deeds of its victims. Such ones need not a little "helper" whom they can control, but rather a great and mighty Saviour Who will control them.

Since this is the reality of their situation, we do them no favor by failing to make this clear to them. Indeed, should they now succeed where once they failed, apart from a knowledge of the true nature of their infirmity hitherto, they will boast partly in themselves in their renewal, and so fail to thank God alone for the very victory which they now enjoy.

Exposure (i.e., making the facts known) concerning our duty, together with concomitant entreaty for "logical divine service" (*cf* Rom.12:1,2), is often the means of grace unto repentance which God employs to awaken us, first of all to a *sense* of our duty (*cp* Titus 2:4), and then to a concern that we might be fulfilling it. It is that those who have believed God as to the *mercy* of their salvation might become *concerned* for faithfulness, that this revelation is made known to us. It has been manifested to us that it is "*not* for works which are wrought in righteousness which we do, but according to His mercy, [that] He saves us" (Titus 3:5), *in order* "that those who have believed God may be *concerned* to preside for ideal acts" (Titus 3:8).

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 2003
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-FOUR

EDITORIAL

THE TRANSITION from young adulthood to the onset of agedness occurs over the span of only about thirty years (*cp* Acts 7:58; Philemon 9). As one who is now at the latter end of this transition, as I contemplate my friends of many years, I must, in the words of the hymn, declare, "Change and decay in all around I see . . . ." Yet these words are sung not only by myself with my friends in mind, but by my friends with myself in mind.

We are all dying. Even if our conscience is good before God, simply in consideration of the sheer brevity of life and with an awareness of the impendency of death, we are apt to identify all too closely with the words of Peter to Sapphira: "Lo! the feet of those who entomb your husband are at the door, and they shall be carrying you out" (Acts 5:9b).

Indeed, if we view things solely on the surface, we are apt repeatedly to find ourselves with "despair" in our heart (Ecc.2:20). After all, "Since the destiny of the stupid man is also mine, and it shall befall me, to what advantage then have I been wise? Hence I spoke in my heart, This too is vanity. For there is no remembrance of the wise man or the stupid man for the eon; in the days which are already coming everyone is forgotten; alas, *the wise man dies along with the stupid one!* Then I hated life, for to me the work was evil that was done under the sun, for the whole is vanity and a grazing on wind" (Ecc.2:15b-17).

Disappointment, discouragement and depression; decay, disease, dying and death; habitual sin, addiction and shame; decadence, depravity and wickedness; sadness, sorrow and misery; tragedy, horror, pain and suffering: these evil afflictions are common to man.

Do you see the problem here? God is love (1 John 4:8); He is Almighty (2 Cor.6:18); He is the only and wise God (Rom.16:27); He alone is good (Luke 18:19); He alone makes the world and all that is in it (Acts 17:24); *yet the world contains an abundance of evil.*

Some, attempting a "free will defense," have claimed that God has endowed man with a power of "free will," that is, with a power of ultimate control over his own decisions. Since man has misused this power, sin and suffering, dying and death have been the result.

Such an "explanation," however, explains nothing. In the face of such a grand purported power, how are we to account for man's having misused this power so egregiously, and for that matter, why did he misuse it at all? If man was so utterly "free," why did he not instead use his freedom wisely and well, on every occasion and under all circumstances? Or, if man in himself was morally "neutral," how did he ever arrive at any decisions at all, being intrinsically perfectly indifferent both to good and to evil?

Furthermore, this notion of ultimate control over one's decisions, termed free will, which claims that one's decisions are the result neither of causality nor of a lack of causality, is an incoherent notion in violation of the law of the excluded middle,[1] and so cannot possibly be true. This is because any given event either occurs due to a cause or else it does not. If it should occur due to a cause, one has no control over its occurrence; its occurrence is inevitable. And, if it should occur without a cause and due to nothing at all, one still has no control over its occurrence: even though its occurrence is not inevitable, it is nevertheless not avoidable; after all, such an event simply suddenly appears, due to nothing whatsoever. It is evident, then, on logical grounds alone, that any "free will defense," however cherished, is doomed to failure.

1. In logic, the law of the excluded middle entails that a statement (e.g., "Causality exists") is either true or else it is not. No third possibility exists. If either that statement's truthfulness or falsity precludes the truthfulness of a certain other statement (e.g., "Free will exists"), that other statement cannot be true.

But the even more serious charge against the free will defense is its *unbelief.* God has revealed to us that He is the Almighty; therefore, no one can have any power of any kind independent of Him. Further, He has revealed to us that He makes the world and *all* that is in it, declaring that He "has made *everything* for its own pertinent end, *yea even the wicked* for the day of evil" (Prov.16:4).

If there is a "problem of evil" it exists (in our eyes) because God is love, is Almighty, is wise, and is good. Yet He makes all, and makes all for a purpose—*even the wicked.* Even so, He is righteous in *all* His ways, and benign in *all* His works (Psa.145:17).

Many have seen that the free will defense fails, and that in any case it is not much of a defense. Yet even those few who intelligently acknowledge God's supremacy and deity over all (commonly termed His "sovereignty"), who nevertheless assume the validity of the orthodox teaching of the eternal damnation of the lost, have pronounced "the problem of evil" an irresolvable mystery.

It is understandable that they should make such a pronouncement. After all, if, above all, God is love, and if He is the Almighty, Who is good, wise, purposeful, and righteous, Who has made all that exists and all that occurs—all being out of, through, and for Him, and to His glory (Rom.11:36)—*how is it that there is an eternal hell of punishment to which vast numbers of His beloved creatures will be interminably subjected?* If such an awful scenario were true, then Love could not bless many of Its beloved, nor could many of Its beloved respond in love to their Benefactor.

If God either does not even will the salvation of all, or

wills it but cannot achieve it, then either the universality of His love is denied, or the universality of His power.

How privileged we are to know that, "in the *grace* of God," God determined that "[Christ] should be tasting death for the sake of *everyone*" (Heb.2:9). Thus it is that God is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10). All for whom salvation is designed will be saved, for salvation is in grace. And salvation is designed for all; hence, all will be saved.

Since God is love, and is righteous, good, and wise, besides being One Who makes all for its own pertinent end, it becomes evident that evil would not exist at all unless the form and degree in which it does exist were to accord with God's love, even as with His righteousness, goodness, wisdom, and purpose.

It is clear that God cannot be glorified as Saviour and that humans cannot be blessed with salvation unless there are sinners to be saved. Therefore, the evil of sin and sinners must exist; it is but the dictate of wisdom that this should be so. Rather than being "shocked" that this should be so, we should rather be shocked were this not so.

Surely the almighty God, Who is love, would see to it that any certain evil did not exist, unless it were wise and needful to His purpose that it should exist. In that case, He would cause it to exist—for His own glory and in order to bless His creatures in a greater way than would otherwise be possible.

In making testimony to such little known things of consequence as considered herein, our prayer to God is that even if we are becoming somewhat "aged," that we might still be able to continue on for some time in useful service to Him through the ministry in which He has placed us. And, we pray as well that many of our friends will be likewise graced to continue on as our associates and supporters in common cause, "for God and His Word," in the ministry of the Concordant Publishing Concern. J.R.C.

PROMISE AND FAITH
(Genesis 12)

12 + **Yahweh** ˡ**said to Abram: Go** ˃**by your**self **from your land,** + **from your kindred and from your father's house to the land** *w***that I shall show you.**

2 + **I shall** *d***make you** in**to** a **great nation,**
And I shall bless you;
+ **I shall** indeed **make your name great,**
And you will *b***be** a **blessing;**

3 + **I shall** indeed **bless** those **blessing you,**
And I shall curse the one **maledicting you.**
+ **In you all** the **families of the ground will be blessed.**

4 +**So Abram** ˡ**went just as Yahweh had** *sp***told** ˃ **him; and Lot** ˡ**went** `with **him.** + **Abram** was **75 years old** *i***when he** was going **forth**⁻ **from Charan.** 5 **And Abram** ˡ**took** `**his wife Sarai and** `**his brother's son Lot and** `**all their goods** *w***that they had gotten and** `**every**⁷*0* ˙**soul** *w* **they had** *d***acquired in Charan;** + **they** went ˡ**forth to go** to*d* the **land** of **Canaan, and they** ˡ**entered** to*d* **the land** of **Canaan.**

6 +**Then Abram** ˡ**passed** *i***through** the **land as far as** the *ri***place of Shechem** *fr***to** ⁷**the high**⁰ **oak.** + **The Canaanite** was **then** ⁷**dwelling**⁰ **in** the **land.** 7 +**Yet Yahweh** ˡ**appeared to Abram and** ˡ**said** ⁷**to him***nc***: To your seed I shall give** `**this** ˙**land.** +**Then** ⁷**Abram**⁰ ˡ**built there** an **altar to Yahweh** ˙Who had **appeared**ˡ **to him.** 8 + **From there he** ˡ**shifted** to**ward the hill** country *f***on** the **east** ˃**of Bethel and** ˡ**pitched his tent** ⁷**there**⁰ with **Bethel** *f***on** the **west and** ˙**Ai** *f***on** the **east.** + **He** ˡ**built** an **altar there to Yahweh and** ˡ**called** *i***on** the

Name of Yahweh. 9 +**Then Abram** l**decamped** to **go**– + in **stages**– to**ward the Negev.**

10 +**Now** there l*b***was** a **famine in** the **land;** +**so Abram** went l**down** to*d* **Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine** was **heavy in** the **land.** 11 **And it came** to l**be just as** 7**Abram**0 *c***got near to enter Egypt***d* +**that he** l**said to his wife Sarai: Behold** *pr***, I know that you** are a **woman, lovely of appearance.** 12 +**So it will** *b***occur** *t***when the Egyptian** men **see** `**you,** + **they will say, This** is **his wife.** +**Then they will kill** `**me,** +**but** *m***keep** `**you** l**alive.** 13 *pr***Please say** that **you** are **my sister,** so **that it may** go l**well** ›**with me** *i***for your** *p***sake, and my soul will** remain **alive due to you.**

14 + **It came** to l**be** *as***when Abram entered**– **Egypt***d***,** + **the Egyptian** men l**saw** `**the woman that she** was **very lovely.** 15 +**Also Pharaoh's chief** officials l**saw** `**her and** l**praised** `**her to Pharaoh, and the woman was** l**taken** to **Pharaoh's house.** 16 + *i***On** *p***account of her it** *c***went well** ›**with Abram; and it came** to l**be** that **he** ›**had** a **flock** of sheep**,** + a **herd** of cattle**, and donkeys,** + men**servants and maid**servant**s,** + **jennies and camels.**

17 +**Then Yahweh** l**touched** `**Pharaoh and** `**his house**hold with **great** 7**and evil**0 **contagions on** *sp***account of Sarai, Abram's wife.** 18 +**So Pharaoh** l**called** › **Abram and** l**said: What** is **this** that **you have done to me? Why** did **you not tell** › **me that she** is **your wife?** 19 **Why** did **you say, She** is **my sister,** +**so** that **I** was about to l**take** `**her for me** ›**as** a **wife?** + **Now** *bd***here** is **your wife; take** her **and go.** 20 **And Pharaoh** l**instructed men** to **over**see **him, and they** l**sent** away `**him and** `**his wife and** `**all** *w***that he** ›**had,** 7**and Lot** went **with him***n***.**

PROMISE, A NEW DEPARTURE

In the eon before this in which we live, Yahweh Elohim put Adam in the midst of luxury, and *warned* him, lest he should lose it (Gen.2:17). Noah, also, was *apprized* of the coming judgment (Heb.11:7). But Noah also received a *promise* for the *future*. This is the new method, elaborated in the life of Abram. It is important to note that God's promises are not based on anything that anyone *was* or had *done*, but were altogether sourced in the purpose of the Subjector alone. It was part of His great plan of subjecting all to Himself. He needed a people and a nation of His own, and a man through whom to bring them upon the scene, and Abram was chosen as their forefather, because he was physically *un*fitted for the task. It must be made clearly evident that all is of God. That is why it could be promised beforehand, and why its physical fulfillment was made practically impossible, from the human side.

PROMISE

The promise was by no means confined to one nation, or to Abraham himself. He, indeed, was to be blessed and to have a great name. But best of all was the promise that he was to become a blessing to *others*. Yahweh Elohim is the great Blesser, and Abram was chosen as His *channel* of blessing, until *all* the families of the ground shall partake of it. Here is where the nation which sprang from Abraham has hitherto failed. It has tried to monopolize all the blessing for *itself*. The full fruition of this part of the promise will not appear until the greater Son of Abraham is upon His throne.

The charge to Abram was threefold: He was to *leave* his *land*, and his *kindred*, and his *father's house* (12:1). These evidently were hindrances to the course which Yahweh had planned for him. His *land* was probably given over to demon worship. His *kindred* also had eloah, or to-subjectors, other than Yahweh, such as Rachel, Jacob's wife, had stolen from her father, Laban (Gen. 31:30-32). Terah had, indeed, set out for Canaan, so he seemed to be the least

objectionable. But he did not go all the way. He did not merely interrupt his journey at Charan, but built a permanent dwelling there. The reason for these severances was this, that Abram was to begin anew, and receive a *land*, and generate a *nation* and set up a *house* of worship apart from and above all the rest, and subject *these* to Yahweh, his Subjector.

Abram seems to have obeyed his instructions. He left his *land* and his father's *house*, and his *kindred*. We are not told that he took Lot. Rather, Lot went with him. As Haran, Lot's father, had died, and Abram had no son, it seems that Lot adopted Abram for his father. But he seems to have inherited his father's cattle, which he kept separate from Abram's. Later on, when there was a contention between their grazers, Abram insisted on parting from him. So Lot was severed from the promise, for he left Abram for the rich pasture of Sodom, and became involved in the curse of Canaan.

THE CURSE OF CANAAN

Why was Abram sent to Canaan? It seems that, when the land was distributed under Peleg (Gen.10:25), the descendants of Canaan, who were cursed by Noah (9:25) were temporarily given the land later allotted to Israel, and seized by them under Joshua. The Canaanites forfeited their right to the land by their immoralities. This is clearly shown by the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. So Abraham and his seed were used by the Elohim to judge these nations, and their land was allotted to Israel as a tenancy, as long as they did not also defile it.

ARRIVAL

Abram seems to have gone as far as Shechem, about the center of the land, and stopped there (Gen.12:6-7). The promise had been given at a distance from the land,

but now he was in the midst of it. So Yahweh appeared to him again and confirmed it on the spot: "To your seed am I giving *this* land." But Abram and Isaac and Jacob did not build themselves homes in the land. They lived in movable *tents*. Their only permanent structures were *altars*, for worship is the immovable and irrevocable recognition of the true Owner. Cain *built* a city contrary to the Subjector's command. At Babel men started to *build* to make themselves a permanent name. The men of faith built only at God's command, as Noah *built* the ark. In the land the patriarchs *built* nothing but *altars* as a sign that the land was *Yahweh's* to perpetuity.

ALTARS

The patriarchs Abram, Isaac and Jacob *built* seven altars in the land, in five places. Abram built four, at Shechem (Gen.12:7), at Bethel (12:8;13:4), at Mamre (13:18) and at Moriah (22:9). Isaac built one at Beersheba (26:25). Jacob built one at Shechem again (33:20) and one at Bethel again (35:1,3,7). These were the outward symbols of their inward subjection, and their worship of the real Owner of the land. This was all the payment He required. Later on, the altar was part of the elaborate tabernacle and temple ritual. But whenever their hearts were not in their worship, the temples and altars were destroyed, and the land was taken from them. Today they are claiming it without offering aught to Yahweh, but they will not be permanently blessed in it until they once more worship the perpetual Proprietor, Yahweh Elohim.

THE LAND NOT EDEN

The land promised to Abraham was not another Eden, where the moisture continually came up and watered the surface. It was not even like Egypt or Mesopotamia, where the water of a stream could be applied by human labor.

The dwellers in the land depended almost entirely on moisture from *above*. The rain from heaven was wholly in God's hand. Its quantity and seasonableness determined their welfare to a large degree. Too little or none meant famine. At the wrong time, it could do a lot of damage. Yahweh used it to bless and to chastise His people (Amos 4:7). In the day of Yahweh, He will use the rain to control other nations also (Zech.14:17).

FAITH

In the administration of *promise* we are now introduced to a new method or principle of subjection, that of *faith* in God's *word*, as distinct from *obedience* to His *will*. Strange as it may seem, the word-stem *amn* for *faith*, or *believe*, does not occur in the Scriptures until we read that "Abram *believes* in Yahweh Elohim, and He is reckoning it to him for righteousness" (Gen.15:6). This is very important, and seldom fully understood. Abram was *not* righteous because of what he *did*, for he often failed and did the wrong thing. But he was *reckoned* righteous nevertheless for his *faith*. *Yahweh never accused him of failure or sin, but counted him as just*, no matter what he did.

If the reader will carefully read the episode concerning Abram's journey to Egypt and back, from the time he left Bethel to his return to it, he will see that all of it was reprehensible and contrary to God's will. *Yet not one word of censure will be found*, except by Pharaoh. Commentators have criticized freely, with such truisms as, "It is better to starve in Canaan . . . than to live in luxury in Egypt." Yet *Abram was blessed in both places*! Pharaoh was good to Abram, so that he came to have a flock of sheep and a herd of cattle and donkeys and menservants and maidservants and jennies and camels (12:16). When he returned, he was richer than ever, not only heavy in cattle, but in silver and gold. When we criticize Abram, even for his lack

of faith, we miss the point of the passage, and are ourselves at fault. He was justified by faith, not by his conduct.

Abram had been told to go from his land to Canaan, and that this would belong to his seed. A full measure of faith would have deduced from this that he would not perish in it, but would be kept in any circumstances. Yet he was not told to remain. In the days of Isaac there was another famine, and Yahweh appeared to him, and told him to *remain* in the land. As a result he not only survived, but reaped a hundredfold when he sowed (26:1,12). Still later, there was a famine in the days of Jacob. He would not leave the land, but sent to Egypt for provisions, until Joseph sent for him, and all Israel left the land to serve as slaves in Egypt (46:3), as had been revealed to Abram (15:13).

The fact that Yahweh said to Isaac, in this connection, that *Abram had hearkened to His voice and kept His charge, His instructions, His statutes, and His laws* (26:5), shows that *He did not reckon it* against Abram when he left the land for Egypt but that He wished to reveal His care for him even in an alien land. Abram sought to protect himself from danger. But his unworthy subterfuge of telling a half-truth proved entirely unnecessary, for Yahweh had to step in and send contagions, great and evil, on Pharaoh and his household, although they had not intended any harm. This shows a method of divine dealing, in reckoning righteousness to one who has faith, which does not seem just to those unacquainted with God's ways, but which apply to all, who, like Abram, *believe* Him.

GOD'S GRACE EMPHASIZED

In commencing a new line of divine dealing by means of Abram, it was necessary to show it in action. In the first place, belief in Yahweh (15:6) is the general attitude toward God which led Abram to go to Canaan, and to build altars to worship Him. He did not necessarily have that fulness

of faith that trusted Yahweh implicitly on all occasions. If blessing depends on unbroken acceptance, unwavering response, then no one could be awarded His gifts. The merest flicker of faith, to begin with, suffices to show the presence of the holy spirit, and is enough to give the assurance of divine favor. We will not condone his leaving the land, or lying to Pharaoh, but rejoice in the blessed outcome, due to God's grace. God not only justified Abram because of his faith, but us also, so we praise and worship Him for dealing thus with us in this era, through Christ Jesus, our Saviour.

When a similar truth was first made known by Paul in connection with judgment, and it had been shown that the injustice of the Jew commended the righteousness of God (Rom.3:5-8), some reasoned that we should be doing evil that good may be coming, without any reference to God's wise control. Paul did not even answer them. As a matter of fact men do just that to their children. A wise father disciplines his children *in order to keep them from doing evil*. But, in His works of discipline, God has a deeper and greater end in view, that He may be revealed to them as *good* and *gracious* and *loving*, not alone in the transcendent blessings which will be ours in the future, but also through the preparatory evil which we are now called upon to endure.

THE SPECIAL BLESSING OF FAITH

Not all are included in the ranks of faith. In Abram's day he seems almost alone. And even today, with Christianity spread over a large part of the earth, real faith is not too plentiful. What, then, is the fate of unbelievers? God is the Saviour of all humanity, *especially* of those who *believe* (1 Tim.4:10). Salvation by *faith* is *not* the portion of all mankind, but only of those chosen beforehand for it. The rest will be saved through *sight*, at the judgment.

Salvation by faith is a high privilege, and should be cherished as such by all who are fortunate enough to enjoy it.

From the divine standpoint, all that Abram did was *right*, for it revealed God's method of operation in *grace*, so Abram is not charged with any wrong. Indeed, he prospered. God was back of all he did. Yet He disciplined Pharaoh even when he was *about* to do wrong, unwittingly, and had not yet committed the sin.

LOT ACTUATED BY SIGHT

Abram was told to go away from his kindred (12:1), which he evidently did. But Lot, his fatherless nephew, went with him, without an invitation. Here again, we can see that this was wrong. Nevertheless, it is just as evident that it was God's intention, for he is a necessary contrast to Abram, especially in his relation to the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah. Besides, Lot was a just man (2 Peter 2:7). He fared marvelously well in material things by his association with Abram. But he was actuated by sight, rather than faith. When their herds became too large to be kept together, he should have left the choice pastures for his benefactor. When there was contention, it was his place to yield to the elder man to whom the promises were given.

After Lot had left Abram, Yahweh not only renewed his promises to him but emphasized them, especially as to his seed. All the land that he could see in every direction, was his to use for the eon. And his seed was to be as the soil of the land, uncountable. But he still remained a stranger and a sojourner in it, for he actually had no allotment of sufficient size to plant his foot (Gen.13:14, Acts 6:5). For Yahweh he *builds* an altar, for His is the land, yet he himself only tents in it, for it was his only by faith in the promised future.

All this is in contrast to the course of Lot. No promises were given to him. If he had been shown the future, he

would have been told that none of his choice land would be his, but all would be destroyed. Moreover, his seed would be the result of a drunken debauch, and given a name as shameful as Abram's was glorious. Lot was captured, together with his people and his goods, in the war that came soon after. Abram, on the contrary, delivered him and his. Lot lived in a *house* in the *city* (19:3), and attained to some eminence, for he sat in the gate where the judges ruled. Abram lived in a tent, but built a permanent altar, and became the intercessor, seeking to save Lot and the whole city of Sodom from destruction.

Justification by faith is one of our greatest treasures today. Indeed, our other blessings are based upon it, for it alone makes peace with God possible (Rom.5:1). Nothing can condemn us (Rom.8:1). Like Abram, once we believe Him, however it may seem to us and to others, all our acts are according to the Subjector's intention, and are used by Him to work out His will. We make no pretense of being righteous in ourselves. If we were, the sacrifice of Christ would not be needed. But our failings, together with His work in Christ, constitute the divine combination which carries out the purpose of the eons, and displays the essential love, on which the future is founded.

But the truth concerning the function of evil cannot be imparted to those who have not learned its lesson, for then its purpose could not be accomplished. Only those given the spirit of God by receiving His revelation, and *believing* Him, can be justified in this eon. Abram was often unjust in his actions. He was not reckoned righteous by what he *did*, but by Him Whom he *believed*. As subjection is accomplished through to-subjecters, His sons by faith, these are the subjects of justification in this eon. The rest are left for later eons, in which the sons are used by the Son to bring the rest into the circle of subjection.

A. E. Knoch

FAITH RIGHTEOUSNESS

FAITH RIGHTEOUSNESS is first found in connection with Abram in Genesis 15:6. He was prepared for the righteousness of faith by his previous experience with his fellow men as recorded in Genesis 13 and 14. Everything *they* do is below the strict standard of justice. Everything *God* does far exceeds it. There is no neutral condition such as men would deem just and right. The action of Lot in going to Sodom was wrong. The men of that city were exceedingly wicked. The war of the kings was unjust. The spoiling of Sodom cannot be defended, especially the fate of Lot. Even the rescue of Lot does not set matters right. On the other hand, the act of Abram *exceeds* the strict line of justice. Abram *refused* his *just due* for the rescue. It is only when we come to the declarations of God that we have divine righteousness, but this far surpasses what we understand by that term. Abram's acceptance of God's unmerited favor is what constitutes his righteousness, because this is the aim and object of God's dealings with him, as it is with all of His creatures.

GENESIS 13 AND 14

Faith righteousness is about to be reckoned to Abram. It is with this in view that we are given the episodes which precede it.

The human idea of right is one of exact reciprocation, so much service for so much hire, so much protection for so much reward. Our great failure is that we carry this into our relationship with God, and thus drag Him down to our own level. Men are ever trying to pay God for His protection and give Him wages for His work. This may

be considered right among men, but it is utterly wrong when applied to God. It is an insult to patronize Him. It is a shame to offer Him wages. We have nothing that He has not given us, and can do nothing for Him except in the strength which He provides. We are bankrupt when it comes to paying for His salvation and utterly destitute when we seek to settle for His services. It is absolutely wrong that we should even attempt to do these things, for they are contrary to His present place as the Deity and His future goal as our All.

When we focus our eyes upon men and their activities we are bewildered if we try to judge between them. There is no fixed standard by which to determine right from wrong. No one seems to be absolutely right or utterly wrong. The only settled standard is God's revelation. The simplest and most practical test is the consummation. *Whatever directly tends to subject men to God and make Him their All,* that is divinely right. Whatever tends otherwise and only indirectly effects God's intention, is wrong, even if it eventually contributes to His glory and His goal. It is only as we consider Abram's experience in the light of God's ultimate that we can understand how his faith is reckoned for righteousness.

GOD IS THE OWNER

Abram was given the land of Canaan. From the superficial human standpoint it may appear *wrong* to take the land away from its inhabitants and give it to Abram and his seed. Seen from the vantage of the divine, it was supremely right. God alone is the actual Owner of the earth and its treasures, and He alone has the disposal of any part of it. The nations of Canaan not only had no title to the land they held, but they did not recognize the true Owner. They brought Him nothing for its use. Superficially again, Abram had even less claim on the land, for he was a stranger and made no

improvements. The only rights he had were divine, and looked forward to the future, when Israel would bring a tenth of its produce to support His worship, and it would become a place where Yahweh would dwell and glorify His name. Neither Abram nor the nations in the land could make any *material* return for the use of the land, for this was also Yahweh's, and He has no need of anything that they had. Abram alone paid the proper price when be built an altar and offered a sacrifice. *Worship, thanksgiving and praise,* the outflow of a grateful heart, these are the precious gems which God can use to adorn His diadem, and they are a rich rental for the promised land.

ABRAM AND LOT

Let us consider Abram's dealings with his nephew (Gen. 13:1-13). Lot was not the possessor of the promises, and he had no rights in the land of Canaan, either human or divine (Gen.12:7). As there was not room for the flocks of both of them, he should rightfully have withdrawn. Abram would have been within his rights if he had driven him out. When strife arose between their herdsmen, Abram was in line with God in his desire for peace, for God will eventually reconcile all to Himself. As the younger, Lot ought to have been subject to Abram, for that is the proper place of humanity in the consummation. In the East there is a constant reminder of this in the subjection of the younger to the elder. Of course, those who are older have had more experience, and are more fitted to rule, but that is not the basic fact. All, in their youth, should learn to realize the place which properly belongs to the creature, the necessary complement of the place of the Deity. But Lot does not volunteer to take this place. He probably thinks he has rights as well as Abram.

Abram, strange to say, although it does not belong to him, takes the place of subjection! He not only refuses to

make good his rightful claim to the whole land, as promised him by God, and his rights as the elder, but gives Lot his choice. He took what was left. This Lot should never have allowed. Abram had taken *God's* choice for him, and was acting along the line that leads directly to the consummation. This is what counts as righteous with God. This is divine righteousness. Abram had it, not because he made a just division of the land between himself and Lot, but because he anticipated, by faith, the end that God has in view. On the other hand, Lot, though righteous among men, did not act according to faith righteousness, so he takes advantage of Abram, and appropriates the best part of God's gift for himself. His choice was soulish. He looked for physical satisfaction from the rich pastures of the Jordan valley. But when he came to dwell in Sodom, his soul was tormented by the lawlessness of his surroundings. Later, he lost all, and Abram had to come to his rescue. He was not in God's will, but served as a foil for God's dealings with Abram. His descendants became foes of the chosen people.

THE WARS OF THE KINGS

Abram's contact with the warfare of that day (Gen.14) gives a further insight into His faith righteousness and the wrongdoing of the times. Of some of the kings, engaged in this conflict, we know that they had no right even to live, for later they were destroyed by God Himself. The rest of them were probably not so very much better. What real right did they have to the territory they claimed as their own? Did they pay Yahweh for the use of it? Did they give Him a tithe of what it produced? Did they thank and praise Him for it? And now some of them band together and subjugate the peoples about them and demand tribute, just as if they were God, the true Owner of the neighboring lands as well as their own. Had they been subject to God

and acknowledged His rights, no such wrongs could have been perpetrated.

Abram, with his vast wealth, must have been a tempting object of plunder, but God kept the marauders away from him, although he was very close to their line of march. This was because he had set his heart on God, not on His gifts. Lot, on the contrary, was after wealth. His heart was occupied with the lush land and the cattle and the goods, which he really owed to the God of Abram. He had no right to them, so they are taken from him, and he himself is carried captive together with all that is his. Abram could have said that it served him right. That would have been quite just from the human standpoint. In a land given to Abraham he had made trouble, and then actually took what he considered the choicest part of it for himself. He had treated Abram most unjustly. Abram was under no obligation, from the standpoint of human righteousness, to go to his aid, especially when he had to do it at the risk of his own riches and even of his life.

THE BLESSING OF BEING A BLESSING

But in the righteousness of faith there is more than mere *possessing.* There is *blessing.* Abram was given a much greater gift than the land. He and his seed were to be *blessed* in it, and, far more than this, he was to be a blessing *to all the families of the earth.* Instead of resenting Lot's mercenary conduct and refusing to help him in his distress, he takes hold of God's promise by faith and rescues his relative and neighbors from their foes. He is confident that God will prosper him in it, for His word must be fulfilled. His land and his life are safe in Yahweh's keeping. As he has no son, he cannot die until provision has been made for the innumerable progeny which Yahweh promised. His life was insured by the Life Giver Himself. Later, the nation of Israel lost sight of this great

truth. They wanted blessing for themselves, but were little concerned about the blessing of others. They implored for deliverance when in distress, but made no move to insure the well being of other nations when they needed help. In the future their blessing will rest largely on their ability to bring peace and plenty to the other nations of the earth.

Blessing, however, demands a background. Perhaps we can understand this better if we put ourselves in the place of Lot. He was probably pleased to get the grazing land near Sodom for his herds and flocks, after the strife with Abram's herdsmen, although the Sodomites would not let him enjoy it. But how much more blessed did he feel after having been rescued from the captivity of the kings! In both cases Abram was a blessing. In the first case it was hardly appreciated, because Lot imagined it more or less his right. But in the latter he had no illusions, and Abram acted far above the level of mere justice. What Abram did was right from the divine standpoint, for it was in line with God's plans, and this alone determines right in His sight.

RECOGNIZING GOD AS GOD

What a contrast between Abram and the kings! They had no title to their own land, yet seek to extend their unjust holdings by force of arms. He had a perfect title to all that Yahweh had given him, yet he yields to Lot when he calmly appropriates the best part that he could find. They not only robbed God of His rights, but this led to much loss and harm and woe to their fellows and probably cost them many lives besides. So it must always be. Those who do not glorify and thank the Deity as God must suffer the righteous retribution of this fundamental error by being barred from blessing themselves, and of being a blessing to others. Abram's faith led him to give God His place, and this led to restoration and blessing.

A. E. Knoch

YAHWEH SPEAKS TO ABRAM

THE GOOD of light and order and life began with the word of God when He *said*, "Let light come to be" (Gen.1:3). The first revelation of God's purpose for humanity is given in those words of His when He *said*, "Let us make humanity in Our image and according to Our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). So also, God's work of blessing Israel and bringing blessing to all families of the ground through the nation of Israel began with Yahweh's words to Abram, when He *said*, "Go by yourself from your land, from your kindred and from your father's house to the land that I shall *show* you. I shall *make* you into a great nation, and I shall *bless* you; I shall indeed *make* your name *great*, and you will be a blessing; I shall indeed *bless* those blessing you, and I shall *curse* the one maledicting you. In you all the families of the ground will be blessed" (Gen.12:1-3).

GOD'S WORK OF SPEAKING

When we say what we have in mind to do, it often is not much more than sound and breath. But God's saying concerning what He will do, is the inseparable partner of His doing that very thing.

We see this pattern in the first chapter of Genesis in those instances where what God says comes to be so. But more and more, especially with the creation of humanity, what God says stands as an expression of His work in process. The sayings of God after the first chapter of Genesis are often not yet realized in accomplishment. Nevertheless, God is *operating all* in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11).

Consequently we would give careful attention to what God says He will do. This very simple work of God, His act of *saying* what He intends and wills to do (His word of "promise"), is critical to us in getting a hold on the vital issues of human existence: who we are and where we stand in relation to the world about us and what life is all about.

The completion of what God said to Abram thousands of years ago in Genesis 12:1-3 has not come to be so. But God has counseled it, and He will bring it about.

INSTRUCTION AND PROMISE

To be sure, the first word of Yahweh to Abram is not one of promise, but one of instruction, put in the imperative voice: "Go." This word directs our attention to the man, Abram, and the greater part of this section of Scripture centers on Abram and what *he* did in response to this instruction. Indeed, we need to heed Abram's example, and learn the lessons of his going and believing, as God's word operated in him.

But we are concentrating now on the actions of God, what He is doing and shall do as outlined in these opening verses of Genesis 12. Abram is seen in his actions of response to Yahweh's sayings (the correct place for human beings), but Yahweh is seen principally in what He *says* He will do.

Let us take time, then, to meditate on the five action words Yahweh uses here in speaking of what *He* would do for Abram, searching for what they reveal about God. They are as follows: "I shall *show*," "I shall *make*," "I shall *bless*" (used twice), "I shall *make-great* [or: *greaten*]," and "I shall curse."

YAHWEH SHOWS

Abram journeyed to the land as he was instructed, but Yahweh was the One Who showed him the land (which He had designated for him beforehand). God is the Revealer of what He has in view.

In Hebrew the word for *show* is literally, *make-see*. Yahweh made Abram see the land in which He would bless him. Yahweh did carry out this initial promise, so that what He said came to be (*cf* Gen.13:14-17). This was the work of God, making Abram see with the eyes of flesh, the area of the earth which God will give to him and his seed, through (as we later learn) His greater Seed, the Lord Jesus Christ.

To us also, God has spoken of an allotment which He shows to us, not to our physical eyes, but the eyes of our heart. Hence we read these lines written by the apostle Paul to believers in Christ Jesus: "Therefore, I also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, *may be giving you* a spirit of *wisdom* and *revelation* in the realization of Him, *the eyes of your heart having been enlightened,* for you to *perceive . . .*" (Eph.1:15-18).

Yet all of us are to some extent are like Abram in Genesis 12. When he first heard these words, they operated in him with the force of anticipation. God had not yet made him see the land with his eyes of flesh. Hence, in our lives today, we pray to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ for enlightenment concerning "the expectation of His calling, and . . . the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and . . . the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing" (Eph.1: 18,19). It is God Who gives this insight, through His spirit.

YAHWEH MAKES

The verb "make" here at the beginning of verse 2, is the same word often translated "do." It is a very common

term in the Hebrew language for expressing action. But it is not used here of a common thing. When the nation of Israel, which commenced with Abram, is completed as envisioned here by these simple terms, it will be seen as an achievement of centuries of divine activity, of molding and shaping and polishing, of training and disciplining which never, on God's part, loses sight of the goal.

This work of God, that of making Abram into a great nation, is far from being completed, even yet after all these thousands of years. It still stands as a work in process, even delayed because of God's present calling in grace, apart from nationality and fleshly descent from Abraham. But it shall be fulfilled when God gives Israel a new heart and a new spirit, and they will dwell in the land which He gave to their fathers, and they become His people, and He becomes their Elohim (Ezek.36:26-28). He has spoken, and He will *do* it (Ezek.36:36).

If we are tempted to think that the failures of that chosen nation which descended from Abram can keep God from making them into a great nation both in size and in quality, we should listen again to Paul's testimony in Romans 3:3,4. "For what if some disbelieve? Will not their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? May it not be coming to that! Now let God be true, yet every man a liar." Indeed, ". . . all Israel shall be saved, according as it is written, Arriving out of Zion shall be the Rescuer. He will be turning away irreverence from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them whenever I should be eliminating their sins" (Rom.11:26,27).

This testimony of Paul's concerning God's making of this great nation is presented in the same epistle where he writes this welcome word to us who are called: that "whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls, these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these He glorifies also" (Rom.8:29,30). These are works

of God which He *does,* but nevertheless remain unsupported by what we see physically. They are works of God of which He speaks in His Word, but remain matters for faith. Nevertheless, we find that there is great blessing for us who have been graciously granted to believe what God has said to us in the evangel concerning these blessings. What God has *said,* centered on what He has done in sending in own Son (Rom.8:3) is a source of daily strength and encouragement.

Consequently, we are blessed as Abram was blessed, by accepting what God has said to us in His Word, and being invigorated by faith, giving glory to God, being fully assured also, that, what God has promised, He is able to *do* also (Rom.4:20,21).

YAHWEH BLESSES

The key work of God in Genesis 12:1-3 is that of *blessing.* It is mentioned twice in speaking of what God Himself will do. He will bless Abram, and He will bless those blessing him.

God's work of blessing was first mentioned in Genesis 1:22,28 (*cf* Gen.5:2) regarding certain of His creatures. In Hebrew its root meaning is "kneel." Hence it is associated with a right relationship toward God, as suggested also by God's blessing of the seventh day (Gen.2:3). Nothing is more blessed for us than to glorify and thank God, the lack of which is a source of present human woe (*cf* Rom.1:21).

What God said in Genesis 12 about blessing Abram began to be realized in a limited way with his prosperity in association with his honoring of God. But the fullness of blessing to Abram and His descendants, and indeed embracing blessing for all the nations, is still to come. Hence we read God's word through the prophet, "For to Me shall bow every knee, and every tongue shall swear fealty" (Isa.45:23).

Yahweh adds also the happy promise that Abram and his seed will become a blessing. This indeed is God's operation as well, although here it is expressed literally in the form of instruction: "Become a blessing." But, like the imperative word "Go" in Genesis 12:1, the imperative "Become" in verse 2 is empowered by God's words of promise.

We will only refer now, in passing, to Paul's use and expansion of the promise from Isaiah (quoted above) in Romans 14:11 and Philippians 2:10,11. The core of our blessings and ultimately God's blessing of all, involves our kneeling, or subjection to our Lord. For us who are believing today, there is, again, no promise of present, physical prosperity, but in faith we may be blessing the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing, in our appreciation of Him (*cf* Eph.1:3-12).

YAHWEH GREATENS

The verb in the third line of Genesis 12:2 is "make-great." It appears in an emphatic form which the CV has tried to indicate by the lightface word "indeed." (The same form is used with the verb "bless" in the first line of verse 3.) Abram had a name which meant FATHER-HIGH, and which was later changed to Abraham, meaning FATHER-HIGH-*throng*, but at this time he was not a father at all. Yet the promise of God, which meant so much to him, was that his name and honor would be "greatened." And this will be realized in joyful reality.

In the meantime, "he was invigorated by faith, giving glory to God, being fully assured also, that what He has promised, He is able to do also" (Rom.4:20,21). This word will come to pass in every detail when all Israel is saved, but for this father who had no children for so many years, and never experienced the fullness of this greatness of which Yahweh spoke, the speaking of it by Yahweh, remained a blessing in itself.

We pause again, and ask: What has God spoken to us concerning justification, conciliation, vivification, subjection and reconciliation? Glory is added to glory (*cf* 2 Cor. 3:18). What God says to us is ever an invigoration to us as we are believing.

YAHWEH WILL CURSE

Finally, God speaks to Abram again of blessing, but involves with this promise of blessing for others who bless Abram and his seed, the promise of a curse for those who maledict him and his seed. We will treat these two works of God together as Yahweh presents them in Genesis 12:3. The primary work is blessing, but this blessing involves the negative action of bringing a curse on those who set themselves against the chosen of God.

It may seem to us that the cursing is out of place, even incongruous, in the context of these promises of blessing for Abram, his seed and all the families of the ground. Indeed it is if the work of cursing is a final and everlasting operation. But as part of the process of blessing, serving the necessary end of bringing out the blessedness of the blessing, as well as displaying God's power of deliverance from harm for His chosen ones, the cursing needs to be appreciated. And beyond these immediate purposes for good, the cursing is in line with God's operations of indignation and condemnation and indeed the entire experience of evil which entered into the world with the eating of the forbidden fruit. Here God's object embraces His entire eonian purpose and the whole matter of the appreciation of Himself.

The blessing of Abram and the cursing of those who maledict him as God's chosen vessel for honor, and thus maledict God, are both processes toward the end that God be All in all. Yet still, we need to look at the immediate reasons for these operations. God continues to show

His mercy to certain individuals and guard them from the hate and greed of others who are not blessed. Even today in this era of conciliation when He is not reckoning the offenses of the world against them, God fills the believer's every need (Phil.4:19). He leads us to let our lenience be made known to all (Phil.4:5) and to pray for all, that we may be leading a mild and quiet life (1 Tim.2:1,2). We are also reminded of the spiritual armor God has provided for us against those powers who oppose God's choice of us for the celestial allotment (Eph.6:10-17).

But we do not know the details of what is ahead for ourselves. In this, the lessons given in God's word to Abram can only encourage us in our faith and in reliance on the living God.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF FAITH

Yahweh's words to Abram were words of blessing. That of which they spoke will be carried out by God. Nothing will keep God from faithfully doing what He has said He will do. But in the meantime, these words of Yahweh became the source of many blessings to Abram as he believed them and responded to them, including often physical blessings of protection and prosperity. This was most fitting in line with the promises of physical and earthly blessings to come.

To us also, God has spoken, through His chosen apostle, concerning blessings of an allotment and calling which put us in a right relationship with Him. But, more in accord with the blessing of justification pictured in Genesis 15:6, as is fitting where spiritual blessings are in view, our walk remains entirely by faith, and our growth to spiritual enlightenment by His grace. Faithful are His sayings to us, and worthy of all welcome, especially as they center on His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and the blessings with which God blesses us in Him.

D.H.H.

DAVID AND BATHSHEBA
(2 Samuel 11)

11 + **It came** to ˡ**be** ˃**at the year's return,** ˃ the **season** when ˙**kings** march **forth**–, +**that David** ˡ**sent** `**Joab and** `**his servants with him, and** `**all of Israel.** + **They** *c*˙**brought** ˡ**ruin** `to the **sons of Ammon and** ˡ**besieged** *on* **Rabbah,** +**while David** *sit*˙**remained**ˡ **in Jerusalem.**

2 + **It** ˡ*b*˙**was** ˃**at** ˙**eventide, and David** ˡ**arose from** *on* **his bed.** +**When he** ˡ**walked** about **on** the **housetop of the royal** *in*˙**palace,** + **he** ˡ**saw from** *on* **the housetop** a **woman bathing.** + **The woman** was **exceedingly good** in **appearance,** 3 **and David** ˡ**sent** someone + to ˡ**inquire** ˃**about** the **woman.** + **He** ˡ*sa*˙**reported,** Is **this not Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam** and **wife of Uriah the Hittite?** 4 + **David** ˡ**sent messengers** +**that he might take her;** + **she** ˡ**came to him, and he** ˡ**lay with her—she** had +**just hallowed**ˡ herself **from her uncleanness.** +**Then she** ˡ**returned to her house.** 5 +**When the woman be**came ˡ**pregnant,** + **she** ˡ**sent** + to ˡ**tell** ˃ **David,** + ˡ**saying, I** am **pregnant.** 6 +**At** this **David** ˡ**sent** word **to Joab,** 7˃ **saying**–*0*, **Send** `**Uriah the Hittite to me. And Joab** ˡ**sent** `**Uriah to David.**

7 +**When Uriah** ˡ**came to him,** + **David** ˡ**asked** him ˃**about Joab's well-being and** ˃ **the** *wi*˙**soldiers' well-being and** ˃**about** any **accomplishment** in **the war.** 8 +**Then David** ˡ**said to Uriah,** Go **down to your house and bathe your feet.** +**So Uriah** went ˡ**forth from the royal** *in*˙**palace, and** a **helping** from **the king**'s table **was** brought ˡ**forth after him.** 9 +**Yet Uriah** ˡ**lay** down at the **portal of the royal** *in*˙**palace** `with **all** the other **servants of his lord and** did **not** go **down**

to his house. 10 +**When they** ˡ**told** › **David,** › **saying**–**, Uriah** did **not** go **down to his house,** +**then David** ˡˢᵃ**asked** › **Uriah,** Have **you not come**ˡ **from** a ʷᵃʸ**journey?** For **what reason** did **you not** go **down to your house?** 11 + **Uriah** ˡˢᵃ**replied to David, The coffer and Israel and Judah** are **dwelling in booths, and my lord Joab and** the **servants of my lord** are **camping on** the **face of the field.** +**Then** how can **I**´ ˡ**enter** › **my house to eat and to drink and to lie** down **with my wife?** By **your life and** by the **life of your soul, I shall assuredly not** ᵈ**behave** `in ·**this** ·**manner!** 12 +**Then David** ˡ**said to Uriah,** ˢⁱᵗ**Stay in this** place **today** ᵐʳ**also, and** tomorrow **I shall send you** off. +**So Uriah** ˡˢⁱᵗ**remained in Jerusalem** ⁱ**on** ·**that day, and** ᶠ**on** the **morrow.** 13 **And David** ˡ**invited** › **him** +**that he might eat and drink** ›**in his presence; and he** made **him** ˡ**drunk.** +**Yet in** the **evening he** went ˡ**forth to lie** down ⁱ**on his bedding** ʷⁱ**among** the other **servants of his lord; and he** did **not** go **down to his house.**

14 + **It came** to ˡ**be in** the **morning** +**that David** ˡ**wrote** a **letter to Joab and** ˡ**sent** it ⁱ**by** the **hand of Uriah.** 15 + **He** ˡ**wrote in** the **letter,** › **saying**–**, Get** `**Uriah to** the **forefront,** in **face of** ·**unyielding** ·**fighting;** +**then you** all **will turn back from** ᵃᶠ**behind him,** so +**that he will be smitten and will die.** 16 +**So it** ˡᵇ**was** ⁱ**when Joab kept**– guard ›**over the city** +**that he** ˡᵍ**assigned** `**Uriah to the** ʳⁱ**place** ʷ**where he knew that there** were **men of valor.** 17 +**When** the **men of the city** sallied ˡ**forth and** ˡ**fought** `against **Joab,** +**then** some ᶠ**of David's servants** ᶠ**among the** ʷⁱ**soldiers** ˡ**fell; and Uriah the Hittite** ᵐʳ**also** ˡ**died.**

18 + **Joab** ˡ**sent** word **and** ˡ**told** › **David** `**all** the ˢᵖ**details of the fighting.** 19 + **He** ˡ**instructed** `**the messenger,** › **saying**–**,** ᵃˢ**When you** ᵃˡˡ**finish**– › ˢᵖ**reporting**– **to the king** `**all** the ˢᵖ**details of the fighting,** 20 +**then it** may ᵇ**occur** ⁱᶠ**that the king's fury** flares ˡ**up and he says to you,** For **what reason** did **you** come so **close to the city to fight?** Did **you not know** `ʷ**that they** would ˡ**shoot from** ᵒⁿ **the wall?**

21 ᵃ**Who smote** `**Abimelech son of Jerub-besheth?** Did **not** a **woman fling on him** the **rider section** of a millstone **from on** top of **the wall** ⁱ**at Thebez** so +**that he** ˡ**died? Why** did **you** come so **close to the wall?** +**Then you** must **say, Moreover, your servant Uriah the Hittite, he** also **died.** 22 +**So the messenger** ˡ**went** off; + **he** ˡ**came and** ˡ**told** › **David** `**all** ʷ**that Joab had sent him** to report**.**

23 + **The messenger** ˡ**said to David,** ᵗ **The men had** the **mastery over us and** sallied ˡ**forth** ›**against us** ⁷**in**to⁰ **the** open **field.** +**But we** ˡᵇ**drove them** ᵒⁿ**back as far as** the **portal of the gate**way. 24 +**Then the shooters**ˡ ˡ**shot** ›**at your servants from on** top of **the wall, and** some ᶠ**of the king's servants** ˡ**died; moreover, your servant Uriah the Hittite, he** +**also died.** 25 + **David** ˡˢᵃ**replied to the messenger, Thus shall you say to Joab, Let not** `**this** ·**matter be** ˡ**displeasing in your eyes, for the sword shall devour** ᵃˢ **this** one + just **as that** one**. Intensify your fight** ›**against the city, and demolish it.** +**So encourage him!**

26 +**When Uriah's wife** ˡ**heard that her husband Uriah had died,** + **she** ˡ**wailed over her spouse.** 27 +**After the** period of **mourning** had ˡ**passed,** + **David** ˡ**sent and** had **her** ˡ**gathered to his** ⁱⁿ**palace;** + **she** ˡ**became his** › **wife and** ˡ**bore for him** a **son.** +**But the thing** ʷ**that David had done was** ˡ**evil in** the **eyes of Yahweh.**

Chapters 9 and 11 of 2 Samuel stand in sharp contrast with each other. In chapter 9 David was focused on the memory of his beloved friend Jonathan and the welfare of others. David's amazing capacity to be gracious was illustrated in his treatment of Mephibosheth. In chapter 11 David was focused on himself, and we are horrified by his callousness and self-centeredness. Is the David of chapter 11 the same person seen in chapter 9?

Throughout our studies we have repeatedly contrasted

David with Saul. But here the contrast is between Uriah and David. It was the time when kings go forth to war (v.1), but David stayed behind in the palace. David was rich and had the comfort and companionship of several wives, but he looked elsewhere for satisfaction. Uriah, on the other hand, was not even a blood-born member of the nation in which he lived. He was a Hittite. Yet he was so zealous and devoted to Yahweh and the chosen nation that he refused to enter his own house and enjoy the comfort and companionship of his own home and family. How could he do such a thing when "the coffer and Israel and Judah are dwelling in booths, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping on the face of the field?" (v.11). Uriah shamed David.

It is the same David in both chapters, but here David is more like Saul. Saul had killed the Gibeonites and taken their possessions and broken a covenant which Yahweh honored (2 Samuel 21). David committed adultery with a Hittite's wife, killed the Hittite and broke the law of Yahweh.

PLATEAUS

People often set goals in life. These goals may be a career position, or owning a home, or perhaps retirement. They believe if they can reach their goal, they will have reached a plateau. On the plateau stress will be decreased. Or, on the plateau they will enjoy a measure of control and security. On the plateau they will experience some greater degree of satisfaction.

David had reached a plateau. Long ago his mentor, Samuel, had anointed him to be king of Israel. But Saul's jealousy had forced him to live the life of a fugitive. Now, finally, Saul was gone, and David was king. The nation became united under him. His enemies were nearly all defeated. The rock of Zion was captured and David lived with power and authority in a comfortable palace. David was doing all

God would allow to provide a permanent resting place for the coffer of the covenant. This was David's plateau.

But later, in the words of Psalm 32, David shared his contemplation on this period of his life. He did not describe it as some high level plane to which he had attained. Instead, David saw himself cascading down treacherous rapids. His strength was dried up to the very marrow of his bones. He was a lone dry autumn leaf about to be whisked away by the next passing breeze. David had cut himself off from God.

"*When I kept silent toward You*, my bones became worn out with my roaring the entire day. For the day and night, Your hand was heavy upon me; My freshness was turned into the droughts of summer" (Psa.32:3,4).

TRUE HAPPINESS

David was a man of unusually broad experience. He had been a shepherd and known the solitude and danger of being alone in the wild. He had stared death in the face with faith in God and beheaded the giant before whom his whole nation cringed. With the head of the giant in his hand, he had heard the cheer rise from his people like the roar of the ocean, as they picked up their weapons and pursued the enemy. He had seen the victory parade and heard the songs of the people acclaim his greatness. He had been the leader of a band of idealistic, patriotic rebels who were fed up with the status quo, and who were persecuted and hunted all over the countryside. He became king of his nation and led it to unprecedented supremacy in that area of the world. He had a harem in which he gathered the women who pleased him most. He lived in a palace, and had many devoted men around him who would, without a moment's hesitation, give up their lives for him.

In the Psalm the man of these experiences spoke of happiness—true happiness—that ever-fleeting wisp which humanity so feverishly pursues, like a cat chasing a reflected

light on the wall. The man of these experiences said happiness was in a cleared conscience and in the blessing of being able to stand before God with your sins covered—hardly what the world would have expected for a definition of happiness!

"Happy is he whose transgression is lifted away, whose sin is covered over! Happy is the human to whom Yahweh is not reckoning depravity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit" (Psa.32:1,2). "I am now acknowledging my sin to You, and I do not cover over my depravity. I said, I shall confess against myself my transgressions to Yahweh. And You, You lift away the depravity of my sin" (v.5).

When the apostle Paul summed up the depravity of humanity, much of what he said could have been applied to David in this passage:

"Not one is just—not even one . . . . All avoid Him: . . . . A sepulcher opened is their throat.With their tongues they defraud. The venom of asps is under their lips . . . . Sharp are their feet to shed blood" (Rom.3:10-15).

But Paul went on to use the reference to happiness in Psalm 32, which issued out of these circumstances, as a basis for presenting the happiness inherent in the evangel. Such is the happiness of those who are in Christ. If sin, more than any other thing or circumstance, has the power to rot away our joy from the inside out, how gloriously blessed we must be to be justified from every sin (Rom.4:4-8). And if the glory of God is the brightest and highest of all, how blessed it is to be conciliated to Him and to possess His glory as our expectation (Rom.5)!

WHY?

How could David fail so miserably with Bathsheba? How could he murder Uriah? Why such a tragic evil? Psalm 32 again may help us with these questions.

"You said, I shall make you contemplate, and direct

you in the way that you should go; I will give counsel with My eye upon you. You must not become like a horse, like a mule in which there is no understanding, whose scruff must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it would never come near you" (Psa.32:8,9).

If God sent Gad, the prophet, to meet David on the rooftop that night, and told him what the consequences of his actions would be, there is little doubt that David would not have committed adultery with Bathsheba. But God did not do so.

David already knew that adultery was wrong. He already knew that murder was wrong. But knowing that something is wrong may not be nearly as strong a deterrent as knowing what the consequences are. It is not until we realize the consequences that we can appreciate the purpose of instruction,

When David called for Uriah to return from the siege, he was trying to cover his sin, and his spirit was full of deceit. Then David discovered he could not depend on Uriah's natural inclinations, so he tried to cover his sin by making Uriah drunk. Finally, David realized that he could not manipulate Uriah, so, enmeshed in his depravity, he had his loyal subject killed. All this he did to cover his sin. And still his sin was not covered.

GOD'S DISCIPLINE

God calls us into His family to be His sons. This is a high calling. It is not a calling that God would have us enjoy by blundering thoughtlessly on day after day without concern, needing to be turned this way or that by reins and bridle. Consequently, God exercises us with experiences that press us into heart-breaking, soul-searching, gut-wrenching circumstances. He will not be satisfied with us as children only. He *will* have us to be sons that have come of age. He *will* bring us to maturity, "to a mature

man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ" (Eph.4:13,14). The experiences that wean us out of childhood are not pleasant. But the blessedness of sonship is too great for us to be deterred by the "momentary lightness of our affliction."

David's experience of failure brought him to God: "When I kept silent toward You, my bones became worn out . . . . I am now acknowledging my sin to You, and I do not cover over my depravity. I said, I shall confess against myself my transgressions to Yahweh . . ." (vs.3-5). David's experience resolved his sin: "And You, You lift away the depravity of my sin" (v.5). David's experience changed him, giving him a new realization of God's grace and righteousness. This in turn brought about a change in David's conduct: "You said, I shall make you contemplate, and direct you in the way that you should go" (v.8). J. Philip Scranton

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES BOUND VOLUMES

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CONTRAST AND AGREEMENT

If Paul had written Romans 1:18-3:20 as an epistle complete in itself, wholly concerned with the human condition before God as the righteous Judge, it would be a most pessimistic and despairing piece of literature. It begins with a harsh and very true assessment of human irreverence and unrighteousness along with a stern description of divine indignation against that depravity. Then, when a hope seems to be raised (in Romans 2) that some good people may be found without sin in the day of God's judging, we discover Paul is simply speaking hypothetically in order to show the impartiality and thoroughness of divine judgment. By the time we reach Romans 3:20, all hope of justification by human works has been dashed for both Circumcision and Uncircumcision. The uncompromising conclusion is that "Not one is just—not even one" (Rom. 3:10). In consideration of human deeds, apart from the obedience of Jesus Christ, *no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight* (Rom.3:20).

But Romans 1:18-3:20 does not stand by itself. It is firmly embedded between the declaration that the evangel is the power of God for salvation, in which the righteousness of God is revealed (Rom.1:14-17), and the unequivocal exposition of that evangel beginning with Romans 3:21. Romans 1:18-3:20 is not a direct presentation of the evangel, but it is written in service of the evangel. It establishes the need of the evangel and provides important points for comparison.

This special association of Romans 1:18-3:20 with the evangel can perhaps be seen in the following arrangement of key points in the opening chapters of the epistle:

1. *Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, severed for the* **evangel** *of God . . . concerning His Son . . . Jesus Christ, our Lord.* (Rom.1:1-4)

2. *For not ashamed am I of the* **evangel**. (Rom.1:16a)

a. *For* **it** *is God's power for salvation to every one who is believing.* (Rom.1:16b)

b. *For in* **it** *God's righteousness is being revealed, out of faith, for faith.* (Rom.1:17)

c. *For God's indignation is being revealed from heaven on all the irreverence and injustice of men . . . . Wherefore, defenseless are you, O human! . . . In accord with your hardness and unrepentant heart you are hoarding for yourself indignation in the day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God . . . . For there is no partiality with God . . . . God will be judging the hidden things of humanity . . . . Not one is just—not even one . . . . By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight.)* (Rom.1:18; 2:1,5,11,16; 3:10,20

d. *Yet now . . . a righteousness of God is manifest . . . through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing.* (Rom.3:21,22)

Here we see that Paul's overall theme is the evangel committed to him. In 1:17 (section "b") he begins to present the very important feature of this evangel concerning the revelation of God's righteousness, but he interrupts the direct exposition of his evangel with the long section we are presently examining (section "c"). Then with Romans 3:21 he resumes the direct presentation of the evangel (section "d"). Section "c" contributes much to our appreciation of the evangel by way of contrast, along with insightful points of agreement, and by the way all this discussion of human unrighteousness and divine indignation and judgment supports the great need of the evangel, both for humanity and for the revelation of the righteousness of God.

POINTS OF COMPARISON

By making God's work of righteous judgment a theme for comparison with the evangel Paul helps us appreciate several important features of his message:

First of all, the fact that no one will be found righteous before God's judgment accentuates, by sharp contrast, the glory of God's gracious gift of justification for all mankind.

On the other hand, by emphasizing the demand that divine righteousness be based on truth without overlooking even the most hidden of sins, Paul helps us grasp the standard of truth and righteousness that God holds to in His work of justification through the deliverance in Christ Jesus. In this respect there is important agreement between judgment and the evangel.

Furthermore, by keeping this section of Romans in view when we come to Romans 3:21-8:39, we will come to realize that the blessings of justification, life, glory and peace mentioned in Romans 2:7,10,13, which no one can possibly gain by works of human righteousness, are the very blessings (with more besides) that will come to us gratuitously as God's achievement through Jesus Christ. Here indeed there is marked harmony.

TWO DIVINE OPERATIONS

There are thus two righteous works of God being set before us. One is His work of judgment, which is brought forward to enhance our appreciation of the other: God's work of deliverance through His Son, Jesus Christ.

God's judgment of sinners is just, but it is not a work of salvation. It is based on truth and reaches its verdict according to the facts of human sin. Consequently, if it were God's only work in dealing with human sin, every-

one would be condemned. Even more seriously it would result in a final meaninglessness to God's work of creation, even failure if indeed God had a goal of good and glory in His work of creation. Involved in such a final state of tragic mystery would be the fact that God could not *righteously* be faithful to His promises to His chosen people.

The evangel also tells of a work of divine justice, for indeed, in it God's righteousness is being revealed (Rom. 1:17). But, unlike the word of God's just judgment, the evangel is, in its very essence, a message of salvation (Rom. 1:16). With respect to what is right in dealing with the fact of human sin, there is agreement with divine judgment. There is no compromise concerning righteousness in God's work of salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the righteous achievement of good for all, God's gift of His Son for sinners fulfills all the demands of divine righteousness to the glory of God.

IMPARTIALITY AND THOROUGHNESS

We now come to Romans 2:11-16, which continues to emphasize the righteous standards God holds to in His work of judgment. There is no partiality toward either Circumcision or Uncircumcision. Those of the nations are given the principles of right and wrong in their hearts and consciences and could theoretically carry them out just as well as the Jew who has the law written on stone in clear and well defined terms. But not only will God be impartial, He also will be thorough in His work of judgment. God will examine all human acts, both good and bad. He will judge even the hidden motives and thoughts, including matters of love and hate, of honor and dishonor, of honesty and dishonesty, of compassion and envy, contentment and covetousness, selflessness and selfishness. Every outward deed and every inward thought and attitude of every human being must be addressed without prejudice.

ROMANS 2:11-16

a. For there is no partiality with **God**,

b. for **whoever** *sinned without law, without law also shall perish, and* **whoever** *sinned in law, through law will be judged.*

a. For not the listeners to law are just with **God**, *but the doers of law shall be justified.*

b. For whenever **they of the nations** *that have no law, by nature may be doing that which the law demands,* **these**, *having no law, are a law to themselves, who are displaying the action of the law written in their hearts, their conscience testifying together and their reckonings between one another,*

a. accusing or defending them, in the day when **God** *will be judging the hidden things of humanity, according to my evangel, through Jesus Christ.*

In the preceding arrangement, statements concerning God's work of judgment (the "a" sections) are set apart from what Paul says about the human situation (the "b" sections). The message is that all people, both those of Israel and those of the nations, must be judged with respect to all their acts and motives. They will be judged fairly which means no sin will be overlooked. God's judgments are righteous and must take into account every human thought and deed, both outward and inward, without prejudice or oversight.

This would mean that all must perish. But at this point, halfway between 1:18 and 3:21, Paul connects his thoughts about the human situation and God's judgment with his evangel, with particular attention given to the place held by Jesus Christ in all of God's works, both His work of judgment and His work of salvation.

These closing words of verse 16 stand out as a pointed

reminder that Paul's evangel of justification through the faith of Jesus Christ, revealing the righteousness of God, is still the major theme.

THE HUMAN SITUATION

It takes a person who knows what the law says and who had been becoming blameless, outwardly, as to its righteous demands (Phil.3:6) to write so plainly about the human predicament before the righteous God. It also takes a person who recognizes his own sinfulness and is becoming acquainted with God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ to speak of the fullness of God's righteousness in relation to salvation. It was in accord with the counsel of God's will that Saul of Tarsus was led into the hypocrisy of Pharisaism, which harbored so much hidden hate and pride and covetousness, and through this hypocrisy into zealous enmity and calumny toward God's Son, Jesus Christ. Then, in accord with His purpose and grace, God called this foremost of sinners into a slavery (*cp* Rom.1:1) of love in heralding the evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ.

Paul knows what he is talking about. He is not playing games. Apart from the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners, in order for us to be justified before God we must do the right things always, without faltering and without failure. We cannot sin, ever, even in the tiniest degree. This is true of every human being. It is true of the Jew as well of those of the nations. There is no partiality with God. When He judges, He takes into account every thought and every act of every person. If sin is found, the sinner must perish. On the other hand, if any descendant of Adam is found who carries out the law in every respect, perfectly, without the slightest failure, that (hypothetical) person (who does not exist) would be justified. That is only fair and just. And that is bleak and hopeless.

Such is the human situation that desperately calls for

the evangel. Every deed of every human being must be taken into account. This needs to be made clear, and that is why Paul belabors the point of divine impartiality and thoroughness in judgment so relentlessly. There must be no doubt that he is speaking about the entire human race and the entire corpus of human sin here in Romans 1:18-3:20. Whoever of the nations, who were "without law," should sin, they must perish. Whoever of Israel, who had the privilege of living "in law," should sin, they must also be judged with that sin taken into account (Rom.2:11).

ALL HAVE SINNED

These words of Romans 2:11-16 make it clear that, were it not for the truth of Paul's evangel, no one could be excepted from this righteous examination of God's just judgment and its consequences. Neither "righteous" Abel nor "righteous" Noah, neither "faithful" Abraham nor anyone of the chosen nation of Israel, none even of these blessed people could be justified in God's sight if their own righteousness does not measure up to the standards of God's righteousness. Nor could Enoch be left out of this penetrating judgment with its just verdict, nor Job, nor the Ninevites of Jonah's day, nor the humble Canaanitish woman who sought for crumbs of favor from the Lord in extraordinary faith. Nor could the Ethiopian eunuch be excepted, nor Cornelius, nor any other honest person who, in comparison with the general behavior of humanity, does so well in seeking the Lord and wanting to understand His Word.

We honor them and hold them high for their goodness and courageous stand. But they too must perish if they have sinned, and if Christ has not died for them.

Nor could Paul be excluded from this indictment, he who endured persistent persecution and hardship and who kept the faith. "If Christ has not been roused," Paul's diligent labors were for naught as well as all the faithfulness and

goodness of all God's chosen people (*cf* 1 Cor.15:14-19). Indeed, if Christ has not been given up because of our offenses and has not been roused from among the dead because of the achievement of justification in His blood (*cf* Rom.4:25; 5:9), we all are still in our sins and must be judged by the perfect standards of the righteous God, and so be condemned.

We all have sinned and continue to sin to one extent or another as long as we live. Therefore, before God, considered as we are in ourselves and apart from what Christ has done for us, we must perish.

Although some may do exceptionally well and deserve applause for it, there is no one who adheres in every way to the divine standard of what is right; there is no one who is without sin, except our Lord Jesus Christ, Who came into the world to save sinners by giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all.

JUSTIFIED

Romans 2:13 informs us that the doers of law shall be *justified.* To be justified one must be found righteous in every way. This definition of justification is inflexible. (We must not forget it when we come to Romans 3:24.) Consequently, Romans 2:13 tells us about a justification that is impossible because it is based on human effort. But the evangel tells us about a justification that is certain because it is gained by God in the giving of His Son (*cf* Rom.8:3), yet one where no sin and no failure can be found.

In speaking in Romans 2:13 about righteous doers of the law, even though there are no such people, the apostle establishes the standard of righteousness involved in justification before God. No sin, no matter how unavoidable and unintentional it may be, can be overlooked by God Who searches into the hidden things of the heart. We must be found absolutely righteous if we are to be justified. If one could be justified by works of law, that one would have to be found absolutely righteous. Every deed and every motive, every act and every thought would have to be right. So also, one who is justified in the blood of Christ will be constituted absolutely righteous.

Even our believing that Christ died for our sins does not justify us in the literal sense of the word. We speak, as Paul did, about justification by faith as opposed to justification by acts (*cf* Rom.3:24,28; 4:2; 5:1), but this is literally the blessing of being accounted righteous, on the basis of what Christ has gained. Righteousness is presently *reckoned* to us who are believing (Rom.4:24). It is in the blood of Christ that we are justified (Rom.5:8,9). What *God did* in sparing not His own Son is what literally justifies, not what *we do,* even in our choosing and believing and retaining and enduring of affliction (which are all righteous works graciously granted to us by God). These are good works which God has prepared for us to walk in, and there are many more ahead which will be fully separated from sin and failure (*cf* Eph.2:10). But our justification, that is, actually being righteous, rests solely on the *one work* of God in sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin (Rom.8:3).

When James wrote to the Circumcision about justification by works and not by faith alone (James 2:24), the same principle applies, although James did not seem to realize it. Neither human works nor human faith (which is a hidden work of the heart) can be the cause of actual, literal justification. They are *means* by which God grants to His chosen people what Christ has gained. In the evangel of the Uncircumcision the means is faith alone, and in the evangel of the Circumcision the means are works and a faith that is often fostered by signs and miracles. But in the end, justification cannot be something simply reckoned but experienced in full, so that all are constituted righteous.

ACCORDANCE

Paul is bursting with good news, a welcome message that was given to him through a revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:12), an evangel of such vast dimensions that it encompasses the needs of all sinners without distinction and makes known the glories of God as no other message in all of Scripture can do. Everything Paul has been writing here has had this message in view, sometimes by way of contrast, sometimes by points of harmony. Now in Romans 2:16, in association with his remarks about God judging the hidden things of humanity, the apostle is led to speak directly of his evangel.

The association between the subject of divine judgment and Paul's evangel is expressed here by the Greek preposition, *kata.* The CV has rendered this term by the words "according to." For indeed, in *presenting* the evangel, as he does here in Romans, Paul brings out the fact that God will judge the hidden things of humanity, through Jesus Christ.

But the association implied in Romans 2:16, by the word, *kata,* is also one of harmony. There is something about God's judgment of the hidden things of humanity, through Jesus Christ, that is in accord with God's work of salvation and justification through Jesus Christ's obedience to the death of the cross. Hence, in reflecting on this passage, A. E. Knoch came to the conclusion that Paul was speaking "of things which are in accord with" his evangel.[1]

God's righteous judgment involves all of humanity, both Jew and Greek, those of the nations who are not under the law of Sinai and those of Israel who received that law. So also Paul's evangel involves all of humanity, all of whom are sinners (*cf* Rom.5:18,19). Again, God's righteous judgment involves all the sins of all humanity, even the hidden

1.A. E. Knoch: THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL, p.140, (*cp Unsearchable Riches,* vol.3, p.234; vol.54, p.149).

thoughts and motives of the heart, as Romans 2:16 tells us. So also Paul's evangel involves every single one of the many sins and offenses of all humanity, for, as we read in Romans 5:16, ". . . the judgment is out of one [act of sinning] into condemnation, yet the grace is out of many offenses into a just award." (We note here that "offenses" are hidden wrongs.)

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

The final words of Romans 2:16 are especially suggestive. The phrase, "through Jesus Christ," applies both to God's operation of judgment and to His work of salvation. No doubt Paul gave special stress in presenting his evangel to the fact that God's work of judgment is channeled through Jesus Christ. Elsewhere Paul wrote that for us there is "one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is" (1 Cor.8:6).

That God carries out His operations through His Son, Jesus Christ is certainly in accord with Paul's evangel itself as a message of righteous salvation and righteous justification. The righteousness of God which is revealed in the evangel is manifested through Jesus Christ's faith (Rom.3: 21,22). Gratuitous justification is "through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24). Paul's evangel teaches that "we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ" (Rom.5:1). The salvation of believers is through Him (Rom.5:9), and it is through Him that we have obtained the conciliation" (Rom.5:11). We shall reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ" (Rom.5:17). And the many who are constituted sinners through the disobedience of the one [Adam], "shall be constituted righteous through the obedience of the One [Jesus Christ]" (Rom.5:19).

Indeed, Romans 2:16 prepares us for great tidings of good.

D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME XCV

Abram and the Nations 9
Abraham Believes God 51
Abram to Abraham 59
All Under Sin 173
As Deceivers and True 171
Cast Down but not Perishing 198
Concealed from the Eons 165
Concerns of Faith and Grace 242
Concordant Version of Chronicles, The 153,203
David as a Father 111
David Confronted with His Sin 25
Day of Christ Distinguished, The 225
Desperate Need 35
El Who-Suffices, The 147
End of the Flesh, The 194
Faith in the Supreme 17
God is Faithful to His Word 105
God rules in the Affairs of Men 259
Growth in the Realization of God 87
Humiliation of the King, The 156
In God's Sight 231
Let No One be Judging You 209
Lot and Abraham 251
Notes on 2 Samuel 25,70,111,156,198,259
Not of Men But of God 77
Obituaries: L Bell 197, L Braucht 197, E Caramella 24, A Evely 144, D Hough 197
On Baptism 137,184,222,281
Outside of the Body 117
Paul to the Romans 35,77,127,173,231,273
Prayer and the Will of God 119-126
Questions and Answers 117,165,242
Reaping the Whirlwind 70
Studies in Genesis 9,58,99,147,194,251
Two Seeds, The 16
When God is Being Judged 127
Wherefore Console One Another 265
Years Between, The 32
Yet Now, the Evangel of God 273

Contents:

2 God's Boundless Love
3 Editorial
9 Abram and the Nations
17 Faith in the Supreme
25 David Confronted with his Sin
32 The Years Between
35 Desperate Need

JANUARY, 2004

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God's Boundless Love

Oh no, great God! We feel Thou canst not be
Spectator or upholder of distress,
So long, indeed, as it is objectless.
No! if Thou lookst on sorrow, 'tis to see
Its benefit and end. If before Thee
One hopeless ill could spread the smallest shroud,
Oh, wouldst Thou not dissolve it as a cloud
In the mere fervors of Thy radiancy?
'Tis so! And Thou Thy dearest Son didst send,
That message of a boundless love to make;
Not as a mockery—more the heart to rend,
If all were offered what but few could take!
Not as a thing of words—but as a meed,
Which, like Thyself, is truth and love indeed.

Chauncey H. Townshend

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2004
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-FIVE

EDITORIAL

IN THE COURSE of presenting our case against the doctrine of eternal punishment, it is important that we do not set up and oppose a straw man (a position which in fact our opponents do not hold, though a position which we suggest that they do hold). Nor should we prejudice our hearers against our opponents' actual position itself by drawing undue attention to the more sensational and bizarre, highly speculative claims concerning "hell" which are set forth only by a few unbalanced and unlearned eccentrics.

Yet even when the best face possible is put on the teaching of conscious, eternal punishment this teaching itself, without embellishment, becomes awful beyond expression.

Those who affirm the doctrine of eternal torment, themselves declare it to be a "terrible," indeed a "horrible," teaching. They speak of it thus, however, not in a sense so as to suggest their disapproval of it, much less as an indication that they deem it to be false. They say that it is a terrible and horrible teaching, simply in the sense that it is a teaching which causes terror and horror, inasmuch as it speaks of a transcendently awful, exceedingly unpleasant and severe, unspeakably ugly and painful punishment, one which, once instituted, will continue on *endlessly,* unabated and unremitted.

The main point which those who hold to eternal hellfire wish to make is that, regardless of just what hell's exact nature proves to be, it will in any case be of such a nature that all who are committed to its confines will be altogether miserable there, being *continually*—day and night—and *endlessly*—for all future duration—subjected to awful agonies so terrible that they defy description.

Learned theologians, many of them being kindly and

pleasant-mannered individuals, rarely if ever take any satisfaction in the doctrine of eternal burnings. When speaking simply out of their own humanity, quite a few will frankly acknowledge that the proposition of the correction and salvation of sinners, instead of that of the mere warehousing and tormenting of those who must remain in their wickedness for all eternity, seems not only preferable to them but more in accord with what they know of God.

Yet they would likely feel constrained to revise their words here so as to say that while the teaching of the eventual correction and salvation of sinners as opposed to their eternal punishment is more in accord with what they personally know of God, still, since the eternal punishment of the damned is the "clear teaching of Scripture," a more accurate knowledge of God will make room for the acceptance of this latter teaching instead.

CONFUSION AND DECEPTION

In popular theology, "hell" is the catch-all term under which the disparate themes of *death* (in reference to those who die in unbelief), *Gehenna, the unseen* (*sheol, hadês*), *Tartarus,* and *the second death—the lake of fire,* are subsumed, not to mention confounded, even as more or less equated.

The usual notion is, in simple terms, that all of these words are speaking of one thing, and that one thing is "hell." Then, a wide variety of Bible texts are introduced with a common claim being made for each one, that common claim being that each text's testimony is to be understood as being concerned with the same subject, that of "eternal hell."

All that such texts actually have in common, however, is that they all refer to one or another, divine adversative judgment. They by no means all refer to the same judgment, and most of them are not in reference to a final adversative judgment of Scripture at all, but are concerned with various severe judgments both preceding, during, and following the coming eon.

Most significantly of all, in the Greek Scriptures themselves, it is by no means either declared or entailed that any of these judgments will be imposed endlessly, but simply for *the duration of that which is in view,* which, in every case, is for either a part or the whole of an eon, or, at most, for the remainder of the eonian times preceding the consummation, when all will be vivified and God will become All in all, even as declared in 1 Corinthians 15:22-28.

Yet the apostle Paul's words in this and related passages in which he reveals that glorious immortality, incorruption, and vivification will finally be granted to all mankind, are simply not accepted for what they say. Instead, texts which affirm God's severe yet salutary temporary judgments, are twisted so as to make them no longer either salutary or temporary.

Thus, in perverted form and as untenably interpreted, one part of God's revealed Word is set against another part, with the result that the former as it is misused, is set against the latter as it actually stands, the former thus supplanting and precluding the latter.

Now, of course none of this is acknowledged by orthodox scholars; and, if any of them were to accept it, they would, by definition, no longer be orthodox scholars. We can hardly expect any of them or their followers to acknowledge the soundness of our arguments, much less to agree with us in the teaching which we affirm. In general, sound teaching will not be tolerated. Let us seek to hold to what is actually sound teaching (2 Tim.4:3); but let us not expect to be widely regarded as so doing.

THE NATURE OF "HELL"

A few years ago, I was given a copy of a book entitled THE

Other Side of the Good News;[1] its subtitle is: "Confronting the Contemporary Challenges to Jesus' Teaching on Hell." Throughout the book, the author, Larry Dixon, interacts with the writings of many well-known theologians, both ones who agree and disagree with his own position.

I am delighted to find in this author, an advocate of orthodoxy who not only, it seems to me, writes out of a clean heart, but in the interest more of upholding the truth of Scripture as much as he is able to perceive it, than of merely upholding orthodoxy itself, per se. Too often, the exponents of orthodoxy seem to be much more the zealous and proud partisans of a sectarian cause than objective seekers after truth, ones who truly love and care for all men.

While I find this good-hearted author's arguments to be weak, and his position, that of conscious, eternal punishment, to be mistaken, his writing is altogether calm and sober. He simply wishes to set forth what he believes is true on this terrible theme, which happens to be what Christian orthodoxy also affirms.

As confirmed in this book by Dixon, with citations of and references made to many orthodox scholars, the general orthodox position is as follows:

All sinners (which is all mankind) deserve to go to hell forever; that is, for God to be just, no one at all needs to be saved, much less given an opportunity to hear the gospel and repent. Moreover, there need not even be a gospel, that is, insofar as justice is concerned.

1. Publisher: Victor Books (1992); Wheaton, Illinois.

Of course this title is inapt. The good news of Christ's death for our sins is *entirely* good news and remains so when viewed from any angle. All evil, including all judging, however injurious in itself, is not the "other side" *of* the gospel, but the necessary background *for* the gospel. When speaking of "the gospel," however, traditional Christians are accustomed to having in view not the scriptural good news itself alone, but the whole of their own message to sinners which they call the "gospel offer," which indeed has an "other side."

The salvation of those who are saved, is a work of divine love and goodness on behalf of those who, when considered in their sins, themselves deserve to go to hell.

All who die in unbelief, will go to hell forever. While God loves even unbelieving sinners during their present lifetime, once they die in unbelief, He no longer loves them. His wrath is devoid of love; after death, there is no meaningful way to say that God loves the wicked, which is to say, any and all sinners.

After death, unbelievers become simply the objects of His unremitting wrath, according to which He therefore consigns them to eternal hell.

The various sayings of Jesus which give some indication of what hell will be like, while they, at least in certain points, undoubtedly accord with literal conditions which will obtain in hell, are not to be understood, as such, as literal descriptions thereof but instead as graphic images of the general character of hell, any particulars aside.

The miseries of hell—which is both a place and a condition—will consist both in what one is excluded from (i.e., the joys of heaven), as well as in what one is subjected to (i.e., the terrible pains of hell itself). Whatever their exact form and various details may be, hell's punishments will be both mental and physical: extreme agonizing pain both for the mind and the senses.

The inhabitants of hell will be endowed with great fortitude both mentally and physically, yet for no other purpose than to be able to bear the full agony of their suffering, day and night, for all eternity, lest they should go into shock, be reduced to a vegetative state, or succumb to death, and thus escape the full weight of their misery.

The sufferings of hell will be so terrible as to far outstrip the worst of human sufferings experienced in this life. For example, as horrible as war is, the horrors of war are only a small foreshadowing of that final condition of the for-

saken in hell, who—let it be known above all else—will remain forsaken there *forever.*

VICTORIOUS GRACE

In briefest form, we need point out only two simple facts to show that all will be saved and that therefore the doctrine of eternal punishment is altogether mistaken:

(1) Christ died for all (2 Cor.5:14), giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for the sake of all (1 Tim.2:6), in accord with the will of God Who operates all according to the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), and wills that all mankind be saved (1 Tim.2:4).

(2) All salvation is *in* grace and *through* Christ; hence, man has no hand in the matter whatever. Therefore, from the complementary facts that since salvation is in grace hence all for Whom Christ died will be saved, and that Christ died for all, it follows that all will be saved.

We are justified *gratuitously* in God's *grace,* through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24); and, it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying (Rom.5:18).

If we do indeed see the error of the orthodox teaching of eternal punishment, it is because we first of all have been enabled to see the glorious truth which it ordinarily covers up. Let us be thankful to God for giving us eyes to see and ears to hear, so as to recognize and acclaim Him according as He truly is, the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers (1 Tim.4:10). It behooves us to hold this and all truth in humility and meekness before others, seeking to be gracious especially to those who must oppose us.

Let us be confident in God that He is able to establish us in accord with His true evangel, even that same evangel heralded by the apostle Paul (Rom.16:25), an evangel which, since it is *full* of grace and truth, therefore has no "other side." J.R.C.

ABRAM AND THE NATIONS

13 [+]**Then Abram** went [l]**up from Egypt** to**ward the Negev, he and his wife and all** [w]**that he** [›]**had; and Lot** went **with him.** 2 [+] **Abram was very heavily** stocked [i]**with cattle,** [i]**with silver and** [i]**with gold.** 3 [+]**So he** [l]**went his** way [›]**by stages from** the **Negev** [+] **as far as Bethel,** [fr]**to the** [ri]**place where his tent had** [b]**been** [i]**at** the **start, between Bethel and** [bt] [‹]**Ai,** 4 **to** the [ri]**place of the altar** [w]**that he had** [i] **formerly made there. And there Abram** [l]**called** [i]**on** the **Name of Yahweh.**

5 [+] **Lot** [mr]**too,** ‹who was **going** along ‹with **Abram,** [b]**came** to [›]**have** a **flock** of sheep **and** a **herd** of cattle **and tents.** 6 [+]**But the land would not sustain ‹them [›]while dwelling⁻ together, for their goods had become** so [mn]**abundant** [+]**that they were not able to dwell together.** 7 [+] There [lb]**were disputes between** the **shepherds**[l] **of Abram's cattle and** [bt] the **shepherds**[l] **of Lot's cattle; and** besides **the Canaanite and the Perizzite** were **then dwelling in** the **land.**

8 [+]**So Abram** [l]**said to Lot:** [pr]**Please, let** there [lb]**be no**[t] **argument between me and** [bt] **you, and between my shepherds**[l] **and** [bt] **your shepherds**[l]**, for we** are **men** that are **brothers.** 9 Is **not all the land** open **before you?** [pr]**Please part from** [on] **me. If** it is to **the left,** [+] **I shall** [c]**go** to the **right. And if** it is to **the right,** [+]**then I shall** [c]**go** to the **left.** 10 [+] **Lot lifted** up **‹his eyes and** [l]**saw ‹the whole Jordan basin,** as **you come⁻** to **Zoar:** It was **like** the **garden of Yahweh, like** the **land of Egypt; for all of it** was well **irrigated before Yahweh wrecked⁻ ‹Sodom and ‹Gomorrah.**

11 [+]**So Lot** [l]**chose for him**self **‹the whole Jordan basin; and Lot journeyed** [f] **east**ward. [+]**Thus they** [l]**parted,** as a

man from *on* **his brother.** 12 **Abram dwelt in** the **land of Canaan,** +**while Lot dwelt** *i*__among__ the **cities of the basin and** moved his l__tent__ *fr*__toward Sodom.__ 13 +__But__ the **men of Sodom** were **vicious and intense sinners** ›__against Yahweh.__

14 +__Then Yahweh said to Abram after Lot had parted from__ *wi* __him:__ *pr*__Now lift__ up **your eyes and see from the** *ri*__place where you__ are, **northward and** to*d* the **Negev,** + **eastward and** to*d* the **sea.** 15 __For__ `__all the land__ *w*__that you__ are **seeing, I shall give it to you and to your seed unto** the **eon.** 16 __And I will__ *pl*__make__ `__your seed like__ the **soil** grains **of the land,** so *w*__that, if__ a **man were** l__able to count__ `the **soil** grains **of the land,** then **your seed** *mr*__too might be counted.__ 17 __Rise, walk__ about **in** the **land** ›__throughout its length and__ › __its width, for I am giving it to you__ 7__and to your seed, unto** the **eon*0*.** 18 +__So Abram__ moved his l__tent and__ l__came__ +__to__ l__dwell__ *i*__among__ the **oaks of Mamre** *w* *i*__at Hebron;__ +__then he__ l__built__ an **altar there to Yahweh.**

14 + __It__ *lb*__came__ to **pass in** the **days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goyim,** 2 that **they** *d*__made war__ `with **Bera king of Sodom,** + `__Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah,__ + __Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and** the **king of Bela, that** is, **Zoar.** 3 __All these joined__ forces and came **to the vale of Siddim, that** is, **the Salt Sea.** 4 For **twelve years they had served** `__Kedorlaomer,__ +__but__ *Q*__in__*cs* the **thirteenth year they revolted.**

5 + __In__ the **fourteenth year Kedorlaomer came and the kings who** were allied `with **him.** + __They__ l__smote__ `7__the__*n* **Rephaim** *i*__at Ashteroth-karnaim,__ + `__the Zuzim__ *i*__at Ham,__ + `__the Emim__ *i*__at Shaveh-kiriathaim,__ 6 + `__the Horites in** the 7__mountains__*n* __of Seir as far as__ 7__the terebinth of Paran*0*, which** is *on*__by the wilderness.__ 7 +__When they__ l__turned back,__ + __they__ l__came to En-mishpat, that** is, **Kadesh.** + __They smote__ `__all__ the 7__chiefs__*c* __of the Amalekites and__ *mr*__also__ `__the Amorites__ `who **dwelt**l **in Hazezon-tamar.** 8 +__Then__ the **king of Sodom** marched l__forth__ +__with__ the **king of Gomorrah,** + the **king of Admah,** + the **king of Zeboiim,** + the **king of Bela, that** is, **Zoar.** + __They__ drew up in **battle** l__array__ `against **them in the vale of Siddim,** 9 `against **Kedorlaomer king of Elam,** + __Tidal king of Goyim,__ + __Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar, four kings** `against `__five.__

10 +__Now the vale of Siddim__ had **wells** upon **wells of asphalt, and** when the **king of Sodom and** 7the **king of***nc* **Gomorrah** l__fled,__ + some l__fell__ into *pl*__them, and the remainder__l **fled** into*d* the **hill** country. 11 + The invaders l__took__ `__all__ the **goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and** `__all their food and__ l__went__ away. 12 __They__ +__also__ l__took__ `__Lot, Abram's brother's son, and__ `__his goods,__ +__before they__ l__went__ along; +__for he__ had been **dwelling in Sodom.** 13 +__Then__ one `who was **delivered** l__came and__ l__told__ › __Abram the Hebrew.__ + __He__ was **tabernacling** *i*__among__ the **oaks of Mamre, the Amorite,** the **brother of Eshkol and brother of Aner** + __who__ had entered into a **covenant** as **Abram's confederates.**

14 +__When Abram__ l__heard that his brother__ 7__Lot*0* had been** taken **captive,** + __he__ 7l__mustered__*n* `__his dedicated__ men, **318 born** in **his house**hold, **and** l__pursued__ 7__them*0* as far as Dan.** 15 + At **night he and his** men**servants** l__split up__ *on*__against them.__ + __He__ l__smote them and__ l__pursued them as far as Hobah which** is *f*__to__ the **left** ›__of Damascus.__ 16 + __He__ l__brought back__ `__all the goods__ 7__of Sodom*0*, and he__ *mr*__also brought back__ `__his brother Lot and his goods, and__ `__the women and__ `__the people__ *mr*__too.__

17 + ›__In__ the **vale of Shaveh, that** is, **the king's vale,** the **king of Sodom** came l__forth to meet him after he returned__– __from smiting__– `__Kedorlaomer and__ `__the kings who__ were allied `with **him.** 18 +__Then Melchizedek king of Salem__ *c*__brought forth bread and wine,__ +__for he__ was a **priest for El Supreme;** 19 + __he__ l__blessed him and__ l__said:__

Blessedl be **Abram** ›__by El Supreme,__

Owner[l] **of** the **heavens and** the **earth.**
20 **And blessed**[l] be **El Supreme,**
Who has awarded your foes into **your hand.**
And Abram [l]**gave** [›] **him** a **tenth** [f]**of all** the booty. 21 [+]**Then** the **king of Sodom** [l]**said to Abram, Give** [›] **me the soul**s **and take the goods for your**self. 22 [+]**But Abram** [lsa]**replied to** the **king of Sodom: I** [c]**raise my hand high** to swear **to Yahweh El Supreme, Owner**[l] **of** the **heavens and** the **earth,** 23 [+] **I shall assuredly no**t **take** anything **from all** [w]**that** belongs **to you,** [if] **from** a **thread** [+] [fr]**to** a **sandal lacing,** so [+]**that you should not say,** It is **I**´ who [c]**made** `**Abram rich.** 24 **Nothing for me, but** [w]**what** `my **retainers have eaten, and** the **portion of the men who went** `with **me, Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre; they**´ **should take their portion.**

NATIONS AND KINGS are never mentioned in the eon before the deluge. What restraint there was, was in the hands of Adam and his sons, or successors. They failed fatally, so it led to the deluge. Soon after the flood, however, we read of *nations* (Gen. 10:5). We might render the Hebrew word literally BODIES, as it is translated later on where the Egyptians say to Joseph that they have nothing left to pay for food but their *body* and their ground (Gen.47:18). The AV rendering "Gentiles" (Gen.10:5, etc.) is misleading, especially when used of a time when there were no Jews. So also is the word "heathen" (Zech.9:10) when there were no "Christians." The rendering "people" (James 3: 17) is also confusing, as this term is usually used for another Hebrew word of frequent occurrence.

KINGS OF STRIFE

Kings probably arose soon after the formation of nations, but we hear little about them until they came into contact with Abram, the progenitor of the King of kings, Who will

be the King of *peace*. These, however, come before us, to begin with, as kings of *strife*. There were not only kings, but federations of kings, which sought to subdue, not merely their *own* subjects, but *other kings*. The first glimpse we get of kings gives us a characteristic picture of their activities. A confederation of four kings was arranged for battle against another of five. The four conquering kings sacked Sodom and Gomorrah and took Lot, Abram's nephew, away with them (Gen.141-12).

CONFEDERACIES AND SUBJECT NATIONS

Instead of a long and tedious history of the many conflicts and combinations of nations in the first few hundred years of this eon, after the days of Nimrod and Ashur, Babel and Nineveh, we are carried forward and given the situation which had resulted in these central kingdoms. Scripture is thus concerned with their activities as they affected God's plans in connection with His King and the line from which He sprang.

CITY KINGS SUBJECTED

As the names of the kings and countries after Babel need not be Hebrew, we are often at a loss as to their significance. When they seem to yield a meaning in Hebrew, and are appropriate, we suggest the sense. Shinar may mean Double-City, which is quite possible. This name and the whole campaign shows the tendency of the nations toward centralization under one head, which was later accomplished under Nebuchadnezzar, who included the territory of all these kings, and all others, under his sway. As a king of a composite city, Amraphel is put at the head of this list. All the kings of the second confederation are kings of cities, such as Sodom (FOUNDed) and Gomorrah (OMER), and Zoar (INFERIOR), of which we have further information. Kedorlaomer seems to have made these subject to him,

yet they revolted, and now he came with his confederates to subdue them again (Gen.14:1-5).

ABRAM, THE HEBREW

It is notable that Abram was not a part in this strife, although he was a very rich man and had quite a following who could fight, as he demonstrated later. Almost all these kings are spoken of as connected with a *city*. They follow the lead of Cain, who built a stronghold for his own protection. Even Sodom seems to have had a wall, for Lot sat in its gateway (Gen.19:1). Abram, on the contrary, dwelt in a movable tent, so could *pass on*. That seems to be the reason why, at this point, he is called the Passer, or Hebrew (Gen.14:13). He was a wayfarer, an itinerant, a nomad. He was not a king, with a settled city, but passed from place to place. Yet he had quite a number of retainers, who conquered the conquerors, when it became necessary. This foreshadowed that nation, which was still within him, which would subdue all nations and bring peace.

This first inspired account of the activity of the nations of the earth is most suggestive. Two groups of nations go to war with one another, but the victors are vanquished by Abram! That is the history of all nations in the eons in a nutshell. Instead of each one organizing to insure justice and peace among its own subjects, they combine to war with one another, until the Son of Abram intervenes, and restores what they have destroyed.

MELCHIZEDEK

Then, most remarkably, Melchizedek, king of righteousness and king of peace, the type of the King of kings, adds his blessing, even as the Messiah Himself will bless the seed of Abraham in that coming day.

The *un*righteous kings were wagers of war, and are a picture of *in*subjection. In startling contrast to these early

kings and their injustice and strife, this most mysterious monarch comes upon the scene, whose name and title depict him as the very opposite in character and accomplishments to those defeated by Abram. His name, Melchizedek, describes him as a *just king*, and his title as a *peaceful* one. Moreover, he is a priest, as well, and represents the Supreme Subjector, Owner of the heavens and the earth. What a tremendous difference! The four kings did not even have a valid title to the land over which they ruled, and were seeking to rob the others. Abram, however, insisted on restoring that which he had recovered. Yet he acknowledged the real Ruler and Proprietor of all by giving a tithe to the priest of El Supreme.

A TYPE OF CHRIST

The account given us of Melchizedek is limited to those features in which he and his actions are typical of the Son, Who was with God from the beginning, and had no earthly father or mother. Nothing is known, or should be said, of his genealogy, for it would spoil the picture. Promise deals with the *future*, and here we have a beautiful little cameo of its fulfillment introduced when it was given. It tells us, not simply that Abram defeated unrighteous and war-waging kings in the past, and a righteous and peaceful king blessed him, and gave him bread and wine, but that Abram's *seed* will go through a similar experience in the future on a much grander scale, with the Antitype of Melchizedek, the King and Priest, Christ Jesus, the Son of the Subjector.

In later revelation we are assured that "this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who meets with Abraham returning from the combat with the kings and blesses him, to whom Abraham parts a tithe also, from all; being first, indeed, translated 'king of righteousness,' yet thereupon king of Salem, also, which is 'king of

Peace,' fatherless, motherless, without a genealogy, having neither a beginning of days nor consummation of life, yet picturing the Son of God, is remaining a priest to a finality" (Heb.7:1-3). This incident was only a preview of the end, brought on the scene at the beginning, in order to heighten the great contrast between the failure of earth's first kings and the future perfection of human rule. In order to portray the *Son of God* more clearly, this king is not in any genealogical table, with the dates of his accession and death, or the names of his father and mother, for none of this fits the One Whom he portrays.

ABRAM'S FAITH

Abraham had a good opportunity to enrich himself further, if he had retained the booty which he had recovered when it was offered to him by the king of Sodom. But, by faith, he realized that the Subjector Supreme is the sole Owner, not only of the land, but of all that is on it. Yahweh had promised it to Abram, so it would be wrong to acknowledge the ownership of the king of Sodom, who, as was afterward revealed by his destruction, had forfeited all rights to its enjoyment.

BREAD AND WINE

The unjust kings of war destroyed the sustenance and the enjoyment furnished by the lands they conquered. In contrast to this, Melchizedek presented Abram with a token of that future and final kingdom, over which Abram's Seed, the Anointed Son of the Subjector, will reign. This was symbolized by the bread and wine which he gave them (Gen. 14:18). Then there will not only be justice and peace, but sustenance and happiness. This will not come to pass in this wicked eon, but is waiting until the Seed of Abram assumes His rightful place as King of kings and Lord of lords.

A. E. Knoch

FAITH IN THE SUPREME

THE VICTORY over the kings, in Genesis 14:15, was Yahweh's doing, not Abram's, and Abram freely acknowledged it. This is the testimony of Genesis 14:17-24, in connection with Melchizedek, king of Salem, whose name and title are most suggestive, in view of our present investigation of faith righteousness.

In Hebrew the name Melchizedek means *king of righteousness,* or *righteous king,* and his title is *king of peace* (or king of *well-being*). He is priest of the Supreme Deity, the Owner of heaven and earth, the One Who actually rescued the captives from the kings and Who recovered the property which had been taken from Sodom and Lot. God alone is entitled to recompense. To Him alone is due the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving which His priest will offer in behalf of those who have been saved. So Abram gives Melchizedek tithes from all. *This is faith righteousness.* Before Abram considers any reward for his recovery of what had been carried away, he, through the priest of the Supreme, dedicates a tenth of it to His worship.

THE SUPREME DEITY

It is worthy of note that the august title, *El Supreme* (the *Supreme Subjector*), first appears on the pages of revelation in connection with faith righteousness. Neither one of these exalted appellations is revealed before Melchizedek, the king of *righteousness,* comes upon the scene. Is this not because all genuine righteousness in the universe must be based upon the acknowledgment of God's deity

and supremacy? This is the divine foundation of all real righteousness, the only stable basis on which any permanent right can rest. We will never understand faith righteousness until we realize what true deity involves, and the supremacy which belongs to it. All right must be rooted in the Supreme Deity. None must be derived from any other source. Man's righteousness ignores both His deity and supremacy, hence is little more than a legal fiction, which will melt away once it enters into His august Presence. There may be a relative righteousness, man to man, but even this becomes unrighteousness when it does not recognize the rights of the Deity Supreme.

How few of the saints, even today, know God as *the Deity*! That is because they do not realize their own creaturehood. Like Abram in unbelief, they are convinced that *their* acts, *their* doings are indispensable, or else God cannot succeed in His plans. How many are seeking to forward the kingdom, yet succeed only in gendering Ishmael's that hinder rather than help! The whole of Christendom is like that. It has no real Deity, Who can walk alone without their help. *They,* rather than the Deity, are all-sufficient. How great have they grown in the earth! And almost all are sons of Hagar, in slavery, working, working, working, to save themselves and the world. O that God would give us a realization of *His* Deity and *His* all-sufficiency! That Abram did not fully recognize this is clear, for God immediately goes on to put him through a series of tests, all of which are designed to demonstrate that the flesh is not a deity, and is *not* sufficient.

The title *Supreme* comes from the stem *ol,* ON, and branches out into *over, ascend* (the *ascent* or "burnt" offering), *elevate, surpass, uppermost*. It is usually translated *most high,* or *Most High,* either as a mere descriptive adjective, or as a title. It is perfectly rendered by our English title, *the Supreme.* Its meaning is clear. He is *above* all others. He should be given that place in every realm. Nothing else can be really right.

OWNER

The title, "Owner of the heavens and the earth," fits perfectly into this picture. The customs connected with leases and property rights vary so much today from those which are recorded in the Scriptures that it is difficult to sort out suitable words in translation. Present practice is basically wrong. It rests on the false assumption that ownership is vested in man, that he can obtain *absolute* control of lands and houses and goods and even living creatures, and can *dispose* of these to others, as he wills.

When God calls Himself the *Owner,* He challenges man's title to everything that he possesses. In Israel, under the law, there were few freeholds. Almost all the land remained in the hands of Yahweh, and was distributed by Him by means of the lot. It recognized that all ownership is vested only in God. To *believe* this because God has said it, is *right,* so that the very faith may be reckoned as righteousness.

As the thought of human ownership is so foreign to the Hebrew scriptures, there seems to be no special word to express it. In this passage it is really the *Acquirer,* the *buyer,* for it was by *buying* that permanent possession was obtained. The Hebrew word is easily remembered, for *kne* is the same as *Cain.* Eve called him this because she thought she had paid for him in some way. Literally she bought or acquired him. This is the first intimation of his rebellion against God (Gen.4:10).

But in English we cannot very well apply the name *Buyer* to God because He did not buy or acquire anything in a literal sense, seeing that all is out of Him. What the Hebrew means is that He occupies the control over all things that a buyer has over that which he has bought. Our term *Owner*

is probably the nearest that we have. Among men, ownership comes by acquiring or buying. God has it by creation.

ABRAHAM'S HOLDING

The word *holding* is another way of expressing permanent possession in Hebrew. When his wife Sarah died, Abraham wanted a place for her and himself in the land as a token of his faith in God's promise. Joseph had the same wish. His bones were also buried there (Gen.50:25). So Abraham requested a *holding* (AV possession) in which to bury his dead. After characteristic palaver, he *bought* the cave of Machpelah (*Double*) for this purpose. The field, the trees and the cave were all "confirmed" by the payment of a large sum of silver (Gen.23:3-20) so that Abraham became the "buyer" or owner in perpetuity. And, remarkable as it may seem, *it is still his*! No one has ever dared to dispute his title to it. I do not know just what its legal status is today, but I consider no other piece of real estate has its title so well insured as the tomb of Abraham. If he arose today, no one would care to take it from him. And his it will remain as long as the earth abides, as a token that God's promise will be redeemed. The land itself is such a "holding." It will be Abraham's for the eons (Gen.17:8).

THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK

A great deal of mystery has been wrapped about the *man* Melchizedek. Some have even insisted that he was the Son of God Himself. But Scripture makes Christ of the order of Melchizedek, hence He can hardly be the King-priest Himself (Heb.6:20). As he is to picture the Son of God, the *record* gives us only such information as is needed in order to show the likeness. The writer in Hebrews emphasizes these points in order to stress the fact that our Lord was not a priest at all according to His birth and genealogy. Mary was no priest's daughter. And He could not even

assume the priesthood on the strength of His legal relations to Joseph, who was of the tribe of Judah. Melchizedek, being entirely outside the line of Aaron, certainly had no place in the Aaronic priesthood. Hence his genealogy is not given. So also, no hint is given of his death. This was omitted in order to create the impression of a final priesthood, which needs no successor. These things are true of the Son of God, and they are stated accordingly in the record of Melchizedek.

KING OF PEACE

The setting of this title is superb. Against the dark background of the kings of strife, who robbed one another of their sustenance and happiness, stands the figure of Melchizedek, in solitary majesty, feeding the faithful Abram with bread and wine. These are symbolic of the life and joy which comes to all who recognize the rule of the Son of God, of Whom Melchizedek was a picture. Devastation and misery, destruction and death followed the footsteps of the conquering kings, and they themselves were smitten by Abram. Many of earth's kings are kings of unrighteousness, kings of strife. Like these of old they serve their purpose when we contrast them with the coming King, Who alone can bring this tortured earth the peace for which it longs.

BREAD AND WINE

Not on bread alone shall man be living, but on every declaration going out through the mouth of God (Matt.4:4). Wine is rejoicing the heart of a mortal (Psa.104:15). The bread and wine given to Abram symbolized the sustenance and blessing which he received from Yahweh. It gave not life alone, but joy and satisfaction. Abram already was wealthy. The goods of Sodom might have increased his riches, but they would not have added to his happiness. A man's life does not consist in the superfluity of the goods

that he possesses. Sodom's goods were his by right, from the human viewpoint, yet to accept them would be wrong from the divine, for they would have brought no blessing to Abram, and the loss would probably have made the Sodomites suffer. Had Abram taken them, he would have accomplished the same result as the pillage of the kings, and put himself in a class with them. Rights that bring no blessing are wrong in God's sight.

THE BLESSER BLESSED

Not only is Abram blessed, but his Blesser is also blessed. This is the end and object of all righteousness. Looking at the matter from the standpoint of the universe, what can be basically right which does not contribute to the blessing of its Creator and Sustainer? All of His handiwork proclaims His praise. We need but to look at the stars above to be overcome with amazed awe. We need but to glance at the flowers beneath our feet to be filled with worshiping wonder. But how little does humanity heed these promptings to give Him the adoration which is His due! Even the creature blessings on which his very life depends bring forth no thankfulness. But Abram appreciates and acknowledges the blessings which he has received, and his heart responds. He gives God His due meed of blessing, because he realizes His protecting care and believes that He is the Supreme Deity Who will carry out all that He has promised.

How much blessing accrued to the Deity through the plunder of Sodom by the confederate kings? They, of course, thought that *they* would enjoy their ill-gotten goods, but they had no thought of others or of God. The restoration of the spoil, through Abram, had just the opposite effect. Though he took none of it, he was blessed, as well as those whom he rescued. But, above all, the real Rescuer, the Supreme Deity, received His due in thanks-

giving and blessing. This is the very summit of righteousness. Nothing else is so utterly and inexcusably wrong as the failure to recognize, to appreciate, and to recompense the Deity for His numberless and limitless benefactions. To bless Him is the greatest act of righteousness of which His creatures are capable.

ABRAM AND THE KING OF SODOM

Abram did not try to force his faith or its conduct upon others, who were not ready for it. His neighbors and confederates had a human right to a reward, and he had no right to interfere. So he makes it plain to the king of Sodom that his offer would not hold in their case. Faith cannot be forced. God had not dealt with these men as He had with Abram. They did not realize that the Supreme Deity was the Owner of all. Today, very few take it seriously. Indeed, hardly any of the saints even acknowledge that the Supreme is the Deity. Orthodoxy insists that the clay has the right over the Potter, to mould Him as it will. So we must not expect conduct in accord with faith even from otherwise intelligent believers. We cannot force them into a path for which they have not been prepared before by God.

Abram received no reward for his great services in rescuing Lot and restoring what he and the king of Sodom had lost. Humanly speaking, that was wrong. Did he not have a right to boast of his exploit? Had not he, with a few helpers, overcome the confederate kings? No one would begrudge him a generous share of the booty to recompense him for his efforts on their behalf. But Abram looked at the matter quite otherwise, because he *believed* what Melchizedek, the priest of the Supreme Deity had said, that *God had given his foes into his hand.* If the Supreme had done this, then *He* should get the reward, not Abram. So a tenth of the spoil was given to Melchizedek, as the representative of the Deity, to be used in His worship. This is

faith righteousness. It is based on believing that God not only owns all, but shielded him in his effort to do the right, and that, if he was to get anything for it, the Supreme is the only One Who could pay the price.

The king of Sodom would not have given a tenth for the worship of Yahweh. So he is taught the highest righteousness by the act of Abram. But men are not satisfied with a mere tithe, when they can take all. The king of Sodom expected Abraham to claim all the goods. Indeed, his speech implies that Abraham has a right to everything and everyone that he had brought back. So he begs for the "souls," the people and the animals, as a *gift*, and asks Abram to take the goods. Abram gladly *gives* him the souls, yet his faith righteousness balked at the idea of *taking* aught from the king of Sodom. He had tasted the bread and wine from the hands of God. He could not receive nourishment or blessing from anyone else, lest they displace the Deity, in Whom his faith found its All. How basically unrighteous it would be for the king of Sodom, who owed Yahweh far more than he could ever repay, to give Abram what he did not really possess!

A. E. Knoch

EDNA CARAMELLA

Our friend and sister in the Lord, Edna Caramella, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, was put to repose on December 24, 2003, at the age of 95. Those of us who were associated with the Baldwin (Michigan) Summer Fellowships will remember her enthusiastic participation. She never missed one of these Scripture conferences through all the forty years of their existence. She manifested a genuine joy in the Lord and appreciation of His glories as the Son of God's love. The Deity of God, His righteousness and power and wisdom and love—these were truly things of consequence to her. The deaths of her husband Frank and daughter Frances, both of whom shared her faith, and an increasing deafness troubled her later years, but the Word of God remained a real source of strength and consolation.

DAVID CONFRONTED WITH HIS SIN
(2 Samuel 12)

12 +**Then Yahweh** |**sent** `**Nathan to David.** +**When he** |**came to him,** + **he** |**said to him,** There [b]**were two men in** a **certain city; one** was **rich and** the **other** was **destitute**|**.** 2 **It came** to **be** that the **rich** man ›**had very many**– **flock**s **and herd**s**.** 3 +**Yet** the **destitute**| one ›**had no**thing at **all save one small ewe lamb which he had bought.** + **He** |**tended it, and it** |**grew up together with him and** [wi]**his** [in]**children: it** |**ate from his morsel and** |**drank from his cup and** |**nestled in his bosom;** + **it** ||[b]**was like** a **daughter to him.** 4 +**Then** a **wayfarer** |**came to the rich man, and he** |**spared** › **taking**– some **from his** own **flock**s +**or from his herd**s **to** [d]**prepare for** the **traveler**| ˙who had **come**| **to him;** +**rather he** |**took** `the **ewe lamb of the destitute**| ˙**man and** |[d]**prepared it for** the **man** ˙who had **come**| **to him.**

5 +**So David's anger** grew **very** |**hot** [i]**against** the **man, and he** |**said to Nathan,** As **Yahweh lives,** [t] **the man** ˙who **did**| **this** is a **son of death!** 6 +**As** `for **the ewe lamb, he should repay** [7]**sevenfold~** for it **inasmuch as he did** `˙**this** ˙**thing and** [on]**because** [w] **he** did **not take pity.**

7 +**Then Nathan** |**said to David, You** are **the man! Thus said Yahweh Elohim of Israel:** It was **I´** Who **anointed you** ›**as king over Israel, and** it was **I´** Who **rescued you from** the **hand of Saul.** 8 **I** +**also** |**gave** › **you** `the [Sy]**daughter~ of your lord, and** `the **wives of your lord in**to **your bosom.** + **I** |**gave** › **you** `the [Sy]**daughters~ of Israel and Judah; and if** that had been too **little,** + **I would** |**add for you** [as] **this** way

and *as* **that** way. 9 For **what reason have you despised** `the **word of Yahweh** ›**by doing**– ·what is **evil in His eyes? `Uriah the Hittite have you smitten** *i*with the **sword;** + **you took `his wife** as **your** › **wife and had `him killed** *i*by the **sword of** the **sons of Ammon.** 10 + *now*Therefore the **sword shall not withdraw from your house** *fr*for the **eon, inasmuch** *t*as **you despised Me and** l**took** `the **wife of Uriah the Hittite to become your** › **wife.** 11 **Thus said Yahweh: Behold, I** am **raising** up **over you evil from your** own **house;** + **I will take `your wives** ›**before your eyes and give** them **to your associate; and he will lie** down **with your wives** ›**before** the **eyes of ·this ·sun.** 12 **For you´** *d*acted **in secret,** +**but I´ shall do `this ·thing** in **front of all Israel and** in **front of the sun.**

13 +**Then David** l**said to Nathan, I have sinned** ›**against Yahweh.** + **Nathan** l*sa*replied **to David,** *mr*Now Yahweh, He **has remitted your sin; you shall not die.** 14 **Only** *t*because **you made `Yahweh's enemies**l **spurn,** yea **spurn**– Him *i*by **·this thing,** *mr*surely **the son ·born to you, he shall die,** yea **die**–**.**

15 + **Nathan** l**went to his house, and Yahweh** l**struck `the boy whom Uriah's wife had borne for David, and he be**came l**mortally** ill. 16 +**So David** l**appealed earnestly** `to **the** One, **Elohim,** *i*on *fr*behalf of **the lad; David** +**also** l**abstained** for a **fast;** + **he** l*in*went **and lodged** for the night + –**lying** on*d* the **earth.** 17 +**Then** the **elders of his house**hold l**arose** *on*beside **him to raise him** up **from the earth;** +**but neither would he** get up **nor have** a **repast** of **bread** `with **them.** 18 + **It** l*b*was *i*on **the seventh day** +**that the boy** l**died.** +**Yet David's servants were** l**fearful to tell** › **him that the boy was dead; for they said, Behold,** *i*when **the boy** *b*was– **alive, we spoke to him,** +**but he would not hearken** *i*to **our voice. How** +**then** can **we** l*sa*tell › **him** that **the boy is dead?** + **He** might **do** something **vicious.**

19 +**When David** l**saw that his servants** were **whispering** together, + **David** l**understood that the boy was dead.**

+**So David** l*sa*asked › **his servants, Is the boy dead? And they** l*sa*replied, **He is dead.** 20 +**Now David** l**arose from the earth;** + **he** l**bathed,** + l**rubbed** himself with oil **and** l**changed his raiments.** +**Then he** l**entered** the *in*abode **of Yahweh and** l**prostrated** him**self** in worship. +**When he** l**came** back **to his** *in*palace **and** l**asked** for **bread,** + **they** l*pl*set it ›**before him and he** l**ate.**

21 + **His courtiers** l*sa*asked › **him, What** is **·this ·thing** *w* **you have done? You fasted and** l**lamented** *i*for the *p*sake **of the boy** while he was **alive;** +**but just as** you hear **the boy is dead, you arise and** l**eat bread.** 22 + **He** l*sa*replied, **I fasted and** l**lamented** *i*on *fr*behalf of **the boy** while he was **alive** *t*because **I** *sa*thought, *a*Who knowsl**? Yahweh may be gracious** to **me and** keep **the boy alive.** 23 +**But now** that **he is dead, why** *this*then should **I fast**l**?** l**Can I** › **bring**– **him back** *fr*again**? I** shall **go**l **to him,** +**yet he´** will **not** l**return to me.**

24 +**Then David** l**consoled `his wife Bathsheba;** + **he** l*in*went **to her and** l**lay with her.** +**When she** l**bore** a **son,** + **she** l**called `his name Solomon.** +**As** for **Yahweh, He loved him;** 25 + **He** l**sent** word *i*by the **hand of Nathan the prophet;** +**so he** l**called `his name Jedidiah,** *i*for the *p*sake **of Yahweh.**

26 + **Joab had been fighting** *i*against **Rabbah of** the **sons of Ammon and** had l**seized `the royal city.** 27 +**So Joab** l**sent messengers to David,** + l**saying, I have fought** *i*against **Rabbah** *M*and*c* **have** *mr*just **seized `the water city.** 28 + **Now gather** together `the **rest of the** *wi*soldiers**, and encamp** *on*against **`the city** proper. + **Seize it, lest I my**self **should seize `the city and my name would be called over it.**

29 +**So David** l**gathered** together `**all the** *wi*soldiers **and** l*go*marched to*d* **Rabbah;** + **he** l**fought** *i*against **it and** l**seized it.** 30 + **He** l**took** `the **crown of** *7*Milcom~ **off its head;** + **its weight** was a **talent of gold,** +**with precious stone**s in it; **and it** l*b*was put **on David's head.** + The amount of **loot of the city** that **he** *c*brought **forth** was **very** *mn*great**–.** 31 +**As** `for **the people who** were **in it, he** *c*brought them **forth and**

[pl]**consigned** them ~[i]**to raze it down**~ + [i]**with** ˙**iron threshers and** [i]**with** ˙**iron severing** instrument**s, +or** [p]**assigned** `**them** [i]**to brickwork. And he** [l]**did** [so]**this to all** the **cities of** the **sons of Ammon.** +**Then David and all the** [wi]**soldiers** [l]**returned** to **Jerusalem.**

SUFFICIENT time had passed to allow David opportunity to judge himself and seek God's forgiveness. But he needed Nathan's parable to enable him to see issues of right and wrong apart from his own perspective. Humans have an amazing capacity to fool themselves and to rationalize their actions. Like most of us, David did not see his own actions in the same light he saw the actions of others. God used David's indignation at the unjust man in Nathan's story to awaken him to his own unrighteousness.

In spite of David's sin, his reaction to the prophet's message endear him to us. When confronted with his sin, he readily and openly acknowledged his guilt, and he sought to restore his broken fellowship with God. The same hand that had penned the letter ordering Uriah's death penned Psalm 51. He owned sinfulness as a part of himself throughout his whole life (Psa.51:5), he recognized that God desired holiness much deeper than any ritual cleansing (Psa.51:6), and he fell solely on the gracious mercy of God to provide his cleansing.

Also, David knew and expected no limits on the mercy of God. David fell on his face and fasted for the sake of the child born out of his adultery. He was not too concerned with his own personal acceptance to avoid the risk of offending the graciousness of God by asking for more. Who knows how much grace God might extend toward us? (2 Sam.12:22). Would we have feared to ask God for more, thinking perhaps that His patience with us might be as limited as our own?

ACCEPTING HARDSHIP AND LOSS

When the child died, David had the answer to his prayer. He rose from his grief and pleading, bathed and changed and went to worship the One Who had judged him. Then he returned and carried on with his life. David accepted what God gave him. It was not what he asked for, and it was not what he most desired, but it was what God gave him, and he accepted it.

Job asked the question, "Indeed, shall we receive good from the One Elohim, and should we not receive evil?" (Job 2:10). And should we, whose realm is inherent in the heavens, scorn the momentary lightness of afflictions given to produce for us an eonian burden of glory? There is a time to plead for change, and there is a time to accept what is given, pleasant or not.

THE CONQUERING OF SHAME

Chapters 10 and 11 showed the conquering of the Ammonites to be drawn out over a considerable period of time. It was also noted that Israel's conflicts with Ammon are recorded in such a way as to emphasize shame on Israel. Here in chapter 12, victory over Ammon is finally realized, and it comes after David has been judged for his shameful sin. Judgment is the means of removing shame.

If we would remove the crown of shame that rules over us, we must use judgment. Paul spoke of self-judgment in the believer's life with figures such as crucifixion, slavery and the stripping off of old garments. *Crucifixion of the flesh* is what the believer does to apply the cross of Christ to his own life. "For if we adjudicated ourselves, we would not be judged. Yet, being judged, we are being disciplined by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world" (1 Cor.11:31,32). "We, then, should be putting off the acts of darkness" (Rom.13:12). "Now if we

died together with Christ we believe that we shall be living together with Him also . . . . Let not Sin, then, be reigning in your mortal body, for you to be obeying its lusts, . . . but present yourselves to God as if alive from among the dead, and your members as implements of righteousness to God" (Rom.6:8-13). Now those of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together with its passions and lusts" (Gal.5:24). "Deaden, then, your members that are on the earth: prostitution, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, greed; . . . also be putting away all these: anger, fury, malice, calumny, obscenity out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, stripping off the old humanity together with its practices, and putting on the young, which is being renewed into recognition, to accord with the image of the One Who creates it . . ." (Col.3:5-10). Self-judgment is difficult. It calls for maturity and honesty, but it delivers from shame.

J. Philip Scranton

PSALM 51

51 Be gracious to **me,** O **Elohim, according** to **Your benignity;**
According to **Your many compassions wipe** out **my transgressions.**
2 **Rinse me abundantly⁻ from my depravity,**
And from my sin cleanse me.
3 **For I´ ˡacknowledge my transgressions,**
And my sin is in **front of me continually.**
4 **›Against You, ›against You alone have I sinned**
And done `what is **evil in Your eyes,**
So **that You may be ˡjustified** *ⁱ*__when You speak⁻__,
And be ˡcleared *ⁱ*__when You judge⁻__.
5 **Behold,** I was *ⁱ*__**with depravity** when **I was travailed**__ in birth,
And in sin when **my mother conceived me.**

6 **Behold, You delight** in **truth** even **in** the **hidden** part**s,**
And in the *ᶻ*__**secret~**__*ᶜ* part**s You cause me** to ˡ**know wisdom.**
7 ˡ**Expiate me** *ⁱ*__**with** the **hyssop, and I shall be clean;**__
ˡ**Rinse me, and I shall be whiter** *ᶠ*__**than snow.**__
8 *ᶜ*__**Let me** ˡ**hear elation and rejoicing;**__
Let the **bones You have crushed exult.**
9 **Conceal Your face from my sins,**
And all my depravities wipe out.
10 **Create for me** a **clean heart,** O **Elohim,**
And renew *ⁱ* **within me** an **established**ˡ **spirit.**
11 O **do not** ˡ**fling me from › Your presence,**
And do not ˡ**take Your holy spirit from me.**
12 Do **restore to me** the **elation of Your salvation,**
And ˡ**stabilize me** with a **willing spirit.**
13 **Let me teach transgressors**ˡ **Your ways,**
⁺**That sinners may return to You.**
14 **Rescue me from blood**guilt, O **Elohim,** the **Elohim of my salvation,**
That **my tongue may be jubilant** at **Your righteousness.**
15 O *ˢ*__**Yahweh***ᵖʰ*__**,** ˡ**open my lips,**
⁺**That my mouth may tell** forth **Your praise.**
16 **For You are not delighting** in **sacrifice,** ⁺**that I should give** it;
An **ascent** approach **You are not holding dear.**
17 The **sacrifices** to **Elohim** are a **broken**ˡ **spirit;**
A **broken**ˡ **and crushed**ˡ **heart,** O **Elohim, You shall not despise.**
18 **In Your benevolence,** *ᶜ*__**bring good** `__to **Zion;**
ˡ**Build** up the **walls of Jerusalem.**
19 **Then You shall delight** in **righteous sacrifices, ascent** approach **and wholly** fumed offering;
Then young **bulls shall be** *ᶜ*__**offered up on Your altar.**__

› **Permanent**ˡ

Reassurance

THE YEARS BETWEEN

"WHAT THEN shall we declare to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He who spares not His Own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (Rom.8:31,32).

Prior to this bracing reassurance, the apostle Paul had presented one of the most glorious revelations confided to the creatures of God's universe. *Designates! Calls! Justifies! Glorifies!* These are very special graces of love which are lavished upon those who, led by God's spirit, are described as sons of God. The wonder of such high privilege and honor thus bestowed is expressed by Brother A.E. Knoch:

"Here we have the golden chain of God's sovereignty forged for our blessing. Its four links cannot be separated. He *has* designated us and called us and justified us. Three links are forged. The next is glory! Nothing can compare with the sublime consciousness of a place in God's heart. If *He* is for us, even those who *would* be against us work our weal. No one *can* be against us."[1]

In these years while we walk by faith, all these four links of gold enrich our lives. During these days between our first believing and that day of full realization we feed on these words of God to us, as on our daily bread.

The precious words regarding God's choosing, calling, and justifying the various members of the ecclesia have been safely preserved. Nothing in the whole wide universe could possibly delete or corrupt the amazing clarity and certainty of such revelation. These are finished works, solid and sure.

1. CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.238.

Further, that throughout the years and the constantly changing scenes of life these same members should thus be apprised of such reserved glory is both overwhelming to our hearts and uplifting to our spirits. "For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself" (Phil.3:20,21).

Members of the ecclesia, the body of Christ, thus shall be duly summoned and transfigured to the glory of His exalted dignity. Led by Christ, these shall then participate, together with Him, in bringing full presentation of God's universal, transcendent purpose.

CHOSEN IN CHRIST

In His sacred prayer, our Lord, speaking of His Father's love, referred to this as being *before the disruption of the world* (John 17:24,25). It is not presumption to compare this time as also being when God chose the ecclesia in Christ, His Beloved:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him *before the disruption of the world*, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus" (Eph.1:3-5).

The Son of God's love, in Whom we are chosen, is the Firstborn of *every* creature. There, before all else, God, invisible, imperceptible, created all in the Son of His love. His purpose? His deep, deep yearning? Love responsive! It is imperative that all creation (not just ourselves) should recognize and acknowledge and rejoice in the plain basic

truth, that *all* is created in, through and for Him (Col.1: 15-17). Only thus might we gain some measure of the infinite value of our Father's gift.

IF HE IS FOR US

There are times of uneasy depths of confusion or despair for us all, else Paul would not have written the words of Romans 8 with which we commenced this meditation. Yet his words are operative to those who are believing. May we, once more rehearse the declaration: "If God is for us, who [or what] is against us?"

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.8:38,39).

Let us all reflect that, while physically, we all must learn "to walk before we can run," so also in spiritual matters, maturity in grasping the wisdom of God's purpose is possible only through stages or steps, tenderly enlightened with the patient escort of God's holy spirit.

"With the greatest relish, then, will I rather be glorying in my infirmities, that the power of Christ should be tabernacling over me. Wherefore I delight in infirmities, in outrages, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake, for, whenever I may be weak, then I am powerful" (2 Cor.12:9,10).

Lord, for the years Your love has kept and guided,
Urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
Sought us and saved us, graciously confided,
Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.
Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,
Speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,
Teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:
Lord of that word, receive our grateful praise.

Donald Fielding

DESPERATE NEED

THE JUDGMENT of God is according to truth (Rom.2:2). There is no partiality with God, Who, in His just judgment, will strictly take into account what each person has done (Rom.2:11-13). Every deed and every thought must be considered, whether good or bad, intentional or unintentional, even the hidden things of humanity. These are for accusation or defense in that day (Rom.2:16).

But despite the fact that human beings do many righteous things, the day of the revelation of God's just judgment is identified as a day of divine *indignation* (Rom.2:5). For if any sin whatsoever is found, the person must perish (Rom.2:12). No flesh at all will be found righteous in God's sight when the truth of the human record is taken into account without partiality (Rom.3:20).

PAUL'S EVANGEL

This is the deeply pessimistic theme of Romans 1:18-3:20 in itself, but pessimism is far from Paul's heart as he writes. Every thought pulsates in anticipation of what the apostle has to say concerning Jesus Christ. The truth of human hopelessness appears here in preparation for the truth of the evangel of God concerning His righteous achievements for good in the giving of His Son for sinners.

Almost in the exact middle of this long section of Romans concerning divine indignation on human irreverence and unrighteousness, and God's just judgment of human acts, Paul suddenly speaks of *accord* between these matters and his evangel (Rom.2:16). The apostle has thus provided a pointed reminder of the ruling theme of the epistle. All

that he writes has the evangel in view, not only by means of contrast but by points of agreement as well. He writes of human failure in anticipation of the message of divine glory.

What Paul has said about the human situation and God's searching judgment of each individual will now be applied to a typical Jew, not wholly unlike Saul of Tarsus. The desperate need is race-wide and all-inclusive. Consequently, were it not for the faith of Jesus Christ, the perishing and death must involve everyone. There are no exceptions (which is also a critical principle in Paul's evangel). Therefore, in Romans 2:17-24 we read:

Lo! you are being denominated a Jew,
and are resting on law,
and **are boasting in God**,
and **know the will**,
and **are testing what things are of consequence**,
being instructed out of the law.

Besides, you have confidence in yourself
to be a **guide** *of the blind,*
a **light** *of those in darkness,*
a **discipliner** *of the imprudent*
a **teacher** *of minors,*
having the form of **knowledge** *and* **truth** *in the law.*

You, then,
who are teaching another you are not teaching yourself!
who are heralding not to be stealing, you are stealing!
who are saying not to be committing adultery, you are committing adultery!
who are abominating idols, you are despoiling the sanctuary!
who are boasting in a law, through the transgression of the law you are dishonoring God!
For because of you the name of God is being blasphemed among the nations, according as it is written.

DENOMINATED A JEW

Paul now turns directly to one denominated a Jew, who is representative of those chosen and favored by God for a special place among the peoples of the earth. Knowing the truth of the law has not delivered the Jew from the dire need of sinful humanity and from its fundamental failure to glorify God. But what the apostle writes here should not be ignored by us of the nations. It applies to anyone who trusts in self-righteousness.

The best commentary on this passage is that which the apostle provides in the seventh chapter of this epistle: "The law, indeed, is holy, and the precept holy and just and good . . . . For . . . the law is spiritual, *yet I am fleshly*" (Rom.7:12,14). Even where the just standards of God are clearly enunciated and preserved, and where the words are honored, the flesh is not able to meet even the most basic standards of the law.

SIGNIFICANT TERMINOLOGY

Embedded in this message concerning the Jew and the law and the bad news of human failure are a number of words and phrases which accord with the evangel. In this present study I would like to look particularly at those which are printed above in bold type. Since the acts of *boasting, knowing* and *testing,* as well as the possessing of *knowledge* and *truth,* are associated here with the weakness of the flesh, they never reach the level demanded by the law. Yet Paul uses the same terminology in the context of the evangel which shows that justification is wholly a matter of God's grace accomplished in the giving of His Son for sinners.

Similarly the various efforts in the Lord's service of guiding, enlightening, disciplining and teaching others in need are encouraged in Paul's epistles. But they are not

presented there as precepts of law but rather as logical effects of believing the evangel (*cp* Rom.12:1,2). They are not based on self-confidence but on confidence in God (*cf* 2 Cor.1:9), Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, graciously granting salvation and justification and joy and peace in believing and all that we need (Rom.8:32-39).

RESTING ON LAW

When Moses called the elders of the people together at Sinai and placed before them all the words which Yahweh had instructed him, the people of Israel responded and said: "All that Yahweh speaks we shall do" (Ex.19:7,8). Despite the record of their immediate and stunning failure to carry out the very opening instructions, this self-confidence in fulfilling the requirements of the law was still manifest in Paul's day in the one denominated a Jew. And it is exhibited still today in all who rely on their own personal ability (and "responsibility") to meet the righteous standards of the law for justification before God as outlined in Romans 2:13.

This is a false and hopeless position which inevitably leads to the dishonoring of God.

THREE IDEALS

The one who is being addressed here is one who is "resting on *law*" (verse 17) and being "instructed out of the *law*" (verse 18). Between these two points of identification, Paul lists three ideals which are central principles of the law given to Israel at Sinai. These are high and most worthy objectives for human practice and blessing: to glory in God, to know His will and to test the things of consequence which He reveals in His Word.

These are upheld by the law. The question now is: Can these ideals of the law be reached and maintained by any

human being, even one who is privileged with knowing the law along with enjoying many special prerogatives and blessings granted by God?

BOASTING IN GOD

The law began, not with a commandment, but with a *message* concerning God and His special relationship with Israel: "I, Yahweh, am your Elohim Who brought you forth from the land of Egypt, from the house of servants" (Deut.5:6). The foundational significance of the law for the chosen nation was to be their recognition that "Yahweh is our Elohim; Yahweh, the only One" (Deut.6:4). Their glorying was not to be in themselves but in Yahweh, their Elohim.

This was echoed in the words of Jeremiah 9:23,24, as follows:

Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom,
And let not the masterful man boast in his mastery;
Let not the rich man boast in his riches,
But rather let the boaster boast in this:
To act intelligently and to know Me,
That I am Yahweh, working benignity,
Right judgment and justice on the earth,
For in these I delight, averring is Yahweh.

Indeed the appreciation and expression of this ideal was not entirely absent. That mighty Jew, David, sang (Psa. 62:7):

On Elohim rest my salvation and my glory;
The rock of my strength, my refuge is in Elohim.

This is holy and right and good. But the law against murder and adultery did not keep David from these works of the flesh, which were, at their very root, matters of sinning against God (*cf* Psa.51:4), resulting in dishonor to His Name. Considering God's work of judging *by itself*,

strictly according to the standards of His righteousness and the record of David's acts, there is no way David could escape from perishing.

What is desperately needed for the sinner, including David, is God's work of deliverance in Christ Jesus.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WILL

In its fullest sense, the law focused on God and on His ways and His will. In speaking of the Jew knowing the will, Paul may have had in mind David's words concerning Yahweh in Psalm 103:7 as the passage reads in the Septuagint translation:

He made His ways **known** *to Moses,*
His **will** *to the sons of Israel.*

The Hebrew (Masoretic) text has the plural word "activities" in the second line rather than a singular term conveying the sense of "will." Without speculating here on how this difference may have occurred, we can have no doubt that the law spoke of that which is pleasing to God. Indeed, what God made known to Israel at Sinai was most essentially centered with His will that they come to know Him and glory in Him and love Him with all their heart, soul and intensity (Deut.6:4,5).

Another passage that reflects Paul's thought here is Psalm 40:8 which (again using the Septuagint) reads:

I delight to do Your **will**, *my God,*
And Your law is in the midst of my heart.

In this case the Septuagint use of the word "will" is more in accord with the Hebrew word in the Masoretic Text, which the CV renders by the phrase, "what is *acceptable.*" God's will is that which is acceptable to Him, that which He wants. For Israel this was disclosed in the law.

Here again we discern the holiness and righteousness and goodness of the law. But we also see the certainty of

condemnation against the one who knows the will of God and does not do it. That again is the dire need which prepares the way for the evangel.

THE THINGS OF CONSEQUENCE

The boasting in God and the knowing of the will and the testing of the things of consequence, spoken of in Romans 2:18, are clear objectives set forth by the law given to Moses, on which the Jew rests and out of which he is instructed. The things of most consequence in the law are, as the Lord Himself reminded the people of Israel, that they (first of all) are to love the Lord their God, and (second) they are to love their associate as themselves (Matt.22:37-40; *cf* Deut.6:5; Lev.19:18). In Matthew 23:23 Jesus described mercy, judgment and faith as among the "weightier matters of the law." These principles are simply corollaries to loving God and one's associates.

They are truly consequential expressions of that which is holy and just and good. But even where these consequential matters are made known most clearly, written in stone, there is always failure.

BESIDES

But that is not all of the holiness and righteousness and goodness of the law. Besides the foundational goals of *glorying* in God, of *knowing* His will and of *testing* the things of consequence of which the law spoke, the law envisioned a place of usefulness for Israel. They were to be guides and enlighteners and discipliners and teachers in accord with the things of consequence of which the law spoke. This, too, was made known to Moses, by Yahweh: "These words which I am instructing you today will come to be in your heart. Repeat them to your sons, and speak of them when you sit in your house, when you walk on the road, when you lie down and when you arise" (Deut.6:7).

But because of the flesh, the Jew was not able to be an effective teacher of the high principles of the law. He failed in this because he failed as a doer of the very foundational revelations and instructions of the law.

Nevertheless, Israel will be given a place of service as a channel of blessing not only to their associates but to the nations as well (*cf* Gen.12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4). However, it will not be their own accomplishment; it will come about by the faithfulness of God (*cf* Rom.3:3,4). This is intimated here by the expressions Paul adopts in reference to the Jew's self-confidence in fulfilling his place of instruction and leadership. Paul employs language from the prophets *originally used in reference to the Lord.*

Hence in Isaiah 42:7 we read of the "Servant" and "Chosen One of El," that is, the Messiah, Who will "unclose the eyes of the blind," and in Isaiah 49:6 we read of Him as "a light of the nations." Again, in Hosea 5:2, He is called the "Discipliner." It is only when all Israel shall know Him, "from the smallest of them to the greatest of them" (Jer. 31:34), with the law written on their hearts, that they will be used by God in being a light in the world (*cf* Matt.5:14-18).

This blessing of being a blessing rests, not on the law and on the self-confident efforts of Israel to carry out the law, but on God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises, which in turn is based on that matchless work of God in sending His Son for sinners. Paul will expound on this fulfillment later in Romans 11, but before he does so he will present the evangel given to him concerning Jesus Christ our Lord, upon which Israel's special place of usefulness on the earth is based, just as it is for us.

YOU, THEN

The *having* of this law concerning God and His will, and the *listening* to this law, did not lead to the *doing* of the law. Instead of leading to a loving of God it led to a dishonoring of His Name. Instead of leading to a life of love for one's associates, it led to all sorts of hypocritical skirtings of the law.

David testifies to this regarding himself in Psalm 51.[1] Paul testifies to this regarding himself in Romans 7. And Paul now exposes this fact regarding the representative individual he addresses. Indeed, as the requirements of the law are defined by our Lord in Matthew 5:21-47, there is no Jew (except Jesus Himself, Who came of the tribe of Judah, and was tried in all things, yet apart from sin) who has met any one of them whatsoever in perfection.

The failure of the Jew to do what he himself taught others to do can be exhibited with respect to every principle he taught. Added to his failure to carry out the just requirements of the law, the Jew became practiced in hiding his failures from others. If his "stealing" was more subtle than Achar's, it probably was just as secretive (*cf* Judges 7). If his "adultery" was more in accord with Matthew 5:28 than David's (*cf* 2 Sam.11), it was no less callously put out of mind. Like those associated with the temple when visited by the One about to die for them, the sanctity he professed with his lips was not what was in his heart (*cf* Mark 11:15-17).

Had our Lord Jesus Christ not been faithful even unto the death of the cross, this failure would be wholly catastrophic, not simply for the Jew but for God Who chose this people to bless them and make them a blessing to all the families of the ground. Indeed, the seriousness of what the apostle writes here, all its evident implications of hopelessness, would be overpowering if we forget what he is leading up to, the great "Yet now" of Romans 3:21 and all that follows concerning God's Son and God's righteousness and love commended in His death for sinners.

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1. See p.30 in this issue.

It is the faith of Jesus Christ that leads to justification and the manifestation of the righteousness of God. The promises will be fulfilled. The chosen people will glory in God and know His will and test the things of consequence, apart from all hypocrisy and deception. Although they will not need to teach others (Jer.31:34), they will become a blessing, like that of life itself, to the nations (*cf* Rom.11:15).

This will not be their achievement, but God's supreme accomplishment through Jesus Christ. It will be because of Him that God will put His spirit in their hearts, and they will do the works of the law and become perfect in this doing (*cf* Matt.5:48). Then the welcome words of the Sacred Scriptures, such as noted above, will become realized and exhibited apart from any shadow or flaw.

DISHONORING GOD

A pure and unsullied glorying in God cannot be gained by sinners on the basis of their efforts. The evidence is overwhelming. Both the Jew and the Non-Jew fail of perfection, and thus, in judgment, all must be condemned. Indeed for the "Jew" this failure is, if anything, more pronounced than for the "Greek." For God has shown His mercy to Israel and displayed distinct favor to that chosen nation, and therefore, in their every failure, dishonor comes to God.

Everyone needs the gratuitous and gracious deliverance that is in Christ Jesus. *Everyone* needs the justification gained by His death and made certain by His resurrection (*cf* Rom.4:25).

ACCORDING AS IT IS WRITTEN

As we have seen, a great deal of what Paul has written in Romans 2:17-24 is expressed in the language of the ancient Scriptures. We have noted some of the more obvious sources. In doing this, however, Paul may not cite passages exactly or even in strict accord with the original contexts. There are similarities in the principles being enunciated, but not always in the details of application. In this way, the original application of the passage or phrase is preserved. But also we see that the patterns of God's will and ways form cohesive themes throughout God's Word.

When Paul concludes, in Romans 2:24, that because of the Jew the Name of God is being blasphemed among the nations, and he connects this with what was written before, he probably had in mind the Septuagint version of Isaiah 52:5, where we read: "Because of you My Name is continually being blasphemed among the nations." (Here again the Septuagint reads differently from the Masoretic Text.) The context in Isaiah suggests it was because Israel was taken into captivity, due indeed to their apostasy, that the Name of Yahweh was dishonored. But Paul borrows and adapts that fact and the way it was expressed to speak of Israel's failure to keep the law. Yet because of what God did in sending His Son for the salvation of sinners, all will acclaim the Lordship of their Saviour, to the glory of God (Phil.2:10,11).

There are likenesses ("according *as*") in Paul's language here in Romans 2:24 also with Ezekiel 36:20, where we find these words of Yahweh concerning Israel: "When they came to the nations, wherever they came, they got My holy Name profaned among the nations where they came." Again, concerning David (who has already come to our minds because of what Paul says here to the Jew), there is harmony between Romans 2:24 and 2 Samuel 12:14, where the prophet Nathan says: ". . . you made Yahweh's enemies spurn, yea spurn Him by this thing . . . ."

Because of sin in the flesh, the Jew was not able to carry out the ideal works and maintain the right thinking presented to him in the law. The result was that he dishonored the God in Whom he professed to glory.

THE HONOR OF GOD

In speaking of the way in which the Jew dishonored God, Paul directs our attention to the primary issue. It is the glory of God, and the honor of His Name. The problem Paul brings up here in Romans 2 does not simply deal with Israel's desperate need of salvation. More importantly it deals with the faithfulness of God to His promises and His righteousness in all His dealings.

The Jew cannot be justified by doing the works of the law simply because he does not do the works of the law. Yet God has chosen Israel and promised them special blessings, all of which involve bringing honor to His Name. And He will be faithful to His promises, as Paul will soon remind us in Romans 3:3,4.

We have earlier made reference to Psalm 103:7. In the following verses of that psalm David rejoiced in the compassion and graciousness of Yahweh Who does not requite Israel in accord with their sins and removes their transgressions far from them. Yet how can He do so justly if they do not perfectly fear Him and keep His covenant and remember His precepts? The words are clear in verses 17 and 18: "The benignity of Yahweh is from eon unto eon over those fearing Him, and His righteousness continues for the sons of sons, to those keeping His covenant and to those remembering His precepts, to obey them."

Paul is consciously concerned in Romans 2 with the righteousness of God which is revealed in the evangel. This matter has never left his mind since he introduced it in Romans 1:17. God's righteousness as revealed in the evangel very much relates to His dealings with Israel along with His dealings with us of the nations who are believing, and indeed with all mankind (*cf* Rom.3:25,26; 5:12-19). It will be on the basis of the cross of Christ that God brings Israel under the new covenant and places His spirit in their

hearts so that they know God and do the works of the law. So He will be revealed as faithful and just in all His ways.

WITH THE EVANGEL IN VIEW

Indeed all that Paul has said in Romans 2:17-24 is with the evangel in view. The Jew is shown to belong to the ranks of sinners, so that the entirety of humanity is exposed as irreverent and unjust and desperately needing what God achieves through the gift of His Son.

In addition, this portion of Romans also, in speaking of Israel's failures, has introduced matters which are central to the goodness of the evangel. Let us review some of these again, in conclusion:

The evangel revealing the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ, which is being reckoned to us who are believing leaves no room for boasting, or glorying, in ourselves (Rom.3:27). Instead it leads to the grace of *glorying* in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:1,2). It speaks of justification as the work of God's grace, so that all our boasting is in Him. "Yet not only so, but we are *glorying* also in God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we now obtained the conciliation" (Rom.5:11).

The evangel centers our attention on the *will of God* for us as it influences our living. By becoming acquainted with God's will as it is revealed in the evangel we discover it is not simply an expression of what God wants us to do, but an expression of what God has willed to do Himself in the giving of His Son and what He shall do because of this. Consequently, our walk in accord with God's will for us is a matter of response, not to law, but to these revelations of God's grace. Hence, what Paul writes in Romans 12:1,2 is based on the evangel as he had presented it earlier in the epistle: "I am entreating you, *then,* brethren, *by the pities of God,* to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service, and

not to be configured to this eon, but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, for you to be testing what is the *will of God,* good and well pleasing and perfect."

In accord with this, the message of God's grace and love and righteousness directs us to an appreciation of God's will as it relates to all mankind. For the welcome words of the evangel testify that *God wills* that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). Indeed the transcendent revelations built on the foundation of Paul's evangel, lead us forward to the *secret of God's will,* in accord with God's delight which He has purposed in Christ, "to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth . . . according to the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His *will*" (Eph.1:9-11).

No wonder it became a matter of continuing prayer for Paul that we "be filled full with the realization of [God's] *will,* in all wisdom and spiritual understanding," for this affects our walk and leads to endurance and patience and joy (Col.1:9-11).

Thus, the evangel speaks to us of the *things of consequence,* which Paul prays might become impressed on our minds and hearts. "And this I am praying, that your love may be superabounding still more and more in realization and all sensibility, for you to be testing what things are of consequence . . . " (Phil.1:10).

If the law spoke of love for God and love for our associates as its primary concerns, how much more does the evangel direct us to the love of God, commended in the death of His Son for sinners (Rom.5:8) and a walking in love "according as Christ also loves you and gives Himself up for us, an approach present and a sacrifice to God, for a fragrant odor" (Eph.5:2).

D.H.H.

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Abram Believes God
59 Abram to Abraham
70 Reaping the Whirlwind
77 Not of Men, But of God
87 Growth in Realization of God

MARCH, 2004

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EDITORIAL

It is not so great a problem that we frequently make mistakes, but that we frequently *offend* others in many of the mistakes that we make.

To *sin* is to *miss* the mark; it is to make a *mistake,* to *fail* of the ideal. By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight, "for through law is the recognition of *sin*" (Rom.3:20).

To *offend* is to wound the feelings; it is the infliction of emotional injury. Odious, or offensive acts, are not simply a mistake but an affront; they hurt the feelings and displease the taste; since they are unpleasant and undesirable, they are therefore unwelcome.

The Greek word which corresponds to the English "offense" is *paraptōma* (BESIDE-FALL). That which stands "beside" the "fall" (or failure) of sin itself, is the *offense* thereof.

"Law came in by the way, that the *offense* should be *increasing*" (Rom.5:20). That is, sinful acts committed against the dictates of man's own conscience (*cp* Rom.2:14,15) are indeed offensive to God; but sinful acts committed against the testimony of God's own revealed Word, are even *more* offensive to Him.

It is not at all that we simply have made some "mistakes" and yet that God is somehow insensitive concerning them. It is rather that we all are *constituted* sinners (Rom.5:19) and that even the more upright among mankind still continue on day by day in offensive, sinful behavior. Hence God is deeply sensitive to our offenses, finding them *offensive.*

How glorious it is to know, then, concerning God's chosen ones, that we were *conciliated* to God through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10). And, how glorious too it is to know that in Christ, God has conciliated even *the world* to Himself as well. The word of the conciliation is that, "God was in Christ,

conciliating the world to Himself, *not reckoning their offenses to them*" (2 Cor.5:19).

Through Christ, God has conciliated the people of the world to Himself, uniting them to Him and affording them the place of a friend even while they remain practically estranged in unbelief. Though their acts be ever so offensive, even so, He is not *reckoning* their offenses to them.

Therefore, even in the day of judging when He judges their *acts*, this will not be so because He has taken offense and responded in severity accordingly, but because any such judgments are expedient and accord with His purpose *on behalf of* those whom He has already conciliated to Himself, granting them the express benefit of *not* reckoning their offenses to them.

Though humanity remains exceedingly offensive, through Christ a great change has come about in God's treatment of even the most offensive offenders: He has granted them the place of a close friend, and refuses to hold their *offenses* (i.e., the offensiveness of their deeds) against them.

Alas, unlike God, men continually react to the offenses of their fellows by "hitting back" at their offenders with unbecoming offensive acts of their own.

It is because we are constituted sinners that we commit offenses, including the offense of reacting offensively to the offenses of others. Yet the ideal remains, which is: "to be *bearing with* one another and *dealing graciously* among yourselves, if anyone should be having a complaint against any. According as the Lord also deals graciously with you, thus also you [deal graciously among yourselves]" (Col.3:13).

Even if we are not yet mature enough never to react offensively ourselves to the offenses of others, may a sense of our duty to be dealing graciously with those whom we have complaints against, lead us at least to get over our wounded feelings in a timely way, that we may then heed the entreaty, "Bless those who are persecuting you: bless, and do not curse . . . . To no one render evil for evil" (Rom.12:14,17). J.R.C.

ABRAM BELIEVES GOD

15 After ˙these ˙things the **word of Yahweh** [b]**came to Abram in** a **vision,** › **saying**–**: Do not** [l]**fear, Abram! I** am **your Shield, your exceedingly increased**– **Reward.** 2 + **Abram** [lsa]**replied: My Lord Yahweh, what shall You give me?** + **I** am **going**– **heirless, and** the **successor** to **my house—he** will be **Damascus Eliezer.** 3 **And Abram** [lsa]**added: Behold, You have given no**[t] **seed to me; and** [bd]**now** a **son of my house**hold will **take over**[l] `from **me.**

4 +**Yet** [bd]**here** the **word of Yahweh** came **to him** › **saying**–**: Not this** one **shall take over** from **you, but rather** the one **who shall** come **forth from your internal** part**s, he´ shall take over** from **you.** 5 +**Then He** [c]**brought `him** [l]**forth ˙outside**[d] **and** [l]**said:** [pr]**Now look** up to**ward the heavens and count off the stars if you** [l]**can** › **number**– `**them. And He** [lsa]**promised** › **him: Thus shall become your seed.** 6 +**Now** [7]**Abram**[0] **believed** [i]**on** [7]**Elohim**[cs]**, and He** [l]**reckoned it to him** for **righteousness.**

7 **He** +**also** [l]**said to him: I** am **Yahweh, Who** [c]**brought you forth from Ur of** the **Chaldeans to give** › **you `˙this ˙land to tenant it.** 8 +**Yet he** [lsa]**replied: My Lord Yahweh, whereby shall I know that I shall** enjoy **its tenancy?** 9 +**Now He** [l]**said to him: Take for Me** a **heifer** in her **third**[l] year, + a **goat** in her **third**[l] year, + a **ram** in his **third**[l] year, + a **turtledove, and** a **fledgling.** 10 +**So he** [l]**procured `all these for Him and** [l]**sundered `them** [i]**through** the **middle and** [lg]**put each** [it] **sundered** part **to meet its corresponding part;** +**yet `the** [7]**birds~**[n] **he** did **not sunder.** 11 + ˙**Birds of prey** [l]**descended on the** [7]**severed**[0] **cadavers,** +**but Abram** [7l]**sat** `with **them**[0] and [l]**turned `them back.**

12 +**When the sun** [lb]**was** about **to set,** + a **stupor fell on Abram, and behold,** the **dread** of a **towering darkness** was **falling on him.** 13 +**Then He** [l]**said to Abram: You shall know,** yea **know⁻, that your seed shall become** a **sojourner in** a **land** which is **not theirs; and they will serve them, and** these [7]**will** [c]**do evil to them and**[0] **humiliate** `**them** for **400 years.** 14 +**But I** will [mr]**indeed adjudicate**[l] `**the nation which they shall serve, and afterward they shall** come **forth** [i]**with** a **great** many **goods.** 15 +**As** for **you, you shall come to your fathers in peace; you shall be entombed** [i]**at** a **good greyhaired** age**.** 16 **And** in the **fourth generation they shall return** [bd]**here, for** [bd]**hitherto** the **depravity of the Amorite** is **not** yet **total.**

17 + **It** [lb]**came** to pass when **the sun had set and** a **dense darkness** [b]**came,** + **behold,** a **smoking stove and** a **fiery torch** [w] **passed between** ˙**these** ˙**severed** parts**.** 18 [i]**On** ˙**that day Yahweh contracted** a **covenant** `with **Abram,** › **saying⁻: To your seed I give** `˜**this** ˙**land, from** the **stream of Egypt as far as the Great** ˙**Stream,** the **stream Euphrates:** 19 `**the Kenite,** + `**the Kenizzite,** + `**the Kadmonite,** 20 + `**the Hittite,** + `**the Perizzite,** + `**the Rephaim,** 21 + `**the Amorite,** + `**the Canaanite,** + `**the Girgashite and** `**the Jebusite.**

Because Abram believed, he was concerned about the promised posterity (Gen.15:2). How could God's word be fulfilled unless he had a son? Was he to adopt one? But he is not allowed to leave the ground of faith. He is still forced to *assume* what he had been told to *expect* (Heb.11:1). He is once more assured that he will have a son. Then he is brought forth outside, and Yahweh says to him, "Now look up toward the heavens and count off the stars if you can number them . . . . Thus shall become your seed" (Gen.15:5). The point of this passage lies in the fact that there is no concession to unbelief. No son is

given. No time is set. Physically there is no indication of any fulfillment. Rather the opposite, for Abram was getting older every day. Here we have the highest pinnacle of faith which Abram reached, for it is sheer unadulterated acceptance of God's word, unaided by any outward sign, or the activity of the flesh. That is why this part of Abram's life is the example for the Uncircumcision, who also are justified by faith alone, apart from works (Rom. 4:1-20; 10:1-10; Gal.3:6; Phil.3:9).

God is the Doer

In the midst of Abram's concern about his successor, *God* steps in and makes a promise. *He does not do* anything, but merely tells what He will do. Abram also *does nothing.* He simply *believes* that God will do it. The entire *absence of works* is the key to Abraham's individual relationship to God in uncircumcision. If God had *fulfilled* the wish of Abram at that time there would have been no room for faith. In that case Abram would doubtless have been grateful, but such help never could have displayed the deep and delightful confidence that Abram had in God. It would certainly not have brought to Abram the most marvelous gratuity that an unrighteous man can ever obtain.

The present Hebrew text says in Genesis 15:6 that Abram believed "in *Yahweh,*" but the Septuagint and Syriac Versions indicate an original reading of "Elohim." In accord with this, when quoting this passage, Paul says that Abraham "believed *God.*"

At this point in our study the title used of the Deity is highly significant. "God" fits in here ever so much better than "Yahweh," for this is the germ of the Uncircumcision evangel. It reaches out to those who cannot claim Yahweh as their God. "God" is a timeless title, the great Disposer. "Yahweh" is confined to the eons and Israel. He is the special God of the covenant people, in contrast to

the gods of the nations. As the name finds fulfillment it will vanish. A part of it, the Coming One, will no longer apply when He has come (Rev.11:17; 16:5). Here it is out of place. The intelligent saint is relieved to find that the Author has Himself given us the true title through that apostle who was especially used to bring this great truth to the nations. If we are of the Uncircumcision, without a God such as Israel had (Eph.2:12), let us believe the God of Abram, Who is able to fulfill all His promises through the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Then we also will be reckoned righteous.

Eventually *all* mankind will be justified by God, even the Circumcision (Rom.5:18,19). But this is *not* a part of the evangel of the Circumcision, for Abram was not circumcised until later. Now let us note the great contrast between this and the Circumcision evangel, which is brought before us in the seventeenth chapter of Genesis, when Abram is ninety-nine years old. First God reminds him of his foolish attempt to make up for God's insufficiency (Gen.17:1). It is a hard lesson to learn. So long as Abram is *able* to assist God in fulfilling His promise, he may try to do so. So God waits until he is *un*able. His body is now dead, so far as procreation is concerned. He could no longer bring Ishmaels into the world, and thus aid the Deity in making good His word. So God begins by reciting His appropriate titles: "I am the *Deity, All-Sufficient.*" As such He is able to do all that He promises, and competent to fulfill every engagement that He makes.

THE EXCEEDINGLY INCREASED REWARD

Superficially, it seems as if Abram received no reward for the rescue of Lot and the captives of Sodom and the recovery of their goods. It looked as if he had not been treated righteously, though, of course, it was his own doing. The king of Sodom had offered to do the right thing. But his

faith in God led Abram to act according to a higher rule of righteousness which measured everything by its relation to God, rather than man. He knew that, in God's sight, the king of Sodom had nothing to give, for he had not paid the price for what he possessed to the Owner. How could the king of Sodom enrich him, when the poor ruler had nothing to which he was entitled? But Abram did not offend him by pointing out the truth. He probably felt it rather than knew it. He preferred to get his gifts from the one and only Source of all blessing.

Yahweh engages Himself to be the reward (or: hire) of Abraham! This is doubly marvelous. First of all, Abram had nothing except what God had given him. His servants, his strength, his very life, all were gifts from Yahweh. Besides, the success of the rescue was clearly due to God, Who had awarded his foes into his hand. Abram was an unprofitable slave, as all of God's creatures must ever be, apart from the praise and worship which they offer to the Deity. Nevertheless, Yahweh insists on paying Abram the highest wages, the most enormous salary, the most stupendous reward that it is possible to imagine. *Yahweh Himself is his reward*! That is why Abram is easily the richest of all earth's denizens, the wealthiest of all mundane plutocrats. Almost all other men are burdened or even cursed if they have immense holdings, but Abram's riches always are a blessing because they are really and rightly his, and come from the actual Owner of all.

Dead *things* may contribute to our comfort, but they are not necessarily a source of blessing. The very land given to Abram and his seed has not satisfied his descendants when they held it apart from faith. When they forsook Yahweh the land spewed them out. It is *right* for *things* to be a blessing only when they lead to the great goal which God has set—to be All for everyone. It is *wrong* for *things* to be a blessing apart from the Blesser.

What greater reward could Abram have received than Yahweh Himself? He is the only One Who can assure blessing at any time and for all the eons. If He is for us, who can be against us? In Abram's case we can see the blessing in operation. In the past Abram was blessed temporally with great possessions, such as were reckoned of value in those days. As the friend of God, his name is like a fragrant odor among the sons of men.

How blessed it is for Abraham to have the great Owner of all pledge Himself to look after his lot! Riches have wings. They seldom stay in a family more than a few generations. Abram could not count on conquering the land in his day. Far less could he do aught to secure it for his seed in the future. But, if *Yahweh* promises, *He* will also perform. Abram's faith was not in himself or his holdings, but in the Owner of all, Who is the only One Who can really insure both possession and blessing. The tomb of Abram is the only place on earth with a perfect title. The seed of Abraham are the only nation with a valid right to the land of promise. In the coming kingdom, when they will be subject to the Lord, then they will be blessed and free from want and fear.

RECKONED RIGHTEOUS

Much has been said and written concerning the righteousness which became Abram's. The reckoning has been called "forensic," as though the result of judicial procedure, which might be called a *legal fiction.* Bluntly stated, it hints that Abram did not do right, but God overlooked this and falsified the record. If you look too narrowly at it you are inclined to see things you do not like. It seems almost like a sort of deception. Indeed, some of the more enlightened translators reject this term in favor of "imputed." Theologians "*explain*" this, "to *attribute* or *ascribe vicariously.*" The latter term is further defined as "*substitutional.*" This,

again, is generally accepted to mean "the righteousness of Christ" "accepted by the Divine Father as a substitute for the righteousness of mankind." It will be seen that each new term, each new explanation, calls for another, because it not only fails to satisfy, but actually seems to imply *un*righteousness on the part of God.

Everyone of these non-scriptural, man-made, theological expressions is contrary to the Scriptures and the righteousness of God, the very foundation on which Abram's righteousness rests. *Impute* implies that Abram was *not* righteous. *Attribute* and *ascribe* are milder, but they still need the word *vicarious* in order to relieve their tinge of injustice. *Vicarious* has the advantage of sacerdotal trappings, but it merely means *representative.* The theory is that Christ's righteousness is accepted for man's unrighteousness. A few simple questions would soon show how untenable this is. If Christ's righteousness is taken for man's, is He bereft of righteousness? Of what does Christ's righteousness consist? If His holy life and sacrificial death are a part of it, how could these be imputed to Abram, long before Christ lived on earth and died? One who has seriously studied all these theological makeshifts, cannot help coming to the conclusion that they fail utterly in clarifying this great theme.

Let us rather proceed along the line of *faith.* Abram's passive acceptance, his belief that God is true, whatever He says, is the basis of God's reckoning. This attitude toward God is *right. The acceptance of God's revelation is not only more right than anything else in the world, but it also sets all else right.* It puts the Creator in His right place, and man in his. But the point that is generally obscured by unbelief is this: The acts of the believer are made *actually* right by being *combined* with Christ's sacrifice. The two together are infinitely just, and are essential to God's intention, which is to make Himself known to

His creatures. As a dark background is necessary to reveal His glories, the believer provides this by that part of his life which is lived in unbelief. The sins that condemn him are essential to the revelation of God's grace. When cleansed through the sacrifice of Christ, they are not merely nullified, nor are they destroyed, but they are transformed into acts essential to God's glory and the welfare of His creatures, hence are not merely reckoned right by a legal fiction, but are genuinely, gloriously right, reckoned by the highest standards in the universe.

A. E. Knoch

EDITORIAL NOTES

The preceding treatise was not originally part of A. E. Knoch's *Studies in Genesis*. Along with the articles entitled "Faith Righteousness" and "Faith in the Supreme" (appearing in our last two issues of *Unsearchable Riches*), it is adapted from two studies on "The Faith of Abram" which were part of Brother Knoch's earlier series entitled "The Glorious Gospel of God's Grace" (*cf Unsearchable Riches,* vol.36, pages 197,275). These same studies were also reprinted in volume 81 (pages 51,99), but they contribute such important thoughts, especially on Genesis 15, that it seemed well to present them again along with this reprinting of the series on Genesis.

The article by the late, Edward H. Clayton, entitled "Abram to Abraham," is also a reprint adapted from an earlier issue of our magazine (volume 48, p.303, September 1957). We hope even our longtime readers will not find these repeats irksome, but rather find them refreshing and helpful on the theme of *faith,* a most timely subject for us all in these present days.

My own thoughts are often led these days to 1 Corinthians 12:31 and 13:13 concerning faith as one of the "greater graces," or *effects* of God's joy for the members of the Body of Christ. Although many of the spiritual endowments listed in 1 Corinthians 12 have ceased, that of *faith* still remains as a gift graciously granted by God (Phil.1:29) apart from our doings, for assurance in *God's* powerful ability (Rom.4:21).

What we *see* is often disquieting, but what we *believe* is full of joy and peace. What we *hear* is often strident and fearful, but what God says to us in His Word is assuring and well.

D.H.H.

ABRAM TO ABRAHAM

IN OUR STUDIES of Genesis, we now will offer a methodical discussion of the change from Abram to Abraham. Abram had journeyed from Ur of the Chaldeans. At first the journey was with his father Terah, who tended to be a hindrance to Abram's obedience, whatever sympathy he may have had with what Abram would tell him. It was well over five years since they left Ur, for they made a stay at Charan. This stay was concluded, at least in regard to Abram, when Terah died. Then Yahweh renewed His instructions to Abram (Gen.12:1).

It is interesting to trace the journeying and tentings of Abram in the land. They can be used as a skeleton around which to fix some of the notable events, especially the appearings of Yahweh. The *second* appearing of Yahweh was in the land of Canaan. Abram sojourned at Shechem. Shechem is adjacent to Mounts Ebal and Gerizim. At this place we have the earliest history of Abram in his actual sojourn in the land of Canaan. Here he built an altar to Yahweh. This was in response to the promise: "I shall give this land" (Gen.12:7). But shortly Abram moved.

He journeyed some twenty miles to the south, to the hill country between Bethel and Ai. Here he built an altar to Yahweh and called upon the Name of Yahweh. Ai (Rubbish-heap) was at the sunrise. That spoke of the depravity which Abram had left. He was stretching out to Bethel, the House of El. That spoke of the sunset of his expectations (Gen.12:8).

Journeying from the altar between Bethel and Ai to the

southland, below the Judean hills, Abram was overtaken by a heavy famine. This led him down to Egypt, with all the trouble that ensued there. In that country Abram was deflected from the path of faith (Gen.12:10-20). But, due to Yahweh's protection and overshadowing care, he was led to return to Bethel, the place of the altar (Gen.13:1-4).

Back at Bethel, and while there, Abram and Lot separated (Gen.13:5-13). The journey to Egypt had given rise to more trouble than was immediately apparent. Lot had gathered a herd. And a maidservant, Hagar, was also acquired. Each of these became the cause of further vexation to Abram.

In the separation of Abram from Lot, we should note that, though Lot's choice appeared to be prompted by the fertility of the land, in truth, it was necessary for Abram to remain in the land of Canaan, for, at that point, Yahweh's promises pertained immediately to that area.

FURTHER APPEARANCES

A *third* appearing of Yahweh to Abram occurred at Bethel (Gen.13:14-17). This confirmed the gift of the land to Abram. He now moved some thirty miles southward to Mamre (that is, Hebron).This place is about ten miles south of Salem, which is of interest because Melchizedek was resident there (Gen.13:18; 14:18).

At this point it became necessary to rescue Lot, the nephew of Abram (Gen.14). This episode finds its origin in the presence of Lot among these cities, due to his choice of pasturage for his herd in that area. Abram rescued Lot, but this rescue was only the prelude to his later rescue by the intercession of Abram with Yahweh Elohim (Gen.19).

Following this, we have the *fourth* appearing of Yahweh. Here Yahweh revealed Himself as the Shield of Abram (15:1). This refers especially to the dangers which had surrounded Abram in the military expedition he had undertaken in order to rescue Lot. And it also expresses the certainty of a seed coming from the internal parts of Abram (15:4). Along with the above declaration Abram was told that Yahweh was his exceedingly increased Reward. This was in response to Abram's refusal to take anything of the spoils of battle.

Turning to Abram's side of this appearance, we find the major matter to be the question of the seed. Is Damascus Eliezer, running about in Abram's household, to be the enjoyer of the tenancy? Such an idea was at once rejected by Yahweh (15:4), for Yahweh assured Abram that one out of his loins would be the tenant of Abram's allotment. Furthermore, Abram was told that his seed was to be as numerous as the stars of the heavens. But it was not yet affirmed that this seed would be borne by Sarai. This remained to be said in Genesis 17:19.

These matters were confirmed by a covenant in which Yahweh alone took part. Abram was instructed to take for Yahweh a heifer, a goat, a ram, a turtledove and a fledgling. These animals were to be severed into parts in readiness for the covenant. Abram was occupied in turning back the opposition of the heavens against the covenant, as indicated by the predatory birds. This lasted until the setting of the sun. Then Abram was overtaken by a stupor (15:12). Thus he was prevented from making the covenant. The signs of Yahweh's presence, a smoking stove (figuring affliction) and a fiery torch (figuring deliverance), passed between the severed parts, and thus the covenant was ratified by one side only. And that Side was Yahweh's, Who alone has the ability to perform it!

Abram was also told that his seed would be afflicted for four centuries. Not until the fourth generation would the seed possess the land. Here was what appeared to be frustration of Yahweh's promise, because the depravity of the Amorite had not yet been filled up (Gen.15:13-16).

Nevertheless, in that day, Yahweh contracted a covenant, and, in view of the assurance given to Abram of his own seed, it was then said (15:18): "*I give this land*." The statement regarding the land hitherto had been "I *shall give*" (*cf* Gen.12:7; 13:15). But here, in chapter fifteen, the giving is expressed as a fact, concluded with a specific contract on Yahweh's part, and the boundaries were now stated in their widest extent.

In view of this fourth appearing, chapter sixteen seems strange. From the human standpoint, there was a feeble element which could be looked upon as an excuse for the deflection which arises. Seeing that Sarai did not bear for Abram, she suggested means whereby this deficiency may be remedied. Abram was to take her Egyptian maid, so that Sarai would be built by her. To this Abram agreed, for this would also be his own seed. Thus the evil of the prior deflection, in the visit to Egypt, provided yet further cause to turn aside. Ten years had gone by since the arrival in Canaan. Ishmael was the outcome. Abram was 86 years old at this time. The flesh still had strength. Sarai's advice was followed. The results could not be according to promise.

THE FIFTH AND SIXTH APPEARANCES

Thirteen years passed. Then Yahweh responded: "I am El Who-Suffices; walk before Me, and become a man of integrity" (Gen.17:1). This was the *fifth* appearing. Its import is that *walk must agree with faith*. But Abram did not understand about the seed.

Abram fell on his face. This act of worship was Abram's reaction to the alteration by Yahweh of his own name and that of Sarai (Gen.17:4-17). These were most significant matters. The alterations really concerned the matter which was such a problem to Abram and Sarai, and which had encouraged their compact.

But Abram laughed; he was considering his own body

now deadened, and he exclaimed, "O that Ishmael should live before You!" (17:18).

Now Yahweh confirmed His covenant, asserting (17:19) that *Sarah* was to bear a son for Abram. This is what Abram had not hitherto understood. And now both Abram and Sarai were as good as dead. It is in these circumstances that we should view the institution of circumcision in this appearance. This also was a covenant. Yet it was really more. In the circumstances, it was a figure that the flesh and all its powers were entirely cut off. Abram was obedient to this.

Shortly a further appearing, the *sixth*, occurred at Mamre (Gen.18). This appearing was to confirm the fact that Sarah was to bear a son for Abraham. This time, Sarah takes part in the conversation. And, as did Abraham in the previous appearance, Sarah laughed. This drew forth Yahweh's question (18:14), "Is anything too difficult for Yahweh?" The answer, of course, is no, for the fifth appearing had rested on the title *El Who-Suffices (El-Shaddai)*.

The son was to be named Isaac. In that name was recorded the folly of Abraham and Sarah. At the same time the name also recorded the joyous laughter resulting from the fulfillment of Yahweh's promises. Sarah first laughed on her own account, but later she laughed because Yahweh caused her to do so (*cf* Gen.21:3-7). And here we also laugh with Sarah.

Coupled with this sixth appearing, it is recorded that Abraham interceded on behalf of Sodom. In this service we begin to discern the developed understanding of Abraham. In accord with the promise of blessing through him, Abraham interceded. And the intercession shows his discernment of Elohim's glory in relation to His creatures.

We are given the gist of Abraham's understanding when he asked, "Will You indeed, sweep off the righteous with the wicked? Perhaps there are fifty righteous in the midst of the city; will You indeed sweep off and not bear with

the entire place on account of the fifty righteous who are within it? Far be it from You to act in this manner to put to death the righteous with the wicked, so that it would occur with the righteous as with the wicked. Far be it from You; the Judge of the entire earth, would He not execute right judgment?" (Gen.18:23-25).

This is a most remarkable grasp of the mercy of Yahweh. It shows His glory, for He will indeed do right judgment.

After this Abraham was involved in a third deflection (chapter 20). He journeyed south, and came to sojourn at Gerar between Kadesh and Shur. Related to the actual fulfilling of Yahweh's promise concerning a seed through Sarah, there arose a new factor to be reckoned with. Evidently her youth was renewed, for she obtained power for the disruption of seed though beyond her prime. It was most probable that her innate loveliness was revived. The pact between Abram and Sarai (*cf* Gen.16:1,2) still worked for evil.

Despite the height of understanding which Abraham showed in the matter of Sodom, still here, in Gerar, we perceive again the weakness of the flesh, for Abraham, judging that the fear of the Elohim was absent from Gerar, practiced the same tactics as in Egypt. This imperiled the nation of the Philistines. This forebode an issue contrary to Yahweh's ways through Abraham to the nations.

Yahweh used His resources and power to rectify the position, and Abimelech was delivered. At the same time, Yahweh also showed the unique position of Abraham, for he was a prophet, who would pray for the king. Thus blessing came through Abraham (Gen.20:17).

Following this incident at Gerar, the promised seed (Isaac) was born the following season. Sarah bore for Abraham a son in his old age. Isaac was circumcised the eighth day according to Yahweh's instructions (Gen.21:1-5).

We have completed a brief survey of this biography of

Abraham. Abraham seems to have continued to dwell in the neighborhood of Gerar and Beersheba. It was in this district that Isaac was born.

For a moment let us look again over the record to discern, if possible, Abraham's progress before the seventh appearing of Yahweh.

Let us turn back to the beginning of Abram's call, as recorded in Acts 7:3. The details behind Terah's movement "Come out of your land and from your relationship and come hither into the land which I would be showing to you," commence with the word "Come." This is spoken with reference to Abram. He was responsive and obedient. Terah appeared to be sympathetic, but he was dominant, and a hindrance. After the death of Terah, in Genesis 12:1, Yahweh's message to Abram became "Go." This, according to Acts 7:4, is termed an *exile*. He was exiled into this land of Canaan. Abram went out, not versed as to where he was coming (Heb.11:8). In each instance it was by *faith*.

THE SEVENTH APPEARANCE

Let us link together the fact that Abraham was not versed in where he was coming in his early movements and the "*Go*" of Yahweh when the offering of Isaac was in view (Gen.22:2). This time there was the addition of the words "into the land of Moriah." Moriah means "Bitter-will-be" or "Bitterness."

When *Go* is connected thus, does it not suggest that the ultimate aim has always been in regard to God's only *Son* and His *Sacrifice*? Yahweh called Abram with one aim, to lead him with regard to *His* only Son. And this Yahweh did by means of *Abraham's* only son (22:2). Whether we think of Abram, or of the world, this bitterness is always before Him.

As we reflect upon the words of Abraham to Isaac in answer to Isaac's question, as they were *en route* to the

place of which Yahweh had told Abraham (Gen.22:7,8), can we not realize that on this journeying, Abraham truly was seeing and exulting in the day of Christ (John 8:56)?

Isaac asked about the flockling, and Abraham replied: "Elohim shall see for Himself as to the flockling" (Gen. 22:8). The AV rendering "provide" is a nuance not actually stated. When Abraham named the place, he linked the word *see* to *Yahweh*, that is, Yahweh-jireh (Gen.22:14). Yahweh was seeing to the flockling.

This lays the full stress on the fact that Abraham was walking by *faith*. As to sight, Abraham was seeing his "only son," but, as to faith, Abraham was "reckoning that God is able to be rousing Isaac from among the dead." In a parable Abraham recovered Isaac from the dead (Heb. 11:19). On Moriah, prophecy was enacted. Yahweh saw, but Abraham believed. Thus Isaac's question brings out that Abraham became acquainted with the day of Christ. And, indeed, also that Abraham is the friend of God (James 2:23; 2 Chron.20:7; Isa.41:8), fellowshiping with Elohim, having matters in common.

But let us consider Abraham's progression in the appreciation of God. For this we need to look again at the details in between his call and this consummation. But we must note that, in whatever way we look at Abraham, whether as the forefather of Israel or as the man of faith, Abraham is God's achievement.

Abram, in his own family and society, was viewed in an exclusive and preeminent way, as a man of dignity. But before, and in relation to Yahweh, Abram was none of these. He was just like the rest of the population, a failure. He missed the understanding that God was greater than creation. But, due to God's operation, Abram did attain a solitary dignity as the friend of God.

At Yahweh's second appearance to Abram, He made clear to him all that He purposed: *To your seed I shall give this land* (Gen.12:7). This contains all, though specific details are not expressed. We need to keep this in mind, for all that follows is but a working-out, an expressing of that which was fully implicit in Yahweh's first statement to Abram. The appearings (or theophanies) of Yahweh were to instruct Abram. This they did in two senses: (1) They conveyed God's intentions in the form of promises, and (2) They required Abram to conform himself and his walk to Elohim's ways. In this way, during some forty years, Yahweh was revealed to Abraham.

We start with Abram's responsive disposition. Faith led his disposition to obey. But faith was not yet instructed concerning Elohim's glory. This lack of understanding is seen in the fact that Abram's responsive disposition led to failure, for it gave rise to the activity of the flesh. Faith takes its character from the specific words of God. In the early years Yahweh's word stressed that He was giving the land to Abram's seed. When its boundaries were defined (Gen.15:18-21), Abram had come to understand details concerning the land and concerning the fact that Yahweh would give it. The question of the seed was related to the land, but this Abram did not fully grasp. Elohim's words required Abram to believe that which was contrary to circumstances. This is so both as regards the land and the seed, for the former was already possessed by the Canaanite. Nevertheless, it came about early concerning the seed that there was an even higher demonstration of faith exhibited by Abram (Gen.15:5). Yahweh pointed him to the stars to indicate the number to which his seed will attain. Abram believed God. This believing is counted to him for righteousness (v. 6). The question of the seed is settled, as far as what would be. Understanding as to how it could be, this was limited because Yahweh's glory was but partially grasped.

It is in such circumstances that the flesh can become

active. Abram came to fail because his faith did not wait in expectancy. Thus it came to be that Abram's faith was not affecting his walk (*cf* Gen.17:1).

In Abram's responsiveness we see his goodness and his good intentions superceding the walk of faith. This was the flesh seeking to create circumstances whereby God would be assisted in fulfilling His promise. This is enshrined in Ishmael! Thirteen years of experience intervened, so as to bring Abraham beyond expectation. In this period Abraham learned that, though circumstances seem to hide Elohim's glory, even to the extent of being greater than His glory in appearance, yet in actual fact, such circumstances are needed ere God's glory is unfolded. This is what Abraham learned, and so we see him, though *beyond expectation, yet he was believing with expectation*(*cf* Rom.4:18).

Faith reversed reason. Reason does not get hold of that opinion of God's glory which enables the creature to discover that in all possible ways God is paramount. And thus reason ever tends away from the glorification of God. The growth of Abraham's comprehension of the Subjector may be discerned by the use of the Divine titles which occur in the record. God really used these to instruct Abram. In each title, particular aspects of God's glory are enshrined. Here we need the caution that we ought not to think of any feature of the Deity as being greater than any other.

Yahweh is the One Who speaks to Abram right at the start. This is the Subjector's *Name*, and though of special significance, yet it embraces all else connected with the Deity. Yahweh is the One concerning Whom Abram must learn.

Amidst the warfare (chapter 14), it is *El*, the Subjector Who is presented. This One is supreme, above any other arbiter. Thus, El is greater than any of those arbiters with whom Abram had done battle.

Later (chapter 15), *Shield and the Exceedingly Increased Reward* is used as the title which settled the question of the giving of the land.

Still later, in chapter 17, Yahweh is the *El Who-Suffices.* This title really ought to have decided the question of the seed, apart from the impatience and activity of the flesh.

Yahweh Himself formulated all the foregoing names and titles. But, after offering his son Isaac, Abraham himself formulated the divine title which crystallized the position to which he had attained. It is *Yahweh-yireh,* that is, *Yahweh-is-See-er* (Gen.22:14). That sufficed. Because of this, Abraham, for his part, would walk by faith. And now, through the years, Abraham had learned that faith is triumphant. To this end Yahweh probed Abraham. Yahweh knew this at the start. The probing was to demonstrate fully, concisely and clearly to Abraham, that faith is triumphant.

So taught had Abraham become, that in the evangel of God, he is the great example of faith. It is in his footprints (Romans 4:12) of faith that we are to walk.

Thus Abram, first sought by Yahweh, had come to be the friend of Elohim. This came about through much experience. His faith dispelled doubts. It reversed reason. And it invigorated him so that he could give glory to God (Rom. 4:20). What a vast advance from the position he was in, in Ur of the Chaldeans!

Even so, Abraham, though becoming the friend of God, did not know the secret of the evangel. That brings reconciliation. Yet even this may find a faint figure in this family relationship—Father and Son, Abraham and Isaac. In reconciliation, love dispels all opposition and all offense. And love ever maintains the relationship of reconciliation.

The lesson to us in Abraham is this: *Faith is paramount!* In the evangel of God it agrees with grace and makes salvation certain. Obedient faith is triumphant.

E. H. Clayton

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND
(2 Samuel 13)

13 + This [lb]**happened** some time **afterward:** + **David's son Absalom** ›**had** a **lovely sister;** + **her name** was **Tamar, and David's son Amnon be**came **infatuated** with **her.** 2 +**Yet** › **Amnon was** [l]**distressed** so ›**that** he made him**self ill**– [i]**for** the [p]**sake of his sister Tamar; for she** was a **virgin, and in Amnon's eyes it was** too **difficult to do anything to her.** 3 +**Now Amnon** ›**had** an **associate;** + **his name** was **Jonadab, son of David's brother Shimeah;** + **Jonadab** was a **very shrewd man.** 4 + **He** [l]**said to him,** For **what reason** are **you, the king's son,** so **weak as this,** [i] **morning** [i]**after morning?** Will **you not** [l]**tell** › **me?** + **Amnon** [ls*a*]**replied to him, I** am in **love**[l] `with **my brother Absalom's sister Tamar.** 5 +**Then Jonadab** [l]**said to him, Lie** down **on your bed and** feign your**self ill.** +**When your father comes to see you,** +**then you say to him,** [pr]**Please let my sister Tamar come and** [c]**give me** a [l]**repast** of **bread.** + **She** should [d]**prepare** `**the repast** ›**before my eyes, that** [w] **I may** [l]**see** it **and** ¯**eat from her hand.**

6 +**So Amnon** [l]**lay** down **and** feigned him**self** [l]**ill.** +**When the king** [l]**came to see him,** + **Amnon** [l]**said to the king,** [pr]**Please let my sister Tamar come and make** [l]**heart-**shaped **cakes** ›**before my eyes,** +**that I may have** a **repast** of a [two]**couple heart-**shaped **cakes from her hand.** 7 +**So David** [l]**sent** word **to Tamar** in[d] **the** [in]**palace,** › **saying**–**, Go** [pr]**now** to **your brother Amnon's home and** [d]**prepare** ·a **repast for him.** 8 + **Tamar** [l]**went** to **her brother Amnon's home** +**while he** was **lying** down. + **She** [l]**took** `**dough and** [l]**kneaded** it. +**Then she** [m]**shaped** it into [l]**hearts** ›**before his eyes and** [l]**cooked** `**the heart-**shaped **cakes.** 9 + **She** [l]**took** `**the griddle and** [l]**poured** them **before him;** +**yet he** [l]**refused to eat.** + **Amnon** [l]**said,** [c]**Have every one** go **forth from** [on] **me.** +**So every one** went [l]**forth from** [on] **him.**

10 +**Now Amnon** [l]**said to Tamar, Bring the repast** [M]to**ward**[s] **the** bed**chamber** +**that I may** eat the **repast from your hand.** + **Tamar** [l]**took** `**the heart-**shaped **cakes** [w] **she had** [d]**made and** [l]**brought** them to**ward the** bed**chamber to her brother Amnon.** 11 +**When she** [c]**brought** them [l]**close to him to eat,** + **he** [c]**held** [i] **her** [l]**fast and** [l]**said to her, Come, lie** down **with me, my sister.** 12 +**Yet she** [ls*a*]**replied to him, Do not, my brother, do not** [l]**humiliate me, for** [so]**such** a thing **should not be done in Israel! Do not** [d]**commit** ¯**this** ·**decadent** thing**!** 13 **And I, whither**[d] **should I** [go]**carry** `**my reproach? And you, you** would [l]**become like one of the decadent** men **in Israel.** +**So now** I **pray, speak to the king, for he** will **not** [l]**withhold me from you.** 14 +**But he would not** › **hearken**– [i]**to her voice;** + **he was** more [l]**unyielding** [f]**than she;** + **he** [l]**humiliated her and** [l]**lay** `with **her.** 15 +**Then Amnon** [l]**hated her** with a **very great hatred; for greater** was **the hatred** with **which he hated her** [f]**than** the **love** with **which he had loved her.**

+**So Amnon** [l]**said to her, Get up! Go** away**!** 16 + **She** [ls*a*]**replied to him,** This **must not** be, [7]**my brother**[0]**;** [7]**concerning**~[s] ·**this** ·**evil** ›**of sending**– **me** away, it is ·**greater** [f]**than** the **other** one [w]**that you have done** [wi]**to me.** +**Yet he would not** › **hearken**– **to her.** 17 + **He** [l]**called** `**his young attendant** who was **ministering** to **him and** [l]**said,** [pr]**Now send** `**this** woman out, away **from** [on] **me** to[d] **the outside, and latch the door after her!**

18 + She had a **distinctive tunic on her, for the virgin daughters of the king** [l]**put on** [so]**such robes.** +**When his ministering** attendant put `**her** [l]**forth** to **the outside and latched the door after her,** 19 +**then Tamar** [l]**took ashes** [7]**and** [lpl]**put** them[0] **on her head;** + **she tore the distinctive**

tunic *w*[**that** she had **on her and** ⌊**placed her** *7*[**hands**~*c*] **on her head.** +**Thus she** ⌊**went walking**⁻ away, **and she cried out.**

20 + **Her brother Absalom** ⌊**said to her, Your brother Amnon, has he** *b*[**been with you?** + **Now be silent, my sister; he** is **your brother. You must not** ⌊**set** `**your heart** ›**on** ·**this matter.** +**So Tamar** ⌊**dwelt** + in **desolation**⌋ in **her brother Absalom's home.** 21 +**As** for ·**king David,** when **he heard** `of **all** ·**these** ·**things, he was very** ⌊**angry** ›**with him;** *7*+**yet he** did **not grieve his son Amnon's spirit, for he loved him** *t*[**because he** was **his firstborn**⁰**.** 22 + **Absalom** did **not speak with Amnon** › *f*[**either evil** +**or** *fr*] **good, for Absalom hated** `**Amnon** *on*[**for** this **matter** *w*[**where he had humiliated** `**his sister Tamar.**

23 + **It** ⌊*b*[**was** ›**after** the **days** of two **years** +**that** › **Absalom** ⌊*b*[**had** sheep**shearers**⌋ *i*[**at Baal-hazor** *w wi*[**near Ephraim.** + **Absalom** ⌊**invited** › **all the king's sons.** 24 +**So Absalom** ⌊**came to the king and** ⌊**said, Behold,** I **pray, your servant** ›**has** sheep**shearers**⌋**.** *pr*[**Now may the king** *go*[**come** +**with his servants** *Q*[**to**~ **your servant!** 25 +**But the king** ⌊*sa*[**replied to Absalom, Oh no, my son! Let not all of us** ⌊**go,** so +**that we may not be burdensome** *on*[**to you.** + **He** *7*⌊**urged**~*Q i*] **him,** +**but he would not** › **go**⁻**;** +**yet he** ⌊**blessed him.** 26 +**Then Absalom** ⌊**said,** +**If not** you, I **pray, let my brother Amnon go** `with **us!** + **The king** ⌊*sa*[**replied to him, Why should he go with you?** 27 +**Again Absalom** *7*⌊**urged**~ *i*] **him;** +**so he** ⌊**sent** `with **him** `**Amnon and** `**all** the other **sons of the king.** *7*+**Then Absalom** ⌊*d*[**prepared** a **feast like the feast of** a **king**⁰**.**

28 + **Absalom** ⌊**instructed** `**his lads,** › **saying**⁻**,** *pr*[**Now** *see*[**watch.** *as*[**When Amnon's heart** is **cheerful** *i*[**with wine, and** when **I say to you, Smite** `**Amnon,** +**then you will** *c*[**put** `**him** to **death. You must not** ⌊**fear;** *t* did **not I my**self **instruct** `**you? Be steadfast and** *b*[**be** › **sons of valor!** 29 +**So Absalom's lads** ⌊**did to Amnon just as Absalom had instructed** them**.** +**Then all** the other **sons of the king** ⌊**arose and** ⌊**fled,** + **each** one ⌊**riding on his mule.** 30 + **It** ⌊**came** to **pass** while

they were *i*[**on** the **road,** +**that the report came to David,** › **saying**⁻**, Absalom has smitten** `**all the king's sons, and not one** *f*[**of them is left.** 31 +**At** this, **the king** ⌊**arose,** + ⌊**tore** `**his garments and** ⌊**lay** down on*d* the **earth; and all his courtiers** were **standing by** with *7*[**their***c* **clothes torn**⌋**.**

32 +**Then Jonadab,** the **son of David's brother Shimeah,** ⌊**responded and** ⌊**said, My lord** *7*[**the king***c* **must not** ⌊*sa*[**think** it is `**all the lads, the king's sons,** whom **they have** *c*[**put** to **death; for** it is **Amnon, he alone,** who **is dead. For** *on*[**at Absalom's bidding it** *b*[**was** *pl*[**determined**⌋ *f*[**since** the **day he humiliated**⁻ `**his sister Tamar.** 33 +**So now my lord the king must not** ⌊*pl*[**take to his heart** the *sp*[**report, to** *sa*[**think** that **all the king's sons are dead; but** it is **rather Amnon, he alone,** who **is dead.**

34 +**While Absalom was** running ⌊**away,** + **the lad** who was **the watchman**⌋ ⌊**lifted** `**his eyes and** ⌊**stared, and behold,** there were **many people walking** *7i*[**on** the **road of Horonaim,** *i*[**on** the **descent.** +**So the watchman**⌋ ⌊**came and** ⌊**told** › the **king** about it**.** + **He said, I have seen men** coming **down**⌋ **from** the **road of Horonaim**~ **from** the **side of the mountain.** 35 +**Now Jonadab** ⌊**said to the king, Behold, the king's sons! They have come! According** to the *sp*[**report of your servant, thus it has come** to **be.** 36 + **It** ⌊*b*[**was as he** had *all*[**finished**⁻ › **speaking**⁻**,** + *bd*[**that the king's sons them**selves **came.** + **They** ⌊**lifted their voice and** ⌊**lamented, and** *mr*[**so** did **the king and all his courtiers; they lamented** with a **very great lamentation.**

37 +**As** for **Absalom, he had** run **away;** + **he** ⌊**went to Talmai son of Ammihud, king of Geshur.** + *7*[**King David***c* ⌊**mourned all the days over his son** Amnon**.** 38 +**As** for **Absalom, he had** run **away and** had ⌊**gone** to **Geshur;** + **he** ⌊*b*[**stayed there three years.** 39 +**Then** ·**king David's** *7*[**spirit** of anger⁰ **to** go **forth** ›**after Absalom was** *all*[**vanishing, for he was consoled over Amnon that he had died.**

"For they are sowing the wind, and they shall reap the sweeping whirlwind" (Hosea 8:7). Hosea's statement regarding Israel makes a fitting summary of David's experience. Reaping comes later and in greater quantity than sowing. And so the consequential events from David's sins brought with them far greater sorrow.

Nathan had said to David, "You made Yahweh's enemies spurn, yea spurn Him by this thing" (2 Sam.12:14). "Spurn" means to kick at or drive back with contempt or scorn. Being God's representative, David brought shame on God's Name. Nathan's comment also informs us that the events of David's affair with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah became public knowledge.

David may have suspected that Uriah had been informed of Bathsheba's visit to the palace. Such suspicions would make David indignant, feeling that Uriah was trying to manipulate him. Thinking this way, he could discount Uriah's devotion and justify his own actions to himself. David would outmaneuver Uriah, making him the courier of his own death sentence, and making himself the wise tactician. But God "is clutching the wise in their craftiness" (1 Cor.3:19). Haman was hung on his own gallows, Goliath was beheaded with his own sword, the Adversary is defeated with his own weapon, death, and David was manipulated by his own sons as they copied his sins (*cf* Psa. 7:15,16; 9:15,16; Prov.26:27; Ecc.10:8,9). How much better it would be for us all to be exposed with humility than to double our sins and reap the more bitter exposure later.

Family Life in the Royal Court

Public knowledge of the king's sins became an excuse to his sons to do no less. David's polygamy was a continual spring of strife. The wives and their children would have had separate quarters. There would have been jealousy and envy among them. Probably all the wives were

ambitious for their sons to become king. With the affairs of state and his family so divided, David probably had little influence over his children as a father, and the prestige of the royal court was sure to attract many opportunistic characters and influences.

Like his father, Amnon lusted after beauty and gave in to his lust. Like his father, Absalom murdered. Like his father, Absalom used wine to weaken his victim. Yet the doting father, David, failed to discipline either of his sons for these wrongs.

David experienced the other side of his own sins through the actions of his children. He may have wondered if Uriah was pained like himself as he suffered the violation of Tamar. Oh, if only Amnon had not given in to lust as David had done! Probably the thought of incest was even more revolting to David than adultery. If only Absalom had not murdered, as David had done! And yet Absalom's crime was committed in broad daylight, before many witnesses, and was against his own brother.

The sorrow that David suffered was more bitter and intense because he himself had sent Tamar to Amnon, and he himself had sent his sons to Absalom's feast. Surely he must have asked himself, "Why did I not see these things coming? Why have I multiplied my own grief?"

"Happy is he whose transgression is lifted away, whose sin is covered over!" (Psa.32:1). When we realize the depths of sin and the tragedy to which it leads, we can realize the heights of joy to be found in that simple, honest life, lived in the light of truth. (And is this not what God has in view for us all?)

Jeremiah voiced God's message to Israel: "Let your evil discipline you, and your backslidings, let them reprove you; know then and see how evil and bitter it is when you forsake Yahweh your Elohim and you have no awe of Me, averring is my Lord Yahweh of hosts" (Jer.2:19). Paul also

gave us a similar message: "Be not deceived, God is not to be sneered at, for whatsoever a man may be sowing, this shall he be reaping also, for he who is sowing for his own flesh, from the flesh shall be reaping corruption, yet he who is sowing for the spirit, from the spirit shall be reaping life eonian. Now we may not be despondent in ideal doing, for in due season we shall be reaping, if we do not faint. Consequently, then, as we have occasion, we are working for the good of all, yet specially for the family of faith" (Gal.6:7-10).

FROM THE OUTSIDE, LOOKING IN

We have all had the experience of watching someone very dear to us, whether a close friend, relative or child, undergo sufferings resulting from their actions. In this experience we find that we have the capacity to feel and suffer with others. This should help us understand the far greater capacity that God has to experience our sufferings with us, both personally, and through Christ. "Surely our illnesses has He borne, and our pains—He was burdened with them . . . . The discipline of our welfare was on Him" (Isa.53:4,5). "You Yourself know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought from afar . . . . Should I make my berth in the unseen . . . even there Your hand would guide me, and Your right hand, it would hold me . . . . You have known my soul very thoroughly" (Psa. 139:2-14). "As a father shows compassion over his sons, so Yahweh shows compassion over those fearing Him. For He knows our formation, remembering that we are soil" (Psa.103:13,14).

In watching others suffer we feel their pain, yet we may know that ultimately these circumstances will prove to be of benefit. Faith stands fast in affliction, believing that maturity and joy lie ahead, though hidden from sight.

J. Philip Scranton

NOT OF MEN, BUT OF GOD

GOD IS THE SOURCE of every human benefit and good. This is a fundamental principle of our faith, and yet we often act as though it were otherwise. The Jew, who came to suppose that his own act of circumcision lay at the root of his privileges and blessings, is a good example:

> *For circumcision, indeed, is benefiting*
> **if** *you should be putting law into practice,*
> *yet* **if** *you should be a transgressor of law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.*
> **If** *the Uncircumcision, then should be maintaining the just requirements of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? And the Uncircumcision who, by nature, are discharging the law's demands, shall be judging you, who through letter and circumcision, are a transgressor of law.*
>
> *For not that which is apparent is the Jew, nor yet that which is apparent in flesh is circumcision;*
> *but that which is* **hidden** *is the Jew, and circumcision is of the* **heart**, *in* **spirit**, *not in letter,*
> *whose applause is not of men, but* **of God**.

CIRCUMCISION

When God first gave instructions concerning circumcision He told Abram that it was a covenant *sign* (Gen. 17:11). This would indicate that the act of circumcision was a visible reminder of what was agreed to in the contract. Hence, in Romans 4:11 Paul speaks of circumcision

as a sign and a seal "of the righteousness of the faith which was in uncircumcision." It pointed to what God had done in Genesis 15:6, and it also pointed to the promises God had already made to Abram, concerning the blessings of descendants and land and being a blessing. As such, circumcision was a benefit itself to the chosen people in that it was a visible reminder of what God had said He had done or would do. In this sense, the attention was predominantly centered on God, Who declared what He would do for them, and Who provided this sign to remind them of His deeds and promises.

However, the covenant established at Sinai involved more than God's promises of what He would do for Israel. It called on Israel to do its part by carrying out the demands of the law. In this context, circumcision was not simply a sign of what God was doing and had promised to do, but also was a sign of the nation's agreement to fulfill the demands of the law.

As such it tended to draw attention away from God to the human. It seemed to speak of the promises of God as dependent on the human fulfilling his part. This is the sense that Paul has in view in Romans 2:25, when he says to the Jew, "For circumcision, indeed, is benefiting if you should be putting law into practice."

In accord with this view, we find that after the law had been given, Moses associated circumcision with both a declaration of *God's* love for, and choice of Israel, and the requirement that *they* love and serve Him and love the sojourner among them, an apt summation of all the various instructions in the law (*cf* Deut.10:12-22). In view of these expressions of divine love for them and the need for their upright behavior in love, the people were to circumcise the foreskin of their *heart,* and no longer stiffen their neck (Deut.10:16).

Thus circumcision was being revealed as more than a

sign of what God had done and would do. It was a sign of the people's commitment as well as a sign of what God committed Himself to do. It was also to be more than a surface cutting away of the foreskin. Circumcision was to mean a cutting off of the foreskin of their collective heart, a cutting away of their stubbornness (their collective, stiffened neck). It was to be a genuine, willing and flawless putting away of all their irreverence and self-centeredness.

As such it was an impossibility to the flesh. Consequently, the Jew did not put the law into practice in accord with the sense required. He was a transgressor of law (Rom.1:27). He could not circumcise the foreskin of his stubborn heart. Therefore, any benefit based on circumcision in that sense could not be realized. The circumcision amounted to the same thing as not being circumcised (Rom.2:25).

THREE IF CLAUSES

The three clauses in Romans 2:25 and 26, beginning with the word "if," pose important questions about human righteousness in relation to law. Does the Jew put law into practice so that he gains the promised benefits? (The answer is No.) Or is he a transgressor of law? (The answer is Yes.) Furthermore, does anyone of the Uncircumcision actually maintain the just requirements of the law made known to his conscience by nature? (The answer is No.)

The scriptural answer to all three questions is that not one is just, not even one (Rom.3:10). By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified (Rom.3:20).

The first if-clause speaks of a human impossibility. The Jew does *not* put law into practice. The Jew boasts in God, but at the same time he is dishonoring God (Rom.2:17-24).

The second if-clause speaks of a well-attested fact. It speaks of a human certainty. The Jew *is* a transgressor of law in one way or another (Rom.2:27), for all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin (Rom.3:9). In a judgment where

the hidden things of humanity are brought to light (Rom. 2:16), the Jew will be found a sinner, wanting of the glory of God, just as surely as anyone else.

The third if-clause reverts to the pattern of the first. The Uncircumcision does *not* maintain the just requirements of the law. Paul speaks here of those of the nations who are aware of right and wrong by means of their conscience (*cf* Rom.2:15), or as he puts it here in verse 27, "by nature." The Uncircumcision, guided by the law written in their heart *by nature,* are most certainly included in Paul's conclusion of Romans 3:9-20. They are sinners. The evangel of God's grace is the only means for discharging the demands of the law.

As we are in ourselves, we all fail.

But Paul's main concern now is the position of the Circumcision in God's just judgment. He speaks hypothetically of the Uncircumcision in order to help the Jew perceive the serious reality and implications of his sinfulness. If righteousness can actually be gained by human effort, then the Uncircumcision can do as well as or even better than the Jew.

ALL ARE SINNERS

The truth is, however, that neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision can be justified *in God's sight* by works of law. Whether under the law given at Sinai or a law of conscience, no one can succeed in meeting all the demands of right behavior and right thinking. Sin entered into the world through Adam, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned (Rom.5:12). God Himself must provide the means whereby His promises of good and benefit can be realized.

And God does do so, as the evangel declares. Because of His giving His Son for sinners, God succeeds in gaining the benefits He has promised. And on the basis of His

achievement through the faith of Jesus Christ, God will justly put His spirit into the hearts of the Circumcision so that they will in fact put the law into practice (*cf* Ezek. 36:27). So also on the basis of His sending of His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh, the just requirement of the law will be fulfilled in the believer, both Jew and Greek (Rom.8:3,4), and eventually because of the righteous act and obedience of Jesus Christ, all sinners will be constituted righteous (Rom.5:18,19).

THAT WHICH IS HIDDEN

In speaking of God's just judgment Paul had made mention of God judging the *hidden* things of humanity (Rom. 2:16). The righteousness of God, in His righteous judgment, demands that all the sins of all humanity be taken into account, including the hidden things which other people could not see.

Now in Romans 2:28,29 the apostle writes, "For not that which is apparent is the Jew, nor yet that which is apparent in flesh is circumcision; but that which is hidden is the Jew, and circumcision is of the heart . . . ." Again it is not merely a surface matter. To be a Jew, to be of the Circumcision, as we have seen from Deuteronomy 10, all stubbornness and pride and greed, all coveting and lying and irreverence must be cut away, even that which is hidden from other people. There must be genuine love for God and for one's associate. Every wrong thought and deed must be taken away. Then the Jew is truly a Jew.

A JEW IN TRUTH

This passage is not saying that the Uncircumcision takes the place of the Circumcision. It is not suggesting that people of the nations will manage to succeed where the Jew has failed, so that they become "true" Israel. These verses define for the Jew that which is required of him as a Jew.

What was required was: "Be circumcised to Yahweh, and take away the foreskin of your heart, O man of Judah and dwellers of Jerusalem" (Jer.4:4). But for this to happen, God will have to do it, as indeed was promised long ago: "Yahweh your Elohim will circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed so as to love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may stay alive" (Deut.30:6). That has not occurred yet, but it will when their Rescuer turns away irreverence from Jacob and sets up His [one-sided] covenant with them and eliminates their sins (Rom.11:26,27).

APPLAUSE OF GOD

The language of Romans 2:29 anticipates the evangel, especially as Paul relates it to Israel in Romans 9-11. It is not their doing of the law but Christ's death for sinners that is the basis for God eliminating the sins of Israel. Because of God's giving of His Son, Israel will truly manifest circumcision of the foreskin of the heart. This will not be an achievement of their own fleshly strength, but an operation of spirit from God awakening them from their spirit of stupor (Rom.11:8). "For unregretted are the graces and the calling of God . . . . For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all" (Rom. 11:29,32). God does this on the basis of Christ's death for sinners, including transgressors of the law.

Hence "glory and honor and peace" (Rom.2:10) will come to Israel, not on the basis of their faithfulness, but on the basis of the faithfulness of God (Rom.3:1,2). The applause is not of men but of God (Rom.2:29), which means not only that Israel will meet that standard of righteousness which brings applause to them *from* God, but also that the cause of Israel's eventual faithfulness is found in God, Who is the Source of all benefit and good. It is, as literally stated in the Greek, *out* of God.

ROMANS 3:1-4

What Paul has just written exposes the great need of the Jew for that deliverance which is announced in the evangel. The Jew is not excepted from the irreverence and unrighteousness of humanity. Nevertheless, God has clearly made known in His Word that He has special favors in view for this people. There are many benefits for the Jew, but they are benefits that are wholly sourced in God, not at all in themselves:

What, then, is the **prerogative** *of the Jew,*
or what the **benefit** *of circumcision?*
Much in every manner.
For first, indeed, that they were entrusted with the **oracles of God**.
For what if some disbelieve? Will not their unbelief nullify the **faithfulness of God**?
May it not be coming to that!
Now let **God be true**, *yet every man a liar,*
even as it is **written**:
That so **Thou shouldst be justified** *in* **Thy sayings**,
And shalt be **conquering** *when Thou art being judged.*

In parallel with the words "the Jew," and noting the presence of the definite article in the Greek, we could translate the second half of Romans 3:1 as follows: "or what the benefit of *the Circumcision*?" This may help us to see that Paul is now not thinking of circumcision primarily as a human act (as he was in 2:25) but rather as a name of a people whose stubbornness and failures will be cut off from them by God.

It is God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises, recorded in His oracles, written in His Word, announced in His sayings, that will make Israel a people who are circumcised in heart. Therefore, the prerogative and benefit is much in every manner.

ENTRUSTED WITH THE ORACLES OF GOD[1]

The benefit of circumcision, or rather the benefit in being of the Circumcision, is encompassed in the fact that God entrusted His oracles to them. It is in His oracles, or sayings, that God promises them blessings of land and rule and of being a blessing to others. But also He speaks there of the blessing of having the law in their heart and upholding its standards. Those of the Circumcision will indeed be granted circumcision of the foreskin of their heart.

For it is written, "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I bestow within you, and I will take away the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. My spirit shall I bestow within you, and *I will make it that you shall walk in My statutes and observe My ordinances, and you will obey them.* Then you will dwell in the land which I gave to your fathers, and you will become My people, and I shall become your Elohim" (Ezek.36:26-28).

This is the new covenant, which fully accords with the benefits promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and even with those announced when the law was given. But now these blessings are not made dependent on prior obedience. The obedience of Israel is now viewed, not as a prerequisite of blessing, but as an aspect of the blessings themselves. The oracles and their realization are great benefits because they are all *of God*.

EN-FAITHED, UNFAITHFUL, FAITHFUL

The English reader is unlikely to catch the wordplay in Romans 3:2,3 where three forms of the Greek term for "faith" appear. The word "entrust" is literally "faith-ed" and refers to something given for faithful keeping. We might invent a word like "enfaithed" in order to make the wordplay more visible. To the Circumcision were "enfaithed" the oracles of God.

1. Much of what follows is excerpted and adapted from *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.86, pp.31-40.

Yet some *disbelieved.* The word "believe" is the verb form of the noun "faith." Here it has a negative prefix, rendered *dis-* in the CV, but in order to continue using the root idea of "faith," we could render the question, "For what if some *were unfaithful?* Israel was *enfaithed* with the oracles of God; they were given the words, or sayings of God for faithful keeping. But some, at least, of them were *unfaithful* to these oracles, and thus the nation failed to uphold its trust.

NON-NULLIFIABLE FAITHFULNESS

Will not their unbelief, their *unfaithfulness* to that which was given to them for faithful keeping, nullify the *faithfulness* of God? May it not be coming to that! The pattern is clear. First of all we have something committed to Israel for their faithful keeping, indeed their faithful doing. Then we have Israel as a nation being unfaithful to the trust. And finally we have God being faithful to it. God is faithful, and His promises will be fulfilled.

This is fully in accord with Yahweh's words *spoken* through the prophet Jeremiah: "Behold, the days are coming, averring is Yahweh, when I will contract a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Not like the covenant which I contracted with their fathers in the day I held fast onto their hand to bring them forth from the land of Egypt, *which covenant of Mine they themselves annulled* . . . . For this is the covenant which I shall contract with the house of Israel after those days, averring is Yahweh: I will put My law within them, *and I shall write it on their heart;* I will become their Elohim, and they shall become My people" (Jer.31:31-33).

Israel was unfaithful, but the faithfulness of God cannot be nullified. Because of God's faithfulness, and for

no other reason centered in the human, but because of God's faithfulness alone, the benefits of all the oracles of God entrusted to Israel (including the benefit of putting the law into practice) will be granted to them. No wonder Paul writes that the benefit is *Much in every manner!*

LET GOD BE TRUE

Israel has demonstrated what the human is like, unfaithful and false. But God is faithful and true to His oracles. With the words of Romans 3:4 (partly cited from Psalm 51:4), Paul sums up his thoughts on Israel's benefits for now. (He will carry them forward again in Romans 9, 10 and 11.) God will be justified in His sayings concerning Israel even as in all His declarations. They will not be left unfulfilled because of the failure of His chosen people to save themselves.

The Jew brought dishonor to the Name of God, but this cannot finally be a blot against Him. He will be conquering whenever anyone tries to judge Him, saying that He did the best He could, but the failures of His people were too much for Him. What He has said concerning Israel will be confirmed in realization, so that they will indeed be His people in heart and behavior.

The faithfulness is of God, and this faithfulness is based on the gift of God made known in the evangel of God. Israel's unfaithfulness shows how vital God's giving of His Son for sinners is to that nation. But what is exhibited in the records of Scripture by the Jew is only an example of what is true of us all. Therefore, it is with that message, which is testified to in God's Word, concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, that Paul is directing our hearts. Romans 2:25-3:4 hastens us forward to the great unfoldings beginning with Romans 3:21.

D.H.H.

GROWTH IN REALIZATION OF GOD

We are acquainted with the entreaty, "Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:7).

In the presence of such high entreaties, it is vital to our realization of truth to recognize that the apostle Paul does not come to us as a "second Moses." That is, Paul does not "command" us to do what is right on the grounds that if we fail to do so we will suffer the curses of the law, or, if we should continue to disobey, that we will "lose our salvation" and find ourselves among the vessels of wrath.

Paul comes to us, instead, as a wise counselor, as the Lord's apostle, encouraging us and building us up in faith. He entreats us concerning that which is imperative to our service if God would be pleased and we would be benefited. The fear and trembling that is to attend our walk as we carry our salvation into effect (*cf* Phil.2:13), is not a fear of divine wrath or a trembling born out of a contemplation of eternal punishment. Instead, it is a fear to offend our God and Father Whom we love; it is a trembling produced by an awareness of the fact that the spirit of the One Who rouses Jesus from among the dead condescends to make its home in us.

Insofar as the curses of the law are concerned, "Christ

reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes" (Gal.3:13). We "were put to death to the law through the body of Christ" (Rom.7:4); hence "we were *exempted* from the law" (Rom.7:6). Consequently, we "are *not under* law" (Rom.6:14). These things are related to us by Paul with reference to the fact that Grace *reigns* for life eonian (Rom.5:21); eonian life is a *gracious gift* (Rom.6:23).

DIVINE INDIGNATION

As to the question of divine wrath in the future "day of indignation," how thankful we are to affirm that, "being *now* justified in [Christ's] blood, we shall be saved from indignation through Him" (Rom.5:9). We are also mindful that, according to God's purpose, there are many who will be "vessels of indignation" (Rom.9:22), yet only unto the end that, in due time, they themselves should also be obtaining mercy (*cp* Rom.9:16; 11:32).

Those, however, who are "God's *chosen* ones" (Rom. 8:33; *cp* 2 Tim.2:10), having been *graciously* granted to be believing (Phil.1:29), have had the blessing of justification conferred upon them even now (Rom.3:22). In His kindness and grace to us, God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ Who died for our sakes, that, whether we may be watching or drowsing, we should be living at the same time together with Him (1 Thess.5:9,10).

If some will not, as it literally is, "*tenant* the reign of God" (i.e., have an allotment or "place" in His reign; Gal. 5:21; *cp* 2 Tim.2:12), it is not to say that they will not live under its jurisdiction. All who are members of the body of Christ will live under the jurisdiction of God's reign, whether or not they have a place in its governance.

Vivification and eonian life are a display of God's *grace;* they are not a display of a divine reward in response to man's faithfulness (Eph.2:5,7). They are not a matter of

qualification, but of favor. The fact that, relatively speaking, the reverse is true concerning the selection of those who will have a governing position within the kingdom is beside the point. The believer's eonian life depends solely upon the grace of God.

Concerning the oncoming eons: whether or not we take part in the reign *of* that day, we will, in any case, *in* that day, be roused, vivified and seated together among the celestials (Eph.2:5,6). Our "seat" among the celestials, speaks of a settled place of useful service. Every one of us will be pleasing to God and faithful in His service. "Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, *then you also* shall be manifested together with Him in glory" (Col.3:4).

JUSTIFIED FROM SIN

In the grace of God, Christ tasted death for the sake of *everyone* (Heb.2:9). "Christ Jesus . . . is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for the sake of *all* . . ." (1 Tim.2:6).

"For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently *all died*" (2 Cor.5:14). And, "one who dies *has been* justified from Sin" (Rom.6:7; i.e., "freed from Sin," *cp* Rom.6:18).

This justification *from* Sin which is now the portion of all, is wholly the achievement of the cross. "What was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh" (Rom.8:3). Thus in Christ we behold "the Lamb of God Which is taking away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

Sin in the flesh does not *await* condemnation; it has already *found* condemnation. Sin in the flesh is not *to be* condemned in a future judgment (such as in the second death); it *has been* condemned in a past judgment, the judgment of the cross. The sin of the world has been *taken away* through the sacrificial offering of the Lamb of God,

Christ Jesus our Lord. God made Christ ("the One not knowing sin") to be a sin offering (2 Cor.5:21). Indeed, in literal terms, "He makes Him [to be] *sin*"—that thus sin might be *condemned* and *taken away.*

Consequently, God has not only conciliated *us* to Himself through Christ, but has, in Christ, conciliated *the world* to Himself as well. Accordingly, He is not only dealing graciously with all *our* offenses (Col.2:13), but, concerning the world as well, He is "not reckoning *their* offenses to them" (2 Cor.5:18,19).

Sin speaks of *failure;* it speaks of that which "misses the mark," the mark or target of that which is inherently good, well pleasing and perfect (*cp* Rom.12:2). Sin in the flesh, "the sin of the world," has met its judgment through the One Who is the Sin Offering. Now, through the work of Christ, man is justified *from* the evil slaveowner, Sin (2 Cor. 5:14; Rom.6:7b). Man is declared to be in the only right relationship to Sin, which is to be freed from its jurisdiction. Sin personified (literally, man's sinful deeds), no longer has the prerogative concerning man's judgment. Instead, God through Christ has gained the prerogative!

Therefore, *God*—not Sin—will now determine each man's judgment and final destiny. And, He will do so according to His own purpose, not according to individual merit. Indeed many who will be subjected to God's indignation are far less deserving of it than others who will be saved from it. The vessels of mercy enjoy mercy solely because of God's gracious purpose, not because of any deservedness of their own (1 Tim.1:12-16; Rom.9:15,16).

WHAT THE HUMAN DESERVES

Insofar as "just deserts" are concerned, *all* are deserving of death (Rom.1:32). Considered in themselves, in their own sinfulness, apart from the divine purpose, humanity is well suited and worthy only of death. If this were the only

consideration, it would be altogether fitting not only to put man to death, but to leave him there on a permanent basis.

This is true of the entirety of humanity, not merely of some. Remember, all sinned; *and* all are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). The glory of God represents the only ideal standard of righteousness. It is not merely that man *comes short* of the glory of God that is significant. It is that he is found *wanting* of the glory of God. Not only have all mankind sinned, but all mankind—including those who are least offensive—are members of the old humanity which is *corrupted* in accord with its seductive desires (Eph.4:22).

WHAT GOD WILLS

Howbeit, in the end, God, Who loves all (John 3:16), and wills to save all (1 Tim.2:4), will become All in all (1 Cor. 15:28). In that day, God will fully manifest Himself as the One Who indeed is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim. 4:10). Until then, with respect to all interim judging, it is only a question of whether one best serves the divine purpose as a vessel of mercy or as a vessel of indignation.

OFFENSES NO LONGER RECKONED

The fact that God has conciliated the world to Himself and is not reckoning offenses to the all who have sinned, affirms the fact that man's sinfulness continues to be offensive to God. It is not that man's sinful ways are no longer offensive to the Deity. That is far from the case. It is that now that the Sin Offering has been made, God is no longer *reckoning* man's offenses to him.

It must be emphasized that the conciliation does not exempt man from his close and often painful connection with the generally attenuated yet sometimes full-toned indignation of God which, even now, is being revealed from heaven upon the irreverence and injustice of men

(Rom.1:18). We become acquainted firsthand with God's appraisal of sin whenever we ourselves experience the practical retribution which attends our own failures (*cf* Rom. 1:18-32; *cp* 1 Tim.6:9).

It does not follow from the fact that, as a timeless truth, *sin* has been taken away, nor from the companion fact that, personally speaking, *offense* is not being reckoned, that God will therefore do nothing at all insofar as personal adjudication is concerned with respect to the dreadful deeds of His beloved creatures. God will still bring every *act* into judgment (Ecc.12:14), both in the case of the believer (at the dais of Christ; 2 Cor.5:10) and of the unbeliever (before the great white throne; Rev.20:11,12).

GOD'S WORK OF JUDGMENT

Divine *judgment*, however, simply speaks of divine *decision*. For the sake of the accomplishment of the divine purpose, it remains *expedient* that the various judgments in which God would engage in response to man's wickedness still be carried out. Through these means, God will further make known the awfulness and injuriousness of sin.

Yet it must be recognized that the indignation in the day of the indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God (Rom.2:5), will itself proceed "according to" (or, "in accord with") that glorious body of divine revelation which Paul terms "my evangel" (Rom.2:16)! Paul's evangel is the evangel which reveals the eventual "life's justifying" and reconciliation of all mankind through the saving work of Christ (Rom.5:18,19; Col.1:20). How we rejoice to know that the events of the day of judging will proceed on the basis of and in the light of the glorious consummation when God becomes All in all.

In all future, adversative judgments, then, God will be mindful that the "sin in the flesh" of those undergoing judging has already been condemned and taken away through

the sacrifice of Christ. He will be mindful as well that, through Christ's sacrifice, every sinner—even the most wicked—is already joined to Himself. That is, this is so in fact, all human unbelief notwithstanding.

It is true that, in the current era, God *acts* in conciliation toward mankind. It is true as well that, in coming times of indignation, it will *appear* that God surely is reckoning the offenses of humanity against them. Yet in fact, in the depth of His heart, this will not be so. This is because, at the cross, God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself. The recognition that, practically, this is a truth applied in a special way in the present, must not be misused so as to obscure the realization that, factually, it is a timeless and abiding truth.

In His work of judgment, through Christ, what is seen on the surface covers what is in the depths of God, made known in the One revealed in Paul's evangel (*cf* 1 Cor.2: 6-10). Let no one imagine that Christ, the Righteous One, departs from virtue in assuming the role of Divine Indignation. He does so for the sake of the glory of God and the benefit of all concerned, being motivated by love, wisdom and perfect righteousness. His motives are of the highest order, and His purpose for the greatest good.

FOR GOD AND HIS GLORY

It is vital to realize that the divine indignation of the day of indignation will be the manifestation of an assumed character, not the reflection of what, deeply and ultimately speaking, is actually so.

Furthermore, the indignation of that day will be just the right amount, neither too much nor too little. It will soon be past, and, even as all else, will prove to be for the glory of God and the benefit of man. How glorious it is to know that God does not afflict "from His heart" (Lam. 3:33). How we rejoice in the realization that, ". . . though

He afflicts, *yet He has compassion according to the abundance of His benignities*" (Lam.3:32).

The Son of God, then, to Whom all judging has been given (John 5:22), will yet, as the Emblem of God's *assumption* (Heb.1:3), *assume* the role of One Who is indignant. For the sake of the fulfillment of the divine purpose, even as for the benefit of the creature, it is wise and expedient that Christ should be manifested thus. This theophany will occur principally in the conclusion of the current eon, and then in the day of judging following the thousand years. This assumed, indignant Character, while true to form, is not at all reflective of the heart of the One Who is love (1 John 4:8)—love, which is not incensed, neither is it taking account of evil (1 Cor.13:5), evil being the outworking of the divine intention (*cf* Rom.9:19).

God has a purpose in all that occurs (*cf* Rom.11:36). Man's injustice commends God's righteousness (Rom.3:5). "The truth of God," by virtue of its being afforded an entity of contrast through the vehicle of "my lie" (i.e., through the innumerable lies in which men so frequently engage), indeed, "superabounds." That is, God's truthfulness, in the face of man's untruthfulness, thus becomes much more apparent and precious "for His glory" (Rom.3:7).

God wants to display His indignation and make His powerful doings known (Rom.9:22). Accordingly, He has made the world and all that is in it (Acts 17:24), doing so in such a way that the world will surely contain both creatures and creaturely deeds well-suited to the visitation not only of His indignation but as well of all His concomitant, powerful deeds. "Yahweh has made *everything* for its own pertinent end, *yea even the wicked* for the day of evil" (Prov.16:4; *cp* Eph.6:13). All is not only *out of* God, and *through* God, but all is *for* God as well: *to Him be the glory* for the eons! Amen! (Rom.11:36).

According to Paul, everything that exists and everything that occurs is "for" God. That is, everything is for His purpose; it exists unto the end that the purpose which requires its ephemeral presence might be achieved. It follows, then, that all that is "not of God," faithfully speaking, is nonetheless out of Him, ultimately speaking.

WE RELY ON THE LIVING GOD

All will yet redound to God's glory. Thus we say, "to Him be the glory," in anticipation of and with a view toward the good that God will surely bring into existence out of the evil upon which the corresponding good is dependent.

God cannot be glorified as the Saviour He intends to become, unless His creatures are the kind of sinners they need to be unto this end. Nor can God bless each one with salvation from sin in the way and to the degree that He intends, unless each one's particular kind and degree of sin is fixed. Therefore, that all might accord with God's purpose, all accords with what must be (*cf* Rom.8:26). All, indeed, accords with what must be, since all is out of, through, and for God (Rom.11:36), Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11).

Nonetheless, human behavior still occurs voluntarily, according to one's own choice. It is not true that since all is out of God (and, therefore, that human choice is out of God), that it makes no difference what we do, or that future events will come about in spite of what we do. To the contrary, future events will come about *because* of what we do. Accordingly, since we cannot know what we will do before we actually do it, the matter of decision making, even as self-discipline and self-control, remains vital.

We are awaiting the realized achievement of the full Saviourhood of God. Unto this end, we *rely* on the living God (1 Tim.4:10). Accordingly, we give thanks to Him *in* everything (1 Thess.5:18) and *for* everything (Eph.5:20). We do so, in word and deed, in the form of our unfeigned

assurance and trust in His goodness and wisdom in the face of all the evil extant in the world, replete with such an abundance of horror and misery. God is *our Saviour,* and He is *the Saviour of all mankind.*

The existence of sin and evil is a harsh and unchanging reality. Whatever *we* may do, whatever our own course may consist of, in any case, the current eon itself will continue to be a wicked eon (Gal.1:4). We are all being afflicted. The entire creation—involuntarily—has been *subjected* to vanity, the slavery of corruption (Rom.8:20,21). It is on account of *God* that "we are being put to death the whole day," that "we are being reckoned as sheep for slaughter" (Rom.8:36). We are all dying; we are all sorrowing and groaning in our bodies of humiliation.

In his present state of corruption, man has become characterized by pride, bitterness and wrath. Yet a proud heart can only be changed by the transforming power of a thankful spirit. A spirit of thankfulness affirms that any virtue we may enjoy is ultimately God's gift to us, including the virtue that makes good use of the gifts which He grants.

A bitter and wrathful spirit can only be subdued by a spirit of kindness and love. God alone can grant us such a spirit. Yet the means of grace unto the possession of such an endowment may well be acceptance of and growth in recognition of God as God.

How helpful, then, it is truly to realize that the same awful deeds that man devises against us for evil, God designs for us for good (*cf* Gen.50:20; *cp* Rom.15:4). How beneficial it is to know that all is out of, through and for God.

It is in an awareness of this glorious truth that we say, "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, our Father, Who loves us, and is giving us an eonian consolation and a good expectation in grace, be consoling your hearts and establish you in every good work and word" (2 Thess.2:16,17). J.R.C.

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 The Two Seeds
105 God is Faithful to His Word
111 David as a Father
117 "Outside of the Body"; Prayer, and the Will of God
127 When God is Being Judged
137 The Teaching of Baptizings

MAY, 2004

Volume XCV **Number 3**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

NEW PRINTING:

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs

The publication of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) is an ongoing project endeavoring to provide, in a consistent English translation, a closer reflection of the grammar, syntax and wording of the ancient Hebrew manuscripts than can be found in other current versions.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2004
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-FIVE

EDITORIAL

THE Concordant Version of the books of 1 Chronicles through Job is now being published with large size print similar to our volume of *The Former Prophets.* With this publication, the entirety of the CV of the Hebrew Scriptures has been published in one form or another, although the CV of Jeremiah, which was issued in 1974 as facsimiles of typewritten sheets, is no longer available. It has been a long time coming, and still there is much to do before the whole can be issued as a single volume, yet we are truly thankful that God has brought us this far in this undertaking.

The concept of preparing a "concordant" translation occurred to A. E. Knoch (1874-1965) and Vladimir Gelesnoff (1877-1921) even before they commenced the publication of *Unsearchable Riches* in 1909. Like many others of their day, they found that the use of a good concordance greatly helped in grasping and appreciating God's revelations in His Word. Such investigations also helped to uncover inconsistencies in translation which had tended to obscure the clarity of the ancient manuscripts. Brother Knoch's study entitled "On Baptism" (first published in 1907 in the journal, *Things to Come,* and being presented in our magazine for the first time, starting with this present issue), employed this method of scriptural study. It traces the family of words dealing with *baptism* throughout God's Word, as listed in a complete concordance, carefully examining their usage in their contexts. Brother Gelesnoff's own study of the Hebrew word, *olam,* and the Greek words, *aiōn* and *aiōnios,* published under the title, "The Ages," used the same approach. And in this case, the need of a "concordant" translation became especially apparent.

It may be that there are not many new "breakthroughs" in the Concordant Version of First and Second Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther and Job. But the effort to avoid using any particular English word as a translation of more than one Hebrew or Aramaic term gives our translation special value and reliability for the student of Scripture.

Another feature should be mentioned, and that is our use of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint, other ancient translations and reasonable conjectures as indicated by the context for adjusting some readings in the traditional Hebrew text. These changes are noted by special markings with a translation of the traditional readings given in footnotes. Along this line, in Chronicles we took into account the evidence provided by the many parallel passages in Genesis, Joshua, Samuel, Kings and the Psalms. There is consistency also in our rendering of verb forms and other grammatical features which can greatly help those who are not familiar with Hebrew to become acquainted with many details that would otherwise be hidden.

In looking back at all the labor on this project, the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:8,9, concerning his ministry in heralding the evangel, seem especially appropriate. But if at present there are afflictions, distresses, perplexities and times of being cast down (as there are "in everything" connected with the believer's toil in the Lord), we also are daily blessed with "encouragement and delight" (2 Cor.5:8) in focusing on God's Word. Regarding the Hebrew Scriptures, we are especially encouraged and find increasing delight when we see how they point forward to Jesus Christ.

God willing, our next installment of the CVOT will include our revised translation of the "Major Prophets," Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. We welcome your suggestions and questions concerning our renderings as well as notices concerning typographical errors.

D.H.H.

THE TWO SEEDS

16 +**Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne** › **him no**[t] children; +**yet she** ›**had** an **Egyptian maid, and her name** was **Hagar.** 2 +**So Sarai** [l]**said to Abram: Behold** [pr]**now, Yahweh has restrained me from bearing**– children. [pr]**Please come to my maid. Perhaps I shall be built** up [f]**through her. And Abram** [l]**hearkened to Sarai's voice.**

3 +**Thus,** [f]**at** the **end of ten years** that **Abram** ›**had dwelt**– **in** the **land of Canaan, Abram's wife Sarai** [l]**took** `**her** ˙**Egyptian maid Hagar and** [l]**gave** `**her to her husband Abram** ›**as wife for him.** 4 +**So he** [l]**came to Hagar, and she** became [l]**pregnant.** +**When she** [l]**saw that she was pregnant,** + **her mistress was** [l]**lightly** esteemed **in her eyes.** 5 +**Then Sarai** [l]**said to Abram: My wrong** is **on you. I´ gave my maid in**to **your bosom.** +**Now** that **she** [l]**sees that she is pregnant,** + **I am** [l]**lightly** esteemed **in her eyes. May Yahweh judge between me and** [bt] **you.** 6 + **Abram** [l][sa]**replied to Sarai: Behold, your maid** is **in your hands; do to her** ˙what is **good in your eyes.** +**So Sarai** [l]**humbled her, and she** ran [l]**away from her face.**

7 + A **messenger of Yahweh** [l]**found her** [on]**at** a **spring of** ˙**water in** the **wilderness;** it was [on] **the spring** [i]**on** the **way to Shur.** 8 + **He** [l]**said: Hagar, maid of Sarai, from where have you come, and where are you going?** + **She** [l][sa]**replied: I** have been running **away**[l] **from** the **face of Sarai, my mistress.** 9 +**Then** the **messenger of Yahweh** [l][sa]**told** › **her: Return to your mistress and humble** your**self under her hands.** 10 +**Besides,** the **messenger of Yahweh** [l][sa]**spoke to her: I shall increase,** yea **increase**– `**your seed** so +**that it** can**not be** [l]**numbered** [f]**for multitude.** 11 +**Again** the **messenger**

of Yahweh [sa]**spoke to her: Behold, you** are now **pregnant and shall bear** a **son.** + **You will call his name Ishmael, for Yahweh has heard** ›**of your humiliation.** 12 **And he´ shall become** a [h]**man** like an **onager: his hand** [i]**against all, and** the **hand of all** [i]**against him, and** [on]**against** the **face of all his brothers he shall tabernacle.**

13 + [7]**Hagar**[0] ‖**called** the **name of Yahweh** ·Who had **spoken**‖ **to her: You** are an **El-of-Seeing, for she** ‖**said: Have I here** [mr]**indeed seen after** the One Who is **Vigilant**‖ over **me?** 14 **Therefore** one **called** › this **well:** The **well** ›**of** the One **Living** and **Vigilant**‖ over **me. Behold,** it is **between Kadesh and** [bt] **Bered.**

15 + **Hagar** ‖**bore** › **Abram** a **son; and Abram** ‖**called** the **name of his son whom Hagar bore** [7]**for him**[cs]**, Ishmael.** 16 + **Abram** was **86 years old** [i]**when Hagar bore**¯ ·**Ishmael for Abram.**

TWO SONS were given to both Abraham and Isaac. In each case one was of the *flesh* and one in the line of *faith*. In both cases the fleshly one was the firstborn, superficially superior to his brother, and the forefather of a nation outside the people of promise. To conform with this Abram's name was changed from Abram (FATHER-HIGH) to Abra*ha*m, (FATHER-HIGH-*throng*) because he was to be the ancestor of two other national lines, Ishmael and Edom, outside the sphere of spirit, which would be antagonistic to the nation of promise. As Adam's seed was divided into the lines of Cain and Seth, so Abram's seed was later divided into the lines of Isaac and Ishmael, and Isaac's into Jacob and Esau.

This is an exceedingly important departure. In the preceding eon it seems that the firstborn according to the flesh were always recognized. Even in the beginning of this eon, from Noah to Abram, the firstborn of the flesh

were reckoned in the genealogy of Christ. But by this time it is evident that the flesh is not benefiting any (John 6:63). Life comes only by spirit. So now we have a double witness, Ishmael and Esau, to the fact that the flesh has lost its priority.

FLESH AND SPIRIT

Sarai, despairing of ever performing her part in the promise, determined to carry it out through another. The immediate effect of the expedient was trouble, symptomatic of much more to come. It prefigured that long conflict between the physical and the spiritual seed, those enslaved under the law of Moses, and, those free in Christ, the unbelievers and those of faith, those generated by the will of man and those springing out of the promise of the Subjector.

Paul's allegory, in which Hagar and Sarai are compared to two covenants, that of the flesh and the law, and that of the spirit and the promise (Gal.4:21-31), is the key to the inner meaning of this episode in Abram's life. He was already eighty-six years old, and his wife, Sarai, seventy-six, so there *seemed* to be little likelihood that the promise of Yahweh could be fulfilled. Sarai seems to have given up all hope, so she proposed to have her maid, a slave girl, take her place. She was quite correct when she said that *Yahweh* had *restrained* her from bearing, but she did not understand that this was intentional, as, indeed, was her choice of Hagar, for the seed must be of two kinds, the flesh acting as a foil for the spirit.

Abram was justified by his *faith, not* by his acts. He still believed *what* Yahweh had said concerning his seed. But he had not been told *how* this was to be brought about. As Sarai, his wife, bore him no son, he once thought the seed might come through his adopted heir, Eliezer of Damascus. Now, when Sarai, his wife, whose barrenness seemed to be an insurmountable obstacle to the fulfilment of the

promise, suggested that her Egyptian slave girl take her part, he supposed that this was Yahweh's way of fulfilling the promise, for he did not yet understand God's ways, especially the great distinction between flesh and spirit. So Yahweh used this very action to teach him and his seed this essential lesson. By this method the Subjector *justified* Abram's apparent mistake of relying on Egyptian flesh to fulfill the promise.

FAITH AND PATIENCE

Sarai and Abram had faith, but they lacked *patience*. As time wore on, and they approached the period of life when the fulfilment of the promise would no longer be possible in the ordinary course of nature, they lost patience, and sought to forward it by a device of their own. It is one thing to *believe* a promise, yet quite another to *patiently* wait for its fulfilment. The Hebrews are exhorted to imitate those who, through faith *and patience*, are enjoying the allotment of the promises (Heb.6:12). But Abraham was justified, in this case, because the fruit of this impatience, Hagar and Ishmael, were absolutely essential as a background or foil for God's way of making true His word. Yet, when it turned out contrary to Sarai's wishes, she had to take the blame. Faith believes God's promise. Expectation longs for its fulfilment. Patience waits quietly for it.

Here we have a good example of how Yahweh uses human failure in order to carry out His intention, and guides it into the channel that not only fulfils its purpose, but *justifies* the sinner. When Sarai's harsh treatment of Hagar drove the slave girl away, and she fled into the wilderness, He sent her back to be *subservient*, for *that is the proper place of her seed*, Ishmael, and the nation which sprang from him. The chief function of this error, however, was to demonstrate, by an example, that the promise could *not* be fulfilled by the *flesh*, but must come through *faith*

and the *spirit*. Ishmael, the firstborn, superior according to the flesh, must be displaced by Isaac, the seed of the promise, according to the spirit.

In the Orient it is a terrible trial for a woman not to be able to bear a son for her lord. In this case it was far more trying than usual, for the grand and glorious promises to Abram could never find fulfilment if there was no heir to carry on the line. Where would the innumerable descendants come from if he could not generate even a single son? He would soon be too old. Indeed, Sarai seemed already far beyond the possibility of doing her part. By taking her place and seemingly supplanting her as the wife of Abram, the slave girl greatly increased Sarai's trial by her contempt. But, Sarai, as mistress, could do as she wished, and she so mistreated Hagar that she ran away. Ordinarily, this must be condemned. But, in this case, it served the high purpose of God, so must be *justified*.

SARAI'S WRONG

"My wrong *be* upon thee." is the reading of the AV. This is emphasized in the latest Revision, which has: "May the wrong done to me be upon you!" But the original simply reads MY-WRONG ON-YOU I I-GIVE. The MY before WRONG shows that *she* did it, and the doubled I before GIVE shows that *she* gave it to him, so that now the *results* rest on him. The wrong was not done *to* her, but *by* her.

Abram, moreover, did not do the wrong that Sarai did to her maid at this time. Yet Sarai was justified in her wrong-doing by the messenger of Yahweh, for Hagar had to return and humble herself under Sarai's hands. The right and wrong, however, must not be judged from the standard of human morality, but by the Subjector's revelation. The great conflict between flesh and spirit must be displayed in action. Abram must have two sons. Fleshly Ishmael must come first. And so Yahweh used and *justified* Sarai's recur-

rent wrongdoing. These repeated records of manifest sinning, which was essentially correct in the purpose of God, are given us as examples of God's method of justifying the sins of his saints, and, indeed, all sin, by using it to fulfill His loving purpose.

When Hagar fled, being an Egyptian, she naturally took the road toward her homeland. From this we are able to see her attitude toward the promises. She evidently had no faith in them whatever. Her transient happiness was all that concerned her. But she must have heard of the promises, for these were the underlying reason why she had been given to Abram. But she knew well that the son she might bear would not be her own, but reckoned as Sarah's. So she had no incentive to endure the trial. But this is now given to her. She also is to have an innumerable progeny, and be the ancestress of a nation. So she returns and is subordinate to Sarai, even as the nation she bore was to be subject to the nation of the promise.

THE MESSENGER OF YAHWEH

The appearance to Hagar gives us the first occurrence of the phrase, "*messenger* of Yahweh." Indeed, it is the first time that the word "messenger" is used in the Scriptures (Gen.16:7). Before this, Yahweh *seems* to have spoken directly to those whom He addressed, with the implication that they were *near* Him, within the range of His voice. So He spoke to Abram when He made the promises (12:7; 15:1,4,7,9,18). But Hagar was *not near* in spirit, and her seed, in contrast to the seed of promise, is at a distance from Yahweh. So He deals with them by means of an intermediary, a worker, or messenger. Yet it was Yahweh Himself Who heard of, and saw her humiliation. This was implied in the name of her son Ishma-el (HEARer-is-EL), and by the name she gave Yahweh (SUBJECTor-of-SEEing).

A. E. Knoch

GOD IS FAITHFUL TO HIS WORD

THE FIRST act of God, spoken of in His Word in relation to Abram concerned a piece of land. Yahweh *said* to Abram that He would *show* it to him.

To be sure, Yahweh had told Abram what *he* was to do; Abram was to go by himself from his land, from his kindred and from his father's house to the land that Yahweh would show him (Gen.12:1). We are rightly impressed by Abram's faith obedience, for he did go even though he was not versed in where he was coming (Heb.11:8). As he did later when God promised him seed in number as the stars (Gen.15:5), Abram "faced" the word and believed it (Rom. 4:17), and here also he acted in accord with his faith. "So Abram went just as Yahweh had told him" (Gen.12:4).

But what about God? He also acted in accord with His word and showed Abram the land: "Then Yahweh said to Abram after Lot had parted from him: Now lift up your eyes and see from the place where you are, northward and to the Negev [i.e., southward], eastward and to the sea [i.e., westward]" (Gen.13:14). God spoke concerning what He would do, and He did it.

God's act here may strike us as noteworthy but not exactly remarkable. Abram's faith and its resulting faithfulness were most unusual for a human being. But God's faithfulness in carrying out His word of promise is just what Abram and anyone who knows anything about God would expect from Him.

And that is just the point. The believer expects God to be faithful to His word which He has spoken to us.

The very essence of our faith is to face what God has

said to us concerning what He has done, is doing or will do, and believe it.

In many ways what God did in showing Abram the land was more remarkable than what Abram did in going to the land. No less than for ourselves, God graciously granted to Abram that he should be believing (Phil.1:29). But in telling Abram first of all that He would show him the land, and then carrying out this promise right away, God was strengthening Abram's faith in matters not yet perceived. God was verifying a pattern that was first established in Genesis 1:3. *What God says, He does.* That is more than noteworthy. It is superabundantly grand and glorious, and worthy of much remark. It is the rock bottom of our faith concerning things not yet seen.

I SHALL GIVE THIS LAND

Even before Yahweh Himself actually showed Abram the land, He spoke another word concerning it: "To your seed I shall *give* this land" (Gen.12:7). Then later when Yahweh showed Abram the land, this word was made more personal with reference to Abram: "For all the land that you are seeing, I shall *give* it to you" (Gen.13:17). Certain ancient Greek manuscripts add the words "and to your seed unto the eon" here in Genesis 13, but both the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts have the reading "I shall give it *to you.*"

In promising to give the land to Abram's seed, Yahweh was promising to give it to Abram. This would also apply to Genesis 15:18-21, where the dimensions of the land are made more specific: "On that day Yahweh contracted a covenant with Abram, saying: To your seed I give this land, from the stream of Egypt as far as the Great Stream, the stream Euphrates: the Kenite, the Kenizzite, the Kadmonite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Rephaim, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Girgashite and the Jebusite."

Later we learn further details, including Hebrews 11:10 where we read that Abraham "waited for the city having foundations, whose Artificer and Architect is God." This word concerning a city cannot be a replacement of the promise of the land, but an addition to the words of Genesis which cannot be nullified. The promised land is to include a city designed and built by God. Nevertheless, Abram sojourned in the land of promise "as in an alien land" (Heb.11:9). His enjoyment of the land is still future.

Nor have Abram's descendants ever received the land in full accord with these words of God in Genesis, neither in Joshua's day nor in Solomon's, and certainly not today. If God is to *give* something, He Himself will give it, unquestionably and exactly in accord with His word. If the land is never received, it could only be because God will never give it. But God is faithful to His word even if every human being involved is unfaithful, and indeed all of us are unfaithful in one way or another.

First Yahweh said He would show Abram the land, which He did, so that Abram actually saw it, looking all about in four directions, and then He said He would *give* the land to Abram and His descendants. That word is plain. God will *give* the very land promised to Abram and to his seed.

I SHALL MAKE YOU INTO A GREAT NATION

The second act of God, spoken of in His Word in relation to Abram concerned Abram's descendants, that is, the "seed" which came so prominently in view as God added to His words concerning the land. Yahweh *said* to Abram, "I shall *make* you into a great nation" (Gen.12:2). (Later, of course, God adds to this word and speaks of many nations, but we are looking now at what God says in Genesis 12 concerning one particular great nation.)

This was a new revelation of God's purpose and intention, but it was not unrelated to earlier revelations. There

is harmony in God's Word, which, as the believer now may see, centers on God's Son, Jesus Christ. Before speaking of this great nation which would be composed of Abram's seed, God had spoken of the Seed of the woman, Who would hurt the head of the Adversary (Gen.3:15). At the same time He had told the woman that her restoration would come by her husband (Gen.3:16). Abram surely knew of this and also that he himself was not only a descendant of Adam and Eve, but one born in the lines of Seth (Gen.5:6-32) and Shem (Gen.11:10-26), which held significant places in the divine records. In addition, there was a message from God in Abram's name, FATHER-HIGH. God called Abram by a name that reflected what was not yet so (Rom.4:17).

The great nation that God will make out of Abram's descendants will receive the land shown to Abram (as will Abraham), and they will receive it as a gift and achievement from God.

The verb "make" represents the common Hebrew word usually rendered "do." We are concentrating our attention now on God and His doings, God and His work. In Genesis 12 there is one man, Abram, who is named FATHER-HIGH, who has no children, and who has a wife, Sarai, who is restrained from bearing children. But also in Genesis 12, there is God's word concerning what He would *do*. As with the promise of the land, if the great nation never materializes, it can only be because God did not do what He said He would do.

The doings of Abram and Sarai in Genesis 16 resulted in underlining the fact, stated in Genesis 12:2, that God *Himself* will make the great nation out of Abram. This does not mean that Abraham and Sarah (as they were later named) had no part to play whatsoever. But their part was in receiving from God what He had prepared for them. Their believing and their parenting of a son would be

seen, as they truly were, as the doing of God. The making of the great nation is God's task, and consequently when it is achieved it is wholly to His glory.

Hence we read: ". . . all Israel shall be saved, according as it is written, Arriving out of Zion shall be the Rescuer. He will be turning away irreverence from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them whenever I should be eliminating their sins" (Rom.11:26,27). These words are based on Isaiah 59:20,21, and in relation to Genesis 12:2 we might add God's words through Isaiah a bit further on: "And your people, all of them, shall be righteous; for the eon they shall tenant the land, the scion of Yahweh's planting, the *work* [literally, *doing*] of His hands to show His beauty. The smallest shall become a thousand, and the inferior a staunch nation; I, Yahweh, shall hurry it forth in its era" (Isa.60:21,22). All of this is God's doing. When that great nation which descends "out of" Abraham is established in the land, it will be seen by all that God is the One Who *made* it. "To Him be the glory!" (Rom.11:36).

I SHALL BLESS YOU

In speaking about the land which He would *show* Abram and about the great nation He would *make,* Yahweh *said* He would *bless* Abram. This was related to Abram's own day, like the act of showing him the land, but most essentially the blessing was related to the distant future, like the making of the great nation. God blessed Abram in many ways throughout his life, but the full meaning of the blessing of Abram is reserved for the future.

Again much will be added concerning this act of God, His *blessing* of Abram and the great nation made "out of" him, in the land. For example, we read the following words of Yahweh through the prophet Ezekiel: "Then I will set up one shepherd over them, and he will graze them—My servant David. He shall graze them, and he shall be their

shepherd. I, Yahweh, shall be their Elohim, and My servant David will be prince in their midst; I, Yahweh, have spoken. I will contract with them a covenant of peace, and I will eradicate the wild animal from the land; they will dwell in the wilderness in trust and sleep in the wildwoods. I will make these places and those around My hill a *blessing*: I will cause the downpour to descend in its season; downpours of *blessing* shall come" (Ezek.34:23-26).

As for Abram's own day, God's Word lays stress on God's acts of blessing for Abram in contrast to His acts in relation to others. In Genesis 12, as we are noting, there is much that Yahweh *said* to Abram concerning land and seed and blessing, yet there is nothing there about God speaking to others. Rather the divine acts mentioned in relation to others are that Yahweh would *curse* those who maledicted Abram, and that He *touched* Pharaoh with contagions because he took Sarai to his house, not knowing she was Abram's wife. Abram was blessed with cattle and servants in association with his deception of Pharaoh, while Pharaoh was cursed with a contagious disease.

But the divine work of blessing, such as applied here to Abram, ultimately triumphs over God's temporary work of cursing, in the blessing of all. This is done through the great Seed of Abraham, Who is Christ (Gal.3:16). Here is the ultimate significance of the blessing of Abraham. It is because His Seed became a curse for the sake of sinners (Gal.3:13) that God's blessing of Abraham could eventually be realized in the blessing of all the families of the earth, including those of Egypt (Gen.12:3). It is because of the blood of Christ that we as members of the body of Christ are blessed (Eph.1:3-7). And it is because of the blood of His cross that all enemies will be reconciled to God (Col. 1:20). God is faithful to what has said in all these good and remarkable declarations.

D.H.H.

DAVID AS A FATHER
(2 Samuel 14)

14 + **Joab son of Zeruiah** got to ˡ**know that the king's mind** was **on Absalom.** 2 +**So Joab** ˡ**sent** to*d* **Tekoa and** had a **wise woman** ˡ**taken** along **from there.** + **He** ˡ**said to her,** Feign your**self** to **be** in **mourning** *pr*˙**now!** + *pr*˙**Do put on mourning garments!** + **You must not** ˡ**rub** yourself with **oil,** +**but you will** *b*˙**behave** *this*˙**now like** a **woman** who has been **mourning** *on* the **dead** for **many days.** 3 + **You will come to the king and speak to him** *as*˙**in** ˙**this manner;** +**then Joab** ˡ*pl*˙**put** `**the words in her mouth.**

4 +**When the Tekoite** ˙**woman** 7ˡ**came**~*cs* **to the king,** + **she** ˡ**fell on her nostrils** to*d* the **earth,** + ˡ**prostrated** her**self and** ˡ**said,** Do *c*˙**grant** a **salvation,** ˙**O king!** 5 + **The king** ˡ*sa*˙**replied to her, What** is **your** trouble**?** + **She** ˡ**said, Verily, I** am a **widowed woman;** + **my husband is** ˡ**dead.** 6 + **Your maid**servant ›**had two sons.** + The **two of them** ˡ**strove in** the **field;** +**yet** there **was no rescuer**ˡ to *bt*˙**part them.** +**Then the one** ˡ**smote** `**the other and** *c*˙**put** `**him** to ˡ**death.** 7 **And** *bd*˙**now the whole family has risen** up *on*˙**against your maid**servant, + ˡ*sa*˙**demanding, Give** up `the one who **smote**ˡ **his brother** +**that we may** *c*˙**put him** to **death** *i*˙**for** the **soul of his brother whom he killed,** +**even** *mr*˙**though we** do ˡ**exterminate** `**the tenant**ˡ. +**Thus they would quench** `**my** last **ember which remains, so as to** *pl*˙**leave**– **to my husband no name** +**or remnant on** the sur**face of the ground.**

8 +**Then the king** ˡ**said to the woman, Go to your home, and I my**self **shall** *m*˙**give instructions on you**r behalf. 9 +**Also the Tekoite** ˙**woman** ˡ**said to the king, On me, my lord the**

king, be **the depravity and on my father's house. +Yet the king and his throne** be **innocent.** 10 + **The king** [sa]**replied,** If anyone is [sp]**uttering** anything **to you, +then you bring him to me, and he shall not continue to touch** [i] **you further.** 11 + **She** [sa]**replied,** [pr]**Please let the king be mindful** of **Yahweh your Elohim** that **the redeemer**[l] **of blood** may [f]**not multiply**– his efforts **to** cause **ruin and** that **they** [c]**do not** [l]**exterminate my son. And he** [l]**said,** As **Yahweh lives, assuredly no**t one [f] **hair of your son shall fall** to[d] the **earth.** 12 +**Now the woman** [l]**said,** [pr]**Please let your maid**servant **speak** another **word to my lord the king.** + **He** [sa]**replied, Speak!**

13 +**So the woman** [l]**said, Why +then have you devised like this** [on]**against people of Elohim?** + [f]**While the king** is **pronouncing**– **this decree, the king** is just **as guilty for fail**ing to [c]**let his** own **expelled**[l] one **return**–**.** 14 **For we** all **shall die,** yea **die**– **and** be **like water spilled**[l] to[d] the **earth** [w]**that** can**not be** [l]**gathered** up again**.** + **Elohim shall not carry** away the **soul** + of **him** who **devises devices so as no**t **to** keep [l]**expelled from him** one who has been **expelled**[l]**.**

15 **And now** [w] **I have come to speak this word to the king my lord, for the people** have **made me fearful. +So your maid**servant [sa]**thought,** [pr]**Please let me** [l]**speak to the king. Perhaps the king may** [d]**act** on the [sp]**request of his maidservant,** 16 **for the king** [l]**hearkened to rescue his maidservant from** the **palm of the man** [7]who is **seeking**[0] **to exterminate me and my son together from** the **allotment of Elohim.** 17 + **Your maid**servant [sa]**thought,** [pr]**Now let** the **word of my lord the king** [b]**be final; for like** a **messenger of the** One, **Elohim, so** is **my lord the king, to summon the good and the evil. And Yahweh, your Elohim, may He come** to **be with you.**

18 +**Then the king** [l]**answered and** [l]**said to the woman,** [pr]**Now you must not** [l]**suppress from me** any**thing** [w]**that I** am **asking you.** + **The woman** [sa]**replied,** [pr]**Please let my lord the king speak.** 19 +**So the king** [sa]**asked,** Is the **hand**

of Joab with **you in all of this?** + **The woman** [l]**answered and** [l]**said,** As **your soul lives, my lord the king, assuredly no** [M]**man**~[s] can [c]**go to** the **right**– +**or** [c]**go to** the **left**– **from all** [w]**that my lord the king has spoken; for your servant Joab, he instructed me, and he** [pl]**put in** the **mouth of your** hand**maid all these words.** 20 It was **in** [p]**order to** [m]**turn about** the **face of the matter** that **your servant Joab did this thing. +Yet my lord** is **wise** [as]**with** the **wisdom of** a **messenger of the** One, **Elohim,** so as **to know all** [w]**that** goes on **in** the **land.**

21 +**Then the king** [l]**said to Joab, Behold, I will** [d]**act** [pr]**now** [7]**according** to[0] **this word** [7]**of your**s[0]**.** + **Go! Bring back the lad Absalom!** 22 +**Now Joab** [l]**fell** [M]**on**~[s] **his face** to[d] the **earth;** + **he** [l]**prostrated** him**self and** [l]**blessed the king. And Joab** [l]**said, Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your eyes, my lord the king** [w]**because the king has** [d]**acted** on the **word of his servant.** 23 +**So Joab** [l]**arose,** + [l]**went** to[d] **Geshur and** [l]**brought Absalom** back to **Jerusalem.** 24 +**But the king** [l]**said, Let him** turn **about to his** own **house, and he shall not see my face.** +**So Absalom** turned [l]**about to his** own **house, and he** did **not see the king's face.**

25 + There [b]**was no**[t] **man in all Israel like Absalom** who was so **exceedingly praised**– for his **well-favored** appearance**. From** the **sole of his foot** + [fr]**to** the **crown** of **his head** there [b]**was no**[t] **blemish** [i]**on him.** 26 + [i]**When he shaved**– **his head—**+ **it** [b]**was** [f]**at** the **end of days to days**◇ [w]**that he** would [l]**shave** it; [t]**when it was heavy on him,** + **he shaved it—**+ **he would weigh** the **hair of his head,** two **hundred shekels** [i]**by the royal standard** weight. 27 + **To Absalom were** [l]**born three sons and one daughter;** + **her name** was **Tamar,** and **she became** a **woman** of **lovely appearance.**

28 + **Absalom** [l]**dwelt** the **days** of two **years in Jerusalem;** +**yet he** did **not see the king's face.** 29 +**So Absalom** [l]**sent for Joab, to send him to the king;** +**yet** Joab **would not**

come⁻ to him. ⁺When he ˡsent *fr* **again,** the **second** time, **he ⁺still would not ›come⁻.** 30 **⁺Then** Absalom **ˡsaid to his servants, See, Joab's apportionment** is **›at** the **side** of **mine, and he ›has barley there. Go and ravage it** *i* **with fire! ⁺So Absalom's servants ˡravaged `the apportionment** *i* **with fire.** 31 **⁺Then Joab ˡarose; ⁺ he ˡcame to Absalom** at*d* **the house and ˡsaid to him, Why have your servants ravaged `the apportionment** *w* **that** is **mine** *i* **with fire?** 32 **⁺So Absalom** *lsa* **replied to Joab, Behold, I sent to you, › saying⁻, Come** *bd* **here and let me ˡsend `you to the king to** *sa* **ask, Why have I come from Geshur?** It would be **better for me** if **I** were *fr* **still there. ⁺So now let me see the king's face, and if** there **is depravity in me, ⁺** let **him** *c* **put me** to **death.**

33 **⁺ Joab** went **ˡin to the king and ˡtold › him. ⁺Then he ˡcalled › Absalom** who **⁺now ˡcame to the king and ˡprostrated** him**self ›before him. 7He ˡfell**0 **on his nostrils** to*d* the **earth before the king; and the king ˡkissed › Absalom.**

JOAB'S PLAN

JOAB KNEW David was pining for Absalom (v.1). He was also well aware of the influence Nathan's parable had on David. This may have prompted his plan to find someone with expertise in oratory to present his yarn. Joab probably thought that the return of Absalom would bring his nation's leader a revitalizing peace of mind.

But even though Joab's story prompted David to act according to his suggestion, it did not penetrate David's heart and open new vistas in David's life, like God's parable from the mouth of Nathan. The stories were quite as different as the tellers. Nathan's parable clearly pointed out a wrong and called for judgment upon it. The Tekoite woman's tale was laced with flattery, and called for David to give in to his natural affections. The effectiveness of

Joab's story was also lacking. Though Absalom returned, he was not allowed in the court or to see the king's face.

As design had it, Joab himself paid dearly for his deed (v.30). Regardless of the sincerity of his motives, Joab would soon undo the results of all his efforts for the sake of Absalom (2 Sam. 18:9-15).

A RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTHOOD

"And fathers, do not be vexing your children, but be nurturing them in the discipline and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

This is instruction to help enable believers to live the spirit-filled life that Paul mentioned in Ephesians 5:18. Nurturing is nourishing towards a goal—enabling to grow in the direction of good and success. Admonition is mind-placing—training and disciplining the attitude of heart and mind. Nurture and admonition are seen in contrast, or as opposites, of vexing.

Parenting is more than providing the sustenance of life for one's offspring. It requires involvement in the mistakes and problems of life. It requires the dirtying of our hands by correcting mistakes and training in behavior that is acceptable to God—even if we are busy. Real love cannot rejoice in injustice, but rejoices together in truth (1 Cor.13:6).

David was as busy as any father. The military, commercial, religious and civil affairs of a nation rested upon his shoulders. David had led his country to unprecedented power and dominance, and he prepared for the building of the temple, and revised the levitical and priestly systems. Still there was fault with him as a parent.

David vexed Absalom. He failed to take any corrective action for the rape committed by Amnon or the murder committed by Absalom. And David vexed Absalom more when he allowed him to return, but completely ignored him after his arrival. Whether David had made a good or

poor judgment would probably have been of little significance, if he had just done something. Absalom could have forgiven a judgment upon himself that he believed was unjust, if he believed that his father had made it with sincere intent. But David's failure to act in one way or another was worse than any decision that he might have made. By his own mouth Absalom declared that his death would have been an acceptable and preferable alternative to the frustration caused by indecision. David caused Absalom to lose respect for him, and then to hate him, and eventually to try to overthrow him.

THE DIVIDING OF A COUNTRY

It should be expected that Absalom had a following early on, and may have been looked upon by some as a righteous hero. He had avenged the rape and shame borne by his innocent sister Tamar. He fulfilled the function of "redeemer of blood" (v. 11) for Tamar. Absalom could easily have been seen as one who would uphold the law of God and not allow even the son of a king to escape justice.

But Absalom was chiefly esteemed for his appearance, not for moral integrity. Absalom was handsome and charismatic, and was a likely successor to the throne. As in our own culture, where celebrities and athletes enjoy fame, few are ever esteemed for their humility and righteousness.

David was aging and weakening. Absalom was handsome and rising in popularity. The wedge driven between father and son was about to begin splitting the country.

This speaks to us all. Yet in considering the lessons set before us in *David's failures* toward his sons, Amnon and Absalom, we keep in view the message of *God's victory* through David's Greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the believer's strength and joy for discipline in righteousness.

J. Philip Scranton

"OUTSIDE OF THE BODY" PRAYER, AND THE WILL OF GOD

Question:

I understand that, in death, the body goes back to the earth, the spirit returns to God who gave it, and the soul is unseen or without sensation. Yet, in the Unveiling, we read where John was said to be, "in spirit" in the Lord's Day. If this occurred "out of the body," even as may have been the case with Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:1-3, it would seem that it is possible for humans to live and know things even when they do not have a body—as most claim is so even in the state of death. I would appreciate it if you could clarify this topic for me and help me with my problem here.

Answer:

THE Concordant Version of Revelation 1:10 is: "I came to be, in spirit, in the Lord's day . . . ." Syntactically, the words, "in spirit," constitute an appositive. An appositive clarifies or explains what has previously been said. For example, in the phrase, "Marc, my son," the words "my son" serve as an appositive, clarifying the particular person named Marc that I have in mind.

Similarly, in our phrase in question in the words of the apostle John, "I came to be, in spirit, in the Lord's day," the words "in spirit," clarify the *way* that John came to be "in the Lord's day," that is, in the future "day of the Lord." John did not come to be literally (i.e., temporally) present in that future day (which would be impossible, since that era is yet future, even today); instead, he "came to be"

in the Lord's day, "in spirit." The apostle Paul uses similar language where he says to the Colossians, "For even if, in flesh, I am absent, nevertheless, *in spirit,* I am with you . . ." (Col.2:5; *cp* Rev.4:2; 17:3; 21:10).

When Paul was given "apparitions and revelations of the Lord" (2 Cor.12:1-3), he was not aware whether this experience of his was "in a body" or, in some sense, "outside of the body." I take it, then, that Paul's point is simply that, in any case, what he perceived was utterly authentic and "realistic" to him.

Paul does not say (nor does it follow) that if these revelations came to him "outside of the body," that they came to him "in spirit"—at least in any sense in which "in spirit" were to be understood as the equivalent of "apart from all bodily means." Further, since the brain (functionally, the "mind") is very much a part of the human body, the presence of the "mind" (the faculty through which we gain knowledge) entails the presence of the body.

Therefore, if revelations were somehow to be perceived in a way that may properly be said to be "outside of the body," we need to ask ourselves, How, then, should this phrase in question be understood. In particular, we should not uncritically assume that the sense would necessarily be, as in "orthodox" tradition even as modern-day spiritualism, that of as an incorporeal specter or phantom, one which, putatively, is able to think and act apart from corporeal means.

Surely, the natural sense here in 2 Corinthians 12, is that in light of the "authenticity" of Paul's experience, he was unaware whether he literally—through his bodily faculties of perception—had seen (and otherwise perceived) these revelations, or if instead he simply had come to a mental perception of these things "outside of" (i.e., without the use of) these bodily faculties. In this latter case, though extremely vivid nonetheless, these revelations would then

constitute simply a glorious mental impression, apart from the faculties of sight, sound, and the rest having been employed. I suggest, then, that the phrase here, "outside of the body," should be understood elliptically as, "outside of [the use of] the body" in its normal sentient faculties.

It is vital to keep in mind that "spirit" is "the imperceptible, intangible *power of* action, life, and intelligence" (see entry "spirit," in the Keyword Concordance, p.282). Were Paul to have been given revelations apart from the use of the body's faculties of perception and only through the agency of spirit (i.e., intangible power), he would have, in that case, then—even as John in Revelation 1:10—received such apparitions and revelations purely mentally, apart from the existence of historically-extant, tangible, sentientially-discoverable phenomena.

The human spirit is the power which *produces* all of our perceptions, whether through our sentient faculties, or simply, independently thereof, as mental perceptions. It is not that, whether in life or in death, the spirit somehow "leaves" the body and we then find our incorporeal "inner selves" somehow instantiated therein, continuing to exist and live. Instead, the human spirit (*cp* "my spirit," 1 Cor.5:4) *empowers* the body in *all* that it does and perceives, whether through sentient means, or mentally alone, apart from sentient means.

In death, this imperceptible yet exceedingly capable power, in some inscrutable way (we are not told the particulars) *returns* to God Who gave it (Ecc.12:7). In resurrection, when the dead live again, the human spirit, given by God, will *again* empower its subjects.

Question:

I am seeking light on the true *function* of prayer, especially in light of the reality of eventual universal

reconciliation. Whenever I feel the urge to pray I find myself asking the question, Do I really have the knowledge to ask God to do something other than what He already knows is best to do? Since I became convinced of the truth of universal reconciliation I have not prayed at all. Am I in error? I would add, however, that I have total confidence in God, and none in myself.

Answer:

It is ideal for our confidence to be in God and not in ourselves. That is, this is so ultimately speaking; and indeed this should be our belief and practice throughout the course of our lives, even in the midst of our most industrious undertakings (*cf* 2 Cor.1:9; 3:4,6; Phil.3:3,4).

Still, at the same time, when speaking relatively (which is generally evident from the context or nature of the case), the apostle Paul could speak of having "much confidence" (or "persuasion," see below) directed "into" (it is literally "into" here, not "in") those in whom God was faithfully working (2 Cor.8:22). But this is a relative statement, not an absolute one; it speaks of a confidence of which a certain person(s) is the object *as God's achievement* (*cp* Eph.2:10)—not of some notion of independent confidence merely in humans in and of themselves. Rather, it is a "confidence" *under God* directed toward one or more of His creatures; it is not at all a confidence which inheres in humans *in* themselves, much less *of* themselves.

This is a bit difficult to explain briefly, but the root idea of the Greek cognates which we translate either "confidence" (noun) or "persuade" or "have confidence" (verb; see entries in Keyword Concordance, "confidence" and "persuade"), in essence, all convey the root idea of *persuade;* hence PERSUADE is given as our "standard" for both of these Greek words. Ultimately speaking, we are only to be "confident" (or "persuaded") about either the truth,

existence, or occurrence of anything, if it is established and brought into being by God.

The elements of the Greek word for "prayer" signify "TOWARD-WELL-HAVing" (see Keyword Concordance entry "prayer," p.229). Prayer includes but must not be confined to requests; it should also include expressions of gratitude and grace, of praise and acclamation, of fellowship and love, directed toward God.

God is *operating* all (Eph.1:11); however, while it is evident, then, that God *determines* all, we are not told that He *pre*-determines all, at least in such a way that would logically preclude there being any point to or need for our present requests and His corresponding present responses to our prayers. Our Lord prayed frequently, in earnest heartfelt supplications. Therefore, we may be certain that we should be of this same spirit and custom, regardless of the exact manner or other particulars of any prayer activities of our own.

Prayer itself is out of God; it is inspired by Him, whenever we are moved to engage therein. Some blessings and provisions which we enjoy are only given *in response to* prayer, not apart from prayer. Since we do not know which particular prayers these are, from this consideration alone, the vital place of prayer can be clearly seen. In such cases, then, God leads us to pray, and operates in our lives effectively so that we do so. When we choose to pray, or not to pray—even as when we choose to do or not to do any other thing whatsoever—we are choosing and doing what God has appointed for us to choose and to do. Our future course is the result of our present actions. Therefore, rather than it being so that it makes no difference what we do now, since the future will supposedly be however it will be regardless of what we do or do not do at present, to the contrary, what we do now will determine what we have and experience in the future, whether in the imme-

diate future of the next moment, or the extended future of days and years to come.

Undoubtedly, we do not know what is best; undoubtedly, God does know what is best; and, undoubtedly as well, He will do what is best, *not* what is not best, even if what is not best is something that we want. Carefully considered, however, none of these considerations in the least obviate the vital place of prayer. It is simply that we need to learn to pray in accord with wisdom, which includes a recognition of God's deity, as the One Who is operating all, out of Whom, through Whom, and for Whom is all, to Him be the glory.

We will pray, or not, and, we will pray wisely, or not, according as God leads us and inspires us. May it be that He will grant us wisdom, and sustain us in wisdom. An ideal prayer is that God would be giving us a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the realization of Him, the eyes of our heart being enlightened (Eph.1:17,18). May we be praying thus, doing so as those who, knowing God, are growing in a realization of God and so glorifying and thanking Him *as God* accordingly (*cp* Rom.1:21; Col.1:10).

❊

Question:

Recently, I was studying 1 Timothy 2:4, while noting the differences in the readings of various popular translations. The AV says that God "will have all men to be saved"; yet the reading in the NASB is that He "desires" all to be saved; and, in the NIV, the reading there is that He "wants" [commonly interpreted in the sense of "desires"] all to be saved.

I know that the translation of this verse is a real point of dispute, because if God "wills" the salvation of all men and works everything according to the counsel of His *will* (Eph.1:11), there is no need to debate the topic any further.

So I presume the idea of the partialists is that God "desires" that all men be saved, though He does not actually "will" it. Thus, partialist theology would dictate that God chooses to override His "desires," much like I would if I walked into a bakery and found myself "desiring" a piece of chocolate cake, but then "willed" not to purchase it and eat it.

When I learned that the verb in 1 Timothy 2:4 and the noun in Ephesians 1:11 are from the same root word and only vary as to part of speech, I felt that there was no compelling reason to translate the word fundamentally any differently in either of these passages. Still, I am mindful of the possibility that in Greek, even as in English, the same word can have two or more meanings, dictated by context. This raises the question whether this could be so in the case of 1 Timothy 2:4. Is the meaning in the Greek that, even though God works all things after the counsel of His *will* (Eph.1:11), nevertheless He only "desires" the salvation of all mankind?

Answer:

The essence of your question is whether the Greek text supports the notion that even though God is operating all according to the counsel of His *will*, He nevertheless only "desires" the salvation of all mankind.

My answer to this question is that the Greek text in no way supports any such notion. I say this because the essence of the word in question, which is the verb *thelō* ("to will," CV) is the thought of *decision*, not that simply of the emotion (or feeling) of desire. Besides, even in cases where a connotative usage may be implied, essence of meaning is never "dropped" (i.e., it is never no longer involved), even in cases where, as a matter of interpretation, it may not be in view.

"Desire" corresponds to a different Greek word than

"will," and is concerned with the "feelings," *epithumeō* (ON-FEEL). "Wants" is sometimes used in the Concordant Version itself, but as an idiomatic variant of "wills" and with this thought still in mind. That is, "wants," even as "wills," should likewise be understood as having in view decisions or acts of will, even as in those passages in which the verb "will" itself is used in translation.

In 1 Timothy 2:4, the AV reads "will have," which phrase speaks not of a matter of decision, but of something quite different, that of the future tense. "Will have" is indicative of the future tense, which is an entirely different idea than that of the verb "will" (*thelō*, Keyword Concordance, p.327), which is a synonym for "decide." That is, the AV represents Paul as making a prediction (i.e., declaring a prophecy) as to what shall[1] come to pass. Why shall it come to pass? Because God "*will* have" it so.

Though it is certainly supportive of the salvation of all, the AV rendering here is incorrect. The Greek is not in the future tense, but in the present indicative form; that is, it simply indicates that which is occurring: "our Saviour God . . . wills that all mankind be saved . . . ." The idea is that God has *decided* (i.e., "formed the decision") that all mankind be saved. Then, the only question is, Does He operate ("do" or "work") according to His will, that is, according to the decisions which He has formed. And the answer to this question is, Yes, this is just what He does. In fact, as One Who takes advice from no one else (*cf* Rom. 11:34b), He operates all "in accord with [lit., "down," i.e., on the basis of] the counsel of His *will*" (Eph.1:11).

All the attempts to "water down" 1 Timothy 2:4 with

1. English usually represents the future tense by "shall" for the first person, and by "will" for the second and third person, both singular and plural. "Will" is a morphological and phonetical homonym; it sometimes speaks of (future) tense, while in other cases, it speaks of the distinct, unrelated idea of choice or decision.

"desires" and the like are surely in vain. Indeed, "desires" will not help the case of advocates of eternal torment, since God's counsel (i.e., His plans, what He intends to happen) shall stand, and He will do all His "desire" (Isa.46:10; CV and AV; "pleasure," AS, 1901).

The simple fact is that the Greek word in question is the term concerned with acts of volition or choice, as in, "Thy will be done" (Matt.26:42b; 6:10). It is really very shameful to confuse things here with all these vain claims in English about God "only" desiring but not willing that all be saved—as if God will not achieve what He desires!

You stated that the same word can have two or more meanings, as dictated by the context. While there is truth in what you say here, even so, in any such assertion, there can easily also be serious error and confusion.

In any language, words cannot have two (or more) intrinsic meanings; instead, each word has only one essential meaning. This is so simply in the nature of things. However, words can have, and often do have, two (or more) interpretative senses. These include the various definitions of usage which appear in our dictionaries, which are examples of a word's possible referential meanings. Verbal interpretative sense (i.e., referential meaning), however, is no part of the meaning of a word itself.

Properly speaking, dictionaries do not record word meanings (except in the sense of referential meanings, as above), but word usages. Nor do they inform us as to what is a word's "correct" meaning; instead, in their plurality of definitions, they simply factually *report* to us the various usages of each word which at least certain persons, sometimes, have made of it, whether such a usage is common or uncommon. Dictionaries do not tell us what words mean; instead, they *inform* us, definition by definition, as to what at least some *people* mean (i.e., have in view) when they use a certain word, in a certain way.

In nearly all cases, it is not necessary to make interpretations of sense within a translation; and, if at all practicable, this should not be done, else translation becomes interpretation.

This is not to say that in a version judgments of idiom will not need to be made. "Idiom" refers to the way something is expressed, and this, often, cannot be carried over literally from one language to another while maintaining good diction in translation. Such issues of "idiom" arise *between* languages; issues of verbal interpretative sense, however (i.e., the sense in which a certain word should be understood) exist apart from translation and are not in themselves issues of translation at all.

In cases where various idiomatic issues arise, we use variants in translation in order to accommodate the need. In some cases, such variants may be quite different one from another, even though there is an underlying (although not always readily evident) commonality of idea. In fact, there is great, but controlled, plurality and diversity of rendering of the Greek within the vocabulary and syntactical constructions of the Concordant Version. It is far from being the "literal, word-for-word" translation which most imagine it to be.

The faithfully translated fact is that God *wills* all mankind to be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). This is to say that God has *formed the decision* that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth. Accordingly, then, our Saviour, God, Who is also the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10), is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). In speaking thus, our apostle declares, "I am telling the truth, I am not lying, a teacher of the nations in knowledge and truth" (1 Tim.2:7). And, "faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome . . . . These things be charging and teaching" (1 Tim.4:9,11). J.R.C.

WHEN GOD IS BEING JUDGED

IT WAS the subject of *God's righteousness,* being revealed in the evangel of God's power for *salvation* (Rom.1:16,17), that led Paul into the long dissertation of Romans 1:18-3:20 concerning human irreverence and unrighteousness. Consequently, in speaking of our desperate human situation as sinners facing judgment, the apostle continually has God, His operations and His character, especially His *righteousness* in view.

The apostle writes concerning our unrighteousness and God's judgment in preparation for what he has to say concerning God's achievement of justification. He will show that there is no justification for anyone apart from the righteousness of God and His justification (*cf* Rom.3:26) in Christ Jesus.

ALL ARE SINNERS

The sorry situation of humanity does not exclude the Jew. He also is a sinner as shown in Romans 2:17-29. The Jew, therefore, is not exempt from the righteous judgment of God. God's righteousness demands that "the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience" (Rom.2:4) be set aside "in the day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God, Who will be paying each one in accord with his acts" (Rom.2:5,6). In that day "God will be judging the hidden things of humanity" (Rom.2:16).

Yet this particular revelation of God's righteousness does not involve salvation. It speaks of God, but it does not speak of His evangel, although it accords with it. As for sinners, apart from God's work of salvation in Christ, they

must *perish* (Rom.2:11), and this includes the Jew who is a transgressor of law. And as for God, His just judgment, if it were the end of the revelation of His righteousness, would mean that He could not keep His word concerning blessing for His chosen people and the world.

That cannot be, for God's righteousness demands not only that all sin be taken into account, but also that He will faithfully keep His promises of blessing. This became the issue in Romans 2:25-3:4 where Paul identified God's righteousness with His faithfulness to what He has said regarding the benefit and prerogative of the Jew. The unfaithfulness of "some" (certainly an understatement) cannot nullify the faithfulness of God. God will not fail to keep His word. He is righteous in His work of judging, but He is also righteous in carrying out His promises of blessing.

These two aspects of divine righteousness must be harmonized, which is to say again that Paul is directing us, with great anticipation, to the evangel.

GOD IS RIGHTEOUSLY FAITHFUL

There is a dilemma here: Romans 3:1-4 has disclosed that there is *much* benefit for the Jew because of the faithfulness of God. God will fulfill every word of good[1] spoken in His oracles to the Jew. Nevertheless, in one way or another every man, including the Jew, is a liar (Rom.3:4a; *cp* Psa.116:11), not simply in what we say, but in what we think and in the covering up of truth as well. Consequently all are liable to God's righteous judgment calling for divine indignation. Yet God is *true,* which is another

1. Some have felt that Paul was speaking of God's faithfulness to His words concerning His indignation. That is a contextual topic, but the immediate concern is the *benefit* of the Jew, of which God often spoke in His oracles from Genesis 12 through the latter prophets. God *said* He would bless this people, and He will.

way of saying He is *faithful,* which is another way of saying He is *righteous.* He will keep His promises.

So the question is: How can this be? How can God be righteously faithful in granting promised benefits to anyone who is a sinner? If God grants Israel the blessings spoken of in His word, which He must do because He is true and does not lie, then what happens to the revelation of His righteous judgment? In His righteousness He cannot overlook the sins of Israel forever (and again this would be contrary to His word), and if He could do so, what happens to His righteous *fairness* in judging the rest of the world?

Clearly the apostle is leading us forward to that message of salvation and justification in Christ of which Paul was not ashamed. God's righteousness as it is revealed in His judgment and as it is made known in His faithfulness to His Word must be viewed in connection with His righteousness as it is made manifest in the evangel.

THE PSALM QUOTATION

This pointing of our thoughts toward Romans 3:21 becomes even more imperative in Romans 3:5-8 where Paul expands on the startling words of David in Psalm 51:4 which he has just cited. That complete verse as rendered in the CV is as follows:

> **›Against You, ›against You alone have I sinned**
> **And done** ˙what is **evil in Your eyes,**
> So **that You may be ⌊justified ⌈when You speak⌉,**
> **And be ⌊cleared ⌈when You judge⌉.**

Here David acknowledged that his sin was an evil act against, or as literally expressed, *to* Elohim; he spoke of it as it related to God. As a transgression of law bringing evil to Uriah and others and as it encouraged Yahweh's enemies to spurn Him (*cf* 2 Sam.12:9-14), it was a sin against God. But David spoke boldly here of another effect of his

sin; it was "so that" God would be justified in what He had spoken. David's sin related to God in both a negative and positive way. It caused dishonor to Him in an immediate and temporary sense. But it also produced in David (and in all whose hearts are directed toward God) a growth in appreciation for God, bringing honor to Him Whose righteousness stands in contrast to human unrighteousness. Involved in this contrast is the glorification of God's righteousness within the believer's heart in his expectation that *God Himself* will achieve good out of it all. Or stating the matter more specifically, in accord with Romans 3:1-8, David's unfaithfulness to the law and his place as the king of Israel illuminated the faithfulness of God Whose words of blessing for Israel will be fulfilled as His achievement. And in doing so David's sin focused his thoughts on God.

The Hebrew term translated "so that" in the CV of Psalm 51:4 speaks of purpose. But when David said, "I have sinned . . . *so that* You may be justified when You speak," he was not speaking of a purpose he himself had in view in taking Uriah's wife, but of a good result that must be traced to the purpose and operations of God. David's sorrow was deep and true in relation to himself and what he had done, but his heart was directed to God with longing and expectation that He would bring "elation and rejoicing" (Psa.51:8). David's confidence was in God. Besides his personal losses and sorrows, David's sin resulted in present evil for Jerusalem, and because of that it brought great distress to its king. But in His benevolence, *Elohim* will "bring good to Zion" and "build up the walls of Jerusalem" (Psa.51:18). David's failure exalted God's achievement; it *commended* the righteousness of God.

In speaking of God building up the walls of Jerusalem David was clinging fast to the very words of Yahweh which came through the prophet Nathan on an earlier and happier occasion. The message (it was surely an *evangel*) of 2 Samuel 7:4-16 spoke of God giving David victory over his enemies and establishing the kingship under his descendants. Yet now, already David had sown a seed of failure that would lead downward to ruin and devastation for that kingdom and royal house. Indeed it was already having corrupting effects on the kingship and kingdom.

Nevertheless, Yahweh had said through Nathan, "I will provide a place for My people Israel; I will plant them so that they can tabernacle by themselves and shall no longer be disturbed" (2 Sam.7:10). And Yahweh's word to David also was that "Your house and your kingship will be authenticated before Me for the eon; your throne it shall become established for the eon" (2 Sam.7:16).

David's unfaithfulness cannot nullify God's faithfulness to these oracles. It can only stand as a dark backdrop to the glorious righteousness of God Who will be justified in what He said by bringing His words into fulfillment.

Such high thoughts concerning God, however, seem to open up low thoughts in the human mind:

ROMANS 3:5-8

1. *Now if our injustice is commending* **God's righteousness,** *what shall we declare?*
   a. **Not that God** *Who is bringing on indignation* **is unjust!** *(As a man am I saying it.) May it not be coming to that! Else how shall* **God be judging** *the world?*
2. *Yet if* **the truth of God** *superabounds in my lie, for* **His glory**,
   b. *why am I also still being judged as a sinner, and why not say, according as we are calumniated and according as some are averring that we are saying, that "We should be doing evil that good may be coming"?*
3. —*whose judgment* **is fair**.

WHAT SHALL WE DECLARE?

In maintaining that God is righteous in His judgments and also in faithfully fulfilling His promises despite human unrighteousness, Paul has focused attention on God *as God* (*cp* Rom.1:21). God is righteous and faithful and always succeeds in carrying out His word. How He does so is illuminated by the evangel. But the human keeps wanting to get into the picture in some important way as a contributor and helper. The truth of God's deity, expressed in points 1 and 2 (verses 5a and 7a) is twisted by the human rationalizations expressed in points a and b. In effect, these arguments are judgments against God.

If it is so that human unrighteousness commends God's righteousness, and that our lies make God's truthfulness to superabound in glory, what are we to say? But why should we say anything except to laud and praise God for His good achievement where we fail so miserably?

Shall we say that therefore God cannot bring His indignation on those who actually have sinned because their failures have been used by Him to bring His righteousness into sharp and glorious illumination?

Or shall we say that therefore we ought to multiply our lies and acts of evil in order that the good of commending God's righteousness might be advanced more and more?

Paul will have none of such reasonings. They are judgments against God and the fairness and wisdom of His ways. But he brings them forward because they aid in leading us forward to the evangel. Our great need is expressed not only in our sinful deeds but in our foolish reasonings as well.

GOD BEING JUDGED

Psalm 51:4 as expressed in the Hebrew (Masoretic) Text speaks of God being cleared when He *judges.* But the Greek Septuagint Version (LXX), which Paul used in his quotation in Romans 3:4, speaks of God winning the case when He is *being judged.*[2] Here the thought is that God will conquer against any accusation upon His faithfulness, such as that intimated by Israel's enemies in view of David's sin, or by those who claimed in Paul's day that Israel's unfaithfulness would necessarily nullify any possibility of God fulfilling His promises to them. This judging of God by mankind will be proved false, for God will conquer and fulfill all His promises.

GOD IS FAIR IN JUDGING SINNERS

Romans 3:5-8, however, brings out further charges being brought against God. First it is suggested that God would be unfair in bringing His indignation upon those whose sins brought His righteousness into high relief.

At the very root of this charge against God is human pride and a desire to make a contribution for which God is made a debtor. Whereas David had focused on God's glory in the midst of his shame, the normal human reaction to personal failure is to search for a silver lining in relation to oneself.

Hence the Jew seizes upon the extraordinary idea that he is exempt from God's indignation because his unfaithfulness drew attention to God's faithfulness. This, in effect, is the idea that God owes him something. Paul will fully dispose of such reasoning later in Romans 11 when he once again speaks of God Himself bringing the benefit of mercy to Israel. "For *God* locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all . . . For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, *who*

2. We followed the Hebrew text in the CV of the Psalms passage, but Paul's use of the LXX reading here urges a reexamination of our rendering. At least a footnote providing the LXX wording would be in order, if not using that reading in the CV text itself.

gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:32-36).

It is the evangel that opens up the true meaning of God's indignation and judgment and enables the believer to join Paul from the heart in the joyful benediction of Romans 11:33-36. Indignation and fury, affliction and distress (Rom.2:9) are part of the process toward the goal. They are in the same category as our present sorrows and hurts; they are temporary evils which humble humanity (Ecc.1: 13; 3:10), not at all such a bad outcome. This is not to say they are not serious and unpleasant. They truly involve suffering and shame, but they are not eternal and not without a purpose for good. The evangel makes this clear.

JUDGING THE WORLD

When Paul testified that human failure can never nullify God's faithfulness (Rom.3:3,4), the Jew, and everyone else ought to cheer with praise and thanksgiving. God is faithful to all the good words He has spoken. He is faithful to His word to Abram, "I shall make you into a great nation, and I shall bless you" (Gen.12:2). And He is also faithful to that earliest word of blessing concerning humanity's increase and sway given in Genesis 1:28. As for us who are now believing, God has spoken of superabundant grace (*cf* Rom.5:17).

The evangel reveals to us that God's work of blessing is the bottom line. And it reveals that this work of blessing is a righteous work, for it is based on the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus. There is much grief along the way, failure and loss, but these are for our learning and for our appreciation of God and His blessing. So also, whether the indignation of God comes upon the sinner, or whether the sinner is rescued from it, this indignation, too, must exist as part of God's temporary operations for ultimate good; it

serves certainly as an eye-opener to the standards of divine righteousness. But God's gift of love in giving His Son for sinners is that which brings salvation and finally and lastingly defines and displays God's righteousness in all things.

Such considerations are not yet directly in view in Romans 3:5-8. Paul patiently rehearses some of the human objections to the processes of God. If God is obligated to withhold His indignation from those who, by their sins, contribute to the commendation of His righteousness, then this would apply not just to the Jew or to the relatively good person, like Job, who walks in the fear of God, but to everyone. For everyone's unrighteousness commends God's righteousness. If one is exempted, then all must be exempted, and so God would not need to judge anyone.

But judgment is part of the process. It has its place toward the appreciation of God and the blessedness of His blessings. It does not gain those blessings, for that is the achievement of God in the gift of His Son, but it is a work of the God Who now has made known His evangel.

THE TRUTH OF GOD

The fact that the truth of God superabounds in our lies is a welcome word for every liar. It ought to bring forth exclamations of joy and praise to God! It ought not to get me thinking that I should keep on lying more and more so that God's truthfulness should be made superabundantly more obvious. Again the judgment being made against God by those who accuse Paul of teaching we ought to do evil so that good may come (Rom.3:8) is an expression of human pride. It reflects the underlying human conviction that we ourselves can bring about good apart from God.

How foolish! The sin of lying, which includes deception and cover-up, brings with it its manifold repercussions of shame and suffering in our current lives, as it did for David. And this is apart from any future indignation and

judgment. And beyond the degrading effects of such thinking on us is the loss that comes from such a wrong view of God. That He is glorified through the instrumentality of our failures does not mean that His glory depends on us. There is an ellipsis here in Romans 3:7. It is the *manifestation* of the truth of God that superabounds by my lie, not the truth of God itself. Trusting in God is right. My lie is wrong and must be judged for itself. That is as far as Paul takes us here. But he will take us much further when he brings us to the pathway marked "Yet Now," starting with Romans 3:21.

GOD'S JUDGMENT OF SINNERS IS FAIR

The final words of Romans 3:8 bring us back to the issue at hand. Paul refers to "every human" (Rom.3:4), all the people who are irreverent and unrighteous (Rom. 1:18), that is, everyone. Paul speaks of humanity as they are, apart from any consideration of the evangel; we all are sinners, whose judgment [by God] is fair.

The objector is silenced. But he is not saved. To know the truth of God's work of judging only to this point, that it is fair, is not enough. I don't know about my readers, but I am ready for the evangel. But in case it has not yet hit home, Paul still has a few words to say about our desperate situation in Romans 3:9-20. Not one is just, not even one!

Nevertheless, let me jump ahead once more and say it: all mankind will be brought into that glorious effect of the one just act of Jesus Christ, the justifying of life (Rom.5:18)!

It is our great blessing to be believing the evangel which tells of God's powerful work of salvation through the faith of Jesus Christ. God will be justified in all His sayings, and He will conquer when He is being judged. This is so because Christ was given up because of our offenses and was roused because of our justifying (Rom.4:25).

D.H.H.

THE TEACHING OF BAPTIZINGS

"WHEREFORE, leaving the word dealing with the rudiments of Christ, we should be brought on to maturity, (not again disrupting the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith on God, of the teaching of baptizings, besides the imposition of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and of judgment eonian). And this we will be doing, that is, if God may be permitting" (Heb.6:1-3).

These six lessons comprised the elementary course God gave his earthly people. In the preceding chapter they are called the "rudimentary elements" (Heb.5:12). It is customary in our schools today to offer the pupil an elementary course. The same subject may be taken up again in a complete course.

Even so it has pleased God, in His wisdom, to arrange His course of instruction. In the primary grades He taught by means of object-lessons. He addressed Himself to their senses by outward ordinances of material forms. He instituted a parallel between the material and the spiritual spheres. The removal of bodily defilement by water served to illustrate the cleansing from spiritual uncleanness by means of His Word. A tabernacle made of gold and silver and brass, of linen, of wood, and various other materials, typified His glorious dwelling place and the way of approach (Exodus, chapters 25,26,27).

God dealt with His earthly people as with a child. He gave them the law for a "schoolmaster," or rather an "escort" to lead up to the true Teacher. Until Christ came there could be no complete course of instruction. All from Moses to Christ were in the primary grade, so to speak. The text

book, composed of types and shadows, was elementary, and consisted of *stocheia,* rudimentary observances.

Christ came (Gal.4:7). He was the great Antitype. He revealed the heart of God fully and perfectly at the cross. Since then God has filled up His Words, and a complete course is offered. Christ Himself is our text book. In Him there is maturity.

What gentle graciousness we see in the patient Instructor of His people! To have blazed upon them in the effulgence of His glory would have blinded them. So He led them by gentle steps up the high ascent to the knowledge of Himself. But it is not His purpose that they should always remain on the way and never reach the goal (Heb.5:11-14).

THE MEANING OF THE WORD BAPTISM

Among the elementary ordinances is the "teaching of baptizings" (Heb.6:2), or, if we translate the word *baptizings* as in the AV of Hebrews 9:10, "the teaching of *washings*."

But is there any ground for speaking of baptism as *washing*? We have been taught that it is quite separate and distinct from the washings under the law.

First of all what is the real meaning of the word? It is not an English word at all, but a Greek word with English letters. Its meaning, therefore, must be gathered from its usage by the spirit of God.

It occurs in various forms, but all come from one root *baptō*, which primarily means *to dip* (e.g., Lev.16:24 [LXX]; Matt.26:23; Mark 14:20; John 13:26; Rev.19:13). From this root arise four words:

Baptizō—to make things "baptō."
Baptismos—the act of dipping or washing.
Baptisma—the result of "baptismos."
Baptistês—the one who does it.

These words are seldom translated in the AV, but rather are generally transliterated. The few cases where they are rendered otherwise than some form of "baptize" therefore claim special attention.

Baptismos, the act of baptizing, occurs only in Mark and Hebrews. The four occurrences are as follows: Mark 7:4,8 and Hebrews 6:2; 9:10.

Baptisma, *the result of baptizing*, is used twenty-two times, thirteen of which refer to John's baptism, five to the Lord's, three occur in Paul's letters, and the last one in Peter. This shows clearly that it is not a special term used to distinguish so-called "Christian baptism" from "Jewish washings." The occurrences are Matthew 3:7; 20:22,23; 21:25; Mark 1:4; 10:38,39; 11:30; Luke 3:3; 7:29; 12:50; 20:4; Acts 1:22; 10:37; 13:24; 18:25; 19:3,4; Romans 6:4; Ephesians 4:5; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21.

Baptizō is consistently transliterated "baptize" in the AV except in the following cases:

Mark 6:14, "Baptist."
Mark 7:4, "wash."
Luke 11:38, "washed."

The first is simply an incident of translation. In the other two cases the action is clear. When a Pharisee came home from the market he washed himself before eating.

Baptismos, *the act of dipping or washing*, is only once transliterated "baptism" in the AV. This is in Hebrews 6:2. The other occurrences are:—

Mark 7:4, "washing."
Mark 7:8, "washing."
Hebrews 9:10, "washings."

These passages do not use the word *baptismos* in harmony with the theological import of the word. We are constrained to acknowledge that both the Authorized and Revised versions are warranted here in rendering the word

"washings." The reference is clear and unmistakable. It is to the ordinances of Divine service carried on in connection with the tabernacle.

So we see that the washings at the laver for the priests, and the various washings for the defiled of the people, were "baptisms" (Ex.29:4; 30:18,19,20,21; Lev.8:6; 11:40; 17:15,16; 14:8; 11:25; 15:8,13,16,17,21,31). Indeed the Septuagint uses the word "baptize" for the Hebrew word "rinse" ("wash," AV) in Leviticus 11:25.

The root thought, then, of baptism, is washing.

CEREMONIAL WASHING

It is evident however that this needs modification: for there are three other words in the Greek which also signify various aspects of washing. One of them, *niptō*, means *to wash* a portion of the body (Matt.15:2). Another one, *louō*, from which we have ab-*lu*-tion, refers to *bathing* the entire body (Heb.10:22). Still another one, *plunō*, means *to wash* or *rinse* inanimate things (Rev.7:14). Ordinarily this would be used in speaking of the washing of clothes.

These three words fully cover the field. The verb *baptizō*, is used in place of each of them. It must therefore have a meaning in common with all, yet distinct from each.

A study of each separate case will reveal the fact that *baptizō* was not used for the removal of bodily filth, but rather for the removal of *ceremonial* uncleanness. It is, in fact, *ceremonial washing*.

In the ordinary course of life contact with a carcass would not necessitate washing one's clothes. Marketing is hardly so defiling to the flesh as to require a bath. How could the Pharisee (Luke 11:38) have expected the Lord to do more than go through the formal act to which they were accustomed (Lev.11:24)? To this day such baptisms obtain among the Jews. The merest dipping of the hands in water is deemed sufficient.

Thus we see the real application of the original root *baptō, to dip*. When cups were to be baptized they were not thoroughly washed, but simply dipped in the water (Matt. 23:25). Neither were ewers or other such vessels scoured or subjected to a continual and unnecessary scrubbing, but only formally or *ceremonially* washed (Mark 7:4).

We read in Numbers 19:18 that the hyssop was baptized, or, as we know, *dipped* in water. Indeed in the first recorded baptism, that of the sons of Israel in the Red Sea, there was *no contact with water whatever*[1] (1 Cor. 10:2). They went over dry-shod. *The Egyptians it was who were immersed*.[2]

Washing *may* carry spiritual significance; "baptism" *always* does.

The cleansing, though outward and upon the flesh, is not intended to remove the defilement. But the ideas associated with the cleansing of the flesh are transported into the realm of spirit. Access into the tabernacle was conditional upon the ceremonial baptism or cleansing of the flesh at the laver (Ex.29:4; 30:20; Lev.8:6). Ananias charged Saul, "Rise, be baptized, and bathe off your sins, invoking His name" (Acts 22:16).

Therefore, as baptism is ceremonial washing and is applied to the formal cleansing under the law, and especially in connection with the tabernacle, it behooves us to examine the lessons there taught.

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1. As a matter of *fact* the sons of Israel at the Red Sea were not baptized at all in the ordinary sense of the term. By the figure of Metonymy (of the cause) the term "baptism" is used of the *effect* which it produced. Baptism separated between its subjects and a doomed world in the days of the Acts just as the cloud and the sea lay between Israel and the Egyptians in Moses' day. Now since the *effect* of baptism was the same as the *effect* of the cloud and the sea, it is clear that the term "baptism" most appropriately and strikingly describes it.

2. According to Psalm 77:17, it seems that they were "sprinkled" too!

THE TEACHING OF THE TYPES

Beginning with the laver of the tabernacle (Ex.30:17-21), let us compare it with the sea and the ten lavers of Solomon's temple (1 Kings 7:23-39); and also with the river of Ezekiel (Ezek.47:1-12). The progress of its typical teaching during the ages will then be discovered to our view. If we then connect each type with its proper antitype, the setting of each with relation to God's administrations will be clear; and we shall be in a position to apprehend the truth which is present with us now.

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

When Yahweh tabernacled among His people He made provision for their approach; for though He did indeed dwell in their midst, it was behind thick curtains and a veil (Exodus 25,26). In the court of the tabernacle, right in the way between the gate and the portal, stood two structures: the brazen altar and the brazen laver (Ex.40:29-32).

The laver is not included in the description of the tabernacle and its furniture (Exodus 25-28). After all has been described in minutest detail, after the sheltering silver has been provided for (Ex.30:11-16), then the laver is added and set in its prominent place, intercepting every priest who would draw nigh to Yahweh (Ex.30:17-21).

And even then, its description is most meager: no dimensions, no shape, nothing to define its proportions. This is notable indeed where all else, with painful exactitude, followed the pattern shown to Moses on the mount.

What was it for? "For washing" (Ex.40:30). How simple and beautiful a picture of the cleansing necessary for communion with God! Moses bathed Aaron and his sons, thus fitting them for the presence of a holy God (Ex.29:4). Such a cleansed condition speaks of nearness and communion, which is life. So we see that the washing signified a

"bath of renascence" (Titus 3:5). The initiatory washing of the priest led to a new life of nearness to Yahweh.

But why was the laver left out of the description of the furniture of the tabernacle? Why such seeming indifference as to its shape? Does not this proclaim, with no uncertain sound, that it forms no integral part of the completed structure, but was added for the time being because of the tabernacle's own imperfection? If it was laid on them only "unto the period of reformation" (Heb.9:10), we can see why no importance attaches to its form or dimensions.

But is there any other evidence as to its transitory nature?

THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON

The temple of Solomon, which replaced the tabernacle, had no laver between the altar and the house. In its stead we see the brazen sea at one side of the court and the ten lavers, five on each side of the house (1 Kings 7:23-39).

The brazen sea stood upon twelve oxen (1 Kings 7:25; 2 Chron.4:2-4), speaking of service. The altar before the house has grown to such proportions that it alone fills the court in front of the house, the sea being placed to the left of the porch. The significance of these radical changes will come before us again.

The ten lavers were used to wash the offerings. Though permanently stationed on each side of the house, they were set on bases, each having four bronze wheels (1 Kings 7:30). As the wheels have no other use we may call them tongues, for they tell us once more that the lavers are only "unto the period of reformation."

THE TEMPLE OF EZEKIEL

But again, let us make sure of our conclusions, and look at Ezekiel's temple. What place has the truth of the laver there?

We can hardly expect to find the single laver of the *tab-*

ernacle, for that has already been taken out of the midst. If we look on each side of the house for the ten lavers of the temple, surely enough, they are gone; they have been wheeled away! If we look on the right shoulder of the house eastward over against the south (Ezek.47:1), where the brazen sea stood, that too is gone. But in its place, issuing from under the threshold of the house, flows the river of living water, which removes the curse and brings abundant life and fruitfulness (Ezek.47:8,9).

Here is water indeed! Not a small laver full; not two thousand baths, the limit of the bronze sea (1 Kings 7:26); but a flowing, living river, deepening as it flows (Ezek.47:3-5).

Thus we have pictured for us in the courts of God the metamorphosis of the laver, or rather of the truth which it inaugurates, for the laver itself and the ten lavers disappear, and are all alike finally lost in the river of living water.

A. E. Knoch

(To be continued)

ALICE EVELY

Alice Evely, age 90, died April 30, 2004 in Lake Worth, Florida after a short illness. She is survived by daughter Nina and son Don, also by step-children Paul Evely, René Osborne, and Doris Valentine. Alice was a Concordant believer in Christ, and attended Adlai Loudy's classes in Lake Worth in the 1950's and 1960's. She married Lewis Evely in the early 1950's, and both were a part of the Community Church (Concordant Fellowship) in Detroit, Michigan, where Lewis was a frequent speaker. Lewis died in 1971.

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1 CHRONICLES–JOB

Our latest publication, 1 Chronicles–Job, is currently being printed and should be available in stock very soon. This fascicle of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament comprises 242 pages on letter-size sheets, set in large print (perfect bound, uv-coated cover, with abbreviation key; $14, plus $2 shipping).

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 The El Who-Suffices
153 Words of the Days
156 The Humiliation of the King
165 "Concealed From the Eons";
"As Deceivers and True"
173 All Under Sin
184 Types and Antitypes

JULY, 2004

Volume XCV **Number 4**

Concordant Version of
1 Chronicles through Job

(1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job)

Concerning the books included in this fascicle of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, the book of Job is associated with Psalms and Proverbs in the Hebrew canon. Esther is one of five small scrolls, associated as a group; the others are: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations and Ecclesiastes. Ezra (including Nehemiah) appears along with Daniel in a final section of historical writings, concluding with Chronicles.

1 and 2 Chronicles, are treated as one book in Hebrew under the name "Words [or Annals] of the Days" (*cf* 1 Kings 14:19,29). The history is no mere repetition of the books of Samuel and Kings, but a carefully prepared commentary on the same events as they appeared to the eye of Yahweh. Many events which are assigned to human instrumentalities are here traced back to Yahweh. The purposes and counsels of the heart are unveiled in these divine annals.

Ezra and **Nehemiah** are also to be considered as one book under the name "Ezra" which means help. This is the perfect inscription to the history of Judah's restoration to their land and city and temple.

Esther is a marvelous manifestation of the care of Yahweh over His people when their sun is set and they are in the power of their enemies. Then He becomes their guiding star, shaping their way by means of a providence which never escapes His control. By the simplest and most insignificant means He turns the fell designs of their enemies into a source of blessing.

Like all the scrolls which are designated by the name of a man, the meaning of the name, **Job,** is the index to its contents. It means "Enmity." Job is a concrete example of the work of the enemy. The philosophy of evil is discussed to a finish. His four friends make evil the consequence of sin. Job maintains his innocence. Yet Yahweh vindicates him and blesses him far beyond what would have been possible apart from the affliction he had endured. Evil is definitely designed by God to work out His beneficent purpose. Thus the philosophy of evil and enmity is fully elucidated in this book, as its title indicates.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2004
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-FIVE

EDITORIAL

NOT MANY have thoughtfully pondered the great question of just what is it that makes the good news of Christ, the *good* news of Christ.

Did Christ die for all or only for some? And, is salvation a gracious gift, or is it a reward? It is only natural for those who believe that the death, entombment, and resurrection of Christ is *good news*—who believe that Christ came into the world to save sinners, that through Him sinners might be saved—to want to know the answers to these questions. Did the work of Christ itself achieve salvation for some, for all, or for none? *How* good is the good news? That is: *Just what is it* about the good news that makes it *good* news?

We would seek the answers to our inquiries here "apart from prejudice, doing nothing from bias" (*cp* 1 Tim.5:21b). Accordingly, to the degree that we know ourselves at all, not to mention our precarious situation—the weakness of our flesh and the craftiness of our adversary (2 Tim.2:26)—we will have a corresponding awareness of our need for God's enlightening grace in us.

The vast majority of Christians, whatever they may say and suppose, in fact, conceive of salvation as a reward not as a favor. And among the few who do realize that salvation is indeed truly a gracious gift, most insist that it is for themselves alone. Their claim is that all the rest of mankind must be consigned to eternal hell for their sins, especially for their sins of unbelief, even though (as these traditionalists will acknowledge) those who do not believe, cannot believe, inasmuch as God has not chosen to grant them faith.

It is rarely acknowedged that the Scriptures even possibly could be rightly understood as declaring the eventual salvation of all mankind, Christ having died for all,

and salvation ultimately being a matter of the grace of God, plus nothing.

"Universalism," if it is known at all, is dismissed by nearly all biblically serious people as a worthless heresy, unworthy of serious attention due to its utter lack of basis in the Scriptures.

How glad we are, then, to commend a substantial, new book which at least takes this subject seriously while giving it a considerable hearing. Its title is: UNIVERSAL SALVATION? THE CURRENT DEBATE.[1] Its foundational chapters present "A Case for Christian Universalism," by Thomas Talbott, which are then followed by biblical, philosophical, theological, and historical responses from a variety of scholars, all of whom write irenically and intelligently, if not always substantively and to the point. The book's last chapter, "Talbott Responds to his Interlocutors" affords Talbott a "Reply to my Critics," nearly all of whom reject his thesis, that of the eventual salvation of all mankind and universal reconciliation.

We would also commend to our readers Thomas Talbott's own work, THE INESCAPABLE LOVE OF GOD,[2] which we find to be most interesting. It contains much useful and yet not widely known information. Its key points are tightly and cogently reasoned (Talbott is a professor of Philosophy at Willamette University, Salem, Oregon). It is a defense of the love and goodness of God, as we read early in its first chapter: "Contrary to what we might fear, the Creator and Father of our souls—the Lord of Hosts and King of kings—is good." J.R.C.

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1. Edited by Robin A. Parry and Christopher H. Partridge (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2003).

2. (Universal Publishers, 1999: www.upublish.com/books/talbott.htm) *While both of these titles may be ordered from bookstores, they are perhaps most conveniently obtained through* AMAZON.COM.

THE EL WHO-SUFFICES

17 [+]**When Abram** [lb]**was 99 years old,** [+] **Yahweh** [l]**appeared to Abram and** [l]**said to him: I** am **El-Who-Suffices; walk before Me and become flawless.** 2 [+] **I** am determined to [l]**give My covenant between Me and** [bt] **you.** [+] **I shall increase** `**you** [i] **exceedingly,** yea **exceedingly.** 3 [+]**Then Abram** [l]**fell on his face. And Elohim** [l]**spoke** `to **him,** › **saying**⁻**:** 4 As for **Me, behold,** this is **My covenant** `with **you:** [+] **You will become** › the **father of** a **throng of nations.** 5 [+]**So** `**your name shall no**[t fr]**longer be called Abram;** [+]**but your name will become Abraham, for** a **father of** a **throng of nations have I** [g]**appointed you.** 6 [+] **I will cause** `**you** to **be** [i] **exceedingly,** yea **exceedingly fruitful;** [+] **I will** [g]**make** › **nations** of **you, and kings shall** come **forth from you.** 7 [+] **I have set up** `**My covenant between Me and** [bt] **you and** [bt] **your seed after you,** ›**throughout their generations,** ›**as** an **eonian covenant, to** [b]**be** › **Elohim to you and to your seed after you.** 8 **And I give to you and to your seed after you** `the **land of your sojournings,** `**all** the **land of Canaan,** ›**as** an **eonian holding; and I will** [b]**be** › **Elohim to them.**

9 [+]**Then Elohim** [sa]**spoke to Abraham:** [+]**As** for **you, you shall keep** `**My covenant, you and your seed after you,** ›**throughout their generations.** 10 **This** is **My covenant** [w]**that** =**you shall keep, between Me and** [bt] **you**rselves **and** [bt] **your seed after you: Every male** ›**among you** must **be circumcised**⁻**.** 11 [+]**Namely** =**you** must **be circumcised** `in the **flesh of** =**your foreskin; and** this **will** [b]**be** › the **covenant sign between Me and** [bt] **you**rselves. 12 ›**Throughout your generations, every male** ›**among you** must **be** [l]**circumcised** [+]**when** he is **eight days old,** anyone **born** in the

household **+or acquired** with **money from any foreigner's son who** is **not** *f*__of your seed.__ 13 **He** must **be** |__circumcised,__ yea **circumcised**−**,** the manservant **born** in **your house**hold **+or acquired** with **your money. +Thus will My covenant** *b*__be__ marked **in your flesh** ›__as__ an **eonian covenant.** 14 **+As** for the **uncircumcised male who is not** |__circumcised__ `in the **flesh of his foreskin, + ·this ·soul will be cut** off **from his people; he has annulled `My covenant.**

15 **Elohim** |*sa*__spoke +further to Abraham:__ As for **your wife Sarai, you shall not call `her name Sarai; for Sarah** will be **her name.** 16 **+ I will bless `her; +** *mr*__indeed, I will give__ › **you** a **son** *f*__by her.__ 7__And I will bless him__*c*__. + She will__ *b*__give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall__ *b*__come from her.__

17 **+Then Abraham** |__fell on his face; +__ **he** |__laughed and__ |__said in his heart:__ Can 7a **son**0 **be** |__born to__ one who is **100 years old? +Or** could **Sarah,** a **ninety-year-old,** *if*__possibly__ |__bear__ a child**?** 18 **+So Abraham** |__said to the__ One**, Elohim: O that Ishmael should live before You!**

19 **+ Elohim** |*sa*__replied: Never__theless**, your wife Sarah** will be **bearing** a **son for you, and you will call `his name Isaac. + I will set up `My covenant** `with **him** ›__as__ an **eonian covenant for his seed after him.** 20 **+As for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I will bless `him and** *c*__make `him fruitful and increase `him__ *i* **exceedingly,** yea **exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will** *g*__make__ › a **great nation** of **him.** 21 **+But `My covenant I shall set up** `with **Isaac whom Sarah shall bear for you in the** *af*__next year__ ›__at__ ·__this appointed__ time**.** 22 **+When He** had |*all*__finished__ › __speaking__− `with **him, Elohim** |__ascended from__ *on* **Abraham.**

23 **+Then Abraham** |__took `his son Ishmael and `all__ those **born** in **his house**hold **and `all** those **acquired** with **his money, every male** *i*__among__ the *mt*__people of Abraham's house__hold**, and he** |__circumcised__ `the **flesh of their foreskin** *i*__on__ ·__this very__ ·__day, just as Elohim had spoken__ `to **him.** 24 **+ Abraham** was **99 years old** *i*__when he__ had the **flesh**

of his foreskin circumcised−**.** 25 **And his son Ishmael** was **thirteen years old** *i*__when he__ had `the **flesh of his foreskin circumcised**−**.** 26 *i*__On ·this very ·day Abraham was circumcised and__ also **his son Ishmael;** 27 **and all** the **men of his house**hold**,** the **homeborn and** those **acquired** with **money from** `a **foreigner's son, were circumcised** `with **him.**

THE HUNDREDTH YEAR of Abram's life is the turning point in his career, for in it the promise begins to have its initial fulfillment. In it Isaac, the first of the promised seed, is begotten and born. And in it Abram's name is changed to include the nations which sprang from him.

By this time the bodies of both Abram and Sarai were practically dead, so far as the generation of the seed is concerned (Rom.4:17-22). To commemorate this he is given the *sign* of circumcision, in the flesh. The significance of this sign should be carefully considered.

Yahweh is about to commence carrying out the promises He had made. Abram was so old that he could no longer help, so the way was clear for Yahweh to display *His* power. In accord with this, He assumes a special title, SUBJECTor Who-SUFFICES. Hitherto, Abram seems to have been quite concerned to assist Him fulfill His promises, especially in the case of Ishmael. Now Abram was quite helpless, as well as Sarai. What follows, in this connection, is proof that the Subjector *needs no assistance*. He is self-sufficient. In fact, all the human aid He needs is helplessness, so that His sufficiency may not only be exhibited, but also *appreciated*.

THE COVENANT

A covenant, or contract, is generally made between *two* parties, *each* of which must perform his part. But Abram had come to a point where all he could do was to signify his

assent. So the Hebrew here does not read *making* a covenant (as in the AV), but *giving*. Yahweh alone increased his offspring exceedingly exceedingly, and was their Subjector, and assured them of the land of Canaan. All that Abraham did was to *believe*. This would hardly be called a covenant among men. In fact it would not be legal in some lands, where even a "deed of *gift*" must include a small sum or other valuable consideration. But, in the administration of the promise, Yahweh concludes a *gift* covenant with believers *without a single valuable consideration on their part whatever*.

The *meaning* of the *sign* of circumcision should be easier to understand when considered in the context where it is first given, than elsewhere. Hitherto Abram had been promised a seed, due to the vivifying power of *faith*, which could not come till Abram's physical power had died. Now, however, he *had* begotten a *fleshly* seed. So this must be marked with a sign that signifies the *cutting off of the flesh*. Elohim is *spirit*, and cannot make a covenant with decadent flesh unless it has at least some indication of its excision. The *time* is significant. It was given after *Ishmael* was born, not after the birth of Isaac. *It cuts off the flesh, to make way for the spirit*.

Very few of the so-called "Circumcision" seem to have grasped the sinister significance of the sign. They gloried in it, and considered it a mark of distinction, which gave them a privileged and superior position before the Subjector. Too often it was the seal of a faith that did not exist. It signified the *cutting-off* of the flesh, while they made it a sign of physical *superiority*. Today, our circumcision is in *spirit*, not in letter. Not merely a *part* of the flesh is removed, but we, as a *whole, died with Christ*, yet are also risen with Him (Col.2:11; Phil.3:3). With us the physical rite would be *maim*cision. It might indicate a partial, instead of the complete, removal of the flesh (Phil.3:3).

To conform with her new station, and the change in Abram's name to Abra*ha*m, Sarai (REGARD-MY) My-regarded-[one], expressing her personal relation to her husband, is changed to Sarah (REGARD-ess), which signifies "Chief princess."

Other explanations may be given, but this one seems to conform to the context most closely. Her new name, Sarah, or Chief princess, is immediately followed by the revelation that nations and kings of peoples are to come from her through her son. She had shown her unbelief in the promise in connection with Ishmael, so this added dignity seems to be wholly undeserved. But so is all that comes in the sphere of promise (Gen.17:15). Then she was highly regarded by her husband; now, like him, she is highly regarded by the Ishmaelites and Esau-ites as well as the sons of Israel.

LAUGHTER

Quite a little laughter is connected with Isaac, whose name *I-tzchq* means *Laugh-causer*. Both Abraham (17:17) and Sarah laughed (18:13). Ishmael laughed later on (21:9). To Isaac's parents his birth seems so improbable, that it bordered on the ridiculous. So it is with most of God's promises, for they are impossible to be fulfilled in the physical sphere, and need divine spirit power to bring them about. Nevertheless, Abraham considered his body, already deadened, and the deadening of Sarah (so far as reproduction was concerned), yet the promise of God was not doubted in unbelief. He was invigorated by faith, giving glory to God, being fully assured also that, what He had promised, He is able to do also. *Wherefore, also, it was reckoned to him for righteousness* (Rom.4:22).

Ishmael differs greatly from the seed of promise, for he was not given a land or settled abode, but was like the wild donkey (onager), so fully described in the book of Job

(39:5). His descendants were like the bedouin, roaming about, with no settled dwellings, with their hand against all, and all against them. He inherited his mother's character of insubjection, which she had before the messenger spoke to her (Gen.16:12).

Abram seems to have grasped the fact that even Ishmael has his place in the Subjector's plans, though it be a negative one. He seems to have been quite fond of his first son, for he evidently was a fine specimen of the flesh, apart from faith. He played a necessary and helpful part in acting as a foil for Isaac, the seed of promise.

Two special examples of the beginning of circumcision are presented, one in which the sign was in accord with the facts, and the other a mere outward "maimcision" (Phil.3:2), in which the flesh is mutilated without any corresponding spiritual significance. Apart from the sign itself, Abram's flesh had been cut off so far as the promise was concerned. He could never generate a single son, let alone a numberless seed. But just the opposite was true of Ishmael. He was just beginning a long life in which he was to beget twelve princes and a great nation. So, ever since, the sign has lost its real meaning among the fleshly seed of Abraham.

A. E. Knoch

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1 CHRONICLES THROUGH JOB

As an accompaniment to our recent publication of the books of 1 Chronicles through Job, we are beginning a series of meditations on portions of these writings, especially viewing them in light of the revelations of God given for us through the apostle Paul. We sometimes dismiss books such as Chronicles, especially the lengthy genealogies, as being of lesser value than other books such as Genesis and Job. But all of God's Word is beneficial and able to make us wise for salvation. All Scripture is inspired by God and is beneficial for our learning and discipline (2 Tim.3:15,16). Even the word "Adam" by itself, placed as it is at the beginning of 1 Chronicles, offers us much of benefit.

WORDS OF THE DAYS

THE TWO BOOKS of 1 and 2 Chronicles represent one complete treatise in the Hebrew Bible, under the name, "Words of the Days." The Chronicler begins with the days of Adam and concludes his report with the days of the sons of Josiah and the deportation to Babylon, followed by a brief reference to the days of Israel's return. In the Hebrew canon Chronicles appears at the very end, serving to recapitulate certain themes of Israel's Scriptures which were relevant for them in their days after the long exile. Yet as part of God's Word there is much of value for us as well.

In the opening chapters the "words" consist almost entirely of the names of certain people, first mentioned in Genesis, whose days are thus brought into view. By noting these names and seeing their own relationship to them and to their days, the people of Israel, being reestablished in the land, would be greatly strengthened and encouraged. There are few concepts more valuable to a human being than seeing how one fits into the scheme of things.

The real value of this orientation is not the information itself but the reliability of the information. In this respect there could be no doubt in the Israelite's mind; the Chronicler draws the names from the first book of the Sacred Scriptures; they are the words of God.

In the final respect, the Israelite's place "in the scheme of things" is based on the sayings and the operations of God.

Consequently, in bringing attention to the names of certain human beings and to their days, Chronicles is truly bringing attention to God and what He is doing. The days of which it speaks must be seen beyond their association

with the individual human beings named, and seen finally in relation to God Who makes all our days (*cf* Psa.39:5).

THE DAYS OF ADAM

The first *word* of Chronicles is the name *Adam* which heads a long section of genealogical lists extending through chapter 9. It may seem unnecessarily obvious to say that all the people named are descended from Adam, and all their days are extensions of his days. Yet that is extremely important and fundamentally relevant to this portion of Scripture. It was important for Israel after seventy years of disorientation in Babylon to become reacquainted with their roots, and even to see that these roots do not simply go back to David and his days, or to Israel and his sons and their days, or even to Shem or to Noah. But, as a matter of priority, they go back to Adam, just like roots of the Babylonians and the Assyrians and the people of Edom and all the nations.

The immediate significance of Israel's relationship with Adam is that they are affected by his disobedience. It was in the days of Adam that sin entered into the world, and through sin came death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned (Rom.5:12). In this respect the Israelite stood on the same ground as the Persian and the Arab and the Egyptian and the Greek.

We too are part of that family which began with Adam. And our days also are what they are because of Adam's days. The disobedience of Adam in the garden of Eden brought a curse into the world which characterized the rest of the days of Adam, and so on down to our own times.

But the name, *Adam,* also connects Israel, and all humanity, with the promises of Genesis 3:15, 16, concerning the Seed of the woman, Who would annul the authority of the Adversary, and Who, being born as a human, would be the Channel of restoration to fellowship with God (and

greater blessings as well, as we now know). Israel will be greatly helped in finding its place in the scheme of things by recalling these promises of God given in the days of Adam. And so also will we all.

Again, however, the Chronicler's reference to Adam does not relate only to the days of Adam as recorded in Genesis 3, both as to sin and the promise of the Seed. It also is to be related to the days of Adam as recorded in Genesis 1. To speak of Adam and his days is to speak of humanity as the creation *of God.*

OF GOD

Even as the genealogy of Jesus Christ given in Luke 3:23-28 ends with the words *of God,* thus revealing God as the Source of all, so also the genealogies of Chronicles must be related finally to God. The days of Adam involve, at their very beginning, God as the Creator Who has the finished creature in view: "So Elohim created humanity [or: *Adam*] in His image, in the image of Elohim He created it [or: *him*]: male and female He created them. Elohim blessed them, and Elohim said to them: Be fruitful and increase; fill the earth and subdue it. Hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heavens, over every domestic animal, over all the earth and over every animal that is moving on the earth" (Gen.1:27,28).

In relating Israel, first and foremost, to Adam, the Chronicler relates them not only to Adam's disobedience and its results and to the promises relating to the Seed of the woman, but also to the purpose of God in creating Adam. God never forgets this stated purpose of Genesis 1:27,28. Israel's hardships in Babylon, and afterwards when they returned to Jerusalem, do not lie outside the vision of Genesis 1:27. Nor do the failures and sorrows of our days. What God has in view is the base of any appreciation we can have of our place in the scheme of things. D.H.H.

THE HUMILIATION OF THE KING
(2 Samuel 15)

15 + **It came** to |**be** *f* some time **afterward** +**that Absalom** |*d*|**provided** › **him**self with a **chariot,** + **horses, and fifty men running before him.** 2 + **Absalom would** *c*|**rise early and stand** *on*|**at** the **side of** the **road** to **the gate.** +**Whenever** there |*b*|**was any** ˙**man who** |*b*|**came** with **his contested** matter **to bring** it ›**before the king for judgment,** +**then Absalom** would |**call to him and** |**say, From what city** are **you? And he** would |*sa*|**reply, From one of** the **tribes of Israel** is **your servant.** 3 +**Then Absalom** would |**say to him, See, your matters** are **good and correct;** +**yet** there **is no** one assigned **to you from** `**the king** to **hear**| them. 4 **And Absalom** would |*sa*|**add,** *a*|**O** that **I** were |*pl*|**appointed judge**| **in** the **land, and every man who** |*b*|**had his contested** matter +**or plea** would |**come** *on*|**to me, and I would** *c*|**grant justice** to **him!**

5 +**So it came** to **be,** *i*|**whenever** a **man approached**– **to prostrate** him**self** ›**before him,** +**that he would stretch** forth `**his hand,** + *c*|**take fast** hold ›**of him and kiss** › **him.** 6 + **Absalom** |*d*|**acted** *as*|**in** ˙**this manner for all of Israel who** |**came for judgment to the king.** +**Thus Absalom** |**stole** `the **heart of** the **men of Israel.**

7 + **It came** to |**be** *f*|**at** the **end of** *7*|**four**~*c* **years** +**that Absalom** |**said to the king,** *pr*|**Please, let me** |**go and** |**pay** `**my vow** *w*|**that I vowed to Yahweh, in Hebron.** 8 **For your servant vowed** a **vow** *i*|**when I dwelt**– *i*|**at Geshur in Syria,** › **saying**–**, If Yahweh should restore,** yea **restore**– **me** to **Jerusalem,** +**then I will serve** `**Yahweh.** 9 + **The king** |*sa*|**replied to him, Go in peace!** +**So he** |**arose and** |**went** to*d* **Hebron.**

10 +**But Absalom** |**sent spies**| *i*|**through all** the **tribes of Israel,** › **saying**–**, As** soon as **you hear**– `the **sound of the trumpet,** + **you will** *sa*|**announce, Absalom is king in Hebron.** 11 + Two **hundred men from Jerusalem had gone** `with **Absalom;** they were **invited**| **and** had **gone**| ›**in their sincerity and had no**|*t*| **knowledge** of the **entire matter.** 12 + **Absalom** |**sent** *7*|**and** |**called***Q* `**Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor**|**, from his city, from Giloh,** *i*|**while he** was **sacrificing**– `**the sacrifices.** + **The conspiracy** |**became resolute, and the people going** along `with **Absalom** + were **many.**

13 +**Then** ˙a **message-bearer**| |**came to David,** › **saying**–**,** The **heart of** the **men of Israel** *b*|**is** following **after Absalom.** 14 +**Now David** |**said to all his courtiers who** were `with **him in Jerusalem, Arise and let us** run |**away, for** there **shall** *b*|**be no**|*t* **deliverance for us from before Absalom. Make haste to go, lest he** |**hastens and overtakes us.** +**Then He would hurtle** `**evil on us and smite the city** ›**with** the **edge of** the **sword.**

15 + **The king's courtiers** |*sa*|**replied to the king, As** to **all** *w*|**that my lord the king may choose, behold,** we are **your servants.** 16 +**So the king** went |**forth** +**with his entire household in his foot**steps**;** +**but the king** |**left** `**ten wives, concubines, to be** in **charge** of **the** *in*|**palace.** 17 +**Thus the king** went |**forth** +**with all the people in his foot**steps**; and they** |**stayed** at a **house** ˙**far** off. 18 + **All his courtiers** were **passing** *on*|**at his side;** + **all the Kerethite and all the Pelethite and all the Gittites, six hundred men who came in his foot**steps **from Gath, passed**| **on before the king.**

19 +**Then the king** |**said to Ittai the Gittite, Why should you´** *mr*|**too go** `with **us? Turn back and** *sit*|**stay with the** new **king, for you** are a **foreigner, and you** were *mr*|**also deported**| *7*|**from**~*cs* **your** *ri*|**place.** 20 **You came**– only **yesterday;** + **should I** *c*|**make you rove with us today, to go** +**as I** am **going,** *on* *w*|**wherever I** can **go**|**? Return and take back** `**your kinsmen with you!** *7*|**And may Yahweh** *d*|**deal with you***0* in **benignity**

and faithfulness. 21 +**But Ittai** |**answered** `**the king** + |**saying,** As **Yahweh lives and** as **my lord the king lives, but rather in** the ri**place where my lord the king may come** to **be,** if**whether for death** if**or for life,** t **there your servant shall come** to **be.** 22 +**So David** |sa**replied to Ittai, Go** ahead **and** p**march** by**!** +**Then Ittai the Gittite** |p**marched** by +**with all his men and all the little ones who** were `with **him.**

23 + **All** in **the land** were **lamenting** with a **loud voice** +**as the whole** wi**force** was p**marching** by**.** + **The king** was **~standing~ in Wadi Kidron,** +**while the whole** wi**force** was **passing** on**before** 7**his**0 **face** along the 7**olive~ way** in **the wilderness.** 24 + **Zadok** mr**also** was bd**there, and all the Levites** `with **him carrying** `the **coffer of** the **covenant of the** One, **Elohim.** + **They** 7|**stood by~** `the **coffer of the** One, **Elohim, and Abiathar** came |**up until** › the **crossing**– over **from the city** had **come to end**– for **the whole** wi**force.** 25 +**Then the king** |**said to Zadok, Restore** `the **coffer of the** One, **Elohim,** to **the city! If I should find grace in** the **eyes of Yahweh,** +**then He will bring me back and** c**let me see** `**it and** `**its homestead.** 26 +**Yet if He should say thus, I have no**t **delight in you,** bd**here I** am**; let Him do** ›**with me just as** it is **good in His eyes.**

27 **The king** +**also** |**said to Zadok the priest,** 7see**Look~, you** and Abiathar, do **return** to **the city in peace,** + **Ahimaaz your son and Jonathan son of Abiathar, your two sons,** `with **you.** 28 see**Look, I** shall be **dallying in** the **gorges of the wilderness until word comes**– **from** wi **you** men **to tell** › **me.** 29 +**So Zadok and Abiathar brought** `the **coffer of the** One, **Elohim,** |**back** to **Jerusalem, and they** |sit**stayed there.**

30 + **David** was go**ing up** i **the ascent of Olivet, ascending and weeping;** + **his head** was **hooded**|**, and he** was **walking barefoot. And all the people who** were `with **him hooded** each **man his head;** +**thus they** went **up ascending**– **and weeping**–**.** 31 +**When David** 7**was told~**cs › **saying**–**, Ahithophel** was i**among** the **conspirators**| **with Absalom,**

+**then David** |**said,** I **pray,** O **Yahweh, make** `**Ahithophel's counsel** look **unwise!**

32 +**Now it** |b**happened** when **David came** fr**to the summit where** people would |**prostrate** themselves **to Elohim,** + bd**there to meet him** was **the** 7**long** time **associate~ Hushai** with **his tunic torn**| **and** dust from the **ground on his head.** 33 + **David** |**said to him, If you** p**march** on `with **me,** + **you will become** › a **load on me.** 34 +**But if you** |**return** to **the city and say to Absalom,** 7**Your brothers have crossed** over, **and the king, your father, crossed** over **after me, and now**0 **I** am **your servant,** O ˙**king;** 7**grant me life**0**; I** |**became your father's servant, and I** have been **hitherto,** +**but now I** am **your servant** +**too,** +**then you** c**can annul** `**Ahithophel's counsel for me.** 35 **And** are **not Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, there with you?** +**So it will come** to **be: Every** ˙**word** w**that you may hear from the king's** in**palace, you shall tell to Zadok and to Abiathar, the priests.** 36 **Behold, there with them** are **their two sons, Zadok's** son **Ahimaaz and Abiathar's** son **Jonathan;** + i**by means of them you will send to me every word** w**that you may hear.** 37 +**So David's associate Hushai** |**came** to **the city** +**as Absalom was entering Jerusalem,** 7**and Ahithophel** was **with him**0**.**

ABSALOM'S CONSPIRACY

ABSALOM was a serious threat to David and the spiritual welfare of the country. It was apparent that he had grown to despise his father. He was attractive and well liked, but was also cold and calculating. The same controlled hatred that secretly planned Amnon's murder was now focused on destroying David. Absalom fully occupied himself with his agenda to steal the loyalty of the nation away from his father. He placed himself in the public eye, spending much time at the gate (2 Sam.15:2), the place of public announcement and civil court (*cf* Gen.19:1; 23:10,18; 34:20; Ruth

4:1,11; 2 Sam.18:4,5). Absalom's plan may have been his own, but he could also have been influenced by his mother's royal family during his stay in Geshur, and it is also likely that he was tutored by a secret foe of David in the royal court, Ahithophel.

Under the guise of paying a vow and worshipping Yahweh, Absalom procured David's permission to take 200 members of the court with him to Hebron. At the same time a large number of Absalom's devotees were assembling at Hebron. The plan was to anoint Absalom king, and, in the midst of overwhelming support, to pull the 200 over into firm allegiance to Absalom as well. Ahithophel, David's chief and most trusted advisor, was conspicuously absent from Jerusalem at this time (v.12), but he met Absalom in Hebron and joined hands with him in the rebellion. His presence lent great weight to Absalom's cause.

It has been suggested that Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba (*cf* 2 Sam.11:3; 23:34) and held a deadly grudge against David for his sin with Bathsheba and against her husband Uriah. While this is possible, it is not certain that the same man named Eliam is both the son of Ahithophel and the father of Bathsheba. David seems never to have suspected that Ahithophel had reason to betray him. If David had known that Bathsheba was the granddaughter of his most trusted advisor, that knowledge might even have deterred him from bringing her to the palace. If Bathsheba was Ahithophel's granddaughter, David should certainly have suspected that he had deeply offended his advisor. There is not enough information supplied to determine Ahithophel's motives with certainty.

PSALM 41

Many commentators suggest that Psalm 41 refers to this time in David's life. The Psalmist had a period of serious illness (compare also Psalms 38 and 39). If David had

such an illness, it would explain why he was absent from the judicial duties of the king, providing Absalom with the opportunity to slander him and present himself as a preferable choice for king. Absalom's statement: "there is no one assigned to you from the king to hear them [your matters]" (2 Sam.15:3), is suggestive that something had happened which prevented David from hearing the matters himself. A serious illness would provide both the cause for the need and the reason why David failed to meet the need.

The psalm begins with these words: "Happy is he who is acting intelligently toward the poor and needy; In a day of peril, Yahweh shall provide his escape." From his sickbed the Psalmist also speaks of a conspiracy against himself. He was aware of pretended allegiance and secret slandering. "If one comes to see me, he speaks hypocrisy . . . . Together, all who are hating me whisper against me . . . . Even the man bidding me peace, in whom I trusted, who was eating my bread, has magnified his heel against me" (Psa.41:6,7,9).

The first verse of the Psalm is often thought to be obscure. How does the thought of the happiness of the one who acts intelligently toward the poor and needy fit into the context? David probably wrote the Psalm later, when he could reflect on everything that had happened. He barely escaped from Jerusalem with family and loyal friends. And it was only with the aid of other friends that he was sustained and was able to evade Absalom. Hushai, Abiathar, Zadok, Ahimaaz, Jonathan, Ittai, Shobi, Machir, Barzillai, and even the scheming Ziba came to the aid of the fleeing king. David saw all of this trial as from the hand of God, and he could see the blessing that came to these people after the trial passed as a blessing from God's hand as well.

The second line of verse one moves to David, the needy one, speaking of Yahweh's provision for him. Then he digresses further to his helpless condition in sickness and the conspiracy of his enemies. Even those who were closest

to David and most trusted by him turned on him. David had always expected the worst from the Philistines and Assyrians. But it was not nearly as painful to be injured by them as it was to have those of his own household and his closest of friends betray him. Yet, even through these deep trials and humiliations, Yahweh upheld him.

ITTAI

When David received word that Absalom was proclaimed king, he gathered his family and loyal friends and fled Jerusalem. Ittai the Gittite stands in sharp contrast with Absalom, showing that the bond of loyalty in service is not something that can be passed from generation to generation by the flesh. It depends upon the faith and love given by God (2 Sam.15:15-22).

CROSSING THE KIDRON

When Julius Caesar led his army across the Rubicon River, it was an unmistakable declaration of war on Rome. "Crossing the Rubicon" has become a catch phrase for "making an irreversible decision." It is said that Caesar charged his steed into the shallow waters of the river and exclaimed, "The die is cast!" The historians say Caesar's actions and words carried a prodigious weight of significance and were a turning point in history. But what are they in comparison with "Crossing the Kidron"?

The night scene before us in 2 Samuel 15:23 bears many similarities and contrasts to the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ. The brook Kidron is mentioned only once in the Greek scriptures (John 18:1). On the night of His betrayal, Christ and His disciples left the upper room (John 14:31), and Christ continued talking with them as they walked along through Jerusalem. He spoke many words of comfort to them, concluding with His prayer in John 17. Then they crossed the Kidron to go to Gethsemane and betrayal. He

crossed the Kidron to humiliation, that sharpest of blades for stripping away the flesh. Kidron means *dark* or *somber.* Christ crossed the brook named darkness to enter God-forsaken darkness. Gethsemane means *olive press.* There in Gethsemane Christ voiced His irreversible decision to be obedient, even to the death of the cross. He crossed into the darkness away from the mountain of God, away from the home of the coffer of the covenant. He entered the press where His will was crushed so that the oil of God's spirit might anoint those graced to believe in Him.

ZADOK AND ABIATHAR

David instructed Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, to return the coffer of the covenant to Jerusalem. He assured them that they could be of the greatest help to him by staying in the city, and being a source of information for him (2 Sam.15:24-29). David had learned that Yahweh had no need of his protection, but rather that he, David, stood in need of Yahweh's grace if he was to be permanently established. The inscription of Psalm 3 identifies it as David's prayer and meditation when he fled from Absalom. David saw himself as one whom his God had chosen and was guiding. Whether or not he was delivered was an issue of God's own vindication. Would He allow his chosen one to be forsaken to his enemies, or would deliverance issue forth from His holy mountain? David determined to accept whatever chastisement God had for him, but ultimately he rested in God for deliverance. "I will lie down that I may sleep; I will awake, for Yahweh, He shall support me . . . . To Yahweh belongs the salvation; On Your people be Your blessing!" (Psa.3:5,8).

HUMILIATION AND THE POWER OF GOD

David trudged up the Mount of Olives, weeping, with bare feet and his head covered, showing his dire humili-

ation and distress (2 Sam.15:30; *cp* Deut.25:9,10; Isa.20:2-4; Eze.24:15-18 [bare feet]; *cp* Est.6:12; Jer.14:3,4 [head covered]). As he drew close to the place where Judas would betray Christ, he was told that Ahithophel, his most trusted counselor, was among the conspirators with Absalom. He prayed that God would make Ahithophel's counsel look unwise. And there God did make wisdom look foolish, and foolishness look like wisdom (2 Sam.15:31). Even today the world struggles with the wisdom of the humiliation and crucifixion of Christ, calling it stupidity (1 Cor.1:18-2:13). Yet it is the wisdom of God.

Both David and Christ were rejected by their own people. Absalom and Barabbas were both known murderers, and both were preferred over David and Christ. Both David and Christ sorrowed deeply. Both prayed and both were betrayed. David left Jerusalem to prevent Absalom from attacking it and killing many people there, showing his concern for the safety of his people and all those with him. Similarly, Christ cared for the safety of his disciples (*cf* John 18:9), and both men accomplished the safety of their own (2 Sam.17:22; John 10:27-30; 17:12).

Yet Christ's humiliation and sorrow was deeper. David's friends rallied about him, traveling with him and bringing him supplies. But all forsook Christ and fled (Matt. 26:56). David was suffering the results of his own sins, but Christ was sinless, and suffered for the sins of the world. David was continually praying and seeing God's provision for his deliverance unfolding. Christ was truly forsaken, even by God.

"My body I give to smiters, and My cheeks to burnishers. My face I do not conceal from confoundings and spitting. And My Lord Yahweh is helping Me. Therefore, I am not confounded. Therefore I set My face as a flint, and know that I shall not be ashamed" (Isa.50:6,7). Christ came to the Kidron, and did not hesitate to cross it for us.

J. Phillip Scranton

"CONCEALED FROM THE EONS"; "AS DECEIVERS AND TRUE"

Question:

In a recent Bible study that I attended, one of my friends said that he now believes that the words "eon" and "generation" which normally mean, respectively, a period of time, and, the people living at about the same time, are instead titles of Satan and of certain evil messengers ("Eon," "Eons," and "Generations"). He gets this from Ephesians 2:2 and Colossians 1:26. He said that many people in church history believed the same as he does on this subject. He also said since these meanings are so obvious in these verses, that if others after hearing him out should still reject what he has to say about this, it must be because they do not truly want new truth, at least if it should be made known through an "unapproved" source.

Answer:

WITHIN the compass of "church history," it is possible to find "many people" who have believed all sorts of things, however strange and contradictory, in comparison, one to another. Therefore, the fact that the doctrine which your friend now embraces is not new but was held by certain early Gnostics as well as by various others in later periods, is in no way supportive of its correctness.

Further, since even objectively simple ideas, in the eyes of some may by no means be "obviously true" ideas, it becomes mere intimidation, besides begging the ques-

tion even as confounding the subjective with the objective, to press the sheer "obviousness" of putative truth. It is unwise as well as unkind to claim that those who differ with us (at least any who do so after having examined our claims) do so because "they do not truly want new truth, at least if it should be made known through an 'unapproved' source." Such an evaluation of someone else's heart and motives not only fails to give the benefit of the doubt, but it assumes the worst about a matter concerning which we can by no means be certain.

Now, to address your question itself concerning the word "eon" in Ephesians 2:2 and the words "eons" and "generations" in Colossians 1:26:

> *"And you, being dead to your offenses and sins, in which once you walked, in accord with the* **eon** *of this world, in accord with the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness . . ."* (Eph.2:1,2).
>
> *". . . in accord with the administration of God, which is granted to me for you, to complete the word of God—the secret which has been concealed from the* **eons** *and from the* **generations,** *yet now was made manifest to His saints, to whom God wills to make known what are the glorious riches of this secret among the nations, which is: Christ among you, the expectation of glory—"* (Col.1:25-27).

In Ephesians 2:1, Pauls says that we are dead to our offenses and sins, in which once we walked, "in accord with the *eon* of this *world,* in accord with the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness . . ." (Eph.2:1,2).

Over the centuries, some have taught that it is to be understood from this passage that in the phrase "the *eon* of this world," we have a reference to Satan, who, it is claimed, is the chief "Eon" of the world, the world in which we live.

That is, such teachers claim that EON, which elsewhere means a period of time, here signifies "evil spirit being" as a title of Satan.

It is pointed out that following the phrase, "in accord with the *eon* of this world," is a *parallel* phrase, "in accord with the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness." From this the claim is made that each phrase makes reference to the same thing, namely to the same being, Satan.

Similarly, since in Colossians 1:26 Paul speaks of "*the secret* which has been *concealed* from the *eons* and from the *generations* . . ." these same teachers have claimed that not only is an "eon" a certain type of creature (an evil spirit being) but that a "generation" is a certain type of allied creature as well (a wicked celestial messenger). The idea is that in this instance neither an "eon" nor a "generation" are periods of time, but are instead titles of created beings. To make this notion clear, it is suggested that this text be rendered with these words at issue capitalized thus: ". . . concealed from the Eons and from the Generations . . . ."

It is further reasoned that since "the secret" spoken of here is now made manifest to *beings* (namely, to the saints), in the phrase "concealed from the eons and from the generations," we are therefore to understand that these also are beings (namely, evil spirit beings and wicked celestial messengers). It is stressed that this is doubtlessly the correct meaning, since secrets can only be either concealed from or manifested to actual beings, not to things (i.e., to periods of time).

In reply to the above claims concerning Ephesians 2:2, I would say the following: It is true that the phrase, "*in accord with* the eon of this world," is in parallel to the phrase which follows, "*in accord with* the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness."

Parallelism (which is found primarily in poetry) is a literary device. Its purpose is not to identify one thing with another; instead, it is employed in the interests of somehow making a *comparison* or noting a *similarity* between one thing and another.

Therefore, it does not follow from the fact that these two phrases are set in parallel to one another, that each phrase is in reference to the same thing. Much less does it follow that since the second phrase ("the chief of the jurisdiction of the air . . .") speaks of a being, therefore the words in question in the first phrase (namely, "the eon") are also in reference to a being.

The fact that each of these two phrases in Ephesians 2:2 begins with the common term *kata* (rendered "in accord with") hardly identifies or demonstrates equivalency between the noun "eon" in the former phrase and the noun "chief" in the latter phrase, thus "proving" that the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, presumably Satan, is the "Eon" of this world!

It is by no means revealed to us in this text that the word "eon" here refers to Satan or means some type of powerful celestial being.

Surely "the eon of *this* world" stands in contrast to the respective eons of the other worlds (SYSTEMS) or constitutions of human society which have obtained down the centuries. An "eon" which corresponds to any certain world, speaks of the duration of *time* during which any certain general *order* or "world" exists or prevails.

The eon of this world—the eon in which we live, which continues to endure so long as the present world order obtains—is a *wicked* eon (Gal.1:4). This is so since it incorporates such an abundance of human sins and offenses, including our own, in which once we walked.

These offenses and sins of ours may be accounted for first of all due to the fact that through the disobedience

of Adam we were constituted sinners (Rom.5:19) and thus became members of the old humanity which is corrupted in accord with its seductive desires (Eph.4:22). Yet our offenses and sins are to be accounted for as well in consideration of the fact that in this wicked eon in which we live, besides being involuntarily subjected to the slavery of corruption (Rom.8:21), we are *also* subject to the baneful and deleterious, powerful influences of "the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness."[1]

Thus Paul speaks, concerning our "offenses and sins, in which once [we] walked," in which we engaged ourselves thus, (1) "in accord with the eon of this world," and (2) "in accord with the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness . . ." (Eph.2:2).

In reply to the above claims concerning Colossians 1:26, I would say this: The main argument of these same teachers here in this text is simply that inasmuch as a secret can only be concealed from beings, and since the secret spoken of here had been "concealed from the eons and from the generations," therefore eons and generations are beings.

The additional argument is that since a secret can only be made manifest to beings, and since "the secret" is now made manifest to the saints, who are beings, in the phrase "concealed from the *eons* and from the *generations*," it is therefore beings, denominated thus, who are in view, from whom this secret has been concealed. This argument is specious, however, since it simply does not follow that since the secret is now made manifest to the saints who are beings, that the beings from whom it had been concealed were beings termed "Eons" and "Generations."

1. Through his employment of the striking phrase, "the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness," Paul evidently alludes to Satan, otherwise called the Adversary (*cp* 2 Tim.2:26; 2 Cor.11:14; *cf* Rev.12:9).

The claim that these supposed beings, purportedly termed "Eons" and "Generations," are, as to their nature, "evil spirit beings" and "wicked celestial messengers," stands on very shaky ground indeed. That ground is merely the gratuitous claim that in Ephesians 2:2 the word "eon" in the phrase "the eon of this world" signifies a title of Satan who is spoken of thus. It is reasoned that since in Colossians 1:26 the word "eons" is in the plural, it must therefore have in view a company of lesser evil spirit beings, ones who are in league with the chief evil spirit being, Satan himself. Similarly, it is reasoned that since the word "generations" is conjoined to the word "eons" which word speaks of evil spirit beings, therefore "generations" must also have in view wicked celestial beings, ones who themselves are likewise associated with Satan.

Of course we are well aware that secrets can only be hidden from beings, not inanimate periods of time. Literally, a secret may be hidden in or during a period of time, but not from it (*cp* Romans 16:25, "hushed in times eonian").

If, as one might reasonably hope, the reader upon approaching these verses in question, already knew what an "eon" and a "generation" were, it would not be necessary for the writer to define his terms at every turn.

With this in mind, and since we do indeed already know prior to considering these disputed verses that "eons" and "generations," definitionally, have in view time-duration, and are mindful as well that secrets can only be concealed from and manifested to beings, it follows that the phrase "concealed from the eons and from the generations" cannot be strictly literal but must instead be figurative. The evident figure employed (evident in the nature of the case) is the common figure termed metonymy (i.e., association) in which that which is *associated with* what is expressed is the actual thought in view.

That is, "the secret," which Paul now reveals, which is,

"Christ among *you,*" had been concealed from *those associated with* the past eons (of time) and generations (of human beings), namely, *those who lived during those former eras.*

I should mention as well that even as Paul often uses the figure of association, he also often uses the figure of *omission,* or ellipsis. That is, he frequently compresses his thoughts, thus avoiding weighing down his sentences with excessive verbiage. This figure is present whenever one refrains from *expressing* what is plainly in view and necessary to the completion of the thought.

Taken in this quite similar sense, the thought here thus becomes, "from [*the beginning of*] the eons" (and of the generations), "the beginning of" being clearly *understood* though not expressed.

Acts 15:18 is a similar passage ("Known from [the] eon to the Lord is His work"), though the definite article is not used there and the thought is more general, being from the Hebrew standpoint. The sense is, as we might put it, that from "of old" or from duration of time "long ago," known to the Lord is His work. This sort of device is used in many passages, the self-evident, elliptical idea being understood by the discerning reader.

As I have just indicated, in Colossians 1:26, the figure primarily in view would seem to be that of association. Yet this elliptical thought as well may also be present in Paul's mind. In any event, in the nature of the case, both the metonymical and the elliptical sense are true; and, each one complements the other. Hence we do well to note and to accept them both.

❊

Question:

I must admit that it troubles me that your ministry, though very substantive and useful, is so small, so little known, so little appreciated, and its teachings so

little embraced. Why is it not at least somewhat better known and better received?

Answer:

We empathize with you in your regret that our translation and teaching ministry which over the years has been of much value to many, nonetheless, by the usual standards, has remained very small.

If you are inquiring as to the remote and ultimate cause as to why our work is not more widely known and better received, I can readily answer this question. It is because all that exists and all that occurs is out of, through, and for God (Rom.11:36). This includes not only the character and substance of our efforts, but both their reception or rejection by others, even in the degree to which they are embraced or dismissed (*cp* 2 Cor.6:8,9; Isa.26:12).

But if you are inquiring instead as to the proximate cause as to why our work is not more widely known and better received, perhaps I can also answer this question. The reason why, in this sense, that we have had a little "success" yet only a little success, and why some but no more have received and rejoiced in our teachings and translative findings, is simply because we are the way we are and others are the way they are, according as God is intending.

Regardless of who teaches it and the degree of success any certain ones may have in making it known, the truth of the evangel remains that since salvation is a gracious gift, all for whom Christ died will be saved; and Christ died for all, giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all, in accord with the great truth that our Saviour, God, wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4,6). May God give us not only the grace to accept His truth, but the grace not to be stumbled by the fact that since men love the darkness rather than the light (John 3:19), except where God grants enlightenment, darkness must necessarily prevail. J.R.C.

ALL UNDER SIN

THERE are no human heroes in Romans, just sinners, among whom we find a few fellow partakers of grace. The Hero is our Lord Jesus Christ, Who indeed is the "One Man" through Whom God's grace and gratuity is conveyed (*cf* Rom.5:15), but Who stands unique as the Son of God. What we learn of humanity concerns our need, which is minutely detailed in Romans 1:18-3:20 in order to direct our attention to God as He is made known in His Son. Paul writes about human unrighteousness, but in doing so he directs our thoughts to God's righteousness.

ROMANS 3:9

Still addressing himself to the representative Jew, and identifying himself with him, according to the flesh, the apostle now sums up the manifest fact of human depravity. Here before God's righteous judgment, everyone stands on the same level:

> *What, then? Are we privileged?*
> *Undoubtedly not,*
> *for we previously charge both Jews and Greeks to be* **all** *under sin.*

The Jew, who has the multifarious benefit and prerogative of the oracles of God, belonging to the chosen people, "whose are . . . the promises" (Rom.9:4), is not privileged *when it comes to God's indignation against sin.* God will be righteously faithful to His word, but He will not be unrighteous and unfair in His judgment. How is this possible? This is the pressing question being set before us.

ROMANS 3:10-18

But lest we do not grasp the magnitude of the dilemma, Paul pens one of those powerful masterpieces of thought which are so typical of Romans (e.g., Rom.5:12-19; 8:31-39; 11:29-36). Drawing from the Sacred Scriptures the apostle shows humanity for what it is before the righteous God and apart from the WELL-MESSAGE he is bringing. We are all irreverent and unrighteous in words and in deeds, to one extent or another. The facts of human depravity are: . . . *according as it is written, that*

Not one *is just*
—Not even one.
Not one *is understanding.*
Not one *is seeking out God.*

All *avoid Him:*
At the same time they were useless.
Not one *is doing kindness:*
There is **not even one***!*

A sepulcher opened is their throat.
With their tongues they defraud.
The venom of asps is under their lips,
Whose mouth with imprecation and bitterness is crammed.

Sharp are their feet to shed blood.
Bruises and wretchedness are in their ways,
And the way of peace they do not know.
There is no fear of God in front of their eyes.

These are blunt words, dark and pessimistic in themselves. They speak of humanity as a whole as specifically stated in verses 10-12 (the first two stanzas). Hence what is said about our words and thoughts in the third stanza (Rom.3:13,14) and our deeds and disposition in the last stanza (verses 15-18) also apply to all. From head to foot we all are sinners, which means not simply that we do wrong,

but that, at our very core, we are *unable* to do that which is righteous and honoring to our Creator. Regarding ourselves, we are being led to that sobering and yet exultant awareness of our need of God and His righteousness in a work of salvation. We are sinners. He alone can be the true and righteous Saviour. He alone can supply what is needed by all mankind.

The words of Romans 3:10-18 themselves are not original with Paul. He draws them from the Septuagint translation of Ecclesiastes, the Psalms and Isaiah, adjusting and arranging them in accord with his present thought in his epistle to the Romans. As translated in the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, Paul's probable sources are as follows:

There is no righteous human in the earth, (Ecc.7:20a)
—Not even one. (Psa.14:3c)
[Yahweh gazes down to see whether] there is anyone acting intelligently, (Psa.14:2a,b)
Anyone seeking after Elohim. (Psa.14:2c)

All withdraw aside; (Psa.14:3a)
Together they are spoiled. (Psa.14:3a)
There is no one doing good; (Psa.14:3b)
There is not even one. (Psa.14:3c)

A sepulcher opened is their throat; (Psa.5:9c)
With their tongue they deal slickly. (Psa.5:9d)
The venom of an asp is under their lips. (Psa.140:3b)
His mouth is full of imprecation, with deceit and fraud; (Psa.10:7a)

Their feet . . . are hastening to shed innocent blood. (Isa.59:7a,b)
Devastation and brokenness are in their highways. (Isa.59:7d)
The way of peace they do not know. (Isa.59:8a)
There is no awe of Elohim in front of his eyes. (Psa.36:1b)

No doubt the Jew understood most of these passages in their various contexts as applying only to those of the nations. It would be startling to them to find Paul applying them to everyone, themselves included. Yet that is exactly what he does here. Hence he has just written, with Romans 2:11-29 in mind, ". . . we previously charge both Jews and Greeks to be *all under sin*" (Rom.3:9), even as he soon will write: "no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight . . . *all sinned* and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:20,23), and, ". . . through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which *all sinned*" (Rom.5:12).

Concepts of self-righteousness and superiority easily arise where there is favor. But the fact which is declared throughout Scripture is that every descendant of Adam is a sinner, bar none.

NOT ONE IS JUST

The arrangement of Romans 3:10-18 in four stanzas of four lines each, as given above, attempts to reflect a deliberate pattern of thought in Paul's mind as he brings the subject of human irreverence and unrighteousness to a conclusion. In the opening stanza (Romans 3:10,11) the apostle speaks of every human being, no one excepted, not even those who enjoy the prerogative divine promise. All are unrighteous in accord with the standards of divine righteousness which are upheld in God's judgments. And in accord with those same standards, all are irreverent, without a righteous understanding of God and His ways, and without that necessary and perfect disposition of seeking out God in awe and appreciation.

Where is Paul leading us? He does not stop here with this terrible indictment. He has much more to say, and it will not be disconnected and unrelated to this stern and troubling exposure of human failure.

First of all, Paul speaks of righteousness in relation to humanity. Righteousness as upheld and demanded by God is simply not in us, and it cannot ever be in us by human effort in following the demands of the law. If absolute *righteousness* and human beings are ever to come together, it must be of God, which is exactly what Paul will say starting in Romans 3:21 when he unfolds the evangel. We might see this better if we use the variant "righteous" instead of the word "just" in Romans 3:10, as follows:

Not one is righteous

Yet now . . . a righteousness of God is manifest

The bad news is that no human being is righteous before God. The good news concerns the fact that God is righteous and that He is now manifesting His righteousness in connection with human beings. How this concerns the faith of Jesus Christ and the deliverance that is in Him, and how this relates to justification of sinners, and how this relates to God's grace and purpose are further important points of the evangel. But it begins with this major revelation that the solution to human unrighteousness lies in God's righteousness.

Paul's conclusion from the fact that no one is righteous is not the command that we must therefore strive to make ourselves righteous. That is the message of the law as given at Sinai, or as placed in our conscience. The law speaks of an impossibility for the flesh. The evangel Paul brings, given in light of the fact that everyone is unrighteous, is apart from law, and it begins with the manifestation of God's righteousness.

That may still be surprising to us if we have not been following the arguments of Romans 1:18-3:20 carefully. We may still think of God's righteousness only as it relates to His righteous judgment, but divine judgment and indignation lead only to the impasse Paul has set before us. No one

is righteous. Therefore no one can righteously be granted glory and honor and peace by their works even though God has promised much to His chosen people along these lines. It is clear: The evangel must present God's righteousness in a further and fresh way, or at least in a fuller way, in order for it to be related to salvation, and as good news for unrighteous humanity.

NOT EVEN ONE

The bad news is that no one is righteous, and this is repeated by the words, "not even one." Paul emphasizes this point of universal human unrighteousness. And in presenting the evangel he will soon emphasize, by way of repetition, the manifestation of God's righteousness, *which he relates to all.* It is appropriate that the terms "not one" be repeated and emphasized in Romans 3:10, and that the terms "righteousness of God" be repeated and emphasized in Romans 3:21,22. But in meeting the need expressed the fact that human beings are unrighteous by reference to "God's righteousness," Romans 3:21,22 does not overlook the scope of human unrighteousness as described earlier in the chapter. In both Paul's conclusion about the human problem and his introduction to the evangel which deals with that problem all mankind are in view.

Again the parallel in structure between Romans 3:10 and Romans 3:21,22 may help us appreciate this more clearly:

Not one is righteous
—Not even one.

A righteousness of God is manifest
—Yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith,
for all . . . .

In presenting the evangel, the apostle hastens forward to its special significance to the believer. But he does not overlook its significance for all mankind, all of whom are in

dire need of salvation. God is the Saviour of all mankind, and He is especially the Saviour of believers (1 Tim.4:10). God's righteousness in His work of salvation through Jesus Christ's faith is *for all,* and so it is that on this solid foundation the evangel declares that it is *on all* who are believing.

We will find the same pattern in Romans 5:12-19 where the evangel is related to the believer in a special way on the basis of what God accomplishes for all mankind through the obedience of Jesus Christ. The pressing need of the whole of humanity is summed up here in Romans 3:10-18, and the universality of this need will not be forgotten as the evangel is unfolded.

NOT ONE IS UNDERSTANDING OR SEEKING OUT GOD

Romans 3:11 provides the last two lines of the opening stanza of our passage. The references are to human irreverence as expressed in our thoughts and disposition. We do not understand God, and we do not seek Him out.

What human beings know of God seldom seems to penetrate to that real understanding that recognizes our dependency on Him and the glory and righteousness of His ways (*cf* Rom.1:21). Our concepts of God do not envision Him as a God of purpose in accord with the original presentation of God in the Scriptures, a God Who carries out what He says and brings all powerfully and gloriously to a good completion (*cf* Gen.1). Sin has made us doubters either of God's ability or His goodness, and even worse it has made us look to ourselves as the masters of our destiny. But the evangel which Paul is about to proclaim shows God in His power and righteousness actually accomplishing that good which we all need so desperately The evangel reveals God as the Seeker, Who spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all.

In this there is no room for human boasting, certainly

not for the thought that we helped out God by our decision in His favor and the giving up of our self-interests. What we have done, if we have done anything positive ourselves (and believing what God has said to us is a positive act indeed) is only evidence of God's grace in our lives; it is part of the salvation which He has granted. It is all God's work and His achievement.

We can never make much progress in understanding God as long as we think of justification as something coming out of ourselves, out of our works, out of our fear of God, even out of our faith in Him. Justification is *gratuitous,* as it must be. It is in God's *grace,* as it must be. That is what humanity does not understand. The evangel provides this understanding, by presenting justification as God's achievement through the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ.

ALL AVOID HIM

The second stanza of our passage (Rom.3:12) speaks of human acts in relation to God and then in relation to human beings. These result from our unrighteousness and irreverence.

Because we fail to understand God and seek Him out in understanding our acts go in the opposite direction of righteousness. We avoid God, and we are self-centered and self-occupied.

Avoidance of God goes back to Adam and Eve. Because they had disobeyed and were aware of their nakedness which made their failure so evident, they tried to hide themselves from Yahweh (Gen.3:8).

The evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ shows us that God deals with this avoidance and fear by His gracious work of justification through the faith of Jesus Christ.

If Adam's disobedience can be justified and he himself be constituted righteous, then there would be no avoidance

of God. Yet this is impossible to the flesh. It can only be done by God, and this is what the evangel tells us is done by God, done gratuitously, graciously and righteously. Hence Paul will soon speak of the display of God's righteousness in the current era, where God is displayed as truly just (righteous) and a Justifier of one who is blessed "out of the faith of Jesus" (Rom.3:26). The cause of this justification is the faith of Jesus in dying as the Saviour of sinners.

ALL ARE USELESS

It is a sin to be useless. Few of the sins mentioned here are so definitive as the sin of uselessness. Most human beings do not particularly set out to be useless to God in bringing glory to Him as the wise and able Creator and Subjector. At least to start out with, we do not want to be failures in fulfilling our place as the image and likeness of God. But we are.

Yet God has provided a righteous deliverance from uselessness and all that comes under the heading of sin. As this applies to the believer we are brought into the happy and honorable usefulness of "living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:11). The key to this place of usefulness is appreciation of Christ Jesus as Lord, and this aspect of salvation will eventually embrace all, as Paul later describes it in Philippians 2:10,11. What a day it will be when every knee bows and every tongue acclaims that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God the Father!

NOT ONE IS DOING KINDNESS
NOT EVEN ONE

The Hebrew of Psalm 14:1c and 3b states that "There is no one doing *good*." The Septuagint (and Paul in quoting from the Septuagint) uses the narrower term "kindness" in place of the general term "good." Consequently, the indictment of Romans 3:10-18 seems to turn from

the theme of direct irreverence toward God to that of unrighteousness toward humanity. The Greek words for "kindness" and "useless" share a root element meaning USE. To be kind to someone is to be of use to them. But in its ultimate sense, kindness is usefulness to God in bringing honor to His Name.

The charge is that not one is doing kindness, *not even one.* The evangel of God is that all *the many* sinners who have descended from the one man, Adam, will be constituted righteous by means of the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:19). God righteously will bring sinners into that righteous state of salvation in which the fruit of the spirit will be borne in every way (*cf* Gal.5:22,23).

UNRIGHTEOUS WORDS

Romans 3:13 and 14 point to the filthiness and corruption of human speech. The first two lines are based on Psalm 5:9. Our throat from which our speech arises is like an opened tomb in which a dead body has been placed. Our tongues which begin to form the sounds into distinct words produces lies that not only deceive but defraud. Then borrowing from Psalm 140:3, the apostle describes our lips which complete the formation of our words: they are like the mouth structures of a poisonous snake, striking out with poisonous venom. Finally, he completes the picture in the terms of Psalm 10:7. Our mouth is crammed full with foul words of hate and bitterness.

But God's evangel is crammed with words of righteousness and life, of peace and power, of good and grace and glory. It speaks of the astounding work of God in not sparing His beloved Son, but giving Him up for us all. It speaks of His unparalleled love commended in Christ's death for His enemies who are sinners, infirm and irreverent. It speaks of access in peace and conciliation to God through the death of His Son.

The corrupt and bitter speech of humanity often continues to be found even among those who claim to be servants of God, whenever limits are put on the glory and grace of the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. We defraud those who hear us when we suggest that God cannot save certain sinners, or that He will not do that which He says He wills to do.

The evangel of God delivers and saves those who believe it; it removes them from foul and poisonous speech that repels and harms, and it brings them into full assurance that what God has promised He is able to do also, so that glory is given to God.

UNRIGHTEOUS DEEDS

The severe indictment of human acts given in Romans 3:15-18, borrowed from Isaiah 59 and Psalm 36, may strike us as a generalization that does not apply to every individual. But we recall what Jesus said about the sin of murder in Matthew 5:22. It includes the sin of anger and expressions of hate. People are bruised and made wretched by the thoughtlessness and greed of others, and everyone is included on both sides of the equation. We know what it is to hurt someone else, and we know what it is to be hurt. Most serious of all, the actions of human beings are offensive to God. Furthermore, all laws and all good intentions and desires of those longing to carry out that which is good do not keep us from doing miserable things.

But Paul does not write simply to cast us down. He would have us recognize the truth about ourselves as sinners. But he would have us do this so that we are readied for the truth concerning God as revealed in the evangel. It is not an added burden to our lives to be believing the evangel. It is a message of good with respect to every evil of our experience and within our lives.

D.H.H.

TYPES AND ANTITYPES

THE TABERNACLE with its various ordinances was a type of that which was to come. The temple of Solomon likewise spoke of a future glory to be realized, when He, who is greater than Solomon, shall inaugurate His reign of peace. Ezekiel's temple—still future—will be standing in that Millennial day. It, too, will be a type, not indeed of the Day of the Lord in which it stands, but of the succeeding one, the Day of God (2 Peter 3:10-13) in which the curse will be no more, and a new creation will proclaim that the era of rectification has come.

Types which bring before us such widely different thoughts must picture to us widely different antitypes. It is exceedingly important that we obtain God's mind as to the teaching of the type; and it is no less imperative that we connect each type with the antitype which is proper to it.

THE TABERNACLE PERIOD

The tabernacle stood from Sinai to Solomon. The epistle to the Hebrews deals with the realities which the tabernacle and its ritual prefigured. In it God's Son is set forth as the Antitype of Moses (Heb.3:2-6) and of Aaron (Heb.5:4) and of Joshua (Heb.4:8). The Hebrews are in the wilderness. One worthy of more glory than Moses is their Leader. He is about to bring them into God's rest, which Joshua failed to do. His priesthood far transcends Aaron's, for it is founded upon better promises and is untransferable. The first covenant given at Sinai fades before the second (Heb.8:7-13).

The tabernacle itself is briefly summarized in the ninth

chapter, followed by this significant statement (Heb.9:9): ". . . which is a parable for the *present period*" (instead of "the time *then* present," as in the Authorized Version; see the Revised rendering). In the eleventh chapter the cloud of witnesses mentioned by name goes no further than the tabernacle days. Mount Sinai of the twelfth chapter, and the "camp" of chapter thirteen, all bring before us truths connected with the tabernacle.

Now the epistle to the Hebrews was manifestly written to those who are the subjects of Divine blessing (Heb. 2:3,4; 6:5) as recorded in the book of Acts. We therefore read of the ruins of the tabernacle of David as a present reality among them (Acts 15:16).

Christ is the true Antitype of the tabernacle. Until His glorious appearing, access into Yahweh's presence must be by means of the antitype of the tabernacle ritual, so far as that nation is concerned. [For the moment it will greatly aid us in understanding these types to dismiss from our minds the ministry of the apostle Paul to the nations in which we are given the truth for the present economy].

JOHN'S BAPTISM

But before the true Tabernacle was manifested John came, baptizing in Jordan. What, in the type, is a picture of this?

Christ was that Prophet like unto Moses (Deut.18: 15-19), Who came to deliver His people from bondage (Acts 7:20-39). Israel in Egypt corresponds to Israel under law, and the Lord came to lead them out into that good land He had prepared for them. But, like Israel of old, they tarried in the wilderness. How sadly true is the type in every way! Tens of thousands of them "believed," but they were "all zealous of the law" (Acts 21:20). They were not well pleasing to God, and were strewn along the wilderness (1 Cor.10:5).

The introduction to the wilderness was by baptism. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea (1 Cor.10:2). This severed them from Egypt and united them to Moses. And so, when John began to preach the kingdom of the heavens, he too baptized them unto the true Moses, the Lord Jesus (Matt.3:6).

If a mother were to take her seven boys, who had been playing in the dirt all day, and wash the faces and hands of three of them, she would thus divide them into two companies. The clean ones would be "sanctified." She would be apt to call them "my" boys, in contrast to those who were not clean. And, besides this, the clean boys would have a common bond, which would distinguish them from the unwashed ones, making them a unit. So it was both in Egypt and in the ministry of John the Baptist and our Lord. When the people were "baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea," they not only were separated from the Egyptians, but were identified with Moses.

All the prophets and the law prophesied until John; then the kingdom of the heavens began to be preached. But John did not baptize in his own name. He was not the Prophet who was to come. "John baptizes with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who is coming after him, that is, on Jesus. Now when they [i.e., the people] hear this, they are baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:4,5).

What, then, did John's baptism signify?

First, it was a confession: they needed to be washed, or ceremonially cleansed. They confessed their sins (Matt.3:6).

It was unto repentance, the prime requisite for Israel's blessing. The nation had become a byword and a hissing; they were scattered over all the earth; the nations ruled over them (Deut.28:37,43,48; 1 Kings 8:46,49).

The curses which were written in the law of Moses visited them in their disobedience. So then, in Deuteronomy 30:1-5, we read: "And it will come to be when all these things come on you, the blessing and the malediction, which I put before you, that you will recall them to your heart among all the nations where Yahweh your Elohim will have expelled you and that you will return again to Yahweh your Elohim and hearken to His voice according to all that I am instructing you today, you and your sons, with all your heart and with all your soul. Then Yahweh your Elohim will turn back your captivity and show compassion to you; He will return and convene you from all the peoples where Yahweh your Elohim will have scattered you. If it comes to be that you should be expelled to the end of the heavens, from there Yahweh your Elohim shall convene you, and from there He shall take you. Then Yahweh your Elohim will bring you to the land that your fathers tenanted; you will tenant it, and He will bring you good, and let you increase more than your fathers."

Since the days when Moses consecrated Aaron and his sons (Ex.29:4; Lev.8:6), *all baptism was performed by the person baptized.* The priest washed himself at the laver (Ex.40:31). The defiled clothes were to be washed by the man himself (Lev.11:40). Naaman dipped or baptized himself in Jordan (2 Kings 5:14).

But, when John came, he did the baptizing (Matt.3:6). So they called him "the Baptist." By his baptism, those who received it not only became a separate company, but were identified with the Coming One, and thus became a unit.

John came in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare the way of the Lord (Matt.11:14; Luke 1:17). And this is why the Lord underwent John's baptism (Matt.3:13). He needed no cleansing. No defilement was there to be removed. But as Moses was with the sons of Israel in the cloud and in the sea, so He also identified Himself with those who had been baptized unto His name. And here, too, is emphasized the two grand methods of baptism

which the cloud and the sea set forth. Here, too, there is a cloud, and its significance is clearly seen; for, through it comes the Dove, that Divine Spirit which is the true cleanser, sanctifier, and giver of abundant life (Matt.3:16).

We pause to grieve over the fearful hypocrisy which reigned in the nation in those times. John himself saw how superficial many of those were who came to his baptism. In his bold and fearless way he denounces them, saying, "O progeny of vipers, who intimates to you to flee from the coming indignation?" (Matt.3:7). Repentance and baptism in name and form were not enough. Suitable fruit must be produced to prove its reality (Matt.3:8). The One to Whom they had been baptized could not be deceived. He would not baptize with water, but by His baptism there would be a severing of the real and the unreal. Those would receive the baptism of holy spirit, but such as these the baptism of fire (Matt.3:11).

BAPTISM AND THE KINGDOM

Repentance is always connected with baptism when administered to the sons of Israel (Acts 2:38). The words of Moses, in Deuteronomy, are the long lost key to the right understanding of this much-abused word. Before Yahweh can bless His people Israel in the land, they must turn to Him. And, to prove the sincerity of their repentance, they must also bring forth its proper fruits. None of them will ever enjoy that earthly kingdom except they enter through this door. But, for the other nations, God opened another door—the door of faith (Acts 15:9,14-27).

Baptism was the outward seal of repentance during John's ministry, and that of the Lord Himself while on earth. The Lord Himself never baptized with or in water, but left that to His disciples (John 4:2).

The oneness of those thus baptized, and their separation from the rest, is seen when there arose a question

between John's disciples and the Jews about purification (John 3:25). They go to John, and tell him of the Lord, how He (or His disciples) baptize, and all come to Him. John's disciples were Jews; but now they are distinguished from other Jews. This incident shows, too, how the ministry of John merged into the Lord's, and how John's disciples formed the nucleus of the Lord's followers. These, while one with the Jews by the fleshly rite of circumcision, were separated from them by the fleshly rite of baptism.

The same ministry is continued by Peter on the day of Pentecost. The kingdom had been proclaimed by John and the Lord. Israel refused it, and murdered the Lord's Anointed. But now, in resurrection, He is proclaimed to them again as David's Son, Whom God had raised up to sit on David's throne (Acts 2:23,29,31). But, before the day of the Lord could come manifestly, God's hand must be displayed in judgment. Prophet after prophet had spoken of the opening of that terrible day. More awful than the judgments that delivered them from Egypt was to be the portion of His enemies (e.g., Joel 2:1-11; Isa.66:15).

How then were they, who were guilty of that sin of sins, the murder of God's Anointed—how could they escape them? "'Repent, and be baptized each of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the pardon of your sins, and you shall be obtaining the gratuity of the holy spirit. For to you is the promise and to your children, and to all those afar, whosoever the Lord our God should be calling to Him.' And with more words and different, he certified, and entreated them, saying, 'Be saved from this crooked generation'" (Acts 2:38-40)!

He had shown how that generation was going on to the terrible judgments which would usher in the Day of the Lord. To be saved from these judgments was the end he desired for them. In order to be saved it was necessary for them to repent. Nor this alone; but they must also be

baptized. A priest (in the type of this period, the tabernacle) might have said: "The waters of the laver have no intrinsic value; I will not wash in it." But he would have been reminded of Yahweh's word that he "should not die" (Ex.30:20). So also none of His people Israel will enter into that kingdom except by the way of repentance and baptism. This is the key to that strange word in Peter's epistle (who writes to the *diaspora,* or dispersion, who are in the wilderness and are about to enter the kingdom, and who are surrounded by the fiery trial he spoke of in his Pentecostal sermon): "A representation of baptism, which is now saving you (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the inquiry of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21). Baptism will be the entrance into the Ark of Safety in that day, whose tempestuous judgments will so much resemble the waters of Noah (Isa.54:9; Matt.24:37-39).

Two notable results of John's baptism have been noticed.

(1) It separated its subjects from the nation as a whole and, in addition to this,

(2) it formed them into a separate company.

These two thoughts continue to be seen both in our Lord's ministry and that of the twelve, as recorded in the book of Acts. When the proselyte Cornelius had received the gift of holy spirit, and thus given evidence that God had acknowledged him, Peter could say, "Who should forbid water, that these should not be baptized" (Acts 10:44-48)?

Why should not these men of the nations become one with the baptized company at Jerusalem, since God had sealed them? Not even all of those who had been baptized in water had received the gift of holy spirit. In Samaria they were baptized, but holy spirit had fallen upon none of them (Acts 8:15-17). Simon Magus would have bought the right to impart this spirit with money. If, then, those who had not even received these gifts should be identified with the saints at Jerusalem, and be delivered from the indignation about to be poured upon that nation and the whole earth, why should not these men of the nations be baptized who had received the gift, even as the apostles themselves at the first (Acts 11:15,17)?

So God comes in and forms a new ground of unity which supersedes (and rules in a sense) that of baptism in water, though both continued together for a time.

Remarkable as was the fact that John baptized his disciples (instead of exhorting them to do it themselves as under the law), still more remarkable is the fact that, after this manner had become so thoroughly established, Saul should be told to be baptized and bathe as acts which he himself would perform[3] (Acts 22:16). Had he been baptized like the rest, then he would have been identified with the company at Jerusalem, just as the Samaritans and Cornelius had been. His self-baptism is but one of a variety of symptoms which afterward developed into a clear and definite line of cleavage between him and Jerusalem, and his ministry and that of the twelve.

As his ministries will come before us at length later on, we will not pursue them further now.

Now we know that the temple and its service speaks of the time when our Lord, like Solomon, will sit upon His glorious throne and rule in peace (2 Sam.7:12-16). It is a type of the millennial age. But the tabernacle preceded the temple. It stood during David's reign. Yahweh would not suffer David to build Him a house (2 Sam.7:5-13; 1 Chron.17:4). But now the tabernacle of David is fallen, as the prophet Amos foretold.

But after Israel has been sifted among the nations, and the sinners have died by the sword (Amos 9:9), then will the tabernacle of David be built again (Acts 15:16). From

3. In the Greek, both verbs indicate a reflexive sense.

this we gather, not that the tabernacle itself (as an earthly material structure), but the truth which it represents, the economy which it typifies, will continue until Israel comes into that good land promised to their fathers, and even after this, so long as the Lord, like David, deals in judgment. This is the latter boundary of the antitype. Until then the laver holds its place midway between the altar and the throne. So long will the word go forth—"Repent and be baptized for the pardon of your sins" (Acts 2:38).

While the tabernacle stood no one dared approach Him unless first he be cleansed at the laver. So, in Israel, when the kingdom of God began to be preached by John, and was continued by the Lord and by Peter, and by the twelve at Pentecost, and as it will again be preached at the time of the end, all the way, until the Greater than Solomon is peacefully reigning on His throne, baptism in water will stand right in the midst of the way of approach.

All this is clear; but why a change?

The absolute need of cleansing denotes a state of distance from God. But a cleansed condition speaks of nearness and fellowship (*cf* Ex.29:4). So, in accord with this, Paul spoke of a "bath of renascence" (Titus 3:5). The initiatory washing of the priest was the new birth that introduced him to a life of nearness to Yahweh.

As the sacrifices were continually repeated because of their imperfection (Heb.10:2), so also the washing was continually repeated, adding nothing to the meaning of the type.

In that glorious day when all Israel shall be saved, then all will have been born from above; all will have been cleansed at the "bath of renascence." The whole nation will have been initiated into the priesthood. Hence there is no longer any need for the laver in this aspect. They all will be near (Rom.11:26; John 3:3; Ex.19:6; 1 Peter 2:9; Rev.1:6).

A. E. Knoch

Contents:

193 Editorial
194 The End of the Flesh
198 Cast Down But Not Perishing
203 In the Days of David
209 "Let No One, Then, Be Judging You"
222 Temple Types
225 The Day of Christ Distinguished
231 In God's Sight

SEPTEMBER, 2004

Volume XCV **Number 5**

Concordant Version of

1 Chronicles through Job

(1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job)

Concerning the books included in this fascicle of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, the book of Job is associated with Psalms and Proverbs in the Hebrew canon. Esther is one of five small scrolls, associated as a group; the others are: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations and Ecclesiastes. Ezra (including Nehemiah) appears along with Daniel in a final section of historical writings, concluding with Chronicles.

1 and 2 Chronicles, are treated as one book in Hebrew under the name "Words [or Annals] of the Days" (*cf* 1 Kings 14:19,29). The history is no mere repetition of the books of Samuel and Kings, but a carefully prepared commentary on the same events as they appeared to the eye of Yahweh. Many events which are assigned to human instrumentalities are here traced back to Yahweh. The purposes and counsels of the heart are unveiled in these divine annals.

Ezra and **Nehemiah** are also to be considered as one book under the name "Ezra" which means HELP. This is the perfect inscription to the history of Judah's restoration to their land and city and temple.

Esther is a marvelous manifestation of the care of Yahweh over His people when their sun is set and they are in the power of their enemies. Then He becomes their guiding star, shaping their way by means of a providence which never escapes His control. By the simplest and most insignificant means He turns the fell designs of their enemies into a source of blessing.

Like all the scrolls which are designated by the name of a man, the meaning of the name, **Job,** is the index to its contents. It means "Enmity." Job is a concrete example of the work of the enemy. The philosophy of evil is discussed to a finish. His four friends make evil the consequence of sin. Job maintains his innocence. Yet Yahweh vindicates him and blesses him far beyond what would have been possible apart from the affliction he had endured. Evil is definitely designed by God to work out His beneficent purpose. Thus the philosophy of evil and enmity is fully elucidated in this book, as its title indicates.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 2004
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-FIVE

EDITORIAL

THE HEADLINE on a recent newspaper article asked the question: "Who's right about God?" This seems to invite more attention to the religious ideas of people than to giving heed to what God says about Himself in His Word. What is most important for us in being right about God is to listen to what God says about Himself in His Word.

In this issue of our magazine we learn from Genesis 18 that God delights to do great things for us when we can't do anything for ourselves. And from 2 Samuel 16 we see how God's blessings so often come through our humiliations, so that we are led to say, "God's will be done." The books of Chronicles, with all their lists of names, still point to the One, Jesus Christ, although His Name and God's evangel concerning Him are not directly mentioned. God is One Who, through long years, keeps His highest glories and the measure of His great secret, but when He begins to reveal them as He does in Colossians 2, even then human understanding is often still restrained. Ceremonies and types need to be set aside so that we can see God more clearly through the humiliation and exaltation of His Son, Jesus Christ. Through Him, Who is our Saviour and Expectation, we become acquainted with God, His righteousness, power and love.

If there are pressures and distresses in your life, disappointments and weaknesses and failures, then it may be that you are being readied to know more of God and to be growing in the realization of Him.

"For us there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is" (1 Cor.8:6). "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph.1:3). "We rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour" (1 Tim.4:10). D.H.H.

THE END OF THE FLESH

18 + **Yahweh** [l]**appeared to him** [i]**among** the **oaks of Mamre** +**as he** was **sitting** at the **opening of the tent** [as]**when the day** was brightly **warm.** 2 +**When he** [l]**lifted** up **his eyes,** + **behold,** + **he** [l]**saw three men standing by over** against **him.** +**As he** [l]**saw** them, + **he** [l]**ran from** the **opening of the tent to meet them and** [l]**bowed down** toward the **earth.**

3 + **He** [l]**said: My lord, if** [pr]**now I have found favor in your eyes,** [pr]**please do not** [l]**pass** [f] [on]**by your servant.** 4 **Let** a **little water** [pr]**now be taken,** +**then wash your feet and lean** back **under the tree.** 5 + **Let me take** a **morsel of bread and brace your heart. After**ward **you may pass** on; **for on** [so]**this** account **you have passed** [on]**by your servant.** + **They** [lsa]**replied:** [l]**Do so, just as you** [sp]**said.**

6 + **Abraham** [l]**hastened** toward **the tent to Sarah and** [l]**said:** Take **quickly three seah** measures **of meal flour; knead** it **and** [d]**make ember cakes.** 7 +**Next Abraham ran** out **to the herd and** [l]**took** a **young** calf **of** the **herd, tender and good, and** [l]**gave** it **to the lad** + who [l]**hastened to** [d]**prepare** `**it.** 8 +**Then he** [l]**took clotted cream and milk and** the **young** calf **of the herd** [w]**that he had** had [d]**prepared and** [lg]**set** it **before them,** +**while he** was **standing** [on]**by them under the tree** +**as they** [l]**ate.**

9 + **They** [lsa]**asked** › **him: Where** is **your wife Sarah?** + **He** [lsa]**replied: Behold, in** the **tent.**

10 +**Now he** [lsa]**spoke: I shall return,** yea **return**– **to you; according** to the **season of life,** + **behold, your wife Sarah** will ›**have** a **son.**

+**Yet Sarah** had been **hearing** at the **opening of the tent, and** [7]**she**[n] was [af]**behind Him.** 11 + **Abraham and Sarah** were

old, advanced[l] **in days;** and the **path** in **accord** with **women was halted to** [b]**continue for Sarah.** 12 +**So Sarah** [l]**laughed** [i] **within her**self, › **saying**–**: After I** have become **worn out**–**, will luxury** [b]**occur to me** [t]**while my lord is old?**

13 +**Then Yahweh** [l]**said to Abraham: Why** was **this** that **Sarah laughed,** › **saying**–**: Shall I indeed truly bear** a child**, old** +**as I**´ **am?** 14 **Is** any**thing** too [l]**difficult** [f]**for Yahweh?** ›**At** the **appointed** time **I shall return to you, and according** to the **season of life, Sarah** will ›**have** a **son.** 15 +**Yet Sarah** [l]**dissimulated,** › **saying**–**: I** did **not laugh—for she** stood in **fear.** + **He** [lsa]**replied: No**[t]**,** [t]**but you** did **laugh.**

16 +**When the men** [l]**arose from there,** + **they** [l]**gazed** down **overlooking Sodom. And Abraham went**[l] **with them to see them off.** 17 +**Then Yahweh** [l]**said:** Shall **I** [m]**keep covered**[l] **from Abraham** [w]**what I** will **do**[l]**?** 18 + **Abraham shall become,** yea **become**– › a **great and staunch nation, and in him all** the **nations of the earth will** [b]**be blessed.** 19 **For I have** become **acquainted** with **him in order** [w]**that he may enjoin** `on **his sons and** `on **his house**hold **after him** +**to** –**keep** the **way of Yahweh to do** what is **right and duly** just**,** so **that Yahweh may** –**bring on Abraham** `[7]**all**[0] [w]**that He has** [sp]**promised** [on]**concerning him.**

Abraham was circumcised when ninety-nine years old. For him the sign had a fullness of meaning as for no one else. We read in Romans that his body was already deadened at this time. He was physically beyond expectation, while believing in the expectation promised by God (Rom. 4:18,19). Now only vivification by God could fulfill the promise. He had come to the end of the flesh, and looked alone to Yahweh. As a result, he is ready for fuller fellowship with Yahweh. He is given the privilege of *entertaining* Him (18:1-8), and of *receiving* the promise of the fulfilment of his fondest wish, an heir to his allotment.

The whole account of Abraham's entertainment of his

visitors gives us a perfect picture of the hospitality shown to strangers in the East, from ancient times to the present day. The visitors do not even need to make their presence known by some sound or action, as with us, but simply stand a short distance away in an attitude of expectancy. When they are noticed, the host runs to meet them, and humbly begs them to accept his hospitality. His first duty is to wash their feet and make them comfortable. Then a meal is prepared for them. Not till then is the object of the visit discussed. But guests must never be asked whence they come or whither they are going.

GOD'S DELIGHT

The birth of the promised seed had been foretold from the time of Abram's call (12:1,2). Abram had been concerned about it ever since. Now he was too old to do his part. Just before this he had laughed at the idea (17:17). The very name of the son, Isaac (LAUGH-causer), was given (17:19). Nevertheless Sarah, when she heard it, repeated by the messengers, scouts the idea and was laughing within herself. When she was accused of it, she denied and dissimulated. Yet He insisted that she did laugh (18:11-15). Why is so much made of this? On the human side it seemed silly, but, on the divine, it was the basis of much rejoicing and blessing, for Isaac was not only the first of the promised seed, but the first and foremost type of that greater Son of Abraham through whom *all* the promises will be fulfilled.

Apart from the spiritual vitality imparted by Yahweh, Sarah could not have a son, so the account is so worded that this alone was necessary. Only then we read that she is bearing a son for Abraham (Gen.21:2). Only thus could she have done it at this age, so the son was clearly characterized a spiritual, as well as a physical, product. This is further emphasized in the record by his circumcision, the way God had instructed Abraham.

The laughing, and the exultant joy which it expresses, is only an outward indication of the blessedness which comes through the spirit and its operations. Its greatness and spontaneity is enhanced by the previous disappointment and impatience and distress. Had Sarah borne Abram a son seventy years before, their exultation could not have reached the height that it did. So will it be with us, also, when we enter into the promised glory, for which our present tribulation is but a preparatory multiplicand. Alas! How many of us prefer to laugh now, rather than, by temporary suffering, enhance our future endless exultation!

Evidently the joy inaugurated by the birth of Isaac was permanent, for it found expression again in the great feast when he was weaned. And so will be the hilarious rejoicing of all who, like him, are the product of God's gracious vivifying spirit, through the grace that comes to us in Christ Jesus, our Saviour.

A. E. Knoch

NEITHER DEATH NOR LIFE

At the graveside service for my mother, **Dorothy D. Hough**, who died on July 15 at age 93, I read one of her favorite passages of Scripture, Romans 8:35-39. Neither death nor life can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Death is a powerful enemy, and life often is accompanied with struggles and sorrows, but what are these compared with God's love commended in the death of His Son for our sakes and extended to us daily in the gift of faith?

I am sure this passage is a source of timely comfort also to our Brother John Braucht of St. Petersburg, Florida, whose wife, **Luella Braucht**, was put to repose on September 1 at age 87. She had first learned the truth of universal reconciliation over 60 years ago through the ministry of the late Julius Shaw, and shared it with her husband who has been active in its proclamation.

Again, I know the assurance of God's love was a comfort as well to another friend of our work, **Lilian Bell**, of Hamilton, Ohio, who also recently died. May it continue to comfort us all in every loss and through the struggles of our lives. D.H.H.

CAST DOWN BUT NOT PERISHING

16 + **David had passed** a **little** *f* **beyond the summit,** + *bd* **when Ziba** the **lad of Mephibosheth** › came *meet* **toward⁻ him** + **with** a **team of saddled**ˡ **donkeys, and on them** two **hundred** loaves of **bread,** + a **hundred clusters of raisins,** + a **hundred** cakes of **summer** dates, **and** a **crock of wine.** 2 + **The king** ˡ*sa* **asked** › **Ziba, What** ›**are you** doing with **these?** + **Ziba** ˡ*sa* **replied, The donkeys** are **for the king's house**hold **to ride** on; + **the bread and the summer** dates are for **the lads to eat; and the wine** is for **the faint in** the **wilderness to drink.** 3 + **Then the king** ˡ*sa* **asked, And where** is the **son of your lord?** + **Ziba** ˡ*sa* **replied to the king,** *bd* **Oh,** he is *sit* **staying in Jerusalem, for he** *sa* **thinks, Today** the **house of Israel shall restore to me** `the **kingship of my** grand**father.** 4 + **So the king** ˡ**said to Ziba,** From *bd* **now** on **all** *w* **that Mephibosheth** ›**has** belongs **to you. And Ziba** ˡ*sa* **replied, I bow** low; **may I find favor in your eyes, my lord the king.**

5 + **When** ˙**king David** *in* **approached** *fr* **Bahurim,** + **just then** a **man** *f* **of** the **family of** the **house of Saul** came **forth**ˡ **from there;** + **his name** was **Shimei son of Gera.** He was go**ing forth and** was **maledicting** as he came **forth⁻.** 6 + **He** ˡ*stn* **threw** *i* **stones** `at **David and** `at **all the courtiers of king David,** + **while all the** *wi* **soldiers and all the masters** of war were *f* **at his right and** *f* **at his left.** 7 **And thus** *sa* **spoke Shimei in his maledicting⁻: Forth! Forth, man of** ˙**blood**guilt, + **man of** ˙**worthlessness!** 8 **Yahweh has brought back on you all** the **blood**guilt**s of** the **house of Saul** *u* **in whose stead you have reigned.** + **Yahweh is giving** `**the kingship in**to the **hand of your son Absalom; and** *bd* **here you** are **in your evil** predicament *t* **because you** are a **man of blood**guilt**s!**

9 + **Abishai son of Zeruiah** ˡ**said to the king, Why should** ˙**this** ˙**dead**ˡ ˙**cur maledict** `**my lord the king? Let me** *pr* **now** ˡ**cross** over, **and let me** ˡ**take off** `**his head!** 10 + **But the king** ˡ*sa* **replied, What** is it **to me and to you, sons of Zeruiah?** 7 **Leave** › **him** alone *0* **! Thus he is maledicting** *t* **because Yahweh** *sa* **told** › **him, Maledict** `**David!** + **So** *a* **who should say,** For **what reason have you done so?** 11 + **Then David** ˡ**said to Abishai and to all his courtiers,** *bd* **If my** own **son, who** came **forth from my internal** parts**,** is **seeking** `**my soul,** + **how much more** *t* **so** *now* **then** this **Benjamite! Leave** › **him** alone **and let him maledict** *t* **because Yahweh** *sa* **told** › **him** to. 12 **Perhaps Yahweh** will ˡ*see* **look** *i* **on my** 7 **humiliation~***cs* **, and Yahweh will restore to me goodness** *u* **instead of his malediction** on ˙**this** ˙**day.** 13 + **So David** ˡ**went** *i* **along** the **road** + **with his men,** + **while Shimei** was **walking** *i* **on** the **angular** side **of the hill** to **go⁻ abreast** of **him.** + **He** ˡ**maledicted and** ˡ*stn* **threw** *i* **stones abreast** of **him; he** + **also threw** *i* **dirt.** 14 + **Then the king and all the** *wi* **soldiers** *w* `with **him** ˡ**came** 7 **to the Jordan** *0* **, faint** with thirst, **and they** ˡ**refreshed** themselves **there.**

15 + **Meanwhile Absalom and all the people,** the **men of Israel, entered Jerusalem; and Ahithophel** was `with **him.** 16 **And** so **it** ˡ*b* **was, just as David's** 7 **long time~ associate Hushai came to Absalom,** + **that Hushai** ˡ**said to Absalom,** Long **live the king!** Long **live the king!** 17 + **But Absalom** ˡ**said to Hushai,** Is **this your** *ki* **loyalty** `to **your associate? Why** did **you not go** `with **your associate?** 18 + **Hushai** ˡ*sa* **replied to Absalom,** I did **not** *t* **because I shall** *b* **belong to him whom Yahweh and** ˙**this** ˙**people and all** the **men of Israel have chosen, and I shall** *sit* **stay** `with **him.** 19 **And in the second** place, › *a* **whom should I′ serve?** Is it **not before his son? Just as I served before your father, so I shall** *b* **serve before you.**

20 **Absalom** + **then** ˡ**said to Ahithophel, Grant** us **your counsel! What should we do?** 21 + **So Ahithophel** ˡ**said to**

Absalom, Go **in to your father's concubines whom he left to be** in **charge** of **the** *in*palace. +**Thus all Israel will hear that you are** in **bad odor** `with **your father; and** the **hands of all who** are `with **you will be** *fast*strengthened. 22 +**So they** |**pitched** ˙a **tent for Absalom on the housetop; and Absalom** went |**in to his father's concubines** ›**under** the **eyes of all Israel.** 23 + **In** ˙**those days,** the **counsel which Ahithophel** *fix*gave was regarded **just as** if 7**one**0 had |*ask*consulted *i* the *sp*oracle of the One, **Elohim.** In *so*this way **all** the **counsel of Ahithophel** was esteemed *mr*both ›**by David** *mr*and › **Absalom.**

On passing the summit of Mount Olivet, David and his fugitives were met by Ziba, the servant who was the steward of Saul's property for Jonathan's son Mephibosheth. Ziba brought supplies to David, using the opportunity to curry favor with him, hoping to regain possession of Saul's property. Ziba slandered Mephibosheth and David rashly granted him possession of the property. But when David returned later, and heard Mephibosheth's side of the story, he split the possession between them (2 Sam. 19:24-30). It is not clear if this means that each actually possessed half, or if Ziba worked the land and received half of its produce.

SHIMEI

Shimei, a descendant of Saul's family, quickly seized the opportunity to curse David and blame him for all the ills that had befallen the house of Saul. He even blamed David for the deaths of Saul and Jonathan. Shimei threw stones and dirt as if driving away a vicious and unclean dog. He viewed David's situation as if God had smitten him for his sins (compare Isa.53:3,4,7,10). This humiliation of David represented that of Christ at the time of His crucifixion. David's insistence that Shimei be left alone and allowed

to curse him was typical of the silence of Christ toward the false accusations and cursing that fell upon Him (*cf* Matt.26:63-68; 27:27-31,39-44). Similar to Christ, David determined to drink the cup that Yahweh had prepared for him (*cf* John 18:11).

ABISHAI

Abishai's loyalty to David was like that of Peter to Christ, and like James' and John's on another occasion (Luke 9:54). When he struck off the ear of Malchus with a sword, it surely was Peter's intention to stand between Christ and harm (John 18:10). Our loyalty and service to Christ is sometimes well intended, though it may be misguided. It is quite easy to accept benefit and prosperity as gifts from the hand of God, but it calls for a fathomed depth of maturity to welcome adversity and humiliation as gifts from Him.

AHITHOPHEL'S FIRST COUNSEL

Verse 15 repeats that when Absalom came to Jerusalem, Ahithophel was with him (*cf*15:37). This repetition calls to mind David's prayer for the confounding of Ahithophel's counsel. Hushai appeared to be no threat to Absalom, and was deemed as another addition to the usurper's prestige. It is well that Hushai did not contradict Ahithophel at this time, as it would tend to make him appear to be protecting David's interests. Also, Absalom's sin with David's harem was imperative to fulfill Nathan's prophecy (*cf* 2 Sam.12:11,12).

For Absalom to assume possession of the royal harem was for him to pass beyond the point where any of his followers could conceive of David forgiving him. This was Absalom's Rubicon. Ahithophel's counsel was judicious, and sealed the rebellion.

GOD'S WILL BE DONE

"Leave him alone and let him maledict because Yahweh told him to. Perhaps Yahweh will look on my humiliation, and Yahweh will restore to me goodness instead of his malediction on this day" (2 Sam.16:11,12). In these events, it is the beautiful submission of David to the will of God that is important and which should occupy our mind. This is a foreshadowing of the submission of Christ in Gethsemane: "Father, if it is Thy intention, carry aside this cup from Me. However, not My will, but Thine, be done!" (Luke 22:42). There the death of the flesh was accomplished, even before the cross was reached.

The flesh had overwhelmed David—lust after Bathsheba, murder of Uriah, the indulgence of his sons. But now David is settled. If the Lord will take his life, so be it. But David looks after the priests, the ark, the foreigner who has been in exile with him. He left the capital city to prevent a civil war and slaughter there. While his world is collapsing, he is constantly caring for the welfare of others. He is patient, penitent and mourning over his sins. He obviously has no control, but he is depending on Yahweh.

If God is the cause of all, and not ourselves, then we cannot guarantee that our intentions will be carried out. Nevertheless, our intentions are very important. Solomon said, "Yet Yahweh said to my father David, Inasmuch as it was on your heart to build a House for My Name, you did well that it came to be on your heart" (1 Kings 8:18).

Through this great humiliation and trial in his life, David discovered a new depth of God's grace for him. He came into a deeper submission to Yahweh that was evidenced by a higher level of self-control and patience. David was active, but not trying to control. In it all we see him waiting upon God, and finding deliverance.

J. Phillip Scranton

IN THE DAYS OF DAVID

LIKE a backbone, running through the entirety of Chronicles, the genealogical descent of father to son from Adam to Noah to Abraham, to Israel and then to David unto Josiah and his sons, provides a frame of reference for the other records and topics within this treatise. This is a most exclusive and special line, purposed and continued forward by God in His wisdom and kindness, with one individual only in each generation (not all of whom, by any means, were illustrious). As shown in Matthew this list leads forward to Christ. Here in Chronicles it is drawn from Genesis, and other books of the Hebrew canon, as well as from other records, but as it is presented here it stands out among all other genealogical lines.

The first group of names as listed in Chronicles[1] are as follows:

Adam, Seth Enosh, Cainan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech and Noah (1 Chron.1:1-4). Of the multitude of human beings in that eon from Adam to Noah, only these ten men belonged to this special genealogical line.

With the sons of Noah, three distinct lines are distinguished. But the special line of individuals being marked off through Chronicles descends from Noah's son Shem, who is followed by Arphaxad, Cainan, Shelah, Eber, Peleg,

1. A few individuals are identified by different names in Chronicles, such as Azariah, who is also called Uzziah; the listing of Cainan as a son of Arphaxad is based on the Septuagint Version and is not in the Masoretic Text.

Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, Abraham and Isaac (1 Chron. 1:17-28).

The exclusiveness of this special line becomes more apparent starting with Jacob, who is generally identified by his name Israel in Chronicles. He had twelve sons, but only Judah is given a place in this line of honor. Then it continues as follows: Perez, Hezron, Aram, Amminadab, Nahshon, Salma, Boaz, Obed and Jesse (1 Chron.2:1-12).

Thus in 1 Chronicles 2:15 we are led to David, with an account of his days given in 1 Chronicles 10:14-29:30. Solomon, who is introduced into the record in 1 Chronicles 3:5 is closely associated with his father David in the latter chapters of 1 Chronicles, with his days as king recounted in 2 Chronicles 1:1-9:31.

We can then trace the remaining descendants of David, who succeeded as kings and stand in this line, as follows: Rehoboam (1 Chron.3:10) and his days (2 Chron.10:1-12:16); Abijah (1 Chron.3:10) and his days (2 Chron.13:1-14:1); Asa (1 Chron.3:10) and his days (2 Chron.14:1-16:14); Jehoshaphat (1 Chron.3:10) and his days (2 Chron.17:1-21:1); Joram, or Jehoram (1 Chron.3:11) and his days (2 Chron. 21:1-20); Ahaziah, or Jehoahaz (1 Chron.3:11) and his days (2 Chron.21:17; 22:1-9); Joash (1 Chron.3:11) and his days (2 Chron.22:10-24:27); Amaziah (1 Chron.3:12) and his days (2 Chron.25:1-28); Azariah, or Uzziah (1 Chron. 3:12) and his days (2 Chron.26:1-23); Jotham (1 Chron. 3:12) and his days (2 Chron.27:1-9); Ahaz (1 Chron.3:13) and his days (2 Chron.28:1-27). Hezekiah (1 Chron.3:13) and his days (2 Chron.29:1-32:33); Manasseh (1 Chron. 3:13) and his days (2 Chron.33:1-20); Amon (1 Chron.3:14) and his days (2 Chron.33:21-25); Josiah (1 Chron.3:14) and his days (2 Chron.34:1-35:27); Jehoiakim (1 Chron.3:15) and his days (2 Chron.36:5-8); and Jeconiah, or Jehoiachin (1 Chron.3:15) and his days (2 Chron.36:9,10).

Finally, 1 Chronicles 3:17-24 provides a list of certain

descendants of Jeconiah for several more generations after the deportation to Babylon. But it is not until we come to the first chapter of Matthew that the individuals belonging to this special line during those years are identified. Only the names Shealtiel, or Shalthiel (1 Chron.3:17) and Zerubbabel (1 Chron.3:19) correspond in these two accounts of Jeconiah's descendants. The Chronicler necessarily leaves the list incomplete.

But it is completed in Matthew 1:12-16, where it is carried on to Joseph and Mary "of whom was born Jesus, Who is termed 'Christ.'" Here we see that it is Jesus Christ Who is the culmination of this genealogical line. He is the Seed of the woman promised in Genesis 3:15, in Whom the promise of restoration is centered (Gen.3:16). It was in view of Him that Noah was spared and given grace. He came as the "Son of Abraham" in Whom the promises of the land and multiplied descendants and blessings rest. He is the "Son of David" Who will bring the reign of peace, the kingdom of well-being, to the earth.

A WIDER LINE OF HONOR

The restricted line of honor which began with Adam and ended with Jesus Christ so far as it is given in Chronicles does not deny God's choice and call of a wider group of people. Clearly Chronicles is concerned primarily with God's purpose and operations with respect to the nation of Israel. But it is on the basis of God's special operation in separating a highly exclusive line of descent from Adam to Jesus Christ that He carries on a special work in blessing the people of Israel. The blessing of Judah as recorded in Genesis 49:8-12 ultimately proves to be a source of high and multifarious blessings for the other sons of Israel and their descendants.

Similarly, the special work God is doing in choosing and calling out the nation of Israel must not be thought of as

an end in itself. God's promise to Abram that He would make him into a great nation and that in him all the families of the ground would be blessed (Gen.12:2,3) explains most fully why so much attention is given to the families of Ham and Japheth and to Ishmael and Esau in the first chapter of 1 Chronicles. That special calling of individuals leading from Adam to Christ relates to all the descendants of Adam for good. So also that special calling of the nation of Israel relates to the peoples descended from Japheth and Ham and Ishmael and Esau. Exclusive blessings from God of favor and well being are never ends in themselves.

But let us look further into the books of Chronicles concerning their testimony to God's special work with the nation of Israel:

ISRAEL AND DAVID

As previously noted, the Hebrew title of the books of Chronicles is: *Words of the Days.* Turning back to the list of names given at the beginning of this article we see that more space is allotted to David and his days than to his descendants. Even what is said about Solomon is closely bound up with David, and the subsequent kings are particularly judged in comparison with David and his days.

The reason for this may be found in the words of Nathan the prophet to David in 1 Chronicles 17 which so powerfully connect God's work of distinguishing David with His work in distinguishing the nation of Israel. First of all let us note the words from verses 7-10a which applied immediately to the days of David and foreseeable future:

Thus speaks Yahweh of hosts: I Myself took you from the homestead, from following the flock, to become governor over My people Israel. I shall be with you wherever you go, and I shall cut off all your enemies from before you. I will make for you a name, like the name of the great

ones who are on the earth. And I will provide a place for My people Israel; I will plant them so that they can tabernacle by themselves and shall no longer be disturbed; the sons of iniquity shall not continue to harass them just as at the first, ever since the days when I commissioned judges over My people Israel. And I will make submissive all your enemies.

Then in 1 Chronicles 17:10b-14 we read of blessings to come through Solomon, but now "more than Solomon" is in view:

I am telling you that Yahweh shall build a royal house for you: It will come to pass when your days are fulfilled to go and lie down with your fathers, then I will raise up your seed after you that shall come to be one of your own sons; and I will establish his throne for the eon. I myself shall become for him like a father; and he shall become for Me like a son. As for My benignity, I shall not withdraw it from him as I withdrew it from him who was before you. I will install him in My House and in My kingdom for the eon; his throne, it shall become established for the eon.

In saying that He would establish "his throne for the eon," Yahweh could be taken to refer to the dynasty that continued into the days of the sons of Josiah. The rule continued to be held by succeeding members of one family. But in saying He would install David's son "in My House and in My kingdom for the eon" Yahweh was looking beyond anyone who reigned in Jerusalem from Solomon to the time of the deportation.

It is this word of God given in the days of David that would especially give Israel encouragement and fill them with expectation after their years in Babylon. The testimony of "Words of the Days" is that God is doing a special work involving Israel under the kingship of One Who would come of the seed of David. This work had not been

brought into realization when Chronicles was written. And it still remains unfulfilled even though Christ has come of the seed of David. Yet God is faithful (*cf* Rom.3:3,4).

DAVID AND PAUL

As to the flesh, most of us today, who are believing that Christ died for our sins, are even farther removed than Israel from that physical line which led to Him in the likeness of humanity. Nevertheless, Christ's place as the Son of David holds real and important significance for us as well. Hence our apostle wrote near the close of his life and labors: "Remember Jesus Christ, Who has been roused from among the dead, is of the seed of David, according to my evangel" (2 Tim.2:8). It is not David himself, as king, who is the focus of attention in Paul's evangel, but the Son of David, Jesus Christ, Who will reign until all enemies are put under His feet and brought into that happy subjection described in Philippians 2:10,11, to the glory of God the Father.

In this we have been given a special and most blessed part. As for the present, our hearts are daily in tune with Paul, who wrote: "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome . . . that we rely of the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, *especially* of believers" (1 Tim.4: 9,10). Concerning the future, we also follow Paul in that sustaining consolation which lifted his heart through his final days of loneliness and struggle: "The Lord will be rescuing me from every wicked work and will be saving me for His celestial kingdom" (2 Tim.4:18). This will occur in the oncoming eons (Eph.2:7).

"For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He subjects all under His feet" (1 Cor. 15:25-27).

D.H.H.

"LET NO ONE, THEN, BE JUDGING YOU"

My previous writings on the sabbath as well as more broadly upon the law in general,[1] address many of the various popular claims made by those who advocate sabbath observance and lawkeeping. Since within those articles, however, I only consider Colossians 2:16 (referenced above in our present title) once in passing and do not address the whole of Colossians chapter two at all, I shall consider the entirety of this chapter, including verse sixteen, in the exposition which follows.

❊

COLOSSIANS 2 begins with the thematic declaration, ". . . I want you to perceive what the struggle amounts to which I am having for your sakes . . . ." Fully expressed, the apostle's words here are as follows:

For I want you to perceive what the struggle amounts to which I am having for your sakes and for those in Laodicea, and whoever have not seen my face in flesh . . . . (v.1)

The causal conjunction "for" directs us back to Paul's immediately preceding words which make evident what specific "struggle" it is that the apostle has in mind to which he refers here in chapter two verse one. It is the struggle to be "presenting every man *mature* in Christ Jesus" (1:28) in:

> ***The secret*** *which has been concealed from the eons and from the generations . . . .* (Col.1:26a)

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.80, pp.219-228: "Grace and Obedience"; vol.80, pp.263-272: "The Sabbath and the Evangel"; vol.81, pp.39-48: "Living Faith"; vol.82, pp.63-70: "The Scope of Divine Law"; vol.82, pp.113-122: "What, then, is the Law?"

Though previously undisclosed, this secret which had been concealed throughout the course of history—"from the eons and from the generations"—is the secret which "yet *now* was made manifest to His saints, to whom God wills to make known what are the glorious riches of *this secret among the nations,* which is:" (Col.1:26b,27a)

Christ ***among you,*** *the expectation of glory—Whom we are announcing, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we should be presenting every man mature in Christ Jesus; for which I am toiling also, struggling in accord with His operation, which is operating in me with power.* (Col.1:27b-29)

In its broadest, collective sense, the expression "the secret of Christ" encompasses all truth concerning Christ that was formerly undisclosed and hidden in God which is *now* revealed through Paul's final writings (his "prison epistles"), which revelations "complete the word of God" (Col.1:25). The whole body of Paul's epistle to the Colossians deals with the details or particulars of the secret of Christ. These various aspects of the secret of Christ include the secret glories of Christ as the Son of God.

"Every false theology or philosophy which places anything of human origin between God and man, is set aside by the great truth that Christ is God's Complement. As our Complement He displaces all the decrees and rites of Judaism. In Christ we are complete and need naught else to fit us for the Father's presence.

"The secret of Christ is presented in its future aspect in Ephesians. There is to be a harvest era in which Christ is to be supreme, not only on earth, but in the heavens also. His sway will be universal (Eph.1:10; 3:3). In Colossians, however, the emphasis is placed on His past headship in creation and His present headship in redemption with a view to a future reconciliation of the universe.

"The unity of creation has led philosophers to trace it back to a common origin, by some called a 'primordial germ.' This first element in creation, however simple it may be said to be, must possess within itself a potential universe. The Son of God, the Firstborn of Creation, is the satisfactory solution to all questions which concern creation. Creation did not begin in chaos but in Christ. It will not end in ruin wrought by man but in universal reconciliation wrought by the blood of His cross."[2]

In making known the secret of Christ in its aspect presently in view here in Colossians 1:26,27, which is that of Christ among the nations, even as in the corresponding "expectation of glory" which accords with this transcendent blessing, our apostle declares:

I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for you, and am filling up in my flesh, in His stead, the deficiencies of the afflictions of Christ,[3] *for His body, which is the ecclesia of which I became a dispenser, in accord with the administration of God, which is granted to me for you, to complete the word of God.* (1:24,25)

In its timeless, universal aspect the secret of Christ is presented in Colossians 1:15-20; in verses 21-27 it is presented as it especially applies to us in this present administration.

Most of us are familiar with the Authorized Version rendering of Colossians 1:27b: ". . . Christ in you, the hope of glory," and may initially be puzzled by the Concordant Version translation which is, ". . . Christ *among you,* the *expectation* of glory."

The Concordant translation, however, more faithfully

2. A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.302.

3. These refer not to the essential sufferings of Christ on the cross, but to those afflictions which He endures in His members, in the sufferings which accrue to them (most especially to the apostle Paul), as they herald His evangel, and "suffer evil with the evangel" (2 Tim.1:8) accordingly.

reflects the sense of the Original. "You" here is plural, not singular; hence English diction calls for "among," not "in." Further, "you" refers not simply to any believer indiscriminately, whether Jew or Greek, but only to believers of the nations, ones who were called and blessed according to Paul's evangel. The secret of Christ here speaks of "this secret *among the* ***nations,*** which is: *Christ among* ***you.***"

The basic truth of "Christ *in* you [singular]," which is concerned with the individual believer's experience, wherein Christ dwells in every believer, doing so quite apart from any consideration of his or her ethnicity, was already revealed by Paul in his earlier epistles (e.g., "if Christ is *in* you . . . ," Rom.8:10; and, ". . . living *in* me is Christ," Gal.2:20).

According to the measure of faith given us, it is the *in*dwelling power of Christ that enables us to walk worthily. This, however, is never presented as a secret, and had long been known by the time when Paul, in bonds at Rome, wrote his final epistles of Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. Therefore, this cannot be the truth set before us here in Colossians 1:27.

Instead, the *new* revelation, presented to us here, is that of Christ *among the nations*—as such—as the One Who is now going among the nations dispensing the blessings which attend the "expectation of glory" which is thus set before us, in these *untraceable* riches of Christ (Eph.3:8).

CHRIST AMONG THE NATIONS

"Christ in flesh, when on earth, confined Himself to one nation, Israel. His presence brought with it the glorious prospect of the kingdom as promised in the prophets. Those who received Him and acknowledged Him as their Messiah were filled with high hopes. Some of them wished to secure for themselves the best places in the coming glory. The question in their hearts was, *When?* 'Art

Thou at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?' (Acts 1:6). From His very infancy the saints, like Simeon, looked upon Him, not only as the Salvation of the nation, but as 'the Glory of Thy people Israel' (Luke 2:30-32). He was, indeed, Christ *among* them, the expectation of glory.

"In considering this secret we must keep in mind the scope of Christ's kingdom as set forth in the earlier part of this chapter. It is universal, and embraces all thrones and dominions and sovereignties and authorities, invisible as well as visible, celestial as well as terrestrial (16). This is the secret 'as it was now revealed' (Eph.3:5). To administer the kingdom on earth Messiah will use the nation to which He is united by physical ties. The hundred forty-four thousand will rule among the peoples. The apostles will adjudicate the tribes. But in the heavens Christ will use His spiritual relatives, the saints who are joined to Him among the nations. They have the glorious expectation of having an even more exalted position in His celestial realms.

"Before His ascension He never went among the other nations. In a very real sense, His presence in Israel demanded the degradation of Rome from her place as the leading nation on the earth. Even if He had gone among the various nations of that day, it could not have been a token of their glory in the future, but of their subjugation to the favored people. They can only be subordinate in the coming kingdom, on the earth. In flesh, Christ is of the seed of David, and the nations have no part in Him. It is only in spirit, in His celestial domains, that there is any prospect for the saints in the nations. They cannot have a seat at His right or His left in Jerusalem, but far higher honors are open to them in the empyrean.

" 'Christ among you, a glorious expectation' is that aspect of the secret of Christ which is the counterpart of the secret in Ephesians. It is the secret of Christ as far as it applies to the present administration and to the nations. It gives

believers among the nations the same relation to the celestial kingdom as believers in Israel had to the earthly rule. It gives them an expectation comparable to the kingdom, the longed-for millennium, for which every faithful heart in Israel yearned, yet with a grace and glory as far above it as heaven is high above the earth, and with a kingdom so much greater and grander that our earthborn faculties and expressions fail to function in view of their appalling immensity and majesty."[4]

COMPLETE IN CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR

Now, following this extended prelude, let us consider the remainder of Colossians 2:

. . . that their hearts may be consoled, being united in love, and to all the riches of the assurance of understanding, unto a realization of the secret of the God and Father, of Christ, (v.2)

As we enter into these august revelations, how our apostle wishes that we should do so with consoled hearts even as ones who are united in love! That we should enjoy all the riches of the assurance of understanding, unto a realization of the secret of the God and Father, of Christ, is the desire of his heart. When we "understand" something, we "make out" or discern its meaning. The assurance which is afforded us as the fruit of genuine understanding, is in no way a self-assuredness of confidence in the flesh, but is instead the especial blessing of the spirit upon our intellect.

The secret of Christ, as still more deeply spoken of here, is first of all "the secret of the God and Father, of Christ."

in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed. (v.3)

We cannot but be mindful that so many of the things that have been disclosed to us, which have become a part

4. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.32, pp.44,45.

of our knowledge, are by no means common knowledge among men. Much less, among nearly any at all, are these various particulars of knowledge which we enjoy viewed as constitutive of wisdom. Indeed, if they are noted at all, this is only that they may be caricatured and denied, dismissed and denigrated.

Therefore we ourselves must be wise, and sympathetic too, when we see these revelations mangled and mistreated by others, ones who certainly dismiss and may even mock us as well, as those who believe such "strange teachings." They cannot but react as they do, for they are but flesh and these treasures of wisdom and knowledge are *concealed* in God, Who, to accord with His own purpose, has not yet enlightened them concerning them.

Now I am saying this, that no one may be beguiling you with persuasive words. For even if, in flesh, I am absent, nevertheless, in spirit, I am with you, rejoicing and observing your order and the stability of your faith in Christ. (vs.4,5)

It is far more important to take careful note of *what* it is that we are persuaded of, than simply to have confidence, as such, merely in the strength of our opinions. Many, indeed, are utterly "sold on" all sorts of notions which are in fact false teachings. The Galatians were certainly "persuaded," but not by the truth, but by a distortion of the evangel of Christ, even to the extent that, to their perception, in telling them what was actually the truth, Paul had become their enemy (*cf* Gal.1:7; 4:16; 5:7).

As, then, you accepted Christ Jesus, the Lord, be walking in Him, having been rooted and being built up in Him, and being confirmed in the faith according as you were taught, superabounding in it with thanksgiving. (vs.6,7)

This is ideal advice . . . *for the Colossians,* who had been taught by Epaphras, who was a *faithful* dispenser of Christ (Col.1:3-8). For ourselves, however, having been subjected

to popular myths and false human traditions, we must first *recover* "the faith" (i.e., the true body of teaching) so that we may then *become* confirmed therein. *As* we then, at that juncture, accept Christ Jesus the Lord, may we be rooted and built up in Him, being confirmed in *the faith* according as we *now* have become instructed, superabounding in it with thanksgiving.

Beware that no one shall be despoiling you through philosophy and empty seduction, in accord with human tradition, in accord with the elements of the world, and not in accord with Christ, (v.8)

"It is difficult to discern that the divine religion given to Israel in the flesh may be one of the greatest hindrances toward an appreciation of the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus. Hence the spirit of God forces it down to the same level with human philosophy and tradition by alternating them in this passage. The empty seduction and elements, the circumcision, baptism, and shadows refer to the rites and ritual Yahweh gave His earthly people. Yet they are interspersed with references to the authority and teachings of men. Ritual is just as dangerous an enemy as rationalism. As God's Complement, Christ is the answer to philosophy: as our Complement, He is the end of religion."[5]

A ceremony is an act of a symbolical character and purpose, without an intrinsic purpose. A ritual is a religious (i.e., faith-related) ceremonial observance. The observance of the Passover in its appointed time with its various "statutes" and "customs," is an example of a ceremony or ritual (*cf* Num.9:3). And, in the nature of the case and just as surely, the observance of the sabbath (i.e., lit. the "ceasing") in its appointed time each seventh day and with its own statutory prohibition of all work (Deut.5:12,13) even to the point of the preclusion of any cooking (i.e., of "consum[ing] anything with fire"; Ex.35:3), is another example of a ceremony or ritual.

5. A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.304.

Many a theology is simply a mistaken religious philosophy, contrary to Scripture. Claims about lawkeeping, though devoid of critical truth, through their seeming scripturalness, are seductive to many. They accord not with the truth of Christ, but merely with the "elements of the world," which refers to the Mosaic system, the essential constituents of which the law of Yahweh is comprised, as set forth in the Hebrew Scriptures (*cf* Gal.4:3,9; Heb. 5:12; Acts 21:24).

for in Him the entire complement of the Deity is dwelling bodily. (v.9)

The Greek word for the English "DEITY" is *theotês.* It signifies PLACERship, which is to say, that which *pertains to* God. Strictly, then (though this cannot be well expressed in our idiomatic version), it refers not to "the Deity" Himself, considered as a Being, but to "GODNESS (or "deity") *of* God, Who is a Being. Thus: the entire complement *of* the *deity* (i.e., "GODNESS") *of God* is dwelling bodily in Christ. That is, the entire array of the attributes and qualities which *pertain to* God Himself *dwell,* in a *bodily* way, in Christ, in the One Who in Himself is "the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature" (Col.1:15). In this respect, then, Christ Jesus, Who inheres in the visible form which pertains to the invisible God, "deems it not pillaging to be *equal* with God" (Phil.2:6).

And you are complete in Him, (v.10a)

We have no need of any righteousness of our own, especially any that we are apt to fancy as ultimately arising, if not out of our own external acts, at least out of our fancied inward "virtuous passivity" in assent to God's own work in us. Not only do we have no need for any righteousness of our own for salvation, in which our works are not even a consideration, but for our service as well, in which we

are what we are in the grace of God (1 Cor.15:10); for His achievement are we (Eph.2:10).

Who is the Head of every sovereignty and authority, (10b)

Here Paul alludes only incidentally if at all to sovereignties and authorities among the celestials (Eph.6:12), but primarily if not exclusively to those human authoritarian chiefs among the Circumcision who had sought to impose upon the nations, if not the entire law of Moses, then at least certain putatively "necessary decrees" of their own devising (*cp* Acts 15:1,2; 19,20; Eph.2:15; *cf* Col.2:15).

in Whom you were circumcised also with a circumcision not made by hands, in the stripping off of the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ. Being entombed together with Him in baptism, in Whom you were roused together also through faith in the operation of God, Who rouses Him from among the dead, (10b-13a)

The "circumcision" of Christ mentioned here in which we were circumcised also, refers to the death of the cross in which He was "cut off" from among the living. Similarly, in a figure, we were "baptized" together with Him as well, in reference to both His entombment and resurrection. Thus we died, and now live, "together with Him."

you also being dead to the offenses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, (v.13b)

How glorious it is to know that through the work of the One Whom God makes to be a sin offering for our sakes (2 Cor.5:21), we are now reckoned as dead to our offenses (*cp* Eph.2:5), even as to the uncircumcision of our flesh.

He vivifies us together jointly with Him, dealing graciously with all our offenses, (v.13c)

In spirit, we are already vivified together jointly with Christ; for God has made it so. How can we not rejoice as well in the realization that, accordingly, God is dealing graciously with all our *offenses*? This is so, even though He

will bring every *act* into judgment, whether with mercy, for the vessels of mercy, or through indignation, for the vessels of indignation (Rom.9:22,23).

erasing the handwriting of the decrees against us, which was hostile to us, and has taken it away out of the midst, nailing it to the cross, stripping off the sovereignties and authorities, with boldness He makes a show of them, triumphing over them in it. (vs.14,15)

"The decrees issued by the apostles from Jerusalem (Acts 15:23-29) were a standing symbol of the subjection of the nations to the Circumcision even though they absolved them from observing all the rudimentary rites [or elements], especially circumcision."[6]

Let no one, then, be judging you in food or in drink or in the particulars of a festival, or of a new moon, or of sabbaths, which are a shadow of those things which are impending (vs.16,17a)

Neither our work, or even our cessation from work, makes us either worthy of salvation or fit for glory. But in the position in which God has already placed us, in Christ, we are already roused from among the dead, vivified, and seated together among the celestials. Knowing this, we gladly heed Paul's entreaty here to let no one sit in judgment of us, arbitrating against us, should we eat foods deemed unclean under Moses, work on the seventh day of the week, or decline to keep the various festivals found in the law.

We are mindful that *God's* judgment concerning ourselves with respect to the matter of seeking law-based righteousness through conformance to legal precepts, is that we are to deem any such righteousness a "forfeit" because of Christ (Phil.3:6,7). Indeed, any such forfeit is one which we can well afford to make, being complete in Christ, Who has become to us "wisdom from God, besides *righteousness,* holiness and deliverance" (1 Cor.1:30).

6. A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.304.

We are therefore also deeming the righteousness of lawkeeping to be "refuse" (Phil.3:8,9): if we have been partaking in it, we are now to discard it; if we have not previously taken up with it, we are to leave it among the refuse. Hence we would "beware of curs" (Phil.3:2), of those who behave as the wild dogs of the east, which insist upon dragging forth from among the items discarded by others whatever appeals to them that they might take it to themselves.

—yet the body is the Christ's. (v.17b)

Let us be ever mindful that the ecclesia which is the body of Christ, of which we are members, belongs to Christ, and each of its members are truly *complete* in Him. What need have we for aught beside?

Let no one be arbitrating against you, who wants, in humility and the ritual of the messengers, to parade what he has seen, feignedly, puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, out of Whom the entire body, being supplied and united through the assimilation and ligaments, is growing in the growth of God. (vs.18,19)

The law was "prescribed through messengers in the hand of a mediator" (Gal.3:19; *cp* Acts 7:53; Heb.2:2); hence, by metonymy, it is "the ritual of the messengers" (Col.2:18). That the law was prescribed through messengers, agrees with the Septuagint reading in Deuteronomy 33:2, "on His right hand were His angels [messengers] with Him" (Brenton translation, 1851), where the Concordant Version reads, "At His right are warriors who are His."

Some may go so far in their arbitrations against us in favor of lawkeeping, as to appeal to the legitimacy of their message by a histrionic parading before us of supernatural visions which they, feignedly, have seen. If so, we are to understand that they are instead merely deluded, "puffed up" in their own fleshly mind, as ones who are not properly "holding the Head," which is a succinct expression of our proper duty as members of the body of Christ. Instead of

being force-fed delusions by charlatans, we would instead be fostered in the faith, receiving our supply out of Christ Himself, that we might be growing in the growth of God.

If, then, you died together with Christ from the elements of the world, why, as living in the world, are you subject to decrees: "You should not be touching, nor yet tasting, nor yet coming into contact" (which things are all for corruption from use), in accord with the directions and teachings of men? (vs.20-22)

The power of sin is the law (1 Cor.15:56b; *cp* Rom.6:7,18). When we died together with Christ, we died from (the jurisdiction or power of) the "elements of the world," which refers to the precepts of the law. *Why,* then, *as if* ones living in the world, that is, in the system in which law *does* obtain (even though we are not), would we ever see fit to subject ourselves to any type of mere human decrees? If we are not obliged to even the elements of the system of divine law given to Israel through messengers by the hand of Moses, we are certainly not obliged to heed mere human rules, without any divine authority.

—which are (having, indeed, an expression of wisdom in a willful ritual and humility and asceticism) not of any value toward the surfeiting of the flesh. (v.23)

Exercises of "*willful* ritual" (lit. WILL-RITUAL), would seem to have in view those who make a virtual point of law out of their own exercises of choice, in which they glory in themselves, even if at the same time they should try to cover this up through a facade of humility and asceticism (i.e., austere self-discipline and denial). Even so, neither decrees of prohibitions, rituals of will, nor facades of humility and ascetic practices, are of any value toward the surfeiting of the flesh. Spiritual invigoration in the Lord and in the might of His strength—by the *grace* which is in Christ Jesus—*alone* is able to subdue the flesh and further us in a walk that is pleasing to God. J.R.C.

TEMPLE TYPES

THE TABERNACLE was a type of that which is temporary. The laver which was situated between the altar and the throne spoke of Israel's need of cleansing. We see its antitype in the message of John and then of the Lord and later of the twelve, declaring: "Repent and be baptized for the pardon of your sins." But Israel will be brought into that glorious day and kingdom when all will be cleansed. The antitype of the laver in the tabernacle will be replaced by the antitype of the great *sea* in the temple built in the days of Solomon, and then by that typified by the deepening stream depicted in Ezekiel's vision.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

Thus, in the temple of Solomon, the laver is taken out of the midst of the way of approach. In its stead is "the great sea" mounted upon oxen, and the ten lavers on either side of the house (1 Kings 7:23-39).

The great sea speaks of the abundant blessing and consequent holiness which will be the portion of Israel in that day. They will no longer be exhorted to "repent and be baptized," for all will be regenerate. All that is needed is to maintain them in holiness in their priestly service for the nations.

The nations will approach through them. Solomon's temple was "a house of prayer for all peoples" (Isa.56:7). It was but a feeble type of that grand time when all the nations will approach through Israel (Isa.66:23). These sustain no such relation to Yahweh as Israel; hence for them there are lavers. In that glorious kingdom will be brought to pass the

command of the King: "Given to Me was all authority in heaven and on earth. Going, then, disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy spirit, teaching them to be keeping all, whatever I direct you. And lo, I am with you all the days, till the conclusion of the eon! Amen!" (Matt.28:18,20).

EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE

During the day of Yahweh, the temple described by the prophet Ezekiel will be built in the holy oblation (Ezek. 40-42; 45:1,7). In many respects it is a counterpart of Solomon's temple. It speaks of a day beyond even the day in which it stands.

The day of Yahweh is characterized by the number seven. In Ezekiel's temple the unit of measure is one-seventh longer than in Solomon's, speaking of the eighth day, or day of God. Seven speaks of completion. Eight speaks of a new beginning. In the day of God all things will be new. There will be a new creation.

Among the notable changes in Ezekiel's temple as compared with Solomon's we are most interested in the fate of the ten lavers and the brazen sea.

The lavers were on wheels, and, as we have already seen, they are gone; they have been wheeled away. And why? In Revelation 21:3-6 we read, "And I hear a loud voice out of the throne saying: 'Lo! God's tabernacle is with mankind, and He will be tabernacling with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them. And He will be brushing away every tear from their eyes. And death will be no more, nor mourning, nor clamor, nor misery; they will be no more, for the former things passed away.'

"And He Who is sitting on the throne said: 'Lo! New am I am making all!' And He is saying, 'Write, for these sayings are faithful and true.' And He said to me: 'I have become the Alpha and the Omega, the Origin and the Consumma-

tion. To him who is thirsting I shall be giving of the spring of the water of life gratuitously.'"

The lavers entirely disappear, for there will be no sin to cleanse (Ezek.47:1). The priestly ministry of Israel for the nations is no longer needed. Israel no longer needs to cleanse the sacrifices of the nations, for two reasons: the sacrifices no longer need cleansing, and the nations no longer need the intervention of priests. They, themselves, are clean, and can draw nigh to offer for themselves. What need then for the ten lavers?

The brazen sea has its blessed counterpart. In its place, on the right shoulder of the house, is the river of life, which flows forth and destroys the curse. It proceeds out of the throne of God, an ever deepening stream, bringing life and fruitfulness wherever it goes (Rev.22:1-3). Where there is abundant life there is no need for regeneration. Where there is holiness no cleansing is needed. No, not even a sea; for His servants shall serve Him.

There will be no more doom. God Himself shall dwell with men. He will impose no carnal ordinances between Himself and mankind. *The era of rectification will have come* (Rev.21:3).

APPROACH TO GOD

Thus have we traced, in the courts of God, the way of approach to Him. For His own great Name's sake He put barriers between Himself and mankind. But by Christ He will yet break all the barriers down; and, by Him, bring man back to Himself.

The very existence of a tabernacle or a temple, or even Ezekiel's glorious house, is proof positive of a distant God. So in the new earth there is no temple, but God Himself comes out into the open (Rev.21:22). Means of approach seem to speak of nearness: but they really proclaim estrangement. As we approach perfection they are all done away.

A. E. Knoch

THE DAY OF CHRIST DISTINGUISHED

WHEN Paul prayed that the Philippians would be testing what things are of consequence, he immediately related this to their sincerity in love and realization and lest they be a stumbling block *for the day of Christ* (Phil.1:10). Our expectation in relation to the day of Christ is of great consequence to us. Yet this is often confused with the "day of the Lord." The two days should be distinguished so that we can truly appreciate our calling and the happiness of our expectation.

To Titus the apostle wrote that we are "anticipating that happy expectation, even the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who gives Himself for us, that He should be redeeming us from all lawlessness and be cleansing for Himself a people to be about Him, zealous for ideal acts. Speak of these things and entreat and expose with every injunction. Let no one slight you" (Titus 2:13-15).

In order for us to anticipate our *happy* expectation we need to know something about it. This can only be done by examining the Scriptures as the holy spirit guides us. We endeavor to correctly cut the word of truth (2 Tim.2:15) lest we apply something to us that is meant for another people at another period of time.

As we grow in realization concerning this glorious advent of our God and Saviour, we are to be speaking concerning it, always entreating and exposing because it is easy for us to be slighted. This is what Hymeneus and Philetus were doing. They were swerving as to the truth concerning resurrection, thus subverting the faith of some (2 Tim.2:17,18).

The Thessalonians also had their faith shaken by hearing false teaching on this subject. And if this could happen to such well grounded and mature believers, then surely we, too, can be deceived.

THE DAY WE ANTICIPATE

The following passages of Scripture record the day we are anticipating as members of the body of Christ. Like Paul, we are yearning to be with Christ, for it is much better than either this present life or "to be dying." Whether we are living or dying, Christ is to be magnified, but in our hearts we long for that day when we shall be together with our Lord and Saviour (Phil.1:23).

1. "I am thanking God . . . having this same confidence, that He Who undertakes a good work among you, will be performing it until the *day of Jesus Christ*" (Phil.2:13). God is operating in us to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight (Phil.2:13). He is training us to be disowning irreverence and worldly desires, that we should be living sanely and devoutly in the current eon (Titus 2:12). This work will continue until we enter into His presence.

2. As noted above, we are "to be testing what things are of consequence, that [we] may be sincere and no stumbling block for the *day of Christ,* filled with the fruit of righteousness that is through Jesus Christ for the glory and laud of God" (Phil.1:10,11).

3. "All be doing without murmurings and reasonings, that you may become blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse among whom you are appearing as luminaries in the world, having on the word of life, for my glorying [boasting] for the *day of Christ,* that I did not run for naught, neither that I toil for naught" (Phil.2:14-16). As we live from day to day we should be luminaries in the world. After all, "the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts" (2 Cor.4:6). But then again, how can we not be luminaries when we consider this wonderful treasure that is within these earthen vessels. In one way or another the life of Jesus will be made manifest in our mortal flesh (2 Cor.4:7-12).

4. "And do not be causing sorrow to the holy spirit of God by which you are sealed for the *day of deliverance*" (Eph.4:30). Even if we walk in a way which does not please God, we still have the consolation of knowing that we are sealed for the day of deliverance, when we will do so in fullness. As Romans 8:23 states, ". . . we ourselves also, who have the firstfruit of the spirit, we ourselves also, are groaning in ourselves, awaiting the sonship, the deliverance of our body." This sonship and deliverance will be fully realized when we meet our Lord. He will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory (Phil.3:21).

5. "This, also, do, being aware of the era, that it is already the hour for us to be roused out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believe. The night progresses, yet *the day* is near" (Rom.13:11,12). The salvation here is the deliverance of our bodies. There is a sense in which we have been saved, are being saved, and will be saved. Our salvation will be complete when our Lord Jesus Christ extricates us out of the present wicked eon (Gal.1:4).

THE EVENT OF EXTRICATION

Galatians 1:4 provides us with a good segue into the theme of the "out-lifting," or extricating event of that future day. The following four passages give us further details concerning this event. Notice the progression of details as presented in Paul's epistles:

1. "Lo! a secret to you am I telling! We all, indeed, shall not be put to repose, yet we all shall be changed, in an instant, in the twinkle [tossing] of an eye, at the last

trump. For He will be trumpeting, and the dead will be roused incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality" (1 Cor.15:51-53).

2. "For we are aware that, if our terrestrial tabernacle house should be demolished, we have a building of God, a house not made by hands, eonian, in the heavens. For in this also we are groaning, longing to be dressed in our habitation, which is out of heaven . . . . We are encouraged, and are delighting rather to be away from home out of the body and to be at home with the Lord" (2 Cor.5:1,2,8).

3. "For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory . . ." (Phil.3:20,21).

4. "Now we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are reposing, lest you may sorrow according as the rest also, who have no expectation. For if we are believing that Jesus died and rose, thus also, those who are put to repose, will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with Him. For this we are saying to you by the word of the Lord, that we, the living, who are surviving to the presence of the Lord, should by no means outstrip those who are put to repose, for the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the Chief Messenger, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall be rising first. Thereupon we, the living who are surviving, shall at the same time be snatched away together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be together with the Lord. So that, console one another with these words" (1 Thess.4:13-18).

In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul refers to our change in relation to a secret. He mentions four details concerning this change: It will be in an instant; it will occur at the tossing

of an eye; it will occur at the last trump; we will become incorruptible and immortal. Here also Paul informs that some believers will not experience death prior to this change, for not all shall be put to repose.

In 2 Corinthians 5, Paul adds the information that our new body is *of God* and *not made by hands,* testifying that we long to be at home in this new body *with the Lord.*

Paul gives even deeper and more precious details of our change in Philippians 3. Not only do we put on incorruption and immortality, but our new body that is "not made by hands" is actually going to conform to the body of Christ's glory. This was hinted at in 1 Corinthians 15:35-53 but is clearly stated by the apostle in this text. The change from humiliation to glory fits us for our realm ("city state") which has all along existed in the heavens and is the place which Christ leaves in order to meet us in the air.

More details are added in 1 Thessalonians 4, where Paul confirms what he writes in the other letters. For example, from the 1 Corinthian passage we learn simply that "the dead will be roused incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (v.52). What he says there concerning "the dead" and "we" is made certain in 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17 where the apostle writes, ". . . *the dead* in Christ shall be rising first. Thereupon *we,* the living . . . ." In 1 Corinthians Paul simply uses the pronoun "He" when referring to our Lord trumpeting. In 1 Thessalonians Paul refers to Him as "the Lord Himself" and "the Chief Messenger," descending with the trumpet of God.

The passages from First and Second Corinthians and from Philippians all tell us important details about the change to our new body, while the passage from First Thessalonians gives the details concerning the event itself. There we learn that the living *do not outstrip* those who are put to repose, for the *Lord Himself* descends from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the Chief Messen-

ger and with the trumpet of God. The result is the dead in Christ will rise, and thereupon we, the living, shall at the same time be snatched away together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air. All of us chosen to be in the body shall be snatched away at the *same time* and *together,* to meet the Lord in the air.

ANOTHER DAY

All of the preceding passages deal with the expectation for people of the current era who are being called into the body of Christ. Yet there is another day which we must distinguish from this one, as it arrives much later and primarily concerns God's chosen nation of Israel and the promises given to her dating all the way back to Abraham. This day is most often referred to as the "day of the Lord."

The apostle Paul mentions this day at least twice in his Thessalonian letters. In 1 Thessalonians 5:1,2, he writes: "Now concerning the times and eras, brethren, you have no need to be written to, for you yourselves are accurately aware that the *day of the Lord* is as a thief—thus is it coming!" Later in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 he says, "Now we are asking you, brethren, for the sake of the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ and our assembling to Him, that you be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be alarmed, either through spirit, or through word, or through an epistle as through us, as that the *day of the Lord* is present."

In both of these references Paul speaks of features of the day of the Lord which stand in contrast to what he says in the immediate contexts concerning the "snatching away" event (*cf* 1 Thess.4:18; 5:4-11; 2 Thess.2:2).

We will consider details of distinction between these two days in subsequent studies. But we note for now that the revelations concerning the day of Christ do not shake our minds or cause alarm; rather they console our hearts in every way. What a tremendous expectation God has set before us in His Word!

Ted McDivitt

IN GOD'S SIGHT

GOD'S VIEW of humanity is what is true and therefore most essential for our understanding of ourselves. In Romans 1:18-3:20 we learn what we are in the flesh at present in the world as it is apart from the revelation of God's righteousness in the evangel. We are all irreverent and unrighteous, and none of us, as we now are in ourselves and in accord with what we do, can be justified in God's sight. But in the evangel, about to be unfolded in Romans 3:21-8:39, we are introduced to *God's* achievement of justification for all mankind through the faith of Jesus Christ. This also is a matter of God's sight, and speaks of what is true. But its truth is centered in the effects of the death and resurrection of Christ, which have not yet fully become verities in experience. They are matters of faith.

HUMANITY IN THE FLESH

In Romans 3:19,20, the apostle concludes the theme of God's righteousness in relation to humanity in the flesh. This tells of our position in God's sight apart from His achievements as announced in the evangel:

A. Now we are aware that, whatever the law is saying,
  B. it is speaking to those [in] the law,
    C. that **every** *mouth may be barred,*
    C. and the **entire world** *may be subject to the just verdict of God,*
  B. because by works of law, **no flesh at all** *shall be justified in God's sight,*
A. for through law is the recognition of sin.

This arrangement of Romans 3:19,20 begins with a matter of *awareness* and ends with a matter of *recognition.* These are obvious matters, right out in the open. They do not require faith. In this case, both our awareness and our recognition concern the law. The awareness arises from logic, and the recognition from experience. It is reasonable that everything the law says should speak to the Jew who has the benefit of receiving it. He is the test case. If he fails to keep the explicitly defined instructions of law, everyone of them, this experience of failure makes sin and its power indisputably apparent. Sin is manifest as a reality affecting the entire human race.

Paul earlier had mentioned those who endure in good acts (Rom.2:7) and those of the nations who do what the law demands, maintaining the just requirements of the law (2:14,26). He had also written: ". . . the doers of law shall be justified" (2:13). But, if there had been any doubt, Romans 2:9-20 makes it crystal clear that he had been speaking theoretically. By works of law, *no flesh at all* shall be justified in God's sight. *Every mouth* is barred from making excuses, and *the entire world* is placed under the righteous verdict of God: Not justified.

THOSE WITHIN THE LAW

Hence, as seen in the "B" sections, the limited group of human beings who have been brought within the province of the law, rather than standing alone apart from human irreverence and unrighteousness, are one with *all flesh* in the failure to be righteous. In their failure to maintain the righteous standards of the law as required, the people of Israel prove the race-wide application of the divine verdict that no one can be justified in God's sight by the efforts of flesh. To say that they *could not* keep the law must not distract from the fact being declared here that they *did not* keep it. The fact that God calls certain Israelites righteous

and sees them as righteous is important in its context (and we will look at this viewpoint of God shortly), but this too does not change the fact that every Israelite is unrighteous with respect to the law and the record of their acts. They can never be justified on this basis. God will be faithful to His promises of good, but this cannot be on the basis of their acts in response to the just requirements of law.

The superior "*i*" before the word "under" in the CV informs us that the Greek literally refers to people who are "*in* the law." The thought is not simply a matter of subjection under authority but more generally of inclusion in a system defined by law. For Israel this was a position, apparently, of privilege and opportunity, but in its practical effects, where there was a sensitivity to the meaning of its instructions, it only added to an awareness of the wretchedness of sin and the proof of its power (*cf* Rom. 7:7-24). For those who are *in law* are, like all mankind, *under sin* (Rom.3:9).

WE ALL ARE SINNERS

In the center sections of the above arrangement, Paul reaches his conclusion concerning the position of the entirety of humanity (with the Jew specifically included) before the righteous God in His just judgment. In that we all are sinners, we are left with nothing to say in our defense. In that we all are *under* sin, we are all placed *under* that just verdict of God required by the righteous standards of law, apart from the evangel. On the basis of a law of righteousness, no flesh at all can be justified in God's sight in view of the record of human thoughts and acts.

Paul does not lecture here, as though he were a judge who sits apart from the accused. He speaks as one who had been placed in law, with respect to which he had been becoming blameless as it was understood. Yet now he speaks as one who had been brought to see himself as God sees him

in the flesh. As a Hebrew of Hebrews his efforts to keep the law were astounding, but he failed to maintain the underlying demands of even one word of the law, under the true and penetrating sight of God. The evidence of his hypocrisy was always there, as Romans 7:7-23 makes clear, but now he acknowledges it. The "every mouth" and the "entire world" include his mouth and himself as he is as part of the world.

He does speak, but not in defense of himself. Rather he speaks as an evangelist in order to direct attention to that word of joy and peace which so completely occupies his own heart. He speaks the blunt truth about the human situation before God, but he does so as one who has been overwhelmed by God's grace which brings about justification. He speaks with fervent anticipation of the great good God has revealed to him. The apostle has spoken the truth, but he has not yet spoken the entire truth concerning the situation of humanity before the righteous God.

EVERY MOUTH BARRED

We can have nothing to say in our defense, no excuse, and even no opening for deflecting the subject away from ourselves. We may honestly feel we are more righteous than the next person, but even if that is so it is irrelevant to the charge against us. If there is any measure at all of unrighteousness in us, we are unrighteous. Even if we have not reached the level of clear-sightedness exhibited by David in Psalm 51:5 ("I was with depravity when I was travailed in birth") or Paul in 1 Timothy 1:15 ("foremost of [sinners] am I"), we recognize that we have missed the mark of righteousness. Our judgment by God is fair, and that means condemnation as the just sentence.

"Wherefore, defenseless are you, O human! everyone who is judging, for in what you are judging another, you are condemning yourself" (Rom.2:1). "For there is no partiality with God, for whoever sinned without law, without law also shall perish, and whoever sinned in law, through law will be judged" (Rom.2:11,12).

It is a good thing to be quieted. Now we can listen to what God has to say. And He does have something to say, first of all a verdict, but then He follows with an evangel.

UNDER-JUST

As Paul is inspired here to present God's verdict, he uses a word in Romans 3:19 that belongs to the same Greek word family as "righteousness" (*cf* Rom.1:18; 3:21,22), "just" (Rom.2:5) and "just-*effect*" (Rom.1:32; 2:26). Another key term in this family is "justify" which will appear often through the next portion of this letter. As we have previously noted, that which is *right,* or *just,* is a major theme of these early chapters of Romans.

The Greek word translated "subject to (the) just (verdict)" is *[h]upo-dikos,* (UNDER-JUST). It occurs only here in the Scriptures, expressing the thought of being brought *under* something that is *just,* and here this is spoken of in relation to God. That something is explained in verse 20. It is the divine verdict: Not Justified.

It is not a welcome verdict. But it is just; it is right. It is fully in accord to the truth of what we are in the flesh in view of our deeds and intentions and the thoughts of our hearts.

It is not a welcome verdict, but consider this point again: *It is just.* In our lives we give a great deal of thought concerning justice and fairness. We are upset by wrong decisions of judges and juries and referees. We become angry even at our neighbors and close family members when they act without consideration of what we are convinced is right concerning serious matters that affect us. We do not like seeing others apparently "getting away" with wrong actions. We say in despair, "There is no justice."

Yet our passage tells us there is justice. It is there in the judgments of God. But we cannot altogether like that either because what is right, in view of the record of human thought and action, leads to the verdict that says: You are not justified in what you have done; you are deserving of death; indignation and fury, affliction and distress will come on you; you shall perish! This is what justice demands if *God's act* of sending His Son to die for sinners is not taken into account.

GOD SPEAKS

The verdict of Romans 3:20 is a word of God in light of His righteousness as expressed in the law and in consideration of human unrighteousness in the flesh. Every bit of evidence drawn from the *human record* has been taken into account. The verdict as stated here is an adaptation of the words God inspired David to write in Psalm 143:2 in a prayer of supplication for God's righteous deliverance from distress:

No living one can be righteous before You.

Now while we stand mute before the charges of Romans 3:9-18, we listen to this same message of God as He inspired Paul to write:

No flesh at all shall be justified in His sight.

We are brought into subjection to that verdict made by God, which we do not welcome but which we know is right. We see that no one is treated differently than anyone else. If we sin, whether in law or without law, we are subject to the verdict "Not justified," and to its consequences.

But that is not the end of what Paul has to say to us. God has revealed to this foremost of sinners, a manifestation of divine righteousness which leads to salvation and the verdict: Justified gratuitously in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24).

This too involves God's sight and speaks of a reality, but one that we can see at present only with the "eyes of our heart" (*cf* Eph.1:18) in faith.

GOD SEES

The phrase "in His sight" which appears in Romans 3:20 is a translation of a compound Greek word meaning literally IN-VIEW, joined with the pronoun "His." It is the equivalent of a Hebrew term that occurs often in the Old Testament, and literally means FACE-OF, usually translated idiomatically by the English preposition, "before." Hence where we read in Genesis 6:11 that the earth was ruined "before the Elohim," this is expressed in Hebrew idiom: *to-face-of the Elohim.* The passage speaks of that which God faces, that which is before His presence.

This ruin of the earth in Noah's day was something that should have been evident to humanity as well, had there been any honest examination of the facts. But they were blind to what was there right before their eyes.

Another example is David's well-known question in Psalm 139:7, "Whither could I run away *from Your presence*?" that is, "from-face-of-You." That which is before God's face is that which is true. Everything David knew about himself was known by God (Psa.139:1,2).

O Yahweh, You have investigated me
and are knowing me;
You Yourself know my sitting down and my rising up;
You understand my thought from afar. Psalm 139:1,2

These references correspond well with Romans 3:20. God sees clearly what we are and knows well what we think and do. In accord with what we are and what we do, none of us can be justified in God's sight.

But even in the Hebrew Scriptures this was not the only view of God that is mentioned.

ANOTHER VIEW

Despite the fact that all humanity was ruined in the sight of God, we find God saying to Noah in Genesis 7:1, "I have seen you righteous *to-face-of-Me* in this generation." He saw *all* as unrighteous, which they most certainly were, but he saw Noah, who was a human being on the earth, as righteous.

This may be taken as relative; in relation to the rest of humanity, Noah was righteous. Yet as believers today, we can appreciate a fuller meaning of Genesis 7:1 as an expression of God's view of Noah, ahead of time, as he will be because of the faith of Jesus Christ. This special view is to be associated with the grace God had given Noah. It was a view that will embrace all mankind eventually, for all will someday be constituted righteous because of the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:19), and all will rightly be seen this way. But God already dealt graciously with Noah, viewing him as he will most certainly be.

All of this, now revealed to us in the evangel, is not directly brought out in Genesis 7, but it lies behind the words "before Me," and gives them their highest meaning. The grace Noah found in the eyes of Yahweh (Gen.6:8) is shown by Noah's faith, given him by God, and God seeing him as He will be.

Hence there are two divine viewpoints spoken of in this portion of Genesis. First of all God saw what was so with respect to the acts and motives and thoughts of humanity. This was apparent to God, and it would not be difficult for human beings to see themselves as sinners. The evidence was clearly there. What God saw, they could see, even though what He said they may not have been willing to say.

But also God says that He saw one individual sinner in an entirely different way. He saw Noah in a way that was not apparent to the flesh. It was not manifest, but Genesis

7:1 was true in the final and absolute sense in the eyes of God. Genesis 7:1 speaks of that which is certain to be so.

This second viewpoint of God was one that David meditated on often. It is remarkable that this man, who was so aware of his own failures to keep the righteous standards of the law, could have clung so firmly to this hope: "Happy is the human to whom Yahweh is not reckoning depravity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit!" (Psa.32:2).

As Paul points out in Romans 4:4-8, David longed for that which corresponded very much to what is now being revealed in the evangel.

We have noted Paul's use of David's words in Psalm 143:2 here in Romans 3:20. In that psalm also we find David clinging tenaciously, as he did so often throughout his life, to God's righteousness. As a living human being in the flesh, David could not be righteous before God. Nevertheless he prays in verse 11: "In Your righteousness, may You bring my soul forth from distress."

Now Paul is about to unfold a message from God in which salvation, bringing God's righteousness to all, is the work of God's righteousness.

ROMANS 1:18-3:20

We have reached the end of this long and intriguing section of Romans which began in Romans 1:18. It has led us from the announcement that *God's righteousness is revealed,* to this same announcement, saying now that *God's righteousness is manifest.* It has led us from the statement that God's righteousness is revealed *out of faith,* to a fuller statement that says it is manifest *through the faith of Jesus Christ.* It has led us from an application of this evangel to the *just,* or *righteous person* to an application of this evangel to *all* and to *all who are believing.* Romans 3:21 resumes the very topics brought up in Romans 1:17, but carries them forward in greater detail.

But in the meantime, through 64 verses as we now mark them, Paul has directed our attention to God's indignation on *all* the irreverence and injustice, or unrighteousness, of human beings, and to His righteous judgment of humanity, leading to the conclusion that, by works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight. By itself Romans 1:18-3:20 is bad news for mankind. But as Paul has associated it in such a closely connected way with the evangel it has proved to be extremely helpful in laying the groundwork for our appreciation of this message concerning God's Son, Jesus Christ, and the revelation of God's righteousness through His faith.

In establishing the great and desperate human need for righteousness, these 64 verses have set before us the fundamental character of the righteousness of God. He takes into account all the sins, even the hidden ones, of all human beings. But this does not lead to salvation; rather it leads to condemnation.

On the other hand, within this section of Scripture we are reminded of the riches of God's kindness and forbearance and patience, and of His faithfulness to His promises of benefit and prerogative. These are acts of God which seem to go outside His work of righteous judgment. God's continued preservation of humanity, and His special treatment of certain individuals and peoples seem to bypass the strict requirements of justice.

The solution to all these dilemmas lies in that righteousness of God which is revealed in the giving of His Son for sinners. It takes into account all the sins of all humanity, but it does so in the light of what Christ has done in His faithfulness. That is the message of divine righteousness in His work of salvation now coming before us beginning with the bugle blast of the words "Yet now," and ending with the assurance that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord. D.H.H.

Contents:

241 Editorial
242 Concerns of Faith and Grace
251 Lot and Abraham
259 God Rules in the Affairs of Man
265 Wherefore Console One Another
273 Yet Now, the Evangel of God
281 Paul and Baptism

NOVEMBER, 2004

Volume XCV **Number 6**

Concordant Version of
1 Chronicles through Job

(1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job)

Concerning the books included in this fascicle of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, the book of Job is associated with Psalms and Proverbs in the Hebrew canon. Esther is one of five small scrolls, associated as a group; the others are: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations and Ecclesiastes. Ezra (including Nehemiah) appears along with Daniel in a final section of historical writings, concluding with Chronicles.

1 and 2 Chronicles, are treated as one book in Hebrew under the name "Words [or Annals] of the Days" (*cf* 1 Kings 14:19,29). The history is no mere repetition of the books of Samuel and Kings, but a carefully prepared commentary on the same events as they appeared to the eye of Yahweh. Many events which are assigned to human instrumentalities are here traced back to Yahweh. The purposes and counsels of the heart are unveiled in these divine annals.

Ezra and **Nehemiah** are also to be considered as one book under the name "Ezra" which means help. This is the perfect inscription to the history of Judah's restoration to their land and city and temple.

Esther is a marvelous manifestation of the care of Yahweh over His people when their sun is set and they are in the power of their enemies. Then He becomes their guiding star, shaping their way by means of a providence which never escapes His control. By the simplest and most insignificant means He turns the fell designs of their enemies into a source of blessing.

Like all the scrolls which are designated by the name of a man, the meaning of the name, **Job,** is the index to its contents. It means "Enmity." Job is a concrete example of the work of the enemy. The philosophy of evil is discussed to a finish. His four friends make evil the consequence of sin. Job maintains his innocence. Yet Yahweh vindicates him and blesses him far beyond what would have been possible apart from the affliction he had endured. Evil is definitely designed by God to work out His beneficent purpose. Thus the philosophy of evil and enmity is fully elucidated in this book, as its title indicates.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 2004
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-FIVE

EDITORIAL

THE GRACE of God, His gifts of faith and expectation, His enlightenment and His provision for His chosen ones, His consolation and comfort, His righteousness and love and His present blessings in spirit—these are some of our themes in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches.* They all direct our attention to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind and our Saviour in a special way, upon Whom we rely (1 Tim.4:9,10).

Such reliance is always needed, and always a blessing. But the need and the blessing are never merely repetitious. They are always special, and they are always fresh. Every day we are in need of the evangel and can find it a blessing in a new way. New problems and stresses keep coming, or if they are old troubles, they come with new circumstances. Yet they are well designed for preparing us for the words of God's grace and peace.

For example, as I struggled in preparing my article on Romans 3:21,22, I kept finding these very words about the righteousness of God and the faith of Jesus Christ powerful in dealing with my consciousness of my own shortcomings. What a blessing it is to know that God justifies the sinner, and He does so righteously! On Him I rely.

There are many similar benefits for our daily lives in believing such passages as Romans 11:32-36, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, and 2 Corinthians 5:17, just to mention a few scriptures commented on in this issue. These are words of "spiritual grace," as Paul calls them in Romans 1:11. We may not understand them all correctly; we certainly do not grasp them fully. But we pray for such understanding and grasp for our joy and peace in believing. D.H.H.

CONCERNS OF FAITH AND GRACE

Question:

I am the only one in my family who knows the Lord. When speaking here of my own relationship with Christ, I am not speaking glibly but soberly, with an awareness of the imperfection of my own faith. This is even as I have heard you say during our visits by telephone, that as believers we are *getting* to know Him, as in a practical way we thus seek to get hold of eonian life (1 Tim.6:12): "Now it is eonian life that they may *know* Thee, the only true God, and Him Whom Thou dost commission, Jesus Christ" (John 17:3).

As glorious as this is, in meditating upon these things of faith, it still makes me sad to see the indifference and sometimes the hostility to these very revelations by my own children and even by my husband as well. Why must they be so stubborn?

Answer:

BEING STUBBORN "as to the word," the Word of God (*cp* 1 Peter 3:1), is not unusual, but is the normative (i.e., standard) human condition in the world. Indeed, "we also were once foolish, *stubborn,* deceived, slaves of various desires and gratifications, leading a life in malice and envy, detestable, hating one another" (Titus 3:3). And, even now, we must acknowledge that the deliverance which we now enjoy from such a shameful walk, is only a partial deliverance, not a complete deliverance. Hence we should commiserate our mutual failings, together with unbelievers, not act as if we are no longer acquainted with sin.

It is not simply that your family members *are* stubborn to the things of God, but that thus they *must* be stubborn. This is because "God locks up all together in stubbornness." Yet if this is so—and it *is* so—it is "that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:32).

Even if your beloved ones should die in unbelief, it is evident that through God's wise and good operations in eons to come, they too will come to know and love their Saviour, God.

It is evident that this is so, because God is their Saviour, too—as well as being our Saviour. We *rely* on the living God; our *expectation* is in Him, as *the One Who is the Saviour of all mankind,* albeit that He is *especially* the Saviour of believers (1 Tim.4:10), to whom alone the special gift of *eonian* life is given.

Since our Saviour, God, Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4), we therefore acclaim Him as the Saviour of all mankind. "For even as in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified . . . . the last enemy is being abolished: death . . . . that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:22,26,28).

It is only through actively and intensely believing these marvelous revelations of Scripture that we find a joy which is able to militate against the many things that make us sad, especially the sorrows we face in connection with the unbelief of many among our friends and family.

Though we long to see our families and friends receive the gift of faith, God's calling and one's membership in the body of Christ simply is not "up to us" to pass on to those whom we may prefer. It is *God* Who places the members, each one of them, in the body according as He wills (1 Cor. 12:18). "For of what are you aware, O wife—if you will be saving your husband—or of what are you aware, O hus-

band—if you will be saving your wife—*except as the Lord parts it to each*?" (1 Cor.7:16,17).

We do not know whom God has already chosen ("before the disruption of the world," Eph.1:4) for membership in Christ's body and for life eonian; but we do know that whenever anyone genuinely believes and, due to God's work within one's heart, subsequently truly *finds* Christ *choice*, that person will surely *choose* Him accordingly.

There is so much weak talk today about getting "decisions for Christ," even from those who give us no assurance that they honestly believe. Many, so it seems, only choose the "Christian religion" or church involvement, never having come to personal heart conviction concerning Christ Jesus Himself.

We are aware that faith is out of tidings (i.e., what is heard), yet the tidings through a declaration of Christ (Rom.10:17). Hence we want to share our faith with any who will give us the opportunity to do so. Yet even so, it is only those whom God had chosen long ago who will *faithfully* respond: "Now on hearing this [word of the evangel], the nations rejoiced and glorified the word of the Lord, and they believe, *whoever were set* for life eonian" (Acts 13:48).

It is not just our faith in the distinctives of Paul's evangel that we would share with others, though these things are surely very important. First of all, we want to share our foundational faith that Jesus is the Christ, that He died for our sins, even as that the Scriptures which bear His testimony are the very Word of God.

No one should be criticized or looked down upon for not believing. We cannot scientifically prove the vital elements of our faith even to ourselves; much less can we do so to others. All believers, then, with regard to their *faith*, are necessarily fideists, not empiricists. A fideist is one who relies solely on faith's testimony, rather than on scientific (i.e., empirical) reasoning based upon observation and experimentation of tangible evidence.

Therefore we should not act as if we could scientifically prove the truth value of our faith; conversely, neither need we feel guilty about not being able to do so. In the end, we simply believe. We are *relying* on the immanent fullness of truth inherent in the One Whose testimony has convinced us, which we have accepted, the One of Whom it is written that He does not lie (Titus 1:2).

We are not unmindful that as believers we appear foolish to unbelievers, since faith itself seems foolish to them. In a world of falsehood and delusion, why should anyone *believe* anything at all? Certainly we are mindful, as the apostle Paul himself declares, "If we are having an expectation in Christ in this life only, more forlorn than all men are we" (1 Cor.15:19).

With ourselves, however, it is not a question of whether we ought to believe or ought not to believe; instead, it is simply a fact that we *do* believe. We do not, however, seek to justify ourselves for this; yet neither can we fault ourselves for so doing, in light of what even now we still find to be the efficaciousness for conviction of the testimony of the evangel. We freely (and yet joyously!) acknowledge that we are wholly dependent upon the One Whom we have believed both for the truthfulness of His Word and for the realization of His promises.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Question:

I have accepted the good news of universal reconciliation, of the eventual salvation of all mankind, as well as of the blessing of eonian life which is granted to believers, yet not as a reward but as a favor.

Recently, however, I have become disturbed concerning this subject since a friend pointed me to Colossians 1:21-23: ". . . Yet now hath he reconciled [you] . . . to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight: *if ye continue in the faith* grounded and settled, *and be not moved away* from the hope of the gospel . . ." (AV).

My friend claims that not only is universal reconciliation mere wishful thinking, but that even believers themselves will not be reconciled unless they endure to the end. She says that not only will unbelievers never be saved, but that even many true believers will not be saved either, since many do not continue in the faith at least in an active and consecrated way, but are instead moved away from the hope of the gospel, if not by overtly wicked deeds, then simply by their love of the world and pursuit of worldly pleasures.

The Concordant Version doesn't say "if ye continue," but "since surely you are persisting." But I don't understand this either (and I also wonder which translation is correct) since my friend does have a point that some Christians do become quite worldly and neglectful of their faith.

Answer:

Your friend is mistaken since she has confounded disparate scriptural topics while at the same time accepting her own inferences from the Scriptures as if they were the Scriptures themselves. My task at hand, however, is not to explicate the various ways in which she goes astray, but to deal with your own concerns related to Colossians 1:21-23. If I am able to do so effectively and assuringly, you will then be able to see more clearly for yourself the various particulars in which your friend is in error.

Before considering this passage in question, however, let us first of all rehearse briefly why we believe that eonian life is a gracious gift granted to believers, as well as why

we believe that ultimately reconciliation will truly be universal. Then, on the basis of these established truths, we may subsequently examine Colossians 1:21-23.

We believe that eonian life is a gracious gift, for this is what the apostle Paul says concerning it: "For the ration of Sin is death, *yet the gracious gift of God* is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:23). We are saved *from* indignation (Rom.5:9) and "*for* life eonian" (Rom.5:21). Indeed, this is so such that even "where sin increases, grace superexceeds, that, even as Sin reigns in death, *Grace also should be reigning* through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:20,21).

The very essence of the evangel, which, even now, is "on all who are believing" (Rom.3:22), is the blessing of "being justified *gratuitously in [God's] grace,* through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24). We are "*graciously granted* . . . to be believing on Him" (Phil.1:29). "Where, then, is boasting?" it may be asked, to which the apostle Paul's ready answer is, "It is debarred!" (Rom.3:27).

It is a fact that God *chooses* us in Christ "before the disruption of the world" (Eph.1:4). As members of the ecclesia (Greek: *ekklêsia*) which is Christ's body, we too are included among this company of God's OUT-CALLED ones. It is also a fact, then, that "to those who are *called* . . . Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:24), is the testimony of their faith.

As "God's chosen ones" (Rom.8:33), we "are called according to the purpose that, whom He *foreknew,* He designates beforehand, also, to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. Now whom He *designates beforehand,* these He *calls* also, and whom He calls, these He *justifies* also; now whom He justifies, these He *glorifies* also. What then, shall we declare to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him

up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be *graciously granting us all?*" (Rom.8:28b-32).

"*Therefore*" (*cf* Rom.5:12; *cp* Rom.5:1-11)—that is, in light of the graciousness of the salvation afforded to those who are chosen and granted life eonian, God has determined as well concerning all mankind as follows: ". . . If by the offense of one, the many[1] died, much rather the *grace* of God and the *gratuity* in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds" (Rom.5:15).

"*Consequently, then,* as it was through one offense for *all mankind* for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for *all mankind* for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

We believe, further, in the *reconciliation* of all intelligent creatures universally because the scope of reconciliation is the same as that of creation: ". . . In [Christ] is *all* created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, *all* is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him. And He is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him *the entire complement* delights to dwell, *and* through Him [God delights] *to reconcile all to Him* (making peace through the blood of His

1. In Greek, "the many" here is *[h]oi polloi.* The definite article ("the") has the force of a demonstrative pronoun (*cp* James 2:14), that is, "this." The adjective "many" is a relative term, which speaks of a large or "vast" (as it is often translated) number as opposed to a few. It does *not* signify "a large number, but less than all," but simply a vast number or company, the scope of which is to be determined by the context. "*This* vast [company]"—the multitudinous company set before us here in Romans 5:12-21—is "all mankind" (*cf* Rom.5:12,18).

cross), through Him, *whether those on the earth or those in the heavens*" (Col.1:16-20; *cp* Eph.1:10; Phil.2:9-11).

Going on, then (and I will now address your specific concerns as to the passage which follows), Paul further declares: "And you, being once estranged and enemies in comprehension, by wicked acts, *yet now* He reconciles by His body of flesh, through His death, to present you holy and flawless and unimpeachable in His sight, *since surely* you are persisting in the faith, grounded and settled and are not being removed from the expectation of the evangel which you hear which is being heralded in the entire creation which is under heaven of which I, Paul, became the dispenser" (Col.1:21-23).

It is true that the conjunctive particle *ei* which the CV translates here as "since" signifies "if"; but it is true as well that "if' is sometimes used not only in the sense of "on condition that" (i.e., the if of doubt) but instead in the sense of "because" or "since" (i.e., the if of argument; e.g., Rom. 8:31). It should be noted as well that here "if" (*ei*) appears conjoined to "surely" (*ge*), "a particle indicating that no doubt is possible, or that a statement is beyond reasonable denial."[2] Since the ultra-literal "if surely" as used here is not good diction, the CV translates this phrase as "since surely" (*cp* Gal.3:4; Eph.3:2,4:21).

Of course all are mindful that in a given instance believers may or may not be faithfully persisting. Some at times may quench the spirit and become dormant of faith, even as neglectful. As you suggest, at least in an attentive way, some may become removed from the expectation of the evangel, by worldly distractions and enticements. Even so, rendered thus (as "since surely") Paul's words may well be taken as an expression of encouragement, in order to foster persistence in the faith in a grounded and settled way in cases where this may not yet be forthcoming.

2. Keyword Concordance, p.294.

More particularly, however, in reference to those who *are* persisting, this passage becomes a word of assurance as to one's own inclusion in the stated blessing. For example, our heartfelt appraisal of Christ is that He is "the wisdom of God and the power of God." Consequently, then, it must be so that we ourselves are included among those whom God has truly called and chosen (*cf* 1 Cor.1:24-28). Similarly, then—"*since surely*" in our case it is so—as those who are persisting in the faith, grounded and settled, not being removed from the expectation of the evangel, it must also be so that we ourselves are likewise included among those whom God *even now* (*cf* "yet *now,*" Col. 1:22) has *reconciled.*

Reconciliation is a matter of *practice* and *attitude.* At the consummation, all will *delight* to dwell in Christ; at present, even many who believe in Him, still keep Him at a distance even so, finding their delight elsewhere, perhaps in worldly pleasures, but little if at all in fellowship with Him. Reconciliation is expressive of reestablished close relationship, of the removal of barriers, of mutual peace and devotion, of delight in the company one of the other, of love and unity between friends.

As one who is chosen of God, to whom a measure of faith has been granted, one is in Christ and is justified in His blood. Such a one, however, even though he or she is *saved* (from indignation, and for life eonian), may or may not be one who enjoys *reconciliation.*

What we have in grace is not to be confused with its present enjoyment. Obedience worthy of reward must be discriminated from the blessings in grace of our calling, being chosen of God and justified in Christ's blood, being vivified and glorified in that day, immortal and incorruptible. "For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not out of works, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8). J.R.C.

LOT AND ABRAHAM
(Genesis 18:16-33)

16 +**When the men** l**arose from there,** + **they** l**gazed** down **overlooking Sodom. And Abraham went**l **with them to see them off.** 17 +**Then Yahweh** l**said:** Shall **I** m**keep covered**l **from Abraham** w**what I** will **do**l**?** 18 + **Abraham shall become,** yea **become**– › a **great and staunch nation, and in him all** the **nations of the earth will** b**be blessed.** 19 **For I have** become **acquainted** with **him in order** w**that he may enjoin** `on **his sons and** `on **his house**hold **after him** +**to** –**keep** the **way of Yahweh to do** what is **right and duly** just, so **that Yahweh may** –**bring on Abraham** `7**all**0 w**that He has** sp**promised** on**concerning him.**

20 +**Then Yahweh** l**said:** The **outcry** over **Sodom and Gomorrah** is mn**great** t**indeed, and their sin is exceedingly grave** t**indeed.** 21 **I shall** pr**now descend and see** whether **they have** d**acted** all**altogether according** to the out**cry** over **it** ·that has **come**l **to Me, and if not, I** will l**know.**

22 + **From there the men** l**turned around and** l**went** to**ward Sodom.** +**Yet Yahweh, He** was fr**still standing before Abraham.** 23 +**So Abraham** came l**close and** l**said:** Will **You indeed** l**sweep off** the **righteous with** the **wicked?** 24 **Perhaps** there **are fifty righteous in** the **midst of the city;** will **You indeed** l**sweep off and not** l**bear** ›**with** the 7**entire**0 ri**place** i**on** p**account of the fifty righteous who** are i **within it?** 25 **Far be it** ›**from You** f**to** d**act**– as**in** ·**this manner, to** c**put** to **death** the **righteous with** the **wicked,** so +**that it would** b**occur** as**with** the **righteous as** with the **wicked. Far be it** ›**from You; the Judge**l **of the entire earth,** would **He not** ld**execute** right **judgment?**

26 + **Yahweh** [sa]**replied: If I should find in Sodom fifty righteous in** the **midst of the city,** +**then I will bear** ›**with the entire** [ri]**place for their sake.** 27 + **Abraham** [l]**answered and** [l]**said: Behold, now, I have ventured to speak to** [S]**Yahweh**[ph]**,** +**though I** am **soil and ashes.** 28 **Perhaps the fifty righteous** [l]**lack five.** Will **You** [l]**ruin** `**the entire city** [i]**because** of **five? And He** [sa]**replied: I** will **not** [l]**ruin** it **if I should find there forty-five.**

29 +**Yet he** [fr]**again** [l]**proceeded to speak to Him and** [l]**said: Perhaps forty shall be found there. And He** [sa]**replied: I** will **not** [l]**do** it, [i]**for** the [p]**sake of the forty.** 30 +**Yet he** [l]**said:** [pr]**Now** › **my Lord must not be** [l][hot]**angry,** +**but let me speak; perhaps thirty shall be found there. And he** [sa]**replied: I** will **not** [l]**do** it **if I should find there thirty.** 31 +**Yet he** [l]**said: Behold,** [pr]**now, I have ventured to speak to my Lord; perhaps twenty shall be found there. And He** [sa]**replied: I** will **not** [l]**ruin** it, [i]**for** the [p]**sake of the twenty.** 32 +**Yet he** [l]**said:** [pr]**Now** › **my Lord must not be** [l][hot]**angry,** +**but let me speak** [y]**only** ˙this [du]**once; perhaps ten shall be found there. And He** [sa]**replied: I** will **not** [l]**ruin** it [i]**for** the [p]**sake of the ten.** 33 **As** soon [w]**as Yahweh had** [all]**finished** › **speaking** – ›**with Abraham,** + **He** [l]**went** away**; and Abraham returned to his** [ri]**place.**

YAHWEH APPRISES ABRAHAM

ABRAHAM, who lived at some distance from Sodom, was consulted as to its doom. Lot, who lived within its confines, was unaware of its impending destruction. So it is today. We, who have been enlightened by fellowship with God through His Word, are well aware of the divine indignation which may destroy the world at any time. We will not need to leave, like Lot, however, for we must be caught away before His wrath arrives. But others who live in its midst, do not realize the depth of its degradation, or dread its descending doom, except at the hand of man himself

and his inventions. Lot chose to dwell within the walls of the Sodomites, descendants of the cursed Canaan, who occupied the land promised to Abram.

REVIEW OF LOT'S LIFE

It is worthwhile to trace the life of Lot before he came to live in Sodom, and mark its contrasts with that of Abram. Lot had a good start. His father was Abram's brother, Haran. Although Abram was told to go *from* his kindred and *from* his father's house, when he went to the land of promise, nevertheless Lot, his brother's son, took it upon himself to go along (Gen.12:1-4). But, when they were in the land, their two herds increased so much that there came to be contention between their graziers. Abram gave Lot his choice, and he selected the garden-like district of the basin of Sodom and Gomorrah (13:8-11), and dwelt in one of their cities. While there, he was captured by the confederate kings, yet Abram rescued him. Although he was tormented by the lawless acts of the people, he took his place in the gate as one of their elders.

ABRAHAM'S VIEWPOINT

From the tenor of Abraham's intercession, we can see how like it was to modern ideas, and how far short of the Subjector's purpose. Since Adam sinned, *none* are really righteous, and since Christ died, *all* will become just. Abraham's theology was fractional. If there were fifty righteous, he thought their comparative righteousness would outweigh the wickedness of the rest. It was a good opportunity to teach Abraham the great truth that Yahweh's ways are not as man's ways. In a city like Sodom, the judges should deal with the worst criminals against their laws, but they could not deal with all, even if they were guilty. So Yahweh agrees that He will bear with all if there are fifty so-called righteous.

ABRAHAM'S INTERCESSION

We, who live in the last days of this administration, find ourselves in a position in regard to the world about us much like Abraham in regard to Sodom and Gomorrah. As these cities were doomed to destruction, so with the world in which we live. Thus it may be exceedingly instructive and helpful to consider the whole event, especially the discussion Abraham had with Yahweh. From the human side, his intercession is quite commendable, even if it shows his lack of insight into God's plans and operations. Such a consideration should help us to a closer appreciation of God's ways than Abraham possessed. Then as now, the believers were saved by being *called out*. We cannot keep the judgment from overtaking the world, no matter how hard we persevere in prayer, but we ourselves will be saved because we believe, and will respond to His call to come out, at His advent.

Abraham realized that there might not be as many righteous ones as he supposed. So he kept on lowering the number by fives and tens, from fifty to forty-five, to forty, to thirty, to twenty to ten—one-fifth of the fifty with which he started. Evidently Abraham thought that there must be at least ten, and that any less than this would have to suffer the fate of the rest—which would certainly not be just. As a matter of fact, there were only *four*, Lot with his wife and daughters. Because of their comparative righteousness Yahweh *spared* them (19:16). But *they did not save the city*. *Yet Yahweh saved them*. Even they were not saved by their *own* righteousness, but by *believing* the messengers of doom, and leaving the city. This is the divine method of salvation during the eons. *After* that *all* will be saved (1 Tim.2:4).

First, however, let us look at the whole occurrence from the divine standpoint, uninfluenced by human feelings

and historical facts. How can we do this? By simply noting what occurred *in the light of the consummation*. Whatever Yahweh Elohim does is in perfect accord with all of His other perfections, His love, His justice, His truth, as well as the welfare of His creatures. Yet these attributes are in perfect balance. He does not display His love at the expense of His justice, for both are essential, one to the other, especially to their display. In the end they lead to, and prepare for, His grand goal, when the final fruit of his operations will be perfect and perpetual happiness.

FAITH RIGHTEOUSNESS

Viewed in this light, we are assured that the destruction of all the cities in the basin, with the deliverance of Lot and his two daughters, was the only wise, just and loving thing to do at that juncture. Abraham did not know of God's ultimate, nor the path leading up to it, so he erred in thinking a righteous minority could save all the rest, and that the size of this group mattered. He did not realize that "all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23). Lot's comparative righteousness was powerless to deal with the corruption of Sodom. It was his faith that constituted his righteousness, even as it did Abram's, and does ours today. Those of his daughters who had married, along with their husbands did not believe, so were not saved.

ALL SAVED

The lesson taught by Sodom and Gomorrah was especially intended for the nation of Israel, so that it would keep the way of Yahweh, to do what is right and duly just (18:19). There always was a comparatively righteous remnant in it, even in the days of Elijah, who thought himself the only one left, when there were still seven thousand (1 Kings 19:14,18). But salvation is not by minorities or majorities, but by God and His Anointed. Many in Israel

followed our Lord when He was on earth, and His apostles, when He was roused, yet that did not save the *nation*. It was set aside. In the coming kingdom *all* Israel will be saved (Rom.11:26). And, in the consummation, *all* humanity will be delivered and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). Even Sodom and Gomorrah shall return to their former estate (Ezek.16:55).

Had Abraham known all this, he probably would not have spoken as he did. There are doubtless many since then who secretly agree with him. Good people (like themselves!) should not be judged at all! But the Judge of all did not merely have in mind the fate of these cities but used their doom for the welfare of innumerable others. Sodom and Gomorrah are, in His course of instruction, intended as an *example*. By their ultra-prostitution and coming away after other flesh, they are lying before us, a *specimen*, experiencing the *justice* of fire eonian (Jude 7). Again and again was Israel pointed back to them, for they even exceeded their iniquities.

OTHER SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES

Moses threatened the sons of Israel with a fate like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, if they turn away from Yahweh, their Elohim, and served the elohim of the nations (Deut.29:18-29). Isaiah commences his long prophecy by comparing Israel with these cities, thus (Isa.1:9,10):

Unless Yahweh of hosts had left for us a few survivors,
As Sodom would we become,
And to Gomorrah would we be likened.
Hear the word of Yahweh, captains of Sodom;
Give ear to the law of our Elohim, people of Gomorrah.

Again, in his denunciation of Babylon Isaiah says (Isa. 13:19):

And Babylon, stateliest of kingdoms,
Beauty of Chaldean pride,
Will become like Elohim's overturning
of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Jeremiah compares the prophets in Jerusalem to these adulterous cities, as follows (Jer.23:14):

To Me they have become like Sodom, all of them,
And its dwellers like Gomorrah.

Jeremiah also threatens Babylon with a fate similar to these cities (Jer.50:40):

Like Elohim's overturning of Sodom and Gomorrah
And their neighbors, averring is Yahweh,
No man shall dwell there,
And no son of humanity shall sojourn in her.

Ezekiel, however, not only compares Jerusalem with Samaria and Sodom, but predicts the reversal of their captivity and the return to their former state (Ezek.16:53-56).

In Amos, Yahweh complains that He had overturned some as Elohim had overturned Sodom and Gomorrah, yet they do not return to Him (Amos 4:11).

In Zephaniah, Moab is said to be becoming as Sodom, and the sons of Ammon as Gomorrah (Zeph.2:9).

In later revelation, also, it is used as a well-known example. Our Lord, when He sent out His apostles, told them that, "whosoever should not be receiving you, nor yet be hearing your words, coming outside of that house or city, or village, shake off the dust from your feet. Verily, I am saying to you, More tolerable will it be for the land of Sodom and the land of Gomorrah in the day of judging, than for that city" (Matt.10:14-15; *cf* Mark 6:11).

In Romans Paul quotes Isaiah's words concerning the sons of Israel, showing that, as in the case of Lot, a residue will be saved out of Israel (Rom.9:29).

Peter, also, refers to Sodom and Gomorrah as an example for those about to be irreverent, as well as to the rescue of Lot (2 Peter 2:6-7).

Thus we see how large a place is given to the fate of these cities in the Scriptures. Almost as much as to Noah and the deluge.

MERCY ON ALL

Some, reading the popular versions, suppose that Sodom and Gomorrah are now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire (Jude 7). If that were the case, then all lovers of justice should agree that the Judge of the entire earth is Himself utterly unjust. First of all He locked all up in stubbornness (Rom.11:32). Then He laid a special curse on Canaan and the Canaanites, to whom these cities belonged. As a result of this, and the urge of their flesh through indwelling sin, they indulged in abominable excesses. With such a background and environment, who could escape pollution? Thank God, even the inhabitants of these cities are included in His great purpose to have mercy on *all* (Rom.11:32).

A. E. Knoch

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GOD RULES IN THE AFFAIRS OF MEN
(2 Samuel 17)

17 + **Ahithophel** ˡ**said to Absalom, Oh let me** ˡ**choose** ⁷**for my**self⁰ **12,000 men;** + **let me** ˡ**set out and let me** ˡ**pursue after David tonight.** 2 + **I shall come** upon **him** +**while he** is **weary and slack of hands;** + **I will** ᶜ**make** `**him tremble; and** when **all the** ʷⁱ**soldiers** ʷ `with **him flee,** + **I will smite** `**the king, him alone.** 3 + **Let me bring** ˡ**back all the** ʷⁱ**soldiers to you, like** the **return**⁻ of ⁷ᶜa **bride to her husband.** It is **but** `the **soul of one**~ ˙**man** ʷ **you** are **seeking;** as for **all the people, they shall come** to **be** at **peace.** 4 + **The word** seemed ˡ**upright in** the **eyes of Absalom and in** the **eyes of all** the **elders of Israel.**

5 +**Then Absalom** ˡ**said,** ᵖʳ**Now call** › **Hushai the Archite** ᵐʳ**also, and let us** ˡ**hear what he** ᵐʳ**too** has **in his mouth** to say**.** 6 + **Hushai** ˡ**came to Absalom, and Absalom** ˡˢᵃ**spoke to him** › **saying**⁻**,** ˙**This** is ᵃˢ the ˢᵖ**plan Ahithophel has** ˢᵖ**advised. Should we** ᵈ**act** `on **his** ˢᵖ**advice? If** it **be no, speak** up for **your**self. 7 + **Hushai** ˡˢᵃ**replied to Absalom,** ⁱ ˙**This** ᵈᵘ**time the counsel** ʷ**that Ahithophel has** ᶠⁱˣ**given** is **not good.** 8 + **Hushai** ˡˢᵃ**continued, You you**rself **know** `**your father and** `**his men that they** are **masters** of war, **and they** are **bitter of soul like** a **bear in** the open **field bereaved** of her cubs. + **Your father** is a **man of war, and he** will **not** ˡ**lodge** for the night `with **the** ʷⁱ**soldiers.**

9 ᵇᵈ**Even now he** must be **hiding in one of the dark holes or in some** other ˙ʳⁱ**place. And** ᵃˢ**if** some ⁱ**of them** ᵇ**would fall**⁻ ⁱ**at** the **start, and** one **hears** about it, +**then the hearer**ˡ **will say,** A **stroke has** ᵇ**come** ⁱ**over** the ʷⁱ**soldiers who** fol-

low **after Absalom.** 10 + **Even** if **he** is a **son of valor whose heart** is **like the heart of** a **lion, it shall melt,** yea **melt**⁻ away**; for all Israel knows**ˡ **that your father** is a **master** of war, **and** ʷ**those** `with **him** are **sons of valor.**

11 ᵗ**Hence I counsel: Let all Israel from Dan** + ᶠʳ**to Beer-sheba convene** in a **gathering**⁻ ᵒⁿ**about you,** ›**as numerous as** the **sand** ʷ ᵒⁿ**by the sea; and your presence** be ᵍᵒ**marching** ⁷**in their midst**⁰ **in** the **attack.** 12 +**When we come** ›**upon him in one of the** ʳⁱ**places where he** may **be found,** + **we** will descend **on him just as the night mist** ˡ**falls on the ground;** + **no**ᵗ one **will be left** alive, neither ⁱ **he** +**nor** ⁱ **all the men** ʷ `with **him,** not **even one.** 13 + **If he should proceed** in**to** a **city,** + **all Israel will take up lines** of rope **to** ˙**that** ˙**city; and we will pull** `**it in pieces** ᶠʳ**into the wadi, until** ʷ **not even** a **pebble will be found there.**

14 + **Absalom and all** the **men of Israel** ˡˢᵃ**agreed** that the **counsel of Hushai the Archite** was **better** ᶠ**than** the **counsel of Ahithophel,** +**for Yahweh Him**self **had determined to annul** `**Ahithophel's** ˙**good counsel** › **in** ᵖ**order** that **Yahweh** might **bring**⁻ `**evil** ›**upon Absalom.**

15 +**Then Hushai** ˡˢᵃ**told the priests** ›**Zadok and** › **Abiathar,** ᵃˢ **This and** ᵃˢ **that** did **Ahithophel counsel** `**Absalom and** `the **elders of Israel;** +**yet I**´ **have counseled** ᵃˢ **this and** ᵃˢ **that.** 16 + **Now send quickly and tell** › **David,** › **saying**⁻**, You must not** ˡ**lodge tonight in** the **gorges of the wilderness;** + **you should** ᵐʳ**rather cross** over, yea **cross**⁻ over **lest** › the **king be** ˡ**swallowed** up +**with** › **all the** ʷⁱ**soldiers who** are `with **him.**

17 +**Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz** were **staying** ⁱ**at En-rogel, and** ˙a **maid**servant **would go and tell** › **them;** +**then they**´ would ˡ**go and tell** › **king David, for they** ˡ**dared not** › **be seen**⁻ › **entering**⁻ **the city**ᵈ**.** 18 +**But** a **lad** ˡ**saw** `**them and** ˡ**told** › **Absalom.** +**So both of them** ˡᵍᵒ**left quickly and** ˡ**came to** the **house of** a **man in Bahurim** + ʰᵉ**who** ›**had** a **well in his court.** + **They** got ˡ**down** into ᵖˡ**it,** 19 **and the wife** ˡ**took** `a **portiere,** + ˡ**spread** it **over** the ᴹ**mouth~ of the well and**

ˡ**spread out** ˙**grist on it,** +**so** that **nothing would be known** about it**.** 20 +**When Absalom's servants** ˡ**came to the woman** at**ᵈ the house and** ˡˢᵃ**asked where Ahimaaz and Jonathan** were, + **the woman** ˡˢᵃ**told** › **them** that **they had crossed** over **the shallow waters.** +**Though** the servants ˡ**sought** them, + **they found no**ᵗ one**; and** so **they** ˡ**returned** to **Jerusalem.**

21 + **It** ˡᵇ**was after** › **they** had **gone**⁻ +**that** Ahimaaz and Jonathan came ˡ**up from the well and** ˡ**went and** ˡ**told** › **king David.** + **They** ˡ**said to David, Arise and cross** `**the water quickly, for** ᵃˢ**in this** way **had Ahithophel counseled** ᵒⁿ**against you.** 22 +**Then David and all the** ʷⁱ**soldiers** ʷ `with **him** ˡ**arose and** ˡ**crossed** `**the Jordan;** ᶠʳ**by the morning light not** ᶠʳ**even one was** ˡᵃᵍ**missing who had not crossed** `**the Jordan.**

23 +**When Ahithophel saw that his counsel had not been** ᵈ**followed,** + **he** ˡ**saddled** `⁷**his**ᶜ **donkey and** ˡ**set out and** ˡ**went to his home** ›**in his** own **city.** +**Then he** ᵐ**gave instructions to his house**hold **and** ˡ**strangled** himself **and** ˡ**died.** + **He was** ˡ**entombed in his father's tomb.**

24 +**As** for **David, he had** already ⁱⁿ**reached Mahanaim**ᵈ**,** +**when Absalom crossed** over `**the Jordan, he and all** the **men of Israel with him.** 25 + It was `**Amasa** whom **Absalom had** ᵖˡ**set over** ˙his military **host** ᵘ**instead of Joab.** + **Amasa** was the **son of** a **man** + ʰⁱˢ**whose name** was **Ithra the** ⁷**Ishmaelite~, who had** gone **in to Abigal, daughter of Nahash** and **sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother.** 26 + The **Israel**ites **and Absalom** ˡ**encamped** ⁷**in**⁰ **the land of Gilead.**

27 +**Now it** ˡᵇ**happened** ᵃˢ**when David** had ⁱⁿ**reached**⁻ **Mahanaim**ᵈ +**that Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbah of** the **sons of Ammon, and Machir son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim,** 28 ⁷**brought**⁰ **bedding,** + **basins and potter's**ˡ ᵃˡˡ**vessels,** +**also wheat,** + **barley,** + **meal** flour, + **toasted grain,** + **beans,** + **lentils,** 29 + **honey,** + **clotted cream** + of the **flock, and curded** cheese **of** the **herd. They** ᶜ**brought** them **close**

to David and to the [wi]**soldiers** [w] `with **him to eat. For they** [sa]**thought** that **the** [wi]**soldiers** would have become **hungry,** [+] **faint and thirsty in** the **wilderness.**

TWO COUNSELORS

VERSES 1-4 relate Ahithophel's plan. Had his advice been followed, it seems that Absalom's rebellion could hardly have failed. But David's prayer (2 Sam.15:31) was answered when Absalom called for Hushai to speak his counsel as well. Though Hushai's counsel was different, it was couched in common sense and appealed to those listening. They were already in the palace; why not wait till they could fully assemble their forces? "Yahweh Himself had determined to annul Ahithophel's good counsel in order that Yahweh might bring evil upon Absalom" (2 Sam.17:14).

AHITHOPHEL AND JUDAS

Ahithophel had been a close friend of David. He was David's most trusted advisor (2 Sam.16:23) and a member of the court. As such he had quarters at the palace and ate from the king's table. These facts occasioned David's words in Psalm 41:9.

Even the man bidding me peace, in whom I trusted
Who was eating my bread,
has magnified his heel against me.

Judas Iscariot had been deemed sufficiently trustworthy to be the keeper of funds for Christ's band of disciples (*cf* John 12:6; 13:29). He was there participating in the friendship and small talk shared by the disciples and Christ as they stopped to eat during their travels. In front of Judas was spread the feast and blessing of hearing the words of truth from Christ's own lips. At the passover meal Jesus said, "Lo! the hand of him who is giving Me up is with Me on the table" (Luke 22:21).

Ahithophel would have taken a troop of soldiers and gone after David in the night. Judas took the temple guard with him to Gethsemane at night, and there they apprehended Christ. Judas betrayed Christ with a kiss of friendship—a customary greeting of friends or relatives in that culture. David said the one who was "bidding me peace" was his betrayer. *Peace* was the normal greeting of friendship. The Psalmist could hardly have been more accurate in describing Judas' sign of betrayal.

Ahithophel believed his counsel was right, and when it was not followed he was sure the rebellion would fail, and he would be executed for treason. He saddled his donkey, went home, set his house in order, and strangled himself (2 Sam.17:23). When Judas realized what he had done, he went to the temple, returned the betrayal money, and went out and strangled himself (Matt.27:3-5; Acts 1:16-20).

Ahithophel's counsel also found a fulfillment in the prophecy of Caiaphas. Ahithophel said, "It is but the soul of one man you are seeking; as for all the people, they shall come to be at peace" (2 Sam.17:3). "Caiaphas, being the chief priest of that year, said to them, 'You are not aware of anything, neither are you reckoning that it is expedient for us that one man should be dying for the sake of the people, and not the whole nation should perish" (John 11:49,50).

DAVID'S ESCAPE

David's military experience had taught him the value of accurate information. The chain of communication he hastily constructed through Hushai, Zadok and Abiathar, and their sons, Ahimaaz and Jonathan, proved to be priceless in aiding David and those with him to cross the Jordan to safety.

The house at Bahurim (2 Sam.17:18) was built as a square or rectangle that had an open court in the middle. In this court was a well or cistern for storage of water.

Ahimaaz and Jonathan were hid in the well, the opening probably being level with the ground. The portiere (v.19) was a curtain hung in a doorway. A mat, or something stiff was probably placed over the mouth of the well; then the portiere was spread over that; then grain was spread on the portiere. It was common to dry grain in the sun on a cloth in a courtyard. The cloth made the turning and gathering up of the grain an easy matter. Thus the concealment of the hiding place was very inconspicuous. One would not think of walking on food grain, so the covering was quite safe. After Absalom's scouts left, Ahimaaz and Jonathan were able to deliver their message.

GOD IS IN AUTHORITY

God provided for the deliverance of David through the participation of many individuals, and through many minute details that were far beyond the range of human planning. Years afterward it was made known to Nebuchadnezzar that the Supreme is in authority in the kingdom of mortals (*cf* Dan.4:17,25,32). "To humanity belong the arrangements of the heart, yet from Yahweh comes the answer of the tongue" (Prov.16:1). "A man's heart devises his way, yet Yahweh establishes his steps" (Prov.16:9). In this case, Yahweh established the arrangements of David and those aligned with him, and not the counsels of Ahithophel. We can trace many of the reasons for this as we consider David's place in God's purpose and the types of our Lord and of Judas provided in this account in 2 Samuel 17.

But to Paul was given an appreciation of God's authority in the affairs and experiences of humanity that brings all these individuals, David and Absalom, Ahithophel and Hushai, Zadoc, Abiathar, Ahimaaz and Jonathan together. *For out of God and through Him and for Him is all. To Him be the glory!* (Rom.11:36).

J. Phillip Scranton

WHEREFORE CONSOLE ONE ANOTHER

THE DAY OF CHRIST (Phil.1:6,10; 2:16) in which we meet our Saviour is not synonymous with the day of the Lord. Our expectation as presented by the apostle Paul differs in many respects from that outlined in the prophets of the Hebrew scriptures and by the Lord when He came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The unique features of our expectation are fully in accord with our calling.

REJOICING AS OPPOSED TO FEAR

The day which we are anticipating is a day of rejoicing. It is the day of our graduation, the day of deliverance from these bodies of corruption and humiliation into our glorious, celestial bodies like that of our Lord (Eph.4:30; Phil.3:20,21). It is a day of light and the procuring of salvation (1 Thess.5:4-8).

However, the day of the Lord, at least at its inception, is a time that is marked with fear and darkness. We know this in part from the following language of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5.

"Now we are asking you, brethren, for the sake of the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ and our assembling to Him, that you be not quickly *shaken* from your mind, nor yet be *alarmed*, either through spirit, or through word, or through an epistle as through us, as that the day of the Lord is present. No one should be deluding you by any method, for, should not the apostasy be coming first and the man of lawlessness be unveiled, the son of destruction, who is opposing and lifting himself up over everyone termed a god or an object of veneration, so that he is

seated in the temple of God, demonstrating that he himself is God? Do you not remember that, still being with you, I told you these things?"

These Thessalonian believers were not looking forward to being in the day of the Lord. Just the thought that this was the case caused them to be shaken in mind and alarmed. They were being deluded by a counterfeit letter written by someone other than Paul, apparently suggesting that they were in that day.

Paul dispels this fear by pointing the Thessalonians to the snatching away of the believers into Christ's presence, or, as he puts it here: "our assembling to Him" (2 Thess.2:1). This must occur before the events that usher in the day of the Lord. In looking forward to that day, we rejoice, first of all, that we will finally see our Saviour face to face, but also we are consoled further in knowing that it will occur before the great affliction that is closely associated with the day of the Lord.

APART FROM SIGNS

In Matthew 24:3 the disciples asked Jesus, "What is the sign of Thy presence and of the conclusion of the eon?" In Israel's case, they look for signs concerning His presence (Matt.24:30). For them to believe, they have to see signs (John 2:11,23; 6:2; Mark 16:20; Luke 2:12; 1 Cor.1:22). In fact, earlier in His ministry Jesus said of the people, "If they should not be perceiving signs and miracles, they should under no circumstances be believing" (John 4:48).

Knowing this, then, also explains how Satan will be able to deceive so many during the great affliction. He too, will use signs and false miracles with every seduction of injustice during the dark inception of the day of the Lord. The very presence of the son of destruction, also known as the lawless one, is in accord with this operation (2 Thess.2:8-11).

We, however, do not look for signs. There is absolutely

nothing that we can look for here on the earth that gives us a physical clue that our snatching away is near. The only thing we know for sure is the day of the completion of our salvation, is nearer than when we first believed (Rom. 13:12). Until then, we need to be "observing how we are walking, not as unwise, but as wise, *reclaiming the era*, for the days are wicked" (Eph.5:15).

SNATCHED AWAY TOGETHER

Notice the language in Matthew 24:37-42: "For even as the days of Noah, thus shall be the presence of the Son of Mankind. For as they were in those days before the deluge, masticating and drinking and marrying and taking in marriage until the day on which Noah entered the ark, and did not know till the deluge came and takes them all away, thus shall be the presence of the Son of Mankind. Then two shall be in the field; one is taken along and one is left: two grinding at the millstone; one is taken along and one left. Be watching, then, for you are not aware on what day your Lord is coming."

In this passage, we learn that the ones taken along are the unfaithful and the ones left are the faithful. This was the case in Noah's day during the flood and it will also be the case in the future day of the Lord. In Noah's day the ones taken along were killed. Many will also be killed in the events leading up to the presence of the Son of Mankind. As Matthew 24:28 states, "Wheresoever the corpse may be, there will the vultures be gathered" (see also Luke 17:26-37). Other passages seem to indicate that many of the Jews will be cast out of the kingdom, perhaps joining those of the nations in the eonian fire of chastening (Matt. 8:11,12; 13:24-30; 36-43; 47-51; Luke 13:28-30). There will be a severing of the ideal seed from the darnel, or the just from the wicked at the harvest which is said to be at the conclusion of this eon. It will be just before and during

Christ's reign that the unfaithful and wicked find their lot cast outside in the outer darkness and furnace of fire where there will be lamentation and gnashing of teeth. They will be "cut asunder" and appointed a portion with the hypocrites. These terms refer to the Jews cast out of the kingdom. It will be the ones who are left who will enjoy the blessings of eonian life on the earth with the Son of Mankind, their Deliverer and their King.

However, in our deliverance mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4 it is the believers who are taken along. We will be snatched away together to meet the Lord in the air.

THE LORD HIMSELF

In many of the parables, the Lord spoke of messengers being sent just before the Son of Mankind returns. It seems their mission is to sever the wicked from the midst of the just (Matt.13:49). We also know from Zechariah 14:3-5 that when the Lord returns to the Mount of Olives, all the holy ones are with Him.

However, when Paul speaks of Christ returning for us, the "Lord Himself" is emphasized. The significance of this is brought out by Donald G. Hayter:

"1 Thessalonians 4:16 might have read, 'The Lord will be descending,' and still convey the fact that the Lord will be coming down from heaven. The addition of "Himself" adds something to the sense as well as giving emphasis. It is a form of phrase that occurs a number of times in the Scriptures. In 1 Corinthians 15:28, in the great passage on the consummation of the eons and subjection of all to God we read that 'Then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him.' The emphatic 'Himself also' adds the sense that even the Son will be subject to His Father.

"The construction is used five times in the Thessalonian epistles. In 1 Thessalonians 3:11, for example, we read, 'Now may our God and Father Himself and our Lord

Jesus Christ be directing our way to you!' It seems that when others are involved in what is said they are particularly mentioned. The phrase 'our God Himself' without any addition would draw attention to God alone.

"When the two disciples were walking on the Emmaus road discussing the events of the previous few days in Jerusalem, 'Jesus Himself drew near.' Thus we may be confident that when the Lord comes for us, descending from heaven, He will be alone. No other will distract our attention. We shall have eyes only for the Lord. For this will be our first sight of Him."[1]

IN THE AIR

Israel will meet the Lord when He descends and actually stands on the Mount of Olives (Zech.14:3). A picture of this event is suggested in Acts 1:11. As Christ was ascending, two men in white attire standing beside the disciples, asked, "Men! Galileans! Why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus Who is being taken up from you into heaven shall come thus, in the manner in which you gaze at Him going into heaven. Then they return into Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet."

We, however, as members of the body of Christ, will meet the Lord in "the air" (1 Thess.4:17), which is that part of the atmosphere that contains the mixture of gases essential to life on earth and is within sight of our current terrestrial home.

Concerning this unique feature of our expectation, Brother Hayter wrote:

"One most important feature of this meeting place is that it is the territory of the Adversary, Satan, for he is the chief of the jurisdiction of the air. It is from the air that he controls the earth's affairs. To him have been given all

1.*Unsearchable Riches,* vol.65, p.164.

the kingdoms of the earth, and the affairs of mankind are under his sway, political and religious. He is a spirit making his headquarters in the air above us. And it is here that we shall meet the Lord in the heart of the enemy's kingdom."[2]

CHANGE TO CELESTIAL BODIES

Our meeting with our Lord involves a secret. It has to do with our change. Paul hints at this in 1 Corinthians 15:40 where we read, "There are bodies celestial as well as bodies terrestrial. But a different glory, indeed, is that of the celestial, yet a different that of the terrestrial . . . ." Then in verse 49 he adds, ". . . and according as we wear the image of the soilish, we should be wearing the image of the Celestial."

In Philippians 3:20 the apostle gives us further light by saying our bodies of humiliation are going to be transfigured to conform them to the body of His glory. This change is vital, for it fits us for our realm which is located in the heavens. Yes, we have a place in the heavens where Christ is seated at the present time, Who is "making His home in light inaccessible" (1 Tim.6:16).

No such change is described in Israel's expectation. It is true that in resurrection they will be equal to messengers in that they will no longer be dying (Luke 20:36), but their glory will be in line with their terrestrial calling. Note again Paul's statement that there are bodies celestial as well as bodies terrestrial. Just as the new bodies given to Israel will fit them for their terrestrial calling, so our new glorified bodies will fit us for our celestial calling.

Again we quote from Brother Hayter's meditations on our happy expectation:

"The glory of our Lord's presence will differ on each occasion. For Israel He will appear as He was on the mount of

2.*Unsearchable Riches,* vol.65, p.287.

transformation, His face shining as the sun. The brilliance of His glory will not be greater than His terrestrial saints can endure. For us He will come as the Celestial One with a different glory, one exceeding in brilliance of the noonday sun. But we shall be able to look and live, for we too shall be celestials, changed into beings with a glory similar to the Lord's."[3]

NOT AS A THIEF

Concerning the day of our Lord, Paul says it will occur "as a thief in the night—thus it is coming" (1 Thess.5:2). The Jews, then, need to be watching and enduring. The Lord said to those with Him on the mount that "he who endures to the consummation, he shall be saved" (Mark 13:13). They must Beware! Be vigilant and pray, for no one is aware when the era is. They must be watching, lest the Lord comes suddenly and finds them drowsing (Mark 13:33-37; *cp* Luke 12:37; Rev.3:3; 16:15; Matt.24:13,42-44; 7:21). Such language presents eonian life in association with endurance and faithfulness.

In our case Paul says we are not in darkness, that the day may be overtaking us as a thief, for we are all sons of the light and sons of the day (1 Thess.5:4). Yet, even if we are drowsing (which means we have not been reclaiming the era and growing toward maturity), we still have the assurance of meeting our Lord when He comes for us. *Whether we may be watching or drowsing, we shall be living at the same time together with Him.* "Wherefore, console one another and edify one the other" (1 Thess.5:10,11).

Our eonian life is clearly seen to be a "gracious gift of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:23). Nothing can remove us from our future deliverance for we are "sealed with the holy spirit of promise" (Eph.1:13).

3.*Unsearchable Riches,* vol.65, p.286.

EUTYCHUS AND DORCUS

In the book of Acts God provides us with an excellent example of each calling. First, in Acts 9:36-43 we are introduced to a disciple named Dorcas who was said to be "full of good acts and alms."

Being infirm, she dies, yet Peter being summoned to her, miraculously brings her back to life. This account of Dorcas is quite different from that concerning a young man named Eutychus in Acts 20:9-12. The only thing we know about him is that he fell asleep while Paul was arguing and dropped to his death from the third story. Nothing is recorded of his works, yet Paul, just as Peter did with Dorcas, miraculously brought him back to life.

Dorcas is a type of those in the former resurrection (Rev.20:4,5) who have worked as well as believed, so that their works are kept in view in association with their resurrection. But the saints of the present era of grace are like Eutychus. If Paul's preaching fails to keep them awake, and they are drowsing, even then, such is the superabundance of grace, that they will be snatched away when the Lord descends for us.[4] "For whether we may be watching or drowsing, we should be living at the same time together with Him" (1 Thess.5:6).

FINAL THOUGHTS

Twice Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians that we are to console one another with the words he penned concerning that glorious day when we meet our Lord. Hopefully this paper has not only brought some consolation and a good expectation in grace, be consoling your hearts and establish you in every good work and word" (2 Thess.2:16,17). Amen!

Ted McDivitt

4. Adapted from the CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.211.

YET NOW, THE EVANGEL OF GOD

THE EVANGEL which we have accepted in faith is the message that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and has been roused the third day (1 Cor.15:1-4). It speaks of great good for us coming as a result of the death of Jesus Christ for our sins. The entombment speaks of the old humanity put away, and in His resurrection (and in that only) is the assurance of vivification (1 Cor.15:22).

But this message of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is not good news in relation to us only. It is good news for all creation. Yet even more than this it is a message of good in relation to God. And this is the root of its goodness for all.

In accord with this view of the evangel (seeing it as that which reveals God's glory), at the beginning of his letter to the Romans Paul calls this message, the evangel *of God* (Rom.1:1). It is a work of God, sourced in Him and carried out by Him, Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), and it is for Him. As such it makes God known to us, even the depths of God (*cf* 1 Cor.2:10). The evangel concerns Jesus Christ, our Lord (Rom.1:3-5), but He is the Son *of God*, Whom God gave up for us all (Rom.8:32).

Hence God is called our Saviour, and indeed the Saviour of all mankind (*cf* 1 Tim.1:1;2:3;4:10). What Christ has done for us is not only that He died for our sakes, but also, in doing so, He has become the One through Whom God makes Himself known to us as Saviour in grace and power and wisdom. The evangel tells us of that which God has done for us through the gift of His Son, and in this we

are not only blessed by knowing of these blessings, but also by coming to know God Who blesses. If we begin in first believing the evangel with much joy because of what it says about us, we must grow in our appreciation of the evangel to even greater joy in appreciating what it says about God.

In that the evangel is *of God*, it reflects His deity. It commends His love and is identified as His power and wisdom (*cf* Rom.5:8; 1 Cor.1:18-24). Now also in Romans 3:21-27 we hear the evangel as it reveals God with respect to His *righteousness* in His work of justification.

A MESSAGE WHICH IS OF GOD

The apostle began to present the evangel of God as a revelation of God's righteousness in Romans 1:17. There he had testified that he was not ashamed of the evangel because it was the power of God for salvation to everyone who is believing. But also, he was not ashamed of the evangel,

for in it God's righteousness is being revealed, out of faith for faith . . . .

But for the glory of this revelation to be seen, there needed to be more preparation than simply the claim that Paul was not ashamed of it. As believers, we all can profit from an honest account of the human situation before God apart from the evangel. We need the dark backdrop in order to appreciate the glory of this manifestation of God's righteousness. Hence, in Romans 1:18-3:20, the apostle has brought our attention to the revelation of God's indignation in giving unrighteous humanity over to their depravity, and of His indignation in the day of God's just judgment. In this operation, the many sins of mankind, even those that were hidden from view, will be taken into account. Nothing is overlooked. The result is God's righteous verdict for all, those of the nations and the Jew as

well: "Not justified." With this preparation, therefore, the apostle resumes his thought concerning the revelation of God's righteousness in the evangel:

Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.

Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus . . . toward the display of His righteousness in the current era, for Him to be just and a Justifier of the one who is of the faith of Jesus—where, then, is boasting?

Romans 3:20 has summed up the dire predicament of humanity because of its all-pervading irreverence and unrighteousness. By works of law no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight. Yet now, a new view of God's righteousness has come on the scene, which changes the entire situation. God does that which is impossible for the flesh to do (Rom.8:3). No flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight, yet now, God's righteousness is made to appear by means of the faith of Jesus Christ. This is God's righteousness directed to all and applied to us who are believing even now, resulting ultimately in the blessing of life's justifying for all mankind (*cf* Rom.5:18).

This is all of God, and not of ourselves. It manifests His righteousness, a righteousness that is all-inclusive. Like the righteousness of God's just judgment, no sin or failure is overlooked in the righteous justification of sinners. But unlike God's judgment (which is not called "God's righteousness"), His righteous dealing with sin through the death of Jesus Christ results in good for all. It is because of this consummation of glory that it fully and truly can be designated as *God's righteousness.*

It will then be all to His glory, and the glory of His power, His wisdom, His love—*and* His righteousness.

Indeed, as Paul shows here starting with Romans 3:21, the evangel of God is rich and vast beyond its first impression. Let us look at this grand portion of Scripture now, more closely and in detail.

YET NOW

The "yet" at the beginning of Romans 3:21 speaks of a contrast. And the "now" speaks of something new. What was said in Romans 3:20 was not a final word. It presented God's righteous verdict solely with the record of human deeds in view. Yet now God's righteousness as it is made manifest through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ is brought before us.

Some of the force of these two small connecting words might be made more apparent to us by the following arrangement of Romans 3:20-24:

> *By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight.*
>
> **Yet now:**
>
> *apart from [works of] law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . . through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, . . . being justified gratuitously in God's grace . . . .*

On one side stands the severe and tragic, and yet just, pronouncement of God concerning the whole of humanity. As we are, in flesh and apart from the faith of Jesus Christ, there is no justification. What is revealed there is God's indignation (Rom.1:18), eventually expressed in the day of His just judgment (Rom.2:3-13). The righteous verdict, "Not justified," would seem to call for the perishing of all humanity. Even more serious is what it would seem to mean for God: the loss of what He has created, and His

failure finally to realize the vision of His creation which is recorded in Genesis 1:31. "And Elohim saw all that He had made; and behold it was very good."

What is presented in Romans 3:20 cannot be the last word concerning humanity. A consummation in which all flesh is found "Not justified" would not be a revelation of God's righteousness, such as the apostle is longing to announce. It is only the dark background which makes the light of the evangel shine more clearly.

On the other side of the "yet now" stands that manifestation of God's righteousness which is provided by the evangel which announces salvation and justification through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, apart from any human contribution. The "yet now" is the bridge leading from the despair and hopelessness of Romans 1:18-3:20 to the exultation and peace of 3:21-8:39.

The contrast that the words "yet now" point to involves many details. Among these are:

by works of law
yet now
apart from [works of] law,

works of law
yet now
faith of Jesus Christ,

law
yet now
in *His grace,*

no flesh at all shall be justified
yet now
all being justified,

no flesh justified *in God's sight*
yet now
God's righteousness *is manifest.*

God's righteous judgment is determined *by* the actions of human beings in accord with the standards set by law. God's righteous justification is determined *apart from* the demands of law by the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ. In the former situation human *works* must all be considered; in the latter, only that one work which is called the *faith of Jesus Christ* is in view. *Law*, as given by God at Sinai or as placed in the human heart, brings the focus of attention upon the record of human unrighteousness. But *God's righteousness* in *His grace* of giving His Son up for us all stands in contrast to His righteous *law*, which is continually transgressed by sinners. God's righteous judgment leads to the verdict: *no flesh at all* shall be justified, while God's righteousness made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ leads to the end of *all* being justified. God's *sight* of humanity as judged by the standards of law leads to condemnation. But in His giving of His Son for sinners, there is a *manifestation* of God's own righteousness which is central to the work of justification.

Paul told the Romans he longed to see them face to face in order to share some *spiritual grace* with them (Rom. 1:11). Already *now*, in coming to them by means of this letter, he has shared an astounding word of spiritual power. The evangel of God which reveals His righteousness in announcing gratuitous justification, apart from works of law, in His grace, through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus, lifts up our hearts and invigorates us in joy and peace. This is indeed God's favor, His grace, to us.

APART FROM LAW

Having just spoken of "works of law," the apostle abbreviates his language to speak simply of "law." The application is the same. "Law" is seen here as a system of instruction for obedience (the word "law" in the latter part of verse 21 refers to a portion of Scripture). It calls for works; its

very nature is works. God's righteousness now is being seen apart from such a system demanding human works, whether it is written or unwritten.

Human works as defined by the law given to Moses and by the law written in human hearts are very much in view in God's righteous judgment (*cf* Rom.2:3-16). But His righteous work of justification centers on the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ. There is no place whatsoever here for human works, and what is said about God's righteousness and our justification is wholly centered on the doing and believing of Jesus Christ. He is the One Who deals with human sin. And He does so fully in accord with what is right, not because of law but because of His faith in what God has set before Him, which He performs faithfully.

God's righteousness is being made manifest in the evangel apart from human works as instructed in the law of Moses or even in law as written on the heart. "For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is *not out of you*; it is *God's* approach present, *not of works*, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8). "Being justified *gratuitously in [God's] grace*, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus . . . where, then, is boasting? It is debarred" (Rom.3:24,27).

We cannot see God's righteousness as it is revealed in the evangel if we suppose it is in any way connected with human works in obedience to law. *Yet now, a righteousness of God is manifest, apart from works of law.* This is a message revealing God's righteousness in the justification of sinners which is:

apart from human endurance in good acts and the seeking of glory and honor and incorruption (Rom.2:7),

apart from being not only listeners to law, but being, in fact, doers of law (Rom.2:13),

apart from anyone of us doing, by nature, that which the law demands (Rom.2:14,26),

apart from displaying the action of the law written in the heart (Rom.2:15),

apart from boasting in God, and knowing His will, and testing what things are of consequence (Rom.2:17,18),

apart from being a guide of the blind, a light of those in darkness, a discipliner of the imprudent and a teacher of minors (Rom.2:19,20),

apart from putting the law into practice (Rom.2:25).

It is not that works of law are not good. "The law, indeed, is holy, and the precept holy and just and good" (Rom. 7:12). But we are flesh, and we are sinners, and therefore the law cannot lead to justification. Nor can our works lead to that revelation of the righteousness of God which is given in the evangel. The revelation of God's righteousness is found in what God does for us through Jesus Christ, in grace, entirely apart from our doing.

The evangel which Paul is bringing speaks of God's righteousness in His work of salvation, even of the justification of sinners, apart from human works of law. Our good efforts (if there are any) must be left out of the picture, so that only God's achievement through the faithful work of Jesus Christ is seen. In this way we will be able to appreciate and honor God's righteousness in its true and saving glory.

A RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

Paul has led us carefully and firmly to this point in Romans where he shines the spotlight of truth on the theme of God's righteousness. We need to give it further and thoughtful attention as it is related to the evangel and to all that Paul has written so far in this epistle. It is indeed a theme of spiritual grace for our good and to the glory of our God. D.H.H.

(*To be continued*)

PAUL AND BAPTISM

FOR clearness sake we have entirely omitted the consideration of our subject as set forth in connection with the ministry of the apostle Paul. There are a number of remarkable features that distinguished him from the rest of the apostles, including his baptism which may well have been self-baptism as indicated by the verb form used in Acts 22:16. The twelve had been with the Lord on earth. When one was to be chosen to supply Judas' empty place, the qualification was one who had accompanied Him from John's baptism onward (Acts 1:21,22). Paul had seen the Lord from heaven after His ascension, but was not qualified to have a part in the ministry of the twelve. They preached repentance and baptism; he preached faith.

The Book of Acts is divided into two parts by these two ministries. The incidents of the first half seem to be repeated in the second. Whatever miracle Peter wrought, Paul did the same. Compare—

Acts 3:1 with 14:8.
Acts 9:34 with 28:8.
Acts 9:36 with 20:9.
Acts 5:15 with 19:11,12.
Acts 10 with 9:3-12; 16:9; 18:9; 22:18; 23:11; 27:23.
Acts 12:7 with 16:26.

"For He who operates in Peter for the apostleship of the Circumcision, operates in me also for the nations," said the apostle to the Galatians (Gal.2:8).

This distinction is clearly marked in Acts 13:2: "Sever, by all means, to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Hitherto the evangel had come

through the twelve apostles. But Paul (as his name now becomes) did not receive his evangel from them, nor from any man, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ Himself (Gal.1:11,12).

And not only so, but the time also was revealed to him when he should make it known to the twelve. And this he did separately, first of all to those of reputation, lest a conference should be fatal to his cause. And those of repute did not add anything to him, but rather, when they saw that the evangel of the Uncircumcision had been committed unto Paul as the evangel of the Circumcision had been to Peter, they gave to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. They would confine themselves to the Circumcision, while Paul and Barnabas went to the nations (Gal.2:2-9).

Paul's account of this phase of his ministry is found set forth in Romans 15:8-21. The doctrine which characterizes it is justification by faith apart from works of any kind. This teaching is fully opened up in the first four chapters of his letter to the Romans, that to the Galatians, and his first letter to Timothy.

Paul calls it (in contrast to the other apostles) "my" evangel (Rom.2:16;16:25; 1 Cor.4:15;15:1; 2 Cor.11:4; 1 Thess.1:5; 2 Tim.2:8).

While it is not the *fulfillment* of the promises God had made, it is in perfect *accordance* with the prophetic utterances concerning blessing to the nations with His people Israel (Rom.15:9-12, *according as*). In it the Jew is first, and the nations get a secondary place. This accounts for the statements found in Romans 1:16;2:9;2:10;3:29,30. Mercy to the nations was to accompany the blessing of Israel: "Be merry, ye nations, with His people." There is no hint that this ministry and grace *exhausts* such Scriptures. Indeed they await their *fulfillment* in Yahweh's day. But the grace dispensed is in perfect *harmony* with the revealed counsels of God (Rom.15:9).

In connection with this ministry, baptism in water still obtained (1 Cor.1:14-16). But, as in the case of Cornelius, the spirit baptism preceded and ruled the fleshly rite. All were baptized in spirit. Only such as had undergone spirit baptism were eligible to water baptism (Acts 15:8).

In connection with the ministry of the twelve, all were baptized in water; but not all in spirit. Now this was reversed. *All were baptized in spirit, but not all in water.*

THE TITLES OF CHRIST

Volumes of precious truth cluster around the names and titles of our Lord, or Master, Jesus Christ. To understand baptism in its various administrations we will need to notice how His titles are used in connection with it.

Kurios is translated "Lord" as a rule. Ephesians 6:5 shows that the title means *master.* We have used the latter as a synonym for "Lord." Likewise *Christos* is generally transliterated "Christ." It means *Anointed. "Messiah"* is its Hebrew equivalent.

JOHN'S BAPTISM

John baptized into the name of "the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:5). It was in view of the personal presence of the Master on earth, to prepare a people for Him. Those who owned the Man "Jesus" as their Master were his disciples.

PETER'S BAPTISM

Peter and the twelve baptized Israelites unto the name of "Jesus" (Acts 2:38), the name associated with Him as the rejected Saviour. The emphasis here is that the man "Jesus"—Whom they had crucified and rejected—He was the Messiah. To be identified with Him was the object of that baptism.

But the Samaritans had no part in the Messiah; that was reserved for the priest nation alone. Jews alone were to be

associated with Him in His anointing. To the Samaritans the Messiah sustained the relation of Master. But when on earth the Master had been among them as a man known as "Jesus," and so they were fittingly baptized unto the name and title "the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:16).

The proselytes of the nations, as shown in the representative case of Cornelius, were admitted into full fellowship with Israel by virtue of their reception of the spirit before baptism. Our Lord Himself, speaking of the proselyte centurion of Capernaum (Luke 7:2-10) said of him, "Not even in Israel found I so much faith!" So they were baptized in the name of "Jesus Christ."

Thus, while baptism united these three classes in one, it was a compound unity. Just as the space surrounding the temple was one, yet divided into various courts, so the Jews, the Samaritans, and the nations were united and yet preserved their distinctness.

PAUL'S BAPTISM

But when we come to the baptism under Paul's ministry there is a change. The same name and title is used which Peter employs for Israelites (Paul's and Peter's "acts" always seem to have some point of correspondence) but the order is inverse. Peter used Jesus Christ. Paul used Christ (Gal. 3:27), or Christ Jesus (Rom.6:3).

The same as to words, yet different as to emphasis. To the Jews, the great question which their baptism answered was that "Jesus"—the lowly, despised crucified One—was the Messiah. Their baptism was a confession of this.

But with the nations the circumstances were entirely different. Even as their apostle had known Him only after He was glorified, so they acknowledged Him by the title of His glory, "Christ," or "the Anointed." And to identify this glorious One with the lowly One Who was crucified for the salvation of sinners, they added His name, "Jesus."

As their baptism identified them with Him in this new and glorious resurrection sphere it attained a vastly greater force and significance than it previously held. It spoke to them of His baptism on the cross for their sins, and made them one with Him in His death. But it could not stop there, for He was risen. They, too, were raised in Him. He lived a new, a resurrection life. And so they, too, in Christ Jesus, the Glorious One, had a life beyond the grave, beyond the reach of death. This life is eonian, and has its counterpart in the Millennial age, when the nations that believe on Him will be blessed with life (John 11:26).

Thus we see that the apostles did not vary the formula used in baptism because of ignorance or carelessness, but always chose that which was appropriate to the circumstances. They showed the most acute discrimination. It is evident from this that their non-use of the formula at the end of Matthew's account was dictated by an intelligent grasp of the fact that it was not intended to be used until the kingdom had been inaugurated, as is assumed by the Lord when He gave it to them.

And here we near the summit of the "doctrine of baptisms." God marvelously develops the simple cleansing of the flesh into a rich and fruitful rite. It speaks of purification indeed but not of the flesh. By His baptism on the cross there is cleansing from every defilement. This is the cleansing that sanctifies and makes meet; that fits for the fellowship of a thrice holy God.

Baptism in water still obtains, no longer after the tabernacle type, but after the temple system. But it is ruled by the baptism of spirit.

THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION

But the time came when the apostle had completed the evangel of Christ (Rom.15:19-23). And so, in Acts 19:21 we read, "*Now as these things were completed*, Paul pur-

posed in spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem saying: 'After I have been there I must see Rome, too.'"

This is a crisis of extreme interest to the saints of God of the present administration. At this juncture the apostle wrote the epistles to the Romans and Corinthians. In these epistles this transition period is clearly marked (Rom.15; 1 Cor.13:10-13; 2 Cor.5:16). Hitherto he had known Christ according to the flesh; henceforth he would know Him so no longer. He speaks of seeing by means of a mirror, in an enigma, but of future vision face to face. He speaks of knowing "out of an instalment," but also of a maturity which would follow.

In another passage he speaks of being caught away to the third heaven, and having heard words which it is not expedient to utter. John, in his Patmos vision, speaks indeed of a new heaven as well as a new earth (Rev.21), but, while he details the blessings of this nether sphere, he merely records the fact of the new heaven, and does not enter there as Paul did.

From 2 Peter 3:6,7 we learn that the heavens which are now are the second. Hence, the one seen by John is the third. This third heaven, then, was the subject of Paul's visions (2 Cor.12:2). It is at this juncture, too, that our apostle shows that "if any one is in Christ, there is a new creation; the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new!" (2 Cor.5:17).

A NEW CREATION

Does not all this lead us on in the parallel we have already discovered? If the blessing under Paul's ministry among the nations was on the style of the day of Yahweh, and this ministry came to an end, what shall we look for next? Shall it not be followed by that which reflects the day of God, the perfect state which follows Yahweh's day?

Introduction to the day of the Lord was by regeneration: but *a new creation* ushers in the day of God. Old things will have passed away, and the new will have come.

Such is the new ministry upon which the Apostle now enters—the ministry, or dispensation, of the Conciliation (2 Cor.5:18).

That will be the crowning day of God, when He will be the God of all the nations. In that day there will be no laver, no sea, no ceremonies of any kind on the way to God. Life and nearness will be within each heart. It will be as a flowing river, for thirst as well as for cleansing (Rev.21:3; 22:1-5).

And so it is now.

The forms and ceremonies will have no place there, because the substance will have come which they but weakly shadowed forth.

So now, *in spirit*, maturity, perfection, completeness, fullness, entirety, satisfaction—call it what you will—*has come*. We are complete in Christ Who is the Head of every sovereignty and authority (Col.2:10). That which has come is not the material, on the earth but the spiritual, in the heavenly regions.

How restful it is to look upon a task all finished! And such a task! And so well done! How we should charge our hearts to enter and enjoy this solid satisfying portion. Whatever joys and glories the future may have in store, even though our bodies be changed at His coming, *nothing can add to our completeness in the Anointed*. No ordinances upon the flesh, no prayer, no worship, no service, nothing can make us more acceptable; nothing can remove defilement or any other barrier to approach, for now we are perfectly equipped for His presence. The spirit of our God has cleansed us to His perfect satisfaction. Nothing can bring us nearer, nothing can make us dearer.

A. E. Knoch

INDEX TO VOLUME XCVI

Abraham Buys a Tomb 147
Abraham's Justification 50
Attested by the Law and the Prophets 115
Baptism in Paul's Epistles 76
Bringing the King to the Throne 125
Christ's Faith and Our Believing 279
Concordant Studies 215
Conscience and the Evangel 263
David at Mahanaim 31
David's Mourning 69
Evangel and God's Righteousness, The 39
Evangel and Humanity, The 229
Faith Perfected by Sacrifice 98
Honor 165
Isaac, the Son of Promise 201
Isaac's Sojourning 243
Judgment of the Cross and Personal Adjudication 15
Justification 215
"Justified by Works" 228
Lamp of Israel, The 211
Manifested Righteousness 89
Notes on 2 Samuel 31,69,125,165,211,249
Obituaries: J. Braucht 75, E. Brown 164, J. Bryan 14, E. Jodar 164, A. Killen 132, C. McDivitt 132, F. Niemeyer 214, W. Penn 132, C. Tenniswood 227, L. Watts 192
On Baptism 23,76,133
Paul to the Romans 39,89,115,183,229,279
Perception and Reality 255
Perfection 133
Psalm of David, A 249
Questions and Answers 15,63,139,174
Rescue of Lot 5
Salvation from Sin in Position and Practice 139
Seductive, Prideful Delusions 63
Sons of Abraham, The 197
Spirit Supreme, The 23
Studies in Genesis 5,50,98,147,150,197,201,243
Through Jesus Christ's Faith 183
Trinitarianism and Heresy 174
Varied Usages of "Eons" 65
Wife for Isaac, A 150
Wisdom from Above 271

Contents:

2 "It is Finished"
3 Editorial
5 The Rescue of Lot
15 The Judgment of the Cross, and Personal Adjudication
23 The Spirit Supreme
31 David at Mahanaim
39 The Evangel and God's Righteousness

JANUARY, 2005

Volume XCVI **Number 1**

All in All

The blood of Christ is the basis of all blessing. The purpose of God determines human destiny. It does not depend on our deserts. The plan or process of God during the eons or ages must be distinguished from His purpose, which will not be fully accomplished until the eons are past. Herein lies the difference between the teaching of the Scriptures and the accepted creeds of Christendom. Sin and suffering, condemnation and death, endure for the eons, not "forever."

The believer suffers in the current era because of sin, but will be released in the resurrection at the presence of Christ. The unbeliever will have affliction and anguish for his sins in the judgment, but he also becomes reconciled to God at the consummation, through the blood of Christ's cross (Col.1:20).

Universal reconciliation is the glorious goal toward which all leads. All of God's purpose is achieved through Him Who is the Alpha and the Omega (Rev.1:8). "In Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him [God delights] to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:19,20).

The terms translated "forever" and "everlasting" and "never" are human perversions which could never have deceived us if they had been consistently rendered. They denote definite divisions of time called ages or eons. All together they form a distinct portion of time called eonian times. Much in our common creeds is true if confined within the eons, but it is most malignant error when forced beyond the eons.

Since judgment is not eternal, but eonian, we may accept all the solemn threats of death and condemnation without reservation, while happily exulting in God's grand goal to which all His labors lead: that God may be *All in all* (1 Cor.15:28).

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For God and His
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It is Finished

Blessed be God, our God!
Who gave for us His well-beloved Son,
The gift of gifts, all other gifts in one.
Blessed be God, our God!

What will He not bestow
Who freely gave this mighty gift, unbought,
Unmerited, unheeded, and unsought,
What will He not bestow?

He spared not His Son!
'Tis this that silences each rising fear,
'Tis this that bids the hard thought disappear.
He spared not His Son!

Who shall condemn us now?
Since Christ has died, and ris'n, and gone above,
For us to plead at the right hand of love,
Who shall condemn us now?

'Tis God that justifies!
Who shall recall His reconciling grace,
Or who the broken chain of sin replace?
'Tis God that justifies!

The victory is ours!
For us in might came forth the Mighty One,
For us He fought the fight, the triumph won;
The victory is ours!

Horatius Bonar
–adapted

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2005
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-SIX

EDITORIAL

THE FACT that I have been closely involved in the preparations of *Unsearchable Riches* for thirty-three years is a surprising one to me, but above that a source of sincere thankfulness to God. In His grace, I hope to continue being a part of this ministry. Yet I have reached an age when it seems wise to cut down on some of my responsibilities. With this in view, I have requested to be released from most of my active editorial duties for the magazine so that I can concentrate more on the preparation of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament. This means more responsibilities for Jim Coram and others involved in producing and mailing the magazine. We request your prayers on this matter.

I hope to continue, in the grace of God, to prepare the meditations on the book of Romans. It is a great source of happiness and peace for me to dwell on these words of evangel. In addition I hope to share brief, somewhat disconnected thoughts resulting from the continuing work on the Hebrew Scriptures. The translation and proof-reading chores involve certain dry and uninteresting technicalities, but there are many rewards for the spirit simply because it is God's Word that we are dealing with.

1 Timothy 4:9, 10 has long been a passage of comfort and encouragement to me, not just because it speaks of God as our Saviour and the Saviour of all mankind, but also because it speaks of Him as the living God, on Whom we rely (expect). We struggle and stumble, but always with the confidence that God will continue to perform His work among those whom He has hallowed, until the day of Jesus Christ (*cf* Phil.1:1-6).

D.H.H.

"*Blessed* be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before the

disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved" (Eph.1:3-6).

To speak of our God and Father as "blessed" is to "speak well" of Him (*eulogia,* WELL-LAY [say] ing). It is to extol His goodness and to acclaim His greatness; it is to burst forth in praise, truly declaring, "How *great* Thou art"!

It is true that the course of our life is sometimes hard; there are many sorrows and discouragements. Some things may be so hurtful and enervating that at times we find ourselves becoming inordinately burdened, over our ability, even to the degree that we may be despairing of life itself (*cf* 2 Cor.1:8).

And, it is just as true that the course of our life is sometimes easy; things simply "go our way"; that is, what we want to happen does happen. What happiness it is to experience the appreciation, love, and support of friends and family, the satisfaction of worthy accomplishment, together with the countless pleasures of life that make it so good to be alive.

Accordingly, as God grants us wisdom and insight, we grow both in recognition and appreciation of the fact that our steps are indeed directed by Yahweh (Prov.20:24); thus, at least in measure in the peace of God (*cf* Phil.4:7), we perceive that "He has set a season for *every* event and for *every* deed" (Ecc.3:17b).

In this new year, besides our ongoing work in publishing *Unsearchable Riches* magazine, we are especially occupied with (and nearing completion of) the preparation of two major publications. The first of these is a new edition of the book THE PROBLEM OF EVIL, by A. E. Knoch; the second is a new, large fascicle of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament entitled THE LATTER PROPHETS (consisting of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve Minor Prophets).

It is, then, with thanksgiving both for years of service "for God and His Word" already granted, as well as in anticipation of further labors, that I joyously asseverate, *Blessed be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. J.R.C.

THE RESCUE OF LOT
(Genesis 19)

19 + **The two messengers** ˡ**came** to*d* **Sodom in** the **evening,** +**as Lot** was **sitting in** the **gate**way **of Sodom.** +**When Lot** ˡ**saw** them, + **he** ˡ**arose to meet them, and he** ˡ**bowed down** with his **brow** to**ward** the **earth.** 2 **And he** ˡ**said: Behold,** *pr*˙**now, my lords,** *pr*˙**please turn in and lodge** ˃**at** the **house of your servant and wash your feet.** +**Then you** can *c*˙**rise early and go** ˃**on your way.** +**Yet they** ˡ**said: No***t*˙**, for we shall lodge in** the **square.** 3 +**But he** ˡ**urged** *i* **them** so **intensely** +**that they** ˡ**turned in** ˃**with him and** ˡ**entered** ˃ **his house.** + **He** ˡ*d*˙**made** a **feast for them and baked unleavened** bread**, and they** ˡ**ate.**

4 **They had not yet** ˡ**lain** down +**when** the **men of the city, men of Sodom** that they were**, surrounded** *on* **the house, from youth** + *fr*˙**even** to **old** man**, all the people** *f*˙**without** *end*˙**exception.** 5 + **They** ˡ**called** out **to Lot and** ˡ**said to him: Where** are **the men who came to you tonight?** *c*˙**Bring them forth to us, and let us know** ˋ**them.**

6 +**So Lot** went ˡ**forth to them,** to**ward the portal, and closed the door after him.** 7 + **He** ˡ**said** *7*˙**to them***0*˙**: Oh do not** *c*˙**do** such ˡ**evil, my brothers.** 8 **Oh behold, I** ˃**have two daughters who have not known** a **man. Oh let me** *c*˙**bring** ˋ**them forth to you, and you do to them as** is **good in your eyes. But do not** ˡ**do** any**thing to** ˙**these men; for on** *so*˙**this** account **they have come** *i*˙**under** the **shadow of my rafters.** 9 +**But they** ˡ*sa*˙**replied:** Come **close, yonder! And they** ˡ*sa*˙**added:** ˙This **one came to sojourn** here as an alien**,** +**yet he is judging,** yea **judging**–**. Now we shall** *c*˙**do** more **evil to you** *f*˙**than** to **them. And they** ˡ**pressed very hard** *i*˙**against**

the **man,** [i]**against Lot, and** came [l]**close to break the door.**
10 [+]**Then the** two **men** [l]**stretched** out `**their hand**s **and** [l]**brought** `**Lot** in **to them,** into[d] **the house, and closed** `**the door.** 11 [+]**As** `for **the men who** were at the **portal of the house, they smote** them [i]**with** a **dazzled** perception, **from** the **small** [+] **unto** the **great,** [+]**so they** [l]**tired** [r]**of finding**[-] **the portal.**
12 [+] **The** two **men** [l]**said to Lot:** Do **you** [r]**have any**one [fr]**else here?** Son**-in-law and your sons and your daughters and all who** are **yours in the city,** [c]**bring** them **forth from the** [ri]**place.** 13 **For we** are about to [c]**bring** `**this** [ri]**place** to **ruin**[l], [t]**because great is** the **outcry** over **them** `before the **face of Yahweh. And Yahweh** has [l]**sent us to wreck it.**
14 [+]**So Lot** went [l]**forth and** [l]**spoke to his** son**s-in-law** who were to **take**[l] **his daughters, and he** [l]**said: Get up,** go **forth from** [d]**this** [ri]**place, for Yahweh** is about to [c]**bring** `**the city** to **ruin**[l]. [+]**But in** the **eyes of his** son**s-in-law he** [lb]**was as** if he were **making fun**[l].
15 [+]**As** [d]**dawn** came **up,** [+] **the messengers** [l]**rushed Lot** [i]**on,** [r] **saying**[-]**: Get up, take** `**your wife and** `**your two daughters** who are **found**[l] here, [7]**and come out**[0]**, lest you be** [l]**swept off in** the **depravity of the city.** 16 [+]**Yet he was dallying, and** so, with a [l]**fast** grip, **the men** [c]**took him** [i]**by** the **hand, and his wife** [i]**by** the **hand, and his two daughters** [i]**by** the **hand,** [i]**for Yahweh** was **sparing** [on] **him; and they** [c]**brought him** [l]**forth and** [c]**let him** [l]**rest** [f] **outside** [r] the **city.**
17 [+] **It** [lb]**came** to **pass** [as]**when they** had [c]**brought** `**them forth**[-] [d]**outside** [d] [+]**that** one of them [l]**said: Escape** [on]**for your soul; do not** [l]**look** [af]**behind you; and do not** [l]**stand** still **any**where **in the basin; escape** to[d] **the mountainous** area **lest you be** [l]**swept off.**
18 [+]**Yet Lot** [l]**said to them: Oh certainly not, my lords!** 19 **Oh behold, your servant has found favor in your eyes, and you** have [l]**magnified your kindness** [w]**that you have** [d]**shown** [wi] **me** [r]**in** [c]**preserving** `**my soul alive**[-]**.** [+]**But I, I** [l]**can-**

not [r] **escape**[-] to[d] **the mountainous** area**, lest** [d]**evil cling** to **me and I die.** 20 **Oh behold,** [d]**this** [d]**city** is **near** enough **to flee there**[d]**; and it** is **inferior. Oh let me escape there**[d]**!** Is **it not inferior?** [+] **Let my soul live!** 21 [+] **He** [sa]**replied to him Behold, I will lift** up **your face even** [r]**in** [d]**this matter** [r]**by my no**t over**turning**[-] `**the city** [w]**that you speak** of. 22 **Hasten! Escape there**[d]**, for I** [l]**cannot** [r] **do**[-] any**thing until you** have **come**[-] **there**[d]**. Therefore** one **calls** the **name of the city Zoar.**
23 **The sun** came **forth over the earth** [+]**when Lot came** to[d] **Zoar.** 24 [+]**Then Yahweh caused sulphur** to **rain on Sodom and on Gomorrah, and fire from** `**Yahweh from the heavens.** 25 [+]**Thus He** [l]over**turned** `**these** [d]**cities and** `**the entire basin and** `**all** those **dwelling** in **the cities, and** [7]**every**thing[0] **sprouting** from **the ground.** 26 [+]**When his wife** [l]**looked** back **from** [af] **behind him,** [+] **she** [l]**became** a **monument of salt.**
27 [+] **Abraham** [c]**rose** [l]**early in** the **morning** to go **to the** [ri]**place where he had stood** `before the **face of Yahweh.** 28 **And he** [l]**gazed** down **on** the sur**face of Sodom and Gomorrah and on** the **entire** sur**face of the basin area, and behold,** [+] **he** [l]**saw** that the **fume**s **ascended** from **the area like** the **fume**s **of** [d]a **limekiln.** 29 [+] **It** [l]**came** to **pass** [i]**when Elohim wrecked**[-] `the **cities of the basin** [+]**that Elohim was** [l]**mindful of** `**Abraham and** [l]**sent** `**Lot** off **from** the **midst of the** over**turning,** [i]**as** He over**turned**[-] `**the cities in which Lot had dwelt.**
30 [+]**Now Lot** went [l]**up from Zoar and** [l]**dwelt in** the **hill** country**, and his two daughters** were **with him, for he was fearful to dwell in Zoar.** [+]**So he was dwelling in** [d]a **cave, he and his two daughters** [7]**with him**[0]**.** 31 [+] **The firstborn** [l]**said to the junior** sister**: Our father is old, and** there **is no man in** the **area to come on us according** to the **way of all the earth.** 32 Do **go, let us** [c]**give** `**our father wine** to **drink;** [+]**then let us lie with him and let us** [m]**keep seed** [l]**alive from our father.**

33 +**So they** c**gave** `**their father wine** to l**drink** i **that night.** +**Then the firstborn** l**came and** l**lay** `with **her father.** +**Yet he** did **not know** i**when she lay** down− +**or** i**when she arose**−**.** 34 + **It** l**came** to **pass** f**on** the **morrow** +**that the firstborn** l**said to the junior** sister**: Behold, I lay** `with 7**our**0 **father yesternight. Let us** c**give him wine** to **drink tonight** mr**also;** +**then come** and **lie with him, and let us** m**keep seed** l**alive from our father.** 35 +**So they** mr**again** c**gave** `**their father wine** to l**drink** i ·**that night; and the junior** sister l**got up and** l**lay with him.** +**Yet he** did **not know** i**when she lay** down− +**or** i**when she arose**−**.**

36 +**Thus** the **two daughters of Lot** became l**pregnant** f **by their father.** 37 + **The firstborn** l**bore** a **son and** l**called his name Moab,** 7› **saying**−**, From my father**0**. He** is the **father of** the **Moab**ites **unto** ·this **day.** 38 +**As** for **the junior** sister**, she´** mr**also bore** a **son and** l**called his name Ben-ammi,** 7› **saying**−**, Son of my kinsman**0**. He** is the **father of** the **sons of Ammon unto** ·this **day.**

JUST LOT

ALTHOUGH Yahweh said, "Descend will *I* and see" (Gen. 18:21), He remained behind with Abraham, while the two messengers went on to Lot in Sodom. Lot was a just man, and was "harried by the behavior of the dissolute in their wantonness, (for the *just* man dwelling among them, in observing and hearing from day to day, tormented his *just* soul by their lawless acts)" (2 Peter 2:7,8). So he was saved, but he was not in fellowship with Yahweh, as Abraham was. Instead of coming Himself to Lot, Yahweh sent His messengers. Lot, instead of being an intercessor for Sodom, like Abraham, fails to save even his sons-in-law, and loses all his own property and becomes the incestuous progenitor of idolatrous nations which were at enmity with the people of promise.

WALLS

Abraham lived in a tent, without any defences to insure his security. In contrast, Lot lived in a city with walls and a gateway, built to insure the safety of those within. Yet Abraham was safe in Yahweh's keeping, and Lot was in direst danger from His wrath. Moreover, the city gateway, which is first mentioned here, was the place of fellowship and of judgment. It was a spacious room with vaulted entrances and seats where the elders sat and discussed the affairs of the city and dealt out justice. Abraham had fellowship with Yahweh, which was a source of joy and satisfaction. Lot, however, was disturbed and vexed by his contacts with the Sodomites, and in place of justice there was wrong and riot.

The reception given by Lot to the two messengers was much like that which Abram gave the three. Yet Lot had risen in the world, so that he sat in the gate of Sodom, the place of honor. But the messengers were not impressed by this. They had responded cheerfully to Abram's invitation, but now they refuse Lot's hospitality. They did not wish to have fellowship with him. Indeed, it was not on his account that they had come to warn him. We read that, as "Elohim wrecked the cities of the basin, Elohim was mindful of *Abraham* and sent Lot from the midst" (19:29). It was due to Abraham's intercession that Lot was warned. Lot did not have nearly as high a place in Yahweh's regard as he had in Sodom's. We may hereby note that when a believer accepts the honors of men, he thereby forfeits those which come from God alone.

CALLING

As we also are among those who have been *called*, a special interest for us lies in the *call* of Lot. First of all, let us note that none were saved except those called by the messengers. Lot tried to call his sons-in-law, but it was

not what old theologians called an "effectual" call. But those of us who have tried to save some of our relatives will understand how he was received. If God does not call, no one else can. The very earnestness and urgency of Lot made him appear ridiculous. Just imagine, they had lived in this place all their lives, and not even a meteor had fallen. Now, without any cause, fire and sulphur were to utterly destroy them! They thought that Lot was insane, so they took it as a joke.

The contrast between the response of the messengers to Abraham's invitation to partake of his hospitality, and their reluctance to enter the house of Lot, is very suggestive. They gladly accepted Abraham's proposal to refresh themselves, and brought him the glad news that the long-promised heir would shortly be born. What rejoicing they must have left behind! At last a definite date had been fixed for the greatest event in Abram's life!

LOT ENTERTAINS

When the messengers entered Sodom they had a very different message to deliver, a most unwelcome and fearful threat of disaster and doom, which would be the very reverse of repayment for any favors they might receive. So they determined to lodge in the square. It took excessive urging to get them into Lot's house. Yet they finally consented to go, for in the East, it might be construed as an unforgivable insult to refuse such hospitality. So Lot had the high privilege of entertaining them, and he made a feast in their honor. But they could get no rest in a city so far gone in wickedness and immorality.

Before they could lie down, the Sodomites fully exposed the extent and depth of their depravity. Abraham felt sure that there would at least be ten righteous. Now it turns out that young and old, from the outmost parts come together to do one of the most immoral and degraded deeds that a

human can commit, and this against strangers who were their guests. Even Lot tried to shelter those under his roof by counter concessions which are shocking in the extreme. His morals had been contaminated by contact with this sinful city also. Only the superhuman craft of the messengers was able to shield them from the lust of the Sodomites.

THE MOB

But Lot's pride must have received a severe shock. He had a seat in the gateway as a judge, possibly because of the size of his flocks, not because of his character and mature wisdom. Now that he seeks to act as a judge, and condemns their iniquitous proposals, they remind him that he is only a sojourner, and has no right to rule over them. Then they even threaten him with the fate they had intended for his guests, so that the messengers had to intervene and bring Lot back into the house. Then they disabled the mob by means of dazzlings. One who has this cannot see anything but flashes of light, which make it impossible to recognize objects. It is very disconcerting and tiring, and they finally gave up trying to enter Lot's house.

Lot seems to have struck deep roots in Sodom, for some of his daughters had married men of the city. The messengers sent him to bring these forth, and so save them from impending ruin. But Lot had evidently lost even the respect of his sons-in-law, for they did not take his fearful warning seriously. He does not seem to have had any son, so that all his posterity was cut off except the later incestuous sons by his own daughters. He may have hoped to help the Sodomites by his presence among them. But, alas, it worked in reverse. His daughters had evidently sunk very low morally, by contact with the Sodomites, before they could make him drunk enough to father their sons. Such is the fate of faith when it is divorced from practice. The honors of the world may lead to disaster.

ZOAR, INFERIOR

In the morning, when the rain of fire and sulphur was due, Lot himself dallied so long that the mortals took the four to be rescued by their hands and brought them outside of the city. Even then, though warned to flee to higher ground, outside the basin, on the mountain which was on its edge, and reach a place above the sphere of destruction, and depend on Yahweh alone for protection, Lot begs to enter another city, inferior to Sodom, so not as good a shelter even as it might have been.

Lot's previous conduct had shown that his faith was by no means pure, but sadly mixed with his own devices. He had, indeed, come out with Abram, but he had no promise on which to base it, as Abram had. Then, when he had to part with Abram, he did not insist that Abram have the best, as was fitting, and depend on Yahweh's blessing, but chose his portion by sight. This mixture of sight with faith continued even in his salvation, which was not a gracious one, by faith alone, but depended on his leaving the city and walking toward the mountains, and not looking back. It seems as if the messengers almost had to drag them forth at the very last.

LOT'S WIFE

Once more, in the future, there will be a salvation similar to this when the Son of Mankind will be unveiled (Luke 17:28-33). Not only a small basin near the Dead Sea will be destroyed for its wickedness, but the whole earth will be judged by sore judgments when the Son of Mankind is unveiled. Then, also, salvation will not depend on faith alone (as it is today) but upon *prompt* obedience. Lot was warned not to look back, but his wife did so, and was turned into a monument of salt (Gen.19:26). Then they are warned not to delay an instant, not even to glance

back at the destruction. Yet we must note that Lot's wife was not destroyed with the city, and was not turned into a pillar of stone, but a *monument* of *salt*. She was to be *remembered*, for such monuments were erected in memory of the dead, as Rachel's monument (Gen.35:20). And, being of salt, it was a preservative, for although her faith faltered, she did believe.

MOAB AND AMMON

Although Lot had sought security in Zoar, he soon feared to dwell there, and went up into the mountain where he had been told to go at first (Gen.19:30). In Zoar his daughters might have found husbands, but when they dwelt in a cave, far from other habitations, the daughters carried with them some of the immoral thinking of the Sodomites. Lot, doubtless, also was affected by their decadent habits and allowed his daughters to make him drunk. And so, from merely being separated from Abram on account of his greed for gain and glory, he fathers two breeds of peoples, Moab and Ammon, who were thorns in the side of Abram's descendants when they lived in their land.

Moab (*M u ab* FROM-OUR-FATHER), as a people inhabited the country east of the Dead Sea. Unlike Lot and Abram, both Moab and Ammon were enemies of the people of promise, and were not to be received into Israel (Deut.23:3). They were subjugated by David (1 Chron. 18:2), but they broke loose after the death of Ahab. They were always a thorn in the side of Israel. Their idolatry led many astray.

Ammon (*Om m un* People-FROM-er), the son of the younger daughter of Lot, founded a nation northeast of Moab, his brother, and east of the tribe of Reuben, between the Arnon and the Jabbok, displacing a race of giants (Deut. 2:19,20,37). None of them could be received into the congregation of Israel up to the tenth generation (Deut.23:3).

There was recurrent conflict with Israel. David subjected them, but it was not permanent.

The story of Lot and his incestuous sons is given us in order to show the bitter fruit of a selfish motive. We are not told what prompted him at first, but can discern it in his actions. At first it is hardly apparent. Abram is told to leave his relatives, so could not have invited Lot to go along. Lot, unlike Abram, had no leading from the Lord, but, of his own will, imposed his presence on Abram, and prospered. But, when it came to the test, he got the best of Abram and chose to cast his lot with Sodom. This selfish choice clearly revealed his false incentive, and was emphasized by his insubjection to Abram and the Subjector, and by his reliance on earthly possessions rather than on Yahweh. These traits were intensified by his double paternity and emerged in the actual enmity of his progeny to the seed of Abram. This should help us to see the importance of a pure motive (2 Tim.3:10). Like a faulty compass on a ship, a false motive may lead one far astray, and even lead to shipwreck. A. E. Knoch

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RICHMOND BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

The 2005 Richmond Virginia Bible Fellowship annual conference will be held from April 1–3. The location for these meetings is the Days Inn at 2100 Dickens Road in Richmond (804-282-3300). Please mention the Richmond Bible Fellowship when making reservations in order that the Fellowship might thereby obtain credit toward meeting room expenses.

JANE LISABETH BRYAN

Our friend in the Lord, Jane Bryan, died in Scottsdale, Arizona on April 14, 2004, age 53. Her death followed a long personal battle with cancer, a battle which she lost; yet her future victory over death is assured, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.

As her husband Warren wrote to us, "Many years of concordant study during trials of infirmity have brought strength and expectation: God knows the sequel, 'for He will be making the sequel also.'"

THE JUDGMENT OF THE CROSS, AND PERSONAL ADJUDICATION

Question:

Will *sins* be a part of judgment? Will *offenses* be a part of judgment? Are *works* (i.e., acts or deeds) sinful, yet not sin? Are these issues different between believers and unbelievers?

We are explicitly told that Jesus, as the "Lamb of God," is "*taking away the sin* of the world" (John 1:29); and, we are explicitly told as well that God "makes [Christ] to be *a sin offering* for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:21). Similarly, according as we are informed that God "wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4), it is likewise revealed to us that "Christ Jesus . . . is giving Himself *a correspondent Ransom* for all" (1 Tim.2:6).

Since Christ has died for our sins (1 Cor.15:3), and since God has conciliated the world to Himself and is not reckoning their offenses to them (2 Cor.5:19), it is sometimes said that God will not judge men for either their sins or their offenses, but only for their acts.

This, however, seems like a distinction without a difference. Since it is simply a fact that men's acts are both sinful and offensive, it would seem that the very reason that their acts deserve judgment is because of their sinfulness and offensiveness. Therefore, how can it be true that God will not judge men for either their sins or their offenses, but only for their acts?

Still, and in any case, I am mindful that, in accordance with the will of God, all will eventually be saved, being mindful as well as to why this is so. It is because

> Jesus, as the Lamb of God, has indeed taken away the sin of the world; it is because, as God's Christ, God has made Him our sin offering; and, similarly, it is because Christ has given Himself a correspondent Ransom for all, that all accordingly may be saved through Him. Still, I'm having a little trouble putting all the pieces of the puzzle together, not with respect to ultimate salvation, but with respect to judgment, both that of the believer and of the unbeliever.

Answer:

I AGREE with you that any claim to the effect that God will not judge men for either their sins or their offenses, but only for their acts, is a distinction without a difference (that is, a formal distinction without a substantive difference). It simply is not true that God will not judge men for either their sins or their offenses, but only for their acts. Such an assertion is not a rational claim, for it amounts to saying that God will not judge men for either their sins or their offenses, but only for their (sinful and offensive) acts, which is to say, for their sins and their offenses.

In light of your concern here, however, perhaps I should clarify what I said in a recent article, where I wrote: "It does not follow from the fact that, as a timeless truth, *sin* has been taken away, nor from the companion fact that, personally speaking, *offense* is not being reckoned, that God will therefore do nothing at all insofar as personal adjudication is concerned with respect to the dreadful deeds of His beloved creatures. God will still bring every *act* into judgment . . . ."[1]

I did not intend to make any metaphysical distinction between the word "sin" and a manifestly sinful "act," but simply to use the language of Scripture itself when speaking of what it is that is to be brought into judgment, namely, it is our acts. My thought was not at all that, because of Christ's sacrifice on behalf of our sins, when God brings our acts into judgment, they will somehow no longer be sinful deeds in His sight, but only that, as I subsequently explained, even if these deeds should be ever so "dreadful" (not to mention sinful), even so, they will not be able to preclude our salvation.

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.95, pp.87-96, "Growth in Realization of God."

Before commenting further, I would like to address your general inquiry by making a simple and direct reply to your specific questions. In reference to our personal adjudication before God through Christ, you asked: "Will *sins* be a part of judgment? Will *offenses* be a part of judgment?" My answer is, Yes; insofar as our bad acts are concerned, it is their very sinfulness and offensiveness that calls forth *judgment* concerning them, which is to say, that calls forth *God's wise and righteous response* in answer to their occurrence.

You then asked: "Are *works* (i.e., acts or deeds) sinful, yet not sin?" Finally, you asked, "Are these issues different between believers and unbelievers?"

In regard to this last question, No, these issues as to how God views sins, offenses, and deeds are the same for all, whether one should be a believer or an unbeliever. Believers, who, first of all, are God's *chosen* ones, who as His chosen ones are graciously granted to be believing, enjoy the gracious gift of eonian life, which is not the portion of unbelievers. But whether one is a believer or an unbeliever, or whether one is or is not afforded eonian life, has no bearing on how God views their works of sin and offense.

In light of the thrust of your overall inquiry here, I think what you wish to ask is, "Even though a man's works may be sinful in themselves, since Christ has died for these very works of sin, is it the case that therefore God does not view them as sins or at least does not forensically reckon them as

works of sin?" "Forensic" as used here, means "relating to courts of law," and, theologically, simply has in view God's lawful (which is to say, righteous) rule or determination.

The question then becomes, "Even though a man's works may be sinful in themselves, since Christ has died for these very works of sin, is it the case that therefore God has determined not to consider them as sin and *hence not to deal with them as* sin?" To this question my answer is as follows: No, it is simply not the case in the matter of the personal adjudication of sinners, that since Christ has died for our sins, God therefore no longer considers our sins to be what they actually are, nor acts in response concerning them according to their actual nature. To the contrary, God views things as they are, and responds to them accordingly, according to their actual nature.

God has no need to resort to a legal fiction. In order to save us, He need not pretend that our sins are not sins. As concerns our salvation, this is settled through Christ's sacrifice. Therefore, our sins cannot speak our condemnation. Sin shall not be lording it over us, for we are not under law, but under grace (Rom.6:14). With respect to ultimate issues, this same principle holds true for unbelievers as well as for believers. This is because, "If One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.6:14); and, ". . . one who dies has been justified from Sin" (Rom.6:7b).

Since, because of Christ, our sins cannot speak our condemnation, there is no need for God to implement any exotic forensics on our behalf. By our acts, we are no more able to render ourselves permanently lost any more than, by our acts, we are able to save ourselves. Hence, in consideration of our sins as they are, God determined that Christ should die, on our behalf (*cf* Acts 4:27,28; 2 Cor. 5:21). *And,* in consideration of our sins as they are, God has also determined that all mankind should be subjected to His personal adjudication concerning their sins. For

believers, who are vessels of mercy, their personal adjudication will take place in front of the dais of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10); For unbelievers, who are vessels of indignation, their personal adjudication will occur in the day of judging, following the thousand years (Rev.20:5; 11-15).

Insofar as man's *salvation*[2] is concerned, through Christ, *all that needs be done has been done* unto this end, that the dictates of God's righteousness related thereunto might be entirely satisfied. In the judgment of the cross, we are *saved* through the blood of Christ, plus nothing.

Through the work of Christ in His suffering and death, our sins (which include our offenses[3]) have been *salvifically* died for; thus they have already been brought into judgment with respect to our salvation.

In saying, however, that thus, *with respect to our salvation,* our sins have already been brought into judgment, this is not at all to say that therefore they have already been brought into judgment in every way that God intends to judge them.

Judgment simply speaks of *decision;* hence, in respect to God's works or divine activities, while God has decided that men are to be *saved*[4] through Christ, He has also decided that they are to be *subjected to personal adjudication* for

2. Here, I have in view man's salvation from sin, in all its aspects; these include salvation both from *being* a sinner, constitutionally, as well as from having committed sinful and offensive *acts.*

3. Our *offenses* (i.e., our faulty deeds as considered in their offensiveness to God) are themselves sins, for they "miss the mark" of the ideal, that of being "good and well pleasing and perfect" in His sight (*cf* Rom.12:2).

4. We ourselves as well as all humanity, through Christ, will be saved as follows: we will be saved *from* dying and death, even as from having been constituted sinners with all the deleterious effects thereof; and, we will be saved *for* endless life and glory, vivification and immortality, in the enjoyment of an incorruptible and altogether righteous constitution.

all of their acts (*cp* Rom.14:12; Ecc.11:9; 12:14; Matt. 12:36). Nothing could be more false than to reason that since Christ will save us from sin and death and for endless life and glory, that God is therefore obliged to exempt us from all personal judging. Conversely, it would be equally false to reason that since we are *not* exempt from personal judging, therefore Christ will not save us at all, neither from sin and death nor for endless life and glory.

God's works of personal judgment to which His creatures are appointed, must not be looked on as separate acts of settling for our sins or offenses with a view to the determination of our "destiny." It is important to rid the word "judgment" of the notion of punishment and to confine it to the thought of adjudgement or decision. Since God's "judgment" merely refers to His decision, whether any certain divine decision, inherently, should be either salutary or adversative with regard to the human experience, is not the point. It is in the purpose of God—for His own glory and the benefit of His creatures—that men should undergo discipline and chastening. Therefore, they will undergo discipline and chastening, each one as befits his own calling and as accords with his own circumstances.

Since whatever God does is right (is right for Him to do), and since, during the eonian times, God has appointed a small part of mankind as vessels of mercy and the remaining part as vessels of indignation (Rom.9:9-24), it follows that it is right for Him to do this. And, it follows as well if we should not approve of such a design and operation, that it is not God's designs and operations that need revision, but it is instead our own ethical opinions that are in need of adjustment.

Note that both the vessels of mercy and of indignation are chosen for their respective roles by God, according to His own wisdom and purpose. No one becomes a member of either group according to how one has exercised

ultimate control over one's own affairs. Besides, it is simply a fact that humans do not have ultimate control over their own affairs.

It is evident that humans do not have ultimate control over their own affairs, since *all* is out of, through, and for God (Rom.11:36). Lest anyone should legitimately be able to claim that when Paul says "all" here that he somehow means anything less than all that exists and all that occurs, the apostle wisely precludes the legitimacy of any such claim through the logic of his argument. He declares, "O, the *depth* of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! *For,* who knew the mind of the Lord? *or,* who became His adviser? *or,* who gives to Him *first* and it will be repaid him? *seeing that out* of Him and *through* Him and *for* Him is *all:* to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:33-36).

The reason that *no one,* in himself, already *knew* the mind of the Lord, and *no one* became His adviser, informing Him of something of which, hitherto, He had been ignorant, and *no one* gave something to Him *first,* something which did not originate in Him, is *because all* is out of *Him,* through *Him,* and for *Him.* Therefore, any claim that asserts that anything less than *all* that exists and *all* that occurs is out of, through, and for God, is necessarily a mistaken claim.

The standard objection to the truth of God's deity with respect to all that exists and occurs, comes in the form of a protest. Against the truth that "to whom He will, He is merciful, yet whom He will, He is hardening" (Rom.9:18), the *protestor* is swift to reply, "Why, then, is He still blaming? for Who has withstood His intention?" (Rom.9:19).

Far from acknowledging any force or legitimacy in the protestor's audacious complaint, the apostle simply responds: "*O man! who are you, to be sure,* who are answering again to God? That which *is* molded will not protest to the molder,

'Why do you make me thus?' Or has not the potter *the right* over the clay, out of the same kneading to *make* one vessel, indeed, for honor, yet one for dishonor? Now if God, wanting to display His indignation and to make His powerful doings known, carries with much patience, the *vessels* of indignation, adapted for destruction, it is that He should also be making known the riches of His glory on the *vessels* of mercy, which He makes ready before for glory—us, whom He calls also, not only out of the Jews, but out of the nations also" (Rom.9:2-24).

It is true that many of us who are vessels of mercy are more sinful than many who are vessels of indignation. But even so, as vessels of mercy, it is our very deep-dyed sinfulness that will serve so well to display God's mercy, since only an abundance of mercy, as accords with *grace*, pity, and compassion (*cf* Rom.9:15; Ex.33:19), will suffice in the case of such ones as ourselves. This is a matter for our personal humiliation, not to trivialize our sinfulness, even as God's choice of us is a matter for thankfulness not for pride.

It is simply a fact that it is within the purpose of God to have *vessels* both of mercy and of indignation, each one formed by the Potter, according as He is intending (Rom. 9:20,21). Since the worker is worthy of his wages, it is only fitting even as vessels of mercy, that we should be requited for our practices, both the good and the bad. Hence we will either gain or forfeit wages for our labors according to what God deems their value to be. For what we have done that, in a positive sense, is not worth anything, we will not be paid anything. Yet for all that we have done that is of positive value, we will be compensated, according to its true worth (*cf* 2 Cor.5:10; 1 Cor.3:14,15).

Similarly, since God also wants to make known His indignation and concomitant "powerful doings," He has determined that those whom He has chosen to be included among the vessels of indignation, will serve in this capacity. Let it be so, and may God be glorified. J.R.C.

THE SPIRIT SUPREME

THE VARIOUS BAPTISMS indicate clearly that the blessings of this current era are spiritual as compared with those of the future perfect earth.

As we have seen in our Lord's days upon earth, there was but one baptism—in water.

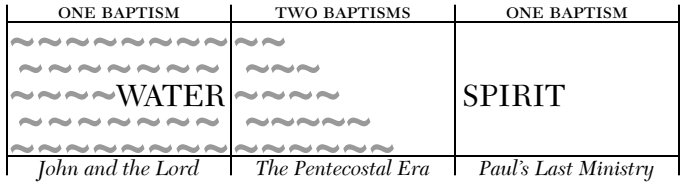
In the Pentecostal economy the baptism of spirit was *added* in some cases.

In Paul's first ministry to the nations *both* baptisms continued. But just the reverse of the days of Pentecost; *all* had the spirit's baptism, and only *some* that in water.

But now, in this new economy, there is again but "ONE baptism" (Eph.4:5), as in our Lord's time; only it is not in water, but in spirit.

So we see that gradually, a step at a time, the tendency has been away from the outward expression by means of water, towards the end—the inward reality, by means of spirit.

This may be shown graphically thus:



All the cleansing and sanctification (which the water only indicated) was really done by spirit. Water came first to instruct the lower classes in God's school. But now that spirit has replaced water, why should we cling to the outward semblance?

There are thus four distinct periods marked out in the Word. These differ from each other, not alone as to baptism, but along other lines as well. By rightly dividing off and partitioning to each the truth which God associates with it, we may hope for God's approval of our workmanship (2 Tim.2:15).

But the most important and weighty truth for us to apprehend is this: that, *in spirit*, the later ministry of the apostle Paul (subsequent to Acts 28:25-28), as recorded in the later epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians), brings the saints to a stage corresponding to the new earth of the end of the Apocalypse. *In spirit*, I say, not as it will be in that day of physical marvels. Now, as it will be then, nothing remains to be done (Eph.2:10,18; 4:12,13). Nothing can be added. Nothing can be improved. All is perfect, complete, satisfactory (Phil.3:15; Col.1:20,25; 2:9,10).

By thus comparing the physical and spiritual, we are helped much in understanding many seeming difficulties.

Take, for instance, the manifestation of the spirit in sign gifts (1 Cor.12). In the millennial age these will be present to restore and bind up. But in the perfect state how can there be gifts of healing when there will be no sickness? No lame man will be there to heal, no dead to raise to life again. The very glory and perfection of that age will make such gifts void.

These gifts abounded in Paul's ministry at the first, and in his earlier epistles. They were common in the Corinthian assembly. But the apostle, at the crisis already noted, tells them that "they shall cease" (1 Cor.13:8-10). How? *By the incoming of maturity, or perfection*, just as will be the case in the day of God. The perfection of that age will make void many a millennial blessing.

If Paul's earlier ministry corresponds with Israel's millennial ministry (only with a spiritual tendency and lacking the measure of material blessing that will obtain then),

it is easy to see why they were done away in this succeeding ministry, which includes the present grace; and why they are not mentioned in his later epistles.

In the apostle's own experience a great change is strikingly manifest. At one time the earth shook open the prison doors and set him free (Acts 16:26). But his last years were spent a prisoner of the Lord in Rome. This fact, and contrast, is specially emphasized in each of the later epistles written by him who was now the "prisoner of Christ Jesus."

01 At one time kerchiefs taken from His body availed to heal the sick (Acts 19:12). Later he endures the thorn in the flesh (2 Cor.12:7-9). Timothy suffers "often infirmities" (1 Tim.5:23), and Trophimus is left at Miletus sick (2 Tim.4:20).

It is manifest that, if perfection has indeed come, it is not in the physical sphere; in fact, the flesh does not receive the comfort that it once obtained. The only medicine for Paul's thorn was sufficient grace.

From all this it is clear that the tendency towards spirit which we have observed in the various baptisms is continued to perfection. *From the former extreme, where spirit seemed to have no place, we have arrived at the latter where flesh has none.*

All is spirit. The greatest glory of this spiritual completeness is its manifestation in the midst of the utter weakness of the flesh. Let us then not look at our flesh to gauge God's thoughts towards us. Some day the spirit, of which we have but an earnest, will energize our bodies, too, and *they will become spiritual bodies*—perfect and complete as the bodies of those who will people the new earth, and with powers which will far transcend what even they will enjoy.

Till then let us enjoy to the full the exceeding riches of God's grace as shown in the high and overwhelming and superabundant spiritual blessings He has bestowed upon

us in the heavenly spheres. Our home, our hope, our destiny is there. Let us drop those earthly concerns which are fitted for a people whose hope is earthly, and set our hearts and minds on things above. We cannot be there in flesh, but we can in spirit. Just as in that future day His presence will be our Paradise, so now let us go in spirit to where He is, at God's right hand, and find our All in Him.

BAPTISM *IN* AND *INTO*

A most instructive and helpful distinction exists in the original text between baptism in a place or element, and into a condition or result. This is clearly seen in the declaration that, *in* one spirit, we all were baptized *into* one body (1 Cor.12:13). The spirit is the element in which we were baptized: the body in the resultant condition. We have thus become identified with the body of Christ. It is a pity that this distinction cannot be consistently carried out in an English version, without offending the fastidious ear of the modern student. We almost regret that we have yielded to this weakness in rendering it "*in* the name of Paul" (1 Cor.1:13,15), and are glad that the sublinear, at least, does not hide the truth under the veneer of elegant English. Indeed, we are more and more inclined to associate attempts to make musical English with the warning of the apostle concerning itching ears. Let us have the truth!

In some texts the force of *into* is easily seen. John the baptist and Peter both baptized *into* the pardon of sins (Mark 1:4; Acts 1:38). *In* could not be used here, for the pardon was not the place or element, but the effect which the rite produced. The same is true of our baptism into the death of Christ (Rom.6:3), the baptism of the sons of Israel *into* Moses (1 Cor.10:2), but best of all, our baptism *into* Christ (Gal.3:27) or Christ Jesus (Rom.6:3). In all these cases there is identification with the thing or person indicated by *into*. This is the point in Paul's appeal to

the Corinthians. If he had baptized *into* his own name it would have created a party in Corinth. It would have identified those thus baptized with Paul, just as it did identify those who were baptized with Christ Jesus.

It is a notable fact that baptism into Christ—whether in Jesus Christ, as proclaimed by Peter, or Christ Jesus, as proclaimed by Paul—baptism into the Anointed was always followed by manifestations of holy spirit. The reason is found in the title itself, for His anointing was by holy spirit. If we should expand the expression, we would say "baptism into the One anointed by holy spirit." It follows as a matter of course that those baptized *into* Him must partake of the spirit which is His essential characteristic. This is emphasized by the fact that, when this title is not used the spirit is not given. Baptism into the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 8:16; 19:5) is expressly denied this virtue.

With these distinctions firmly established in our minds we are in a position to explore two much misunderstood passages, to which they are the key. One is, the so-called "great commission" in the twenty-eighth of Matthew. The other is the double baptism of the disciples whom Paul met at Ephesus, as recorded in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts.

To do anything *in the name* of another signifies that the power and authority behind the act is supplied by the one whose name is mentioned. Some cast out demons in His name (Mark 9:38, see 16:17). Pardon was proclaimed in His name (Acts 2:38). The apostles had authority to baptize in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:38; 10:48). And this is the usual, and, in fact, the only possible sense in which the formula in Matt.28:19 can be understood if we follow the common version. The Revisers have happily changed it to *into*. The verse should read: "baptizing them *into* the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit." Just as Paul baptized a few into Christ Jesus and thus they were introduced into a sphere of blessing in accord with

the title, so, in the day of the Lord, when this commission will be carried out, the nations will be blessed in accord with the formula He gave them.

The name of the Father indicates that, in millennial days, the nations who become disciples will find entrance into the family of God. They will become His children. And this relationship will be based on the propitiation provided by the Son. The apostle John, in his gospel and epistles, which have a special application to that day, treats of the truth which baptism into the Father and the Son indicates. In contrast to the present grace, it is not based on Israel's dejection, but on their redemption. "He is the propitiation concerning our sins, yet not concerning *ours* only, but concerning the whole world also" (1 John 2:2). This is the reason the millennial nations will be baptized into the name of the Son.

It is notable that the title Christ is not used in this formula. It would imply that the nations had a portion in Messiah, which is exclusively Israel's. They could not be baptized *into* the name of Christ without sharing in the administration of the kingdom. Because we, by faith, have been identified with Christ Jesus in baptism, we are associated with Him in His celestial rule. But the nations will have no share in Messiah's reign during the thousand years. It will be the kingdom of the heavens, when Israel alone is the ruling nation.

Why will they be baptized *into* the name of the holy spirit? Is it not clear that this indicates that they will receive the spirit and its manifestations? At that time God will pour out of His spirit on *all flesh* (Acts 2:17). No doubt this will be most evident in Israel, but it will extend to all the other nations also. Seeing that they will enjoy the manifestation of the spirit, this is incorporated into the baptismal formula. They are baptized into the holy spirit.

The baptismal formula used in the end of Matthew indicates the sphere of blessing into which the nations will be ushered when all earthly authority is vested in the hands of Messiah.

When Paul came to Ephesus he found some of John the baptist's disciples who had not received holy spirit. Indeed, they had not heard whether holy spirit "is." They must have heard from John that holy spirit was to come, for his constant theme concerning baptism was to the effect that he baptized in water, but He who was to come after him would baptize in holy spirit (Luke 3:16).

Paul immediately questions them "*Into* what, then, were you baptized?" As it was into John's baptism, Paul explains that that baptism was in anticipation of the Lord Himself, and was into the name of the Lord Jesus. Now baptism into the name of the Lord Jesus does not confer the spirit. Even after the Lord had come and had died and had risen again, this formula failed to communicate spiritual endowments. Philip used it in Samaria and, in explanation of the fact that they did not get the holy spirit, we are told that they had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 8:16).

In view of this fact it is not likely that Paul would use this formula and re-baptize the men. Yet such is the usual interpretation, fostered by a faulty punctuation. Paul, rather, is rehearsing what John the baptist did, and telling us that the formula used by him was the same as that used by Philip in Samaria.

What possible use could there be to re-baptize them, choosing for a formula the very one which was *not* calculated to accomplish the effect he had in view? Instead, as in the case of the Samaritans, where the apostles communicated the spirit by the laying on of hands, Paul imposes his hands on them, and the holy spirit came on them, and they talked languages and prophesied.

The conclusion that Paul did not re-baptize in Ephe-

sus is confirmed by several other considerations. It was at this time that he wrote to the Corinthians that Christ had *not* sent him to baptize, but to preach the evangel. The form of the verbs in the original are conclusive proof as to where we should divide what he said from what he did. His rehearsal of the Baptist's ministry is in the indefinite tense as far as possible for he refers, not to any specific act, but to the whole tenor of his course. This is difficult to carry over into English.

But when he speaks of the imposition of his own hands the tense is changed to present active, indicating an action in progress at the time. That this is the point at which his speaking ends and his acting commences is finally settled by the fact that, after saying that they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus, the narrative proceeds, "At the placing of *Paul's* hands on them . . . ." If Paul had just been before us as their baptizer, his name should have been mentioned in that connection, and we should read "at the placing of *his* hands on them . . . ." It is evident that his name must be mentioned as soon as he begins to act.

A. E. Knoch

INTERLINEAR SCRIPTURE ANALYZER

Our friend André de Mol of Katwijk aan Zee, the Netherlands, is the author of the Bible study program for Windows, *ISA* (Interlinear Scripture Analyzer). *ISA* incorporates the Concordant Version, and the Concordant Greek Text sublinear (or interlinear), along with other valuable resource tools.

ISA is designed to close the gap between translations and the original Bible text. A transparent organized database structure is used to make sure that all (other) renderings of a Greek word are instantly visible. The English concordant sublinear in combination with Greek word parsing, makes *ISA* a unique and powerful tool.

ISA is available from: *www.scripture4all.org;* the companion program, *CBrowser for ISA* (which is an electronic edition of our publication, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY), is available from a link at *www.concordant.org*, under the subsection "Language."

DAVID AT MAHANAIM
(2 Samuel 18)

18 + **David** |*n*mustered `the *w*soldiers who** were `with **him and** |*pl*set over them chief** officers **of contingents and chief** officers **of hundreds.** 2 +**Then David** |**sent** out **`the** *wi*soldiers,** ˙a **third** *i*under** the **hand of Joab,** + ˙a **third** *i*under** the **hand of Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and** ˙a **third** *i*under** the **hand of Ittai the Gittite. And the king** |**said to the** *wi*soldiers, I my**self **shall** *mr*also** march **forth,** yea march **forth⁻ with you.** 3 +**But the** *wi*soldiers** |*sa*protested, You should not** march **forth! For if we should retreat,** yea **retreat⁻,** the **heart** of the others would **not be** |*pl*stirred** ›**about us;** +**even if half of us should die,** the **heart** of the others would **not be** |*pl*stirred** ›**about us. For** *7*you~***s** are worth **ten thousands** of **such as we.** + *now*Therefore** it is **better that you should** *b*be** ready **to** *c*send help⁻ to us from** the **city.** 4 +**Then the king** |**said to them, I shall do** *w*what** seems |**best in your eyes.**

+**So the king** |**stood** ›**at** the **side of the gate** +**as all the** *wi*soldiers** marched **forth** ›**by hundreds and** ›**by thousands.** 5 + **The king** |**enjoined** `on **Joab and** `on **Abishai and** `on **Ittai,** › **saying⁻,** Deal › **gently** ›**with** the **young man** › **Absalom, for my** sake**! +Thus all the** *wi*soldiers heard** *i*when the king instructed⁻** `**all the chief** officers **on behalf of Absalom.**

6 + **The** *wi*soldiers** marched |**forth** into **the field to meet Israel, and the battle** |*b*was** fought **in** the **wildwood of Ephraim.** 7 + **There** the *wi*soldiers of Israel were** |**stricken before** the conscript **servants of David; and there the stroke** |*b*was great** *i* ˙**that day—twenty contingents.** 8 + From **there**

the fighting [lb]**was scattered**[l] **over** the sur**face of the whole area, and the wildwood** › **devoured**– [l]**many** more [i]**of** the [wi]**soldiers** [f]**than** [w] **the sword devoured** [i]**on** ˙**that day.**

9 +**Then Absalom** [lmeet]**encountered** › the **presence of** the conscript **servants of David.** +**Now Absalom** was **riding on** ˙a **mule; and** as **the mule** [l]**came** to pass **under** the **meshes of** ˙a ˙**great terebinth,** + **his head** caught [l]**fast in** the **terebinth.** + **He was** [7]**hanging~**Q **between the heavens and** [bt] **the earth,** +**while the mule** [w] **under him passed** on. 10 + **One** of the **men** [l]**saw** it **and** [l]**told** › **Joab,** + [l]**saying, Behold, I saw** `**Absalom hanging in** a **terebinth.** 11 + **Joab** [lsa]**replied to** the **man** ˙who **told**[l] › **him,** + [bd]**Since you saw ~him~,** for **what reason** did **you not smite him there** to[d] the **earth?** + **I** would have been [on]**obliged to give** › **you** [7]**fifty~**Q pieces of **silver and one girdle.** 12 +**But the man** [lsa]**answered** › **Joab,** + **Even if I** were **weighing** a **thousand** pieces of **silver on my palm, I** would **not** [l]**stretch** forth **my hand** ›**against the king's son. For in our ears the king enjoined** `on **you and** `on **Abishai and** `on **Ittai,** › **saying**–**,** [7]**For my~**cs sake **keep** watch [i]**over** the **young man** [i] **Absalom!** 13 [or]**Otherwise I would have** [d]**dealt falsely** [i]**against my** own **soul;** +**for no**[t] **matter** at **all is** [l]**suppressed from the king.** +**Yet you you**rself would [l]**stand by aloof.**

14 + **Joab** [lsa]**replied, Let me not thus** [l]**wait before you.** +**So he** [l]**took three** [7]**javelins~ in his palm and** [l]**plunged them in**to **Absalom's heart.** [fr]**While he** was still **alive in** the **heart of the terebinth,** 15 + **ten** of **Joab's youth**ful [all]**gear bearers**[l] [l]**surrounded** `**Absalom and** [l]**smote** him **and** [c]**put him** to [l]**death.** 16 +**Then Joab** [l]**blew** [i] the **trumpet, and** ˙his [wi]**soldiers** [l]**returned from pursuing**– **after Israel; for Joab kept** `**the** [wi]**soldiers back.** 17 +**Then they** [l]**took** `**Absalom and** [l]**flung** `**him** in**to** ˙a **large** ˙**dark hole in** the **wildwood, and they** [lst]**set up over him** a **very large mound of stones.** +**As** for **all Israel, they fled,** each **man to his tent.**

18 + [i]**During his life**time **Absalom had taken** `the **mon-**

ument which is **in** the **vale of the king and** [lst]**set** it **up for him**self**; for he said, I** ›**have no son in** [p]**order** to [c]**keep my name** in **remembrance**–**.** +**So he** [l]**called** › the **monument** [on]**after his** own **name, and** › **it**´ **is** [l]**called Absalom's sign**post [fr]**to** ˙**this** ˙**day.**

19 + **Ahimaaz son of Zadok said,** [pr]**Now let me** [l]**run and** [m]**bear** the [l]**tidings** `to **the king that Yahweh has** [j]**vindicated him** [f]**against** the **hand of his enemies**[l]**.** 20 +**But Joab** [l]**said to him, You** are **not** a **man of tidings** ˙**this** ˙**day.** + **You will** [m]**bear** the **tidings** [i]**on another day;** +**but** ˙**this** ˙**day you shall not** [m]**bear** the **tidings. —**[t]**This** was [on]**because the king's son was dead.**

21 +**Then Joab** [l]**said to** a **Cushite, Go tell** › the **king** [w]**what you have seen.** + The **Cushite** [l]**bowed down to Joab and** [l]**ran** off**.** 22 + [fr]**Yet Ahimaaz son of Zadok** [l]**again** + [l]**said to Joab,** + **Let** [b]**come what** may, **let me** [l]**run** [pr]**now, me** [mr]**too, after the Cushite.** + **Joab** [lsa]**asked, Why then** have **you** to **run**[l]**, my son,** +**when** there **are no tidings** of benefit **for you** to be **found**[l]**?** 23 7+**But** Ahimaaz [l]**said**[c]**,** + **Let** [b]**come what** may, **let me run.** +**So** Joab [lsa]**replied to him, Run!** +**Then Ahimaaz** [l]**ran** by **way of the basin, and he** [l]**passed** `by **the Cushite.**

24 + **David** was **sitting between the two gates** +**when the watchman**[l] [l]**went** up **to** the **roof-level of the gate**way ›**by the wall;** +**as he** [l]**lifted** up `**his eyes,** + **he** [l]**saw** + [bd]**there** was a **man running alone** by **him**self**.** 25 + **The watchman**[l] [l]**called** down **and** [l]**told** › the **king; and the king** [lsa]**replied, If he** is **alone,** there are **tidings in his mouth.** +**While** the man **was** [go]**running and** [go]**came**– **near,** 26 + **the watchman**[l] [l]**saw** an**other man running.** +**Then the watchman**[l] [7]**on~ the gate** [l]**called** down, + [l]**saying,** [bd]**There** is [7]an**other**[c] **man running alone** by **him**self**. And the king** [lsa]**replied, That** one, [mr]**too,** is a bearer of **tidings**[l]**.** 27 + **The watchman**[l] [lsa]**continued, I** can **see**[l] that `the **running-**style **of the first** one is **like** the **running of Ahimaaz son of Zadok.** + **The king** [lsa]**replied, This** one is a **good man;** + **he** [l]**comes** ›**with good tidings.**

28 + **Ahimaaz** 7drew l**near~ and** l**said to the king, Peace!** + **He** l**bowed down to** the **king** ›**with his nostrils** to*d* the **earth and** l**said, Blessed**l be **Yahweh your Elohim, Who made** `those **men surrender who lifted** `**their hand** *i***against my lord the king.** 29 +**Then the king** ls*a***asked,** Was it **peaceable for** the **lad, for Absalom? And Ahimaaz** ls*a***answered, I saw** ˙a ˙**great throng** when **Joab** was › **sending**– off `**the king's servant and** me, `**your servant.** +**Yet I** do **not know what** it was about. 30 + **The king** l**said,** Go **around and stand by** 7**here~.** +**So he** went l**around and** l**stayed.**

31 + **Just then the Cushite** was **coming** up; **and the Cushite** l**said, Let my lord the king** receive the l**tidings that Yahweh has** *j***vindicated you today** *f***against** the **hand of all** those ˙who **rose**l up *on***against you!** 32 + **The king** ls*a***asked** › **the Cushite,** Was it **peaceable for** the **lad, for Absalom? And the Cushite** ls*a***replied, May** the **enemies**l **of my lord the king and all** those **who rise** up *on***against you for evil become like** that **lad!**

33 +**Then the king was** l**disturbed.** + **He** went l**up** *on***to** the **upper chamber of the gate**way **and** l**wept.** + **Thus he** *sa***lamented** *i***as he went–,** O **my son Absalom! my son! my son Absalom!** *a***O** l*g***that I´** had **died**– *u***instead of you!** O **Absalom, my son, my son!**

DAVID AT MAHANAIM

THE TIME elapsed between David's arrival at Mahanaim and the battle with Absalom's forces is likely to have been weeks or even months. Absalom would have sent out word to elders of the tribes, calling for troops to convene at Jerusalem. Meanwhile, as word of David's location spread, loyal forces were drawn to him. David organized his forces into three contingents. Three separate groups would be less susceptible to being swallowed up by a larger force than an equivalent number in a single group. The assembled

troops received provisions from landowners of substance who favored David as king.

The battle began in an open area, but migrated into the wildwood. The statement in verse 8 that the wildwood consumed more than the sword may be understood in various ways. A less disciplined group, retreating for cover, could become disorganized and individually dispersed, which would make them easy prey in wooded areas of limited visibility. As this was in the Jordan valley, there may have been marshes or quagmires, which would further inhibit mobility. The cover of the woods would also benefit a smaller, experienced force, allowing them to engage in battle much as the Native Americans did with the redcoats.

PRIDE AND HUMILITY

"Yet anyone who shall be exalting himself shall be humbled, and anyone who shall be humbling himself shall be exalted" (Matt.23:12). "Pride goes before a breaking down, and a haughty spirit before a stumbling. It is better to be lowly of spirit with the humbled than to split up loot with the proud. He who contemplates on the word shall find good, and who trusts in Yahweh, happy is he" (Prov.16:18-20).

Chapters 15-18 provide a contrast between Absalom and David. Absalom is the handsome prince, with the unbelievably glorious head of hair (2 Sam.14:25,26), who is the apple of the nation's eye. He rumbled through the streets of Jerusalem in a chariot, surrounded by his squad of men, making his appearance in public places. The aging and sickly David is nearly absent from the narrative till he must flee Jerusalem for his life. David fled under the cover of darkness, barefoot and mourning, until he was lent a humble donkey to ride. David humbled himself before Yahweh, accepting the curses of Shimei, and waited for His deliverance. Absalom came into Jerusalem being acclaimed as

king, receiving homage from his subjects. He rode a mule, perhaps David's own. Mules were preferred for royalty (2 Sam.13:29), inasmuch as their gait provided a more comfortable ride than horses.

High up on the mule, fleeing from the battlefront, Absalom's proud and glorious head became stuck fast in the branches of a tree. Hanging between heaven and earth, he fulfilled the scripture that those hung on a tree are cursed (Deut.21:22,23). Absalom had driven his own father from his home and threatened his life. Now, he hung helplessly awaiting execution, undeserving of the mercy and gentleness his father hoped he would receive. At this point the Scriptures set another contrast before us. Evidently, Absalom's three sons had all predeceased him, and Absalom had set up a monument in Jerusalem as a remembrance to himself, there being no one to carry on his family name. But Absalom's monument was far overshadowed by the disgraceful pile of stones covering his broken body in that large dark hole in the wildwood. It marked with shame the place of a criminal's execution.

A SOLDIER'S WISDOM

Joab knew Absalom's ambition, and he also knew David's weakness for his son. It was for the good of Israel that Absalom be killed. This would bring an immediate end to the battle; it would save many lives; and it would quench the rebellion. In raising the mound of stones over Absalom, Joab probably vented his own disgust and enmity for the king's undisciplined son (*cf* 14:28-32).

A FATHER'S LOVE

In studying the Scriptures, many times we find passages in which we wish additional details were given. But the 18th chapter of 2 Samuel may cause us to wonder why so much detail is given! Verses 10-14 and 19-33 give unusually detailed accounts of what may seem to be little more than passing conversation. Such passages are interesting for a number of reasons. It is likely that Ahimaaz was interviewed personally by the historical recorder whose writings eventually became part of the inspired text of the Scriptures. This would account for the accuracy and detail of the conversations.

Such passages also bring us into the emotional heat of that moment, enabling us to more fully grasp all that was taking place while deepening our realization of what transpired. The brazen reply of the soldier to Joab, his commander in chief, leads us to suspect that he had seen a few soldiers shortchanged, and perhaps even killed, by the fair promises of captains who considered their men expendable. "50 shekels and a girdle! I wouldn't stretch forth my hand against the king's son, even if I felt the weight of a thousand shekels in my hand! The king will search out every detail of this episode, and you won't be there standing up on my behalf when my neck's on the chopping block!" This verbal exchange verifies how well known was David's love for Absalom, even at such a time as this.

The fleet-footed Ahimaaz loved his king. Obviously, he yearned somehow to soften the blow to David of Absalom's death. He persistently requested leave till Joab finally sent him. Then, he outran the other messenger in order that he might reach David first. David was sitting between the inner and outer gates of the city. The city walls were doubled at the gates for extra strength, and double gates were built. Under siege the area between would be filled with dirt and stones to absorb the blows of battering rams.

The father of the profligate saw his son returning home from a great distance (*cf* Luke 15:11-32). Like him, David was anxiously waiting for news about Absalom. In all the details of conversation between the watchman, David, Ahimaaz and the Cushite, one thing is clear: David's chief concern was Absalom's welfare.

Absalom had taken David's concubines as if they were his own. He had murdered his half-brother, David's first-born son, in cold blood. He had driven David from his home and was trying to kill him. But all we see from David is the long-suffering love of a father. What kind of love is this? The world would say, "That is the love of a fool." No one wants to give unrequited love, yet everyone wishes that that kind of love would always be there for them. It is. While we are still infirm, while we are still in accord with the era in which we live, while we are still irreverent, while we are still sinners, God has commended His love to us through the death of His Son, Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:6-8).

J. Phillip Scranton

GREEK ELEMENTS FLASHCARDS

Our friend William Steidtmann of Winona, Minnesota, has developed *Greek Elements Flashcards*, which is a Windows computer-based flashcard system for learning New Testament Greek vocabulary. It operates within *MemoryLifter*, an automated flashcards educational software program.

The *Flashcards*' vocabulary is derived from our publication, THE GREEK ELEMENTS, which is an analysis of the vocabulary of the Greek Scriptures into the elements of which the words are composed, and a grouping of the words under the elements each contains, followed by the nearest English equivalents, as used in the Concordant Version.

The Elements, then, are the foundational components of the Greek language as used in the Scriptures, from which all the more complex words are formed. Bear in mind that these basic components are abstracted into higher-order word concepts, and are not to be memorized as if they were the literal (sub-) meanings of fully constructed words, *per se* (it is true, incidentally, that some word elements are complete words in themselves; this is so most often in the case of proper nouns). A study of these elements will, however, lead one to a much deeper appreciation of, and insight into, the Greek language, and thus, also, into the Scriptures themselves.

Both the *Greek Elements Flashcards* and the *MemoryLifter* program are available from links supplied on our website, *www.concordant.org*, under the subsection "Language."

THE EVANGEL AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

IT IS RIGHT in view of human unrighteousness that God should be indignant toward us. It is right that this indignation should lead to a righteous judgment. Furthermore, it is right that this judgment be fair, that it be conducted impartially and that every act of every human being, good or bad, boasted in or hidden in shame, should be taken into account.

Then also, it is right that this righteous judgment should result in a righteous verdict, and it is right, in view of all the evidence given concerning the acts of humanity, that this verdict should be: No flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20).

What then? In view of the evidence presented, the righteous judgment is made, and the righteous verdict is in. What then? What is the sentence?

The sentence is not pronounced!

The 64 verses of Romans starting with 1:18, concerning humanity in its relation to God, filled with condemnatory evidence of human irreverence and injustice, embracing the entirety of the race, do not close with a sentence of condemnation. The passage goes only to the point of the just verdict, and then it stops.

NEW EVIDENCE

The somber verdict is succeeded by a new examination of the entire issue, presenting new and remarkable evidence. This new evidence does not involve a new way by which the sinner can get himself right with God. It is presented apart from any list of steps human beings

must take in order to avoid the sentence of condemnation; in very fact, it is apart from law and from what law requires of humanity.

The opening words of this evidence are startling. Instead of directing attention to human unrighteousness it directs attention to God's righteousness. How is it that God's righteousness can save humanity from that sentence of condemnation which appears to be the logical and righteous result of the just verdict? Would it not be best to leave out the matter of divine righteousness from this context?

Yet God's righteousness is brought *to the fore*. To be sure, in Romans 3:23 Paul will sum up the evidence given in Romans 1:18-3:20 concerning human unrighteousness. But he begins with a twice-stated reference to God's righteousness. That is the source of justification. In the evangel the fact of human unrighteousness is fully recognized, yet not for condemnation but as that deeply entrenched evil from which God's righteousness delivers us.

NO SENTENCE PRONOUNCED

If the righteous verdict of Romans 3:20 had been followed, in Romans 3:21, by a sentence made solely in light of the evidence given, that sentence would have had to be the utter ruin and destruction of humanity. Such a sentence would be right if the record of human acts and thinking were the only factors to be considered. But it would be contrary to countless revelations of God given in His Word, including what we learn of Him in Romans 1:18-3:20.

In such a case God could not be blessed as the Creator of the human race (*cf* Rom.1:25), which would no longer exist. Instead of being a matter of riches, God's kindness and forbearance and patience toward unrighteous humanity (*cf* Rom.2:4) could only be seen finally as wasted effort. In a sentence of extermination for all sinners, the benefit and prerogative set before the nation of Israel in God's oracles and sayings would come to nothing, instead of being "much in every manner" (*cf* Rom.3:1,2). God's faithfulness to His promises would have to be nullified (*cf* Rom. 3:3,4), or else it would have to be maintained at the price of unrighteous and arbitrary partiality.

Where would be the value of the commendation of God's righteousness as it is set in comparison with human unrighteousness (Rom.3:5) if the human race ended up being destroyed? Indeed the work of judgment itself would only highlight a failure of God's purpose to create humanity in His image and likeness.

Obviously Romans 1:18-3:20 was not written to bring us to that sentence of condemnation which its evidence seems to require. It has taken us only to the verdict in order to lead us forward to that all-important piece of evidence called "the evangel of God" (Rom.1:1). The record of human behavior is still there. The testimony to God as Creator, Who acts with forbearance and then judges with impartiality and fairness, and Who is faithful to His words telling of benefit to a people who themselves have been unfaithful, is still there. The commendation of God's righteousness which human unrighteousness affords remains an important factor within the evangel. But all these considerations now are to be seen in relation to that critical revelation of God's righteousness by means of Christ's death for us all.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS ACHIEVEMENT

Hence, in Romans 3:21 our attention is turned away from the record of humanity's unrighteousness and human failures in relation to the just requirements of the law. The matter of justification brought up in Romans 3:20 in negative terms (Not justified!), is now to be viewed "apart from law" and is to be seen as it relates to God's righteousness as it is made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ.

We turn from the impasse stemming from human activity in relation to law to the record of God's operations of righteousness centered in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ in His death for sinners.

ROMANS 3:21-8:39

Romans 3:21 begins the most important section of the entire epistle. It consists of 154 verses continuing to the end of chapter 8, taking us from this manifestation of *God's righteousness* to a declaration of the absolute inviolability of *God's love.* This section of Romans begins with God's righteousness being made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ. It ends with nothing separating us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The perimeters of Romans 3:21-8:39 clearly focus on God, and so, in reality, does all in between. That we are being justified through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus highlights God's grace (Rom.3:24). That Christ should die for the sake of sinners commends the love of God (Rom.5:8). That we may be enjoying the peace and access of the conciliation is a matter that instills in us a boasting in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom.5:11;8:35-39). All that is said about the blessing of faith (Rom.3:27-4:25) and our identification with Christ in His death, entombment and resurrection (Rom.6:1-7:6), is a matter of God's gracious gift. The mighty rescue from the wretchedness of human weakness which the law exposes generates outpourings of thanksgiving to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.7:7-25). The provision of that blessed position of sonship in which we cry, "Abba, Father!" and that peace and endurance which is given in expectation (Rom.8:1-27), stirs up our awareness that God is working all together for good (Rom.8:28-34). For it is God Who foreknows and designates and calls and justifies us. Altogether the evangel is a message to the glory of God.

That is the bottom line, expressed succinctly later in the epistle by these words: ". . . out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: *to Him be the glory*!" (Rom.11:36).

A THREEFOLD PATTERN

At the very beginning of the epistle we noticed an important pattern in Paul's presentation of the evangel. Our attention was drawn first to God, then to Jesus Christ, and finally to us who receive the evangel. The evangel is (1) the evangel of God, (2) concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, (3) for our faith-obedience (Rom.1:1-7).

These three steps appear again in Romans 3:21-23, and again in reverse order in 3:24-26, as shown in the following arrangement:

Yet now, apart from law, a **righteousness of God**
is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets),
yet a **righteousness of God**
through **Jesus Christ's** *faith,*
for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.
Being justified gratuitously in His grace,
through the deliverance which is in **Christ Jesus** . . .
toward the display of **[God's] righteousness** . . . .

The evangel, in its primary and highest and final unfoldings, directs attention to God. In the presentation given in Romans Paul begins with the evangel's focus on God's righteousness. From this initial unfolding, and with it firmly in view, we continue to become acquainted with God, from glory to glory (*cf* 2 Cor.3:18;Col.1:9,10). Here in Romans the manifestation of God's righteousness is the grand prelude to the focus on His love in Christ Jesus, from which nothing in all time and space can separate us.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Hence, in this exposition of the evangel of God which focuses our attention on God, what He is and what He has done and does and will do, the apostle begins not with a consideration of God's power (which was noted in Romans 1:16) or wisdom (see 1 Corinthians 1:18-25) or even of His grace (which is soon underlined in Romans 3:24) or His love (which will be brought to our special attention in chapters 5 and 8), but with His *righteousness.* All of these revelations concerning the character of the Deity are based on that death and resurrection of Christ which is announced in the evangel (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1-4). But first of all, the focus of attention is on the manifestation of God's righteousness.

Already, in Romans 1:16,17, the apostle had written of God's righteousness being revealed in the evangel. There it was associated with God's power for salvation. This earlier passage connects directly with Romans 3:21,22 which carries forward its thought, now in association with justification. This theme of the revelation of God's righteousness in the evangel has not been forgotten. It was always there in the background throughout the intervening passage. (In Romans 3:5 the apostle referred specifically to God's righteousness, though not directly in connection with the evangel.) But now it is once more brought into the foreground, where the association of God's righteousness with God's powerful work of salvation is being expressed in terms of justification. The parallels are clear:

> *For not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it is God's power for* **salvation** *. . . . For in it* **God's righteousness** *is being* **revealed**.
>
> *Yet now, apart from law, a* **righteousness of God** *is* **manifest** *. . . for all, . . . for all sinned . . . . Being* **justified** *gratuitously . . . .*

It is God's righteousness which comes to the rescue of

sinners who stand under the righteous verdict: "Not justified." The new pronouncement, "Justified," stands on the foundation of the righteousness of God. The evangel defines this righteousness of God as that which demands and brings about the good outcome of *salvation* from the expected sentence of condemnation to the assured achievement of *justification* for sinners. We need to focus on this righteousness which is God's own righteousness if we are to appreciate the full significance of our justification.

GOD'S GLORIOUS RIGHTEOUSNESS

In a notable reflection on Romans 3:21, A. E. Knoch wrote: "We are apt to be unduly concerned with our *own* righteousness, either through our acts, or our faith in God. The first thing to be established is *God's* righteousness. If *He* is not just, our righteousness, even if we had any, would be of no avail."[1]

That righteousness of God which is now made manifest is glorious beyond human imaginings. It retains all the characteristics of righteousness presented in the previous section of Romans. It is a righteousness that is without partiality. Therefore it is concerned with *all of humanity*. It refuses to overlook any wrong, even the hidden things of humanity. Therefore, it is concerned with *all the many sins and offenses* of Adam's seed. This is what Paul tells us with clarity and joy in Romans 5:12-19, but it is also found here in 3:22, I believe, in the words "for all," and in the logical connection between Romans 3:23 and verse 24. We will look into this in more detail when we come to those passages.

Also, in accord with Romans 3:3,4, God's righteousness as it is made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ involves His *faithfulness* to His Word. What He has spo-

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.40, p.43.

ken He will bring about in full realization. Indeed all the features of divine righteousness which are commended by human unrighteousness are carried forward in the message of the evangel.

This leads us to that aspect of divine righteousness which is revealed in the evangel and which could not be shown by God's righteous work of judgment. God's righteousness as it is now being made manifest apart from human works is one that demands and achieves an end of good for humanity and glory for God. It is God's righteousness that His stated purpose for humanity, that it be created in His image and likeness (Gen1:26), and that all be seen as very good because it is very good (Gen.1:31), be realized.

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND SALVATION

That God's righteousness always leads to, and must lead to a good end was foreshadowed in the Hebrew Scriptures. The types, of course, are never perfect. God's righteousness as it was perceived by the psalmists or prophets does not exhibit its full glory as we may perceive it now in faith within the message of the evangel. But the pattern of divine righteousness was there.

We note this pattern in Psalm 98:2, where God's righteousness is paralleled with His work of salvation, a passage which perhaps was in Paul's mind when he penned the words of Romans 1:16,17.

Yahweh has made known His salvation;
To the eyes of the nations He has revealed
His righteousness.

Here is a picture of the fulfillment of God's promises going back to Genesis 12:2,3 when God told Abram He would make of him a great nation which would be blessed and would become a blessing to all the families of the ground. Hence the psalmist adds (Psa.98:4):

Raise a joyful shout to Yahweh, all the earth!

The righteousness of God in His work of salvation from sin and death, through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus lies behind this work of which the psalmist sang. That salvation of Israel into the promised kingdom under the Messiah's reign could never come about apart from the faith of Jesus Christ exhibited in His death for sinners. For us these words of the psalmist's joy serve as a type of that highest manifestation of God's righteousness which comes through the "one righteous act of Jesus Christ" which is for all mankind for life's justifying.

So also, in Isaiah 59:16, we read of Yahweh's deliverance of Israel from His enemies. No one else can turn back transgression from Jacob:

Yet His own arm shall save for Him,
And His own righteousness, it will support Him.

The work of God in rescuing His chosen people, spoken of in these passages, is great and glorious, but it does not reach to the fullness of salvation and revelation of God's righteousness announced in the evangel of God which we are so privileged to believe. Nevertheless the pattern is the same. For Israel and for the nations in the coming kingdom, and for the promised Saviour and Anointed One, Jesus Christ, in setting up this kingdom, God's righteousness is seen in an achievement of salvation.

These operations of salvation will be seen as operations of righteousness. But what could not have been fully manifest to the prophet and the psalmist was that these righteous and saving works of God have a solid and sure basis in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, in His death on the cross for the salvation of sinners. That basis has now been laid down, and it is that which is declared in the evangel of God. It is in that message of salvation in terms of justification that we who are believing can even now see this righteousness of God. We are believing that we are justi-

fied in His blood and conciliated through His death, and that all on the earth and all in the heavens shall be reconciled to God through the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love (Col.1:13-20).

THE OUTCOME

It is this good end resulting from our Lord's faithful obedience which defines the righteousness of God, as no other operation and outcome can do, that is made manifest to us who are believing. We may not see just how all this end of glory is achieved by means of the death of God's beloved Son, His entombment and resurrection on the third day, but we do see, in faith, with the eyes of our heart, that it *is* achieved. For that is what the evangel declares. In our believing, it is *what* God says that is the prime issue, having precedence even over the happy searching for the wondrous details of the perfection of God's ways. In faith we stand with this assurance, that God's righteousness being revealed in the evangel concerning Christ's faithfulness to the death of the cross is directed to the justification of sinners.

Hence we read: "As it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one [righteous act] for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

This is spiritual grace indeed. God is revealing His righteousness by means of His righteous work of salvation and deliverance and justification of sinners, indeed of all sinners, which is brought about through the faith of Jesus Christ. We are believing this!

Praise God for His righteousness!

D.H.H.

Contents:

49 Editorial
50 Abram's Justification
63 Seductive, Prideful Delusions; Varied Usages of "Eons"
69 David's Mourning
76 Baptism in Paul's Epistles
89 Manifested Righteousness

MARCH, 2005

Volume XCVI **Number 2**

All in All

The blood of Christ is the basis of all blessing. The purpose of God determines human destiny. It does not depend on our deserts. The plan or process of God during the eons or ages must be distinguished from His purpose, which will not be fully accomplished until the eons are past. Herein lies the difference between the teaching of the Scriptures and the accepted creeds of Christendom. Sin and suffering, condemnation and death, endure for the eons, not "forever."

The believer suffers in the current era because of sin, but will be released in the resurrection at the presence of Christ. The unbeliever will have affliction and anguish for his sins in the judgment, but he also becomes reconciled to God at the consummation, through the blood of Christ's cross (Col.1:20).

Universal reconciliation is the glorious goal toward which all leads. All of God's purpose is achieved through Him Who is the Alpha and the Omega (Rev.1:8). "In Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him [God delights] to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:19,20).

The terms translated "forever" and "everlasting" and "never" are human perversions which could never have deceived us if they had been consistently rendered. They denote definite divisions of time called ages or eons. All together they form a distinct portion of time called eonian times. Much in our common creeds is true if confined within the eons, but it is most malignant error when forced beyond the eons.

Since judgment is not eternal, but eonian, we may accept all the solemn threats of death and condemnation without reservation, while happily exulting in God's grand goal to which all His labors lead: that God may be *All in all* (1 Cor.15:28).

(A. E. Knoch; 222 pages, $8.00)

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 2005
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-SIX

EDITORIAL

WHEN our hopes are not realized and our longings are not gratified, we may well become despondent and suffer dejection. This is especially so in cases where sincere, noble hopes are met with long-term disappointment.

Ongoing lowness of spirits and melancholy, even when not extreme, is still debilitating. In such cases, even if substantial strength remains, significant diminution nevertheless obtains.

Such "depression" is especially hard to endure in a society whose best advice even to the most intractable of problems is, "Just say, No." In the matter of confronting one's failings, the counsel of religious people is hardly any better than this, and in fact it is worse. While they tell us to "look to God" or to "turn our problems over to the Lord," in the end, they too only appeal to the flesh. This is evident since they insist that God's deliverance will only be granted in response to our having appealed to Him *in the right way*, with the necessary intensity and steadfastness. Hence if, subsequent to extended, earnest prayer, one's weakness or failing should still remain, the claim is that this too is our own fault—due to the inadequacies of our "technique" as supplicants.

Therefore, when our way is hard and our course is painful—when God's own deliverance is not presently forthcoming and yet the "help" of our fellow humans is worse than no help at all—we simply have no recourse but to turn to God for more opportune help. In this case, then, our prayer becomes—and may it be so that He *will* be pleased to grant us *this* grace—that He would endue us "with all power," as needed, "for all *endurance* and *patience* with *joy*" (Col.1:11). J.R.C.

ABRAM'S JUSTIFICATION

ABRAM BELIEVED IN YAHWEH, and it was accounted to him for righteousness (Gen.15:6). He had been complaining that Yahweh had not given him the promised seed, so he was told to look heavenward and count the stars, if he was able. Then Yahweh said, *"Thus shall become your seed." The belief of this statement constituted Abram's righteousness*. No act of flesh was necessary. He probably did *look*, but he certainly did *not count* them. He did not exert himself in any way. There was no room for boasting (Rom.3:27). It was of faith that it may accord with grace (Rom.4:16). Abram was invigorated by faith, giving glory to God (Rom.4:20).

However, on Yahweh's side there were to be innumerable generations, a task, in its way, more incomprehensible than the enumeration of the stars.

SISTER AND WIFE

Sarah was misrepresented by Abram on two separate occasions, when he said that she was his sister, which was true, but *implied* that she was not his wife (Gen.12: 10-13; 20:1-18). Such misleading statements of fact may be worse than open prevarication. These two events had much in common, although in some ways there is a contrast, so it may be helpful to consider them together. In both cases Abram was *afraid*. He had lost the sense of divine protection.

It seems that, in those days, a beautiful wife was a perilous possession, apt to excite the cupidity of kings. Lacking faith in his Subjector, and too conscientious to tell an

open lie, he decided to protect *himself* (not his wife!) by telling a half truth, for Sarah actually was the daughter of his father, though not of his mother, and so really was both sister and wife. Such a union was quite correct according to the customs current in that day.

THE ADVERSARY

As Abram is the foremost example of faith, which he afterward fully exhibited in the offering of Isaac, it is very helpful to see how God strengthened his faith when it faltered, as in these cases. Behind the scenes we can see, in these two examples, an attempt of the Adversary to spoil Sarah for the conception of the seed in her old age. Abraham seems to have fallen into this trap, and helped Satan to accomplish it, but God interfered, and saved her for her special mission.

THE OUTCOME JUSTIFIES

As Abram was such a wealthy man, any alliance with him, especially by marriage, would be most welcome, while, on the other hand, if he was out of the way, they could not only take his wife, but all his possessions as well. Yet, on the divine side, how could the promises of Yahweh be fulfilled if he died before his heir had been begotten? God used Abram's faltering to confirm his faith. In both cases his subterfuge was brought to light, yet the one whom he feared was made mortally afraid of him, and insisted on enriching and honoring him, so that the outcome actually *justified* Abram's defection!

The account of Abram's deception of Pharaoh is as follows:

GENESIS 12:10-13

10 +**Now** there [b]**was** a **famine in** the **land;** +**so Abram** went [l]**down** to[d] **Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine** was **heavy**

in the **land.** 11 **And it came** to |**be just as** 7**Abram**0 c**got near to enter Egypt**d +**that he** |**said to his wife Sarai: Behold** pr**, I know that you** are a **woman, lovely of appearance.** 12 +**So it will** b**occur** t**when the Egyptian** men **see** `**you,** + **they will say, This** is **his wife.** +**Then they will kill** `**me,** +**but** m**keep** `**you** |**alive.** 13 pr**Please say** that **you** are **my sister,** so **that it may** go |**well** ›**with me** i**for your** p**sake, and my soul will** remain **alive due to you.**

DOWN TO EGYPT

Soon after Yahweh had assured Abram that the land was his and his seed's, Abram journeyed toward the south rim, that is, near the southern border of the land. Then a famine came, a heavy one. Abram had no instructions to leave the land, or to go to Egypt. He even told his wife that he does so at the risk of his life. So he not only goes without orders, but without the conscious protection of Yahweh. He deserved to lose his wife and his riches and his life. And, under law, he probably would have received his "just" deserts. Why is Abram "allowed" to do such things with impunity? It is most important to see that Abram *was not righteous in himself, or in his actions*, yet, nevertheless, was justified *by God's* activity on his behalf.

This lesson is repeated in Genesis twenty when Abraham misled Abimelech, king of Gerar.

GENESIS 20:1-18

20 + **Abraham** |**journeyed from there** to**d the Negev area and** |**dwelt between Kadesh and** bt **Shur.** +**While he** |**sojourned** as an alien **in Gerar,** 2 + **Abraham** |**said** ›**of his wife Sarah, She** is **my sister,** 7**for he feared to say,** She is **my wife, lest** the **men of the city** |**kill him on** account of **her**0**.** +**Then Abimelech king of Gerar** |**sent and** |**took** `**Sarah.** 3 +**But Elohim** |**came to Abimelech in** a **dream** by ˙**night and** |**said to him: Behold, you** are to **die**| **on** account of **the woman whom you have taken,** +**for she** is the **spouse**| **of** a **possessor.**

4 +**Now Abimelech had not** gone **near** › **her, and he** |**said: My Lord, are You** going to **kill**| **even** an 7**unknowing and**0 **righteous nation?** 5 Did **not he him**self **say to me, She** is **my sister? And moreover,** did not **she her**self **say, He** is **my brother? In** the **sincerity of my heart and in** the **innocence of my palms have I done this.** 6 + **The** One**, Elohim,** |sa**replied to him in** the **dream: I**´ mr**too know that you have done this in** the **sincerity of your heart, and I**´ **was** mr**also keeping** `**you back from sinning**– ›**against Me. Therefore I** did **not** g**allow you to touch** › **her.** 7 + **Now restore the man's wife, for he** is a **prophet** +**that he may pray about you,** so +**that** you may **live!** +**But if you are not restoring** her**, know that you shall die,** yea **die**–**, you and all who** are **yours.**

8 +**So Abimelech** c**rose** |**early in** the **morning and** |**called** › **all his servants and** |sp**reported** `**all** ˙**these** ˙**things** i**before their ears. And** 7**all**n **the men** became **exceedingly** |**fearful.** 9 +**Then Abimelech** |**called** › **Abraham and** |**said to him: What have you done to us? And** wt**wherein have I sinned** ›**against you that you have brought on me and on my kingdom** so **great** a **sin? You have done** wi**to me** d**things** w**that should not be done.** 10 **And Abimelech** |**said to Abraham: What** did **you have** in see**view that you did** `**this** ˙**thing?**

11 + **Abraham** |sa**replied:** t**Because I said** to myself**,** there **is surely no fear of Elohim in** ˙**this** ri**place: and they will kill me on** sp**account of my wife.** 12 **And** mr**besides, she** is **truly my sister,** the **daughter of my father** y**though not** the **daughter of my mother. And she** |**became my** › **wife.** 13 + **It** |**came** to **pass,** as w**when Elohim** c**made** `**me stray from my father's house,** +**that I** |**said to her: This** is **your kindness** w**that you should** d**show** wi **me;** ›**at** ˙**every** ri**place where**d **we shall come, say** ›**of me, he** is **my brother.**

14 +**Then Abimelech** |**took** 7a **thousand** shekels **of sil-**

ver and[n] a **flock and** a **herd,** [+] men**servants and maid**servants**, and** [l]**gave** them **to Abraham; he** [+]**also** [l]**restored** `**his wife Sarah to him.** 15 **And Abimelech** [l]**said** [7]**to Abraham**[0]**, Behold, my land** is **before you; dwell** [i]**where** it is **good in your eyes.** 16 [+] **To Sarah he said, Behold, I have given** a **thousand** shekels **of silver to your brother.** [bd]**Now this** will serve › **you** as a **covering of eyes** ›**before all who** are `with **you.** [+]**So** `in **all** respects you are [+]**now** publicly **vindicated**[l]**.** 17 [+]**Then Abraham** [l]**prayed to the** One**, Elohim, and Elohim** [l]**healed** `**Abimelech and** `**his wife and his maidservants,** so [+]**that they** could [l]**bear** again**;** 18 **for Yahweh had restrained,** yea **restrained– tightly every womb** ›**in Abimelech's household on** [sp]**account of Abraham's wife Sarah.**

ABIMELECH

Abimelech, king of Gerar, had received many intimations that the Elohim, the Subjector was with Abraham. When Abraham had deceived him in regard to Sarah, his wife, He had warned the king, and no harm had come to Abraham, but rather gain. And so this prophet, as God had called him, had prospered enormously while sojourning in the king's country. So it was that the ruler of the land actually sought to make a treaty with Abraham, as though he already had a sovereign right to tenant in it!

Abimelech was a Philistine, a people who descended from Ham, like the Egyptians, but not through Canaan, like the Canaanites. The Hebrew lexicons all seem to make them descendants of *Shem*, but give no scriptural evidence.

In the tenth of Genesis and the first of 1 Chronicles we have the line of Ham, Mizraim, Casluhim, after which is the parenthesis: "from where the Philistines came forth" (1 Chron. 1:12). They must be distinguished from the Canaanites, who were under a curse. The Philistines stretched along the shore of the Mediterranean, up to Carmel at times. They spread out somewhat in the south, and were often subject to the Egyptians, who were also Hamites.

GENESIS 21:22-34

22 [+] **It** [l]**came** to **pass** [i]**at** ·**that time** [+]**that Abimelech,** [+]**with Phicol** the **chief of his** military **host,** [lsa]**spoke to Abraham,** › **saying–: Elohim** is **with you in all** [w]**that you** are **doing.** 23 [+]**So swear now to me** [bd]**here** [i]**by Elohim** that **you shall assuredly no**t deal **false**ly ›**with me** [+]**or** › **my progeny** [+]**or** › **my posterity. According** to the **kindness** [w]**that I have** [d]**shown** [wi]**to you, you shall** [d]**deal with me and with the land in which you sojourn.**

24 **And Abraham** [l]**said: I´** [l]**swear** it**.**

25 [+]**Then Abraham reproved** `**Abimelech on account** of **the well of water which** the **servants of Abimelech had snatched.**

26 [+]**But Abimelech** [lsa]**replied** [7]**to him: I** do **not know** [a]**who has done** `**this** ·**thing; and moreover, you´** did **not tell** › **me; and** [mr]**besides I´ had not heard** of it **un**til **today.**

27 [+]**Then Abraham** [l]**took** a **flock** of sheep **and** a **herd** of cattle **and** [l]**gave** them **to Abimelech; and** the **two of them** [l]**contracted** a **covenant.** 28 [+]**When Abraham** [lst]**set** `**seven ewe lambs of the flock aside** by **them**selves**,** 29 [+] **Abimelech** [l]**said to Abraham: What** is the meaning [bd]**here** of ·**these seven ewe lambs** [w]**that you have** [st]**set aside** by **them**selves**?** 30 [+] [7]**Abraham**[0] [lsa]**replied:** [t] **You** must [l]**take** `[S]**the**[n] **seven ewe lambs from my hand in** [p]**order** that **it may** [b]**be** › a **testimony for me that I have delved** `**this** ·**well.** 31 **Therefore** one **called** › ·**this** [ri]**place Beer-sheba** [t]**because there** the **two of them had sworn** an oath**.**

32 [+]**When they** had [l]**contracted** the **covenant** [i]**at Beer-sheba,** [+] **Abimelech** [l]**got up** [+]**with Phicol** the **chief of his** military **host, and they** [l]**returned to Philistine country.** 33 [+]**Then** [7]**Abraham**[nc] [l]**planted** a **tamarisk** [i]**at Beer-sheba and** [l]**called there** [i]**on** the **name of Yahweh,** [S]**the**[n] **eonian El.** 34 [+] **Abraham** [l]**sojourned many days** as an alien **in Philistine country.**

SELF-RIGHTEOUS ABIMELECH

Self-righteous Abimelech made a good foil for God-righteous Abraham. He evidently realized that God was with Abraham in *all* that he did, good or bad. But, alas! he only wanted Abraham to be as good as he was! That was easy, so Abraham did not hesitate. But Abimelech was a king, so he was responsible for what his subjects did, and they had committed what was a serious crime under the circumstances. They had snatched a well of water which belonged to Abraham. In such a land water is the most valuable possession. And such a well as this in this location became famous, as it is today, for few travelers to the holy land do not go to see it. But, typically, it is a symbol of the spirit of God, and the life that wells up in the believer for life eonian.

As the land was promised to his seed, he could not swear *never* to eject the Philistines, but, as he knew that his seed would not dwell in it until four hundred years later, he was free to make a conditional agreement with Abimelech. The AV suggests that he made it with "my son" or "my son's son," but the Hebrew reads "my progeny +or . . . my posterity" (Gen.21:23), that is, to his whole family. So the treaty was well within the limits, and probably lasted only as long as Abraham's son and grandson were in his country, until Jacob went down to Egypt.

All that he stipulated was that Abraham would not be *false* to him and his family! Why this? Because Abraham *had* been false to him in the matter of Sarah. Can we visualize the situation? Here was a Philistine king, who did *not* have Yahweh for his Subjector, asking His prophet, to whom He had promised the land, not to deceive him again! Abraham had been afraid of *him*. Yet now *he* was afraid of *Abraham!* Of course Abraham had nothing to say but, "I swear."

BEER-SHEBA

In order to make the matter sure, Abraham paid for the well-site with a flock and a herd (21:27), as the basis of a covenant. For the well itself, which he had delved, they entered into a covenant, and Abraham gave seven ewe lambs to Abimelech as testimony to the fact that the well belonged to him. Besides, it was given a name which records that fact. Beer-sheba means WELL-OATH, and that name remains to this day. When in Palestine, I made a special point of visiting the spot. There seem to have been seven wells later. The stem of the word *oath* and *seven* is the same: *shbo*. This probably kept the name from being changed, as was done with many other sites.

The AV says that Abraham "planted a *grove* in Beer-sheba and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God." (Gen.21:33). This is most misleading, for, in all other places where the word "grove" occurs, they indicate false worship. They were often cut down on that account. Those "groves" are named *ashre* happiness, to express the licentious worship which they concealed. The CV calls them "Ashera *poles*." The word here used, *ashl* TAMARISK, looks very much like this, for the *r* and *l* are easily confused in Hebrew. The AV renders it "tree" in the only other occurrences (1 Sam.22:6; 31:13). We may be sure that Abraham would not plant a grove in which idolators could conduct their orgies.

THE WELL

Abraham was encouraged to assert his rights. Doubtless he had been afraid to do so before. Besides all the wealth, especially in cattle, which Abraham had amassed, he owned wells of water. Particularly for a herdsman, drinking-water is of inestimable value, and has caused countless clashes, especially in the western plains of the

United States, for cattle cannot live long without water. The servants of Abimelech evidently had not learned to fear Abraham's Protector, so they took his well away from him. It was the easiest way that they could keep him out of their preserves. But Abimelech was afraid, and profuse in his excuses.

Neither did Abraham call on the LORD there, but on the name of Yahweh (Will-be-ing-was) El (SUBJECTOR) *eonian*. This was most appropriate. He did not trust the Philistine king or his covenant, for the man might not live another year, nor did he depend upon his army, for it might be destroyed in a day. We know that there is no trace left of them now. But the well is still there, and Beer-sheba has been in the hands of his descendants most of the time since then. For four hundred years his descendants, from Jacob to Joshua, lost it, and so for long periods later. So he called on the *eonian* Subjector, Who not only *was* in Abraham's day, but will be throughout the eonian times. In the day of Yahweh, and the day of El, then the promises given to Abraham will find a glorious fulfillment, and his descendents will be refreshed by the water from the Well of the Oath.

Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days, and Beer-sheba, about as far south of Hebron as that is of Jerusalem, though a little to the west, seems to have been the center of their sojourn until Jacob went down to Egypt at the request of Joseph.

NOT OF ACTS

We read that, "by *faith* Abraham, being called, obeys, *coming out* into the place which he was about to obtain to enjoy as an allotment, and came out, not versed in where he is coming. By faith he *sojourns* in the land of promise . . ." (Heb.11:8-9). Later we have the result, "And he believed Yahweh, and it is accounted to him for right-

eousness." (Gen.15:6). He was not justified by going to the land of promise, or remaining there, or building an altar there, or interceding for Sodom, or any other *act*, good or bad. Neither was he condemned by any bad *acts*, such as prevaricating as to his wife's status, or by going, to Egypt without orders.

TURNING BAD INTO GOOD

Abraham was chosen to give us simple illustrations and public exhibitions of how acts, bad in themselves, are not only justified by Yahweh, but actually bring blessing! Even Pharaoh, whom Abram had wronged, did good to Abram, so that he came to have a flock and a very heavy herd of cattle, and donkeys, and menservants and maidservants. But poor Pharaoh must suffer, even though he had done no wrong! As a result of his journey the *culprit* is very heavy in cattle and in silver and in gold. Here, put into concrete, tangible, substantial form, we have the results of faith righteousness. The Subjector, by His intervention, turns all Abram's sins into undeserved blessings, simply because he *believed* Him in regard to His plans, even though he did not trust Him at all times.

How thankful we should be that we are not justified by the *amount*, or the *firmness* of our faith, or the *steadfastness* with which we believe! If it had depended on these things Abraham would *not* have been justified! We can understand and, perhaps, condone his deception when he went down to Egypt and caused so much damage to Pharaoh there, by his conduct. Yet after this had shown Yahweh's care and beneficence (Gen.20:14-15), how could he fall for the same fear again? Yet we should be thankful that it was so, for do we not do the same? And when we do, does it not tempt us to doubt His grace? How can we expect Him to extend His justification to repeaters, who do not seem to benefit by the lessons of the past?

GERAR

One would think that his experience with Pharaoh, in Egypt, would have cured Abram of misrepresenting his relation to his wife. Even if his words were technically correct, for Sarah *was* his sister, the natural implication was that she was not his wife. Such a relationship was evidently rather rare. Should he not have had enough confidence in Yahweh's ability to protect him, so that he could openly confess the truth?

When Abraham sinned the second time (Gen.20:2), he did not leave the land promised to him and go into an alien country. Gerar may be included in the territory of Israel today. He journeyed toward the Negev (*ngb*, ARCH), or *south* rim. Just as *im* SEA is often used to indicate the *west*, so *ngb* is often rendered *south*, or southward, in our versions, although *drum* is the real word for SOUTH. It refers to the border country between Israel and Egypt. The actual border seems to be indicated by *shur* REGARD, which indicates a *barricade*. Abraham does not seem to have made this territory his permanent dwelling place, but was temporarily sojourning in *Gerar*.

Abimelech is called the king of Gerar here. But later he is called king of the Philistines (Gen.26:8), so it may be that this was his capital, or a place of temporary sojourn *(gur)*. At any rate, this descendant of Ham was the *supposed* ruler of the land. Yet here he came into touch with Abraham, the *real* title-holder. Abraham, however, made a very poor showing, so the Subjector stepped in and, by means of a dream, did not dethrone him and put Abraham in his place, for that time had not yet come. Yet He put Abimelech below him, by making Abraham, not only the possessor of Sarah, who might avenge the kidnapping of his wife, but a prophet of the Subjector, on whose word his very life depended.

THE PHILISTINE NATION

The language used by Abimelech is very suggestive. It shows us what the Philistines thought of themselves. The Subjector did not threaten the whole *nation* with death on account of his taking of Sarah, yet the king expostulates, ". . . are You going to kill even an unknowing and righteous *nation*?" (Gen.20:4). Did he, in his inmost consciousness, have an intimation of the fate of the nation, and fear its fulfillment at that time? Abimelech had been sincere, in this transaction, but the *nation* certainly was not *righteous*. This they afterward showed, when they stopped up the wells which Abraham's servants had dug (Gen.26: 15,18). In closing, the Subjector broadens His threat to include all of Abimelech's servants (Gen.20:7).

A PROPHETIC SCENE

Abraham does not make much of a showing in his role as a prophet, but the *scene* which follows certainly is a miniature prophecy of the kingdom of his greater Son, although Abraham makes a poor representation of Him (Gen.20: 8-18). First, the fear of the Elohim is felt by all Abimelech's servants. Then he not only restores Sarah, but presents him with much money and a flock and a herd, and servants and maids. All that Abraham did was to pray for the king, that God would heal him and his house, for they had not only been threatened, but had actually been given a foretaste of the impending inflictions.

Why is it that these disgraceful stories of Abraham's duplicity are recorded in the Scriptures of truth? To be sure, they are seldom mentioned, and do not seem to have seriously dimmed the luster of his fame. We may be sure that they have a profound lesson for all who *believe*. We suggest that the reason is this: They illustrate the righteousness of *faith*, which is *altogether of God*, for it needs

a background of Abrahamic *un*righteousness to properly display and emphasize it. This is so seldom realized that we feel compelled to over-emphasize it, otherwise the great truth of justification by faith can hardly be fully grasped and enjoyed.

GOD JUSTIFIES

The subjects of these episodes in the story of the life of Abraham seem to most of us out of line with the rest of the narrative, for they record a *lack* of faith on the part of the great example of faith. We are prone to base his righteousness largely on his *acts*, rather than his *faith*. This is extremely misleading, when we apply it to ourselves. Are we justified by faith in *the acts of Christ and God* on our behalf in the past, or must we add to these our own faulty actions in the present? None of *us* would justify Abraham's conduct in Egypt or in Philistia. Yet *God did justify both of them, by their outcome!* They brought much material wealth and spiritual prestige to Abraham, as the exponent of that righteousness which comes from faith in God alone.

EXHORTATION

Let us hope that these two episodes in the life of the father of the faith-filled, will be blessed to the readers of these lines, so that they may enjoy fully the righteousness which is theirs by faith *alone*, not based on any of their faulty acts, and, as a result, enter into perfect peace with God, based *only* on the acts of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Only so may we have access to the grace in which we stand and glory in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:2).

May these acts of Abraham help us to enjoy the great foundation truth of Romans 4:5, "to him who is *not* working, yet is *believing* on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness."

A. E. Knoch

SEDUCTIVE, PRIDEFUL DELUSIONS; VARIED USAGES OF "EONS"

Question:

I have purchased the Concordant New Testament, Greek Text, as well as all of the Old Testament translations in the past year. Upon looking into Galatians chapter six, I came across a bit of confusion (which I am sure would not be confusion to you) concerning verse three. The Concordant NT says, "For if anyone is supposing himself to be anything, being nothing, he is imposing on himself." Now the part, ". . . he is imposing on himself," is the confusing part to me. I looked in WIGRAM'S ENGLISHMAN'S CONCORDANCE (also recommended by CPC) and compared the Greek word there with what the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT has, and they were the same. How is it that Wigram's translates this word as "deceiveth" and not as "he-is-imposING-on" as the Concordant sublinear renders it? Both of these translations make a huge difference in the context of the passage. The idea of "deceiveth," in my opinion, does not flow with the context of the first five verses.

Answer:

THE LINE in Wigram's Concordance for Galatians 6:3 which includes the word "deceiveth" is not Wigram's own translation, but merely his listing of that verse as it appears in the Authorized Version itself.

Idiomatic usage between languages is sometimes quite similar, while in other cases it is very different. Our goal, in translation, is to remain substantively close to the sense

of the Original, even in cases where, in order to maintain a reasonable level of good diction, we cannot be formally literal and can only be literal in the sense of in accordance with essence of meaning.

The problem which Paul addresses herein, in Galatians 6:3, is not, per se, one of deception (though by corollary that is true as well), but of *seduction,* namely, of self-seduction.

The elements of the Greek word *phrenapataō,* signify "DISPOSE-SEDUCE." The element *phren* (as in the English "phrenology") is the Greek stem which speaks of mental inclination, which we render accordingly as "disposition" (see Keyword Concordance, p.79, entries "disposed" and "disposition"). The element *apataō* is the Greek verb which means "seduce" (see KC, p.262, entries "seduce" and "seduction").

If anyone, then, failing both in meekness and as a bearer of the burdens of others (Gal.6:1,2), instead, should be supposing himself to be anything, being nothing, he is "dispose-seducing" on himself (Gal.6:3). As a matter of mental inclination or disposition, he is thus involved in self-seduction (as opposed to seduction imposed on him by someone else). What such a one has seduced himself into thinking is that he is, as it were, "hot stuff," that is, one who is quite superior to others, so much so that he has no need either for meekness or for objective—and necessarily negative as to one's own flesh—self-evaluation (*cf* "noting yourself," 6:1).

Furthermore, since he is so superior, he need not waste his putative greatness in selfless service to others in consideration of their manifest burdens (6:2). Such a one, then, in his *disposition,* is involved by way of corollary in an act of *imposition,* that of imposing the false (yet very seductive) notion upon himself which is referred to above. Thus, idiomatically: "If anyone is supposing himself to be anything, being nothing, he is imposing on himself." Namely, he is imposing on himself a false and harmful notion, albeit one that by its enticing, seductive nature (since it tells us what we, in our pride, would like to hear) we are apt to entertain and perhaps even freely accept as well.

❊

Question:

I am relatively new to the teaching that all men will be saved. However, as you can imagine, there are still a few wrinkles I need to iron out. My question concerns Revelation 20:10. First of all, I guess I must ask that since everything comes from God, exists in God, and will return to God, then will Satan himself be saved? Or, if not, what will be his ultimate outcome?

Revelation 20:10 speaks of the Adversary, as well as of the wild beast and the false prophet. And then it says, "And they shall be tormented day and night for eons of the eons." If, in fact, even today, only two eons lie ahead, namely, the millennial kingdom followed by the eon of the eons, then what does "eon*s* [plural] of the eons" mean here?

Most translators render this as "for ever and ever." However, it does mention day and night which indicates time divisions, hence, ages. I would have supposed that it should say "the eo*n* of the eons," which would indicate the final eon. But to say "eon*s* of the eons," seems to indicate, at least, many more eons.

Or, could traditional Christianity be right in translating it "for ever and ever"? If they are not correct in this translation, then is not the thought of eternity expressed anywhere in the Bible at all? Or if this thought does appear, what words are used for this purpose?

Answer:

Since all of creation is in the Son of God's love, through

Whom God delights to reconcile all, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens, there is no more reason to suppose that Satan is not included therein than that any other certain creature is not included therein. Therefore, it must be that that notable creature who had rightly long been termed "the Adversary," is very much included in the reconciliation of the universe, at which time this title ("Adversary" or "Satan") necessarily will no longer apply, since he will be reconciled and be at peace.

Your next question concerns Revelation 20:10, in regard to the torment spoken of there which will be "for the eons of the eons." The usual question here, as it is ordinarily expressed, is: "How can there be only one 'age' after the millennium when the devil, at the end of the thousand years, is to be tormented unto ages of ages?"

The problem here is a loose usage of terms. The "thousand years" of the saints' reign does not constitute the entirety of the coming epochal *eon* or duration. The two do not end at the same time.

"The period of time covered by the word 'eon' depends upon the context. The expression 'for the eon' does not necessarily include the entirety of the eon intended. While some seem to think that it must include the whole of a given eon, on the contrary, when an action occurs in an eon, it usually refers only to the rest of it. Our Lord spoke to the barren fig tree, 'No longer, by any means, may fruit be coming of you *for the eon.*' Did He forbid fruit from the deluge to His coming? The tree was not even planted until a thousand years after the flood, and it *did* produce fruit in this eon, but was to do so *no longer* (Matt.21:19; Mark 11:14; *cp* John 13:8; 1 Cor.8:13).

"So also in the plural. 'For the eons' does not denote the whole of them. Christ shall reign over the house of Jacob 'for the eons,' yet only two of them will be left when the kingdom commences (Luke 1:33). This passage also shows

that the rendering '*unto* the eons' is impossible, for then He would not reign at all!

"The same is true of the phrase 'for the eons of the eons.' We read that the saints will be reigning for the eons of the eons (Rev.22:5). But some of these saints will not be alive at the commencement of the millennial eon. We cannot delay this eon after the advent of the Messiah. Yet Daniel and the dead circumcision saints are not raised until seventy-five days later. Part of the eon will be past when they commence to reign with Him the thousand years (Rev. 20:6). The same usage is found with reference to the torment of the Adversary. Although the wild beast and the false prophet have been in the lake of fire a thousand years before him (Rev.19:20), only one phrase is used for both: "the eons of the eons" (Rev.20:10). At that juncture, how much of that eon still remains, we do not know. But no matter how little, so it was that our Lord and His apostles spoke, and we should follow His example. This *usage* (in Revelation 20:10) of the word 'eon' does not affect its *meaning.* The limitations are in the *context,* not in the word."[1]

The fact that "eons" speaks of a plurality is no indication whatsoever of any particular plurality, certainly not of a very numerous plurality such as "(at least) many more," as you suggest.

Then you asked, "Or, could traditional Christianity be right in translating [this phrase] "for ever and ever"?

The traditional rendering "for ever and ever," the sense of which being the idea of endlessness, is unquestionably wrong as a translation, even if it could somehow be shown to be correct as an interpretation. As a translator, one must be objective if he would remain a translator, lest he should become an interpreter, sharing his own subjective opinion as to sense of usage. The Greek always reads

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.40, p.144.

aiōn; the CV always reads "eon," the latter simply being an anglicized transliteration of the Greek (a parallel case is the Greek *baptizō* and the English anglicized transliteration "baptize").

By our translation "eon" we mean the idea of "(inherently) indefinite duration." As *translators,* we do not mean for "eon" to be understood in any other way, including as an "age," or "eon" where "eon" is understood as a finite period. As *expositors,* in our own writings, since we find that all eonian time-durations revealed in Scripture have in view finite periods, we interpret the usage of these words accordingly, as finite time periods. But that is an entirely separate point from what these words themselves mean and how they must be *translated* (and, understood as well, at the translative level) if we would be objective and accurate in translation.

Finally you asked, "If the [usual translations are incorrect in their rendering 'for ever and ever,'] then is not the thought of eternity expressed anywhere in the Bible at all? Or if this thought does appear, what words are used for this purpose?"

Yes, the idea of endlessness does occur in Luke 1:33: "And He [i.e., 'the Son of the Most High,' v.32] shall reign over the house of Jacob for the eons. And, *of His kingdom* [i.e., '*reign*'] there shall be *no consummation.*" Concerning that which is "of" (i.e., "pertains to") His reign as the accomplishment thereof, there shall be no consummation.[2]

That which Christ achieves through (or as a result of) His reign, will be endless; and *that* will never consummate, which is to say, it will be interminable, in that there will always be new goals to achieve and still further glories to bring into realization. J.R.C.

2. In the nature of the case, concerning the phrase "*of* His kingdom," this is the ablative (i.e., "from-sense") usage of this Greek genitival case ending, represented in English by the preposition "of."

DAVID'S MOURNING
(2 Samuel 19:1-40)

19 +**Then** › **Joab was** ˡ**told** *bd*[bd]**that the king** was **weeping and** ˡ**mourning over Absalom.** 2 **And the victory** *i*[i] ˙**that day** *lb*[lb]**was** turned ›**into mourning for all the** *wi*[wi]**soldiers, for** *i*[i] ˙**that day the** *wi*[wi]**soldiers heard** it › **said**–**, The king is grieved over his son.** 3 + **The** *wi*[wi]**soldiers** ˡ**stole** away *i*[i] ˙**that day to enter the city just as** ˙*wi*[wi]**soldiers** would ˡ**steal** away ˙who are **put to shame**ˡ *i*[i]**when they** have **fled**– **in battle.** 4 +**As** for **the king, he wrapped** up `**his face. And the king** ˡ**cried out** in a **loud voice,** O **my son Absalom!** O **Absalom, my son, my son!**

5 +**Then Joab** ˡ**came** 7[7]**in**to0[0] **the house to the king and** ˡ**said, Today you have** *c*[c]**put** to **shame** `the **faces of all your servants,** `who *m*[m]**provided** an **escape**ˡ `for **your soul** ˙this **day and** `the **soul**s **of your sons and your daughters, and** the **soul**s **of your wives and** the **soul**s **of your concubines,** 6 ›**by loving**– `those who **hate**ˡ **you and** › **hating**– `those who **love**ˡ **you. For you have professed today that chief** officer**s and** conscript **servants are no**thing **to you.** *t*[t]**Now I know today** *t*[t] **even if Absalom** were **alive and all of us** were **dead**ˡ **today, then that** would be **upright in your eyes.**

7 + **Now arise!** Go **forth and speak** *on*[on]**to** the **heart of your servants! For I swear** *i*[i]**by Yahweh,** *t*[t]**if you are no**t go**ing forth, assuredly no man shall lodge** `with **you tonight; and this will be worse for you** *f*[f]**than any** ˙**evil** plight *w*[w]**that has come over you from your youth until now.** 8 +**So the king** ˡ**arose and** ˡ**sat** down **in** the **gate**way**; and** when › **all the** *wi*[wi]**soldiers were told,** › **saying**–**, Behold, the king** is **sitting in** the **gate**way, + **all the** *wi*[wi]**soldiers** ˡ**came before the king.**

+ **Israel´ had fled,** each **man to his** *M*[M]**tent~.** 9 + **All the**

people came to ˡ**be speculating** ⁱ**among all** the **tribes of Israel,** ˃ **saying**¯**,** It was **the king** who **rescued us from** the **palm of** ⁷**all**ᶜˢ **our enemies**ˡ**, and he**´ ᵐ**provided our** ¯**escape from the palm of** the **Philistines.** ⁺**Yet now he** ran **away from the land, from** control **over** ⁷**his kingdom and from**⁰ **Absalom.** 10 ⁺**But Absalom, whom we had anointed over us, has died in battle;** ⁺ **why** ⁿᵒʷ**then** do **you** ᶜ**keep silent**ˡ ˃**about bringing back**¯ `**the king?** ⁷**And** the **word of all Israel came to the king**ᶜ**.** 11 ⁺**So** ˙**king David him**self **sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests,** ˃ **saying**¯**, Speak to** the **elders of Judah,** ˃ **saying**¯**, Why should you** ᵇ**be** the **last to bring** `**the king back to his** ⁱⁿ**palace,** ⁺**since** the **word of all Israel has come to the king** ˃**at his house?** 12 **You** are **my kinsmen, you** are **my bone and my flesh.** ⁺ **Why should you** ᵇ**be** the **last to bring** `**the king back?** 13 **And to Amasa you shall say,** Are **you not my bone and my flesh? Thus may Elohim do to me, and thus may He add, if you** do **not** ˡ**become chief of the** military **host before me all** ˙your **days** ᵘ**instead of Joab.** 14 **And** Amasa ˡ**won over** `the **heart of all** the **men of Judah as one man; and they** ˡ**sent** word **to the king,** ⁷ ˃ **saying**¯ᶜˢ**, Return, you and all your servants!**

15 ⁺**So the king** ˡ**returned and** ˡ**came as far as the Jordan; and** ⁷the **men of**⁰ **Judah had come** toᵈ ˙**Gilgal** ˃**on** their ᵍᵒ**way**¯ **to meet the king, to** ᶜ**bring** `**the king across**¯ `**the Jordan.** 16 ⁺ **Shimei son of Gera** the **Benjamite** ʷ **from Bahurim made** ˡ**haste and** came ˡ**down with** the **men of Judah to meet** ˙**king David,** 17 **and with him** were a **thousand men from Benjamin.** ⁺**Also Ziba,** the **young** attendant **of Saul's** ⁱⁿ**estate,** ⁺ **his fifteen sons and his twenty servants** `with **him,** ⁺ **they prospered** in arriving at **the Jordan before the king;** 18 **and** ⁷**they~ crossed the ford to** ᶜ**bring across** `**the king's house**hold, **and to do** ˙whatever was **good in his eyes.**

⁺**As** for **Shimei son of Gera,** ⁱ**when he** had **crossed**¯ ⁱ the **Jordan, he fell** down **before the king;** 19 **and he** ˡ**said to the king, Let not my lord** ˡ**account depravity to me, and do**

not ˡ**remember** `ʷ**what** ¯**depravity your servant** ᶜ**did** ⁱ**on** the **day** ʷ**when my lord the king** went **forth from Jerusalem,** so ˃**that the king** should ᵖˡ**take**¯ it **to** ʰⁱˢ **heart.** 20 **For your servant knows that I,** yea **I have sinned.** ⁺**So** ᵇᵈ**here I have come today,** the **first** ˃**of all** the **house of Joseph, to** go **down** ˃**and meet**¯ **my lord the king.**

21 ⁺**Then Abishai son of Zeruiah** ˡ**responded,** ⁺ ˡ**saying, Should Shimei not be** ᶜ**put** to **death** ᵘ**for this** ᵗ**because he has maledicted** `**Yahweh's anointed?** 22 ⁺**Yet David** ˡˢᵃ**replied, What** is it **to me and to you, sons of Zeruiah, that today you** have ˡ**become my** ˃ **adversary? Should** anyone **in Israel be** ᶜ**put** to **death** on ˙this **day? For** do ⁷**you~ not know that today I** am again **king over Israel?** 23 ⁺**Then the king** ˡ**said to Shimei, You shall not die. And the king** ˡ**swore** an oath **to him.**

24 ⁺**Also Mephibosheth,** grand**son of Saul,** came **down to meet the king.** ⁺ **He had neither** ᵈ**cared** for **his feet, nor had he** ᵈ**cared** for **his upper lip, nor had he laundered** `**his clothes** ˃ **from the day the king** ᵍᵒ**departed**¯ **until the day** ʷ **he came** back **in peace.** 25 ⁺**So it** ˡᵇ**was** ᵗ**when he came** ⁷**from**⁰ **Jerusalem to meet the king** ⁺**that the king** ˡ**said to him, Why** did **you not go with me, Mephibosheth?**

26 ⁺ **He** ˡˢᵃ**replied, My lord the king,** it was **my** own **servant** who **deceived me. For your servant had said** ⁷**to him**ᶜ**,** ⁷**Saddle~**ˢ **the donkey for me** ⁺**that I may ride on it and** ˡ**go** `with **the king. For your servant** is **lame.** 27 ⁺ Ziba has ˡ**vilified** ⁱ **your servant** ˃**before my lord the king.** ⁺**But my lord the king** is **like** a **messenger of the** One, **Elohim;** ⁺**so do** ˙what is **good in your eyes.** 28 **For all of** the **house**hold **of my** grand**father** ᵇ**were not**hing ᵗ**now** ⁱᶠ**but men** doomed to **death** ˃**before my lord the king.** ⁺**Yet you** ˡ**set** `**your servant** ⁱ**among** those who **ate**ˡ at **your table.** ⁺**So what righteous** claim **have I** ᶠʳ**then** ⁺ **to cry out** any ᶠʳ**more to the king?**

29 ⁺ **The king** ˡˢᵃ**replied to him, Why should you speak** any ᶠʳ**longer** of **your** ˢᵖ**affairs? I** ˢᵃ**decree** that **you**´ **and Ziba**

|apportion `the field.** 30 **+But Mephibosheth |said to the king, mr Just let him take `the whole, inasmuch as my lord the king has come to his home in peace.

31 **+Also Barzillai the Gileadite had** come **down from Rogelim and** had **|passed** on `with **the king** to **the Jordan to see him off** `at **the Jordan.** 32 **+ Barzillai was very old, eighty years** of **age. + He´ had all provided `the king** with food **i during his sit stay i at Mahanaim, for he** was a **very wealthy man.** 33 **+So the king |said to Barzillai, You, cross** over `with **me, and I will all provide** `for **7your old** age~ **with me in Jerusalem.**

34 **+Yet Barzillai |sa replied to the king, How** many **days of** the **years of my life** are left **that I should** go **up** `with **the king** to **Jerusalem?** 35 **I** am **eighty years** of **age today.** Would **I |know** the difference **between good ›and bad? if Or** can **your servant |taste `w what I |eat and `w what I |drink? if Or** can **I fr still |make out i** the **voice of singing** men **and singing** women**? Why +then should your servant become** a **further › load to my lord the king?** 36 **Your servant** could **barely |cross `the Jordan** `with **the king! + Why should the king requite me** with **¯this ¯requital?** 37 I **pray, let your servant return +that I may die in my** own **city wi near** the **tomb of my father and my mother. +But bd here** is **your servant Chimham, 7my son c; let him cross** over **with my lord the king, and do for him `w what** is **good in your eyes.**

38 **+ The king |said, Chimham shall cross** over `with **me, and I my**self will **|do for him** `whatever is **good in 7my~ e eyes. And any**thing else **w you |choose** to ask **on of me, I** will **|do** that **for you** too. 39 **+Then all the wi soldiers |crossed** over **`the Jordan. +When the king** was ready to **¯cross, + the king |kissed › Barzillai and |blessed him; and** Barzillai **|returned to his** own **ri place.** 40 **+Then the king |crossed** over to **d ¯Gilgal, and Chimham crossed with him, and all** the **wi soldiers of Judah; + they c brought `the king ¯across, mr together +with half** the **wi force of Israel.**

DAVID'S MOURNING

David had lost Amnon, his firstborn son. Now he had lost another son, one who had certainly appeared to all as a likely successor to the throne. David loved his children deeply, and the knowledge that his own sins were at the root of these losses surely caused him feelings of deep guilt for Amnon's and Absalom's deaths. But how could David safeguard someone who declared war against him and sought to kill him? David was long overdue to choose between his friends and enemies, and to let go of Absalom.

JOAB'S REBUKE

Joab was practical and fearless, though sometimes unscrupulous. He was probably younger than David. It is likely that he had been with David while Saul was still alive, but he is not mentioned in a position of leadership until his confrontation with Abner in 2 Samuel 2. Joab and David had been together through many battles and other trying experiences. Joab was the one who carried out David's order to see that Uriah was killed. Joab "had the goods" on David—good and bad. This deep familiarity with David, and a realization of the country's immediate condition, provided Joab with the boldness to rebuke the king so harshly.

Like a hard resounding slap in the face, Joab's rebuke brought David back to his senses. "Better is exposed reproof than love that is concealed. Faithful are the injuries of one in friendship, yet shifty are the kisses of one who hates" (Prov.27:5,6). It was imperative for the unity and stability of the country that David mask his feelings for Absalom. David returned to the gate and commended his loyalists, and the healing of the nation was begun.

REGAINING THE THRONE

Absalom was defeated. What should David do next? Should he not march back to Jerusalem and resume his challenged position? David showed a surprising degree of patience by waiting to be invited back to the throne. Then he gently chided his own tribe, Judah, for being the last to call for him.

Perhaps the most outstanding example of David's grace toward the rebellious nation was illustrated in his treatment of Shimei. Shimei had cursed David vehemently when David was fleeing Jerusalem (2 Sam.16:5-13). Now Shimei repented, bringing 1,000 Benjamites with him, besides Ziba and his house. They crossed the Jordan to meet the exiled king and to help bring him home. Abishai, who was vocal at the time of Shimei's cursing, spoke up calling for Shimei's execution. But David refused, saying it was a time of peace and restoration, and swore to Shimei that he would not die for his cursing. This grace is much like that of the Lord Jesus Christ to another Benjamite (Phil.3:5). "Grateful am I to Him Who invigorates me, Christ Jesus, our Lord, for He deems me faithful, assigning me a service, I, who formerly was a calumniator and a persecutor and an outrager: but I was shown mercy, seeing that I do it being ignorant, in unbelief. Yet the grace of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.1:12-14). Similar to the overwhelming grace of Christ, David's grace toward Shimei shocked even those who knew him best.

BARZILLAI

Barzillai and David had a sincere friendship rivaled only by that of Jonathan and David in earlier years. Barzillai freely gave of his substance to support the king's needs during his time across the Jordan, and asked for nothing

in return. The nation of Israel owed much to this man's generosity for the peace and prosperity enjoyed during the latter days of David's reign.

In Barzillai's son Chimham, David may have found a replacement for his deceased sons. It is likely that Chimham received a portion of the king's inheritance near Bethlehem (Jer.41:17). Other descendents of Barzillai are mentioned generations later in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh.7:63).

When Israel wandered 40 years in the wilderness, the death of the older generation was typical of the death of the flesh that precedes full enjoyment of the promises of God. This principle was emphasized again with the circumcision that accompanied the crossing of the Jordan at Gilgal under Joshua's leadership. David's crossing of the Jordan to return to Jerusalem also took place at Gilgal. There is much evidence of the flesh in the bickering of the tribes of Israel, but Barzillai stands as a beautiful example of the flesh left behind. He no longer could taste the delicacies that delight the tongue, or hear the melodies that stir the soul, but, in the person of his son, he crossed the descending river to dwell with the king.

J. Phillip Scranton

JOHN BRAUCHT

Our brother in the Lord, John Braucht, of St. Petersburg, Florida, was put to repose on March 10, 2005. In his 89 years, God gave him his own unique arrangement of experiences, both good and evil, many of which he described in his autobiography entitled, *A Life Worth Remembering*. One that was especially good was his acquaintance with the Concordant Version and the truth of the reconciliation of all. After his retirement from the military, John gave much of his time and strength to his ministry of distributing biblically related literature, including that of the Concordant Publishing Concern. Now he sleeps to await the glorious time when we will be snatched away together to meet our Lord in the air. Thanks be to God for this happy expectation!

On Baptism

BAPTISM IN PAUL'S EPISTLES

THE distinctive truth for the present time is given us through the apostle Paul (Eph.3:8,9) in the epistles written after Israel is set aside, or in view of that fact. In perfect accord with the grace revealed, the least of all saints is chosen to enlighten all as to the secret administration hitherto concealed by God.

If we seek to "reconcile" the various administrations in which baptism obtains and fuse them all into one general and indistinct whole, we only obscure the truth. Truth must be rightly apportioned, or it is no longer truth.

Even in Paul's letters there are various presentations of this subject which *seem* contradictory. If, however, we remember the administration in which each truth finds its place, all is clear. What seemed contradictory falls into perfect order. Thus we are enabled to give each Scripture its full weight. We are not forced to tone down or clip His word to make it fit some other passage.

Paul wrote nine epistles to seven ecclesias. Seven speaks of the perfection and completeness of the revelation God gave through him. Every subject in which we require instruction is dealt with. True, Peter and John deal with the same subjects, but their viewpoint is radically different and not at all in keeping with the present fullness of grace.

They fall into three groups, according to the measure of the manifestation of God at the time when they were written.

Two were written before the truths most characteristic of the present dispensation had been made known. These are 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

Four were written on the verge of the present period, and were sent to the Romans, the Corinthians and the Galatians.

Three were given after the public repudiation of Israel (Acts 28:25-28), in the full blaze of the glorious grace which is now dispensed. These were written to the Ephesians, the Philippians, and the Colossians.

The remaining four are personal epistles.

This is the key to the various ways in which the truth of baptism is presented in each. Perfect harmony prevails when we apprehend the progress of revelation.

THE EARLY LETTERS

The subject of baptism is entirely foreign to Thessalonian truth. Its scenes are laid in that future glory where baptism has no place.

In Galatians it is mentioned once. "Now at the coming of faith, we are no longer under an escort, for you are all sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. For whoever are baptized into Christ, put on Christ, in Whom there is no Jew nor yet Greek, there is no slave nor yet free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3:25-28).

Those under the law were children, kept in ward by its wall of ordinances and commandments. But when faith had come, the saints were given the place of a grown son.

This was not a matter of attainment for some. It was the portion of *all*. It is not a question of individual experience. It is not, as in nature, that saints become sons through infancy and youth. It is a question of God's administration.

All under law, however godly or experienced, were children. All who are of faith are sons. To illustrate this the apostle points to those among them who had been baptized into Christ. They had been clothed with Christ. And so, being clothed with Him, they themselves were not seen,

but Christ. All fleshly distinctions are obliterated. The differences between the Greek and the Jew, the slave and the freeman—even the sexes—all are gone in Him. But this was true, not alone of those who had been baptized, but of all. They were "all one in Christ Jesus."

Let us for a moment allow that baptism in water made them one, as it did those in Jerusalem and Samaria. Then only those baptized were clothed with Christ. There would then be a fleshly distinction—a conclusion diametrically opposite to the apostle's words.

No ordinance could make them one in sonship. That was by faith alone. Having begun by spirit, it was impossible for them to be perfected by flesh.

THE TRANSITIONAL LETTERS

The epistle to the Romans contains a retrospective glance at the ordinance of baptism as administered under the "evangel of God," or what Paul terms "*my* evangel."

It follows from that most astounding revelation of God's favor found in the fifth chapter. The sovereignty of sin, from Adam till Moses, was absolute. No less so is the present reign of grace. Much as sin may abound, grace always superabounds.

"A most dangerous doctrine," some would say. "Then a man may do just as he pleases! He may revel in sin and still be saved. Why his very sin will call forth still greater grants of grace!"

Just so.

"What, then, shall we declare? That we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing? May it not be coming to that! We, who died to sin, how shall we still be living in it? Or are you ignorant that whoever were baptized into Christ Jesus are baptized into His death? We, then, were entombed together with Him through baptism into His death, that, even as Christ was roused from

among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also should be walking in newness of life" (Rom.6:1-4).

The Received Text reads "Jesus Christ," which is unfortunate indeed. His personal name Jesus, followed by His title, Messiah, or Christ, refers us to the days of His humiliation. It was unto Christ as having been baptized at the cross, as having died and been buried, and as having been raised again; it was unto Christ Jesus that they were baptized. And this united them to Him. They too had been put to death, had been buried, and had been raised again. And this put them beyond the boundaries of sin's realm. Indeed, "We, who died to sin, how shall we still be living in it?"

UN-BAPTIZED INCLUDED IN CHRIST

The fact of having undergone the washing of water was no guarantee of a sinless life. It was only as they apprehended its spiritual meaning that its power was seen.

But some had not been baptized. Were they excluded from this unity with Christ? Were they forbidden to identify themselves with Him in His baptism? Or were they charged to undergo the ordinance in order to obtain these privileges?

None are told to be baptized. The apostle carefully distinguished between "us," those with him, and "*ye*" (emphatic or contrastive in the Greek), the Roman saints. Not even all of those with him had been baptized. He could only say "*as many* of us," not "*all*." Nor does he drop any hint which would lead us to infer that those with him had any intentions in that direction.

But still more strongly are we led to believe that it was not his object to teach the Romans to observe the rite, for a more fitting juncture could not be found in which he might have charged them to fulfil it. But he does not do so. And more than this, he does charge them to "reckon" it so. All the precious truth which the observance conveyed

to its subjects was to be *reckoned* theirs, just the same as though they had gone through it. The fact that God does not charge them to be baptized is a clear indication that it was not according to His will.

The uncertain footing upon which baptism in water rested during Paul's ministry among the nations, previous to the present administration, is in sharp contract to its firm hold in early Pentecostal times. This becomes very apparent by Paul's course at Corinth, and his subsequent thankfulness that he had not baptized more freely (1 Cor.1:14-16).

He regarded baptism as a unifier, or rather, in their case, a possible cause of division, by uniting them to another center than Christ. If he had baptized more of them he might be called upon to answer the charge of baptizing into his own name; thus creating a unity apart from the unity God had made by spirit-baptism. He goes on to say: "For Christ does not commission me to be baptizing, but to be bringing the evangel, not in wisdom of word, lest the cross of Christ may be made void."

FLESH PROFITS NOTHING

The cross put an end to man as to flesh. Oceans of water applied to his body could not cleanse; neither could it sanctify for God's presence, nor produce a spiritual unity. The power of that cross, once known, put an end to all that concerns the flesh. Flesh avails nothing. If it be reckoned, if I be baptized in water, then I deny the cross and its condemnation of the flesh.

And here we arrive at the very pith and marrow of our subject. Though our Lord had been baptized by John, still He speaks of another baptism, yet future, which would give relief from the hindrances in which He exercised His earthly ministry (Luke 12:50).

All baptism hitherto had been but shadows. But there

can be no shadow without the substance. The washings of the law and the waters of Jordan did not even remove the filth of the flesh, much less did they touch the moral defilement which separates between the creature and the Creator. What can wash away such defilement?

Nothing but the death of Christ.

That was the baptism He spoke of. Not His death at Pilate's hands, but His death in that deeper spiritual sense of which the physical is but a parable. Just as all fellowship and recognition ceases between a dead man and his friends, so He was severed from the smile and fellowship of God. And more than this, when He was made the sin offering, as in days of old, God sent fire from above into His bones, and it prevailed against Him.

How great a marvel that He became a real Man, at times hungry and weary and worn! But how much greater is the marvel as we see Him, till then untainted, undefiled, holy, having no need of any cleansing, any baptism, become sin for us!

For Himself He could acknowledge no sin; for us He took all sin.

Then was cleansing needed; then was baptism needed. Water would not do; no, nor literal fire. Nothing less than the fierce fury of God's wrath could consume the sin: His hot displeasure alone could cleanse.

What all this involved we may never know. He alone could bear it. But we know that it laid Him in the grave, and that He rose triumphant, and has ascended to God's right hand.

And as we see Him in that holy place we know that all the sins that He bore are gone. They never could find entrance there. And we whisper to our hearts: "His is the baptism that cleanses and purifies and satisfies. And since it was not for Himself He bore it (for He had no need), then it was for me. Whatever means God has provided, that will

I use to obtain the benefits of this baptism of baptisms, the cross of the Christ of God."

As we have seen, baptism into "Christ Jesus" meant more than into the "Lord Jesus" (for Samaritans), or "Jesus Christ" (for Israel's sons in their national standing and for proselytes of the nations). It was unto Him as having died and being risen and glorified. Not death alone, but resurrection also.

THE CLAIM OF NO RESURRECTION

In his great argument on resurrection the apostle makes a point of this: "Now if Christ is being heralded that He has been roused from among the dead, how are some among you saying that there is no resurrection of the dead? Now if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither has Christ been roused. Now if Christ has not been roused, for naught, consequently is our heralding, and for naught, is your faith . . . Consequently those also, who are put to repose in Christ, perished. If we are having an expectation in Christ in this life only, more forlorn than all men are we. . . . Else what shall those be doing who are baptizing? It is for the sake of the dead absolutely if the dead are not being roused. Why are they baptizing also for their sake? Why are we also in danger every hour?" (1 Cor.15:12-29).

Paul died daily. The death here spoken of is that which baptism sets forth—death with Christ. What shall we do for those who have died with Christ if there is no resurrection (Rom.6:3)?

If death is the end of all, if there is no resurrection, then those baptized into "Christ Jesus," acknowledging their death with Him, are, simply sealing their own doom and destruction. It is the hope of resurrection alone that puts meaning and joy into the rite for them. But they *did* rejoice in "Christ Jesus" (1 Cor.15:31). The apostle bases his protest upon this.

How inconsistent to rejoice in Christ Jesus (the title of His glory) when they had destroyed the only real cause of rejoicing—the resurrection! How inconsistent to identify themselves with Him in death and then deny His glorious resurrection and their part in it! Such teaching, instead of leading to a resurrection experience in this life, leads to looseness and carelessness and indifference.

In 1 Corinthians 10 (one of the earlier transitional epistles) the baptism of the fathers into Moses is made the point of a solemn warning.

Many of their descendants were sheltering themselves under the fact that they had been baptized. But, like Simon of Samaria, their hearts were not right in the sight of God. Every one of the fathers had been baptized into Moses, and enjoyed the same spiritual gifts, but this did not shield them from God's displeasure. The great bulk of them were strewn along the wilderness. "So that, let him who is supposing he stands beware that he should not be falling."

This passage has often been used by the enemy to destroy confidence in Christ. But the very opposite is its intention. Those who base their assurance on baptism or spiritual gifts, let *these* take heed! They may *think* they stand, but they are certain to have a fall. The *baptism of Christ* with holy spirit is the only one that can establish our hearts forever in God's sight.

The warning follows the fact that the consummation of the eons had been attained. The drama of earth's history had reached its crisis by the apostasy of Israel. This apostasy was burdened with baptism and religious ceremonies. Hence the warning.

The last Scripture in the transitional epistles remains to be noticed. "For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the one body, being many, are one body, thus also is the Christ. For in one spirit also we all are baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks,

whether slaves or free, and all are made to imbibe one spirit" (1 Cor.12:12,13).

The Corinthians had been the subjects of the washing of baptism. Not, indeed, necessarily in its outward ceremonial form, in water, but in the substantial spiritual cleansing of which water was but the shadow. After mentioning various classes of the wicked, the apostle says: "And some of you were these, but you are bathed off, but you are hallowed, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God" (1 Cor.6:9-11). The bathing which resulted in their sanctification was by the spirit of God. "Bathing" really cleanses the flesh; "baptism" does not. So the thorough spiritual cleansing is here spoken of as "bathing," rather than "baptism."

SPIRIT BAPTISM MUCH GREATER THAN WATER

Unity had hitherto been by water. Now for the first time we read of a unity by spirit-baptism. We have seen how the laver gives place to the sea, which in its turn is transformed into a life-giving river, the source of life and fruitfulness wherever it flows. The spirit which baptizes us into one body is a river of life. Neither laver nor sea furnished a draft for the thirsty soul. Cleansing exhausted their mission. They were not "living" or running water, like the river. But the spirit He bestows not only binds us one to another, but it is a draft of delight and life. We have all been caused to imbibe the same spirit. We all have the same life. We all are one. This is the "unity of the spirit," which cannot be broken, which He charges us to keep with diligence (Eph.4:1).

Thus is baptism set forth in the transitional epistles. We are pointed back to what has been, and are led on to look forward to still clearer light. "For out of an instalment are we knowing," says the apostle, "Now whenever maturity may be coming, that which is out of an installment shall be discarded" (1 Cor.13:9,10). Childhood is past. Manhood is future. Upon its threshold he says: "When I was a minor, I spoke as a minor, I was disposed as a minor, I took account of things as a minor. Yet when I have become a man, I have discarded that which is a minor's" (1 Cor.13:11).

ADVANCING TO MATURITY

The apostle had the unique experience of emerging from one administration, of passing through a second, and was about to enter the third. The first was characterized by the concrete forms of childhood; the next, the dignity of sonship; the last is to be the maturity of the full grown man.

Thus we can easily see the ground for "putting away" things he once held dear.

The present secret administration was gradually approached in the Acts, and those epistles written before its close. The mystery or secret of the present administration was not made known until Ephesians was written. Still there is symptom after symptom pointing forward to it. The manner of Paul's conversion was itself a very remarkable indication, even though he was brought into the (then) existing order of things. He was called *as an enemy, outside the land*. His baptism has been already mentioned. His preaching Messiah as the Son of God is another very prominent point of divergence from the rest. His separation along with Barnabas and his sermon at Pisidian Antioch drove the wedge in still further.

There was a great difference, too, in the effect of his ministry on those who heard him. All received the spirit. When the secret was finally revealed, it was not given to those alone who should thenceforward be saved, but to those who had previously received the gift of the spirit in connection with his ministry (Eph.1:13).

At that time they had no hope of their own, but the hope of Israel. But they were to be saved from the wrath about

to visit this earth by being caught up into the air. They and those who had fallen asleep would be changed in the resurrection. They were to bear a heavenly stamp.

The secret (or mystery) of Israel's blindness had been revealed to the initiated as well as the mystery of the Gospel, or secret good news—the conciliation.

After all this Israel is publicly and finally repudiated, and the way is thus cleared for the acknowledgment of the nations (Acts 28:25-28).

So we see that, before the present secret administration was revealed, things were in a ripe state to receive its wondrous message.

ISRAEL'S CONTINUAL REJECTION

All the while the evangel of God was being proclaimed among the nations, God was still holding out the offer of the kingdom to His disobedient people.

Before this, while our Master was still on earth, He had proclaimed the kingdom as Yahweh's prophet. When they reject the offer, He quotes the words Yahweh spoke to Isaiah, blinding their eyes and stopping their ears. He no longer proclaims the kingdom openly, but veils His teaching in parables concerning the interval of its rejection (Matt.13).

When, later on, they rejected the King Himself, He hid himself from them, and the Word through Isaiah (which he heard when he saw His glory) was again announced (John 12:37-41).

All manner of sin and blasphemy was forgiven them, even though they rejected Yahweh and His Messiah. Only one more way was open. After He ascended, the promised holy spirit was given, renewing the offer of the kingdom, and promising to send back their Messiah if they would repent (Acts 3:20). It is the last call. If the spirit is rejected there is no other resource. Sin against the holy spirit can not be pardoned for the eons.

The book of Acts is the record of this final ministry. It begins with the coming of the spirit: it chronicles the rejection of the spirit: it ends with the spirit's repudiation of Israel. Its subject is the kingdom of God—the same kingdom which they had twice rejected in Messiah's preaching and His person. Isaiah's thrice quoted testimony against them (this time referred to as the holy spirit's specially solemn words) concludes the history. Their dreadful wars and the sickening horrors of the destruction of Jerusalem pass unnoticed in the Word of God. Thenceforward they are out of His reckoning.

They have rejected Yahweh.

They have rejected Messiah.

Now they have rejected the holy spirit.

This is final.

How solemn and far-reaching, then, must be the proclamation from Rome, the seat of earthly sovereignty, of the spirit's withdrawal of the offer of the kingdom to Israel!

In the first proclamation of the kingdom, by the Master Himself, the nations had no place. The Son of David was not sent but to the house of Israel.

Neither had they any part in the King. The Greeks who desire to see Him are not accommodated.

And when the kingdom first began to be proclaimed by the spirit's power, no one dreamed of such a thing, even though Israel, by the murder of Messiah, had forfeited every claim to the kingdom. After this dreadful deed they really had no more right to God's blessing than the other nations.

The spirit must needs act upon the principle of *grace*, even with the people of the covenant. But this principle takes in the other nations, too!

The first hint we get of this is in Cornelius' case. The spirit's gifts are freely bestowed on aliens. Fleshly distinctions are ignored. Through Paul's ministry among the

nations the spirit gets a larger and still larger place. The nations receive the spirit. Israel rejects the spirit.

Israel is not cast aside for failure to carry out the ordinances. Far from it. They were fiercely zealous for the ritual, and even tried to force the other nations under its yoke. This is why Isaiah's words at the close of Acts are quoted as the words of the *holy spirit*, and not, as previously, as Yahweh's words or the Master's.

The first rejection of the kingdom drew from Him the secrets of the kingdom, which the disciples alone could understand.

The rejection of Himself led Him to further unbosom Himself to His own, though He hid Himself from the multitude.

What, then, shall we expect from the rejection of the spirit?

Publicly and outwardly the spirit seems to withdraw. No mighty works henceforth display its presence. But to His own He reveals the greatest secrets that God's purpose has ever revealed—the full secret of Messiah, and the present secret administration which God had concealed from all previous eras.

The public proclamation of the spirit's rejection of Israel is the monument God has erected to guard the boundary-line between the previous and the present dispensation. On one side is inscribed Isaiah's solemn repudiation. On the other, "*to the nations was dispatched this salvation of God*."

While we have observed with profit the *tendency* of the truth before this time, we must not stop here. We must look to Paul's letters, written after this great and distinct dispensation-marking event, to get clear, conclusive, and final teaching on our subject. But we must not open the letter to the Ephesians without first having closed the book of Acts.

A. E. Knoch

MANIFESTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

THE EVANGEL OF GOD as it is presented in Romans 3:21-26 is, first of all, a manifestation of *God's* righteousness; this manifestation is centered in the faith of *Jesus Christ* in His death on the cross, which is the means for the justification of *sinners.* These three points of emphasis: that which concerns God, that which concerns His Son, Jesus Christ, and that which is directed to sinners, may be distinguished by the following arrangement:

A. *Yet now, apart from law, a* **righteousness of God** *is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a* **righteousness of God**

B. *through* **Jesus Christ's faith,**

C. *for* **all, and on all who are believing**, *for there is no distinction, for* **all sinned** *and are wanting of the glory of God.*

C. Being **justified** *gratuitously in His grace,*

B. through the **deliverance which is in Christ Jesus,** *Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter, through* **faith** *in His blood,*

A. for a display of **His righteousness** *because of the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before in the forbearance of God, toward the display of* **His righteousness** *in the current era, for* **Him to be just and a Justifier** . . . .

It is a simple matter of A B C. If we are to grasp the goodness and glory of the evangel of God we need to begin with what it says about God ("A"). Then we need to relate

that to what it says about Jesus Christ ("B"). In this way we are led ideally to what the evangel says about us and the blessing of our justification ("C").

Justification is a work of God's righteousness in sparing not His own Son but giving Him up for us all. It is channeled through the faith and faithfulness of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners. It is for all, and it is presently placed "on" those who have been graciously granted to believe.

IT IS MANIFEST

God's righteousness is manifest in the evangel. The Greek verb rendered, "is manifest," is, grammatically speaking, in what is called the "perfect tense." This tense speaks of that which has been done, that which is completed. The righteousness of God has been made manifest by means of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross for sinners, as announced in the evangel ("Christ died for our sins").

How is it manifest? It is manifest in words that come from God, in what God has said to us, in His message of powerful salvation resulting from the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ. It is revealed "in" the evangel (Rom.1:17) of which Paul was not ashamed, for which he was severed from his fleshly connections (Rom.1:1). In making known this evangel Paul was bringing a message that makes God's righteousness apparent with a clarity never before perceived.

The Scriptures given to Israel, the law and the prophets (and the "literature" sections as well), *attest* to this righteousness of God, but the evangel that Paul was bringing makes it *manifest.* Later, we will look at the testimony of the Hebrew Scriptures to God's righteousness and its distinctive character in relation to salvation, but now we wish to look into the evangel itself in order to appreciate more clearly the way in which it actually manifests God's righteousness to us.

ROMANS 1:19,20

Paul had used the word "manifest" in Romans 1:19 in a passage concerning God's revelation of Himself in His work and achievements of creation:

. . . that which is known of God is apparent among [mankind], for God **manifests** *it to them. For His invisible attributes* **are descried** *from the creation of the world,* **being apprehended** *by His achievements, besides His imperceptible power and divinity . . . .*

Just as the creation round about us manifests much concerning God that otherwise could not be "apprehended," so also the evangel manifests God's love and grace, His power to save, and, as now being noted, His *righteousness,* in a way that otherwise could not be known. While living in this world filled with multitudes of living things which come forth and are sustained by means outside of themselves, we do not actually see with our eyes of flesh and perceive with our physical senses something we can call divine "power and divinity" (Rom.1:20). But what we do see does indeed speak of God as powerful and divine. We physically view the *effects* of His power and divinity. These point emphatically to a Creator of tremendous ability and intelligence.

Similarly, regarding the evangel, we may perceive, to some extent, such effects as love and joy and peace and discipline in righteousness in the lives of the believers (*cf* Gal.5:22,23). But we do not yet view empirically that finished salvation in which we are constituted righteous and conformed to the image of God's Son (Rom.5:19; 8:29). Our justification in its full realization is not experienced physically, but rather it is known in faith. Nevertheless, in accepting and believing this message of justification the definition of God's righteousness becomes clear to our understanding. What we believe informs us what God's

righteousness is. It is manifest, as Paul later puts it, to the eyes of our hearts (*cf* Eph.1:18).

What the believer perceives is that God's righteousness demands justification. It demands that all ultimately be right. Everything that is clearly wrong at present must be clearly found in the end to have been right. All is right in the long run. The end achieved by God justifies the means He employs to reach that goal. There will be nothing left that can be termed "wrong."

The evangel also shows us that God's righteousness does not employ sinful, human beings in any way in His work of justification. Its manifestation in the evangel is apart from human works of law. There is no place for human boasting. Our justification is in grace and is gratuitous as far as we are concerned. This applies even to human faith. Literally speaking we are *not* justified by our believing, but rather in the blood of Christ (Rom.5:9). That which God's righteousness has gained for all is now, in God's grace, "on all who are believing." No good that we can do is more righteous than believing God. But all the righteous acts that we do now, including our believing of the evangel, are, in themselves, tainted with the fact that we are sinners.

These are characteristics of God's righteousness: it is purely of God, uncontaminated with human imperfections, and it achieves full and undeniable justification for all sinners where no sin is left as a blot against the glory of God's consummation.

That is what the evangel says when it declares that sinners are justified gratuitously in God's grace, through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus. We are not talking about something that we can presently prove by the evidence of our physical senses of observation. We are talking about the essential meaning of what God says to us in the evangel. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15). As it was through one offense for all

mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just [act] for all mankind for life's justifying (Rom.5:18). This is what we believe, and in believing it we are coming to see the glory and perfection and incomparable right-ness of God's righteousness.

A MINISTRY OF ENLIGHTENMENT

As a slave of Christ Jesus, as a called apostle, as one severed to evangelize the evangel of God (Rom.1:1), Paul was involved in a work of making God's word of good *known* so that God Himself might be *realized* (*cf* 2 Cor.4:6; Col. 1:9,10). Note some further descriptions of Paul's activities found in Romans: "we obtained grace and apostleship for faith-obedience among all the nations" (Rom.1:5); "For God is my Witness, to Whom I am offering divine service in my spirit in the evangel of His Son" (Rom.1:9); "I am longing to see you, that I may be sharing some spiritual grace with you" (Rom.1:11); "Thus this eagerness of mine to bring the evangel to you" (Rom.1:16).

Indeed, he closes the epistle with this word of praise to the God Who has revealed Himself in the evangel Paul was commissioned to bring:

"Now to Him Who is able to establish you in accord with my evangel, and the *heralding of Christ Jesus* in accord with the *revelation* of a secret hushed in times eonian, yet *manifest* now and through prophetic scriptures, according to the injunction of the eonian God *being made known* to all nations for faith-obedience—*to the only, and wise God, through Christ Jesus, be glory* for the eons of the eons. Amen!" Rom.16:25-27).

Through his epistles, the apostle continually uses verbs of revelation, such as: "make known," "manifest," "commend," "display," "herald," "evangelize," along with such general terms as "say," "write" and "teach." Paul draws attention to God's revelations of which we have become

"aware" and "understand" and "know," and of which he would have us not be ignorant, while always encouraging us in our believing.

WE ARE AWARE

In believing the evangel the believer becomes aware of God in a way that is hidden from those who do not believe. We should ask ourselves: Do we understand what we believe? Are we aware that God's giving of His Son, Who died on the cross for sinners and Who was roused the third day, tells us what kind of righteousness God possesses, as well as informing us of His wisdom, power and love?

Later in this epistle Paul writes (Rom.8:28):

Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good . . . .

The next words might well be rendered as follows: "[This awareness is] for those who are loving God, who are called . . . ." The Greek does not literally say "of" those who are loving God, but "to" or "for" those who are loving God. God is working all together for the good, but most people are not aware of this fact. But if we are believing the evangel, we are becoming aware of this sure and certain aspect of God's character and pattern of His operations.

Romans 8:28 corresponds with telling harmony to what Paul writes in Romans 3:21,22. As believers being justified gratuitously in God's grace, as those who are called, we are becoming aware of God's righteousness. This righteousness is one that sees to it that *all is for good.* This is the character of God's active and all-inclusive involvement in all that occurs. He is working all together for good.

As believers we are aware of this because this is what God tells us in the evangel we are believing. We are told that God has a purpose, and that we are called into a special calling in accord with that purpose. But this purpose

involves all that happens and all that exists. It is, as Paul will later write, God's purpose in Christ, "to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth" (Eph.1:9,10). This purpose is the purpose of God, Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:11). From the very beginning of revelation, this principle has been laid down, that what God does is all for good (Gen.1:31). But now that Christ has died for our sins and has been roused, the goodness of God's operations and purpose has become apparent.

The evangel itself, concerning Christ's death for sinners, is not presented immediately in a direct way in Romans 8:28-30, but it is there in such words as: "He calls" "He justifies" and "He glorifies." This is what God does according to the evangel. And so it is that Paul very soon brings in the words of the evangel itself, reminding us that God spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all (Rom.8:32). The righteousness of God is that God works all together for good. This working of all together for good is centered upon God's giving of His Son for sinners. It is built upon the faithfulness and obedience of Jesus Christ in dying for our sake. We who believe the evangel are aware that this is so. It is manifest to us.

What we are aware of has to do with God. Of course, in believing the evangel we are believing that *we* are being justified in the blood of *Christ* and conciliated through His death. But in believing what Christ's death for sinners accomplishes for us and for all mankind, we find ourselves growing in the realization of God. He is a God of glorious righteousness! This is of overwhelming consequence.

NO OBSCURITY

That which is manifest is not mysterious or hidden. If, then, Paul refers here to God's own righteousness being

revealed in the evangel and being manifest through the death of Jesus Christ for sinners, we who believe this evangel ought to be able to perceive God's righteousness in this message of salvation and justification. It should certainly not be an obscure matter to us.

The concept is not difficult. The idea that God is working everything for good is clear enough. But the evidence of present experience, what we see with our eyes and hear and touch, is all against it. Nevertheless, God tells us this is so because His Son, Jesus Christ, dealt with sin and death, in such a way that all will enjoy justification of life and be constituted righteous. God tells us that, in the giving up of His Son, He has done that which puts His righteousness on display in His work of justification.

But, even for those who have heard the evangel and claim to believe it, certain traditions of human origin and propagation have made it almost impossible to see God's righteousness in the evangel. We have fewer problems (or at least think we do) in seeing God's love, which is commended to us in the death of Christ on the cross. Yet who can have any sort of clear grasp of God's righteousness in His giving of His Son on our behalf, while still holding to a concept of everlasting torment or annihilation for some human beings?

There are other human reasonings that are especially harmful to our appreciation of the righteousness of God as revealed in the evangel. To see the human will as independent of God in His will and intention can only make that which has been made manifest by the evangel hazy and obscure. Insertions of human works into the evangel, are harmful to our appreciation of God's righteousness and our assurance of the justification He has achieved.

Paul is bringing us spiritual grace. He is bringing us a message for our joy and peace in believing (*cf* Rom.15:13). It manifests God's righteousness and is wholly to His glory.

D.H.H.

Contents:

97 Editorial
98 Faith Perfected by Sacrifice
115 Attested by the Law and the Prophets
125 Bringing the King to the Throne
133 Perfection
139 Salvation From Sin, In Position and Practice

MAY, 2005

Volume XCVI **Number 3**

Concordant Version of The Book of Psalms

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Although the word "Psalm" appears in the titles of many of the individual pieces, the Hebrew word traditionally used as a title for the whole collection is the plural form of the word *praise* (*cf* the heading of Psalm 145). The term "Psalms," however, is also appropriate, for it means "melodies," as rendered, for example, in Psalm 81:2, "Lift up a melody . . . ." Yet the melody is not confined to singing but rather is directed to the thought being expressed in poetic form and its impression on the mind.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2005
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EDITORIAL

"REMEMBER Jesus Christ, Who has been roused from among the dead, is of the seed of David, according to my evangel" (2 Tim.2:8).

This grand entreaty of the apostle Paul may be more clearly perceived by setting off its interjectory phrase by dashes while emphasizing its primary thought by italics: "*Remember Jesus Christ*—Who has been roused from among the dead, is of the seed of David—*according to my evangel.*"

Thus, Paul's entreaty here, most succinctly declared, is: "*Remember Jesus Christ . . . according to my evangel.*"

Indeed, Christ has been roused from among the dead, and is of the seed of David; but these vital revelations may be learned apart from Paul's evangel (e.g., Matt.28:6,7; John 7:42).

There are many additional and most glorious revelations of God's grace which are only revealed *in and through* Paul's evangel: life's justifying for all mankind (Rom.5:18,19); the conciliation of the world to God through Christ (2 Cor.5:19); God's revelation of Himself as the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.2:4; 4:10); the secret of God's will to have an administration of the complement of the eras to head up all in the Christ (Eph.1:10), and to reconcile all to Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Col.1:20). All of these blessings are to be granted for the laud of the glory of God's grace (*cf* Eph.1:6), unto the end that *every* knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and *every* tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father (Phil.2:10,11).

It is in an awareness of these uniquely Pauline revelations, then, that we would gladly heed Paul's entreaty here: *Be remembering Jesus Christ . . . according to my evangel.*

J.R.C.

FAITH PERFECTED BY SACRIFICE
(Genesis 22:1-19)

22 + **It** |**came** to **pass after** ˙**these** ˙**things** +**that the** One, **Elohim, He probed** `**Abraham and** |**said to him: Abraham! And he** |sa**answered:** bd**Here I** am. 2 +**Then He** |**said: Take** pr**now** `**your son,** `**your only** one**, whom you love,** `**Isaac, and go** ›**by your**self **to the land of Moriah and** c**offer him up there** ›**as** an **ascent** offering **on one of the mountains which I shall** sa**indicate to you.**

3 +**So Abraham** c**rose** |**early in** the **morning,** + |**saddled** `**his donkey and** |**took** `**his two lads and** `**his son Isaac** `with **him.** +**When he** had |**split** the **wood** for the **ascent** offering**,** + **he** |**set out and** |**went to the** ri**place which the** One**, Elohim, had** sa**indicated to him.** 4 It was i**on the third day** +**that Abraham** |**lifted** up `**his eyes and** |**saw** `**the** ri**place from afar.** 5 +**Then Abraham** |**said to his lads:** › **You sit here with the donkey** +**while I and the youth shall go thus** fr**far;** +**there we shall worship, and we shall return to you.**

6 +**Now Abraham** |**took** `the **wood** for **the ascent** offering **and** |**placed** it **on his son Isaac** +**while he** |**took** `**the fire and** `**the knife in his hand; and** the **two of them** |**went** along **together.** 7 +**Then Isaac** |sa**spoke** up **and** |**said to his father Abraham: My father! And he** |sa**replied:** bd**Here I** am **my son.** +**Now he** |**said: Behold the fire and the wood;** +**yet where** is **the flockling for** the **ascent** offering**?** 8 + **Abraham** |sa**answered: Elohim´ shall see for Him**self **as to the flockling for** the **ascent** offering**, my son. And** the **two of them** |**walked** on **together.**

9 + **They** |**came to the** ri**place** w**that the** One**, Elohim, had** sa**indicated to him.** + **Abraham** |**built** `**the altar there**

and |**arranged** `**the wood.** + **He** |**trussed** up `**his son Isaac and** |**placed** `**him on the altar** f **above** › the **wood.** 10 +**Then Abraham** |**stretched** out `**his hand and** |**took** `**the knife to slay** `**his son,** 11 +**when** the **messenger of Yahweh** |**called to him from the heavens and** |**said: Abraham! Abraham! And he** |sa**replied:** bd**Here I** am**.** 12 + **He** |sa**continued: Do not** |**stretch** out **your hand** 7**on**n **the youth, and do not** |**do anything to him; for now I know that you fear**| **Elohim,** +**since you have not kept back** `**your son,** `**your only** one**, from Me.** 13 +**When Abraham** |**lifted** up `**his eyes,** + **he** |see**observed,** + **behold,** there was 7**one**ncs **ram, held**| af **back in** the **thicket** i**by its horns.** +**So Abraham** |**went and** |**took** `**the ram and** c**offered it** |**up** ›**as** an **ascent** offering u**instead of his son** 7**Isaac**s**.** 14 + **Abraham** |**called the name of** ˙**that** ri**place Yahweh-yireh,** of **which is it** |**said today:** i**On** the **mount of Yahweh it shall be seen.**

15 + The **messenger of Yahweh** |**called to Abraham** a **second** time **from the heavens.** 16 + **He** |**said:** i**By My**self **have I sworn, averring** is **Yahweh, that because** w **you have done** ˙**this** ˙**thing and have not kept back** `**your son,** `**your only** one**,** 7**from Me**nc**,** 17 t **I shall bless,** yea **bless**¯ **you, and** |**increase,** yea **increase**¯ `**your seed like** the **stars of the heavens and like** the **sand** w **on the sea shore.** + **Your seed shall take over** `the **gate**way **of its enemies**|**,** 18 **and all** the **nations of the earth will bless** themselves **in your seed, inasmuch as you have hearkened** i**to My voice.** 19 +**Then Abraham** |**returned to his lads;** + **they** |**set out and** |**went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham** |**dwelt in Beer-sheba.**

JUSTIFICATION, in the contexts in Genesis, has two different, yet interrelated aspects; divine and human. The divine phase is concerned with the *gift* of the innumerable seed (Gen.15:5), and the human phase with the *sacrifice* of Isaac (Gen.22:1-18). It is very important to note

that, in the divine act, Abram was *not allowed* to perform a single duty toward its attainment (Gen.21:1-3), but in the human act he *did many things* when his Subjector told him to offer up his son as an ascent offering in obedience. God has graciously given us these two contrasting examples of faith in the annals of the father of the faithful to help us to discriminate between them (Genesis chapters 15 and 22).

In examining the divine record, it will be helpful to consider not only the bare statements, but the whole context, and to note carefully those particulars which have a bearing on the theme. Both Paul (Rom.4:5; 4:20-22), who wrote to the saints among the nations whose blessings are spiritual and among the celestials; and James (2:21,24,26), who wrote to the twelve tribes with the physical, terrestrial calling, refer to Abraham's justification.

This will give us the inspired background needed to apprehend the difference between these two aspects, and to see that they do not conflict, but are two ways of God's dealing with His own.

DEPENDENCE ON YAHWEH

We already know that Abram was not righteous in himself or in his actions (Gen.12:10-13; 16:1-4; 17:17; 20:2). Nevertheless he was justified by God's activity on his behalf (Gen.12:17; 13:1-4; 16:7-16; 21:17-22; 20:3-18; 21:1-3).

In what might be called the first "world war" of which God gives us any record, an "eastern" confederacy threatened to conquer the "west" (Gen.14:1-14). This confederacy even captured Lot and carried him off (Gen.14:12). Abram had not yet become a strong nation, so, humanly speaking, he was no match for them. Regardless of this, he not only chased them out of the promised land, but restored the booty taken from Lot and Sodom. Abram had been given the land, so he was able to defeat those who had no divine title to it. However, he could go no further.

All this would give him a tendency to lean on the flesh. Consequently, Melchizedek met him to remind him that El, the Subjector, is supreme, and the Owner, not only of the land, but of the heavens and the earth. It was Yahweh Who awarded the foe into his hands (Gen.14:18-21). This battle occurred just before Yahweh announced the faith covenant to Abram. Referring to Abram's victory, Yahweh assures him that he could not have accomplished this unless He had been his Shield and Reward (Gen.15:1). Abram's power, for the skillful use of which he was richly repaid, was a gift of Yahweh to be used exclusively for the reclamation of that which was taken by the foe. This experience, given to Abram and recorded for us just before he was promised the star seed, was an exhibition of Yahweh's power and was intended to illustrate to Abram His ability to fulfill His promises, protect His chosen, and reward those who rely on Him at all times.

Up until this time Abram had received only a partial revelation, the promise of a seed countless as the soil grains of the land (Gen.13:16). He was well aware of the fact that he was heirless except for Damascus Eliezer (*Aliozr* SUBJECTOR-HELPER), whom he termed "a son of my household" (Gen.15:3), and who had been adopted for the express purpose of filling the vacant place of Abram's heir. It was a feeble attempt of Abram *to help God*.

However, Yahweh had other plans. He bids Abram " 'Now look up toward the heavens and count off the stars, if you can number them . . . Thus shall become your seed.' And Abram believed on Elohim and He reckoned it to him for righteousness." (Gen.15:5-6). Yahweh asked Abram to number the stars, thereby taking him far above the sphere of human operations, and promising him that his seed shall be as the stars of heaven. This celestial revelation of divine glory overwhelmed all of Abram's reasoning, showing him the folly of seeking to *help* Yahweh.

Later, Sarah, his wife, proposes to *help* Yahweh by obtaining an heir by means of Hagar, Sarah's maid (Gen.16:1-4). Why did Abram try to help his God again? Perhaps it was the realization that the procreative powers of his wife could not produce even one son, let alone an innumerable progeny. At this point he failed to fully apprehend the omnipotence of God, and was unable to realize that Yahweh Elohim has no limitations. Yet, as offensive as this action was, and as much as it might have deserved condemnation, it was justified by Yahweh! (Gen.16:7-21).

Once again, after Yahweh has established His covenant, Abram doubts His word and scoffs at the suggestion of a son being born to him (Gen.17:17). Sarah is also in agreement (18:13). But Yahweh, as faithful as His word, visits Sarah (Gen.21:1-3), and Sarah bore for Abraham a son named Isaac. Even though Abram questioned the human or physical possibility, the promise of Yahweh was not doubted in unbelief (Rom.4:20-22).

Abram, who was already practically dead, becomes to us a picture of resurrection. We must recognize the fact that, like Abram, we are dead in ourselves. Our justification is not based on *acting* righteously, but on *believing* God and resting our *faith* in Him alone (Rom.1:17). God needs no help and will accept no help. This is what He taught Abraham. Let us pray that His ability, in Christ, will inspire us to increase our dependency on the One Who is able to raise the dead. Faith such as this is not a dead principle, but a *vital force* which leads a believer to act according to God's revelation.

THE HUMAN ASPECT

The second aspect of justification deals with the sacrifice of Isaac. Yahweh said to Abraham, "Take now your son, your only one, whom you love, Isaac, and go by yourself to the land of Moriah, and offer him up there as an

ascent offering on one of the mountains which I shall indicate to you" (Gen.22:2). Without hesitation, Abraham takes his beloved son to the appointed place on the third day (Gen.22:4) and, with Isaac carrying the wood, and Abraham himself taking the fire and knife, they both ascend to the place of sacrifice. Abraham does not falter, not even when Isaac asks, "Where is the flockling?" (Gen. 22:7). Nor does he cry aloud as he trusses up his only son (Gen.22:9). It is only after he stretches out his hand about to slay Isaac that the messenger of Yahweh restrains him (Gen.22:11,12). This was the *work* which *perfected*, or *matured* his faith.

James tells us "Abraham, our father, was he not justified by works when offering up his son Isaac on the altar? You are observing that faith worked together with his works, and by works was faith perfected. And *fulfilled* was the Scripture which is saying, 'Now Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness, and he was called 'the friend of God.' You see that by works a man is being justified, and not by faith only." (James 2:21-25).

As the basic distinction between Paul and James is that of faith versus works, let us consider closely the context in each case. At first Abram did nothing but *look*. Yahweh even *brought him forth* outside! (Gen.15:5).

In contrast to this, note the many *acts* of Abraham's which are recorded in connection with the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen.22:2): *take; go; offer* (3) *rose; saddled; took; split; set out; went* (4) *lifted; saw;* (5) *said; sit; go; worship* (6) *placed; took; went* (7) *behold;* (8) *answered;* (9) *came; built; arranged; trussed; placed* (10) *stretched; took; slay* (11) *here;* (13) *lifted; observed; behold; went; took; offered* (14) *called.*

ACTIONS BASED ON FAITH

In summing up, the messenger of Yahweh said (v. 16),

"you have *done . . . not kept back*." This should show that the faith that justified him was "perfected" by action, or deeds, *based* upon the faith which justified him. Apart from faith, he could not have done any of this.

But this theme is viewed from various standpoints in divine revelation, which are indicated by their names and their place in God's plan, and their corresponding acts. We greatly regret that English usage compels us to use "James," in place of Jacob, especially as the title of his epistle to the *twelve tribes* in the dispersion. He writes in the character of a *slave* (James 1:1). His real name, Jacob, means HEEL, which characterized the son of Isaac only until he came face to face with God at Peniel. Then it was changed to Israel, Upright-with-SUBJECTor (Gen.32:28). Before this he was far from being upright (Gen.32:24-32).

JAMES TO TWELVE TRIBES

James did not affirm that *we* of the nations are justified by works, as many seem to suppose. He writes to the *twelve tribes*, as such, before the close of Acts, when the prophecy of the sixth of Isaiah was being fulfilled (Isa.6: 9-10). Now that the twelve tribes are not in view, and there is no distinction between them and the other nations, it has no application to us today.

James' epistle reads, "You are observing that faith worked together with his works, and by works was faith perfected. And fulfilled was the scripture which is saying, Now 'Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness,' and he was called 'the friend of God.' You see that by works a man is being justified, and not by faith only." (James 2:22-24). According to this the basic truth that *justification is by faith in God's word* is taught by James also. But he wants to see it *operating* in the believer, as it did in the ease of Abraham later on.

James does not assert it, but asks the question, "Abraham, our father, was he not justified by works when offering his son Isaac on the altar?" In contrast to the statement, "Abram . . . *believed* . . . and He *reckoned* it to him for righteousness." (Gen.15:6), this sacrifice of Isaac brings blessing and power to him and his physical seed, and will make them a blessing to all the *nations of the earth* (Gen.22:16-18). They will have physical blessings among the terrestrials.

ABRA[HA]M TYPICALLY

Abram means FATHER-HIGH. This expresses his position in both the physical and spiritual sphere, for his physical progeny will be the highest in terrestrial rule, and his spiritual sons will be supreme over all. This is suggested by using the figures of soil and sand and stars of those who believe, and who will be roused from among the dead, as he figuratively was before generating Isaac.

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

But he also represented the Highest Father in the offering up of Isaac on mount Moriah (Bitterness). This goes far beyond mere righteousness. Like Abraham, the Divine Father had one Son, His Firstborn, and His immanent affection yearned for the love of all the rest. Righteousness would shield them from His indignation, but would not bind them to Him with the fetters of affection. This He accomplishes by the sacrifice of His Son. Abraham and Isaac are used to shadow beforehand the greatest revelation of divine love that can be, by giving a preview of the great Sacrifice on the very mount on which the innumerable types of it were to be slaughtered later, on the brazen altar. And quite near the place where it was perfected "outside of the gate" (Num.19:9,10), as the law prescribed for the burnt offering for cleansing.

At the same time Abraham, as the father of those who believe, enacts the part that should be played by every other

believer in this administration. They are called upon, not to put to death their only son, whom they love, but to figuratively crucify their *own* flesh as well as the world (Gal. 5:24; 6:14). This is their just deserts. The just deserts of all is death. Abraham and Isaac were figuratively dead. Only then can God reveal His vivifying power and glory. This is the real function of death. It gives God an opportunity to reveal to His creatures their impotence apart from Him, and the transcendent power of His spirit.

DEATH AND JUSTIFICATION

Abram was *dead*, as far as the promise of posterity was concerned, yet he believed that God would act according to His word. Later, after the initial promise was fulfilled, and the son was given, he was told to put him to *death*. As he had already learned that God could raise the dead, he *not only believed*, but *acted* on this belief by preparing everything up to the fatal stroke. He not only believed, but, *because* of his faith, he *hearkened* to His voice. In both cases he recognized God as the Resurrection and the Life.

FAITH PERFECTED

The unfolding faith of Abram went through many phases before it was perfected by the offering of his only son, Isaac (James 2:22). Each of these had a special quality and has been characterized by giving it a name. We will copy these, and seek to improve on them if possible. The *obedience* of faith brought him to the promised land (Gen.12:4). The *humility* of faith gave Lot the first choice (Gen.13:8). By the *strength* of his faith he conquered the kings (Gen. 14:15). The *firmness* of faith enabled him to believe when all hope of an heir seemed futile (Gen.15:6). The *boldness* of faith led him to intercede for Sodom (Gen.18:23). In the *joyfulness* of faith he named the son of promise (Gen. 21:3). By the *loyalty* of faith he submitted to Sarah, and

expelled Hagar and Ishmael (Gen.21:14). In the *gratitude* of faith he planted a tamarisk (Gen.21:33). In its *perfection* he offered up his only son (Gen.22:2).

It is said that the Canaanites, among whom Abraham dwelt, made a practice of propitiating their deities by sacrificing their dearest possessions, even their children (2 Kings 3:27). But, in his case, it seemed to be directly contrary to all of Yahweh's previous promises, besides being an *only* son, the fruit and fulfillment of faith. Yet many tests had shown him that God could even bring back from death. He himself had been deadened before he generated Isaac. Abraham was quite prepared to actually slay his son, for he reckoned that, even so, God was able to rouse him from among the dead (Heb.11:19). Thus we are given a parabolic representation of the important fact that the chosen nation is the fruit of *faith,* and the resurrection power of God, but not of the *flesh.*

PROBE, NOT TEMPT

The AV reading, that "God did *tempt* Abraham" (Gen. 22:1), may have been allowable when it was first translated, but, like, "lead us not into *temptation*" (Matt.6:13), it throws a dark shadow on the divine character. Elohim was not inducing Abraham to act contrary to His will, but was probing him to *prove* to all concerned that he would obey Him, even when it was contrary to his own desires. His reaction to this test entitled him to his high place among those who are famed for their faith (Heb.11:17).

MOUNT MORIAH

Mount Moriah was the eminence on which the temple of Solomon was later built, where millions of sacrifices were offered, which prefigured the supreme sacrifice of God's Son. It *may* have included Golgotha, the place of a skull (Matt.27:33; Mark 15:22; Luke 23:33; John 19:17), which

is north of the highway which borders the temple area. Otherwise, it is not clear why it was necessary to travel the long way from Beer-sheba, perhaps a two days' journey northward, to where Jerusalem now is. Ordinarily an altar could be built in any location. Doubtless Abraham had one near his tent, and offered flocklings upon it, for Isaac knew of this (Gen.22:7). The distance is given as fifty-four miles. But, as it is measured by days, a time period, each of them may represent an eon, for the Lamb of God was sacrificed in the middle of the third of the five eons, that is, in the symmetrical center of the eonian times.

THE ASCENT OFFERING

The character of the offering is of prime importance here, for Abraham possessed God's righteousness, and had no need of a sin-, or a trespass-, or even a present-approach. Being justified by faith, there was no necessity for one of these. He had access into the divine presence, so required no approach gift. The only one he could offer was an *ascent* offering. It is remarkable, and most significant, that the ascent offering comes before us in Genesis only when Noah (who also was a just man) brings it after the deluge, and in this passage, when Abraham offers Isaac and the ram (Gen.8:20; 22:2,3,6,7,8,13). It *all ascended* to God as an act of pure *worship*, and may be brought only when there is no need for minor sacrifices, or when they have already been offered.

Today, such an ascent offering can be brought only by those believers who know that, in Christ, all the other sacrifices have been offered for them, and there is *nothing* to *hinder* them from worshiping God, not even their shortcomings and failures. These His divine alchemy transmutes into His own righteousness, for He uses them as a foil to reveal the opposite in Himself.

WORSHIP

Abraham's faith assured him that, even though be should offer up Isaac as an ascent offering, his son *must* later be alive to fulfill Yahweh's promises concerning the seed, seeing that "In Isaac shall your seed be called." He was "reckoning that God is able to be rousing him from among the dead also; whence he recovers him in a parable . . ." (Heb. 11:18,19). This is evident from his words to the two lads who were left behind: "We shall worship and we shall return to you" (5). Usually, Abraham is represented as terribly distressed, his heart sorrowing in anticipation of the loss of his son, and shuddering at the thought of shedding little "Laughter's" blood. But that is not the reaction of faith. That is the fruit of unbelief. No, he seems to have given no sign of unbelieving trepidation, because he had the assurance that, whatever he did, Isaac must live to fulfill God's promise.

ELOHIM SHALL SEE

They went together, Isaac carrying the load of wood, while his father had the fire and the knife. Isaac evidently realized that they were about to offer a sacrifice, so was perplexed as to the victim, for that prime essential seemed to have been forgotten. Very diffidently, he asks permission to speak. When his father assents, he points out that they have the wood and the fire for an ascent offering, but no flockling. His father's reply was such as no one without perfect confidence in the Subjector could have expressed: "*Elohim will see for Himself* . . ." (8). He knew that this must be so, but how it would be done he could not say, and he did not venture to express a conjecture. It was doubly fulfilled, once at the time, by a divinely provided ram, but not fully till the death and resurrection of the great Antitype, God's beloved Son, our Saviour.

The usual reading, "God will provide himself a lamb" is

not warranted by the text. Isaac did not *see* any sacrifice. Abraham did not say that Elohim will *provide* one (Isaac), but that He is seeing, or will see, this apparent lack, and implies that they must leave that to Him. God saw the ram (and He saw the Lamb), but they could not.

It is hard to imagine how Abraham could help being perturbed while making the actual preparations; building the altar, arranging the wood, trussing LAUGH-causer, stretching out his hand, taking the knife, and—but he is not allowed to raise it, for a voice calls out his name repeatedly: "Abraham! Abraham!" Thus, at the last instant, the Subjector, having attained His object, reverses His previous command: "*Do not* stretch out your hand on the youth, and *do not* do anything to him . . ."

FEARING GOD

Even in this day of transcendent grace, we are exhorted to carry our salvation into effect with *fear* and *trembling* (Phil.2:12). So long as we are in our mortal flesh we cannot help having a holy awe in view of the fact that, apart from faith in Christ, and reliance on God's grace, we are not able to do a single thing or speak one word, with absolute confidence that it measures up to the divine ideal, and is perfectly acceptable to our Creator and Subjector. To do that which we ourselves would doubly dread to do, in fact would not dare to do, at the divine behest, must have a powerful motive. No *man* could have persuaded Abraham to sacrifice his son. Only the fear of Elohim could cause him to commit such a murderous deed as this.

GOD FORESEES

As Abraham had told Isaac, Elohim saw the need of the sacrificial victim, but it was not a flockling, as Isaac proposed. There were different grades of ascent offerings, which correspond to the faith of the offerer. The highest

was taken from the herd, the second from the flock, the third from the flyer. Elohim's opinion of Abraham's faith, and the value He put upon his offering is shown by the *ram* which He Himself had foreseen. This was the highest, for it closely foreshadowed the supreme sacrifice of His Own Son on Golgotha (Lev.1:2,10,14).

EVIL

This transaction has a close bearing on the so-called problem of evil. Was it good or evil for Elohim to charge Abraham to do this? Was it not an evil merely to truss up his son and then act as if he were about to murder him? But this was only a typical preview of that future scene in this very vicinity, in which Elohim's own Son was not merely trussed up, but cruelly crucified, not only menaced with a knife, but pierced with a lance head, and not simply threatened with death, but actually forsaken by His Father and left to die. This, the greatest evil ever committed, was due to the deliberate decision of Elohim, so that it could actually be rehearsed here long before it took place. Yet, out of this, the greatest of all evils, will come the greatest and grandest good.

Such a memorable place as the scene of Isaac's sacrifice deserved a name, so Abraham calls it *Ieue-irae* (Yahweh-is-See-er) which implies, not that He merely *observed* Abraham's offering of Isaac, but that He saw the ram which Abraham saw and sacrificed later, and He also "saw" the future Antitype, His only begotten Son, which was to be seen later in this mount. This led to the proverb "On the mount of Yahweh it shall be seen" (Gen.22:14). It can hardly be interpreted as Yahweh *sees,* or *is seen,* or *appears.* He was not Himself present, but sent a messenger. Even the following promise, perhaps the most memorable and magnificent that Abraham received, was relayed to him through a mediating messenger. In the great Anti-

type, Christ Jesus, He already saw the sufficient Sacrifice, fore-ordained before the eons, ample for all.

At Beer-sheba (WELL-SATISFY, or -oath) Abraham had sworn *by* Elohim (Gen.21:23,24). Now, however, that *Yahweh* swears *to* Abraham, *by* whom can He swear? Men swear by a Greater, but there is no greater one than He, to swear by, so He swears by Himself (Gen.22:16; Heb. 6:13). No assurance can be more certain than that. And no list of Abrahamic blessings can be greater than that incorporated in this oath. Being based on faith, it includes all who believe, not only his physical seed on the earth, but also Abram's innumerable celestial star-seed as well.

THE STAR SEED

Abram was assured of a seed as numerous as the stars on two occasions. After the conquest of the kings and the blessing of Melchizedek, and after the refusal to take any of the goods of Sodom, when Abram feared that he would have no heir, then he is told of a numberless star seed (Gen.15:5). Then it was that he was justified by *faith.* Later, once again, after the severest test of his *faith,* in the offering of his son, the promise is renewed (Gen.22:17). It seems clear from this that the star seed is connected with his *faith,* and consists of that great and glorious company who *believe* God during the eons, as Abram had done, not merely those of His physical progeny, many of whom did not believe. As was most fitting, this promise was renewed to Isaac, when he was about to go down to Egypt (Gen.26:4).

THE SAND SEED

On this occasion Abraham is also assured of a sea shore seed (Gen.22:17,18). This is most appropriate, for it was not a question of the *faith* of *Isaac,* but of his *physical* life. No doubt he did believe, and may belong to the star seed. Yet it is as sand seed that Israel will rule over their

enemies in the kingdom. But it is principally as believers that they will *bless all the nations* (Gen.22:18) in the day of Yahweh. Later this promise is repeated to Jacob, when he feared the wrath of Esau, as he was returning to the land, as he recalls this promise (Gen.32:12).

CELESTIAL

The secret of a celestial seed (1 Cor.15:51) was not made known to Abraham. The soil of the land and the sand of the sea may suggest their presence on the earth. Abraham's name is brought in nearly twenty times when justification by faith is taught and enforced in Paul's preparatory epistles. This grand theme is illustrated in the fourth chapter of Romans by seven references to the patriarch (1,2,3,9, 12,13,16). To sum up, we are told that the *righteousness* which was *reckoned* to him will be *reckoned* to us also, who are *believing* on Him Who rouses Jesus, our Lord, from among the dead. But nothing is said of any further blessing, beyond this, among the celestials. It is only after the celestial calling is revealed by Paul, that we see the aptness of this illustration when referring to the saints in this secret administration.

In Galatians we may see the same truth, when in conflict with the flesh. Circumcision *signified* the *cutting off* of the flesh. They were trying to make it the *completion* of the flesh (3:6,7,9). Here, again, the blessing is confined to the *justification* of *believers* of the nations. This is the blessing of Abraham which comes to the nations by faith. The law, which came later, and the present celestial blessings do not subtract or add to the justification by faith that we have in common with Abraham (14,16,18,22,29).

THE GATEWAY OF ENEMIES

Israel according to the flesh, the soil and sand seed, did not always tenant the gateway of its enemies (Gen.22:17).

This picturesque phrase is based upon the fact that the elders, the rulers of a city, sat in the gateway. They held court there and ruled the city from its entrance. Literally, *faithful* Israel is to govern its foes, and thus be at peace. The reason they have not always done so is that this promise is limited to those who had inherited Abram's faith as well as his flesh. In the days of David and Solomon, who had this faith, this was the case. And it will be so in the future when Israel, as a nation, will accept its Messiah. Even today we can see the plight of the Jews in unbelief. Even though they are the sand seed, they are threatened by their enemies because they refuse to put their faith in the Messiah Yahweh has given them.

Beer-sheba (*Bar-shbo* WELL-oath) was the southernmost city of consequence in the land of Israel. Indeed, "from Dan to Beer-sheba" is the common phrase for the whole length of the land (1 Sam.3:20). It lies in the center of the Negeb, or south rim, on the regular road through central southern Palestine to Egypt. It remained the headquarters of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, until the latter went to Egypt. Now it seems to be once more within the boundaries of the nation of promise. Dan is also inside the northern boundary, so they may speak of having the land from Dan *around* to *Beer-sheba,* though much of that lying between, including ancient Jerusalem, is in the hands of their bitter enemies.

In conclusion, may we look beyond the picture presented by Abraham and Isaac, to the *Inaugurator and Perfecter* of faith Who, for the joy lying before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now seated at the right hand of God (Heb.12:2). Isaac was only a type, a dim shadow of the One Whose faith led Him to descend from the highest heights of glory to the deepest depths of shame, and has called us to share the fruits of His faith with Him, by blessing us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials (Eph.1:3).

A. E. Knoch

ATTESTED BY THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS is manifested through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.3:21,22), that is, it is revealed in the evangel (Rom.1:17) that tells us Christ died for our sins, was entombed and has been roused (1 Cor.15:3,4). It is in this Word of God concerning the faith of Jesus Christ to the death of the cross that God's righteousness is most clearly and fully made known. It is made known as a righteousness that refuses to overlook any wrong. It is a righteousness that requires deliverance from evil into good. It is all to the glory of God and the appreciation of His righteousness as the Justifier.

The evangel of God concerning His Son, which is being presented before us in Romans, reveals this to us. But God's righteousness as it is thus made known in the evangel is also *attested* by the law and the prophets and throughout the Hebrew Scriptures (Rom.3:21).

These Scriptures do not provide the *manifestation* of God's righteousness which we have in the evangel, for Christ had not yet come and died for sinners. They do not *reveal* God's righteousness as it is revealed in the achievements of Christ's death, entombment and resurrection, but they are packed full with types and patterns, promises and prophecies, which *accord* with, and *foreshadow* this evangel. It is in this testimony of promised good in the holy Scriptures of old (*cf* Rom.1:2) that we find important preparations for the evangel, including the subject of the righteousness of God. Hence in a very basic and

edifying way "whatever was written before, was written for this teaching of ours, that through the endurance and the consolation of the scriptures we may have expectation" (Rom.15:4).

ATTESTED

The CONCORDANT VERSION uses the English word "attest" for two different Greek terms, but these are distinguished from each other by the use of boldface and lightface type. The Greek word, *martureō*,[1] is rendered entirely in boldface type (**attested**) as here in Romans 3:21, and the Greek word, *dokimon*,[2] appears in the CV with the first two letters in lightface type (at**tested**) as in Romans 14:18. The latter term refers to that which meets the requirements of a test. Hence it is that which has been found *qualified.* But the word used in Romans 3:21, has the sense of "having been marked down in testimony to."

The law and the prophets do not set forth the telling evidence of God's righteousness that we find in the evangel. Only the obedience of Christ to the death of the cross and its results can serve as such a manifestation of divine righteousness. Yet the law and the prophets, do witness to God's righteousness in circumstances and associations that are significant in leading us forward to the evangel. We who are believing can now look back and appreciate how these scriptures testify in detail after detail to what this righteousness must be.

GOD IS RIGHTEOUS

In this present article I wish to look at certain passages from the law and prophets that witness to the fact that God *is* righteous. Here we may find from their con-

1. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.300, under the heading, *testify.*
2. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.300, under the heading, *tested.*

texts certain features of that righteousness which parallel the righteousness of God as it is now being made known in the evangel. Indeed, in the Hebrew Scriptures God's righteousness itself is often presented as a quality of God that brings the good of deliverance out of an evil situation. How this end can be achieved in view of the reality of human sinfulness is left unclear until Christ comes into the world to save sinners. But the testimony of a firm and sure relationship between divine righteousness and deliverance from evil remains.

TESTIMONY OF PHARAOH AND MOSES

The first time Scripture directly speaks of God being righteous is, surprisingly, through the mouth of that Pharaoh in the days of Moses who was raised up by God as a vessel of indignation (Rom.9:14-23). It was by means of this Egyptian that God displayed His power for deliverance of His people, Israel (Rom.9:17). But also at one point, and very briefly, Pharaoh *testified* to God's righteousness (Exodus 9:27):

Then Pharaoh . . . said to them: I have sinned this time. Yahweh is the righteous One, and I and my people are the wicked.

Later, in Deuteronomy 32:3, 4, Moses witnessed in dramatic terms to the faithful righteousness of God. The people of Israel were poised to enter the promised land. But Moses was barred from that triumphant experience, and consequently, he was experiencing a real and deep sorrow; nevertheless he sang in exultant praise:

Grant greatness to our Elohim!
The Rock—flawless is His contrivance,
For all His ways are (right) judgment.
The El of faithfulness and without iniquity;
Righteous and upright is He.

The lives of Pharaoh and Moses were intertwined during a most critical period in the history of Egypt and Israel. They both spoke of God's righteousness under personally troubling circumstances resulting from their own unrighteous acts. They both desired rescue from the troubling circumstances that had been brought upon them and deliverance into peace and well-being. And neither of them experienced that deliverance.

But here the similarities stop. Pharaoh spoke the truth but did not match his actions to his words. God hardened his heart (Exodus 7:3; Rom.17,18), and Pharaoh remained a vessel of dishonor. However, Moses was a vessel of God's mercy, so that he was able to face his troubles with faith. That completion of deliverance for which he fervently longed, which had driven him forward through the turmoil in Egypt and the struggles of the wilderness journey for forty years, that salvation into the land, was denied to him. Yet he was blessed in attesting, in faith, to God's righteousness with a song of heartfelt laud for the flawlessness of His contrivances and ways, and for His faithfulness, uprightness and *righteousness.*

In this way, Moses did receive a salvation, a salvation from being without expectation, a salvation into reliance on the living God, a salvation of peace and inner happiness that comes with faith. God is flawless in all His ways. He is faithful to all that He has said. He is upright. And He is righteous.

It is not that the testimony of Moses made God righteous. Far from it. But what Moses said acknowledged *from the heart* that God is righteous. The words of Pharaoh also testified to God's righteousness, but not from that glorious freedom of heart that is given to the "sons of God" (*cf* Rom.8:21). What Pharaoh sought was deliverance from the severe difficulties he was facing into the comforts of human prosperity. What Moses wanted was

also a rescue, but in faith centered upon God's Word Moses possessed assurance that the deliverance would come in God's own time. Moses faced his experience of great personal sorrow with expectation of that allotment God had promised to him and his seed, an allotment which would involve salvation as the achievement of the righteous God (*cf* Heb.11:27,39,40).

DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HUMAN SINFULNESS

Pharaoh was right in the words of his lips which spoke of his own wickedness along with Yahweh's righteousness. For, in truth, the human (including Moses who was unfaithful and wrong in his striking of the rock, *cf* Num.20:2-13) is corrupted with unrighteousness. God's righteousness is behind all His contrivances and ways. It is not separate from His hardening of human hearts any more than it is separate from His opening of human hearts to mercy and expectation and peace. God's righteousness is altogether directed to the good of deliverance from evil and enjoyment of salvation. Pharaoh spoke of this, and that is as far as it went. Moses spoke of it, and he believed it. It was not only in the leaving of Egypt and the crossing of the sea, but even as he faced death without entering the land, Moses was graced with a great measure of faith, "as seeing the Invisible" (Heb.11:27).

FLAWLESS CONTRIVANCES

What Moses said in his song needs to be repeated for our learning. God is flawless in His contrivances. This is the character of His righteousness. God's contrivance of hardening Pharaoh's heart must be toward eventual good even for Pharaoh himself, for that is the character of God's righteousness. The fact that Pharaoh was not saved and suffered the just effects of God's indignation cannot be the end of God's operations with respect to him. All of

God's contrivances have salvation ultimately in view. Had Pharaoh's heart been opened at that time, in God's mercy, to the truth of his own words concerning God and himself, we may be sure that Pharaoh's release of Israel would have meant blessing for him and his people. It will be this way for Egypt in that future day when Yahweh will send to them a Saviour, and He will descend and rescue them, and He will say, "Blessed be My people, Egypt" (Isa.19:20-25). As for Pharaoh himself, and the Egyptians of that ancient time, they will someday all bow in the name of Jesus and acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, *for the glory of God, the Father* (Phil.2:10,11). This will be uttered from the heart, for God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all (Rom.11:32).

This operation of God in blinding and hardening hearts in order mercifully to deliver them from this evil is related to the righteousness of God as it is manifested in the faith of Jesus Christ in His death for sinners. The right-ness of the future salvation of Egypt and of the future enjoyment of Moses of an allotment in the promised land, as well as the right-ness of God's contrivances related to them in the past bears a most critical relationship to that one great and righteous act of God (*cf* Rom.5:18) in giving His Son for sinners.

As present day vessels of God's transcendent grace, we can perceive this righteousness of God and exult in it, surely in greater measure than Moses and with fuller assurance, for we are believing the evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE PROPHETS

The "law" (the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy) attests to God's righteousness first through the mouth of an Egyptian who did not appear to have any faith at all in what his own lips had uttered. Similarly, in the "prophets," one of the most stirring passages testifying to the fact that God is righteous is associated with a ruler among the nations. The words of Isaiah 45 are addressed to Cyrus of Persia, who likely upheld a dualistic view of deity—two gods, one of good and the other of evil. But God is One, and He is righteous in all His doings, with an end of indisputable goodness (Isa.45:6-8,21-25):

I am Yahweh, and there is no other.
Former of light and Creator of darkness,
Maker of good and Creator of evil,
I, Yahweh, make all these things.
Drip down from above, O heavens,
And let the skies distil righteousness;
Let the earth open up, Let salvation bud,
And let righteousness sprout together with it;
I, Yahweh, I create it . . . .
A righteous El and a Saviour,
And there is none except Me.
Turn toward Me and be saved, all the limits of the earth,
For I am El, and there is no other.
By Myself have I sworn;
From My mouth has gone forth righteousness,
A word that shall not turn back;
For to Me shall bow every knee,
And every tongue shall swear fealty;
Only in Yahweh—one will say to Me—
are righteousness and strength.
Unto Him shall each one come,
And all who were heated against Him shall be ashamed.
In Yahweh shall they be justified,
And shall all the seed of Israel boast.

These words are addressed to Cyrus, but they were written for Israel in a time of great trouble. With respect to Cyrus and his nation they speak of a future salvation,

in God's righteousness, when they shall bow the knee and acclaim the Lordship of Jesus Christ, to the glory of the one God Who will then be known as Father even by them. With respect to Israel, these words speak of their future boast in Yahweh in Whom alone are righteousness and strength. They speak of that future kingdom upon the earth promised to the patriarchs and the prophets and envisioned in the psalms. Altogether these are words of truth which speak of God's righteousness in relation to salvation and justification. They are words of faith, centered in God's power for Israel's *salvation*, and they are words of faith, centered in God's *righteousness* in carrying out this salvation. Yet also, in accord with the promises given to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3, the salvation spoken of here goes beyond salvation for Israel, to reach even to "all the limits of the earth" and the bowing of "every knee," which necessarily includes Cyrus and his people.

The prophecy here parallels the song of Moses in its expression of joyful faith in the righteousness of God in all His ways. As Moses associated God's righteousness with His faithfulness to His promises concerning the land and Israel and the nations, so also, the prophet Isaiah speaks of God's righteousness in association with God's faithfulness as Creator of all (*cp* 1 Peter 4:19).

But what is the basis of this faithful righteousness of God? God will not bring about any people's salvation without a righteous and real elimination of sin and wickedness along with a true justifying of life. There must be a righteous Saviour in order for God's righteousness in His work of salvation to become known and appreciated.

THE RIGHTEOUS SAVIOUR

The righteousness of God requires the elimination of all that is evil, of sin and death, of sorrow and loss, of selfishness and cruelty and sorrow. It calls for salvation from

all that is wrong, to the end that all is right. And since it is impossible for human beings to bring about such an end, or even to contribute to such an end by their own deeds, there must be One Who has a true relationship with humanity ("in Him is all created") yet stands apart from the corrupted race, Who can save them in righteousness. The prophet Zechariah was one among others who testified to the coming of Him Who is the Saviour, Who is righteous in His work of salvation. In Zechariah 9:9 we read of Israel's future King in the following terms:

Behold, your King shall come to you!
Righteous and bringing salvation is He.
Humble and riding on a donkey,
And on a colt, the foal of a jenny.

How strange these words must have seemed at the time they were spoken, and even today they must seem puzzling apart from the word of the cross which is the power and the wisdom of God. It is especially the word "humble" that seems out of place with the coming of the King Who is righteous and Who is bringing salvation. These words are quoted in association with Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem with acclamation from the people just days before He was crucified (*cf* Matt.21:1-9). The righteousness and the bringing of salvation involve the humbling of the One Who will afterward reign in exaltation. As the evangel of God proclaims, Christ Jesus is the One Who humbles Himself, becoming obedient (in faithfulness) to the death of the cross. Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him and graces Him with the name that will be acclaimed by every tongue, for the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:8-11).

We can see now how all this fits together and how it is a dealing with sin that leads forward to justifying of sinners and revelation of God as the righteous Justifier. But what we see in faith is also marvelously supported by the

testimony of the Hebrew Scriptures concerning the righteousness of God.

BEING SAVED

We also have troubles. This is only human (*cf* 1 Cor. 10:13). Let none of us suppose that we will escape the loads and even the burdens that come with the present times. If you are like me, you may find yourselves often reading over Paul's list of troubles in 2 Corinthians 11:23-38 just to get things into perspective. But Paul learned that our Lord's grace is sufficient for every need (2 Cor.12:9). The apostle was given special afflictions along with the glorious revelations of grace and peace from God which he was given to share.

Most of our afflictions, however, are more easily traced to our own failures than to faithfulness in service to our Lord. We are often like Moses and act impulsively and in human stubbornness. But in every case, whether we are like Job and experience sorrows that seem unrelated to obvious deservings or whether we are like David and experience troubles easily traced to our human failings, we are always strengthened and encouraged by reliance on the faithful and righteous God. And we are blessed in this beyond Job and Moses and David and the prophets of old. For we have heard the evangel and are believing it.

Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners . . . . For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and mankind, a Man, Christ Jesus, Who is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all . . . .Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome (for for this are we toiling and being reproached), that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers (1 Tim. 1:15; 2:6; 4:9,10).

D.H.H.

BRINGING THE KING TO THE THRONE
(2 Samuel 19:41-20:26)

41 + *bd*Now all the men of Israel kept coming to the king and |said to the king, For what reason have our kinsmen, the men of Judah, stolen you away and *c*brought `the king and `his household ¯across `the Jordan, and all of David's men with him? 42 +Then all the men of Judah |answered *on* the men of Israel, *f*Because the king is a near relative to us! + Why does this make › you *hot*angry *on*about ˙this ˙matter? Have we eaten, yea eaten¯ from the king's food? *if*Or did he carry a load for us? 43 + The men of Israel |answered `the men of Judah, + |saying, We ›have ten *hand*shares in the king; + moreover we are *7*the firstborn~, rather *f*than you. + For what reason do you slight us? + *b*Was not our *sp*proposal first, to bring `our king back to us? +Yet the words of the men of Judah were more |obstinate *f*than the words of the men of Israel.

20 + A worthless man happened to be there; + his name was Sheba son of Bichri, a man of Jemini. + He |blew *i* the trumpet and |*sa*declared, There is no portion for us in David and no*t* allotment for us in the son of Jesse! Each man to his tents, O Israel! 2 +So every man of Israel moved |*on*away from following David to go after Sheba son of Bichri. +But the men of Judah, they clung *i*to their king from the Jordan + as far as Jerusalem.

3 +When David |came to his *in*palace in Jerusalem, + the king |took `the ten women, *7*his*0* concubines, whom he had left to be in charge of the *in*palace, and he |*g*put them in a house under guard. + He |*all*provided for them, +but

he did **not** go ⁻**in to them;** ⁺ **they** ˡᵇ**remained constricted**ˡ **until** the **day of their death**⁻**,** in **living widowhood.**

4 ⁺ **The king** ˡ**said to Amasa,** ᶜ**Call** a **convocation for me** `with the **men of Judah** within **three days, and stand** ready **here your**self. 5 ⁺**So Amasa** ˡ**went to** ᶜ**call** a **convocation** `with **Judah;** ⁺**but he** ˡ**delayed** longer ᶠ**than the appointed** time ʷ**that** the king **had** ᶠʳ**set** for **him.** 6 **And David** ˡ**said to Abishai, Now Sheba son of Bichri shall** cause › **us** more **evil** ᶠ**than Absalom.** ⁷**And now~**ˢ**, take** ⁷**with you**ᶜˢ `**your lord's servants and pursue after him, lest he find for him**self **fortressed**ˡ **cities and rescue** himself, away from **our eyes.** 7 ⁺**So Joab's men** marched ˡ**forth after him** ⁺**with the Kerethite,** ⁺ **the Pelethite and all the masters** of war. ⁺ **They** marched ˡ**forth from Jerusalem to pursue after Sheba son of Bichri.**

8 ⁷⁺**When**⁰ **they** were ʷⁱ**at the large** ˙**stone** ʷ**that** is **in Gibeon,** ⁺**then Amasa him**self **came** up **before them.** ⁺**Now Joab** was **girded**ˡ with **his coat** over **his clothing; and on it** a **girdle** with the **sword in its scabbard strapped**ˡ ᵒⁿ**to his waist.** ⁺**Now** ⁷**the sword~** came **forth, and it** ˡ**fell** down.

9 ⁺ **Joab** ˡ**said to Amasa,** Is all **well** with **you, my brother? And Joab's right hand** took ˡ**hold** ⁱ**of Amasa's beard** as if **to kiss** › **him.** 10 ⁺**So Amasa was not** on **guard** ⁱ**against** the **sword** ʷ**that** was **in Joab's** left **hand** ⁺ who ˡ**smote him** ⁱ**with it** ›**on the fifth** rib, **and his bowels** ⁷**were** ˡ**poured out~** to ᵈ the **earth.** ⁺ **He** did **not** have to **repeat** it **to him,** ⁺**for he was dying.** ⁺**While Joab and his brother Abishai pursued after Sheba son of Bichri,** 11 ⁺ a **man** ᶠ**of Joab's lads stood over him and** ˡ**said, Any**one **who delights in Joab and any**one **who** is **for David,** let him follow **after Joab.** 12 ⁺ **Amasa** was **rolling** him**self in** his **blood in** the **middle of the highway.** ⁺**When the man** ˡ**saw that all the** ʷⁱ**soldiers stood** still, ⁺ **he** ᶜ**brought** `**Amasa** ˡ**around,** ᶠ**off the highway** into **the field; and he** ˡ**flung** a **cloak over him as** ʷ **he** ˢᵉᵉ**realized** that **any-one** ˙**coming** up **on**to **him** ⁺ **would stand** still. 13 **As** ʷ**soon** as

he was ⁷**removed away~ from the highway, all** the **men** ᵖ**marched** by, **following Joab to pursue after Sheba son of Bichri,** 14 ⁺ who **was passing** ⁱ**through all** the **tribes of Israel** to ᵈ **Abel** ⁺**of Beth-maacah; and all the** ⁷**Bichrites~** ⁺ ˡ**assembled and** ˡ**came also after him.**

15 ⁺ Joab's men ˡ**came and** ˡ**besieged** ᵒⁿ **him in Abel** of ᵈ **Beth-maacah.** ⁺ **They** ˡ**poured out earthwork** ›**against the city, and it** ˡ**stood** ⁱ**against** the **rampart.** ⁺ **All the** ʷⁱ**soldiers** ʷ `with **Joab** were **wrecking the wall** so as **to cast** it down, 16 ⁺**when** a **wise woman** ˡ**called** out **from the** ⁷**wall~, Hear! Hear!** ᵖʳ**Please** ˢᵃ**tell** › **Joab,** Come **near** ᶠʳ**over** ᵇᵈ**here, and let me** ˡ**speak to you.** 17 ⁺**So he** went ˡ**near to her, and the woman** ˡˢᵃ**asked,** Are **you Joab?** ⁺ **He** ˡˢᵃ**replied, I** am. ⁺ **She** ˡ**said to him, Hear** the **words of your maidservant.** ⁺ **He** ˡˢᵃ**answered, I** am **hearing.** 18 ⁺**Then she** ˡˢᵃ**continued,** › **saying**⁻**, They** ˡ**spoke,** yea **spoke**⁻ **in former** times, › **saying**⁻**, Let them ask,** yea **ask**⁻ ⁱ**at Abel** ⁷**and** ⁱ**at Dan** whether that **which** the **faithful of Israel had** ᵖˡ**established** ever **came to end. Let them ask,** yea **ask**⁻ ⁱ**at Abel**⁰**, and thus they will come to end.** 19 **I** represent the **peaceable**ˡ and **faithful**ˡ **of Israel.** But **you** are **seeking to** ᶜ**bring death**⁻ to a **city** ⁺**that** is a **mother in Israel. Why should you swallow** up the **allot-ment of Yahweh?** 20 ⁺ **Joab** ˡ**answered,** ⁺ ˡ**saying, Far be it, far be it** ›**from me** ⁱᶠ**that I should swallow up** ⁺**or** ⁱᶠ ᶜ**bring** down to ˡ**ruin.** 21 **The matter** is **not** quite **so** ᶠ**because** a **man from** the **hill** country **of Ephraim, Sheba son of Bichri** is **his name, has lifted** up **his hand** ⁱ**against** the **king,** ⁱ**against David. Give** `**him** up, **him alone, and I shall** ˡᵍᵒ**withdraw from** ᵒⁿ **the city.** ⁺ **The woman** ˡˢᵃ**replied to Joab, Behold, his head** shall be **flung**ˡ **to you** ⁱ ᶠʳ**over the wall.**

22 ⁺**Then the woman** ˡⁱⁿ**went to all** ˙her **people** ⁷**and** ˡ**spoke to all the city**⁰ **in her wisdom.** ⁺**So they** ˡ**cut** off `the **head of Sheba son of Bichri and** ˡ**flung** it down **to Joab. He** ⁺**then** ˡ**blew** ⁱ the **trumpet, and they** ˡ**scattered from** ᵒⁿ **the city,**

each **man to his tents.** +**As** for **Joab, he returned** to **Jerusalem, to the king.**

23 + **Joab** was M**over~ Israel's entire** military **host;** + **Benaiah son of Jehoiada** was **over the Kerethite and over the Pelethite.** 24 + 7**Adoniram~**cs was **over the tributary** service**;** + **Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud** was **the recorder**l**.** 25 + **Sheva** was **scribe**l**; and Zadok and Abiathar** were **priests.** 26 + **Ira the Jairite** mr**also** b**served** › **David** as **priest.**

REBELLION OF THE FLESH

Verses 41-43 of chapter 19 introduce the rebellion of Sheba with the petty bickering between the tribes that occasioned the uprising. When Joshua led the Israelites across the Jordan at Gilgal, monuments of 12 stones were set up at Gilgal and in the Jordan, commemorating a passage through death, and a leaving of the old life behind. The death of the flesh is a crucial principle indispensable to coming under the rule of *the Beloved*.

The name *Bichri* carries the idea of *bearing early fruit*, or, *to give the birthright*. The arguments between Judah and the 10 tribes were centered on the birthright (v.43) and rights based upon physical relationship to the king. Thoughts of obedience, devotion, spiritual unity, or subjection to Yahweh were all forgotten. The controversy was over personal rights and wounded feelings. If the king was returning to the throne, why would the joy of his return not displace any and all feelings of being slighted? Why would they not rather prefer to accept injury with silent charity? (*cf* 1 Cor.6:7). Why would they not turn the other cheek?

The apostle Paul dealt with a similar situation among the Galatians. The controversy was whether or not a physical relationship to Christ could take precedence to a spiritual unity with Him. Paul said, ". . . the entire law is fulfilled in one word, in this: 'You shall love your associate as yourself.' Now if you are biting and devouring one another, beware that you may not be consumed by one another" (vv.14-15 of context: Gal.5:11-17). 2 Samuel 20 shows graphically that Israel was on the verge of destroying itself with civil war. The Israelites left Gilgal, the place where reproach was rolled away by the cutting off of the flesh, but instead of going to Jerusalem, the possession of peace, they went each one to their own tents—to their own possessions.

THE VIOLATED CONCUBINES

2 Samuel 20:3 speaks of the concubines with whom Absalom had lain to give his stealing of the throne its stamp of finality. The verse closes with a phrase that might strike us as unusual: *living widowhood*. The meaning is clear. These women would live out their lives without ever bearing a child to the king. Their lives would fail to bear the joyous fruit that could come from living in subjection to the king, because they had surrendered to the authority of someone else. As with the twelve tribes, the issue can be reduced to the relationship sustained to the king. This phrase may also shed light on Paul's expression in 1 Timothy 5:6: "though living, is dead" (see 1 Tim.5:3-16).

These women found themselves to be very much like prisoners. Remembering the schemes of Sarah, the bartering of Leah and Rachel, and the tears of Hannah, we realize that in their culture a woman's fulfillment was largely found in the bearing of children. They may well have cursed the day that their beauty had brought them to the palace. If only they had been plainer, they may have married that neighborhood boy and had a happy life raising a family. Or if only they had resisted Absalom, even if it cost their life. It is the believer's submission to the rule of Christ, and his or her faithfulness to His rule, that invigorates them and prevents them from coming to the place of a fruitless existence.

DAVID AND JOAB

Though David and Joab seem to have been interminably linked, that was not by David's design (2 Sam.3:39). After the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, Abner, Saul's commander, was the strong central figure around whom Saul's house stood. David had made a covenant with Abner in an effort to unite the country. Abner may have become David's commander in chief if Joab had not killed him (2 Sam.3). Later David offered the position of commander in chief to the man who could first breach the Jebusite stronghold in Jerusalem (1 Chron.11:6). This accompanied the moving of the capital from Hebron to Jerusalem, and appears to have been a political ploy designed to garner the approval of the whole nation. It seems that David did not want the country to think that only those who had been with him as an outcast could reign with him. Yet it was Joab who breached the stronghold.

In the 19th chapter, in an effort to unify a country broken by his son's rebellion, David offered Amasa, Absalom's commander, the position of military leader in his cabinet (2 Sam.19:13,14). This was an outward statement that David was ready to pardon all who had followed Absalom in the rebellion. Joab foiled David's plan again by murdering Amasa. David, a man of blood (1 Chron.22:7,8; 28:3), and bloody Joab (1 Kings 2:5,6) remained together.

Israel struggled with unity and submission to the king, and David himself struggled with the rule of his officers, particularly Joab. There are parallels between the submission of Israel to David, the submission of Joab to David, and the submission of the flesh to the believer. The believer may try to crucify the flesh, but still he continually finds his service to the Lord performed by the flesh. The flesh repeatedly offers its energy in an effort to justify itself. Like Joab, the flesh keeps coming back. It is interesting that in chapters 15,16, and 17 where the theme is the humility and complete subjection of David to God, Joab is not even mentioned. Many others are mentioned by name with extensive details and conversations. But Joab is not mentioned until David begins to act on his own plans for dealing with the crisis. As long as David was fully submissive to God, Joab was out of the picture.

WISDOM AT ABEL OF BETH-MAACAH

Joab was bent on bringing down the rebellion, and bringing the whole nation under David's rule, even if it meant destroying an entire city or starting a civil war to do it. He laid siege to Abel, not stopping to follow the instruction in the law (Deut.20:10-20). These verses (2 Sam.20: 15-22) call to mind the many times the words of Christ have been followed without wisdom or understanding. "If your right eye is snaring you, wrench it out and cast it from you—if your right hand is snaring you, strike it off and cast it from you" (Matt.5:29,30). It is not the eye that causes one to lust, and it is not the hand that causes one to steal. And the fact that Sheba had fled to Abel did not mean that the whole city was in rebellion against the king and should be destroyed. The crucifixion of the flesh, the "leading into captivity every apprehension into the obedience of Christ" (Col.3:5; Gal.6:14; 2 Cor.10:5), does not require a mutilation of the believer's body.

When Christ rules in our life, the flesh becomes a fugitive, a cunning fugitive, who sees our heart as a walled city of refuge. Wisdom must prevail, and the usurper within must be dealt with decisively. Find the rebellious self, hiding in the heart, and throw his head over the wall. What will be the loss if we give safe harbor to such a worthless man? Would we risk a whole city for the foolish momentary glory of spouting off our anger and frustration? Would we waste a life of potentially fruitful service to indulge self?

Solomon may have thought of the deliverance of Abel

when he wrote Ecclesiastes 9:13-18. He saw a wisdom that was great to him—a wisdom whereby a provident man could deliver a city from overwhelming odds. But no one remembered the wise man or hearkened to his words. Joseph was remembered in the prison, and delivered Egypt and its surrounding countries with the wisdom of God. Christ has made known the wisdom and power of God by humbly submitting Himself to God's will, and our deliverance is to be found in that wisdom also.

J. Phillip Scranton

WILLIAM S. PENN, JR.

We have only recently heard of the death of our brother, Bill Penn, of Davis, California, on May 27, 2004. His early interest in the things of consequence which our apostle Paul recorded in his epistles seemed to deepen through the years. He was blessed with a cheerful and confident disposition, sustained by a strong faith and happy expectation. As for us who remain, we look forward to that day of vivification when we will all be together always with our Lord.

AMBER (HEINTZELMAN) KILLEN

The widow of Robert B. Killen, whose concise, scriptural studies have sometimes appeared in this magazine, Amber will be especially remembered by those who attended Bible studies in their home as a thoughtful hostess and strong advocate for the evangel. She was put to repose on April 30, 2005, at the age of 88. In a private funeral service on May 4 her four children and their families followed a pattern of fellowship their parents had set in their home with scripture reading, prayer, comments and song.

CHARLOTTE MCDIVITT

We are sorry to hear of the death of Charlotte McDivitt, of Windham, Ohio, on March 1, 2005. Her cheerful presence will be greatly missed at the meetings in northern Ohio conducted by her son, Ted, and by all of us who knew her. Our sympathy goes out to her husband, George ("Bud"), and her large and close-knit family. Phil Scranton spoke of her faith and the One Who was the center of her faith at her memorial service on March 5.

PERFECTION

WHO shall describe the glories of the Ephesian letter? We are taken back before the entrance of evil and behold ourselves in His purposes in Christ. We are taken and seated in the very heavens in Christ. But, though the earth is taken from beneath our feet in this twofold sense, yet in Him we find a firmer footing than ever this earth can give.

But such abundant grace cannot be contained in Israel's narrow pale. They were nigh by virtue of the covenant blood. Such nearness was but distance compared with the nearness now secured by the blood of Christ. The means by which they drew near—the court, the altar, the laver, the holy place, the vail—all these are now seen to be but barriers to their free approach.

Now these are all removed. The defilement of the flesh might keep even an Israelite outside the camp in the days of old; but now the blood of Christ yields to no fleshly disability, and avails for all—for those afar off as well as those that were nigh. The nations have an equal share with Israel in this stupendous blessing.

The blood of Christ alone, unaided, without escort or association, without accessory or adjunct of any kind, brushing aside the embarrassment and blockade of fleshly rites, in the fresh and unsupported vigor and power of its solitary majesty—the blood of Christ alone is the champion of the sinner; that, single-handed, clears a passage to the very throne of God.

But is baptism brushed aside? Is it included in the abolished rites?

Among the unities of the fourth chapter are: "*One* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism" (Eph.4:5).

Though there be lords many, for us there is but one Lord.

In previous dispensations, as well as in a future day, varieties of faith obtain. Favor is shown to various classes according to their relationship to Israel. In the Pentecostal era the faith for Israel was far more glorious than that for the Samaritans, while the nations were but guests at Israel's board. Now they are no longer guests and sojourners, but fellow citizens of the saints, and members of God's family. Now there is one faith for all; not Israel first, not the nations first; but all are received on equal gracious terms.

ONE BAPTISM

As there is but one faith now, so also there is but one baptism.

We have seen how the ministry of our Lord, and, that of John were characterized by one baptism—that in water. John had borne record concerning the Master: "I, indeed, am baptizing you in water for repentance, yet He who is coming after me is stronger than I, Whose sandals I am not competent to bear. He will be baptizing you in holy spirit and fire" (Matt.3:11). So the Master, upon His ascension, bears witness to John: "John indeed baptizes in water, yet you shall be baptized in holy spirit after not many of these days" (Acts 1:5).

So that from Pentecost onward two baptisms obtained. Water baptism was accompanied by spirit baptism.

In the administration of the evangel of God among the nations by Paul these two continued, but water baptism takes a secondary place, while the baptism of the spirit is the portion of all.

Now that there is a return to *one* baptism the question remains: "Is it water, or, Is it spirit?"

The epistle itself gives answer: when believing also, you are sealed with the holy spirit of promise (Eph.1:13). This alone entitled them to the spiritual blessings which they had in the heavenly regions.

By one spirit they were all baptized into one body. Without that baptism there could never be the one body. If the one body does not exist, there is no body of Christ, no ecclesia, and our highest blessings as His members are annulled.

It is by this spirit that we all have access into God's presence, and are united one to another. This unity of the spirit is one of the characteristic truths of this secret economy. It is vital.

So then, the baptism of spirit remains.

NO CONFIDENCE IN FLESH

As there is but one baptism, that in water disappears. If we take Ephesians as the text book, then Philippians furnishes us with examples, and Colossians with review.

In Philippians, we see the apostle's own course in the things of flesh. Precious as they once appeared, he now counts them but fit for curs. As he sees those who call themselves the "Circumcision," staking all upon a mere mutilation of their flesh, he sounds the alarm: "Beware of the maimcision, for *we* are the circumcision who are offering divine service *in the spirit* of God, and are glorying in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in flesh" (Phil.3:2,3). He weeps as he warns them once more of the enemies of the cross of Christ "who to the terrestrial are disposed" (Phil.3:18,19). It is hard to exclude baptism in water from these "earthly things." Once, like circumcision, it was necessary for divine blessing, but now both have been fulfilled in His cross.

In Colossians, baptism itself is taken up in conjunction with circumcision.

In the days when Yahweh taught His people how to draw

nigh to Him, what was the requisite for approach? The uncircumcised could not draw nigh at all. Circumcision was the prime factor in seeking His presence and blessing.

But a nearer approach required still more. The circumcised Israelite could not even reach the laver. A circumcised priest could not go beyond the laver without being first baptized in its water.

Circumcision and baptism, then, constituted the Israelite's fitness to approach a veiled God.

And they are still necessary. They are essential. No one is properly furnished for His presence and blessing unless first he is circumcised and baptized.

COMPLETE IN CHRIST

In this light we read: ". . . you are complete in Him . . . in Whom you were circumcised also with a circumcision not made by hands, in the *stripping off of the body of flesh* in the circumcision of Christ" (Col.2:10,11).

Here is circumcision indeed; though "not made by hands" though accomplished on the cross apart from us altogether, it is *the only real, the only true circumcision*. The sons of Jacob were *not* circumcised. *We are.* They only shadowed it. We have the substance.

Let no one say that circumcision is obsolete. It is a present, practical, powerful truth. It is, however, but part of the truth. It leaves Christ on the cross, lifeless.

So the apostle goes on to say: "Being entombed together with Him in baptism, in Whom you were roused together also through faith in the operation of God, Who rouses Him from among the dead" (Col.2:12).

Christ is risen! And we are risen in Him! Here is cleansing! Here is baptism!

By the power of His spirit we enter into the blessed potent truth that we have already been baptized. And such a baptism as the sons of Israel never knew. By Him we

have not only died, but have also been buried and raised from the grave—in *Him*. Not from "a watery grave by the strong arm of the baptizer" but by an Almighty arm, "through faith in the operation of God, Who rouses Him from among the dead."

Just as we are not circumcised in flesh, but in spirit, so also with baptism. *His* baptism, just as His circumcision, we reckon as our own. He was buried; so were we. He arose; we too are risen.

As we think of this solemn glorious truth the warning still rings in our ears: "*Beware that no one shall be despoiling you . . . in accord with the elements of the world* [the elementary religious observances] *and not in accord with Christ*!" (Col.2:8).

Has our God set this danger signal here for naught? How many, many, of His precious ones have passed it by unheeded! How sad to be in the toils of men when God has made us free and complete in Him!

There *is* danger! God has not warned us against that which has no existence, for multitudes of God's saints have gone blindly into this snare in spite of God's warning. He has delivered the writer of these pages: He alone can deliver those who bear His divine and solemn appeal.

The exquisite joy and delicious satisfaction which is found by those who know themselves complete in Christ can only be found by heeding this divine "Beware!"

By the very nature of things, circumcision, while speaking of the stripping off of flesh, gave the flesh a standing it was never entitled to. Spiritual circumcision alone really fulfills its import.

Baptism was likewise embarrassed. While it spoke of spirit and gave the flesh no place, yet, being an ordinance on the flesh, it seemed to give the flesh acceptance in His sight.

But our baptism gives flesh no place. Our cleansing is by

spirit and finds a real and genuine acceptance by our God.

If I am complete in Him no fleshly rite can add to my completeness. If I do add it, then I deny that His work has fully met God's claims. I dishonor that work by subtracting from its potency; and spoil it by adding something of my own dead, putrefying flesh.

If I receive the wondrous truth then I am constrained to refuse these ordinances upon the flesh, both circumcision and baptism. I rest alone in Him in Whom I have no lack.

A. E. Knoch

Complete in Christ my Saviour,
How precious is the thought!
God finds in me the pleasure,
For which He longed and sought.

Complete in Christ, my Saviour,
On love alone I lean,
In self I seek no solace,
In Him alone I'm seen.

Complete in Christ my Saviour,
I need not aught beside.
God's holy word hath said it.
In Him I may abide.

Complete in Christ, my Saviour,
How can I hope for more?
His grace has brought each blessing,
His love has kept in store.

Complete in Christ my Saviour,
'Tis sweet as it is true.
No lack can God discover,
In aught I am or do.

In Christ I've found salvation,
And all that makes me meet,
For God's own holy presence
In Him I am complete.

Olive E. and Ernest O. Knoch

SALVATION FROM SIN, IN POSITION AND PRACTICE

Question:

If it is *Christ Jesus* Who is the *Saviour* (1 Tim.1:15), how can it be that we are to *save ourselves* by something that we do, such as by attending to ourselves and to the teaching (1 Tim.4:16)?

Stranger still, how can it be so that "a woman" shall be *saved* "through the child bearing, if ever they should be remaining in faith and love and holiness with sanity" (1 Tim.2:12,15)?

If Christ is truly the Saviour, surely we cannot save ourselves, nor can a woman be saved by bearing children, even by ones who are faithful to God. I need to have this subject clearly explained to me.

Answer:

THROUGH the death of the cross, Christ Jesus *alone* is the Saviour of sinners, from sin and all its effects. It is through Christ *alone* that we are saved from indignation and for life eonian (Rom.5:9,21).

That primary and most glorious "salvation" yet to come is not a reward for our obedience, much less is it a compensation for some fancied independent cooperation of our own, something in which we might indulge ourselves in at least a measure of self-congratulations.

Nevertheless, under God, and under Christ, as the agents of God's gracious operations, the practical need remains for us to "save ourselves" from withdrawing from the faith; and, in a similar vein, a woman, through child bearing and

its fruitful associations, may do well in saving herself from domineeringness, even as from loudness and indiscretion.

In 1 Timothy 4:1, the subject of this entire chapter which follows is set forth: "Now the spirit is saying explicitly, that in subsequent eras some will be *withdrawing from the faith* . . . ." Paul then proceeds to expound upon the pattern which this apostasy will follow, along with representative examples of these teachings of demons, as found "in the hypocrisy of false expressions" which masquerade themselves as scriptural truth.

The apostle stresses the importance of "fostering with the words of faith and of the ideal teaching which you have fully followed" while at the same time refusing what, however they may be disguised, are actually nothing more than "profane and old womanish myths" (1 Tim.4:6,7).

By giving heed to reading, to entreaty, to teaching, neglecting not the gracious gift which is in us, while meditating on these things and involving ourselves in them, we thereby "attend to [ourselves] and to the teaching."

Paul then explains that by "persisting" in these needful and wise conventions, we will *save ourselves* as well as those "hearing" us, that is, those who heed our testimony ("in doing this you will save yourself as well as those hearing you"; 1 Tim.4:16). Clearly, it is that by persisting in these vital practices, we will save both ourselves together with those who will hear and heed our word, from *withdrawing from the faith.*

Under God and in His grace, we often "save ourselves" from many a fearful failing and baneful backsliding. This thought accords with the theme of Philippians 2:12, 13, where Paul similarly declares, ". . . with fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation into effect, for it is God Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:12b,13).

Out of love, we "fear" to offend God, and, in spirit, by

faith, "tremble" in His glorious presence. It is only fitting, then, that we should approach our *practical salvation* as to life's affairs in such a reverent and devout attitude.

This is so, "*for* it is *God* Who is operating in [us]." Literally, He is operating in us "the to be willing" as well as "the to be working"—which, in the nature of things, is essential to the *effecting* (the actual doing or out-working) of our practical salvation.

These phrases "the to be willing" and "the to be working" are the strict readings, as indicated in the Concordant Version by the superior dots (for the definite article, "the") and the vertical strokes preceding "will" and "work" (for the act, or incomplete, verb form, indicative of ongo*ing* action).

Both our willing and our working, wherever these are requisite to any actions of our own whereby we either *get* ourselves out or *keep* ourselves out of trouble and sin, are themselves the effects of God's own operations in us.

This glorious work of God is "for the sake of His *delight*" (Phil.2:13b). Many of His operations find no place in His *heart*, though they are the work of His *hand* even so, according to His own wise counsels. Our faithfulness, then, is not merely *also* God's work, but is *especially* God's work, and it *delights* Him to accomplish it in us.

2 Timothy 2:20, 21 is another passage which accords with this same theme: "Now in a great house there are not only gold and silver utensils, but wooden and earthenware also, and some indeed for honor, yet some for dishonor. If, then, anyone should ever be *purging himself* from these, he will be a utensil for honor, hallowed, and useful to the Owner, made ready for every good act."

If one's course hitherto has not been characterized by honorable acts but by dishonorable acts, one is, perforce, a utensil "for dishonor." While within His "great house," God, Who is operating all (Eph.1:11), certainly has a place

and purpose for such utensils, even so, it is not a place of honor but of dishonor. If one should ever be *purging himself* from the uncleanness of walk which necessitates his classification among the utensils of dishonor, only then will he be a utensil for honor, hallowed and useful to the Owner for faithful service.

How wonderful, then, to know in the case of any such genuine purging of sin that no flesh at all shall be boasting in God's sight (*cf* 1 Cor.1:29-31). This is because we are His achievement: "For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. *For His achievement are we,* being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them."

"LITTLE WOMEN"

Concerning 1 Timothy 2:15: "Now I am not permitting a woman to be teaching nor yet to be domineering over a man, but to be in quietness (for Adam was first molded, thereafter Eve, and Adam was not seduced, yet the woman, being deluded, has come to be in the transgression). Yet she shall be saved through the child bearing, if ever they should be remaining in faith and love and holiness with sanity."

As an initial point of reference, even as of connection, it is this gender-specific salvation, from the shame and dishonor associated with Eve's original sin, which is here in view. In its outworkings, this sin is centered in a spirit of insubjection, which is typically manifested in a domineering manner, even as in indiscretion and loudness.

From the time Eve was first deluded and came to be found in transgression, her shame and dishonor, by association, has fallen upon women as a whole. In addition to this, and more directly, in accord with the corruption inherent

in the old humanity, it must be acknowledged that just as surely as it is characteristic of men not to love their wives as their own bodies, it is characteristic of women not to be subject to their husbands (Eph.5:22-28).

In their rebellion, women lapse into loudness and indiscrete speech, even as into a domineering spirit over their husbands. This is so, even as men who in their egocentrism, lapse into a vacuity of love for their wives. While such mannerisms and practices are surely the way of the flesh, even so, where God grants special grace, these gender-specific declivities may be greatly attenuated even if not altogether eliminated.

The apostle Paul makes special mention of those "little *women*" (i.e., women of diminutive spiritual character; 2 Tim.3:6), among those of both sexes who have a form of devoutness yet deny its power, who are so readily led into captivity by unfaithful teachers. All pretenses and deceptions to the contrary, in their religious zeal, these women are actually being led, not by the spirit of God, but by "various lusts and gratifications; [such ones are] always learning and yet not at any time able to come into a realization of the truth" (2 Tim.3:7).

There is a great need for practical salvation here. And it is women who especially need to be saved from an unnatural, and unbecoming, domineering spirit, and to be endowed with a spirit of *quietness* with all *subjection* (1 Tim.2:11; *cp* 1 Peter 3:4,5). It is not that men do not have deficiencies in these areas too, but that women have special needs in this sphere, and this is what the apostle is addressing.

Evidently, the pronoun "she" in verse 15 ("Yet she shall be saved through the child bearing . . .") is not used strictly with a literal antecedent of "the [first] woman" herself, but is used in reference to the female of the species, that is, in a general way of "the woman" (i.e., "women") in contrast to "the man" (i.e., "men"). Through her experience

of bearing children ("through the child bearing," a figure of association here which points us primarily to child *rearing*), "*if ever* they [i.e., her children] should be remaining in faith and love and holiness with sanity."

While the woman should *not* be "teaching" nor yet domineering over the man, on the other hand, there is much that she *should* be doing with a view toward counsel, example, and encouragement in faith on behalf of the children, *acquainting* them with the Scriptures (*cp* 2 Tim.1:5; 3:15).

It is, in part, thus, through this especial, ennobling influence of their mother, that they may become children of genuine faith, unfeigned love, and actual holiness with spiritual sanity (in contrast to the immaturity, religious foolishness, and misguided zeal of so many of the young people of today who are naming the name of the Lord). Through being of service to others, namely to her own children, that they might find saving graces for themselves through God's appointed means, the woman herself will find much saving grace from her own weaknesses.

This counsel, of course, is ideal. No doubt, in this present wicked eon, there have been very few families who have ever enjoyed these blessings in abundance. Some may have cultivated a lively, and even commendable, form of devoutness, but in the great majority of cases it has lacked enlightenment, the presence and power of the truth (*cp* 2 Tim.3:5-7).

Conversely, even where more light is present, there may still be distractions and weaknesses that hinder a more faithful walk. But as we see the value of this course for ourselves which Paul presents, perhaps we will be graced in measure to "undo" some of our past failings and be strengthened for better service in times ahead. This is the path that our apostle would have us follow, for it is the course God has appointed for the family, for the woman and for her children, under the headship, and leadership, of the man.

J.R.C.

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 Abraham Buys a Tomb
150 A Wife for Isaac
165 Honor
174 Trinitarianism and Heresy
183 Through Jesus Christ's Faith

JULY, 2005

Volume XCVI **Number 4**

Concordant Version of
The Book of Psalms

The *Concordant Version of the Psalms* endeavors to follow a pattern of consistency in translating the Hebrew words and thoughts of the Original. Hence there has been an effort to avoid the use of any English term for more than one Hebrew term, even though several English words may be required to do duty for a single Hebrew term. Boldface and lightface type, superior symbols and abbreviations and footnotes are all used to clarify the meaning or to represent some unique features that are otherwise difficult to express in English.

Boldface type is used for words (or parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. The regular, lightface type is used for words (or parts of words) which have been added to help express the Hebrew thought in more idiomatic English.

Symbols and abbreviations are used to indicate variant readings in the various Hebrew manuscripts or ancient Versions or to provide more complete information concerning the literal expressions in the Hebrew. These symbols and abbreviations are identified on the inside covers of the book.

Although the word "Psalm" appears in the titles of many of the individual pieces, the Hebrew word traditionally used as a title for the whole collection is the plural form of the word *praise* (*cf* the heading of Psalm 145). The term "Psalms," however, is also appropriate, for it means "melodies," as rendered, for example, in Psalm 81:2, "Lift up a melody . . . ." Yet the melody is not confined to singing but rather is directed to the thought being expressed in poetic form and its impression on the mind.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2005
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-SIX

EDITORIAL

WITH the publication of the Concordant Version of the Latter Prophets, now at the printers, the entirety of our translation of the "Old Testament" will be available in one form or another. The books of Ruth and Lamentations appeared in the January 1994 and July 1992 issues of *Unsearchable Riches,* respectively, and the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy as well as the Psalms and Daniel, which were published in installments from 1957 to 1994, are still available in the smaller size form used for our magazine. The remaining books are (or soon will be) printed in three portions in notebook size form: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs (1998); The Former Prophets (2004); and now The Latter Prophets (2005).

We are profoundly thankful to God that He has brought us to this milestone. Yet we are continually humbled by our shortcomings and the frustrations of our wishes in completing this project.

A "Concordant Version" of the Sacred Scriptures was envisioned nearly a century ago. A. E. Knoch undertook the task of translating the Greek Scriptures (usually called the "New Testament"). This was first published in 1926, with major revisions issued in 1931, 1944 and 1966. Vladimir Gelesnoff began the preparation of a Concordant Version of the Hebrew Scriptures, but was unable to make much progress before his early death in 1921. This task was taken up by Brother Knoch in the early 1930's and continued with the assistance of several helpers, of whom E. H. Clayton of England made major contributions. A tentative translation was completed, partly in typewritten form, yet other portions only in handwritten form, by the time of Brother Clayton's death in 1972. In the meantime,

Herman H. Rocke, had moved from Germany to California and commenced a thorough review of the translation, its consistency both in vocabulary and renderings of various grammatical forms, and its readability. Along with a number of helpers he also undertook a reexamination of the emendations of the Hebrew text indicated by his predecessors on the basis of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the ancient translations in Greek (especially the Septuagint) and Syriac, and other sources, such as the Samaritan Pentateuch.

I gradually became acquainted with the translation project from 1972 becoming more closely involved in association with Brother Rocke from 1984 until his death in 1996. He worked mainly on the Pentateuch and Former Prophets, plus Ruth, Esther, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Daniel, and I on the poetic books and Latter Prophets, each checking over the other's work, and comparing it all with the work done earlier under Brother Knoch's supervision. In the last few years I have tried to bring the whole together with more consistency, while looking again into a number of unsettled problems.

Many of these problems still remain unsettled, and a search for a greater measure of consistency should be undertaken even after we publish the whole together in one form. It is well to remember Brother Knoch's dictum that the Version always remain tentative, open to improvements both as to underlying textual concerns and the English renderings.

Without setting deadlines, but with renewed hope, we turn now to the effort of bringing all the published installments together in one form. I trust our readers will join us in prayer for wisdom and strength in this further effort.

I hope also, that many will find real help, as I continue to find, in a growing appreciation of these sacred writings by means of this Concordant translation.

D.H.H.

ABRAHAM BUYS A TOMB

23 + **Sarah's life** ˡ**came** to **be 127 years;** these were the **years of Sarah's life.** 2 + **Sarah** ˡ**died in Kiriath-arba** ⁷**which** is **in** the **vale**ⁿ**. It** is now **Hebron in** the **land of Canaan. And Abraham** ˡ**came to bewail** › **Sarah and to lament** over **her.** 3 +**Then Abraham** ˡ**arose from beside his dead**ˡ**.**

+ **He** ˡ**spoke to** the **sons of Heth,** › **saying**⁻**:** 4 Although **I** am an alien **sojourner and settler** ʷⁱ**among you, give** › **me** a **holding** for a **tomb** ʷⁱ**among you, and let me entomb my dead**ˡ **from before me.** 5 + The **sons of Heth** ˡ**answered** `**Abraham,** › **saying**⁻**: ~Suppose~** 6 you **hear us, my lord. You** are a **prince of Elohim in our midst. Entomb** `**your dead**ˡ **in** the **choicest of our tombs. None** ᶠ**of us shall prevent** ᶠ **you from entombing**⁻ **your dead**ˡ `in **his tomb.**

7 +**Then Abraham** ˡ**arose and** ˡ**bowed down to** the **people of the land, to** the **sons of Heth.** 8 + ⁷**Abraham**⁰ ˡ**spoke** `**to them,** › **saying**⁻**: If** there **is** consent `in **your soul to** let me **entomb**⁻ `**my dead**ˡ **from before me,** so **hear me and intercede for me** ⁱ**with Ephron son of Zohar** ˢ**the Hittite**ⁿ**,** 9 +**that he** ˡ**give** › **me** `**the cave of Machpelah which** is **his, which** is ⁱ**at** the **end of his field;** ⁱ**at** the **full current** price **let him give it to me** ›**as** a **holding** for a **tomb in your midst.**

10 +**Now Ephron** was **sitting in** the **midst of** the **sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite** ˡ**answered** `**Abraham** ⁱ**before** the **ears of** the **sons of Heth,** › **all** those who had **come**ˡ to the **gate**way **of his city,** › **saying**⁻**:** 11 **No**ᵗ**, my lord, hear me! I give the field to you, and the cave** ʷ**that** is **in it, I give it to you;** ›**before** the **eyes of** the **sons of my people I give it to you. Entomb your dead**ˡ**.**

12 +**Again Abraham** ˡ**bowed down before** the **people of the land** 13 **and** ˡ**spoke to Ephron** ⁱ**before** the **ears of** the **people of the land,** ˃ **saying⁻: ʸ Suppose you would—hear me! I will give silver** shekels for **the field. Take** them **from me, and let me entomb** `**my dead**ˡ **there**ᵈ**.** 14 + **Ephron** ˡ**answered** `**Abraham,** ˃ **saying⁻: ~Suppose~** 15 you **hear me, my lord;** a piece of **land** at **400 shekels of silver, what** is **that between me and** ᵇᵗ **you?** + **Entomb** `**your dead**ˡ**.**

16 + **Abraham** ˡ**hearkened to Ephron.** +**Then Abraham** ˡ**weighed** out **for Ephron** `**the money** ʷ**that he had** ˢᵖ**named** ⁱ**before** the **ears of** the **sons of Heth, 400 shekels of silver** at the rate **current**ˡ ˃**among** the **merchants**ˡ**.** 17 +**Thus** the **field of Ephron** ʷ ⁱ**at Machpelah** ʷ**that** is ˢ**adjoining**ⁿ **Mamre, the field and the cave** ʷ**that** is **in it, and all the trees** ʷ**that** are **in** the **field,** ʷ ⁱ**within all its boundary round about,** became ˡ**confirmed** 18 **to Abraham** ˃**as** his **acquisition** ˃**before** the **eyes of** the **sons of Heth,** ⁱ **all** those who had **come**ˡ to the **gate**way **of his city.**

19 + **After** ˢᵒ**this Abraham entombed** `**his wife Sarah** ˃**in** the **cave of the field of Machpelah** that is **adjoining Mamre. It** is now **Hebron in** the **land of Canaan.** 20 +**Thus the field and the cave** ʷ **in it** became **confirmed to Abraham** ᶠ**by** `the **sons of Heth** ˃**as** a **holding** for a **tomb.**

DEATH OF SARAH

SARAH, like Abraham, must have been rejuvenated when she bore Isaac, for she was beyond the normal age for childbearing. So she lived on to the age of a hundred and twenty-seven years. It seems that Abraham no longer lived in Beersheba, but somewhat northeast of it at Arba (FOUR), sometimes called Kiriath (*town*) of Arba, or Arba-town. It is here identified with Hebron (JOINED), in the foothills that lead up along the road to Jerusalem. It was in the land of Canaan (SUBMITter), given to the grandson of Noah (Gen. 9:25). The inhabitants were descended from Heth (Dismay) whose name seems to indicate that they were daring and defiant men, who would be difficult to deal with.

ABRAHAM'S ACQUISITION

Abraham calls himself a *sojourner* and a *settler*, not a "stranger," as the AV has it. The word sojourn comes from STIR, to move about. But he was not continually moving either, and seems to have remained in some locations for a long time. This would give him the right to ask for a tomb, for he could hardly carry a corpse with him. But he wanted a *permanent possession* for a tomb, so he asks for a *holding.* Land tenure in the Scriptures is of various kinds. The principal methods were *tenancy* and *holding.* Israel as a nation never acquired, or bought, or owned, or held, or possessed, the land, for it *belongs* to Yahweh Elohim, and they were only *tenants* at His pleasure, and were evicted when they did not serve Him, and will never be safe as long as they refuse their Messiah.

A tomb should not be a transient abode. It should last until the resurrection. Abraham did not get a temporary tenancy, but *acquired* (23:18) a *holding* (23:4,9) and weighed out four hundred shekels (250 ounces) of silver (v.15), which *confirmed* it (v.17) as his. It included the field of Ephron (SOIL-er), in which is the double cave which is adjoining Mamre (CHANGE or Bitterness) with all the trees in its boundary by acquisition, before the eyes of the sons of Heth and to all entering the gates of the city. Is there any other transaction of this kind in the Scriptures in which such extraordinary emphasis is laid on its permanence? What a contrast to the rest of the land, which had been promised to him, of which he did not own enough to place one of his feet? And several hundred years had to elapse before his seed could take over its tenancy.

A. E. Knoch

A WIFE FOR ISAAC

24 Abraham was +**now old; he was** *in*__advanced in days,__ **and Yahweh´ had blessed** `**Abraham in all** things. 2 + **Abraham** |**said to his servant,** the **eldest of his house**hold, `who was **ruling** *i*__over all__ *w*__that he__ ›**had:** *pl*__Put your hand__ *pr*__please__ **under my thigh.** 3 + **I shall** *c*__make you swear__ *i*__by Yahweh Elohim of the heavens and Elohim of the earth__ *w*__that you shall not take** a **wife for my son,** *7*__for Isaac__*0*__, from the daughters of** the **Canaanites** *i* **among whom I** am **dwelling.** 4 *M*__Rather~__*n* **you shall go to my land** *7*__whence I__ *b*__came__*0*__, and to my kindred, and** that **you will take** a **wife for my son, for Isaac,** *7*__from there__*0*__.**

5 + **The servant** |**said to him: Perhaps the woman shall not be willing to** *go*__come following me to__ ·**this** ·**land. Shall I bring back,** yea **bring back**¯ `**your son to the land from where you** came **forth?** 6 + **Abraham** |*sa*__replied to him: Be__ on **your guard lest you** |**bring** `**my son back there**__*d*__**.** 7 **Yahweh Elohim of the heavens** *7*__and Elohim of the earth__*0* **Who took me from my father's house and from** the **land of my kindred** *7*__whence I__ *b*__came__*0*__, and Who spoke to me and Who swore to me__ › **saying**¯**:** *7*__To you and__*0* **to your seed shall I give** `**this** ·**land, He´ shall send His messenger before you, and you will take** a **wife for my son,** *7*__for Isaac__*0*__, from there.** 8 +**But if the woman should not be willing to** *go*__come following you__ *7*__to__ ·**this** ·**land**__*0*__,** +**then you will be absolved** *f*__of this my oath; but you shall not bring__ `**my son back there**__*d*__**.** 9 +**So the servant** |*pl*__put__ `**his hand under** the **thigh of Abraham, his** =**lord, and** |**swore to him** *on*__concerning__ ·**this** ·**matter.**

10 +**Then the servant** |**took ten camels from** the **camels of his** =**lord, and** with gifts *7*__from__*0* **all** the **good**s **of his** =**lord** *i*__under his hand,__ + **he** |**set out and** |*go*__left for Aram-naharaim, for__ the **city of Nahor.** 11 +**There he** *c*__made the camels__ |**kneel** down *f* **outside** › the **city** ›**by the well of water** ›**at eventide,** ›**at** the **time** when **the** women **go out**¯ **to draw forth**| water. 12 **And he** |**said: Yahweh Elohim of my lord Abraham,** I **pray,** *c*__let__ it **happen before me today and** *d*__show benignity__ *wi*__to my lord Abraham.__ 13 **Behold me standing by** *on*__at the spring of water, and the daughters of__ the *mt*__people of__ the **city** are **going out to draw forth water.** 14 +**So** let **it come** to **pass** that **the maiden to whom I** |**say,** *pr*__Please__ *c*__lower your jar__ +**that I may drink, and she says** *7*__to me__*0*__, Drink, and I shall__ *mr*__also__ *c*__give your camels__ to **drink** *7*__until__ *if* **they** *all*__finish__ › **drinking**¯*0*__—__let `**her** be the one **You have** *c*__made__ ready be**fore**hand **for your servant, for Isaac.** + *i*__Thereby I shall know that You have__ *d*__shown benignity__ *wi*__to my lord__ *7*__Abraham__*n*__.__

15 + **This** |**came** to **pass ere he had** *all*__finished__ › **speaking**¯ *7*__›in his heart__*n*__; and behold, Rebecca** was coming **forth**|**, who had been born to Bethuel son of Milcah, wife of Abraham's brother Nahor, and her jar** was **on her** *bk*__shoulder.__ 16 + **The maiden** was of **very good appearance,** a **virgin,** + **no**__*t*__ **man had known her.** + **She** went |**down** to **the spring,** + |**filled her jar and** came |**up** again. 17 + **The servant** |**ran to meet her and** |**said,** *pr*__Please,__ *c*__let me sip__ a **little water from your jar.** 18 + **She** |*sa*__replied, Drink, my lord, and she__ |**quickly** + *c*__let__ |**down her jar** upon **her hand and** *c*__gave him__ to |**drink.** 19 +**When she** had |*all*__finished__ › *c*__letting him drink__¯**,** + **she** |**said,** *mr*__Also for your camels I shall draw forth until__ *if* **they** *all*__finish__ › **drinking**¯**.** 20 **And she** |**quickly** + |**emptied out her jar** into **the trough,** + |**ran** *fr*__again to the well to draw forth__ water**, and** |**drew forth for all his camels.**

21 **And the man** was **~gazing wondrously~** ›**at her, silently**| waiting **to know** *if*__whether__ or **not Yahweh had prospered**

his way. 22 +**Then it** ⌊**came** to **pass, just as the camels had** [all]**finished** ⌋ **drinking**–, +**that the man** ⌊**took** a **golden** nose **pendant,** a **beka** in [its] **weight, and two bracelets, ten gold** shekels in [their] **weight,** [on]**for her wrists.** 23 7 +**Then he** ⌊**asked her**0 **and** ⌊**said,** [a]**Whose daughter** are **you? Tell** ⌋ **me** [pr]**please, is** there **room** in **your father's house for us to lodge** for the night**?**

24 + **She** ⌊[sa]**replied to him, I** am the **daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah whom she bore to Nahor.** 25 **She** +**further** ⌊**said to him,** [mr]**Besides we** [wi]**have enough crushed straw** [mr]**and provender as well as room to lodge** for the night. 26 +**Then the man** ⌊**bowed** his **head and** ⌊**worshipped** ⌋ **Yahweh.** 27 + **He** ⌊**said: Blessed**⌋ be **Yahweh Elohim of my lord Abraham, Who has not forsaken His benignity and His faithfulness**[f] **with my lord.** As for **me, Yahweh has guided me in** the **way** to the **house of my lord's brothers.**

28 + **The girl** ⌊**ran and** ⌊**told** ⌋ **her mother's house**hold [as]**about these things.** 29 +**Now Rebecca** ⌋**had** a **brother, and his name** was **Laban. And Laban** ⌊**ran to the man** ˙**outside**[d] ⌋**at the spring.** 30 + This ⌊**came** to **pass** as soon **as** [S]**he**[n] had **seen**– `**the** nose **pendent and** `**the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and as he** had **heard**– `the **words of his sister Rebecca,** ⌋ **saying**–**, Thus the man spoke to me.**

+**So** Laban ⌊**came to the man, and behold,** he was still **standing** [on]**by the camels** [on]**at the spring.** 31 + **He** ⌊**said** 7**to him**[c]**, Come** in**, blessed**⌋ one **of Yahweh. Why should you stand** [i] **outside,** +**when I my**self **have cleared out the house and** a [ri]**place for** the **camels?** 32 +**Then the man** ⌊**came** to[d] **the house;** + one ⌊**unharnessed the camels and** ⌊**gave crushed straw and provender to** the **camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of** the **men who** were **with him.** 33 +**Yet** when 7**bread**0 **to eat was** [pl]**placed before him,** + **he** ⌊**said, I shall not eat until** [if] **I have spoken my words.** + **He** ⌊[sa]**replied, Speak.**

34 +**Then he** ⌊**said: I** am **Abraham's servant.** 35 + **Yahweh**´ has blessed `**my lord exceedingly, and he** has become ⌊**great;** + **He** has ⌊**given** ⌋ **him** a **flock** of sheep **and** a **herd** of cattle**,** + **silver and gold,** + men**servants and maid**servants**,** + **camels and donkeys.** 36 + **Sarah, my lord's wife,** ⌊**bore** 7**one**0 **son for my lord after she** had grown **old; and he** has ⌊**given** ⌋ **him** `**every**thing [w] **he** ⌋**has.**

37 + **My lord** [c]**made me** ⌊**swear,** ⌋ **saying**–**: You shall not take** a **wife for my son from the daughters of** the **Canaanite**s **in whose land I** am **dwelling.** 38 7**Rather**[n] **you shall go to my father's house and to my family, and you will take** a **wife for my son** 7**from there**0**.** 39 **And I** ⌊**said to my lord: Perhaps the woman shall not** [go]**come following me.** 40 + **He** ⌊[sa]**replied to me: Yahweh** 7**Elohim**0**, before Whom I walk, He** 7**Him**self[cs] **shall send His messenger** along `with **you, and He will prosper your way, and you will take** a **wife for my son from my family, and from my father's house.** 41 **Then you shall be absolved**[f] **of my** oath of **imprecation;** [t]**when you** ⌊**come to my family, and** [if] **they should not give** her **to you,** +**then you will** [b]**be absolved**[f] **of my** oath of **imprecation.**

42 +**When I** ⌊**came today to the spring,** + **I** ⌊**said: Yahweh Elohim of my lord Abraham,** I **pray, if You are prospering**⌋ **my way on which I** am 7**now**0 **going,** 43 **behold me standing by** [on]**at the spring of water,** 7+**where the daughters of** the [mt]**people of** the **city** are **going out to draw forth water**0**.** +**So** let **it come** to **pass** that **the damsel** ˙who is coming **forth**⌋ **to draw forth** water**, and to** [her]**whom I say,** [pr]**Please** [c]**let me drink** a **little water from your jar,** 44 **and she says to me: Drink,** not [mr]**only you,** +**but I shall** [mr]**also draw forth** water **for your camels—**let **her** be **the woman whom Yahweh has** [c]**made** ready be**fore**hand **for my lord's son.** 7[i]**Thereby I shall know that You have** [d]**shown benignity** [wi]**to my lord Abraham**0**.**

45 **Ere I**´ had ⌊[all]**finished** ⌋ **speaking**– **in my heart,** + **behold, Rebecca** was coming **forth**⌋**, and her jar** was **on her** [bk]**shoul-**

der. + **She** went ˡ**down** to[d] **the spring and** ˡ**drew forth** water. **And I** ˡ**said to her:** [pr]**Please** [c]**let me drink** [S]a **little water from your jar**[c]. 46 +**So she** ˡ**quickly** + [c]**let** ˡ**down her jar** [7]**upon her hand~ and** [sa]**replied: Drink, and** [mr]**also your camels I shall** [c]**give** to **drink.** +**Then I** ˡ**drank, and she** [c]**gave the camels** to **drink** [mr]**also.**

47 + **I** ˡ**asked** `**her and** ˡ**said,** [a]**Whose daughter** are **you?** + **She** [sa]**replied,** The **daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor, whom Milcah bore for him.** +**Then I** [pl]**put the pendant on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists.** 48 **And I** ˡ**bowed** my **head and** ˡ**worshipped** › **Yahweh and** ˡ**blessed** `**Yahweh Elohim of my lord Abraham, Who has guided me in** the **reliable way, to take** `the **daughter of my lord's brother for his son.** 49 **And now, if** ⁼**you really** mean to [d]**show**ˡ **kindness and faithfulness** `to **my lord, tell** › **me, and if not, tell** › **me,** +**that I may turn around** [on]**to** the **right or** [on]**to** the **left.**

50 + **Laban and Bethuel** ˡ**answered and** ˡ**said:** ˙This **matter** comes **forth from Yahweh. We are** ˡ**unable to speak bad or good to you.** 51 [bd]**Here** is **Rebecca before you. Take** her **and go,** +**that she may become** the **wife** ›**of your lord's son just as Yahweh has spoken.** 52 **And it** ˡ**came** to **pass, just as Abraham's servant heard** `**their words,** +**that he** bowed in ˡ**worship** to**ward the earth** ›**before Yahweh.** 53 +**Then the servant** [c]**brought** ˡ**forth articles of silver,** + **articles of gold, and garments, and** ˡ**gave** them **to Rebecca; and he gave costly** gift**s to her brother and to her mother.**

54 +**Then they** ˡ**ate and** ˡ**drank, he and the men who** were **with him; and they** ˡ**lodged** there for the night**.** +**When they** ˡ**arose in** the **morning,** + **he** ˡ**said: Dismiss me,** [7]**and let me go**[c] **to my lord.** 55 +**But her brother and her mother** ˡ**said: Let the maiden** [sit]**abide** `with **us** a few **days or** even **ten.** [7]**And**[ncs] **after**ward **you may go.** 56 + **He** [sa]**replied to them: Do not** ˡ**delay** `**me,** +**since Yahweh´ has prospered my way. Dismiss me, and let me go to my lord.** 57 **And they** ˡ**said: We shall call** › **the maiden;** + **let us ask** her `at **her mouth.**

58 +**So they** ˡ**called** › **Rebecca and** ˡ**said to her:** Will **you** ˡ**go with** ˙**this** ˙**man? And she** [sa]**replied, I** will ˡ**go.** 59 +**Then they** ˡ**dismissed** `**their sister Rebecca** +**with** `**her wetnurse**ˡ**, and** `**Abraham's servant** +**with** `**his men.** 60 + **They** ˡ**blessed** `[7]**their sister**[cs] **Rebecca and** ˡ**said to her:** O **you, our sister,** may you [b]**give rise to thousands of myriads, and may your seed take over** `the **gate of** those who are **hating it.** 61 +**Then Rebecca and her maidens** ˡ**got up and** ˡ**rode on the camels and** ˡ**went after the man.** +**Thus the servant** ˡ**took** `**Rebecca and** ˡ**went** his way**.**

62 +**Now Isaac had come** back **from** having **set** out⁻ to the **well Lahai-roi;** +**for he** was **dwelling in the Negev area.** 63 + **Isaac** went ˡ**forth to meditate in** the **field** › **before**⁻ the **evening.** +**When he** ˡ**lifted** up **his eyes,** + **behold,** + **he** ˡ**saw camels coming.** 64 +**When Rebecca** ˡ**lifted** up `**her eyes and** ˡ**saw** `**Isaac,** + **she** ˡ**swooped down, off the camel,** 65 **and** ˡ**said to the servant:** [a]**Who** is ˙**this** ˙**man** ›**there** ˙who is **walking in** the **field to meet us?** + **The servant** [sa]**replied, He** is **my lord.** +**So she** ˡ**took** ˙her **veil and** ˡ**covered** her**self.** 66 **And the servant** ˡ**related to Isaac** `**all the things** [w]**that he had done.** 67 **Isaac** +**then** ˡ**brought her** to[d] **the tent of Sarah his mother.** +**Thus he** ˡ**took** `**Rebecca, and she** ˡ**became his** › **wife, and he was loving her.** +**Now Isaac was** ˡ**comforted after** the loss of **his mother.**

EVIDENCES OF FAITH

ABRAHAM was, doubtless, acquainted with the curse of Canaan (Gen.9:25) and believed that that seed would be wiped off the land which God had now given to *him* and *his* seed. So he was most emphatically against any physical corruption through union with the Canaanites. At the same time he knew of the blessing of Shem, and desired to keep within the family to which he belonged. To this day the sand seed of Abraham is very proud of their physi-

cal heritage. As he himself, however, had been called *away* from his former home, and from his *relatives* there, he also insisted that Isaac remain in the land of promise. Hence it was that he sent his servant to his relatives, to select a wife for his son. All this is evidence of Abraham's faith in Yahweh Elohim.

As his mission was concerned with generation, his chief servant was sworn with his hand on Abraham's thigh, that section of the human body whence the seed comes, and where the child is borne. Ordinarily, Abraham would have gone back himself, with his son, but he believed only what God had said, and he had no divine call to return, especially as Isaac, also, had no instruction to go. As his seed was called in Isaac, there could be no doubt that Yahweh Elohim would provide a wife for him in the way of faith. It has been pointed out that, though all this concerned Rebecca more than anyone else, she knew nothing about it. So it is with all whom God calls. They are the subject of God's prevision long before He calls them and prepares them for their part in His plan (Gen.24:2).

CALLING

The servant evidently did not share Abraham's faith, so he interposed with an objection. What if the woman is unwilling? From the human side this is a very reasonable reflection. How could anyone demand that a maiden should leave her parents and family and acquaintances, to whom she is bound by many a tender tie, and desert them all for an unknown man, even if he is wealthy? If he wanted her, let him come and woo and win her! Humanly speaking, Rebecca's might be a very risky course of action, dependent on the capricious emotions of an impulsive maiden. But the Subjector controls even these, so that what seems unwise and hazardous is sane and safe in His all-embracing providence (Gen.24:8).

SYRIA OF THE TWO STREAMS

Syria (*Aram* Most-HIGH) of the two streams, usually called Mesopotamia (Mid-streams), seems to be the height between the upper reaches of the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers, although this expression applies equally well, and is loosely used of the lower plains in Babylonia also. *Aram-naharaim* (HEIGHT-streams) must be a region *north*-east of Palestine. I once received the impression from the name Mesopotamia that the servant went due east, over the desert. But, when I crossed it, from Damascus to Baghdad, we found only one place to get water, Rutba Wells. So it seems likely that the north-eastern route was generally taken, even to Babylon. Later this region is called *Padan* (RANSOMed) also (Gen.25:20).

THE EUPHRATES

It may help the student of the Hebrew Scriptures to have a clear impression of the course of the Euphrates river, which is the principal one of the two streams. The other river, the Tigris, is probably the same as the Hiddekel (*Fleet-one*, Gen.2:14). This stream is *east* of Assyria. The Euphrates is *west* of it, so forms the north-eastern, angular boundary of the land promised to Abram. This stretches from the river of Egypt, which is small and in the south, to the great stream, the stream Euphrates (Gen.15:18). Thus Israel's holding will be bounded almost entirely by water, for the sea is in the west. By far its longest boundary is the Euphrates (FRUITful), a fit name, for the land along this stream is famous for its fruitfulness. It forms the greater part of the "Fertile Crescent."

ARARAT

The route of the head servant, therefore, was mostly northward, avoiding the arid eastern desert, which leads

to the lower reaches of these rivers. A flowing stream must descend, and one as long as the Euphrates, from the mountains of Ararat, cannot descend very swiftly unless it ends far below sea level, like the Jordan (DESCENDer). So Eliezer *ascended* to reach Syria (Most-HIGH) Perhaps we should take this as an indication that the sand seed came from a source higher than the sea shore, to which it later descended, and may figure the mass of the physical seed of Abraham. As to the flesh they had a high start in the maid of Aram.

WOMEN AT THE WELL

Women at the well in the evening are one of the most striking scenes in the orient. We observed them at Ain Karim, a spring southwest of Jerusalem, and also at Siloam, to which came the women of the village across the wady of the Kidron, who climbed up the ridge and went down the stairs to the pool, as the approach in the wady was closed. They carried the water in earthen jars or five gallon tin cans, balanced on their heads. This compels them to walk very erect, for they could not balance the jars or bear their weight otherwise. This is an excellent exercise, for it gives them an upright carriage. They never seem to spill any water, except on purpose. I was staring at the women ascending the stone steps at Siloam, when, all of a sudden, one of them, above where I was standing, seemed to trip, and I thought her jar was going to fall. But she quickly balanced it again, and the water went just where she intended—in my face. The women enjoyed my plight even more than I did!

Eliezer, standing by such a well, hardly had the faith of Abraham, so he did not appeal to *his* God but to Yahweh Elohim, the Subjector of Abraham. He not only asked for a sign, but proposed one himself. No doubt he and his camels were very thirsty and needed the water to prolong

their life. So they represented, in a way, the need of Abraham, who required a wife for his son to promote his lifeline. And the one who was eager to serve the servant with water would be likely to serve the son in propagating his progeny. As the whole affair was of God and according to His revelation hitherto, it was an immediate success.

The Masoretic text and the AV omit some phrases in this narrative, which are supplied by the Septuagint. In verse fourteen it adds "until they finish drinking." Camels can drink a lot of water, and, in a case like this, where a single spring must serve a city, it may have been scarce. So we get the impression that Rebecca (*Grand-confluence*) would supply the thirst of Abraham and Isaac *fully.* In the next verse, after "ere he had finished speaking," "in his heart" is added by the Septuagint. This gives it the touch of truth. It was not a mere outward sound, uttered with his lips, but the inmost desire of his heart, which only God could hear and answer. Rebecca certainly did not hear him, for she came forth even *before* he finished his prayer.

Here we have a good illustration of how things "happen." For a man of faith, nothing is a mere matter of chance. Indeed, so it is even with unbelievers, though they have no faculties to perceive it. In fact, even all their physical perceptions are very limited in scope. Some of the lower animals can see and hear and smell objects and sounds and odors imperceptible to a human eye or ear or nose. But God not only *perceives* all, but *controls* all. So it is that events conform to our prayers and wishes only so far as these are in harmony with God's grand and gracious specifications, which He made before the eons, and which will be correctly carried out to the minutest detail, when these are consummated.

THE CALLER

Some very spiritual teachers have taught that the ser-

vant was a type of the holy spirit in this "Church" period, seeking a bride, or wife, for Christ. But now that we differentiate between the bride and the body of Christ, it seems more fitting to confine the servant's antitype to the terrestrial calling. The call of the present ecclesia, or *body* of Christ, was a *secret* in Abraham's day, and also when Christ was on earth. The servant's mission prefigures the call of Israel, the *physical* line.

THE ENRICHMENT

In full accord with the promises to the physical seed, Abraham's servant presents Rebecca with the evidences of his master's wealth. These promissory presents are tokens of the terrestrial treasures which are the portion of Abraham's seed, which have already come to them in the past, before they enjoy the fullest measure of His wealth, after the marriage, in Christ's kingdom. They were given the land itself and its produce, and rose to great riches in the days of Solomon. In eastern lands, it is customary for a woman to display her wealth by means of rich ornaments and coins worn as part of her headdress. These were not given to enhance her beauty, which was quite unnecessary, and, indeed, has the opposite effect on a female of "exceedingly good appearance," like Rebecca.

DIVINE LEADING

As servants of Christ, we can learn much, even from Eliezer. He did not put his own feelings first at the happy outcome of his mission so far, and *thank* Yahweh for it, but *worshipped* Him, and said: "*Blessed* be *Yahweh.*" Only then he mentions himself and his mission, saying, "*Yahweh* has guided *me* to the house of my lord's brothers" (Gen.24: 26,27). Being an old and experienced traveller, no doubt he knew very well how to find his way about. But to travel all that distance, and meet the object of his search immediately in such an auspicious manner, could hardly be hoped for by a mortal. The divine leading was very evident.

LABAN

As the story of Dinah, Jacob's daughter, shows, the brothers of a maid were responsible for her in those days (Gen.34). In this case, especially, we would expect her father, Bethuel, to take the principal part. Her father, indeed, joins Laban when the question of her departure comes up (24:50). But, at first, Laban (WHITE) ran out to meet the servant of Abraham (v.30), and, first of all, he saw the pendant, and the bracelets on his sister's hands. This first glimpse of Laban shows his avaricious character, for it implied that there was more to come in which he might share. But, later on, the son of his sister, Jacob, who doubtless inherited this trait from Rebecca, was more than a match for him, relieving him of not only two daughters and their maids, but flocks and herds as well.

THE INHERITANCE

It is instructive to see how much greater was the heritage of the spiritual than the physical seed. Isaac was given a flock and a herd and silver and gold and servants and maids and camels and asses (24:35,36). Even after Abraham married Keturah, and had six more sons, we read, "Abraham had given everything he had, to his son Isaac." (Gen.25:5). Those who belonged to the physical seed only were sent away during his lifetime, with gifts. They were sent to the land of the East, where Isaac was not allowed to go. But Jacob, the fleshly heel, did go, and was not counted as spiritual seed until he returned and had his name changed to Israel (Upright-with-SUBJECTor). At the same time, these easterners, like Jacob, probably prospered in their earthly inheritance, but Israel's seed went into the bondage of Egypt, to be trained for their greater spiritual heritage.

DELAYING TACTICS

After the faithful servant had explained his mission and given due credit to Abraham's Subjector for its success up to this point, he first leaves the decision to Rebecca's father, Bethuel, and Laban, her brother, who decide in his favor, even before asking the maid whether she was willing (v.56). This was not only in line with the customs of the time and land, but in accord with the spiritual lesson that the woman should be subject to the man, and the flesh to the spirit. But then the flesh interferes and tries to delay matters (v.55). Alas! This is too often the case. But Elohim can control even the flesh. In this case He has settled this for her when she was born and given the name Rebecca ('Great-Confluence'). For in her, as in all humans, He had implanted the desire for a union, and this is not inclined to delay.

THE BLESSING OF REBECCA

Rebecca's brothers were not spiritual. Laban's character comes out very clearly later in his dealings with Jacob. So they have no blessing like Abraham's seed, although they have an intimation of it, as is shown by their words to their sister: "May you give rise to thousands of myriads, and may your seed take over the gate of those who are hating it" (Gen.24:60). But the last clause is not at all in line with the star seed. Neither are the attendants of Rebecca, her wet-nurse and her maids.

REBECCA'S WETNURSE

Deborah, Rebecca's wetnurse, is worthy of special notice (v.59). It seems to have been a custom in those days that the wetnurse remain with a well-to-do maiden for life. The spiritual lesson lies in the fact that, not only did Rebecca receive life from her mother, but she had a different and later source of life from another woman. This may give a hint of the two seeds, for the soil seed, the physical life, comes first, and the spiritual later. In line with this is the fact that Deborah was a very close and dear friend of the family, so that, after Jacob was changed to Israel, when she died, she was buried with special honors under an oak in Bethel, and it was named Allon-bacuth, Oak-of-Lamentations (Gen.35:8).

ISAAC

From this point onwards Abraham fades from the scene. Isaac is found by himself, having fared forth to worship in the field. Moreover, he is at a well called Lehi-rai (To-live-mirror). His mother had died. He is by himself, and is worshiping in the wilderness, in which, however, he has a hidden source of refreshment. Is this not a marvelous miniature of this solitary link in the spiritual star seed? Are not we also in a wilderness, away from all earthly exuberance, alone in our worship of our Subjector, with His Word at hand, in which we may not only see a clear reflection of ourselves, but enjoy the refreshment of living, life-giving water? And have we not a loving expectation of meeting One Whom, having not seen, nevertheless we love with our whole heart?

THE MEETING

Isaac, having worshiped with bowed head, may have unburdened his heart concerning the great crisis in his life, with sweet submission in regard to the wife whom Yahweh Elohim would provide for him. He lifts his eyes, and lo! Camels are coming! We do not read of any such spiritual attitude or meditation or worship on the part of Rebecca, who is to supply the earthly seed. She is high upon a camel's back, and tossed to and fro with the restless undulation of the beast of burden's broken gait. Is not this in quaver-

ing contrast to Isaac's silent saunter? Is it not another animated picture of the terrestrial seed? The unbeliever is like the surging sea, for quiet it cannot be (Isa.57:20). And a ship of the desert is even more disturbing than one that is waited over the waves.

ISAAC MARRIES

We can easily imagine what a mother's boy Isaac must have been, and how she must have poured out her love upon him, the single son of her extreme old age. And, no doubt, Isaac reciprocated her affection, and he keenly felt the loss of his mother when she was taken away by death. Her tent was now empty. Therefore Rebecca was doubly welcome, not only for her own sake, but as filling the vacant place left in Isaac's heart by the loss of his mother. And her tent was ready for her. So it is when one responds to the call of God. We do not enter a strange, unfurnished habitation. All was prepared beforehand. So it was also with the terrestrial seed. The land was not empty and uncultivated when Israel entered it, but ready for their reception. And so it will be in the future. The star seed is even better prepared than this, so that they receive resurrection bodies.

A. E. Knoch

REPOSING IN THE LORD

Earl Myron Brown was put to repose on May 25, 2005, one week before the completion of his ninety-fourth year. He had lived in Largo, Florida, for many years, where he conducted Scripture studies as long as he was able. Along with his son-in-law, Marvin Rice, he prepared several booklets on scriptural themes, mostly centered in Paul's epistles.

We have recently heard of the death of **Elva Jodar** of Edmonds, Washington. She was a lady of unusual energy along with an enthusiastic appreciation for the message of God's work of salvation for all mankind. Yet we are all mortal, and again we pray that God will hasten the day of deliverance into immortality and incorruption which He has promised. It will come.

HONOR
(2 Samuel 21:1-14)

21 + There [lb]**was** a **famine in** the **days of David year after year** for **three years.** +**So David** [l]**sought** `the **face of Yahweh, and Yahweh** [lsa]**replied,** ›**On Saul and** ›**on** his **house** is ·**blood**guilt [on]**because** [w] **he** [c]**put** `**the Gibeonites** to **death.** 2 + **The king** [l]**called** the **Gibeonites to**gether **and** [lsa]**spoke to them.** +**As** for **the Gibeonites, they** were **not** [f]**of** the **sons of Israel, but rather** [f]**of** the **rest of the Amorite, and** the **sons of Israel had sworn** an oath **to them;** +**but Saul** had [l]**sought to smite them in his zeal**– **for** the **sons of Israel and Judah.** 3 + **David** [lsa]**asked** › **the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you?** + **In what** way **shall I make expiation** +**that** would [m]**lead** you to **bless** `the **allotment of Yahweh?** 4 + **The Gibeonites** [lsa]**answered** › **him, For us** there **is no** claim of **silver and gold** [wi]**against Saul** +**or** [wi] **his** [in]**estate; and** it **is no**t up **to us to** [c]**put** a **man in Israel** to **death. And** David [lsa]**responded, What**ever **you say**[l]**, I shall do for you.** 5 + **They** [lsa]**replied to the king, The man who** [all]**destroyed us,** + **who** [7]**betrayed~** › **us** that **we** should **be prohibited from standing**– **by in all** the **territory of Israel—** 6 **let seven men** [f]**of his sons be** [g]**handed** over **to us, and we will gibbet them** ›**before Yahweh** [i]**at** [7]**Gibeon~** ~[i]**on** the **mountain~ of Yahweh. And the king** [l]**said, I´ shall** [g]**hand** them over.

7 +**Yet the king** [l]**spared** [on] **Mephibosheth son of Jonathan son of Saul** [on]**because** of the **oath of Yahweh** [w]**that** was **between them, between David and** [bt] **Jonathan son of Saul.** 8 +**So the king** [l]**took** `**Armoni and** `**Mephibosheth,** `the **two sons of Aiah's daughter Rizpah whom she had borne for Saul,** +**together** `with the **five sons of Saul's**

daughter [7]**Merab~[s] whom she had borne for Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite;** [9] **and he** [l]**gave them in**to the **hand of the Gibeonites.** [+] **They** [l]**gibbeted them** [i]**on** the **mountain before Yahweh.** The **seven of them** [l]**fell altogether;** [+] **they´ were** [c]**put** to **death in** the **first** [i] **days of** the **harvest,** at the **start of** the **barley harvest.** [10] [+] **Aiah's daughter Rizpah** [l]**took `sackcloth and** [l]**stretched it out for her**self **›on the rock from** the **start of** the **harvest until water poured forth on them from the heavens.** [+] **She** did **not** [g]**allow** the **flyers of the heavens to rest on them by day,** [+]**nor `**the **animals of the field** by **night.**

[11] [+]**Now › David was** [l]**told `**[w]**what Saul's concubine Rizpah daughter of Aiah had done.** [12] [+]**So David** [l]**went and** [l]**took `**the **bones of Saul and `**the **bones of his son Jonathan from `**the [ps]**commanders of Jabesh-gilead who had stolen `them from** the public **square of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hung them** [i]**on** the **day** the **Philistines smote~ `Saul** [i]**on** Mount **Gilboa.** [13] [+] **He** [c]**brought** [l]**up `**the **bones of Saul and `**the **bones of his son Jonathan from there; and they** [l]**gathered `the bones of** those who had been **gibbeted**[l]. [14] [+] **They** [l]**entombed `**the **bones of Saul and** of **his son Jonathan** [7]**and** of those **gibbeted**[l0] **in** the **land of Benjamin,** [i]**at Zela, in** the **tomb of his father Kish.** [+]**Thus they** [l]**did all** [w]**that the king had enjoined** on them**.** [+] **Afterward Elohim** granted the [l]**entreaty for** the **land.**

THE CONTEXT

IS THIS CHAPTER in its chronological place? Late in David's reign seems excessively late for retribution upon Saul's sin. The text is probably given here so that its teaching may be connected with the surrounding context.

From the list of officers in David's cabinet given in 2 Samuel 8:16-18 to the similar list in 20:23-26, the book is primarily concerned with David's sins and the divine retribution

on his house. Even Amasa was a relative of David, and his death was part of the curse Nathan announced to David (2 Sam.12:10). In chapter 21 the theme of God's retribution continues, but in relation to Saul and to the nation at large, for sins which brought plagues on the land.

The final four chapters of 2 Samuel form a symmetrical arrangement:

Israel plagued for Saul's sin (21:1-14)
  Heroics of warriors—giants (21:15-22)
    Psalm (22:1-51)
    Psalm (23:1-7)
  Heroics of warriors—outnumbered (23:8-39)
Israel plagued for David's sin (24:1-25)

With this arrangement we can see that the events connected with Saul's sin are placed here in parallel to the events connected with David's sin. Both sins represented failures to give proper recognition and honor to Yahweh.

JOSHUA AND THE HIVITES OF GIBEON

Joshua 9:3-10:15 relates the historical events behind the scene in 2 Samuel 21. This group of people were Hivites (Joshua 9:7), who are identified here in 2 Samuel 21:2 as "of the rest of the Amorite." They lived in Gibeon and neighboring cities (*cf* Josh.9:17), but tricked the Israelites into making a covenant of peace with them, claiming to have come from a far country. When the truth was found out, the sons of Israel could not smite them, "for the princes of the congregation had sworn an oath with them *by Yahweh Elohim of Israel*" (Josh.9:18). As a result, the Gibeonites lived with Israel in peace, but as servants. "On that day Joshua made them wood choppers and water bailers for the congregation and for the altar of Yahweh until this day, to serve at the place He would choose" (Josh.9:27).

Israel had failed to consult Yahweh before making a

covenant in His Name. Still Yahweh required that they honor it. Because of their fear of Yahweh, these Hivites had secured a place of service to Him.

DAVID AND THE GIBEONITES

Saul's attempt to annihilate the Gibeonites was not motivated by his zeal for Yahweh, but rather by his zeal for the children of Israel (2 Sam.21:2). This may suggest a national or racial prejudice. While the guilt was focused on Saul's house, it involved the whole nation, and the famine was tragic for the Gibeonites as well. The famine was retribution for failing to honor the covenant with the Hivites that had been made in Yahweh's Name. And it was also for failure to honor Yahweh and the land in which He dwelt by polluting it with innocent blood.

David asked the Gibeonites, "In what way shall I make expiation that would lead you to bless the allotment of Yahweh?" (v.3). The *allotment of Yahweh* refers to *Israel.* What a question! What would the Jews answer if the Germans asked them, "How shall we make amends for the holocaust of World War II, so that you can ask God to bless us? How would some of the tribes of American Indians that were nearly exterminated answer such a question?

The Gibeonites' response to David shows their knowledge of the law's requirements and it shows an earnest reverence for Yahweh. The release from the plague could not be purchased with money: "Nor shall you take a sheltering ransom for the soul of the murderer, who stands condemned to die; for he shall be put to death, yea death . . . for it is the blood that pollutes the land. As for the land, no shelter may be made for the blood which was shed on it save by the blood of him who shed it" (Num.35:31,33).

Hence, seven men of the house of Saul were to be gibbeted before Yahweh.

In Numbers 25:1-5, the hanging up before the Lord

of those who were executed was an extension of the capital punishment meant to allay the hot anger of Yahweh. The hanging of the executed was a public proclamation of their cursed condition (Deut.21:22,23). As the Deuteronomy passage tells, normally the hanged were to be taken down at the end of the day, that their presence not be a pollution of the land in which Yahweh was dwelling. Seven is a number symbolic of divine completion, and is used a number of times with reference to vengeance (see Gen. 4:15,24; Psa.79:12).

The word *expiation* in 2 Samuel 21:3 is often translated *propitiatory shelter* in the CV. It has reference to shelter from God's indignation. In this case there was a setting right of the relationship of the Gibeonites and Israel. The guidance of the law was followed, but there was an issue of human justice involved as well. God would break the drought which had brought the famine, but entreaty for the land was not fully granted until after the entombment of Saul's family (v.14). The burial of the gibbeted bodies was necessary for the land to be clean. It is also interesting that the *propitiatory shelter* or *mercy seat* of the tabernacle was absent from the scene, having been taken to Jerusalem. Later, at that place in Jerusalem, another plague would be stopped (*cf* 2 Sam.24:16) in a show of God's mercy that would place His Name in an area ever to be associated with the true Propitiatory Shelter.

Saul was responsible for a slaughter of the priests (1 Sam.22), but we read of no divine retribution for that crime. Still the foreigners, who, in virtue of an oath in Yahweh's Name, chopped wood and carried water for the tabernacle, were avenged. The priesthood had fallen, and the home of these natives to the land was the chief place of worship in Israel. Though the coffer of the covenant was at Jerusalem in a tabernacle that David had erected for it there, the altar and the tabernacle of Moses, which

had traversed the wilderness, were at Gibeon (1 Chron.15: 25-29; 16:1,37-40; 21:29; 1 Kings 3:2-4). This explains how they would "gibbet them before Yahweh at Gibeon on the mountain of Yahweh" (2 Sam.21:6).

THE MOUNTAIN OF YAHWEH

The Masoretic text has "Gibeah of Saul, the chosen one of Yahweh" where the CV has "Gibeon on the mountain of Yahweh." The emendation is based on the Septuagint translation which has "Gibeon" instead of "Gibeah," and the fact that the Hebrew words for *chosen of Yahweh* look very much like the Hebrew words for "on the mountain of Yahweh." This emendation also is more in accord with the context of 2 Samuel 21 and other passages of Scripture than a reference to Saul as "the chosen of Yahweh." The Hivites exhibited a humility that rejects the idea they would sarcastically refer to Saul as "the chosen of Yahweh" in the context of his crimes. Rather they would refer to the mount where the altar and tabernacle were located as "the mountain of Yahweh."

Saul failed to honor the oath made in Yahweh's Name, and Yahweh's presence in the land. David honored his oath to Jonathan in Yahweh's Name (*cf* 1 Sam.20:12-16) by sparing Jonathan's son Mephibosheth, and he honored Yahweh by making proper burial of the dead of Saul's family to cleanse the land. The Gibeonites honored the law in their request for a legal justice. And Rizpah honored king Saul and her family's name.

It is interesting that the Gibeonites, as a subservient people, did not have the authority to inflict capital punishment (2 Sam.21:4). This is the same situation in which Israel found itself in the days of Christ (John 18:31-32; 19: 6-7,16). In both cases deliverance came by someone other than the Jews executing Jews in their land.

RIZPAH

The story of Rizpah grips our attention with curious wonder. In a time of terrible loss and mourning for her family, and a time of death and famine in her country, she stood alone in the midst of abject shame, patiently and tenaciously maintaining a semblance of honor for her family name. Armed with nothing more than the love of a mother, she turned the head of the king, and caused him to give proper and honorable burial rights, not only to seven cursed men, but also to the whole family. This in turn, caused Elohim to grant entreaty for the land (v.14).

For a body to be left to the fowls and beasts instead of receiving burial was a terrible shame (*cf* 1 Sam.17:44; Jer.16:4). This shame was expressed in its full extent with reference to wicked Jezebel: "This is the word of Yahweh that He spoke by means of his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel the dogs shall devour the flesh of Jezebel. And the carcass of Jezebel will come to be like manure on the surface of the field in the portion of Jezreel that they may not say, This is Jezebel" (2 Kings 9:36,37). The thought of manure on the ground makes the final mental image of the individual repulsive. This kind of expression was common in that culture (*cf* Job 20:7; Psa. 83:10; Jer.8:2; 9:22; Zeph.1:17). Also, the closing thought with Jezebel was that memory of her would perish. There would be no grave marker or monument, or even a shameful heap of stones, as in Absalom's case, to bring her existence back to memory. Thus Rizpah's work was as much for honor as it was for love.

THE TIME OF THIS EVENT

The first verse of 2 Samuel 21 lays special emphasis on the fact that the famine occurred during David's reign. Later special emphasis is made of the time of the execution

of Saul's sons. Why did this plague not occur during Saul's reign, and why is "the start of the barley harvest" repeated (v.9)? This would be the time of Passover, and especially the offering of firstfruits, which commenced the barley harvest. Andrew Jukes has noted that the time of this event was the time of firstfruits when Christ arose (2 Sam.21:9).[1] Thus the seven sons of *Sheol* (same as *Saul*), or the fullness of the reign of death fell on the day of Christ's resurrection. Death's reign began with Adam, and was strengthened by the law of Moses, but the full measure of death's reign was surpassed when God raised His *Beloved* (same as *David*) Son, Who will eventually abolish death (Rom. 5:14-17; 1 Cor.15:26).

A SIGN FROM YAHWEH

Why were the bodies of Saul's seven sons left hanging in shame? It has been noted that the giving up of the men was done with respect to requirements of the law, but the law also required the hanged to be taken down at the end of the day (Deut.21:22,23). These bodies were left until rain fell on them, showing an end to the drought, which had caused the famine. They waited for a sign from Yahweh that the famine was lifted. The former rains fell after the harvest at the end of the long, dry summer. They restored moisture to the ground and softened it for planting. The latter rains were the heavier rains of the *winter* or, *rainy season,* which supplied the moisture for the maturing of the grains and fruits. Though we are not told specifically when the rain fell, there is no indication that it came early during the normally dry summer months. The rain appears to have come after the time of wheat harvest. It would have been highly unusual if it had come before or during the harvest (*cf* 1 Sam.12:16-18). Rizpah's vigil may well have

1. A. Jukes, Restitution of All Things, p.36.

lasted six months. That is the approximate time between firstfruits, in the first month, and the seventh month when the wheat harvest and final ingathering was completed. The seventh month held the day of propitiatory shelters, followed five days later by the festival of tabernacles.

This sacrifice of seven men was kept from desecration, or kept holy by Rizpah. Rizpah means *glowing coal* and is so translated in Isaiah 6:6, speaking of a live coal from the altar. Rizpah's devotion shows that the fire of this judgment on Saul's house was sustained until the latter harvest was complete and the blessings of God rained down. The sacrifice of Christ, which defeated the power of death, will be effective and honored until His work of heading up all is completed, and until death is abolished.

TWO MEPHIBOSHETHS

Special attention is drawn to the name *Mephibosheth.* Like the goats on the day of atonement, and the doves for the leper's cleansing (Leviticus chapters 14 and 16), one Mephibosheth died, and one Mephibosheth lived. The doubles represent Christ. One represents Him in His death, and one represents Him in resurrection. *Mephibosheth* means *dispeller of shame,* and *Armoni* is said to mean *elevated.* Christ was lifted up in shame, like the serpent on Moses' pole, to deliver us from sin and death and to roll away our reproach. And it is by His lifting up in resurrection that He completes deliverance. Christ is the true Dispeller of shame. He was shamed and humiliated in being made sin for us, but from the time of His death forward, He received honor. He received the burial of a king in a new unsoiled tomb. From there He rose to be seated at the right hand of God. And the love of the Father honors His obedient Son, making His work effective until sin and death are no more.

J. Phillip Scranton

TRINITARIANISM AND HERESY

Question:

I have been personally apprised by a theologian friend that "the Concordant Publishing Concern is a non-Christian cult which, besides being universalists, are also sponsors of the Arian heresy." What is your answer to this serious charge? As the Athanasian Creed [381 A.D.] declares, "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith. Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance . . . . So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God . . . . [and, the catholic faith further affirms that] they that have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire. This is the catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved."

Answer:

WHILE we, indeed, are not Trinitarians, neither do we identify ourselves with any other movement or figure in church history, whether Arius or anyone else. Yet if our views should indeed be similar in some particular respect to those of any certain historical personage, we cannot see how this speaks either for our views or against them.

If any certain group of believers is heretical according to the standards of some other believer or group of believers,

this is a matter of little significance in itself. Any appeals whatsoever to man—not to mention, of all things, appeals to the majority of men (albeit of "Christian" men)—expose their own poverty and shame.

For what it is worth, however, the Concordant teaching concerning Christ, evidently, is at least similar to that of the Libyan theologian Arius (c. 256-336) in certain basic respects. Yet only a little is known concerning his views, and that mostly through the writings of his adversaries. Hardly any Arian apologetics have been preserved.[1]

I would suggest to you that it is not a matter of much importance that a traditional theologian should see fit to denominate us a "non-Christian cult" while claiming besides that we are "heretics." Many such theologians claim that the ecclesia is confined to those who embrace the doctrine of the Trinity. Since, according to these theologians, non-Trinitarians are excluded from the ecclesia, they therefore use the word "cult" simply as a default term for all worshipers of God who, by their standards, are not in Christ.

Obviously, we are indeed heretics in relation to orthodoxy; but it is just as true that the orthodox are heretics in relation to ourselves. Neither of these facts in themselves, however, are very significant. This is because what is important is not how any certain commonly-approved versus commonly-disapproved believers may view one another, but how the teachings of each respective group truly accord with the Scriptures themselves.

Believers, or "Christians," are those who are believing the evangel that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures (1 Cor. 15:3,4). Even this simple testimony may be interpreted in

1. Louis Berkhof, THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1937).

more than one sense; but it would simply be incorrect to say that those who may indeed interpret this declaration of the evangel somewhat differently than ourselves therefore do not *believe* the evangel—that they do not accept and are not convinced by its testimony.

The many and varied issues concerning the being and nature of God, however, are far more detailed and complex than this brief and simple declaration of the evangel. Yet if men are prone to misunderstand the evangel, how much more so are they apt to misunderstand the Scripture's testimony on such august themes as the nature of God or the sense in which the title "God" may properly be ascribed to Christ.

Even if one should be mistaken in his understanding *about* God, this does not mean that he is an unbeliever as to the testimony of His *evangel.* One may well be called of God and convinced as to the testimony of "Christ crucified," while at the same time being persuaded of a wide variety of profane prattlings, not yet having been granted the especial blessing of a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the *realization* of God (*cf* Eph.1:16).

The English "cult" is from the Latin *cultus,* which speaks of care, cultivation, or worship. By extension, it has come to be used of devoted, generally obsessive, attachment to a person or principle, especially if that person or principle is presented (or received) as an *authority.* In practice, however—quite apart from any lexical significance—"cult" has simply become a term of stigmatization and derision, even as a term of convenience by which one may justify oneself for dismissing the beliefs of any and all who have been branded thus.

The Concordant Publishing Concern consistently repudiates all human authority, including its own. While, obviously, like any ministry, our ministry had a founder and still today has teachers, few indeed, even among ourselves, have been guilty of paying excessive heed to them or to their teachings. Our problem is rather the opposite. Because we, in fact, do not practice any sort of authoritarianism, some, even among our friends, do not carefully consider our findings, while still others reject them out of hand. Nevertheless, we seek to maintain fellowship with all such ones.

Unless a believer should be given over to some type of uncleanness of the flesh, we wish to maintain fellowship with him. If he is, indeed, invoking the name of the Lord and seems to be doing so out of a clean heart, we seek to pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace together with him (*cf* 2 Tim.2:22).

If it seems to us that he is persuaded of false teachings even on fundamental issues, we do not conclude that he is therefore no part of the *ecclesia.* Accordingly, we would be disappointed in anyone among us who saw fit to characterize him as lost, unsaved, or the like, and especially so of anyone who saw fit to go so far as to stigmatize him as "cultic," simply because he did not concur in our conclusions from Scripture.

Truth does not need the help of human authority. We should be more interested in *being* correct than in *calling* ourselves "the correct ones" (i.e., "the orthodox") while making sure that we are received and esteemed by men as such. "Let no one be boasting in man . . ." (1 Cor.3:21), then, remains good advice.

In an era of apostasy, surely we are unwise to suppose that the prevailing, "orthodox" teachings are almost certainly correct. The majority may be and sometimes are correct in any certain point. (There are certainly innumerable false and foolish minority views.) But to suggest—at least when it comes to "the fundamentals"—that all who are intelligent, educated, honest, sincere, and consecrated by the spirit of God, are those who are of the

majority position, is as conceited and unrealistic as it is false and fallacious.

This is all to say that—whoever is correct on the points at issue in the Trinitarian controversy—in any case, those who acknowledge those holding the view opposite to their own as nonetheless their brethren in Christ are correct in this. Whatever their opinions on the Trinity, those who believe that Christ died for their sins and rose again on the third day, who say from the heart that Jesus is Lord while deeming Him the sole Mediator between God and mankind, are not unbelievers, but believers.

"THERE IS ONE GOD, THE FATHER"

The Scriptural expressions for "God" do not signify either supremacy or unoriginatedness of being. And, these terms may be used either in a relative sense or in an absolute sense—even when used in a literal sense and in a faithful sense. "God" is a title; it speaks of Subjectorhood or Placership; it says nothing about either supremacy or unoriginatedness of being.

We judge that in an absolute sense, "there is no other God except *One*" (1 Cor.8:4). This is because we believe that "the Head of Christ is *God*" (1 Cor.11:3), and also because we believe that our God and Father is "the *God of* our Lord *Jesus Christ*" (Eph.1:17). We believe, then, that the Supreme God (*cf* Deut.32:8; Lam.3:38) is the One Whom the apostle Paul terms "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph.1:3), Whom Christ Himself terms "the only *true* God" (John 17:3).

While we believe "even if so be that there are many being termed 'GODS,' whether in heaven or on earth, even as [there is a sense in which] there are many gods and many lords, nevertheless for us there is *one* God, *the Father,* out of Whom all is, and we for Him, *and* one Lord, Jesus Christ,

through Whom all is, and we through Him. But not in all is there this knowledge" (1 Cor.8:5-7a).

INHERING IN THE FORM OF GOD

We believe, inasmuch as Christ is "the Image of the invisible God" (2 Cor.4:4), and the Emblem of His assumption (Heb.1:3), that, representatively speaking, Christ *is* God (i.e., even the Supreme God), for He unfolds Him to us (John 1:18).

Accordingly, we believe that, "in [Christ] is all created (Col.1:16), even as that, as the Word of God, "all came into being through it" (i.e., through Him, Who is figured here as "the Word"; John 1:1).

The reason why we render the phrases in question in John 1:1,2 as we do ("The word was toward God, and God was the word. This was in the beginning toward God. All came into being through it [or, through "the same"] . . ."), is because our translation closely reflects what the Greek says: "THE SAYing was toward the God AND God WAS THE SAYing this WAS IN ORIGINal TOWARD THE God ALL THROUGH SAME BECAME . . . ."

We believe that Christ, rather than being the Supreme God, is instead (idiomatically expressed), "God's creative Original" (Rev.3:14), which is to say (literally), "THE ORIGINal OF-THE CREATION OF-THE God." Since God is the One out of Whom *all* is (1 Cor.8:6 Rom.11:36), it follows that Christ Himself came to be, out of God.

Hebrews 3:2 accords with this truth in declaring that "the Apostle and Chief Priest of our avowal, Jesus, [is He] Who is faithful to Him Who makes Him." It should be noted that the AV rendering here, "appointed," is gratuitous; the Greek signifies "do," or "make"; the AV rendering itself for this word, 356 times, is "do," and 114 times, "make." The context does not confine itself to any office which Christ holds (to which His appointment could be

made) or even address itself to such a concept, even though such a thought may be included as well. A straightforward reading of the text simply says that Jesus is faithful to Him Who *makes* Him; and, in any case, this is the only objective way to translate the passage.

On the other hand, we freely say of Christ, "my Lord and my God" (John 20:28), for so He is, though not in a supreme sense but in a sovereign sense. Christ, "is *Sovereign,*" (Col.1:18); that is, He has the highest place of delegated authority, under God—*His* God (Heb.1:9) and Head.

It is, then, as to the Sovereign under the Supreme that we understand the Father saying to the Son, "Thy throne, O God . . ." (Heb.1:8). Similarly, the apostle Paul speaks of the advent of Christ, as "the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour" (Titus 2:13). Thus, and literally so, we too are anticipating the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Just as we believe that *God* is our Saviour and *Lord*, we also believe that *Christ* is our Saviour and *God.* Obviously, however, we do not speak in the identical sense when we say these respective things.

Further, we believe that Christ, "being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God" (Phil.2:6). We would only point out that equality is not identity, and that equality, rather than constituting a proof of identity, instead constitutes a proof of its preclusion.

Likewise, we believe that in Christ "the entire complement of the Deity is dwelling bodily" (Col.2:9). The form we render "Deity," more strictly is GODNESS.

The rendering "God*head,*" as in the AV, cannot be supported, for the Greek form neither expresses nor entails any thought of either headship or corporateness. Though it is awkward to express in English, the idea seems to be that, in Christ, the entire complement (i.e., the entire array) of "the GODNESS [of God] is *dwelling bodily.*" The claims,

then, affirmed by Trinitarians concerning Christ (namely, supreme Godhood and unoriginatedness of being), are by no means proved by these passages.

VARIED USAGES OF "HOLY SPIRIT"

"The *holy spirit* of God" (Eph.4:30), is just that, the *consecrated, imperceptible power of* God—that especially devoted divine power by means of which God effects His most august workings and achieves His most glorious accomplishments. The expression "the holy spirit," is sometimes used as a *figure* of close association for God Himself, His holy spirit *representing* the One Whose it is. While this expression is often used literally as well, in order to speak of God's holy, imperceptible power itself, in some cases it appears instead as a figure of *personification* according to which "personal" qualities are assigned unto it, even as the Scriptures sometimes assign figurative "personhood" to other things, such as Sin, Death, Righteousness, and Grace. In no case are any of these things literal persons, but rather they, in a figure, are spoken of *as if* they were persons.

PARTICULARS OF TRINITARIANISM

The notion of the Trinity is that God, Who is one Being, exists eternally in three "persons." "Persons" is not intended to be understood literally for the idea of a plurality of actual, discrete beings, but as a representative expression for the technical term "hypostases," by which is intended the (three) essential modes in which God continually subsists. Each "person" or "hypostasis" is viewed as a *sine qua non* (i.e., essential element; Latin: "without which not") of Deity, each one being uncreated and of the same essence or nature.

Each hypostatic mode (i.e., essential way in which God exists) is marked by a certain "personal" quality, being

denominated, respectively, "the Father, "the Son," and "the Holy Spirit."

It follows from this, however, since each of these three hypostases are modes *of* God, that they cannot, either individually or collectively, literally *be* God.

It is vain for anyone holding this view to claim that either the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit are *literally* or *actually* God, for their own position asserts that these are modes *of* God, which precludes their being God. Solidity, liquidity, and gaseousness are ways (or modes) in which matter exists; they are not matter itself.

One who holds this tri-part, hypostatic modes (i.e., Trinitarian) position, cannot legitimately claim that Jesus is literally God; instead, he must acknowledge that Jesus is literally *not* God, but instead some type of inscrutable mode, apart from which God cannot exist. Trinitarians are contradicting their own position when they affirm that "Jesus is God," insisting that they mean this neither figuratively or relatively, but literally and absolutely. Pious claims that (1) Christ *is* God, and (2) that Christ is a hypostasis *of* God, are not enigmatic mystery, they are rather plain contradiction.

Say what they will, the Trinitarians' actual position entails it being true that (1) Christ is *not* God; that (2) Christ is *not* a Being; that (3) Christ, albeit a divine essentiality, is not an actual Person at all, but only a *mode* or "personalized" *way* in which *God* "subsists."

Let us neither be afraid of man nor of his dreadful dogmas. Instead of contending for the doctrine of "the holy Trinity" and denouncing, or even denying a place in Christ to those who must beg to differ, let us simply be rejoicing in the Lord, being invigorated in Him and in the might of His strength. May our only creed be, "I believe God," while relying on the living God for enlightenment and assurance of understanding. J.R.C.

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

WITH THE WORDS "Yet now" in Romans 3:21, Paul leads us to revelations that stand in contrast to the grave facts concerning the unrighteousness of humanity and the righteous judgment of God presented in Romans 1:18-3:20. Picking up the theme of Romans 1:14-17, he now focuses on the evangel as it manifests the righteousness of God.

ROMANS 3:22

This evangel of God appears before us in Romans 3:22 with rich and profound expressions. It is worded in 1 Corinthians 15:3 in plain words: *Christ died for our sins.* It is expanded in Romans 5:8,9 as a message of God's love commended to us in Christ's death for sinners, who are justified in His blood and will be saved from indignation through Him. But now at the very commencement of this momentous discourse on the evangel the apostle presents the message in terms of God's righteousness manifested through the faith of Jesus Christ. This, as we shall soon see, is the basis of the sinner's justification (Rom.3:24) and the display of God's own righteousness as the Justifier (Rom.3:25,26).

Even as we discern God's love in His giving up of His Son for us while we are still sinners, so we perceive His righteousness in this same operation of God carried out through the faithfulness of His beloved Son.

The evangel speaks of the *death* of Christ. In Romans 3:22 this is expressed by the words "the *faith* of Jesus Christ." In this message concerning the humbling of God's Son, Jesus

Christ our Lord, there is a revelation of God's righteousness not manifested earlier in the pages of Scripture, though attested by types and foreshadows. The importance of this is impressed upon us by a comparison of Romans 3:22 with Romans 1:17 where the apostle introduced these remarkable revelations to us, only to interrupt them by the long dissertation of Romans 1:18-3:20. He now resumes these thoughts with clearly parallel expressions:

> In [the evangel] *God's righteousness* is being *revealed, out of faith* . . . .
> [Apart from law] a *righteousness of God* is *manifest* . . . *through Jesus Christ's faith* . . . .

Romans 3:22 not only stands in parallel to 1:17, but also, as an essential part of the entire passage of Romans 3:21-28, it stands in contrast to Romans 3:19,20. Where Paul had spoken of the *righteous verdict of God,* he now speaks of the *righteousness of God.* Where he had spoken of the entire world *becoming subject* to the just verdict of God, he now speaks of the righteousness of God *becoming manifest.* Where he had spoken of no justification *through works of law,* he now speaks of God's righteousness as a work of justification *through the faith of Jesus Christ.*

YET A RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

God's righteousness is emphasized here by repetition: *a righteousness of God* is manifest, . . . *yet a righteousness of God* . . . .

This righteousness does not overlook the fact that all are under sin (Rom.3:9). Law makes it undeniable that human beings are sinners. "For through law is the recognition of sin" (Rom.3:20). But Romans 3:21,22 faces that reality concerning human sin with the message of the evangel of God in which God's righteousness is revealed as a work of justification. The words of law make the human

failure to keep the law an obvious and open revelation (*cf* Rom.1:18), but the words of the evangel direct attention to God's righteousness in dealing with human sin, in putting an end to sin and righteously bringing about the justification of the sinner. This is accomplished and made manifest through the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ to the death of the cross.

This is to say that in giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all, Christ Jesus carried out the purpose for which He came into the world: to save sinners (1 Tim. 1:15; 2:5,6). This is to say, that by means of His dying for sinners, Christ Jesus established justification and deliverance (Rom.3:24) in such a way that the perfection and glory of God's own righteousness is brought to light.

Romans 3:21,22, however, does not immediately draw attention to the sinners' justification. The subject of righteousness *from* God is not yet directly in view. That will come before us starting in verse 24. But we must not rush ahead to that which concerns ourselves before we come to appreciate the foundation of our justification. God's righteousness is what lies behind justification as its source, which means that our justification in the blood of Christ is righteous with that perfect righteousness which altogether reflects the character of the righteous God.

This is revealed in the evangel, which, in the present context might be described as the evangel of justification by the righteous God.

SALVATION

This evangel is called "the evangel of our salvation" in Ephesians 1:13. We have noted the testimony of the law and the prophets concerning God's righteousness that, it not only calls for judgment, but it leads to salvation. By works of law, no flesh can be brought to a standing of righteousness in God's sight. But the righteousness of God

as made manifest in the evangel leads to such a salvation! It demands such a salvation! It may seem incongruous to us, but the evangel is a message that intimately joins God's work of the salvation of sinners with God's righteousness. It is Christ's death for sinners which is the channel through which sinners are brought to justification, and through which God's righteousness as that quality of God which effects justification can be put on display.

WHOSE FAITH?

Once we understand that the apostle refers to God's own righteousness being made manifest, we can readily see that this cannot be made known by means of *our* faith. Our believing is flawed, even that of the most mature of believers. Justification is not gained by what we do, as Romans 3:20 has made clear. The evangel Paul is bringing declares that human works of law for justification are replaced, not by human works of faith, but by that great work of faith undertaken and completed by Jesus Christ. Human faith is important; it is the means by which we receive that which Christ has gained for us. But our faith is not brought into the picture here until later in verse 22 after the message concerning Christ Jesus has been set before us.

God's perfect righteousness in gaining our salvation can be seen only as it is manifested in the faith of Jesus Christ in His steadfast reliance on God's word and His faith-obedience to the death of the cross. The evangel concerns Jesus Christ and what He did for sinners. It is in this message that God's righteousness is revealed.

Hence Paul connects *faith* with *Jesus Christ* in the grammatical construction known as the "genitive case." This often corresponds to the English "possessive case," telling us what the subject *has.* Jesus Christ Himself has faith, and His faith is defined for us in His giving of Himself to the death of the cross for such sinners as we are.

This was the subject of an article by Brother A. E. Knoch in the November 1938 issue of *Unsearchable Riches.* What follows is excerpted and slightly adapted from that study:

JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

"Faith is generally supposed to be restricted to the saints, and quite out of the question in connection with Christ, notwithstanding the fact that He is hailed as the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith (Heb.12:2). I do not remember ever reading of Jesus Christ's faith until I began to read my Greek text. Then it impressed me very much in my studies of the third of Romans. Nevertheless I was rather diffident in regard to it and said little until I was forced to translate this phrase in the version. Then the question arose, am I mistaken as to the force of the genitive here? It does not seem possible that it denotes the faith of others in Him, as usually rendered, but perhaps it denotes the faith, or body of belief, which is derived from Him, not His own believing.

"But it is not a translator's duty to interpret, yet he ought to preserve distinctions, especially in connection with such an important matter as faith, so there was no way but to bring over the genitive into the English, leaving the student to decide this by means of consistent renderings . . . .

"The third of Romans, especially the paragraph from verses 21 to 28, is of the highest importance to the understanding of justification . . . .Either [the faith in view in Romans 3:22 refers to Jesus Christ's] faith, that is, it belongs to Him (which is the usual sense of the genitive), or it comes from Him, though this would ordinarily demand more definite expression, by means of a connective, as *from* or *out of* . . . .

"The confusion which exists among translators should convince us that some false notion is back of it, and should open our minds to the fact that our Lord, as a Man, had

confidence in God (Matt. 27:43), hence is the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, by far the greatest Example of faith in the annals of mankind. And His faith is the basis of justification just as our faith is the channel through which it is received and enjoyed."[1]

FAITH AND FAITHFULNESS

The context of Romans shows that the faith being spoken of is focused on what God has said. "For what is the scripture saying? Now 'Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness'" (Rom.4:3; based on Gen.15:6). When God said, "A father of many nations have I appointed you," Abraham "faced" this word and believed it "of the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were" (Rom.4:17). This promise of God was not doubted in unbelief, but Abraham "was invigorated by faith, giving glory to God, being fully assured also, that, what He has promised, He is able to do also" (Rom.4:20,21).

But this assurance of Abraham was eroded by circumstances. Consequently, as the years passed without any realization of the promised fatherhood, Abraham's faith that "God is able to do what He has promised" was altered to something like this: "God will do what He has promised when I help Him out." Hence he hearkened to Sarai's voice and fathered a son through Hagar (Gen.16:1-4).

Even with Abraham, who is set forth as the great human example of faith, there were times when faith faltered. Where God's word is believed despite the evidence of what

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.29, pages 375-382; see also the articles, "The Faith of Jesus Christ," *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.61, pages 12-26; "The Faith of Christ Jesus," *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.82, pages 45-48; and "Through the Faith of Christ," *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.87, pages 226-234. For a contemporary study of this theme from a theological perspective see THE FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST, by Richard B. Hays (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2002).

is seen to the contrary, the believing may still become weakened as the visible evidence against God's promise becomes stronger and stronger. Because the English language distinguishes between "faith" and "faithfulness" we might say that Abraham had strong faith but was not fully faithful to what he believed. But this is making a distinction where there really is no distinction. If Abraham was not fully faithful, his faith was not perfect. To believe what God has said is to be faithful to what God has said, and the experiences of life, day in and day out, inevitably expose the weaknesses of human faith by means of human unfaithfulness.

Hence, in the language of Scripture, both Hebrew and Greek, the word "faith" implies both believing and remaining faithful to what is believed. For human beings both faith and faithfulness are imperfect, or rather, for human beings faith/faithfulness (a single concept) *is* imperfect. But for Jesus Christ faith/faithfulness is without flaw, without weakness of any sort.

With Jesus Christ faith is faithfulness, and it is so without the slightest defect. But does His faithfulness truly involve faith? That is, does the fact that He endured the cross and gave Himself a correspondent Ransom for all, dying for the salvation of sinners, involve an act of believing without literally seeing, as our act of believing must be? As the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, as He endured the cross and despised its shame, was believing that the joy lying before Him would come (Heb.12:2), and He was doing so without seeing. He suffered great agonies, but, in faith, He declared in prayer before His Father, "Not as I will, but as Thou!" (Matt.26:39).

WHAT DID HE BELIEVE?

What did Jesus Christ believe? As with Abraham, and as with us as well, His faith was centered in what God has

said. He faced the declarations of God concerning Himself and was invigorated by faith, giving glory to God. He lived "on every declaration of God" (Luke 4:4; *cp* Matt.4:4). In doing this, He needed to abide faithfully even upon those words which spoke of His sufferings and death, for that was God's purposed pathway to His exaltation (*cf* Phil.2:9,10).

The necessity of His humbling and suffering and shame, culminating in the loss of fellowship with and spiritual empowerment by His God and Father for three fearful hours on the cross (*cf* Matt.27:45,46), and then His death and entombment, had all been revealed from Genesis and throughout the sacred writings entrusted to Israel. The glories would come *after* such sufferings (1 Peter 1:11) and could not be separated from them.

The hurting of the heel of the promised Seed (Gen. 3:15), the making of clothing for Adam and Eve from the skin of a slain animal (Gen.3:21), God's heeding of Abel's approach present from the firstlings of the flock (Gen.4:4), and all the slaying of living creatures as offerings, described in the law given at Sinai, spoke to Him of what the God of all righteousness had purposed for Him.

The words of David also spoke of what our Lord faced in His humiliation: "My El! My El! Why have You forsaken me?" This psalm also voiced God's *answer* in terms of the praise and glorification of Him (Psa.22:1,21*c*-31). Again the words of the prophets spoke of what was set before Him: ". . . so ruined was His appearance more than any man . . . smitten of Elohim and humbled" (Isa.52:14; 53:4).

Jesus Himself testified to this before He was crucified: "Thenceforth begins Jesus to show His disciples that He *must* be coming away into Jerusalem and to be suffering much from the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and to be killed, and the third day to be roused" (Matt. 16:21). Afterwards He spoke to those with Him on the road to Emmaus, "and beginning from Moses and from all

the prophets, He interprets to them, in all the scriptures, that which concerns Himself" (Luke 24:27). His faith was centered in, and He was faithful to all that God had said concerning Him.

JESUS CHRIST

As we have noted many times already in this study of Romans, the evangel of God concerns His Son, *Jesus Christ,* our Lord (Rom.1:1-4). It is here at the beginning of Romans 3:22 that this is first made specific (it was anticipated by the words "out of faith" in Romans 1:17). The evangel of God concerns Jesus Christ as the One Who believed that God had a glorious and joyous outcome in view in not sparing His Son, but giving Him up for us all.

The Name *Jesus* refers to Him as the Saviour, Who is and was and shall be, "Yahweh-Saviour." But now it goes beyond its significance in relation to the nation of Israel and reaches to His revelation as the One Who gave Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:6). The evangel concerns God's Son, Who is Jesus, Who makes evident the saving character of divine righteousness.

Furthermore, the Son of God as He is now presented by means of His faith is entitled "Christ," or the *Anointed-One.* He is given authority and power by God for the work of salvation spoken of in the evangel. The power of God for the salvation of sinners and for the revelation of God's righteousness in the salvation of sinners is centered in God's Son as the Saviour Who is anointed of God. The evangel concerns God's Son, Who shed His blood, for sinners, as the Anointed Saviour.

THE VALUE OF JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

It is not simply the fact that God makes Himself known through His Son, Jesus Christ, that is so astounding. But the fact that this manifestation comes by means of Christ's

faithfulness in dying for sinners, and by this means only, is what takes our breath away. We tremble in view of this tremendous act of faith of our Lord. It must not be degraded into a mere matter of martyrdom. It was that which was necessary for the display of the righteousness of God as the Justifier of sinners. This most critical work which is for the justification of sinners has been done. This is the power of the evangel for our salvation every day in our lives, in our hearts and our walk, in assurance and expectation and reliance on the living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind. Our joy and peace rest upon His faith which was faithfully heeded and kept.

The value of the faith of Jesus Christ lies deeply in the way in which it brings God's righteousness to light. It is a work of faith that covers the entire ground of human sin and enmity, that which is apparent and that which is hidden from view. No sin and no sinner can be left outside the realm of the divine righteousness being revealed in the evangel.

The faith of Jesus Christ calls for nothing less.

D.H.H.

LEILA WATTS

June 19, 2005 marked the end of an extended period of physical suffering for our sister, Leila Coleman Watts, but also the close of a life blessed with an ever growing appreciation of God as He is revealed in Christ Jesus. She was 80 years old. A talented musician and artist, an enthusiastic teacher and writer, Leila was given a keen interest in God's Word from her youth. Most noteworthy of all, for us, is the fact that she came to know that she had nothing to boast in before God. We join her husband, Harry, and all her family in mourning her death, but not as others sorrow who have no expectation. For the Lord Himself will be descending with a shout of command, with the voice of the Chief Messenger, and with the trumpet of God, and we will all be snatched away together to meet Him in the air, and thus always be together with Him.

Contents:

193 Editorial
197 The Sons of Abraham
201 Isaac, the Son of Promise
211 The Lamp of Israel
215 Justification
228 "Justified by Works"
229 The Evangel and Humanity

SEPTEMBER, 2005

Volume XCVI **Number 5**

Concordant Version of

The Latter Prophets

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel,

Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum,
Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

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In accord with their length, these books are generally divided into two groups, the "Major Prophets" (Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel) and the "Minor Prophets" (or "The Twelve," the books of Hosea through Malachi). But all of them, like the Former Prophets (Joshua through Kings), are concerned with God's operations with respect to the nation of Israel. The distinctive feature of these books is their revelation of Yahweh's ample provision for His erring people. They may fail, but He remains true. Indeed, their unfaithfulness is necessary to make known His faithfulness.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 2005
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-SIX

EDITORIAL

THE WORD of God is *God's* word. It is what *He* has to say. The time and circumstances under which the various portions were written must be kept in view, but His Word is always beneficial to the believer.

We should seek to know what God has said as accurately as possible so that its profit may increase. The Concordant Version is a human effort to translate the ancient manuscripts of Hebrew (and, for a small portion, Aramaic) and Greek into our own language. It endeavors to reflect the original expressions accurately. This itself is difficult, but it is made easier by the "concordant method" of translation which examines the scriptural terms in their contexts and establishes English standards for each term before translating.

We have also given considerable effort to uncover the most likely original wordings of passages where there is evidence of errors developed through the years of copying the text by hand. This involves a certain amount of subjectivity, especially as contextual considerations are also taken into account, and the results should be treated as tentative. Yet we do not feel we should shirk the effort to establish a more reliable textual basis for our translation while still observing the "concordant" guidelines of consistency.

The CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE LATTER PROPHETS is now in print. The first editions of the books of Isaiah, Ezekiel and the "Minor Prophets" have been available for many years, but these have been re-examined and revised for this new printing. The book of Jeremiah had been published only in facsimile sheets of typewritten pages, so that its inclusion here is a first edition in typeset print. In accord with the theme of this editorial, the following familiar pas-

sage from Jeremiah (15:16), as we now render it, may offer further insight into its values by its fresh terminology and expression, even though the basic thought does not differ essentially from other English translations:

Your words were found, and I have been devouring them;
+Thus Your word ⌈becomes to me ⌉ the **elation and ⌉** the **rejoicing of my heart.**

The verb "devour" represents the Hebrew word for "eat," so that we could have used the more common term as in the AV. In this case, however, we chose to use a variant English term that may bring out the emotion of the context. Either "eat" or "devour" is available for our Version, for neither term is used for any other Hebrew word. But we use "devour" where the context suggests an intensity of the action, in this case, an intensity of need for and appreciation of God's Word.

The CV also expresses the continuing process of the action by using an "-ing" form of the verb. We use "I have been devour*ing*" rather than "I have devoured." This reflects the form of the Hebrew verb, which is sometimes called the "incomplete" (more commonly, the "imperfect"). Jeremiah speaks of a continuing activity (of the past) which was not yet completed. The verb "become" is also in this "incomplete" form as indicated by the vertical line before the word. In this case, we felt that "is becoming" would be awkward English, and that "becomes" conveys the thought just as well.

The Hebrew word which we translate "elation" is rendered "joy" in the AV. Again the thought is not too much different, but the less common term, "elation," may be more striking and reflective of Jeremiah's exuberance. The CV uses "elation" for every occurrence of this Hebrew term, while the AV uses "gladness" and "mirth" besides "joy." Also the CV does not use "elation" for any other Hebrew

term, while the AV uses "joy" for several other Hebrew terms that are unrelated in form.

As for the word rendered "rejoicing," which is used here by both the CV and AV, the CV does use the variant "amusement" for this Hebrew term in Proverbs 15:21. In turn, the word "amusement" is not used for any other Hebrew word in the CV. However, the AV renders this Hebrew word by several English words besides "rejoicing," including the words "mirth" and "gladness" which were used for the former Hebrew word, as well as "joyfulness" and "pleasure."

These two Hebrew words used here by Jeremiah are often used together in order to emphasize the sense of delight. (They both are used in Jeremiah 7:34, 16:9 and 25:10, in association with wedding festivities.) They are similar in meaning, but any special nuances of meaning in each term can only be discovered by consistency in translation.

I have been especially enjoying Jeremiah 15:16 as it pictures our Lord in His years in the likeness of humanity. It was Jeremiah's privilege to be a type of Christ, as many other personages in the Scriptures have been. Thus Jesus said to the Adversary, quoting from Deuteronomy 8:3, "Not on bread alone shall man be living, but on every declaration going out through the mouth of God" (Matt.4:4). There in the wilderness and in physical weakness, our Lord was certainly *devouring* God's Word.

Could we say that the Lord was also *finding* His Father's words filled with *elation* and *rejoicing* for His needs during this great probing by the Adversary? Indeed we can. The declarations of God were His sustenance for delight and satisfaction. Furthermore, both Deuteronomy and Matthew express an imperative thought by a future tense in this passage. The Hebrew verb in Deuteronomy 8:3 is an "incomplete" form, and the Greek translates accordingly: *shall be living*. This use of a future tense as a command

appears often in Scripture. Even some of the ten "commandments" are expressed as though they were prophecies of the future, such as: "You shall not come to have other elohim in preference to Me . . . ." Here God's words have a double meaning. In the immediate and relative sense they are instructions of the law, but in the final and absolute sense they are promises of what will be so. Not only was Jesus' life centered in the declarations of God, but every human being will come into that joy eventually.

To center on such rich words was giving Jesus great strength for endurance in this experience of evil. Indeed God's Word was elation and rejoicing to Him.

Our readers may well know something of this experience, though surely under lesser evils than those which Jesus faced. God's Word is filled with examples of and testimony to the fact that God brings good out of evil (see Brother Knoch's comments on justification in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, starting on page 215). Such men as Jeremiah and Job and Paul suffered much evil which God works together for good, through Jesus Christ.

Indeed, the Scriptures are greatly nutritious for us daily. It is our hope that by its freshness of translation as well as its features of consistency, The Concordant Version of the Latter Prophets will aid in conveying added values to our fellow believers' lives. "For whatever was written before, was written for this teaching of ours, that through the endurance and the consolation of the scriptures we may have expectation" (Rom.14:4). We all live in a wicked eon which is packed full with distractions from things of consequence. We need His Word.

"All scripture is inspired by God, and is beneficial for teaching, for exposure, for correction, for discipline in righteousness, that the man of God may be equipped, fitted out for every good act" (2 Tim.3:16,17).

D.H.H.

THE SONS OF ABRAHAM

25 + **Abraham** ˡ**again** + ˡ**took** a **wife;** + **her name** was **Keturah.** 2 + **She** ˡ**bore** ˃ **him** `**Zimran,** + `**Jokshan,** + `**Medan,** + `**Midian,** + `**Ishbak and** `**Shuach.** 3 + **Jokshan begot** `**Sheba and** `**Dedan.** + The **sons of Dedan became** the **Ashurim and** the **Letushim and** the **Leummim.** 4 + The **sons of Midian** were **Ephah,** + **Epher,** + **Hanoch,** + **Abida, and Eldaah. All these** were **Keturah's sons.** 5 + **Abraham** had ˡ**given** `**everything** *w* **he** ˃**had to** 7**his son***nc* **Isaac.** 6 +**But to** the **sons of the concubines** *w*[1]**that Abraham** ˃**had, Abraham gave gifts and** *i*[2]**while he** was *fr*[3]**still alive** ˡ**sent them** *on*[4]**away from his son Isaac eastward, to** the **land of** the **east.**

7 **And these** are the **days of** the **years of Abraham's life** *w*[1]**that he had lived, 175 years.** 8 + **Abraham** ˡ**breathed** his **last and** ˡ**died in** a **good** and **greyhaired** age**, old and satisfied** 7with **days***ncs***, and was** ˡ**gathered to his** ⁼**people.** 9 + **His sons Isaac and Ishmael** ˡ**entombed** `**him** ˃**in the cave of Machpelah,** *w* **adjoining Mamre,** ˃**in** the **field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite,** 10 **the field** *w*[1]**that Abraham had bought from** `the **sons of Heth. There***d* **Abraham was entombed, and** also **his wife Sarah.** 11 **And it** ˡ**came** to **pass after** the **death of Abraham** +**that Elohim** ˡ**blessed** `**Isaac his son.** + **Isaac was dwelling** *wi*[2]**by** the **well Lahai-roi.**

12 + **These** are the **genealogical** records **of Abraham's son Ishmael whom Sarah's** `**Egyptian maid**servant **Hagar bore to Abraham.** 13 + **These** are the **names of Ishmael's sons,** *i* **their names** ˃**in** accord with **their genealogical** record**s: Ishmael's firstborn, Nebaioth;** +**then Kedar,** + **Adbeel and Mibsam,** 14 + **Mishma,** + **Dumah and Massa,** 15 **Hadad,** + **Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah.** 16 **These**´

are the **sons of Ishmael, and these** are **their names** [i]**by their hamlets and** [i]**by their** nomadic **domiciles: twelve princes** according **to their clans.** 17 **And these** are the **years of Ishmael's life, 137 years;** +**then he** [l]**breathed** his **last and** [l]**died and was** [l]**gathered to his** =**people.** 18 + **They** [l]**tabernacled from Havilah as far as Shur, which** is **adjoining Egypt,** [i]**as you come**– to[d] **Assyria. He fell** in [on]**against** the **face of all his brothers.**

KETURAH'S SONS

Abraham's sons by Keturah, added to Ishmael and Isaac, makes eight sons in all for Abraham. But these were not included in the promise, which was confined to Isaac. The line of Jacob, with his twelve sons, were given names which were prophetic of the future, whereas the names of the sons of Keturah seem to have been given later in life, as descriptive of the character or accomplishment. They are better called appellations. Jacob, the Heel, had both kinds of names. He exposed his character even at birth, when he took hold of Esau's heel. But he was given a star-seed name at Peniel, when it was changed to Israel.

KETURAH'S GRANDSONS

The firstborn of Keturah, Zimran, does not seem to have carried on the line, for no sons of his are on record here. The second son, however, Jokshan, had three. Sheba was his firstborn, then Dedan, and this line is continued through him. Keturah's great-grandsons were probably forefathers of Arabian tribes.

Midian, the fourth son of Keturah, had five sons, whose names are important enough to have a place in divine revelation. The firstborn was Ephah, the second Epher, the third Hanoch, almost the same as the son of Cain (Gen.

4:17) and the father of Methuselah (Gen.5:18). The fourth was named Abida, and the fifth and last, Eldaah. These, we are told, are *sons* of *Keturah* (25:4). Sonship has a much higher meaning in the Orient, than with us. This is exemplified in what follows. Abraham gave gifts to these sons of a concubine, and sent them away, so that, at his death, Isaac was his sole heir, not only of his possessions, but especially of the much more precious promises of the land and the kingdom. The others went eastward, where some of them developed Arab tribes, so that, in large measure, the Arabs claim descent from Abraham, although he so clearly disowned them. This has caused constant strife between the two, as it does to this day.

ABRAHAM'S DEATH

And these are the days of the years of the lives of Abraham— so reads the literal Hebrew (Gen.25:7). In his case, at least, the plurality of this idiom may suggest a great deal. His life was nearly all bright, with hardly any darkness, and he enjoyed two lives, so to speak, one of a hundred years until his bodily powers decayed. Then they were rejuvenated, given a new life for seventy-five years more. This was more than twice as long as most men live today, so he was satisfied.

VITALIZING POWER OF JUSTIFICATION

This is a physical, literal illustration of the vitalizing, invigorating power of justification. It brings peace and contentment, and, in his case, earthly blessings and great wealth. We who are justified today should enjoy all this, but in a higher, spiritual sphere. Yet the contentment of *faith* furnishes a powerful rejuvenator, so that, even today, it vitalized the frames of the infirm, so they can even glory in them, as in the case of Paul and of Timothy (2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Tim.5:23).

ANNALS OF ISHMAEL

As far as the physical seed is concerned, Ishmael is the firstborn. Compared with Isaac, he had a numerous progeny, for he begat twelve princes, each of which became a clan, whereas Isaac, had only two, Esau and Jacob, and neither of them were in the line of faith until Jacob became Israel. Moreover, neither Isaac nor Jacob settled any part of the land at that time, whereas the clans of Ishmael seem to have occupied quite a little of the sandy stretches in what was later called Arabia, not far from the shores of what was later called the gulf of Suez, or the Red sea, and the Arabian gulf—the southern rim of the Arabian desert. But they seem to have lost their identity in the course of time. Along with the descendants of Keturah, the inhabitants of this region claim Abraham as their forefather.

ISHMAEL

We are told very little of Ishmael's history, as he was not in the line of promise. Indeed, besides the length of his life, 137 years, all that is related is concerned with his *death*. As it stands, the territory taken over by him and his sons is rather indefinite. The fact that they *tabernacled* seems to show that they were nomads. "Havilah unto Shur," according to the latest maps seems to indicate the whole western coast line of what we call Arabia, opposite Egypt, with Shur in the north and Havilah in the south. But it seems to have gone as far to the east as Assyria. Before his birth Ishmael was described as an onager, or wild donkey, his hand against all and all to be against him (Gen.16:12). Ever since, Israel, representing the promised seed, has been subject to inroads from these desert marauders, who portray the enmity of the flesh and its fight against the spirit.

A. E. Knoch

ISAAC, THE SON OF PROMISE
(Genesis 25:19-34)

19 + **These** are the **genealogical** record**s of Abraham's son Isaac. Abraham begot `Isaac.** 20 **And Isaac** [b]**was forty years old** [i]**when he took**– **›as his wife `Rebecca,** the **daughter of Bethuel the Syrian** [f]**of Padan-Syria,** the **sister of Laban the Syrian.**

21 + **Isaac** [l]**entreated › Yahweh ›on behalf** of **his wife; for she** was **barren. And Yahweh** granted **›** his [l]**entreaty, and his wife Rebecca** became [l]**pregnant.** 22 +**When the sons** [l]**jostled each other** [i] **within her,** + **she** [l]**said: If so, why** has **this** happened to **me?** +**So she** [l]**went to inquire** `of **Yahweh.** 23 **And Yahweh** [l]**said to her:**

Two nations are **in your belly,**
+ **Two folkstems shall part from your internal** organ**s.**
+**But** one **folkstem shall be** more **resolute** [f]**than** the other **folkstem,**
And the **senior shall serve** the **junior.**

24 +**When her days were** [l]**fulfilled to** give **birth,** + **behold,** there were **twins in her belly.** 25 + **The first** came [l]**forth ruddy, all of him like** a **hairy mantle;** +**so they** [l]**called his name Esau.** 26 **And afterward his brother** came **forth, and his hand** was **holding** [i] **Esau's heel;** +**so** [M]**they**[n] [l]**called his name Jacob.** +**Now Isaac** was **sixty years old** [i]**when** [7]**Rebecca**[0] **bore**– **`them.**

27 +**As the lads** [l]**grew up,** + **Esau** [l]**became** a **man knowing** how to **hunt,** a **man of** the open **field;** +**yet Jacob** was an **unsullied man, dwelling** in **tents.** 28 **And Isaac** [l]**loved `Esau, for** it meant **game in his mouth.** +**Yet Rebecca** was **loving `Jacob.** 29 Once +**when Jacob** had a **stew** [l]**simmering,**

+ **Esau** |**came from the field, and he** was **faint** with hunger**.**
30 + **Esau** |**said to Jacob: Let me glut** *pr*‹**now from the red,**
˙**this** ˙**red** stew**, for I** am **faint.—Therefore** one **called his**
name Edom also**.**
31 + **Jacob** |*sa*‹**replied** *7*‹**to Esau***0*›**:** Do **sell** › **me, as** of to**day,**
`**your birthright.** 32 **And Esau** |**said: Behold, I** am **going**
to die anyhow**.** + › **What** good **then** is a **birthright to me?**
33 + **Jacob** |*sa*‹**replied** *7*‹**to him***0*›**:** Do **swear to me, as** of to**day!**
+**So he** |**swore to him.** +**Thus** *7*‹**Esau***0* |**sold** `**his birthright to**
Jacob.34 +**Then Jacob gave** › **Esau bread and lentil stew;**
+ **he** |**ate and** |**drank,** + |**got up and** |**went** away**.** +**Thus** did
Esau |**despise** `**the birthright.**

YAHWEH is the Elohim, or Subjector, of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob (Ex.3:15). These three form the three-fold background by which the star-seed may learn about their special Deity, Who Will-be-ing-was. His dealings with this trinity of humans is the clue to their own special position among mankind (Matt. 22:32; Mark 12:26; Acts 3:13; 7:32). But they provide us, also, with lessons in those lower realms of truth which we have in common with them, such as *justification* by *faith,* by Abraham (Rom.4:1-3; Gal.3:6), and *promise*, by Isaac (Rom.9:7,10; Gal.4:28), and *choice* by Jacob (Rom.9:13).

THE PROMISED SEED

Above all else, Isaac was the *promised seed,* and we should consider this as typical of him, rather than his personal traits or shortcomings. Secondly, his *name,* denotes LAUGH-causer, and, as a consequence, we should not expect him to be *tested,* as Abram was, or *tried,* as Jacob was by his brother and father-in-law. Three identical Abrams could not teach us more than one. Three different characters

have three different lessons to teach. If we seek to find a perfect character among the physical seed of Adam, that would be a serious mistake, for God needs only One such Man, Who came later. All the others must be imperfect, until the perfect Son transfigures them into His likeness.

As Isaac was the first of the promised seed, and in him all the rest of the seed is called, we must go back before his birth to understand his history. As soon as Abram reached the center of the land, Yahweh appeared to him and said, "To your *seed* I shall give this land" (Gen.12:7). Here, first of all, only Isaac was in view. Later, after Lot had parted from Abram, the promise was repeated, but included Abram himself (13:15) and all his physical progeny, for it was compared with the *soil* of the land, in order to show how multitudinous it would be. Later, after Abram had refused to be rewarded for the rescue of the Sodomites from the confederate kings, he complained, "You have given no seed to me." Yet Abram already had a substitute, Damascus Eliezer (15:3).

ISAAC, THE STAR SEED

This time the seed is not as the *soil,* which probably figures Abram's physical offspring in the land, but a much higher and more glorious one (Gen.15:5). Even this also would be beyond computation. The stars figure the *spiritual* seed, who would *believe,* like Abram. The term, *thus* seems to indicate more than mere number, and suggests a higher degree of *likeness*. But when the promise was confirmed by a *covenant,* then the boundaries of the land defined it as from the stream of Egypt to the Euphrates (Gen.15:18).

When Ishmael was about to be born, Hagar was also told that his seed would not be numbered for multitude (16:10). Thus Abraham became the forefather of a throng of *nations* which are not reckoned with the star seed.

SIMILARITIES WITH ABRAM

Outwardly, Isaac's history is remarkably similar to that of Abram's, for he was blessed for his father's sake. He is respected by Abimelech. His wife was barren. He exposed her to danger. He had two antagonistic sons. He had family trials. He had trouble with his wells and those Abraham had dug. All this, especially the last item, should help us to see that his function is to be *like* his father spiritually, even as the Son is like the Father. He does not originate, for Abram dug the wells, but he does act as an intermediary, *through* whom the water may be enjoyed. He is a figure of the Father's Son.

NOT ALL ISRAEL ARE ISRAEL

The vital lesson for us, and for fleshly Israel, is elaborated for us by the apostle Paul in his Roman (9:7-10) and Galatians (4:28) epistles, when he declared clearly and emphatically that *not all those out of Israel, these are Israel*. Abraham had other offspring besides Isaac. More than a decade before his birth, Ishmael was born. And even Abram could plead, "O that Ishmael should live before You!" (Gen.17:18). So is Israel today. And many true believers have the same feeling that he had. This will be fulfilled in the future when all Israel shall be saved (Rom.11:26). Ishmael, although divinely named Hearing-is-Subjector, must not be a child of *faith,* or of *promise,* like Isaac, but of the *flesh,* of the *slave* woman, Hagar. So are the other seed of Abraham who fail to have his *faith*.

SEED NOT CHILDREN

Abraham had further offspring besides Ishmael, after the death of Sarah, by Keturah (Incense). His name and the fact that Abraham's life was, figuratively, a resurrection life, for he had to be vivified in order to generate Isaac

(Rom.4:19), has in it a faint suggestion of Abraham's spiritual seed *among the nations*. Even the numbers are suggestive. In all he had eight, but there were six by Keturah. But by no means do we wish to intimate that these six were the seed of *promise,* for they were no more promised, as Isaac was, than the believers among the nations today. Her name could be a physical intimation of a secret spiritual reality. These sons were *sent away* with a present, and had no more right to the promised land than we have. In fact, we do not look forward to *any* physical blessing on the *earth* at all.

ISAAC'S SEED

As with Abram, Isaac's seed was long delayed. He was forty years old when he married Rebecca, the daughter of Bethuel, the Syrian. Again, as with Abraham, his wife was barren. They did not do as Abram and Sarai had done, by bringing foreign flesh into the succession, but entreated Yahweh, so that their sons were very evidently an answer to prayer, and a further development of God's plan to reveal His future ways by means of His dealings with the patriarchs.

THE DIVINE CHOICE

The great lesson taught by the twins is so solemn and weighty and hard to believe, that we again refer our readers to Paul's inspired explanation, given us in Romans 9:10-26: Not as yet being born, nor putting into practice anything good or bad, *that the purpose of God may be remaining as a choice, not out of acts, but of Him Who is calling,* it was declared to her that "The greater shall be slaving for the inferior," according as it is written, "*Jacob I love,* yet *Esau I hate*" (*cf* Mal.1:2,3). In this account concerning Esau and Jacob we have this transcendent truth exemplified and enacted by living men, through their actions as

well as their words, so that we must denounce it as unjust and atrocious, if it were the work of a human, or even the device of a devil. That is why so few are able to believe it.

DIVINE MERCY

In order to help us believe it, the apostle adds testimony from Moses and Hosea and Isaiah, and introduces Pharaoh and the potter, all in order to prove the simple proposition that the Subjector does, not only as He wills, but what *appears* to us to be unjust, in order to turn transient harm into permanent blessing. When Moses asked Yahweh to show him His glory, He announced the divine declaration: "I will be gracious to whom I am being gracious and will show compassion to whom I am showing compassion." (Ex.33:19; Rom.9:15). This is not culled from a human creed, but the Subjector's own statement, not of faith, but of *fact*. Paul deduces from this that the fate of a human does not depend on willingness or work, but altogether on God's mercy (Rom.9:16).

HARDENING

It is not difficult to discern God's mercy in the case of Isaac, but it takes a measure of faith to acclaim His treatment of Ishmael. So another case is brought in to strengthen the divine standpoint. Pharaoh is told why he was raised up to such a pitch of power, but few seem able to swallow it. "For this selfsame thing I rouse you up, so that I should be displaying in you *My power,* and so that *My Name* should be published in the entire earth" (Rom.9:17 *cf* Ex.9:16). God's glory *must be* displayed, for that is the greatest blessing that can come to mankind. Is it not the highest wisdom and mercy to harm one man, or cause a nation to suffer for a brief period, if that helps all humanity for the eons and beyond? Ashamed am I that I ever lent an ear to any "explanations," which suggest that Pharaoh hardened his own heart, so that I contradicted the Supreme!

THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

In Romans 9:19-21 Paul clinches his contention by going back to the beginning and basing his argument on the formation of humanity (Gen.2:7). Like a potter, Yahweh Elohim took soil from the ground, and formed it into a human. But mortals seek somehow to push Him out of His place and form themselves, forgetting that they are soil, and that they can no more form themselves than the clay used by a potter can shape itself on the wheel. The potter whirls the wheel and shapes the clay as suits him*self,* to suit his purpose. But no mortal potter, no matter how skillful he may be, can compete with the great Creator, Who made both him and his wheel, and Who has designs in His heart which include the universe. He has forms to fashion far finer, and more splendid than mortals ever dreamed.

GENEALOGICAL ANNALS

The Annals of Isaac[1], like those of Abraham, are an excellent example of a reversal, beginning with his *birth* (25:19) and ending with his *death* (35:27-29). Then comes his family, Rebecca and his sons (25:20-28), balanced by Leah and Rachel and Jacob's sons (35:16-26). Then come *Esau and Jacob's* Birthright (25:29-34) and Blessing (27:1-35:15). Then two Appearances, at Gerar (26:1-5) and Beersheba (26:23-33). Wife trouble comes to Isaac (26:6-11), and Esau's wives bring bitterness of spirit to Isaac and Rebecca (26:34,35). In the center, at the turning point, we have the Canaanite Abimelech, with themes of separation (26:12-25) and covenant (26:26-33).

As a result of their joint entreaties, Rebecca conceived, and the long conflict between the two seeds began even before any of them were born (Gen.25:22). This is quite

1. See the "Skeleton Index" in the CONCORDANT VERSION OF GENESIS, p.33.

different from Abraham's two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, who were born about thirteen years apart, and by different mothers, Esau and Jacob were born almost simultaneously, with Esau barely the firstborn, and from the same mother. Nevertheless, they were more unlike each other and incompatible than Abram's sons. What illustration could be more forceful than this to show the great truth that God's *choice* is the determining factor in life, and not the will of the *flesh*? Before he knew what he was doing, Jacob earned his name by grabbing his brother's heel. And all his life, before he met the Elohim at Peniel (FACing-SUBJECTOR) and his name was changed from Jacob (HEEL) to Israel (Upright-with-SUBJECTOR), he unwittingly employed crooked means to get what belonged to him! Esau did not do that.

JACOB'S EXAMPLE

As we, who are chosen, are prone to do as Jacob did, and waste our lives in an effort to obtain what is already ours in Christ, his example should be of great value, to show us what we should *not* do. Let us not blame Jacob for doing as he did, but thank him for his example, lest we do likewise. Moreover, in contrast to Esau, who was "profane," in that he gave up his birthright for a single feed (Heb.12:16), Jacob prized it above all, and even descended to shabby trickery to get it. In the depths of his heart he was true to the Subjector, and valued His gifts, even if, with his twisted brain and reprehensible hands, he sought to steal them.

ESAU'S NAME

As Esau was born ruddy, all of him as a fur robe of hair, there is a tendency among scholars to derive his name Esau (*Oshu* Doer) from his appearance. The Arabic suggests an unknown stem, *Oshe,* hairy, or rough. Bagster's Analytical Hebrew Lexicon, which seems to be standard

among English students, follows this, making it *Hairy*. But why must his name be taken from his appearance? Jacob was not named to accord with his looks, but rather with his *deeds*. Why should not Esau be called a *Doer,* and his flesh described because he was in the line of the flesh? Jacob's appearance is never described, except as he differed from Esau, for he is in the line of the spirit.

EDOM

Esau and Jacob grew up together, but they differed radically in their dispositions. Indeed, they were somewhat like Cain and Abel, for Esau also wished to slay Jacob. But Esau was not a farmer, like Cain, but an intelligent hunter. He was like Nimrod, who was a master hunter. He it was who commenced the first kingdom. So Esau, also, started a new nation, to which was given the name Edom (LIKE, Red), because he glutted himself with red stew, supplied by Jacob. Esau's enmity against Jacob has been continued ever since, but his land is called Idumea, in later revelation (Mark 3:8). This strife was revived when an Edomite, Herod the Great, massacred the babes of Bethlehem (Matt.2:16), and another, Herod Antipas, beheaded John the Baptist (Matt.14:10), and mocked the great King, the Son of Humanity, in the line of Israel (Luke 23:11).

PARTIALITY OF PARENTS

It is only as we keep God's ultimate *intention* (*not* will) in mind that we can understand the perverse partiality of the parents of the twins. Otherwise we would [il]logically expect Isaac to love Jacob, for the superior, the firstborn, Esau, was to serve the inferior, Jacob. In this he was justified, not from the physical aspect, but the spiritual. His love for Esau was based upon his fleshly appetite, the taste of his tongue. At the last, however, he recognizes his own blindness, and the hand of Yahweh in correcting his mis-

take (Gen.27:24-33). So it was with Rebecca. Although she recognized the divine prophecy, and gave Jacob his proper place, yet she was really to blame when Jacob deceived his father (27:6). So it is always, *both good and ill, will work His will,* or, rather, His intention.

THE BIRTHRIGHT

The patriarchs did not live on flocks alone, for they had bread, and now we read of lentils (Gen.25:32). It is somewhat surprising, however, to find Jacob stewing a stew. Esau was a good hunter, who supplied Isaac with venison, but this provision was uncertain. On this memorable occasion Esau had tried hard, so he was faint; in fact he spoke as if he was about to starve. This was quite improbable, and only shows how little he cared for his birthright, when he bargained it away for a single meal.

A. E. Knoch

THE LATTER PROPHETS

Endeavoring to bring forth more of the vital facts of the Scriptures in a setting of harmony and consistency, we are presenting this Concordant Version of the Latter Prophets as a further installment of our translation of the Old Testament.

In accord with their length, these books are generally divided into two groups, the "Major Prophets" (Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel) and the "Minor Prophets" (or "The Twelve," the books of Hosea through Malachi). But all of them, like the Former Prophets (Joshua through Kings), are concerned with God's operations with respect to the nation of Israel. The distinctive feature of these books is their revelation of Yahweh's ample provision for His erring people. They may fail, but He remains true. Indeed, their unfaithfulness is necessary to make known His faithfulness.

THE LATTER PROPHETS is now in stock and ready for shipment; publication details are as follows: 8½" x 11" format, 469 pages; perfect bound, ultraviolet-coated heavy cover; $18.00 per copy. Shipping and handling: add 10% ($2.00 minimum); California residents please add sales tax; foreign orders payable in U.S. funds.

THE LAMP OF ISRAEL
(2 Samuel 21:15-22)

15 + There lb**was** fr**again** a **battle** ›**between** the **Philistines** and `**Israel, and David and his servants with him** went l**down and** l**fought** `the **Philistines;** +**yet David** grew l**faint.** 16 + **Ishbi-benob who** was i**among** the **votaries of the Rapha** (+ the **weight of his** 7**lancehead~** was **three hundred bronze shekels, and he** was **girded**l with a **new** 7**mace**0**),** + **he** ls*a***intended to smite `David.** 17 +**But Abishai son of Zeruiah** came **to his** l**help;** + **he** l**smote `the Philistine and** c**put him** to l**death.**

Then David's men swore an oath **to him,** › **saying¯, You shall not** march **forth** `with **us** in**to battle** any fr**more** +**that you may not quench** `the **lamp of Israel.**

18 + **It** lb**occurred afterward** +**that** there lb**was** fr**again** ·**fighting with** the **Philistines** i**at Gob. Then Sibbecai the Hushathite smote `Saph who** was i**among** the **votaries of the Rapha.**

19 +**When** there lb**was** fr**again** ·**fighting with** the **Philistines** i**at Gob,** + **Elhanan son of Jair** the **Bethlehemite** l**smote** `Lahmi the brother of **Goliath the Gittite,** + his**whose spear** had a **shaft like** the **heddle-rod of weavers**l.

20 + There lb**was** fr**again fighting** i**at Gath.** + A **gigantic man** lb**came** +**with six fingers** on **his hands and six** + **toes** on **his feet, twenty-four** in **number;** + **he´** mr**too was** a **votary** ›**of the Rapha.** 21 +**When he** l**challenged `Israel,** + **Jonathan, son of David's brother Shimeah,** l**smote him.** 22 `**Those four were votaries** ›**of the Rapha in Gath;** + **they** l**fell** i**by** the **hand of David and** i**by** the **hand of his servants.**

DAVID AND THE OTHER GIANT

THE CLOSING VERSES of chapter 21 list a number of David's mighty men who had earned the highest of honors and prestige in David's armed service. All the enemies listed here are giants. The listing in chapter 23 relates heroics performed against overwhelming numbers of foes. This same kind of division may be made in the spiritual problems that believers face. Sometimes a single, huge, demoralizing problem confronts us. Other times we are inundated with innumerable difficulties or details. In either case, the Beloved has power to deliver.

David had come to fame and leadership by defeating Goliath, a tremendous, giant warrior. But at this time David was not fresh and rested from the sheep's pasture. He had been fighting the Philistines for some time, and he grew faint from exhaustion. In his moment of weakness, his life was threatened by another giant warrior, Ishbibenob. Abishai came to his rescue, killing the giant. This raises a question. If David became leader by killing a giant, should Abishai, or one of the other giant-slayers, ascend to David's position of leadership?

It is heart-warming to see the devotion of these veteran warriors to their leader. They considered David's life to be of far greater value than their own. From that time forward David was not to go into battle. God's purpose was not for David to continually provide miraculous, single-handed military deliverance. The defeat of Goliath verified the divine approval of David, but God does not need a half moment's notice to raise up a giant-killer. David was intended to lead the people closer to God, write the Psalms, revise and reorganize worship in Israel, and to be instrumental in the designation of the place where God's name would be established. He also was chosen as an important link in the genealogical line leading to Jesus Christ.

Throughout his life David served as a remarkable type of Christ in many respects.

This event as described in 2 Samuel 21:15-17 has a significant parallel in the life of Christ. Our Lord performed many miracles for the purpose of proving that He was sent from God and that the people should accept and follow Him (John 5:36-40). Yet, instead of understanding this purpose for His works, many saw the miracles as an end in themselves (John 6:26-34). They were looking for a hero who would bring deliverance in every situation, but they did not see themselves or their nation moving on to a greater and higher relationship to God. But what need is there of a Great Physician to heal repeatedly the infirmities of those to whom God has promised immortality? If ever we are to know Christ, we must see in Him for more than the power to transcend normal human abilities. His miracles catch our distracted eye that He might lead us on to far greater things.

LEST THE LAMP BE QUENCHED

"Then David's men swore an oath to him, saying, You shall not march forth with us into battle any more that you may not quench the lamp of Israel" (2 Sam.21:17; see also 18:1-4). In the books of Samuel, the word *lamp* first occurs in 1 Samuel 3:3, a time when Samuel was still quite young. "In those days the word of Yahweh had become rare; there was no vision being unfolded . . . . Eli . . . was not able to see. The lamp of Elohim was not yet quenched" (3:1-3). The priesthood was about to be set aside, but God would give guidance to Israel through the prophet Samuel. Saul was never called Israel's lamp and the spiritual aspect of his leadership was clearly lacking.

David was the one after God's heart who was chosen to guide the nation in the direction they should go to please God and fulfill his purpose for them. Yet David himself

needed guidance as well. In the Psalm of 2 Samuel 22 David said, "Indeed You Yourself shall light up my lamp, O Yahweh; My Elohim, He shall brighten my darkness" (v.29).

"In it [the word] was life, and the life was the light of men . . . It was the true light—which is enlightening every man—coming into the world" (John 1:4,9). Paul said, "All be doing without murmurings and reasonings, that you may become blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse among whom you are appearing as luminaries in the world, having on the word of life" (Phil.2:14,15).

One candle can be lit from another, and the light of one candle can be multiplied a million times without diminishing the light of the first candle. So also, the spirit of Christ can be endlessly multiplied in those who believe (Rom.8:9-11). May God continue to enlighten the eyes of our heart, that we may walk as children of the light, bearing the light of the life that we have been given in Christ Jesus (Eph.1:18; 5:8,9).

J. Phillip Scranton

FRED NIEMEYER

Born in the Netherlands, maturing into manhood during World War II, emigrating to Canada to begin a new life with his growing family, and struggling in recent months with cancer, Brother Fred Niemeyer was greatly blessed through his life with a faith in God as a God of purpose and love in Christ Jesus. Along with his wife, Helen, and family, Fred rejoiced in God's goal for all mankind, and he found peace in the evangel of peace which led him to cry out, "Abba, Father!"

He was one of the founders and supporters of the Kitchener, Ontario fellowship. At each gathering, Fred could be counted on to stand up, always dressed in his suit, and quietly make an impromptu commentary on the current subject, filling in with extended, memorized verses of Scripture.

Fred was given repose early on the morning of October 18, awaiting his resurrection change when Christ comes to receive us all to Himself.

JUSTIFICATION

GOD, THE SUBJECTOR, plays the principal part in the tragedy of the eons. What He does and says is immeasurably more important than the minor roles of His creatures. Justification cannot be fully grasped apart from an understanding of this divine side of events throughout the eons. We should not only consider justification externally, that is, as things *appear* to be to *us,* but rather intrinsically, that is, as they really *are*. God is love. If we believe this, then we cannot think of Him as unjust. But if we do not know Him, and judge Him by some of His acts during His unfinished operations, we may misjudge Him, as if He were unjust. God is inherently just, but this may not be fully revealed to many of His creatures until they see the outcome of His eonian operations. Eventually, all will applaud even the worst of His apparent injustices.

In the first formal statement of our justification (Rom. 3:21-26), the point is repeatedly pressed that *God* is just, for apart from His righteousness, no one else could possibly be just. In this passage we read: "a righteousness of *God* is manifest . . . a righteousness of *God* . . . . a display of *His* righteousness . . . the display of *His* righteousness . . . for *Him* to be just and a Justifier . . . ." First of all, then, we must be assured that the Subjector Himself is just, especially when He justifies those who are far from righteous in themselves, as we are.

Perhaps the greatest hindrance to the acknowledgment of God's absolute justice is the presence of evil in His universe. Indeed, if it will never be removed, or will not

accomplish any good, then we would not even attempt to prove Him just, and our justification would be a worthless waste of effort. Moreover, if evil will persist forever, and the great bulk of mankind will suffer eternally in a fiery hell for sins that they were unable to avoid because of their deadly inheritance, and if it is not a part of God's plan to reveal Himself, then this effort to justify the ways of God to men would never have been attempted. The "God" of Christendom is a ferocious fiend, and no one, not even He Himself could ever justify His atrocious malevolence. So we will consider Him only as He is revealed in His Word.

FATHERS

Not all the discipline inflicted by earthly fathers is beneficial. It may even do harm. This is due to their own insubjection to God and ignorance of His Word. But suppose that every father were in possession of infinite wisdom, and had the power to control all circumstances, so that he could compel every occurrence to contribute to the final effect. Could he not then easily design his disciplinary inflictions so as to produce the good he has in view? So it is with our spiritual Father, the great Subjector of all.

DOING EVIL THAT GOOD MAY COME

Only a subjector may do evil that good may come, for he alone has complete control. Nevertheless, the ALL-SUBJECTOR has given us many examples of it in those whom He has put in the place of TO-SUBJECTORS. A father, for instance, may discipline his children severely, if necessary, that they may be taught to obey him. One of the great scourges of the present day, "juvenile delinquency," is largely due to the lack of needed discipline. This, in itself, is not enjoyable, but evil. It is a deterrent, which hinders far worse evil. Much present good in the world is the fruit of past evil. Discipline, indeed, for the present is not *seeming* to

be a thing of joy, but of sorrow, yet, subsequently, it is rendering the peaceable fruit of *righteousness* (Heb.12:11). We cannot grasp the good in evil unless we look beyond it to its final effects.

EVIL

Is God right, or just, when He creates evil (Isa.45:7)? Our answer should be based on a knowledge of its effects. If we accept the traditional destiny of the majority of humanity as a burning hell and damnation for all eternity, we will hardly be able to excuse His terrible injustice. But if we believe the Scriptures concerning the justification of all (as well as their subjection and reconciliation), then we will shout an enthusiastic *Yes! A thousand times, Yes!* Thank God for evil! This is basic. If He is not just, even in this one particular, it is folly to believe that He is not only just, but a Justifier of others also (Rom.3:26). Those who hold to these false traditions do not, and, indeed, cannot comprehend or enjoy either God's justification or their own.

Only the Subjector can justify. He has given us illustrations, by means of various TO-SUBJECTORS, which may help a little to understand how it can be done. A father may cause his child to suffer, as a corrective for misdeeds, and so prevent future crime. A little discipline in childhood may harvest great blessing in maturity. A father is *justified* in doing such evil because he has the future of his children in view. Recently a young person went to law to become free of parental discipline. But the judge refused to permit it, because it was beneficial.

SUBJECTORS MUST DO EVIL

The evil done by God is done as the Subjector, during the eons. Consequently the TO-SUBJECTORS under Him are also obliged to do evil. Humanity, in its place as subjectors of the animals, does much evil. Rulers employ

police and soldiers to compel subjection. Those who have the spirit of the Subjector, Christ and His apostles, even Paul, the most gracious of the apostles, had to do evil. All this evil arises from the fact that they are subjectors, like God, and that this evil is essential to the subjection of all at the consummation.

To comprehend God's eonian operations, let us wing our way, in spirit, into the consummation, and *look back* upon His activities from that clear height. Then the outcome will vindicate all of His evil eonian operations, for *all* mankind will not only be *justified*, but *satisfied* and *loving* children of their Father. This most gracious and glorious goal could not have been attained by any other means than by recourse to their opposites, temporary injustice and estrangement and hate. Our own *un*righteousness will enable us, not only to perceive, but to *appreciate* His righteousness. This will lead us to *admire* and *adore* Him, and to willingly *serve* and *worship* Him. He has been fully justified in making men sordid sinners that He may transform them into appreciative subjects.

ADAM

Adam presents a double example of *failure* to do evil, both as a *subjector* of the lower creatures and as the *father* of his family. He failed to judge the serpent, so that Yahweh Elohim had to do it for him. As a result, we read of multiplied evil, for the serpent and Adam and Eve and all their descendants (Gen.3:15-19). Again, Adam, as father, failed to discipline his firstborn son, after he had killed his brother Abel.

Consequently, Yahweh Elohim stepped in and *cursed* the ground, so that it refused to give its vigor to him, and sentenced him to be a rover and a wanderer, in fear of death. When Cain refused to serve his sentence, Adam did nothing about it, and let him build a city in defiance

of Yahweh Elohim. As these lesser evils were not inflicted, this led to the much greater calamity of the deluge. When necessary evil is evaded it breeds worse evil.

HUMAN GOVERNMENT

As the failure to properly discipline Cain led to further evil and the flood, the new eon introduced after the deluge began with the provision that the crime of Cain must be properly adjudicated. "Whoever sheds the blood of a human, by a human his blood shall be shed; for in the image of Elohim He has made humanity" (Gen.9:6). Can we imagine what sort of a world this would be if all the murderers, like Cain and his descendant Lamech, could brazenly challenge anyone who would call them to account? The superior authorities, to whom we must be subject, are a divine institution which God has empowered to deal out judgment. They must do evil, and cause suffering. There is a sword for lawbreakers, visiting evil on those committing evil (Rom.13:1-5). A government which refuses to inflict evil would be unjust.

PAUL AS AN EVIL DOER

Paul, the apostle, was shown more grace than anyone else, and also excelled all in the display of grace. Nevertheless he did not consider it gracious or even kind to overlook the sins of the saints. Did anyone else demand so often that sinners be disciplined by means of evil? As this is sufficient for a treatise by itself, we will only quote briefly, so that all may be thoroughly convinced that the modern tendency of indulging unscriptural conduct in the ecclesia is not rooted in love or grace, but in laxity and unfaithfulness. Ordinarily, "Love is not working *evil* to an *associate*" (Rom.13:10). Nevertheless Paul often did evil and charged others to do evil to the disobedient, for this is the only course that will benefit them.

Not only Paul and Timothy, as apostles, were empowered to act as TO-SUBJECTORS, and enforce discipline in the ecclesia as a whole, but they appointed elders in the various ecclesias to act as such locally. The saints are to be told that they must be subject to the political authorities, for they are God's servants (Rom.13:1-5). Titus was told to remind them of this (Titus 3:1). Surely the elders in the ecclesia should receive as much subjection. But even Timothy had to be told not to upbraid an elder (1 Tim.5:1), and not to assent to accusations against them, which the saints accepted without sufficient evidence (1 Tim.5:19). But in these, the last days, men are calumniators, stubborn to parents, adversaries, uncontrollable, so it is not likely that there will be much subjection to elders now, or that the evil which they are obliged to do will be appreciated. But they will be justified in that day.

Paul writes to the Corinthians not to commingle with immoral members, but to expel them (1 Cor.5:13). This might cause them considerable distress. He actually gave up Hymeneus and Alexander to Satan to teach them not to calumniate (1 Tim.1:20). This seems terrible to us, as most of us have an entirely false idea of the part Satan plays in God's plan. All the evil he does will be beneficial in its final effect, under the guidance of God. Paul is especially severe against anyone who brings the Galatian heresy into the ecclesia, calling down an anathema upon him (Gal.1:9), and insists that he bear his judgment (5:10). He predicts that he would not spare those who have sinned (2 Cor.13:2).

MEMBERS OF ECCLESIAS

Not only the elders in an ecclesia are compelled to hurt those who need discipline at times, but the members themselves are called upon, on occasion, to note those who are making dissensions and snares beside the teaching which they learned, and *avoid* them (Rom.16:17). Alas! In these

last days many may *follow* them and avoid the few who obey this scripture! That only compounds the evil, but does not remove it.

In view of their future part in God's plan, of judging the world, the saints should take these obligations seriously. But how few realize that they are not simply to bask in elysian delights in heaven, but to have a part in disciplining and blessing the rest of God's creation?

EFFECTS

In some cases Paul also records the effect of the evil. In 2 Corinthians 7:7 he writes that he rejoiced that he had made them sorry, for it led to repentance and unregretted salvation. In the case of Mark, whom Paul refused to take along, after he had deserted him (Acts 15:38), Paul later wrote that "he is useful to me for service" (2 Tim.4:11). Mark evidently did not resent Paul's action permanently, but was helped by it (Col.4:10). At the dais of Christ, it will become clear that all divine discipline was beneficial, even if it was painful at the time.

JUDGING THE WORLD

Some of the Corinthians sought to escape evil by applying to the secular courts. This is in itself a great evil. An earthly court is entirely incompetent to judge believers. Anyone who would sue a saint is already guilty of a major offense against God if not against the government. Every case of this kind should be adjudicated by a wise man who is a brother in the Lord. One who brings such an action before a worldly tribunal is already condemned in God's sight, even if he gets a favorable verdict from the unbelieving judge. Yet such a sordid case was made the occasion for revealing the marvelous truth that *the saints shall judge the world* (1 Cor.6:1-9).

SAINTS JUDGE

We know that God is about to be judging the habitance in righteousness by the Man Whom He specifies, that is, Christ Jesus (Acts 17:31; 2 Tim.4:1) All unbelievers must stand before the great white throne. But how can so many billions of human beings be individually judged, one after the other? Would there be any end to this trying ordeal? In a human courtroom today such a judgment, with a single judge, would be impossible. But, if the *saints,* the members of Christ, are *delegated* to carry out this judgment, as TO-SUBJECTORS of the great TO-SUBJECTOR, it is perfectly feasible under the changed conditions of that day, for they will be glorified, with faculties and powers unutterably better suited to this task than those they now possess. Then they will be able to do evil that will have a harvest of endless good.

SATANIC DISCIPLINE

But we must not forget that *God Himself* sent Paul a messenger of *Satan* to buffet him! What had he done? More good than any other mere man. But he was in danger of being "lifted up." Who wouldn't be, in his position, after receiving the highest revelations? His reward, so far, seems to have been composed of infirmities, outrages, necessities, persecutions, and distresses. Are not these evil? But Paul was in danger of ruining his whole ministry by *lifting himself over* that which is proper to anyone who owes all to God's grace. This term is used only once again, when speaking of the man of lawlessness, who will *lift himself over* everyone termed a god, and will be seated in the temple of God, demonstrating that he himself is God (2 Thess.2:3,4). We are all in danger of this sin, especially those who have also received these revelations through Paul. So we should be thankful for any evil which

the adversary may send us, which keeps us from inordinate self-esteem.

JUDGING MESSENGERS

Perhaps the greatest task which lies before the saints in their future glorification will consist in judging *the world,* especially *messengers*. Can there be any doubt that this will involve the infliction of evil? No one would question that humans who die without being justified still need the experience of evil in some degree in order to prepare them to be subject to the TO-SUBJECTORS, and especially to the Supreme Subjector at the consummation. This may be our greatest glory, to have a part in the work of Christ in subjecting the universe to the Subjector, so that He may become All in all. To subject His human enemies, what an honor that would be! But to see Satan crushed under our feet (Rom.16:20), and all his heavenly hosts subjected to God through us, in Christ, will be the highest honor accorded to any mere creatures.

If Paul needed such satanic discipline, surely it is also required by all others who revel in the great revelations which he has shared with us. Having the utterly false idea that all discipline is punishment for wrong doing, and that God sends it only to those who have misbehaved, many are prone to look at all trials as a token of God's displeasure and indicative of a departure from the right.

As a matter of fact, in this case the splinter in the flesh was given him because he had received transcendent revelations as a token of his superior comprehension of God's glory gained by being raptured into the paradise and the third heaven. We usually think of paradise and heaven as associated with unadulterated bliss, but in his case it led to an incurable ailment and temporary torment by Satan.

SAINTS CRUSHING SATAN

Our evil, in which all believers will have a part, and

which they will doubtless deem very good, will be their final encounter with the Adversary. In Romans (16:20) we are told that "the God of *Peace* will be crushing Satan under your feet swiftly." This is really a great good and a rare privilege, for it will remove from circulation the greatest instigator of evil in the universe. Few of us have a proper idea of how much he misleads even the saints. The AV reads "shortly" instead of *swiftly*. In that case, he has been crushed long ago. Yet we know that he will be imprisoned for a thousand years (Rev.20:2) and then cast into the lake of fire until the end of the eons. So it will not occur *shortly*, unless this refers to his imprisonment before the millennium. Even then it may be only a comparatively short time from the present, but not from Paul's day.

JOB AND SATAN

In Job's case the Subjector has actually shown us a preview of the course of evil, especially in connection with the evil-beneficial ministry of Satan, who appears on the scene as a son of the Subjector, so he also must be a subjector. And, as a matter of fact, he is used, in the book of Job, not merely to test Job with evil, but to prepare him for good. In fact, his efforts resulted in doubling the blessedness of Job, materially, and revealing God to him spiritually. The question arises, shall Satan be punished for all the evil he inflicted on Job, or should he be rewarded for the doubly blessed consummation (Job 42:10)? This applies, not only to the evil he did to Job, and to Paul and others, but to all his machinations. As it was God who instigated all this evil, He was the "responsible" principal; Satan was only the agent.

SIN JUSTIFIED

Looked at from the human side, sin is utterly evil and harmful and ruinous, and can lead to nothing but destruction and death. But, from the divine viewpoint, it is also the indispensable backdrop for the display of the Subjector's intrinsic essence, which is *love*. Apart from sin, He would remain the Unknown Enigma, without a single trait which could cause His creatures to cling to Him, throughout the infinite future which follows the eons. The real question is, not whether God was justified in introducing evil, but, would He have been Love had He withheld from His creatures that which was essential to the revelation of His affection? Eventually all will join, not only in *justifying* the Subjector for this seemingly sinful course, but will praise and *glorify* Him for its outcome.

Let us not get the false idea that God, the Subjector, was unjust until the cross of Christ. He is always just. But before the cross His justice was but dimly discerned, as we see in the book of Job. Now it is definitely demonstrated by the suffering, death and resurrection of His Beloved.

The sacrifice of Christ, the Son of God, although the sorest sin that man ever committed, has virtue in it to counteract and transmute all sin into a source of highest blessing to man and greatest glory to God. All eonian sin is necessary as a somber background for post-eonian blessing, through the value of His mediatorial offering.

In Christ's cross God displays His righteousness, so that He is Himself just as well as the Justifier of the one who is of the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26). We must not restrict our thoughts to the fact that He is *our* Justifier, through Christ. Before He could be that He must be *manifestly* just *Himself*. We must acknowledge that, to the limited understanding of a human, apart from His revelation, God may appear to be a ferocious fiend. In fact, almost all uninspired religions show Him as such by means of their idols and their ceremonial rites. Even Christendom presents Him as an eternal tormentor in regard to the unbeliever. But the cross has proven, by the suffering of His Son, that

He is far more than just or right, even *gracious* and *loving*.

There can be no consummation, with God All in all, until all are righteous. This is the object of the eons. Seen in this light, no insubjection is trivial, but is a vital element in God's purpose. This may be seen when we look at the millennium. There Christ and His subordinates must be obeyed, or there is swift judgment. If grace was not reigning now, it would be so today.

RECONCILIATION AND SUBJECTORSHIP

We have seen that justification is far more than either forbearance or shelter. Yet even this great grace is not the ultimate by any means, but only forms the firm foundation on which to base a much higher, more intimate and affectionate relationship. The judge who acquits a prisoner makes it *possible* for him to be on friendly terms with the one whom he justifies, but is by no means obliged to invite him to his home or to adopt him into his family. But, with God, justification must eventually lead to the nearest and dearest associations. It prepares for reconciliation, friendship, and sonship, in which we, as TO-SUBJECTORS, are actively engaged, in and with Christ, in bringing the rest of creation into harmony with His heart.

Even reconciliation is not the ultimate goal for the elect of God, whom He calls. It is, indeed, as far as we go at the present time, during our humiliation in these mortal bodies. But, in resurrection, in our celestial, spiritual bodies, we will realize more fully the force of the words, "whom He justifies, these He *glorifies* also" (Rom.8:30). This might be called a "guaranteed" result of justification, for there is no chance of failure. But this strong expression, having been abused by human impotence, has lost its sense of certainty. But God puts His seal upon it by speaking of it as a fact. He does not put it in the future when it will be realized but in the indefinite, He *glorifies* us, for this was

assured when *He* selected us in the past, and it will be procured when *we* enjoy it in the future.

A. E. Knoch

(excerpted)

CLINTON TENNISWOOD

Our Brother, Clint Tenniswood, who died in late August at the age of 91, was a Michigan farmer who had a deep respect for God's Word. He gladly embraced the revelations of God's grace in the evangel committed to Paul and the truth of God's delight to reconcile all through the blood of Christ's cross. Often Clint and his late wife, Marion, opened their home for fellowship with others. Those who attended will not soon forget the warmth and sincerity of their hospitality. The happiness of such fellowship strengthens the happiness of expectation which consoles us in losses such as this.

GOD'S LOVE

God's love is perfect and is the intrinsic reason, inherent to His essential nature, behind all His doings. While the world shakes its fist at God because of all the evils attending this wicked eon, yet the apostle Paul declares: "Be rejoicing in the Lord *always!* Again, I will declare, be rejoicing!" (Phil.4:4). How is it that our apostle can speak thus, and would have us do the same?

In 2 Corinthians 11:23-27, Paul lists some of the miseries that came upon him. Yet, even so, in the midst of all of his incredible suffering we can hear him lifting his voice to God in rejoicing. But why? Why rejoice in jails, blows, floggings, stoning, famine and thirst, dangers on every side, cold and nakedness, and all the rest?

It is because Paul had become acquainted with God's love. Love seeks the ultimate, highest well being of its object. Paul knew that he was beloved of God. And, knowing this, he was aware that "God is working *all* together *for the good*" (Rom.8:28).

T. K. Nungesser

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES VOLUME 95

Volume 95 (2004) of *Unsearchable Riches* magazine is now in stock and ready for shipment (casebound, green cloth, gold stamping, 288 pages; $23.00; please add 10% s&h; CA residents add sales tax).

"JUSTIFIED BY WORKS"

Where James declares that, ". . . by works a man is being justified . . ." (James 2:24), he is dealing simply with individual acts; thus he draws our attention to the fact that when a man does what is right, it may be said of him that, *in that respect,* he is a "righteous" man (*cf* Luke 18:14; James 2:25,26; *cp* Joshua 2:4-15; Heb.11:31).

We ourselves are thus "justified [i.e., *pronounced righteous*] by works" daily, with respect to our upright acts and our obedient service unto God. This is so whenever we do what is right, to the degree that this is actually the case. In the appraisal of our actions in and of themselves, however, we ourselves are also pronounced *un*righteous on a daily basis, whether by ourselves, our associates, or especially by God. That is, relevant to God's revealed will concerning our walk, By our righteous deeds shall we be *justified,* and by our unrighteous deeds shall we be *convicted* (*cp* Matt.12:36,37).

This ordinary or everyday sense, however, is the only sense in which James ever speaks of "justification." It is altogether foreign and contradictory to the teaching of James that any such benefit should accrue to the irreverent; indeed, to sinners, to ones who are "*not working*" (Rom.4:5). And that such an incalculably valuable gift as that of God Himself justifying sinners should be dispensed at all, not to mention be dispensed "apart from law" (Rom.3:21) and even "gratuitously in His grace" (Rom.3:24), was simply inconceivable to those such as James who were "seeking to establish their own righteousness" (Rom. 10:3; *cf* Matt.5:20).

It is not that what James has to say about "salvation" (practical salvation) or about the relationship between faith and works is wrong or is even in opposition to Paul's evangel, but that his words deal with an entirely different type of justification and with a different aspect of salvation from that of Paul's foundational message to the sinner.

Conversely, however, James' evangel is by no means in accord with Paul's, and indeed is quite the antithesis of it. James' entire concept of righteousness is the same as that of Moses: "that a man who *does,* the same shall be living in it" (Rom.10:5; Lev.18:5; James 1:12; 2:10). Yet Paul's view is simply this: "If righteousness is through law, then Christ died gratuitously" (Gal.2:21). "For we, in spirit, are awaiting the expectation of righteousness *by faith*" (Gal.5:5).

Consequently, insofar as our security in Christ is concerned, even if we were to be persisting in sin, grace would increase accordingly (*cp* Rom.6:1). Indeed, it would increase not only commensurately, but superexcessively, for, in this matter, even "where sin increases, grace superexceeds," and reigns "for life eonian" (Rom.5:20,21). Yet this is not at all the case under the Circumcision evangel. J.R.C.

THE EVANGEL AND HUMANITY

FROM THE BEGINNING of Romans the apostle Paul has been leading us, as believers, into a growing appreciation of the evangel of God. We have tried to follow him carefully as he has proceeded from thought to thought, building on what he has already said. It has become increasingly clear that the evangel is wholly and lastingly to the glory of God.

The evangel of God is His good message concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.1:1-5). Paul was longing with driving eagerness to share it with others (1:6-15). This was because the evangel is the power of God for salvation, and in this message the righteousness of God is being revealed in connection with faith (1:16,17).

THE DARK BACKGROUND

At this point, in Romans 1:18, the apostle brings in the subject of human irreverence and unrighteousness, and of God's indignation upon this corruption in His just judgment of sinful humanity. For us, this is bad news. But in understanding that Paul is still developing his thoughts regarding the evangel, we come to see this bad news concerning the whole of the human race as subservient to God's good news concerning Jesus Christ. What is said about God in Romans 1:18-3:20 must be submitted to what the evangel of God says about God. God's indignation and work of judgment are relative matters which lead to our appreciation of the absolute matters of God's love and work of righteousness revealed in the evangel.

The evangel dominates.

This means that what is said about humanity in this long section must also be understood in relation to the good news of God's powerful work of salvation. The experience of sin and its consequences cannot thwart God's purpose for good and, in the final analysis, will only serve to accentuate the glory spoken of in the evangel. God's righteousness and all the sins of all humanity are in view in both places, but only in the evangel are these brought together in the realm of salvation.

The very length and detailed review of the human situation in Romans 1:18-3:20 testifies to the importance the details in this section hold in our grasp of the evangel. They will greatly help us understand the grace and glory of God's "well-message."

ROMANS 3:21,22

We have returned now to the evangel itself. The direct presentation of the evangel which began in Romans 1:16,17 is resumed, but with this difference: The contrastive facts brought out in Romans 1:18-3:20 are fresh in our minds. We see the evangel now as it stands out brightly against the dark background of human sinfulness and divine indignation and judgment.

Hence we read the remarkable words of Romans 3:21,22:

Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.

TEXTUAL CONCERNS

The earliest, extant Greek manuscripts lack the words "and on all" in verse 22, thus reading: ". . . yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all who are believing." (A few other early witnesses have "on" instead of "for," but still confine the thought to believers.) Although the AV has both prepositional phrases as in the CV, most modern translations follow the early evidence and have only one, usually accepting the preposition "for" (often rendered "unto" or "to") instead of "on."

On the other hand, many later Greek manuscripts have the fuller reading, and an editor of Codex Sinaiticus (fourth century) who probably lived in the seventh century added the words "and on all" to that important witness. This editor claimed to work from an "ancient" and carefully prepared edition of the Scriptures compiled in the third century, and his notations in Codex Sinaiticus were given special attention in the compilation of the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT.

But our use of the longer reading is also based on contextual considerations. What Paul says before Romans 3:22, and afterwards as well, connects ideally and effectively with these two phrases, taking the first ("for all") in reference to all humanity, and the second ("on all who are believing") in reference to a special portion of the whole. I have tried to indicate some of these connections in this present article.

This, however, invites another point of criticism. Many scholars claim that, if genuine, the two prepositions, "for" [or "to"] and "on," would have been understood by the Greek reader in Paul's day in relation to the same object, "all who are believing." It would be the same as if Paul had written "for and on all who are believing." Such a sense has frequently been understood by commentators using the AV.

Yet here again Paul's use of the word "all" in verses 9 and 12 of this chapter of Romans, as well as other inclusive expressions, such as "not one," and "no flesh at all," provide clear connections with the first "all" of verse 22. The parallel passage of Romans 5:18 where Paul wrote the words "for all mankind" also provides evidence of what

is in his mind. Elsewhere in his letters he speaks of the believers as a special portion of all humanity (*cf* Gal.6:10; 1 Tim.4:10). He is indeed concerned with believers, but he goes to great length throughout this context of Romans to remind us who believe that we are not the only ones God is concerned about. Hence I take Paul as saying, in effect, "for all [humanity], and on all [those human beings] who are believing."

APART FROM LAW

In presenting the evangel here, Paul first sets the scene; it is "apart from law." It is apart from the situation presented in Romans 1:18-3:20 where God's righteous judgments centered upon what the human does. It is apart from that which led to the just verdict of Romans 3:20 concerning the entire human race. Human works do not play a part in the evangel (except in a negative way as the dark background of the evangel).

It is essential that we grasp this point. There is no room for our works, not any works of any of us, except to stand back and listen to what God has done.

Once we realize that Paul is speaking here with all seriousness concerning the human situation and what God has done about it, we can truly make progress in appreciation of the evangel and the revelation of God's righteousness in it.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS AND CHRIST'S FAITH

With the human and his deeds thus set aside for the moment, the evangel itself is seen once again in relation to God, what He is and what He does; this is primary. The evangel manifests God's righteousness, which was the very point Paul had made when he stopped for the long discussion of 1:18-3:20. This manifestation of divine righteousness in a work of salvation centers upon God sparing not

His own Son, Who faithfully endured the cross and died for our sins. Now we see God's righteousness clearly as it is revealed in the evangel in contrast to His indignation as revealed in His righteous works of judgment. We are seeing God's righteousness in a new and fuller way when we see it in the operations of God spoken of in the evangel.

The good that God accomplishes is as righteous as God is righteous, and it is as solid and secure as the faith of Jesus Christ.

THIRD PLACE

With this emphasis on God and the gift of His Son plainly in view Paul now turns to the subject of the evangel in relation to the sinner. We take third place in this presentation of the evangel.

But exactly who occupies this "third place"?

Most certainly the righteousness of God made manifest through Jesus Christ's faith has the believer in view. But it is the believer as part of the "all" who sin. The believer is part of the whole of humanity as far as being a sinner is concerned. So also the believer is part of the whole of humanity when it comes to this righteousness of God which is manifest in the message of the evangel, in the message that says Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

Everyone who is irreverent and unrighteous to any degree and at any time (*cf* Rom.1:18) and who is thus deserving of death (*cf* Rom.1:32) is here as an object which God has in view in this operation of His righteousness. Everyone who is under sin (*cf* Rom.3:9) and who ever has avoided God (*cf* Rom.3:12) is here in "third place."

What God has done in not sparing His Son but in giving Him up for sinners points ahead to a future realization which encompasses the entirety of the human race. But, in God's grace, the justification which has been gained by our Lord Jesus Christ as the outworking of God's right-

eousness is even now applied to those who are believing, who are, in themselves, sinners just like everyone else.

FOR ALL

Romans is addressed to those who have accepted the evangel in faith (Rom.1:8), both Greeks and barbarians, both wise and foolish (Rom.1:14). It reflects Paul's eagerness to bring the evangel anew to the believers in Rome, to the Jew first and the Greek as well (Rom.1:15,16). The letter is written with believers, indeed *all* believers, directly in view. But after making this clear, the apostle devotes what amounts to one eighth of the entire epistle to establish the fact that *all* mankind are sinners. He directs attention to "all the irreverence and injustice of human beings" (Rom.1:18), to the fact that sinners are deserving of death (Rom.1:32) and the fact that everyone who condemns the unrighteousness of others is condemning himself (Rom. 2:1-3). Because of this, the apostle points out, God's indignation is coming on humanity in the form of being given over to their decadence, and it will come in the future upon unrighteous humanity in the day of God's indignation and righteous judgment (Rom.2:4-10). This includes the Jew, despite the fact that God has promised much in the way of prerogative and benefit, to which He will be faithful (Rom.2:17-3:4). Yet the Jew also must be judged fairly (Rom.3:5-8). *All* are under sin (Rom.3:9). When God judges even the hidden things of humanity, it will be found that *all* avoid Him (Rom.3:12), and that *no flesh at all* can be justified by their works.

It is thus altogether fitting in this context that when Paul returns directly to the subject of the evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ, he should make reference to the entirety of the human race. The problem which he has set forth in Romans 1:18-3:20 embraces all mankind. There can be no doubt that Paul is relating the evangel to all mankind in Romans 5:12-19. Similarly, the "for all" of Romans 3:22 should be understood as referring to all mankind, just as the "all" of 3:9,12.

Indeed there is a striking parallel in terminology between the phrase we are looking at in Romans 3:22 and the phrase in Romans 5:18:

a **righteousness** *of God* **through** *Jesus Christ's faith*
for all . . .

through *one* **just** *[act]*
for all mankind . . .

In both passages the death of Jesus Christ on the cross is associated with righteousness. In Romans 3:22 it is presented as "Jesus Christ's faith" which manifests "a righteousness of God." In 5:18 Christ's death on the cross is referred to by two words, literally signifying "one just-*effect.*" They speak of the act of Christ in dying for sinners which is the effect of the demands of righteousness. Both passages also use the preposition "through" in the same sense. It is "through" the channel of that most pivotal and supremely righteous act of Christ upon Golgotha—it is "through" His faith, that all mankind will be blessed with justification and that we are blessed in spirit today.

Just as God's righteousness in judgment is related to all humanity in Romans 1:18-3:20, so is God's righteousness as it operates through the death of Jesus Christ related to all humanity. This is brought out briefly in Romans 3:22 and more extensively in 5:12-19.

DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS MANIFESTED

We have noted from the testimony of the law and the prophets that God's righteousness was associated, not only with divine judgment but also and most essentially with salvation. The righteousness of God being made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ must indeed take into

account every sin of every sinner. But in doing so it leads to salvation. If there are no saving results, God's righteousness could never be made manifest in the act of giving His Son to the sufferings and death of the cross. If there are no saving results for all, even if only one human being was left under the power of sin, the righteousness of God would be trapped in obscurity.

It is absurd to suppose that God's Word, provided for human beings, refers to God's righteousness in a way that cannot be understood by human beings as a matter of righteousness. There is no secret and hidden meaning to the word "righteousness" when it is used of God, indicating that it may include something we would never otherwise call righteousness. In fact, the more clearly we grasp what is revealed in the evangel of God concerning God's righteousness, the more truly we will exclaim, "This is righteousness indeed!"

How could we as believers who were chosen by God and designated for the place of a son long before we were born, come to perceive God's righteousness if only a chosen few are ever brought into salvation, while the rest are to be eternally denied the effects of Christ's faithful obedience to the cross? God's righteousness as it is manifested through Jesus Christ's faith is a quality of God that has all humanity in view; it is for all. It is activated in a righteous operation which manifests God's righteousness at every turn. It leads ultimately and surely to salvation. It leads to justification. It leads to God's glory. It righteously brings an end to the irreverence and unrighteousness of all humanity and supplants it with life's justifying.

ON ALL WHO ARE BELIEVING

Both prepositions, the "for" (Greek, *eis*) and the "on" (Greek, *epi*) preserve the focus on God and His activity and reflect the human position as receivers of what God

has done. This is not to say that believing and receiving are not acts. But they are acts that center upon and direct attention to God and His acts. They are acts of appreciation and reliance and enjoyment. We would boast in ourselves if justification came by way of our obedience to instructions of law. But our act of believing, if it is defined scripturally (and is not made to be an act that makes the difference between eternal bliss and everlasting hell) puts the spotlight on the One we believe.

God is the One Who establishes justification and brings its values into our lives. The gaining of justification is the direct operation of God by means of the faithful obedience of His Son. The granting of justification to us when we believe is also His work. And our act of believing, which is itself a gracious gift which God imparts to us, is the means God has chosen to convey what He has gained for all to us. For believers, boasting in ourselves is debarred and replaced by boasting in what God has accomplished.

As for the present, righteousness is reckoned to us. This blessing is presented especially in Romans chapter four. That is surely a major significance of the word "on." Paul had used this preposition earlier in reference to God's indignation when he wrote, "God's indignation is being revealed from heaven *on* all the irreverence and injustice of men" (Rom.1:18). It is God Who expresses His indignation in the giving over of sinners to their lusts and dishonorable passions and a disqualified mind. It is God also Who now expresses His grace in the reckoning of the righteousness achieved through the obedience of Jesus Christ to those who are believing.

This theme of God's present placement of the justification earned by Christ upon the believer will come before us as we continue forward from Romans 3:24. It is hardly enough to say that we are exceedingly blessed. But we are blessed in a way that blesses God (*cf* Eph.1:3) for His right-

eousness in His work of justification, a righteousness that is without mystery and redounds to His glory.

THE BELIEVERS IN RELATION TO ALL

As believers we receive special and transcendent blessings, not the least of which is the revelation that God's righteousness operates for the good of all. We receive blessings others do not receive, but we are still part of the entirety of the human race. In coming to appreciate our blessings we are not crippled in mind concerning God's purpose for the rest of mankind, of whom we are a part. We are part of the "all" in the phrase "for all," even as we are part of the "all" in the clause "all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God."

Note how Paul encloses the reference to believers between two references to all mankind:

> *God's righteousness through Christ's faith for* **all**,
> *and on* **all who are believing**,
> *for there is no distinction, for* **all** *sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.*

Paul is not referring to two exclusive groups, such as believers and unbelievers, in Romans 3:22. He is referring to the whole of humanity and then to a special part of that whole. The believers are included in both the "for all" and the "on all who are believing."

When it comes to being a sinner, as well as when it comes to being objects of the righteousness of God as it operates through the faith of Jesus Christ, there is no distinction. The effects of this righteousness of God are for all, and will ultimately be enjoyed by all, even as all are sinners who, in themselves, stand in great need of the glory of God. The believer must realize that the benefits we receive now and in the eons ahead are due to the operation of the righteousness of God and are based upon what

God accomplished for all in the giving of His Son. Like the Jew of old, we who believe the evangel must realize that we all are sinners just like everyone else, and we are dependent on God and what He does through Christ for the benefit of all.

A PARALLEL PASSAGE

We have already referred to the parallel thought in 1 Timothy 4:10. Romans 3:22 says that the righteousness of God as it is manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ is for all and on all who are believing. God is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. In both cases the emphasis is on God first of all. He is the Saviour. He is righteous in His work of justification. 1 Timothy had previously identified God's will to save all mankind (1 Tim.2:4) with Christ Jesus giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (2:5,6). Our passage in Romans identifies the manifestation of God's righteousness with the faith of Jesus Christ. The objective in both cases embraces all humanity with a special application to the believers.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS OPERATIONS

This accords with and helps greatly to elucidate all Scripture. They are filled with promises that have not yet been fulfilled. God's dealings with humanity involve leniency and patience and special choices, warnings and forbearance, followed by sudden acts of judgment. Paul has already reminded us that God will be faithful to the oracles He had given to the Circumcision, despite their unfaithfulness (*cf* Rom.3:1-4). Apart from faith, it all appears hopeless. The psalmist pleaded with Yahweh, saying, "Remember how transient is my life," and he even saw this in relation to everyone else, adding, "For what futility have You created all the sons of humanity?" (Psa.89:47). Yet he spoke with a marvelous hope that what seems to be so is not so. And the

psalm ends with an expression of faith that was expressed first by praise ("Blessed be Yahweh for the eon") followed by a double *Amen!* It was a hope that harmonized with the promise which came to Abraham that "In you all the families of the ground will be blessed" (Gen.12:3). Again it accorded with Yahweh's later words through the prophet, saying, "For to Me shall bow every knee, and every tongue shall swear fealty" (Isa.45:23).

However, since Christ had not yet, in His vast love, died for all (2 Cor.5:14), the basis of these prophetic words of promise could not have been seen. But now it is made manifest.

Continually, in the types provided by the offerings and reflected by chosen individuals such as Noah, Joseph, Moses and the prophets, there was a pointing ahead to Jesus Christ. It is only that these various themes of human lacks and needs and God's unique choosings and directings were not brought together as they now are by the evangel of God concerning His Son.

Yet now God has announced His evangel through His chosen apostles and prophets, speaking directly to our hearts through the ministry of the apostle Paul. Romans 3:21,22 has already made it clear that God has not created the sons of humanity for futility.

A SOLID JUSTIFICATION

Paul has not told us simply that we are justified. He would have us see the basis and nature of this justification which God has graciously and gratuitously granted to us. Its basis is solidly laid in the faithful act of Jesus Christ in His death for sinners, and its nature is solidly embedded in the righteousness of God.

To be a believer of the evangel—what a benefit, what a prerogative, what a blessing for our lives every day! Thanks and praise be to our God! D.H.H.

Contents:

241 Editorial
243 Isaac's Sojournings
249 A Psalm of David
255 Perception and Reality
263 Conscience and the Evangel
271 Wisdom from Above
279 Christ's Faith and our Believing

NOVEMBER, 2005

Volume XCVI **Number 6**

Concordant Version of

The Latter Prophets

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Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum,
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EDITORIAL

WHEN we speak of "the evangel of the *untraceable* riches of Christ" (Eph.3:8), we are mindful that it was the apostle Paul to whom these glorious revelations were first made known, who was granted the grace of bringing this evangel to the nations. In this service, then, it becomes the apostle's privilege even as the burden of his ministry, "to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the *secret*" (Eph.3:9a), that is, this secret revelation concerning Christ as comprised in the *untraceable* riches of Christ.

Both in type and in prophecy, the Hebrew scriptures have much to say concerning the Messiah, or Christ, Who is destined to reign over the house of Jacob in the oncoming eons. Likewise, throughout the non-Pauline portions of the Greek scriptures, whether in the various accounts of the personal ministry of Jesus, the Nazarene, or in any of the remaining, related Circumcision writings, these scriptures as well set forth an abundance of disclosures of inestimable worth concerning this One Who is the Christ of God.

The salvation appointed unto the apostle Peter even as unto the chosen expatriates of the dispersion to whom he writes (1 Peter 1:1), is the salvation "concerning which . . . the prophets *seek out and search out,* who prophesy concerning the grace which is for *you* [i.e., for the believing Israelites, such as these chosen expatriated ones of the dispersion]" (1 Peter 1:10). In their inspired prophecies, as God's spokesmen, these prophets of Israel thus engaged themselves, "searching into what or what manner of era *the spirit of Christ* in them made evident, when testifying beforehand to the sufferings pertaining to Christ and the glories after these" (1 Peter 1:11).

Conversely, those revelations comprised in the *untraceable* riches of Christ, which had been "concealed from the eons in God" (Eph.3:9), include the purpose and allotment

in grace of the ecclesia which is Christ's body (Eph.1:22b, 23a), the knowledge of "the secret of [God's] will . . . to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ" (Eph.1:9,10), even as "through [Christ] to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:20). Thus it is that "God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:9-11).

In our possession, however, of this transcendent grace of God which has been bestowed upon us ("the transcendent grace of God on you"; 2 Cor.9:14), if we would be citizens walking worthily of this *evangel* of Christ (Phil.1:27), we need to be walking worthily of the Lord *Himself* as well, "for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in the realization of God" (Col 1:10).

We ourselves, however, are not competent to achieve any such lofty goal: "Not that we are competent of ourselves; to reckon anything as of ourselves [would be to err], but our competency is of God" (2 Cor.3:5). Our prayer, then, is not that God would simply help us to be faithful while still in the end finally leaving us to our own devices, but that He would *make us competent* in our service for Him (*cp* 1 Cor.15:10). Therefore, our prayer, in meekness yet in boldness, is that God Himself, Who loves us, and is giving us an eonian consolation and a good expectation in grace, would also be consoling our hearts and *establish us in every good work and word* (2 Thess.2: 16,17). Accordingly, we pray as well that *God* should be fulfilling in us *every* delight of goodness and work of faith in power, so that not our name but the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in us, and we in Him, in accord with the *grace* of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess.1:11,12).

Blessed be the name of the One Who is our Lord, Who is also our Saviour! J.R.C.

ISAAC'S SOJOURNINGS

26 + There ˡ**came** to **be** a **famine in** the **land—aside from the former** ˙**famine** ʷ**that** ᵇ**occurred in** the **days of Abraham—and Isaac** ˡ**went to Abimelech, king of** the **Philistines,** to[d] **Gerar.** 2 +**Then Yahweh** ˡ**appeared to him and** ˡ**said: You must not** go ˡ**down** to[d] **Egypt. Tabernacle in** the **land** of **which I** ˡˢᵃ**apprise** › **you.** 3 **Sojourn in** ˙**this land, and I shall** ᵇ**be with you and bless you. For to you and to your seed am I giving** `**all** ˙**these** ˙**lands. And I will carry out** `**the oath** ʷ**that I swore to your father Abraham.** 4 + **I will increase** `**your seed like** the **stars of the heavens, and I will give to your seed** `**all** ˙**these** ˙**lands.** + **All nations of the earth will bless** them**selves in your seed,** 5 **inasmuch as** ⁷**your father**ⁿ **Abraham hearkened** ⁱ**to My voice and** ˡ**kept My charge, My instructions, My statutes, and My laws.**

6 +**So Isaac** ˡ**dwelt in Gerar.** 7 +**When** the **men of the** ʳⁱ**place were asking** ›**about** ⁷**Rebecca**⁰**, his wife,** + **he** ˡ**said, She** is **my sister, for he feared to say,** ⁷**She**ᶜ is **my wife, lest** the **men of the** ʳⁱ**place** ˡ**kill** ⁷**him**⁰ **on** account of **Rebecca, for she** was of **good appearance.** 8 + **It** ˡ**came** to **be,** ᵗ**when he** ›**had been there** ¯**long** ˙**days,** +**that Abimelech king of** the **Philistines was gazing** out **through** ˙his **window, and behold,** + **he** ˡ**saw Isaac caressing** `**his wife Rebecca.** 9 +**So Abimelech** ˡ**called** › **Isaac and** ˡ**said** ⁷**to him**⁰**: Behold, she** is ʸ**surely your wife; and how** could **you say, She** is **my sister?** + **Isaac** ˡˢᵃ**replied to him:** ᵗ**Because I** ˡˢᵃ**thought, otherwise I might die on her** account. 10 +**Then Abimelech** ˡ**said: What** is **this** that **you have done to us? Quite easily** some**one of** ⁷**my**⁰ **people** might **have lain** `with **your wife, and** so **you would have brought guilt** up**on us!** 11 **Abimelech**

+then [m]**gave** [l]**instructions** `to **all** [7]**his**[n] **people,** › **saying**–**:** ·Whoever **touches**[l] [i] ·**this man** +**or** [i] **his wife shall be** [c]**put** to **death,** yea **death**–**.**

12 + **Isaac** [l]**sowed in** ·**that land and** [l]**found** [7]the **barley** yield[cs] **in** ·**that year** to be a **hundred**fold**,** +**for Yahweh was blessing him.** 13 +**Thus the man** became [l]**great and** [l]**went** on [go]**getting**– **greater until** [t] **he** became **very great.** 14 + **It** [l]**came** to **pass** when **he** ›**had** a **stock of flocks** + a **stock of herds and many servants,** +**that** the **Philistines were** [l]**envious** `of **him.** 15 +**As** for **all the wells which his father's servants had delved in** the **days of his father Abraham,** the **Philistines had obstructed them and** had [l]**filled them** with **soil.** 16 **Abimelech** +**then** [l]**said to Isaac: Go** away **from our people, for you are very** much **stauncher** [f]**than we** are**.**

17 +**So Isaac** [l]**went** away **from there and** [l]**encamped in** the **wadi of Gerar and** [l]**dwelt there.** 18 + **Isaac** [l]**again** + [l]**delved** `**the water wells which** [7]**the servants**[n] **of his father Abraham had delved;** +**but** the **Philistines** had [l]**obstructed them after** the **death of Abraham. And he called their names** [as]**by** the same **names** [w]**that his father had called** › **them.** 19 +**When Isaac's servants** [l]**delved in** the **wadi** [7]**of Gerar**[0]**,** + **they** [l]**found there** a **well of living water.** 20 +**But** the **shepherds**[l] **of Gerar** [l]**contended with Isaac's shepherds**[l]**,** › **saying**–**: Ours** is **the water.** +**So he** [l]**called** the **name of the well Esek, for they had annoyed** [w] **him** there. 21 [7]+**When Isaac** [l]**shifted from there**[0] **and they** [l]**delved another well,** + **they** [l]**contended** [mr]**again over it.** +**So he** [l]**called its name Sitnah.** 22 +**When he** [l]**shifted from there and** [M]**they**[nc] [l]**delved another well,** + **they** did **not contend over it.** +**So he** [l]**called its name Rehoboth and** [l]**said:** [t]**Because now Yahweh has** [c]**given** › **us wide** spaces**, and we will be fruitful in** the **land.**

23 + **From there he** went [l]**up** to **Beer-sheba.** 24 + [i] ·**That night Yahweh** [l]**appeared to him and** [l]**said: I** am the **Elohim of your father Abraham; do not** [l]**fear, for I** am `with **you!** + **I will bless you and increase** `**your seed** [t]**for** the [p]**sake**

of My servant Abraham. 25 **And he** [l]**built** an **altar there and** [l]**called** [i]**on** the **name of Yahweh.** +**Then he** [l]**pitched his tent there, and Isaac's servants** [l]**dug** a **well there.**

26 +**As** for **Abimelech, he** [go]**came to him from Gerar** +**with Ahuzzath his associate and Phicol** the **chief of his** military **host.** 27 +**So Isaac** [l]**said to them:** For **what reason have you come to me,** +**since you´ hate** `**me and** [l]**sent me** away **from** `**you?** 28 + **They** [l][sa]**replied: We have seen,** yea **seen**–**, that Yahweh** [b]**is with you. And we** [l]**said, Let** [pr]**there** [b]**be** an oath of **imprecation between our** two sides**, between us and** [bt] **you.** + **Let us contract** a **covenant with you,** 29 that **you shall assuredly do** [wi] **us no evil,** + **just as we have not touched you,** + **just as we have done** [wi] **you but good and** [lm]**let you go in peace. You** are **now** the **blessed**[l] **of Yahweh.**

30 +**So he** [l][d]**made** a **feast for them, and they** [l]**ate and** [l]**drank.** 31 + **They** [c]**rose** [l]**early in** the **morning and** [l]**swore** an oath **to each** [his] **other.** +**Then Isaac** [l][m]**let them go, and they** [l]**went from** `**him in peace.** 32 + **It** [l]**came** to **pass** [i] ·**that** same **day** +**that Isaac's servants** [l]**came and** [l]**told** › **him concerning the well** [w]**that they had delved, and they** [l]**said to him: We have found water.** 33 +**So he** [l]**called** `**it Shebah; therefore** the **name of the city** is **Beer-sheba until** ·**this** ·**day.**

34 + **Esau** [l][b]**was forty years old** +**when he** [l]**took** as **wife** `**Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and** also **Basemath daughter of Elon the** [7]**Hivite**~[nc]**. And they** [l][b]**gave rise** to an **embitterment of spirit for Isaac and Rebecca.**

SEED LIKE THE STARS

YAHWEH told Abraham that his seed would be as uncountable as the *soil* of the *land* (Gen.13:16), the *sand* of the *sea* (22:17), and as the *stars* of the *heavens* (15:5; 22:17). This latter figure of speech is used by Yahweh in renewing the promise to Isaac (Gen.26:4).

Two contrasting spheres, *spirit* and *flesh, faith* and *works, celestial* and *terrestrial,* operate in the life of Abram-Abraham. When applied to his descendants in figurative language, one is likened to the scintillating stars, high above our heads, the other to the soil and seaside sand, found beneath our feet. These should help us to realize the vast advantage of faith over flesh. Stars shed light into the prevailing darkness, but soil and sand make heavy walking for our feet. In general, the stars are Abram's sons by *faith* as we read, "those of *faith, these* are," not only the *seed,* but the "*sons* of Abraham" (Gal.3:7).

Abra[ha]m's seed is not confined to the physical offspring of Israel. These are the soil and sand seed. All *believers* today are his *sons,* who can claim him as their spiritual father. In our case the figure of the stars is especially apt, for we are blessed with every *spiritual* blessing among the *celestials*. Here we have one of the early intimations of the present secret administration, and the celestial destiny of a selection out of mankind, not based upon a physical relationship, but on a spiritual bond.

THE NEGEB

The patriarchs spent most of their lives in what is called the Negeb (*ngb*). The AV renders it south, south country, south side, southward. It is not the usual word for *south,* but indicates a *region*, not merely a direction. As the stem *gb* denotes ARCH, or *rim,*, and the Negeb seems to be the low country south of the semi-circle of mountain country, the name may be understood as signifying "[south]-rim."

THE SECOND FAMINE

Until lately the Negeb was considered practically desert. There are no streams worth mentioning, except, perhaps, in the rainy season, only dry "wadis," as the Arabs call them, or *arroyos* in Spanish, as in Southern California. We have sometimes translated the Hebrew *nchl* "watercourse." However, there seems to be a good supply of underground moisture. That is why the patriarchs dug so many wells there. The soil seems to be fertile, so far as I could tell. Indeed, Isaac raised a fine crop of barley there a little later (26:12). But when the seasonal rains fail, there is a famine. One came in the days of Abraham, and he went to Egypt. One came in Isaac's time, but he is warned not to go to Egypt. So Isaac went down the wadi to Gerar, not far from its mouth. Much water flows in the sand below the surface.

Abraham had made a covenant with Abimelech at Beer-sheba acknowledging Abraham's ownership of the well at that place. Nevertheless the Philistines had filled up the other wells which Abraham had dug. This time they seized this well also. So Isaac merely gives them an appropriate name. One he called Esek (Annoyance) and the other Sitnah (ADVERSE). In this way he seems to have been driven up the wadi Gerar toward Beer-sheba. Finally, however, Isaac, with his servants, delve a well which was not contested, so Isaac called it Rehoboth (WIDE-spaces). This was some distance from his headquarters, so he had plenty of elbow room. Thence he returned to his headquarters at Beer-sheba.

PROMISES AND ALTAR

Abram was told to walk in the land, its length and its width (Gen.13:17). But after Isaac's return from Gerar, the patriarchs seem to have made Beer-sheba their headquarters (Gen.26:23). There Yahweh appeared to Isaac and renewed the blessing of Abraham. So there he built an altar and called on the Name of Yahweh. This implied a certain permanence, which was further confirmed by the digging of the well, which has remained to this day. This is significant. The enemies of Israel have caused them much

unrest. Abimelech's oath has been broken many times in its history, but the promise of Yahweh remains, and will be fulfilled in due time. Of this Beer-sheba is the permanent symbol to this day.

WIVES OF ESAU

When Isaac was forty years old, Abraham would not allow a marriage with the Canaanites who lived near his dwelling place, because they were under a curse (Gen. 9:24). Now that Esau was forty he took two wives from the accursed line of Canaan. Hence, a son of Shem, the blessed, links up with daughters of Canaan, the accursed. The effect was that the spirits of Isaac and Rebecca were embittered by them. But it kept Jacob from such a forbidden union. A. E. Knoch

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A PSALM OF DAVID

22 + **David** [lsp]**addressed** `the **words of** ˙**this** ˙**song to Yahweh** [i]**on** the **day Yahweh rescued** `**him from** the **palm of all his enemies**[l] **and from** the **palm of Saul.** 2 + **He** [l]**said:**

O **Yahweh! my Crag,**
+ **My Fastness,** + **my Deliverance**[l] **for me!**
3 [7]**My**[0] **Elohim, my Rock! I** take [l]**refuge in Him,**
My Shield and the **Horn of my salvation!**
My Impregnable Retreat **and my Haven!**
My Saviour[l]**, You** Who **are saving me from violence!**
4 The One **being praised! I** [l]**call** on **Yahweh,**
And I am being saved from my enemies[l]**.**
5 **For** the [M]**cables~**[c] **of death have enveloped me,**
[7]**And**[cs] the **torrents of decadence, they** [l]**frighten me.**
6 The **cables of** the **unseen, they surround me;**
The **traps of death have confronted me.**
7 **In my distress I** [l]**called** on **Yahweh,**
And to my Elohim I [7][l]**implored~**[cs]**.**
+ **From His temple He** [l]**heard my voice,**
And my imploring [M]**before Him,**
it [l]**came**[c] [i]**to His ears.**
8 +**Then the earth** [l]**reeled and** [l]**quaked.**
[7]**And**[cs] the **foundations of the** [M]**mountains~**[c]**,**
they were [l]**disturbed,**
And they [l]**reeled, for His** anger grew ⁻**hot.**
9 **Smoke ascended** [i]**from His nostril**s,
And fire that [l]**devours, from His mouth;**
Flashing **embers blazed forth from Him.**
10 + **He** [l]**stretched out** the **heavens and** [l]**descended,**
And murkiness was **beneath His feet.**

11 + **He** |**rode on** a **cherub and** |**flew;**
+**So He** M|**swooped** down~c **on** the **wings of** the **wind.**
12 + **He** |**set darkness round about Him;**
7**His booth**~cs was the 7**darkness**~c **of waters,**
the **thick** cloud**s of** the **skies.**
13 f**Out** of the **brightness** in **front of Him**
Flashing **embers of fire blazed forth.**
14 7+**Then**c **Yahweh** |**thundered from** the **heavens,**
And the **Supreme, He** |**gave** forth **His voice.**
15 + **He** |**sent** off His **arrows,**
+**with** which **He** |**scattered them,**
7**And He multiplied**0 bolts of **lightning**
+**with** which **He** |**discomfited them.**
16 +**So** the **channels of** M**water**~c **were** made to |**appear,**
M**And**c the **foundations of** the **habitance**
were |**revealed,**
7f**By Your**~cs **rebuke,** O **Yahweh,**
f**By** the **breath of** the **wind of ~Your~ nostril**s.
17 **He** |**sent from** the **height; He** |**took me;**
He |**removed me from many waters;**
18 **He** |**rescued me from my strong enemy**|
7**And**cs **from** those **hating me;**
For they were tougher f**than I.**
19 **They** |**confronted me in** the **day of my calamity,**
+**Yet Yahweh** |**became my Stay.**
20 + **He** c**brought** `**me** |**forth** in**to** a **wide** place;
He |**liberated me, for He has delighted in me.**
21 **Yahweh** |**requited me according** to **my righteousness;**
According to the **purity of my hands**
He |**recompensed** › **me.**
22 **For I have kept** the **ways of Yahweh,**
And I have not been wicked by turning **from**
my Elohim.
23 **For all His judgments** have been **in front of me,**
And I have **not** |**put away His statutes from** M**me**~s**.**

24 + **I** have |**become flawless** 7wi**before**~cs **Him;**
+ **Let me** |**keep** my**self from my depravity.**
25 + **Yahweh** |**recompensed** › **me**
according to **my righteousness,**
According to **my purity in front of His eyes.**
26 **With** the **benign** one **You** show Your**self** |**benign,**
7**And**cs **with** a **flawless master You** show Your**self**
|**flawless.**
27 **With** the **purified**| one **You** show Your**self** |**pure,**
+**But with** the **perverse** one **You** show Your**self** |**cunning.**
28 7**For You**~c **You**rself **shall save** the **humbled people,**
+**But You shall abase** those whose 7**eyes**~c are **exalted**|**.**
29 i**Indeed You** M**You**rself **shall light** ups **my lamp,**
O **Yahweh;**
M**My Elohim**~s**, He shall brighten my darkness,**
30 So **that** i**by You I may run** over a ~stone **dike~,**
M**And**s i**by my Elohim I may leap** a **barricade.**
31 **The** One, **El, His way** is **flawless;**
The sa**word of Yahweh** is **refined**|**;**
He is a **Shield to all** who are tak**ing refuge in Him.**
32 **For** is there **any ~Eloah~ apart from Yahweh?**
And is there **any Rock apart from our Elohim?**
33 He is **the** One, **El,** 7**the** One **belting me**~Qc with **valor,**
And He |g**spreads flawlessness** on **my way,**
34 The One **poising my feet like hinds',**
And on my high-places He causes me to |**stand.**
35 He is the One **teaching my hands for** the **battle,**
So +**that my arms** may **manage** a **bow of bronze.**
36 + **You** |**gave to me** the **shield of Your salvation;**
And Your Q**help~** c**made me** |mn**great.**
37 **You** |**widened my steps beneath me,**
So +**that my limbs have not tottered.**
38 **I** |**pursued my enemies**| **and** |**exterminated them,**
And I did **not** |**return until they** were all**finished**–**.**
39 + **I** |all**finished them and I** |**transfixed them,**

And they were **not** able to ˡ**rise.**
+ **They** ˡ**fell beneath my feet.**
40 + **You** ˡ**belted me** with **valor for** the **battle;**
You ˡ**bowed beneath me** those **rising** against **me.**
41 +**As** for **my enemies**ˡ**, You** ˡ**gave to me** the **scruff**
of their necks,
And those **hating me, I** ˡ**effaced them.**
42 **They** 7ˡ**implored~**ˢ**,** +**yet** there **was no salvation**ˡ**;**
They called **to Yahweh,**
+**yet He would not answer them.**
43 + **I** reduced **them** to ˡ**powder like** the **soil of** the **earth;**
Like the **mud of** the **streets I** ˡ**pulverized them;**
I ˡ**stamped** on **them.**
44 + **You** ˡ**delivered me from** the **disputes of my people;**
You ᴹˡ**placed~ me** ›**at** the **head of** the **nations.**
A **people I had not known, they** ˡ**serve me;**
45 The **sons of** the **foreigner, they** ˡ**cower** ›**before me;**
›**As** soon as the **ear** is **hearing~ they** ˡ**hearken to me.**
46 The **sons of** the **foreigner, they** ˡ**disintegrate,**
And they come ᴹˡ**cringing~ from their enclosures.**
47 **Alive** is **Yahweh, and being blessed** is **my Rock;**
+ **Let** the **Elohim of** the **rock of my salvation**
be exalted.
48 He is **the** One, **El,**
ʿWho is ᵍ**rendering vengeance for me,**
And the One ᶜ**bringing down** the **peoples under me,**
49 The One ᶜ**bringing me forth from my enemies**ˡ**.**
+ **From** those **rising** against **me** have **you** ˡ**exalted me;**
From the **man of violence** have **You** ˡ**rescued me.**
50 **Therefore, I shall acclaim You** ⁱ**among** the **nations,**
O **Yahweh,**
And to Your Name shall I make melody.
51 He is the One **magnifying** the **salvations of His king.**
And ᵈ**showing benignity to His anointed,**
To David, and to his seed ᶠʳ**for** the **eon.**

DAVID'S ROCK

THIS CHAPTER contains Psalm 18 with minor changes. In this psalm David interprets the experiences of his life from his personal point of view. He spent much time as a shepherd and as a fugitive in the wilderness, and on numerous occasions found safety hiding in the rocks or by climbing to some craggy height where he had seen the wild goats look down on a hunter with complacency. God was the Rock.

Commenting on Psalm 18, Donald G. Hayter wrote, "David's first place of refuge in his flight from Saul was a cave in a rock at Adullam. He returned also to it later for safety (2 Sam.23:13). For him the rock was a stronghold and a place of security where he was exalted above his enemies. In the rock he saw an ideal picture of his Lord. Not only was it a place of concealment, but there was water there (Psa.78:15) and even honey (Psa.81:16). In the rocks were clefts, fissures and caves, providing protection. The Lord is the Rock of our salvation."[1]

HE HEARD MY VOICE

David revelled in the truth that God heard his prayers. Even from the holy courts of His heavenly temple, David's Elohim heard his cries for help and came to his rescue with earthshaking power and dreadful might that dumbfounded David's enemies. With Yahweh on his side, or, rather, he on Yahweh's side, it mattered not that David's enemies were larger and stronger than he. What mattered was that David loved and honored God, and from the bottom of his heart he was devoted to God. His stumblings along the way just served to remind him that God was his first and every need. He was the One, El, Who belted him with valor and caused him to stand (2 Sam.22:33,34).

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.65, pp.40,41.

David had an exceptional ability in trials and under stress to approach God, looking at God and praising Him, rather than focusing on his problem. His descriptions do not suggest that the laws of nature were repeatedly suspended, but rather he was enabled to visualize God delivering him through whatever means were employed. He saw God working in and through everything that happened. David saw what others did not see. His confidence in God is proven and emphasized by what some might dismiss as poetic exaggeration. His inspired expressions may be figurative, but the inescapable truth is that he saw and knew God as his Deliverer.

It was God Who delivered him from trouble. It was God Who blessed and strengthened him and made him secure. It was God Who prepared for David's future, bringing him to peace and prosperity and promising to establish his house in the generations to follow.

J. Phillip Scranton

WITH CHRIST IN VIEW

In the *preceding psalm,* as in many others, the words of David have the Lord Jesus Christ in view. (Note Paul's use of 2 Samuel 22:50 in Romans 15:9 in reference to Christ.) David spoke of himself, but he spoke as led by the spirit of Christ in him (*cf* 1 Peter 1:11; 2 Sam.23:2). Consequently, David's feelings and thoughts foreshadowed those of the Lord in His sufferings under the attacks of His enemies and even more pointedly in the rescue and triumph which God would provide for Him.

What must our Lord have felt as He fed on such words as these in "the days of His flesh," when He was "offering both petitions and supplications with strong clamor and tears to Him Who is able to save Him out of death" (Heb.5:7)! The psalm speaks of facing "violence" (v.3) and being confronted by "the traps of death" (v.6) in the day of His calamity (v.19). But with even greater detail it reflects our Lord's assurance in God as the Horn of His salvation, His Rock and Stay, Who will brighten His darkness with salvation over His strong enemy (*cf* verses 2-4, 18,19,29). D.H.H.

PERCEPTION AND REALITY

Question:

Even among believers in Christ who believe that, to accord with God's will to save all (1 Tim.2:4) that all will eventually be saved, there is great diversity of opinion concerning nearly every other teaching. Is the only unity, then, common to our faith that, in the end, all will finally be saved?

Also, I have recently been severely criticized by certain fellow believers, ones with whom, in fact, I share much common faith, even though we differ in various particulars, especially as to the authoritarian claims they make concerning their own ministry, ones which entail their teachings necessarily being correct. While I reject their claims here, I do not reject their place as members of the body of Christ. Yet they have gone so far as to say that I am not saved, that I am serving an idol, and the like (see their letter to me, enclosed).

Please be so kind as to help me with these concerns.

Answer:

YOU ASKED, in relation to your mutual faith with others who also acknowledge God as the Saviour of all mankind yet disagree with you on other subjects, "Is the only unity, then, common to our faith that, in the end, all will finally be saved?"

Those who recognize God according to His glorious title as the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10), are agreed that in order for a title to be declarative of who one is, that same title must be reflective of what one does, else one cannot actually be such a one as his title declares him to be.

Yet even so, concurrence of faith among such believers as to the scope of salvation, is no assurance of concurrence of understanding among these same believers concerning other scriptural themes. As you noted, even among those believers in Christ who rejoice that God will become All in all (1 Cor.15:28), beyond their foundational faith that Christ died for their sins according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures (1 Cor. 15:3,4), there is indeed great diversity of opinion on ever so many other subjects.

Therefore, yes, among those sharing common faith in God as the Saviour of all mankind, there may be few other particulars of interpretation on general doctrines concerning which all such believers enjoy common agreement.

However, even though they embrace some type of partialist (as opposed to universalist) view concerning salvation, there are others who are nevertheless genuine believers since they genuinely believe in Christ. Among these believers as well there is also a wide diversity of opinion, except on this fundamental theme of the death and resurrection of their Saviour, Who died for their sins.

It is God Who enlightens, and grants understanding. Even as Paul declares concerning the believer's faith: "I plant, Apollos irrigates, but God makes it grow up . . . . God's farm, God's building, are you" (1 Cor.3:6-9). And, "The entire body . . . *is* growing in the growth of God" (Col.2:19).

In some ways, not only as concerns others but as concerns ourselves as well, we would certainly like for "the growth of God" to be different than it is. But then we would also like not to get old and die, not to experience pain and suffering, never to be discouraged or unhappy—in a word we would like to never have occasion to have any need for patience and endurance.

Surely we are unwise in all of this, including in our excessive worries over the fact that both our friends and associates in faith in particular and we ourselves just as surely are not yet nearly as mature in Christ as we ought to be, ideally speaking. Yet if we are all growing in the growth of God, and it is God Who makes our faith grow up, it being the case that, "For everything there is a stated time, and a season for every event under the heavens" (Ecc.3:1), then, as to God's purpose, all is well with the world, including in all ways in which the world, considered in itself, is ever so far from well. Let us, then, enter into this truth, and in so doing, enter as well into *the peace of God:* ". . . the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind . . . [the peace of God that] shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:7).

Now, concerning your other area of concern, in which you stated that you had recently been severely criticized by certain fellow believers, ones who presented themselves to you as authorities, in such a way even as to claim that you were necessarily wrong and they were necessarily right, I can only say that it is sad to hear of these exceedingly critical and negative attitudes. Because of the acridity and extreme severity of their tone, I will herein only cite in briefest form from their writing you shared with me, and without any personal reference.

For all that I have seen of various most ungracious persons over the years, I do not think that I have ever seen the equal in sheer self-confident scornfulness toward others of that exhibited in these present vituperations of your detractors. "Biting and devouring" (Gal.5:15) of one another, even as adverse "judging" of one another (Rom.14:4,10,13,22), is always wrong; but when such injurious acts are engaged in repeatedly and to such a great degree—and even then without shame even as acknowledgement of what one is doing—the consequences of such acts are bound to be very injurious. That these folks of whom you speak affirm

the eventual salvation of all makes their, as you say, "Eternal torment-like spirit" toward those who differ with them all the more regrettable.

Declaring to you even that "you are not saved," that "you are serving an idol, not God, [hence that] you need to repent," besides saying that another man whom they also criticize "does not know the Lord either," and that still another "was not a genuine servant of God," while all the while assertively equating with "the truth" what can only be their own opinions and interpretations, is truly a dangerous and deleterious mixture.

Our greatest need, surely, is for a spirit of humility, gentleness, meekness, kindness, and graciousness. Then, as a complement to such nobility of heart, just as it would be very helpful for us all to be more familiar with various matters of language, it would be at least as helpful as well for us to have a good, working knowledge of the elements of critical thinking, which includes an awareness of the constituent elements of fallacious argumentation.

Foundational to critical thinking is the distinction between epistemology and ontology.

The philosophical term "epistemology" speaks of the study of the nature of knowledge. "Knowledge" is "that which is perceived with the mind" (see Keyword Concordance entry "know," p.169: "[to] perceive with the mind"). One's own personal epistemology, then, is simply one's own theory of knowledge, which explicates one's own opinions and conclusions.

The philosophical term "ontology" (which is the study of the nature of being), however, speaks not of what we perceive, but of that which actually exists, or is constitutive of reality.

One's epistemology speaks simply of one's *perceptions* (i.e., conceptions) as to what is true, correct, or real; it is simply incorrect to equate or identify it with what *is* true,

correct, or real. Whether explicit or implicit, in any human statement of what is true, one should understand that what is declared to be so is not necessarily so, but is so simply according to a certain person's knowledge or perception of things. Our knowledge and understanding not only of the Scriptures but of anything else as well is just that: it is our knowledge and understanding *of* reality (as in the expressions, "to the best of my knowledge," and "according to my understanding"), not necessarily reality itself.

Yet nothing is more common than for people to speak of what they "know" to be true (based simply on their confidence in its correctness) as being that which *is*—in actual reality—true. They *perceive* something to be so; ergo, it *is* so! The ubiquity of such faulty thinking seems amazing, until we consider that such irrationality is simply native to the flesh. It is surely a gracious gift indeed to enjoy some clarity on this point, for left to ourselves, we would be no different than anyone else, whether concerning this failing or any other.

As concerns our faith, by God's grace, we can become *settled and unmovable* (1 Cor.15:58) as to what the Scripture actually says, but in this only to the degree that we can intelligently discriminate between (1) what the Scripture says, and (2) what we interpret as being constitutive of its proper sense, in which it should be understood. Even this can hardly be gained without sufficient ability, substantively, to discern between a correct and incorrect translation of any certain scriptural declaration.

And, also by God's grace, we can become *settled and unmovable* (not in a stubborn sense, but in a sense of allegiance to truth) as even concerns the Scripture's interpretative meaning (the sense in which it should be understood) as well, yet only to the degree that God enlightens and otherwise enables us not only to engage in critical thinking concerning the true sense of His Word, but to do

so faithfully and well. Thus, we may become settled and unmovable *in the knowledge and understanding which God has granted us.*

What we must not do, however, is equate what we believe to be our God-given knowledge and understanding with ontological reality. Now the person who does not like this fact and does not wish to adjust his thinking to accord with it, will say (effectually at least): "Well, if that is true, then I cannot, warrantedly, be absolutely certain, beyond any doubt, about anything. Yet I abhor any such thought and find it totally unacceptable; therefore, I reject it." Of course my rejoinder here is simply that it is not a question of what any certain person may abhor or not abhor, find acceptable or unacceptable, but of what is true, and demonstrably so, to all who are able to make the distinction between what we perceive to exist and what actually exists.

I make mention of all of this in the context of these severe charges which certain persons have rendered against you, as well as against various others, in the hopes that we ourselves at least—let others do what they will—will in any case refrain from being so dogmatic and cocksure concerning what are necessarily, at best, only our considered judgments and careful opinions.

What a travesty this situation is: folks who seem quite unaware of what they are actually doing in this regard, speaking as if their word were tantamount to God's Word, and then, beyond this, carrying on in such an offensive and unhelpful way. It simply does not follow from the fact that "the Bible says" a certain thing (even on the assumption that the original Scripture also says that same thing), that our reasonings concerning and conclusions therefrom are correct. That is, it simply does not follow that the two may be equated, that one is the equivalent of the other.

We are continually interpreting Scripture, even when we may not realize that we are doing so, and perhaps especially when, in our naiveté, we confidently suppose that we are *not* doing so. It is a matter of considerable perspicacity and much effort to distinguish declaration from interpretation, to be able to discriminate between the two; and, even if we should truly possess the former, this is no guarantee that our ratiocinations will lead us faithfully into possession of the latter.

Among humans, so-called "philosophical certainty" (in the sense of being constitutive of that which, beyond question, is necessarily correct) is something that any philosopher worth his salt knows cannot be had. Any believer, then, who would also be worth his salt, needs to be equally aware of this, that is, of the vital distinction between perception and reality.

The "problem of uncertainty," like "the problem of evil," need not actually be a problem—surely not in any sense unmitigable. For believers at least, it does not lead—"inexorably" or otherwise—either to relativism or to nihilism (the latter term refers to the notion not only that, at present, nothing can be known to a "philosophical certainty," but that this will always be so and that therefore all values are baseless, including religious and moral values). Any abiding unsatisfactoriness here that we ourselves may feel at present, may be greatly and perhaps even wholly relieved through our heartfelt engagement in, confidence in and reliance upon the living God, Who is our Friend and our Father, Who loves us with a vast love, and of Whom it is written: "all My counsel I will do." Ultimately speaking, then, our confidence is not in our understanding of Scripture (even in its most precious particulars), but in the God of Scripture, Who is love, and Who will exercise judgment and do right.

It is not that, as concerns our faith, we may have no certainty of any kind, but only that, in the nature of things, we cannot have a certain kind of certainty, the certainty that no man is warranted in having, the conceited (or at

least unattainable-desire) certainty that he simply *is* right (hence, that he cannot be mistaken), which is a certainty we do well not to seek.

As believers, we can have and do have a certain certainty; it is the certainty of *conviction,* which is to say the certainty of faith. And in this we are growing in *confidence,* in *trust* in the word of the living God. In fact, it is this proper certainty which is the essential idea of the word "certainty" itself in its Latin root from which it is derived (*certus,* from *cernere,* "to determine"). Properly, then, that of which we are "certain" is that which we have determined (i.e., "settled") to be so. The beyond-all-doubt type of certainty, however, that men may want even today (yet would do well not to want, while we are still walking by faith, not by literal, tangible perception) is simply a windmill of the mind, an unachieveable *desiderata.*

We must humbly acknowledge that even those writings that we deem our best and most faithful efforts are ones which still we wish were better. On rare occasions, due to some hindrance or inadvertency of circumstance, a statement may have appeared within our pages which was not in accord even with our own findings, which findings themselves, even at their best, are never infallible.

Even as with all other human undertakings to teach God's Word, the same is true in our own case, through our own publication. *Unsearchable Riches* magazine is not the Sacred Scriptures; nor is any other human publication the Sacred Scriptures.

As concerns our own personal faith and as concerns our publication *Unsearchable Riches* as well, we can only say that we are thankful for the faith God has given us and for the little place of service He has allowed us to be in. We trust that our readers will find much that is good in our writings over the years, including in the articles found in our present issue. May God bless the good, to the glory of His Name. J.R.C.

CONSCIENCE AND THE EVANGEL

BEFORE Adam and Eve sinned they may not have been consciously aware of right and wrong, but once they sinned their conscience was suddenly awakened: "Then the eyes of both of them were unclosed, and they realized that they were naked" (Gen.3:7).

Although "conscience" is never mentioned in the Old Testament, the idea of conscience is there. The first to refer specifically to conscience was the apostle Paul. Of the thirty-two times conscience appears in the New Testament, he mentions it twenty-two times. The conscience can be *weak* and thus *polluted* (1 Cor.8:7,12) and *defiled* (Titus 1:15). One can have "a *good* conscience" (1 Tim.1:5,19; 1 Peter 3:16,21), as well as have a *clear* conscience (1 Tim.3:9; 2 Tim.1:3). It is also possible that peoples' consciences can be *cauterized* (1 Tim.4:2). One's conscience can be *cleansed* (Heb.9:14) and be figuratively *wicked* (Heb.10:22). One can also possess an *ideal* conscience (Heb.13:18).

The conscience is that which recognizes what is right. However weak or cauterized, it will be called upon to testify concerning mankind in the day when God will be judging the hidden things of humanity according to Paul's evangel, through Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.2:15,16).

CONSCIENCE IS AGAINST ETERNAL TORMENT

Conscience in an ideal state will repudiate the doctrine of eternal torment. Many ministers who teach eternal torment, admit that they wish it were not so. Whether consciously or not, when they say such things they are crit-

icizing God as to what they think His will is for mankind. Even though they believe everlasting woe is taught in the Scriptures and they may have been inculcated with this since youth, they seem to be revolted by this very teaching. Their conscience cannot stand together with it. That which such ministers are propagating does not commend itself to their consciences, nor can it commend itself to any man's conscience, since the basic nature of conscience is that it sides with what is perceived as good.

THE EVANGEL

Paul's evangel commended itself to every man's conscience:

"Therefore, having this dispensation, according as we were shown mercy, we are not despondent. But we spurn the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor yet adulterating *the word of God,* but, by manifestation of *the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience* in God's sight.

"Now if *our evangel* is covered, also, it is covered in those who are perishing, in whom the god of this eon blinds the apprehensions of the unbelieving so that the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God, does not irradiate them" (2 Cor.4:1-4). Here Paul sandwiches his reference to conscience between "the word of God," "the truth" and "our evangel."

Albert Barnes wrote concerning the common teaching on hell, "I have never seen a particle of light thrown on these subjects that has given a moment's ease to my tortured mind; nor have I an explanation to offer, or a thought to suggest which would be of relief to you. I trust other men—they profess to do—understand this better than I do; and that they have not the anguish of spirit which I have; but I confess when I look on a world of sinners and of sufferers; upon death-beds and graveyards; upon the

world of woe, filled with hosts to suffer forever; when I see my friends, my parents, my family, my people, my fellow citizens; when I look upon a whole race, all involved in this sin and danger; and when I see the great mass of them wholly unconcerned; and when I feel that God only can save them, and yet He does not do it, I am struck dumb. It is all dark, dark, dark, to my soul, and I cannot disguise it."[1]

Had this commentator seen just "a particle of light" concerning the evangel as to the outcome of that which is procured for all mankind, this would have commended itself to his conscience and would have assuaged his tortured mind. "God . . . wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth . . . . Christ Jesus is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all" (1 Tim.2:4,6).

Please take special note that Barnes could not conscientiously side with what he perceived God was doing with humanity. His conscience was working very well, yet he makes note of those who had no "anguish of spirit" over this matter. He also wrote in the same book: "These and kindred difficulties meet the mind. They meet us when we endeavor to urge our fellow sinners to be reconciled to God, and to put confidence in Him. On this ground they hesitate. These are real, not imaginary difficulties." He is correct. Anyone with a conscience finds it difficult to be at peace with and put trust in a God Who eternally tortures certain of His creatures.

Yet, when people see, according to Paul's evangel that God's judgment is *just* (Rom.2:5), that Christ's obedience more than offsets Adam's disobedience (Rom.5:18,19), and that God has a wonderful goal to be All in all of humanity (1 Cor.15:28), how can this not commend itself to every man's conscience? The true evangel allows one to "put confidence in Him" and "to be reconciled to God."

1. Albert Barnes: PRACTICAL SERMONS, pp. 123-125.

When eternal torment is taught our conscience must conclude:

God's love is brought in question,
God's justice is brought in question,
God's glory is brought in question,
Christ's sacrifice is brought in question,
God and Christ seem to be fiends rather than friends.

COMMENDING TO OUR CONSCIENCE

Paul said he and his fellow evangelists were "by manifestation of the truth, commending themselves to every man's conscience in God's sight" (2 Cor.4:2). Christians and non-Christians need to have the truth manifested and commended to their conscience.

The elements of the Greek word *sunistêmi* are TOGETHER-STAND. It is translated as "commend, have cohesion, cohere, stand together" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.54). Paul, and those with him were, by manifestation of the truth, *commending* themselves to every man's conscience. Every man's conscience, when presented with the true evangel of the glory of Christ, will stand together with it. A person may conscientiously say, "That sounds right to me." However, due to the flesh or the god of this eon blinding their apprehensions (*cf* 2 Cor.4:4), they may say they have a hard time believing it.

George L. Rogers wrote this concerning conscience: "It is the supreme faculty in man, for however bewildered his intellect, conscience, if allowed to speak, always declares for right as against wrong. It is the ally of the preacher of righteousness and truth. Paul appealed for its support in his advocacy of the truth (2 Cor.4:2). As faith lays hold of Christ, so conscience lays hold of the divine will so far as revealed, legislating and judging accordingly."[2]

2. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.20, pp. 220,221.

CONSCIENCE ALLIED WITH FAITH

The conscience is a strong ally of faith. Often the apostle Paul would join the two in the same breath. For instance:

"Now the consummation of the charge is love out of a clean heart and a good *conscience* and unfeigned *faith,* from which some, swerving, were turned aside into vain prating" (1 Tim.1:5).

". . . having *faith* and a good *conscience,* which some, thrusting away, have made shipwreck as to the *faith*" (1 Tim.1:19).

". . . having the secret of the *faith* in a clear *conscience* (1 Tim.3:9).

"Now the spirit is saying explicitly, that in subsequent eras some will be withdrawing from the *faith,* giving heed to deceiving spirits and the teachings of demons, in the hypocrisy of false expressions, their own *conscience* having been cauterized" (1 Tim.4:1,2)

We can see from the above verses that faith, the faith in the evangel, and a good conscience were of utmost importance. In fact, Paul often gave stress to his conscience and that of others in relation to service. Concerning himself he wrote, "Grateful am I to God, to Whom I am offering divine service from my ancestors with a clear conscience" (2 Tim.1:3). However, some, such as Hymeneus and Alexander, were thrusting away a good conscience. Upon thrusting it away they began to calumniate (*cf* 1 Tim.1:19,20). The words, *calumniate* and *blaspheme* are used for the same Greek verb, *blasphêmeō.* We find that the elements of that Greek word in the Keyword Concordance, are HARM-AVER. Calumniate: "To make maliciously false statements about; slander."[3] In a sense, they became rudderless, drifting aimlessly into hazzards unknown, thus making ship-

3. THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY.

wreck as to the faith. The faith became a complete ruin due to thrusting away what used to be a good conscience.

Paul linked conscience to the withdrawal from the faith which would occur in subsequent eras (1 Tim. 4:1,2). Once a person's conscience has been cauterized, the way is open to "giving heed to deceiving spirits and the teachings of demons, in the hypocrisy of false expressions." A doctor may cauterize or seal up a wound or abnormal tissue with a cautery. This is done by means of caustic substances, electric currents, lasers, or very hot or very cold instruments. Cauterization is used to stop heavy bleeding as in the case of amputations. A person's conscience may thus be sealed so that it becomes incapable of recognizing the spirits which deceive and the teachings of demons in the hypocrisy of false expressions.

I remember when I was a young man, camping out and sitting around the fire, I would look intently into the flames and glowing embers and ask my friends just how it is possible that people can go to a place like that for eternity. No one ever had an answer. My conscience was so stirred by the nightmarish scenes conjured up in my mind that I could not rest until I had a good answer. Not until a friend, years later, handed me a Concordant Literal New Testament and some writings from the Concordant Publishing Concern, were my fears put to rest. My conscience exalted at the wonderful truths! It could not side with the doctrine of demons called "eternal torment." I thank God my conscience was not cauterized so that I could not recognize the truth when it was brought before me!

EXPOSING SEVERELY

Paul left Titus in Crete (Titus 1:5) where many, especially those of the Circumcision, were insubordinate, vain praters and imposters (Titus 1:10). Do we avow an acquaintance with God? Do our acts deny what we avow? Are we

abominable? "All, indeed, is clean to the clean, yet to the defiled and unbelieving (un-faithing) nothing is clean, but their mind as well as *conscience* is defiled. They are avowing an acquaintance with God, yet by their acts are denying it, being abominable and stubborn, and disqualified for every good act" (Titus 1:15,16).

We should not look outside the walls of the ecclesia concerning what our apostle wrote to Titus here. Paul told Titus to "be exposing them severely, that they may be sound in the faith" (1:13). Paul's concern was with believers, that they would be without weakness and error in faith. Notice how he brought in the conscience: ". . . their mind as well as conscience is defiled" (v.15). He associated a defiled conscience with those who were unsound in the *faith*, who were in this sense, "un*believing*." (Belief and faith have their origins in the same Greek word *pistis*.) While Paul usually connects conscience with faith, here he connects it with faith in the negative, i.e., "*un*believing."

CONSCIENCE CAN BE INURED

Some of the Corinthians had a problem with believers and their relationship with idol shrines. Others did not seem to have any difficulty at all, conscientiously, lying down in idol shrines and eating idol sacrifices, because they had the knowledge that an idol is nothing and there really is only one God, the Father and one Lord, Jesus Christ (1 Cor.8:4,6,7). The problem was that there were new converts who were weak in the faith. They might be walking past an idol shrine and see another believer from their ecclesia lying down and eating the food sacrificed to the idols. Their conscience, already weak, would take a severe beating (1 Cor.8:12). The weak might then become inured or accustomed to the eating of the idol sacrifices once again (v.10), which could even lead them back to idol worship. At the very least there was a danger of being stumbled in the faith.

Word must have gotten back to Paul concerning this dilemma, and so Paul wrote to them to correct this situation (*cf* 1 Cor.8:1-13). Hence he entreated those who were mature: "Now beware lest somehow *this right of yours* may become a stumbling block to the weak. For if anyone should be seeing you, who has knowledge [that there really is only one God and one Lord], lying down in an idol's shrine, *will not the conscience of him who is weak be inured* to the eating of the idol sacrifices? For the weak one is perishing also by your knowledge; the brother because of whom Christ died. Now in thus sinning against brethren, and *beating their weak conscience,* you are sinning against Christ. Wherefore, if food is snaring my brother, I may under no circumstances be eating meat for the eon, lest I should be snaring my brother" (1 Cor.8:9-12). Under grace, believers have *rights* of freedom not allowed those believers who were under the law. However, Paul believed it is much better to think of the weak ones and not exercise those rights which might cause them to falter in growth and maturity and might beat their weak conscience.

Believing the evangel and having a good conscience was important to the apostle Paul. It should be important to us as well. How happy are those whose consciences stand together with what they believe. Though we may fail often, let us, by God's grace, run the race that is set before us and lawfully obtain the incorruptible wreath.

May we hold to the faith with a good and clear conscience, commending ourselves and the truth we proclaim to every man's conscience. Let us pray that our "love may be superabounding still more and more in realization and all sensibility, for [us] to be testing what things are of consequence, that [we] may be sincere and no stumbling block for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that is through Jesus Christ for the glory and laud of God" (Col.1:9-11).

Tony Nungesser

WISDOM FROM ABOVE

THERE is a wisdom hidden in God and revealed through His Word to those who dig for it like buried treasure, and its purpose is salvation. It is the wisdom found in the evangel of God.

1. THE SCRIPTURES ARE ABLE TO MAKE YOU WISE

Wisdom is defined in the Keyword Concordance (p.329) as "The faculty which makes the highest and best application of knowledge." Paul reminded Timothy that he was "acquainted with the sacred scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3: 15). And to the Colossians he declared similarly that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed (hidden) in God (Col.2:3).

"Therefore we also, from the day on which we hear, do not cease praying for you and requesting that you may be filled full with the *realization* of His will, in all *wisdom* and *spiritual understanding,* you to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in the realization of God; being endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, for all endurance and patience with joy; at the same time giving thanks to the Father, Who makes you competent for a part of the allotment of the saints . . ." (Col.1:9-12).

God's purpose for the body of Christ is to be filled full with the realization of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. Paul was keenly aware of this fact and had such a great desire to see it accomplished that he did not cease praying to that end.

Paul also understood this was the key for walking worthily of the Lord for all pleasing. How our hearts long for the assurance that we are pleasing our Lord, and how difficult it seems to find the way to do this! Many of us who know God and find no pleasure in ceremonies and rituals still live with guilt and shame wondering if we will ever be in a position to walk worthily of our Lord let alone actually bring pleasure to the heart of God.

Hebrews 11:6 says: "Now apart from faith it is impossible to be well pleasing, for he who is coming to God must believe that He is and that He is becoming a rewarder of those seeking Him out." That which pleases God is rooted more deeply in what we believe about Him than in what we do, for our actions are reflections of our faith.

After speaking of a worthy walk "for all pleasing" Paul prays that we might be "bearing fruit in every good work" (Col.1:10). This accords with Ephesians 2:10 which says God makes goods works ready beforehand for us to walk in them. In applying these words not only to the future, but to the present as well, we see that God prepares good works ahead of time for us, as the fruit of faith. As we daily walk in them, by faith, He is pleased, and we will be "growing in the realization of God." What a joy it is to behold and willingly participate in what God is doing in our lives.

Verse 11 of this Colossian prayer gets more glorious: ". . . being endued with all power in accord with the might of His glory, for all endurance and patience with joy." *All power . . . the might of His glory* and *all endurance and patience with joy* are expressions of great consolation and expectation to encourage us in time of need.

This is not the self-serving, self-gratifying power the world is chasing after. It may not be easily recognized outwardly, but make no mistake, God wants us to be filled with all power in accord with the might of His glory, for all endurance and patience and joy. This is real power and

this is the wisdom all mankind really needs, but because they don't realize it they are looking in all the wrong places. We, the saints of God, have come to know that this power and wisdom is found in God and His word, the Source of our endurance, patience and joy.

Verse 12 says, "at the same time giving thanks to the Father," acknowledging where the endurance, patience and joy is coming from. All is out of Him; it does not originate in us, so be giving thanks to the Father who makes you competent.

"When the Supreme Deity, receives His due in thanksgiving and blessing, this is the very summit of righteousness. Nothing else is so utterly and inexcusably wrong as the failure to recognise, to appreciate, and to recompense the Deity for His numberless and limitless benefactions. To bless Him is the greatest act of righteousness of which His creatures are capable."[1]

For what purpose is God making us competent? It is that we might have a part of the allotment of the saints. Our allotment is an actual permanent possession in the celestials. This is our great expectation, the expectation of God's calling in Christ. Being made competent is a process, a good work that God has undertaken, and He will be performing it until the day of Jesus Christ.

2. GOD'S WISDOM FROM ABOVE AND THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD

Paul expounds further on the wisdom we are looking for, when he says. "Wisdom we are speaking among the mature, yet a wisdom not of this eon . . . wisdom in a secret, wisdom which has been concealed . . ." (1 Cor.2:6,7). And he adds, "Let no one be deluding himself. If anyone among you is presuming to be wise in this eon, let him become

1. A. E. Knoch, adapted from *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.36, p.277.

stupid that he may be becoming wise, for the wisdom of this world is stupidity with God" (1 Cor.3:18,19).

First he says this wisdom is not for everyone; it is for the mature. He also tells us that it does not come from the wise men of this eon and neither is it for them; it is foolishness to them. And, vice versa, the wisdom of this eon is stupidity to God and must be discarded by those who would receive God's hidden wisdom.

James refers to wisdom from above and wisdom of the earth in his letter and makes clear distinctions about the effect they both have. "Now if you are having bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, are you not vaunting against and falsifying the truth? This is not the wisdom coming down from above, but terrestrial, soulish, demoniacal . . . . Now the wisdom from above is first, indeed, pure, thereupon peaceable, lenient, compliant, bulging with mercy and good fruits, undiscriminating [without partiality], unfeigned" (James 3:14-17). The wisdom we acquire will have a bearing on how we act.

In Ephesians 4:32 we find the basis for ideal conduct. "Deal graciously among yourselves according as God also, in Christ, deals graciously with you." Christ is the supreme example, and wisdom from the Head will reflect His character through the body and by His grace. "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome (for this we are toiling and being reproached), that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers." (1 Tim.4:9,10) What a privilege it is to be aware of our total reliance on the living God. This is wisdom from above.

Our dependency on God appears as weakness to those around us, but hopefully we of like faith and spirit can see a powerful operation taking place in each other. Paul was well aware of God's operation working in himself, and he ends the discussion on his thorn in the flesh with a most incredible statement: ". . . whenever I may be weak, then I

am powerful" (2 Cor.12:10). We may be sure the Adversary is also aware of this process. Ephesians 3:10 says the multifarious wisdom of God is made known to sovereignties and authorities among the celestials through the ecclesia. Even the mighty spiritual beings that we struggle against are learning from us weak, often confused humans, us strange beings who are subject to sin and death and often walking in error.

How can this be? It is a very simple matter once we see it. It is God's wisdom we are to make known, not aiming to make ourselves look good! "For we are not heralding ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord . . . . We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the transcendence of the power may be of God and not of us" (2 Cor.4:5,7). It is for His glory not for ours! We are "being designated beforehand according to the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, that we should be for the laud of His glory" (Eph.1:11,12). Therefore, we can agree wholeheartedly with Paul: We are offering divine service in the spirit of God and are glorying in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3:3). This is wisdom from above.

3. THE WORD OF THE CROSS

"Around the cross lies God's wisdom . . . . Christ crucified starts the reference to God's wisdom."[2]

This is the testimony of Paul: "For the word of the cross is stupidity, indeed, to those who are perishing, yet to us who are being saved it is the power of God . . . . Does not God make stupid the wisdom of this world? . . . Jews signs are requesting, and Greeks wisdom are seeking, yet we are heralding Christ crucified, to Jews, a snare, yet to the nations stupidity, yet to those who are called, both Jews

2. E. H. Clayton: "The Cross and Wisdom."

and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God . . ." (1 Cor.1:18-25).

Yet not only so, but also God's righteousness is revealed in the evangel which tells us Christ died for our sins (*cf* Rom.1:18; 3:31,25,26), and His love is commended in Christ's death for sinners (Rom.5:8). If our evangel does not make known God's love and righteousness, calling it "the power and wisdom of God" is nonsense. The modern day "gospel" of Christendom is only "good news" for a few, and at the end of the day it shows God to be anything but loving, wise, powerful or righteous. Just using the words does not make it so.

Jonathan Edwards in his famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." said that we the saved, when in heaven, will be able look across the great gulf between heaven and hell and see our loved ones, even children and parents, writhing in pain. He went on to say this sight will actually cause us to appreciate our heavenly bliss even more. And many in Christendom buy into this theology. How can anything be so stupid?

There is an explanation found in the first chapter of Romans. When people, knowing God, fail to glorify Him as God or thank Him, they are made vain in their reasonings, and darkened is their unintelligent heart. Alleging themselves to be wise, they are made stupid. And according as they do not test (form a careful opinion of) God, to have Him in recognition, God gives them over to a disqualified mind (*cf* Rom.1:21,22,28). By human caprice and craftiness they are carried about by every wind of teaching and are systematically deceived (*cf* Eph.4:14). In some cases it may take years to acquire this kind of belief system. Christendom calls this process, in other circles, "brain washing".

Volumes have been written trying to make sense out of these doctrines of demons. They try in vain to reconcile a view of God, Who calls His creation very good, with

that which sees Him ending up ruining a good part of it in "hell." He is a God Who, by their own admission, is all powerful and desires all mankind to be saved, but somehow has no choice but to torture many of His children for all eternity. And what must be the height of stupidity this whole picture is called an expression of divine love.

I trust it helps us see, by contrast, how beautiful, wise and loving God's real evangel is. God does love the world, and He dispatches His only begotten Son into the world, that the world may be saved through Him (*cf* John 3:16,17). Christ came that "He should be tasting death for the sake of everyone" (Heb.2:9). He came to save sinners by giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.1:15; 2:6).

"Wherefore,also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:9-11).

What a precious gift it is to have the eyes of our hearts enlightened, we who have been graciously granted to believe this wonderful message. May we ever look to Him with uncovered face, mirroring the Lord's glory, and be transformed into the same image, from glory to glory. (2 Cor.3:18). This is the only "good news" that has the power to produce the fruit of the spirit, which begins with love (Gal.5:22,23).

God wants us to be filled with His love, and He also wants us to mature in love, in all wisdom, making the highest and best application of this knowledge spoken of in the evangel. Love is believing "all," love is expecting "all" and love is enduring "all." Here is a wisdom concealed in God, but now manifested in His evangel, that can open the eyes of our spiritual understanding for our present needs as we face the experiences of our lives. May we run the race

with patience, grasping more and more the vast dimensions of His love, depending on His wisdom and enjoying His great salvation daily.

Looking steadfastly to Jesus Christ, the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith (*cf* Heb.12:2), empowers us to love and work for the good of all, especially those of the family of faith (*cf* Gal.6:10). It empowers us to forgive each other and ourselves, to be lenient, without partiality, genuine and bulging with mercy. This wisdom empowers us to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. It empowers us to believe all and expect all and to endure all. This is not the wisdom of this eon nor of this world. This is the powerful wisdom that is concealed in God, and which God gives to those who are believing His evangel, and in this way are seeking for it like buried treasure. O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and knowledge of God!

3. CLOSING EXHORTATION

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy [set apart ones] and beloved, pitiful compassions, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, bearing with one another and dealing graciously among yourselves, if any one has a complaint against any. According as the Lord deals graciously with you, thus also you. Now over all these put on love, which is the tie of maturity. And let the peace of Christ be arbitrating in your hearts, for which you were called also in one body; and become thankful. Let the word of Christ be making its home in you richly, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing yourselves; in psalms, in hymns, in spiritual songs, singing, with grace in your hearts to God. And in everything, whatsoever you may be doing, in word or in act, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father, through Him" (Col.3:12-17).

Don Bast

CHRIST'S FAITH AND OUR BELIEVING

THE FAITH of Jesus Christ is the connecting link between God's righteousness and the justification of the sinner. The believer's faith is the connecting link between the justification gained by Christ and the reckoning of that justification to the believer. Our faith is that graciously granted response to the evangel which brings justification into our lives. What Jesus Christ did in believing His Father's word and faithfully carrying out His will was the greatest work of faith in all the eons. What we do in believing that Christ died for our sins is an extraordinary blessing from God that wholly debars us from any boasting in ourselves but multiplies its many beneficial effects continually in our lives, to the glory of God.

The Concordant Version of Romans 3:21,22 reads as follows:

> *Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God*
> *through Jesus Christ's* **faith,**
> *for all, and on all who are* **believing** . . . .

The words "faith" and "believing" represent different forms of the same basic term in Greek. We could say "belief" and "believing," or invent a new term and say "faith" and "faithing." There are two faiths in view here, the faith of Jesus Christ and the faith of believers. They differ greatly in quality, but they both speak of an acceptance of something as true, leading to some measure of

faithfulness. And in both cases the "something" that is believed is the Word of God.

God has purposed to manifest His righteousness in a work of salvation through the faith of His Son. In faith, our Lord Jesus Christ died for sinners, not for ex-sinners, nor in any exclusive way for certain sinners, but for sinners who have failed in achieving that state of perfection which is characteristic of the glory of God (*cf* Rom. 3:23; 5:8; 7:18-20). Our Lord's faith and faithfulness to the death of the cross is the means of justification. Whatever the phrase "justification by faith" comes to signify it must always keep its foundational sense of justification through the faith of Jesus Christ, in His work of deliverance (*cf* Rom.3:22,24; Gal.2:16).

Our faith is vitally important, but as a blessing from God, not as a requirement that achieves justification. The gracious gift of justification is gained solely on the basis of Jesus Christ's faith in dying for our sins. And that must be the channel for the justification of everyone else, whether Circumcision or Uncircumcision, or those who finally come to believe, know and acclaim God's Son as Saviour and Lord, by empirical evidence.

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

Jesus Christ's faith is perfect. We cannot expect to reach His level of faith as long as we are in these bodies of humiliation. But the *pattern* of His faith is the pattern of our faith. It is a pattern of believing what God says to us.

So it was with Abraham who believed God when the evidence was against what He had said, who faced God's word to him, not doubting in unbelief, giving glory to God, being fully assured that what He has promised He is able to do also (Rom.4:17-21). But even more truly and consistently and expectantly our Lord accepted and retained God's Word concerning Him, apart from doubt and with

strong assurance, and He faithfully responded with His words and deeds.

Jesus spoke of giving His disciples the declarations which His Father had given Him (John 17:8), but these do not lie outside God's written Word which foresees and supports all that He believed and taught. In Romans three Paul is concentrating on the message of Christ's faithfulness in dying for sinners, and we can discover throughout the Scriptures themselves that which God had said concerning Him and God's will for Him.

In His years in the form of a slave and likeness of humanity Jesus held tenaciously to God's Word as His strength and encouragement. At twelve years of age He testified that He had to be among the things which were His Father's (Luke 3:46-49). In His early manhood He told the Adversary: "It is written that, 'Not on bread alone shall man be living, but on every declaration of God'" (Luke 4:4). Later, He spoke to His disciples of the fulfillment of the scriptures which testified to those things which must occur (Matt.26:54). Facing the prophesied events of the coming day, His assurance and comfort in prayer before His God and Father was "Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). To those of His disciples who were on the road to Emmaus with Him, He spoke of His sufferings and entering into glory. "And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interprets to them, in all the scriptures that which concerns Himself" (Luke 24:25-27).

Jesus Christ's faith was solidly centered in God's will as expressed in what He said. Our Lord was *obedient* unto the death of the cross. This was God's will (*cf* Matt.26:39, 42,44), foretold in passages such as Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 and pictured in types from Genesis forward through all the Hebrew Scriptures, in all the offerings and the patterns of divine service in tabernacle and temple and in such incidents as Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah

and Jonah cast into the sea. There is hardly a portion of the Scriptures of old that does not speak of some aspect of the cross, entombment and resurrection of Christ or promise blessings that could never be fulfilled apart from His great work of faithfulness.

Jesus knew from the Scriptures, that:

1. God's route to His purposed goal of good and glory was by way of humiliation and suffering and death. Our Lord was to die (Isa.53:8).

For He is severed from the land of the living;
Because of the transgressions of My people,
He is led to death.

2. As the Saviour, He was to die for sinners. Israel is the definitive case of what is in humanity. They were transgressors (Isa.1:2), a nation of sin, a people heavy with depravity, seed of evildoers, sons who were corrupters, forsakers and spurners of God (Isa.1:4). There was nothing apparent in them worth saving. Nevertheless, as Jesus well knew, He was to be wounded because of their transgressions, with the depravity of them all coming to rest on Him so that He was humbled and fetched to slaughter as a flockling (Isa.53:6,7).

3. God would achieve His goal. Concerning Israel, this was a goal of good that would be manifested in full light and experience (Isa.53:11).

From the toil of His soul He shall see light,
And He shall be satisfied by His knowledge.

For our Lord, God's Word spoke personally of suffering and death and of glory to follow (1 Peter 1:11).

It is through Jesus Christ's faithful adherence to the Word of God concerning Him that every good purposed by God is achieved. Not only His deliverance of Israel, but the justification of all who come under the name of sinners

and transgressors is gained through the faith and faithfulness of Jesus Christ.

His giving of Himself manifests God's righteousness in the achievement of justification. This is established for all and will be enjoyed by all in God's own time, but even now it is placed upon those who are believing that He died for their sins, was entombed and has been roused from among the dead. Justification is out of His faith, and it is for our faith even today in the midst of failure and weakness, suffering and shame, sorrow and dying. But for us also, there is expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:2).

THOSE WHO ARE BELIEVING

Abraham is our human example of believing (Rom.4), but our believing is centered on what Christ did in faith. And, as with our Lord (and Abraham), what we believe is what God has said concerning us as human beings and as God's chosen vessels for a special purpose. Abraham believed that God had appointed him to be a father of many nations (Rom.4:17). But the basis of this promise was not revealed to him. God also speaks to us concerning matters of glory and joy and peace, concerning our justification and conciliation and glorification, but He relates these to the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for us.

It cannot be emphasized too much that what we believe is what God has said in His Word concerning us. To begin with, this is what is called the evangel of God. It is a "well-message." It is centered in what Christ has done and what He is and on God's achievements in Him. The evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ our Lord is the solid foundation of all the good God has spoken of in His Word.

WHAT GOD HAS SAID TO US

What Genesis 12:2,3, and the expanded promises in succeeding chapters, were to Abraham, the evangel of God as

presented in Romans and the expanded revelations of his continued ministry are to us in speaking of good to come. But what God says to us is far more than what He said to Abraham. For Paul's evangel and its associated revelations reveal the depths of God (1 Cor.2:10) simply because they are explicitly built on the basis of our blessings, which is the cross of Christ. This is the center of our faith, the very core of what we believe. Let us anticipate some of these words of God which Paul is about to set before us. They are divine declarations for our believing:

Being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus . . . where, then, is boasting?

For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, died.

God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes. Much rather, then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from indignation, through Him.

For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life.

Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.

What, then, shall we declare to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?

These are all statements of the evangel which plainly

refer to the key element of blessing coming through Christ Jesus. In one way or another they direct attention to His faith in dying for sinners. What He has done is the heart of our faith. Every detail of blessing presented in these chapters of Romans is built on this fundamental revelation of the evangel, that Christ died for our sins. We cannot know God as *just* in His place as *Justifier* (Rom.3:26) apart from Jesus Christ's faith. We can have no access to God or expectation of glory (Rom.5:1,2) apart from what our Lord, Jesus Christ, has done. The force of Paul's entreaties in Romans 6 for walking in newness of life rests on Christ's death for us and our identification with Him in His death. The spirit of sonship in which we are crying, "Abba, Father!" (Rom.8:15) comes to us in our believing of the evangel concerning God sparing not His own Son.

THE BELIEVER'S FAITH

Our believing is a great blessing in what it brings into our lives of joy and peace, of spiritual strength for endurance and patience in expectation. But it is also a miracle. From the standpoint of human longings and desires, the evangel more than satisfies. But there is a darkness in our being that cannot accept what God has said in this message. We are blinded (2 Cor.4:4). And it takes God Himself to open our hearts to faith.

The gracious gift of believing (Phil.1:29) longs to share the message that is believed (*cf* Rom.1:8-12), but it does not belittle others who have been given a lesser measure of faith. Like its companion grace of love, faith is patient, is kind, is not jealous, is not bragging, is not puffed up (*cf* 1 Cor.13:4).

Thus faith bears fruit in inner blessings and in faithful activity. Paul speaks of "the work of [the] faith" in 1 Thessalonians 1:3, not as some sort of requirement, but as a benefit in itself which calls for thanksgiving to God.

NO DISTINCTION

I have tried to show something of the critical connection between our faith and that of Jesus Christ. But it is also important that we see the critical connection between our need of justification and the need of humanity as a whole for justification. The evangel points our attention to Christ; it concerns Him Who is God's Son and our Lord. But it does not allow us as believers and as those who are "beloved by God, called saints" (Rom.1:7) to forget that we are part of the human race, all of which is under sin (Rom.3:9).

We do not know Christ or grasp the vital value of His faith if we suppose He did not die for all sinners. It is a fair question to ask how He could have died for us if He has not died for all. But beyond that, how could He be the Christ of the Scriptures if all are not ever to enjoy that justification He has gained for sinners, and become subjected to His Lordship? Again, we cannot perceive the glory of God's righteousness if we think it is concerned only with those few sinners who are believing today, apart from sight. There can be no doubt that all sin and that all are wanting of the glory of God. But there seems to be much doubt among us that the glory of God is unrestricted and all-encompassing.

The "all" of Romans 3:23 is the "all" of Romans 3:9, a reference to the entirety of the human race, not one of whom is righteous (Rom.3:10), not one of whom could ever be justified in God's sight by works of law (Rom.3:20). The immediate connection of verse 23 is with the words "all who are believing," but our believing does not remove us from being, in ourselves, a part of the mass of humanity described in Romans 1:18-3:20. We are distinguished by God's grace, and this is powerful in dealing with sin, and is full of promise for the future, but we remain descendants of that one man, Adam, through whom sin came into the

world, and through sin death (Rom.5:12). Sin makes its home in our flesh (Rom.7:17-20), even as in all.

Paul is very careful that we not imagine there is something about us that makes us intrinsically superior to others who do not believe. As human beings we all stand before God with the same need of justification. Hence the evangel speaks in a context apart from requirements of works of law placed upon us and from any personal achievements of righteousness. It speaks of God's righteousness, not of ours. It focuses on Christ's faith as the operating factor and notes human faith simply as a factor for receiving what Christ's faith gains. What the believer receives is gratuitous. It is in God's grace. It allows no boasting in self.

Believers must never forget that they are sinners and come short of the glory of God, just like everyone else. Paul allows no room for any of us to think God sees something more salvageable in us than in the unbeliever. If anything, as far as the flesh is concerned, we are less likely candidates for His special choice than many who are not chosen. Most all of us know better people than ourselves who are unbelievers. There can be little doubt God does too, Who sees in this that which will display the transcendent riches of His grace in the oncoming eons (*cf* 1 Cor. 1:26-29; Eph.2:7-9).

It is in this context, that we must understand Romans 3:23. Paul speaks of believers, but of believers as human beings, whose record includes sin and failure. All humanity sins, and all come short of the glory of God. This is what the evangel says about us.

Yet we are blessed with faith, in believing that Jesus Christ's faith has gained justification in that He has died for us.

Now we are ready to concentrate once more on God and His Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord.

D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME XCVII

Appointed as Prophet . . . 63
Attaining to the Unity of the Faith . . . 25
Attested by the Prophets . . . 69
Binding and Loosing . . . 90
Blood of Christ's Cross, The . . . 219
Consequences of the Cross, The . . . 119
Crisis in Corinth . . . 169
David's Masters of War . . . 52
Discipline of Evil, The . . . 177
Division and Reunion . . . 205
Faith in His Blood, Through . . . 219
Founding of Kingly Strength . . . 160
From Jacob to Israel . . . 243
Glorying in Expectation . . . 275
God is Love . . . 129
God's Righteousness Displayed . . . 211
Human Schemes and Divine Intention . . . 7
Into God's Hands . . . 107
Is Yahweh True to His Troth? . . . 269
Jacob and Laban . . . 99
Jacob's Contacts with God . . . 59
Justified in God's Grace . . . 39
Last Words of David, The . . . 32
Meditation on Psalm 8, A . . . 160
Notes on Jeremiah . . . 34,63,103,177,205,261
Notes on 2 Samuel . . . 32,52,107
Now on Display . . . 251
Obituaries: H. Dirks 48, I. Jensen 38, W. Sanderlin 48, W. Tatton 15
Nothing is Now Condemnation . . . 229
Paul, an Apostle . . . 93
Paul to the Romans . . . 39,137,183,211
Proclamations from Yahweh . . . 103
Questions and Answers . . . 25,90,119,229,251
Return of Jacob, The . . . 195
Sons of Jacob, The . . . 149
Struggling in Prayer . . . 16,79
Studies in Genesis . . . 7,59,97,149,195,243
Through the Deliverance in Christ Jesus . . . 137
Warnings to Judah . . . 261
White as Snow . . . 69
Whom God Purposed . . . 183

Contents:

2 "O Love, that wilt not Let Me Go"
3 Editorial
7 Human Schemes and Divine Intention
16 Struggling in Prayer
25 Attaining to the Unity of the Faith
32 The Last Words of David
34 The Book of Jeremiah
39 Justified in God's Grace

JANUARY, 2006

Volume XCVII **Number 1**

Concordant Version of

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(Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings)

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For God and His
Word

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O Love, that wilt not let me go

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thine ocean depths it flow
may richer, fuller be.

O Light that foll'west all my way,
I yield my flick'ring torch to Thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in Thy sunshine's blaze its day
may brighter, fairer, be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
that morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from Thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
Until called forth from earthly bed
to Life that endless be. Amen.

Albert L. Peace

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2006
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-SEVEN

EDITORIAL

"BECOME IMITATORS OF ME, according as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor.11:1). To supply the ellipsis here, the thought becomes, "Become imitators of me, according as I also am of Christ [engaged in imitation]." It is on the ground ("according as") that Paul, in fact, is imitating Christ Himself, that we, then, are to imitate Paul.

To "imitate," is to "attempt the same thing in the same manner."[1] In attempting to do what Paul does, we will soon find that this calls for much practice. Hence, the apostle further entreats us: "What you learned also, and accepted and hear and perceived in me, these be putting into *practice,* and the God of peace will be with you" (Phil.4:9). Let us be sincere in our endeavor, actively practicing our lifelong lesson, that of imitating Paul who himself is imitating Christ. No matter how badly we may fail at times, let us return to our noble endeavor, our practice, that of imitating Paul, in his imitation of Christ.

One important way that we can imitate Paul is in the matter of exhibiting a spirit of *meekness* in our relations with others, whether with our mates, our children, our families and friends, our fellow believers, our co-workers, our neighbors—with all with whom we associate or otherwise engage ourselves.

The adjective "meek" is not a commonly used term of popular speech. One rarely hears it at all, unless it is used negatively in a pejorative sense, in reference to one who is easily imposed upon or overly compliant.

Perhaps in part because it rhymes with "weakness" and to many seems to carry such a connotation, many are apt

1. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.154.

to conclude that meekness is somehow connected not with strength but with weakness. Since believers in Christ are at least aware, however hazily, that meekness is not a weakness but a virtue, they are often quick to point out the fact that "meekness is not weakness." While this is true and needs to be emphasized, even so, if we have no more interest in learning what meekness is in order that we may practice it than to assure others as to what it is *not*, it is clear that our interest in walking in meekness is an insufficient interest concerning this subject.

Meekness, that is, the Greek *prautês*, is a condition of mind and heart; it is an internal attitude that is exhibited through external behavior. In Scripture, unlike in common, modern speech, meekness is always a virtue, and is never associated with weakness, much less with ignoble fear.

Meekness is set in opposition to arrogance: "When *arrogance* comes, then dishonor shall also come, yet with the *meek* is wisdom" (Prov.11:2). This wisdom of meekness is manifested most gloriously in our Lord Jesus: "Lift My yoke upon you and be learning from Me, for *meek* am I and *humble* in heart, and you shall be finding rest in your souls" (Matt.11:29). Meekness is in accord with love, and, together with love, is set in contrast to severity (1 Cor. 4:21). Meekness likewise accords with leniency (2 Cor. 10:1), even as with humility (Eph.4:2), while being found in close company with holiness, pitiful compassions, kindness, and patience (*cf* Col.3:12).

Paul entreats Timothy to ". . . pursue righteousness, devoutness, faith, love, with endurance, suffering, and *meekness*" (1 Tim.6:11). Righteousness, devoutness, faith, and love are virtues that we *pursue* (*diōkō*, CHASE). Though, at present, we may not at any time fully lay hold of these virtues ideally, even so, since we are aware of their importance, we nevertheless seek them and chase after them, rejoicing when we grasp them at least in part. Yet if we

would indeed pursue righteousness, devoutness, faith, and love, not only with endurance and suffering, but with *meekness* as well, we must have a clear and accurate idea as to what meekness is.

As the antithesis of arrogance, meekness entails a lack of vanity or self-importance; essentially, meekness is non-aggressive, *mild*-manneredness in quietness of spirit (*cp* 1 Peter 3:4), in contrast to the aggressive, often arrogant harshness that is characteristic of a "dog eat dog" society.

Meekness is often associated with *submission*,[2] in acknowledgement of and especially in yieldedness to the authority or prerogative of another. Whenever submissiveness (i.e., yieldedness) is called for and one not only submits but does so *mildly* and quietly, without reluctance and apart from disturbance, one exhibits the distinctive fruit of the spirit termed "meekness" (Gal.5:23).

Meekness, however, is not confined to events in which submission or deference is in order, but may be exhibited in a wide variety of circumstances, on all occasions, whenever one exhibits a *mildness of spirit*, especially in interaction with others. Meekness, which is to say, mild-manneredness, can still "stand its ground" wherever so doing is appropriate; but it will do so in a non-acerbic manner, apart from harshness, in mildness, moderation, and calm.

"Now youthful desires flee: yet pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, with all who are invoking the Lord out of a clean heart" (2 Tim.2:22). It has well been said that a clean heart (as opposed to correctness of doctrine) is the true basis of fellowship. Yet even so, "stupid and crude questionings" are to be "refuse[d], being aware that they are generating fightings" (2 Tim.2:23).

"Questioning" is "the process of solving a problem."[3]

2. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.193; where "Meek" is defined as "mildly submissive."

3. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.238.

Since, however, a great many questionings that we may encounter, even if innocently expressed, are nevertheless not only crude but also stupid (i.e., insipid or mentally tasteless; dull), and yet we are to "refuse" or decline to respond to such inquiries, it is evident that we must be wise, gentle, humble, gracious, and *meek* in so doing. We will certainly not be tactless and imprudent by plainly stating to our inquirer that since we find his or her questions and arguments to be stupid and crude (even if it is evident to us that they are stupid and crude), we must therefore refuse to respond to them!

We will instead, in time, find a way to *meekly* address whatever is actually at issue pertinent to the proper subject of inquiry at hand, while graciously overlooking whatever may perhaps be "stupid and crude" in the questionings themselves which are put to us.

As slaves of the Lord, we "must not be fighting, but be gentle toward all, apt to teach, bearing with evil, *with meekness* training those who are antagonizing, seeing whether God may be giving them repentance to come into a realization of the truth" (2 Tim.2:24,25). Accordingly, then, we are "to be calumniating[4] no one, [but] to be pacific, lenient, *displaying all* ***meekness*** *toward all humanity*" (Titus 3:2).

What a joy and privilege it is to send forth this first number of volume 97 of *Unsearchable Riches* magazine. May its message be proclaimed in a spirit of humility and meekness, even as with patience and joy. J.R.C.

4. In English, to "calumniate" is to make maliciously or knowingly false statements about. However, the Greek word here, *blasphêmeō* (HARM-AVER; translated in the CV as "blaspheme" in reference to God, and "calumniate" in reference to man), in essence of meaning, accords most closely with the English "malign," which means to make evil (i.e., injurious or destructive), harmful, and often exaggerative or even untrue statements about; in a word: to speak evil of. Therefore, it is this definition that we should have in view where the CV reads "calumniate," and, it is this practice which we must seek to avoid.

HUMAN SCHEMES AND DIVINE INTENTION

JACOB'S DECEPTION of Esau is usually considered merely a mean trick played by him to get the blessing of the first-born. This is a very superficial view. The matter had been settled and made known before he was born, by divine decree. "The senior shall serve the junior" (Gen.25:23). "For, not as yet being born, nor yet putting into practice anything good or bad, that the *purpose of God* may be remaining as a *choice, not out of acts,* but of Him Who is calling," Who said, "Jacob I love, yet Esau I hate" (Rom. 9:11-13). Indeed, there were many actors in this episode. Elohim decreed it. Isaac sought to prevent it. Rebecca planned the deception. Esau had forfeited it by his indifference to its value, shown by trading it for one glutting of grub. It is only one scene in the great drama of divine determination. It agreed with God's glory.

GENESIS 27:1-25

27 + **It came** to |**be** *t***when Isaac was old and his eyes were** too **dim** *f***to see**–**,** + **he** |**called** `**his** ˙**elder son Esau and** |**said to him, My son.** + **He** |*sa***answered** › **him,** *bd***Here I** am**.** 2 **And he** |**said: Behold** *pr***now, I am old** *7***and***cs* **I** do **not know** the **day of my death.** 3 +**So now,** *pr***please take up your** *all***gear, your arrow holder and your bow;** + **go out** to **the field and hunt** some **game for me.** 4 + *d***Prepare for me** a **tasty** dish**, just as I like.** + Do **bring** it **to me and let me eat, in** *p***order** that **my soul may bless you** *i* **ere I** |**die.**

5 +**Now Rebecca** had **heard**| **Isaac** *i* **speaking**– **to his son Esau.** +**When Esau** had |**gone** into **the field to hunt game** *7***for his father**~**,** 6 + **Rebecca**´ |**said to her** *7***junior***0* **son Jacob,**

› saying¯: Behold, I heard `your father speaking to your brother Esau, › saying¯, 7 Do **bring › me** some **game and** *d*__prepare__ a **tasty** dish **for me.** + **Let me eat** +__that__ **I may bless you before Yahweh, before my death.** 8 **And now, my son, hearken** *i*__to my voice__ **›in** *w*__what__ **I** am **instructing `you.** 9 **Go** *pr*__now to the flock and take for me from there two kids of__ the **goats,** *7*__tender and__*0* **good, and I shall** *d*__prepare `them__ as a **tasty** dish **for your father just as he likes.** 10 + **You** must **bring** it **to your father, and he will eat in** *p*__order__ *w*__that he__ may **bless you before his death.**

11 +__Yet Jacob__ |__said to his mother Rebecca: Behold, my brother Esau is__ a **hairy man,** +__but I__ am a **smooth-skinned man.** 12 **Perhaps my father may feel me; and I will become in his eyes like** one leading him **astray**|**.** +__Then I would bring on me__ a **malediction and not** a **blessing.** 13 + **His mother** |*sa*__replied to him:__ Up**on me** be **your malediction, my son.** *y*__Only hearken__ *i*__to my voice.__ +__Now go, take__ them **for me.**

14 +__So he__ |__went and__ |__took__ them **and** |__brought__ them **to his mother; and his mother** |*d*__prepared__ a **tasty** dish **just as his father liked.** 15 +__Then Rebecca__ |__took `her ˙elder son Esau's ˙festal garments__ *w*__that__ were `with **her in** the **house, and** |__put__ them **on `her ˙younger son Jacob.**

16 **And** `with **the skins of** the **goats' kids she clothed** *on* **his hands and** *on* the **smooth-skinned** part **of his neck.** 17 +__Then she__ |__gave `the tasty__ dish **and `the bread** *w* **she had** *d*__made in__to the **hand of her son Jacob.**

18 +__So he__ |__came to his father and__ |__said, My father! And he__ |*sa*__replied,__ *bd*__Here I__ am. *a*__Who__ are **you, my son?** 19 + **Jacob** |__said to his father; I__ am **Esau, your firstborn. I have done just as you** *sp*__told__ **› me. Arise** *pr*__now,__ do **sit up and** do **eat** *f*__of my game in__ *p*__order__ that **your soul may bless me.** 20 + **Isaac** |*sa*__asked__ **› his son:** *wt*__How__ is **this** that **you › found¯** it so **¯quickly, my son? And he** |*sa*__answered,__ *t*__Because Yahweh your Elohim__ *c*__had__ it **happen before me.** 21 +__Then Isaac__ |__said to Jacob:__ Do come **close,** *pr*__please,__ so +__that I may feel you, my son,__ whether **you** are *this*__really my son Esau__ *if*__or not.__

22 +__So Jacob__ came |__close to his father Isaac, and he__ |__felt him and__ |__said: The voice__ is **Jacob's voice,** +__yet the hands__ are **Esau's hands.** 23 + **He** did **not recognize him** *t*__because his hands__ *b*__were hairy like__ the **hands of his brother Esau. And** so **he** |__blessed him.__ 24 **He** |*sa*__asked__ +__again,__ Are **you** *this*__really my son Esau? And he__ |*sa*__replied, I__ am. 25 +__Then he__ |__said:__ Do *c*__bring__ it **close to me and let me eat** *f*__of__ the **game, my son, that my soul may** |__bless you.__ +__So he__ *c*__brought__ it |__close to him, and he__ |__ate; and he__ |__brought › him wine, and he__ |__drank.__

SOULISH ISAAC

As is usual in the early phases of divine revelation, the imperceptible spiritual truth is indicated by evident physical facts. When Isaac was old, he was not only dim-sighted and ignorant and sensual, but had *lost sight* of the divine decree that the greater shall serve the inferior (Gen.25:23; Rom.9:12), and so was ignorant of how his death would affect his sons, and that he would transmit the *spiritual* blessings of the star seed.

But God is not hindered or held back by the failures of His chosen, but rather, He uses even their devious devices to work His will. Isaac sends out Esau, which he should not have done, and Rebecca sends Jacob, which she should not have done, and Jacob falls in with her deception, which he should not have done, yet all this disobedience and deception is used to carry out God's intention.

Yet there was a great difference between the two sides. Isaac and Esau were acting in opposition to God's declared decree. Rebecca and Jacob, who are popularly supposed to be the worst offenders, for they used insubjection and deceit and outright falsehood, were acting in accord with God's mandate. Isaac and Esau were seeking to thwart God's will, and He hates that, for it not only offends His

heart, but hinders the final happiness of His creatures. Rebecca and Jacob, however, were seeking to fulfill His intention, although they were doing it selfishly, and foolishly and sinfully. This will lead to God's glory and the blessing of all eventually. God loves that, and as a result He loves those who do it, and justifies their evil deeds. So He hated Esau, yet loved Jacob.

ISAAC'S BLESSINGS

That Isaac's blessing of Jacob was divine is emphasized by the fact that it was given contrary to his own desires. His inherent faith is evidenced by his immediate acceptance of his mistake as an act of God. Yet, at Esau's plea, he blesses him also. These two blessings are well worth our closest consideration, for they predict the course, not only of the two sons, but of the nations which sprang from them. In very broad outline they predict the future fortunes of the relation between Israel (*Ishr-Al* Upright-is-Subjector) and Edom (*Adum* Red), the nickname which clung to the nation which sprang from Esau, to commemorate the red banquet which cost him his birthright. A very expensive repast! Yet who can blame him for selling it for a red feed, when his father, Isaac, now seeks to give it to him for a tasty dish of game?

GENESIS 27:26-40

26 +**Then his father Isaac** ˡ**said to him:** Do come **close** ᵖʳ**now and** do **kiss** › **me, my son.** 27 +**So he** came ˡ**close and** ˡ**kissed** › **him.** +**When he** ˡ**smelled** `the **smell of his garments,** + **he** ˡ**blessed him and** ˡ**said: See,** the **smell of my son** is **like** the **smell of** the ⁷**full**ⁿ **field** ʷ**that Yahweh has blessed.**

28 +**So may the** One**, Elohim, give** › **you**
ᶠ**Of** the **dew of the heavens,**
ᶠ**Of** the **fertile** soil**s of the earth,**
And ᵐⁿ**abundance of grain and grape juice.**

29 **Peoples shall serve you,**
And folkstems shall bow down to you.
ᵇ**Be master** ›**over your brothers,**
And may your mother's sons bow down to you.
Cursedˡ be those **cursing you,**
And blessedˡ be those **blessing you.**

30 +**Now it** ˡ**came** to **pass, just as Isaac had** ᵃˡˡ**finished** › **blessing**⁻ `**Jacob,** + **it** ˡ**came** to **pass** as **Jacob had** ʸ**scarcely gone out to** come **forth from** `the **presence of his father Isaac,** +**that his brother Esau came** back **from his hunt.** 31 + **He**´ ᵐʳ**too** ˡᵈ**prepared** a **tasty** dish **and** ˡ**brought** it **to his father. And he** ˡ**said to his father: May my father arise and eat** ᶠ**of his son's game in** ᵖ**order** that **your soul may bless me.** 32 + **His father Isaac** ˡˢᵃ**asked** › **him,** ᵃ**Who** are **you? And he** ˡˢᵃ**answered I** am **your son, your firstborn, Esau.** 33 +**Then,** in **great trembling, Isaac** ˡ**trembled unto excess and** ˡ**said:** ᵃ**Who** was **he, indeed,** `who **hunted**ˡ for **game and** ˡ**brought** it **to me? I have** already **eaten** it ᶠ **all** ⁱ **ere you came** in**.** + **I** ˡ**blessed him,** ˢ**and**ⁿ ᵐʳ**indeed, he shall** ᵇ**remain blessed**ˡ**.**

34 ⁷**And it** ˡ**came** to **pass**⁰ **as Esau heard**⁻ `**his father's words,** + **he** ˡ**cried** with a **loud** out**cry,** + **bitter unto excess; and he** ˡ**said to his father, Bless me**´ ᵐʳ**too, my father.** 35 +**Yet he** ˡ**said** ⁷**to him**⁰**: Your brother came** ⁱ **deceitfully and** ˡ**took your blessing.** 36 **And he** ˡˢᵃ**replied: He** ᵗ**rightly calls his name Jacob,** +**since he** has ˡ**circumvented me this** ᵈᵘ**twice; he took** `**my birthright, and behold, now he has taken my blessing.** +**Then he** ˡˢᵃ**asked: Have you not laid** a **blessing aside for me?** 37 + **Isaac** ˡ**answered and** ˡ**said to Esau: Behold, I have** ᵖˡ**appointed him master** ›**over you, and** `**all his brothers I have given** › **him** ›**as servants.** + **I have supported him** with **grain and grape juice. Indeed, what,** +**then, shall I do for you, my son?** 38 + **Esau** ˡˢᵃ**replied to his father:** ›**Have you** only **this one blessing, my father? Bless me**´ ᵐʳ**too, my father!** 7+ **Yet Isaac was** ˡ**still.**⁰ +**Then**

Esau ˡlifted up **his voice and ˡlamented.**
39 + **His father Isaac ˡanswered and ˡsaid to him:**
Behold, far **from** the **fertile** soil**s of the earth**
shall *b*__**be your dwelling,**__
And far **from** the **dew of the heavens above.**
40 + *on*__**By your sword shall you live,**__
And you shall serve ˋyour brother.
+__**But it will come**__ to **pass, as** *w* **you** *c*__**hold ˡsway,**__
+ **You will break off his yoke, off your neck.**

EDOM

The word *from*, in Hebrew as in English, varies somewhat in sense according to the context. Of things it may refer to *a part of*, yet of location, of space, it denotes *away from*. That this is the case with Esau is abundantly confirmed by the near and far contexts, as well as the condition of the land today, even if we do not consider the great truth that God hates those who despise His blessing. Yet, for a while Edom prospered and became independent. In fact, in the days of our Lord, the Herodian kings, under the suzerainty of Rome, ruled in the territory given to Jacob. The AV rendering is a contradiction of history, and a serious blot upon the prophetic inspiration of the Bible.

For the descendants of this man, who valued a belly-full of food more than the spiritual blessings of the firstborn, the Subjector has a land which denies them such soulish delights. The mountainous region of Edom is perhaps as barren as any place on earth. The Arabah, or continuation of the Dead Sea gorge has little but rock.

There is hardly any vegetation even in the Petra district, except where there are terraces or artificial irrigation. In Malachi (1:2,3) we read: "Esau I hate. And I shall make his mountains a desolation, and his allotment is for the wild jackals of the wilderness." Obadiah (1:3) says that Edom is "tabernacling in the clefts of the crag." It lacks the refreshing night mist of Jacob's heritage.

Both Esau and Jacob had their names changed, but in quite opposite directions. Jacob took hold of Esau's heel long before birth, but Esau was full grown when he bartered away his birthright. In significance, also, they are opposites. Edom, his nickname, is a reminder of the lowest point in his experience. He despised God's spiritual allotment which included eonian welfare, for a few minutes of soulish satisfaction. Israel (Upright-is-Subjector), on the contrary, lost his nickname, and received a divine title indicative of his justification and eonian elevation, and recalled his highest experience in the life of faith.

GENESIS 27:41-28:5

41 + **Esau** held a ˡ**grudge** ˋagainst **Jacob on** account of **the blessing** with **which his father had blessed him. And Esau ˡsaid in his heart:** The **days of mourning** for **my father are approaching.** + **I** am determined to ˡ**kill ˋmy brother Jacob.**
42 +**When ˃ Rebecca was ˡtold** ˋthe **words of her ˙elder son Esau,** + **she ˡsent and ˡcalled ˃ her ˙junior son Jacob and ˡsaid to him: Behold, your brother Esau** is **comforting** him**self** with regard **to you,** intending **to kill you.** 43 + **Now, my son, hearken** *i*__**to my voice.**__ + **Get up! You ˃have** to run **away to my brother Laban,** to*d* **Charan.** 44 + **You** must **dwell with him several days until** *w* **your brother's fury is relenting,** 45 **until your brother's anger turns** away– **from you and he has forgotten** ˋ*w*__**what you have done to him.**__ +__**Then I will send**__ word **and take you** away **from there. Why should I be bereaved** *mr* of **both of you** in **one day?**
46 +__**Then Rebecca ˡsaid to Isaac: I am irritated in my life** *f*__**because of** the **daughters of** *7*__**the sons of**__*0* **Heth. If Jacob** should **take**ˡ a **wife from** the **daughters of Heth, like these, from** the **daughters of** *7*__**this**__*0* **˙land, ˃of what** good is **life to me?**
28 +__**So Isaac ˡcalled ˃ Jacob and ˡblessed ˋhim;**__ + **he ˡinstructed him and ˡsaid to him: You shall not take** a **wife**

from the **daughters of Canaan.** [2] **Get up; go** to[d] **Padan-Syria** to[d] the **house of Bethuel, your mother's father; and from there take** › **you**rself a **wife from** the **daughters of Laban your mother's brother.** [3] + **May El Who-Suffices bless** `**you and** [c]**make you fruitful and multiply you,** so +**that you become** › an **assembly of peoples.** [4] + **May He give to you** `the **blessing of** [7]**my father**[0] **Abraham, to you and to your seed** `with **you,** so ›**that you** may **tenant**– `the **land of your sojournings** [w]**that Elohim gave to Abraham.**

[5] +**Then Isaac** [l]**sent** `**Jacob** off**; and he went** to[d] **Padan-Syria, to Laban son of Bethuel the Syrian, brother of Rebecca,** the **mother of Jacob and Esau.**

ESAU'S SCHEME

Esau, like Cain, sought to glut his passion by murdering his brother. This shows clearly that he had no faith in God's promises, for he imagined that he was able to nullify them, when, in fact, he was furthering them. Jacob must have descendants, if his blessing is to be fulfilled. But, also, they must not come through the doomed inhabitants of the land. So Esau's vindictive, murderous idea, instead of robbing Jacob of the blessing, only aided in its fulfillment, and sent him to the place where he not only obtained one wife, but two, as well as their maids. This is a good example of God's method of making man defeat himself.

REBECCA'S SCHEME

But Rebecca also, when she seeks to gain her own ends, carries out the Subjector's intention rather than her own. She loved Jacob and wished to preserve him for herself. In this she failed, for she never saw him again. Esau had married Hittites, or Hethites, of the cursed line of Canaan, and Rebecca found them a great trial, so she did not want Jacob to do the same. This gave her a good excuse for sending him away, and one which was in line with the blessing.

By sending him to her own kin she would assure them of a part in the promise. Isaac was easily convinced. His own wife had come from Padan, Aram, or Syria (Most-High), and Jacob would be welcome there. This time he does not bless Jacob himself, but invokes the blessing of El Shaddai, the Subjector Who-Suffices to carry out in him the blessings given to Abraham.

A. E. Knoch

WILLIAM J. TATTON

Our friend in the Lord, William Tatton, of El Segundo, California, was born on December 26, 1919, and was put to repose on January 31, 2006. Along with his wife Evie, for many years, Bill frequently attended our fellowship gatherings, which are currently held here in Santa Clarita and alternatively in Montclair. Bill loved the Word of God, as well as music and poetry, all of which he shared with his family. He looked forward to being with his Lord, and praised God with the life he lived, as one who was excited about God's future plans.

Besides his wife Evie, Bill is survived by his four children, Bill Jr., Charles, Anita, and Margaret, besides nine grandchildren. We are remembering Bill with fondness, in anticipation of our future joyous reunion with him in the day of Christ's appearing.

RECORDED SCRIPTURE MESSAGES ONLINE AT CONCORDANT WEBSITE

For nearly thirty years we have made available cassette tape recordings of many of our talks on important Scriptural topics. Now that cassette tapes are swiftly being supplanted by digital media as the medium of choice, we are in the process of converting many of our messages into digital sound files. These files can be listened to directly online, or downloaded and played at a later time using a computer audio program. They can also easily be converted and transferred to a portable, digital music player.

These Scripture messages in digital form may be obtained from the "Audio" section of our website, *www.concordant.org*. Quite a few of these tape-to-audio-file conversions are already online, and we hope to add many more in the months ahead.

Scripture Studies

STRUGGLING IN PRAYER

THE MEANING of the elements of the Greek word for "prayer," *proseuchê,* are "TOWARD-WELL-HAVing," which in this case correspond as well to the meaning of this Greek word itself. When in prayer, then, we are making our requests known to God (*cf* Phil.4:6), we are speaking to Him thus with a view *toward having* things be *well* with the one who is the subject of our prayer, whoever it may be, for whom we are praying.

Prayer is the medium of communication between God and His creatures. "God is to be sought, and entreated. He always has been thus disposed, and He always will be . . . ."[1]

In hours of peril, humanity involuntarily cries to God, doing so as a natural impulse. One may argue all one wants against the value of prayer, but the fact remains that, in sufficient need, men pray because they cannot help doing so. Man is made for dependence upon his Maker, and fellowship with Him. Most people seldom think about prayer until tragedy strikes; and then it is remarkable how fast they learn to pray.

When I was a young believer, I was taught that only those who prayed three to four hours a day would be able to survive the great tribulation coming on the earth. Being zealous, I took my new faith seriously. For months, I tried to get up at 4:00 a.m., pacing the floor in prayer, "putting my time in" before anyone else got up. Yet many days, I failed to do so and was then plagued with guilt. Periodically, I

1. Cecil J. Blay, IT IS WRITTEN, p.98.

withdrew to a remote cottage, in order to give myself over to undistracted prayer, crying out to God to have mercy on me. Ironically, on other occasions, I was self-righteous concerning the times of prayer which I had managed to achieve. I was a walking contradiction; yet even so, I still had a deep hunger to know God and to win His approval.

Prayer meetings were held at least three nights a week; seldom was there a message or Bible reading, just prayer alone. We felt this was the only way to learn how to crucify the flesh and to walk in the spirit. We were young and naive and made some very foolish decisions. Several times, we should have sought medical assistance, but felt God wanted us to pray and trust Him, instead. Obviously, I don't recommend such a course to anyone; but we didn't know any better. God was gracious to us, and I'm so thankful that He kept us from serious calamity.

I don't regret those days of "spiritual bondage," although there was so much pain and confusion and many unanswered prayers. Through my experiences of that period, I acquired some valuable training that has had a profound effect on my life. I learned, the hard way, that prayer is not meant to be either a formal ritual or a grievous duty, but a natural, necessary, and very gratifying part of a believer's life. Above all, I learned the benefit of spending time alone with the Lord, and even today get restless if I cannot find the total privacy which I crave for this purpose. For fifteen years, I hunted moose in Northern Ontario, miles from anyone except for my hunting partners; and on most days, I did not even see them. Each morning, I was drawn to my tree-stand, overlooking a large swamp. There I sat alone, sometimes, from morning until dusk, enjoying the overwhelming peace of God's potent company.

"All through the Scriptures we have instance after instance of men of God seeking Him in prayer, sometimes for worship, sometimes in contrition and sometimes with defi-

nite requests for His active intervention. Our Lord is the classic example; He constantly sought God in prayer and, at the same time, constantly acknowledged that His chief desire was that God's will should be done. There is no higher pattern upon which we can model our own petitions."[2]

Here are some exemplary passages related to our theme, concerning our Lord Jesus: "And in the morning, rising very early, still in the night, [Jesus] came out and came away into a desolate place, and there He prayed" (Mark 1:35). "And, dismissing the throngs, He ascended into the mountain privately to pray. Now, evening coming on, He was there alone" (Matt.14:23). "Now it occurred in these days that He came out into the mountain to pray, and throughout the night He was in *the prayer of God*" (Luke 6:12).

Accordingly, here are two notable passages related to prayer concerning the apostle Paul: "I am thanking my God at every remembrance of you, always, in every petition of mine for you all, making the petition with joy . . ." (Phil. 1:3,4). "We are thanking the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *always praying* concerning you . . ." (Col.1:3).

Even as our Lord, Elijah the prophet also went up into a mountain (Mount Horeb), earnestly seeking audience with God. ". . . And behold, Yahweh was passing by, and a great and steadfast wind was ripping apart the mountains and was breaking up the crags before Yahweh; yet Yahweh was not in the wind. After the wind was an earthquake; yet Yahweh was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake was a fire; yet Yahweh was not in the fire. After the fire was the sound of *a gentle stillness*"(1 Kings 19:11b,12). It was only then, in the midst of a gentle stillness, that Yahweh made His presence known to Elijah, declaring, "What have you to do here, Elijah?" (1 Kings 19:13). What an *honor,* and, what a *comfort* it is, "in the

2. Cecil J. Blay, It is Written, p.99.

midst of gentle stillness," to hear God's voice in quietude. Is there anything in this life more excellent?

". . . He who is coming to God must believe that He is, and is becoming a Rewarder of those who seek Him out" (Heb.11:6). "My son, if you take my words and store up my instructions within you, attending with your ear to wisdom, and you stretch out your heart to comprehension, indeed if you call out for understanding, and you lift up your voice for comprehension, if you seek it as for silver and search for it as for buried treasures, then you shall understand the fear of Yahweh, and you shall find the knowledge of God" (Prov.2:1-5).

"Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but *in everything, by prayer* and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:4-7).

Through meditation upon God's Word, we are rewarded with the treasures of knowledge and understanding. As we really get to know Him, He whispers His peace and joy into our hearts. But make no mistake: the busier and noisier our lives, the more difficult it is to hear His quiet testimony.

We are instructed to pray

Our great apostle Paul, instructs us many times to pray. Here, I will quote only a few examples: "*In prayer be persevering*, watching in it with thanksgiving" (Col.4:2). "Be rejoicing always. Be *praying unintermittingly.* In everything be giving thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess.5:16-18). "Furthermore, *pray,* brethren, concerning us, that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified, according as it is with you also" (2 Thess.3:1).

How is it possible to be *persevering* in prayer, even as to be praying *unintermittingly*? "As God speaks to us through His Word, so we speak to Him through prayer. This becomes a *way of life* and an *attitude of mind,* not a formal ritual."[3] "It is quite possible to be always in the *attitude of prayer* in the subconscious mind, so that all our other work is done in an *atmosphere of dependence* on God. To be continually putting our petitions into words is quite the opposite of the unremittent prayer of the apostle. The scribes of old were prolix in prayer (Mark 12:40), but it only drew down judgment upon them. Rather it is the inarticulate pleadings of the spirit, of which we are not always aware, which immediately makes its presence known, when occasion demands it."[4] Prayer is the *soul's sincere desire,* uttered or unexpressed. It is possible to be praying and not realize it. If our attitude of mind is a dependence on Him and our heart is longing for Him, is this not prayer?

PRAYER IS OUT OF GOD

How often we hear Romans 11:36 quoted: ". . . Out of Him and through Him and for Him is all . . . ." and, Ephesians 1:11, "[God] is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will." We love these verses, and are most grateful to God for the gift of faith to believe the great truth concerning His deity which these texts reveal; this becomes especially so as we realize how few can receive their testimony without any reservation. But even so, are we mindful as well of God's powerful operations as they affect us on a personal level? Paul, when speaking of God's operations concerning ourselves, uses phrases such as "among us" and "in you." To the Philippians he wrote, "He Who

3. Dean Hough, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.77, p.4.

4. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.77, p.63.

undertakes a good *work among you,* will be performing it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil.1:6); and, "It is God Who is *operating in you* to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:13). God's powerful operations of grace in us and among us bring Him great delight; how glorious this is for us to behold as we take the time and make the effort to contemplate it.

Regarding God becoming All in us, A. E. Knoch wrote, "If our subconscious mind is habitually in tune with Him, so that we only need to touch a key to make it audible, there is a constant connection or communion which is very close to that for which God is preparing the whole universe."[5]

Someday all will understand and glorify God for His wisdom and love, but right now it is our especial time to know Him and fellowship with Him. We may not always understand what He is doing, or why He operates the way He does. But, be thankful, children of God, that He is working in you, preparing you for His allotment among the celestials.

Regarding God's operation in us, Paul declares that "God wills to make known [to us] what are the glorious riches of this secret among the nations, which is: Christ *among you,* the expectation of glory—Whom we are announcing, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we should be presenting every man mature in Christ Jesus; for which I am toiling also, *struggling* in accord with His operation, which is *operating in me* with power" (Col.1:27-29).

As God's chosen vessel, Paul was called to announce, admonish, and teach, with the goal of presenting all before God, mature in Christ Jesus. For this cause he toiled, *even struggling.* Yet this very struggle was in accord with God's operation, which operated in Paul with power.

5. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.77, p.64.

If God has indeed opened our eyes to perceive the glorious riches of this secret—that of Christ among the nations, with the corresponding expectation of glory granted to us which accords with this allotment—we should not be surprised to find ourselves as well in the midst of great struggle. It is a struggle for clarity, for accuracy, even as for stability and settledness. If Christ is among us and is operating in us, we will not only have a great expectation of glory, but, as we grow in faith, we will find ourselves involved in the "growing pains" of maturity. This is because, for such believers, "It is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, not only [for us] to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also, having the *same struggle* such as you are perceiving in me, and now are hearing to be in me" (Phil. 1:29,30). Our allotment among the celestials, God's calling above in Christ Jesus, is the occasion of our spiritual warfare; and this entails a "vast struggle" even though unsolicited by ourselves (*cp* 1 Thess.2:2; Eph.6:10-17).

Mature believers will recognize this struggle for what it is, and will not resist the work of the spirit, but welcome God's operations in their lives. As God's "holy ones" we become devoted for His use, and find ourselves *struggling* for one another in prayers, that we may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God (Col.4:12). We do not initiate this operation or the struggle, nor can we ultimately halt it either. Consequently then, "Let us have fond affection for one another with brotherly fondness, in honor deeming one another first, in diligence not slothful, fervent in spirit, slaving for the Lord, rejoicing in expectation, enduring affliction, *persevering in prayer . . .*" (Rom.12:10-12).

From time to time, we may all find ourselves doubting the worth of persevering in this noble battle in which we are enveloped. In such instances, then, we need to be entreated, once again, simply to *heed* Paul's exhortation: "Present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing

to God, your logical divine service, and not to be configured to this eon, but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, for you to be *testing what is the will of God,* good and well pleasing and perfect" (Rom.12:1,2). Then, when we ourselves have been invigorated anew, we will be able to comfort the fainthearted and to uphold the infirm in prayer, as did Epaphras, *struggling* in prayer on behalf of his fellow believers, that they also might stand mature and "*fully assured in all the will of God*" (Col.4:12b).

It is not, as we are often told, that God somehow merely "sees the end from the beginning," but that, from the beginning, He *tells* us what the "hereafter" *will* be, in light of the fact that the events hereafter are the events which *result* from His counsel (i.e., they constitute His intention) even as from His desire, which He *causes* to occur and thus fulfills:

9 **Remember** the **former** thing**s from** the **eon,**
For I am **El, and** there **is no** *fr*__**other!**__
Elohim! and no other **like Me!**
10 **Telling from** the **beginning,** the **hereafter,**
And from aforetime *w*__**what has not**__ yet **been done,**
Saying, *7*__**All**__*0* **My counsel shall be confirmed,**
And all My desire shall I do;
11 **Calling from** the sun**rise,** a **bird of prey,**
From a **land afar,** a **man of My counsel,**
Indeed I have spoken; Indeed I shall bring it to pass**!**
I have formed the plan**; Indeed I shall do it!**

(Isa.46:9-11)

10 **For just as the downpour** |__**descends and the snow**__
from the heavens,
+__**Yet it**__ does **not** |__**return there**__*d*__**,**__
But rather it soaks `the earth
And causes it to **bear and sprout,**
And it gives seed to the **sower**| **and bread to** the **eater**|**,**
11 **So shall My word** *b*__**be**__ *w*__**that shall**__ go **forth from My mouth;**

It shall not return to Me empty,
But rather it does `w**what I desire**
And prospers in that for **which I sent it.**
(Isa.55:10,11)

While some will say that if God is truly operating all, without exception, then our prayers can have no value at all, since whatever He has appointed to come to pass will occur, whether or not we engage in prayer. This, however, is not the case. It is simply incorrect to say that whatever God has appointed to come to pass will occur, whether or not we engage in prayer. Some blessings are only granted in response to prayer; and we have no way of knowing which blessings these are. As those, then, who are seeking God's favor, who are mindful that in any certain case prayer may well be essential thereunto, we are diligent accordingly to make our requests known to Him.

Besides, whatever prayer we do actually engage in finds its origin, means, and objective in God Himself, according to His own purpose (*cf* Rom.11:36). The absolute fact of God's operation of all, does not jeopardize, or contradict, the relative fact that God often accomplishes His purpose and grants His blessing, not regardless of our prayer or apart from our prayer, but solely *through our prayer,* which He Himself inspires.

God loves to bring help to the needy and joy to the broken-hearted, but He also longs for our love in return. He is preparing us to have a part in reconciling the whole creation and then He will have glorious fellowship with all. This is what His heart yearns for. The more intimate time we spend with Him in prayer, the more our heart yearns for the same.

Therefore, ". . . Let us go, yea go to beseech the face of Yahweh, and to seek Yahweh of hosts; I am going, even I" (Zech.8:21).

Don Bast

ATTAINING TO THE UNITY OF THE FAITH

Question:

Why don't we have unity of the faith today? I sometimes attend a "mainline" evangelical church. Its pastor holds and teaches the usual views: salvation is conditional and is gained or lost according to the sinner's exercise of his freedom of will, as traditionally understood; the dead are not wholly dead, but instead, somehow, immaterially, at the time of "death," go to either heaven or hell; the doctrine of the Trinity is not only true, but one cannot be saved unless one wholeheartedly embraces this doctrine accordingly; and, the punishment of the lost will be (1) extremely and unspeakably painful, both physically and mentally, and (2) absolutely endless in its duration, without mitigation or interruption, throughout the endless future.

Yet, on a few occasions, I have attended somewhat "Concordant-related" conferences where the above views not only are rejected, but where opposite teachings are affirmed: salvation is unconditional, hence does not depend upon the free will of man, however this might be understood; the dead are wholly dead, hence no one goes either to heaven or hell when death ensues; since there is only one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, the doctrine of the Trinity is therefore false; and, similarly, since all mankind will eventually be saved, the doctrine of eternal punishment is likewise false.

While I agree with these latter teachings, I could not help noticing that even at such conferences where such teachings are at least generally affirmed, there

was nevertheless much diversity of opinion if not on these subjects then at least concerning various other subjects, beyond these more fundamental topics.

This brings me back to my original question, which I would ask especially in light of the fact that Paul says, "Now I am entreating you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all may be saying the same thing, and there may be no schisms among you, but you may be attuned to the same mind and to the same opinion" (1 Cor.1:10): *Why* don't we have unity of the faith today?

Answer:

HOW WE LONG for the day when all will be saying the same thing, when there will be no schisms among us, and all will be attuned to the same mind even as to the same opinion. And, we are confident that that day will finally come, for God has decided thus: "that all mankind be saved *and* come into *a realization of the truth.*" Is it not our Saviour, God, Who *wills* that this should occur (1 Tim.2:4), the One Who declares, "All My counsel shall be confirmed, and all My desire shall I do" (Isa.46:10b)? In this regard as well, then, as concerns every human being's eventual realization of the truth, let us put our confidence even as our expectation in God.

But in the meantime, we must face reality as we find it. At present, in the wisdom of God, "to accord with what *must be*" (Rom.8:26), no one can go beyond what his "disposition [i.e., mental inclination] *must be*" (*cf* Rom. 12:3). Accordingly, then, "it *must be* that there are sects also among you, *that those also who are qualified may be becoming apparent among you*" (1 Cor.11:19). Even though the qualifiedness of those who *are* qualified will only be apparent to those who have eyes to see, it is needful, by way of contrast, for those who are "*dis*qualified as to the faith" (2 Tim.3:8), *to be* disqualified as to the faith—

"that those . . . who *are* qualified may be becoming *apparent* among you."

THE SAME MIND AND OPINION

You pointed out the apostle Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 1:10, where he declares: "Now I am entreating you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all may be saying the same thing, and there may be no schisms among you, but you may be attuned to the same mind and to the same opinion."

This passage of Scripture, however, is often taken as if it said, "Now I am entreating you to do the following, and *that* is what you are to do: *All are to be saying the same thing,* so that there will be no schisms among you . . . ."

This is by no means what Paul says. Neither the definite article (which is often used as a demonstrative pronoun, i.e., "this" or "that,") nor either *ekeino* or *kakeino* ("that"; which speak of a specific subject in view; e.g., Mark 12:4) are used in this phrase in question here in 1 Corinthians 1:10. Instead, the word used is [*h*]*ina,* which is "a conjunction introducing the logical result"[1] (i.e., ideally, that the end in view might follow, consequent to the action performed, as the effect of the cause).

As a *necessary* cause (i.e., as an essential "means of grace") on behalf of his fellow believers' progress in the faith, Paul frequently and emphatically engages in entreaty (*cp* Acts 27:33,34). Even though entreaty is often a necessary (i.e., indispensable) cause of our obedience, it is not in itself a *sufficient* cause thereof, which, in order to be made operative, requires God's further work of *regulating* both the spirit and the heart of man in such a way so as to produce the essential change of heart and resultant will within the human psyche (*cf* Prov.4:23b; 16:2; 21:2; *cp* 1 Sam.2:3, ". . . actions are regulated by Him").

1. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, "that," entry 3, p.301.

Thus, the sense here in 1 Corinthians 1:10 is as follows: "Now I am entreating you, brethren . . . *in order that* all may be saying the same thing . . . ." Unto this end, Paul engaged himself thus, with a view to effecting this needed change among the Corinthian believers.

It is accordingly, then, unto this same end that Christ "gives these, indeed, as apostles, yet these as prophets, yet these as evangelists, yet these as pastors and teachers, toward the adjusting of the saints for the work of dispensing, for the upbuilding of the body of Christ, *unto the end that we should all attain to the unity of the faith* and of the realization of the son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ, that we may by no means still be minors, surging hither and thither and being carried about by every wind of teaching, by human caprice, by craftiness with a view to the systematizing of the deception" (Eph 4:11-14).

This is the end in view, and this end in view will be realized in due course. It is simply that it will by no means be realized *today,* during this present lifetime. The only way that it could be realized today would be if God were to bring it to realization today, which He will not, since this would be contrary to His intention. Since even our apostle, in himself, is nothing (*cf* 1 Cor.3:7), and, since we ourselves are likewise nothing (Gal.6:3), it is clear that we cannot help to bring to fruition the very maturity for which we long. The situation is rather thus, according as Paul declares: "I plant, Apollos irrigates, but God makes it grow up" (1 Cor.3:6). May we come to realize that, "For *everything* there is *a stated time,* and a season for *every event* under the heavens" (Ecc.3:1).

While patiently waiting, however, for God to bring this vital unity of faith to fruition among us, Paul affords each one full liberty of opinion, saying, ". . . Let each one be fully assured in his own mind" (Rom 14:5b); and, "The faith

which you have, have for yourself in God's sight. Happy is he who is not judging himself in that which he is attesting" (Rom.14:22).

DEFICIENCIES IN TEACHING

In too many cases, wherever the Scriptures may be heralded, the teaching set forth is simply not very good. In saying this, I do not have in mind presentational skills (which at least in some cases may be excellent), but rather the substantive content itself of what is said. Very often, so much that is affirmed is either non-factual, misleading, irrelevant, prejudicial, speculative, or simply illogical. False and fallacious arguments abound. Such errors in argumentation are often made not only by those who, unwittingly, speak against truth, but by those as well who while speaking on behalf of actual truth, likewise unwittingly, nevertheless set forth many an erroneous argument on its behalf and in its cause.

In such cases, not only as concerns the speakers but the hearers as well, the problem is not unbelief in the Scriptures themselves, but imprudence, credulity, carelessness, bias, and naiveté, as concerns proper judgment of the sense of the Scriptures themselves.

God must enlighten us; otherwise, left to ourselves, we will simply find a way to err. It is not that we by any means ultimately trust in intellectual competency or even in ethical commitment. Rather, it is that we are wholly dependent on God if we would think a correct thought or do a proper deed.

It is simply that, and this is especially so among those who would seek to teach others, competency "according to God" (*cp* 2 Cor.7:9-11; i.e., as opposed to according to human supposition) is the ordinary *means of grace* which God uses in granting enlightenment, with a view toward *further* progress in the faith (*cp* 2 Tim.2:6). Indeed, apart

from His blessing upon any such skills and inclinations that we may have—which are themselves and wherever they should exist, wholly His achievement (*cf* Eph.2:10; *cp* Isa. 26:12)—we can hardly expect to present ourselves to God qualified, unashamed workers, *correctly* cutting the word of truth (2 Tim.2:15). How much less, then, can we expect to do so when lacking sufficient aptness and training?

THE POWER OF THE WORD

If we should be graced, even characteristically, to "fully follow [Paul] in [his] teaching," as well as, in some useful measure, to follow him also in his "motive, purpose, faith, patience, love [and] endurance" whether or not, beyond these, even in his "persecutions [and] sufferings" besides (2 Tim.3:10,11), we should, in any case, expect to experience some measure of corresponding persecution. This is simply because—at some time and to some degree—". . . *all* who are wanting to live devoutly in Christ Jesus *shall* be persecuted" (2 Tim.3:12).

Those who are actually true to the Word, to many, will appear "as deceivers" (*cf* 2 Cor.6:8); that is, this is what they will seem to be, even though they are not. This is even as the case with the Galatians who had been "bewitched" (Gal.3:1) by Paul's opponents into turning away from him. By his very efforts in which he was actually being true to them, to their perception, he had become their enemy: "So that I have become your enemy by being true to you!" (Gal.4:16).

As believers, faith comes to us "out of tidings" (Rom. 10:17), that is, as a result of our "hearing" and "seeing" the testimony of the Scriptures, once we are first given ears to hear and eyes to see (*cf* Prov.20:12; *cp* Deut.29:4; Mark 4:22,23). It is the power of the Scriptural testimony as operative in our lives that brings conviction to our minds. We believe because of the power of the Word, "according to the power that is operating in us" (Eph.3:20). That is,

"from God you receive, not the word of men, but, according as it truly is, the word of God, which is *operating* also in you who are believing" (1 Thess.2:13). "Now on hearing . . . the word of the Lord . . . they believe, whoever were *set* for life eonian" (Acts 13:48).

Explicitly, then, to answer your question, "*Why* don't we have unity of the faith today?" my answer is, Because God does not intend for unity of the faith to obtain among us today, else if He did so intend, it would obtain among us even now.

Your deeper question then becomes, Why does God not intend for unity of the faith to obtain among us today? And here the answer can only be because, in His wisdom, to accord with His purpose to glorify Himself according as He is intending and to bless His creatures accordingly, victory must be achieved out of humiliation and failure. Even the ecclesia itself must prove to be a failure, with respect to its collective undertakings. This is only fitting for those who are still members of the old humanity. Yet even here God mercifully gives a measure of light and a portion of grace to all of His chosen ones, lest we should fail altogether and be wholly undone in every way entirely.

In the Scriptures themselves, God continually maintains a testimony in the world, a beacon to the truth of His own Word. Beyond this, and even if their voice should be little heard, He often further grants certain ones the privilege of faithfully heralding various scriptural teachings of great consequence, with the blessing of many accordingly as the result.

It is not for us, however, to *decide* whether the progress of the evangel among God's people is as it should be, albeit to accord with God's purpose. Instead, it is ours simply to *realize* that the progress of the evangel among God's people *is* as it should be, to accord with God's purpose. In this we would be satisfied, and in this we would rejoice.

J.R.C.

THE LAST WORDS OF DAVID

23 [+]**Now these** are **the** [af]**last words of David:**
The **averring of David son of Jesse,**
[+] The **averring of the master** [Q]whom **El raised** up~**,**
The **anointed of** the **Elohim of Jacob,**
And the **pleasant** one **of** the **psalms of Israel.**
2 The **spirit of Yahweh has spoken** [i]**by me,**
And His declarations have been **on my tongue.**
3 The **Elohim of Israel has said,**
To me the **Rock of Israel has spoken:**
When the one **ruling** [i]**over humanity** is **righteous**
And is **ruling** [M]**in**[c] the **fear of Elohim,**
4 [+]**Then** it is **like** the **light of** the **morning,**
When the **sun** [l]**rises,**
A **morning without thick** cloud**s,**
[f]**Like** the **brightness** [f]**after rain**
Bringing **verdure from** the **earth.**
5 [t]**Indeed,** is **not my house thus with El?**
For He has [pl]**made** an **eonian covenant** [›]**with me,**
Arranged[l] forth **in every** respect **and** safe**guarded**[l]**.**
[t]**Indeed, shall He not cause all my salvation**
And my **every desire** [t] to [l]**sprout?**
6 [+]**Yet** the **worthless,** they are [i]**like thorn**s,
All of them isolated[l] away,
For they should not be taken [i]**by hand.**
7 [+]**When** a **man** [l]**touches** [i] **them, he** must **be** [l]**fully** armed
With **iron and** the **shaft of** a **spear.**
And [i]**with fire shall they be burned,**
yea **burned**[–] **in** [7]**their shame~.**

GOD'S CHOSEN RULER

THERE IS an interesting similarity between the way David begins this Psalm and the way Balaam began his inspired blessings on Israel. Both prophets begin by introducing themselves by name and as the son of their fathers, and both designate their prophecy as the "averring of the master" who had been allowed to hear and repeat the words of God (2 Sam.23:1,2; Num.24:3,4,15,16). Being aware of the covenant that God had made with him, David may well have believed that the "star of Jacob" and the "scepter of Israel" were to be fulfilled in him and his seed. The word *transfix* is seldom used in the Scriptures, but occurs twice in Balaam's prophecies (Num.24:8,17) and twice in David's Psalms (2 Sam.22:39; Psa.18:38).

David gives a beautifully poetic description of righteous rule. It speaks of the best days of his reign, and even more of the reign of Christ. Who has never stepped out into the bright sunlight, after the rain has captured every particle of dust and locked them in the soil, and after every leaf and blossom have been bathed, so the full beauty of their colors and fragrances can be enjoyed? Who has never paused in the sunlight after days of dark clouds to let the sun's warmth and light penetrate their skin and brighten their soul? "The light is sweet, and it is good for the eyes to see the sun" (Ecc.11:7).

David was inspired to tell us that these experiences are like life lived under truly righteous rule. It is something the world has only seen glimmers of from time to time. It is something the philosophers have dreamed of and have unsuccessfully tried, again and again, to define. Despite centuries of cultural experiments, humanity still waits to see it. It will come with Christ, and meanwhile it will only be seen with the eyes of faith.

J. Phillip Scranton

THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

As will be seen by the Skeleton Index of subjects, the main body of Jeremiah is occupied with his *Commission,* his *Predictions, Historical Notices,* and his *Scrolls.* All are reverted to in inverse order. His *Commission* is *given* at the beginning and *ended* at the close. His *Predictions* concern *Israel* first and later the *Nations.* Then he takes up the account of king *Jehoiakim,* and balances it by that of *Zedekiah.*

The Scrolls occupy the center. First they are *written and* read, then *destroyed* and *rewritten.* Their arrangement conforms so close to other life forms that it is convincing evidence that it contains divine life. This is further confirmed by the predictive portion which revealed things which could be known only to Yahweh, the eonian Elohim.

SKELETON INDEX

1:1-3 Introduction	**EPISTOLARY**	**Conclusion 52:1-34**
1:4-19 Given	**COMMISSION**	**Ended 51:64b**
2:1-20:18 All Israel	**PREDICTIONS**	**Nations 46:1-51:64a**
21:1-35:19 Jehoiakim	**HISTORICAL**	**Zedekiah 37:1-45:5**
36:1-19 Written, Read	**SCROLLS**	**Destroyed, Rewritten 20-32**

Until recently no one seems to have observed any order in the arrangement of Jeremiah's prophecies. As many of them are dated, attempts were made to rearrange them in chronological order, but with no apparent advantage. The skeleton presented above should show that, under the apparent disorder there is a regular and vital arrangement, which is clear evidence of its inspiration.

JEREMIAH OF ANATHOTH

1 The **words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, *f*of the priests who** were **in Anathoth in** the **land of Benjamin,**

The name Jeremiah has become a synonym for a doleful lamentation, full of complaint and despair. But that is by no means its significance, for it will be found that all his "jeremiads" serve only as a dark and dismal background for the "Exaltation-of-Yahweh," for that is the meaning of his name and the true intent of his great prophecy. Hilkiah, his father's name, means "Portion-of-Yahweh," which may signify that his portion and Jeremiah's, by birth, was a very special one in Israel, for they were of the order of Aaron. Hence they had all the privileges of priesthood (*cf* 1 Chron.24:1-6). Usually, when priesthood failed to train the people in the ways of Elohim, a prophet was chosen from some other tribe, even as the great Chief Priest Himself, who came from the tribe of Judah. But sometimes, as in the case of Ezekiel and John the Baptist, a prophet was taken from their apostate ranks.

Anathoth may mean "Responder." It was a Levitical city in the tribe of Benjamin, only a short distance north of Jerusalem. It is mentioned as often in this prophecy as all other occurrences, because Jeremiah redeemed a field there for his cousin, and the records of the transaction put into an earthen jar, so that they are still in existence, and will yet be found when the kingdom comes (*cf* Jer. 32:6-15). This was done as a token that Anathoth will yet be the scene of such transactions in the future. Jeremiah had predicted the deportation. By this means he certified to the certainty of the restoration (Jer.32:36-44).

JEREMIAH 1:2,3

Immediately we learn that Jeremiah was given the word of Yahweh. "For not by the will of man was prophecy car-

ried on at any time, but, being carried on by holy spirit, holy men of God, speak" (2 Peter 1:21). Thus Jeremiah was separated as a holy man of God:

[2] **to whom** the **word of Yahweh** [b]**came in** the **days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah, in** the **thirteenth year** [>]**of his reign;** [3] + **it** [lb]**came** [i]**through** the **days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, until** the **finishing**[–] **of** the **eleventh year** [>]**of Zedekiah son of Josiah, king of Judah,** that is**, until** the **deportation**[–] **of Jerusalem in the fifth month.**

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As the time period in which this prophecy was given is among the first things brought to our attention, it is vital that we consider it as set forth in the historical prophets, and keep this as the backdrop for the whole action. As not only the dates and the kings are given, but also the closing event, this should occupy a prominent place in our study. The *deportation* of *Judah,* centered in *Jerusalem,* is the climax to which all tends. In this it is in direct contrast with Ezekiel, which commences *after* the deportation. These periods are not concerned with the lives of these prophets, which is a minor matter, nor are they confined to these eras, but they indicate the background of the spiritual contents.

THE DAYS OF JOSIAH

The best introduction to Jeremiah is a careful study of the last chapters of 2 Kings (22-25) and 2 Chronicles (34-36). But it may help to condense both accounts into a few sentences. Josiah was probably the best of David's line. He destroyed false worship and repaired the temple. When a scroll of the law was found, he was greatly distressed by the departure of his people from its teachings (2 Kings 22:8-13), and did his best to reform them. His

celebration of the passover surpassed every one that has been held during the days of previous kings, even David (2 Kings 23:22). He dreaded the fulfillment of the curses in the law, but Yahweh told him that they would not come in his day, because of his good reign (2 Kings 22:18-20).

It may seem strange that Yahweh should send such a good king just as He was about to destroy the nation. But this was needed in order to highlight the guilt of the people. A bad king, like Jeroboam, who introduced idolatry and forsook the worship of Yahweh (*cf* 1 Kings 12:31-33), could be blamed for the defection of his subjects. But Judah was so very apostate that not even the best of David's sons could stem the tide of insubjection. Personally he was spared evil, but the nation suffered a series of three disasters which we may call their *subjection,* and their *deportation,* beginning about seven years later, and the *desolation,* about a dozen years later still, when the temple and Jerusalem were destroyed.

THE SONS OF JOSIAH

Despite the fact that they had such a good father, all the sons of Josiah refused to follow in his steps. This was necessary to fulfill Yahweh's predictions.

Jehoahaz, or Shallum, who was first made king in place of his father, did what was evil in the eyes of Yahweh and died a captive in Egypt (2 Kings 23:30-34; Jer.22:10-12). He was replaced by his brother Eliakim, whose name was changed to Jehoiakim, who also did much evil (2 Kings 23:34-24:6). Jeremiah had many dealings with Jehoiakim and spoke of his disgraceful record and death in 22:13-19. Jehoiakim's son, Jehoiachin, then became king but was taken captive to Babylon (2 King.23:6-16). He is referred to as Coniah in Jeremiah 22:24-30. Then Josiah's son Mattaniah was made king in Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar who changed his name to Zedekiah. He also did what was evil in the eyes of

Yahweh, and was blinded and taken to Babylon because he had revolted against Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:17-25:7; Jer.52:1-11). It was during the times of these kings, of Josiah and his sons, that the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah.

THE FORTY YEARS

It is intensely significant that, so far as can be ascertained, this period from the thirteenth year of Josiah to the deportation of Jerusalem was about *forty* years in duration. In this it seems to parallel a similar period of testing, much of which was depicted in the book of Acts. In both cases the temple was destroyed at the end. Here it was Solomon's glorious edifice; later it was Herod's splendid house. Israel was often tested for this length of time. They were forty years in the wilderness. The Judges Othniel, Barak, and Gideon each directed them during forty year periods (Judges 3:11; 5:31; 8:28). Also the priest Eli judged Israel for this period (1 Sam.4:18), and the kings David and Solomon reigned for this length of time (1 Kings 2:11; 11:42). Now that Judah's kings had failed, the nation is given a final testing under the prophet Jeremiah. Such is the setting of this prophecy.

A. E. Knoch

IRENE JENSEN

Our sister, Irene Jensen, from Wittenberg, Wisconsin, recently was put to repose, awaiting the shout of her Lord when He comes to take His own. From its earliest years, *Unsearchable Riches* magazine arrived, first at her parents' home, then at her own, and was eagerly read. For many years, and upon many occasions, Irene contributed articles to local newspapers in which she made bold yet gracious testimony to the grace and love of God in the saving work of Christ on behalf of all mankind. The Scriptures themselves, especially the letters of Paul, were the foundation of her faith and sustained her through the struggles and disappointments of her life. We look forward to that time when we will all be always together with our Lord.

JUSTIFIED IN GOD'S GRACE

HUMANITY is not right. The human race was created in the image of God and according to His likeness to oversee the lower creatures and keep all in order for the good of the whole (Gen.1:26-31). God created it all, the heavens and the earth and all living things, culminating with the creation of humanity in Adam, whose name means "most like," that is, "most like" God. This was also the name given to humanity itself. But neither Adam nor the race descending from him lived up to that name.

What has happened? What do we see as we look around at our world and at humanity, the portion of God's creation that is intended to be most like Him?

What God has said about humanity in Genesis 1 is not manifested in humanity. The human race is not filling its place in creation in a way that accords with its name.

Today with modern means of communication we seem to be made aware of many more details about humanity than ever before. Perhaps we would rather not be so well informed—wars and tyranny and violence, waste and sorrow and suffering, selfishness and greed and dishonor, and worship of gods and powers and ideas that seem only to perpetuate injustices and incite to further unrighteousness. On the other hand, perhaps in seeing so many evils as they exist throughout the world, in distant places, we are kept somewhat from giving attention to all of these evils as they exist nearby, *and in us*. In any case, we are aware, as former generations also were aware, that the entire creation (including most pointedly, the human race) is subjected

to vanity and enslaved to corruption, and is groaning and travailing together (Rom.8:20,22).

IN GOD'S SIGHT

And what does God see as He looks at His creation and at the human race which He created with the distinct purpose of service for the good of the earth, as a reflection of God Himself? What does God see as He views humanity as it is apart from the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus?

God's indignation is being revealed from heaven on all the irreverence and injustice of mankind who are retaining the truth in injustice . . . . (Rom.1:18)

It is not that God did not know this would happen. He is God and tells from the beginning all that will occur (*cf* Isa.46:10,11). It is rather that He, nevertheless, feels what He knew He would feel in the evil situation He deemed necessary for the appreciation of good (*cf* Isa.45:5-7; Rom. 11:32-36). Humanity was created to bring glory to God by reflecting His goodness, even His righteousness throughout His creation, and to appreciate Him with thankfulness. But the evidence shows that this has not come about.

Human beings are defenseless before any just judgment of God,

. . . because, knowing God, not as God do they glorify or thank Him, but vain were they made in their reasonings, and darkened is their unintelligent heart. (Rom.1:21)

Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God. All avoid Him: at the same time they were useless. (Rom. 3:11,12)

JUST REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW

It is a bad situation. Isn't there anything that can be done about it? Perhaps a clear set of instructions for our guidance will help?

. . . the doers of law shall **be justified.** (Rom.2:13)

At Sinai God gave one small portion of humanity a law written in stone which instructed them how they should be living, first with regard to God and then with regard to their associates. Even for humanity as a whole there is some guidance concerning good and bad, written in their hearts (Rom.2:14,15). If those under law did what the law instructed them to do, they would be justified.

Nevertheless, it is impossible for human beings to keep the just requirements of the law. Consequently:

. . .by works of law, no flesh at all shall **be justified** *in His sight, for through law is the recognition of sin.* (Rom.3:20)

Humanity cannot be justified in God's sight by works of law. They are not righteous with respect to Him and the standards He has set in the law, and they cannot be justified for their existence, that is, for their lives as they are lived. They are useless in bringing glory to God and in keeping creation in good order with peace and well-being and happiness and all that is good, and in maintaining right feelings and actions with respect to one another.

Justification, as Paul speaks of it in Romans 3:20, must be "in God's sight." It is not a justification that speaks relatively, such as a human judge might pronounce, where we have human beings "comparing themselves with themselves" (2 Cor.10:12). *Becoming* blameless in efforts to keep the law, as in the case of Saul of Tarsus (Phil.3:6), is not enough (*cp* Rom.7:7-20). The judgment of God is according to truth (Rom.2:2), so that justification in His sight must be absolute and complete. All human acts must be taken into account.

THE EVANGEL OF GOD

This message about God's just judgment is not good news in itself. (If the common teaching that judgment is a "final

thing" were true, then this matter of judgment would be horrible news beyond imagination.) But God announces good news. It is the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.1:1-4):

Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God. (Rom.3:21-23)

In this welcome word, the matter of law and human efforts to keep its just requirements is excluded. The light shines on God, and specifically on His righteousness, which is made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ. The evangel of God tells of the faith of Jesus Christ, "Who was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying" (Rom.4:25). He died for the sake of sinners (Rom.5:8).

This unparalleled act of faith and faithfulness makes God's righteousness manifest in that it is "for all" without partiality. Paul expands on this later, in the following words:

. . . as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just [act] for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just. (Rom.5:18,19)

Jesus Christ's faith in dying for sinners is "for all mankind for life's justifying." His obedience to the death of the cross is so that the vast multitude of humanity which is dying in its irreverence and unrighteousness "shall be constituted just."

When this occurs, all mankind will be useful in fulfilling the place God has for them. They will be constituted righteous while profiting from the experience of evil formerly given them. This will then lead them to glorify and thank God with full appreciation, honoring Him truly not only as their Creator, but as their Saviour and Justifier. Because of the righteous and faithful act of Christ in dying for their sins, they will be constituted just with an appreciation of God that has become deeply imbedded because of their past lives under sin. In short, they will be just and justified by the God Who is just and the Justifier.

But this is to jump ahead. Paul does not develop the theme of God's righteousness as it relates to all mankind right away. Romans 5:18,19 speaks of the future. Humanity, as a whole, still goes on as it has all along. Yet for those who are believing that Christ died for their sins and was entombed and roused the third day, God has granted what Paul calls "the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness" (Rom.5:17). For us, in the evangel of God concerning His Son, God has provided a very special enjoyment of what all will enjoy ultimately. We too have failed to reflect the vision of Genesis 1:26-31,

. . . for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God. (Rom.3:23)

Yet wholly apart from the record of our acts, we who are believing this evangel of God are:

Being justified *gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus . . . .* (Rom.3:24)

That which will finally come about as the result of the faith of Jesus Christ is announced here as being so in the present for us who believe. The faith of Christ is the channel for the achievement of justification, and our faith (such as it is, in accord with the measure granted us by God), is the means used by God in His grace for the reception of it in the present era. Hence, both the faith of Jesus Christ and our faith are in view in the following passage:

For we are reckoning a man to **be justified** *by faith apart from works of law.* (Rom.3:28)

As with Abraham who was not justified by acts (Rom.4:2), but rather had righteousness reckoned to him by God, so is righteousness reckoned to us who are believing (Rom. 4:11,23,24). In this way we are being justified in the present. The consummations of the eons have attained to us (1 Cor.10:11). This is not a legal fiction. Justification is a finished work. But it has not yet been applied to all. It is applied to us when we believe, and we are then sealed with the assurance of the deliverance to us of all that has been procured (*cf* Eph.1:13,14).

This is God's grace to us who are believing.

GRATUITOUS JUSTIFICATION

Justification is apart from works of law. By connecting Romans 3:24-25 with verse 27, removing the period and replacing it with a comma, we read, "Being justified gratuitously, . . . where, then, is boasting, It is debarred!" We have often defined *grace* as unmerited favor, but it would probably be more correct to define it simply as favor and reserve the sense of "unmerited" for the word *gratuity.* But both terms are used here (see also Rom.5:15) so that our place as receivers of what God gives is made clear. Paul does not speak of "cheap grace," but of "gratuitous grace."

IN GOD'S GRACE

The justification spoken of in Romans 3:24 is sourced in the righteousness of God. As far as we are concerned it is gratuitous, without any cause whatsoever in ourselves. It comes to us as God's free favor. But as far as God is concerned this gratuitous grace involved a sacrifice beyond measure, and for His Son, Jesus Christ, it involved the greatest of suffering and loss.

What does it mean when the evangel states that God

is the One Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all (Rom.8:32)? The verb "gives" is in the Greek verb form called "aorist," which is not concerned with time but with fact. The passage does not treat of this giving as something of the past, even though it is a completed work. It views this past act of God as a fact that has reference to all the eons. For God, the blood of His Son being shed by sinful humanity was foreknown before the disruption of the world (1 Peter 1:19). God's Word from Genesis to Revelation and to the climactic revelations given the apostle Paul testifies over and over again to this central and vital act of God.

It was always before Him. And when the full time came God delegated His Son (Gal.4:6), Who humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil.2:11).

For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit. (Rom.8:3,4)

For the One not knowing sin, [God] makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him. (2 Cor.5:21)

In itself this work of God was full of hurt and horror, but as to its purpose and result it was and is full of joy and glory. In this respect, in view of its results, God desired to crush Him, so that many would be justified (*cf* Isa.53:10,11). The cross of Christ is God's greatest work, greater even than creation itself. It makes known His wisdom and power (*cf* 1 Cor.1:23,24) and commends His love (Rom.5:8). And it reveals and manifests His righteousness in establishing justification.

THROUGH CHRIST JESUS

God does all things through His Son. "For us there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is, and we through Him" (1 Cor.8:6). This was not so clear in the Hebrew Scriptures, but the types such as the offerings, and the prophecies concerning deliverance to come are nearly meaningless apart from this fact.

God's work of judgment is carried on *through Jesus Christ,* and in mentioning this in Romans 2:16 Paul could not forbear pointing out that this accords with his evangel. The evangel *concerns* Jesus Christ our Lord, through Whose faith in dying for sinners, God's righteousness is made manifest. He is the One through Whom God's work of salvation and justification is conducted. We are being justified gratuitously in God's grace . . .

through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.

This deliverance which is in Christ Jesus is a deliverance from the verdict: Not Justified, to the joyful state of being justified gratuitously. Where it is said of us as we are in the flesh, that we are wanting of the glory of God, we now have been delivered through our Lord Jesus Christ into this grace in which we stand where we exult in expectation of the glory of God.

WHAT IS NOW SEEN

The world seems to continue as it has been from the days of Adam. We see the groaning and wretchedness which results from irreverence and unrighteousness. We also know that there will be a day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God, in which it will be found that no flesh at all can be justified in God's sight. Not one is righteous, not even one. Yet this does not bring us despair, for we know Who will be the Judge, and we

know what God has done through Him for a deliverance unto life's justifying and being constituted righteous.

We see in faith that God is reckoning righteousness to us, and that we are blessed with every spiritual blessing, in Christ, according as God chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless *in His sight* (Eph.1:3,4).

This special blessing of justification in the sight of God is almost beyond comprehension. Yet realizing that the rest of humanity will also someday enjoy this justification which comes through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, makes the superabundance of grace which we have obtained from God, all the more blessed.

As for myself, I do not do well in sharing this message of spiritual grace with others who know nothing of it. I feel certain that I do not grasp clearly all of what Paul is saying here in Romans. But more and more I am learning to rely on the living God, which is the same as *expecting* on Him, or rather, putting my expectation in Him. I do look around me at the world and the great mass of humanity and think of what it is going to be like when God is justified in giving this human race the name of "Most Like" Him. Then they will glorify and thank Him and rejoice in the glorious freedom of the children of God. What is being observed is temporary (2 Cor.4:18). This does not refer only to our own afflictions and the decay of our "outward man" (although it does specifically refer to that in the text, and we can all appreciate that reference), but to all that is not right in the world.

For the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor.4:6)

D.H.H.

HERBERT DIRKS

We are sorry to announce the death of our brother, Herb Dirks, on January 13. He was born in Germany prior to World War II and suffered greatly during his youth from that conflict. Moving to North America after the war, he lived many years in the Cleveland, Ohio area, where he married and raised his family. Always eager for fellowship around the Word of God, Herb found joy in knowing that all will be reconciled to God through the cross of His beloved Son. But also for Herb there was often great distress in finding that very few seemed to share this happiness. His wife, Barbara, preceded him in death. Our condolences and prayers go out to their daughters, Maria and Helga, and their families.

WILLIAM SANDERLIN

It is well over forty years ago that we first became acquainted with Bill Sanderlin, then a young laborer, with a growing family, who was burdened by religious fears and mistaken concepts of God. Yet in God's grace, he heard and accepted the truth of the finished work of salvation centered in Christ's death for sinners, in which He should be tasting death for the sake of everyone. If there were tests of his faith and setbacks along the way, they served to strengthen his reliance on the living God rather than on himself. We are sorry to hear of his death and extend our sympathy to his family. Yet looking back at Bill's life, we say, Thanks be to God for His gratuitous grace!

CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Work is progressing on the revisions for the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy. After that is done, we will need to finish a detailed introduction for the whole with instructions for use, as well as to search out errors and insert corrections for the presently published portions. We always appreciate hearing from others concerning errors they may have found, or suggestions they may have for improvements. On this matter, we have noted an unfortunate typographical error in the recent publication of *The Latter Prophets.* The words "learn righteousness" were inadvertently omitted from the end of the first line of Isaiah 26:10 (p.54). We ask that those who have purchased copies of this publication insert these words by hand.

Contents:

49 Editorial
52 David's Masters of War
59 Jacob's Contacts with God
63 Appointed as a Prophet
69 White as Snow
79 Struggling in Prayer
90 "Binding" and "Loosing";
"Paul, an *Apostle* . . . . "

MARCH, 2006

Volume XCVII **Number 2**

Concordant Version of

1 Chronicles through Job

(1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job)

Concerning the books included in this fascicle of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, the book of Job is associated with Psalms and Proverbs in the Hebrew canon. Esther is one of five small scrolls, associated as a group; the others are: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations and Ecclesiastes. Ezra (including Nehemiah) appears along with Daniel in a final section of historical writings, concluding with Chronicles.

1 and 2 Chronicles, are treated as one book in Hebrew under the name "Words [or Annals] of the Days" (*cf* 1 Kings 14:19,29). The history is no mere repetition of the books of Samuel and Kings, but a carefully prepared commentary on the same events as they appeared to the eye of Yahweh. Many events which are assigned to human instrumentalities are here traced back to Yahweh. The purposes and counsels of the heart are unveiled in these divine annals.

Ezra and **Nehemiah** are also to be considered as one book under the name "Ezra" which means help. This is the perfect inscription to the history of Judah's restoration to their land and city and temple.

Esther is a marvelous manifestation of the care of Yahweh over His people when their sun is set and they are in the power of their enemies. Then He becomes their guiding star, shaping their way by means of a providence which never escapes His control. By the simplest and most insignificant means He turns the fell designs of their enemies into a source of blessing.

Like all the scrolls which are designated by the name of a man, the meaning of the name, **Job,** is the index to its contents. It means "Enmity." Job is a concrete example of the work of the enemy. The philosophy of evil is discussed to a finish. His four friends make evil the consequence of sin. Job maintains his innocence. Yet Yahweh vindicates him and blesses him far beyond what would have been possible apart from the affliction he had endured. Evil is definitely designed by God to work out His beneficent purpose. Thus the philosophy of evil and enmity is fully elucidated in this book, as its title indicates.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 2006
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-SEVEN

EDITORIAL

IN THE EPISTLE we know as "Ephesians,"[1] the apostle Paul sets forth what has well been termed "the zenith of divine revelation."[2]

Let us consider just a few especially important declarations from this epistle, those which appear within verses three through twelve of chapter one:

1. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, blesses us with every *spiritual* blessing among the *celestials* (Eph.1:3).

2. He does so, in Christ, *according as He chooses us* in Him *before the disruption of the world*, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love *designating us beforehand* for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus (Eph.1:4,5).

3. This is *in accord with the delight of His will*, and for the laud of the glory of His *grace*, which *graces us* in the Beloved, the One in Whom we are having the deliverance through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses *in*

1. "The words ['in Ephesus'] are absent from several important witnesses . . . as well as from manuscripts mentioned by Basil [a writer of the fourth century] and the text used by Origen [circa 182–251 A.D.]" (Bruce M. Metzger; A TEXTUAL COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT, p.601; 1971: United Bible Societies).

"We will continue to call it 'Ephesians' because of custom and convenience and because it is almost a certainty that it *was* sent to Ephesus. But we are practically certain that it was a circular letter addressed to *all the believers in Christ Jesus*, and that the introduction has been spoiled by the addition of the words 'in Ephesus' . . . . Both of the best manuscripts we have, Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, were originally written without these words" (A. E. Knoch; *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.11, p.94). Hence, the Concordant Version omits the words "in Ephesus" from its text of Ephesians 1:1, while including the word "Ephesians" within brackets in its title to this epistle, thus: "Paul to the [Ephesians]."

2. A. E. Knoch; THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.288.

accord with the riches of His *grace,* which He *lavishes* on us (Eph.1:6,7).

4. In all wisdom and prudence, God is making known to us *the secret of His will,* which itself is *in accord with* His *delight,* which He *purposed* in Christ (Eph.1:8,9).

5. The secret of God's will is to have an administration of the complement of the eras, *to head up all in the Christ*—both that in the heavens and that on the earth—in Him in Whom *our lot was cast also,* being *designated beforehand* according to the *purpose* of *the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will,* that we should be for the laud of *His* glory, who are pre-expectant in the Christ (Eph.1:3-12).

As glorious as each one of these marvelous revelations is, it seems that only a few among God's people have ever truly grasped them, having clearly understood their plain testimony, while becoming settled and unmovable concerning them.

That so few have laid hold of these transcendent declarations should not surprise us. Even genuine believers, the members of the ecclesia, in themselves are still flesh; hence, even though they are "in Christ," many are but "minors" in Christ. Since they are still comparatively "fleshy," spiritually speaking, they are only able to drink "milk" and are *unable* to ingest "solid food" (1 Cor.3:1,2).

Such ones are simply in no position to *receive* sound teaching, or to *appreciate* a concordant version, being unable to grasp the importance of *correctly* cutting the word of truth (2 Tim.2:15), even as of having a pattern of *sound words,* ones which we hear from the apostle Paul (2 Tim.1:13).

The only solution to this otherwise unsolvable problem is the *grace* of God, in *His* own time, when He, in due course, leads us to be praying for a *special* and *further* spiritual endowment *beyond* that of elementary faith itself.

That special, further spiritual endowment, for which we would therefore pray that God would be granting it to us, is: "*a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him,* the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for you to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength" (Eph.1:17-19).

It has well been said that we do not so much need to hear a good argument, as we need to be given the grace to recognize and accept a good argument when we hear one. Similarly, I would say that we do not so much need to read a faithful exposition of Ephesians 1:3-12, as we need to have in our possession—in our hearts and in our minds—a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of God. Then—and only then—the eyes of our heart having been enlightened, will we be able to recognize and benefit from a faithful exposition, such as one elucidating the glories of our passage herein under consideration.

Therefore, we would pray not only for ourselves, but on behalf of all our fellow believers, that God might be giving us this very *spirit* which we so vitally need: a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him.

Even then, upon receiving a measure of this spirit, we will recognize not only our need still for a further measure of this same spirit, but, first of all, our need for the grace not to quench the measure of spirit which we then have come to enjoy.

For this, we need a Saviour. We need our God and Father; and, we need for Him not merely to "assist us," but, first of all, to *deliver* us, to the degree that He sees fit, and then to *preserve* us, in the measure that accords with His purpose. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. J.R.C.

DAVID'S MASTERS OF WAR
(2 Samuel 23:8-39)

8 **These** are the **names of the masters** of war **who** belonged **to David:** 7**Ish-bosheth~** M**the Hachmonite**s**,** the **head of the three.** 7**He´ brandished `his spear**s on**against eight hundred,** all **slain** i**at one** du**time.** 9 + af**Next** to **him** came **Eleazar son of Dodai son of Ahohi** i**among** the **three masters** of war **with David** i**when they reproached**– i the **Philistines. There they were gathered for battle.** +**As** the **men of Israel** went l**up,** 10 **he´ arose and** l**smote** i the **Philistines until** t **his hand be**came **weary, and his hand** l**clung to the sword.** +**Thus Yahweh** ld**performed** a **great salvation** i**on** ·**that day;** +**now the people, they** l**returned after him,** y**only to strip** them.

11 + af**Next** to **him** came **Shammah son of Agee** the **Hararite.** +**When** the **Philistines were** l**gathered at**d **Lehi,** where **there** lb**was** a **portion of** ·a **field full** of **lentils,** + **the people had fled** f**before** the **Philistines.** 12 +**Yet he** l**stood by in** the **midst of the portion and** l**reclaimed it and** l**smote** `the **Philistines.** +**Thus Yahweh** ld**performed** a **great salvation.**

13 + **Three** f**of the thirty head** men went l**down and** l**came** ›**during** the **harvest to David** ›**at** the **cave of Adullam,** +**while** a **Philistine kinfolk** troop was **encamping in** the **vale of Rephaim.** 14 + **David** was **then in** the **fastness, and** the **garrison of** the **Philistines** was **then** at **Bethlehem.** 15 +**Now David** voiced his l**yearning and** l**said,** a**Who may** c**give me** to **drink water from** the **cistern of Bethlehem** w**that** is i**at** the **gate?** 16 +**So three of the masters** of war l**rent** their way **in**to the **camp of** the **Philistines and** l**bailed water from**

the **cistern of Bethlehem** w i**at** the **gate.** +**When they** had l**carried and** l**brought** it **to David,** +**then he would not** › **drink– it,** +**but poured** a **libation** `of **it to Yahweh.** 17 + **He** l**said, Far be it** ›**from me,** O **Yahweh,** f**for me** to **do– this. 7Should I drink**0 **the blood of the men** ·who **went**l i risking **their souls? And he would not** › **drink– it. These** are the exploits that **the three masters** of war d**performed.**

18 +**As** for **Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah,** s**who** was **head of** ·another **three,** + **he´ brandished `his spear** on**against three hundred,** all **slain.** + **He** ›**won** a **name** i**among** the second **three.** 19 ~**He**c was the most **illustrious**l f**among the three; and** so **he** l**became their** › **chief.** +**Yet he** did **not come** fr**to** the rank of **the** first **three.**

20 + **Benaiah son of Jehoiada from Kabzeel** was a **man of many valiant deeds.** It was **he** s**who smote** `the **two** 7**sons of~ Ariel of Moab.** +**Once,** i**on** ·a **snowy day, he´** went **down and smote** `a **lion** mid**inside** ·a **cistern.** 21 **He´** +**also smote** `an **Egyptian man who** was of imposing **appearance.** +**Although the Egyptian** had a **spear in** his **hand,** + **he** went l**down to him** i**with** a **club and** l**snatched** `**the spear from the Egyptian's hand and** l**killed him** i**with his** own **spear.** 22 **These** are the exploits that **Benaiah son of Jehoiada** d**performed.** +**So he** ›**won** a **name** i**among the three masters** of war. 23 Though he was more **illustrious**l f**than the thirty,** + **he** did **not come to** the rank of **the** first **three.** +**Yet David** l**placed him** ›**over his household guard.**

7+ **These** are the **names of the masters** of war **of** ·**king David**0**:** 24 **Asahel brother of Joab** was i**among** the **thirty, Elhanan son of Dodo** from **Bethlehem,** 25 **Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Harodite,** 26 **Helez the Paltite, Ira son of Ikkesh the Tekoaite,** 27 **Abiezer the Anathotite, Mebunnai the Hushatite,** 28 **Zalmon the Ahotite, Maharai the Netophatite,** 29 **Heleb son of Baanah the Netophatite, Ittai son of Ribai from Gibeah of** the **sons of Benjamin,** 30 **Benaiah** the **Pirathonite, Hiddai from** the **wadis of Gaash,**

[31] **Abi-albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite,**
[32] **Eliahba the Shaalbonite,** the **sons of Jashen, Jonathan**
son of [33] **Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam son of Sharar**
the **Hararite,** [34] **Eliphelet son of Ahasbai,** the **son of the**
Maacathite, Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, [35] **Hezro**
the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite, [36] **Igal son of Nathan**
from Zobah, Bani the Gadite, [37] **Zelek the Ammonite,**
Naharai the Beerothite, the [all]**gear-bearer**[l] **of Joab son of**
Zeruiah, Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, [39] **Uriah the**
Hittite; thirty-seven in **all.**

THE HIGHEST RANKING TRIO

VERSES 8 through 12 detail David's top three warriors by accomplishments. The details and names are suggestive of some of Paul's exhortations.

Hachmonite (v.8) means *wise.* We are to walk as *wise* and *prudent,* understanding what the will of the Lord is (Eph. 5:16,17). This is necessary because those with whom we must wrestle are more formidable than odds of 800 to 1.

Eleazar *(whom God helps)* the son of Dodai (*fond*), though his hand grew weary, found that God caused it to cling to his sword, and God provided a great salvation. We are to abhor what is wicked and cling to the good, not becoming despondent in ideal doing, for in due season we will be reaping (Rom.12:9; Gal.6:9). "For all am I strong in Him Who is invigorating me—Christ!" (Phil.4:13).

The name *Shammah* means *appalling.* Shammah faced an appalling situation and stood fast when those around him were retreating from danger. Thus he reclaimed what had been lost. "Not being startled by those who are opposing in anything" (Eph.5:6), "put on the panoply of God, to enable you to stand . . . and having effected all to stand, stand then! . . . reclaiming the era, for the days are wicked!" (Eph.6:10-17). Wisdom, tenacity and commitment are needful qualities for those who will be numbered among Christ's mighty ones.

SACRIFICE FOR THIRST

Verses 13 through 17 relate an incident that reveals the devotion of David's men. One of the intangible qualities of David that made him an exceptional leader, and a quality that he shared with Christ, was his unpredictability. David's men could never be quite sure what his action would be in a given situation. This compelled them to await his direction. The same was true of Christ's disciples. Who would dare respond to a command to feed a multitude? Who would have expected Him to multiply food and feed thousands in the wilderness? Who would expect to find Him sitting at the village well talking to a harlot? Who would have thought He would tell those who had labored all night long fishing to launch out into the deep and cast their nets one more time? Who would have guessed that if they filled the water jars with water, He would turn that water into wine? Had we been in that smaller group, standing with Jesus when He told the crowd of mourners that the girl was only asleep, would the scornful laughing have been hard to bear? Such a Master is Christ. We do not know what His next instruction will be. We cannot run on ahead.

Three of David's men came down to David at the cave of Adullam. The Philistines were camped nearby and had a garrison established in Bethlehem. The three had probably brought David food. It was harvest time. David's thoughts probably wandered back to his childhood, and the family gatherings that were customary at harvest time. The fugitive warrior found his heart yearning for the peace and comfort of home, and gave voice to his feelings by asking how he could have a drink from the cistern of Bethlehem at the gate. How many times he had quenched his thirst there!

"So three of the masters of war *rent* their way into the camp of the Philistines and bailed water from the cistern of Bethlehem that is at the gate" (v.16). It is interesting that the word *rent* used here is also used in Judges 15:19 where God *split open* a place at Lehi, and a spring of water came forth which slaked the thirst of Samson when he cried out, dehydrated from intense battle. The same word was also used by Isaiah (48:21) when he spoke of God *rending* the rock in the desert so that water gushed out, enough to quench the thirst of a nation and their livestock too.

DAVID'S SURPRISING RESPONSE

To the amazement of these three masters, David did not drink the water they had risked their lives to bring him. Consider for a moment how the event would be remembered if he had drunk it? How would they have felt if he had gulped it down and wiped his mouth? Might they have looked back on the event with grudging, that they had risked their lives for something their leader had only enjoyed for a moment? Could he show enough satisfaction in tasting the water to satisfy them as well? Would their memory of that exploit have focused only on their valiant deed and the way the three had fought together, so that David's place in it all would have become obscured at best?

David surprised these three masters by doing two things. He humbled himself before them, and he made the water for which they had risked their lives an offering to God. He did these things by pouring the water out on the ground before God. David's actions showed them their deed was too precious for him to keep for himself. Something of such great value must be given to God. The blood of sacrifices was usually poured out at the base of the altar. Israel was strictly forbidden to drink blood. The soul was in the blood, and it belonged to God. And if a beast was killed in the field, perhaps when hunting, the blood was

to be poured out on the ground and covered with soil. In 1 Samuel 7:6, when Israel was returning to Yahweh with all their heart, they bailed water, and poured it out on the earth before Yahweh, and fasted. David treated the water his three heroes brought to him as if it was their own blood given as a sacrifice to God.

Like David's water, the blood was *poured out.* "I am poured out like water" (Psa.22:14), David prophetically wrote of Christ. "Therefore I will apportion to Him among many, and to the staunch will He apportion the loot, insomuch that He *gives up* His soul unto death" (Isa.53:12). The idea of "gives up" in Isaiah includes the thought of *emptying* or *pouring out.* In the New Testament the word *shed* is used as an idiomatic variation for *poured out.* "This is My blood of the new covenant, that is *shed* [*poured out*] for many . . ." (Matt.26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20). Paul also spoke of the shed blood of Stephen with this word (Acts 22:20).

When David poured out the water as an offering to God, he gave something to his loyal and devoted men. He made their efforts and the endangerment of their lives a satisfying gift to God, which would bring them acceptance with God. David could not have done anything that would have touched these men more deeply. They would think back on their exploit frequently, but the danger and battle and sweat would all be overshadowed by what David had done with the water.

The life of Christ was poured out as a sacrifice to God. But it is more than that which is pleasing to God. It is our acceptance with God, and it is what binds us both to Christ and also to the Father. "We are loving God, for He first loves us" (1 John 4:19). Thus His love is poured out in our hearts (Rom.5:5). The believer thinks back time and again with heart-touching amazement at the pouring out of Christ's life for our sakes and for the sake of humanity.

THE SECOND RANKED TRIO

Verses 18 through 23 speak of a second group of three warriors whose names are more frequently recorded in 2 Samuel. Only two of this group, Abishai and Benaiah, are named. It is possible that Joab was the third, but he is not named as such, and none of his valiant deeds are recorded. Also, his office of commander in chief of Israel's army seems to place him in a separate class. Amasa may have been the third in this group. But, because he followed Absalom in the rebellion, his name and deeds may have been omitted from the record. If this is the reason for the omission, it would be like that of some of the ungodly kings in Matthew.[1] Abishai has the distinction of also being named in the first list of renowned warriors in chapter 21, where it is recorded that he saved David's life.

HE IS CLUTCHING THE WISE IN THEIR CRAFTINESS

This subtitle is from 1 Corinthians 3:19, where Paul quotes from Job 5:13. This is an apt expression to describe one of the heroic deeds of the strong and agile Benaiah. It also describes the workings of God in situations where the display of His providential control astonishes us. Benaiah approached the imposing Egyptian with only a club, took his spear from him, and killed him with his own weapon. This reminds us of Goliath, who was beheaded with his own sword, and Haman, who was hung on his own gallows. And, most of all, it reminds us of the Adversary, who had the might of death, but through death, was discarded by the Inaugurator of our salvation (Heb.2:14). This theme is mentioned a number of times in the Scriptures (see Psa. 7:15,16; 9:15,16; Prov.27:27; Ecc.10:8,9).

J. Phillip Scranton

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1. Concordant Commentary on the New Testament, p.11.

JACOB'S CONTACTS WITH GOD
(Genesis 28:10-22)

6 +**When Esau** ⌊**saw that Isaac had blessed** `**Jacob and had sent** `**him** off to*d* **Padan-Syria to take from there** a **wife for him**self, **and** that *i*⌊**while blessing**⁻ `**him he** had ⌊**enjoined on him,** › **saying**⁻**: You shall not take** a **wife from** the **daughters of Canaan,** 7 **and** that **Jacob** had ⌊**hearkened to his father and to his mother and** had ⌊**gone** to*d* **Padan-Syria,** 8 +**then Esau** ⌊*see*⌋**realized** *t*⌊**how displeasing** the **daughters of Canaan** were **in** the **eyes of his father Isaac.** 9 +**So Esau** ⌊**went to Ishmael and** ⌊**took** ›**as wife** `**Mahalath,** a **daughter of Abraham's son Ishmael,** a **sister of Nebaioth,** *on*⌋**in** addition to **his wives he** already ›**had.**

10 + **Jacob** went ⌊**forth from Beer-sheba and** kept ⌊**going** to**ward Charan.** 11 + **He** ⌊**came** up**on** *i* a certain *ri*⌋**place and** ⌊**lodged there** for the night, **for the sun had** already **set.** + **He** ⌊**took** one *f*⌋**of** the **stones of the** *ri*⌋**place,** + ⌊*pl*⌋**put** it as **his headrest and** ⌊**lay** down **in** ˙**that** *ri*⌋**place.** 12 + **He** ⌊**dreamed, and behold,** there was a **stairway** *st*⌋**set**⌊ **earthward,** +**with its top touching the heavens***d*⌋**. And behold, messengers of Elohim** were **ascending and descending** *i*⌋**on it.** 13 **And behold, Yahweh** was **standing up over him and** ⌊**said:**

I am **Yahweh Elohim of your father Abraham and** the **Elohim of Isaac.** 7⌋**Do not** ⌊**fear!***0* **The land on which you** are **lying** down**, to you I shall give it and to your seed.** 14 **And your seed will become like** the **soil** grains **of the land.** + **You will breach** forth **westward and eastward,** + **northward and southward.** + **All** the **families of the ground will be blessed in you and in your seed.** 15 **And behold, I** am **with you;** + **I will keep you in all** 7⌋**the way***0 w* **you**

are going, and I will bring you back to ˙this ˙ground, for I shall not forsake you until *w* **I should have ¯done `7all0 w that I have spoken to you.**

16 +**When Jacob |awoke from his sleep,** + **he |said:** *so* **Surely Yahweh is in ˙this** *ri* **place, and I** did **not realize** it. 17 + **He was |fearful and |said:** *wt* **How fear** inspir**ing** is **˙this** *ri* **place; this is no**ne *t* **other** *if* **than** the **house of Elohim, and this** is the **gate**way **of the heavens.** 18 + **Jacob** *c* **rose |early in** the **morning and |took `the stone** *w* **that he had** *pl* **put** *7* **there**0 as **his headrest,** + *|pl* **set `it up** as a **monument and |poured oil on its top.** 19 + *7* **Jacob**0 **|called** `the **name of ˙that** *ri* **place Bethel,** + **howbeit** the **name of the city** was **Luz › formerly.**

20 +**Then Jacob |vowed** a **vow, › saying¯: If Elohim,** *b* **is with me and keeps me in ˙this way which I** am **going, and gives › me bread to eat and** a **garment to put on,** 21 **and I return in peace to my father's house,** +**then Yahweh will** *b* **be my › Elohim.** 22 **And ˙this ˙stone** *w* **that I have** *pl* **set up** as a **monument, it shall become** a **house of Elohim** *7* **for me**0**.** + **All** *w* **that You |give › me, I shall tithe,** yea **tithe¯ it for You.**

JACOB'S DREAM

AFTER the further display of Esau's limited spiritual perception in his choice of wives, the account turns to Jacob once again, who is now on his own. But Yahweh comes into direct contact with him in a *dream.* This is a new method of revelation for the patriarchs and is the first of five contacts with the Deity. This dream came as he was *leaving* the land for Padan Aram. The last dream came as he was *leaving* the land for Egypt (Gen.46:2). Twice God *spoke* to Jacob when he was *told* to return to the land (31:3), and when he was told to return to Bethel (35:1). There also, He *appeared* to him (35:9). These contacts with the Deity mark the crises in his career.

STONE FOR PILLOW

That Jacob took a stone for a pillow must have some spiritual significance, or it would not be worthy of mention. The ground on which he rested his *body* was soilish, and represented the soil seed. But his *head,* which may well represent the spirit, was higher, and the rock is often used as a figure for the foundation of a spiritual edifice, as Peter, or Cephas (bedrock), represents the spiritual basis of the kingdom ecclesia. Here the stone represents a similar revelation. Israel will reach all nations with the evangel of the kingdom.

"THE LADDER"

The somewhat ridiculous figure of a ladder mars the solemnity of this scene. Many of us are afraid of ladders, and one high enough to reach to heaven would make us dizzy. When we look at anyone climbing a ladder their back must be turned to us. The stem of this word, *sl,* signifies a HEAP. It is used often in the word *sll,* highway. Some manuscripts have the extra *l* here, and some have an *i,* making it *sl l im,* HEAPS, heap on heap. This would be a natural description of a staircase. This we can visualize in a dream without it waking the dreamer up. It came from heaven to earth. It was not used by men, but by messengers from *above.* In it Yahweh came down to speak to Jacob. It also agrees with the accompanying figures of a gateway and a house.

ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE GROUND

Jacob was lying in about the center of the land hitherto presented to his soil seed, so it was a most fitting location for Yahweh to renew the promise. Besides, being repeated to him while he was asleep, the promise should have shown him that his efforts were not needed in order

to earn it or keep it, a lesson he sorely needed. But there was an added clause, which is more precious than all that had been promised before. His soil seed was not only to be blessed, but his star seed was to *bless others.* Blest, in him, and in his seed, would be all the families of the ground (Gen.28:14). This includes all the nations on the earth, not excluding ourselves who are blessed with Abraham by *faith* in the Subjector Who descended from heaven to bless Jacob (Gal.3:9).

THE CONSECRATED STONE

The stone was called Bethel (*Beth-El,* House-of-Subjector). But the place had the name Luz, DEVIATOr. The first gives us the divine side, the other the human. Jacob made a bargain with Yahweh Elohim which deviated greatly from the promise. That is why, when he came back from his journey and had his name changed to Israel, he set up a stone again and renewed the name Bethel.

JACOB'S VOW

Jacob was still a heel. But this was worse than the trade he made with his brother, getting the birthright for a red stew. Now he seeks to drive a hard bargain, promising ten per cent return for all that he was given. Still, that was what they gave under the law, and is considered very good recompense to God in Christendom today. Besides, Yahweh Elohim was to stand by him and keep him and feed him, and clothe him and return him in peace to his father's house! Not till then would he acknowledge Yahweh as Subjector! What a "deviation" was this from the faith of his grand grandfather Abraham! Had he not already been promised infinitely more than this? But this was needed to reveal what a God he had. Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help (Psa.146:5)!

A. E. Knoch

APPOINTED AS A PROPHET
(Jeremiah 1:4-19)

4 + The **word of Yahweh** [b]**came to me,** [›] **saying**[–]**,**
5 [i] **Ere I** [l]**formed you in** the **belly, I knew you,**
And [i] **ere you** came [l]**forth from** the **womb,**
I hallowed you;
I [g]**appointed you** a **prophet to** the **nations.**
6 +**Then I** [sa]**answered, Alas, my Lord Yahweh, behold, I** do **not know** how to **speak**[–]**, for I** am a **youth.** 7 +**Yet Yahweh** [l]**said to me, Do not** [l]**say, I** am a **youth,**
For [on]**to all** to **whom I shall send you, you shall go,**
And [`]**all** [w]**that I shall instruct you, you shall speak.**

JEREMIAH'S COMMISSION GIVEN

JEREMIAH was a prophet with reference to the *nations.* He was against his own people and for their enemy. The crisis had come when Judah, like the ten tribes, had sinned beyond perceptible remedy, so they must be deported out of their land, far from their temple, and forfeit the throne of David.

The eras of the nations were about to commence, and the sovereignty of the earth must be in their hands until Messiah comes in glory. It was Jeremiah's trying task to make this known to his people, and to insist on subjection to Nebuchadnezzar. Consequently, he appeared to be a traitor, and received neither hearing nor sympathy from his own.

Twice Yahweh charges Jeremiah with his mission, here in verses 4-7 and again in verse 17. He also repeats His

encouragement (verses 8-10 and 18 and 19). The corresponding parallels of the opening charge could only be spoken by the great Subjector Who predestined Jeremiah's whole career before he was born, and will carry out His purpose in spite of all the opposition, even that of Jeremiah himself. He was formed and sanctified before he could object, and he will go and speak just as Elohim instructs him. This is true of all who fulfill His will. Unless Yahweh had known him beforehand, he would not have been sent, and he will fulfill the divine intention no matter what seems to hinder. So it was with Samson (Judges 13:3), John the baptist (Luke 1:15) and Paul (Gal.1:15). Like him, Moses also objected that he was not a man of words (Ex.4:10), and incompetent. But El must have men whose physical shortcomings are a foil for His competence, that they may not take the glory to themselves.

YOU SHALL SPEAK

Verses 7 and 17 are dominated by the same divine decisiveness. Jeremiah is not begged to go and speak, but it is declared as an accomplished fact, which cannot be gainsaid. He shall go to those to whom Yahweh sends him, and he shall speak all that Yahweh instructs him.

JEREMIAH ENCOURAGED

8 **Do not** ˡ**fear**[f] **their presence,**
For I am `with **you to rescue you, averring** is **Yahweh.**
9 +**Then Yahweh** ˡ**put forth `His hand and** ˡ**touched**[on] **my mouth, and Yahweh** ˡ**said to me, Behold, I have**[g] **put My words in your mouth.**
10 **See,** ˙**this** ˙**day I have**[c] **given you supervision**
over ˙**nations and over** ˙**kingdoms,**
To pluck up and to break down and to destroy
and to demolish,
To build and to plant.

Nevertheless, Jeremiah is not sent alone in his own strength, or he certainly would have been afraid and failed, even if he was not a "child" by any means, but about twenty-one years of age. Nowadays this is supposed to indicate maturity, but then a man was a minor until his thirtieth year. His mouth was not to speak his own thoughts, but Elohim's. In this way he was to act as the mouthpiece of Yahweh, Who was about to pluck up and destroy and plant nations and kingdoms.

THE ALMOND—ALERTNESS

11 +**Then** the **word of Yahweh** ˡ[b]**came to me,** › **saying**⁻**,** **What** do **you see**ˡ**, Jeremiah? And I** ˡˢᵃ**answered, I see**ˡ an **almond tree-branch.** 12 + **Yahweh** ˡ**said to me, You have** done **well** ›**in seeing**⁻**, for I** am **alert**ˡ **over My word, to**[d] **perform it.**

In the spring the earliest tree to blossom is the almond, hence it was a sign of *alertness,* and the stem means *alert.* It is so used five times in this prophecy (Jer.1:12; 5:6; 31: 28,28; 44:27). Yahweh is alert over His word and His people, as a leopard is alert over its prey (Jer.5:6). The AV usually renders it *watch* or *await,* but in this connection they have made it nearly the opposite, *hasten* (verse 12). All of these words are better suited to other Hebrew words. Yahweh is prepared to act on the instant. Such is His attitude in this prophecy.

THE BLOWN POT

13 +**Then** the **word of Yahweh** ˡ[b]**came to me** a **second** time**,** › **saying**⁻**, What** do **you see**ˡ**? And I** ˡˢᵃ**answered, I see**ˡ a **pot** with a **blown**ˡ fire**, and its face** directed **from** the **face of** the **north**[d]**.**
14 +**Then Yahweh** ˡ**said to me,**
From the **north** ˙an **evil shall be** [7]**blown~**

on all the **dwellers**[l] **of the land;**
15 **For behold, I** am **calling to all** the **families**
of the **northward kingdoms, averring** is **Yahweh,**
And they will come and [g]**set** up**, each** one **its throne**
at the **portal of Jerusalem's gates,**
+ [on]**Against all her walls round about,**
And [on]**against all** the **cities of Judah.**
16 + **I will pronounce My judgments** `on **them**
[on]**for all their evil**
In [w]**that they have forsaken Me**
And have [l]**fumed** incense **to other elohim**
And have [l]**bowed down to** [d]**works of their hands.**

The picture represents the peoples of Israel's enemies being heated by the fire blown by God's spirit. At the same time they are blown down to Judah and overrun the kingdom.

A "blown pot" leaves too much to the imagination for a western language. Even though a pot cannot "seethe," (as the AV has it) or "boil" (RV), we can easily supply the water in our thoughts. They also supply the fire. But these are discordant renderings, used only here and in Job 41:20. Elsewhere they also usually use the word *blow,* especially of the *fire* under the pot (Job 20:26; Isa.54:16; Ezk. 22:21). So here we have a figure which leaves much to the imagination. Some of this is supplied by the popular versions, for the water in the pot must have boiled with a blown fire under it.

But this loses the connection with the explanation given in verses 14-16. The Greek version uses a form of the word *burn* both here in verse 13 and in the interpretation (second line of verse 14), so that the Hebrew probably was the same. Both the AV and the RV read that evil shall "break forth" from the north, although the RV margin says that the Hebrew means *open.* But "break forth" and "open"

fail to connect with the blown pot. But the Hebrew for *open* (*phthch*) is almost the same as that for *blow* (*phuch*). Therefore it seems almost certain that it should read *blow,* which makes excellent sense.

The land was protected from invasion by the desert and the sea except to the north whence all their eastern enemies entered the land.

A glance at a map will show that Babylon and Assyria, the nations which were used against Israel, were *east* or *northeast* of Palestine. But there was a vast desert between them. Crossing from Damascus to Baghdad, we found only one good watering place at Rutbah Wells. Large armies could hardly take this direct route. They rather went along the Euphrates into northern Syria, and came down from there into the holy land.

THEY SHALL NOT PREVAIL

17 +**As** for **you, you shall belt your waist;**
+ **You will arise**
and speak to them `**all** [w]**that I**´ [l]**instruct you.**
Do not be [l]**dismayed** [f]**because** of **their presence,**
Lest I [c]**make you** [l]**dismayed before them.**
18 +**As** for **Me, behold, I have** [g]**made you today**
in**to** a **fortress city,**
+ In**to** an **iron column and** › a strong **bronze** [=]**wall**
[on]**Against the entire land,**
›**Against** the **kings of Judah,** ›**against its chief** officials**,**
›**Against its priests**
and ›**against** the **people of the land.**
19 + **They will fight** ›**against you,**
+**Yet they shall not** [all]**prevail** ›**against you;**
For I am `with **you, averring** is **Yahweh,**
to rescue you.

Corresponding to this, in Jeremiah's special mission to

Yahweh's own people, Judah, which was apostate, he was made strong, so that, when they fought against him, they would not be able to overcome him. The rest of the prophecy amply bears out this prediction. All were against Jeremiah, but they did not prevail, and he was rescued from them by Yahweh. A. E. Knoch

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ADDITIONAL NOTE

The translation of Jeremiah 1:13 appearing in the preceding article by A. E. Knoch differs from that in the recently published Concordant Version of the "Latter Prophets." When I was preparing Jeremiah for publication I overlooked these brief notes by Brother Knoch (they were stored in a small box which I had set aside, but recently uncovered) which we are now publishing. Also, in the midst of other concerns, I did not properly weigh the value of the CV rendering in the typed edition of Jeremiah issued in 1974.

Yet now I see the probability of a verbal connection between verses 13 and 14 in the use of the word "blown," which Brother Knoch and his co-workers had noted many years ago. Since there is such a connection in verses 11 and 12 by means of the word "alert" (the Hebrew word for "almond" means "alert"), it is reasonable to expect a similar association in verses 13 and 14. Even though there is no such connection in the Hebrew of the Masoretic text, there is in the ancient Greek translation of Jeremiah, called the Septuagint, as Brother Knoch points out. The evidence of the Septuagint translation supports the emending of the Hebrew verb OPEN (which we translated, "shall be unloosed") to "shall be blown," in verse 14. This is supported further by the fact that the words "open" and "blown" are very similar in Hebrew and might easily have become confused in the process of copying from an old, worn out manuscript to a new one.

Yet, why all the fuss? The rendering of the Masoretic text into idiomatic English, as given in our recent publication, conveys the thought of an overwhelming, invading force from the north well enough. But the translation of the Hebrew as emended by the evidence of the Septuagint brings out the point that this evil does not arise from the nations themselves, but is instigated by the spirit of God; it is blown. This accords directly with verse 15 where Yahweh says He is calling to the northern kingdoms to come against Jerusalem.

D.H.H.

WHITE AS SNOW

WHEN the apostle Paul wrote that God's righteousness is "attested by the law and the prophets," he was not speaking vaguely, but had specific passages in mind, such as Habakkuk 2:4 and Genesis 15:6 which he cites in Romans 1:17 and 4:3. (It seems likely, furthermore, that Paul considered Psalms 32:1,2, quoted in Romans 4:7,8, as an utterance from one of the "prophets," through whom God spoke.) There are certainly other passages from the Hebrew Scriptures which Paul did not cite directly, but which, nevertheless, serve in support of "this teaching of ours" (*cf* Rom.15:4). The prophet Isaiah especially offers important testimony concerning God's goal of righteousness, which, in many important ways, foreshadows the message of justification as a revelation of God's righteousness presented in the book of Romans.

In the following article on Isaiah 1:1-18 I am suggesting a number of parallels with the theme of justification between these verses and the early chapters of Romans. This is most noticeable in verse 18 where Yahweh speaks of sins becoming white as snow. Perhaps this passage was also in Paul's thoughts as he moved from the fact that "all sinned" (Rom.3:23) to the evangel of gratuitous justification, in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24).

YAHWEH HIMSELF SPEAKS

The first chapter of Isaiah opens with the prophet announcing a public exposure from Yahweh concerning

the depravity of Judah and Jerusalem, and indeed, all Israel. The prophet does not bring an evangel, at least initially, but rather a message of condemnation which reflects on the Name of God Who chose this people for Himself. Far from any cover-up, Yahweh speaks loudly and openly so that all could know (Isa.1:2,3):

2 **Hear,** O **heavens, And** [c]**give ear,** O **earth,**
For Yahweh Himself **speaks:**
Sons have I magnified and exalted,
[+]**Yet they**[´] **have transgressed** [i]**against Me.**
3 The **plowing ox knows his owner**[l],
And the **donkey** the **crib of his possessors;**
[7+]**Yet**[Q] **Israel, it** does **not know** [7]**Me**[0]**;**
[7]**And**[Qcs] **My people, they** do **not consider** [7]**Me**[0]**.**

In Romans, Paul also brings a message from God for sinners, but it is an evangel which speaks of God's righteousness in relation to His power for salvation (Rom. 1:1-17). To be sure, Paul directs attention, at length, to human unrighteousness from Romans 1:18 through 3:20, but in doing so it is clear he is preparing the way for revelations of spiritual grace in relation to the evangel. What Paul says about human depravity is solidly related to what he says about God's righteousness in His work of justification, while in Isaiah what is said about Israel's transgression and evil works appears to dominate.

A NATION OF SIN

4 **Woe, nation** of **sin**[l]**! People heavy** with **depravity!**
Seed of evildoers[l]**! Sons** who are **corrupters**[l]**!**
They forsake [`]**Yahweh!**
They spurn [`]the **Holy** One **of Israel!**
They are estranged, going [af]**backward!**
5 **On what shall you be smitten further,**
Since **you are adding** more **stubbornness?**

All of the **head** is [›] **ill,**
And all of the **heart** is **sick,**
6 **From** the **sole of** the **foot** [+] **unto** the **head**
there **is no soundness in it;**
Injury and welt and smiting raw,
They are not pressed out nor bound up
nor made tender [i]**with oil.**

According to Isaiah 1:4-6, Israel was a nation of *sin* which had *transgressed* against Yahweh and did *not* know Him; they did *not* seek to understand Him; they were heavy with *depravity*, seed of *evildoers, corruptors* who *forsook* and *spurned* Yahweh, who went *backward,* adding to their *stubbornness, ill* and *sick, without soundness,* filled with *injury* and *welt* and *smiting raw*.

Yet they were the ones Yahweh Himself had magnified and exalted over others (verse 2). This is a critical point which we must not overlook. The most serious problem underlying Judah's apostasy is what it says about God. So in Romans, the key factor in God's indignation against humanity is our failure to glorify or thank God as God and offer Him divine service as the Creator, Who is blessed for the eons (Rom.1:18-25). Not just Israel, but all mankind (apart from God's grace) fail to seek out God as God, and so they are useless in appreciating and exhibiting the One in Whose image they are created (*cf* Rom.3:9-20).

At the heart of the work of justification is the need for God to be shown as righteous in all His operations, and this is what the evangel of God expressly proclaims (*cf* Rom.3: 25,26). God must be justified in His work of creation, in His forbearance and patience, in His choices, and in all His declarations concerning His purpose for good.

As for humanity, in the meantime, God gives them over to the lusts of their hearts and dishonorable passions and a disqualified mind (Rom.1:24-32).

So also God spoke concerning Israel, through the prophet Isaiah, declaring (1:7-9):

7 **Your land** is a **desolation, Your cities burned**[l] with **fire;**
Your ground—
in front of **you strangers**[l] are **devouring `it,**
[+]**Yea desolation like** the over**turning of strangers**[l]**.**
8 [+] The **daughter of Zion is left like** a **booth in** a **vineyard,**
Like a **hut in** a **cucumber patch, like** a **city besieged**[l]**.**
9 **Unless Yahweh of hosts Him**self **had left for us**
[as] a **few survivor**s,
As Sodom would we become,
To Gomorrah would we be likened.

SACRIFICES OF BLOOD

The root of Judah's depravity was the fact they did not know or understand Yahweh; they forsook Him and spurned Him (Isa.1:3,4) for forbidden idols and the work of their hands (Isa.2:8) while still maintaining the outward forms of the law. They shed the blood of animals without appreciation for God's dealing with sin.

10 **Hear** the **word of Yahweh, captains of Sodom;**
[c]**Give ear** to the **law of our Elohim, people of**
Gomorrah.
11 **Why, to Me, your many sacrifices? Yahweh is saying;**
I am surfeited with **ascent** offerings **of rams**
and the **fat of fatlings;**
And the **blood of** young **bulls and he-lambs**
and he-goats I do **not desire.**

Yet the blood of bulls and lambs and goats was a critical factor in the law, as the entire book of Leviticus makes clear. The enormity of Israel's sin is shown by the entire absence in these practices of any recognition of the relationship between the divine service and their need of Yahweh as sinners. They were sinners, and it was only

the blood that hallowed them to cleanness, even though it was not to a finality and had to be repeated year after year (Heb.9:13; 10:1-4)).

HANDS FULL OF BLOOD

15 **And** [i]**when you spread**[–] out **your palms** [7]**to Me**[0]**,**
I shall obscure My eyes from you;
Even though you [l]**multiply prayer**s,
there **will be no hearing** by **Me.**
Your hands, they are full of **blood,**
[Q]**Your fingers** [i]**with lawlessness**[J]**.**

Not only did they fail to relate the blood of the sacrifices with Yahweh's passing over of the penalties of their sins, nor even recognize their need for such a provision, but also their hands were full of blood in their rejection of God's prophets (*cf* 2 Chron.24:21) and in their treatment of those among them who were wronged including the widow and orphan. Therefore, the cry went out from Yahweh:

16 **Wash; purge** your**selves!**
Take away the **evil of your actions**
from in **front** of **My eyes!**
Desist from [c]**doing evil**[–]**;**
17 **Learn** to [c]**do good**[–]**!**
Inquire for right **judgment;**
Make happy the [7]**wronged**[l~]**!**
Seek right **judgment** for the **orphan;**
Contend for the **widow!**

YAHWEH'S INSTRUCTION

But what is this? Judah and Jerusalem, even all of Israel, are sinners! How can they wash so that they will be purged?

This seems, at first sight, to be only a further instruction from Yahweh to Israel, added to the divine words spoken at Sinai. God instructs, and Israel promises they will heed

and obey. Then Israel fails, and Yahweh instructs again, and they fail again and suffer the consequences, and promise again to change their ways and follow the good which Yahweh sets before them.

But the instruction for cleansing, added to the charges of futile shedding of animals' blood and wicked shedding of human blood, prepares us for verse 18.

What we have read so far in Isaiah chapter one takes God's chosen people of Israel to a position very similar to what we find Paul taking us in Romans 3:9-20. God is not honored as God. No human being is righteous; not even one. *Sharp are their feet to shed blood.*

The chosen nation cannot do what is required by their own strength in obedience to the law. *God* must turn back their transgression and place His spirit within them, which indeed *He will do* (*cf* Isa.59:20,21; 61:8-11). Later, through the prophet Ezekiel, Yahweh declares (Ezk.36:25-27):

I will sprinkle clean water on you,
And you will be clean from all your uncleannesses,
And from all your idol clods I shall cleanse you.
I will give you a new heart,
And a new spirit will I bestow within you . . . .
My spirit shall I bestow within you,
And I will make it that you shall walk in My statutes
and observe My ordinances."

Behind the divine instruction given to Israel lies the divine provision which He has purposed and will bring to realization. This is centered in Christ, in His death for sinners, and it is this which is now in view in Isaiah 1:18.

ISAIAH 1:18

Here there is a tremendous change, not in the terms used, but in the thought being expressed by the word "if" and the references to the colors red and white which

speak of sin and of cleansing. Like the evangel that Paul begins to expound in Romans 3:21, Isaiah 1:18 stands out in shining light against the darkness of what has just been said. True, Isaiah offers only flashes of light, while Romans steadfastly takes us "from glory to glory" (*cf* 2 Cor.3:18). Nevertheless, taking Isaiah 1:18 in a straightforward way, as an oracle of God, it surely speaks of profound benefit and prerogative for Israel, to which God remains faithful and true despite their unfaithfulness (*cf* Rom.3:1-4).

18 *go*__Come__ *pr*__now, and let us__ have it |__corrected,__
__Yahweh is saying.__
__If your sins |become like scarlet,__
__as snow shall they be white;__
__If they are |red as crimson,__
__as wool shall they become.__

CORRECTION

In the AV the first line is rendered, "Come now, and let us reason together." The Hebrew verb represented by "let us reason together" belongs to a family of words expressing meaningful consideration of a problem in order to reach a solution. We have assigned it the standard, VIGOR, and use the English words "correct," "arbitrate," and sometimes "reprove" or "plead" for it in our translation. In Genesis 20:16 this word is used in reference to the *public vindication* of Sarah before the people of Gerar, that is, an effective and thorough clearing of her name. We see, then, that in Isaiah 1:18 Yahweh is referring to a vigorous dealing with the problem of Israel's sinfulness with a view to its thorough correction.

In Isaiah 2:4 the active form of this verb is rendered "arbitrate," and refers to an action performed by Elohim alone. "He will judge between the nations and *arbitrate* (correct) for the many peoples." In this there is promised

a vigorous work of God toward the correcting of wrongs and the bringing in of blessings.

The verb form in Isaiah 1:18, however, is passive, and it involves both Yahweh and Israel. The invitation suggested by the words, "Come now, and let us," brings Israel into the picture, not as correctors, but as those whose sins are to be corrected. Yahweh is not immediately presented here as the Corrector either, but rather as One with Whom the sinful nation views the correction to come. The point is that there will be a strong and effective dealing with the sinfulness of Judah for their good, which Yahweh invites Israel to become aware of.

If their sins become like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. This is the correcting of the problem. They who cannot purge themselves will be purged.

The prior context puts the burden on Israel: "Wash! Purge yourselves!" And the following context tells what they must do in order to purge themselves: "If you are willing and hearken, the good of the land shall you eat" (Isa.1:19).

These cannot come as Israel's own achievement. These will come about under the new covenant which God will establish with His people (*cf* Jer.31:31-34). Isaiah 1:18 must be seen in relation to God's dealings with Israel when He puts His spirit within them. It speaks of actual correction. But it cannot be a correction that is achieved by the actions of Israel.

RED AS BLOOD

Perhaps the most remarkable matter in Isaiah 1:18 is that the "if" is not an "if" of Israel's willingness to purge themselves, as in verse 19, but an "if" of an increase in sin. The word of God here speaks of sins which go beyond the sins of God's chosen people in the days of Amoz, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. The Hebrew word for "scarlet" means "repeat" or "double." It refers to a deep red caused

by double dipping in the dye. The word "crimson" refers to a worm from which a bright red color is obtained. It is a very noticeable red.

If Israel's sins become deeply and conspicuously red, it is on this basis, according to our text, that there will be cleansing. Israel will be cleaned from their uncleanness. God will make it so under the new covenant.

But how will He make it so? What is its basis? Isaiah 1:18 associates this purging from uncleanness with a time when their sins reach their greatest intensity in the shedding of blood. Isaiah 1:18 speaks in terms of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The time when the hands of these sinners became most truly scarlet and red as crimson in the shedding of blood was when they rejected the One Who came to save them from their sins. In their depravity, they forsook Him and spurned Him, going backward in their stubbornness, for the sake of a murderer, and they cried out concerning the Son of God, Who came to save them from their sins, "Crucify, crucify Him!" (Luke 23:17-21). The "entire people said, 'His blood be on us and on our children!'" (Matt.27:25).

WHITE AS SNOW

The words of Isaiah 1:18 accord with later scriptures concerning the blood of Jesus Christ. What God's chosen people did in crucifying the One sent to them by God (*cf* Acts 2:36; 3:17,18; 4:10) was what we all would have done in their position, for it was "in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:22,23). It could not be avoided. This is not to excuse the sinner, or even less to place a charge against God. But it is to acknowledge that we all are sinners, and to recognize that God is operating as God, Who deals righteously with all human depravity.

In the pouring out of the blood of Jesus Christ there is that correction which brings Israel into the position of

cleanness, for which God has chosen and exalted them. The blood of Jesus Christ is the basis of the new covenant and the means by which Israel's dross will be refined (Isa.1:25), so that even the once faithless Jerusalem will be known as "City of righteousness, Faithful town" (Isa.1:26).

Hence in the hours before His crucifixion Jesus spoke of the shedding of His blood as the blood of the new covenant for the pardon of sins (Matt.26:28). This comes about by way of the sufferings of our Lord on the cross, for blood speaks of the soul, that is, of sensation (*cf* Lev.17:11,14, CV). The people of Israel are ransomed from their vain behavior "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, foreknown, indeed, before the disruption of the world" (1 Peter 1:18-20). So also, reflecting the language of Isaiah chapter one, the writer of Hebrews spoke of *cleansing* of the conscience from dead works in view of the blood of Jesus Christ.

JUSTIFIED IN HIS BLOOD

It was given to the apostle Paul to complete the message of Isaiah 1:18 when he wrote in Romans 5:9 of *justification* in the *blood* of Christ. Israel's deepest of sins, of which we too have our part as sinners and enemies of God (*cf* Rom.5:8-10), was necessary for the justification of all the sins and failures of sinners. In this is revealed the righteousness of God. Indeed the greatest of sins, the pouring out of the blood of Jesus Christ, is justified by its results, so that in the end there is life's justifying for all mankind, who are then "constituted righteous" (Rom.5: 18,19). Then not only Israel will know Him Who magnified them, and not only ourselves who are getting to know Him today as the One Who gave His Son for our sakes, but all will know Him and bless Him as the righteous Justifier Who has justly dealt with all our sins.

D.H.H.

STRUGGLING IN PRAYER
(Part Two)

THE Greek word *agōnia* from which we get our English words "agony" and "agonize," is translated *struggle.* Luke used this word after quoting the renowned prayer of our Lord in the garden of Gethsemane, while He waited for Judas and the soldiers to come and take Him away, to be crucified. "He prayed, saying, 'Father, if it is Thy intention, carry aside this cup from Me. However, not My will, but Thine, be done!' . . . . And coming to be in a *struggle,* He prayed more earnestly . . ." (Luke 22:42).

God was operating in Jesus to fulfill His will. Jesus had known, since His youth, that He had come to earth for the specific purpose of dying for sinners like you and me. But now in prayer, to His Father Who had sent Him, the reality that "His hour had come" grips Him. The greatest battle ever fought in the universe was raging, and Jesus, God's Anointed One, found Himself at the very center of combat.

Is it any wonder that He was "coming to be in a *struggle?*" He did what is the natural impulse of all humans, "He prayed more earnestly," and was given the courage to affirm decidedly: "Not My will, but Thine, be done." He perceived anew that this was the only way mankind could be delivered from the chains of death. And through prayer His faith was assured. He believed God that His death on the cross would accomplish all the Father's will, and that He would be resurrected the third day, victorious over sin and death.

God is *operating in us* (Phil.2:13); and, He has a pur-

pose for each one of us. No doubt His greatest work in us will be done after we are glorified; but what He is doing even now in us, is itself necessary and important. We too, then, even as our Lord, must also walk by faith trusting that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knows what is best; this is especially so when we find ourselves in times of struggle.

The tendency may be to try to ignore this operation in us or to fill our lives with activities and stimulation, but the battle will not go away! The struggle is ever present, and our only consolation, at times, may be that, deep down, we know it is for our benefit and in accord with His will, for our good. So we must press on. As we learn to acknowledge the Father's operation in us and cheerfully submit our will to His, as Christ did, we will realize a higher purpose in life and a greater focus. A purpose so majestic that it will overshadow all else.

First and foremost, the reason for Paul's entreaty that "petitions, prayers, pleadings, thanksgiving be made for all mankind, for kings and all those in a superior station," is "that we may be *leading a mild and quiet life* in all devoutness and gravity" (1 Tim.2:1,2). It is so important for us to lead a quiet life that Paul exhorts us "to *be ambitious to be quiet,* and to be engaged in *our own* affairs . . ." (1 Thess.4:11).

To the casual observer, those leading such a life may appear as apathetic, even though this is by no means the case. It is simply that it is vital that our lives be characterized by mildness and quietness if we might somehow be attentive to the beautiful sound of God's own gentle stillness. Such an atmosphere is conducive to our recognition of His operations in us. Then, by His grace, we will not be despondent, knowing that "even if our outward man is decaying, nevertheless that within us is being renewed day by day. For the momentary lightness of our affliction

is producing for us a transcendently transcendent eonian burden of glory" (2 Cor.4:16,17).

Hence, as we read in Hebrews, "Come, then, with boldness to the throne of grace, that you may be obtaining mercy and finding grace for opportune help" (Heb.4:16). Our on-going prayer for each other should be that God would grant us maturity that we may view our struggles as an invitation to draw closer to the loving arms of our heavenly Father.

Go to Him, then, "praying in every place, lifting up benign hands, apart from anger and reasoning" (1 Tim.2:8). Go *as you are,* with nothing to hide, in the freedom that we enjoy in Christ, whereby "with uncovered face," we may be "mirroring the Lord's glory . . . being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the spirit" (2 Cor.3:18).

GOD'S SPIRIT, IN US, IS PRAYING FOR US AND THROUGH US

"Are you not aware that you are a temple of God and the spirit of God is *making its home in you?*" (1 Cor.3:16). It is the greatest privilege imaginable afforded to members of the human race that the living God might be making His home in us. Rejoice and be glad: "Now we ought to be thanking God always concerning you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, seeing that God prefers you from the beginning for salvation, in holiness of the spirit and faith in the truth, into which He also calls us through our evangel, for the procuring of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently, then, brethren, stand firm, and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, whether through word or our epistle" (2 Thess.2:13-15).

"For freedom Christ frees us! Stand firm, then, and be not again enthralled with the yoke of slavery" (Gal.5:1). The yoke Paul is speaking about is servitude to the law

which involves bondage of continually having to do something to appease God or to win His approval.

There are so many "worthy causes" calling for our time and attention and no doubt we may feel the pressure to get involved, to participate. Indeed, the message of "participation" resounds through the halls of Christendom from those oblivious of the principle of "faith obedience" during this administration of grace. Like Martha they are distracted with much service; but we, like Mary, need to choose the good part (*cp* Luke 10:38-41), that one thing of which we have supreme need: living faith.

In speaking of the father of us all, our apostle Paul declared, "For if Abraham was justified by acts, he has something to boast in, but not toward God. For what is the scripture saying? Now 'Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness.' Now to the worker, the wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as a debt. Yet to him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness" (Rom.4:2-5).

It is not that God wants us to be totally isolated and uninvolved in the society in which we live; it is simply that we cannot afford to be distracted from centering upon our life of faith. This is because, "it is *not ours to wrestle with blood and flesh*, but with the sovereignties, with the authorities, with the world-mights of this darkness, with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials" (Eph.6:12).

Hence, even as Paul declares, "*Let the peace of Christ be arbitrating in your hearts,* for which we were called also in one body; and become thankful. *Let the word of Christ be making its home in you richly,* in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing yourselves; in psalms, in hymns, in spiritual songs, singing, with grace in your hearts to God" (Col.3:15-17).

Like Mary, as we sit at the Master's feet, meditating on

His Word, in due course, our hearts will be enlightened to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, *in accord with the operation of the might of His strength* (*cf* Eph.1:18,19).

It is not a matter of our doing "great things for the Lord," but rather simply of our sharing with others what God is doing through us. "Consequently, then, as we have occasion, we are working for the good of all, yet specially for the family of faith" (Gal.6:10). Accordingly, then, "Let us have fond affection for one another with brotherly fondness, in honor deeming one another first, in diligence not slothful, fervent in spirit, slaving for the Lord, rejoicing in expectation, enduring affliction, persevering in prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, pursuing hospitality" (Rom.12:10-13).

GROANING AND TRAVAILING

"For you did not get slavery's spirit to fear again, but you got the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying, 'Abba, Father!' *The spirit itself is testifying together with our spirit* that we are children of God. Yet if children, enjoyers also of an allotment, enjoyers, indeed, of an allotment from God, yet joint enjoyers of Christ's allotment, if so be that we are suffering together, that we should be glorified together also" (Rom.8:15-17).

As the sons of God, it is true that we are especially aware of the groaning and travailing that pervades the entire creation. Yet it is likewise true that we are uniquely aware of the glorious freedom that awaits the entire creation as well. The spirit, operating in us with power, has given us a glorious foretaste of our expectation. We are mindful, too, of the vanity of the foolish lusts to which we ourselves even as all humans are subjected.

Someday, we will more fully appreciate the utter futility of this human experience, which nevertheless serves as a necessary backdrop for the glory about to be revealed. In the meantime, we find ourselves in special pain, constantly torn between two worlds. We spend each waking moment with an expectation of resurrection glory, deep in our bowels; and yet at the same time, we are ever aware of the suffering which we must undergo, since we too, even as the rest, have likewise been subjected to the slavery of corruption.

We do well to turn away from excessive attention to our own distress, by turning our attention to the weaker members of the body, to those who are in special need of comfort, even more than ourselves. We will find great joy in employing our God-given energy in service to others for their good, even as in devoting ourselves to prayer on their behalf.

In writing to his beloved brothers and sisters in Christ of Galatia, the apostle Paul penned this profound statement: "Little children mine, with whom I am travailing again until Christ may be formed in you!" (Gal.4:19). Travailing is painful; and as in childbirth, its pangs will intensify the closer we get to our deliverance. "A woman, whenever she may be bringing forth, is having sorrow, seeing that her hour came; yet whenever she should be bearing the little child, no longer is she remembering the affliction, because of the joy that a human being was born into the world" (John 16:21).

Our sorrow, also, will be forgotten once we, the sons of God, are unveiled. In the meantime, the pains of labor are a necessary and vital part of the operation of God working in us, preparing us for our celestial allotment. Therefore, we, who have the firstfruit of the spirit, are groaning in ourselves awaiting the sonship, the deliverance of our body (Rom.8:23).

The spirit itself causes us to cry out, "Abba, Father! Deliver me from this body of death!" Yet as we grow in awareness that we have been given not a spirit of slavery but a *spirit of sonship,* our fears will be diminished and our trust and reliance upon God will be increased. "For we also, who are in the tabernacle, are *groaning, being burdened,* not wanting to be stripped, but to be dressed, that the mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now He Who *produces us for this same longing* is God, Who is also *giving us the earnest of the spirit*" (2 Cor.5:4,5).

God created us with an overwhelming need to be saved and loved; and, as we become more keenly aware of our total dependency upon Him, this will draw us to His bosom in intimate fellowship with Him. There, in His presence, His spirit prays through us and for us, and we are refreshed and uplifted. "O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways" (Rom.11:33)!

GOD IS PLACING IN US THE WORD OF CONCILIATION

"Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and *placing in us* the word of the conciliation. For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God *entreating through us*. We are beseeching for Christ's sake, Be conciliated to God!" (2 Cor.5:18-20).

God's purpose in blessing us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, even as in choosing us in Him before the disruption of the world, in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son (Eph.1:3-5), is not simply to bless us thus, but to bless us thus so that we may thus be a blessing to others.

The great future work which awaits us will ensue consequent to our glorification. This will be during the "administration of the complement of the eras," when God heads up all in the Christ—"both that in the heavens and that on the earth" (Eph.1:10). But for now, God is placing in us the word of the conciliation, and is entreating through us, "Be conciliated to God!"

"All be doing without murmurings and reasonings that you may become blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse among whom you are *appearing as luminaries* in the world, having on the word of life" (Phil.2:15,16).

Our natural eye cannot see any glory beaming out from us; yet we are walking by faith, not by perception (2 Cor.5:7). It is not a matter of any worthiness of our own in our high calling. Hence we would not depend upon our feelings, but simply believe God in the testimony He has given us. Besides "we are not heralding ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, yet ourselves your slaves because of Jesus, for the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Now we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the transcendence of the power may be of God and not of us" (2 Cor.4:5-7).

What a burden is lifted when we realize the evangel is not about us, but about God's achievement in Christ. Let us, then, become sincere, gentle children of God in our testimony to all, even as Paul declares: " . . . I became as weak to the weak, that I should be gaining the weak. To all have I become all, that I should undoubtedly be saving some. Now all am I doing because of the evangel, that I may be becoming a joint participant of it. Are you not aware that those racing in a stadium are, indeed, all racing, yet one is obtaining the prize? Thus be racing that you may be grasping it" (1 Cor.9:22-24).

My mother-in-law was a praying women. She labored for over forty years in the Finnish Pentecostal church and often prayed for the salvation of her children and grandchildren, fearing they would spend eternity in hell. She carried a heavy burden that tormented her and possibly speeded the Alzheimer's disease that finally took her mind the last twelve years of her life. She didn't understand God's purpose of the eons, nor His ultimate plan of salvation for all mankind. If she had enjoyed this knowledge, she could have prayed with confidence and enjoyed His peace.

One danger for those of us who see these great truths, is to adopt a form of fatalism, and not take at all seriously the vital importance of prayer. Some may imagine, "Why pray for anyone, if God has already conciliated the world to Himself?" or, "Why bother to herald the good news, if Christ's death on the cross took care of every sin and all mankind will be saved?" The emphatic answer is, that the message that all mankind will be saved *is* the good news.

In referring to his "faithful saying" that "God . . . is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers" (1 Tim. 4:10), Paul declared, "*for this* are we toiling and being reproached." Fully stated, Paul's testimony here is as follows: "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome (for for this are we toiling and being reproached), that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. *These things be charging and teaching*" (1 Tim.4:9-11).

"For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us" (2 Cor.5:20a). This is so not in spite of the fact that "God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself," but because of it. "We are beseeching for Christ's sake, Be conciliated to God!" (2 Cor.5:20b), because we know that God has conciliated the world to Himself and is

not reckoning the offenses to them (2 Cor.5:19a). *Therefore,* He has placed in us, "the word of the conciliation" (2 Cor.5:19b).

Undoubtedly we will always be questioned by the religious scoffers. Howbeit, our primary charge, as ambassadors, is not to respond to their many questionings and doubts, but simply to "*Herald the word.* Stand by it, opportunely, inopportunely, expose, rebuke, entreat, with all patience and teaching" (2 Tim.4:2). May God grant us the power and wisdom to live and move accordingly. Hence, "*In prayer be persevering,* watching in it with thanksgiving, praying at the same time concerning us also, that God should be opening for us a door of the word, to speak the secret of Christ" (Col.4:2,3).

Therefore, wherever you may find yourself, and especially on behalf of those heralding the word today, let us pray in accord with Paul's entreaty concerning himself and the saints of his day, where he said: "During every prayer and petition *be praying on every occasion* (in spirit being vigilant also for it with all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints, and for me), that to me expression may be granted in the opening of my mouth with boldness, to make known the secret of the evangel . . ." (Eph. 6:18,19). Thus, let us be, "*persevering* in prayer."

PRAYER IS LOVE RESPONSIVE

King David, a man according to God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14), wrote, "As a deer is panting over the channels of water, so is my soul panting for You, O Elohim!" (Psa 42:1). It is natural and healthy for the children of God to *long* for the presence of their Father, and to *need* His presence even as the deer needs water.

But we may have become so preoccupied with our own lack, individually, or even as a many-membered body, that we may never have considered God's perspective of this

wonderful relationship which we enjoy with Him. Is it not so that even as we long for His presence, He likewise longs for our presence as well?

We are all familiar with the words, "God is love" (1 John 4:8). In the Keyword Concordance (p.186) "love" is defined as: "A complex emotion arousing appreciation or delight in and a *desire for the presence of its object,* as well as to please and promote its welfare."

Therefore, since God *is* love, His heart hungers for the fellowship of his handiwork. At the consummation, God will be All in all (1 Cor.15:28); but now He wants to be something special in us. In an intimate and personal way, He desires our fellowship. In setting forth our requests before God, we should always add (whether implicitly or explicitly), "However, not My will, but Thine, be done!" (Luke 22:42). In this there is blessing for us, and God will be glorified.

Even the saints who did not understand this, including my mother-in-law, will see their joy magnified because of their many tears shed. When they are joined with their loved ones, they will realize that their prayers were an important part of their reconciliation. They will also realize that the apparent delay in God's answering their requests was better than having had their prayers answered immediately. Even as ourselves, they too must realize their total lostness and helplessness, before they can appreciate being found and being saved. We must all experience temporary distance from God that we might truly appreciate the permanent closeness which one day will be ours.

What an honor to be graced to experience a foretaste of this closeness even now, the closeness that we experience in heartfelt *prayer,* as we, with thanksgiving, make our requests known to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Don Bast

"BINDING" AND "LOOSING"; "PAUL, AN *APOSTLE* . . . ."

Question:

Charismatic healers often claim that they, like Peter (Matt.16:19), can "bind" and "loose" whoever and whatever they want. At least they can do so, so they say, if the faith of their listeners is strong enough. They generally make this claim in reference to freeing ("loosing") people from addiction and disease and to binding demons, including demons of poverty. Does not Matthew 16:19 confer such an ability upon Peter, even as upon certain present-day, spirit-filled ministers?

Answer:

NO, MATTHEW 16:19 by no means confers any such ability upon Peter, much less upon any present-day, purportedly "spirit-filled" healers. In the Authorized Version this passage reads: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

The Concordant Version provides a more accurate rendering of the Greek: "I will be giving you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatsoever you should be binding on the earth *shall be those things having been bound in the heavens,* and whatsoever you should be loosing on the earth, *shall be those having been loosed in the heavens.*"

Both of these verbs ("bound" and "loosed") are perfect participles and should be rendered in English, respectively, *having been* bound and *having been* loosed.

This accords with the ultra-literal English sublinear of the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT (p.78), which reads: "WHICH IF-EVER YOU-SHOULD-BE-BINDING ON THE LAND WILL-BE HAVING-*been*-BOUND IN THE heavens AND WHICH IF-EVER YOU-SHOULD-BE-LOOSING ON THE LAND WILL-BE HAVING-*been*-LOOSED IN THE heavens."

At this juncture in Christ's ministry (Matt.16:13-20), "We have come to the climax of our Lord's proclamation of the kingdom. The people know Him not. Only a few, led by Peter, recognize Israel's Messiah. These are the new ecclesia, called out from the nation, and separated from them by loyalty to Him. Our Lord's ministry commenced with the descent of the spirit in form as a dove. Peter is inaugurated into his new office by being named the 'Son of a Dove.' Then our Lord plays on the meaning of 'Peter,' which is 'rock.'

"As such this new ecclesia would be built on him. The forms *Petros* and *petra* differ only in gender. In the new Jerusalem the twelve will be associated with him in the foundation (Rev.21:14). But he alone is the foundation in this ecclesia. He took this place in the Pentecostal era. This is the same ecclesia which will pass through the terrors of the end time, for whom Peter's epistles are especially intended. Then the great dragon and his hosts will not prevail against this ecclesia.

"Peter used the keys on the day of Pentecost to open the kingdom to Israel. From Peter's confession forward the doors into the kingdom were shut and the Lord no longer proclaimed it. As He would not be present when they were to be opened again, He gave Peter the keys. Peter's dealings with Ananias and Sapphira show the power he possessed. None of this has any connection with the present ecclesia, the body of Christ. We are not built on Peter. None of his teaching is for us. We are associated with Paul. Peter's keys would not be of any service to us, for we do not enter

that kingdom. Before the powers of the unseen hurl themselves against that ecclesia, we will be safely at home with our Lord (1 Thess.4:17)."[1]

THE "KEYS" OF THE KINGDOM

The "kingdom of the heavens" (an expression peculiar to Matthew's account) is the kingdom of the *God* of the heavens (Dan.2:44), to be established on the earth in the coming eon (*cp* Matt.5:5). It is "the kingdom of God," insofar as it is contemplated within the Hebrew writings and within the scope of Christ's personal ministry to Israel. As the Psalms declare, the heavens *rule* (*cf* Psa.136:8,9). That is, as the "heavens" (especially the sun) were recognized by all as being providentially determinative with respect to man's need for heat and light (even as, in the sun's absence, for cold and darkness), upon which he was dependent for his welfare, they constitute an apt figure of God's deity, especially with respect to the impending kingdom.

It is not a kingdom *in* heaven, but a kingdom *of* heaven—"heaven's" kingdom. Figuratively, by both association and likeness, it is "the kingdom of *the heavens.*" Literally, it is the kingdom of *God.* God's kingdom will be established in the day of Yahweh (i.e., the "day of the Lord"), when man's day (*cf* 1 Cor.4:3) is then past.

It should be noted that the Lord's words in Matthew 16:19 give Peter no authority whatsoever over heavenly things or things celestial. The God and Father of Christ is He Who "is in the heavens" (Matt.16:17). Whatsoever Peter should be binding (or loosing) *on the earth* would be only those things "*having been bound* [already] in *the heavens.*" "The heavens," here, by association, refer to God Himself ("Who is in the heavens"), Who indeed, "fills" heaven, even as earth as well (Jer.23:24).

1. A. E. Knoch; The Concordant Commentary, p.34.

Peter had the "keys" of the kingdom of the heavens. In the figure, with reference to the kingdom, Peter could use these keys either to "lock" (i.e., bind) or "unlock" (i.e., loosen). As noted above, Peter used these "keys" (i.e., the divinely granted authority inherent in his ministry) to "open" the kingdom to Israel at Pentecost, having "shut" the kingdom to Israel earlier, from the time of his confession (Matt.16:16) until Pentecost. This is evidently the case, for from that time onward the Lord no longer proclaimed it. Peter's dealings with Annanias and Sapphira illustrate the power he possessed (with reference to the kingdom) as well (*cf* Acts 5:1-11).

With respect to Paul's evangel, after a time, Cephas (the Aramaic surname of Simon, the equivalent of the Greek *Petros,* i.e., "Peter"; *cp* Matt.4:18; John 1:40-42) once became hypocritical (and self-censured as well), inasmuch as he was incorrect in his *attitude* toward the truth of the Pauline evangel (Gal.2:11-14). He should never have acted (effectually at least) as if "judaizing" was *compulsory* for those of the nations (Gal.2:14). Cephas, along with the rest of the Jerusalem leaders, had no authority whatever over Paul or those in Christ under Paul's ministry (*cp* Gal.1:15-2:14).

In summary, Peter only bound (and/or loosed) that which had already *been* bound (and/or loosed) "in the heavens," that is, that which had already *been* bound (and/or loosed) *by God Himself,* the One Who is operating *all,* according to the counsel of *His* will (Eph.1:11).

❊

Question:

Today I began to read Ephesians. I want to read it meticulously and intelligently. I haven't gotten very far . . . yet. I got to the third word: "apostle." I want to know what the word "apostle" (*apostolos*) means.

> Yet when I look in the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, I find: "FROM-PUT-ed, commissioner." "Commissioner," or "Commissioned"? How can I well understand the literal Greek in this case, and in general? How much do I just have to accept about Greek idiom, and how much makes sense even to my English ear, even in the ultra-literal form: "from-put-ed"?

Answer:

Well, you did get to the third word, and that is good. Actually, in the beginning phrase, "Paul, an apostle," we could spend considerable time on the word "Paul," too. And, though the second word, "an," is not in the Greek, there are important issues to be understood concerning article adjectives, definite and indefinite; explicit, implicit sense, issues of ellipsis, idiom, and so forth.

There is very little indeed that you will "just have to accept" (i.e., apart from conclusive evidence) in New Testament factual studies—which must form the basis for all subsequent judgments as to sense and application. That is, this is so if you will engage yourself in serious, rigorous study in certain disciplines and of various issues.

In principle, linguistic/theological, historical-critical science is of the nature of any other science (Latin, *scientia,* [field of] knowledge). It is often possible to set forth conclusive, deductive evidence of such findings; though in other instances, in the nature of the case, such findings must be inductive in nature. Yet even these often constitute strong evidence, of a beyond-a-reasonable-doubt nature.

Hermeneutics (i.e., interpretation) must be founded upon factual evidence; the former must always follow the latter; in the nature of things, it can never precede it.

Exegesis (i.e., that which is "led forth from [a document]"), which, like studies of figures of speech, is a sub-discipline of hermeneutics, is a craft, an artistic skill, though a highly scientific one. Yet it is upon such very skills,

founded themselves, in turn, upon factual evidence, that valid hermeneutics depends.

It has well been said concerning any subject—assuming that relevant key issues are such that they can be set forth in ordinary language—that if a subject can be reduced to its simple essence, and if sufficient factual evidence exists and is employed in support of a valid derivative position, it can be understood by any ordinary person—any ordinary interested and fairminded person. Of course for such an ideal to be realized, even as is so for anything else that is to be achieved, there is need for the saving grace of God, *through* concomitant human effort, as the fruit thereof.

In some cases, I can conceive no—or only dubious—connection between the meaning of the elements of a Greek word and the meaning of the word itself. But in many cases the meaning of the elements of a Greek word are significantly reflective or even indicative of the meaning of the word itself (though, in the nature of the case, never decisively so).

Obviously, if we did not otherwise have a clue as to what *apostolos* might mean, we would probably not make much progress from just a knowledge of the individual meanings of its respective elements. But, for that matter, how do we even know that these (i.e., "from" and "put") are the meaning of its elements? The answer of course is that this itself can only be known by an antecedent knowledge of the respective words "from" (*apo*) and "put" (*stellomai*). And this, in turn, can only be discovered through definitive evidence of the usage of these words.

In many cases, listings of such words themselves, when uncompounded, can readily be searched out in the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE. In the great majority of cases, they can otherwise be discovered through one or more of the other Concordant tools. Only in a few (perhaps never vital) cases, must extra-canonical, non-New Testament source

information be consulted (such as *koinê* [common, first or early-century], Septuagint [Old Testament Hebrew, translated into Greek, c. 200 B.C.], or classical Greek writings).

If you will look up these appropriate entries in the Keyword Concordance, in turn, looking up at least a few of the usages of each of these words within the New Testament text, you can easily satisfy yourself that the Concordant English STANDARDS "from" and "put" are correct. And, taking a hint from the stated definition for *apostolos* of "commissioner," you may then turn to the entry "commission" (i.e., *apostellō*), which is simply the verbal form of the noun, *apostolos.* There you will find plenty of definitive, scriptural evidence in justification of the translation "commission" (as a verb), or, idiomatically, as more frequently rendered in the Concordant Version, "dispatch."

By the ending for *apostolos*, FROM-PUT-*ed*, we merely seek to convey the fact that this form is an adjective, albeit used as a noun; that is, it speaks, elliptically, of a "from-put-ed [*one*]." In the Concordant *Version,* however, in consideration of idiom and custom, we have chosen the rendering "apostle" (which, like "eon," is merely transliterated/anglicized Greek), notwithstanding the inadequacies and poverty of this word as commonly defined in English dictionaries.

Thus, following the steps I have herein rehearsed, we may obtain conclusive evidence that an "*apostolos*" is a *commissioner,* one who has been *commissioned* (one who is "officially *sent* forth, with *authority* for the execution of some task"; see KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.55).

In nearly every case, for practically all the major words and the great majority of the minor words and particles of the New Testament vocabulary, *definitive* evidence is available (and, nearly always, is to be found within the New Testament itself), from which *conclusive* evidence may be drawn. J.R.C.

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 Jacob and Laban
103 Proclamations from Yahweh
107 Into God's Hands
119 The Consequences of the Cross
129 God is Love
137 Through the Deliverance in Christ Jesus

MAY, 2006

Volume XCVII **Number 3**

Concordant Version of
The Book of Psalms

The *Concordant Version of the Psalms* endeavors to follow a pattern of consistency in translating the Hebrew words and thoughts of the Original. Hence there has been an effort to avoid the use of any English term for more than one Hebrew term, even though several English words may be required to do duty for a single Hebrew term. Boldface and lightface type, superior symbols and abbreviations and footnotes are all used to clarify the meaning or to represent some unique features that are otherwise difficult to express in English.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2006
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EDITORIAL

THE EXPRESSION "the dais of Christ," appears only once in Scripture, in 2 Corinthians 5:10. A "dais" is a platform raised above the surrounding level to give prominence to the person on it. Thus, the dais of Christ, upon which our Lord will appear, will befit His honor and dignity as the One before Whom all of us must be manifested that each should be *requited* for that which he puts into practice through the body, whether good or bad.

To "requite," is to make *suitable return to,* whether for a benefit or service, or for an injury. We are not informed as to the metaphysics of this event, that of our requital at the dais of Christ; hence as to the particulars of how this will all take place, we cannot say.

It is at least conceivable, at an appointed time, and for most, after a long waiting period, that each one of us would be individually called forth to stand before the dais, that we might first have our careers individually reviewed in all their details, followed by each believer's personal requital accordingly, rehearsing each one's deeds, one by one.

But it is at least as conceivable, apart from any need for any of us as individuals literally to "*stand* for review," that we should instead, in consideration of our former lives, simply all be *manifested* in front of the dais of Christ (that is, made to appear according to our true character and actual career), that we might then be *requited* accordingly, suitably and without delay. Therefore, since "all is naked and bare to the eyes of Him to Whom we are accountable" (*cf* Heb 4:13), we would anticipate our manifestation and requital before the dais as an event that will occur swiftly and as a marvel of efficiency.

Our Concordant STANDARD for the Greek word *komizō* (which the CV ordinarily translates as "be requited") is

"FETCH" (*cp* Luke 7:37). The question is, What will our practices, both good and bad, "fetch" for us at the dais of Christ? The answer is that they will fetch what God deems proper and right concerning them in our case, according to the principle that, "Each will be getting his own wages, according to his own toil" (1 Cor.3:8b).

That of our work that may be figured by "gold and silver, precious stones," being such as will abide the scrutiny of fiery testing, is work for which we shall "get wages." But that of our work that may be figured by "wood, grass, straw," being such that it can by no means abide such severe examination, is work that thus shall be "burned up" and must be *forfeited,* hence for which no wages shall be paid (*cf* 1 Cor.3:10-15).

We are not only "vessels of mercy" (Rom.9:23), but God is "*rich* in mercy" toward us (Eph.2:4). As undeserving as we are, we shall be saved from the indignation of God, through Christ (Rom.5:9). For our bad works, then, we shall simply forfeit wages; should these be extensive and entail our failing to endure (*cf* 2 Tim.2:12), in that case, we will not enjoy the allotment of God's *reign* or kingdom. Even so, we shall still live under its jurisdiction, in our enjoyment of the gracious allotment of life eonian (*cp* Gal.5:21; Titus 3:7; Eph.2:5-7; Rom.6:23b).

Many dread the dais of Christ for themselves, or long for their fellow believers who have offended them to be upbraided there, and thus, at last, get their justly deserved comeuppance from the Lord. How glorious it is instead to know when we are manifested before the dais of Christ and requited for our practices, both good and bad, that we shall already be vivified, immortal, incorruptible, conformed to the image of God's Son. Then, and then alone, will we be able to bear such exposure and corresponding requital, both of ourselves and of one another, apart from anger, malice, jealousy, and bitterness, in the fullness of kindness, gentleness, humility, and love. J.R.C.

JACOB AND LABAN
(Genesis 29:1-35)

29 + **Jacob** [l]**lifted** up **his feet and** [l]**went** to**ward** the **land of** the **sons of** the **East,** [7]**to Laban son of Bethuel the Syrian; brother of Rebecca,** the **mother of Jacob and Esau**[0]**.** [2] **And behold,** + **he** [l]**saw** a **well in** the **field. And behold, there** were **three droves of small cattle reclining** [on]**beside it, for from** ˙**that** ˙**well they** [c]**gave the droves** to [l]**drink. And the** customary **great stone** lay **on** the **mouth of the well.** [3] +**When all the ~shepherds**[n] **were gathered there**[d]**,** + **they would roll** `**the stone off** the **mouth of the well,** + [c]**give** `**the small cattle** to **drink, and** then **restore** `**the stone to its** [ri]**place on** the **mouth of the well.**

[4] + **Jacob** [l]**said to them, My brothers, from where** are **you?** + **They** [lsa]**replied, We** are **from Charan.** [5] + **He** [lsa]**asked** › **them,** Do **you know** `**Laban son of Nahor?** + **They** [lsa]**replied, We know** him**.** [6] **And he** [l]**said to them,** Does › **he fare well?** + **They** [lsa]**answered,** He **fare**s **well.** +**Now behold, his daughter Rachel** is **coming with the flock.** [7] + [7]**Jacob**[0] [l]**said** [M]**to them**[nc]**: Behold,** it is [fr]**still great** ˙**day**light, and it is **not** yet **time** to **gather**⁻ **the cattle.** Why don't you [c]**give the flock** to **drink and go** and **graze** them**?** [8] + **They** [lsa]**replied: We** [l]**cannot until** [w] **all the** [7]**shepherds~**[n] **are** [l]**gathered, and they roll** `**the stone off** the **mouth of the well.** +**Then we will** [c]**give the flock** to **drink.**

[9] [fr]**While he** was **speaking with them,** + **Rachel her**self **came with the flock** [w]**that** was **her father's, for she** was the **shepherdess**[l] [7]**of her father's flock**[0]**.** [10] +**Now it** [l]**came** to **pass as** soon [w]**as Jacob saw** `**Rachel,** the **daughter of his mother's brother Laban, and** `the **flock of his mother's brother**

Laban, + **Jacob** came ˡ**close and** ˡ**rolled** `**the stone off** the **mouth of the well and** *c*˙**gave his mother's brother Laban's flock** to ˡ**drink.** 11 +**Then Jacob** ˡ**kissed** › **Rachel and** ˡ**lifted** up `**his voice and** ˡ**wept.** 12 + **Jacob** ˡ**told** › **Rachel that he** was a **nephew of her father and that he** was a **son of Rebecca.** +**So she** ˡ**ran and** ˡ**told** › **her father** 7˙`**these** ˙**things**0**.** 13 + **It** ˡ**came** to **pass as** soon as **Laban heard**– `the **report** about **Jacob his sister's son,** + **he** ˡ**ran to meet him,** + ˡ**embraced** › **him,** + ˡ**kissed** › **him and** ˡ**brought him to his house.** + **He** ˡ**related to Laban** `**all** ˙**these** ˙**things;** 14 **and Laban** ˡ**said to him:** *y*˙**Surely my bone and my flesh** are **you.**

+**When he** had ˡ**dwelt with him** a **month of days,** 15 + **Laban** ˡ**said to Jacob:** Just *t*˙**because you** are **my nephew,** + should **you serve me gratuitously?** Do **tell** › **me what** shall be **your hire.** 16 +**Now Laban** ›**had two daughters;** the **name of the elder** was **Leah, and** the **name of the younger** was **Rachel.** 17 + **Leah's eyes** were **tender;** + **Rachel**´ *b*˙**was** of **lovely shape and** was **lovely** in **appearance.** 18 + **Jacob was loving** `**Rachel, and he** ˡ**said: I shall serve you seven years** *i*˙**for your** ˙**younger daughter Rachel.** 19 + **Laban** ˡ*sa*˙**replied** 7˙**to him**0**:** It is **better** that **I give**– `**her to you** *f*˙**than** that **I give**– `**her to another man.** Do **dwell with me.** 20 +**So Jacob** ˡ**served** *i*˙**for Rachel seven years; and they came** to ˡ**be in his eyes like several days** *i*˙**because** of **his love**– `for **her.**

21 +**Then Jacob** ˡ**said to Laban:** Do **grant** me `**my wife, for my days are fulfilled, and** do **let me come to her.** 22 +**Then Laban** ˡ**gathered** `**all** the **men of the** *ri*˙**place and** ˡ*d*˙**gave** a **feast.** 23 **And it** ˡ**came** to **pass in** the **evening** +**that** 7**Laban~** ˡ**took** `**his daughter Leah and** ˡ**brought** `**her to** 7**Jacob~***s*˙**, and he** ˡ**came to her.** 24 + **Laban** had ˡ**given** `**his maid**servant **Zilpah to his daughter Leah** *M*›**as***n* a hand**maid for her.** 25 **And it** ˡ**came** to **pass in** the **morning, and behold, it** was **Leah!** +**So** 7**Jacob~** ˡ**said to Laban: What** is **this you have done to me?** Was it **not** *i*˙**for Rachel** that **I served with you?** + **Why** did **you deceive me?** 26 + **Laban** ˡ*sa*˙**replied; It is not**

ˡ**done** *so*˙**this** way **in our** *ri*˙**place to give the junior before the firstborn.** 27 **Fulfill** the **week** with **this** one**, and** 7**I~***nc* **shall** indeed **give** › **you** `**that** one *mr*˙**too** *i*˙**for** the **service** *w*˙**that you** can ˡ**serve with me** *fr*˙**yet another seven years.**

THE PLACE

PADAN-SYRIA, whither Jacob went, was over the Euphrates river just outside the land promised to Abraham (15:18). Nothing is said of his crossing this great, deep stream till his return (31:21). His route from Beer-sheba to Bethel was slightly east of north, and so he seems to have continued as far as Aram (Syria) to the heights south of the upper reaches of the Euphrates river. Yet it must have been some distance from it, as the flocks were watered from a well.

JACOB'S BAD BARGAIN

As was the case with Abraham's servant when he went for a wife for Isaac, divine guidance is most evident, for Jacob almost immediately meets the woman he wishes for his wife, and is able to be of service to her and her family.

But at this point, Jacob makes another bargain. He was to give seven years' service with keep, for a wife. We have no way of judging how good the trade was, but we can depend on him to get the better of Laban. But he trusts Laban, and so we have a very good foil for the faithfulness of Yahweh. Laban gave him what neither of them wanted, and so got the best of him. Jacob was saddled with a wife he did not love.

RACHEL AND LEAH

28 + **Jacob** ˡ**did so and** ˡ**fulfilled** the **week** with **this** one**;** +**then** 7**Laban~** ˡ**gave** › **him** `**his daughter Rachel** ›**as his wife.** 29 + **Laban** had ˡ**given** `**his maid**servant **Bilhah to his daughter Rachel** ›**as** a hand**maid for her.** 30 +**Then he**

|came to Rachel *mr* **too; and he was loving `Rachel** *mr* **as well,** more *f* **than Leah; and he |served with him** *fr* **yet another seven years.**

31 + **Yahweh |saw that Leah** was **disliked|, and He |opened `her womb; +yet Rachel** was **barren.** 32 + **Leah** became **|pregnant and |bore** a **son** *7* **for Jacob**^{0}**.** + **She |called his name Reuben, for she said** It is *t* **because Yahweh has seen** *i* **my humiliation;** *7* **and** so **He** has **|given › me** a **son**^{0}**;** *t* **now my husband shall love me.** 33 + **Then** *7* **Leah**^{0} became **|pregnant** *fr* **again and |bore** a *7* **second**^{0} **son** *7* **for Jacob**^{0}**.** + **She |said:** It is *t* **because Yahweh has heard that I** am **disliked|; and** so **He** has **|given › me `this** one *mr* **also. And she |called his name Simeon.** 34 + **Then she** became **|pregnant** *fr* **again and |bore** a **son.** + **She |said: Now** at *·du* **last my husband shall be obligated to me, for I have borne › him three sons. Therefore** *7* **she**^{nc} **called his name Levi.** 35 + **Then she** became **|pregnant** *fr* **again and |bore** a **son.** + **She |said:** *7* **Now**^{0} ·this *du* **time I shall acclaim `Yahweh. Therefore she called his name Judah.** + **Then she |stayed from bearing**$^{-}$**.**

JACOB'S SISTER WIVES

In the law we read: "You shall not take a woman to be a rival to her sister . . ." (Lev.18:18). The combination of two avaricious tricksters brought much trouble into Jacob's married life. Leah probably had the hardest time, as she was not loved and had been forced into the relationship in a way that would not endear her to Jacob. Her only means of endearing herself to him would be to bear him sons. And in this she was quite successful, for she bore him six sons, besides two by her maid. This marriage certainly was not ideal, yet the family thus engendered is easily the most important in God's plan for the human race, for here we have the beginnings of the twelve tribes of Israel, through whom He will reveal Himself in the Scriptures.

A. E. Knoch

PROCLAMATIONS FROM YAHWEH
(Jeremiah 2:1-18)

OVER a third of Jeremiah concerns his own people directly (2:1-20:18). Most of this is composed of *proclamations* from Yahweh concerning Jerusalem and Judah (2:1-12:17 and 17:19-27) followed by *symbolic representations* (13:1-17:18 and 18:1-20:18). The proclamations beginning in chapter two deal with Jerusalem's espousals, marriage and adultery, continuing through Jeremiah 3:11.

BRIDAL DAYS

2 + The **word of Yahweh** [lb]**came to me,** › **saying**–, 2 **Go**– **and** –**call in** the **ears of Jerusalem,** › **saying**–**, Thus says Yahweh:**
I remember ›**concerning you,** the **benignity of your youth,**
The **love of your bridal** days**,** when **you** [go]**followed**– **after Me in** the **wilderness,**
In a **land not sown**[l]**.**
3 **Holy** was **Israel to Yahweh,**
The **first**fruits **of His** harvest **yield;**
All who **devour**[l] **him shall be** held **guilty;**
Evil shall come ›**upon them, averring** is **Yahweh.**

Under the general figure of marriage Yahweh recalls the past, when they became His people in the wilderness.

At the exodus Israel was greatly impressed by their miraculous deliverance, and sang the praises of their Deliverer. In the wilderness He gave ample by daily miracles and continued sustenance, and by visiting evil on their enemies.

For forty years they lacked nothing (*cf* Deut.2:7) while He repeated for them to return His love (*cf* Deut.6:4,5).

A CALL FOR HEARING

4 **Hear** the **word of Yahweh, house of Jacob,**
And all the **families of** the **house of Israel.**
5 **Thus says Yahweh,**
What iniquity did **your fathers find in Me,**
That they have wandered **far from** *on* **Me**
And have ˡ**gone after** ˙**vanity and be**come ˡ**vain?**
6 + **They** did **not** *sa*-**ask, Where** is **Yahweh,**
˙Who *c*-**brought**ˡ `**us up**ˡ **from** the **land of Egypt,**
˙Who *go*-**led**ˡ `**us in** the **wilderness,**
In a **land of gorge and pit,**
In a **land of aridity and blackest shadow,**
In a **land in** *her*-**which no***t* **man passes,**
And no*t* **human dwells there?**
7 + **I** have ˡ**brought** `**you to** ˙this **productive land,**
To eat its fruit and its goodness,
+**Yet you** have ˡ**entered and** ˡ**defiled** `**My land,**
And My allotment you have *pl*-**made** in**to** an **abhorrence.**
8 **The priests, they** did **not** *sa*-**ask, Where** is **Yahweh?**
+ Those who **handle**ˡ **the law, they** did **not know Me,**
+ **The shepherds**ˡ**, they transgressed** *i*-**against Me,**
And the prophets, they prophesied *i*-**by Baal**
And went after things that do **not** ˡ**benefit.**
9 **Therefore, I shall contend** `with **you** *fr*-**again,**
averring is **Yahweh;**
+**Even** `with the **sons of your sons shall I contend.**

Notwithstanding all His wonders in the wilderness, they forgot them. Furthermore, the luxuries in the land did not hold them to Him. Even the priests no longer inquired for Him. And the prophets voiced the falsehood of Baal ("Possessor"). The lesson taught by this long demonstration is

very clear. Soulish blessings are not enough to draw men to their Subjector in fond affection. It needs a background of evil, to make a lasting impression.

Since that time the nation has suffered untold travail, and the worst is yet to come. Yet this, *and a new heart,* will prepare them to worship Yahweh their Elohim in spirit and in truth (*cf* Jer.31:33). Therefore we should not crave material blessings, lest they prove a curse. Like Paul we would learn to be content so that we become strong in Him Who is invigorating us—Christ (Phil.4:11-13).

IDOLATRY

10 *t*-**Indeed cross** to the **coasts of Kittim and see,**
And send to **Kedar, and intensely consider and see;**
Behold, has it ever *b*-**happened like this?**
11 **Has** any **nation changed** its **elohim**
(+**even** though **they** are **not elohim**)**?**
+**Yet My people, they have changed** *S*-**My***ph* **glory**
i-**for** what does **not** ˡ**benefit.**
12 **Be appalled over this,** you **heavens,**
And be horrified, be utterly drained,
averring is **Yahweh;**
13 **For My people have** *d*-**committed two evils:**
`**Me they have forsaken,**
the **Fountain of living waters,**
To hew for themselves **cisterns,**
brokenˡ **cisterns** *w*-**that** can**not** ˡ**contain** ˙**water.**

The names *Kittim* and *Kedar,* seem to be used as a figure of the east and the west, or everywhere, for the argument would apply to any nation. Israel, with the true Elohim changes to the false much more readily than those who have no elohim worthy of the name! They forsake a running spring with pure, gushing water, for cisterns which do not even hold the tainted run-off from their roofs!

14 Is **Israel** a **servant,** *if*__**Or**__ is **he** a **house-born** slave**?**
For **what reason has he become** › **plunder?**
15 **Over him sheltered** lions **are roaring;**
They *g*__**lift up their voice,**__
And they are *set*__**making his land** in__**to** a **desolation;**
His cities, they are ravaged, *f* **without** a **dweller**|**.**
16 **Even** the **sons of Noph and Tahpanhes,**
They ~|**smash~ you** on the **crown** of your **head.**
17 Did **you not** |**do this to you**rself
When **you forsook**‾ `**Yahweh your Elohim**
In the **era** when He *go*__**led**__| **you in** the **way?**
18 **And now,** *wt*__**why**__ should › **you** go ›__**on**__ the **way** to **Egypt**
to drink the **waters of Shihor?**
And *wt*__**why**__ should › **you** go ›__**on**__ the **way** to **Assyria**
to drink the **waters of** the **Stream?**

In that early time Yahweh led Israel in the way to a bountiful land, but now they had forsaken Him, and the land has become a desolation.

The Egyptian cities Noph and Tahpanhes (Jer.2:16) are closely connected with the refusal of the Israelites to obey this prophecy, and be subject to Yahweh Elohim Who spoke through the prophet. They forced Jeremiah to accompany them on the way across the border into Egypt for shelter (Jer.43:4-7; 44:1).

So it is that they bring evil upon themselves. They were always relying on one of their enemies to shield them from the others instead of calling on Yahweh through His to-subjectors. This is powerfully expressed by their desire to refresh themselves from the great streams, the Euphrates (the stream), and the Nile (Shihor), instead of the waters which come from heaven above and the springs which were abundant in their own land (Jer.2:16-18).

A. E. Knoch

INTO GOD'S HANDS

(2 Samuel 24:1-25)

24 [i]**When** the **anger of Yahweh** [l]**continued to** grow **hot**– [i]**against Israel,** + **He** [l]**incited** `**David** [i]**against them,** › **saying**–**, Go, count** `**Israel and** `**Judah.** 2 +**So the king** [l]**said to Joab** [7]**and** the **chiefs~ of the army who** were `with **him,** Go [pr]**now to and fro** [i]**through all** the **tribes of Israel from Dan** + **unto Beer-sheba and** take a **census** `of **the people** so +**that I** may **know** `the **number of the people.** 3 + **Joab** [lsa]**replied to the king,** + **May Yahweh your Elohim add to the people** a **hundred** [du]**times as** [they]**many** + **as they** are +**while** the **eyes of my lord the king** are **seeing** it**.** +**But, my lord the king, why** does **he delight in** ·**this matter?** 4 +**Yet the king's word was** [l]**unyielding to Joab and** [on]**to** the **chiefs of the army.** +**So Joab and** the **chiefs of the army** went [l]**forth** [7]**from**[c] the **presence of the king to** take a **census** `**of the people** `of **Israel.** 5 + **They** [l]**crossed** `over **the Jordan and** [l]**encamped** [i]**at Aroer** to the **right** side **of the city** [w]**that** is **in** the **middle of the wadi;** they went toward ·**Gad and** on **to Jazer** 6 **and** [l]**came** to[d] ·**Gilead and to** the **land of** [7]**the Hittites** to**ward Kadesh~.** + **They** [l]**came** to**ward Dan-jaan and round about to**ward **Sidon.** 7 **They** +**also** [l]**came** toward the **fortress of Tyre and all** the **cities of the Hivite and the Canaanite.** +**Then they** went [l]**forth to** the **Negev of Judah** at **Beer-sheba.** 8 +**Thus they** went [l]**to and fro in all the land.** + [f]**At** the **end of nine months and twenty days they** [l]**came** back to **Jerusalem.** 9 + **Joab** [l]**gave** `the **number of** the **census of the people to the king;** + **it came** to [l]**be,** in **Israel, 800,000 men of valor drawing** the **sword; and** the **men of Judah** were **500,000 men.**

10 + **David's heart was smiting `him after he had thus numbered `the people; and David |said to Yahweh, I have sinned intensely** in *w*what I have done. + **Now,** O **Yahweh,** I **pray, cause** `the **depravity of Your servant** to **pass** away; **for I was exceedingly unwise.** 11 +**When David |arose in** the **morning,** + the **word of Yahweh** *b*came **to Gad the prophet, David's vision seer,** › **saying**–, 12 **Go**–, **and you will** *sp*tell › **David, Thus says Yahweh: I** am **holding over** *on* **you three** things**. Choose for your**self **one** *f*of them +**that I may do** it **to you.** 13 +**When Gad |came to David,** + **he |told** › **him and |said to him, Should** 7**three~ years** of **famine come to you in your land?** Or **should you** be **three months** in **flight**– **before your foes** +**while** 7**they~** are **pursuing you?** +**Or should** there *b*be– **three days** of **plague in your land? Now know and see what word I should bring back** to the One **sending me.** 14 + **David** |*sa*replied **to Gad, Utter distress** is **mine. Let us |fall,** I **pray, in**to the **hand of Yahweh, for His compassions** are *mn*abundant; +**but let me not |fall in**to the **hand of humanity.**

15 +**So Yahweh** |*g*cast the **plague** *i*on **Israel from the morning** + **until** the *M*eventide*s* so +**that 70,000 men** *f*of **the people |died from Dan** + **unto Beer-sheba.** 16 + **The messenger** 7**of Elohim***0* **was stretching** forth **his hand** toward **Jerusalem to ruin it.** +**Yet Yahweh** showed Himself |**merci**ful as **to the evil and |said to** the **messenger** ˙who was **causing ruin** *i*to the **people, Enough, now hold back your hand.** + The **messenger of Yahweh** *b*was then *wi*at **the threshing site of Araunah the Jebusite.** Q+ **David |lifted `his eyes and |saw** `the **messenger of Yahweh standing between the earth and** *bt* **the heavens,** +**with his drawn| sword in his hand stretched out| over Jerusalem.** +**Then David and the elders, covered| in sackcloth, |fell on their faces~.**

17 +**Now David** |*sa*spoke **to Yahweh** *i*when **he saw**– **`the messenger** ˙who was **causing ruin** *i*to the **people;** + **he |said, Behold, I my**self **have sinned, and I my**self **have been depraved,** Q**I, the shepherd,** who **has caused** this **evil~,** +**but these** are **the flock; what have they done? Let Your hand come** to **be,** I **pray,** *i*against **me and** *i* **my father's house.**

18 + *i*On ˙**that day Gad |came to David and |said to him, Ascend, set up** an **altar to Yahweh** *i*at the **threshing site of Araunah the Jebusite.** 19 +**So David** went |**up according** to the **word of Gad just as Yahweh had instructed** him**.** 20 +**When Araunah |gazed and |saw `the king and `his servants crossing over** to **him,** + **Araunah** went |**forth and |prostrated** him**self** ›**before** the **king, his brow** toward the **earth.** 21 + **Araunah |said,** For **what reason has my lord the king come to his servant?** + **David** |*sa*replied**, To buy from** *wi* **you `the threshing site for building**– an **altar to Yahweh,** so +**that the stroke may be restrained from** *on* **the people.** 22 +**Yet Araunah |said to David, Let my lord the king take** it **and** *c*offer **|up** ˙what is **good in his eyes. See the oxen for** the **ascent** offering, **and the threshing sledges and** the *all*implements **of the oxen for wood.** 23 ˙**All** this, ˙O **king, Araunah** *g*donates **to** the **king.** +**Then Araunah |said to the king, Yahweh your Elohim, may He accept you.**

24 + **The king** *sa*replied **to Araunah, No***t***, for I shall buy,** yea **buy**– it **from `you** *i*at the full current **price; and I shall not** *c*offer **up to Yahweh my Elohim** any **ascent** offerings **gratuitously.** +**So David |bought `the threshing site and `the oxen** *i*for **fifty shekels** of **silver.** 25 +**Then David |built there** an **altar to Yahweh and** *c*offered **|up ascent** offerings **and peace** offerings**.** +**Now Yahweh** let Himself **be |entreated** again **for** the **land; and the stroke was |restrained from** *on* **Israel.**

CONSEQUENCES OF DAVID'S SIN

YAHWEH'S anger grew hot against Israel (2 Sam.24:1), and so He incited David against Israel by causing him to take

a census. David's personal reason for the census is not disclosed, and so we seek our edification in other details that are given. There is much discussion that seeks to pinpoint responsibility for David's sin. The same event is recorded in 1 Chronicles 21, where it is said that Satan stood up against the children of Israel and incited David to take the census. The situation is much like that in the opening chapters of Job. God is the ultimate cause of all. Satan is under God's control. And all the events of our lives, good or evil, are for our learning, and ultimately will be for benefit.

THE CENSUS

The census David required was a counting of military strength (2 Sam.24:9). It could be that Israel had grown strong and taken part in the kinds of sins that comfort, prosperity and self-satisfaction breed. How different this sounds from David's words in the psalm recorded in chapter 22! Moses prophesied that such things would happen: "Yeshurun grew stout and kicked . . . then he abandoned Eloah Who had made him, and disgraced the Rock of his salvation . . . a fire, it will be kindled by My anger . . . I shall cause evils . . . pestilence . . ." (Deut.32:15-24).

The path taken in the census mentions group after group of the original inhabitants of the land who should have been driven out. Their presence was a continual influence toward idolatry. The census takers crossed Jordan and started to the south, then went north on the east side of the Jordan valley, circling at the north end of the country, and returning south on the west side.

Moses had given special instructions regarding census taking (Ex.30:11-16). The census counted males, 20 years of age and over, who were able to go to war. Every man counted was to pay a half shekel. This money was an offering to the Lord to make a propitiatory shelter for their souls. The funds raised by the census were appointed

for the tabernacle service. Payment of the half shekel was required to prevent a plague from coming among the people (Ex.30:12,13). There is no mention of collecting the half shekel in David's census; neither is there any mention of a violation of this law by Yahweh or Gad. We are left in the dark as to whether the offering was collected or not. Yet it seems that if it had been collected, the offering should have served its purpose of preventing a plague. It is possible that David's insistence on paying for his sacrifice to Yahweh was prompted by a failure to collect the census fee.

In Numbers 1 a census was taken (Num.1:1-4) for the purpose of military and social organization. The Levites were not counted because they were designated as caretakers of the tabernacle and its service. A second census was taken before the generation that grew up in the wilderness entered the land of promise. That census was used to determine the size of allotment to be given to each tribe (Num.26, see especially verses 52-56,62). The second census also noted who were survivors of the wilderness wanderings (Num.26:63-65).

Some people are troubled by the thought of a propitiatory shelter being purchased with money (Ex.30:22-16), because of 1 Peter 1:18-20: ". . . not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, were you ransomed from your vain behaviour . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, foreknown, indeed before the disruption of the world." We need only remember that the propitiatory shelters provided in the law were only typical, whether they were the blood of an animal or money or the execution of a criminal. The use of money may actually aid our understanding of the true propitiatory shelter. The rich could not pay more, nor could the poor pay less (Ex.30:15). God loves all people. To Him none are of less value.

DAVID'S INTERCESSION AND THE EVENING SACRIFICE

"David's heart was smiting him after he had thus numbered the people" (v.10). This is a very expressive description of the work of the conscience. God sent Gad to David with three choices of retribution for his sin. Bewildered, David threw himself on the compassion of God, choosing the three day plague, and hoping for God's mercy. The plague did not last one full day. It began in the morning and lasted till *eventide,* or *the appointed time,* which was the time of the evening sacrifice.

This time of day is very significant. In the evening: the dove returned to Noah with the torn-off olive leaf (Gen. 8:11), the Passover lamb was killed (Ex.12:6), and Daniel was thrown into the lion's den (Dan.6:16). At the time of the evening sacrifice Elijah prayed a short prayer, and fire fell from heaven which consumed the sacrifice, the stones of the altar, the wood, and twelve pitchers of water that had been poured on it (1 Kings 18:33-38). Daniel set himself to pray and fast for understanding of Jeremiah's prophecy regarding the seventy year captivity, and at the time of the evening sacrifice Gabriel came to give him understanding (Dan.9:21).

Three o'clock in the afternoon was the established time for the beginning of sacrifice and for prayer. It was at that time that Peter and John went into the temple and healed the lame man (Acts 3), and it was at that time that Cornelius had a vision and instruction from a messenger to send for Peter (Acts 10:3). There was darkness on that solemn day of the crucifixion until the ninth hour, the time for prayer and the evening sacrifice. And then Jesus Christ died on the cross of Calvary (Luke 23:44). In one way or another, all the preceding events at the time of the evening sacrifice point toward the cross.

A great change took place in David's view of his nation when he prayed for them. No longer were they a great standing army to take pride in, but they were a helpless flock. His calling for the judgment to be upon him and his father's house alone is a foreshadowing of the One Who died for all, bearing the sin of all, and Who prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they are not aware what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).

PARALLELS AND CONTRASTS OF THE PLAGUES

There are a number of correspondences between Saul's plague in 2 Samuel 21 and David's plague in chapter 24. Both plagues were on the land of Israel for sins of both the kings and the people. Both plagues involved representatives of peoples not expelled from the land of promise (Hivites and Jebusites).

David's plague was stopped at the threshing floor, and Araunah (or, Ornan), was threshing wheat at the time. Restitution was made for Saul's plague at Firstfruits, in the beginning of barley harvest. The tabernacle had been located at Gibeon (1 Chron.21:29), causing the Gibeonites to say, "let seven men of his sons be handed over to us, and we will gibbet them *before Yahweh at Gibeon on the mountain of Yahweh*" (2 Sam.21:6). Thus this final thought associated with Saul's reign is related to the tabernacle which had not yet come to its final home. This final event in the reign of David is related to stopping the plague of death, and establishes the ground for the temple. The threshing floor became the site for the altar, and the larger area around the threshing site became the area of the temple precincts. The entire harvest of humanity was purchased by Christ, God's Beloved and was offered to God by the fire of the judgments that fell upon Him. That sacrifice purchased acceptance and peace for the harvest of all.

The execution of Saul's seven sons was a penalty, not an

offering. In contrast, David was required to build an altar and offered sacrifices to God that were approach presents and fragrant odors to God.

Saul (closely related to the word "Sheol") and David ("Beloved") represent the reigns of death and love. The reign of death is based on fear. Fear gives nothing. It only enslaves. Love provides everything. Saul only stole from the Gibeonites. David enriched the Jebusite, purchasing the entire temple ground (1 Chron.21:25). "Fear is not in love, but perfect love is casting out fear, for fear has chastening. Now he who is fearing is not perfected in love" (1 John 4:18). Our Lord participated in blood and flesh "that through death, He should be discarding him who has the might of death, that is, the Adversary, and should be clearing those whoever, in fear of death, were through their entire life liable to slavery" (Heb.2:14,15). "We are loving God, for He first loves us" (1 John 4:19).

Saul's plague started with his sin of wanting to exterminate the Gibeonites. He would decrease the number in Israel. He involved the nations in it by leading the army of God's nation against those people. David's plague started with the sins of the people (2 Sam.24:1) and was transferred to David by God inciting him to number the people, looking at the increase of the nations. In a very real sense the sin for which David bore guilt was the sin of the whole nation. This represents Christ, Whom God made to be sin for our sakes (2 Cor.5:21). Like Moses and Samuel and Ezra and Christ, David interceded for his flock. Saul spoiled the flock to gain personal support.

TYPICAL NUMBERS

The numbers in scripture bear a significance that frequently can be traced and understood to complement and reinforce the teaching of the passage. This chapter has several such examples. The number 9 is associated with

judgment[1] David was offered 3 alternatives, each had an increment of 3: 3 years of famine, 3 months of defeat by enemies, or 3 days of pestilence. 3 x 3 = 9.

The number 20, which is associated with the idea of expectancy or waiting is joined with the idea of judgment, producing the thought of impending judgment. The time required to take the census was 9 months and 20 days (v.8).

50 is the number of jubilee, or deliverance, and 7 is the number of perfection. The number 50 follows 7 x 7, or perfection squared. The threshing site was purchased for 50 shekels of silver. Silver is associated with the idea of ransom or redemption. Joseph, the savior of his brethren was sold for 20 pieces of silver (Gen.37:28); Samson was sold by Delilah for silver (Judges 16:5); and Christ, like the gored slave, was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Ex.21: 28-32; Psa.22:21; Zech.11:12-13; Matt.26:14-16).

50 shekels also carries another significance that relates to Christ. This was the price to ransom one from an extraordinary vow (Lev.27:3). If a man had vowed to devote his life to God, a vow that would obligate all the prime years of his adult life and strength, the price of that vow could be purchased, to release him from it. Christ's life and strength (similar to the lifetime Nazirites, Samson, Samuel and John the Baptist) was devoted to God. The price of the altar where the death plague was stopped and the ground purchased as a place for the name of God to be established, was the price of perfection squared plus 1, the price of a perfect life totally devoted to God.

A PLACE FOR HIS NAME

What was the most significant event in David's life? Was it the slaying of Goliath, or one of his anointings? David did many great things for Israel and in service to God. Many of

1. E. W. Bullinger, *Appendixes to the Companion Bible*, p.14.

those recorded in Chronicles, and we have not even spoken of them. But it may be that David's sin of numbering the people was the most significant event of his life.

There is one great prevailing reason why Israel was delivered from the slavery of Egypt, traveled to the land of promise, and was to drive out all the inhabitants of the land. That reason was so God would have a holy people among whom He could dwell, and that the earth could have a place in which the name of Yahweh was established. In Deuteronomy 12-16 Moses gives instruction to Israel regarding their life in the land of promise. 8 times there he mentioned that Israel's judgments and statutes were for the purpose of them being able to dwell with Yahweh and *in the place where His Name was established* (Deut.12:5,11,21; 14:23, 24; 16:2,6,11). When David built the altar on the threshing floor he purchased from Araunah, he established the place in the land of Israel for the name of Yahweh. "This is to be the House of Yahweh, the One, Elohim; and this is to be an altar for ascent offerings for Israel" (1 Chron.22:1). With this event, the story of David's life closes, except for a few comments regarding the anointing of Solomon and David's death. The history of Israel to this point is a typical illustration of the things that must come to pass before God's dwelling can be established with us.

GOD'S CHOOSING OF THE PLACE

"Then Solomon started to build the House of Yahweh in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah where He had appeared to his father David, at the place which David had prepared on the threshing site of Ornan [same as Araunah] the Jebusite" (2 Chron.3:1). By taking note of some details in David's experience with the death plague, and comparing them with other events occurring at this place, God's means and purpose for choosing this place will become apparent.

"Abraham! . . . Take now your son, your only one, whom you love, Isaac, and go by yourself to the land of Moriah and offer him up there for an ascent offering on one of the mountains which I shall indicate to you" (Gen.22:1,2).

Deep, heart-rending sacrifices were made on Mount Moriah that brought the offers to the end of themselves and to complete dependence upon God. When Isaac asked his father where the sacrifice was, Abraham replied, "Elohim shall see for Himself as to the flockling for the ascent offering, my son" (Gen.22:8). When faced with the judgment for his sin, David said to Gad, "Utter distress is mine! Let us fall, I pray, into the hand of Yahweh, for His compassions are abundant" (2 Sam.24:14). "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass by from Me. However, not as I will, but as Thou!" (Matt.26:39). The ram died for the sake of Isaac. The oxen died for the sake of Jerusalem, and Christ died for the sake of all mankind.

"Now Abraham took the wood for the ascent offering and placed it **on** his son Isaac" (Gen.22:6). Araunah's oxen were to be offered as an ascent offering, and the wood for the fire was to be the yoke they had borne, the sledges they had pulled and the other implements of their harnessing and care. "And, bearing the cross Himself, he came out to what is termed a 'Skull's Place,' where they crucify Him" (John 19:17).

The word *bearing* used here means to bear the full weight of burden of something. In the passages that speak of Simon the Cyrenian carrying the cross, the word is one that means to move or transport something from one place to another. The significance of the distinction between these words is that Christ bore the full weight of shame and disgrace that accompanied the cross, and the full weight of guilt for the sin of the world.

Abraham supplied everything that was needful for the sacrifice, except for Yahweh-jireh's last minute provision. David would not offer any thing for which he did not pay.

No one but God could provide the Lamb Who takes away the sin of the world.

Abraham "lifted up his eyes" to see a ram caught in a thicket (Gen.22:13). David "lifted his eyes" to see that the death messenger had been halted (2 Sam.24:16). "Jesus . . . lifting His eyes to heaven . . . said, 'Father, come has the hour. Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son should be glorifying Thee'" (John 17:1).

Isaac was tied and helpless on the altar, but there is no mention of him struggling for freedom (Gen.22:9). David, and the elders with him, covered in sackcloth, fell on their faces, helpless to stop the plague. Christ gave Himself willingly, without complaint or self-defense.

Death hung on a word. Abraham's arm was out-stretched with the knife, ready to slay his son (Gen.22:10). David saw "the messenger of Yahweh standing between the earth and the heavens, with his drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem" (2 Sam.24:16). After moistening His mouth with the vinegar, Christ mustered His strength to say, "It is accomplished!" and then He gave up the spirit. To insure that He was truly dead, one of the soldiers pierced His side with a lance head (John 19:30,34).

The wisdom and power of God are revealed in all three of these events, and faith is a hallmark of each one. Abraham expected God to raise Isaac, and he told the lads waiting that he and Isaac would both return after worshipping (Gen.22:5). David committed the nation's fate to the hand of Yahweh, "for His compassions are abundant" (2 Sam. 24:14). Christ had just been forsaken by God in the most unearthly darkness, nevertheless, facing the end of His existence, He said, "Father, into Thy hands am I committing my spirit" (Luke 23:46). Founded on the wisdom and power of God, and the faith of Jesus Christ, we "are being built together for God's dwelling place, in spirit" (Eph.2:19-22).

J. Phillip Scranton

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CROSS

Question:

I would like to know what the "good news" ("gospel," or "evangel") of Christ actually *is*, insofar as personal salvation is concerned. I realize that the good news itself is that "Christ died for our sins . . ." (1 Cor. 15:3), how it was that "in the grace of God, He should be tasting death for the sake of everyone" (Heb.2:9b). Even so, what the specific benefit is that we receive as the result of Christ's death for our sins, is not stated either in 1 Corinthians 15:3 or in Hebrews 2:9.

Even if all will eventually be saved, I want to know *why* all will eventually be saved. And, I also want to know *why* those who are presently saved, are presently saved, and *why* those who are not presently saved, are not presently saved.

I have long been taught that salvation is a gift; however, since "gift" is variously defined as "something given without compensation," or simply as "a thing given" (i.e., regardless of basis), it is not very informative simply to say that salvation is a gift. In any case, among evangelicals, the common teaching is that salvation in Christ is "the unmerited but not unconditional favor of God."

I know that you have addressed this subject before and in various ways, but I would appreciate it if you would respond to my specific concerns, stated above.

Answer:

IN ESSENCE your question is: What are the *consequences* of Christ's death for our sins? What is the *achievement* of the death of Christ on our behalf? Was His sacrifice, while

indispensable, nevertheless *insufficient* for our salvation, or was His sacrifice, instead, *sufficient* for our salvation? In simplest terms: Is our salvation achieved by Christ plus *something,* or by Christ plus *nothing?*

We are mindful that, under God and in His grace, we must "save ourselves" from withdrawing from the faith (*cp* 1 Tim.4:1; 4:16). Similarly, we realize that if we would come to be among the "utensils . . . for honor . . . hallowed, and useful to the Owner, made ready for every good act," we must first purge ourselves from the characteristics of the utensils for dishonor (*cf* 2 Tim.2:20,21). Hence the entreaty, "Now youthful desires flee: yet pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, with all who are invoking the Lord out of a clean heart" (2 Tim.2:22).

Such considerations as these, however, are not concerned with positional salvation in Christ, but are solely matters of practical salvation, concerned with our service in the Lord. Even there, should we enjoy a measure of success in such worthy endeavors, we may only speak of what "we" have done in such regards, without immediately adding: "*yet not I, but the grace of God,*" for in such a case, it is "*in the grace of God* [that] I am what I am" (*cf* 1 Cor. 15:10). This is necessarily so, "lest anyone should be boasting" (*cp* Eph.2:9); that is, boasting in the flesh, instead of in God and in His grace (*cp* 1 Cor.1:29-31; *cf* 2 Cor.1:12).

While it is true that the specific benefit (or rather, benefits) of Christ's death for our sins is not explicitly stated in 1 Corinthians 15:3, what is often overlooked here is that the *whole of the good news* which Paul brings us and makes known to us—"in which also [we] stand, [and] through which [we] are saved" (1 Cor.15:1,2)—is "*that Christ died for our sins* according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures . . ." (1 Cor.15:3,4). Hebrews 2:9 adds the further critical word that it was in

the *grace* of God that Christ should be tasting death for the sake of everyone.

The true significance of these glorious revelations may be further noted and appreciated by the fact that we are *complete in Christ:* "And you are complete in Him . . ." (Col.2:10).

That is, there is no *further* evangel concerning our salvation beyond "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor.2:2). Specifically, there is no further evangel such as: "Good news! You can be saved from eternal hell and gain a place in heaven for all eternity, if you will fulfill the following requirement . . . ."

Therefore, it follows that an artful claim such as the common one you mentioned which asserts that the gift of salvation in Christ is "the unmerited but not unconditional favor of God," is necessarily mistaken in its intended claim, besides the fact that it is also substantively incoherent.

The reason it is substantively incoherent, is because "favor" is a close synonym for "grace," which by scriptural definition is the opposite of a reward, something given in consideration of the fulfillment of a condition or requirement.[1]

Not only is the standard claim that salvation is "the unmerited but not unconditional *favor* of God" especially incoherent, but it would still be thoroughly incoherent to say, omitting the term "favor" and substituting the neutral word "provision," even that salvation is "the *unmerited but not unconditional* provision of God." The reason why any

1. Both "favor" and "grace" signify essentially the same thing: that which is given in order to bring joy (*cp chara,* "joy" and *charis,* "grace" or "favor"), which is granted not out of works (Rom.11:6) or as a wage (Rom.4:4). In the Concordant Version both "grace" and "favor" are translations of the same Greek word *charis.* It is simply a matter of customary idiom whether one or the other is used in the translation of any certain passage in which *charis* appears in the Original.

claim that salvation is unmerited yet nonetheless conditional is an incoherent claim, is because of the fact that that which one merits is that which one deserves or has earned. It is what one *ought* to be given in consideration of what one has done. But that is precisely the notion that attends that which is given conditionally!

When one meets a condition for something, one *qualifies for*—which is to say, meets the requirements of—the thing to be given. Hence, when one fulfills a condition by meeting a requirement, one deserves to receive what one has earned, which is to say, what one merits.

This accords with the principle, "'A threshing ox you shall not be muzzling,' and 'Worthy [i.e., deserving] is the worker of his wages'" (1 Tim.5:18). Very simply, that which is granted in return for what one has done, is that which one merits, for which one ought to be paid, compensated, or rewarded.

What actually seems to be intended, however, by the claim that salvation is unmerited but not unconditional, is that the meeting of such a comparatively small requirement could never merit such an unspeakably valuable endowment. But if this is what is intended, then one should speak plainly and say that salvation is indeed a matter of merit, that is, of wages or reward, but that it is also a matter of vast overpayment for relatively little labor. Thus salvation in Christ is the world's greatest *bargain,* since one need do but very little in order to gain such an invaluable endowment of inestimable worth.

We must calmly face the fact—in kindness, meekness, gentleness, and humility—that most are simply blind to the nature of grace itself, being unable accordingly, then, to perceive the nature and scope of the evangel of the grace of Christ. "The *grace* of God in *truth*" (Col.1:6), is one of the many treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are *concealed* in the God and Father of Christ (*cf* Col.3:3). "A

man can not get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27). Hence, even our best arguments will not bring conviction to those who do not have eyes to see and ears to hear.

We may not, then, scorn our fellow believers from whom God Himself has concealed the truth concerning His grace, to whom He has not yet given a realization of this vital truth. "It is the glory of Elohim to conceal a matter" (Prov.25:2); and, it is evident that it is the glory of God to conceal an understanding of His grace in particular, that it might be to His especial glory, in due time, to reveal that very grace, through the evangel, which formerly He had concealed (*cp* Rom.1:17; 1 Cor.2:10).

"CONSEQUENTLY ALL DIED"

Though more will be said related to your general inquiry in what follows in the remainder of this article, I will now briefly reply to your specific questions, which I have formed as follows:

Question 1: What are the *consequences of* Christ's death for our sins? What is the *achievement of* the death of Christ on our behalf and eventually on behalf of all sinners? If all will eventually be saved, *why* will all eventually be saved?

Answer to Question 1: All will eventually be saved because, in the grace of God, Christ tasted death for the sake of everyone (Heb.2:9). The consequences of Christ's death for our sins are as follows: "If One died for the sake of all, *consequently all died*" (2 Cor.5:14); and, ". . . one who dies has been justified from Sin" (Rom.6:7). We were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, and, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life (Rom.5:10). As the chosen of God, to whom faith has graciously been granted, we are justified in Christ's blood and shall be saved from indignation, through Him (Rom.5:9).

Since God wills all mankind to be saved (1 Tim.2:4), is

the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10), is operating all according to the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), it being the case that Christ is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:6), therefore, all mankind will eventually be saved, it being explicitly affirmed that ". . . even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified . . . . The last enemy is being abolished: death . . . that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:22,26,28).

Question 2: Why are those who are presently saved, presently saved, and *why* are those who are not presently saved, not presently saved?

Answer to Question 2: We who are presently saved are saved now because we are called according to God's *purpose* (Rom.8:28) according to which we have been "set" or appointed for the special salvation (*cp* 1 Tim.4:10b) of life eonian (Acts 13:48). This is so, that in the oncoming eons, we should be displaying the *transcendent riches* of God's grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:7). For this, each one of us was chosen before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4), by the One Who saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given us in Christ Jesus before times eonian (2 Tim.1:9). The rest of mankind are not yet saved, since God intends to save them not before the consummation, but at the consummation, when the full benefits of the sacrifice of Christ for all will finally be realized by all (1 Cor.15:20-28).

Therefore, Christ's sacrifice was not merely indispensable to, but all-sufficient for our salvation, even as for the salvation of all mankind. Hence it is that our salvation even as the salvation of all is achieved by Christ alone—that is, by "Christ plus *nothing.*"

"ACCEPTING" AND "RECEIVING"

"Now to the *worker,* the wage is not reckoned as a favor [i.e., a *grace*], but as a *debt.* Yet to him who is *not working,* yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness" (Rom.4:4,5).

A worker's pay is not to be deemed a favor bestowed or a grace granted, but a wage owed, that is, a debt. Conversely, then, a favor bestowed or a grace granted, cannot be a wage owed; that is, it cannot be that which the giver of the grace or favor is obligated, or indebted, to give.

While most believers would be loathe to express themselves in these terms, most, in fact, conceive of their faith (i.e., of their acceptance of Christ, by faith) as their "ticket" to salvation, a ticket which states on its face, "Grant to the bearer hereof, (1) Exemption from hell, and (2) Everlasting life in heaven."

As concerns salvation, popular evangelists regularly make much of the words "accept" and "receive," which, through implication and inflection, they invest with special connotative meanings of their own. The following is an example of such ones' specialized usage of these terms: "In order to be saved, you must *accept* Christ as your Saviour; unless you *receive* Him as your Saviour, you cannot and will not be saved."

It is not that we essentially disagree with such statements themselves as such, but that we essentially disagree with what is being implied by means of such statements, as ordinarily expressed.

The whole purpose of such assertions is to put the onus of salvation upon the sinner: the sinner is *required* to do the right thing (which is, to accept and receive Christ). If he will do so, he will be saved; but if he should fail to do so, he will be subjected to unspeakably horrible punishment in hell, and that for all eternity.

I would add that we would also disagree with traditional teachers as to the sense in which the word "must" here should be understood, as concerns salvation. That is because in the evangel of the *grace* of Christ, the sense

in which we "must" accept Christ as our Saviour, is simply that of what is "essential to" (that is, must be present in) salvation, not at all that of what is "*required for*" salvation, which is an entirely different thought. Since God *graciously* grants to all His chosen ones a measure of faith (*cf* 1 Cor.12:3; *cp* Phil.1:29), it follows that none are saved apart from faith, hence that the believer's faith is an essential component of (not requirement for) his or her salvation.

Unlike in popular theology, in the scripture testimony of the evangel, the terms "accept" and "receive" are used by no means to speak of burdens of responsibility to be borne, much less as vehicles by which to justify normative intuitions as to the nature of volitional freedom, but simply to speak, respectively, of that which one once, first began to "take along" with oneself, and of that which, at some point, one came to have, or possess.

An example of the scriptural usage of "accept" is: "As, then, you *accepted* Christ Jesus, the Lord, be walking in Him" (Col 2:6). More strictly, *paralamb[an]ō,* idiomatically rendered here as "accept," is "take along," as in the messenger's words to Joseph, " . . . *take along* the little Boy and His mother and flee into Egypt . . ." (Matt.2:13). That is, as we once first "took along" Christ Jesus, the Lord, with us—in all commitment of spirit and devotion of faith—let us now be walking in Him as well. There is nothing here about some type of initial "transaction" (for salvation is not a transaction), but everything here about an initial commitment and dedication.

An example passage of the scriptural usage of "receive" (one which also incorporates the word "accept" or "take along") is: "To His own He came, and those who are His own accepted Him not. Yet whoever obtained Him ["as many as *received* him," AV], to them He gives the right to become children of God, to those who are believing in His name, who were begotten, not of bloods, *neither of the will of the flesh, neither of the will of a man, but of God*" (John 1:11-13).

The word rendered here (in John 1:12) as "receive" in the Authorized Version or "obtain" in the Concordant Version (also "get"; when used actively, "take"), in essence, simply means (somehow) to "come into possession of."[2] And, it speaks of *that of which boasting is precluded,* for "A man can not *get* ['receive' or 'obtain'] anything if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27); and, ". . . Now what have you which you did not *obtain* ['get' or 'receive']? Now if you *obtained* it also, *why are you boasting as though not obtaining?*" (1 Cor.4:7).

"THE FAITH OF JESUS"

Many conclude that since the apostle Paul often speaks of faith in connection with salvation and since the way in which he speaks of it is true, that the traditional view concerning the connection of faith with salvation must therefore be correct. This conclusion, however, is a *non sequitur;* that is, it does not follow from the premises stated.

In logic, the *validity* of an argument refers solely to its structure, not to the correctness of its conclusion. It is possible for a valid argument to yield a false conclusion, which will occur if even one of its premises is false. A logical argument is *valid* structurally precisely if *it* cannot lead from true premises to a false conclusion. However, a logical argument is *sound* if and only if: (1) the argument is (structurally) valid; and (2) *all of its premises are true.* Therefore, the only argument that should be accepted, since its conclusion is correct, is a *sound argument,* an argument which is (1) structurally valid, and of which (2) all its premises are true.[3]

2. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.121, entry "get."

3. Amplified and adapted from *wikipedia.org,* and WEBSTER'S 1913 DICTIONARY, entries "validity," and "soundness."

The question remains, then, What is the connection of faith with salvation?

Since faith is a gracious gift, it is that with which we are "graced" (literal reading of the idiomatic rendering "graciously granted"; Phil.1:29). In the phrase, "graced to be believing," "graced" is a "make" or causal verb form, parallel to "caused to be sick," or "made to be well." Our faith is the effect of a cause, namely the gracious operations of God in unveiling His Son in us (*cf* Gal.1:16), we who were once ignorant of Christ, living our lives in unbelief, which nevertheless the grace of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in Christ Jesus (1 Tim.1:13,14).

God's righteousness in our salvation is manifested and achieved through *Jesus Christ's faith*—"through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus"—(Rom.3:21,22,24). This is so, "for God to be just and a Justifier of the one who is of *the faith of Jesus*" (Rom.3:26). Jesus our Lord was "given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying. Being, *then,* justified *out of faith* [namely, the faith and faithfulness of Christ], we may be having peace toward God, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this *grace* in which we stand, and we may be glorying in *expectation* of the glory of God" (Rom.4:25-5:2).

It follows, then, that the true connection of faith with our salvation, is that our justification in the grace of God is achieved through the faith(fulness) of Christ in His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil.2:8). Consequent to His death, He was roused "*because* of our justifying" (Rom.4:25b), in which we were "justified in His blood" (Rom.5:9).

Our own faith has no part in the achievement of our salvation; instead, it affords us the precious benefit of knowing, and rejoicing in, that which God has achieved for us in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. J.R.C.

GOD IS LOVE

As my wife and I bowed our heads to give thanks for our evening meal a lump formed in my throat and my eyes and forehead started to ache. I opened my mouth, but no words came out. Tears started to run down my cheeks, and then I started weeping with loud sobs uncontrollably.

I had only wept like this twice in my life before that I can recall. The first occasion was when I was around seven years old, and my mother had been reading to us the Bible story of the crucifixion of Christ. The second time, I was twenty-two years old, at a revival meeting altar call. I had been running from the Lord's call on my life since my mid-teen years, and when He finally stopped me in my tracks, His grace and love overwhelmed me once again as it had done in my childhood.

This third and very recent occurrence had one difference. The first two times I was deeply moved by God's overpowering love for me personally, but now I was overcome with the love of God for my family. Yet this too was a pouring out of God's love into my own heart through the holy spirit (Rom.5:5).

Our fifteen-year-old daughter, our son, his wife and our four beautiful grandchildren had left to go back to their home, three thousand miles away, a few hours previous. This had been their first visit in five long months and therefore we indulged ourselves with twelve noisy, fun-filled, and hectic days together.

Now all alone, again, our eyes met across the dinner table. The deafening silence and overpowering absence

of my dear loved ones was more than I could manage, and the floodgates opened so that the tears flowed freely. Over the next few days the tears slowly dried up and the ache faded, but a new determination to reunite with them had been birthed.

THE PRIMARY ELEMENT

The apostle John, called the beloved apostle, wrote in his first epistle, *"God is love"* (1 John 4:8). In his three epistles and in his account of the Lord's earthly ministry, it is obvious that the love of God is a predominant theme. This is not only true for John's writings, for the *primary element* of the evangel itself is the fact that *God is love*. What may be less obvious is that this is the most foundational truth expressed in the Sacred Scriptures from cover to cover. The *love of God* is also the most powerful and most underestimated force in the universe, by friend and foe alike.

In the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE (p.186), love is defined as: "A complex emotion arousing appreciation or delight in and *a desire for the presence of its object,* as well as to please and promote its welfare."

This dominating desire that God has to be with and please each and every created being will not be denied Him. Nothing will be able to separate God from the object of His love, and at the consummation He will be *All in all* (1 Cor.15:28). God is the only One "*. . . operating all in accord with the counsel of His will*" (Eph.1:11), and He "wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4). Therefore all mankind eventually will be saved.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, like you and me, and the grace of our Lord will overwhelm all with faith and love in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim.1:14,15). Is it a hard thing for the Lord to conquer to the uttermost with His irresistible love even as He has for us? "And, being found

in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus *every knee should be bowing,* celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and *every tongue should be acclaiming* that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:8-11). Love will conquer all!

Through many centuries there has often been a failure to keep this primary theme in view as it relates to all of God's creation and all of His operations. Thereby, the One Who is All-Sufficient has become displayed as a helpless friend at best, and a diabolical fiend at worst. Those passages of Scripture that plainly speak of God's unconditional love have been made subservient to those that speak of His anger and judgment. Mistranslations such as "hell" and "everlasting" have promoted doctrines of demons and have obscured the precious message of God's powerful love.

THUS GOD LOVES

John 3:16 is perhaps the best known verse of our day. "For thus God loves the world, so that He gives His only begotten Son, that everyone who is believing in Him should not be perishing, but may be having life eonian." It is not coincidental that this passage starts with the most important thought, "*For thus God loves*," and then is followed by three more statements in order of their significance, namely that He gives His only begotten Son, that this concerns those who are believing, and that this is so that they not perish but be having life eonian.

God loves because He can do no less, for He is love. The verb "love" here is in the aorist verb form. This differs from the past, present or future verb tenses that we have in English. The aorist is called "the fact form," and time is not the important factor. Rather, the fact of the action

is in view. In this case, it is the fact that *God loves* which is of paramount importance, rather than the time.

GOD'S LOVE IN HIS GIVING

We must keep this *primary thought* of the fact of God's love in mind as we read on so that we may appreciate the second thought concerning God's giving of His Son more fully. Because God loves, it is His natural impulse to give, and His love is thus that *He gives His only begotten Son,* His most precious possession.

O that we could grasp the significance of Paul's words when he said "What, then, shall we declare to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (Rom.8:32,33). Comprehending the cost of giving up His precious Son for us, should convince us, "that He is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us" (Eph.3:20).

Why do we have such great difficulty in unreservedly and wholeheartedly accepting God's unconditional Love for us? We can understand why unbelievers do not embrace God's love. It is because the evangel "is covered in those who are perishing, in whom the god of this eon blinds the apprehensions of the unbelieving so that the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God, does not irradiate them" (2 Cor.4:3,4).

What about us, the saints of God, for whom Paul prayed for a spirit of wisdom and revelation and for enlightenment (Eph.1:15-19)? Why do we spend so much time and effort trying to earn what God gives gratuitously, with endless but futile works that never accomplish or produce anything other than refuse? Why do we doubt that maybe all is not well, and fear lest God's gift is something that is not

really gratuitous but rather dependent on our efforts? Is the large shield of faith not able to extinguish all the fiery arrows of the wicked one (Eph.6:16)?

The Adversary has an easy time pinpointing sin in our lives. He will remind us of our failures day and night as long as our ear is attuned to his reasonings. Our only defense is to trust wholly in the Sacred Scriptures that reveal this amazing kind of love which transcends knowledge. "Now let God be true, yet every man a liar" (Rom.3:4). The Adversary "is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). If we have received the helmet of salvation then also let us take up the sword of the spirit, which is a declaration of God (Eph.6:17).

God's Word states clearly and emphatically that, in spite of our human condition, His great love for us will never cease. God's desire to bless us and be with us is not based on our goodness or anything lovely about us. We can share with Him our deepest secret without any fear of jeopardizing His love for us. "God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). God "saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian" (2 Tim.1:9).

EVERYONE WHO IS BELIEVING

The third thought from John 3:16, in order of priority, is that regarding our faith. First God loves, and second He gives His Son, and the third element speaks of *everyone who is believing in Him.* There is no doubt that our faith plays a necessary and vital part in the receiving of our salvation, but it is not the primary element of salvation itself. Faith is the vehicle or the channel through which God grants that which He has gained in His love, in the giving of His Son. Our faith does not gain salvation. There can be only one source of salvation for anyone and

for everyone, and it is the faithful suffering and dying of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross.

We must also understand that the faith required for receiving salvation, as with salvation itself, is God's gift to us, "For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and *this is not out of you it is God's approach present*, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8).

Furthermore, it is Christ's faith that we must put our confidence in as Paul explains in Romans and Galatians: "... yet a righteousness of God *through Jesus Christ's faith*, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God. Being *justified gratuitously* in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter, through *faith in His blood,* for a display of His righteousness because of the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before in the forbearance of God), toward the display of His righteousness in the current era, for Him to be just and a Justifier of the one who is of *the faith of Jesus.* Where, then, is boasting? It is debarred" (Rom.3:22-27).

If it were our faith that saved us we would be saved one day and lost the next because our faith wavers and falters. We have no confidence in ourselves but depend totally on God. "Having perceived that a man is not being justified by works of law, except alone *through the faith of Christ Jesus*, we also believe in Christ Jesus that we may be justified *by the faith of Christ* and not by works of law, seeing that by works of law shall no flesh at all be justified" (Gal.2:16). "The scripture locks up all together under sin, that the promise *out of Jesus Christ's faith* may be given to those who are believing" (Gal.3:22).

SHOULD NOT BE PERISHING

The fourth element which follows the words "every-

one who is believing" is found in the words: "should not be perishing, but may be having life eonian." The theme of eonian life versus perishing must be considered in the light of the primary element that God is love, as with all the other thoughts in the sentence. This is necessary if we hope to extract the meaning that God intended in this passage or in the Scriptures as a whole.

There will be a perishing for all who do not believe during the eons, but it will be in subjection to and lead to an appreciation of God's great love, not unlike all His activities in the universe. There will be judgment and a great loss, but it is not forever, and it is not for the purpose of punishment as an end in itself, but of correction. If we keep all the elements in their proper order this makes perfect sense, and so does the next thought in the verse that follows.

Although John 3:16 is the favorite verse of so many, seldom do we hear John 3:17 quoted with it. The reason is simple: The two thoughts do not make sense together if one holds to the hideous doctrine of eternal torment. John 3:17 reads: "For God does not dispatch His Son into the world that He should be judging the world, but that the world may be saved through Him." After God created the universe and everything in it, He said it was very good. He has never changed His view of His creation but has been grooming it and preparing with one all-encompassing purpose in mind. That is to fulfil His heart's longing for *love responsive.*

He is a Patient Planner and a Master Builder, Who is in control of every detail as they unfold in His vast universe. Not one circumstance in the lives of all eight billion people on the earth is happening for naught. Each and every event was orchestrated from the heart of a Loving Father with the intention of preparing each individual to be receptive to His love.

We the children of God have not shed one tear in vain

either, but each one was for the purpose of molding us into vessels of honor useful to the Owner (*cf* 2 Tim.2:21). To the extent that we can grasp the grace associated with our high calling and receive God's fathomless love, to the same extent will we be able to accept the necessity of our suffering also. All of us, at times, wish that there was a way to be seated among the celestials and enjoy the great secrets without any pain. But Paul is our pattern and like him we also, lest we should be lifted up by the transcendence of the revelations, will suffer from time to time.

When we are buffeted by Satan we would remember it is not to punish us but to humble us and to prepare us for the Master's use. We need to be reminded also, that sufficient for us is His grace, for His power in infirmity is being perfected. Like Paul, in this, we do well to strive for the ideal. With the greatest relish, then, may we also be glorying in infirmities, that the power of Christ should be tabernacling over us. Wherefore we delight in infirmities, in outrages, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake, for, whenever we may be weak, then we are powerful" (*cf* 2 Cor.12:9-10). The way to power, in the Lord, is through His love.

"What shall be separating us from the love of God in Christ Jesus? Affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? According as it is written, that 'On Thy account we are being put to death the whole day. We are reckoned as sheep for slaughter.' Nay! in all these we are more than conquering through Him Who loves us.

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.8:35-39).

Don Bast

THROUGH THE DELIVERANCE IN CHRIST JESUS

GOD MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN, in full clarity, *through* His Son. Humanity knows something of God's invisible attributes of power and divinity from the creation of the world (Rom.1:19,20). Yet, by this means, we cannot know God in such a way that we will be glorifying Him *as God* (Rom. 1:21) and holding Him in recognition [realization] (Rom. 1:28). We cannot be growing in a realization of God as God (*cf* Eph.1:17; Col.1:10) apart from His evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The nation of Israel, as well, who were given types and foreshadows of Jesus Christ and of God's great work of deliverance through Him cannot enter into a comprehension of God as He is in His righteousness and saving power and love apart from becoming actually acquainted with the One Who is the Effulgence of God's glory, in His work of the cleansing of sins (*cf* Heb.1:1-4). The types are not enough. There must be a manifestation of the Antitype, the Lamb of God Who is taking away the sin of the world (John 1:29) in order for God to be unfolded (John 1:18).

As we who are members of the body of Christ come to know Him Who gave Himself for us, and come to appreciate the deliverance which is in Him (Rom.3:24), we are being led into an acquaintance with God as God. Thereupon we pray for growth in realization of such a matter of consequence as this (*cf* Phil.1:9-11).

"For the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to

the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6). It is the Son of God's love, Who is the *Image of the invisible God,* Firstborn of every creature, in Whom all is created, Who is the Channel of reconciliation of all to God (Col.1:13-20).

ROMANS 3:21-25

In the evangel of God, God's righteousness is made manifest as God's gracious work of justification, and this work is accomplished *through* Jesus Christ. This is being announced in Romans 3:21-25 where the Greek preposition, *dia,* appears three times in the sense of "through," in association with our Lord. Presenting the passage again so that what it says about God (sections "A") and what it says about Christ (sections "B") and what it says about human beings (sections "C") are distinguished, we can perhaps see better how these prepositional phrases, beginning with the word "through," are related to the whole thought:

A. *Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest, . . . yet a righteousness of God*

B. **through Jesus Christ's faith,**

C. *for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.*

C. *Being justified gratuitously in His grace,*

B. **through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus,** *Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter,* **through faith in His blood,**

A. *for a display of [God's] righteousness . . .*

Each of the "through" passages appears in the "B" sections which focus our attention on our Lord Jesus Christ. They all concern Him as the One Who died for sinners so that God's righteousness may be made known to our hearts.

The first and third uses of the preposition "through" direct attention to the death of Christ as a matter of *faith.* In these cases, the emphasis is on what Jesus Christ *did* in order to make God's righteousness manifest and to carry out God's purpose for a true Place of propitiation. The central reference, which is our present subject, is to Christ's death as a matter of *deliverance* which is *in Him.* Here we are concerned with the results of His death and resurrection.

As for God, His righteousness is made manifest and put on display. As for us, we are sinners who are being justified in God's grace. As for Jesus Christ, He was faithful in the sufferings of the cross and the shedding of His blood in order to bring about our deliverance and reveal the depths of God to us.

DELIVERANCE

To repeat, the phrase, "through *Jesus* Christ's faith," lays emphasis on what the Saviour has *done,* while "through the deliverance which is in *Christ* Jesus" points to the glorious *result* of His faith and obedience expressed so astoundingly at the cross. The former emphasizes the fact that He is the Saviour, Jesus, Who was faithful unto the death of the cross. Hence He is referred to as *Jesus* Christ. The latter views Him as the Anointed One, Who is exalted at God's right. Hence He is referred to as *Christ* Jesus. Deliverance is what we are having in Christ Jesus because of Jesus Christ's faith. It is not of ourselves. It is *in* Him, that is, we do not have it apart from the One Who died for our sakes, and Who is roused from among the dead and is seated at God's right hand (*cf* Rom.8:34). Our relationship to the glorified Son of God is as close as it can be.

The Greek word rendered "deliverance" in the CV is translated "redemption" in the AV. The elements of the Greek word give the meaning, "from-loosening," and it is thus closely related to the words *ransom* and *redemption,*

both of which represent forms of the Greek word meaning "loosening." The addition of the word "from" lends to the word "deliverance" the sense of a "full fruition of a ransom or redemption."[1] It is a grand and complete deliverance resulting from the Jesus Christ's faith in dying for sinners, and it is found in Him.

THOSE WHO ARE BELIEVING

For us who are believing (*cf* Rom.3:22), it is, even now, in spirit (*cf* Rom.8:23), a secured deliverance from the position of Romans 3:20 where we stood with all mankind under God's verdict: *Not justified.* It is a deliverance to the position of Romans 3:24, which is that we are *being justified* gratuitously in God's grace. Indeed it is deliverance from all the conditions of ignorance, failure, enmity, dishonor and condemnation described in Romans 1:18-3:20 to the blessings of justification and peace and expectation, of newness of life, sonship and security in God's love presented in Romans 3:21-8:39.

The deliverance which is in Christ Jesus takes us from the wretched uncertainties and hypocrisies of dependence on human strength in meeting the demands of law (whether that of Sinai or that testified to by conscience) to the happiness of the human to whom God is reckoning righteousness apart from acts (Rom.4:6). It takes us from ignorance of the way of peace (Rom.3:17) to the joy of peace toward God and access to Him in grace, in which we are glorying in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:1,2).

Under sin (*cf* Rom.3:9), humanity is not understanding God or seeking Him out (Rom.3:11), but now, through the faith of Jesus Christ, there is deliverance which has already been granted in spirit, in God's grace, to us who are believing. This is a deliverance, above all else, into a growing

1. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.71.

recognition of God as the God of righteousness (*cf* Rom. 3:26), Who commends His love to us by that astonishing giving up of His Son (Rom.5:8-11; 8:32). Indeed this giving of God in sparing not His Son leads ultimately to the justifying of life for all mankind (Rom.5:18). Consequently, we are aware of God as the God of all goodness, and we are persuaded that nothing is able to separate us from His love in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.8:28-39).

All of this, and so much more, is encompassed in what Paul calls "the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus." It is such a rich expression that we find the apostle savoring and sharing it with us, not only here in Romans 3:24, but in several other epistles at significant places. What he writes in 1 Corinthians 1:30 and in Ephesians 1:7 may especially aid us now in appreciating our text in Romans.

CHRIST JESUS BECAME DELIVERANCE TO US

The Corinthians were enriched in Christ Jesus in all expression and all knowledge (1 Cor.1:5), but this seemed to have puffed them up, so that there were schisms and strifes among them (1:10-13; 4:6). This is most characteristic of the flesh. Even we who have believed and accepted the evangel that Christ died for our sins, can easily lose sight of the way this very message centers entirely on Him and His cross. We think of ourselves too much. We can even come to think of our deliverance and all the blessings involved in it in such a way that the way in which these blessings have been obtained (*cf* 1 Cor.4:7) is made secondary.

Hence Paul writes, "And I, coming to you, brethren, came not with superiority of word or of wisdom, announcing to you the testimony of God, for I decide not to perceive anything among you *except Jesus Christ and Him crucified*" (1 Cor.2:1,2).

We are not members of the body of Christ because of anything in ourselves, whether wisdom or power or bravery

or nobility of nature (1 Cor.1:26,27), but because of *Christ crucified* (1 Cor.1:23). That, and that alone, is the source of righteousness, holiness and deliverance (1 Cor.1:30).

Christ is our deliverance, whether or not we are participating in and enjoying the deliverance which is in Him. The deliverance is already "procured" (Eph.1:14). Nothing we do adds to it or takes away from it. While the believing of it, the accepting in faith that Christ Jesus died for our sins, puts us and keeps us on the road to maturity, in joy and in peace, the deliverance itself is a certainty.

That is God's wisdom and power for salvation as well as the manifestation of His righteousness, to center it all in Christ Jesus, and in Christ Jesus as the Crucified One, entirely apart from anything we might do.

DELIVERANCE THROUGH HIS BLOOD

The words of Ephesians 1:7 reflect the whole of Romans 3:24, but in a context that expands on the meaning of deliverance *in* Christ Jesus. In Ephesians, our blessings are clearly defined as spiritual and as centered *in Christ.* As Romans informs us that our deliverance is in Christ Jesus and associates this with Christ as the Place of propitiation through faith in His blood, so Ephesians reminds us that it is *in Him* that we have deliverance, and it is *through His blood.*

The expression "His *blood,*" like the phrase "Jesus Christ's *faith,*" refers to the crucifixion of our Lord. It speaks of what He did in dying for sinners. In this case, His sufferings are particularly in view, for the soul, the sentient-ness, is in the blood (Lev.17:11). The cost to Christ of our deliverance is beyond calculation, in what He suffered and finally in His death. The results, however, are also beyond calculation.

The references in Romans 3:24 and Ephesians 1:7 to blood, then, speak first of all of the suffering of Christ in His dying. It relates the matter of deliverance to that of redemption and ransom by drawing attention to the cost

paid by Christ Jesus. For us our justification through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus is gratuitous. For Him our justification is far from gratuitous. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, being rich, because of you He became poor, that you, by His poverty, should be rich" (2 Cor.8:9). He "empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and, being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil.2:7,8).

Over and over again in Ephesians we read of what we are and have IN Christ. We cannot escape the point. We do not have deliverance or any of our blessings or any portion of them outside of Him. Indeed we do not have them at all except as we have them in Him, in Whom God blesses and chooses and graces us, and in Whom our lot was cast.

In grace, through faith [His faith], *are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them* (Eph.2:8-10).

IN CHRIST JESUS

In Greek there are two *the's* in the phrase of Romans 3:24, "the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus." The first is connected with the word "deliverance," and the second is represented in the CV by a raised dot before the word "which." It may be more forceful to place these two portions of the verse in parallel, as follows:

the deliverance
the [one] *in Christ Jesus*

One particular deliverance is in view, and that is *the* one in Christ Jesus. This may help explain why Paul used a rare

Greek term to speak of redemption or ransom. Although the Old Testament types tell us much about the antitype, they must not be confused with it. The deliverance which is in Christ Jesus is unique, and in no sense at all does it contain any inadequacies or allow for failure. Since it is in Christ Jesus, it is fully harmonious with God's power and wisdom and righteousness which is revealed in Him. It cannot be compromised. All that God has intended to be accomplished in Christ will be realized.

To meditate on these words of Romans 3:24 is humbling as to ourselves, honoring as to Christ Jesus and glorifying as to God. Christ Jesus is the one Mediator, Who gives Himself as the correspondent Ransom for all, revealing God as the Saviour (1 Tim.2:4-6; 4:9,10). It is in this light that our humbling becomes exultation. Our joy and boasting is in what God has accomplished through Christ Jesus, Who is the One Who even now is pleading for our sakes (Rom.8:34).

Continually in our lives, and most acutely in times of suffering, we are blessed by the evangel of Romans 3:24, as words filled with spiritual power, like those of Genesis 1:3. "Let there be deliverance, and there comes to be deliverance." That deliverance which we have in Christ Jesus, in faith, becomes powerful in our lives. Consequently we ourselves, who are groaning in ourselves, are nevertheless awaiting the sonship, the *deliverance* of our body (Rom.8:23).

In Christ, on hearing and believing the evangel, we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the *deliverance* of that which has been procured (Eph.1:13,14; 4:30).

To God be the glory for His flawless and triumphant work of deliverance through Christ Jesus, and for His evangel of our deliverance in Christ Jesus.

D.H.H.

Contents:

145 Editorial
149 The Sons of Jacob
160 The Founding of Kingly Strength
169 Crisis in Corinth
177 The Disipline of Evil
183 Whom God Purposed

JULY, 2006

Volume XCVII **Number 4**

Concordant Version of
The Book of Psalms

The *Concordant Version of the Psalms* endeavors to follow a pattern of consistency in translating the Hebrew words and thoughts of the Original. Hence there has been an effort to avoid the use of any English term for more than one Hebrew term, even though several English words may be required to do duty for a single Hebrew term. Boldface and lightface type, superior symbols and abbreviations and footnotes are all used to clarify the meaning or to represent some unique features that are otherwise difficult to express in English.

Boldface type is used for words (or parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. The regular, lightface type is used for words (or parts of words) which have been added to help express the Hebrew thought in more idiomatic English.

Symbols and abbreviations are used to indicate variant readings in the various Hebrew manuscripts or ancient Versions or to provide more complete information concerning the literal expressions in the Hebrew. These symbols and abbreviations are identified on the inside covers of the book.

Although the word "Psalm" appears in the titles of many of the individual pieces, the Hebrew word traditionally used as a title for the whole collection is the plural form of the word *praise* (*cf* the heading of Psalm 145). The term "Psalms," however, is also appropriate, for it means "melodies," as rendered, for example, in Psalm 81:2, "Lift up a melody . . . ." Yet the melody is not confined to singing but rather is directed to the thought being expressed in poetic form and its impression on the mind.

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EDITORIAL

HOW WE REJOICE to know that for us eonian life is not a reward, but is instead a *gracious* gift! This is what Paul declares: "The *gracious* gift of God is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:23b).

Yet perceiving that many will deny or disapprove this testimony of the evangel, by way of illustration, the apostle goes on to argue:

Or are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law), that the law is lording it over a man for as much time as he is living? For a woman in wedlock is bound to a living man by law. Yet if the man should be dying, she is exempt from the law of the man. Consequently, then, while the man is living, she will be styled an adulteress if she should be becoming another man's, yet, if the man should be dying, she is free from the law, being no adulteress on becoming another man's. So that, my brethren, you also were put to death to the law through the body of Christ, for you to become Another's, Who is roused from among the dead, that we should be bearing fruit to God. (Rom 7:1-4)

As I wrote concerning this theme years ago:

> In Romans 7:1-4, through a striking illustration relating to marriage, Paul enforces the *graciousness* of the evangel. In this passage, Paul is by no means giving us a treatise on wedlock, but only introduces the subject incidentally for the purpose of reaffirming and defending the utter despotism of the reign of Grace with respect to life eonian. The law is only lording it over a man for as much time as he is *living* (Rom.7:1), even as a woman is bound to a *living* man by law, but is not so bound to a *dead* man (Rom.7:2). Therefore, in the accounting of God, since *we died*

together with Christ (Rom.6:8; *cp* Col.3:3) when He died for our sakes, there is no law that can speak our condemnation. This is because law has no jurisdiction over a dead man.

"So that, my brethren, you *also* [like the woman whose husband has died] were put to death to the law through the body of Christ" (Rom.7:4a). Even as, *solely because of the act of another* (namely, the man who dies), the woman, should she become another man's, will *not* be styled an adulteress (Rom.7:3), thus also, *solely* because of the act of Another, even Christ the Lord, God will only deem us His saints and will not treat us as sinners *even if we should be persisting in sin—even if we should be increasing in sin* (Rom.5:20,21; 6:1).

While it is true that our awful enemy Sin has nothing better to give than the terrible rations of death, since, being under *grace,* Sin shall *not* be lording over *us,* we need not fear the forced imposition of any such rations!

Let Sin's despicable "rations" be what they will, they will never be our portion. Indeed, "the ration of Sin is death, *yet* the gracious gift of God is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:23). "*Nothing, consequently,* is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:1).

This is even as Paul further argues, "Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall be living together with Him also" (Rom. 6:8). ". . . Let not Sin, *then,* be reigning in your mortal body, for you to be obeying its lusts" (Rom.6:12).

". . . Present yourselves to God as if alive from among the dead, and your members as implements of righteousness to God. *For* Sin shall *not* be lording it over you, *for* you are not under law, but under *grace*" (Rom. 6:14).

Since we *shall* be living together with Christ, and since Sin shall *not* be lording it over us, we are *therefore* entreated to obey! We do not obey to *become* exempt from the power of Sin, which is the law (1 Cor. 15:56), but because we were put to death to the law through the body of Christ (Rom.7:4) and thus were exempted from its condemning power (*cf* Rom.7:6). Therefore, because of the act of Another, even our Lord, Jesus Christ, we may be having peace toward God and may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God (Rom. 5:1,2).[1]

Even though we may often lament with Isaiah, "Lord, who believes our tidings?" (Rom.10:16), nevertheless, "Faith is out of tidings, yet the tidings through a declaration of Christ" (Rom.10:17). Therefore, we would "Herald the word," while standing by it opportunely, inopportunely, exposing, rebuking, entreating, with all patience and teaching (2 Tim.4:2). Since God grants not only faith but understanding as well to some, it is on behalf of such ones that we would labor, even when this means our suffering the reproach of many.

May we come to realize that even though we also all behaved ourselves once in the lusts of our flesh, doing the will of the flesh and of the comprehension, and were, in our nature, children of indignation, even as the rest, *yet God,* being *rich* in *mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us,* vivifies us together in Christ (in *grace* are you saved!) and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying *the transcendent riches of His grace* in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For *in grace, through faith,* are you saved, and *this is not out of you;* it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.81, p.143,144.

makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them (Eph 2:3-10).

While the glorious words of the preceding paragraph are not my own but the apostle Paul's, in an attempt to foster the reader in their plain and straightforward content, I purposely styled them here without quotation marks. By so doing, it is my hope that many will simply read them and accept them for what they say—even as they stand—apart from any attempt to explain them away.

If we imagine that "it is only right" that a man be responsible for his own salvation, even as that he should gain it as a reward by his obedience, we will be disappointed in and stumbled by the very evangel of our salvation. If we are looking for a means by which we can get some glory for ourselves, attempting to show ourselves to be superior to others by our own hand, we must look elsewhere than to the evangel for the gratification of any such prideful longings.

Such untoward longings, however, may readily be gratified simply by being "*transferred* from that which calls you in the *grace* of Christ, to a *different* evangel, which is *not* another, except it be that some who are disturbing you want also to distort the evangel of Christ" (Gal.1:6,7).

No, says Paul; any such "evangel" is *substantively different* than the evangel of the *grace* of Christ, and is *not* another evangel of the same essential kind as that heralded by him. Indeed, the only way that one could even hope to succeed in the claim that such a spurious evangel *was* another true evangel—an evangel which in vital essence was the same as Paul's, having only superficial distinctives in contrast to it—would be by *distorting* the actual evangel of the *grace* of Christ heralded by Paul in order to do so.

May God grant us eyes to see that any little glory that we might enjoy is not our own, but is wholly a reflected glory of His own—that we should be "for the laud of the glory of *His grace*" (Eph.1:6). J.R.C.

THE SONS OF JACOB
(Genesis 30:1-43)

30 +**When Rachel** |**saw that she** did **not bear** children **for Jacob,** + **Rachel be**came |**jealous** *i***of her sister and** |**said to Jacob: Grant** › **me sons; and should** there **be no**ne**, I** shall **die**|. 2 + **Jacob's anger** grew |**hot** *i***at Rachel, and he** |**said** 7**to her**0**:** Am **I in** the *u***place of Elohim Who has withheld from you** the **fruit of** the **belly?** 3 +**So** 7**Rachel**0 |**said** 7**to Jacob**0**: Behold my maidservant Bilhah; come to her** +**that she may** give **birth on my knees and** that **I, even I, may be built** up *f***through her.** 4 **And she** |**gave** › **him** `**her** hand**maid Bilhah** ›**as wife; and Jacob** |**came to her.** 5 + **Bilhah** became |**pregnant and** |**bore** a **son for Jacob;** 6 **and Rachel** |**said: Elohim has adjudicated** for **me, and, moreover, He has heard** *i* **my voice and** |**given** › **me** a **son. Therefore she called his name Dan.** 7 + **Rachel's** hand**maid Bilhah** became |**pregnant** *fr***again and** |**bore** a **second son for Jacob;** 8 **and Rachel** |**said: Twistings of Elohim I have twisted with my sister;** *M***and**s**, moreover, I have** *all***prevailed.** +**So she** |**called his name Naphtali.**

9 +**When Leah** |**saw that she stayed from bearing**–**,** + **she** |**took** `**her** hand**maid Zilpah and** |**gave** `**her to Jacob** ›**as wife;** 7**and Jacob** |**came to her.**0 10 + **Leah's** hand**maid Zilpah** 7became| **pregnant**0 **and** |**bore** a **son for Jacob;** 11 **and Leah** |**said:** A **raid** is **coming;** +**so she** |**called** `**his name Gad.** 12 +**Then Leah's** hand**maid Zilpah** 7became |**pregnant** *fr***again and**0 |**bore** a **second son for Jacob;** 13 **and Leah** |**said:** *i* **Happiness** is **mine; for daughters will** *m***call me happy.** +**So she** |**called** `**his name Asher.**

14 + **In** the **days of** the **wheat harvest Reuben** |**went** out **and** |**found mandrakes in** the **field and** |**brought** `**them to his mother Leah.** +**Then Rachel** |**said to Leah:** *pr*__**Please give**__ › **me** some *f*__**of your son's mandrakes.**__ 15 +__**Yet**__ *7*__**Leah***__*0* |**said to her:** Is it a **little** thing that **you** have **taken**– `**my husband?** + **Will you** *mr*__**also take**__ `**my son's mandrakes?** + **Rachel** |*sa*__**replied:**__ *7*__**Not so!**__~*n* **He shall lie with you** *7*·__**this***__*0* ·**night** *u*__**in**__ return for **your son's mandrakes.** 16 +__**When Jacob**__ |**came** in **from the field in** the **evening,** + **Leah** went |**forth to meet him and** |**said: To me are you coming** *7*__**tonight***__*n*; **for I hired,** yea **hired**– **you** *i*__**with my son's mandrakes. And**__ so **he** |**lay with her in** ·**that night.**

17 + **Elohim** |**hearkened to Leah, and she** became |**pregnant and** |**bore for Jacob** a **fifth son;** 18 **and Leah** |**said: Elohim has given** me **my reward** *w*__**because I gave my**__ hand**maid to my husband.** +__**So she**__ |**called his name Issachar.** 19 +__**Then**__ **Leah** became |**pregnant** *fr*__**again and**__ |**bore for Jacob** a **sixth son;** 20 **and Leah** |**said: Elohim has endowed me,** yes `**me,** with a **bountiful dowry.** *7*__**Now***__*0* at ·*du*__**last my husband shall prefer me, for I have borne**__ › **him six sons.** +__**So she**__ |**called** `**his name Zebulun.** 21 **And after**ward **she bore** a **daughter;** + **she** |**called** `**her name Dinah.**

22 + **Elohim** |**remembered** `**Rachel;** + **Elohim** |**hearkened to her and** |**opened** `**her womb.** 23 + **She** became |**pregnant and** |**bore** a **son** *7*__**for Jacob***__*0*; **and** *7*__**Rachel***__*0* |**said: Elohim has gathered** up `**my reproach.** 24 + **She** |**called** `**his name Joseph,** › **saying**–**: May Yahweh add to me another son.**

25 + **It** |**came** to **pass** *as w*__**when Rachel had borne**__ `**Joseph,** +__**that Jacob**__ |**said to Laban: Dismiss me and** do **let me go to my** *ri*__**place and to my land.**__ 26 Do **give** me `**my wives and** `**my children** *i*__**for whom I have served**__ `**you, and** do **let me go; for you´ know** `**my service** with **which I have served you.** 27 + **Laban** |**said to him: If** *pr*__**now I have found grace in your eyes—I have** *m*__**practiced augury**__ and know +__**that**__

Yahweh has |**blessed me owing to you.** 28 **And he** |*sa*__**added:**__ Do **specify your hire** *on*__**to me.**__ + **I** am determined to |**give** it. 29 + *7*__**Jacob***__*0* |*sa*__**replied to him: You your**__self **know** `*w*__**how I have served you and** `**what has become**__ of **your cattle** `under **me.** 30 **For** only a **few** *w b*__**were yours before my**__ coming; +__**now they**__ have |**unfolded** › *mn*__**abundantly,**__ +__**since Yahweh**__ has |**blessed** `**you** ›**at my foot**steps. +__**Yet now, when shall I´** *mr*__**also** *d*__**provide for my**__ own **house**hold?**

31 +__**Then** *7*__**Laban***__*0* |**said** *7*__**to him***__*0*: **What shall I give** › **you?** + **Jacob** |*sa*__**replied: Not shall you give**__ › **me anything.** But **if you** will |**do** ·**this** ·**thing for me, I shall** |**again** indeed **graze** *7*__**and***__*c* **guard your flock.** 32 **I shall pass today** *i*__**among all your flock taking away**__– **from there every speckled** +__**or flecked**__| **flockling, and every brown flockling** *i*__**among**__ the **sheep, and** *7*__**every***__*0* **flecked**| +__**or speckled** *i*__**among**__ the **goats;** + that **will** *b*__**be my hire.**__ 33 + **My righteousness will answer** *i*__**for me,** *i*__**on** the **morrow day,** *i*__**when you** |**come on my hire before you: Every**__one *w*__**that is not**__ **speckled** +__**or flecked**__| *i*__**among**__ the **goats and brown** *i*__**among**__ the **sheep, that** one shall count `with **me** as **stolen**|**.**

34 **And Laban** |**said: Behold, agreed; let it** *b*__**be according**__ to **your word.** 35 +__**But** *i*__**on** ·**that day he** |**took away** `**the striped and** ·**flecked**| ·**bucks and** `**all the speckled and** ·**flecked**| ·**she-goats, every**__one *w*__**that**__ had **white** *i*__**on it, and every brown** one *i*__**among**__ the **sheep; and he** |**gave** them over **in**to the **hands of his sons.** 36 +__**Then he**__ |*pl*__**put**__ a distance of **three days'** *way*__**journey between him**__self **and** *bt* **Jacob, and Jacob** was **grazing** `**the rest**| of **Laban's flocks.**

37 +__**Then Jacob**__ |**took for his** use **sappy staves of white poplar and hazel and plane** trees. + **He** |**peeled in them white** strips of **peelings,** laying **bare the white** *w* **on the staves.** 38 **And he** |**put** `**the staves which he had peeled in** the **gutters (in the water**ing **troughs** *w*__**where the flocks**__ |**came to drink),** › be**fore the flocks;** +__**for they**__ |**mated** *i*__**when they came**__– **to drink.** 39 +__**So the flocks**__ |**mated** ›**by**

the staves, and the flocks gave [l]**birth** to **striped, speckled and flecked**[l] young. 40 + **Jacob** [c]**kept the sheep apart, and he** [g]**put** the **faces of the flock**s **to**ward the **striped** [7]**ram**[0] **and all** the **brown** [i]**among Laban's flock**s. +**Then he** [l]**set his** own **droves** aside**; he set them** for **him**self **alone and not** [on]**with Laban's flock**s.

41 +**So it came** to **be in every** [7]**season**[c] when **the sinewy**[l] of **the flock**s were about to **conceive**–, +**that Jacob** [pl]**set** `**the staves in** the **gutters** ›**before** the **eyes of the flock**s ›**that they** might **mate**– [i]**by** the **staves.** 42 +**But he** did **not** [pl]**set** them [i]**when the flock**s were **drooping**–. +**So the drooping came** to **be Laban's, and the sinewy Jacob's.** 43 +**Thus the man** [l]**unfolded more and more, and many flock**s [7]**and herds**[0] [l]**came** to **be his,** +**also maid**servant**s and** man**servants,** + **camels and donkeys.**

THE TWELVE SONS

As the names of Jacob's sons were not merely derived from the attendant circumstances, as was Jacob's name, but were prophetic of their place in the Subjector's future plans, it will be profitable to study their meaning with some care. Their final number, twelve, is often recalled in the course of revelation as a symbol of subordinate subjection, for it will be exercised through 12 tribes, and 12 apostles seated on 12 thrones. The crown of Christ has 12 stars, and the new Jerusalem will have 12 foundations and 12 gates of 12 pearls. Finally the tree of life will produce 12 fruits, one each month.

REUBEN

Reuben (*See! a son*) was the firstborn of the flesh, who, in the previous eon would have been distinguished with a name, as the head of the race (Gen.6:4). But in this eon, like Ishmael and Esau, he receives a subordinate rank. He

was unstable like water, and violated the berth of his father (Gen.49:4). Therefore he had a subordinate place among the twelve, and his descendants had their allotment east of the Jordan, so that they went into captivity first. But he did seek to save the life of Joseph (Gen.37:22). Although Leah looked upon him as given by Yahweh in answer to her prayers, it was a selfish desire on her part.

SIMEON

Simeon (*Heard*) Leah's second son is a record of the hearing of her prayers. She still sought to turn Jacob's hatred into love by this means. When Jacob foretells the future of the tribes, he joins Simeon with Levi, and bases his predictions on their horrible massacre of the Shechemites (Gen.34:25; 49:5-7). In the division of the land among the tribes they received no distinct allotment, but dwelt in the center of Judah, whose portion was too much for them (Joshua 19:1-9).

LEVI

Levi (*Obligated*) was so named because Leah felt that Jacob, even if he did not love her, was greatly indebted to her for the three sons she had borne him. In the East any son is considered a great asset, and, now that she had enriched him with three sons, Jacob could not help being much obligated to her.

The future role of Levi's descendants, however, depended largely on his conduct. As he was a partner with his older brother Simeon in the massacre of the Shechemites, he also lost a definite allotment in the land, and was scattered throughout Israel. Jacob cursed their fierce anger and their obstinate rage (49:7).

JUDAH

Judah (*Acclaimed*) shows that Leah has been benefit-

ted spiritually by her sad plight. She now acclaims Yahweh for what He has done to help her, for no woman who has borne three sons for her possessor can fail to be highly regarded, even if not loved. This is the key to Judah's leading place among the tribes and the large allotment, and, above all, his part in the lineage of our Lord (Luke 3:33).

Hence he receives the most acclamation from Jacob in his prophetic blessing. The scepter he took away from Reuben is given to Judah. The tribe descended from him received the largest allotment and the leadership after David ascended the throne. When the kingdom was divided, Judah remained true to the worship of Yahweh, and his name is used of all Israelites to this day.

DAN AND NAPHTALI

Dan (*Adjudication*) is the fruit of Rachel's jealousy and artifice. Yahweh will not give her a son, so she endangers her loving relation to Jacob, by blaming him for it. This was most unreasonable, for he had begotten four sons meanwhile. So Dan had a very poor start and will have a poor place in Israel. Jacob leaves Dan till later in his blessing (49:16). He likens him to a serpent in the way. It was Dan that brought idolatry into Israel. This tribe stole a graven image and set it up and had a priest of their own (Judges 18). Jeroboam set up one of his golden calves in Dan (2 Kings 10:29). In the sealing of "every" tribe of the sons of Israel in the great affliction, Dan is omitted, so that it is questionable if it will exist in the future (Rev. 7:5-8). Rachel gave him the name Dan because she imagined that she has been given what is due to her. Alas! that may have been so, but may we never be guilty of demanding our due, for we deserve less than nothing.

Naphtali (*Twistings*), the second son which Bilhah bore gives further evidence of her low spirituality, so he and his tribe played a subordinate part. It was located in the north, between Dan and Ashur.

GAD AND ASHUR

Gad (*Raid*) is another result of the rivalry between Jacob's two wives. Hitherto Leah needed no substitute, for she had already borne three sons. Yet she wished to maintain her lead, and envisioned many more. When foretelling Gad's future Jacob predicts that he will be raided, yet he will raid their heels (Gen.49:19). His descendants lived on the far side of the Jordan.

Ashur (*Progress*, "Happy") is the name of Leah's second son by her maid, but it refers rather to the joy of Leah, herself, because her stratagem had worked. Zilpah does not seem to have been given any credit! The tribe which descended from him was apportioned the coast, north of Carmel.

RACHEL'S SELF-HELP

Rachel seems to have been driven to desperation, for now her sister had five sons, yet she had none of her own. So she turns away from Yahweh and seeks to help herself by means of fleshly help. She even lowers her pride by bartering for mandrakes from her rival. But it is of no avail, but rather the contrary, for it gave Leah another son. We do not read that she used the mandrakes, but we are told that Elohim hearkened to her prayer. All this is very gripping, and it should help us to see how useless it is to depend upon anything outside of God's grace.

ISSACHAR

Issachar (*There-is-Reward*) was Leah's fifth son. She took him as payment for giving her maid to her husband.

Jacob, in his last prophecy, calls Issachar a boney donkey reclining between two saddlebags. This is not very complimentary, although the donkey is the most reliable and patient animal in the land. In accord with this, he is

never mentioned again in the records. The tribe received a small allotment on the western side of the Jordan below lake Galilee, bordering on the valley of Jezreel.

ZEBULUN

Zebulun (*Preferred*) indicates Leah's triumph over her sister Rachel. A wife who can present her husband with six sons brings a much greater dowry to him than one who has not borne a single one herself. The AV says, "now will my husband *dwell* with me," which seems entirely inadequate. The RSV has "*honor* me," which is better. The name seems to come from the word meaning *prefer*. We may be sure that the preference did not include Zebulun himself.

In accord with Jacob's prophecy, this tribe tabernacled toward the sea shore (Gen.49:13), though not actually on the coast which was given to Ashur.

DINAH

Dinah (*Adjudicatress*) is the feminine form of her brother Dan's name. She is the only daughter mentioned by name, as she is an important figure in the later history. Others are mentioned, who sought to comfort Jacob when Joseph was lost (Gen.37:35) and when they went down to Egypt (46:7).

JOSEPH

Joseph (*May-He-Add*) is the cry of a long tried mother heart for another child. She had borne the reproach of barrenness, while her unloved sister bore Jacob many sons. But we should look deeper than that, for Joseph undoubtedly inherited much from the long testing and trial and humiliation of his mother that prepared him to become a type of the suffering Christ, and was worshiped by all his brethren, and even his parents.

Joseph received the longest and richest blessing from his father. Nearly the last to be born, he is granted the

riches of the firstborn. First he is praised because of his fruitfulness. Indeed his progeny was so numerous that it was divided into two tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh, which later stretched clear across and took most of the center of the holy land (49:22). He is compared with an offshoot of a fruitful plant. This perfectly fits both his past and his future. Jacob also speaks of the perennial steadiness of Joseph's bow before those who were contending against him. Finally Jacob calls down the blessings of the One Who-Suffices on Joseph who was singled out from his brothers (Gen.49:22-26).

OTHER SONS

Benjamin (*Son of the Right Hand*) was "added" to Joseph's mother, Rachel, later. He is compared to a wolf (Gen.49:27). Ephraim (*Fruits*) and Manasseh (*Oblivion*), the sons of Joseph, came later, and recorded his fruitfulness and his obliviousness as to the trials and toil of his early years (Gen.41:51,52).

JACOB DECEIVES LABAN

Jacob had gone to Laban to get a wife, and now he had two of them with a dozen children. He had been promised the land where his father Isaac lived, so why could he not return to him, who had much more cattle and wealth than he needed, and which had been promised to him? Why then does he talk as if he had nothing? (Gen. 30:30). Simply because he is a heel, or circumventer. He probably had not forgotten Laban's trick, who had made him serve fourteen years instead of seven, and disposed of an unattractive daughter, at Jacob's expense. Now is an opportunity to make Laban pay for his deception, and to gain a flock of his own. Let us not seek to excuse Jacob, for it is necessary to realize his natural meanness in order to appreciate his transformation into Israel. So, also, it

is well to discover our own selfishness to enjoy the fullness of God's grace.

Jacob knows Laban's selfish character, so, when he inquires what wages he would have to *give*, he replies with an emphatic denial of taking a gift. "*NOT* shall you give me anything." That was very good bait! What more could Laban want? So he puts his foot right into Jacob's trap. It is said that the normal color of the flocks is white. Striped or flecked or brown are abnormal. So, in the natural course of events, Laban's cattle would have increased far more than Jacob's. Laban thought himself crafty. Hadn't he tricked Jacob into marrying Leah? Now he thought he was doing it again, or he would not have accepted Jacob's proposition so readily.

JACOB'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The methods Jacob used seem obscure, but the fact and intention was to swindle Laban in such a way that Jacob could not be blamed.

Jacob gives Laban and us a sample of his *own* righteousness. How can there be deception here? All that Laban or his sons need to do is to examine Jacob's hire, and if there are any which are normal, without stripes or speckled or flecked he has stolen them. If not, he has acquired them honestly, of course, for how could he help it if they were born that way? It seems that Laban and his sons never did see through the swindle. They changed the hire, but Jacob changed his tricks. Many a believer, today, is like Jacob. They tell what is evidently true, but withhold other facts which make it a lie. Jacob justified himself before Laban and all men, but not in his own conscience or before Yahweh Elohim.

The greatest marvel in all this is the attitude of Elohim. When He does intervene, He says "I have seen all that *Laban* has done to you" (Gen.31:12). Laban must have reversed the

terms of his contract with Jacob at every counting. So *he* was not justified. Jacob had not needed to resort to trickery. Very few who hear of this, or speak of it, realize that. But still he did so, just as when he deceived his father in regard to Esau unnecessarily. He thought himself smart, but he was a pitiful fool in trying to steal what belonged to him. It was his, he had a right to it, he was *justified* in taking it, for Yahweh Elohim had given it to him. Moreover, his pitiful efforts are also needed by Elohim as a picture for all others who are tried in a similar way. A.E.K.

IN WISDOM, HERALDING THE WORD

Herald the word. Stand by it, opportunely, inopportunely, expose, rebuke, entreat, with all patience and teaching. (2 Tim.4:2-4)

The apostle Paul's entreaty here is essentially singular: *herald the word.* All the rest is in support of this one directive. In addition to proclaiming "the word" of the evangel and its associated teachings, we must "stand by it" as well, doing so not only "opportunely" but "inopportunely." It is clear that there will be occasions when it will be needful to "expose" pertinent facts (including unpopular ones not commonly accepted), and even to "rebuke" and "entreat" in cases where these disciplines may be expedient. But if it is clear that exposure, rebuke, and entreaty must have their place, it is just as clear that any such disciplines must be engaged in "with *all patience and teaching,*" even as in such a way so as to occur "in love." This is so, simply because *all* our actions are to occur in love (*cf* 1 Cor.16:14).

The English "rebuke" speaks of sharp criticism and censure, which definition does not capture the essence of the Greek word from which it is translated, *epitimaō* (ON-VALUE). The essential idea of this expression is to center the mind of the hearer on the *value*—on the importance and worth—of whatever concern it is that may be in view. Hence, in reference to a future act, it is rendered "warn" (e.g., Matt.12:16). In some cases, it may be that a measured criticism is the best way to call attention to the importance of a certain problem or difficulty; but if so, any such criticism must be constructive, not destructive, in nature. Finally, let us note as well that even the kindest criticism can only be received by those who are open to our counsel, not by those whose attitude toward us may be aptly summed up in the words, "If I wanted your help, I would ask you for it." J.R.C.

A Meditation on Psalm 8

THE FOUNDING OF KINGLY STRENGTH

"O Yahweh our Lord, how noble is Your Name in all the earth, You Whose splendor is bestowed on the heavens. From the mouth of the unweaned and sucklings You have founded strength on account of Your foes, to cause the enemy and avenger to cease" (Psa.8:1,2).

Psalm 8 begins with an address of honor to Yahweh. This honor springs from the realization that Yahweh performs His purpose by means that surprise and delight us. The Psalmist saw the heavens as an incomprehensible display of the wisdom and power of God. In contrast with this he asked, "What is a mortal that You are mindful of him?" (v.4). But in spite of man's frailty and insignificance, Yahweh lays the foundation of strength down among the humble sons of humanity.

It is amazing that this strength shall be manifested by placing the universe under man's feet (v.6). But even more amazing is the unexpected surprise that this strength finds its foundation in the helpless cries of the infant sucklings of humanity (v.2). Honor and praise must be tendered to Yahweh, because no one else would or could build strength in such a manner. God's directings in the life of Moses provide a brilliant example of this very thing. Pharaoh ordered the execution of all the Israelite male infants. But the cry of the infant Moses gained him a home and care in Pharaoh's own house! And, after being nurtured and educated at Pharaoh's expense, Moses brought the plagues on Egypt, plundered the country, destroyed the military and set the oppressed free. That is God's way of doing things, and it is glorious!

The subscript to this Psalm is: "Permanent, The Eons of the Son." George F. Trench wrote a book entitled After the Thousand Years in which he presented the theme of Psalm 8 as being the subjection of all to Christ through the coming eons. This is in keeping with Christ's quotation from the Psalm, its use in Hebrews 2, and also the typical representations of the theme in the books of Samuel and Kings.

CHRIST'S QUOTATION

Christ entered Jerusalem, riding the colt of a donkey, to the cheers of the crowd, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be He Who is coming in the name of the Lord! Hosanna among the highest!" (Matt.21:9). Then when He came to the sanctuary the chief priests and scribes protested to Him: "Are you hearing what these are saying?" Yet Jesus is saying to them, "Yes. Did you never read that 'Out of the mouth of minors and sucklings Thou dost attune praise'?" (Matt.21:16).

There has been considerable discussion over Christ's quotation from Psalm 8, which favors the Septuagint. The Hebrew of Psalm 8 uses the word *strength* (v.2), where Christ used the word *praise.* The great Teacher made a play on words here. The Greek word for *minor* is *nêpios.* It is a compound of the word *young* and a word meaning *say,* or, *speak,* or *word.* A minor is one who is not sufficiently mature to speak with authority or command respect. The chief priests and scribes were the authorities responsible for guiding their nation by their words of wisdom. Yet they failed to honor God. They allowed the merchants to transform the temple of God into a marketplace for personal gain. They were the traffickers, or Canaanites, who should be expelled from God's holy precincts. Since the voices of authority were silent on such things, God attuned praise to Himself from lips too young to speak with authority.

There is a beautiful harmony between the thoughts of strength and praise. Because man comes to realize that victorious strength was founded in the cries of helpless sucklings, he must praise God. This relationship between praise and strength is emphasized in the opening of Hannah's prayer of exultation: "Glad is my heart in Yahweh! High is my horn in my Elohim! Wide is my mouth over my enemies, for I rejoice in Your salvation . . . . Yahweh is putting to death and is keeping alive . . . . He is laying low and is exalting too. He is raising the poor from the dust and exalts the needy from the ash heap, seating them with patrons of peoples, allotting them a throne of glory . . . . He shall give *strength* to His king" (1 Sam.2:1-10).

The same relationship between strength and praise is presented in the song of Moses: "Yah is my *Strength* and my Melody, and He became mine for salvation. This is my El; I shall adorn Him" (Ex.15:2). The word for strength used in these verses is the same as that used in Psalm 8:2.

The records of Christ's entry into Jerusalem may be found in Matthew 21:1-17, Mark 11:1-10, Luke 19:28-40, John 12:12-19, and Zechariah 9:5-9, and they are repeatedly presented typically throughout the books of Samuel. John's account records how the raising of Lazarus was instrumental in causing the crowd to form. This mention of raising the dead is reminiscent of the prayer of Hannah. The talk among the throngs concerning His raising of Lazarus would be part of what Luke referred to as the "powerful deeds which they perceived" (Luke 19:37). Despite the fact that it may be questionable if any good thing could come out of Nazareth (John 1:46), the unlearned multitudes claim Him as the Son of David and the coming King. They call for His kingdom to be established. They show that they recognize Him as the Messiah. God is honored by the realization that this One of humble beginnings is indeed from Him.

The context of Luke heightens this praise even more. Psalm 8 makes special note of humanity's insignificance when compared to the heavens. But the babes and sucklings cry: "Blessed be the King coming in the name of the Lord! In heaven peace, and glory among the highest!" (Luke 19:38). He Who emptied Himself and humbled Himself "ascends also, up over all who are of the heavens, that He should be completing all" (Eph.4:10). The weak and humble of humanity proclaim peace to the heavens, peace that was founded on earth.

THE MEANING AND LINK OF SUCKLINGS

A suckling child is weak and helpless, being completely dependent on its mother for nourishment and care. A suckling animal likewise presents a picture of harmlessness and vulnerability. The Scriptures have used the symbol of the suckling to portray images of the coming King. These images come before us especially in the books of Israel's kings.

1 Samuel opens with the lamenting and vow of Hannah. God heard her prayers and she bore Samuel, whose name means "heard of God." Special emphasis is made that she would keep the boy until he was weaned. At that time she took him to the tabernacle at Shiloh. The emphasis on his weaning identifies Samuel as a suckling, yet he became one of Israel's greatest leaders, guiding the nation for many years, filling the offices of prophet, priest and judge. The birth of Samuel is cast in contrast with the birth of Ichabod. Ichabod's mother, the wife of Phinehas, son of Eli, is unknown by name. The context of 1 Samuel 4 shows her emphatically silent, evidently saying nothing but the child's name, Ichabod, meaning: "no glory," or, "the glory is departed." She died in childbirth never to nurse her son, but the suckling of the barren Hannah who cried to God was raised up to replace the whole house of Eli.

In the seventh chapter of 1 Samuel Israel became plaintive after Yahweh. They mourned, like Hannah, and fasted and poured out water before God. Samuel sacrificed a single milk-fed, or suckling lamb and prayed for them. The Philistines set themselves in battle array against Israel, but Yahweh thundered over them so violently that they fled before Israel and suffered a great defeat. Then Israel enjoyed a time of peace.

Later chapters set up a comparison between Saul, Goliath and David that shows a similar contrast. Saul was larger than any Israelite, standing head and shoulders above them all. In 1 Samuel 17, when all Israel was trembling before Goliath, an exceptionally long and detailed description of Goliath's armor is given. Then it is shown that even Saul's armor is too large and cumbersome for David to use. David was only a youth (1 Sam.17:42), but, with no armor at all, he fought and defeated Goliath. It is a grand display of God's use of a small and weak vessel.

The suckling infant, Joash, was hidden by his wetnurse in the temple to escape the slaughter of the royal seed by Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. He lived in the temple for six years under the guidance of Jehoiada the priest. When the child king was seven years old, Jehoiada succeeded in making him king and in executing Athaliah (2 Kings 11). Strength founded in weakness is the theme.

THE PUBLIC ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

"Ashkelon shall see it and fear, and Gaza also shall travail exceedingly, and Ekron—for her fond hope will be put to shame, and the king will perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be indwelt. A bastard people will dwell in Ashdod. And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. And I will take away his blood from his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth.

"Yet he that remains, moreover, shall be for our Elo-

him; and he will come to be like a mentor in Judah, and Ekron like a Jebusite. And I will encamp at My House as a detachment against those passing and returning. The taskmaster shall never pass upon them again, for now I keep watch with My own eyes.

"Exult exceedingly, daughter of Zion! Raise a joyful shout, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your King shall come to you! Righteous and bringing salvation is He. Humble and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a jenny" (Zech.9:5-9).

An extended context is given here from the passage quoted in the accounts of Matthew and John at Christ's entry into Jerusalem (Matt.21:5; John 12:15). The extended context names four of the five major cities of the Philistines. Those five cities are referred to in 1 Samuel 6:4. (Later prophecies usually omit Gath, which may have been absorbed into Judah.)

1 Samuel 6 supplies, by typical representation, a prophecy of Christ's entry to Jerusalem. In that prophecy is contained another reference to the thought of sucklings. The Philistines were a part of this first typical prophecy, and their mention in Zechariah's prophecy shows that there are additional points of similarity between Zechariah's prophecy and the record of our Lord's entry into Jerusalem. The Philistines, who had captured the ark, sought the wisdom of their advisors for a suitable means of returning the ark to relieve themselves from the plagues it brought upon them. This event is set in contrast with the elders and priests of Israel who had counseled to bring the ark to the battle when it was first captured (1 Sam.4).

The advice of the Philistines' advisors was to pen the calves of a pair of milk cows, place the ark of Yahweh in a new cart, and see if the cows would return the ark to its home against their natural, instinctive urges. The context is very emphatic. "The young cows went straight ahead

on their way in the direction of Beth-shemesh. They went along a single highway, lowing as they went; and they did not withdraw to the right or left" (1 Sam.6:12). The thought of the weakness of the sucklings highlights the strength of God, testified to by the lowing of the cows. Their noise was a testimony that every step they took was not of their own will. And they were bringing the ark, representing the presence of God, or Christ, to its home. The cows were untrained, but pulled the cart straight and evenly as if they had worked together for years. And they denied the pain of swollen udders, the calling of their calves, and their knowledge of the location of their home.

Similar things are seen when Christ entered Jerusalem. He rode a young, untamed donkey—"on which not as yet any man is seated" (Mark 11:2; Luke 19:30), and it carried Him peacefully. The colt on which He rode was tied with its mother, indicating that it was still a suckling. Amidst all the noise of the throngs glorifying God and recognizing Christ as King, there was no evidence of any waywardness on the part of the animals. The following outlines show a definite resemblance between a number of contexts.

1 Samuel 6
The coffer of Yahweh returning alone
Untrained milk cows pulling new cart straight forward
Sounds of lowing and rejoicing
Sacrifice of cows
Plague on Irreverence

2 Samuel 6:1-11
Coffer moved by David and 30,000 Israelites
New oxcart and restive oxen
Singing and praise without obedience
No sacrifice
Uzzah smitten

2 Samuel 6:12-15 and 1 Chronicles 15:25-28
Coffer brought to Jerusalem
Borne on shoulders of Levites
All Levites, priests, singers, players and dancers celebrate
Many sacrifices
Blessing and food for all the people

1 Kings 8
Coffer moved to the temple by Solomon
Borne by the priests
King Solomon and all the people celebrating
Unnumbered sacrifices
Great glory

The Four Accounts
Christ entering Jerusalem
Riding unbroken colt without resistance
Disciples and multitudes—Praise of babes and sucklings
Sacrifice: the cross
Temple cleansed; Israel set aside

ZECHARIAH'S PROPHECY

The opening verses of Zechariah 9 are cast in the setting of the advance of Alexander the Great and the Greek empire.

Tyre was preparing for siege (Zech.9:3), and the Philistine cities would be overthrown. Yet it appears that a distant, future invasion is also in view. In the midst of these military aspects the arrival of Israel's King is prophesied. The prophecy then continues with the works of the coming King.

It is interesting to see that there are a number of other aspects, besides Christ riding into Jerusalem on the colt, to which allusion is made in the prophecy.

Immediately following Christ's entry in John's account,

some Greeks come to Philip, asking to see Jesus. This could be an allusion to the Greeks in Zechariah's day.

The accounts of Matthew, Mark and Luke all cast the entry of Jerusalem in their contexts just prior to the cleansing of the temple.

The variation of the contexts is interesting. In Matthew the temple cleansing comes immediately, followed in turn by the cursing of the fig tree and the challenging of Christ's authority. In Mark's account Christ enters the temple and looks around on everything there. This *looking* may be an allusion to Zechariah 9:8, "I will encamp at My House as a detachment against those passing and returning. The taskmaster shall never pass upon them again, for now *I keep watch with My own eyes.*" In Luke's account the entry of Jerusalem and the cleansing of the temple are separated by Christ's lament over Jerusalem for the destruction that would come upon it. The glory and peace that will belong to Jerusalem were hidden from their realization.

Zechariah 9:8 speaks of God's encampment in His House like a military detachment to protect it from those *passing and returning.* This probably refers to the soldiers and raiding parties of Alexander's army, or to another future time when Christ will return.

Mark may contain an allusion to it in a sentence supplied by his account that the others omit: "And He did not give leave that anyone may be carrying a vessel through the sanctuary" (Mark 11:16).

Also, in the days of king Joash there actually was a detachment encamped at Yahweh's House. Jehoiada, the priest, hid the royal suckling Joash in the temple for six years. He established watches to guard the boy, especially at the time when they declared him king, and executed the wicked queen, Athaliah (2 Chron.23).

J. Phillip Scranton

CRISIS IN CORINTH

WHEN I read 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17, as a young believer I found it alarming. As translated in the Authorized Version (AV) the passage warns: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, *him shall God destroy;* for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." This brought much fear into my life. Would God *destroy* me should I dare smoke tobacco? What about eating junk food? What if I ate unclean foods as described under the Mosaic law? Would God destroy me for defiling my body with any of these things?

It was not until I began to study these verses concordantly that this dreaded fog began to lift its heavy burden from me. In seeing that the text spoke of *corrupting* rather than *destroying* I was encouraged to investigate the whole passage more carefully, especially as it relates to its context. Then by checking the sublinear of the Concordant Greek Text, I was able to note Paul's use of the plural pronoun "you" and the singular pronouns "anyone" and "him" in this passage. This did much to clarify Paul's meaning to my heart. He was not using "temple" in reference to our human body as in 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 but in the sense of a group comprised of a plurality of individuals.

The Greek word *phtheirō* is translated consistently as *corrupt* in the CLNT. The AV translates it as "corrupt" six times but as "defile" and "destroy" in this specific verse. In so doing they corrupted the basic meaning of *phtheirō*.

Defile has more to do with being filthy or unclean while *corrupt* has more to do with decay. It is possible the AV translators thought of this temple much like the Jewish temple which, if one *defiled* it by bringing anything unclean into it, God, or the Jews would destroy him (*cf* Acts 27:21-31) and translated accordingly.

DRAWING FROM DAILY LIFE EXPERIENCES

Discovering the background in which this passage was written has been greatly helpful to me in understanding it. The city of Corinth was the capital city in its region. It was enriched by commerce from all parts of the Roman empire. Thus, many of the Corinthian believers were well-to-do in relation to the surrounding regions. "Corinth exceeded all the cities of the world, for the splendor and magnificence of its public buildings, such as temples, palaces, theatres, porticos, cenotaphs, baths, and other edifices . . . . The temple of Venus was not only very splendid, but also very rich . . . .Thus riches produced luxury, and luxury a total corruption of manners." [1]

The Corinthians had many temples. And so we read in 1 and 2 Corinthians that Paul drew from their experience with temples to bring out some spiritual truths about the true temple (1 Cor.3:16,17; 6:19; 2 Cor.6:16) which is comprised of believers, in which God's spirit dwells. He was masterful in taking something his readers experienced in their community and drawing a spiritual lesson from it.

But wealth brings with it a train of problems. One such problem was prostitution among the Corinthians which was not even named among the nations (1 Cor.5:1). He also wrote to them not to be commingling with paramours (male prostitutes), or the greedy, or an idolater, or reviler,

1. Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Entire Bible, p.1087; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1967.

or drunkard or extortioner. "With such a one you are not even to be eating" (*cf* 1 Cor.5:9-13). With all their opulent wealth, their city was rife with all these vices, and some had crept into their ecclesia. Maybe due to this wealth Paul wrote: "Already are you sated, already are you rich, apart from us you reign" (4:8).

This early ecclesia, established by Paul, was on the verge of a major breakdown. The Corinthian believers had many problems: jealousies, strifes and fleshliness (1 Cor. 3:1-4), boasting in men (3:21), being puffed up, one over the one, against the other (4:6, 18, 20; 5:2), taking their brothers before the court system of unbelievers (6:1-6), injuring and cheating (6:7, 8), eating of the idol sacrifices and thereby "sinning against brethren, and beating their weak conscience" (8:12), coming together for discomfiture (11:17), schisms among them and sects (11:18, 19), eating and drinking unworthily (11:29), having evil conversations and thus corrupting their kind characters (15:33).

STRIFES AMONG THE CORINTHIANS

At the very beginning of this Corinthian epistle, right after his introduction, Paul got to the crux of a major problem. "For it was made evident to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe, that *there are strifes among you*" (1 Cor.1:11). It is highly probable that Chloe was someone of repute and not likely to give wrong information concerning the true state of affairs. The Corinthians sent a letter, with word from those of Chloe concerning different matters such as relationships (1 Cor.7:1-40), idol sacrifices (1 Cor.8:1-13) and concerning the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor.15:12). Consequently, Paul wrote: "Now I am saying this, that each of you is saying, 'I, indeed, am *of Paul,*' yet another 'I *of Apollos,*' yet 'I *of Cephas,*' yet 'I *of Christ*'" (1 Cor.1:12).

If we were somehow able to go back in time to Cor-

inth to visit the Corinthian ecclesia in Paul's day we might notice, upon walking into their assembly, that the members would be sitting in different groups. Among these groups would be strifes keeping them in their respective clique. Imagine four long tables; each table devoted to one of four leaders. If we asked one group why they are sitting at their specific table and not fellowshipping with the other tables, they would tell us that they are "of Paul." The next table would tell us they are "of Apollos." Then as we continued through the room we would come to the table which was "of Cephas," then finally to the one "of Christ."

Each table would explain why their group is better than the others. For instance, those of Paul might claim that they are correct because Paul said he was their apostle, and he had many mighty acts to back up that claim. The table which was of Apollos might boast, "He is the greatest orator." He stayed with the Corinthians for awhile and must have impressed some of them (Acts 19:1) as he was scholarly and able in the Scriptures (Acts 18:24) and thoroughly confuted the Jews (Acts 18:28). The table of Cephas (the Hebrew name for Peter) might say, "Our group is the correct group, and you should not listen to those other groups you just spoke to because they are all wrong. Peter is the chosen apostle, and it was he who was given the keys of the kingdom! He walked on water and walked with the Lord, besides performing many miracles! We would like to see Paul or Apollos walk on water!" And finally those at the table of Christ might exclaim to us, "All those three tables are wrong and ours is right because Christ is over all of them! Christ ascended into heaven, not Paul or Apollos or Cephas! When we are with Him, He will be the One in charge, not them!"

CORRECTIVE MEASURES ADVANCED

What did Paul write in response to those who are "of

Paul, of Apollos, of Cephas, of Christ"? He made a statement in 1:13 which should have arrested their attention at the very start: *Christ is parted!* Christ was being parted by what they were doing. Christ was, in a certain sense, being separated into parts. Due to this, the body of believers could not function properly. In Paul's expression, "Christ is parted!" we conclude that the Corinthians were all members of the one body of Christ with Christ as their Head. Being parted, the body was not functioning properly. This partisanship was corrupting the temple of God, and therefore God was corrupting those individuals involved. He was causing a decay among them.

"IN CHRIST," NOT "OF CHRIST"

Next we see that in order to put an end to the schisms Paul brought up the subject of crucifixion: *Not Paul was crucified for your sakes!* They should understand by this that neither was Cephas nor Apollos crucified for their sakes. The last time Paul was with them he wanted to perceive only *"Jesus Christ and Him crucified"* (1 Cor.2:2). They soon had forgotten that important lesson!

Now then, could the "of Christ" group, upon hearing this epistle read to this point in their meeting, look with glee to the other groups and justifiably say, "See, we were right!"? No! For they should see that the other three groups, along with their group, are actually one complete group, *in Christ.* They should have perceived that their "of Christ" group was just as wrong, for they were creating a schism. Rather than stating that they are "of Christ," they should be saying, "We *all* are in Christ!" Since they as well as the other groups are "in Christ," it stands to reason that everyone is on equal footing within the entire ecclesia.

Paul then brought up the subject of baptism. He asked: *Or into the name of Paul are you baptized?* (1 Cor.1:13). They needed to understand that being baptized into the

name of Christ meant that they were *in Christ,* identified in His death, entombment and resurrection *as a group.* Neither Cephas, Apollos nor Paul could boast that anyone was baptized into them, and likewise no one could boast of being baptized into their names. This welcome revelation of our position in Christ should arrest the schisms. All of them should at once see the unity to which they all belong.

WISDOM OF THE WISE DESTROYED

There are some more basic arguments Paul wanted to make in addressing the situation in Corinth. In 1 Corinthians 1:17 through 2:16 the argument rests on the evangel of the cross. Seventeen times the word "wisdom" is mentioned in this Corinthian epistle alone, more than any writing in the New Testament. 1 Corinthians contains 50% of the entire New Testament's usage of the word. In view of their prosperous lifestyle the Corinthians may well have thought they were really wise. How else could they have attained to such a high degree of living? Yet Paul, rather than trying to impress them with all the learning he had, brought the evangel, "not in wisdom of word, lest the cross of Christ may be made void" (1:17).

Just in case the Corinthians should wish to boast in themselves, Paul reminded them: "For you are observing your calling, brethren, that there are not many wise [ones] according to the flesh; not many powerful [ones], not many noble [ones], but the stupid [ones] of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the wise [ones], and the weak [ones] of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the strong [ones] and the ignoble and the contemptible [ones] of the world God chooses, and the [ones] being nothing, that He should be discarding the [ones] which are, so that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight. *Yet you, out of Him, are in Christ Jesus*" (1 Cor.1:26-29). How could the Corinthians boast, when,

according to the passage above, they saw that the majority of them were stupid, ignoble and contemptible? Since they could not boast in God's sight, surely they should not be boasting among themselves. It might be that the humans they vested with so much homage were in the same category. They should have been boasting in the Lord (1 Cor.1:31).

Paul was compelled to let the Corinthians know what he and Apollos are. "Servants are they" (3:5). Being cognizant of this should help quell the fighting. The planting and irrigating was nothing apart from God making it grow up. God is everything (*cf* 3:5-7). He and Apollos, rather than competing against each other, were actually "fellow workers" working together for the common good. As such, the Corinthians should at once see a common ground. "Now he who is planting and he who is irrigating are for one thing." That one thing which they are for surely is not schisms! "God's farm, God's building are you" (3:9). Being God's farm and God's building they should be bringing forth fruit and be glorifying God as a whole rather than divided. Since in fact it is God's farm, Paul and Apollos are workers under God's direction. And since the believers are God's building, God is the architect, not Paul, Apollos nor Cephas.

Finally, Paul brings out the idea of him being like a wise foreman. As such, according to the grace of God, he *lays* a foundation, yet another is *building* on it. He then states that the only foundation which can be *laid* is Jesus Christ (*cf* 1 Cor.3:11). Not Paul, not Apollos, not Cephas but Jesus Christ is the foundation. Upon that foundation is the corporation of believers comprising the temple.

CORRUPTING THE TEMPLE

Getting back to the passage which began this article I will now quote from the Concordant Version: "Are *you* not

aware that *you* are a temple of God and the spirit of God is making its home in *you?* If *anyone* is corrupting the temple of God, God will be corrupting *him,* for the temple of God is holy, which *you* are" (1 Cor.3:16, 17). Each italicized *you* in the passage above is plural. In verse 17, "anyone" and "him" are singular. So we can see that the temple is comprised of a plurality of believers. Likewise we can see that, should *anyone,* being any specific *individual,* be corrupting that *group of believers* known as the temple in which God's spirit resides, God will be corrupting that *individual.* In some sense God will be causing that individual to experience decay. "Corrupt" signifies "cause decay" (see Keyword Concordance, p.61). Let us all realize that, as a corporate body, we, as a plurality of believers, are the temple of God and that God's spirit truly does dwell within that temple. Should an individual believer be corrupting or be causing to decay, in any way, that temple (not their own bodies), by schisms, strifes, unscriptural teaching or any means, God will be corrupting or be causing to decay that individual.

I am not advocating a license to use things in such a way which are harmful to our bodies. Paul tells us ". . . By all means glorify God in your body" (1 Cor.6:20).

Yet also let us pray for grace not to be involved in the same problems afflicting the Corinthians. Let us not boast in any certain individual or proclaim to be *of* any certain teacher no matter how wise or able in the Word we feel they are. Rather, let us all endeavor to see both ourselves and those working for the good of all as being *in Christ Jesus* and not *of Christ* to the exclusion of others. We are all "out of Him" yet not in such as way as to be exclusive of others in the body of Christ for, in truth, we are all "in Christ Jesus," (1 Cor.1:30).

Tony Nungesser

THE DISCIPLINE OF EVIL
(Jeremiah 2:19-37)

THE PROCLAMATIONS of Yahweh which Jeremiah delivered to Jerusalem continue with special regard to the nation's espousal to Him in the wilderness and the way that they had wandered far from Him. They had committed two evils: First they forsook Yahweh, "the Fountain of living waters." And then they had followed this with idolatry, hewing "for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot contain water" (Jer.2:13). There are consequences for such evils, but not, as might be supposed, their absolute rejection by Yahweh and final destruction, but rather the consequences of *discipline and reproof.*

THE FORSAKING OF YAHWEH

19 **Let your evil discipline you,**
And your backslidings, let them reprove you;
Know +**then and see** ᶠ**how evil and bitter** it is
when **you forsake**⁻ `**Yahweh your Elohim**
And you ›**have no**ᵗ **awe of Me,**
averring is **my Lord Yahweh of hosts.**
20 ᶠ**Indeed from** the **eon** ⁷**you~ have broken your yoke,**
⁷**You~ have pulled away your bonds,**
And you ˡ**say, I shall not serve.**
ᶠ**Indeed on every lofty hill**
And under every flourishing tree,
you are **sprawling, prostituting.**
21 +**Yet I My**self **planted you** a **yellow** muscat vine**,**
all of it reliable seed;
+**Then how have you turned** into a **degenerate,**

foreign ˙vine un**to Me?**
22 **Though you should** ˡ**launder** yourself ᵗ**with soda**
And ˡ**increase soap** ˃**on you**rself,
Your depravity would remain **inscribed**ˡ **before Me,**
averring is **my Lord Yahweh.**

The experience of evil is the best background for blessing. An acquaintance with the bitterness which accompanies Israel's apostasy is preparatory for future good.

Yet there was no evidence in Jeremiah's day that such an operation of correction was underway. Even at this time of growing distress Israel was unwilling to serve their Elohim, and they turned to others for happiness. Unlike plant life, which rigidly obeys the laws of heredity, they continued to go against nature. Abraham, from whom they sprang, was a man of faith, but they did not stay true to their stock.

The fifth chapter of Isaiah parallels the language of Jeremiah 2:21. In both passages Yahweh presents a picture which shows how much effort He devotes to the cultivation of that felicity which will fill the cup of all to overflowing in the consummation. But this can be fully appreciated only by those who have known its opposite. The very failure to attain it in the past will make it possible for Israel to fully enjoy it in the future. Such is the wisdom of Yahweh, that His seeming failures are indispensable ingredients of their final felicity.[1]

A CALL TO SEE AND KNOW

23 **How** can **you** ˡ**say, I am not unclean;**
After the Baalim I have not ᵍᵒ**followed?**
See your way in the **ravine;**
Know what you have done!
You are a **fleet young camel,**
winding about in **her** path**ways,**

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.51, p.169.

24 An **onager, taught** by the **wilderness;**
In the **yearning of her soul she gulps** the **wind;**
In **her estrus** ᵃ**who** can ˡ**turn her back?**
Anyone seeking her need **not** ˡ**faint;**
In her month they shall find her.
25 **Save back your foot from barefoot** sores
And your throat from thirst.
⁺**Yet you** ˡ**say, No**ᵗ cause for **despair**ˡ,
For I love alienˡ gods**,**
and I shall ᵍᵒ**follow after them.**
26 **As** a **thief** is **ashamed** ᵗ**when he is** ˡ**found** out,
So will the **house of Israel be ashamed,**
They, their kings, their chiefs,
And their priests and their prophets,
27 Who **say**ˡ **to** a **tree, My father** are **you,**
And to a **stone, You you**rself gave **me birth.**
For they have turned around the **nape** of their neck
to Me, and not their **face;**
⁺**Yet in** the **era of their evil they** ˡ**say,**
Do **arise and save us!**
28 ⁺**Yet where** are **your elohim**
ʷ**that you** ᵈ**made for you**rself**?**
Let them arise if they can ˡ**save you**
in your era of evil;
For your elohim, O **Judah,**
have become as the **number of your cities.**

In the very heart of this long indictment we have Israel's repudiation of any wrong doing, claiming that they are neither unclean or idolators (Jer.2:23)! Hence Yahweh calls to them to see and know the truth of their shameful behavior. The metaphors of verse 24 exactly match the people's avowal in verse 25. They are determined to go after alien gods. This is their "era of evil" both as to their acts and the results of their acts.

The words are stern and true as to the nation's shame-

lessness and their dishonoring of God, but there is a *good word* still to come. The evil spoken of here will give way to, and make all the more glorious, the averring of Yahweh, given through this very prophet: "Behold, the days are coming, averring is Yahweh, when I will carry out the *good* word which I have spoken concerning the house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah: In those days and *in that era* I shall make sprout for David a Sprout of righteousness, Who will establish right judgment and justice in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall tabernacle in serenity, and this is what one shall call it: Yahweh, our Righteousness" (Jer.33:14-16).

Nevertheless, it was given to Jeremiah to live in an era of severe apostasy from Yahweh and to bring a message of His revulsion and condemnation.

CALL TO TRANSGRESSORS

29 **Why** do **you** ˡ**contend** ˃**against Me?**
All of you have transgressed *ⁱ*__against Me, averring__
is **Yahweh.**
30 ˃ **Futilely have I smitten** ˋ**your sons;**
They have not taken admonition;
Your sword has devoured your prophets
like a **lion** *ᶜ*__bringing ruin.__
31 **(O** ˋ**generation,** all of **you, discern** the **word of Yahweh.)**
Have I become a **wilderness to Israel**
*ⁱᶠ*__Or__ a **land of** the **gloom of Yah?**
For **what reason** do **My people say, We** hold **sway;**
We shall not come *ᶠʳ*__again to You?__
32 Can a **virgin** ˡ**forget her ornaments**
or a **bride her ribbons?**
⁺**Yet My people, they have forgotten Me**
days that **are without number.**

The deplorable state of Yahweh's people seemed almost hopeless. Wicked transgressors, they accept no discipline, and actually kill His prophets. They wish to be rid of Him. They have forgotten their early rapture, and are turning back to the very place from which Yahweh had delivered them.

TURNING TO EGYPT

33 *ʷᵗ*__How__ ˡ**good you** *ᶜ*__make your way to seek love;__
Wherefore, you *ᵐʳ*__even teach__ ˋ**the evil** women ˋ**your**
ways.
34 **Moreover,** *ⁱ*__on your hems is found__ the **blood**
of the **souls of needy innocents;**
You did **not come upon them** *ⁱ* __burrowing,__
for it is **on all these.**
35 ⁺ **You** ˡ**say,** *ᵗ* __I am innocent;__
yea, His anger has turned away **from me.**
Behold, I am **judging** ˋ**you**
*ᵒⁿ*__because you say¯, I have not sinned.__
36 *ʷᵗ*__How very__ often **you** ˡ**go about** ˃ **altering¯** ˋ**your way!**
You shall be *ᶜ*__put__ to **shame** *ᶠ* **by Egypt** *ᵐʳ*__also__
Just as you were put to **shame** *ᶠ* **by Assyria.**
37 **Moreover, from** ˋ**this** place **you shall** go **forth**
⁺**with your hands on your head;**
For Yahweh has rejected those
in whom **you** placed **trust**
(And you shall not prosper ˃**by them),**

When the Jews forsake Yahweh, they repeat their tendency to depend on others, at this time on Egypt, while previously they had looked to Assyria in the north. These nations will prove to be untrustworthy, for Yahweh rejects them.

This is made definite later through Jeremiah, in the case of king Zedekiah: "Thus says Yahweh Elohim of Israel: Thus shall you say to the king of Judah who has sent you to

Me to inquire of Me, Behold, the army of Pharaoh which is marching forth to help you will return to its own land, Egypt" (Jer.37:7). No help will come from Egypt, "and Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape from the hand of the Chaldeans, for he shall be given, yea given into the hand of the king of Babylon" (Jer.32:4).

As for those who flee to Egypt, Yahweh of hosts declares, "They shall fall by sword; by famine they shall be finished from the smallest unto the greatest; by sword and by famine they shall die, and they will become an execration and an appalling object and a malediction and a reproach" (Jer.44:12).

Yet this also is not Yahweh's final word concerning Israel or their neighbors to the north and the south. Situated between Egypt and Assyria, the land became the battleground for both in their strife for supremacy. As the buffer state, Israel was tempted to lean on one to protect it from the other. Yet Yahweh used Israel's northern and southern neighbors as rods with which to chastise His people. Nevertheless, in that day to which the prophets looked forward, "Yahweh will become known to Egypt, and Egypt will know Yahweh" (Isa.19:21). Then all will change when "Israel shall become a third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing within the earth, with which Yahweh of hosts will bless them, saying, Blessed be My people, Egypt, and the work of My hands, Assyria, and My allotment, Israel" (Isa.19:21,24).

Israel will not be alone in that day, in the midst of a hostile world. Her nearest neighbors will be true friends and fast, even though they once were her worst enemies. This will be Yahweh's achievement, and He alone will be exalted in that day.[2]

A. E. Knoch

2. *cf Unsearchable Riches*, vol.33, p.221-240.

WHOM GOD PURPOSED

THE HIGHEST revelation of God's righteousness is that which is found in the evangel of God. There in the death of Jesus Christ for sinners the believer finds manifested a righteousness of God which transcends in clarity and fullness any divine operation of righteousness previously presented. It is a righteousness which takes into account the fact that all mankind are sinners who are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:9-20,23), and yet it culminates in life's justifying for all, so that all the many sinners are constituted righteous (Rom.5:18,19).

Justification is not a work of arbitrary will, but God, Who operates all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:11), justifies on the basis of the demands of His righteousness. In not sparing His Son, God involved Himself in a work of great suffering and loss in order to gain justification. What Jesus experienced was a reflection of what God was undergoing in the giving of His Beloved. Justification required indeed a work of power and pain, for only that would accord with the demands of divine righteousness. God cannot do that which is contrary to what He is, and, therefore, what He has done for sinners must reflect perfect righteousness, without flaw, set apart in its holiness from the limitations and relativity of human righteousness. There can be no cover up. The least noticeable of sins and least hurtful of failures must be justified as truly as the cross of Christ itself, the very basis of justification.

Hence justification is a work accomplished through the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ as proclaimed in

the evangel: Christ died for our sins, was entombed and roused the third day.

ROMANS 3:25

In Romans 3:25 the significance of justification in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus is extended to the matter of *propitiation.* Justification is God's righteous dealing with sin, but Romans 1:18 directed attention not only to human irreverence and unrighteousness, but to divine indignation because of human unrighteousness as well. The problem is not human sin only, but also that barrier which human sin has effected between the Creator and His creation. It is in view of God's indignation that Paul now writes concerning Christ Jesus:

. . . Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter, through faith in His blood, for a display of His righteousness . . . .

Paul introduces this expansion of the revelation of the righteousness of God by reference to Christ as the Antitype of the propitiatory shelter (AV, "mercy seat"). This was the lid over the coffer of the testimony (AV, "ark of the covenant") where Yahweh kept appointment with Israel and spoke to them (*cf* Exodus 25:17-22). It was a meeting place for God and the human, but greatly constricted by limitations which must not be carried over to what Paul is saying here concerning Christ Jesus. The Antitype does not possess every characteristic of the type. God's righteousness is not *manifested* in the propitiatory shelter over the coffer of the testimony in the holy of holies, but it is made manifest in Christ Jesus as the Propitiatory shelter. Even as justification through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus is real and complete and reflects the high standard of divine righteousness, so also what Paul now says about Christ as the Propitiatory directs attention to the perfect

righteousness of God. Through Jesus Christ we have access to God apart from His indignation simply because there is no indignation where there is justification. Hence, we see that the word "propitiation" is used figuratively. It speaks of approach to God entirely apart from divine indignation. The death of animals and spattering of blood, the work of the chief priest who comes into the holy place where the propitiatory shelter was—all of these details are now settled in Christ Who died for our sins.

In Romans 3:24,25, Paul connects justification with propitiation in order to draw attention to the types which spoke of the need for blood to be shed for approach to God apart from indignation. But in Romans 5:1,2, he will connect justification with our new relationship with God in more literal terms. Note the similarities and parallels between these two passages in Romans:

1. *Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus,*
2. *Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter, through faith in His blood . . . .*

1. *Being, then, justified by faith,*
2. *we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand . . . .*

The evangel of God concerning His Son announces the end of sin and the end of divine indignation. These consummations will be realized throughout the universe when God is All is all, but, in spirit, they have attained to us who are believing (1 Cor.10:11).

JUSTIFICATION AND PROPITIATION

Let us repeat the two results of Jesus Christ's faith which are presented in Romans 3:24,25, for purposes of comparison and meditation:

1. We are being justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.
2. God purposed Christ Jesus for a Propitiatory shelter, through faith in His blood.

The words "being justified" stand in parallel to the term "Propitiatory (shelter)." These have reference to the benefits of justification and propitiation which are received by believers apart from their works. The phrase "in God's grace" is set in parallel to the words "God purposed." These terms direct attention to the operations of God, Whose righteousness is being made manifest. Finally, the two phrases beginning with the word "through" concern Christ Jesus as the One Who died for sinners.

The blessing of justification is a work of God's grace centered in Christ Jesus. The blessing of Christ Jesus as the Propitiatory is an operation of God's purpose also centered in Christ Jesus. In both cases God is the Source, the first and determinative Cause of what we have received. And in both cases Christ Jesus is the Channel, the only Means through which God brings His blessings to us.

THAT WHICH GOD PURPOSES

The Greek verb rendered "purpose" is used only three times in Paul's letters. According to its root elements it means BEFORE-PLACE. The question is whether Paul was thinking of God placing Christ as the Propitiatory before our sight (as suggested by the AV rendering), which would accord well with the word "display," or did he intend the sense of God placing the ultimate result before His own mind.[1]

Paul *purposed* to come to Rome, but had been prevented from carrying out this idea of his mind (Rom. 1:13). In Ephesians 1:9 we learn that God has *purposed*

1. *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.236.

to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ. It seems most likely that here in Romans 3:25 Paul also is referring to God's goal which He has kept before His mind. God purposed Christ Jesus to be a Propitiatory shelter. Unlike human purposes, when the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will purposes to bring about an ultimate result, it is certain of fulfillment.

FORESHADOWS OF PROPITIATION

In the ancient Scriptures, mainly directed to God's chosen nation of Israel, the subject of propitiation is presented by a Hebrew word meaning *shelter* (or, *cover*). Its first occurrence provides a striking illustration of its scriptural sense. When Yahweh, in His grace, exempted Noah from His intention of wiping out humanity off the surface of the ground (Gen.6:6, 8), He gave him instructions for the building of the ark (Gen.6:14-16). This place of deliverance from the effects of divine indignation was to be *sheltered* both inside and outside with "a sheltering coat" (Gen.6:14). The word "sheltered" is translated from the same Hebrew verb as that translated "make a propitiatory shelter" elsewhere, and "sheltering coat" is from the same Hebrew noun as that rendered "propitiatory shelter" in Job 33:24. "As this coating, which Noah put on the ark, *sheltered* it from the action of the elements, so Christ's propitiatory sacrifice *shelters* from divine indignation."[2]

DIVINE INDIGNATION

God's indignation is generally restrained because of His "kindness and forbearance and patience" (Rom.2:4). It is expressed in the distancing of humanity from God. Paul speaks of God *giving* humanity *over* to the effects of their

2. A. E. Knoch: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.46, p.221.

irreverence and unrighteousness (Rom.1:24,26,28). Adam and Eve were *driven out* from the garden where God had communicated with them (Gen.3:23,24). Cain was cursed in such a way that he was driven from the home of his parents and concealed from Yahweh's presence (Gen.4:13,14). But humanity in Noah's day was "wiped out" by God in His indignation (Gen.6:7; 7:4,23), except for Noah and his family who were *sheltered* from the deluge.

This was a matter of grace (Gen.6:8). The Scripture says of Noah that he was a righteous man who was flawless in his generation and who walked with God (Gen.6:9), and God even said to him, "I have seen you righteous before Me in this generation" (Gen.7:1). But in Noah's flesh he could not be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20). No matter how faithful Noah was in following the instructions of Yahweh and thus adhering to His word, God could not see him as righteous apart from seeing him in His mind in the distant future, justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. Since God's sight is intensely accurate, we may be sure that this is what God was viewing when He said that He was seeing Noah righteous. Yet, in Noah's day, this was a matter of divine favor granted to Noah alone in his generation (though extended, in Noah, to his immediate family). Noah's place of shelter from God's indignation was in view of his future position of justification through the faith of Jesus Christ.

CLOTHING OF SKINS

But even before Noah, Scripture speaks of God's provision of a shelter for sinners from divine indignation, although it does not use the word "shelter," but rather a similar term with its own distinctive connotations. In Genesis 3:21 we read that "Yahweh Elohim made for Adam and his wife tunics of skin and *clothed* them." This, too, was a matter of grace, for Adam and Eve had committed the most

serious of sins in disobeying the instruction of God. They were deserving of immediate death. They themselves felt their vulnerability and were fearful in their shame before their Creator. Yet He provided that which *clothed* them, a covering which gave temporary protection and comfort in their fearful situation and which put a finality to the evidence already given in Genesis 3 that God's indignation would not be fully expressed in their day.

In this earliest picture of divine shelter from indignation with a view toward divine deliverance, there is a key point that is not brought out in Genesis 7 with regard to Noah. It is not even brought out directly here, but the intimation is clear that animals had to be slain, and blood shed, so that Adam and Eve could be clothed with skins. And this was done by Yahweh Elohim Himself.

GOD'S HEEDING OF ABEL'S PRESENT

The shedding of blood is also implied in Genesis 4 when Abel brought a present to Yahweh of "some firstlings of his flock and their fat portions" (Gen.4:4). Cain's present lacked the shedding of blood and represented his trust in his own labors by the sweat of his brow. But, in faith, Abel followed the pattern set before his parents by Yahweh Himself. The result was "Yahweh gave *heed* to Abel and his approach present. But to Cain and his approach present He did not give heed" (Gen.4:4,5). By the word "heed" we see a parallel to Noah finding grace in the eyes of Yahweh. God looked at Abel as he will be in Christ Jesus, Who would die for him, Whom God was even then purposing for a Propitiatory. Indeed, in accord with the testimony of Jesus Himself, Abel was seen as righteous (Matt.23:35). By heeding Abel's approach present, Yahweh Elohim viewed him as he would be in Christ. God did not look at Cain that way, even though he too will ultimately enjoy the justifying of his life and be constituted righteous.

Abel died, not being requited with the promises, but perceiving them ahead and saluting them, and avowing that he was a stranger and expatriate on the earth (*cf* Heb.11: 4, 13). But Cain suffered the effects of divine indignation in being sent away from his father's home, where God's revelation was preserved and His operation of deliverance was then centered as it involved Adam and Eve and the new son, Seth. Beyond this as well, Cain continued to hoard for himself indignation in the day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God (Rom.2:3-5).

PROPITIATION UNDER THE LAW

As already noted, in Romans 3:25 Paul uses the Greek word, *[h]ilastêrion,* which, in this exact form, appears only one more time in the Greek Scriptures. That is in Hebrews 9:5, in reference to the lid over the coffer of the testimony (AV, ark of the covenant). This was first described in Exodus 25:17-22 where Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying: "I will *keep appointment* with you there, and I will *speak* with you above the propitiatory shelter from between the two cherubim which are over the coffer of the testimony of all which I am instructing you for the sons of Israel." Later Yahweh instructed Moses concerning Aaron as the chief priest, ". . . he must not come at just any time into the holy place, inside the curtain before the propitiatory shelter which is on the coffer so that he may not die, for in the cloud shall I appear over the propitiatory shelter" (Lev.16:2). This was a place of *appointment* where Yahweh *spoke* to Israel through a chosen individual.

TO MAKE A PROPITIATORY SHELTER

The CV uses "make a propitiatory shelter" for the Hebrew verb which is often rendered "make an atonement" in the AV. The blood of the offerings for *approach* and concerning *sin* was spattered before the propitiatory shelter (the

lid of the coffer) in order to "make a propitiatory shelter" for the sinner (Lev.16). The types speak of both the offering and the blood which make the shelter from God's indignation, as well as the place where this is made, using various forms of the same Hebrew word, essentially meaning "shelter." John identifies Christ as the Antitype of the offerings that made a propitiatory shelter when he wrote (using a slightly different word than Paul used in Romans 3:25), "He is the propitiatory shelter concerned with our sins, yet not concerned with ours only, but concerned with the whole world also" (1 John 2:2).

Each term and detail mentioned in the types of the ancient Scriptures has its fulfillment in Christ Jesus, in the suffering on the cross and the shedding of His blood for sinners and in the new relationship with God which results. In the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners, we find that which ultimately puts an end to divine indignation.

THROUGH THE FAITH IN HIS BLOOD

The faith which is the channel for this great achievement of approach to God apart from His indignation is the faith of Jesus Christ which Paul had previously brought to our attention in Romans 3:22. Our faith could no more put an end to divine indignation than it could achieve justification, though indeed God graciously reckons righteousness to us who are believing and opens the way of peace. In pouring out His soul at Golgotha, Christ Jesus was holding fast in faith to the testimony of God's Word concerning the way to righteousness and peace. What God had set before His mind, before His heart, as He dealt with Adam and Eve, and with Cain and Abel, and with corrupt humanity and Noah, and with Israel in the wilderness and throughout their history, was sharply etched upon the heart of our Lord. This testimony always concerned blood. That is, it always spoke of what God had in view for His beloved Son.

It always had in view that God would spare not His own Son, and that Christ Jesus would die, and that then He would be roused (*cf* Rom.8:32,34). Did our gracious Lord not hold fast in faith to this testimony as He held steadfastly to that which was set before Him in God's Word? "And Yahweh Elohim made for Adam and his wife tunics of skin and clothed them" (Gen.3:21). Abel "brought some firstlings of his flock and their fat portions. And Yahweh gave heed to Abel and his approach present" (Gen.4:4). "If his approach present is an ascent offering from the herd, a flawless male is it which he shall bring near. To the opening of the tent of appointment shall he bring it near for acceptance on his behalf before Yahweh. He will support his hand on the head of the ascent offering so that it will be accepted for him to make a propitiatory shelter over him" (Lev.1:3,4). Aaron "will slay the hairy goat of the sin offering which is for the people, and bring its blood inside the curtain and do with its blood just as he did with the blood of the young bull, and spatter it on the propitiatory shelter and before the propitiatory shelter. Thus he will make a propitiatory shelter over the holy place because of the uncleanness of the sons of Israel and because of their transgressions, for all their sins" (Lev.16:15,16). "Yet He was wounded because of our transgressions, and crushed because of our depravities" (Isa.53:5).

Through His faith in His blood, Christ Jesus has been made to be the Propitiatory, the Place where there is access to God in peace, apart from all indignation. This is what God has purposed. It has been graciously granted to us in spirit, and ultimately all will enjoy the reconciliation and peace which comes through the blood of the cross (Col. 1:20). What glorious righteousness is this which God has put on display for us who are believing! To Him be the glory Who has drawn us to Himself through the faith of His beloved Son! D.H.H.

Contents:

193 Editorial
195 The Return of Jacob
205 Division and Reunion
211 God's Righteousness Displayed
219 Through Faith in His Blood
229 "Nothing . . . is Now Condemnation"

SEPTEMBER, 2006

Volume XCVII **Number 5**

Concordant Version of

1 Chronicles through Job

(1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job)

Concerning the books included in this fascicle of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, the book of Job is associated with Psalms and Proverbs in the Hebrew canon. Esther is one of five small scrolls, associated as a group; the others are: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations and Ecclesiastes. Ezra (including Nehemiah) appears along with Daniel in a final section of historical writings, concluding with Chronicles.

1 and 2 Chronicles, are treated as one book in Hebrew under the name "Words [or Annals] of the Days" (*cf* 1 Kings 14:19,29). The history is no mere repetition of the books of Samuel and Kings, but a carefully prepared commentary on the same events as they appeared to the eye of Yahweh. Many events which are assigned to human instrumentalities are here traced back to Yahweh. The purposes and counsels of the heart are unveiled in these divine annals.

Ezra and **Nehemiah** are also to be considered as one book under the name "Ezra" which means help. This is the perfect inscription to the history of Judah's restoration to their land and city and temple.

Esther is a marvelous manifestation of the care of Yahweh over His people when their sun is set and they are in the power of their enemies. Then He becomes their guiding star, shaping their way by means of a providence which never escapes His control. By the simplest and most insignificant means He turns the fell designs of their enemies into a source of blessing.

Like all the scrolls which are designated by the name of a man, the meaning of the name, **Job,** is the index to its contents. It means "Enmity." Job is a concrete example of the work of the enemy. The philosophy of evil is discussed to a finish. His four friends make evil the consequence of sin. Job maintains his innocence. Yet Yahweh vindicates him and blesses him far beyond what would have been possible apart from the affliction he had endured. Evil is definitely designed by God to work out His beneficent purpose. Thus the philosophy of evil and enmity is fully elucidated in this book, as its title indicates.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 2006
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-SEVEN

EDITORIAL

ISRAEL is to be blessed and be a blessing to all the other families of the ground (Gen.12:2,3). This was in view in Jeremiah 3:17 and 4:2 just before the chosen nation was deported to Babylon, as pointed out in the article entitled "Division and Reunion" (p.205).

But in the meantime there continues to be much conflict between the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the other nations, especially those which surround the promised land. That was reflected early on in the confrontations between Jacob and Laban, which, as Brother Knoch suggests, was part of a foreshadowing of Israel's history (p.199). Such conflicts come to a head at the conclusion of this present wicked eon with wars and multiplied lawlessness, culminating with "the abomination of desolation, which is declared through Daniel the prophet," when the faithful must flee to the mountains (Matt.24:3-22).

These things will come. But when the apostle Paul spoke of these very events in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12, and of the day of the Lord coming as a thief in the night in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3, he did not speak of fleeing, but rather sought to console and edify. The context of Thessalonians differs significantly from that of Matthew 24 and 25. We are to be ambitious to be quiet, and to be engaged in our own affairs, and to be working with our hands, that we may be walking respectably toward those outside and may have need of nothing (1 Thess.4:11,12; *cp* 2 Thess.3:12; 1 Tim.2:1-4).

In times like the present when great turmoil rages in the Middle East between the very peoples of Jeremiah's

days, we must take heed of Paul's entreaty not to be quickly shaken from our mind or alarmed (2 Thess.2:2). We, being of the day, are to be sober, putting on the cuirass (upper body armor) of faith and love, and the helmet, the expectation of salvation. For God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for our sakes (1 Thess.5:8, 9).

Unlike Israel, our realm is inherent in the heavens (Phil. 3:20), and the evangel which we have accepted is wholly centered in grace and is not dependent on our works in any way whatsoever (Eph.2:8, 9). Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus (Rom.8:1), as we are reminded once again by Brother Coram's article in this issue (p.229). The display of God's righteousness which has been set before us in the evangel (p.211) is critical for our peace of mind and encouragement in faith through the troubles and struggles of our lives. Our faith is built on what Christ has done in His faith and faithfulness (p.219).

It is because of the evangel that he brought, that message of power and holy spirit which imparts *much assurance* (1 Thess.1:5) to our hearts, that Paul can speak of us as "sons of the light and sons of the day" (1 Thess.5:5). We wait and watch for the rescue described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, but we do so with ever sharpened faith that God is working all together for good (Rom.8:28). It is only because of the evangel and our believing of it that Paul's advice in 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22 can be coherent and, indeed, logical in times such as the present. "Be rejoicing always. Be praying unintermittingly. In everything be giving thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

"Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace continually by every means. The Lord be with you all!" (2 Thess.3:16).

D.H.H.

THE RETURN OF JACOB
(Genesis 31:1-55)

31 +**Now** [7]**Jacob**[0] |**heard** `the **words of Laban's sons,** › **saying**¯**: Jacob has taken** `**all** [w]**that** belonged **to our father; and from** [w]**what** was **our father's, he has** [d]**established** `**all** ·**this** ·**massive** wealth. [2] **And Jacob** |**saw** `**Laban's face, and behold,** ~**it**[n] **was not with him as heretofore.** [3] +**Then Yahweh** |**said to Jacob: Return to** the **land of your fathers and to your kindred.** + **I shall** [b]**be with you.**

[4] +**So Jacob** |**sent** word **and** |**called** › **Rachel and** › **Leah** out into **the field to his flocks.** [5] + **He** |**said to them: I** have **seen**| `**your father's face that** ~**it**[n] **is not** toward **me as heretofore.** +**But** the **Elohim of my father, He has** [b]**been with me.** [6] **And you yourselves know that I have served** `**your father** [i]**with all my vigor.** [7] **And your father, he has cheated** [i] **me and changed** `**my hire ten times.** +**Yet Elohim** did **not** [g]**allow him to** [c]**bring evil** [wi]**on me.** [8] **If he** |**said thus:** The **speckled shall become your hire,** +**then all the flock**s gave **birth** to **speckled** young. +**But if he** |**said thus:** The **striped shall become your hire,** +**then all the flock**s gave **birth** to **striped** young. [9] +**So Elohim** has |**despoiled your father** `of his **cattle and** |**given** them **to me.**

[10] + **It** |[b]**occurred in** the **mating**¯ **season** of **the flock**s +**that I** |**lifted** up **my eyes, and behold, I** |**saw in** a **dream** that **the he-goats** [7]**and the rams**[0] ·mount**ing up on the small cattle** were **striped, speckled and dappled.** [11] **And** a **messenger of the** One**, Elohim,** |**said to me in** the **dream: Jacob! And I** |[sa]**replied:** [bd]**Here I** am. [12] +**Then he** |**said:**

Lift up **your eyes** *pr*now **and see** that **all the he-goats** *7*and **the rams**0 mount**ing up on the small cattle** are **striped, speckled and dappled; for I have seen** `all *w*that **Laban** has **done**| **to you.** 13 **I** am **the** One, **El,** *7*Who **appeared to you** *i*at0 **Bethel, where you anointed** the **monument** *7*and*ncs*-**where you vowed** a **vow to Me. Now get up,** go **forth from** ·this ·**land and return to** the **land of your kindred.** 7+ **I shall** *b*be **with you.**0

14 + **Rachel and Leah** |**answered and** |**said to him:** ›**Have we** *fr*still any **portion** +**or allotment in** the **house**hold **of our father?** 15 **Are we not reckoned** *7*as*nc* **foreigners** ›**by him? For he has sold us and, moreover,** has |**devoured,** yea **devoured**– `the **money** he got for **us!** 16 **For all the riches** of **which Elohim despoiled** *f* **our father, they** belong **to us and to our sons. And now, all** *w*that **Elohim has said to you, do** it.

17 +**So Jacob** |**got up and** |**lifted** `**his sons and** `**his wives on the camels.** 18 + **He** |**drove** off `**all his cattle and** `**all his goods** *w* **he had gotten,** the **cattle of his acquisition** *w*that **he had gotten in Padan-Syria to set** out **to his father Isaac,** toward the **land of Canaan.**

19 +**Now** when **Laban had gone to shear** `**his flock,** + **Rachel** |**stole** `**the household idols** *w*that belonged **to her father.** 20 **And Jacob** |**stole** `the **heart of Laban the Syrian** *on*by no**t** –**telling** › **him that he** was runn**ing away.** 21 +**So he** ran |**away, he** +**with all** *w* **he** ›**had;** + **he** |**got up and** |**crossed** `**the Stream and** *pl*set `**his face** toward **the hill** country **of Gilead.**

22 + › **Laban** *7*the **Syrian**0 **was** |**told** *i*on **the third day that Jacob had** run **away.** 23 + **He** |**took with him** `*7*all0 **his brothers and** |**pursued after him** for a distance of **seven days'** *way*journey; + **he** |**caught up** `with **him in the hill** country **of Gilead.** 24 +**But Elohim** |**came to Laban the Syrian in** a **dream** by ·**night and** |**said to him: Be** on **your guard lest you** |**speak with Jacob** *f* **good** *fr*or **bad.**

25 +**Then Laban** |**overtook** `**Jacob** +**when Jacob had pitched** `**his tent in** the **hill** country**; and Laban** too **pitched** `~**his tent**~ **in the hill** country **of Gilead.** 26 + **Laban** |**said to Jacob: What have you done** +**that you** |**stole** `**my heart and** |**led** away `**my daughters like captives**| taken by the **sword!** 27 **Why** did **you** have to –**hide and** |**stealthily** › run **away**– `from **me and not** –**tell** › **me,** +**that I might see you off** *i*with **rejoicing and** *i* **songs,** *i*with **tambourine and** *i* **harp!** 28 **And you** did **not let me** › **kiss my sons and** › **my daughters. Now, you** *d*acted– –**unwisely.** 29 **My hand** would *is*have › the **disposition to** *d*inflict **evil** *wi*on =**you.** +**But yesternight** the **Elohim of your father, He** |*sa*spoke **to me** › **saying**–**: Be** on **your guard** *f*not to **speak**– **with Jacob** *f* **good** *fr*or **bad.** 30 +**Yet now, you** *go*left to **go**–, *t*since **you longed** for**—longingly**–**—for your father's house.** But **why have you stolen** `**my** household **gods?**

31 + **Jacob** |**answered and** |**said to Laban:** *t*Indeed, **I was fearful.** *t* **I** *sa*thought, **otherwise you might snatch** `**your daughters** away **from** *wi* **me** *7*and `**all** that is **mine**0**.** 32 Yet **with whom**soever **you should find** `**your** household **gods he shall not live.** In **front of our brothers identify for you**r-self **what** is **with me, and take** what belongs **to you.** +**But Jacob** did **not know that Rachel, she had stolen them.**

33 +**So Laban** |**came in**to **Jacob's tent and** *i* **Leah's tent and** *i* **the two maidservants' tent,** +**but he** did **not find** it. + **He** came |**forth from Leah's tent and** |**entered** *i* **Rachel's tent.** 34 +**Now Rachel had taken** `**the household idols and** |*pl*put **them in**side ·her **camel's saddle basket.** + **She was sitting on them** +**while Laban** went |**feeling** `over **all the tent, and he found not**hing. 35 + **She** |**said to her father: Do not let** there **be** *hot*anger **in** the **eyes of my lord,** +**that I am not** |**able to rise** *f*in **your presence; for** the **way of women** is ›**on me.** +**So** *7*Laban0 |**searched** *7*in **all the tent**0**,** +**but** did **not find** `**the household idols.**

36 +**So** › **Jacob** grew |*hot*angry **and** |**contended** *i*with **Laban.**

+ **Jacob** ˡ**retorted and** ˡ**said to Laban: What** is **my transgression? What** is **my sin that you dashed after me?** 37 Now **that you** went ⁻**feeling** `over **all my furnishings, what** *f*of **all** the **furnishing of your house have you found?** *pl*ˡ**Put** it **thus** in **front of my brothers and your brothers, and** *c*ˡ**let them** ˡ**arbitrate between us two.**

38 *this*ˡ**Now,** for **twenty years I** have been **with you. Your ewes and your she-goats have not miscarried.** + **I have not eaten** the **rams of your flock.** 39 **I have not brought to you** any animal **torn to pieces; I´** ˡ**expiated** for **it. You** ˡ**sought** to exact **it from my hand,** be it **stolen**ˡ by **day** +**or stolen**ˡ by **night.** 40 **I have** *b*ˡ**been** where the **drought devoured me** *i*ˡ**by day, and** the **ice** *i*ˡ**by night; and my sleep** would ˡ**flit from my eyes.**

41 *this*ˡ**Now,** for **twenty years I** ›ˡ**have** been **in your house**hold; **I have served you fourteen years** *i*ˡ**for your two daughters, and six years** *i*ˡ**for your flocks; and you** have ˡ**changed** `**my hire ten times.** 42 **Unless** the **Elohim of my father,** the **Elohim of Abraham, and** the **Awe** Inspiring One **of Isaac had** *b*ˡ**been** ›**with me,** *t* **you would now have sent me** away **emptyhanded.** But **Elohim saw** `**my humiliation and** `the **weariness of my palms, and He** ˡ**reproved** you **yesternight.**

43 + **Laban** ˡ**answered and** ˡ**said to Jacob: The daughters** are **my daughters, and the sons my sons;** + **the flocks** are **my flocks, and all** *w*ˡ**that you** are **seeing** here**, it** belongs **to me!** +**As for my daughters, what** could **I** ˡ**do today for them or for their sons** *w*ˡ**that they have borne?** 44 + **Now** do *go*ˡ**come;** do **let us contract** a **covenant, I and you;** + **it will** *b*ˡ**be** › a **witness between me and** *bt* **you.**

7 +**Yet Jacob** ˡ**said to him: Behold,** there **is no one with us; see, Elohim** is **Witness.***0* 45 **And Jacob** ˡ**took** a **stone and** ˡ**raised it up** as a **monument.** 46 **And Jacob** ˡ**said to his brothers: Pick up stones!** +**So they** ˡ**took stones and** ˡ*d*ˡ**made** a **mound. And they** were going to ˡ**eat there** *on*ˡ**by the mound.** 47 + **Laban** ˡ**called** › **it Yegar-sahadutha, and Jacob,**

he ˡ**called** › **it Gal-ed.** 48 +**Then Laban** ˡ**said** *z*ˡ**to Jacob:***0* ˙**This** ˙**mound** is **witness between me and** *bt* **you today. Therefore he called its name Gal-ed,** 49 **and** ˙**Mizpah;** *w*ˡ**because he** ˡ**said: May Yahweh** keep **watch between me and** *bt* **you** *t*ˡ**when we are** ˡ**concealed,** each **man from his associate.** 50 **If you** ˡ**humiliate** `**my daughters,** +**or if you** ˡ**take** other **wives** *on*ˡ**besides my daughters—**there **is no one with us. See, Elohim** is **witness between me and** *bt* **you.**

51 **And Laban** ˡ**said to Jacob: Behold** ˙**this** ˙**mound, and behold the monument** *w*ˡ**that I directed** to be set up **between me and** *bt* **you,** 52 **witness** is ˙**this** ˙**mound, and witness** is **the monument** that **I´ should not** ˡ**pass** `beyond ˙**this** ˙**mound to you, and** that **you´ should not** ˡ**pass** `beyond ˙**this** ˙**mound and** `˙**this** ˙**monument to me to** do **evil.** 53 The **Elohim of Abraham and** the **Elohim of Nahor,** the **Elohim of their father, shall judge between us.**

+**So Jacob** ˡ**swore** *i*ˡ**by** the **Awe** Inspiring One **of his father Isaac.** 54 **And Jacob** ˡ**sacrificed** a **sacrifice** *i*ˡ**on** the **hill, and he** ˡ**called** › **his brothers to eat bread.** +**So they** ˡ**ate bread and** ˡ**lodged** by night *i*ˡ**on** the **hill.** 55 + **Laban** *c*ˡ**rose** ˡ**early in** the **morning;** + **he** ˡ**kissed** › **his sons and** › **his daughters and** ˡ**blessed** `**them.** +**Then Laban** ˡ**went and** ˡ**returned to his** *ri*ˡ**place.**

JACOB'S RETURN TO THE LAND

JACOB'S HISTORY from the time he was exiled from the land to Padan Aram, to the time of his return to Beth-El, may be a foreshadowing of the course of Israel from its going down to Egypt to its return and conquest. The points of agreement are the two exiles, in which they multiplied greatly, yet were in hard bondage; the sudden escape and pursuit by Laban and Pharaoh, the wilderness sojourn and the living in booths; the destruction of Shechem and the conquest of the Canaanites; the return to Beth-El and the

worship of El in the future. This may help us to see why some seemingly needless things occur, such as the massacre of the Shechemites. This was only a preview of the outcasting of the Canaanites.

GOD'S TIME

When Elohim's time had come for Jacob to return to his father Isaac, He influenced all the parties concerned, except Laban, in his favor, and Laban's sons are jealous, for Jacob had taken what they deemed to be theirs. Even Laban is disgruntled. And they had good grounds. Then Yahweh Himself gives Jacob orders to return. Jacob's wives, with undue partiality, are indignant at the treatment he had received. Then Jacob has a dream, and the El of Beth-El reappears to him and bids him return to the land of his kindred. All hearts are prepared, so that Jacob is not hindered in the least. Yet he still insists on stealing away secretly! Nothing is said of his deceptive tricks. Jacob is justified for failings, however reprehensible personally, which are in accord with God's purpose.

So Jacob is "stealing" away without Laban's knowledge, and stealing Laban's heart (Gen.31:20), and Rachel even stole his household gods!

THE RETURN ROUTE

It will help us to locate Padan, Syria, if we note carefully the incidents which mark his return. First he crossed "the stream." This can hardly be any other than the Euphrates. Its upper reaches could probably be forded. It is interesting to note that this stream forms the boundary of the land given to Abram (Gen.15:18), so that, as soon as he crossed it, he was in the land of promise. As he was running away, he reached the hill country of Gilead, in northern Palestine proper, in ten days. As the western stretches of the rivers there run in deep gorges, he would keep well to the

east until he came to the Jabbok (32:22). Thence he went to Succoth (33:17), and across the Jordan, to Shechem (33:19), in Canaan. After the affair of Dinah, he dwelt for a while at Beth-El (35:1). Later, passing by Bethlehem, he came back to Isaac, his father, at Mamre, or Hebron, where he buried him. Thence, later, he left the land for Egypt.

LABAN'S PURSUIT

Humanly speaking, Laban and all his brethren could easily have caused Jacob much trouble, even if Jacob did have three days' start. And, indeed, Laban caught up with Jacob in seven days, for he had no women or cattle to slow down his speed. So Elohim, in the last night, intervenes in a dream with a threat, warning him, "Be on your guard lest you speak with Jacob good or bad" (v.24). Both of them pitch their tents in the hill country of Gilead (v.25). As Laban is not allowed to harm Jacob, he can only eulogize himself and take credit for not doing evil. Only one charge is he able to press, and that is that Jacob had stolen his gods, or subjectors.

LABAN'S GODS

Laban speaks of two sets of subjectors, or gods. The Elohim of Jacob's father, Isaac, spoke to him, warning him not to harm Jacob (31:29). Now he claims that Jacob has stolen his own elohim. In both cases it is plural. In such an important matter, this should not be concealed in a true translation. Laban evidently had more than one "god" or subjector. Later these are called household gods, or *teraphim,* (reLAXers). This stem *rph* with an *a* added, would mean *heal*, so we may infer that they affected the health of their worshipers. They seem to have been shaped like a human (1 Sam.19:13-16). They might be either a carving in wood or a molten image of metal, such as the Danites took from the house of Micah, for their own priest (Judges 17,18).

Under the circumstances, this was a very serious matter, so Jacob threatened the offender with death.

RACHEL'S GODS

Rachel had stolen her father's gods. We never read of them again, but they probably were among the foreign Elohim which Jacob buried under the terebinth which was at Shechem (Gen.35:4). We know that she was so determined and desperate that she traded for Reuben's mandrakes in order to conceive a son, but without results. Is she now trying another method to make sure that a second son will be "added" (Joseph)? When Laban sought the gods, she had an opportunity to get rid of them. Instead of that she tries another trick, in order to keep them. Poor Rachel! Yahweh does answer her prayer by giving her another son, but, to her he became *Ben oni*, a son of *sighing*, whom Jacob named Benjamin, *Son of the Right Hand*, and it cost her her life.

As Laban was such a smart man, it is not easy to see why he wanted these gods back. They evidently were no match for Jacob's. They had not brought him riches or security, while Jacob's Elohim had given him both health and wealth, and had kept Laban from harming him. And now they did not even seem to know that he was hunting for them, although Laban probably rummaged through everything in the tent, even the women's private sections. Why did not they do like the Elohim of Jacob, and cry out when he came so near to them? Rachel's lying excuse was too much for them! How could she hide and harbor such unsatisfactory symbols? This should reveal to us the heart of Rachel and the cause of her disappointments. She lacked faith in Yahweh Elohim!

JACOB'S DEFENSE

The failure of Laban to find his gods gave Jacob a splendid opportunity to give him a piece of his mind, by elaborating on his heavy hardships while in Laban's service. He probably was an excellent shepherd and kept up the appearances of outward righteousness. But he confessed none of the devious devices which had practically robbed his father-in-law of most of his possessions. Yet he did acknowledge his faith in the Elohim of his father, Whom he calls the Awe of Isaac, and the Elohim of Abraham, and confesses that he would have been robbed of all that he had gained apart from His care and protection, which had been manifested to Laban by the warning he had received the night before.

LABAN'S LAME REJOINDER

Laban is powerfully impressed, even though he seeks to save face by claiming all as his property. So he proposes a covenant. But there was no one there to witness it. The Septuagint adds here the words of Jacob: "And saying is he to him, 'Behold! No one is with us. Behold! Elohim is Witness between me and you." In order to have some durable memento of the transaction, Jacob set up a stone, as he had done at Beth-El, more than twenty years before. Stones are abundant in Palestine, and are the most durable natural objects obtainable. I found plenty of stones at Beth-El thousands of years later. In order to include all his brethren in this covenant, they, too, gathered stones and made a mound.

GAL-ED — YEGAR-SAHADUTHA

After both parties had piled up a mound, they used it as a table, in order to have fellowship in eating and drinking, which, in itself, was a certification of peace. This mound was to be the visible evidence of the peace pact between them. They both called the mound a Mound-of-Witness or Testimony (*Gal-ed* in Hebrew, *Yegar-sahadutha* in Syr-

iac). Thus they were mutually satisfied to be rid of each other. Therefore Laban added another name *Mizpah*, meaning Watch; with the explanation, "May Yahweh keep watch between me and you when we are concealed, each man, from his associate." Laban evidently had more confidence in Jacob's God than in Jacob himself. In the course of time, Gal-ed, or Gilead, was used of a large district east of the Jordan.

A.E.K.

JACOB

The life of Jacob is perplexing to many. Looked at in askance at the commencement of the life of faith, it heightens in meaning and beauty, acquiring increasing force and value as experience expands and life's sun nears the horizon. Although, by reason of low standards in morals and practice, his biography may at first seem less entrancing than that of the other patriarchs, yet it is second to none as concerns the splendid triumphs achieved through grace.

The indomitable energy of the flesh displayed in Jacob seems to detract from the attractiveness of the account given of his life in Genesis. Yet this very exhibition of weakness lends the story an endearing charm. Men like Joseph are rare visitors among mortals. Extraordinary characters like Abraham, whose faith at times soars in dazzling empyrean heights, at times wades in miry clay, appear more frequently in the ranks of the redeemed, yet they also are exceptional. But one of Jacob's stamp—following his own inclinations; preferring paltry schemes of his to the flaming splendor of God's glory; involving himself in sorrows and tribulations; and then suddenly mounting up as an eagle to soar consciously and steadily toward the distant orb of perfect light, and from that eminence glance backward upon a succession of wasted years, and feel the pang of keen remorse—the remorse of what could have been—is akin to the vast mass of believers.

Crystalized in his experience are the sorrows and struggles and weaknesses which beset the path of the majority of us. Every word of such a story is instinct with life, and our hearts throb a tribute of loving gratitude to the God of Love Who has given us such a tale of matchless grace.

V. Gelesnoff

DIVISION AND REUNION
(Jeremiah 3:1-4:2)

YAHWEH'S PROPHECY to Jerusalem continues in the third chapter of Jeremiah in view of their trust in Egypt, which will not prosper. Yahweh announces that He has rejected that nation,

3 ›**Saying**–, [bd]**If** a **man should dismiss** `**his wife,**
And she goes away **from** `**him and**
becomes another man's,
Should he return to her [fr]**again?**
Would **not** ˙**that** ˙**land be** ˡ**polluted,** yea **polluted**–**?**
⁺**Yet you´ have** committed **prostitution**
with **many associates,**
And would you **return**– **to Me? averring** is **Yahweh.**
2 **Lift your eyes** [on]**to** the **ridges and see;**
Where have you not been ravished?
On the path**ways you have sat** waiting **for them**
like an **Arabian in** the **wilderness,**
And you ˡ**pollute** the **land** [i]**with your prostitutions**
and [i] **your evil.**
3 ⁺**Hence** the **showers were** ˡ**withheld,**
And the **latter rain, it** did **not** [b]**come;**
⁺**Yet yours has** [b]**been** the **forehead**
of a **prostituting woman;**
You have refused to be put to shame.
4 Did **you not call to Me henceforth:**
My Father, You the **Mentor of my youth,**
5 **Shall He** hold **resentment for** the **eon**
[if]**Or** ˡ**keep** on › **permanently?**

[bd]**This** is the way **you have spoken,**
+Yet you |do all **the evil + you |can.**

The heart of the nation of Israel was after soulish, physical blessings. But when they enjoyed them they failed to acknowledge the Giver, so that He had to withdraw from them. Then they sought what they desired from other sources. As they were bound by covenant to Yahweh Elohim, this was like a woman who is divorced by a man, and marries another. The law of Moses ruled that, in such a case she could not return to her first husband (Deut. 24:1-4). The nation had gone after many false subjectors and had no right to His blessings whatever.

JEREMIAH 3:6-12

6 + **Yahweh |said to me in** the **days of Josiah the king: Have you seen [w]what backsliding Israel has done? She went| on every lofty mountain and › under every flourishing tree and** 7committed **|prostitution~[c] there.** 7 **+Yet I |said: After she** has **done¯ `all these** things **she shall return to Me, +but she has not returned. And her treacherous sister Judah** has **|seen** this. 8 7**She~[cs]** has **|seen +also that due to all** these **causes, [w]when backsliding Israel [m]committed adultery, I sent her** off **and |gave › her `**the **scroll of her divorce. +Yet treacherous| Judah, her sister,** did **not fear, and she´ [mr]also |went** forth **and** committed **|prostitution.** 9 **And it came** to **be, [f]because her prostitutions** seemed so **slight +that she |polluted `the land and** committed **|adultery `**with **·stone and `wood.** 10 **+Yet even in** spite of **all this, her treacherous sister Judah** did **not return to Me [i]with all her heart, but rather [i]with falsity, averring** is **Yahweh.**

11 **+So Yahweh |said to me, Backsliding Israel has [m]shown her soul** more **righteous [f]than treacherous| Judah.** 12 **Go¯ and ¯proclaim `these ·words** to[d] the **north and ¯say:**

Return, backsliding Israel, averring is **Yahweh; I shall not cast My face** down **[i]upon you, for I** am **benign, averring** is **Yahweh; I shall not** hold **resentment for** the **eon.**

The northern portion of the nation, called Israel in distinction to Judah, had been deported nearly a century before and had been deported principally on account of idolatry, which was often accompanied by prostitution, and is compared to it in spirit. Though invited to return to Yahweh, notwithstanding the law against it, Israel would not do so. So she was figuratively divorced and sent away, and is still afar among the nations to this very day.

Judah had witnessed all this, yet had treacherously followed in her footsteps. As Israel never had such an example to deter it, they were not nearly so guilty as treacherous Judah. Hence, about twenty years later, Judah suffered a like fate.

JEREMIAH 3:13-15

13 [y]**Only acknowledge your depravity, that you have transgressed [i]against Yahweh your Elohim and** have **|dispersed your [way]efforts ›among aliens|, under every flourishing tree, and you have not hearkened [i]to My voice, averring** is **Yahweh.**

14 **Return, backsliding sons, averring** is **Yahweh, for I My**self **possess [i] you; + I will take `you, one from** a **city and two from** a **family, and I will bring `you** to **Zion.** 15 **+Then I will give › you shepherds| according** to **My** own **heart, and they will graze `you** with **knowledge and ·intelligence¯.**

Israel as a whole nation will return to the land in the day of Yahweh. They were deported through the northern gateway between the two Lebanon mountain rangers and thence were scattered among the nations. This is still the land approach to Israel from Eurasia. The writer entered the land in this gate on the railway from Turkey. In the future, after the great affliction at the commence-

ment of the so-called millennium, Israel will once more be united to return to their allotment. Their divorce will be annulled, for they will acknowledge the depravity of their past. But, as the land may not be large enough to hold them all, the return seems to be representative, one from a city, or two from a family.

JEREMIAH 3:16,17

16 +**When it comes** to **be that you** |**increase and are fruitful in** the **land, in** ˙**those days, averring** is **Yahweh, they shall no**t fr**longer say,** The **coffer of** the **covenant of Yahweh;** + **it shall not ascend on** their **heart, nor shall they remember** i **it, nor shall they** n**miss** it**, nor shall** another one **be** d**made** fr**again.**

17 **In** ˙**that era they shall call** › **Jerusalem** the **throne of Yahweh, and all the nations will be expectant to**ward **her, for** the **Name of Yahweh** ›**at Jerusalem, and they shall no**t fr**longer walk after** the **obduracy of their** ˙**evil heart.**

The coffer of the covenant contained the stone tablets of the law which Israel never could keep. In the future the commandments, carved in stone, which were hidden from their gaze in this coffer, will be replaced by the fleshly tablet of the heart (Jer.31:33). They will be born of Elohim's spirit, which will enable them to walk in His law, so that they will fulfill it, yet they will forget the hard bondage which it once imposed upon them.

That future time is further fixed by the fact that Jerusalem will be the world capital when all the nations will look to it expectantly.

JEREMIAH 3:18-21

18 **In** ˙**those days** the **house of Judah shall walk** on**with** the **house of Israel, and they shall enter together from** the **land of** the **north** on**to the land which I allotted** `to **your fathers.**

19 + **I My**self **said,** Oh **how I** would |**set you** firmly i**as sons and** |**give** › **you** the **coveted land,** the **stateliest allotment of** the **nations; and I** |**said, You shall call** › **Me: My Father, and you shall not turn** away **from following Me.** 20 7y**However, like~** a **woman** who **is treacherous** f**with her associate, so you have been treacherous** i**with Me, house of Israel, averring** is **Yahweh.**

21 A **sound is heard on** the **ridges,**
Supplicating lamentations of the **sons of Israel,**
For they have c**made** `**their way depraved;**
They have forgotten `**Yahweh their Elohim.**

The rent torn in the undivided nation by the folly of Solomon's son led to disastrous results. They were enemies, and one often harmed the other, apart from the damage done by their common enemies. In the coming day of their return both of them together will be a chastened and regenerated and unified nation.

In the consummation all will be reconciled to God, and He will be their All. They will know Him as Father, and they will be His sons. This is already true of believers today. Having His spirit, they call Abba Father. It will also be true in Israel when they are restored to Yahweh. The final fatherhood is reached by stages, of which the first has begun. This comes to Israel after they lament over their past, and they supplicate to Yahweh their Elohim.

JEREMIAH 3:22-4:2

22 **Return, backsliding sons;**
I shall heal your backslidings!
Behold us; we will arrive ›**before You,**
For You are **Yahweh our Elohim!**

23 so**Surely** › **falsehood** comes **from** the **hills,**
Clamor from the **mountains;**
so**Surely in Yahweh our Elohim** is **Israel's salvation.**

24 +**Yet the shameful** thing**, it has devoured**
`the **labor of our fathers from our youth,**
`Their flocks and `their herds,
`Their sons and `their daughters.
25 **Let us lie** down **in our shame,**
And let our mortification cover us,
For >against Yahweh our Elohim have we sinned,
We and our fathers, from our youth
+ **until ·this ·day,**
And we have not hearkened
*i***to** the **voice of Yahweh our Elohim.**
4 If you l**return,** O **Israel, averring** is **Yahweh,**
l**return to Me,**
And if you l**take away your abominations**
from My presence
And do **not** l**wander** away**,**
2 **And you** l**swear,** As **Yahweh lives, in truth,**
in right **judgment and in righteousness,**
+**Then nations shall bless** them**selves in Him,**
And in Him shall they boast.

The instruction of 3:22, and the "if" of 4:1 must be seen in light of the assurances of 3:17, 18 and the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34. Hence, Yahweh voices words of evangel here in Jeremiah 3:22, when He says He will heal their backslidings, and they will respond, "Behold us." This will be followed by their confession of faith, "You are Yahweh our Elohim," and their acknowledgment of past sins, "For against Yahweh our Elohim have we sinned" (3:25). Finally Yahweh speaks of their own restoration when they will return to Him apart from their abominations and will not wander away (4:1). In association with this Yahweh will fulfill the function for which He has called them, to be a channel of blessing to the other nations: "Then nations shall bless themselves in Him, and in Him shall they boast."

A. E. Knoch

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS DISPLAYED
(Romans 3:25)

GOD HAS PURPOSED that the division and enmity between humanity and Himself caused by sin be removed. This is accomplished through Christ Jesus as the Antitype of the propitiatory shelter ("mercy seat"). The evangel indeed focuses on God and what He accomplishes through His Son, in giving Him for our sins. This emphasis is shown in our present passage of Romans 3:25, arranged as follows:

God purposed [Christ Jesus] for a Propitiatory shelter,
through faith in His blood,
for a display of **His righteousness**
because of the passing over of the penalties of sins
which occurred before
in the **forbearance of God** . . . .

What God had in view from the start was a creation that knows Him truly as He is and thus is glorifying and thanking Him (contrast Rom.1:19-25). For this to be, there had to be sin and mortality with all its affliction and stubbornness, so that God might display His righteousness, and not that alone, but His wisdom and power and His love. God's love is that love which gives and which draws His creation to Himself in righteousness and peace, doing so through the faith of Jesus Christ. All along, from Adam and downward, God has been single-mindedly focusing on what He would achieve through His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Even in His long and patient forbearance toward sinners, before the sending of His Son, God was looking ahead to

the end of enmity and with it a disappearance of its accompaniment of divine indignation. God's heart was continually centered on the access and peace which Christ would gain as the Propitiatory (the Place where the human comes before God apart from sin and divine indignation). God, longed for this, but in such a way that His righteousness (and love) be displayed. And now, in the evangel, we are given a manifestation of that perfect righteousness through the achievements gained by the faith of Jesus Christ.

Yet even now, as we well know, what has been gained is not realized and enjoyed, except in spirit, in the hearts of the chosen who have been graciously granted the gift of believing. Nevertheless, for us this evangel and our believing of it is a powerful salvation every day and hour as we live in the present wicked eon.

TYPES AND THE ANTITYPE

The word rendered "Propitiatory (shelter)" here in Romans 3:25 refers to the lid of pure gold above the coffer of the testimony (ark of the covenant) with two cherubim of gold arising over it, before which Yahweh kept appointment with the people of Israel (Ex.25:17-22), first through Moses (Num.7:89) and then, once a year, through Aaron (Lev.16:1-17) and his successors, whoever was chief priest. There are many details given concerning the structure in Exodus 25, and the service carried on before it in the holy of holies, described in Leviticus 16. The same pattern was followed in the building and service of the temple in the days of Solomon (1 Chron.28:11-13; *cp* 1 Kings 6:19-28; 2 Chron.3:8-13).

This lid of pure gold was a type of Christ Jesus as the One through whom we are brought near to God apart from His indignation, justified, so that we come to know and glorify God as the God of pure righteousness.

In speaking of this divine service and ways in which it

pictured Christ, the writer of the book of Hebrews presented Christ as the Antitype of the chief priest, who came into the "second," or holiest part of the tabernacle once a year, "not apart from blood." But, for his purpose at the time he wrote, he made no comparison with the propitiatory shelter itself (Heb.9:3-12).

The apostle John also spoke of Christ as the Antitype of the propitiatory shelter (1 John 2:2; 4:10), but used a slightly different word than appears in Romans 3:25 and Hebrews 9:5, referring not to the coffer lid in the holy of holies but to the sacrifice itself, the blood of which was brought into the holiest place and spattered before and on the lid of the coffer. Every feature of these ancient rituals described in the law of Moses points ahead to Christ and His cross.

THE PLACE OF PROPITIATION

Now, however, in Romans 3:25, Paul uses the same word as that in Hebrews 9:5 (*[h]ilastêrion*) as a type of Jesus Christ. The chief priest was a picture of Christ Who presented His own blood to God, and the sacrifice itself looked ahead to the One Who died for our sins. But also, the place in the holy of holies where propitiation was made was a type of Him through Whom we have the deliverance of justification and peace toward God.

That is what comes before us in Romans 3. The grace of this blessing will be laid out before us in fuller glory and more direct terminology in Romans 5:1-11, but already we are beginning to see much of the grandeur of God's righteousness manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ as the source of our access to God in peace.

Not at all because of any good works or acts of righteousness of our own (if there are indeed any that can truly be called such), but because of the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for us, we are being justified gratuitously and are brought before God apart from indignation. This is solely

because of what our Lord did and what He has become for us. It is through the faith which is found in His blood.

THROUGH THE FAITH IN HIS BLOOD

The faith which is placed in the blood of Christ Jesus is first and foremost the faith of Jesus Himself. It was a great breakthrough when Martin Luther saw in Romans 3:25 a doctrine of justification by [our] faith rather than by human works. Paul will soon center attention on this aspect of God's grace as it relates to us, and no doubt the apostle is anticipating this even here in verse 25. What a grace it is indeed that we are granted justification when we believe! We are privileged to receive in faith what Christ has gained by His faith. It is out of His faith for our faith (Rom.1:17)!

But before we concentrate on the matter of our believing, we need a clear appreciation of what we are to be believing. Romans 3:24-26 is a statement of the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. It is one of the several direct and powerful presentations of the evangel given by Paul for us today. What is said in 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4, is expressed here with different terms. Where 1 Corinthians declared that "Christ died for our sins," Paul speaks now in Romans of "the faith in [Christ Jesus'] blood." Where the evangel is worded as a message of Christ dying "for our sins," it is now worded as a message of our gratuitous justification in God's grace which brings us before God apart from indignation.

These blessings are indeed put to our account and become powerful in our lives, upon our believing (*cf* Eph. 1:13; Rom.4:4-8), so that our believing is a necessary and gracious provision. But we would not miss anything the evangel has to say about the glories of our Lord and of the significance of His crucifixion. It was a work of His faith which was centered in His blood, in the sufferings

He endured on our behalf. Here was Christ's faith, that is, His act of believing, in holding fast to what was laid down in the Scriptures from Genesis forward, in countless ways. God's Son faithfully accepted in heart and soul the testimony of God's Word that sin must be dealt with by the shedding of the blood of the One Who knew no sin. Here in its highest and most glorious expression was faithfulness in the honoring of that Word through pain and sorrow and the darkness of God's own turning away from His beloved Son, Who was made to be Sin.

FOR A DISPLAY OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

God's righteousness may now be seen by the eyes of our hearts (Eph.1:18). It is defined by the way it is expressed in God's achievements through His Son, Who died for sinners. God's righteousness is displayed most essentially in the outcome of Christ's obedience to the death of the cross.

What is being displayed is that God faces the bleak and woeful lack of righteousness and glory that infests humanity and deals with it in such a way that our lives are justified and His indignation is taken away. What we see by our experience and the testimony of our senses is that all is wrong. What we believe, in believing the evangel, is that *God righteously brings all to a supremely righteous consummation.* All the evils described in Romans 1:18-3:20, and summarized in Romans 3:23, are met with in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. Where we are defenseless in our irreverence and unrighteousness, unable to glorify and thank God, given over to what is not befitting, to greed and pride and unintelligence, we are even now, in spirit, delivered in Christ Jesus to salvation and peace and righteousness. Ultimately all will be brought to this grand position in fullness. God will be All in all (1 Cor.15:28). All will be reconciled to God through the blood of the cross of His beloved Son.

GROANING AND TRAVAILING

As a human being, even the most mature of believers is intimately acquainted with sin and sorrow and pain. Paul will repeat the theme of Romans 1:18-3:20 again in Romans 8:22. The entire creation is groaning and travailing together. "Yet not only so, but *we ourselves also*, who have the first-fruit of the spirit, we ourselves also, are groaning in ourselves . . ." (Rom.8:23). But the message of the evangel is that God's righteousness is displayed because of the faith which is in Christ's blood. Consequently, God's expectation is that the whole of that which God has created "shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:21).

Here is God's righteousness. Wars and stupidity, terror and perfidity, failure and dishonor, hypocrisy and bitterness, these are all dealt with at the cross, and the result is that God is justified in bringing all His creatures through these evils to justification (Rom.3:26; 5:18,19).

But sometimes we are so pressed by the evils within and without us that, despite Paul's testimony and instruction we despair and worry a great deal (*cf* 2 Cor.4:8; Phil.4:6). Always we need the evangel which reveals God's righteousness and instills His peace.

So also in this very epistle, even the apostle Paul reveals the sorrows of his heart arising from the circumstances of his own day as they affected him: "The truth am I telling in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifying together with me in holy spirit, that my sorrow is great, and unintermittent pain is in my heart . . . for my brethren, my relatives according to the flesh" (Rom.9:1,2). But Paul wrote this with the evangel he had just expounded in Romans 3:21-8:39 freshly and firmly in mind. Consequently he exults: "For unregretted are the graces and the calling of God . . . . For God locks up all together in stubbornness,

that He should be merciful to all . . . . To Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:29,32,36).

In like manner we encounter the ways of God in our own experiences, ways that often seem inscrutable, where we are unable to trace anything of good except as we have learned from the evangel that God is richly wise and that all is out of Him and through Him and for Him (Rom.11:33-36).

We are not given a message that tells us what we must do in order to come before God in righteousness and peace. The evangel of God concerning His Son is a message announcing what God has done. It is not contaminated with requirements of human works but focuses on the perfect faithfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ and God's achievement through this astounding act of love. It deals with all sin and all humanity with justification and peace toward God as its fruit. The more fully we appreciate the evangel, the more truly we will be grasping the glory of God's righteousness so that it may bear fruit in our lives, both in facing that which disturbs us and in instilling in us the disposition of Christ.

PASSING OVER OF PENALTIES

The Greek word translated "the passing over" in this verse is not used elsewhere in the New Testament. But its verb form is used in the Septuagint for several Hebrew terms. It is used in Exodus 14:12 for the Israelites' stubborn request that Moses would "leave off" from them and let them serve the Egyptians. It is used in Deuteronomy 32:36 where Moses sings of Israel being "set free." And in 2 Samuel 4:1 it is used for the Hebrew word meaning "slacken." Paul is speaking of the fact that God was letting the penalties of sin go for the time being.

For long centuries, God slacked off from imposing the penalties of sin. This was God's forbearance. It could not manifest His righteousness. That which could be perceived

of divine righteousness, was perceived only in divine acts of judgment which expressed His indignation against sin. Yet even then, those of faith, such as Enoch and Noah and Abraham and David, would anticipate God's righteousness as a matter of salvation. (See, for example, the opening, parallel verses of Psalm 31 and Psalm 71.)

Humanity is deserving of death (Rom.1:32), yet it is preserved by God. Judging simply by the evidence, apart from what is made known in the evangel, those who sin must perish (Rom.2:11). In accord with the records of human acts, no flesh at all can be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20). Yet God is patient and kind and forbearing (Rom.2:4).

Adam, through whom sin and death came into the world, lived long after he sinned, and Noah, too, was kept alive even when God saw that humanity as a whole deserved to be wiped out (Gen.6:5-8). And the chosen nation of Israel, as well, failed over and over again to honor God. Yet God forbore to destroy them completely in His righteous indignation.

Why is this? Can this be justified?

We who believe the evangel can now see that all of God's forbearance is justified, along with all the evil which has corrupted the entire race, for Christ Jesus was faithful even to the death of the cross. The wickedness of humanity continues and grows, and indeed God will again bring the woes of His indignation and anger upon the earth as the prophets declared and as described in Revelation. We are not appointed to that day (1 Thess.5:1-9), but even when it comes, it will come swiftly (Rev.1:1), for it is not what God has finally in view for humanity. God's forbearance and the periods of His withdrawal of forbearance are parts of the process. They are not the goal.

The evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ speaks of the goal. It is in its message concerning the faith of Jesus Christ that God's righteousness is displayed. D.H.H.

THROUGH FAITH IN HIS BLOOD

"YET NOW, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets) yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.

"Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter, *through faith in His blood*, for a display of His righteousness . . ." (Rom.3:21-25).

WHOSE FAITH?

A number of commentators on Romans 3:25 say that the words *through faith* should be understood as a parenthetical expression. They believe in his flow of thought, Paul spoke of *a propitiatory shelter in Christ's blood*, and that Paul interjected the idea of faith into this thought. Propitiation was most commonly sought or achieved through a blood sacrifice. A sacrifice could be as faithless as a ritualistic following of ceremonial instruction. Faith may well have seemed a parenthetical thought to many hearing Paul's letter, but it is critical to Paul's exposition of the evangel. So vital is it, that it will be a primary theme of the next chapter of his letter. Why does Paul insert this matter of faith?

In the phrase, "through faith in his blood," whose faith is referred to? The emphasis of evangelism on faith may prompt us to say it is the faith of those who are believing, mentioned in verse 22. But it is through the faith of Jesus Christ, also mentioned in verse 22, that the righteousness of God gratuitously justifies us and delivers us through

the Propitiatory shelter which God purposed in the blood of Christ. True, this evangel of our salvation is out of the faith of Christ *for our faith* (Rom.1:17). When justification, both of God and sinners, is in view, it is the faith of Christ that is pre-eminent (Gal.2:16). In the face of the faith of Noah and Abraham and Moses and Ezra and all the other worthies who might be named, the Scriptures speak of the coming of Christ as "the coming of faith" (Gal.3:23). The promise of life is "out of Jesus Christ's faith" (Gal.3:22).

Many before Christ believed God, and some of them even died for their faith (Heb.11). But in Christ we find a constant and perfect faith, coupled with humility and complete submission to God, and full dedication to performing His will. The faith of Jesus Christ is an indispensable part of His living and dying in order to make the propitiatory shelter that God purposed. "We also . . . putting off every impediment and the popular sin . . . looking off to the Inaugurator and Perfector of faith, Jesus, Who, for the joy lying before Him, endures a cross, despising the shame, besides is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. For take into account the One Who has endured such contradiction by sinners while among them, lest you should be faltering, fainting in your souls. Not as yet unto blood did you repulse, when contending against sin" (Heb.12:1-4).

The Lord Jesus knew of the sufferings and death that awaited Him in Jerusalem. Yet "He fixes His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem. And He dispatches messengers before His face," so it would be public knowledge that He was coming there (Luke 9:51, 52). "My back I give over to smiters, and My cheeks to those who tear at My beard. My face I do not conceal from mortification and spitting. My Lord Yahweh, He shall help Me. Therefore, I am not mortified. Therefore I set My face like flint, and I know that I shall not be shamed" (Isa.50:6, 7). This is faith—adamant, unshakable, flint-faced faith.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BLOOD

"For the soul of the flesh, it is in the blood, and I Myself have assigned it to you to make a propitiatory shelter over your souls on the altar; for the blood, because of the soul it makes a propitiatory shelter . . . for the soul of all flesh is its blood; as its soul is it. So I said to the sons of Israel: The blood of any flesh you shall not eat, for the soul of all flesh, it is its blood. Anyone eating it, he shall be cut off" (Lev.17:11, 14). The soul is related to all the sensory perceptions. All the sensations and enjoyments of life have to do with the soul.

All our mental activities are dependent on the blood also. For us to think, to believe, to understand, to hold convictions about right and wrong—we must have blood supplied to the brain.

Usually the parts of the body work together to care for each other. Our eyes see that the door in front of us is closed, and they tell the brain, and the brain tells the hand to open the door, and it tells the feet to slow down so we don't smash our nose. Or the fingers touch something hot, and the brain says, "Quick! Drop that!" Or we eat dessert, and the tongue says, "This is the best chocolate pie I ever tasted—get some more." It is the blood that enables all the members to do their part in functioning this way.

But sometimes the blood is flowing to all the members of the body, and they do not help each other. For example, unkind words are spoken which deeply wound our feelings, and immediately blood rushes to the head, and it turns red and hot, and our heart cries out: "Hit them! Wound them back!" But a mature mind, renewed to be like Christ's, says, "No. We will not return evil for evil!" And it tells the tongue to speak softly and kindly. Or a sharp, stinging slap strikes the cheek. The face yells, "Pain! Avoid injury! Strike back!" Yet again the renewed mind says, "Silence! There

are better ways to resolve this issue." Here is an operation of the spirit within the believer.

THE BATTLEGROUND

So it was with Christ. His body was pierced and lacerated in excruciating pain by the crown of thorns, beaten into His brow, and by the scourging and beatings and the nails. His heart was broken and stung from the false accusations. But the same drops of blood that enabled Him to feel the terrible pain and the hurt and forsakenness also supplied life to a heart and mind that was unshakably fixed on God. And in the contradiction that His body experienced—His endurance of all the pain and wrong, accepting all in humble silence—He was bearing, in His body, in His blood, the weight of our sins. The blood of Christ was the battleground of suffering and faith.

The faith of Christ stood like a giant granite monolith—victorious and unmoved, until His blood stopped flowing and the sense of pain ceased. How precious is that blood! How strong and precious is His faith! The shedding of His blood and the giving up of His life prove the power of His faith. No human frame ever honored God so highly as Christ did there! And He did it all right down here in the flesh where we live. Daily the world's attractions and motivations pull at us—clutching at us. Will faith rule?

BLOOD ON THE COFFER

On the day of propitiatory shelters (Lev.23:26-28), the priest took the blood of the sin offering goat, on which Yahweh's lot had fallen, into the holy of holies (Lev.16:1-34). All year long sin offerings had been made, but the blood of *none* of them was taken into the holiest place of the tabernacle or temple. The blood of the daily sin offerings stayed out on the altar. This unique, annual offering represented the sacrificial death of Christ. "Now Christ . . .

through His own blood, entered once for all time into the holy places, finding eonian redemption . . . . For Christ entered not into holy places made by hands, representations of the true, but into heaven itself, now to be disclosed to the face of God for our sakes" (Heb 9:11,12,24).

In the holy of holies the priest would sprinkle the blood of the sin offering "on the propitiatory shelter and before the propitiatory shelter" (Lev.16:15). This represented a sheltering of the earthly holy place and also a sheltering of it in the sense of an approach to God. The holy of holies had to be sheltered with blood for God to abide there through the next year, and the symbolic approach to Him had to be sheltered as well.

Inside the ark, or coffer, was the testimony, or the tablets of the law on stone—heavy and grievous to bear. The blood was placed on the propitiatory shelter, or mercy seat. In this there are two coverings indicated: (1) the pure, solid gold of the lid or shelter itself, and, (2) the blood of the sin offering. The pure gold propitiatory shelter represented Christ in His perfection, and the blood represented His sacrifice for sin. This barrier, or cover, between God and the law and His indignation against human failure to keep the law enables God to deal graciously with humanity, because the perfection and sacrifice of Christ fulfills all the law can demand.

But there is more. The blood represents a death—the death of One more pure than the gold of the shelter. And death marks the limit of the law's jurisdiction. "Or are you ignorant . . . that the law is lording it over a man for as much time as he is living? . . . you also were put to death to the law through the body of Christ . . . now we were exempted from the law . . . . Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. (Rom.7:1-6; 8:1). When God looks toward the law, He sees first the blood, representing the death of the One in Whom all died (2 Cor.

5:14). The blood says not only that the law is fulfilled, but also that its authority has ceased to exist over any who are included in the death of Christ.

The propitiatory shelter also represented the throne of God. That is where God's presence dwelt. That is the place from which His word emanated. To think of Christ's blood there, is to see Him seated there, at God's right hand, in virtue of His sacrificial work. The blood of Christ represents the essence of His passion. It speaks at once of both the pain that He suffered and His faithfulness to God, which would not allow any escape from drinking the dregs of divine wrath. Only the blood can supply a body with the capability both to feel the pain and to resist the demands of the pain to serve One greater than self. God has enthroned such faithfulness that we might perceive its achievement and imitate Christ Who has displayed such faithfulness for us. The blood on the coffer is a testimony that God has seen it and acts and rules in response to it.

BLOOD ON THE DOORWAY

"Then the blood will become a sign for you on the houses where you are. When I see the blood I will pass over you" (Ex.12:13). Man looks upon the events of history and the effects of individual lives, and establishes holidays to commemorate great events. Often this happens many years after the events occurred. God established the observance of Passover and the weeklong festival of unleavened bread before the exodus occurred, and He established the dedication of the firstborn on the day they left Egypt. And, in Israel's exodus, God Himself observed the law He gave them. Israel was His firstborn, and God redeemed Israel by taking the lives of the firstborn of Egypt (Ex.4:22, 23). Similarly, Christ established a covenant with His disciples over dinner on the eve of His death.

The blood of the Passover lamb was to be placed on the

two jambs and the lintel of the door. The blood was a sign to God. He did not look upon or judge the people in the house. His eye was on the blood. The number of people in each house was equivalent to the supply of the lamb for that house. The blood on the doorway only protected the people of a house if they remained under the cover of the blood during the plague. A house without blood was no shelter. The lamb provided what God was looking for outside, and it provided the nourishment that was needed by those inside for the journey on which they were about to embark. The blood of the lambs that were slain represented the blood of the firstborn ones who died so that Israel could go free. Similarly, Christ, the Firstborn of all creation and the Lamb of God, gave His blood, His soul, to make the propitiatory shelter for our sins. All those in Christ are safe.

There is also a symbolic representation here of faith in the description of the way in which they were to eat the paschal meal. "And thus shall you eat it, with your waist girded, your sandals on your feet and your stick in your hand. You will eat it in urgent haste. It is the passover to Yahweh" (Ex.12:11). The normal way in which an evening meal was eaten was to dress comfortably, remove the sandals, and eat in a semi-reclining position. The expectation after the meal was to lie down and sleep. Sleep is sometimes a type or symbol of death. But the expectation of the paschal meal was the commencement of a new life. Their observance was the acting out of an expression of belief that God was going to deliver them.

The meal also had prophetic features. The lamb was eaten with unleavened cakes over bitter herbs. The bitter herbs represent the experience of slavery in Egypt. Egypt would be nothing more than their grave if they remained there. But God's provision piles blessed and tasty food upon the bitters, making them somewhat of an appetizer, or

remembrance of what preceded the meal itself. The lamb was roasted with fire—a symbol that it passed through the judgment on behalf of those covered by its blood. No bone was to be broken, showing that its death was all related to the judgment passed upon it and not some act of human violence (*cf* Psa.34:19, 20; John 19:36). Amidst the struggles and trials God's care keeps us intact.

Leaven was kept in the form of a piece of unbaked bread dough. A piece would be saved aside for the next batch of dough to be made. This had to be done, because baking the bread destroys the leaven. The old piece of dough would be added to the new dough, and the leaven, or yeast, would quickly spread throughout the whole. But for the paschal supper they ate unleavened bread. This showed that they were beginning a new life, and that none of the old life was going to be carried over into the new. There was to be a complete break with the old and a completely fresh start made. Experience shows us all too well that the things of life in the flesh will intrude and thoroughly spread through the life of faith. We need to be a whole new lump, unleavened by our former life. The lesson of the leaven is very much the same as circumcision, or the complete dedication of cities to the sword in the conquest of Canaan. The exodus was also the birth of God's firstborn son, Israel. This too shows a new beginning of life.

These thoughts on the meal prepare us to take a second look at the significance of the blood on the doorway. The blood on the doorway sheltered the sinner, closing out the wrath of God's judgment. But God's anger does not endure long. "For there is only a moment under His anger but a lifetime under His benevolence. In the evening, lamentation may lodge, but in the morning there is jubilant song" (Psa.30:5). And so we find that the blood on the doorway also opens the door. The blood on the doorway provides an escape from slavery. It opens the way to a whole new life.

The bloodstained doorway is the exit for the redeemed. In Ephesians 1:8, the preposition used creates a verbal picture of this: ". . . we are having the deliverance *through* His blood"—as if passing *through* a bloody doorway. Colossians 1:20 speaks of ". . . peace *through* the blood of His cross." Here again, as in Exodus, are the thoughts of blood on wood, and the emphasis on the firstborn. The context names Christ as Firstborn of every creature and also Firstborn from among the dead.

BLOOD ON THE GARMENT

In the Scriptures, garments frequently represent righteousness. This is especially so in the case of Christ's garment. It was seamless, woven from above throughout the whole (John 19:23). This speaks of the perfect righteousness of Christ, a righteousness from above without any seams or flaws. His faith brings us into the righteousness of God (Rom.3:21-25; 2 Cor.5:21).

The garments of the priests, then, by comparison, must also bear a resemblance to Christ and His righteousness. The garments were of a fine white linen fabric, sometimes called cambric, and were beautifully embroidered. The book of Exodus explains in considerable detail the design and making of these garments, but we will focus on only one point. The garments for the priests were made of fine material and were new and clean, but the garments were not suitable, and the priests could not serve until they were dedicated.

"Then you will take some of the blood which is on the altar and some of the anointing oil and spatter it on Aaron and on his garments and on his sons and on the garments of his sons with him, so that he will be holy, he and his garments, and his sons and the garments of his sons with him" (Ex.29:21; Lev.8:30). The cleanliness and perfection of brand new garments did not qualify them for use

in God's presence. The garments also had to be cleansed by the blood of sacrifice and anointed for service. These garments were consecrated and holy for serving God, and the priests were to respect the garments of their calling, as well as the God Who called them. One of the restrictions on the high priest was that he could not rip or tear his holy garments as a sign of grief, not even for his closest family members (Lev.10:6; 21:10). He was separated to Yahweh for Yahweh's service, and that was more important even than family relationships.

God calls us into His service. He calls us into holiness. But it is no earthly cleansing that makes us fit for this service. It is the cleansing provided by His sacrifice that makes us fit. It is the blood of Christ on us that gives us righteousness and makes us separate. This righteousness we have from Christ should never be violated, even for the closest of earthly relationships. An additional thought that grows out of this is that we will not enter the holy of holies, heaven itself, until glorified and perfected in His righteousness.

CONCLUSION

The propitiatory shelter that graces us in God's purpose came through the faith of Jesus Christ as manifested in the shedding of His blood. Through the example of the blood on the coffer, we see that His sacrifice fulfills the law, His death removes us from the jurisdiction of the law, and that He Whose blood was shed for us sits on the throne of the universe. Through the example of the blood on the doorway, we see that in Christ we are saved through judgment and are freed from the slavery of sin's flesh. Through the example of blood on the garment, we see that Christ's sufferings and death were for our sakes, and that His righteousness clothes us. His sacrifice dedicates us to God that, in spirit, we might even now begin living to God in righteousness.

J. Philip Scranton

"NOTHING . . . IS NOW CONDEMNATION"

Question:

I have long been troubled by the Authorized Version translation of Romans 8:1, which reads: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." This seems to make the "no condemnation" depend upon the "walk[ing] not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," which is to say that it seems to make the "no condemnation" applicable solely to those who have the proper, and necessary, walk.

Such an understanding comes through even more forcefully if the comma after "Jesus" is omitted: "There is . . . no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus *who walk not after the flesh . . . .*"

Thus the sense seems to be that there is no condemnation solely for those in Christ whose walk is consistently upright. And, from this it would seem to follow that for the rest of us who genuinely believe yet whose walk may not always be faithful, our destiny will be that of "condemnation," presumably to everlasting punishment. Yet this would place all such believers (probably myself included) into the same destiny as those who "believeth not," who, according to the Authorized Version's testimony concerning such ones, "shall not see life" (John 3:36).

In any case, I believe the evangel that we are "justified gratuitously in [God's] *grace,* through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24); that "the *gracious* gift of God is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:23); and that, "where sin increases, *grace superexceeds,* that, even as Sin reigns in death,

thus *Grace* also should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:20,21).

It is just that I do not know how Romans 8:1 should be translated and understood, which at least in the Authorized Version seems to make salvation depend upon good works, instead of upon God's grace. I realize that the Concordant Version translates this passage quite differently than the Authorized Version; still, I need to know that the Concordant translation is correct, if indeed that is the case. Even then, however, I will need to have this passage explained to me, as it appears in the Concordant Version.

Answer:

In the Concordant Version, Romans 8:1-4 reads as follows:

Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. Not according to flesh are they walking, but according to spirit, for the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus frees you from the law of sin and death. For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit.

You are correct in your assessment that as Romans 8:1 stands in the Authorized Version, this rendering would seem to make exemption from condemnation applicable "solely to those who have the proper, and necessary, walk."

This would make good works at least the proximate cause of salvation, and as understood by most, it would make them the ultimate cause thereof as well, since few indeed are aware that all is out of, through, and for God (Rom.11:36).

Beyond this, you have spoken ideally in affirming your faith in God's gratuitous grace in our justification (Rom. 3:24), even as in the gracious gift of life eonian (Rom.6:23), the grace of God that reigns through righteousness, "for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:20,21).

Clearly, then, it must be that the Authorized Version rendering of Romans 8:1 is somehow defective, and especially that its interpretation as popularly understood is mistaken.

First of all, we will do well to be aware of the textual issues concerning this verse in question. The three most ancient New Testament manuscripts are Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Vaticanus, and Codex Alexandrinus, and it is upon these three codices that the Concordant Greek Text is based, and from which it is formed.

Some have concluded that the phrase here, "not according to flesh are they walking, but according to spirit," should be omitted altogether, since it does not appear (or does not appear in its entirety) in certain manuscripts; hence, it is not included in various translations.

It is true that it is not in Vaticanus. The most important part of this clause, however, is included in Alexandrinus, and it appears in its entirety in the margin of Sinaiticus, by the hand of the copyist who appears to be its principal corrector, referred to in the Concordant Greek Text as "s^2."

It was in light of such considerations as these, as well as that of the similar language and logical relation which obtains between the words of 8:1b and 8:4b, that the decision was made to include this reading in question within the Concordant text and translation as well.

It is important to note that the Greek negative that appears here, in our phrase, "not according to flesh are they walking, but according to spirit," is *mê* (no), which is rendered in the Concordant Version either as "**no**," or

"**not**." This is "the 'conditional' negative. It does not deny absolutely—only *relatively*."[1]

There is an entirely different Greek word *ouden* (NOT-YET-ONE; also see the variant form, *ou* [also, *ouk*, or *ouch*]), which is "the absolute negative, apart from conditions."[2] *Ouden* is rendered in the Concordant Version as "**nothing**," and *ou* is translated "**not**" or "**no**^{t}."

The *absolute* negative, *ouden,* is used in the declaration of Romans 8:1a, "*Nothing,* consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus."

Yet it is the *relative* negative, *mê,* which appears in the phrase, "Not according to flesh are they walking . . ." (Rom. 8:1b), as well as in the parallel phrase, Romans 8:4b, which reads ". . . who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit."[3]

It should be noted as well that since no definite article appears between the words at the end of Romans 8:1a, ". . . those in Christ Jesus," and the words at the beginning of Romans 8:1b, "Not according to flesh are they walking . . ." it is unwarranted to add the word "who" between these two clauses (as in the AV rendering, ". . . to them which are in Christ Jesus, *who* walk not after the flesh . . ."[4]).

1. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry "**no**," p.206.

2. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entries "**not**, **no**^{t}"; and, "**nothing**," first of two entries of this name, p.207.

3. The current printed edition of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT contains a typographic error in Romans 8:4b, in the rendering "**not**"; this should be "**not**," with a lightface "t," as in Romans 8:1b.

4. The Greek definite article (i.e., "the") is often used as a pronoun (e.g., in Romans 8:5, as represented by the English words "those who are" and "that which is," set in lightface type). The definite article even appears in Romans 8:1a, where the CV translates it "those," in the phrase "those in Christ Jesus." However, it does *not* appear in the Greek at the critical juncture in question, between the end of Romans 8:1a, and the beginning of Romans 8:1b. Therefore, the presence of the word "who" in the English AV text at this very point (in the phrase, "*who* walk not after the flesh"), is an egregious mistranslation.

To afford us further assurance of the correctness of the Concordant Version's translation of Romans 8:1, let us take careful note of the reading of the ultra-literal English sublinear of this verse as it appears in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT. Thus, it should be evident to the careful reader that this verse as it appears in the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT, constitutes a faithful, idiomatic translation of the Greek original:

"NOT-YET-ONE CONSEQUENTLY NOW DOWN-JUDGment to-THE-*ones* IN ANOINTED JESUS NO according-to FLESH THEY-ARE-ABOUT-TREADING but according-to SPIRIT . . ." (CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT, English sublinear).

and:

"Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. Not according to flesh are they walking, but according to spirit . . ." (CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT).

WALKING ACCORDING TO SPIRIT

Finally, may we be aware of the following Scripture passage which constitutes a close parallel to the words of Romans 8:1b ("Not according to flesh are they walking"), syntactically, grammatically, in the use of the relative negative, *mê,* and, as constitutive of an independent clause: "Not according to man am I speaking these things" (1 Cor.9:8).

Even as the scriptural testimony, then, of 1 Corinthians 9:8 is, "Not according to man am I speaking these things," thus also, the scriptural testimony of Romans 8:1b is, "Not according to flesh are they [i.e., those in Christ Jesus] walking."

In light of these facts, let us therefore be confident that the sense of these glorious declarations of Romans 8:1 is:

(1) *absolutely* speaking, "*Nothing* . . . is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus"; and: (2) *relatively* speaking, "Not according to flesh are they walking, but according to spirit . . . ."

It is important to realize that the words "*Nothing* . . . is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus," constitute an independent clause, and so may be punctuated at their end either by a semicolon or period. That is, these words stand alone, and are not to be modified by what follows. Instead, the words which follow (namely, the phrase, "Not according to flesh are they walking, but according to spirit . . ."), rather than modifying the clause which precedes them, *also* constitute an independent clause, which therefore also stands alone as a declaration in its own right.

It is simply a fact that, as a relative statement made in comparison to others, ones who are not in Christ, we who are members of the ecclesia which is His body, are not walking according to flesh, but are instead walking according to spirit.

SIN IN THE FLESH CONDEMNED

Just as "to those who are called . . ." the conviction of their heart is: "Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor.1:24), it is the case as well concerning "those in Christ Jesus [that] not according to flesh are they walking" (Rom.8:1).

It is not that those who are called *ought* to believe that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, but that they *do* believe that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. And, neither is it the point that those who are in Christ *ought* not to be walking according to flesh, but rather it is a fact that, relatively speaking, they are *not* walking according to flesh.

Paul then immediately goes on to explain *why* what is so here, is in fact the case. It is so that we are not walking

according to flesh, but instead according to spirit, "*for* the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus frees you from the law of sin and death. *For* what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, *did God,* sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement [i.e., righteous effect, or result] of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit" (Rom.8:2-4).

To the degree that it is so, we are walking not according to flesh but according to spirit, *because* "the *spirit's law of life* in Christ Jesus frees [us] from the law of sin and death." It is due to the working of God's spirit within us that this change has been effected.

"THE SPIRIT'S LAW OF LIFE"

Just as there is a law of "sin and death," there is the spirit's "law of life" as well: "For the flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh. Now these are opposing one another, *lest* you should be doing whatever you may want" (Gal.5:17).

In a given case, either the flesh or the spirit prevails. When left to our own devices, the spirit is quenched (*cf* 1 Thess.5:19) and the flesh gains the ascendancy, the works thereof becoming apparent for all to see. Among these are "adultery, prostitution, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, enchantment, enmities, strife, jealousies, furies, factions, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkennesses, revelries, and the like of these" (Gal.5:20,21a).

Yet when the grace of God directs, the spirit conquers the flesh, and the fruit of the spirit is manifested: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control: against such things there is no law" (Gal.5:22,23).

"Now those of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together

with its passions, and lusts" (Gal.5:24). In Romans 8:1, we learn that our walk accords not with flesh but with spirit. This is so in the measure granted us of freedom from the law of sin and death by the spirit's law of life. Similarly, here in Galatians, Paul declares by means of the aorist verb form (which speaks of a timeless fact) that those of Christ Jesus "*crucify* the flesh together with its passions, and lusts." This is something that, in fact, we *do.* Our flesh may be far from dead, its full crucifixion by no means as yet having been achieved. But as those who have, at minimum, some measure of walk that accords with spirit rather than with flesh, it must be that we have at least undertaken this formidable task, that of the crucifixion of the flesh.

"YOUR DISPOSITION MUST BE"

Though it is by no means the norm for those in Christ (either in the sense of a model, or of a principle of right action within a group), nevertheless, too often, it has been the experience of many of us even as sincere believers in Christ, that we have found ourselves simply overcome by Sin:

"For what I am effecting I know not, for not what I will, this I am putting into practice, but what I am hating, this I am doing. Now if what I am not willing, this I am doing, I am conceding that the law is ideal. Yet now it is no longer I who am effecting it, but Sin making its home in me.

"For I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not. For it is not the good that I will that I am doing, but the evil that I am not willing, this I am putting into practice. Now if what I am not willing, this I am doing, it is no longer I who am effecting it, but Sin which is making its home in me.

"Consequently, I am finding the law that, at my willing to be doing the ideal, the evil is lying beside me. For I am gratified with the law of God as to the man within,

yet I am observing a different law in my members, warring with the law of my mind, and leading me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

"A wretched man am I!" (Rom.7:15-24a).

Paul's experience here, as suggested by many, may well have been primarily lived out by him in the days of his unbelief, when he sought to be obedient to God yet lacked the power to achieve this lofty goal. But even if this should have been largely the case concerning Paul, it does not follow from this that from the day when *we* first believed, we too were granted the fullness of grace that may have been the portion of our apostle from that day onward.

Let us ever be mindful that "each has his own gracious gift from God, one indeed, thus, yet one thus" (1 Cor.7:7b).

Though we all need to "grow up"and mature, still, we are "not to be overweening, beyond what [*our*] *disposition must be,* but to be of a sane disposition as God parts to each the measure of faith" (Rom.12:3), the measure of faith that will enable us to mature to the measure of faithfulness afforded us by God.

"A man can not get anything if it should no be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27). And, ". . . What have you which you did not obtain? Now if you *obtained* it also [i.e., if you, the same as anyone else, did not create but were simply *given* all that you have], *why are you boasting* as though *not* obtaining?" (1 Cor.4:7).

Beyond the range afforded us by "[our] disposition [which] must be," it is evident that we cannot go. Therefore, while ever seeking to be faithful, let us recognize and acknowledge our own limitations.

The question then becomes: "What will rescue me out of this body of death?" to which the answer is, "*Grace!*[5] I

5. Though missing from other manuscripts, the reading "Grace," appears here as a copyist's emendation in the Sinaiticus manuscript.

thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Consequently, then, I myself, with the mind, indeed, am slaving for God's law, yet with the flesh for Sin's law" (Rom.7:24b,25).

GRACE ALONE PREVAILS

"*Grace!* This is the key to deliverance from the law and from self and from sin! It is not struggling: it is standing still to see the salvation of God. It is not fighting the flesh, but, putting it in the place of death, finding ourselves alive beyond its sphere in resurrection.

"Those who enter into conflict with the flesh will not find victory but defeat. In Romans we die to sin, to the law, and seek deliverance from the body of death. Nothing will avail us but the undiluted, unadulterated grace of God.

"Grace is the door that leads us out of Romans seven into Romans eight. It ushers us out of misery into the realm of pure delight. It transfers us from unsatisfactory, distressing self-inspection, where we are harassed with doubts and condemned by ourselves, into that marvelous realm which greets us in the opening of the eighth chapter: 'Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation . . . .' Instead of continual condemnation, grace absolutely defies all condemnation. Even where sin abounds, grace superabounds, so that sin itself is submerged in the redundance and superfluity of grace.

"All sorts of remedies have been suggested to cure the wretched man but none of them compare with this divine prescription. The eighth chapter is based on this reply and cannot be comprehended apart from it. The wretched man

While it is well to know of this revision, which may well be reflective of the original autograph, it is better still to see that even if implicit, the answer to the question, "What will rescue me . . . ?" is in any case present at least by way of corollary in the word's of Paul, where he subsequently responds, "I *thank* [i.e., "well-*grace*"] God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (i.e., for being the One Who will indeed rescue me).

is continually condemned by an inward weakness and waywardness with which he has no sympathy. Grace steps in, and, as a consequence, nothing is condemnation to those in Christ Jesus, for the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus frees us from the law of sin and death. God's grace-gift is eonian life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom.6:23). The life abides on the same terms on which it was received: nothing down, nothing forever."[6]

"BEING STUBBORN AS TO THE SON"

You also expressed concern regarding the Authorized Version's translation of John 3:36, which reads: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Yet the Concordant Version translation of this same verse reads as follows: "He who is believing in the Son has life *eonian,* yet he who is stubborn as to the Son shall not be seeing life, but the indignation of God is remaining on him."

More strictly, as may be noted by the vertical stroke before "has" and "stubborn" in the CV, which signifies the act verb form (which speaks of action go*ing* on), the CV indicates the following as the actual literal sense: "He who is believ*ing* in the Son is hav*ing* life *eonian,* yet he who is *being stubborn* as to the Son shall not be see*ing* life, but the indignation of God is remain*ing* on him."

It should be noted as well that the life in view that some shall not be seeing is *aiōnion* life. "Everlasting" should be "eonian," as in the Concordant Version, from the Greek adjective *aiōnion,* which signifies "pertaining to the *aiōn,*" or in English, "pertaining to the eon." The essential meaning of "eon" is "duration," which always refers to the dura-

6. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.12, pp.57,58.

tion of that which is in view. Here in John the duration in view is that of the coming kingdom eon, as we read in Mark 10:30, "*in the coming eon,* life eonian," which is to say, "in the coming eon, the life pertaining thereunto."

The one who is *apeithōn* as to the Son, speaks of one who is being "*stubborn*" (*cp* Rom.10:21; Titus 1:16) as to the Son, not necessarily of one who "believeth not." And the idea here is not at all that of a categorical, timeless fact to the effect that one who at some point is stubborn as to the Son, therefore "shall not see life," but that the one who is *being* stubborn as to the Son shall not be *seeing* life.

It is simply that the one who is *being* stubborn as to the Son shall not be see*ing* life, but the indignation of God is remain*ing* on him. That is, so long as one is being stubborn as to the Son, such a one shall not be seeing (eonian) life, but instead the indignation of God is remaining on him. This in no way precludes his salvation *should he no longer continue to be stubborn,* even if he should continue to be stubborn for a time subsequent to being subjected to God's indignation.

"God locks up *all* together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to *all*" (Rom.11:32). Our God is the *living* God, upon Whom we *rely.* He is the Saviour of *all* mankind, *especially* (not exclusively) of believers (*cf* 1 Tim. 4:10). This is a *faithful* saying, and one which is "*worthy* of all welcome" (1 Tim.4:9). This is so, since it is for *this very declaration* that the apostle Paul, together with Timothy, toiled and was reproached. Therefore the apostle declares: "*These things* be charging and teaching" (1 Tim.4:11).

Knowing that in light of Christ's saving work both for us and in us (Rom.3:21-7:25), "Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus," we are discovering as well that "Not according to flesh are [we] walking, but according to spirit, for the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus frees [us] from the law of sin and death" (Rom.8:1,2). Blessed be our God and Saviour! J.R.C.

Contents:

241 Editorial
243 From Jacob to Israel
251 Now On Display
261 Warnings to Judah
269 Is Yahweh True to His Troth?
275 Glorying In Expectation

NOVEMBER, 2006

Volume XCVII **Number 6**

Concordant Version of

The Latter Prophets

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel,

Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum,
Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

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EDITORIAL

THE REALIZATION of the *grace* of God *in truth* (*cf* Col. 1:6b)! Surely, this is one of our greatest needs.

Yet before we can gain a true *realization* (*epignōsis,* ON-KNOWledge) of the grace of God in truth, we must first obtain at least a basic *knowledge* (*gnōsis,* KNOWledge) of the grace of God—"*in truth.*"

Before we can ever progress into a deeper and more mature "recognition" and "realization" of God's true grace, we must first of all simply *know* what the *grace* of God *is.*

It is not the word "grace" itself that is important, but the idea for which it stands. So long as our notion of "grace" is different than or even contradictory to (*cf* Titus 1:9) the scriptural sense of this expression, this will preclude our gaining even a basic knowledge of grace—much less a *realization* of grace.

That is, this is so as concerns the grace of God *in truth.* We must not be content with "falsely named 'knowledge'" (1 Tim.6:20), but seek out genuine knowledge, while looking to God for His blessing upon our endeavor.

In God's good providence, within the text of Scripture itself, He has provided us with several definitive usages of the word "grace," which make evident the essential force of this word.

The Greek word for "grace" is practically the same as the word for "joy." Hence, in our Keyword Concordance, each word is given this same STANDARD (*charis,* "grace": JOY; and *chara,* "joy": JOY, as well). Truly, it is "grace" *which brings* "joy," or produces happiness; thus, the close connection between these two nearly identical Greek words.

First of all, let us note the clear sense of "grace" as it is used by our Lord in the following passage:

"And if you are loving those loving you, what *grace* is it to you? For sinners also are loving those loving them. And if you should be doing good to those doing good to you, what *grace* is it to you? For sinners also are doing the same. And if you should ever be lending to those from whom you are expecting to get back, what *grace* is it to you? For sinners also are lending to sinners, that they may get back the equivalent" (Luke 6:32-34).[1]

Second, let us pay close attention as well to the following two verses from Romans that will further cement the meaning of "grace" in our minds:

(1) "Now to the *worker,* the *wage* is not reckoned as a *favor* [i.e., as a "*grace*"], but as a *debt*" (Rom.4:4).

(2) "Thus, then, in the current era also, there has come to be a remnant according to the *choice* of *grace.* Now if it is *in grace,* it is no longer out of works, else the grace is coming to be *no longer grace.* Now, if it is *out of works,* it is *no longer grace,* else the work is no longer work" (Rom.11:5,6).

From these clear, definitive usages of "grace," it is plain that grace reaches out to *sinners;* to those who only love those who love them; to those who only do good to those who do good to them; to those from whom Grace does *not* expect to get something back. And, it is plain as well that a *gracious* gift or *favor,* is not a wage for work or a debt that is owed. In fact, if a certain provision granted *is* a provision of *grace,* it comes to its recipient not as a reward afforded as a result of works, but simply as a *favor* bestowed by its benefactor, to bring *joy* to the object of its blessing. Thus, and thus alone, we learn of "the *grace* of God *in truth*" (Col.1:6). J.R.C.

1. Though rendered "thanks" here in the CV, the literal force (and usual CV translation) of *charis* is "grace" or "favor."

FROM JACOB TO ISRAEL
(Genesis 32:1-32)

32 [+]**As** for **Jacob, he** too **went** [›] **his way; and messengers of Elohim** [l]**came** up**on** [i] **him.** [2] **And Jacob** [l]**said as** [w] **he saw them: This** is the **camp of Elohim.** [+]**So he** [l]**called the name of** [·]**that** [ri]**place Mahanaim.**

[3] [+]**Then Jacob** [l]**sent messengers before him to his brother Esau,** to[d] the **land of Seir,** the **field of Edom.** [4] **And he** [l]**instructed** [`]**them** [›] **saying**[–]**: Thus you shall say to my lord, to Esau: Thus** [l][sa]**speaks your servant Jacob: With Laban I have sojourned, and I** have [l][af]**remained** there **until now.** [5] [+] **Bull**s [l]**became mine and donkey**s [7]**and**[ncs] **flock**s, [+]**also** men**servant**s **and maid**servants**.** [+]**So I am sending** word **to tell** [›] **my lord** [›]**that** [7]**your servant**[0] may **find**[–] **grace in your eyes.**

[6] **And the messengers** [l]**returned to Jacob** [›]**and said**[–]**: We came to your brother, to Esau; and** he is [mr]**already** [go]**coming to meet you, and four hundred men with him.**

[7] [+]**Now Jacob was very** [l]**fearful, and it was** [l]**distressing to him.** [+]**So he** [l]**divided** [`]**the people who** were [`]with **him, and** [`]**the flock**s, [+] [`]**the herd and the camels,** in**to two camps.** [8] [+] **He** [l][sa]**thought: If Esau should come to the one** [·]**camp and smite it,** [+]**then the remaining** [·]**camp would come** to **be** [›] **delivered.**

[9] [+]**Then Jacob** [l]**said:** O **Elohim of my father Abraham and Elohim of my father Isaac,** O **Yahweh** [·]Who [l][sa]**told** [›] **me: Return to your land and to your kindred, and I shall** [c]**do good** [wi]**to you!** [10] **I am less** than worthy[f] **of all the benig-**

nities and *f*of all the faithfulness *w*that You have *d*shown `to Your servant. For *i*with only my stave I crossed `this Jordan, and now I have become ›two camps. 11 Rescue me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau. For I am fearful `of him lest he |come and |smite me, *7*and*0* the mother *on*with the sons. 12 +Yet You Yourself have said: I shall *c*do good, yea good– *wi*to you, and I will *pl*make `your seed like the sand of the sea which cannot be |numbered *f*for multitude.

13 +So he |lodged there *i*for ·that night. And from ·what came| *i*to his hand, he |took an approach present for his brother Esau: 14 two hundred she-goats and twenty bucks, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, 15 thirty milch| camels +with their foals, forty young cows and ten young bulls, twenty jennies and ten colts. 16 + He |*g*put them *i*under the hand of his servants, drove after drove by itself alone. And he |said to his servants: pass along before me and |*pl*leave an interval between drove and *bt* drove. 17 +Then he |instructed `the first, › saying–: In case my brother Esau should encounter you and –ask you, › saying–: To *a*whom do you belong? + Whither are you going, and to *a*whom do these before you belong? 18 +so you say: To your servant, to Jacob. It is an approach present, sent| to my lord, to Esau. And behold, *mr* he himself is coming *af*behind us.

19 +Thus he |instructed *mr*also `the second *mr*and `the third *mr*as well as `all ·those going after the droves, › saying–: According to ·this word =you shall speak to Esau *i*when you come upon– `him; 20 and you must *mr*also say: Behold, your servant Jacob is *7*coming along*0* *af*behind us. For he *sa*thought, I am determined to |appease his face *i*with the approach present ·going before me. And afterward I shall see his face; perhaps he will |lift up my face. 21 +So the approach present |passed along, *on*ahead of his face; +yet he himself lodged *i*for ·that night in the camp.

22 + In that night he |got up and |took `his two wives

and `his two maidservants and `his eleven children and |crossed `the ford of the Jabbok. 23 + He |took them and *c*let them |pass `through the wadi; he +also *c*sent |across `*7*all*nc* *w*that he ›had.

24 +When Jacob was |left alone by himself, + a Man |wrestled with him until the dawn ascended–. 25 +Then He |saw that He did not *all*prevail ›against him. + He |touched *i* the palm of his thighbone; and the palm of Jacob's thighbone was |strained in his wrestling– with Him.

26 +Then He |said: *m*Let Me go, for the dawn has ascended. +Yet he |*sa*replied: I shall not *m*let You go *t* *if*unless You first bless me. 27 +Yet He |said to him: What is your name? And he |*sa*replied: Jacob. 28 And He |said *7*to him*0*: No*t* *fr*longer shall your name be *sa*called Jacob, but rather Israel; for upright are you with Elohim and with men, and you are *all*prevailing. 29 +Then Jacob |asked and |said: Do tell me, I pray, Your name. +Yet He |said: Why is this that you are asking for My name? And He |blessed `him there.

30 + Jacob |called the name of the *ri*place Peniel. For I have seen Elohim face to face, and my soul was |rescued. 31 And the sun |rose ›on him as *w* he passed `by Penuel. And he was limping on account of his thigh. 32 Therefore the sons of Israel are not eating `the sinew of the thigh nerve, which is on the palm of the thighbone, until ·this ·day; for He had touched *i* the palm of Jacob's thighbone *i*at the sinew of the thigh nerve.

JACOB'S PLIGHT

WE NOW approach the greatest crisis in Jacob's career. Yahweh had been with him during his absence from the land, but this had not solved the problem which had led him to leave it. The danger from the anger of Laban and his retainers was by no means so great as that from Esau, who had planned to kill him before he left. Then Esau was

only a single, but powerful enemy. Now he was not alone, but had four hundred of his own men with him. Moreover, he lived in a barren land, so that Jacob's great wealth would be most acceptable booty, which would be all his if Jacob were out of the way. Legally and naturally, Esau was the firstborn, and Jacob was only an interloper whom Yahweh had blessed far beyond what he had expected. Yet Jacob had not learned to *trust Yahweh* to fulfill His promise.

MAHANAIM

In the midst of Jacob's deep distress, he had a vision of messengers of Elohim, who were encamped about him. Hence he named that place, Mahanaim, or "[Two]-Camps" (the Hebrew word is in the dual form; *cp* Gen.32:7,10, where Jacob divides his possessions into two camps). The word *camp* is formed from the stem *chn* which is also used for the Hebrew word for *grace*. Here in Genesis 32 this seems to be a key to the situation. Jacob had deliberately taken advantage of his brother's hunger and robbed him of his birthright. Then, when Isaac was blessing his sons, he once again stole what Isaac intended for Esau. Why shouldn't his brother treat him as he deserves? Then it is that Jacob has the vision of the camp of Elohim. "And messengers of Elohim came upon him" (Gen.32:1). This would remind him of the promises made at Bethel (Gen. 28:18), when he left the land. But now, in God's grace, the heavenly hosts accompany him. He is not alone. He has a much greater host on his side than Esau could possibly raise against him.

MESSENGERS TO ESAU

But Jacob still insists on using his own devices, in order to blunt the wrath of his brother against him. So he sends some messengers to Esau to tell him of his good fortune, and seek grace in his eyes (Gen.32:3-5). His whole attitude is changed. He is not seeking to get aught from his brother, but to win his friendship by giving to him. This was immeasurably better than his previous tricks, but it still lacks that confidence in his Elohim which His previous gracious dealings should have inspired. He goes to the opposite extreme by calling Esau "my lord," and seeking grace from him, when Yahweh had already given him the lordship and the grace. And he sends presents after he had put the matter in the hands of Elohim, Who does not need such expedients. So he uses various fatalistic devices to save what he could. First he divides his people into two camps, and resigned himself to lose one, if he could only save the other (32:7,8). Then he sends munificent present offerings. But at the same time we find him falling back upon His God.

JACOB'S PRAYER

Now, at last, the Circumventer is not satisfied with his circumvention, and he is cast upon the Eloah of Abram and Isaac, Who had led him ever since he had met Him at Bethel (32:9-12). The vast improvement in his fortunes since then, enables him to plead for the sand seed, which had been promised.

JACOB'S PRESENT FOR ESAU

Yet Jacob had much the same idea that prevails today in Christendom, that prayer is not prevailing unless accompanied by corresponding effort. So he proceeds to send Esau a tremendous *present* offering. He hopes that his brother will take it as a propitiatory shelter, usually called an "atonement," which will protect him from the fury of Esau (32:13-21).

As a final intervention, he even takes his whole family across the watercourse, so that he will be the last one to meet his brother (32:22,23). Alas! Still how feeble was his

faith! How little had he learned to rely on Yahweh! Now, however, he had exhausted all his tricks, and had lost confidence in all his devices. Not till now was he in a position to appreciate what Yahweh had given him, or what was in store for him and his seed, based alone on His love.

JACOB WRESTLES

Hitherto, as we have seen, Jacob continually wrestles with Elohim for blessing. He refuses to accept it as a present. Now that he reaches the crest of his career, he must be shown that his own efforts are of no avail. All this is vividly portrayed by a wrestling match. A Man wrestles with him, but does not throw him. So it was with Jacob during the darkness of his past career. Now that there is to be a great change, as the sun is risen, the Man simply touches his thigh, so that *he can wrestle no longer*! So will it be with Jacob in the future (32:24-25). How hard is it for us to learn the same lesson, that it is God Who is operating in us to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight (Phil.2:13). May many who read these lines find the blessing of complete dependence on God! *Do not wrestle with God for the blessings He wishes to bestow upon you*!

JACOB'S NAME

In order to conform to the spiritual lesson, there must be no more wrestling after the darkness is past. Those who live in the light of God's grace, never wrestle. Jacob was no longer in shape to wrestle, but he could hold on. So he held fast to the Wrestler, in order to get His blessing. This blessing was conveyed by changing Jacob's name. Poor fellow, his name *Jacob,* HEEL (Gen.25:36), given him because he grabbed his brother's heel when he was being born, was a lasting, disgrace, for it was used, as in American slang, for one who overreaches or circumvents another, just as he had done to his brother and his father-in-law. He had

been well named. But *henceforth his character would be the opposite*, so his name must be changed.

ISRAEL

Now that Jacob is converted from a heel to the opposite, he needs a new name with a converse implication. So he is given the name *Israel*, which we render Upright-of-El. But, as scholars give other interpretations, we will mention some of them. One, "Wrestler-with-God," fits well his *previous* life, but not the final phase which Israel is now entering. Others make it "Prince-with-God," which is more in accord with the facts. The stem *shr* has many branches. By itself it is used for *chief*. But with an *i* prefixed it is much used for *upright*. Its meaning is clearly seen in the words of Elihu to Job (33:3): "My sayings reflect the uprightness [*ishr*] of my heart." Here we have this branch prefixed to *Al,* [El], Subjector. The grand truth is this: In *himself* as to the *flesh* and in his *life* hitherto, Jacob was a *heel*, and deserved his derogatory *name*. But now, in the divine prevision, all his faults are prophetic of El's dealing with the nation, and all are needed to effect His loving purpose. Therefore he, like Abraham and Isaac, and all believers, has the *uprightness-of-the-Subjector*.

Explaining his new name, the Messenger says of Jacob: "Upright are you with Elohim and with mortals, and are prevailing" (Gen.32:28). This corresponds with the marvelous facts. Notwithstanding Jacob's conduct, El always justifies his doings. Jacob did not finally prevail in the wrestling match, and henceforth he knows his own lameness and wrestles no more.

PENIEL

Jacob's spiritual encounters with the Deity made a powerful impression on him, and hallowed the spot ever after. At the commencement of his banishment from the land he

named it Bethel, as the *house* or dwelling of El, to which He descended on occasion. Now he had seen the Deity on the bank of the Jabbok (Wrestle), so he calls the spot *Peniel*, Presence-of-Subjector. Jacob's spiritual progress had been very lame and halting hitherto. Now this lameness was transferred to his *flesh*. Jacob had an *un*-uprightness of his own, but now Israel has the uprightness of the Subjector, not his own.

THE TOUCH DIVINE

Jacob, no doubt, was a robust wrestler. It would have taken a strong hold and heavy heave to put him in the dust. Instead, the divine Wrestler allowed him to hold his own until the dawn. Then He merely *touched* his thigh and lamed him for life. This gives us a condensed review of his career. He had been striving to get what God had promised, but failed to enjoy it. Now he could no longer contend, so could accept his blessings in thankfulness from the hand of his Subjector. Now he was ready to meet his brother, not physically, with a numb thigh, but spiritually, with God as his Helper. "Happy is he who has the El of Jacob as his Help" (Psa.146:5).

MEETING ESAU

Jacob made many preparations to influence his brother Esau in his favor, under the false impression that he still harbored a grudge, and never imagining that the Elohim Who dealt with him had changed his brother also. Esau meanwhile had prospered, and seems to have gained many allies. Later he leaves Canaan for Edom, and becomes a separate nation. Now however, instead of seizing all of Jacob's wealth, he refuses even his formal gift at first (which might have indicated enmity), and proposes to go with Jacob and *protect* him, instead of *robbing* him of all that he has.

A. E. Knoch

NOW ON DISPLAY

THE CURRENT ERA is one in which God's righteousness is put on display (Rom.3:26). The Greek word translated "current" (*nun*) is the same word rendered "now" in Romans 3:21. In contrast to that which could be seen "before," there is a grand display of God's righteousness in the *now* times.

The evidence accumulated through the past and found throughout Scripture leads to the just verdict that "no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight" (Rom.3:20). That this is so is the cause of fearful despair concerning humanity, *if* it is also true that God has no evangel of deliverance. And even more catastrophic than the human prospect if Romans 3:20 is God's final word on the situation would be what this indicates about God Himself, Who created us.

Yet now there is something new that profoundly changes the entire outlook. God has sent His Son into the world for that deliverance which includes the justification of sinners and the end of divine indignation. But that is not all. What God has done for us in His grace and through His Son reveals God in His glory and abounds to His glory. What has been done is that the sufferings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ both establish the righteousness of God as the One Who Justifies and put this transcendent and exultant righteousness on display.

Indeed, the ancient Scriptures, also at every turn, attested in promise and by type and foreshadowing to this great Self-revealing and history-changing work of divine righteousness centered in the faith and faithfulness of Jesus Christ, Who died for sinners. We can see this, looking

back, in the words of Genesis 3:15,16, and the pattern set in Genesis 3:21, in the account of Cain and Abel and their approach presents, in that of Noah and the ark, in the promises made to Abraham and the scene on Mount Moriah with Isaac, in the record of Joseph's sufferings and exaltation, and of David's experiences and the themes of his psalms, and throughout the prophets. These scriptures did not announce the evangel explicitly, but they prepared for it in its most fundamental aspects. And now it is proclaimed! God's righteousness is now made manifest (Rom. 3:21)! There is deliverance in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24)!

This is the evangel of God concerning His Son, for which Paul was severed and which he eagerly sets down before us in this epistle to the Romans. But in announcing this message, the apostle does not take us immediately from Romans 3:20 to Romans 3:24. He does not connect the human situation of "not justified" directly with that message of grace and gratuity concerning our deliverance. The solid foundation and vital force of the evangel of justification is the righteousness of God, which is thus made manifest by the achievements of the cross of Christ.

ROMANS 3:21-26

The double reference in Romans 3:21,22 to God's righteousness being made manifest is matched by the double reference in verses 25 and 26 to "His righteousness" being put on display. Furthermore, both passages use the word "now," to speak of this revelation of divine righteousness, thus drawing attention to a change in the present from that of the past. Finally, both are vitally connected with the faith of God's Son, Romans 3:21,22 leading to this theme ("Jesus Christ's faith") and Romans 3:25,26 developing from it ("the faith in His blood").

The key position of the subject of divine righteousness in the evangel is shown by its prominence in Romans 3:21-26,

where what is said about Christ and about human beings is developed in relation to the righteousness of God. A suggested structure was presented in the January 2005 issue of *Unsearchable Riches* (p.43), which follows here with a fuller inclusion of verses 24-26. The two sections labeled "A" focus on God; the "B" sections direct attention to Christ; and what is said about us is safely positioned in the middle so that our deliverance and peace is clearly seen in reference to God's righteousness and Jesus Christ's faith.

A. *Yet now, apart from law, a* **righteousness of God** *is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a* **righteousness of God**

B. *through* **Jesus Christ's faith**

C. *for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.*

C. Being justified gratuitously in His grace,

B. through the deliverance which is in **Christ Jesus, Whom** *God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter through* **faith** *in His blood,*

A. for [unto] *a display of* **His righteousness** *because of the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before in the forbearance of God, toward the display of* **His righteousness** *in the current era, for* [unto] *Him to be* **just** *and a* **Justifier** *of the one who is* [out] *of the faith of Jesus.*

THE ASTOUNDING DISPLAY

Hence the evangel of God, in announcing justification in God's grace, manifests God's righteousness. Furthermore, in Romans 3:25 Paul expands on this message of grace by telling us that, in accord with God's purpose, Christ Jesus is the Antitype of that place in the tabernacle and temple

where Israel's chief priest was to come before God once a year, sheltered by blood from divine indignation. Here in the holiest place, was the coffer of the testimony, or ark of the covenant, above which was a lid of gold, called the propitiatory shelter (AV, *mercy seat,* Heb.9:5). This was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has become the Place where we come to God in peace. In this we see that Christ's faith is not only the channel for the manifestation of God's righteousness in the achievement of *justification,* but it also is the channel for the display of God's righteousness in the achievement of "propitiation," or a standing before God apart from indignation.

These tremendous and blessed results of Christ's faithful obedience unto the death of the cross, are accomplishments of the righteousness of God. That is what is being set before us, placed in startling display in front of the eyes of our heart. For the apostle, this display is so important as an essential feature of the evangel that, after mentioning it twice in 3:21,22, he mentions it twice more, in verses 25 and 26, once in relation to the situation of the past where God passed over the penalties of sins, and then in relation to its present application to and appreciation by believers.

And still the apostle is not through with this theme. After speaking four times of God's righteous*ness,* Paul concludes by speaking of God as *being* righteous, or "just," and as the One Who *justifies,* or "righteous-fies" human beings and their lives. The last part of Romans 3:26 shifts the thought from the display (revelation, or manifestation) of God's righteousness, to the righteousness itself which is being displayed and to its application in that great and glorious work of justification.

GOD DEALS WITH ALL EVIL

God's righteousness cannot be satisfied as long as any measure of irreverence and unrighteousness, even the slightest hint of wrong or lack or ignorance remains in His creation. In addition, all the suffering and wickedness of the eons must be found to have been necessary for the good end which God has gained. Consequently, God will be thanked and glorified, and His blessedness will be honored with full appreciation.

Hence the evangel of God concerning His Son is a message that faces all the evils and failures of the past, as well as the fearful judgment to come, recounted in Romans 1:18-3:20, and it declares that God is justified as our Creator and God in all that occurs. At the very heart of the evangel is the righteousness of God. It reveals to us that He is justified in all things by the results which are gained through the death and resurrection of His beloved Son.

These results have even now begun to be expressed in our own lives as believers. The consummations of the eons have attained, in spirit, to us (1 Cor.10:11). We have been given the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying "Abba Father!" (Rom.8:15). It is not yet as it shall be, for we have only the earnest of the spirit (Eph.1:13,14), but we are being invigorated and refreshed and encouraged by this display of God's righteousness, and we pray for growth in its realization.

HUMAN IRREVERENCE AND UNRIGHTEOUSNESS AND DIVINE INDIGNATION

While looking at these words of Romans 3:25,26, we should now go back to that earlier section of dire darkness and see how the light of the evangel shines upon it. "For the God Who says that out of darkness light shall be shining is He Who shines in our hearts with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6).

Romans 1:18-25 has boldly spoken of human irreverence toward God Who is their Creator. How can the God

of such ignorant and stubborn beings be justified as their God? They see His achievements all about them in the existence of life and the marvels of creation, but they do not glorify or thank Him. They twist the truth of God and alter it into a lie and offer divine service to the creature rather than the Creator. Yet He is their Creator. How, then, can He be justified in creating such a creation? Humanity descends continually into irreverent and unrighteous acts which are, in turn, increased with added misery by God giving them over to even more vicious irreverence and acts of wickedness. Furthermore, even when God is forbearing and patient there is no lasting change by way of repentance (Rom.2:4). And as for God's chosen people Israel, whose are the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the legislation and the divine service and the promises (Rom.9:4,5), the general direction of their history has been toward the *dishonoring* of the God in Whom they boast (Rom.2:17-24).

RECOGNIZING GOD AS GOD

It will not do to try to justify God in this dreadful situation in which we find ourselves by saying He has nothing to do with it. To speak of our wills as though they were independent of any outside causes and to deny to God either the power or desire to accomplish His will are expressions of irreverence. The charge against humanity that they fail to glorify and thank God *as God* (Rom.1:21) applies to all of us to some extent, and it is only in God's grace as we grow in realization and appreciation of God's righteousness, wisdom, power and love that we may be being removed from this failure.

For God to be just, and for Him to be displayed as such, He must be glorified and thanked as God the Justifier. The truth of God must be realized, so that He is given divine service of thanksgiving and praise and be blessed for the

eons and beyond. For God to be righteous, He must bring His creation to understand Who He is, no longer avoiding Him and being useless, but being freed into the glorious freedom of the children of God, in which we all cry out to Him, "Abba, Father!" (*cf* Rom.8:15-25). This is where the cross of Christ, which is announced in the evangel and which is the expression of His faith, leads.

Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one *dikaiōma* [one JUST-*effect*, one deed effected by God's righteousness operating in His Son, Jesus Christ,] for all mankind, for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just (Rom.5:18,19).

GOD IS JUST AND JUSTIFIER

In the last half of Romans 3:26, the apostle Paul unfolds the evangel of God as it relates to God's righteousness in a most forceful and dramatic way. The deliverance which is in Christ Jesus not only displays God's righteousness, but it establishes it. Notice the two uses of the word "for," or "unto," in Romans 3:25 and 26. The deliverance which is in Christ Jesus is (1) *for* the display of God's righteousness, and (2) *for* God to be just and a Justifier. Let us consider this second outcome now.

The justification and peace which are gained through the faith of Jesus Christ in dying and being roused are not simply the means for the display of God's righteousness, but God could not be righteous in carrying out His purpose for His creation without this faithful obedience of His Son to the death of the cross. This concluding statement of Romans 3:26 is concerned not with simply the *display* of God's righteousness but with *the establishment of His righteousness itself.* The faith of Jesus Christ not only man-

ifests God's righteousness, it is the means by which God's righteousness in His work of justification is brought about.

This bears repeating: The faith of Jesus Christ in suffering and dying and being entombed and then roused from among the dead is what establishes God's righteousness. The deliverance which is in Christ Jesus and His position as the Place of propitiation, as announced in the evangel, are for God *to be* just. They are the necessary elements for God *to be* righteous, and, in particular, for Him *to be* the righteous Justifier.

WHAT OCCURRED BEFORE

In the long eras before the cross of Christ, those who were (relatively) upright and faithful in honoring God, correctly assumed that God is righteous. This is well attested in the book of Job. Job's associates thought that he was doubting God's righteousness, and they were shocked by this. Job was not denying that God was just, but he could not see it as so. Hence he pleaded for assurance that God was in charge of things, that the evil that had come upon Job was part of the operations of God. Job could not see that his sufferings were just, but once God revealed Himself as the God of all creation Job was satisfied.

David also sang in exultation (Psa.119:137):

You are righteous, O Yahweh
And Your judgments are upright.

Even in His judgments, which David correctly called "upright," there was much that did not appear upright, and always there was much forbearance and much passing over of the penalties of sin. But now, according to the evangel, we can exult in the established fact that God is righteous.

It is not merely a reverent assumption. *It is a fact!*

Justification in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter is the evidence placed before the eyes of our heart that He is righteous.

This is what the evangel declares. What would Job have said, had he been graced by God to hear this marvelous word? What psalms would David have composed and sung with fervent praise, had he heard that His Lord had died for His sins and that he was justified gratuitously in God's grace! Righteous is God, and all His ways are upright, and in everything God is justified!

We are believing this. How happy we are to be believing the evangel! God has not yet given everyone faith, and we too have very likely not grasped the glory and grace of the evangel in any measure of fullness. Yet because God has given us a measure of faith, these words of the evangel are full of power for salvation in our daily lives. And we are sealed for the place He has prepared for us in the oncoming eons as members of the body of Christ.

THOSE OF THE FAITH OF JESUS

In contrast to those who are "out of law," (Rom.4:14,16) we are "out of the faith of Jesus." That speaks of our origins and identifies us accordingly. Besides the reference to those who are "out of law," Paul refers to those who are "out of the Circumcision" (4:12). In our English idiom, we may also speak of a person as being "out of Kentucky," or "out of the University of Minnesota," or "out of a privileged class." Paul uses the figure often in Romans. Christ is One Who, according to the flesh, comes out of the seed of David (Rom.1:3). As believers we are out of the faith of Abraham (Rom.4:16) in that we have a special relationship to God because we are believing what He says to us as Abraham believed what was said to him.

To say that we are out of the faith of Jesus is a grand description of our status and points to the originating cause of this status before God. Once again, as in Romans

3:22 and 3:25, Paul directs attention to the faith of Jesus Christ. That is where our roots are. That is the source of our position before God. That is our common heritage. That is what assures us of justification and peace before God, not what we have done, and also not our faith, but the faith of Him Who emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and Who, being found in fashion as a human, humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil.2:7,8).

Yet, as we have already noted often, to be out of the faith of Jesus does not speak of something that is eternally exclusive, as though to suggest those who are not presently out of our Saviour's faith, can never enjoy the justification that has been gained for them. That we are out of His faith is not exclusive, but it is definitive. Whenever anyone stands justified in God's sight, this is so because of the faith of Jesus.

Someday all will bow in the name of Jesus (Phil.2:10).

Hence, when all mankind are blessed with life's justifying (Rom.5:18), it will be because of God's giving of His Son, Who was faithful to the death of the cross. All will then join the ranks of those who are out of the faith of Jesus. What a glorious day that will be!

THE GLORY OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

God's giving of His Son for sinners makes it absolutely true that God is righteous. It is the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus and its effects of justification and peace that leads to God being just, undeniably righteous in all His operations. And it is the same work of God's love and of Christ's faithfulness that leads to God being the Justifier. He will ultimately be thanked and glorified as the One Who brings all to a righteous consummation.

D.H.H.

WARNINGS TO JUDAH
(Jeremiah 4:3-31)

HAVING dealt with the future of the ten tribes, who were already deported, Jeremiah's message now turns to Judah, to whom the prophet was particularly sent. He warns them with threats and alarms, lest they suffer a like fate.

JEREMIAH 4:3,4

3 **For thus says Yahweh to** the **man of Judah**
and to [7]the **dwellers**[l] **of**[cs] **Jerusalem:**
Till for yourselves **tillage,**
And do not [l]**sow** [>]**among thorns.**
4 **Be circumcised to Yahweh,**
And take away the [7]**foreskin**[~cs] **of your heart,**
O **man of Judah and dwellers**[l] **of Jerusalem,**
Lest My fury should go [l]**forth like fire**
And [-]**consume,** [+]**with no**ne to **quench**[l] it,
[f]**because of your evil actions.**

By means of a parable they all could understand literally, Jeremiah seeks to send home to their heart the folly of continuing in evil. Grain sown among thorns would not only choke but would be in danger of being burned if the thorns caught fire. These burned so fiercely that the grain would be consumed along with them.

A second parable added to this completes the thought. They were all circumcised in flesh, but few understood its meaning or carried out its essence. It signified the cutting off of the flesh in dealing with Elohim. They did not worship in spirit and in truth (*cf* John 4:23,24).

These are words of warning which tell of fearful judgment in the immediate future. For it was given to Jeremiah, first of all, "to pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to demolish," which must precede any message of building and planting (Jer.1:10). The prospect of Israel's return to Yahweh and of the nations blessing themselves in Him, expressed in Jeremiah 4:1,2, seems hopeless as the invaders approach nearer and nearer.

JEREMIAH 4:5-7

5 **Tell** it **in Judah,**
And in Jerusalem announce it **and say,**
Blow the **trumpet in** the **land,**
Proclaim; *m*__**do**__ it **fully and say:**
Gather yourselves**,**
and let us come to the fortress cities.
6 **Lift** up a **banner:** To*d* **Zion;**
*c*__**Take**__ to **strong** shelter**; do not** ˡ**stand** still,
For evil I am **bringing from** the **north,**
and a **great breaking.**
7 A **lion has** come **up from his thicket,**
And a **ruiner**ˡ **of nations, he has decamped,**
Has gone **forth from his** *ri*__**place**__
to *pl*__**make your land**__ › a **desolation;**
Your cities, they shall crumble
*f*__**because**__ there **will be no dweller**ˡ**.**

The rule of the nations belongs to Judah and Jerusalem, and they will have it, under Messiah, in the future. But before that time it is given to four other powers, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and the false Christ in the latter days of the eon. The first of these was about to destroy Judah and Jerusalem, and carry them away to Babylon. This is the background of Jeremiah's predictions. Here he gives the alarm. Although Babylon lies east of Judah the desert

was between, so they went northwest along the Euphrates river and came down from the north. Nebuchadnezzar is aptly called a lion, the king of beasts, for he conquered all nations. At this time he seems to have set his army on the march to Jerusalem.

JEREMIAH 4:8-18

8 **On this** account **gird** yourselves with **sackcloth;**
Wail and howl;
For the **heat of Yahweh's anger**
has not turned away **from us.**
9 **And it will come** to **be in** ˙**that day, averring** is **Yahweh,**
The **heart of the king shall perish,**
And the **heart of the chief** officials**,**
And the priests will be appalled,
And the prophets, they shall be stunned.
10 +__**Then I**__ ˡ__**said, Alas, my Lord Yahweh,**__
*so*__**Surely You have lured,**__ yea **lured**– › ˙**this people**
and › **Jerusalem,**
› **Saying**–**, Peace, it shall** *b*__**come to you,**__
+__**Yet**__ a **sword has touched unto the** very **soul.**
11 **In** ˙**that era it shall be said** ›**concerning** ˙**this people**
and ›**concerning Jerusalem:**
A **glazing wind** from the **ridges in** the **wilderness**
is the **way of** the **daughter of My people,**
Not serving **to winnow nor to purify;**
12 A **fuller wind** *f*__**than this shall come for Me;**__
Now even I Myself **shall pronounce judgments**
`against **them.**
13 **Behold, like clouds he shall ascend,**
And like a **sweeping** whirlwind are **his chariots;**
Fleeter *f*__**than vultures are his horses.**__
Woe to us, for we are devastated!
14 **Launder your heart from evil, Jerusalem,**
that you may be ˡ**saved!**

How [fr]**long shall your lawless devisings lodge** [i]
within you?
15 [t]**Indeed** a **voice** is **telling** it **from Dan,**
And is **announcing sorrow**
from the **hill** country **of Ephraim.**
16 **Remind** › the **nations:** Come [bd]**this** way**!**
Announce it **over Jerusalem:**
Besiegers[l] are **coming from the far** off **land,**
And they shall [g]**lift up their voice**
[on]**against** the **cities of Judah;**
17 **Like** those **guarding** a **field, they** [b]**stay** [on]**around her,**
[f] **round about,**
For `against **Me has she rebelled, averring** is **Yahweh.**
18 **Your way** of life **and your actions,**
they have [d]**brought these** things ›**on you;**
This evil of yours,
[t]**indeed** the consequences are **bitter,**
[t]**Indeed it touches unto your** very **heart!**

Here Judah is called to repentance by the operation of Yahweh's anger. They needed to change their mind in view of the approach of Nebuchadnezzar and the lack of courage among the political heads and lack of faith among the religious leaders (verse 9). This was so extreme that Jeremiah felt certain that Yahweh Himself had lured the rest of the people into thinking that peace is coming (verse 10). Far from being blasphemy, it is an indication of his recognition of divine supremacy when the prophet traces even Jerusalem's false rallying cry of "Peace" to Yahweh.

A good wind is much used in the east to separate the chaff from the grain, but the wind that was coming was a glazing storm, for the enemy was coming as a sweeping whirlwind which could only devastate (Jer.4:11-13).

The usual outward token of repentance in Israel was a garment of sackcloth, often accompanied by wailing and howling (Jer.4:8). This is apt to be superficial, so they were also exhorted to launder their heart (verse 14). The time called for internal cleansing, especially from the effects of their lawlessness.

As was later shown to the prophet Daniel, it was the will of Elohim that Babylon rule the world at that time. Judah had already been subject to Nebuchadnezzar, but rebelled, contrary to the advice of Jeremiah. Now the armies of the Babylonian king were nearing. Dan was the most northern of the tribes, and the hill country south of it was the territory of the ten tribes often called Ephraim (verse 15). Hence the besieging army (verse 16) was just north of Judah whose rebellion was actually against Yahweh (verse 17). The consequences of Judah's evil actions were bitter and touched to the heart (verse 18).

JEREMIAH 4:19-22

19 O **my internal, my internal** writhing**!**
I cannot [c]**help** [l]**churning!**
O the **sidewalls of my heart!**
My heart is **clamoring** ›**within me!**
I can**not be** [l]**silent,**
For my soul hears the **sound of** the **trumpet,**
the **shout of war.**
20 **Breaking on** top of **breaking is heralded;**
[t]**Indeed the entire land is devastated!**
Suddenly my tents are devastated,
In a **moment, my** tent**-sheets!**
21 **How** [fr]**long** must **I** [l]**see** the **banner,**
Must **I** [l]**hear** the **sound of** the **trumpet?**
22 [t]**Indeed foolish** are **My people;** `**Me, they** do **not know;**
Frivolous sons are **they,**
And they have **no**[t] **understanding;**
Wise are **they** ›**in** [c]**doing evil**–**,**
[+]**Yet** how **to** [c]**do good they** do **not know.**

Now the enemy, after devastating the land, concentrates on the holy city, Jerusalem, the place where Yahweh dwells, and Zion, where earth's government should be centered. From the divine standpoint the scene is one of utmost pathos and portent. Israel and Judah were called and trained to be Elohim's representatives on earth, to bring blessing to all its peoples and nations. First, the ten tribes failed and were taken far from their place and position. Now the much smaller but far more significant, Jerusalem, the very heart of the divine purpose, was being destroyed. It seemed as if Elohim's great plan for mankind had utterly failed. This is one of the greatest crises in the history of the race. The eras of the nations were about to commence (Luke 21:24).

JEREMIAH 4:23-26

23 **I saw `the earth, and behold,** it was a **chaos and vacant,**
And › the heavens, and they *is*__had no light.__
24 **I saw the mountains, and behold,** they were **quaking,**
And all the hills, they rocked.
25 **I saw, and behold,** there **was no ˙humanity,**
And every flier of the heavens,
they had bolted away**.**
26 **I saw, and behold, the crop** land was ˚a **wilderness**
And all its cities, they were broken down
*f*__Because__ of **Yahweh's presence,**
*f*__Because of__ the **heat of His anger.**

The spiritual cataclysm is here illustrated by and related to the opening chapter of Genesis. There is nothing for Elohim or a spiritual mind anywhere, just as when the earth became waste and vacant after its original creation, and there was no luminary to lighten the scene (verse 23). Moreover, the political powers, figured by earth's eminences were being rocked as during an earthquake, for

Nebuchadnezzar put them all down, making them subject to Babylon (verse 24). Even the subjectorship of humanity over the lower creation was affected (verse 25), and the serving and keeping of what Elohim had provided for their good had ceased (verse 26).

JEREMIAH 4:27,28

27 **For thus says Yahweh:**
A **desolation shall the entire earth become,**
(+__Though I shall not__ *d*__make__ a full *all*__end__ to it)**.**
28 **On this** account **the earth shall mourn,**
And the heavens be ¯somber*f* **above;**
on **For I have spoken, I have resolved,**
And I will neither regret nor |turn back from it.

Although this judgment is so severe and far-reaching, it is by no means the finish of Elohim's operations on the earth. Yahweh will speak and plan and will not regret (repent), for back of the apparent failure and disgrace, it is really an essential part of a much greater plan. All that failed at this time will be a much greater success because of it in the future, and will be a vital element in the revelation of Yahweh Elohim at the consummation.

JEREMIAH 4:29-31

29 **From** the **sound of** the **horseman and** the **archer,**
the entire *7*__countryside~__ is runn**ing away;**
They enter *7*__in__to **caves, And they hide***0* **in thick**ets**,**
And they ascend into **caverns;**
Every ˙city is **forsaken|,**
And there **is no one dwelling in them.**
30 **And you,** who will be **devastated|, what are you doing**
That you |clothe your**self** in **scarlet,**
That you |ornament yourself with **ornament**s **of gold,**
That you |amplify your eyes *i*__with pigment?__

It is **for futility** that **you** make your**self lovely;**
Paramours[l] **reject** [i] **you; They** [l]**seek your soul.**
31 [t] A **sound like** one in **travail**[l] **I hear,**
Distress like a woman [e]**bearing** her **firstborn,**
The **sound of** the **daughter of Zion,**
Who **is gasping** for **breath,**
while [l]**spreading** out **her palms:**
Woe [pr] **to me, for my soul is faint** [›]**before** the **killers**[l]**!**

In a series of brief, terrifyingly vivid scenes, accentuated by the sounds of war, the effects of Yahweh's anger against His stubborn people is laid before us. With the sound of the approaching army the people from the countryside and smaller cities fled to conceal themselves in caves and thickets. In the city of Jerusalem women ornamented themselves as prostitutes with the hope of distracting the soldiers and preserving their lives. It was futile. The army was pitiless against all, women and children, elders and youth. Another sound was added to the sound of trumpet, the shout of war, the pounding of hooves and the military attack. This was the daughter of Zion crying out in excruciating pain like a woman in childbirth, gasping for breath: "Woe to me, for my soul is faint before the killers!"

DIVINE JUDGMENT

In view of this entire chapter, we exclaim with the words of our apostle, "How inscrutable are [God's] judgments, and untraceable His ways!"(Rom.11:33). Yet we relate this also to Paul's words in the previous verse: "God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all." The cross of Christ assures us that the events of Jeremiah chapter four are not the end of God's operations with His chosen people. For "out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!"

–adapted and expanded from notes by A. E. Knoch

IS YAHWEH TRUE TO HIS TROTH?

ISRAEL was the wife of Yahweh. He was her Possessor (Jer.31:32), Who brought them to Himself out of Egypt (Ex.19:4). He was married to her (Hos.2:7). Ezekiel tells the story of how He found her as a new born babe, forsaken and weltering in her own blood. Yet He gave her life and excellent ornaments and took her to be His own, and her renown went forth among the nations for her loveliness, for it was perfect through His honor which He had placed upon her (Ezek.16:4-14). In after years He remembered the love of her espousals when she followed Him in the wilderness (Jer.2:2). At Sinai they entered into the covenant which made them one (Ex.34:10-17).

But Israel became unfaithful, breaking her covenant and turning from Him to the idols of the nations (Ezek. 16:36). Hosea's wife was guilty of this very sin, and became a sign of Israel's apostasy (Hos.2:5). As a wife treacherously departs from her husband, so they dealt treacherously with Him. Therefore He said to her, "I will judge you with the judgments of adulteresses" (Ezek.16:38). And He gave her a bill of divorce (Jer.3:8), even as He had told them to do in the law. Now if a man sent away his wife and she went from him and became another man's, the law says she may not return to him again (Deut.24:1-4). And shall it be so with Yahweh's wife? Is she divorced forever? *Not so!* For He has said, even thus (Jer.3:1,14):

. . . If a man should dismiss his wife,
And she goes away from him and becomes another man's,

Should he return to her again?
Would not that land be polluted, yea polluted?
Yet you have committed prostitution with many associates,
And would you return to Me? averring is Yahweh.

Return, backsliding sons, averring is Yahweh, for I Myself possess you!

A NEW COVENANT

Not again will He enter into a covenant which she can break, but He will make a new one which rests upon His own work alone (Jer.31:31-33):

Behold the days are coming, averring is Yahweh, when I will contract a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Not like the covenant which I contracted with their fathers in the day I held fast onto their hand to bring them forth from the land of Egypt, which covenant of Mine they themselves annulled while I was Possessor over them, averring is Yahweh. For this is the covenant which I shall contract with the house of Israel after those days, averring is Yahweh:
I will put My law within them,
And I shall write it on their heart;
I will become their Elohim,
And they shall become My people.

This will be an eonian covenant (Ezek.16:60) which will rest entirely on Yahweh's own faithfulness (Ezek.36:22,23):

Therefore, say to the house of Israel, Thus says my Lord Yahweh: Not on your account shall I act, house of Israel, but rather for My holy Name which you got profaned among the nations where you have come. I will hallow My great Name which has been profaned among the nations, which you got profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am Yahweh, averring is my Lord Yahweh, when I am hallowed among you before their eyes.

Then Yahweh will *betroth* her to Himself for the eon (Hos.2:19). She will forget the shame of her adolescence and the reproach of her "widowhood" (i.e., divorce), for her Maker will be her Possessor (Isa.54:4,5). Yet she will not call Him, "Baali," that is, "My Possessor," but rather she shall call Him, "Ishi," that is, "My Husband" (Hos.2:16).

LET GOD BE TRUE

Some have hinted that Yahweh has not kept His pledge, but has married another who has taken Israel's place. Nowhere in God's holy Word has He hinted at such fearful unfaithfulness. When Israel proves unfaithful, He remains true, even as Paul has written (Rom.3:3,4):

For what if some disbelieve? Will not their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? May it not be coming to that! Now let God be true, yet every man a liar.

But, some say, "Is not the church the bride of Christ? Are we not espoused to Christ (2 Cor.11:2)?"

The apostle Paul, in dealing with the Corinthians, rebukes them for following others than Christ. He desired that they should be single towards Him and not divide their affections among His servants. To illustrate this point he compares them to a virgin who is espoused to one man. She may not take up with other men, but must be solely for the one to whom she is betrothed. Now the point lies entirely in the "simplicity" or singleness which the apostle is inculcating (2 Cor.11:3). To add the thought of marriage is unwarranted, and opens the way for all sorts of fancies. The figures of a virgin and a bride are distinct and each has a lesson all its own. The figure of the virgin was used by Paul of the Corinthians in view of certain circumstances. It may not be taken of all the ecclesia.

The Scriptures know nothing of a "bride of Christ." Paul, the one to whom the truth of the present adminis-

tration was revealed, speaks much of our relationship to Christ as His body, but never mentions a bride. He speaks of this administration as being concerned with a *secret* of which nothing was known before, in which blessing is celestial and spiritual (Eph.1:3; 3:9). Yet the "bride" was not only known, but *present* when John the Baptist introduced the Bridegroom to her on the banks of the Jordan (John 3:27-30; *cp* Rev.18:23). *The twelve apostles* and the *faithful remnant in Israel—these are the bride.* And when the faithless part of the nation is judged in the overthrow of Babylon, we are told that the voice of the bride would no longer be heard in her. And of the faithful ones we are shown a vision of the new Jerusalem which is prepared as a bride adorned for her husband for she is the bride, the Lambkin's wife (Rev.21:2,10). And her stones are indeed "in antimony" (Rev.21:2,10; Isa.54:11), and they have the names of the Lambkin's twelve apostles and the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. The saved of the nations will walk in its light, but are not in the city (Rev.21:24).

But we who are saved now—whether Jew or Gentile—we have a higher place than this, for the city of Abraham's hopes *comes down to the earth* (Rev.21:2,3). All our blessings are *celestial.* And not only are our blessings among the celestials (Eph.1:3), but the figure which portrays them to us is a celestial one. We are the body of Christ. He is in heaven, and His body physical is a true token of what we are—His body spiritual (Col.2:17). And we are much nearer and dearer than any bride could ever be, for a man's body is so one with him that He *cannot* but cherish it. Some men have hated their wives, but "no one at any time hates his own flesh . . . as Christ also the ecclesia" (Eph.5:29).

But does not the fifth of Ephesians teach that the ecclesia is the wife (if not the bride) of Christ? No. Many of the steps in the argument of this chapter are entirely unnecessary if this were so. Then it would be simply "Husbands, be loving your wives according as Christ also loves the ecclesia" (Eph. 5:25). But instead of this simple argument, much is made of the fact of the physical oneness of husband and wife. Only after it is shown that the twain have become *one* flesh is it possible to *compare* the marriage relationship with the union of the saints to Christ. A man should love his wife even as *himself*—because this is the love of Christ to the ecclesia, which is His body. Men ought to love their wives as their *own* bodies—which is true of Christ and His own body, the ecclesia. We are members of His *body*—not His bride.

How exultantly precious is our relationship to Him! What could be nearer? What could be dearer? Even sinful men *cannot* hate their *own* flesh. And He *cannot* but love us as He loves Himself! God grant that we may drink deeply of this delicious draught!

THE BRIDE

And Israel—why is she called a *bride* when she was a wife long ago? Her blessings, too, are greater than we realize. She was once a bride when He took her by the hand and led her up out of the land of Egypt (Jer.31:32). And she will respond again, as in the days of her youth (Hos. 2:14,15). God will make all new (Rev.21:5). The Lamb does not grow old, but becomes young. The *amnos* Lamb (John 1:29) becomes the *arnion* Lambkin (Rev.19:7). And the *wife* becomes the *bride* (Rev.21:9). And then they will celebrate the marriage feast as of old, not for seven days, but for a thousand years, for of Jerusalem in that day we read that over all, the glory will be a *chuppah,* or marriage *canopy* (Isa.4:5). For a millennium they will celebrate the nuptials of Yahweh with His people whom He wooed and won and whom He makes doubly His through their unfaithfulness. They shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a turban of royalty in the hand

of their God. They shall no more be termed "Desolation," but shall be called "My-Delight-is-in-Her," and their land "Espoused," for Yahweh is elated in them. As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall their God rejoice over them (Isa.62:3.4).

Let us then leave these earthly blessings to His earthly people, and let us not make Him a perjurer and involve Him in a breach of promise, for He is faithful to them, even as He is to us. We cannot take Israel's place as the bride any more than they can take our place as Christ's body. Both are blessed, yet they differ from each other. One is earthly and connected with earthly rule, as was prefigured by Adam and Eve in Eden; the other is heavenly and linked to universal dominion. The relationship of bride is near, the body is nearer. The union of the bride and groom is dear, but the unity of the body is dearer.

May His grace keep us from staining the honor of His fair Name! –adapted from A. E. Knoch

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GLORYING IN EXPECTATION

"'HOPE' has degenerated into a desire for something which we have no real reason to expect." However, this Greek word in question (*elpizō,* verb; *elpis,* noun), which the Authorized Version usually translates merely as "hope," speaks of God as the One on Whom we "*rely*" (2 Cor.1:10; 1 Tim. 4:10; CV), in Whom we put our "*trust*" (AV).

Therefore, when speaking of something in the future, the Concordant Version translates the verb form of this word as "expect," and the noun form as "expectation." In the Keyword Concordance, then, "expectation" is defined as "a *sure and certain* hope."[1]

Thus, in *relying* on the living God (1 Tim.4:10), our Saviour, "Who does not lie," Whose "promises" are "before times eonian," we stand today, in all devoutness, "in *expectation* of life eonian" (*cf* Titus 1:1,2).

Most people will concur that there is nothing sure about these troubling times, in which we live. The cares of this life can be overwhelming, and the future, at times, can look downright depressing. How blessed we are, as the children of God, to have a steadfast anchor, a most precious and glorious expectation in the midst of widespread uncertainty.

"Our expectation is one of the most powerful things to consider because of the effect that it has upon our life *if we get a glimpse of it.*"[2]

As great as our expectation is, my concern is that unless

1. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.97.
2. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.45, p.295.

we really do get a glimpse of it and it becomes an active, living reality in our hearts, we will find little if any consolation in it. A vague and abstract concept of the "hereafter," will have little effect on our lives. This enlightenment can come from God's Word alone, and only then through the enlightenment of the eyes of our heart (*cp* Eph.1:18), the core of our spiritual being. There, we can behold the glory of what lies ahead for us, "not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, matching spiritual blessings with spiritual words. Now the soulish man is not receiving those things which are of the spirit of God, for they are stupidity to him, and he is not able to know them, seeing that they are spiritually examined" (1 Cor.2:13,14).

At first glance, this whole matter may appear as a great paradox. On the one hand, we are asserting that we possess this great treasure; yet on the other hand, we are saying that we do not really have it yet, nor can we actually perceive it now, since ". . . expectation, being observed, is not expectation, for what anyone is observing, why is he expecting it also?" (Rom.8:24).

As we explore what God has declared regarding our expectation, our prayer must be that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving [us] a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him, *the eyes of [our] heart* having been enlightened, for [us] to perceive what is *the expectation of His calling,* and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of *His allotment* among the saints" (Eph.1:17,18).

Once we get a glimpse of this expectation of our calling, and take the time to meditate on what our heart beholds, it will have a powerful effect on our life.

The wisdom we are praying for is not the wisdom of this world: "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the discusser of this eon? Does not God make stupid the

wisdom of this world? For since, in fact, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom knew not God, God delights, through the stupidity of the heralding, to save those who are believing" (1 Cor.1:20,21).

Instead, we are praying for a realization of ". . . *God's wisdom in a secret,* wisdom which has been concealed, which God designates before—before the eons, for our glory, which not one of the chief men of this eon knows, for if they know, they would not crucify the Lord of glory. But, according as it is written, That which the eye did not perceive, and the ear did not hear, and to which the heart of man did not ascend—*whatever God makes ready* for those who are loving Him. *Yet to us God reveals them through His spirit,* for the spirit is searching all, even the depths of God" (1 Cor.2:7-10).

WHAT HAS GOD MADE READY FOR US?

First and foremost, it is *the resurrection* of the dead and the snatching away that we anticipate. Our faith is grounded on Him Who roused Jesus our Lord from among the dead (*cf* Rom.4:24).

"Now, if Christ has not been roused, vain is your faith—you are still in your sins! Consequently those also, who are put to repose in Christ, perished. If we are having an expectation in Christ in this life only, more forlorn than all men are we. (Yet now Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing. For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence" (1 Cor.15:17-23).

Christ is risen, indeed, and has been received up into glory (*cf* 1 Tim.3:16).

The next company awaiting this most magnificent occur-

rence, is the ecclesia which is the body of Christ. We are not looking to the stars for signs of His coming; nor do we require any prophecies to be fulfilled before He comes for us. Therefore, we make no claims as to the imminency of Christ's appearing for us. Instead, we are simply relying on "the living and true God, and . . . [are] *waiting* for His Son out of the heavens, Whom He rouses from among the dead, *Jesus, our Rescuer* out of the coming indignation" (1 Thess.1:10).

Accordingly, we are persuaded that ". . . the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven with a *shout of command,* with the voice of the Chief Messenger, and with the *trumpet of God,* and the dead in Christ shall be rising first. Thereupon we, the living who are surviving, shall at the same time be *snatched away* together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And thus *shall we always be together with the Lord.* So that, console one another with these words" (1 Thess.4:16-18).

Likewise, in the conclusion of this present eon, those among the nation of Israel and related saints of old who are "deemed *worthy* to happen upon . . . [the coming] eon and the resurrection from among the dead" (Luke 20:35), will also be vivified in Christ's presence. This will occur in the era appointed unto them, as those who themselves "are [also among] Christ's" own people just as surely as ourselves (1 Cor.15:23; *cp* Rom.16:7; Matt.24:13,14,21; Dan.12:1-13).

The trumpet is an instrument of celebration and praise, and its sound will awaken in each one of us the most transcendent worship possible. The trumpet is also used to assemble to battle; and, the battle being announced is one of a sure and eminent victory. This will finally occur at " . . . the consummation, whenever [Christ] may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and

power. For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death" (1 Cor.15:24-26). Finally, then, "whenever all may be subjected to [God], then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:28).

What joy should fill our hearts as we anticipate this most-glorious event. It was the joy lying before Jesus, the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, that gave Him the courage and faith to endure the cross, despising the shame (*cf* Heb.12:2). Was it His own resurrection, alone, that He had in mind, or was it not as well the unveiling of the sons of God (*cf* Rom.8:19)? Indeed, is He not, even now, longing for the same things we are?

He has been listening to the children of God crying "Abba, Father" for many years! Time and again He has heard the desperate plea, "Come Lord Jesus!" He, more than anyone, must feel the entire creation groaning and travailing, awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God. It is no wonder, then, that when He comes, it will be with a *shout!*

We are not told what words Christ will shout in that day. When He called Lazarus from the tomb all He cried was, "Lazarus! Hither! Out!" (John 11:43). Whatever the words, we know they will produce the sweetest sound ever heard. I have a notion that we will be shouting also, as we ascend from the earth, soaring through the Adversary's territory (*cp* Eph.2:2), on our way home.

A. E. Knoch wrote: "If we are faithful to God, we will find but little in this life, and we will look forward to resurrection-life in Christ. Apart from resurrection, we should be the most pitiable of all mankind."[3] It was surely not Brother Knoch's intention to make us feel guilty about the few pleasures in this life that we may enjoy. No doubt his

3. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.65, p.85.

intent was rather to suggest that the only reason we can enjoy our family and friends as we do, is because of the understanding we have of God's love and purpose for us which includes resurrection life in Christ and the deliverance it will bring *for all.* Compared to this "sure and certain hope," everything else in this life is vanity indeed.

LONGING TO BE HOME

God has placed in each one of His children a deep longing for something greater than what we can touch or see, here on earth. "For we are aware that, if our terrestrial tabernacle house should be demolished, we have a building of God, a house not made by hands, eonian, in the heavens. For in this also we are groaning, *longing to be dressed* in our habitation which is out of heaven, if so be that, being dressed also, we shall not be found naked. For we also, who are in the tabernacle, are groaning, being burdened, on which we are not wanting to be stripped, but to be dressed, that the mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now He Who produces us for this same longing is God, Who is also giving us *the earnest of the spirit.* Being, then, courageous always, and aware that, being at home in the body, we are away from home from the Lord (for by faith are we walking, not by perception), yet we are encouraged, and are delighting rather to be away from home out of the body and *to be at home with the Lord*" (2 Cor.5:1-8).

All through history, God's chosen ones have been aware that they were strangers in a foreign land. The writer of the book of Hebrews, when referring to that "vast . . . cloud of witnesses" (Heb.12:1), wrote these words: "In faith died all these, not being requited with the promises, but perceiving them ahead and saluting them, and avowing that they are *strangers and expatriates* on the earth. For those who are saying such things are disclosing that they are *seeking for a country of their own.* And, if, indeed, they remembered that from which they came out, they might have had occasion to go back. Yet now they are *craving* a better, that is, *a celestial;* wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be invoked as their God, for He makes ready for them a city . . . . And these all, being testified to through faith, are not requited with the promise of God concerning us (the looking forward is to something better), that, apart from us, they may not be perfected" (Heb.11:13-16; 39,40).

The homeland for which we are craving is ". . . *our realm . . . inherent in the heavens,* out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself" (Phil.3:20,21). *This* is where our lot is cast; *this* is where we belong. It is there, in the heavens, that we have a permanent and actual possession.

For the members of the body of Christ who died long ago, Christ's appearing for them will seem like only the passing of a moment's time. This is because they had only fallen "asleep" in the Lord. Their next conscious thought, then, subsequent to their death, will be the sound of Christ's own trumpet: "For He will be trumpeting, and the dead will be roused incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor.15:52).

At present, ". . . our Lord, Christ Jesus . . . alone has immortality, making His home in light inaccessible, Whom not one of mankind perceived nor can be perceiving . . ." (1 Tim.6:14b; 16a). These feeble bodies which are prone to decay and sin, are not equipped to dwell in the splendor of our celestial home.

Therefore, whether we are alive or are asleep in the grave, when the trumpet sounds, ". . . we all shall be changed, in an instant, in the twinkle of an eye . . . . For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immor-

tality. Now, whenever this corruptible should be putting on incorruption and this mortal should be putting on immortality, then shall come to pass the word which is written, Swallowed up was Death by Victory. Where, O Death, is your victory? Where, O Death, is your sting? Now the sting of Death is sin, yet the power of sin is the law. Now thanks be to God, Who is giving us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. So that, my beloved brethren, become settled, unmovable, superabounding in the work of the Lord always, being aware that your toil is not for naught in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:51b; 53-58).

After Paul's lengthy explanation about our resurrection and vivification, we read two little hinge words, in the last verse of this chapter, words that easily can be overlooked. He says, "So that . . . ." That is to say, Because of this glorious revelation of which I have just been speaking—"So that [or 'therefore'], my beloved brethren, *become settled, unmovable,* superabounding in the work of the Lord always, being aware that your toil is not for naught in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58). It is on the basis of apprehending what God has prepared for us that we can become settled and unmovable now.

To "settle," is ". . . to set in place firmly or comfortably . . . . to *take up permanent residence.*"[4] Thus, in spirit, we can be firmly established and comfortable in our celestial homeland.

". . . God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us . . . vivifies us together in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us together and *seats us together among the celestials,* in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:4-6). What a privilege and honor to get a glimpse of our celestial allotment. ". . . By revelation the secret is made

4. New York (Warner Books, 1983): Webster's New World Dictionary, p.545.

known to [Paul] . . . the secret of the Christ, which, in other generations, is not made known to the sons of humanity as it was now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets: *in spirit* the nations are to be joint *enjoyers of an allotment . . .*" (Eph.3:3-6).

GOD IS FAITHFUL

We cannot earn, nor in any way qualify to be partakers of Christ's celestial allotment; for God "saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian" (2 Tim.1:9).

Neither will God change His mind about choosing us and designating us beforehand for glory (*cf* Rom.8:28-30), even if we should deem our calling above in Christ something commonplace, or even if it should become a matter of neglect. "For God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for our sakes, that, whether we may be watching or drowsing, we should be living at the same time together with Him" (1 Thess.5:9,10).

Why, then, does Paul entreat us, and that in so many ways, to walk *worthily* of the calling with which we were called (Eph.4:1)? Paul knew that even though our expectation is assured, "becoming settled" is not. "All, whatsoever you may be doing, work from the soul, as to the Lord and not to men, Being aware that from the Lord you will be getting the compensation of the *enjoyment of an allotment*" (Col.3:23,24). Enjoying our allotment and becoming settled, is a powerful reward set before us right now. Let us not be content with the cheap imitations either of "fatalism" or of "apathy"; these are not rewards from the Lord, but mere reflections of human confusion and disinterest.

"Are you not aware that those racing in a stadium are, indeed, all racing, yet one is obtaining the prize? Thus be

racing that you may be grasping it. Now every contender is controlling himself in all things; they, indeed, then, that they may be obtaining a corruptible wreath, yet we an incorruptible" (1 Cor.9:24,25).

Paul continues this theme into the next chapter of 1 Corinthians, by telling us why God was not pleased with the children of Israel, and how He punished them. He then warns us that "all this befalls them typically. Yet it was written for our admonition, to whom the consummations of the eons have attained. So that, let him who is supposing he stands *beware* that he should not be falling. No trial has taken you except what is human. Now, faithful is God, Who will not be leaving you to be tried above what you are able, but, together with the trial, will be making the sequel also, to enable you to undergo it" (1 Cor.10:11-13).

This passage is addressed to those who seem to be standing; or rather, in any case, to those who suppose themselves to be so doing. "Standing" speaks of maintaining an upright position. Therefore, even when we think we are standing firm in the faith, we need to "beware, lest we fall." We need to take time to *try* ourselves, if we are in the faith; *test* ourselves (2 Cor.13:5).

Because of our lofty position in Christ, we are by no means exempted from "the fiery arrows of the wicked one." It is for this very reason that we will be a target! Therefore, let us be "taking up the large shield of *faith," by which we will be able to extinguish all such flaming missiles (Eph. 6:16). How we thank God that He* is faithful, and that He will not be leaving us to be tried above what we are able.

Understanding 1 Corinthians 10:13 will be most helpful; hence this passage warrants a close examination. Let us start by breaking it down and looking at its key aspects:

1. Trials are common to all humans.
2. Trials are for the purpose of trying or "probing" us.
3. God is faithful, and He will not be leaving us to be tried

above what we are "able" (which is to say, that for which we will "have sufficient resources for the end in view."[5]

4. *Together* with the trial, God will *also* be making the "sequel" thereunto.

5. Our knowledge that every trial that "takes us" will have its own "sequel" (*ekbasis,* OUT-STEPPing; i.e., "issue or result"),[6] will enable us to undergo every trial, each one that we are called upon to endure.

Notice the word "together." *Together* with the trial, God will be making the sequel also. This is to say that God will not only be making the trial, but "that which follows" the trial as well, its "sequel," once we are graced to step out of it, and are therefore no longer in it. God makes both our trials as well as their sequels; and, He makes them "together." That is, He makes them in such a way that they are not only intimately connected or conjoined, but in such a way that each is essential to the other.

The sequel of most significance to our every trial, of course, is nothing less than that of which we have been speaking, namely our happy expectation. Our expectation is the continuing and most important part of the story of our lives; and, it will not begin until we are snatched away to meet the Lord in the air and enter our allotment among the celestials. Logically speaking, and from the human perspective, this could happen very soon, or long after we are in the grave.

OUR PRIMARY TRIAL AND ITS SEQUEL

It is true that we often enjoy present-day sequels to many of our present-day trials. While these may afford us considerable relief and happiness, such relief and happiness is necessarily short-lived, simply because our lives

5. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.5.
6. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.265.

themselves are of short duration. And indeed, in cases where even today we may enjoy deliverance from a certain trial, very often, it is not long before a new trial arrives to takes its place. Besides, by no means all of our present-day trials, enjoy a present-day sequel; instead, many must await Christ's appearing, and "the deliverance of our body," which is appointed solely for that day (*cf* Rom.8:23; *cp* Phil.3:20,21).

It is very helpful to know that our every trial will enjoy its sequel. Indeed, our life as a whole is a great "trial," one which is full of dangers and uncertainties daily, one in which many of its individual trials never receive a sequel, and one which, in any case, ends in death. Therefore, the principal sequel to any and all of our trials can only be the resurrection, immortality, incorruption, vivification, and conformation to the image of God's Son, which He has promised us in the oncoming eons (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22; 43; 53; Rom.8:29).

Our primary "trial," then, is this very life itself, which, for all the good it may contain, must characteristically be termed, "an experience of evil," one which God "has given to the sons of humanity to humble them by it" (Ecc.1:13). Our primary "sequel," then, as well, is our glorious life to come, in which God will "be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:7).

THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT

Let us note carefully the following two verses in which the word "earnest" appears: (1) "Now He Who is confirming us together with you in Christ, and anoints us, is God, Who also seals us and is giving the *earnest* of the spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor.1:21,22). (2) " . . . In Whom on believing also, you are sealed with the holy spirit of promise which is an *earnest* of the enjoyment of our allotment, to

the deliverance of that which has been procured for the laud of His glory!" (Eph.1:14).

An "earnest" is "a pledge in kind";[7] it is "something given or done as an indication or assurance of what is to come; [a] token."[8]

Upon believing, we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise (Eph.1:13). It is a pledge that, in due time, we will enjoy the whole of all that God has promised us. It is true that in the case of God's blessings upon us, the earnest is but a tiny fraction of that which is to follow. Still, no stronger assurance can be given that the instalment will be followed by all that is needed to perfect the transaction, than the glorious earnest which we presently enjoy.[9]

". . . We may be *glorying in expectation of the glory of God*. Yet not only so, but we may be glorying also in afflictions, having perceived that affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness expectation" (Rom.5:2-4).

"Wherefore we are not despondent, but even if our outward man is decaying, nevertheless that within us is being renewed day by day. For the momentary lightness of our affliction is producing for us a transcendently transcendent eonian burden of glory, at our not noting what is being observed, but what is not being observed, for what is being observed is temporary, yet what is not being observed is eonian" (2 Cor.4:16-18).

"Now may the God of expectation be filling you with all joy and peace in believing, for you to be *superabounding in expectation*, in the power of the holy spirit" (Rom.15:13).

Don Bast

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7. Keyword Concordance, p.85.

8. New York (Warner Books, 1983): Webster's New World Dictionary, p.426.

9. adapted from A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.50, p.27.

INDEX TO VOLUME XCVIII

Adam, Where are You? . . . 32
Back in the Land (Gen.33) . . . 7
Basis of Justification, The . . . 87
Be Admonished, Jerusalem (Jer.6:1-30) . . . 79
Believing God . . . 160
Blessedness of Believing, The . . . 131
Boasting Debarred . . . 39
Concerning the Flesh (Gen.34) . . . 53
Divine Supremacy . . . 186
Do You not Know? (Isa.40:21) . . . 213
Esau and the Edomites (Gen.36) . . . 147
Evangel we Have Accepted, The . . . 231
Faith and Righteousness . . . 75
Faith's Righteousness . . . 265
Fleshly Interlude, A (Gen.38) . . . 203
God's Operative Love . . . 23
God's Word Operates . . . 279
Grace Reigns Through Righteousness . . . 65
Happiness from God . . . 221
Indeed, did Elohim Say . . . ? . . . 57
It is Enough! . . . 177
Jacob and the El of Bethel (Gen.35) . . . 99
Joseph and his Brethren (Gen.37) . . . 149
Joseph in Egypt (Gen.39,40) . . . 205
Joseph's Exaltation (Gen.41) . . . 245
Judah and his Wives . . . 198
Justification by the One God . . . 119
Notes on Jeremiah . . . 10,79,109
Obituaries: F. Anderson 56, M. Binney 38, S. Cooper 38, J. Gemmink 96, C. Randolph 38, M. Rynders 56
Pattern of God's Ways, The . . . 17
Paul to the Romans . . . 39,87,119,160,221,265
Proclamations from the Temple Gate (Jer.7:1-15) . . . 109
Search for Faithfulness . . . 10
Sin of Joseph's Brothers, The . . . 257
Some Questions from Scripture . . . 32,57,137,169,213
Studies in Genesis . . . 53,99,147,149,198,203,205,245,257
Thoughts on Prayer . . . 113,273
What Then is This Bleating? . . . 169
Who Am I? . . . 137

Contents:

2 "It is Thy Hand, My God!"
3 Editorial
7 Back in the Land
10 Search for Faithfulness
17 The Pattern of God's Ways
23 God's Operative Love
32 Adam, Where are You?
39 Boasting Debarred

JANUARY, 2007

Volume XCVIII **Number 1**

Concordant Version of
1 Chronicles through Job

(1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job)

Concerning the books included in this fascicle of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, the book of Job is associated with Psalms and Proverbs in the Hebrew canon. Esther is one of five small scrolls, associated as a group; the others are: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations and Ecclesiastes. Ezra (including Nehemiah) appears along with Daniel in a final section of historical writings, concluding with Chronicles.

1 and 2 Chronicles, are treated as one book in Hebrew under the name "Words [or Annals] of the Days" (*cf* 1 Kings 14:19,29). The history is no mere repetition of the books of Samuel and Kings, but a carefully prepared commentary on the same events as they appeared to the eye of Yahweh. Many events which are assigned to human instrumentalities are here traced back to Yahweh. The purposes and counsels of the heart are unveiled in these divine annals.

Ezra and **Nehemiah** are also to be considered as one book under the name "Ezra" which means help. This is the perfect inscription to the history of Judah's restoration to their land and city and temple.

Esther is a marvelous manifestation of the care of Yahweh over His people when their sun is set and they are in the power of their enemies. Then He becomes their guiding star, shaping their way by means of a providence which never escapes His control. By the simplest and most insignificant means He turns the fell designs of their enemies into a source of blessing.

Like all the scrolls which are designated by the name of a man, the meaning of the name, **Job,** is the index to its contents. It means "Enmity." Job is a concrete example of the work of the enemy. The philosophy of evil is discussed to a finish. His four friends make evil the consequence of sin. Job maintains his innocence. Yet Yahweh vindicates him and blesses him far beyond what would have been possible apart from the affliction he had endured. Evil is definitely designed by God to work out His beneficent purpose. Thus the philosophy of evil and enmity is fully elucidated in this book, as its title indicates.

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Unsearchable Riches

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For God and His
Word

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It is Thy Hand, My God!

It is Thy hand, my God!
My sorrow comes from Thee!
I bow beneath Thy chast'ning rod:
'Tis love that bruises me!

I would not murmur, Lord;
Before Thee I am dumb:
Lest I should breathe one murm'ring word,
To Thee for help I come.

My God, Thy name is love,—
A Father's hand is Thine:
With tearful eyes I look above,
And cry, "Thy will be mine!"

Jesus for me hath died,—
Thy Son Thou didst not spare:
His pierc'ed hands, His bleeding side,
Thy love for me declare!

Here my poor heart can rest;
My God, it cleaves to Thee:
Thy will is love, Thine end is blest,—
All works for good to me!

James G. Deck

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2007
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

WE ARE THANKING GOD, for enabling us to continue on in the publication of *Unsearchable Riches* magazine for yet another year, sending forth its message of God's love and grace to all to whom He opens a door for the hearing of its testimony.

How blessed we are to be learning of the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Eph.3:10,11). All leads to the glorious goal, when death will be abolished and all mankind will be vivified—immortal and incorruptible—"that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:22,26,28).

In the meantime, as regards the human experience, Wisdom can only declare, ". . . Vanity of vanities, *all* is vanity" (i.e., transitoriness; Ecc.1:2b). It is the *transitoriness,* or *ephemerality* of living (that is, the quality of being temporary or impermanent), which is the underlying difficulty for us all, as we endure throughout the course of our lives. "For what is your life? For a vapor are you, which is appearing briefly and thereupon disappearing" (James 4:14). Indeed, "All flesh is grass, and all its glory is as the flower of grass. Withered is the grass, and the flower falls off" (1 Peter 1:24; cit. Isa.40:6-8a).

Corollarial to a recognition of the impermanency of one's life, is a keen awareness of the impendingness of one's death: "The living *know* that they shall die . . ." (Ecc.9:5; *cf* Ecc.7:2; *cp* 2 Cor.1:9).

Still, so long as we find life worth living, "we are not wanting to be stripped" of the life we do have, but are rather longing "to be dressed" in the glorious, unending life which God has promised us: "that the mortal may be swallowed up by life" (2 Cor.5:4), life that is life indeed.

"Now He Who produces us for this same longing is God, Who is also giving us the earnest of the spirit" (2 Cor.5:5).

Through all the vicissitudes, disappointments, and sufferings of this mortal existence, then, may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the holy spirit be with us all! Amen! (2 Cor.13:14).

FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP

We are often asked concerning fellowship: "Do you know of any like-minded believers who live in my area?" In cases where we are acquainted with any such persons within a certain locale, we are glad to share this information. We do so in the hope that each one will extend "the right hand of fellowship" (*cf* Gal.2:9) to the other, in a way in which benefit accrues to all.

In many instances, however, we simply know of no one to commend. In such cases, we hope that this will not be too disappointing to those who are seeking such fellowship. It should be remembered that fellowship *in Christ* may be (and should be) "with *all* who are invoking the Lord out of a clean heart. Now [lit., 'Yet'] stupid and crude questionings refuse, being aware that they are generating fightings" (2 Tim.2:22b,23).

Fellowship may or may not (and certainly need not) involve group participation, but simply interpersonal communication. Whether any particular individual or group involvement should truly be *expedient* and *edifying* (1 Cor. 10:23), is something that one must decide for oneself (*cp* Rom.14:5b). "All is allowed me, but not all is expedient. All is allowed me, but *I will not be put under its authority* [i.e., 'jurisdiction'] by anything" (1 Cor.6:12; *cp* 2 Cor.11:4-6).

The infirm in the faith are to be taken to ourselves (Rom. 14:1), but this is not to say that we are to make them our regular teachers (*cp* 2 Tim.4:3). Even at the conversational level we need to be careful: "Be not deceived: evil conversations are corrupting kind characters. Sober up justly and

do not be sinning, for some have an ignorance of God. To abash you am I saying it" (1 Cor.15:33,34).

Regular group fellowship is necessarily limited by constraints of time and distance. Even in a small community there are far too many individuals or groups naming the name of the Lord for us to involve ourselves with them all. Many a group claims to have recovered important beliefs and practices long neglected by others. Other conservative groups view themselves as preserving the vital "fundamentals" of the faith. Claims, names, and slogans, however, are no evidence that one has succeeded in one's endeavors. In any case, those who prefer catch phrases to a pattern of sound words (2 Tim.1:13) only expose the weakness of their position.

GROWING IN THE GROWTH OF GOD

We may rest in the conviction that Christ alone is the Head of the body, the ecclesia (Col.1:18), and that the Head of Christ is God (1 Cor.11:3). All who practically claim His place, or grant it to another, are "not holding the Head, out of Whom the entire body, being supplied and united through the assimilation and ligaments, is growing in the growth of God" (Col.2:19).

Even the apostle Paul had no authority in himself. If he had turned away from *the Lord's* evangel (which was merely in the apostle's trust), the pronouncement would have been, "Let him be anathema!" (Gal.1:8,9). It is very destructive, then, for *anyone* to be turned aside and "transferred from that which calls you in the *grace* of Christ, to a *different* evangel" (Gal.1:6). The evangel of Christ may easily be distorted, and changed into a message quite unlike the original teaching of the apostle Paul (Gal.1:7). One by no means avoids such a course by merely claiming apostolic authority or special revelation.

There is a sense in which all are God's servants. For

example, men who may be quite unworthy and unfaithful as a whole are often used of God to present the message of "Christ crucified" to us (*cf* Phil.1:15-18; *cp* 1 Cor.1: 18-25). Certain others may well teach us truth on additional subjects, even if they should hold to serious error on many other topics.

Perhaps God will be pleased to give some sufficient light that they might truly be "*faithful* dispenser[s] of Christ" (Col.1:6,7). If so, such ones, then, may be graced to do the work of evangelist, pastor or teacher according to truth, even in such a way as is pleasing to God. Yet this can only be so if their work should be suited to the *adjusting* of the saints (from error and minority), in order to lead them into a substantial measure of faithfulness and maturity (*cf* Eph.4:11-14).

It is much better actually to *do* the *work* of an evangelist (2 Tim.4:5) than to boast of being one, or to have this designation conferred upon oneself as a hierarchical rank within a denomination. One must actually proclaim the *evangel* to be an evangelist. The same is true of the "teacher." Those who are actually—however unintentionally—"fraudulent workers" (2 Cor.11:13) may well glory in their teaching abilities while all the while schooling others in the ways of error. Similarly, no one who claims to be a "pastor" (*poimainō;* SHEPHERD) who nonetheless possesses the characteristics of a "wolf" (*cf* Acts 20:29), is a pastor at all—in the sense of Ephesians 4:11.

What we actually are and what we actually do is what counts, not our titles or any human opinions (*cf* 1 Cor.4:1-5). To our own Master we are standing or falling (Rom.14:4). All else is *vanity.* "Let all who teach take this to heart: their work will be tested to see *'what kind it is.'* It is better to have a little *after* the fire than much *before* it."[1] J.R.C.

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.251; *cf* 1 Cor.3:14.

BACK IN THE LAND

33 + **Jacob** ˡ**lifted** up **his eyes, and behold,** + **he** ˡ**saw** ⁷**his brother**⁰ **Esau coming, and with him four hundred men.** +**So** ⁷**Jacob**⁰ ˡ**divided** `**the children** ᵒⁿ**among Leah,** + ᵒⁿ **Rachel and** ᵒⁿ **the two maid**servant**s.** ² +**Then he** ˡᵖˡ**put** `**the maid**servant**s and** `**their children first, and** `**Leah and her children after** them**, and** `**Rachel and** `**Joseph** ᵃᶠ**last.** ³ + **He him**self **passed** on **before them, and he** ˡ**bowed down** to**ward** the **earth seven** ᵈᵘ**times until he** came **close**⁻ ᶠʳ**to his brother.** ⁴ +**Yet Esau** ˡ**ran to meet him;** + **he** ˡ**embraced him and** ˡ**fell on his neck and** ˡ**kissed him; and they** ˡ**wept.**

⁵ +**Then he** ˡ**lifted** up `**his eyes and** ˡ**saw** `**the women and** `**the children; and he** ˡˢᵃ**asked:** ᵃ**Who** are **these** ›**with you?** + **He** ˡˢᵃ**replied: The children whom Elohim has gracious**ly given `to **your servant.** ⁶ +**Then the maid**servant**s** came ˡ**close, they and their children, and** ˡ**bowed down.** ⁷ + **Leah** ᵐʳ**also** came ˡ**close** +**with her children, and they** ˡ**bowed down. And after**ward **Joseph and Rachel** came **close and** ˡ**bowed down.**

⁸ +**Now he** ˡˢᵃ**asked:** ᵃ**What** is **all** ˙**this** ˙**camp to you** ʷ**that I have encountered? And he** ˡˢᵃ**replied: To find favor in** the **eyes of my lord.** ⁹ +**Yet Esau** ˡ**said: I have much, my brother. Let** ʷ**what** is **yours** ᵇ**be yours.** ¹⁰ +**But Jacob** ˡˢᵃ**replied: Oh no! If** ᵖʳ**now I have found favor in your eyes,** +**then you** must **take my** approach **present from my hand,** ᵗ **because I have seen your face as** one **sees**⁻ the **face of Elohim, and you are** ˡ**benevolent** toward **me.** ¹¹ ᵖʳ**Please take** `**my blessing** gift ʷ**that** ⁷**I have brought**~ⁿᶜ **to you, for Elohim has been gracious** to **me, and** ᵗ**because I have every**thing**.** +**So he** ˡ**urged** ⁱ **him, and he** ˡ**took** it**.**

12 +**Then he** ⌊**said:** Do **let us journey, and** do **let us go. And I shall** indeed **go in front of you.**

MEETING ESAU

JACOB MAKES many preparations to influence his brother Esau in his favor, under the false impression that he still harbors a grudge, and never imagining that the Elohim who dealt with him had changed his brother also. Esau meanwhile had prospered, and seems to have gained many allies. Later he leaves Canaan for Edom, and becomes a separate nation. Now however, instead of seizing all of Jacob's wealth, he refuses even his formal gift at first (which might have indicated enmity), and proposes to go with Jacob and *protect* him, instead of *robbing* him of all that he has.

Already we can see in these exchanges between Jacob and Esau an anticipation of that future time when Israel will be blessed and also be a blessing to all the nations, including the descendants of Esau (*cf* Gen.12:2,3; 27:29).

GENESIS 33:13-17

13 +**But he** ⌊*sa*⌋**replied to him: My lord knows**⌊ **that the children** are of **tender** age**, and** that **the flock and the herd,** recently **freshened**⌊**,** are *on*⌋**under my** care**.** + If *7*⌊**I drive them hard**~*nc* a **single day,** + **all the small cattle shall die.** 14 So **let my lord,** *pr*⌊**please, pass** on **before his servant.** +**But may I my**self **conduct** them **gently,** according **to** the **pace of the property** *w* **before me, and** ⌋ the **pace of the children until** *w* **I** ⌊**come to my lord** at*d* **Seir.**

15 +**Then Esau** ⌊**said: Let me** *pr*⌊**now put with you** some *f*⌋**of the people who** are `with **me.** +**Yet he** ⌊*sa*⌋**replied: Why this?** *7if*⌊**Only***0* **let me find favor in** the **eyes of my lord.** 16 +**So Esau** ⌊**returned** *i* ⌋**that day** ⌋**on his way** to*d* **Seir.** 17 **And Jacob journeyed** to*d* **Succoth and** ⌊**built** ⌋ **him**self a **house** *7*⌊**there***0*⌋**. And for his cattle he** *d*⌊**made booths. Therefore he called** the **name of the** *ri*⌊**place Succoth.**

JACOB AT SUCCOTH

Jacob was now in the land, out of the clutches of Laban and free from fear of Esau, so he is not driven, and gives his herds a rest. From what he said to Esau, the weather was warm and a single intensive drive could do damage. As he went westward and needed water, he probably went along the watercourse of the Jabbok, where there would be many oleanders, from which temporary booths could easily be made. Here he also built a house.

GENESIS 33:18-20

18 + **Jacob** ⌊**came safely** to the **city of Shechem** *w* **in** the **land of Canaan,** *i*⌊**after he** had **come** back~ **from Padan-Syria; and he** ⌊**encamped** `**before the city.** 19 +**Then he** ⌊**acquired** `the **portion of the field where he had pitched his tent from** the **hand of** the **sons of Hamor** the **father of Shechem,** *i*⌊**for** a **hundred kesitahs.** 20 **And he** ⌊*st*⌋**set up there** an **altar and** ⌊**called** *7*⌋**on** the~ **Elohim of Israel.**

JACOB CAMPING AT SHECHEM

Jacob still had some lessons to learn, or, perhaps, to teach us, by his mistakes. Although he knew that he was in the land of accursed Canaan, he not only camped before the city, but he *acquired*, that is, bought and paid for, the field where he stretched his tent. Abraham, indeed, had bought a tomb, but that was done in faith, believing that the whole land would be his in resurrection. Here Jacob, the shrewd bargainer, pays for a piece of property which had been given to him!

Later, indeed, he seems to have given it to Joseph (Gen. 48:22). According to later revelation it had a spring (John 4:5-6). He even erected an altar there, and, in faith, he called on the Subjector of Israel.

A. E. Knoch

SEARCH FOR FAITHFULNESS
(Jeremiah 5:1-31)

THE THREATS of Jeremiah 4:3-31 are now matched by an investigation for acts of right judgment and faithfulness in Jerusalem. The search leads to the conclusion that the people are locked up in stubbornness and do not hearken to Yahweh's words. Therefore He is bringing Babylon against them.

SEEK FOR FAITHFULNESS

5 [m]**Go to and fro in** the **streets of Jerusalem,**
And see, I **pray, and know, And seek in her squares;**
If you [l]**find** a **man,**
If there **is** one [d]**executing** right **judgment,**
one **seeking faithfulness,**
[+]**Then I shall pardon** [›] **her.**
2 [+]**Even** [if]**though they say,** As **Yahweh lives,**
They [Mso]**surely**~[c] [l]**swear** [›] **falsely.**
3 O **Yahweh, Your eyes,** do they **not** look **for faithfulness?**
You smote [`]**them,** [+]**yet they** did **not travail;**
You [all]**finished them;**
They refused to **take**¯ **admonition;**
They made their faces more **unyielding**
[f]**than** a **crag;**
They refused to return.
4 [+]**Yet I my**self **said, Yea, they** are **poor** people;
They are foolish,
For they do **not know** the **way of Yahweh,**
The right **judgment of their Elohim.**
5 **Let me go** [›]**on my** way **to the great** men,

And let me speak [`]to **them;**
For they´ should **know** the **way of Yahweh,**
The right **judgment of their Elohim.**
[y]**Nevertheless they**´ **alike had broken** the **yoke;**
They too **had pulled away** the **bonds.**

The first two parallels (verse 1) seem to imply that there are no true men in Jerusalem, the third that theirs is a lip service (verse 2), the fourth and fifth that they do not respond to discipline (verse 3), and the remaining couplets in verses 4 and 5 show their folly and ignorance. Jeremiah himself proposed to go and speak to the great ones, but they also are insubordinate.

THE APPROACHING ARMY

6 **Therefore** a **lion from** the **wildwood smites them;**
A **wolf of** the **plains, it** [l]**devastates them;**
A **leopard** is **alert**[l] **over their cities:**
Anyone [`]go**ing forth from them, he shall be torn**
to pieces.
For multitudinous are their transgressions!
Plentiful are their backslidings!

This seems to be a strong figurative indication of the trepidation which had seized the Jerusalemites in view of the presence of Nebuchadnezzar's forces. The lions that were in the wildwood, and the wolves, and the alert, lurking leopard were among the most dangerous killers among the animals. So the army of Nebuchadnezzar was among mankind.

JUDAH'S SHAMEFUL APOSTASY

7 **Wherein** can **I** [l]**pardon** [›] **you for this?**
Your sons, they have forsaken Me,
And they [l]**swear** [i]**by non-elohim;**
[+]**Though I am ~surfeiting~** [`]**them,**

+**Yet they** still commit |**adultery,**
And in a **house of prostitute**s| **they** |**slash** them**selves.**
8 **They** *b***are rutting horses,** wander**ing early;**
They are neighing,
each one ›**after his associate's wife.**
9 **On** account of **these** things **should I not check** them**?**
averring is **Yahweh,**
And should My soul not |**avenge** it**self**
*i***on** a **nation** *w***such as this?**
10 Go **up** *i***on her leveled** terrace**s and** *m***bring ruin,**
+**Yet do not** |*d***make** a full *all***end;**
Take away her vine-branches,
for they are **not Yahweh's.**

Unpardonable were the sins of Judah, especially their swearing by those which were not real subjectors as their Elohim was. If He should bless them in material things they would only abuse His beneficence by indulging in fleshly lusts. On such as these evil is the only real remedy. The distress and deportation of His people are not a "punishment," but are beneficial in their effect. Such acts of divine vengeance will check them and prepare them for their future service to the other nations. And these inspired records of their past delinquencies will be of great benefit to them, to humble them and to teach them their utter dependency on their Elohim, Yahweh.

The second line of verse 10 has seemed to critics so out of place in this context of destruction that some have even advocated dropping it from the text. Yet Yahweh's reminder that He will not make an end of Jerusalem appears again in verse 18, as well as in 4:17, in 30:11 and 46:28. It fully accords with Yahweh's charge to Jeremiah to build and plant as well as pluck up and break down and destroy (Jer. 1:10). The darkness of the context makes the light of this promise stand out with startling brilliance.

A TREACHEROUS PEOPLE

11 **For they have been treacherous,**
yea **treacherous**– *i***to Me,**
The **house of Israel and** the **house of Judah,**
averring is **Yahweh.**
12 **They have disavowed** *i* **Yahweh,**
And they |**say, Not He! Evil shall not come** up**on us,**
And, We shall not see sword and famine;
13 **And, The prophets, they shall become** › **wind,**
And, The word is **no**t **in them;**
Let thus and thus **be done to them.**

As both the house of Israel and of Judah could not be convinced of their depravity, they were treacherous and disavowed Yahweh by denying His word. They would not hearken to the prophets of Yahweh and denied the message they were bringing. They accused them of being "wind," but the word also means "spirit," so they unwittingly told the truth without intending to do so.

WORDS CHANGED TO FIRE

14 **Wherefore, thus says Yahweh, Elohim of hosts:**
Because you report– `**this** ·**word,**
Behold, I will *g***make**| **My words in your mouth**
in**to fire,**
And ·**this** ·**people** into **wood, and it will devour them.**
15 **Behold, I** will **bring**| up**on you** a **nation from afar,**
house of Israel, averring is **Yahweh;**
It is a **perennial nation; It** is a **nation from** the **eon,**
A **nation** *his***whose tongue you** do **not** |**know,**
And what it |**speaks, you** can**not** |**make out.**
16 **Its quiver** is **like** an **open**| **tomb. They** are **all masters.**
17 + **It will devour your harvest and your bread;**
*M***It***cs* **shall devour your sons and your daughters;**
It shall devour your flock and your herd;

It shall devour your vine and your fig tree**;**
It shall make destitute your fortress cities
In which you are **trusting—**[i]**with** the **sword.**

As they made light of the words of Yahweh's prophets, calling them wind when they were spirit, so He would transform them in their mouths into fire which would consume the people they wished to shelter. This figure was fulfilled by the Babylonian invasion. Babel, or as the Greeks called it, Babylon, goes far back to the beginning of this eon, soon after the deluge, being the first named of the cities of Nimrod (Gen.10:10). It is from, or since the eon, which began after the deluge (Jer.5:15). Jerusalem was chosen by Yahweh to head His kingdom. When it failed, it was quite fitting, in man's day, that it should revert to the sovereignty of the earth. At the time of the end false Israel will gain control under this name (Rev.14:8), and be guilty of the same sin, so that the city of Babylon itself will be terribly and finally destroyed (Rev.18:10,21).

TRAINED THROUGH SUFFERINGS

18 **Yet even in ˙those days, averring** is **Yahweh,**
I shall not [d]**make** a full [all]**end** `of **you.**
19 **And it will come** to **pass, that ~they~ shall say,** [u]**For what** reason **has Yahweh our Elohim done `all these** things **to us? [+]Then you will say to them, Just as you forsook `Me and [l]served foreign elohim in your land, so shall you serve aliens[l] in** a **land not yours.**

Yahweh is by no means through with Judah. In fact this deportation is only one phase of His training. They must be cured of serving foreign subjectors in their own land before they will be ready to spread His worship in other lands. So they are forced to serve aliens in a foreign land.

All of this training through suffering is the strongest of evidence for God's purpose of glory for His chosen people.

STUBBORN AND REBELLIOUS HEART

20 **Tell this in** the **house of Jacob,**
And announce it in Judah, ›saying:
21 **Hear this,** [pr]**now,** you **people, frivolous and mindless,**
[they]**Who ›have eyes [+]yet are not seeing;**
[they]**Who ›have ears [+]yet are not hearing:**
22 **Are you not fearing `Me? averring** is **Yahweh;**
Should you not [l]travail [f]**in My presence,**
I, Who placed the **sand** as the **boundary for** the **sea,**
An **eonian statute, and it shall not pass** beyond **it?**
[+]**Though** its waters [l]**reel [+]yet they shall not** [all]**prevail,**
And its billows clamor,
[+]**yet they shall not pass** over **it.**
23 [+]**Yet for ˙this people** there [b]**is** a **stubborn[l]**
and rebellious[l] heart;
They have defected and continue to [l]**go** away**.**
24 **And they** do **not say in their heart:**
[pr]**Now let us fear `Yahweh our Elohim,**
˙Who **gives[l]** the **downpour,**
the **former rain and** the **latter rain in its season;**
The **weeks,** these **of** the **statutes** for **harvest,**
He [l]safe**guards for us.**

As His people would not accept His words, Yahweh asks them to use their eyes and ears to learn from the works of Elohim in nature. The sea is much greater and more powerful than any nation, yet it is kept in bounds by tiny grains of sand. It may surge with tremendous power toward the beach, but it cannot go beyond the limit He has set.

No nation on earth can control the rain, no matter how powerful they are. Surely He is more to be feared Who regulates the rain, for their whole life is dependent on it.

DEVIOUS DEVICES

25 **Your depravities, they have turned these** things **aside,**

And your sins,
they have withheld the good from you.
26 [t]**Indeed wicked** one**s are found** [i]**among My people;**
Each one [l]**lies in wait like camouflaged– trappers;**
They [st]**set ruinous** snares**; they** [l]**seize men.**
27 **Like** a **crate full** of **fowl,**
so their houses are **full** of **deceit;**
Therefore they have grown **great and are** [l]**enriched.**
28 **They are stout; they are glossy;**
Moreover, they surpass in **matters of evil;**
They do **not adjudicate** rightful **adjudication,**
The rightful **adjudication of** the **orphan,**
[+]**that they may prosper,**
And they do **not judge** the right **judgment**
of the **needy.**
29 **On** account of **these** things **should I not** [l]**check** them**?**
averring is **Yahweh;**
Should My soul not [l]**avenge** it**self**
[i]**on** a **nation** [w]**such as this?**
30 An **appalling and horrible** thing **has** [b]**happened**
in the **land:**
31 **The prophets, they prophesy** [i] **falsehood,**
And the priests,
they hold [l]**sway** [on]**by their** own **means,**
And My people, they love it **so;**
[+]**Yet what shall you do** [›]**at its** [af]**end?**

In Israel, in contrast to the present spiritual administration, good conduct was a key to physical welfare. But there were among them those who sought to evade this by enriching themselves by various devices and deceits. They may think that they will escape the evil which their deeds demand, but now things have come to a head. Even though it will not be complete annihilation, the end which comes out of their appalling and horrible apostasy is coming near.

–adapted and expanded from notes by A. E. Knoch

THE PATTERN OF GOD'S WAYS

THE OPENING chapter of Genesis is a revelation of origins, all of which are traced, directly or indirectly, to the supreme Originator, God. But more than this, this initial portion of God's Word displays the pattern of God's ways. In doing this, in informing us of His works of creation and showing us the essential pattern of His ways, God is introducing Himself to us as He is. Here God first makes Himself known to us *as God* (*cf* Rom.1:21) in a most primary and fundamental way, which is to be kept in heart and mind through every further revelation and in every encounter and experience of our lives.

GOD AS CREATOR

First of all God is the Creator. Whatever exists is due to His creating act. The extended account in Isaiah 45:5-12 and the all-inclusive declaration of Romans 11:36, in their own contexts, repeat and confirm the revelation of Genesis 1:1 as do so many other passages of Scripture. All is out of God.

Then in quick succession, the account tells of the coming (more literally, the *becoming*) of evil on the earth. This is expressed by three Hebrew terms rendered in the CV by the English words, *chaos*, *vacant* and *darkness* (Gen.1:2). These evils are not directly traced to God, but He is the only One in view, and He is in view as Creator. Isaiah 45:7 states explicitly what is implied in Genesis 1:2.

The introduction of chaos and vacancy and darkness into the creation is extremely significant in the outworking of

God's purpose. But this evil does not occupy our attention long, for immediately the text directs us forward to the account of God's spirit vibrating over the waters which covered the surface of the earth.

The rest of the chapter expands on this last theme of the operation of God's spirit. It recounts the way in which God, through His spirit, deals with the evil of verse 2. He does this in two stages, first in what He says, and second in the fulfilling of what He has spoken. In the end we are led from chaos, vacancy and darkness to that which is *very good* (Gen.1:31).

We might outline this pattern of God's way as presented in this opening section of the Scriptures, as follows:

Creation
  Evil
  Spirit in Word
  Spirit in Fulfillment
Very Good

In this, God is shown as the God of power and wisdom and love in bringing creation to an abundantly good completion. His power in creation is exercised in accord with a pattern that can only be described as glorious. It is the divine pattern, for it reflects the character and mind of God. He creates, but He does not go directly from creation to the realization of its goodness. This is because the realization of good requires contrast with the experience of evil, followed by the exultant experience of deliverance from evil.

Hence God's power is shown not simply in doing great things that no creature could ever do, but in doing them in such a way that the highest qualities of existence might be known and appreciated. That is the pattern of Genesis 1. God's will is to expresses His love, so that the creature genuinely recognizes His glory.

AND ELOHIM SAID

In Genesis chapter 1 the repeated pattern of God's spirit operating first in what God says and then in the bringing about of what He has said, is set before us, in an orderly sequence of seven days. For our present consideration we will first focus on Genesis 1:3 which directs attention to the most elementary and fundamental of the operations of God in leading His creation to the realization of the good He has in view. And then we will proceed to the sixth day and the making of humanity.

Using the English progressive-present form of the verb to represent the Hebrew verb forms of Genesis 1:3, and following the word order of the Hebrew, we might translate the passage as follows:

And saying is Elohim, Coming to be is light.
And coming to be is light.

This is awkward English, but if we ignore features of tense and mood, perhaps we can catch something of the simplicity and directness of the Hebrew. What God says comes to be fulfilled exactly as He says it. There may be nuances of command and of future tense in the first line which are replaced by nuances of declaration and past tense in the second line. But in Hebrew these features are implied by the context rather than the form of the verbs themselves. What the verbs, *is-saying,* and *is-coming-to-be,* express is an ongoing action. (This form of the Hebrew verb is usually identified as the "imperfect," or, perhaps more suitably, the "incomplete" verb form.)

There was power in what God was saying, and this power was immediately demonstrated by the actual coming of light reaching through the darkness which lay over the surface of the earth. What a scene! What a deliverance! What a tremendous accomplishment! To God be the glory for the coming of light!

HUMANITY

Setting aside for now the pattern of God's ways shown in days two through five, let us move ahead to the sixth day and the making of humanity. The pattern shown above from Genesis 1:3 is presented in Genesis 1:26,27, as follows:

And saying is Elohim, making are we humanity . . . .
And creating is Elohim humanity.

The process of making humanity is described in much more detail than the bringing about of light. And the verb used in what God said ("making") is not exactly the same as that which speaks of what He did ("creating"). But the process is the same. First God speaks, and then he carries out what He has spoken.

Yet we find in Genesis chapter 3 that evil comes upon humanity even as it did upon the earth as recorded in Genesis 1:2. Indeed, here again the evil is not directly traced to God, but rather to humanity and the deceptive tactics of the serpent. Yet also, it was God Who made the serpent, and it was God Who placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden where He placed the human pair. And in no way does He ever cease to be in charge and be the One out of Whom, and through Whom, and for Whom is all.

In accord with the pattern of Genesis 1, humanity in Genesis 3 has reached a stage which parallels Genesis 1:2. And humanity is still in that stage. "For as, in Adam, all are dying . . ." (1 Cor.15:22).

Death and sin, irreverence and unrighteousness, sorrow and pain, hate and dread, these are parallels to the chaos and vacancy and darkness of Genesis 1:2. And chaos and emptiness and darkness remain with us as well. Cain killing Abel, the wickedness of Cain's descendants, the evil of the whole race in the days of Noah, the tower of Babel, the wars of Genesis 14, the sufferings of Job, the murmuring

of the children of Israel and their distrust of Yahweh in the wilderness, the deportation to Babylon, . . . *the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus Christ,* these are all evidence of the evil that envelops humanity.

VIBRATING SPIRIT

Humanity remains in confusion and fearful emptiness and darkness, but God has gone forward to the next stage which begins with the vibrating of His spirit. As in Genesis 1:3, this is first centered in what God says. Regarding His ways with humanity God has been saying what shall come to be, and the record of His words is provided throughout the Scriptures. In fact, He began to speak of that already in Genesis 3:15,16 in referring to the woman's Seed and to a restoration. The testimony of God points ahead to deliverance from evils into that which is very good.

To be sure, with frank and honest recognition the Scriptures never lose sight of the evils of corruption and unrighteousness which lie upon humanity. But these are to be seen in one way or another in connection with words of deliverance into that which is very good. Just as Genesis 1:2 is dealt with by Genesis 1:3, so the failures and sufferings and wickedness of humanity recorded in Scripture from Genesis chapter 3 forward are dealt with, first of all, by God's words of grace which center on His Son, in figure and type and prophecy, and now in evangel, and then finally by the fulfillment of that good of which He has spoken.

That good, as God Himself has said, comes to humanity through the Seed of the woman, Who is Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the Light, the Antitype of the light which illumined the earth and dispelled the darkness. It is God's Son Who is the Image of the invisible God, Who enlightens us concerning His God and Father. In terms that reflect the words of Genesis 1:3, the apostle Paul writes of the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He

Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor.4:6). It is in Him that we have the deliverance, in Him Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and [delights] to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Col.1:14-20). Consequently, in speaking of the evil of mortality and death in 1 Corinthians 15:22, Paul concludes his thought with these words: ". . . thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified."

God has already brought radiant light into this dark world by means of words, most powerfully by means of that good message, which is the evangel concerning God's Son. In believing this evangel of our salvation we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, and which accompanies us safely to the gracious deliverance of that which has been procured (Eph.1:13,14).

God has spoken, but not all have heard, and not all who have heard are believing what He has said. Nevertheless, what He has spoken will be fulfilled in realization. It is our privilege, granted to us in God's transcendent grace, that we have accepted what God has said regarding the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus. We are believing, even though we are not yet seeing. We have come to that stage pictured in the first half of Genesis 1:3, and we are believing that what God has said will come to be. Let us not get discouraged by the chaos and darkness all about us. These evils are temporary. The finishing step of God's way with humanity will parallel Genesis 1:31. It will embrace all of humanity, and it will be very good.

D.H.H.

GOD'S OPERATIVE LOVE

"BE REJOICING in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing!" (Phil.4:4). We have the most excellent reason, ever, to be happy, for "*the love of God has been poured out in our hearts* through the holy spirit, which is being given to us" (*cf* Rom.5:5).

What peace and consolation is afforded those who are "persuaded" that *nothing* will be able to separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord: "neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.8:38,39).

The essence of love is such that it must be shared. God's love lies behind His great desire to be with those whom He has created in His image. "The Son of God's love, in Whom we are chosen, is the Firstborn of *every* creature. There, before all else, God, invisible, imperceptible, created all in the Son of His love. His purpose? His deep, deep yearning? Love responsive!"[1]

Mankind is the object of God's love, and nothing will prevent Him from satisfying this craving which He has to be with us. For He alone is the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11).

What a privilege is ours, as members of the body of Christ, to share with God the intimacy of His love and happy expectation. God's love is the most powerful force

1. Donald Fielding, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.95, p.34.

in the universe, for "God is love" (1 John 4:8). "Now we ought to be thanking God always concerning you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, seeing that God prefers you from the beginning for salvation, in holiness of the spirit and faith in the truth" (2 Thess.2:13).

WITHOUT LOVE WE ARE NOTHING

1 Corinthians 13 has been named the "love chapter," and is considered by many a poetic and even romantic exposition, excerpts of which are often read at weddings and anniversaries. This may be true, yet there is a much deeper message in this chapter, for us, which deserves our close attention, regarding this complex emotion called "love."

Chapter thirteen starts with these words: "If I should be speaking in the languages of men and of the messengers, yet should have no love, I have become resounding copper or a clanging cymbal. And if I should have prophecy and should be *perceiving all secrets* and all knowledge, and if I should have all faith, so as to transport mountains, yet have no love, I am nothing. And if ever I should be morselling out all my possessions, and if I should be giving up my body, that I should be boasting, yet may have no love, in nothing do I benefit" (1 Cor.13:1-3).

We, who are learning the value of having a pattern of sound words (2 Tim.1:13) and of correctly cutting the word of truth (2 Tim.2:15), need to be reminded that faith and revelation-knowledge are *gratuitous gifts* gushing forth from the heart of a loving Father. Furthermore, unless this great knowledge which we are acquiring should be absorbed by *a soft heart of love*—one that is *yearning* for God—it will profit nothing.

Likewise, any attempt to share these deep secrets, will be little more than a bothersome noise, and will benefit nothing, unless spoken from a vibrant living faith in God, Who is *love.*

Even if we could move mountains, or were to give away all that we have, such acts would benefit nothing, if done for any reason other than that of a direct response to the love of God, gratuitously given to us.

How is it possible that such grand exploits, if we should perform them without love, would be ones in which we would gain no benefit? It surely must be, in the economy of God, that *love accounts for everything.* It is the one thing alone that can inspire *living faith* in God's children. When the grace of our Lord overwhelms a prepared heart, it is with both *faith and love* in Christ Jesus" (*cf* 1 Tim. 1:14), concurrently, that it does so. It is in this connection that we would especially note that "apart from faith," it is impossible to be well pleasing to God (*cf* Heb.11:6).

The intent of these strong words concerning the necessity of love, is to cause us to realize our total dependence on God, while being thankful to Him for "His indescribable gratuity!" (2 Cor.9:15).

"When the Supreme Deity receives His due in thanksgiving and blessing, this is the very summit of righteousness. Nothing else is so utterly and inexcusably wrong as the failure to recognize, to appreciate, and to recompense the Deity for His numberless and limitless benefactions. To bless Him is the greatest act of righteousness of which His creatures are capable."[2]

The matter of which we are speaking is *a heart issue!* In Scripture, when used figuratively, the "heart" speaks of "the center and core of man's *spiritual* being, which is the seat of motives (Matt.5:8), understanding (Matt.13:15), and reasoning (Mark 2:6). This is to be distinguished from the common usage of this term which speaks of the seat of feeling and affection."[3]

2. adapted from A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.36, p.277.

3. adapted and excerpted from KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.141, entry "heart."

In our own day, as in the days of our Lord's earthly ministry, the Word of God has gone forth to the masses. And, for the most part, the situation remains the same as it was for Israel when the Lord spoke to them: "In hearing, [they] will be hearing, and may by no means be understanding; and observing, [they] will be observing, and may by no means be perceiving. For *stoutened* is the heart of this people" (*cf* Matt.13:14,15).

To "stouten," is to "make fat and dull."[4] A heart in this condition is not able either to receive or dispense God's truth. Although it sounds severe, the truth of the whole matter is, *without God's love, we have nothing* and are nothing, and it is only because of His love that we are blessed beyond measure. "Through [Christ], then, we may be offering up the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips avowing His name" (*cf* Heb.13:15).

LOVE IS BELIEVING ALL

Paul goes on in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 to describe this complex emotion as follows: "Love is patient, is kind. Love is not jealous. Love is not bragging, is not puffed up, is not indecent, is not self-seeking, is not incensed, is not taking account of evil, is not rejoicing in injustice, yet is rejoicing together with the truth, is forgoing all, *is believing all*, is expecting all, is enduring all."

Note that Paul does not state that love will make us patient and kind persons. Instead, he writes, "*love* is patient, is kind." He also declares: "For I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh) . . ." (Rom. 7:18). Our apostle was ever mindful that he had nothing to boast of in himself: "With Christ have I been crucified, yet I am living; no longer I, but living in me is Christ. Now that which I am now living in flesh, I am *living in faith*

4. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.289, entry "stouten."

that is of the Son of God, Who loves me, and gives Himself up for me" (Gal.2:20; *cp* 2 Cor.12:11).

God's love in us cannot be contained, and will be expressed through us. Accordingly, we must understand that it is not we ourselves accomplishing anything, but the love of Christ in us, for the laud of His glory. It is God's love *in us* that is patient and kind, even as it is God's love *in us* that is expecting all and believing all. Left to ourselves, we are incapable of believing anything about God, especially His unfathomable secrets. Faith and love, then, abide together, and cannot be separated; hence Paul declares: "[*love*] is *believing* all" (1 Cor.13:7).

THIS ONE IS KNOWN BY GOD

"Now concerning the idol sacrifices: We are aware that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, yet *love builds up*. If anyone is presuming to know anything, he knew not as yet according as he must know. Now if anyone is loving God, *this one is known by Him.* Then, concerning the feeding on the idol sacrifices: We are aware that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God except One. For even if so be that there are those being termed gods, whether in heaven or on earth, even as there are many gods and many lords, nevertheless for us there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is, and we through Him. But not in all is there this knowledge . . . . Now food will not give us a standing with God, neither, if we should not be eating are we in want, nor if we should be eating are we cloyed.

"Now beware lest somehow this right of yours may become a stumbling block to the weak" (1 Cor.8:1-9).

"Except in heathen lands, the question of eating that which has been sacrificed to idols, is no longer a pertinent one, but the principle handed down is quite as important

as ever."[5] The principle expressed in this passage is very clear and elementary: "It is ideal not to be eating meat, nor yet to be drinking wine, nor yet to do aught by which your brother is stumbling, or is being snared or weakened" (Rom.14:21). "Love is not working evil to an associate. The complement, then, of law, is love" (Rom.13:10).

Paul introduces the issue of idol sacrifices in 1 Corinthians 8:1, by stating that we, the enlightened members of the body of Christ, all have knowledge regarding this subject. In verse four, he mentions idol sacrifices again, and continues on through verse six explaining what this knowledge is. It is that we know that no idol is anything, and that there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all is, and we through Him.

In 1 Corinthians 8:1b,2, we find some very profound words, ones that are closely related to those of 1 Corinthians 13. Here we read that "knowledge puffs up, yet love builds up. If anyone is presuming to know anything, he knew not as yet according as he must know. Now if anyone is loving God, this one is known by Him."

It is not that knowledge, literally, puffs up, but that it figuratively does so. "As to feeling, it is *as if* knowledge itself is the guilty culprit and is the cause of our pride. It is instead, however, that *we* are at fault when we become puffed up with respect to our knowledge (even if our knowledge itself should be faultless) because we do not have love. This is because it is *love* that builds up, or edifies.

"It is not that knowledge is bad and love is good; that while love is constructive, knowledge is destructive (or at least not very important), hence we should seek to have as little of it as possible. It is rather that knowledge—an entity which in itself is vital and essential to our true welfare—when in the presence of the *flesh* and devoid of love, can only lead to pride, not to any true edification worthy of the name. *Thus,* "Knowledge puffs up, yet love builds up."[6]

5. A. E. Knoch, Concordant Commentary, p.255.

This is to say that there is no problem with *what* we know to be true, but with how we express it before others. If anyone is presuming to know anything, remember, that we do not yet know as we one day must know and therefore surely will know.

What is amiss, then, with the way that we know (as contrasted with the way that we must come to know)? The answer may not be obvious, but I believe the words that directly follow are the key to a correct understanding.

It is not coincidental, immediately after the phrase in verse two ("If anyone is presuming to know anything, he knew not as yet according as he must know"), that we read in verse three, "Now if anyone is loving God, *this one is known by Him.*"

Many of us proudly confess that our confidence is in God alone, and some of us will go so far as to say that God is ultimately in control of every detail in our lives. Even so, we still worry and complain when trouble and affliction come our way. The problem is not that we do not understand that God is ultimately in control; the problem, instead, is that we have not yet been *perfected in love* sufficiently that we may believe this is so, truly thoroughly and consistently. Only then can we whole-heartedly exclaim even as Job: "Indeed should we receive good from the One, Elohim, and should we not receive evil?" (Job 2:10b).

It is those who are loving God—albeit because He first loves them (1 John 4:19)—who are the ones who are "known" by God, even as who "know" Him intimately. We are in the process of growing in the realization of God. Slowly, we are coming to know according as we must know. Thus, we are

6. James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.93, pp.130,131.

coming *to know the way of love.* By His spirit, God, Who is love, is homing in us (*cf* Rom.8:9); and *this love in us is believing all and expecting all,* besides teaching us to be walking in love, as beloved children (Eph.5:1,2).

This process, that of learning to be walking in love, is God's operation in us. It was initiated by Him, and we are "having this same confidence, that He Who undertakes a good work among [us], will be performing it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil.1:6).

ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE

In the book of Ephesians, especially, we get a glimpse of that for which God is preparing us, ". . . making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in [Christ]) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth—in Him in Whom our lot was cast also, being designated beforehand according to the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, that we should be for the laud of His glory, who are pre-expectant in the Christ . . . [God] subjects all under His feet, and gives Him, as Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all" (Eph.1:9-12; 22,23).

"Yet God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us (we also being dead to the offences and the lusts), vivifies us together in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:4-9).

These secrets had not previously been made known to anyone (*cf* Eph.3:5). Paul, then, asks God to root us and ground us *in love,* that we may be strong to grasp these transcendent truths. Thus our apostle declares, "On this behalf am I bowing my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, after Whom every kindred in the heavens and on earth is being named, that He may be giving you, in accord with the riches of His glory, to be *made staunch with power,* through His spirit, in the man within, Christ to dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, having been *rooted and grounded in love* should be strong to grasp, together with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and depth and height—*to know the love of Christ as well* which transcends knowledge—that you may be completed for the entire complement of God" (Eph.3:14-19).

"It is evident, and experience has confirmed the fact, that the greatest power is required, not for service, but to enable us to realize and to appreciate the marvelous revelation of God's grace and love which is ours in Christ Jesus. May God exercise our hearts to this end!

"Every lack in the universe is filled by Christ. He is God's *Plerōma*, or Complement, Who supplies every deficiency. We, as members of His body, are His complement. To fit us for this place, He wishes us to grasp the grace which this involves, which in turn will reveal the *transcendent love of Christ.* Thus we will be filled or completed—brought to that finished state which fits us for our future destiny."[7]

It is through knowing the love of Christ—which transcends knowledge—that we may be completed for the entire complement of God.

"Love so amazing, so divine,
demands my heart, my life, my all."

(Isaac Watts, from the hymn, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.")

Don Bast

7. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.291.

Some Questions from Scripture

ADAM, WHERE ARE YOU?

"YAHWEH ELOHIM called to the human and said to him: Adam, where are you?" (Gen.3:9).

The words of this text give us record of the first question asked of man by his Creator. The question was not the first in Scripture, for the serpent had already addressed itself to the woman in subtle terms—"Did Elohim say indeed . . . ?" (Gen.3:1) and had succeeded, by its guile, in luring her from the path of obedience. The serpent's question occasioned the event which gave rise to the need for the question of Genesis 3:9, asked by Yahweh Elohim, which is the subject of this meditation.

Within the concise compass of two chapters the Divine Author has given to us the *facts* of the "beginning." In instant obedience to the Creator's primal fiat, the surging shafts of light gleamed forth to penetrate darkness's domain and dispel the stygian clouds which, from the primeval cataclysm, had wrapped the sphere in a barren embrace and covered the abyss in frigid silence. God had not created the earth a chaos (Isa.45:18); it *became* so (Gen.1:2), and, in orderly stages during succeeding days, He fashioned the earth afresh and accomplished the vast work of restoration, suiting it to the purpose of the eons, counselled in His will. As night followed day and day night, each ruled by its appointed light, the Great Architect surveyed the glory of His workmanship and, at its completion, pronounced His verdict: "And behold, it was very good" (Gen.1:31).

In the tranquility of that "dateless date," however, no human eye had gazed into the atmosphere's luminous infinitude or looked upon the pristine splendor of the

earth fresh from its Creator's mold. God had "formed the earth to be inhabited" (Isa.45:18), but, as yet, "there was no human to serve the ground" (Gen.2:5). The one thing lacking had been anticipated and the need already filled in the mind and purpose of God. In the opening chapter of the Sacred Scriptures, we have this record (Gen:1:27) that, on the sixth day:

Elohim created humanity in His image; in the image of Elohim He created it.

Latent in His creation reposed the human (and in that human, reposed humanity), waiting only for the Divine touch and living breath. In His own time appointed, formed of the soil of the ground, fashioned in the image and likeness of God and breathing the imparted breath of life from Yahweh Elohim, the human became a living soul (Gen.2:7). Complete and splendid, the first man stepped forth upon the earth out of which he had been formed, and was led into the garden which God had prepared for him. Of all the vast tract of earth's virgin surface, this garden was to be the scene of the first man's activity and service, and, to the man, in this idyllic spot, Yahweh Elohim brought forth his complement and helper—the woman, who was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh.

The attention of students, critics and sceptics of all eras has been focussed on the record of this early scene and primary events in the history of humanity. This record, this revelation given for *faith,* has been held aloft to scorn and ridicule, but to those who would treat His revelation with such mocking disdain, *He* has one retort which at once exposes the critics' ignorance, deflates their arrogant contempt and silences their ribaldry; it is (Job 38:4):

Where were you when I founded the earth?
Tell if you know with understanding.

We who know Him and love His Word, examine the

record with reverence and in humility, seeking from Him an understanding of His revelation, a spiritual discernment, which is not withheld from us.

The garden was well watered by the stream issuing out of Eden and sustained a wide variety of trees the beauty of which pleased the eye and the fruit of which provided nourishment. In the protective shelter of "the middle of the garden" two extraordinary trees grew in company, the "tree of life" and the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen.2:9), and these trees were singled out by special mention. Before Yahweh Elohim had provided the man with his companion, his helpmeet, He had given the man careful and precise instruction regarding the trees of the garden (Gen.2:16,17):

From every tree of the garden you may eat, yea eat. But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying.

Thus access to every tree but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was permitted. The tree of life was not barred to him, but no coveting or yearning hand was to be stretched out to pluck the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Disobedience of this command would incur automatically the dire penalty decreed.

It is evident that the man must have communicated to his wife Yahweh's emphatic command, for she was aware of it when the serpent accosted her. She knew that access to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was denied her, and she was aware of the consequence of a disregard of the command. Nevertheless, even so instructed, she was no match for the wiles of the most subtle of the beasts of the field, and she was deluded by the craftiness of the serpent. Regardless of consequence, her hand was stretched out, the fruit plucked and shared with her husband. Then

their eyes were opened— to the stark fact of their nakedness. In a sentence, the apostle Paul summed up the dramatic event in the early history of the race (1 Tim.2:13,14):

For Adam was first molded, thereafter Eve, and Adam was not seduced, yet the woman, being deluded, has come to be in the transgression.

Their eyes were opened, enabling them to apprehend, with distress, their nakedness. In shame and in fear, each inadequately covered by a circlet of leaves (a poor substitute for the covering light of their departed glory), the first man and his wife hid themselves. The meeting with their friend, Yahweh Elohim, which should have been anticipated with pleasure, was something to be avoided, so they sought desperately the obscurity afforded in the midst of the trees.

Oh! erring souls (Psa.139:7-10):

Whither shall I go from Your spirit,
And whither could I run away from Your presence?
If I should climb to the heavens, You are there;
And should I make my berth in the unseen,
behold You are there . . . .
Even there Your hand would guide me
And Your right hand, it would hold me.

What hope of obscurity had they from God Who sought them, when "even darkness, it is not darkening to You" (Psa. 139:12)? In their fear, trembling, and ill covered nakedness, they sought to hide themselves from Him, little knowing that their only help and their salvation in that day of their distress was in Him from Whom they fled. In their dejectedness they hid, but we thank our God and Father that He sought. In the cool of the day, He approached their hiding place and called to them. The voice that not so long before had called the light forth from the "pathway where light tabernacles" (Job 38:19) now called to the sinner and said to him (Gen.3:9):

Adam, where are you?

It was a direct and simple question, and it brooked no evasion. "Where are you?" Well may Adam have anticipated the cry of Job and answered: "Behold I am slight, how can I reply to You?" (Job 40:4). No other course was open to Adam but to creep from his furtive seclusion and answer tremulously: "I was fearful because I was naked, so I hid" (Gen.3:10).

It is of more than passing interest to note, at this point, that it is probable that in this question, "Adam" is first used as a proper noun. Versions are not always agreed at which point in the inspired record "Adam" is used as a name. Hitherto, the word may have been employed with the meaning of "human." Now, Yahweh Elohim has sought the sinner—and names him. Adam, where are you?

As has been observed, disobedience to God's command incurred a penalty, and that penalty was declared, unequivocally, by Yahweh Elohim to be: "on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying (Gen.2:17). Adam and Eve did not succumb immediately, but they experienced quickly the initial retributory consequences—recognition of their nakedness, shame, fear and then expulsion from the garden. The way to the tree of life was barred effectively, and, as a result of this, the grip of mortality would tighten inexorably until the full enactment of the sentence.

The affirmation of the stern penalty: Cursed is the ground on your account; In grief shall you eat of it all the days of your life . . . Until you return to the ground . . . For soil you are, And to soil shall you return (Gen.3:17-19), left Adam and Eve in no doubt as to the bleakness of the prospect. We cannot tell if they tasted the bitterness of absolute despair and accepted their punishment as final and irremediable, or whether they saw in the judgment of the serpent a glimmer of hope to lighten the enshrouding

gloom, or recognized there was a prophecy innate in the sentence pronounced upon the serpent.

As to their thoughts and feelings, we can only conjecture, and surmise has no place alongside revelation, but if a gleam did momentarily lighten their darkness, we cannot but wonder if a ray rested on a rude stake raised on a hill, Golgotha, Skull's Place, where, with heel hurt, the Seed of the woman was to hurt the serpent's head.

Let the tragedy of this first offence be instantly and fully admitted: the bitterness, the gloom and the melancholy amidst the primal splendor of Eden were (and remain) facts that cannot be gainsaid. Let us acknowledge, too, the somber truth of later revelation that (Rom.5:12):

. . . through one man sin entered into the world and, through sin, death, and thus death passed through into all mankind,

and that (Rom.5:17):

. . . by the offense of the one, death reigns through the one.

These facts in the Word of Truth must be acknowledged without reserve, but, at the same time, let us recognise that it was not tragedy unrelieved, not bitterness and despair without hope, not the bleakness of sorrow without the precious "balm in Gilead." "Is there no Physician there?" (Jer.8:22). The question is asked that it may be affirmed with emphasis—there is! Death may be reigning through one, but it is a dethronable monarch—righteousness shall be reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:17). Sin may reign in terrible autocracy, in death, but Grace will reign through righteousness for life eonian (Rom.5:21). In Adam, all are dying—but, behold! a greater than Adam is here—IN CHRIST shall ALL be vivified (1 Cor.15:22). "The first man, Adam, became a living soul: the last Adam a vivifying spirit" (1 Cor.15:45).

The slow-rising and falling centuries have moved, and are

moving toward the great goal that God had in view from that day of the offense in primal Eden, yes, and before that day. During the expanding years the Great Subjector has been engaged in His ceaseless, patient quest for the creatures of His hand. That quest started in Eden when the silence of that fateful morning was rent by his deeply felt call to Adam,"Where are you?" He sought the erring ones then, he sought in the intensity of infinite love when He spared not His only Son, but gave Him up for us all, and He will not cease His seeking until the outstretched arms of Calvary gather all of the human family in their grand embrace.

Then, in that distant era, all will be subject to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—no knee unbent, no tongue withholding His rightful praise, no recalcitrant whisper to mar the glad and universal submission, for God will be All in all (1 Cor.15:24-28). Not All in some or even All in many, but All in all.

Alan Reid

REPOSING

Brother **H. M. ("Max") Binney** of Madisonville, Tennessee, was put to repose on December 31, 2006. He was a diligent student and teacher of God's Word whose journey of faith took him from the acceptance of Christ as the Son of God, Who died upon the cross for sinners, to a maturing realization of the fullness of that message of God's grace and peace as it relates to all mankind.

The death, after a long illness, of Brother **Stanley Cooper** of Niagara Falls, Ontario, on January 21, was not unexpected, but it brings great sadness to all who knew him, nevertheless. As our agent for Canada many years and as an elder among the believers who met in Kitchener, he always carried on the work set before him with a quiet steadiness that will be much missed.

We are also saddened to hear of the death of our friend, **Carl Randolph** of Richmond, Virginia. He was a thoughtful brother who had come to rejoice in God's purpose to head up all in Christ.

BOASTING DEBARRED

THE RIGHTEOUS God is my Justifier. He justifies me, who could never stand before Him justified by self-effort, and He brings me before Him as one who is *out of* the faith of Jesus (that is, a product of His faithfulness). This message of Romans 3:26 sums up the rich revelations of Romans 3:21-26, once again showing me that the evangel of God tells first of all of what God has done for me, a sinner, and then of the way in which He has accomplished this glorious work of good, which is through His Son, Jesus Christ, my Lord.

God is the Source of my justification, and Jesus, in His humiliation of obedience even to the death of the cross, is the Channel. I receive what God has achieved in not sparing His Son, but giving Him up for me. I am the beneficiary of God's righteousness operating through the faithfulness of His beloved Son, Who died for me. My justification is all of God through Jesus Christ. I did nothing in this operation except receive the gratuity which God gives in His grace through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus.

This is my testimony in accord with what Paul seems to be saying in the opening chapters of Romans concerning the evangel of God of which he was not ashamed. May we all grow in realization and appreciation of this evangel which now in Romans 3:27 brings us to exclaim with Paul:

Where, then, is boasting? It is debarred!
Through what law? Of works?
No! But through faith's law.

WHERE, THEN?

The word "then" gathers up the testimony of the preceding verses, which have introduced the evangel of God, and sets the whole before us as the premise for this conclusion that we cannot boast in ourselves. The evangel which Paul has been placing before us leads to the realization that there are no bragging rights for us in our justification in the sight of God. We stand righteous and at peace before Him, but for this unspeakably happy position we have done nothing of ourselves which could be presented to God as our contribution to His work of justification. This is because:

1. By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20). We cannot do that which law demands. As we are in our flesh, we cannot pass the test of God's examination of our thoughts and actions. If we have not reached the conclusion that, as sons of Adam, we are losers, Romans 1:18-3:20 decisively settles the matter. As we are, in ourselves, we are hopeless.

2. The evangel, which is God's good news, faces this bleak and dismal fact and dispels it completely by manifesting a righteousness of God, apart from the demands of law (Rom.3:21; *cf* Rom.1:17; 3:28). The standard of righteousness which God requires for justification is the standard He follows in establishing justification. Every sin and act of unrighteousness and irreverence of every human being must be dealt with. This, which is impossible for human beings, is done by God in the sending of His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh (*cf* Rom.8:3). This is done apart from our efforts.

3. This righteousness of God which is being made manifest in the evangel operates through Jesus Christ's faith (Rom.3:22). This is not our faith in Jesus Christ, as some have claimed, but Jesus Christ's faith in dying for us who

are sinners (*cf* Rom.5:8). "The faith of Jesus Christ is always put as the basis out of which this blessing [of justification] flows."[1]

4. The righteous operation of God that leads to justification is not channeled through human action, but it is, nevertheless, *for* the benefit of all (for all are sinners and are wanting of the glory of God), and it is presently placed on all who are believing (Rom.3:22,23), by being reckoned to them. Human beings are not contributors to justification, or earners of justification, but rather we are receivers of a justification that expresses God's righteousness and all that it demands.

5. As far as we are concerned, justification is gratuitous (Rom.3:24). There is no cause in ourselves for what we have received. Whatever we imagine we might add, or, more unexcusably, might think God demands of us to add to what our Lord has done in His faithfulness, can only corrupt and distort the evangel in our hearts, diluting our happiness and stunting our spiritual growth.

6. Justification is a matter of God's grace (Rom.3:24). It is His favor to us, yet a favor that is desperately needed, and a favor that is full and complete. God's grace is not something that any of us can do without. And it is not given with strings attached.

7. Justification comes through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24), and not some sort of self-discipline and sincere endeavor which God finds in us. As believers, we *have* the deliverance that comes through the blood of Christ (*cf* Eph.1:7). And because of this deliverance all mankind will ultimately enjoy the benefits of Christ's faithfulness (Rom.5:18,19).

8. Besides this, in accord with His grace of deliverance for sinners, God purposed Christ Jesus to be the Anti-

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.7, p.267.

type of the place of propitiation in the tabernacle, where there was access for the sinner before God, apart from God's indignation (Rom.3:25). God always achieves what He purposes. Being justified, we have access to God in peace, and we have the privilege of enjoying this glorious standing before Him (*cf* Rom.5:1,2). And again, because of our Lord's faithfulness even to the death of the cross, this enjoyment of peace will someday be enjoyed by all (*cf* Col.1:20).

9. This access in peace is achieved through the faith in God and His Word which Christ Jesus maintained even in the excruciating pain of His soul in the shedding of His blood (Rom.3:25) and the darkness of forsakeness and death itself. That is the defining measure of His faith, which is without flaw or the slightest weakness, while our faith often falters and faints.

10. Such a deliverance by means of our Lord's faith which results in justification and propitiation, displays God's righteousness as it contrasts with the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before in the forbearance of God (Rom.3:26). The passing over of the penalties of sins could never be a *manifestation* or *display* of God's righteousness. But the evangel has put His righteousness as that which leads to justification on display.

11. This deliverance displays God's righteousness in that it establishes Him as the righteous Justifier. By the time we come to Romans 3:27 we see that the vital issue in our justification is God's justification. He is just in every way, and He is the Justifier.

12. As our Justifier, God justifies us on the basis of the faith of Jesus. This third reference in five verses to the faith of our Lord, first to Him as Jesus Christ (Rom.3:22), then as Christ Jesus (3:24,25) and now as Jesus (3:26), firmly establishes the ground of justification as settled in God's Son and His death for sinners.

This is what the evangel says. It tells of the faith of Jesus Christ in suffering and dying for human beings, all of whom have sinned, and in announcing what Jesus has done it brings God's righteousness to light. If God is to be righteous in justifying us, there can be no cover-up in justification. Justification must have a solid and true basis. It cannot be a pretense, certainly not a sort of divine decree that has no basis other than an authority of position. Also, and most critically, for God's righteousness to be made manifest there must be a good and righteous outcome. The justification must be a justification that meets the standards of God's own perfect and penetrating sight. All sin and failure must be taken into account in God's justifying operation. Every sinner must ultimately benefit from Christ's act of faithfulness. And for this to be so, justification must stand completely apart from any requirements placed on the sinner. And so it is.

Since the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord is a message that announces this very thing, where, *then,* is boasting?

NO BOASTING

It is because justification is the work of the righteous God through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus that boasting in myself is shut off. "Such a deliverance, entirely on the ground of grace, bars all boasting, unless it be in Christ and in His God, Who has become our Justifier."[2]

This is what disallows boasting (*cp* Eph.2:8,9). The gratuitous justification which comes to one like me who cannot be justified in God's sight by anything I may do, has been achieved by means of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. This evangel does not allow the slightest opening for me to congratulate myself. Nothing I have done or do

2. A. E. Knoch, Concordant Commentary, p.233.

contributes to my justification, even good things including the very best of things which a human might do, which is to believe God. My believing is fundamental to the enjoyment of justification, but it is not a point of consideration in the gaining and establishing of justification.

For me to believe God is indeed a righteous act, but it does not justify me or my life with all the irreverence and unrighteousness that infuses my flesh and corrupts my activities. I do not appear as a player in the process of justification, but rather I am the infirm and irreverent sinner who receives justification as a gratuitous and gracious gift of God. Where, then, is any chance for me to boast in myself?

It is debarred!

YET BOASTING IN GOD

The act of boasting (or "glorying," as the Greek word is sometimes translated) is not wrong in itself. In fact the evangel directs me to be boasting in God (Rom.5:11) and, like Paul, to be boasting in Christ Jesus, in that which is directed toward God (Rom.15:17). "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, *except* in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal.6:14).

But even the act of boasting in the cross of my Lord Jesus Christ contributes nothing toward my justification. Such boasting lies in the realm of response to the justification God has achieved through the faith of His beloved Son. Such ideal boasting comes as a result of what He has done as God opens the eyes of my heart to it. That God justifies me is solely and entirely based on the faith of Jesus Christ. In this context, to speak of the faith of Jesus is to speak of what, in Philippians 2:5-8, Paul calls the emptying of Christ Jesus in coming in the likeness of humanity and then the humbling of Himself in obedience even to the death of the cross. The expression "faith of Jesus

Christ" summarizes all that my Lord did in disposition and in act when He suffered on the cross and died as a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:6). To boast in this evangel, whether in my heart or in speaking to others, is to glory in that overwhelming grace that lies in what God has done in and through His Son, apart from any contribution whatsoever of my own.

What a blessed and powerful state of living it is not to imagine that justification rests on anything I have done or must do! I am well aware of my own incapabilities and that good is not making its home in me, that is, in my flesh (Rom.7:18). Even my best efforts will not stand up in God's sight as worthy of life and joy and peace before Him. Yet again, what an energizing force for growth and maturity in my faith and my actions to realize that, like Paul, I am what I am by the grace of God, so that that grace of God might not come to be for naught in me (*cf* 1 Cor.15:10)!

A LAW OF WORKS

If I could actually be justified in God's sight by performing the works demanded by the law given at Sinai, or any other acts of righteousness, I would not be debarred from boasting in myself. Paul says of Abraham that if he was justified by [his] acts he has something to boast in, even though it could not be a boasting toward God (Rom.4:2). So also myself, if my faith were the key to my justification (in its literal sense), or even a little portion of the key, I would have every right to boast, and indeed, I don't see how I could keep from boasting in possessing such an essential place in my justification.

Any law or instruction or guideline that calls on me to do something in order to get what God has gained for me, and which He gives to me gratuitously, encourages me in every way to glory in myself in the getting.

Only a law which lies entirely outside my doing, like

the law of gravity, for instance, can offer no opportunity for boasting.

What Paul calls "faith's law" is such a law.

FAITH'S LAW

The failure to recognize that the word "faith" here in Romans 3:21-28 refers to the faith of Jesus Christ rather than our faith has led to confusion and puzzlement over the development of Paul's thought. He is not saying that our faith replaces our works in bringing us to justification in God's sight, but rather that *Jesus Christ's faith* does this which we could never do by any means whatsoever.

Romans 4:4,5 will direct attention to the faith of believers, which is centered on God Who is justifying the irreverent. Our faith, that is, our believing of what God says in His evangel to us is the basis on which God *reckons* righteousness to us. But justification itself is not based on our faith but on the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26). We are products of His faith. We are blessed because of His faith. Faith's law is the effective way in which the evangel concerning Jesus Christ's faith works in the believer. To be sure, at present this law operates only in those who are believing, but the law does not arise from our faith, but from that of Jesus Christ.

It is the evangel of God's grace concerning the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners that works like a law on us who believe.

Our faith, which fluctuates in time, is in the faith of Jesus, in His believing, in His faith which is strong and which was tested on Golgotha under the most difficult of conditions. Jesus Christ's faith was centered triumphantly in confidence in His God and Father and the righteousness of His ways through all that terrible event. This is the basis of our justification. This is the spiritual grace Paul is sharing with us now in Romans 3.

To repeat: It is not our faith (the strength of which varies from believer to believer, in accord with the measure of faith granted by God) that debars boasting, but rather Jesus Christ's faith in God—His faithfulness on our behalf in the achieving of justification. It is the message which we believe that works like a law upon us, that keeps us from boasting.

COMMANDS OR CERTAINTIES?

At Sinai God gave a law to Israel which is summed up by two statements: "You shall be loving the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole comprehension," and "you shall be loving your associate as yourself" (Matt.22:37-40). It is noteworthy that these words, which are usually understood as "commandments" are not expressed in the imperative mode but in the future indicative. God *will* bestow His spirit in Israel, and they *shall* walk in these ordinances and *will* obey them (Ezek.36:27). When God puts His spirit in them, they shall love the Lord their God and their associate as themselves.

Now, through the apostle Paul, God has spoken the words of His evangel to us. This message to us which tells of Jesus Christ's faith, saying, "Christ died for our sins," contains a law (that is not so much expressed as a command as a declaration of what is bound to be) that says, in effect, "You shall not be boasting in yourselves."

LOCKED OUT

Boasting is denied to us. That is, to use the elements of the Greek word translated "debarred,"[3] boasting in ourselves is *locked out* where we cannot get at it. That is what the law of faith does to the human drive of self-glorifica-

3. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.68.

tion. The evangel concerning the faith of Jesus Christ, is most effective in taking the wind out of the sails of human pride. It does not permit us to boast in ourselves.

"Since we are justified *gratuitously*—without any warrant, insofar as *anything* we may have done is concerned—we cannot boast in ourselves that we are justified (Rom.3:27).

"The truth of the evangel—the grace of God in truth—debars all boasting in man. It is not merely that we *should not* boast, but that we *cannot* boast!"[4]

This is faith's law, a law that does not issue from our faith but from the faith of Jesus Christ. What we need in order to be kept from boasting is to be enjoying and appreciating what our Saviour's faith has gained for us.

THE EVANGEL OF GOD

Paul was not ashamed of the evangel for it is the power of God for salvation. The spirit of this eon and of humanity in general is one that tends to distrust God and to place its confidence in the flesh.

Yet in Romans God exposes our basic and race-wide irreverence and unrighteousness and then tells us of the operation of His powerful grace, sourced in His righteousness and love, in the giving of His Son for sinners. Let us not be ashamed of that evangel, as insulting as it may be to human pride, as humiliating as it may be to our concepts of self-honor and self-glory. Let it be that our faith will grow and cling more and more tenaciously to the faith of Jesus Christ so that we boast only in His cross and in the God Who is just in His work of justification, and not at all in ourselves.

D.H.H.

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4. James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.77, p.123.

Contents:

49 Editorial
53 Concerning the Flesh
57 Indeed, did Elohim Say . . . ?
65 Grace Reigns
Through Righteousness
75 Faith and Righteousness
79 Be Admonished, Jerusalem
87 The Basis of Justification

MARCH, 2007

Volume XCVIII **Number 2**

Concordant Version of

1 Chronicles through Job

(1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job)

Concerning the books included in this fascicle of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament, the book of Job is associated with Psalms and Proverbs in the Hebrew canon. Esther is one of five small scrolls, associated as a group; the others are: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations and Ecclesiastes. Ezra (including Nehemiah) appears along with Daniel in a final section of historical writings, concluding with Chronicles.

1 and 2 Chronicles, are treated as one book in Hebrew under the name "Words [or Annals] of the Days" (*cf* 1 Kings 14:19,29). The history is no mere repetition of the books of Samuel and Kings, but a carefully prepared commentary on the same events as they appeared to the eye of Yahweh. Many events which are assigned to human instrumentalities are here traced back to Yahweh. The purposes and counsels of the heart are unveiled in these divine annals.

Ezra and **Nehemiah** are also to be considered as one book under the name "Ezra" which means help. This is the perfect inscription to the history of Judah's restoration to their land and city and temple.

Esther is a marvelous manifestation of the care of Yahweh over His people when their sun is set and they are in the power of their enemies. Then He becomes their guiding star, shaping their way by means of a providence which never escapes His control. By the simplest and most insignificant means He turns the fell designs of their enemies into a source of blessing.

Like all the scrolls which are designated by the name of a man, the meaning of the name, **Job,** is the index to its contents. It means "Enmity." Job is a concrete example of the work of the enemy. The philosophy of evil is discussed to a finish. His four friends make evil the consequence of sin. Job maintains his innocence. Yet Yahweh vindicates him and blesses him far beyond what would have been possible apart from the affliction he had endured. Evil is definitely designed by God to work out His beneficent purpose. Thus the philosophy of evil and enmity is fully elucidated in this book, as its title indicates.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 2007
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

"[GOD] SAVES US and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian" (2 Tim.1:9).

This glorious declaration of the apostle Paul is plain and clear. We can only account for the fact that these words of Scripture and others like them are so widely ignored or denied, by consideration of another fact. It is that "*all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are *concealed*" in the God and Father, of Christ (Col.2:2b,3). Truly, "It is the glory of Elohim to conceal a matter . . ." (Prov.25:2a); yet to God be the glory as well (*cf* Rom.11:36), whenever it accords with His purpose to reveal that which has formerly been hidden: "For nothing is hidden which shall not become apparent, neither concealed which should not by all means be known and come to be apparent" (Luke 8:17; *cp* 10:21).

In this marvelous word of the evangel, then, set forth in 2 Timothy 1:9, we would only thus emphasize the apostle's own testimony: *God saves us;* and He does so *not in accord with our acts.* And, *God calls us with a holy calling;* one which is likewise *not in accord with our acts.*

Instead, God saves us and calls us with a holy calling *in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian.*

As concerns our salvation and calling, God has "His own purpose," which is to be fulfilled in relation thereunto. Therefore, our salvation and calling accord *not* with our acts, but with God's own purpose. And, they accord with the *grace* given to us in Christ Jesus, even *before times eonian* (*cp* Rom.16:25,26; Titus 1:2).

We do not know why, specifically, God chose us (we who are the particular members of the ecclesia which is Christ's

body), instead of others, for life eonian. But we do know that He *has* done so, having chosen us already, long ago, even "before the disruption of the world" (Eph.1:4).

Accordingly, then, we would emphasize: (1) that God has truly *chosen* us (i.e., "singled us out"), and (2) that He has truly chosen *us,* that is, in contradistinction to others (*cf* 2 Thess.2:13).

Let us rejoice—and consider ourselves sufficed—in the knowledge that these glorious blessings which our God and Father lavishes upon us are (1) according to His own *purpose,* and (2) "in accord with the delight of His *will,* for the laud of the glory of His *grace* . . ." (Eph.1:5b,6a).

NOW WE ARE AWARE

The remaining especially notable Scripture passage which stresses that our calling is according to God's *purpose* is Romans 8:28-32.

Let us first of all consider verse 28, which is translated in the Concordant Version: "Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God, who are called according to the purpose that . . . ."

Here, the Concordant Version generally follows the traditional English syntax and grammar in the rendering of this verse, as is found in the Authorized Version. Translated thus, the reader is informed that God is working all together for *the* good *of those who are loving God,* which is to say for the personal benefit of all such persons.

It is true that the more enlightened reader will not perceive self-merit in his own love of God; instead, in all humility, he will be mindful that "We are loving God, *for* He first loves us" (1 John 4:19). Still, from this translation, since this is what is said, the reader will conclude that what is revealed here is that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God; that is, for the self-benefit of all such ones.

However, if we follow the Greek syntax itself and also render the text here more literally, we will find that what the apostle Paul writes in this verse is even more glorious than we had previously supposed.

First of all, let us note the reading of this verse according to the ultra-literal English sublinear of the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT:

"WE-HAVE-PERCEIVED YET that to-THE *ones*-LOVING THE God ALL IS-TOGETHER-ACTING THE God INTO GOOD to-THE-*ones* according-to BEFORE-PLACing CALLED BEING that . . ." (Rom.8:28).

Following the Greek closely (as much so as is practicable), Romans 8:28 may be idiomatically translated as follows: "Now we are aware that—*to* the ones who are loving God—God is working *all together for good;* [this is] *to* the ones who are called according to the purpose that . . . ."

Translated thus, noting the Greek syntax, the two critical phrases which are in the dative case (i.e., "to"), not the genitive (i.e., "of"), even as the absence of the definite article before the word "good" together with the unneeded "of" following, the thought thus presented becomes significantly different and far grander still than that previously understood.

Rendered thus, we understand that, as ones who are loving God, we enjoy the awareness that God is working all together for good. Period. This is so, whether a certain divine operation should be purposed especially for our own good, in particular, or for the greater good in general, broadly speaking, in consideration of God's wider purpose and own glory.

To those of us who are loving God, this is how we "see things," and view the course of history: "For I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us. For the premonition of *the creation* is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God. For to vanity was *the creation* subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that *the cre-*

ation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God. For we are aware that *the entire creation* is groaning and travailing together until now" (Rom.8:18-22).

. . . whom He foreknew, He designates beforehand, also, to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. (Rom.8:29)

As those who are loving God, God not only "knows" us at present (*cf* 1 Cor.8:3), but He "*fore*knew" *us* (i.e., not merely something about us) as well, long ago. And, "He designates [us] beforehand, also, to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren" (Rom.8:29).

"Now . . ." By means of this introductory particle, Paul remonstrates with the reader, effectually declaring, "Now, look here, and pay close attention. Here is the way it truly is: . . ."

Now whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls, these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these He glorifies also.

What then, shall we declare to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all? (Rom.8:30-32)

God foreknows us, designates us beforehand, calls us, justifies us, and glorifies us.

Let others say what they will to the apostle's explicit testimony here, the question only remains, "What, then, shall *we* declare to these things?" To which our only reply is as follows:

Since God is for us, it is evident, ultimately, that *nothing* is against us. This is because God is working all together for good. It is beyond any doubt, then, that God, Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, *shall,* together with Him, also, be *graciously* granting us all.

Now, look here, and pay close attention: This is the way that it truly is. J.R.C.

CONCERNING THE FLESH

(Genesis 34)

34 + **Dinah,** the **daughter of Leah whom she had borne for Jacob, |went out to** *see*__visit__ *i* the **daughters of the land.** 2 + **Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite,** the **prince of the land, |saw `her; + he |took `her, and |lay** `with **her and |humiliated her.** 3 + **His soul was clinging** *i*__to Dinah daughter of Jacob, and he was loving `the maiden and |spoke__ *on*__to__ the **heart of the maiden.** 4 +**So Shechem |said to his father Hamor, ›** __saying–__**: Take `this girl ›as wife for me.**

5 +**Now Jacob, he heard that** *7*__the son of Hamor__*0* **had defiled `his daughter Dinah, +but his sons´** *b*__were__ `with **his cattle in** the **field. +So Jacob** *c*__kept silent until they came__ back–**.** 6 +**Then Shechem's father Hamor** came |**forth to Jacob to speak** `with **him.** 7 +**As** for **Jacob's sons, they came from the field as they heard–** of it**; and the men were |grieved. + Their** anger grew **exceedingly |hot,** *t*__because he had__ *d*__committed__ an **outrage** *i*__against Israel ›by lying–__ `with **Jacob's daughter. And** *7*__they |said:__*0* *so*__Such__ a **thing** ought **not** to **be |done.**

8 +**Yet Hamor |spoke** `with **them, ›** __saying–__**:** As for **my son Shechem, his soul is attached** *i*__to =your daughter. Give `her,__ *pr*__please, to him ›as wife,__ 9 **and intermarry** `with **us. You |give =your daughters to us, and you |take `our daughters for your** *7*__sons__*0***.** 10 **And you may dwell** `with **us; + the land shall become** open **before you. Dwell and** go as **merchants** *7*__on__*0* **it, and have holdings in it.** 11 +**Then Shechem |said to her father and to her brothers: Let me find favor in your eyes, and** *w*__whatever you |sa__*a*__tell ›__ **me I shall give** it.

12 [c]**Impose on me very much** as **bride-price and gift; and I** intend to [l]**give** [as] [w]**whatever you** [l][sa]**tell** [›] **me;** [+]**only give** [›] **me** [`]**the maiden** [›]**as wife.**

DINAH AND SHECHEM, THE CANAANITE

In the days of the patriarchs, two lines of the descendants of Ham occupied the land which Yahweh reserved for Israel: the Philistines and the Canaanites. The latter were under a curse because of their ancestor's behavior when Noah was drunk. They came into the land promised to Abraham, and it was the duty of the Israelites to exterminate them. Without in the least excusing the conduct of Simeon and Levi, it is clear that their actions were a part of God's plan. To understand this we must view it as an example of the lust of the flesh. Abraham admonished his servant that he should not take a wife of the Canaanites (24:3), but when they did have carnal connection they always fell under the *curse,* wherever they were in the line of *blessing.* The Canaanites stand for the lusts of the flesh which we are to crucify (Gal.5:24).

GENESIS 34:13-31

13 [+] **Jacob's sons** [l]**answered** [`]**Shechem and** [`]**his father Hamor** [i]**with deceit; and they** [l]**spoke** so [w]**because he had defiled** [`]**their sister Dinah.** 14 [+] [7]**Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers**[0]**,** [l]**said to them: We** [l]**can not** [›] **do**[–] [·]**this** [·]**thing, to give** [`]**our sister to** a **man who** [›]**has** a **foreskin; for this** is a **reproach to us.** 15 [y]**Only** [i]**on this** condition **shall we consent to you** [7]**and dwell** [`]**with you**[0]**, if you** [l]**become like us** and have **every male** [›]**among you** [›] **circumcised**[–]**.** 16 [+]**Then we will give** [`]**our daughters to you, and we shall take** [`]**your daughters for us** [7›]**as wives**[0]**.** [+] **We will dwell** [`]with **you and become** [›] **one people.** 17 [+]**Yet if you** do **not** [l]**hearken to us** [›]**and be circumcised**[–]**,** [+]**then we will take** [`]**our daughter and go.**

18 [+] **Their words** seemed [l]**good in** the **eyes of Hamor and in** the **eyes of Shechem son of Hamor.** 19 [+] **The youth** did **not delay to do** [·]this **thing, for he delighted in Jacob's daughter;** [+] **he** was the most **illustrious**[l] [f]**of all his father's house**hold.

20 [+]**So Hamor and his son Shechem** [l]**came to** the **gate**way **of their city and** [l]**spoke to** the **men of their city,** [›] **saying**[–]**:** 21 [·]**These** [·]**men, they** are **peaceable** [`]toward **us,** [+]**so they may dwell in** the **land and** go as [l]**merchants** [`]on **it.** [+] **Behold, the land** is **wide** enough on either **side before them. We** can [l]**take** [`]**their daughters** [›]**as wives for our**selves**, and we** can [l]**give** [`]**our daughters to them.** 22 [y]**Only** [i]**on this** condition **shall the men consent to us** so as **to dwell** [`]with **us** and **to become** [›] **one people,** [i]**that every male** of **ours be circumcised**[–] **just as they** are **circumcised**[l]**.** 23 **Their cattle and their acquisitions and all their beast**s, will **they not** be **ours? ** [y]**Only** do **let us consent to them, and they shall dwell** [`]with **us.** 24 **And they** [l]**hearkened to Hamor and** [›] **his son Shechem, all** those who **went out**[l] **of** the **gate**way **of his city. And they were** [l]**circumcised, every male,** [7`]in the **flesh of their foreskin**[0]**.**

25 [+] **It** [l]**came** to **pass** [i]**on the third day** [i]**when they** [b]**were**[–] in **pain**[l] [+]**that** the **two sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each** [l]**took his sword and** [l]**came** up**on the city unawares and** [l]**killed every male.** 26 **They** [+]**also killed** [`]**Hamor and** [`]**his son Shechem** [›]**with** the **edge of** the **sword,** [+] [l]**took** [`]**Dinah from Shechem's house and** [l]**went out.** 27 [7+]**Then**[ncs] the **sons of Jacob, they came** up**on the slain and** [l]**plundered the city** [w]**because they had defiled their sister** [7]**Dinah**[cs]**.** 28 [7]**And**[ncs] **they took** [`]**their flocks,** [+] [`]**their herds and** [`]**their donkeys,** [+] [`7]**all**[0] [w]**that** were **in** the **city and** [`][w]**that** were **in** the **field.** 29 [+] **They captured** [`]**all their estate,** [+] [`]**all their little one**s **and** [`]**their wives; and**

they [l]**plundered** [+]**even** `**every**thing [w] **in** the [7]**houses~.**

30 [+]**Then Jacob** [l]**said to Simeon and** › **Levi: You have** brought **trouble** `on **me** ›**by** [c]**making me stink**~ [i]**among** the **dwellers**[l] **of the land,** [i] the **Canaanite and** [i] the **Perizzite,** [+]**while my** [ad]**men** are few in **number;** [+] if **they are gathered** [on]**against me,** [+] **they will smite me; and I will be exterminated, I and my house**hold. 31 [+]**Yet they** [lsa]**replied: Should he** [d]**deal** `with **our sister as** with a **prostitute**[l]**?**

SIMEON AND LEVI

The proposition of Shechem, that they intermarry and become one people, uniting the accursed fleshly seed of Canaan with the spiritual, blessed seed of Abraham, was altogether contrary to God's plan. As Paul tells the Galatians, "the flesh is lusting [against] the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh....these are *opposing one another*" (Gal. 5:17). It is the function of circumcised Israel to cut off the deeds of the flesh. Little did the Canaanites realize the meaning of circumcision. In their case it led to the literal cutting off of the flesh.

When Israel *heard* (Simeon: HEARer, *cf* Gen.29:33) it was *obligated* (Levi: OBLIGATed, *cf* Gen.29:34) to exterminate them.

A. E. Knoch

REPOSING

Our sister, **Frances Anderson,** of Muskegon, Michigan, was put to repose on January 30, at age 92. She was the widow of Pastor David Anderson, and together they had labored many years in support of the truth of God's grace in giving His Son for sinners, and its magnification when God becomes All in all.

Brother **Martin Rynders,** who died on March 17 at age 91, lived in Fort Wayne, Indiana, not too far from the Andersons. He was acquainted with God's Word from his youth and greatly rejoiced in the truth of the reconciliation of all through the blood of Christ's cross.

INDEED, DID ELOHIM SAY . . . ?

THIS IS THE very first question in Scripture (Gen.3:1). It was not asked by Yahweh Elohim, or by the first human that He had formed—it was asked by the serpent which had suddenly appeared in the midst of the primal peace and splendor of Eden. The words of the question form the first recorded utterance of the serpent—the Adversary—and the query arrests our attention because:

(1) couched in terms suggestive of doubt, it stands in sharp contrast to the powerful and factual statements of the first two chapters of Genesis;

(2) it also reveals the subtle tactics employed by the Adversary in his assaults.

When Adam was placed in the garden that Yahweh Elohim had prepared for him, he was given explicit instruction (Gen.2:16,17):

From every tree of the garden you may eat, yea eat. But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying.

There was no ambiguity in that command and the giving of it was not delegated to a messenger—it was communicated to the man by Yahweh Elohim Himself. The risk of miscarriage and misunderstanding of the order was thereby avoided. Of twelve declarations by God in the first two chapters of Genesis, this imperative instruction to Adam is the eleventh.

In the light of later revelation, it is not surprising that the first attack of the serpent is directed against the *Word*

of God. "The words of Yahweh are clean words" (Psa.12:6), yet the evil one will use every power at his command to soil them. The word of God is "a lamp . . . and a light" (Psa.119: 105), yet the archenemy will muster the seen and unseen forces of wickedness to envelop it in his stygian darkness. As the psalmist declared in Yahweh's praise, "The sum of Your word is *truth*" (Psa.119:160), so also our Lord testified in His dark hour, "Thy word is truth" (John 17:17), yet the Adversary will employ every wile and daring artifice to discredit it.

The serpent appeared quickly in the garden and, without preliminaries, addressed itself to the task of deceiving the woman, the man's complement. The line of attack adopted is worthy of note, for it formed the pattern of the Adversary's later activities. *Doubt* was implicit in the question. Thereafter the true position was *misrepresented* and finally the Word of God was *denied*.

Indeed, did Elohim say . . . ? Has He indeed told you . . . ? Thus was the woman's belief in the declaration of Yahweh Elohim undermined. Thus was the seed of doubt insidiously sown and the root of rebellion planted with malicious skill. The harmony of Eden had been complete and inviolate hitherto, but the concord and pleasant agreement was shattered by the presence of the refractory intruder.

The doubt insinuated in the woman's mind by the opening words of the question was accentuated by the purposeful misrepresentation of the declaration of Yahweh Elohim. Yahweh had said (Gen.2:16,17):

From every tree of the garden you may eat, yea eat. But . . . .

The serpent, with calculated cunning, misquoted Yahweh's words and said to the woman (Gen.3:1):

You shall not eat from every tree of the garden?

God had liberally provided. The needs of Adam and his wife had been met unstintingly. The fruit of every tree but one could be eaten with freedom, and access was denied to the one tree only, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The serpent falsely represented God's statement by the implication of miserliness—"You shall not eat from every tree . . . ?"

The woman answered, but, although her reply indicated her awareness of the instruction and the penalty of disobedience, she did not correct the misleading insinuation of the serpent.

Thus beguiled, the step from incipient doubt to disbelief was an easy one, and she, who was to be called Eve (LIVING) succumbed in the face of the blatant denial of the declaration of Yahweh Elohim by the Adversary. Yahweh had said, ". . . to die you shall be dying." "Not to die shall you be dying" was the final shaft to ensure the downfall of Eve in her first testing.

In this incident in the initial stages of humanity's history, we descry the design underlying the stratagems of the Adversary, and we do not remain in ignorance of his devices (*cf* Eph.6:11 and 2 Cor.2:11).

Consideration of Job's experience will show the pattern of Satan's artifice emerging. The Adversary, gathered in company with the sons of God, presented himself before Yahweh and, at that august session, was asked by Yahweh (Job 1:8-9):

Have you set your heart on My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a man flawless and upright, fearing Elohim and withdrawing from evil.

These were words of praise indeed—approbation of which we would be justly distrustful if spoken of man by man, of mortal by mortal. But these were not the words of a mortal; they were the words of Yahweh, Who well knew what was in humanity. The Adversary did not affirm or

deny Yahweh's appraisal of His servant, but met the question with the mocking retort (Job 1:9):

Does Job fear Elohim gratuitously?

He had won a swift and easy victory in the primordial garden. Now, in this assembly of the sons of God, the Adversary would drive a wedge of doubt into the mind of Yahweh Himself. We can detect the derision as he continued (Job 1:11):

Nevertheless, now put forth your hand and touch all that is his. He shall assuredly scorn you to your face.

Was Job as perfect and upright as He had thought? Did he truly fear God and keep away from evil? Or was his uprightness a sham—was there insincerity and a selfish motive in his service? Had Yahweh, in His scrutiny of Job left undiscovered a baseness, a hollowness? Had He properly assessed His servant's worth? The Adversary, the Slanderer, with deliberate insolence, would have instilled into the mind and heart of Yahweh (were that possible) such doubt and uncertainty.

Satan did put forth his hand and touch Job (Job 2:7). The testing, by which Yahweh permitted the Adversary to winnow His servant, was long and grievous, but Job did not curse God, even though induced by his wife to do so. The severity of the affliction caused him to deplore the day of his birth, but ultimately God revealed Himself to Job in such a remarkable manner that the manifestation drew from him the spontaneous acknowledgment (Job 42:5):

With the hearing of the ear I had heard of You, But now my eye sees You.

Instead of imprecation and bitterness, there was praise, and thus the slanderous misrepresentation by, and the base motives of, the Adversary were exposed and his evil intent frustrated.

The success of the serpent's guile in Eden was decisive, but the luster of the triumph over the woman was dimmed when the serpent found itself involved in the judgment pronounced by Yahweh Elohim and the subject of the emphatic prediction (Gen.3:15):

And I shall set enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed. He shall hurt you in the head and you shall hurt Him in the heel.

When, in due time, the Seed of the woman appeared, we are not surprised to find that He was the Object of immediate and vigorous assault by the Adversary. During the slow moving centuries since it was uttered, that prophecy had rankled in the mind of the evil one—a festering sore which had been rendered the more purulent by the several malevolent but abortive attempts to eradicate the Royal Line. The long awaited opportunity to grapple with the *Seed* presented itself in the Advent of the Son of Man. The hope of conflict, as it were hand to hand, so long deferred, harbored and fanned in that malignant breast, could not be realized.

Straightway from His memorable experience in Jordan, Jesus was led in the spirit in the wilderness and for forty days and nights endured the rigors of trial by the Adversary. To what extent and with what severity He was tested during that long period (throughout which He also fasted) we do not know, but at its completion, He was further tested before the Adversary withdrew from Him. The three points of the trial are outlined for us by Matthew and Luke in the fourth chapter of each of their accounts, and these, briefly, are:

(1) Transmute the stones to bread.
(2) Acquire power and possession of the kingdoms of the world in exchange for worship.
(3) To cast Himself from the wing of the sanctuary to prove the truth of God's promised protection.

The first temptation gave Him opportunity to satisfy a pressing physical need: The second offered a quick and easy way to power and dominion, the Adversary's way, without the Cross—His Father's way, by Calvary, was the path of obedience. The third point of the trial incited Him to disobedience by tempting His Father and putting Him on trial.

The baptism of Jesus by John in the river Jordan was accompanied by a remarkable phenomenon. The waters had not stilled when the heavens were rent by the descending Spirit of God which rested on Him, and from out of the riven clouds the voice of His Father testified (Matt.3:17):

This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight.

Well might we say with prophet of old—"Yahweh is in His holy temple! Be quelled, all the earth, before Him!" (Hab.2:20). Let us, as did God's faithful servant of a day long past, take the shoes from off our feet, for this is holy ground. Let us bow down before the Lord, our Maker, and contemplate in awe and reverent silence the sublime testimony—*This* is *My Son,* the Beloved. *God* has spoken—let us embrace that vital truth with every fiber of our being.

The beloved *Son* of His *Father*—The knowledge of that precious truth sustained Him in the prolonged physical stress and mental ordeal in the wilderness and fortified Him when the Tempter thrust at Him the vile and fiery shaft—*If you are God's Son.* The Adversary knew well the Lord's weakened physical state after forty days and nights of trial and fasting, and sought, at once, to exploit the advantage, in a manner at once familiar and apparent. *If* You are. . . . *If* You are . . . . *If* You are . . . . In a calumniating whisper the Tempter urged upon the heart and mind of the "Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith" disbelief of the declaration of God and doubt as to His divine Sonship. The cruel taunt and the ensuing temptations were faced,

resisted and conquered by the upraised shield of *faith* and the *Word of God.* Quietly, calmly and with dignity He met each point of the trial with an unequivocal—*It is written*.

The Adversary thereupon left Him, but "until an appointed time" only (Luke 4:13). Stern indeed had been this pre-Calvary encounter in the wilderness, but a sterner trial, a more bitter conflict lay ahead. At the appointed time, the evil one returned, and the full force of his pent up and unabated fury broke upon the thorn-crowned head of the Man of Sorrows, as He hung from the rude stake raised on the "place of a skull," Golgotha. There He hung, the Spectacle in the midst of the madding crowd, the lonely object of the coarse jest and mocking taunt. The scene is graphically portrayed for us by Matthew in his account, chapter 27—"Now those going by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads . . ." (v.39). But above the confusion and clamour of voices turned hoarse by the raucous cries of "Crucify! Crucify!" was heard an echo from the wilderness:

If you are the Son of God, descend from the cross! . . . He has confidence in God. Let Him rescue him now, if He is wanting him, for he said that God's Son am I! (Matt.27: 40,43)

He suffered the judgment, the stripes, the nailing to the tree because He had claimed to be *The Son of God.* "What need have we still of witnesses?" (Matt.26:65) declared His captors, and they hustled Him through Pilate's hall to Calvary.

The Lamb of God recognized intuitively the "voice" incarnate in these willing dupes and emissaries of the evil one. He did not yield to their vile suggestion. He did not waver in the path of obedience. He did not falter in His resolve to finish the work which God had given Him to do (John 17:4). He did not descend from His cross, but endured it, despising the shame and contradiction of sin-

ners. As in the wilderness testing, so now He triumphed gloriously and was able through that victory to say, "It is accomplished!" (John 19:30).

The machinations of the Adversary, which he thought to consummate in all their fiendish fury on that hill outside the city wall, became the cause for the destruction of his position of authority. The head of the serpent was crushed by *the* promised *Seed* on the "Place of the Skull" (Matt.27:33).

To those who have ears to hear, it is not without significance that the first question recorded in Scripture—"Indeed, did Elohim say . . . ?—is directed against the *Word* of *God*. The query in the wilderness and on the hill called Calvary, was levelled at the *Word* Which became flesh. The concerted forces of evil and wickedness have been, still are and will continue to be mustered and concentrated against the imperishable Word of *Truth*, *Life* and *Light*. We still hear and will hear the "Indeed, did Elohim say?"—"Does Job?"—the recurring "if." Some of these powers of wickedness are in high places and exalted station and their prominence commands attention. They, as their master, would rob us of the *Word of God*, our most precious possession. They would have us abandon the solid foundation of the impregnable rock of sacred Scripture for the shifting sands of blundering human speculation and philosophy. They would supplant the living *Word of Truth* of the Great Author in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed (Col.3:3) by the vaporings of profane prattlings and antipathies of falsely named knowledge (1 Tim.6:20).

To every query, specious or blunt, to every critic "high" or "low," to every "Yea, hath God said?" whispered or blatant: let the firm, assured answer of every child of God be:

IT IS WRITTEN.

Alan Reid

GRACE REIGNS THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS

"WHERE SIN INCREASES, *grace superexceeds,* that, even as Sin reigns in death, thus *Grace also should be reigning* through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:20,21).

The administration of the grace of God was given to the apostle Paul (Eph.3:2) who penned these words: "Grateful am I to Him Who invigorates me, Christ Jesus, our Lord, for He deems me faithful, assigning me a service, I, who formerly was a calumniator and a persecutor and an outrager: but I was shown mercy, seeing that I do it being ignorant, in unbelief. Yet the *grace* of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, foremost of whom am I. But therefore was I shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ should be displaying all His patience, for a pattern of those who are about to be believing on Him for life eonian" (1 Tim.1:12-16).

FOREMOST OF SINNERS

Paul, as Saul of Tarsus, was not the first in order of sinners, but he was the first in rank; therefore he uses the term "foremost of sinners." He did not consider himself as the worst offender because of a false sense of humility; it was a recognition of the magnitude of his failure. For he, of all people, should have welcomed the Messiah when He came, but instead dedicated his whole energy to wip-

ing out those who did accept Jesus thus, as the Messiah, or the Christ of God.

This one who was "in circumcision the eighth day, of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, in relation to law, a Pharisee, in relation to zeal, persecuting the ecclesia, in relation to the righteousness which is in law, becoming blameless"(Phil.3:5,6), had plenty of opportunity to hear the truth of Christ's advent.

Saul had witnessed firsthand Stephen, "possessing the fullness of faith and holy spirit, looking intently into heaven, as he perceived the glory of God, and Jesus, standing at the right hand of God, and said, 'Lo! I am beholding the heavens opened up, and the Son of Mankind standing at the right hand of God.'" He stood close by and did nothing when the crowd, "crying with a loud voice, pressed their ears and rush on him with one accord. And, casting him out, outside of the city, they pelted him with stones. And the witnesses put off their garments at the feet of a young man called Saul. And they pelted Stephen with stones, while he is invoking and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!' Now, kneeling, he cries with a loud voice, 'Lord, Thou shouldst not stand against them this sin!' And saying this, he was put to repose. Yet Saul was endorsing his assassination" (Act.7:55-8:1).

Paul's resumé only gets worse as we read: "Yet pious men are Stephen's pallbearers, and they make a great grieving over him. Now Saul devastated the ecclesia; going into the homes, dragging out both men and women, he gave them over to jail" (Act.8:2,3). "Now Saul, still breathing out threatening and murder against the disciples of the Lord, approaching the chief priest, requests from him letters for Damascus to the synagogues, so that, if he should be finding any who are of the way, both men and women, he may be leading them bound to Jerusalem" (Acts 9:1,2).

God chose the one who least deserved any favor, the

chief of sinners, to be the prototype of the new order of *the administration of grace.* Even the most unlearned yet enlightened seeker of truth is able to comprehend, "For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8,9).

Those who feel their salvation had anything to do with what they have done do not understand grace. We cannot earn or deserve grace, else it is not grace at all.

THE EVANGEL OF GRACE

Once Saul, who was later called Paul, received this revelation of the grace of God and dedicated the balance of his life to heralding the evangel which he once opposed, being consumed with his new calling and service, he then wrote: "I am not making my soul precious to myself, till I should be perfecting my career and the dispensation which I got from the Lord Jesus, to certify *the evangel of the grace of God*" (Acts 20:24).

"Now I am making known to you, brethren, the evangel which I bring to you, which also you accepted, in which also you stand, through which also *you are saved,* if you are retaining what I said in bringing the evangel to you, outside and except you believe feignedly. For I give over to you among the first what also I accepted, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:1-4). It is on the solid foundation of *the evangel of the grace of God* that we stand, and through which we are saved.

Paul recognized not only the wisdom, but the *potency* of the simple message, "Christ crucified" (*cf* 1 Cor.2:2-4). "The word of the cross is stupidity, indeed, to those who are perishing, yet to us who *are being saved* it is the power of God" (1 Cor.1:18).

RELIGIOUS BONDAGE

I grew up in the Mennonite church, and at an early age understood exactly what "being saved" meant within our denomination. It implied that you had accepted Jesus Christ, into your heart and life, as your Lord and personal Saviour. I was taught that this was the most important issue facing every human being, for it determined whether you would spend eternity in hell's fire or heaven's bliss.

It was our duty to make people aware of the gravity of this matter and thereby help a few, at least, escape the inevitable terrible destiny of the bulk of mankind.

For most of my life, I lived with a burden of chronic guilt and shame for failing to do my utmost to help save the lost people around me. It was not until I was in my forties, that God opened my eyes to see that His vast love for mankind is such that "He dispatches His Son into the world not that He should be judging the world, but that *the world may be saved* through Him" (John 3:17). What a joy and relief it was to behold our God as The Saviour of the world, *Who wills that all mankind be saved* and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4), even as to be granted the faith to believe that Christ Jesus gave Himself a correspondent *Ransom for all* (1 Tim.2:4-6).

I had been in religious bondage for years, striving to crucify my flesh, and take up my cross daily, in order to win God's approval. What a happy day it was when God showed me that "He saved [me] and called [me] with a holy calling, not in accord with [my] acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to [me] in Christ Jesus before times eonian" (2 Tim.1:9).

THE EVANGEL OF THE CIRCUMCISION

My dilemma had been that I did not know how to correctly cut the word of truth (2 Tim.2:15), and therefore did

not realize that the evangel given to Peter and the twelve was a distinct message from Paul's evangel of grace.

During this current administration of the grace of God, in spirit the nations are to be joint enjoyers of an allotment, and a joint body apart from Israel and apart from the law. By revelation the secret was made known to Paul, which, in other generations, was not made known to the sons of humanity as it was then revealed to His holy apostles and prophets (*cf* Eph.3:3-6). The foremost of sinners was to be the model of those about to be saved during this administration of grace.

James presented the Circumcision evangel this way: ". . . Faith, if it should not have works: it is dead by itself. But someone will be declaring, 'You have faith and I have works.' Show me your faith apart from the works and *I shall be showing you my faith by my works* . . . . You see that by works a man is being justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:17,18,24).

FOR FREEDOM CHRIST FREES US!

My confusion, over the years, was in attempting to make one message out of the two, and trying to apply the Circumcision message to my own life. The Galatians fell into this trap, and Paul had a stern word for them:

"For freedom Christ frees us! Stand firm, then, and be not again enthralled with the yoke of slavery. Lo! I, Paul, am saying to you that if you should be circumcising, Christ will benefit you nothing. Now I am attesting again to every man who is circumcising, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Exempted from Christ were you who are being justified in law. You *fall out of grace*" (Gal.5:1-4).

"Now if it is in grace, it is no longer out of works, else the grace is coming to be no longer grace. Now, if it is out of works, it is no longer grace, else the work is no longer work" (Rom.11:6).

As in Paul's day, there will be "some who are disturbing you, wanting to distort the evangel of Christ, desiring to transfer you from that which *calls you in the grace* of Christ, to a *different* evangel" (Gal.1:6,7). This mishmash of law and grace, commonly promoted in Christendom, is not good news for today—nor for any other time, for that matter. The only living, unadulterated message, relevant for the saints of God today, is the evangel of our happy God (*cf* 1 Tim.1:11), the evangel of grace entrusted to Paul.

After we, the body of Christ, are snatched away, and God begins to deal with Israel again, *then* the evangel of the Circumcision that Peter and James proclaimed, will be applicable for the time remaining, in the conclusion of the eon: " 'For this is the covenant that I will be covenanting with *the house of Israel* after those days,' the Lord is saying: 'Imparting My laws to their comprehension, On their hearts, also, shall I be inscribing them, And I shall be to them for a God, And they shall be to me for a people' " (Heb.8:10).

UNDERSTANDING GRACE

Christendom speaks much of grace, but has created its own definition for it, which is not grace at all.

I once heard a preacher make this statement about grace: "I would rather the saints of God understand grace and not live it than to not understand grace yet live it." The "living it," to which he is referring, is a daily walk worthy of salvation.

This preacher was suggesting that there are two main tendencies towards which "Christians" are drawn. One attitude is "seeing that our salvation is 100% a gracious gift from God and 0% due to our works, there is no sense in pursuing righteousness." Realizing that they did nothing to gain their salvation, they continue to do nothing to glorify the God Who saved them.

The preacher felt this position was better than that of those who do not understand grace and yet strive to live a good life, thinking that it is their own righteousness that qualifies them for salvation, being ignorant of the fact that what they are working so hard to gain has already been given to them gratuitously.

Although I may agree in principle with this man's notion, that the former erroneous position is not *as* bad as the latter erroneous position, in any case, both positions are based on a faulty premise and neither is actually possible. By seeing the fallacy of this reasoning, I trust, we will be better equipped to appreciate the ideal. And, ". . . Even as you are superabounding in everything—in faith and word and knowledge and all diligence and the love that flows out of you into us—that you may be *superabounding in this grace* also" (2 Cor.8:7). God's desire for His children is that they would be *invigorated by the grace* which is in Christ Jesus (*cf* 2 Tim.2:1).

The one camp is in error believing that righteousness can be gained through their good works. If it could, then Christ died gratuitously (*cp* Gal.2:21). Therefore it is impossible even to begin a *faith*ful walk, except in grace through faith. Paul knew firsthand that by works of law no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20).

Saul probably came closer to perfection by works of law than anyone, and, with great confidence in the flesh, he labored tirelessly, surmising that he was at least getting closer to becoming blameless (*cp* Phil.3:4-6). But when he met the living Christ on the Damascus road, he finally realized that his pursuit of righteousness by works of law, was futile. From that point on he humbly proclaimed: "But things which were gain to me, these I have deemed a forfeit because of Christ. But, to be sure, I am also deeming all to be a forfeit because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, because of Whom I for-

feited all, and am deeming it to be refuse, that I should be gaining Christ, and may be found in Him, not having my righteousness, which is of law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God for faith" (Phil.3:7-9).

The grace of God which was ever with Paul (1 Cor. 15:10) led him gladly to give up all he could ever hope to gain by his own efforts, that, in his awareness, he might gain *Christ* and righteousness through the faith of Christ.

RECEIVING THE GRACE OF GOD

I do not believe the other position, which the preacher described as "understanding grace but not living it," is possible either, at least at any practical level of living faith. Those who *actually* apprehend the grace of God in truth, *will* be bearing fruit and growing. Thus Paul writes to the Colossians:

"We are thanking the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, always concerning you, on hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints, because of the expectation reserved for you in the heavens, which you hear before in the word of truth of the evangel, which, being present with you, according as in the entire world also, is bearing fruit and growing, according as it is among you also, from the day on which you hear and realized the grace of God in truth" (Col.1:3-6; *cp* Rom. 8:1-4; Gal.5:24).

Should the grace of God be received for naught (*cf* 2 Cor.6:1), it is either because it is not truly comprehended, or else the spirit has been quenched (1 Thess.5:19a).

We eagerly expose the error of those who over-emphasize the importance of human acts and decisions even to the point that they (supposedly) determine where we will spend eternity. Yet let us not be guilty of taking the other extreme by ignoring the numerous entreaties which Paul

makes concerning our walk. They are not words of law, but rather arise as the logical effects of grace (*cf* Rom.12:1,2), and they always accord with the grace of our calling. So we find Paul entreating us in view of the grace and love of God unfolded in Ephesians 1-3, to walk worthily of the calling with which we are called (Eph.4:1).

Paul did not stop being a pattern of the saints of God, after his Damascus road awakening. He continued to be a model of the grace of God, for God's grace which was with him did not come to be for naught (1 Cor.15:10).

WALKING IN NEWNESS OF LIFE

To the Philippians, Paul wrote: "With fear and trembling, *be carrying your own salvation into effect,* for it is God Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight. All be doing without murmurings and reasonings, that you may become blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse among whom you are appearing as luminaries in the world, having on the word of life, for my glorying in the day of Christ, that I did not run for naught, neither that I toil for naught" (Phil.2:12b-16).

"God is able to *lavish all grace on you,* that, having all contentment in everything always, you may be superabounding in every good work" (2 Cor.9:8).

It is expedient that we understand that "in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8,9). But this is not the end of the story; God has saved us for a purpose. The text continues, "For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:10).

By grace we were saved, and by grace we will be "stripping off the old humanity together with its practices, and

putting on the young, which is being renewed into recognition, to accord with the Image of the One Who creates it" (Col.3:9,10).

"We cannot conjure up devoutness. Rather, devoutness will come naturally to the heart that dwells on the grace of our Saviour, God."[1]

AMAZING GRACE!

"Yet law came in by the way, that the offense should be increasing. Yet where sin increases, grace superexceeds, that, even as Sin reigns in death, thus *Grace also should be reigning* through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:21).

Although we are aware that God's operation in us is a work in progress, we are confident that He Who undertakes this good work among [us], will be performing it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil.1:6). "We, then, were entombed together with Him through baptism into death, that, even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also should be walking in newness of life" (Rom.6:4).

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!
Thro' many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath bro't me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home.

(John Newton, from the hymn, "Amazing Grace!")

Don Bast

(To be continued)

1. Dean Hough, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.63, p.38.

FAITH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

WHAT is faith?

"Now faith is an assumption of what is being expected, a conviction concerning matters which are not being observed" (Heb.11:1).

When the definition of faith contains a phrase such as "matters not being observed," and words like "assumption" and "expectation," it becomes obvious there is nothing physically tangible about faith; it consists of the perception of the "eyes of our hearts" (*cf* Eph.1:18).

Faith, then, resting in a conviction of expectation centered in the future, must be based upon truth, or the faith will be futile. This leads us to God's Word, for it alone is truth, in which faith may safely rest.

FAITH IN GOD PLEASES HIM

How important is faith? Hebrews 11:6 says: "Now apart from faith it is impossible to be well pleasing, for he who is coming to God must believe that He is, and is becoming a Rewarder of those who are seeking Him out."

It is well pleasing to God to believe that He is, that He exists and exists as God, and to believe that He is becoming a Rewarder of those who are seeking Him out.

THE FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST

We know that Jesus Christ was well pleasing to His Father, for it is witnessed to in Matthew 3:17 (*cp* Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35): "And lo! a voice out of the heavens, saying, 'This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight.'" He

lived a life of faith before His Father (*cf* John 5:19; 8:26), but we see this best in His giving of Himself at the cross (John 18:11; Rom.3:22,26; Gal.3:22).

Jesus' speech and actions were all based on a knowledge of what His Father wanted Him to say and do, so all of His speech and actions were of faith.

THE OUTCOME OF JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

The outcome of Jesus Christ's faith will be the fulfillment of His Father's purpose, for we read in Hebrews 2:10 that "it became Him, because of Whom all is, and through Whom all is, in leading many sons into glory, to perfect the Inaugurator of their salvation through sufferings" (*cp* Eph.1:10,23; 1 Tim.4:9,10).

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH

In Greek the word translated "righteousness" is the compound term, JUST-TOGETHERness, and in the Keyword Concordance it is defined as "the quality or state of being righteous, the status of one who is justified."[1]

Is there a standard set out in Scripture by which two or more may live together in a righteous or just relationship? Yes, the law is such a standard.

But we find that even with the standard of the law to guide us humanity cannot attain to righteousness. "Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction" (Rom.3:21-22).

Note that this passage says, "a righteousness of God is manifest." The word "manifest" means "make-APPEAR;" hence God's righteousness is made to appear. Note also that it is "through Jesus Christ's faith," that is, through

1. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.250.

His "conviction concerning matters which are not being observed." It will be the fulfilling of the expectation of the faith of Jesus Christ which will finally reveal God's righteousness to all.

What was the expectation of Jesus Christ's faith? Statements He made during His earthly ministry supply the answer. "For the Son of Mankind came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). "For God does not dispatch His Son into the world that He should be judging the world, but that the world may be saved through Him" (John 3:17). "And I, if I should be exalted out of the earth, shall be drawing all to Myself" (John 12:32).

His expectation was to be the Saviour promised in Genesis 3:15,16. Turning again to Romans we find this is exactly what occurred:

". . . for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.

"Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter, through faith in His blood, for a display of His righteousness because of the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before in the forbearance of God), toward the display of His righteousness in the current era, for Him to be just and a Justifier of the one who is of the faith of Jesus . . ." (Rom. 3:23-26).

Verse 25 speaks of a display of God's righteousness dealing with the past, and verse 26 speaks of a display of His righteousness in the present. If God had not provided a Propitiatory shelter for sins that had occurred before by those who lived by faith together with the law, He would not be righteous, for there would not have been JUST-TOGETHERness. By providing the Propitiatory God honored His word concerning the promised Saviour and thus revealed His righteousness of JUST-TOGETHERness.

The evangel is that message telling us of Christ's death for our sins, and entombment and that He has been roused

from among the dead (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1-3). Looking back to Romans 1:16,17 we find Paul testifying: "For not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well. For in it God's righteousness is being revealed, out of faith for faith, according as it is written: 'Now the just one by faith shall be living' " (Rom.1:16,17).

It is in the evangel that God's righteousness is being revealed "out of faith, for faith." Because of Jesus Christ's faith there is an evangel of God. That is the "out of faith" part. The righteousness of God is revealed or "made manifest" to believers by His spirit within giving us an understanding or knowledge of the evangel (*cf* 1 Cor.2:4-10) which we accept by faith. That is the "for faith" part.

"For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

"For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit" (Rom. 8:3-4).

God's righteousness has been set forth in the evangel of God which Paul now brings. It is revealed through the faith of Jesus Christ, in His death and resurrection. We have been reckoned righteous because of faith. Our faith is a gift from God, and it continues as a result of His spirit which He gives us (Eph.2:8-10; Gal.5:22,23), and our love is of Him also (Rom.5:5). We are simply earthen vessels by means of which God reveals His love, grace, wisdom, power, holiness and righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ. We are of all His creation most blessed.

Stanley Cooper

BE ADMONISHED, JERUSALEM
(Jeremiah 6:1-30)

THE THEME of warning to Jerusalem continues in Jeremiah 6 which matches with Jeremiah 4:3-5:31 in the "skeletal" structure. In the previous section there were clear flashes of light which pierced the darkness, such as the assurances in 4:27 and 5:10,18 that a (full) end will not be made to Jerusalem. Yet now in Jeremiah 6 it is more difficult to trace any message of hope.

There is much that corresponds to Jeremiah's mission to pluck up and break down and destroy and demolish, but is there anything which points ahead to a building up and a planting (*cf* Jer.1:10)? Yes there is, but it is found in implication rather than direct statement.

The very intensity of Yahweh's fury as it is expressed in Jeremiah's inner distress testifies to a deeper intensity of love. The long delay in the outpouring of His indignation while exercising the riches of His kindness and forbearance (Rom.2:4), reveals the bent of God's heart. Indeed even here in chapter 6 "this people" upon whom Yahweh is now bringing evil (6:19) are termed by Him, "My people" (Jer.6:14,27; *cp* Hos.1:8-11; 2:23). Even in His anger, His vision of them as they will be slips through.

The destruction and deportation did come, as Yahweh declared through Jeremiah. But also Yahweh said through the same prophet: "If the heavens above could be measured, and the foundations of the earth below could be investigated, then I Myself shall reject all the seed of Israel on account of all that they do . . . . Behold, the days are coming . . . when the city will be rebuilt for

Yahweh; . . . it shall not be plucked up nor demolished for the eon" (Jer.31:37-40).

EVIL FROM THE NORTH

6 [c]**Take** yourselves to **strong** shelter**, sons of Benjamin;**
Flee **from within Jerusalem,**
And in Tekoa blow the **trumpet,**
And on Beth-haccherem lift up the **beacon,**
For evil, it gazes from the **north,**
and a **great breaking.**
2 **I will still the homestead,** + **the delicate**[l] one,
The **daughter of Zion.**
3 [›]**Against her** [l]**come shepherds**[l] **and their droves;**
They pitch tents around [on]**about her;**
They graze, each one [`]at **his hand.**

The city of Jerusalem jutted up from Judah into the territory allotted to the tribe of Benjamin. Jerusalem was for all the people of Israel, but those of Judah and Benjamin naturally formed the bulk of its inhabitants. Here it was given to Jeremiah to speak words of warning to those of his own tribe (*cf* Jer.1:1), whose land lay north and to the east and west. The words are brief and blunt. Then also the prophet speaks of warning signals arising from the hills of Tekoa and Beth-haccherem just south of Jerusalem between it and the wilderness.

For evil gazed from the north, a great breaking. The forces of Babylon approached. The verb "gaze" is associated with fearful threat in this context (Jer.6:11). Yet there will come a time when God will gaze at Zion with Truth and Righteousness (Psa.85:11; *cp* Psa.102:19).

YAHWEH'S STRATEGY

4 **Hallow** a **battle** [on]**against her!**
Arise and let us go **up** [i]**at noon!**
Woe to us, for the day fades,
For the **shadows of evening are** [l]**stretched out.**
5 **Arise and let us** go **up** [i]**at night!**
And let us wreck her citadels!
6 **For thus says Yahweh of hosts: Cut** down **trees,**
And construct an **earthwork** [on]**against Jerusalem;**
She is **the city** [7]**of falsehood~;**
All [i] **within her** is **extortion.**

As Yahweh's grand strategy demanded that a nation take over the place which Israel ought to have, and they will have when properly trained for it, Yahweh Himself proclaims a holy war against Jerusalem. As the city is certain to fall there need be little of the usual preparation, so the vanguard seems to have arrived at the walls at noon, but later forces, when they came, raised up earthworks during the night.

But all the might of the enemy could not have taken the city if Yahweh were not against it. Its weakness was within. Just as at a later siege, Titus and his Roman legions did not do as much damage as the Jews within, so now the evils within weakened its defense more than the outward attacks.

EVIL COLLECTED AND PRESERVED

7 **As** a **cistern** [7c]**keeps cool~~ its waters,**
so she [7c]**keeps cooly** fresh~ **her evil;**
Violence and devastation are [l]**heard in her;**
[on]**Before My face continually** are **illness and smiting.**
8 **Be admonished, Jerusalem,**
Lest My soul should be [l]**strained from you,**
Lest I should [pl]**make you** a **desolation,**
a **land** that **is not** in**dwelt.**

The cisterns in the Orient are so built that rainwater will run into it from around. The figure is used to describe the evil which Jerusalem conserved just as the cisterns of

the city collected waters and kept them safe. Violence and devastation, with illness and smiting fill Jerusalem from round about. Hence Yahweh admonishes the people.

CLEAN GLEANED

9 **Thus says Yahweh of hosts:**
~Clean glean~, yea **clean glean⁻, as** you would a **vine,**
the **remnant of Israel;**
Bring your hand back like a grape **picker**ˡ
over the **tendrils.**

Here Yahweh speaks to the invading army. It was the custom to leave a part of the crop to be gleaned by the poor and needy. But what was left of Israel's vine, a symbol of gladness, was to be "clean gleaned," or stripped entirely. Even that put into the trays was to be taken. Indeed, the deportation was very complete; nearly all were taken to Babylon.

NOT ATTENTIVE

10 *on*Against *a*whom must I ˡspeak and ˡtestify
⁺that they may hearken?
Behold, uncircumcised is **their ear,**
and they ˡ**cannot** › *c*pay attention⁻;
Behold, the **word of Yahweh,**
it has become for them › a **reproach,**
7**And***cs* **they** do **not** ˡ**delight in it.**

When Yahweh seeks to help them by His words, no one attends. They do not wish to be reproached by Him.

THERE IS NO PEACE

11 ⁺**Yet** of `the **fury of Yahweh I am full;**
I am tired with **containing⁻** it.
Pour it **out on** the **infant in** the **street,**
And on the **intimate** group **of choice** youths **alike;**
*t*Indeed *mr*both husband with wife shall be seized,

The **elder with** the one **full of days.**
12 ⁺ **Their houses will be** turned **about to others,**
Fields and wives alike,
For I shall stretch out `My hand *on*against the **dwellers**ˡ **of the land, averring** is **Yahweh;**
13 **For from their smallest** ⁺ **unto their greatest,**
everyone is **greedy**ˡ with **greed,**
And from prophet ⁺ **unto priest,**
everyone is *d*practicing falsehood;
14 ⁺ **They** ˡ**heal** `the **brokenness of My people**
*on*in an **offhand**ˡ way,
› **Saying⁻: Peace, peace,** ⁺**when** there **is no peace.**
15 **They have** *c*acted shamefully,
For they have *d*committed an **abhorrence;**
However they are not ˡ**ashamed,** nay **ashamed⁻;**
They do **not even know** how to **blush⁻;**
Therefore they shall fall *i*among the **fallen**ˡ;
In the **era** when **I check them, they shall stumble,**
Yahweh has said.

The prophet is bursting with fury against all classes because they are intent on getting something for themselves. Even the prophet and the priest gain popularity by predicting peace, and they are not ashamed to do it without knowing the mind of Yahweh. Therefore, even though they are recognized as His servants, they fall with the rest.

REFUSAL

16 **Thus says Yahweh:**
Stand on the **roads and see;**
⁺ **Ask** ›**about** the **eonian tracks,**
where this way to ˙**good** is,
And go in it, and find respite for your soul.
⁺**Yet they** ˡ**say, We shall not go.**
17 ⁺**Also I set up watchmen**ˡ **over you:**
*c*Pay attention to the **sound of** the **trumpet!**

[+]Yet they [l]say, We shall not [c]pay attention.

Even when Yahweh exhorts them to go in the good way followed by faithful men such as Abel, Noah and Abraham, they refuse. When Yahweh sets up watchmen such as Jeremiah himself they remain stubborn to the warnings.

YAHWEH BRINGS EVIL

18 **Therefore hear, ·nations,**
And know, crowd, `[w]what is coming **[i]against them.**
19 **Hear, ·earth!**
Behold, I am **bringing evil ›on ·this ·people,**
The **fruit of their** own **devisings;**
For they do **not [c]pay attention [on]to My words,**
And My law, [+] they [l]reject [i] it.

Yahweh calls the nations and the earth to witness that He is the One Who brings this evil on Judah and Jerusalem as a result of their own doing. It is not the lust for power in the hearts of the enemy, as it would seem to one not in the counsels of Yahweh Elohim, but Yahweh Himself is behind these events for His own purposes.

UNACCEPTABLE OFFERINGS

20 **Why** is **this,** that **frankincense from Sheba is coming to Me,**
And the goodly aromatic **reed from** a **land afar?**
Your ascent offerings are **not › acceptable,**
And your sacrifices are not congenial to Me.

Their rejection of Yahweh has come so far that Judah imports pleasant odors from lands afar, yet they offer no perfume in their ascent offerings and their sacrifices which could be congenial to their Lord.

YAHWEH SETS STUMBLING BLOCKS

21 **Therefore, thus says Yahweh:**

Behold, I shall [g]**put[l] stumbling blocks**
›before ·this ·people,
And they will stumble [i]on them;
Fathers and sons alike,
Neighbor and his associate, they shall perish.

Although all their blessings come from Yahweh, in their alienation from Him the only true help is to cause them to stumble until they perish. Consequently Yahweh lays unavoidable stumbling blocks for the temporary destruction of the whole people.

THE TIME FOR DEVASTATION COMES

22 **Thus says Yahweh:**
Behold, a **people** is **coming from** the **north land,**
And a **great nation is [l]roused from** the **remote** part**s**
of the **earth.**
23 **Bow and scimitar they [c]hold [l]fast;**
They are **cruel and [m]show no[t] [l]compassion;**
Their voice [l]clamors like the **sea,**
And on horses they [l]ride,
Arrayed[l] like a **man for battle, [on]against you,**
daughter of Zion.
24 **We have heard `**a **report of it; Our hands** fall **slack;**
Distress [c]holds us fast,
Travail as a woman giv**ing birth.**
25 **Do not** go **[l]forth** to **the field,**
And in the **road do not [l]walk,**
For the **enemy[l] ›has** a **sword;**
Shrinking fear is [f] **round about.**
26 **Daughter of my people, gird** on **sackcloth,**
And wallow in ashes;
The **mourning** for an **only** son [d]**make for you**rself,
The **wailing of bitterness;**
For suddenly the devastator[l] shall come up**on us.**

The Babylonian invaders entered the land from the north, although they lived on the eastern side, across the desert. Their equipment and ferocity led them to conquer all the nations.

The Assyrians, before this, were also great conquerors, and would have taken Jerusalem if its time had not come, and Yahweh had not been for them, defeating the host by slaying them in a single night. But now, for a time, Yahweh acted against His people. So He advises them not to go outside, but to repent in sackcloth and ashes.

A TEST OF YAHWEH'S PEOPLE

27 **I have** [g]**made you** an **assayer** [i]**of My people**
—a **fortress—**
So [+]**that you** may **know and assay** `**their way.**
28 **They all** are the **stubborn**[l] **of** the **stubborn**[l]**,**
Going about **defaming,**
Bronze and iron, all of them; Ruiners[l] are **they.**
29 The **bellows have** become red **hot from** the **fire;**
The **lead is completely removed,**
› **Futilely has the refiner**[–] **refined,**
And the **evildoers have not been drawn off.**
30 [7]**Call~** › **them rejected**[l] **silver,**
For Yahweh has rejected [i] **them.**

A final test is given to Judah under the figure of a refiner who seeks to draw off the base metal. Jeremiah himself is made the assayer whose warnings are applied to the people. But the test is not successful. The people are not pure silver and are rejected.

Yet it is Yahweh Who rejects them, and in this there is promise for good.

–adapted and expanded from notes by A. E. Knoch

THE BASIS OF JUSTIFICATION

GOD is the *Justifier* (Rom.3:26; 8:33). The fact that He, and no one else, is the Justifier is of prime importance. To know that *God Himself* takes care of our justification would seem enough for us to believe for our happiness and peace and for our strength and endurance.

But we are given more.

God is the *righteous* Justifier (Rom.3:26), and in the evangel announcing His work of justification God's righteousness can be seen by those who believe. This means that justification is not simply forensic, based only on divine authority and decision, but it is actual and unimpeachable. It is in fact the work of God, and thus it reflects the character of God in every way. For the evangel of justification reveals and manifests and displays the righteousness of God (Rom.1:17; 3:21,25,26).

That it is God Who justifies, and that He does so with absolute righteousness would seem enough for our joy and peace through every setback and struggle of our lives.

But we are given more.

THE FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST

Justification is achieved by God in His righteousness out of and through the faith of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.3:21-26; Gal.2:16).

Consequently, in Romans 3:27, when Paul says that "faith's law" debars boasting, he is reminding us that justification which is achieved by means of the faith of Jesus Christ and not our acts does not allow us to boast in our-

selves. Our boasting must be in Him Who died for our sakes. Justification comes about by His giving of Himself for sinners.

Once again, why is it that we cannot boast in being justified?

For we are reckoning a man [human] *to be justified by faith apart from works of law.* (Rom.3:28)

We cannot boast; this is because we are justified by the faith of Jesus Christ apart from anything we may do. This is the message of Romans 3:28 in light of its preceding context and in accord with the nature of the evangel of God. We cannot boast in ourselves, "for," in our *reckoning,* or *accounting* of what the evangel says, it is clear that justification must be founded on *faith.*

WHOSE FAITH?

For many years, at least since the days of Martin Luther, it has been assumed that Paul is referring to the believer's faith here. Hence this passage is taken to say the human is justified by placing his faith in what Christ has done rather than by doing the works of law.

Truly, this prevalent view represents a step forward from the enslavement to ecclesiastical rules and schemes which pervaded the religious systems of Luther's day, and still exists in many forms. The point is scriptural, for Paul will soon tell us, "Now to the worker, the wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as a debt. Yet to him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, *his faith* is reckoned for righteousness" (Rom.4:4,5).

Yet some in more recent times are taking Paul's references to "Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22) and the "faith of Jesus" (Rom.3:26) in their literal and most natural sense. It is thus seen that the words "Jesus Christ's faith" refer to Jesus Christ's own faith, just as the words "his faith" in Romans 4:5 refer to the believer's own faith, and the words "the faith of Abraham" in Romans 4:16 refer to Abraham's own faith.

Furthermore, and most significantly, it is seen that just as Christ's *obedience* to the death of the cross (Phil.2:8) is an expression of the evangel, so also to speak of the *faith* of Jesus Christ is to get at the heart of the evangel of God concerning His Son. His obedience and faith are one.

In these studies on Romans 3:21-31 I have been presenting a pattern of thought that gives first place to God as the One out of Whom all is, and that then points to our Lord Jesus Christ as the One through Whom God operates and reveals Himself to us who occupy third place in what is said. It has brought me much delight to note this pattern and much peace to meditate on it and its significance.

I have suggested that this threefold pattern is established in the opening verses of Romans where the evangel is presented as the evangel of *God,* concerning *His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord,* and this message is being brought by Paul for *our* faith-obedience.

Further, concerning faith, in Romans 1:17 Paul speaks of the revelation of God's righteousness as being "out of faith" and also "for faith." This revelation comes forth out of Christ's faith and is for our faith. In accord with this it is fitting that Paul presents the manifestation of God's righteousness in His work of justification as sourced in and centered in Jesus Christ's faith.

It is only when that evangel concerning Christ's faith is established that Paul takes us into a consideration of our faith.

This is not to suggest I find no help from others who have searched (in many cases much more carefully than I have done) and shared from the rich store of truth in this marvelous section of God's Word, yet who do not agree with me concerning the phrase "faith of Jesus Christ." Far

from it; and indeed where I may differ from the majority, I find much to be thankful for in the good they contribute and appreciate the testing of my own thoughts which their disagreements afford. Teachers are only those who are learners.

Nevertheless, it is decidedly a minority view to take the reference to faith in Romans 3:28 (as well as in Romans 3:27) as referring at least in its primary sense to the faith of Jesus Christ. There is a contrast here, it seems to me, not between human works and human faith, but rather between human works and Christ's faith. In Romans 3:21-31 Paul directs our thoughts to the way in which justification is achieved (that is, "out of [Christ's] faith"), not (as he does in chapter 4) to the way in which it is applied to the believer. In his mind, Paul may well be looking ahead to what he will say about the believer's faith, and his words in Romans 3:28 can be seen as opening the way for the matter of God reckoning righteousness to the believer. But first and foremost, here in Romans 3:28 he is looking back to what he has just said about the faith of Jesus in verse 26, and the faith of Jesus Christ in verse 22.

The basis of all our blessings, including justification, is the cross of Christ. There can be little disagreement with this, but a great deal is lost when the word of the cross is not seen directly in Romans 3:28.

GALATIANS 2:15,16

What Paul says in Romans 3:28 is said in more detail in Galatians 2:15,16, where he makes explicit what is strongly implied in our passage in Romans. In Galatians we are told that the human is being justified, not simply "(by) faith," but "through the *faith of Christ Jesus,*" and this is repeated by the words, "we may be justified by [out of] the *faith of Christ.*" The thought and the language of Romans 3:28 and Galatians 2:15,16, are strikingly parallel, even though the circumstances which called for these two presentations of the evangel differed. The evangel of justification which Paul brought applies to many human situations and conditions. This evangel draws us into a faith which centers on Christ's faith, and also it keeps us there through the many attempts of the Adversary to distract our attention from God as our Justifier in His grace.

The Galatians were being transferred from the evangel and from the happiness it provided for them by a distortion of the evangel which brought in works of law as a factor in our justification (*cf* Gal.1:6,7; 3:1-3; 4:15). In exposing their error, the apostle recalls a situation in which, by his behavior, Peter ("Cephas") was unfaithful to the evangel which tells of Christ's death for sinners, both of the Circumcision and of the Uncircumcision. This led Paul to bring in the very message we have been examining:

We, who by nature are Jews, and not sinners of the nations, having perceived that a man is not being justified by works of law, except alone through the faith of Christ Jesus, we also believe in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by the faith of Christ and not by works of law.

Here within this passage with the Jewish outlook in view Paul states almost word for word what he declared in Romans 3:28 with all believers in view. This can be shown by condensing the Galatians passage as follows:

We . . . perceived that a man [human] *is . . . being justified . . . by . . . faith . . . and not by works of law.*

Despite contextual differences, the message, at the very root, is the same in both passages. This is the evangel of God concerning His Son as it relates to justification. It is centered in faith, and, as plainly stated in Galatians, the faith in view is the faith of Christ. What the believer does in receiving the evangel is mentioned here (as it is in Romans), but it is the faith of Him Who lived by every

word of God, even to the point of suffering and enduring the pain and darkness of Golgotha unto the death of the cross, that is announced in the evangel and stressed here in Galatians. He Who knew no sin became a sin offering for our sakes that we might become God's righteousness in Him (2 Cor.5:21).

It is through and out of this faith that we are justified.

PARALLEL WORDINGS

Let us note the parallels in these two passages in more detail by arranging them in three major groupings, the first concerned with our receiving of the evangel, the second with the evangel itself, and the third with what is excluded in receiving it. The words from Romans are given in roman type and the words of Galatians in italics:

WHAT WE DO:

For we are reckoning . . .
We, . . . having perceived . . .
we also believe in Christ Jesus . . .

WHAT WE RECEIVE, AND ITS SOURCE:

a man to be justified (by) faith . . .
that a man is . . . justified . . . through the faith of Christ Jesus . . . .
we may be justified by the faith of Christ . . .

WHAT IS EXCLUDED:

apart from works of law.
not being justified by works of law . . .
and not by works of law . . .
by works of law shall no flesh at all be justified.

WHAT WE DO

The verbs "reckon" in Romans 3:28 and "perceive" and "believe" in Galatians 2:16 are all parallel. They do not speak of the basis of justification, but rather of what we do in receiving the evangel and holding it in view. What we are reckoning and believing to be so is the evangel that justification comes by means of the faith of Jesus Christ, that is, by means of His death, entombment and resurrection. This is the evangel which we have accepted, and in which we stand (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1-3).

In addition, like the perceptive Jew who comes to understand from personal experience under law that no flesh at all can be justified in God's sight by works of law (Rom.3:20), we are acquainted enough with our failures in the flesh to realize we can never stand before God in righteousness on the basis of our acts. This is a principle backed up by all the evidence of human irreverence and unrighteousness which was set before us in Romans 1:18-3:19. There Paul spoke of human beings as a whole and then in particular of the Jew in comparison with those of the nations, and he concluded that, instead of being a guide of the blind, the Jew, through the transgression of the law was dishonoring God (Rom.2:17-24). The Jew and the non-Jew stand together as sinners. No one will ever be found to be righteous before God by human works.

Our faith rests in Christ's faith, and our reckoning centers on what our God and Father says in His evangel, for He knows all that has been achieved through the faith of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

THE HUMAN

Paul speaks of the "man," that is, the *human,* in Romans 3:28 and Galatians 2:16. All who are human beings, that is, all who are "flesh" (*cf* Rom.3:20; Gal.2:16c), are sinners (*cf* Rom.3:9,23). This condition is not the goal God had in view when He created humanity (*cf* Gen.1:26), but it is part of the process intended by God in order to bring humanity to that consummation where He is All in all. At present the fact that God is both just and Justifier

cannot be seen by the eyes of our flesh. The evidence of our senses and experience is that Sin reigns, and we cannot turn it to good. But in believing the evangel concerning Jesus Christ's faith we perceive that *God* is working all together for good. He is just. He is righteous. He is the Justifier Who will deliver all mankind into life's justifying (Rom.5:18). This is the message of the evangel. How happy is the human who is believing this message of God which tells of His achievement through the giving of His Son for sinners!

Romans 3:28 is the reversal of Romans 3:20. By works of law, no *flesh* at all shall be justified in God's sight. Yet we are reckoning a *human* to be justified by faith apart from works of law.

THE EVANGEL OF GOD

When the Greek phrase "faith of Jesus Christ" is understood as referring to "the believer's faith in Jesus Christ" much of the glory and centrality of the evangel of God concerning His Son is obscured. The words of Romans 3:28 are the words of the evangel, not words concerning the way in which we receive the evangel. They speak of the faith of the One Who was given up because of our offenses and was roused because of our justifying (Rom. 4:25). They direct our hearts to the word of the cross.

Yet according to the popular understanding of this section of Romans, the apostle, in dismissing any idea of justification by works of law, was principally concerned with what we must do in place of works of law (that is, we must believe in order to be justified). But it is what Christ has done that justifies. To dwell on our faith without recognition of His faith can easily get us entangled in obsessive concerns or pharisaical pride over ourselves in comparison with others. But the truth is that God justifies on the basis of the faith of Jesus Christ.

That is the source of our joy and strength.

When Paul *makes known* to the Corinthians the evangel which he was *evangelizing* he states it in direct and simple terms, wholly centered on Christ: *Christ died for our sins; He was entombed; He has been roused* (1 Cor. 15:1-4). That is the evangel concerning our Lord and Saviour, and that is what we have accepted and need to retain for daily salvation, though it remains true even if we do not retain it. That is the message that should be seen in the words "Jesus Christ's faith." They point to Him and not to ourselves.

CENTERING OUR FAITH UPON HIS FAITH

To be sure, not only in Romans 3:22, but in Galatians 2:16 as well, Paul identifies us as those who believe. This later passage speaks literally of believing *into* Christ Jesus. But this is preceded and followed by references to Christ's faith, which reflect the message of good news that "Christ died for our sins." To believe "into" Christ is to place our faith upon His faithfulness and its results; it is to rest in His faith; it is to immerse our reckoning and our heart perception into the evangel of God concerning His Son.

The words concerning our believing in Galatians 2:16 (and in Romans 3:22) do not define or repeat in a different way the words concerning the faith of our Lord and Saviour. They refer to our faith in Christ's faith.

How could our faltering faith be so powerful and pure as to manifest God's righteousness? How could the faith of a sinful, human being actually be the source of justification? What is needed is the triumphant faith of Jesus Christ! In believing into Christ Jesus we are believing that we are being justified by His flawless and matchless faith, and not by what we do.

The danger, as noted above, comes in giving sole attention to our faith when we should be dwelling in a pri-

mary way on Christ's. It is the recognition of His faith and appreciation of His faith that strengthens our faith. To dwell on the faith of Jesus Christ is spiritually invigorating, for to speak of His faith to the death of the cross is to speak the very message of the evangel of God concerning Him, which is indeed the power of God for salvation (Rom.1:16).

WHERE IS HAPPINESS?

The faith of Jesus Christ shines out far above my faith. It led Him to die for the sake of me, the sinner (*cf* Rom.5:8). Can I believe it? Only as God imparts some measure of faith. And in believing it, I still have no way of proving it, and I can be sure that the Adversary will work upon me as he worked upon Eve in the garden. Yet I keep turning to the evangel of God concerning His Son. There is my happiness and peace through every setback and struggle of my life.

D.H.H.

LEST WE SORROW

The apostle Paul set our happy expectation before us in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *lest we may sorrow according as the rest, also, who have no expectation.* The very center of our expectation is our Lord Jesus Christ, Who will be descending from heaven with a shout of command, so that we all shall be snatched away *together* to meet Him in the air, and thus always be together with our Lord.

"So that, console one another with these words."

It is with this expectation in our hearts that we announce the death of **John Gemmink**, of Anaheim, California, on March 2. For a few years John worked at the Concordant Publishing Concern, and we remember his diligent attention in labor and especially his steadfast appreciation for the truth of God's glorious purpose for all mankind. He had the heart of an evangelist, longing to share the message of God's wisdom, power, righteousness and love. We extend our sympathy to his wife, Teresa, daughter Ariana and three grandchildren, joining them and many friends in praise to our Lord for the good He brought into our lives through this brother.

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 Jacob and the El of Bethel
109 Proclamations from the Temple Gate
113 Thoughts on Prayer
119 Justification by the One God
131 The Blessedness of Believing
137 Who Am I?

MAY, 2007

Volume XCVIII **Number 3**

Concordant Version of

The Latter Prophets

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel,

Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum,
Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

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In accord with their length, these books are generally divided into two groups, the "Major Prophets" (Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel) and the "Minor Prophets" (or "The Twelve," the books of Hosea through Malachi). But all of them, like the Former Prophets (Joshua through Kings), are concerned with God's operations with respect to the nation of Israel. The distinctive feature of these books is their revelation of Yahweh's ample provision for His erring people. They may fail, but He remains true. Indeed, their unfaithfulness is necessary to make known His faithfulness.

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EDITORIAL

THE CLEARER our grasp of the evangel of true *grace* and of the intrinsic authority of the Scriptures themselves, the more clearly we will see the absurdity of human authority. This includes any posture which entails practical lordship over other believers. God is able to establish His people; and He does so, according as He is intending.

The genuine ecclesia (*ekklêsia,* OUT-CALLED, "church," AV) is simply comprised of all whom God *calls.* We are called out of the world and into Christ, out of unbelief into faith. "Ecclesia" is used in this way in many passages. The only other usages of *ekklêsia,* in Scripture that are pertinent to believers are those in reference to saints living in a particular city or region (e.g., Gal.1:2), or to those who periodically assemble themselves together at a certain location (e.g., Rom.16:5). This latter usage of OUT-CALLED, though concerning believers, refers not to God's having called them into Christ, but merely to a pastor's (or some other leader's) calling together of those who wish to be part of a certain congregation or regular gathering.

If the leader's teachings, however, are not truly faithful to the evangel and its service, surely there is nothing very remarkable—let its members claim what they will—about being a part of such a group. Those who go so far as to speak of their own group—*in contradistinction to other believers*—as "the saints" or "the church," are in serious error and are nurturing a false spirit.

Because of their immaturity, and the powers of the Adversary, a great many believers will not have the ability to recognize ministries within the ecclesia that are more characterized by faithfulness than others. Those in positions of leadership are often endowed with various fine

qualities. This is so no matter how erroneous their teachings may be. In addition to their appeal, such ones may also be very persuasive. It is only natural, then, that others, at least as immature as themselves, should accept them as stalwarts of the faith.

Those who are actually quite mistaken in many of their basic teachings will nonetheless be convinced of the verity and value of their own ministries. As a result, they will attract many followers who, quite understandably, will gladly affiliate themselves with them. At the outset, the novice is not competent to judge; later on, he fears to disagree with established authority. As a rule, however, the people "love it so" (*cp* Jer.5:31). Effectually, they cry out, "Do give to us a king to judge us" (*cp* 1 Sam.8:6).

In certain cases a contemporary man is given an authoritative place; in others, an ancient church creed serves the same purpose. In a number of churches the chief pastor's opinions are considered absolutely authoritative. To differ with him is to differ with Christ. To be "obedient to God," one must actually follow the pastor in his mistaken views, until he recognizes the error of his ways. Such a one's teachings are not be questioned; must less doubted or rejected.

In other groups, while such a position is theoretically repudiated, it is practically accepted nonetheless, often with as much zeal as that of those who openly advocate such principles. The same spirit prevails, even if unwittingly so.

All such things are altogether wrong, for they largely destroy one's ability to think, seek, and decide for oneself. In all such cases it is already a foregone conclusion that one must be subject either to an "authoritative" creed, a learned church leader, or to some other human dignitary.

We owe to one another not obeisance, but *love* (*cp* Rom. 13:8), extended in a spirit of humility, meekness, kindness, and grace. J.R.C

JACOB AND THE EL OF BETHEL
(Genesis 35)

35 + **Elohim** ˡ**said to Jacob: Arise,** go **up** to **Bethel and dwell there, and** ᵈ**make** an **altar there to El** ˙Who **appeared**ˡ **to you** ⁱ**when you** ran **away**⁻ **from** the **face of your brother Esau.**

2 +**So Jacob** ˡ**said to his house**hold **and to all who** were **with him: Put away** `**the foreign elohim** ʷ**that** are **in your midst.** + **Clean** your**selves, and change your raiments.** 3 +**Then** do **let us arise, and** do **let us** go **up** to **Bethel.** + **I** intend to ˡᵈ**make** an **altar there to El** ˙Who **answered**ˡ `**me in** the **day of my distress and** ˡᵇ**was with me** ⁱ**on** the **way** ʷ**that I have gone.**

4 +**So they** ˡ**gave to Jacob** `**all the foreign elohim** ʷ**that** were **in their hand**s **and** `**the pendants** ʷ**that** were **in their ears; and Jacob** ˡ**buried** `**them under the terebinth which** was ʷⁱ**near Shechem.**

5 +**As they** ˡ**journeyed,** + the **dismay of Elohim** ˡᵇ**came on the cities** ʷ **round about them; and they** did **not pursue after** the **sons of Jacob.** 6 **And Jacob** ˡ**came** to*ᵈ* **Luz** ʷ **in** the **land of Canaan (that** is **Bethel), he and all the people** ʷ**that** were **with him.** 7 +**Then he** ˡ**built** an **altar there and** ˡ**called** › the ʳⁱ**place: El of Bethel; for there the** One**, Elohim, had been revealed to him** ⁱ**when he** ran **away**⁻ **from** the **face of his brother** ⁷**Esau**⁰**.**

8 **And Deborah, Rebecca's wetnurse**ˡ, ˡ**died and was** ˡ**entombed** ᶠ ᵘ**below** › **Bethel under the oak. And** ⁷**Jacob**⁰ ˡ**called its name Allon-bacuth.**

9 + **Elohim** ˡ**appeared to Jacob** ᶠʳ**again** ⁷**in Luz**⁰ ⁱ**during**

his coming back– **from Padan-Syria, and** 7**Elohim**0 l**blessed** `**him.** 10 + **Elohim** l**said to him: Your name** is **Jacob;** yet **your name shall no**t fr**longer be called Jacob, but rather Israel, it shall** b**be your name.** +**Thus He** l**called** `**his name Israel.**

11 **And Elohim** l**said to him: I** am **El Who-Suffices; be fruitful and multiply.** A **nation and** an **assembly of nations shall** b**come from you, and kings shall** come **forth from your loins.** 12 **And** `**the land** w**that I gave to Abraham and to Isaac, I shall give it to you, and to your seed after you I shall give** `**the land.**

13 +**Then Elohim** l**ascended from** on **him in** the ri**place** w**where He had spoken** `with **him.**

14 **And Jacob** lst**set up** a **monument in** the ri**place** w**where He had spoken** `with **him,** a **monument of stone, and he** l**libated** a **libation on it and** l**poured oil on it.** 15 + **Jacob** l**called** `the **name of the** ri**place where Elohim had spoken** `with **him, Bethel.**

16 +**As they** l**journeyed from Bethel,** +**while** there lb**was** fr**still some distance of** ˙**land** ›**before coming**– to**d** **Ephrath,** + **Rachel was** in l**childbirth, and she** had a l**hard** time **in** her giving **birth**–. 17 + **It** l**came** to **pass** i**when she** had it **hard**– **in** her giving **birth**–, +**that the midwife**l l**said to her: You must not** l**fear, for this** one mr**too** shall be a **son for you.** 18 **And it** l**came** to **pass** i**when her soul** was **going out**– **(for she died)** +**that she** l**called his name Ben-oni;** +**yet his father, he called** › **him Benjamin.** 19 +**So Rachel** l**died and was** l**entombed** i**on** the **way** to**d** **Ephrath (that** is**, Bethlehem).** 20 **And Jacob** lst**set up** a **monument over her tomb. This** is the **monument of Rachel's tomb until today.**

21 + **Israel** l**journeyed** on **and** l**pitched his tent** f **beyond** › **Migdal-eder.** 22 + **It** l**came** to **pass** i**while Israel** was **tabernacling**– **in** ˙**that land** +**that Reuben** l**went and** l**lay** `with **Bilhah, his father's concubine.** + **Israel** l**heard** of it, 7**and it was** l**evil in his eyes.**0

+**So** there **came** to l**be twelve sons of Jacob.** 23 The **sons of Leah: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn,** + **Simeon,** + **Levi,** + **Judah,** + **Issachar and Zebulun.** 24 The **sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin.** 25 + The **sons of Rachel's maid**servant **Bilhah: Dan and Naphtali.** 26 **And** the **sons of Leah's maid**servant **Zilpah: Gad and Asher. These** are the **sons of Jacob who were born to him in Padan-Syria.**

27 +**Then Jacob** l**came to his father Isaac,** 7**to**0 **Mamre,** 7**to**0 **Kiriath-˙arba (that** is**, Hebron)** 7**in** the **land of Canaan**0 **where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned.** 28 **And** the **days of Isaac came** to l**be** a **hundred eighty years.** 29 +**Then Isaac** l**breathed** his **last and** l**died and was** l**gathered to his people, old and satisfied** with **days. And his sons Esau and Jacob** l**entombed** `**him.**

LEAVING SHECHEM

WHEN Jacob met Yahweh at Bethel, He gave him the land on which he lay, and promised to be with him and keep him on the way and restore him to that ground (Gen.28:13-15). After the massacre of the Shechemites, Jacob feels himself in danger once more, so Elohim tells him to go to Bethel, and dwell there, and set up his altar there. The whole incident had a very beneficent effect upon his spirit, so, first of all, he bid his household hand over all their foreign subjectors, such as Rachel stole from her father, including the pendants in their ears, and buried them under the terebinth (*imprecation*) at Shechem. This act probably put a curse on their idols and other objects of veneration. As the dismay of Elohim was put upon the surrounding cities, these did not dare to molest them.

BETHEL

Although Bethel was also in the land of Canaan, it had been given to Jacob by the real Owner, when He met him

on his outward journey. So here was the place to build an altar. He had named it Bethel (House of El) when here before, so now he makes it personal, El-of-(the)-House-of-El, *El-beth-el*.

Deborah, Rebecca's wet-nurse, symbol of her flesh, was entombed in Bethel, under the oak. Bethel is a place to remember, hence Jacob erected two stone monuments there, and poured upon them a libation to express his joy and oil to show the illumination he received. The only two occasions where the patriarchs raised such a memorial were at Bethel (Gen.28:18; 35:14).

JACOB-ISRAEL

Jacob's name had been changed to Israel (*Upright-with-El*) at Peniel, yet he had not fully apprehended its meaning, so, now that he is back at Bethel, this is repeated. Its importance can hardly be exaggerated, yet its full force seems practically unknown. Since he was at Bethel he has cheated his father-in-law out of most of his possessions by his *un*righteous tricks; he has confirmed his *un*righteous place as firstborn of Isaac, instead of Esau; he has drawn down the hatred of the Canaanites by the massacre of the Shechemites. Who, of humanity, would dub him upright? His mother? His father? His brother? His father-in-law? The Canaanites? *No one but El*. But this uprightness was not his. It was not based on what he was or did, but upon his place in the plans of the Subjector centered in His Son (Who would come in Jacob's line). All of this illustrates *God's* uprightness, *not* Jacob's.

THE SUBJECTOR WHO SUFFICES

All three of the patriarchs were taught by experience that El suffices. So, Abraham, when he is ninety-nine years old, is first to hear this title (Gen.17:1), which was the basis of the covenant. Isaac appealed to Elohim Who Suffices, when he was about to send Jacob away (Gen.28:3). Now that El has shown Jacob His sufficiency in many trying situations, He assumes this title, the *El-shaddai* (El Who-Suffices), and goes on to say, "Be fruitful and multiply. A nation and an assembly of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come forth from your loins. And the land which I gave to Abraham and to Isaac, I shall give it to you, and to your seed after you I shall give the land" (Gen.35:11-12).

LESSON FOR THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION

For us, in the present administration of God's grace, the career of Jacob-Israel illustrates the first part of Paul's epistle to the Romans, especially *justification* (Rom.3:21-4:25) and *sovereignty* (8:28-39). God is the Justifier, out of Whom is all. Christendom, even Protestants who speak of justification by faith, almost all fail to grasp its full import, and as a result cannot even grasp the elementary illustrations of it in the life of Jacob. It would be well for all of us if, in spirit, we would go to Bethel, and let the great truths of justification and divine sufficiency fill our spirits. I made a special trip there in person, to help my dull apprehension to realize the great, but elementary truths embodied in the life and experience of Jacob-Israel.[1]

RACHEL-BENJAMIN

Rachel, in contrast with Leah, was beloved, though barren. In the flesh, although well-favored, she has a life-long trial, for she was disappointed until she bore Joseph. Yet now that her greatest wish to add another son is fulfilled, she calls him *Ben-oni*, Son-of-*my-sorrow*, as an expression of her ebbing strength, but Jacob changed it to "Son-of-the-Right-Hand."

1. See Brother Knoch's report of this visit to Bethel in 1931, appended at the end of this article.

BENJAMIN

Benjamin, who completes the number of the twelve tribes of Israel, was especially beloved for his mother's sake. The tribe which sprang from him is particularly noted as the one which remained true to the house of David, and was incorporated in Judah, not in ten-tribed Israel, which was deported from the land. So it was present when Messiah came. Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul, belonged to the tribe of Benjamin (Rom.11:1). There seems to be a suggestive parallel, for, when Paul came upon the scene, the nation which was his physical forbear, was in great affliction, and passed from the scene soon thereafter, though not for permanency.

EPHRATH

There seems to be special significance to the place of Rachel's tomb. It was on the way from Bethel to Bethlehem (House-of-Bread) in a district called Ephrath, or Ephrathah (*cf* Micah 5:2), which suggests the idea of fruitfulness. She never did arrive at fruitfulness before her death, as Leah had. From Bethel to Bethlehem the road would take them through the territory occupied by the tribe of Benjamin. The tomb of Rachel is in the boundary of Benjamin (1 Sam.10:2). There is a chapel there now which is not far off to the right of the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. So it seems that she was placed in a location which was within the borders of the tribe which she bore in Benjamin. He was the only one of the twelve who was born in the land of promise.

REUBEN, FIRSTBORN OF THE FLESH

Reuben was Jacob's firstborn. In the eon before the flood, he would have inherited the highest place, and Jacob's headship. No place would have been found for Judah in the chronology of Christ. Reuben probably was looked upon as the leader of Jacob's sons, as he was a man of great physical vigor, which led him to excesses. But once more the lesson is repeated in a different way, as Ishmael and Esau were rejected, so the physical birthright of Reuben is ignored, and the scepter is given to Judah.

ISAAC'S DEATH

Abram dwelt among the oaks of Mamre in Hebron after parting from Lot (Gen.13:14-18). He and Isaac sojourned there. Thither Jacob now returned. And Isaac lived to be one hundred eighty years old. We read that he was "*satisfied* with days." He was the son of *promise,* and he lived long enough to see much that had been promised fulfilled. Both of his two sons had large families and possessions, which were a token of the greater blessings yet to come. We see no such fulfillments in our lifetime, but, as our promises are spiritual and are appropriated by faith, our satisfaction should be much greater and exultation much higher, even as heaven is greater and higher than the earth.

A. E. Knoch

A TRIP TO BETHEL

. . . As we are advised to get an auto to take us the three miles to Bethel, we are going down to the center of Ram Allah. We are having a long wait, but enjoy seeing the native life pass before our eyes. There is a shepherd calling a sheep, and it follows him. The fellah just passing has trapped some animals and is seeking to sell two furs. They look somewhat like weasels. Finally our car comes and we bump over rough roads past the present village of Beitin to the few acres of ancient ruins. The remains of a strong tower still stand, the entrance being half buried in debris.

Near it is a cistern. Let us see how deep it is. If we will light this piece of paper and throw it down we will soon find out. Not so deep as it looked. Only about ten feet. It probably would seem deeper from the bottom looking up.

So this is the place where Jacob was overtaken by the night (Gen.28:10-17). I have often wondered why he took stones for a pillow, but I would do the same if I were compelled to stay here tonight. The ground is still damp from the recent rain, and there is a superabundance of stones on every hand.

BLINDNESS CONCERNING GRACE

There are few passages in the Hebrew Scriptures which can be compared with Jacob's dream for its graciousness. A supplanter and a fugitive, Jacob richly deserved severe discipline. Instead, the land is confirmed to him, he is promised a numberless posterity, and is made the channel of blessing to the whole earth.

It should comfort us Jacobs to see how little he understood grace. He was fearful of it. After all the riches God had poured into his lap he tries to get the better of God by driving a sharp bargain. *If* God would be with Him, and keep him and feed him and clothe him and restore him to his father in peace, then he will give God back a tenth of all he has received (Gen.28:22)! A very profitable business this, to pay for merchandise by returning a tenth! Only God would not be bankrupted by it.

On this spot, where I now sit, God revealed His gracious goodness, and Jacob disclosed the despicable meanness of mankind. There are not lacking people today who consider that, if they tithe, they have quite repaid the Deity for all His benefits! God wants to give because it is the more blessed part. If the return of a tenth robs us of the consciousness that we owe all to Him, 'twere better naught should go back to God. He is not in need of it. He

is desirous of thankful hearts and adoring spirits. Can I, in a minute measure, right the wrong committed by Jacob so long ago by accepting, with thankful tears, a richer heritage than Jacob's, and by refusing to pay a tenth of a tithe in return, unless it be ten times a tithe of the homage of my heart and the worship of my spirit? If so, my gracious God, I will revel in the riches of Thy favor and refuse to insult Thy Majesty by fouling it with my fingers.

Indeed, as the psalmist declared, "Happy is he who has the El of Jacob for his help!" (Psa.146:5).

Here, at Bethel, which means "House of El," God appeared the second time to change Jacob's name to Israel, as He had done at Peniel (Gen.32:28; 35:9). Bethel came into prominence in connection with the destruction of Ai by Joshua. Later it was taken by the house of Joseph. It seems to have had but a single gate (Judges 1:22-25). Deborah seems to have lived some distance south of here when she judged Israel (Judges 4:4,5) . . . .

Alas! Just as is the case with God's dwelling place today, Bethel has its sorry story of departure from the Deity. Jeroboam, like our present religious leaders, knew the power of past associations, so he set up one of his golden calves in Bethel (1 Kings 12:28,29). He made religion more convenient and practical, and he made his own festivals, devised by his own heart, and was quite successful in establishing the new religion in this "house of El." Alas! Many a place with such a name today only restrains men from true worship in spirit. "Christian" holidays such as Christmas and Easter, attract more pilgrims to the Holy Land than any other force. This country is flooded with false priests, who perform a ritual altogether foreign to God's appointment.

Elijah and Elisha came by here and found the sons of the prophets, who were anxious to tell Elisha what he already knew. He told them to hush (2 Kings 2:3). But the sons of

the prophets, in these days at least, are not easily discouraged when there is bad news to "evangelize" . . . .

Good King Josiah demolished the altar and high place, and burned the grove that was in this place (2 Kings 23:15). After the captivity a handful returned here to live (Ezra 2:28). Amos foretold the ruin of Bethel (Amos 5:5).

Such is the history of this dwelling place of the Deity. God's manifest presence has not hallowed many of earth's hills. This is one of few such favored spots. How comforting to know that now, by His transcendent grace, He tenants in us as temples of the living God (1 Cor.3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16). Through Christ He comes to us in broad daylight and promises us far more than Jacob ever dreamed. In Him all things are ours.

Through us He will bless, not merely mankind, but all His heavenly hosts. Shall we do as Jacob, promise Him a tithe in return for His favor? No! Never! But let us repay His grace by such deep gratitude and loyal love as will more than requite Him for His vast sacrifice.

Bethel was called *Luz* (Devious) at the first (Gen.28:19). This may have been given it because of its orchards. In Arabic Luz is the name of the almond tree, but it probably was used for the hazel nut in ancient times. Later the name was transferred to another place. When the spies of the house of Joseph went there one of the inhabitants showed them the gate, and his life was saved on that account. He went into the land of the Hittites and there founded another Luz, named after this location.

A. E. Knoch

The preceding is an extract, adapted from the series "The Palestine Expedition," *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.23, pp.266-269.

In installment form, this extensive series is comprised in its totality within our four *U.R.* volumes 22–25. Until December 1, 2007, we are offering this set of volumes for the special price of $60 (plus s&h of $6.00 U.S.; $12 foreign; CA orders add sales tax).

PROCLAMATIONS FROM THE TEMPLE GATE
(Jeremiah 7:1-15)

7 The word which [b]**came to Jeremiah from** `**Yahweh,** ›
saying¯**:** [2] **Stand in** the **gate of Yahweh's House and** ¯**proclaim there** `**this** ·**word, and** ¯**say, Hear** the **word of Yahweh, all** you **of Judah** ·who **enter**[l] [i]**through** ·**these gates to worship** › **Yahweh.**

[3] **Thus says Yahweh of hosts, Elohim of Israel: Amend your ways and your actions, and I** will [m]**let** `**you** [l]**tabernacle in** ·**this** [ri]**place.**

[4] **Do not** put **your** [l]**trust** ›**in** ·**false words,** › **saying**¯**, These** buildings are the **temple of Yahweh,** the **temple of Yahweh,** the **temple of Yahweh.**

[5] **For if you** [l]**amend,** yea **amend**¯ `**your ways and** `**your actions, if you** [ld]**execute,** yea [d]**execute**¯ right **judgment between** a **man and** [bt] **his associate,** [6] and **you** do **not** [l]**exploit** the **sojourner,** the **orphan** +**or** the **widow, and you** ~do **not**~ [l]**shed innocent blood in** ·**this** [ri]**place, and you** do **not** [l]**go after other elohim to your evil,** [7] +**then I will** [m]**let** `**you tabernacle in** ·**this** [ri]**place, in** the **land** [w]**that I gave to your fathers** › **from** the **eon and unto** the **eon.**

[8] **Behold, you** are putt**ing your trust** [on]**in** ·**false words to no benefit**¯**.** [9] Do you think to **steal**¯**, murder**¯ **and** commit **adultery**¯ **and swear**¯ › **falsely and fume**¯ incense **to Baal and go**¯ **after other elohim whom you have not known,** [10] +**then you come and stand before Me in** ·**this House, over which My Name is called, and you say, We have been rescued in order to** [d]**commit**¯ `**all** ·**these** ·**abhorrences?** [11] **Has** ·**this** ·**House over which My Name is called become** a **burglars' cave in your eyes? Behold, I My**self [mr]**also see**

it**, averring** is **Yahweh.** 12 [t]**Indeed go** [pr]**now to My** [ri]**place which** was **in Shiloh, where I** [m]**caused My Name** to **tabernacle** [i] **former**ly**, and see** [w]**what I did to it** [f]**in view of** the **evil of My people Israel.**

13 **And now, because you** have **done**– **all these** [d]**deeds, averring** is **Yahweh,** +**though I** have been [l]**speaking to you,** [c]**rising early**– **and speaking**– persistently**,** +**yet you** do **not hearken, and** though **I** [l]**call you,** +**yet you** do **not answer,** 14 + **I will do to** the **House over which My Name is called, in which you** are **trusting, and to** the [ri]**place which I have given to you and to your fathers, just as I did to Shiloh.** 15 + **I will fling you from** [on] **My presence, just as I have flung all your brothers, all** the **seed of Ephraim.**

WORSHIP AND TRUST

THE PROCLAMATIONS of Jeremiah, like most matters concerning the chosen nation, had two aspects, the political and the religious. The words of the prophet from 3:11 to the end of chapter 6 were addressed northward, among the nations; they have emphasized the political aspect. Now the prophet stands in the gate of Yahweh's House, and his words are concerned with the religious aspect, that concerned with worship and trust in Yahweh, continuing through chapter 10.

A further account of Jeremiah's message from the temple gate is given in chapter 26 with added details. This occurred "in the beginning of the kingship of Jehoiakim son of Josiah" (Jer.26:1).

What is recorded here concerning Shiloh in Jeremiah 7:12-15 is supplemented by Yahweh's instructions in 26:4-6 where we read:

And you will say to them, Thus says Yahweh: If you shall not hearken to Me to walk in My law which I set before

you, to hearken to the words of My servants the prophets whom I am sending to you, rising early and sending, yet you will not hearken, then I will make this House like Shiloh, and I shall make this city a malediction to all the nations of the earth.

LIKE SHILOH

When the sons of Israel first came into the land, they pitched the tabernacle in Shiloh (Joshua 18:1). This was in accord with Yahweh's instructions in Deuteronomy 12:10,11 so that they might dwell in serenity. But as events transpired even in those early days, the people turned from the ways of Yahweh. Even in Shiloh itself, the sons of Eli, the chief priest, were very wicked. At that time, when the Philistines prevailed in battle against Israel, the Israelites took the coffer, over which Yahweh dwelt, with them into the battle, not realizing that their defeat was due to the evils committed by the sons of Eli (1 Sam.4). The dwelling place of the Deity cannot be used to hallow their sins.

Now in Jeremiah's day, once more the Jews imagine that the temple will shield them from all ill, even if they are ever so sinful. They had not learned the lesson of Shiloh, so it was repeated on a much greater scale. Their wondrous temple was about to be utterly destroyed because of their evil actions. Hence Jeremiah proclaims and exhorts them to repent lest they be deported as the ten tribes had been, who had forsaken the temple.

TRUST

With boldness, the young prophet Jeremiah, who had first said, "Alas, my Lord Yahweh, behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am a youth" (Jer.1:6), speaks now in the midst of widespread hostility. The people were trusting in "false words" (Jer.7:4,8,14), but Jeremiah's trust was in Yahweh (*cf* Jer.39:18).

The false words were in the form of a religious mantra which induced a sort of trance: ". . . the temple of Yahweh, the temple of Yahweh, the temple of Yahweh" (Jer.7:4). But Jeremiah, with words of blunt and practical truth, calls upon them to amend their ways and execute right judgment, to stop exploiting the sojourner and orphan and widow, and to cease from shedding innocent blood (Jer.7:5,6).

This is what reflects the glory of the House over which the Name of Yahweh is called. Devoutness for God and respect for His dwelling place involves concern for others.

The people's religious rage, which arose from their trust in the temple corrupted by idolatry, is graphically set before us in Jeremiah 26:7-9, as follows:

Now the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the House of Yahweh. Yet it came to be as soon as Jeremiah finished speaking all that Yahweh had instructed him to speak to all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people grasped him, saying: You shall die, yea die. For what reason do you prophesy in the Name of Yahweh, saying: This House shall become like Shiloh, and this city shall be deserted without a dweller? Then all the people assembled around Jeremiah in the House of Yahweh.

As for Jeremiah, Yahweh had arranged his rescue, for we read (Jer.26:24):

However, the hand of Ahikam son of Shaphan came to be with Jeremiah so that he not be given up into the hand of the people to put him to death.

Here we recall the words of our apostle (2 Tim.4:17):

Yet the Lord stood beside me, and He invigorates me, that through me the heralding may be fully discharged, and all the nations should hear; and I am rescued out of the mouth of the lion.

–adapted and expanded from notes by A. E. Knoch

THOUGHTS ON PRAYER

Be praying unintermittingly. In everything be giving thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thess.5:17,18)

Now, similarly, the spirit also is aiding our infirmity, for what we should be praying for, to accord with what must be, we are not aware, but the spirit itself is pleading for us with inarticulate groanings. Now He Who is searching the hearts is aware what is the disposition of the spirit, for in accord with God is it pleading for the saints. (Rom.8:26,27)

Union with Christ Jesus is invested with countless spiritual blessings. These blessings will be realized by the members of His body. This complete realization will occur when we are glorified together with Him among the celestials (*cf* Eph.2:5-7).

As we await the presence of our Saviour for the completion of our glorification, even today, we are granted an "earnest" (i.e., a pledge in kind) of what is to come (*cf* 2 Cor.1:22; 5:5; Eph.1:14). Thus we are graced to experience a foretaste of God's *spiritual* blessings.

Prayer is one of these blessings. In God's grace, everyone who believes on Christ Jesus receives His gratuity to experience the activity of prayer.

The goal of this series of articles concerning prayer, is to explore specific things of consequence about God's spiritual blessing of prayer. We shall consider the experience of prayer within several of God's administrations, while

featuring this experience among those believers who live within this present administration of God's grace.

Prayer is communication which is directed toward God. It is the Godward expression which comes out of our hearts. It may be presented as a verbal offering in a variety of formats; these include petition, pleading, supplication, praise, thanksgiving. Alternatively, it may be engaged in as an inarticulate activity, out of the heart, reflecting the summation of one's inner emotions. Often these emotions outstrip the capacity of formal language to express them.

God our Father desires for us to communicate with Him (1 Thess.5:17,18). Even though, proximately, prayer is out of us, ultimately, prayer is out of God, as are all things (Rom.11:36). Therefore, God equips us for prayer's activity, while teaching us how to pray. He also provides us with the power for prayer, and places within us the desire for communication with Him. In today's administration of grace, these are the prerequisites and provisions of prayer, placed in those who are in Christ Jesus.

In scriptural Greek, the equivalent of the English "prayer" is *proseuchê* (TOWARD-WELL-HAVing), and of "pray," *proseuchomai* (TOWARD-WELL-HAVE).

Proseuchomai is comprised of three particles, *pros* (TOWARD), *eu* (WELL), and *[e]chomai* (HAVE). Those who experience prayer's activity, must be equipped with the essentials reflected in these three particles. For the sake of simplicity, let us consider these particles in the following order: first, *eu;* thereafter, *[e]chomai,* and finally *pros.*

THE "WELL-NESS" OF PRAYER

Eu means "well" (in popular English, loosely, "good"), as in the declaration, "*Well* done! good and faithful slave . . ." (Matt.25:21a). When used as a part of other Greek words, it gives the sense of supplying that which makes for the "*well*-ness" of the primary term in view, as in the following examples: "evangel" (*euanggelion,* WELL-MESSAGE); "delight" (*eudokeō,* WELL-SEEM); "bless" (*eulogeō,* WELL-say).

In a like pattern, *eu* brings a sense of well-ness to the overall meaning of the Greek word for prayer, well-ness for the one who prays, seeking the well-ness of others and honoring God for the fact that well-ness comes from Him.

For believers, prayer must be founded upon what is truly *well* (i.e., proper, commendable, and sound). This "good" (i.e., well-ness) is the Word of God. Indeed, those of us who have received the gratuity of God's grace in Christ Jesus, would let the word of Christ make its home in us richly (Col.3:16); and, we thank God for the degree to which we actually do just this.

God's Word is the good that forms a portion of prayer's foundation. Thus we come to know God's character, purpose, power, faithfulness, love, mercy, and grace, besides that which pleases Him, and, what displeases Him. And, thus we come to know His Son, even as our own frailty.

All of this good awareness and more, comes through His Word. Receiving this good knowledge, we may more accurately base the praises, thanksgiving, petitions, and pleadings that we offer toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ. How glorious! We have the good of God's Word placed within our hearts and minds by God Himself.

ACCESS TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST

Another portion of prayer's foundation is reflected in the term *[e]chomai* as contained in the Greek word for "pray." *[E]chomai* means to *have,* or be in possession of. One must have access to God, as well as possess spiritual invigoration, in order to experience the activity of prayer. Access to God is being brought into His presence. In our case, each of us is led into the presence of "the Father" (Eph.2:18). We have this access because of our union with the Son of God, Christ Jesus our Lord.

The spirit of Christ homes in us and provides for us access into God's presence. Christ's spirit within us is responsible for leading us into God's presence.

In Romans 8:15,16 Christ's spirit is called "the spirit of sonship," which is altogether a spirit of faith and trust. This is expressed by the wondrous cry, "Abba, Father!"

Prayer is spiritual activity. It requires spiritual power. We have been graced to have God's spirit homing within us and providing us with the necessary power to engage in spiritual work (*cf* Eph.3:16).

Paul prayed that God would grant us through His spirit to be made staunch (i.e., strong) with power in order to realize the spiritual experiences for which we have been appointed. For this, by God's spirit, we have been provided with the especial energy essential to prayer.

[E]chomai ("have") is also reflective of another blessing out of God which is graced to us in Christ Jesus. This blessing is the desire and the will to pray. This blessing encompasses both the initial desire and the subsequent will actually to participate in offering prayer toward God.

Power, access, faith provided, yet we must still be given the desire and will for prayer. In Philippians 2:12, 13, the apostle Paul informs us that we are made to will or want the experience of prayer's activity, because of God's operation within us. This is to say that God is in action within our hearts for the sake of generating this desire for prayer: ". . . with fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation (lit., your "self-salvation") into effect, *for it is God* Who is operating in you *to will as well as to work* for the sake of His delight."

DIRECTED TOWARD GOD

Finally, prayer is directed toward God. This is reflected in the particle *pros. Pros* means "toward." Prayer is offered toward God.

Though, in spirit, we have access, faith, and power for prayer's activity, in our present condition, we remain relatively ignorant and insubordinate. We are ignorant of God's intentions. In what is at best the imperfection of our obedience, we remain at least relatively insubordinate to the instructions given to us by Christ Jesus, our Lord. Similarly, we remain deficient in grasping what is necessary to effect God's will, good and well pleasing and perfect (*cp* Rom.12:2).

We direct our prayer toward God for His attention, in *consideration* of our requests. Prayer is not initiated by us. Rather, prayer is among the good works that God has created in Christ Jesus beforehand, for us to be walking in them (*cf* Eph.2:10). God sees to it that we walk in prayer. He initiates prayer's activities within us by reminding us, inspiring us, and moving us to pray. The words of an old spiritual says it this way: "Every time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart I will pray."

God prompts us to direct the desires found in our hearts toward Him. God is operating in us, literally, "the to be willing as well as the to be working," for the sake of His delight (Phil.2:13b).

Each of us have general and particular issues that well up within our hearts. We present these matters to God for His attention. We request of God through Christ Jesus to do something about us, or these issues. This is according as we are instructed, ". . . in everything . . . let your requests be made known to God . . ." (Phil.4:6).

Even so, many of these requests are out of line with God's decretive will, that is, with His intention. Therefore, they require correction prior to being presented before Him.This correction of our prayer is a work which is performed by Christ, by His spirit (*cp* "Now the Lord is the spirit"; 2 Cor.3:17a).

Thus, ". . . the spirit also is aiding our infirmity, for

what we should be praying for, *to accord with what must be*, we are not aware, but the spirit itself is pleading for us with inarticulate groanings. Now He Who is searching the hearts is aware what is the disposition of the spirit, for in accord with God is it pleading for the saints" (Rom. 8:26,27; *cp* 12:3). When we speak of "What must be," we are speaking of God's decretive will; that is, His intention concerning what must come to pass.

Christ knows the desires of our hearts which we long to present in prayer. He searches our hearts, and also knows the degree of our ignorance of God and His ways. Christ knows the ways of God and His determinations. He knows the outcome of God's ways. He corrects our prayer by pleading on our behalf; but in so doing, He pleads according to God's will and intention.

In summary, it becomes clear that for us prayer is God's work in us through Christ Jesus our Lord. It is our experience. We have been graced to offer communication toward God. He provides the necessities for prayer. We have His spirit which generates the desire and will to pray. His spirit also provides the power for us to engage in prayer's spiritual activity. We have the spirit of Christ which affords us access into God's presence, as well as the faith necessary to be pleasing to God through prayer.

We are in possession of God's Word, which informs us of His character, of His evangel concerning His Son, as well as, of our weakness and need. His Word serves as the framework of prayer for us. Yet because of our ignorance, Christ pleads for us, according to God's will and intention, for the purpose of correcting our prayer "toward God," prior to its presentation to Him.

For us, prayer is God's work in us through Christ Jesus our Lord. How graced we are to experience its activity.

Robert G. Edwards

JUSTIFICATION BY THE ONE GOD

THE questions and answers of Romans 3:29-31 lead us from the presentation of the evangel in 3:21-28 to its application in chapter 4. They lead from the manifestation of God's righteousness to the reckoning of righteousness to the believer. They lead from a focus on the faith of Jesus Christ to a consideration of the faith of the believer as foreshadowed by Abraham in uncircumcision.

Accordingly, we are moving from the revelation of God's righteousness "out of [Jesus Christ's] faith" to its application "for [the believer's] faith" (*cf* Rom.1:17).

But at every turn we must hold fast to the evangel as it has been set before us in Romans 3:21-28. It must not be left behind. It is the solid substance and the firm foundation of our believing. Our faith is centered in the faith of Jesus Christ. Our justification is a matter that displays God's righteousness.

A TRANSITION PASSAGE

Romans 3:29-31, which we are now examining, serves as a transition passage, reinforcing what has been said about the evangel as a message telling of God's achievement through the faithful obedience of His Son, but also beginning to give our thoughts direction toward the application of this achievement to human beings.

Romans 3:21-28 has concentrated on the evangel as God's achievement through His Son, Jesus Christ. This emphasis still remains in Romans 3:29-31 as Paul points to God's oneness in His work of justification on the basis of the faith of Jesus Christ. The words "God . . . will be jus-

tifying" reflect the grand conclusion of Romans 3:26, that God is the Justifier. And the word "faith" still finds its point of reference in the words "faith of Jesus," also in verse 26.

But the future tense, "will be justifying," looks ahead from what was done at the cross (*cf* Rom.3:25) to its presently ongoing and future results with respect to humanity. The certainty of the justification of all mankind has been settled at the cross, and it will be enjoyed by all (Rom.3: 22; 5:18,19). In the meantime, God applies it to certain people. As to the people in view, they are distinguished here in two groups, identified as the Jews and the nations, Circumcision and Uncircumcision. One group is defined by what they do, and the other by what they do not do.

A further distinction is indicated by the use of the preposition "through" (Greek, *dia*) with reference to the justification of the Uncircumcision. The "out of" (Greek, *ek*) which Paul employs with reference to God's justifying of the Circumcision points back to verse 26 where he speaks of God as the Justifier of one who is *out of* the faith of Jesus. This is the one source of the work of justification by the one God. It applies to the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision. But the apostle takes us who are chosen from all the nations one step further. The faith of Jesus is not only the source of justification for us, but it is also the channel of its influence in our lives. The evangel concerning Jesus Christ's faith, rather than the law, is our guide and continually active power within us for righteousness. This will become especially clear in Romans 6-8.

ROMANS 3:29-31

As noted, the two groups, to whom God applies the blessing of justification while they remain sinners in the flesh are the Jews who are distinguished by circumcision, and the nations identified by not being circumcised. These are considered separately in alternating passages

(labeled here as "A" and "*B*") as shown by the following arrangement:

A. Or is He the God of the Jews only?
B. Is He not of the nations also? Yes of the nations also, if so be that God is One,
A. Who will be justifying the Circumcision out of faith
B. and the Uncircumcision through faith.
A. Are we, then, nullifying law through faith? May it not be coming to that! Nay, we are sustaining law.
B. . . . Abraham believes . . . in uncircumcision . . . we are believing . . . not through law . . . .

Here God is first seen as God of the Jews and then as God of the nations. And God's work of justification is related first to the Circumcision and then the Uncircumcision. Thereafter, in verse 31, a question concerning law is taken up, and this once again relates to the nation of Israel, who are "of the law" (Rom.4:16), and "whose is . . . the *legislation* [LAW-PLACing]" (Rom.9:4). Law is an important factor for the application of justification for the Jews in their lives. Finally, starting with Romans 4:1, Paul returns to speak of the application of justification to the lives of the believers among all nations, and this continues through that whole chapter.

The central thought in our present passage, however, is that God is One in His work of justifying. Even though, in this context, humanity is divided into two groups, Jews and nations, Circumcision and Uncircumcision, God justifies human beings only as they stand before Him "out of the faith of Jesus," that is, as beneficiaries of the faith of Jesus Christ, whether they are under law or not under law.

IT IS GOD WHO JUSTIFIES

In its linguistic form the Greek word rendered "justify" means *cause to be just* [or *righteous*]. In English, the end-

ing *-fy* supplies the sense of "make," or "cause," as in the word "beauti*fy*" or the word "ampli*fy*." This same sense is indicated in Greek verbs by the insertion of the letter *o* (omicron) just before the final stem, which occurs in the Greek word for justify ("I justify" is *dikaioō*). This Greek verb is principally used in the Septuagint version of the Hebrew ("Old Testament") text for the "cause" form of the Hebrew verb "be righteous," hence, "cause to be righteous."

But in its usage, the verb "justify" generally (by the figure of association) conveys more limited senses, such as: "recognize to be just (righteous)," or "declare to be just (righteous)." Yet even here we can often perceive a sense of "cause" lying behind the act of justifying. Under the law judges in Israel were to examine cases in dispute and then "justify the righteous" (Deut.25:1). They did not cause the righteous person to be righteous (since by definition, he was already righteous), but they caused him to be recognized as righteous with respect to the matter in dispute, by their verdict.

Similarly, Yahweh declared that He would not justify the wicked one (Ex.23:7). He would not cause a wicked person to be known as righteous.

We might then confine the sense of the word "justify" in Romans 3:20 to an act of judicial declaration. By works of law no flesh can be declared righteous (or *just*) in God's sight. Or perhaps it would be better to interpret the passage as saying, By works of law no flesh can be recognized as righteous (by God) in God's sight.

These understandings of Romans 3:20 are certainly true, and they harmonize with the usages of the word in the passages in Exodus and Deuteronomy. But is this what Paul is telling us in Romans 3:21-28? Is he using the verb "justify" in a figurative sense, in a sense of simply declaring a person to be righteous, that is, causing him or her to be

recognized as righteous on the authority of the divine verdict itself, which is based, as often claimed, on the believer's faith in Christ?

Or can the verb "justify" be understood in its literal, linguistic sense of *caused to be righteous*?

After all, it is God Who is doing the justifying. Consequently, the meaning of the act is critical to our understanding of God.

GOD IS JUSTIFYING THE IRREVERENT

Paul's statement in Romans 4:5 that God is justifying the irreverent gives us pause. By itself it seems to stand in direct contradiction to Exodus 23:7. This is certainly so if the figurative sense of "declare to be righteous" is used in both passages. One passage would then say: God does not declare the wicked one to be righteous. And the other passage would tell us: God declares the irreverent to be righteous.

But the context of Romans 3 is the evangel of God's gratuitous justification through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus. Does this not make a difference?

THE FAITH OF JESUS

Once we see that the phrase "Jesus Christ's faith" in Romans 3:22, "the faith in His blood" in Romans 3:25 and "the faith of Jesus" in Romans 3:26 refer to the faithful obedience of our Lord to the death of the cross, we are led more surely to see that Paul is speaking about literal justification. The evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord tells us that the irreverent and unrighteous human being will be caused to be righteous.

Nothing less can satisfy all that was involved in the faith of Jesus Christ. Nothing less can be associated with the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.

The evangel is a declaration of all the good God does

through His Son, Jesus Christ, through His perfect faith and through His wholehearted obedience.

Because of the faith of Jesus Christ all mankind will be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19). At present God is reckoning that righteousness to us who are believing (Rom. 4:5,6). In this sense He is calling what is not as if it were (Rom.4:17). He has put what has been gained by the faith of Jesus Christ to the account of those who are believing. What is reckoned and called and declared will be actually so, and it cannot fail to be so, because Jesus Christ died for our sins. God justifies us through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, on the basis of His faith in His blood.

When God justifies on the basis of the faith of Jesus Christ He does so in its full and literal sense. He causes us who are irreverent and full of sin and enmity to be righteous.

That is what we are believing, one very basic aspect of the message that says Christ died for our sins. We may indeed not be understanding how it is so, but that is what the word of God says to us in Romans 3:21-28.

RIGHTEOUSNESS RECKONED

In Romans 4 Paul will speak of God reckoning righteousness to the believer on the basis of the believer's faith. Abraham in uncircumcision is given as the great example of this work of God (Gen.15:6). James also refers to this passage although he also refers to Abraham's great act of "offering up" his son Isaac on the altar, by which Abraham's faith was "perfected" (James 2:20-22; Gen.22). For those of the twelve tribes this reckoning is on the basis of their faith and works. For us who are not under law this reckoning is on the basis of our faith alone.

To have righteousness reckoned to us is not the same as being caused to be righteous. It comes closer to the figurative sense of being declared righteous. When the verb

justify is equated with being reckoned righteous, as it is in James and in Romans 4, it cannot be taken in the literal sense of being caused to be righteous. Human faith, or human faith plus works, cannot cause anyone to be righteous. But the faith of human beings can be, and is a means through which God reckons the righteousness gained by the faith of Jesus Christ to them.

Hence, when God reckons righteousness to us, He is doing so in recognition of what has happened because of the death and resurrection of Christ, and in anticipation of what the results of Christ's faith will be when they are enjoyed in full by us.

Even when God reckoned righteousness to Abraham, it was in view of God's justifying work that would occur at the cross. This was pictured by the sacrifice which was carried out to completion while Abraham remained in a stupor (Gen.15:9-17). If God had not given up His Son for Abraham and if Jesus Christ had not been faithfully obedient to the death of the cross, then what God had done in reckoning righteousness to him would remain an act of unrighteousness on God's part and meaninglessness for Abraham.

GOD IS ALWAYS FAITHFUL

God is always faithful to His word. We can look back and see how He has carried forward His promises to Abraham. But if He does not ever bring them to the full glory of realization, then we have a god who fails, at least some of the time.

Throughout Romans, as Paul presents the evangel of God, he keeps in view what this means with respect to Israel. We all are sinners. The Jew is a sinner. God justifies the human being on the basis of the faith of Jesus. He justifies the Circumcision on this same basis. If He goes back on His word to one, He may do so for the other.

This recognition of a duality within humanity is not new to this letter to the Romans, for the apostle has already given special attention to the Jew as a sinner in addition to the general information about all humanity as sinners (*cf* Rom.2:17-3:4). And he will have much to say later about God's unique dealings with this chosen nation, especially in chapters 9 through 11.

IS LAW NULLIFIED?

The question now is: If God justifies on the basis of what Jesus Christ has done rather than on the basis of what people do, then is it still true that He is God of the Jews in any special way? To get to the heart of the matter, the question is in effect: Is God's word and instruction as to righteousness which was given to Israel in the law now discarded (Rom.3:31)?

With similar language and thought, in Romans 3:3,4, the apostle utterly dismissed any possibility of God going back on His word to Israel or leaving His provisions for them unfulfilled. Will Israel's unbelief nullify God's faithfulness to the benefits and prerogatives He has promised them? Again, as questioned now in Romans 3:29-31, will the fact that God justifies human beings without distinction on the basis of Christ's faithfulness nullify any possibility of law becoming an important and operative factor for righteousness in Israel's future, as promised through the prophets?

May it not be coming to that!

THE GOD OF THE JEWS

When Paul first began heralding the evangel of God to peoples among all the nations, the great resistance was that of the Jews who could not conceive of God granting favor to those "outside," who were not given the law or the promises of old. But in refusing to support any thought

of Jewish exclusiveness in benefiting from the justification which comes through Jesus Christ's faith, Paul also refuses to suggest any annulment of God's special relationship with regard to the Circumcision and the law as given to them. All Israel will be saved (Rom.11:26). Throughout Romans, where Paul presents the evangel as it relates to peoples out of all nations, he acknowledges and maintains with strong emotion the unique place of Israel in God's operations. In presenting the truth of the evangel as it relates to us, the apostle never loses sight of the fact that his relatives according to the flesh are the "Israelites, whose is the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the legislation and the divine service and the promises; whose are the fathers, and out of whom is the Christ according to the flesh, Who is over all, God be blessed for the eons. Amen!" (Rom.9:4,5).

Paul has already given special attention to the fact that Jews are sinners just like everyone else:

> *Lo! you are denominated a Jew and are resting on law, and are boasting in God, and know the will and are testing what things are of consequence, being instructed out of the law . . . . You, then . . . who are boasting in a law, through the transgression of the law you are dishonoring God!* (Rom.2:17-23)

Yet there is benefit and prerogative for the Jew, nevertheless, for because of what Christ has done for sinners, the sinners of this chosen nation will receive *from God* the fulfillment of the promises He has made to them:

> *What, then, is the prerogative of the Jew, or what the benefit of circumcision? Much in every manner. For first, indeed, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. For what if some disbelieve? Will not their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? May it not be coming to that! Now let God be true, yet every man a liar . . . .* (Rom.3:1-4)

As to being sinners, there is no distinction:

What, then? Are we privileged? Undoubtedly not, for we previously charge both Jews and Greeks to be all under sin, according as it is written, that "Not one is just"—not even one. (Rom.3:9,10)

And as to God's work of justification on the basis of the faith of Jesus, there is no distinction, even though there are distinctions as to the way in which justification is applied. Romans 3:29-31 takes note of the distinction which is preserved by the special place of law in Israel's calling. Paul's strong testimony is: "We are sustaining law." Law as given to Israel retains an important place.

Once we see that God will be faithful to the benefits promised to Israel, we can also see that there is no contradiction between the conclusion that a human is "justified by faith apart from works of law" (Rom.3:28) and Paul's testimony now, just three verses later, "we are sustaining law." The law was not given to Israel as a means for justification in the literal sense of being caused to be righteous. When James writes, "You see that by works a man is being justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24), he is certainly using the word *justify* in the figurative sense of righteousness being reckoned to a sinner, as shown by his reference to Genesis 15:6 in verse 23. Paul will do this also in Romans 4:2,3 in speaking of the same passage from Genesis.

Yet we see the fuller picture of justification in what Paul writes here in Romans in chapter 3. The actual source of being caused to be righteous is the faith of Jesus. Justification is out of the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ. But the reckoning of righteousness to sinners is twofold: For the Circumcision it is by means of faith and works (so that in this respect law is sustained). For the Uncircumcision it is by means of faith alone, but a faith that is strengthened by the spiritual power of the message of faith of Jesus Christ in our lives.

Justification in its essential and literal sense of being caused to be righteous is based solely on the faith of Jesus Christ. Justification, used figuratively, in the sense of having righteousness reckoned to us is based on the faith of the believer for those of the Uncircumcision, and on faith plus works of law for those of the Circumcision.

Hence, when Paul says "we are sustaining law," he is speaking of this in relation to Israel.

CHRIST RETURNS AS REDEEMER AND RESCUER

What God promised through the prophets cannot be set aside. God will magnify His law within Israel when the Redeemer returns to them. He will establish His covenant with them, and they will enjoy His mercy once more (Rom.11:26-31). It is because of the faith of Jesus Christ that all the eloquent words of the prophets concerning Israel and the law given them will be fulfilled:

Yahweh Himself desires, on account of His righteousness,
That He may magnify the law and ennoble it. (Isa.42:21)

Then there will come to Zion the Redeemer,
And He shall turn back transgression from Jacob . . . .
As for Me, this is My covenant with them, says Yahweh:
My spirit which is on you
And My words which I place in your mouth
Shall not be removed from your mouth,
Or from the mouth of your seed,
Or from the mouth of your seed's seed, says Yahweh,
Henceforth and for the eon. (Isa.59:20,21)

I will put My law within them,
And I shall write it on their heart;
I will become their Elohim,
And they shall become My people. (Jer.31:33)

All of this will be because of the faith of Jesus, although that was not seen. Nevertheless, this is the word of God. Let God be true!

THE GOD OF ALL PEOPLES

If there was Jewish resistance during the days of Paul to the inclusion of all nations in the benefit of justification on the basis of Christ's faith, in our own days this sort of resistance is often reversed in many cases among those who believe Christ died for sinners of all nations. We sometimes betray little appreciation for God's faithfulness to the work He began with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which He carried forward through many centuries in connection with the twelve-tribed nation that descended from the twelve sons of Jacob.

Hence we might well rephrase Romans 3:29,30 to express a corrective reminder for ourselves: Or is He God of the nations only? Is He not of the Jews also? Yes, of the Jews also, if so be that God is One, Who will be justifying the Uncircumcision and the Circumcision as well out of the faith of Jesus.

Yet further, and no doubt along with the vast majority of Jews in Paul's day, most of us fail to see that if God justifies on the basis of the faith of Jesus Christ, there is no reason for anyone ultimately not to be caused to be righteous. Indeed it is certain that all mankind will ultimately enjoy the benefits of this work of divine righteousness and love. The special benefits for Israel, and the gracious blessings reserved for believers of the present day, all of which will be realized, cannot keep God's righteous work of justification from being put fully into effect in God's own time. All will someday stand before God as those who are "out of the faith of Jesus."

D.H.H.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF BELIEVING

THE virtue and blessedness of believing is clearly set forth by the apostle Paul. His letters portray its power; his life its stirring triumph. His pen, as no other, has made an indelible impression on the heart and mind of the believer. In proof, let us look at an introductory expression of it.

"Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God, through Jesus Christ's faith, for all and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned, and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:21-23).

A righteousness of God is manifest. And attested by the law and the prophets. Surely, an array of testimony which places it in a clear light, and beyond all shadow of doubt. Indeed, the sacred oracles overflow with the beauty of it. But, it has seemed so far away. Paul, however, gives it life and meaning as he so finely adds to the thought, "Yet a righteousness of God, *through Jesus Christ's faith, for all and on all who are believing.*"

Now in very truth and radiant grace, it comes near to the heart of man. *Jesus Christ's faith.* What a channel for the stream of God's grace! How far beyond our own frail faith. Our righteousness is a broken reed. Of what avail are ethics to give life and peace? There has been but one life, one faith, eminently pleasing to God. He alone could say, "For what is pleasing to Him am I doing always" (John 8:29).

His faith, and not ours, brings to our heart the deep sense of God's righteousness. And here is the glory of it. It

is *"for all, and on all who are believing."* What a gift! Could we wish for anything better with which to commence the life of faith? Note, also, the exquisite equality of blessing. "There is no distinction, for *all sinned,* and are wanting of the glory of God." There is the "all" in each clause; but the blessing, right here and now, is on *"all who are believing."*

Is it so simple and so easy as that? Well, that is God's way and manner of entrance into blessing. And there is a grandeur in it, too. For, to go on and on believing God, as He reveals Himself in the word of His grace, is to experience great things. Not only is there joy and peace in believing, but a rare knowledge and understanding.

Paul, in writing of "this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that *for all the saints*" (Eph.1:15), refers also to "the transcendent greatness of His power *for us who are believing*" (Eph.1:19). This is that one great faith of the Ephesian epistle, which so links us with the "one God and Father of all, Who is *over all,* and *through all,* and *in all*" (Eph.4:6). In the permanent power of these three "alls" there constantly flows to the heart a joy and peace in believing.

To believe in the divine supremacy, solves so much that is otherwise perplexing. Therefore, to see that God is *over* all, and *through* and *in* all the affairs of life, is to experience in some measure, an understanding of His thoughts and ways. We shall notice how human proposals are subject to God's disposals.

Abraham believes God, and is chosen as the progenitor of a people whose amazing destiny will one day thrill the world. Joseph's brethren sell him into Egypt, yet by this very means they are all kept alive. And again, as Pharaoh seeks to diminish these people, God multiplies them. Indeed, the Hebrew Scriptures are full of illustrations displaying God's own way of dealing with men. In all these, there is an exactness and equity of judgment truly divine.

The ills of life are seen to serve purposes of God. But

where some things seem a mystery, it is well to leave them, leave them with God as matters not to be probed by our poor knowledge. And this is where the blessedness of believing comes in. In peace or in war we take up Eli's language, "It is the Lord: Let Him do what seemeth Him good" (1 Sam.3:18).

It is well to remember that at all times God has His own ends to serve. He moves in ways so different to human estimates. Knowing the end in view, He acts accordingly. It is not given to human beings—happily for them, for otherwise life would be intolerable—to foresee or to predict to any large extent, the unfolding course of events. In one phase, men seem to have been right; in another, they seem to have been wrong. Then again, a few years later, when the perspective of time has lengthened, all stands in a different setting.

For believers, however, in all contingencies of life, there is the solace of "joy and peace in believing" (Rom.15:13). And what a difference this makes! The heart is stilled amid the strife of tongues; and the spirit rejoices in God our Saviour. Daily is He praised for His loving-kindness, and for His thought upon us for good.

Content with what He gives, and hourly resting in the wisdom of His will, man's day need not disturb us. We look to the great beyond of the day of Christ, and the day of God. And in those wondrous days, things rare and lovely will enrapture the vision, and enrich the whole being.

Our blessedness, then, lies in believing God as He unfolds Himself in the word of His grace. For in this word is wisdom which will rightly shape our lives, to His glory and our good. And in the exercise of believing God there will be found the highest motives for a well-spent life. But far too many are influenced by what they see and hear around them, and so become creatures of environment. Faith would save us from this as it did Abraham. The wor-

thy patriarch believes God, and is lifted out of and above his environment.

Happy are we, should God so lay His hand upon us; and it behooves us to take Paul's words to heart. "Faithful is the saying, and I am intending you to be insistent concerning these things, that those who have believed God may be concerned to preside for ideal acts. These things are ideal and beneficial for humanity" (Titus 3:8).

Opening in a similar way, there is yet another quotation which stresses the value of belief. "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome . . . that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, *especially of believers*" (1 Tim.4:9,10).

That God is the Saviour of all mankind, gives much point and power to the believer's reliance on Him. It inspires God's children with the best of motives for kindliness towards their fellow men. They see in them not just what they now are, it may be to bear with, but something also of what they will become. Even that rare something which will spring to life and being when they are truly subject to the Son of God, when, with clear vision, they see and understand.

God is a great leveller. See how distinctions vanish in His wise judgment. Note how the scripture declares, "*God locks up all together in stubbornness*." And to what intent? It is, "that He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:32).

LIVING ONE'S FAITH

Believing sinners are changed by their believing. A preacher once said: "There are two parts in the gospel. The first part is the *believing* it, and the second part the *behaving it."*

There is a word much in use today with the psychologists. The word "function." Does our believing truly function? Does it work or operate in our lives as Scripture

assures us it will? There is not a man or woman of God, who, looking back on life, could say it did not. And, if not in a way open to all, then in some manner clearly known to ourselves, and none the less real, our belief has more than justified itself. In ways wonderful to contemplate, God has been our environment. And in no circumscribed fashion. Rather has He brought us to a large place, above things of sense and transient feeling. Even to where, as Paul says, "you are enriched in everything in Him, in all expression and all knowledge" (1 Cor.1:5).

The writer overheard this question: "What do you make of life?" The answer given was, "Well, it is just made up of what you put into it." Life, however, is far better for us if we see that it is made up of what God puts into it. Such insight makes all the difference. Just to learn, as a preacher once did at a conference, that there is a *struggling* faith and a *resting* faith.

One outcome of believing God is tranquillity of spirit. And what an asset at the present time! True rest is as unchanging as God Himself—like Him it rises above all earthly things. It is secret, abundant, without a regret or wish.

There is, then, no end to the blessedness of believing. A wealth of discovery awaits our approach. And, blessed be God, the eventide of life is no bar to richness of experience, or to quality of testimony. Our believing, however, will have more point and more value, if we fully see our freedom from the law. Our initial blessing is "apart from law." And so is the whole of it.

We are surrounded enough by enactments and laws. It is, therefore, an exquisite relief to live as becomes the atmosphere of our celestial citizenship. And what more spiritual and suitable expression of this high altitude can we find, than in Paul's prison epistles? And in all his letters are precepts and counsels of a simple and noble per-

fection. He is truly the apostle, herald, and teacher, for the blessing of the nations, and for the true edification of the body of Christ.

Blessed are they who, needing no loud sign,
Of reason, or felt proof, or voice divine,
Believing, love, and loving, do not sigh.
Believe because they love, and ask not why.
But on His wisdom rest they all day long,
And read His words, and are refresh'd and strong.
Thro' all His works, His thought, at every turn,
Thro' all His Word, His grace and truth discern.

William Mealand

THE BELIEVER'S SPIRIT VIVIFIED

There is another and higher source of spirit than that provided by the breath and the body. Our Lord tells us that the declarations which He spoke to them are spirit and are life (John 6:33). This introduces us to the most vital of all the usages of the word, for us who are members of Christ. There is a sense in which God's words energize us, vitalize us. These words have no direct effect on our physical frames, but they put new life into our spirits. Hence "the body indeed, is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rom. 8:10). This is due to the operation of the spirit of God through the Word of God, so that the part played by our own spirits is subordinate, and not always easily distinguished.

The disposition of the flesh is death; that of the spirit is life and peace (Rom.8:6). The impartation of life to our spirits by the Word is the great miracle which transforms sinners into saints. It is the vital point in the two figures which are used to illustrate their entrance into life. Human beings receive life by creation or generation. Adam and Eve were created. All the rest are born. Those who enter the kingdom do so by being begotten of the spirit (John 3:5). As those who share in the celestial allotment are not sufficiently equipped for the new sphere by regeneration, they are made a new creation, with added powers and capacities to enable them to function when away from the earth. They will not be turned into spirits, but they will receive spiritual bodies in place of their present soilish bodies (1 Cor.15:47-49).

A. E. Knoch

WHO AM I?

THE few words, "As for Moses, he had become a shepherd of the flock of Jethro his father-in-law" (Ex.3:1), compass the activities of Moses during the well nigh forty years which intervened between his flight from Egypt to the refuge in Midian, and God's call to him to return to Egypt as the deliverer of His chosen people. There would be time enough in these long years for calm reflection, and, as he wandered with his flocks from pasture to pasture in the Midian solitudes, Moses' thoughts would turn with a natural frequency to the persecuted children of Israel in Goshen.

He knew well the land of his people's bondage. He had been nourished in the lap of Egypt's luxury and trained in its wisdom and lore, but, though nurtured as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, he was not oblivious of the fact that those held in bondage by the despot Pharaoh were his brethren. He had heard the crack of the cruel lash and the tortured scream of his kinsmen, and these harsh sounds would echo in the hush of the Midian desert to remind him of the continuing oppression of the people of God.

Doubtless, in his desert sojourn, Moses would at times experience a longing to succor his distressed brethren and lead them from the detestable servitude, for he recognized, when first he visited his kinsmen, that he was to be their deliverer (Acts 7:25), but any impulse to return to Egypt had been stifled, and he continued with Jethro, "disposed to dwell with the man" (Ex.2:21). It may have

been that the recollection of the precipitate and abortive attempt to liberate his people, in his own strength, which had incurred the wrath of Pharaoh, discouraged him from further endeavor.

The course of history, however, is not determined by man's inactivity nor, for that matter, by his activity, but by the indomitable will of *God*, Who operates all in accord with the counsel of that will (Eph.1:11). God's intention is neither frustrated by man's perversity nor assisted by human tractability, but moves inexorably to the determined goal.

God declared His intention to deliver His people, and the era of their emancipation was at hand. He had seen their affliction had heard their moaning (Ex.2:24; 3:7), and He had "descended to rescue them" (3:8) from the cruel hands of their Egyptian taskmasters. No power nor combination of powers could thwart Him. As the time predetermined for that dramatic deliverance approached, the human instrument God had selected to lead His people from bondage to liberty moved quietly, with his flocks, towards the mountain of God in Horeb.

Of old, God spoke to the Fathers in the Prophets "by many portions and many modes" (Heb.1:1), and there was, likewise, diversity in His manifestation. The appearance to Moses in a burning bush in the Sinai wilderness was unique. A burning thorn bush would be a familiar sight to Moses, but a bush that burned and was not consumed was a phenomenon that aroused a curiosity which he sought to satisfy by turning aside to "discern this great sight" (Ex.3:3). The wonder and glory of the spectacle drew him irresistibly, but, by the Divine command, Moses was kept at a distance from the burning bush.

Then, as he stood with bared feet upon the sacred ground, he heard God speak to him out of the bush. God made known to him His intention to deliver His oppressed people and that he (Moses) was to be His emissary to Pharaoh

and the leader of the children of Israel out of Egypt. The announcement of the impending liberation of God's people doubtless stirred Moses' heart and fanned into brightness the hope of the promise (made centuries before to Abraham—Genesis 15:13 and 14) cherished in the breasts of those of the Nation who had remained true and faithful to God through the long years of affliction. *God* was about to fulfill that promise—His people were to come out, and it would be a deliverance, not only from the oppression of Egypt, but also from the contaminating abominations and idolatry of that land (*cf* Joshua 24:14).

Any joy this revelation brought to Moses was eclipsed, it would seem, by the dismay which overwhelmed him when he realized how actively he himself was to participate in the plan of liberation. Instead of a glad and instant response, or acquiescence, he parried God's stirring command, hesitantly, with the question:

Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh . . . ? (Ex.3:11)

It would be wrong to assume that Moses was willfully disobedient to God's command. If he did shrink from the task, his reluctance to fill the role of leader arose rather from a natural reserve and a sense of unworthiness and inability. He would remember all too vividly that earlier failure, when his brethren refused to recognise in him the potential deliverer.

When such diffidence is born of true humility, it is commendable. It characterized others who were privileged to serve God. When David, the king, "sat before Yahweh" in the matter of a dwelling place for Yahweh, he asked the same question as Moses: "*Who* am I, my Lord Yahweh?" (2 Sam.7:18; *cf* 1 Sam.18:18,23). The great prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah both gave indication of an innate humility, and a humble spirit was evident in Gideon when the Lord called him to deliver Israel. His response to the call

was, "O! Yahweh, With what shall I save Israel? Behold my contingent is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the most inferior in my father's house" (Judges 6:15).

It is, of course, only as we recognize and acknowledge our own frailty that we are able to prove and appreciate the power and ability of our God and Father, but we must be careful at all times to see that the realization of our impotence does not blind us to the fact that *God* is able. Pressure of trying circumstances brought Job to the point of admission: "Behold I am slight; how can I reply to You?" (Job 40:4), but later he came to recognize the power of the Almighty, the Supreme, and exclaimed: "I know that *You* are able in all things . . ." (Job 42:2).

Perhaps Moses was discomfited by a consciousness of his own unfitness, his slowness of speech and tongue (Ex.4:10), and it may have been that he imagined himself alone with the might of Egypt arrayed against him and pictured himself a solitary figure approaching an irate Pharaoh, at the same time unwanted and unwelcomed by his disbelieving brethren. Persistently he looked within and, consequently, could see nothing of the limitless power available to him. He seemed to reckon without *God*.

Whatever be the cause of Moses' hesitancy, it was but the opportunity for God to reveal Himself to His chosen servant, and He did so, first of all, in the words of the sublime promise:

I shall come to be with you. (Ex.3:12)

Moses was not to be alone. The great task to which God called him was not to be the solitary mission Moses imagined it. He was to enjoy the abiding and unfailing companionship of *God*.

The same promise was given in later years to Joshua when, in turn, he was entrusted with the heavy burden of leadership: "Just as I was with Moses, so I shall be with you" (Joshua 1:5). Gideon, too, was encouraged by the stirring words, "I shall come to be with you" (Judges 6:16), and the same pledge was given to the redeemed of Israel through the prophet Isaiah to sustain them in the waters and fire of affliction and trial (Isa.43:2,5). And in a future era, the disciples will be invigorated by the same promises which the Lord Himself gave them when they go out to all nations: "Lo! I am with you all the days till the conclusion of the eon!" (Matt.28:20).

There can be no greater possession than the knowledge and recognition that *God is* and the consciousness that He is with us. The accumulated wealth of this world cannot purchase the peace that the vital sense of His companionship brings. Such blessedness is our strength in weakness, our courage in trial, our power in service, and it is also that loving, gentle restraint when, in our foolish impetuousness, we would run ahead of Him or trust in the frailty of that which we fondly call "our strength."

Thus, along with the command, God gave to his servant the promise of the constancy of His presence:

I shall come to be with you.

We cannot think that more could be asked than that, yet this assurance of the Divine companionship did not suffice to calm the fears in Moses' troubled heart or drive the doubts from his anxious mind. *Faith* had not, as yet, laid firm hold on *God* (as it did subsequently), or glimpsed the vast reservoir of His power. Moses was still gripped in the toils of an introspection which fostered distrust, and distrust must always question. The earlier anxiety had arisen from an acute awareness of his own unfitness, and now he added to this a concern as to the credentials of his mission. He anticipated the doubt and curiosity of his brethren and conceived the possible circumstance:

"Behold! When I am coming to the sons of Israel, and

I say to them, The Elohim of your fathers, He sends me to you, then they will say to me, What about His name? What shall I say to them?" (Ex.3:13).

Moses desired to know the *Name* of the *One* Who commissioned Him. Perhaps, in a measure, this concern was a natural one and understandable, for the servitude in Egypt had been long and irksome, without Divine interposition, effacing memory and hope in many, and Moses' enforced absence was of such duration that many of the children of Israel would not know him if he returned. He wanted to carry a valid "authority." God did not rebuke him (as he did afterwards for his persistent reluctance to obey, Ex.4:10-14), but gave to Moses, His servant, "an answer of peace":

I shall come to be just as I am coming to be . . . . Thus shall you say to the sons of Israel, I-Shall-Come-to-Be, He has sent me to you. (Ex.3:14)

In later years, the thunders of Sinai's law giving were to reverberate through the fastnesses of Horeb and over the sacred ground upon which Moses stood. The hosts of Israel which he was to lead were to hear these thunders, see the lightning flash and the encompassing cloud and tremble, but though the events associated with the promulgation of the Divine statutes were eminently holy and awesome, they did not surpass in solemnity and wonder those of the quiet scene in the pervading desert hush and the simple declaration of the *Name of names*. From out of the radiant glory of the bush, without the frightening elemental accompaniment marking the august Presence in the cloud on Sinai, God quietly declared His *Name*. A long silence was broken and Moses became the possessor, not only of the certain promise of God's presence, but of the inviolable pledge of Yahweh's power and help.

Reflection, then, on Moses' question "*Who* am I?" (Literally, *"Who I"*) will lead us to the conclusion that it did not matter so much who Moses was, but that *God* was to be with him, and the limitless power of *I-Shall-Come-to-Be* was to be available to him. *The factor* of consequence was neither the impotence of Moses nor the obduracy of Pharaoh, but the immutable intention of Yahweh to deliver His people and His irresistible power to accomplish that deliverance.

This grand and basic truth is powerfully expressed for us in later Scripture by the apostle Paul, another of Israel's illustrious sons, who asks a question and answers it with emphasis:

What then, shall we declare to these things?
If God is for us, who is against us? (Rom.8:31)

God being with us and for us, no power nor combination of powers can frustrate the accomplishment of His intention for us. "God is working all together for good" (Rom.8:28). The trying experiences, which, in the immediate process and on the surface, appear harmful and hostile to us, are merged in the inexhaustible riches of His grace and are thereby transmuted by the Divine alchemy to achieve our good and bring to us His blessing.

God had said to Moses: "I have descended to rescue them . . ." (Ex.3:8). The mighty *"I-Shall-Come-to-Be"* had become manifestly active in the affairs and history of the Nation He had chosen. The *One* Who was before, Who is beyond, and Who comprehends *time*, was markedly associating Himself with the *events of time*, particularly at this juncture with the deliverance and preservation of the sons of Israel. Yahweh (IEUE) had revealed Himself to the covenant people.

Moses learned gradually during the long, testing years of the wilderness journey something of the wonder and measure of that activity, with the resultant strengthening of his *faith*. In that further period of forty years, he

moved from the shifting sands of his earlier fears, doubts and unsteadiness to recognise the only immovable foothold and to rest in its stability.

The Rock—flawless are His deeds. (Deut.32:4)

That Rock was Christ. *He* was the Prophet of Whom Moses spoke (*cf* Deut.18:15,18; John 1:45; Acts 3:22). As Yahweh "descended" and delivered His ancient people by His mighty power and stretched out arm, so also did Christ "descend" even more markedly and relate Himself more vitally to *time* and to the children of *time* in His "coming to be in the likeness of humanity" (Phil.2:7). Through His accomplished work at Golgotha, *He* has effected a greater deliverance. Raised there, as He was, by cruel and wicked hands on a rude stake, He will draw *all* to Himself (John 12:32), and to His Father, by the irresistible compulsion of His love.

Alan Reid

SUMMARIES

As a help to the reader we offer the following summations of the various articles in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches:*

The editor distinguishes various uses of the word "ecclesia" lest we put ourselves under human authority in seeking truth (pages 97,98).

With a similar theme, Brother Knoch traces valuable lessons associated with the cities of Bethel (pages 99-108) and Shiloh (pages 109-112). Our trust is to be in God, not in ourselves or in what we have.

A new contributor to our magazine, Brother Robert Edwards, offers thoughts on prayer as a spiritual blessing from God (pages 113-118).

The scriptural uses of the verb "justify" and the place of Israel in God's purpose are principal considerations in the article on Romans (pages 119-130). And as a complement to that study, we reprint an article by William Mealand, which rejoices in the blessedness of believing (pages 131-136).

We conclude with Brother Alan Reid's meditation on Moses' question, "Who am I . . . that I should bring forth the sons of Israel from Egypt?" and on God's powerful reply, "I shall come to be with you" (pages 137-144).

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 Esau and the Edomites
149 Joseph and his Brethren
160 Believing God
169 What Then is This Bleating?
177 It is Enough!
186 Divine Supremacy

JULY, 2007

Volume XCVIII **Number 4**

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2007
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

JACOB heard a surprising message from God through Joseph, whom he loved, and at first he rebuked his son, for it was too shocking to him (Gen.37:10). But then it is recorded that Jacob "observed the word" (Gen.37:11). This was good, and it reminds us of Abraham who *faced* the word of promise God gave him and believed it *of the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were* (Rom.4:17).

Nevertheless, Abraham later took his attention away from God's word, and he heeded the word of Sarah as recorded in Genesis 16, resulting in the birth of Ishmael. So also, Jacob seemed to have entirely forgotten the message of Joseph's dream when he was confronted with the dramatic and tangible evidence of the bloody tunic of his son, and he mourned and could not be consoled (Gen.37:31-35).

Similarly Elijah was so overwhelmed by Jezebel's threat against his life (1 Kings 19:2) that he took his eyes off the evidence of God's power and faithfulness which he himself had been the instrument of displaying. Consequently, we find him dwelling on himself and exclaiming, "It is enough now! O Yahweh, take my soul from me, for I am no better than my fathers" (1 Kings 19:4).

Then there was the case of Saul the king, who failed to face the instructions from Yahweh concerning Amalek squarely, explaining, in effect, that he had a better plan which would more likely bring honor to God (*cf* 1 Sam. 15:3,15).

We ourselves may be truly grateful to God that His message to us is not one involving wrestling with blood and flesh (Eph.6:12). Nor indeed is His evangel to us accompanied by dramatic, visible displays of power (*cf* 1 Cor.1:

22,23), nor does it involve terrestrial land or descendants (*cf* Phil.3:20; Eph.2:13-22). It is a message of grace and peace, illuminating the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God. Yet we have this treasure in earthen vessels, for, like Jacob and Elijah and Saul, we are weak and easily distracted away from reliance on God and what He has said to us. But this is the very condition in which God's transcendent power is made known to us, instilling in our hearts thanksgiving to the glory of God (*cf* 2 Cor.4:4-15).

Further concerning Jacob and Joseph, see the article beginning on page 149, and concerning God's word to Abraham and his faith, see the reflections on Romans 4:1-3 starting on page 160. Elijah's failure to hold fast to the revelation of God's power and glory given him is brought before us in the meditation starting on page 177, and a thoughtful comparison between Saul the king and Saul of Tarsus who became Paul the apostle is presented in pages 169-176.

These incidents of old serve as types of us (1 Cor.10:6). We also have received a message from God, and we also need to be remaining in what we have learned and verified, as Paul reminded Timothy (2 Tim.3:14). We have been given a message of undiluted grace (see p.187), centered wholly in what God has achieved through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. There are many ways in which it may be distorted, as shown in the case of the Galatians (*cf* Gal.1:6-9). That we are justified through the faith of Jesus Christ and saved in God's grace is often compromised by religious requirements imposed in the name of piety as with king Saul. The welcome word given us is so fully centered in reliance on the living God (*cf* 1 Tim.4:9,10) that (even more so than Elijah) we may not fear that any power can separate us from His love (*cf* Rom.8:35-39). We thus pray for steadfastness in faith and growth in realization, for all endurance and patience with joy (*cf* Col.1:9-12).

D.H.H.

ESAU AND THE EDOMITES

(Genesis 36)

NOT FIRST the spiritual, but the soulish, thereupon the spiritual (1 Cor.15:46). This is true, not only of the first Adam and the Last, but also of the first and later born of Isaac: Esau and Jacob. We have had much of Jacob's history in the annals of Isaac, until he died. Now in Genesis 36, however, we are given the short genealogical annals of Esau, before we are shown the annals recorded by Jacob. Esau's annals are presented in two parts: The first, while he is in Canaan with Isaac (Gen.36:1-8); and another, after he is separated from him, in Edom, a land of his own (Gen. 36:9-43). As a nation, the Edomites continued to carry on the spiritual contrast with Israel, that first appeared in Jacob and Esau. The name "Edom" (Red) was a continual reminder of the soulishness of their ancestor.

CANAANITE WIVES

In contrast to Jacob, who, like Isaac, believed the record concerning the curse of Canaan, and went to great lengths to avoid mixing the seed of promise with that of the curse, Esau, being soulish and sensual, even though he knew that they were evil in the eyes of his parents, took wives from the Canaanites, as well as from Ishmael (Gen.28:8). He, like Lot, became so rich in cattle and goods that he had to part with Jacob, his brother, so went eastward to the country south of the Dead Sea, called Seir, or, later, Edom.

While Israel was in slavery in Egypt, the seed of Esau was developing freely in its mountainous home, with many sheiks and kings.

EDOM IN HISTORY

Esau and the Edomites take but little place in further revelation except as a foil for his brother, while Jacob, or rather Israel, occupies by far the largest space in God's plans for the earth.

THE HERODS AND CHRIST

The greatest of the Edomites, the Herodian dynasty, appeared upon the scene in opposition to the greatest of Israel's sons. When Jesus, the Christ, was born, Herod the Great, king of the Jews at that time, sought to destroy Him as a Boy by massacring all the boys who were in Bethlehem (Matt.2:3-18). His son, Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, who had John, the Baptist, beheaded, scorned and scoffed at Him when He appeared before him, just before His crucifixion (Luke 23:8-11). Herod Agrippa, king of Palestine, assassinated James, John's brother, and apprehended Peter, who escaped; he was smitten by a messenger of the Lord because he did not give glory to God, and he became the food of worms (Acts 12:1-23). Such is the inglorious fate of these powerful Edomites.

THE EDOMITES

The estrangement between Edom and Israel found its first expression more than four hundred years after Jacob and Esau's first encounters, when Moses was leading the Israelites to the promised land. As the people were afraid to go directly into the land, Moses was leading them round about, east of the Dead Sea. The direct route was through the territory of Edom. But the king of Edom refused to give them passage, so that they had to go a longer way around (Num.20:19-21). This embittered the sons of Israel against the Edomites. The prophets predicted that Edom would become a desolation (Jer.49:17), and a desertion (Ezek. 25:13), even as it is still today. A. E. Knoch

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN
(Genesis 37)

37 [+]**Now Jacob** [l]**dwelt in** the **land of his father's sojournings, in** the **land of Canaan.**

[2] **These** are the **chronological** record**s of Jacob.**

Joseph, seventeen years old, came to **be grazing** [i] the **flock** `with **his brothers** (**[+]since he** was but a young **lad),** `with the **sons of Bilhah and** `the **sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph** [l]**brought** `**their evil muttering to their father.** [3] [+]**Now Israel, he loved** `**Joseph** more [f]**than any of his** other **sons,** [t]**because he** was the **son of his old** age**; and he had** [d]**made** › **him** a **distinctive tunic.** [4] [+]**When his brothers** [l]**saw that their father loved** `**him** more [f]**than any of his** other [7]**sons**[ns]**,** [+] **they** [l]**hated** `**him** [+]**so they could not speak**¯ › **peaceably** with **him.**

[5] [+]**Once Joseph** [l]**dreamed** a **dream; [+]when he** [l]**told** it **to his brothers,** [+] **they** [fr] **hated**¯ `**him** [l]**still** [fr]**more.** [6] [+] **He** [l]**said to them:** [pr]**Do hear** ˙**this** ˙**dream** [w]**that I have dreamed.** [7] [+] **Behold, we** were **binding together grain-sheaves in** the **midst of the field, and behold, my grain-sheaf got up and** [mr] **stood up**right**. And behold, your grain-sheaves** gathered [l]**around and** [l]**bowed down to my grain-sheaf.**

[8] [+] **His brothers** [l][sa]**replied to him: Are you** go**ing** to **reign,** yea **reign**¯ **over us?** [if]**Or shall you rule,** yea **rule**¯ [i]**over us? And they** [fr] **hated**¯ `**him** [l]**still** [fr]**more on** account of **his dreams and** [on] **his words.**

[9] [+]**Then he** [l]**dreamed** [fr]**still another dream and** [l]**related** `**it** [7]**to his father and**[0] **to his brothers.** [+] **He** [l]**said: Behold, I have** [fr]**again dreamed** a **dream.** [+] **Behold, the sun and**

the moon and eleven stars were **bowing down to me.**

10 +**When he** ˡ**related** it **to his father and to his brothers,** + **his father** ˡ**rebuked** *i* **him and** ˡ**said to him: What** is ˙**this** ˙**dream** *w*[1]**that you have dreamed? Shall we come,** yea **come**¯**, I and your mother and your brothers, to bow down** to*d* the **earth** ›**before you?** 11 +**So his brothers were** ˡ**jealous** *i*[2]**of him;** +**yet his father, he observed** `**the word.**

12 +**Once his brothers** ˡ**went to graze** `**their father's flock** *i*[3]**at Shechem.** 13 +**So Israel** ˡ**said to Joseph:** Are **not your brothers grazing** *i*[4]**at Shechem?** Do **go!** + **I shall send you to them.**

And he ˡ*sa*[5]**replied to him:** *bd*[6]**Here I** am**.**

14 +**Then** *7*[7]**Israel**[0] ˡ**said to him: Go** *pr*[8]**now** *M*[9]**and**[n] **see** `about the **well-being of your brothers and** `about the **well-being of the flock, and bring me back word.** +**So he** ˡ**sent him** off **from** the **vale of Hebron, and he** ˡ**came** to*d* **Shechem.**

15 + A **man** ˡ**found him,** + **behold, straying in** the **field**s**, and the man** ˡ**asked him,** › **saying**¯**: What are you seeking?** 16 + **He** ˡ*sa*[10]**replied: I** am **seeking** `**my brothers.** Do **tell** › **me,** *pr*[11]**please, where they** are **grazing.** 17 + **The man** ˡ**said: They decamped from here; for I heard** *7*[12]**them**[n] **saying: Let us go** to*d* **Dothan.** +**So Joseph** ˡ**went after his brothers and** ˡ**found them** *i*[13]**at Dothan.**

18 + **They** ˡ**saw** `**him from afar; and** *i* **ere he** came ˡ**near to them,** + **they** ˡ**plotted** `against **him to** *c*[14]**put him** to **death.** 19 **And they** ˡ**said, each to his brother: Behold,** ˙**this** ˙**dreamy person** ›**there** is **coming.** 20 + *go*[15]**Come now,** + **let us kill him and fling him in**to **one of the cisterns; and we will say:** A **wild animal, it has devoured him.** +**Then we shall see what** will *lb*[16]**come** of **his dreams.**

21 +**When Reuben** ˡ**heard** this, + **he** tried to ˡ**rescue him from their hand**s**.** + **He** ˡ**said: Let us not smite** his **soul.** 22 **Reuben** +**further** ˡ**said to them: You must not** ˡ**shed blood. Fling** `**him** in**to** ˙**this** ˙**cistern** *w*[17]**that** is **in** the **wilderness.** +**But you must not** ˡ**lay** a **hand** *i*[18]**on him.** He said this

that he **might rescue**¯ `**him from their hand**s in order **to restore him to his father.**

23 +**So it** *lb*[19]**came** about, +**that as** soon *w*[20]**as Joseph came to his brothers, they** ˡ**stripped** `**Joseph** `of **his tunic,** `**the distinctive tunic** *w*[21]**that** he had **on him.** 24 **And they** ˡ**took him and** ˡ**flung** `**him** into*d* **the cistern.** +**Yet the cistern** was **empty;** there **was no water in it.**

25 +**Then they** ˡ**sat** down **to eat bread.** +**When they** ˡ**lifted** up **their eyes,** + **behold,** + **they** ˡ**saw** a **caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead,** +**with their camels carrying tragacanth gum,** + **balm and labdanum;** they were **going to** *c*[22]**bring** it **down** to*d* **Egypt.**

26 +**Now Judah** ˡ**said to his brothers: What** is to be **gain**ed *t*[23]**if we** ˡ**kill** `**our brother and** ¯**cover** up `**his blood?** 27 *go*[24]**Come,** + **let us sell him to** *7*[25]**these**[0] **Ishmaelites.** + **Do not let our hand** *b*[26]**be** *i*[27]**upon him; for our brother, our** own **flesh** is **he. And his brothers** ˡ**acquiesced.**

28 +**When** *7*[28]**the**[0] **men,** *7*[29]**the**[0] **Midianite merchants**ˡ ˡ**passed** by, + **they** ˡ**drew and** brought `**Joseph** ˡ**up from the cistern and** ˡ**sold** `**Joseph** *i*[30]**for twenty** shekels of **silver to** the **Ishmaelites** + who ˡ**brought** `**Joseph** to*d* **Egypt.**

29 +**When Reuben** ˡ**returned to the cistern,** + **behold, Joseph was not in** the **cistern.** + **He** ˡ**tore** `**his clothes,** 30 + ˡ**returned to his brothers and** ˡ**said: The boy! He is no** longer there**! And I—whither**[d] am **I** now *7*[31]**going~?**

31 +**Then they took** `**Joseph's tunic,** + ˡ**slew** a **hairy goat, and** ˡ**dipped** `**the tunic in** the **blood.** 32 + **They** ˡ**sent** `**the distinctive tunic and** *c*[32]**had** it ˡ**brought to their father, and** ˡ**said: This we have found.** *pr*[33]**Do identify** it; is **it your son's** ˙**tunic** *if*[34]**or not?**

33 + **He** ˡ**recognized it and** ˡ**said:** The **tunic of my son! A wild animal, it has devoured him! Joseph was torn to pieces,** yea **torn to pieces**¯**!** 34 +**Then Jacob** ˡ**tore his raiments and** ˡ*pl*[35]**put sackcloth** *i*[36]**on his waist and** ˡ**mourned over his son many days.** 35 + **All his sons and all his daughters**

|got up [7]and came[0] to console him; [+]yet he |refused to be consoled and |said: For I shall go down mourning to my son, to[d] the **unseen. [+]Thus his father |lamented** `over **him.**

36 **[+]Meanwhile the [7]Midianites~[nc] sold `[7]Joseph~** in**to Egypt, to Potiphar,** a **court official of Pharaoh** and **chief of the bodyguard.**

JOSEPH, A TYPE OF CHRIST

JOSEPH is one of the most marvelous types of Christ in the Hebrew Scriptures. Jacob's affection for him, the hatred of his brethren, his intended death and suffering, his exaltation to be the saviour of the world, all find their true meaning and find fulfillment in the life, death and glorification of Jesus Christ, God's Beloved, Who was rejected by the Jews and crucified, yet was exalted to God's right hand to be their Saviour and King. While in preceding sonships, Christ was represented by Isaac as the son of *promise*, and Jacob, or Israel, as the one *chosen*, yet in this one Joseph gives us a picture of His *suffering* and *glory*.

Let us remember this throughout the story of his career, so that we will find the full benefit of this unique revelation.

JACOB'S FAMILY AFFECTIONS

Jacob seems to have divided his affections very unevenly among the members of his family. This gave rise to much partiality and disaffection. It began with his special love for Rachel, which was continued toward her sons Joseph and Benjamin. His marriage to Leah against his wish and will, made matters worse, for the two sisters were very jealous of each other. Rachel's barrenness aggravated the situation, and, when she finally did present Jacob with a child, the fruit of his full affection for her, this son seems to have taken so large a place in his heart, that all the others became jealous before long. The fact that Dan and

Naphtali, sons of Bilhah, with Gad and Asher, sons of Zilpah, the two maids, seem to have grazed a flock separate from the sons of Leah, indicates that they also were treated differently than Jacob's other sons.

GOD'S LOVE VARIED

Is it not so in the spiritual realm also? God loves the whole world, yet He has not treated all alike, by any means. First of all, the Son of His love, like Joseph, was and is the principal object of His affections. "The Father is loving the Son" are the words of the Son Himself (John 3:35). In a sense Jacob's love of Joseph began with his love of Rachel, so preceded, as well as excelled, his love for the others' sons. But God's love extends to all, *and* so includes us, who have been given His spirit and who reciprocate His affection. He also loves all the rest, and will eventually bless all through His Beloved, just as Joseph expressed his affection, even for those who hated him, by saving them from the famine and providing for them, even though he was exalted far above them.

THE HATRED OF HIS BRETHREN

Further evidence of dissension in the family was the evil muttering of those sons with whom Joseph grazed the flock. The versions call this an "evil report," as if something was amiss with the flock. But it seems to refer to their *muttering* against him. (The Hebrew stem for the word "muttering" is also used for the animal, *bear*). The context goes on to tell us why they muttered. This late comer had monopolized Jacob's affection, and was receiving far more attention and distinction than any other one. In fact, they went so far as to hate him. And was it not so with his great Antitype? The mere fact that His Father loved and distinguished Him, led His own people to hate Him gratuitously (John 15:25).

In the Orient, the clothing is expressive of standing and rank. Jacob's sons probably dressed alike, unless the oldest, the firstborn, wore some distinctive mark. But Joseph was younger than they, and, so far as is recorded, had *done* nothing to merit such partiality. But Jacob, to express his love for the son of his beloved wife, made him a distinctive tunic. Others translate: "a coat of many colors" (AV), "a long robe with sleeves" (RSV), "a garment reaching far down," etc. The Hebrew words mean *tunic*, such as was made for Adam and Eve in Eden, and *limitings*. It was a distinctive tunic for Joseph limited to him alone. This distinguished him from the rest, which they resented.

CHRIST'S DISTINCTIVE CLOTHING

Is not this confirmed by the spiritual counterpart? Not, however, in His outward appearance, in His clothing, was Christ distinguished from His brethren, but in His spiritual words and actions. These were, like the robes worn by the chief priest, for glory and beauty. And the fact that He was distinguished in this way made His brethren hate Him all the more. He was able to wear the white garments which were worn in entering the divine presence, and ask His hearers, "Who of you is exposing Me concerning sin?" In His words and deeds the purple is seen in Matthew, as the King, the crimson in Luke, as the Son of Mankind, the amethyst in John, as the Son of God. He, indeed, had "a coat of many colors." It is possible, though not certain, that Joseph was distinguished in this way, but we are not distinctly told so.

JOSEPH'S DREAMS

Joseph has been criticized for telling his dreams to his family. In ordinary circumstances, it might have been unwise, if not offensive. But we should always remember that *faith justifies* all actions. Joseph believed these revelations to be of God, so had a right to speak. Nay, it would have been wrong if he had not spoken. This is seen more clearly in the Antitype. He, also, was blamed because of His supposed pretensions, and denounced because He claimed to be the Messiah. When He stood before the chief priest, and was exorcised to tell whether He was the Christ, the Son of God, He replied, "*You* say it! Moreover, I am saying to you, Henceforth you shall be seeing the Son of Mankind sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then they said that He was a blasphemer, liable to death (Matt.26:62-67). Joseph was quite correct in making known his dreams. Even his brethren acknowledged this after they were fulfilled. So will Israel acknowledge Christ in that day!

As in the likeness of the star, soil, and sand seed in the promise to Abraham, so Joseph related two different dreams of much the same import, one located on earth and the other in the heavens. These, however, do not relate to his *seed*, although Ephraim and Manasseh, the tribes descended from him, were more numerous than any other. They relate to his *rank*, the honor that would be his in the future. These dreams were literally fulfilled. The time came when they all actually prostrated to him when he was lord over all the land of Egypt. So will it be in the Antitype also. The sons of Israel hated their Saviour and did not believe His predictions concerning His own exaltation and glory in the kingdom. But all that He said of His future eminence will be fulfilled, even as Joseph's dreams turned out to be true.

SHECHEM

When Jacob was returning from Padan Aram, he stopped at Shechem, and acquired a portion of a field from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred coins. And he set up an altar there (Gen.33:18-20). Later on, two of

his sons murdered all the males, and took all their women, children and animals (Gen.34). Moreover, Jacob had dug a well there and gave the freehold to Joseph (John 4:3-12). This may account for their going to such a distance with their flocks. They probably used the Shechemites' grazing ground and the water from the well. But Joseph remained behind, as his father's pet. So he was sent to the sons of Leah, to inquire as to their welfare.

GRATUITOUS HATRED

Here is another delightful touch, in the contrast between the disposition of Joseph and that of his brothers. His sole concern was their welfare. Indeed, he represented the fatherly affection of Israel, and was intent upon being a blessing to them. But his brothers were not at all influenced by unselfish service for their sakes, but hated him with a murderous malevolence based only on envy and selfishness. Perhaps this had been further inflamed by their father's gift of the freehold at Shechem, where they had been just before.

How closely does this compare with the Antitype! He, also, was sent by His Father for the welfare of His brethren, the sons of Israel. He also had been given a well of water for their eonian satisfaction, and they alike refused the water He offered them, but instead chose to place their dependance on the law for their satisfaction. His rule over them had likewise been foretold in the sacred scrolls. So they, like their ancestors, hated Him gratuitously (John 15:25). They had every reason to love Him, yet, by the divine alchemy, their very hatred will magnify His love all the more, as was seen when Joseph met his brothers later in Egypt.

TYPICAL DEATH

A type cannot be precisely the same as the antitype, or it would not even be a type. Yet there are nuances, even

in the differences, which are suggestive. The brothers as a whole, at Dothan, were determined to put Joseph to death. But one, Reuben, the firstborn, was not with them in it. So it was when Christ came. The nation, as a whole, demanded His death, but some, called "the ecclesia of the firstborn" (Heb.12:23), His apostles and faithful followers, had no part in this dreadful deed. So it was that Joseph was not put to death, but buried in a cistern. Jacob refused to be comforted, when he heard of it and said, "I shall go down mourning to my son, to the unseen" (37:35). So Joseph was practically dead to them until he was glorified in Egypt. So is Christ to His brethren today.

THE EVIDENCE OF DEATH

Although Joseph did not die, he was robbed of his distinctive tunic, and a goat was slain and the blood used to provide evidence for his death. In the type, the death of this goat is very suggestive. The great Antitype was not put to death merely as the object of His jealous brethren's hatred. He suffered, as a sacrificial victim, for others. By applying the blood of the goat to the tunic, the distinctive honors of Joseph are associated with his suffering and supposed death, and the benefits which would come to them all, even to his father, Israel, for the cross of Christ brings blessing to all, not only to the hateful nation, but to the whole world, including even God Himself.

THE SALE OF JOSEPH

Hitherto Joseph had led an exceptionally fortunate life. His mother and his father were excessively fond of him, and showed it in their partiality to him. In this he was like the beloved Son of the Father, in the glory which He had before the world was (John 17:5). But now his sufferings begin. His own brothers commence them. From the highest station in life he descends to the lowest, a slave. The

price of a slave was thirty shekels of silver (Ex.21:32), and that is probably what he brought in Egypt. But the caravan was at some expense taking him there, so they paid only twenty. Judah was the brother who suggested this sordid transaction. Another Judas, Iscariot, sold the great Antitype for thirty pieces of silver in His day.

ISHMAELITES AND MIDIANITES

Ishmaelites, being descendants of Hagar, the Egyptian maid (Gen.16:1), were partly Egyptian, as well as circumcised descendants of Abraham, so they were really quite closely related to Jacob's family, in flesh. Midianites also were relatives, as Midian was a son of Abraham by Keturah (Gen.25:2). It seems that the two, being so nearly related, often intermingled, living east of the Jordan as a rule. In this case there seems to have been a caravan with both, and the Ishmaelites bought Joseph, but the Midianites sold him. Perhaps the priests and elders of a later day were the antitypes of these descendants of Abraham according to the flesh (Matt.26:15), for they paid the price of a slave for the betrayal of the Antitype of Joseph.

THE CISTERN

Cisterns were, and still are, quite common in the land of Palestine. Most of the country is high, so that the winter rains run off to the Jordan on one side, or to the sea on the other. Therefore the winter supply must be stored for summer use. Without help or means of some sort, it is practically impossible to climb out of these cisterns, so the prospect must have seemed very dark to Joseph, and the sale to the caravan a welcome change. But to Reuben, who must have been absent when he was sold, it was a severe shock, because he had hoped to save him, for he, as the firstborn, was answerable for his safety.

JACOB'S MOURNING

When Jacob was shown the bloody tunic of his beloved son, he was filled with fearful sorrow and was inconsolable. It cast a dark shadow over his days for about a decade, until Joseph was revealed to them all as their saviour from the famine and as the ruler of Egypt. In similar fashion did the early disciples mourn the death of Christ, for they had hoped that He would redeem Israel. But the nation which was guilty of His death will not see Him again until He appears in glory, not as the Saviour and Ruler of Egypt, but of all nations, especially His own people Israel.

A. E. Knoch

Next to the cross of Christ, the story of Joseph gives us the clearest insight into the function of sin in God's plan and illustrates how a dastardly and cruel act may be justified when viewed in the light of His purpose. Joseph's brothers knew nothing of the famine which would come. They had not the slightest desire to fulfill the dreams which made the favorite brother their lord. Indeed, they wished to prevent the possibility of their fulfillment. So they conspired to kill him.

But this was not according to the purpose of God, so He put it into the heart of Reuben to deliver Joseph, with the hope of returning him to his father. Yet this, again, was not in line with God's plan, so He sent the Midianites and put Judah in the way of making some profit out of the transaction. So Joseph was sold into Egypt. Is it not a sad and sordid scene of sin? Plotting to slay their own flesh and blood because of his dreams! Actually accepting twenty pieces of silver for the darling of their father's heart!

How tragic were the consequences of this sin in the eyes of Jacob may be seen from his own words. "It is me that you bereave. Joseph, he is no more, and Simeon, he is no more. And you would take Benjamin away. *On me come all these things*" (Gen.42:36).

Thus it appeared that all was against Jacob. And so it appears to us when tragedy stalks into our lives and robs us of our friends or our wealth or our health and leaves us helpless. All seems against us, when, if we only knew God's mind, we would see that all is for us. Thus it becomes the glory of God's wisdom to harness His unsuspecting enemies to His purpose, and use their opposition to prosper His plans.

A. E. Knoch

BELIEVING GOD

TO BELIEVE GOD is a righteous act, but it does not cause a person to be righteous. Only God can make the irreverent sinner righteous. He does so, not through our faith, but through the faith of Jesus Christ. This full and literal justification will be realized in God's own time when all mankind enjoy life's justifying and are constituted righteous (Rom.5:18,19). But in the meantime God can and does put this, which has been gained for all, to the account of those who are believing His evangel concerning His Son. God can do this righteously, for it has the righteous basis of the faith of Jesus Christ, that is, of His obedience in faith to the death of the cross, and His entombment and resurrection, which was for all who are sinners (*cf* Rom. 5:18; 2 Cor.5:14; 1 Tim.1:15; 2:4-6).

FOR OUR FAITH

In Romans 4:1-3, the apostle Paul carries his presentation of the evangel of God forward to its application to the believer. This reckoning of righteousness also can be called justification, but only in a figurative sense. It is justification applied in spirit, not justification experienced in full; it is righteousness put to our account, but not yet part of our being as it will be when we are constituted righteous.

Accordingly, in bringing the evangel to us, Paul is now turning directly to the theme of Romans 1:16, presenting the evangel as the power of God for salvation *to everyone who is believing.* He is now expounding the fact that in the evangel "God's righteousness is being revealed . . . *for* [our] *faith*" (Rom.1:17). After showing us, in Romans 3:21-28,

that God's righteousness is made manifest through Jesus Christ's faith, he now speaks of this righteousness being placed, in spirit, *on all who are believing* (Rom.3:22).

Again, with reference to the immediate context, Paul is now beginning to develop the distinction made in Romans 3:30 that God will be justifying the Uncircumcision *through faith.*

The reckoning of righteousness to the believer is a foundational step in God's present application of His grace of justification. There is much more to come, for the evangel enters into our lives in many ways, for joy and peace and spiritual invigoration day by day. As the evangel is being believed it becomes powerful in us for the bearing of the fruit of the spirit (*cf* Gal.3:5,6; 5:16,22-26). But God begins to bring blessing to us by reckoning to our account the righteousness which Christ has gained. He does this now for those who are believing.

In order to clarify this blessing of being reckoned righteous, through the channel of our acceptance of the evangel in faith, Paul points to the notable case of Abraham (called "Abram" at that time, but Paul passes by that detail) in Genesis 15 before he was circumcised (Paul does not pass by that detail, but rather makes an issue of it). Hence we read in Romans 4:1-3:

What, then, shall we declare that Abraham, our forefather, according to flesh, has found? For if Abraham was justified by acts, he has something to boast in, but not toward God. For what is the scripture saying? Now "Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness."

WHAT HAS ABRAHAM FOUND?

The question of Romans 4:1 arises from the evangel as Paul has been presenting it at the end of chapter 3. The force of the connective term "then" is to take what

has just been said, as the basis for what will now be said. The fact that a human being is justified by means of the faith of Jesus Christ apart from works of law has important repercussions for us, not just in the future, but now while we are still in the flesh.

But also this question at the beginning of Romans 4 develops from Paul's denial that law has been nullified, even though the Circumcision will enjoy justification as it is sourced in Jesus, just as everyone else (Rom.3:30,31). With respect to the Jews law still retains an important place, especially as God brings them under the promised new covenant in which the law will be written on their hearts by God's spirit, and they will be enabled to carry out its instructions. That promise is still in effect, and Paul will maintain that in detail in chapters 9-11.

Nevertheless, for those of the Uncircumcision, the keeping of the law is not a factor, even with respect to God reckoning righteousness to the irreverent. The Jew needs to recognize this, and so Paul now provides the scriptural evidence for this operation of God which has it roots before the law concerning circumcision was given to Abraham. What Paul writes now should help those of the Circumcision in seeing what God is doing with respect to the Uncircumcision, and at the same time this should help us to appreciate more clearly and truly the matchless grace of our calling.

Being reckoned righteous was a blessing that Abraham *found* in those unsettled and unsettling days when he was wandering about in a land promised to him which he did not possess and being called by a name which constantly contradicted the perceptible facts. It was a time of restless fear in view of human political conflicts and social breakdown (*cf* Genesis chapters 14 and 18) and frustrating longing for this fatherless man named "Father-high," who rescued others that they might enjoy a dwelling place

without himself possessing any such holding to call his own, being exposed to all sorts of dangers and perils.

But this was the ideal situation for God's revelation of Himself to Abraham as the One Who is Reliable in meeting his needs, which is to say Reliable in bringing His Word to pass.

Even as Noah *found* grace in the eyes of Yahweh (*cf* Gen.6:8), so Abraham found the grace of righteousness reckoned to him by the One Who was his Shield and exceedingly increased Reward (Gen.15:1,6). This grace was placed before him by God, so that he found it.

GOD MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN

Before this, Yahweh had promised Abram that he would be made into a great nation which would be blessed and become a blessing to all the families of the earth (Gen. 12:2,3). Furthermore, he would have descendants numbered as the grains of soil in the earth (Gen.13:16). These earlier messages from God focused on what Abraham would receive. But in Genesis 15, before giving Abraham further details about the blessings He had in store for him, God *revealed Himself* as his ever-present Source of Blessing. The evangel that Abraham's seed would number as the stars of the heavens is firmly connected to the evangel that God was his Shield and exceedingly increased Reward (Gen.15:1).

This, as a whole, both the promise of blessings to come and its basis in God Himself as Shield and Reward is what Abraham believed.

In a similar way, God comes to us, who could never be justified in His sight by what we do, and He brings us an evangel which *reveals His righteousness* by means of the faith of His Son, Jesus Christ. He comes to us and says, "You must not be fearing! I am your righteous Justifier, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus."

BOASTING

Faith does not lead to *boasting* in ourselves, but it does lead to *glorying* in God. These two italicized words represent the same Greek term,[1] which occurs, in different grammatical forms, frequently in the book of Romans (*cf* Rom.2:17,23; 3:27; 4:2; 5:2,3,11; 15:17). In reminding the Jew and informing us as well that God reckoned righteousness to Abraham before he was placed under the law of circumcision, and through the channel of faith alone, the apostle defends his evangel before the Circumcision and defines its essence of grace before us all.

The Jew was boasting in God and in law (God's word as given to them), but by his transgression of the law he was dishonoring God (2:17-23). His boasting was not a true glorying in God, but rather was self-centered and hypocritical. In complete contrast to this, the evangel manifests God's righteousness in justifying sinners on the righteous basis of human inclusion in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This debars all boasting in ourselves by giving all the credit of justification to the operation of God's grace as channeled through the faith and faithfulness of His beloved Son (Rom.3:24-26).

Turning then to the example of Abraham, Paul states: "If Abraham was justified by acts, he has something to boast in . . ." (Rom.4:3). If such a thing were possible, that any human could carry out the instructions of the law and thus be found righteous, he would have much to boast in.

But, in reality, this boasting would not be directed *toward God.*

If Abraham, or anyone else, could carry out the demands of law fully and righteously, there would be no genuine glorying pointed toward God. There might be a desire

1. *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.35, under the key words, *boast*, and *boasting.*

and intention to honor God and rejoice in His greatness, but if righteousness were actually our achievement, the glorying in Him could only be a surface matter, and the attempt a matter of condescension, as though we were doing God a favor, while doing ourselves a favor.

It is only as we boast in Christ Jesus, in what He has done and what He means to us as Saviour and Lord, that the boasting becomes rightly orientated toward God and so brings Him honor.

A similar thought is expressed in much the same way in Romans 15:17 when Paul speaks of his own boasting "in Christ Jesus, in that which is *toward God.*"

THE SCRIPTURAL TESTIMONY

The evangel Paul is bringing seemed to clash with the traditional understanding of Israel concerning human righteousness. The chosen nation pursued a law of righteousness, but they made no progress in this so as to put them at an advantage over other people (Rom.9:31). They were ignorant of the righteousness of God, which is revealed in the evangel Paul was bringing (Rom.1:14-17), so that their lives were not subjected to the powerful effects this evangel has for those who are believing (Rom.10:3).

Nevertheless, the Scriptures God gave Israel allowed for this message of grace which manifests God's righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ, even if they did not speak directly of it. Looking back at the ancient Scriptures through the lens of the evangel, we can now see foreshadows and preparations which are helpful and enlightening for our appreciation of the fuller meaning of Christ's death and resurrection which God made known through His chosen apostle. This testimony of the Hebrew Scriptures even included the particular detail, within the evangel, which Paul is now setting before us. The way in which God grants justification (gained through the faith of Jesus

Christ) to the uncircumcised nations is by their believing, and this alone, apart from obedience to law. For Israel law is sustained, but this is not so for the nations, who are not under law. For us of the Uncircumcision, righteousness is reckoned by God through the channel of our faith, apart from law, in what He has said to us.

This pattern was laid down and recorded in Scripture long ago in the life of Abraham, before he was circumcised.

Paul cites the passage (Genesis 15:6) on the basis of the ancient Greek translation (called the Septuagint): *Now Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness.*

ABRAHAM BELIEVES GOD

That which Abraham believed was impossible to believe. It was not that strong evidence was against it, but that all tangible and experiential evidence was against it. Consequently, the believing had to be based on the word of the One Who said to Abraham that He was His Shield and exceedingly increased Reward.

Every day Abraham looked out from his tent, across the hills, down to the plain where others, whom Abraham had rescued from their enemies, lived in prosperity, building new and stronger walls for protection, buying and selling and enjoying leisure and luxury. All Abraham had was the unfulfilled word of Yahweh which showed absolutely no prospect of ever being fulfilled.

Doubts were forming in Abraham's mind, or if not doubts, at least the seed of doubting which lies in that reasoning which suggests that God wants us to do something before He will give what He has promised. It was the revising of God's word which had said, "I shall make you into a great nation, and I shall bless you" (Gen.12:2), so that it comes to mean, "With your help, I shall make you into a great nation and bless you." The fear that we

may not ever get what God has promised is fostered by self-examination. It is dispelled by facing God's word and taking it for what it says.

So now, in order to dispel Abraham's doubts and fears, Yahweh lays emphasis on the revelation of Himself as Abraham's Shield and exceeding increased Reward. And God imparts a measure of faith to Abraham so that he is able to accept God's word on the one basis of its being God's word. The focus is on God. And the whole dependence is on God.

Just as our boast is to be directed toward God, our faith is placed in God and His word to us. In Genesis 15:6, the Hebrew text says literally that Abraham believed *in* Yahweh, which is an idiomatic way of expressing the thought that Abraham placed his faith in *what Yahweh had said* to him. The same development of thought is expressed by the Greek in the statement that Abraham *believes God,* so that the focus of our hearts changes from ourselves to God and His doing.

Facing the message which he heard, Abraham believed it *of the God Who is vivifying the dead* (Rom.4:17). *The promise of God* was not doubted in unbelief, but he was invigorated by faith, *giving glory to God,* being fully assured also, that, *what He has promised,* He is able to do also (Rom.4:20,21).

So also for ourselves, as Paul is telling us, the great blessing of faith lies in the blessing of placing our faith in what God has said to us. We are blessed in having righteousness reckoned to us by faith alone, and not by works, but concerns about the quality and steadfastness of our faith must not distract attention from growing in appreciation of what God has said to us. We would grow in faith, but this does not come by examining the strength of our faith as compared with that of another believer and so in resolving to be stronger believers. Rather it comes by lis-

tening to what the evangel of God says and glorying in Him Who has spoken it.

IT IS RECKONED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

The words "Abraham was justified" in Romans 4:2 are set in parallel to the words "reckoned to him for righteousness," in Romans 4:3. In Romans 4:5 the words "justifying the irreverent" are matched by the words "reckoned for righteousness," and also by the words "God is reckoning righteousness" in verse 6. This holds true throughout the chapter. Justification is presented in terms of being reckoned righteous, rather than in the literal sense of being caused to be righteous. We will be constituted righteous; but now, ahead of the majority of mankind, and entirely apart from anything of ourselves, in God's grace, God has put it down to our account that we are righteous. He sees us as we are in Christ, crucified, entombed and vivified. That is the grace of God's remarkable reckoning that, in His further grace, we are believing.

Hence, to believe God in what He says to us is not only a righteous act, it is full of blessing because it centers our hearts on God and His giving up of His Son for us. But more than this, it is full of blessing because God reckons the righteousness achieved through the faith of Jesus Christ to us who are given the privilege of believing. God blesses us with faith in Him and His word, and on the basis of this blessing He grants the blessing of being reckoned righteous even now while irreverence and unrighteousness still operate in our flesh. We go from grace to grace, and grace is granted on the basis of previous grace given.

May we be enjoying the blessing of believing what God has spoken to us. We are being justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. Furthermore, in believing this the righteousness gained by Christ is put to our account. D.H.H.

WHAT THEN IS THIS BLEATING?

THE BLEATING of sheep is not a sound which usually causes surprise or concern, but rather is it associated with the tranquility of the countryside: a sound of the spacious hillside and pleasant meadow calculated to soothe a frayed or troubled mind. To Samuel, the prophet of the Lord, the noise of bleating sheep and lowing cattle at Gilgal brought no such pleasant reflections but, instead, occasioned his anxious question to Saul, the king.

A few years before, Saul had been anointed by Samuel and proclaimed king of Israel. He was the first king of Israel, given to that nation in response to the demand for "a king, to judge us like all the other nations" (1 Sam.8:5) and because the people persisted in that demand in the face of a wiser counsel of Samuel. "No," they cried, "for there *should be* a king over us" (1 Sam.8:19). The people had grown restless and were dissatisfied with Theocracy and had long forgotten the strong delivering hand and outstretched arm of God, His protecting care and ample provision. The miracle of the deliverance from Egypt, the pillars of cloud and fire, the manna and the conquests were not happenings within the immediate experience of the generation so long and so wisely guided by Samuel, and the wonder of God's providence had been lost in the vortex of the nation's ingratitude and unfaithfulness. God seemed remote from them, distant, intangible, and Samuel, His prophet, old. "Behold," exclaimed the elder of Israel to the Lord's prophet, "you are old, . . . do appoint for us a *king*" (1 Sam.8:5).

So God gave His people a king and that king was Saul (Shaul—asked) the son of Kish of the tiny tribe of Benjamin, a man of striking physique towering head and shoulders above his fellows, and he was acclaimed the nation's king at Mizpeh. The nation had rejected *God* (1 Sam.8:7; 10:19).

When Saul was settled in the leadership of the sons of Israel, Samuel communicated to him the urgent command of the Lord (1 Sam.15:3):

So now go, you must smite Amalek and doom him and all that is his. You shall not spare him . . . .

The Lord of hosts remembered that, many years before, the Amalekites had attacked the sons of Israel at Rephidim soon after they had been brought safely and miraculously out of Egypt and through the Sea of Weeds. The assault had been directed against the faint and feeble who dragged wearily in the rear of the Israelitish concourse. Battle was subsequently joined, and Israel's forces, led by Joshua, triumphed under the upraised and upheld arms of Moses. The victory in this first of Israel's encounters with the nations was a temporary, but not adequate requital for the dastardly attack launched by Amalek. Consequently, the Lord caused a record to be made of the incident and of His intention to blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under the heavens (Ex.17:14; Deut.25:17-29).

The Lord's command was unequivocal—this nation that had resisted the progress of God's chosen people was to be utterly destroyed. It was a stern edict, but the times were stern, and Israel was struggling for her existence in the midst of hostile nations. Without hesitation, Saul embarked upon the task, and he seemed to meet little resistance from the retreating Amalekites who were at his mercy. But, despite this, he did not carry out the command completely. He took Agag, the king, alive and spared

the best of the flocks and herds and drove them back to Israel's borders. On his return from the victory, Saul was met by the prophet Samuel, to whom the Lord had confided (1 Sam.15:11):

I regret that I caused Saul to reign as king, for he has turned away from following Me . . . .

Saul, apparently satisfied that he had fulfilled the behest of the Lord, greeted the prophet (1 Sam.15:13):

Blessed be you by Yahweh! I have carried out the command of Yahweh.

The falseness of Saul's declaration was at once and thoroughly exposed by Samuel's question—"What then is this bleating of the flock in my ears . . ?" (1 Sam.15:14). The prophet was surrounded on all sides by the restless flocks and lowing herds, visible proof of the king's disobedience. There could be no gainsaying the evidence, and Saul sought cowardly refuge in excuse and blamed the people who, he said, spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to *sacrifice* unto the Lord (1 Sam.15:15). This surely was commendable sentiment and an extenuating reason for his misdemeanor—such a lofty desire would doubtless mitigate the seriousness of the transgression. Samuel was not deluded and laid bare the baseness of Saul's motive with disconcerting frankness:

"Then why did you not *hearken* to the voice of Yahweh? Why did you *pounce* on the loot and do what was evil in the eyes of Yahweh?" (1 Sam.15:19).

There was no possibility of Saul concealing the true motive from *Him.* "The unseen was naked in front of Him, And there was no covering for Abaddon" (Job 26:6). The underlying intent could not remain obscure from *Him* when "all is naked and bare to the eyes of Him to Whom we are accountable" (Heb.4:13).

The laws of *God* and His instructions have, at all times,

required inflexible heeding so that what is heard is carried out. His edicts were, without exception, purposive and were given to be *heeded,* and Saul did not completely carry out the order given to him. He failed in the first task assigned to him, and the kingdom was rent from him in consequence of his dishonoring of God's instructions. Sacrifice was a ritual divinely instituted and had its appointed place and value, but (1 Sam.15:22):

Behold, to hearken is better than sacrifice,
To pay attention than the fat of rams.

Sacrifice is true and acceptable in the measure of the hearkening and obedience that prompts it.

When we move forward in the pages of Holy Writ through the succeeding turbulent centuries of Israel's history we come, in course, to the mention of another Saul. This second Saul was also of Israel's stock and of the tribe of Benjamin, and though small in stature and perhaps feeble in frame, he attained, *intellectually,* an eminence among his contemporaries no less dominant than that held *physically* by his nation's first king. His mental ability was equalled by a tireless devotion to, and passionate enthusiasm for, the traditions of the Fathers. His zeal for the traditional Judaic tenets made him an avowed and bitter enemy of those who professed allegiance to the risen Christ, and his pre-conversion activities can be summed up in the phrase—"Now Saul devastated the ecclesia" (Acts 8:3). His confession to the Galatians was— "I inordinately persecuted the ecclesia of God and ravaged it" (Gal.1:13).

A relentless hatred gave Saul no respite and drove him on a merciless mission to Damascus, armed with Sanhedrin authority, to apprehend those who were "of the way" and bring them back bound to Jerusalem. He was determined effectively to silence those who called upon the Name of the Lord. He had callously endorsed the death

of faithful Stephen and was bent on the extermination of others professing a like faith.

In due course, Saul reached Damascus, but not in the way he had planned, for he, the would-be captor was instead the captive. He, who carried the chains for his erstwhile enemies was himself bound—bound in the stronger, enduring and imperishable fetters of the grace and love of God, Whose Son he so cruelly persecuted.

The memory of the events which so suddenly and dramatically changed the course of his life remained vividly clear in the mind of Saul (who became Paul), and, years later, when, as the prisoner of the Lord, he stood arraigned before the governor Festus and king Agrippa, he recounted the happenings of that memorable day as he neared Damascus. He told of the divine intervention—the brilliance of the heavenly light—the Voice in the Hebrew tongue that called to him (Acts 26:14), "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting Me?"—then, with compelling earnestness, addressed himself to his royal judge (Acts 26:19):

Whence, king Agrippa, I did not become stubborn as to the heavenly apparition.

The glory of the blinding vision left Saul in no doubt as to the error of the way he had so ardently pursued. A new pathway opened before him and, without demur, he stepped resolutely upon it, implicitly obeying the pierced Hand that beckoned him onwards. His desire henceforward was to serve Him Whom once he persecuted.

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

The two Sauls were prominent figures in the sacred record. Both were of the tribe of Benjamin, and each was chosen by God for a special task, the first to be the first of Israel's kings, the second to carry the evangel of God's grace to the Nations. Saul, the king, failed to *heed* the com-

mand of the Lord and was rejected. In later years, when he considered his conduct he was compelled to admit—"I have acted unwisely" (1 Sam.26:21). Saul, subsequently Paul, the apostle, was *faithful* to what he heard from the Lord, so that when he surveyed the long, trying years of his devoted service, he could exclaim—"I have kept the faith" (2 Tim.4:7).

Both men reached that juncture in their life's experience where the subsequent course of events was to be determined by an act of disobedience or obedience. The value of the course followed is pointedly and powerfully expressed in these phrases. We either act unwisely, or we keep the faith.

ADAM AND CHRIST

It has been said, and truly said, "The supreme crises of history are centered in the *disobedience* of the first man (Adam) and in the *obedience* of the Second (Christ)." Adam *disobeyed* the only command God had given to him and, in so doing, revolted against the authority of God. The second Man "humbles Himself, becoming *obedient* unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil.2:8). The first man and the Second stand vitally related to the race in a relationship which *no other* can sustain. The apostle Paul, writing to the Romans, makes this clear (Rom.5:19):

For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.

In his first letter to the Corinthians he further affirms (1 Cor.15:22):

For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified.

These acts of *disobedience* and *obedience* are the events of history which dwarf all others, from which all others

derive and in the light of which all else is incidental. They are epochal. The slow rising and falling centuries which mark the course of Time have woven into the intricate fabric of humanity's story momentous happenings, but none which did not (and none which will not) stem from one or other of these supreme events.

The sin of Adam mothered all sin, by means of death which passed on from Adam to all humanity which was latent in him. None is exempt from the terrible consequences which find their source in the single act of *disobedience.*

What then, of the *obedience* of Christ? Is the scope of "life's justifying" less comprehensive than that of the condemnation? Emphatically no! He became *obedient* unto death (Phil.2:8), and His *obedience* is no less potent for good than was Adam's disobedience and offense for condemnation. There is *none* reached by the cold hand from Eden that will not be enfolded in the warm embrace of the arms stretched out from Calvary. "For even as, in Adam, all are dying, *thus also,* in *Christ,* shall all be vivified" (1 Cor. 15:22). We dare not constrict these grand and sweeping terms of inspiration.

The potential for *good* in *hearkening* to what God says and for all *ill* in *disregarding* it is incalculable, and, in this era of self-assertiveness, disregard of authority and hatred of discipline, it behooves us to recognise and acknowledge this. The so-called "freedom of the individual" has been enthroned, and the bulk of humanity is on its knees in a grovelling obeisance to it, but despite this vaunted liberty, the truth is that all men are *slaves.* This fact is admirably and forcefully expressed by Paul in his letter to the Romans, in which he states (Rom.6:16):

Are you not aware that to whom you are presenting yourselves as slaves for obedience, his slaves you are, whom you

are obeying, whether of Sin for death, or of Obedience for righteousness?

We have the fact of universal servitude thus tersely stated by the apostle. We serve one of two masters, either (1) *Sin* which brings death or (2) *Obedience* which brings righteousness. In this remarkable Romans passage, *Obedience* is used in opposition to Sin, and would lead to the conclusion that *disobedience is sin.* In this more than in anything else, we cannot serve two masters, for we cannot present ourselves simultaneously to Sin and to Obedience. Sin is a despot and the only true freedom is to be found in subservience to the gracious mastery of *Obedience.* If we present ourselves as slaves of *Obedience* we are better able to present our bodies as a living, well pleasing sacrifice to God in compliance with the entreaty of the apostle Paul (*cf* Rom.12:1).

The spoils of conflict attested the disobedience of Saul the king and gave rise to the Prophet's question, which has been the subject of this meditation. "What then is this bleating of the flock in my ears . . ?" (1 Sam.15:14). It simply meant that Saul had disregarded the command of the Lord. He had not *hearkened,* which in turn, produced disobedience which can be traced back to the failure to hearken to God's Word. In the lives of most people, there are those things which bear witness to this downward path. When the aged Samuel had rebuked Saul for his failure to comply with the command of the Lord in the fulness it required, he told the king that, "Behold, to *hearken* is better than sacrifice . . . (1 Sam.15:22), and in these memorable words stressed for all generations to follow the inestimable value of hearkening unto obedience. The Lord Jesus Christ, in His death on the Cross, presented to His God and Father the coalescence of the faultless, unblemished Sacrifice and an unquestioning, perfect Obedience.

Alan Reid

IT IS ENOUGH!

WHEN Jezebel threatened the soul of Elijah, as recorded in 1 Kings 19, he feared and fled into the wilderness. After the great victory at Mount Carmel, the prophet was deeply depressed, exclaiming, "It is enough now!" and he begged that Yahweh would take his soul, for he was no better than his fathers (1 Kings 19:2-4).

James writes that "Elijah was a man of like emotions with us" (James 5:17). What emotions, then, did Elijah exhibit in this incident that are like our own? He exhibited fear, loneliness and hopelessness. In looking at himself in relation to others, he was filled with depression. There is much we believers today can learn from Elijah's life concerning depression and what steps can be taken in order to come out of it, as God gives the grace.

Elijah was one of the mightiest prophets. What occurred in his life causing him to *fear and run for his soul* and thus slip into such severe depression that he begged for his soul to die?

To find the cause we must first go back about three and a half years to 1 Kings 16. Here the divine record gives us a glimpse into the lives of several people who caused Israel to sin and provoked Yahweh to vexation, with two being the main antagonists in Elijah's life (1 Kings 16:30-33):

. . . Ahab son of Omri did what was evil in the eyes of Yahweh, worse than all who had been before him. So it came to pass (as if it was lightly esteemed by him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat) that he took as wife

Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians. Then he went to serve Baal and worshiped him. He set up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal that he built in Samaria. Ahab also made an Asherah pole. Thus Ahab proceeded to do more to provoke Yahweh Elohim of Israel to vexation than all the kings of Israel who had been before him.

The lives of Ahab and Jezebel were marked by a wicked hardheartedness, spiraling downward and away from Yahweh, taking Israel with them in their sin. Yet immediately after reading this concerning these two idolaters we are ushered into a confrontation between Elijah and Ahab (1 Kings 17:1):

Elijah the Tishbite, the prophet from Tishbe of Gilead, said to Ahab, As Yahweh Elohim of Israel lives, before Whom I stand, There shall not come in these years night mist or rain, except at the bidding of my word.

Ahab was causing Israel to forsake the one true God in exchange for Baal worship. Jezebel was enforcing their brand of religion by terminating the prophets of Yahweh by means of the sword, yet nourishing the prophets of Asherah. It is in this context of irreverence that Elijah is first mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures. We find God using this mighty prophet to confront the evildoers, and bring chastening to His apostate people by locking heaven for three and a half years (*cf* Luke 4:25). This drought would not end except at the bidding of Elijah's word.

In the meantime, most likely to conceal him from Ahab, Jezebel and apostate Israel, Yahweh sent Elijah out to Wadi Cherith where he was fed by ravens and could drink from the stream (1 Kings 17:2-7). God was taking care of Elijah for his every need and in an unheard of way.

But the water Elijah so depended upon in the wadi dried up due to the drought.

Then, to provide for him, Yahweh sent Elijah out of the

land of Israel to a Sidonian woman: "Now the word of Yahweh came to him, saying, Arise, go to Zarephath of Sidon; and you will dwell there. Behold, I enjoined on a widowed woman there to sustain you" (1 Kings 17:8,9). In this, God was once again showing Elijah that He was his Provider.

ELIJAH'S GREAT FAITH

This Gentile widow knew of Elijah's Elohim, speaking of Him by His Name, but she had no hope for surviving the drought. After she told Elijah she had only a small amount of oil in her cruse and a palm full of meal in a jar, she said she was gathering sticks in order to take them home and make a meal for herself and her son from this scanty store. Then she and her son would lay down and die.

The situation looked hopeless. Yet Elijah held fast to God's word to him which he shared with the woman: "For thus says Yahweh Elohim of Israel, The jar of meal, it shall not be exhausted, and the cruse of oil, it shall not abate until the day that Yahweh shall give a downpour on the surface of the ground" (1 Kings 17:14).

So it came to be. They were fed for many days on that small amount of oil and meal. Yahweh was meeting their needs through this trying time.

This leads us to ask ourselves again how Elijah, with all the evidence of God's care for him, could ever reach the point where he would run from mere human threats and so enter into deep depression.

A FURTHER REVERSAL

After this we read that the widow woman's son became ill and died. Yet again Elijah prayed to Yahweh, Who heard his prayer and restored the boy! And the widow woman's faith increased (1 Kings 17:17-24). However great the test, God continued to supply the solution.

Nevertheless, it would not be too long before Elijah

would flee in such fear and dejection that he would beg to die.

OBADIAH

Beginning in chapter 18 the next stirring event in Elijah's life in trying to turn the tide of the apostasy was when Yahweh sent him to announce to Ahab that He "shall indeed give rain upon the surface of the ground" (1 Kings 18:2). The rain, however, would not come without confrontation and Israel returning to Yahweh. This meeting occurred in the third year of the drought. Yahweh must have known that their hearts would turn around to Him.

As Elijah was on his journey to meet Ahab he first came across Obadiah, one of Ahab's servants. Although he was associated with Ahab, Obadiah greatly feared Yahweh from his youth, and he had even hidden a hundred prophets of Yahweh in two caves, supplying them bread and water to save them from Jezebel. Now Elijah told Obadiah to go tell Ahab, "Elijah is here" (18:8). Yet Obadiah was afraid to do this, knowing the danger of Ahab's anger, for "There is no nation or kingdom where my lord has not sent to seek you" (18:10). Ahab must have thought that if Elijah was killed things would all get better in Israel.

But even this information did not deter Elijah from a confrontation with Ahab. He was very zealous for Yahweh and feared Him more than he feared Ahab. When Obadiah finally consented and told Ahab where to find Elijah, it is stated that Ahab "ran to meet Elijah" (18:16).

THE TROUBLER OF ISRAEL

The first words spoken in this stand-off are of great interest. Ahab said to him: "Is this you, the troubler of Israel?" (1 Kings 18:17). Here Ahab exposed his self deception and wicked pride. Yet Elijah was bold in telling the king: "I have not brought trouble on Israel, but rather you have,

and the house of your father, because you have forsaken the instructions of Yahweh, and you went after the Baalim" (1 Kings 18:18).

THE GREAT CHALLENGE

At this point, Elijah told Ahab to "convene to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, together with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah who are eating at the table of Jezebel" (18:19). Elijah was facing the very heart of this apostasy.

The scene is set. One solitary prophet was meeting Israel head-on and all the people who wanted him dead. This man feared no one. Here at Mount Carmel, he boldly faced them all. He came close to them, so that he could look them in the eye, saying, "How long will you go on skipping to and fro between the two opinions? If Yahweh is the One, Elohim, go after Him. If Baal is, go after him" (1 Kings 18:21). Little did they realize that God was about to take away their indecision.

"Yet the people answered him not a word."

THE CONTEST ON CARMEL

Elijah then told them to supply two young bulls. They were to choose one, cut it in pieces and place it on the sticks, but they were not to apply fire to the offering. He would do the same.

He further instructed, "Then you [the prophets of Baal] will call your elohim by name, and I myself shall call Yahweh by Name. And it will come to be: The One, Elohim, Who shall respond with fire, He is the One, Elohim. People often love a challenge, especially when it is a grand challenge! They would not answer him a word beforehand, but now *all the people answered and said,* "Good is the word which you have spoken" (1 Kings 18:24).

The prophets of Baal were skipping about the altar that

one had made and began calling Baal by name from morning until noon. But there was no answer.

Finally, with amazing courage, "Elijah trifled with them and said, Call with a loud voice (for he is an elohim) in case he is in meditation, or in case he had to turn away, or in case he has been on the road; perhaps he is sleeping and shall awake" (18:27). So the prophets of Baal cut themselves and then "feigned themselves prophets until the time to offer up the approach present" (19:29). But there was no answer from their elohim.

Elijah then told all the people to come close to him. He wanted their full attention. He then "mended the demolished altar of Yahweh" (18:30). In rebuilding *Yahweh's altar* he took twelve stones, one for each tribe of the sons of Jacob. He built the altar "in the Name of Yahweh," dug a trench around the altar enough to hold two seahs of grain or six gallons of water. He arranged the sticks, cut up the young bull in pieces and placed it on the sticks. Next he asked for the unimaginable. He told them to do something that would defy logic. They were to take four jugs, fill them with water, and pour them on the ascent offering. Not just once but three times he had them do this until the trench was filled with water. The very commodity they needed most and which was withheld for three and a half years is poured out on the altar possibly as a libation to Yahweh, one jug of water for each tribe of Israel. Now, in front of all the prophets of Baal, the people and king Ahab, Elijah focused his undivided attention upon Yahweh, the One Who was Elohim.

ELIJAH'S PRAYER

"When it was time to offer up the approach present Elijah the prophet came close and said, O Yahweh Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that You are Elohim in Israel and I am Your servant and that

by Your words I have done all these things. Answer me, O Yahweh, answer me! Thus this people may know that You, Yahweh, are the One, Elohim, and that You Yourself will turn their heart around back again" (19:36,37).

Yahweh answered his prayer in an astounding display of power! "The fire of Yahweh fell and devoured the ascent offering and the sticks, the stones and the soil, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. When all the people saw this, they fell on their faces and said, Yahweh, He is the One, Elohim, Yahweh, He is the One, Elohim. Then Elijah said to them, Grab the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. So they grabbed them, and Elijah brought them down to Wadi Kishon; there he slew them" (1 Kings 18:38-40).

Elijah prayed that God would turn the hearts of the people back to Him. This display of God's power produced a catharsis in Israel. The people backed Elijah, praising Yahweh, and they grabbed the prophets of Baal.

Following this great display of power, Ahab was told to go home before the rains came. Yet Elijah ran ahead on foot to get to Jezreel before Ahab returned there. When Ahab arrived he told his wife, Jezebel, about all that Elijah had done and how he killed the 450 prophets of Baal with the sword.

It was then that Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah telling him that at that very time tomorrow his soul would be like the soul of those he had just killed.

What the Scriptures inform us next is shocking, yet common to humanity.

ELIJAH FEARED AND RAN FOR HIS SOUL

It is written: "*Elijah feared, arose and ran for his soul*." What did this display of fear and cowardice say to all of those who had just witnessed such a mighty display of God's power in response to Elijah's prayer on Mount Carmel?

Would it encourage them to go back to Baal worship? He now was running for his life. A solitary threat had caused him to flee. Why did he not remain and confront her emissaries of death? Had she sent a million-man army, he could have just stood his ground and asked God to send down fire to destroy them all. Yet he ran. Depression causes us to do things we would not otherwise do.

Elijah took his eyes off the all Sufficient God of Israel and looked at his weak self.

Fear entered, and flight was the direct result. He truly was "a man of like emotions" to us. Our emotions are based upon our perceptions. Our perceptions vacillate and thus do our emotions. They go from positive when we are looking outward, seeing God as the One to rely on, to negative when looking inward at ourselves.

Elijah ran for his soul. He traveled over 100 miles southward to Beer-sheba which is at the very southern border of Israel to get away from Jezebel. There leaving his lad and walking a day's journey into the wilderness, he "came to sit under a certain broom bush," and there he begged Yahweh for his soul to die! He could go no further! He "begged for his soul to die and said, 'It is enough now! O Yahweh, take my soul from me, for I am no better than my fathers'" (1 Kings 19:4).

A MESSENGER STRENGTHENS

Nevertheless, God sent a messenger to strengthen him with food and water and to tell him: "The journey is too much for you." Does this not remind us of Christ Who also was "depressed and sorrow-stricken to death" (Matt. 26:37; Mark 14:33), and to Whom God also sent a messenger for strengthening (Luke 22:43)? Our Lord's thoughts concerning His journey to the cross—the journey for carrying the sins of the world—the journey to separation from the Father—were too much for Him to endure, and so the

Father helped His Beloved Son out of His depression and weakness by sending this heavenly messenger so He could re-focus on *the joy lying before Him* for enduring the cross and despising its shame (Heb.12:2).

WHAT ABOUT US TODAY?

What might be helpful to us today when we become depressed? Many times when we are depressed we are doing what Elijah was doing; we are looking at ourselves rather than at God. We look at our failures, our shortcomings, and then we start dwelling on our troubles which seem more than enough!

Yet God's grace to us superexceeds!

FORGETTING THOSE THINGS BEHIND

As for our failures and troubles, we need a good forgetter: ". . . *forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind*, yet stretching out to those in front—toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus" (Phil.3:13,14). When we forget those things which are behind we forget our failings. But let us also be "stretching out to those [things] in front—toward the goal." Paul was goal-oriented.

BE THANKFUL

"And let the peace of Christ be arbitrating in your hearts, for which you were called also in one body; and *become thankful*" (Col 3:15). When we focus on God and recount to our loving heavenly Father all the countless good things He has done for us, and give Him thanks for them, depression takes a back seat. By God's grace, let the messenger God has sent to us (the apostle Paul), strengthen us in keeping the good news before us in every circumstance of life.

T. K. Nungesser

DIVINE SUPREMACY

"NOT OUT OF ACTS" (Rom.9:11). Not occasioned by effort, physical or mental. Not purchased by deed of hand or heart. Not to be won by a nod of the head or a movement of the will. Not conditioned by the taking of an attitude. Not subject to the saying of a word, or the thinking of a thought. *Channelled* through the will, the emotions, the mind, if you like, but not *conditioned* by them. In God's administrations these creature powers act as operating means, though none of them may ever be an effecting cause.

"Not out of acts"—good, bad, or indifferent. Not of attempt, effort, or intention. How can a deaf man "hear"? How can a paralyzed man "come"? How can a dead man "will"? Human sweat can never earn divine salvation. Human agony can never earn divine repose. Humanity cannot raise itself by tugging at its religious bootstraps.

"Not out of acts" would sour the sweetness of Heaven itself to a legal soul, and transform Paradise into a Hell to every Pharisee. Much rather would such a one spend an eternity lauding the excellence of one meritorious act of his own than a single moment in self-forgetful wonder at the marvels of the Omnipotent's handiwork! "Not out of acts" constitutes Heaven's highest glory to the humble soul. It adds melody to its music, and increases the rapture of its joys. If the glory of the Lord so fills the house that the priests may not stand to minister in the Presence, much less may the Pharisees strut and plume themselves where sinless angels veil their faces and adore.

"Where, then, does the action of my will come in?" Read Romans 9:11 again. Note how it says nothing whatever of

your thinking, *your* intending, *your* willing, or *your* purpose, but "that the purpose of God may be remaining as a choice, *not out of acts.*" "Oh, then it is a matter of what God wills?" Yes, now you have it. It is *God's* intention, *God's* will, and *God's* purpose, not yours at all. "Then it is not of *me* at all?" Read it once more, "not out of acts, but of Him Who is calling." It is not "of him that listens," as if the "listening" to the call was a purely human thing entirely "free" and under no determination whatever. *The calling includes the listening.* The "will to listen" is "of Him Who is calling." "The deaf He is making to be hearing" (Mark 7:37). Thus it is that when *He* works He at once places a negative between *His* working and all fancied human ability—"not out of acts."

"Not out of acts . . . . Jacob I love, yet Esau I hate" (Rom. 9:13). That proves it, doesn't it? We have already considered the marvel of God's love to Jacob. We should not, however, be guilty of the grave error that has disgraced so much of our thought on this subject, by thinking that God went out of His way to specially hate Esau. Nor, on the other hand, should we imagine for a moment that He had to force Himself to love Jacob. Humanity does that. Deity never. There is no compulsion in His love. There is no venom in His hate.

The simple difference between God's relation to Jacob and to Esau was that He looked upon Esau as he was, and He looked upon Jacob as he was to be. He regarded Jacob in the future tense, whereas for the time then being He chose to regard Esau in the present tense alone. It was not a mechanical love in the one case, and a mechanical hatred in the other. His love to Jacob and His hatred to Esau both flowed freely and naturally from the perfections of His Being. His love was not weakness, nor was His hatred wickedness. His love for Jacob, and His hatred for Esau were both of them exhibitions of His *justice.* He

did not lower the laws of His righteousness in order to love Jacob, nor did He make them more drastic so that He might hate Esau the more intensely. *He hated Esau because He was a loving God!*

Nor would He be a God of love *except* He hated everything that was not good for Esau, and as long as Esau, was allowed to cling to those hateful, hurtful things, so long did he thrust himself into the sphere in which God's anger burned. Love must hate all that which challenges its authority. And all this is really anticipated by Paul when he queries, "Not that there is injustice with God? May it not be coming to that!" cries the great apostle as he flings the base suggestion aside. "No, no," he would say, "He is righteous when He loves; He is righteous when He hates; in all that He does He is the God all divine."

We need not hesitate to recognize the fact that if it is not our listening but God's calling, not our working but God's willing, then why He should choose to give this one and not that the listening ear, or work His will in one and not another is an enigma which human reason is not able to solve, and which divine revelation does not offer to explain. So we are prepared for the way that Paul gives mere prying curiosity a stinging slap in the face. Nor, indeed, was this Paul's, but God's rebuff to mere idle questioning.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD

Why I should have been born in the nineteenth century and not in the first; why I should have been born in America and not in the wild mountains of Afghanistan; why I should have been nursed by a Christian mother instead of a cannibal one; these are alike the workings of that "purpose of God" which remains as [His] choice. "It is not of him who is willing." I chose neither the twentieth century, the American continent, nor the Christian mother. I didn't *will* them. I didn't *work* for them. *God* willed them, and

I'm here. The same God who wills generation, wills new creation; and my being in Christ is no more a matter of my willing than my being born in America is, or was, a matter of my choosing.

We should not think that any one moment of time can tell all that may be told of God. The full scroll of all the ages alone will suffice to reveal the eonian God. The volume of a solitary era can never reveal what takes the whole library of the eons to make plain. So if we read in an introductory chapter that God hated Esau, we learn in a later, fuller one, that He loves the world, *and so He must have loved the man He hated.* Though the waves may roar on its surface, the ocean is untroubled in its unfathomed depth. Nor could Esau, nor Pharaoh, nor Nero, nor Judas work or will themselves *out of* that cosmic love, any more than they could either work or will themselves *into* it.

God hates, but He is not hatred. He both loves, and is Love. We may attempt to state the difference between His love and His hatred thus: His hatred is temporary; His love is endless, without consummation. His hatred is as temporary as is the sin that calls it forth, and on which it rests; His love is as permanent as the righteousness on which it feeds. Hatred is a passing phase: Love an eternal revelation. Jacob have I loved without end, but Esau have I hated for a time.

But if Jacob was a vessel of mercy and Esau a vessel of indignation, we have the same vivid contrast shown in God's word to Moses, and His message to Pharaoh. He speaks of mercy to the one, and of indignation to the other. Here Moses is the vessel of mercy and Pharaoh the vessel of indignation. What Moses willed is not of sufficient consequence to have passing mention in this fifteenth verse. God says "I shall." "I shall be merciful to whomever I may be merciful; I shall be pitying whomever I may be pitying." You can't squeeze man into it sideways. Its language

is foolproof. It locks my willing and my listening outside. It evicts everything except myself as the passive, inert recipient of undiluted grace.

"For this selfsame thing *I* rouse you up, so that I should be displaying in you *My* power, and so that *My* name should be published in the entire earth" (Rom.9:17).

THE SAME KNEADING

But while we note the variety and difference that exists here, we should not overlook the fact that, vessels of indignation and vessels of mercy though they be, both vessels are made by the Potter "*out of the same kneading*" (Rom. 9:21). Thus Esau and Jacob, one "loved" and the other "hated," were "out of the same kneading."

Moses before the throne, a servant of God, and Pharaoh upon the throne an enemy of God were, both of them, despite the differences that lay like yawning chasms between them, "out of the same kneading." A certain unity lay back of, and beyond, the differences which were developed in the two kinds of vessel. How such a simple phrase can puncture the bombast of human pride!

In the verses that follow, where the contrasting divisions of the human race into Jew and Gentile are referred to, it is well to remember that such distinctions can be traced back, past their differences, to a common source and a common humanity in Adam. Both Jew and Gentile, though one be nationally a vessel of mercy and the other a vessel of indignation, are ultimately "out of the same kneading." And not only so, but the vessels of indignation at one time, become vessels of mercy at another; and those who were vessels of mercy then, become vessels of indignation now. This seems to be purposely shown in the fact that whereas in chapter nine the Gentile Pharaoh's heart is hardened, in chapter eleven the position is reversed and while the Gentiles become vessels of mercy

it is now Israel's lot to be "calloused" (Rom.11:25,29-31). That God's final purpose in His universal pottery is not to make *some* "vessels of mercy" and *some* "vessels of indignation" is clear in 11:32 where His declared will is not to have mercy on *some* but on *all.*

NO DISTINCTION

In chapter ten (v.12), Paul reverts, it would seem, to the same thought. All national and moral difference between Jew and Gentile is brushed aside. "For there is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek" (Rom.10:12). Why? Because they are "out of the same kneading." That, too, is the lesson of this epistle's earlier chapters where, as regards *sin,* as here in regard to *grace,* the same phrase summarizes the historical lessons of racial degradation: "There is no distinction" (Rom.3:22).

The very figure of the clay from which the potter molds his vessels suggests to us the truth of man's earthly origin. "Soil you are." Potter's mold! Yes, and in that handful of red earth which the mighty Potter molded into human form, in that "same kneading" lay, dormant and potential, the myriad varieties of saint and sinner alike. Moses and Samuel and David the king were there. There also Isaiah, Daniel and Jeremiah. There the Twelve, with the heroes and martyrs of the early ecclesia. The fools and the philosophers of all earthly time were there. The heroes and the cowards, the noble and the base, monks and martyrs, pirates and priests lay waiting the moment when they would be molded into the part they were destined to play in the drama of the ages.

And thus is there "no distinction." But if all have come "out of the same kneading," this involves the added thought that the vessels, however much they differ, are all made by the same Master Potter. "For the *same One* is Lord of all, being rich for all who are invoking Him." The Potter is the Lord of the clay. At least in *Scripture* He is; but in theology,

the clay is the lord of the Potter, if indeed it needs a Potter at all when it becomes what it wills and wishes to become! The vessels are out of "the same kneading," and they have the "same One" Who is Lord. Glory to His Name!

Just one more scripture in the eleventh chapter which reminds us of the Potter in the ninth. "Now if the firstfruit is holy, *the kneading is also*" (Rom.11:16). Not some of the kneading but "*the kneading.*"

Vessels of indignation do not constitute the "firstfruit." Pharaoh is not a specimen of the art of God. "The Firstfruit, *Christ*" (1 Cor.15:23). Is *He* holy? Then, "if the firstfruit is holy, *the kneading is also*." But did *He* enter into and become part of that same kneading? "Since, then, the little children have participated in blood and flesh, He also was very nigh by partaking of *the same*" (Heb.2:14). The art of the Master Potter is shown in the Firstfruit Christ, and in Him is exhibited the goal and the destiny of the human race.

Alan Burns

THE CV PENTATEUCH

It has been delayed so long that this announcement that the CV of the Pentateuch (Genesis through Deuteronomy) is now just about ready for the press may seem an anticlimax. Yet we are profoundly thankful to God for bringing it thus far. With some hesitancy, knowing something of our own weaknesses, it appears to us that this installment of the CVOT should be ready for distribution by the end of the year. It will leave one more volume in the large format of the *Former Prophets, 1 Chronicles through Job* and the *Latter Prophets,* yet to be published (this last installment will include *Psalms through Song of Songs, together with Ruth, Lamentations* and *Daniel*). Hence, God willing, we should have the entire "Old Testament" available in five volumes by this time next year, providing the many advantages of an idiomatic translation which is consistent in vocabulary and the rendering of grammatical details. Although these large print, paperback volumes may be awkward in carrying about, they should prove helpful to many in home reading and study, besides serving ideally for those involved in proofreading in preparation for a more permanent publication of the Version.

Contents:

193 Editorial
198 Judah and His Wives
203 Fleshly Interlude
205 Joseph in Egypt
213 Do You Not Know?
221 Happiness from God
231 The Evangel We have Accepted

SEPTEMBER, 2007

Volume XCVIII **Number 5**

GRACE FOR FAITHFUL SERVICE

It is by no means inconsistent to call to duty those who are wholly dependent upon God for the fulfillment of that very duty. The voice of entreaty does not implore us to do what we *can* do, of ourselves, but what we *must* do if we would be faithful and well pleasing to God.

The word of entreaty affirms that which we *ought* to do, that which it is imperative that we *do* do, not that concerning which we have no need of saving grace.

Indeed, upon occasion, entreaty must become rebuke (*cf* 2 Tim.4:2), even if tempered with compassion. Yet even here it does not approach the objects of its severity as ones who are somehow in possession of a power of self-sufficiency by means of which they are well able to do the ideal, even if they have never done it. To the contrary, the one who would faithfully entreat others, first of all, is keenly aware that the disease of the sinner is no trivial infirmity in the presence of which the constitutionally able, nonetheless, mysteriously, sometimes err, but is rather a *disabling* malady of vast proportions which *proves* its presence by the fallen deeds of its victims. Such ones need not a little "helper" whom they can control, but rather a great and mighty Saviour Who will control them.

Since this is the reality of their situation, we do them no favor by failing to make this clear to them. Indeed, should they now succeed where once they failed, apart from a knowledge of the true nature of their infirmity hitherto, they will boast partly in themselves in their renewal, and so fail to thank God alone for the very victory which they now enjoy.

Exposure (i.e., making the facts known) concerning our duty, together with concomitant entreaty for "logical divine service" (*cf* Rom.12:1,2), is often the means of grace unto repentance which God employs to awaken us, first of all to a *sense* of our duty (*cp* Titus 2:4), and then to a *concern* that we might be fulfilling it.

It is so that those who have believed God as to the *mercy* of their salvation might become *concerned* for faithfulness, that this revelation is made known to us. It has been manifested to us that it is "*not* for works which are wrought in righteousness which we do, but according to His mercy, [that] He saves us" (Titus 3:5), *in order* "that those who have believed God may be *concerned* to preside for ideal acts" (Titus 3:8). J.R.C.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 2007
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

HOW GRATEFUL we are that our Lord is *patient* with us. He remains calm and forbearing, *bearing with* us in love (*cp* Eph.4:2), throughout all the vicissitudes, trials and tribulations, of our lives.

And be deeming the patience of our Lord salvation, according as our beloved brother Paul also writes to you, according to the wisdom given to him, as also in all the epistles, speaking in them concerning these things, in which are some things hard to apprehend, which the unlearned and unstable are twisting, as the rest of the scriptures also, to their own destruction. You, then, beloved, knowing this before, be on your guard lest, being led away with the deception of the dissolute, you should be falling from your own steadfastness. Yet be growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ . . . . (2 Peter 3:15-18a)

. . . be deeming the patience of our Lord salvation . . . .

We do indeed deem the patience of our Lord salvation. That is, we deem His patience a necessary cause in the achievement of our *salvation*—which is to say of whatever measure of deliverance and preservation God sees fit to grant us throughout the course of our lives. It is through our Lord's *patience*—in His love and kindness, not giving up on us but rather *carrying us through* temptation, trial, travail, and tragedy—that our salvation is achieved.

. . . according as our beloved brother Paul also writes to you, according to the wisdom given to him, as also in all the epistles, speaking in them concerning these things, in which are some things hard to apprehend, which the unlearned and unstable are twisting, as the rest of the scriptures also, to their own destruction. (2 Peter 3:15b,16)

Out of our own impatience and mental laziness we are sometimes inclined to think that the Scriptures should have been written in a simpler form, one that would require little time and effort on our part in order to discern its meaning, while at the same time being practically impossible to misunderstand.

It is at such times especially that we should remind ourselves that it is *according to the wisdom given to him* that the apostle Paul writes some things that are hard to apprehend.

Among believers, normatively at least, not all things, but only some things are *hard* to understand. Many things, however—things that are neither complex nor problematic as such—may still be misunderstood. In most cases, such themes are neither recondite nor esoteric; instead, it is simply that their truth is not in accord with our own intuitions, inquiries, traditions, and settled opinions.

For example, it is a simple (i.e., uncompounded) fact that God *wills* that *all mankind* be saved and come into a realization of the truth, even as that Christ Jesus is giving Himself a *correspondent* Ransom for the sake of *all* (1 Tim.2:4,6), it being likewise true that God is operating all according to the counsel of His *will* (Eph.1:11), unto the end of the realization of this very goal (*cf* Eph.1:10,23).

Calvinists, however, through machinations of their own faulty reasonings, are committed to the view that God does *not* will all mankind to be saved and that Christ does *not* give Himself a correspondent Ransom for the sake of all. Therefore, they cannot believe what the Scriptures say concerning this theme, simply because of their own resolute opinions to the contrary.

Similarly, Arminians, through their own especial machinations of faulty reasonings, cannot believe the Scriptural testimony on this same subject either. Ironically, while they acknowledge Christ's sacrifice and God's salvific will

as being for the sake of and in the interests of all mankind, they insist that, even so, for most of mankind, the work of Christ and the will of God will prove to have been insufficient and thus ineffectual, due to most men's failure to respond worthily and obediently thereunto. They insist that salvation is only for the obedient and worthy, while insisting especially that in the end it is not the grace of God, but the will of man that suffices for this selfsame obedience and worthiness.

Along similar lines, we may encounter Trinitarians who insist that "Jesus is very God," informing us that this is so inasmuch as He is one of the three *hypostases* (i.e., "essential modes") in which God *subsists* "throughout eternity." Or we may encounter Modalists who insist that "Jesus alone is God," inasmuch as there is one God and, as they claim, Jesus is God (i.e., is the Deity) Himself, God not subsisting in various modes, but only *manifesting* Himself through such means.

All the while, however, the truth remains that ". . . even if so be that there are those being termed gods, whether in heaven or on earth, even as there are many gods and many lords, nevertheless for us *there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is,* and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is, and we through Him" (1 Cor.8:5-7a).

. . . which the unlearned and unstable are twisting, as the rest of the scriptures also, to their own destruction. (2 Peter 3:16b)

It is at our own peril that we twist the Scriptures. That is, such an action is not to someone else's destruction (or loss), but to our own. Certainly, however, at least for those of us who are blessed according to the evangel of the apostle Paul, the destruction that would result from such an act is not, as some imagine, the destruction of one's body and the loss of resurrection life. It is instead the destruction of one's faithfulness as to the topic in question, which if

such twisting should not be slight, but serious and extensive, would be even to the destruction of a faithful career, besides the corresponding loss of reward which would attend such a course (*cf* 1 Cor.3:10-15; 2 Cor.5:10).

When we think of the "unlearned," we are apt to think of those of little education; and, when we think of those who are "unstable," we are apt to think of those who, by ordinary standards, are at least fickle, if not of unsound mind.

While such ones as these may be expected routinely to twist the Scriptures, it is by no means such ones alone who do so. To the contrary, one may be a learned professional, full of erudition and of great intellect, even as a loyal churchman and stable citizen, one who is a credit to his community, and nonetheless still be a person who twists the Scriptures—not only regularly, but even egregiously and extensively.

This is because it is quite possible for us to be verbally acquainted with the Scriptures, while not being *perceptively* acquainted with the Scriptures.

In answering the chief priests and the elders of the people (*cf* Matt.21:23), Jesus said to them, "You are deceived, not being acquainted with the scriptures, nor yet with the power of God" (Matt.22:29). More literally, we may render this verse thus: "You are deceived [i.e., 'astray,'] not being *perceptive*[1] *of* the scriptures, nor yet of the power of God."

If one is not perceptive concerning a certain Scriptural subject, this is because, at least in this regard, such a one does not have eyes to see and ears to hear; and this, in turn, is because God has not given that person "a heart to realize and eyes to see and ears to hear" (*cp* Deut. 29:4; Isa.29:10; Matt.13:15). This accords with the still

1. *"mê eidotes"* ("NO HAVING-PERCEIVED"); from *eidon* (PERCEIVE): "to get knowledge by means of any or all of the senses" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry "perceive," p.221).

broader consideration that "A man can not get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27). Thus the only true answer to the question, "Why do many not accept the testimony of Scripture that 'A man can not get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven'?" is, "Because 'A man can not get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven.'"

Therefore it is unwise for us to enter into dialectics with unperceptive individuals, at least in cases where they wish to challenge us and contest with us through dialog and debate, thus exposing what they see as our error while promoting their own views in the process.

You, then, beloved, knowing this before, be on your guard lest, being led away with the deception of the dissolute, you should be falling from your own steadfastness. (2 Peter 3:17)

As those who, we trust, do indeed know these things before, it is still vital for us to be on our guard lest, "being led away with the deception of the dissolute, [we] should be falling from [our] own steadfastness."

The striking phrase "the deception of the dissolute," speaks of those who lack moral restraint insofar as this may be the case in their quest to justify a belief of their own, one which is actually contrary to Scripture. Even if unwittingly, they end up twisting Scripture itself since, as they see it, (1) their own doctrine is true, and (2) Scripture doubtlessly accords with it.

Yet be growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ . . . . (2 Peter 3:18a)

When our heads are clear and our hearts are calm, this is exactly what we all want to do. May God give us meekness and humility in our interactions with our fellow believers, in order that love through patience may be our guide and our way, not only with those who are open to our teaching, but especially with those who are not. J.R.C.

JUDAH AND HIS WIVES

THE thirty-eighth chapter of Genesis is one of the dark pages of Scripture, for in it we have a brief account of the chief events in the life of Judah, the fourth son of Jacob. Interwoven with his personal history is that of his three sons, and the chief events in the life of his eldest son's wife, Tamar.

We have been furnished with a key by the apostle Paul which opens to our understanding the typical teaching to be found in this chapter. Many who have not used the light furnished by Paul have regarded this chapter as a blot upon God's Word. The key is given us in Galatians in the allegory of Abraham and his wives. It is there stated that the things which Abraham did and their results serve as an allegory (Gal.4:22,24). We find another such allegory in the life story of Judah.

We may have seen that, in some degree, the leading events in the life of Abraham foreshadowed what came upon the whole nation, especially as under the law. An even more remarkable type and antitype may be seen by comparing the story contained in the thirty-eighth chapter of Genesis with what comes upon the tribe of Judah.

This parallel is manifested from the time Judah separates from the ten tribes and becomes a separate nation, until Christ comes a second time to deliver Judah and Jerusalem, previous to the full regathering of Israel.

We see in Abraham's union with Hagar that Scripture regards it as a marriage, for Abraham is said to be Hagar's "husband," and that the marriage was a type of the covenant the Israelites made at Sinai. We have a similar condition before us, for in this story each such union or marriage is the type of a covenant of some sort, either for good or for evil:

It came to pass at that time that Judah went down away from his brothers and pitched his tent near an Adullamite man; his name was Hirah. There Judah saw the daughter of a Canaanite man; her name was Shua. He took her as wife and came to her. (Gen.38:1,2)

A DOWNWARD PATHWAY

We may see the historical fulfillment of Judah going *down away* from his brothers, in the tribe of Judah separating from the ten tribes, and afterwards falling into Canaanite idolatry. The covenant which the nation then made to serve idols (*cf* 2 Kings 21:1,15; 2 Chron.33:1,10) was predicted centuries earlier by the action of their ancestor in his marriage to a Canaanite wife.

THREE SONS

Three sons are born to Judah by his Canaanite marriage. These are named Er, Onan, and Shelah. Er, the eldest, was married to Tamar, whose name means a *palm*. The sacred records inform us that "Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil in Yahweh's eyes; and Yahweh put him to death" (Gen.38:7). Er's marriage has its antitype in that covenant made when God's wrath was impending over the nation in the days of King Josiah (*cf* 2 Kings 23:3; 2 Chron.34: 31,32). By it they covenanted to do the whole law.

The putting to death of Er is depicted in the slaughter of a considerable portion of the nation thirty or more years later by the king of the Chaldees (2 Kings 25; 2 Chron. 36:17). This was at the time of the conquest of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar.

As Judah had three sons, the nation may be said to be

divided into three groups. The first group is represented by Judah's eldest son Er. All these were slain when Jerusalem was captured. The second group, represented by the second son Onan, are those who are left in the land by the king of Babylon that they might cultivate it and keep the land productive (Jer.39:10). The third group, who are represented by Shelah—Judah's youngest son, are those, and the descendants of those who were carried away into the seventy years captivity (*cf* 2 Kings 25:11-12; 2 Chron. 36:17; Jer.39:5-11).

Jeremiah was sent by Yahweh to instruct those who had been left in the land that Yahweh would bless them if they would submit and serve the king of Babylon. They refused to obey God. They rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. They put to death his governor, and fled to Egypt. When the armies of the Babylonian king soon afterward entered Egypt, the majority of this company were slain according to the words of Jeremiah (Jer.42:10; 44:30). This is a fulfillment of what the death of Onan the second son prefigured, for he refused to take Tamar to wife. Had he been obedient the type would have required that the remnant remaining in Canaan would obey Yahweh and serve the king of Babylon.

In the course of time the Canaanite wife of Judah died. We may say that this receives its fulfillment when the exiled nation repented of their idolatry, and turn, while yet in the land of Babylon, to worship Yahweh. He then causes the king of Babylon to set them free that they may return to Palestine. In the time of Christ we see the nation again strong in point of wealth and numbers. This would indicate that Shelah, the youngest son, has grown to manhood when he should, according to custom and to Judah's promise, have been married to Tamar. We are told that Judah feared to obey the law lest his remaining son die also (Gen.38:11; John 11:48).

TYPES AND ANTITYPES

We now read of the sin Judah himself committed in his union with Tamar which, like the crucifixion, was contrary to law, yet it fulfilled the law, seeing that Judah was pledged to provide her with a husband. This union in the sight of God was as binding upon Judah as any marriage covenant (1 Cor.6:16). By this union Tamar becomes possessed of Judah's staff, his signet ring and jewels. Some months afterwards Judah was compelled to acknowledge in a public manner that he is the father of her unborn children.

This sinful union is figurative of the sin committed by the nation in the crucifixion of Him Who was, and is, Judah's rightful King, Judah's true sin-offering, and Judah's legal successor. Judah, as a nation, at this time covenanted to serve Caesar and cried: "His blood be on us and our children" (Matt.27:25). Christ, Judah's great antitype, was made sin. He was also the victim slain to confirm a new covenant of grace which Judah has not yet understood (Heb.9:15,17). This was a divine marriage (Isa.54:5; 62:5), but the marriage feast is postponed as the guests were unready (Matt.22:3).

On the day of Pentecost, the disciples brought forth by inspired utterance the very Word of God, the "living oracles" (*cp* Acts 7:38). This word is the true staff of Judah.

Other spiritual gifts are indicated by the signet ring, and the jewels of which Judah and Jerusalem had formerly been the custodians. Tamar would have been executed if she had not been able to produce the pledges received from Judah. In like manner the disciples, on the day of Pentecost, put to shame the Jews by proving that they were the true bride. They alone possessed the pledges of divine approval which they received from heaven, which were shed forth by Jesus the Anointed One, the Lion of Judah's tribe.

The names of Tamar's twin children and the peculiarities of their birth, may be said to represent three distant dispensational eras which sprang from this anti-typical union. The *first* of these would be the brief apostolic period during which Jerusalem was the center of authority and during which the twelve apostles were directed to preach to Jews and in which they were finally shut out from going to the gentile nations (Gal.2:7,9). The *second* period is that in which Paul's gospel is proclaimed and the center of authority is shifted to the Jerusalem above.

Zarah, the name of the last born, but legally the first-born son, means *Radiant*, and was often used of the sunrise. In birth he did not come first, but he thrust forth his hand, and the nurse bound a red thread upon it to mark him as the first-born. He then withdrew his hand. This appearance of the hand typified the brief Apostolic church period, which was like a radiating dawn to Judah. The birth of Phares followed, whose name means, a *breach*, or *gap*. This birth typifies a gap in the preaching to the Jew first, a breach or gap in the kingdom gospel of the apostles during which Paul's gospel of free grace is the only message.

The coming forth lastly of Zarah the firstborn typifies the *third* period when the kingdom message will be resumed in greater power with signs, when the greatest revival and the greatest persecution the world has known will follow. The unbelieving Jewish remnant which survive the terrors of the great tribulation are represented by Shelah, whose name means *Ease*. When this remaining one-third of Judah cry to the Lord in the time of Jacob's trouble, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah will come and deliver them. Then they will have an abundance of prosperity in a time of ease. This will inaugurate a *fourth* period not seen in this symbolic lesson, that of the kingdom of heaven on the earth spoken of by all the prophets.

John H. Cale

A FLESHLY INTERLUDE

THE INTRODUCTION of Judah's lustful experiences in Genesis 38 may seem an unnecessary interruption in the story of Joseph and his brothers. On the contrary, it is essential as a contrast to the conduct of Joseph, and gives us a key to the sojourn in Egypt and the wilderness journey. We may think the simple and natural way to possess Palestine would be to continue to live there and so gradually take over the land of promise. But Yahweh Elohim had a much higher aim than that, which could only be attained by exposing the family's fleshliness, which demanded the discipline of Egyptian slavery and the humbling experiences of the wilderness.

The immediate object of the record of Judah's weaknesses, and the execution of his two sons, was to expose the fleshly and deathly character of association with the descendants of Canaan, and, at the same time show the contrast in the conduct of Joseph. The hand of Yahweh Elohim was very clearly exhibited in both cases. Judah's sons were doomed to death by the immediate hand of Elohim, bringing sorrow and disgrace on the people of promise. Joseph was miraculously elevated to the highest place on earth, bringing glory and happiness to his people and salvation to the other nations.

JUDAH

Judah and Pharez, his son, were in the messianic line, being ancestors of the royal line of the house of David and of the Messiah according to the flesh. Hence their history

is of special interest, and Judah is given a long section in the annals of Jacob (Gen.38). We have seen how reluctant Abram and Jacob were to take wives for their sons, Isaac and Jacob, from the accursed Canaanites living in the land. But Jacob does not seem to have been so particular with his twelve sons. That they married is clear, as each one increased to a tribe in Israel. Very little is said of their wives, except in the case of Judah and Joseph, who was given an Egyptian woman named Asenath, a daughter of Potiphera, who was a priest (Gen.41:45).

JUDAH AND THE CANAANITES

Judah seems to have separated from his brothers and made friends with an Adullamite named Hirah (Heater), through whom he became acquainted with the daughter of a Canaanite named Shua (Futility), and married her (Gen.38:1,2). Simeon also did this (Gen.46:10).

As was to be expected of a union of a blessed son of Abraham and a cursed Canaanite, Judah's firstborn son, Er (Denuded), when married to Tamar (Palm), was so evil in the eyes of Yahweh, that He put him to death. And so with the second son, Onan (Negated), who would not take his brother's place. Finally Canaanite trickery combined with his own soulish desires, makes Judah himself the father of Pharez (Breach) by his own daughter-in-law.

A CONTRAST IN CONDUCT

What a contrast this is to the conduct of Joseph, who was much more severally tempted, yet retained his chastity when all alone in the land of Egypt! Yet this very fact re-emphasizes the wisdom of giving the account of Judah's soulish sinfulness at this point. Rather than a distracting digression, it creates a candid contrast to the correct character of Joseph's conduct.

A. E. Knoch

JOSEPH IN EGYPT

THE STARTLING STORY of Joseph's rise from slavery to supremacy in Egypt has only one superior in the history of humanity, and that is the story of our Saviour, which it foreshadowed. Joseph's terrestrial dream suggested the pristine glories of the Son, after He emptied Himself and took the form of a slave (Phil.2:7). During His earthly ministry, He, like Joseph, humbled Himself, and served as a slave. Being shut up in the dungeon of death, our Lord rose and was glorified, and is now the Saviour, and will become the Ruler of the world. All this is foreshadowed in Joseph's career. In each case it came about because *God was with both of them*.

GENESIS 39:1-6

39 [+]**As** for **Joseph, he had been** [c]**brought down** to[d] **Egypt. And** an **Egyptian man, Potiphar,** a **court official of Pharaoh** and **chief of the bodyguard,** had [l]**bought him from** the **hand of the Ishmaelites who had** [c]**brought him down there**[d]**.** 2 [+] **Yahweh** [lb]**was** `with **Joseph,** so [+]**that he** [l]**became** a **man** who **prospered**[l]**; and he** [lb]**remained in** the **house of his lord, the Egyptian.**

3 [+]**When his lord** [l]**saw that Yahweh** was `with **him and** that **Yahweh** was **prospering** [i]**under his hand every**thing [w] **he** was **doing,** 4 [+]**then Joseph** [l]**found grace in his eyes, and he** [l]**ministered** `to **him.** [+]**Then he** [c]**made him** [l]**supervisor over his house**hold**, and all** that **he had, he gave in**to **his hand.** 5 **And it came** to [l]**be** [+]**that,** when **he had** [c]**made** `**him supervisor of his house**hold **and over all** [w]**that he**

had, from then on, **owing to Joseph, Yahweh** [l]**blessed** `the **house**hold **of the Egyptian.** + **Yahweh's blessing** [lb]**was** [i]**on all** [w]**that he had in** the **house and in** the **field.** 6 +**So he** [l]**left all** [w]**that** was **his in Joseph's hand.** + **He gave no**[t] **thought** about **anything** `concerning **him**self, [t] [if]**except the bread** [w] **he** was **eating.**

POTIPHAR

Joseph was bought by Potiphar, a court official of Pharaoh, chief of the bodyguard. As he was an Egyptian, his name was not Hebrew, so we cannot be sure of its meaning. The first part *Phut* is the same as the third son of Ham, which is the name of Libya, but he was an Egyptian. The Hebrew term for "court official" usually indicated "eunuch," but in this and other cases it seems rather to be applied simply to one who is close to the court. He had a wife and house of his own. Literally, he is called a SLAUGHTERER, but the term was applied also to the palace-guards who executed those doomed to death. He was their head.

The fact that a man of such high rank, who was so near to Pharaoh, bought Joseph, was the first indication that Yahweh was with him, for it not only put him close to Pharaoh's palace guard, but, later, to his baker and cupbearer, who were to be the means of his exaltation to the highest place in the king's court. But, as in the case of Christ, he must first be rejected and degraded to even a lower level. That is often God's way, and a sign of His approval, rather than of His displeasure. Paul became the offscourings of the world, the scum of all (1 Cor.4:13). This was the preparation for the glory that lies before him.

GENESIS 39:7-20

+**Now Joseph** [lb]**was well-favored** in **shape** +**as well as well-favored** to the **sight.**

7 + **It** [lb]**came** about **after** ·**these** ·**things** +**that** the **wife of**

his lord [l]**lifted** up `**her eyes to Joseph and** [l]**said:** Do **lie with me!**

8 +**But he** [l]**refused and** [l]**said to his lord's wife: Behold,** `with **me** around, **my lord gives no**[t] **thought** about 7**anything~**[n] **in** the **house; and all** [w]**that he has, he has given in**to **my hand.** 9 **He is no greater in** ·**this house** [f]**than I** am; **and he has not kept back anything from me** [t] [if]**except** `**you,** [i] [w]**because you** are **his wife.** + **How should I do** ·**this** ·**great** ·**evil and** ¯**sin** ›**against Elohim?** 10 **And it** [l]**came** to **pass as she spoke**¯ **to Joseph day** by **day,** +**that he would not hearken to her to lie beside her, to** [b]**be with her.**

11 One ·**day like** ·**this** + **it** [lb]**occurred** +**when** 7**Joseph**[nc] [l]**came** to[d] **the house to do his work,** +**that** there **were none** [f]**of** the **men of the house**hold **there in** the **house.** 12 +**So she** [l]**grasped him** [i]**by his cloak,** › **saying**¯**:** Do **lie with me!**

+**But he** [l]**left his cloak in her hand and** [l]**fled and** [l]**went out,** ·**outdoors**[d]**.**

13 **And it** [l]**came** to **pass** [as]**when she saw**¯ **that he had left his cloak in her hand and** had [l]**fled** ·**outdoors**[d]**,** 14 +**that she** [l]**called** › the **men of her house**hold **and** [lsa]**spoke to them** › **saying**¯**: See! He brought** › **us** a **Hebrew man to make fun** [i]**of us. He came to me to lie with me;** +**but I called** out [i]**with** a **loud voice.** 15 **And it** [l]**came** to **pass,** [as]**when he heard**¯ **that I** [c]**raised my voice high and was calling,** +**that he** [l]**left his cloak beside me and** [l]**fled and** [l]**went out,** ·**outdoors**[d]**.**

16 + **She** [c]**kept his cloak** [l]**laid up beside her until his lord came**¯ **to his house.**

17 +**Then she** [l]**spoke to him according** to ·**these words,** › **saying**¯**: The Hebrew** ·**slave whom you brought to us came to me to make fun** [i]**of me;** 7**and he** [l]**said to me, Lie with me!**[0] 18 **And it** [l]**came** to **pass** [as]**when I** [c]**raised my voice high**¯ **and** [l]**called** out +**that he** [l]**left his cloak beside me and** [l]**fled** ·**outdoors**[d]**.**

19 +**Now it** [lb]**came** about [as]**when his lord heard**¯ `**his wife's words which she spoke to him,** › **saying**¯**:** [as]**In** ·**this man-**

ner your slave has [d]**treated** [›] **me,** [+]**that his anger** grew [l]**hot.** [20] [+]**So Joseph's lord** [l]**took** [`]**him and** [lg]**put him** in**to the round-house,** the [ri]**place** [w]**where the king's prisoners** lay **bound**[l]**. And there he** [lb]**remained in the round-house.**

TEMPTATION RESISTED

So satisfactory was Joseph's service that he rose to the highest place in the household. But he is strongly tempted to take advantage of it. He seems to have had an excellent appearance, so that his master's wife became enamored of him. The temptation was much greater than those which his brothers, Reuben and Judah, had failed to resist, yet he even expostulated with the woman at a considerable risk. Finally she did trick him into a compromising situation, and he is degraded to be a prisoner, charged with a serious offense. Does not this correspond to the false accusations against our Lord, and His degradation deeper still to a cursed death between criminals?

GENESIS 39:21-23

[21] [+]**Yet Yahweh** [lb]**was** [`]with **Joseph and** [l]**stretched out kindness to him** in [+]**that He** [lg]**granted him grace in** the **eyes of** the **warden of the round-house.** [22] **And** the **warden of the round-house** [l]**gave** over **in**to the **hand of Joseph** [`]**all the prisoners who** were **in the round-house,** so [+]**that he**[´] [b]**was** [d]**instituting** [`]**every**thing [w] they were **doing there.** [23] The **warden of the round-house was no**t [see]**supervising** [`]**any**thing **whatsoever** [i]**under his hand,** [i] [w]**because Yahweh** was [`]with **him, and** [M]**all**[ncs] [w]**that he** was **doing, Yahweh** would **cause** to **prosper**[l]**.**

JOSEPH IN JAIL

Once more Joseph is given ample evidence that Yahweh is with him. No doubt he had the same help that is our portion. "God . . . will not be leaving you to be tried

above what you are able, but, together with the trial, will be making the *sequel* also, to enable you to undergo it" (1 Cor.10:13).

Joseph never forgot his dreams, and firmly believed in their fulfillment. But, like us, he probably could not realize all that they implied. They gave him a place superior to his brethren and his parents, but predicted nothing nearly so great as the honor which was before him. But they must have been a great comfort to him in the midst of his trials, even as our much greater honors are to us, in the midst of our present humiliation.

The warden of the round house, where the prisoners were kept, followed the example of Potiphar, and turned over the whole administration of the prison to Joseph. To this day some of the prisoners in a jail may be given special tasks and privileges. They are called "trusties," for they are entrusted with certain duties. But to turn over the whole administration of a jail to one of its inmates would not be likely unless the hand of Yahweh was in it. So Joseph is once more prospering, even in the midst of affliction.

GENESIS 40:1-8

40 [+] **It** [l]**came** to **pass after** [·]**these** [·]**things** that the [7]**chief**[0] **cupbearer**[l] **of** the **king of Egypt and the** [7]**chief**[0] **baker**[l] **sinned** [›]**against their lord** [›] the **king of Egypt.** [2] [+] **Pharaoh was** [l]**wrathful over his two court officials, over** the **chief of the cupbearers**[l] **and over** the **chief of the bakers**[l]**;** [3] **and he** [lg]**put** [`]**them** [i]**under guard** in the **house of** the **chief of the bodyguard,** [›]**at the round-house,** the [ri]**place where Joseph** lay **bound**[l]**.** [4] [+] The **chief of the bodyguard** assigned [`]**Joseph** to [l]**look after** [`]**them; and** so **he** [l]**ministered** [`]to **them** [+]**while they** [lb]**were** [i]**under guard** for some **days.**

[5] [+] **Both of them** [l]**dreamed** a **dream,** each **man his** own **dream in** the **same night,** each **man his dream** [as]**with** its

own interpretation, the [7]chief[0] cupbearer[l] and the [7]chief[0] baker[l] [w]›of the **king of Egypt who** both lay **bound[l] in the round-house.**

6 +**When Joseph [l]came to them in** the **morning and [l]saw `them,** + **behold, they** were **languid[l].** 7 +**So he [l]asked `Pharaoh's court officials who** were [i]**under guard** `with **him,** in **his lord's house,** › **saying⁻:** For **what reason** are **your faces troubled today?**

8 + **They [l][a]replied to him: We dreamed** a **dream,** +**yet** there **is no** one to **interpret[l]** `**it.**

+ **Joseph [l]said to them:** Do **not interpretations** belong **to Elohim? Relate** it **to me,** [pr]**please.**

CUPBEARER AND BAKER

The head of a great nation is often in danger from his enemies, who seek to get rid of him in various ways, especially by violence and deceit. Therefore he usually has a guard, and a special "cupbearer" to serve his meals, and a special kitchen staff which prepares his food. Remarkably, Joseph is thrown into touch with Pharaoh's chief of the executioners first, and now with his erstwhile cupbearer and baker, all of whom were intimately concerned with *Pharaoh's* welfare. Joseph then becomes interested in *their* welfare. This is the simple but certain way that the Subjector operates. Here we have a good method of "getting ahead." Do not make your own welfare the principal object of your life, but seek to be of service to others. It is far better to serve than to have servants.

GENESIS 40:9-15

9 +**So** the **chief of the cupbearers[l] [l]related `his dream to Joseph and [l]said to him: In my dream,** + **behold,** there was a **vine before me.** 10 **And [i]on** the **vine** were **three intertwining** branches**;** + **as** soon as **it** was **budding, its blos-**

soms came **up,** and **its clusters ripened** their **grapes.** 11 + **Pharaoh's cup** was **in my hand;** +**so I [l]took `the grapes,** + **[l]pressed `them** in**to Pharaoh's cup, and [l][g]put `the cup** [on]**in Pharaoh's palm.**

12 +**Then Joseph [l]said to him: This** is **its interpretation. The three intertwined** branches**, they** are **three days.** 13 **In** [fr]**another three days Pharaoh shall lift** up `**your head, and he will restore you** [on]**to your post; and you will** [g]**put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, according** to **the former custom** [w]**when you** [b]**were his cupbearer[l].** 14 [t]**So if you** still **remember me** being here `with **you, as** soon [w]**as it should** go **well** ›**with you,** +**then,** I **pray, you do** [wi] **me** the **kindness and mention me to Pharaoh and** [c]**bring me forth from** ·**this** ·**house.** 15 **For I was stolen,** yea **stolen⁻ from** the **land of the Hebrews; and even here I have not done anything that they should** [pl]**put `me in** [7]**this**[0] **confinement.**

THE CUPBEARER'S DREAM

As Joseph's life is largely influenced by the dreams he had been given to show God's intention as to his own life, he was quite prepared to listen to, and sympathize with, the two unfortunate men. First the cupbearer has his dream. A vine with three branches produces fruit, from buds to clusters, while he is watching, and he presses out the juice and sets it before Pharaoh.

Joseph interprets it correctly, so, in three days, he has a good friend in the very presence of Pharaoh! But, alas! Such friends are seldom sufficiently grateful to reciprocate. Joseph need not depend on them, for Yahweh had a much better way to get the cupbearer to speak. He makes an opportunity in which the cupbearer can reap a little credit for himself. Selfishness is a strong incentive to action!

GENESIS 40:16-23

16 +**When** the **chief of the bakers[l] [l]saw [t]how well he had**

interpreted, + **he** |**said to Joseph: I too** was **in my dream, and behold,** there were **three wicker trays on my head,** 17 **and in the uppermost tray** there were some *f*__**of every**__ sort **of Pharaoh's food, handiwork of** the **baker**|**; and the flyer**s were **eating** `**them** *f*__**out**__ of **the tray over my head.**

18 + **Joseph** |**answered and** |**said** *7*__**to him**__*0*, **This** is **its interpretation: The three trays, they** are **three days.** 19 **In** *fr*__**another three days Pharaoh shall lift** up `**your head off you, and he will hang** `**you on** a **tree. And the flyer**s **will eat** `**your flesh off you**r bones**.**

20 + **It** |**came** to **pass** *i*__**on the third day,**__ the **birthday**¯ `of **Pharaoh,** +**that he** |*d*__**gave**__ a **feast for all his officials; and he** |**lifted** up `the **head of** the **chief of the cupbearers**| **and** `the **head of** the **chief of the bakers**| **in** the *mid*__**presence of his officials.**__ 21 + **He** |**restored** `the **chief of the cupbearers**| *on*__**to his cupbearing,**__ so +**that he** again |*g*__**put the cup**__ *on*__**in Pharaoh's palm.**__ 22 +**As** for `the **chief of the bakers**|**, he hanged** him **just as Joseph had interpreted for them.**

23 +**Yet** the **chief of the cupbearers**| did **not remember** `**Joseph;** + **he** |**forgot him.**

THE BAKER'S DREAM

The baker's dream differs from the cupbearer's, to accord with their different vocations. Now we have food in place of drink, cereals in place of wine, three trays in place of three branches, to indicate three days. But the food does not reach Pharaoh. The flyers of heaven, representing evil spiritual powers, devour it. Here is the vital difference. The food is taken away before Pharaoh can eat it, unlike the wine which was put before him by the cup-bearer. So the baker is hanged and cannot help Joseph to escape. The cupbearer, meanwhile, ungratefully forgets his promise to Joseph. Once more man has failed, and it is all up to Yahweh Elohim.

A. E. Knoch

DO YOU NOT KNOW?
(Isaiah 40:21)

THERE IS NO truth we need to hold more prominently in view, and stress more frequently, than that of the sovereign omnipotence of our *God* and Father. It is fundamental.

Few, if any, of those who have come to a knowledge of God would willingly deny Him that supremacy, yet so many believers subscribe sincerely and earnestly to doctrines which would drag Him from His throne and exalt the creature. The tenets of theology not infrequently rob Him of His glory and modify His Deity, albeit, perhaps, unintentionally.

Because of this, it is well that we examine carefully the beliefs we hold to see whether or not they conflict with the basic and unalterable *fact* of His absoluteness. If it be found that our creeds conflict therewith, then the creeds and *only* the creeds require adjustment, for His absoluteness remains inviolable.

The passage from which this question is drawn (Isaiah 40:12-31) directs attention in an arresting way—by means of a series of questions—to the might and majesty of the Supreme, to Whose power the visible, physical creation bears constant witness. There are many such passages as this in Scripture and frequent and prayerful consideration of them will bear its own reward.

The question, to which we would apply our hearts, is a composite one:

(*a*) Do you not know?
(*b*) Do you not hear?
(*c*) Has it not been told to you from the beginning?
(*d*) Have you not gained understanding from the foundations of the earth? (Isa.40:21),

and one can sense that the tenor of the four clauses implies that what is not known, heard or understood, *ought to be*. The deliberate nature and the incomplete form of the question combine to give added force to the answer, which is supplied by the questioner and which declares the incomparable *truth* that it is the *Supreme* Who sits over the circle of the earth. This is the vital, incontrovertible *fact* which subordinates all else—the primal *truth* and the foundation of all truth. *He* sits on the throne of the universe, immovable and enduring. True, emperors of past centuries, their robes dyed deeply in innocent blood, and the dictators of recent and present times reeking with the fetid ghastliness of their horror chambers, have aspired to supplant Him on that throne, but He is still there, and will *remain* there, for the supermen of tomorrow will fail as ignominiously in their blatant attempts at usurpation as their counterparts of yesterday.

"It is He Who sits over the circle of the earth"(Isa. 40:22)—the restless sphere men call it now—the sphere which *He* brought into being along with innumerable others (Gen.1:1; Isa.40:28), set beneath the wide canopy of the heavens which *He* stretched out like thinnest gauze (Isa.40:22), all of which *He* carries on by His powerful declaration (Heb.1:3). As in the realm of rule where inordinate lust for power would seek to dispossess *Him* of His sovereignty, so in the sphere of His creatorhood, the devotees of the goddess "science" (often loosely and falsely so-called) would filch from Him the glory and honor due to *Him* as the Creator of *All*. Rather than acknowledge *Him*, they ascribe *His* accomplishment, in their various

nebulous theories and philosophies, to some impersonal combination of force and circumstances.

We are on the threshold of a vast human investigation into the physical properties of the earth in which, aided by numerous and undoubtedly ingenious devices, the scientists of many nations combine resources to probe beneath, on and above the surface of the globe. The information gathered will be pooled and then scrutinized in years to come. There is little likelihood, however, that the investigation, no matter how exhaustive, will lead those engaged in it to a discovery of the Creator at Whose behest the universe came into being, for, "Can you find out the fathoming of *Eloah*?" (Job 11:7), nor is it probable that it will evoke acknowledgement of "His imperceptible power and divinity" (Rom.1:20). It *should* be conceded and remembered, however, that whatever discoveries are made of forces, latent or active, and properties, these were already *there* and were *not* put there by man. Discovery is discovery and the unearthing of that which is existent does not entitle the discoverer to assume the mantle of creator.

Not only does the question lead to the affirmation of *His* utter supremacy, but the answer contains also a pointed reminder of humanity's lowly and subordinate position (Isa.40:22):

So that its dwellers are like grasshoppers.

Here is a statement which is by no means pleasant listening to those who are "vain in their reasonings" (Rom. 1:21), or to anyone who is "puffed up by his fleshly mind" (Col.2:18). The relative position of Creator and creature, of Subjector and subject, is declared simply in a figure, and the place assigned the creature is not high. Man has for so long viewed his intellect, his accomplishments and his aspirations through the magnifying glass of a vain and vivid imagination that he sees man, and man only, in pro-

portions so gross that the Supreme is completely eclipsed from sight. It is well, therefore, and very necessary for all of us, to have the perspective corrected by a serious contemplation of these simple words (Isa.40:22):

So that its dwellers are like grasshoppers.

This truth, so forcefully expressed in these seven words, finds further emphasis in the companion verses in this truly remarkable Isaiah passage (Isa.40:15,17,23):

Behold, all nations are as a drop from a bucket, and as dust on the scales are they accounted.

And all the nations are as nothing in front of Him; less than nil and a chaos are they accounted by Him.

It is He Who is bringing chancellors to nothing; judges of the earth He makes to be like chaos.

In these present times, when man has in his grasp power so devastatingly terrible and imagines that man determines the course of things and that he is master of humanity's destiny, these are not sentiments that will find ready acceptance. In fact, to contend for the literal truth expressed in these verses, and in many similar throughout the Scriptures, is to invite opposition as widespread as it is vehement, for the ideas of human free will and free moral agency are conceptions well nigh sacrosanct. The *fact* is, however, that the only untrammelled will in the universe is the will of *Almighty God*. To deny this positively or by implication is a negation of His Deity. "It is *not*" saith the holy spirit through the inspired penman, the great apostle of the nations, "It is *not* of him who is willing . . . but of *God*, the Merciful," and again, "for *who* has withstood His intention?" (Rom.9:16,19).

The monarch of the first world kingdom learned, through a long and bitter experience, the necessary lesson that "the Supreme is in authority in the kingdom of mortals, and He gives it to whomsoever He will" (Dan.4:25). After

he had recovered from the predicted experience, King Nebuchadnezzar affirmed a new-born conviction in the Deity's supremacy by his declaration (Dan.4:35,37):

All those abiding on the earth are reckoned as naught; according to His will He is doing with the army of the heavens and with those abiding on the earth. And there is no one who shall stay His hand and say to Him, What have You done? . . . and He is able to abase all those walking in pride.

Such an understanding and appreciation of God's supremacy was shared by David, Israel's king, and the truth of God's sovereignty was cogently expressed by him thus (Psa.135:5-6, *cf* 115:3):

For I myself know that Yahweh is great, and our Lord is greater than all elohim. All that Yahweh delights He does, in the heavens and on earth, in the seas and every abyss.

and again (Psa.113:4):

Exalted over all nations is Yahweh, over the heavens, His glory.

These are positive testimonies to the supremacy of God and to His irresistible power, yet how *seldom* are they given the serious consideration they merit? Instead, so many cling to the fallacious notion of the complete freedom of the will of man, not realizing that, if such an idea were true and thought out to its conclusion, man would be the potter and the Supreme the clay. *That cannot be!* The creature, man, may not be *conscious* of any external or inner coercion and thus *imagine* himself to be volitionally independent. He may, like Pharaoh of ancient times, oppose the declared will of God and pride himself in doing so, but the sphere of his "independence" is circumscribed and the duration of the opposition temporary.

It is usually argued, of course, that God has the power

but will not use it to break the will of a recalcitrant soul. The fact and truth of the matter is that He will not *need* to, for His beloved *Son* accomplished all that was necessary to *draw all* men to Him (John 12:32). The stubborn will is for a season only and is related to that aspect of His dealings revealed to us in Romans chapter 9—"yet whom *He* will, *He* is hardening" (v.18).

The possession of a will unconditioned by circumstance, *absolutely* free, indomitable, is an attribute of *Deity.* That is *His glory* and He will *not* give His glory to another, neither His praise to carvings (Isa.42:8; 48:11). The grasshopper inhabitants of the earth do not share that aspect of His glory, except in the measure that they will share in the ultimate bliss which will be the crowning accomplishment of His *un*withstandable intention.

"With whom," asks the prophet, "With whom does He take counsel?" (Isa.40:14). It was certainly not with the denizens of the earth—not with the princes of the earth which are brought to nothing—not with the nations of the earth which are counted as the small dust of the balance. With whom, then, did He discuss the mighty matters of creation, the sustaining of the universe age after age, of sin, salvation and destiny? With *no one! He* Who sits over the circle of the earth, in sovereign and firm control, has no need of a counselor for *He* is the *One* (Eph.1:11):

Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will.

The apostle Paul in his letter to the Roman saints quotes from this Isaiah passage (40:13) and repeats the prophet's question (Rom.11:34):

For who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser?

There is no retinue of advisers attendant upon the Supreme—*He* does not require such direction, for in Himself are concealed all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col.2:3). The activities of the Most High do not stem from indeterminate deliberation in the conclaves of men, for it could be said that such ". . . darkens counsel by declarations without knowledge?" (Job 38:2). Indeed it is the case that there are always those sufficiently presumptuous to offer Him advice and suggest improvements in the "running of affairs," but such advice is wholly gratuitous and He is not influenced by it. God, Who is "telling from the beginning, the hereafter . . . . All My counsel shall be confirmed" (Isa.46:10), is unimpressed by the effusions of those who take it upon themselves ignorantly to judge Him *in the process* of the out-working of His purpose.

God's eonian purpose, and the means He has devised for its sure and ultimate realization, were counseled in the calm seclusion of an *absolute* and *irresistible will,* and that will is rooted in the unfathomable depths of infinite love.

Little wonder that the beloved apostle phrases so beautifully and powerfully the only conclusion possible after contemplation of God's ways and gracious purpose (Rom. 11:33):

O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways!

The prophet's question was addressed of old to the inhabitants of the ancient cities of Judah and to Zion in the midst of them, but it is a question peculiarly relevant to the present, when God is *not* glorified as *God* (*cf* Rom.1:21):

Do you not know? Do you not hear?

If we do not know, it is not because evidence is lacking for it is abundant around and above us: "The heavens are recounting the glory of El" (Psa.19:1). Day by day, night by night, throughout the long ages, the marvel and immensity of the physical creation has borne, and is bearing, unfaltering witness to the *fact* of *His being* and to the wonder of *His* creative and sustaining might. We can-

not plead ignorance in the face of such overwhelming evidence and we are without defense.

What saith the Scriptures in this matter? Paul, writing to the Roman saints records the inspired comment (Rom 1:20,21):

For His invisible attributes are descried from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements, besides His imperceptible power and divinity, for them to be defenseless . . . .

May we come to know indeed and to realize in a full measure the grandeur of the *fact* and *truth* that it is (Isa. 40:22):

He Who sits over the circle of the earth

and that He sits firm upon His universal throne, *Supreme* in His sovereignty and irresistible power, *Supreme* in the glory of His creatorhood, *Supreme* in the blessedness of *His* saviourhood, for *He* is "the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers" (1 Tim.4:10,11).

". . . *out* of *Him* and *through Him* and *for Him* is *all*: to *Him* be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:36).

Alan Reid

DISCIPLINE FOR ANGER AND PRIDE

Even if we are aware, decretively speaking, that all the ways and deeds of all mankind are "of God," we will still react to these ways and deeds not only with pleasure or displeasure, but sometimes, even in pride or anger. Whenever, then, pride or anger should still arise in us, it is vital that we remind ourselves once again, whatever deed it may be that is in view, whether good or bad, that it is "part of the all" that is out of, through, and for God. Then, and only then, *our outlook on life will be revolutionized,* and that in a most helpful way.

We marvel and praise our God and Father in consideration of His operation of all and His knowledge of all. As the Psalmist declares, "Your eyes saw my embryo, and my days, all of them were written upon Your scroll; the days were formed when there was not one of them" (Psa.139:16).

J.R.C.

HAPPINESS FROM GOD

IT IS ONLY one who knows weakness and unrighteousness who can know the saving power and delight of the evangel. Only sinners, who are hopelessly unable to be justified in God's sight by works of law, can know the joy of the justification achieved through the faith of Jesus Christ. And only those made wretched by doing what they do not want to do and failing to do what they want to do can come to appreciate the grace and happiness of being reckoned righteous by God.

JUSTIFICATION AND THE RECKONING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The question of Romans 4:1 is answered first in a negative way (Rom.4:2) and then in a positive way (Rom.4:3). What did Abraham find concerning justification? He found that justification did *not* come to him by works of law. And he found that *God reckoned righteousness* to him when he believed what God had said to him.

The passive verb "was justified" (verse 2) is set in parallel with the active verb "is reckoning" (verse 3). The change of verbs is significant. Abraham could not be justified by his acts no matter how righteous they were in relation to other sinners, for he also was a sinner. Yet this means also that Abraham could not have been justified, in the full and literal sense of the word, by his faith, for this too was a human act which was necessarily flawed. Nevertheless, in His grace, God reckoned righteousness to Abraham when he believed that as his Shield and exceedingly increased Reward, God would give him seed as the

stars of the heavens (Gen.15:1-6). To follow through with the figure of speech, God put it in His account book that Abraham was righteous.

For approximately two thousand years the righteousness of God in this act of reckoning righteousness to Abraham might easily be called in question. There was no solid basis for this reckoning *except in the mind and counsel of God,* in His plan and purpose to which He faithfully adhered and which He fulfilled in the giving of His Son for sinners two millenniums after Abraham's day.

THE MISSING CONNECTION

For Abraham there was no manifest link between the two things he had found. He could not be justified by his acts, but righteousness was reckoned to him. The evangel concerning justification given in Romans 3:21-28 was missing, as indeed it had to be, for Jesus Christ had not died for sinners. Consequently the reckoning of righteousness seemed to be an arbitrary act of God, without any basis beyond the very human and changeable faith of Abraham. That could never be a real basis; it was the occasion chosen by God for the reckoning of righteousness, but not at all a cause for the manifestation of God's righteousness in a work of true justification.

But as for God, He had purposed a firm foundation for the reckoning of righteousness, settled in what He would do in sparing not His own Son but giving Him up for sinners like Abraham. The cross of Christ connects the reckoning of righteousness to the believer with God's work of justification and the revelation of God's righteousness.

"Now when the full time came, *God delegates His Son . . .*" (Gal.4:4). God "spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all . . ." (Rom.8:32). Christ Jesus "became to us wisdom *from God,* besides *righteousness* and holiness and deliverance . . ." (1 Cor.1:30). "For the One not knowing

sin, *He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes* that we may be becoming *God's righteousness in Him*" (2 Cor.5:21).

It was given to Paul to announce this evangel concerning Jesus Christ as it revealed the righteousness of God. This righteousness of God in justifying the irreverent is made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ, through His faith in God exhibited by His faithfulness in dying for sinners. In the death of Christ for all, all died, and in His life all will be vivified (*cf* 2 Cor.5:14; 1 Cor.15:22). Therefore, the righteousness of God is put on display, in that God justifies the irreverent as they come before Him as beneficiaries of ("out of") *the faith of Jesus* (Rom.3:26).

It was with this in view that God reckoned righteousness to Abraham when he believed God's word to him. Abraham did indeed act righteously in believing, and God is greatly pleased by those who believe what He says to them. But the righteousness reckoned to Abraham, and to us who believe the evangel, has its unassailable basis alone in the faith of Jesus Christ Who died for us all while we are still sinners.

GOD'S GRACE FOR BELIEVERS

What, then, shall we declare that we have found? We have found that we cannot do anything to make ourselves righteous, and we have found superabundant grace from God in reckoning to us even now that righteousness which He has provided through His beloved Son, as our apostle testifies now in Romans 4:4-8.

> *Now to the worker, the wage is not reckoned as a favor* [*grace*]*, but as a debt.*
>
> *Yet to him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness.*

The word "favor" in Romans 4:4 represents the same

Greek term translated "grace" in Romans 3:24. It belongs to a family of words, including the verbs "rejoice" and "thank" which contain the common element of JOY. In presenting the evangel here in Romans, the apostle has shown that justification is a work of God, manifesting His righteousness, which is centered in His grace. We may truly say that it is a favor that brings joy to the Giver as well as the receiver. Now also he points out that God's work of reckoning righteousness to the believer is a favor from God sourced in divine joy and bringing joy to weak and woeful creatures such as ourselves.

God's grace inheres the evangel of justification, and, furthermore, God's grace expands in that special and present operation of reckoning righteousness to those who are believing the evangel. Hence Paul will soon write of believers as "those obtaining the *superabundance* of grace" (*cf* Rom.5:17).

GOD JUSTIFIES THE IRREVERENT

What is it we are believing? We are believing that God justifies the irreverent. That is one way in which the evangel of God is worded; it is a staggering claim concerning God. In writing this, the apostle uses the language of Exodus 23:7 except for the word "not." In the law, Yahweh declared, "I shall *not justify* the wicked one [LXX, *irreverent*]." In His evangel, God declares that He *is justifying* the irreverent!

But is this not a direct contradiction?

No, indeed. It is a reversal. It is an evangel of great joy which contrasts with the message of the perfect law given at Sinai which was dependent on the very imperfect flesh of human beings. The evangel of God is the glory of God.

The passage in Exodus (*cp* Deut.25:1; Prov.17:15; Isa. 5:23) is in accord with Romans 3:20, where Paul concluded, "By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in

[God's] sight." It also needs to be associated with Romans 3:23 which says, "There is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God." All are wicked and irreverent in the sense that all sin and all fail to recognize and glorify God as God. We all are unrighteous, and we cannot change the fact. Yet what is impossible to us, *God* does (*cf* Rom.8:3).

It is the evangel that takes away the "not" of Exodus 23:7 and the "no flesh at all" of Romans 3:20. This is because it also removes human works of law from the equation and brings in the faith of Jesus Christ. Paul deliberately uses the language of Exodus 23:7 (Septuagint translation) in order to emphasize God's grace and power and righteousness as revealed in the evangel. The fact God cannot and will not justify anybody on the basis of the evidence provided by their lives is his very point. We are all in a hopeless situation apart from what God has done in sparing not His Son but giving Him up for us all. There is no way God could justify us if the record of our acts and thoughts is what is being taken into account.

Yet because of the faithful work of deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, God is justifying the irreverent.

THE BELIEVER'S FAITH AND HAPPINESS

Our act of believing God does not place God in our debt. It does not call for payment (certainly not the payment of justification), for who can give to God first so that He must repay (Rom.11:35)? Rather to be believing is in itself a gracious gift from God which becomes the occasion for God to reckon the gratuitous grace of justification to us and for real and vital happiness to enter into our lives:

[It is] *even as David also is telling of the happiness of the man to whom God is reckoning righteousness apart from acts:*

Happy they whose lawlessnesses were pardoned
and whose sins were covered over!
Happy the man to whom the Lord by no means
should be reckoning sin! (Rom.4:7,8)

To believe the evangel (WELL-MESSAGE) is happiness. The more truly we understand what is being said and accept in faith that it is so, the more this happiness will take root in us in the midst of the vast evils of present existence. This does not mean we won't suffer much sorrow and regret, but that, within the distress, we may always and continually call upon the power for the inexhaustible supply of inner joy and peace which God's evangel concerning His Son has for us. We have the welcome privilege to look to God, in faith, as the living God and Saviour of all mankind (1Tim.4:10).

THE HUMAN, DAVID

Paul points to David by name three times in Romans. God's Son comes of the seed of David, as the One Who will arrive out of Zion as Rescuer for the salvation of all Israel (Rom.1:3; *cf* 11:26-28). Yet David was also aware that, before this rescue occurs there would be much distress ahead for Israel, such as expressed in Psalm 69:22,23, and cited by Paul in Romans 11:9,10. Now in Romans 4:6-8 we also see David as a man of flesh, but one whose heart was directed toward God in Whose hands he placed his fervent trust despite his own deserts.

Paul also uses the language and testimony of several other psalms of David, especially as he relates his evangel to Israel, who knew David as the ideal king and national hero, and should have known him as a great type of the Messiah. We also can all learn much from this man as a type of Christ, but even more particularly in the present context as he is seen as a son of Adam, a human being with

weaknesses and faults, while still exhibiting much that is ideal in his reliance on God and appreciation of His Word.

David's words, as a sinner who relies on God, borrowed in Romans 3:4 from Psalm 51 and here in Romans 4:7,8 from Psalm 32, stand out before us all as they relate to the evangel. They do not present the hero, defeating the enemies of Israel and of the Lord, but the human who sins, and who, in his realization of his sinfulness, looks to God for salvation. Here we see the king who brought dishonor on his country and his God, dwelling with hope on his God for his people and himself. Here we see the human who was exposed and humbled by his miserable weaknesses in flesh, looking to his Lord for a good that he knew he could never earn by his acts. Indeed, Paul does not cite David's stirring words of avowal of his sins, although these two psalms have much to say along that line. But instead our attention is drawn to the greater message concerning *God's faithfulness* to His promises of benefit, and a hope for *His favor* toward the sinner.

When David's sins of adultery and murder of a loyal soldier in his army, from the nations (*cf* Rom.2:22,24), were exposed, he acknowledged his transgressions with his sin ever before him (Psa.51:3), but he held firmly to his trust in Elohim that Elohim Himself would be justified in His sayings and be conquering when He is being judged (Psa.51:4, as worded in the Septuagint). David accepted the disciplining judgment which brought great sorrow into his life through his family. But with Yahweh's promises of good to come in mind, David looked to God as ever true to His word. This is what the apostle cites in Romans 3:4—not what the psalm says about the sinner but what it says about God as the One Who is righteous.

DAVID'S HAPPINESS

So also now in Romans 4:7,8, Paul draws attention not

to what David said in Psalm 32:5a about his sin, but to David's grand vision of and longing for righteousness from God as expressed in Psalm 32:1,2. Happiness for the sinner lies entirely in the hands of the Lord.

Here was a happiness of hope in a time of severe grief and in the face of agonizing evils to come. There are two incidents from David's life, recorded in the books of Samuel and Chronicles, which might lie behind the words of Psalm 32. These are his adultery with Bathsheba which is specifically related to Psalm 51, and his numbering of the people recounted in 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21. In both cases David's sin was openly reckoned to him, resulting in serious loss and suffering.

Along with the scriptural account of David's sin in numbering the people of Israel under his kingship we are given a glimpse of God's operations behind the scene in carrying out the counsel of His will (*cf* Eph.1:11). In accord with the words of 2 Samuel 24:1 and 1 Chronicles 21:1, we understand that God was operating through the instrument of Satan (as in the case of Job) by inciting David to make this census. As Joseph testified to his brothers, what human beings devise for evil, God devises for good (Gen. 50:20). Nevertheless, even as Joseph's brothers sinned, so also David sinned in seeking something that would bring him glory apart from a consideration of God.

This was a political move. It may have been that David had reasoned that it would help the Lord strengthen and preserve the throne given to him if its great prosperity was made known publicly. God would indeed preserve the dynasty for awhile, and would preserve the line until David's greater Son was born. God Himself will keep His word to David as found in 2 Samuel 7:12-16, but not with David's help. In fact, David's own scheme resulted in a weakening of the kingdom so that seventy thousand men of Israel died in the plague sent by God.

Therefore, afterwards David was smitten in his heart and said to God, "I have sinned *intensely* in what I have done" (2 Sam.24:10; 1 Chron.21:8). Furthermore, in speaking to the vision seer, Gad, David exclaimed, "Utter distress is mine" (2 Sam.24:14; 1 Chron.21:13).

But what we must note, above all this, is that in his intense distress David concentrated all his thought on the Lord. David was humbled, and the results were greatly beneficial to him. No matter what would happen next, David declared, "Do let me fall, I pray, into the hand of Yahweh, for His compassions are very abundant; but let me not fall into the hand of humanity" (1 Chron.21:13; *cp* 2 Sam.24:14). Distress would come from God, but David would not give up hope for the happiness of not having his sin reckoned to him.

If this is not the background for Psalm 32, it is an appropriate example of its expression. How happy the distressed sinner would be if God did not reckon sin to him.

The Believer's Happiness

We live in a world that still is as Paul describes it in Romans 1:18-3:20. And in our flesh we still find ourselves walking contrary to the ideal standards of law, whether that of Sinai or that written in our hearts. And often, as our faith falters, we exclaim with Saul of Tarsus, "A wretched man am I!" (Rom.7:24).

But we are given happiness far beyond that which David longed to have. This arises from believing the evangel. It comes about as we attend to the message of God's grace of justification, which in turn is the basis of God's grace of not reckoning sin to us.

The evangel leads us beyond what David was able to hope for, so that we are aware, in faith and in an expectation that goes beyond hope, that God justifies justly on the basis of the faith of Jesus. It is in light of that grand

operation centered in the cross of Christ, that God reckons righteousness to us, who are believing, apart from works of law!

GLORYING IN EXPECTATION

Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God. (Rom.5:1,2)

Consequently, as we are believing the evangel that God is justifying the irreverent through the faithful obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ, God is granting us happiness. It is, then, in hearing and believing this evangel that we go beyond David. We share with him the recognition that only God can deal with this wretched condition of sinners who fail to do what is right and find themselves doing what is wrong.

But, unlike David and unlike Abraham as well, we have heard God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. In this evangel God's righteousness is revealed. It is made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ, Who was obedient even to the death of the cross. Now for us, who are believing this evangel, even though we cannot prove in any physical and empirical way that it is so, there is a happiness being renewed over and over again. Rather than reckoning our sin against us, God is reckoning that righteousness to us which has been gained through the faith of Jesus Christ.

In reckoning righteousness to us God has graciously made it so that "Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:1).

God has said it, and it is so. Happy are we who are believing the evangel of God.

D.H.H.

THE EVANGEL WE HAVE ACCEPTED

AT ONE PLACE in First Corinthians we find Paul making known to the brethren the evangel which they already knew (1 Cor.15:1-4). This lay at the heart of the apostle's commission, to bring (literally, *evangelize*) the evangel (*cp* Gal.1:16). This is the message which we also have *accepted,* and in which we *stand.* It is through this evangel that we are *being saved,* that is, continually, day by day, delivered from the wretchedness and the self-centeredness of the flesh by *retaining* it in our hearts, holding fast to it in faith. The evangel which tells us of the *completed* salvation which God has gained for us in His grace (*cf* Eph. 2:2,9) is the power of God for present *ongoing* salvation for us who are believing (Rom.1:16).

The evangel announces:

> *that Christ died for our sins . . .*
> *and that He was entombed,*
> *and that He has been roused the third day . . . .*

Like the Corinthians we have accepted this evangel, and Paul speaks to us across the centuries in making it known again and again. It is not a magical formula but a simple and direct presentation of an extraordinary group of divine declarations. In meditating on this message once again, I pray it will not be irksome to the reader, but helpful for our appreciation *together* for invigoration and endurance in our lives in the flesh and in this current eon.

Believing these words does not make them true. They are true whether we believe them or not. But we are greatly

blessed by believing them. Believing these words does not mean that we understand them fully. But the blessing increases as we grow in appreciation of what they say.

To begin with, the message is startling, and indeed it does not cease to be startling. The Anointed One of God *died.* And it is this which deals with our sins. His death was indisputable, for He had to be entombed and then was roused from the death in which He was kept for three days.

Yet as we are believing this evangel we are coming to see that there is great wisdom in it, and that it is a revelation of God's righteousness and love. And again, it is a priceless source of power to us for joy and peace and endurance.

A UNIFYING THEME

The evangel is the key which opens up the Scriptures before us as a unity.

In the Corinthian passage, Paul said that the death and rousing of Christ were "according to the scriptures," or rather, "*in accord with* the scriptures." I take the latter rendering as conveying the sense of the Greek more exactly. From Genesis chapter 1 throughout all the Sacred Scriptures, we find full and remarkable *accordance* with the message that Christ died for our sins, and has been roused. In the record of God's acts we see a pattern that first anticipates the evangel and then draws upon it for enlightenment concerning the present and future.

The remarkable previewing of the evangel which we find in the pattern set in Genesis 1:2-31, in the prophecies of Genesis 3:15,16, and the way in which God dealt with the nakedness of Adam and Eve, in the account of Abel's death (the first human death recorded in Scripture), in the rescue and preservation of Noah and his family, in the call of Abraham and the blessings given him on the basis of faith, his giving of his son Isaac on Mount Moriah, the story of Joseph and the rescue of Israel from Egypt—in these, to

name only a few instances, tells us clearly that God had the evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, in view from the beginning. In fact, God's purpose was already being carried out in Christ Jesus before times eonian (2 Tim.1:9), and the "precious blood of Christ, as of a flawless and unspotted lamb" was foreknown before evil entered into the world (1 Peter 1:19,20).

A DIVINE PATTERN

The pattern of God's operations exhibited in the evangel follows the pattern of His operations described in the first chapter of Genesis. In view of a condition of **evil**, and in association with His **spirit**, God brings a message concerning good (an **evangel**), which is certain to come to pass. The astounding *way* in which evil is replaced by good, that is, through the death and resurrection of God's Son, is not readily apparent. Yet even there God's *word,* what He *says,* can be seen as a type of Jesus Christ Who brings "grace and truth" and "unfolds God," as presented in John 1:1-18. Paul also draws from Genesis 1:3, concerning what God *said* concerning *light,* in speaking of the evangel which he was dispensing. This message illuminates "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:1-6). In the "letter of Christ," reflected by the believers themselves (2 Cor.3:3), God tells us of Light which replaces darkness, even as He did in Genesis 1:3, with the words: "Let light come to be!"

At present and for much of past time the evil dominates our attention, and this is true of Scripture where the evidence of sin and failure and death is recorded at length. But what God says about good to come stands above all this visible corruption and must and will be realized.

Let us note the elementary pattern as found in the first chapter of Genesis and then compare it with the evangel as presented by our apostle Paul:

THE FIRST CHAPTER OF GENESIS

Evil (Genesis 1:2a):

As for the earth, it came to be a chaos and vacant, and darkness was over the surface of the abyss.

Spirit (Genesis 1:2b):

And the spirit of Elohim was vibrating over the surface of the waters.

Evangel (Genesis 1:3-26):

And Elohim said:

[In view of darkness] *Let light come to be! . . . .*

[In view of chaos] *Let an atmosphere come to be in the midst of the waters, that it may be separating waters from waters . . . .*

[In view of chaos and vacancy] *Let the waters under the heavens flow together into one confluence, that the dry ground may appear . . . . Let the land become verdant with vegetation . . . .*

[In view of darkness and chaos] *Let luminaries come to be in the atmosphere of the heavens to separate between the day and the night, that they may be for signs, for appointed seasons, for days and years. Let them be for luminaries in the atmosphere of the heavens to give light on the earth . . . .*

[In view of vacancy] *Let the waters swarm with the swarming thing, the living soul, and let the flyer fly above the earth on the face of the atmosphere of the heavens . . . .*

[In view of vacancy and chaos] *Let the earth bring forth the living soul, each according to its kind: domestic beast, creeper and land animal, each according to its kind . . . . Let Us make humanity in Our image and according to Our likeness. Let them hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heavens, over the domestic beast, over every land animal and over every creeper that is creeping on the earth . . . .*

THE MESSAGE WE HAVE ACCEPTED

Hence, we see that the evangel we have accepted follows the pattern of Genesis 1 as a message of deliverance from evil into good. It is a word of salvation from evil spoken by God which comes to us in association with His spirit.

Evil

(As an expression of chaos): *All sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.* (Rom.3:23)

(As an expression of vacancy): *All are dying.* (1 Cor.15:22)

(As an expression of darkness): *The god of this eon blinds the apprehensions of the unbelieving.* (2 Cor.4:4)

Spirit:

You are our letter, engraven . . . not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God . . . Who makes us competent dispensers of a new covenant . . . of the spirit . . . . (2 Cor. 3:2-6)

Evangel:

(As deliverance from the chaos of sin): *God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes.* (Rom.5:8)

(As deliverance from the vacancy of death): *Even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified.* (1 Cor.15:22)

(As deliverance from the darkness of blindness to an illumination of the glory of God): *The God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* (2 Cor.4:6)

COMING TO BE SO

In selecting the words of God from Genesis 1 we left out the words which speak of fulfillment. The words, "And light came to be," and the repeated phrase, "And it came to be so," reach their highest level in Genesis 1:31 where we

read, "And Elohim saw all that He had made; and behold, it was very good." What God says comes to be so.

The evangel in its fundamental declaration speaks also of what will come to be, but has not yet fully come to be. We are living in a time between the words, "Let light come to be," and the words, "light came to be," except as God's spirit enters into the lives of those who are believing. This exception is very important to note, but as to the actual, complete realization of what God has done in giving His Son for us all, this is still a matter of the future. We walk by faith and live in expectation of the full light and order and life which Christ has gained for us. In believing what God has said we are invigorated by His spirit, *being saved,* as we have noted, day by day (1 Cor.15:1,2). But the day will come when we are vivified in Christ's presence (1 Cor. 15:23), when Christ, our Life, will be manifested, and we are manifested with Him in glory (Col.3:4).

GENESIS 2 AND 3

Whereas the first chapter of Genesis provides the pattern of deliverance from evil to good by means of God's spirit and His word, in the second chapter the *particular details* found in the evangel begin to unfold. The evil which must be dealt with is introduced by way of a warning given in Genesis 2:17, and it becomes an actual experience in the third chapter. God's words then begin to reflect the evangel in a much more definite way than Gods words in the first chapter.

Evil:

In the second and third chapters of Genesis the pattern of God bringing good where there is evil is expanded with direct reference to humanity. The great and sobering evil is introduced in Genesis 2 when Yahweh Elohim *instructs* the human:

From the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying. (Gen.2:17)

The evil which brings the knowledge of good and evil is not presented here as the act of disobedience but as the process of dying which leads downward to death. This evil must be removed first so that sin may be eliminated.

The verb "dying" is later seen to encompass the evils of a realization of nakedness and fearfulness (Gen.2:7,10) and experiences of grief and groanings (3:16.17) and sweat from thorns and weeds (3:18). Likewise, the infinitive "to die" is later explained as the "return to the ground, for from it were you taken" (Gen.3:19). The essence of the evil was mortality and its culmination in death.

Evangel:

The evangel in this context is first stated in words addressed to the serpent (Gen.3:14,15):

Then Yahweh Elohim said . . . I shall set enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her Seed. He shall hurt you in the head, and you shall hurt Him in the heel.

Then there is a welcome message in Genesis 3:16, in Yahweh Elohim's words to Eve:

Yet by your husband is your restoration.

THE PROMISED SEED

Now in Genesis 3:15 God speaks of One Who will be born of the woman, not Eve herself (as she thought when Cain was born and she said, "I have acquired a man"), but, as we have learned, one named Mary. When God said, "Let light come to be," the words speak of Christ only obliquely, but now much more directly.

They were addressed to the serpent, but they were of much interest to the human pair. The Adversary had seized

authority over them by leading them to act in accord with his words and contrary to the words of Yahweh Elohim. In this way the Adversary had obtained "the might of death" (Heb.2:14). Such was the headship of this one who had apparently kept God from realizing the stated purpose of His creation of humanity, to be in the image and likeness of Elohim as subjectors over the other creatures of the earth.

Yet God *said* to the serpent that the Seed of the woman would *hurt* him in the head.

RESTORATION

Furthermore, in speaking to the woman, God said, "By your husband is your restoration" (Gen.3:16).

The word "restoration," used in the CV, is based on the Septuagint Version which saw the Hebrew word, basically meaning "return," here rather than the similarly spelled word meaning "impulse" (AV, *desire*). In 1954, Brother A. E. Knoch commented on this under the heading, THE ADJUDICATION OF THE WOMAN, as follows:

"Grief and groaning, specially suited to her functions in the perpetuation of the race, were allotted to the woman, corresponding to the part she played in the offense . . . . But this experience of evil is accompanied by a promise of restoration, through this very function. With her husband the race will be perpetuated until the second Man, the last Adam (1 Cor.15:45,47), will bring about its *restoration.*

"The AV says nothing of any restoration, but renders it 'thy *desire* shall be to thy husband.' Just what is intended by this is not very clear, but it does not seem to deal with the matter in hand. Another Hebrew word means *desire* (2 Sam.23:5). The Septuagint has *apostrophê* FROM-TURN-ing, restoration. The equivalent Hebrew would be *thshube,* which differs from the Hebrew text in one letter only."[1]

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.45, pp.121, 122.

The goodness in view in Genesis 3:15,16 is a matter of dealing with the headship, or authority, which the Adversary had usurped, and a return to the previous relationship of access and obedience to the Lord. It will be the Seed of the woman Who will bring this about. But in hurting the Adversary by putting an end to his headship, the promised Descendent of Eve would Himself be hurt.

CHRIST AS THE PROMISED SEED

The parallels of these passages from Genesis with the evangel concerning God's Son show us again that God had the death and resurrection of Christ in view from the beginning. The "hurt" of the promised Seed foreshadows in understated terms the death of the cross of Jesus Christ. The "restoration" speaks also in understated terms of the glory which follows the cross.

A preview of the evangel has begun to unfold. Not only will God deal with evil by bringing in good, but He will do so through a promised Individual Who would be born of a woman. One important way in which the evil of death and its effects on humanity will be dealt with will be by nullifying the authority of the Adversary. There will be a struggle involving the Seed and the Adversary, resulting in a turning to that which is good.

Let us note the words of the evangel as they parallel the words of the third chapter of Genesis:

Evil:

Even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned. Rom.5:12

Evangel:

Now when the full time came, God delegates His Son, come of a woman . . . . (Gal.4:4)

Christ Jesus . . . empties Himself, taking the form of a

slave, coming to be in the likeness ofh umanity, and being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:5-8)

. . . through death, He should be discarding him who has the might of death, that is, the Adversary. (Heb.2:14)

He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He subjects all under His feet. (1 Cor.15:26,27)

Finally, as to the evil of death and its sting of sin (1 Cor. 15:56) the evangel which we have accepted states as a glorious future fulfillment of the death and resurrection of Christ:

Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one [effect of righteousness] *for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.*

From the beginning of God's Word we are being prepared for the climax of the cross of Christ which becomes the means for the elimination of evil and coming in of the consummation when all will be very good. The evil of death and its effects is introduced, and immediately God begins to evangelize. He tells of good to come. But in speaking of this good He adds more and more details concerning the way in which it will come. We see from Genesis 3:15,16 that this good will come through One Who will be born of a woman, Who will deal with the power and authority of the Adversary.

By no means have we noted all concerning the evangel that can be traced in these early passages. But we see that there are important foreshadowings there. We hope to continue this search in future studies. D.H.H.

Contents:

241 Editorial
245 Joseph's Exaltation
257 The Sin of Joseph's Brothers
265 Faith's Righteousness
273 Thoughts on Prayer
279 God's Word Operates

NOVEMBER, 2007

Volume XCVIII **Number 6**

Concordant Version of

The Pentateuch

GENESIS
EXODUS, LEVITICUS
NUMBERS, DEUTERONOMY

THE PUBLICATION of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) is an ongoing project endeavoring to provide, in a consistent English translation, a closer reflection of the grammar, syntax and word usage of the ancient Hebrew manuscripts than can be found in other current versions. By analyzing the contextual usages, a single English word was first selected as the most suitable equivalent for each Hebrew word. To achieve readability some words were then given a limited number of idiomatic variants that are harmonious with the sense derived from the investigations. English words used as the common translation of particular Hebrew words, and even idiomatic variants, are not used for other Hebrew words.

The Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses, is referred to by our Lord as "The Law" (Matt.7:12; 22:40; Luke 16:16). Any passage in these five books is referred to as being in the Law, even if it is not in the decrees of Sinai. The title of four of the Mosaic scrolls consists of the opening words of the text: "In a Beginning" for Genesis, "And These are the Names" for Exodus, "And He Called" for Leviticus, and "These are the Words" for Deuteronomy. The title of Numbers is taken from the first sentence, "In the Wilderness."

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 2007
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-EIGHT

EDITORIAL

WITH THIS present number of *Unsearchable Riches,* we draw to a close our ninety-eighth volume. From its first issue in 1909 unto the present year of publication, 2007, this magazine has been set forth "for God and His Word," on behalf of both the written Word of God, the Sacred Scriptures, and the Word of God incarnate, Christ Jesus Himself.

While addressing a wide variety of scriptural topics, as its name suggests, the especial emphasis of our publication has always been the proclamation of the "unsearchable" (AV), that is, "untraceable riches of Christ": ". . . to bring the evangel of the *untraceable* riches of Christ to the nations, and to enlighten all as to what is *the administration of the secret, which has been concealed* from the eons in God, Who creates all" (Eph.3:8,9; contrast 1 Peter 1:10).

Throughout the many years of its publication, there have been a considerable number of writers who have made important contributions to "the U.R.," even as there have been workers in various capacities who have had an active hand in the wider ministry of the Concordant Publishing Concern. When thinking of those of former years, however, who were the principal laborers in this ministry, we call to mind in a foremost way its founders: **A. E. Knoch** (d.1965) and **Vladimir Gelesnoff** (d.1922), together with **Ernest Knoch** (the son of A. E. Knoch; d.1991), the longtime office manager of the Concern, and **Herman Rocke** (d.1996), who, besides being a regular contributor to the magazine, labored for many years in the preparation of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament.

In more recent decades, **Dean Hough** has been not only a mentor to me, but more generally the guide and advisor

of the Concordant ministry as a whole. Dean has served for many years as the Editor (now Editor Emeritus) of our magazine, to which he has contributed an abundance of articles, while working continually as well as a translator on the Concordant Version of the Old Testament project.

When I think of the struggles and sorrows, together with the joys and accomplishments both of our predecessors and of ourselves, I can only marvel at God's goodness and wisdom in it all, in His direction not only of our labors, but of our lives generally as well.

Relatively speaking at least, we are nearing the completion of our work in the publication of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament. In the coming year, we hope to continue in this work of CVOT translating and typesetting, as well as in what will then be the ninety-ninth year of the publication of *Unsearchable Riches* magazine. In light of these plans and hopes which we have for the coming year, then, we look to our God and Father for the strength and health, for the will and courage, requisite to our continuing on in these endeavors.

❊

It is often claimed that since Christ is to be *worshiped,* this proves that He is God. The fact that Christ is a proper object of worship, however, proves no such thing. Worship is not confined to Deity. Further, our Lord's title, "Christ," is proof that He is not *God* (absolutely speaking), but God's *Anointed.*

The English "anoint" is derived from the Latin *inungere* (to smear or rub on). The Greek verb *chriō* ("anoint"), is the basis of the noun *christos,* which in English is "christ." It is to be regretted that we use "christ" for the noun of the verb *anoint,* thus obscuring its meaning from the ordinary reader. It corresponds to the Hebrew *mâshîyach* (i.e., "messiah"), a title appropriate to priests, kings, and proph-

ets after their consecration by means of anointing with oil. Our Lord Jesus *Christ,* is the Christ of christs, even as He is King of kings, for He is "anointed," by the spirit of God, far above the rest. That is, He is "anointed" ("christed") by God, His God, with the oil of exultation *beyond* His partners (Heb.1:9), beyond that of all others who also enjoy an anointing of God.

Since many passages of Scripture speak of the worship of God (e.g., John 4:20-24), while various others present examples in which Christ is worshiped (e.g., Matt.28:9), many will say that Christ is therefore God. "Worship" (*proskuneō,* TOWARD-TEEM), however, simply speaks of an action in which one is *overflowingly full* in giving courtesy and honor, even devotion and reverence (i.e., deep respect and esteem), to the object of his veneration.

Even the English word "worship" (which is related to the word *worth*) is used not only of the adoration of the Deity, but of certain men of high office (as in the appellation "your worship" in reference to a magistrate, in consideration of his worthiness).

Perhaps the erroneous idea that worship is confined to God alone arose from the words of our Lord in reflection upon the law, in which He prohibits the offering of *divine service* to any other (Matt.4:10; Luke 4:8): "The Lord your God shall you be worshiping [e.g., Psa.29:2], and to Him only shall you be offering *divine service*" (Matt.4:10; e.g., Deut.10:20). Christ does not say that all others, no matter how honorable, may *not* be worshiped, but that "the Lord your God" *is* to be worshiped. The fact that He alone may be offered divine service is no proof that others may never be worshiped or extended homage.

As God's Anointed, Who is one with Him in His word and ways, Christ may be freely worshiped. When we worship Him we worship God, for He is the Image of the invisible God (2 Cor.4:4). If we are in doubt as to the sense in which Christ is one with God, this is clarified

for us in John 17:11b: "Holy Father, keep them [the disciples] in Thy name, in which Thou hast given them to Me, *that they may be one, according as We are*" (*cp* John 17:21-23). The disciples were not to become members of an expanded Trinity, nor were they to become "modes" of the Deity. Rather, they were to become *united* with God and His Christ both in character and in purpose.

In the interest of proving that worship must be given to God alone, it is sometimes pointed out that the messenger of the Unveiling before whose feet John fell to worship entreated him not to do so (Rev.19:10; 22:8). We can hardly suppose, however, that if the worship of anyone other than the Deity (e.g., Matt.18:26; Acts 10:28) were a sinful act, the apostle John would have been so unenlightened as to have been ignorant of this. In declining the apostle's worship and enjoining him to worship God, the messenger does not condemn all worship, however moderated and relatively expressed, except that which is directed toward God Himself. It is only that the messenger, who is himself a great personage and emissary of the Deity, under such august circumstances as these in which the glory of *God* is especially in view, deems all relative homage inappropriate in order that the apostle's worship might be undistractedly directed toward the One to Whom the glory inherent in all others is due (*cp* Eph.3:21).

In the future the Jews who worship Satan will be made to worship the faithful remnant who refuse to worship the great enemy of God: "Lo! I shall be making them that they will be arriving and *worshiping* before your feet, and they may know that I love you" (Rev.3:9).

Since all who are God's, whether Christ or His saints, are *worthy,* they may therefore be worshiped, as the direct fruit of His purpose and will. He who worships them worships the God Whose handiwork they are. He is glorified in their honor, as ones who ascribe their all to Him. J.R.C.

JOSEPH'S EXALTATION

41 + **It** ˫ᵇ**came** about ᶠ**at** the **end of** two ᵈᵃʸ**full years** +**that Pharaoh** was **dreaming. And behold,** he was **standing** ᵒⁿ**by the waterway,** 2 +**when, behold, seven young cows, lovely** in **appearance and plump of flesh,** were com**ing up from the waterway and** ˫ᵍ**grazed in** the **marsh grass.** 3 **And behold, seven other young cows, ugly** in **appearance and thin of flesh,** were com**ing up after them from the waterway; and they** ˫**stood beside the** other **young cows on** the **shore of the waterway.** 4 +**Then the** ⁷**seven**⁰ **young cows, ugly** in ˙**appearance and thin of** ˙**flesh,** ˫**ate** `**the seven young cows** that were **lovely** in ˙**appearance and plump.** +**At** this **Pharaoh** ˫**awoke.**

5 **He** fell ˫**asleep** +**again and** ˫**dreamed** a **second** time**. And behold, seven ears of grain, plump and good,** were com**ing up** ⁱ**on one stalk.** 6 **And behold, seven** ⁷**other**⁰ **ears of grain, thin and blasted**˩ by the **east** wind**,** were **sprouting after them.** 7 +**Then the** ⁷**seven**⁰ ˙**thin ears of grain** ˫**swallowed** up `**the seven** ˙**plump and** ˙**full ears of grain.** +**At** this **Pharaoh** ˫**awoke; and behold,** it had been a **dream.**

8 + **It** ˫ᵇ**occurred in** the **morning** +**when his spirit was** ˫**agitated,** +**that he** ˫**sent and** ˫**called** `**all** the **sacred scribes of Egypt and** `**all her wise** men**. And Pharaoh** ˫**related** `**his dream to them;** +**but** there **was no** one to **interpret**˩ `**them for Pharaoh.**

9 +**Then** the **chief of the cupbearers**˩ ˫**spoke** `to **Pharaoh,** › **saying**–**: I** am **reminded**˩ `of **my faults today.** 10 Once **Pharaoh was wrathful over his officials and** ˫ᵍ**put** `**me** ⁱ**under**

guard in the **house of** the **chief of the bodyguard, `me and** `the **chief of the bakers**ˡ**.** 11 + **We** ˡ**dreamed** a **dream in** the **same night,** both **I and he. We dreamed, each** one **his dream** *as***with** its own **interpretation.** 12 **And there,** `with **us,** was a **Hebrew lad,** a **servant ›of** the **chief of the bodyguard.** + **We** ˡ**related** them **to him, and he** ˡ**interpreted `our dreams for us; he interpreted** for **each** one **according** to **his dream.** 13 **And it** ˡ*b***came** about **just as he had interpreted for us, so it** *b***happened.** `For **me it** was ⁻**restoring** *on***to my post, and** `for **him it** was ⁻**hanging.**

14 +**So Pharaoh** ˡ**sent and** ˡ**called `Joseph.** + **They** *c***brought him** ˡ**rapidly from the confinement;** +**when he** had ˡ**shaved and** ˡ**changed his raiments,** + **he** ˡ**came to Pharaoh.** 15 **And Pharaoh** ˡ**said to Joseph: I dreamed** a **dream,** +**yet** there **is no** one to **interpret**ˡ **`it.** +**Now I** myself **have heard** it **› said⁻** *on***about you,** when **you** ˡ**hear** a **dream,** you are able **to interpret `it.**

16 + **Joseph** ˡ**answered to Pharaoh, › saying⁻:** It is **no**t **in me. Elohim, He shall answer** `for the **well-being of Pharaoh.**

17 +**Then Pharaoh** ˡ**spoke to Joseph: In my dream, behold, I** was **standing on** the **shore of the waterway.** 18 **And behold, from the waterway seven young cows, plump of flesh and lovely** in **shape,** were com**ing up, and they** ˡ**grazed in** the **marsh grass.** 19 **And behold,** *7***from the waterway***0* **seven other young cows, poor and very ugly** in **shape and scrawny of flesh,** were com**ing up after them. I have never seen** any **›so ugly as these in all** the **land of Egypt.** 20 **And** *7***the seven***0* **·scrawny and ·ugly young cows** ˡ**ate `the ·first seven ·plump young cows.** 21 +**When they** had ˡ**come** in**to their inward**s, + **it would not be known that they had come** in**to their inward**s, +**for their appearance** was **ugly just as** *i***at** the **start.** +**At** this **I** ˡ**awoke.**

22 *7*+**Then I** fell ˡ**asleep** a **second** time*n***, and I** ˡ**saw in my dream,** + **behold, seven ears of grain, full and good,** were com**ing up** *i***on one stalk.** 23 **And behold, seven** *7***other***0* **ears of grain, puny**ˡ**, thin** and **blasted**ˡ by the **east** wind, were **sprouting after them.** 24 **And the** *7***seven***0* **·thin ears of grain** ˡ**swallowed up `the seven ·good ears of grain.** +**When I** ˡ*sa***told** this **to the sacred scribes,** + there **was no** one to **unravel**ˡ it **for me.**

25 + **Joseph** ˡ**said to Pharaoh:** The **dream of Pharaoh, it** is but **one.** `*w***What the** One**, Elohim,** is about to **do**ˡ**, He has told to Pharaoh.** 26 **The seven good young cows, they** are **seven years. And the seven ·good ears of grain, they** are **seven years.** The **dream** *7***of Pharaoh***0***, it** is but **one.** 27 + **The seven ·scrawny and ·ugly young cows ·com**ing **up after them, they** are **seven years. And the seven ·empty ears of grain, blasted**ˡ by the **east** wind**, they shall** *b***be seven years of famine.** 28 **This** is **the word** *w***that I have spoken to Pharaoh:** *w***What the** One**, Elohim,** is about to **do**ˡ**, He has shown** `to **Pharaoh.** 29 **Behold, seven years** are **coming** with **great plenty in all** the **land of Egypt.** 30 +**But seven years of famine will arise after them; and all the plenty in** the **land of Egypt will be forgotten;** + **the famine will** *all***consume `the land.** 31 + **The plenty shall be unknown in** the **land** *f***in view of ·that ·famine thereafter; for it** will be **exceedingly heavy.** 32 + The *on***reason the dream** was **repeated⁻ to Pharaoh,** given *du***twice,** is **that the matter** is already **established**ˡ *f* **with the** One**, Elohim. And the** One**, Elohim,** will **make haste**ˡ **to do it.**

33 **And now let Pharaoh** *see***select** an **understanding and wise man, and** ˡ**set him over** the **land of Egypt.** 34 + **Let Pharaoh** *d***act and** *n***appoint supervisors over the land and** ⁻*m***take** a **fifth** *7***of all the produce***0* `of the **land of Egypt** *i***during the seven years of plenty.** 35 + **They should** get **together `all the food of ·these** *7***seven***0* **·good years** ·which are **coming, and they should heap up cereal** grain **under Pharaoh's hand** for **food in** the **cities, and they** must safe**guard** it. 36 + ·This **food will** *b***be ›** a *n***reserve for** the **land**

›against the seven years of famine which shall [b]come in the **land of Egypt,** so **+that the land should not be cut** off **in** the **famine.**

37 + **The [sp]proposal** seemed **[l]good in** the **eyes of Pharaoh and in** the **eyes of all his officials;** 38 **and Pharaoh [l]said to his officials: Shall we find** one **like this,** a **man in whom** is the **spirit of Elohim?**

39 **+Then Pharaoh [l]said to Joseph: After Elohim [c]let `you know– `all this,** there **is no** one so **understanding and wise as you.** 40 **2You´ shall [b]be over my house, and all my people shall obey [on]at your bidding. But** in **the throne I shall be greater [f]than you.**

41 **Pharaoh +further [l]said to Joseph: See! I have [g]set `you [7]today[0] over all** the **land of Egypt.** 42 **+Then Pharaoh [l]took off `his ring from [on] his hand and [lg]put `it on Joseph's hand. +** **He** had **`him [l]clothed** in **garments of cambric, and he [l]placed** a **decorative** chain **of gold [on]about his neck.** 43 **+ He [c]had `him [l]ride in the second chariot [w]that he ›had; and they [l]called** out **before him: Attention! +Thus** he was **[g]putting– `him over all** the **land of Egypt.**

44 **+Moreover Pharaoh [l]said to Joseph: I** am the **Pharaoh, +yet without your [fr]consent no[t] man shall raise up `his hand +or `his foot in all** the **land of Egypt.**

45 **+ Pharaoh [l]called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah, and he [l]gave › him ›as wife `Asenath, daughter of Potiphera priest of On. +Then Joseph** began to **[l]go out over** the **land of Egypt.** 46 **+ Joseph** was **thirty years old [i]when he stood– before Pharaoh king of Egypt. +After Joseph [l]went out from** the **presence of Pharaoh, + he** traveled **[l]across [i]** the **whole land of Egypt.**

47 **+While the earth [ld]yielded ›in overabundance [i]during the seven years of plenty,** 48 **+ he** got **[l]together `all** the **food of [7]the[n] seven years [7]of copiousness[0] [w]that came** to **be in** the **land of Egypt. And he [lg]stored** the **food in** the **cities; +** the **food** from the **field [w]that** was **round about [it] the city, he [g]stored in** the **midst of it.** 49 **+Thus Joseph was heaping up cereal** grain**, exceedingly much–, like** the **sand of the sea, until [t] he halted › counting– [off], for** there **was no** more **enumeration** possible**.**

50 + **Two sons were born to Joseph [i] ere** the **year of the famine [l]came. [w] Asenath, daughter of Poti-phera priest of On, bore** them **for him.** 51 + **Joseph [l]called `**the **name of the firstborn Manasseh: For Elohim has made me oblivious `**of **all my toil and `all my father's house.** 52 + **He [l]called `**the **name of the second Ephraim: For Elohim has [c]made me fruitful in** the **land of my humiliation.**

53 **+Then the seven years of plenty [w]that had come** to **be in** the **land of Egypt [l]concluded,** 54 **and** the **seven years of the famine [l]started to come, just as Joseph had said. +** There **[lb]was famine in all ˙lands, +but in all** the **land of Egypt** there **[b]was** found **bread.** 55 **+When** the **whole land of Egypt was famishing** too**, +then the people [l]cried to Pharaoh for bread. +Yet Pharaoh [l]said to all Egyptians: Go to Joseph; [w]what he [l]says to you, you shall do.**

56 **+Meanwhile the famine, it had come** to **be over** the **entire** surface **of the earth. +When the famine** held **[l]fast in** the **land of Egypt, + Joseph [l]opened [7]`all the storehouses~[n], `all [w]that** was **in them, and he [l]rationed out** grain **to** the **Egyptians.** 57 **+Also all the earth came** to[d] **Egypt, to Joseph, to purchase [t]because the famine** held **fast in all the earth.**

HELPING GOD

JOSEPH, no doubt, looked upon his luck in jail as the direct intervention of Elohim, and enjoyed it. He, like all of us, tried to help matters by doing what he could to facilitate them. So he had begged the chief cupbearer to remember him, and to speak to Pharaoh, to right the wrong done to him (40:14-15). But, alas! Human gratitude and help is vain, so the cupbearer lets two years go by without ful-

filling his promise (41:1,9). All that Joseph hoped for was release from his prison. But God had something much greater than that in view.

All of this was only preliminary to the fulfillment of *Joseph's* dreams (41:8). And this was brought about by *Pharaoh's* double dream.

PHARAOH'S DOUBLE DREAM

Egypt was famous for the wisdom of its wise men, and, no doubt, they were very clever in their way, as was shown later on, when they sought to duplicate the signs done by Moses and Aaron by their occultism (Ex.7:11,12). But they did not even claim to be able to interpret Pharaoh's dreams (41:8). It was necessarily so, for Yahweh was preparing for the elevation of Joseph above them.

THE FUTURE

The future is in the hands of Yahweh. Only to a very limited degree can the human intellect presage what is about to occur. Even with all the data which is gathered to enable the weatherman to predict heat or cold, storm or drought, even he may be mistaken. The main points in the type here are the ignorance and helplessness of the wise men in view of the impending crisis, and the elevation of Joseph as the saviour of the world, for it was in all the earth (41:57). Corresponding to this is the great affliction of the future, and the elevation of the Nazarene to the Suzerainty over all the earth. Even now there are symptoms of the great disturbances which are about to destroy all human governments and prepare for the kingdom of the Son of Mankind.

JOSEPH'S HUMILITY

Humility is the sign of genuine greatness (Gen.41:16). Only those who recognize and acknowledge the only Source

of true wisdom are really wise. Like Joseph, they should insist on it, that the glory be ascribed to God.

PHARAOH'S DREAMS

The two dreams are one in this, that they are not only concerned with food, but also with famine. The seven plump cows and spikes could be found only when there was a surplus of food for man and beast, whereas the evil-looking ones were such as were not known in Egypt with its waterways. Again the number, as in the previous dreams, is concerned with *time*, which could not be more or less than years. Now that we know the answer, it seems very simple and suggestive, but the wise men of Egypt, even if they had guessed it, would hardly care to be the bearers of bad news. That is the difference between a man of God and a worldly prognosticator. As there were seven good years ahead, there were probably no indications of the bad ones to follow. False prophets might have guessed the first seven, but would not understand the second.

JOSEPH'S ADVICE

Joseph was now in a most advantageous position to demand something for himself, and he deserved it. Egypt had enslaved him and imprisoned him, so now the smartest thing to do was to capitalize on his good fortune. The wisest course, however, was to ask nothing for his service. He recognized that it was not his, but came from Elohim, so he left his further fate in the hands of Yahweh. But he did offer Egypt the advice which the occasion called for. His plan was as simple as it proved to be practical (41:34-36). He did not simply save a half of the food in the fat years to provide the same amount in the lean ones. *Some* food would probably be grown in the lean years, so that with care and abstinence, it could sustain life. Any supervisor who would take a half of their food from the populace for

seven years might arouse much opposition and have difficulty in storing so great an amount.

JOSEPH GLORIFIED

Joseph was, figuratively speaking, "buried" in the prison, severed from the society of his fellows, until he was called upon to reign. In a sense Pharaoh called him out from among the dead and set him at his own right hand. Elohim could easily have given him the throne of Pharaoh himself, instead of the second place. But that would not have agreed with the Antitype. Christ will not be the Supreme Subjector, even in the coming kingdom. He will be the highest *To*-Subjector, for His commission is not to subject all to *Himself*, but to His Father, the Subjector Supreme (*cf* 1 Cor.15:27,28). Yet Joseph had practical control of all in Egypt (Gen.41:39-44), even as Christ will be Suzerain over all the earth in the millennial kingdom.

The psalmist has celebrated this period of Joseph's career in immortal verse as follows:

16 + **He** ˡ**called** forth a **famine on the earth;**
He broke off the **entire stock of bread.**
17 **He sent** a **man before them,**
Joseph, who **was sold** ˃**as** a **slave.**
18 **They humbled his feet in fetter**s**;**
His soul was inserted in **iron**
19 **Until** the **era** when **His word came**⁻ to pass**,**
When the **saying of Yahweh had refined him.**
20 The **king sent and** ᶜ**let him** ˡ**loose;**
The **ruler**ˡ **of** the **peoples** + ˡ**opened his** way**.**
21 **He** ᵖˡ**constituted him lord** ˃**over his house**
And rulerˡ ⁱ**among all his acquisition**s**,**
22 **To** ᶻ**discipline~ his chiefs** ⁱ**at his soul**'s desire**,**
So +**that he should make his elders wise.**

(Psalm 105:16-22, CV)

JOSEPH'S NEW HONORS

Joseph, whose Hebrew name means ADD-er, from the stem *sph* (which may allude to him as the gatherer of the grain during the seven good years), is now given an appellation, *Tzphnth-phonch*, which is probably Egyptian, but is recorded in the Septuagint as *Psonthom panech*, which might mean Saviour-of-the-World. This would be an appropriate title for him, and especially for his future great Antitype, Whom he only foreshadowed. Christ had no title exactly like this, but He is, indeed, the Saviour of the world, not only of those who lived in Joseph's day, who were saved from starvation, but of all of Adam's race, throughout the eons. And He saves them not merely from dying, like Joseph, but out of death after they died.

JOSEPH'S WIFE

Joseph's elevated social and political rank called for a corresponding marital alliance. Pharaoh himself gave him *Asnth*, daughter of *Phuti-phro*, priest of *An*, or On. The Septuagint translates this last name *Helion poleos*, Sun city, usually called Heliopolis, situated not far from modern Cairo. As there is no word for *city* in the Hebrew text, it is more than possible that he was simply the priest of the sun, and that this made him the religious head of Egypt. Then the type would be even more complete, for Israel as a nation is the wife of Yahweh, and will act as a priestly nation as well as exercising the political power.

AGE

Joseph, like our Lord, was not commissioned until he was of age, that is, thirty years (Luke 3:23). This was the rule in Israel. A man was not enrolled as such until he had reached maturity (Num.4:3-4). In the present spiritual service, which does not depend on physical growth as much as on spiritual maturity, this does not always apply,

except to subjection. Paul wrote to Timothy, "Let no one be despising your youth" (1 Tim.4:12). But here, also, maturity is imperative, that is, spiritual maturity, which, alas! is almost unknown in Christendom.

OCCUPATION

Even in the administration of his office, Joseph may be compared to our Lord. He fared forth from the face of Pharaoh, and passed through all the land of Egypt. So Christ fared forth from the face of His Father, and made known a somewhat similar message to the people, for, after they had rejected the *good* news as to the nearness of the kingdom, He made known the seven years of fearful judgment before it could come. These are still impending over the unbelieving nation. Both Joseph and Jesus left their homes and went directly to the people with their double message.

CEREALS

It is interesting to note the *kind* of food stored up for the famine. When the Israelites were in Egypt they ate cucumbers, and melons and onions and garlic (Num.11:5). Such foods as these would hardly keep for seven years. They appealed to the palate and the soul. So the Israelites despised the heavenly manna of the wilderness. It may be that the region where they dwelt, in the low delta, at Goshen, was especially adapted to vegetables. But Egypt as a whole was famous, in ancient times, as the *granary* of the world. Vegetables, besides rotting readily, were bulky and lower in vital value. But cereals contain a germ which will keep for many years and will reproduce indefinitely. Daniel ate such *seed* food. I find that four spoonfuls suffice for a breakfast when a small quantity of wheat germ is added. Therefore Joseph ordered cereals to be grown and stored in the cities. Is not this suggestive of our life-giving spiritual sustenance, in Christ?

THE SONS OF JOSEPH

Joseph has the exclusive honor of providing two sons for the twelve-tribed holy nation. His own name, Joseph, ADD-er, is a prediction of his fecundity. Although Scripture (*cf* Gen.48:5-22) only alludes to his having more descendants than these, it is his *younger* son Ephraim (FRUITS), whose name by its plural ending (-im) suggests much fruitfulness. The name of the firstborn, Manasseh (Oblivion), contains a most precious retrospection. Like Joseph, we will in the glory also be oblivious of all the trials that once plagued us and the tribulations of the past. These can no longer torment us, but rather increase our enjoyment of a bliss which will never cease. Had Joseph been born to the purple he might have become a useless, fruitless, dissatisfied heir. But his slavery and false imprisonment enabled him to fully appreciate the grace and glory which was his from the hand of God.

We would naturally expect that Joseph's sons would each get a small portion of the land, compared with the others. On the contrary, Manasseh received the largest portion of all, both east and west of the Jordan. The combined number of the two tribes was more than any one of them.

In the story of Joseph we see a beautiful illustration of Yahweh Elohim's dealings with one who, like the Messiah, always went about seeking to do the will of his Father and his Subjector. In it we can observe the divine order. Subjection and slavery must *precede* glory and honor. From it we can better understand why even God's blessed Son first had to be humbled and rejected. Indeed, those who receive the highest honors now, without earning them, will someday have to abdicate to Him Who was willing to be Last before taking His rightful place as Head of all humanity. The first shall be last and the last shall be first.

A. E. Knoch

THE PENTATEUCH

The *Concordant Version of the Pentateuch,* the first five books of the Sacred Scriptures, is now at the printers. It should be available by the end of the year. These books are sometimes identified as the Five Books of Moses, but scripturally they are referred to simply as "The Law," or (transliterating the Hebrew term for "law") "The Torah." But as the most ancient portion of God's written Word, they are composed of more than God's code of instructions to Israel, for they bring before us all the revelation of God as the One Who has a clear plan of operation and carries it forward.

No translation can perfectly represent the thoughts of the Original, and indeed no Hebrew manuscript extant today is without error due to the centuries of copying and re-copying of the text by hand. But it is our hope that the CV will make a significant contribution to the reader's appreciation of God's Word.

We urge those who use our Version to read each text in full as given in idiomatic English. Then, by becoming familiar with the information provided by our Abbreviation Key and introduction, the passage might be read in a more literal form. The effort will likely not change the sense but may impress it on the mind by the exercise of reading the passage at different levels.

For example, our translation of the first half of Genesis 1:31 is: "And Elohim saw all that He had made; and behold, it was very good." Reading the boldface words only and interpreting the signs and abbreviations, the whole passage might then be read somewhat as follows: "And Elohim was seeing all which He had done, and behold, very good."

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THE SIN OF JOSEPH'S BROTHERS

NEXT to the cross of Christ, the story of Joseph gives us the clearest insight into the function of sin in God's plan and illustrates how a dastardly and cruel act may be justified when viewed in the light of His purpose. Joseph's brothers knew nothing of the famine which would come. They had not the slightest desire to fulfill the dreams which made the favorite brother their lord. Indeed, they wished to prevent the possibility of their fulfillment. So they conspired to kill him.

But this was not according to the purpose of God, so He put it into the heart of Reuben to deliver Joseph, with the hope of returning him to his father. Yet this, again, was not in line with God's plan, so He sent the Midianites and put Judah in the way of making some profit out of the transaction. So Joseph was sold into Egypt. Is it not a sad and sordid scene of sin? Plotting to slay their own flesh and blood because of his dreams! Actually accepting twenty pieces of silver for the darling of their father's heart!

Joseph besought them and was in anguish of soul, but they would not hear (Gen.42:21). Jacob, their father, rent his clothes, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days, and refused to be comforted. "I shall go down mourning to my son, to the unseen" (Gen.37:35).

Thus his father wept for him. And later, when they wished to take Benjamin to Egypt, his heart wailed forth the lament that is among the saddest in the annals of sin: "My son shall not go down with you since his brother is dead, and he is remaining, he alone. If mishap would befall

him on the way which you go, then you would bring down my gray hairs with affliction to the unseen" (Gen.42:38). How tragic the consequences of this sin were in the eyes of Jacob may be seen from his own words. "It is *me* that you bereave. Joseph, he is no more, and Simeon, he is no more. And you would take Benjamin away. *On me come all these things*" (Gen.42:36).

So it appeared. And so it appears to us when tragedy stalks into our lives and robs us of our friends or our wealth or our health and leaves us helpless. *All seems against us*, when, if we only knew God's mind, we would see that *all is for us.*

There is a blessed future for which all our trials are a preparation. Nay, the very sins of men are material in His hands with which to work out their salvation. A God Who can accomplish His ends and bless His creatures only when they obey Him and fall in line with His revealed plans, would have little opportunity to act in this evil eon, and would be submerged in sin and rebellion. It is the glory of God's wisdom to harness His unsuspecting enemies to His purpose, and use their opposition to prosper His plans.

JOSEPH'S JOY

How triumphantly Joseph greets his brothers! What a marvelous insight into God's ways was granted to him! Instead of harboring a grudge against them for their treatment of him, instead of condemning them for their cruel conduct, he reassures them. "And now do not be grieved nor let it be hot in your eyes that you sold me hither, because Elohim has sent me on before you for the preservation of life" (Gen.45:5).

Here we have the divine side of this sin, which is, after all, the *actual* truth in regard to it. Apparently, his brothers were "responsible" for his exile in Egypt. But, had they known that this would only further the fulfillment of

his dreams, they would never have done as they did (*cp* 1 Cor.2:8). Their motives were all wrong. Their sin was grievous. But their act was actually good. It was so good that God claims it as His own.

As his brothers are not fully consoled, Joseph repeats the great truth: "But Elohim sent me on before you to set up for you a remnant on earth and to preserve lives for you in a great deliverance. So now, not *you* sent me here, but the One, Elohim" (Gen.45:7,8). The plain inference seems to be that, if Joseph had not been sent into Egypt, their lives would have been forfeited to the famine. Egypt itself would have succumbed, and the countries about would have sent in vain for sustenance. All the promises to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob would have failed if Joseph had not gone down to Egypt (Gen.45:7,8).

Is there another act in the lives of the patriarchs so vital to their welfare, or so essential to God's glory, as this sin? What good deed of theirs compares with it in its beneficent effects? The marvelous truth stands forth sharp and clear. *The sending of Joseph into Egypt was actually God's act, absolutely necessary for their salvation. Yet that very act was apparently a heinous crime against God and against Joseph and against their father Jacob.*

As a sin it apparently greatly wronged Joseph and seemed to rob Jacob of his beloved son. As the act of God it made Joseph the saviour of the world and preserved Jacob and all his sons and their families from starvation.

THE POWER OF GOD'S GRACE

All this looks as if we are lauding sin, as though we were saying "Let us do evil that good may come." In reality it is quite the reverse. In practice it prevents sin. Whenever the grace and wisdom of our Saviour God is extolled, men are not wanting who think they would take advantage of His love if they believed it. But when it grips their hearts

they lose all desire for the license which it is supposed to give. Their amazement at His wisdom reveals the folly of any attempt on *their* part to justify sin, and they have no inclination to put Him on trial.

The effect of this truth on the future is indescribably grand. Eternal, irremediable, omnipotent sin is a conception so terrible that it threatens the sanity of anyone who dares to give it earnest consideration. Yet, even if we see God's power to cope with sin, in most of our minds we picture it as an ineradicable stain on the universe forever. We imagine that its evil effects will linger eternally, and that we shall look back with sorrow and regret that it was ever allowed to enter the creation.

Such a cloud will not darken our sky at the consummation. Sin spells sorrow and suffering now, and it is well that it should. But then not only some sins, but all sin will be justified. It will not, like the sale of Joseph into Egypt, save mankind from a famine of physical food, but from that greater lack, ignorance of God, and give them a realization of the appalling power and wonderful wisdom which are at the service of His dauntless love.

This simple story supplies the answer to the difficulty which some experience in believing that God does evil (not sin) in order to accomplish good. We are often accused of teaching that "we should be doing evil that good may be coming" (Rom.3:8). Here we have an evil act which brought about much good. But we recognize that this good was attained only through the direct operation of God. Apart from this the sin of Joseph's brothers would have produced nothing but suffering and death.

We should not do evil and trust blind chance to turn it to good. It does seem impossible for a man to do evil and not sin. He has no control over an act once it has occurred. Even a good deed, done with the best of motives, may lead to disaster. All we can do is to commit our actions

to the hand of God, Who alone is able to guide them to a happy outcome.

But shall we thus limit God? Paul spoke of *us,* not *Him.* That God does evil is so often taught in the Scriptures that we feel like apologizing for insisting on a fact so plain on the face of revelation, notwithstanding that others seem to think that we are slandering Him when we believe His words (2 Kings 6:33; Neh.13:18; Jer.19:3; 21:10; 32:42; 36:3,31; 39:16; 40:2; 42:17; 44:2,11; Lam.3:38; Ezek.14:22; Micah 1:12). And anyone who will note carefully will see that, when *He* does evil, good always results. All the evil He brought upon Israel was for their welfare.

A good deal has been made of the sin of rejecting God's Word. Indeed, there are some who would question whether eternal torment applies to any except "Christ *rejectors.*" Sir Robert Anderson was one of these. So we may be sure that obstinacy or stubbornness is one of the most fatal of sins. But the Scriptures do not make the division which theology has attempted, which brings in a host of difficulties. How much light must a man have before he is a rejector? If he hears one clear gospel message, is that enough? What is a "clear" gospel message? Some of the "heathen" have never heard of Christ. If they "hear" of Him, does that make them eligible to eternal torment, or must they hear a given formula to be doomed forever?

To what ridiculous shifts are we driven when we embark on a theological investigation! In the Scriptures, the *amount* of light is not in question. *All* men have some illumination, and all are declared to be obstinate or stubborn. This, we submit, is the greatest evil under the sun. Yet God has no hesitancy in declaring that *He* brought this upon them. "For God locks up all together in stubbornness . . ." (Rom.11:32). In their own consciousness, of course, they think that they have a right to think as they choose. It is not according to God's purpose that they should be conscious of His con-

trol. Now why is this evil done? "That He should be merciful to all" (Rom.11:32).

Joseph's brothers did evil, yet God meant it for good. We do evil, yet God will transmute it into good. Yea, even when we sin, grace superabounds. But we do not sin to tempt further grants of grace, neither should we do evil in fond expectation that it will eventuate in good. As we shall show, evil and sin have their limits, beyond which they would not react to the welfare of the creature or the glory of God.

FOOLISH REASONING

How foolish if Joseph's brothers had reasoned as some would have us do today! They should have said, "If it turned out such a great blessing to throw Joseph into a pit and sell him into slavery, why, let us assassinate him now, and perchance it will turn out even better than our previous sin." What madness would this have been! Yet that is precisely the difference between believing that God can and does do evil to evolve good, and saying "Let us do evil that good may come."

At first Joseph's brethren would look back on their treatment of him with mingled feelings of sorrow and joy. Sorrow for their own sin, for the sufferings of Jacob and Joseph. Joy for their salvation from starvation, for the restoration of Jacob's long lost son and for his exaltation. But when they realize that God justifies their act by making it the source of blessing not only for themselves but for Jacob and Joseph as well, all regrets would vanish, though their condemnation of themselves would increase.

The treatment of Joseph by his brothers is a precious type of the death and resurrection of the Son of God. Joseph's brothers did not actually kill him, even as Abraham did not slay Isaac, but in both cases there was the intent of the heart, which is what counts with God. The brothers typify

the nation that brought Christ's blood upon their heads. Jacob represents the Father, and Joseph the Son.

It must be noted that the only ones who suffered unjustly because of this sin are the ones who did not commit it. Jacob had no hand in the crime, yet he suffered from its effects. The loss of his son caused anguish of heart which but feebly reminds us of the awful gulf which separated the Father and His Beloved at Golgotha.

In Joseph we see the suffering Saviour. Far from having any part in the sin of his brothers, he is the spotless victim who suffers most of all. But his suffering is for their sin, not his own. And it is essential to the justification of his brothers, for it is only through his distress that God works out the happy result, which vindicates their act. They are not justified through the blind unfeeling forces of providence happening to counteract the normal results of sin. They are freed from all guilt through the vicarious sufferings of Joseph, who did not deserve, yet endured, the consequences of their sin.

They deserved banishment from their father's house: Joseph bore it. They deserved to lose their liberty: Joseph languished within prison walls. They deserved to suffer: Joseph endured it.

So let us freely acknowledge that there is a temporary element of injustice so far as Joseph is concerned. The brothers never could do anything to justify his sufferings. If God can justify his brothers He also must do something to justify Himself as regards Joseph.

Hence Joseph is exalted to the second place in Egypt. The suffering of Joseph leads to the justification of the sin of Joseph's brothers. The exaltation of Joseph leads to the justification of God in laying the burden of their sin on him. However much he may have suffered in the pit and in the prison, how happy he must have been to become the saviour of his family! And when all was done, he him-

self would be first to justify God for the anguish and distress which brought so much blessing in its train.

GOOD OUT OF SUFFERING

So we see that the sin of mankind can be justified through the suffering of a Saviour, and the apparent injustice to the Saviour is fully compensated by God Himself in awarding to Him the highest place at His right hand.

Current theological expressions have done much to drag down our conception of the "atonement." The very term atonement, so freely used, betrays the spiritual poverty of those who use it. In this type, the sufferings of Joseph, his absence from his father's house, may be said to have covered or concealed the sin of his brothers for the time. But what is that compared with the uncovering of the sin and its justification? There are phases in which this greater grace is the very opposite of atonement.

The commercial view of the "atonement" barters so much suffering for so much sin. Christ is said to have died "in our room and stead." There is no need to explain how one Man could suffer in such quantity, or how anything beyond mere negative escape from judgment can come of such a "transaction." The death of Christ was not in our stead. The appropriate preposition is not *anti*, INSTEAD-OF, but *huper,* OVER, *on behalf of.*

If Joseph had suffered in the place of his brothers, that would not only have been a great injustice to him, but it would have left them in the land, doomed to starvation, no whit better off than before they sinned. But since, under the guiding hand of God he suffered *for* them, it led, not merely to a release from the penalty of their sin, but to a great deliverance from the great evil which was impending over all. Through his trials they were justified and he was glorified, and they in him.

A. E. Knoch

FAITH'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

GOD'S *reckoning of righteousness* to us who are believing (Rom.4:5) has its basis in His work of justification channeled through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.3:21-28).

So also, *our believing* is wholly dependent on and centered in the faithful obedience of Christ Jesus to the death of the cross. Our faith is not the basis of justification, but rather His. Our faith is a matter of resting on His faith-obedience. Our believing of the evangel is the occasion chosen by God for putting to our account the justification established by the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners, and in so doing filling us with happiness.

David spoke of such happiness in Psalm 32:1,2. But the happiness we have is even greater than that which David envisioned. God has manifested His righteousness to us through the faith of Jesus Christ. We are justified in God's grace through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus. Consequently, we see that the happiness which God has given us is solidly established. Lying behind it is God's sending of His Son for sinners culminating in the death, entombment and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

GOD'S FAVOR OF HAPPINESS

This happiness, then, is it for the Circumcision,
or for the Uncircumcision also?
For we are saying,
To Abraham faith is reckoned for righteousness.
How, then, is it reckoned?
Being in circumcision or in uncircumcision?
Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. (Rom.4:9,10)

GENESIS 15:1-5

Long ago, God initiated the pattern of this work of grace, this happiness for sinners who are reckoned righteous by faith apart from works of law. The extraordinary favor given to Abraham in Genesis 15:6 shows what is in God's heart for His chosen ones. For Israel in their experience in the present life, faith is firmly connected with signs and works, just as it was later for Abraham. But for us faith remains as the sole channel for God's reckoning of righteousness. Those of the Circumcision continue with their father Abraham into circumcision. But we remain back with him as he was in Genesis 15:6, in uncircumcision, where he is found to be our father in spirit.

In Genesis 15:1-3 the scene is set. We see Yahweh and Abraham (Abram), these two and these two only, and we hear a message from Yahweh while Abraham speaks twice:

After these things the **word of Yahweh** *came to* **Abram,** *in a vision,* **saying:** *You must not be fearing, Abram! I am your Shield, your exceedingly, increased Reward.*

Abram **replied:** *My Lord Yahweh, what shall You give to me? I am going heirless, and the successor to my house—he is Damascus Eliezer.*

And Abram **added***: Behold, You have given no seed to me; and now a son of my household will take over from me.*

The words of Yahweh are full of glory and strength. But the words of Abraham express anxiety and uncertainty. Paul does not direct attention to these verses, but they are of value to us in providing an honest picture of the human heart. Flawless and vital faith in what God says is not something that comes to us readily. It must come as a gracious gift from God.

The scene remains the same in Genesis 15:4,5, where we hear a second word from Yahweh which, in responding to Abraham, directs attention back to the message of good

He has for him. Then we see Yahweh bringing Abraham outside where He speaks a third time and a fourth time, expanding on the glory of His promise. But now we hear nothing further from Abram:

Yet here the **word of Yahweh** *came to him* **saying:** *Not this one shall take over from you, but rather the one who shall come forth from your internal parts, he shall take over from you.*

Then He brought him forth outside and **said:** *Now look up toward the heavens and count off the stars if you can number them.*

And He **promised** *him: Thus shall become your seed.*

GENESIS 15:6

It is verse 6 that Paul cites in Romans 4. Here there are no words being spoken by Abraham as the words of God resound in his heart. Here also there are no words from God, but rather two acts: Abraham's *believing* and God's *reckoning*, which the apostle will bring to our attention again and again:

Now Abram **believed** *on Elohim,*
and He **reckoned** *it to him for righteousness.*

At first Abraham had responded to Yahweh's good word of assurance with a question that implied an element of criticism, and then he added another word almost of complaint. But now, as God had arranged the circumstances, under the magnificence of the countless stars which Abraham was instructed to count, the mind of the man who is named "Father-High" is directed away from his uncertainties. Now Abraham's discouragement and impatience over the fact that he has no children are lost as he seizes upon the words of God in faith. The hopelessness of ever having children, and the vast weight of evidence against it ever happening are transformed by the message God

has been giving him into expectation and assurance. Thus Abraham accepts God's evangel to him as true, without question or qualification.

In Genesis 15:6 we see Abraham at his best, when he does nothing and has nothing to say and simply accepts God's good word of promise as truth.

And God reckons righteousness to him. What precedes and what follows as to Abraham's mind and his acts are irrelevant to the act of God in reckoning Abraham's faith for righteousness. God relates the blessing solely to the moment of Abraham's rest and delight in believing what appears to be impossible but must be so because God said it.

BELIEVING THE EVANGEL OF GOD

The evangel of God has come to us, saying (in effect):

You must not be fearing! I am your Justifier, your exceedingly, increased Giver of grace, gratuitously and yet righteously, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.

This is a very good word, but it is not easy to believe. Like Abram we may look to God and ask for something tangible, or at least a vision or experience to give us assurance. Or, even more likely, we might look to Him to ask for something difficult that we might do (but not too difficult) in order to feel more worthy.

Indeed we may wish to follow Abraham a bit beyond Genesis 15:6 and ask of God, as he asked in verse 8, "Whereby shall I know that I shall enjoy" what You have promised?

But God replies (in effect):

Not by works are you saved, but in grace, by My approach present in the giving of My Son. Now look at this evangel, and be glorying in expectation of My glory. You are justified by the faith of Jesus apart from works of law.

Nevertheless, we may desire something more than the words of promise, if not the sign of circumcision, at least

something we can do to assure us that the promise is safely and securely sealed. Yet again God replies (in effect) as written in Ephesians 1:13,14):

On believing the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation, you are sealed, in Christ, with the holy spirit of promise, which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured.

Oh, our Father and our God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we believe it.

FAITH

"And what is faith? Is it a settled confidence that God will do what we desire? The certainty that He will bend His will to acknowledge ours? This certainly *is* faith—faith in *ourselves.* Self-confidence has long arrayed itself in gospel garb and played the part of faith. But faith in God despises self and leans alone on Him—not on our thoughts of Him or on His works—but on His steadfast Word. Fixed firm upon the Word of God, faith has a fearless, steadfast stand. Faith elsewhere placed will totter to its fall. The very throne of God is not more firmly founded than His Word, and we believe Him true.

"Because we believe Him, He reckons us righteous in His sight. How blessed to be righteous! Yet how much more blessed still to have it as a gift from God. The merest token which speaks the love of some dear friend is transmuted into a priceless treasure in our eyes. His great gift—itself so precious—should magnify the love that prompted it."[1]

Faith is a gift. A firm and fixed faith in what God has said to us is the greatest of spiritual blessings. But what He has said to us is not based on our faith. Because the evangel has its basis solely in the faith of Jesus Christ Who

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.52, p.158.

died for our sakes, rather than on our faith, thus our faith is freed to grow. It is not burdened with self-examination and concern about its quality, as though to suppose God might take back what He has given. For our uneven faith centers upon the perfect and steady faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. And for this very reason it grows and matures. Because we focus on what God has done in and through Jesus Christ, we become more and more settled in faith and the peace and happiness it brings.

IN UNCIRCUMCISION

So we remain with Abraham in uncircumcision (even if we are born of the Circumcision in flesh). We do not go with him as his sons into Genesis 17:3-27 where Yahweh laid down the covenant which called for Abraham, on his part, to be circumcised. (The blessings God, on His part, would grant to Israel, He will grant in His faithfulness, quite apart from Israel's faithfulness to His words of law, or lack of faithfulness, but that is not made clear until later.) Nevertheless, to repeat, those termed the Uncircumcision (*cf* Rom.3:30) remain with Abraham in uncircumcision, apart from works of law.

FOOTPRINTS OF ABRAHAM

However, as for Abraham:

A. . . . he obtained the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which was in uncircumcision,
B. for him to be the father of all those who are believing through uncircumcision, for righteousness to be reckoned to them,
A. and the father of the Circumcision,
B. not to those of the Circumcision only, but to those also who are observing the elements of the faith in the footprints of our father Abraham, in uncircumcision.

By the arrangement of Romans 4:11,12, given above, I have tried to indicate the distinction Paul recognizes between the Circumcision and Uncircumcision while still viewing them as one in the basic matter of faith. In the sections labeled *A* what is said refers to the Circumcision only, but in the *B* sections the apostle brings in those who are believers apart from any requirements of circumcision.

The sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness reckoned to Abraham is significant for the nation of Israel, Abraham's descendants according to the flesh. "Jews signs are requesting," (1 Cor.1:22), and God gives them signs, supportive to the flesh. For Israel, they follow in the footprints of Abraham in believing and also in receiving a sign that involves the flesh and indeed flesh-obedience.

We, of the Uncircumcision, are not given a sign that involves doing something in the flesh. We follow the footprints of Abraham only as they were laid down in Genesis 15:6. There are no works of law required of us in order to assure us that God does not reckon sin against us. The promise of God spoken to us in the evangel, which we are believing is not sealed by anything we do. But in believing the evangel we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise itself. With the evangel God Himself seals us with His spirit which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, an internal, invisible effect of believing the evangel (Eph.1:13,14).

THE ELEMENTS OF THE FAITH

The observing of the elements according to Acts 21:24 was understood as keeping the instructions of the law given through Moses. But even before the instructions concerning vows and indeed before the instruction concerning circumcision, the elementary act of believing was set forth, not as a matter of instruction, but as a favor of God given

to His chosen ones. Yes believing is an act. But it is not an act that can be instructed. It is an act that can only be graciously granted by God (Phil.1:29), and it rests wholly on the great work of deliverance that is in Christ Jesus.

Those who are observing these elements of the faith, that is, the element of believing that justification is gratuitously granted to us in God's grace, the element of believing that God is just in being our Justifier, for He justifies us as He sees us as beneficiaries of the faith of Jesus, the element of recognizing that we cannot do anything to add to what God has done in the giving of His Son—those who are observing these elements of the faith are greatly blessed. We are left speechless, without room for worry or complaint.

This pattern of faith displayed by Abraham in Genesis 15:6 is always under attack. Abraham himself did not always rest fully and confidently in what God said to him. But when God instructed him to take his son, his only one, whom he loved, and offer him up as an ascent offering on the mountain in the land of Moriah, it was surely Abraham's believing of God's words in Genesis 15:1-5 (as well as earlier words of promise) that sustained and strengthened him. In a similar way, when we are given hard experiences which bring pain and sorrow or struggle, and which seem to belie the message of salvation God has spoken to us, we will find peace and strength in placing our faith in what God has said concerning the faith of His Son. The believing of the evangel is the beginning of our joy and peace and spiritual strength for endurance and patience and expectation, and it is this for us all along the way in our present lives. We do not have signs in the flesh or signs observable to the senses. We have only God's word itself, and the precious gift of believing that word. But that is more than enough.

D.H.H.

THOUGHTS ON PRAYER
Part II

But, according as it is written, That which the eye did not perceive, and the ear did not hear, and to which the heart of man did not ascend—whatever God makes ready for those who are loving Him. Yet to us God reveals them through His spirit, for the spirit is searching all, even the depths of God. (1 Cor.2:9,10)

PRAYER is communication that is directed toward God. It is one of the practical blessings that He gives to believers. God desires for everyone within the household of faith to talk with Him. He has placed a high value on prayer. He gives His attention to prayer.

All is out of God (Rom.11:36). This includes prayer. There are many factors which form the foundation of prayer offered toward God. Let us consider three of these: a knowledge of God's purpose, trust in Him, and the favor of being in God's presence. All of these are provided to us by God.

God's purpose for creation is to be All in all. The means that He has designed in order to achieve His purpose reflect His wisdom. A knowledge of what He has planned for us and how He procures it for us, is important in order to have an intelligent conversation with Him. A knowledge of His purpose even as of certain time-related objectives has been given to some, whether through direct revelation, as with Moses and Paul, or through His written Word as He speaks to us today.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S PURPOSE

God's purpose is revealed to us in 1 Corinthians 15:28: He will be *All* in all.

A knowledge that God's purpose and objectives are achieved through the faith of His Son, is critical information that should be used when praying to Him. This is because prayer must be connected to the truth of God's spoken or written Word.

Therefore, it is important for us to realize that "a man is not being justified by works of law . . . [but] by *the faith of Christ*" (Gal.2:16). God's righteousness is manifested "*through Jesus Christ's faith*" (Rom.3:22). God justifies us gratuitously in His grace "through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24); hence it is that God is a Justifier "of the one who is of *the faith of Jesus*" (Rom.3:26).

Conversely, ignorance of God's accomplishments by the faith of His Son translates proportionally into an attitudinal deficiency that impacts the experience of prayer in a negative way. This is to say, that it is difficult to have an intelligent conversation with One Whose achievements and glory are unknown to us. Ignorance of God's Word produces a mind-set of distrust in His ability and control of the universe.

We bring infirmity (i.e., weakness) to the prayer experience. In terms of knowledge, each of us are infirm in varying degrees.

The apostle Paul addressed this deficiency of our knowledge thus: "The spirit also is aiding our infirmity, for what we should be praying for, to accord with what must be, we are not aware, but the spirit itself is pleading for us . . ." (Rom.8:26,27). This infirmity includes but is not limited to the degree of ignorance that we possess concerning God's achievement of His purpose and objectives because of the faith of His Son.

TRUST IN GOD

Trust is another primary factor for our consideration. Trust is the state of persuasion that moves us to act with conviction upon that which we believe. When we pray, it is a reflection of our understanding of His glory, ability, and control.

Therefore, our motive and reason for prayer should be based upon what we have learned and accepted as truth concerning God's accomplishments in His Son. Belief/trust is also provided to us by God, as a gift of His grace. The apostle Paul informs us that God parts to each the measure of faith, and that being used for the implementation of spiritual duties (Rom.12:3). Prayer is a spiritual blessing wherein we talk to God, trusting that He and His Son in truth are all that is written and spoken of concerning Them.

THE FAVOR OF BEING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

How privileged we are to be having peace toward God and to enjoy access into His presence—in spirit, by faith, through prayer. Peace toward God and access to Him are achieved for us through Christ: "Who was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying. Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.4:25-5:2).

It is "in accord with the purpose of the eons, which [God] makes in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph.3:11), that we have access to God. Christ Jesus is the One "in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence, *through His faith*" (Eph.3:12). Concerning believers both of Israel and of the nations, the apostle Paul declares that it is "through

[Christ that] we both have had access, in one spirit, to the Father" (Eph.2:18).

As mortal sinners living in a world full of dangers, it is only natural that many of our requests in prayer would be concerned with our present hopes and desires, for safety and endurance, for protection and preservation, for deliverance and sustenance. May our prayers, however, not be confined solely to requests even for necessary needs, but include as well affirmations of praise and thanksgiving to God as we rehearse to Him what we have learned through Scripture concerning Him. Thus we may praise Him for the excellence of His goodness and wisdom, His power and divinity, and above all His love, as we rehearse to Him the many things which He achieves for us through Christ.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF GRACE

Today, we live in the administration of *grace,* of grace apart from law in relation to entrance into eonian life. God's objectives differ within this administration from that of law as well as the other administrations. He is preparing us to display the glory of His wisdom and grace to those who dwell within the heavens, "among the celestials" (Eph.3:10,11).

Prayer for the present era is designed for those who are *already* sons of God. It is reflective of our spiritual state in Christ Jesus. In Christ Jesus, we are placed as sons of God (Eph.1:5). We already have the spirit of sonship, and call out to Him, "Abba, Father!" (Rom.8:15,16). Our blessings are found in Christ Jesus. They are spiritual and located in the celestials (Ephesians 1:3). Prayer for us is also a spiritual activity. It should be focused upon spiritual things. Unlike Israel, we are instructed to pray "unintermittingly" (1 Thess.5:17).

Again, in this administration of Grace, prayer is founded upon *knowledge, trust,* and *God's presence.* As is the case

in all God's administrations, these primary factors are provided by God to those whom He chooses. In our case, we enjoy these privileges as members of the ecclesia which is the body of Christ (Eph.1:22,23).

Documentation of God's objectives for this administration is found in His written Word. We should make every effort to study His Word (2 Tim.2:15), recognizing it as a means of grace, being mindful that a knowledge of these spiritual items is given by the *revelation* of God's spirit. Paul prays that God may *give* us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him, the eyes of our heart having been enlightened (Eph.1:15-17). This knowledge, then, is itself an operation of His grace.

Likewise, trust in God's ability to achieve His objectives of this administration is provided to us as a gift of His grace. This knowledge and trust should fashion the prayers that we offer toward God. The duty of trust for us is to seek things above, where Christ is (Col.1:1-3).

Notwithstanding physical requests, the emphasis of prayer during this era should feature the spiritual accomplishments and blessings of God through His Beloved Son. God has placed His spirit within us (Rom.8:9). We are always in His presence, and thus are equipped to communicate unintermittingly with Him.

Finally, it is the will of God for us who are in Christ Jesus to feature thanksgiving in all of our prayers (1 Thess.5:18). We above all others should be aware that God is in control of all. He has placed the purpose of the eons which He makes in Christ Jesus our Lord within our hearts (Eph. 3:11), along with the knowledge that the faith of Christ has guaranteed its outcome (Rom.3:22,24,26).

Our every circumstance is in God's control. He has blessed us to share in the victory that He has achieved in His Beloved Son. Truly, God provides our every need. Thus, we are to be "thankful" (i.e., literally, "*grace*-giving")

in everything (1 Thess.5:18), and *for* (i.e., for the sake of) all things (Eph.5:20), in consideration of the needs of the entire creation (*cp* Rom.8:22).

The Greek word translated "thanks" is *eucharisteō,* the elements of which signify WELL-JOY, or WELL-GRACE.[1] The essential idea of *charis* is not "gratitude" (as with the English "thanks") but of "favor," extended in order to bring joy to its recipient.

When we give "grace," then, to God *in* everything (in every situation in which we may find ourselves, including those which are full of suffering and sorrow), it is not that we are expressing our gratitude, per se, for even the worst of life's experiences, considered in themselves. It is instead that we are seeking to bring joy to God as we favor Him with our trust in His purpose while relying on His love, in consideration of His giving us all that we have (*cf* John 3:36), including even the worst of life's experiences, full of suffering and sorrow.

The guidelines and content of prayer change from administration to administration, as God's administrative objectives change.

However, the primary factors which form the foundation of prayer remain constant throughout the eons, and throughout God's administrations thereof. They are provided for us by God. He has achieved His purpose by the faith of His Son. For this administration in which we now live (Grace), let us fashion our prayers upon His purpose and the administrative objectives of Grace. Let us remain in the attitude of prayer at all times.

Robert G. Edwards

1. "Grace" (*charis,* JOY) and "joy" (*chara,* JOY) are very closely connected; indeed, they are inextricably linked. "Grace," that is, "favor," is that which brings joy. Joy is immanent in grace, and conveys its essence to the objects of its blessing.

GOD'S WORD OPERATES

THE WORD of God is living and *operative* (Heb.4:12). It always prospers in accord with God's desire (Isa.55:11). When God said, "Let light come to be!" light did in fact come to be (Gen.1:3). Consequently, we may be assured that when God says, through His chosen apostle to the nations, that He will become "All in all" (1 Cor.15:28), this will indeed become so. And when He says concerning us, who are believing His evangel concerning His Son, that God prefers us from the beginning for salvation (2 Thess. 2:13), we may be certain that this special salvation (*cf* 1 Tim.4:10) will be fully enjoyed, even as it is enjoyed in spirit today as we are believing (*cf* Eph.1:13,14; 1 Thess. 1:5). Believing what God says to us concerning the good He has achieved and that will be realized through the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ has powerful effects on us in our lives. It is a message of power, bringing grace and peace.

THE EXAMPLE OF ABEL

Scripture testifies continually to the power and assurance which God channels through His word as it is believed. The first human example of the operative power of God's word is that of Abel in Genesis 4. In Hebrew 11:4 we read, "By faith Abel offers to God more of a sacrifice than Cain, through which he was testified to that he is just at God's testifying to his approach presents, and through it, dying, he is still speaking."

What word of God was it that Abel was believing? No

doubt both Cain and Abel heard God's message that we find now in Genesis 1 concerning His work of creation. And most particularly, Adam and Eve would have drawn attention to what God said concerning His purpose for humanity (Gen.1:26):

Let Us make humanity in Our image and according to Our likeness. Let them hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heavens, over the domestic beast, over every land animal and over every creeper that is creeping on the earth.

God did create humanity in His image (Gen.1:27). His word was operative, and became reality. But it is evident that all that God had in view in creating humanity had not yet become so. To be in God's image and likeness involves more than holding sway over fish and birds and animals. There must be genuine understanding and appreciation of God before anyone can reflect Him as a true image. This takes time and experience. Genesis 2 and 3 begin a process which leads forward to this end.

A WORD OF LAW

After planting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of a garden and placing the human in that garden, God spoke another word, beyond His words of chapter 1, which brought humanity back to the stage of the unfulfilled word given in Genesis 1:26. This further word was one of law, dependent on the human rather than on God. The brothers would also have heard this message of Genesis 2:17 where Yahweh Elohim instructed the human, saying:

From the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying.

Since it was dependent on humanity, the instruction was

not followed, so that the realization of God's purpose for humanity was put in abeyance. Yet, since Genesis 1:26 was a word of good spoken by God, it must be fulfilled. And it must be fulfilled by God Himself as originally stated. This surely was being believed by Abel.

A WORD OF PROMISE

But more than that. Abel's parents would have relayed the words of God given in Genesis 3:15 and 16 concerning Eve's Seed and her restoration through her husband. One would be born Who would deal with the headship of the Adversary, but Who, in doing so, would Himself be hurt. In addition, there would be a "restoration" to good as it formerly existed.

THE TESTIMONY OF GENESIS 3:15

The testimony of God in Genesis 3:15 was that One would be born Who would hurt the head of the serpent. We can see in this that God Himself had the evangel concerning His Son in view. In dealing with the authority which the Adversary had seized over humanity, and with the reign of death which had just begun (*cf* Rom.5:14), the Seed of the woman would Himself be hurt in His heel. The allegory telling of One Who would step on the serpent's head and be bit in the heel of His foot points ahead to the obedience of Jesus Christ unto death, even *the death of the cross* (Phil.2:8). This will lead to the exaltation of the promised Seed above every name (Phil.2:9), over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named (Eph.1:20-22). Consequently, every knee will bow and every tongue will acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father (Phil.2:10,11).

Believing the evangel as it appears in Genesis 3:15,16 would bring Abel peace and expectation. The message operated in him with much assurance.

THE TESTIMONY OF GENESIS 3:21

In addition to hearing the words of Genesis 3:15,16, the sons of Adam and Eve would have heard, and Abel would have accepted with faith and would have been retaining in his heart, the testimony of Genesis 3:21. Yahweh Elohim Himself had made tunics of skin to clothe Adam and Eve, who were already experiencing the effects of dying in the form of fear and anxiety over their nakedness. The evil of the dying process which leads to death itself was first met by God Himself providing a covering by means of the death of animals. This did not nullify death, but it did point ahead to its final abolition through the One Who would die for sinners

We can now look back at Genesis 3:21 and see it as a foreshadowing of the evangel which declares that God spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all (Rom.8:32), and again, "Thus God loves the world, so that He gives His only-begotten Son" (John 3:16). Abel could not have seen this as deeply as we can, but perhaps he felt there was some connection between the reference in Genesis 3:15 to the Eve's Seed, and in Genesis 3:16 to the promise of "restoration," to this record of God's immediate provision for his trembling parents. God put an animal, or animals, to death in order to cover the first effects of the operation of death in humanity.

In any case, however much Abel grasped from the small portion of God's Word which was available to him, it is evident that he believed a present for Yahweh should reflect the divine revelations of Genesis 3. Yahweh had led the way in speaking of One Who would deal with the Adversary and in doing so would be hurt. Furthermore, He provided clothing the dying and vulnerable humans by means of death.

Hence these revelations of God were operating in the

life of Abel. They worked in him in such a way that his present for Yahweh was ideal in acknowledging the righteousness of God's ways and taking His words as true. These words were foreshadows of the evangel concerning Jesus Christ our Lord. They were not operating in Cain, for he was not given faith. But brief and nondetailed as they were, they were bearing the finest of fruit in Abel who was believing them.

ABEL AS A TYPE OF THE BELIEVER

Abel is a type of the believer in that he was believing the word of God as it spoke of good to come and of the way by which it would come. When he brought an approach present to Yahweh it was an expression of his faith in God's word and his reliance on Him as the One Who will bring all to that which is very good. As firstlings of his flock and their fat portions (Gen.4:4), this present expressed the alignment of Abel's heart with the ways and word of God.

Unlike Cain, who seems to have been obsessed with his own importance as the man *acquired* by Eve, Abel, whose name means *vanity* (or, *transience*), placed his reliance on God as the One Who provides what is needed. There was no thought of boasting in his labors or even of getting honor for his faith-obedience, only of honoring God with a present which reflected the divine pattern of Genesis 3:21.

God *heeded* Abel's present because it represented humble confidence in Him and His word. As expressed by the writer of Hebrews, God *testified* to Abel that he was just in bringing the present he brought. God's word operated in Abel by instilling a spirit of confidence and assurance, of peace and expectation in him. In this God was glorified.

Abel . . . brought some firstlings of his flock and their fat portions. (Gen.4:4)

Christ died for our sins. (1 Cor.15:3)

Being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus . . . where, then, is boasting? (Rom.3:24,27)

ABEL AS A TYPE OF CHRIST

We learn much from Abel as a type of the believer who centers attention on what God has said concerning His purpose of good. But the account of Genesis 4 has even more to say to us as Abel is seen as a type of Christ. By this means, as noted above, God reveals that from the very beginning His thoughts were centered on the cross and its effects.

It was given to Abel to serve as a type of the promised Seed, and for his death to be a type of the way in which God will remove death and its effects from His creation. The "hurt" which the Adversary will inflict on the Seed of the woman will be pain and suffering unto death. When Yahweh Elohim made tunics of animal skin in clothing the frightened pair, the death factor enters into the account. In considering these records from God, Abel was led to bring a present to Yahweh from the flock, including the fat portions which requires that the sheep be slain.

But in Genesis 4:8 the Word of God informs us that Abel was killed in anger and hate by his brother Cain. This is a type of the death of Christ, Who was sent to death by His own people, and crucified under the authority of the Roman government and with the wishes of the human mob. The word "killed" goes much further than the word "hurt," and that is in accord with God's way of revealing truth. Step by step the Word of God prepares for the climactic event of the eons in ridding God's creation of evil and bringing in that which is very good: the crucifixion of God's Son, and His resurrection on the third day.

They hate Me gratuitously. (John 15:25)

EVE

Eve apparently thought that her firstborn son was the promised Seed Who would hurt the serpent in the head. For she named him Cain, which means "Acquired." Hence she said, "I have acquired a man" (Gen.4:1). In this we see that the words of God concerning herself had impressed her, but she had improvised upon them as she had done before in telling the serpent that Elohim had said they were not to touch the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen.3:3). She now changed the word "Seed" to the word "man." And she associated God's words concerning the groanings of pregnancy directly to His words concerning her seed. That is to say, Eve saw in her sufferings, her own personal achievement for a reversal of what had happened when she and her husband ate the forbidden fruit. In her own mind she had acquired, by means of her birthpangs, what God had promised.

But Yahweh had pointed to the Promised One as the *Seed* of the woman, not necessarily her own son, but perhaps One Who would come later in the line of descendants. And most critically, God had not presented the grief and groanings of Eve as the cause of the coming of the Promised Seed. It was not to be that she herself would acquire Him by means of the sufferings given her because of her disobedience. The Promised Seed would be given by God, to His glory.

It is a great delight, however, to see that after the horrible catastrophe of Cain's failure and wicked murder of his brother, Eve was given wisdom and grace in responding to the birth of a son in place of Abel. She named him "Seth" which means "Set." And in doing so she no longer drew attention to herself, but rather gloried in what God had done for her, using the sound expressions of the promise of Genesis 3:15: "Truly Elohim has set for me another *seed* instead of Abel" (Gen.4:25).

Through her sufferings, not those of pregnancy and childbirth, but the sufferings of shame and humiliation which came suddenly when her firstborn son killed his brother, the word of God began to operate in Eve for her good. This pattern has been the experience of many of Eve's children through the generations. God often opens our eyes to the truth of His word through hard experiences. Yet always He reveals His love to us while we are still sinners (Rom.5:8).

CAIN

The word of God did not operate in Cain as it did in Abel and came to do in Eve. We can say, using Peter's expression (*cf* 2 Peter 3:16), that Cain twisted the available scriptures to his own destruction. Seeing himself as the promised Seed, and experiencing the days of grief and sweat which characterized his vocation as a server of the ground (Gen.3:17,18; 4:4), Cain evidently felt he was earning God's approval. The present he brought to Yahweh was a testimony to his own labors and accomplishments. It was not in harmony with God's words of promise and the patterns of Genesis 3. There was no foreshadowing of the evangel in Cain's act, for it centered on himself rather than on God.

When Yahweh heeded Abel's present and gave no sign of approval to the elder brother, Cain became angry, and his face fell because of the divine slight.

At this point Yahweh spoke directly to Cain, and although the record we have of what He said has several grammatical difficulties and obscurities, considering Genesis 4:6,7 in context it becomes clear that the message is one of evangel.

Hence Yahweh asked Cain why he was so angry and his face fallen. Since he had not done well, the solution was to do well. This called for a sin which would deal with the sin of Cain's sin of pride and rejection of God's revealed ways.

In Leviticus, and elsewhere in the Scriptures, the various offerings are generally distinguished by a single word, the "approach," the "ascent," the "present," the "sin," etc. In the context of Genesis 4:7 the "sin" should be understood as an offering, just as the "present" was. They both picture Christ, Who would die for the salvation of sinners as God's own present (Eph.2:8) and Who would be made to be "Sin" (2 Cor.5:21), that we may become God's righteousness in Him.

This sin offering would be like Abel's present. Yahweh Himself had made an animal readily available for Cain to slay and bring to Yahweh just as Abel had done. To do this would lift up Cain from his seething humiliation and make it well for him.

But instead of making a sin offering, Cain murdered his brother, increasing in wickedness.

Nevertheless, God spoke to Cain once more, indicating His continued concern for the one whose blood had been shed: "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying out to Me from the ground . . . ."

The blood of Abel no longer flowed in his body providing what he needed as a sentient being. It was in the ground which was under a curse, crying out, as it were, to God for judgment. God responded to that cry, but not with the severity demanded later in the law He gave to Israel (*cf* Ex.21:12; Lev.24:17). Even here in the presence of evil most stark and horrible, the word of God leaves an opening for the word of Genesis 1:26 to be fulfilled in all its glory. And most essentially here in the presence of death, the words of God prepare us for His evangel.

It is fitting for us to see in the blood of Abel a picture of the blood of Christ, which speaks of justification (Rom.5:9) and reconciliation (Col.1:20). It is fitting because it is there in type. Sin will give way to righteousness, and death will give way to life immortal. D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME XCIX

Abel as a Type of Christ . . . 119
Abraham's Faith and God's Grace . . . 93
Authority of the Word, The . . . 151
Being, Then, Justified . . . 233
Blessedness of Believing, The . . . 131
"Be Rejoicing in the Lord Always" (Phil.4:1-23) . . . 185
Breaking and the Subjection (Gen.44) . . . 135
Deeming it to be Refuse (Phil.3:1-21) . . . 23
Disposition of Christ, The (Phil.2:1-30) . . . 109
Evangel of Promise, An . . . 45
Faith and Expectation . . . 99
For the Progress of the Evangel (Phil.1:1-30) . . . 63
Given up and Roused . . . 166
In Accord with Grace . . . 81
In Accord with the Scriptures . . . 13, 56, 119, 207
Justification and Conciliation . . . 283
Not, Neither, But . . . 177
Obituaries: L. Grandy 62, E. Harty 62, W. Packard 126, N. Richardson 62, D. Woodams 251
Order and Leadership . . . 263
Paul to the Romans . . . 39, 81, 99, 166, 233, 273
Problem of Evil, The . . . 252
Repentance of Israel, The (Gen.42:1-38 . . . 31
Return to Egypt, The (Gen.43:1-34) . . . 51
Revelation of the Divine Intention, The (Gen.45) . . . 147
Satan Tries Christ . . . 71
Set by God . . . 207
Sin for Sin . . . 127
So Israel Journeyed (Gen.46) . . . 203
Sojourn in Egypt . . . 245
Stratagems of the Adversary . . . 71
Studies in Genesis . . . 31,51,135,147,203,245
Studies in Philippians . . . 63,109,185
Teaching and Fellowship . . . 215
There is a Reclining One . . . 56
There is a Sin Offering . . . 13
Through Faith's Righteousness . . . 39
Through our Lord Jesus Christ . . . 273
What is Judgment? . . . 38
Yahweh Speaks to Cain . . . 5

Contents:

2 "The Sacred Scriptures"
3 Editorial
5 Yahweh Speaks to Cain
12 Genesis 4:1-7
13 There is a Sin Offering
23 Deeming It to Be Refuse
31 The Repentance of Israel
38 What is Judgment?
39 Through Faith's Righteousness
45 An Evangel of Promise

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Concordant Version of

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Unsearchable Riches

A Bimonthly Magazine
For God and His
Word

VOLUME XCIX

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The Sacred Scriptures

A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic like the sun;
It gives a light to every age;
It gives, but borrows none.

The Hand that gave it still supplies
The gracious light and heat;
His truths upon the nations rise:
They rise, but never set.

Let everlasting thanks be Thine
For such a bright display,
As makes a world of darkness shine
With beams of heavenly day.

My soul rejoices to pursue
The steps of Him I love,
Till glory breaks upon my view
In brighter worlds above.

William Cowper

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2008
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-NINE

EDITORIAL

WHAT God has done for us in and through His Son, Jesus Christ, is the basis and continuing focus of our faith. And what we believe is the basis of our walk and service in the Lord.

This is shown at the very start when Abel approached near to Yahweh with a present that recognized His provision for Adam and Eve in their nakedness. This was in contrast to Cain, who brought a present designed to bring honor to himself, and not in harmony with Yahweh's provision-message. But even though he committed this sin of irreverence, Yahweh spoke directly to Cain of a further provision He had prepared for him, one that pictured Christ Who would be made to be a Sin Offering for the sake of all sinners. (Concerning the foreshadowing of the evangel in these early events, we offer two articles on Genesis 4:1-7 in this issue, pages 5-22.)

The fundamental lesson of reliance on the living God for salvation (1 Tim.4:9,10), and not on ourselves (Eph.2:8), which is so sharply delineated in the history of Cain and Abel is brought out over and over again in the pages of Scripture. It is there in the events surrounding Joseph, who pictured Christ as Saviour and Lord, and even Judge, as presented in Genesis 42 (see pages 31-38).

This revelation of the centrality of God's gift of His Son for sinners reaches its highest point in the epistles of Paul. To this descendant of Adam, who in his flesh had proved himself to be the foremost of sinners, God in His overwhelming grace, revealed His righteousness and power and love in a way that opens up all His Word as a coherent message centered on Christ. (See the articles on Romans 4:13 and Galatians 3:16, pages 39-48.) Furthermore, God

made known to Paul riches of truth even beyond what can be traced in the earlier portions of His Word. Yet all of these also are centered in what God did in not sparing His Son, but giving Him up for us all.

But what does all this mean to us in a practical way? Again, in light of God's grace given to us in Christ Jesus, we look at Philippians chapter 3, verse by verse (pages 23-30), concerning the believer's service in the Lord. Our service is fundamentally, in an elementary way, a matter of rejoicing in the Lord, Whom God has given us. It is a matter of believing and then finding growth in faith and maturity in walk as we focus on the righteousness which comes through the faith of Christ.

Now, in beginning our ninety-ninth year of publication we are keeping this fundamental theme of the cross of Christ before us. We still would give attention to the *Untraceable Riches* of Christ (Eph.3:8), for they are much neglected. But also we would give attention to the elementary riches of God's grace upon which the mature revelations are based. These basic riches as they are centered on God's gift of His Son for sinners are presented in various ways, in type and promise, throughout His Word.

Especially for myself, this concern with the "traceable riches of Christ" has developed because of my involvement with the *Concordant Version of the Old Testament* (CVOT). There is inestimable value to us in seeing the way in which these early writings point ahead to Christ and His cross, from which all blessings accrue.

In regard to the CVOT, we are happy to announce that *The Concordant Version of the Pentateuch* is now in print in one volume with large type. This leaves only one more installment to be published in this format. God willing, that volume, which will include Psalms through Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations and Daniel should be published later this year. D.H.H.

YAHWEH SPEAKS TO CAIN

CAIN was the firstborn of Adam, and, as such, is a type of his mortal race, which, like him, not only is dying, but murderous. His mother Eve doomed him when he was still a babe, by naming him *Acquired*, as though he came in payment for her efforts, rather than God's workmanship. Alas! It proved too true! But he was the fruit of her disobedience and insubordination, rather than of God's grace.

CAIN AND ABEL

The case of Cain should be of tremendous interest to all the rest of the race. We should pay intense attention, particularly to the words of Yahweh at this crisis. Unfortunately, both the translation and interpretation of His words are in confusion. It is worth our best efforts to restore the text to its original form, and give a concordant rendering, on which a sound interpretation can be based. The usual renderings and explanations reflect the apostate way of Cain, salvation by works, rather than salvation by sacrifice and faith, according to what is later revealed concerning Cain and Abel.

In Hebrews 11:4 we learn that Abel offers to God more of a sacrifice than Cain, through which it was testified that he was just, having God's testimony to his oblation. It is evident from this that there was a difference between the two sacrifices which was vital, and it had to do with sin. Had sin not entered before this, there would have been nothing wrong about Cain's present. Meanwhile the ground had been cursed, and its fruit represented the toil and sweat of

man's hands. It was typical of his efforts to satisfy God in unbelief and sin, by means of works, which cannot please Him. On the other hand, Abel had heard and accepted God's provision, such as He had made for Adam and Eve when He sacrificed an animal for their covering. Therefore he also slew an animal to cover his sin. By it he acknowledged his true state before God, and foreshadowed the sacrifice which was to take away the sin of the world.

Faith cannot exist without a revelation, for who can believe God if he has not heard what He has said? Abel's faith must have been based on God's word, and Cain's act on a failure to believe. Like most men today, Cain did not recognize his own state nor the need of a sacrifice to cover his sin.

CAIN'S PRESENT NOT HEEDED

In the case of Cain and Abel, it is two different classes of sacrifice which are in view, not the general conduct of Cain and Abel. So the ancient rabbis who made the Greek version understood it, for they rendered the word "*well*" by *correctly*. At the beginning of man's history, and ever since, his place in Yahweh's esteem has not been a matter of conduct, but of *sacrifice*. No heed was given to Cain's *present*. Nothing is said of Yahweh's displeasure with his other acts. This is difficult to carry over into English. With his religious background, the average reader takes "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be *accepted*?" as teaching that Cain's bloodless offering was not accepted because he was a bad man. And this is confirmed by the following words in the Authorized Version, "and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." This figurative phrase has actually taken on a meaning just the contrary to the picture it presents! Sin does not lie outside, at the door. It has come inside! At least, in Cain's case, his sin was already committed. That was why Yahweh did not heed him and he was downcast.

LIFTED

The Authorized Version tells us that if Cain had done well he would be *accepted*. Strange to say they never translate this Hebrew word by *accept* again, but *rising* (Lev.13:2), *raise* (Job 41:25), *highness* (Job 31:23), etc. It comes from a stem *nsha* which means *lift*. It is used often in such phrases as lift the *eyes* (Gen.13:14), or the *voice* (Gen. 21:16), or the *head* (Gen.40:20), or the *face* (Job 22:8, translated *honorable*). Just before this we read that Cain's face had *fallen*. Surely here we have the same figure, only that, if Cain had offered well, a blood sacrifice instead of the fruit of the ground, Yahweh God would have heeded it, and his face would not be *fallen*, but *lifted up*.

A concordant rendering falls right in line with the vital revelation of the passage. It uses the term "sin [offering]" to express the Hebrew idiom.

True, there is no extra word for *offering* in the Hebrew, but this is the case in hundreds of other places. It is the well-known figure of association. A thing is called by the name of the most pertinent part. A ship may be called a *sail* or a *steamer* when we refer to its movement, a *bottom* when we speak of its cargo. So a sin offering is usually called a *sin* in numerous places in Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers, and is so translated in the Authorized Version (Ex.29:14, etc., Lev.4:3, etc., Num.6:11, etc.). Yahweh was not blaming Cain for his misconduct in general, but for his failure to shelter himself under a sacrificial offering, such as his brother had brought.

SIN, OR SIN OFFERING

The usual understanding of Genesis 4:7 as speaking of *sin*, personified, crouching outside the door, will not illustrate the idea that Cain *had* sinned, but only that he was liable to do so. But the future is not in view. Sin, to use

this figure, had already entered his heart. Some interpreters go on from the idea that sin was ready to spring upon him, to the next clause, with which it seems to agree, and say, in effect, that sin will not overpower Cain, because he is given rule over it. This, however, is contrary, not only to his previous conduct, and to the murder which followed, but directly denies the great truth that *sin reigned* in death from Adam to Moses over those who did not sin like Adam (Rom.5:14,21). Many efforts have been made to fit *sin* into the context, but with little success. Therefore it seems well to see if its usage as *sin offering* does not give better results.

The simple word *sin* is used for the *sin offering* frequently in Hebrew. It is the figure of association, or perhaps *near*-association, for, in a very real sense the offering is a *sin*. Abel had offered a firstling of the flock and had pleased Yahweh. Is not this a hint to Cain to do the same? A sin offering was reclining at the opening, or door, ready at hand for sacrifice, and mankind had been given the dominion over the cattle of all kinds (Gen.1:26). So Cain had no excuse, even if he had no flocks and was a farmer rather than a grazier.

THE OFFERINGS

The stem of the Hebrew word generally translated "offering" (*qrb*) is NEAR. All the offerings slain on Jewish altars, and the great Antitype, the sacrifice of God's Son Himself on Golgotha, were offered in order to bring men *near* to Him. In the new earth God will once more dwell with mankind (Rev.21:3). At the consummation He will be as near as possible, All in *all* (1 Cor.15:28).

Just as there are four accounts of our Lord's career on earth, each portraying a different side of His character and ministry, so also there were four or five different kinds of offerings as described in Leviticus, each presenting a distinct aspect of His sacrifice. In our popular version they are called the *burnt* offering, the *meat* offering, the *peace* offering, the *sin* offering and the *trespass* offering. The last three names indicate fairly well the character of the offerings, but the burnt offering is not so called in the inspired text, but rather the *ascent* offering. The point is not that it was all consumed on the altar, which is true, but that it *all ascended* to Yahweh. The *meat* offering was partly eaten, hence its English name. But the Hebrew calls it a *present* to God, an oblation.

The *ascent* and the *present* offerings are concerned with *God's glory*. The *peace* and the *sin* and *guilt* offerings, are occupied with *man's welfare*. The *ascent* offering is pure worship of the Deity for what He *is*, the *present* offering, or oblation, for what He has *done*. The *sin* offering is concerned with removal of the barrier made by man's mistaken acts, and the *peace* offering has in view human *enmity*, or offenses.

CAIN'S PRESENT OFFERING

In bringing a present to Yahweh, Cain did not do well and had a bad conscience. He had expected Yahweh to accept the labors of his hands. When He did not, instead of acknowledging his failures, Cain became angry, and his countenance was darkened.

As a sinner, Cain should not have presented to God the results of his sweat, grown in the ground God had cursed. Eve had evidently been disillusioned by his conduct, for she named her next son Abel, that is, *Vanity*. And, true to his name, Abel recognized the futility of his own efforts, and presented to Yahweh the firstlings, or *firstborn*, of his flock as a sacrifice, a sin offering. To this Yahweh gave heed, for it foreshadowed that saving, sacrificial Sin Offering of His own Son which would rescue and reconcile His lost creatures, and restore them to Himself.

SUFFERING AND DEATH

There is a modicum of truth in Cain's sacrifice, for the fruits died, and death is necessary for restoration to God. *But there was no suffering.*

Neither was there actual suffering on the part of the grain used under the law. But it is clearly indicated in a variety of ways. The grain was *beaten* into fine *flour*. It was subjected to *fire* when *toasted* or *baked* or *cooked*. And it was actually *burned* as incense when *fumed*.

Cain did not realize his need of a *suffering* Mediator. He was not aware that, if Adam's offence brought suffering on him and his, so his own shortcomings called for judgment, and this must at least be indicated by the offering which was to mediate between him and Yahweh. It is not the Saviour's *life* that saves, but His *suffering* and *death*.

Moreover, he needed far more than a mere substitute. God isn't trying to repair mankind and bring it back to Eden. The suffering and the sacrifice must lead to a fellowship infinitely finer and more perfect than that. So *oil* and *frankincense* must be added to the present, in order to indicate the great *Anointed* Saviour, the Son of God's love in Whom He *delights*.

FRANKINCENSE AND OIL

By the marvelous figure of condescension Yahweh speaks to us in terms a human can comprehend. Not only does He speak plainly through later revelation, telling us that the Father is seeking worship in *spirit* and *truth*, but, in the shadowy language of the types, the present offering *must* be accompanied with *frankincense* and *oil*. When the first is fumed as incense it gratifies His sense of *smell*. When the oil is burned it produces *light* to illuminate His *sight*. But the connection between these are not very clear in an English translation or the ordinary course of life. We must look for their significance in Hebrew and in the service of the tabernacle, Yahweh's dwelling place in Israel.

In the offerings, the effect of frankincense was a delightful *odor*. In Hebrew the stem *ruch* is used for *wind, smell* and *spirit*. When we read that Elohim is *smelling* a restful *smell* (AV *a sweet savor*) it suggests the word *spirit*, to the reader of the Original. He is *spirit,* and those worshiping Him must be worshiping in *spirit* (John 4:24). This Cain did *not* do. God's spirit was not rested by his present.

All of the frankincense was fumed with fire on the altar. We do not read that it disseminated its odor until it was *burned.* So it speaks also of *suffering.*

Hence it is particularly symbolic of our Lord's *spiritual* humiliation and the agony of separation from His Father, endured on Golgotha. This is the highest aspect of His sacrifice, which brought the greatest pleasure to the heart of His Father.

While it speaks of the only time when He was *forsaken* by Him, it is the basis on which all will be *reconciled* to Him. If we approach the Father with the plea that His Son was forsaken by Him for our sakes, our present offering will be most acceptable. It will be a *restful* smell, and He will welcome us to His heart. At the consummation it will bring all His estranged creatures back to Him, to enjoy His permanent rest.

A. E. Knoch

NOTES

The preceding article is excerpted and arranged from three longer studies by A. E. Knoch, written more than fifty years ago. These are: "The First Evangel," in *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 35, pages 183-192; "Babe, Child, Sonship and Firstborn," in *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 41, pages 129-143; and "The Way of Cain," in *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 46, pages 7-22.

GENESIS 4:1-7

4 [+]**Now the human knew `Eve his wife.** [+] **She** became [l]**pregnant and** gave [l]**birth** `to **Cain,** [+] [l]**saying: I have acquired** a **man** `through **Yahweh.** 2 [+]**Then she** [l]**proceeded to** give **birth** `to **his brother `Abel.**

[+] **Abel** [l]**became** a **shepherd**[l] **of** the **flock,** [+]**while Cain** [b]**was serving** the **ground.**

3 **And it came** to [l]**be** [f]**at** the **end of** a year's **days** [+]**that Cain** [l]**brought** an approach **present to Yahweh from** the **fruit of the ground.** 4 [+]**As** for **Abel** [mr]**however, he´ brought** [f] some **firstlings of his flock and** [f] **their fat** portions**. And Yahweh** gave [l]**heed to Abel and** › **his** approach **present.** 5 [+]**But to Cain and** › **his** approach **present He** did **not** give **heed;** [+]**so Cain's** anger grew **very** [l]**hot, and his face** [l]**fell.**

6 [+]**Then Yahweh** [l]**said to Cain:**

Why is your anger **hot?**
And why is your face fallen?

7 **If you** had [c]**done** what is [l]**well,** would you **not lift** up your face**?**
[+]**But** [if]**since you** have **not** [c]**done** [l]**well,** there is a **sin** offering**,**
A flockling **reclining** ›**at** the **portal,**
And for you is [7]**restoration~** in **his** sacrifice**;**
[+] **You´ are ruling** [i]**over him.**

Notes: **4:1 human** same word as **Adam**; **Eve**: **Living**; **Cain**: **Acquired**. **4:2 Abel**: **Vanity** (or, **Transitoriness**). **4:3 Cain brought . . . from** the **fruit of the ground**: *cf* Gen.3:17, Jude 11; **4:4 Abel**: *cf* Heb. 11:4. **4:7 sin** offering: *cf* Lev.4:3 where the same Hb word is rendered **sin** and **sin** offering, a feminine word in Hb, while **reclining** is masculine in Hb; **restoration**: Hb **impulse**; **ruling:** *cf* Gen.1:26

THERE IS A SIN OFFERING

THE PRECIOUS blood of Christ was foreknown before the disruption of the world (1 Peter 1:19,20). The Lambkin was slain from the disruption of the world (Rev.13:8). Christ died for our sins in accord with the Scriptures (1 Cor.15:3).

In pattern, in promise and in type, from the very beginning of Genesis, the book of beginnings, we can trace the great and pivotal theme of the gift of God's love in saving sinners through the death, entombment and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ.

It is there in *pattern* when the evils of chaos, vacancy and darkness had enveloped the earth, and the spirit of God vibrated over the waters, and God said, "Let light come to be!" (Gen.1:2,3). For the Word in Whom was light came into this world of darkness, and although the world did not grasp the light, nevertheless He is the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world (*cf* John 1:1,9,14,29).

It is there in *promise* when Adam and Eve stood before Yahweh, trembling because of the horrible operation of death within them. The message concerning the blood of Christ was there in shadow when our first parents heard Yahweh's words to the serpent concerning the Seed of the woman Who would hurt its head and Himself be hurt in the heel (Gen.3:15). For it is through the death of the Son of God that the Adversary who has the might of death will be discarded (Heb.2:14).

And it is there in *type* when Yahweh clothed Adam and Eve with tunics of skin to cover their nakedness (Gen. 3:21). For God purposed Christ Jesus to be a propitiatory shelter through [His] faith in His blood (Rom.3:25). This

early picture, in type, of God's provision for dying humanity was then expanded when Yahweh prepared a sin offering for the sinner, Cain, for the lifting up of his countenance (Gen.4:7). For God made Christ to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him (2 Cor.5:21). Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all *welcome*, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15).

In this series of studies, I have called attention to these foreshadowings of the evangel, along with further details related to this message of God's grace and love in the early chapters of Genesis. But the remarkable words of Genesis 4:6,7, addressed to the angry and defiant firstborn son of Adam and Eve, call for further attention. The passage is a challenging one for the translator, but most rewarding for us all when we see the way in which it looks ahead to the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ.

TWO FIRSTS

The first recorded human sin outside the garden was that of Cain when he brought a present to Yahweh from the fruit of the ground (Gen.4:3). It is not called a sin, and from most people's viewpoint it does not seem to be a sin. But it is made clear that Cain had *missed* the mark (which is the root meaning of the word *sin* in Hebrew) in bringing a present to Yahweh. For Yahweh did not heed it, that is, He showed no sign of accepting and approving it.[1] Yet He heeded Abel's offering. Then, rather than learning from Abel's example, which reflected the pattern of Yahweh's provision of Genesis 3:21, Cain added sin to sin, error to error. In his seething anger he expressed his irreverence toward God and His ways (*cf* Rom.1:18-21).

1. The sign would almost certainly have been fire coming from God and consuming the offering (*cf* Lev.9:24; 1 Kings 18:38).

Then also, the first reference to sin in the Scriptures is in Genesis 4:7 where it refers, not to Cain's sin, but to the same kind of sin which Abel brought as a present to Yahweh, which Yahweh heeded with a sign of approval. It was a sin offering, which was provided by Yahweh Himself, and in this respect it is even a fuller type of Christ and the evangel concerning Him than the present Abel brought from the flock over which he served as shepherd. Salvation does not come by means of human efforts; rather it is a matter of *God's approach present* (Eph.2:8).

THE SINNER, CAIN

When Yahweh speaks to Cain it is already evident that death operating in him had led to sin. "Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, *on which all sinned*" (Rom.5:12). We are apt to think of Cain's sinfulness pretty much in relation to his murder of his brother, Abel. But, as death operated in him, he was missing the mark from birth (as was Abel), and Scripture draws attention first of all to his failures in relation to a recognition and appreciation of God. This was a matter of irreverence, which is a most serious missing of the mark of righteousness (*cf* Rom.1:18). Cain's fury was actually anger against the ways of God. This was what was noted by Yahweh in Genesis 4:6 Who now speaks literally to Cain by means of words.

YAHWEH SPEAKS TO CAIN

Let us look at Genesis 4:6,7, first of all by means of a strictly literal rendering of the Hebrew wording. Words joined by hyphens represent single Hebrew terms. The word "impulse" is put in brackets because the CV conjectures the emendation "restoration," at this point. Slight additions in lightface type are inserted to help clarify the Hebrew idiom.

Why is-it-hot to-you?
And-why it-falls your-face?

Not, if you-are-welling, a **lifting?**
And-if not you-are-welling
to-opening, a **sin;** a **reclining;**

And-to-you [impulse]-his
And-you, you-are-ruling in-him.

As arranged above, the passage is in poetic form, composed of three stanzas, each made up of a couplet of parallel lines.

In the first stanza Yahweh draws Cain's attention to his personal distress over Yahweh's rejection of his present. The parallels are obvious, with both lines starting with "why," and the reference to Cain's hot [anger] being supplemented by the reference to his fallen face.

The verb "falls" provides the connection to the second stanza where Yahweh speaks of a "lifting." In this new stanza where both lines begin with "if," Yahweh asks Cain about the results of "[do]ing well," and then He parallels this question with a statement about "not [do]ing well." Unlike the first and third stanza there is an imbalance in this couplet due to the expanded terms in the second line. This draws special attention to that line and the terms, "opening," "sin" and "reclining-[one]."

The third stanza takes up the reference to the "reclining one" and relates it first to Cain in a personal way, and then points out Cain's position in regard to it.

ANGER AND FALLEN FACE

Yahweh's questions in the opening stanza (end of verse 6) are straightforward and clear. Yahweh draws attention to Cain's reaction to the rejection of his offering. There was something wrong about Cain's present, and there was something wrong about Cain's reaction to the fact it was

not heeded by Yahweh. These opening lines point to sins already committed by Cain, and do not in themselves suggest a warning about a further sin.

Yahweh would have Cain realize the seriousness of his failures.

This is a first and necessary step for the sinner toward receiving the evangel concerning Jesus Christ. On the road to Damascus, the ascended Lord asked Saul of Tarsus, "*Why* are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4). When this sinner, now Paul the apostle, presented the evangel in his epistle to the Romans, he preceded the message of justification with a lengthy section which made absolutely clear the fact that *Not one is just,* for *all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God* (Rom.3:10,23).

Hence in Genesis 4:7 Yahweh speaks to the sinner, Cain, about that which will lift him up from his fleshly fury caused by pride and the irreverence of rejecting the ways of God as they were set before him. But Yahweh is not speaking a word of condemnation; rather His message is one of deliverance. This is a message Cain needs to hear and heed for his good. It is *good news*; it is a *well-message.*

DOING WELL

The Hebrew word for *good* is often used as a verb which is generally rendered "be good" or "be well." In the causative form, as here in Genesis 4:7, it is usually translated "do well" in the CV. Had Cain done what is *well* in bringing a present to Yahweh, his countenance would already be lightened with happiness and peace. However he had not done what was well. The result was that he was beside himself in anger and wretchedness.

At this point Yahweh speaks words of good, directing Cain to that good which will lift up his countenance with happiness instead of anger, and peace instead of a sullen spirit.

A LIFTING UP

The word translated "lift [up]" conveys the idiomatic sense of "dignity" in Genesis 49:3 (Jacob spoke of his son Reuben as excelling in *dignity,*that is, in a *lifted up* position). In Yahweh's dissertation to Job He speaks of the "lifting up" of the leviathan from which the subjectors shrink back (Job 41:25). It speaks of prominence calling for respect. If Cain wanted to be heeded by Yahweh, it must be connected with doing that which is well. That means he needed to align himself with the revelations of God given to him.

Here in Genesis 4:7 the word "lift" speaks of a correction of Cain's fallen face and in this way provides a fitting connection with the previous stanza. When Yahweh heeded Abel's present, but not his own, Cain felt angry and cast down, and this was visible in his countenance. Now the Lord points to the way in which this evil will be reversed.

AN EVANGEL

Yahweh's words are words of evangel, corresponding to the words, "Let light come to be," in Genesis 1:3 and Paul's exclamation in Romans 1:16, "For not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing."

Now with humanity being expelled from the garden where Adam and Eve enjoyed fellowship with Yahweh, the effects of death were multiplying in different ways.

For Abel it may have been that he had more opportunity as a shepherd to reflect, first of all on the fact that he himself was a *transitory* and vulnerable creature, and then because of this he thought deeply on God's provision of tunics of skin for clothing his parents in their nakedness (Gen.3:21). Abel *heeded* the message God had given. Consequently: "By faith Abel offers to God more of a sacrifice than Cain" (Heb.11:4).

But in his busy, self-centered life, Cain was not ready for the evangel which God was now bringing to him.

Nevertheless, light shall come to be, that is, the Sin Offering will be made by God Himself, and ultimately Cain will bow the knee and acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God the Father.

SINCE YOU HAVE NOT DONE WELL

The second line of the middle stanza is the most difficult of the entire passage to translate, but the most significant for our appreciation of the ways of God in dealing with human unrighteousness and irreverence. An appropriate rendering might be as follows:

And if you are not do**ing well, at** the **opening** there is a **sin** offering; there is a **reclining** one.

The word *sin* and the participle, *reclining,* refer to that which was "at the opening." But in Hebrew, the word for sin is feminine in gender, and the word for reclining is masculine. Grammatically speaking the word "reclining" is not an adjective to "sin [offering]" but stands by itself as a further description of that which was at the portal. The two terms are treated separately. That which is at the portal is, in some way, a sin. In addition, it is a reclining thing.

This seems to say (1) that Cain's multiple sin of irreverence and anger must be dealt with by a sin, and (2) that his wrong-headed focus on his own labors must be met by a reclining thing. Yahweh draws Cain's attention to something that He identifies as a sin and as a recliner; there it was for Cain to see, at the opening.

THE OPENING

This is not the only time in Scripture that the word "sin" is associated with the word "opening." In Leviticus 4:3-5, we read:

If the anointed priest should sin so as to bring guilt on the people, then he shall bring near for his sin with which he has sinned a flawless bull calf of the herd, to Yahweh as a **sin** [offering]. *He will bring the young bull to the* **opening** *of the tent of appointment before Yahweh and support his hand on the head of the young bull and slay the young bull before Yahweh. Then the anointed priest, who is consecrated, will take some of the blood of the young bull and bring it to the tent of appointment.*

Because in later portions of God's Word, the Hebrew word for "opening" refers to a doorway of a building, the CV often uses the word "portal" in rendering it into English. This is the English word used here in Genesis 4:7 in the newly published CV of the "Pentateuch." It seems likely that Cain was still at or near the place where he and his brother brought their presents to Yahweh. Such a place may well have been just outside the garden where Adam and Eve had enjoyed access to Yahweh, but from which they all were now excluded (*cf* Gen.3:24). Again, it may indeed have been the place where Yahweh had slain an animal in order to make tunics of skin for the human pair. In any case the striking parallel in language between Genesis 4:7 and Leviticus 4:3,4, aids in opening up Yahweh's message to Cain as one looking ahead to Christ as the Sin Offering.

The sin offering at the portal sets a pattern which is followed in the law concerning the tabernacle, pointing ahead to the Antitype, our Lord Jesus Christ, and His crucifixion. He told His disciples, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one is coming to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). For us who are believing the evangel of our salvation, these words in Genesis 4:7 serve as preparation for the marvelous declarations of Ephesians 2:13-18. "Yet now, in Christ Jesus, you, who once are far off, are become

near by the blood of Christ. For He is our Peace . . . . And coming, He brings the evangel of peace to you, those afar, and peace to those near, for through Him we both have had the access, in one spirit, to the Father" (Eph.2:13-18).

A SIN OFFERING

Here, as already noted, Scripture makes first mention of a sin. The reference is to an animal in a reclining position which is to be presented to Yahweh for His heeding (by burning it with fire that He Himself would send). What a shocking thing! Yet again, this shocking present is meant to be a type of God's giving of His own Son in the death of the cross. With this in view we fully understand why the sin offering is simply and candidly called a *sin* in Hebrew.

This was what was in the mind of God as He spoke to this irreverent and unrighteous sinner who was about to murder his brother. It was not the sin of Cain, but the sin which would be the means for the justifying of Cain's life, and so that Cain might be constituted righteous (*cf* Rom.5:18,19).

If some would object here that I do not take Cain's sinfulness seriously enough (for indeed he did murder Abel, and indeed Yahweh laid further curses upon him), I would point to the seriousness of the cross of Christ. It was a sin, a sin of sins. But it was the sin which results in justification for everyone, for you and me who are believing the evangel, and for faithful Abel as well, but also for the murderer Cain, who was locked up in stubbornness (*cf* Rom.11:32).

A RECLINER

Something was reclining at the portal. It was not sin personified as an evil force lurking, or crouching as a lion, or coiled as a serpent, or any such thing, ready to pounce on Cain. Sin personified as a force was already much nearer to Cain than what was at the portal; it was making his

home in him, as with us all (*cf* Rom.7:17). Cain would know without looking what Yahweh was referring to. His brother had brought a present to Yahweh from the firstlings of his flock, and from their fat portions (Gen.4:4), and that was what Yahweh had heeded. There was a flockling at the portal, quietly readied (*cf* Acts 8:32,33). As such it was a true type of the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world.

The Hebrew word for "reclining" is clearly used of various animals at rest, of small cattle at a well (Gen.29:2), of a burdened donkey sinking down in weariness (Exodus 23:5) and of various animals, both predators and prey, lying together in peace in the kingdom (Isa.11:6,7). Even when Judah is figured as a crouching lion which is *reclining,* the point is made that it is unlikely anyone could make him rise (Gen.49:9). It is used of the needy of Israel reclining in serenity (Isa.14:30) and of Yahweh's chosen ones reclining in a good homestead under Yahweh as their shepherd (Ezek.34:14,15).

Yahweh is not speaking of an ominous power readied for attack. Rather He is referring to an animal that is in a resting position. Since the Hebrew participle "reclining" is masculine in gender, the CV inserts the masculine word "flockling" (AV, "lamb") in lightface type (*cp* Gen. 22:7,8; Exodus 12:3). This is conjecture, but it is in harmony with the sense of an animal waiting in serenity, and is the very term used in Isaiah 53:7 in reference to the One Who opens not His mouth as He is fetched to slaughter.

The word "reclining" is the connecting term leading to the final couplet. The reclining flockling is in some manner *for Cain,* and Cain has the right to *rule over it.* I hope to look at this as a type of Christ in His obedience unto the death of the cross in a separate article. In many ways this extraordinary passage of Scripture is able to *lift up our faces* with joy and thanksgiving to God.

D.H.H.

DEEMING IT TO BE REFUSE

(Philippians 3:1-21)

For the rest, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. (3:1a)

As we consider Paul's entreaty here for faithful service to our Lord, let us continually be rejoicing in the *Lord.* While whenever we are not distracted from so doing, we cannot but rejoice in *Christ* in connection with our future salvation and glorification, here we are not called to a contemplation of these, but are instead enjoined to be rejoicing in our *Lord* in consideration of our *service* as *slaves* for His sake.

To be writing the same to you is not, indeed irksome for me, yet it is your security. (3:1b)

It is as if Paul is apologizing for repeating his entreaty so often for us to be rejoicing in the *Lord.* But since few seem even to grasp the point of his words in this connection, and even those who understand them need special grace in order to heed them, it is critical that he repeat and stress them on behalf of us all.

It is by no means irksome for Paul to be writing the same to us, for it is our *security* that he should do so in the interests of our faithful service, lest we be left to our own devices and be put to shame.

Even if inconsistent in their theology, in their way, all believers rely on *Christ* for salvation. Few indeed, however, have no confidence in the flesh (Phil.3:3b), which is to say, no confidence in themselves but in God (*cf* 2 Cor.1:9) as concerns their *service* for their *Lord,* upon Whom they are wholly dependent for any success therein.

Because of the darkness of our minds, intuitively, such

an approach seems out of the question, since it conflicts with our received ideas as to moral responsibility. We fail to recognize that in our endeavors in which we *effect* (or produce) our own salvation as concerns our practical affairs, it is in fact *God* Who is operating in us for the sake of His delight both the willing and the doing in which we engage unto this end (*cf* Phil.2:12,13).

Yet if we should come to realize that as the Image of the invisible God, it is Christ Himself Who *as our Lord* motivates and inspires us so that we *therefore* enjoy a demonstrable measure of ability (i.e., "invigoration") in His service, how can we not but rejoice in Him? "For the rest, brethren mine, be *invigorated* in the *Lord* and in the *might* of *His strength*" (Eph.6:10). Hence, "Be rejoicing in the *Lord* always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing!" (Phil.4:4).

Beware of curs, beware of evil workers. (3:2)

Those who are figured here as "curs," who, however fine fellows they may be in their own person, are in a certain respect not doers of good, but "evil workers." This is because, however unwittingly, they stand in opposition to the apostle in his insistence on our putting no confidence in the flesh, whether as concerns not only our ancestral pedigree but even our own righteousness which is of law.

Those who see value and importance in those very things which Paul deems his refuse, who therefore insist on retrieving them out of Paul's refuse container, are indeed, in this respect, like the wild dogs of the east, who are quite undiscriminating in what they are willing to ingest.

Beware of the maimcision, for we are the circumcision who are offering divine service in the spirit of God, and are glorying in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in flesh. (3:3)

In the present administration, unlike in previous ones, "Circumcision is nothing . . ." (1 Cor.7:19). What was once a token of covenant relationship with the Deity, is now a mere

mutilation of the flesh. Conversely, as those who place no confidence in the flesh and are glorying in Christ Jesus, we become the genuine Circumcision, for this is what the rite signified, in the cutting off of the flesh. Circumcision—as the type of all law-obedience for salvation—has become a badge of apostasy. Beware, then, of the maimcision!

And am I having confidence in flesh, also? If any other one is presuming to have confidence in flesh, I rather: in circumcision the eighth day, of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, in relation to law, a Pharisee, in relation to zeal, persecuting the ecclesia, in relation to the righteousness which is in law, becoming blameless. (3:4-6)

All of these are concerned with confidence in the flesh; most have to do with a place of nobility for an esteemed Israelite under law, while two (membership in the sect of the Pharisees, and zealotry for the putative virtue of persecution of the ecclesia) are concerned simply with the approval of one's peers in the pursuit of "orthodoxy."

But things which were gain to me, these I have deemed a forfeit because of Christ. But, to be sure, I am also deeming all to be a forfeit because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, because of Whom I forfeited all, and am deeming it to be refuse . . . (3:7,8a)

The Greek word which the CV translates "refuse," *skubalon,* is an interesting term. It is a New Testament *hapax legomenon* ("[something] said only once"); that is, a word that occurs only once in a single corpus or body of literature.

The AV translation "dung" accords more with the usage in Josephus (*Jewish War,* 5.571) where in the final siege of the Romans in the Jewish War (66-73 A.D.) some of the Jews were reduced to such straits that they searched the sewers for old cow dung and ate the "*offal*" (*skubalon*; i.e., the residual garbage) therefrom.

The CV translation "refuse" corresponds to the usage

found in the apocryphal work *Sirach* (or *Ecclesiasticus;* 27:4): "As when one sifts with a sieve, the *refuse* [*skubalon*] remains; so also the filth of man in his speech." Similarly, in the collection of the Rylands Papyri (2.149.22; 39-40 A.D.) the writer speaks of animals grazing on "the *gleanings* [*skubalon,* i.e., 'residuals'] of my vegetable-seed crop." Apart from connotative usage, then, the essence of *skubalon* appears to signify that which remains as a residue, which is appropriately discarded as worthless.

These things which had been "gain" to Paul, he now deems a "forfeit" (i.e., something to which the right is lost). He does so gladly "because of Christ"—with a view to "gaining Christ" in his own awareness and practical service, in consideration of the true significance of the cross, in the victory achieved there.

Paul accordingly not only *forfeits* all (giving up the rights and benefits thereof), but deems it as *refuse* as well, which is to say as mere residue, which is to be *discarded* as worthless.

It is "the righteousness which is *in* law" (Phil.3:6) and "*of* law" (Phil.3:9), which includes God's law given to Israel but is not confined to it, which most cannot believe we are to deem as refuse and so discard accordingly insofar as our standing before God is concerned. Yet it is here that we are "complete" in *Christ* (*cf* Col.2:10), and so simply have no need of law-obedience for our justification.

Further, we cannot "fully follow [Paul]" in his "teaching" (2 Tim.3:10) for our service in which he gives no entreaty for us to heed any directives of Moses at all per se, while at the same time taking it upon ourselves to look to Moses' law for instruction concerning our walk. Instead, our apostle declares, since we are complete in Christ, "Let no one, *then,* be judging you in food or in drink or in the particulars of a festival, or of a new moon, or of sabbaths, which are a shadow of those things which are impending—yet

the body is the Christ's" (Col.2:16,17). As those who are so closely identified with Christ as to be figured as members of His own body (Eph.5:30), we simply have no need to be "scrutinizing" days and months and seasons and years (*cf* Gal.4:10) within a code of law never given to us, which we are nowhere enjoined to heed.

The "all" which Paul deems a forfeit and as worthless refuse includes all that which the Israelite people deemed most valuable—in which they placed their *confidence,* albeit, as aptly termed by Paul, a "confidence in flesh," whether of heritage, peer approval, or obedience to law.

Insofar as their standing before God was concerned, they were *confident* that their pedigree and law-obedience were the *sine qua non* ("without which, not") of divine blessing.

Today, perhaps all believers are enlightened sufficiently to know that, in Christ, it is simply not important whether we are of Israelite descent at all, or whether we have obeyed the law concerning circumcision. Many, however, suppose that what is in fact a certain "righteousness in law" is essential to their salvation. This is so whether such a righteousness in law is based upon various portions of the law of Yahweh given to Israel, particular instructions of Jesus given to his disciples, or sundry imperatives of service contained in the epistles of Paul.

Many suppose that they must avoid various sins while achieving at least some minimal level of virtue or else they will be confined to hell for all eternity.

Others, more enlightened in a way, recognize that one's outward acts (whether of sinful deeds or virtuous endeavors) are simply *not* determinative of one's destiny.

Such ones, however, insist that a certain inward activity of mind in which one willingly acquiesces to the influences of the spirit and thus accepts Christ as one's Saviour, *is* determinative of one's destiny unto salvation.

Such a mental act, however, is deemed not as simply a

proximate cause of one's salvation, one which itself is but the fruit of divine grace, but instead as *a requisite act, ultimately under one's own control, which is the ultimate cause of one's salvation.*

In the end, then, those holding this position finally make man his own saviour just as surely as those who do so more overtly through explicit appeals to law-obedience if one would escape hell and gain heaven.

. . . that I should be gaining Christ, and may be found in Him, not having my righteousness, which is of law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God for faith: (3:8b,9)

Thus we "gain Christ" in a true recognition of Him; we decidedly do not gain Christ as our Saviour by our correct understanding of His truth, but by God's own choice "before the disruption of the world" (Eph.1:4), in accord with the grace given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian (2 Tim.1:9). We would be found in Him as those not having their own righteousness which is of law, but that which is through the faith(fulness) of Christ, the righteousness which is from God, [based] "on the [i.e., 'this'] faith" (literal rendering).

This is all unto the end:

to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, conforming to His death, if somehow I should be attaining to the resurrection that is out from among the dead. Not that I already obtained, or am already perfected. Yet I am pursuing, if I may be grasping also that for which I was grasped also by Christ Jesus.

Brethren, not as yet am I reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one thing—forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus. (3:10-14)

We may conform ourselves to His death, by "*reckoning*

[ourselves] to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:11). Then, in contending the ideal contest of the faith, we may, *in spirit,* even seek the attainment of "the resurrection that is out from among the dead," as those who would "get hold of eonian life" (1 Tim.6:12; 19) even now.

Even Paul could only pursue this goal that he might grasp it; he had not yet obtained it or become already perfected therein. Thus he emphasizes the importance of "forgetting" (figuratively, at least) those things which are behind that he might stretch out to those in front: namely, the pursuit of the prize, that of *a vital, present-day foretaste* of God's calling above in Christ Jesus in the coming eon, which itself is not a prize at all, but a gracious gift, granted to us gratuitously in God's grace.

Whoever, then, are mature, may be disposed to this, and if in anything you are differently disposed, this also shall God reveal to you. (3:15)

How encouraging these words are! If we are not yet sufficiently mature to grasp the true sense of Paul's words here, do not be worrying about anything (*cf* Phil.4:6), God shall reveal it to us in due course. To our own master we are standing or falling. Now we will be made to stand, for the *Lord* is able to make us stand (*cf* Rom.14:4).

Moreover, in what we outstrip others, there is to be a mutual disposition to be observing the elements by the same rule. (3:16)

As we observe the elements of our faith and its concomitant faithfulness (*cp* Rom.4:12), while recognizing that we possess an enlightenment enjoyed by few others, let us be disposed not to this fact alone. Instead, let us have a "mutual disposition" which includes a mindfulness as well to this "same rule" of outstripping others when it comes to be "elementing" our faith, that is to be engaging in a faithful walk, suited to the nobility of our position as sons of God and ambassadors of Christ (*cf* Gal.6:15,16; Eph.1:5; 2 Cor.5:20).

Become imitators together of me, brethren, and be noting those who are walking thus, according as you have us for a model . . . (3:17)

In all of these things, let us be imitating Paul, while noting others as well who are walking thus, for we have all such ones as a model (*cf* 2 Tim.3:10,11).

. . . for many are walking, of whom I often told you, yet now am lamenting also as I tell it, who are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose consummation is destruction, whose god is their bowels, and whose glory is in their shame, who to the terrestrial are disposed. (3:18,19)

Many who are friends of Christ, are nevertheless *enemies* of the *cross* of Christ, insofar as its significance is concerned in the achievement of God's purpose to become All in all (1 Cor.15:28). The consummation which is theirs ("whose consummation") for such unfaithful *service* is that of a certain "destruction" (or "loss"), namely that which will obtain when they, even as ourselves, are manifested before the dais of Christ and are requited for their practices through the body, whether good or bad (2 Cor.5:10). "If anyone's work shall be burned up, he will forfeit it, yet he shall be saved, yet thus, as through fire" (1 Cor.3:15).

For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself. (3:20,21)

Our realm inheres in the heavens, where God rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:5-7). How we long to have the body of our humiliation conformed to the body of His glory. Yet this is just what He will do, "in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself." How great is our Saviour, the *Lord* Jesus Christ. J.R.C.

THE REPENTANCE OF ISRAEL

THE COURSE OF JOSEPH with his brethren was conducted with a wisdom the like of which Egypt never saw at any other time, notwithstanding its reputation in the ancient world. Joseph did not impulsively call for his family to share his good fortune, but waited till they were spiritually prepared to enjoy his favor. We might foolishly criticize him for not calling his father, at least, to bask in the favor of Pharaoh, as soon as he was established. Instead he waited more than seven years without even sending a comforting message to his sorrowing parent. And, when his brothers came, he treated them as if he did not want to know them, even though his heart yearned for their favor and fellowship. Like his Lord, he did not disclose himself to them until he had brought them to repentance. Then his favor was appreciated and enjoyed, as it could never have been, if it had not been preceded by the trials and distresses which came before.

GENESIS 42:1-5

42 [+]**When Jacob** [l]**saw that** there **were** grain **rations** to be had **in Egypt,** [+] **Jacob** [l]**said to his sons: Why are you staring** at [sf]**one another?** [2] **And he** [lsa]**added: Behold, I have heard that** there **are** grain **rations in Egypt.** Go **down there**[d] **and purchase for us** [7]a **little food**[0] **from there,** [+]**that we may live and not die.**

[3] [+]**So Joseph's ten brothers** went [l]**down to purchase cereal** grain [f]**in Egypt.** [4] [+]**Yet Jacob** did **not send** `**Joseph's brother Benjamin** `with **his brothers, for he said: Lest**

mishap ˡbefall him. 5 ⁺**Thus** the **sons of Israel ˡcame** along **to purchase in** the **midst of** others ˋwho were **coming; for the famine** ᵇ**was** also **in** the **land of Canaan.**

THE FAMINES

There were three famines in the promised land in the days of the patriarchs, yet they differed much in degree and effect.

The first came soon after Abram entered the land (Gen. 12:10). It did not extend down to Egypt, for Abram went there to escape it. But he brought a serious *evil* on Pharaoh, so Abram was ejected out of Egypt. The second was in the days of Isaac. Yet he was told *not* to go down to Egypt. So he went to Gerar, and there he imitated Abram's ruse, for fear of the Philistine king, passing off his wife as his sister. Both of these brought *evil* upon the nations to which they went for help.

Far worse conduct on the part of Jacob's sons sent Joseph down to Egypt, yet this led to a great salvation, not only of the people of the promise, but of the Egyptians as well. *This is an epitome of their whole history*. Outside of their land they have never been a blessing, but after they accept their King, and return to Him, they will save, not themselves alone, but the other nations also.

As it may be in Israel very soon, if it has not already begun, God brought the sons of Jacob to repentance by means of great tribulation. The famine that Joseph had foreseen was not a local one, but spread over all the earth, including the holy land. The people were starving to death. Yahweh, however, had provided a saviour, and was about to deliver them, but first they must suffer much evil, so that they would not only repent, but also would be prepared to enjoy His salvation and appreciate, not only His goodness, but the evil that conditioned them to enjoy it. Jacob heard the evangel that there is salvation in Egypt, and he

believed it, and sent ten of his sons to go down and bring of the life-saving food to sustain them.

GENESIS 42:6-13

6 ⁺**As** for **Joseph, he** was **the** man in **authority over the land; he** was ˙**rationing out to all** the **people of the land. ⁺When Joseph's brothers ˡcame, ⁺ they ˡbowed down to him** with their **brow** to[d] the **earth.** 7 ⁺ **Joseph ˡsaw ˋhis brothers and ˡrecognized them; ⁺yet he** made him**self ˡunrecognizable to them.** ⁺ **He ˡspoke harshly** ˋto **them and** ˡˢᵃ**asked** ˃ **them: From where have you come?**

And they ˡˢᵃ**replied: From** the **land of Canaan, to purchase food.**

8 ⁺**While Joseph** had ˡ**recognized ˋhis brothers,** ⁺ **they**ˊ did **not recognize him.** 9 ⁺**Now Joseph ˡremembered ˋthe dreams** ʷ **he had dreamed** ˃**about them, and he ˡsaid to them: You** are **spies**ˡ**. You have come to see the land** ˋin its **nakedness.**

10 ⁺**Yet they** ˡˢᵃ**replied to him: No**ᵗ**, my lord.** ⁺ **Your servants, they have come to purchase food.** 11 **All of us, we** are **sons of one man; we** are **forthright** men**; your servants have nev**er ᵇ**been spies**ˡ**.**

12 ⁺**But he ˡsaid to them: No**ᵗ**, for you have come to see the land** in its **nakedness.**

13 ⁺ **They** ˡˢᵃ**replied: We, your servants,** were **twelve brothers, sons of one man in** the **land of Canaan. And, behold, the youngest** is ˋwith **our father** ˙this **day, and the one—he is no** more**.**

BENJAMIN

Benjamin (**son**-at-**right**), Joseph's only brother of the same mother, was probably not involved in the crime of attempted fratricide, so did not need the discipline which Joseph used to bring them to repentance. His name suggests that he presents a picture of the disciples of Christ,

those who are His, and who were not guilty of taking part in His death. The figure of the right hand is often used, in contrast to the left, to designate those who are exempt from judgment. The Son Himself is seated at God's right hand (Matt.22:44). In the judgment of the nations, the sheep at His right shall enjoy the allotment of the kingdom (Matt.25:34).

GENESIS 42:14-38

14 +**However Joseph** |**said to them: It** is just *w*__as I__ *sp*__told__ ›**you,** › **saying**–**: You** are **spies**|. 15 *i*__By this you shall be tested,__ as sure as **Pharaoh** is **alive. You shall assuredly no**t go **forth from here,** *t*__unless__ *if* __your__ ˙__youngest brother__ *i* __comes__– *bd*__here.__ 16 **Send one** *f*__of you, and let him take__ `__your brother__ here**,** +__while you´__ shall **be bound.** +__Thus shall your words be tested__ whether there is **truth** `in **you.** +__But if not,__ *t*__then,__ as sure as **Pharaoh** is **alive, you** are **spies**|**!**

*S*__And they__ |__said: The youth__ |__cannot leave__ `__his father.__ +__When he would leave__ `__his father,__ +__then he would die!__*n* 17 +__Yet he__ had `__them__ |__gathered__ ›__under guard__ for **three days.**

18 + *i*__On the third day Joseph__ |__said to them: Do this, and__ you shall **live! I** am **fearing** `**the** One**, Elohim.** 19 **If you** are **forthright** men**, let one of your brother**s **be** kept **bound in your guardhouse.** + The rest of **you, go** *7*__and__*n* **bring** the grain **ration**s for the **famine of your house**holds**.** 20 +__But you shall bring__ `__your__ ˙__youngest brother to me,__ so +__that your words may be verified, and you shall not die. And__ *so*__this__ is what **they** |__did.__

21 +__Now they__ |__said,__ each **man to his brother: Verily, we** are **guilty on** account of **our brother,** *w*__because we saw__ the **distress of his soul** *i*__when he supplicated__– ›__with us,__ +__but we__ did **not hearken. Therefore** ˙__this__ ˙__distress has come__ ›__upon us.__

22 + **Reuben** |__retorted__ `to **them,** › **saying**–**:** Did **I not** *sa*__tell__ › **you,** › **saying**–**: Do not** |**sin** *i*__against__ the **boy?** +__But you__ did **not hearken.** +__As__ for **his blood,** *mr*__indeed,__ *bd*__here it is required__ from us**.**

23 +__Yet they´__ did **not know that Joseph** was **making out** their words**, for** there was ˙a **translator**| **between** him and **them.** 24 +__Now__ *7*__Joseph__*0* turned |__around,__ away **from** *on* **them; and he was weeping.** +__Then he__ |__returned to them and__ |__spoke to them.__ + **He** |__took__ `__Simeon from__ `__them and__ had `__him__ |__bound__ ›__before their eyes.__

25 + **Joseph** *m*__gave__ |__instructions__ + to |__fill__ `__their__ *all*__vessels__ with **cereal** grain**,** + **to restore their money,** each **man**'s in**to his sack, and to give** › **them provision**s **for** the *way*__journey.__ +__Accordingly__ one |__did so for them.__

26 +__Then they__ |__loaded__ `__their__ grain **ration**s **on their donkeys and** |**went** off **from there.**

27 +__When,__ *i*__at__ the **lodging** place**,** ˙__one__ of them |__opened__ `__his sack to give provender to his donkey,__ + __he__ |__saw__ `__his money__ *7*__pouch__*0***;** + *bd*__here it__ was **in** the **mouth of his bag.** 28 **And he** |**said to his brothers: My money has been restored.** + *mr*__Indeed,__ *bd*__here__ *7*__it__*n* is **in my bag.** +__At__ this **their heart** |__tensed up,__ so +__that they__ |__trembled,__ each **man** looking ›__at his brother,__ › __saying__–**: What** is **this** that **Elohim has done to us?**

29 +__When they__ |__came to their father Jacob__ in*d* the **land of Canaan,** + **they** |**told** › **him** `**all** ˙that had **befallen**| `**them,** › **saying**–**:** 30 **The man** who is **lord of the land spoke harshly** `with **us and** |*g*__put__ `__us__ *7i*__under guard__*0* **as spies**| `against **the land.** 31 +__But we__ |__said to him:__ **We** are **forthright** men**; we´ have nev**er *b*__been spies__|**.** 32 **We** were **twelve brothers, sons of our father; the one—he is no** more**; and the youngest** is `with **our father** ˙this **day, in** the **land of Canaan.** 33 +__Then the man__ who is **lord of the land** |__said to us:__ *i*__By this I shall know that you__ are **forthright** men**. Leave** ˙**one** of **your brother**s `with **me;** + **take** *7*the grain **ration**s*c* `for the **famine of your house**holds **and go.** 34 +__But bring__ `__your__ ˙__youngest brother to me.__ +__Then I shall know that you__ are **not spies**| *t*__but you__ are **forthright** men**. I shall** *g*__deliver__ `__your brother__

to you, and you may go as [l]**merchants** `in **the land.**

35 + **It** [l]**came** to **pass** when **they** were **emptying their sacks,** + **behold,** each **man** found **his money pouch in his sack.** +**When they** [l]**saw `their money pouches, they and their father** as well, + **they were** [l]**fearful.** 36 +**Then their father Jacob** [l]**said to them:** It is **`me** that **you bereave. Joseph, he is no** more**, and Simeon, he is no** more**. And you** would [l]**take `Benjamin** away**. On me** [lb]**come all these** things**.**

37 +**Now Reuben** [lsa]**spoke to his father,** › **saying¯: You may** [c]**put `my two sons** to **death, should I not** [l]**bring him** back **to you.** Do **give `him** [on]**into my hand, and I´ shall restore him to you.**

38 +**But he** [lsa]**replied: My son shall not** go **down with you** [t]**since his brother is dead, and he** is **remaining, he alone.** + If **mishap would befall him** [i]**on** the **way** [i] **which you** [l]**go,** +**then you would** [c]**bring down `my grey hair**s [i]**with affliction** to[d] the **unseen.**

JOSEPH'S MOTIVE

From his later conduct it is evident that Joseph's heart was much moved by the presence of his brothers, and by their report, and it needed much restraint on his part to act the false accuser. Yet he did not consult his own feelings, but was concerned for their welfare. Not, indeed, that of their physical frames, or he would have fulfilled their request without further fuss. Neither had he any thought of "punishing" them for their crime. His motive was much higher than that. It was a delicate role to play, and easily misunderstood. Are not God's dealings, especially with the sons of Israel today, very similar and, temporarily, incomprehensible by the descendants of the sons of Jacob?

Joseph had his ten brothers put in ward for three days, so they would be led to consider the seriousness of their fratricidal crime. Even so their descendants are being persecuted today, so that they may reconsider the wrong done

to their Messiah by their forefathers. But, in Joseph's case, the time was very short, only three days, for a longer time would only cause his father and brother unjust suffering. By returning to each one the money he had brought to pay for the cereal they had received, he stirred up their consciences still more.

A. E. Knoch

STUDY NOTES

Here in Genesis 42 (and continuing through chapter 44) some fundamental steps by which the nation of Israel will be brought to repentance are set forth in the way in which Joseph deals with his brothers. Yet also as a type of Christ in His exaltation with authority, we see in Joseph's actions a pattern of Christ in bringing all mankind into the grand subjection described in Philippians 2:9-11.

1. When the brothers bowed down to Joseph (Gen.42:6), what was still lacking, according to Genesis 42:8?

2. Will not the bowing and acclaiming of Philippians 2:10,11, be in full recognition (realization) of the One in authority as the Saviour, Jesus, Who humbled Himself unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil.2:8)?

3. What might be the parallel between Joseph and Christ when we read that Joseph *recognized* his brothers (Gen.42:7,8)? Might not Romans 5:8 be considered in this respect?

4. Consider a possible parallel between the statement that Joseph *remembered* his dreams (Gen.42:9) and what the evangel says about the faith of Jesus Christ (i.e., Rom. 3:22-26; Heb.12:2). Was it not that Joseph was always keeping in mind the revelation of future glory God gave him? Is there not a parallel here with reference to Christ?

5. In considering what is said about the *harshness* of Joseph, and its results, what can be said about the purposes of Christ in His work of judgment?

WHAT IS JUDGMENT?

IT IS A SAD COMMENTARY on the human race to find that the word "judgment" is so unstable and liable to deterioration. This must be because men are so unjust and vindictive themselves. The word has come to mean condemnation and punishment almost exclusively, when it ought to be neutral. How seldom is it used in a good sense among us!

The Pharisees were not slow to *condemn* others. Yet our Lord rebuked them for passing over *judgment* and the *love* of God. They neglected the reparatory side of judgment. The *poor* (Prov.29:14; Psa.72:4) they failed to judge, and the *fatherless* (Isa.1:23; Psa.10:18); that is, they did not protect them in their rights. Our Lord combined *judgment* with *mercy* and *faith.* These, the weightier matters of the law, they neglected. Such a "judgment" certainly did not mean punishment. Instead of so judging, the scribes devoured widows' houses, though they were swift to condemn those who did not keep the traditions (Mark 7:5; 12:40).

Perhaps the best place to show that judgment is always *right,* is found in Abraham's appeal to the Lord, when He spoke of the state of Sodom. The Authorized Version reads, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do *right?* (Gen. 18:25). I agree that they expressed the sense correctly, yet I deplore the fact that, in doing so, they passed up a notable opportunity of anchoring the true meaning of the word *judgment* in our language. The Hebrew reads, "The Judge of the entire earth, would He not execute *judgment?*" It is clear that anything wrong would not be judgment in Abraham's eyes. If anyone in Sodom should suffer unjustly that would not be *judgment,* and would be wrong. *There is absolutely no injustice in divine judgment.* It is rather, *the righting of what is already wrong.*

A. E. Knoch

THROUGH FAITH'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

ROMANS 3:21-31 focuses attention on justification by means of *the faith of Jesus Christ.* This work of God's righteousness is for all sinners. The human is justified by the faith of God's Son, apart from works of law.

However, what has been achieved at the cross has not yet been put into effect and realized. It will ultimately be manifested and appreciated by all as described in Romans 5:18,19, when all mankind will enjoy life's justifying, and all who have been constituted sinners because of Adam's disobedience will be constituted just because of Christ's obedience in faith.

Nevertheless, in the current era, there is a special display of God's righteousness, in His work of justification, as it is graciously placed upon *those who are believing* the evangel (Rom.3:22). These are the called of Jesus Christ (Rom.1:7), who are already identified as being "out of the faith of Jesus" (Rom.3:26). Now in Romans chapter 4 the theme of faith is especially centered upon the believer's faith in believing that Christ (in His faithful faith) died for our sins. And also the theme of righteousness now is that of God reckoning the righteousness established by means of the faith of Christ to the believer. God's reckoning of righteousness to us is also apart from works of law and is a matter of God's grace.

But in stressing our faith, Paul keeps the evangel concerning Jesus Christ's faith before us, for that is the foundation of all we believe.

Hence in considering what Paul says about our faith, the evangel of God concerning the faith of Jesus Christ is not

to be forgotten or even marginally overlooked. Our faith means nothing apart from His faith. God could not and will not reckon righteousness to anyone apart from His grace and love in not sparing His Son but giving Him up for us all. God had the faith of His Son in view when He reckoned righteousness to Abraham, and He looks back at that faith and its accomplishments when He reckons righteousness to us.

THE BELIEVER'S FAITH

With this evangel in our hearts, we are seeking now to follow our apostle's teaching concerning the character and value of our faith. It is one of the three greatest graces which God has given us (*cf* 1 Cor.13:13), fully centered in the evangel of God concerning His Son. Our faith is the channel through which God reckons righteousness to us. And along with this fundamental blessing it becomes the means for spiritual growth in our lives, in joy and peace (*cf* Rom.15:13), in endurance and patience (*cf* Col.1:11), and in the walk of love (*cf* Eph.5:1,2).

In order to clarify the grace of God in reckoning righteousness to us even now while we live in bodies of humiliation and weakness, Paul endeavors in Romans 4 to put our faith in its proper place. Our believing of God is like Abraham's believing of God as recorded in Genesis 15:6. It is in an environment in which there is nothing apparent[1] on God's part except His word to us, and on our part except our believing of that word.

GOD'S PROMISE

Now in Romans 4:13 Paul expands on the pattern provided by Abraham's believing of God's word and God's reckoning of righteousness to him as recorded in Genesis 15. The apostle would have us note not only the pattern of Genesis 15:6, but also that the word of God which Abraham believed was a word of promise just as the evangel is for us.

For **not through law**
is the promise to Abraham,
or to his Seed,
for him to be enjoyer of the allotment of the world,
but **through faith's righteousness**.

Here and in the next few verses, Paul relates faith to God's promise, not to God's act of promising, but to that which is promised and its fulfillment. It is not that Yahweh promised something to Abraham because he believed. But rather God first declared the promise (which was based on what Christ would do later), then Abraham believed the promise, and because of this act of faith, that which was promised became assured for Abraham. It belonged to him.

There is no distinct Hebrew word for *promise;* the context of a passage must determine whether the Hebrew word for "say" or that for "speak" is a promise, that is, a word concerning good to come. In the case of Abraham, the message he believed was what Yahweh *said* to him when he looked up toward the heavens at the vast number of stars. The CV (2007 edition) of Genesis 15:5 reads:

+Then He [c]brought `him [l]forth ˙outside[d] and [l]said: [pr]Now look** up to**ward the heavens and count off the stars if you [l]can › number⌐ `them. And He [lsa]promised › him: Thus shall become your seed.

This was the promise as it was given to Abraham. He would have descendants numbering as the stars of the heavens. This is the allotment promised to Abraham, measured here in terms of people rather than geography.

1. This is not to deny that God's spirit and His invisible operations are critically involved in our encounter with His Word.

PROMISE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

Yet in order for this promise to be a faithful promise, that is, a promise of God, it is absolutely necessary that Abraham be justified in God's sight. Since this is impossible in the flesh and by works of law (Rom.3:20), God Himself must righteously supply justification, in His grace, as indeed the evangel of God announces He has done, through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.3:21-26).

So we see that when Yahweh reckoned Abraham's faith to him for righteousness, He was looking ahead to that which would be accomplished through the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ. So also, when God reckons righteousness to us who are believing (*cf* Rom.4:11, 12,23-25), He is basing this on what was achieved through the faith-obedience of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

EXPANDED MEANING

Accordingly, in Romans 4:13, with the evangel he is bringing in view, Paul expounds this promise given to Abraham in new and expanded terms. He shows that the promise to Abraham concerning his seed being as numerous as the stars of the heavens, was in some important way a promise *to* his SEED. Then the apostle adds that the promise of such a vast and countless number of descendants involves "the allotment of the world." Finally, Paul relates Genesis 15:5 to verse 6 and thus notes that the fulfillment of the promise is channeled through faith's righteousness.

These are noteworthy and significant matters, not simply what Paul says about faith (though that is the principal matter), but what he says about the *Seed* and *the allotment of the world.*

THE SEED

The obvious sense of the word "seed" in Genesis 15:5 is

"descendants." Paul employs that meaning in Romans 4:18 where he writes that Abraham would become the father of many nations, according to that which has been declared, "Thus shall be your seed."

But here in Romans 4:13, there is good reason to take the word "SEED" in reference to Christ, as the Seed of Abraham, Who will be the principal Allotee of the allotment of the world. This is clearly what the apostle intends in the parallel passage of Galatians 3:16.

Now to Abraham the promises were declared, and to his Seed. He is not saying "And to seeds," as of many, but as of One: And to "your Seed," which is Christ.

Hence we find Paul pointing to God's promises, whether to Abraham or to the Circumcision or to the Uncircumcision as centered in Christ and His place as King (1 Cor. 15:25) and ultimately Head over all (*cf* Eph.1:23; Phil.2: 10,11), Who indeed is appointed by God Enjoyer of the Allotment of All (Heb.1:1,2).

In this way, while dwelling on our faith, as first typified by Abraham's faith, Paul would not have us forget that all is dependent on the faith of Jesus Christ. Faith's righteousness is the righteousness reckoned to us when we believe, but our believing is focused on our Lord Jesus Christ and His faith in which righteousness is established. So also, whatever promises God makes to us are, in the first place, promises made to His Son. This was true of the promises to Abraham. And it is true of the promises to us.

The magnitude of the promise of Genesis 15:5,6 as it truly existed in the mind of God could not be perceived by Abraham.[2] It was only after the promised Seed had come and had died for sinners (who were still sinners when He

2. For a discussion of the way in which the promise of seed numbering as the stars foreshadows our calling among the celestials, see *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 49, pages 248-250 [vol. 96, pages 112,113].

died for them, Rom.5:8), that God revealed through His chosen apostle the expanding significance of the promise. We are beginning to see that now in Romans as Paul evangelizes the evangel to us. Not only Abraham and the nation of Israel, but believers from any and all nations have a special part in the allotment promised to the Seed of Abraham. This is because Christ died for us (as He has died for all), and because God chose us in Him before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:3,18,22,23), which God has not done for all.

Yet also, because we keep our focus on the promise as it was directed to the One Who is the Seed of Abraham, we can see that the word "world" here cannot be limited in any way. Eventually the world of all humanity will receive the benefit of the justifying of life which is gained through the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ.

FAITH'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The promise of a vast allotment will become reality to Abraham because he believed God when He said his seed would number as the stars of the heavens, and because God thereupon reckoned it to Abraham for righteousness. There were no works of law Abraham had to perform in order for this promise to be assured. The allotment belonged to Abraham as soon as he believed the promise and righteousness was reckoned to him, and the allotment will be realized in all its glory in God's own time.

What treasures of spiritual grace there are in the words "faith's righteousness"! God's promise to us of righteousness and the glorious allotment assigned to us from God, even to be joint enjoyers of Christ's allotment (Rom.8: 15,17), is firmly settled on the faith of Jesus Christ, and graciously granted to us upon our believing! In this there is no room for works of law.

D.H.H.

AN EVANGEL OF PROMISE

THE SCRIPTURE "brings before an evangel to Abraham" (Gal.3: 8), which, though very different in itself, in principle, is the same as the evangel of our own salvation. With respect to the certain futurity of His promises *in grace*, God's ways with Abraham in this prototypical event are representative and precedent-setting of His ways with us. We have no more "say" concerning our possession of the blessings comprised in God's good news for us than Abraham had concerning the blessings comprised in God's good news for him (*cf* Gen.12:3; 18:10; *cp* Rom.4:16; Gal.3:18). It is in this sense alone that all who are united in Christ Jesus (*cf* Gal.3:28b) are "of Abraham's seed" (Gal.3:29).

It is with this likeness in view which we enjoy both to Abraham and to his literal seed, that Paul declares, "Now you, brethren, *as* Isaac, are children of *promise*" (Gal.4:28). And, "if you are Christ's, consequently you are of Abraham's seed, enjoyers of the allotment according to the promise" (Gal.3:29). The appositive explains the sense in which we are "of Abraham's seed." It explains that we are, "enjoyers of an allotment according to promise" (Gal.3:29).

It is not "the" specific allotment given or "the" specific promise made (to Abraham) which is in view. (The definite article does not appear in the Greek before either "allotment" or "promise.") Paul is by no means saying that God's particular blessings to Abraham's genealogical seed are our particular blessings as well. Besides, any such considerations are entirely beside the point.

In principle, God's ways with Abraham and with Isaac are the same as His ways with Christ and with us. God's

declarations and promises concerning ourselves, as with Abraham, are matters "of faith," *that they may accord with grace* (Rom.4:16). The very purpose in their being matters which are *of faith*, is that they should already be true prior to the time in which we first believe them.

"Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes, for it written, Accursed is everyone hanging on a pole, that the blessing of Abraham may be coming to the nations *in Christ Jesus*, that we may be obtaining the promise of the spirit through faith" (Gal.3: 13,14). In this passage as well, the appositive confirms the sense in which this is said, the sense in which the blessing which is said to be "of [or, pertaining to] Abraham" comes to the nations, yet in the Person of Christ Jesus. The likeness consists of this: that we obtain the promise of the spirit which God makes to us *through faith* even as Abraham, *through faith*, obtained the promise of the spirit which God made to him (Gal.3:14b).

YOUR SEED, WHICH IS CHRIST

Thus we are those "who are observing the *elements* [or basic principles] of the faith [i.e., of this, essentially-speaking, common faith] in the footprints of our father Abraham, *in uncircumcision*" (Rom.4:12). That is, before we ever believed, God's promise to us was already true, and when we believed we had not yet performed any works of righteousness. "For not through law is the promise to Abraham, or to his Seed, for him to be enjoyer of the allotment of the world [the SYSTEM or total blessing which God had prepared for him], but through faith's righteousness" (Rom.4:13). Neither God's promises to Abraham concerning his descendants, nor His promises to Abraham's Seed ("which is Christ," Gal.3:16b) concerning His glorified brethren (*cp* Titus 1:2; Rom.8:29) can possibly fail. As to the *expectation* of life eonian which concerns

ourselves, God, Who does not lie, *has promised*, doing so "before times eonian" (Titus 1:2).

In saying that there is a sense in which even Christ Himself is the "Seed" of Abraham, Paul has astutely availed himself of the fact that the word "seed" may be used with a single object in view as well as in the more common uniplural sense in reference to many individual seeds. As always, he introduces his illustration to make a particular point. Paul's point here is that in the original promise made to Abraham "and to his seed" we may observe the *completeness* inherent in the *singular* nature of an unqualified promise. "He is not saying 'And to seeds,' as of many, but as of One" (Gal.3:16b).

As far as Paul's point is concerned and can be reflected by way of this illustration, God is saying, "And to 'your Seed,' which is Christ [alone]" (Gal.3:16c). As Paul says, "Now this I am saying: a covenant, having been ratified before by God, the law, having come four hundred and thirty years afterward, does not invalidate, so as to nullify the promise. For if the enjoyment of the allotment is of law, it is no longer of promise, Yet God has graciously granted it to Abraham through the promise" (Gal.3:17, 18).

The fact that, as to His ancestry, our Lord is descended from Abraham, is beside the point. In the figure here, Christ, our *only* Saviour, is represented by the *singular* "seed" of Abraham. The likeness consists of this: even as Abraham's offspring *alone* may possess their promised blessings, thus also our blessings in Christ depend solely upon His finished work. Any shortcomings of our own, which come afterward, can never invalidate the sufficiency of His antecedent sacrifice or nullify the promises of God concerning our salvation, for these promises depend *solely*, or *singularly*, on the merits of Christ's sacrificial blood.

In the word "seed," the apostle draws our attention to its singularity. Having thus fixed our attention on the thought

of singleness, Paul would have us know that in the matter of providing *all* that is necessary to ensure our salvation, *singleness stands for Christ and excludes ourselves*: "And to 'your *Seed*,' which *is* [that is, which thus symbolizes or represents] *Christ*."

YOU FALL OUT OF GRACE!

The Galatians, however, were under the delusion that merely in the cross of Christ alone apart from some completing activity of their own they were perilously incomplete (*cf* Gal.3:1-3). The apostle replies by saying that in holding such a view they were perilously mistaken. Yet they were persuaded that if they were ever to gain a right (or "justified") standing before God, whatever the benefits of Christ's sacrifice might be, in any case, there were some rules which they themselves must also obey.

Like their modern counterparts, they viewed the blood of Christ on the one hand as indispensable, and yet on the other as insufficient. Christ was only their Saviour after they were first their own saviour. In their attitude and thinking, as a result of holding such proud and mistaken views, their beliefs necessitated their *practical* exemption from the benefits which are afforded *only* in Christ. This did not change their *actual* position in Him, but it did rob them of a realization of it. By denying the sufficiency of Christ's finished work for their eonian salvation, they exempted themselves from a true appreciation of Christ's Saviourhood. In so doing, they also lost the unique happiness which the true evangel had once afforded them (Gal.4:15).

Thus their faith was not vibrant and living. It was not remaining in the evangel, Paul's evangel of the grace of Christ (Gal.1:6). May God grant us the grace of grasping and retaining the evangel given to us that we might be blessed with a living faith.

J.R.C.

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 The Return to Egypt
56 There is a Reclining One
63 For the Progress of the Evangel
71 Satan Tries Christ
81 In Accord with Grace
93 Abraham's Faith and God's Grace

MARCH, 2008

Volume XCIX **Number 2**

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EXODUS, LEVITICUS
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EDITORIAL

SOMETIMES, we are drawn away from a greater devotion to God's Word simply by the distractions and gratifications of daily life. "Now that falling among the thorns, these are those who hear and, by *worries* and *riches,* and by the *gratifications of life,* going on, *stifle,* and are *bringing nothing to maturity*" (*cf* Luke 8:14).

Clearly, "those intending to be rich are falling into a trial and a trap and the many foolish and harmful desires which are swamping men in extermination and destruction. For a root of all of the evils is the fondness for money, which some, craving, were led astray from the faith and try themselves on all sides with much pain" (1 Tim.6:9,10).

Ironically, many who have only a little money, nevertheless, have a greater fondness for money, as well as a greater desire to gain wealth, than many who have long been wealthy, who even so are by no means greedy, being generous toward others as well. "Those who are rich in the current eon be charging not to be haughty, nor yet to rely on the dubiousness of riches, but on God, Who is tendering us all things richly for our enjoyment; to be doing good acts, to be rich in ideal acts, to be liberal contributors, treasuring up for themselves an ideal foundation for that which is impending, that they may get hold of life really" (1 Tim.6:17-19).

The "gratifications of life," speak of the *satisfactions* and *pleasures* of life. It is not that we must forego all longings for fulfillment and contentment while at the same time repudiating all that is pleasureful; it is instead that we must not make these our constant goal and perpetual quest. While we would gladly receive the satisfaction and pleasure which God sees fit to grant us, just as surely, we must not grumble and murmur—expressing discontent and complaint—with regard to those things which God sees fit *not* to grant us.

The many and diverse worries comprised in the phrase "the

worry of this eon . . ." (Matt.13:22), include all the adverse things that people can and do worry about, whether upon occasion, frequently, or continually. While we do not *know* what the future may bring (*cp* Prov.27:1), we often *fear* what may happen, and so *worry* about it accordingly, filling our lives with anxiety and distress.

The apostle Paul's counsel is ideal: "Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6,7). Even so, since our troubles *cause* us to worry as we do, until God graciously empowers us *not* to worry (or at least alleviates our worry), we will continue to worry on, unabated.

This should not surprise us. After all, of ourselves, we are not competent for anything (*cf* 2 Cor.3:5); hence we do well, ultimately speaking, to "be having no confidence in ourselves, but in God" (2 Cor.1:9).

Our worries, then, even as our seeking after riches or for gratifications of life, will stifle our attentiveness and devotion to God and His Word. This will result in our not bringing anything to maturity, as concerns our walk in the Lord. Let us, then, while recognizing the desperate straits in which we find ourselves, have confidence in God, our *Saviour,* as we look to Him for *deliverance.*

According to the power that is operating in us, God is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending (Eph.3:20). Therefore, He is well able to attenuate or even fully remove our trials, which include our worrying, even as our seeking after riches and gratifications of life.

Our prayer to God, then, is that He would indeed either attenuate or remove our trials—if possible, sooner than later, but if not, then later rather than sooner. And, we may make this request in full confidence that it will be granted. This is so, since "No trial has taken you except what is human. Now, faithful is God, Who will not be leaving you to be tried above what you are able, but, *together with the trial, will be making the sequel also, to enable you to undergo it*" (1 Cor.10:13). J.R.C.

THE RETURN TO EGYPT

43 +**As** to **the famine,** it was **heavy in** the **land.** 2 +**So it** |**came** to **pass, as** soon *w*__as they had__ *all*__finished__ › **eating**– `**the** grain **rations which they had brought from Egypt,** +**that their father** |**said to them: Return, purchase for us** a **little food.**

3 +**Yet Judah** |*sa*__spoke to him,__ › **saying**–**: The man** 7who is **lord of the land**0 *c*__bore witness,__ yea **witness**– *i*__to us,__ › **saying**–**: You shall not see my face unless your** 7·__youngest__0 **brother** is `with **you.** 4 **If you will send**| `**our brother** `with **us, we** are determined to go |**down and** |**purchase food for you.** 5 +**But if you will not send**| 7`__our brother__ `with **us**0**, we shall not** go **down. For the man, he said to us: You shall not see my face unless your** 7·__youngest__0 **brother** is `with **you.**

6 +**Then Israel** |**said: Why** did **you** *c*__bring__ this **evil** ›**on me** ›**by telling**– › the **man, you** ›**had** *fr*__another brother?__

7 + **They** |*sa*__replied: The man questioned,__ yea **questioned**– us ›**about our**selves **and** › **our kindred,** › **saying**–**:** Is **your father** *fr*__still alive? Have you__ another **brother?** +**So we** |**told** › **him** *on*__in accordance__ with ·**these** *sp*__facts.__ How could **we** |**know,** yea **know**– **that he** would |**say** 7**to us**0**:** *c*__Bring down `your brother?__

8 +**Yet** again **Judah** |**said to Israel his father:** Do let **the youth go** `with **me. And** do **let us** |**set out and** |**go** +**that we may live and not die,** not *mr*__only we,__ but *mr*__also you__ *mr*__and our little ones.__ 9 **I´ shall be** the one to be |**surety** for **him. From my hand shall you seek** to exact **him; if I** do **not bring him** back **to you and put him before you,** +**then I will be** at **fault** ›**before you all** ·my **days.** 10 **For if we had not pro-**

crastinated, [t] **we would now have returned this** [du]**twice.**

11 +**So Israel their father** |**said to them: If** that is the [so]**case, indeed,** then **do this: Take** some[f] **of the land's superior** products **in your** [all]**vessels and** [c]**bring** them **down to** the **man** as an approach **present;** a **little balm and** a **little honey, tragacanth gum and labdanum, pistachio nuts and almonds.** 12 +**Also, take** a **double** amount of **money in your hand; and** `**the money** ˙that was **restored**| **in** the **mouth of your bags, you** must |**bring back in your hand; perhaps it** was an inadvertent **error.** 13 **Take** `**your brother** +**too, and set out; return to the man.** 14 **And may El Who-Suffices** [g]**grant** › **you compassion before the man,** so +**that he sends** back ›**with you** `**your other brother and** `**Benjamin.** +**As** for **me,** [as]**if** [w] **I am** to be **bereaved, I** shall **be bereaved.**

15 +**So the men** |**procured** ˙`**this** ˙approach **present. And they took** a **double** amount of **money in**to **their hand, and** `**Benjamin.**

+**Then they** |**set out and** went |**down** to **Egypt** + where **they** |**stood** ›**in Joseph's presence.**

LOCKED UP IN STUBBORNNESS

There is very little obstinacy on earth comparable to that of the descendants of Jacob to this very day. In the physical famine of their day, the brothers and their father kept putting off any return to Joseph until the pangs of hunger drove them to act. So it will be before they return to their Messiah. The fearful inflictions of the end time will force them to seek shelter and salvation in their Saviour. God's potent power in that day will induce in them a willingness (Psa.110:3), so that the divine force will be, in reality, divine mercy. This will unlock them from stubbornness (Rom.11:25-32). So also it is a beginning step in God's operation of mercy toward them that the brothers are compelled to return to Joseph (Gen.43:1-15).

GENESIS 43:16-34

16 +**When Joseph** |**saw** `**Benjamin** `with **them,** + **he** |**said to** the one **who** was to **over**see **his house: Bring** `**the men** to[d] **the house.** + Have an animal **slaughtered** for **slaughtered** meat**, and** [c]**have** it **prepared. For the men shall eat** `with **me** [i]**at noon.**

17 **And the man** |**did just as Joseph had said.** +**So the man** |**brought** `**the men** to[d] **Joseph's house.**

18 +**Yet the men were** |**fearful** [f]**because they were brought** to **Joseph's house, and they** |**said:** It must be **on** [sp]**account of the money** ˙which was **restored**| **in our bags** [i]**at** the **start** that **we** are **brought**| in, so ›**that** one may **roll**– him**self** up**on us and** › **cast**– him**self** up**on us and** › **take**– `**us for slaves, and** `**our donkeys** too.

19 +**Hence they** came |**close to the man who** was to **over**see **Joseph's house, and they** |**spoke to him** at the **portal of the house.** 20 + **They** |**said: O! my lord, we** came **down,** yea **down**– [i]**at** the **start to purchase food.** 21 **And it** [lb]**occurred** [t]**when we came to the lodging** place **and** began |**opening** `**our bags,** + **behold,** there was [7]**the**[0] **money of each** one **in** the **mouth of his bag, our money in its** full **weight.** +**Now we** |**brought** `**it back in our hand.** 22 **And we have** [c]**brought down other money in our hand to purchase food. We** do **not know** [a]**who** [pl]**put our money in**to **our bags.**

23 + **He** |[sa]**replied:** It is **well-being** ›**with you. You must not be** |**fearful. Your Elohim and** the **Elohim of your** [7]**fathers**~[s]**, He gave** › **you** a **buried** treasure **in your bags. Your money came to me. And he** brought |**forth** `**Simeon to them.**

24 +**Then the man** |**brought** `**the men** toward **Joseph's house and** |**gave** them **water, and they** |**washed their feet.** +**When he** had |[g]**provided provender for their donkeys,** 25 + **they** |**laid out** `**the** approach **present** [fr]**for Joseph's coming**– [i]**at noon; for they had heard that they should eat bread there.**

26 +**When Joseph** |**came** ·**home**[d], + **they** |**brought** `**the** approach **present** [w] **in their hand to him** into[d] **the house, and they** |**bowed down** ›**before him** to[d] the **earth.**
27 + **He** |**asked** › **them** ›**about** their **well-being and** |**said:** Is it **well-being** with **your** ·**old father** of **whom you** |[sa]**spoke? Is he** [fr]**still alive?**
28 + **They** |[sa]**replied:** It is **well-being** ›**with your servant,** › **our father; he** is [fr]**still alive. And they** |**bowed** the **head and** |**prostrated** them**selves** [7]**to him**[0]**.**
29 +**When** [7]**Joseph**[0] |**lifted** up **his eyes and** |**saw** `**his brother Benjamin, his** own **mother's son,** + **he** |[sa]**asked:** Is **this your** ·**youngest brother** of **whom you** [sa]**spoke** [7]**to bring**[0] him **to me? And he** |[sa]**added: May Elohim be gracious** to **you, my son.** 30 +**Then Joseph** [m]**left** |**quickly, for his compassions were fervid for his brother,** so +**that he** |**sought to weep. And he** |**entered** ·his own **chamber**[d] **and** |**wept there**[d]**.** 31 +**After he** had |**washed his face,** + **he** came |**forth,** + |**checked** him**self and** |**said:** [pl]**Serve** the **bread.**
32 +**Then they** |[pl]**served** › **him alone** by **him**self**, and** › **them alone** by **them**selves**, and** › **the Egyptians** ·who **ate**| `with **him, alone** by **them**selves**; for the Egyptians** |**could not** › **eat**– **bread** `with **the Hebrews** [t]**since that** would be an **abhorrence to** the **Egyptians.** 33 +**Now they** |**sat** › **facing him, the firstborn according** to **his birthright, and the junior according** to **his inferior** status**.** +**So the men,** looking **each** ›**at his associate, were** |**amazed.** 34 +**Then he** had **helpings** |**carried from** `**before him to them;** +**yet Benjamin's helping was fivefold** |**more** [f]**than** the **helpings of all of them.** +**Thus, with him, they** |**feasted and** |**drank freely.**

TENDER FEELINGS

This time the brothers get a very different reception, because they come in a very different spirit, for they have been exercised about their sins. And Joseph was so moved that he cannot refrain from weeping, especially as he once more lays eyes upon his own brother, Jacob's beloved wife's only other son, Benjamin. So he has to retire in order to relieve himself by tears. But the time for him to reveal himself to his brothers has not yet come.

A. E. Knoch

A SEASON TO WEEP

The Assembler spoke of many different seasons for humanity under the heavens, including "a season to weep" (Ecc.3:4). For Joseph there were several occasions for weeping, not so much in sorrow as in anticipation of the coming happiness. So he wept at the first sign of his brothers' repentance (Gen.42:24), and now at the sight of Benjamin (Gen.43:30). Later also will come the "long" weeping when Jacob and Joseph embrace at their reunion in Egypt (Gen.46:29). And once more he will weep when his brothers come to him in fear and doubt concerning his intentions, and he will comfort them and speak to their hearts (Gen.50:15-21).

In this our thoughts turn to the scene presented in Revelation 1:7 when the Lord comes before Israel. That will be at once a season of sorrow over the past and of joy at His presence. A. E. Knoch wrote of this in THE UNVEILING OF JESUS CHRIST, pages 107-109, as follows:

"Lo! He is coming with clouds, and every eye shall be seeing Him—those also, who stab Him—and all the tribes of the land shall be grieving over Him. Yea! Amen!"

"What a sight this will be to the nation which has rejected Him for so many centuries! When they see the marks of His passion, the spirit of grace and supplication will overwhelm them, and they will mourn over the past and be in bitterness because of their rejection of Messiah. It will be national—all the tribes of the land will beat their breasts because of Him . . . . One sight of Him, and they are His."

THERE IS A RECLINING ONE

THE REMARKABLE passage found at Genesis 4:6,7, should be seen as a foreshadowing of the evangel. Here Yahweh speaks to the aggrieved and angry sinner, Cain, with a message of good. Yet it is an evangel that does not appeal to Cain in his pride, under his present circumstances. In structure this word of God is poetic, composed of three couplets, or paired lines which stand in parallel to each other. The first couplet would direct Cain to recognize that he is a sinner, and has a serious need:

Why is your anger hot?
And Why is your face fallen?

When Adam and Eve were filled with fear and tried to hide from Yahweh because of the exposure (in their nakedness) of their dying condition, Yahweh first drew attention to their sinfulness by asking pointed questions, "Where are you? . . . Who told you? . . . What is this you have done?" (Gen.3:9,11,13). Then, in light of the pressing need caused by their sin, Yahweh Himself killed an animal and provided tunics of skin to clothe them. Now, in a similar way, when Cain is filled with fierce and self-centered resentment, Yahweh asks questions able to make him aware of his sin.

Next Yahweh draws Cain's attention to that which will lift his spirit in aligning himself with the divinely instituted pattern of Genesis 3:21. Had Cain followed that pattern when he brought a present to Yahweh, that is, had he done what is well, he would not be filled now with the evil spirit exhibited in his countenance. But the pathway

of doing that which is well is still open for Cain. And once again this is associated with the killing of an animal.

If you had done what is well, would you not lift up your face?
But since you have not done well, at the portal there is a sin offering, a flockling reclining,

Today also, God has a message which will lift the sinner up from wretched hate and irreverence, as it did Saul of Tarsus. "Grateful am I to Him Who invigorates me, Christ Jesus, our Lord, for He deems me faithful, assigning me a service, I, who formerly was a calumniator and a persecutor and an outrager: but I was shown mercy, seeing that I do it being ignorant, in unbelief. Yet the grace of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners . . ." (1 Tim.1:12-15).

This evangel concerns Christ Jesus, Whom God made to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him (2 Cor.5:21). He was One Whose disposition was of a quiet readiness and compliance in emptying Himself, and in humbling Himself unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil.2:5-8).

We must not suppose that God has eternally shut off from the sinner, Cain, that which He provided for the foremost of sinners, Saul. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, in accord with God's will for all mankind (1 Tim.1:15; 2:4-6). Philippians 2:9-11 makes it clear that Cain will someday be brought into that state of well-doing and well-being that was intimated by Yahweh's words to him in Genesis 4.

THE RECLINING ONE

The single word, **reclining,** is attached to the end of the second couplet in such a way that it stands out by itself.

In grammatical form it is a participle, which would ordinarily serve as an adjective to the noun, **sin**-offering, that is, a *reclining sin offering.* Yet adjectives generally agree in gender and number with the nouns they modify, and *reclining* is masculine singular, while *sin* is feminine singular. Also, this second line of the second couplet is already much longer than the first line so that it is thrown off balance for a perfectly matched parallel. The effect is that both the words, *sin* and *reclining* draw special attention to themselves separately. The word *reclining,* like an adjective to its noun, does add information about the sin offering. But it also stands alone in its own right. Like the term *sin offering,* the word *reclining* points ahead to Christ in His death for sinners in a *distinctive* way.

As the Sin Offering, Christ Jesus, Who knew no sin, was made to be the great Anti-Sin, the Sin which puts an end to sin. As the Reclining One, He was obedient unto the death of the cross.

Genesis 4:7 only hints at these powerfully striking aspects of the evangel. Looking back at the passage now, we who are believing God's evangel concerning His Son rejoice to see what was in the Lord's mind as He spoke to Cain. The faithful obedience of Jesus Christ is foreshadowed here in these few terse expressions, so that they shine out in full harmony with the divine words of Genesis 1:3 and their effects on the world of darkness.

THE THIRD STANZA

The word *reclining* is the connecting link to the last stanza. As mentioned, it is masculine in gender, so that it is the antecedent of the pronouns "his" and "him" of the final two lines, even as *Cain* is the antecedent of the pronouns "you." Yahweh directs Cain's attention to a sin offering which has a particular character. It is a reclining and submissive animal (most likely a young male sheep,

a flockling, but that is not directly stated). Furthermore, it bears an important relationship to Cain, and also Cain bears an important relationship to it.

IMPULSE OR RESTORATION?

Taking the Hebrew text as it stands today, and rendering it word for word into English, this third couplet of our passage might be set out as follows:

And-to-you impulse-his
And-you, you-are-ruling in-him.

Even apart from the ideal state of Eden, we can sometimes trace in sheep a compliant disposition. Under wise and sensitive care, the impulse of many domestic animals becomes a readiness to be directed by their master.

In several thought-provoking articles,[1] Brother A. E. Knoch told of his investigations of the Hebrew word translated "desire" in the AV in Genesis 3:16 and 4:7 (also in Song of Songs 7:10). This is the word rendered "impulse" in the literal version above. Following Brother Knoch's suggestion, based on the Septuagint Version of this passage, the CV renderings (in both the 1957 and 2008 editions) represent an emendation of the Hebrew word *thshuqe* ("impulse") to *thshube* (literally, "return," but rendered idiomatically by the word "restoration"). This has seemed quite satisfactory to me, especially (as Brother Knoch stressed) because it seemed to provide an early picture of the evangel as a message of deliverance and salvation. For Cain, a message of restoration (or "return") might speak of a turning back to his relationship before Yahweh before he rejected the divinely sanctioned pattern of Genesis 2:21. And this, in turn, could reflect the deeper message of a turning away

1. *cf Unsearchable Riches,* vol.35, pp.183-192; vol.41, pp.142,143; vol.46, pp.7-22.

from condemnation to the right standing before God which is proclaimed in the evangel.

Yet of course the evangel tells first of all of Christ, what He has done, and then of the good which this brings about. The evangel in its elementary essence is: "*Christ died* for our sins" (1 Cor.15:3); "While we are still sinners, *Christ died* for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). From this we may proceed to: "Christ Jesus came into the world to *save* sinners" (1 Tim.1:15), and even further to: "Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, *be graciously granting us all*?" (Rom.8:32). The glory and blessings revealed in the evangel do not stop even here, but in every case they rest on the astounding fact that the Son of God was crucified as a common criminal and died on behalf of sinners. The glories rest on the obedience of Jesus Christ to the death of the cross; they are dependent on Christ's faith which is for our faith.

In Genesis 4:6,7, when Yahweh speaks of a *lifting* for Cain, this serves well in pointing ahead as a type of deliverance. But the words *sin* and *reclining* point to the *means* of deliverance, thus serving as types of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Sin Offering and the Lamb of God.

Consequently, I am suggesting here that the word used in the extant Hebrew text, rendered "impulse" in the CVOT footnote for Genesis 4:7, should be given further consideration. In its derivation, this Hebrew term is built on the root idea of RUN-ABOUT, which suggests a sense of service. But, more than service, as suggested in Song of Songs 7:10, the word speaks of an inner urge for the good of another. Hence the damsel rejoices in the relationship between herself and her beloved:

I am my darling's,
And his **impulse** *is toward me.*

We will see this good impulse and impulse for good in many later foreshadowings of the evangel, although the word itself is not used. It is there in the quiet demeanor and trust of Isaac at the ascent to Mount Moriah, and in the disposition of Joseph and his appreciation that God was working all his sufferings together for the good of himself and his family. All of this pictures Jesus Christ Who emptied Himself and humbled Himself and died for us, so that the old humanity which follows in the way of Cain would be put to death.

FOR CAIN

The impulse of the recliner was *for Cain.* It was disposed to do what would be of good use for him. The implications of this, seeing that it involves the personal preparation and guidance, even the active arranging of God, may first shock us. Indeed, here was a creature specifically prepared by Yahweh for sacrifice. Yet this serves as a type of God's giving of His Son, Who was made to be a sin offering for our sakes.

Cain was unwilling to do what his brother Abel had done. It would have been a blow to his pride in view of all he had done by the sweat of his brow. He would rather have pleased Yahweh by giving something of his own labors to Him (for which he would be honored), and he would not look for it under any other terms. He would not have his standing before God be based on the sacrifice of an innocent flockling, provided by God. This is the "way of Cain" (Jude 11). It is based on the stubborn pride of the human which in turn is based on a denial of the reality of death operating within us. This truly wicked impulse must ultimately be abolished, for it is false and destructive.

The evangel speaks of that which is stupid and weak from the human perspective (*cf* 1 Cor.1:18-23). Yet we are not ashamed of this astonishing message (Rom.1:16).

CAIN'S PLACE OF RULE

The last line of this poem in Genesis 4:6,7, tells, not of the reclining animal's relationship to Cain, but of Cain's relationship to the flockling. Cain was to rule over the reclining animal and offer it (him) up to Yahweh as a sin offering.

This is in accord with Yahweh's instruction to Adam that he and his race were to sway over the lower animals (Gen. 1:28). Yet this message from Yahweh only seemed to exacerbate Cain's attitude of disdain toward the ways of Yahweh. To follow the example of his "transitory" brother, Abel, rather than continue in his way of self-sufficiency, was unacceptable to him.

So it has continued to be. The god of this eon blinds the apprehensions of the unbelieving, so that the light of the evangel concerning God's Son, Jesus Christ, does not reach their hearts (2 Cor.4:4).

D.H.H.

WITH EXPECTATION

In announcing the death, on February 8, of our dear sister, **Nova Richardson,** of Boise, Idaho, we do so with the happy expectation of always being together with our Lord (*cf* 1 Thess.4:13-18). Nova was closely associated with us in our translation projects for many years. God gave her both a desire and ability to understand many details of Hebrew and Greek grammar and a cheerful perseverance in the labor involved in checking and rechecking our renderings. Her life was a testimony of reliance on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind.

We make mention now also of Brother **Elmore Harty,** who died last year on May 18 at 97 years of age. He had no settled home but traveled widely heralding the evangel of conciliation as he saw it.

Again, we received notice of the death of **Lucille Grandy,** of Wagener, South Carolina, on November 1, 2007. We feel the loss of this warm-hearted sister, who served among those associated with the ecclesia there.

These and other losses sharpen our sense of longing with expectation and thanksgiving for what God has prepared for us all in the oncoming eons.

FOR THE PROGRESS OF THE EVANGEL

(Philippians 1:1-30)

PAUL'S EPISTLE known as "Ephesians," together with those directed to the "Philippians" and the "Colossians," are sometimes termed the "perfection epistles." This is because they present the zenith of Pauline truth, the revelation of which Paul became a dispenser, as well as the primary exponent, "in accord with the administration of God, which is granted to me for you, to *complete* the word of God" (Col.1:25).

These same epistles are often called the "prison epistles" as well, since they, together with 2 Timothy and Philemon (*cp* 2 Tim.1:8; 2:9; 4:6,7; Philemon 9), were written near the close of Paul's career, when he was held in bonds at Rome (*cp* Acts 28:30,31; Eph.6:20; Phil.1:17; Col.4:8).

Our present subject, the Philippian epistle, "is a divine commentary on the latter half of Ephesians, and, like it, is especially concerned with the deportment demanded by the transcendent doctrines developed in the first half of the Ephesian letter. This is the key to its contents. *It does not deal with doctrines, but with deportment.* This will illumine many a difficult passage in it . . . .

"This epistle was not written by Paul and Timothy in the character of *apostles,* but *slaves.* This is important, as it gives us a key to the character of the whole letter. The mention of the overseers, or supervisors, and servants leads to the same conclusion. The grace also is from the *Lord.* If we keep this in mind it will greatly simplify the understanding of difficult portions of the epistle."[1]

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, pp.296,297.

SPEAKING THE WORD OF GOD FEARLESSLY

Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, together with the supervisors and servants: Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Phil.1:1,2)

A word of "grace and peace" from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, is contained within the introductory portion of all of Paul's epistles. There is a tendency for us to overlook these words or to fail to note their importance. Yet they are full of significance: God's constant disposition toward us is one of graciousness and peacefulness. Since, through our Lord Jesus Christ, God is graciously inclined and at peace toward us, we ourselves may be having peace toward God (*cp* Rom.5:1), while extending joy and thanksgiving toward Him as well.

I am thanking my God at every remembrance of you, always, in every petition of mine for you all, making the petition with joy, for your contribution to the evangel from the first day until now . . . . (Phil.1:3-5)

"I am thanking my God . . . for your contribution to the evangel . . . ." Since the gifts of the Philippians to Paul, in their contribution to the work of the evangel, were ultimately out of God (Rom.11:36) and given from heaven (John 3:27), Paul thanked *God* accordingly for the Philippians' own gifts. As the proximate cause thereof, we do well to be grateful to one another for gifts given and help provided. But we especially do well to recognize and be thankful to the One Who is the ultimate cause of the very generosity and kindness of our friends, which prompts them gladly to share of their means or time with us, with a view toward furthering the evangel of Christ. It is no wonder, then, that it is "each according as he has proposed in his own heart, not sorrowfully, nor of compulsion, for the *gleeful* giver is loved by God" (2 Cor.9:7).

. . . having this same confidence, that He Who undertakes a good work among you, will be performing it until the day of Jesus Christ: according as it is just for me to be disposed in this way over you all, because you, having me in heart, both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the evangel, you all are joint participants with me of grace, for God is my Witness how I am longing for you all in the compassions of Christ Jesus. (Phil.1:6-8)

Whatever good work God has undertaken *among* us ("you" is plural here), God will continue to be performing among us, until the day of Jesus Christ.

God is doing a good work in us, individually, and among us, collectively. His good work results in our good work, whether it should be the good work of one's being, as the Philippians, a patron of the evangel, or as is true of many, a devoted student of the Scriptures, a faithful husband or wife, a true friend, a helper of the downtrodden—or any other good and virtuous act performed by ourselves. These good works which we do, we do as those who are God's achievement: "For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:10).

And this I am praying, that your love may be superabounding still more and more in realization and all sensibility, for you to be testing what things are of consequence, that you may be sincere and no stumbling block for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that is through Jesus Christ for the glory and laud of God. (Phil.1:9-11)

Let us imitate Paul in praying this same prayer ourselves, God giving us grace to be praying it habitually and intelligently.

"Knowledge" (*gnōsis*, KNOWledge) is good; and "realization" (or "recognition," *epignōsis*, ON-KNOWledge) is even better. Even so, without *love*, we are nothing (1 Cor. 13:2). Hence we are to be "rooted and grounded in love," which itself results from God granting us, "in accord with

the riches of His glory, to be made staunch with power, through His spirit, in the man within, Christ to dwell in [our] hearts through faith . . ." (Eph.3:16,17).

Thus our *love* is to be an intelligent and scripturally-grounded love; and it is our love that is to be superabounding—"still more and more"—in (1) *realization* (*cp* 1 Tim. 2:4,7) and (2) *all sensibility* (*cp* Luke 9:45). This is "for [us] to be *testing* what things are of *consequence* (*cp* Rom.2:18).

To "test" is to "form a careful opinion by subjecting the senses or mind to impressions" (*cp* Rom.1:28; 12:2)[2]. Man is of more "consequence" than a sheep (Matt.12:12), and of the flying creatures of heaven (Matt.6:26). And, God's purpose of the eons which He makes in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph.3:11), is of more consequence than the genealogies of post-Exilic times, with which some seek to identify themselves in a quest to "prove" their Israelite origins according to the flesh (*cp* 1 Tim.1:4).

Some things are of far more consequence than others. And, before we can even begin to test or form careful opinions concerning things of consequence, many and varied, we must first have the wisdom and enlightenment to perceive what things *are* of consequence, and, what things, comparatively at least, are not.

This is all unto the end that we "may be *sincere* [*eilikrines,* SUN-JUDGED; as in the Latin sense, of "pure"] and *no stumbling block* for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that is through Jesus Christ for the glory and laud of God" (Phil.1:10b,11).

Now I am intending you to know, brethren, that my affairs have rather come to be for the progress of the evangel, so that my bonds in Christ become apparent in the whole pretorium and to all the rest, and the majority of the brethren, having confidence in the Lord as to my bonds, are more exceedingly daring to speak the word of God fearlessly. (Phil.1:12-14)

2. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry "test," p.300.

Some might well suppose, now that Paul was suffering evil unto bonds as a malefactor, that this would mean the end of his effective ministry in the evangel. But since "the word of God is not bound" (2 Tim.2:9), Paul's affairs had rather come to be for the *progress* of the evangel, apparently reaching unto some even within the Pretorium, the very household of Caesar (*cp* Phil.4:22). Accordingly, the majority of the brethren, having confidence in the Lord as to Paul's bonds, rather than drawing back, became more exceedingly daring to speak the word of God fearlessly!

Some, indeed, are even heralding Christ because of envy and strife, yet some because of delight also; these, indeed, of love, having perceived that I am located for the defense of the evangel, yet those are announcing Christ out of faction, not purely, surmising to rouse affliction in my bonds. What then?—Moreover, seeing that, by every method, whether in pretense or truth, Christ is being announced, I am rejoicing in this also, and will be rejoicing nevertheless. (Phil.1:15-18)

Here is our example: Even if the heralding of some has no better motive than their own aggrandizement in their quest for power in the midst of envy and strife, announcing Christ out of *faction, not purely,* even if with such a low motive as in so doing to increase the suffering of another of whom they are jealous (*cp* "surmising to rouse affliction in my bonds"), "*nevertheless,*" we will be rejoicing even in this (i.e., in such ill-motivated evangelism) also. This is because, "by every method, whether in pretense or in truth, [at least] Christ is being announced" (Phil.1:18), and since "God delights, through the [seeming] stupidity of the heralding [of 'Christ crucified'], *to save those who are believing*" (*cp* 1 Cor.1:21-25).

For I am aware that, for me, this will be eventuat-

ing in salvation through your petition and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ, in accord with my premonition and expectation, that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death. (Phil.1:19,20)

The phrase here "in salvation," is literally "into saving" (*eis sōtêrian*), and refers to God's work in Paul of sustaining and preserving him through trial, that in nothing would he be put to shame, but instead, as he says, "with all boldness, as always, now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death" (Phil.1:20).

For to me to be living is Christ, and to be dying, gain. Now if it is to be living in flesh, this to me means fruit from work, and what I shall be preferring I am not making known. (Phil.1:21,22)

This is the figure of inverted ellipsis, where what is needed in the first clause is supplied by the second, and what is needed by the second is supplied by the first. The literal thought is as follows: *For me to be living is gain to Christ, and for me to be dying, is gain to Christ, as well.*

That is, gain will accrue to Christ and to His cause either way. While pointing out if what should happen would be that Paul would continue to live that this would mean "fruit from work" for him as a result, even so, the apostle declines to make his own preference known, whether he should be living or dying.

(Yet I am being pressed out of the two, having a yearning for the solution and to be together with Christ, for it, rather, is much better.) (Phil.1:23)

This is not as in the Authorized Version, "For I am in a strait betwixt two," but as in the Concordant Version, "Yet I am being pressed out of the two" (*sunexomai de ek tōn duo;* I-AM-*be*ING-pressED YET OUT OF-THE TWO). Paul was under the constraint of these two alternatives, whether he

should be living or dying. And out of the pressure brought to bear upon him by each of these, he was, quite naturally, longing for the *solution*[3] to his dilemma, one in which each alternative course, in its own way, seemed problematic.

Paul declares that he has a yearning for two things: (1) a solution to his present dilemma, whether he should be living or dying; and (2) "to be together with Christ, for it, rather, is much better." It is well for Paul to have a solution to his present dilemma; but it is much better to be together with Christ, which was the apostle's expectation and constant longing.

Paul says nothing to indicate that if the solution to his dilemma were to be that he would die, that *he* would then *not* actually *die*, but would instead *at that very juncture*, be transported, albeit incorporeally (not to mention, inscrutably), into the presence of Christ. To the contrary, Paul identifies the time of our assembling into the presence of Christ, as being that of our resurrection, not at the time of our death (2 Cor.4:14; 1 Cor.15:51-53; 1 Thess.4:13-18).

Yet to be staying in the flesh is more necessary because of you. And, having this confidence, I am aware that I shall be remaining and shall be abiding with you all for your progress and joy of faith, that your glorying may be superabounding in Christ Jesus in me through my presence with you again. (Phil.1:24-26)

It is not that Paul did not know whether his death were imminent or not, as he makes plain here. Still, he longed for the resolution of his situation in its practical outworkings, through the passage of a span of time after which it would be clear to all that he would be continuing on in ministry.

3. Here the Greek is *ana luō* (UP-LOOSE). Its force is that of the English "resolution" (as in the verb "resolve"), in the sense of finding a *solution* to a problem. In addition to Philippians 1:23, it appears as well in Luke 12:36 where the CV renders it idiomatically as "break loose": "and you be like men anticipating their own lord, when he should *break loose* from the wedding festivities . . . ."

Only be citizens walking worthily of the evangel of Christ, that, whether coming and making your acquaintance, or being absent, I should be hearing of your concerns, that you are standing firm in one spirit, one soul, competing together in the faith of the evangel . . . (Phil.1:27)

May it always be the sincere endeavor of our heart to be walking worthily of the evangel of Christ, "standing firm in one spirit, one soul, competing together in the faith of the evangel . . . ."

. . . and not being startled by those who are opposing in anything, which is to them a proof of destruction, yet of your salvation, and this from God, for to you it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also, having the same struggle such as you are perceiving in me, and now are hearing to be in me. (Phil.1:28-30)

To be "startled," is to be disturbed or agitated suddenly, as by surprise or fear. It is only natural to be startled when those whom we regard, even if unwittingly, begin to oppose this or that teaching within the compass of the faith of the evangel. Ideally, Paul would not have us be startled in such cases, or at least through this entreaty, would have us soon compose ourselves and continue on faithfully, even if some are now constrained to "disagree." Such opposition is a proof of their "loss," or "destruction" of corresponding reward (*cf* 1 Cor.3:10-15).

Yet it is a proof as well of our *salvation from opposing*, "and this from God." This is because, in such a case, God has, for Christ's sake (so that at least some would maintain a true testimony concerning Him and the nature of His saving work), graciously granted us *not only* to be believing on Him (which favor is enjoyed by all His chosen ones), "but to be *suffering* for His sake *also*, having the same struggle such as you are perceiving in me, and now are hearing to be in me" (*cf* 2 Tim.1:8; 4:5). J.R.C.

SATAN TRIES CHRIST

AT THE BEGINNING of His ministry our Lord was not ushered into a second Eden to lead a *luxurious soulish* life, such as Adam and Eve enjoyed before they succumbed to Satan's wiles. Instead, He was led into the *wilderness* by the spirit, where there was nothing to please His soul (Matt.4:1). The wilderness of Judea, though very near to Jerusalem and Bethlehem, is composed of extremely desolate and inhospitable terrain. It fits well with the Dead Sea, of which it forms the western shore. From the highlands near Jerusalem it is cut by deep wadies, dry most of the year, with steep stone cliffs, and hardly any vegetation. It is not merely devoid of luxuries, but of necessities to sustain life. Had there been food of any kind, our Lord would have found it. Instead, He was hungry.

Satan's trial of God's Son is far more helpful for believers, who have an earnest of God's spirit, than that of Adam, who lacked this essential aid. We should not be deceived like Adam and Eve, for we not only have much more knowledge of the Subjector, but also, in believing the evangel, we are given spiritual insight, along with the shield of faith to protect us. Besides this we have the sword of the spirit, the word of God to defeat him. Christ had this in fullest measure, so His encounter with the Adversary should be of extraordinary help to us.

Matthew's account of our Lord's life as a whole, is confined to Jesus as the *Christ*, the Anointed, the King of Israel. But, here we are dealing with a wider sphere, to which Satan belongs. In Job we read of a group of beings called *sons* of Elohim, the Subjectors. These are used by

God to carry out His intention, which may include evil, to produce ultimate good, as in Job's case. In Hebrew his name is *Satan* which means adversary. In Greek this is rendered *Diabolos,* THROUGH-CASTER. So here we have two *sons* of the Subjector. One is used for good, the other for evil. Hence our Lord here in Matthew 4 is not merely the Messiah of Israel, but He is presented in the wider sphere of divine sonship, which is more fully developed in John's account.

TRIAL OF CHRIST IN FLESH

Satan made three distinct attempts to destroy the Son's complete submission to the Father. To aid our memories we may call them (1) His *flesh,* (2) His *faith,* and (3) His *fame.* First he seeks to tempt Him to appeal to God's power in order to satisfy His bodily needs, apart from divine direction. When a thrust with the sword of the spirit defeats this attempt, the Adversary himself quotes the Scriptures, in order to distort His faith by a false appeal to the Word. This is most successful among believers today, but Jesus was not so easily deceived as we are by the Adversary, who is the god of this eon, and who blinds the apprehension of the unbelieving (2 Cor.4:4). On this basis he now receives the worship of the whole religious world, and if we do not fully *believe,* even we who are the chosen are in danger of giving Satan the subjection and worship which belongs to God and His Anointed.

But finally, Satan challenges our Lord's right to be called God's Son, for He appears to be nothing but a starving human who could not even manage to get enough to eat. In order to reveal the highest of God's glories as a Saviour and Reconciler He had emptied Himself (Phil.2:7), changing from the form of Subjector into that of a slave. He was now a *Human,* and must comport Himself accordingly. Satan had ignored this, and challenged Him to prove

His Sonship, when His mission was to demonstrate His humanity. So He proves His position by appealing to a passage dealing with humanity: "Not on bread alone shall man be living, but on every declaration going out through the mouth of God" (Matt.4:4).

Of Jesus the chief priests and scribes and elders said: "Others he saves! Himself he can not save!" (Matt.27:42). So it was at the very beginning. All was created through Him, and even in His humiliation, He could feed four thousand with seven cakes of bread and a few fishes (*cf* Matt.15:32-39). These also were hungry people, yet they left over seven hampers full of food, enough to have sustained Him a long time in the wilderness.

NOT ON BREAD ALONE

And, approaching, the trier said to Him, "If you are God's Son, say that these stones may be becoming cakes of bread." Yet He, answering, said, "It is written, 'Not on bread alone shall man be living, but on every declaration going out through the mouth of God.'" (Matt.4:2-4)

When our Lord was tried by the Adversary, again it was an attack on His spiritual relationship to God, rather than any enticement to moral delinquency, and our Lord countered it accordingly. After having fasted for forty days, what crime could there be in turning stones into bread to assuage His hunger? Is not this miracle only the acceleration of the usual process of nature? Stone is weathered by the sun and air, and turned into soil. Plants reach down and take from it the substance and vitality which, in turn, is stored up in the grain. This is ground and kneaded and baked into bread for human consumption. He Who does this in the course of eons can do it in a second. In its place it is eminently right and commendable. Probably we shall experience an even greater miracle constantly in the glo-

rious bodies which will be ours when vivified. Perhaps we will live directly on the sunlight which turns the stone into bread (Matt.4:1-4).

But the error here is fundamental. All life is sourced in *God* and it is not right to use His sustaining forces apart from His direction. Man, as he is now constituted, must, indeed, live on food which once was a stone, but not on that *alone*. He must eat in accord with the word of the God Who created the food, and Who sustains the eater. At present man is not constituted to eat stones, for God wishes him to experience the evil connected with the production of his food. There must be toil and trial and tears in order to put him in his proper place before His Creator, and the Model Man is not going to evade these because He has the power to do so. He was still on the way to the cross, which must precede the path to the crown. Satan's object was not to make Him a glutton or a winebibber, as His human enemies called Him on a later occasion, but to draw Him away from absolute dependence on the word of the living God.

Most humans live on "bread" or food alone, or very little else. The chief source of life is either unknown or unappreciated by them. Yahweh Elohim took Israel in hand in the desert, where there was no food for their vast throng, to teach them their absolute dependence on Him. They were there, not only forty *days* but forty *years* and would have perished miserably if they had not been granted food from heaven. This was done deliberately, that He might make known to them that, "not on bread alone shall the human live, for by every utterance from the mouth of Yahweh shall the human live" (Deut.8:3).

At first the Adversary did not quote Scripture but only reasoned from the major premise that the Son of God could transform stones into bread. This is quite true. Before He entered the human race, our Lord had been

the Firstborn of creation, through Whom all the rest had come into being. But the minor premise was absolutely and fatally false. The Son Who had emptied Himself and condescended to the form of a human *could* perform such a miracle for others, but He could *not* do it as the Saviour of the world. As such He must be absolutely dependent on God, and could only put into His mouth that which came out of God's mouth.

CHRIST EMPTIED HIMSELF

Here the Adversary made the mistake that we, unspiritual (un)believers, often make. We fail to grasp the vital object of Christ's mission in the past, which was, not to be well-fed and powerful and successful and famous, but to fast and be weak and a failure and shamefully mistreated, so that such passages as the Adversary quoted are altogether out of place. The same is true of the saints today. The Corinthians were astray in this matter (1 Cor.4:8). They were puffed up and boastful, as many are today. Paul wrote, "Already are you sated, already are you rich, apart from us you reign . . . . We are stupid . . . yet you are prudent . . . . We are weak, yet you are strong. You are glorious, yet we are dishonored." He goes on ending with, "As the offscourings of the world we became, the scum of all things, hitherto" (1 Cor.4:8-13).

How could the primordial sin and offense have been avoided? There was only one way, and that is the only one today. Had Eve simply avoided all reasoning and false quoting, and quoted the exact words of Yahweh Elohim, she would have thwarted his designs. Yahweh had not spoken of *any* tree, but only of *one.* Moreover, He did *not* say they were not to *touch* it. She should have indignantly denied the serpent's denial. She should not have tested God's word by the outward appearance of the fruit. She should not have given any to her husband. *She should have quoted God's*

actual words to the serpent. "You must not eat from it" (Gen.2:17). That is what we should do today. None of us are as subtle as Satan, so are foolish to try to argue with anyone who has his spirit.

PETER IMITATES SATAN

Not only Satan proposed to relieve Jesus of soulish suffering, but Peter, the chief of the apostles, was determined to keep Him from the agonies that lay ahead. He even dared to rebuke Him, and actually demanded that He be "propitious" to Himself, not discerning that He was to be the Propitiation for the whole world, so could not be so to Himself (*cf* Matt.16:22-26). It used to appear very strange to me that our Lord could give Peter such a title as "satan," the worst that I could think of, until I saw that the prince of the apostles was only repeating the advice given to the Son of God before He began His ministry. And is not this being constantly repeated in the Lord's service today? Why walk in the will of God, when all about us is against us?

SCRIPTURE MISPLACED

Then the Adversary is taking Him along into the holy city, and stands Him on the wing of the sanctuary. And he is saying to Him, "If you are God's Son, cast yourself down, for it is written that 'His messengers shall be directed concerning Thee,' and 'On their hands shall they be lifting Thee, lest at some time Thou shouldst be dashing Thy foot against a stone.'"

Jesus averred to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not be putting on trial the Lord your God.'" (Matt.4:5-7)

Being defeated by a quotation from the Scriptures concerning the welfare of Christ's soul and flesh, the Adversary now changes to assail His *faith.* Now *he also* quotes the Scriptures. He appeals to the ninety-first psalm, which

states: "For He shall enjoin His messengers concerning you, to keep you in all your ways. On their palms shall they lift you, lest you should strike your foot against a stone" (Psa.91:11,12). The Adversary had triumphantly begun as before, "If you are God's Son." He should have said, "If you are *not* God's Son." The Son, as the Saviour, is *not* saved. Unlike the scoffers at the cross, we delight in the fact that "Others He saves! Himself He cannot save!" (Matt.27:42).

The Adversary, like most of us today, does not apply the Scriptures to the right *time* in God's plan. A passage out of place is more dangerous than none. It is "in the Bible," but is not according to God's plan.

We, also, cannot claim as our own the promise in Psalm 91:11-12. I thought of this when I went (of my own volition) to the area where the sanctuary stood, overlooking the Kidron wadi. At that corner the wall is highest outside, and is so far above the level of the ravine, with its stoney slope that I could expect little less than broken bones, or even death, if I should fall off the wall. As heights make me dizzy I did not loiter long, for I knew no scripture which would guarantee that I would not be severely injured. If I had appealed to this passage it would have been *credulity* not faith, but it will doubtless apply to the faithful believer in the kingdom.

Even in the kingdom I doubt if this would apply to anyone intent on trying it *in order to find out if it is true. That is not faith.* It is arrogant *un*belief. The Israelites probed Yahweh, their Elohim, at Massah (Probing). They were thirsty, and really reasoned that, if Yahweh were able, He would not have allowed this. So, at Moses' pleading, He brought water out of a rock, the last place they would expect to find it (Ex.17:2). What they said was, "Is Yahweh among us or is He not?" (Ex.17:7). Not withstanding the many miracles they experienced, they all died in the wilderness because of unbelief. Therefore Moses said:

"You shall not probe Yahweh your Elohim as you probed at Massah" (Deut.6:16). God can do anything, but He will never be probed by believers, for that itself is sufficient evidence that they have no confidence in His power.

GLORY

Again the Adversary takes Him along into a very high mountain, and is showing Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these to you will I be giving, if ever, falling down, you should be worshiping me."

Then Jesus is saying to him, "Go away, Satan, for it is written, 'The Lord your God shall you be worshiping, and to Him only shall you be offering divine service.'" (Matt. 4:8-10)

After the Adversary had made two mistakes in testing the Son in connection with His flesh and faith, he made a final attempt to reach Him through His *fame.* Originally the Son was the highest creature in the universe, but His kenosis, or emptying, had left Him without any apparent glory at all. Son of a poor artisan, in a despised village in contemptible Galilee, without visible means of support, He was on the downward road to the still deeper disgrace of a crucified criminal. Now Satan offered Him the opposite, a place at the summit of earthly glory, without the painful path He was pursuing. It is striking to note the physical concordance of His course with His spiritual career. Satan took Him to a very high mountain, a symbol of elevation and the political eminence which he was promising Him. But He came down, literally, He descended from above the heavens to below the sea to the lowest spot on earth—the shore of the Jordan near the Dead Sea (*cp* Eph.4:9). And from there He made His home in a town on lake Galilee, still quite a distance below sea level. Such places are very

scarce on earth. So also was His lonely career, mostly lived in the deepest depressions of His native land.

The spiritual character of these trials should help us to understand that the mission of Satan is not in the realm of flesh, but of spirit. He is opposed to faith in God, even when he artfully suggests that we put God on trial or when he produces Scripture for his suggestions and demands. Few saints, alas! are able to counter with Scripture as our Lord did, because they do not intelligently apprehend the role in which Satan has been cast by God, and confuse it with that of a mythical "devil" who inflames the flesh and leads men to vile and vicious deeds. Only indirectly, as in the case of Adam, does the Adversary influence mankind in the direction of immorality, that is by leading him into opposition to God's will.

PAUL OUR PATTERN

But the question might be asked, does the truth of Genesis and of Matthew apply today? There are some basic truths, such as the introduction of sin into humanity which apply to the whole of the eonian times. Others, such as suffering for the sake of others, are limited to the wicked or evil eons. As we are human and live in these eons, they apply to us. But there is a very special application to the present secret administration. This we find in Paul's epistles. It is personally exemplified in the case of Paul himself. He speaks of it particularly to the Corinthian ecclesia, and explains it at length in his first epistle to them (3:6-13).

Unlike Paul, but very much like Christendom today, the Corinthians were already *sated,* already *rich* and *regnant* (1 Cor.4:8). Note how close this comes to the three places of our Lord's testing by Satan—the *flesh* (sated), the *faith* (rich), and *fame* (reign). In the *future* these terms may describe our condition. Now, however, we must not satiate ourselves with the desires of the flesh and of the

eyes, and the ostentation of living (1 John 2:16). Yet note the word *already.' Paul wished that they really reigned, in the future,* for then he will reign with them. But *now* these things are out of place.

God demonstrates, by means of Paul, a living example, how the very greatest of Christ's apostles should fare, for they were used as an exhibition, or theatrical, to make this clear to the world, and to messenger and to humanity. To them we appear as stupid, yet Christendom, like the Corinthians, is prudent. We are weak, yet they are strong. They are glorious, yet we are dishonored. Seldom, it may be, are we hungry or thirsty, naked or buffeted and unsettled, but we toil, working with our own hands. We also are reviled and persecuted and calumniated of all things, even by other believers.

OUR BLESSEDNESS

O, that the saints, especially their teachers, would realize that our true blessedness lies, not in fleshly fortunes or selfish faith, or fame for ourselves, but in spending and suffering for the sake of others in this temporary terrestrial tent. Even in the future, in our glorious celestial abodes, our happiness will not be based primarily on the *possession* of a glorious body, or a perfect faith, or our high rank, but on our ability to be bringing blessing to others. How marvelous it will be to have a body able and willing to serve God acceptably! And how blessed to be so filled with God's spirit that no faith will be needed to accept His Word! And how glorious to be in a position to bring even the celestial sphere into harmony with God's grand consummation, so that He becomes all even in the highest realm of creation! A. E. Knoch

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IN ACCORD WITH GRACE

JUSTIFICATION based on the faith of Jesus Christ is an achievement of divine grace (*cf* Rom.3:24). The reckoning of righteousness to the believer is a grace ("favor") from God (*cf* Rom.4:4,5). So also, God's promise to those who are believing and thus are reckoned righteous is fully in accord with grace (*cf* Rom.4:16).

NOT THROUGH LAW

It is true that in heralding the evangel, Paul was not nullifying law (Rom.3:31). God will write the law on the hearts of Israel, and they will do what it instructs (*cf* Ezek.36:26-28). Nevertheless, the evangel which the apostle was bringing is fully centered in grace, apart from works of law. This evangel is sourced in the faith of Jesus Christ, for our faith (*cf* Rom.1:17). This which is true of the evangel, is therefore true of the *promise* of glory of which the evangel speaks. As was so of the promise given to Abraham, God's promise of an allotment (*cf* Rom.8:17) given to us as believers is not through works of law (*cf* Rom.4:13). The promise comes to us by faith alone, out of Christ's faith and for our faith. Hence in Romans 4:14,15 we read:

> *For if those* [*out of*] **law** *are enjoyers of the allotment,*
> **faith** *has been made void,*
> *and the* **promise** *has been nullified,*
> *for the* **law** *is producing indignation.*
> *Now where no* **law** *is, neither is there transgression.*

Law is sustained as a necessary part of Israel's calling; they are under law (Rom.3:19); their very identity is shaped

out of their association with law (Rom.4:14), for theirs is the legislation (Rom.9:4). But God's promise of a future allotment from Him rests entirely on Christ's faith and will not be fulfilled on the basis of human obedience to law. If it could happen that way, then the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners would be made void, and the faith of the believer would in actuality be just a meaningless gesture.

Finally, as Paul now points out, if the promise of God depended on human beings keeping the law, then the promise would be nullified, for no one, as we are presently constituted, can keep the law.

LAW PRODUCES INDIGNATION

Here, Paul refutes the false notion in two directions. First he shows us that the idea that the promise can be fulfilled by human works makes all he has been saying about the faith of Jesus Christ and of the believer void of any significance. Faith would take us in the wrong direction. Then he shows us that the idea that the promise can be fulfilled by works of law must be discarded simply because no one keeps the law; this would mean that the promise could never be fulfilled.

The precepts of law are holy and just and good (Rom. 7:12), yet human beings are fleshly (Rom.7:14), and thus by inevitably transgressing the law, divine indignation can only be increased. This will be made very evident again at the end of the millennial kingdom when the Adversary is loosed from being bound, (Rev.20:1-3; 7-10). The evangel Paul is bringing takes us beyond the promise of the new covenant promised for Israel, so that God's righteousness is made manifest in His work of justification through the faith of Jesus. It is in view of this evangel fully centered upon the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that the consummations of the eons have attained (in spirit) to us (1 Cor.10:11).

FAITH AND GRACE

There is only one pathway to righteousness. That is the pathway announced in the evangel of God. The faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners, and their identity with Him in His death, entombment and resurrection, is the only way to justification and a new creation in which human beings become constituted righteous.

As for us who believe, we are reckoned righteous in God's transcendent grace, through the channel of our believing of the evangel even now while we remain sinners in the flesh. We are brought under the sway of God's grace (*cf* Rom.5:21), apart from law, in this most acceptable era in which we live (*cf* 2 Cor.6:1,2). God's promise of glory is ours, not through law, but through faith's righteousness. This is the message Paul presents now in Romans 4:16,17.

> *Therefore, it is out of* **faith,** *that it may accord with* **grace,**
>
> > *for the promise to be confirmed to the entire seed, not to those out of the law only, but to those out of the faith of Abraham, who is father of us all,*
> >
> > *according as it is written that, A father of many nations have I appointed you—*
>
> *facing which, he* **believes** *it of the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were—*

With these words, Paul not only contrasts faith with works of law, but also grace with law itself. The promise of which God speaks in the evangel rests on faith alone, and for us it is wholly a matter of the grace of God.

GOD'S JOY

The word *grace* is a member of the JOY family in Greek. It is favor arising from the joy of the giver, bringing joy to the receiver. It is joy as a two-way street. Justification in God's

grace is justification in the realm of God's joyful giving. It is His delight to justify us righteously and gratuitously through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. Now in Romans 4:16 we also learn that from the vast depths of His joy God promises a special allotment of glory to those who are believing the evangel.

GOD'S WORD OF PROMISE

The promise of a future allotment from God is not simply for those descendants of Abraham who are "out of law," but it is for all who are "out of [that sort of] faith" which was given to Abraham when God spoke to him in the night, in Genesis 15:5,6. We all can recognize a kinship with this "father-high" at that moment—not so much as he was in Genesis 22, when he was called upon to serve as a type of God Himself in the giving up of His Son. We find our relationship to Abraham in Genesis 15, as he was when he could not do any great deeds of faith. At that point, Abraham could only receive in faith what God said to him about something that God had done in regard to him which would be realized in God's own time.

It is in this pattern of faith and promise that Abraham is like a father to us, and we are sons to him.

WHAT IS WRITTEN

In Romans 4:17 Paul uses the exact wording of the Septuagint Version of Genesis 17:5, but he is still relating the evangel to the example of Abraham in Genesis 15:6. We are to see Abraham as our father in that he believed God apart from works of law. He is our father in that God reckoned righteousness to him on the basis of his faith alone, before he received and carried out the instructions concerning circumcision. It is in following this particular footstep of faith in what God says that we are Abraham's descendants. It is a forceful figure of speech. He is like

our father, and so we are like his sons, all because of the place of faith alone in establishing our position of righteousness before God.

But also there is a promise from God involved for those who are sons of Abraham in this figurative way. Here again he is like a father to us. Because God has reckoned us righteous, we shall indeed be constituted righteous, and therefore we shall receive glorious blessings, allotted to us by God, blessings that cannot be given apart from righteousness.

EXPANDING SIGNIFICANCE

Hence Paul now uses the language of Genesis 17:5 in expressing the *promise* that Abraham believed in Genesis 15:6. The core message is basically the same. Pointing to the stars, God promised Abraham: "*Thus* shall be your seed" (Gen.15:5). Then two chapters later, we read that God called Abram (Father-high) by the new name, Abraham (Father-high-throng), saying, as the Hebrew text words it: "a father of a *throng* of nations have I appointed you" (Gen.17:5). Paul would have us see that God's gracious gift of reckoning righteousness on the basis of faith so that one may be an enjoyer of an allotment from God is not limited to Abraham alone. The promise is explicitly applied to many peoples. (The Hebrew says, "throng of nations," and the Septuagint renders this as: "many nations.") But the evangel reveals to us that the significance of what God said to Abraham expands even beyond what that message conveyed in Genesis. The "throng" of descendants includes all who believe what God says to them and promises for them.

BELIEVING GOD'S WORD

Abraham did do something in Genesis 15:6. He did not do works of law; he did not become circumcised; he did

not follow instructions of the Lord. But he did believe what God said to him. This means also that he listened to God's message. He set his attention on what God said to him. Paul tells us this in the middle of Romans 4:17 where he relates Abraham's faith to certain important details about the God, Whose word he was believing.

according as it is written that,
A father of many nations have I appointed you—
facing which,
he [Abraham] *believes it of God . . .*

The pattern of faith provided by Abraham, as Paul now presents it, is twofold. First he faces the promise. Then he believes it. So also with us. We face the promise which God speaks to us. Then, in God's grace, we believe it.

It is the message which reveals God. In this letter Paul began his exposition of the evangel by saying that the righteousness of God is revealed *in it,* that is, *in the evangel* (Rom.1:17); what God says to us manifests His righteousness (Rom.3:21). It is the message telling us of the death of Christ for us as sinners that commends God's love to us (Rom.5:8). It is the evangel that says we have become planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, and thus we will be of the resurrection also (Rom.6:5). At its very core it reveals God as the One Who is vivifying the dead.

Like Abraham, we focus our attention on that message of God which He has spoken to us, and we believe it.

Yet our faith, like Abraham's, is not perfect, and many other voices and ideas keep appearing in front of us. May God keep our attention on His message of righteousness and life centered in Christ Jesus.

UNUSUAL WORDING

In comparing Abraham's faith in Genesis 15:6 to our faith, and God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 17:5 to

the promise He gives to us in the evangel, the apostle Paul expresses himself in an unusual way in Romans 4:17. He quotes Genesis 17:5 as worded in the Septuagint translation, and then adds these words (adapting the CV wording to a more literal form):

facing of-which he-believes of-God of-the *One*-**vivifying the dead-***one***s** . . .

The word "facing" represents a Greek preposition compounded of three common prepositions, DOWN-IN-INSTEAD, giving the general sense of "opposite" or "in front." This term is always translated **facing** in the CV (see KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.99). In Greek it is always followed by a word in the genitive case, shown above by the preposition "of."

The verb "believe," however, is not ordinarily followed by a genitive. And the fact that this occurs here in this passage ("he-believes *of*-God") has led translators and commentators to claim this as an example of the grammatical feature of "attraction" in which a pronoun is expressed in the same case (nominative, genitive, dative or accusative) as its antecedent, even though it would ordinarily appear in a different case. A clear example of this is found in Ephesians 4:1 where the pronoun "which" appears in the genitive "of-which" because its antecedent is in the genitive, "of-the-calling," even though "which" carries the sense of the dative case ("with which"). But in Romans 4:17 the pronoun appears before the genitive term, "of-God," so that if Paul expresses himself by using an otherwise, incorrect case for a term because of its connection with another term, he is doing this in an especially awkward way by using the pronoun before the noun he wants to serve as its antecedent.

This would mean that Paul's syntax is quite confused. The result is that commentators offer different "correc-

tions" to Paul's wording. Some suppose Paul meant to say that the promise of Genesis 17:5 spoke of matters which were so in God's sight, that is, in front of God, before His eyes. While others explain that Paul intended to speak of Abraham being in front of God in his act of believing Him.

The CV, however, supposes that Paul intended to use the genitive, "of-God," following the verb, "he-believes." In verse 4 he said that Abraham believed God. Now in verse 17 the apostle would have us see that, in believing God, Abraham was believing God's word. He was positioned in front of the promise just quoted, *facing which,* he believes what it says as that which is *of God,* revealing that God was One Who vivifies the dead.

What Abraham believed was what God said to him. What we believe is what God says to us. In believing God, Abraham was facing God's promise. And he believed it as a word of God which made God known to him as the Vivifier of the dead, speaking of things that are not so at present as if they were. So also we believe the evangel and find it to be a revelation of the righteousness of God Who is the righteous Justifier of sinners, all of whom will be vivified and constituted righteous.

RETAINING FAITH

Later on, when Abraham listened to Sarah about taking Hagar to himself and bearing a son by her (Gen.16:1,2), he was not overtly denying what God had said to him in Genesis 15:5, but he was not retaining it in faith. He was associating the promise of a son and of many descendants with the words of Sarah and with his own acts rather than holding to the promise as wholly a matter of what God said and God would do. He was letting another word become the focus of attention, not the word of God alone, as He spoke in Genesis 15:5, but inserting the words of Sarah and the thoughts of his own mind. He was not doing as

he did in Genesis 15, placing faith simply and fully in the context of what God had said.

So also we may lose sight of the evangel and its words of promise as God has stated them in the context of faith and grace. We are frequently wanting to help God out. Inner impatience and the disquieting feeling that God requires more of us than faith in His evangel and reliance on Him easily beset us. Or again, we may weary of the fact that today faith in what God says to us is not at all a matter of sight, so that God does not provide visible evidence of what the evangel says is true. In Ephesians, Paul identifies these kinds of attack against us as "fiery arrows of the wicked one," which, he tells us, need to be extinguished by "the large shield of *faith*" (Eph.6:12-17). As Paul reminded the Corinthians, we need to be *retaining* the evangel in heart so that it may be saving us daily from losing that joy which comes from believing (1 Cor.15:1,2).

THE GOD WHO VIVIFIES THE DEAD

In the course of his life, Abraham did not always keep God's promise before him as firmly as he did in Genesis 15. But he began by carefully attending to what God said to him, and he kept returning to that position of facing the word. In doing this, Abraham was growing in the realization of God. In front of God's word, he was given joy because of what the promise meant to him. But above all else he was given joy in seeing what it said about God. This latter grace was the greater grace.

The promise was that Abraham would be the father of many nations. From all the evidence that could be seen this was an utter impossibility. It was nonsense. But against that overwhelming, visible evidence, there was the promise of God. When what God said to Abraham was faced squarely by Abraham, it became clear to him that *God* must be able to make him alive as a father of many descendants.

"Abraham was practically dead, so far as progeny was concerned. What he needed was vivification in some degree in order to have the necessary vitality for generating a seed so multitudinous as was promised to him."[1]

God vivifies the dead!

Does that sound familiar to us? Does not the evangel of God concerning His Son, which we are believing, say the same thing, only in a greater and wider significance, and in the context of literal death?

"For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22).

Yet again, for us who are believing the evangel, but who, like everyone else, are mortals and sinners in the flesh, there is a figurative application of this truth about God, which is of practical value to us each day. The expectation of literal vivification from literal death is the bedrock of our expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:2). This happy expectation invigorates us as we await its realization (Rom.8:24,25). So we see that the truth that God vivifies the dead has continuing value in our daily lives, in respect to a figurative vivification.

Note how Paul presents this later in this letter to the Romans:

"Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall be living together with Him also, having perceived that Christ, being roused from among the dead, is no longer dying. Death is lording it over Him no longer, for in that He is living, He is living to God. Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:8-11). This living to God arises from the message we are believing. It is a matter of God operating in us (*cf* Phil.2:13) as we believe the evangel. Therefore, Paul writes, "Now if the spirit of

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.32, p.52.

Him Who rouses Jesus from among the dead is making its home in you, *He Who rouses Christ Jesus from among the dead will also be vivifying* your mortal bodies because of His spirit making its home in you" (Rom.8:11).

GOD'S NAMING

When the apostle Paul speaks of God as calling that which is not as if it were, he does not have some esoteric philosophy of creation in view. This passage does not support the mystic concept that God created the universe out of nothing. Such an idea can only distract our minds away from the things of consequence concerning God as Creator and Saviour. Creation out of nothing can neither be explained nor understood. The throng of Abraham's descendants will not arise from nothing. They will live and enjoy an allotment from God as a result of the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ and of God's further operations in view of this crucial event.

The message Abraham believed was one that viewed the future as so certain and sure that it could be spoken of as verity. God's word was equated with fact even though it was not an experienced fact at the time. It was fully dependent on God, and He will bring it about.

God called Abram (Father-high) by a new name that was an expansion of the old name: Abra*ha*m (Father-high-throng). This was in accord with the expanding promise which God spoke to Abraham. Yet even at the end of his life, a census of Abraham's descendants would not match the sense of his name, even in its earliest form. It was God's joy to speak of the favor of the allotment He had in view for Abraham long before it would be realized. God called what was not [yet experienced] as if it were.

For it shall be.

It shall be because God had a plan involving His beloved Son which will bring it about. It shall be because the Seed

of Abraham would come, and on the basis of His death and resurrection, Abraham will visibly appear as, and in fact experience being, the father of many peoples.

So also for us, the evangel we are believing speaks of that which is not presently experienced as it will be. It is only in faith and in spirit that we enjoy what God has said about us. We are justified by the faith of Jesus Christ. We cannot prove this empirically, in reference to what is evident as we fail and do wrong things, and are ourselves suffering hurt and affliction. We are not now vivified in body as we will be in conformity to Christ's body of glory (Phil. 3:21). Our bodies are soulish and soilish, and not yet in the image of the Celestial One, our Lord Jesus Christ (*cf* 1 Cor. 15:42-49). Believing that which shall be does affect us for good, in our behavior and in our spirit. But our mortality and sinfulness in the flesh are still with us. Nevertheless, God reckons us righteous through the faith Jesus Christ.

IN FRONT OF THE EVANGEL OF GOD

As Paul will soon point out, we are believing that Jesus our Lord was given up because of our offenses, and He was roused because of our justifying (Rom.4:25). This is the evangel, which speaks to us of God as the One Who vivifies the dead.

Let us, therefore, be positioning ourselves day after day, moment by moment in front of what God has said to us in the evangel. The message that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and has been roused is a declaration of the truth that God secures righteousness and life. No matter what may happen to us as we struggle and stumble in the flesh, what God has said is true and will be fully realized. And as we believe it we will be vivified in our spirits in an immediate, practical way by the spirit of God with the persuasion that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.8:38,39). D.H.H.

ABRAHAM'S FAITH AND GOD'S GRACE

ABRAHAM is the father of us all (Rom.4:12,16,17) in this very respect: God had already chosen Abraham before He made Himself known to him, and had already decided as well just what He would do for him and through him. He *informed* him of His plans: "A father of many nations *have I appointed you*" (Rom.4:17; Gen.17:5); "Thus *shall be* your seed" (Rom.4:18; Gen.15:5); "At this season' *I shall come 'and there will be* for Sarah a son' " (Rom.9:9; Gen.18:10).

When Abraham believed God's declarations concerning himself, he did not make them true, nor did he thus qualify himself to be the object of His promises (Rom. 4:16-22). He faced the truth, and believed it of the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were (Rom.4:17). For the word of God was already sure. Therefore, it was impossible for Abraham either to qualify or disqualify himself for those things which God had already decided to give him.

Abraham's faith gave him conviction and expectation; it afforded him assurance. For God had already determined what He would bring to pass with regard to Abraham and his seed prior to the time in which He revealed this to Abraham, and quite apart from any of his own opinions in the matter. Indeed, if he had failed to believe God's word to him, while it is true that he thereby would have lost all the power and joy of faith, nevertheless, he would not have nullified God's promises: "For what if some disbelieve? Will not their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? May it not be coming to that!" (Rom.3:3,4). The same would be true in our case, were we to disbelieve. In

fact, beyond the message that Christ died for their sins, most believers seem to be full of unbelief concerning the evangel of their salvation. Yet its glorious message remains true on their behalf nonetheless.

According to His will, God graciously grants at least a small measure of faith concerning the work of Christ and His victory over death to all who are His (*cf* 1 Cor.15:10,11; 1 Thess.4:14; Rom.12:3). But whatever faith each one may have as a result, does not make the evangel of his salvation become applicable to him, for it was already applicable to him long before he was born, and certainly long before he first believed. One may possess great riches of which he is ignorant. As with the slaves during the American civil war who heard and believed the news of their emancipation, we do not make the gospel of our salvation true by believing it. When we believe, we only enter into a realization and appreciation of what is already true.

Christ died for our sins whether we think so or not. In God's sight, we died to sin when He died for our sakes, even if we should deny this to be true. *And,* the fact is, God long ago had already chosen those of us who are now in Christ, according to His pre-eonian grace and purpose, designating us beforehand to be conformed to the image of His Son, having set His hand to call us, justify us and glorify us, all in His time.

JUSTIFIED BY FAITH

When we believe, our faith is reckoned, or accounted, for ("into," *eis*) righteousness (Rom.4:5). God considers our faith in His declarations to be a righteous faith; for it is always *right* to believe what He says. However, *salvation from sin is only to be found in the work of Christ,* not in one's faith in the work of Christ.

Paul does not say that to him who is not working, yet is believing (Rom.4:5), his faith qualifies him for salvation!

He does not say that we are justified because we believe or in return for believing. This is not the case. Our Lord "was roused," not merely to make it possible for us to be justified, but "*because of our justifying*" (Rom.4:25). We are justified out of Christ's own personal faith (Rom.3: 22,26). It is not through our faulty faith, but through the matchless faith of our Lord Jesus Christ that we have peace toward God. His work of faith affords this to us. Our faith only makes this known to us.

FAITH ACCORDS WITH GRACE

With regard to God's declarations and promises concerning ourselves, as with Abraham, God has made them matters "of faith" *that they may accord with grace* (Rom. 4:16). The very *purpose* in their being matters which are of *faith*, is that they should already be true prior to the time in which we first believe them.

God "is justifying the irreverent" (Rom.4:5), doing so *gratuitously, in His grace* (Rom.3:24). In the very nature of things, when acting in *grace*, God must act purposefully, according to *His* choice and apart from any obligation to requite His creatures for their actions (*cf* Rom.9:11; 11:6).

It is fitting that those chosen ones who are called in this current era of the *display* of God's righteousness (Rom. 3:26) should have faith. *Their faith points to Christ*, in Whom, through His sacrificial death, God's righteousness is manifested. It is manifested, not through our faith, but "through Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22). God unveils (*cf* Rom.1:17) His righteousness to men by justifying them gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). This glorious gratuity is "for all", "for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:24). It has been *bestowed* upon God's chosen ones at present (it is "on all who are believing," Rom.3:22). God has done this in order that we might constitute a special

display, or example, of this great blessing which He has purposed for all. Through the obedience of Christ, this and related glorious benefits will actually be given to all mankind (*cf* Rom.5:15,16,18,19).

Since we are justified *gratuitously*—without *any* warrant, insofar as *anything* we may have done is concerned—we cannot boast in ourselves that we are justified (Rom.3:27).

The truth of the evangel—the grace of God in truth—debars all boasting in man (Rom.3:27). It is not merely that we *should not* boast, but we *cannot* boast! "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal.6:14).

GOD'S GOODNESS TOWARD ALL

Our faith is evidence of our *calling* (1 Cor.1:23,24), of our having been *chosen* (1 Cor.1:26-29) for membership in the body of Christ and for life eonian. If others do not believe, they will not enjoy the life of the coming eons. But this is only because, *according to God's wise counsels and purpose,* they have not been chosen for this particular allotment.

Yet, since God is exceedingly good, all will receive whatever is best for *Him* and best for *them.* This is true even if this should include the experience of a temporary enlistment as a vessel of indignation in order that man's injustice might commend God's righteousness (*cf* Rom.3:5; 9:22).

When we believe God in these matters, our faith accords with His operations in grace, and is centered in His gracious promises. Thus we are enabled to believe and to rejoice in our happy expectation. Let us be invigorated by the *grace* which is in Christ Jesus (*cf* 2 Tim.2:1)!

J.R.C.

The preceding article is excerpted from *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.77, pp.89-94,120-124.

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 Faith and Expectation
108 We are Awaiting
109 The Disposition of Christ
119 Abel as a Type of Christ
127 Sin for Sin
135 The Breaking and the Subjection

MAY, 2008

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and
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EDITORIAL

THE ESSENCE of "the kingdom of God," whether in its present governance within our hearts, or in its future implementation, under Christ, over the nations of the earth in the coming eon, is "*righteousness and peace and joy in holy spirit*" (Rom. 14:17). Hence it is that "he who *in this* is slaving for Christ, is well pleasing to God and attested by men. Consequently, then, we are pursuing that which makes for peace and that which is for the edification of one another" (Rom.14:18,19).

It is true that "righteousness" encompasses many particulars. Yet in our wider pursuit of "righteousness, faith-[fulness], love, [and] peace" (2 Tim.2:22), there are certain things that are basic to our approach, besides being practical necessities along the way. Thus, through his epistle to Titus, the apostle Paul speaks concerning these as follows:

"Remind them to be subject to sovereignties, to authorities; to be yielding, and to be ready for every good work, to be calumniating no one, to be pacific, lenient, displaying all meekness toward all humanity" (Titus 3:1,2).

It is necessary for us to be subject to those in authority over us, whether in the civil government under which we live, in our employment, or within our own families. Similarly, if in times ahead we would engage ourselves, ideally, in "every good work," we must be preparing ourselves for such endeavors even at present.

It is vital that we do not "calumniate" (i.e., defame or disparage) others, but instead be pacific and lenient, "displaying all meekness [i.e., mild-manneredness] toward all humanity."

"For we also were once foolish, stubborn, deceived, slaves of various desires and gratifications, leading a life in malice and envy, detestable, hating one another" (Titus 3:3).

Therefore, if we would now become "well pleasing" (Rom.

12:1) to God in our walk, we must be "*transformed* by the renewing of [our] mind" (Rom.12:2).

It is critical, then, that we become "*concerned* to preside for ideal acts" (Titus 3:8). Indeed, we cannot very well "be *learning* to preside over ideal acts for necessary needs" (Titus 3:14), unless we first become *concerned* to do so.

In order to inculcate this concern within us, having first frankly stated how sinful and detestable "we also" once were, our apostle then interjects:

"*Yet* when the kindness and fondness for humanity of our Saviour, God, made its advent, *not for works which are wrought in righteousness which we do, but according to His mercy, He saves us,* through the bath of renascence and renewal of holy spirit, which He pours out on us richly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that, being justified in that One's grace, we may be becoming enjoyers, in expectation, of the allotment of life eonian" (Titus 3:4-7).

"Faithful is [this] saying, and I am intending you to be *insistent* concerning these things, *that those who have believed God may be concerned to preside for ideal acts.* These things are ideal and beneficial for humanity" (Titus 3:8).

"*Not* for works . . . which we do, but *according to His mercy, He saves us*"! And, as concerns His mercy, as related by Paul, God is saying: "I *shall* be merciful to whomever I *may* be merciful, and I *shall* be pitying whomever I *may* be pitying" (Rom.9:15). In the original text to which Paul refers, Yahweh is saying to Moses: "I will be *gracious* to whom I am being gracious and will show *compassion* to whom I am showing *compassion*" (Ex.33:19). Thus mercy accords with *grace,* even as pity accords with compassion.

"Consequently, then, it is *not* of him who is willing, *nor* of him who is racing, *but of God, the Merciful*" (Rom.9:16).

Once again, then, "that those who have believed God may be *concerned* to preside for ideal acts," "I am intending you to be *insistent* concerning these things" (Titus 3:8). J.R.C.

FAITH AND EXPECTATION

THE BELIEVERS are those who are believing what God says to them. In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul brings the evangel (WELL-MESSAGE) of God concerning His Son to us. This is what we are believing.

This message from God is first presented in detail in Romans 3:21-31. To begin with it tells us about God's righteousness and Jesus Christ's faith. It tells of justification, but the starting point is not our justification, but the revelation (*cp* Rom.1:17) of God's righteousness which is centered in Christ's faithfulness. God's righteousness is the source of our justification, not our righteousness, for we are unrighteous. And the means of justification is Christ's faith, not our faith but His. It is through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24), not in what we do, but in what He has done.

A MESSAGE FOR SINNERS

Justification, which was accomplished in the past will be realized in the future. It has not come into effect in human experience and realization yet. Ultimately it will embrace all mankind (Rom.5:18,19). But in the meantime, the evangel which tells us that God gave His Son Who died for our sakes, this message revealing God's righteousness manifested through the faith of Jesus Christ, is being proclaimed. And those who, in God's grace, are believing it are already being affected by it in spirit and will be fully blessed in every way in resurrection (*cf* Rom.6:5,8; 8:23). On believing the evangel, God reckons the righteousness gained by Christ to us (Rom.4:4,5,11,23-25), and seals us

with the holy spirit of promise unto the deliverance of that which has been procured (Eph.1:13,14). The evangel speaks, then, of an achievement in the past that will be realized for all in the future. And then it speaks particularly of present and future enjoyment of special blessings for us who are believing.

In Romans 4, Paul is beginning to show what the evangel means to us who are believing it, in terms of promises for the future and spiritual blessings for the present. All that Paul says concerning our blessings, however, is built firmly on what God has done in giving His Son for sinners. We continue to follow Paul's thoughts in Romans 4 concerning our faith, but as we do so we need to keep in view what he has said in chapter 3 concerning God's righteousness and Jesus Christ's faith.

THOSE WHO ARE BELIEVING

God is the Saviour of all mankind, *especially* of believers (1 Tim.4:10). The special salvation which God graciously grants to those who believe the evangel, as it relates to justification, was briefly noted in Romans 3:22. God's righteousness, manifested through Jesus Christ's faith is *on all who are believing.* This is then presented in Romans 4:5 in the following words: ". . . to him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness" (*cp* Rom.4:23-25). The justification gained by the faithful obedience of God's Son to the death of the cross is now placed on us—it is reckoned to us—who are believing.

THE EXAMPLE OF ABRAHAM

God's gracious gift of reckoning righteousness to those who believe His word to them is pictured in God's dealings with Abraham (Abram) in Genesis 15:1-6, as he was prior to circumcision, bearing the name of "Father-high,"

and yet childless and aged. God did not give Abraham the evangel He has given us through Paul. But God gave him an evangel, and he believed it, apart from works of law, and God reckoned it to him for righteousness. This is the fundamental similarity between Abraham and us, and the basis for us to be considered sons of Abraham.

However, there are many other points of similarity, as brought out in Romans 4:17-21, as follows:

> 1. [Abraham], facing [the promise] *believes it of the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were—*
>
> 2. who being beyond expectation, *believes in* [on] *expectation,* for him to become the father of many nations according to that which has been declared, "Thus shall be your seed."
>
> 3. And *not being infirm in faith,* [Abraham] considers his body already deadened (being inherently somewhere about a hundred years) and the deadening of the matrix of Sarah, yet the promise of God was *not doubted in unbelief,* but he was *invigorated by faith,*
>
> *4. giving glory to God,*
>
> 5. being *fully assured also, that, what [God] has promised, He is able to do also.*

Like Abraham, in believing what God says to us we come to recognize God as the Vivifier of the dead, Who is calling that which is not as if it were. We also, like him, continue to be believing God, not on the basis of sight, but simply on the basis of full *reliance* on God, *expecting* that what He has said will come to be. As with Abraham before Isaac was born, this believing of God's word and reliance on Him is what dispels doubts and makes faith stronger despite the visible and physical evidence all around us which seems to oppose it. This strengthening of faith which comes by

focusing on what God has said to us, makes us, as it made Abraham, glorifiers of God. This focus on God and His evangel is the pathway to full assurance that what God has promised He is able to do also.

GOD VIVIFIES THE DEAD

Paul uses the word "dead" here in Romans 4:17 in a figurative sense. But there can be no doubt what he is saying. The man called "Father-high" was like a dead man as far as being a father was concerned. Yet God said to him that he would have descendants numbering as the stars of the heavens (Gen.15:5), and that there would be a throng of nations looking to him as their father (Gen.17:5). Believing that word and facing it, Abraham came to see that it all rested on God Who alone could and would make him a potent and vigorous man in carrying out the functions and joys of fatherhood.

For us, the term "dead" has both a figurative and literal application. In the present context Paul has shown that we are dead as to righteousness (*cf* Rom.3:9-20,23), but God has vivified us with justification based on the faith of Jesus Christ. This evangel rejuvenates our thinking and our doing, even as the apostle describes it in Romans 6:9-11 (*cp* Eph. 4:20-25). Believing, as we do, that Christ was roused from among the dead and is now living to God, we are guided by this faith to be reckoning ourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Yet indeed, the "promise" of the evangel of God speaks of a literal vivification for the literal dead. "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and . . . He was entombed, and He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures, . . . roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing. For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are

dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor. 15:3,4,20-22).

This literal vivification from literal death is future. But as we are believing this word of promise, we are enjoying the present spiritual blessing of expectation.

EXPECTATION IS RELIANCE

In the Concordant Version, the verb "expect" is sometimes rendered "rely" (e.g., 2 Cor.1:10; 1 Tim.4:10). So also the Greek word for "expectation" involves a sense of "reliance." Expectation, or reliance on God as the Vivifier Who will do what He has said, is one of the three greatest of graces (1 Cor.13:13). While other graces such as prophesying or spiritually instilled knowledge are discarded, expectation remains as the support of faith throughout the current era, sustaining us and encouraging us and strengthening us. Both faith and expectation are needed by us all until they are replaced by sight and fully realized experience when we are vivified. This transforming vivification will begin when "the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the Chief Messenger, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall be rising first. Thereupon we, the living who are surviving, shall at the same time be snatched away together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be together with the Lord" (1 Thess.4:16,17). We will thus be roused in incorruption, in glory and in power, with bodies dominated by spirit, wearing the image of the Celestial One, in incorruption and immortality (1 Cor.15:42-44,49,53).

THUS SHALL IT BE

Whatever God has said shall be, thus shall it be. That was innate to the promise given to Abraham, and it is innate to God's promise to us. We shall be living together with

Christ. All who are believing that Christ Jesus died and rose for their sake (Rom.5:8; 1 Cor.15:3,4; 1 Thess.4:13) shall be included in that snatching away to meet the Lord in the air. "And thus shall we always be together with the Lord" (1 Thess.4:15-17).

The evangel announces what God has done through the faith of His Son, Jesus Christ. Yet these glorious achievements of God are not presently experienced and manifested, except in spirit by those who are believing this evangel. While we groan in our bodies of humiliation we are carried along on the grace of expectation, awaiting the deliverance of that which has been procured (Eph. 1:14; Phil.3:20,21).

In accord with what God has said, thus shall it be.

INVIGORATED BY FAITH

At present we do not know the power of life and happiness and peace as we will have them when we are vivified. But we are greatly invigorated, in spirit, in believing that God is the One Who vivifies the dead. The believing does not take the form of feeling but rather of expectation. If we rest our faith on feelings or experiences in the flesh or visible signs we will be led into doubts and depressing disappointments, for this is not the era for such evidences. Yet faith will grow as we focus on what God has said and rely on Him to bring it about. Faith that is settled upon expectant reliance on God is faith that invigorates. It rejuvenates us spiritually.

Abraham did have experiences in flesh that we do not have. But he never experienced being the father of a throng of nations, which was the promise God gave him. Hence Paul (who also had experiences that are not granted to us today) speaks in Romans 4 of Abraham as he was at a time when God's promise had no visible evidence of fulfillment at all. As far as what was perceptible to the senses was concerned, Abraham saw (he "considered" it as a fact) that his body was dead in relation to human reproduction. What was visible was that the fulfillment was physically impossible. Consequently, at that time, Abraham was believing solely on the basis of God's word and the expectation that it would be fulfilled.

That is how we are, too. We do not ignore the visible fact that we are dead as far as any hope of justification is concerned. But we believe that we are, nevertheless, justified gratuitously through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. And we expect this will be known and enjoyed to the full. We believe the evangel and rely on God to bring about in glorious realization all that He has said has been achieved through the faith of Jesus Christ. The fulfillment is in God's hands, just as the means were when He spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all.

This is the pathway to a strong and vigorous faith. It is the pathway that says, "God will bring us into the enjoyment of what He says He has done." We say with Paul, "Faithful is He Who is calling [us], Who will be doing it also" (1 Thess.5:24).

GIVING GLORY TO GOD

Giving glory to God is the effect of believing His word and relying on Him to do, faithfully, what He has said. It is the result of an appreciation of Him, Who He is and what He does. It is not a rule to follow, but for us today, it is the product of faith resting on expectation.

Paul speaks of Abraham giving glory to God, but this is not actually said in the Scriptures. During a time when there is no visible support for God's promise of vivification and His declaration of righteousness, to believe that promise and declaration and to rely on Him to bring them into full enjoyment *is* to give glory to God. Glorifying God is not a practice established by rule and regimen, but the

effect and accompaniment of believing that God is what He says He is and does the good that He says He does. In the oncoming eons, for us, it will arise from actually experiencing the good in bodies conformed to Christ's glory. Finally all will bow in the name of Jesus and acclaim His Lordship, *to the glory of God the Father* (Phil.2:10,11). But for Abraham long ago, and for us today, the believing of the evangel of God concerning His Son, and the expectation that God will bring us into the enjoyment of all He has declared, this is what glorifies Him.

FULLY ASSURED

Abraham was *fully assured* that what God has promised, He is able to do also (Rom.4:21). This verb is used again in Romans 14:5, where Paul urges each of us to "be fully assured in his own mind" regarding personal decisions in our behavior. In both cases the instigating factor of full assurance is the word of God which is being believed. Our mind is a mind which is influenced by the evangel that "Christ died and lives" (Rom.14:9). This message affects our thinking and walk in a pattern of love and righteousness and peace (*cf* Rom.14:15-21). For Abraham it was the promise that God would make him the father of many nations. In believing this and in relying on God, Abraham was given peace and assurance. For us full assurance comes from believing the evangel of God that we are justified gratuitously in His grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. Believing that God speaks truly and faithfully, we have full assurance that what He has said will come about.

But what if we find our faith faltering? That will surely happen when we focus our minds on what is tangible to our senses and experienced in our flesh. The Galatians were misled into thinking they needed to follow Abraham with respect to the law concerned with circumcision as established in Genesis 17. But here in Romans 4, Paul relates his evangel to only one passage from that chapter, God's promise that He had *appointed* Abraham as a father of a throng of nations. Abraham was already *appointed by God* to be the father of many peoples. Faith focuses entirely on what God says He has done. For us today, full assurance is the product of believing God when He tells us that justification is gratuitous; it is in His grace; it comes about by the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, by His faithfulness to the death of the cross, by His unfaltering faith in His God and Father.

The key to full assurance is in the simplicity of taking God at His word. To seek physical signs and the support of the senses is mistaken for God's chosen ones today. To suppose that God wants us to do something for Him so that He can save us is destructive to the enjoyment of the salvation He has procured for us. We may prefer some sort of practice, like circumcision, or "sacraments," or "charismatic powers," as visible bases for assurance. But we are partakers of that happiness the Lord described to Thomas: "Seeing that you have seen Me, you have believed. Happy are those who are not perceiving and believe" (John 20:29). Full assurance is in believing God and relying on His ability to bring us to the glory He has prepared (*cf* Rom.5:2; 8:18-25).

GOD IS ABLE

What God has promised, He is able to do also. We revel in these words of faith and expectation. If God says He will do what is good, and if He is able to do it, it will be done.

May God grant us the grace of attending to the message He has spoken to us. May God grant us the grace of believing and of continuing to believe this evangel with reliance on Him and His ability in power, wisdom and righteousness to fulfill its every word.

D.H.H.

WE ARE AWAITING

We are awaiting the sonship, the deliverance of our body (Rom.8:23). This great expectation is, first and foremost, the resurrection of the dead and the snatching away as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Our faith is grounded on Him, Who roused Jesus, our Lord from among the dead (*cp* Rom.4:24). "Our realm [the homeland for which we are craving] is inherent in the heavens out of which *we are awaiting a Saviour* also, the Lord, Jesus Christ" (Phil.3:20).

While we wait in readiness, we may feel temporarily undone and neglected at times. But as we meditate on the Sacred Scriptures we will be assured, that in the heavens with Christ, we have a permanent and actual possession. In Him our lot was cast. It has always been there and this is where we belong (*cf* Eph.1:11).

As great as the celestial realm will be the highlight of our future surely must be the fact that, from that moment on, we will always be together with the Lord (*cf* 1 Thess.4:17). Being with the King of Kings, our Lord and Saviour is what makes heaven glorious, beyond our grandest dreams.

"For to expectation were we saved. Now expectation, being observed, is not expectation, for what anyone is observing why is he expecting it also? Now, if we are expecting what we are not observing, *we are awaiting it with endurance*" (Rom.8:23-25). Our continual prayer is that, by His grace, we will be endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, for all endurance and patience with joy (Col.1:11).

Don Bast

THE DISPOSITION OF CHRIST

(Philippians 2:1-30)

If, then, there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any communion of spirit, if any compassion and pity, fill my joy full, that you may be mutually disposed, having mutual love, joined in soul, being disposed to one thing—nothing according with faction, nor yet according with vainglory—but with humility, deeming one another superior to one's self, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also. (2:1-4)

Here, we find the usage of "if" termed "the if of argument"; it is the equivalent of "since" (*cp* Rom.8:31).

There is such an abundance of "comfort of love," "communion of spirit," besides "compassion and pity" afforded us in Christ! *Since,* then, this is so, *in* the empowerment we find through the comfort of love, communion of spirit, even as compassion and pity which is in Christ, Paul would have us "fill [his] joy full" by being "*mutually* disposed" toward one another, "having *mutual* love, *joined* in soul."

Our apostle would have us be "disposed to *one* thing": "*Nothing according with faction, nor yet according with vainglory.*"

"Faction" (*eritheia,* STRIFE-) is "a group or clique within a larger group . . . ; party strife and intrigue; dissension."[1]

"Vainglory" is "excessive elation or pride over one's own achievements, abilities, etc.; boastful vanity"[2] (*cf* Galatians

1. Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1); based on the RANDOM HOUSE UNABRIDGED DICTIONARY, Random House, Inc. 2006.
2. *ibid.*

5:26: "We may not become vainglorious, *challenging* one another, *envying* one another").

Accordingly, then, the apostle Paul would have us "with humility, [be] deeming one another superior to one's self, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also."

Eritheia ("faction, CV) is a derivative of *eris* (STRIFE), which itself is the equivalent of the English "strife," which speaks of "enmity or zeal in action, evil competition"[3] (*cf* Rom.13:13, "strife and jealousy"; *cp* 2 Cor.12:20).

If "with humility," we are "deeming one another superior to one's self, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also," we will simply have no room for faction, strife, vainglory, jealousy, competition, envy, or challenging of one another. May the virtues and the benefits we find in Christ as we center upon them, keep us from engaging in these sundry yet closely related evils.

For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also, Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and, being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (2:5-8)

We are to "see to it" ("let this disposition be in you") that the disposition of Christ be in us, living and operative in our lives. This is our duty, or "role responsibility"; the fact that we have no resources of our own with which to fulfill this obligation does not exempt us therefrom, apart from which we cannot be well pleasing to God. Therefore, we must look to God in His saving grace to transform us by the renewing of our mind (Rom.12:2), if we would in any measure at all fulfill this lofty counsel.

3. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry "strife," p.290.

"The supreme example of self-abasement set before us in the Scriptures is the descent of Christ from the form of God to the death of the cross, from the zenith of celestial glory to the deepest depth of earthly degradation. We are exhorted to cultivate His humble disposition, so contrary to all our own ambitions and counter to the spirit of the world about us, that we may emulate Him in devotion to the welfare of others, though it involves our own humiliation.

"In the course of this exhortation we are reminded of the *kenōsis* [i.e., 'emptying'] of the Christ, that which changed Him from the form of God to the form of a slave . . . .'

"In Paul's exhortation he presents for our emulation two distinct acts of Christ, the *kenōsis* and the *tapeinōsis*, the emptying and the humbling. The first describes His descent from the form of God to the form of a slave; the second His descent from the fashion of a man to the fashion of death most detestable to men and most obnoxious to God, the death of the cross. As He was in the form of God before He took the form of a slave and a human frame, the *kenōsis* is the inspired term for the change which accompanied His incarnation."[4]

THE FORM OF GOD[5]

The entire *complement of* the "Deity" [or, "*d*eity," *theotês*, PLACERship, the "GOD*ness*" or PLACERship *of* God] is dwelling *bodily* in Christ (Col.2:9). In a *bodily* way, the entire array of *that which pertains to* God is *dwelling in* Christ. Since the entirety of that which pertains *to* God yet cannot be communicated *by* God in Himself, Who is spirit, is dwelling bodily *in* Christ, it follows that Christ Himself is *not* the Deity.

Similarly, since, in His "pre-existence," Christ alone was

4. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.21, pp.197,202.

5. James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.86, pp.69,70.

"inherently [lit., "inhering," i.e., existing by right] in the form *of* God," He, accordingly, "deem[ed] it not pillaging to be *equal with* God" (Phil.2:6,7).

Since Christ is the Son of God, He is a Being distinct from God. Christ therefore was not equal to God in an identification-of-person sense; instead, the *appearance* of Christ was in a form which is to be identified as that which is proper to Deity. To all appearances, Christ was the same as, or "equal to," God.

We are not told that Christ is a Form of God (and, therefore, that Christ is a mere Form, instead of a tangible, actual Being). Instead, we are told that God's Anointed, *Christ,* before He emptied Himself, was "inherently *in* the form *of* God" (Phil.2:6). Form refers not to inward essence but merely to external appearance (e.g., 2 Tim.3:5). The form of God was not a manifestation of what Christ was in Himself, but a representation of His God. His glory consisted not in actually being the Deity, but in possessing the visible appearance through which God had chosen to manifest Himself.

"The form of God," does not refer us to that of which God Himself is composed, nor is it an expression corollarial to the notion that God Himself is a corporeal being. Instead, it refers to the personal *appearance* of *Christ,* in which He inhered and thus deemed it not pillaging to be *equal* with *God* (lit., "ANOINTED JESUS WHO IN FORM OF-GOD belongING . . ."). Christ was inherently in the "of-God" *form;* thus He *appeared* to be the Deity. He Who is the Image of the invisible God, existed in the form which is proper to Deity, the form in which God would have Himself made manifest.

IN THE NAME OF "JESUS"!

Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father. (2:9-11)

It is in response to the fact that Christ voluntarily emptied Himself, descending from the highest to the lowest place, that God now highly exalts Him. Even so, in bestowing the name Jesus (*Iêsous;* "Yahweh-SAVIOUR) upon Him, God does not *reward* Him with this name, but instead *graces* Him with this name, the name that is above every name.

Our Lord declared, "Now the Father, remaining in Me, *He is doing His works*" (John 14:10). All is *out of* God (Rom. 11:36), including the obedience of Christ unto death (*cf* Acts 4:27,28). Christ's obedience, too, then, even as our own, is ultimately the work of God. All is *for* God (Rom. 11:36), to Whom alone all ultimate glory is due.

It is in the name of "Jesus," that is, "Yahweh-*Saviour,*" that every knee should be bowing, whether celestial, terrestrial, or subterranean, and every tongue should be *acclaiming* that Jesus Christ is *Lord,* to the glory of God, the *Father.* Thus it is evident that it is the *Saviourhood* and *Lordship* of Jesus Christ even as the *glory* of God as *Father,* that is in view here, when every knee bows and every tongue declares.

By usage, it is necessarily an "acclamation" (as opposed to a negative "confession"); that is, a proclamation made with enthusiastic approval, for all is declared unto the *glory* of God—the glory of God, *the Father.*

In the coming eons, those who are God's people, will enjoy either "the allotment of the land" (Matt.5:5), or an allotment among the celestials (*cf* Eph.1:3; 2:6), in the case of those whose "realm is inherent in the heavens" (Phil.3:20).

However, during this extended period, by far the greater portion of mankind's only allotment will be a "subterranean" one, in the sleep of death.

"Subterranean" (*kata chthonion,* DOWN-TERRANEAN), by its elements, signifies "down" (or "in accord with") "[the] terrain." Nevertheless, even those who in oncoming eons know no other allotment than a "down-terranean" one (save for the day of their judging), will, at the consummation (1 Cor.15:22,23,28), be vivified themselves, and join in the *universal* chorus, bowing their knee and acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father.

So that, my beloved, according as you always obey, not as in my presence only, but now much rather in my absence, with fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation into effect, for it is God Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight. (2:12,13)

"*So that* . . . ." That is, since it is the case that the glorious goal which he has just rehearsed, in due time, *will* be achieved, in light of this, Paul goes on to entreat, saying: "according as you always obey, not as in my presence only, but now much rather in my absence, with fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation into effect . . . ."

"According as you always obey . . . ." It is true that because of "the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus," all genuine believers have a new disposition and a new walk, according to the *measure* of grace granted them (*cf* Rom.8:1-4). However, because of the limited and imperfect obedience of even the most noble of believers, it is evident that Paul's words here are not intended categorically but relatively, and are more exhortative in their intent than strictly accurate in their historicity. To speak thus, however, in such a case, is reflective of wisdom, as in the adage, penned many centuries after the lifetime of Paul: "Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you will help them become what they are capable of becoming."[6]

". . . *with fear and trembling,* be carrying your own salvation into effect, *for it is God Who is operating in you* . . . ." We do not fear and tremble in light of the impending era of indignation, for "being now justified in [Christ's] blood, we shall be saved from indignation through Him" (Rom.5:9). Accordingly, we enjoy "the expectation of salvation, for God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:8,9; *cp* 1 Thess.1:10).

6. Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749–1832).

Still, since it is God Himself Who is operating in us as we carry our salvation into effect, it is only fitting that we do so "with fear and trembling." Any literal "fear" here, however, is simply that of a healthy fear to displease, born out of a longing to be well pleasing. Our "fear" of God—which is the beginning both of wisdom and of knowledge (Psa.111:10; Prov.1:7)—is essentially a matter of deep reverence and extreme awe. It is a reverential fear, motivated by love and gratitude, not by a spirit of terror. Similarly, we would tremble solely out of awe and wonder, in consideration of the wondrous fact that God Himself deigns to operate in *us.*

First of all, here, we should note that any "salvation" that we carry into effect, is necessarily a practical salvation, not our positional salvation in Christ. Our positional salvation in Christ is "not in accord with our acts, but in accord with [God's] own purpose and the *grace* given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian" (2 Tim.1:9; *cp* Eph.1:4).

Conversely, our practical salvation, by which, as the case may be, we are either *delivered* from sin and danger, or *kept* from sin and danger, is something in which we are very much involved, for it is we ourselves who are exhorted to carry it "into effect."

Even so, our need for God is just as vital as concerns our practical salvation as in the matter of our positional salvation in Christ, through the blood of His cross. Ultimately speaking, we are no more capable in ourselves of either

delivering or keeping ourselves from sin and danger, than we are of achieving a justified standing before God through our own works. It follows, then, whenever we do either *get* ourselves out of trouble or *keep* ourselves out of trouble, that we do so as God's achievement (*cf* Eph.2:10), not as some sort of demigods that are ultimately, somehow "on their own"—ones who accordingly enjoy their own independent glory, quite apart from the Almighty.

How glorious it is to learn, then, that when we ourselves, as the proximate cause thereof, "effect" or "produce" our "own [practical] salvation," we do so as those in whom God Himself, as the ultimate cause thereof is "operating," doing so "for the sake of His delight." Literally, it is God Who is operating in us, "THE TO-BE-WILLING AND THE TO-BE-IN-ACTING" (Phil.2:13) in which we engage, in all such cases.

All be doing without murmurings and reasonings, that you may become blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse among whom you are appearing as luminaries in the world, having on the word of life, for my glorying in the day of Christ, that I did not run for naught, neither that I toil for naught. (2:14-16)

Where the Scriptures speak against "reasonings," they have in view not the ratiocinative (i.e., "reasoning") process itself, per se, which indeed is essential to rational thought, but the "*wicked* reasonings" (Matt.15:19) and "*evil* reasonings" (Mark 7:21) which arise out of man's own sinful heart. These result in evil and wicked acts (hence they are wicked and evil reasonings), whether one's syllogisms employed unto such ends, as such, should be valid or invalid.

We would not "murmur," nor wickedly "reason"; and, we would avoid all such evils that we may be becoming blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse indeed.

But even if I am a libation on the sacrifice and ministration of your faith, I am rejoicing myself and rejoicing together with you all. Now, to be mutual, you also be rejoicing, and be rejoicing together with me. (2:17,18)

Under the law, the priest poured a "libation" (i.e., liquid offering) onto the sacrifice (Num.15:5). Paul had simply "poured himself out" into the lives of the Philippians, as they presented themselves before God in the actions related to their faith, which is to say, in the "sacrifice and ministration" thereof. Even so, in this, he was rejoicing, and entreats the Philippians to join him in rejoicing as well.

Now I am expecting, in the Lord Jesus, to send Timothy to you quickly, that I also may be of good cheer when I know of your concerns. For I have no one equally sensitive, who will be so genuinely solicitous of your concerns, for all are seeking that which is their own, not that which is Christ Jesus'. (2:19-21)

Of all those whom Paul might send to assist the Philippians, Timothy alone was suited for faithful service. Alas, all the rest were seeking that which was their own, not that which is Christ Jesus'.

Now you know his testedness, that, as a child with a father, he slaves with me for the evangel. This one, indeed, then, I am expecting to send—as ever I may be perceiving my course from the things about me—forthwith. Yet I have confidence in the Lord that I myself shall also be coming quickly. (2:22-24)

As we make our plans concerning any proposed future activities, rather than seeking the guidance of signs or miraculous revelations, let us instead imitate Paul here as well and be *perceiving* our course "from the things about [us]," as a more faithful indicator of what may lie ahead.

Now I deem it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, yet your apostle and minister for my need . . . . (2:25)

Epaphroditus' "apostleship" or commission consisted simply in acting as courier in order to bring the Philippians' contribution to Paul. This example illustrates the elementary, essential meaning of the term.

. . . since, in fact, he was longing for you all and depressed, because you hear that he is infirm. For he is infirm, also, very nigh death, but God is merciful to him, yet not to him only, but to me also, lest I should be having sorrow on sorrow. The more diligently, then, I send him, that seeing him again, you may be rejoicing and I may be more sorrow-free. Receive him, then in the Lord with all joy, and have such in honor, seeing that because of the work of the Lord he draws near unto death, risking his soul that he should fill up your want of ministration toward me. (2:26-30)

"Ministration" (or "ministry," *leitourgia,* PEOPLE-ACT-ion) speaks of active, personal service on behalf of another (*cf* Luke 1:28; *cp* 2 Cor.9:12). Even if the Philippians were willing to make some contribution to Paul's need, they were deficient in the matter of "ministration" or personal care on his behalf.

Concerning Epaphroditus: "This is a most pathetic picture of the suffering which often accompanies the service of the Lord in this economy. In the previous economy Paul could and would have healed Epaphroditus, for his very handkerchief was potent with power (Acts 19:11,12). That course was in keeping with the kingdom which he then proclaimed. But now, when all blessing is spiritual (Eph.1:3), Paul does not attempt to heal Epaphroditus and tells Timothy to use a sip of wine for his frequent infirmities (1 Tim.5:23). How full of feeling is the statement that he was depressed, not by his own condition, but because the Philippians had heard of it and would be concerned about him!"[7] J.R.C.

7. A. E. Knoch, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.299.

ABEL AS A TYPE OF CHRIST

THERE are many messages in the Scriptures which tell of God's good purpose. For example, God declared through Jeremiah, concerning His chosen people, Israel: "I know the designs that I am designing for you, . . . designs for your well-being and not for evil, to give you a hereafter and an expectation" (Jer.29:11). And through Paul we learn that God is working all the experiences and events of our lives together for good (Rom.8:28). Yet for the good to be known and manifest as good, there must be a background of evil. Consequently, Jeremiah spoke of God's designs for Israel's well-being at the time of the great evils of siege and deportation to Babylon. And Paul wrote to people like us whose lives are filled with things that do not seem at all to be working out for good. "For we are aware that the entire creation is groaning and travailing together until now. Yet not only so, but . . . we ourselves also are groaning in ourselves . . ." (Rom.8:22,23).

Furthermore, not only does God speak of good against a background of evil, that message which He specifically identifies as His evangel (WELL-MESSAGE) is centered upon the greatest of evils, the traitorous, vicious and wholly unjust murder of His Son. The evangel of God *is* the word of the *cross,* the message summed up in the words, "Christ crucified" (1 Cor.1:18,23). The foundational revelation of the evangel concerns the death of our Lord and Saviour.

There is great evil in the world, and the way—the *only* way—in which it can be removed so that good may result is by means of the death and entombment of Jesus Christ, leading forward to His resurrection.

THE EVANGEL

When God spoke to Israel in the time of their severest agony and told them of His designs for their well-being, they could know almost nothing of the actual basis of the good which He promised. Christ had not yet died for them, and the evangel could not be announced. Yet God knew from the beginning that He would send His Son to this world, and He would die for sinners. The precious blood of Christ, as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, was foreknown by God "before the disruption of the world" (1 Peter 1:19,20), that is, before evil had entered our world.

For the apostles, and most keenly for Paul, the evangel was known as a completed work of God. Romans 8:28 is built on the evangel that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8). To be aware that God is working all together for good is to believe that God spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all (Rom.8:28). But for Jeremiah and Israel in deportation, there were only shadows of the evangel in types and patterns laid down in certain events and experiences and in the law and in certain prophesies concerning the future.

FORESHADOWS

We have been looking at a few of these early foreshadowings of the evangel, starting with Genesis, the book of beginnings. These early expressions of the evangel are almost impossible to trace apart from knowing its full and direct revelation in the current era. With the evangel in mind, we can see its elementary pattern, when, in the presence of chaos and vacancy and darkness, God said, "Let light come to be" (Gen.1:2,3). The evangel is a word of God that attacks and eliminates evil. Then, knowing that Christ died for our sins, we can perceive a real, though understated and incomplete, prophecy of the evangel in the words of Genesis 3:15 concerning the *hurting* of the

heel of the Seed of the woman. The evangel centers on One, Who Himself will suffer evil in the process of bringing good where there is evil. Furthermore, we can see that God had the death of His Son in view when He clothed the frightened and guilty parents of our human race with tunics made from animal skins (Gen.3:21). The evangel announces God's provision for deliverance from the fears and vulnerability of sinners in front of God and in view of His indignation. And again, when Cain was cast down in an angry rage of hate and dismay, God spoke to him of a sin offering which would lift his face (Gen.4:5-7). To deal with the evil that had engulfed his whole disposition and soul, God provided an animal which was to be slain and placed on an altar as a present to God. Here is a passage that prefigures the evangel of God, announcing that God made the One Who knew no sin "to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:21).

The evils which darken our lives are many, but the evil which will put an end to all evils is one, and that is the death of the Son of God's love.

This is the foundation of all the good spoken of in the evangel, the foundation of well-being, the foundation of justification, of conciliation and reconciliation, and of glory.

GENESIS 4:8

After the words of evangel in Genesis 4:6,7, the wickedness of Cain and his descendents dominate the chapter until verse 25. But the record of Cain's murder of his brother given in verse 8 has a great deal to say about the evangel:

8 + **Cain** [l]**said to his brother Abel:** 7**Let us go** into **the field**[ncs]**.** +**Now it** [l]**came** to **pass** [i]**while they** [b]**were**– **in** the **field** +**that Cain** [l]**rose** up [r]**against his brother Abel and** [l]**killed him.**

The crucifixion of Christ is brought before us here in type, but not from the standpoint of God's provision (as it is in Genesis 4:6,7), but from the standpoint of human irreverence and unrighteousness, and thus of human need. The murder of Abel by his brother is a picture of the murder of Jesus Christ by those He came to save, who were His brothers as to race (not just the race of Israel, but the race of mankind, for He came as the Son of humanity). There is nothing of promise for good in Genesis 4:8. It pictures only the evil deed itself, and does so as a human act. God is left out of the picture in any direct way. Nevertheless, this passage brings to the believer's attention certain vital issues connected with the evangel: first of all, it points to the sinful involvement of humanity in the death of Christ; then also, we see here a type of the quiet disposition of our Lord in facing and enduring the cross (*cf* Matt.26:63; 27:12-14). But perhaps most important of all, Genesis 4:8, provides the first explicit reference, in type, to the fact that Christ was to be *put to death.*

THE HAND OF THE LAWLESS

On the day of Pentecost after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Peter declared to the Jews in Jerusalem: "Men! Israelites! Hear these words: Jesus, the Nazarene, a Man demonstrated to be from God for you by powerful deeds and miracles and signs, which God does through Him in the midst of you, according as you yourselves are aware—This One, given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God, you, gibbeting by the hand of the lawless, assassinate" (Acts 2:22,23).

In ourselves as mortals and sinners, we all follow in the spirit of wicked stubbornness and hate which ruled in the hearts of the Jews. Paul speaks of all mankind, "both Jews and Greeks" as under sin, ". . . whose mouth with imprecation and bitterness is crammed. Sharp are their feet to shed

blood" (Rom.3:9,14,15). By God's grace, Abel put faith in the pattern of sacrificial giving set by God Himself (Heb. 11:4; Gen.3:21; 4:4), but apart from that he could never have been a type of Christ in disposition, and his death would not have served to presage the death of Jesus Christ.

THE DISPOSITION OF ABEL

We have noted the way in which the flockling provided by God as a sin offering and its impulse of readiness to do what is required for Cain's benefit (Gen.4:6,7) prefigured the disposition of Christ in emptying Himself and becoming obedient to the death of the cross (*cf* Phil.2:5-8). But Abel, who is a type of Christ in that he was killed by his brother, also, by his meekness and quietness, becomes a type of the willingness of the Son of God to become the Sin Offering for sinners (*cf* Acts 8:32; 1 Peter 2:22,23; Phil. 2:5-8). Cain is prominent in speech, both before and after he killed his brother, but Abel is silent.

It was thus given to Abel, the one named *Vanity,* or *Transience,* to serve as the type of Christ in His disposition unto His death for sinners.

DEATH

Abel was killed. Christ was assassinated on the cross. They were dead.

We are not told of Abel's sufferings. All we are told is that he was killed. In parallel passages we read that the brothers of Joseph sought to kill him (Gen.37:20). David said of the wicked person, that "he sits in ambush in the hamlets; in places of concealment he kills the innocent" (Psa.10:8). Jesus told His disciples ahead of time: "The Son of Mankind is about to be given up into the hands of men [humans], and they will be killing Him" (Matt.17:22,23).

This was not a door to life. It was an act of force to put an end to life. The Seed of the woman would be hurt in His

heel by the seed of the serpent. But what this "hurt" would involve was not even intimated in Genesis 3. A certain animal was killed in order for Yahweh to provide clothes for Adam and Eve. But there is no scriptural record of it being slain. That fact has to be assumed. The sin offering was reclining at the doorway to the place of sacrifice, and Cain was to rule over it by slaying it and then placing it on the altar. But again this is not directly stated, only suggested by the context and as we take note of the law of the sin offering in Leviticus. Yet now in Genesis 4:8, the critical place of death in the evangel of God concerning His Son is made specific in the type provided by the murder of Abel.

It was necessary for Christ to die. For in that He, in Whom all were created, died, all of humanity died, and the old humanity was put away. This essential and sobering feature of the evangel, that it announces that Christ died, is first intimated in Scripture by the death of Abel, the first human being to die.

ABEL'S BLOOD CRIES OUT

Yet although Abel has been silent throughout these events as described in Genesis 4:3-8, we find he has much to say. He spoke by his faith as shown by his deeds (Heb. 11:4), and now Yahweh Himself has heard a message from Abel's blood, which is shed and poured out on the cursed ground (Gen.4:9-12):

9 +**So Yahweh** l**said to Cain: Where** is **your brother Abel?**
And he l*a***replied: I** do **not know.** Am **I my brother's keeper**l**?**

10 +**Then He** l**said: What have you done?** The **voice of your brother's blood** is **crying** out **to Me from the ground.**
11 + **Now you** are **cursed**l**,** away **from the ground which has opened wide `its mouth to take `your brother's blood from your hand.** 12 *t***When you** l**serve `the ground, it shall not continue** to **give¯ its vigor to you.** A **rover**l **and** a **wanderer**l **shall you become** *t***on earth.**

Abel himself is dead and cannot speak, but by a powerful and haunting figure of speech, his blood, the vehicle of awareness and feelings ("the *soul* of the flesh, it is in the blood," Lev.17:11), is said to cry out to Yahweh. The message is a cry for vengeance on Cain. Consequently, Yahweh curses Cain by sending him away from the ground which he had served in the sweat of his brow (*cf* Gen.3:19; 4:2), and he is to become a wanderer in the earth.

Later scriptures verify that such a message of judgment is in view. Jesus spoke of the judging of Gehenna to the scribes and Pharisees who were in the line of all those who shed the blood of the prophets "from that of just Abel" until their own days (Matt.23:29-36). And John perceived, in the vision given him regarding the Lord's day, the souls of those slain, which cried out, "Till when, O Owner, holy and true, art Thou not judging and avenging our blood on those dwelling on the earth?" (Rev.6:9,10).

The shed blood of Abel cried out for vengeance and judgment. But one who serves as a type of Christ can never represent Him fully. In Hebrews 11:24, we read of "Jesus, the Mediator of a fresh covenant," and of "the blood of sprinkling *which is speaking better than Abel.*" Indeed, the blood of Jesus Christ speaks to us of justification (Rom.5:9) and peace (Col.1:20).

Hence, when Yahweh heard the message from the blood of Abel, He heard a call for vengeance. But also we may surely say that He was aware of a deeper message still being spoken by Abel, not by words but by his deeds while he still lived.

The writer of Hebrews tells of this message from Abel: "By faith Abel offers to God more of a sacrifice than Cain, through which he was testified to that he is just at God's

testifying to his approach present, and through it, dying, he is still speaking" (Heb.11:4). Although he is dead, even now Abel is speaking. The word he is speaking to those who believe is not a word of vengeance, but a word of faith, which is a message of reliance on God.

Much has happened since the days of Abel. The time came when God delegated His Son, come of a woman, and also the time has come when He delegates the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying "Abba! Father!" (Gal. 4:4-6). All along the way, from Adam to us, and through the eons, all centers on God's vast work of love in the giving of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

D.H.H.

WILHELMINA PACKARD

Always rejoicing in God's grace of salvation in Christ and His purpose to head up all in Him, our good friend, "Wilma" Packard, was an inspiration to many by her testimony in word and deed. She was put to repose on May 21 at the age of 96. Raised in a large Dutch family in the American Midwest, where Bible reading and discussion were maintained daily with enthusiasm, she never lost her eager interest in "things of consequence." We are consoled in our loss, as she was increasingly consoled, by the words of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, and the assurance that the time will come when we shall always be together with our Lord.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

First published in German in 1915, a book by E. F. Stroeter has now been translated into English and published under the title, The Gospel of God's Reconciliation of All in Christ. It is available from the translator, J. H. Tonn, 3248 NE Johnson St., Roseburg OR 97470, for the price of $23.00 postpaid.

We have now published a reprint of A. E. Knoch's book, The Problem of Evil, and the Judgments of God, which contains the thought-provoking article, *Sin for Sin*, which follows in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches*. See also the announcement on our inside back cover.

SIN FOR SIN

NOWHERE, perhaps, are man's theories and God's thoughts further apart than on the means of dealing with sin. This divergence is limited to theology, however, for in other walks of life man finds his ideas will not work, so reverts to the true and practical solution.

Man "atones" for misdeeds by good conduct. God demands another wrong to make a matter right. Let us admit that this seems so far wrong that few will even consider it. We have the proverb: "Two wrongs never make a right." Indeed, in man's moral ethics, uncontrolled by God, it *would* be a dangerous doctrine. For it is only when two wrongs are properly related to each other that they are mutually corrective.

Not long since I had a striking experience of how two mistakes may combine with a very happy effect. We were building an evangelistic van. Someone, unknown to me, jacked up one of the rear wheels. After the hardwood framework had been carefully set so as to be square and the posts perpendicular, the jack was found and taken away. Then the whole rear end leaned over to one side an inch or two. I tried hard to force the frame into position, but it had been securely bolted, and would not budge. After losing nearly a night's sleep over it, it suddenly occurred to me that the large swinging door would have a tendency to throw the posts out of perpendicular. On testing it out it was found that the weight of the door exactly counterbalanced the slant of the posts and made them perfectly plumb!

Here we have a practical example of a mistake and its justification. I acknowledge freely that it was my mistake

to get the door post out of plumb, but I insist that I was justified by the outcome. Any carpenter or builder can appreciate the possibility of making such a mistake, but they do not issue instructions to make them, for their happy outcome is beyond human control.

In other spheres, however, the principle is recognized and applied. In all commercial transactions and in bookkeeping it would be exceedingly silly to try to correct a mistake by doing right. If a man is overcharged, he is not satisfied to be charged what is right on other items, but wants a rebate. This, of course, is essentially wrong, for it is a payment for nothing. A friend recently forgot to deduct ten dollars from the bill for printing our magazine. How is he going to make it right? By not doing it again? No, but by wrongly deducting it from the next bill.

God's earliest lesson in "atonement" or sheltering is full of significance. Adam had sinned. He tried to cover himself with fig leaves. He did not do another wrong to cover his first offense. But God is not satisfied. He sacrifices an innocent lamb to provide a covering. On what ground could we have justified Adam if he had taken the life of a lamb to clothe himself? But are we not doing this very thing every day? Creatures against whom no charge can be laid are slaughtered for peltries to provide our covering. The sin that brought the need of covering demands another wrong to repair it.

Sin and sacrifice are constant associates—far closer in the vocabulary of the Original than any English version. In the fifth of second Corinthians many margins make "He made Him to be *sin*," "He made Him a *sin offering*," on the ground that, in the Hebrew the phrase *sin offering* is simply *sin.* Our translators have not always been clear in their own minds how to render it. Thus, when they had always translated "for a sin offering," in the fourteenth verse of the fourth of Leviticus they suddenly change to "for the

sin." Whether it is rendered "a young bullock for the sin," or "for a sin offering" may not seem to matter much until we see that it applies to the sacrifice of the bullock, not to the sin of the congregation.

But, some will say, how can a sacrifice to cover sin be itself a sin? The point we wish to press at present is that, in the inspired language of Scripture, there is no other term for it, and were we speaking Hebrew, we must always refer to the sin offering as the "sin." Nor can we convince ourselves that this is merely accidental, a curious circumstance, without reason or significance. On the contrary, it points to the path of truth. Let us consider carefully just what the offering of a sacrifice involves. Is there any aspect in which it too partakes of the nature of a sin, or mistake?

Following the flood, God gave animals to mankind for food. Occasionally it is right to kill some unfortunate animal to put it out of its misery. But what would we think of the farmer who deliberately chose a young bullock, a perfect specimen of its kind, and killed it for no other purpose than to burn it up? He would be called a fool, or worse, a criminal. It was wrong to take the bullock's life. It did not deserve death, and its death served no useful purpose. Such an act would surely be a mistake, a sin. Yet this is precisely what the sacrifice for sin was, viewed apart from its sacred associations. Do we then wonder that it was called a sin by God Himself?

Let us consider the real nature of the sin offering, quite apart from those religious prejudices (which have no place in the Scriptures) which hamper our thought and chain our reason. The hunter who slays wantonly, for no other incentive than the lust to kill, justly forfeits the respect of mankind. Some may justify it as a sport, but who would consider the sacrifice of a young bullock in that light? Were the flesh or the skin needed or used for the support of human life, it might be condoned. But no. The only reason for its death is that its owner has done wrong!

Can the slaying of a perfect, inoffensive, useful creature be regarded in any sense as right? Does it compensate for the sin for which it is offered? Does it alleviate the loss of the one who suffers from the sin? From the human standpoint, apart from the illumination afforded by divine revelation, it was a huge mistake.

Propitiation, a shelter for sin, was by means of a sin (offering). One mistake, contrary to the Divine precepts, was temporarily met and covered by another, which was in accord with His ritual. Does not this account for the fact that the bullock was not burned on the altar, in the sacred courts, but at a distance far from the divine dwelling, outside the camp? Being a "sin," it was brought far from the holy dwelling place of God and consumed with fire.

It was thus that Elisha healed the waters of Jericho. Being so near the salt sea leads us to suppose the waters alkaline and thus unfit for use. What is the remedy? Elisha cast salt into the water. This should have made it worse, but, by the divine alchemy, it cleared the waters. God's ways and man's are not the same. We would not commend salt as a purifier of water unless the Divine Chemist prescribed it. Neither would we advise anyone to sin, in order to cover a previous sin. Only God's will and wisdom can correct sin by sin.

The cross of Christ is the touchstone of truth. If we find that it confirms our faith, we need have no fear of its falsity. But if it fails to confirm it, we may well view our theology with suspicion and distrust.

We now desire to consider the great crisis in the career of Christ entirely apart from all else but His dealings with God. Man's attitude and acts, and Satan's persecution, we reserve for another time.

It is evident on the surface that the latter part of our Lord's ministry was weighted with His impending doom, which even caused a clash between Himself and one of

His disciples. But it is not till we reach Gethsemane that the veil is torn aside and we get a glimpse of the awfulness of the cross as it affected His fellowship with God. Hitherto the will of Christ was in perfect parallel with that of His Father. True, He did not do His own will, but He acquiesced in the divine will cheerfully and with His whole heart. But now He begs that the cup pass from Him. His will was not at all in line with the will of God. But the will is not the final arbiter. The heart may furnish motives deeper and more powerful. So He adds, "Not My will, but Thine, be done!" (Luke 22:42).

We need not even ask the question whether He had a right to refuse to drink the cup which God had put to His lips. God Himself had opened the heavens and testified that He was delighted with His beloved Son. Christ had challenged any one to convict Him of sin and no one even dared to try. Pilate washed his hands of His case. Heaven and earth and the very demons declared His righteousness. There were no flaws in Him. Was it right, then, that He should suffer so severely that the very anticipation drew clots of blood from His agonized brow?

We are not now concerned with the physical pain and shame inflicted by men. How undeserved that was we shall see again. Men are ignorant, as He Himself declared when He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they are not aware what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). Men are unjust and hateful, so we have no difficulty in understanding their attitude toward the holy One of God.

We are now concerned only with those most mysterious and terrible of all His sufferings, the loss of fellowship, the averted face, the active hostility of God Himself, which wrung from Him the orphan cry, "My God, My God, why didst *Thou* forsake Me?" The terror of those three hours of darkness, when the Sun of His life was hid from His soul, surpass the power of the pen, yet the psalmist compares

it with the force of fire and water and the sword (Psa.18: 7-16; 22:14-20; 69:1,21).

This was God's dealing with His Son. Our present question is, Was it right? Did Christ deserve such suffering? Was there any ground, in His relation with God, for the distance and despair which He endured? All will agree, even an infidel will concede, that, if any one ever deserved the opposite, it was that lowly, holy Man. We are face to face, then, with this great truth, that God did visit with direst evil the dearest Object in His universe. God does inflict evil even where no direct blame exists.

The fact that sin had invaded the universe is no reason why Christ should suffer. The penalty of sin applies to the sinner, not to the only One Who was not corrupted by its contact. (We are now confining ourselves to a consideration of the justice of His case, and exclude all higher thoughts.)

It will not destroy this truth to say that His case was exceptional and that the apparent wrong was justified by the results to mankind and the whole creation. This is most true. It is the very truth for which we contend. God uses evil to attain a higher good. It is the means He employs in turning His creatures from neutral indifference to an active and affectionate response to His love.

The attitude of God toward Christ on the cross is, in reality, a much deeper "problem" than the entrance of evil or sin. When evil came into the creation, creation was neutral—neither good nor bad. If it did not deserve evil, neither did it deserve good. Not so with our Lord. The glories He had before He emptied Himself to become a man entitled Him to respect and honor. The life He lived, the service He performed in His humiliation, called forth praise and demanded a suitable reward. There was not the slightest cause in Him for divine condemnation.

If we are backward in acknowledging that evil came into the world in accord with God's purpose, what shall we say

of His treatment of Christ? Christ did not want to drink the cup set before Him, yet this was God's will. The shame and indignity heaped upon Him during His ministry were not deserved. We acknowledge that men were direfully wrong in their treatment of Him. What then, shall we say of God Who forsook Him in His deepest need, Who sent fire from above into His bones, and more than this, *desires to crush Him!* (Isa.53:10). There was only one greater wrong in all the universe than that He should be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and that was that His sorest affliction should come from the heart of His God and Father.

Let every one who imagines that God has no connection with evil listen to that lonely forlorn cry of the forsaken Son, "My God, My God, why didst *Thou* forsake Me?" In vindication, we point to the infinitely blessed results flowing from it. We find that even the Sufferer Himself shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. And this is the answer which suffices for the first entrance of evil as well as for its foremost example.

Murder is an evil of the first degree. To take the life of an enemy is usually punishable with death. To take the life of a friend is far worse, and one who slays his own beloved ones is usually adjudged insane, for it is a crime too terrible for a rational being to commit. It is this thought which intrudes itself upon us when we read of the faith of Abraham, when he offered up his son Isaac. He doubtless felt the same as we do about it, for we know that he consoled himself with the thought that God, Who was in reality responsible for the apparent crime, could take care of its consequences, for He could rouse Isaac from the dead (Gen.22:8-16; Rom.4; Heb.11:17-19).

The chief interest for us lies, not in Abraham's deed, for he did not actually slay his son, but in the great antitype, when God and His Son came to Golgotha. Then there was no substitute, but the Father's knife found its sheath

in the Son Whom He loved, and in Whom all His hopes were centered. Our purpose in referring to it is to point out that, from every human standard, Abraham's intended act was insanely criminal. It was absolutely without justification apart from the revealed will of God. What had Isaac done to deserve death? And, infinitely more deserving as was the Son Whom he represented, why should He be slain? If we confine our inquiry to Christ and God, in their past relationships, and exclude the sin of man and creation and the benefits to come to all through His sacrifice, we must confess that it was a temporary wrong to the Victim. Is not this the thought underlying the fact that He was made a sin offering for our sakes, that we might become God's righteousness in Him? (2 Cor.5:21). No man made Him sin, and certainly Satan had no such laudable object in view. It was *God* Who did it, and to such purpose that it rectified and justified all other sins.

The prevalent conception of the perfected universe is one scarred and marred by sin. God's thought is infinitely higher. The cross of Christ has transmuted sin into righteousness, transgression into obedience, offense into reconciliation, hate into love.

Temporarily, during the earthly kingdom, sin is pardoned, offenses are forgiven. But eventually sin is justified, or vindicated. In itself it is criminal; in combination with the crime of the cross, it is an essential factor in the revelation of God's heart.

To recapitulate: God settles sin by sin. Every sin is transmuted by the sin of sins into an act essential to God's highest glory and the creatures' greatest good. All the righteousness and glory and honor which are Christ's, either before His incarnation or after His glorification, do not offset sin. His undeserved humiliation and distress and shame and death are sufficient to transform all sin into righteousness and holiness and bliss.

A. E. Knoch

THE BREAKING AND THE SUBJECTION

IT was likely because of failing health that Brother Knoch left us with only a few written notes directly concerned with Genesis 44. In commenting on Joseph's deep emotion upon seeing his brother Benjamin (*cf* Gen.43:29,30), he added the following thought: "But the brothers are not yet broken. So once more their money is returned in their sacks and Joseph's special beaker is placed in Benjamin's sack, so that he is forced to return. As a result Judah makes a full explanation and proposes to suffer in Benjamin's place."[1]

With these general remarks as a guide, let us look at Genesis 44 as it presents the "further breaking" of the brothers' jealousy and stubbornness in verses 1-13, followed by the evidence of this breaking in the brothers' submission from the heart, especially as expressed in Judah's moving appeal. Here we find a striking reversal of the events and evils of chapter 37. The word of God revealed through the dreams of Joseph is reaching its fulfillment. God has been operating in the lives of Jacob and his sons, and in the events of the world. And He has been operating it all together for good.

A FURTHER BREAKING

44 +**Then** 7**Joseph**0 l**instructed** `the one **who** was to **over**see **his house,** › **saying**¯**: Fill `the men's bags** with **food as** much w**as they are** l**able** to **carry**¯**;** pl**put** +**also each** one**'s money in** the **mouth of his bag.** 2 **And you shall** pl**put** `**my beaker,**

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.50, p.274.

the silver beaker, in the **mouth of** the **bag of the youngest** +**together** `with the **money** for **his** grain **ration.** +**So he** l**did according** to the **word of Joseph** w**that he had spoken.**

God had given Joseph a revelation that his brothers would bow down to him (*cf* Gen.37:5-10). When they first came to Egypt, the brothers did in fact bow before Joseph "with their brow to the earth" (Gen.42:6), and this has been now repeated in the second quest for food (Gen.43:26,28). But the bowing must be from the heart with a willing recognition of the human need and genuine appreciation of the lord's supply for that need. Consequently, there is a further test made to bring the brothers to such a heartfelt submission that will serve as a picture even of the bowing of every knee in the name of Jesus, and the acclaiming of His Lordship to the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:10).

THE BROTHERS LEAVE

3 When **the morning was light,** + **the men were dismissed, they and their donkeys,** 4 and **they´** went **forth** `from **the city.**

They had not c**gone far** +**when Joseph said to** the one **who** was to **over**see **his house: Set out, pursue after the men.** +**When you have overtaken them,** +**then you** must **say to them: Why have you repaid evil** u**for good?** 5 7**Why** did **you steal** `**my beaker, the silver beaker?**0 Is **this not** the one i**from which my lord** l**drinks?** + It is the **same** i**by** it**which he** m**practices** l**augury. You have** c**done evil** in w**what you did.**

6 + **He** l**overtook them and** l**spoke to them** `with ·**these** ·**words.**

It is morning, and the brothers depart from Egypt, laden with food, with both Simeon and Benjamin safely in hand. All seems *well.*

There was also a departure, years before, when Joseph

was sent by his father from Hebron to go to Shechem and see about his brothers' *well-being* (Gen.37:12-14). Now, after the brothers depart for home, Joseph is the one who sends his representative on a mission that will result in much temporary distress for the brothers. But in truth Joseph is still personally and deeply concerned with the well-being of his brothers.

This is further evidence of God's use of evil in order to bring about a good that could never be realized without the troubling experience.

THE BROTHERS' FIRST RESPONSE

7 +**But they** l**said to him: Why** does **my lord** l**speak words as** ·**these? Far be it** ›**from your servants** f**to** d**act**– as**in** ·**this** sp**way.** 8 **Behold,** 7**the**nc **money** w**that we found in** the **mouth of our bags, we brought** it **back to you from** the **land of Canaan. How** +**then should we steal silver or gold from your lord's house?** 9 `With **whom** 7**the beaker**0 **may be found** f**among your servants,** + **he would die; and we** mr**also shall become** › **slaves to my lord.**

10 + **He** ls**a replied: Now** mr**then, so** be **it, according** to **your words,** yet only 7**the man~** `with **whom** 7**the beaker**0 **is** l**found, he shall become** a **slave to me.** +**As** for the rest of **you, you shall** b**be** held **innocent.**

The brothers view the charge as completely unjustified, and they respond boldly with confidence in their innocence. At one point during their first descent to Egypt, they had recognized a connection between their wicked treatment of Joseph and the distress that came upon them (*cf* Gen.42:21). But this second visit has gone so well for them that they feel no need for consideration of the fact that they are sinners whether or not the present charge is true. Most serious of all they see no need for recognition of God in the current circumstance.

In attitude they still seem much the same as they were when they said in pride, "We shall see what will become of his [Joseph's] dreams" (Gen.37:20). They still are in great need of humbling, a humbling that accords with the truth that they are sinners.

In Genesis 37 Joseph was sold by his brothers (under the leadership of Judah) as a slave. Now Joseph is lord, and the brothers, in an act of pride, make themselves liable for slavery.

OVERWHELMED

11 +**So they** ˡ**quickly** + ᶜ**let** ˡ**down each** one `**his bag** to*ᵈ* **the earth, and they** ˡ**opened each** one **his bag.** 12 **And he made** the ˡ**search,** ¯**starting** *ⁱ***with** the **oldest, and** *⁻ᵃˡˡ***finishing** *ⁱ***with** the **youngest. And the beaker was** ˡ**found in Benjamin's bag.**

13 +**At** this **they** ˡ**tore their raiments;** + **they** ˡ**reloaded** each **man** *⁷***his bag***⁰* **on his donkey, and they** ˡ**returned** to*ᵈ* **the city.**

When the brothers had deceived their father into thinking that Joseph had been killed by an animal, Jacob tore his raiments and mourned for many days (Gen.37:31-34), but not his sons.

Here the brothers are overwhelmed; they are deeply startled, and they are the ones who tear their raiments in grief. Suddenly all does not seem well for them. But they do not even consider leaving Benjamin to be taken back alone and enslaved. What they did to Joseph in cold calculation, they refuse to do for Benjamin. Now they are truly broken, and now they manifest a remarkable change. Without hesitation, they reload their bags and turn back to the place now looming with danger and ominous threat. They who had sold Joseph for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites who brought him to Egypt (Gen.37:28),

now are headed in the same direction with the very same prospect facing them, hoping to rescue Benjamin, even at the price of their own enslavement.

Yet now God is placing them in a position for things to be truly well.

FALLING TO THE EARTH

14 +**When Judah and his brothers** ˡ**came** to*ᵈ* **Joseph's house,** + **he´** was *ᶠʳ***still there; and they** ˡ**fell** to*ᵈ* the **earth before him.**

15 + **Joseph** ˡ**said to them: What** *ᵛᵈ***deed** is ˙**this** *ʷ***that you have done?** Did **you not know that** a **man** *ʷ***such as I** *ᵐ***practices** ˡ**augury?**

For the second time in two days the twelve sons of Jacob are together, but only one is aware of the fact. The eleven fall to the earth before Joseph. This is not a submission instigated by external authority. If there is a hope in them for deliverance, it is not for themselves but for their father's sake. From the soul, with every ounce of their being, the brothers fall down in this act of subjection. There is no room in their hearts for thoughts of resentment or self-justification. They all, Benjamin included, are focused on the pressing need of sparing their aged father from the grief that would be a stroke of death to him.

This is the circumstance arranged in the wisdom of God as He has operated in and through Joseph. It had long ago been prophesied. It was foreknown. And now it is coming to pass.

But what is shown by the act of falling to the earth needs to be expressed by words which acclaim what is in the heart. "For with the heart it is believed for righteousness, yet with the mouth it is avowed for salvation" (Rom.10:10).

Consequently, Joseph restrains his emotions again and opens the way for Judah to speak for himself and his brothers the words that must be spoken:

"HOW CAN WE JUSTIFY OURSELVES?"

16 + **Judah** [lsa]**answered: What shall we say to my lord? What shall we** [sp]**argue?** + [wt]**How** can **we** [l]**justify** our**selves? The** One**, Elohim, He has found** out `the **depravity of your servants. Behold, we** are **slaves to my lord,** [mr]**both we** [mr]**and** he **in whose hand the beaker was found.**

Judah's name is a form of the Hebrew word meaning "acclaim," a word that also is sometimes rendered "confess," for it speaks of a firm and sincere affirmation of truth, whether in praise or in shame, or with both involved. When Judah was born, Leah had passed beyond expectation of favor from Jacob, as expressed in the naming of the first three sons, and she simply *acclaimed Yahweh* for him (Gen.29:31-35). Already the other brothers have been looking to Judah for leadership. This is a dim foreshadowing of the homage that will be paid to Judah's greater Son Who will rule the peoples with scepter and statute (see Jacob's blessing of Judah in Genesis 49:10), but, like Joseph, ruling always with Israel's well being in view (*cf* Jer.29:11). But Judah himself is to be seen as the *Acclaimer* so that he himself pictures Israel acclaiming the Lord (*cf* Isa.45:23-25); that is what is in view here as Judah speaks with acclamation of his sinfulness and of honor to Joseph, who pictures Christ.

Judah begins not as a man eager to defend himself from false accusations, but as truly a man recognizing his own and his brothers' depravity, entirely dependent on the judgment of the one before him, whom he calls with sincere acclamation, "my lord." Judah and his brothers cannot even attempt to justify themselves, for however innocent they are of the crime of which Benjamin is accused, they are exposed in the sight of God as sinners of the worse sort.

When the brothers exclaim that Elohim has found them out, they express their own realization that God is aware of

all they had tried to hide. They had acted at Dothan (Gen. 37:17) without consideration of God and in opposition to His word as spoken in Joseph's dreams. Until recently they had continued in this self-deception concerning the divine supremacy of God. But now Elohim has made it clear to them that He is aware of their wickedness, and He is very much concerned with the matter. This is the issue at hand, not the stealing of a beaker, but the sin arising from unbelief, as recorded in Genesis 37. The brothers are becoming aware of it, and Joseph has already been given the insight (*cp* Gen.42:21,28; 45:5; 50:20). But what the brothers have in view for dealing with this evil falls far short of the divine intention which is being carried out through Joseph.

JOSEPH HOLDS FIRM

17 +**But** [7]**Joseph**[0] [l]**said: Far be it** [>]**from me** [f]**to do**[-] **this. The man in whose hand the beaker was found, he**[´] **shall become** a **slave to me.** +**As** for the rest of **you,** go **up** [>]**in peace to your father.**

Joseph would have the breaking be fully expressed. It must be made clear that every human scheme for deliverance of Benjamin and rescue of Jacob from further distress be put aside, so that the glory of God's deliverance through His chosen one be manifested. The brothers need to see that they cannot rescue Benjamin.

Consequently, Joseph still holds firm in sternness and severity even though his heart throbs for reunion and reconciliation.

JUDAH COMES CLOSE

18 +**Then Judah** came [l]**close to him and** [l]**said: O! my lord, let your servant speak** [pr]**now** a **word in my lord's ears, and let your anger not** grow [l]**hot** [i]**against your servant, for you** are **like** [as] **Pharaoh.**

Now Judah, the Acclaimer, comes close to the one who stands in highest authority, and acclaims him as the one who is like Pharaoh, that is, like the most powerful and important person in all the earth. With no hope except as it is placed in the one before him, he acclaims Joseph as his lord.

WORDS FROM THE HEART

19 **My lord, he asked `his servant, › saying¯: Have you** a **father or** a **brother?** 20 **And we ˡsaid to my lord: We have** an **old father and** a **child of** his **old age,** the **youngest. ⁺Since his brother is dead, ⁺ he´ alone** *he* **is ˡleft ›of his mother, and** so **his father loves him.** 21 **⁺Then you ˡsaˡtold › your servants: ᶜBring him down to me; ⁺ I** am determined to *ˡpl*ˡ**set my eyes on him.** 22 **And we ˡsaid to my lord: The youth ˡcannot › leave¯ `his father. ⁺When he would leave `his father, ⁺then he would die.** 23 **⁺But you ˡsaˡtold › your servants: If your ˙youngest brother** does **not** come ˡ**down** `with **you, you shall not › see¯ my face ˡagain.**

24 **And it ˡcame** to **pass** *t***as we** went **up to your servant** *7*˜**our father ⁺that we ˡtold › him** `the **words of my lord.** 25 **⁺Later our father ˡsaid: Return, purchase for us** a **little food.** 26 **⁺Yet we ˡsaid: We ˡcannot ›** go **down¯. If our ˙youngest brother is** `with **us, ⁺ we will** go **down; for we ˡcannot › see¯ the man's face ⁺** if **he, our ˙youngest brother, is no**t `with **us.**

27 **⁺Then your servant** *7*˜**our father ˡsaid to us: You your**selves **know that my wife bore two** sons **for me.** 28 **⁺ ˙One** went ˡ**forth,** away **from `me, and I ˡsaid:** *y*˜**Surely he was torn to pieces,** yea **torn to pieces¯. And I have not seen him** *bd*ˡ**hitherto.** 29 **⁺** If **you take `this** one *mr*˜**also from** *wi* **my presence and mishap would befall him** *7*˜**on the way**^{0}**, ⁺then you would** *c*˜**bring down `my grey hair**s *i*˜**with evil** to*d* the **unseen.**

30 **⁺So now,** *as*˜**if I** should **come¯ to your servant** *7*˜**our father, and the youth were no**t `with **us, ⁺since his soul** is

tiedˡ up *i*˜with **his** boy's **soul,** 31 **⁺then it will come** to **pass, as** soon as **he sees¯** *t* **the youth is no**t *7*˜with **us***n*˜**, ⁺that he will die; and your servants will** *c*˜**bring down** `the **grey hair**s **of your servant our father** *i*˜**with affliction** to*d* the **unseen.** 32 **For your servant** became **surety** `for **the youth** *f wi*˜**to my father, › saying¯: If I** do **not ˡbring him** back **to you, ⁺ I will be** at **fault ›before my father all ˙**my **days.**

33 **⁺So now let your servant** *sit*˜**stay** *pr u*˜**instead of the youth** as a **slave to my lord, and let the youth** go **up with his brothers.** 34 **For how** could **I** go ˡ**up to my father ⁺** if **the youth were no**t `with **me, for fear that I may see** *i* the **evil which** would ˡ**come upon `my father?**

When Jacob showed that he loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, the ten brothers hated Joseph so intensely that "they could not speak peaceably with him" (Gen.37:3,4). Now, Judah pours out words from his heart concerning Benjamin: "He alone is left of his mother, and so his father loves him" (Gen.44:20). Without the slightest indication of jealousy, Judah repeats his father's words, "You yourselves know that my wife bore two sons for me" (Gen.44:27).

We may object to Jacob's partiality (yet it does picture God's favor toward some as a special work in His blessing of all), but Judah is now occupied only with the fact that his father would be overcome by the loss of Benjamin. It is a prospect of human suffering unto death which Judah would have the lord nullify. All depends on the lord.

The words accord with the act of bowing. On behalf of his brothers, and his aged father, Judah places all in the hands of the exalted lord, who has saved them from starvation and is able to save their aged father from death, and indeed Benjamin and themselves. Who is this lord? He is none other than the one who is about to draw them to himself with tears of love.

EVERY TONGUE SHALL ACCLAIM

How can we read Genesis 44, knowing what is coming in chapter 45, and suppose that the exaltation of Jesus Christ described in Philippians 2:9-11 may involve a forced subjection in torment and hate and despair? And how can we read of Joseph's reaction and suppose that the Saviour and exalted Lord, Jesus Christ, will subject any to everlasting misery? The Antitype is not less glorious than the type.

The pictures of human subjection to the Lordship of Christ given in Genesis 44, and the picture of the Saviour's Lordship about to be given in Genesis 45 and 50 are only dim foreshadowings of what Paul speaks of in Philippians 2. They cannot express the glory of that greatest of subjections, which will be to *the glory of God the Father.* We savor the implications of Judah's words of acclamation, which bring us close to tears of joy (as they did Joseph), in anticipation of the deeply felt subjection of all to our Lord Jesus Christ:

"O! my lord! . . . let your servant stay instead of the youth as a slave to my lord, and let the youth go up with his brothers. For how could I go up to my father if the youth were not with me, for fear that I may see the evil which would come upon my father?"

Here is a picture of a sinner bowing before the mightiest of lords in his day, pleading for grace in behalf of others at the price of his own enslavement or death. He is not thinking of himself except as one who deserves suffering, and indeed prefers it above any other, seemingly possible verdict. If, then, this is a good picture of the sinner who bows in the name of Jesus, and of what will be in his heart as he acclaims Jesus Christ as Lord, what shall we say of Joseph as a picture of the exalted Lord? What will be in His heart?

Hasten that day! This is our prayer.

D.H.H.

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 A Revelation of
the Divine Intention
151 The Authority of the Word
166 Given Up and Roused
177 Not, Neither, But
185 "Be Rejoicing in the Lord Always"

JULY, 2008

Volume XCIX **Number 4**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

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A. E. Knoch, paperback, 346 pages (ISBN 0-910424-59-4)

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2008
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME NINETY-NINE

EDITORIAL

THE evangel of God, the authority of His Word, the pattern of God's operations, the essential place of Paul's apostleship and teaching for us today, and the deportment that accords with his evangel, these are among the themes of the articles in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches.* Looking back, we see that these very themes have frequently, even dominantly, occupied the pages of this magazine during its nearly one hundred years of publication. We continue to see these subjects as central to our faith.

We begin this issue of our magazine with some brief yet spiritually invigorating comments on Genesis 45, concerning the revelation of God in the affairs of humanity.

Of upmost consequence is the happy word of God's grace in Christ Jesus, as it was revealed to Paul by our ascended Lord. The uniqueness and importance of Paul's apostleship and message is traced in the article entitled, "Not, Neither, But," and the foundation of this evangel in Christ's death and resurrection from among the dead is considered in the article on Romans 4:25. The practical value of this evangel in the lives of believers comes before us again in the study on Philippians 4.

Regarding the value of God's Word, Brother A. E. Knoch wrote in the "Explanatory Introduction" to the International Edition of the Concordant Version "New Testament":

God's Word is mankind's most precious possession. What are all the treasures in the world compared with it? Do they even begin to approach the riches which are brought to us by the knowledge of His mind, the appreciation of His love? Indeed, it is God Himself Who is revealed in the sacred scrolls.

It was this appreciation for God's Word that led Brother Knoch to undertake the task of preparing a "Concordant" translation of the Sacred Scriptures. The plan, as most of our readers know, was to examine each Greek and Hebrew word of the ancient texts in all its contexts, as listed in a concordance, in order to assign an appropriate English word (or a restricted number of English variants), to each of these terms. Then these English words would be used consistently in the translation and would not be employed for other Greek or Hebrew terms. The first complete edition of the CV of the "New Testament" was published in 1926, with major revisions appearing in 1944 and 1966.

The preparation of the CV of the "Old Testament," however, has been a long and slow process. Yet now we are about to send in the last installment of the *Concordant Version of the Old Testament* to our printer, which will make the whole available in five large-print volumes before the end of this year. This is far from providing a one-volume book containing the CV of both parts of the Sacred Scriptures, as we still hope to do, but it is a milestone for us, for which we praise and thank our gracious God.

But indeed there are certain advantages to the Version in this form. The large print and page-size allows the reader to insert notes, cross-references and other "helps for understanding" along with passages being studied. I am already doing this myself along with suggestions for possible improvements for later editions. (We have noted several typographical errors in the previous installments, the most serious of which are the missing words, "learn righteousness" at the end of the first line of Isaiah 26:10, and the wrong spacing of the last syllable of the word "customs" at the end of Ezekiel 23:24.) We appreciate thoughtful suggestions from our friends for improvements in later printings and revisions.

D.H.H.

A REVELATION OF THE DIVINE INTENTION

JOSEPH'S revelation of himself to his brothers involves a revelation of God's purpose for good through all the evils of human hate and pride, and the sufferings and losses that resulted. As a type of Christ, Joseph acts in such a way that the ways of God and His goal of glory are brought to our attention. It is this that makes Genesis 45 of such lasting value for us today.

GENESIS 45:1-28

45 [+]**At** this **Joseph was no**[t] longer **able to check** him**self** [›]**before all** those [‹]who were **stationed**[l] [on]**by him, and he** [l]**called** out: [c]**Have every man go out from** [on] **me.** [+]**So no**[t] **one stayed** [‹]with **him** [i]**when Joseph** made him**self known**[–] **to his brothers.** 2 [+] **He** [lg]**raised** [‹]**his voice in lamentation, and** the **Egyptians** [l]**heard** it**; and Pharaoh's house** [l]**heard** about it**.**

3 [+] **Joseph** [l]**said to his brothers: I** am **Joseph!** Is **my father** [fr]**still alive?** [+]**But his brothers were not able to answer** [‹]**him, for they were flustered** [f]**at his presence.**

4 [+]**Then Joseph** [l]**said to his brothers:** [pr]**Now** come **closer to me.** [+]**When they** came [l]**close,** [+] **he** [l]**said: I** am **Joseph your brother,** [‹]**whom you sold** to[d] **Egypt.**

5 **And now do not be** [l]**grieved nor let it be** [l]**hot in your eyes that you sold** [‹]**me** [bd]**hither,** [t]**because Elohim has sent me** on **before you for** the preservation of **life.** 6 **For this** is just two **years** that **the famine** is [i] **within the land; and** for **five** [fr]**more years** [w] there **will be no plowing** [+]**nor harvest.**

7 +**But Elohim** ˡ**sent me** on **before you to** *pl*˙**set up for you** a **remnant** *i*˙**on earth and to** *c*˙**preserve lives for you** ›**in** a **great deliverance.** 8 +**So now, not you´ sent** `**me** *bd*˙**here,** *t*˙**but the** One**, Elohim; and He** has ˡ*pl*˙**made me** › a **father to Pharaoh and** › **lord** ›**over all his house**hold **and ruler**ˡ *i*˙**over** the **whole land of Egypt.**

9 **Make haste and** go **up to my father, and** ˡ**say to him: Thus says your son Joseph, Elohim has** *pl*˙**made me** › **lord** ›**over** the **whole of Egypt.** Do come **down to me; do not** ˡ**stay** behind. 10 + **You will dwell in** the **land of Goshen, and you will** *b*˙**be near** › **me, you and your sons and your sons' sons,** +**also your flock**s **and your herd**s **and all** *w*˙**that** is **yours.** 11 + **I will** *all*˙**provide** `for **you there,** *t*˙**since** there are *fr*˙**yet five years of famine, lest you be**come ˡ**destitute, you and your house**hold **and all** *w*˙**that you** ›**have.**

12 **And** *bd*˙**now your eyes and my brother Benjamin's eyes** are **seeing that** it is **my mouth** that is **speaking to you.** 13 +**So you tell** › **my father** `about **all my glory in Egypt and** `**all** *w*˙**that you have seen. And you** must **make haste and** *c*˙**bring** `**my father down** *bd*˙**here.**

14 +**Then he** ˡ**fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and** ˡ**wept. And Benjamin wept on his neck.** 15 **He** +**also** ˡ**kissed** › **all his brothers and** ˡ**wept over them.** + **Afterward his brothers** *sp*˙**talked** `with **him.**

16 + **The news was heard** in **Pharaoh's house,** › **saying⁻, Joseph's brothers have come. And it was** ˡ**well pleasing in** the **eyes of Pharaoh and in** the **eyes of his officials.**

17 +**Then Pharaoh** ˡ**said to Joseph:** *sa*˙**Tell** › **your brothers, Do this: Load up** `**your livestock and go; enter** into*d* the **land of Canaan,** 18 **and take** `**your father and** `**your house**holds**, and come to me.** + **I** am determined to ˡ**give** › **you** `of the **best of** the **land of Egypt;** + you shall **eat** `the **fat of the land.** 19 **And you´ are instructed** to tell them**: Do this: Take for your**selves **carts from** the **land of Egypt for your little one**s **and for your wives; and you** must **lift** `**your father** on one **and come.** 20 + **Let not your eye** ˡ**commiserate over your chattels, for** of the **best of** the **whole land of Egypt, it** is **yours.**

21 + The **sons of Israel** ˡ**did so.** + **Joseph** ˡ**gave** › **them carts** *on*˙**at** the **bidding of Pharaoh, and he** ˡ**gave** › **them provisions for** the *way*˙**journey.** 22 **To each** and › **everyone he gave changes of raiments;** +**but to Benjamin he gave three hundred** shekels of **silver and five changes of raiments.** 23 **And to his father he sent as** *this*˙**follows: ten donkeys carrying** some *f*˙**of** the **best** things **of Egypt, and ten jennies carrying cereal** grain, + **bread and sustenance for his father** ›**on** the *way*˙**journey.**

24 +**Then he** ˡ**sent** `**his brothers** off**.** +**When they were going,** + **he** ˡ**said to them: Do not be** ˡ**disturbed** *i*˙**on** the **way!**

25 +**So they** went ˡ**up from Egypt and** ˡ**came** to the **land of Canaan, to their father Jacob.** 26 + **They** ˡ**told** › **him,** › **saying⁻:** 7˙**Your son**0 **Joseph** is *fr*˙**still alive;** + *t*˙**indeed, he** is **ruler**ˡ *i*˙**over** the **whole land of Egypt.** +**But** 7˙**Jacob's~ heart was** ˡ**torpid, for he** did **not** ˡ**believe** › **them.** 27 +**Then they** ˡ**spoke to him** `**all** the **words of Joseph** *w*˙**that he had spoken to them; and** when **he** ˡ**saw** `**the carts** *w*˙**that Joseph had sent to carry** `**him,** +**then** the **spirit of their father Jacob** ˡ**revived,** 28 **and Israel** ˡ**said: Enough! Joseph my son** is *fr*˙**still alive! I** am determined to ˡ**go and** ˡ**see him** *i* **ere I** ˡ**die.**

JOSEPH MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN

Judah's offer so stirs Joseph's heart that he cannot restrain his feelings. His brothers have really repented, so he makes himself known to them, and soothes their sore hearts by revealing a secret that very few mortals, even firm believers in God, have fully grasped. Joseph sought successfully to show them the seriousness of their treatment of him, and they had felt it severely in their hearts and had repented.

THE DIVINE SIDE

Now, however, Joseph shows them the other side of their actions, the divine side, and tells them that *the Elohim had sent him before them to preserve their lives*! This does not minimize or excuse their guilt, nor void their repentance, but it does reveal the all-prevailing love of Yahweh, and His pre-vision as well as provision for His own.

This is, perhaps, the most intimate and revealing revelation of God in the Hebrew Scriptures. Today we are told plainly that *all* is of God (2 Cor.5:18), but this seems too big to swallow. When seen in action, in detail, in a story such as this, especially when the action all seems clearly due to human wanton wilfulness, contrary to the spirit of God, and yet carries out the loving purpose of His heart, it may manage to penetrate our dull minds and hard hearts to some extent. The writer prays that this may be the case with all who read these notes.

"To *preserve* life the Elohim sends me before you." Joseph's brothers intended to *destroy* his life, but succeed in preserving their own. But now, they must think of their father, who seems to have been the chief sufferer due to their acts.

"ELOHIM SENDS ME"

With fine spiritual insight, Joseph emphasizes the prior place of the Subjector by beginning the message to their father with the divine title Elohim. "Elohim sends me." His spirit subjects all, even when they are not subject to Him. "*Not you send* me thither." Isn't this a crass contradiction of the plain *facts*? Yes. But not of the hidden *truth*! And so Elohim constituted him a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his household, and ruler in all Egypt. God's plans are continually countered by men but nevertheless executed by God. All is of Him.

A. E. Knoch

THE AUTHORITY OF THE WORD

THE genuine ecclesia (*ekklêsia*, OUT-CALLED, "church," AV) is simply comprised of all whom God *calls*. We are called out of the world and into Christ, out of unbelief into faith. "Ecclesia" is used in this way in many passages. *All* who truly believe "that Jesus died and rose" are saints of God and belong to His ecclesia, even if it should be that God has not increased their faith beyond this foundational, glorious revelation. "If we are believing that Jesus died and rose, thus also, those who are put to repose, will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with Him" (1 Thess.4:14).

The only other usages of *ekklêsia* in Scripture which are pertinent to believers are those in reference to saints living in a particular city or region (e.g., Gal.1:2), or to those who periodically assemble themselves together at a certain location (e.g., Rom.16:5). This latter usage of OUT-CALLED, though concerning believers, refers not to God's having called them into Christ, but merely to a pastor's (or some other leader's) calling together of those who wish to be part of a certain congregation or regular gathering.

If the leader's teachings, however, are not truly faithful to the evangel and its service, surely there is nothing very remarkable—let its members claim what they will—about being a part of such a group. Those who go so far as to speak of their own group—*in contradistinction to other believers*—as "the saints" or "the church," are in serious error and are nurturing a false spirit.

THE TRAP OF "ESTABLISHED AUTHORITY"

Because of their immaturity, and the powers of the

Adversary, a great many believers will not have the ability to recognize ministries within the ecclesia that are more characterized by faithfulness than others. Those in positions of leadership are often endowed with various fine qualities. This is so no matter how erroneous their teachings may be. In addition to their appeal, such ones may also be very persuasive. It is only natural, then, that others, at least as immature as themselves, should accept them as stalwarts of the faith.

Those who are actually quite mistaken in many of their basic teachings will nonetheless be convinced of the verity and value of their own ministries. As a result, they will attract many followers who, quite understandably, will gladly affiliate themselves with them. At the outset, the novice is not competent to judge; later on, he fears to disagree with established authority. As a rule, however, the people "love to have it so" (*cp* Jer.5:31). Effectually, they cry out, "Give us a king to judge us!" (*cp* 1 Sam.8:5-7).

In certain cases a contemporary man is given an authoritative place; in others, an ancient church creed serves the same purpose. In a number of churches the chief pastor's opinions are considered absolutely authoritative. To differ with him is to differ with Christ. To be "obedient to God," one must actually follow the pastor in his mistaken views, until he recognizes the error of his ways. Such a one's teachings are not to be questioned, much less doubted or rejected.

In other groups, while such a policy is theoretically repudiated and any such practice denied, it is practically accepted nonetheless, often with as much zeal as that of those who openly advocate such principles. The same spirit prevails, even if unwittingly so.

Ironically, many who condemn and reject human authority if it should be contemporary, singular, and heterodox, justify and embrace it themselves if it should be ancient,

plural, and orthodox. Many bow down to the dictums of the early church creeds just as surely as others prostrate themselves before modern day "apostles."

All such things are altogether wrong, for they largely destroy one's ability to think, seek, and decide for oneself. In all such cases it is a foregone conclusion that one must be subject either to an "authoritative" creed, a learned church leader, or to some other human dignitary.

Yet the clearer our grasp of the evangel of true grace and of the intrinsic authority of the Scriptures themselves, the more clearly we will see the illegitimacy of any ecclesiastical policy that entails human authority concerning truth. Any such approach is terribly mistaken, for it necessitates the lordship of one man over another in matters of faith. *God* is able to establish His people, and He does so, according as He is intending. The truth does not need the assistance of human dominion. "Success" is no proof of faithfulness. To the contrary, it is usually a strong indication of its opposite.

ACCEPTED SCHOLARSHIP AND VENERATED CREEDS

Personal competency to make correct judgments is the vital need of every believer. Yet what is this but the gift of God, according to the wisdom and enlightenment He is pleased to give? Yet this only comes in response to prayer and in response to much sane-minded labor in the Word, labor that is rooted and grounded in love, not in fleshly pride or mere curiosity (Phil.1:9-11; Eph.3:14-19).

"*Examining* the *scriptures* day by day, *to see* if these have it thus" (Acts 17:11), is one thing. Rooting about in "the Bible" in a desperate quest for proof texts against a position which we do not wish to accept, is quite another. The former endeavor requires time, patience, competency and impartiality. The latter has no need of any of these.

It is not that we are obligated to consider every wind

of teaching that comes our way. That is quite impossible. Nor is it that any certain ministry is necessarily worthy of special consideration. It is instead that the issues in question themselves concerning the greatest scriptural themes, are worthy of our careful and protracted attention. It is most unsatisfactory to be ignorant of these things, or, in a dispute, only to consider well one side and not the other (*cf* Prov.18:13). In an era of apostasy such as the present (1 Tim.4:1,2; 2 Tim.3:13; 4:3,4), nothing could be more foolish than summarily to reject the leading exponents of those who dare to stand against our own traditions.

It is totally inadequate, not to mention dangerous, to approach the Word of God with no more in hand than the Authorized Version or some other all-too-frequently lawless and discordant translation. We need much guidance and wisdom even with a faithful translation before us, and cannot hope to gain a good understanding without an accurate, concordant version.

Few scriptural passages are fully absolute, without limitation of any kind, even if they should be practically absolute. And many statements are by no means absolute, but are true only as they relate to a certain subject. It is strictly a matter of wisdom and discernment, based upon our total knowledge of all facts that have a bearing on a matter, as to whether we should judge a statement absolute or relative, even as literal or figurative.

It will not suffice merely to make bold claims as to the significance of a passage, especially when, if the truth be known, we may never have realized that such a thing as varied senses in which a passage may be taken even exists.

Most of those who at least know something of our work seem to know, more or less, *what* we believe (even if they should find it difficult to state our position fairly and accurately); but few indeed seem to understand *why* we are constrained to take the stand that we do, especially in

those cases in which our findings are contrary to those of orthodoxy. So many simply will not "hear us out." They do not really grasp what are—at least to us—the compelling *reasons* for our beliefs.

Consequently, on the one hand, they do not possess a sufficiently good reason for themselves to accept our findings, and on the other hand, they are unable to help us where we may need adjustment since they do not seem to understand the considerations that constrain us to teach as we do. That is, they are in no position to point out any actual weaknesses in a structure concerning which they hardly seem to discern at all the true nature of its foundation.

It is to be regretted that those who cannot concur with our findings nearly always appeal to "scholars" and "authorities." The creeds of Christendom are regularly appealed to as well—as if, even in an era of extreme apostasy, prevailing opinion were somehow an indicator of truth! We do well to consult others, and it is not wrong to agree with them. But the least suggestion that truth concerning any certain subject is practically established because either the majority or a certain class or movement find accord among themselves concerning it, is only a manifestation of foolishness if not conceit. Few are even interested in the true meaning of scriptural terms and teachings. Yet even those who do make at least some sort of inquiry, too often confine their efforts to considering the opinions of those scholars who advocate their own present views. If the teachings of those holding contrary views are consulted at all, such considerations are nearly always more superficial than substantial, and are engaged in more obdurately than objectively.

Who are we to believe, those who boast the loudest of their credentials, or those of their mentors? Are we to entrust our faith to those who are the most vociferous and adamant, who insist that they and theirs alone are

"orthodox," "evangelical," "conservative," "spirit-filled," or perhaps even "the true church" or "apostolic"? Through such shibboleths, those who appeal to such things are only removing all doubt that they are entirely out of sympathy with the words of the apostle, "Let no one be boasting in men" (1 Cor.3:21).

"The principle of founding all upon the Scriptures themselves is vital and must be sustained above all. The Scriptures are our only authority. There are helps, and hindrances, but no authorities. Expositions represent fallible human endeavors to grasp God's truth as revealed in His Word, and are neither authoritative nor inspired. The opinions of the founders of evangelical movements, however great or godly, are no more authoritative than those of other believers, are equally amenable to the tribunal of holy writ, and must stand or fall by its verdicts. To set up the teaching of any man or set of men as an authority is a return to Romanism."[1]

REALIZATION IN PRAYER

Every believer surely has the right to his own opinion. Yet the right to one's opinion carries with it the obligation to see to it that one's opinion is right. Therefore, God's people need to learn how to *think*, both clearly and accurately, in order that they might make wise and valid judgments.

Apart from divine enlightenment, however, clear thinking and intelligence, however excellent, will by no means suffice for discerning the will of God. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are *concealed* in Him (Col.2:3). We may sooner create the galaxies by ourselves than understand the Scriptures apart from God's enabling power.

Just as proficiency in any field requires training and experience, progress in the faith is impossible apart from

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.1, p.253.

prayer and education. This is God's *way;* it is His "means of grace." It is unrealistic and foolish to minimize the importance of either of these two entities.

In prayer, as in our walk in general, we are to become imitators of the apostle Paul; as he says, "according as I also am [an imitator] of Christ" (1 Cor.11:1). Thus we have the apostle "for a model" (Phil.3:17). We do well to note that his concerns and petitions to God are not for soulish welfare but for *spiritual enlightenment.* Among his most notable prayers are these; may they be our guide as we seek wisdom from above and spiritual understanding:

"Therefore, I also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you *a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him,* the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for you to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength" (Eph.1:15-19; *cp* 2 Cor. 4:13).

"Be rejoicing *in the Lord* always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:4-7).

"We are thanking the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, always praying concerning you, on hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints, because of the expectation reserved for you in the heavens, which you hear before in *the word of the truth*

of the evangel, which, being present with you, according as in the entire world also, *is bearing fruit and growing,* according as it is among you also, *from the day on which you hear and realized the grace of God in truth,* according as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow slave, who is *a faithful dispenser of Christ* for us, who makes evident to us *your love in spirit.*

"Therefore we also, from the day on which we hear, *do not cease praying for you* and requesting that you may be *filled full with the realization of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,* you to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in *the realization of God;* being endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, *for all endurance and patience with joy;* at the same time *giving thanks to the Father,* Who makes you competent for a part of the allotment of the saints, in light" (Col.1:3-12).

FOUR VITAL QUESTIONS

In studying any passage of Scripture, we must always ask ourselves: (1) *What* does it say? (2) *Whom* does it concern? (3) *When* does it apply? and (4), In *what sense* is it true?

Unless we have no opinion at all concerning a certain subject, it will be impossible for us not to make some type of judgment concerning it with respect to these questions, even if we do not consciously rehearse these points or even know they exist.

Indeed, many naively imagine that they themselves simply "believe God," while accepting the Scriptures at "face value"—unlike certain others whom they deem "too intellectual," not to mention less "spiritual" than themselves. Such ones will often further declare, albeit tautologically, since "God's Word says what it means, and means what it says," there is no need for any "human interpretation."

All such sentiments are simply wrongheaded. First of all, there are no interpretations except for human interpretations. Unless we make no claim at all as to how a given declaration should be understood, we simply cannot avoid "interpreting" it, which is simply to say, declaring the sense in which we believe it should be understood.

Therefore, it is by far the wiser course to keep the following questions ever before us as we seek further light, and, as God grants it to us.

(1) *What* does it say? In order to judge correctly here it is essential that we learn the difference between an actual scriptural declaration and a mere human inference therefrom. We need to be especially clear as to the enormous difference between a *corollary* (that which, though not expressed, must be true, in light of what *has* been said) and an *inference* (that which not only has not been expressed, but may well not be true at all, and, in any case, cannot be known to be true). We must not self-confidently claim that a writer is "undoubtedly" making an implication when it is far more likely that we are only making an unwarranted inference.

It will not suffice to note that a certain translation may state a certain thing in a certain passage; for, for all their accord, there are many differences in rendering among translations, from one version to another. These differences are often by no means trivial or confined simply to choice of phrasing or even to significantly distinct ideas though only concerning minor points of teaching. To the contrary, in some cases, differences in translation declare completely opposite thoughts, even concerning subjects of the greatest consequence.

If we would not blindly follow others, our only recourse, then, is to the authority of the Scriptures themselves, through a careful consideration of their own definitive usages of the words of inspiration. Such a pursuit entails, at minimum, at least some measure of intelligent, per-

sonal use of a concordance, one which provides access to all occurrences of those words of the Original concerning which the meaning is disputed. We will wish to investigate the various usages of these expressions, so that we might discover for ourselves those passages in which they are used in a truly definitive way.

(2) *Whom* does it concern? and (3) *When* does it apply? It does not follow from the fact that a certain revelation is "in the Bible," is "in the New Testament," or is included among "the very words of Christ," that such a revelation therefore concerns ourselves. *This may or may not be the case.* Furthermore, some things that have a vital application, whether for Israel or the nations, are nonetheless only applicable within a certain era or under a certain administration. They are not necessarily in effect continually and interminably even for those to whom they do apply, much less with respect to all.

Such important questions as these must be intelligently and patiently considered; we must endeavor not to make rash judgments, decisions that are the fruit of our own imprudence and impatience, according to our ignorance and prejudice.

All Scripture is truth for today concerning the subject with which it deals and with respect to those who are concerned in it. All Scripture is *for* us in the sense that it is in some way beneficial to us, whether for teaching, exposure, or correction; and it is all given to us with a view toward our instruction in righteousness (2 Tim.3:16), so that we might know what is true. This is all unto the end that the man of God might truly be "equipped, fitted out for every good act" (2 Tim.3:17).

Yet if we should truly wish to engage in *faithful* acts, we must come to "know that which concerns [ourselves]" (Col.4:8), and to distinguish it from what does not concern us, insofar as any certain act of human obedience,

divine blessing, curse, promise, warning, or other teaching is concerned. It is by no means ideal for us to take to ourselves those things in the Bible which do not belong to us. Such practices are mere religious thievery, no matter how hallowed by antiquity. The apostle Paul refers to those who, however sincerely, were taking up with those many things which are concerned only with the flesh and with the nation of Israel, as "curs," as "evil workers," and entreats the Philippians to "beware" of them (*cf* Phil.3:2-9).

It is true that we must not contrive artificial distinctions, imagining differences that simply do not exist. Yet it is just as true that we must not fail to note and heed all genuine distinctions, no matter how many of our own traditions may have to be set aside as a result.

Misplaced truth becomes insidious error, for it seems to have scriptural support. As little as it may be heeded, at least the principle of proper application seems to be acknowledged among virtually all believers. For example, hardly any seek to apply *all* the laws of Moses to themselves, or even *all* the imperatives of the Lord Jesus, which He declared within the compass of His personal ministry to Israel. We have yet to hear of any today who wish to make either male circumcision or animal sacrifices compulsory for salvation, however much they may differ among themselves or seek to press other "requirements" into service unto this same end.

Therefore, nearly all, even if tacitly, at least assent to the principle of "correctly *cutting* the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15), insofar as this entreaty has in view the fact that while all Scripture is for us, it is not all *to* us; it is not all applicable to believers today, to those who are the members of the body of Christ.

It must be recognized as well that even where the word "all" or any other "universal" expression is used (e.g., "each," "any," or "every"), the reference is always to *all*—to "each"

and "every" one—of *those who are in view* within the scope of the subject matter of the text in question. In some instances, the reference is to all believers (or, as the case may be, to all saints, humans, or even creatures) without distinction—apart from any limitations—whether of era or administration. In other cases, either the actual *context* of a passage or the nature of the case *limits* the application of such "universal" terms. It limits them solely to all those of a certain group or class, to those living at a certain time or under a certain administration or economy. It is essential to recognize as well the mere *close proximity* of a certain phrase to an actual *context* which is in question, when such a phrase is actually a part of a *different* context (albeit a contiguous one) from the one which is being considered or is primarily in view.

(4) In *what sense* is it true? Even if we have succeeded in discerning what has been said, whom it concerns and when it applies, we are not ready to come to a conclusion until we resolve the vital question which remains, *In what sense* is this passage true? That is, is it to be understood literally or figuratively; and, absolutely or relatively?

All literature is comprised *primarily* of literal expressions, even if many figurative expressions should also be employed. Indeed, without an understanding of the literal it is impossible to discern the message of the figurative, for literal meaning is the basis of figurative application.

Therefore, the adage "whenever possible, literal" is essentially sound advice. We would prefer to refine this slightly, however, and say, "Whenever *viable*—all things considered—literal." Taking this approach will not close the door to the recognition of true figurative passages or otherwise diminish our insight to discern that which is *spiritual* (which is an entirely different matter from that which is *figurative*). To the contrary, it will form a sound basis for our study of literary figures and will tend toward

awakening us to their presence. Though there are many figures of speech, by far the most common ones, metaphor and metonymy, are concerned, respectively, with either likeness to or association with the literal. Of course, when considering literal meaning, we must not confound essential *meaning* with derived *usage.* Similarly, we must note the difference between the many lexical *definitions* of a word's usage, and the vital, definitive *essence* of the word itself, which distinguishes it from other expressions.

When judging between the literal and figurative, if, because it would entail absurdity or contradiction to take a phrase literally we are constrained to deem it figurative, we must still ask ourselves, Of what does the figure consist and what is the literal *idea* behind the figure, which it merely serves to convey?

Yet wherever there is no compelling reason to take a statement figuratively and we therefore judge it to be literal, we must still decide whether this literal statement is *absolute* or *relative.* If we should judge it to be truly absolute, we must regard it as universally so, without limitation of any kind. If we should regard it as relative (as most statements are, even if they should be practically absolute), we must decide the *scope* of the subject matter to which this literal statement may be *applied.*

All these matters are concerned with wise and astute judgment. They are matters of "interpretation," which is merely to say they are are matters concerning which we must make correct decisions. Though it is not *literally* true that "the Scriptures interpret themselves," nonetheless, the spirit of this aphorism is certainly true, as expressed through this metonymical figure! The literal idea intended is that if we would truly *understand* (i.e., make out the meaning of) a certain text, we must make many correct decisions concerning it *as we are guided by the many related scrip-*

tural matters with which it is associated or otherwise connected or dependent.

ISSUES VITAL TO 1 CORINTHIANS 15:22

By way of example concerning the *necessity* of interpretation of sense in order to gain a correct understanding of what is revealed, let us consider 1 Corinthians 15:22: "For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified."[2] At least the following eight questions must be answered—and answered correctly—in order to avoid misunderstanding what is indeed truly declared therein:

(1) What is the force of the word "For" and to what does it refer?

(2) What is it for something to be so in an "even as-thus also" way, and how is that way properly applied to this case at hand?

(3) What is it for a phrase to be set in "parallel" to another, and are the phrases herein "in Adam" and "in Christ" thus juxtaposed?

(4) In these same phrases, "in Adam," and "in Christ," the word "in" is prominently employed. Since the word "in" is sometimes used locatively, and in other cases is used instrumentally, we must first ask: (a) What is meant by each of the two respective terms, "the locative usage of 'in,'" and "the instrumental usage of 'in'"? and then (b) How can we determine which usage is employed here?

(5) How can we determine whether the same usage occurs in both phrases, or if a different usage is employed in each case, and, in that event, which usage is the one employed in each respective case?

2. Our findings on these questions concerning 1 Corinthians 15:22, are set forth in detail in the article, "Crucial Questions About Resurrection": *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.85, pp.163-177; and, www.concordant.org/expohtml/HumanDestiny/1cor15.html .

(6) What is the scope of the "all" that, in Adam, are dying, as well as of the "all" that, in Christ, shall be vivified?

(7) What is the difference in meaning between the Scriptural declaration "in Adam, all are dying . . . [and] . . . in Christ, shall all be vivified" and the common misreading of this verse: "all in Adam are dying . . . [and] all in Christ shall be vivified"?

(8) What is the essential meaning of "vivify" (i.e., of the Greek word, *zōopoieō,* LIVE-DO), and what is the sense in which it is used here in 1 Corinthians 15:22?

It is true that suitable aptitude and temperament and adequate skills in language and logic, together with sufficient interest, inclination, and available time, are requisite to ongoing research in the resolution of such questions.

However, what are any of these but the gift of God? After all, since "a man can not get *anything* if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27), a man certainly cannot possess any such needful skills and disposition except on this same basis.

One should by no means despair, however, if he or she does not personally possess such wherewithal for original investigation. Instead, one should rather, then, pray for the wisdom to *recognize* helpful teaching when one encounters it, together with a heart disposition to *learn* from anyone providing any such useful service (*cf* Eph.4:11-14).

May our God and Father grant us grace not only to believe His Word, but to make wise judgments concerning its proper sense as well, according as He grants us enlightenment.

Accordingly, then, may our hearts be consoled, being united in love, in our quest for "all the riches of *the assurance of understanding*, unto a realization of the secret of the God and Father, of Christ, in Whom *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are *concealed*" (Col.2:2,3).

J.R.C.

GIVEN UP AND ROUSED

THE EVANGEL is a matter of death and life. It proclaims the death of Christ on the cross and in the tomb. *Christ died for our sins, and was entombed* (1 Cor.15:3,4). Then it speaks of the life of Christ in resurrection. *Christ has been roused from among the dead* (1 Cor.15:4; Rom.4:24).

Concerning humanity, it faces the deep-seated problem of death, both as a state and (figuratively) a power leading downward to that state, and tells of its defeat and ultimate elimination, and the establishment of life immortal and incorruptible. It is because death as a destructive power in us producing sin and offense has infected the entire human race through the sin of Adam (Rom.5:12-14), culminating in the state of death, that the death of Christ (and our inclusion in His death) is so critical. And it is because His death accomplished what was so desperately needed by humanity that He was roused to life.

The pattern of death followed by life is presented throughout the Sacred Scriptures. In Romans 4, Paul points to this pattern in the experience of Abraham, the fatherless man whose name meant "Father-high." He and his wife, Sarah, were *deadened* in the ability to have children (Rom.4:19). But in His promise that Abraham would be the father of many nations, God revealed Himself as the One Who is *vivifying* the *dead* (Rom.4:17).

So also for us: In His evangel concerning His Son, God reveals Himself as the One Who will be *vivifying* our *mortal* bodies (Rom.8:11), both now, in spirit, and in the future, in Christ's presence (1 Cor.15:22,23). Hence God tells us of His love to us in giving up His Son for us, "seeing

that, while we are still sinners, Christ *died* for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). We who are believing are identified with Him already in His *death,* as He was in the tomb (Rom.6:3,4). Then God's message to us adds triumphantly: "Christ has been *roused* from among the *dead,* the Firstfruit of those who are *reposing.* For since, in fact, through a man came *death,* through a Man, also, comes the *resurrection* of the *dead.* For even as, in Adam, all are *dying,* thus also, in Christ, shall all be *vivified*" (1 Cor.15:20-22).

RIGHTEOUSNESS

The evangel of God, as Paul is presenting it in Romans, focuses on the theme of righteousness. Justification is established through the faith of Jesus Christ, that is His faith-obedience to the death of the cross. It is gained by His death and our inclusion in that death, and it is enjoyed in life, both in the future when we are fully vivified, and at present, in spirit. In Romans 4, the apostle has been especially concerned with the blessing of being reckoned righteous, granted to us when we believe the evangel that Christ died for our sins and was roused from among the dead.

This blessing of being reckoned righteous is also pictured for us by Abraham's experience in Genesis 15:6, who was fully assured that, what God has promised, He is able to do also. *Wherefore, also, it is reckoned to him for righteousness* (Rom.4:21,22).

> *Now it was not written because of him only, that it is reckoned to him, but because of us also, to whom it is about to be reckoned, who are believing on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead.* (Rom.4:23,24)

Abraham did not know that what God did for him in reckoning righteousness to him had us in view as well as himself and his physical descendants. But God knew this. What He did for believing Abraham, He intended to do

for us in a way centered even more fully in His grace and based explicitly on the giving up of His Son. When God spoke to Abraham in Genesis 15 and reckoned righteousness to him, He also had us in view, who were "about to be believing."

BELIEVING ON GOD

In believing God's promise that he would have descendants numbering as the stars of the heavens, Abraham was believing it *of the God Who is vivifying the dead* (Rom. 4:17). His faith was placed entirely on God Who is able to do what He has promised (Rom.4:20,21).

Likewise, for us, in believing the evangel that we are justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, and in believing also that God reckons us righteous when we are believing this evangel concerning His Son, we are placing our faith wholly on God, Who is vivifying the dead. In our apostle's words as expressed in Greek, we believe *on* God, even as we rely [*expect*] on the living God (*cf* 1 Tim.4:10), Who is actively carrying out His operations in dealing with death and sin and bringing forth life and righteousness.

Righteousness is linked to the death of Jesus our Lord followed by God rousing Him from among the dead. It is the work of God and the grace of God and the gratuity of God. Therefore, we are not trusting in ourselves or our works but are believing on the God Who vivifies the dead. We are believing on the God "Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead" (Rom.4:24).

THE EVANGEL

Now in Romans 4:25, the apostle Paul presents the evangel he was evangelizing (*cf* Rom.1:15), wording it succinctly and distinctly in terms that continue to echo in our hearts and resound in our spirits:

> [*God*] *rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead,*
>
> *Who was given up because of our offenses,*
> *and was roused because of our justifying.*

As in Romans 1:1-7 and 3:21,22, the evangel speaks to us here first of all as it speaks of *God.* God gives up Jesus our Lord and rouses Him from among the dead. Then the evangel directs attention to *God's Son,* Who is given up (to the death of the cross and of the tomb) and roused (to life from among the dead). He is the One in Whom we were created (Col.1:16), and consequently the only One through Whom we can be saved. Hence we know and honor Him as Saviour and Lord, as ultimately all will do (*cf* Phil.2: 10,11). Finally Paul presents the evangel as it affects *us.* It tells of God dealing with *our offenses* in the giving up of Jesus our Lord for *our justifying.*

JESUS WAS GIVEN UP

It was God Himself Who gave up His Son to suffering and death. The passive verb, "was given up," in Romans 4:25 becomes an active verb in Romans 8:32, with God as the One doing the action.

This latter passage culminates with Paul's jubilant song in praise of the love of God (Rom.8:35-39), making clear to us that God's giving up of His Son is an act of love. So also in Romans 4, what the apostle says about Christ being given up by God leads forward to that amazing wording of the evangel that we find in Romans 5:8. The fact that Christ died for sinners is God's commendation of *His love.*

GOD'S LOVE

How can we comprehend this? We see Christ's love here, but can we see God's love in this giving up of His Son? In Romans 5:7 we are directed to consider the love of a human who might die for the sake of a good person. Yet

Christ died for sinners, who indeed still remain sinners in themselves. Yet Christ's death is called God's love for us! The Father gave up His Son to the sufferings of the cross and the death of the tomb, for us! It was the love of Christ. But in its deepest sense it is the love of God, Who is love.

Let us pause here to consider what the verb "was given up" tells us of God and of His love. Some passages from the Hebrew scriptures may help us see what was in God's heart as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in His giving up of His Son for our sake:

THREE FATHERS

We turn to Genesis 22 where we read of Abraham taking his son Isaac to the mountain where he was instructed to give him up as an ascent offering. Knowing full well that this meant giving up the one in whom all his expectation and joy was centered, Abraham, nevertheless, "took the wood for the ascent offering and placed it on his son Isaac, while he took the fire and the knife in his hand; *and the two of them went along together*" (Gen.22:6). Isaac was the son Abraham loved, his only one (Gen.22:2), but the circumstances, determined by the instructions of God, called for the father to do what he would never do otherwise. Yet, through it all, he never wavered in his love for Isaac, and he never tried to cover it up in order to steel his resolve for the deed ahead. They walked on together, and Abraham replied to Isaac's questions with faith in God, but also with the gentle words of love for his son: "Here I am, my son . . . . Elohim, He shall see for Himself as to the flockling for the ascent offering, my son" (Gen.22:7,8).

It was not given to Abraham that the togetherness of himself and his son would be severed by the death of Isaac. But God gave up His Son to the hours of suffering and darkness on the cross, and then to death itself in the silence of the tomb. This was done for us.

As God is greater than Abraham, so His love for His Son was greater beyond all comparison as the Two of Them approached the cross together. God, Who is aware of the suffering and travail of all creation, was keenly aware of the sorrow and pain of His Son. God, Who is keenly conscious of the evil of death, from that of Abel onward, felt the evil of this separation from His Beloved Son beyond all measure. This is to speak now of the Father's heart. And that God would do this is to speak of His love for us.

Jacob also became a type of the love of God as Father when he wept over the apparent death of his son, Joseph. "Jacob tore his raiments and put sackcloth on his waist and mourned over his son . . . and refused to be consoled" (Gen.37:34,35).

As the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is greater than the father of Joseph, so God's love for His Son, Whom He gave up to death, was greater and deeper in the loss of His Son in death, than Jacob could ever have felt. This is to speak of the Father's heart, and in doing so it speaks of His love for us, who continually offend His heart. In knowing the outcome of great good resulting from this sacrifice, God gave up His Son to death, in happy expectation (*cp* Rom. 8:18-21). But there still was the giving up, and all that it meant to the heart of God.

Even David, in his piercing cries over the death of his unworthy son, Absalom, becomes a type of what was in God's heart as the Father, in the giving up of His most worthy Son for us who are so unworthy. "O my son . . . my son! . . . . O that I had died instead of you! O . . . my son, my son!" (2 Sam.18:33).

Yet the Father could not die, and He could not die for us. It had to be the Son of His love in Whom we were created (*cf* Col.1:13-20). God's love for us involved His suffering as Father over the suffering of His Beloved Son. This is God's love as it is commended to us.

JESUS OUR LORD

God gave up His Son for us in love. But God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, acted in love Himself. Referring again to Colossians 1:15,16, we note that Christ is the Image of the invisible God, and so, in His love for us, He reflects God's love. But also He loves us because we were created in Him. In dying for us Christ revealed the heart of God, and also exposed His own heart of love for us whom God brought forth in Him. As we were created in Him, so are we included in Him in His death. "For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14).

The One Who died for our sake, for the sake of the irreverent, of enemies and sinners, is Jesus, our Lord. He died so that we might be living a life that recognizes Him as Saviour and Lord. This is the happy and exultant life that comes to us because Jesus our Lord died for our sakes.

BECAUSE OF OUR OFFENSES

What God has done in the giving up of His Son, and what Christ has done in being given up, is because of us. This is where we first come into the message called the evangel of God. We are unrighteous; we are sinners; we are *offenders* at enmity with God. It was our miserable state under the reign of death as a power that called for God's drastic act of giving up His Beloved Son.

What is called "sin" in Romans 3:9 and 3:23 is called "offense" in Romans 4:25. Offense is that aspect of sin which wounds the feelings, that which degrades and denies the glory of God. Again, what is called the "sin" of Adam in Romans 5:12, and his "disobedience" in Romans 5:19, is referred to as his "offense" in Romans 5:15,18,20. The offensiveness of humanity is especially centered in its *irreverence,* in which we change God's glory to our own level

and avoid Him and His ways. Paul has already defined this offensiveness and its effects most concretely in Romans 1:18-32. In our offensiveness we are vain in our reasonings, and darkened is our unintelligent heart. The human mind is a disqualified mind, distended with envy, murder, strife, guile, depravity; in our flesh we are whisperers, vilifiers, detesters of God. Such offensiveness is the cause of God giving up His Son in order to put it to death, and bring all that is good to life. This is the measure of God's love for us.

"Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but *gives Him up* for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?

"Who will be indicting God's chosen ones? God, the Justifier? Who is the Condemner? Christ Jesus, the One dying, yet rather being roused, Who is also at God's right hand, Who is pleading also for our sakes?

"What shall be separating us from the love of God in Christ Jesus? Affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? According as it is written, that 'On thy account we are being put to death the whole day, we are reckoned as sheep for slaughter.' Nay! in all these we are more than conquering through Him Who loves us.

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.8:32-39).

ROUSED FROM THE DEAD

Jesus was dead and among the dead. The fact that He was entombed proves that He was dead. Consequently, when He was roused on the third day, He was roused from that state of death in which millions upon millions of man-

kind have entered. As to the condition of being dead there was no difference between Jesus our Lord and all who have died from Abel unto the present. But as to the significance of His death, and as to its effects, it is singularly, and exultantly unique. It alone made the righteousness of God manifest and established His work of justification. Hence, God roused Him from among the dead. He was roused because of our justifying.

BECAUSE

From the standpoint of traditional Christianity, the wording of the evangel here is mystifying. What can it mean that our Lord Jesus was roused *because of* our justifying? If our offenses were the cause of the giving up of Christ to death, can it be that our justifying is to be seen as something prior to Christ's resurrection, somehow already an accomplishment established by the death of Christ which opened the way for God to rouse Him? Does the word "because" carry the same sense in these parallel lines?

How can it not?

We were baptized into Christ's death, entombed together with Him through baptism into death (Rom.6:3,4). Our old humanity was crucified together with Him (Rom.6:6). It is with this in view that Paul declares, "If Christ has not been roused . . . you are still in your sins" (1 Cor.15:17). He has been roused, and thus the old humanity as an entirety had been put to death in the death of Christ.

This fact as declared in the evangel has not yet become a fact manifested in realization. But because of the obedience of Jesus Christ to the death of the cross, the many who are dying in Adam will ultimately enjoy the benefits of Christ's obedience to the death of the cross, and thus all will be constituted just (Rom.5:19). All are included in the death of Christ, and eventually will enjoy the benefits of life's justifying (Rom.5:18).

Yet in the meantime we are enjoying these benefits in spirit now, and will be enjoying them in every way in the oncoming eons, among the celestials.

OUR JUSTIFYING

What is referred to as the manifestation of God's righteousness in Romans 3:21, and as the blessing of being justified gratuitously in God's grace in Romans 3:24, is called "our justifying" here in Romans 4:25. Our old self has been put to death in the death of Christ; it is done away with. Christ as the Sin offering was put to death, and when that occurred, sinful humanity, under the sway of Death, was also put to death. The enjoyment of justification by all mankind was thus assured, although it has not yet been realized. But for us who are believing, this which was gained through the death of Jesus Christ is reckoned to our account and is becoming a powerful force in our present lives. There can be no doubt that we shall be living together with Christ and living to God in the oncoming eons. But concerning the present, Paul says to us, "Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:11).

ROUSED TO LIFE

The verb "given up" refers to the crucifixion of Jesus our Lord, given up to sufferings and the death which resulted by means of the cursed cross. In this astounding act of God, the old humanity with its sin and offensiveness was done away with. But the evangel does not stop there. The verb "given up" occurs once in our passage, but the verb "rouse" occurs twice. God rouses Jesus from among the dead, and He was roused because of our justifying. We have given much attention here to what the evangel says about death, but the passage itself gives more attention to what the evangel says about life.

The death of the old is necessary, but it is necessary in order that there be life that is new. The verb "rouse" speaks of life that is awake and aware of its condition and surroundings, life as it is felt by the senses and known by the heart. For our Lord, His rousing from among the dead brought an awareness that stood not only in glorious contrast to the sufferings of the cross but also stood in glorious contrast to the entire lack of awareness of the tomb.

LIVING TO GOD

When He was roused, Christ was living to God in a new and expanded way. He is now living to God as the God Who is vivifying the dead. So also, in believing the evangel that we died together with Christ, and in believing that we shall be living together with Him also (Rom.6:8), we find we are putting our faith on God as the Vivifier of the dead. As Christ is living to God, so also, in spirit and in heart, we are living to Him Who gives life out of death.

Thus the fourth chapter of Romans concludes with the evangel of God concerning His Son as it relates to the evil of death and to the exceeding good of life. It announces that God gave up Jesus our Lord to death and roused Him from among the dead. It points to Jesus our Lord as the One Who was given up and roused. The giving up was because of what we are as offenders, and the rousing was because of what God accomplished for us in the giving up of His Son, and by our inclusion in Him. That accomplishment is, to start with, our justifying. But that is not all, as our apostle now makes clear:

"Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.5:1,2).

D.H.H.

NOT, NEITHER, BUT

Then Haggai the messenger of Yahweh spoke in Yahweh's message to the people . . . . (Haggai 1:13)

IN THE ABOVE Scripture, we see that Yahweh places equal emphasis on message and messenger. This is especially true of the Apostle Paul. Throughout Paul's letters, he is constantly defending himself against attack. The goal of these attacks was to distract people from the message, and the means to that goal was discrediting the messenger. In a court of law, one objective of the defense is to discredit a witness. If the witness can be discredited, his testimony will be thrown out, even if it's true. The Adversary is ever opposing God's present truth, and today that means opposing Paul.

Many have called me a Paul worshiper. I would counter: Who is the greatest Apostle? Paul? No. It is the Lord Jesus Christ. "Whence, holy brethren, partners of a celestial calling, consider the Apostle and Chief Priest of our avowal, Jesus . . ." (Heb.3:1).

The word "apostle," in the above verse means, "commissioner," or "sent one." Had the Father not sent our Lord, there would have been no Apostle Paul. Or Peter. Or James. Or any other apostle. And without apostles, there would be no "beautiful feet" to bring us our evangel of good. Paul himself was a slave of Christ. Like us, he was a mere earthen vessel (*cf* 2 Cor.4:7). We do not worship earthen vessels; we do not analyze their shape or texture. Yet we do value the treasure within.

In Galatians, chapter 1, Paul defends himself, his mes-

sage, and his ministry against the subtlest attack Satan has ever devised: mixing grace with law. Many a declared Christian today may appear godly, yet to compromise the message God sent to us through His chosen apostle, by adding foreign elements, is the ungodliest of acts.

None can follow Christ today unless they follow Paul, for the words of Paul are the latest and greatest words of Christ. Mixing law with grace leaves no evangel for the unbeliever (Romans 3-4), no power from the evangel for the saint (Romans 6-8), no comprehension of distinctions in God's administrational activities (Romans 9-11), no grasp of the body's celestial calling (Ephesians), and no understanding of its expectation of glory (Thessalonians).

Imagine going to a cupboard and indiscriminately throwing any handy ingredient into a cake bowl. The end result would not be a cake, but an inedible monstrosity. So too, the sacred scriptures. Each book of the Bible is good and true, but to mix them without intelligence causes more harm than good.

PAUL'S APOSTLESHIP

Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through a man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who rouses Him from among the dead), and all the brethren with me, to the ecclesias of Galatia: Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who gives Himself for our sins, so that He might extricate us out of the present wicked eon, according to the will of our God and Father, to Whom be glory for the eons of the eons. Amen! (Gal.1:1-5)

"Paul, an apostle (**not** from men, **neither** through a man, **but** through Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who rouses Him from among the dead) . . . ."

This inspired introduction is the source of my title, "Not, Neither, But." This construction occurs three times in Galatians, chapter one. In each case, the three terms point to the distinctive character of Paul's commission and message.

The first point of distinctiveness concerns Paul's apostleship. His adversaries continually held one thing against him: he was not one of the twelve apostles. Why does Paul distance his apostleship from the agency of man? There was an apostle appointed through man, and it was Matthias, chosen by lot after our Lord's resurrection to fill the place of Judas. The Lord Himself chose twelve apostles, and twelve only. The function of the twelve was to rule the twelve tribes of Israel: "Yet Jesus said to them, 'Verily, I am saying to you, that you who follow Me, in the renascence whenever the Son of Mankind should be seated on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel' " (Matt.19:28).

If the Lord chose twelve apostles for the twelve tribes of Israel, the most important question we need to ask is: Why choose Paul? Paul was not the thirteenth apostle for that calling concerned with the nation of Israel. Paul's message was unique, and so was his apostleship. Christ chose the twelve during His earthly humiliation, but Paul He called from His celestial throne.

Today, you and I have a relationship to Paul similar to that which Israel had with Moses. I will go so far as to say that Paul is our Moses. Just as Moses ascended the mount to receive the law from Yahweh, Paul met Christ on the road to Damascus, receiving our evangel directly from its Source. Reading the books of Moses, one discovers the children of Israel to be far from satisfied with God's chosen messenger. It is the same today with Paul. And yet Paul is God's chosen one, whether we like it or not. Paul compares himself with Moses in 2 Corinthians 3:7,8:

"Now if the dispensation of death, by letters chiseled in stone, came in glory, so that the sons of Israel were not able to look intently into the face of Moses, because of the

glory of his face, which was being nullified, how shall not rather the dispensation of the spirit be in glory?"

PAUL'S EVANGEL

I am marveling that thus, swiftly, you are transferred from that which calls you in the grace of Christ, to a different evangel, which is not another, except it be that some who are disturbing you want also to distort the evangel of Christ. But if ever we also, or a messenger out of heaven, should be bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you, let him be anathema! As we have declared before and at present I am saying again, if anyone is bringing you an evangel beside that which you accepted, let him be anathema! For, at present, am I persuading men or God? Or am I seeking to please men? If I still pleased men, I were not a slave of Christ. For I am making known to you, brethren, as to the evangel which is being brought by me, that it is not in accord with man. For neither did I accept it from a man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you hear of my behavior once, in Judaism, that I inordinately persecuted the ecclesia of God and ravaged it. And I progressed in Judaism above many contemporaries in my race, being inherently exceedingly more zealous for the traditions of my fathers. (Gal.1:6-14)

Paul's frustration with the Galatians did not resign him to failure. Rather, it emboldened Him to proclaim the truth with an even greater zeal. Paul does not write: "Since all is of God, this is the way things must stay." Never. Paul was a teacher, and teachers teach. Apostasy only inspires more teaching. Departure from truth affected Paul deeply. So disturbed was he by the Galatian apostasy that he declined the services of Tertius, his scribe, and sat down to write the Galatians himself—with large letters! (Gal.5:11).

What bothered Paul the most was the subtle distortion of truth. The Galatians believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, but they reckoned His sacrifice as insufficient. They had undertaken their new walk in spirit, but imagined they would complete it in flesh, looking to the Law of Moses to seal their justification. Paul, hearing of this, was beside himself.

"The evangel which is being brought by me," said Paul, "is **not** in accord with man." Of course it wasn't. What man would ever bring a message that makes all men sinners and wanting of the glory of God? What man would disclaim any possible human solution to the problem of sin? An evangel in accord with man would include a ten-step program and a diploma. According to Paul, man's contribution to the evangel is to be the object of God's complete work. Man provides the helplessness from which God rescues him. It is this lack of human contribution that distinguishes Paul's message from every religion on earth.

"For **neither** did I accept it from a man, nor was I taught it." When Christ appeared to Paul, He did not send him to Peter or any of the twelve for finishing school. **But** rather, Paul's education "came through a revelation of Jesus Christ."

In Acts 26:16, Paul relates the story of his conversion to Agrippa. "The Lord said, 'I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand on your feet, for I was seen by you for this, to fix upon you before for a deputy and a witness both of what you have perceived and that in which I will be seen by you.'"

Paul's meeting with Christ on the Damascus road was a preliminary step only. "I was seen by you," said the risen Lord, "and I will be seen by you." The Lord Jesus Christ appeared to Paul on multiple occasions. In other words, Paul enjoyed personal, intimate discourse with the Saviour of the world. Christ taught him Himself; imagine that. On one occasion, the lesson included a snatching away to the third heaven (*cf* 2 Cor.12:2).

PAUL'S INDEPENDENT MINISTRY

Now, when it delights God, Who severs me from my mother's womb and calls me through His grace, to unveil His Son in me that I may be evangelizing Him among the nations, I did not immediately submit it to flesh and blood, neither came I up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I came away into Arabia, and I return again to Damascus. Thereupon, after three years, I came up to Jerusalem to relate my story to Cephas, and I stay with him fifteen days. Yet I became acquainted with no one different from the apostles, except James, the brother of the Lord. Now what I am writing to you, lo! in God's sight, I say that I am not lying. Thereupon I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. Yet I was unknown by face to the ecclesias of Judea which are in Christ. Yet only they were hearing that "He who once was persecuting us, now is evangelizing the faith which once he ravaged." And they glorified God in me. (Gal.1:15-24)

Note the phrase, "to unveil His Son in me." What does it mean to unveil something? It means "to take the cover off of." Paul unveiled more about God's Son than anyone before him or since. Peter and Paul believed in the same Jesus, but Paul revealed glories unknown to Peter, John, David, Isaiah, and every other divine penman. We of the nations are only acquainted with our celestial inheritance through Paul. We can only know Christ's greatest glories and accomplishments through Paul. Before Paul, God's inspired writers revealed Christ as Messiah, King, and High Priest—all roles related to Israel. Through Paul's revelation, we see much more. We see Christ as Head over the ecclesia which is His body, and ultimately as head over all. Through Paul's revelation, we see the full scope of Christ's accomplishment on Calvary. In Ephesians, chapter three, Paul calls this, "the secret of the Christ."

Paul did **not** immediately submit his revelation to flesh and blood. He did not go to Peter one day and ask, "Did I hear this right?" When Paul writes his letter to the Galatians, he does not begin by saying what he did. Rather, he said what he did not do. What he did not do is of vital importance to us! He did not go to Peter.

And **neither** did he go to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before him. Jerusalem was the center of Judaism and the Law of Moses. It was the center of the only religion God gave to man. As such, it was a place most unsuitable to the new revelation.

In Acts, chapter 13, the new evangel and its administrators are centered in Antioch. "Anti" means "instead of," and "och" means "have." The verb "uphold" has the same elements. With Paul's conversion, God's proclamations now go forth from here, through Paul, *instead* of from Jerusalem, through Peter. Antioch is "*upheld* as the base of Paul's evangel to the Gentiles, while the Jerusalem ecclesia is eventually dispersed."[1]

If Paul was the nations' Moses, then Antioch became their Jerusalem.

Luke wrote his account of the Lord's earthly ministry and the book of Acts for the sake of a man named Theophilus, who may have come to question Paul's apostleship because he was in prison and the whole of Asia turned against him. The two accounts form a unit. Here is how Luke starts Acts: "The first account, indeed, I make, O Theophilus, concerning all which Jesus begins both to do and to teach, until the day on which He was taken up" (Acts 1:1,2).

So Luke's first account is about all that Jesus began to both do and teach. Note the word "began."

So what is Acts about? It is about what the same Christ presented in the first account was continuing to teach. The

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.197.

same Jesus was working in Acts 2 with Peter, and the same Jesus was working with Paul in Acts 13. This shows that Paul's ministry is just as much in tune with God's purposes as our Lord's earthly ministry and that of the twelve.

Jerusalem had the divine religion, and out of Jerusalem the law will go forth in the millennium. That is still God's chosen place, and His purpose for the earth will be centered there. But, with Paul we have a transfer and a segregation of time. Paul says: **But** I came away into Arabia. That was the same place Moses had been. What was Moses doing there? Getting the law. What was Paul doing there? Getting a revelation of the evangel of the grace of God.

Paul did not go to those in Jerusalem, but he went away to learn the truth for the nations. In Acts 2:42 Luke writes about those of the Circumcision and the twelve apostles. They were in Jerusalem, persevering in the teaching of the apostles. But Paul was not doing this, for he did not get his teaching in Jerusalem.

God was working in Paul as He worked in Peter, and the message both brought concerned the Lord Jesus Christ. But Paul did *not* get his apostleship from men, *neither* though a man, *but* it came through Jesus Christ; Paul did *not* bring an evangel in accord with man, *neither* did he accept it from a man, *but* it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ; and Paul did *not* immediately submit the revelation he received to flesh and blood, *neither* did he go to Jerusalem, *but* he went to Arabia.

Now, if Paul's message was the same as Peter's, he sure took pains to point out that it wasn't. For us to point out Paul pointing this out is the great burden of this era. Here and now, there are many who will perish for the eons for a lack of a knowledge of Paul's evangel. Let us therefore preserve the purity of Paul's message, and herald it boldly, that they may believe, whoever are set for life eonian.

Dan Sheridan

"BE REJOICING IN THE LORD ALWAYS"

(Philippians 4:1-23)

So that, my brethren, beloved and longed for, my joy and wreath, be standing firm thus in the Lord, my beloved. (4:1)

Hitherto, within the compass of his epistle to the Philippians, Paul has delivered various warnings, each one designed to protect us from various dangers which we may well encounter.

Now, "Paul proceeds to add positive exhortations equally needed to aid us on our way. We are all liable to waver, to differ in our dispositions, to be depressed, to worry, to be engrossed by the evil rather than by the good (4:1-9). How wonderfully he introduces his words! His readers were beloved and longed for, his joy and wreath (4:1).

"It seems to me that, in milder measure, this is true of all to whom God's truth comes through Paul. I, for one, feel almost as if I were a Philippian, for I am certainly in his wreath and would like to be his joy, and love him and long to see him, as he would me, were we acquainted. Paul puts the personal touch here, and speaks as to particular friends.

"'Stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved' (4:1). Here is the tone which lifts the favorites of grace. There is no threat of doom in case of disobedience, only the constraint of love. Since that day the slaves of the Lord have been inconstant, unsettled, unsteady, changeable, fluctuating, vacillating, wavering, restless, uneasy, erratic, fickle—anything but firm in the Lord in regard to His service in this era. We do not speak of Christendom, which has been far

more constant in the service of the flesh and the terrestrial than the saints have been of Christ and the celestial. Yet God's patience has not been exhausted. The exhortation still calls to us, Stand firm in the Lord *thus.* As imitators of Paul, as forfeiting everything of the flesh and finding our all in Christ, there is a vast opportunity for service, such as seldom comes to the sons of Adam."[1]

I am entreating Euodia and I am entreating Syntyche, to be mutually disposed in the Lord. (4:2)

Whatever the difficulty may have been between these two believers, it is enough for us to know that their need for mutual consideration and care is the same as that which obtains between ourselves and those to whom we may feel less kindly or concerned. Indeed, in their essence, may our Lord's words to His disciples in Luke 6:32-35 speak to us as well in consideration of our need to be gracious to our own associates, especially those within the household of faith:

". . . if you are loving those loving you, what thanks [lit. *grace*] is it to you? For sinners also are loving those loving them. And if you should be doing good to those doing good to you, what thanks is it to you? For sinners also are doing the same. And if you should ever be lending to those from whom you are expecting to get back, what thanks is it to you? For sinners also are lending to sinners, that they may get back the equivalent. Moreover, be loving your enemies, and be doing good, and be lending, expecting nothing from them, and your wages will be vast in the heavens, and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked."

Yes, I am asking you also, genuine yokefellow, be aiding them, these women who compete together with me in the evangel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers whose names are in the scroll of life. (4:3)

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.29, p.316,317.

"Competing *together* in the faith of the evangel" (Phil. 1:27) is a unique competition. Unlike in a literal race where only one obtains the prize (*cf* 1 Cor.9:24), competing *together* in the evangel, involves mutual support of one another—"deeming one another superior to one's self, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also" (Phil.2:3,4). All those involved in such mutual "competition," will be sure to win the applause of God in that day (1 Cor.4:5).

The apostle makes mention here that certain particular individuals had their names written in the scroll of life. In a similar passage, Paul states that some of his helpers were of the Circumcision (Col.4:11). Not all believers were of the Circumcision, or had their names written in the scroll of life, or it would be quite pointless to mention the fact that these things were so concerning certain ones.

It would appear, then, that "the scroll of life" amounts to a census of the sons of Israel, and is confined to the Circumcision. This seems to be suggested in the following passages:

"So Moses returned to Yahweh and said: Oh! this people has sinned a great sin, and they made for themselves an elohim of gold. And now, if You should bear their sin, bear it. Yet if not, wipe me, I pray, from Your *scroll* which You have written. Yahweh said to Moses: Anyone who has sinned against Me, I shall wipe him from My *scroll*" (Ex.32:31-33).

"In that era shall stand up Michael, the great chief, standing over the sons of your people. Then comes to be an era of distress such as has not occurred since there came to be a nation on the earth, till that era. Now in that era your people shall escape—all those found written in the *scroll*" (Dan.12:1).

"Let them be wiped out from *the scroll of life,* and let them not be written with the righteous" (Psa.69:28).

". . . yet be rejoicing that your names are *engraven* in the heavens" (Luke 10:20; *cp* Isa.4:3; Psa.87:5,6; Mal.3:16).

But you have come to mount Zion, and the city of the living God, celestial Jerusalem, and to ten thousand messengers, to a universal convocation, and to the ecclesia of the firstborn, *registered* in the heavens, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the just perfected" (Heb.12:22,23).

Perhaps the most conclusive evidence, however, is furnished us in connection with the holy city, new Jerusalem, the bride, the wife of the Lambkin (Rev.21:9-27):

"At the close of its description we are told, 'Under no circumstances may anything contaminating, or one who is making an abomination and a lie be entering into it, *except those written in the Lambkin's scroll of life* [no others may enter in]' (Rev.21:27). On the portals of this city are inscribed the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel (Rev.21:12). It seems needless to find further evidence that this is indeed the home of the favored nation. That the other nations are not within its walls is further shown by the statements that the nations will be walking by means of its light, and that their glory and honor will be carried into it (Rev.21:24,26). The situation here seems very clear. Israel within the city, the nations without. *One written in the scroll of life, the other kept out by the lack of such an honor.*"[2]

Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing! (4:4)

This is ideal counsel. Rejoicing in the Lord "always" includes especially those times in which we are naturally less inclined to do so. Paul's repeated entreaties for us to be rejoicing in the Lord are our "security" (Phil.3:1). We simply are not "safe" from day to day in the many difficulties of life that arise, except as we hear and heed the

2. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.35, pp.146,147.

words of the evangel which make Paul's exhortation here so practical: "Be rejoicing in the Lord—*always!*"

Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. (4:5)

Since the Lord is near and is aware of all we do, let this be an incentive to us to let others know our lenience. To lighten a penalty or excuse a chore is not indulgence or permissiveness but rather mercifulness. While lenience is not always suitable and its exercise can only be according to wisdom, nevertheless, wherever practicable and expedient, may we be making our lenience known to all.

Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus. (4:6,7)

We must not think of Paul's entreaties, here or elsewhere, in a legalistic way, but as the advice of a friend as to what is truly in our best interest. After all, we cannot *not* worry so long as there are things that are causing us to worry, except when God bestows saving grace on us sufficient to displace worry with peace and confidence in Him.

Therefore, we pray for just such saving grace, so that we might be blessed as those who, at least in measure, are walking in a way that is well pleasing to Him. In every situation, as we faithfully, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known to God, the peace of God that is superior to every frame of mind—perhaps not immediately but *in due course—shall* be garrisoning our hearts and our apprehensions in Christ Jesus, in the face of whatever trials we may be called upon to endure.

For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is grave, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is agreeable, whatever is renowned—if there is any virtue, and if any applause, be taking these into account. What

you learned also, and accepted and hear and perceived in me, these be putting into practice, and the God of peace will be with you. (4:8,9)

We live in a wicked eon, in the midst of a corrupt world containing much decadence, and depravity. Uncleanness abounds, seemingly nearly everywhere. Therefore we must not give our attention to it, and must seek to keep at a distance from it, in order to avoid its corrupting influence. Instead, let us center our thoughts and activities upon what is wholesome and good: "Whatever is true, whatever is grave, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is agreeable, whatever is renowned—if there is any virtue, and if any applause, be taking *these* into account."

As we *put into practice* those things that we hear, perceive, accept, and learn from the apostle Paul, *the God of peace* will be with us.

Now I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that at length, for once your disposition toward me blossomed, to which you were disposed also, yet you lacked occasion. Not that I am hinting at a want, for I learned to be content in that in which I am. I am aware what it is to be humbled as well as aware what it is to be superabounding. In everything and among all am I initiated, to be satisfied as well as to be hungering, to be superabounding as well as to be in want. For all am I strong in Him Who is invigorating me—Christ! (4:10-13)

The words, "Now I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that at length," are elliptical and require us to supply their self-evident completing thought along these lines: "you contributed to my needs." Paul seems always to have been on their hearts, even if, for some time, circumstances had hindered the Philippians in the expression of their heart's desire. In speaking of this, however, Paul makes no hint of a want of his own, for, as he said, "I learned to be content in that in which I am." Whether in circumstances humble or superabundant, throughout all the vicissitudes of his career, "for all" of these, Paul found himself "strong in Him Who is invigorating me—Christ!" (Phil.4:13; *cp* Eph.6:10; 2 Tim.2:1).

Moreover, you do ideally in your joint contribution in my affliction. Now you Philippians also are aware that, in the beginning of the evangel, when I came out from Macedonia, not one ecclesia participates with me in the matter of giving and getting, except you only, for in Thessalonica also, you send, once and twice, to my need. Not that I am seeking for a gift, but I am seeking for fruit that is increasing for your account. Now I am collecting all, and am superabounding. I have been filled full, receiving from Epaphroditus the things from you, an odor fragrant, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. (4:14-18)

The Philippians' joint contribution to Paul in his affliction, calls to mind precious memories. When Paul came out from Macedonia at the beginning of his work in heralding the evangel, except for the Philippians, not a single ecclesia participated with him in, as he gently puts it, "the matter of giving and getting." When Paul was in Thessalonica, among friends, it was the Philippians who twice sent gifts in consideration of his need. In speaking of these things now, it is not that Paul is seeking any further gift, but that he is rather "seeking for fruit that is increasing for your account," even if this should come through the further generosity of his Philippian friends.

Their contribution, given out of heartfelt love and appreciation for their apostle, like the ascent offerings of the law (e.g., Ex.40:6,10,29), ascend to God with the pleasant odor of the sacrifice of Christ.

Now my God shall be filling your every need in accord with His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (4:19)

We cannot say, whatever the desires of our heart for this present lifetime may be, that these constitute our actual

needs; it is clear that such desires, instead, constitute simply whatever it is that we may *want.*

Instead, our actual *needs*—for we are dying sinners—are to become immortal and incorruptible (1 Cor.15:51-53), to be constituted just (Rom.5:19) and vivified (1 Cor.15:22), to be conformed to the image of God's Son (Rom.8:29). It is these blessings that constitute our actual needs, *and God will be filling them all on our behalf,* in accord with the riches in glory that are now His in Christ Jesus.

Now to our God and Father be glory for the eons of the eons! Amen! (4:20)

Since God—Who is also our *Father*—is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us (Eph. 3:20), we cannot but ascribe the greatest possible glory unto Him, even for the eons of the eons! Amen!

Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. Greeting you are the brethren with me. Greeting you are all the saints, yet especially those of Caesar's house. (4:21,22)

We do well to remember one another with care and concern, and to extend heartfelt greetings, each one to the rest, on a regular basis. As the sentiment of our own hearts concerning ourselves, directed toward others, is "Forget me not," we may be sure that this same sentiment concerning themselves, directed toward us, is on the hearts of all our friends in faith.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit! Amen! (4:23)

As in Galatians 6:18, here in Philippians 4:23 as well, it is to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ alone to which Paul appeals. Since we are not competent for anything of ourselves, but our competency is of God (2 Cor.3:5), we look to Him, then, to illumine us and empower us for faithful service.

J.R.C.

Contents:

193 Editorial
197 So Israel Journeyed
207 Set by God
215 Teaching and Fellowship
233 Being, Then, Justified

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Volume XCIX **Number 5**

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EDITORIAL

WITH the publication of the Concordant Version of *Psalms through Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations and Daniel,* the *Concordant Version of the Old Testament* is now complete and available in five notebook size, softbound books. We invite our readers to join with us in thanksgiving for reaching this milestone. But along with this we urge our friends to join us in prayer for graces of wisdom and strength as we face the future. For much work still needs to be done before the Version is ready for publication in handier form (hopefully in a single volume), along with companion volumes corresponding to the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, and CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT.

Now in this lengthy and somewhat informal editorial I would like to point out some of the unique features of the CVOT as it is presently available, as well as indicate hopes for the future, should the Lord tarry. In doing so I have chosen Psalm 21 as an example. This is partly because it exhibits many of the principal features of the Version. And since it is not a particularly well known psalm, it may be easier for us to examine the Concordant rendering without too much prior bias. But also because I have already drawn attention to this psalm in my article on Genesis 4:25 in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches,* its further consideration here may help emphasize some thoughts presented in that study.

For it does seem to me that one of the greatest values of the Hebrew Scriptures for believers today lies in noting the many ways it lays down the pattern of God's great work of deliverance through Jesus Christ. In this respect they are pre-eminently beneficial (*cf* 2 Tim.3:16).

Psalm 21 is rendered in the current CVOT as follows:

A **Davidic Psalm**

21 O **Yahweh, in Your strength is** the **king rejoicing,**
And in Your salvation, *wt*__how exceedingly is he__
exulting!

2 The **yearning of his heart, You will give to him,**
And the **proposal of his lips You will no**t **withhold**
at all**.**

Interlude

3 **For You shall succor him** with **blessings of good;**
You shall set a **glittering** gold **crown** ›**on his head.**

4 **He asked life from You; You will give** it **to him:**
Length of days for an **eon and further.**

5 **Great** is **his glory** *i*__through Your salvation;__
Splendor and honor shall You poise on him.

6 **For You are setting him** for **blessings for** the **future;**
You are exhilarating him
*i*__with__ the **rejoicing of `Your presence.**

7 **For the king** is **trusting in Yahweh,**
And in the **benignity of** the **Supreme he shall no**t
slip at all**.**

8 **Your hand shall find** › **all Your enemies**ˡ**;**
Your right hand**, it shall find** those **hating You.**

9 **You shall** *set*__make them like__ a **fiery stove**
›**in** the **era of Your presence.**
Yahweh, He shall swallow them up **in His anger,**
And fire shall devour them.

10 **You shall destroy their fruit from** the **earth**
And their seed from among the **sons of humanity.**

11 **Though they have intended evil** *on*__against You,__
And **they have devised** a **scheme,**
They shall not *all*__prevail.__

12 **For You shall** *set*__make them__ turn their **backs;**
*i*__With Your__ bow**cords You shall be ready**

*on*__against their faces.__

13 **Be exalted** indeed**,** O **Yahweh, in Your strength;**
We shall ˡ**sing and make** ˡ**melody**
concerning **Your masterful** deeds**.**
› **Permanent**ˡ**,** *on*__Concerning__ the **Hind of the Dawn**

DISTINCT TERMINOLOGY

A "concordant" vocabulary is one that is developed by examining the usage of each original term (as listed in a concordance) in all its contexts and assigning an English word (or words) to it which will not be used for any other original term. The words "rejoicing" and "exultant" in Psalm 21:1 represent two different Hebrew verbs, the first of which is always rendered by a form of "rejoice" in the CVOT and the second of which is always rendered by a form of "exult." In contrast to this, the AV uses such expressions as *cheer up, make glad, make joyful, make merry* as well as *rejoice* for the first, and *be glad, joy, be joyful* as well as *rejoice* for the second.

To be sure, the two Hebrew verbs have *similar* meanings and are used in Psalm 21:1 as close equivalents in parallel lines. But they do not share *exact* meanings. A. E. Knoch was insistent that "*every word in the Scriptures has a meaning distinct from every other.* That is what words are for."[1] This is surely so. The first Hebrew verb of Psalm 21 occurs more frequently than the second, and is best represented in English by the more common verb "rejoice." The second Hebrew verb, which occurs less frequently, belongs to a family of words which have developed from the concept of a *rolling* motion, such as *billow* (*cf* Job 38:20) and *cyclone* (*cf* Psa.77:18). It calls for an English verb which suggests an especially active kind of rejoicing. *Exult* serves ideally for this purpose as well as providing a

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.18, p.35.

fine correspondence with the Greek word rendered *exult* in the CLNT (*cp* Luke 1:47; 10:21; Acts 2:26; 16:34; interestingly, the two distinct Greek words rendered "rejoice" and "exult" in the CLNT occur together in Matthew 5:12).

Another Hebrew word conveying a sense of *joy* is used in verse 6 and rendered "exhilarating" in our translation. Belonging to the Hebrew family of words connected by the concept of *oneness,* it occurs only three times in the Scriptures. In Exodus 18:9 and here it seems to speak of a special joy given to a certain *individual.* In Job 3:6, where we use the translation, "be one," it possibly implies that, in ancient thought, each day rejoiced in having its own special place in the year. The special, exhilarating joy granted to David personally, as one individual, was the rejoicing which he had in Yahweh's presence. This does not mean that others did not, or will not, experience this same exhilaration. But the psalm speaks of David (and, in type, of Christ), and he will experience the joy of being singled out for blessings from God. (Christ, as the Antitype, is *highly exalted,* Phil.2:9-11.)

So also each of us personally will be given unique happiness in the Lord's presence (such as Paul speaks of in 1 Thessalonians 2:19,20), besides the joy we all shall share together.

SUCCORED WITH BLESSINGS OF GOOD

Of course, for me to suggest such distinctions, and for the reader to test them out, a good concordance is needed. With the help of Tony Nungesser, who does our computer typesetting, among other tasks, we are preparing an alphabetical index of all the key words used in the CVOT which, in turn, will direct the student to the page and item in *Englishman's Hebrew Concordance,* where all the references for that word's usage are given.

Let us consider, for example, the word **succor** which

is used in Psalm 21:3. With our CVOT index we can look up this word in the alphabetical listing and find the following entry:

succor PRECEDE 1088.2 qdm 6923 [Dt.23:4]

This informs us that the word **succor** is in the PRECEDE family of Hebrew words, and all the references for this particular Hebrew word are given on page 1088 of Englishman's Concordance (readily available from most Christian bookstores), in the second group of references on that page. We transliterate the three letter Hebrew word as *qdm* (given as *kah-dam* in the concordance). For those who use Strong's Concordance, or are familiar with its numbering system, we provide the Strong's number for this Hebrew word: 6923. Then finally we give one reference for this word, Deuteronomy 23:4.

This is enough information for finding the entire list of Scripture passages using this word. (There are 26 of them.) But we do not always use the word *succor* to translate *qdm.* And this is true for many Hebrew words. Consequently, our index will also list each word under its family name. Having found that *succor* is in the PRECEDE family we can turn to the listing as given under that family name, which is as follows:

PRECEDE 1088.2 qdm 6923

anticipate [Jb.3:12]	go out *pc* **before** [Ps.88:13]
confront [2S.22:6]	**precede** [Ps.68:25]
confront with [2K.19:32]	rise *pc* **before** [Ps.119:147]
forestall [Jo.4:2]	stand *pc* **before** [Ps.89:14]
go *pc* **before** [Ps.59:10]	**succor** [Dt.23:4]

Now we see that *qdm* is rendered in the CVOT by ten different English terms. We may easily see how some of these are related to the leading word *precede* (e.g., **anticipate** and **forestall**). But how does the word **succor** fit in?

Literally, Psalm 21:3 praises Yahweh as the One Who shall *precede* the king with blessings of good. Another passage where this word is translated "succor" in the CVOT helps us understand the figure of speech: The Moabites did not "succor" Israel when they were in the wilderness (Deut.23:4). That is, these people who were already established along Israel's way to the promised land refused to use their position as a help to the chosen nation. On the other hand, Yahweh will be readied with blessings of good for David when he is raised up as king in the coming kingdom (*cf* Jer.30:9; Ezek.37:24).

This is a comforting thought for us too. God blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials in Christ, designating us *beforehand* for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus (Eph.1:3-5). Furthermore, He has made good works *beforehand,* in which we will walk (Eph.2:10).

POISED

Every word of Scripture contributes in a special way to the whole of God's revelation of Himself, as seen in its context and also as connected with its use in other passages. Psalm 21: 5 speaks of Yahweh *poising* the king with splendor and honor. The unusual verb "poise" represents a Hebrew term in the EQUAL family. There is an impressive visual use of this verb in Psalm 18:33. God is the One Who poises the psalmist's feet like hinds' (feet), and causes him to stand on his high-places.

So also God seats us together in Christ among the celestials, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:6.7). The transcendent highness of our calling is staggering, far beyond what is set for David. Yet we are firmly poised and securely set, for all our blessings are *in Christ.*

THE ENEMIES' BACK

Most of our readers know that the CV uses boldface type to show direct translations of Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek terms in the ancient manuscripts of the Scriptures, and lightface type for words, or parts of words, which have been added as needed by English idiom. For example, the Hebrew does not use the definite article "the" before **king** in the first line of verse 1, or the preposition "with" in the first line of verse 3, but they are needed in English for clarity's sake.

The first line of Psalm 21:12 is particularly difficult to render into English while still reflecting the Hebrew terms. The sense of the line is that Yahweh **shall set** His enemies in retreat, but rather than using the words "in retreat," the Hebrew employs the noun, **back**, figuratively to paint a picture of a single mass of back-turners. In order to convey this sense, the CV adds the lightface words "turn their." We also add a lightface "s" to the word **back** to accord better with English idiom.

The psalm does not reach to the glory resulting from Christ's defeat of His enemies which we find in Paul's epistles. As sinners, we ourselves are enemies of God, who are vain in our reasonings and darkened in our hearts (Rom. 1:21-25), yet in the face of this enmity, "we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son" and shall be saved in His life (Rom.5:10). Others who remain in stubbornness and enmity still face judgment, but the blood of Christ's cross assures us that all enemies will eventually be subjected and reconciled (Phil.2:9-11; Col.1:20).

DAVID'S YEARNING

It is widely accepted that Psalm 21 is closely related to Psalm 20 which is filled with requests for help and salvation for David in a time of battle. But whereas most trans-

lations of Psalm 21:2 and 4 indicate that the requests of the king had *now* been granted, the CVOT presents the fulfillment of the yearning of David's heart as a *future* certainty. The viewpoint throughout most of our translation of Psalm 21 is one of confidence in what Yahweh *will* do, while, at least for verses 1-6, the AV and most other Versions present a viewpoint of appreciation for what He has done.

The Hebrew verb does not in itself express time. The time of the action is established by the context. This is shown by Isaiah 9:7 where the verb has the same form as the verbs of Psalm 21:2 and 4. "To the increase of the chieftainship and to the well-being there *will be* no *end.*" To say "*there has been* no *end*" or "there *was* no *end*" would be incoherent. Was the yearning of David's heart already fulfilled? As to warfare, perhaps he had received what he desired to some extent. But as for David enjoying life for an eon and further (Psa.21:4), that still lies ahead even today.

In the present life, no son of Adam ever receives all that the heart yearns for. Far from it. Yet when the yearning is as David's heart yearned, an ardent desire for the glory of God (*cf* 1 Kings 8:17), it most certainly shall come about.

As for the yearnings of our hearts today, we are blessed by the expectation that they will be fully realized. "For to expectation were we saved. Now expectation, being observed, is not expectation, for what anyone is observing, why is he expecting it also? Now, if we are expecting what we are not observing, we are awaiting it with endurance" (Rom.8:24,25).

A LITERAL RENDERING

I have commented on some of the features and thoughts of the CV of Psalm 21. As published it is an *idiomatic* translation. It holds closely to the wording of the Hebrew, but it still expresses that wording in a way that we hope may be readily understood by those who speak and read English.

Brother Knoch hoped to publish a companion volume to the translation that would contain a more literal rendering of the Hebrew Scriptures, somewhat along the lines of the sublinear in the Concordant Greek Text. The following translation of Psalm 21 is an attempt to do this without trying to supply the Hebrew itself. The words joined by hyphens represent single Hebrew terms, following exactly the order of the Hebrew. The two verb "tenses" are both represented by English present tenses, one by the progressive present (the *-ing* form) and the other by the simple present.

Psalm to-David

21 Yahweh, in-Your-strength rejoicing-is king,
And-in Your-salvation, what he-is-exulting, exceedingly
2 **Yearning-***of* **his-heart, You-give to-him,**
And-proposal-*of* **his-lips,** by-**no-**means **You-withhold.**

Interlude

3 **For You-are-preceding-him blessings-***of* **good;**
You-are-setting to-his-head crown-*of* **glittering** gold**.**
4 **Life he-asked from-You; You-give to-him:**
Length-*of* **days, eon and-further.**
5 **Great his-glory in-Your-salvation;**
Splendor and-honor You-are-poising on-him.
6 **For You-are-setting-him blessings for-further;**
You-are-exhilarating-him in-rejoicing `Your-presence.
7 **For the-king trusting in-Yahweh,**
And-in-benignity-*of* **Supreme,** by-**no-**means **he-is-slipping.**
8 **It-shall-find, Your-hand, to-all Your-enemyings;**
Your-right-hand**, it-shall-find hatings-You.**
9 **You-are-setting-them like-stove-***of* **fire**
to-season-*of* **Your presence.**
Yahweh, in-His-anger, He-is-swallowing-them
And-/it-is-devouring-them, fire.
10 **Their-fruit from-earth You-are-destroying**

And-their-seed from-sons-*of* humanity.
11 **Though-they-intend on-You evil,**
They-devise scheme,
By-**no-**means **it-is-abling.**
12 **For You-are-setting-them back-**turning;
In-Your-cords You-are-*making*-ready
on their-faces.
13 **Be-exalted! Yahweh, in-Your-strength;**
We-are-singing! and-we-are-*making*-melody
Your-mastery.
To-Permanenting, On-Hind-*of* the-Dawn

DIVINE STRENGTH

Psalm 21 begins with the king rejoicing in *Yahweh's strength* (Psa.21:1). And it ends with the people of Israel singing, "Be exalted indeed, O Yahweh, in *Your strength!*" (Psa.21:13).

What are the masterful deeds presented here that define Yahweh's strength? They are His giving of the yearning of the king's heart and life for the eon and further. They are His poising of splendor and honor on him, His setting of David for blessings for the future and the exhilaration He grants with the rejoicing of His presence. They are His finding of His enemies and and His swallowing up of those hating Him, the destruction of their seed, and the turning of their back in defeat.

In Ephesians, Paul speaks to us, concerning the transcendent greatness of God's power for us, in accord with the might of *His strength,* which is operative in the Christ (Eph.1:19). This is God's strength as it is employed in rousing Christ from among the dead and in seating Him up over every other power. Later Paul entreats, "For the rest, brethren mine, be invigorated in the Lord and in the might of *His strength*" (Eph.6:10). This is God's strength operating in Christ as our Lord. D.H.H.

SO ISRAEL JOURNEYED

ALTHOUGH God's plans seem to us to linger long in evil preparation, once the crisis comes, there is no delay. Poor Jacob was probably worn out with waiting, but once Joseph had revealed himself to his brothers, all co-operate to hasten the arrival of Israel in Egypt.

As practically the whole of the land of Egypt was near the Nile, there was little need for means of transportation over land, so carts were probably scarce. Even in other lands, transportation was mostly by camelback. But Pharaoh supplied carts for the children and wives and Jacob. So there was no delay. After Joseph was revealed to his brethren, he was no longer concealed from his father. So it will be when the great *Gatherer* is revealed to His people. Not long thereafter the dead saints will be raised and Israel will be completed in the kingdom.

A REVIVED SPIRIT

Israel's spirit had become torpid, so that he could not *hear* the good news brought to him by his sons, but, when his eyes *saw* the carts which Pharaoh had sent, his spirit revived (Gen.45:25-27). Like Job, by the hearing of the ear he heard, yet now his eyes had seen (Job 42:5).

His first exclamation is significant. *"Enough!"* (Gen. 45:28). What a tremendous difference between a bereaved, starving, despairing nomad, and a revived, satisfied, exulting father, whose son has become the saviour of the world! The lamentations of Genesis 37:33-35 will soon change to the long, weeping of joy described in Genesis 46:29.

GENESIS 46:1-7

46 [+]**So Israel** [l]**journeyed,** [7]**he**[0] **and all** [w]**that he** [›]**had.** [+]**When he** [l]**came** to[d] **Beer-sheba,** [+] **he** [l]**sacrificed sacrifices to** the **Elohim of his father Isaac.**

[2] [+]**Then Elohim** [l][sa]**spoke to Israel in appearances of the night and** [l]**said: Jacob! Jacob!**

And he [l][sa]**replied:** [bd]**Here I** am**.**

[3] [+]**Then He** [l]**said, I** am **the** One**, El,** the **Elohim of your father; do not** [l]**fear** [f]**to** go **down**¯ to[d] **Egypt, for I shall** [pl]**make you there** in**to** a **great nation.** [4] **I My**self **shall** go **down with you** to[d] **Egypt, and I My**self **shall** [mr]**also** [c]**bring you up,** yea **up**¯**; and Joseph shall set his hand on your eyes.**

[5] [+]**After** this **Jacob** [l]**set out from Beer-sheba.** [+] The **sons of Israel** [l]**carried** `**their father Jacob,** [+] `**their little one**s **and** `**their wives in** the **carts** [w]**that Pharaoh had sent to carry** `**him.** [6] **They** [+]**also** [l]**took** `**their cattle and** `**their goods** [w]**that they had gotten in** the **land of Canaan, and they** [l]**came** to[d] **Egypt, Jacob and all his seed** `with **him;** [7] **his sons and his sons' sons** `with **him, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his seed, he brought** them `with **him** to[d] **Egypt.**

THE REASSURING VISION

But first, before Israel journeyed to Egypt, he sacrificed sacrifices to the Subjector of his father Isaac in Beersheba (WELL-oath), where Abraham had planted a grove (Gen.21:33).

Israel now had more than *enough,* but all our present blessings are transient. What of the future? Many great promises had been made to Abraham and Isaac and to Jacob himself. Is this departure from the land of promise in line with these great blessings of the future? To be sure, Abram was told that they would suffer there, but also that they would increase and be delivered (Gen.15:13,14). This is now confirmed. God will make Israel into a great nation. And, indeed they had already increased to seventy-five souls.[1]

GENESIS 46:28

[28] [+] **He had sent** `**Judah before him to Joseph to point out before him** the way to[d] **Goshen.** [+]**Then they** [l]**came** into[d] the **land of Goshen.**

GOSHEN

Goshen means **close**. Joseph wanted to be near to his family, after his long separation. Such is the desire of our Father, after we have been estranged from Him and reconciled. Goshen was probably the eastern half of the Nile delta, a flat land, probably the gift of the river, composed of sediment brought down from above, so it was outside of Egypt (Narrows) proper, where there is no grazing land and little room for cattle. I have observed it carefully from a train window, and saw no elevations, only high sails of small ships, which seemed to be floating on the land, there are so many mouths in the delta. Being on the eastern border near the wilderness it was well located, not only for their arrival, but also for their future exodus, for Yahweh plans far in advance.

GENESIS 46:29-34

[29] [+] **Joseph** had **his chariot** [l]**hitched** up **and** went [l]**up to meet his father Israel** in[d] **Goshen.** [+]**When he** [l]**appeared**

1. For the present, we pass over the list of names for the sons of Israel who came to Egypt, as given in Genesis 46:8-27. We agree with Brother Knoch that these names are "full of interest and significance," but must be satisfied for now to refer the reader to the suggested meanings given in the 1957 edition of the CV of Genesis, as he did in *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.50, p.277. This first edition of our translation of Genesis is still available from our office.

›before him, + he ˡfell on his neck and ˡwept *fr*__long on his neck.__

30 **+Then Israel ˡsaid to Joseph: I** am willing to **ˡdie** at ˙this *du*__time, after I have seen ˙your face,__ and **that you** are *fr*__still alive.__

31 **+After** this **Joseph ˡsaid to his brothers and to his father's house**hold**: I** must surely go **ˡup and ˡtell › Pharaoh and ˡsay to him: My brothers and my father's house**hold**, who** were **in** the **land of Canaan, they have come to me.** 32 **+ The men** are **shepherdsˡ of small cattle, for they became cattlemen. + They have brought** with them **their flocks and their herds and all** *w*__that__ belongs **to them.**

33 **And it will** *b*__occur that Pharaoh shall call for you and__ *sa*__ask__ you**: What** is **your** *d*__occupation?__ 34 **+Then you** must **say: Your servants** *b*__are cattlemen from our youth + until now,__ *mr*__both we__ *mr*__and our fathers, in__ *p*__order__ that **you may dwell in** the **land of Goshen, for every shepherdˡ of small cattle** is an **abhorrence** to **Egyptians.**

CATTLE RAISERS

One of the sad effects of human depravity is the tendency of each people to look down upon others who are unlike them. The Egyptians looked askance at cattlemen, for their narrow strip of land on each side of the Nile, which the river could irrigate, was not adapted to cattle raising. Hence they were largely vegetarians. There really was no proper range for cattle, except in the delta. So Joseph kept his people apart from the Egyptians by settling them where they had entered, and whence they could leave easily when the time came. But it seems that they gradually took up gardening also, for, later on, they yearned for the cucumbers and melons and onions and garlic of Egypt (Num.1:1:5).

A. E. Knoch

SET BY GOD

THE EVANGEL of God concerning His Son, announcing to us that Christ died for our sins, that He was entombed and that He has been roused from among the dead, is in accord with the Scriptures, from the very beginning. In facing the evil of chaos, vacancy and darkness which had enveloped the earth, the spirit of God vibrated over the abyss, with the object of bringing all to a state of excelling good. But rather than immediately bringing forth good where evil ruled, God first expressed His great, saving power by means of words, starting with "Let light come to be!" (Gen.1:3). This accords with the fact that God's vast power of spirit for the salvation of sinners is exercised in our lives first of all in and through words of enlightenment, the words of His "well-message" concerning His Son.

Now I am making known to you, brethren, the evangel which I bring to you, which also you accepted, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved . . . that Christ died for our sins. (1 Cor.15:1-3)

For the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor.4:6)

The evangel is a word of God, endued with spiritual light and power pointing forward to good and the revelation of the glory of God.

GENESIS 3:15

Later, when the evil of death and sin entered the world through the disobedience of the human pair, God spoke

again, this time addressing the serpent in the presence of Adam and Eve. God's word in Genesis 3:15 concerned the coming of the Seed of the woman, Who would hurt the head of the Adversary, and would Himself be hurt in the heel. The message was one of deliverance, yet there would be struggle and pain involved. Indeed God announced His evangel itself in its most basic form here, for He spoke of Christ and the hurt He would suffer for the purpose of annulling the acts and nullifying the power of the Adversary (*cf* 1 John 3:8; 1 Cor.15:24).

Now when the full time came, God delegates His Son, come of a woman . . . . (Gal.4:4)

We are heralding Christ crucified . . . Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God . . . . (1 Cor.1:23,24)

Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father. (Phil.2:9-11)

The evangel of God concerns His Son, Who emptied Himself in coming in the likeness of humanity and humbled Himself to the death of the cross, to be exalted as Saviour and Lord over every name that is named.

GENESIS 3:21

Further, in view of the fearful estrangement from God which had overcome Adam and Eve, Yahweh provided clothing of tunics made from animal skin (Gen.3:21). In this God testified beforetime to the death of His Son for propitiation, the removal of God's indignation, which itself is but an initial revelation in God's word of peace gained through the blood of the cross.

Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the

deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter, through faith in His blood . . . where, then, is boasting? (Rom.3:24,25,27)

God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes . . . . For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life. (Rom.5:8,10)

GENESIS 4:7

Then again, when Cain was engulfed by his hot anger over God's rejection of his self-glorifying present, God told him of His own provision for lifting his face. This was an animal like the one Abel brought, reclining at the portal of the place of sacrifice (Gen.4:3-7). What God had to say concerning deliverance from the evil of human irreverence and unrighteousness had to do with the death of a sacrificial victim. And this also accords with what God has to say to us in His evangel.

Be conciliated to God! For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him. (2 Cor.5:20,21)

GENESIS 4:8

The Word of God then continued to detail the evil of Cain's rejection of God's message to him and the explosive growth of his anger and offended pride which led him to kill his brother (Gen.4:8). At this point, Abel, whose blood cried out to God from the ground, had clearly become a type of Christ, Who would be assassinated by lawless hands (Acts 2:23).

Christ died for our sins, (1 Cor.15:3)
. . . One died for the sake of all, (2 Cor.5:14)
. . . making peace through the blood of His cross. (Col.1:20)

The evangel is a message of salvation and peace in front of God based solely on the death of God's beloved Son.

GENESIS 4:9-24

But the bulk of Genesis 4, as indeed the bulk of Scripture, draws attention to the tremendous need for the evangel rather than to the evangel itself. What is said about Cain and his descendants corresponds to Romans 1:18-3:20. The irreverence and unrighteousness of Cain developed from his *rejection* of God's word and his *scorn* for God's ways as they were set before him. That which was known of God was apparent to him, yet knowing God, he did not glorify or thank Him as God, and his heart became more and more darkened to the glory of the incorruptible God. Cain's actions were sharp in the shedding of blood, and his ways were filled with bruises and wretchedness. The way of peace he did not know, and there was no fear of God in front of his eyes.

Consequently, despite the forbearance of God (*cp* Rom.2:4), the pathway of Cain continued in a direction which culminated in the exaltation of brute violence as expressed by Lamech in the sixth generation (Gen.4:23,24):

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice!
Wives of Lamech, [c]give ear to **my saying!**
[t]**Truly** a **man I have killed for my injury,**
And a **boy for my welt.**
[t]**If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,**
[+]**Then Lamech seventy-seven**fold**.**

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

For Adam and Eve it surely was a time of severe crisis. Their hopes for their firstborn were shattered, and now there was no male seed at all.

But God was able to show Himself faithful to His word, and so we read in Genesis 4:25:

[25] [+] **Adam [l]knew [`7]Eve[c] his wife [fr]again. [7]She** became **[l]pregnant[cs] and** gave **[l]birth** to a **son. [+] She [l]called [`]his name Seth, [7›] saying[–0]: [r]Truly Elohim has set for me another seed [u]instead of Abel, for Cain killed him.**

Here is an evangel for Adam and Eve. And how different from Cain and Lamech was Eve as her face was lifted up in joy because of God's setting of a seed for her. She indeed had formerly been captivated by a spirit of pride after she first travailed in childbirth. Her reaction to the birth of Cain began with the pronoun "I" (Gen.4:1); now it begins with the exclamation "Truly[1] Elohim!" The beginning of peace in the midst of human troubles is centered in the recognition of God in our life's affairs.

Note the words "instead of Abel," and the words "Cain killed him." Abel was the one who first pictured the promised Seed, and he was killed. Seth took his place in picturing the promised Seed, and he did so as the one who was set by God. Abel foreshadows Christ as the One Who would be killed. Seth foreshadows Christ as the One Who would be *set* to hurt the head of the Adversary.

This One, given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God, you, gibbeting by the hand of the lawless, assassinate. (Acts 2:23)

. . . that, through death, He should be discarding him who has the might of death, that is, the Adversary. (Heb. 2:14)

ELOHIM HAS SET

It was God Who set this seed for Eve. We do not often use the verb "set" this way, with reference to a settled placement of people in a certain position. We say, for example,

1. The word "truly" represents the Hebrew conjunction "that" which connects the birth of Seth with Eve's decisive recognition *that* this was Elohim's doing.

"The doctor has set an appointment," but not, "The President has set so-and-so Secretary of State." This, however, is a common usage of the Hebrew verb. The CV translates this verb by the word "placing" in Genesis 48:17, and by the word "make" in Psalm 21:9, but in such cases the word "set" is attached in small superior letters in front of the rendering. The Hebrew verb "set" first appears in Genesis 3:15 where God speaks in terms of the evangel, telling the serpent He will *set* enmity between him and the woman and his seed and her Seed. Genesis 3:15 and 4:25 speak of two particular settings of God which prepare the way for that great setting of His Son as Saviour.

This Hebrew verb is used four times in Psalm 21 in reference to God's future settings on behalf of David. Like Seth, David was set in the line leading to the promised Seed, Jesus Christ. But unlike the scanty record concerning Seth, God's Word provides many details of David's life as well as his future place in the promised kingdom. These too are set by God. David rejoiced in Yahweh's strength and salvation (Psalm 21:1), and yearned for the time when "He shall *set* a glittering gold crown on his head" (verse 3), for He was "*setting* him for blessings for the future" (verse 6).

But before these glories are realized, Yahweh will *set* His enemies to become "like a fiery stove in the era of His presence" (Psalm 21:9), and He will *set* them as back-turners (retreaters) from His bowcords (verse 12).

DAVID AND CHRIST

David is often *set forth* in Scripture as a type of Christ, and what he says in his psalms concerning his own experiences and outlook frequently applies in a greater and higher way to our Lord. This is certainly true of Psalm 21 (as it is of Psalm 22). In many ways, Psalm 21 foreshadows Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 15 concerning Christ, Who died for our sins, Who was entombed in death, and

Who has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing, in Whom all will be vivified, each in his own class:

> For He must be reigning until He should be ***placing*** *all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He* ***subjects*** *all under His feet. Now whenever He may be saying that all* ***is subject****, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who* ***subjects*** *all to Him. Now, whenever all may* ***be subjected*** *to Him, then the Son Himself also* ***shall be subjected*** *to Him Who* ***subjects*** *all to Him, that God may be All in all.* (1 Cor.15:25-28)

Here the verb "placing" and forms of the verb "subject" are emphasized in order to indicate their parallel and accordance with the verb "set" in Psalm 21.

SET FOR BLESSINGS

Seth is a type of Christ in that he was set by God for a particular place of blessing in His purpose. In multiple ways this is true of David (FOND, *beloved*) as well, who was set even more clearly to express in his experiences and expectation what God has set for His *Beloved* Son.

Yet also, in a marvelous way, we find in the Scriptural testimony concerning Seth and David, basic patterns of God's grace for us as expounded in His evangel concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. God has set us for life eonian (Acts 13:48) and placed us in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27,28). And He has set us for a special salvation in His grace (*cf* 1 Tim.4:10; Rom.3:24; Col.1:21,22; Eph.2:8-10). Here indeed is glittering glory, and here is a message concerning blessings for the future, and the defeat of enemies.

With the ancient foreshadowing of the evangel given in Genesis 4:25 in mind, we turn to the words of our apostle in Ephesians. Here we see superlative blessings which God has set for us who are set in Christ:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He ***chooses*** *us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love* ***designating*** *us beforehand for the* ***place*** *of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved, in Whom we are having the deliverance through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His grace, which He lavishes on us . . . .* (Eph.1:3-8)

Seth was set by God to be in the genealogical line from Adam to the promised Seed, our Lord Jesus Christ. David, too, was set for blessings in the future. We are set by God to be holy and flawless in His sight even while we live in the flesh, and are set by God for the place of a son. And all of this is **in Christ.**

Hence in perceiving how these blessings of God come to us, we see what lies behind all of God's settings: The settings and placings of God, and the choosings and designatings of God can mean nothing apart from the death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus Christ.

There is no glimpse in Genesis 4:25 of our place in the body of Christ, the complement of the One completing the all in all (Eph.1:15-23). We cannot trace the secrets which are unfolded through Paul's ministry in that early passage of God's Word. But the glorious *pattern* of God's operations in which He sets His chosen ones in a place of blessing is discerned in this incident. The evangel concerning God's Son and the secrets concerned with God's transcendent grace *in Christ* accord with God's gracious setting of Seth as the special seed for Eve. It is all of God, and what He has set as so will be realized to His glory, for it is centered in Christ.

D.H.H.

TEACHING AND FELLOWSHIP

FAITHFULNESS is impossible apart from "the faith"; the genuine body of teaching must first be discerned before it can be heeded. This needs to be emphasized, especially in an era when so few seem to realize this and so many are either apathetic and distracted, or else stubborn and close-minded (even if exceedingly zealous).

It will hardly suffice merely to assent to the "verbal and plenary" inspiration of the Scriptures. It is remarkable indeed how those who continually boast of their unexcelled commitment to "the Bible," so often have hardly any interest at all in matters either of language or learning. Let us not be mere zealots, ignorantly committed to whatever translation or teachings may have come our way.

SPEAKING AND TEACHING ACCURATELY

With respect to the theme of the believer's intellect, even as to the anti-intellectual bias of so many today concerning things spiritual, it is well to note the example of Apollos, the fellow-laborer of the apostle Paul. "Now a certain Jew named Apollos, a native Alexandrian, a *scholarly* man, arrives at Ephesus, being *able in the scriptures.* He was *instructed* in the way of the Lord, and fervent in spirit. He *spoke and taught accurately* what concerns Jesus, being versed only in the baptism of John. Besides, he begins to speak boldly in the synagogue. Now, hearing him, Priscilla and Aquila took him to themselves and expounded the way of God to him *more* accurately" (Acts 18:24-26).

Consequently, Apollos was used of God as one through

whom other saints would be granted progress in the faith. Since, in presenting "[that which] concerns Jesus," Apollos both spoke and taught accurately and was willing to receive instruction from others so that he might learn to do so even *more* accurately (even if this instruction should come to him by the word of ordinary believers), God used him to enlighten many. "What, then, is Apollos? Now what is Paul? Servants are they, through whom you believe, and as the Lord gives to each. I plant, Apollos irrigates, but God makes it grow up" (1 Cor.3:5,6).

In so many cases today, however, it would seem that the great majority of God's people are simply unable to receive further light (*cp* 1 Cor.3:1,2; 1 Tim.4:1,2). Due to their immaturity, the persuasive words of their leaders, no matter how mistaken, seem more convincing than even the most explicit scriptural declarations to the contrary. This is to be regretted, for "the blind cannot guide the blind. Will not both be falling into a pit? [Similarly:] A disciple is not above his teacher, yet everyone who is *adjusted* will be *as* his teacher" (Luke 6:39,40).

On the other hand, some are so proudly "independent" and self-sufficient that they refuse to learn anything at all "from a mere man." Though they will hardly consider the thoughts of others, their confidence in themselves often seems unbounded.

Those who have learned much and are far better educated than most, will often recognize their need for still further education. Yet, ironically, those who are not so well educated often see little need for any further training. And even those believers who may be well educated insofar as their own vocation and general station in the world are concerned, only rarely seem to perceive the importance of competency and adequate training in and for the Word of God.

More than a few are of the opinion that they should only

seek scriptural understanding through their own efforts, apart from the assistance of others. In some cases, those who take this approach may even freely acknowledge that their own skills, whether in language studies or other scripturally-related skills, are quite limited and that there are others whose abilities far outstrip their own in these disciplines. Nonetheless, they insist on being "taught by God directly," while shunning all human help. However deficient their own present knowledge and however accurate certain instruction might be, such brethren will still insist that they should not attend to any form of scriptural instruction which comes through men. Indeed, in this sense, they do not need any assistance; for, according to them, if God would either correct or increase their understanding, He will not use "teachers" to do so.

Such ones sometimes make the claim that there are no longer any teachers among the members of the ecclesia. Consequently, they believe that any today who would engage in such service are engaged in wrongdoing, even if their teaching itself should be faithful and true. While we do not share this conviction, we do not wish to press our own thoughts here but simply to point out that such a suggestion is not really the issue. Insofar as our own progress in the faith is concerned, the question is not—whether in the past or the present—Does some sort of "official *office*" of "teacher" obtain in the ecclesia? but is instead, Is it possible to learn apart from instruction?

"HIS ANOINTING IS TEACHING YOU"

Even so, the claim is made by some that it is simply no longer God's way to grant scriptural enlightenment through the *teaching* of the Word. Those who make this claim routinely appeal to 1 John 2:27: "And the anointing which you obtained from Him is remaining in you, and you have no need that anyone may be teaching you, but as His anoint-

ing is teaching you concerning all, and is true, and is no lie, according as it teaches you also, remain in Him."

It is evident, however, that the words "you have no need that anyone may be teaching you," are not universally applicable. Further, they by no means support the proposition that those who are not yet learned should nonetheless repudiate all instruction; nor do they give credence to the notion that there are no longer any teachers in the ecclesia. Indeed, John's words are only declared in a *relative* sense even to those to whom they are addressed.

John, just as truly as Peter and James, ministered to the Circumcision, and referred to the nations as outside the sphere of fellowship (*cf* 3 John 7). The instruction of this passage is confined to those who, though they were *in* Christ, were nonetheless *under* law, and blessed according to the Circumcision evangel (Gal. 2:7). This text speaks of the awareness which—by the point in time in which John writes this epistle to them— these *particular* Jewish saints enjoyed *concerning those various notable revelations which come before us in this epistle.* And this awareness, which they now had, was the result of the *teaching* which they had formerly received! It is "[*this*] truth," in its entirety—namely, those general revelations which John *rehearses* once again within this very epistle—to which he refers (*cf* 1 John 2:20,21; *cp* the term "all").

Even for the sake of such well-instructed ones, John deemed it wise, rather than neglecting his brethren altogether, to rehearse these things before them. Since they already *had been* taught, his readers no longer needed *to be* taught. Having already learned these things (in a basic and foundational way), they had no need for any man to be *instructing* them in them any further, though they did need to be *reminded* of them by John nonetheless.

In principle, this is true of all those whom, through instruction, God establishes in His Word. For those who are

thus established, any further *teaching*, as such, is redundant. At this point, "teaching" becomes a figure of speech, and refers not to initial external instruction (through human agency) but to ongoing inward direction (by the anointing of God's spirit).

There is not the slightest suggestion, however, in these words of John that, for example, either the children of these very believers or any other individuals who, upon being called of God and seeking instruction in His ways and will, should be told to go their way and to repudiate all possible means of enlightenment, save for an inner anointing. These words of 1 John 2:27 are by no means indicative of some sort of *ipso facto* recension of the ministry of teaching; and they give no justification at all to the foolish notion that contemporary believers will do well to shun all forms of instruction.

INTELLECTUAL GIFTS

Still others eschew education and discount if not denounce both logic and learning, even considering such pursuits as unspiritual, unwise, and unneeded. Though they may "read the Bible" regularly and perhaps even attempt its study to some degree, ultimately, they believe that the Lord simply "tells" them which interpretation is true, application proper, translation correct, and so forth. It does not seem to trouble them that other experiential-oriented ones—while holding to positions directly contrary to their own—will claim that they too, supposedly, receive their opinions "directly from the Lord" as well.

Actually, we might well agree that much of the truth is indeed extremely simple and hardly requires either much intelligence or advanced education for its acceptance. In fact, in many cases, it is not so much education or intelligence that is being derided but *grace* by those who—since *they* cannot grasp the truth—claim that even the

simplest explanations of it involve the intellect to a supposed "improper degree."

Those orthodox believers, however, who are not anti-thinking or anti-academic, instead of this tactic which is employed by so many, often seek to pit their leaders' credentials against our own, and their scholars against our teachers, even though such things have nothing whatever to do with the truth. They do this despite the fact that there is perhaps no teaching for which we stand that at least some popularly recognized and highly esteemed theologians have not held themselves.

Under God, even the most intelligent and gifted of students, ones who have done much outstanding original research, owe a great deal to those men of His counsel who assisted them, both in the beginning and along the way in their service for the Lord. It simply is not God's way to grant extensive literary and linguistic insight through sudden, miraculous endowment. It is unrealistic, then, to expect competent workers in the Word to stand proficient in such abilities apart from having first developed such very skills. This is simply to say that it is not the course of Providence for men suddenly to be able to understand the complexities of language studies or to possess astute powers of hermeneutical discernment who have never learned the vital rules which attend these very activities.

If any among those who "do not need to learn from teachers," should nonetheless violate either vital principles of grammar or any other tenets of sound judgment, unless they feel they can count on divine correction through some type of supernatural sign, they will either have to join the rest of us and learn through teachers themselves or else remain ignorant and mistaken.

It is true that much progress may be made simply through dedicated personal study. Indeed, in some cases, humble private students—*ones who have become proficient in the*

requisite skills—have made advances far beyond those ordinarily attained through institutional means. Even so, much of the competency which is essential to any advanced endeavor toward becoming a qualified worker in the Word (2 Tim.2:15), may only be attained (even if informally) through much intense, protracted study; that is, through sufficient, worthy, intellectual training.

But this is not at all to suggest that the ordinary believer must both forsake his present career and plead for special cerebral gifts if he is to hold out any hope of being faithful to his Lord. By no means. Many in the ecclesia who are not students at all may well be more pleasing to God than certain ones among their brethren whom the Lord has directed into more scholarly pursuits. We should neither lust after those gifts which God in His wisdom has not granted us, nor should we repudiate their importance simply because we ourselves do not possess them. Instead, we should pray that God might lead us to those who *are* truly knowledgeable, to brethren who *can* help us within these realms, requesting that if He should do so that He might also give us the ability to recognize and benefit from such assistance.

It is by no means that all need to possess such gifts; nonetheless, it is vital that intellectual and scholarly abilities related to the Scriptures exist among at least some within the ecclesia, in order that such ones might serve the rest for the good of all. And since there are many, even though they are quite scholarly who are nonetheless quite deceived, it is needful that some among those members of the body who are faithful to the evangel should not only be proficient in essential matters of language and exegesis, but should also be competent to *defend* the faith as well, against the many false claims of its more erudite opponents.

At the end of his career, when the word of God had been completed, Paul still declared to Timothy, "And what things

you hear from me through many witnesses, these commit to *faithful* men, who shall be *competent* to *teach* others also" (2 Tim.2:2). Therefore, it is foolish indeed to imagine that we will do well to repudiate all such assistance or effectually to say to those who might otherwise be able to help us, "I have no need of you" (*cp* 1 Cor.12:21).

"SELF-EDUCATION"

It is impossible to gain knowledge while remaining in ignorance. But we can hardly teach ourselves what we do not yet know. Yet if we already knew it, we would not need to be taught. Strictly speaking, then, there is no such thing as "self-education." In the nature of the case, all knowledge is gained from external sources, even by those who are "self-taught." Even in rare cases of highly advanced students concerning certain things which they first discern for themselves apart from the instruction of others, such progress only comes as the result of *prior* instruction. Progress in any field of endeavor can only come through *preparation,* and this is impossible apart from some form of instruction. Therefore, whether by the spoken word or the written word, teaching is essential for us all.

It is distressing indeed to observe the incredible notions which obtain among many of God's people such as the idea that it is unneedful—and even unspiritual—to employ intelligent, tangible, educational means if we would enjoy an increased measure of illumination from the sacred writings. Nonetheless, so it is. While we earnestly pray for progress toward maturity for all—both for ourselves and for all the members of the body of Christ—and seek to encourage and assist others wherever we can, beyond this, we must wait upon God.

EVANGELISTS, PASTORS AND TEACHERS

Besides the foundational gifts of "these, indeed, as apostles, yet these as prophets" (Eph.4:11a; *cp* Eph.2:20), Christ also "gives gifts to mankind" (Eph.4:8) in the form of evangelists, pastors and teachers, ones whose service is "toward the *adjusting* of the saints, for the *upbuilding* of the body of Christ, . . . *that we may by no means still be minors,* surging hither and thither and being carried about by every wind of teaching, by human caprice, by craftiness with a view to the systematizing of the deception" (Eph. 4:11b-14). Any who truly serve to adjust the saints and to lead them into maturity, serve, at least in some measure, in these capacities.

Where the evangel of grace is proclaimed, the words of the faith (1 Tim.4:6) are taught and the believers are tended to and brought into maturity accordingly—to the degree that this is so—the work of the evangelist, the teacher and the pastor is performed. There need not be, nor is there apt to be, anything extraordinary about such servants in themselves. They need neither apostolic appointment, human sanction, nor a perfect understanding of all things scriptural, in order to do useful and significant work for the Lord.

"Now, being true, in love we should be making all grow into Him, Who is the Head—Christ—out of Whom the entire body, being articulated together and united through every assimilation of the supply, in accord with the operation in measure of each one's part, is making for the growth of the body, for the upbuilding of itself in love" (Eph.4:15,16).

THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT

In the ecclesia, the administration should be local and yet the fellowship global. Hierarchical dominion is simply wrong, regardless of who may have more light on this or that teaching or wisdom concerning any certain policy or procedure. And "local" must be understood as *any cer-*

tain gathering of believers, not the artful notion of entire cities or geographical regions.

The fact that the *apostle* Paul addressed his inspired epistles to all the believers within a certain city or province, affords no justification whatever to the outrageous, authoritarian claims and dictums which are set forth today, whether by those dwelling in Rome, or elsewhere. Paul was not *ruling* over the believers in any locale; he simply wished to address all the believers in every place and to share the evangel with them, the evangel which he himself had received directly from the Lord (Gal.1:11,12; 2:2).

There is no benefit in Christ, in His saving work, which accrues only to the members of one fellowship or class of believers within the body of Christ but not to another. Membership in the body is a matter of being called and chosen of God; it is not a matter of organizational affiliation, knowledge of the Pauline secrets, participation in some type of fleshly baptismal ceremony, or any other such thing. Indeed, even concerning those things that are pleasing to God and vital to faithful service, there is no assurance that the immature will even recognize them, much less practice or appreciate them. In a practical sense today, and in the future as well, at the dais of Christ, such a one may lose much if he is disqualified in service. But if so, he will lose *nothing* as to his place in Christ, which entails the gracious gift of eonian life and a celestial allotment for *all* the members of His body, no matter how unworthy. This is because, in Christ, the most ignorant, and even disobedient believer is just as complete as the one who knows the most and serves the best (*cf* Col.2:10-13).

In the day of His appearing, the entire body of Christ will be graciously granted eonian life, not merely those among them who are more faithful or those affiliated with a certain ministry. As such, mere group affiliation—even if the group should be under the leadership of a truly faithful teacher—will not gain us anything at all. As Paul puts it, "God is not taking up the human aspect" (*cp* Gal.2:6).

Nonetheless, we should seek to have good *personal* fellowship with all believers whose hearts are clean, even if their minds are confused or simply uninformed. This is so even if we may not wish to involve ourselves with the organizations to which any certain brethren may belong. May we always endeavor to *keep* the unity of the *spirit,* until we attain and unto the end that we should *all* attain, to the unity of the *faith* (*cp* Eph.4:3,13).

ANOTHER JESUS, A DIFFERENT EVANGEL

The only "church" of consequence, then, is the ecclesia *of God.* It comprises all whom God *calls* unto Himself. It is an organism, not an organization, complete with a "headquarters" and an authoritarian leader. Its Head and only authority as to the truth is not even the apostle Paul, but Christ the Lord. It is actually God Himself, through Christ, Who enlightens us. He *inspires* our willing obedience; we by no means contribute it. It is *Christ's* work to be hallowing and cleansing the ecclesia, that He should be presenting to Himself a glorious ecclesia (Eph.5:25-27).

It is evident that much of His work unto this end today is only preparatory, even among the comparatively mature. His glorious work is far from consummated. Yet since it is *His* work, it is not our work, and therefore, ultimately speaking, does not depend upon us at all, even in the slightest detail. May it be that He will *use* us, but He decidedly does not *need* us.

Far too much has been made out of "belonging to a 'church,'" "going to 'church,'" or, especially, of being involved in "*the* church," when what is intended is merely some particular group under the direction of a certain leader.

Simple group fellowship can be a fine thing. And where constructive teaching is included during the time of such

meetings, this also may be commendable. But where innumerable grave errors are continually set forth and where authoritarian claims are made or other such tactics engaged in, insofar as *faith*fulness to *the Lord* is concerned, far more harm than benefit is the inevitable result to all who would deeply involve themselves in such associations.

The apostle Paul encourages *fellowship* among *all* those who are invoking the Lord out of a clean heart (2 Tim. 2:22). The infirm in the faith are to be taken to ourselves (Rom.14:1), but this is not to say that we are to make them our regular teachers (*cp* 2 Tim.4:3). May it not be coming to that! Nor is it to say, since we ourselves supposedly "know the truth," that it somehow follows from this that we will therefore do well continually to subject ourselves to the harmful influences of profoundly mistaken teachers—ones who by no means set forth the evangel of the *grace* of God.

The fact that doctrine is not the basis of *fellowship*—of interpersonal relationship, friendship, companionship, communion in Christ—has nothing whatever to do with the entirely separate question of the *wisdom* of deeply *involving* oneself with an assembly of believers in which extreme error flourishes even as the deceptive spirit which attends it. Even at the conversational level, we need to be careful: "*Be not deceived:* evil conversations *are* corrupting kind characters. Sober up justly and do not be sinning, for some have an ignorance of God. To abash you am I saying it" (1 Cor. 15:33,34).

May we not be like the Corinthians, who, being minors in Christ, saw fit to "bear with ideally" those who radically opposed the apostle Paul, gladly permitting such ones to instruct them in contrary teachings. As he said, "I betroth you to one Man, to present a chaste virgin to Christ. Yet I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deludes Eve by its craftiness, your apprehensions should be corrupted from the

singleness and pureness which is in Christ. *For if,* indeed, he who is coming is heralding another Jesus Whom we do not herald, or you are obtaining a different spirit, which you did not obtain, or a different evangel, which you do not receive, you are bearing with him ideally" (2 Cor. 11:2-4). Insofar as the faith is concerned, a great deal of what passes for truth within the "orthodox evangelical church" today, serves only to sustain those genuine believers who *involve* themselves with it (not necessarily all who merely attend some of its meetings) in the bonds of a false, different spirit, even as with another Jesus and a different evangel.

THE VANITY OF *REASONINGS*

Now I am entreating you, brethren, to be noting those who are making dissensions and snares beside the teaching which you learned, and avoid them, for such for our Lord Christ are not slaving, but for their own bowels, and through compliments and adulation are deluding the hearts of the innocent. For your obedience reached out to all (Rom.16:17-19a).

The instruction here, however, to note and avoid such ones as spoken of, can only have a full application in Paul's own day. In approaching this passage, we will do well to recognize that it is directed toward those who were being taught directly by the apostle Paul himself.

Yet even in that day it was not that every believer who held to serious error was to be avoided. In this very epistle, Paul had already insisted to the Romans that they were to take the infirm in the faith *to themselves.* Some of the Corinthians denied the resurrection (1 Cor.15:12); still others, though not denying it, insisted that it had already occurred (2 Tim.2:18). Rather than avoiding such deceived brothers, Paul plainly insisted: "pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, *with all* who are invoking the Lord *out of a clean heart*" (2 Tim.2:22).

Many whose hearts are undefiled possess extremely confused minds. Yet rather than disfellowshiping such ones and avoiding them altogether, we are to take them to ourselves, though, it is true, "not for discrimination of reasonings" (Rom.14:1).

In using the words, "discrimination of reasonings" (i.e., "differences" arising out of *reasonings*), Paul is not speaking of the benefits which accrue from the wise use of good logic but of the harm that results from the foolish use of bad reasoning. That is, he is referring to the *misuse* of the ratiocinative process through all manner of *fleshly* rationalizations; incompetent judgments, foolish speculations, false premises, and the like. Such unprofitable conversations with those who are infirm in the faith can only result in "discriminations"; that is, in unwholesome differences of opinion, if not sectarian confrontations and controversies.

In Romans 16:17, Paul is referring to ones who were truly "making dissensions and snares *beside* the teaching which *you* learned." Since the obedience of the Roman believers to Paul's original teaching had "reached out to all" (Rom.16:19a), it was not difficult for those who had been taught by the apostle himself, readily to discern those who were making "dissensions" (*dichostasia,* TWO-STAND). Such ones were openly taking a stand against Paul's message, and had contrived contrary doctrines by which those thus ensnared could not but fall into error.

Few indeed in Christendom today, however, have any realization at all that such a thing as Paul's evangel even exists (*cp* Rom.16:25), and fewer still have any intelligent grasp of that of which it consists. Few indeed, from a basis of such an awareness, can justly be charged with having sought to dissent from this evangel or with having sought to ensnare others, should they be found following the Pauline revelation.

Therefore, if this passage (with respect to "noting" and "avoiding") is capable of any application today at all, it can only be applied to those who, having truly *recognized* the teachings of Paul as such, have nonetheless sought to dissent from them and to snare others so that they might no longer follow them.

If some, truly as enemies, should actively and intentionally oppose us or seek to undermine our work, a work which we believe to be in accord with Paul's evangel, our response may need to be quite different than that which we would make to outsiders, ones who simply cannot agree with us, for no better reason, in fact, than that of finding our teachings to be out of step with their own.

In any case, no matter how much assurance we may have that we are correct, let us always remember that we too are not apostles but are instead, like our opposers, only sinners for whom Christ died.

We hope that even those today who believe that they have been given much light on the Pauline evangel, will not insist upon their own indubitable correctness concerning the Word, but upon the perfection of the Word itself, quite apart from their convictions concerning it.

Rather than insisting upon our own purity of teaching, let us instead emphasize that *any* who bring a message of some sort of "good news" that is nonetheless *not* the evangel of the *grace* of Christ which was first entrusted to the apostle Paul, are bringing "a *different* evangel" and that the word concerning *all* such ones is "Let him be anathema!" (*cf* Gal.1:6-12).

It is very destructive for *anyone* to teach or receive such a fraudulent gospel, no matter how honorable the intentions of those concerned may be. If we would serve others, then, let us "attend to [*ourselves*] and to the teaching" (1 Tim.4:16), endeavoring to take a *positive* stand that is faithful to the word of God's *grace,* not a negative posture that ever seeks to point out the departures of others.

DISCERNING THE EXPEDIENT

Surely it is best, however, in any event, apart from the question of that which actually constitutes faithful group fellowship, for us to be sincere in our course, well-intended and of a clean heart. Participation in a particular group, then, according to our maturity, disposition, family situation, or other circumstances, may be the best alternative for one though not for another.

It is true that extreme and undue reserve—not to mention virtual deception for the sake of preserving one's popularity—is by no means a noble quality. On the other hand, neither is it laudable to press one's views upon those who are unreceptive or to disrupt the sincere efforts of others to serve and worship God according to their own best judgment.

Not all is *expedient* (1 Cor.10:23). Solid nourishment is for the mature, who, because of habit, have faculties exercised for discriminating between the ideal and the evil (Heb.5:14). Many not only are not ready for solid food (1 Cor.3:2), but show little or no real interest in it. Premature change may be positively detrimental. Let each one do what he is *ready* to do, according to what he himself deems best.

In the question of expedient group fellowship, many factors are involved. While some will be greatly profited and liberated by disassociating themselves from the harmful influences of the usual churches and their teachings, others will be benefited little if at all by taking such a course.

No doubt some are stronger than ourselves, and so are less likely to be injured through the frequent hearing of unscriptural expressions and foolish myths. Possibly, unlike ourselves, they are able to "stand aloof" (2 Tim. 2:16) from profane prattlings indefinitely, no matter how often they should be subjected to them, and even to sustain little injury from their presence while being frequently in their

midst. We hope so, and even think that perhaps for some exceptional ones this may actually be so. It seems to us, however, that in many instances this may not truly be the case, and we say this primarily in light of the apostle Paul's concern over the Corinthians in this regard.

Yet, conversely, we agree that some will indeed swiftly return to the world, neglecting the things of God altogether, if they should decide nothing more than no longer to "go to church."

They would then be deprived of the many *good* influences concerned with reverence toward God and commitment to Christ which also exist in these same churches in which error is so abundant. For such ones, unless something new, readily at hand, acceptable and accessible to them is substituted for what has been forsaken, significant advantage can hardly accrue merely by removing themselves from their familiar associations.

It is a precious gift indeed truly to be able to study the Word of God, even as helpful teaching concerning it. And what a blessing it is if we are able to attend to the things of God whether or not we should be in the constant companionship of others while so doing.

It can only be His grace if we are able to worship our God consistently and serve His Christ well, apart from the traditional means which most must use if they would attempt to do so at all. As Paul would put it, "I want all men to be as myself also, *but* each has his own gracious gift from God, one indeed, thus, yet one thus" (1 Cor. 7:7).

When all factors are considered, participation in a standard church in which much serious error is taught (though much good is present as well), may, on the whole, be the most expedient course for many. Yet this can only be so for such ones, ones who would still participate in such an assembly even though rejecting much of its teaching, if they will by no means confine their personal studies in

the Word to the corrupt translations and teaching materials which stand approved in such circles.

All that any of us can do, then—if we are free of man and his authority—is to have whatever personal or group fellowship we can, as seems expedient and beneficial, according to our own judgment and maturity. This itself will depend upon the measure of wisdom which God has given us. But it will not depend upon some type of church authority, whether obvious or subtle.

In any case, and above all, let us be *bearing with* one another *in love,* with all humility, meekness, and patience (Eph.4:2): ". . . imitators of God, as beloved children . . . *walking in love . . .*" (Eph.5:1,2).

Even if in any certain matter our judgment should not be the most prudent, we must not let our freedom be decided by someone else's conscience (*cp* 1 Cor.10:29b), even if the other person should be wiser than ourselves. We do well to seek wise counsel, but we must learn to think for ourselves and to make our own decisions: "Let each one be fully persuaded in his *own* mind" (*cp* Rom.14:5b).

Instead of condemning others, imagining ourselves to be infallible, we would only keep these considerations in mind, while seeking to act appropriately in our own affairs, as God grants us understanding and strength for useful service. J.R.C.

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BEING, THEN, JUSTIFIED

WHEN Jesus our Lord was roused from among the dead the great work of justification had been achieved, not applied to sinners, but achieved for them. He was roused *because of* our justifying (Rom.4:25). When He was roused, the justifying work had occurred already, and thus His rousing became the evidence that our sins have been dealt with (*cp* 1 Cor.15:17). Therefore, we read (Rom.5:1):

A. *Being, then, justified*
  B. *by faith,*
A. *we may be having peace toward God,*
  B. *through our Lord, Jesus Christ . . . .*

Here we see a twofold pattern where God's gracious gratuity of justification (A) is based on the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ Who was given up to death because of offenses (B). We, who are believing, are even now living in a state of justification in God's sight, and because of this extraordinary favor we may be enjoying peace toward God. The justification is out of the faith of Jesus Christ, and the peace comes through Him as our Lord and Saviour. The "A" section speaks of what we receive, and the "B" section speaks of Christ, Who gained what we receive. This wording of the evangel is repeated in strikingly similar correspondence a few verses later, in Romans 5:9:

A. *being now justified*
  B. *in His blood,*
A. *we shall be saved from indignation,*
  B. *through Him.*

It is the shedding of Christ's blood—it is the faith-obe-

dience of Jesus Christ to the death of the cross (Rom.3:21; Phil.2:8) that is the source of our justification and the resultant enjoyment of peace toward God. This pattern of the evangel where righteousness and peace are solidly based on the faithfulness of our Lord in dying for sinners, was introduced in Romans 3:24,25 where we read, in accord with the twofold pattern noted above:

A. *Being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace,*
   B. *through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus*
A. *Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter,*
   B. *through [the] faith in His blood*

The gratuity of righteousness is *out* of Jesus Christ's faith (Gal.3:22). The "faith" of Romans 5:1 is His faith in obedience to God's will, and His faithfulness in His suffering and death. This is the faith that justifies. Our faith comes into the picture as it rests on His faith and as the provision through which God reckons to us the righteousness established by Christ. So also, in Romans 3:24,25, justification is through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, not in us, but in Him; and "the faith" which brings about propitiation is our Lord's faith expressed in the shedding of His blood. Justification and peace are the accomplishments of God through the faith of His Son Who died for us while we were still sinners. Such a work of justification has become the manifestation of God's own righteousness (Rom.1:17; 3:21,25,26). It is a work of justification, in God's grace, that is without flaw. It is ironclad—no, it is gold-clad and wholly indestructible. It is righteous in every way, and it will result in the enjoyment of life's justifying by all mankind, so that the many sinners from Adam on downward will be constituted righteous (Rom.5:18,19). There is no way this will not occur.

And thus we who are believing this evangel may already be enjoying peace toward God. Later, writing to us who

are of the Uncircumcision, according to flesh, Paul reveals that we are brought near to God *by the blood of Christ* Who is our *Peace* (Eph.2:13,14). Once again, in accord with the pattern of Romans 5:1,2, Paul writes that it is *through the blood of Christ Jesus* that we have boldness and *access* before God (Eph.3:12).

THEN

The fifth chapter of Romans does not stand by itself. It develops from all that has been laid down in the epistle from the beginning, but most directly and vitally from Romans 4:25. This is the force of the word "then" in Romans 5:1. Jesus our Lord was given up because of our offenses and was roused "because of our justifying. Being, *then,* justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is because our offenses have been successfully dealt with in God's giving up of His Son to the death of the cross and the entombment, as made evident in the fact that He was then roused from among the dead, that the apostle now speaks of peace in connection with justification. What God has done in giving up His Son, and what His Son has done in faith and faithfulness—this is the basis of our justification, and this, in turn, opens the way to peace toward God.

BEING JUSTIFIED

In that Jesus our Lord was given up because of our offenses, and in that He was roused because of our justifying, we now are standing before God, in His sight, holy and flawless (*cf* Eph.1:4). This is a dramatic reversal of the situation earlier described by our apostle: "By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight" (Rom.3:20). In seeing us who are believing the evangel as those who are "out of the faith of Jesus" (Rom.3:26), God

righteously reckons the righteousness established by the death of Christ to us even now while we still live in the flesh. This position of *being* justified before God is ours continuously. It cannot be taken away because it is not based on what we do or how we feel, but rather on what our Lord has done.

Justification has occurred on the basis of Christ's faith. That is the first point being made in Romans 5:1. Moment by moment, we are living in a state of justification in the sight of God, Who is not pretending or resting on mere forensic judgment, but is seeing accurately and truly what has been gained through the death of His Son. It is a work of gratuitous grace as far as we are concerned, but it is righteously founded on what Christ has done.

THE END OF ADAM'S LINE

How did it happen? How did the crucifixion and entombment of Jesus Christ bring justification to us who are sinners, and conciliation to us who are enemies in our offensiveness before God?

When Christ died, all of us died (2 Cor.5:14) in the sense that the old humanity was decisively and unconditionally put to an end. Eventually this will take the form of full experience, when no one at all will be found as a sinner and every life will be found justified (Rom.5:18). What was accomplished will become a reality in full realization. The old state of sin under the power of death that started with Adam is doomed.

Paul will repeat this exultant word of truth in speaking of us who are believing the evangel and are viewed by God as we shall be when we are glorified (*cf* Rom. 8:30). In spirit, we were baptized *into the death* of Christ Jesus (Rom.6:3). We were entombed together with Him (Rom.6:4). Our old humanity was crucified together with Him (Rom.6:6). We died together with Christ (Rom.6:8).

One who dies has been justified from Sin (Rom.6:7).

Christ did not suffer in our place. We were crucified together with Him. He did not die as our Substitute, but the sinner died in Him in Whom all of us were created (*cf* Col.1:16).[1] He suffered and endured the cross (*cf* Heb. 12:2), and we did not, but nevertheless we died. He was given up *because of* our offenses. He also died *for the sake of* our sins (1 Cor.15:3), that is, He died so that our sins might be put away to a finality (*cp* 2 Cor.5:17; Heb.10: 1-14). He died so that the sinner, the old creation, might be put to death, and all might ultimately be vivified in Him (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22).

OUT OF FAITH

Romans 5:1 does not speak of actual justification coming out of *our* faith. The word "faith" in Romans 5:1 must be primarily and dominantly, if not exclusively, understood in reference to *Christ's* faith, as we have noted above. To be sure, the believer's faith is given much attention in Romans 4, and in verse 24 Paul has just spoken of us "who are *believing* on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead." But our believing is not the source of justification but the basis upon which God reckons righteousness to us in this present era while we are still in the flesh. Only in a figurative way, in reference to the way in which justification is applied to us in this era, can we relate justification to our faith. And even then there is no place for boasting in ourselves. Literal justification as a righteous work of God, in its essential sense of being caused to be righteous, cannot rest on our faulty faith.

If justification as a display of God's righteousness requires human faithfulness in addition to Christ's, there would be

1. See the article, "Substitution or Inclusion?" in *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.22, p.549.

no solid basis, indeed no hope for peace. If such justification could, in some cases, be somehow partly earned by such a measure of faith as exhibited by Abraham in Genesis 15 or Paul on the Damascus road[2] the whole matter of peace toward God would best be set aside from our considerations.

NOT OUR FAITH, BUT HIS

Hence it is out of the faith of Jesus Christ that we are justified. Justification in this literal sense is not merely a declaration of God, decreed on the basis of divine authority for the benefit of certain individuals who have taken the right steps of faith. It is a work that manifests the righteousness of God (Rom.3:21). If, then, justification manifests God's righteousness, it must have a solid basis in righteousness, one that bypasses human requirements and lies outside of human efforts. Every wrong must be righted. Every sin and every sinner must be dealt with in such a way that all mankind may be brought into the profound and glorious state of "life's justifying" (Rom.5:18).

At the very beginning of this letter, the apostle wrote that the evangel of God concerning His Son reveals God's righteousness "out of faith." It is "for [our] faith," but the revelation of God's righteousness is sourced entirely in the faith of Jesus Christ, in His obedience to the death of the cross. It comes *out of* His faith.

If we are to grasp the reality of the peace which God has set before us, we must come to appreciate the righteousness of justification as it is announced in the evangel Paul is bringing here in Romans. In their deepest significance, the words "out of faith" here in Romans 5:1 as well

2. According to his wording in 1 Timothy 1:13, Paul was overwhelmed with faith and love as he perceived these qualities *in Christ Jesus,* not as they had come to dwell in himself.

as in Romans 1:17 refer to the faith of Jesus Christ as presented explicitly in Romans 3:22-26.

MAY BE HAVING

Much has been written about the correct grammatical form of the verb "have" in Romans 5:1. Brother Knoch observed: "The Authorized Version says 'we *have* peace.' Yet the two leading manuscripts read 'we *may* be having peace.' The difference is very slight in the original, only the *length* of the letter *o,* but the same sound. But the fact is, that those who are justified, have so little conception of what this implies that they . . . are *not* at peace with God. It is only as we fully grasp the force of justification, that it excludes all possibility of condemnation (Rom.8:1) and is not dependent on our acts or feelings, that we have settled peace, and are really reconciled with God."[3]

Our faith does come into the picture here, however, but not in the word "faith," but rather in the pronoun "we." The antecedent of this pronoun is the phrase "[those] who are believing" in Romans 4:24. Justification comes out of Jesus Christ's faith; the enjoyment of peace toward God is for those who are believing this evangel. Hence, in context, Romans 5:1 declares: "Being, then, justified out of [Jesus Christ's] faith,, we [who are believing this evangel] may be having peace toward God."

But even here, Paul puts the spotlight on the faith of Christ, for not only is justification sourced in His faith, the peace that believers may be having is to be recognized as coming *through our Lord, Jesus Christ.* We are conciliated to God *through the death of His Son* (Rom.5:10). The emphasis in Romans 5 continues to be on the message we are believing concerning God's Son. Our faith is fully dependent on His faith.

3. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.47, p.193.

The fact is that we are still in the flesh, and in focusing on our own faith without appreciating the centrality of Christ's faith, we tend, on one hand, to get depressed and discouraged, or on the other hand become proud and self-righteous, both evils arising from comparisons with the faith of others. These bring about the very opposite of a state of peace and drive us away from any enjoyment of peace toward God. As we enter into this section of his letter, Paul would have us focus our believing on the faith of Jesus Christ which is the source of justification. That is the pathway to peace toward God because it brings us to the awareness of what He has done in and through His Beloved.

PEACE TOWARD GOD

What is this peace we may be having toward God? It is the enjoyment of the *access* and *standing in grace* which we have before God because of being justified through the faith of Jesus Christ. But this is more than standing before Him apart from His indignation. Indeed, propitiation has been achieved through Christ's faith in His blood (Rom.3:25), but the term Paul is about to use in defining this peace is not *propitiation*, but *conciliation* (Rom. 5:10,11; *cp* 2 Cor.5:18.19). There is no condemnation for us (Rom.8:1), and that speaks of peace. But also from a positive standpoint, the peace we may be enjoying is built on God's love (Rom.5:8) and brings us into the position of sons to God, in which the spirit of sonship in us cries out to Him, "Abba, Father!" (Rom.8:15).

Justification comes out of the faith of Christ. With this One, Who died for us, and thus established our justification—with this One as the Conveyer of peace, we may be sure that all estrangement between us and God is gone, and in its place is the peace of a son centered in God's righteousness and love.

D.H.H.

Contents:

241 Editorial
245 Sojourn in Egypt
252 The Problem of Evil
263 Order and Leadership
273 Through our Lord, Jesus Christ
283 Justification and Conciliation

NOVEMBER, 2008

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EDITORIAL

HOW WE LONG to be engaging ourselves in those things which are "the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect." Unto this end, our apostle Paul entreats us thus, "by the pities of God, to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service, and not to be configured to this eon, but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, for you to be *testing* what is the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect" (Rom.12:1,2).

Our flesh ever seeks to deter us from this noble quest; yet the earnest of the spirit with which we have been endowed, beckons us to seek after righteousness once again, even when for a time our flesh had gained the upper hand. Indeed, "the flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh. Now these are opposing one another, *lest you should be doing whatever you may want*" (Gal.5:17).

While we are able to do what we want in the sense that we act voluntarily, choosing what we decide upon (as opposed to being forced to act, contrary to our will), we are not always able to do what we will to do in the higher sense, that of engaging in those noble acts constitutive of "the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect."

Too often, our experience has been: "What I am effecting I know not, for not what I will, this I am putting into practice, but what I am hating, this I am doing" (Rom.7:15). Hence, in such cases, "it is no longer I who am effecting it, but Sin making its home in me . . . . For it is not the good that I will that I am doing, but the evil that I am not willing, this I am putting into practice" (Rom.7:17,19).

How we rejoice, therefore—the remaining imperfection of our walk notwithstanding—that now, as believers,

in accord with the measure of grace given us, our experience is that "Not according to flesh are [we] walking, but according to spirit, *for the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus* frees [us] from the law of sin and death" (Rom.8:1,2).

While this is manifestly not a categorical freedom, it is nonetheless, and manifestly, an actual, real, albeit relative, *freedom* from the law of sin and death. It is relative to the measure of *grace* God has granted us, "as God parts to each the measure of *faith.* For even as, in one body, we have many members, yet all the members have not the same function, thus we, who are many, are one body in Christ, yet individually members of one another. Now, having *graces* excelling, in accord with *the grace which is given to us* [let us be walking] . . ." (Rom.12:3-6).

In our pursuit of "righteousness, faith, love, [and] peace" (2 Tim.2:22), it is critical that we disown not only "worldly desires," but "irreverence" as well. Therefore, as God trains us by His "*saving grace,*" we *find* ourselves "disowning *irreverence* and worldly desires," unto the end that "we should be living sanely and justly and *devoutly* in the current eon" (Titus 2:11,12).

It is not that we will henceforth no longer have any thoughts whatsoever constitutive either of irreverence or worldly desires, but that we will have, in any case, truly "disowned" both of these untoward entities. That is, from our hearts, we will no longer give anything of ourselves to either of these, while wishing to have nothing to do with them as well. This is not to say that they will never entice us, or that we will never succumb to their call; but it is to say that we will have renounced our allegiance to them and declared from the depths of our being that we wish them permanently out of our lives.

When we say that we "revere" God, we mean that we stand in awe of Him in an overwhelming feeling of wonder and admiration, while regarding Him with the deepest respect, deference, profound honor and esteem, even as adoration and homage, as is befitting to God alone.

As those who revere God, we proclaim, not only in light of the manifest glories of nature, but most especially in consideration of those glories revealed alone through the sacred Page, "O Lord my God, how *great* Thou art!"

When we add to the idea of reverence the thought of that which is "well," we find, in the Greek word *eusebeia* (WELL-REVERence) even as in its English equivalent "devoutness," the idea of reverence that is engaged in in a way that is *well* (as opposed to in a way that is "in vain . . . teaching for teachings the directions of men"; Matt.15:9).

In beginning his epistle to Titus, Paul declares that his testimony is "in accord with the faith of God's chosen, and a realization of the truth, which accords with *devoutness*" (Titus 1:1). The truth which accords with devoutness, which is to say the truth that accords with revering God in a way that is truly well, foundationally, is the truth that glorifies and thanks God—and God alone—truly *as God* (*cf* Rom.1:21). It declares "that there is no other God except One . . . *the Father,* out of Whom *all* is" (1 Cor.8:4-6); no one knew the mind of the Lord, or became His adviser, or gave to Him first that it might be repaid him, *"seeing that out* of Him and *through* Him and *for* Him is *all: to Him be the glory* for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:34-36).

In accord with the truth of God's "deity"—that He is the Source, the Course, and the Object of all—is the truth of God's will for the salvation of all mankind: "Our Saviour, God," "Who is operating *all* in accord with the counsel of His will," "wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4; Eph.1:11).

In light of these most glorious considerations, we can only declare: "Now to the King of the eons, the incorruptible, invisible, only, and wise God, be honor and glory for the eons of the eons! Amen!" (1 Tim.1:17). Even so, we

must extend our praises here with great caution, in a way in which we "may be warring the ideal warfare" (1 Tim. 1:18). This is because some, who at one time had "faith and a good conscience," subsequently thrust it away, thus making "shipwreck as to the faith" (1 Tim.1:19).

It is in light of these sobering considerations that our apostle declares, "I am entreating, *then,* first of all, that petitions, prayers, pleadings, thanksgiving be made *for all mankind,* for kings and *all* those being in a superior station, *that we may be leading a mild and quiet life in all devoutness and gravity,* for this is ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour, God, Who wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth" (1 Tim.2:1-4).

We need to care about all those whom God cares about. Since God loves the world (John 3:16), is fond of humanity (Titus 3:4), and wills that all mankind be saved (1 Tim.2:4), we need to engage in *heartfelt, habitual* prayer, even as giving of thanks (and, on occasion, petitions and pleadings) on behalf of *all mankind.*

This includes all those who have offended and injured us, even as all political figures at home and abroad of whom we disapprove, not to mention all sinners of every sort, even the most terrible and wicked.

If the practice of such "prayer" (*proseuchê,* TOWARD-WELL-HAVing) and related voiced-to-God concern on behalf of all mankind is new to you, now is the time to begin (may it be so). If you have lapsed from such devotion on a regular basis, God give you grace to be renewed therein. If such prayer is difficult and awkward for you at first, persevere therein. It will become easier with practice, as we remain mindful that such concern and care for others is (1) "ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour, God," and (2) affords us the blessing of leading, inwardly at least, "a mild and quiet life in all *devoutness* and gravity" (1 Tim.2:2,3). J.R.C.

SOJOURN IN EGYPT

JACOB and all his family had now come to their sojourn in Egypt. It was not the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and it was not to be a permanent settlement. But the Scriptures provide several scenes from the early years of that sojourn for our learning. In concluding his studies in Genesis, A. E. Knoch drew our attention to the following passages:

GENESIS 48:1-19

48 + **It** [lb]**came** about **after** ·**these** ·**things** +**that** someone [l]**said to Joseph, Behold, your father** is **ailing.** +**At** that **he** [l]**took** `**his two sons with him,** `**Manasseh and** `**Ephraim,** and [7]**came to Jacob**[0]**.**

2 +**When it** [c]**was** [l]**told to Jacob,** + [l]**saying, Behold, your son Joseph has come to you,** +**then Israel** [l]**encouraged** him**self and** [l]**sat** up **on the couch.**

3 + **Jacob** [l]**said to Joseph: El Who-Suffices, He appeared to me** [i]**at Luz in** the **land of Canaan and** [l]**blessed** `**me.** 4 + **He** [l]**said to me: Behold Me** [c]**making you fruitful.** + **I will multiply you and** [g]**make** of **you** › an **assembly of peoples.** + **I will give** `**this** ·**land** [7]**to you and**[0] **to your seed after you** as an **eonian holding.**

5 **Now** +**as** for **your two sons** ·who were **born**[l] **to you in** the **land of Egypt** [fr]**before I came**[–] **to you** to[d] **Egypt, they** are **mine. Ephraim and Manasseh, they shall** [b]**belong to me like Reuben and Simeon.** 6 +**But your children whom you will beget after them, they shall become yours;** [on]**by** the **name of their brothers shall they be called in their allotment.**

7 + **I** want this because, *i*[**when I came**]– **from Padan-***7*[**Syria, your mother***0*] **Rachel died** up**on me in** the **land of Canaan** *i*[**on** the **way** *i*[**while** there was *fr*[**still some distance of land** ›**before coming**]– to*d*] **Ephrath.** +**So I** [**entombed her there** *i*[**on** the **way** to **Ephrath, that** is**, Bethlehem.**

8 +**When Israel** [**saw** `**Joseph's sons,** + **he** [**said,** *a*[**Who** are **these?**

9 + **Joseph** [*sa*[**replied to his father, They** are **my sons whom Elohim has given** › **me in this** land**.**

+**At** this *7*[**Jacob***0*] [**said, Take them** *pr*[**please to me** +**that I may bless them.** 10 +**Now Israel's eyes, they were heavy** *f*[**with old** age**; he** [**could not** › **see**– well**.** +**When he** *c*[**brought** `**them** [**close to him,** + **he** [**kissed** › **them and** [**embraced** › **them.** 11 **And Israel** [**said to Joseph, I had nev**er **assumed** to **see**– **your face** again**, and** *bd*[**here Elohim has** *c*[**let** `**me see** `**your seed** *mr*[**as well.**

12 + **Joseph** *c*[**brought** `**them** [**forth from** *wi*[**beside his knees, and he** [**bowed down** *7*[**to him***0*] ›**with his brow** to**ward** the **earth.**

13 +**Then Joseph** [**took** `**both of them,** `**Ephraim** *i*[**with his right** hand *f*[**to Israel's left, and** `**Manasseh** *i*[**with his left** hand *f*[**to Israel's right, and** *c*[**brought** them [**close to him.**

14 + **Israel** [**stretched** out `**his right** *7*[**hand***n*] **and** [*set*[**laid** it **on Ephraim's head,** +**though he** was **the junior, and** `**his left** hand **on Manasseh's hand. He** *m*[**used** `**his hands** –**intelligently, for Manasseh** was **the firstboro.** 15 **And he** [**blessed** `**Joseph and** [**said:**

The One**, Elohim, before Whom my fathers walked,**
Abraham and Isaac,
The One**, Elohim,** `**my** ˙**Shepherd**[**from my** *fr*[**youth**
until ˙**this** ˙**day,**
16 **The Messenger,** `**my** ˙**Redeemer**[**from all evil,**
May He bless `**the lads,**
+**That** *i*[**through them my name may be called,**
And the **name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac,**

And that **they may proliferate to** a **multitude**
i[**within the land.**

17 +**When Joseph** [**saw that his father was** *set*[**placing his right hand on Ephraim's head,** + **it was displeasing in his eyes.** +**So he** took [**firm hold** of **his father's hand to take** `**it away, off Ephraim's head,** *on*[**to** the **head of Manasseh.**

18 **And Joseph** [**said to his father, Not so, my father, for this** is **the firstborn.** *pl*[**Put your right** hand **on his head.**

19 +**But his father** [**refused and** [**said, I know, my son, I know. He´** *mr*[**too shall become** › a **people, and he´** *mr*[**too shall be great.** + **Nevertheless, his** ˙**younger brother shall be greater** *f*[**than he; and his seed shall become** a **fullness of** ˙**nations.**

JOSEPH'S MISTAKE

Another great truth is revealed in connection with the conduct of Joseph, but this time he had to be corrected by his father, Israel. It is repeated for us, the nations, in Ephesians 1:11. God designates beforehand according to His purpose, for He operates all in accord with the counsel of His will. This is seen in Israel's family. Reuben, the oldest according to the flesh, never did get even a high place in the tribes. Levi received the priesthood, Judah the throne. Jacob had adopted Joseph's two sons, so that they are counted as two separate tribes in Israel (Gen. 48:5). When he came to give them his special benediction, Joseph placed the oldest, Manasseh, on Israel's right, to receive the greatest blessing. But Jacob crossed his hands, so that Ephraim was favored. Joseph tried to correct this, but Israel persisted.

The first-born of the *flesh* does not inherit the highest place. Adam has been superseded by Christ Jesus. Isaac took Ishmael's place. Jacob himself was blessed above Esau. Joseph rose high above Reuben, and now his sons are transposed according to the purpose of God. Ephraim

(FRUITS) became the progenitor of a numerous tribe in the most fruitful territory in the land, so that the ten tribes which separated after the reign of Solomon, were also called Ephraim, or, generally, Israel, the title of the whole nation, and the two remaining tribes were given the name of Judah.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

All these are given us as examples of the basic principle of God's operation, Christ said: "Thus shall the last be first and the first last." (Matt.20:16). The greatest value for us in the narratives in Genesis lies, not in the stories themselves, but in the great fundamental principles which they illustrate. All is of God (2 Cor.5:18). The flesh is not benefitting anything (John 6:63). But by far the greatest and grandest example is not clearly revealed in the first book of divine revelation, but in what may be the last, Paul's prison epistles, in which the Hebrew (PASSER) constellation together with the rest of the star seed, will be blessed with every spiritual blessing among the celestials.

GENESIS 49:29-33

29 +**Then he** l**instructed** `**them and** l**said to them: I** am to **be gathered**l **to my people. Entomb** `**me** ›**with my fathers** ›**in the cave which** is **in** the **field of Ephron the Hittite,** 30 **in** the **cave which** is **in the field of Machpelah** *w* **adjoining Mamre in** the **land of Canaan—**`**the field** *w***that Abraham bought from** `**Ephron the Hittite** ›**as** a **holding** for a **tomb.** 31 **There***d* **they entombed** `**Abraham and** `**his wife Sarah, there***d* **they entombed** `**Isaac and** `**his wife Rebecca, and there***d* **I entombed** `**Leah.** 32 **The field** +**with the cave** *w* **in it** was an **acquisition from** `the **sons of Heth.**

33 +**When Jacob** had l*all***finished** › *m***giving instructions**¯ `to **his sons,** + **he** drew **his feet** up l**again** on**to the couch and** l**breathed** his **last and was** l**gathered to his people.**

JACOB'S LAST INSTRUCTIONS

Jacob looks beyond his death to the reunion with his people, Abraham and Isaac in the resurrection. In token of this he desires to be near them even in the sleep of death. These three are the founders of the eonian nation, whom Yahweh will use to bless all the rest. From them will come the Conqueror of death, and Israel's greatest Son. As a testimony to his faith in their future, and in the return of the nation to the land given to Abraham, he wishes to precede them. So Israel still sleeps in the promised land waiting for the day when all His faithful sons will arise seventy-five days after Messiah comes, and enter the eonian kingdom prepared for them.

GENESIS 50:15-26

15 +**Yet Joseph's brothers,** l**seeing that their father was dead,** + l**said, Suppose, Joseph** holds a l**grudge** against **us and should pay** › **us back,** yea **pay back**¯ `for **all the evil** *w***that we dealt** out `to **him.** 16 +**So they** *m***sent** l**forth** a message **to Joseph,** › **saying**¯**, Your father** *m***gave instructions before his death,** › **saying**¯**,** 17 **Thus shall you** *sa***speak to Joseph:** I **pray** you, *pr***please bear** with the **transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they dealt badly** with **you.** +**So now** *pr***please bear** ›**with** the **transgression of** the **servants of** the **Elohim of your father.**

And Joseph l**wept** *i***over their words**¯ **to him.**

18 +**Then his brothers** *mr***also** l*go***came and** l**fell** down **before him and** l**said, Behold, we** are **yours** ›**as servants.**

19 + **Joseph** l*sa***replied to them: Do not** l**fear! For** am **I** in the *u***place of Elohim?** 20 + **You´ devised evil** *on***against me,** 7+**yet***nc* **Elohim, He devised it for good in order** to *d***accomplish**¯**, as** at ·**this day, to** *c***preserve many people alive**¯**.** 21 +**So now do not** l**fear; I my**self **shall** *all***sustain** `**you and** `**your little one**s. +**Thus he** l**comforted** `**them and** l**spoke** *on***to their heart**s.

22 + **Joseph** |*sit* **remained in Egypt, he and** 7**his brothers and all**0 **his father's house**hold. + **Joseph** |**lived** a **hundred ten years;** 23 **and Joseph** |**saw** › **Ephraim's sons** to the **third** generation; *mr* **also** the **sons of Manasseh's son Machir, they were born on Joseph's knees.**

24 +**At** length **Joseph** |**said to his brothers: I** am about to **die**|; +**yet Elohim, He shall** take **note,** yea take **note**– `of **you.** + **He will** c**bring** `**you up from** ·**this** ·**land to the land** about **which** 7**Elohim**0 **swore** 7**to our fathers**0**, to Abraham,** › **Isaac and** › **Jacob.**

25 +**Then Joseph** |**adjured** `the **sons of Israel,** › **saying**–**,** When **Elohim shall** take **note,** yea take **note**– `of **you,** +**then you will** c**bring up** `**my bones** 7^with **you***ncs* **from here.**

26 +**After** that **Joseph** |**died,** a **hundred ten years old;** + **they** had `**him** |**embalmed, and he was** |**placed in** a **coffin in Egypt.**

GRACE AND EXPECTATION

Once more Joseph gives us a picture of divine *grace*, which the sons of Israel find very hard to understand. They were quite correct in thinking that Joseph had a *right* to revenge himself on them for their murderous designs against him. But Joseph seems to have come as near as anyone in Israel to emulating the gracious side of God's character. His stern treatment of them when they first came to Egypt, was all in keeping with this, for they were in dire need of repentance. But, after this, he treated them with something like the favor which is shown to us sinners of the nations, in this day of unadulterated, glorious grace.

Joseph evidently knew of the promise Yahweh had made to Abraham, when He set up His covenant with him, that they would remain in Egypt four hundred years. So he not only reminded them of it, but, like his father, gave them a token, even in death, so that they remembered. He had himself embalmed so that his body also would wait until

their exodus. God is the God of hope, and arranged to give them visible, tangible evidence of the future fulfillment of His Word.

A. E. Knoch

This article concludes our series, *Studies in Genesis*, which began in January, 1951 issue (volume 42, number 1). Those of our readers who have followed the entire series will note that God graciously has granted further light on a number of topics, so that some statements made in earlier chapters have been corrected in later issues. We pray that this series has proved helpful to our readers, and are grateful to God for His gracious guidance through the years of its preparation. May it prompt in each of us a prayer of praise to the God of Abram (Who justifies by faith), and of Isaac (Who keeps His promises), and Jacob (Who blesses all, even a Circumventer).

DOROTHY WOODAMS

As with Lydia of Thyatira, our Lord opened the heart of Dorothy Woodams to hear and heed the message of God's grace and peace which Paul brought (*cf* Acts 16:14). With her daughter, Keitha Martin, she traveled far and listened carefully to the expounding of the Word of God, responding with thoughtful questions and encouragement. We were shocked to hear of her sudden death from a car accident on August 18, but believing, as she believed, that God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), we are strengthened in anticipation of the happy expectation set before us (Titus 2:13).

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THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

THERE is probably no subject that confronts mortals which is more perplexing than the problem of evil. The question of its *origin* has engrossed the thoughts of Christians generally; to contrive some way whereby evil might have first come into existence, and at the same time clear God from all responsibility has been their chief endeavor. Yet, all down the centuries, the Scriptures have supplied a thread of exodus from the labyrinth of this great cosmic problem.

It is self-evident that an absolutely supreme Deity must be a universally responsible Deity. God must be responsible for whatever state of things obtains, or, what is tantamount to it, responsible for that chain of causes that led to this state of things. If God cannot alter this evil state of things, then He is not omnipotent; if He will not, then He is not all-loving.

But if God has a purpose to accomplish which justifies the employment of evil, then we may see Him as the God of power and love which the Scriptures present Him to be. Did not God suffer evil to enter the universe in the first place when He might have prevented it? We certainly must answer affirmatively, for the negation of this statement deprives Him of supremacy. The negation of the statement, that He could have prevented evil from effecting an entrance, deprives the universe of a supreme head, and sets it aimlessly whirling in space, a sport of blind, impersonal forces, with no governing hand above and beyond it. If, then, God allowed evil when He was able to avert it, there is no evading the issue that He is responsible for all the consequences that have followed in its trail, and the

only way to vindicate Him is to take the ground that God has a purpose in evil which, while augmenting His glory, secures a higher degree of blessedness for the creature.

SCRIPTURAL TESTIMONY

When we think of it seriously it seems as if, in their treatment of the question of evil, the sacred writers were rather unguarded and careless in their expressions. Some of their assertions seem to border on irreverence and, to some, even a positive offense to moral sensibility. How much so may be inferred from the painful assiduity with which expositors have labored to tone down their language.

As an example of the boldness of sacred writers we will instance the oft repeated statement, "All is out of God" (Rom.11:36; 1 Cor.8:6; 11:12; 2 Cor.5:18; *cp* Eph.1:11; Heb.2:10). The majority of Christians profess to believe it, but their actual views qualify the apostle's statement. "It is impossible to believe this statement in toto," they say. "Had the phrase been used of things Paul heard when snatched into the third heaven, or of the things John beheld when soaring in spirit over the new earth, we would have no difficulty in taking it literally; but surely we cannot be expected to take the phrase absolutely when it is used of a world groaning in pain and reeking in crime. Paul did not mean that absolutely *all* things are of God, the bad things as well as the good, all the crime, and sin, and wickedness; what he really wished to say is that all *good* things are of God."

But the apostle knew what he said. His purpose was to reveal and enlighten, not to confuse and mystify. Nor is Paul alone in teaching that all is out of God; the same truth in the plainest terms and in the most positive manner all the sacred writers affirm; and no one would think of doubting it were it not for the fact that it is at variance with received ideas. An absolutely supreme God is necessarily,

a universally responsible God, and such is, as we shall see, the clear, positive, unmistakable teaching of Scripture. To this universal responsibility, evil is no exception, but rather a specially designated feature, inasmuch as God declares Himself to be its Creator (Isa.45:7).

JOB AND JOSEPH

God rules over all; He does whatsoever is done in heaven or on earth; He assumes full responsibility. Hence the same act, such as inciting David to number the people, which in one place is attributed to the Adversary, is in another place ascribed directly to God (1 Chron.21:1 *cf* 2 Sam.24:1). In like manner Job's afflictions, represented as inflicted by the Adversary in one place, are spoken of as due to the hand of God, the Adversary "smote Job with the evil boils" (Job 2:7), just as his acquaintances came to condole "over all the evil which Yahweh had brought upon him" (Job 42:11).

On the forefront of revelation, the story of Joseph eloquently proclaims the truth that evil things are of God just as much as good things. His brethren had made up their mind to destroy him. Dissuaded from their murderous intent, they sell him into slavery, and in order to cover up their crime shamefully deceive their aged father. The sin of Joseph's brethren was dark-dyed; and yet in the course of years, when Joseph became ruler of Egypt, and is at last made known to his brethren, he comforts them by saying: "And now do not be grieved nor let it be hot in your eyes that you sold me hither, because Elohim has sent me on before you for the preservation of life. So now, not you sent me here, but the One, Elohim" (Gen.45:5,8).

It is thus evident that God had willed to bless the world through the sufferings of Joseph; so that in selling their brother, Jacob's sons carried out the will of God; and it is equally evident that, while carrying out the will of God,

their hearts were not right toward Him; and the calamities of God's trying providence which came upon them were designed as a corrective. Does not this prove to demonstrate that "all is out of God"?

SAMSON AND AHAB

I will now advert to an example all the more powerful because it seems trite and commonplace. I mean the case of Samson. While in Timnath he became infatuated with a Philistine damsel and was determined to marry her. To the arguments of his parents, who try to persuade him against a marriage condemned by Moses' law, Samson replies: "Get her for me, for she pleaseth me well." None would even dream that God had anything to do with this foolish love affair. And yet the record reads, "As for his father and his mother, they did not realize that this was from Yahweh: He was seeking a pretext against the Philistines" (Judges 14:4).

The extermination of the royal house of Ahab is another illustration of how evil things are of God (1 Kings 21:19-29). The accomplishment of it is detailed in 2 Kings 9 and 10. It is a sickening tale of cunning, truce-breaking, treachery, cruelty, barbarous butchery, and yet it was the carrying out of Yahweh's purpose. In 1 Kings 21:21, God says, "I will cut off from Ahab any man-child, restrained or forsaken, in Israel."

According to the narrative in 2 Kings 9:1-10:28 Jehu was the perpetrator of the awful deed, and yet it is plainly recorded that God was in it. He intended the crimes and wickedness of men to subserve His own purpose, and He brought good out of them in the end.

THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

Again, in 1 Kings 12 we read of the revolt of the ten tribes. It was a movement of the people; and yet in the

sequel of the story, when the army of Judah was ready to march against Israel, the prophet said: "Thus speaks Yahweh: You shall neither go up nor fight against your brothers . . . *for it was from Me*" (2 Chron.11:4). Jeroboam was the prime mover in the movement which resulted in the secession of the ten tribes; and yet God says, "I will take the kingship out of the hand of his son" (1 Kings 11:35).

Should it be objected that the foregoing events occurred in Israel, where God's presence was revealed in a special manner, we have only to point to the sweeping declaration of the apostle in Acts 17:26: "He makes out of one every nation of mankind, to be dwelling on all the surface of the earth, specifying the setting of the seasons and the bounds of their dwelling." This clearly shows that the movements of history, the rise and fall of kingdoms, the changes in the world's map that have taken place from time to time, all have been ordained beforehand; everything works out just as God had decreed.

ISRAEL'S AFFLICTIONS

But there are some Scriptures even more startling. We learn that *the Lord hardened* the heart of the Canaanites, that they should come out against Israel in battle, that He might destroy them utterly (Joshua 11:20). In another place we are informed that it was *of God* that King Amaziah should reject the word of God (2 Chron.25:20). Psalm 105, in reviewing the dealings of God with the nation, throws light on the sojourn of Israel in Egypt in a way that is truly surprising.

Then He made His people exceedingly fruitful
And made them more plentiful than their foes.
He turned their heart to hate His people,
To plot against His servants. (Psa.105:24,25)

The prophet Isaiah bears out the statement of the Psalmist when he says: "Who has given Jacob to the robber, And Israel to the plunderers? Is it not Yahweh?" (Isa.42:24). Truly, all is out of God.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

Let us now take a glance at the way the Scriptures view that crime of crimes—the crucifixion of God's Son. With the champions of a heartless orthodoxy it is a stock argument to prove the necessity for unending torments: they point out that there can be no mercy for the perpetrators of such awful deeds. But the apostle tells that they did what God's hand and counsel determined before to be done, and that Christ was "given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23; 4:28).

CREATOR OF EVIL

Thus far we have been considering instances illustrating that evil things are of God. We will now look at a passage which expressly states this truth (Isa.45:5-7).

I am Yahweh, and there is no other;
Except for Me, there is no Elohim;
I am forearming you, yet you do not know Me,
That they may know,
From the rising of the sun and from the west,
That there is no one apart from Me;
I am Yahweh, and there is no other.
Former of light and Creator of darkness,
Maker of good and Creator of evil,
I, Yahweh, make all these things.

I am aware how this passage is disposed of by theological casuists, who have been trained to make the Bible subserve the interests of their systems. It is claimed that the Hebrew word *ra* means *inflicted* evil, so that not moral evil is meant, but evil in the shape of calamities which

overtake the peoples. A glance at a concordance shows this explanation to be a makeshift of theorists. The tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen.2:9,17) cannot possibly mean inflicted evil. The serpent was not enticing the woman by a prospect of inflicted evil (Gen.3:5): that would have been no inducement to transgress. God said, Man has become like one of Us in knowing good and evil (Gen.3:22); who can believe that inflicted evil is meant? Neither does Ecclesiastes assert that God will bring into judgment inflicted evil (Ecc.12:14)! The fact is, the original word is a generic *for all evil,* and is used hundreds of times throughout the Hebrew Scriptures to denote wickedness and wrongdoing; and there is no reason, so far as language is concerned, to give it any other meaning here.

But apart from questions of language, the context determines the force of the word. In addressing Cyrus, God says, *I create evil*. In contrast to heathen dualism which derives light and darkness, good and evil, from rival deities, the Hebrew prophet represents Yahweh as sole Creator of good and evil, and author as much of adverse as of propitious forces.

In explaining this passage away the only alternative has been to fall back on the dualism of the Zoroastrian system, and divide the universe into two opposite realms, with a rival god over each. But whereas Zoroastrianism teaches that evil will eventually cease to exist, according to the belief of Christendom the Adversary emerges from the conflict with a larger following than God, and evil secures for itself a permanent place in God's universe. Is it any wonder that thinking men and women turn away from a theology which is a tissue of glaring and palpable contradictions?

I would urge my readers to accept Scripture at its face value, and not allow the thought of abuses which may be made of it to lead them to reject or modify the Word of God. Since God declares, *I create evil*, we need not apologize for

Him. He assures that absolutely *nothing* takes place but His hand is in it, that there is no power that can act independent of Him or unknown to Him. If there was, God's government could be entirely upset sometime. According to popular theology the Adversary has already done that very thing. He invaded God's universe and entirely upset His work; and though God forthwith evolved a so-called "plan of redemption" to repair damages, yet He is not able to cope with the situation; He cannot banish the daring invader, who has come to stay, to permanently disfigure and disgrace God's fair creation.

THE PURPOSE OF EVIL

We have considered the Scriptures asserting that God is the sole Creator of all things, that evil is His servant, as are all things, and that His will is accomplished thereby. We will now proceed to consider the *purpose* of evil.

If God is the Creator of evil, then it must be that He has created it for a *good* purpose, and that, under His guiding hand, it serves to heighten the good. The Scriptures fully bear out this inference.

Let us first turn to Romans 8:19-22

For the premonition of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God. For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God. For we are aware that the entire creation is groaning and travailing together until now.

Here is an epitome of the entire "purpose of the eons."

The whole creation is represented as awaiting, with groaning and travailing in pain, the revealing of the sons of God. Then we are told that the creation was subjected to vanity—this fallen state—not of its own will, but by the

will of Him who has subjected the same in expectation, that is by the will of God. Strange as it may seem, yet Paul positively asserts that God made the creation subject to the bondage of corruption. Further on in the same epistle, unfolding God's ways with Israel and the nations, he makes a statement even more astounding:

ROMANS 11:30-36

For even as you once were stubborn toward God, yet now were shown mercy at their stubbornness, thus these also are now stubborn to this mercy of yours, that now they also may be shown mercy. For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all.

O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid Him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!

Why should God do such strange things as subjecting creation to vanity and locking Jews and Gentiles in stubbornness? Such strange acts are unjustifiable in themselves; but neither is an end in itself; both are *means* to an end, and are fully justified by the results achieved through their medium—the deliverance of creation into the liberty of the children of God, and the mercy upon all. Evil is God's prerogative; in His ways with the creature He acts on the principle enshrined in the adage, "the end justifies the means."

"A dangerous doctrine," someone interjects. "If God acts on the principle that the end justifies the means, why not adopt it generally as a rule of conduct, seeing we are enjoined to be imitators of Him?" The answer is simple.

The apostle does not say that we should imitate God in *all* things, but rather in *walking in love* (Eph.5:15-21). God has acted toward us in love; we are to imitate His attitude in our dealings toward men. God does a great many things which man is enjoined *not* to do. God kills and hurts (Deut.32:39); man is forbidden to do either, because he is not possessed of unlimited power. When God kills He also makes alive, when He hurts He also heals; but man can neither heal nor make alive, and is thus forbidden to destroy what he is unable to restore. In dealing with evil, man is *overcome by* it, whereas God *overcomes by means of it*. Man is warned, in the most solemn fashion, to abstain from evil because he has no control over it; but God has perfect and absolute control over all things and is thus able to use them for universal good.

GOD WORKS ALL TOGETHER FOR GOOD

Our difficulties on this point arise from inability to see *how* evil is conducive to good. But the examples we have considered, as, for instance, the case of Joseph, prove that He has done it in some cases, and if He has done it in *some* cases it is not difficult to believe that He will do it in *all* cases. The two passages in Romans state the good ends to which evil conduces, and thus we come to know something of the purpose of evil. We do not see enough to comprehend its vast sweep, but we do see enough to establish us in the belief that this purpose is grand and glorious, and in perfect harmony with His character.

In conclusion, I will remark that, in this respect, as in many others, there seems to exist a certain analogy between nature and revelation. We know that all organic processes involve a certain balance of opposing forces and in all of them is a union of conflicting tendencies. The phenomena of physical life involve at every instant, as a part of themselves, all the essential phenomena of the death of

tissue. The same balance of opposing forces exists also in the unfolding of the "purpose of the eons." The so-called mystery of evil precisely as it is in the world is absolutely indispensable to the realization of God's purpose, because it is the necessary condition of all true good in the world. For good, spiritual, moral, or personal, is the overcoming of evil. Created intelligences shall never know themselves, until they learn for themselves that all the comfort of life, all its strength, victory, and blessedness, comes only through the sufferings and death of Christ.

GOD IS OPERATING ALL

Thus the Scriptures teach that light and darkness, good and evil, are really parts of the same Divine economy. Good and evil proceed from the same Author; they cooperate for the same ends; they are included in the same vast chain of causation. The only difference is that we know a little more about the one than we do about the other, and that the One who presides over both alike lays—or seems to lay—a little more stress here than He does there. God sees as a whole what we see in fragments. When the organist sits at the keyboard of his instrument he plays some passages soft and some loud; sometimes the notes he gives forth are muffled, sometimes they are loud and clear. But the different parts of His playing are all upon the same instrument, and they all harmonize together. The same note is alternately subdued and emphasized; and there are *crescendos* and *diminuendos* to connect the soft with the loud. So with Him who sits at the keyboard of the universe and touches the chords of universal action: the music which results is not broken and discordant, but it all blends into a subtle harmony and the rising and the falling cadences alike contribute to the realization of the pre-determined goal.

V. Gelesnoff

ORDER AND LEADERSHIP

If we would be faithful, the glorious truths of the evangel must not be intermingled with sundry popular notions of the day such as the importance of "successful church growth," or, especially, with any teachings or attitudes which entail ultimate reliance upon the flesh, any nominal claims about "grace" notwithstanding.

The apostle Paul tells us, "I want you to perceive what the *struggle* amounts to which I am having for your sakes" (Col.2:1), the struggle to be announcing, "Christ among *you* [the nations, and] the expectation of glory [which concerns you]—Whom we are announcing, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we should be presenting every man *mature* in Christ Jesus" (Col.1:27,28). This struggle toward maturity is a great one for each of us today as well, at least it is if we are truly growing in understanding and progressing in usefulness in the Lord's service.

Struggles with those with whom we are more closely connected are usually much more painful than those with ones whom we hardly know. This is so even though in matters of faith we are apt to be in much closer accord on the whole with these personal associates than with those outside. Yet we may be thankful to God that He has given us such trying experiences, for surely they are all for good and are granted in His wisdom.

STAND BY THE WORD

The faithful teacher is to "*stand by*" the "word" (the teaching or word concerning the various doctrines which

comprise the faith), and is to do so opportune*ly* and inopportune*ly* (2 Tim.4:2). The Authorized Version is misleading here: "be *instant* in season, out of season." Yet it is on a basis of these very words that many have claimed that confrontations with others are actually to be sought; and, that on a moment's notice, under all circumstances, we are boldly to insist upon our own views and to press them upon whomever we may encounter.

Many seem to suppose that the word "instant," as used here, is intended to convey the idea of insistence, as well as of immediacy. "Instant," however, is not a good rendering of the Greek *epistêōi* (BE-ON-STANDING). In such a case as this, it should be rendered simply "stand by" (even the Authorized Version itself gives the rendering "stood by" for a similar form of this same word, *epestêsan*; *cp* Luke 24:4).

The primary terms in question (rendered, respectively, "opportunely" and "inopportunely" in the CV) are not nouns but adverbs; as well, the Greek equivalents of the English "in" (*en*) and "out" (*ek*) are not in the Greek. "Opportunely" and "inopportunely" speak of the *way* in which we are to *stand by* the truth. We are to stand by it in a way that recognizes our current situation—whatever it may be—for what it is, and then acts accordingly.

This is simply to say that when we find ourselves in an opportune situation for speaking the word of truth, we should act opportune*ly*—in a way befitting our present opportune situation. And, when we find ourselves in an *in*opportune situation for speaking the word of truth, we should speak the word *in*opportune*ly,* in a way befitting our present *in*opportune situation.

In one instance, the one who acts opportunely will recognize the good opportunity which lies before him and will act appropriately; and in the other instance, the *way* in which we stand by the truth ("*in*opportunely") will reflect a wise and appropriate response to the unprofitable situation in which we find ourselves.

None of this has anything to do with foolishly putting ourselves into situations that will almost certainly be unprofitable, or with seeking to knock down a wall where God has not even opened a door.

We are to use our limited time and strength wisely. And, should we *find* ourselves in an inopportune circumstance, we are still to stand by the truth, though in a way that wisely recognizes an unprofitable situation for what it is and tries to pass through it as expediently and inoffensively as possible.

THE *RIGHT* TO DECIDE

Perhaps a further word with regard to authority in the ecclesia would be in order, concerning matters that are actually in the realm of common sense, besides a few comments on the word "authority" itself.

Any given group, regardless of size, needs to have order and leadership. Someone must supervise and supervise well, for the sake of peace and order. This entails "authority," but only in the sense of *prerogative* or *right* to decide policy, in practical matters on behalf of the group or ministry.

We recognize that God, Who is operating all (Eph. 1:11), has appointed whatever "powers" or authorities there may be, everywhere and in every place. "There is no authority except under [literally, "by"] God. Now those [authorities] which are, have been set [prescribed or arranged] under [by] God, so that he who is resisting the authority has withstood God's mandate" (Rom.13:1,2). This has special reference to political authority (*cp* Rom.13:3-5), but it includes all authority. Even the lowliest peasant has certain *rights* or *jurisdiction* (that is the sense of the Greek word for "authority," *exousia*) in his own dwelling, concerning his own possessions or the members of his family. Whatever such established rights or prerogatives may exist, in whatever sphere of life, are to be honored.

For example, I recognize that I am not at all "in charge" of other ministries or of other congregations. Even though I have quite a few good friends in various places where believers gather for worship and instruction, I still do not have any "rights" concerning those ecclesias, for others have the supervision in those cases, not myself.

Besides, my "authority" is confined merely to supervising the work of our own ministry, leading the meetings, and so forth. I have no authority whatever over the faith of even the brethren who attend our own meetings, much less over the faith of those in other places! Even if I should truly be correct and another brother mistaken, I must not be a lord over his faith: "Not that we are lording it over your faith, but are fellow workers of your joy" (2 Cor.1:24).

The "authority" which the apostle Paul had, which was given to him by the Lord, was "for building you up and not for pulling you down" (2 Cor.10:8). Our only "right" is to seek to "build up" (or "edify") our brethren, not to lord it over their faith. Not to us, but "To his own Master [each one] is standing or falling. Now he *will* be *made* to stand, *for the Lord is able* to make him stand" (Rom. 14:4). Perhaps many will not stand mature until the resurrection, but that does not make the promise any less certain or any less true.

It is my right or "authority" to require others in our meetings not to be disorderly or disruptive, not to say or do things which I consider inexpedient during the time they are attending the meetings. Similarly, if a brother who regularly attended our meetings were to continue on, unrepentant and repeatedly sinning in certain very grave and "contagious" sins, I would have to "expel" him (1 Cor.5:11-13) until true repentance had been established (*cf* 2 Cor.2:1-11).

But I am not to prohibit any person who attends our meetings from going to other services; nor am I to forbid others to start their own separate group if they should wish. If anyone should sincerely think that he could be more faithful to the Lord by taking such actions, I would sincerely tell him that he should do so, no matter how mistaken I considered his views to be. Nor would I prohibit those who remained from considering any materials that such a one might publish, or, for that matter, from reading any other publications. That is because such a "prohibition" is not within my rights or range of authority.

In Romans 16:17,18, it is true that Paul declares: "Now I am entreating you, brethren, to be noting those who are making dissensions and snares beside the teaching which you learned, and avoid them, for such for our Lord Christ are not slaving, but for their own bowels, and through compliments and adulation are deluding the hearts of the innocent." Should I not, therefore, instruct others to be noting those ("mark them," AV) who make dissensions and snares beside the teaching which they learned through me, and to avoid them accordingly? My answer is, No; or rather, No, not as such.

I should rather point out to all who would hear me that it is vital that none of us "dissent" from (i.e., differ with) actual truth, nor be deceived by various "snares" in which what is actually true is somehow misrepresented and thus made to appear "wrong" or "bad" through spurious argumentation. Beware, then, that in turning away from our teaching that you are not as well, albeit unwittingly, turning away from the teaching of the apostle Paul.

SHEPHERDS AND WOLVES

A "pastor" (*poimainō,* SHEPHERD), literally, is "one who *tends* sheep; figuratively, [he is] one who *cares for* the saints" (see KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.268). And such steps as I have suggested above are within the sphere of proper care for any who cannot otherwise be benefited by our services. This figure of speech, "shepherd," however, is

commonly perverted and taken beyond its point of likeness in the metaphor. Thus the claim is made that a shepherd is one who *protects* his sheep from wolves—I suppose by herding all the sheep into a tight enclosure and by scaring any of them that are stupid enough to stray. This *type* of tending, however—which may be appropriate indeed for literal sheep—is decidedly *not* appropriate at all for the members of the body of Christ.

Now I too wish to protect my friends from "wolves." Indeed, I *long* to do so. However, the "weapons of our warfare" must be the word of God, not some pseudo-authority of my own devising. Furthermore, these weapons are not powerful at all in my weak hands. It is only when *God* makes them powerful, by giving others eyes to see and ears to hear, that their might is manifest. Then, and only then, are they "powerful *to God*, toward the pulling down of bulwarks; pulling down reckonings and every height elevating itself against the knowledge of God" (2 Cor.10:4,5).

One is either correct or mistaken *according as He believes God or fails to do so.* No one is necessarily wrong merely because he disagrees with me. Such considerations are not the issue and have nothing to do with it. On the other hand, no one can afford to disagree with me if I should be correct.

We can only *concur* with the truth; we cannot create it. We have no "authority" whatsoever to *determine* the boundaries of truth, for God has already done so. It is ours simply to agree or disagree with what *He* has established. No believer has been granted infallibility, even if he should possess much understanding on the whole. Consequently, no other believer should feel the slightest obligation to agree with his brother, except where, according to one's own understanding, his brother has been faithful to the revealed Word.

A SPIRIT OF LIBERTY

Even as with brothers according to the flesh, brethren in

Christ as well often have many differences among themselves. Though they may frequently disagree (whether graciously or otherwise) concerning both the sense and the scope of their Father's words, they are still *brothers* in Christ and God is still their mutual *Father.* Yet due to human failure (most frequently, on both sides), personal relationships may become quite strained as a result of such disagreements. Where this has been the case, may each one see his *own* duty truly to deal *graciously* with his brother's offense, acting in all meekness and humility in order to restore the friendship—whether or not his brother should make a similar response. Yet it is quite true, where there has been estrangement, conciliation is essential on *both* sides; otherwise reconciliation is impossible.

In order to be free to think for themselves, believers must also be free to be foolish, free to make foolish judgments and to come to foolish conclusions. It is true that the foolish and the immature will indeed misuse their liberty; but we must let them have this very freedom, for *it is their right.* We must not effectually take it from them through artful teachings about our "pastoral authority" or through our own delusions of grandeur or self-importance. Above all, we must not merely nominally claim to grant them liberty while in fact enslaving them to ourselves.

In our attitude and approach, we must actually provide our brethren with an *atmosphere* of liberty in which learning may take place; and we must both know the truth and be competent to teach it if we would be worthy of their attentive consideration of our words (*cp* Acts 17:11). Let us truly *be* able to help others; we cannot, however, expect others to recognize such an ability in us, much less to welcome or appreciate it.

Even so, we must *provide* liberty (from human dominion) to those who are yet foolish and immature, who cannot at present hear us (*cp* 1 Cor.3:2), so that they might

be at liberty whenever God should decide to set them on the path of maturity. It is not that He cannot easily grant understanding, even to those most grievously deceived and enslaved. It is only that, if we ourselves would be pleasing to Him in the meantime, both our manner and our message must reflect, not "slavery's spirit to fear again" (*cp* Rom.8:15), but a spirit of *liberty*—a spirit of humility and grace; a spirit which manifests the disposition of Christ (*cp* Phil.2:5-8).

The bonds of wisdom and maturity are the only freedom worthy of the name. The Son will one day make us all fully free; then we will be free indeed! Yet we will by no means become free of God or of His counsels. To the contrary, He will be All in all (1 Cor. 15:28)! We will be free of sin, not free of the divine operations. We will be fully subjected to perfect righteousness, not abandoned to chance.

The divine operations will then be fully glorious, ideal and marvelous in every way. There will be no more mortality, no more stubbornness, subjection to vanity or slavery of corruption. Instead, in the highest possible sense, we will all be fully subject to God. These glorious bonds are the liberty for which we long and are our "happy expectation."

GROWING IN THE GROWTH OF GOD

We may rest in the conviction that Christ alone is the Head of the body, the ecclesia (Col.1:18), and that the Head of Christ is God (1 Cor.11:3). All who practically claim His place, or, grant it to another, are "not holding the Head, out of Whom the entire body, being supplied and united through the assimilation and ligaments, is growing in the growth of God" (Col.2:19).

Even the apostle Paul had no authority in himself. If even he had turned away from the *Lord's* evangel (which was merely in the apostle's trust) the pronouncement would have been, "Let him be anathema!" (Gal.1:8,9). May we,

then, become established in Paul's evangel (Rom.16:25), and may we not be "transferred from that which calls [us] in the *grace* of Christ, to a *different* evangel" (Gal.1:6). The evangel of Christ, for the nations, may easily be distorted, and changed into a message quite unlike the original teaching of the apostle Paul (Gal.1:7). One by no means avoids such a course by merely claiming apostolic authority or special revelation.

There is a sense in which all are God's servants. For example, men who may be quite unworthy and unfaithful as a whole are often used of God to present the message of "Christ crucified" to us (*cf* Phil.1:15-18; *cp* 1 Cor.1: 18-25). Certain others may well teach us truth on additional subjects, even if they should hold to serious error on many other topics.

Perhaps God will even be pleased to give some sufficient light that they might truly be "*faithful* dispenser[s] of Christ" (Col.1:6,7). If so, even if most should fail to recognize such ones accordingly, this will by no means diminish the usefulness of any such ministry in the lives of those who are able to benefit from it. Popular recognition is worthless; faithfulness to the Lord is priceless.

It is much better actually to *do* the *work* of an evangelist (2 Tim.4:5) than to boast of being one, or to have this designation conferred upon oneself as a hierarchical rank within a denomination. One must actually proclaim the *evangel* to be an evangelist. The same is true of the "teacher." Those who are actually— however unintentionally—"fraudulent workers" (2 Cor. 11:13) may well glory in their teaching abilities while all the while schooling others in the ways of error. Similarly, no one who claims to be a "pastor" (shepherd) who nonetheless possesses the characteristics of a "wolf" (*cf* Acts 20:29) is a pastor at all—in the sense of Ephesians 4:11.

As in the story "Little Red Riding Hood," "wolves" must

not openly acknowledge their true nature. And, one may easily be a wolf in practice yet a shepherd in intention. Most simply lack understanding, and do not intend to mislead others at all. Often they mean well indeed, have a sincere and living commitment to Christ and a walk worthy of our imitation. This makes them much more effective deceivers (*cp* 2 Cor.11:13-15; 2 Tim.2:25,26).

What we actually are and what we actually do is what counts, not our titles or any human opinions (*cf* 1 Cor. 4:1-5). To our own Master we are standing or falling (Rom. 14:4). All else is vanity. "Let all who teach take this to heart: their work will be tested to see '*what kind it is.*' It is better to have a little *after* the fire than much *before* it."[1]

Those who "feel" called to do this or that are merely guided by their feelings. Those who would impose their own power, only expose their own impotency. We can only walk by faith, not by perception (much less by our emotions or by fleshly domination). The important thing for us all is to be "*faithful* men" personally, whether or not God should make us competent to teach others also (2 Tim.2:2; 2 Cor.3:5). In itself, apart from the truth, the ability to teach or lead others is not important in the slightest; indeed it can be a great impediment.

It is helpful to recall that, as Paul says, Christ was a "snare" to the Jews (1 Cor.1:23). Even today unbelieving Jewish scholars who are well acquainted with the "Christological" writings of the prophets fail to recognize Jesus the Nazarene as the One Who fulfilled them. If they cannot even recognize the *Person* of the Saviour, it really should not surprise us if God's own people often cannot recognize His *evangel*, at least not very clearly. But it is God Who makes our faith grow up, not we ourselves (1 Cor.3:5-7), and He will have His own time and way with us all. J.R.C.

1. A. E. Knoch, The Concordant Commentary, p.251.

THROUGH OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST

PAUL wrote Romans as a called apostle who was severed for the *evangel of God* (Rom.1:1). His apostleship is unique; he was severed from that of the twelve (*cf* Acts 13:2), as he himself was severed from the privileged position he had held from birth, of the race of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin (*cf* Gal.1:15; Phil.3:4-8). The evangel of God was promised before (Rom.1:2), but in being heralded *among all the nations* by one who obtained overwhelming grace in being given his commission (*cf* Rom.1:5; 1 Tim.1:13,14), it speaks of riches beyond anything previously revealed.

Second only to the fact that the evangel is the evangel *of God* is the fact that it *concerns God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord* (Rom.1:1-5). This has been made abundantly clear in Romans 3:21-28 where Paul began to unfold the details of this "well-message." The evangel of God manifests the righteousness of God, and it does so *through the faith of Jesus Christ.* It announces gratuitous justification in God's grace, which is achieved *through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.* He is the One, purposed by God, Who is the means of propitiation *through the faith in His blood* (the faith He maintained in His suffering and death). God is now displayed as the righteous Justifier in that He justifies sinners who are *out of the faith of Jesus.* All the good that God has accomplished and will bring about in realization comes through the death of Jesus Christ and His resurrection out from among the dead. Consequently the evangel of God concerning His Son can be summarized by these words: *Christ died for our sins; He was entombed; and He has been roused* (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1-4).

OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST

The opening passage of Romans chapter 5 is rich in announcing blessings from God as they are granted to us through our Lord, Jesus Christ. This evangel of God, as Paul is now presenting it, first of all speaks of **justification**. And it is upon that basis that it speaks of **peace toward God**, involving **access** to Him and our **standing in grace** before Him. It is also on the basis of justification by the faith of Jesus Christ that we may be glorying in **expectation of the glory of God**. None of these favors exists apart from our Lord Jesus Christ, and this is specifically brought to our attention in Romans 5:1,2.

We can see by the following arrangement of Romans 5:1,2 that Paul was not content merely to list these benefits which God gives in His grace. The apostle adds and intersperses four prepositional phrases (printed in italics) which point to Christ and His faith. The place of Jesus Christ in securing righteousness and peace, access and our standing in grace, and our expectation of the glory of God, and in bringing them into our lives is critical.

1. Being, then, justified
out of faith,
-2. we may be having peace toward God
through our Lord, Jesus Christ,
through Whom
3. we have the access also,
by the faith,
4. into this grace in which we stand,
-5. and we may be glorying in expectation
of the glory of God.

JUSTIFICATION BY CHRIST'S FAITH

Justification comes about as a manifestation of God's righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ, which is the source of our position in front of God, Who is altogether

righteous as the Justifier (Rom.3:21-28). This righteous justification is reckoned to us who are believing (Rom.4), but it is Christ's faith/faithfulness in dying for us that is the one, effectual basis of justification. We are justified in His blood (Rom.5:9). That settles the matter. Let us not insert our works or our faith into this equation. Let us keep ourselves out of it, except to accept it as it is stated, to stand in it against all opposition, to retain it as established fact, to believe it as the word of God (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1,2). We are justified (in the full meaning of the term) by no other means than the faith of Christ (Gal.2:16).

Being, then, justified out of [Jesus Christ's] *faith . . .*

PEACE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

. . . we [who are believing] *may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ . . .*

Peace has been made. God's enemies were conciliated to God through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10). Indeed, God conciliates us to Himself through Christ, Who died for the sake of all (2 Cor.5:14,18). Ultimately all will enjoy (in the blessing of reconciliation) the peace which has been secured by means of the death of the cross of the Son of God's love (Col.1:20).

But now in Romans 5:1, according to the best reading of the ancient manuscripts, Paul focuses our attention on the present, practical effects in the believer's life of this evangel announcing justification achieved through the death of Jesus Christ. If God has brought about justification through the faith of Jesus Christ, and not by anything we have done, we may be certain of the position of peaceful well-being that we have before Him. This peace is a peace toward God that we who are believing may be enjoying day by day. Having obtained peace through the death of God's Son, we may be having peace, through Him as our Lord, even in this world of conflict and eon

of wickedness, where we could never otherwise hope to have such an approach. Let us be partaking of the blessing of peace (indeed the enjoyment of reconciliation), which God has gained for us through the death of His beloved and faithful Son.

The evangel that makes known the blessings that are out of the faith of Jesus Christ gives spiritual power for daily salvation to the believer. What is out of the faith of Christ is for our faith in our lives right now (*cf* Rom.1:16,17). We are seeing this here in Romans 5:1,2. We surely need peace, and this means fundamentally that we need peace toward God. If we suppose that such peace rests on something we have to do, even on our faith, it will elude us. Yet to see that peace toward God is settled through the death of God's Son, is a continuing source of peace as we live in a world where we are bombarded by uncertainties.

IRREVERENCE AND INDIGNATION

Nothing in Romans 1:18-3:20 leads us to peace toward God, but everything there prepares us for it. "For God's indignation is being revealed from heaven on all the irreverence and injustice of men" (Rom.1:18). "And according as they do not test God, to have Him in recognition, God gives them over to a disqualified mind, to do that which is not befitting . . . those who, recognizing the just statute of God, that those committing such things are deserving of death . . ." (Rom.1:28,32). "Wherefore, defenseless are you, O human! . . . in accord with your hardness and unrepentant heart you are hoarding for yourself indignation in the day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God, Who will be paying each one in accord with his acts" (Rom.2:1,5,6). "For there is no partiality with God, for whoever sinned without law, without law also shall perish, and whoever sinned in law, through law will be judged. For not the listeners to law are just with God, but

the doers of law shall be justified" (Rom.2:11,12). ". . . for we previously charge both Jews and Greeks to be all under sin, according as it is written, that 'Not one is just'—not even one. Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God . . . . And the way of peace they do not know" (Rom. 3:9-11,17). By works of law "no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight" (Rom.3:20).

There is no hope for peace in this blunt and crushing charge against humanity, for the race is viewed here as it is in itself apart from what is made known in the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

But once the evangel concerning our Lord is brought into view our spirits are lifted up in joy and peace. First we learn of justification by means of the faithful faith of Jesus Christ unto the death of the cross. Then we learn of a further blessing based upon that of justification. The way of peace toward God has been opened up before us through the death of God's Son.

This is an added grace, which startles us even beyond the astounding revelation of God's righteousness in His achievement of justification. It arises from His heart and expands as the revelation of His love as He pours it out in our hearts. It is an open way of access toward God as our Father, gained by means of Jesus Christ's faith and kept open by Him Whom God has exalted over every power of opposition (*cf* Phil.2:9-11). Hence the apostle even greets his readers with terms that summarize the evangel he was bringing: "Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom.1:7).

ACCESS THROUGH OUR LORD

. . . *through Whom we* [who are believing] *have the access* [toward God] also . . .

The word "access," is literally TOWARD-LEADing in Greek, and thus picks up the thought of peace *toward* God.

It is through Christ as our Lord that the way toward the God of peace (*cp* Rom.15:33; 16:20) lies open before us. The term occurs in only two other passages of Scripture, both times in Ephesians. There Paul presents untraceable riches of Christ which he could not speak of earlier (*cf* 2 Cor.12:4). But still the foundational themes of righteousness and peace centered in Christ, as we find them in Romans, remain vital and vibrant. Addressing believers of the Uncircumcision, who had been far off from access to God in comparison with those of the Circumcision, Paul makes known that we are now brought near *by the blood of Christ.* For *He is our Peace.* And now, *through Him,* we both are given *access in one spirit to the Father* (Eph. 2:11-18). Furthermore, in connection with the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ and the testimony of the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which God makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord, the apostle testifies that we are having boldness and access with confidence, *through His faith* (Eph.3:8-12). The access is to the Father. And it comes about through the faith of Christ Jesus.

So also, the access of Romans 5:2 is to God as Father, Who is the God of peace. Paul describes it in Romans 8 this way: "For you did not get slavery's spirit to fear again, but you got the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying, 'Abba, Father!'" (Rom.8:15). Again he writes, "Now seeing that you are sons, God delegates the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying 'Abba! Father!'" (Gal.4:6). God has given us access to Himself as Father, in which, in the midst of weaknesses and stresses we cry out to Him in the most endearing terms of Fatherhood.

How can this be? If we look at ourselves as we are in our infirmity and offensiveness, like Adam and Eve in Genesis 3, we would retreat and hide in fear. But when we look at what God has given us *through His Son Jesus Christ,*

justified in His blood and conciliated through His death, then all is changed.

Changed? How great is the change? The word "conciliate" means DOWN-CHANGE. God has made this change from enmity to peace. He has made it through the death of His Son. The access is there. The way of peace has been set before us through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who now in His life, at the right hand of God, is pleading for our sakes (*cf* Rom.8:34).

ACCESS BY FAITH

. . . *through Whom we* [who are believing] *have the access* [toward God] *also, by the faith* [of Jesus Christ] . . .

Peace toward God is partnered with and enjoyed in the access toward God as Father which God has provided through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. This access is "by the faith" (Rom.5:2), that is, by the faith referred to in verse 1, out of which we are justified. The preposition "by" is used in the CV of Romans 5:1 to express the literal Greek term "out of" in idiomatic English. It tells us that the faith of Jesus Christ is the *source* of justification. Now in verse 2, the preposition "by" (in lightface type) is used in the CV to express the so-called "dative case" of the Greek. The Greek word for "faith" is spelled in a special way in order to convey certain distinct ideas that cannot be expressed in English without using a preposition. Often a word in the dative case is best expressed in English by adding the preposition "by." (This is called the "instrumental dative.") The instrument, or means of access is the faith (of Jesus Christ). The "by" of verse 1 indicates the source, and the "by" of verse 2 indicates the means. The source of justification and the means for our access to God is faith, and the faith in view in both cases is the faith of Jesus Christ.

What Paul has in mind here in Romans 5:2, is clearly expressed in Ephesians 3:12. To say that the access has

been opened up *through* our Lord, Jesus Christ, and then to add that this is *by* His faith, is not redundant, but clarifying and emphatic. There would be no open way of access to God as the God of peace, apart from the faith-obedience of our Lord. But now, in the stress and turmoil of our lives, *in believing* that Christ died for our sins, and that it is *in Him,* that we have boldness and access to the Father with confidence, peace (as well as joy) is increasingly taking hold of our lives (*cf* Rom.15:13).

STANDING IN GRACE

. . . through our Lord, Jesus Christ . . . we [who are believing] *have the access* [toward God] *also, by the faith* [of Jesus Christ], *into this grace in which we stand . . .*

The verb "stand" expresses stability and readiness, Peace toward God is not a state of drowsiness or flabbiness. It is an alertness apart from outer and inner disturbance and distraction. We stand with full reliance on the living God (*cf* 1 Tim.4:10), Who is the God of peace, Who justifies us out of the faith of Jesus Christ and conciliates us to Himself through the death of His Son.

It is our security and spiritual strength to repeat this evangel. Righteousness and peace are God's favors to us, based not on any deservedness of our own, but on the faith of our Lord as expressed in the shedding of His blood, even in His death. We stand with peace toward God, in access to the Father, as objects of God's grace. We do not stand in any righteousness of our own, not even in any sort of goodness that makes us relatively superior to another sinner. God's grace to us is entirely based on the faith of Jesus Christ.

It is not that one person may not stand out from the crowd in justice, in honesty and kindness and faithfulness. Abel was righteous in comparison with Cain, and Noah in comparison with all others in his generation. So also were Zechariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1:5,6), and this was

"in front of God." But no one can stand before God fully justified and reconciled on the basis of their every act and thought in the flesh. We stand before God in grace. And, finally when all is taken into account, so must Abel and Zechariah and every human being.

But Paul is not writing about the consummation described in 1 Corinthians 15:28 or Colossians 1:20 here, but about what God has granted to us who are believing the evangel today when the results of Christ's faith are not perceptible, and when what is perceptible is solidly against them. It is God's grace that we believe (*cf* Phil.1:29), and what we believe is that we are saved in God's grace by means of His approach present in the giving up of His Son (Eph.2:8) and His Son's faithful giving up of Himself as a sacrifice to God, for a fragrant odor (Eph.5:2).

God's grace to us, in accord with the context of Romans, lies in our justification through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24) and the enjoyment of peace toward God which is established in Christ's death and maintained in His life as our Lord (Rom.5:10).

GLORYING IN EXPECTATION

Being, then, justified out of [Jesus Christ's] *faith, we* [who are believing] *may be having peace toward God . . . and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God.*

Like peace toward God, expectation of the glory of God rests on the foundation of justification. Peace and expectation are coordinate and complementary blessings which the believer may be enjoying. They are both based on the primary blessing of justification which has been secured through the death of Christ as a sin offering. As we may be enjoying peace toward God, so also we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God.

The evangel of God is such that everyone is barred from boasting (glorying) in themselves (Rom.3:27). As sinners

we are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). But as believers who are justified by the faith of Christ we are in a state of expectancy of that which is God's glory. And thus at every point in our lives we may be glorying in this sustaining and uplifting favor from God.

What is the glory of God? It is the brightness and pureness of His righteousness, now manifest to the believer as we believe that we are justified through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. We expect that full appreciation of life's justifying when we will be constituted righteous because of the obedience of our Lord (*cf* Rom.5:18,19). But more than this, the glory of God is the vast, radiating love of the Father commended in the death of His Son for His enemies and fully expressed in the glorious freedom of sonship and deliverance, which we are awaiting in expectation (*cf* Rom.5:8; 8:21-23). Here the glory of God in His favors of righteousness, peace and access and our standing before God will blaze forth beyond our present comprehension. And this is not all, for Ephesians tells of glories beyond those presented here in Romans.

Peace toward God and expectation of His glory are blessings uniquely made available to those who are believing the evangel today. They meet the fears and stresses of our times.

"For I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us" (Rom.8:18).

"So that, my brethren . . . be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: *the Lord is near.* Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and *the peace of God,* that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions *in Christ Jesus*" (Phil.4:1,4-7). D.H.H.

JUSTIFICATION AND CONCILIATION

CONCILIATION is *based* on justification, for, unless the question of sin is settled, there can be no peace. "*Being justified by faith*, we *may* be having peace . . ." (Rom.5:1). The *experience* of peace does not necessarily follow, just as the peace offering which the offerer shared with God, did not necessarily follow the sin offering. Justification is all of God, so is not dependant on us at all. Peace, as explained in the fifth to the seventh chapters of Romans, fluctuates with our flesh, and depends on our apprehension of *grace*. Justification and the sin offering must form its *foundation*, but conciliation itself is a separate and superior grace, which is rooted in the *peace offering*.

Perhaps the best illustration of the differences between justification and reconciliation is found in the last two eons. In the Kingdom eon, the day of Yahweh, justice is administered with a firm hand, but the nations are still kept at a distance from God, and must approach Him through Israel and its ritual. But in the day of God, the final eon, God draws near to all humanity. Israel is no longer a barrier into His presence. God tabernacles with mankind. He no longer withdraws within temple walls. This is the literal new creation which we already possess in spirit (2 Cor. 5:17; Rev.21). But we enjoy *both* of these two eons at one time, for to us the consummations of the eons have already attained (1 Cor.10:11). We already enjoy the grace of justification and the peace of reconciliation, which will eventually be the portion of all.

REPAYMENT

Like a great many Hebrew words, *peace* is a faded figure, such as the English word *under-stand*. If we *stand under* anything we know something about it. So the Hebrew stem of *peace* denotes REPAY. When Joseph's brothers were overtaken with his silver beaker in their sacks, they asked, "Why have you *repaid* evil for good" (Gen.44:4)? If a man's bull killed another bull, the law demanded that he *repay* bull for bull (Ex.21:36). Peace is based upon repayment, on keeping an even balance, so that no one has any cause to complain or create a disturbance.

THE PEACE OFFERING

As conciliation is the restoration of *peace* between God and His creatures, the basic thought was doubtless presented to Israel in their peace offerings (Lev.3). Here, as usual, there must be sacrifice and blood and the identification of the offerer with the victim by the imposition of his hands. It was slain before Yahweh at the portal of the tent of appointment, and the blood sprinkled around on the altar. The fat was fumed as a fire offering with the ascent offering, as a restful smell for Yahweh. All of it did not ascend to Yahweh, however, like the ascent, or burnt, offering, but God *shared* it with the offerer, for peace is a mutual matter, like reconciliation. This sets forth God's attitude toward Israelites alone. It was not for any alien. Conciliation differs in this, that Christ died for *all*, and God is at peace with *all*, and actually asks his enemies to share it with Him. That is the evangel for today. If accepted, there is mutual reconciliation.

THE GRACE WHICH ESTABLISHES

Justification by itself is not the grace which establishes us in settled confidence before God. Peace does that. Justification flows from that which God has *done*; what He *is*, is the basis of peace. We point back to the deliverance wrought by Christ Jesus as the ground of our justification. We look up to the Son of God, pinnacled in highest glory, beyond the reach of death, and to God Himself, Whose Image He is, and find in Him the living, loving Source of peace.

This peace would be impossible without our previous justification before God, but it is a favor immeasurably beyond it. Many of the saints have never known the stability, the solid satisfaction, the exultant joy, which justification by itself cannot produce, but which comes to those who use the "Way" God has provided—Christ Jesus—not only to deal with their sins, but as the road leading to His very presence, giving admission to this far greater grace—the Reconciliation. God's hand has revealed His heart, and He draws us to Himself.

Nor need we fear to respond. Christ Jesus is the Passport by Whom we may approach. We stand secure in Him. For it is through Him "we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand."

OUR EXPECTATION

And what a prospect lies before us! The "glory of God" is our goal. Once we read our sentence thus: "For all sinned and are *wanting* of the glory of God." (Rom.3:23). Yet now it has become our boast in Him. What that glory comprises we may learn as we contemplate the only Man Who never sank below its lofty standard. As high and spotless as the snow-capped mountain peak; as lowly and sweet as the wild forget-me-not; all this we were not, and it was our condemnation; all this we shall be, and shall we not exult? This is our "expectation," our joy; this reaches far beyond the "righteousness" of any human court.

A PATH OF PAIN AND PEACE

Such is our expectation. But what of the path that lies between us and our goal? It is set with trials that oppress; afflictions and distresses that may dim our eyes with tears and blur the engaging vision. Can exultation find a place in such a scene as this? We ask our hearts, by sickness straitened, driven by distress, sinking in a sea of sorrows, and not a sign of His hand to help; and find its only answer in a doubt: "Doth God know?" Are not all these tokens of His displeasure, His indignation, His wrath?

Our rebel heart denies that there is peace. Our traitor heart would breed sedition in the very citadel of Love. O, how it swells and heaves our bosom with tempestuous waves of fear and pain, distrust and unbelief! And is there one whose eyes have scanned these lines, who has not harbored these? And is there one, who, musing in the shadowed hour, has not been galled by chains of dark distrust?

Only One can calm us, and He rises as He did on the Sea of Galilee, and lo! the tempest flees before His face! (Mark 4:37-40). *Be silent, be still!*

He has made peace. Let us, then, be at peace.

SAFE IN THE SON

All the virtue of *Christ's* death abides in the *blood*. Not so with the death of the *Son*. We should not speak of blood in relation to the spiritual separation from God which constituted the death of the Son. No nails, nor spears, could touch the life of the Son of God. He gave the spirit up Himself (John 19:30). This is what His Father had charged Him to do. And so, in place of the blood to plead the value of that death, the Son Himself, alive forevermore, beyond Death's reach, is the assurance of the love-life to which it is the introduction. He is the living love-link which binds us with bonds unbreakable to the Father's heart.

Such was the affection shown us when we were still enemies. But now that His love has subdued our stubborn hearts, we may enter into settled and enduring peace. How little need we fear for future welfare! If such rich favor is dealt out to *enemies*, what shall be the portion of His *friends*!

GLORIOUS DISTINCTIONS

O that we may grasp these precious, these glorious distinctions. We will not exult a whit less in the dying of Christ for sinners, gracing them with strength and righteousness when we discover that the death of God's Son introduces us to the nearer and dearer sphere of God's affections, reconciling God's enemies to Himself. Do we rob Christ's blood of aught of its abiding value when we point beyond it to the living Son at God's right hand? The blood spells safety; but the life illumines love. There has not been enough stress laid upon Christ's blood—but alas! The life of the Son has almost been forgotten and with it the truth of which it speaks.

Let us preach Christ crucified for sinners, but let us not forget to implore God's enemies in view of the death of His Son! Let us set forth God's righteousness which is secured for us by Christ's death, but let us not ignore the Conciliation which flows from the death of His Beloved.

Let us point to the blood and banish every fear! But let us also disclose the living, loving Son, whose *life* is pledged to all who know the *peace* His death provides.

Christ for sinners; God's Son for enemies! Christ for righteousness; God's Son for reconciliation! The blood of Christ for safety; the life of God's Son for love! Such are God's glorious distinctions. A. E. Knoch

(The preceding article has been extracted from two studies appearing in *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.4, pp.71-87; and vol.45, pp.27-46.)

INDEX TO VOLUME C

Adam Died . . . 91
Accord with the Scriptures, In . . . 37,91
Beneficent Divine Providence, A . . . 67
Commendation of God's Love, The . . . 135
Conciliated through the Death of God's Son . . . 215
Concordant Studies . . . 7,21,53,79,103,113,147,164,197,225,246
Divine Assumptions, The . . . 79
Expectation is not Mortifying . . . 11
Glorying in God . . . 271
God's Deity in Judgment . . . 7
God's Love in the Death of Christ . . . 57
"Holy Kiss," A . . . 123
Human in Creation and Resurrection, The . . . 113
Justified in Christ's Blood . . . 185
Keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the Midst of Confusion . . . 173
Mystery of Evil, The . . . 86
Not for All is the Faith . . . 24
Obituaries: D. Carleton 163, H. Jones 122, S. Russ 144,
J. Thompson 85, J. Tonn 163
Paul the Pessimist . . . 21
Paul to the Romans . . . 11,57,135,185,215,271
Perceiving the Grace of God . . . 279
Prayer and the Deity of God . . . 229
Prophecy and History . . . 263
Psalm 22 . . . 37
Questions and Answers . . . 25,67,123,173,229,279
Rock was Christ, The . . . 128
Sin and Death . . . 53
What is Death? . . . 197
What is God's Goal? . . . 246
What is Mankind? . . . 103
What is Offense? . . . 225
What is Spirit? . . . 164
What is the Soul? . . . 147
Whose End is Destruction . . . 30

Unsearchable Riches

**A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our Centennial Year

(1909–2009)

Contents:

2 "The Glory Effulgent"
3 Editorial
7 God's Deity in Judgment
11 Expectation is Not Mortifying
21 Paul the Pessimist
25 "Not for All is the Faith"
"Whose End is Destruction"
37 Psalm 22

JANUARY, 2009

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For God and His
Word

VOLUME C

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The Glory Effulgent

Brightness of eonian glory
Shall Thy praise unuttered lie?
Who would hush the heavenly story
Of the One Who came to die?

Crowned the Head of all creation,
Thou didst lay Thy glory low—
Curse-crowned Calv'ry's alienation—
Endless praises ceaseless flow!

Sing His bless'd triumphant rising,
See Him on His Father's throne;
Sing, till heaven and earth surprising,
Reigns the Nazarene alone!

Sing of sin, of God offended,
Death—which cannot Him appall,
For these sorrows shall be ended
When His God is All in All!

Sing His reconciliation,
God and man in friendship sweet;
Sing the august consummation,
When His work is all complete.

Sing His love, surpassing story,
Love abiding, love above
Every attribute and glory—
Sing Himself, The Son of Love!

Universal His creation;
Universal its recall;
Blood-bought reconciliation,
Makes the Father all in all!

-adapted from Robert Robinson

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2009
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

EDITORIAL

"It is with a sense of deep gratitude to God that we send forth the first number of this Magazine in the interest of a rightly apportioned Word.

"The truth which we endeavor to make known through these pages is one which thus far has been sadly ignored, but which is a stimulus to deeper Bible study, opens up the treasures of God's Grace and the resources of His multifarious Wisdom, and discloses endless vistas into time and eternity, both past and future."

With these words, *Unsearchable Riches* was introduced to the public in October 1909. The editors were Vladimir M. Gelesnoff (1877-1922) and A. E. Knoch (1874-1965). Now the present editors send out this five hundred and ninety-fifth number, the first issue of Volume 100, no less sincerely *with a sense of deep gratitude to God.*

How can it be otherwise? In his closing words to Timothy, the apostle Paul urged his young fellow worker: "Herald the word. Stand by it, opportunely, inopportunely, expose, rebuke, entreat, with all patience and teaching" (2 Tim.4:2). Then he added, "Yet you be sober in all things; suffer evil as an ideal soldier of Christ Jesus; do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim.4:5). If we can participate in any way in such a heralding and evangelizing, we can only say, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity!" (2 Cor.9:15).

Brother Gelesnoff probably had Paul's charge to Timothy in mind when he referred to this magazine's mission as being in the interest of a rightly apportioned ("correctly cut" CV) Word. This can be seen in his article, *Paul, the Pessimist,"* originally appearing in volume 2 and adapted for this present issue (pages 21-24). It is our principal con-

cern to "explore the boundless treasures of grace" as our apostle delivered them over to us in his epistles. The evangel of God concerning His Son (Rom.1:1-5, see the article beginning on page 11), and what Paul termed the secret of the evangel (*cf* Rom.16:25; Eph.6:19,20) and especially the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ concerning the multifarious wisdom of God (Eph.3:8-11) are all components of Paul's distinctive apostleship which have been "sadly ignored" and which this magazine has endeavored to make known from its beginning. May God give us grace to continue this effort.

With this in view we plan to give renewed attention in this one hundredth volume to such themes of Paul's writings as presented in past issues of our magazine and as they continue to call for our attention. To repeat and reconsider such matters is for our *security (cp* Phil.3:1) in the present perilous times and for our joy and peace in believing (*cp* Rom.15:13). Yet not simply, repetition, but we pray for growth in the realization of God and increasing perception of what He has done for us in Christ (*cf* Eph.1:15-23).

Fundamental to a realization of God is the principle that "out of Him and through Him and for Him is all" (Rom. 11:36). In accord with this Paul writes in Ephesians 1:11 that God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. That this includes God's use of "vessels of indignation" (*cf* Rom.9:22) and their judgment is the theme of the article starting on page 7, compiled from two of Brother A. E. Knoch's early writings entitled, "God is God," and "The Deity of God."

It is as a part of a definite minority that we have maintained that God is the Creator of evil (*cf* Isa.45:7), intending it as the dark background for the appreciation of good. The great test of this is the cross of Christ, which far from being unforeseen by God was in fact an essential part of His purpose. This has often been the theme of articles

in this magazine, and is taken up here in the study on Psalm 22. Whether the forsakenness of Christ on the cross and the loss of all communion with His God in death, or God's deliverance of His Son unto power and glory, God is the One doing it.

The hymn preceding this editorial is based on one written by Robert Robinson in the eighteenth century, adapted with additional stanzas by A. E. Knoch. It was the first poem to appear in *Unsearchable Riches* (vol.3, p.184) and reprinted here as worded in our book of *Scriptural Songs.* It begins with praise to our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, in the words of Hebrews 1:3, is the Effulgence of God's glory. Brother Robinson expressed this reference to God's Son as, "Brightness of *eternal* glory," which Brother Knoch changed to "Brightness of *eonian* glory. For many this would seem to be a diminishing of the glory of God as it is radiated by our Lord. But our longtime readers will understand the correctness of using the English word "eonian" for the Greek word *aiōnios.* The Scriptures do not take up the philosophical concept of eternity, but rather speak of eons and that which pertains to them. God's glory surely exceeds the eons, but we would see it as it is reflected by His Son during the eons as they are presented in Scripture.

In saying this, a note of criticism may be implied in reference to Brother Gelesnoff's words about disclosing "endless vistas into time and eternity." It was not long before both editors saw the wisdom of discarding such unsound expressions as "time and eternity," which draw attention away from things of consequence to vain speculation. The result has been that the magazine has been able, as few other publications have been, to distinguish between such *processes* as the experience of evil and God's works of judgment and the *goals* of justification and reconciliation in God's purpose of the eons (Eph.3:11).

The concern for the use of the sound words and the

sound teaching of God's Word has led of course to the work involved in preparing a "concordant" version of the Scriptures. This is an ongoing endeavor which still leads to the opening of new insights into the meaning of scriptural terms. (Perhaps my suggestions about the word "forsake" in this issue may lead in this direction.) Similarly, the principles of "concordant" translation give support to sane and careful investigations into the meanings of "difficult" passages of Scripture, such as Jim Coram's remarks concerning 2 Thessalonians 3:2 and 2 Corinthians 11:15 (pages 25-36).

So we are thankful for this centennial year of the publication of *Unsearchable Riches,* looking back at earlier contributions and carrying them forward as God gives us insight and strength. Indeed these are perilous periods. Consequently, we find the words of 1 Timothy 4:10 very welcome and faithful and timely: We rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all, yet in a special way of us who are believing in these days when many are turning away from the faith and are turning aside to myths.

During 2009, in honor of this our centennial year, instead of our customary two-color cover, we are printing the cover of our magazine, as in 1909, in black only, on which the title words, *Unsearchable Riches,* are reproduced exactly as they appeared on our first issue.

Work has been proceeding on our index to the words used in the *Concordant Version of the Old Testament,* as keyed to *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance.* We hope to make this available by the middle of this year. Yet also we are not neglecting the insertion of needed revisions and corrections for the CVOT itself. In reference to this project we do appreciate suggestions and corrections from our readers, and solicit the prayers of all.

D.H.H.

GOD'S DEITY IN JUDGMENT

GOD is *God*. He is supreme. Everything has its source in Him, takes its course through Him, and will finally endorse Him in highest excellence.

He brings all things into line with the advice offered by His own determination. "Who gauges the spirit of Yahweh and is informing Him as a man of His counsel? With whom does He take counsel? And who is giving Him understanding, is teaching Him in judgment's path, is teaching Him knowledge, and is informing Him the way of understanding? Or, who has given to Him first, and it shall be repaid to him?" (Isa.40:13,14). And not only could He go to no one else for counsel, but He yields to no one in the execution of His will. He said to Moses, ". . . 'I shall be merciful to whomever I may be merciful, and I shall be pitying whomever I may be pitying.' Consequently, then, it is not of him who is willing, nor of him who is racing, but of God, the Merciful" (Rom.9:15,16; *cf* Ex.33:19). All else is confusion—causeless, incurable chaos.

Thus He deals in grace. He is as solitary and supreme as ever He was before the eons began, when there were no wills that dare dispute His own. So, also, in judgment. "For this selfsame thing I rouse you up, so that I should be displaying in you My power, and so that My name should be published in the entire earth" (Rom.9:17). Truly, then, whom He will, He is merciful, but (just as truly) whom He will, He is hardening (Rom.9:18).

HUMAN PROTEST

But some will protest, "Why, then, is He still blaming? For who has withstood His intention?" What is the spir-

it's answer to such insolence? "*O man*! who are *you*, to be sure, who are answering again to God? That which is molded will not protest to the molder, 'Why do you make me thus?' Or has not the potter the right over the clay, out of the same kneading to make one vessel, indeed, for honor, yet one for dishonor?" (Rom.9:19).

We repeat the question, suiting it to the circumstances attending the exodus out of Egypt. "If God purposed that Pharaoh should resist His mandate, why did He plague Egypt and drown Pharaoh's host in the Red Sea for doing what He had planned that they should do?" God Himself replies that it was done to display His indignation and to make His power known (Rom.9:22). And who dares to question His right to do as He wills with His own?

But for those who bow before His divine Majesty, there is a complete and satisfactory solution of the apparent moral obloquy which seems to cling to such arbitrary despotism. Our mistake lies in this, that we take a small segment of God's dealings with Pharaoh as a public character and treat it as though it were the complete cycle of His dealings with him as an individual.

Orthodoxy insists that the die is cast at death. According to its teachings Pharaoh was not only coerced into rebellion against God at the exodus, but he has consciously suffered for his sin ever since, and will do so for all eternity. The annihilationist view is far more merciful to Pharaoh, for he does not receive any punishment in death and suffers extinction of being after enduring the penalty of his acts. The revolt against God's deity has its roots in these unreasonable and irreconcilable doctrines of human destiny.

Once we allow God to complete the broken record of Pharaoh's life it is easy to justify Him and it is easy for God to justify Pharaoh. The great king is not suffering now, before he appears in the judgment to be sentenced. When he does stand before the great white throne, his

sentence will be just, in accord with his deeds. The judgment will be, not merely penal, but corrective and remedial. Its end will be death, in which there is no suffering or consciousness of time.

So far as Pharaoh's conscious experience is concerned, his death is immediately followed by his resurrection, and ushers him into the judgment. If he was drowned in the waters of the Red sea he loses all trace of time till he awakens before the great white throne. The judgment is not simply to condemn. Its object is to set right what is wrong. The greatest wrong is his attitude toward God. In the presence of Christ and the awful throne this will be corrected. By means of the blood of Christ his life will be justified (Rom.5:18).

We do not believe in the theological denial of death embodied in the formula "Sudden death, sudden glory." There is no glory for us until the resurrection. The silence of the Scriptures and the palpable obscurity of theologians should be sufficient to convince anyone on this point. Nevertheless, since the dead know not anything (Ecc.9:5), this statement is true so far as they are aware. In their conscious experience, the moment of repose coincides with the moment of awakening.

Pharaoh dies the second death, yet to him it is quite as if he entered at once into the unutterable glory of the consummation. Through water he enters into the resurrection. Through fire he enters vivification. Thus he is justified, vivified and reconciled. He is a notable example of those whom God locks up in stubbornness (Rom. 11:32). In his case, as in all others, it is done, not to lead to his eternal condemnation, but that God may be merciful to him. Christ, Who taught His disciples to love their enemies, will display the richness of His heart and the efficacy of His blood, in the reconciliation of the invisible sovereignties which He created (Col.1:16,20).

It is quite fitting that those who hold to eternal torment or annihilation should object to God's deity. They reason in a circle. Because all are not saved He is not God. He is not God because all are not saved. But they should not load us with *their* problems. We who see the grand ultimate are enabled to acknowledge His Godhood. Eternal torment either deifies the devil or transforms God Himself into a fiend. Annihilation somewhat softens the harshness of His injustice, yet insists on Satan's supremacy. No one can be held by either of these doctrines or any intermediate scheme of human destiny and acknowledge the full deity of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is operating the universe in accord with the counsel of His own loving adamantine will.

It is only as we see His supreme success at the consummation, when He will be All in all His creatures, that we are able to grasp the great truth of the deity of God. Only then can we turn back to the beginning and see Him supreme. Only then can we look above the clouds and see Him ride the storm. Only then can we believe Him when He says (Isa.45:6-9):

I am Yahweh, and there is no other,
Former of light, and Creator of darkness,
Maker of good, and Creator of evil:
I, Yahweh, make all these things,
Drip down from above, heavens,
And let the skies distill righteousness:
Let the earth open up, let salvation bud,
And let righteousness sprout together with it;
I, Yahweh, I create it.
Would anyone contend with his Former?
Earthenware of the ground with its artificer?

A. E. Knoch

The preceding article is edited and excerpted from two earlier studies: "God is God," vol.2, p.207; and "The Deity of God," vol.16, pp.157-170.

EXPECTATION IS NOT MORTIFYING

ON THE BASIS OF the evangel of justification by the faith of Jesus Christ, Paul takes us to peace and expectation (Rom. 5:1,2). These are the rich blessings every believer may be enjoying every day, under every circumstance of life. But they are not gained by anything we do. They rest on the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. The solid foundation of peace toward God and expectation of His glory is the death, entombment and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Peace toward God is of utmost importance. Human irreverence and unrighteousness create a barrier between God and mankind, building up to a day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God (*cf* Rom.1:18-2:5). On the basis of human acts, no flesh at all can stand justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20). But the evangel tells of the faith of Jesus Christ, Who died for sinners, and on this basis God will be displayed as the Just Justifier (Rom.3:26). Yet even beyond this, on the basis of the death of His Son for His enemies God has conciliated the world to Himself (Rom.5:10; 2 Cor.5:19), and ultimately, on this same basis of the blood of Christ's cross, all will be reconciled to Him (Col.1:20).

But what of today? Justification and conciliation have a unique significance at present even while unrighteousness and enmity still infuse the world of dying humanity. On the basis of the faith of Jesus Christ, the believer is reckoned righteous and granted access to God as Father, to stand in grace before Him in peace (Rom.5:1,2).

Yet also, beyond this, the believer may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:2). Added to the

blessing of peace toward God, being enjoyed as an accompaniment of believing the evangel, is the ongoing enjoyment of expectation of all the good which constitutes the glory of God.

No human being is so privileged and blessed as one who is believing the evangel of God concerning His Son. This evangel is truly operative in the believer, both for the present and for the life to come, as a source of power from God for salvation (*cf* Rom.1:16).

With this in mind, we turn again to the opening words of Romans 5, arranging the passage as follows:

ROMANS 5:1-5

A. Being, then, justified out of faith,
  B. we may be having **peace** toward God through our Lord, Jesus Christ,
    1. through Whom we have the access also, by the faith,
    2. into this grace in which we stand,
  B. and we may be glorying in **expectation** of the glory of God.
    1. Yet not only so, but we may be glorying also in afflictions,
    2. having perceived that affliction is producing endurance,
    3. yet endurance testedness,
    4. yet testedness, expectation.
  B. Now **expectation** is not mortifying,
A. seeing that the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is being given to us.

The evangel of God concerning His Son is set before us in verse 1 by the words "justified by faith" (that is, "by [Christ's] faith") and again in verse 5 by the words "the love

of God." Thus the passage begins and ends with distinct versions of the evangel, first designating it as a message centered upon Christ's faith and then upon God's love.

In between, as we have noted, Paul directs attention to two particular blessings, based on this evangel of God, which the believer may be enjoying today in every circumstance. *Peace toward God* is built on justification by means of the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for us. So also is the blessing of the *expectation of the glory of God.* But now also, Paul connects expectation directly with the evangel as an expression of the love of God.

By commending the love of God to us, and as God's spirit enlightens our hearts, the evangel assures us that we will indeed be participants of the glory of God. The revelation that God loves us so much that He gave His Son to die for our justification is the solid basis of our expectation. This expectation will not let us down.

NOT ONLY SO

Even as Paul elaborated on the blessing of peace toward God by relating it to the provisions of access to God and our stand in grace, in verse 2, so now in verses 3 and 4 he expands on the blessing of expectation by relating it to our present experiences. Affliction, leading to endurance and testedness are experiences given by God, not requirements in order to be brought into the glory of God. They are not the basis of expectation, but they deepen our appreciation of the grace of expectation and energize us in holding fast to what God has said about the good He has prepared for us in the future.

Affliction will come, but the believer is in a position to be greatly benefited by troubles and oppositions. Such experiences are especially effective in drawing our attention to what we are believing. Its effect on believers is to make the word God has spoken to us more meaningful.

Consequently, as we come face to face with things that disturb and distress us, we are given strength for endurance by taking into account the pattern of God's operations as revealed in the evangel:

"Wherefore we are not despondent, but even if our outward man is decaying, nevertheless, that within us is being renewed day by day. For the momentary lightness of our affliction is producing for us a transcendently transcendent eonian burden of glory, at our not noting what is being observed, but what is not being observed, for what is being observed is temporary, yet what is not being observed is eonian" (2 Cor.4:16-18).

From an outward viewpoint, our experiences testify against any hope for justification and being glorified. Nevertheless, the evangel testifies that God is working all together for good:

"Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God, who are called according to the purpose that, whom He foreknew, He designates beforehand, also, to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. Now whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls, these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these He glorifies also" (Rom.8:28-30).

SUFFERINGS GRACIOUSLY GRANTED

Indeed for the believer there is special affliction. "For to you it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also" (Phil.1:29; *cp* 2 Tim.3:12). What we believe is contrary to human wisdom and dangerous to entrenched philosophy. The evangel speaks of what God has done, not of what we must do. And what God has done is centered on the *death* of the Deliverer, not the vigor of His life. "We are heralding Christ crucified, to Jews, indeed, a snare, yet

to the nations stupidity" (1 Cor.1:23). "In grace, through [Christ's] faith, are you saved, *and this is not out of you*" (Eph.2:8). These are revolutionary words, and they invite opposition which adds to the groaning and travail of human suffering in the current era (*cf* Rom.8:18-23).

The expectation of the glory of God does not replace afflictions, but rather, for the believer living in the present, wicked eon, this expectation becomes more valuable by afflictions. Accepting that God gives us afflictions, and He does so for a good purpose, we find that they strengthen us with *endurance* and *testedness*, and this whole process intensifies our sense of expectation.

SURE AND CERTAIN HOPE

Hence, for those who are believing the evangel, the effect of the experience of affliction is endurance and testedness and a strengthening of expectation. The future enjoyment of the glory of God becomes more sure and certain to those who are accepting and retaining the evangel that Christ died for their sins. The believer gets the point of Romans 8:32. "Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" If God loves us so much that He has done this for us, then He will certainly bring us to the glory of righteousness and peace of which His evangel speaks.

That does not mean this assurance will stay with us day in and day out. The fiery arrows of the Adversary keep coming our way, yet they are extinguished by the large shield of faith (Eph.6:16). The helmet of the expectation of salvation follows the putting on of the cuirass of faith and love (1 Thess.5:8). When we are cast down by the opposition or coolness to attempts to share the evangel, let us realize that it is graciously granted to us to participate in experiences similar to those experienced by our

Lord in His rejection and death (*cp* 1 Cor.9:23; 2 Cor.1: 7,4:8-11; Phil.1:29).

NOT MORTIFYING

Life is filled with disappointments. What we hope for does not often come about. But God Himself, through His holy spirit, has set an expectation of righteousness and peace and glory in our hearts, and He has founded it on the gift of His love in giving His Son for sinners. This is not a thing of uncertainty. This is not a conditional matter. It is settled. It is sure to be realized and enjoyed.

Paul's words here in Romans 5:5, "expectation is not mortifying," reiterate the testimony of many others throughout Scripture in times of darkness and trouble. When David felt forsaken by God he focused on the experience of the fathers who trusted in Him and were not put to shame (Psa. 22:4,5).[1] Again he sang out of the distresses of his heart, lifting his soul in prayer, saying, "My Elohim, in You have I trusted. Do not let me be ashamed; Do not let my enemies be glad over me. Indeed, all expecting You shall not be ashamed" (Psa.25:2,3). Similarly, the psalmist prayed to Yahweh, "Support me according to Your promise that I may live, and let me not be put to shame because of my hopefulness" (Psa.119:116).

Paul may have had Isaiah 28:16 especially in mind, for he cites that passage later in Romans 9:33 where he has the expectation of Israel in view: ". . . the one believing shall not be put to shame." Further, in a time of increasing national deterioration and fearful warning of desolation and travail ahead for Israel, Isaiah was led to say, "Do not fear, for you shall not be shamed! And do not be mortified, for you shall not be abashed" (Isa.54:4). In faith, in trust and in expectation, anchored in God's word to us,

1. *cf* the article on Psalm 22 in this issue.

we will never be put to shame. What He has declared will come to pass will surely come to pass.

THE BASIS OF EXPECTATION

What is the basis of this assurance? Is it simply that God is faithful to His word?—that God is so powerful that He can and will do everything He has promised to do?—that God is so wise that He can work everything out exactly as He has declared?—that God is love and will not rest until He achieves the full expression of His love? Yes indeed! But for us who are believing the evangel, that is not enough. The evangel is not a message that simply affirms the deity of God, His power and wisdom and righteousness and faithfulness and love. The whole manifestation of God as God, and the complete carrying out of His will of righteousness and love rests on His giving up of His Son to the death of the cross.

The evangel trains us in such a way that we do not think of God's love or power or wisdom or any of His glories without seeing them in relation to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If we consider God's power in relation to His work of creation, for instance, we find that passages such as 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; 5:14-21 and Colossians 1:9-20 add much vital information to that given in Genesis 1. God makes His power, righteousness, wisdom, faithfulness and love known through His evangel concerning His Son.

Israel was given much that pointed to Christ, the sacrifices and unique experiences of affliction and deliverance, besides the more direct words of the prophets. But they did not have the evangel given to us.

Isaiah 28:16 speaks of Christ, and the assurance of Isaiah 54:4 is built upon the prophecies of the afflicted Christ given in Isaiah 53. In type, Psalm 22 speaks of the sufferings of Christ on the cross, and then of God's faithful

and glorious answer to His prayer for deliverance (verses 19-21). The trust and expectation of Israel will not be a source of mortification, for the great Antitype of David was forsaken and smitten of Elohim, wounded because of their transgressions and crushed because of their depravities, so that they would be healed (Isa.53:4,5). Yet this was not made plain, and could not be until the work given to Christ was accomplished.

THE BELIEVER'S ASSURANCE

The Greek word translated "mortify" in Romans 5:5 is sometimes rendered "disgrace" in the CV. God will be mortifying those who look to human wisdom and strength for deliverance rather than to the word of the cross (1 Cor. 1:27). But those whose expectation is established by and centered in the evangel of God's love (which declares that Christ died for sinners) will not be disgraced in this expectation (*cp* Rom.9:33; 10:11). We are assured of this because it rests on God's love, not simply on a feeling of love, but love as expressed in action. It is love as demonstrated in giving up His Son to death on our behalf. God's love is not an abstract theory but an actual glory that is exhibited in the definite operation of the giving up of His Son for the sake of sinners. That love is the ground of our expectation. It is our assurance, in every experience of our lives, that we will be enjoying the righteousness and peace and all that glorifies God.

THE LOVE OF GOD POURED OUT

The love of God is perceived in Christ's death for sinners. "God is commending *this love of His* to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). This is God's astounding message to us. This is the *evangel* [WELL-MESSAGE] of God concerning His Son. In this message centered in the death of God's righteous Son, God's righteousness is revealed. And in this message concerning God's giving up of His beloved Son, God's love is expressed.

We need this message.

How does this evangel commend God's love in such a way that our hearts are filled with that love? It is a love unparalleled. We repeat: It is the love of God in not sparing His Son and of giving Him up for our sakes. Let us pause so that we get this right. It is not the love of giving Himself up for our sakes. If God could have died it would have meant the end of everything. But He could not have died, for He is God. There was only One Whose death would do us any good, and that is the death of the One in Whom we were created (Col.1:16), so that the old creation might be put to death and all be vivified in Him (1 Cor.15:22).

The love of God proclaimed in the evangel is His love in giving up His beloved Son for the sake of those creatures described in Romans 1:18-3:20. It is the love that called for God to forsake His Son, remaining silent and unresponsive while He suffered and finally gave over His spirit to the Father and died. The "hurt" (*cp* Gen.3:15) suffered by Christ in this loss is incalculable. How, then, can we speak of the cost to His God and Father?

No wonder that Paul uses the verb "pour out" here. God does not simply love us. He pours out His love in our hearts. When used of wine coming out of bursted wine skins, this verb is translated "spill" (Matt.9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37). There it speaks of a sudden release of what had been bottled up. It is as though God could not hold back His love any longer. It had been stored away long enough.

In His evangel God says to us: Let the light of My love be poured into your hearts!

Now may the spirit of God vibrate over the darkness of our hearts so that this light of His love may flow in all its abundance into them.

It is this overflowing love of God that is the solid rock of our expectation.

THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

The holy spirit is the spirit of God. It is first spoken of in Genesis 1:2 as the connecting link between darkness and the word of God, in which Elohim said: "Let light come to be!" Here in Romans 5:5, it is the connecting link between humanity as sinners who are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23) and the believing of God's word in which He says: "Christ died for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). It is that invisible power for enlightenment which comes direct from God into the heart (the seat of intelligence and appreciation) of the believer.

It is the evangel that is the word of God in view here. The spirit of God vibrates over the darkness of our hearts so that what God has said to us is being believed, and thus His love is being received.

There are plenty of reasons in our lives to feel distressed and cast down (2 Cor.4:8,9). But for us as believers, despite the darkness all around us and in us, despite our own weaknesses and failures, despite the chaos of events and human thinking, despite all this, we are expecting that God is bringing all to righteousness and peace. He is doing this apart from any contribution from us. He is doing this on the basis of the death of His beloved Son, Who died for our sakes while we were still sinners. This is the love which He pours out in our hearts and commends to us in His evangel, and which expands to vast dimensions as we grow in realization of the blessings He gives us in Christ (*cf* Eph.1:15-23).

With such a strong and sure foundation of love we may be certain that our expectation will not be left unrealized. The expectation of the glory of God is not mortifying.

D.H.H.

PAUL THE PESSIMIST

To be a pessimist in this age concerning the things of the world is equivalent to being looked upon as was one of God's servants in olden time, of whom it was said: "I hate him, for at no time has he prophesied good for me, but rather evil" (1 Kings 22:8), and of whom the apostate king spoke when he commanded: "Put this one in the house of detention, and feed him with bread of oppression and water of oppression" (1 Kings 22:27).

Pauline doctrine in respect to the last days is intensely pessimistic. He has no word of praise for the gigantic achievements of modern intellect, no intimation of his having the slightest hope because of the attainments in mechanical art of the present age. His teaching concerning man in his relation to things mental, political, moral, or ecclesiastical, may be summed up in his words to Timothy: "Now this know, that in the last days *perilous periods* will be present" (2 Tim.3:1).

How completely Paul was outside the currents of modern life and thought may be gathered from a comparison of his words just quoted with the words of those representative of present day affairs. The leaders in twentieth century philosophy, and twentieth century theology, unite in pronouncing the present era to be a *glorious age.* Thus their judgment is a decided negative to the declaration of the apostle. Who, then, is right?

The answer is to be found in the records of human history. But to which page in the register shall we turn? Let us find in Scripture an indication of the method which will

lead us most quickly to the result desired. "No fig tree, my brethren, can produce olives, nor a grapevine figs" (James 3:12). The thought of James is this: "As the root, so shall the fruit be." With this in mind, we proceed at once to the root of human history, and turn to the beginning of things to learn the moral value of these same things, in their end. If the fountain be bitter, its waters cannot, of necessity, be sweet. If the seed sown be thistle, of it we cannot gather the fragrant blossoms of the rose.

We would here ask the reader to carefully peruse the record of man's doings, found in Genesis 4. The record is not embellished in any way; the words chosen are few and simple; the writer's feelings are not once seen; hence the account given is ideally historic. Now, what we learn from history is this: That the present achievements of man, the modern attainments of his science, the latest products of his art—all had their origin in that portion of the race which started out with its back towards God, its face towards destruction, and which, ultimately, was wiped off the face of the earth in the waters of the deluge. Here we learn that the first poet was a bigamist, and the first song that ever came from the lips of man was a praise of murder and of crime. The foundations of the first city were laid by an architect whose hands were crimsoned by his brother's gore.

The notable pessimist of such an age of "progress"—the "Paul" of the day, so to speak—was found in Enoch. We read of him that, notwithstanding the artifices in brass and iron, or the sweet strains of skilled musicians, or the adept poets of his day, he prophesied thus: "Behold! the Lord cometh!" He who "walked with God," knew God's thoughts of the advanced science of his times, estimated it in the light of sanctuary values, and pronounced judgment upon the whole.

In the account of the antediluvian age, we read of culture, science, invention, art, and progress, but not of God. Hence, in these last days, history is but repeating itself. Man has quarried the rocks, and read the records of prehistoric worlds, and boasts of the greatness of his geology. He harnesses the powers of nature to his chariot and prates of his inventive genius. He sweeps the heaven with his eye, numbers the stars, weighs the planets, and ends by saying that in these days, "the heavens declare the glories of Kepler and Newton." God is barred and bolted from His universe, hurled from His throne, and man would fain encircle his brow with the diadem of the Omnipotent One. Perilous times indeed.

Let us glance at a threefold description of these times of peril. First, from 2 Timothy 4:3, we learn that they are times of "heaped teachers"; next, from James 5:3, times of "heaped treasures"; and lastly, from Romans 2:5, times of "hoarded indignation." It is not necessary to point out that the "heaped teachers" teach not concerning the "hoarded indignation"; they are too optimistic about human abilities to deal with such matters! Neither is it necessary to point out that the "heaped treasures" redeem not from the indignation piled up.

But what of Paul's attitude towards this state of things? What manner of conduct did he enjoin upon the servants of God? Three words contain the answer: "Herald the word." Is there injustice abroad? Herald the word. Is Righteousness bleeding in the dust, and Wrong triumphant on the throne? Herald the word. Those who herald the word today are the real "apostolic succession." The "sword of the spirit" is the only weapon which Paul can commend to the Christian warrior. Hence in his letter to Timothy he puts a threefold emphasis upon the Word:

The Word *inspired* (2 Tim.3:16,17).
The Word *correctly cut* (2 Tim.2:15).
The Word *heralded* (2 Tim.4:2).

But let the reader note that it is to be heralded, not only because it is inspired, but because it must be correctly cut; not only because it is authoritative, but because it must be understood. While the world, then, is delving deep into the treasures of nature, let the ecclesia explore the boundless treasures of grace. While the world hastes on to its "hoarded indignation," let those called out of its corruption enter into the present enjoyment of the riches of His grace and glory untold. Here is the place for optimism—in reliance on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all (1 Tim.4:10).

If we have noted Paul's pessimism, and pointed out his method, we cannot close without referring to his experience. In him we see the result of being severely scriptural. The path of faithfulness trodden by Paul was by no means a path of roses. It was:

A path of suffering (2 Tim.1:12).
A path of imprisonment (2 Tim.2:9).
A path of persecution (2 Tim.3:11).
A path of abandonment (2 Tim.4:10,16).
A path to the lions (2 Tim.4:17).

If you would be successful, preach anything that gets the people. If you would be faithful, herald the Word.

Let us then plead for pessimists to take the field against the forces of human optimism. Pessimists who will not have one single good thing to say of the soulish man. Pessimists who, Paul-like, will own to having "no confidence in the flesh." Pessimists who can see but one place for the old-Adam flesh, and that place the cross of Calvary, and who will gladly acknowledge that "good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh)."

"Perilous Periods"!
"Herald the Word"!

Vladimir Gelesnoff

"NOT FOR ALL IS THE FAITH"; "WHOSE END IS DESTRUCTION"

Question:

I would appreciate your comments on the whole of 2 Thessalonians 3:1, 2: "Furthermore, pray, brethren, concerning us, that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified, according as it is with you also, and that we should be rescued from abnormal and wicked men, for not for all is the faith." I am especially interested in your thoughts on the final phrase of this passage, "for not for all is the faith," as it reads in the Concordant Version. Yet the Authorized Version reads, "for all men have not faith." What is the apostle Paul actually saying here?

Answer:

HERE Paul begins with the word "furthermore," which in this case is to say, "In addition to heeding what I have just previously stated, be doing what I am about to say as well." What the apostle had stated just previously was:

"Now we ought to be thanking God always concerning you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, seeing that God prefers you from the beginning for salvation, in holiness of the spirit and faith in the truth, into which He also calls us through our evangel, for the procuring of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently, then, brethren, stand firm, and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, whether through word or our epistle. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, our Father, Who loves us, and is giving us an eonian consolation and a good expectation in grace, be consoling your hearts and establish you in every good work and word" (2 Thess.2:13-17).

However, we cannot very well fulfill our duty here, doing what we ought to do, unless we first of all *believe* that what Paul says here is true. What he says is that "God *prefers you from the beginning for salvation . . . .*" Hence, "we ought to be thanking God always," accordingly that this is so.

This revelation is in accord with the fact that "God saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and *the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian*" (2 Tim.1:9), as well as the fact that "[God] *chooses us* in [Christ] *before the disruption of the world*" (Eph.1:4).

May we indeed, then, as those who *believe* our apostle's testimony here, be *thanking* God *always* that, "from the beginning," He *preferred us for salvation,* "in holiness of the spirit and faith in the truth, into which He also calls us through our evangel, for the procuring of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

We would especially note as well that it is "our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, our Father, Who loves us," to Whom Paul appeals, to "establish [us] in every good work and word" (2 Thess.2:17). Clearly, it is the work of our Lord Jesus Christ as well as that of God, our Father, to establish us in every good work and word. We need to realize, then, that it is *not our work*—our "job"—to achieve this end. When the goal in view here, that of our having been established in every good work and word, is realized, the achievement thereof will be the work of Jesus Christ and God, our Father, *alone.*

It is at this juncture that Paul declares, "*Furthermore,* pray, brethren, concerning us, that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified, according as it is with you also" (2 Thess.3:1). There is a great need for us earnestly to *pray* on behalf of those who are heralding the word, "that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified." The sense of the word "that" here is not that of the demonstrative

pronoun (*touto,* THE-SAME; "this" for something near and "that" for something at a distance), as if Paul's intent were for us merely to *declaim* "the following" words, expressed as a wish, here necessarily transposed, "May the word of the Lord race and be glorified."

Instead, the force of the word "that" which is used here (*hina*) is that of a conjunction introducing the logical result in view, that is to say, "in order that" or "so that." We are to understand, then, by Paul's words here that we are to be persevering (*cf* Rom.12:12) in *prayer* on behalf of those who are heralding the word—making our requests known to God for their sakes—*in order that, so that* "the word of the Lord may race and be glorified [among others] according as it is [already] with you also."

Our role as that of those engaged in earnest prayer on behalf of those doing the work of an evangelist (*cf* 2 Tim.4:5) that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified, is the necessary, proximate cause thereof. Yet this necessary, proximate cause itself is within the compass of and subservient to God's own ultimate and sufficient cause in the realization of this same goal (*cf* Rom.11:36).

Under God, then, *in order that* "the word of the Lord may race and be glorified," may we be persevering in prayer on behalf of those making the evangel known. By these considerations, we see the essential place of prayer, even though, rightly understood, that essential place affords no room whatsoever for boasting in the flesh in the fact of prayer's existence. Still, what a privilege it is for us to be agents *through* whom God works in the achievement of His purpose.

In many cases, blessing and benefit *only* come consequent to prayer, not apart from prayer, but instead through prayer, as a result thereof. Even though our prayer itself finds its origin and ultimate cause in God according to the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), as an integral part of the

divine economy, its existence and occurrence remains vital and indispensable.

Here we can only marvel and rejoice, declaring, "O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? *seeing that* out of Him and through Him and for Him is *all: to Him be the glory* for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:34-36).

Besides praying on behalf of those making the evangel known *so that* the word of the Lord may race and be glorified, we are to pray on their behalf as well *so that* they should be "rescued from abnormal and wicked men, for not for all is the faith."

The word translated here "abnormal" (*atopon,* UNPLACED) is rendered elsewhere "amiss." The barbarians of Melita, after a viper had fastened on Paul's hand, were astonished to behold nothing coming to be "*amiss*" with him (Acts 28:6). The enlightened malefactor declared of Jesus to another of the hanged malefactors at the crucifixion of Christ, "we are getting back the just deserts of what we commit, yet this One commits nothing *amiss*" (Luke 23:41).

One who is deemed "amiss" or "abnormal" in his behavior, is one whose behavior, characteristically, fails to conform to normative propriety. Many today are deeply amiss or profoundly abnormal, out of the right or proper course, order, or condition.

In many cases, and even more seriously, abnormalcy is conjoined to "wickedness," which has especially in view the *malignancy* of an action.[1] A "malignant" act is an act performed by one who is disposed to cause harm, suffering, or distress deliberately. Often such ones are very dangerous, for their acts tend to be harmful whether in influence or effect, not infrequently out of feelings or displays of ill will or hatred.

1. "Wickedness" (*ponêria,* MISERY-GUSH), perhaps, originally, spoke simply of the impulsive act of one in misery. Yet it has come to be used of any *malignant* act (*cf* Keyword Concordance, p.326, entry "wickedness").

Such abnormal and wicked persons can cause a great deal of trouble to those who have become the objects of their displeasure. Hence Paul speaks of the special need of those heralding the word that prayer be made on their behalf so that they may be rescued from any such ones, ones who have somehow become offended by them or otherwise hold them in disapprobation.

That there are such abnormal and wicked persons, and hence the need for rescue from them, is clear, "for not for all is the faith." Paul thus intimates that while "the faith" is a salutary force tending to the dissipation of abnormalcy even as the attenuation of wickedness, even so, "not for all is the faith."

The Authorized Version rendering here, "for all men have not faith," fails to note that the thought in view is not merely that of some sense of abstract conviction even with Christ as its object, but that of benefit gained from consecrated commitment to a particular body of truth which Paul terms "the faith." This is to say that the Authorized Version's rendering, "for all men have not faith," fails to bring out the the thought that it is a specific *corpus* of faith to which Paul herein refers, namely, that of the faithful teaching of Christ originally entrusted to our apostle.

Our phrase in question, translated "**for not** for **all** is **the faith**" in the Concordant Version, rendered literally from the Greek is "NOT for OF-ALL THE BELIEF." Syntactically expressed in English, this is "for NOT OF-ALL THE BELIEF," which is to say, still speaking in substantive literality, "for NOT OF-ALL THE FAITH."

The word "all" here, in the phrase, "for not of-all the

faith," is in the genitive case, hence our representation of the Greek "(not) OF-ALL." Something that is not "OF-ALL," is something that does not concern all or pertain to all.[2]

The sense of this overall passage, then, is that we are to be praying, so that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified, and so that those heralding the word should be rescued from abnormal and wicked men, *for* "not pertaining to all" is the faith. The phrase is elliptical, the full thought being, "for not pertaining to all is *the enjoyment of* [i.e., the possession or partaking of] the faith."

The enjoyment of "*the faith,*" is something that, decidedly, does not pertain to all. Rather, during this present wicked eon, the enjoyment of "the faith" is something that only concerns those who, first of all, are called and chosen of God as believers in Christ, who *as well* are "*faithful* to 'the faith.'" That is, instead of such ones even unwittingly standing in opposition to certain of its teachings, to them it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, *not only* to be believing on Him (which is the portion of all genuine believers), but to be *suffering* for His sake *also,* as they engage themselves, "competing together in *the faith of* the evangel" (*cf* Phil.1:27-30). This is even as Paul declares: "Suffer evil with the evangel," albeit "in accord with the power of God" (2 Tim.1:8).

❊

Question:

Last night I was reading 2 Corinthians 11, and I came across verses 13-15: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; *whose end shall be according to their works*" (AV).

I was wondering how we would answer if someone asked us the following: "In teaching about the servants of Satan, Paul taught in 2 Corinthians 11:15 that '[their] end shall be according to their works.' How could they ultimately be saved if their end is according to their works? Would Paul have written such a statement if he actually believed in universal reconciliation?"

2. Since the more literal "for not of all the faith," does not constitute good diction, which is necessary in an English idiomatic *version,* the Concordant Version renders the passage thus: "**for not** for **all** is **the faith**."

Answer:

My answer is, Yes, Paul would have written what he in fact wrote here even though he, indeed, "believed in" the eventual reconciliation of all. The following will explain.

In considering this subject, we are concerned principally with two scripture texts: 2 Corinthians 11:15, and Philippians 3:18, 19. In the Authorized Version, these are translated respectively as follows:

> "[concerning the servants of Satan] . . . *whose end shall be according to their works.*"
>
> ". . . the enemies of the cross of Christ: *whose end is destruction . . . .*"

It is not that the Authorized Version translation "end" is simply wrong, but that it is inadequate, especially as it is apprehended by the ordinary reader.

The Greek noun here is *telos,* which signifies "FINISH." In both these passages the definite article (i.e., "the") appears. Hence the Greek reads, "THE FINISH."

When, for *telos,* we say "finish," we do *not* mean "finish" in the sense of *cessation,* but of *accomplishment.* That is why the Concordant Version ordinarily translates the noun *telos* as "consummation," and its corresponding verb *teleō* as "consummate" or "accomplish."

Hence the Concordant Version translates these two scripture texts, 2 Corinthians 11:15, and Philippians 3:18, 19, thus:

> "[concerning the servants of Satan] . . . *whose consummation shall be according to their acts.*"
>
> ". . . who are enemies of the cross of Christ, *whose consummation is destruction . . . .*"

Every intelligent reader is aware that where we read of "the *end* of the Lord" in James 5:11 (AV), this refers not to the cessation of Yahweh's life (as if such a thing were possible), but to His glorious *accomplishment* at the *consummation* of His operations with respect to Job: "Thus Yahweh Himself blessed the latter years of Job more than his beginning" (Job 42:12). This is because "the *consummation* of the Lord" concerning Job was one of great blessing, "for very compassionate and pitiful is the Lord" (James 5:11, CV). Thus we "perceive *the consummation* of the Lord."

An opponent of A. E. Knoch once said words to the effect that, Since there are some "whose end is destruction," there can be no universal reconciliation.

It is simply incorrect, however, to read the idea of "ultimate finality as concerns human destiny," into the mere word "end." An "end" simply speaks of *the* end in view, that is, of the eventuality or outcome of something. "End," or "consummation," is not a proper noun with an exclusive reference; instead, it is a *relative* term that is always used in relation to its subject. It speaks of a specific outcome into which a particular course of action leads, or in due course will eventuate.

That is: *this* leads to *that;* or, *that* is the eventuality (or outcome) of *this.* That is all that anyone can intelligently make out of the word "end" (or "consummation"). It is *the* outcome (or "end result") of a certain thing, which is to say that in itself it is simply *an* outcome, though in relation to its subject, as previously stated, it is *the* specific outcome into which a particular course of action leads.

The "end" or outcome that *belongs to* ("*whose* consummation is . . .") those who are enemies of the cross of Christ (Phil.3:19) is that of a certain destruction. This is simply to say that the *outcome* of following a certain destructive course will be that of a certain "destruction" (or "loss") as a *result.*

May we be ever mindful of our need to be imitating the apostle Paul, endeavoring to fully follow him in his "teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings" (2 Tim.3:10).

"In all of these things, let us be imitating Paul, while noting others as well who are walking thus, for we have all such ones as a model (*cf* 2 Tim.3:10,11).

". . . for many are walking, of whom I often told you, yet now am lamenting also as I tell it, who are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose consummation is destruction, whose god is their bowels, and whose glory is in their shame, who to the terrestrial are disposed. (3:18,19)

"Many who are friends of Christ, are nevertheless *enemies* of the *cross* of Christ, insofar as its significance is concerned in the achievement of God's purpose to become All in all (1 Cor.15:28). The consummation concerning them for such unfaithful service will be that of 'destruction' (or 'loss'), namely that which will obtain when they, even as ourselves, are manifested before the dais of Christ and are requited for their practices through the body, whether good or bad (2 Cor.5:10). 'If anyone's work shall be burned up, he will forfeit it, yet he shall be saved, yet thus, as through fire' (1 Cor.3:15)."[3]

In all such cases, the same principle applies: that to which a certain type of behavior will lead "in the end" (or, "at the

3. James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.99, p.30.

consummation" thereof) is that of a certain destruction or loss as a result.

This includes those of 2 Corinthians 11:15 as well, who are the servants of Satan, "whose consummation [or 'outcome' for such unworthy service] shall be according to their acts." As is the case with those intending to be rich, such acts lead to "destruction": "Now, those intending to be rich are falling into a trial and a trap and the many foolish and harmful desires which are swamping men in extermination and destruction" (1 Tim.6:9).

This fact, however—how it is that destructive acts lead to an outcome of destruction—is in no way decisive of the final destiny of any such "destruction-prone" individuals. Many indeed will suffer loss and destruction of various kinds and degrees, including in the case of some, even the destruction of both soul and body by the Gehenna of fire (*cf* Matt.10:28).[4]

This is all that anyone can reasonably make out of such language: Such behavior leads to such ends; and such ends will be the portion of all thus concerned. In all such cases, "end" (or "consummation") is used relatively, that is, in relation to the subject at hand.

Any such outcomes for such ones, however, are by no means the consummation or *final* end of God's purpose concerning them, but are instead only *certain* ends (i.e., outcomes or eventualities), which will accrue to them in due course, in correspondence to their behavior.

4. "And do not fear those who are killing the body, yet are not able to kill the soul. Yet be fearing Him, rather, Who is able to destroy the soul as well as the body in Gehenna." (Matt.10:28). In such cases, Gehenna, effectively, will "destroy" the soul as well as the body. This is because such unworthy ones under law, who by unrighteous acts forfeit the life of the kingdom, in so doing forfeit as well the sentient (i.e., soulish) pleasures thereof, whose bodies, previously, had been destroyed already by the Gehenna of fire (*cf* Isa.66:23,24).

That is, the fact that not only some men, but every one of us, both believer and unbeliever, will experience various kinds of destruction and loss as the consequence of our own unjust behavior, says nothing at all as to whether the *final* end or goal which God has appointed for us will be decided by any of these various antecedent outcomes (or "ends") which befall us during the course of our career.

We need not be in doubt, however, concerning this question. This is because we know, on other grounds, that any loss of wages or even bodily destruction that should be the portion of any among us as the result of our own failures, will nevertheless be *followed* by the *ultimate* end or consummation that God has appointed to us all, according to His *grace.*

That *ultimate* end, that *glorious* "consummation" of which the apostle Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 15:24 ("thereafter the consummation"), is *the consummation of vivification,* when the immortal, incorruptible life of which Christ is the Firstfruit, finally becomes the portion of all mankind. *This* is the outcome, the consummation, to which God has appointed all humanity as the *gracious* fruit of the *saving* work of Jesus Christ on their behalf.

WHAT IS ACHIEVED IN CHRIST?[5]

"For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22). "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

In both of these passages, and in each case, both in

5. James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.85, pp.176,177.

that which comes to be through Adam and in that which is achieved through Christ, all mankind are affected. The condemnation of death and dying which befall *all mankind* through the disobedience of the one man, Adam, is put in parallel to vivification and life's justifying which God grants to all mankind through the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ. *Even as* the one apportionment, *thus also* the other. One is the work of Adam; the other is the work of Christ. Both Adam and Christ affect all the rest.

In these matters of justification and vivification, which form the heart of true soteriology and eschatology, neither our sins nor our virtues have any place whatever. All is due to Christ. Nonetheless, since orthodoxy, in its Arminian form, cannot abide that salvation is truly in grace and through the unaided work of Christ, and, in its Calvinistic form, cannot believe that Christ, salvifically, died for all, orthodoxy simply has no room for the truth.

If others fail to understand, much less accept, our teaching, may we ourselves clearly understand why we believe what we believe; and let us be certain that our reasons for our faith are sound and conclusive.

Let us rejoice that those who presently oppose, one day will believe the truth. We may be sure that they will do so, for He Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (Eph.1:11; 1 Tim.2:4).

THE CONSUMMATION OF IT ALL

We see, then, that even though there will be an outcome (an "end" or eventuality) of destruction for those who are the enemies of the cross of Christ, even as an outcome of judgment according to their acts for those who are the servants of Satan, there will *subsequently also* be an outcome of *vivification,* not only for all such ones as these, but in fact, for all mankind. To God be the glory! J.R.C.

PSALM 22

NOT ONLY does the evangel of our salvation accord with the whole of Scripture from the very beginning, but often the ancient, Hebrew Scriptures provide explicit glimpses of the details surrounding the death of Christ. This is true, for example, in the account of Abraham offering up his son in Genesis 22, and of the events in Joseph's life recorded in Genesis. It is often true as well in the life of David and in the words of his psalms. Psalm 22 is particularly beneficial in making us wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (*cf* 2 Tim.3:14-17). In looking ahead to many vivid features of our Lord's sufferings on the cross and of the glories after these (*cf* 1 Peter 1:11), it is able to deepen our appreciation of the evangel of God as it was given over to us through the ministry of the apostle Paul (*cf* Rom.15:4; 1 Cor.15:1-4; Gal.1:6-12; 2 Tim.1:6-12).

This has recently become greatly evident to me while meditating on Romans 5:5,[1] but many other passages from Paul's writings, even those recounting the "untraceable riches of Christ" (e.g., Eph.1:7-12, 20-23; 3:1-18; Col. 1:18-20) may be enriched by this psalm as it anticipates Christ's sufferings and death (Psa.22:1-21b), and then His resurrected life and future reign (Psa.22:21c-31). God was operating in the life of David toward this end, so that once again His Word would testify to the central crisis of the eons in the death, entombment and resurrection of Jesus Christ, followed by His exaltation.

1. *cf* the article, "Expectation is Not Mortifying" in this present issue of *Unsearchable Riches.*

DAVID ANTICIPATES CHRIST

The heading identifies this as a Davidic Psalm. But the exact relationship of the psalm to David's own experience cannot be determined. This is well, for it frees us to concentrate on its application to Christ. This is not to deny that it recalls David's own experience and reflects his own feelings, but its great value for us is its anticipation of Christ's sufferings on the cross and the blessings resulting from His resurrection, especially as He related them to the operations of God. God spares not His own Son for our sake, and God highly exalts Him as Saviour and Lord of all.

With a few corrections in typeface and rearranging of phrases for better emphasis, plus a change to a more literal reading in verse 8, the following is the CV of Psalm 22 as published in our 2008 edition:

A **Davidic Psalm**

22 **My El! My El! Why have You forsaken me?**
Far from my salvation are these **words of my roaring.**
2 **My Elohim, I am calling by day,**
+yet You are not answering,
And by **night, +yet** there is **no**^{t} **stillness for me.**
3 **+But You** are **holy,**
The One **dwelling** among the **praises of Israel.**
4 **In You our fathers trusted;**
They trusted, and You ˡ**delivered them.**
5 **To You they cried out, and they escaped;**
In You they trusted, and they were not put to **shame.**
6 **+But I** am a **worm and not** a **man,**
A **reproach** to **humanity and despised**ˡ by the **people.**
7 **All** those **seeing me, they are deriding** ˃ **me;**
They ˡ**open up** their **lip in** sneering**;**
They ˡ**wag** their **head,** saying**,**
8 He **hands over**⌐ himself **to Yahweh;**

let Him deliver him!
Let Him rescue him, seeing **that He delights in him!**
9 ^{t}**Indeed You** were the One **rushing me forth**
from the **belly,**
Causing me to **trust on my mother's breasts.**
10 **On You was I flung from** the **womb;**
From my mother's belly, You have been **my El.**
11 **Do not be** ˡ**far from me, for distress** is **near,**
^{t}**Because** there **is no** one **helping.**
12 **Many** young **bulls surround me;**
Sturdy ones **of Bashan, they compass me about.**
13 **They open their mouth wide** ^{on}**against me**
^{7}**Like**^{s} a **lion, ravening and roaring.**
14 **Like water I am poured out,**
And all my bones are disjointed.
My heart has become like wax;
It is melted in the **midst of my bowels.**
15 **Dried** up **like earthenware is my vigor,**
And my tongue clingsˡ to **my jaws;**
+ **To** the **soil of death You ~**bring **me** ˡ**low~.**
16 **For curs have surrounded me;**
The **crowd of evildoers**ˡ**, it has** en**compassed me;**
^{7}**They dig** into$^{\sim Qc}$ **my hands and my feet.**
17 **I** ˡ**number all my bones;**
They′ ˡ**look; they** ˡ**stare** ^{i}**at me.**
18 **They** ˡ**apportion my garments** ˃**among them**selves,
And ^{on}**for my clothing they** ˡ**cast** the **lot.**
19 **+Yet You,** O **Yahweh, do not be** ˡ**far** away**!**
My Fortitude, do **hurry to my help!**
20 Do **rescue my soul from** the **sword,**
My only one **from** the **paw of** the **cur.**
21 **Save me from** the **mouth of** the **lion**
And from the **horns of** the **wild bulls—**

22:15 ~~~ bring **me** ˡ**low:** Hb set **me** on the ˡ**hearth**stones.
22:16 7-~*Qc* **They dig** into: Hb **Like** a **lion.**

You have answered me!
22 Do **let me** [l]**recount Your Name to my brothers;**
In the **midst of** the **assembly shall I praise You.**
23 Those **fearing Yahweh, praise Him!**
All the **seed of Jacob, glorify Him!**
And revere [f] **Him, all** the **seed of Israel!**
24 **For He has neither despised**
Nor abominated the **humiliation of** the **humbled,**
And He has not concealed His face from him.
[+]**But** [i]**when** he **implored**[–] **to Him, He hearkened.**
25 **From `You** comes **my praise in** the **vast assembly;**
I shall pay my vows in **front** of those **fearing Him.**
26 The **humble shall eat and shall be satisfied;**
And those **seeking after Him shall praise Yahweh.**
May [7]**their~**[cs] **heart**s **live for** the **future.**
27 **All** the **limits of** the **earth shall remember**
and return to Yahweh;
[+] **All** the **families of** the **nations shall worship**
before [7]**Him~**[c]**.**
28 **For Yahweh's** is **the kingdom,**
And [7]**He**[0] is the One **ruling** [i]**among** the **nations.**
29 **~Yea, to Him~ shall bow down**
all those ~about to be **sleeping** in~ the **earth;**
Before Him shall crouch all those **descending**
to the **soil.**
And he who did **not** [m]**keep his soul alive—**
30 His **seed shall serve Him;**
It shall be recounted [›]**about** [s]**Yahweh**[ph]
To the **generation** [7]that is **coming~.**
31 **And they shall tell** of **His righteousness**
To a **people** about to **be born**[l]**,**
Declaring **that He has done** this**.**

22:26 *7-~cs* **their:** Hb **your.**
22:27 *7-~c* **Him:** Hb **You.**
22:29 ~~~ **Yea, to Him:** Hb **They will eat and;** ~~~ about to be **sleeping** in: Hb **sleek of.**
22:30 *7-~* that is **coming:** Hb **They shall come** [placed at beginning of next verse].

THREE CRITICAL LINES

Three lines in this psalm stand out from the rest and sum up the whole: the first, the last and the third line of verse 21. They all tell of actions of God, and thus make Him known. Indeed, they point ahead from God's dealings with David to specific actions of God in relation to His Son, Jesus Christ. And thus they illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor.4:6).

First of all, God Himself brought the evil of forsakenness upon Christ, the evil of putting a temporary end to the rich fellowship that had always existed between Himself and His beloved Son:

My El! My El! Why have You forsaken Me?

Then, abruptly, in the middle of the psalm, with a complete change of expression and tone from the preceding lines, we hear words of David, now becoming the words of Christ addressed to His God, in resurrection:

You have answered Me!

Finally we hear our Lord bringing the good news to humanity concerning His God, Who had brought the evil and Who had rescued His Son from that evil which He had brought. This rescue from death is a message of good, first for Israel and then extending to the limits of the earth, even to all humanity. And it is a message heralding God's righteousness, declaring:

He has done this!

What was a psalm of David becomes a psalm concerning Jesus Christ, leading to the praise of God. It emphatically draws attention to the afflictions which are endured by God's Son unto death, and boldly traces them to God. Then it testifies with exultation to God's rescue of His Son from death, and in praising God for this deliverance, it points to its widening effects of life and worship and ser-

vice to the glory of God. It is all to His glory, for He is the One Who is wholly responsible for what has been done.

GOD SPARES NOT HIS SON

Like Job, our Lord, Who became the Antitype of Job in His suffering of evil, refused to attribute His sufferings to immediate causes. He did not call out to His God, saying, "My God! My God! Why has Satan so deceived humanity that they despise and deride Me and dig into my hands and feet like savage beasts?" No, what pressed most deeply upon Him was not what human sinners had done, but what His God had done, crying out with a loud voice, saying, "My God! My God! Why have You forsaken Me?" (*cp* Matt.27:45,46).

THE WORD "FORSAKE"

The Hebrew verb translated "have forsaken" in Psalm 22:1 occurs over two hundred times in the Old Testament. A complete listing of its occurrences is given starting on page 915 of *Englishman's Hebrew Concordance* (in Strong's Concordance it is assigned the number 5800). In the vast majority of its occurrences the CV renders this word by some form of the verb "forsake" (as does the AV, and most other English translations). But in a few instances this will not work.

English dictionaries assign various shades of meaning to the word "forsake," ranging from the sense of giving up or renouncing something held dear, to that of abandonment or desertion. But an examination of the Hebrew word in all its contexts indicates that it is broader in its meaning than the English word "forsake." The terms to do not entirely match up in meaning.

Exodus 23:5 provides a good test case. Here the Hebrew verb usually rendered "forsake" occurs three times, and if the CV rendered all three occurrences by a form of *for-*

sake it would read as follows: "In case you see the donkey of one hating you reclining under its load, then you will halt from forsaking him with it. You shall forsake, yea forsake it along with him."

This same instruction appears in Deuteronomy 22:4 but with different verbs, helping us greatly to catch the intended sense: "You shall not see your brother's donkey or his bull or any domestic beast of his fallen on the road and obscure yourself from them. You shall raise, yea raise them with him."

The AV and many other versions and lexicons treat the verb in Exodus 23 as a distinct term meaning "help," taking it as a homonym of the verb rendered *forsake.* It is claimed that here we have two words that are spelled the same but have different meanings.

However, we see these as occurrences of one word covering a range of meaning that is not always conveyed by the English word "forsake." The CV translates the last line of Exodus 23:5, "You shall *set free,* yea *set* it *free* along with him." The law instructed the Israelites they were not to forsake a needy member of their community, even if there was hate between them. Instead, in the particular situation described, the one who observed the problem was to set the donkey along with its owner free from the predicament, that is, help get the donkey and the man *forsaken* of the very unwelcome trouble into which they had fallen.

The CV also uses "set free" for this Hebrew verb in Deuteronomy 32:36 which speaks of Yahweh's adjudication and mercy for His people when they have no power left in themselves, both those in restrained servitude and those *set free* from restraints. We also use this rendering in Job 9:27, where Job would have his face *set free* from its disfiguring stress so that he can smile again. Job wanted to be forsaken of this intimate association.

In addition, we will revise Nehemiah 3:8 and 4:2 where

we presently translate this verb by forms of the English word "renovate." It is clear that those working on the ruined walls of Jerusalem were not *forsaking* them, but the term "renovate" adds nothing to the word "repair" which is already used in the passage. These men were repairing and *setting* the walls and stones *free* from the ruin and "rubble" of their then current state. They were forsaking Jerusalem from the devastation in which it existed.

Hence we can see that the core meaning of the Hebrew word is something like "disassociate," although that seems far too colorless to catch the nuances of feeling in the Hebrew. It is a disassociating of a close relationship, whether the separation is desirable ("set free") or undesirable ("forsaken").

SEVERED FROM FELLOWSHIP

Our Lord's forsakenness consisted of a terrifying *stillness* on God's part, when He did *not answer,* in any way, the cries of His Son. It was a matter of a broken relationship between God and the One Whose place of rest is in His bosom (John 1:18). In forsaking Christ, God had cut off that most intimate and precious association. Even in the long, days of labor among the people of Israel, who "accepted Him not" (John 1:11), the Lord could always turn in prayer to His Father, and know Him as His God (*cp* Psa.22:10). But now when no one was helping (v.11), God was silent and still.

Jesus suffered from the jeers of the people and the cruel mistreatment of the evildoers, but it was God's place in it all that captured His mind and burdened His heart. The people spoke in derision, but in fullest of irony what they said was truth. Intending to add to His distress, they opened their lips in sneering, supported by the body language of scorn in the wagging of their heads, saying: "He hands over Himself to Yahweh; let Him deliver Him! Let Him rescue Him, seeing that He delights in Him!" (Psa.22:7,8). Indeed, it was so that He would soon hand over His spirit to His Father's keeping, and, in God's own time, He would rescue Him out of death as the object of His delight.

Consequently, the great test for Jesus was holding fast to His trust in God despite the fact that God had forsaken Him. His God had broken off the way of refreshing and sustaining fellowship during the hours of darkness on the cross. And now God was bringing Him low to death itself, when He must give up His spirit. Our Lord passed the test, trusting in His God as His Fortitude (Paul calls this in the context of justification, "the *faith* of Jesus Christ").

GOD'S WAY

"To the soulish man, the whole earthly career of Christ is a strange enigma. The temptation in the wilderness, the privations of the way, the agony of Gethsemane, the blood baptism of Calvary, are impenetrable mysteries transcending our faculty of comprehension. Yet Christ had confidence in the Father, confidence in His love and wisdom, and so He followed unhesitatingly the marked out path. Viewed from the standpoint of our ideas, the humiliation of Christ seems meaningless. Viewed from God's throne, we perceive that by this down-stoop, the foot of the ladder leading to the throne was reached. The path of the Lord Jesus exemplifies the supreme value of confidence in God.

"Christ's expectation also was in God. In the darkest hour, when all forsook Him, when even His God hid His face, He cried, "Father, into Thy hands am I committing My spirit." And the open grave and the honor which now adorns His brow as He sits on the Father's right demonstrate the value of that expectation.

"We, too, may place our confidence and expectation in God. His God is our God. His Father is our Father. He leads His people on to glory. Though the way be dreary

and the outlook gloomy, let our confidence be firm and our expectation bright. The way He chooses is not the shortest nor the easiest, but it is the right way, and it ends right."[2]

GOD HAS ANSWERED

For three hours there had been no consoling contact between God and His Beloved, Who had been made to be the Antitype of the sin offering (2 Cor.5:21), and this would be continued in greater reality in the three days of death. As that horrible reality approached Jesus turned to His silent God as His only Fortitude (Psa.22:19).

He shouted with a loud voice, "Father, into Thy hands am I committing My spirit" (Luke 23:46), while the jeers of evildoers roared against Him like a lion, and the pain they had inflicted upon Him like wild bulls throbbed within (Psa.22:21).

There is no break in the psalm itself, but there is a decisive break in thought between the second and third lines of verse 21. This is indicated by the long dash in the CV. As a word of prophecy concerning what had not yet occurred, this represents the death of our Lord.

The sounds and the pain of the first two lines of Psalm 22:21 are gone when the Lord, heard through the words of David, cries out to His God in exultation, "You have answered Me!" The psalm has nothing to say about the days of death or their significance. It goes immediately from the Lord's last sensations on the cross to His cry of praise when, in His Father's love, He receives back His soul (*cf* John 10:17,18). He is roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing (1 Cor.15:20).

God's answer was that answer to our Lord's cry which God had not given Him when He called out to God for it. It was the answer of deliverance to the One Who trusted in

2. Vladimir Gelesnoff: *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.1, pp.37,38 (adapted).

Him; it was the rescue of the One in Whom He delights; it was the help of His God and Fortitude, at exactly the right time. But more than rescue and deliverance and help from the jeers and the wounds of evildoers, it was life out of death. It was life in which the way of communion to His Father had been restored, and more than restored, for the value of the fellowship was vastly multiplied because of the experience of forsakenness.

FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

The psalm tells us that this life of the risen Lord is centered in the activity of making God known. This work is first and primarily viewed as it involves Israel, but it enlarges to involve all the limits of the earth and all the families of the nations. Even then, it does not reach to the level and scope of the revelations given to Paul concerning our celestial calling and the heading up of all in the Christ, but it allows for them. What is most important for us is that God's forsakenness of Christ and His answer to that forsakenness, as given in Psalm 22, is most beneficial to us in our appreciation of the evangel of God concerning His Son, which we are believing.

For it is an evangel centered on the relationship of Jesus Christ to His God and Father. He was obedient to His God even when His God cut off communication with Him and was silent and still. Thus He died. But He was roused, and God exalts Him in a work of rule which will bring all into the recognition and appreciation of the work of deliverance which God brings about in Christ, *for the glory of God, the Father*.

"For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also, Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and being found in fashion as a human,

He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, *for the glory of God, the Father*" (Phil.2:5-11).

OUT OF GOD, AND THROUGH HIM, AND FOR HIM

David's experience of forsakenness and its sequel of God's rescue has become absorbed as a prophecy of God not sparing His Son, but giving Him up for us all, and of God exalting His Son, Christ Jesus, above every name that is named, for the glory of God, the Father. God is the One doing all this! God is the One Who broke the fellowship between Himself and His Son, having made Him to become sin (we drop the lightface words of 2 Corinthians 5:21). This was sourced in God's will and was carried out through His operations in accord with the counsel of His will.

God is the One Who roused Christ from among the dead and (as we have now learned) Who exalts Him above every power and authority. Furthermore, God has now made known the secret of His will, to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ. And this also is sourced in God's will and is carried out through His operations in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:9-11).

God is the One doing it all.

"O, the depths of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:33-36). D.H.H.

Unsearchable Riches

**A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our Centennial Year

(1909–2009)

Contents:

49 Editorial
53 Sin and Death
57 God's Love in the Death of Christ
67 A Beneficent Divine Providence
79 The Divine Assumptions
86 The Mystery of Evil
91 Adam Died

MARCH, 2009

Volume C **Number 2**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 2009
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

EDITORIAL

"We have the precious privilege of giving thanks at all times and for all things: not for good things only, but for apparently bad things; not in seasons of prosperity alone, but when all seems dark and dismal. All things, whatever their appearance, are cooperating for our welfare, and the keener our realization of God's supervising care and control, the more ready we are to rejoice, even in the midst of sorrow and suffering.

"It is not the mission of this little magazine merely to teach the truth, but to put our readers into the most intimate relations with God, Who is Truth. It is one thing to talk about the omnipotence, omnipresence and immanence of the Deity, yet deny them in thought and action, and [another] to enjoy the presence and unlimited power of God at all times and in all places. The apostle Paul wished to attain, in his experience, to the resurrection life. So it is our privilege, not only to see the grand vision of God's ultimate, but to allow its rays to illumine our lives even now.

"Unless God retains the reins of the universe in His hands today, He can never guide it to the goal. And, since He controls all and cares for His own, we must not only trust, we may not merely acquiesce, we should tune our hearts to continual thanksgiving, unphrased, inaudible perhaps, but grateful to the heart of God."

So wrote Brother A. E. Knoch in the July 1925 issue of *Unsearchable Riches* (vol.16, p.193). Now, nearly eighty-four years later, we are still facing "apparently bad things" and seasons "when all seems dark and dismal." As in 1925 there are many good things for which we are thankful. But the test of faith is its vitality "in the midst of sorrow

and suffering." When confidence in God as the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, and this for good, is placed alongside our troubles, we see how right and fitting Paul's entreaty is.

There are three foundational revelations of Scripture here. First, that God is operating all; second, that God is operating all for good; and third that all is for God's glory. All is out of God, and through Him, and for Him.

In this present issue of *Unsearchable Riches,* we concentrate on the first and second principles, but in doing so, keep coming to the third.

As to the fundamental fact that all is out of God, we reprint Brother William Mealand's masterful meditation, "The Mystery of Evil" (p.86), first appearing in our magazine in 1919 (vol.10, p.283). Looking into the issues of divine causation more deeply, Jim Coram carefully defends our teaching of "A Beneficent Divine Providence" from the charge that it is tantamount to fatalism (p.67).

We often hear from friends who are troubled by upheavals in national and world events, wars, economic policies, social changes and the very fact that, in human affairs, nothing stays the same (while not really being new). The "nations are perturbed, and the folk, they mumble empty [things]" (Psa.2:1). Others are distressed by more personal circumstances of life, such as family troubles, losses of jobs and restricted situations due to sickness or age.

Yet Paul says, ". . . the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything," and then advises, "but in everything, by prayer and petition, *with thanksgiving,* let your requests be made known to God" with the result that "the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:5-7).

How can this be so? Only as it is true that God is the God of wisdom and power and righteousness and love that the evangel concerning His Son reveals Him to be.

Hence, we also would draw attention to this evangel and its extensions as it applies to us as members of the body of Christ. In the current issue, I have tried especially to follow Paul's thoughts carefully concerning the way in which the evangel that announces, "Christ died," is related to God's love (p.57 and p.91). Along with this, we print some thoughts of Brother Knoch on "Sin and Death" (p.55), which were instrumental in opening up to my own mind the crucial place of Christ's death in God's achievements of justification, conciliation and reconciliation, along with vivification and subjection. In accord with this we also reprint Brother Knoch's article on "The Divine Assumptions" (p.79, first appearing in volume 10, pp.25-31), which focuses on the crucial place of Jesus Christ, as the Effulgence of God, in all of God's operations.

This is not to praise Brother Knoch or claim some special superiority of teaching for myself or others who write here. If anyone teaches rightly it is due to God's grace in enlightening understanding, and the teaching, if it is right, must and will be altogether to the glory of God. This is true not only of those who plant the word, and those who irrigate, but of those who respond with faith and faithfulness (*cf* 1 Cor.3:5-9; Phil.1:29). It is God Who makes His Word grow up.

No one escapes the experience of evil. But, in such experience, we who are believing God's word to us, are given the special grace of being aware that God is working all together for good (Rom.8:28). This does not mean that we will no longer have to face trials and trouble, or that such evils are not real. But growth in the realization of God and what He is doing, provides us with power "for all endurance and patience with joy" (Col.1:11) even while the evil persists.

The apostle Paul gives many reminders of this and provides many examples of its truth. But perhaps that given in

Romans 9-11 is most striking. There he begins by speaking of his great sorrow and the unintermittent pain which was in his heart because of what was happening to his relatives according to the flesh (Rom.9:1-5). And he ends in the recognition that God locks all together in stubbornness so that He should be merciful to all (Rom.11:32), leading him to the joyful outburst of praise to God in Romans 11:33-36.

Some readers of *Unsearchable Riches* may feel we refer to those verses too often. But what Paul writes at the end of chapter 11 is exactly God's provision to him for endurance and patience with joy in view of his sorrow over Israel. With such a God of power and purpose in view, Who is the God Who reveals His righteousness and love through the faith of His Son, as proclaimed in the first eight chapters of Romans, we can go forward to Romans 12 and see the logic of its entreaties.

Consequently, in God's grace, we would continue to point to this revelation of God as the One, out of Whom and through Whom and for Whom is all.

For we, too, are experiencing sorrow and pain of heart as we look at the world about us. Yet also beyond this, we know something of suffering evil with the evangel and its heralding, certainly not as Paul faced, but still enough to perceive the importance of his prayers for realization of the truth which are clearly related to his prayers for boldness and faithfulness.

"Therefore we also . . . do not cease praying for you and requesting that you may be filled full with the realization of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, you to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in the realization of God; being endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, for all endurance and patience with joy; at the same time *giving thanks to the Father*" (Col.1:9-12).

D.H.H.

SIN AND DEATH

SIN, in the languages of inspiration, is a faded figure. It presents a picture to our eyes of a man aiming at a target, yet *missing the mark*. In the Hebrew it actually means miss. In Greek, it denotes UN-MARK. This very illustration is used when we are told that there were left-handed men in Benjamin who could fling stones and not miss, or sin (Judges 20:16). The picture is further elaborated if we add the law, which denotes AIM. Yet those who seek to keep the law are poor shots, for they usually do *miss*, or *sin*. Even as no one can hit the bull's-eye every time, so no one can avoid sinning.

Our English word *sin* is the nearest we have to represent these terms, so a translator is obliged to use it in a version. Yet the closer and more illuminating terms are valuable aids to the earnest student and even the casual reader. A single picture may convey a clearer impression than many words, and this is true even if it is only a word picture.

WHY WE SIN

The word *through* is used thrice in Paul's explanation why all humans sin. "Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned" (Rom.5:12). It was

through one *human*, Adam, and
through his *sin*, and
through death—on which all sinned.

Sin was not transmitted through a single channel. A man does not keep on missing the mark because he did so

once. If some outward influence caused him to do so the first time, and the conditions are all perfect, he may never miss again. But if the first mistake lowered his vitality so that he trembles, he may never be able to hit the bull's-eye until he is cured of his infirmity.

God purposely constituted Adam so that, if he made a mistake, in his case if he should eat the wrong thing, he would disintegrate, and return to the soil of which he was composed. This *process* is called *dying*, and the resultant *state* He called *death*. God distinguished between these two in His warning (Gen.2:17) by saying to *die* (the state) shall you be *dying* (the process).

DEATH AND DYING

In Genesis 2:17 the verb "die" is repeated in two different forms. First it is in the so-called "construct infinitive." Our infinitive is "to die." Being in the "construct state" shows that it is limited or restricted in its meaning by the following word. In the phrase "the word of the Lord," for instance, the word "word" is in the construct state because not everyone's word is intended, but only the Lord's. So here, the thought of dying is restricted by the following verb "you shall be dying." From this we gather that it is only in a restricted sense that Adam would die that day. "To die shall you be dying" brings before us a *process* of death, culminating, indeed, in actual death, but of indefinite duration in its operation.

YAHWEH'S UNDERSTANDING

What is Yahweh's commentary on this phrase? For the time came when He must remind Adam of it and pronounce a sentence in harmony with it. As a matter of fact the verdict of Yahweh, found in Genesis 3:17-19, is but an expansion of this phrase. And, as we have been led to expect, it is mostly occupied with the process of death:

17 **And to Adam He said: [t]Because you hearkened to your wife's voice and [l]ate from the [7]only[0] tree [w]that I instructed you, [>] saying[–] you** must **not [l]eat from it,**
Cursed[l] is **the ground [i]on your [p]account;**
In grief shall you eat of **it all** the **days of your life.**
18 [+] **Thorns and weeds shall it sprout for you,**
And you will eat [`]the **herbage of the field.**
19 [i]**By** the **sweat of your brow shall you eat [7]your[0] bread,**
Until you return[–] to the ground,
for from it were you taken.
For soil you are**, and to soil you shall return.**

Henceforth Adam began to return to the ground and continued to do so, until his heart ceased to beat and his body decayed. The slow decay during life makes it impossible for us to always hit the center of the target. "Death passed through into all mankind, *on which* all sinned."

When Adam finally, literally died, his soul lost all connection with the world. He could no longer see or hear, or taste or smell. Not only did his body decay and return to the soil, but his sensations vanished, and his spirit returned to God, as it was before he was created.

This is literal *death.*

THE ONE MAN, ADAM

In his inspired analysis of sin's operation in the world, Paul ignores the temptation of Eve, and traces it all back to *one* human, Adam. Eve's disposition is not reckoned as the first sin, and her eating is not counted in the transmission of sin. Moreover, Adam was not deluded as Eve was (1 Tim.2:14). She ate first, and he ate, not because he expected to get any benefits, but *because she ate.*

Sin's entrance is a silhouette of its exit. Adam's love for Eve gives us a clear intimation of Christ's love for those who were created in Him, as Eve was in Adam (Col.1:16).

He was not seduced or deluded, so as to be in the transgression (1 Tim.2:14). But, when Eve transgressed, his love for her led him to do likewise. He did not sin until he took the fruit and *ate.*

So it was with our Saviour. He did not sin, nor was He deluded by it; nevertheless, *for the love of us,* He was made Sin, or a Sin Offering. This was done by crucifixion, for the curse of God was upon all who were hanged on a pole. He did not do this of Himself, but suffered it to be done because of His love for us.

Our Saviour did not have a man for a father, but He did have a woman for a mother. As Christ was born of God, He did not inherit the death sentence of Adam; nevertheless He came of a woman, so is figuratively called the "seed" of Eve and of Mary.

So the story of sin is really the greatest *love* story ever told. Adam sinned for love of Eve, and Christ was made sin for love of mankind. Yet both sins were planned by God in order to *reveal His love* to all His creatures, not only the sinners themselves, on the earth, but all His erring creatures, from the north star to the southern cross. All must learn through sin that *God is love!*

ADAM AND CHRIST

Adam's *one* offense is counteracted by Christ's *one* just award (Rom.5:18). The act of Adam actually affects *all mankind.* So Christ's work, eventually, must also actually justify *all mankind.* Man has no choice in becoming a sinner, *thus also* will it be through the work of Christ. Both are actual and universal.

A. E. Knoch

The preceding was adapted from *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 6, pages 45-47 (vol.54, pp.78-81); volume 49, pages 49-52; and the *Concordant Commentary,* page 235.

GOD'S LOVE IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST

It is out of and through Jesus Christ's faith that God's righteousness is revealed as the glorious remedy of human unrighteousness (*cf* Rom.1:17,18; 3:20-26; Gal.2:16). The faith of Jesus Christ is His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross (*cf* Phil.2:8; Rom.5:19). This is the source and solid foundation of the righteous justification which God is now reckoning to those who are believing this evangel of God concerning His Son (Rom.3:26; 4:5,23-25).

Hence we have seen from Romans 3:21-4:25 that the evangel is a message revealing *God's righteousness.* It does so through the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners.

Now in Romans 5:1-4, the apostle Paul has shown that this righteous work of God in justifying sinners on the basis of Jesus Christ's faith is a continuing source of peace and expectation for those who are believing this evangel. But in verse 5 he goes forward from viewing the evangel as a revelation of the righteousness of God to presenting it also as the expression of the love of God. The evangel concerning God's Son manifests *God's righteousness,* and in addition, it commends *God's love.*

THE LOVE OF GOD

The love of God is unparalleled.

It is made known by a cruel *death.*

It is made known by the ignominious death of *the One God has anointed* as Head over all.

It is made known by the death of God's Anointed One *for those who, in every perceptible way, are unlovable.*

God would not have His love seen and known by any other act except as that act is viewed in connection with the death of Jesus Christ. Not God's work of creation, not His gifts of mercy and grace, not even the glories He has purposed for the future—God would not have His love defined by any of these operations unless they are related to that one most solemn and most mind-boggling act of all history, the death of Jesus Christ.

In Romans 5, verses 5 and 6, and then again in verse 8, this astounding revelation of divine love is stated in most emphatic terms.

There are a number of unusual features in the Greek text of Romans 5:6, but its connection with verse 5 and parallel with verse 8 are clear. Let us read the passage apart from a paragraph division, noting the way in which the terms, "seeing that" and "for" join one thought to the next:

> Now expectation is not mortifying,
> **seeing that** the love of God has been poured out in our hearts, through the holy spirit which is being given to us.
> **For** Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent died.

Why is expectation not mortifying?

Expectation is not mortifying *seeing that* it is based on God's love for us. Our expectation of the glory of God is founded on God's love, and therefore it is certain to be fully realized.

What is God's love for us?

It is that Christ died for us, infirm and irreverent human beings as we are. God loves us, *for* Christ died for our sake.

The love of God which began to be poured into our hearts when we first believed the evangel, and which is still being poured into our hearts as God's holy spirit enlightens us who are believing, is that Christ died for us,

who are weak and irreverently occupied with the schemes and ways of our times, and who are deserving of nothing except indignation and death (*cf* Rom.1:18,32). When the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth concerning humanity is exposed, the verdict is: "Not one is just, not even one" (Rom.3:10); by human effort, no one can be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20).

The situation is out of our hands. It is completely in God's hands, Who gives His beloved Son to the death of the cross and *by this means* expresses His love for us in the achievements of justification and conciliation.

This extraordinary definition of God's love is repeated in Romans 5:8 with words that cannot be mistaken. Again we draw attention to the connecting term, which, in this case, is: "seeing that." God's love is disclosed by Christ's faithfulness in dying for sinners:

> God is commending this love of His to us,
> **seeing that,** while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes.

In accord with this, we read in John 3:16, "For *thus* God loves the world, so that He gives His only-begotten Son . . . ." The way in which God loves us is in view here, not its measure (as suggested by the AV word "so"). God's love is defined by the giving of His Son, Who died for our sakes.

CHRIST DIED

Every believer ponders over this most central and basic statement of the evangel of God: *Christ died.* In making known His good news, God begins by announcing the death of His Son, Who is the *Anointed One* (*cf* Acts 4:27; Heb.1:9), the *Christ,* in Whom all will be headed up (Eph. 1:10). This One *died.* The entire message is built upon that fundamental and remarkable fact.

The verb *die* is used four times in Romans 5:6-8. As the expression of God's love, Christ *died* for the sake of those described in Romans 1:18-3:20. This love of God's is distinct from the love of the rare human being who might be willing to *be dying* for the sake of a just man, and with the unusual person who might be daring *to die* for the sake of a good man. God, in commending His love to us, saw to it that Christ *died* for the sake of sinners, for weak humanity, engrossed with themselves and their times, irreverently avoiding God. He died for those who could never stand before God in righteousness by their efforts.

The verb "die" must not be glossed over. It must not be obscured by euphemistic sentiment. Christ ceased to live. The One anointed by God with power and glory was dead until He was roused. And it is because Christ truly died that God can be (and is) righteous in His work of justification and can (and will) bring sinful humanity to Himself in love.

2 Corinthians 5:14

In itself the evangel is a paradox. How can the message that the Son of God died be a message of good? And how can God's giving of His Christ, His Anointed, to death be the very expression of His love?

It will greatly help us in this regard to attend carefully to the words of 2 Corinthians 5:14. When Christ died, all died, which means that the entire human race was included in His death. This is God's love: that He would give the One Who was most precious to Him, so that the corrupt and ruined human race might be put to death in such a way that it might be vivified anew, and come to know God as its All (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22-28).

It is God's Son as His Anointed Who died. It is the One Who is the Image of the invisible God, in Whom all is created, Who died (Col.1:15,16). It is the One in Whom all is

to be headed up, Who is to complete "the all in all" (Eph.1:10,23), Who died. Christ died, so that no one would finally be left out in bowing in His Name of Jesus and acclaiming His Lordship to the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:5-11). His blood was shed at the cross so that all will be reconciled to God (*cf* Col.1:20).

Here we see the full sweep of this expression of God's love in the death of His Anointed. This will be set before us again in Romans 5:18,19. But now in the first half of the chapter Paul relates this love of God to the believer. God's love commended in the death of Christ has special meaning to us (*cf* 1 Tim.4:10), who are "being now justified in His blood" and will be saved from indignation (Rom.5:9), and who are "conciliated to God through the death of His Son" and will be saved in His life (Rom.5:10).

For our sake

Thus we see that the death of God's Son, Jesus Christ, is the expression of God's love in that, through this severest of losses, it brings forth great good for us, unachievable by any other means. This is introduced in Romans 5:6-8 by the Greek preposition, *[h]uper*, which is generally rendered "for the sake of" in the CV when used, as here, with a noun or pronoun in the genitive case.

In Romans 4:25 Paul speaks of human offenses as leading to the giving up of Jesus our Lord to death. Now in Romans 5:6-8 he speaks of the death of Christ as dealing with human infirmity, irreverence and sinfulness. The direction of thought is reversed, the former passage moving the thought from human wrongs to our Lord's death, and the present passage moving it from Christ's death to its effects on sinful humanity.

The preposition, *[h]uper* appears here four times, always in association with the verb *die*. Altogether, directly or by contrast, these terms inform of the object of Christ's death.

For Christ, . . . *for the sake of* the irreverent, died.
For hardly *for the sake of* a just man will anyone be dying:
for *for the sake of* a good man, perhaps someone may be daring to die,
yet God is commending this love of His to us,seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died *for our sakes.*

We, in our offensiveness, are the cause of our Lord's death, but His death is for our sakes. Christ's death is for the good of those who were the cause of His death. Christ died for our sakes. His blood was shed for our justification (5:9). The death of God's Son was for the conciliation of God's enemies (5:10).

Verse 7 serves to lay emphasis on this unique character of God's love in that His Son, Whom He anoints above all, died for those who continually bring dishonor to Him. In relating love to death, one would suppose that the qualities of goodness and righteousness must also be present. To die for someone assumes that the one died for is good and just. But the evangel of God concerning the death of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, is for the sake of those who altogether lack these qualities. God spared not His own Son but gave Him up to death for the sake of those who are deserving of death.

In this, God commends His love.

IRREVERENT MEN[1]

Before His death and after it, to the very last, men are irreverent. That is, they want happiness, but refuse to tolerate any "interference" on God's part. They cast Him out of their plans, though they readily follow and cooperate

1. The following paragraph is excerpted from A. E. Knoch's article, "Exhortation to Peace," *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.4, p.76 and vol.52, p.163.

with Satan in his schemes to better the lot of mankind. But, though they refuse Christ, Whom God has given power and authority to bless them to the full, and though they had fully proven their own inability and infirmity, yet even thus Christ dies for them, laying the foundation of eonian happiness. The weakness of that death is stronger far than the combined efforts of man and Satan. "For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the *irreverent*, died" (Rom.5:6).

STILL INFIRM AND IRREVERENT SINNERS

Along with the repeated verb, *die,* and the repeated expression, *for our sake,* our passage employs the Greek adjective *eti,* three times, rendered in the CV by the word "still," as follows:

Christ died for us while we are *still* infirm.
He died for us while we are *still* in accord with the era.
Christ died for us while we are *still* sinners.

We are infirm. We are irreverently drawn away from God to the influences of our times. We are sinners.

This was true of us when we first believed. Even if we had tried to be otherwise, we remained the weak and irreverent sinners we had been from birth. And this remains true of us, as to our flesh, no matter how much good God's spirit has effected in our lives as believers.

This is not to deny the good that believing the evangel brings to us. Rather, it is to point to the transcendent good that has been done for us, so that we might realize the goodness of this good, untainted by anything of ourselves, and thus it might work in us. There is never a time, in our current lives, when we can leave this evangel of God's love in the background. We remain human beings who are mortal and weak. We need the evangel in heart and mind every moment of our lives.

Romans 5 is not an appeal to sinners to stop being sinners, any more than it is an encouragement to indifference as to our walk. It is a *declaration of the evangel* begun in Romans 3:21 (concerning God's righteousness in His work of justification) with new and expanded enlightenment (concerning God's love in His work of conciliation). That needs to be grasped first so that we can go forward to Romans 6-8 and appreciate the force of Romans 12-15.

In speaking of the human need of the evangel, Paul begins here with the human defect of *infirmity.* The evangel recognizes what we are in the flesh, which is that we are helpless and defenseless sinners.

Then, from the fact of ingrained and unavoidable infirmity Paul turns to the consequential fact that we are irreverent, especially as those who avoid God and cling to the human ways of this wicked eon. We are drawn to the interests of the current era, and in this we offer divine service to the creature rather than the Creator (Rom.1:25).

We are sinners, which is to say we fail, not only as to righteousness in our actions, but as to what we are in our human minds. We are constituted sinners (Rom.5:19). This is our condition; it has been passed down to us from Adam (*cf* Rom.5:12). Not only are we weak and irreverent and failing to reach the standards of genuine goodness and righteousness, but we are absolutely unable to change the fact by our own efforts and will.

Yet in His love, *God* changes the fact.

He spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all. Christ died for us.

Romans 6 will build on the evangel as presented in Romans 5, pointing to the relationship between the believing of this evangel and the living of it. But now Paul is presenting the evangel itself, even expanding on its glories. For us to know God's righteousness and God's love it is essential that we recognize that justification and the enjoyment

of peace toward God are blessings entirely dependent on God's giving of His Son to the death of the cross. Christ died for us who can do nothing to get ourselves out of the hopeless wretchedness in which we exist.

IN ACCORD WITH THE ERA

The Greek phrase, *kata kairon,* rendered "according-to SEASON" in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT sublinear, is almost always associated with Christ's death in English translations of Romans 5:6. Paul's thought is thus understood as similar to that of Galatians 4:4 ("when the full time came, God delegates His Son"), giving the sense, "*in due time* Christ died" (AV). This is true, but it is not what Paul has in view here.

The most likely manuscript reading of Romans 5:6 has two uses of the word "still" (rendered "yet" in the AV). Where this is accepted, it is generally explained that the double usage is intended to emphasize the fact that we were *still* infirm ("*yet* without strength" AV), even though no suggestion of such emphasis is given in the translation.

But in the CV the phrase, *kata kairon,* is associated with the human condition of conformity to the spirit of the age. The second "still" of Romans 5:6 is attached to this point. In our flesh, we are "*still* in accord with the era."

Christ died for us who are still infirm and irreverent and disposed to the patterns of thought and action that characterize and dominate the era in which we live. It is vital that we recognize this if we are to grasp the measure and value of God's love for us. God's love is the love of sparing not His own Son for us, who in our flesh are still disposed to the current era of human irreverence. We are unlovable.

RECLAIMING THE ERA

This corresponds with Ephesians 2:2 where Paul calls human beings by the name "sons of stubbornness" who

walk "*in accord with the eon* of this world." (*cp* Col.1:21). As to the flesh we still exhibit this character, even though the evangel that God deals graciously with us in Christ, Who loves us and gives Himself up for us (*cf* Eph.4: 32-5:2) invigorates us spiritually to be *reclaiming the era* (*cf* Eph.5:16; Col.4:5).

Later in Romans, in view of the evangel concerning Christ dying for the sake of those who, in flesh, are still in harmony with the current era, Paul writes to us who are believing this evangel: "I am entreating you, then, brethren, by the pities of God [such as designating us beforehand for sonship, calling us in grace for justification and glorification; *cf* Rom.8:30], to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service, and *not to be configured to this eon,* but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, for you to be testing what is the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect" (Rom.12:1,2).

This entreaty would never be made if the flesh of the believer was no longer attracted, even enslaved to the ways of the current era and wicked eon. But the message of grace that highlights God's love in the death of Christ for our sakes makes this entreaty both logical and meaningful to us. We thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord (*cf* Rom.7:24,25).

KEEPING GOD'S LOVE IN VIEW

Every day of our lives brings this love of God to our attention. We stumble and fail to honor God as God and do all sorts of things that reasonably should cool God's love for us, and yet He keeps pouring out His love into our hearts through His holy spirit. He keeps on invigorating us with joy and peace as we keep a tight hold on His evangel concerning His Son.

D.H.H.

A BENEFICENT DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Question:

I would like to know whether I am responsible for my actions; or rather, I would like to know in what sense I am responsible for my actions; and, if there is such a sense, the sense in which I am not responsible for my actions. These are surely important questions, things of consequence about which one should exercise the greatest of care.

Not only in my church at home, but in conferences I have attended in other places as well, even where the Concordant Version is used and generally commended and the teaching of the eventual salvation of all affirmed, the teaching of God's deity in all things as set forth in your book by A. E. Knoch, THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND THE JUDGMENTS OF GOD, is often denied. (Someone even said privately to me that though you at the Concordant Publishing Concern may claim otherwise, your false teaching as to God's so-called deity is little more than baptized fatalism, to which it is tantamount.)

When I am actively engaged in reading this book by Mr. Knoch, its teaching rings true, and I am blessed. Yet when I hear the arguments of others against its teaching, by some who have been acquainted with Concordant publications far longer than myself, at least some of their arguments seem correct; at least I am unable to tell that they are incorrect. It may be that I have not followed your explanations sufficiently closely. But I am waiting for further light on this subject, "the eyes of [my] heart having been enlightened."

Answer:

YOUR APPROACH to this important topic (which is also, regrettably, often a subject of controversy) is ideal. In the end, true scriptural understanding is a matter of enlightenment, as God gives us eyes to see and ears to hear. In the case of a much-controverted subject, often what is needed is not so much a conclusive argument, but the grace of openness to, together with the ability to recognize, grasp, and accept, a conclusive argument, should one be exposed to such an argument. It is important to keep in mind as well that, to those who are "dull of hearing," what may seem to be just "words, many and abstruse" (*cp* Heb.5:11), may actually be instead at least an approximation of the simplest possible, adequate explanation of a somewhat complex subject.

Since any form of behavioral determinism (which is merely to say, of the affirmation of the existence of sufficient causes of which human decisions are the effect), *especially the teaching of the altogether wise and benign "deity"* (i.e., "GODness" or "PLACERship") *of God* (*cp* Col.2:9), is a radically different concept than that of mere fatalism, it is far from just and correct to claim that our putatively "false teaching as to God's so-called deity is little more than baptized fatalism, to which it is tantamount."

As popularly understood, fatalism affirms that whatever is fated to happen, will come to pass *no matter what, regardless of what one may do* to avoid one's inexorable fate. Fatalism, effectively, says, What will happen tomorrow is what is fated to happen tomorrow *no matter what, regardless* of what we do, either today or tomorrow.

Determinism, of any kind, on the other hand, affirms that much that will happen tomorrow, will happen only because of and not apart from what we do today.

The argument of fatalism is that if it is fated that you will recover from an illness, then, regardless of whether you consult a doctor or you do not consult a doctor you will recover. But also, if it is fated that you will not recover from an illness, then, regardless of whether you consult a doctor or you do not consult a doctor you will not recover. But either it is fated that you will recover from an illness or it is fated that you will not recover. Therefore it is futile to consult a doctor.

The thought, presumably, is that it is futile, because what you do will have no effect. If so, the reply given by Chrysippus (c. 280–206 B.C.) to this argument seems exactly right: "The conclusion does not follow; because it may have been fated that you will recover as a result of seeing the doctor." (The corresponding reply would be equally apt if we substituted "necessary" for "fated.")[1]

Our point here is that essential means are indispensable to objective ends; hence objective ends, even though certain to occur, cannot occur apart from their own essential means (*cf* Acts 27:21-25; *cp* vss.30-37; 42-44).

Though we would not boast about tomorrow, for we do not know what a day may generate (Prov.27:1; *cp* James 4:13-17), we do know that careful deliberation and wise choice, not to mention necessary effort, are all essential to the achievement of desirable goals. Good results require good actions, which in turn require good choices. It has well been said that, No one knows what he can do until he tries. In sum, in the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., "The mode by which the inevitable comes to pass is effort."

CHOOSING WHAT IS CHOICE

We are free to do as we please, and yet only as we please. This is to say that under normal circumstances, we are free from being compelled to act contrary to our own will, and are free to choose as we please and do as we want. Yet

1. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* "Fatalism, entry 7, 'The Idle Argument,'" adapted: HTTP://PLATO.STANFORD.EDU/ENTRIES/FATALISM/#7.

at the same time, we are bound to choose according to our strongest desire, whatever on the whole appears most "choice" to us at present.

At a certain time and in a certain circumstance (according to the present state and character of the psychological forces[2] inhering in our mind), this may be to defer short-term gratification in the interests of gaining long-term benefit. Yet at a different time and in a different circumstance, this may be to yield to short-term gratification, even though this entails the forfeiture of long-term benefit. In each case, however, we will be acting voluntarily, choosing what we please and doing what we want.

If we were not bound to choose according to our strongest desire, to select whatever on the whole appears most "choice" to us at present, not only would our actions not be voluntary, according to our own choice, but our lives would be subjected to utter chaos.

For example, we might find ourselves suddenly engaged in adultery or murder, even though such acts—not only in the abstract but in relation to our present desires as well—were altogether undesirable and abhorrent to us, at odds with our own will and preference. Similarly, we might find ourselves, even under the most dangerous of road conditions, driving at a great speed and utterly recklessly, even steering our automobile in such a way as to cause it to fly off a cliff and we with it unto a certain death. That is, we might find ourselves doing this even though our present strongest desire was to drive slowly and cautiously, with the greatest of care, with a view to the avoidance of any injury.

2. These include any mental states or entities that can preferentially arbitrate between different options, especially our emotions, such as joy, fear, happiness, sadness, peace, worry; all of one's thoughts, feelings, desires, beliefs, inclinations, motivations, and so on.

(I owe the phrase "psychological forces," and the contents of most of this footnote to Brian D. Parks, in "Ultimate Moral Responsibility is Impossible: A New Defense of The Basis Argument": http://people.consolidated.net/gptravel/umr_no_possible_bdp.pdf.)

In God's own appointed time, when we are finally constituted just (Rom.5:19) and conformed to the image of His Son (Rom.8:29), though we will still be free to do as we please and yet bound to act according to our strongest desire, since due to the abiding, wholly virtuous character with which we will then be endowed, it will always be our strongest desire to act only wisely and righteously, never unwisely or unrighteously.

This is, even as it is written, when the chosen ones among the sons of Israel are fully begotten anew, that it will be the case that, "Everyone who is begotten of God *is not doing sin, for* His seed is remaining in him, *and he can not be sinning, for* he is begotten of God" (1 John 3:9).

This same principle holds as well for ourselves, who are members of the ecclesia, the ecclesia which is, figuratively, "the body of Christ" (*cf* Eph.1:22,23; *cp* Col.1:24). In the day when we are, not as today, only in earnest, but in that day, altogether and entirely, a new creation in Christ (*cf* 2 Cor.5:17; Gal.6:15)—resurrected and vivified, immortal and incorruptible—we will also be, altogether and entirely, members of "the new humanity which, *in accord with God,* is being *created* in *righteousness* and *benignity* of the truth" (Eph.4:24). Then will fully come to pass the words of our Lord, concerned with the only "true" or "real" freedom—whether of will or other aspect of liberty—worthy of the name: "If ever, then, the Son should be *making* you free, you will be *really* free" (John 8:36).

VARIED SENSES OF RESPONSIBILITY

If what one means by "responsibility," is simply accountability or just liability to judgment, then, Yes, we are "responsible" before God, for "each of us shall be giving account concerning himself to God" (Rom.14:12); and "all of us must be manifested before the dais of Christ, that each should be requited for that which he puts into practice

through the body, whether good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10). All our practices must be considered; none may be ignored; and, they must all, both the good and the bad, receive their fitting response (i.e., requital or recompense).

But if what is meant by "responsibility," however, is accountableness and just liability to judgment *because* of one's, as the case may be, either proper or improper use of one's "free will," as popularly construed, then, No, we are not thus "responsible" before God.

The law of causality is that every effect has an antecedent cause. This is an analytically true statement, for by definition, for every effect there is a cause; and every cause produces an effect.

The hypothesis, "Everything has an antecedent cause," however, is a false hypothesis since it entails either an infinite regress in seeking a first cause, or the necessarily false notion of self-causation (*causa sui*, Latin, meaning "cause of itself").

Nothing can be the cause of itself, for in order for something to be the cause of itself, it would have to exist prior to its own existence. The notion of ultimate self-creation, then, that is, of one's own self being the ultimate cause of the way one is, is formally false, since it fails the test of logical analysis.

This is not at all to suggest that since we cannot be thus self-caused insofar as the content and course of our own lives is concerned, that we cannot cause changes in our own disposition and composition (i.e., aggregate characteristics), whether for good or ill. Indeed, if only in small measure, or to a substantial degree, we regularly cause changes in our own disposition and character, whether for good or ill.

The important, life-changing decisions that one makes at present will surely influence one's future character and personality. But even so, to be *ultimately* self-created, which

is to say to be *ultimately responsible for* the decisions that one makes at present, one would have to be ultimately responsible for the motivational forces that effectively led him or her to make those very decisions.

HEREDITY AND PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

This, however, is demonstrably impossible, for it involves an infinite regress:

> In order to be truly morally responsible for what one does, it seems that one would have to be the ultimate cause or origin of oneself, or at least of some crucial part of one's mental nature. One would have to be *causa sui*, in the old terminology. But nothing can be truly or ultimately *causa sui* in any respect at all. Even if the property of being *causa sui* is allowed to belong (unintelligibly) to God, it cannot plausibly be supposed to be possessed by ordinary finite human beings. "The *causa sui* is the best self-contradiction that has been conceived so far," as Nietzsche astutely if not graciously remarked in BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL:[3]
>
> > It is a sort of rape and perversion of logic. But the extravagant pride of man has managed to entangle itself profoundly and frightfully with just this nonsense. The desire for "freedom of the will" in the superlative metaphysical sense, which still holds sway, unfortunately, in the minds of the half-educated; the desire to bear the entire and ultimate responsibility for one's actions oneself, and to absolve God, the world, ancestors, chance, and society, involves nothing less than to be precisely this *causa sui* and, with more than Baron Münchausen's audacity, to pull oneself up into existence by the hair, out of the swamps of nothingness.
>
> In fact, nearly all of those who believe in strong

3. Friedrich Nietzsche, BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (1882), "Part One: On the Prejudices of Philosophers, section 21": HTTP://WWW.ALLPHILOSOPHERS.COM/NIETZSCHE/NIETZSCHE_CHAPTER1.HTML.

free will do so without any conscious thought that it requires ultimate self-origination. Nevertheless, this is the only thing that could actually ground the kind of strong free will that is regularly believed in, and it does seem that one way in which the belief in strong free will manifests itself is in the very vague and (necessarily) unexamined belief that many have that they are somehow or other radically responsible for their general mental nature, or at least for certain crucial aspects of it.

The above argument may seem contrived, but essentially the same argument can be given in a more natural form as follows. (i) It is undeniable that one is the way one is, initially, as a result of heredity and early experience. (ii) It is undeniable that these are things for which one cannot be held to be in any way responsible (this might not be true if there were reincarnation, but reincarnation would just shift the problem backwards). (iii) One cannot at any later stage of one's life hope to accede to true or ultimate responsibility for the way one is by trying to change the way one already is as a result of one's heredity and previous experience (which is to say, one's specific nature and nurture; one's genetics and precise constitution, even as one's fully-detailed life-experience).

For one may well try to change oneself, but (iv) both the particular way in which one is moved to try to change oneself, and the degree of success in one's attempt at change, will be determined by how one already is as a result of heredity and previous experience. And (v) any further changes that one can bring about only after one has brought about certain initial changes will in turn be determined, via the initial changes, by heredity and previous experience.

(vi) This may not be the whole story, for it may be that some changes in the way one is are traceable to the influence of indeterministic or random factors. But (vii) it is foolish to suppose that indeterministic or random factors, for which one is *ex hypothesi* [i.e., by hypothesis] in no way responsible, can in themselves contribute to one's being truly or ultimately responsible for how one is.

> The claim, then, is not that people cannot change the way they are. They can, in certain respects (which tend to be exaggerated by North Americans and underestimated, perhaps, by members of many other cultures). The claim is only that people cannot be supposed to change themselves in such a way as to be or become truly or ultimately responsible for the way they are, and hence for their actions. One can put the point by saying that the way you are is, ultimately, in every last detail, a matter of luck—good or bad. That is, luck swallows everything.[4]

While the substance of Professor Strawson's point is well-taken by ourselves, since luck is conceived either as random events of sheer chance or as deterministic yet undesigned and purposeless events in the evolving course of nature, we would not speak of luck, but instead of divine providence. We would say, then, that one can put the point by saying that the way you are is, ultimately, in every last detail, a matter of divine providence. That is, seeing that out of God, through God, and for God is all: "to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:36), it is evident that a beneficent divine providence, for wise and good ends otherwise unattainable, accounts for everything.

"YET NOT I BUT THE GRACE OF GOD"

The traditional notion of moral responsibility is that one is morally responsible for an action if and only if one chooses and acts as one does neither by chance (i.e., apart

4. Galen Strawson, in E. Craig (Ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Routledge: London; 1998, 2004), "Free Will": HTTP://WWW.REP.ROUTLEDGE.COM/ARTICLE/V014.

from any cause at all), nor as the effect of a causal history; that is, because of a chain of sufficient causes which explain why one chose and acted as one did, rather than in some other way.

Instead, one must act in such a way so as to be ultimately responsible for how one chooses and acts. And, it is believed, this is how one ordinarily does choose and act.

It is evident, however, that any such notion of moral responsibility is impossible to satisfy, and therefore that the belief that this is how one ordinarily does choose and act is a mistaken belief. This is because either one acts as one does as the effect of one's own causal history, in which case one's actions are unavoidable, being the effect of a cause (or rather, of an entire causal history), or else one acts as one does merely by chance, apart from any cause whatsoever, in which case one's actions are unpreventable, being events of sheer chance.

Between these two accounts of behavior (or some combination of the two), the field of possibilities is exhausted. This is because either one acts as one does as the effect of a cause, or else one does not.

Since this is the case, no additional account of behavior beyond these two is even possible. Hence, on any possible account, it is impossible to satisfy the requirements of the traditional notion of ultimate-responsibility-based, moral responsibility.

It is true, in one sense, namely, the hypothetical, that at the time of choice one indeed could have chosen otherwise. That is, on the hypothesis that at the time a choice was made conditions had been sufficiently different that one would have chosen otherwise, then, quite obviously, one could have chosen otherwise. But, in the categorical sense, in the time when a choice was made, conditions being as they were, one could not have chosen otherwise. This is because on any possible account (whether cause-

affirming or cause-denying), in the case of any occurrence, only one outcome is possible.

Yet it is this very notion of ultimate self-creation which is exemplified in the popular belief which affirms that one is, at least to a considerable degree, a "self-made man" with regard to the existence of one's own virtues.

The most egregious offense inherent in the doctrine of self-created virtue, commonly termed "free will," is that it ascribes the glory of the creature's virtue not to the creature's Creator, but to the creature himself. And, since the essence of pride is the holding of a high or inordinate (i.e., excessive) opinion of one's own dignity and importance, those who believe that their virtue is self-created (and hence, finally, thanks to themselves), are necessarily prideful individuals.

Using the Concordant Version or holding to the eventual salvation of all, is by no means a preventative against the mistaken belief of self-created virtue, or for that matter, against a wide variety of other mistaken beliefs. Specious (i.e., seemingly correct, but actually fallacious) argumentation is often persuasive, appears in attractive form, and by means of winning personality. Very often, it creates a strong bias against actual truth. Even so, it remains essential error. The only question, then, is whether we are sufficiently enlightened to *recognize* its essential error.

Properly-speaking, "self-control" simply speaks of the control of the self by the self; by usage, it has in view the control of the self with a view toward uprightness of action. That is, the scriptural expression "self-control," says nothing in favor of the notion that when one engages in self-control, one enjoys a power of *ultimate* control *over* oneself as to *how* one engages in control of oneself, even that when one chooses one thing instead of another, one can choose otherwise than what one does in fact choose, and so forth.

Nothing, including one's own virtue, can be *ultimately*

self-created.[5] The "self-control" that chooses virtue over vice, righteousness instead of sin, discipline instead of laxity, is itself a *fruit* of the spirit (Gal.5:23). The self-control, then, that opts not to quench the spirit (1 Thess.5:19), but instead to be filled full with spirit (Eph.5:18), is not causeless, but the "fruit" (i.e., effect) of a cause.

The truth is that to the degree that we have self-control, even as in the spheres in which we enjoy its presence and empowerment, we are what we are "in the *grace* of God." This is even as the apostle Paul says concerning the twelve, "*In the grace of God,* I am what I am . . . . more exceedingly than all of them toil I—*yet not I but the grace of God* which is with me" (1 Cor.15:10). Similarly, even as concerns sexual continence, while the apostle declares, ". . . I want all men to be as I myself also," he goes on to say, "*but each has his own gracious gift from God,* one indeed, thus, yet one thus" (1 Cor.7:7).

In light of the fact, then, that any teaching in support of freewill-based responsibility as popularly understood is necessarily mistaken, one should reject it, not view it as possible "new truth," new truth that just happens to be the same old error as is already all but universally embraced.

May it be our heartfelt privilege to join with the apostle Paul in affirming, and, in insisting upon, the glorious *good news* of 2 Corinthians 1:12: "Our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and sincerity *of God,* not in fleshly wisdom, but *in the grace of God,* we behaved ourselves in the world, yet more superabundantly toward you." J.R.C.

5. This is the case even within the Deity Himself, in Whom the fullness of virtue is self-*existent,* not self-*created.* God did not *create* Himself a particular way, with a particular disposition and character. Instead, God Himself *exists* in a particular way, with a particular disposition and character.

THE DIVINE ASSUMPTIONS

AMONG the glories which grace our Lord Jesus Christ is one of surpassing interest and splendor; but this, like many another gem in His diadem, has been long lost and forgotten. It is brought before us in that galaxy of glories which graces the opening of the epistle to the Hebrews.

Like every inspired gem, it is fitly set. The coming eon was allotted to Abraham, the father of the Hebrews. So now Abraham's greater Son is set forth as the Allottee of all. The nation of Israel is the eonian nation and so we see Him as the Maker of the eons. As these eons are made for the display of God, we are now introduced to the One Who is to be the means of His revelation. First He is the Effulgence (i.e., out-shining, or radiant splendor) of God's glory. And then He is introduced to us as the Emblem (i.e., representation, or symbol) of the divine assumptions (Heb.1:3).

In meditating upon the relations between God and His Son, it will be our wisdom to observe and preserve the figures and illustrations which He Himself suggests rather than any of our own invention. "The effulgence of His glory" leads us to the most notable of all natural representations of God's glory, the sun.

The sun itself is not visible to human eyes. What we see is the luminous photosphere or radiance which surrounds it. What we feel is the radiance of which it is the source. In the richer Hebrew tongue two terms are used to describe the sun. One, referring to the sun itself (Job 9:7) is but seldom used, but the other, the common term, refers rather to the radiance of the sun, its shining. Thus when we read the phrases at which so-called scientific scholars

scoff, and are told that the sun rises and sets, moves and stands still, gets hot and scorches, it is not the astronomical idea of the sun which is intended, but the phenomenal thought—the sunshine—which is suggested. By appealing to the poverty of our language and not noting the precision of the tongue of inspiration, the wisdom of the wise has confounded itself.

All our physical blessings are borne to us by sunbeams. All light and life relies, not only on the sun, but on its radiance, its effulgence. Should the sun shut in its beams and shroud its shining, it would be like God apart from the offices of His Son—unappreciated, unknown, inscrutable. And so He is to all who have not seen and felt His light and love as these radiate from His Effulgence.

To us who know God and all His warmth of love and life-giving illumination, He still remains invisible. But by His Son, His glories have filled our hearts with blessing as the sun's beneficent beams spread blessing on the earth.

The next illustration, in which we are particularly interested at this time, brings before us quite a different picture. Just as this page is printed from type whose form corresponds to that of the characters which appear before the reader's eye, so it is with God and His Son. The type and its impression are distinct and different in many ways; yet, so far as the interpretation of thought is concerned, they are one. The printer who reads the type and the reader who scans these lines, are impressed with precisely the same ideas. So the Son of God is the Emblem (*charaktêr*, CARVing) of God's assumptions, being thus expressive of His character.

This phrase has been variously rendered. The Authorized translates "the express image of His person." That this is rather in the nature of a commentary, or a suggestion as to what they thought it meant, rather than a true rendering of the original, is manifest when we note their translation of the word here rendered "person" by "substance" in the first verse of the eleventh chapter.

"God is spirit" (John 4:24). How then, can we speak of His *substance?* In the AV, The Greek word here translated "substance" has been rendered *confident* (2 Cor.9:4), *confidence* (2 Cor.11:17; Heb.3:14); and the Revisers have followed the AV in using *substance* in Heb.11:1. But faith is not substance. In fact, it is quite its opposite.

In order to rest satisfied as to the meaning of this important word we will need to find an expression which will fit into the context of each of its occurrences. "Confidence" seems to suit the Corinthian contexts fairly well. But the apostle has shown more than simple confidence. He has expressed this to others. He has *assumed* that they were ready and feared lest this assumption may not be true. Here we have hit upon an expression which will fit each occurrence as a key fits the lock. It does not strain the context, but fills its place perfectly and opens up the significance of the passage. Using this as the basis of a concordant version, we have this satisfactory definition of faith (Heb.11:1): "Now faith is an assumption of what is being expected, a conviction concerning matters which are not being observed" (CV).

Faith in God's word rests, not on evidence, but rather exists because of the lack of it. It is a *conviction* concerning matters where evidence is withheld. It is an *assumption* of that which we are expecting. All our blessings, like those of the worthies of this chapter, may be perceived afar off, and may be saluted, but have not yet been obtained (*cf* Heb.11:13).

Faith, as related to hope, or rather expectation, *assumes* all the force and flavor of the longed-for object. The fulfillment of faith alone can substantiate it. But faith refuses to wait for fact and takes for granted that He Who has spoken will not fail to fulfil His word.

Palestine, we assert, belongs to Israel. That is faith. In fact, it has been the territory of many peoples over the centuries. But we *assume* that God's word is true and that any others who may possess it for a time, will have it only for a temporary term.

Faith, then, is the *assumption* (*hupostasis,* STANDing-UNDER) of that which we are expecting; it is the banner under which we take our stand. Thus, when we transfer this thought to the phrase in the first chapter of the epistle, it not only fits perfectly but suggests a vast field of almost unexplored truth. The Son of God is not the image of God's *substance* or *person* (whatever these may mean), but the Emblem, or Impress, of His Assumptions. Through His Son, God makes the eons (Heb.1:2). Throughout these eons, God places Himself in various *attitudes,* and *relations* to His creatures. He *assumes* various characters; He is Creator, Ruler, Provider, Master, Husband, Father. He is Yahweh and Elohim. He assumes these parts; but how can His creatures become aware of His assumptions? How can they know His relationship to them? He makes this manifest through His Son, Who is the *Emblem,* or *Impress* of these assumptions.

The Greek word for "impress" is the source of our word "character." Indeed, the Greek word, transliterated, is *charaktêr.* It occurs only in this passage; but, with another affix, marking the fixed result of a stamp or die, it is used often in the Revelation to denote the "mark" or stamp of the beast (*charagma,* CARVE-*effect*; Rev.13:16). It is also used in Acts 17:29, where it is translated "graven" in the AV, or "sculpture" in the CV. Idols were sculptured to depict the character of the god or goddess which they represented. Hermes (Acts 14:12, Mercurius) with his herald's staff and winged sandals, is proved to be the messenger of Olympus; Artemis (Acts 19:24,27,28,34,35, Diana) was known as a huntress by her pack of dogs; while Zeus (Acts 14:12,13,

Jupiter) proclaimed himself by his scepter and his throne. But the Son of God is no mere *charagma*, no sculptured image of His God. He is a *charaktêr,* and displays Him by His words and works, by a life of love and a dread death, by a radiant resurrection and an august ascension.

He is the facsimile of God's assumptions, their *character*-istic presentation. In Him, God's peculiar and salient attributes are converted into terms of human speech and action. When God is indignant, He frowns; when He rejoices, then the smile will play upon His Beloved's lips.

He is the Impress of all God's assumptions. It is vain and vicious to drive in a wedge, as we so often do, between the Son and the Father, as though there were as little sympathy between them as there is in the average human family. He and His Father are one, just as He and His saints are one. This unity is one of spirit, not identity of personality.

Failure to apprehend the truth that our Lord is the Impress of all the divine assumptions, has led to many a self-imposed difficulty. Some passages prove that He is *Adonai,* not *Yahweh.* Other passages make it clear that He *is Yahweh*. Still others give Him the title *El* or *Elohim.*

Let us note the words of Psalm 110:1: "The averring of Yahweh to my Lord . . ." (Psa.110:1; cited, "Said the Lord to my Lord . . ." Matt.22:44). This seems to show clearly that David's Lord was *not* Yahweh. Yet it is David who speaks of the crucified One: "I poise Yahweh in front of me continually . . ." (Psa.16:8; *cp* Acts 2:25). Thus, while we infer from one of David's utterances that He was *not* Yahweh, we have clear evidence from another passage that He *is.*

The same is true of the title Elohim. In Hebrews 1:9, Elohim is called His God. Yet in the preceding verse, He Himself is called Elohim (*cf* Psa.45:6,7).

In His distress on Calvary He calls upon El, "Eloi, Eloi" (Matt.27:46), yet in the very same book He Himself is called

Immanuel—El with us (Matt.1:23). This, too, is the title given the Son as the Creator (Heb.1:10; Psa.102:24-27).

In the Greek Scriptures Master or Lord is used indiscriminately of the *Adonai* or *Yahweh* of the Hebrew; yet this is the peculiar title which is used to distinguish Him from His God. "For even if so be that there are those being termed gods, whether in heaven or on earth, even as there are many gods and many lords, nevertheless for us there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is, and we through Him" (1 Cor.8:5,6).

Often is God spoken of as the God and Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Yet the title God is not denied the Son. Thomas acknowledges Him to be his Lord and his God, and is not rebuked for his confession (John 20:28). There is a strong probability that He is called "the Only Begotten God" in the first chapter of John's account (v.18). The same apostle tells us that He is the true God (1 John 5:20).

Indeed, while the title "Father" is the one most distinct from the Son, He is the *Emblem of* the divine fatherhood, too. He told His disciples, "'If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. And henceforth you know Him and have seen Him.' Philip is saying to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficing us.' Jesus is saying to him, 'So much time I am with you, and you do not know Me, Philip! He who has seen Me has seen the Father, and how are you saying, Show us the Father? Are you not believing that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The declarations which I am speaking to you I am not speaking from Myself. Now the Father, remaining in Me, He is doing His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me . . .'" (John 14:7-11).

From all of these examples, it is evidently beside the mark to seek to limit any divine characterization to Deity proper, for we cannot hear Him apart from His Expression; we cannot see Him apart from His Image; we cannot perceive the characters He assumes apart from the Emblem of His assumptions. *This does not obliterate manifest differences of identity and personality.* Indeed, we are forced to distinguish between the Image and its invisible Original; we cannot confuse the Expression with the One Who speaks; and we are not distressed when the Emblem is spoken of in the same terms as the Assumption. The one great Mediator between God and humanity is fully authorized to speak and act as God; and to receive the honors which are due to Him only. And this because His will and ways and words are not His own but His Who sent Him.

From this it is manifest how unscriptural is the theological theory of a "trinity." We are asked to believe that there are three God-persons whose three wills act in unity. Scripture knows of but one God whose will is supreme and needs no subordination or compromise or harmony with any other will. The Son of God always did the will of His God, and never presumed to cooperate with Him. As the Expression of God, He does not announce His own will; and He renounces any will of His own as the Emblem of the divine assumptions.

A. E. Knoch

JOY THOMPSON

Our sister in the Lord, Elzina Joy Thompson, of Melvin, Illinois, died on February 6, 2009, age 78. She is survived by her husband, Dayo, six children, fifteen grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. As her daughter, Lisa Krall, related to us, "Beyond being the 'typical' wonderful mother, Mom was an ambassador of Christ, making it clear to me and to my five brothers who we are, why we are, and what we are—*through Him.* God uses many ways to reach His people, but none can be dearer than one's own mother. He has blessed our family superabundantly."

At Joy's funeral, since it encapsulates her strongest beliefs, Ephesians 3 from the Concordant Version was the principal reading.

Devotional Studies

THE MYSTERY OF EVIL

WHATEVER of mystery there may be in the origin of evil, its presence in the universe is a great outstanding fact. Explained or unexplained, evil exists, and it is just this fact which presents a problem of absorbing interest. Philosophy is unable to account for the mystery, and science can only infer that some inscrutable law is operating in the play of two great forces, good and evil.

While acknowledging the fact of evil, many hope for its elimination by way of evolution, regarding it as a present imperfection which the human race will shed as it ascends the hill of life. Others, in their eagerness to exonerate God from responsibility, give evil a permanent place in the universe, ascribing its origin and continuance to the devil. However, there are those who cannot reconcile the thought of perpetual sin and suffering with a just conception of God, and to these the writer specially commends this brief study of a great theme.

In the realm of romance, genius vividly portrays the conflict of vice and virtue, and with unerring instinct depicts the triumph of good and the eclipse of evil. Now, this longing for the ascendancy of the noble and praiseworthy is no small token of that perfect state which shall ultimately prevail. The difficulty with many is to see how evil can be conducive to good, and a necessary factor in the accomplishment of divine purpose. That evil was no mere accident, but an integral, indispensable part of the divine plan, is proved and illustrated by the entire range of sacred narrative and history. Bold in statement, strong

in truth, Scripture still offers the clearest solution of the problem of evil. Shall we be less bold in reception, or must we modify and water down its strength to suit our fixed notions and ideas?

GOD'S FIAT

The fiat of God has gone forth. "Former of light and Creator of darkness, Maker of good and *Creator of evil*, I, Yahweh, make *all* these things" (Isa.45:7). Surely, then, there must be a purpose in evil's creation, since nothing can be purposeless that comes from Him. Absolutely supreme, God is responsible for the guidance of the universe to its appointed climax. Able to avert evil, He created it for reasons of His own. Evil is God's prerogative, and its employment subserves the purpose in view. He takes full control, and is at the helm of affairs in such manner that He is "operating *all* in accord with the counsel of will" (Eph.1:11). Truly, "all is of God," and though we may not be able to fully comprehend His ways, yet we may see sufficient of His ability to assure us of a purpose marvelous in wisdom and rich in love.

There is no real good, no vital virtue, apart from conflict with, and victory over, evil. Suffering in some form is inevitable, but is transfigured when we see that it is the Divine means to an exalted end. Herein there is much point in the thought expressed of Christ that, "even He also, being a Son, learned obedience from that which He suffered" (Heb.5:8). We even read that He was ". . . given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God . . ." (Acts 2:23); and, that ". . . of a truth, in this city were gathered against Thy holy Boy Jesus, Whom Thou dost anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the nations and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Thy hand and Thy counsel designates beforehand to occur" (Acts 4:27,28).

Thus we see that the machinations of wicked men were instruments in the fulfillment of the divine purpose.

The story of Joseph finely illustrates the inter-weaving of good and evil. His brothers planned his death, but eventually sell him into slavery, concealing their crime by crafty deceit. Years roll by, and Joseph, the obscure, becomes ruler of Egypt, and a thoughtful benefactor of the people. Revealing his identity to his brothers, who fear reprisal for their misdeeds, Joseph makes a fine acknowledgment of God's overruling power. He consoles them by saying: "And now do not be grieved nor let it be hot in your eyes that you sold me hither, because Elohim has sent me on before you for the preservation of life . . . . So now, not you sent me here, but the One, Elohim" (Isa.45:5,8). Indeed, "You devised evil against me, yet Elohim, He devised it for good in order to accomplish, as at this day, to preserve many people alive" (Gen.50:20). Truly what we term circumstance and chance, attend upon His will in the accomplishment of His manifold purpose.

WORLD EVENTS PRE-ORDAINED

In such quotations as the following we see the supremacy of God in the great forces of good and evil. Referring to Israel, God says: ". . . Just as I brought on this people all this great evil, so shall I bring on them all the good which I am speaking concerning them" (Jer.32:42). "And it will come to be just as I was alert over them to pluck up and to break down, to demolish and to destroy and to smash, so I shall be alert over them to build and to plant, averring is Yahweh" (Jer.31:28). And again: "Who has given Jacob to the robber, and Israel to the plunderers? Is it not Yahweh . . . ?" (Isa.42:24). Indeed, "Would there come to be evil in a city and Yahweh not have done it?" (Amos 3:6). We also read that ". . . He makes out of one every nation of mankind, to be dwelling on all the surface of the earth,

specifying the setting of the seasons and the bounds of their dwelling . . ." (Acts 17:26). Thus we see that the events of history, rise and fall of kingdoms, changes in the world's map, have been all foreordained.

It may be said that if God thus acts in supremacy of power, He must therefore invade the domain of what is termed "free will." But Scripture, experience, and observation show conclusively that man is not absolutely free. He may be free in the realm of will,[1] but not in the sphere of action. He may plan and purpose, determine and devise, but there is a controlling power above himself which ever and anon restrains the execution of his will. Man is often the creature of circumstance. In the words of Byron, "Men are the sport of circumstances, when circumstances seem the sport of men." Thus, man's proposals are ever at God's disposal.

Profoundly wise and beautifully simple was the attitude of the poet who penned the following lines:

I have no answer for myself or thee
Save that I learned beside my mother's knee:
All is of God that is and is to be,
And God is good. Let this suffice us still,
Resting in childlike trust upon His will
Who moves to His great ends unthwarted by the ill.

Evil is but temporary, though its reign seem long. The will of the creature shall yet be swayed into perfect correspondence with the will of the Creator. Within the majestic monitions of His will, punishment and judgment there may be, but all the minutiae of His marvelous guidance and government is ordered with a view to the ultimate issue. And when the mystery of His will is seen in the light

1. That is, simply in the sense that he is free from compulsion, from acting contrary to his own will, and may do as he pleases in correspondence to the desires of his heart. "Yet it is Yahweh who regulates the heart" (Prov.21:2), from which "spring the outflowings of life" (Prov.4:23).

of full accomplishment, there will be joyous acquiescence from the lips of all.

The presence of evil, in conflict, crime, and catastrophe may mystify and perplex, but once grip the grand conception that the winding ways of men, though a seeming tangled skein, is not purposeless with God, and we have enlightenment and assurance. We may safely trust the destiny of mankind to Him who created, who fashioned and formed in august pursuance of a purpose supreme. Therefore, we may rest heart and intellect in His power to bring to glad fruition the operations of His majestic will.

William Mealand

"THE PHANTOM OF FREE WILL"

There is only one independent "free" will in the universe, and that is the will of God. This will, during the eons, is manifested in two distinct ways, through experience and revelation. The flesh of mankind has been placed by God in an environment which leads it contrary to His revealed will. Mankind's physical heritage from Adam, disposes it against His manifest pleasure. This is God in history working out His will in the realm of subconsciousness. In order to perfect His purpose men must not be aware that they live and move and are in Him. They must be oblivious of all but the fruit of His operations through their progenitors and in their associates. They must imagine that they are independent deities, well able to match their wits and wills with that of their Creator. This is the great democratic doctrine of "self-determination."

The false "free will" which men claim arises from ignorance of God's ways and of their own limitations. Not realizing that God is working against Himself in order to become known, they imagine that their will is independent of His. Not being able to analyze the intricate processes which underlie their own determinations, they delude themselves into thinking that each volition on their part is a creative act, indeed, far more than that, for creation is not, as commonly supposed, based on nothing. But man's will is itself a creature of circumstance and can be molded and shaped by the great Controller of circumstances, to suit His own pleasure. A. E. Knoch

(The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God, p.126.)

ADAM DIED

IN Genesis 5:3-5 we have the history of Adam briefly presented in terms of three particular verbs: *live, beget* and *die*. The first is a verb of goodness and glory. The second indicates purpose in life. But the third verb stands against the other two with dire implications.

3 + **Adam** |**lived** 7two **hundred thirty**0 **years and** |**begot** a son **in his likeness** and as**after his image;** + **he** |**called** `**his name Seth.** 4 **And** the **days of Adam, after his begetting**– `**Seth, came** to |**be** 7**seven hundred**0 **years, and he** |**begot sons and daughters.** 5 +**So all** the **days of Adam which he lived came** to |**be nine hundred thirty years;** +**then he** |**died.**

There are other verbs here, but *live, beget* and *die,* these three are of most significance. And of the three, the first and last are critical to the overall message of Scripture concerning God's plan and purpose for humanity, centered in the death, entombment and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The verb "live" is traced back to Genesis 2:7, where we read that Yahweh Elohim formed Adam out of soil and blew into his nostrils the breath of *life,* and he became a *living* soul. In creating the human, God had in view a living, sentient being. Adam consciously experienced sensation and feeling.

The verb "beget" relates back to Elohim's words in Genesis 1:28, addressed to humanity concerning its place in creation: "Be fruitful and increase; fill the earth and subdue it," which in turn connect with Elohim's words of purpose in the making of humanity: "Let Us make humanity in Our image and according to Our likeness. Let them hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heav-

ens, over the domestic beast, over every land animal and over every creeper that is creeping on the earth" (Gen. 1:26). This filling of the earth also carries forward the primary statement of purpose given in Genesis 2:15 where we read: "Then Yahweh Elohim took the human and settled him in the garden of Eden to serve it and to keep it."

THE OMINOUS VERB

But the good indicated by these verbs telling of divine glory and purpose in the creation of Adam ("human") is fearfully threatened by the verb "die." The person who dies is no longer living, no longer a sentient being. One who dies cannot serve as the image of God. Such a creature cannot subdue other kinds of creatures which need clear direction and timely provision. The human who dies cannot serve and keep the garden filled with fruitful plants which sustain life. The glory of the Creator is darkened, and the goodness of life and increase is obscured by the entrance of death into the world.

Adam lived for nine hundred and thirty years, but from the day he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he was dying. The vitality of life was diminishing day by day from that fatal day of disobedience. The function of subduing and keeping plants and animals in order was increasingly weakened until it was ended entirely. There is no communication, no awareness, no honor, no glory in death.

TO DIE YOU SHALL BE DYING

The concept of dying is introduced in Scripture with Yahweh Elohim's instruction concerning the trees of the garden (Gen.2:16,17). It enters like the chaos and vacancy and darkness of Genesis 1:2 and casts a foreboding shadow across the lush beauty and serene prosperity of the garden of Eden:

16 **And Yahweh Elohim** [l]**instructed** [on] **the human,** [›] **saying**[–]**: From every tree of the garden you may eat,** yea **eat**[–]**.**
17 [+]**But from** the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you** must **not** [l]**eat from it; for** [i]**on** the **day you eat**[–] **from it,** to **die**[–] **you shall be dying.**

This verb comes before us next in Genesis 3:1-5, where we read:

3 [+]**Now the serpent, it became** more **crafty** [f]**than any** other **animal of the field** [w]**that Yahweh Elohim had** [d]**made.**
[+] 7**The serpent**[n] [l]**said to the woman: Indeed** [t] did **Elohim say, You shall not eat from every tree of the garden?**
2 [+] **The woman** [l][sa]**replied to the serpent: We may eat** [f]**of** the **fruit of** the **trees of the garden;** 3 [+]**yet** [f]**of** the **fruit of the tree** [w]**that** is **in** the **midst of the garden Elohim said, You shall not eat from it, and you shall not touch** [i] **it lest you should die.**
4 [+]**But the serpent** [l]**said to the woman: Not** to **die**[–] **shall you be dying;** 5 **for Elohim knows**[l] **that** [i]**on** the **day you eat**[–] [f]**of it your eyes will be unclosed, and you will become like Elohim, knowing good and evil.**

INSTRUCTION AND WARNING

The first use of the verb "die" in Scripture comes directly from the mouth of God, Who uses it twice in the same statement (Gen.2:17). In instructing Adam concerning the fruit He had provided in the garden, Elohim said he could eat from every tree except that of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Elohim's message is clear and emphatic. Adam is *not* to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And the reason he must not do so is given stress by the repetition of this dark and sobering verb. Elohim warns Adam, "You must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it,

to die you shall be dying."

This was not an evangel. Yet it prepares the way for the evangel of God concerning His Son.

Then in the next appearance of the verb "die," Eve cites Elohim's words, but not exactly as He had spoken (Gen.3:3). She elaborates on His instruction regarding the forbidden fruit, telling the serpent: "Elohim said, You shall not eat from it, and you shall not touch it

lest you should die."

This was not an evangel either. But in changing the strong, unconditional declaration of God to one speaking of possibility (which opens the door to uncertainty), Eve distracted attention from the extremely serious subject that Elohim had introduced. Altogether, with her additions and revisions, she managed to make God seem unreasonable and His words equivocal.

The serpent, however, avoids any sense of uncertainty and speaks with clear declaration in openly denying the words of God (Gen.3:4):

"Not to die shall you be dying."

And then he changes the subject. It is not to the advantage of the liar to dwell on his lie. Indeed, for the Adversary the less said about death, the better, for it may lead to the exposure of his most audacious falsehood.

Nevertheless on the day Adam sinned, he began to be dying. He continued to live long beyond what we would suppose possible, but as with our own experience, his living was a diminishing process. And so it came about that God's word expressed by the infinitive "to die" (Adam was *dying* so as *to die*) was fulfilled, and Adam died.

GOD SPEAKS AGAIN

In the evangel of God, we again hear Him speak concerning sin and death. But in this case life is fully established, and death is abolished. Christ is made to be Sin,

the Antitype of the sin offering. He dies. And the result is the life of vivification, in which righteousness and peace and glory reign.

"For the One not knowing sin, [God] makes to be a *sin* offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:21). "Christ *died* for our sins" (1 Cor.15:3). "For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, *died*" (Rom.5:6). "God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ *died* for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). "In that [Christ] *died,* He *died* to Sin once for all time, yet in that He is living, He is living to God" (Rom.6:10). "If [Christ] *died* for the sake of all, consequently all died. And He *died* for the sake of all that those who are living should by no means still be living to themselves, but to the One *dying and being roused* for their sakes" (2 Cor.5:15). "For even as, in Adam, all are *dying,* thus also, in Christ, shall all be *vivified*" (1 Cor.15:22). "The last enemy is being abolished: *death*" (1 Cor.15:26).

In Romans 5, the apostle Paul contrasts Adam with Christ, and the entrance of death through the sin of Adam with the life and righteousness that enters through the obedience of Jesus Christ in Himself dying for us all:

"Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin *death,* and thus *death* passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned— . . . . Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

Thus Adam also is included in the death of Christ and will enjoy life and righteousness as it has been gained by Christ for all mankind.

WITHOUT EQUIVOCATION

In the evangel God speaks about death openly and clearly, without equivocation. Christ died. That is the opening declaration of the evangel which we have accepted, in which we stand and through which we are being saved (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Let us not, like Eve, place doubt on, or, like the serpent, deny the sober reality of His dying by claiming it was really some sort of living in which some service was being performed and usefulness maintained somewhere among the dead who somehow live on.

The entombment of our Lord was not simply intended to serve as evidence to the human mind of the resurrection when it was emptied. It is the evidence that Christ was truly dead during those three days, and that when He was roused and got back His life, the very power of death itself was defeated, so that ultimately it will be completely abolished from God's universe (*cf* 1 Cor.15:26,54-57).

As for us who are believing, let us be believing the evangel we have accepted. As our own mortality increasingly takes hold on our consciousness we need especially to hold fast to the welcome message of God that Christ died for our sins. This message is continually God's power for salvation, not only for the life ahead, but for the present as well. The evangel tells us that we died with Christ, and the old humanity was crucified together with Him (*cf* Rom. 6:5-11; Gal.2:20; Col.3:3). We are dying, but Christ has died for our sakes, and we will live together with Him.

The stark and unadorned message of human life and sin followed by death which is set before us in Genesis prepares us for the astounding message concerning the death of Christ and of His resurrected life in which He is no longer dying. Both accounts have serious significance for us all. The one points the way to the other and together give marvelous cohesion to the Word of God.

D.H.H.

Unsearchable Riches

**A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our Centennial Year

(1909–2009)

Contents:

97 Editorial
103 What is Mankind?
113 The Human in Creation and Resurrection
123 A "Holy Kiss," Yet Opposition; "The Rock was Christ"
135 The Commendation of God's Love

MAY, 2009

Volume C **Number 3**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

This book traces the divine function of *evil* (whatever is harmful or destructive) from its inception to its consummation, by presenting scriptural solutions to the various long-debated questions concerning God and His sovereignty.

As one of its subjects, it probes and takes issue with the commonly accepted explanation that Satan, and not God, is responsible for evil. To quote the book's author: "Almost all of us are shortsighted. We see the judgments, but fail to recognize that they are only part of God's way with mankind, that they are definitely not an end. We confuse the going with the goal. Judgment is God's strange work. He uses it as a preparation toward a glorious consummation."

The message in this book is especially valuable to us in these days of doubt and distress, to lead men to rely on and rest in God alone.

A. E. Knoch, paperback, 346 pages (ISBN 0-910424-59-4)

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2009

BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

EDITORIAL

WE PRESENT here portions of four editorials from earlier issues of our magazine, the first appearing in volume one (pages 201-203), the second in volume twenty-seven (pages 193,194), the third in volume thirty-nine (pages 3,4), and the last in volume forty-three (page 50). They are dated according to the particular issue of the magazine. The first one may have been the joint effort of Brother Gelesnoff and Brother Knoch, but the other three are from the pen of A. E. Knoch alone.

Altogether they exhibit the concern of our founding editors and of ourselves today for the scriptural principle set down in Romans 11:36, ". . . seeing that *out of [God] and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons!* Amen!" That God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11) is the solid support of our joy and peace. It gives God His rightful place as the One Who blesses and puts us in our proper place as those who are blessed and who bless God because of this (*cf* Eph.1:3). All is out of God, and all is to His glory.

God has a message of grace for us, and He prepares our hearts to receive it:

FEBRUARY 1910

SO ABUNDANT has been God's blessing upon our little magazine that we are constrained to publish abroad our thanksgiving, that it may redound yet more to His glory and encourage the hearts of those who have taken such a kindly interest in this effort to exalt His Name . . . .

Many of [the] precious truths [being presented here] will be new to our readers, but we trust that their novelty will in no wise deter anyone from testing them by the most exact and searching scrutiny of the Word of God. We desire for all our readers the rank of Berean nobility (Acts 17:11) who "*examined* [*anakrinontes*] the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so" . . . .

We are not ashamed to stand for intense exactitude in dealing with the words of God, though this has often put us to shame. In His material creation the microscope is unable to find the limits of His infinite perfections. His spiritual creation is no less exact and perfect in its sphere. To shun exactness is to shun the light. It is, in measure, to reject the Word of God for the philosophy of man. We do so only to gloss over and conceal those uncomfortable details which mock our theology and endanger our reputation before others. Nothing but a divinely implanted desire to please *Him* can deliver us from this plight.

We have rejoiced greatly to find that God has not only given the message, but that He has prepared hearts to receive it. Both are His work; both are essential. For, of ourselves, it is not only impossible to discover the truth in His Word, but we are so dense that, apart from His gracious operation, we cannot even recognize the light when we see it.

So we are utterly cast upon God; and we are glad that it is so, for here we can rest. He has given the message, and He is able to prepare hearts to hear it.

And here, at rest, and filled with thanksgiving, we can worship and say:

Who is like our God, Who in giving us riches unsearchable, has enriched Himself with surpassing praise?

Since, like Paul, we are what we are by the grace of God

(1 Cor.15:10), and not due to anything of ourselves, our behavior is to reflect this with humility and patience. Our deep desire is that others also, along with ourselves, may be brought to a greater appreciation of God as He reveals Himself in Christ Jesus our Lord. Here the guidelines of Ephesians 4 and 5 are especially welcome:

JULY 1936

THE FRUIT of Ephesians is found in 4:1-6, "with all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace." Whoever knows the highest truth in the Scriptures will walk in this way. This should be our endeavor, especially in these days when so few know the truth. And it should be especially stressed in our contacts with those whom God has given ears to hear and eyes to desire His glory. We all have much to learn ourselves, so it should not be hard to have patience with others, even if they seem slow and dense. Let us remember that, if we really have the highest truth, it will not appear in pride and self-exaltation, or in confining our fellowship to those like minded, but in lowly and forbearing service among those we desire to lead into further light.

Above all let us not give offense by a haughty pretension to all the truth, or by claiming for our leader the monopoly of it. All of God's saints have some light, and much truth has come to everyone who has sought to know God through His Word. One who was overzealous for his special teacher claimed that the others had learned from him. But this teacher spoiled it all by acknowledging that he, also, got most of his knowledge from an early writer—called Paul! None of us has aught that God has not given to him.

And it is not given us to keep, but to dispense. Let us not award the prize before the race is run. Then the Lord, Who looks upon the heart, will praise each one.

We should show especial sympathy and helpful consideration to those pastors who, with a true heart, are seeking to lead their flocks into the truth. Here the test is not the head, but the heart. It is not easy to clear our mind from tradition, nor can it be done in a moment. And one who feeds others must deal gently with them, and cannot do as he himself desires. He must suit his pace to their steps. Like Jacob, he dares not overdrive them a single day, lest the weak fall by the way. It may not be pleasant for us to measure our steps, but this must be done when ministering to many. Let us not discourage those whose hearts are open to God's truth, but who still cling to the past. Their persistence is a good quality which may keep them from wavering when they come into fuller light.

Yet a walk in grace and love, patterned after God's love for us which is commended in Christ's giving of Himself for us (*cf* Rom.5:6,8; Eph.4:32-5:2), does not mean timidity in the face of opposition to the truth that glorifies God:

JANUARY 1948

IT HAS become the fashion to make a virtue out of timidity, of dubiousness and uncertainty. Indeed, a firm stand for the truth is decried as "petrified dogmatism" and other slanderous epithets. God gives us, not a spirit of timidity, but of power and of love and of sanity (2 Tim.1:7). The era has come when they will not tolerate sound teaching, turn away from the truth (2 Tim.4:3,4). Some are always learning, yet not at any time able to come into a realization of the truth (2 Tim.3:7). Many of the saints do not glorify God as God; they will not have it that *all* is out of and through and for Him. This is the principal seed-plot of the apostasy.

Who will prepare for the battle if the trumpet give a dubious sound? Here are some of the peals that should

pour forth: Pray . . . that I may open my mouth with *boldness*, to make known the secret of the evangel (Eph.6:19) . . . that the saints may by no means still be minors, surging hither and thither, and carried about by every wind of teaching (Eph.4:14). Be *confirmed* in the faith (Col.2:7)! *Stand firm* in the faith (1 Cor.16:13)! *Persist* in the faith, *grounded* and *settled*, and don't be *removed* from the *expectation* of the evangel (Col.1:23)!

Alas! These are the last days, and *nothing that we can do will stop the apostasy*, for God has warned us that it must come. Man must reject the greatest grace going, to demonstrate the depths of his own depravity. But our appeal is to those who fear God and *believe His Word*. *They* need not be dragged down with the rest! Read and heed the special message for today! Suffer evil with the evangel! Have a pattern of sound words! Be invigorated by grace! Don't engage in useless controversy! Correctly cut the truth! Withdraw from injustice! Remain in what you learned and verified! Herald the Word! Stand by it! Expose, rebuke, entreat, with all patience and teaching (2 Tim.1:8,13; 2:1,15; 3:14)!

May God enable *you* to steer clear of the many sunken reefs that beset your course, and glorify God *as God*, out of Whom, and through Whom, and for Whom is ALL!

We do not know what is ahead in the days immediately before us. But we are aware that God is working all together for our good (Rom.8:28).

This is grandly supported by the word of God which tells us that He chooses us in Christ before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the *glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved* (Eph.1:4,5).

MARCH 1952

GOD AND HIS GRACE are the greatest glories that the saints will ever possess. Let us do our utmost to guard His deity and hold fast to the very transcendent grace that characterizes the present administration. His grandest gifts were all given to us in Christ eons ago by choosing us in Him before sin came in. Then it was that our lot was cast in Him, and we were predesignated to participate with Christ in His universal headship. None of the called in this administration had the least choice in deciding their fate. It is all due to the counsel of *His will.*

The special danger is for those of us who have been granted a measure of knowledge beyond the average. Knowledge puffs up. Love builds up. It is grand to know of God's great plans for us, but it is grander still to realize that only unmerited grace could include us among the recipients of these gifts. It is especially gratifying to know that they were ours in Christ, even when we were absolutely oblivious of them . . . .

Consequently, our prayer is for endurance and patience with joy (Col.1:11), and also that *expression may be granted, in the opening of our mouths with boldness* (Eph.6:19,20).

As for this present issue, our thoughts are especially directed to God's wisdom in creation and His grace and love in the death of His Son for us and in our place in Him. Humanity as the creation of God will be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom.8:21). This is solely because while we are still sinners Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8). Now, as believers, we are identified with Him in His death, entombment and resurrection, enjoying in spirit that which is fully manifest in the consummations of the eons (1 Cor.10:11).

D.H.H.

WHAT IS MANKIND?

GOD ALONE knows what mankind is. For, while humanity is fitted with many means of sensing the world about it, it has no eyes within. So to the Word of God we turn to learn what He, Who formed the first human being, has to say about His own handiwork.

As we are especially concerned with the constitution of man himself, in order to view aright the subject of resurrection, we will pass over the first account of man's creation (Gen.1:26,27), which views him in relation to God and to the creatures of his dominion, and pass on to the detailed account of man's composite formation as recorded in chapter two, verse seven. As this lies at the root of all subsequent study, let us quote the Concordant translation of this important passage and study each word thoroughly before we proceed.

Yahweh Elohim[1] formed the human out of soil from the ground, and He blew into his nostrils the breath of life; and the human became a living soul. (Gen.2:7)

THE SOUL—AN EFFECT

This brief, yet comprehensive account, falls naturally into three distinct statements, which concern the body, the spirit, and the soul: The "human"—formed from the soil. The "breath"—the basis of the spirit. The "soul"—the result of the union of body and breath. It should be noted

1. Yahweh Elohim is a transliteration of the principal divine name and title which is translated "Lord God" or "Jehovah God" in other versions.

that these are not three distinct entities. The soil was there before; the spirit, too, was given by God (Ecc.12:7). *But the soul was not added to these*. It was simply the effect, like the light of a lamp, of which the oil might figure the body and the oxygen the breath. Indeed this word "became," in the exact form which it takes in this passage, is first used in Genesis 1:3 in the phrase "there was light." (Concordantly rendered this reads: "And it is *becoming* light.") Now we know that light is not a substance existing apart from the agents by which it is manifested, but is merely the effect of certain relations between substances.

COMING TO BE

The precise form of this word "become" occurs six times in the first chapter (Gen.1:6[7],9,11,15,24, and 30), in the phrase "and it *was* so (or, concordantly, "And *coming* is it to *be* so"). In each of these cases it is abundantly clear that it notes simply the *effect* of the previous words and never gives the idea of another and distinct addition to what has been said. In fact, it is a question whether a single passage can be found to show any such usage. This is most significant, for the word occurs hundreds and hundreds of times, so often, indeed, that ordinary concordances give only a few specimens of its usage.

The first occurrence of this word is a notable example of its force. Genesis 1:2 should read, ". . . the earth *came to be* . . .", not *was*. From this we know that it was not created "waste and void" or, rather, "a chaos and vacant," but became so as the effect of some interference. This is confirmed by the words of Isaiah 45:18:

For thus says Yahweh, Creator of the heavens;
He is the One, Elohim, the Former of the earth
and its Maker,
He Himself established it;

He did not create it a chaos; He formed it to be indwelt:
I am Yahweh, and there is no other.

Our point is that "came to be" registers the effect or result of *previous action* and introduces no new element.

This inspired record of the formation of man by the One Who knows, ought to settle conclusively the fact that man is of the soil, that his life is of the spirit, and that he *became* a living soul quite apart from the addition of anything else. Withdraw the spirit and the soul also goes, for it was the importation of spirit which occasioned its presence. The first two elements existed before Adam was created. The body was made of the soil. The spirit was God's gift. But this is not true of the soul, for it is not an *addition*, but a *consequence*. But more will be said about this when we come to study the soul itself.

SOLID—LIQUID—GASEOUS

Matter—so far as it can be apprehended by our human sense—has three forms: solid, liquid, and gaseous. We are well aware of the distinct qualities of each of these, yet we may fail to grasp their significance. Everything that we sense is a parable: it is the stepping stone from the known to the unknown. This has indelibly impressed itself upon all language, for spirit is never expressed in terms of solids or of liquids. It is always associated with air. By the figure of implication it is called by the same name as the wind. In Hebrew and Greek and Chaldee, the languages of inspiration, the same word is used for "wind" and "spirit." It is a sad token and a parable of the degeneracy of our days when the English language persistently speaks of spiritual things as "psychical," which is, by interpretation, *soulish*. Too often, alas, the so-called "spiritual" is soulish and is well named "psychic."

The soul is not figured by the gaseous forms of matter,

but by the liquid. It may be "poured out" (Job 30:16). It is like a "*watered*" or "*soaked*" garden (Jer.31:12). It is definitely stated to be represented in the human body by the blood (Lev.17: 14, here mistranslated "life" in the Authorized Version).

The solid portion of the human body is matter in its highest expression. Yet by itself, apart from its connection with the blood and breath, the human frame is but so much soil, and it quickly returns to its native elements when it is deprived of either blood or breath.

The blood, according to scripture, *is*, that is, represents, the soul. This will be discussed more fully and clearly established when we deal with the subject of the soul. In contrast with both breath and body, blood is a fluid. Yet, at the same time it is the medium of communication between the breath and the body. The air is of no avail to the body except through the blood. Neither is the soil of any use except through the blood. The blood is the vehicle which joins the two together. It is not composed of distinct materials but is the joint product of the breath and body. This, also, will be further developed later, in its proper place.

We are first struck with the *manner* in which God made the man. He "forms" him. God is the great Potter. The Hebrew word "forms" is not to be taken here as a simple creative word of command, but portrays the careful, loving molding of the creature which was to satisfy His heart.

HEBREW TERMS FOR "MAN"

Hebrew is very rich in terms descriptive of humanity—richer than Greek, and far richer than English. So, in considering any passage in which the word "man" occurs, it is important for us to inquire as to what peculiar aspect is made prominent by the expression used in the original.

The following list will be useful to anyone wishing to pursue this interesting and profitable line of study:

adm (Greek: *anthrōpos*) = human, in contrast to spirits and beasts (Gen.6:7).
aish (Greek: *anêr*) = man, husband in contrast to
ashe (Gen.2:23) and *gunê* (John 4:17) woman, wife.
zkr (Greek: *arsen*) = male in contrast to
nqbe (Gen.1:27) and *thêlu* (Matt.19:4) female.
gbr = master.
anush = mortal.

It is obvious that the last term, "mortal," cannot be used of man before the entrance of sin, before death entered. Nor is the descriptive appellation "master" ever used in the book of "In a Beginning" which was misnamed "Genesis."

The first three words are all used in connection with creation. One distinguishes the sexes, which indeed seems to have been an innovation in God's creation. Another views this distinction from the relationship of husband and wife. The first term, *adm*, however, brushes all these differences aside, includes both sexes, and distinguishes the *human* race from the creatures above as well as below.

We may rest assured, then, that in this passage we have the beginning of mankind, as such, apart from any divisions which came in later, such as the sexes, or strength or weakness.

The important fact that mankind is a part of the ground becomes apparent in the judgment scene which followed Adam's offense, for there he is doomed to return to the *ground* because he had been taken out of it (Gen.3:19).

MAN IS SOILISH

It has often been debated as to what is essentially the "man." We have the answer here, for, *before* the spirit is imparted the form which Yahweh Elohim made is called "the human." This indicates that "the human" is essentially *soil*. Such a thought is fully confirmed by the apostle Paul, when he says:

"The first human, Adam, 'became a living soul;' the last Adam a vivifying spirit. But not first the spiritual, but the soulish, thereupon the spiritual. The first human was out of the earth, soilish; the second Human is the Lord out of heaven. Such as the soilish one is, such are those also who are soilish, and such as the Celestial One, such are those also who are celestials. And according as we wear the image of the soilish, we should be wearing the image also of the Celestial" (1 Cor.15:45-49).

The first man is not only *soul*-ish but *soil*-ish, as rendered in the Concordant Version.

A "DUSTY" TRADITION

It is contrary to both Scripture and fact to say that man was formed of *dust*. The body is composed primarily of moisture. The Hebrew word, *ophr,* here translated "dust" in the Authorized Version, is also rendered "*mortar*" (Lev. 14:42,45) where water is absolutely essential; it is solidly set into lumpy casts (Job 38:38), and it forms *tunnels* (Isa.2: 19). In its basic meaning this Hebrew word refers to a part of the ground; that moist, fertile layer which covers the surface. Mankind, in death, returns to it, for he was taken from it. We conclude, then, that mankind, as the offspring of the first man, is essentially *soulish* and *soilish*. Thus, it is the prerogative of the second Man, Christ Jesus, to be *spiritual* and *celestial*.

The Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures, called the Septuagint, uses the very word which the apostle Paul applies to man in his Corinthian epistle. So that, if we translate "soil" in the first instance, we ought to translate "soilish" in the second, to preserve the connection. "Earthy," as in the Authorized Version, would rather show man's *relation* to the earth; soilish shows his *derivation* from the soil.

The statement that man was made of the soil of the ground is amply evidenced by the fact that it is from the same soil that humanity derives the food which sustains the body. Whether it be vegetable or animal food, it can all be traced back to that part of the ground which will sustain plant life—which we call the soil. Out of this he was originally formed; through this he maintains his body; into this he must return.

WHAT CONSTITUTES CREATION

But some will protest: Is not man distinctly said to be a *creation* (Gen.1:27; 5:1,2; Deut.4:32; Psa.89:47; Isa.45: 12)? And, according to Hebrews 11:3, is not creation the making of something out of that which had no previous existence? If "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear," how is it possible that Adam was *created* out of materials at hand and not out of nothing?

A consistent translation of Hebrews 11:1-3 will soon show that this scripture has no bearing on the matter we are discussing at all. Nothing is said of the material "world," for the word here is *aiōnas*, eons. And the word for "framed" is never so translated elsewhere, but "mend" (Matt.4:21; Mark 1:19) and "restore" (Gal. 6:1), "fitted" (Rom.9:22), being usually rendered by "perfect" (Heb.13:21; 1 Peter 5:10). It is derived from *artios* which means "equipped" (2 Tim.3:17, AV: "perfect"), and a study of each occurrence will satisfy us that it refers to an *adaptation* or *adjustment*. It is not probable that the fishermen would be "mending" the nets *in* the boat, but rather that they were *readjusting* them so that they would be ready for another catch (Matt.4:21; Mark 1:19). These changes, together with others of a minor nature, would give us a rendering as in the Concordant Version:

Now faith is an assumption of what is being expected, a conviction concerning matters which are not being

observed; for in this the elders were testified to. By faith we are apprehending the eons to adjust to a declaration of God, so that what is being observed has not come out of what is appearing. (Heb.11:1-3)

This puts the passage in perfect harmony with its context. It is hard to see why the writer of Hebrews should prefix his eulogy of faith by a reference to creation, but it is most apt and pertinent to explain *why* the Hebrews should imitate the faithful of old. They had heard and welcomed the proclamation of the Kingdom. They were looking for its appearing. But the Kingdom did not come. Not only so, but it seemed to recede with each succeeding year. What is the matter? The nation of Israel, *as a whole*, has rejected its message. Paul's ministries, of which they could hear, but which they could hardly understand, have followed Israel's failure. Their dispensation would take much time. The eon, which had threatened to end in judgment and the speedy advent of the Kingdom, is now being *adapted* to the new grace. This grace was not evolved out of the previous revelations concerning the Kingdom. Rather it came in spite of its rejection. It is a pure product of the word of God: His declaration.

CREATION FROM PRE-EXISTING MATERIALS

As this passage is the only one which seems to teach the philosophical theory of creation, we are now free to examine all the passages which speak of creation to see if any of them insist on creation out of nothingness; or if, perchance, there are more which speak of creation as it is in the case of Adam—out of preexisting materials. A patient search will reveal the fact that, while not a single passage can be brought forth to support the theory that creation refers to the substance of things and not their form, there are many which refute it.

The Hebrew word, *bra*, is the only one translated "create" and this is done quite consistently so that the student can easily test this matter. (The complete list of occurrences is given in ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW AND CHALDEE CONCORDANCE, on page 270.)

A very striking passage is found in Numbers 16:30, which refers to Yahweh *creating a creation*. But we look in vain for any new substance, for in this case it has no reference to matter at all. It refers to an occurrence which was without *precedent*, and this seems to be one of the primary notions in the meaning, of "creation." The mere fact that the female was *created* as well as the male (Gen.1:27; 5:2), when we know that the woman was taken out of the man (Gen.2:23), further confirms the truth that creation is only a new mode of matter—an unprecedented organism into which it is formed.

Adam was *formed* (Gen.2:7) and *made* and *created* (Gen. 5:1). All of these are also predicted, in one breath, of the restored of Israel in the day of her future glory (Isa.43:6,7):

I shall say to the north, Give,
And to the south, Do not close off;
Bring My sons from afar,
And My daughters from the ends of the earth,
Everyone who is being called by My Name;
And for My glory I created him;
I formed him; indeed I made him.

Surely they will not be made out of nothing, but are the physical seed of Israel.

During the thousand year reign of Christ on the earth, not only are those called by His name termed His "creation," but the physical marvels, done by the hand of Yahweh, will be a creation as well (Isa.41:18-20).

The Greek word for creation, *ktisis*, will tell the same tale. We are being *created* in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:10).

The new humanity is a *creation* (Eph.2:15, AV "make"). Nowhere are we told of the creation of either spirit or substance. Philosophy's bible would open up with the creation of *matter*. But God always presumes this and creates some new form of matter or phase of spirit. It is not that matter was created in a chaotic state and *formed* into the heavens and the earth, but the arrangement or organization of matter into the form of heavens and earth—this was the act which is called "creation."

We conclude, then, that, just as the creatures which the earth *brought forth* are called a creation, so mankind, though formed of soil from the ground, is a creation too, because the creature thus formed was the first of its kind, new, strange and startling.

THE "HUMAN" IS SOIL

It is a notable fact that the body is not mentioned in the description of man's creation and, as we shall see, neither is the spirit. It is not the exact truth, then, to say that man's *body* was formed from the soil of the ground. The record is that the *human himself* was so formed. Humanity is of the soil, soilish. It *is* soil. Hence we are quite authorized to believe that, as to humanity, the *body* is the essential and distinctive part. Perhaps most of us have been taught that this is true of the spirit, but this is not in accord with the record. Even in the future glory there will be no disembodiment, but we shall have a spiritual *body* (1 Cor. 15:44). So that, when our present body is compared with a "tent" (2 Cor.5:1, CV: "tabernacle") it is only in contrast to our permanent and heavenly body. Let us, then, lay for a foundation this clear statement:

Yahweh Elohim formed the human out of soil from the ground.

A. E. Knoch

THE HUMAN IN CREATION AND RESURRECTION

THE ELEMENTS of which Adam was formed are worthy of close study. He was a composite of earth and heaven, the ground and the atmosphere, soil and breath (Gen.2:7). His body is soil, his life is in his breath. The soil is a compound of the solid ground with the fluid water, and his breath of the atmospheric gases. So he is really a regrouping or formation of the same elements which were mingled together in the abyss of the ruined earth, and separated into air, water and land on the first three days of restoration. But there was more than this. It was a *vital* combination.

The *vital* element in mankind comes, not from the earth, but from the *heavens.* Not only does the sun supply us with light and warmth, but it furnishes us with vitamins in foods which our organs can assimilate, and which sustain life. We not only see this and feel it and inhale it directly as we live, but our flesh and bones are made, not merely of inert minerals, but of sun-drenched ground, the surface of the land, disintegrated and vitalized by rays of sunshine and the oxygen of the air.

SOILISH FLESH AND BLOOD

Not only was the first human *formed* of the soil, but he and all the rest of us continue *to build* and *renew* our bodies from the soil. As Paul says, the first man was *soilish,* the second Man is the Lord out of heaven. We now wear the image of the soilish, but we shall be wearing the image of the celestial. He goes on to characterize the soilish man as "flesh and blood" (1 Cor.15:47-50). The flesh

is the substantial part of our frames which is built up and renewed by elements taken from the soil, mostly through the medium of plants, their roots and stalks and fruit and seeds. The blood is the carrier of these substances from the digestive organs to the tissue of the flesh.

PLANTS SOILISH

Plants are more soilish than animals. Their roots must be in immediate contact with the soil in order to live. Cut off from their native habitat and transferred to heaven would mean decay and death. In a lesser degree this is true of humanity as at present constituted. The ecclesia which is figured by Christ's body has a celestial destiny, but we could never live apart from the soil with our present bodies. They must be changed. The soilish must be transformed into celestial. We must derive our sustenance, our life, through other channels than the soil. As this is not the ultimate source, but only an intermediary, our life must come through the sun or direct from God Himself, through His spirit.

THE BREATH OF LIFE

The body unites humanity with the earth, but the spirit links us with the heavens. The flesh is tied down to the soil, which gives it substance, the breath associates it with spirit, which gives it life. When breathing ceases the spirit of life departs. The flesh remains, but gradually returns to the soil. The fact that a perfect body can be put to death, with all its parts intact, by merely shutting off the air, shows that the breath supplies the life. This is further confirmed by the fact that life can be restored to such a body if breathing can be renewed, as in the resuscitation of the drowned. Moreover, in miraculous resurrections, the decaying body can be restored, as in the case of Lazarus (John 11-12). The overwhelming proof is found in the

death of our Lord, Whose mortally mutilated body saw no decay, and was resumed in resurrection, *without* the blood.

LIFE NOT IN THE BLOOD

Were the life in the blood (AV Gen.9:4; Lev.17:11), as is generally supposed, we would expect our Lord, in resurrection life, to have a superabundance of blood. On the contrary, He had flesh and bones, but *no* blood whatever (Luke 24:39). His hands were pierced by the nails and His side by the spear, so that the blood flowed forth (Matt. 27:49; John 19:34). It seems that all the blood was withdrawn; otherwise He could not have gone about with such open wounds. He showed them to His disciples, and, a week later, invited Thomas to thrust his hand into His side (John 20:20,27). He had life, abundant life, without any blood. Since He had no blood, His body was not dependent on the soil for its sustenance. It was not soilish. It was celestial.

BREATH THE BASIS OF LIFE

That the *breath* is the basis of the life of humanity at present may be shown by the fact that, when we exhale, it has lost its vitalizing quality. The lungs extract its life-giving force, and expel the residue. It has been changed into the breath of *death.* Our exhalation is poisonous. Neither animals nor man can remain alive in the exhalation we expel. We rob the air of its vitality. If we should seek to sustain life by the infusion of blood *without breathing*, it would soon show that the blood is useless unless it has oxygen to carry, for it is only the transportation system, so far as *life* is concerned.

CHRIST EXHALED VITALITY

Our exhalation is poison now, but it will not be so in resurrection. Our Lord, though He had no blood, so could

not derive His life from the atmosphere, nevertheless could *exhale life*! By this means it was that He imparted holy spirit to His apostles, and empowered them to fulfill their commission (John 20:22). This shows clearly that vital spirit power may be dispensed by God directly without the usual intermediate agencies such as the sun and the breath. It is His *spirit* that is the ultimate source of all life. At present it vivifies our *mortal* bodies by making its home in us (Rom.8:11). In the future it will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory (Phil.3:21). Then it will no longer be a *soilish* body but a *spiritual* one.

THREE FORMS OF LIFE

Three distinct forms of life may be distinguished, plant life and soul life and spirit life. The first two are alike in that they depend upon the soil for substance and upon the atmosphere for life. But plant life is fixed and motionless, without sensation. It is able to transform the soil into organic food, containing vitamins, fit for the consumption and sustenance of soul life. Soul or sensation is in the blood. It is an intermediate form, dependent on plant life and the atmosphere. The blood is also a medium for carrying nourishment and oxygen to the organs of the body and for removing the waste. Spiritual life needs neither soil nor air nor blood, but depends on a direct, though intangible, connection with God's spirit, the source of all life. The body and the blood are like the wiring, the spirit like the electricity of a light.

BLOOD AND SENSATION

The inspired assertion that the soul is in the blood (Gen.9: 4) may be readily confirmed by experience. Cut off the supply of blood from any part of the body and it becomes numb. Feeling vanishes with the blood, even if

the nerves, are not cut or impaired. Sensation returns as soon as the blood courses freely once more. This is the basis for the part that the blood plays in the sacrifices of Israel, and the death of the great anti-typical sacrifice. It explains why the carcass of a slain animal was to be drained of the blood (Lev.17:13). Once the blood is gone, physical suffering is impossible.

SUFFERING AND BLOOD

Sensation and *suffering* are essential factors in the revelation of God's grace and love. Relief from the experience of evil is cause for great thankfulness. It was with this in view that the first human was formed a living *soul.* Physical pleasure and pain are needed to acquaint us with the heights of happiness and the depths of despair. We would not be able to fully appreciate one without an experience of the other. Even then we could not respond to the love of God apart from the sufferings of Christ. When He came in the likeness of humanity and was found in fashion as a human (Phil.2:7,8), it was in order that He might *suffer.*

The blood of animals had to be poured out immediately in order to prevent suffering. Not so with the anti-typical Victim. He suffered to the end, for he retained His blood until after death. They could not take His life from Him even by crucifixion (John 10:18). He had to yield it up of Himself. We need not waste our sympathy on the animals slain in sacrifice on Jewish altars. They suffered little, if at all, for the first duty of the priest was to drain away the blood. After that suffering was impossible.

The formation of Adam is only the second step in the scale of living creatures. The plants are the lowest, the animals next, spiritual life follows with its varying degrees for sainthood and service. Then comes indwelling. The climax seems to be the change from a soulish, soilish body to a spiritual one.

HUMAN LIFE

Since both animals and man are soul life, wherein does man differ from the other animals? So far as the soul goes, there seems to be nothing to distinguish them. Animals can feel and see and hear and smell, even as we can. In some cases they are not as sensitive as we are, but in others more so. An eagle can see further, some insects seem to have a wider hearing range, and bloodhounds certainly excel us in scent. Man and the lower animals are *alike* in respect to the *soul,* in nature as well as in revelation. The animals themselves are a higher expression of life than the plants, because they also have the breath of the spirit of life in a lower degree, than mankind.

GOD IS SPIRIT

Let us remember that, essentially, God is spirit (John 4:24). Our revered version tells us that God is *a* spirit. There are many spirits, some of them wicked. He is not merely one of these, limited in place and power, but the life of all that lives. Hence He is the Source and Supply of spirit wherever it is found. Thus it is easy to see why all life and power is utterly dependent on Him and the impartation of His spirit. And the measure of this dispensation determines the nearness to Himself and the elevation above the balance of creation. Figuratively we might say that the measure of Himself that God has imparted to us fits us for our place in His universe. In Him we are living and moving and are (Acts 17:28).

IMAGE AND BREATH

In Scripture the distinction between humanity and the animals is in *likeness* to the Subjector, so that man is to *sway* over the lower order of living souls, and is empowered by the act of Yahweh Elohim, when He Himself introduced the breath into his nostrils, which gave him a *spirit direct from the Creator,* beyond and superior to that possessed by his subjects. Man has a somewhat different physical form from other animals, but the difference between them as to size and shape and internal structure is not nearly so great as there is between the various classes of animals themselves. The vital distinction is *spiritual,* not physical. It consists in an extra endowment of spirit, which makes him more like the Creator, Who is spirit, and gives him his name Adam, or human, that is, Likeness.

BREATH OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE

Later on the phrase "breath of life," is amplified by inserting the word *spirit.* All soul life that expired in the deluge of Noah is described as having "the breath of the *spirit* of life" in its nostrils (Gen.7:22 CV).

This shows the close relation between *breath* and *spirit* in living souls, and their vital connection with life. So far as is revealed, the *bodies,* the flesh and blood of those drowned in the flood, were not mutilated in any manner, as is the case in strife or war, nor was death due to gradual decay. The water cut off the supply of air. It made breathing impossible. With the air the spirit left the body, and death ensued. In souls life is directly dependent on breath. The oxygen of the air is indispensable as fuel for feeding the life process, and preserving the spirit.

BREATH LIKE BLOOD

The breath is not literally the spirit, even as the blood is not actually the soul. As the soul of the flesh is dependent on the blood, so, perhaps, we may consider the breath as the carrier, the medium used by the spirit in soul life, such as the animals and man possess on the earth. It is not necessary in a bloodless, spiritual body. Now, it cannot function without the blood to intervene between it and the

flesh. Moreover, a special lung tissue is needed to transfer its oxygen to the blood and return the carbon dioxide to the air, for the outer skin is not fashioned for this purpose. As the digestive organs prepare the food for assimilation into the blood so the lungs bring the breath into contact with it and vitalize it so that it provides us with sensation.

MAN'S SWAY OVER ANIMALS AND SPIRITS

In this we can dimly perceive, not only the place of humanity, but God's purpose in regard to it, and the method He uses to prepare it for its final function at the consummation. Then will be perfected, not only its rule over the living souls on the earth, but a selection out of mankind will reign in the heavens. If we seek to seize and hold fast to the sequel that God has set before us, it will help us to endure the hardships of our present training period. Not only will the experience of evil humble us, but the sufferings we are called upon to bear will prepare us for a place of authority in the celestial kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Head of all sovereignty, not only on earth, but in the heavens also.

The vivification of Christ's mutilated, bloodless body, is one of the greatest exhibitions of the life-giving power of God's spirit. Not only was He alive, but, like Yahweh Elohim when imparting life to Adam and the race in Eden, Christ imparted holy spirit to His disciples by *exhaling* upon them. At Pentecost they received power by the spirit *coming upon* them by means of a violent *blast.* In the manifestations of the spirit *in connection with the earth,* it is usually associated with the air, the breath, a blast, for this is essential to soul life, and is the best illustration of God's vital energy which produces life and provides power. But, apart from its physical manifestation in soul life and the special enduement given to humanity to raise it above the animals, it was not a permanent possession, but was present on special occasions, and for particular purposes.

In explaining the operation of God's spirit with Israel to Nicodemus, our Lord compared it to a blast of air. This is probably the best illustration that can be given, especially when we connect it with begettal, as He did, for it is not only a powerful, intangible *force,* but imparts *life.* Ezekiel's prophecy concerning Israel's regeneration uses a similar figure (Ezek.37:9). He says, "Come from the four winds come, O spirit, and blow into these who were killed, so they may live." They were no longer dry bones, but were covered with flesh and sinews, and encased in skin. But they had no life. This was figuratively imparted by *wind.* Literally, they began to *breathe,* even as Adam, when he first became a living soul.

The life imparted to Adam by means of the breath could not suffice our Lord in resurrection, for He had no blood, and, even if He had, He could never have ascended into the heavens, where there is no air. Neither can we live among the celestials equipped only with our present breath of life. So we find, in Paul's epistles, a much greater and more permanent supply of holy spirit than ever before. Even as the priests and prophets and kings and apostles and disciples were distinguished from the rest of mankind by special dispensations of God's spirit, so we are distinguished from them by becoming the *permanent home* of the holy spirit. At present we have only the earnest, but it is, at the same time, the seal of the fullness that is to follow.

So we see that "the breath of life" imparted to Adam was one of a series of dispensations of life and power through God's spirit. This, however, was not sufficient for carrying out God's operations, so priests and kings, prophets and apostles were empowered by the spirit to work His will. This raised them above the rest even as Adam was above the lower creation, for they are not only like God in respect to them, but are used by God to reach the God-

like human race. And now He is imparting His spirit permanently, and will even transform our soulish bodies, such as Adam had, into spiritual frames so that we may become His intermediaries to the celestial hosts. Thus we, as the body of Christ, being most vitally and spiritually united to Him, will be the highest achievements of His holy spirit, to the glory of His grace.

Resurrection, the return of the spirit to the body is, perhaps, the greatest of all the miracles wrought by our Lord during His ministry. Dead and decaying Lazarus was called back to life by the spirit of His voice. But how much greater will it be when all of Israel's saints, long since returned to the soil, will be roused from their tombs after His advent? They will not return to mortal bodies, doomed to die again, but receive life eonian, until death itself is abolished. Their bodies will not continually decay and cause them to sin against their inclination. They will enjoy a perfect and perpetual life. In a word, they will be *vivified.* Yet we will not only be made *alive* beyond the reach of death but *transformed.* Our soilish, soulish bodies will become celestial and spiritual. Our infirm, immortal frames will become powerful and immortal. Not till then will we realize what it is to be *like* Him and *beloved* by Him. To Him be glory for the eons of the eons!

A. E. Knoch

EXPECTATION CENTERED IN CHRIST

Born not too many years after the founding of this magazine, Brother Harold Jones of Bellingham, Washington, was put to repose on April 9. He loved to speak to others of the One Whom he called, "The All-Victorious Christ," sharing the truth of Romans 5:18,19; 1 Corinthians 15:22-28; Ephesians 1:10,11; Colossians 1:13-20 and 1 Timothy 2:4-7. He had requested of his family that the funeral service be centered, not on himself, but on such passages of Scripture as these, and this request was honored.

A "HOLY KISS," YET OPPOSITION; "THE ROCK WAS CHRIST"

Question:

In your fellowship gatherings, why do you not greet each one in attendance—man or woman, young or old, whether close acquaintance or not—with a literal "kiss" by means of the lips? After all, you claim to follow Paul, and yet does not Paul say, "Greet one another with a holy *kiss*" (2 Cor.13:12); and, "Greet *all* the brethren with a holy *kiss*" (1 Thess.5:26)? There can be no doubt that you are guilty of blatant error in not following this practice. This is beyond the fact that certain of your major teachings are now being opposed by some very knowledgeable people.

Answer:

THERE is a serious problem in your inquiry. First, you *ask* us *why* we do not do a certain thing. Then you assert that there can be no doubt that we are guilty of "blatant error" for not doing this same thing. If whatever we may say in reply to your question is necessarily mistaken, why bother to ask us to answer your question in the first place?

But in any case, to reply to your Scripture question, Does not Paul say, "Greet one another with a holy *kiss*"; and, "Greet *all* the brethren with a holy *kiss*"? our answer is, Of course he does! Furthermore, we consider his thought here to be an important one, and wish to heed it accordingly. Even so, it simply does not follow that we must now become careful to engage in some type of actual touching or pressing with the lips each time we see any and all

of our fellow believers, whether long-time friends or new acquaintances, even if this should be done in a manner that is altogether "holy."

It is true that the English word "kiss," though not ideal, is a satisfactory translation of the Greek *philêma.* However, it is *not* true that this Greek word, *philêma,* (or even the English word "kiss" for that matter), signifies "to touch with the *lips.*" The essence of the English word "kiss," is simply "a slight touch or contact" (THE RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY, p.487). The thought of making such a contact by means of one's *lips* is a *usage* of the word (albeit the ordinary usage of the word), not its essential meaning. Furthermore, the Greek word itself, *philêma,* by its elements, signifies FOND-*effect,* and certainly has nothing to say about human "lips," in any way whatsoever.

This is true even in such a case as the woman who did not intermit "fondly kissing" (i.e., DOWN-FONDING, *kataphilousa*) the Lord's feet (Luke 7:45). It is evident, in the nature of the case, according to Luke's record of this occurrence (Luke 7:37-50), that she touched His feet by some means. As far as language is concerned, however, we cannot say whether, in so doing, she did so even by means of her head (much less by means of her lips). In light of eastern custom, we may *presume* that—in some altogether righteous manner—she indeed expressed her fondness for the Lord by embracing His feet, at least in part, even by means of her lips. But we do not, in fact, *know* this to be the case.

Besides, it is neither wise nor uplifting to speculate about such things, much less to give them excessive attention. The point is simply that this woman, though a sinner (*cp* Luke 7:37), *through some wholesome means of contact,* expressed her *fondness* for the Lord accordingly.

As is suitable in each case, then, through *whatever* means we may deem expedient and appropriate, when

greeting our brethren in the Lord, we are to be effecting not indecency (*cp* Rom.1:27) but holiness, while conveying our genuine *fondness*[1] for them accordingly. This is the main thing; in fact, this is the only point of Paul's entreaty, "Greet one another with a holy 'kiss'" (i.e., by means of a consecrated expression of *fondness,* in recognition of mutual faith). The vulgar notion of some sort of "lip contact" is entirely foreign not only to the Greek, but even to the English.

Let us seek to be wise and sensible. If we cannot follow the Greek, let us at least learn to distinguish the difference between English meaning and English usage. Moreover, let us not fail to note the enormous "forest" which manifestly lies before us merely because of some phantom "trees" which seem to lurk in the foreground.

You also mentioned that "certain of [our] major teachings are now being opposed by some very knowledgeable people." More specifically, what you really mean to convey here is the fact that certain of our major teachings are now being opposed by some very knowledgeable people *with whom you are acquainted,* ones with whom we are

1. In speaking of the Russian Marxist, intellectual, and revolutionary, Leon Trotsky, the American humorist and entertainer, Will Rogers, declared, "I bet you if I had met him and had a chat with him, I would have found him a very interesting and human fellow, for *I never yet met a man that I didn't like*" (*Saturday Evening Post,* November 6, 1926). Surely, then, rather than heaping contempt upon some even among our fellow believers because of certain of their ignoble characteristics, may we instead, with singlemindedness concentrating on the *good* that is in them even now, learn to view others even as Will Rogers perceived those of his acquaintance. Rogers' words here, in fact, say more about him than about those whom he knew. The sense of his words is by no means that he, categorically, simply "liked" everyone whom he met, but that he *concentrated upon* not what he found deeply offensive in others, but upon what was interesting, and, connotatively, of good "human" characteristic in them, in such a way that *thus* he could honestly say: "I never yet met a man that I didn't like."

acquainted as well, ones who formerly agreed with our findings, but now no longer do so.

Such opposition, however, is nothing new, by any means. Throughout the one hundred year history of the ministry of the Concordant Publishing Concern, there have always been no lack of "very knowledgeable people" opposed to our findings on various major teachings, whether such ones were always and continually opposed to our views, or only came to oppose them later on, having for a time embraced them themselves.

This fact that you note, then, is simply not very significant in itself; it can only seem significant to one who, out of his or her own bias, is pre-disposed to defer to a certain teacher, unduly inclined to favor a certain teaching, or even secretly gratified to find some other certain teacher or ministry "guilty of blatant error."

Concerning a number of doctrines currently being advocated by some, we would simply say, for your own sake, Make sure you have all the facts before taking a stand against our teaching. Have you at least carefully considered and discerned the main points on a question as set forth not only by those holding contrary views, but as presented by ourselves as well, in our primary, relevant expositions? At least it is possible that we may have considered these very matters now of concern to you with greater insight and more faithfully than you suppose.

As well, we would ask—in order to guard against even the possibility of pride or presumption—*before* going to others (which inevitably will entail at least some measure of disturbance among friends, including ones who have a high regard for our ministry), Have you spoken with us privately about whatever issues may be of concern to you? Have you understood our points which lead us to conclude as we do, even then letting some significant period of time pass for due consideration of all that is involved

before taking a stand before others, especially ones of our mutual acquaintance, a stand which is, quite obviously, opposed to our own?

Or is it instead that you have prematurely gone ahead, speaking to *us* little or even not at all (too often, in such cases, we are the last to hear and are simply not consulted)?

We do *not* say, Never take your findings to others; much less do we say, Since you differ with us, you must be mistaken. By no means. If you judge that we are mistaken, we want you to have the liberty not only to *think* so, but—where expedient and in a kindly way—to *say* so as well.

Even so, with regard to *how* one does *what* one does—far beyond any considerations of mere human respect and professional courtesy—there is the vital matter of doing that which is pleasing to the Lord, Who loves us *all* and is fond of us *all,* notwithstanding all of our failings. We are mindful, then, that He would have us all be attentive to the feelings of one another, while giving active attention to the pursuit of that which makes for peace.

To be sure, each one has the right to his or her own opinion. Still, we must ever keep in mind that truth is not nearly so readily discerned as many suppose. In the end, its enjoyment is a matter of divine enlightenment. We are all prone to err. It is quite easy for one to be mistaken, while being confident that one is not mistaken. Consequently, then, may we all, mutually and together—in a truly practical and not merely superficial way—both greet and honor one another, "with [lit., 'in'] a holy kiss."

"If, then, there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any communion of spirit, if any compassion and pity, fill my joy full, that you may be mutually disposed, having mutual love, joined in soul, being disposed to one thing—nothing according with faction, nor yet according with vainglory—but with humility, deeming one another superior to one's self, not each noting that which is his

own, but each that of others also. For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also . . ." (Phil.2:1-5).

❊

Question:

In 1 Corinthians 10:3,4, Paul says of Israel that they all "ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank of the spiritual Rock which followed. Now the Rock was Christ." I do not understand what Paul is saying here: What was the "spiritual Rock which followed"? Whom did it follow, and in what sense did it do so? And especially, I would ask, In what sense is it the case that that Rock was Christ? Finally, what is the meaning of ". . . to whom the consummations of the eons have attained" (1 Cor.10:11)?

Answer:

The entire relevant passage here is as follows: "For I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, that our fathers all were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all are baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank of the spiritual Rock which followed. Now the Rock was Christ" (1 Cor.10:1-4; *cf* Ex.13:20-22; 14:21,22; 17:1-6).

"But not in the majority of them does God delight, for they were strewn along in the wilderness. Now these things became types of us, for us not to be lusters after evil things, according as they also lust. Nor yet be becoming idolaters, according as some of them, even as it is written, 'Seated are the people to eat and drink, and they rise to sport.' Nor yet may we be committing prostitution, according as some of them commit prostitution, and fall in one day twenty-three thousand. Nor yet may we be putting the

Lord on trial, according as some of them put Him on trial, and perished by serpents. Nor yet be murmuring even as some of them murmur, and perished by the exterminator" (1 Cor.10:5-10; cit. Ex.32:6b; *cf* Num.11:4; 14:2,36; 21:4-6; 25:1-9; 26:64).

"The redemption of Israel out of Egypt was typical of the spiritual deliverance which is ours in Christ. *All*, indeed, were redeemed by the blood of the paschal lamb, but not all by any means pleased God in the wilderness journey. They *all* went through the Red Sea dry shod, *all* were identified with Moses, *all* ate the manna, and *all* drank the water brought forth by Moses' rod in the desert. Yet, notwithstanding these privileges, they failed in self-control, they went back in heart to the flesh pots of Egypt, reverted to idolatry, sinned and murmured. These were the very sins into which some of the Corinthians were ensnared. And these things still have their appeal to us unless we, like the apostle, reduce our bodies to bondage."[2]

"THE ROCK WAS CHRIST"

The spiritual "food" and "drink" of which Israel partook in the wilderness, refers not only to the literal food and drink which God gave to them, but to His entire providence unto them during that period, by means of His imperceptible, intangible power. That is, they "drank" of the spiritual "Rock" which followed (i.e., which attended them on their way). "Rock" is capitalized in the CV, since it refers to *God's* entire provision to the sons of Israel during their wilderness journey. By association, the rock from which water came forth at Mount Horeb (Ex.17:6), figures the entire divine providence within that era.

Consequently, Paul says that the Rock "was" Christ (1 Cor.10:4b). That is, the Rock was *like* Christ. Specifi-

2. A. E. Knoch, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.257.

cally, that "Rock" was to Israel, like Christ is to us. Even as they were all "baptized into" (i.e., identified with) Moses, and so received many benefits accordingly, thus also, we are all baptized into Christ, and receive many benefits accordingly—wholly apart from any consideration of our own acts. We *all* are baptized into one body, and *all* are made to imbibe one spirit (1 Cor.12:12,13), having been entombed together with Christ through the baptism into the death into which He entered for our sakes, for our sins (Rom.5:8; 6:4; 1 Cor.15:3).

Nevertheless, and even though the benefits which we receive in Christ far transcend those which were afforded to Israel in Moses, if it should be that God does not delight in us with respect to our ways and walk, being unworthy of the incorruptible wreath (1 Cor.9:25), we will not be granted it.

If, in addition to our salvation from indignation and into life eonian, we would be getting as well "the *compensation* of the enjoyment of an allotment" (Col.3:25) for our service, it will be necessary for us to engage in worthy service. If we would be granted a place of authority in God's celestial kingdom (2 Tim.4:18), we must faithfully endure (2 Tim.2:12a). If we would "get wages" (1 Cor.3:14), we must do useful work. For, as Paul says:

Now all this befalls them typically. (1 Cor.10:11a; *cp* Rom.15:4)

The type consists in Israel's failure in flesh which entailed great loss to the people. If we too, in the overall course of our careers, are displeasing to God, we will forfeit much, both now and at the dais of Christ (2 Cor.5:10). Many are the foolish and harmful desires which are swamping men in extermination and destruction (1 Tim.6:9). Indeed, the record of Israel's failure "was written for our admonition."

Yet it was written for our admonition, to whom the consummations of the eons have attained. (1 Cor.10:11b)

We are those "to whom the consummations of the eons have attained"! Paul cannot conclude his word of admonition without first declaring these glorious words. Indeed, they are life to us if we would heed his counsel. For they are the evangel, and the evangel is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing (Rom.1:16).

The evangel is the means which God uses to effect practical salvation in His people. All else, that is not otherwise the fruit of the spirit through God's wider providence, even if quite "successful" in itself, is but the subjugation of one lust of the flesh by a more powerful lust of the flesh, even if, as in many cases, it should be a more "respectable" one as well, one which is highly esteemed among men, one which may not even be recognized as sin.

If, even in measure, we would be *delivered* (not merely exchange one sin for another, for example, exchange a lack of discipline for an abundance of pride), we would be invigorated by the *grace* which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim.2:1). If, even in part, we would be *preserved* (not merely cast out one demon in order to make room for seven worse ones), we would be invigorated in the Lord and in the might of *His* strength (Eph.6:10). If we would be bearing fruit and growing, it would be by the power of the word of God's *grace* (Acts 20:32) in the word of truth of the evangel (Col.1:6), being refreshed and renewed in the various facets of this glorious message many times throughout our lives.

Though it is surely needful to do so, it will not suffice solely to tell us that if we would not disqualify ourselves we must exercise self-control (1 Cor.9:24-27). Unless we are full of self-confidence (by which, we are already disqualified), telling us no more than this will only discourage us, thereby ensuring our failure.

Therefore, Paul tells us much more: he tells us that we are those to whom the consummations of the eons have attained.

Telos (FINISH, "consummation"), as a verb, *teleō,* is often rendered "accomplish." In a slightly different verbal form, *teleioō,* it is usually rendered "perfect." For example, "the law perfects nothing" (Heb.7:19). This stem (*tel-*) speaks of that which is finished, not in the sense of cessation but of *accomplishment.* It speaks of that which is "ultimately" achieved (*cp* "Now I am expecting that you will recognize *ultimately*"; 2 Cor.1:13). Its most noble usages may be found in John 19:28,30 ("Jesus being aware that all is already *accomplished,* that the scripture may be *perfected* . . . . When, then, Jesus took the vinegar, He said, 'It is *accomplished!*' "), and in 1 Corinthians 15:23 ("thereafter the *consummation*" [i.e., the consummation both of the vivification of all mankind and of the eonian times]).

The phrase "consummations of the eons" is not literal, but is a figure of association. Periods of time, in themselves, are incapable of accomplishment. Rather, the sense is, *God's* consummations, or accomplishments, as the result of His work through the eons. The eons not only come to an end, but culminate in the *purpose* (Eph.3:11) for which God made them (Heb.1:2).

"The eons are divided into two classes, the first three, which are preparatory, and the last two, called 'the eons of the eons,' which turn the evil of the first class into good. The last two eons, including the thousand years' reign and the reign of the saints in the new heavens and new earth, are the fruit and consummation of the evil eons. In *spirit,* Paul brought those under his ministry into the new creation, which is the spiritual counterpart of the eon inaugurated by the new heavens and new earth. It is only thus that the consummations of the eons had already reached the Corinthians."[3]

"The purpose and perfection of the final consummation

3. A. E. Knoch, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.257.

is partially anticipated and realized beforehand. In the preparatory eons there is type and prediction and promise. But when the crisis created by the cross is reached, all this gives place to fulfillment. The righteousness of the Kingdom, the reconciliation of the new creation—all these are fulfillments of the purpose of the eons. All these are consummations, though in English we may hardly call them 'ends.' The final consummation, then, is not immediately introduced by worldwide judgments or the instant arrest of a revolt or a new creation (though these are steps necessary to bring it about), but is rather the deposition of a perfect universe into its perfect depository—God. It is marked only by the subjection of the Son after all else has been subjected. And this perfection itself is the result of previous consummations.

"In this light we can understand the apostle telling the Corinthian saints of the arrival of the consummations of the eons. Now the time had come for the fulfillment of the types.

"But, in a far deeper and closer sense, are we, as well as the Corinthians, associated with the consummations of the eons. The rejection of Israel has made way for a *spiritual* fulfillment of all for which they wait more than a thousand years. Our justification is more than millennial, our reconciliation exceeds that of the new creation (for we are already a new creation, with, in spirit, far more exceeding riches than any that will be enjoyed even in that glorious era). We are 'complete' in Christ (Col.2:10), thus, in spirit, attaining to a 'mature' (or 'finished') man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ (Eph.4:13; Phil.3:15; Col.1:28).

"In our own spirits we have an undeniable foretaste that the eons are accomplishing the purpose for which they were made. And every accomplishment of God's purpose is but one of many consummations which presages the

grand final perfection—the end and object of God's primeval purpose—when God is All in all."[4]

It is in light of all these things, then, that Paul entreats:

Wherefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. (1 Cor.10:14)

An "idol" (*eidōlon,* PERCEIVE-WHOLE) is an image by means of which human senses are supposed to perceive the whole character of the deity (i.e., of the "GOD" or "GODS") which the idol represents.

Most of us, unlike the Corinthians, may not be inclined to genuflect before statues, to bow before icons, much less to be abominating the idols of the ancient nations (*cf* Rom. 2:22). Even so, we may well still have our idols. Whatever captures our primary interest and takes the highest measure of our devotion, if it be not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is our idol. Indeed, as our apostle explains, prostitution, uncleanness, passion, evil desire and greed, any one of which, effectually, is idolatry (Col.3:5).

So that, let him who is supposing he stands beware that he should not be falling. (1 Cor.10:12)

Paul does not merely entreat us to beware, lest we should be falling. Instead, he says, "*So that* [*ōs te,* lit., AS-BESIDES], let him who is supposing he stands beware that he should not be falling" (*cp* e.g., 1 Cor.1:7,29; 4:5; 5:8). The sense is, *As* those who stand *beside* (i.e., *in awareness of,* in *close association with*) that which has just been stated—namely, that the consummations of the eons have attained to *us!*—"let him who is supposing he stands beware that he should not be falling."

May we, then, through this very awareness, be *strengthened* to flee from the allures of the flesh by the power of a strong and saving faith, a faith which is keenly and deeply aware that we are those to whom, in spirit, the consummations of the eons have attained. J.R.C.

4. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.58, pp.39,40.

THE COMMENDATION OF GOD'S LOVE

GOD—Christ—human sinners—this is the pattern of focus in the evangel. The evangel is the evangel *of God;* it is *God's* power for salvation, revealing *God's* righteousness and commending *God's* love, directed surely and truly to *God's* glory.

Yet it concerns God's *Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord,* and the good of which it speaks is accomplished through the faith of *Jesus Christ,* in that *Christ* died for *our* sakes, while *we* are still *sinners.* The evangel declares that *Jesus, our Lord,* was given up because of *our* offenses, and then roused because of *our* justifying.

This pattern is exhibited in a striking way in Romans 5:8, where we read:

> **God** is commending this love of **His** to [or *for*] **us**,
> seeing that, while **we** are still sinners,
> **Christ** died for **our** sakes.

In the evangel God is not only revealing His righteousness, but also commending His love, and in doing so we perceive that God's love is something very unique and special. It is a love for[1] us, who are sinners. And even

1. As indicated above, this verse may be understood as speaking of God *commending to us* His love, or of God commending *His love for us.* Both thoughts are true, but the parallel with "Christ died *for our sakes,* and Paul's use of the Greek pronoun, *eis* [INTO], in similar contexts (e.g., Rom.3:22; 5:18; Eph.1:15; Col.1:4; 1 Thess.3:12) seems to favor the latter meaning. According to the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE (p.159), the sense of *eis* "is never limited to unto, but always extends into."

more astonishing, it is a love expressed by the death of the Anointed One of God.

We begin, then, with God, first looking back in review at what Paul has said about Him as He is known apart from the evangel, and then considering what he writes about God now as the evangel makes Him known:

KNOWING GOD

Apart from the evangel that which is known of God by mankind in general is "descried from the creation of the world" (Rom.1:19-25). His achievements in creation, in what can be seen, are continually manifest by the very existence of life, sustained and continued, and by the immense and critical forces of the physical universe. Although evils of disruption, death and sin are always present, nevertheless sunrise and spring, birth and song and much that is welcome and hopeful testify to the existence of One of power and divinity, One Who is behind it all and Whose abilities and intelligence are superior than anything we can know or do.

Yet as for human beings, "knowing God" in this way, "not as God do they glorify or thank Him" (Rom.1:21).

Since this is so, and humanity continues in its ways of irreverence and unrighteousness, God is presently made known for "His kindness and forbearance and patience" (Rom.2:4). After all the evidence of human irreverence and unrighteousness, God still does not put an end to this system of failure and those who are wrapped up in it.

From the human standpoint, God's forbearance brings about only an additional layer of irreverence. This, in turn, leads to the further revelation of God in the day of indignation as a God of righteous judgment. Then He will be known as One Who judges in accord with truth and impartiality (Rom.2:1-16).

In addition, beyond all this, for the Jew, God has given

the law, in which He made known much concerning His will and the "things of consequence" (Rom.2:17,18). But here again the result has been that the name of God is being blasphemed among the nations, and the chosen people themselves "through the transgression of the law" are "dishonoring God" (Rom.2:19-27). This failure, however, opens the way to a new revelation of God, which could not be made known apart from Israel's unbelief, and that is that God remains faithful and true to what He has promised (Rom.3:2,4).

Kind and forbearing and patient, God nevertheless will bring "indignation and fury, affliction and distress, on every human soul which is effecting evil" (Rom.2:9). Is there not something unaccountable here? If such judgment is certain, and if it is God's final word, why all this kindness and forbearance? It only seems to prolong the misery, while increasing the sum of those who will suffer future misery.

Then also, righteous and impartial in judgment, God is nevertheless faithful in bringing about benefits and prerogatives for a people who are unfaithful and who bring dishonor on His name! Is there not a serious contradiction here? There is no just basis for such faithfulness apart from the evangel.

And that is the point. The fact that God is faithful under such conditions makes it necessary and certain that such a righteous basis would be provided. All that is said in Romans 1:18-3:20 brings the evangel into its vital position regarding human deliverance and divine glory.

That which is known of God, apart from His evangel concerning His Son, leaves Him still hidden in mystery except for conviction in faith that He is a God of righteousness and salvation (*cf* Heb.11:1-12:2). The revelation of God is incomplete until we know Him as He reveals Himself in the giving of His Son for sinners, and its glorious results. Yet now in that message, announcing that Christ died for

our sins, was entombed and has been roused, there is a revelation of God's righteousness that is complete and full, a demonstration of His love that is without any element of contradiction or mystery.

GOD IS COMMENDING

To commend something is, according to the word elements of the Greek term, to *stand together* with it. In commending Phoebe (Rom.16:1), Paul was figuratively placing her next to himself, drawing attention to her as a worthy servant of the ecclesia. So also God places His love for us next to Himself in a position of high honor and worth to Himself. This is what God is doing regarding His love, when He says: Christ died for our sakes.

Let us never restrict the love of God, never underestimate its high place in God's operations, never suggest it cannot be all that is called for by the glory of God. For it is established by the death of His Son, Who is the Christ, and this for sinners.

GOD'S OWN LOVE

We need to pause. The apostle is drawing attention to God's personal love itself, what it is. It is so distinctive, so immense, so astounding that it must be spoken of in extraordinary terms and striking expression. Paul's wording in Greek must have seemed unusual even to those familiar with the language, so that the believers in Rome might well have called for its repetition when they first heard it. ("What is that, again?") Adapting the English sublinear line as given in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT we might capture the emphasis on the special character of God's love more fully than is provided by our familiar, idiomatic translation:

Commending **the Himself love** *into us is* **the God** . . . .

The subject, "God," is put at the end, so that we are left with this reference to the Deity ringing in our ears. What is spoken of here is the love of **God**! And this love of God's is the love which characterizes Himself. There should be no doubt that the apostle speaks of God's love so that this is seen as God's truly *self-revealing* love.

WHAT IS THIS LOVE?

The unusual wording of the first clause of this verse is matched by the surprising wording of the second. The love of God is viewed here solely in terms of what Christ did, without direct reference to God's own doing. The love of God for us is that *Christ died* for our sakes. Let us look at the passage again in accord with the Greek syntax:

Commending the Himself love into us is the God, seeing that . . . **Christ** *over us* **died.**

Indeed, in drawing attention to God's own distinguishing love, we might expect Paul to tell of God's giving of Christ to the death of the cross. Instead he rushes ahead and equates God's love directly with the fact that Christ died for our sakes.

There is an ellipsis here which is supplied by Romans 8:32. Thus we understand the complete thought to be somewhat as follows: "God is commending this love of His [for] us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, [God spares not His Anointed One, but gives Him up for us all, in that] Christ died for our sakes."

But instead of this full and certainly true statement of the evangel, the apostle hastens forward to associate God's love solely with what Christ did. To draw attention to God's giving of His Son here might lessen the attention to the vital issue of Christ's dying. In order to focus on God's own love, we are taken immediately to that which demonstrates its essence most acutely, the death of Christ for

sinners. This was that which cost God the most, that His Son should be placed in that state over which the Adversary has the might (*cf* Heb.2:14). And this is that which achieves the most for His creation, as will soon be made clear in Romans 5:9-19.

At this point, nothing else is to be considered.

CHRIST DIED

But what does it mean that Christ died? It seems incredible that this should have to be asked. Only two verses later the death of God's Son is distinguished from His life. "For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the *death* of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His *life*" (Rom.5:10). When Christ died, He was no longer living. When He was roused to life, He was no longer dead. When Christ died, He became dead.

Some have taught that when Christ died, He passed to another kind of life. If this were so, how is it that Paul places such pointed emphasis on Christ's death as the commendation of God's love for us? Is God's love for us expressed in releasing Christ from His suffering into another conscious existence of great mysteriousness, but evidently without the agonies of the cross? And how can we gauge the value of God's love by such a qualified and vague sense of death, where the word "life" holds an essential part?

Others have taken a different approach, claiming that the word "died" in verses 6 and 8 refers, by a figure of association, to the final stages of the dying process. Hence it speaks here of the sufferings on the cross. But a figurative sense of the verb is more than unlikely in this context. Christ did literally die. His life as it had existed in the form of humanity came to an end. It is inexplicable that Paul, in presenting the evangel, would intend to bypass the fact that Christ literally died and employ the verb "die" in a figurative sense that could easily be expressed literally.

A few verses later, in Romans 5:15, Paul will again use the verb "died" in a literal sense. This is in accord with the list given in Genesis 5 of those who lived a certain number of years and then "died." It does not refer to the terminating stages of the dying process, but to the termination of life.

Later in Romans Paul tells us that "we *died* together with Christ" (Rom.6:8), a powerful figure of speech showing the effect of Christ's [literal] death on us. It is indeed a figure, but one that is based on the meaning of the words "Christ died" in our present passage. Are we to understand that we are identified with only the final stages of Christ's life? No indeed. The old humanity must be done away with (*cf* Rom.6:6), and the means for this is that Christ died for our sakes, and our old humanity is put to death in that death.

THE SUFFERINGS AND THE DEATH

The sufferings of the cross are certainly critical in the demonstration of God's love, but we must see them in association with Christ's literal death. They are indeed in view in the words "crucified" and "cross," but in speaking of the manner of Christ's death these terms necessarily testify to the fact that He died. That Christ *died* is the vital and determining factor here where Paul dwells on the love of God. God's love is poured out in our hearts, *for* Christ *died* for the sake of the irreverent (Rom.5:6). God's love is commended in the fact that Christ *died* for the sake of sinners (Rom.5:8).

When Christ died He was no longer alive, and consequently He was no longer suffering. In giving up His spirit, He was placing Himself under the power of the Adversary. In this fearful and faithful act, in accord with the will of God, we are to see God's love, if indeed it accomplishes the good God has in view.

Therefore, in the death of Christ, purposed in God's heart of love, there is the death of the corrupt race of

humanity created in Him, so that it might be vivified in Him, Who was roused because of our justifying (*cf* Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor.15:22).

OUR PLACE IN THE EVANGEL

This love which is God's own personal love in the death of His Son, the Anointed Lord, is for us, that is, directed "into" us, who are sinners. Let us look at Romans 5:8 in the syntax of the Greek once again, this time noting the way in which God's love expressed by the death of Christ is related to us:

Commending . . . the Himself love **into us** *is God,*
that **still sinners being us,**
Christ **over us** *died.*

Note that in this message of glorious good, we are positioned in the middle of everything that is said.

We stand as sinners between God's act of commending His love and the identification of that love expressed in the message that "Christ died for our sakes." There is no better place for sinners to be.

Yet this is not all. Even before Paul speaks of us as sinners, he refers to us as beneficiaries of God's love. We are those who are favored by being positioned between the commended love and God, Who commends it. Commending His self-revealing love *for us* is God.

Then in the last line of this verse we hold the prime position of being between Christ and His act of dying. Christ, *for our sakes,* died. There we are securely identified with Christ in His death, and thus our old humanity was put away.

FOR SINNERS

To be identified as a sinner is not based alone on our unrighteous and irreverent acts. The term applies to anyone who fails to achieve or maintain what is good and right and perfect. An irreverent and idolatrous person is a sinner, and so is one who is ignorantly devout (*cf* Acts 17:23). Regarding humanity as it is, there is one assessment: "There is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:9,23).

Nevertheless, God loves us in such a way, with such intensity, that He spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all. The Anointed One of God died for the sake of sinners.

In our flesh, as descendants of Adam, we who are believing the evangel are in the same boat as all mankind. What is said about humanity in Romans 1:18-3:20 applies to us all to one extent or another. This is doubly certified in Romans 5:6-11 where Paul describes us as objects of God's love in the giving of His Anointed, His Son, to death. We are:

1. infirm
2. in accord with the era
3. irreverent
4. not just
5. not good
6. sinners
7. enemies

The wonder is that there can be an evangel (WELL-MESSAGE) of God that has anything at all to do with us. But that is to fail to hold fast to the fact that it is the evangel *of God,* Who is commending His very particular and personal love. As Romans 5:7 testifies, God's love is something far different from human love. Such love is the certain basis for the blessings Paul is about to describe:

WHAT WE ARE AS BELIEVERS

We who are neither just nor good in ourselves are brought into this message which announces that, despite what we

are in the flesh, as sinners who now are believing that Christ died for our sins, we are those:

1. who are being justified by [Christ's] faith,
2. who may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ,
3. who have access through Him into grace in which we stand,
4. who may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God,
5. who are receivers of the love of God,
6. for whose sake Christ died,
7. who are being justified in His blood (*cp* #1),
8. who shall be saved from indignation,
9. who were conciliated to God through the death of His Son,
10. who shall be saved in Christ's life (*cp* #8),
11. who are glorying in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ (*cp* #4),
12. who have obtained the conciliation through Him (*cp* #9).

What a contrast between what we are as human beings and what we are in Christ because of God's love expressed in the death of His Anointed! We can clearly see why our place in this message brings praise and thanksgiving to God and honor to our Lord Jesus Christ, and not to ourselves.

D.H.H.

AWAITING HIS SHOUT

Our dear sister, Shirley Russ, of Grand Rapids, formerly of Baldwin, Michigan, was one who believed that Jesus died and rose. Consequently, when she was put to repose in March, it was in expectation that our Lord will descend with a shout, the voice of the Chief Messenger and the trumpet of God, and she will rise to be always together with Him (1 Thess.4:13-18). May it be soon.

Unsearchable Riches

A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our Centennial Year

(1909–2009)

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 What is the Soul?
164 What is Spirit?
173 Keeping the Unity of the Spirit,
In the Midst of Confusion
185 Justified in Christ's Blood

JULY, 2009

Volume C **Number 4**

Concordant Version of
The Pentateuch

GENESIS
EXODUS, LEVITICUS
NUMBERS, DEUTERONOMY

THE PUBLICATION of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) is an ongoing project endeavoring to provide, in a consistent English translation, a closer reflection of the grammar, syntax and word usage of the ancient Hebrew manuscripts than can be found in other current versions. By analyzing the contextual usages, a single English word was first selected as the most suitable equivalent for each Hebrew word. To achieve readability some words were then given a limited number of idiomatic variants that are harmonious with the sense derived from the investigations. English words used as the common translation of particular Hebrew words, and even idiomatic variants, are not used for other Hebrew words.

The Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses, is referred to by our Lord as "The Law" (Matt.7:12; 22:40; Luke 16:16). Any passage in these five books is referred to as being in the Law, even if it is not in the decrees of Sinai.

The title of four of the Mosaic scrolls consists of the opening words of the text: "In a Beginning" for Genesis, "And These are the Names" for Exodus, "And He Called" for Leviticus, and "These are the Words" for Deuteronomy. The title of Numbers is taken from the first sentence, "In the Wilderness."

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2009
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

EDITORIAL

In the August, 1912 issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, (volume 3, p.245), V. Gelesnoff wrote, "Those who seek the mind of God through the Scriptures are confronted with a critical obstacle of an unusual kind. The current versions often translate the same Hebrew word in various ways, and quite as often one word is made to do the duty of several words in the original. In this way a veil of mystery has been thrown over many a passage, and a certain amount of human opinion and guesswork has been imported into God's truth. Of course, the translators had no intention of introducing confusion into the text or color it with their own views. The inconsistency which vitiates their work is the inevitable result of ignoring the foundation principle of right translation—the use of a separate word in the translation for every word in the original."

This principle, which we have called "the Concordant Method of translation," became the basis of the Concordant Version, and remains a guideline for us as we continue our translation work. We perhaps can never claim to have reached the full ideal Brother Gelesnoff envisioned; idiom and the range of usage of particular words differ from one language to another. But a high standard of consistency remains our goal.

It is not only for purposes of more exact translation that we give careful attention to the appearance of each term in the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. The Concordant Method of translation is also a Concordant Method of Scripture study. Two excellent examples of this are presented in the current issue: A. E. Knoch's articles entitled "What is the Soul?" and "What is Spirit?" The former first appeared in Volume 5 (pp.259-273) and was reprinted in Volume

53 (pp.169-176, 225-234). The latter is an abridgement of an original article, appearing in Volume 20 (pp.7-20) and reprinted in full in Volume 66 (pp.5-12, 77-83). This also appears as the opening chapter of the book, *Spirit, Spirits and Spirituality.*

We are presenting them again because of their valuable contributions to the appreciation of these basic and critical themes of God's Word. They are human works and must be taken as such, but the extended lists and groupings of the various uses of the Hebrew and Greek words rendered "soul" and "spirit" should greatly help us in guarding our thoughts from personal prejudices and directing us more truly to God's own mind.

What Brother Knoch wrote about the soul has been particularly helpful to me in understanding Paul's reference to justification in Christ's blood in Romans 5:9. Yet in this passage, where he saw Christ's blood primarily as a *memorial* to His sufferings (see p.159), I suggest Paul had principally in view the shed blood as a *witness* to Christ's lack of all sensation, in death. I give some of my reasons for this in my article starting on page 185.

The concordant investigations set before us in "What is Spirit?" can aid us greatly in appreciating and distinguishing the various uses of this term in Scripture. They reveal that there is a common, connecting thought of "invisible, intangible power." Regarding the subject of the unity of the spirit (which Brother Coram discusses in his article starting on page 173), we find much happiness and assurance in knowing that, despite all our human divisions and divisiveness, there is a true unity among members of the ecclesia which God has established by His invisible power.

We are thanking God for each one of you who join us in consideration of these things of consequence, and for the opportunity to continue this effort.

D.H.H.

WHAT IS THE SOUL?

> "For the word of God is living and operative, and keen above any two-edged sword, and penetrating up to the parting of soul and spirit . . ." (Heb.4:12).

THE LACK OF VITALITY and penetration in human literature and conversation is most clearly evidenced by the utter failure to distinguish between soul and spirit. It is almost universally the case that when the soul is spoken of, the spirit is intended. The English words which have been derived from *psuchê*, the Greek word for soul, all, erroneously, refer to various aspects of spirit. For instance, *psychology* has to do with the mind, not the soulish sensations. *Psychic*, instead of bearing its true meaning, soulish or sensual, denotes pneumatic, or spiritual. These are not mere curiosities of philology, but the sure indexes of the present day confusion which we must detect and avoid if we wish to get the truth on the subject of the soul.

A NEED FOR DILIGENCE

To get a firm grasp of the true and proper idea conveyed by the term "soul" is not the work of an instant. It can only come by a careful consideration of the contexts in which it occurs. These form an infallible index of its force. Yet here the English reader is at a great disadvantage because the version to which he may be accustomed often translates the same words in the original by a variety of terms in the English, thus concealing their true force. *Psuchê*, soul, is so often translated by the term "life" that the distinction between soul and life as well as between soul and spirit (the source of all life) is almost obliterated.

THE "AUTHORIZED" RENDERINGS OF THE HEBREW

With two exceptions the word soul, as found in the Authorized Version, always represents the Hebrew word *nphsh*. Job 30:15 and Isaiah 57:16 have no reference to the soul. The latter should be rendered "breath." Apart from these, every occurrence of "soul" in the accepted version may be depended upon to be correct.

But in a multitude of instances *nphsh* has been translated by other English expressions. We give a list of these passages so that the student may correct them in his King James Bible. In all, there are about forty-four variations. These are grouped together where the meaning is allied.

THE TRANSLATIONS OF *nphsh* IN THE AV
except where rendered "soul"

any, Lev.2:1; 24:17; Num.19:11; Deut.24:7.
appetite, Prov.23:2; Ecc.6:7.
beast, Lev.24:18,18,18.
body, Lev.21:11; Num.6:6; 19:13; Haggai 2:13.
breath, Job 41:21.
creature, Gen.1:20,21,24; 2:19; 9:10,12,15,16; Lev.11:46,46.
dead, Lev.19:28; 21:1; 22:4; Num.5:2; 6:11.
dead body, Num.9:6,7,10.
deadly, Psa.17:9.
desire, Ecc.6:9; Jer.22:27; 44:14; Micah 7:3; Hab.2:5.
fish, Isa.19:10.
ghost, Job 11:20; Jer.15:9.
heat, Ex.23:9; Lev.26:16; Deut.24:15; 1 Sam.2:33; 2 Sam. 3:21;Psa.10:3; Prov.23:7; 28:25; 31:6; Jer.42:20; Lam.3:51; Ezek.25:6,15; 27:31; Hosea 4:8.
hearty, Prov.27:9.
him, Prov.6:16.
life, Gen.1:30; 9:4,5,5; 19:17,19; 32:30; 44:30,30; Ex.4:9; 21:23,23,30; Lev.17:11,14,14,14; Num.35:31; Deut.12: 23,23; 19:21,21; 24:6; Josh.2:13,14; 9:24; Judges 5:18; 9:17,

12:3, 18:25, 25; Ruth 4:15; 1 Sam.19:5,11; 20:1; 22:23,23; 23:15; 26:24,24; 28:9; 21;2; 2 Sam.1:9; 4:8; 14:7; 16:11; 18:13; 19:5,5,5,5; 23:17; 1 Kings 1:12,12; 2:23; 3:11; 19:2, 2,3,4,10,14; 20:31; 39,39,42,42; 2 Kings 1:13,13,14; 7:7; 10:24,24; 1 Chron.11:19,19; 2 Chron.1:11; Esther 7:3,7; 8:11; 9:16; Job 2:4,6; 6:11; 13:14; 13:39; Psa.31:13; 38:12; Prov.1:18,19; 6:26; 7:23; 12:10; 13:3,8; Isa.15:4; 43:4; Jer. 4:30; 11:21; 19:7,9; 21:7,9; 22:25; 34:20,21; 38:2,16; 39:18; 44:30,30; 45:5; 46:26; 48:6; 49:37; Lam.2:19; 5:9; Ezek. 32:10; Jonah 1:14; 4:3.
lust, Ex.15:9; Psa.78:18.
man, Ex.12:16; 2 Kings 12:4; 1 Chron.5:21; Isa.49:7.
me, Num.23:10; Judges 16:30; 1 Kings 20:32.
mind, Gen.23:8; Deut.18:6, 28:65; 1 Sam.2:35; 2 Sam.17:8; 2 Kings 9:15; 1 Chron.28:9; Jer.15:1; Ezek.23:17,18,18, 22,28; 24:25; 36:5.
mortally, Deut.19:11.
one, Lev.4:27.
person, Gen.14:21; 36:6; Ex.16:16; Lev.27:2; Num.5:6; 19:18; 31:19,35,40,40,46; 35:11,15,30,30; Deut.10:22; 27:25; Josh. 20:3,9; 1 Sam.22:22; 2 Sam.14:14; Prov.28: 17; Jer.43:6; 52:29,30,30; Ezek.16:5; 17:17; 27:13; 33:6.
pleasure, at, Deut.23:24; Psa.105:22; Jer.34:16.
self, Lev.11:43,44; Deut.4:15; Josh.23:11; 1 Kings 19:4; Esther 4:13; 9:31; Job 18:4; 32:2; Psa.131:2; Isa.5:14; 46:2; 47:14; Jer.3:11; 17:21; 37:9; 51:14; Amos 2:14,15; 6:8; Jonah 4:8.
they, Job 36:14.
thing, Lev.11:10; Ezek.47:9.
whither will, Deut.21:14.
will, Psa.27:12; 41:2; Ezek.16:27.
would have, Psa.35:25.
[omitted entirely, Gen.37:21; Lev.24:17,18; Num.31:35; Deut.19:6; 22:26; Judges 18:25; 1 Sam.22:2; 1 Chron.5: 21; Isa.3:20; 56:11; Jer.2:24; 40:14,15].

By combining this list with the occurrences of "soul"

the student will have at his command every context which the Hebrew Scriptures afford for the study of this very important term.

A HELPFUL CONCORDANCE OF THE GREEK *psuchê*

The following list of the occurrences of *psuchê*, the Greek word for soul, will enable those who have no concordance of the original to check all the divine contexts. Every reference is given, segregated into groups according to the grammatical relation which the word sustains to its context. Thus "soul" is in one line while "souls," in the plural, is in another line. The genitive of the Greek is found following "*of* soul" and "*of* souls." The dative follows "*in* soul" and "*in* souls." The accusative, our English objective, is not distinguished in form from the nominative, but rather by its place in the list, toward the bottom. The vocative is indicated by an exclamation point, thus, "soul!" In each case those references which have no article ("the") are given first, then those which have it, prefixed by "the soul" for the singular, or "the souls" for the plural. A helpful definition is also included.

ALL THE OCCURRENCES OF *psuchê*, soul, IN THE GREEK SCRIPTURES

The result of imparting breath to the human (Gen.2:7); in the blood (Lev.17:14); limited to moving creatures (Gen. 1:20); distinguished from life (Gen.2:7); from spirit and body (1 Thess. 5:23)—a *sentient* being. *Figuratively*, the person as viewed from the standpoint of his sensations or experiences (Rev.6:9).

soul, Acts 3:23; Rom.13:l; Rev.16:3. the soul, Matt.6:25; 12:18; 26:38; Mark 14:34; Luke 1:46; 12:23; John 12:27; Acts 4:32; 20:10; 1 Thess.5:23; Heb.10:38; 3 John 1:2.
souls, Acts 2:41; 1 Pet.3:20. the souls, Acts 27:37.
of soul, Acts 27:22; Eph.6:6; Col.3:23; Heb.4:12; 10:39.

of the soul, Matt.16:26; Mark 8:37; 12:30,33; Luke 10:27; Rom.16:4; Heb.6:19; 1 Pet.2:11; Rev.18:14.
of souls, 1 Peter 1:9. *of* the souls, Acts 27:10; 2 Cor.12:15; Heb.13:17; 1 Peter 2:25.
in soul, Matt.6:25; Acts 2:43. *in* the soul, Matt.22:37; Luke 12:19,22; Phil.2:30.
in souls, Acts 7:14. *in* the souls, Matt.11:29; Heb.12:3.
soul, Matt.10:28; Mark 3:4; Luke 6:9; Rom.2:9; 1 Cor.15:45; James 5:20; 2 Peter 2:8. the soul, Matt.2:20; 10:28; 39,39; 16:25,25,26; 20:28; Mark 8:35,35,36; 10:45; Luke 2:35; 9:24,24; 12:20; 14:26 17:33; John 10:11,15, 17,24; 12:25,25; 13:37,38; 15:13; Acts 2:27; 20:24; Rom.11:3; 2 Cor.1:23; 1 John 3:16; Rev.12:11.
souls, 2 Peter 2:14; Rev.8:9; 18:13. the souls, Luke 21:19; Acts 14:2,22; 15:24,26; 1 Thess.2:8; James 1:21; 1 Peter 1:22; 4:19; 1 John 3:16; Rev.6:9; 20:4.
soul! Luke 12:19.

We suggest that these passages be translated uniformly. It is no crime to cross out mere human deviations and insert divine verities in their place. If soul meant "life," as our translators so often suggest, why was it not written with the Greek word for "life" in the original instead of the word for soul? We have already convinced ourselves of the fact that soul and life are utterly distinct by the phrase "living soul" (Gen.2:7). If we translate the word *nphsh* in that phrase as it is so often translated, we come to the absurd conclusion that, as the result of the impartation of the breath of the living, man became a "living *life*." Could Job have said, "*My life* is weary of my life" (Job 10:1)?

SOUL AND SPIRIT SEPARATE

The distinction between soul and spirit is no less pronounced. Besides the passage in Hebrews 4:12, which gives the Word of God the monopoly on this distinction,

we have the list "spirit and soul and body" (1 Thess.5:23). It is needless to say that this does not enter into the relation of the soul to the spirit and body at all, but only to its blameless preservation unto the presence of our Lord. The fact that the soul is the effect of the union of spirit with body is neither taught nor refuted by this text. It is thoroughly in harmony with the twofold constitution of man. For, while the soul is not one of the units of which man is constituted, its condition in view of His coming has a place quite as important as the body and spirit. And the preservation of the entire man involves the soul just as much as the two units on which it is based.

Now, instead of the soul and spirit being the same, they are put in striking contrast in the discussion of the differences between the first man, Adam, and the last Adam, Christ Jesus. The first became a living soul, the last a vivifying, or life-giving *Spirit*. This same contrast is even more apparent in the adjectives "spiritual" and "soulish." In the second chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians this distinction is obscured by the rendering "natural." Not the "natural," but the *soulish* man is not receiving those things which are of the spirit of God (1 Cor.2:14). Such perception is reserved for the spiritual man (v.12). So, too, in the fifteenth chapter. The body is there called a *soulish*, not a "natural" body, in contrast to the spiritual body of the coming resurrection (1 Cor.15:44,45,46).

THE SOUL SPEAKS OF SENSATIONS

The truth that the soul refers to sensation or conscious experience is really acknowledged by the translators themselves, though they have concealed it from their readers by their renderings. Many who think of the soul as the seat of our highest spiritual faculties would be surprised to know that it finds its fitting place between such words as "terrestrial" and "demoniacal." In James 3:15 we have "terrestrial,

soulish, demoniacal." The translators rendered it: "earthly, *sensual*, devilish." Here, however, if we take the word sensual in its present day acceptation, they have overshot the mark. But in their days it probably meant very nearly what soulish means—one who is swayed by physical sensation. The crowning proof of its antipathy to spirit lies in its last occurrence. There we read of those who are "soulish, *not having* the spirit" (Jude 19). Here again the translators rendered it "sensual."

THE SOUL IN GENESIS

Having noted that there is a distinction between life and spirit and soul, we are now ready to inquire more closely into the characteristics which define the latter. The first few occurrences in Genesis will supply us with the information which we need at this point. There we find developed the broad distinctions between flora and fauna, plants and animals.

It is most instructive to note the contrast between the introduction of plants on the third day of God's work of restoring the earth and the creation of living souls on the fifth and sixth days. Plants are, indeed, living *organisms* quite as much as animals, yet they differ from animals in a number of important particulars which are duly emphasized. Plants do not *swarm*. But the first mention of living souls brings out this characteristic. "Let the waters *swarm* with the *swarming* thing, the living soul" (Gen.1: 20, CV). This rendering may, perhaps, best convey to our minds the fact that the words "bring forth abundantly" and "moving" of the common text are but different grammatical forms of one expression in the Hebrew. To breed may be involved but it is not so stated. Swarm expresses the idea of motion, which is further developed in the next occurrence of the word "soul."

Plants cannot *move*. They are rooted in their place.

But not so with animals. This is brought out in the second statement; "Elohim created . . . every *moving*, living soul" (Gen. 1:21).

Plants are never called souls, yet, like the animals, they derive their nourishment from the soil and carbon from the air. But in them this combination causes no sensation or consciousness, which is the chief characteristic of soul. Generally speaking, soul is spoken of only in those forms of life which can move from place to place, which possess the further function of sensing the outward world, of being conscious of their own existence.

Now when, a few verses later, man is brought upon the scene, we are informed that he, too, becomes a "living soul" (Gen.2:7). What shall this convey to our minds? Simply that he, too, like the animals, would be able to move from place to place, would have the power of sensing the world around him and a conscious realization of his own existence. He is not a plant, but an animal, and possesses these endowments in common with other animals.

Instead of this phrase marking a difference between the man and the previously created animals, it shows his similarity to them. In fact, until we study and appreciate what has already been said of living souls, we are at a distinct loss to realize what is meant when the man is said to become a living soul.

A striking recognition of man's distinctly human attributes is found in the apostle Paul's address at Athens (Acts 17:28). The spirit is recognized in the statement that "In Him we are living." The soul is implied in the word "moving," and the body in the third item, which is the usual word for "are," for the identification of the man with his material structure, is consistently confirmed throughout the scriptures. "In Him we are living and moving and are" is a clear indication of the apostle's analysis of mankind. And that he considered it most elementary is shown by

the fact that he does not hesitate to proclaim it to unbelieving idolators.

THE SOUL, AND THE SENSES

Plants have life as well as animals, but it is not a conscious life. They do not see and feel and hear and taste. This is the force of being a "living soul."

The connection of soul with the senses is evidenced by a selection of interesting passages. We will give the renderings of the Authorized Version. The taste is especially intended in such scriptures as "whatsoever thy *soul* lusteth after" (Deut.12:15, 20,21), "thy *soul* longeth to eat flesh" (Deut.12:20), "eat grapes thy fill *at thine own pleasure*" (Deut.23:24), "Their *soul* abhorreth all manner of meat" (Psa.107:18), "a thief, if he steal to satisfy his *soul*" (Prov. 6:30), "eateth to the satisfying of his *soul*" (Prov.13:25), "an honeycomb, sweet to the *soul*" (Prov.16:24), "if thou be a man given to *appetite*" (Prov.23:2), "The full *soul* loatheth an honeycomb, but to the hungry *soul* every bitter thing is sweet" (Prov.27:7), "should make his *soul* enjoy good" (Margin reads: "delight his *senses*"), (Ecc.2:24), "the *appetite* is not filled" (Ecc.6:7), "to make empty the *soul* of the hungry" (Isa.32:6). In all of these cases the point lies in the sensation accompanying the use of food, the physical satisfaction which the soil furnishes when we partake of its products.

A CONVINCING CONFIRMATION

This is amply confirmed by our Lord's words: "Do not worry about your soul, what you may be eating, or what you may be drinking . . . . Is not the *soul* more than nourishment" (Matt.6:25)? These creature needs are what the soul craves, yet true satisfaction is not to be found in them. Even as He said on another occasion: "For what will a man be benefitted, if he should ever be gaining, the whole world,

yet be forfeiting his *soul*? Or what will a man be giving in exchange for his *soul?"* (Matt.16: 26). This is the evil which the wise man saw: "A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it . . ." (Ecc.6:2, AV).

"SAVING SOULS"

So, too, he who prefers the indulgence of his physical senses to loyalty to Christ, who shrinks from the discomfort and distress which His disciples must endure, he shall lose his soul in the time of Christ's exaltation. But he who "loses his soul" for Christ's sake, he will gain it in that glorious future kingdom. In the phraseology of today's theology, to "lose your soul" is the very worst calamity which can occur. It is equivalent to "eternal damnation." Yet our Lord used these very words and urged His disciples to "lose their souls." "For whosoever should be wanting to *save his soul* shall lose [or "destroy"] it" (Matt.16:25). He who would save his soul (which is continually put before the sinner today) was to be discouraged and restrained by the fact that such would destroy their souls. Once we allow the true scriptural force of "soul" the passage is luminous with meaning and "the salvation of soul" takes on an entirely different color. This phrase, so loudly proclaimed today, is never once used in Paul's epistles. In fact, he very seldom speaks of the soul. Indeed he highly commends Epaphroditus for "risking his soul" for the sake of his fellow Philippians (Phil.2:30). This risk was evident in his sickness and depression which accompanied it. Paul could never commend anyone risking their salvation for any cause. But in Hebrews and James and Peter's first epistle, which are concerned with the *physical* blessings of the earthly Kingdom, in these letters we read of the salvation of the *soul*.

SOUL AS A FIGURE OF SPEECH

The term "soul" is often used as a figure of speech to denote the person from the standpoint of his sensations or experience. This is called a metonymy of the adjunct, because an object is characterized by some closely related thing. In the International Edition of the Concordant Version this figure was marked with a small superior capital A, standing for the figure of Association. Thus we speak of a human being as a "soul" when we wish to call attention to their feelings or sensations or experiences. A familiar instance is the phrase "the *soul* that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek.18:4, AV). In Israel, they had been using a proverb: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." In other words, they accused Yahweh with punishing them for the misdeeds of their fathers. In reply Yahweh says that the soul that sins—the one who actually experienced the sensations connected with the sin—*that* soul shall die, and not one that never was experientially connected with the sin.

THE SOUL OF A BEAST

With this key in hand, how much more impressive and harmonious is the proverb, "A righteous man regardeth the *soul* of his beast; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel" (Prov.12:10). It is not simply the life of the beast which is here spoken of, but the comfort and strength and sustenance of the beast which is the object of the just man's solicitude. He will not overload it; nor will he underfeed it. He will see that it is well taken care of at all times. That this is the real thought is confirmed by the second member of the couplet, for all of this is in contrast with the cruelty of the wicked.

And how luminous does our Lord's invitation become in the light of a true understanding of the soul! "Hither to

Me, all who are toiling and laden . . . and you shall be finding rest in your *souls*" (Matt.11:28,29). It is the soul that feels the pressure and distress of life's burdens and responsibilities and it is the soul that finds its rest in His yoke.

And the same light shines from that striking contrast—the rich man who said to his soul: "Soul, many good things have you laid up for many years. Rest, eat, drink, make merry" (Luke 12: 19). But his soul was never to enjoy the rest or the feast which he had prepared for it.

Therefore the Lord told them not to worry about their soul, *what they may be eating*. We would have said that eating was a care of the *body*, not the soul. But He knew better, and, while He spoke of clothing as connected with the body, eating was for the soul. Indeed all living souls need nourishment, but not necessarily covering. No soul can live without food, but the animals, except man, need no protection from the elements beyond what is provided for them by nature.

THE SOUL IS IN THE BLOOD

Just as the divine illustration of the spirit was in the *breath*, so we have the divine picture of the soul in the *blood*. Much has been lost by the arbitrary change of the word soul to "life" in the passages where this is clearly taught. Notice how the two are used together in Genesis 9:4. "Only flesh with its *soul*, its *blood*, you must not eat" (CV). This truth is again emphasized in the phrase, "for the *soul* of the flesh, it is in the *blood*" (Lev.17:11, CV). And again, "for the *soul* of all flesh is its *blood*; as its soul is it . . . for the *soul* of all flesh, it is its *blood*" (Lev.17:14, (CV).

Now, why should the blood be chosen to picture the soul to us? We have already seen that the soul has its origin, not in the body merely, nor yet in the spirit alone, but in their combination. And what could better portray this than the blood? It is fed from food by means of assimilation and thus is linked to the body and the soil; it is fed from the air by means of respiration and is thus linked to the breath and spirit.

BLOOD FOR PROPITIATION

Having learned that soul is synonymous with sensation and that the soul of the flesh is in the blood, we are prepared for the further truth that "it is the *blood* that maketh an atonement for the *soul*" (Lev.17:11, AV), or concordantly rendered, "for the blood, because of the soul, it makes a propitiatory shelter."

Now, as the soul is in the blood, what is more appropriate as a means of propitiation than blood? The same holds true in the higher sphere of justification or acquittal. The blood of Christ, the memorial of His sensations or sufferings for sins, is the pledge of our safety from coming indignation (Rom.5:9). Christ's suffering was over when the soldier pierced His side and blood flowed forth (John 19:34). And, after His resurrection, when He sought to calm His disciples, He could not say (which would have been most natural) that a spirit has no flesh and *blood*, but "a spirit has not flesh and *bones* according as you behold Me having" (Luke 24: 39).

OUR SOULISH BODY

In perfect accord with all this we are told that there is a *soulish* body and there is a spiritual body (1 Cor.15:44). The last Adam became a life-giving, or vivifying spirit, in contrast with the first Adam who became a living soul. Flesh and *blood*, indeed, is not able to enjoy an allotment in the kingdom of God, for the blood is the badge of a soulish body, while flesh and bones is in accord with a spiritual body (1 Cor.15:50). The statement that Christ's flesh was not acquainted with decay (Acts 2:31) in the tomb is enough to show that it was the very same flesh

which endured the suffering of the cross. And this is put beyond question by the nail prints and the spear wound. And the further fact that His body is bloodless reminds us that a propitiatory shelter, for the pardon of Israel's sins, as well as those of the whole world, has been accomplished (1 John 2:2). The "blood" that is "making a propitiatory shelter" has been poured out.

THE SACRIFICE WAS NOT TO SUFFER

The just and merciful law which Yahweh gave to His people Israel, while it insisted on the death of countless victims in sacrifice and countenanced the slaying of animals for food, made due provision that they should not suffer. It was obligatory that the hunter pour out the blood of an animal taken in the chase (Lev.17:13) and blood was never allowed to be eaten.

To this very day the slaying of animals for food is the work of a Jewish rabbi who is specially trained for the task. He has a keen bladed knife with which he severs the animal's throat and drains off the blood. The carcass is called "Kosher" meat. No other will be eaten by the pious Jew. This is far better than the usual practice of stunning an animal about to be slaughtered, for it not only eliminates suffering for the animal, but avoids the possibility of tainting its flesh by means of the blood during the process of dying.

UNDERNEATH THE ALTAR

The blood of the sin offering was poured out at the foundation of the altar (Lev.4:7,18,25,30,34; 5:9). When their souls were poured out these souls went underneath the altar. It is said that in Solomon's temple there was a vast pit under the altar to receive the rivers of blood which flowed from the thousands of sacrifices which were offered upon it. So that we must seek the soul of the sacrifices underneath the altar, where the blood had been poured.

It is the suffering and anguish which God's faithful witnesses will endure during the reign of Antichrist that calls for avenging. When Abel died his blood cried from the *ground*, whence it had been poured (Gen.4:10). But when these martyrs die for the sake of their testimony to the one great Sacrifice, their blood is, as it were, poured out underneath the *altar* and their death ascends as a sweet savor to God. Hence we read of those under the fifth seal (Rev.6:9) who were slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they had, that their *souls* were underneath the altar, where it was customary to pour the blood of the animal sacrifices. And the reason for the figure characterizing them as "souls" is very evident, for they cry for avenging on those dwelling on the earth who had shed their *blood*. It was the sufferings unto death which they had endured for His sake which cried aloud for God's judging and avenging. We need not imagine that Abel's blood, which had been swallowed by the ground, actually became endowed with the organs of speech and made an articulate audible appeal to Yahweh. Neither should we suppose that the souls of these martyrs received a miraculous embodiment for the purpose of crying aloud for averring on their adversaries. To say the least it would take a large altar to cover them all or very small souls to be cramped in such numbers into so small a space. Such a dismal, bloody, ashy pit would hardly be a fit recompense for their previous tribulation!

MAN AS AN ORGANISM

Many attempts have been made to define the soul. Among these may be mentioned the suggestion that it refers to man as an *organism*. This is chiefly founded upon those passages in which a dead soul is translated a dead "body," which could not be touched without defilement. Yet these instances are better understood when we

remember the figurative usage of the word in connection with death. When death is viewed as an experience, it is the soul which departs; when it emphasizes the end of life, it is the spirit which expires. It all depends upon the viewpoint.

That the soul is not merely another name for "organism" may be seen from several considerations. Plants are organisms, yet they have no soul. They are living organisms but not living souls. The glorified body, too, could hardly be *contrasted* to a living organism for it continues to be such even when it becomes a spiritual body. To call a soulish body an organized body tells us nothing more than is already contained in the word body. Let us put the word "organized" for soulish and it will be most evident that it will not do. "The *organized* man receiveth not the things of the spirit" (1 Cor.2:14); "earthly, *organized*, devilish." (James 3:15); "*organized*, having not the spirit." (Jude 19)—these, are discords which hinder, rather than help our apprehension of the true force of the term "soul."

THE CONTEXT CLARIFIES

The context gives us the needed clue to a clear distinction between soul and spirit. The soul senses the material, tangible, visible, physical sphere; the spirit moves in the realm of the etherial, the invisible, the metaphysical. The soul *sees* the letters upon the page, the spirit *perceives* the meaning which they convey. Time and time again, the terms which primarily refer to soul have been transferred to spirit. We *taste* food with the soul and we *taste* God's goodness with the spirit. We *feel* the comforting warmth of the sunshine with the soul, while we *feel* the effects of His love in our spirits.

SEEKING THE SOULISH

It is not that the soul is essentially bad and the spirit essentially good. Nor yet the reverse, for many evil things,

such as pride, may be spiritual rather than soulish. Yet, as the delights of the senses are satisfied by the physical, so the spirit craves the metaphysical. The prevailing tendency is towards allowing the soul to rule. Elegant edifices, robed choirs, popular preachers—all these appeal to the soul and seek to satisfy the senses. This tendency is not surprising since our present body is a *soulish* body. It exaggerates the importance of its sensations. It does not readily respond to the spirit.

THE SOULISH IN THE SCRIPTURES

Thus, to sum up, just as human *existence* is joined to the soil (for the *human* was formed of the soil *before* the spirit was imparted), and as spirit is the source of *life*, so the soul is the seat of *sensation*. And for human beings, sensation is impossible except where there is a material body vivified by a spirit. Sensation does not depend upon a distinct entity or organism apart from either body or spirit, but rather upon their union. This union and its resultant sensation is termed "soul" in the sacred Scriptures.

A. E. Knoch

JACOB H. TONN

Our brother in the Lord, J. H. Tonn, of Roseburg, Oregon, was put to repose on December 27, 2008. Brother Tonn was the English translator of the German publication THE GOSPEL OF GOD'S RECONCILIATION OF ALL IN CHRIST by Ernst Ferdinand Stroeter. We anticipate our joyful reunion with Brother Tonn in the day of Christ's appearing.

DONALD R. CARLETON

Donald R. Carleton of Aurora, Colorado, fell asleep in Christ on May 29. Don was an avid tennis player and an employee of Wilson Sporting Goods Company. Don had the opportunity of presenting the evangel of Christ to many, including through a Bible class which he taught for many years. Our friends Dave Benson and Ed O'Brien officiated at Don's memorial service on June 5.

WHAT IS SPIRIT?

BOTH the Hebrew and Greek words for spirit are figures of speech. Literally they denote air in motion, a *wind* or *blast*. Sometimes there is a slight question whether it is literal or figurative. Some have proposed to translate John 3:8 somewhat as follows: "The *spirit* is breathing where it wills, and you are hearing the sound of it, but you are not aware whence it is coming and whither it is going. Thus is everyone begotten by the spirit." But the word *breathing* should be *blowing*, and a spirit makes no *sound*. Both are true literally of a blast of air. It was spoken to one without spiritual perceptions in order to illustrate what he could not understand. Nicodemus knew about the motions of the air, but he was ignorant concerning the movements of the spirit. Hence we translate literally *blast*, rather than figuratively *spirit*.

The great key words of God's revelation, in the Original, should be familiar to His saints. In Hebrew the word spirit is *ruch*. While it is usually translated *spirit* in the AV, it is also rendered, *air, blast, breath, cool, tempest* and *wind*. The last is its undoubted literal meaning in many passages. As this is its primary sense and is the natural phenomena to which God appeals to convey to us the idea of spirit, let us first of all assure ourselves that this is indeed true by reviewing the passages in which this occurs. The following are most of the texts in which *ruch* refers to actual *air in motion*, or WIND. The list is well worth reading. We give the familiar Authorized renderings. Practically all should be translated *wind*.

ruch, WIND, spirit

Gen.	3:8	in the garden in the *windy* part of the day
Gen.	8:1	Elohim caused a *wind* to pass over
Ex.	10:13	Yahweh, He drove an east *wind* . . . the east *wind* carried the locust swarm along
	119	an exceedingly steadfast west *wind*
	14:21	by a strong east *wind* all the night
	15:8	by the *wind* of Your anger
	10	You made a breeze with Your *wind*
Num.	11:31	and a *wind*, it journeyed
2 Sam.	22:11	He swooped down on the wings of the *wind*
	16	by the breath of the *wind* of Your nostrils
1 K.	18:45	with thick clouds and with the *wind*
	19:11	and a great and steadfast *wind* was ripping apart the mountains . . . yet Yahweh was not in the *wind*. After the *wind* was an earthquake
2 K.	3:17	ye shall neither see a *wind*
	19:7	I am putting a *spirit* in him
1 Chr.	9:24	The gatekeepers were in four *directions*
Job	6:26	Yet treat as *wind the words of a desperate man*
	8:2	*be such abundant wind*
	21:18	like crushed straw before the *wind*
	28:25	He granted weight to the *wind*
	30:15	my reputation is pursued as by the *wind*
	22	You lift me up into the *wind*
	37:21	When the *wind* has passed
	41:16	that the *wind* cannot enter between them
Psa.	1:4	that the *wind* whisks away
	11:6	let a simoon *wind* be the assigned portion
	18:10	He swooped down on the wings of the *wind*
	15	the *breath* of wind of Your nostrils
	42	before the face of the *wind*
	35:5	like trash before the *wind*
	48:7	like the east *wind* which broke up the ships
	55:8	away from the gusting *wind*
	78:39	a *wind* going that is not returning
	83:13	like straw before the *wind*
	103:16	the *wind* it passes over him
	104:3	Who is going on the wings of the *wind*
	107:25	He spoke and recruited a tempestuous *wind*
	135:7	bringing forth the *wind* from His treasuries

	147:18	He is reversing His *wind*
	148:8	tempestuous *wind* performing His word
Prov.	11:29	He who brings trouble on his own house shall shall be allotted *wind*
	25:14	like vapors and *wind* when there is no downpour
	23	a north *wind* travails forth a downpour
	27:16	he who stifles her can stifle the *wind*
	30:4	Who has gathered the *wind* in both His hands
Ecc.	1:6	the *wind* is going . . . the *wind* returns
	5:16	since he toiled for *wind*
	11:4	he who observes the *wind* does not sow
Isa.	7:2	trees of the wood sway because of the *wind*
	17:13	like trash before the *wind*
	26:18	yet it is as though we bear *wind*
	27:8	removes her away with His stiff *wind*
	32:2	a hiding place from the *wind*
	41:16	and the *tempest* shall scatter them
	29	*wind* and chaos are their molten images
	57:13	the *wind* shall carry them all away
Jer.	2:24	an onager . . . she gulps the *wind*
	4:11	a glazing *wind* from the ridges
	12	a fuller *wind* than this shall come
	5:13	the prophets, they shall become *wind*
	10:13	and brings forth the *wind* from His treasuries
	13:24	by the wilderness *wind*
	14:6	they snuff up the *wind*
	18:17	like the east *wind*, I shall scatter
	22:22	the *wind* shall graze all your shepherds
	49:32	I will toss them away to every *wind*
	36	I will bring upon Elam four *winds*
		I will toss them away to all these *winds*
	51:1	I am rousing . . . a ruinous *wind*
	16	brings forth *wind* from of His treasuries
	52:23	ninety-six pomegranates . . . each *direction*
Lam.	4:20	the *spirit* of our nostrils
Eze.	1:4	a tempestuous *wind* was coming from the north
	5:2	shall you toss to the *wind*
	10	will toss away all your remnant to every *wind*
	12:14	I shall toss away to every *wind*
	13:11	a tempestuous *wind* shall rend it
	13	I will rend with a tempestuous *wind*

	17:10	when the east *wind* assaults it
	21	spread to every *wind*
	19:12	the east *wind* dried up its branch-shoots
	27:26	the east *wind* broke you apart
	42:16,	17,18,19,20 *side of the . . . wind*
Dan.	8:8;	11:4 the four *winds* of the heavens
Hos.	8:7	they are sowing the *wind*
	12:1	Ephraim grazing on *wind*
Jonah	1:4	Yahweh, He cast forth a great *wind*
	4:8	Elohim assigned a sultry east *wind*
Zech.	2:6	the four *winds* of the heavens
	5:9	and the *wind* was in their wings

THE GREEK WORD FOR SPIRIT

We leave the Hebrew word at this point in order to establish the fact that the Greek word for spirit has practically the same force, though slightly different in its derivation and more precise in its form. The word is *pneuma*. It enters into many English words, such as *pneumatic*, all of which have to do with air or spirit. The verb, *pneō*, signifies BLOW, and is usually spoken of the wind, as will be seen in the following list, which has all of its occurrences. The concordant renderings are given, as some distinctions are absent from other translations.

pneō, BLOW, breeze

Matt.	7:25,	And the rain descended, and the rivers came, and the
	27	winds *blow*
Luke	12:55	whenever *it is blowing* from the south
John	3:8	The blast *is blowing* where it wills, and the sound of it you are hearing
	6:18	The sea was roused by the *blowing* of a great wind
Acts	27:40	hoisting the foresail to the *breeze*
Rev.	7:1	that the wind may not *be blowing* on the land, nor on the sea, nor on any tree

A glance over this list will show that the basic idea is almost identical with that of the Hebrew *ruch*. It refers to the *movement of the atmosphere*. Usually the wind is men-

tioned, But the usual word wind is not derived from this root in Greek. It is a special term *anemos*. Hence we have rendered BLOWING by *breeze* in Acts 27:40. These occurrences are all literal, and should give us a vivid impression from which to form an idea of the operations of spirit. It is an invisible, intangible force, at times gentle, at other times of terrific power.

The noun derived from this verb, *pnoe*, occurs only twice, yet in both passages there is so close a connection between the material and spiritual that they will repay consideration.

pnoê, BLOWing, blast, breath

Acts	17:25	gives to all life and *breath* and all
Acts	2:2	There came out of heaven a blare even as a violent carrying *blast*

The blast accompanying the manifestations of the spirit at Pentecost was the physical counterpart and symbol of the spiritual power which was present. It was a day of signs and sensational evidences to unseen realities. For our present purpose it is sufficient for us to note that "a violent carrying blast," a powerful and sustained current of air, was the apt emblem of the spirit's operations. Paul, at Athens, gives us a different picture. The intake of air is a necessity for physical life. The breath is the symbol of the spirit, just as the blood, which is the combination of the breath with the body, stands for the soul. Later on we will consider the close relation between the breath and spirit in mankind.

The word *pneuma*, which is translated *spirit* hundreds of times, comes from the same root as the words we have just considered. Hence the underlying thought is connected with BLOWING. But the special ending *-ma* denotes the *effect* produced. Hence we may translate it BLOW-*effect*. It seems to suggest the energy of the moving atmosphere.

It is seldom used in a literal sense. Once (Heb.1:7) we have the couplet,

> Who is making His messengers *blasts*,
> And His ministers a flame of fire.

As the corresponding member, "a flame of fire" is literal, we are forced to render *pneuma* likewise. Otherwise the parallelism is marred. In John 3:8 we read of the *sound* of *pneuma*. Hence it also is literal, for spirit cannot be heard.

DEFINITIONS OF SPIRIT

We may now venture to formulate a general definition of spirit, depending on our further investigations to verify, amplify and correct our understanding of it. We will follow the general definition by four secondary and more specific explanations, each of which forms a division of the subject. These definitions are from our *Keyword Concordance*.

Spirit is the invisible, intangible power of action, life, and intelligence. It is an intelligent principle of action (Luke 9:55; 2 Cor.12:18), as the spirit of meekness (1 Cor.4:21), of prophecy (Rev.19:10), of faith (2 Cor.4:13), of sonship (Rom.8: 15), of power and love and sanity (2 Tim.1:7), of slavery (Rom. 8:15), of stupor (Rom.11:8), and of the world (1 Cor.2:12). It is used of the life principle common to animals (Ecc.3:21), and mankind (Gen.6:17). It is also applied to metaphysical beings (2 Chr.18:20) without flesh or bones (Luke 24:39), which are usually unclean or evil (1 Tim.4:1), as well as demons (Luke 4:33) and messengers (Rev.4:5).

Its highest use denotes the divine power as manifested in His invisible, intangible operations (John 4:24), the Spirit of God, that holy Spirit (Matt.1:18; John 3:8; Acts 13:2) which comes on men for power (Acts 1:8), baptizes for cleansing (Acts 1:5) and unifying (1 Cor.12:13), filling for utterance (Acts 2:4; Eph.5: 18), sealing for safety (Eph.

1:13), and homing (1 Cor.3:16) for permanent fellowship.

IMPERSONAL SPIRITS

In studying such a difficult metaphysical theme, it will help us to segregate the usages of the word spirit, and group those of the same kind together. The first great distinction that suggests itself is that of *personal* and *impersonal*. Though spirit is usually used of intelligent beings, it also denotes the inward moving force, that which animates and controls action. The widest view of this is presented to us in the following contrast:

1 Cor.	2:12	Now we obtained, not the *spirit* of the world, but the *spirit* which is of God

We cannot well make the spirit of the world a personality. It is the *zeitgeist*, the trend of the times, the undercurrent which is carrying the world on its course. So also, there is a counter current, closely associated but not identified with the holy Spirit, which is of God.

Other more specific instances in which the spirit is the impelling power, the actuating motive, will be of interest:

1 John	4:6	By this we know the *spirit* of truth and the spirit of deception
1 Peter	4:14	the *spirit* of glory and power, and that of God has came to rest on you
Eph.	1:17	a *spirit* of wisdom and revelation
Rom.	8:15	you get the *spirit* of sonship
2 Cor.	4:13	the same *spirit* of faith
Heb.	10:29	outrages the *spirit* of grace
1 Cor.	4:21	in love and a *spirit* of meekness
Gal.	6:1	in a *spirit* of meekness

In contrast with these are the following (the first has already been quoted):

1 John	4:6	the *spirit* of deception
2 Tim.	1:7	God gives us, not a *spirit* of timidity

Rom.	11:8	God gives them a *spirit* of stupor
	15	you did not get slavery's *spirit* to fear again
Luke	13:11	a woman having a *spirit* of infirmity

Not only is the kosmos or world characterized by a special spirit, but the times of the eons are distinguished from the preceding and succeeding times by the "eonian spirit." It is associated with sin and redemption. Hence we have the notable expression,

Heb.	9:14	Who, through the eonian *spirit*, offers Himself

The term spirit is used to denote the true inward urge or motivating force, in contrast with outward appearance; the actual intent or meaning rather than the letter.

Rom.	2:29	But that which is hidden is the Jew, and circumcision is of heart, in *spirit*, not In letter
	7:6	slaving in newness of *spirit* and not in oldness of letter
Gal.	5:25	in *spirit* we may be observing the elements
2 Cor.	3:6	a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the *spirit*
Eph.	4:23	be rejuvenated in the *spirit* of your mind
Rev.	19:10	the testimony of Jesus is the *spirit* of prophecy

Time or place is usually known to us by means of our bodily sensations. To receive impressions apart from the body just as if it were in another place or time, is indicated by *in spirit*.

Rev.	1:10	I came to be, in *spirit*, in the Lord's day
	4:2	immediately I came to be in *spirit*
	17:3	And he carries me away, in *spirit*, into a wilderness
	21:10	And he carries me away, in *spirit*, on a mountain

Much that exists is formal, and sometimes empty. Such was the ritual of divine worship given to Israel. God, being Spirit, desires its force rather that its form. He craves the invisible, intangible reality of which the outward is but the counterpart.

John	4:23	true worshipers will be worshiping the Father in *spirit* and truth
Phil.	3:3	we are the circumcision, who are offering divine service in the *spirit* of God
Eph.	2:22	built together for God's dwelling place, in *spirit*

That which has no physical basis or occasion, which is metaphysical, is associated with spirit.

Matt.	5:3	happy, in *spirit*, are the poor
	22:43	How, then, is David, in *spirit*, calling Him Lord
Rom.	15:30	through the love of the *spirit*
Col.	1:8	makes evident also to us your love in *spirit*
Gal.	5:25	If we may be living in *spirit*
1 Peter	4:6	should be living according to God, in *spirit*
Eph.	6:18	be praying on every occasion, in *spirit*
1 Cor.	14:16	if you should be blessing in the *spirit*
Eph.	5:18	be filled full with *spirit*
Gal.	5:16	Walk in *spirit*
	18	if you are led by *spirit*
1 Cor.	14:2	in *spirit* he is speaking secrets
Gal.	5:5	we, in *spirit*, are awaiting the expectation of righteousness by faith
Eph.	3:6	in *spirit* the nations are to be joint enjoyers

Unity, in Israel, was attained by physical relationship. They had a common ancestry. Now, however, unity between the Lord and His own, and that between saints is based on the possession of a common spirit. They are energized by the same vital power which impels them in the same direction.

1 Cor.	6:17	he who joins the Lord is one *spirit*
	12:13	in one *spirit* also we all are baptized into one body, . . . and all were made to imbibe one *spirit*
Eph.	2:18	access, in one *spirit*, to the Father
	4:4	one body and one *spirit*
2 Cor.	12:18	walk we not in the same *spirit*?
Phil.	1:27	standing firm in one *spirit*, one soul

A. E. Knoch

KEEPING THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT, IN THE MIDST OF CONFUSION

Question:

The diversity of opinions among Christians is troubling to me. Worse yet, many will not even acknowledge that what they claim is the truth is simply what they think is the truth, not necessarily the truth itself.

Such ones while acknowledging their own fallibility, will typically argue that nevertheless their beliefs (or at least principal beliefs) themselves cannot be mistaken. This is because since they can be proved to be true, therefore they are true.

I have heard this same sort of argument made in favor of a wide variety of claims, ranging from the identity of "the true church," to the truth and inspiration of the Scriptures themselves; from the nature of the state of the dead, to the nature of the human will. And, concerning the question of final destiny, I have heard such arguments made time and again in favor of eternal torment.

Another claim I have encountered many times, however it may be put, in principle, is as follows: "I am correct in what I teach, since I teach simply what the Bible says. The Bible does not need to be interpreted and ought not be interpreted; instead, it ought to be believed. And this is what I do: I do not interpret the Bible; I believe the Bible, rightly translated and applied of course. In cases where clarification may be needed, the Bible interprets itself; we just need to find where it does so, and then apply what it says."

I might add that, from some, I have also heard it argued that if you do *not* believe in the Trinity, that

at death, Christians go to heaven, and that many people will go to hell for all eternity, you are not really saved. Yet by certain others I have heard it argued that if you *do* believe in the Trinity, that at death, Christians go to heaven, and that many people will go to hell for all eternity, you are not really saved. What confusion! Yet in making such claims, neither side will admit they are mistaken, or as a rule, even acknowledge that they might be mistaken. After all, they have "proof" that they are correct!

In these various self-justifying claims, something seems quite wrong. Can you help me out here? I want to fellowship with all invoking the Lord out of a clean heart (2 Tim.2:22), and am aware of the need, as Paul says, to "keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace" (Eph.4:3). Even so, I am not always sure how best to go about this.

Answer:

In responding to your letter, I would like to address especially the subject of fellowship among all invoking the Lord out of a clean heart, in consideration of our need to be keeping the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace in all our dealings and interchange with our fellow believers.

But before I do so, I would like to give significant attention as well to your earlier concerns regarding the various truth-claims made by some. These include, as you related them to me: the imagined immunity to error of even the most fantastical beliefs which, it is claimed, have nevertheless been proved to be true; the supposed wrongness and needlessness of interpreting Scripture, while claiming one's own avoidance of this allegedly improper activity; and finally, the contradictory claims that the believing or disbelieving of certain doctrines, ones which putatively inhere in the minds of all those truly saved, is the proof that one is or is not truly saved.

At present, however, I will give attention only to the intellectual principles we must follow if we are to determine what the truth is concerning any and all such truth-claims as those which you relate. I will do so instead of giving attention at this time to the specific errors which I may note in these particular truth-claims. Through one's implementation of better critical thinking skills, one will be much more able to spot for oneself any such specific errors.

Many simply dislike the task of engaging in careful, precise thinking, at least in the course of Scripture study. Some will even make the irrational claim that any attempt at analysis and exactitude is "unspiritual." Perhaps most, however, while acknowledging the importance of such mental labors, still dislike them, feel they are "too hard," and that, in any case, somehow, such activities are "just not for me."

Indeed, we cannot stress enough, and most heartily agree that, "If the Lord is not in it," even our best human efforts and acumen will prove most inadequate to the goal of significant scriptural insight and understanding. This is even as the Psalmist declares: "If Yahweh Himself is not building a house, its builders toil futilely in it. If Yahweh Himself is not guarding a city, the sentinel is alert futilely" (Psa.127:1).

We would not at all, then, study and investigate the Scriptures with a view to learning their truth—using necessary, legitimate means unto this end—because we imagine ourselves, out of ourselves, up to even the least part of the task. Instead, we would do so because we *pray* that God Himself would be with us in our endeavors, *graciously* guiding our path and enlightening our way.

In our quest for understanding, we merely seek to use the proper and necessary tools for the task, implementing them for the same reason that those building a house seek to use the proper and necessary tools for their task.

Yet if we are not aware what the needed tools for our

task even are—or else are aware, but still decline to avail ourselves of them—how can we ever hope to gain a competency in their use, and, I would add, how can we also ever hope, realistically, to build our "house" well?

You well summed up what the usual claims made by many come to, who affirm not merely that they think their beliefs are correct, but in fact that their beliefs cannot be mistaken. As you well note, exposed to the light of day, their claims are nothing more or less than that since their beliefs can be proved to be true, therefore they are true.

All that such a claim amounts to is this: Since the premises from which my position follows are true, therefore my position itself is true; indeed, it is not only true but necessarily true.

To state this argument objectively, as well as more carefully, however, one should employ not the word "since," but rather the word "if." Specifically, one should say as follows:

"*If* the premises of one's position are true, and *if* the conclusion that one affirms as one's position follows from these premises, therefore one's position itself is also true; indeed, it is not only true but must be true."

To say no more than this, however, is merely to recount the definition of a sound argument, with an added word affirming what logicians term, "the necessity of the consequence." As important as knowing what the definition of a sound argument is, the question at hand is not, What constitutes a sound argument? but, (1) Are the specific premises claimed as true which form the basis of a particular truth-claim, *themselves* actually true, and (2) Does the conclusion claimed to follow from these premises, actually follow from these premises.

The answer to Question Two here, which is not so often disputed even though it is vital, is simply a matter of elementary logic. But ascertaining the answer to Question One, however, is usually far more involved, and nearly always more contentious. This is because, very often, those making false claims, claim as true, premises that are demonstrably false (or at least either unproved or unknowable); and, very often as well, both the true premises and sound arguments of those making legitimate truth-claims are nevertheless denied by their opponents.

An argument which is Sound is also Valid; but a Valid argument may or may not be a Sound argument.

A Sound argument is an argument *founded upon true premises* which *also* results in a *true* conclusion. An argument which is Valid *but contains even a single false premise*, is not a Sound argument, and does *not* yield a true conclusion, even though its conclusion follows from its premises.

Here are examples both of a Sound argument (which entails its also being a Valid argument), and of a Valid argument, yet one which is nevertheless not a Sound argument:

An argument is sound if and only if

1. The argument is valid.
2. All of its premises are true.

For instance,

All men are mortal.
Socrates is a man.
Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

The argument is valid (because the conclusion is true based on the premises, that is, that the conclusion follows the premises), and since the premises are in fact true, the argument is sound.

The following argument is valid but not sound:

All organisms with wings can fly.
Penguins have wings.
Therefore, penguins can fly.

Since the first premise is actually false, the argument, though valid, is not sound.[1]

1. *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia* (Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.), entry, "Soundness": HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/SOUND_ARGUMENT.

REJECTION OF SCRIPTURE TRUTH

For the era will be when they will not tolerate sound teaching, but, their hearing being tickled, they will heap up for themselves teachers in accord with their own desires, and, indeed, they will be turning their hearing away from the truth, yet will be turned aside to myths. (2 Timothy 4:3,4)

While the apostle Paul herein evidently refers at least primarily to the religious, or religious-related myths to which men, in their rejection of the actual truth of Scripture, will be turned aside, it is the case that in the world itself today, there exists an abundance of fanciful myths which many are persuaded to accept. Time will tell whether even some of these become credible to those who have first rejected the truth of the evangel.

My personal favorite is the claim that numerous eyewitnesses have observed reptilian humanoids, and that reptilian species are the force behind a worldwide conspiracy directed at manipulation and control of humanity. These humanoids have the remarkable capacity to "shape-shift" at will, appearing usually in human form, while in private, appearing in their preferred and native form, that of reptilian humanoids. Perhaps the most fantastic claim of all made by some among those affirming the earthly presence of such reptilian humanoids, is that many of our world's leaders, from George W. Bush to British royal family, are in fact seven-foot tall, blood-drinking reptilians, immigrants to earth from the constellation Draco.

Since like most conspiracy theories, falsification[2] of the reptilian humanoid hypotheses is nearly impossible, the proponents of such hypotheses continue to prosper. No matter how daft such claims may appear to most, virtually

2. Scientific falsifiability (or refutability) is the logical possibility that an assertion can be shown false by an observation or a physical experiment.

every folkloric hypothesis in existence may claim its own audience, to whom it appears credible.

To find out the latest, both pro and con, about reptilian humanoids and most every other folkloric belief among the practically innumerable variety of such beliefs extant in the world today, one need only consult one's own preferred internet search engine. Many of these beliefs will seem absurd to nearly all, yet not to some. And, even some dubious theories capable of falsification, will still appear credible to many, in some cases, even among those who are more discerning, whether or not, in fact, these theories are actually correct.

REJOICING IN COMMON FAITH

While we may well smile at the absurdity of claims about reptilian humanoids living among us, the point we must not overlook is that there are those, otherwise sane and normal persons, to whom such claims are altogether real. Never mind that not many share their convictions; true believers in such tales will not be dissuaded.

And indeed, which is the most fantastic claim, after all? Is it the claim that Queen Elizabeth is an extra-terrestrial lizard? Or is it not instead the claim that God, the All-Sufficient Creator—Who is love and Who is the Saviour of all mankind—will nevertheless torment in unspeakable agony even a single one of His creatures for all eternity, not to mention the actual prevailing claim itself, that He will forever torment in unspeakable agony by far the greater part of His creatures?

Yet this latter claim that God is an Eternal Tormenter, indeed an Eternal Tormenter of vast proportions, is the settled faith not of a few eccentrics, but of many thousands of learned men, by far the majority of them, at least in notable ways, exemplary individuals; and, it is the settled faith as well of millions of their followers and adher-

ents, whatever the case may be concerning each one's personal character.

When attention is drawn to the fact that many of those naming the name of the Lord, do indeed hold to the doctrine of eternal torment, not to mention to an entire array of other false teachings as well, the question naturally arises, Are those affirming such views nevertheless members of the ecclesia itself, called and chosen of God? Well, at least we cannot say that any such individual person, even though he may hold many false beliefs, is *not* a member of the ecclesia.

Here we must say that it has not been revealed to us what percentage of the professing ecclesia are also members of the genuine ecclesia. It is likely that the true number of the members of the ecclesia is much larger than supposed by some, while remaining much smaller even so than presumed by many. Beyond this, we ourselves have no opinion here; for to say any more would be to be disposed above what is written (*cf* 1 Cor.4:6).

Indeed, faith can be feigned (i.e., "simulated"; *cf* 1 Cor. 15:3), not genuine; even so, this is not to say that in any certain case we may know that it is. It is simply not our place or province to judge such matters, whether on an individual basis or on a global basis. It is enough for us to confirm our own faith (*cf* 1 Cor.1:23-25; *cp* 1 Thess.4:14), and to be persuaded as well of the genuine faith of our close associates, ones who convince us thus accordingly (*cf* 2 Tim.1:5; *cp* 1 Tim.1:2). The rest we may well leave to God (*cf* 2 Tim. 2:16-19), being happy and content in so doing.

CONSOLATION IN CHRIST

With these considerations in mind, let us now turn to the subject of fellowship among all those invoking the Lord out of a clean heart, in consideration of our need to be keeping the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace.

As a prelude, we can do no better in preparing our hearts for this theme, than by quoting our beloved apostle Paul in Philippians 2:1-4:

If, then, there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any communion of spirit, if any compassion and pity, fill my joy full, that you may be mutually disposed, having mutual love, joined in soul, being disposed to one thing—nothing according with faction, nor yet according with vainglory—but with humility, deeming one another superior to one's self, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also.

How much consolation, *how much* comfort of love, *how much* communion of spirit, and especially, *how much* compassion and pity, we find in our Lord Jesus Christ, Whom we love!

Well, then, says Paul, that being so, I would have you fill my joy full by always pursuing what I am about to say, which is with a view to your becoming truly "*mutually* disposed" among yourselves, that you might be having *mutual* love, joined in soul. Unto this end, then, I would have you be disposed to just *one* thing, which must ever be kept in mind. Here is what it is: Be doing *nothing according with faction, nor yet according with vainglory;* instead, with humility, be deeming one another superior to one's self in consideration, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also.

I am entreating you, then, I, the prisoner in the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, with all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace: one body and one spirit, according as you were called also with one expectation of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all. (Ephesians 4:1-6)

Many having a clean heart, may not have a clear mind or an enlightened spirit. To the degree that we suppose ourselves to be enjoyers of such a mind and spirit, it behooves us to be "taking to [our]selves" those whom we deem "infirm in the faith" (Rom.14:1), thus "pursu[ing] righteousness, faith, love, peace, *with all* who are invoking the Lord out of a clean heart" (2 Tim.2:22). To be sure, while we must not concur with them in their misapprehensions, still we may rejoice with them in common faith, in the death and resurrection of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for the sins of us all.

We may at all times take all such ones to ourselves in spirit, while being cordial and gracious in all our encounters. Yet, even as in all our relations among all with whom we are acquainted, both believer and unbeliever, we should only deeply involve ourselves with those with whom we find it *expedient* or *edifying* to do so, God granting us wisdom here, concerning any certain activity or specific pursuit (*cf* 1 Cor.6:12; *cp* 1 Cor.10:23).

In my following restating of Ephesians 4:1-6, while the text remains the same, I have added some words in brackets. The careful reader will note that these additions are relevant, and true in the nature of the case; ideally, even self-evident. While they do not change the sense of what Paul says, hopefully the reader will find that they do help to clarify the sense of what is actually stated:

"I am entreating you, then [in consideration of all the foregoing in this epistle], I, the prisoner in the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called. [Thus, I declare,] with all humility and meekness, with patience, [be] bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to *keep* the *unity* of the spirit with the tie of peace [thus—which is, according to truth, whether recognized or not, that there is but]: *one* body and *one* spirit. [This is so, as you are aware, though the infirm in faith may not agree]

according as you were called also with *one* expectation of your calling, [it being true, in fact, even as, again, *you* are aware, that, for us, there is but] *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all."

GROWING IN MATURITY

Thus we see that Paul herein provides us not with a means by which we may justify ourselves in excluding others from our circle of fellowship (or still worse, even from our acknowledged circle of sainthood), but with the *one* true foundation upon which we may rest, becoming "settled, unmovable" (*cf* 1 Cor.15:58), *growing* in maturity ourselves, while *bearing with* one another in *love.*

The unity of the spirit which God has made and we, in our practice, are to endeavor to keep, is that God has made it so that there is, in truth and faithfully speaking, but *one* body and *one* spirit.

Be the organized church bodies all around us ever so numerous, and the many false spirits abounding among those who are deceiving others, being deceived themselves (*cf* 2 Tim.3:13), there remains but *one* body of believers, through which they are enlightened by *one* spirit, the holy spirit of God (Eph.4:30).

The *one* body is the ecclesia, which is the "body" of Christ: "the ecclesia which is His body" (Eph.1:23), its members being so closely identified with Him as to be, in a figure, the very members of His body.

In 1 Corinthians 12:11-13, these two intimately related themes of the *one* body and the *one* spirit, are brought together in a single passage: "Now all these *one and the same spirit* is operating, apportioning to each his own, according as He is intending. For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the one body, being many, are one body, thus also is the Christ.

For *in one spirit* also we *all* are baptized into *one body,* whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and all are made to imbibe *one* spirit."

Accordingly, ". . . whoever are baptized into Christ, put on Christ, in Whom there is no Jew nor yet Greek, there is no slave nor yet free, there is no male and female, for you *all* are *one* in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3:27,28).

It is unnecessary to be very widely acquainted with the many theologies and theological systems of Christendom, whether present or past, to realize that over the course of more than two millennia, "every wind of teaching" (Eph. 4:14) has indeed circulated and prevailed among some, whether among only a few or a great many.

Concerning every vital subject as rehearsed here by Paul, concerning which he assures us that there is but "*one,*" the theological world effectively has cried out saying, "No! there are *many.*" Yet this is only to be followed by each one of its representatives, bickering among themselves, wishing to add, "the only true one, however, is mine."

It is vital to note that here in Ephesians 4, Paul by no means *defines* the parameters of truth, the truth concerning the one body, the one spirit, the one expectation of our calling, the one Lord, the one faith, the one baptism, the one God and Father of all. That is not his purpose. Instead, his purpose is to assure us that there is indeed but *one* of each, and that that true *one,* in every case, may be discovered through an enlightened reading and study of the collective whole of his epistles, complemented to be sure by the rest of the sacred scriptures as well.

Our common quest is, in God's own time, that we should "*all* attain to the *unity* of *the faith*" (Eph.4:13). In the meantime, let us all, "with all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, [be] endeavoring to keep the *unity* of the *spirit* with the tie of *peace*" (Eph.4:3). J.R.C.

JUSTIFIED IN CHRIST'S BLOOD

THE *righteousness* of God is revealed in the evangel of God (Rom.1:1,17), which is the message that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and roused from among the dead (*cf* 1 Cor.15:3,4). The *love* of God is commended to us by Christ when He died for sinners (Rom.5:8). So we see that God's righteousness and His love are made known by the same operation of God, His giving of His Son (Rom.8:32), Who, in turn, was faithful in dying for our sakes.

In Romans 5:6 and 8 this evangel of God is set down in the simplest of terms: *For Christ, . . . for the sake of the irreverent, died . . . . While we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes.* The evangel of God declares:

A. *Christ died*
B. *for our sakes.*

Now in Romans 5:9 Paul expands on the words, "Christ died," and he makes the general expression, "for our sakes," specific, taking up these two points in reverse order:

B. Much rather, then, *being now justified*
A. *in His blood,*
B. *we shall be saved from indignation,*
A. *through Him.*

Paul will continue this exposition and enlargement of the evangel in Romans 5:10 and 11, but we will focus on verse 9 first, noting what it says about Christ's death and what it did for our sakes. Christ died, and the result of this shedding of *His blood* is that we are *being justified.* And this being so, we are blessed even more in that we *shall be saved from indignation through Him* Whose blood was shed.

THE PLACE OF JUSTIFICATION

Paul has already presented the evangel of God concerning His Son as it relates to justification. What he wrote in Romans 3:21-28 is summed up here by the words, "being now justified in [Christ's] blood." Justification is through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, thus manifesting the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ. It does not arise from our faith any more than it could arise from our works. Our faith is the acceptance of the evangel that announces what God has done for us in Christ. On believing this evangel God reckons to us the justification achieved in and through the death of Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.4:5,23,24; *cp* Eph.1:13,14).

What was referred to as the faith of Jesus Christ in Romans 3 is now referred to as the blood of Christ. To speak of His faith and His blood is to present, in specialized terms, the evangel that Christ died for our sins. To be justified in Christ's blood is to be justified in His death, which occurred with intense suffering and was effected with no feeling and no awareness whatsoever. Christ's death is the place of our justification. But in using the word "blood," the apostle directs our attention to the death of Christ as it relates to His soul.

BLOOD AS A TYPE

In the Scriptures, blood is associated with the soul (*cf* Gen.9:4-6; Lev.17:10-14).[1] It is necessary for sentient life, for feelings, consciousness and all the functions of a "living soul."

As a figure of speech, in connection with death, the term "blood" generally speaks of death by the hand of another or others, often violently. It is death in the sense of blood-

1. See the article entitled, "What is the Soul?" in this issue, especially pages 152-161.

shed, or blood poured out. This figurative use of the word invariably appears in Scripture after the death of the victim, so that, while it may serve as a memorial of sufferings associated with the dying process, it necessarily witnesses to the actual loss of all sentient qualities. Significantly, in these cases, the blood is outside the body. That which sustains the soul has been removed.

In its first occurrence in Scripture, Genesis 4:10, the word directs attention to a vicious, hateful shedding of blood, calling for vengeance (*cf* Matt.23:35,36). Speaking to Cain, who had murdered his brother Abel, Yahweh said:

"The voice of your brother's **blood** *is crying out to Me from the ground."*

In this striking way the horrible reality of Abel's death is brought before us. Abel himself was dead, and his blood was in the ground instead of in him as the medium of consciousness. It was no longer surging in his body, sustaining sensation and that most commendable disposition he had possessed in desiring to honor his Creator. The shock and hurt of his last moments were gone as well as any contact at all with the world about him. Without blood, Abel was no longer a living soul.

When the blood of Christ, the great Antitype of Abel, was shed, it spoke to God, not simply of vengeance, but of that glorious effect of the death of His Anointed which goes far beyond divine indignation to justification. The voice of Christ's blood cries unto God for the sake of the sinner.

Similarly, the passover flockling was slain and its blood put on the jambs and lintels of the houses of the Israelites in Egypt so that Yahweh would pass over them in bringing the stroke of death on the firstborn (Exodus 12:6-13, 21-23). The children of Israel were sinners just as surely as the Egyptians, but the blood of the innocent animal pointed ahead to the blood of Christ which would be shed for the pardon of sins (*cf* Matt.26:28). Now in Romans 5:9,

the apostle Paul takes us further in informing us of *justification* (not simply pardon) in Christ's blood.

Later in Leviticus, the many references to the blood of animals which were slain have much to say about the blood of Christ as He became the Antitype of each of the various offerings. Regarding the sin offering as described in Leviticus 4, it was to be slain, and its blood was to be taken before Yahweh. Note again the progressive steps as recorded in Leviticus 4:14-16:

. . . when the sin with which they have sinned becomes known, then the assembly will bring near a flawless bull calf of the herd as a sin offering and bring it before the tent of appointment. The elders of the congregation will support their hands on the head of the young bull before Yahweh, and one will slay the young bull before Yahweh. And the anointed priest will bring some of the blood of the young bull to the tent of appointment . . . .

First the sacrificial victim was brought near, and then the elders placed their hands on its head, and then it was put to death. It is only after the animal had been slain that its blood is brought into the picture. The shed blood testified to the fact that the animal was no longer a living soul. As in Genesis 4:10, so also in Exodus 12 and throughout Leviticus whenever the blood was mentioned, there was a message to God concerning the blood of our Lord. The blood of Christ was *poured out,* (Matt.26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20). The sufferings of His soul had been endured, and now there were no sensations of any sort whatsoever. Christ had died. And in this full separation from being a living soul there was justification.

JUSTIFIED IN HIS BLOOD

Hence, in Romans 5:9, the reference to the blood of Christ is a commentary on the words "Christ died." It is a

testimony to the fact that when Christ died He had no sentient contact with life at all. When His blood was poured out, He no longer could feel anything. In its fullest meaning, He had given His soul a ransom for many, even for all mankind (Matt.20:28; 1 Tim.2:6). As the One Who was made to be Sin (the Sin Offering), He was dead.

This accords with Romans 4:25 which tells us that Jesus our Lord was given up *because of* our offenses, and was roused *because of* our justifying. The fact that Christ was given up to death is traced to our offenses, and the fact that Christ was roused out of death is traced to our justifying which had been gained in His death. The principle is clearly stated in Romans 6:7 where Paul declares that "one who dies has been justified from Sin."

When Jesus our Lord was given up to crucifixion He was given up to the greatest of humiliation and the greatest of suffering of soul, extending to every inch of His body and sensed in every nerve. His blood fed this pain and kept it virile and sharp while the cruelty of humanity raged, and then in the hours of darkness, God Himself turned from Him Who had been made to be Sin.

Then He died, and His blood was shed (*cf* John 19:33,34). There was no more pain, but also no more sensation of any kind, no awareness, no contact with humanity or any of creation, and, most serious of all, no fellowship with God, His Father. God's Son, His Anointed One, in Whom all of God's purpose for good was centered, died. All of this was due to our offenses, but it was also for our sakes.

For we died together with Him (Rom.6:2-11).

This marked the end of the old humanity with all its irreverence and unrighteousness, all its offense and sin, all its infirmity and all its enmity. (This is not yet put into full effect, but it is absolutely certain, for the necessary deed has been done.) In the shedding of Christ's blood all that was wrong with humanity was done away with, and

thus we are justified. Now the way is opened to a new life in which all the lessons learned from the experience of evil are retained within a constitution of righteousness (Rom.5:18,19).

The reference to Christ's blood in Romans 5:9 intensifies the significance of the verb "die" in verses 6 and 8. It speaks of the kind of death, but in speaking of death itself it speaks of the complete nullifying of all the faculties of the soul.

SALVATION FROM INDIGNATION

Furthermore, in view of this justification centered in the shedding of Christ's blood for sinners, Paul points ahead to the blessing of salvation from indignation. What has been done in Christ's blood is the basis, and sole basis, of our standing before God in grace and peace (*cf* Rom.5:1,2).

In pronouncing woe on the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, the Lord declared that "on you should be coming all the just blood shed on the earth, from the blood of just Abel until the blood of Zechariah, whom you murder between the temple and the altar. Verily, I am saying to you: All these things will be arriving on this generation" (Matt.23:35,36). The scourging and persecuting that they had brought upon God's spokesmen will come upon them, and as they killed, so they will be killed. In the expression of God's indignation, the blood they had shed will be avenged with the shedding of their blood.

But in Paul's evangel God's purposes are revealed more fully and deeply. Whereas the blood of Abel called for vengeance, the shed blood of Christ, in its highest significance, brings about the end of divine indignation. Apart from God's grace in reckoning righteousness to us who are believing, and in fulfilling all His promises to His chosen ones, there are still times when God will pour out His indignation on sinners. But because of Christ's pouring out of

His blood, the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love, all will ultimately enter into the reconciliation which has been gained (Col.1:20).

As for us who believe, since our old humanity with its infirmity and irreverence of soul was put to death, and thus we stand justified in God's grace (*cf* Rom.3:24; 5:2), we are fortified with the sure and certain hope of salvation from any expressions of God's indignation. Justification means the expectation of the glory of God, of joy and peace and all the blessings of the new humanity.

Expressed negatively, to the extent that we do not accept and retain with growing faith (*cp* 1 Cor.15:1,2) our position of justification as declared in the evangel, our enjoyment of the expectation of salvation from indignation is weakened today. If we suppose that justification depends to a certain degree on ourselves, to that degree we will harbor uncertainties in mind and heart about what is ahead for us. No matter how well we can cover up our inner doubts before the world, if we think God wants something from us to add to what Christ has done, we will be mired down in a similar situation to that experienced by Saul of Tarsus under the law. He was wretched in the knowledge that he could not do what he willed and kept doing what he did not will (*cf* Rom.7:7-24).

We are justified in the shedding of Christ's blood. We are justified in what has been already done. It is all settled!

How much more, therefore, is it settled that we will never come under the indignation of God.

THROUGH HIM WHO SHED HIS BLOOD

Even as justification is achieved in Christ's blood, so also salvation from indignation is made certain through Him Who shed His blood for us. The brief words, "through Him," at the end of Romans 5:9 recapitulate all that has been said about Christ in the preceding verses. Christ, for

the sake of the irreverent, died. While we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes. We are being now justified in the shed blood of God's Anointed. And we shall be saved from indignation through this very same means.

This is critical. The evangel of God which was given to Paul to bring to sinners of every nation concerns His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. It is not concerned with what we must do in order to be justified and saved. It is concerned with what Christ has done and with what then happened to Him. Christ died for our sins. He was entombed, and He has been roused from among the dead.

Furthermore, in accepting the evangel, it is not only critical that we do not put ourselves in the place occupied by Christ, but that we do not confuse what it says about Him by inserting philosophies and traditions of human wisdom. Christ died for our sakes. Christ's blood was shed for our justification which assures us of salvation from indignation. It was necessary for Him to die, so that we might die with Him. The old had to be put away once and for all to a finality (*cp* Heb.9:13,26; 10:1,14) so that the new can take its place. The more clearly we see this, the more truly we will be readied for what follows in Romans, especially in chapters 6-8 and again for the entreaties which begin in chapter 12.

THE CRUCIAL PLACE OF CHRIST'S DEATH

The shed blood of Christ testifies to the indisputable fact that He was dead. There was no awareness, no contact with life, no sensation. It was in this state, and in our identification with Him in His death, that justification occurred.

In this God's love for us is expressed, in that He died for us while we are still sinners, that His blood was shed that we might be justified, and that we might be saved from indignation. This is God's gratuitous grace. And this is the bold simplicity of the evangel of God concerning His Son.

D.H.H.

Unsearchable Riches

**A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our Centennial Year

(1909–2009)

Contents:

193 Editorial
197 What is Death?
215 Conciliated Through the Death of God's Son
225 What is an Offense?
229 Prayer, and the Deity of God

SEPTEMBER, 2009

Volume C **Number 5**

Concordant Version of

The Latter Prophets

ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, EZEKIEL,
HOSEA, JOEL, AMOS, OBADIAH, JONAH, MICAH, NAHUM,
HABAKKUK, ZEPHANIAH, HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, MALACHI

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EDITORIAL

IN ADDITION to our many printed publications, which may be ordered either by postal mail or from our website, *www.concordant.org*, we also provide on our website the content of many of these same books, booklets, and pamphlets. All of this extensive on-line material is available without charge, for personal reading or printing, as desired. In fact, a number of our publications that are no longer available in print (or may be temporarily out of print), are nonetheless available on-line.

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dance have been superimposed in red for each entry in this on-line edition.

(6) Our new typeset document (pdf, 321 pages), Vocabulary Index for the Concordant Version of the Old Testament.

This index is an attempt to provide users of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) access to full listings of the occurrences of each major Hebrew or Aramaic (Chaldee) word (except most proper names) used in the Old Testament. It is admittedly more complex and less convenient than the Keyword Concordance published with the Concordant Literal New Testament. But until such a concordance using the vocabulary of the CVOT can be made available this may serve as a useful substitute. This is an abridgment of a full list of the English terms used in the CVOT, still being updated in 2009 as work proceeds on a first edition of the CVOT as a whole.

The list is keyed to Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance (5th edition), which is presently available under the title, Englishman's Hebrew Concordance (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody MA 01961-3473, isbn 0-913573-21-3). The word entries in this latter edition are coded to the numbering system of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, and these numbers are also provided here in our index.

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(7) *The Sacred Scrolls of the Scriptures,* an overview, book by book, explaining the general character, place, and purpose of each of the books comprised in the Sacred Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments.

(8) *Introducing the Concordant Literal New Testament,* The Concordant Method of Translation, in two parts,

provides detailed information concerning the principles employed and practices followed in the preparation and publication of the Concordant Literal New Testament.

(9) *Scripture Translation Principles,* presents a simple explanation of what *translation* is, while explaining the difference between translation and interpretation, addressing as well how definitive usage and essential meaning are determined.

(10) *Proponents for a Literal Translation of the New Testament,* in four parts, wherein the Concordant Literal New Testament is tested by standards proposed by recognized scholars in the field of translational problems. Investigation is made to see if the Concordant Version anticipates available versions, or improves on suggested renderings, or points the way toward possible solutions of problems connected with difficult words or verses or passages.

(11) *What is a Version?* explains what a *version* of the Sacred Scriptures actually is. The Concordant Literal New Testament with Keyword Concordance, together with the companion volume, the Concordant Greek Text, collectively, seek to be of the greatest service by providing, in the latter, a detailed, verbatim sublinear, and, in the former, an *idiomatic version* (employing boldface and lightface type together with superior literal word indicators), supplemented by a useful concordance.

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The principal remaining sections of our website are as follows:

Audio. This section includes, in digital format for on-line listening or downloading, a large number of our recorded Scripture messages originally available in cassette tape format. A great many "things of consequence" (*cf* Phil.1:10) are considered in these messages. Since the teaching of Romans is basic and is pre-supposed in all of Paul's epistles, in our special series of messages "Outlines in Romans" (from 32 tapes), we present a detailed exposition of this epistle. Romans presents the evangel of God in a full, orderly and systematic way not found in any other book.

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Finally, a large and diverse selection of our Scripture expositions from *Unsearchable Riches* magazine, are included in this section of our website as well. While these are far too numerous to list here, as we are able, we intend to add to their number considerably, all in the interests of heralding the word (2 Tim.4:2), that the word of the Lord may race and be glorified (2 Thess.3:1). J.R.C.

WHAT IS DEATH?

AMAZING AS IT MAY SEEM to some, death is a *return*. Man is soil and *returns* to the soil (Gen.3:19). The spirit *returns* to God who gave it (Ecc.12:7). The soul *returns* to the unseen whence it came (Psa.9:17 and Acts 2:27,31). In fact Job speaks of death itself as a return when he says:

> I know that You are returning me to death.
> (Job 30:23, CV)

Neither man as a whole, nor any part of him enters a new, unknown condition at death, but all returns to the state from which it emerged when life was imparted. Even as the body was created of existing entities, so with the spirit which was given by God; and at death these return to the same condition in which they were before.

This truth has been obscured by inconsistency in rendering the Hebrew word *shub*. This word is represented in the English Authorized version by one hundred and forty-two variations in rendering. On the other hand, five Hebrew words are translated "return." Our only recourse is a fresh, concordant study of the term. The main question to be decided is whether this Hebrew word simply means to *turn*, or if it includes the thought of a previous condition, hence a return. The following passages from the Authorized Version are in point.

Gen.3:19	till *thou return* unto the ground;
Gen.3:19	unto dust *shalt thou return*.
Psa.104:29	they die, and *return* to their dust.
Psa.146:4	*he returneth* to his earth.
Job 10:9	*wilt thou bring me* into dust *again*?

Ecc.12:7	*Then shall* the dust *return* to the earth as it was: and the spirit *shall return* unto God Who gave it.
Psa.9:17	The wicked *shall be turned into hell*,
Judges 15:19	and when...his spirit *came again*
1 Kings 17:21	*let* this child's soul *come* into him again.
Gen.42:28	My money is *restored*;
Lev.6:4	(5:23) *that he shall restore* that which he took

These are but a few of many passages which clearly prove that this Hebrew word means not only *turn* but *return*. Many instances are quite misleading if we should translate *turn*, but all are clear when we prefix *re-*.

With this key in our hands we are able to unlock the secret of death. And if we apply it first of all to the material part of mankind, the body, we not only have unquestionable proof of its truth, but are supplied with a parable of the spirit and a clue as to the soul.

THE BODY IS SOIL

Consider, then, the facts as to the body. It is soil. At death it returns to the soil whence it came. While it was a part of the body this soil was stamped with our personality. We speak of it as our body, though the elements which compose it are constantly changing and are entirely decomposed in death. As a matter of fact, each seven years or so the body has undergone an entire change, so far as its material components are concerned, yet it is the same body as far as we are aware. Perhaps it would not be too much to say that our bodies die every seven years and are renewed as often. This, of course, is a gradual process, nevertheless a real one. It should help us to realize what the death of a body involves. Could we compress this process of dying into a brief period and check the repair processes, then we have death itself. This daily dying is a continual reminder and a constant intimation of mortality. Death is written large in our daily experience for it is

perpetually operating in our bodies to return them to the soil from whence they came. And it is to this that Scripture points us if we would realize what death means. It should teach us that the body is not identified with any arbitrary unchangeable portion of the soil, but remains the identical body when the material elements which compose it have been replaced by entirely different substance. The elements which return to the soil have no more consciousness or identity than they had before we partook of them in the form of food.

DEATH FOR LIFE

Another law, akin to this, is that the higher organization must live by the death of the lower. Plants can draw their sustenance directly from the soil, but animals, living souls that move, cannot extract their food from the earth directly. They must live by the death of the herb and the grain and the fruit.

Thus we are constantly being reminded of the great lesson that God cannot only bring life from death, but that our death is but a stepping stone to the high honor given to us through His Beloved, Christ Jesus.

No fact in all the universe is so amply and constantly evidenced as the truth that death is the only means of life. The death of Christ, as the harbinger of life to a dying race, is the most illustrious example, but it is far from being a solitary one. It is but the apex of a pyramid of facts which have been piled up by the ages, which are still recurring and which may be felt by everyone and everywhere. The food we eat is eloquent on this point. Not merely flesh food—though this is its highest expression—but vegetables and grains as well. To begin with, it is only by dying that the grain can grow. It is only through death that the seed we sow can sprout. And this imparted life is lost again when the grain is used as food, either of animal or man-

kind. Death, death, death, nothing lives but by death. This is the universal law of life from which nothing can escape.

DEATH IS NOT LIFE

Men have been betrayed into the most absurd inconsistencies in their efforts to accept the dictum of the serpent "Ye shall not surely die." They frantically flee from death, they add precaution to precaution to avoid it, they brand a man a murderer who kills another, and call him a suicide if he kills himself, yet they persist in painting death in most pleasing colors. If it is such a blessed state why not embrace it?

But the word of God clears away such mists by associating life with good and death with evil (Deut.30:15,19). God has no pleasure in the death of those who die (Ezek.18:32), nor has anyone else. Death, in God's Word, is compassed with sorrows (Psa.18:4; 116:3) and terrors (Psa.55:4).

DEATH IS ESSENTIAL TO RESURRECTION

The greatest havoc wrought by a false view of death is the virtual denial of the resurrection. In my early endeavors to grasp the mind of God as to the true evangel which He would have preached, the most striking and notable departure from the preaching of the Apostles I found to be in their constant stress on the resurrection of Christ, while present day evangelical preachers hardly ever deem it worth mentioning in a Gospel address. I sought the cause of this discrepancy and found it in the false view of death which has become orthodox and "sound." For if death for the believers is but the entrance into a fuller, free *life*, then what need of a resurrection? Why drag down the spirit from its ecstatic session in the divine Presence into a burdensome body again?

In line with this I found that the theological phrase "the resurrection of the *body*" (which virtually denies resurrection in that it excludes the soul and spirit) has wrought great mischief. This unscriptural, misleading phrase has found its way into the creeds and seeks to hide its falsity by its challenge to "faith." It wears a mask of truth to conceal its real intent, which is hardly less than the error of which the apostle Paul warns us (2 Tim.2:18) for it infers that the resurrection is past already so far as the soul and spirit is concerned.

Until we acknowledge death to be *death* we cannot understand resurrection aright, for it is resurrection from the *dead*, not from another form of life!

Another remarkable phenomena is worth noting in this connection. It is the tendency for those who deal much with the original Greek to become "heretics" on this question. The church has corrupted the truth so that a vital contact with the early manuscripts is sure to lead to "heresy." In truth, such a study of the original has become almost necessary in order to recover this truth. Thus it was with Martin Luther, soon after his escape from the thralldom of Rome. In his "Defense" he says: "I permit the Pope to make articles of faith for himself and his faithful: such as that the soul is the substantial form of the human body, that the soul is *immortal*, with all those monstrous opinions to be found in the Roman dunghill of decretals."

But even before that day our martyr, William Tyndale, whose life and death were devoted to the truth, writes to Sir Thomas Moore: "In putting departed souls in heaven, hell and purgatory, you destroy the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul prove the resurrection. What God doth with them, that shall we know when we come to them. The true faith putteth the resurrection, which we be warned to look for every hour. The heathen philosophers, denying that, did put that souls did ever live. And the Pope joineth the spiritual doctrine of Christ, and the fleshly doctrine of philosophers together—things so contrary that they cannot

agree. And because the fleshly-minded Pope consenteth unto heathen doctrine, therefore he corrupteth the Scriptures to establish it. *If the souls be in heaven*, tell me why they be not in good case as the angels be and *then what cause of the resurrection*?"

And not only the faithful Tyndale but others since his day who have dealt directly with the text of the early Greek and Hebrew have become convinced of this "heresy." As a young inquirer I was warned against Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott on this ground. Rotherham, whose quaint version has been the delight and help of many, has been impeached of this "error." Dr. Bullinger, whose Critical Lexicon evinces a close study of the original, suffered much for maintaining this truth. So that we must warn all who wish to remain orthodox not to brush aside the veil of the Authorized Version or look upon the face of the ancient text or you will surely be tainted with the heresy of God's truth!

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL NOT SCRIPTURAL

The most unblushing denial of God's word is found in the orthodox doctrine of inherent immortality. It finds no source or prop or excuse in the Scriptures of truth. It is but the wild guess of a pagan philosopher foisted upon us by a degenerate theology. When its supporters are driven to admit that it has no place in God's Word they try to tell us that it is everywhere inferred. If they should say that it is everywhere inferred that God will bring all back to life it would fully satisfy each intimation and would have solid support and definite declarations. But nowhere is there the least intimation of immortality being a present possession anywhere in the sacred scrolls. Death is insisted on everywhere as being the lot, not only of humanity, but of other creatures as well.

At the very forefront of revelation man is denied immortality. The serpent had indeed said, "Ye shall not surely

die" (Gen.3:4). But Yahweh Elohim takes all the necessary precautions, so that His Word does not fail. Not only does the sentence go forth, "soil are you, and to soil are you returning" (Gen.3:19, CV), but they are driven from Eden for the express purpose of keeping them from the tree of life. Had they tasted of this tree then they would indeed have been immortal—at least for the eon—and their life would have been prolonged in the midst of all the infirmities and distresses of advancing age. They would be tortured by pain and racked by disease without the possibility of escape through death or restoration by resurrection. They would be in the modern "hell."

But Yahweh Elohim allows no such inconceivable calamity to overtake them. He placed cherubim and a flaming sword to guard the way of the tree of the living. In other words, He took care that no one could possibly become immortal until the way should once more be opened by means of Christ and the resurrection. How anyone, in the face of the narrative, coupled with the distinct assertion that Christ alone has immortality—how anyone can still believe Satan's lie, seems almost incredible. Yet we know that those in high places not only hold and herald it forth as truth, but seek to find "evidence" for it in the Scriptures! Some, however, allow that it is not taught there, but that it is taken for granted!

IMMORTALITY AND INCORRUPTION

Christ alone has immortality (1 Tim.6:16). We shall put it on when we are vivified (1 Cor.15:53,54). These two passages are the only references to immortality, or deathlessness, in the Greek Scriptures. Romans 2:7 and 2 Timothy 1:10 refer to incorruption, not immortality. This is clear from 1 Corinthians 15:42,50,53,54, Ephesians 6:24 and Titus 2:7, which comprise all the occurrences of the word for incorruption.

PLATO'S PHILOSOPHY *vs.* GOD'S TRUTH

In spite of the plain, unequivocal declaration of Holy Writ, it is commonly believed that the theory of Plato, that man is inherently immortal, is found in the Bible. Let any one who believes this take up his Bible and concordance and search and see if he can find a single passage to support the assertion. Usually this is acknowledged, though some passages, such as Mark 12:27, "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living," are cited which clearly refer to resurrection, or the fact that the dead are roused, not to deathlessness. The very weakness of Plato's position, when referred to the Word of God, ought to be the most powerful argument for believing God's express declaration that Christ *alone* is now possessor of immortality (1 Tim.6:16).

Nevertheless many of the arguments of Plato and his followers appeal to our reason with great force. The longing for deathlessness which God has implanted in the human breast is eloquent in its favor. Will He deny the craving which He has Himself created? Shall death defeat the designs which have cost Him infinite pains and unlimited labor?

It was but human for Plato to reason from all this that death was not the end of God's dealing with mankind. And thus far he and those who follow him are right. But his error lay in his ignorance of God's power to rouse the dead. All Plato could do was to deny the reality of death itself. He would limit it to the body. He would make the soul or the spirit immortal and thus provide for the continuance of man's existence that the purpose of creation might thus find a possibility of fulfillment.

The grand truth that, in Christ, all shall be made alive, or vivified, at once denies the doctrine of inherent immortality and supplies the true and satisfactory solution to Plato's problem. Man, truly, was not created to float as a vapor

across the sky and dissolve into nothingness. His present life is no more than this. But this fails to fulfill his destiny and falls short of the purpose God has in view in His creation. But the object is not obtained by a fancied immortality. It is attained only through death. It is reached only by resurrection. It is found alone in vivification. Men shall not be *kept* alive; they shall all be *made* alive. It will not do to deny death, for death is one of the means for manifesting God's might and mercy.

ALL VIVIFIED

Every argument in favor of immortality receives a complete and comprehensive answer when once we see that all shall be vivified. Not only will they be raised to receive the deserts of their deeds, but, when this has been attended to and the second death has run its course, then they will be made alive in Christ in order that God may enjoy the fruit of His endeavors on their behalf and that they may enjoy the love which will not leave them even in the dust of death.

It has been truly said: "Even in pagan religions there is found an element of distorted truth. In fact, many a deep truth, which narrow-minded Christian theology has never grasped, can be discovered, in caricature, in heathen religions. They all date back to the sons of Noah, all of whom had the oracles of truth, as far as they were known in their day. It is around fragments of these oracles as a basis that heathen philosophy has spun. It is from them, as a source, that all pagan cults have sprung, even though they are, in the form they have taken, 'doctrines of demons.' Distorted, malignant caricatures of truth are they, just the same . . . . And so, in the heathen belief of the soul's immortality there is a grain of truth also."

The element of truth in the doctrine of the inherent immortality of man will be evident after the consummation when all men will indeed be possessed of this price-

less gift. But the great error lies in the denial of God's power and that of His Christ. Life is not inherent in man in any sense. Not even in God's Son. The Father has life in Himself—inherent life—and He makes this a gift to His Son (John 5:26). Apart from Christ, the Son of the living God, there is no life.

The continuity of life after death in some modified, fragmentary way, is entirely unknown to Scripture. The spirit does not continue to empower life. The soul does not continue to live. The man is dead. The denial of this is only a subterfuge of philosophy which knows nothing of resurrection. At all hazards they must keep God from touching His own creatures!

GOD GIVES

But God will not have it thus. The cold comfort which "inherent immortality" affords is replaced by the grand consolation that death, like all else, is *for* God; a means for the discovery of His heart. So that when all men indeed possess immortality it will be a *gift*—a gift from God Himself, and the realization of their utter unworthiness for this priceless boon as well as their absolute helplessness to gain it—these are the offices and function of sin and death and judgment. God will *sell* nothing to any man, but nothing will be able to keep Him from *giving* with a lavish hand what each may most esteem and least deserve.

Inherent immortality is a doctrine of the demons, the substructure of spiritism, a destructive delusion. It is the offspring of the ignorance which prevails as to God's ultimate vivification of all. Christ alone has immortality now. In order to die, when on the cross, it was necessary for our Lord to give up His spirit, for His Father had given Him to have life in Himself (John 5:26). This power God gave back to Him in resurrection. Thus it is that through Him, the Firstborn from among the dead, and His death, God

is able to promise to all the gift which they vainly seek to arrogate to themselves, apart from God's grace.

TWO FALSE VIEWS OF DEATH

Resurrection is denied by both of the extreme views of the death state. One theory is that the dead are conscious though disembodied—that they are really *alive*: the opposite view holds that they are annihilated. From both of these standpoints resurrection is impossible.

"THE DEAD ARE ALIVE!"

If the dead are consciously alive then they are not dead at all and both the need and possibility of resurrection is unthinkable.

Being an unscriptural doctrine, the advocates of a conscious intermediate state have nothing definite to offer as to the conditions of such an existence. It would be far from accurate to guess that it would correspond to the state of so-called "angels;" or to liken it to the imagined conditions of "disembodied spirits."

Once a leading magazine published a series on "Are the Dead Alive?" Few seemed to notice the incongruity of the question. For if it should be established that the dead are alive this would also prove that they are not dead. This leads to the bold denial of death:

> "There is no death
> What seems so is transition."

And this reminds us of Eden's garden where the mother of all the living is told, "Ye shall not surely die." Orthodoxy is nothing less than the propagation of the Adversary's lie. In seeking to deny death, however, it also denies the possibility of resurrection. To make alive that which already has life should not call forth much effort. Yet resurrection is set forth as the mightiest exhibition of God's great

power. And everywhere it is insisted that it is the resurrection *from the dead.*

Likewise, if the dead are as though they had not been they are beyond the reach of resurrection. Let us allow all that God says as to the reality of the death state. Let us never think of it as life in any sense. Let every element return whence it came. Yet it is no more possible to annihilate the history of a man's life than to annihilate his individuality, or that which is spoken of in Scripture by means of the pronoun. Our Lord said that all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice and shall come forth. If they had been annihilated what "they" would there be to hear His voice? We are persuaded and fully grant that they can hear no *other* voice; in fact they are no more able to hear than if they really had been annihilated. And, indeed, unless *He* should speak to them we are certain that they never would hear nor live again—they would be the same as annihilated for all practical purposes.

But while we allow death its full force, we must always stop short of annihilation and acknowledge that something still exists (not *lives*) which responds to the voice of the Son in resurrection.

Perhaps one of the most convincing passages in favor of annihilation is found in Obadiah 16 where we read: "They shall be as though they had not been." This, however, is but a loose paraphrase of the Hebrew text, for the verbs "shall be" and "had been" are exactly the same in the original. If we render the verb the same in both instances it relieves the sentence of the very element which it needs to predicate annihilation. If for instance, we should translate "they are as if they are not" their existence is affirmed rather than denied. Besides, this passage deals with *nations*, not individuals, and we are quite free to admit that nations are to vanish as such, but not the persons who compose them.

The most striking case of the fire of Divine judgment is

found in the overthrow of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Indeed, they are expressly said to be set forth as an example "experiencing the justice of fire eonian" (Jude 7, CV). But even this extreme case carried no thought of final annihilation to the mind of our Lord or to the prophets. Ezekiel assures us that Sodom shall return to her former estate (Ezek.16:55). Our Lord warns those cities which were refusing His message that it would be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judging than for them (Matt.10:15; 11:24; Mark 6:11; Luke 10:12).

THE SECOND DEATH

While many will acknowledge that death is not annihilation, they insist that this is not true of the second death, the lake of fire. We are told that death without resurrection is virtual annihilation, and such it is. But let us not be too positive that there is no Scripture which teaches that there is a resurrection from the second death. That many have never discovered such a passage is quite true. But it is not what we have not seen which should form our doctrine, but what we have seen. There is such a passage, as we shall show, in due time. The main confusion on the subject of the second death has been brought about by the refusal to believe that it is a death at all. It is put in an entirely distinct category simply because it is called the second death. But we must remember that this phrase "the second death" is not to be explained—it is itself the divine explanation of what is to be understood by the lake of fire. Let us never seek to explain God's explanations.

We read of many things which are said to be *second*. Was not the healing of the nobleman's son (John 4:46-54) a *sign* just as much as when the water blushed at Christ's presence in Cana of Galilee (John 2:11)? Was the second "ward" or jail not a ward because it was second (Acts 12:10)? And the second Man, is He not a Man just as cer-

tainly as the first man, Adam (1 Cor.15: 47)? And is not the second covenant (Heb.8:7) a covenant at all? And the second "veil" or curtain (Heb.9:3), was it not a veil? Peter's second epistle (2 Peter 3:1), the second animal (Rev.4:7), the second seal (Rev.11:14), the second foundation (Rev. 21:19)—all of these are precisely what they are said to be in spite of the fact that they are not the first of their kind. Why, then, should the second death (Rev.2:11; 20:6,14; 21:8) be anything other than death?

This is the divine definition of the lake of fire. The fearful travesty which makes the dead alive, tortured before they are even brought before God's bar of justice, and raised from the dead merely to be hurled back into a fiercer torment—with such travesty the Scriptures have nothing to do. Nor do we appreciate the mighty effort God puts forth to wrest them from the sleep of death, if it is only to consign them once again to oblivion by the awful horror of the lake of fire.

To those who know the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the judgment of the great white throne will always present an insuperable difficulty apart from the grand truth of universal reconciliation. Why disturb the slumber of the wicked if no one is to be benefitted thereby? Why wake them to life again if it only brands His name as Vengeance and wreaks unspeakable pain on them? Or if (as some may insist) they are consciously suffering even before their trial, why should He put forth infinite power only to damn them with double damnation? This is not His God nor ours.

ADAM, DYING TO DIE

A notable passage—which, indeed, contains the very first mention of death in the Word of God—is the penalty imposed on Adam in case of his disobedience.

> "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen.2:17, AV)

How are we to understand this statement? That Adam lived on for nine hundred years is beyond dispute (Gen.5:5).

The most plausible explanation—spiritual death—becomes more impossible the closer it is considered. "Spiritual" death is figurative. It depends on a knowledge of literal death for its understanding. Now it is an unbreakable law of figures such as this that the literal must come first, then the figurative. But death was unknown to Adam before this. Literal death would be difficult for him to apprehend, much less "spiritual." Another consideration confirms this conclusion. In all the references to death in the Hebrew Scriptures not once is spiritual death referred to. It is a thought beyond the range of those who received that installment of God's revelation.

Besides, death was not confined to Adam's spirit. The pronoun "you" cannot be so interpreted, for we are never told that Adam was spirit, but often that he was soil. If we confine it to any part of him it will be necessary to refer it to his body, for he was not only formed from the soil but it is distinctly stated "soil *you* are, and to soil *you* shall return" (Gen.3:19, CV).

The key to the solution of our difficulty lies in the notable expression which our translators have rendered "surely die." In the Hebrew it is unlike anything which we have in English. It reads literally, if we accept current standards of translation, "to die shall you be dying." That is, the verb "die" is repeated in two different forms. First it is in the so-called "construct infinitive." Our infinitive is "to die." Being in the "construct state" shows that it is limited or restricted in its meaning by the following word. In the phrase "the word of the Lord," for instance, the word "word" is in the construct state because not every one's word is intended, but

only the Lord's. So here, the thought of dying is restricted by the following verb "you shall be dying." From this we gather that it is only in a restricted sense that Adam would die that day. "To die shall you be dying" brings before us a *process* of death, culminating, indeed, in actual death, but of indefinite duration in its operation.

The same phrase is used in a similar sense in Genesis 29:7; 1 Samuel 14:44; 22:16; 1 Kings 2:37,42; 2 Kings 1:4,16; Jeremiah 26:8; Ezekiel 3:18; 33:8,14.

The most interesting of these occurrences is 1 Kings 2:37, where we have the identical statement made to Shimei by Solomon in case he should dare to leave the confines of Jerusalem. "In the day . . . to die shall you be dying" gives us a perfect parallel case. And, like Adam, Shimei transgressed. And like him *he did not die* on the day he crossed the brook Kidron, but went to Gath after his servants and returned. This would not be so notable if Solomon had offered some excuse for not keeping his word and sending after him to fulfill his threat. Indeed, Solomon reiterates his previous words, not omitting the phrase "in the day" and proposes to carry it into execution several days afterward! It is evident that his understanding of this phrase was quite different from the impression conveyed by our usual English translation.

Such evidence as this is valuable—far more valuable than the labored efforts of Hebrew scholarship. Learning is ever lame, but here is evidence of Solomon's interpretation of this phrase—and how many would dispute his knowledge of Hebrew?

But we have still stronger evidence from Him Who is greater than Solomon.

YAHWEH'S UNDERSTANDING

What is Yahweh's commentary on this phrase? For the time came when He must remind Adam of it and pronounce a sentence in harmony with it. As a matter of fact the verdict of Yahweh is but an expansion of this phrase. And, as we have been led to expect, it is mostly occupied with the process of death.

> "And to Adam He said: Because you hearkened to your wife's voice and ate from the only tree that I instructed you, saying you must not eat from it, cursed is the ground on your account; in grief shall you eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and weeds shall it sprout for you, and you will eat the herbage of the field. By the sweat of your brow shall you eat your bread, until you return to the ground, for from it were you taken. For soil you are, and to soil you shall return'" (Gen.3:17-19, CV).

Instead of instant death, he is to eat of the ground in sorrow "all the days of your life." Here we have an intimation of death, yet only as the result of grief long drawn out. The same story is repeated when he is assured that he shall eat bread "until you return to the ground, for from it were you taken. For soil you are, and to soil shall you return."

"THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT"

The silly story of the "apple" need not concern us. But whatever the fruit may have been, it seems certain that it was "poisonous," as we would say—a slow poison, eventually causing death. Its effects were felt the very day on which it was tasted.

Let us not suppose that this is the introduction of evil into the universe. It was merely the channel *through* which it came into the world system (Gk. cosmos, Rom.5:12). The adversary had spoken of evil as something well known to the "gods" (Heb. Elohim) and Yahweh Elohim Himself says:

> "Behold, man has become like one of Us in knowing good and evil. Now lest he should stretch out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live for the eon—."
>
> (Gen.3:22, CV)

Therefore Yahweh Elohim sent Adam forth from the gar-

den of Eden, to till the ground from which he had been taken. So He drove out the man; and He stationed at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubim, and the flame of the revolving sword, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Grace glows in every word of this judgment scene. We have become so used to man's judgment that we can think of it in no other way than a vindictive condemnation. Not so in the Scriptures, "Judge the widow and fatherless" does not mean to condemn them: it rather refers to their receiving their full rights in spite of their weakness and lack of influence. So here, in this, the earliest trial of mankind, we have the principles which govern all subsequent sessions of the court of God. It consists essentially of such a readjustment of affairs as will eventually produce, not only restoration, but reconciliation. The cursing of the ground was not in revenge; it was "for your sake." And toil and sweat, as we all know, carries with it a blessing, in fact it is one of the means of warding off the death which so surely impends.

DEATH WILL GLORIFY GOD

Another merciful provision was the guarding of the way leading to the tree of the living. Life, such as we now know it, is tolerable for a brief period, but when the functions fail and the senses cease, living becomes an unbearable burden. So that death itself is a mercy, under the circumstances, and provides the Creator with another opportunity to magnify His name by means of resurrection. He is not the God of the dead but of the living!

A. E. Knoch

CHRIST THE FIRSTFRUIT

"For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Corinthians 15:21,22).

CONCILIATED THROUGH THE DEATH OF GOD'S SON

THE EVANGEL that Christ died for our sins (1 Cor.15:3) has been presented in Romans 5:8 as the love of God, in that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes.

In 2 Corinthians 5:14, this same message is presented as the love of Christ, in that He died for the sake of all, and consequently all died.

What can be more shocking than the message that the Anointed One of God died? What can be more challenging to our common notions than the claim that this was an act of love which was for our sakes? What can seem more fantastic than the whole accumulative revelation that Christ died, and when He died, He died for the benefit of everyone, none of whom were worthy, and that the benefit begins with everyone being identified in His death, so that, in some way, in truth, all died?

Again, what did Christ do for sinners when He died?

First of all, when Christ died, all died.

This seems very radical.

But we recall that God told Adam the effect of his disobedience would be: *to die you shall be dying* (Gen.2:17). Sin is dealt with by death.

When we die we can no longer sin (*cf* Rom.6:2,7,10). The sinner's death, as a descendant of Adam, gets rid of the sinner, but it does nothing further than that. On the other hand, the sinner's death in the faithful and obedient death of Christ brings about justification (Rom.5:9), which opens the way to our identification with Him in His resurrected and glorified life.

Ultimately all shall be vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:22) and enjoy "life's justifying," where also all who were constituted sinners will be "constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19), and all who were estranged and enemies of God will be reconciled to Him (Col.1:20). But now in Romans 5:1-11 our apostle is unfolding this evangel of righteousness and peace to us who are believing, showing its significance for us already. Even now while we still remain sinners in the flesh, God pours out His love in our hearts, reckoning us righteous on the basis of Christ's shed blood, and bringing us to Himself in peace and love on the basis of the death of His Son.

ROMANS 5:10

In Romans 5, we are taken from glory to glory in the exposition of the evangel of God, even as these revelations transform our lives (*cf* 2 Cor.3:18). The announcement of justification in Christ's blood and salvation from indignation is continually a source of deep joy and spiritual invigoration for us, but also there is the remarkable gratuity of peace which enters our hearts as we come to appreciate God's unparalleled achievement of conciliation, and the future salvation it points to:

For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God
through the death of His Son,
much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved
in His life.

The message we have received from God directs us to the contemplation of what God has done. The evangel comes to us as a message, not concerning what we must do, but of what God has accomplished in and through His Son. That is where we begin, so that the evangel itself might become to us the power of God for salvation in our lives (Rom.1:16).

Thus we learn that, while we are still sinners Christ died for our sakes. We are justified in His blood and shall be saved from indignation through Him. So also, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son. And furthermore, in accord with the evangel, which adds to the words "Christ died," the revelation that "[He] has been roused" (*cf* 1 Cor.15:3,4), the message now declares that and we shall be saved in the life of God's Son. The evangel does not come to us, as God's words to Israel at Sinai came, with instructions and requirements placed upon us, but with the message of Christ's death and His resurrection from among the dead, and the glorious effects this has for the sake of the infirm sinner and irreverent enemy.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE, AND ITS EFFECTS

As we noted in meditating on Romans 5:9, our apostle is defining and expounding the evangel concerning God's Son, Jesus Christ and what God did for us in and through Him. But Paul is doing so in reverse order. What was gained for our sakes was justification and salvation from indignation. What was done was that Christ shed His blood.

Now in Romans 5:10 this exposition of the world-changing message that "Christ died for our sakes" is enlarged further in the first half of the verse, and then in the second half Paul goes forward to identify us with the life of God's Son out of death. Thus the phrase, "for our sakes," now comes before us in the words, "being enemies we were conciliated to God," and again in the words, "being conciliated, we shall be saved." Then the statement that "Christ died" is re-stated by the phrase, "through the death of [God's] Son." Finally, we are led to the culminating declaration of the evangel, in which the rousing of Christ from death into life is announced. Our future life of salvation into that peace, described in Romans 8:21 as the glorious freedom

of the children of God, is assured by the life of Christ, not His life before the cross, but His life in resurrection out of death and now in exaltation.

In order to see the pattern of this exposition of the evangel of God concerning His Son more clearly let us carry forward the arrangement given in our last article, now extending it through verse 10, as follows:

A. *Christ died*
  B. *for our sakes.*

  B. *Much rather, then, being now justified*
A. *in His blood,*
  B. *we shall be saved from indignation*
A. *through Him.*
  B. *For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God*
A. *through the death of His Son,*
  B. *much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved*
A. *in His life* [*out from among the dead*].

Thus we see that the evangel of God has two parts: The first part concerns God's Son, announcing that He died and then was roused. This part focuses on what has been done *by God* through and in His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. The second part of the evangel announces what this operation of God has done *for us* who are sinners, infirm and irreverent, and enemies of God.

BEING ENEMIES

The evangel as presented in Romans 5:10 takes us from "being enemies" to "being conciliated." Just as the message of verses 8 and 9 has told us of God's love taking "sinners" to the position of "being justified," so now we learn that God's love removes us from being under God's indignation to the position where we stand before God in closest harmony of peace. We have learned what God's love is. It

is that Christ died for sinners. The death of Christ takes sinners and brings them to justification, and it takes enemies and brings them to conciliation.

We became enemies in the same way we became sinners. Paul is about to recount this historical process starting with verse 12. Adam sinned. Thus death passed through into all mankind. As a result all sinned and thus all are sinners.

But as sinners we also are enemies, which speaks especially of our attitude toward God. The *disposition* of our flesh is enmity to God (Rom.8:6). As we are in flesh, descendants of Adam, we are *estranged* and enemies in *comprehension* (Col.1:21). God's indignation is directed not only against the unrighteousness of our acts but the irreverence that lies behind them and is expressed in them (*cf* Rom.1:18).

In the six verses of Romans 5:15-20, the word "offense" appears six times. Not only did Adam disobey the divine instruction (5:19) concerning the fruit of the tree and thus transgress (5:14) beyond the wide realm of blessing set before him, but in doing so he offended God. To sin is to offend, but to disobey the instruction of divine law is to increase the offense (5:20). Thus as death operates in us so that we are constituted sinners, we are not able to please God. Our position before God as descendants of Adam, in our flesh, is that we are His enemies.

There is no harmony, no peace, no way of access to God's heart of love, but only offense added to offense until brought under the indignation and fury of the day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God (*cf* Rom.2:5-10).

BEING CONCILIATED

Nevertheless, it was given to Paul to bring an evangel, not only of the revelation of God's righteousness, but of His great achievement of peace. In heralding that Christ

died for our sins, our apostle was graced with the message that we, as enemies of God, were conciliated to God through the death of His Son.

Conciliation is God's achievement. God is the One Who brings it about, and He does so in a most astounding, even paradoxical way, at the greatest of cost to His heart. Conciliation is established by God *through the death of His Son.*

But what is this conciliation? The Greek word translated "conciliate" is given the root sense of DOWN-CHANGE in the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE. The word DOWN represents the Greek preposition, *kata,* which, like all prepositions, is a connective showing the relationship of one thing to another. In this case the general sense may be that one thing is brought "down alongside" the other, or, as *kata* indicates when used with the accusative case, "in accord with."

Hence the change may be seen as one from enmity to one of harmony and accord. That is what God has done. We, the enemies, have not come to Him, putting aside our enmity and heeding His word with thanksgiving. He has brought us, who offend Him in countless ways, to a place of access to Him and a standing before Him where peace reigns. He has bridged the pathway to His heart through the death of His Son.

THE MEANS OF CONCILIATION

To speak of the death of God's Son is to say words that are plain. The words are not hard to understand, but they are joined together in extraordinary association, *death,* and *His* (that is, *God's*), and *Son.* How is this a welcome message? The Son of God died!

These are indeed words of glad tidings, for God's act of conciliation was achieved, as worded in Romans 5:10, *through the death of His Son.* No greater expression of enmity toward God could be imagined than that exhibited at the cross. Here was the public display, before all

creation, of rejection and hate toward the One of Whom God declared, "This is My Son,the Beloved, in Whom I delight" (*cf* Matt.3:17; 12:18; 17:5). Yet this is what brings about peace.

"Concentrated here we see the enmity of man toward God. His Son, the unceasing and delightful source of His purest joy, the effulgence of His glory; His Son is rejected, despised, cast out and crucified!"[1]

Yet this most offensive of offenses is the means of our conciliation to God. From the human side it was the greatest exhibition of enmity of all the eons. From God's side it was the greatest act of conciliating love of all time.

The believer is already benefiting, in spirit, from the effects of this achievement of God. As we will learn from Romans 5:11, we have *now obtained the conciliation.* We may be enjoying peace toward God through all the afflictions of life, for we have access to Him, where we are positioned before Him in grace. God's love is being poured out in the hearts of those who are believing. But note, at the very root of our faith is not the message that we are justified or that we are conciliated, but that Christ died for our sakes, that the Son of God was put to death for the enemies of God. This is where God's love is commended, and this is where peace is made.

"What, then, shall we declare to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Surely, He who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (Rom.8:31,32).

WHAT GOD HAS DONE

Hence we see that the conciliation was established when the Son of God died. In His death, all who were God's

1. A. E. Knoch: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.52, p.200.

enemies by their offensive deeds, words and thoughts toward Him, even their avoidance of glorifying and thanking Him—all these died.

But this was not even announced until several years later when, in Israel's offense of rejecting the Messiah, Paul (who, as Saul of Tarsus had led the way in seeking to be anathema from Christ) was given this revelation to dispense (*cf* Rom.11:11-15). Now he is bringing it before us in his evangel, a special revelation of our relationship to God during this present era (affecting all the world also, as announced in chapter 11).

WHAT GOD IS DOING

This marvelous announcement is repeated in 2 Corinthians 5:18, where Paul writes, "Yet all is of God, *Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ.*" There also, as in Romans 11, Paul relates this message of conciliation to the world itself as well, not only to the believers, adding that "God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them." This affects the whole world in which we live, in that God is not responding to human offense as He did in previous eras, but rather is treating mankind (with respect to their offenses) in accord with what was gained for us all through the death of His Son. When men avoid Him and even deny His existence, He is silent and refrains from responding with clear acts of divine indignation.

This also becomes a vital part of evangelizing, that is, bringing the evangel to the unbelieving world. Hence, Paul writes concerning his dispensation, "For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching for Christ's sake, 'Be conciliated to God!'" (2 Cor.5:20).

As noted above, Paul will speak of the conciliation of the world in Romans 11:12-15 as it relates, in the current era,

to God's dealings with Israel and the nations. But now in Romans 5:10,11, he is focusing our attention on the conciliation as it relates to us who are believing. In ourselves we are sinners, and in ourselves we do that which is offensive to God. Yet, as expressed in 2 Corinthians 5:18 with respect to the world, in conciliating us to Himself, God is not reckoning our offenses to us.

What a grand and decided change this is! It speaks of peace and access established by righteousness (Rom.5:1,2) and measured by the love of God (Rom.5:6) by means of the death of His Son for our sakes. This blessing is intensely practical for our daily lives now as we face afflictions, for they produce endurance and testedness as they are faced with awareness of our stand before God in grace and righteousness and peace. Then also, as Paul has made clear in Romans 5:2-5, our expectation is sharpened by this conjunction of the struggles of our lives with the revelation of the great change God has achieved through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

SAVED IN THE SON'S LIFE

Since it is true and blessed that we are conciliated to God through the death of His Son—since this very major blessing is a true one, how "much rather" it is true and blessed that "we shall be saved in His life!" Since God has brought us before Him in peace, pouring out His love into our hearts, by means of the death of His beloved Son, we can have no doubt whatsoever that we shall be saved from all infirmity and missing of the mark of perfection, all acts of irreverence and every expression of enmity, into life where we fully participate in the glory of God. As enemies we have died in the death of God's Son; now as friends, even children of God (*cf* Rom.8:16), we know we shall be made alive in His life.

Thus ". . . the Son Himself alive forevermore, beyond

Death's reach, is the assurance of the love-life to which it is the introduction. He is the living love-link which binds us with bonds unbreakable to the Father's heart.

"Such was the affection shown us when we were still enemies. But now that His love has subdued our stubborn hearts, we may enter into settled and enduring peace. How little need we fear for future welfare! If such rich favor is dealt out to *enemies,* what shall be the portion of His *friends*!"[2]

As we are identified with the Son of God in His death, so we will be identified with Him in His life. "Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall be living together with Him also, having perceived that Christ being roused from among the dead, is no longer dying. Death is lording it over Him no longer, for in that He died, He died to Sin once for all time, yet in that He is living, He is living to God" (Rom.6:8-10).

YET NOT ONLY SO

What has happened by means of the death of God's Son? *We were conciliated to God.*

This brings God's love and the enjoyment of peace close into our lives every day.

What shall happen in view of the life of God's Son? *We shall be saved.*

This is our expectation. But expectation is not simply a vision of what shall be. Like the evangel of what God has done, this message of what God will do is an active force in our lives. Since we shall be living unto God as Christ is now living unto God, we are led by this expectation to the enjoyment, in spirit, of what shall be. We will consider this in our next study as presented in Romans 5:11.

D.H.H.

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1. A. E. Knoch: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.52, p.203.

WHAT IS AN OFFENSE?

THE Greek word *paraptōma* is composed of two word elements, signifying BESIDE-FALL. It occurs twenty-one times in the Greek Scriptures and is always rendered *offense* in the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT.

The suggested definition given in our KEYWORD CONCORDANCE (p.209) is: "that which wounds the feelings."

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18,19

Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their **offenses** *to them.*

We should never confuse offenses with sins. In the present administration, during the dispensation of conciliation, God is not reckoning their offenses, even to the world. That does not apply to their sins and crimes and injuries against one another and Himself. For these they will give account at the great white throne in the resurrection of judging. But now, even the blasphemies of the modern godless movement, which can hardly be exceeded in vicious vehemence and awful offensiveness, do not move Him to protect the honor of His name.

Though a judge dare not *justify* any infringement of the law on the part of the one who stands before the bar, he may choose to bear a good deal of illtreatment himself on the part of others in the courtroom. He may overlook or forgive those whom he deems in contempt of court without being himself unjust. It is more a question of feel-

ings than of law. It concerns personal *offense.* In Biblical usage the word *offense* should be limited to social misconduct. Its loose usage as a synonym of *crime* in legal language is to be deplored, for much that is *offensive* cannot be counted as a legal *offense.* A judge may fine a man for laughing at him, but if he has a sense of humor he may join in the laugh. Either way he is neither just nor unjust. Such offenses belong to a different category, only remotely related to his proper judicial functions.

–A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.37, pp.80,81.

ROMANS 5:15-18

But not as the **offense***, thus also the grace. For if, by the* **offense** *of the one, the many died, much rather the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds.*

And not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity. For, indeed, the judgment is out of one into condemnation, yet the grace is out of many **offenses** *into a just award. For if, by the* **offense** *of the one, death reigns through the one, much rather, those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*

Consequently, then, as it was through one **offense** *for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying.*

The first human offense followed right after the first display of Divine affection. Adam's first recorded act after Yahweh, the Subjector, had kindly provided a complement for him, so that he was no longer lonely, was to wound his Benefactor's heart by questioning His fondness and disbelieving His word, and acting contrary to His wise warning. It was a mistake, a *sin,* to eat the death-dealing fruit. It was a *transgression* to disobey His word. But, far deeper

and more malignant than these, it was a frigid, frightful *offense* to hurt His *feelings,* when He had just manifested His *affection* in a most marvelous manner. Except it be to reveal His own love to His creatures through it, the main motive in building the woman was to fill the void in the heart of adam with happiness. It should have called forth the most thankful obedience and heartfelt trust.

The fact that Adam's sin and transgression was an *offense* against God's feelings, due to the surrounding circumstances, is clearly conveyed by the record, yet it is but dimly discerned by the saints, even though the revered Authorized Version always uses this term when referring to it in the fifth of Romans. This rendering is excellent, yet it would have been even better, if they had used the same term, offense, elsewhere when the same word occurs in the original. This is especially true in 2 Corinthians 5:19 where God is dealing with the descendants of Adam at the present time. Instead of not imputing their *trespasses,* to make them immune from *judgment,* He is not reckoning their *offenses,* which frees them from His *displeasure* in the present period of super abundant grace. It is an affair of the heart, rather than of the hand or head.

Because, at the present time, God is more concerned with the display of His *grace* than His justice, with *love* than judgment, it is important that the other occurrences in Paul's epistles be correctly rendered. Galatians 6:1 should read, "if a man should be precipitated . . . in some *offense,*" rather than overtaken in a fault. In Ephesians 1:7, "the forgiveness of *sins,*" and 2:5 "dead in *sins*" should be *offenses,* as *forgiveness* deals with *feelings,* and these offenses separate men from God in figurative death. In Colossians 2:13 we have both of these thoughts in one sentence, but the AV renders it "dead in *sins* . . . having forgiven you all *trespasses.*" God is *love,* and the clearer this appears on the pages of His revelation, the better it will be for us. This

should govern the underlying motive of all our dealings with Him and with one another.

It is exceedingly helpful to note that the beneficent attitude Yahweh Elohim had toward Adam, in whom the whole race was hidden, was very much the same as at the end, when humanity is once more on friendly terms with Him. But here it is followed by the first offense, and then by final reconciliation. The *feelings* play the principal part in the tragedy of the eons, especially at these prominent points in human history. This throws much light on the present, which began very much the same, with a new creation in which the old is passed by, and all is new in the spiritual sphere, as it was then in the material. Now again we learn to know evil, and are dying. Yet the way to life is not barred . . . .

–A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.45, pp.47-49.

ROMANS 5:20

Yet law came in by the way, that the **offense** *should be increasing.*

Law is not the foundation of God's dealings with the race. It only came in by the way. Its object was *not* to give men a standard of conduct by which they may walk to please God, but to transform *sin* into *offense.* It is only a temporary expedient in God's great demonstration, showing that man not only falls short of the glory of God, but is at enmity with Him. He not only *fails,* but *rebels.* The light of the law does not keep him from sin, but leads him on to offense.

–A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.69, p.249.

OTHER OCCURRENCES

This word also occurs in Matt.6:14,15; Mark 11:25,26; Rom.4:25; 11:11,12; Gal.6:1; Eph.1:7; 2:1,5; Col.2:13.

PRAYER, AND THE DEITY OF GOD

Question:

One of the strongest arguments against the teaching of the sovereignty of God is that it renders prayer superfluous. If God works all things after the counsel of His own will, *why bother to pray,* since it will not change anything? *Why pray at all, if whatever happens is bound to happen?*

Now, you may be able to give some false, "intellectual" argument against these questions; but I'm confident you can't really answer them, by showing that even if the doctrine of the sovereignty of God is true, prayer is *not* thereby made unnecessary. I say this because it seems beyond question that if the doctrine of the sovereignty of God *is* true, then prayer thereby *is* made unnecessary.

But what I really want from you as a starting point is simply an *honest* answer to the following question: Do you not at least *feel* the force of this argument against your teaching? *Honestly* now, doesn't it seem quite clear to you, as it does to me, that if God ordains everything anyway, there simply is *no need* to pray?

I really need for you to tell me the truth here: Assuming that you actually pray and don't just claim to do so, don't you yourself feel *foolish* asking God to grant your request, since, according to you, He has already decided whether or not He will do so? In any case, under your theory, you *ought* to feel foolish doing such a thing, whether you do or not.

Can't you see that your teaching that "all is out of God" discourages prayer and is deeply injurious to

prayer—as at least a few holding your doctrine have been honest enough to admit is the case?

Answer:

BEFORE addressing the subject of prayer in light of our teaching of the deity of God,[1] commonly termed, God's "sovereignty," I would like to say a word concerning the question of our "honesty" here. This seems in order, since you plainly appear to question it: You suggest that, unless pressed, we may not give you an "honest" answer; again, you insist that we answer you "honestly"; you "really need" for us to "tell you the truth"; concerning prayer, at least you suggest that perhaps we do not really pray, but only claim to do so. Finally, you say that "at least a few holding your doctrine have been honest enough to admit" that such a teaching as our own "discourages prayer and is deeply injurious to prayer," plainly intimating that we ourselves may not be so honest as to admit even this much.

As I will explain in what follows, you are simply mistaken in claiming that "[our] teaching that 'all is out of God' discourages prayer and is deeply injurious to prayer." Actually, just the opposite is the case. And if there is anyone who believes that all is out of God who actually affirms that while all *is* out of God, this is nonetheless a truth which discourages and injures prayer, then that person would be mistaken as well.

Misapprehension and improper application of truth can of course be a deleterious influence. Similarly, in the eyes of shortsighted and misperceiving skeptics and opposers, many truths will appear unseemly and stupid. This is so concerning even the very word of the cross itself (*cf* 1 Cor. 1:18-25). These considerations, however, are simply irrelevant as to the question, What is true.

1. When we say, "the deity of God," we mean the "GODNESS" of God (*theotês,* PLACERSHIP; "that which pertains to God," entry "Deity," Keyword Concordance, p.71); that is, all that God *is* and all that He *does* (*cp* Rom.1:21).

I would suggest that at least you consider the possibility that it may be that those who differ with you, do so not because they are dishonest, but simply because, to them, you appear to be mistaken. Why think the worst of people unnecessarily? And, why ascribe the worst of motives to others when you (1) have no way of knowing that their motives are actually impure, and therefore (2) also have no way of justifying yourself in ascribing the worst of motives unto them in the first place? Otherwise, you will be comporting yourself as a person of "wicked suspicions" (*cf* 1 Tim.6:4); that is, as someone who goes about merely *surmising* the worst of others, at least in the case of those who differ with you theologically.

One person may very well innocently differ with another in one's understanding of a matter. For example, concerning a certain issue, assuming that both individuals are not mistaken, then one person is correct and the other is incorrect. The mistaken party, however, may well think that he or she is correct, even though that is not the case. Not infrequently, the mistaken party may well not only believe that he or she is correct, but may fervently and adamantly further insist: "I don't just think I'm right and believe I'm right, I *know* I'm right; there's 'no way' that I'm mistaken about this."

When, however, one claims to "know"[2] that he or she is correct, this is merely to say that that one, however confidently, *perceives* it to be the case that he or she is correct. One may have a clear and certain perception of a matter and with the greatest of fervor equate that perception with fact or truth, while still having a *misperception* of that same matter.

2. To "know" is to "perceive with the mind"; Keyword Concordance, entry "know," p.169.

Dogmatism[3] is simply not becoming to us, not to mention, completely inappropriate and unwarranted. Yet how common it is, in a quarrel, for one party, expostulating, to add the words, "I *know* I'm right!" only to be rejoined by the other party, saying, "I know *I'm* right!" Such assertions add nothing to an argument, and, thus expressed, simply evince the conceit of the one or ones thus speaking.

If we would be intelligent and fair, while comporting ourselves in a calm and becoming manner, we simply will not go about vociferously declaring statements such as, "I don't just *think* I'm right, I *know* I'm right!" How foolish are such declarations, since, in the nature of the case, to *know* that one is right, can be nothing more than to *think* (however confidently) that one is right.

Having presented our argument that a certain proposition is true, normatively, we may then freely assert that, indeed, that same proposition "is" true. That is, we may do so, so long as at some point we have made evident that in speaking thus, we are speaking not categorically, but according to our best judgment—which is not *necessarily* correct, even if it should truly *be* correct. After all, one can *think* that one has indubitable evidence that his or her position is correct, while simply being mistaken that one has any such evidence.

We may *wish* to be able to say more than this, but we simply cannot, warrantedly, say more than this. Concerning truth, let us have our reasons for the conclusions to which we come, and where appropriate, let us share these reasons with others. If, after deep and thorough investigation of a question, we find that we have sufficient evidence to warrant a specific conclusion, let us make our conclusion accordingly. This conclusion, then, becomes our conviction.

3. "Dogmatism," as used here, is "[the] arrogant assertion of opinions as truths" (Dictionary.com Unabridged [v 1.1]; Random House, Inc. HTTP://DICTIONARY.REFERENCE.COM/BROWSE/DOGMATISM.)

Even so, to adapt the principle inherent in Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 4:4 to our case at hand, let us always keep in mind that even if it is the case that "of nothing am I conscious as to myself [as having erred] . . . *not by this am I justified.* Now He Who is examining me is the Lord" (*cf* 1 Cor.4:4; *cp* Rom.14:4).

Where God has truly spoken, let us become "settled, unmovable" (*cf* 1 Cor.15:58). What He has said, *is* true; and, there *is* a specific sense in which what He has spoken is to be understood, whether or not we ourselves are in possession of that correct understanding. To "understand" something, is to "make out the *meaning*,"[4] both of *what* is said *and of the sense in which* what is said is so.

Since ". . . A man can not get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27), it is evident, then, that if we would truly *understand* a matter, God must *give* us a special endowment of spirit for this purpose: "a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him" (Eph. 1:17). For this, then, we would pray, "requesting that [we] may be filled full with *the realization of His will*, in all wisdom and spiritual *understanding*" (Col.1:9).[5]

MISCHARACTERIZATIONS OF TRUTH

Before I address your principal claim, which is that if our teaching of the "sovereignty" (or rather, "deity") of God is true, prayer thereby is rendered superfluous, I wish to address your preliminary question where you ask: "Do you not at least *feel* the force of this argument against your teaching? *Honestly* now, doesn't it seem quite clear to you, as it does to me, that if God ordains everything anyway, there simply is *no need* to pray?"

4. Keyword Concordance, entry "understand," p.314.

5. *cp* Isa.11:2: "And the spirit of Yahweh will rest on Him, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and mastery, a spirit of knowledge and fear of Yahweh."

In all honesty, *no,* I do not at all feel the "force" of this argument, which you make here, supposedly "against [our] teaching." Nor should I feel it, for it is not actually an argument against our teaching at all, but only against a straw man which you mistakenly think is representative of our teaching.

You also assert, "If God works all things after the counsel of His own will," then there is no reason to pray "since it will not change anything."

Since I do *not* believe that "God ordains everything anyway," that is, in such a way that somehow precludes the essential place of prayer, I cannot be expected to feel the force of an argument wielded against something that I do *not* believe, especially since it has no bearing whatsoever on what I *do* believe.

While I do affirm, as you would put the matter even though you disbelieve it, that "God ordains everything," that is a very different thought than any notion to the effect that since God ordains everything, it follows from this that He cannot but do so in such a way that precludes both the importance and efficacy of prayer.

To have any merit, your claim here can only be that *if* it were the case that prayer had no efficacy, no proximate causative agency or other vital connection to the constituents of one's life-experience and outcome subsequent to one's engagement in prayer, prayer would *then* be an undertaking without critical importance or abiding value. While I agree with your conclusion here based on your own hypothesis, again, the scenario which you envision, is by no means representative of the position for which we stand. You are arguing not against our teaching, but against a "horrible hypothetical," one of your own devising.

I must emphasize that you are simply mistaken in characterizing our teaching as the proposition that "God ordains everything anyway," where it is clear by your usage of "anyway" that you have in mind the idea that, according to our teaching, God ordains everything in such a way that everything will come to pass "anyway"—that is, regardless of *how* we pray or even *whether* we pray.

Again, here you are simply opposing a fatalistic straw man, for what you represent as our teaching is neither our actual teaching as to God's own determinative operations, nor anything tantamount thereunto.

There is no "anyway" in our teaching. That is, we expressly *deny* that God is operating all according to the counsel of His will in such a way that regardless of *how* we pray or even *whether* we pray, the outcome will be the same.

To the contrary, we affirm the essential place of prayer, since we affirm that *prayer,* regular, earnest and sincere, *changes those who pray,* such that as a result, their attitudes and deeds are significantly different than they otherwise would have been, had they not prayed as they prayed, not to mention significantly different than they would have been had they not prayed at all.

Furthermore, it may well be that in many cases, God grants our requests, whether for ourselves or on behalf of others, not apart from, but only through and consequent to our having made our requests known to Him. Have you not read, "You have not, *because of not requesting*" (*cf* James 4:2b)? Indeed, if we should be requesting anything *according to His will,* He is hearing us (*cf* 1 John 5:14). Thus understood, then, "*Request* and it *shall* be given you. Seek and you shall find. Knock and it shall be opened to you" (*cf* Matt.7:7).

No sane and devout believer would presume to know that any certain divine provision will be his whether or not he asks God for it. After all, the reason why we are not to boast about tomorrow, is because "[we] do not know what a day may generate" (*cf* Prov.27:1). Therefore, no sane and devout believer will care to forego making his requests

known to God concerning those things for which He longs which press especially upon his mind.

This is so because such believers are aware that it may well be that in any certain case, if God would grant blessing, He would do so only through, and as a result of our prayers. Though God is our Father, Whom we love, we still do well to have a certain wholesome fear concerning Him. While fear of Yahweh is far from the whole of wisdom, it is nevertheless, "the beginning of wisdom; all who practice it have a good insight" (Psa.111:10).

PRAYER FOR GOD'S APPOINTED GOALS

You ask, "Don't you yourself feel *foolish* asking God to grant your request, since, according to you, He has already decided whether or not He will do so? In any case, you *ought* to feel foolish doing such a thing under such circumstances, whether you do or not." Further, you say, "Why pray at all, if whatever happens is bound to happen?"

In reply to your words here, I wish to say the following: I commend you for in these instances arguing against what we *do* teach, not, as in the case of your other questions and comments, what we do *not* teach.

First of all, primary causes do not render intermediate and proximate causes inessential, needless, dispensable. Instead, they remain essential, needful, indispensable (*cp* Acts 27:22-26; 30-36; 44b).

Further, it hardly follows that because future events are "bound to happen," therefore there can be no good reason to pray concerning them. Nothing is more "bound to happen" than the establishment of the kingdom of God on the earth in the coming eon, in which God's will, will be done. Yet one of our Lord's first principles in teaching His disciples *how to pray* was to instruct them that they should be praying: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done . . ." (Matt.6:10).

"The prophet Ezekiel, after giving the outlines of the restoration of the holy land in the day of Yahweh, includes this notable detail: *'This further I shall be inquired of by the house of Israel to do for them:* I shall increase them with humanity like a flock of sheep. Like a flock for holy offerings, like a flock of sheep in Jerusalem in her appointed festivals, so shall the deserted cities become filled with flocks of humanity. *Then they will know that I am Yahweh'* (Ezek.36:37,38). Does not this show clearly that, not only is the answer to the prayer already determined by God, but the prayer itself is a part of His planning. How can we know now that the sons of Israel will pray if God does not put it into their hearts to do so?"[6]

We may be fully assured that God finally will save all mankind, for while it is true that God is the Saviour "especially of believers," even as "[Christ] is the Saviour of the body" (Eph.5:23), it is first of all true that God is "the Saviour of all mankind" (1 Tim.4:10). "God . . . wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4). It is "for which" testimony, our apostle declares, that he "was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the nations in knowledge and truth" (1 Tim.2:7).

Yet it is in direct connection with this very testimony "which some, thrusting away, [make] shipwreck as to the faith" (1 Tim.1:19), that Paul declares, "I am entreating, *then* . . . that *petitions, prayers, pleadings, thanksgiving be made for all mankind,* for kings and all those being in a superior station, that we may be leading a mild and quiet life in all devoutness and gravity, *for this is ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour, God, Who wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth*" (1 Tim.2:1-4).

6. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.77, p.148.

Note well that, unto God, we are to pray, petition, plead, and give thanks on behalf of all mankind—and that it is ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour, God, that we should do so—*because* it is God Himself Who wills that all mankind be saved! *Therefore,* He would have us engage ourselves in prayer, petition pleading, thanksgiving, for their sake. "I am intending, *then,*" says Paul, "that men pray in every place, lifting up benign hands, apart from anger and reasoning" (1 Tim.2:8).

From this we learn the principle that prayer is by no means rendered "superfluous" because it is in accord with God's will, which shall be done, but rather that it thus becomes fitting, needful, welcome in God's sight, *because* it is in accord with His will, which shall be done.

In Matthew's account, concerning our Lord's great trial of suffering (*cp* Heb.2:18), the reading of His testimony, there in Gethsemane is: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass by from Me. However, not as I will, but as Thou!" (Matt.26:39). And, according to Luke's account of this same event, the reading is: "Father, if it is Thy intention, carry aside this cup from Me. However, not My will, but Thine, be done!" (Luke 22:42). In these two readings, and most especially in the latter reading, we have the ideal testimony as to how we ourselves should face, and pray accordingly to God concerning, our own sufferings and trials as well (*cf* 1 Cor.10:13).

PRAYER IN ACCORD WITH GOD

Your concern over the time element as to when God determines the events which entail what His "answer" to our prayer will be, is actually not the critical thing. That is, even if God had not yet decided whether or not to grant my request, it would still be the case that His decision, *regardless of the time of its occurrence,* in any case, ultimately would be based not upon *my* desires, but upon *His* desires (*cp* Isa.46:10), according to His purpose, in correspondence both to His wisdom and His righteousness.

We must not imagine that God, at least in many things, is indifferent, that very often He simply has no preference, whether something does or does not exist, whether something does or does not occur. This is because whatever *does* exist and *does* occur—which together consist of a practically innumerable number of specific details—these exist and occur solely as the outworkings of God's own unspeakably intelligent, purposeful, and powerful operations, according to which He operates all (*cf* Eph.1:11; *cp* Rev.4:11).

It is in an awareness of these considerations, then, that I say, No, I do not at all "feel foolish" in making my requests known to God, even though *He* decides, and has already decided, whether or not to grant my request. (Of course, I wholly reject your claim that, I "*ought* to feel foolish" still praying to Him, even "under such circumstances.")

This is because I am mindful that God, my Father, is aware of my needs *before* I make my *requests* known to Him (Phil.4:7; *cf* Matt.6:8; *cp* 6:31-34). I do not come to Him informing Him, educating Him, counseling Him. He does not need my help here, or for that matter, concerning anything else. It is not as if God is needy and must look to us for assistance:

"The God Who makes the world and all that is in it, He, the Lord inherent of heaven and earth, is not dwelling in temples made by hands, neither is He attended by human hands, as if requiring anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all" (Acts 17:24,25).

Indeed, ". . . who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? *seeing that* out of Him and through Him and for Him is *all:* to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:34-36).

In light of these considerations, then, in preparation for our words in prayer unto God, we would conceive of Him effectively saying unto us at this very juncture:

Yes, I have considered already what you are about to ask Me. I am your God, your Father, and I am aware of all your needs and all your desires, before you ask Me concerning them. Since I know just what to do concerning every one of them, I have decided just what to do also, concerning every one of them accordingly.

Even in your present life, in which while you experience much evil, you also enjoy much good, I grant you all possible goodness even now that is not precluded by all needful evil. This evil exists only temporarily, not permanently; and, no more intensely and in no other form than is necessary unto the realization of My wise and good, great and glorious ends, great and glorious ends otherwise unattainable. All My ways are righteousness, accord with My goodness and My wisdom, and especially with My love.

Now, again, as to this present request of yours: I am mindful that it is for something good, which you long to have. I welcome your asking Me concerning it, and am pleased that you do so, even as I will be pleased once again, every time you make such further requests of Me. Be assured that I know what is best to do here and will act accordingly, whether or not to grant you this specific request even in the near future, or to grant it, or something else instead, at a later time. I love you.

I pray, then, because prayer changes me; because prayer is sometimes and likely often essential to blessing, hence I would not forego it. I pray because my prayer, sincere and devout, is pleasing to God, because I often long to pray, finding no ease until I pray, as much so as I am constrained to eat, drink, or sleep. I pray because God has blessed me, that I should do so. J.R.C.

Unsearchable Riches

**A BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our Centennial Year

(1909–2009)

Contents:

241 Editorial
246 What is God's Goal?
263 Prophecy and History
271 Glorying in God
279 Perceiving the Grace of God

NOVEMBER, 2009

Volume C **Number 6**

The Concordant Commentary

A. E. Knoch's Commentary (or "Notes") was first published nearly eighty years ago. It is based on the Concordant Literal New Testament, and follows the sequence of books from Matthew to Revelation. Important passages are dealt with succinctly, yet with remarkable helpfulness, especially in light of the relative brevity of the entries. Ample cross-references to notes on related sections of Scripture are provided. Literary frameworks of the various books of the New Testament are included.

As Brother Knoch wrote, "The writer of these notes cannot help uttering a heartfelt prayer that they will never be taken for more than what they are intended to be—suggestive thoughts which lead to and not from the Sacred Text. He would rather they would vanish than that they should stand between anyone and the living oracles. May we never be tainted with the spirit of the ancient Rabbis who did not scruple to place their words above the Sacred Scrolls . . . . In the same way, the commentaries and confessions and creeds of Christendom have a stronger hold on the hearts of many of His saints than the inspired Scriptures. May He grant that many will return to the fountain undefiled!"

A. E. Knoch, hardcover, 416 pages
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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 2009
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

EDITORIAL

"THANKS be to God for His indescribable gratuity!" Thus Paul wrote to the Corinthians in view of the way God worked in their lives by means of the evangel of Christ which they avowed as true (2 Cor.9:8-15).

With this six hundredth issue of *Unsearchable Riches,* it seems appropriate for us to express publicly our thanks to God for the way in which His grace operated a century ago in the lives of two young believers, Vladimir Gelesnoff and A. E. Knoch. They were sons of Adam, which means that, as to the flesh, they were mortals, and so they were sinners just like us all. But under different circumstances, even in separate continents, they heard God's evangel concerning Jesus Christ, and believed it. Yet also, again by different routes, God began to open their hearts to see that this evangel went far beyond the view of traditional creeds and established doctrines of Christianity. And in accord with God's design they came in contact with each other by correspondence with a mutual desire to share by the printed page what they were coming to see concerning the glory of God and His transcendent grace through Jesus Christ.

The magazine was first envisioned as "A Bi-Monthly in the Interest of a Rightly Divided Word of God." As such the editors wished to give special heed to Paul's directive to Timothy as worded in the King James Version: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15). For them, to a great extent, this meant the recovery of truth that had been lost or covered up by the traditions of men.

But soon, recognizing that the recovery of truth must not be considered an end in itself, the statement of the magazine's purpose was changed to the simple motto: *For God and His Word.* Truth glorifies God.

Hence in connection with the growing realization of God's purpose to reconcile all through the blood of the cross of His beloved Son (Col.1:20), Brother Knoch wrote in the opening editorial of volume 5, as follows:

"We are not contending for a mere doctrine. We are championing the revealed character of God. The gloomy cloud of theology has obscured Him from us far too long. Its chilling mists have cooled our enjoyment of His power and His wisdom and His grace. Its libels and aspersions on His name have repelled the instinctive responses of our hearts so that we could not fully and unreservedly justify Him. Nor were we able to defend His honor in the presence of His enemies. But now all this is gone. We are able to vindicate Him in all His ways before all His creatures."

Even here the focus was not so much on the fact that all will be saved, as on the revealed truth that *God is the Saviour* of all mankind. We do not save ourselves, and as a certainty, no one is saved apart from God willing it and accomplishing it through His Son, the Mediator, Who gave Himself a correspondent ransom for all (*cf* 1 Tim. 2:4-6; 4:9,10).

In accord with this, in the article on God's goal of becoming All in all, reprinted in this issue (pp.246-262), Brother Knoch called Romans 11:36 a "compend of divine revelation." *Out of God and through Him and for Him is all.* This great summary of the teaching of Scripture and pronouncement concerning the experiences and happenings of life has shaped much of the testimony of this magazine from the very start.

This is seen clearly in Brother Gelesnoff's introductory article to a series on "the Prophets" of the Hebrew canon,

which we reprint here on pages 263-270 in abridged form, somewhat edited to correspond with later insight.[1] While upholding the revelation that all is out of God and for Him, our brother pointed particularly to the blessing of knowing that all comes about *through* God's counsel and operation. Brother Gelesnoff wrote in infirmity of flesh, but his confidence in the supremacy of God, through every struggle and sorrow, was strong and based solidly on the highest testimony of Scripture to the glory of God.

It was not only the glorious revelation of universal reconciliation that was opened up because of this focus on the supremacy of God, but also such associated matters as the eons and the administrations of God, the various secrets of God, now revealed, God's purpose for Israel and most astounding for us, His purpose for the ecclesia which is the body of Christ—all of these were given careful attention as operations of God in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). Perhaps most startling of all was the series of articles on the origin, purpose and end of evil, which became incorporated in a book, now available under the title: The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God.

As Brother Knoch acknowledged with hearty sympathy in volume 15, page 47, it is the reality of evil and suffering that makes the truth that all is out of God such a severe strain on the faith of many. But once we accept the fact that evil is temporary, that it is necessary for the appreciation of good, that God subjects the creation to vanity *in expectation* that it will be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God

1. Originally printed in *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.11, pp.21-31. For further details concerning the life of Vladimir Gelesnoff, see *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 13, pages 45-88, and that of A. E. Knoch, see volume 56, pages 97-144.

(Rom.8:21), we are on the way to full agreement with Paul, with heartfelt exultation, in his praise of God in Romans 11:33-36. *O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God!*

Regarding the fundamental subject of God's grace we read in volume 31, page 137, the following words:

"Grace glorious, rich, transcendent, is our portion now (Eph.1:6,7;2:7) . . . . Grace, undiluted by law, unspoiled by works, unconfined by aught of man, is the fullest, freest outflow of God's essence, which is love."

Even the matter of justification by faith is fully centered in God's grace, apart from our acts, for it is achieved by the faith of Jesus Christ. Hence we read in volume 7, page 266 concerning justification by faith:

"The translators of our versions did not believe in Christ's faith, judging by the way they manipulated the passages which point it out . . . . Justification is founded on His faith; it is conferred on our faith."

(These two subjects, the grace of God and its place in His work of justification and conciliation, are taken up also in this present issue, starting on page 271 and 279, respectively.)

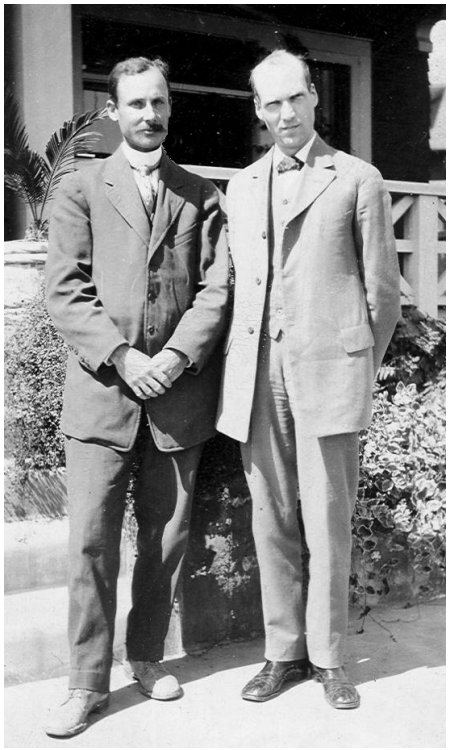
All these interconnecting themes of great consequence have met with opposition and controversy, calling for defense and further investigation. Recovery of truth, defense of truth and becoming settled in the faith (Col.1:23) are ongoing needs for us all. We thank God for others who, in their ways and places, are carrying on the struggle in heralding the word, standing by it, opportunely, inopportunely, exposing, rebuking, entreating, with all patience and teaching (*cf* 2 Tim.4:2). Thus, along with such brethren, we would continue this testimony to the grace, the righteousness and the glory of God as manifested "in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6).

With some diffidence, lest it be misunderstood as a

matter for boasting in the flesh, we share the accompanying photo of our founding editors taken sometime after Brother Gelesnoff moved to California in 1911. Brother Knoch, on the left, was the elder by nearly three years and died at age 90 in 1965, while Brother Gelesnoff was put to repose in his forty-fourth year in 1921. They have finished their careers. We, who still remain, look forward to that day when we *all* are snatched away together to be always together with our Lord (1 Thess.4:17,18).

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity.

D.H.H.



WHAT IS GOD'S GOAL?

Yet now Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing. For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power. For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He subjects all under His feet. Now whenever He may be saying that all is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him. Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all. (1 Cor.15:20-28)

"ALL IN ALL"—such is the august goal of our God! He will yet be everything to every one of His creatures, as it is fitting that He should be. Nothing less will satisfy His heart or the heart of our Saviour. Nothing less will vindicate His love or form a fit conclusion for the tragedy of the eons. Let us with joy believe it. Let us exult as we receive it! May these three simple syllables, that an infant's lips can lisp, become the very basis of our being, the background of every act, the key to every occurrence, a light in every

darkness, a balm for every wound. They are the pole star of all true philosophy, the consummation of all wisdom. They are the heart of that compend of divine revelation, "Out of Him and through Him and for Him is all" (Rom. 11:36), and reflect back upon the dismal story of sin and suffering the bright and beneficent beams of the immanent love of God, for which the darkness and death we now endure is but a fleeting foil.

Well do I recall the days when this part of first Corinthians was utterly incomprehensible to me. The "truth" which held me in its thrall turned it into a dark riddle, which I had no hope of solving, at least in this life. Its beams were too bright, and, in place of illuminating my whole being, as it does today, it blinded my eyes, as Saul was blinded by the brightness of our Lord's presence on the way to Damascus. But gradually the scales fell away, and now that which was the most obscure has become a light for illuminating all the rest. This experience has taught me to bear with much patience the blindness of others, and to wait until God graciously restores their sight so that they may gaze upon these universal glories. Let us pray that God may open many eyes to discern that far future infinitude of bliss—God All in all.

The paragraph which closes with these wondrous words must be illumined by their light, or it will prove an insoluble enigma. The vivification of all, the abolition of death, the abdication of the Son—these truths are too much for the mortal whose heart is still confined in the confessions of human theology. In fact this part of God's revelation is far too magnificent in its scope to be cramped into the creeds of men. Hence we urge all who read these lines to remember at all times, when studying this superlative section of divine revelation, that the object of all which the apostle brings before us is a two-fold universality in regard to God. *Every* creature of His will find in Him its *all*. Keep-

ing this constantly before us we will be able to examine the steps which lead up to it, beginning with Him in Whom it has already found a fulfillment, the Firstfruit, Christ.

CHRIST THE FIRSTFRUIT

Christ *has* been roused from among the dead, and not only so, but He is the Firstfruit of those who are reposing. Just as, each year, a sheaf of grain (Lev.23:10) was waved before Yahweh as a token and promise of the coming crop, so Christ, in His recall from death, was but the beginning, to be followed, in due course, by the whole harvest. All is reckoned as being in the Firstfruit, so that, in another place, the apostle says, "If the firstfruit is holy, the kneading is also" (Rom.11:16). What is true of one is germinally true of all the rest. So that we need only look at Christ to see what God's heart has in store for all the creatures which His hands have made. His vivification is the sample and gives certainty to all the rest.

In his epistle to the Romans, the apostle shows how Christ's work parallels and far more than corrects the one act of Adam, to which is traced the entrance of sin and death. His conclusion was that, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying (Rom.5:18). In fullest accord with this he now develops the same thought in connection with *life*. In this also, Christ is far more than the equivalent of Adam. Death, as well as sin, came in through the first man. So life, as well as righteousness, comes in through the Second, our Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, this goes far deeper, for it is death working in us which is the cause of our sin.

THE PROCESS OF DYING

Far more than our decease was brought in by Adam, and something which affects our souls much more than the

sleep which closes our career. God did not say to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen.2:17). If He had, Adam would have died the very day in which he was judged. He might then have had no progeny of sinners. In the precise language of the Hebrew, He said, "to die you shall be dying." That is, there would be dying as well as death. As we now know, there is a long process of disintegration, with which we are all acquainted, even though we are accustomed to calling it life. Ever since Adam sinned, he and his descendants have been dying. Like ripe fruit plucked from the tree, our bloom soon passes away, and we show a slow process of decay. In Adam, all are dying, even while they are still alive. That is the "life" that we inherited from our disobedient parent, which not one of his descendants has ever evaded.

Thus, we read, *shall all be vivified.* The contrast is not between the crisis of actual death and the resurrection, but between the dying process and a life process, beyond the touch of death. Indeed, it is not strictly true that all in Adam are doomed to die. Many have longed to be among the favored few who will not expire, but be vivified at the coming of our Lord. We who survive to the presence of Christ are slowly dying, but we will not complete the process when we hear the shout that will wake the dead and infuse immortal life into our dying frames. Not all of Adam's descendants will die, but all begin to tread the path that leads down to the grave as soon as they are born.

The contrast in this glorious promise is between mortality and immortality, between our present mode of existence and the glory before us. That vivification is far more than resurrection is abundantly evident, for it is for those who have not died as well as for those who repose. Our Lord is not only the Resurrection but the Life (John 11:25). Not only could He call back Lazarus from the tomb to life like that he had before, and thus be his Resurrection, but, in

the days to come, He will call Lazarus once again, to a life indissoluble and incorruptible, and thus become his Life. That is why, especially in relation to Lazarus, our Lord calls Him self by this double title. Lazarus has already experienced His power in resurrection, but he waits in death until His future presence before he makes His acquaintance as his Life. His resurrection was a passing occurrence, but the life that he will receive will be enduring, constant, incorruptible, eonian.

For death the cure is resurrection, but for dying we need life. The crisis of death is a single act and so is resurrection. Each may occur in an instant of time. This is not before us in this parallel (1 Cor.15:22). The words "are dying" and "shall be vivified" are in the incomplete tense in the Original, which denotes an action in progress. The long drawn-out activity of death in dragging men down to the grave is put in contrast with the endless activity of life in imparting incorruption, power and glory. All who endured the first shall enjoy the second. Here is a message for mankind which should lift it above its misery! Knowing this, we can even enjoy the weakness and humiliation of our present state in anticipation of the glory for which it is the necessary prelude.

THE THREE CLASSES

Perhaps all of us are like the prophet, and our hearts cry out, "Till when?" We are like children, intent only on the immediate sensations of our souls. God uses wisdom and waits until the proper preparation has been made. He does not wish to lavish His gifts on thankless, unresponsive hearts, so must reserve His bounty until sin and death have prepared them to appreciate His boons. Only thus can He become everything to them. So the longed-for glory cannot come at once. Moreover, some will be ready before the rest. The great Firstfruit is already glo-

rified. Not only has He been roused from sleep as to His soul, and raised as to His incorruptible frame, but He has been vivified, as to His Spirit, and possesses a life indissoluble (Heb.7:16), beyond the reach of death.

Of His soul we read that it was not forsaken in the unseen, or, more literally, the imperceptible (Acts 2:27). That is, in death all perception had ceased. His eye did not see, His ear did not hear, nor had He any sensation whatsoever. As to His soul, death affected it just as it does the souls of all humans. But it was not abandoned in that condition. He was *roused*, and sensation was restored, and every perceptive faculty returned. This is what constitutes consciousness. The return of His spirit to His body was the means of recalling His soul, for sensation is not an entity like the body or spirit, but an effect, which appears and disappears with the combination which causes it in mankind.

Of His body we read, "nor was His flesh acquainted with decay" (Acts 2:31). In this He was unique. His frame saw no corruption, notwithstanding it was dead. Decay is not an essential feature of death, merely a possible after-effect, dependent on the environment. If it should be very cold, decay may be prevented for thousands of years, as has been the case with mammoths encased in ice. By artificial refrigeration, flesh may be preserved for many months. In the hot climate of Palestine, however, dissolution commences almost at once, so that the dead are hurried away and buried on the day of death. But in His case God would not suffer it (Acts 2:27). Indeed, from the time when His work was finished His humiliation ceased. His body was not flung away and dishonored, but was entombed in a costly memorial. His honors began in the tomb, even before His resurrection. His corpse saw no corruption, and He was with the rich in His death (Isa.53:9). Though crucified with robbers and malefactors, He made His grave with the honorable of the earth.

His spirit He had entrusted to God. When He expired He cried, "Father, into Thy hands am I committing My spirit" (Luke 23:46). David, in the Psalms, whom Peter quotes on the day of Pentecost, not only foretold the whereabouts of His soul, and the condition of His body in death, but goes on to deal with His spirit, not indeed, by name, but by its manifestation, which is life. Not a word is said of the spirit in death, for there is nothing to say. After its committal to God when He expired, the next we hear of it is in vivification, for the spirit makes alive. It returned to the lifeless frame. In the words of David, "Thou makest known to Me the paths of life" (Acts 2:28). This is more than the rousing of the soul, or the raising of the body. This is vivification, expressed in the fine figurative fashion of the ancient Hebrew. Although His spirit was in the Father's keeping, He did not ascend to the Father until after His resurrection (John 20:17).

The *Firstfruit*, Christ! To be sure, all men will be raised for judgment. All shall be roused to give an account of their acts to God. But that is not what these words convey. He was not the first to be raised from the dead. Even before He came some received their dead by resurrection (Heb. 11:35). He Himself raised more. Others were roused from among the dead before Him. He was *not* the Firstfruit of resurrection or rousing, but of those who are vivified. No one before Him entered the portals of eonian life. No one was clothed with incorruption and immortality. Only as such is He the Firstfruit. We look for all who are in the tombs to hear His voice and come forth, some to life, and some to judgment (John 5:28, 29). But only the first group finds Him their Firstfruit. The second must find Him this, as we learn elsewhere, at a later time, and in another class.

The three classes of the vivified are distinguished from each other in character and time. Christ is a class by Himself. Then there is the group of faith, those who are His.

Thereafter, to complete the "all," come the remainder, who have no special designation, except that, at present, they may not be called His, hence do not believe. This agrees with the classification elsewhere given, where God is called the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers (1 Tim.4:10). And it harmonizes also with the gift of eonian life, which is not the portion of unbelievers. Hence the apostle, instead of describing the third class, gives the fact, rather, of the consummation, and this fixes the time of their vivification after the eons. Hence the third class is not promised eonian life, here, for vivification is not theirs until the eons end.

THOSE WHO ARE CHRIST'S

The time of vivification varies with each class. Christ, as we know, has been beyond the dominion of death ever since His resurrection. "Those who are Christ's" will be vivified at His presence (1 Cor.15:23). This seems to be at the crisis of the eons, between the three evil and the two good ones. As the great object of the apostle here is to show that *all* will be made alive, he does not give details concerning this second class, or tell us when this presence takes place. The term he uses, the *parousia*, the BESIDE-BEING, is broad enough to include all that is written elsewhere concerning the coming of Christ to Israel (cf Acts 1: 11) and, before that, to us (1 Thess.4:16,17). The main point of this part of Paul's presentation lies in the last word, the *consummation*. This is fully described as to both character and time, in the words that follow.

Before going on to consider the consummation, let us note the consistency which has carefully kept from even mentioning the resurrection of condemnation, which takes place at the great white throne. The moment we seek to insert it we find ourselves in conflict with the line of thought. "Those who are Christ's" certainly will not appear

in that judgment. And those who are not will certainly not be vivified, with Christ as Firstfruit, when they are called to stand before Him as Judge. This is more abundantly evident from the fact that they enter death once again. This section does not deal with such resurrections, for they do not introduce any to God as their All. In them Christ is the Resurrection, not the Life. And only this latter character of His comes into play in "making alive."

THE CONSUMMATION

In place of naming the third class to be vivified the apostle simply tells us that after the vivification of the second class there will be a consummation. He names an event, not the dead who are left. The fate of the third class is so involved in this event, that we need only to understand it in order to be informed of their future. This grand truth seems to be almost unknown in Christendom. Although the very climax and fulfillment of all revelation, it has been eclipsed by human perversions. As a result the god of Christendom has lost the essential attributes of Deity. He is like the foolish man who started to build but could not finish. Theology brings nothing to a conclusion. It attains no definite goal. Sin, suffering, and insubjection are never conquered. God is compelled to work an eternal miracle in order to maintain a never-ending eyesore in His creation, once so subject, so sinless, and so good.

Knowing as I do, the power of this great truth, I urge everyone to make its acquaintance. To know the end from the beginning is no longer a divine prerogative, for in this passage (1 Cor.15:20-28) God reveals to us the goal He has in view, and the manner in which it will be attained. Few, even of the saints, have any clear idea of the object of all creation and revelation. They have no key to nature and to history. They are riding in an automobile without a steering wheel and have no idea whither it is bound. Most of

the perplexities and many of the pains we are called upon to endure are ameliorated, if not removed, when we see the great goal which God has set before the universe, to which all things tend, for which all are but the preparation. I am heartily sorry for all His saints who have never had their eyes opened to see the end—the purpose of the Lord for all creation.

The consummation consists in *subjection*. Christ Himself will be subject when He has subjected all. Here we have a key to all the evil in the world. It is due to *insubjection* to God. This is seen clearly in the character of the eons. The evil eons are either anarchistic or under human government. The good are under the scepter of Christ. The very name, the Kingdom, speaks of subordination. Adam's insubjection brought in sin. Christ's obedience and reign will restore all to its proper place beneath the rule of God. This is not an endless, hopeless task which never comes to fruition. It will be accomplished. It will find its finish at the close of the eons. It is the consummation of the eonian times. Intelligent and loving subjection on the part of all His creatures brings us to the goal, God All in all.

Christ will give up the Kingdom to *God* as *Father*. These two names reveal to us the object of the eonian times. They show us their root and their fruit. From being *creatures* of the great *Subjector*, who have rebelled against His rule, mankind is brought to loving obedience, as *children* of the *Father*. If that time could be described as a day, we might call it the day of the Father. Now we have man's day, for man is ruling. Soon will come Yahweh's day, to be followed by the day of God. Then will come the final, the finishing time, the "day" of the Father, in which God becomes the loving Ruler of His own household, and all creation will be one vast family, knowing no subjection except to Him, no laws but filial obedience. The Kingdom will be handed over to God, yet this will transform it into a universal family.

THE REIGN OF CHRIST

It is the office of Christ, God's Anointed, to bring this about. It is astonishing to note how this is to be done. The method is entirely negative and consists in making certain things *inoperative* (15:24,26). The word used to express this is most important, and it is both interesting and suggestive to consider the parts of which it is composed, for the idiomatic meaning is quite in accord with its elements. Its chief root is *erg*, which occurs frequently in the word family denoting *action*. To this is prefixed the Greek letter *a*, denoting UN-, *a-erg*, which combines, the *a* swallowing the *e*, making *arg*, which is the root for UN-ACT, *idle* (2 Peter 2:3). To this is further prefixed the connective *kata*, DOWN (dropping the last *a*), *kat-a-rg*, DOWN-UN-ACT, DOWN-idle, make inactive, or inoperative. Idiomatically it is most difficult to translate this word, for we use many terms to denote this where Greek uses but one. In this passage we may use *nullify* with sovereignty and *abolish* with death. But in our present meditation we shall prefer *make inoperative*.

It is usually supposed that the universe is so essentially wrong that it requires *positive* corrective acts to set it right. From this basic revelation it appears that what is needed is the negative abolition of activity in two distinct directions, the cessation of all subjecting powers over and *outside* of man, and the stopping *in* man of the force which subjects him to sin. In other words, man is now subject to external authorities and to the operation of death within him. Make these activities inoperative and he will be subject to God. Man was made by his Creator for subjection to the Deity. This is his normal condition, to which he returns as soon as alien restraining influences have been removed. Add to this negative removal the positive experiences which were his while insubordinate, and we have

all that is necessary to make the creatures of God not only obedient, but adoring children of the Father; children to whom He is Everything.

Death is the last enemy to be made inoperative. To many the inclusion of death in a discussion of subjection seems strange and misplaced. This arises from the mistaken idea of death which prevails. Not only do men make the death state one of life, but they fail to grasp the fact which appears at the very forefront of revelation, that death is operating in every descendant of Adam during this life. All are dying. Moreover, that great truth, that *death* is transmitted (*not* sin), so that we sin because we are dying, has been obscured by translators and is unknown to theology (Rom. 5:12). But once we understand that all of our insubordination is due to the immanence of death in our members and that we cannot be normally subject so long as it operates in us, then we are prepared to give death the place accorded to it in this discussion.

If we stop the activity of death in humanity we cannot be insubordinate of ourselves, for we were not only created out of God but *for* Him. I once wondered why death was the *last* enemy. Now I know that it must be so, for its abolition by itself would remove all the rest, were they not already abolished. If death (and, as a consequence, sin, which is its fruit) should be made inoperative at the beginning of the thousand years, there could be no reign and no rebellion, for insubjection would be absent. Where all are subject to God all other forms of subjection must vanish. Subjection to anyone but God is abnormal. That is what brought in sin. Its gradual abolition in the eons to come will lead mankind up to the consummation. Make death inoperative and the last vestige of insubjection vanishes. It must be the last enemy because its abolition completely subjects all to God.

The consummation, then, does not follow immediately

after the vivification of those who are Christ's. The second class are made alive in order to have a part in the *reign* of Christ. The end cannot come so long as there is such a thing as reigning. The interval between the second and the third class consists largely in Christ, with His saints, taking over the government of the universe. No rule, however, can exist where there is no insubjection, for no one who is subject to God needs any intermediary sovereignty or authority or power. These, taking the place which belongs to God, are in their very nature abnormal, opposed to God's ultimate, unless they are temporary and retiring, having their own withdrawal as their aim, being merely scaffolding to be removed when its purpose is accomplished. Such is the nature of the rule of Christ. It is not the object but the means. It aims at its own recall.

THE END OF INSUBJECTION

This passage, because it goes to the very bottom of things, bares to our gaze the true nature of rule. How much disturbance and distress have come to mankind through the operation of human government! From the days of Noah till the present, oppression and tyranny have been the order of the day, wars of aggression and succession have bathed the world in blood, and even the best of governments have left much to be desired. Human government is certainly abnormal. And will the reign of Christ with the saints restore ideal conditions? Is not the rebellion at the end of the thousand years an emphatic denial? The reign will be righteous and good, and will bring much blessing because God will be back of Christ, so that it will approximate the ideal. But evil is not banished from the universe by intermediate rule, but by the gradual and final withdrawal of all rule.

Almost all other rule tends to draw men away from subjection to God. Christ's rule will be devoted to restoring

them to the normal. It will continue until all rule is concentrated in His hands. All enemies will be put under His feet. All of this will be done with the cooperation of the saints, in whom death no longer operates, for they have been vivified. But all the rest are still hindered from yielding spontaneous subjection by the operation of death and sin within them. Others of His enemies are in the second death. What is needed to restore all to more than normal perfection is to stop the activity of death. This is done, at the last, by the vivification of all. The dead and the living, all who are still within the clutches of death in any of its manifestations, are made alive. This is the point of this passage. It puts universal life in place of universal death.

This passage affords a splendid lesson in intelligent interpretation. The apostle insists that Christ subjects all under His feet. He proceeds, "Now whenever He may be saying that all is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him." That which is self-evident and altogether contrary to the object of the whole, need not be stated. Paul need not say, "He subjects all *except God*." But a most important point arises, which is also self-evident, and that is *that there are no other exceptions*. And if the word "all" has no other exceptions here, why should it have them in similar connections elsewhere? Nor is it a sign of superior acumen to insist that stones and sticks are not included. Such an objection is only a sign that the objector is not yet fully subject in his mental operations. It suffices to know that, as a result of Christ's reigning, there will be no insubjection left in all the universe, so that He may hand it over to the Father.

THE ABDICATION OF CHRIST

The time of the consummation is given us, not in chronological fashion, but in relation to the vital events of the universe. When God has brought all into subjection to

Christ, "then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all." What an utter contradiction of all our thoughts about empires is contained in these marvelous words! When the great conquerors of earth had gained universal control they made every possible provision for retaining it. We see what becomes of such an empire in the case of Alexander. When death tore the scepter from his hands, his vast kingdom fell to pieces. What is gained by force must be held by power. But Christ's reign brought all to *God,* not to Himself, except as He was the Mediator of the Deity. Hence His abdication will cause no great change in government. It will merely be the public acknowledgement of a patent fact. Christ brings men to God.

Great are the mediatorial glories of God's Christ! No prophet ever spoke His words more faithfully. No other priest is in His class. No king can compare with Him. But what distinguishes His word above all others is the fact that He carries it on to a conclusion. He is Priest *to a finality* in the day of Yahweh. Hence there is no temple and no priesthood in the day of God. Then He still continues to reign, but it is to such purpose, that He finally rules rule out. This is the greatest of all His glories, the eternal halo, which is composed of the surpassing excellence of all the rest.

A temple, even with all the golden glories of Solomon's majestic pile, is the symbol of a distant God. In Yahweh's day one will be reared once again in the holy oblation. It will far surpass even the splendors of Solomon's. But how much greater, to the anointed eye, is the glory of the day of God, where He dwells with mankind, without any barrier between! Nothing would so dim the luster of Christ's priestly glory, as to shut God up once again, in the day of God, and bid men approach Him as of old, through mediatorial means. The fact that it is not needed in the last eon,

is the highest praise that can be brought to the Melchizedek priesthood. In a thousand years it accomplished its mission, and finished the task God intended it to do. All other priesthood retires because of its weakness and inability to bring aught to perfection. His retires with honors, having accomplished its glorious mission.

A throne, even in the day of God, is the symbol of enmity and of insubjection. We are accustomed to associate it with majesty and splendor, and do not readily perceive that it rests upon resistance to the will of God on the part of those who come under its control. Perhaps our imaginations can conceive of a beneficent governor of some island realm whose subjects had so profited by his rule that, when he left them for a year, he could suspend all government until his return. That would border on the miraculous. The ideal government is that which brings God into the hearts of its subjects to such effect that He alone is needed at the helm, and all intermediaries are idle and superfluous.

At the consummation, as *Christ*, our Lord's work is finally finished. His anointing made Him a Prophet, a Priest, and a King. Not one of these functions is needed when the consummation comes. Hence it is not as *Christ* that He subjects Himself to God, but as the *Son*. In His official glories He was always subordinate to Him, yet, at the same time, He subjects others. Then He lays these glories by, and in the unofficial relationship of Son, He is subjected to the Father. His mediatorial glories will take on the added luster of success, the splendor of achievement, the sublimity of consummation. Oh, how it drags His highest honors in the dust to distort God's Word so that His priesthood is eternal and His Kingdom everlasting! May God forgive the ignorant zeal which seeks to gild the glory of His crowns with the tarnished tinsel of man's imagination! What He starts He will finish, and what He commences He will consummate.

GOD ALL IN ALL

The purpose of all of this, as, indeed, of all God's eonian dealings with mankind, is that God may take the place in every heart which His love deserves, so that each member of the human race becomes, at last, no longer a lost creature but a fondled child, no longer a distant enemy but a delighted son. Death brought in the breach, and life will much more than remove it. Death nearly made God nothing to anyone. Life will make Him All to everyone. In Adam all are dying through no choice of theirs, and so, in Christ, this same all will be made alive. All were created in the Son of His love (Col.1:13-16), and all will be reconciled by the blood of His cross (Col.1: 20). Death, in all its manifestations, will be discarded. Life will be universal, for only so can God be All in all.

A. E. Knoch

GOD'S FINISHED WORK

It is something to know that history, despite its sinister aspects, is after all God's work; we are not standing helpless in a world set adrift by an enemy, but are in a personal world, a moral world, where character is being wrought out and God's purpose is being realized. In such a world it is permitted to us to see a vision of God's finished work, and devote ourselves to the service of the highest and best, in the sure faith that the whole universe will enter into His rest and move in unison with His will.

V. M. Gelesnoff

Here let us direct our attention to the result of God's eonian dealings. God is ALL in ALL. The kingship has been delivered up to Christ's God and Father (1 Cor.15:24), and the Son is subjected to Him (v.28)—as if to suggest that the family, rather than the kingdom, characterizes the ultimate state. The Adamic dead have *all* been raised *in Christ* (v.22); and now, perfected in His perfections, God Himself becomes ALL *in them.* Humanity in the Son, and God in humanity—do we wonder if the eyes of faith at times have blinked when called to gaze upon that wondrous goal?

Alan Burns

PROPHECY AND HISTORY

GOD carries out His purpose of the eons in time. "He makes out of one every nation of mankind to be dwelling on all the surface of the earth, specifying the setting of the seasons, and the bounds of their dwelling" (Acts 17:26). Time does not go on of itself, without supernatural control or guidance. History unfolds itself according to a definite plan. The program of history has been determined by the Most High and every step in the process and the final outcome is infallibly settled. The rise and fall of nations, their continuance in power, their conflicts and the territorial changes consequent thereon, every event and movement is carried out in accordance with the provision of His plan.

The God of the prophets is the Sovereign and Architect of the universe, having neither rival nor competitor. "I am El, and there is no other" (Isa.45:22). Time and space are under His absolute control. Nothing can take place without His appointment. "Who is this who speaks, and it comes about, if Yahweh does not determine it?" (Lam.3:37). Created intelligences which move in space and act in time carry out His will. None can stir without His high behest. "According to His will, He is doing with the army of the heavens and with those abiding on the earth. And there is no one who shall stay His hand and say to Him, What have You done?" (Dan.4:35). He builds, and none can hinder; He works out the purpose set forth by His own advice and prosecutes it to a successful issue, without hindrance, interference, or delay. "Yahweh of hosts has sworn saying, Assuredly just as I have meant, so will it come to be, and

just as I have counseled, that shall be confirmed . . . . For Yahweh of hosts, He has counseled, and who shall annul it? And it is His hand that is stretched out, and who shall reverse it?" (Isa.14:24,27).

God's faithful purpose moves across the ages and keeps tryst with foreseen need. The universal order was dependent on divine intelligence for its origin; and it is equally dependent on divine intelligence for its outworkings. There is no way in which things or events could slip in, which were not provided for in the primal arrangement. God knew from the outset what He was doing, and He intended its interweavings. Hence every event represents a divine purpose, and is part of a divine plan, and is as truly purposeful when realized through ordinary processes as it would be if produced by fiat. This is the doctrine of the divine supremacy, before which the scandals which infest religious thought disappear.

THE LIVING GOD

We are too prone to encompass God with the limitations with which we ourselves are beset. And when we allow the purpose, we practically cancel it by pushing it so far back in time as to think that it must have faded out of the divine mind and interest altogether. The things we planned long ago we have forgotten or they have lost all value for us, and we think it must be so with God. The world of popular thought resembles a patchwork quilt. The universe has been resolved into opposite unrelated units divided by impassable intervening chasms. Nature and mind have been set up in mutual exclusion, and an order of "natural law" has been made a reason for denying purpose. Wherever such law can be traced things are supposed to be sufficiently explained without further reference. God is needed only to supplement the inadequacies of nature, and if nature be adequate, God is needless; there

can be naught but blind happenings for which nature alone is responsible. The underlying notion is that nature somehow has slipped from under God's control, and acquired self equality and self sufficiency which have enabled it to set up for itself and do a great many unintended things on its own account. Nature is thus built into a self-sufficient mechanism operating partly on its own account, partly in opposition to the divine purpose, so that God is obliged to break occasionally into its order to remind us that He is still alive and doing what He can to prevent the utter miscarriage of His enterprise. As a consequence men are looking for God in the field of physical prodigies rather than in the moral realm and in the normal activities of men and the unfoldings of history. Having created a rift between God and His work, nature is looked upon with suspicion; "natural" has become a term of reproach, and the fear prevails that should some outstanding fact be reduced to rule or some miracle accounted for by natural law, faith will vanish and be made of none effect.

THE PROPHETIC VIEWPOINT

The prophets set aside the notion of the cosmic order as the rival of God. For them there is no nature that does the bulk of the world's work, while God is reserved for occasional interpositions. They teach that nature is dependent on a power beyond itself and perpetually does only that which it is intended to do. God is the ever present Worker in the ongoing world, and nature is but the form and product of His ceaseless activity.

The false notion of nature has been extended to the field of history. As nature is supposed to set up for itself and do many things on its own account, so history is supposed for the most part, if not entirely, to go its own way, while God now and then intervenes in some striking fashion for His favorites. The round of human action is a haphazard

scramble of men doing the behest of the devil, while providence spooks about in the dark, frustrating now and then a bold scheme of Satan, but having no connection with the orderly movement of the world. Thus men look for God in signs and marvels, in strange events, in striking crises, in great calamities, and in unusual coincidences, rather than in the orderly movements of human life. This looking for God in the chaotic and abnormal is a source of much weakness. God's action is supposed to be above and apart from law, rather than through it, or in accordance with it.

In opposition to this the prophets affirm a divine purpose, a moral development in humanity as the essential meaning of God in history. This history is the unfolding and realization of the divine purpose. To be sure, we are not always able to discern any special significance in events; but that only proves that the underlying purpose is not always evident. Sometimes the historical crisis is such, and the co-working of complex factors is so marked, that we seem almost to see the hand which shapes our ends. Then we speak of God's nearness. But commonly life runs on in the familiar routine, and we seem left to our own judgment to find the way. At such times we have nothing to say of God. But the only difference is that sometimes the divine purpose seems manifest while at other times it is hidden. The purpose, however, is equally controlling at all times, though not equally manifest. Our eyes are veiled in this matter by the false notions of a self-running nature and a human-run history.

GOD'S WILL AND PURPOSE

The course of history is not something foreign to God's purpose into which He makes occasional raids to reveal Himself. His purpose determines and administers the course of events; and history is but the form of His procedure. We come down, not to the opposition of a rival, nor

to any impersonal principle, but to One Who lives and "is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph. 1:11). The most common event, as the growth of a weed, is as supernatural in its causation as any miracle would be; for in both alike God is equally implicated. Life itself, with all its forms and interests, represents the divine will and purpose and from it God is never absent.

We are in God's world, and the ultimate reason why anything is, or changes, or comes to pass, lies not in any mechanical necessity, nor in any natural antecedents, nor in any machinations of free moral agents, but in the will and purpose of that God in Whom all things live and move and have their being (Acts 17:27). Every system must come down at last to some fact, or system of facts, of which no more can be said than that it is. This fact, to which all else is referred, and from which all else takes its rise, is, for the prophets, the will and purpose of God.

Furthermore, the divine causality proceeds in orderly ways in the realization of its aims, so that events do not happen at random but according to rule. To trace the modes of being and happening is the function of prophecy; and practical wisdom depends on this knowledge.

When the theological banishment of God from His world is revoked and His supremacy set up in its place, we make it possible for faith to endure in the world as it is and to prosper with expectation of what is to come. We return, not to a rabble of capricious wills behind nature and history, but to a loving Father, Who founds and administers the order of the world. God's will is not back of these things at some awful distance of time and space, but is their present living source.

FORMER AND LATTER PROPHETS

It is a widespread idea that prophetic writings are predictive. Ignorance lies at the basis of this mistaken and

misleading idea. Under the title “Prophets” the Scriptures draw together the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets. These books are arranged in two distinct groups. The first, the Former Prophets, embraces Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings. The second, the Latter Prophets, comprises Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets.

The books of the first group are purely historical. They are conspicuous by the absence of the very predictive element supposed to be the prime requisite of prophecy. The men who recorded this history are called “prophets” the same as those supposed to foretell the future. The prophetic element binds their writings into one class; the grouping merely differentiates the constituent parts of prophecy in regard to order. The "former" prophets precede the “latter” in point of logic and experience as well as time. Our concern in life and its interests follows an invariable rule. Our first desire is to know what takes place under the sun. When that desire has been gratified, when the facts are known, questionings arise in regard to the reason of things, and we want to know why things happen as they do.

EVENTS AND THEIR PURPOSE

Two quite distinct questions present themselves to the observer of the times. The first concerns the uniformity of coexistence and sequence which constitute the order. The second, the underlying causality and purpose of the order. The way in which events occur in an order of law is one thing; the meaning of such events in a scheme of purpose is forever another. Things exist and events happen in certain ways. To discover, describe and register these ways of being and happening is the function of history. But when this is done, we further need to trace the causality at work, and the purpose underlying the whole. These two questions are quite distinct, and the answer to both

is necessary to the full satisfaction of the mind. History as such explains nothing; for it only classifies and coordinates facts according to rule; the knowledge of cause and purpose is empty until experience furnishes the facts. As a result of this distinction we can appreciate the grouping of the “Prophets.”

Prophecy is a fusion of history and its purpose. The Former Prophets write down history. They relate Israel’s fortunes from the entrance into the land to the removal to Babylon. They give us a systematization of sacred history. Events are classified under familiar heads; the order in which divine causality proceeds is traced. But it is description, not explanation.

The Latter Prophets run concurrently with the Former. They found themselves on, and constantly appeal to, the facts recorded in the antecedent books. But here we have purposive interpretation. The divine purpose and the manner of its realization in Israel’s experience is traced and explained.

The writings of the Latter Prophets range themselves around the periods dominated by the foreign powers which influenced Israel’s life and fortunes—the Assyrian, the Babylonian, the Persian. The first claims most of the writings. Here belong Isaiah and the Minor Prophets from Hosea to Habakkuk. The Babylonian period is covered by the books of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Zephaniah. Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi belong to the Persian period.

DIVINE COUNSEL

In Isaiah God again and again claims for Himself a providential government of history: the career of His Servant is the final touch that reveals the counsel of God from the beginning to the end of history (Isa.41:21-23; 42:9,23-25). This involves the restoration of Israel, to fulfil the covenant, and the bringing of salvation to all the nations of

the earth (Isa.49:6). The aim of prophecy is to reveal the cause and meaning and goal of the movement of humanity rather than predict specific events. For this reason prophecy centers around epochs which exhibit the continuity of law and the rational connection of the revealing work. The prophets of each period focus on some outstanding fact of an eventful era—Sennacherib's invasion, the fall of Jerusalem to the Chaldeans, the return from Babylon. These facts are no more divine than others. They are simply extraordinary events which, from their form or the circumstances of their occurrence, make the divine presence and purpose more manifest than is the case with the ordinary routine course of events.

God works His will in history not apart from men, but involving men; and the work is no less divine on that account. We need not fear development, or natural agencies, when we know that the divine purpose underlies them all.

THE DIVINE SUPREMACY

Thus we see the deep significance of the divine supremacy emphasized by the prophets. It recalls God from the infinite distance in space and time to which sense thought has banished Him, and where theology has lost Him, and makes Him the omnipresent power by which all things exist and on which all things continually depend. It is something to know that history, despite its sinister aspects, is after all God's work; we are not standing helpless in a world set adrift by an enemy, but are in a personal world a moral world, where character is being wrought out and God's purpose is being realized. In such a world it is permitted to us to see a vision of God's finished work, and devote ourselves to the service of the highest and best, in the sure faith that the whole universe will enter into His rest and move in unison with His will.

V. M. Gelesnoff

GLORYING IN GOD

IN HIS GRACE and by His righteousness God justifies sinners through the faith of Jesus Christ. In believing this evangel we become acquainted with God's love which He pours out in our hearts, not only in His work of righteous justification but in His unparalleled act of the conciliation of His enemies through the death of His Son. Consequently, it is certain that we shall be saved in His life (*cf* Rom.5:9,10).

YET NOT ONLY SO!

> *but we are glorying also in God,*
> *through our Lord, Jesus Christ,*
> *through Whom*
> *we now obtained the conciliation.* (Rom.5:11)

For Paul, when sharing the spiritual grace of the evangel, there is always more to add. Here for the second time in this context he uses the phrase, "Yet not only so," in both cases pointing to ways in which the evangel leads to glorying. Both our glorying in afflictions (Rom.5:3) and now our glorying in God are *present* effects of believing the evangel concerning the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ which occurred in the *past.* And both arise as we anticipate the *future* which God has prepared for us because of Christ's faith: the expectation of the glory of God and salvation connected with the life of God's Son.

This passage looks back to all that Paul has written so far in Romans concerning God and His power, faithful-

ness, righteousness and love, and all that constitutes His glory, as it has been made known through Jesus Christ. But in particular it contemplates the conciliation, which God has brought about through the death of His Son.

Thus we are glorying in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

NOT ASHAMED

Romans 5:11 is the complement of Romans 1:16. In preparing his readers for the evangel he was about to unfold, Paul wrote, "Not ashamed am I of the evangel." Now, having presented the foundational features of the evangel as a revelation of God's righteousness and a commendation of His love, Paul declares without reservation that it leads to "glorying in God." He has taken us from a striking understatement in negative terms to the positive position of bold exultation. He began by denying any trace of shame concerning a message that is built on the foundation of the shameful death of God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, having brought us to see that this death of God's Son is the means for the revolutionary change from sin to righteousness, from enmity to conciliation and from death to life, he testifies that there is no holding back of joyful praise.

GLORYING OR BOASTING

The Greek term translated "glorying" here is a present participle of the verb, *kauchaomai*, which is often rendered "boast" in the CV. The corresponding term in Hebrew belongs to the IRRADIATE family and is most frequently translated "praise." As used in Scripture the concept is one of joyful, uninhibited appreciation, with or without just cause, whether directed to the self or another.[1]

1. *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.35, and ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW CONCORDANCE, p.366.

In Romans 5:11 the act of boasting is a glorying that is directed apart from praise of ourselves, and it clearly arises from true and just causes: the revelation of God's righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ in the justification of sinners, and the commendation of God's love in that Christ died for our sakes, conciliating us to Himself through that death, drawing us close with full access into highest favor.

FOCUSING ON GOD

On first hearing the evangel, most of us focused on what it said about us, about our justification and salvation and all the many blessings which we are given. But our blessings are all in Christ, and the opening words of this message, as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:3,4, are "Christ died," followed by "He was entombed" and ending with "He has been roused." With this our attention is enlarged so that we see our blessings as they come to us through and in our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Yet again, when introducing the evangel in Romans, Paul identifies it as *God's power* for salvation (Rom.1:16; *cp* 1 Cor.1:18-25, where also it is called *the wisdom of God*). Then, tied with a threefold cord of testimony, the evangel is seen as revealing, manifesting and displaying *God's righteousness* (Rom.1:17; 3:21,25,26), through Jesus Christ's faith. Later in chapter 5 and again in chapter 8 this message centered upon God's power and righteousness is enlarged in "breadth and length and depth" as it speaks of *the love of God,* in Christ Jesus, our Lord (*cf* Rom.5:6,8; 8:35-39; Eph.2:4; 3:17,18). The center of focus and ultimate meaning of the evangel is what it says about God.

It is a matter of progress toward maturity. As presently constituted, we probably never get entirely rid of seeing ourselves as the center of things. But the evangel is powerful, energizing the believer by the spirit of God, which

is aiding us in our infirmity, strengthening our awareness of God as the One working all together for good (*cf* Rom. 8:26,28). Thus we learn to say with Paul: "May it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal.6:14).

So it is, after identifying the evangel as a message speaking to us especially of God's power, righteousness and love, that Paul pauses in Romans 5:11 to stir up our hearts in joyful boasting in God. All that he has been saying strengthens our reliance on God, in the great privilege of glorying in Him.

That is, it does so as we are believing the evangel.

ISRAEL'S BOASTING

It was in connection with their position of resting on the law that the Jew boasted in God (Rom.2:17). Consequently, because they could not avoid transgressing the law, they brought dishonor on God (Rom.2:23,24). The cause of their boasting in God, that is, His giving of the law to them, involved their own acts to such a degree that glorying in God became essentially a hypocritical boasting in themselves. Yet when their Rescuer arrives and turns away their irreverence and eliminates their sins (Rom.11: 26,27), bestowing His spirit within them, so that they walk in His statutes and observe His ordinances (Ezek.36:27), God will be their praise, or *boast* (*cf* Deut.10:21) more truly than ever before. They will be doing the works of the law, but doing so with full recognition that this is due to God's spirit in them. They will relate their benefits to their Rescuer Who ransomed them from their vain behavior with His precious blood (1 Peter 1:19). Then "in Yahweh shall they be justified, and shall all the seed of Israel boast" (Isa.45:25) with honor to His name.

HUMAN BOASTING

Jeremiah was a prophet to the nations concerning God's place for them in His dealings with Israel (*cf* Jer.1:5-10). As such he set forth the ideal condition for all peoples on the earth, when Israel returns to Yahweh: "Then nations shall bless themselves in Him, and *in Him shall they boast*" (Jer.4:1,2). In accord with this are the often quoted words of Jeremiah 9:23,24:

Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom,
And let not the masterful man boast in his mastery;
Let not the rich man boast in his riches,
But rather let the boaster boast in this:
To act intelligently and to know Me,
That I am Yahweh, working benignity,
Right judgment and justice on the earth,
For in these I delight, averring is Yahweh.

But what is not seen here (and could not be plainly revealed) is that Israel's return and all intelligent action and the knowing of God arise from what God has done for sinners through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To know God and glory in Him as the One Who works benignity and executes judgment and justice must ultimately be to know Him as He is revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

OUR BOASTING

In His superabundant grace (Rom.5:17), God has revealed His righteousness and love to us as it is revealed through the giving of His Son for sinners, apart from our works. Consequently, our boasting in God is freed from self congratulation. It is a glorying in God which focuses wholly on what He has done for us through the giving of His Son. Because the doing of works of law has no place in our deliverance from sin and enmity, we are taken even beyond the

new covenant promised to Israel. We are granted a position where joyful appreciation of God is without any element or implication whatsoever of praise to ourselves.

That will be true of all when they bow in the name of the Saviour and acclaim His Lordship to the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:10,11). Yet in God's transcendent grace, this, as one of the consummations of the eons, has attained ahead of time to us (1 Cor.10:11), who are debarred from boasting in ourselves (*cf* Rom.3:27). *For God's achievement are we,* being created in Christ Jesus, for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them (Eph.2:10).

THROUGH OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST

Our glorying in God is always in connection with what He has done, is now doing and shall do *in and through His Son, Jesus Christ.* This is clear from the context of Romans 5.

We glory in God for the high privilege of having peace toward Him. And this has been opened to us *through our Lord, Jesus Christ* (Rom.5:1).

We exult in God in that, *through Him Who is our Lord and Saviour, and God's Anointed One,* He has given us access into a position of grace before Himself where we are rejoicing in the expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:2).

We praise our God for His love which is defined and exhibited in that *Christ died* for the our sake, who, in ourselves, are sinners, bringing dishonor to our Creator by our acts and are deserving only of death (Rom.5:8).

Our boast is in God in that it is He Who justifies us and saves us from indignation, and He does so *through Christ* (Rom.5:9), Who was given up because of our offenses and was roused because of our justifying (Rom.4:25).

And then there is the conciliation. God Himself has removed all the enmity of His enemies *through the death*

of His Son. Again we have to pause. We must not pass over these words of evangel lightly. It is not *despite* the insidious offense of the death of His beloved Son that God conciliates us to Himself. It was by this means that God expresses what has been from the beginning in His heart concerning humanity. And it does not end with the conciliation, for that must be realized finally in the reconciliation of all, when peace, made through the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love, is fully experienced (Col.1:20).

THE CONCILIATION OBTAINED

It is God Who has brought us into a position before Himself in which there is no enmity or offense. It is God Who has given us this standing where we are conciliated to Himself. It is God Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all so that we may have the blessing of the conciliation.

What have we done in all this?

We have obtained what God has given.

The Concordant Version uses the word "obtain" for the passive form of the verb generally rendered "get."[2] But even the active form often conveys a passive sense, as in John 3:27 ("A man can not *get* anything if it should not be given him out of heaven"). We did not conciliate ourselves to God, but He has conciliated us to Himself. Furthermore, He is presently acting toward the world in accord with this achievement, not reckoning their offense against them, and sending His ambassadors with the entreaty: "Be conciliated to God!" (2 Cor.5:19,20). As for us who are believing that God has conciliated us to Himself through the death of His Son, we are enjoying, in spirit, an earnest of the peace and access to God in grace which He has achieved for us.

2. *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.121.

In *obtaining* the conciliation from God by means of the death of His Son, we did not *get* slavery's spirit to fear again, but we *got* the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying "Abba Father!" This spirit is testifying together with our spirit that we are children of God, enjoyers of an allotment from God (Rom.8:15-17).

Our boasting is in accord with 1 Corinthians 4:7, where Paul asks, "Now what have you which you did not obtain?" (note again, the words of John 3:27). Our boasting is centered in all that we have obtained from God in Christ Jesus and is directed toward God, and, like Paul, we dare not speak of other things which might bring us praise (*cf* Rom.15:17,18).

THE PLACE OF BOASTING

Where then is boasting? It is not in ourselves, not in our works and not even in our faith. It is in God Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. And the glorying in God ascends from us in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; the glorying is through Him, through Whose death and resurrection God has made Himself known and has blessed us with righteousness and peace. D.H.H.

The typeset CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT as well as scanned pages of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT WITH KEYWORD CONCORDANCE are available online at WWW.CONCORDANT.ORG, page: "Concordant Version."

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PERCEIVING THE GRACE OF GOD

Question:

I know what many of the *blessings* of the evangel are (e.g., forgiveness, justification, conciliation, eonian life, immortality, incorruptibility, vivification), but I am not so clear concerning the *nature* of the evangel, that is, what it is and what it entails. Everyone says that we are saved "by grace"—or at least no one cares to say that we are *not* saved by grace—but as it turns out, what it means to be saved by grace, is variously defined.

Even among those affirming the final salvation of all, even as among those affirming eternal torment, grace is understood differently by some than by others. Most claim that one must meet some type of requirement in order to be saved, while a few claim that there is no requirement to be met. Some say that good works are required for life in the coming ages, yet others say that only faith in Christ is required. Still others claim that one's possession of eonian life turns on just one thing: one's willingness (according to one's own free will) to be *non-resistant* to the workings of the Holy Spirit.

In contrast to these various conditional views, some such as yourself teach that those who will enjoy eonian life are simply those whom God has chosen to receive it, according to His Own grace and purpose.

I am familiar with many of the arguments made by the advocates of these various positions; yet at least I am not fully confident just which of these teachings is correct. Can you help me see what the truth is concerning the evangel? I want to know what the evan-

> gel *is,* which will make evident to me what the *nature* of the evangel is. I want to know what salvation "by grace" *actually* means and entails. I know that Christ died for my sins, and that this is good news having to do with my salvation. But does Christ's sacrifice for my sins secure and ensure my salvation, or does it just secure and ensure the possibility of my salvation?

Answer:

YOU have framed the question well; and that is a good start. May we now consider it carefully, and, especially, answer it correctly and faithfully.

It is upon "*hearing* the word of truth, the evangel of [our] salvation," and upon *believing* it also ("in Whom on believing also"), that "[we] are sealed with the holy spirit of promise (which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured) for the laud of [Christ's] glory!" (Eph.1:13,14).

In speaking of our initial "hearing"—to be sure, with "ears to hear"—and "*believing*" of the evangel of our salvation, we have in view the time when we first, as ones who now (1) *rely*[1] upon the evangel of our salvation's testimony as true, and so (2) are *convinced* (i.e., persuaded) that its testimony, in fact, is true, therefore *assume* it as well (i.e., take it to ourselves as our own).

Especially as concerns the evangel, every man who is

1. "Now faith is an *assumption* of what is being *expected,* a *conviction* concerning matters which are not being observed" (Heb.11:1). The Greek *elpizō,* as here, is sometimes translated "expect" in reference to something in the future. It is also, however, sometimes translated "rely," as in the testimony, ". . . we *rely* on the living God . . ." (1 Tim. 4:10; *cp* 2 Cor.1:10; Rom.15:12). Futurity (as in "expect") is incidental to *elpizō,* hence is not inherent to its essential meaning, which is "rely." More fundamentally then, we may understand faith as "an assumption of what is being *relied upon* [as true], a conviction concerning matters which are not being observed."

truly wise of heart concerning it, is one in whom Yahweh has *put* wisdom and understanding (*cp* Ex.36:1; *cf* Col.2:2; 2 Tim.2:7). If we would have wisdom and understanding, then, this must be given to us from heaven, for "a man can not get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27).

Still, wisdom and understanding come to us in measure, and that, in installments; gradually, not suddenly, all at once. To be sure, where one enjoys wisdom and understanding, God has given these self-same endowments. And, where one seeks for wisdom and understanding, one does so solely by God's grace. Even so, the means of grace through which we gain wisdom and understanding is our own actions and efforts in which we labor unto this end, in order to *acquire* them:

5 **Acquire wisdom; acquire understanding;**
Do not [l]forget, and do not [l]turn aside
from the **sayings of my mouth;**
6 **Do not [l]forsake her,**[2] **and she shall guard you;**
Love her, and she shall preserve you.
7 The **beginning of wisdom** is**: Acquire wisdom,**
And [i]with all your acquisition, acquire understanding;
8 **Highly regard her, and she shall raise you up;**
She shall [m]bring you glory [t]as you [l]embrace her;
9 **She shall [g]bestow** a **wreath of grace [>]on your head;**
A **crown of beauty shall she award** to **you.**
(Proverbs 4:5-9)

"Wisdom" is "the faculty which makes the highest and best application of knowledge."[3] To "understand," is to "make out the meaning";[4] hence, "understanding" is that enlightened intelligence which one enjoys when one has, in

2. "her": i.e., wisdom.
3. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry "wisdom," p.329.
4. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry "understand," p.314.

fact, made out the meaning of something. Through proper analysis of both the meaning (i.e., essential significance) and function of each of the words comprised in a clause or sentence, which together serve to form and convey a specific idea, we may know what that specific idea is.

This may be termed a clause's or sentence's "base-meaning," in contradistinction to its "sense-meaning," which is to say its "interpretative meaning." While establishing even the base-meaning of a statement is often a formidable undertaking, one requiring substantial reading comprehension skills, as a rule, further establishing *the sense in which* that statement should be understood (which is to say, its "interpretative meaning) is an even much more formidable undertaking.

For example, in the words of the evangel, "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor.15:3), the base-meaning thereof is that "the Anointed One died ["died" meaning the cessation of life] for [i.e., 'for the sake of," or "on behalf of"] our sins [i.e., our mistakes, our failings of the ideal]."

From the clause, "Christ died . . ." together with the knowledge that to "die" means to "cease to live," we may determine that when Christ died, He ceased to live, which is the base-meaning of this statement. Still, simply believing that Christ actually died, does not answer the further question of the interpretative meaning here, which is: In what sense did He die? or, In what way is it possible to die (i.e., to cease to live)? Specifically, did Christ die categorically or only corporeally?

Further, to claim that it is, or is not, possible to die only corporeally while still remaining alive incorporeally, is a claim concerning the metaphysics[5] of death: Is it or is it not possible for one to die corporeally only (hence, in this

5. Metaphysics is the investigation of the nature of reality, seeking to determine what exists.

sense, to die), while still continuing to live, though only incorporeally? The answer to this question can only be discovered through an accurate knowledge of the metaphysics of death, specifically of human death.

The evangel, however, is simply that Christ died for our sins: that in being put to death (hence, in somehow ceasing to live), Christ did so for our sins.

A knowledge of *how* it was that, until the third day, Christ ceased to live, or of what it is for anyone to cease to live, is knowledge altogether distinct from a knowledge of the evangel itself. It is true that one may not *understand* the evangel fully or altogether correctly if one does not understand the true metaphysics both of life and of death. Nevertheless, one who *believes* that Christ *died* for our sins (who therefore has a *verbal* understanding of this declaration), *believes the evangel*—let his *metaphysical* understanding of death be what it will.

DISCRIMINATION OF SENSE

Before addressing your question specifically as to the nature of the evangel, I have first spoken somewhat of the more general matters of hearing and believing, of acquiring wisdom and understanding, even as of noting base-meaning while distinguishing it from interpretative meaning, that is, of the *sense* in which we should *understand* a statement to be so. These considerations which I have rehearsed briefly above, are directly relevant to your question; and, they are directly relevant as well to every other scripture-related question.

Our need is for eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart with which to believe. We are in desperate need of wisdom and understanding, for without these our quest for truth is hopeless. We have vital need as well to be intelligent in our faith, which critically includes discriminating between what is said, and the sense in which what is said

is to be understood, in light of an entire array of considerations relevant to whatever subject it may be that is at hand.

Let us, then, be praying unintermittingly, requesting, that the God our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giv*ing* us a spirit of wisdom and revelation, the eyes of our heart having been enlightened, for us to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength (*cf* Eph.1:17-19).

A CORRESPONDENT RANSOM FOR ALL

Now to your question: What is the *nature* of the evangel? Keep in mind in approaching this question that the evangel, in essence, is just one thing; it is that, "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures." More fully stated, even as the apostle Paul declares: "Now I am making known to you, brethren, *the evangel* which I bring to you, which also you accepted, in which also you stand, through which also you are saved, if you are retaining what I said in bringing the evangel to you, outside and except you believe feignedly. For I give over to you among the first what also I accepted, *that Christ died for our sins* according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:1-4).

The good news is that since Christ died for our sins, *our sins have been died for!* Indeed, ". . . We are observing Jesus . . . in the *grace* of God . . . tasting death for the sake of *everyone*" (Heb.2:9). ". . . Christ Jesus . . . is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all . . ." (1 Tim. 2:5,6). "God . . . wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4), and, "is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11).

Hence, "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome (for for this are we toiling and being reproached), that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. These things be charging and teaching" (1 Tim.4:9-11). "For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation . . . . The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He subjects all under His feet . . . . Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:22-28).

"For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, *if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died*" (2 Cor.5:14; *cp* Heb.2:9); and, "*. . . one who dies has been justified from Sin*" (Rom.6:7; *cp* vss.18,22; John 1:29).

"The evangel of [our] salvation" (Eph.1:13), which is the evangel that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor.15:3), is "the evangel of the *grace* of God": even as Paul declares, ". . . the dispensation which I got from the Lord Jesus, to certify *the evangel of the grace of God*" (Acts 20:24). "But not as the offense, thus also the *grace.* For if, by the offense of the one, the many died, much rather the *grace* of God and *the gratuity in grace,* which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds" (Rom.5:15). "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying" (Rom.5:18).

THE SAVING GRACE OF GOD

To answer your question, then, What is the *nature* of the evangel? the answer is, as the passages above make evident, that the evangel is an evangel of *grace,* and, of a grace which *saves:* it is the evangel of "the *saving grace* of God"

(Titus 2:11). "Now *if it is in grace, it is no longer out of works,* else the grace is coming to be no longer grace . . ." (Rom.11:6a; *cp* Rom.4:4; Luke 6:32-35). Hence any claim that salvation depends upon some type of human contribution (such as good works, assent to faith, or non-resistance to the operations of God's spirit), is necessarily mistaken, being contrary to the nature of grace.

Further, it is not a question of the nature of man's will. That is, whether it is or is not the case that man possesses such a freedom of will as is popularly supposed, is simply irrelevant. This is because in the matter of our salvation in Christ, we are not called upon to fulfill requirements. Instead, we are saved by genuine, gratuitous grace, not by some sort of "grace," falsely so-called, that is perfectly indistinguishable from a reward.

The evangel of our salvation, is not an evangel which merely offers to save, but which actually achieves salvation, in the *grace* of God. Therefore, Christ's sacrifice for our sins actually secures and ensures our salvation; it does not merely secure and ensure the possibility of our salvation.

If any "gospel teaching" today either affirms or entails it being the case that salvation is granted only on the condition of some type of human obedience, especially some type of ultimately flesh-dependent human obedience, any such teaching is false, for it denies that salvation is truly a gracious gift, not something granted as a reward or compensation, on a *quid pro quo* (i.e., "this for that") basis.

Alternatively, if any gospel teaching claims that the blessing of the gospel is truly a gracious gift, but that the gracious gift consists not in actually achieving salvation on behalf of the sinner, but only in making salvation possible while leaving its outcome uncertain, that teaching is false as well.

This is because such a concept is synergistic in nature (i.e., co-operation based), and in the end, is not even synergistic, but autosoteric in nature (i.e., ultimately dependent

upon the human self alone). According to that conception, when God has done all that He will do, and will do no more, and yet man still remains unsaved, it is necessarily man alone who makes all the difference between success and failure. In that case, for all eternity, man would be able to boast that when God's work was completed and yet he himself, the sinner, was still lost, it was then that he himself independently pitched in and did whatever was necessary in order for "salvation" to be realized.

". . . The word of *the truth of the evangel* . . . is bearing fruit and growing . . . from the day on which you hear and realized *the grace of God in truth,* according as you learned it from . . . a faithful dispenser of Christ . . ." (Col.1:4-7).

It is vital that we know what "the grace of God in truth" is not only in the sense of the particular blessings of which it consists according to "the truth of the evangel," but first of all and more especially, what the expression "the *grace* of God," in itself, in truth, actually signifies.

That is, what does it mean for something to be a matter of the "grace," or "favor" of God, in contrast to something that is a matter of the reward, wage, or compensation of God? "Now to the *worker,* the *wage* is *not* reckoned as a *favor* [i.e., as a *gracious* gift], but as a *debt*" (Rom.4:4). A favor or gracious gift, then, is not something that is due us because of something we have done, but is simply an act performed or provision made granted out of kindness and love in order to bring us joy, *irrespective of what we have done or not done, whether good or bad.* This is what grace is; and most importantly, this is what the grace of God is.

In the interests, then, of your perceiving for yourself and gaining an assurance in the grace of God in truth as set forth in the evangel of your salvation, I would commit you *"to God and to the word of His grace,* which is able to edify and give the enjoyment of an allotment among all who have been hallowed" (Acts 20:32). J.R.C.

INDEX TO VOLUME 101

Adam and Christ . . . 21
All Included in Christ . . . 277
Believing and Salvation . . . 27
But Grace Superabounds . . . 155
Consequently Then . . . 285
Creation of Humanity, The . . . 93
Critical Issues Concerning "The Many" and "On Which" . . . 267
Death in God's Purpose . . . 11
Death Reigns . . . 81
Disobedience and Obedience . . . 257
Evangel of Christ, of Israel, and of the Nations, The . . . 61
God's Purpose . . . 199
Grace and Glory . . . 165
Grace Should be Increasing, That . . . 233
Grandeur of Faith, The . . . 195
How the Dead are Roused (1 Cor.15:35-58) . . . 127
In-Beginning-Of . . . 39
Imputation or Transmission . . . 89
Man's Mission in Creation . . . 225
Misconceptions Concerning Justification by Works . . . 179
Mission of Mankind . . . 225
Momentous Parallels (Rom.5:18,19) . . . 243
Not as the Offense, Thus also the Grace . . . 147
Notes on Romans . . . 21,89
Obituaries: L. Brix 154, F. Hansen 287, J. Hricik 154, A. Portillo 155, J. Rentschler 154, C. Stark 287
Out of Many Offenses . . . 171
Paul to the Romans . . . 13,81,155,171,214,285
Precious Bane . . . 76
Questions and Answers . . . 27,61,179,233,267
Race-Wide Condemnation and Vivification . . . 247
Reigning in Life through the One . . . 214
"Shocking Blasphemy, A" . . . 208
Sin of Adam, The . . . 53
Studies in Romans . . . 21,89,247,257
Transmission of Sin, The . . . 5
Therefore, Through One . . . 13
Undeniable Evidence for the Resurrection . . . 99
Verb "Create," The . . . 42
Vivification of All, The (1 Cor.15:20-34) . . . 108
What is Grace? . . . 170

Contents:

3 Editorial
5 The Transmission of Sin
11 Death in God's Purpose
13 Therefore, Through One
21 Adam and Christ
27 Believing and Salvation
39 In-Beginning-Of
42 The Verb "Create"

JANUARY, 2010

Volume 101 **Number 1**

Vocabulary Index

for the

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

THIS INDEX is an attempt to provide users of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) access to full listings of the occurrences of each major Hebrew or Aramaic (Chaldee) word (except most proper names) used in the Old Testament.

It is admittedly more complex and less convenient than the Keyword Concordance published with the Concordant Literal New Testament. But until such a concordance using the vocabulary of the CVOT can be made available this may serve as a useful substitute.

This is an abridgment of a full list of the English terms used in the CVOT, as updated in 2009, as work proceeds on a first edition of the Version as a whole.

The list is keyed to Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance (EHCC, 5th edition), which is presently available under the title, Englishman's Hebrew Concordance (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody MA 01961-3473, ISBN 0-913573-21-3). The word entries in this latter edition are coded to the numbering system of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, and these numbers are also provided in this index.

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321 pages; available without charge in PDF format; file may be downloaded from **www.concordant.org, Concordant Version section.** *Specific link:* http://concordant.org/version/Vocabulary%20Index%20for%20the%20CVOT.pdf

Unsearchable Riches

A Bimonthly Magazine
For God and His
Word

VOLUME 101

co-editors:
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and
James R. Coram

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If I Could See

If I could see with faith's far eyes,
How the disguise of things would flee!

If I could see in loss, true gain,
I'd not complain, but patient be.

If I could see thy smile of love,
Grief's cloud above 'twould comfort me.

If I could see I would not fear,
Nor shed a tear, but trust in Thee!

If I could see Thee working all
That doth befall, I'd worship Thee!

If I could see Thy mighty plan
To succour man, to life the key—

I then would see that Love will win,
And over Sin have victory.

I then would see that all of life,
Both peace and strife, doth lead to Thee!

C. J. Blay

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2010
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED ONE

EDITORIAL

As stated on our cover, *Unsearchable Riches* is "A Bimonthly Magazine for God and His Word." That is, the articles are intended first of all to be for the glory of God, and, in accord with this, for the appreciation of His Word in which He makes Himself known.

What we intend, however, may not be carried out very well. We are stumbling and infirm. But this only can strengthen our reliance on the living God, Who indeed is operating all in accord with the counsel [*intention*] of His will, and in accord with His delight which He has purposed in Christ (Eph.1:9-11).

Consequently, our desire is to search into and testify to the depth of the riches of God, to His wisdom and knowledge in His judgments and in His ways, seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all (Rom.11:33,36). We would do so because we live in a world which often presses on us with great sorrow and unintermittent pain of heart (*cf* Rom.9:2), and we suppose this is so with our readers. We need to have the God, Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, shine in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor.4:6).

Perhaps we devote too much space to the evangel of God concerning His Son as Paul presents it in Romans and not enough to the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ as expounded by our apostle in Ephesians and Colossians (though they are intertwined as one). Yet we surely need the foundation laid by Paul as a wise foreman, as it concerns Jesus Christ (1 Cor.3:10,11; *cp* Eph.2:20). Thus we

give attention once again in this first issue of volume 101 to fundamental matters concerning the human predicament under the reign of death, and justification by the faith of Jesus Christ. We concentrate as well on God as the Creator, Who has a purpose in creating. This He achieves as the Just Justifier of sinners by means of One Who was obedient to the death of the cross, and as the Conciliator of His enemies through the death of His Son.

These are up-to-date themes as they have always been since they were first presented in the Scriptures. But some of them have long been covered up by human traditions. It is interesting that the truth of justification through Jesus Christ's faith (Rom.3:21-28; Gal.2:15,16; 3:21-24) is currently receiving much attention by biblical scholars. Also there continues to be dissatisfaction with the most frequent renderings of the Greek words, *eph [h]o,* in Romans 5:12, which the CV translates quite literally as "on which." Long established, but mistaken ideas, upheld by good and pious teachers are not easily discarded, and we are not optimistic that much progress will be made in the short run. Nevertheless, it is good to see these important issues being discussed.

They are matters of real consequence. We are not justified in any literal sense of the word by our faith, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. And gratuitous justification because of the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus is paralleled by the gratuitous effect of Adam's sin on all mankind. False tradition invariably detracts from the grace of God in the giving of His Son for sinners, and puts human efforts in its place.

It is only as we grow in appreciation of our need as sinners and God's grace as our Justifier and Saviour that we can rightly be directed in devoutness and edifying service for our Lord. "For the rest, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord . . . . it is your security" (Phil.3:1). D.H.H.

THE TRANSMISSION OF SIN

How is it that Adam's sin has ruined the race? What is transmitted that constitutes all his descendants sinners? It is surprising how many discordant theories are offered in explanation of this fact. At least six are recognized by name in works on theology, yet it is admitted that not one of these is satisfactory. All are based on the misapprehension and mistranslation of a single phrase. Correct that, and the whole subject becomes luminous and difficulties vanish as the mists before the morning sun.

In Romans 5:12 we read that "through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, *on which* all sinned . . . ." The usual rendering, "*for that* all have sinned," reverses the divine statement, and has led to a radical misconception of the truth as to sin, as a principle of action. The mistake is much the same as that made by evolution, which confuses creation with the present course of nature. It is true that death came into the world through one sin at the first, but it is not true that sin is the source of death to Adam's descendants. In their case it is *death* which is inherited, and this not only makes them sin once, but constitutes them sinners.

TWOFOLD EXPERIENCE OF DEATH

We can see the difference between sin as a single act and the principle of sin very clearly in Adam's case. Let us note most carefully the penalty which God attached to Adam's transgression. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). Not a word is said of a

change in his nature. All the penalty imposed was a two-fold experience of death. The Hebrew for "surely die" is usually given as "dying thou shalt die." The present state of our investigations in Hebrew grammar leads us to render it "to die you shall be dying," which is certainly most concordant with the facts and the truth now being recovered. Adam was *dying*—the process which continued throughout his life; *to die*—the fact which was its climax at the close. This interpretation is fully confirmed, not only by the experience of Adam, but by that of all his posterity. Humanity is now a dying race. Their lives not only culminate in death, but they are vitiated by the gradual operation of death from birth to dissolution.

When Adam sinned and saw the sad consequences of his offense, why did he not cease sinning? Why did he not learn the lesson his one transgression taught? We find that Adam, instead of fleeing from further errors, made more mistakes continually. One sin does not, in itself, constitute a sinner, but the one sin of Adam evidently led to his becoming such. Death entered through the one sin, and *death* it was that made him a confirmed sinner. He no longer needed a temptation from without. He did not require a prohibition from God. All he did was done in error simply because he had lost the vital force which alone could keep him in the path of rectitude.

A DEVITALIZING PROCESS

It is not *sin*, but *death* which came through to all mankind. All efforts to explain how sin came through, which do not recognize death as the medium of transmission, lead men to flounder in bogs and quagmires of thought from which the most eminent theologians have found no way of escape. Adam was not threatened with becoming a sinner if he sinned. He was warned that it would bring death. And this death it was that made him a sinner. So

with his posterity. They inherit mortality, a dying which ends in death, a devitalizing process. They are born to die, and this it is which debars them from acts of righteousness. This it is which constitutes them sinners. This is the "depravity" which makes men go contrary to conscience and against their nature.

Death, not sin, has passed through into all mankind, on which all sin. Death, according to the usual rendering of Romans 5:12, does not come until men have sinned. Yet an infant may die before it becomes conscious. The sinning spoken of here is the act, not the fact. To give the act of sinning as a reason why death came through to all mankind does not tell us how sin is transmitted. We wish to know why we commit this first act of sin and all those that follow.

This passage is often twisted to read, "for that all sinned *in Adam*." This may have some truth in it, but such a meaning cannot be extorted out of the words. It must be imposed upon them. "All sinned" is an exceedingly simple, self-evident statement, requiring no explanation, no theory to support it. Not so with "all sinned in him." This must be further explained by the doctrine of "federal headship" and involves endless problems such as the age of responsibility. The phrase "for that" can never be legitimately extracted from the Greek words ON WHICH. They point to the effect, not the cause. All sinned because death passed through to all.

How simple and satisfactory when we read aright! Death passed through to all mankind, *on which* all sinned. *Death* is the channel of sin. Death came through to all mankind. All men are mortal. Sin is a by-product of mortality. The transmission of death by generation presents no problems. It is simply the lack of sufficient life, a deficiency in vitality, of all that flows from the life abundant. We are severed from the Source of life. Men are denied access to the tree of life. They are wanting of the glory of God.

THE EFFECT OF MORTALITY ON ADAM

Let us not miss the simple lesson and striking contrast found in Adam's first sin and in his subsequent life of sin. We know that the first sin came from without. But the temptation was not repeated. Adam probably would not have yielded a second time. Nevertheless, Adam kept on sinning. He made futile efforts to conceal his shame. He hid from Yahweh. He felt himself a sinner. No cause whatever can be found for this course except the words of Yahweh Elohim. The penalty of his sin was death. Death began its operation the very day he ate of the forbidden fruit. And this death it was which led him from one sin to another, so that sin was not merely an isolated act, past and gone, but a present fact, full of sorrowful insistence.

There is no scriptural warrant for any change in Adam's nature. God was very explicit. The thing at stake was *life*. It was not necessary to say to Adam that he would become a sinner, for that is involved in death. Adam became just like his descendants, once death had entered.

SIN REIGNS IN DEATH

We all know that sin leads to death. But that the action is reciprocal, so that death is the cause, not merely of acts of sin, but of the practice and principle, which makes us sinners, has been practically lost to us because our translators gave it no place if they could help it. The apostle tells us that sin reigns *in* death (Rom.5:21), but they changed this to *unto* death, thus spoiling the sense and the figure at one stroke. Sin's sovereignty is not *unto* death but *in* death. Death is the sphere of its sway, the only territory which yields homage to its horrid tyranny.

Let us not lose the force of this figure. Where death is, there sin is supreme. The process of dying, which we call life, produces that predilection to err which is called sin, and puts all under the absolute despotism of Sin. Apart

from a new *life* no sinner can escape servitude from this master. Hence we read the glorious contrast: "thus grace, also, should be reigning, through righteousness, for eonian *life* through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:21).

We press the absolute tyranny of Sin in its own territory, death, not only for its own sake, but to impress the far more potent fact that Grace also is a tyrant, not one whit less securely seated than Sin. O, that the saints would only acknowledge its sway and bow to its beneficent despotism! We all allow Sin's sovereignty, but how few glory in the Grace that utterly displaces it?

Once we have established the close connection between death and sin and the vital relation between life and righteousness, many a passage of Holy Writ will be suffused with added light. Life, eonian life, is practically synonymous with salvation from sin. Life and incorruption go hand in hand (2 Tim.1:10). Those whose names are in the book of life have no part in the second death (Rev.20:15). The resurrection of *life* includes deliverance from all the penalties and disabilities of sin. Life in Christ is all we need. Sin, sorrow, and suffering will cease for us when we are made alive. When death is abolished, sin in fact as well as in act, will be banished from the universe.

OUR LORD'S VITALITY

That which especially distinguished our Lord and Saviour from those about Him was the possession of superabundant life. They were mortal, drifting to their graves. He was so suffused with life that He could lavish His vitality on others. Should they touch a leper, they would be unclean. His touch would cleanse the leprosy. So great was His vital force that He not only stayed the ravages of death before dissolution, but actually recalled a putrid corpse to life. The first Adam became a living soul; He was a life-imparting Spirit.

It is only as we realize that the intense vitality of the Son of God was the basis of His sinlessness and righteousness and holiness, that we are in a position to contemplate the awful significance of His death. As death was not operating in Him, He never should have died. Only His own voluntary act and the violence of His enemies could open the portals of death for Him. But it was not death alone but the attendant consequences which He dreaded. This it was that drew drops of blood from His brow, that set His will at variance with His Father.

The suffering of the Son of God is not our subject at this time. All we wish to point out is the channel through which sin is transmitted. It not only comes to us through death, but so also it came to Him, when He canceled it.

DEATH ABOLISHED

The glorious harmony of this foundation truth with God's great ultimate will be apparent to all who believe in the abolition of death and the vivification of all. If sin can operate only through death it will surely disappear when death vanishes. It will have no channel through which to reach men and no sphere in which to operate. All that will be left of it will be the delicious relief of its absence, and the deep, abiding appreciation of the love that could use it to reveal its overwhelming tide of affection.

The transmission of sin is a matter of paramount importance in the knowledge of God's ways. If sin or a "sinful nature" is inherited, as usually taught, it gives rise to many perplexing problems which are not solved for us in the Scriptures. It makes the whole subject of sin inexplicable, and darkens the resurrection. But if death, or rather dying, mortality, is transmitted, all of these problems vanish. This is why the rendering *on which* is so vital and valuable, in place of the usual *for that* (Rom.5:12).

A. E. Knoch

DEATH IN GOD'S PURPOSE

THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT imparted to Adam and Eve the knowledge of good and evil. This tree is no longer with us, but the *death* which it imparted has been inherited by the whole race. *This it is what makes men sinners*. We do not need to be lured and deluded by a sinister spirit being in the form of a serpent, nor do we need to eat forbidden fruit. It is not that our *nature* is sinful, but because the *dying* process, which Adam first felt on the day he ate the forbidden fruit, has been continued and prolonged, not only until the day of his death, but in all his progeny. The life which he had received when Yahweh Elohim blew into his nostrils the breath of lives (plural), was not limited to himself alone, but included the entire race which springs from him. After his offense, he passed on the dying process, so that each one of his descendants also acquires the knowledge of good and evil. This is confirmed by Paul in Romans (5:12) where he says: "Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through to all mankind, *on which* all sinned."

In order to understand such a subject as death, or any evil, we should consider its entire history as given in the Scriptures, and as an integral part of God's purpose. One of the most difficult things for us to understand is the entrance and course of death. We read that, in Adam, all are dying. But why? Perhaps we might even question whether such a simple act as the eating of fruit was sufficient to warrant the death penalty. It would soon depopulate the earth if such trivial misdeed deserved death today. But let us allow that, as Adam was warned of its effects, he

brought the penalty upon himself. But *we* did not offend thus! Why should *we* suffer for what *he* did? In our decadence, we are shortsighted and do not see that this is just as applicable to our salvation. Our life, the life of all mankind in the future, is absolutely undeserved, and is not based on our acts, but on the suffering of our Saviour.

Moreover, we and Adam and all mankind, yes, all creation, will be dealt with in this same manner because, long before we were in Adam, all were in the Son of God's love (Col.1:16). Our inclusion in Adam is a most helpful object lesson, intended to teach us what is in store for all. Our inclusion in Adam brings us death and woe. Our previous inclusion in God's Son will bring life and love to all. This is God's way, consequently it is not like our ways. He is not dealing with us as if He were human, like ourselves, but as He is in truth, the Creator and Preserver, the Blesser of all His creatures. If our fate depended upon ourselves, Adam's example should show us that we would *all* suffer eternal death. But in His hands we may be assured that we will only suffer in such measure as will enable us to enjoy His blessing and give Him the glory and praise which is His due.

At first all were *in* the *Son* of God's love. At last all will be *in Christ*. In that early epoch there was no sin and no need for a Saviour. The Son was not anointed until later, for the specific purpose of dealing with death and sin. When in the Son, we had part in His life, just as later, in Adam, we partook of His mortality. Finally, however, all will be vivified, that is, possess a life after death. As this was secured by the sacrifice of *Christ*, we are now safe, beyond the reach of death. In Christ shall *all* be vivified (1 Cor.15:22). True, this includes only those in Christ, His saints, at His presence. Yet all the rest will be included at the consummation, when all enemies, even death, will be abolished.

A. E. Knoch

THEREFORE, THROUGH ONE

THE "Therefore" of Romans 5:12 and the "Consequently" of Romans 5:18 arise from the evangel of God as Paul has set it forth from the beginning of the epistle, but the particular and immediate connection is with Romans 5:6-11. In the extraordinary passage of Romans 5:12-21 the apostle carries over the terminology and thoughts of the preceding paragraphs and places them in a context encompassing all of Scripture and involving all mankind.

We are infirm *sinners* (missers of the mark of perfection) who can do nothing to make ourselves righteous in God's sight. Yet we have received God's evangel concerning His Son, telling us that while we are still sinners, *Christ died* for our sakes. By this means, we are *justified* gratuitously, in His blood.

Not only are we unrighteous in ourselves, unable to stand justified in God's sight by our acts, we are irreverent enemies of God. Yet He conciliates us to Himself *through the death of His Son.* We have contributed nothing to this doubled endowment of righteousness and peace. Yet in God's grace, we who are believing have already been reckoned righteous and have *obtained* the conciliation which God has achieved *through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Therefore—

Since this is so that we who are sinners just like everyone else are being blessed already by God's achievements on behalf of sinners, through Jesus Christ, it must ultimately be enjoyed by all. Christ died for all. All have been died for. Hence Paul writes:

Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned . . . [that is to say,] *as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.* (Rom.5:12,18,19)

By thus omitting verses 13-17 we see where Paul is leading us. He is taking the facts concerning the catastrophic position of all humanity before God, including us, which he has already set before us, and adding them to the facts of the evangel concerning Christ, which he has just reiterated for our faith. His conclusion is that "therefore," even as all are constituted sinners because of Adam, thus also, all will be constituted righteous because of Christ.

ALL MANKIND

Paul has said he was eager to bring the evangel to both Greeks and barbarians and (this may be a surprise) even to those who already were believing it (Rom.1:14,15). There are no barrier walls to the work of evangelizing. And we who are believing it are always in need of its light and invigorating power.

Thus, reaffirming his eagerness in negative terms, Paul has said he was not ashamed of the evangel, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing, for in it God's righteousness is revealed (Rom.1:16,17).

Yet furthermore (and here we tend to miss his point), he has said, piling detail upon detail, that he was not ashamed of the evangel, *for* God's indignation is being revealed from heaven on all the irreverence and injustice of human beings, who are deserving of nothing except death (Rom.1:18-32).

Paul was not ashamed of the evangel because each individual human being is defenseless before God in His just judgment, where God pays each one (the Jew included) in accord with his acts, even the hidden things, so that everyone's judgment is found to be fair (Rom.2:1-3:8). Paul is not ashamed of the evangel because both Jews and Greeks are all under sin, and not one is righteous—not even one, so that by means of human acts no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:9-20).

Paul was not ashamed of the evangel because everyone needs it. It is a message of critical and vital importance for all mankind.

So then, in Romans 3:21,22, Paul has repeated what he had said in Romans 1:17, assuming we will still have Romans 1:14-16 in mind. Paul was eager to bring the evangel of which he was not ashamed, for in it "a righteousness of God is manifest . . . through Jesus Christ's faith [not our faith], for all, and on all who are believing."

If both prepositional phrases, "for all" and "on all" are original and can properly be differentiated by a comma as in the CV, then we can see that Paul immediately relates the evangel to what he had just concluded about mankind as a whole. The righteousness of God now made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ is marked out *for all.*

THOSE WHO ARE BELIEVING

Then, turning to the believer, the apostle has declared that this righteousness of God is already "*on* all who are believing [this evangel]," who are included in the entirety of sinful humanity, wanting of the glory of God. Accordingly, he has written in Romans 4:4 that to the one "who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness." What Christ has done for all has been put to the believer's

account already. Furthermore, being justified by the faith of Jesus Christ, the believer may be having peace toward God, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:1,2). Yet not only so, but in our present lives we are greatly blessed by knowing God has a purpose of love even in our afflictions.

Believing the evangel is to focus our attention on Christ, on what God has done through Him, on His faith, on His death, on the shedding of His blood, and on His resurrection. For apart from that there is no manifestation of God's righteousness, and thus God could never be displayed as the just Justifier, nor could He ever express His love in removing the barriers of enmity between humanity and Himself and drawing His enemies to Himself in peace.

But since God has done so through His Son, Jesus Christ, and has already blessed us through our Lord, He will bring all mankind into the blessings resulting from this great achievement.

THE UNFINISHED ANALOGY

However, as we have seen, the analogy between Adam's sin and Christ's righteous act as they affect all mankind, begun in Romans 5:12, is broken off at the end of the verse. The "even as" is left without the expected "thus also" until verses 18 and 19. For now the apostle concentrates on the "Adam side" of the comparison, just as he did in 1:18-3:20. Yet everything he writes about Adam and sin and death is important for our appreciation of our Lord Jesus Christ and what He has done for us all.

We begin, therefore, with verse 12 by itself.

Referring back to Genesis 3, Paul directs our attention to Adam and his sin. The one man, Adam, the sin of Adam, the effect of the one sin, which is the invasion of the operation of death in the world, and the effect of this operation of death on all mankind which is that all sin, these com-

prise the theme of Romans 5:12. This is succinctly and tellingly expressed both in thought and structure:

A. *Therefore, even as through one man* **sin** *entered into the world,*
B. *and through sin* **death,**
B. *and thus* **death** *passed through into all mankind,*
A. *on which all* **sinned**—

By arranging this verse in four lines we see that the principal theme relates to *sin* and *death*, with a focus on sin in the first and fourth line and a focus on death in the middle two lines. The structure does not indicate a parallel between the first two lines and the second two lines, but rather a single, cohesive thought leading from Adam's sin to the sinning of everyone by way of the tyrannical power of death. First sin is the cause of death, and then death is the cause of sinning.

We also discern a contrast between the "one man" (literally, one *human*) and "all mankind" (literally, all *humans*). Similarly, the phrase "into the world" stands in association with the phrase "into all mankind." The two verbs, translated "entered" and "passed through" work together to indicate forward movement from one thing to another, and this is supported by the prepositions, "through" and "into," and the phrase, "on which."

SIN AND DEATH

The text speaks of the one sin of Adam. We have no trouble with that. It was a sin of disobedience (Rom.5:19), a transgression (Rom.5:14) of the instruction of God, in which He said: "From every tree of the garden you may eat, yea eat. But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying" (Gen.2:16,17).

Adam sinned, and on that day the process of dying began

in him and continued until he died (*cf* Gen.5:5). By a figure of association, the process of dying is called by the same name as the culmination of the process: death.

But in Romans 5:12 Paul does not simply recall that the one man sinned and came under the debilitating influence of the reign of death in him, but rather he adds with emphasis that this had major repercussions on all humanity. Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, *and thus* death passed through into all mankind. There is an operation of mortality that works in us, and this is traced back to Adam and his sin.

PROGRESSION OF THOUGHT

We see, therefore, that Romans 5:12 speaks of one thing leading to the next.

Through one man sin *entered into* the world.

Then *through* this entering of sin into the world death entered into the world.

And thus because of this entering of death into the world, death *passed through into* all mankind.

And finally, it is *on* account of this passing of death into all mankind ("on which") that all sinned.

Yet according to the most widely accepted of current understandings of this passage, as reflected by the AV rendering, and followed by most others, the connection between the last two clauses reverses the direction of cause and effect:

Through one man sin entered into the world.

Through this sin came death.

And so death passed upon all men.

And this was because (*for* the reason *that*) all sinned.

In this, the connection between Adam and his descendants seems to be that he led the way, and we all follow. Why we do so is not explained, and why Paul should trace death first to Adam while wanting us to know it really is to

be traced to our own sins seems only to discredit his ability to communicate. And most seriously, the question of how this serves as a parallel to the righteous act and obedience of Christ and its effect of gratuitous justification and life loses its way in the mists of theological disputation.

"ON WHICH"

The Greek words, *eph [h]o,* literally represent the preposition "on" and the pronoun "which" (or "who"). Paul uses the exact terms elsewhere only three times, in 2 Corinthians 5:4, in Philippians 3:12 and Philippians 4:10, and in each case the sense, *on* [account of] *which,* is appropriate. The lexical and grammatical issues support the CV rendering, but the deciding issue is contextual, and (if I may use the much abused term), evangelical. The parallel points of comparison between Adam and his sin, and Christ and His righteous act, are seriously compromised, if not covered over, by the reversal of Paul's thought at the end of verse 12. He is not denying that the ration of sin is death (Rom.6:23) when he traces the fact that we sin to the operation of death in us which was introduced by Adam's sin. We must not obscure what Paul says about why we sin, lest we obscure what he says about why we shall be constituted righteous.

Paul is concerned with death as a dying process that drastically and gratuitously affects humanity, debilitating us all. Thus the apostle writes, "death *reigns* from Adam to Moses" over those who do not sin as a transgression of God's instructions, but who nevertheless sinned (Rom. 5:14). And again he testifies, "Sin reigns *in* [not *unto*] death," that is, it reigns where death operates (Rom. 5:21). The same fact is brought before us in 1 Corinthians 15:56, where we read that the "sting of Death is sin." Death, as a vicious evil operating in us, stings us with the virulent barb of sin.

DEATH INFECTING ALL

The passing into all mankind of death in the form of dying, and this leading to the sinning of all, is continually illustrated in the pages of Scripture. From Cain to the ruin of all humanity in Noah's day, from Babel to Sodom, from Israel's murmurings in the wilderness to the making of the golden calf, to their failures in the land under their judges and kings and in the days of the prophets, down to the very coming of the Christ, Whom they rejected, the effects of the reign of death are brought before us.

And still the process of the reign of death continues and will not fully end until all are brought under the reign of Christ, in vivification (1 Cor.15:22,26).

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

When we see the pervasive evil that came through Adam we will be prepared to appreciate what is said about Christ in the second halves of every verse from Romans 5:15 to 5:21. Even as through one man sin and death came into the world on which all sinned, *thus also:*

The grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds.

The grace is out of many offenses into a just award.

Those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Through one just award for all mankind [comes] life's justifying.

Through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.

Grace superexceeds.

Grace reigns through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

D.H.H.

ADAM AND CHRIST

IN Romans 5:12-21 the human race is viewed as a unit to which Adam and Christ equally sustain universal relationships. God's two men, their respective acts, and the consequences of these to all alike, are earnestly presented as two great sets of facts essentially connected with universal condemnation and universal justification. Only two men have radically affected the history of the race. All other acts are included in their respective acts of disobedience or obedience. The states and dispositions of flesh or spirit which motivate the acts of all other men have their sources in one or the other of these two. No man can do more harm than did Adam. He inflicted more injury on God than any other. He slew more men than any other, for he slew them all. By one disobedience he sent himself and his progeny tobogganing to destruction. He made the grave the terminus of his race. Only the Last Adam can affect as many as Adam did, yet He accomplishes more, for He not only counteracts the first man's destructive deed, but also all its direst consequences.

God's righteousness and peace as conferred on believers and giving assurance of glory was demonstrated and brought to a climax in the foregoing part of this epistle. There is nothing to add to what has been said of the personal values of these gifts. Their racial values are now to be set forth. Not only is every individual of the race in view, but the paragraph sweeps the whole field of human history. History has three grand divisions; namely, from Adam to Moses, from Moses to Christ, and then the names of Adam

and Moses are dropped and one name alone remains, that of Jesus Christ our Lord.

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Christ and His work is the subject. If Paul turns suddenly from his joyous boasting in God to the darkest and saddest disaster of human history, it is only that he may put it into immediate contrast with the superexcess of light and gladness flowing from the grace that is in Christ, which transmutes disaster into glorious triumph for God and for humanity. If for a little we are to be occupied with Adam's offense and its devastating consequences to all, it is only to be shown that the righteousness of God in Christ shall extend equally to all.

EQUALITY AND EXCESS

The parities and disparities, the disobedience and the obedience are clearly, if briefly, canvassed. One or other of two ideas is found in every verse. They are *equality* and *excess*. Adam slew all. Christ cannot exceed Adam in this respect, but His salvation is equal in extent to the destruction wrought by Adam. When Christ's achievement is compared with that of Adam as to the numbers affected there is always exact equivalence. But when the results of Christ's work are contrasted with the effects of Adam's offense, there is always excess. And the excess is always on Christ's side. Christ is destined to do much more for every child of Adam than Adam did. The benefits received from the Last Adam are in inverse ratio to the disaster entailed by the first. Mere cancellation of what some call "Adamic" sin and death would not explain the "much rather's" of this passage, nor call for the surplusage of grace which superexceeds sin. As to numbers there is parity: as to grace and life and righteousness there is the disparity of excess.

PROFOUND, BUT NOT OBSCURE

The sagacity of many able commentators has exhausted itself on what one has called "the subtleties and intricacies of one of Paul's obscurest passages." The passage is indeed profound and has the inexhaustible depth of God's word, before which we need to be very humble. That subtlety, intricacy, and obscurity are found will not be questioned by any who are familiar with the history of the interpretation of this passage. But these belong to the comments rather than to the text. God's word does not conceal truth. It alone reveals it. If there is obscurity, is it not proper to attribute it to the reader? And does not such a confession warrant serious attempts to clear away some of the obscurities? We need to approach the passage with honesty of heart, intellectual candor, freedom from the trammels of traditional theology, and above all, with prayer for spiritual intelligence to perceive just what God says. If we fail, we should rather attribute the failure to our lack of spiritual strength than to obscurity in the inspired word.

ADAM, SIN AND DEATH

Romans 5:12 introduces a comparison which is not completed. One side only of a balanced statement is given, but the other side is implied by the "even as" and by all that has preceded.

12. ***Therefore*** shows that, though the argument now passes from the individual to the race, the chain of thought is not broken. This second part of the chapter is thus linked to the first, which has prepared us for the introduction of Adam and the entire race.

Even as . . . all sinned . . . . The structure of this sentence is broken by the omission of the principal clause. Some have thought that Paul slipped in the eagerness and intensity of his thought, and so omitted the clause. But his words bear the marks of most careful premeditation. The

missing clause may be supplied from the context as follows: *Thus also through One Man grace entered into the world, and through grace life, and thus life shall be imparted to all mankind, on which all partake of righteousness.* We venture to think that the intelligence of our friends will preserve us from the charge of adding to Scripture. We shall not base any argument on the supplied words; but that they are true to the whole context may be seen by noting the correspondences, as *one man* and *one man*, *sin* and *grace, death* and *life, all mankind* and *all mankind, sin* and *righteousness.* The inspired word needs no addition; its meaning is clear. Paul sacrifices a balanced sentence that he may establish the first side of the statement. The broken sentence is a literary device of inspiration to fix our attention on the tremendous facts stated in the first side of the comparison. When these are clearly apprehended all the rest is proven by a *thus also.*

So that it is not till verse 18 that Paul puts the comparison in complete form. *Consequently then* introduces the climacteric statement, which resumes and recapitulates the argument concerning *the one* and *the all.* Verse 19 explains and makes foolproof the summarizing statement of verse 18. The same recapitulation of the race in Adam and in Christ is found in First Corinthians 15:22.

Through one man. The emphasis is on *one.* The dozen occurrences of this word are an additional emphasis. Two ones, two men, two acts, two sets of consequences dominate this passage, dominate each individual, dominate history, and determine the condition and destiny of the entire race. There are only two men, and no third. Is there such a connection between one man and the race as to secure to all what one has done? The validity of this argument depends on the immutable and inescapable relations existing between the race and its respective heads. Scripture and science declare that such a relation exists. Heredity

and the solidarity of the race are not discoveries of modern science. That mankind is one and that all are related as descendants of a first pair is the assertion of Genesis. The law of heredity which moderns recognize contains in germ every principle involved in Paul's assertion that the offense of the one ancestor involves the offspring in disability, condemnation, and death, as well as that other assertion that through the obedience of the One the race with which He has become incorporated shall be endowed with life and righteousness.

The derivation of sin and death from Adam is treated by Paul as a known and admitted fact derived from the Genesis story. The literal accuracy of the account of the entrance of sin is assumed and the whole argument based upon it. The race is one because it sprang from one. Adam was once the race. The race was involved in him and could have been killed in him.

THE ENTRANCE OF SIN

Sin entered into the world. Sin is here personified and is viewed as a whole. It enters by a single transgression. Sin is lawlessness. It is failure and want, lack of conformity to the revealed will of God. Adam's sin was refusal to be subject to God. If I yield obedience to God on ninety-nine points and disobey Him in the hundredth, I am sinning even as Adam did. The consequences show that no sin is trivial. Adam's one offense introduced disorder and ruin into a perfectly ordered world. The root idea of *kosmos*, world, is that of order, system and adornment. Sin is the destroyer of all this.

THE ENTRANCE OF DEATH

And through sin death. What is death? The word first occurs in Genesis 2:17. This passage is most illuminating. It says, literally: *For on the day you eat from it, to die you*

shall be dying. The threatened death was to seize on Adam immediately on his sinning, "on the day you eat from it." It has been objected that this threat was not carried out until, some nine hundred and thirty years later, Adam was brought down to the soil out of which he was taken. But the process (dying) began immediately, and culminated later in death (to die). The first use of "death" includes all the shades of meaning with which the word is used in subsequent Scriptures.

And thus death passed through into all mankind. This clause asserts that sin caused the transmission of death from Adam to his remotest offspring. Death does not reach each individual through a door which he himself opens, but by entering the door of one man's sin and *thus* passing through to all men. The fact that all are dying is indisputable. Here is the explanation. The fact of the transmission of sin is not here stated, but rather the transmission to all of *death.*

THE EFFECT OF MORTALITY ON ALL

On which all sinned. There has been a great variety of translations and interpretations of these simple words. The literal translation here given seems to be the only one that does not contradict the surrounding statements. All personally and actually committed sins, and they did so as a result of their mortality and consequent moral depravity. The antecedent of "which" is "death." This death process was transmitted to all, whereon all sinned. Death channels the failure of Adam to all. It is never said that in Adam all are sinning, but that in Adam all are dying. Let us stick to the statements of the text. Sin first caused death to Adam. This death, which is the effect of sin, is transmitted to all, and causes them to sin. By sinning they proved that death had passed upon them, and by it they were constituted sinners. George L. Rogers

BELIEVING AND SALVATION

Question:

Since justification is only granted to, or comes "on those who are believing" (Rom.3:22), it would seem to me that boasting in self is not really debarred, even though this is what Paul says, that it is debarred, and so it must be the case that, rightly understood, this is so (Rom.3:27).

Similarly, if we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise not only "on hearing the word of truth, the evangel of [our] salvation . . . [but] *on believing also*" (Eph. 1:13), it is obvious that our believing is what makes the difference between whether or not we are saved.

Finally, in Ephesians 2:8,9, even though our salvation itself is "in grace," and "not out of [us]" (since God saves us, we do not save ourselves), nonetheless, salvation *comes* to us "through faith." So again, faith alone is finally determinative of salvation.

Since believing is something that we do, I agree that, in any ordinary sense, it is an act, or work (since, by definition, something that one does is an act, or work). But since Paul says that we are "justified *by faith apart from works of law*" (Rom.3:28) and that justification is given "to him who is *not working, yet is believing . . .*" (Rom.4:5), I conclude (1) that God must not consider believing to be an act (presumably since it is only an inward mental act), and (2) that while I am *not* saved *by works* (Eph.2:9), I *am* "justified *by faith*" (Rom.3:28).

Still, even if faith (or in any case, believing) is, in some special sense in the sight of God, not a "work," since one's eligibility for salvation ultimately depends

upon whether one believes and accepts Christ or does not believe and rejects Him, faith is clearly decisive to salvation.

Evidently, then, even as faith, in a special sense, is not considered a work, humbly intoned, boasting in one's faith alone, in a corresponding special sense, is not deemed (improper) boasting.

It is for these reasons that I cannot agree with you that salvation, in all its connections, is "all of God," since in the end it depends on our faith. Indeed, if salvation were all of God, we would not be responsible agents and it would be unfair for only some to be saved while others remained lost, even if not for eternity but only for the coming ages.

What do you think of my conclusion here, and especially of the reasons for my conclusion, given above, because of which I believe as I do?

Answer:

WHILE I agree that your conclusion follows from your premises, I find your premises themselves to be mistaken. Hence, since I view the foundations of your position as demonstrably false, I cannot concur with you in your position itself. Below, I will state and consider your various premises and related thoughts, one by one, and then comment on them, explaining why I find them to be untenable and in error.

***(1)* Since justification is only granted to, or comes "on those who are believing" (Rom.3:22), it would not seem to me that boasting in self is really debarred . . . .**
***(2)* . . . I conclude . . . that God must not consider believing to be an act (presumably since it is only an inward mental act) . . . .**

Setting aside my opinion for the moment concerning your notion here that believing qualifies or makes one eligible for salvation, on the assumption that this notion is correct, I would only add that it not only would *seem* that

boasting is not debarred, but boasting, clearly, would *not be* debarred. This is even as the apostle Paul declares, "For *if* Abraham was justified by acts [*ex ergōn,* OUT OF-ACTS], he has something to boast in, but not toward God" (Rom.4:2). In that case, Abraham's boasting would not be Godward, but inward, toward himself, in himself.

Your claim, based on the false premise (see below) that even though believing is an act, God must not "consider" it to be an act, leads you to conclude that, "humbly intoned," boasting "in one's faith alone" must not be "(improper) boasting," is quite untenable. Men are at least as disposed to boast in their mental labors even as in the decisions of their hearts as they are in the work of their hands. Humbly intoned or not, many freely and regularly engage in boasting, which is to say in self-praise, even as in self-admiring ways (whether publicly or in self-contemplation) in consideration of their "decisions for Christ" even as of their living for Him as well, in which they seek to credit themselves for "letting the Holy Spirit have His way," unlike the mass of men, including those less noble believers whom they deem their inferiors.

Paul simply does not draw the *kind* of distinction between working and believing that most suppose. Where Paul distinguishes between working and believing, in his words, "Yet to him who is not working, yet is believing . . ." (Rom.4:5), the apostle's distinction is not a metaphysical distinction, concerning the *nature* of what exists, but a functional distinction, concerning the *purpose* that each one of the respective entities in view (namely, [1] working, and [2] believing) *serve:* "Now to the worker, the wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as a debt. Yet to him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness" (Rom.4:4,5).

Paul's argument is, since, if one is justified by what he

does he has something to boast in (Rom.4:2) and yet in justification boasting is debarred (Rom.3:27), it follows that we are not justified by what we do.

For his working, that which a worker receives is not a favor, or gracious gift, but a wage, which is his just due, which is owed to him because of what he has done. Yet insofar as our being recipients of the blessings of the evangel is concerned, we are not workers to whom gain is due because of our work, but are instead beneficiaries of grace in relation to which our works are wholly irrelevant.

When we read, then, as concerns the blessings of the evangel, that we are ones who are "*not* working," the sense is that we are ones to whom nothing is due in consideration of what we have done—which perforce includes any and all believing in which we engage.

So when we further read as concerns the blessings of the evangel that while we are classed as "*not* working" individuals, yet nevertheless that we still enjoy a certain classification, namely that of those persons who "[*are*] believing," something very important becomes manifest to us. What becomes manifest is that in relation to our obtaining of the blessings of the evangel, our believing of the evangel is not relevant *in consideration of* its being something that we do (even though believing is something that we do).

Our believing of the evangel instead becomes relevant as concerns the blessings of the evangel in consideration of the fact of *the essential purpose served by* our believing, which is that it is the occasion, or basis (in the sense of "fitting groundwork"), upon which God reckons our faith "*for* righteousness."

The relevance of our believing in relation to the blessings of the evangel themselves, then, is not the false notion that merit inheres in our believing, but that it is on the occasion and fitting groundwork of our *having believed*, that righteousness is accounted to us.

It is not that by this accounting we actually become righteous. Instead, what Paul says is that in this act of God, which He performs on our behalf, our faith is reckoned "*for* [*eis*, lit., "into"] righteousness."[1] This is to say that through this act of reckoning (or "accounting"), our faith is "put down to our account" such that by so doing God's goal of our gaining a certain righteousness is thereby realized.

What this specific righteousness is which God grants us *through* this act of reckoning in which He engages, is the righteousness achieved through the faith and faithfulness of Jesus Christ in His obedience unto the death of the cross. This righteousness is afforded us in spirit; we do not yet experience it in full.

This righteousness is bestowed upon us upon our believing, not because of the virtue of our faith, but because it is on the apt occasion of our believing that God delights to do so. When we believe in the death and resurrection of Christ, we are believing in the means through which our justification is achieved. Thus we perceive the aptness inherent in the occasion.

This is not to say that by our own albeit "right act" (so far as it goes) of believing God that we actually become righteous. It is rather to say that what transpires is that in *correspondence to* our having believed God, God, for His own wise and good ends, sees fit to "put it in His account book," as it were, that we are righteous. And so we are, "in spirit," as if already present (*cp* 1 Cor.5:3). By this act in which God puts it on the record that we are righteous even though in ourselves we are not righteous, as with Abraham, God, proleptically (i.e., in anticipation), is *calling* what *is*

1. *eis* (INTO) is "a connective used with the accusative [i.e., objective] case, denoting direction or entrance" (Keyword Concordance, p.159). Here the sense is that our faith is put down to our account thus, not in consideration of any merit of its own, but for the *purpose* of thereby granting us (a certain) righteousness.

not as if it were, in light of the fact that—because of the saving work of Christ on our behalf—eventually it *will be* so (*cf* Rom.4:17b).

Insofar as the existence itself of our faith is concerned, suffice it to say that we are *graciously granted* to be believing" (Phil.1:29). God graciously grants at least a small measure of faith concerning the work of Christ and His victory over death to all who are His (*cf* 1 Cor.15:10,11; 1 Thess.4:14; Rom.12:3). But whatever faith each one may have as a result, does not make the evangel of his salvation become applicable to him, for it was already applicable to him long before he was born, and certainly long before he first believed.

For the reasons already explained, with a view toward our salvation, faith cannot be an entity of inherent merit; it can only be an entity of inherent blessing. We are not blessed in return for believing; it is rather that because we are blessed, we therefore believe. Through believing, we gain the *assurance* of faith, which results from believing. In believing, we gain not entitlement to (or "eligibility" for) blessing, but assurance of blessing.

We were chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4), and are now called with a holy calling, *not in accord with our acts,* but in accord with God's own purpose and the *grace* which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian (2 Tim.1:9).

The evangel, then, is not "good advice," but good news. It is simply an announcement, a heralding of those great truths which comprise the evangel of our salvation. They are all fully true *concerning ourselves* entirely apart from our faith in them and acceptance of them.

REALITY AS CONCERNS FAITH

While faith, what is believed, is itself not a work, believing is a work, an activity, albeit a mental activity. To do

something, is to perform an act. Acts are not confined to external acts, but include inward, mental acts as well.

Believing is the exercise of faith, through rehearsal, contemplation, and reaffirmation. Believing is one of the most intellectually demanding activities, or "works," in which we may engage. Among all of our doings, engaged believing is one of the most strenuous, involving us in an abundance of mental exertion, vigorous action, and effort.

Whether any certain act involves the use of one or another bodily member or members (e.g., one's hands and one's brain together, or one's brain alone), is beside the point. Hence any claim to the effect that believing is not an act, or work, is obviously mistaken and is an artificial distinction not reflective of reality.

It is instead reflective of an attempt to justify a certain separate notion (even if not an explicit claim), one that nevertheless cannot be correct. That separate notion, miscreant in its nature (even as rarely if ever explicitly stated and frankly acknowledged), is none other than the notion that effectually we *are* justified out of acts, namely, by means of our own act of believing that Christ died for us, for the sake of our sins. It is the notion at least that even if we are not wholly justified by our acts, we are at least justified by our own act of believing sufficiently that by the beneficence of our believing we thereby gain access to having the further benefits of Christ's death applied to us.

It simply will not do to say that even though believing is an act, God must not consider it to be an act. What we know is (1) that believing is something we do; (2) that, by definition, that which we do is an act; therefore, (3) that believing *is* an act. To claim, then, that, even so, God does not "consider" one's exercise of faith to be an act, is to say that He does not regard something, or deem something to be, according as it truly is, which is to say that He deems something to be not what it is, but something that it is not.

Therefore, since believing *is* an act, let us frankly acknowledge this to be so. And then, let us acknowledge as well that we therefore are justified out of something that we do, that we have something to boast in accordingly, and that boasting in self is by no means debarred, but rather given its rightful place.

That is, let us acknowledge that these things are so *if it is the case,* as you claim, that our believing the gospel makes us "*eligible*" for the benefits of the gospel, such that our salvation is thereby ensured.

But to claim this is to deny the evangel itself, which declares that boasting *is* debarred. Therefore, let us freely acknowledge and insist that, "*Not for works which are wrought in righteousness which we do,* but according to His mercy, [God] saves us, through the bath of renascence and renewal of holy spirit" (Titus 3:5).

PRIDEFUL IMAGINING AND CONCEIT

Consequently, the following claims that you make cannot be true:

> ***(3)* . . . one's eligibility for salvation ultimately depends upon whether one believes and accepts Christ or does not believe and rejects Him . . . . faith is clearly decisive to salvation . . . . our believing is what makes the difference between whether or not we are saved . . . . faith alone is finally determinative of salvation.**

Indeed, the various inferences you make from the scripture passages to which you appeal, are all founded upon your fundamental notion that one somehow *qualifies* oneself, or makes oneself *eligible* for salvation by something that one does—whatever act it may be that one must perform unto this end. This is plainly to teach that salvation is only for the qualified, the eligible; it is to say that the saving work of God through Christ is gained by the human because of man's own doing. It is to say that man must first

save himself from ineligibility for God's further salvation on his behalf. No one who even *admits* that his outlandish teaching is one of salvation by works, can make any greater or substantively different claim than this.

> ***(4)* . . . in the end [salvation] depends on our faith.**

Here, you claim yet once again that in the end salvation depends on our faith. You simply assert that this is true, as if this settles the matter. No proof is given beyond your own unwarranted inferences from the verses to which you appeal, in which faith is somehow in view. You speak as if it follows from the fact that the believer's faith is somehow connected with his salvation, that the believer's believing therefore constitutes a qualifying agency by which one gains eligibility for salvation, and therefore, entitlement! Your claim here is completely fallacious; that is, your argument, dubious and thin as it is, in no way proves your claim. This is to say that even if your position here, on other grounds, were somehow correct, your own argument on behalf of your claim would still be invalid.

> ***(5)* . . . I cannot agree with you that salvation, in all its connections, is "all of God," since in the end it depends on our faith. Indeed, if salvation were all of God, we would not be responsible agents and it would be unfair for only some to be saved while others remained lost, even if not for eternity but only for the coming ages.**

In your complete statement here, you finally make it clear *why* you infer as you do from the content of the verses which you cite. It is because "if salvation were all of God, *we would not be responsible agents and it would be unfair* for only some to be saved while others remained lost," even if this should be the case only for the eons and not for eternity.

Manifestly, your fundamental desire is to subject the

Deity Himself to the bar of your own justice. Should He, for His own good reasons, even for a comparatively brief period, wish to act according to His own choice and purpose in a way which entails affording certain *blessings in grace* to some that are not granted to all, you wish to enter a protest. Why, this would be *unfair;* this is to say, it would be *unjust* and *wrong* if certain favors are granted to some that are not granted to all.

Accordingly, should God operate His universe in such a way that entails it being the case that men are not in all respects the very sort of responsible agents (that is, agents justly liable to the consequences of their actions) that you deem right and proper, you are ready to inform us that this is the same thing as their not being responsible agents at all. You know the way things need to be in order for them to be the way they should be; it is quite unthinkable that your fundamental suppositions here should be significantly mistaken.

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

In this final section, I will consider the verses to which you appeal (Romans 3:22; 3:28; Ephesians 1:13; 2:8,9) in support of your thesis that our believing is the means by which we make ourselves eligible for salvation.

FIRST, ROMANS 3:22 AND EPHESIANS 1:13:

yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction . . . . (Romans 3:22)

In Whom you also—on hearing the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation—in Whom on believing also, you are sealed with the holy spirit of promise. (Ephesians 1:13)

The fact that the blessing of "being justified" (Rom.3:24) has come on those who are believing (Rom.3:22), and that the blessing of being sealed with the holy spirit of promise,

likewise, comes "[up]on believing" as well, gives no support to the notion that believing constitutes (or affords and grants) eligibility. Justification is granted "*gratuitously* in [God's] *grace,* through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24), which precludes its being granted on any fancied grounds of eligibility because of believing.

NEXT, ROMANS 3:28:

Of works? No! But through faith's law. For we are reckoning a man to be justified by faith apart from works of law. (Romans 3:28)

When we are reckoning a man to be "justified by faith apart from works of law," since this justification is "by faith," by the specific faith that is in view in this context, faith's law *debars* it from being anything in which we can engage in self-boasting (Rom.3:27). Hence it is not merely that we should not boast, but that we cannot boast!

Since a man cannot get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven (John 3:27), we cannot legitimately boast even in our own faith, even though in consideration of our own doings of faith we would have something to boast in (*cp* Rom.4:2), however illegitimately so. This is even as Paul declares: ". . . Now what have you which you did not obtain? Now if you obtained it also, *why are you boasting as though not obtaining?"* (1 Cor.4:7).

Here in Romans 3:28, however, it is not our faith, but "Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22), "the faith of Jesus" (Rom. 3:26) that is in view. We are indeed "justified by faith," or more literally, "in faith," in that our justification is centered in faith, but it is in Jesus Christ's faith, the faith and faithfulness of Jesus, in which it is achieved. Therefore, since in this case boasting in self would not merely be *illegitimate, unwarranted,* and *improper,* but would be rationally *impossible* as well, it is with rejoicing, then, that we declare with Paul: "*Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .*" (Gal.6:14)!

Finally, Ephesians 2:8,9:

For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. (Ephesians 2:8,9)

". . . God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us (we also being dead to the offenses and the lusts), vivifies us together in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying *the transcendent riches of His grace* in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:4-7).

This is so, and gloriously true, "*For* in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you." More literally stated (this is so, and gloriously true), "*For* [to come] *into this grace,* through faith, you *have been* saved [hence, you *are* saved], and this is not out of you" (Eph. 2:8a). Instead, it is "God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. *For* His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:8b,9,10).

It is true that this transcendently marvelous blessing is channeled to us "*through* faith," which in the nature of the case can only be, in its achievement, Jesus Christ's faith, and is further channeled to us *through* our own faith, which God graciously grants us, for "all joy and peace in believing" (Rom.15:13), with a view to our "*assurance* of faith" (*cf* Heb.10:22), even as "to all the riches of the *assurance* of understanding" (Col.2:2). Even so, "Where, then, is boasting? It is debarred! . . ." (*cp* Rom.3:27).

Truly, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed in Him, in the God and Father, of Christ (Col.2:3). May God grant us, then, a realization of His grace according to truth (*cf* Col.1:6). "Now thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity!" (2 Cor.9:15). J.R.C.

IN-BEGINNING-OF:

THE INITIAL WORDS, of God's written revelation to mankind are of transcendent import, far-reaching in their implications. Although the popular rendering, "In the beginning," is probably as close to the significance of the Original as English idiom will allow, still it is sufficiently inexact to cause cloudy conceptions and questionings to arise. It seems to fix a *definite* point of time, and to be limited to the single act of creation, whereas the Hebrew expression does not name a specific instant in the past, but is a descriptive term, giving *priority* or *origination* to the contents of the whole book.

The Hebrew stem, *rash,* denotes HEAD, and is used in words conveying the sense of summit, top, first, principal, as well as beginning. The special form used here, *rashith,* must usually be rendered by *first of,* or *beginning of* in English, as "the *beginning of* the year (Deut.11:12), and "the *first of* the firstfruits" (Ex.23:19). The very phrase with which the Bible begins, *B-rashith,* (*B* is IN), occurs four times elsewhere, and is translated, with slight variations, "in the *beginning of*" (Jer.26:1; 27:1; 28:1; 49:34), and is always followed by a noun, which the CV renders "kingship" or "reign." But in Genesis it is followed by the *verb* create. This seems to show that it is not a part of the sentence, but the title. A. E. Knoch

CONCORDANCE OF "BEGINNING"

The 51 occurrences of the Hebrew word, *rashith,* are listed in ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW CONCORDANCE, page 1147, second entry. The number assigned this term in

Strong's Concordance is 7225. The CV reserves five English terms for this Hebrew word: **beginning, first, first**fruit, **first**fruits and **principal.** (However, we use the words, **firstfruit** and **firstfruits,** all in boldface type, for a different Hebrew term as in Exodus 23:19.)

Gn.	1: 1	In a **beginning** of—
Gn.	10:10	The **principal** cities of his kingdom
Gn.	49: 3	And the **beginning** of my virility
Ex.	23:19	You shall bring the **first** of the firstfruits
Ex.	34:26	The **first** of the firstfruits of your ground
Lv.	2:12	As an approach present of the **first**fruits
Lv.	23:10	bring a sheaf of the **first**fruit
Nu.	15:20	Of the **first** batch of your coarse meal
Nu.	15:21	Of the **first** of your coarse meal
Nu.	18:12	their **first**fruit which they shall give
Nu.	24:20	**First** of the nations was Amalek
Dt.	11:12	from the **beginning** of the year
Dt.	18: 4	The **first**fruit of your grain
Dt.	18: 4	and the **first** of the fleece of your flock
Dt.	21:17	he is the **beginning** of his virility
Dt.	26: 2	you will take from the **first** of all the fruit
Dt.	26:10	I bring the **first** of the fruit of the ground
Dt.	33:21	And he saw the **first** portion given to himself
1S.	2:29	to make yourself plump with the **first** portion
1S.	15:21	the **first** parts of what had been doomed
1S.	2:29	to make yourself plump with the **first** portion
2 Ch.	31: 5	the **first**fruit of grain, grape juice,
Ne.	10:37	We shall bring also the **first** batch of
Ne.	12:44	for the **first**fruit, and for the tithes
Jb.	8: 7	So your **beginning** will seem inferior
Jb.	40:19	He is the **first** of the ways of El
Jb.	42:12	latter years of Job more than his **beginning**
Ps.	78:51	The **beginning** of virility in the tents of Ham
Ps.	105:36	The **beginning** of all their virility
Ps.	111:10	The fear of Yahweh . . . **beginning** of wisdom
Pr.	1: 7	The fear of Yahweh . . . **beginning** of knowledge
Pr.	3: 9	with the **first**fruit of all your income
Pr.	4: 7	The **beginning** of wisdom is:
Pr.	8:22	acquired me as the **beginning** of His way
Pr.	17:14	The **beginning** of a quarrel

Ec.	7: 8	end of a matter is better than its **beginning**
Isa.	46:10	Telling from the **beginning**, the hereafter
Jr.	2: 3	The **first**fruit of His harvest yield
Jr.	26: 1	in the **beginning** of the kingship
Jr.	27: 1	in the **beginning** of the kingship
Jr.	28: 1	in the **beginning** of the kingship
Jr.	49:34	at the **beginning** of the reign
Jr.	49:35	the **beginning** of their mastery
Ezk.	20:40	your presentations of **first**fruit
Ezk.	44:30	The **first** of all the firstfruits of all
Ezk.	44:30	And the **first** of your coarse meal
Ezk.	48:14	nor transfer this **principal** piece of the land
Dn.	11:41	and the **principal** area of the sons of Ammon
Ho.	9:10	fig tree in its **first** season
Am.	6: 1	specified men of the **first** of the nations
Am.	6: 6	who are anointing with **first** quality oils
Mi.	1:13	she is the **beginning** of sin to . . . Zion

GOD'S COUNSEL FOR ISRAEL

Remember the **former** things **from** the **eon,**
For I am **El, and** there **is no** *fr*__**other!**__
Elohim! and no other **like Me!**
Telling from the **beginning,** the **hereafter,**
And from aforetime *w*__**what has not** yet **been done,**__
Saying, *z*__**All**__*0* **My counsel shall be confirmed,**
And all My desire shall I do;
Calling from the sun**rise,** a **bird of prey,**
From a **land afar,** a **man of My counsel,**
Indeed I have spoken;
Indeed I shall bring it to pass**!**
I have formed the plan**; Indeed I shall do it!**
Hearken to Me, sturdy of heart,
*v*who are **far from righteousness:**
I *m*__**bring near My righteousness;**__
It shall not be far off**,**
And My salvation shall not delay;
And I will *g*__**bestow salvation in Zion,**__
for Israel, My beauty. (Isa.9-13)

THE VERB "CREATE"

THE Hebrew verb generally translated by the English verb "create" in its several forms appears in the Masoretic Text 54 times. These are listed in groups according to distinct verbal forms in ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW CONCORDANCE on page 270. This list is reproduced here using the CV readings rather than the AV. (The CV emends the Hebrew text in Isaiah 4:5 and the end of Ezekiel 21:19 in accord with the Septuagint Version, but these passages are shown in this list as they would read had we not followed the ancient Greek translation.) In addition, we attempt to identify each group by English terms instead of using transliterated Hebrew terms such as *kal.* and *niphal.*

Also, recognizing that the Hebrew verb does not, in itself, express tense (which is a matter determined by the context), we use "fact verb" instead of "preterite," and "action verb" instead of "future." A sample, literal rendering in English for each grouping is added in italics. These use present tense forms as most adaptable to whatever time is in view in the context. Hence, following the example, "He creates," in the first group of references, we see that Genesis 1:1 might be expressed, in the Hebrew manner, as "Elohim *creates* the heavens and the earth." The context makes it clear that this act occurs in the past; thus the verb itself is freed to concentrate on the idea it expresses, telling us something like this: God brings the heaven and the earth into existence.

In accord with this adapability of the present tense, I am writing these notes mostly using verbs in that form. I

am hopeful that the reader is able to follow my thoughts even though this is not the ordinary way of communicating in English.

This list is presented as an incentive for our readers to make their own investigations into the scriptural usage of this term. But I offer some of my own thoughts arising from such a "concordant" study following the list itself. I hope it proves helpful.

CONCORDANCE OF THE VERB "CREATE"

Regular, Active, Fact Verb: *He creates*

Gn.	1: 1	Elohim **created** the heavens and the earth
Gn.	1:27	in the image of Elohim He **created** it:
Gn.	1:27	male and female He **created** them
Gn.	2: 3	all His work that Elohim had **created**
Gn.	5: 2	Male and female He **created** them
Gn.	6: 7	I shall wipe off humanity that I have **created**
Dt.	4:32	from the day that Elohim **created** humanity
Ps.	89:12	The north and the south, You, You **created** them;
Ps.	89:47	For what futility have You **created** all humanity?
Isa.	4: 5	Then [Yahweh will **create**] over every site
Isa.	40:26	Who **created** all these?
Isa.	41:20	the Holy One of Israel, He **created** it
Isa.	43: 7	And for My glory I **created** him
Isa.	45: 8	righteousness . . . salvation . . . I **create** it
Isa.	45:12	I Myself made the earth, and **created** humanity
Isa.	45:18	He did not **create** it a chaos;
Isa.	54:16	Behold, I Myself **created** the craftsman
Isa.	54:16	And I Myself **created** the ruiner to harm
Jr.	31:22	For Yahweh has **created** a new thing on the earth:
Ma.	2:10	Did not one El **create** us?

Regular, Active, Fact Infinitive: *to create*

Gn.	5: 1	On the day Elohim **created** Adam

Regular, Active, Fact Imperative: *create*

Ps.	51:10	**Create** for me a clean heart, O Elohim

Regular, Active, Incomplete Action Verb: *He is creating*

Gn.	1:21	Elohim **created** the great sea monsters

Gn. 1:27 So Elohim **created** humanity in His image;
Nu. 16:30 should Yahweh **create** a . . . creation

Regular, Active, Participle: *creating; Creator=Creating*-One

Ec. 12: 1 Yet remember your **Creator**
Isa. 40:28 **Creator** of the ends of the earth
Isa. 42: 5 **Creator** of the heavens
Isa. 43: 1 thus says Yahweh, your **Creator**
Isa. 43:15 your Holy One, **Creator** of Israel
Isa. 45: 7 Former of light and **Creator** of darkness
Isa. 45: 7 Maker of good and **Creator** of evil
Isa. 45:18 thus says Yahweh, **Creator** of the heavens
Isa. 57:19 **Creating** the produce of the lips:
Isa. 65:17 For behold Me **creating** new heavens and a new earth
Isa. 65:18 the future which I shall be **creating**
Isa. 65:18 For behold Me **creating** Jerusalem an exultation
Am. 4:13 For behold the One . . . **creating** the wind

Regular, Passive, Fact Verb: *it is created*

Ex. 34:10 marvels which have not been **created**
Ps. 148: 5 He Himself determined, and they were **created**
Isa. 48: 7 Now are they **created,** yet not hitherto;
Ezk. 21:30 In the place where you were **created**

Regular, Passive, Infinitive: *to be created*

Gn. 2: 4 when they were **created** in the day
Gn. 5: 2 their name Human on the day they were **created**
Ezk. 28:13 In the day of your **creation**
Ezk. 28:15 from the day of your **creation**

Regular, Passive, Incomplete Action Verb: *it is being created*

Ps. 104:30 You send forth Your spirit; they are **created,**

Regular, Passive, Participle: *being created*

Ps. 102:18 a people yet being **created** shall praise Yah.

Make Form, Active, Fact Verb: *he makes create*

Js. 17:15 and **clear off** an area for yourselves
Js. 17:18 wildwood, and you will **clear** it **off**

Make Form, Active, Infinitive: *to make create*

Ezk. 23:47 pelt them with stones and **clear** them **off**

Make Form, Active, Imperative: *make create*

Ezk. 21:19 And **put up** a signpost at the head of the way
Ezk. 21:19 to the city; [**put up**] . . .

Cause Form, Active, Infinitive: *to cause create*

1S. 2:29 to **make** yourselves **plump**

GOD AS CREATOR

We notice that God is the One doing the creating in every passage where the "regular" verb form is used, while human actions are in view only in the passages where the "make" verb form and the "cause" verb form are used. In all cases something new is brought about, but it is more of a *rearranging* of things when the *make-create* and *cause-create* verb forms appear. Creating in the full sense of originating is always traced to God in the Hebrew Scriptures.

God is revealed by what He does. The first act of God recorded in His Word is that He creates the world in which we live:

Elohim created `the heavens and `the earth. (Gen.1:1)

Lift your eyes to the **height and see;**
[a]**Who created** [7]**all**[0] **these?**
He `Who is [c]**bringing forth their host** [i]**by number,**
He is calling to them all [i]**by name;**
[f]**Because** of the [mn]**greatness of** His **virility**
and His **resolute vigor not one is** [lag]**missing.** (Isa.40:26)

Do **you not know?** [if]**Or** do **you not hear?**
The **Elohim eonian** is **Yahweh,**
Creator[l] of the **ends of the earth;**
He does **not** [l]**faint Nor is He** [l]**wearied;**
There **is no fathoming** [y]**of His understanding.** (Isa. 40:28)

By His act of creating the heavens and the earth God is immediately revealed as a God of immense power, virility

and resolute vigor, and also as the One of unfathomable understanding. There can be no doubt that creation testifies to God's "imperceptible power," yet not power alone, but power used in such a way that God's "divinity" is expressed (Rom.1:20). God knows what He is doing; He creates with a purpose in view, and that purpose, once it is seen, can only draw forth the praise and laud of the Creator.

For thus says Yahweh, Creator[l] of **the heavens;**
He is **the** One**, Elohim,** the **Former**[l] of **the earth**
and its [d]**Maker**[l]**,**
He Himself **established it;**
He did **not create it** a **chaos; He formed it to be**
in**dwelt:**
I am **Yahweh, and** there **is no** [fr]**other.** (Isa.45:18)

God creates the heavens and the earth, yet the earth becomes a chaos, vacant and covered by darkness (Gen.1:2). This is in accord with the counsel of God's will (Eph.1:11), but only as a temporary matter. For God creates the earth to be indwelt. Before chaos enters and before He creates humanity, or any form of life, the Creator of the heavens and the earth creates a dwellling place for the creatures of His hands, and nothing can keep Him from the achievment of this purpose.

Indeed, speaking through His prophet, God declares of Himself:

Former[l] of **light and Creator**[l] of **darkness,**
[d]**Maker**[l] of [Q]**good**[I] **and Creator**[l] of **evil,**
I, Yahweh, [d]**make**[l] **all these** things**.** (Isa.45:7)

In accord with God's divinity, and by His understanding, evil enters into the world in the form of chaos and emptinesss and darkness, but this can only serve the purpose of good which God has in view. This is assured by the words of Genesis 1:31 when God sees all that He had made "and

behold, it was very good." Only when all is good God ceases from His work of creation:

[+]**Thus the heavens and the earth were** [\all]**finished, and all their host.**
[i]**On the** [7]**sixth~**[nc] **day Elohim** [\all]**finished His work** [w]**that He had** [d]**made; and He** [l]**ceased**[◊] [i]**on the seventh day from all His work** [w]**that He had** [d]**made. And Elohim** [l]**blessed** `**the seventh day and** [l]**hallowed** `**it, for in it He ceased from all His work** [w]**that Elohim had created** ›**by** [d]**making**– **it.**
These are the **chronological** record**s of the heavens and the earth** [i]**when they** were **created**–**, in** the **day** that **Yahweh Elohim** [d]**made**– **earth and heavens.** (Gen.2:1-4)

All the good work that God does in this restoring of the earth includes even the creating of sea creatures and flyers, as specifically mentioned. But all the hosts of living souls are created by God, and this is according to His determination and for His praise:

Elohim [l]**created** `**the** ˙**great** sea **monsters and** `**every** ˙**moving,** ˙**living soul** with **which the waters swarm** according **to their kind, and** `**every winged flyer** according **to its kind. And Elohim** [l]**saw that** it was **good.** (Gen.1:21)

[wt]**How numerous are Your** [d]**works,** O **Yahweh!**
You have [d]**made all of them in wisdom;**
The earth is filled with **Your achievement**s**:**
This ˙**sea, great and wide** on all **hands;**
The **creeper** is **there, and** it **is numberless,**
Animals, both **small** [wi]**and great;**
There the ~sea **monsters~ are going,**
The **dragon that You have formed to gambol in it.**
All of them, they [l]**look forward to You**
To [g]**supply their food in its season;**
You [lg]**supply** it **to them; they** [l]**pick** it **up.**
You [l]**open Your hand; they are well** [l]**satisfied.**
You [l]**conceal Your face; they are** fill**ed** with [l]**panic.**

You ˡ**gather** away **their spirit; they** ˡ**breathe** their **last**
And ˡ**return to their soil.**
You ˡ**send** forth **Your spirit; they are** ˡ**created,**
And You ˡ**renew** the **face of** the **ground.** (Psa.104:24-30)

May they praise `the **Name of Yahweh,**
For He Himself **determined, and they were created.**
He ᶜ**makes them** ˡ**stand for** the **future, for** the **eon;**
He has ᵍ**set** down a **statute,**
and it shall not pass away**.**
Praise `Yahweh from the earth,
Sea **monsters and every abyss . . . .** (Psa.148:5-7)

God's creation of the sea monster is especially interesting. It is given its place in the waters of the sea, in which it is to be well satisfied and serve to the praise of the Name of Yahweh. And yet, like the "dragon," there is presently something ominous about it as it often appears in the Scriptures. Psalm 104:30 seems to look ahead to a renewal in which God's purpose is fulfilled, as expressed in Psalm 148:5-7.

THREE STEPS

In these works of creation we discern a pattern of three steps, leading from purpose to praise: 1. There is an initial creation in accord with a good purpose. 2. This is followed by ruin. 3. Finally there is God's achievement of His good purpose. Looking ahead, we plan to trace this pattern in a further grouping of our concordance list where the creation of humanity and of Israel are in view.

What is missing in these passages, or rather only dimly seen by way of prophecy and type, is the place of Christ, the Son of God's love, in it all. For us who are believing, all these passages from the Hebrew Scriptures find their climax in such passages as Romans 8:18-39, Ephesians 1:3-23; 3:8-11 and Colossians 1:13-20.

D.H.H.

Contents:

49 Editorial
53 The Sin of Adam
61 The Evangel of Christ,
of Israel, and of the Nations
76 Precious Bane
81 Death Reigns
89 Imputation or Transmission
93 The Creation of Humanity

MARCH, 2010

Volume 101 **Number 2**

Vocabulary Index

for the

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

THIS INDEX is an attempt to provide users of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) access to full listings of the occurrences of each major Hebrew or Aramaic (Chaldee) word (except most proper names) used in the Old Testament.

It is admittedly more complex and less convenient than the Keyword Concordance published with the Concordant Literal New Testament. But until such a concordance using the vocabulary of the CVOT can be made available this may serve as a useful substitute.

This is an abridgment of a full list of the English terms used in the CVOT, as updated in 2009, as work proceeds on a first edition of the Version as a whole.

The list is keyed to Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance (EHCC, 5th edition), which is presently available under the title, Englishman's Hebrew Concordance (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody MA 01961-3473, ISBN 0-913573-21-3). The word entries in this latter edition are coded to the numbering system of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, and these numbers are also provided in this index.

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321 pages; available without charge in PDF format; file may be downloaded from **www.concordant.org, Concordant Version section.** *Specific link:* http://concordant.org/version/Vocabulary%20Index%20for%20the%20CVOT.pdf

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MARCH 2010
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED ONE

EDITORIAL

THE MOTTO of our magazine is "For God and His Word." The first verse of God's Word introduces us to God in definitive and fundamental terms. He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Nothing is left out of the picture. God is responsible for the entire world in which we live.

Anyone who would examine and meditate upon the Sacred Scriptures needs to hold fast to this opening statement and what it says about God. Anyone who attempts to teach and uphold God's Word needs to keep this first revelation of God in view. It is the first major premise of Scripture, and it lies behind every ensuing topic. God is the Cause of our world, and whatever is required for Him to be such, He most certainly possesses.

But already in the second verse of God's Word this first principle is put to the test. God created the heavens and the earth, *and the earth came to be a chaos and vacant, and darkness was over the surface of the abyss.* It is the presence of evil that calls for more words from God than those given in Genesis 1:1. God has the knowledge and ability to create all that exists, but chaos and vacancy and darkness entered into the very part of God's creation in which we live.

It is because of what Genesis 1:1 says about God's power and divinity (*cp* Rom.1:20) that we cannot say chaos and emptiness and darkness entered into God's creation apart from His wisdom and power and purpose. Creation by God and severe disruption of that creation are too close in God's own account of how things got started to keep the subjects apart. In Genesis 1:2, there was no Power-

ful Beginner of things in view besides the One Who was in view in verse 1, Who knew exactly what to do and was fully capable of doing it. God is the same in Genesis 1:2 as He is in verse 1. This is made clear by Genesis 1:3-2:4.

But here again, although when God created humanity all was seen as very good (Gen.1:31), we learn that Yahweh Elohim placed the human in the garden where He had caused the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to sprout (Gen.2:8,9). Furthermore He instructed Adam not to eat of that tree, warning him that on the day he should do so, "to die you shall be dying" (Gen.2:17). Then this was followed by the deception of Eve by the serpent and then by Adam's participation in the offense. The account given in Genesis 2 and 3 calls for more to be said than was said in Genesis 1:31. All that God had made was very good, but sin and death entered into the world. And like the evils of Genesis 1:2, the evils that came about in the garden are not to be separated from the revelation of God's wisdom and power and purpose for good as given in Genesis 1:1 and 1:3-2:4.

God's Word does not avoid the subject of evil, but rather it boldly associates it with the revelations of God's knowledge and power and the good end which He has in view. The ruin of humanity and the earth which is recorded in Genesis 6 does not keep God's purpose for the race as described in Genesis 1:26-28 from being fulfilled (see the article starting on p.93). But it becomes the occasion for the display of His righteousness in judgment, and then finally and most effectively, part of the dark background needed for the display and appreciation of God's saving power.

Thus also, God's Word continues beyond Genesis with the call of Israel and its place in God's operations, from Moses and the former prophets to David and the kings that followed him and the latter prophets. Added to this are the psalms and other writings, which like the prophets

frequently point ahead to the Impending One first mentioned in Genesis 3:15. In these writings there is abundance of testimony to the corrupting power of death in humanity as it operated in one chosen nation. Yet God's purpose for Israel is not thwarted, not even by their rejection of the Christ and the dishonor they brought to God's Name by disobedience to the law He has given them.

This is verified in God's Word by the apostles and others of the chosen nation such as James. Because of the evil of Christ's suffering and death and the glory of His resurrection this chosen nation is given expectation in God (1 Peter 1:17-21). An earthly allotment and law, as well as other distinctive features, are retained as essential factors in their calling (see pages 68-75), but the foundation of it all is their ransom by the precious blood of Christ.

Regarding our own calling, we have been examining our apostle's presentation of the evangel of God in Romans, noting some of the special features (again note the points of distinction in Brother Coram's article) connected with God's grace for us who are in ourselves infirm sinners and irreverent enemies. Indeed for more than a century this magazine has focused on Paul's letters and the message of grace and peace in them. Here God speaks directly to us, and reveals Himself as above all else, the God of righteousness and love from which nothing can separate us. On this matter there is much still to say both in expounding the truth and in defending it as it points to the glory of God.

The sin of Adam, and its place in God's purpose, is given considerable attention in this issue of our magazine. What Brother Knoch has to say on this subject (beginning on page 53) sets the pace for the notes on Romans 5:14,15. "We are sure . . . that sin, or failure, never had any place in God Himself. But we can only maintain this position so long as we acknowledge that it has a place in His purpose."

The event recounted in Genesis 3:1-12, and its results

as voiced directly by Yahweh Elohim in Genesis 3:13-19 and treated personally by Him in verse 21 affect all mankind, not simply God's chosen ones, whether of Israel or out of all the nations. This comes before us in an especially clear way in Romans 5:12-21. For there Paul makes a comparison between Adam and Christ, between his act of disobedience and Christ's act of obedience. When we get to verses 18 and 19 we come to a revelation of God that parallels Genesis 1:1 and 1:31, but with greater force and higher glory. For it is God's giving of His Son for sinners that makes God known as He truly is, not only as to His wisdom and power, but as to His heart.

It is perhaps in the reprint of Brother Mealand's "devotional study" entitled "Precious Bane," that the value of seeing God's hand in all things is most forcefully brought to our attention. Here was a man who suffered much evil in life, besides knowing himself what failure and infirmity means (as we all come to know), yet who could trace the goodness of God in it all.

Without apology we say that the good of Genesis 1:1 and the evil of Genesis 1:2 most certainly provide the sense of Isaiah 45:7, when Yahweh declares that He is the "Maker of good and Creator of evil." So also we take Paul's words of Romans 11:32-36 in an absolutely unqualified sense concerning humanity and its experience:

. . . God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all.

O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!

D.H.H.

THE SIN OF ADAM

THE oft-repeated question, "Could not God have prevented Adam's sin?" may be answered with an emphatic "Yes!" More than that, God could have created him incapable of sin, but He did not only make it possible for him to offend, but impossible for him to do otherwise. Adam transgressed at the first test. We need have no hesitancy in believing that Adam, like all his posterity, was locked up in stubbornness, that he might come within the range of God's mercy (Rom.11:32).

GOD'S INTENTION

With all reverence we must insist that, if it was God's purpose and intention to make Adam sin-proof, then not only Adam, but God Himself, has failed. If an inventor builds a machine which breaks at its first trial we do not hesitate to call him a failure. Furthermore, if the first attempt was so unfortunate, what ground have we to confide in His future efforts?

That God could have a man able to stand, not merely the mild temptation of the garden, but the severest strain of sin, is convincingly exemplified in the case of Christ. Nay, here He had a Man able, not only to live unsullied in a scene of sordid sin, and suffer its presence in others, but to bow to the will of God and suffer the degradation and moral infamy consequent upon His taking the place of sin itself, and come through unstained and spotless in God's sight.

Had Adam never sinned he would have been a neutral,

a sentient clod unfit for the full companionship of his Creator. Of one thing we may be sure. He would never have known evil. And we may be equally sure that he never would have known good. He would not curse God for sin, neither would he thank Him for His beneficence nor adore Him for His grace. He would have utterly failed to fulfill the purpose of His creation. We must always remember that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil had a double function. No one forgets that it brought the knowledge of *evil.* But it was primarily the tree of the knowledge of *good.* Adam had no appreciation of the good by which he was surrounded. Having known nothing else, it was not good to him. He received it as a matter of course, without a thankful thought.

Adam could have lived on indefinitely in such an unappreciated paradise, but only with untold loss to himself and to his Creator. All that he saw was God's hand; His heart was veiled. Some means must be found to rouse Adam's affectionate response to the Divine yearnings. He must learn to appreciate good. How shall this be done?

THE TREE

It is a notable fact, and full of significance, that the tree of which Adam ate was no afterthought with God. Adam's ignorance of good did not lead to its planting. It was already grown and bearing fruit. Moreover, it was not hidden in some distant corner, in an impenetrable thicket, unapproachable and forbidding. It was in the very midst of the garden, accessible, and desirable in every way. If it was simply a question of keeping Adam from eating its fruit, it could easily have been removed. Far simpler yet, it need never have been planted. God alone was responsible for all the accessories in Adam's transgression.

But it is of still greater significance that it combined in itself two inseparable functions. Perhaps we would have

preferred one tree to teach the knowledge of good, and another to initiate into the knowledge of evil. But this is impossible in the very nature of things. We may strive to conceive of light apart from darkness, but it proves impossible. Light may drive out all darkness, yet its realization depends on its opposite. So good cannot be known by human beings, apart from evil.

EVIL IS NOT ETERNAL

The function of evil in the world is to impart an appreciation for the good. It is God's background on which He will paint the highlights of His grace. We do not say that evil is necessary for the *existence* of good, for then it would be primeval in its origin and eternal in its stay. Evil is a lesson which, once learned, will not need repetition. By its blackness it will brighten the beams of eternal bliss long after it has passed out of existence.

ADAM, A TYPE

Furthermore, Adam, so long as he was alone, before Eve was given him as a helpmeet for him, made no mistake. Adam was not seduced by sin. He was not deluded by the tempter (1 Tim.2:13,14). It was far from a mere excuse when Adam said, "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat." Rather, he deliberately involved himself in her sin and transgression and offense. In this he was a type of the Second Man, Who knew no sin, yet became sin for love of His own. It was a mistake for him to hearken to his wife, yet it was a profound proof of his affection, for he chose to be with her in sin and all its consequences, rather than to be alone in impeccable solitude.

Nor was the woman's defense a mere excuse. By creation she was not the equal of the tempter. Left to herself she would probably never have thought of disobedience. The

great point in man's primal mistake which we must not miss is this, that both Adam and Eve were sinless within, and would never have made their mistake apart from influences from without. Over these they had no control. We realize in ourselves that Adam's sin has put mankind into a place where sinfulness is thrust upon men even before they have a will. So Adam was surrounded by forces which overpowered him.

SEEMING CONTRADICTION

The position that Adam's sin fulfilled God's underlying purpose in creation, seems to conflict with the charge that he should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The same seeming contradiction runs through the entire range of Scripture, but may be seen most clearly in the cross of Christ. No one would think of absolving His murderers on the ground that it was God's will that He should suffer. There can be no doubt that all they did was in accord with the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23), formed eons before they had any existence (*cf* 1 Peter 1:19,20). But they did not understand His purpose and acted entirely independent of it. The great glory of God's wisdom is displayed in the way He works out His will by means of the ignorance and opposition of His enemies. Christ crucified shows the utter futility of opposing God, for He has our measure and knows what we will do, and has planned accordingly. Let us always keep God's purpose distinct from the process used in its accomplishment.

Some will say then that God gave Adam a prohibition that he might break it. Just so. Later on He gave Israel a law, through Moses. They, too, thought He meant them to keep it, and in a fatal moment of self-confidence, promised to do so. But we are distinctly told that it was given for an entirely different object—that the offense shall be increasing (Rom.5:20). Had it been kept it would have defeated

the end for which it was designed. Like the law laid down for Adam, it was accompanied by a curse. Blessing comes through the curse, and not through the keeping of law.

It will be evident, then, that the presence of sin in the universe is not a mistake on God's side, but a part of His plan for reaching the hearts of His creatures. The moment that we seek to shift the responsibility for sin from His shoulders to that of any of His creatures, whether Satan or Adam, then we do indeed involve Him in sin, and a way that strikes at the foundation of all future bliss. If a single one of His creatures ever disappointed the purpose of its being and escaped His control, what will hinder a still more serious revolt? Then God will be dethroned, and chaos rule and ruin.

SIN'S PLACE IN GOD'S PURPOSE

But we must not be satisfied with tracing sin back to the purpose of God, without discovering something of its place in that purpose, for it is this that gives Him glory and brings blessing to our heart's. If God only *permitted* evil and sin, the plain inference would be that it is a hindrance, rather than a help, in His administrations. Furthermore it would imply that His heart was not in it, and expected nothing from it.

Just as the nature of sin sets our minds at rest regarding its source, so the nature of God heals our hearts as to its object. Now that we know *how* sin entered, it is not difficult to discover *why* it came. It was deliberately introduced by God in order to form a foil for the display of His character and attributes. He planted the tree, He gave the woman, He introduced the serpent. All of the factors which influenced Adam to sin were, directly or indirectly, from His hand.

But His wisdom and His purpose is most clearly seen in the qualities with which He invests the sin even before it

has been committed. Is it intended to reveal His justice? Then He must make it the breaking of a prohibitory law. Is it planned to display His affection? Then He must make it a breach of fellowship. It is because Adam's sin, or mistake, was at the same time a transgression and an offense that it becomes the means for the revelation, not merely of His hand, but of His head and of His heart.

SIN IS FAILURE

Keeping before us our accurate definition of sin, we would actually incriminate God, that is, charge Him with failure, if we should insist that Adam's sin was independent of His plan and purpose. If it was God's intention that Adam should continue sinless, if God created Him with the supposition that he would remain holy, then He made a grave mistake, or a sin. But if Adam, in his sin, fulfilled God's purpose, then the very sin of Adam proves the sinlessness of God.

We are sure, then, that sin, or failure, never had any place in God Himself. But we can only maintain this position so long as we acknowledge that it has a place in His purpose. If it is an intruder, unwanted, disconcerting, eternal, then the greatest mistake of all was to "allow" it to enter the universe.

Sin, we repeat, is failure. If God wills the salvation of all, and, because of forces outside Himself, is unable to accomplish the desire of His heart, but plunges the vast majority, or even a remnant, into endless agony, that would not only prove the sinfulness of His creatures, but it would demonstrate to the whole universe that He had come short of the goal He had set for Himself.

SIN FOR SIN

In man's vain philosophy wrong is righted by right. But doing right is neutral. The man who pays all his bills

promptly does not expect that to settle an old debt. The bookkeeper who makes a mistake is not relieved by the correctness of all the rest. If the mistake has passed beyond recall, he may still be able to adjust matters by making another error to counterbalance the former. In God's great account book the sins of His creatures are more than overbalanced by the One Who was made *sin* for us, though He knew no sin.

We cannot "atone for past misdeeds by living an upright life." The Israelite was given no work to cover his sin. A just law already demanded all that he could do. His sins must be met on entirely different grounds. Hence they were transferred from him to an animal which had nothing against it. The outpouring of its soul in the appointed manner on God's altar, made a covering for the soul of the offerer, and swung the scales of justice back to a balance. Not that it actually accomplished this. No animal can substitute for a man.

Man's greatest offense more than corrects his minor mistake in Eden. Do we fully realize that, so far as man is concerned, we owe all we have in Christ to a sin unutterably more awful than Eden's transgression? Do we appreciate the fact that not a single great deed or good act ever brought us blessing at all to be compared with man's most malignant sin? Regarded strictly from the human standpoint, the crucifixion of Christ must stand unparalleled in the annals of sin. Yet it is this sin which settles the score of Adam and his descendants and which will bring untold blessing in its train.

We are not seeking to exonerate Pilate, or the priests, or the Pharisees, or Judas. We are not trying to excuse the people. Our vocabulary is not capable of expressing our utter contempt of their cowardice, our horror of their hypocrisy, our loathing of their disloyalty, our shuddering at their shameful sin. But this only accentuates our admi-

ration of the inimitable wisdom of God, which uses such men and such material for the removal of all sin. Viewed from the human side they are fiends incarnate: from the divine viewpoint they are God's appointed priests, slaying the Sacrifice upon the brazen altar.

THE PLACE OF SATAN

Satan, indeed, was the chief instigator in this murder. As in the case of Adam, it is impossible to prove that a single human actor in this scene would have performed his part unless he had been impelled from without. No one can read Pilate's words without acknowledging that he did not desire to have a hand in this unjust deed. He was compelled by the priests, the Pharisees, and the populace. These, in turn, were doing the behest of the Slanderer whose children they were. Judas was actually obsessed by Satan before he dared to commit his foul offense.

THE CROSS BRINGS UNMEASURED BLESSING

If it must needs be that offenses come, truly it must needs be that this offense of the cross should occur. Surely, if we can see sin nowhere else in God's light we can see it here in its true eternal intent, the medium of unmeasured blessing to the unnumbered millions of God's creatures for all time. And there could be no cross apart from man's supreme sin.

They knew not what they were doing. Had they known the monstrous mistake they were making they would never have had a hand in His murder. It was necessary that they should be ignorant. And if it was essential that ignorant ungodly men commit the sin of all sins in order that the foundation stone of future bliss be securely laid, can we not see in this a great example of the method by which God will transmute all sin into eventual good?

A. E. Knoch

THE EVANGEL OF CHRIST, OF ISRAEL, AND OF THE NATIONS

Question:

I am aware that you see the evangel brought by Paul as an evangel which while having some things in common with the evangel of the Circumcision, is at the same time an evangel which is distinct from and importantly different than it. You teach that Paul's evangel alone is applicable to ourselves.

My main question concerns these apparent two evangels and their proper application. But I would be grateful as well if you would comment on the following noteworthy phrases of the apostle Paul: "the allotment of life eonian" (Titus 3:7), and "the allotment of God's kingdom" (1 Cor.6:10). Similarly, while Paul speaks of "the transcendent grace of God on you" (2 Cor.9:14), yet he warns of the possibility of becoming "disqualified" (1 Cor.9:27), stating further in 2 Timothy 2:12, "*If* we are enduring, we shall be reigning together also" (2 Tim.2:12).

Answer:

By way of introduction to my reply to your question, I would first of all like to say the following:

All Scripture is "truth for today" concerning the subject with which it deals. Even so, all Scriptural teaching—however beneficial the knowledge of which may be to us in some respect—is nevertheless not instruction to ourselves, in the sense of the obligations and blessings of which it speaks and to whom it speaks, being our obligations and blessings as well.

In our quest for scriptural enlightenment and spiritual understanding, in order not to confound one truth with another, or to conflate disparate, incompatible entities into a single, false and confused amalgam, it is important that we note and freely acknowledge all substantive distinctions between scriptural subjects.

At the same time, we must not introduce artificial distinctions of our own devising. Similarly, mere formal distinctions or otherwise superficial distinctions must be acknowledged accordingly, not treated as if they were vital, essential distinctions.

Even so, as important as it is that we apply such critical policies and principles to our scriptural studies, the question remains, For this, who is competent (*cp* 2 Cor.2:16)? Of ourselves, how can we ever hope *actually* to be *qualified,* unashamed workers, *correctly* cutting the word of truth—*faithful* men, even ones *competent* to teach others also (*cp* 2 Tim.2:2; 2:15)?

The answer is that since of ourselves we are simply incapable of succeeding in any such lofty endeavor, we must, then, look to God to *make* us competent if, even in measure, we would be competent.

Indeed, it is not that we are competent of ourselves—to reckon anything as of ourselves would be to err (*cf* Rom. 11:36). Instead, our competency—whatever competency we *do* have—is of God (*cp* 2 Cor.3:5). This is even as Paul further declares: "For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom, but *in the grace of God, we behaved ourselves* in the world, yet more superabundantly toward you" (2 Cor.1:12).

THIS *AND* THAT

Concerning our view of Paul's evangel, you summed up our position well by saying: "You see the evangel brought

by Paul as an evangel which while having some things in common with the evangel of the Circumcision, is at the same time an evangel which is distinct from and importantly different than it."

Since in what follows herein I will be speaking many times of the evangel of "the Uncircumcision," as well as of the evangel of "the Circumcision," it would be well to explain at the outset what is meant by each of these expressions.

As used of persons, the phrase "the Circumcision" (*cf* Rom.3:30; 4:9, 12; 4:12; 15:8; Col.4:11; Titus 1:10) is elliptical, in reference to the persons (*cp* Acts 11:2; Gal.2:12) to whom this ritual pertains (Gen.17:9-14), the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, "the sons of Israel" (e.g., Luke 1:17; Acts 7:37). Originally, circumcision was the special sign of faith given to Abraham's descendants (*cf* Acts 7:8); but later it is used merely in marking his physical progeny (*cf* Keyword Concordance, p.50, entry "circumcise").

In Galatians 2:7, 8, we read of "the evangel of the Uncircumcision" which was entrusted to Paul, even as of "[the evangel] of the Circumcision" which was entrusted to Peter. "The evangel *of* the Uncircumcision," speaks of the evangel which predominantly belongs and pertains to "the Uncircumcision," that is, to the non-Israelite peoples of the earth. Likewise, "[the evangel] *of* the Circumcision," speaks of the evangel which predominantly belongs and pertains to "the Circumcision," that is, to the sons of Israel.

Commonality is not identity. Two objects may have much in common while remaining what they are, objects concerning which differences obtain. It is the differences that make the difference; and, I hope to make clear in due course what these primary differences are between the evangel of the Uncircumcision and that of the Circumcision.

At this time, I will simply point out that, merely on linguistic grounds, as Paul speaks of these two evangels, it is

impossible for the evangel of the Uncircumcision and the evangel of the Circumcision to be one and the same.

It is not that it would be simply impossible, in any conceivable usage, for the phrases "the evangel of the Uncircumcision" and "the evangel of the Circumcision" to refer to the same evangel (e.g., consider the phrases, "the language of the Americans," and, "the language of the British," which is the same language, English).

It is instead that, *as Paul speaks of them,* it would be impossible for each of these distinct phrases to be used in reference to the same thing. According to the apostle's usage, these distinct evangels cannot be merely formally distinct yet essentially the same; instead, they must be essentially disparate.

This is because if *this* evangel which belongs and pertains to the Uncircumcision were one and the same as *that* evangel which belongs and pertains to the Circumcision, it would be improper to speak of them thus, as "this" one and yet of "that" one. Yet "this" is the very force of the definite article itself; and, as here, when a first-mentioned such object is spoken of by "the," it has the force of the "near" demonstrative pronoun, "this"; and, then, when the second-mentioned object spoken of by "the" is spoken of thus, it has the force of the "far" demonstrative pronoun, "that." This is to say concerning these two respective evangels: "First, I wish to make mention of '*this* evangel,' the evangel of the Uncircumcision; and second, I wish to make mention of '*that* evangel,' the evangel of the Circumcision."

In such a case, if "this" *evangel* were in substantive essence the same as "that" *evangel,* it would be improper to speak of them thus, as *this* one, and yet of *that* one. It would be as absurd and incorrect to do so as it would be to say: "First, I wish to make mention of '*this* language,' the language of the Americans; and second, I wish to make mention of '*that* language,' the language of the British,"

when the language of the Americans and the language of the British is one and the same, namely English.

Speaking in such a way, of *this* evangel and yet of *that* evangel, even though in each case the evangel spoken of was the same evangel, would be the equivalent of speaking of two teachers in a case where each one of them teaches the same subject, and yet saying: "Mr. Smith teaches *this* subject; and, Mr. Brown teaches *that* subject."

DANGERS OF PREJUDICE

In this question at hand, that of determining whether or not Paul's evangel, the evangel of the Uncircumcision, is different than the evangel of the Circumcision, let us be assured that the truth here is right and good. The word of God does not come out from us (*cp* 1 Cor.14:36). We are not the arbiters of truth in any sense of our preferences or desires concerning it having any bearing on its contents.

May we all be happy with the truth, whatever the truth is, concerning our present subject of inquiry. Indeed, if we cannot take an actual objective approach concerning the constituent elements of truth, it may be that, due to our prejudices against it, even if we should clearly encounter it, we will convince ourselves that it was not the truth that we encountered after all.

NARROW *AND* WIDE CONSTRUAL

It is generally held that there is only one evangel of Christ, and accordingly that all those in Christ are partakers of the same blessings and on the same basis, that all are enjoyers of the same allotment, as well as that all are obliged to the same duties, as persons subject to the same instructions.[1]

1. This is to say that since all believers agree that in the Scriptures the evangel made known to sinners concerning personal salvation is that "Christ died for our sins . . ." (1 Cor.15:3), what most actually have in

It is accordingly believed that in the teachings of the apostle Paul, which (it must be acknowledged) he specifically terms "*my* evangel" (Rom.2:16; 16:25; 2 Tim.2:8), we nevertheless merely have those revelations which simply were either first introduced by Paul, or given special emphasis by Paul. The claim, then, is made that, even so, these teachings of Paul's are *also*—at the same time and in the same way—instruction to or blessings for *all* who are in Christ, *including all those of the Circumcision.*

Conversely, it is likewise believed that in the teachings of the twelve (*cf* 1 Cor.15:5) even as in the writings of the Circumcision authors (i.e., in the books of Hebrews, James, Peter, John, Jude), we simply have those revelations which were either first introduced by them, or given special emphasis by them, which are nevertheless, and in the same way and at the same time, instruction to or blessings for *all* who are in Christ, *including all those of the Uncircumcision.*

Now, in seeking to answer this question of your inquiry, it seems well to say a word initially about the expression "the gospel," or "the evangel," itself. For many, their sheer familiarity with how this phrase is used among their peers, practically answers for them our question under consideration, with no actual proof needed. This supposition about the phrase "the gospel," however, is a classic example of the fallacy of begging the question, in which the proposition to be proved is assumed, in this case implicitly, in

mind when making the claim that there is but "one gospel," is not so much about the evangel itself, per se, but about certain things which they *also* believe to be true in *relation to* the evangel. That is, the claim is that concerning the one evangel of Christ, it is the case that this singular well-message affords the *same* blessings, the *same* allotment, on the *same* basis, both relatively and absolutely, with the *same* duties attending, engaged in for the *same* purpose, to the *same* singular company of saints who are the objects of its beneficence.

the premise. In such a case, a proposition is merely spoken of *as if* it had been proved.[2]

Such folks are used to hearing this phrase "the gospel" used in such a way as if its inherent sense were, "that one, self-same message of good news which on the same conditions, grants the same benefits to all who accept its message and respond to its call."

Thus they interpret the definite article, "the," as if it signified "the one and only," and even as if, in the case of the phrase "the" gospel, the sheer presence of the word "the" entailed as well, all the related things that they also suppose to be attendant to "the gospel" itself.[3]

Since the expression "the evangel of Christ," may be construed widely as well as narrowly (that is, used of a *collective* singular entity, or of an *intrinsic* singular entity), it is simply not in point to mention that in Scripture we read not of the evangel*s* of Christ, but of the evange*l* of Christ. Therefore, it is beside the point to make anything of this fact, as if it settled anything concerning our question at issue.

In a given case, the expression "the evangel of Christ," thus narrowly construed, may have in view a singular sense

2. The sense of the phrase *"begging* the question," is that such mistreatment of the question in view, such that it is scarcely if at all even addressed and certainly not answered, is as if, through the figure of personification, the Question thus were put at pains of having to declare: "I beg of you, please answer that which I ask; do not act as if you have done so when you have done no such thing."

3. Such a notion is mistaken. The only singleness entailed by the definite article, "the," is the singleness to which it refers in any certain instance as regards the specific object which is in view. Whether or not that to which it refers in a given case is the only one of its kind, is a consideration unrelated to the force or purpose of the definite article itself. "The" is used to distinguish the particular from the general, or one particular from another particular. It is sometimes used specifically as a demonstrative pronoun (i.e., "this" or "that"; e.g., James 2:14), and practically always entails this same idea (*cf* Keyword Concordance, p.301, entry "the").

such that in that instance it is used in reference to a sole, specific well-message which is "of Christ." Yet in another case, this same expression, thus broadly construed, may be used in a uni-plural sense, such that in that instance it is used to encompass *all* of the distinctive particulars universal, which when considered together, comprise the entire complement which is the *one* well-message "of Christ."

PRIMARY DIFFERENCES

Since we already clearly have established on grammatical grounds that the evangel of the Uncircumcision is necessarily somehow substantively distinct, essentially disparate, from the evangel of the Circumcision, let us now take note of three primary ways in which this is so.

These primary differences between the evangel of the Uncircumcision and the evangel of the Circumcision are: (1) differences of allotment; (2) differences of corpus of instruction; (3) differences of relative basis of blessing.

#1: Differences of allotment:

The allotment of the Circumcision. The evangel which concerns the people of the Circumcision, is the evangel of the Circumcision. "It is the good news that the God of the heavens has purposed to set up a kingdom, right here on earth (*cp* Matt.5:5; Rev.5:10), both political and spiritual, embracing all the kingdoms of men 'under the whole heavens': 'In their days, that is, of these kings, the Eloah of the heavens shall set up a kingdom that for the eons shall not come to harm, nor shall His kingdom be left to another people. It shall pulverize and terminate all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for the eons' (Dan.2:4).

"Messiah ben David is to sit on the throne of His father according to the Davidic promise (2 Sam.7:1-16), Jerusalem to be the capital city, rebuilt with gloriously resplendent beauty, the sons of Israel possessing the kingdom,

with all peoples, lands, and countries subject to them as priests of Yahweh and ministers of God, when they shall reign until the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh shall cover the earth as the waters form a covering for the sea (Hab.2:14). It concerns the good news that Yahweh is going to fulfill the patriarchal promise and restore the kingdom to Israel, the political sovereignty of which was taken away from them and given to the nations, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar, 'until the eras of the nations may be fulfilled' (Luke 21:24)."[4]

The allotment of the Uncircumcision. Likewise, the evangel which concerns the people of the Uncircumcision, is the evangel of the Uncircumcision. It is the good news that, unlike God's blessing of Israel, with their allotment on the earth, God blesses us "with *every spiritual blessing among the celestials,* in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved" (Eph.1:3-6).

". . . God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us . . . vivifies us together in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us together and seats us together *among the celestials*, in Christ Jesus, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:4-7).

Accordingly, then, "*. . . our realm is inherent in the heavens*, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our

4. Adlai Loudy, GOD'S EONIAN PURPOSE, p.161 adapted (Santa Clarita, Ca.: Concordant Publishing Concern, 1991).

humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself" (Phil.3:20,21). Thus, "The Lord will be . . . saving [us] for His *celestial* kingdom: to Whom be glory for the eons of the eons. Amen!" (2 Tim.4:18).

#2: Differences of corpus of instruction:

The corpus of instruction of the evangel of the Circumcision. The "law of God," when the reference is to what was given through Moses, is spoken of interchangeably as the law of Moses and that of the Lord (e.g., Luke 1:6; 2:22-24,39; John 1:17; Heb.10:28).

Among the Jews, there were tens of thousands who had believed, and *they were all inherently zealous for the law* (Acts 21:20). Under the economy of the law, it was essential that the believers should display their own righteousness (Matt.5:20). If they would enter into life, they must "keep the precepts" (Matt.19:17) and endure to the consummation (Matt.24:13). Throughout their generations they were to teach their sons, "It shall come to be righteousness for us when we observe to do all this instruction before Yahweh our Elohim, just as He had enjoined on us" (Deut.6:25).

Understandably, then, at Jerusalem, some from the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, supposing that any believers of the nations would have to become proselytes and keep the law even as themselves (*cp* Matt. 23:15; Isa.56:1-7), "rose up, saying that *these* [i.e., these also, the believers of the nations evangelized by Paul; Acts 15:3] must be circumcised, besides charging them to keep the law of Moses" (Acts 15:5).

These believers of Judea were all rightly zealous of the law. Their error did not consist of believing that except *they* should be circumcised after the custom of Moses, *they* could not be saved, but in saying to those believers

among the nations reached by Paul and Barnabas, that "If *you* should not be circumcised after the custom of Moses, *you* can not be saved" (Acts 15:1).

It is clear, then, concerning the law, even as declared *to the Hebrews:* while "the law perfects nothing," still, "it is the superinduction of a better expectation, through which *we* are drawing near to God" (Heb.7:19).

The law was never "done away"; it is simply that it was never given to the nations. Even so, Peter, even as all those who looked to him as their apostle, continued to be under the law and subject to its precepts, including those concerning unclean meats (*cp* Matt.5:17-20; James 2:10; Isa. 65:4; 66:17).

The law, then, as complemented by the personal teachings of Jesus, together with the epistles of Hebrews through Jude, constituted the foundational corpus of instruction of the evangel of the Circumcision.

The corpus of instruction of the evangel of the Uncircumcision.[5] Believers today are not under the corpus of law given to Israel of old. God has not imposed these laws upon us, notwithstanding the excellence we may perceive in them or any suppositions of our own as to their perceived appropriateness for our obedience today.

One may not pick and choose which of Moses' precepts he will take to himself and which he will not, according to his own speculations and reasonings to the effect that certain of these laws have been done away while others yet remain. Intrinsically, the entire law was holy, just, and good, even ideal; and the Israelite under law was required to heed it.

Yet it by no means follows from this that its precepts and statutes constitute timeless righteousness with respect to the personal behavior of all men, everywhere, regardless of era or divine administration. Therefore it is both false

5. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.82, pp.114,115; vol.80, pp.219,220.

and foolish to claim that if we would be holy and do what is just and good, we must do what Moses declares.

If God would have us know what is pleasing to Him with respect to the walk of the believer today, He must send us an apostle to make this known to us. And if it should be that any particulars encompassed within His will for us at present should include certain explicit counsel which, *incidentally*, was once also His counsel to Israel of old, then He will need to send us a spokesman or prophet to make this clear.

May we be given the eyes to see that God has done this very thing; and that He has done so through the ministry of the apostle Paul (the apostle of *the nations*), as recorded in his prophetic scriptures (*cf* Rom.11:13; 16:26). It is the writings of the apostle Paul (the New Testament books from Romans through Philemon), then, that constitute the corpus of instruction of the evangel of the Uncircumcision, which writings alone are *to* and *concerned with* believers today, as members of the ecclesia which is Christ's body (*cf* Eph.1:22,23; 1 Cor.12:27; Eph.4:12).

What some call "Gods law"—that is, to speak plainly, the Ten Commandments and perhaps certain other laws from the books of Moses—is, according to many, that which constitutes timeless righteousness. However reasonable and scriptural this notion may seem to be, it simply is not true. We do not seek to obey as such even a single one of the laws given through Moses. Similarly, we do not inconsistently set aside the fourth commandment, that enjoining sabbath-keeping, while seeking to heed the remaining nine ourselves. Not at all. It is merely *incidental* to our own obedience that, for example, Moses instructed the Israelite to honor his father and mother (the fifth commandment of the ten words). *We* are to follow the apostle Paul *fully* in *his* teaching (2 Tim.3:10). *That* is why we, *like* Israel, are to honor our parents also (Eph.6:1-3).

#3: Differences of relative basis of blessing:

The relative basis of blessing of the evangel of the Circumcision. It is true that the *ultimate* foundation of blessing of the evangel of the Circumcision is the same as that of the Uncircumcision, namely, the *grace* of God, "seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:36; *cp* Rom.11:1-6; 1 Peter 1:13; Matt.25:34).

Even so, in the case of those of the Circumcision, the *relative* basis of blessing in the sense of that which is *requisite* to their entrance into life, is their own law-obedience and otherwise personal uprightness. If they would enter into life—if they would be *worthy* to partake in the resurrection of *the just* (in contrast to that of the unjust; Luke 14:14; 20:35; Acts 24:15)—they must keep the precepts (Matt.19:17). This is even as Jesus likewise declared concerning them, that for them to be entering into the kingdom of the heavens, they must be doing the will of His Father Who is in the heavens (Matt.7:21).

Otherwise, the Lord will be avowing to them that, "I never knew you! Depart from Me, *workers of lawlessness!*" (Matt.7:23; *cp* Acts 21:20).

This relative basis of the evangel of the Circumcision's blessing, however, which when only inadequately considered, might seem to disagree with its ultimate basis, is actually in full accord with it. This is so, "For an El of knowledge is Yahweh; and *actions are regulated by Him*" (1 Sam.2:3): "O Yahweh our Elohim, You shall set peace on the hearthstones for us, for indeed, *all our doings You have made for us*" (Isa.26:12).

The relative basis of blessing of the evangel of the Uncircumcision. The most striking thing about any presumed even relative basis of blessing found in man's own doings in the case of the evangel of the Uncircumcision, is that no such actual relative basis of blessing exists! Not only is

our salvation, as with the Circumcision, ultimately speaking, a gracious gift, but even relatively speaking, it is a gracious gift as well. Even as concerns our faith, it too is a gracious gift (Phil.1:29). It is not that we are *required* to believe, for we are not, but that we *do* believe, since God grants us faith.

This is because neither our sins nor our virtues have any bearing on our enjoyment of this promised blessing of life eonian. Indeed, it is this great truth, the truth that, for ourselves, eonian life itself is not a reward but a *gracious* gift (*cp* Rom.6:23; Eph.2:7-10), that is the very snare, or "scandal" (Greek: *skandalon*) of the cross. This is even as Paul, by way of example, declares concerning circumcision insofar as it concerns ourselves (*cf* 1 Cor.7:19): "Now I, brethren, if I am still heralding circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? *Consequently the snare of the cross of Christ* has been nullified" (Gal.5:11).

For those under the Circumcision evangel, eonian life itself, relatively speaking, is indeed of the nature of a reward. This is because it will only be given to the lawful, the just, the worthy—and will *not* be given to those who are otherwise.

Yet for ones such as ourselves who are blessed according to the evangel of the *Un*circumcision, since this blessing of eonian life is *itself* a gracious gift, hence, not a reward, it follows that the nature of our works, whether they should be worthy or unworthy, is simply not relevant in this regard. Thus, the most unworthy of believers, just as surely as those who are most noble of service, will, in their *life* (*cp* Eph.2:5,6) in the oncoming eons, be "displaying *the transcendent riches of [God's] grace* in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:7).

"Faithful is the saying: 'For if we died together, we shall be living together also'" (2 Tim.2:11). And, ". . . *you died,* and your life is hid together with Christ in God. Whenever

Christ, our Life, should be manifested, then you also shall be manifested together with Him in glory" (Col.3:3,4).

Even so, in our case, as concerns not "the allotment of eonian *life*" (Titus 3:7), but "the allotment of the kingdom [i.e., '*reign*'] of God" (*cf* Gal.5:21), if we would be granted the incorruptible "wreath" of faithful service and not disqualify ourselves for it (*cf* 1 Cor.9:24-10:12; *cp* 2 Tim.2:5), we must faithfully endure.

Any among us, then, who do faithfully endure, will be granted, *besides* the *gracious* allotment of eonian *life,* the further reward of being *participants in* the reign of God itself. This allotment of reigning, of having a position of governance in God's kingdom, is in contradistinction to the allotment of simply *living under* that reign yet not participating in the governance of the reign itself.

While the relative basis of one's enjoyment of such a place of service in that day, then, is one's own faithful endurance now, still, the ultimate basis of one's so doing, that is, in the case of those who do endure, is nevertheless the *grace* of God: ". . . *in the grace of God I am what I am,* and His grace, which is in me, did not come to be for naught, but more exceedingly than all of them toil I—*yet not I, but the grace of God which is with me*" (1 Cor.15:10).

It is the case, then, that "*if* we are *enduring,* we shall be *reigning* together *also*" [i.e., besides, in any case, gloriously *living* together, in that day]; [yet] if we are disowning [i.e., as opposed to faithfully enduring], He also will be disowning us; if we are disbelieving, He is remaining faithful—He cannot disown Himself" (2 Tim.2:12,13).

How we rejoice in this testimony, while at the same time being mindful that many cannot receive it. "Of these things be *reminding* them," at the same time *entreating* them, "conjuring them in the Lord's sight not to engage in controversy for nothing useful, to the upsetting of those who are hearing" (2 Tim.2:14). J.R.C.

PRECIOUS BANE

THE EVENTS of Eden are eloquent in the display of God's wisdom. They reveal, also, a primal grace, a yearning solicitude for man's well being. And, if we accept the story as narrated, we may see that the incidents were divinely inevitable.

The whole situation is the creation of God, contemplated as a prelude to a desired experience. An experience that should bring a felt need of God, revealing at long last complete recognition and appreciation of Him. To this end there was an essential environment. The presence, too, of a being whose cunning lure should bring about a strange, yet precious bane.

It is fruitless to think what might have been if Adam and Eve had not eaten of the forbidden tree. We are concerned with the facts as stated. Phrases, such as "man's fall," or "man's probation," hide rather than reveal the depth of meaning in the events of that fair paradise.

Therefore, in pursuance of God's high purpose, every factor contributed. The two trees, the serpent, and the innocent, unsuspecting lamb. Then, to our first parents the fiat went forth: "From every tree of the garden you may eat, yea eat. But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it, for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying" (Gen.2:16,17).

"To die you shall be dying." A lamentable condition and an absolute certainty of eventual death. Yet see how Eve detracts from its positiveness, and adds a sentence of her own. "You shall not eat from it, *and you shall not touch it*

lest you should die" (Gen.3:3). *"Lest you should die."* Eve introduces an element of uncertainty by so misquoting. This weak understatement is seized upon immediately by the tempter. "Not to die shall you be dying."

And how soon follows the fatal action, the tragic disobedience! God knew indeed that their eyes would be opened. But how sadly and with what sorrow did they learn it! They knew they were naked, but now it was burdened with a sense of shame. They are now dying creatures though possessed with physical well being. Sin and death affect their future domain, and through them pass to the yet unborn. So the bane begins, the long duress, and man becomes a creature in captivity.

MERCIFUL INTERVENTION

Yet, ere man leaves the garden, God visits him. Yet not so much in judgment as in grace. It is a merciful intervention. Adam is saved as it were, from himself. And though thrust forth, it is as a God-clothed being, with the memory of the means employed in providing his raiment. The two were now to know in very truth both good and evil.

Strangely enough, and mysterious though it seems, they were vested with a dignity unknown before. Man came from God with keen intelligence and potent powers. Though monarch of all he surveyed, he knew not those marked contrasts which come from acquaintance with ill. He knew not to appreciate the good by virtue of its fitness. It was not enjoyed as compensation or reward. Nor was it viewed in clear contrast from adverse things around. There was no bane.

But now the scene is changed. There is a curse upon the ground. There is necessity for work. The atmosphere seems charged with hostile forces. Disappointments and sorrows shadow the daily path. They are all strangely new. Yet all are vested with meaning, that man may learn how

greatly and deeply he needs God. And so God visits him that he may thus learn. In the words of Job (7:17,18):

What is a mortal, that You should make a great thing of him,
Or that You should set Your heart on him?
Or You should check on him every morning,
And You should test him every moment?

Man is a being of rare possibilities. But he must be schooled. Therefore were our first parents thrust forth to find the world as a great training ground. In its antagonisms they were to see a wisdom which works for good. Those coming after were also to realize that all is designed for an essential experience. The untutored, however, do not realize this. Yet all, whether they learn or not, are affected by the interplay of good and evil.

JACOB'S SCHOOLING

In the life of Jacob there are many incidents which illustrate this rare tuition. His entry into the world was unique. His was the grasping hand, his the subtle diplomatic mind. A bargainer all the time. Note the terms of his vow:

". . . If Elohim is with me and keeps me in this way which I am going, and gives me bread to eat and a garment to put on, and I return in peace to my father's house, then Yahweh will be my Elohim" (Gen.28:20,21).

See, too, the manner of his long sojourn with Laban. Always the circumventer as his name signifies. And again the diplomat as he goes to meet his brother Esau. But now a great lesson awaits him. That of dependence upon God. It has been his to order and arrange. Now, it is God's to appoint and dispose. And God does so in a way to eclipse all Jacob's elaborate preparations for a peaceable meeting. He even has to urge Esau to take his present. These are his words:

". . . If now I have found grace in your eyes, then you must take my approach present from my hand, because I have seen your face, as one sees the face of Elohim, and you are benevolent toward me. Please take my blessing gift that I have brought to you, for Elohim has been gracious to me, and because I have everything . . ." (Gen.33:10,11).

Yet, can we say his lesson was fully learned? Years after, he murmurs, "On me come all these things" (Gen. 42:36) How different to Job's high note of faith, "Should we receive good from the One, Elohim, and should we not receive evil?" (Job 2:10). His was a rare acknowledgment of God's right to choice in giving. The recognition of this divine right gives poise and repose to the spirit. It is a true mark of maturity in the wisdom which is of God.

GOD'S HAND IN OUR LIVES

A consciousness of God's hand in the shadows of life is an asset of great worth. To see how much and how often circumstance waits upon Him, how He can move and prompt for our good, is vision indeed. And only thus are we made aware of the preciousness of life's haunting bane. Its vein of gold is the good which comes through it as most signally of God. We have desired a quietude, it may be, from the intensive drive of the daily task, and there has been such an ordering that the very calm of God has stolen upon us. Fevered fret has gone.

THE SEQUEL

This, of course, is not always so. Yet, even when we have to go through with some form of oppression, God, "together with the trial, will be making the sequel also, to enable you to undergo it" (1 Cor.10:13). And often, the sequel is so befitting that we are left with a rare sense of divine regard. And with the poet would say:

"I thank Thee more that all our joy
is touched with pain;
That shadows fall on brightest hours,
that thorns remain:
So that earth's lot may be our guide
and not our chain."

Precious bane, when it lifts our thoughts to God! When it speaks of His marvelous superintendence of life! See how eloquently it spoke to the apostle Paul! Its shadows were always falling athwart his life. And only on one occasion do we find him seeking relief. He entreats that the trying thing should withdraw from him, but is shown that thereby an all-sufficing grace will be his. He therefore delights in the things which are against him, for Christ's sake. At the same time he looks for the deliverance of the body, and for the lifting of the curse which is now on God's creation. For the time is nearing, when, from its long travail, it shall enter into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

In the meantime, however, there is much for our learning in the affairs of life. It is for the spirit-taught to see God in life in ways not possible to the worldly wise, to whom the haunting bane appears as a thwarting nemesis against which they must ever struggle for the mastery. Untaught by its frustrations they miss the blessedness it holds for the spirit-taught of God.

But amid all the complications and entanglements of this much-vaunted age, are concealed the quiet yet pervasive lives of God's hidden ones. And to them is it given to see God's hand—to realize that "ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness," when He is near.

Learning thus, we shall wait patiently the glad time when He of the pure heart and clean hand shall come to His own. And the grace He will show, and its long display, shall bespeak the passing of life's dark, yet precious bane.

William Mealand

DEATH REIGNS

IT IS DEATH as the condition of mortality, leading downward to the state of death, that oppresses humanity so that all sin. This infirmity, in which we are continually dying until there is no life left, is due to the one sin of the one man, Adam, who passed this woeful condition on to all his descendants (Rom.5:12). We are dying sinners, and this is because of something that happened entirely apart from our participation.

Mortality and the human failures that accompany it have come upon us (that is, all mankind) because of Adam.

As human beings, we may think it is unjust to suffer consequences of another's act. But as believers, we have just been glorying in God for His work of *gratuitous* justification through the faith of Jesus Christ. We have just been directed to the commendation of God's love, poured out in our hearts, in that while we are still infirm, still sinners, Christ died for our sakes. We have just been boasting in God, who has conciliated us to Himself through the death of His Son, we who, in ourselves, stand before Him as enemies. Our confidence is in God and in His indescribable gratuity. And such settled reliance cannot grow and bear its fruit of joy while we deny the reality of our inherited infirmity. We must not fight against the plain statements of Romans 5:12-14 if we would go forward with Paul to the completion of his thought in the following verses.

There are two acts in view in the overall passage of Romans 5:12-21, the sin of Adam which affects us gratuitously for a brief time, and the righteous obedience of

Jesus Christ which superabounds in its good effects which will never cease and which become realized by way of contrast to what has come through Adam. Hence we read:

ROMANS 5:12-14

A. THEREFORE, *even as through one man* **sin** *entered into the world,*
B. *and through sin* **death,**
B. *and thus* **death** *passed through into all mankind,*
A. *on which all* **sinned**—
A. *for until law* **sin** *was in the world,*
A. *yet* **sin** *is not being taken into account when there is no law;*
B. *nevertheless* **death** *reigns from Adam unto Moses,*
A. *over those also who do not* **sin** *in the likeness of the transgression of Adam,*
A. *who is a type of* HIM WHO IS ABOUT TO BE.

The bulk of this passage is concerned with the one man, Adam, his act of sin and its effect on all mankind. The central pattern is: (1) sin, (2) death, (3) sin. The link between the one sin of the one man and the sinning of all mankind is death. This passage is not telling us, as some have thought, that we were involved in Adam's sin and must bear responsibility for it. Nor is Paul saying, as others have thought he should be saying, that Adam died because he sinned, and so also we die because we sin. Whatever truth may lie in such thoughts, this passage of Scripture is not dealing with our involvement with Adam's sin, or with the consequences of our sins.

Instead it is dealing, first of all, with a particular consequence of Adam's one sin, which is that all his descendants are born with death operating in them. We are dying; death is reigning in our lives. And it is under the sway of this corrupting power of death that we are sinning.

LINKS TO THE EVANGEL

But this bleak reality does not stand alone. It is connected to Paul's evangelizing of the evangel of God concerning His Son. This is kept before us at the beginning of verse 12 with the word, THEREFORE, and at the end of verse 14 with the reference to HIM WHO IS ABOUT TO BE. These are links to the evangel of God, concerning His Son. The THEREFORE points us back to what Paul has just written about God's grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. We, who are affected by Adam's sin with the mortality it introduced into the human race, are glorying in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, in Whose blood we are gratuitously justified, and through Whose death we are conciliated to God. So also, the final words of Romans 5:12-14 concerning HIM WHO IS ABOUT TO BE point ahead to all that is said about Christ in verses 15-21, and beyond.

We will keep these links in mind. What is said about the one man, Adam, opens our understanding to what is said about the One Man, Jesus Christ, and it is this, in turn, which invigorates us to be walking in newness of life (Rom.6:4).

SIN IS IN THE WORLD

Our passage thus directs our attention to Adam in order to direct our hearts to Christ.

Verse 13 begins by applying the words of verse 12, "sin entered into the world," to the era before the law was given. It was still true at that time that "sin was in the world." Even though sin, as a transgression of the law, was not being taken into account when there was no law, nevertheless, as stated in verse 12, "all sinned."

The question is: Why was sin in the world then (and why is it still in the world)? The answer given in verse 12 is that Adam sinned, and through this sin came death, and thus

death has passed through *into* all mankind, and it is *on the basis of* this operation of death in us that we sin. Paul is presenting the fact that we all are radically affected by Adam's sin. The penalty of mortality which our progenitor suffered because of his sin has been passed along to all his descendants.

For the most part, the people who lived from Adam to Moses were not able to transgress God's law simply because He had not given any directions of law to them such as He had given Adam, and later would give Israel in thorough exactitude. Yet they all sinned. No one escaped from the effects of mortality. All failed, some with more wickedness of heart than others, to be sure, but all sinned.

Thus we see, that verses 13 and 14 support the claims of verse 12. Because of Adam's sin, death entered into all mankind, and on this circumstance all sinned. Even where there was no law, all sinned. It was because death reigned from Adam to Moses that they sinned. And this also explains why those under the law sinned, no matter how disciplined (like Saul of Tarsus) or deeply dedicated to God in heart (like David) they may have been. We are all affected by the insidious and powerful operation of death reigning over us; we are involuntarily affected by that dying condition which is traced back to Adam's sin.

DEATH REIGNS

In the structure of Romans 5:12, death stands in the midst of things. So also in the structure of Romans 5:13,14, it occupies the center of the thought. Before law was given people sinned, although sin was not taken into account. Nevertheless, *death reigned.* Death as the evil tyrant of mortality reigned in the lives of everyone in that era, just as it continued to do after Moses within the nation of Israel, as well as in the lives of those who are not under law. The unrelenting, devitalizing operation of death which was brought

to our attention in verse 12 continues to operate even where there is no sin of disobedience to divine instruction.

GENESIS 2:17

When Yahweh Elohim instructed Adam concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, He said, ". . . you must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying" (Gen.2:17, CV). By the infinitive, *to die,* death was spoken of as a thing, for infinitives are generally used as nouns. By the finite verb, *shall be dying,* the process of dying, whether brief or prolonged, was in view. Altogether in this passage death is perceived as that state in which there is no life and, by the figure of association (metonymy), the process of dying which leads to that state. On the day when Adam ate of the fruit he began to die, and this continued increasingly for 930 years until he died. It is this operation of death within us that Paul has in view in our passage.

Death still reigns (see also Romans 5:17). But it will be dethroned; indeed it is doomed to absolute destruction (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22-26), both in the final sense of the state of death where there is no life, and in its operative sense of the dying condition which leads to that state. And how is it doomed? By the death of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord! Death is put to death by the one death, the one act of unparalleled righteousness, which occurred two thousand years ago, the full effect of which will be the vivification of all. Because of Jesus Christ's obedience to the death of the cross, everyone will bow and acclaim His name for the glory of God, the Father (Phil.2:8-11).

And most blessedly, as we are believing the evangel, while we continue to die, we are invigorated by the grace and power of the message to be living to God as if alive from among the dead (*cf* Rom.6:13). How vital it is, therefore, to listen to the evangel, to accept what it says in truth

and be believing it, that we may obey this teaching of God's gratuitous grace, from the heart (Rom.6:17). For it is God's power for salvation (Rom.1:16).

THE IMPENDING ONE

Christ is the One Who is about to be; He is the Impending One. In the presence of Adam and Eve, Yahweh Elohim said to the serpent:

. . . I shall set enmity between you and the woman
And between your seed and her Seed.
He shall hurt you in the head,
And you shall hurt Him in the heel.

There would be One Who would come and take back the authority which the Adversary had seized, but He would not do so without a personal loss. When her first son was born, Eve was so certain he was the promised one that she named him *Cain*, which meant "*Acquired.*"

Cain was not the promised Seed, nor was Abel ("Vanity"), nor Seth ("Set"), even though in different and distinct ways they each pointed ahead to Him, as the One Who would empty Himself and be set by God for deliverance. The promised Seed would come, and the Scriptures never lost sight of this. The One to Whom the scepter belongs will come (Gen.49:10; Num.24:17). A Boy would be born, upon Whose shoulders will be the chieftainship (Isa.9:6). He would bear the sin of many (Isa.53:12) and establish right judgment and justice (Jer.23:5). Thus the prophets spoke to Israel concerning Him:

Exult exceedingly, daughter of Zion!
Raise a joyful shout, daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold your King shall come to you!
Righteous and bringing salvation is He. (Zech.9:9)

And suddenly, the Lord Whom you are seeking shall come to His temple, and the Messenger of the covenant, in Whom you are delighting. Behold, He comes! says Yahweh of hosts. (Mal.3:1)

Yet when He came, He came in humiliation and was rejected. Consequently, those who expected that He was the One about to be King of Israel were disappointed.

Yet we expected that He is the One about [is impending] *to be redeeming Israel.* (Luke 24:21)

Yet in coming thus He became the Redeemer. He came, but in many important ways He remained the One about to be.

For the Son of Mankind is about [is impending] *to be coming in the glory of His Father . . . .* (Matt.16:27)

Grace to you and peace from Him Who is and Who was and Who is coming . . . . (Rev.1:4; *cf* 1:8; 4:8)

THE TYPE AND THE ANTITYPE

In what ways has Romans 5:12-14 presented Adam as the type of Christ, Who was to come?

Adam was one human being, and Jesus Christ is One, even *the* One Human (Rom.5:15; *cp* Phil.2:6,7).

By his one act, Adam affected all mankind, and by His one act, Christ will affect all mankind with life's justifying (Rom.5:18).

The effect of Adam's act is gratuitous. So also is the effect of Christ's righteous act, even as it already is operating with spiritual power in the lives of believers.

The bold clarity of Romans 5:12-14 has not been well received even by those who testify to the grace of God in sparing not His own Son for their sakes. But this only dilutes and confuses what Paul has written concerning God's righteousness and love in and through Christ Jesus, and what he is about to say about the grace which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ.

As soon to be pointed out in verses 15-17 Adam does not

picture Christ in the particular deed of his doing, nor in its particular results. But he is a type of Christ in affecting mankind by his one act, entirely apart from what we do. In these matters: *one man, one act affecting all,* and this *apart from our contribution,* in these points Adam is a type of Jesus Christ.

AWAITING THE IMPENDING ONE

The Impending One has come. He has obeyed in perfect faith, even to the death of the cross. This was a death involving great humiliation, pain and sorrow, but it did not arise from an operation of death within Him, stemming from the sin of Adam, but rather came about by His own release of His spirit. Nevertheless, He died as declared in the evangel (Rom.5:6,8; 1 Cor.15:3). This was the one act of the One Man which gratuitously affects all mankind, bringing life and righteousness.

He has come, but He is also still the Impending One, Who will bring results of His one act into complete enjoyment for His chosen ones, and then ultimately for all.

As for us who are believing, we have the expectation that "the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the Chief Messenger, and with the trumpet of God," and we shall meet Him in the air (1 Thess.4:14-16). For "we are awaiting . . . the Lord, Jesus, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself" (Phil.3:20,21).

Yet Romans 5:12-21 compares the gratuitous effects of Adam and of Christ on all mankind. Consequently, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying (Rom.5:18).

D.H.H.

IMPUTATION OR TRANSMISSION

POOR, puzzled, muddle pated Paul! He had, according to some up-to-date commentators, a great capacity for getting confused. Quite frequently his logic halts. If anyone should doubt that in Romans 5:13,14 Paul became confused and wandered off into a blind alley, we have the assurance of reputable modern scholars that he did so. Undoubtedly confusion exists somewhere!

But then, if Paul blundered, what becomes of apostolic inspiration and authority? What we supposed was a divine revelation vanishes like a piece of ice before the sunlight of a superior enlightenment and intelligence. We should be duly grateful to be rescued from the blundering of this so incompetent apostle. But, as we look at the interpreters and correctors of Paul, we hesitate. Has not this Paul proclaimed to us the gospel of God concerning His Son? Have we not with him experienced its power for salvation, and shared somewhat of his illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ?

Away from his interpreters we turn again to Paul. His words are few and clear and authoritative.

For until law sin was in the world, yet sin is not being taken into account when there is no law; nevertheless death reigns from Adam unto Moses, over those also who do not sin in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him Who is about to be.

For connects the foregoing assertions with the proofs. It connects the statements of verse 12 with the support given to these facts in verses 13 and 14.

Until law sin was in the world. Sin was here because through one man sin entered the world. The manner of its dissemination is by the propagation of the race from a sinful head. The causal connection between Adam's sin and that of his posterity has been traced in the words "death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned." All do not see that death, the penalty of sin, includes *a depraved condition* from birth. Because death is not seen to be the link between Adam's sin and ours, various theories of the imputation, or reckoning, of Adam's sin to all mankind have been formulated. Imputation is an idea foreign to the text. Transmission is a fact, and is the central thought. Sin and death are linked interchangeably as cause and effect. If sin cast the blight of death upon Adam's whole being, it depraved him. The transmission of death is the transmission of depravity.

Yet sin is not being taken into account where there is no law. *Taken into account* occurs in one other place, being used in Philemon eighteen. "This be charging to my account." It differs from the word "reckoning" in "not *reckoning* their offenses to them" (2 Cor.5:19) by having the preposition *en* ("in") prefixed to it, which adds the idea of inscribing in a book. It is thus an accountant's term. The argument of Paul is that death reigns over those whose sins are not taken into account.

In Adam's case death was the prescribed penalty for his breach of a law. The infliction of death supposes the violation of a positive law the penalty of which is death. Sin which is not taken into account or reckoned to the sinner as a breach of law cannot account for the reign of death. The simple prohibition of Eden had no authority over others than Adam, and even he could not disobey it after his expulsion from Eden. Only one sin was accounted to Adam. Nothing remains of that law save the record of its statement in Genesis 2:16,17, the story of its violation, and the fact

that its penalty is upon the whole race. Where there is no law sinners cannot subject themselves to its penalty. One reason for the prominence of "one offense" is that Adam's sins subsequent to his expulsion from the garden were not transgressions of law. His subsequent sins do not account for the reign of death nor are the consequences of them transmitted to the whole race.

The word **nevertheless** is emphatic. It stresses the fact, apparently contradictory to the idea of non-imputation, that **death reigns from Adam to Moses.** Though the men of that period could not sin with the same responsibility as Adam had, nevertheless they share the penalty of his sin. Death sits as a tyrant upon the throne because his reign is firmly established on the foundation of the divine sentence pronounced in Eden.

The enthronement of death is the most terrible catastrophe of history. So repulsive a condition as a race universally doomed to the failure of mortality and death is unnatural. It can be explained only as a divine infliction and a stupendous disaster. It more than suggests that such a condition and destiny cannot be the consummation of a beneficent Creator's plan.

Over those who do not sin after the likeness of Adam's transgression. Adam's sin took the form of transgression of a known law, besides being a disobedience and an offense. The law was like a fence which God had placed around the tree so that Adam could not reach it. He broke down the fence and so transgressed. Law converts sin into transgression and aggravates its offensiveness. Not all sin is transgression. Hence men without law cannot sin after the likeness of Adam's transgression. Perhaps the majority of the race now living have never heard of God's law; nevertheless they are under the sway of the tyrant death.

The edge is taken off every objection when it is seen what God has done for His destroyed humanity by the Last

Adam. Just as we, without being parties to Adam's transgression, are dying, so we, while surely not parties to the obedience of Christ, shall receive life and righteousness. To argue that our personal sin must be the meritorious cause of the death to which we are subject is as reasonable as to argue that our personal righteousness merits justification and life. But as the chief feature of the type is that our relation to Adam apart from any choice or act of ours has involved us in his doom, so the conspicuous feature of the antitype is that our relation to the Last Adam shall involve us in His just award. Paul has begun his proof of the universality of Christ's work by proving Adam's disobedience to have caused universal sin and death. Sin and death being in His world, God goes there with His life-imparting grace.

George L. Rogers

EDITOR'S NOTE

In his note on Romans 5:14 in the CONCORDANT COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT (p.235), A. E. Knoch took the position that the era between Adam and Moses was the type Paul had in view here, as a picture of the present era. In accord with this the early editions of the CV read, ". . . which is a type of that which is about to be." This was changed under Brother Knoch's supervision in the 1944 edition to read as presently rendered, ". . . who is a type of Him Who is about to be." When George L. Rogers' notes on this passage, from which the preceding article is excerpted, appeared in *Unsearchable Riches* in 1931 (volume 22, pp.101-125), they followed a similar position. Both teachers, however, were clear and adamant in stressing the points of comparison between Adam and his one sin of disobedience and Christ and His one act of righteousness and obedience. In this Adam was certainly a type of Christ.

In view of these considerations it seems to me it would be most helpful to the reader, in reprinting Pastor Rogers' notes, to delete those comments which follow the former position on the last clause of verse 14. In this way the value of his overall stress on the passage as pointing ahead to the grace of God in Christ might stand out more surely.

D.H.H.

THE CREATION OF HUMANITY

WE EXIST because God created us. We are not the products of fortuitous accident but of the direct operations of One beyond us in power and wisdom and being.

"The God Who makes the world and all that is in it, He, the Lord inherent of heaven and earth, is not dwelling in temples made by hands, neither is He attended by human hands, as if requiring anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all" (Acts 17:24,25).

As implied by the verb "create" there was a definite pattern and purpose in the mind of God when He brought humanity into existence.

+So Elohim |created `humanity in His image; in** the **image of Elohim He created `it: male and female He created `them.

+ Elohim |blessed `them, and Elohim |said to them: Be fruitful and increase; + fill `the earth and subdue it. + Hold **sway *i*over** the **fish of the sea and *i*over** the **flyer of the heavens,** 7+ ***i*over every** domestic **beast*n*,** 7+ ***i*over all the earth*0* and *i*over every animal** `that is **moving on the earth.** (Gen.1:27,28)

To be created in God's image is explained here primarily as a matter of function. Humanity was created in order to be fruitful and increase so that it would fill the earth and subdue it. In this way humanity would reflect its Creator.

Humanity was created to fulfill a purpose, and that purpose was to subdue the earth and sway over other forms of life on the earth which had previously been created.

Every living thing was to have its place, but humanity was set over all the other terrestrial forms of life. And in this it was to be an image of God, Who is over all, absolutely.

RUIN

Yet as previously noted regarding God's creation of the earth as recorded in Genesis 1:1, chaos and vacancy and darkness entered the picture (Gen.1:2). God's purpose that the earth be inhabited (Isa.45:18) seemed to be thwarted. So also God's creation of humanity in His image seemed to be ruined by the disobedience of Adam and Eve which brought about the entrance of sin and death into the world.

"Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned" (Rom.5:12). Adam disobeyed the divine instruction of Genesis 2:17, and because of this, he immediately became mortal, *dying* day after day, so as finally *to die.*

But this did not affect Adam and Eve alone, for this operation of death within them was passed through into all mankind. Cain and his descendants (see Genesis 4:17-24) and Seth and his descendants (see Genesis 4:26-32), they all sinned and were wanting of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). This was true even of Enoch who walked with Elohim (Gen.5:22) and Noah who found grace in the eyes of Yahweh and was righteous and flawless in his generations (Gen.6:8,9).

What does this say about the Creator? He creates with a purpose in view, but the purpose is not maintained. The good is ruined by evil.

What we must say is that the Creator's purpose is never to be left unfulfilled; God never loses sight of His purpose nor the means of its realization. Even after sin and death entered into humanity, the Scriptures testify to the fact that humanity is the creation of God:

[i]**On** the **day Elohim created– Adam, in** the **likeness of Elohim He** [d]**made `him. Male and female He created them, and He** [l]**blessed `them and** [l]**called `their name Human** [i]**on** the **day they** were **created–.** (Gen.5:1,2)

God created humanity, and He blessed them. Nevertheless they became filled with evil:

[+] **Yahweh** [l]**saw that the evil of humanity** was **multiplying** [i]**on earth, and every form of** the **devisings of its heart** was **surely evil all the day.** [+] **Yahweh** [l]**regretted that He had** [d]**made `humanity** [i]**on earth, and He** [l]**grieved `in His heart.** [+]**So Yahweh** [l]**said: I shall wipe** out `**humanity** [w]**that I have created, off** the sur**face of the ground, from human unto beast, unto** the **creeper and unto** the **flyer of the heavens; for I regret that I have** [d]**made them.** (Gen.6:5-7)

[+]**Now the earth was** [l]**ruined**[◊] **before the** One**, Elohim, and the earth was** [l]**full** of **violence.** [+] [7]**Yahweh**[0] **Elohim** [l]**saw the earth, and behold, it was ruined, for all flesh had ruined `its ways on the earth.** [+]**So** [7]**Yahweh**[0] **Elohim** [l]**said to Noah:** [7]The **era of**[0] the **end of all** [7]**human**[0] **flesh has come before Me, for the earth is full** of **violence**[f] **because** of **their presence.** [+]**Now behold, I** am about to **ruin**[l] **them** `with **the earth.** (Gen.6:11-13)

CREATED FOR FUTILITY?

Yet God did not ruin the race completely. With Noah and his family humanity was sustained, but without any removal of the mortality and its accompaniment of sin. Day after day and year after year since the days of Noah, humanity is dying and failing. We try to put the best bent possible on history, but clearly the ruin of humanity is at work.

We cannot think of this ruin in a detached way. We are too much a part of it all. God created us, but violence and pain and failure keep eroding our endurance. We are like the psalmist who exclaimed:

Remember *wt*__how transient__ is **my** life**,**
*on*__For what futility have You created all__ the **sons of humanity?** (Psa.89:47)

YAHWEH'S REGRET

Nor does God take this ruin in a detached way. He is **Creator of evil** (Isa.45:7), but as a temporary means for good. He locks all up in stubbornness in order to be merciful to all (Rom.11:32). But the evil of stubbornness and ruin which form a part of the processes which God counsels still brings sorrow to His heart. And more painful is His travail in the suffering and death of the Son of His love, through which all will be reconciled to Him (*cf* Col.1:13-20).

It is thus from every standpoint no small thing that God created humanity. We are created by God for a purpose of good. Nevertheless, we stand before Him ruined and unable to change the situation. Yet now, by means of the faith of Jesus Christ, God's righteousness is manifest, leading to life's justifying for all mankind (*cf* Rom.3:21-28; 5:12-19).

WITH EXPECTATION

Hence, in speaking of God as our Creator, we believe that the pattern of Genesis chapter 1, where creation is followed by chaos, vacancy and darkness, and then by the vibrating of God's spirit and the expressing of His word, "Let light come to be!" is the pattern God is following with respect to humanity. We believe that God is the Creator of all humanity in Christ, and the Reconciler of all through Him. Therefore, the futility and vanity which we see and experience is here because God has subjected creation to it "in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:20,21).

D.H.H.

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 Undeniable Evidence For the Resurrection
108 The Vivification of All
127 How the Dead Are Roused

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Vocabulary Index

for the

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

THIS INDEX is an attempt to provide users of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) access to full listings of the occurrences of each major Hebrew or Aramaic (Chaldee) word (except most proper names) used in the Old Testament.

It is admittedly more complex and less convenient than the Keyword Concordance published with the Concordant Literal New Testament. But until such a concordance using the vocabulary of the CVOT can be made available this may serve as a useful substitute.

This is an abridgment of a full list of the English terms used in the CVOT, as updated in 2009, as work proceeds on a first edition of the Version as a whole.

The list is keyed to Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance (EHCC, 5th edition), which is presently available under the title, Englishman's Hebrew Concordance (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody MA 01961-3473, ISBN 0-913573-21-3). The word entries in this latter edition are coded to the numbering system of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, and these numbers are also provided in this index.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2010
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED ONE

EDITORIAL

FOR various reasons, related to our mortality, we had not been able to complete this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* before it became obvious that we needed to give concentrated attention to the July issue. This is humiliating to us, but it does stir us more diligently to look beyond ourselves to the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. The outcome for now is this special issue of our magazine, given entirely to reflections on the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, in three studies, written many years ago by A. E. Knoch.

These articles appeared as part of a series first entitled "The Mystery of the Resurrection," and later changed to "The Secret of the Resurrection." For some months we have been preparing the various instalments of this entire series for publication as a book. Four of these instalments were reprinted in last year's magazines, three of which ("What is Mankind?" "What is the Soul?" and "What is Death?") will soon appear as a separate publication. The fourth of these was an abridgement of the article entitled "The Vivification of All," appearing in our November 2009 issue under the title, "What is God's Goal?" This meditation on 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 appears here again under its original title, including Brother Knoch's notes on verses 29-34 as well.

As indicated, this was not what we had planned for this issue, but, in God's grace, it has become our privilege to share this excellent commentary on one of the most foundational, enlightening and spiritually uplifting chapters of God's Word, under one cover. Indeed it seems so satis-

factory to us that we are arranging to publish these three articles also as a single booklet made available for others beyond the readership of our magazine.

While reviewing these articles in preparation for reprinting I have often had to pause in order to think more deeply on a passage being discussed, as well as utter a prayer of thanksgiving and praise to God for some spiritual enrichment which the inspired words of Paul have brought to my heart. The first article which centers on the evangel has been of particular interest and help because of the way it connects 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 with Romans 5. The latter chapter stresses the matter of dying and death (Christ's death and our mortality and death), while resurrection and life are most prominently in view in 1 Corinthians 15.

I must confess that in stressing the importance of the death of Christ and our identification with Him in that death, as brought out in Romans 5 and 6, I sometimes neglect the vital necessity of His resurrection. A friend recently asked me if Christ's death would accomplish anything apart from the resurrection. Of course not! Brother Knoch puts its succinctly: "The death of Christ is sad news, not glad tidings, apart from His resurrection" (p.101).

As for the articles planned for this issue and partly finished, we hope to present them in the July issue. All experience of failure and distress (including the small frustration mentioned here), as is common to humanity, is transformed in the life of the believer to benefit when it is related to the evangel of God's love and the assurance that He is working all together for our good.

For we are persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God, in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.8:37-39).

D.H.H.

UNDENIABLE EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION

(1 Corinthians 15:1-19)

THE RICHEST and most far-reaching revelation concerning resurrection, rousing, and the recall to life is spread before us in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. The hopeless heresy, that *none* will be *raised,* provoked the gracious revelation that *all* will be *made alive.* The apostle first deals with the resurrection of Christ and the evidence for it (1-11). Then he shows the utter hopelessness of the saints in case the heresy should be true (12-19). From this he goes on to give the grand outlines of God's future dealings with death, in order that He may become All in all (20-28). After again dealing with the negative side of the subject (29-34), he goes on to discuss the manner of the resurrection as well as the character of the body that shall be (35-49). The climax comes when he reveals the secret change which will come to all of us when the Lord's trump calls us to Himself (50-57).

Some among the Corinthians were saying that there is no resurrection of the dead (1 Cor.15:12). To combat this fundamental error the apostle does not confine himself to proving the resurrection, but reminds them of the *evangel* which was the basis of their belief, because *the resurrection is an essential and indispensable feature of the glad tidings.* The attack on the resurrection was a thrust at the very vitals of the evangel. All was false and futile without it. Their acceptance, their standing, even their salvation involved a belief in the resurrection. Either they have received it or their "faith" has no foundation, and is not genuine:

"Now I am making known to you, brethren, the evangel which I bring to you, which also you accepted, in which also you stand, through which also you are saved, if you are retaining what I said in bringing the evangel to you, *outside and except you believe feignedly*" (1 Cor.15:1,2).

There was, even in those days, the possibility of a sham belief. Today, Christendom is composed mostly of these sham believers, who are *not* saved by a knowledge of the evangel. The difference is in the *acceptance* of the evangel, and in *standing* in it. The great mass today, especially where Christianity is the prevailing religion, hear and assent to the facts of the evangel without any actual acceptance or appreciation, or any standing in it. That is why the evangel itself has gradually shifted around from a glad message concerning Christ to a sad message concerning sin. Sham believers fail to appropriate the vital values of His sacrifice, so they still stand in themselves and their own doings. This question of lifeless church members is not always easy to solve, since the genuine have accepted a sadly enervated evangel and stand in a cloud of traditions, and the sham may easily appear to possess as much as the real ones profess.

Modern evangelical preaching has deteriorated into a moral protest against the sins of men, an exhortation to forsake them, spiced with a varying amount of help from a compassionate Saviour, and perhaps a few dim references to His "atoning" death and shed blood. Seldom do we hear a ringing testimony concerning His resurrection, with all its vital implications. The devitalized evangelism of this unbelieving end time does not deny the resurrection, but it ignores it. Its object is "conversions." Hence the belief engendered is too often a sham. It is centered in self and sin, instead of in Christ—His suffering and shameful death, His glorious resurrection, His celestial ascension and promised return.

THE EVANGEL

Christ is the solitary subject of the evangel, and three facts concerning Him, all of which took place within the narrow compass of three days, constitute its essence. He died, was entombed, and has been roused. His death was for our sins; His resurrection is evidence of their removal. So simple, yet so sublime, is the message that saves! Who can measure the depths of love which it reveals, or scale the heights of glory which it unveils? It sinks the most august Personage in the whole universe down into the deepest degradation and it carries Him up to the highest heights in the heavens. It concerns God's anointed Saviour and that part of His career which effects our salvation. Apart from these three facts there is no evangel. The death of Christ is sad news, not glad tidings, apart from His resurrection.

To be sure, there is much more to be said as to the effects of His sacrifice Godward and manward. Especially today, as the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians makes clear, we should herald the conciliation, for God is conciliated in this administration. If we faithfully bear witness to the work of Christ and the influence it has had upon God, then its application to mankind will not fail to accomplish its mission.

A TEACHING EVANGEL

Many a time, in my early efforts to serve my Lord, have I heralded the evangel to the lost. In preparation, I often pondered the opening words of the fifteenth of First Corinthians, and sought to make it the basis of my message. But the bare facts of the evangel are soon stated, and more was needed to fill in its outline. So it was that I gradually took to what was then called a "teaching gospel," and this eventually led to teaching the saints in place of evangelizing sinners. I would heartily commend this "teaching

evangel." It seeks to fill out the skeleton here given from other portions of the Word. This is, in fact, suggested by the phrase "according to the Scriptures," which is twice used in this condensed outline, as if to show its importance, and to intimate that these brief words are but an epitome of vast *fields* of truth which are elaborated elsewhere in the Sacred Scrolls. The great subject of sacrifice is involved in His death. And the greater subject of resurrection is implied in His rousing.

CHRIST—THE ANOINTED

Until we know *Who* it is that died, the evangel will have little meaning or power. In Christendom somewhat is known of His life of humiliation on earth, but how little of His official glories as God's Anointed Prophet and Priest and King! The mere mention of the name "Christ" in any gospel assembly should awaken feelings and thoughts such as the name "Messiah" brings up in an intelligent synagogue of the Jews. The most Blessed Being in the universe, the Image of the Deity, the Channel of all creation, the Effulgence of God's glory, His Beloved Son, the promised Seed of the woman Who will bruise the serpent's head, the Seed of Abraham and David's Heir, the Prophet like Moses and the Priest after the order of Melchizedek, the promised Saviour of the world—such is the One Who died, was entombed, and rose. He should be made known to all as the Lord of life so that they may realize, in some degree, what it meant for Him to die. He should be exalted to His place supreme so that men may get at least a glimpse of His humiliation.

DIED FOR OUR SINS

That *such* a Christ should die—this is the great marvel. That He, through Whom all life has come, should enter the realms of death, opens up to our gaze the vast vista of

God's love, for death could never have touched Him except as a Sacrifice for the sins of others. But here, again, false conceptions of death rob the truth of all reality. Death is no longer an enemy. It is regarded as only a higher form of life. Apart from the physical sufferings, Christendom makes death a portal to glory instead of the gate to shame. Knowing not the high honors of Christ nor the deep disgrace of death they cannot compute the vast distance between them, so cannot realize or appreciate the descent of Christ to the cross or the glory of His resurrection.

ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES

To trace the types of Christ which speak of His death for sin is a task by itself, beyond the scope of the present treatise. Before the entrance of sin God provided Him, as a flawless and unspotted Lamb (1 Peter 1:20), Whose precious blood alone could cleanse away the sin that was to come. And when sin actually entered, Yahweh straightway made coats of skins for Adam and his wife, to clothe them (Gen.3:21), and these must have come from animals which died for their sins. Abel brought to Yahweh the firstborn of the flock and of their fat (Gen.4:4). When God chose to dwell among His people Israel He could be approached only through the death of victims on sacrificial altars slain, all of which foretold the death of Christ. Unnumbered multitudes of animals yielded up their souls merely to portray His death for sin. Rivers of blood have flowed merely to point onward to the precious blood of Golgotha.

In every case the shadow had the shape of the reality. There is a marvelous harmony between the types and the august Antitype. Under the ritual of the law, only flawless animals could be offered, so that His flawlessness might be recognized. All of the details of His death were presented typically by the various offerings, especially those for sin, and by the Passover lamb, and the sacrifices on the

day of "atonement" or propitiation. I would press upon those who preach or teach the gospel, to dwell upon the way in which His sacrifice fulfilled all that was written of it in the Scriptures. Let not the mere statement suffice. So may we kindle a living faith in God and His Word in breasts that know Him not, should we show how fully the substance satisfies the shadow.

HE WAS ENTOMBED

As an evidence, both of His death and of His resurrection, we must press the fact of His entombment. There must be no question of the reality of His entrance into the death state, or it will react upon the reality of His resurrection. Let us note exactly what is said, for very few in Christendom now believe it. The attack on the great truth of the resurrection begins by setting aside the words, "*He* was entombed," and putting in their place, "His *body* was buried, but His soul and spirit were alive outside the tomb." As a matter of fact, few actually believe that *He* died for our sins. They have no need for the tomb, except as a temporary receptacle for His outer shell, not His real Self.

The reverent student who reads God's account of the creation of mankind will note that Adam was formed *of soil from the ground* (Gen.2:7). Later this is made still more emphatic. In judging him God said, "By the sweat of your brow shall you eat your bread, until you return to the ground, for from it were you taken. *For soil you are,* and to soil you shall return" (Gen.3:19). Humanity is not composed of spirits clothed with a mantle of flesh. It has no expression apart from a body. The spirit imparts life and power and makes it a living soul, but, apart from the body, it is not a spirit or a soul. When a man dies *he* is buried or entombed, not his body merely. If this is not so, resurrection is a farce and deserves the fate which has befallen it. Christendom has repudiated death, so why should it witness to the resurrection? If *He* was not entombed, neither was *He* raised.

ROUSED THE THIRD DAY

After Isaac had been taken from Abraham by the command to slay him, he recovered him on the third day (Gen. 22:4; Heb.11:17,18). Joseph was in prison two full years or "years of days" (Gen.41:1), and was released and exalted on the *third* "years of days." Our Lord Himself referred to Jonah's escape from the fish as a type of His resurrection. Along with the sacrifices which were required to be without corruption, these instances foreshadow the great fact that Christ, though dead, saw no corruption.

Besides this there are other pictures of resurrection, such as the two birds used in the cleansing of the leper in the fourteenth chapter of Leviticus. One bird was not enough to set forth the truth, for it was slain and its blood applied. So another was associated with it by dipping it in the blood of the slain bird. With this token of death upon it, it was set free to fly away into the heavens, a blessed and beautiful exhibition of life beyond suffering and death.

WITNESSES OF HIS RESURRECTION

"The matter shall be confirmed at the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses" (Deut.19:15). Men are fallible, and may be mistaken, so it was laid down in the law of God that matters of importance should not be determined by the testimony of a single witness. The thought of a double witness is employed in a variety of ways in establishing the most important event which has ever occurred in the history of the earth. He was seen by individuals and by more than five hundred at once. Two of the pillars of the Circumcision saw Him, Cephas and James. He was seen at least twice by the twelve, who would be

especially competent to testify, as they had spent so many months with Him before.

PAUL'S WITNESS

Still the most striking and satisfactory testimony of all is that of Paul himself. All of the other witnesses were friends of our Lord and inclined toward His teaching. Saul of Tarsus was His worst enemy. He persecuted those who believed in His resurrection. There cannot be the least suspicion that his testimony is biased in favor of our Lord. He lacked what the Circumcision had, a personal acquaintance with Him before His death, but this is far more than balanced by his enmity, which would dispose him to testify *against,* not *for,* the truth.

Though Paul saw Him *last* after His resurrection, at the same time he saw Him *first* as a foretaste of His return to earth. He saw Him in glory so bright that it struck him blind. He saw Him as Israel will see Him in the future, not as the disciples saw Him in the past. In the regeneration, when the nation shall be born at once, then the Messiah will appear in His glory, and they will see Him as Paul did on the road to Damascus, returned to earth, surrounded with celestial splendor. Will anyone who sees Him thus need any further evidence of His resurrection? So overwhelming was this proof to Paul that it instantaneously transformed him from a fanatical persecutor to an adoring slave, just as will be the case with Israel in the future. Is not this why he calls himself a premature birth? While Israel is not regenerated, he was, in a figure, because he saw the *glorified* Christ, Whom none of the others had yet seen.

THE GRACE OF GOD

Paul's whole career, after he had met the Lord in glory, was evidence for the resurrection, for the power of Christ's resurrection wrought in him. And this power came to him

through the channel of *grace.* Let us not miss the emphasis which he places on this, the reigning characteristic of this administration. This he declares, in one of those beautiful examples of divine rhetoric in which lovers of literature delight (15:10):

> Yet, in the *grace of God* I am what I am, And His *grace,* which is in me, did not come to be for naught, But more exceedingly than all of them toil I—yet not I, But the *grace of God* which is with me.

It is this grace, operating in God's saints today, which first empowered Paul, which bears witness to a living, glorified Christ, at God's right hand. Later, in the Philippian epistle, Paul expands this thought. Through the power of Christ's resurrection, fellowship in His sufferings, and conformity to His death, he strove to attain to an experience such as will be ours in the resurrection (Phil.3:10,11). The conduct of every saint should be ample evidence that Christ is no longer in the tomb, but is risen and gracious in His glory.

Thus the apostle lays before those who deny the resurrection, the evidence which supports it. He gives the historical testimony of actual witnesses, fully competent to decide, in sufficient numbers and reputation to shut out all deception. No event in the history of the world is better attested. But the evidence is not confined to the past. It is a vital force operating in every true believer. Just as in the coming eons, no one will need to fall back upon the testimony of the Circumcision as to the resurrection of the Messiah, seeing that He Himself is present in power, and the whole conduct and attitude of mankind is influenced thereby, so it should be now among the saints. The grace which flows from His glorious resurrection produces a power which should transform our lives so that we may walk as partakers of the power of His resurrection, and living reflectors of His glory.

A. E. Knoch

THE VIVIFICATION OF ALL

(1 Corinthians 15:20-34)

"ALL IN ALL"—such is the august goal of our God! He will yet be everything to every one of His creatures, as it is fitting that He should be. Nothing less will satisfy His heart or the heart of our Saviour. Nothing less will vindicate His love or form a fit conclusion for the tragedy of the eons. Let us with joy believe it. Let us exult as we receive it! May these three simple syllables, that an infant's lips can lisp, become the very basis of our being, the background of every act, the key to every occurrence, a light in every darkness, a balm for every wound. They are the pole star of all true philosophy, the consummation of all wisdom. They are the heart of the compend of divine revelation, "Out of Him and through Him and for Him is all" (Rom. 11:36), and reflect back upon the dismal story of sin and suffering the bright and beneficent beams of the immanent love of God, for which the darkness and death we now endure is but a fleeting foil.

Well do I recall the days when this part of first Corinthians was utterly incomprehensible to me. The "truth" which held me in its thrall turned it into a dark riddle, which I had no hope of solving, at least in this life. Its beams were too bright, and, in place of illuminating my whole being, as it does today, it blinded my eyes, as Saul was blinded by the brightness of our Lord's presence on the way to Damascus. But gradually the scales fell away, and now that which was the most obscure has become a light for illuminating all the rest. This experience has taught me to bear with much patience the blindness of others, and to wait until God graciously restores their sight so that they may gaze upon these universal glories. Let us pray that God may open many eyes to discern that far future infinitude of bliss—*God All in all.*

DYING CONTRASTED WITH LIFE

The paragraph which closes with these wondrous words must be illumined by their light, or it will prove an insoluble enigma. The vivification of all, the abolition of death, the abdication of the Son—these truths are too much for the mortal whose heart is still confined in the confessions of human theology. In fact this part of God's revelation is far too magnificent in its scope to be cramped into the creeds of men. Hence we urge all who read these lines to remember at all times, when studying this superlative section of divine revelation, that the object of all which the apostle brings before us is a two-fold universality in regard to God. *Every* creature of His will find in Him its *all*.

Keeping this constantly before us we will be able to examine the steps which lead up to it, beginning with Him in Whom it has already found a fulfillment, the Firstfruit, Christ.

Christ *has* been roused from among the dead, and not only so, but He is the Firstfruit of those who are reposing. Just as, each year, a shock of grain (Lev.23:10) was waved before Yahweh as a token and promise of the coming crop, so Christ, in His recall from death, was but the beginning, to be followed, in due course, by the whole harvest. All is reckoned as being in the Firstfruit, so that, in another place, the apostle says, "If the firstfruit is holy, the kneading is also" (Rom.11:16). What is true of one is germinally true of all the rest. So that we need only look at Christ to see what God's heart has in store for all the

creatures which His hands have made. His vivification is the sample and gives certainty to all the rest.

In his epistle to the Romans, the apostle shows how Christ's work parallels and far more than corrects the one act of Adam, to which is traced the entrance of sin and death. His conclusion was that, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying (Rom.5:18). In fullest accord with this he now develops the same thought in connection with *life*. In this also, Christ is far more than the equivalent of Adam. Death, as well as sin, came in through the first man. So life, as well as righteousness, comes in through the Second, our Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, this goes far deeper, for it is death working in us which is the cause of our sin.

Far more than our decease was brought in by Adam, and something which affects our souls much more than the sleep which closes our career. God did not say to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen.2:17). If He had, Adam would have died the very day in which he was judged. He might then have had no progeny of sinners. In the precise language of the Hebrew, He said, "to die you shall be dying." That is, there would be dying as well as death. As we now know, there is a long process of disintegration, with which we are all acquainted, even though we are accustomed to calling it life.

Ever since Adam sinned, he and his descendants have been dying. Like ripe fruit plucked from the tree, our bloom soon passes away, and we show a slow process of decay. In Adam, all are dying, even while they are still alive. That is the "life" that we inherited from our disobedient parent, which not one of his descendants has ever evaded.

Thus, we read, shall all be vivified. The contrast is not between the crisis of actual death and the resurrection, but between the dying process and a life process, beyond

the touch of death. Indeed, it is not strictly true that all in Adam are doomed to die. Many have longed to be among the favored few who will not expire, but be vivified at the coming of our Lord. We who survive to the presence of Christ are slowly dying, but we will not complete the process when we hear the shout that will wake the dead and infuse immortal life into our dying frames. Not all of Adam's descendants will die, but all begin to tread the path that leads down to the grave as soon as they are born.

THE CRISIS OF DEATH

The contrast in this glorious promise is between mortality and immortality, between our present mode of existence and the glory before us. That vivification is far more than resurrection is abundantly evident, for it is for those who have not died as well as for those who repose. Our Lord is not only the Resurrection but the Life (John 11:25). Not only could He call back Lazarus from the tomb to life like that he had before, and thus be his Resurrection, but, in the days to come, He will call Lazarus once again, to a life indissoluble and incorruptible, and thus become his Life. That is why, especially in relation to Lazarus, our Lord calls Himself by this double title. Lazarus has already experienced His power in resurrection, but he waits in death until His future presence before he makes His acquaintance as his Life. His resurrection was a passing occurrence, but the life that he will receive will be enduring, constant, incorruptible, eonian.

For death the cure is resurrection, but for dying we need life. The crisis of death is a single act and so is resurrection. Each may occur in an instant of time. This is not before us in this parallel (1 Cor.15:22). The words "are dying" and "shall be vivified" are in the incomplete tense in the Original, which denotes an action in progress. The long drawn-out activity of death in dragging men down

to the grave is put in contrast with the endless activity of life in imparting incorruption, power and glory. All who endured the first shall enjoy the second. Here is a message for mankind which should lift it above its misery! Knowing this, we can even enjoy the weakness and humiliation of our present state in anticipation of the glory for which it is the necessary prelude.

THE THREE CLASSES

Perhaps all of us are like the prophet, and our hearts cry out, "Till when?" We are like children, intent only on the immediate sensations of our souls. God uses wisdom and waits until the proper preparation has been made. He does not wish to lavish His gifts on thankless, unresponsive hearts, so must reserve His bounty until sin and death have prepared them to appreciate His boons. Only thus can He become everything to them. So the longed-for glory cannot come at once. Moreover, some will be ready before the rest. The great Firstfruit is already glorified. Not only has He been roused from sleep as to His soul, and raised as to His incorruptible frame, but He has been vivified, as to His Spirit, and possesses a life indissoluble (Heb.7:16), beyond the reach of death.

Of His soul we read that it was not abandoned in the unseen, or, more literally, the imperceptible (Acts 2:27). That is, in death all perception had ceased. His eye did not see, His ear did not hear, nor had He any sensation whatsoever. As to His soul, death affected it just as it does the souls of all humans. But it was not abandoned in that condition. He was *roused,* and sensation was restored, and every perceptive faculty returned. This is what constitutes consciousness. The return of His Spirit to His body was the means of recalling His soul, for sensation is not an entity like the body or spirit, but an effect, which appears and disappears with the combination which causes it in mankind.

Of His body we read, "nor was His flesh acquainted with decay" (Acts 2:31). In this He was unique. His frame saw no corruption, notwithstanding it was dead. Decay is not an essential feature of death, merely a possible after-effect, dependent on the environment. If it should be very cold, decay may be prevented for thousands of years, as has been the case with mammoths encased in ice. By artificial refrigeration, flesh may be preserved for many months. In the hot climate of Palestine, however, dissolution commences almost at once, so that the dead are hurried away and buried on the day of death. But in His case God would not suffer it (Acts 2:27). Indeed, from the time when His work was finished His humiliation ceased. His body was not flung away and dishonored, but was entombed in a costly memorial. His honors began in the tomb, even before His resurrection. His corpse saw no corruption, and He was with the rich in His death (Isa.53:9). Though crucified with robbers and malefactors, He made His grave with the honorable of the earth.

His Spirit He had entrusted to God. When He expired He cried, "Father, into Thy hands am I committing My Spirit" (Luke 23:46). David, in the Psalms, whom Peter quotes on the day of Pentecost, not only foretold the whereabouts of His soul, and the condition of His body in death, but goes on to deal with His Spirit, not indeed, by name, but by its manifestation, which is life. Not a word is said of the spirit in death, for there is nothing to say. After its committal to God when He expired, the next we hear of it is in vivification, for the spirit makes alive. It returned to the lifeless frame. In the words of David, "Thou makest known to Me the paths of life" (Acts 2:28). This is more than the rousing of the soul, or the raising of the body. This is vivification, expressed in the fine figurative fashion of the ancient Hebrew. Although His Spirit was in the Father's keeping, He did not ascend to the Father until after His resurrection (John 20:17).

The *Firstfruit,* Christ! To be sure, all men will be raised for judgment. All shall be roused to give an account of their acts to God. But that is not what these words convey. He was not the first to be raised from the dead. Even before He came some received their dead by resurrection (Heb. 11:35). He Himself raised more. Others were roused from among the dead before Him. He was *not* the Firstfruit of resurrection or rousing, but of those who are vivified. No one before Him entered the portals of eonian life. No one was clothed with incorruption and immortality. Only as such is He the Firstfruit. We look for all who are in the tombs to hear His voice and come forth, some to life, and some to judgment (John 5:28,29). But only the first group finds Him their Firstfruit. The second must find Him this, as we learn elsewhere, at a later time, and in another class.

THOSE WHO ARE CHRIST'S

The three classes of the vivified are distinguished from each other in character and time. Christ is a class by Himself. Then there is the group of faith, those who are His. Thereafter, to complete the "all," come the remainder, who have no special designation, except that, at present, they may not be called His, hence do not believe. This agrees with the classification elsewhere given, where God is called the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers (1 Tim.4:10). And it harmonizes also with the gift of eonian life, which is not the portion of unbelievers. Hence the apostle, instead of describing the third class, gives the fact, rather, of the consummation, and this fixes the time of their vivification after the eons. Hence the third class is not promised eonian life, here, for vivification is not theirs until the eons end.

THE TIME OF VIVIFICATION

The time of vivification varies with each class. Christ,

as we know, has been beyond the dominion of death ever since His resurrection. "Those who are Christ's" will be vivified at His presence (1 Cor.15:23). This seems to be at the crisis of the eons, between the three evil and the two good ones. As the great object of the apostle here is to show that *all* will be made alive, he does not give details concerning this second class, or tell us when this presence takes place. The term he uses, the *parousia,* the BESIDE-BEING, is broad enough to include all that is written elsewhere concerning the coming of Christ to Israel (*cf* Acts 1:11) and, before that, to us (1 Thess.4:16,17). The main point of this part of Paul's presentation lies in the last word, the *consummation.* This is fully described as to both character and time, in the words that follow.

Before going on to consider the consummation, let us note the consistency which has carefully kept from even mentioning the resurrection of condemnation, which takes place at the great white throne. The moment we seek to insert it we find ourselves in conflict with the line of thought. "Those who are Christ's" certainly will not appear in that judgment. And those who are not will certainly not be vivified, with Christ as Firstfruit, when they are called to stand before Him as Judge. This is more abundantly evident from the fact that they enter death once again. This section does not deal with such resurrections, for they do not introduce any to God as their All. In them Christ is the Resurrection, not the Life. And only this latter character of His comes into play in "making alive."

THE CONSUMMATION

In place of naming, the third class to be vivified the apostle simply tells us that after the vivification of the second class there will be a consummation. He names an event, not the dead who are left. The fate of the third class is so involved in this event, that we need only to understand it

in order to be informed of their future. This grand truth seems to be almost unknown in Christendom. Although the very climax and fulfillment of all revelation, it has been eclipsed by human perversions. As a result the god of Christendom has lost the essential attributes of Deity. He is like the foolish man who started to build but could not finish. Theology brings nothing to a conclusion. It attains no definite goal. Sin, suffering, and insubjection are never conquered. God is compelled to work an eternal miracle in order to maintain a never-ending eyesore in His creation, once so subject, so sinless, and so good.

Knowing as I do, the power of this great truth, I urge everyone to make its acquaintance. To know the end from the beginning is no longer a divine prerogative, for in this passage (1 Cor.15:20-28) God reveals to us the goal He has in view, and the manner in which it will be attained. Few, even of the saints, have any clear idea of the object of all creation and revelation. They have no key to nature and to history. They are riding in an automobile without a steering wheel and have no idea whither it is bound. Most of the perplexities and many of the pains we are called upon to endure are ameliorated, if not removed, when we see the great goal which God has set before the universe, to which all things tend, for which all are but the preparation. I am heartily sorry for all His saints who have never had their eyes opened to see the end—the purpose of the Lord for all creation.

The consummation consists in *subjection*. Christ Himself will be subject when He has subjected all. Here we have a key to all the evil in the world. It is due to *insubjection* to God. This is seen clearly in the character of the eons. The evil eons are either anarchistic or under human government. The good are under the scepter of Christ. The very name, the Kingdom, speaks of subordination. Adam's insubjection brought in sin. Christ's obedience and reign

will restore all to its proper place beneath the rule of God. This is not an endless, hopeless task which never comes to fruition. It will be accomplished. It will find its finish at the close of the eons. It is the consummation of the eonian times. Intelligent and loving subjection on the part of all His creatures brings us to the goal, God All in all.

Christ will give up the Kingdom to *God* as *Father.* These two names reveal to us the object of the eonian times. They show us their root and their fruit. From being *creatures* of the great *Disposer,* who have rebelled against His rule, mankind is brought to loving obedience, as *children* of the *Father.* If that time could be described as a day, we might call it the day of the Father. Now we have man's day, for man is ruling. Soon will come Yahweh's day, to be followed by the day of God. Then will come the final, the finishing time, the "day" of the Father, in which God becomes the loving Ruler of His own household, and all creation will be one vast family, knowing no subjection except to Him, no laws but filial obedience. The Kingdom will be handed over to God, yet this will transform it into a universal family.

It is the office of Christ, God's Anointed, to bring this about. It is astonishing to note how this is to be done. The method is entirely negative and consists in making certain things *inoperative* (15:24,26).

It is usually supposed that the universe is so essentially wrong that it requires *positive* corrective acts to set it right. From this basic revelation it appears that what is needed is the negative abolition of activity in two distinct directions, the cessation of all subjecting powers over and *outside* of man, and the stopping *in* man of the force which subjects him to sin. In other words, man is now subject to other men and to the operation of death within him. Make these activities inoperative and he will be subject to God. Man was made by his Creator for subjection to the Deity.

This is his normal condition, to which he returns as soon as alien restraining influences have been removed. Add to this negative removal the positive experiences which were his while insubordinate, and we have all that is necessary to make the creatures of God not only obedient, but adoring children of the Father; children to whom He is Everything.

Death is the last enemy to be made inoperative. To many the inclusion of death in a discussion of subjection seems strange and misplaced. This arises from the mistaken idea of death which prevails. Not only do men make the death state one of life, but they fail to grasp the fact which appears at the very forefront of revelation, that death is operating in every descendant of Adam during this life. All are dying. Moreover, that great truth, that *death* is transmitted (*not* sin), so that we sin because we are dying, has been obscured by translators and is unknown to theology (Rom. 5:12). But once we understand that all of our insubordination is due to the immanence of death in our members and that we cannot be normally subject so long as it operates in us, then we are prepared to give death the place accorded to it in this discussion.

If we stop the activity of death in humanity it cannot be insubordinate of itself, for it was not only created out of God but *for* Him. I once wondered why death was the *last* enemy. Now I know that it must be so, for its abolition by itself would remove all the rest, were they not already abolished. If death (and, as a consequence, sin, which is its fruit) should be made inoperative at the beginning of the thousand years, there could be no reign and no rebellion, for insubjection would be absent. Where all are subject to God all other forms of subjection must vanish. Subjection to anyone but God is abnormal. That is what brought in sin. Its gradual abolition in the eons to come will lead mankind up to the consummation. Make death inoperative and the last vestige of insubjection vanishes.

It must be the last enemy because its abolition completely subjects all to God.

The consummation, then, does not follow immediately after the vivification of those who are Christ's. The second class are made alive in order to have a part in the *reign* of Christ. The end cannot come so long as there is such a thing as reigning. The interval between the second and the third class consists largely in Christ, with His saints, taking over the government of the universe. No rule, however, can exist where there is no insubjection, for no one who is subject to God needs any intermediary sovereignty or authority or power. These, taking the place which belongs to God, are in their very nature abnormal, opposed to God's ultimate, unless they are temporary and retiring, having their own withdrawal as their aim, being merely scaffolding to be removed when its purpose is accomplished. Such is the nature of the rule of Christ. It is not the object but the means. It aims at its own recall.

THE REIGN OF CHRIST

This passage, because it goes to the very bottom of things, bares to our gaze the true nature of rule. How much disturbance and distress have come to mankind through the operation of human government! From the days of Noah till the present, oppression and tyranny have been the order of the day, wars of aggression and succession have bathed the world in blood, and even the best of governments have left much to be desired. Human government is certainly abnormal. And will the reign of Christ with the saints restore ideal conditions? Is not the rebellion at the end of the thousand years an emphatic denial? The reign will be righteous and good, and will bring much blessing because God will be back of Christ, so that it will approximate the ideal. But evil is not banished from the universe

by intermediate rule, but by the gradual and final withdrawal of all rule.

Almost all other rule tends to draw men away from subjection to God. Christ's rule will be devoted to restoring them to the normal. It will continue until all rule is concentrated in His hands. All enemies will be put under His feet. All of this will be done with the cooperation of the saints, in whom death no longer operates, for they have been vivified. But all the rest are still hindered from yielding spontaneous subjection by the operation of death and sin within them. Others of His enemies are in the second death. What is needed to restore all to more than normal perfection is to stop the activity of death. This is done, at the last, by the vivification of all. The dead and the living, all who are still within the clutches of death in any of its manifestations, are made alive. This is the point of this passage. It puts universal life in place of universal death.

This passage affords a splendid lesson in intelligent interpretation. The apostle insists that Christ subjects all under His feet. He proceeds, "Now whenever He may be saying that all is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him." That which is self-evident and altogether contrary to the object of the whole, need not be stated. Paul need not say, "He subjects all *except God.*" But a most important point arises, which is also self-evident, and that is *that there are no other exceptions.* And if the word "all" has no other exceptions here, why should it have them in similar connections elsewhere? Nor is it a sign of superior acumen to insist that stones and sticks are not included. Such an objection is only a sign that the objector is not yet fully subject in his mental operations. It suffices to know that, as a result of Christ's reigning, there will be no insubjection left in all the universe, so that He may hand it over to the Father.

THE ABDICATION OF CHRIST

The time of the consummation is given us, not in chronological fashion, but in relation to the vital events of the universe. When Christ has succeeded in subjecting, the universe to Himself, "then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all." What an utter contradiction of all our thoughts about empires is contained in these marvelous words! When the great conquerors of earth had gained universal control they made every possible provision for retaining it. We see what becomes of such an empire in the case of Alexander. When death tore the scepter from his hands, his vast kingdom fell to pieces. What is gained by force must be held by power. But Christ's reign brought all to *God,* not to Himself, except as He was the Mediator of the Deity. Hence His abdication will cause no great change in government. It will merely be the public acknowledgement of a patent fact. Christ brings men to God.

Great are the mediatorial glories of God's Christ! No prophet ever spoke His words more faithfully. No other priest is in His class. No king can compare with Him. But what distinguishes His word above all others is the fact that He carries it on to a conclusion. He is Priest *to a finality* in the day of Yahweh. Hence there is no temple and no priesthood in the day of God. Then He still continues to reign, but it is to such purpose, that He finally rules rule out. This is the greatest of all His glories, the eternal halo, which is composed of the surpassing excellence of all the rest.

A temple, even with all the golden glories of Solomon's majestic pile, is the symbol of a distant God. In Yahweh's day one will be reared once again in the holy oblation. It will far surpass even the splendors of Solomon's. But how much greater, to the anointed eye, is the glory of the day of God, where He dwells with mankind, without any bar-

rier between! Nothing would so dim the luster of Christ's priestly glory, as to shut God up once again, in the day of God, and bid men approach Him as of old, through mediatorial means. The fact that it is not needed in the last eon, is the highest praise that can be brought to the Melchizedek priesthood. In a thousand years it accomplished its mission, and finished the task God intended it to do. All other priesthood retires because of its weakness and inability to bring aught to perfection. His retires with honors, having accomplished its glorious mission.

A throne, even in the day of God, is the symbol of enmity and of insubjection. We are accustomed to associate it with majesty and splendor, and do not readily perceive that it rests upon resistance to the will of God on the part of those who come under its control. Perhaps our imaginations can conceive of a beneficent governor of some island realm whose subjects had so profited by his rule that, when he left them for a year, he could suspend all government until his return. That would border on the miraculous. The ideal government is that which brings God into the hearts of its subjects to such effect that He alone is needed at the helm, and all intermediaries are idle and superfluous.

At the consummation, as *Christ*, our Lord's work is finally finished. His anointing made Him a Prophet, a Priest, and a King. Not one of these functions is needed when the consummation comes. Hence it is not as *Christ* that He subjects Himself to God, but as the *Son.* In His official glories He was always subordinate to Him, yet, at the same time, He subjects others. Then He lays these glories by, and in the unofficial relationship of Son, He is subjected to the Father. His mediatorial glories will take on the added luster of success, the splendor of achievement, the sublimity of consummation. Oh, how it drags His highest honors in the dust to distort God's Word so that His priesthood is eternal and His Kingdom everlasting! May God forgive the ignorant zeal which seeks to gild the glory of His crowns with the tarnished tinsel of man's imagination! What He starts He will finish, and what He commences He will consummate.

The purpose of all of this, as, indeed, of all God's eonian dealings with mankind, is that God may take the place in every heart which His love deserves, so that each member of the human race becomes, at last, no longer a lost creature but a fondled child, no longer a distant enemy but a delighted son. Death brought in the breach, and life will much more than remove it. Death nearly made God nothing to anyone. Life will make Him All to everyone. In Adam all are dying through no choice of theirs, and so, in Christ, this same all will be made alive. All were created in the Son of His love (Col.1:13-16), and all will be reconciled by the blood of His cross (Col.1:20). Death, in all its manifestations, will be discarded. Life will be universal, for only so can God be All in all.

In closing his discussion of the evidences of the resurrection the apostle appealed to the experience of grace in his own life (1 Cor.15:10). Again, in his final word showing that the reposing are lost if there is no resurrection, be concluded that, if we have an expectation in Christ in this life only, we are more forlorn than all men (15:19). And now, after showing that all will be made alive, be makes the personal application to human experience. He views the error of non-resurrection in the light of baptism, of his own dangerous career, and of its effect on our morals. He closes with an exhortation, intended to abash his readers (15:34).

BAPTISM AND THE DEAD

It is clear that the thought does not flow right on from verse 28 to verse 29. If we read, "that God may be All in all else what shall those be doing who are baptizing . . ."

(as it is in the ancient manuscripts) we see little connection. An investigation of the whole passage will show that the paragraph dealing with vivification (20-28) is parenthetic. We should go from verse 19 to verse 29, and read it thus: "If we are having an expectation in Christ in this life only, more forlorn than all men are we (20-28). Else what shall those be doing who are baptizing. It is for the sake of the dead if . . . ." In both cases the apostle discusses the effects of non-resurrection in this life, because there is no future. We suffer foolishly if there is no resurrection. Those who were being baptized at the time (from whom Paul dissociates himself) were going through a delusive form if the dead are not roused, for while baptism itself does not set forth the resurrection, it loses all its force unless it looks forward to it.

As there is no punctuation in the Original, it is easy to run two sentences together in such cases. This is especially true where questions are asked. Thus, in this passage, we as well as other translators, not noting this figure of speech, rendered it "Else what shall they be doing who are being baptized for the sake of the dead?" This was all the more inexcusable as my attention had been called to the proper rendering. It should read, "Else what shall those be doing who are baptizing? [It is] for the sake of the dead absolutely if . . . ."

Nothing is known of any such thing as baptism for the dead in apostolic days. It has no warrant whatever in history or in revelation. Yet who can tell the trouble that has been caused by this little slip! It was made the source of considerable income by one of the sects of Christendom. It has harassed the heads of multitudes of the saints. It is now in "the Bible." Who will dare to take it out!

CONSTANT DANGERS

Paul's personal life was a continuous protest against this

error. He is in danger every hour. How foolish to run such risks with no prospect of future compensation! Daily, it seems, he dared to look death in the face. In Ephesus he fought with wild beasts. All this was absolutely unnecessary and foolishly futile if death ends all. Instead of being a benefit to him, it was a loss. In this life Paul forfeited much and endured more, and what good was it to him if there is no future life? Our present contentment and joy and exultation is but a hallucination apart from the life to come. There is no possible mental accord between a life of sacrifice and a death without any hope of living again.

A CORRUPTING DOCTRINE

The moral effect of non-resurrection is its most disastrous phase. It undermines the most powerful motive for good conduct which a man can have. Men cannot help reasoning, "If the dead are not being roused, we may be eating and drinking, for tomorrow we are dying" (*cf* 1 Cor. 15:32-34). I have actually seen the equivalent of this used to get men to give themselves over to the enjoyment of the present. It was phrased somewhat as follows: "Enjoy yourself while you are alive, for you will be a long time dead!" Non-resurrection robs us of one of the best incentives to a sane, sober and sacrificial life. Such a false teaching cannot be content with being a mere theory, a subject for theological debate. It will invade every avenue of our life and ruin the roots of our deportment. All error vitiates our walk, but this is one of the most enervating and corrupting of them all.

Very few of God's beloved saints realize what a decisive part doctrine has to play in conduct. Our belief, not our practice, molds our character. That which is false has its reflex on our lives. It seems that the Corinthians were not fully aware of this feature of the heresy, so the apostle warns them. "Be not deceived," said he, "evil conversations

are corrupting kind characters. Sober up justly and do not be sinning, for some have an ignorance of God. To abash you am I saying it." Here he brands all that is contrary to universal vivification as deceptive, as evil, as corrupting, as drunkenness, as unjust, as sin, and as ignorance. Strong expressions, when we consider how much more apt they are when applied to Christendom than to the Corinthians. Those who have not nullified the resurrection by the denial of death are only a small fraction, and those who acknowledge the vivification of all are too few in numbers to be worthy of mention. No wonder that the conduct of Christendom is so far from the ideal!

Hence I have no hesitancy in commending the great truth of the vivification of all as one of the most practical that can be found. It is not a dry doctrine, with little vital value. It is an elixir for all the saints. Next to personal salvation there is no truth so full of living power to help us on the way and to fill our hearts with joy and exultation. But, best of all, it gives us a God worthy of the name. The glad message of God's love comes to us, not in word only, but in power and in much assurance. The clouds that concealed Him from our gaze vanish as before the rising sun. All the vanity that depressed us is filled with blessed purpose. In everything we see His hand. And the goal is the most magnificent, the most heart-satisfying, the most love-revealing that could be. What greater bliss can we wish creation, mankind, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and God Himself than that God become the universal Father? What words of tongue or pen are half so sweet as those which fill the future with ineffable delight and the present with surpassing peace? Let us treasure them in our hearts and display them in our walk, and inscribe upon our banner, "All in all."

A. E. Knoch

HOW THE DEAD ARE ROUSED

(1 Corinthians 15:35-58)

How are the dead being roused? The deniers of the resurrection still have their doubts. They question the process: How? They query the kind: What body? These are legitimate inquiries, but not valid arguments against the truth. Hence the apostle reproves the doubters. As is so often the case with unbelief, these carnal saints simply ignored the power of God. From the apostle's reply we may form some idea of the line of reasoning which led them to doubt. It seemed to take two distinct directions. Perhaps it was something like this: So far as can be observed, life comes only from previous life, not from death. Resurrection is not natural. Again, as they had heard that the saints would be snatched away into the air, the difficulty would arise, how can a resurrected body accomplish that which we cannot even do with our present physical frames? How can it differ from the bodies we have now?

First of all the apostle shows that their deductions are quite unwarranted. He does this by calling their attention to simple facts in nature, of which they were well aware. But we must not take these as replies to the questions asked. The apostle is simply exposing the lack of logic in their doubts. This he does by showing them that, even in nature, there is life out of death. "What *you* are sowing is not being made alive if it should not be dying." Note the emphatic *you*. It seems to suggest a comparison between them and God. He is sowing His saints, as it were, and will reap a harvest. *They* sowed grain. How much of a crop would they get if none of the grains died? None at

all. Life could come only from dying grains, not from such as were not dying. Let us note the verb carefully, lest the usual translation lead us into a trap. A farmer does not sow dead grain. Then, indeed, he would have no harvest. Life comes from dying, but not from dead seed.

This illustration is not intended to explain how the dead are roused, but merely to show that the reasoning of the objectors was based on a false premise. Even in nature, though life does not arise from death, it does spring from the dying, not the living seed. To be sure, there is a likeness here between us who are surviving (who are also dying) when the Lord returns, and the grain, for both are made alive before actual dissolution. But it is unwise to press such resemblances, for they easily lead to unwarranted deductions. This figure has fully fulfilled its function when it shows that the reasoning, which seems to prove the impossibility of resurrection, is disproven by one of the commonest facts of our experience.

Again, I implore my readers, to keep this, and all other figures of likeness, strictly to the actual points of contact. I will go into details here, simply to show how foolish it is to force figures, so that it may be a warning example which will keep us from this harmful practice at all times, especially in the interpretation of the Scriptures. The farmer sows a single grain, and from this he reaps perhaps thirty, sixty, or a hundred grains. Will this be the case in resurrection? Will each of us be multiplied, and have that many bodies in the life to come? Absurd! Again, if the seed dies before sprouting it yields no grain whatever. Is this the case with the saints? They, indeed, almost all die before they are made alive. Consequently none would be vivified! The grain is buried alive. Shall we be, also? And so on. Let us not use this figure as if the grain were actually raised from the dead. It is not so. It simply proves that life comes from that which is in the process of dying, nothing more.

The same is to be observed of the other line of thought. Reasoning can tell us nothing about vivification, for reasoning shuts out God. Even nature shows that human logic is false in regard to the result of vivification. A grain of wheat planted in the ground is given life. It sprouts. What comes forth? Another grain, exactly like it? By no means! First it shoots up into a stalk, and down to form roots. These are quite unlike the seed in form and function. And then it bears whole ears of kernels like the seed. Vivification may impart forms and functions quite unlike the seed. Why should not this be the case also in the vivification of mankind? Nature clearly shows that God, when He gives life, provides a body for it such as He wills. All of this finds its point in the fact that the secret which the apostle is about to reveal consists in a radical *change* in our bodies when we are vivified.

Another point which may be seen in God's work in nature is the variety and adaptability of each body to its environment. The flesh of man is not suited to a life in the water, and his body is too heavy for flight in the air. Each animal has a form suited to its environment. In its structure, down to the most minute detail, it is adapted to the element in which it lives, as well as to its mode of livelihood. Indeed, we are tempted to add, some of them, in the course of their development, change from one sphere to another. It is true that men cannot adapt themselves to a life in the water or in the air except for brief periods with very clumsy expedients. In fact they do not adapt their bodies, but rather seek to alter their environment. If they go beneath the water they take oxygen with them. But God, Who has adapted other creatures for a life in spheres where man cannot now exist, can certainly modify the human body to suit any environment which it may please Him to provide. That is precisely what He has in view in the secret about to be unfolded.

And now the apostle makes a statement which should startle us. "There are bodies celestial and bodies terrestrial." All of the bodies hitherto mentioned have been on the earth, that is, terrestrial. But why introduce celestial bodies? What have we to do with bodies on the heavenly spheres? We are not acquainted with these, hence they are not given as examples. Indeed, those who have given their lives to the study of the heavens are not at all agreed that there are living creatures on the planets or on the stars. One thing is certain, they would need to have different bodies from those which *we* now possess. To live on the moon, for instance, we would need no lungs, for there seems to be no air there, nor could we make full use of our blood. To exist on the sun without being burned to a crisp in the fraction of a second would call for very different flesh from that which we now possess. And the stars—each one may demand functions of which we know nothing at the present time. Is this not more than a hint that we will one day exchange our terrestrial for a celestial body?

Among these celestial "bodies" there seems to be variety also, as among the flesh of bodies terrestrial. Our idiom of calling the moon, the planets, the sun, the stars, and other objects in the heavens celestial "bodies," may lead to misunderstanding in this passage. "Bodies terrestrial" cannot refer to the earth itself (for there is only one earth) but to the animals on the earth. So, also, must we understand "bodies celestial." Not the "celestial bodies," the sun, moon, and stars, but the living organisms which inhabit them. What untold variety there may be among the billions of stars, which differ so much in glory! Even as seen from the earth, some shine with a reddish radiance, some are blue, some yellow, some have these elements, and some those in their composition—all of which may demand a modification in the manner of beings which God has placed upon them.

Again we say, why does Paul bring up the dwellers on other spheres besides our own? Nowhere else does he indulge in interesting speculations such as the habitability of the heavenly worlds. There must be some good reason why he includes celestial life in his examples of the variety of God's creation. For him this is no guesswork. He does not imagine, from the "canals" on Mars, or some such source, that there are men on planets near us, but he boldly states that *there are bodies celestial,* not merely bodies *in* the heavens but *on* the heavenly spheres. In the previous Scriptures we have accounts of messengers who have come to earth. Hence there should be no doubt that such creatures not only exist, but that they are much superior to mankind in power and glory. It seems to be necessary to his explanation to bring these into the discussion.

In our study of Paul's words to the Thessalonians we found that, when those reposing are roused, we who survive will rise together with them to meet the Lord in the *air.* It is more than likely that this part of the apostle's teaching gave rise to the question we are now considering. With what body do the resurrected come if they are able to defy the force of gravitation, and assemble in the *air?* Surely they will not be transformed into birds! Without in the least doubting the truth, we may well inquire as to the nature of such a resurrection body. In this passage, we meet with the second hint as to the character of this body. *The apostle brings in celestial bodies here* because, as he later says, *we shall wear the image of the celestial!* This is the secret of the resurrection, not, indeed, plainly stated, but so clearly intimated that we would be dull indeed if we did not anticipate his conclusion.

The illustration, taken from nature, of the terrestrial and celestial bodies, is given only to show that God has varied and can vary His creatures at will to suit their environments. If it were not plainly revealed later, we would not

be warranted in taking his reference to celestial bodies as an indication of our change in resurrection. We must not go beyond this and argue, since there are many glories in the heavens, for star is excelling star in glory, that this also will be true of those who are raised to celestial glory. The figure has done its duty. Let us not overwork it. God can, and will, give us bodies adapted to our environment. To the saints in Israel He will give terrestrial glory, to us celestial. They need no such change as will come to us, for they will continue in the sphere in which man was created and for which he is already adapted. As our environment will change, so also will our bodies need to be changed accordingly.

ROUSED IN INCORRUPTION

"Thus also is the resurrection of the dead." Israel's terrestrial honors will be different from our celestial glory, yet we will have many mutual blessings. Vivification involves much which is common to those on earth and those on the heavens. These are first presented for our consideration. *It is sown in corruption, it is roused in incorruption.* Except in the case of our Lord, the death process, either before or after the crisis at which the vital bodily functions cease to operate, is accompanied by corruption. There is a continual disintegration and dissolution to which we are so accustomed that we are apt to consider it an essential feature of life. In fact it is difficult for us to imagine a life without a measure of corruption. This is clearly seen in the case of a wound. It seldom heals without some inflammation and pain due to the presence of foreign matter which would not appear in perfect health. In fact the death process is one of corrupting. It is checked during life by the vital powers, but goes on unhindered once these have expired.

Roused in incorruption! Understand it we may, but realize it—nay! Such perfect health and jubilant vitality

surpasses the powers of our imagination. Every unpleasant sensation will be absent and give place to a delicious sense of vigorous health. Perhaps the nearest approach to it is the contrast which we experience when convalescing from a serious illness. What affects us is not so much the *fact* of corruption, as the *sensations* of which it is the source. Perhaps this is why the word *roused* is used in place of the usual *raised.* Really it is the *soul* that is *roused.* The *body* is rather *raised.* But by a fine figure the effect is brought before us in place of the fact. This is continued throughout the contrasts here presented. The emphasis is put upon the feelings which these transformations will produce in our breasts, as a result of the material changes in our frames, for these are implied and included in the word "roused." It is well to make a note of this figurative usage of words for some seek to confuse the clear connection between the body and resurrection by appealing to this figurative application of the word roused. Figurative usages do not give us the meaning of a word. They are based upon and depart from this meaning.

ROUSED IN GLORY

"Sown in dishonor—roused in glory." Corruption is followed by a sorry train of evils. It is bad enough to have the sense of degrading physical corruption buried in one's own breast, but how much worse it is when publicly known and repellent to others! How painful to the aged to find their faculties failing so that men notice and commiserate or avoid them! Dishonor is the outward effect of inward corruption. So also will glory be the splendid apparel of inner incorruption. How marvelous to realize that all will think well of us, not because we have succeeded in covering our true state from their gaze, but because we are utterly and splendidly sound, without a trace of evil or disintegration, and have naught to repel the most fastidious and exacting!

There is every likelihood that this will include an actual physical aura of light which will clothe us in a robe of radiance. In a very weak fashion we can see this in nature now, for some animals have the power of emitting phosphorescent beams. In fact it seems that even inert substances, in the early history of our earth, were so charged with latent energy, that they gave forth radiant waves, akin to light, or, as it is now called, radioactivity. It is probable that Adam and Eve, before the entrance of death, were clothed with a cloak of light emanating from their frames. But when death began to operate, this so reduced their vitality that it was no longer visible. Hence their feeling of shame and the need of a covering. There is much of fact in the figures which we use to describe a person of intense vitality. He is called radiant or beaming. Great joy lends us this for a fleeting moment. It will be ours forever in a measure Adam never knew, when we are roused in glory.

ROUSED IN POWER

"Sown in infirmity; it is roused in power." What a prospect for such weak worms as we are! What would I not give to have a dynamo within me now, to do what I would like to accomplish, were it the will of God! Now it is His way to work with weakness, that His power may be perfected in it. Paul himself had his splinter in the flesh. Whatever it may have been, it was an infirmity. May we be able, like him, to glory in our infirmities, that the power of Christ may tabernacle over us! (2 Cor.12:7-10). Now our strength lies in weakness, to show how much God can accomplish by such despicable means. But then it will be His way to display in us His power.

It takes power to fly up into the sky. A mighty motor is needed to lift an airplane into the ether. Even to keep it there for any length of time takes a vast supply of fuel, which must be brought from the earth. How then can His

saints ascend into the air to meet Him when He comes? With our present bodies not one of us could rise more than a few feet from the surface of the ground, and then we would fall back again into the grim clutches of gravitation. We need tremendous power to escape the attraction of the earth, to rise into the air, and then to soar away with Him into the empyrean. For lack of any other name we will call it the power of the glory, for if our bodies are luminous with light they may easily be imponderable and powerful as well. Strength is not proportionable to weight. A bird seems to have more energy to an ounce than we have to a pound. In fact it seems to be quite the contrary in nature. Give us a body without weight and we may become as swift and as powerful as the lightning flash.

THE SOULISH AND THE SPIRITUAL BODY

"It is sown a soulish body; it is roused a spiritual body. If there is a soulish body, there is a spiritual also. Thus it is written also, The first man, Adam, became a living soul; the last Adam a vivifying Spirit. But not first the spiritual, but the soulish, thereupon the spiritual" (1 Cor.15:44-46). The previous contrasts between our present and our resurrection bodies are, more or less, restorations to the proper and normal state of humanity, such as existed in a lesser degree before sin entered. Adam was given a body which was not corrupt. It was glorious and powerful, though not in the measure which will obtain in the resurrection. But it was essentially a soulish body, as is indicated by the expressive synecdoche "living *soul.*" As a matter of fact Adam was a *body,* made of soil, and vitalized by a spirit. He was not a soul or a spirit, for the soul was only the effect of the spirit on his body. But, being dominated by his sensation, it is more true to feeling to name him by that part which is in point, just as we call a ship a "sail" in reference to its propulsion, and a "bottom" with regard to its freight.

There is such a thing as a soulish body, that is, one characterized by sensations and under their control. It has a spirit, but this is not dominant, for it simply supplies the vitality which is necessary for the functioning of the soul. Eating and drinking and shelter, the pleasures of the senses—these are the influences which determine its course. Such was the body given to Adam. That is why he is called a soul, a slave of sensation. It was through this side of the human constitution that sin entered. And it is this which causes even the holiest saint to lean toward the gratification of soulish desires. All of us, by unhappy experience, know that there is a soulish body, for that is the only kind which mankind has ever had.

But there is also a spiritual body. No one except our Lord has had one, so our attention is directed away from the first Adam to the last, the Head of the new humanity. He also was composed of a body, a spirit, and a resultant soul. The body came from the soil as with other men, but His holy spirit, in contrast with ours, came direct from the Deity. All life comes from spirit, and His generation by holy spirit gave Him a life which counteracted the mortality, or dying process, which He might otherwise have inherited from His mother. Indeed, He possessed so much vitality that He was able, not only to cure disease, but even to raise the dead. He became a life-imparting spirit. Again we insist that this statement must not be taken literally. He had a body and a soul, hence was not exclusively a Spirit being. By calling the whole by a part, this part is emphasized. In Him the *spirit* was dominant, as the soul is in Adam and his descendants. He has a spiritual body.

As we are taught in the Roman epistle, we also have received the spirit of God, and, in a sense, this vivifies our mortal bodies by making its home in us (Rom.8:11). By its means we are enabled to put the practices of the body to death and live toward God. There is, indeed, no

material change in our physical frame. It is yet a soulish body in its innate tendencies. In order to do the work of a spiritual body the homing spirit must put its practices to death. This will not be necessary in the resurrection. We have only a weak foretaste of what it will mean to have a spiritual body, with the spirit supreme and the soul subordinate. We are in an intermediate position. The soulish body was first and still remains. The spirit homes in us and, in a measure, dominates our experience, but cannot change the body. When we are vivified this will be perfected. The spirit will completely dominate the glorious, powerful frame which will be ours in the future.

THE SOILISH AND THE CELESTIAL

Adam was formed out of soil from the ground, and all of his nourishment, as well as ours, springs from the soil. Man cannot live everywhere on the earth. There must be soil where plants are able to transmute the inorganic material into living, organic substances which can enter the blood by means of the organs of digestion. Soil is that part of the earth's surface which has been oxidized, and is formed chiefly out of weathered rock. The roots of plants cannot transmute stone into stalks and leaves, blossoms and fruit, until it has been broken into minute particles and these have united with the vital portion of the air, the same oxygen which we inhale directly through our lungs. Our bodies are made of soil, and, through the medium of plants, are sustained by the soil. They are earth-bound and soilish.

It is said that the sailors who first circumnavigated Africa took three years to do so, because they had to stop every year, plant and harvest a crop in order to find food for themselves. But if we were called upon to go about the universe, we might not often find soil on which plants would grow. And we would probably famish before we got very far. No, a soilish body is hardly suitable for celestial circumnavigation.

"The first man was out of the earth, soilish; the second Man is the Lord out of heaven. Such as the soilish one is, such are those also who are soilish, and such as the Celestial One, such also are those also who are celestials. And, according as we wear the image of the soilish, we should be wearing the image also of the Celestial" (1 Cor.15:47-49). Even as Adam has descendants who wear his soilish image, so also those who belong to the second Man may wear His Celestial image. Christ, even before His death, could walk upon the water. After His resurrection, He appeared and disappeared, and went whither He would, unhindered by doors or walls, and at last ascended into the empyrean. This is not possible for a soilish son of Adam. This was in His power because of His heavenly birth. It will be ours because we shall bear His image, when we are vivified.

"Now this I am averring, brethren, that flesh and blood is not able to enjoy an allotment in the kingdom of God, neither is corruption enjoying the allotment of incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50). The apostle stressed the fact that *he* is the one who emphasizes this statement. Perhaps, by this means, he wishes us to limit its application to those who come under his ministry. This is also indicated by the context. He is now dealing with that which is celestial. Flesh and blood is not competent to cope with celestial conditions. At His ascension, our Lord had a body of flesh, but no blood. It seems evident therefore that this statement refers to the combination of the two, flesh with blood. And this is substantiated by the facts of our experience. No body such as we have, depending on oxygen which is brought to all parts by means of the blood stream, could possibly live more than a few miles above the surface of the earth.

Even the highest mountain peaks are practically inaccessible because we are flesh and blood, and depend on a dense atmosphere to supply our circulation with oxygen. Balloon ascensions are common in which life is difficult

at great heights without artificial respiration. A body with lungs and blood is quite inadequate for a celestial allotment. Some have insisted that mankind would some day find a means of reaching and of living upon the moon, where, so far as all appearances go, there is no atmosphere. But that is not within the powers of any body whose very consciousness soon fades away when drained of blood, or when this fluid is not constantly supplied with oxygen. A celestial body must have a source of life and power apart from the soil and atmosphere of this earth.

THE SECRET OF OUR CHANGE

"*Lo*! a secret to you am I telling! We all, indeed, shall not be put to repose, yet we all shall be *changed*" (1 Cor. 15:51). This is the secret of the resurrection. It reveals the one feature which will distinguish our vivification from that of the Circumcision. It declares that our bodies will not be raised soilish but celestial, not with blood, but vivified directly by spirit. The soil and air are mediums through which the power which comes from the sun is supplied to our bodies. In our new bodies these will not be needed. Life will flow to us directly, from its divine source, and abundantly, unhampered by the means of supply.

The change will come "in an instant, in the twinkle of an eye, at the last trump. For He will be trumpeting, and the dead will be roused incorruptible, and *we* shall be changed" (1 Cor.15:52). Here we have the same prior expectancy (Eph.1:12) which was revealed first to the Thessalonians. Here are the two classes, the survivors and the reposing, and the Lord Himself descends with the trumpet of God (1 Thess.4:15,16). In Thessalonians all is colored by the consolation which the apostle wished to impart. Here it is concerned with the *change* which the secret reveals. There we find that the dead will be roused first, so that they and the living will be snatched away together in clouds. Here

we learn that it will all be the work of an instant, in the time it takes an eyelid to raise or lower, not even during the short period in which the trumpet will be blown, but at the last blast.

What a contrast to the thoughts of men! Only lately have I read what a scientist had written concerning the origin of life on the earth. It seems that "science" (falsely so called) always starts in the middle of the story and forgets to tell us how life began in the first place. However, there was life on some other planet, a single cell. Now it seems that this man has proven that the sun's rays can attract such a single cell and convey it through space, so that it could travel in this way from Mars to the earth, without being destroyed, in the course of many years. Then, arrived on the earth, it would take a few millions of years, or perhaps it was billions—it matters little to the scientific mind—in which to evolve into a human being. According to this evolutionary fairy tale it should take at least a million years for us to sprout wings to fly away to the stars. But God works differently! In a space of time so short that we cannot very well measure it the great transformation will take place.

"For He will be trumpeting, and the dead will be roused incorruptible, and *we* shall be changed." Again we notice the order, for it agrees with the previous word, that the dead in Christ shall be rising first (1 Thess.4:16). Paul conforms fully in every way to his former revelation. He simply enlarges upon that side of it which deals with our bodies. Here he uses a remarkable phrase which is the equivalent of vivification. The words "roused incorruptible" assure us of unending life. Two things are predicated of the body, sensation and incorruptibility. They are aptly chosen, for they assure us that the changed body, though bloodless, will have a soul, and, though once corrupted, will never return to decay again. Incorruptibility is especially used of the dead, for the opposite has been their lot. "This corruptible must put on incorruption."

"This mortal must put on immortality." This is a word for the living. The process of dying must be replaced by deathlessness. It would be much to be assured that we should never die, but this is infinitely more. Mortality is not merely the possibility of death but the actual process, which loads our whole lives with sickness and with sin. Who would care to live endlessly in dire decrepitude? What we need is deliverance from the enduring of death in our experience, not merely freedom from the dread of death in the future. And this is our expectation! Death may, indeed, relieve us of our daily distress, and put us to repose, yet we do not wish oblivion but life. We want our bodies changed from mortality to immortality, from soulish and soilish, to spiritual and celestial. Such is our constant longing and ardent expectation.

DEATH SWALLOWED UP BY VICTORY

"Now, whenever this corruptible should be putting on incorruption and this mortal should be putting on immortality, then shall come to pass the word which is written:

> Swallowed up was death by Victory.
> Where, O Death, is your victory?
> Where, O Death, is your sting?

Although this statement has immediate application to our change, it is well to note the precise wording, for it has a much wider scope. It reads, not, "when" but "whenever." Every time there is vivification will this note of victory ascend. And it is not "fulfilled" but "come to pass," for the fulfillment occurs only at the consummation, when death finally and fully ceases to operate. Many false conclusions have been hastily deduced by not observing the precise introductory words in each reference to previous

revelation. This statement includes more than our vivification in its embrace. It concludes the whole subject and stretches forward to the consummation.

Death is presented here in its two aspects, as operating in us and stinging us, and, when we expire, as having the victory over us. Both aspects are dealt with in vivification. We will no longer be dying and we will never die. There will be no present pain nor future victory. No one needs to ask where death's sting is today, for each one of us has it festering in his own flesh. No one needs to inquire for death's victory, for the earth has become a charnel-house, full of dead men's bones.

DEATH'S STING

"Now the sting of death is sin . . . ." This is a difficult statement to understand before we grasp the fact that sin is due to death operating in us. The rendering of the Authorized Version in Romans 5:12, "for that all have sinned," instead of "*on which* all sinned," completely reverses the true relationship. The state of dying would be unutterably more bearable if it did not make us sinners. It is not the dying that hurts, but sin, which is its sting. If sin were absent, even death would lose its painfulness and much of its dishonor. This is also the solution of the question. How shall we be made sinless in the resurrection? Nothing is said of this in the Scriptures, because it is self-evident that, if sin is due to dying, it will be unknown where there is abundant life. Vivification is the sovereign cure for sin. So it was with our Saviour. Sin He could not, for in Him was life. Even if it was not indissoluble before His death, yet it was abundant, and no one could take it from Him. He laid it down of Himself. At the very end, in a loud voice, He committed His spirit to God. In Him was no sin because the life He had direct from God swallowed up the inheritance of mortality and death which He had from Adam through His mother.

THE LAW, THE POWER OF SIN

If the law, could have given life, it would have enabled those who received it to fulfill it. In Romans seven the apostle lays down the principle that, apart from law, Sin is dead. He lived, apart from law once, but the precept revived Sin. The law, ostensibly given for the preservation of life, became his death. The law became a sword in the hands of Sin, and slew him. There is no vivification through the law! It abets Sin and spreads death.

Over both of these, both Sin and the Law, the companions of Death, we have a present victory, as set forth in Paul's Roman letter. This is a blessed foretaste of our great and glorious victory over Death itself when our change comes. The world celebrates its great victories of arms after they occur, as perforce it must. But it is far better to enjoy them beforehand, in the times of defeat and death, for then the tidings of success are most needed and appreciated. It is our privilege to celebrate the most illustrious of all victories, over the greatest and the latest of all our enemies long before it actually occurs.

"So that, my beloved brethren, become settled, unmovable, superabounding in the work of the Lord always, being aware that your toil is not for naught in the Lord." The present conquests of Death, through Sin and the Law, may make us uneasy, restless, agitated, spasmodic, desultory and wavering in our work for the Lord, unless we are enabled to look forward to the coming victory. With this in view we need not worry about the outcome. That is certain, sure, and glorious! Contrary to all appearances, our toil is not in vain. All of our longings and aspirations will be fulfilled. If God has given us the heart of an evangelist who would like to see every single soul saved, our longing will yet be satisfied. If we desire to perfect the saints in the knowledge of God, this will be accomplished. In the certainty of final victory, let us be steady, undeviating, and full of zeal.

In conclusion, we need not be concerned about the resurrection, how it will be brought about and what it will accomplish, as though it were a work of man, or as if God had exhausted His resources. We cannot even understand His wonders in nature. *God* is able to fulfill all the pleasure of His will, and *He* will give each one *that which pleases Him.* He Who raised our Saviour from the deepest depths of degradation and death up to the highest pinnacle of immortality and glory, in order that He may administer the celestial realms and prepare them for the consummation, when God will be reconciled to all, He loves us and will give us immortality and glory celestial so that we may share in the mighty task of revealing His grace and love to the whole creation, so that every creature in the realms celestial may find in Him their All. A. E. Knoch

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BLESSING THROUGH DEATH

The great difference between faith and unbelief came to a focus at the crucifixion. The unbelieving malefactor, representative of mankind as a whole, in accord with Luke's account, voices his skepticism by saying "Are not you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" (Luke 23:39). But he received no answer from our Lord. This exposes the heart of humanity. They want a *present* release from their woes. They will follow a leader who will promise them health, wealth and happiness in *this* life. The world is continually striving to improve the condition of humanity in this eon and will follow any antichrist who promises them immediate relief from their troubles. They do not believe God or look for bliss in the future, through His Anointed.

The Scriptures contain intimations of blessing through death from the first, for only thus can God reveal Himself as the Resurrection and the Life. To Adam and the race He gave the experience of dissolution, or dying. Yet this only as a preparation for resurrection, in which He may reveal Himself as the Life. Later, in preparation for Israel, He gave some special experiences of life out of death. Abraham was as good as dead before He gave life to the chosen nation. Isaac was also doomed and resurrected in a figure. And last and greatest of all, all our blessings come to us, not through the life, but through the death of Christ, His Son. A. E. Knoch

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 Not as the Offense,
Thus Also the Grace
155 But Grace Superabounds
165 Grace and Glory
170 What is Grace?
171 Out of Many Offenses
179 Misconceptions Concerning
Justification by Works

JULY, 2010

Volume 101 **Number 4**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

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A. E. Knoch, paperback, 346 pages (ISBN 0-910424-59-4)

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2010
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED ONE

EDITORIAL

GRACE AND GRATUITY are such distinctive terms in the evangel brought by Paul as to represent it by themselves. They occur together in Romans 3:24 in connection with the revelation of God as the just Justifier through the faith of Jesus Christ, apart from human works of law (*cf* Rom. 3:21-26). So also in Romans 5:15-17 they express this evangel of justification in the blood of Christ as it is expanded by God's gift of conciliation through the death of His Son (*cf* Rom.5:1-11). In all this there is no room for human boasting, but rather we are led fully to be glorying in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul's own calling as an apostle, teacher and evangelist accords with the gratuity of the grace of God which epitomizes the evangel of salvation through the faith of Christ which he was bringing (*cf* Eph.2:4-10), and the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ as it relates to our celestial calling. For in himself, he was "less than the least of all saints" (*cf* Eph.3:1-13).

What of you and me? Every day, as "wicked men and swindlers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:13), and people turn their hearing away from the truth and turn aside to myths (2 Tim.4:4), we may be strengthened and encouraged by the evangel that "God saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian" (2 Tim.1:6-14). It is not in accord with our acts. It is in accord with God's purpose, and it is in accord with God's grace in Christ Jesus.

In meditating on Romans 5 and noting distinctions between Paul and James in this issue of our magazine, we are reminding ourselves and our readers of the grace of our calling in Christ Jesus. We believe very deeply that this is our security.

D.H.H.

We commend the following arrangement of Romans 5:15-17, prepared many years ago by the late George L. Rogers, as a helpful supplement to the studies in this issue on this important passage of Scripture. Our readers may agree with us that the points of contrast which Paul is making here are made more visual by this means than by straightforward prose:

But not as	thus also
THE OFFENSE	THE GRACE, *charisma*.
For if by	much rather
the offense	the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is
of the one	of the one Man, Jesus Christ,
the many died,	to the many superabounds.
And not as	is
THROUGH ONE SINNING	THE GRATUITY,
For, indeed, the judgment	yet the grace, *charisma*,
is out of one into condemnation,	is out of many offenses into a just award.
For if	much rather
	THOSE OBTAINING
by the offence of one	the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of right-eousness
DEATH REIGNS	SHALL BE REIGNING IN LIFE
through the one,	through the One, Jesus Christ.

NOT AS THE OFFENSE, THUS ALSO THE GRACE

ONE man was the cause of all our woe; and One Man is the means of all our weal (Rom.5:12-19). A *single act* of disobedience on Adam's part constituted many sinners. A *single act* of obedience on the part of Christ will yet constitute many just. Through Adam, sin reaches all. Through Christ, righteousness will yet reach all.

The destiny of mankind does not depend upon the individual conduct of each one. *All* are sinners, *All* deserve to be sentenced. *None* deserve to be justified. And all are absolutely helpless. All who acknowledge descent from Adam must acknowledge also, that through his disobedience, they are sinners. Stubborn facts crowd in on every side to bear witness that cannot be gainsaid—sorrow, sickness, death—and a heart that cannot cease from sin.

But what of that?

If Adam alone is to blame for this, then Christ alone must be acclaimed for the future perfection. "As it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19). Just so. What encouragement there is in this!

Thus, while, in its universal aspect, the antitype is *even as* the type, and the work of Christ co-extensive with the ruin wrought by Adam, in its vigor and virtue the reconciliation overwhelms the estrangement, producing a pre-

cious burden of fruit for all the toil and travail attending the offense. Here is not *restoration* merely, with no addition to the seed that was sown, but *reconciliation—a hundredfold harvest.*

SUPERABOUNDING GRACE

In its universal application, type and antitype balance perfectly. The reconciliation is as far-reaching as Adam's offense. But the effect of the obtaining of the superabundance of God's grace is not limited to the weak outlines of the type. Let us consider the points in which it excels.

But not as the offense,	thus also the grace.
For if, by the offense of the one, the many died,	much rather the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds.

Let us suppose for a moment that the favor shown corresponds exactly to the type. Then it would just recover from the effects of the offense, and we would have just what Adam had in innocence, with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil untested, its fruit prohibited and progress impossible. Righteousness we would not have, for Adam stood under a prohibitory law; holiness we could not appreciate, for it cannot shine except in the darkness of sin. And all the precious fruit of the love of God, which provided for our justification at the cost of the blood of Christ—all these would be lost.

But no! We have infinitely more than mere recovery from the effects of the one offense. We are not under a

precept as was Adam, liable to transgress at the first assault of the Adversary. Instead we are justified apart from our own acts altogether. Whatever we have done or may do does not affect our justification, for it is as immutable as the One Who gave it to us. In fact, it is His own righteousness (Rom.3:22; Phil.3:9).

WE KNOW HIM!

But there are minor chords in this grand harmony. Better than His gifts is the knowledge that we have *Him.* We know God as Adam never could, even if he had communed with Him in innocence through all the days since then. God's offended heart demanded death, but now that He is conciliated, His favor flows in such redundant measure that it takes us infinitely beyond whatever we may have lost through Adam's one offense.

There is another count in which the gift far transcends the sin.

ONE SIN=CONDEMNATION — MANY OFFENSES=JUST AWARD (ROM.5:16)

And not as through one act of sinning,	is the gratuity.
For, indeed, the judgment is out of one into condemnation,	yet the grace is out of many offenses into a just award.

A single offense on Adam's part sufficed to bring in the sentence of condemnation. God did not wait to find the average tenor of his life, or whether he would repeat the offense. A single act—then judgment has its session. God Himself is Judge, the guilty man confesses his sin and the sentence is pronounced against him (Gen.3:8-19).

If such summary justice was served out for a single sin,

what must the multitude of man's flagrant offenses call for? Is the gift of righteousness sufficient to recover from only one offense, and thus fulfill the type? That would leave us in as bad a case as ever, for we all offend in many things. The favor shown to us cares nothing for the number of offenses. Nay, grace rather glories in their multitude and provides a verdict of "not guilty" for everyone whose cause it pleads (Rom.5:20). Paul, the *foremost* of sinners, was granted the high privilege of becoming the greatest exponent and chief example of God's grace (1 Tim.1: 14-16).

And still another consideration remains, in which the favor shown throws the type completely in the shade.

DEATH AND LIFE (ROM.5:17)

For if,	much rather,
by the offense of the one,	those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness,
death reigns through the one, [Adam]	in life shall be reigning through the One, Jesus Christ.

Death entered through the gates left open by Sin, and usurped God's throne.

Not death in the sense that it is known among men. That could never reign. But, instead of the mild acquiescence to his Subjector which Adam had shown before his offense, men now refused to obey Him altogether. Their conduct, instead of being based upon His presence, in fear of His displeasure, was founded upon His absence, taking advantage of the fact that He did not come upon the scene of each offense and judge it on the spot, as He had done in Adam's case, but set a future day in which all would be judged at once. Thus they were ruled by the fact that He was not present to interfere, and gave full swing

to the unbridled desires of their own hearts. Death thus usurped the scepter God alone should hold.

REIGNING IN LIFE

If we could set this right, then what would we have? Death must be dethroned. God must be enthroned. That would satisfy the type. But we have more than this by far. They were merely Death's *subjects.* But we are not only *subjects* of our God, but are the *objects* of His unstinted favor, the recipients of His best gifts, and honored with a place in His dominions far above the rank of subjects. *We are called upon to reign* (Rom.5:17).

Such are the particulars in which the estrangement falls short as a type of the Conciliation. The favor shown infinitely surpasses the offense; the deliverance is not merely from one sin, but from *many offenses.* It does not turn us back to innocence, but grants us righteousness.

To sum up: If type and antitype balanced perfectly, the truth would be thus:

Many die = Many live
One sin into condemnation = Justification from one sin
Death reigns = Life reigns

But such is not the case. The type falls far short of figuring the full truth. This may be shown thus:

Many die = God's grace and gratuity superabound to many
One sin into condemnation = Many offenses into a just award
Death reigns = The recipients of the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness reign in life.

We repeat: In its universal aspect, the antitype is *just as* the type, and the work of Christ co-extensive with the ruin wrought by Adam, yet in its vigor and virtue, the reconcili-

ation overwhelms the estrangement, producing a precious burden of fruit to God for all the toil and travail attending the offense.

GOD'S GOAL

And here we find ourselves at the very kernel of the whole matter. Some of us may have been saturated with the thought that Christ's death falls far short of even restoring to God what He had lost; that the Divine adventure has been a losing venture! But, as we learn a little of God's wisdom and power and love, and drink more deeply of His Word, we may perhaps conclude that, after all, He may restore all to pristine perfection. But suppose He did? What reward is that for the cross on Golgotha and the patient passion of the eons? Why should we be crushed beneath His chariot wheel, only to find ourselves restored? Who would break down a building only to restore it to its former state? Who would go on a journey only that he may return to his native land? Who, in health, would be tortured that he may be healed? Yet the world has been wrecked, Christ has journeyed from afar and has been bruised beneath sin's burden.

Was all this for naught?

No! A thousand times, no! The *absence* of sin and transgression are negative blessings, which would not even restore all as it was originally. But far, far more delicious than this is the fruit of sin's travail—the joyous, the exultant *reconciliation.* The affectionate sweetness which can be tasted only after estrangement—this is the nectar which will banish all the dregs which it has been our lot to drink.

SIN PREPARES FOR GRACE

Death was but the delegate of Sin, whose sway was not broken by the law's advent. But the law shed its light upon the scene, and what once was merely sin became a

transgression and an offense. But this did not hinder Sin in the least. It turned the law into an ally, and, through its death-dealing commands, established itself still more firmly upon the throne.

The law could not dethrone Sin, because it could not banish Death.

THE REIGN OF GRACE

But a mighty Conqueror has come upon the scene, and Sin has been vanquished! Death has been defeated!

And what is this Conqueror's name?

Grace!

Sin is no longer on the throne! His despotism has passed away!

Grace reigns now with undisputed sway (Rom.5:,20,21).

Shall we still acknowledge the dethroned despot when such a king adorns the throne?

As Sin robbed men of God's presence and blessing, so Grace restores them to His smile. To enjoy His favor and the gifts He gives is life—eonian life. The cherubim and the flaming sword, which kept the way to the tree of the living, no longer bar the way. The eons may come and the eons may go, but no one can change His mind towards those who are the objects of His unmingled favor.

And all this bounty and blessing is as free to all as is sin. Everyone will acknowledge that Adam's offense has made it very simple to sin. It need not be laborious, or expensive, or difficult. And it is not a whit more difficult to profit by Christ's one just act.

FREE TO LIVE TO GOD

Grace reigns! What, then, shall we declare? That we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing (Rom.6:1)? Emancipation from the tyranny of Sin by means of death to Sin and enslavement to God in resurrection is

the answer. Sin has no jurisdiction over us, for we are not subjects of Law, but subjects of Grace (Rom.6:14).

What then? Should we be sinning, seeing that we are not under law, but under grace? (Rom.6:15). But here we find ourselves beyond the Law's jurisdiction, for the Law cannot reach beyond death into the resurrection life we now enjoy.

LAW AND GRACE

The law of Moses promised life to those who *kept* it. But the "spirit's law" emancipates all under the law of sin and death by giving life in Christ Jesus (Rom.8:2). Sinai's law was the sword of Sin and Death. The spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus is the only way in which its just exactions may be met and Death defeated.

The law condemned. Grace conveys us beyond the possibility of condemnation (Rom.8:1). No such thing as an adverse decision is possible in our case, for this is precluded by the faith of Jesus Christ.

The law separated. But now that Grace reigns, we are persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.8:38,39).

This is RECONCILIATION: *free, full and final!*

A. E. Knoch

REPOSING IN CHRIST

In recent months, the following friends of ours in faith which is in Christ Jesus have died: **Jane Rentschler** of Grand Rapids, Michigan, **Leone Brix** of Cordes Lakes, Arizona, **Alberta Portillo** of Phoenix, Oregon, and **James Hricik** of Park Ridge, New Jersey.

Concerning not only these friends, but all those in every place who are members of the body of Christ, we joyously declare: The day will come when we all "shall . . . meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be together with the Lord. So that, console one another with these words" (1 Thess.4:17,18).

BUT GRACE SUPERABOUNDS

PAUL is evangelizing. What he has to say about the one man Adam and his one act of sinning and its effect on all mankind is only to draw our attention to the One Man, Jesus Christ, His act of righteousness and its effect on all mankind. And this, in turn, directs our attention to the grace of God which, in putting an end to death and sin, and bringing in life and righteousness, superabounds in good beyond even the good of Eden.

GOD, CHRIST, HUMANITY

We have noted the threefold pattern of the evangel as introduced in Romans 1:1-7, where God is given first place, then Christ, and then the human. Paul was severed for the evangel of *God* (1:1). This evangel concerns God's *Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord* (1:3--5). It is brought by a human *apostle* and directed to human beings among *the nations* (1:6,7).

1. All is out of *God,* and through *Him* and for *Him.* To *Him* be the glory! (Rom.11:36).

2. God spares not His own *Son* (Rom.8:32), manifesting His righteousness through *the faith of Jesus Christ,* commending His love in that *Christ died* for sinners, and in that He conciliates us to Himself through *the death of His Son.*

3. We are infirm; we are *irreverent;* we are *sinners;* we are *enemies* toward God (Rom.5:6-10). Because of the one *offense* of the one man, *we all sin, and we all are dying unto the state of death* (Rom.5:12-14).

Now in Romans 5:15-17, after referring to Adam as the

type of Him Who is about to be (Rom.5:14), Paul immediately forestalls any misunderstandings about the immense superiority of Christ and the vast differences between Him and Adam in what was done. What was done by Adam is called *the offense.* And what was done by Christ is called *the grace of God and the gratuity in grace.* Thus, in rearranging the pattern of Romans 1:1-7 our attention is now drawn first to the *human* situation, then to the grace of *God* which deals with the human situation through *the One, Jesus Christ.*

A. *But not as* **the offense,**
  B. *thus also* **the grace.**
A. *For if, by* **the offense** *of the one, the many died,*
  B. *much rather* **the grace** *of God and* **the gratuity in grace,** *which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds.*
A. *And not as through* **one** *act of* **sinning**
  B. *is* **the gratuity,**
A. *For indeed, the judgment is out of* **one [sinning]** *into condemnation,*
  B. *yet* **the grace** *is out of many offenses into a just award.*
A. *For if by* **the offense** *of the one, death reigns through the one,*
  B. *much rather, those obtaining* **the superabundance of grace** *and* **the gratuity of righteousness** *shall be reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*

In this passage, Paul is taking us home. He is directing our thoughts from Adam's act and its effect (the "A" lines) to Christ's act and its effect (the "B" lines).

There are several important points of contrast, but the most dominant and vital is between *offense* or *sinning* in the "A" lines, and the various forms and expansions of the

terms *grace* and *gratuity* in the "B" lines. All other matters of contrast, such as that between the words "the many died" and "to the many superabounds," or between the phrases "into condemnation" and "into a just award," or that involving the verb "reign" arise under this major contrast between offense-sin and grace-gratuity.

THE OFFENSE

The Greek word used by Paul here, and translated "offense," is a compound of three elements, *para-ptō-ma,* literally meaning BESIDE-FALL-*effect.* We may say, then, that the noun "offense" refers to the effect of the one individual's unguarded *falling to the side of* the right pathway of faith. It is akin to the word *sin,* in indicating failure, but also in accord with the words *transgression* and *disobedience* it expresses a conscious act of faithlessness to the word of God. It thus offends the heart of God.

But since all is out of God, why should He be offended by what He counseled to occur (Eph.1:11)? The happiness of God is in the goal which He has purposed for His beloved Son (*cf* 1 Tim.6:15), and to which all His operations are directed. But He knows and feels the evil of every evil within the process leading to that glorious consummation. In seeing that all is out of God we do not suppose that God is impassive.

Yet it is a serious error to make Adam's fall from the pathway of obedience, into a doctrine which denies the place of God as God, out of Whom is all. God had the blood of Christ in view before He created Adam (1 Peter 1:19,20). Even as He locks up all in stubbornness that He may be merciful to all (Rom.11:32), so also God prepared the way for Adam's offense in order that His grace may be known and enjoyed.

Grace is not God's "Plan B" put together when Adam caused "Plan A" to fail. Grace is Plan A.

THE GRACE

Grace (JOY) is favor arising from joy and bringing joy. Gratuity (GIVE-GUSH) is *unstinted giving,* apart from consideration of what is deserved. In our passage each word appears in two forms, *grace* as JOY and as JOY-*effect,* and *gratuity* as GIVE-GUSH and as GIVE-GUSH-*effect*.[1] But the basic meanings of *joy-filled favor* and of *unfettered giving* are retained throughout, whether or not the effect of the gift is given special emphasis.

The grace and *the gratuity*—these terms refer specifically here to both the act of Christ and its effect. They stand for God's power-packed message concerning His Son, declaring that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and has been roused the third day (1 Cor.15:3,4). They cover the ground of what was done by Christ (He died) and then why it was done (it was for our sins). But the special contribution to our understanding of the evangel, provided by these two terms, is that together they lay stress on the fullness of the divine achievement and of the human inability and undeservedness. The deliverance from irreverence, unrighteousness and enmity is God's achievement in and through His Son alone. It is not in ourselves or anything we do.

From the book of Romans the two terms, *grace* and *gratuity,* draw together two major evangelizing passages, as follows:

Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . . through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.

Being justified ***gratuitously*** *in [God's]* ***grace****, through*

1. *cf* the entries for *grace* and *gratuity,* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, pp. 132-134.

the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus . . . where, then, is boasting? (Rom.3:21-27)

Jesus our Lord . . . was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying.

Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this ***grace*** *in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God . . . . For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, died . . . . God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes. Much rather, then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from indignation, through Him.*

For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life. (Rom.4:24-5:10)

Here Paul has defined the grace of God and the gratuity in grace for us. We are justified in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. As far as we are concerned it is gratuitous. It is apart from works of law. This is because we all are sinners. There is no room whatsoever for us to be boasting in ourselves.

Justification is apart from any righteousness of ours, but it manifests God's righteousness. It comes about through the faith of Jesus Christ (which is His obedience to the death of the cross). We have received it in grace, on the righteous basis of what God has achieved through the death of His Son.

Consequently, we stand before God in grace. Yet this position involves more than justification. The joy-filled favors of peace toward God and free access to Him through our Lord Jesus Christ are opened up already to those who are believing He died for their sakes. God piles grace upon

grace and gratuity upon gratuity, conciliating us to Himself through the death of His Son.

HUMANITY'S PERILOUS POSITION

If it is needed (and clearly it *is* needed), Romans 1:18-3:20 has exposed the irreverence and unrighteousness of humanity, not one of whom is righteous, not even one. This long passage ended with the irrefutable conclusion that "by works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight." Now in Romans 5:12 this fact of inescapable human corruption is traced to its origin. "Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned." The damage has been done and cannot be undone by anything we might do.

GOD SENDS HIS SON

Thus God Himself marshals His forces in His Son to deal with this catastrophic situation. But these forces against sin and offensiveness and death are not, as we might expect, outpourings of indignation and powers of destruction upon ruined humanity. Rather the forces God employs are the powers of superabounding grace and gratuity, concentrated in the one act of the one Man, Jesus Christ. This act, expressing the grace of God, gratuitously bestowed, was that Christ died for our sakes!

One Man and one act—all depends on Him and what He did, in the specific counsel of God (*Acts 2:23*). *The One Man is Jesus Christ, and the one act is His faithful obedience unto the death of the cross.*

This seems both weakness and stupidity. But the believer is learning that it is the wisdom and power of God (*cf* 1 Cor.1:18-25). The death of Christ is the death stroke of the reign of death over humanity. We also see in this, that God's grace of justification and gratuity of conciliation are

not simply declarations from on high without any other foundation. There is no pretense in the evangel. The justification is solidly righteous because of the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.3:21-28), and the conciliation arises from this. When Christ died, all died (2 Cor.5:14). So, in Christ, all shall be vivified (1 Cor.15:22).

Hence God makes known His grace by the same means by which He reveals His righteousness, His power, His wisdom and His love: it is through the One Man, Jesus Christ. It is through His faith. It is through His death in which we are identified (Rom.6:3).

THE MANY DIED

By the offense of the one, the many died.

"The one" (that is, Adam) plus "the many" are the "all mankind" of verse 18. Looking back in history, it is a fact that Adam and his many descendants have all suffered under the reign of death, and they all have died, up to our own generation. Looking at the present, at ourselves groaning in ourselves (*cf* Rom.8:23), we all are dying. And unless the rescue of 1 Thessalonians 4:17 occurs for us beforehand, we will die. This is the effect of Adam's offense upon the race.

As for myself, now over the "threescore and ten" mark, I reflect on death more and more. So many who were once an important part in my life, have died. What a loss! Unspeakable! Death is an enemy. But even in my youth when I did not ponder the fact very deeply, death was operating in me and corrupting me and the world about me. It is the great evil of present, human existence.

Here in Romans 5:12-17 Paul dwells on the sobering fact of human death in detail, viewing it both as process and state:

Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin **death**. And thus **death** passed through into all man-

kind. On account of which, that is, because **death** (as an operation of corruption) infected all mankind, all sinned. In every era of time from Adam even to the present, **death** reigns as an insidious tyrant in our lives.

Those identified at the end of Romans 5:12 as the "all" who sinned are brought before us in Romans 5:15 in the blunt declaration: "the many died." How many are the human beings who have sinned and have died? Millions, even billions! This is what Adam's one act has meant to humanity. And it continues to mean this to the billions who still live under the judgment of death which was first imposed on Adam.

GRACE SUPERABOUNDING

The grace of God and the gratuity in grace which of the One Man, Jesus Christ, superabounds to the many.

In what way does God's grace and the gratuity superabound? First of all, justification and conciliation take us beyond Adam's position before God in Genesis 2. It is not simply that the death of the One Man, Jesus Christ, puts an end to death and replaces it with life. "A simple reversal of the offense would put us where Adam was before he transgressed. But the gratuity through Christ is infinitely more than a mere recovery from the effects of Adam's offense."[2]

As believers of the evangel, we stand before God in grace (Rom.5:2), justified in His grace by the faith of Jesus Christ Who shed His blood for our sakes (*cf* Rom.3:21-28; 5:9). Thus we may be having peace toward God, Who conciliates us through the death of His Son (Rom.5:1,10). Adam knew nothing of such joy and peace.

Furthermore, as Paul is about to announce, this superabounding grace and gratuity will ultimately embrace all mankind. Indeed, as we have noted, the entire human

2. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.235.

race has been in view in relation to Adam from verse 12, but verses 18 and 19 will relate us all to Christ in clearest of terms:

. . . as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.

THE INTENSITY OF THE GRACE-EFFECT

For the believer today and in full measure in the future, and ultimately for all mankind, the effect of the grace of God brings an intensity of life and righteousness and joy that superabounds beyond the intensity of pain and corruption under the reign of death. Paul will soon speak of this by means of the rich phrase, "reigning in **life**" (Rom.5:17). Later he will describe it as "the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:21). So also we read in 2 Corinthians 4:17, that "the momentary lightness of our affliction [death reigns] is producing for us a transcendently transcendent eonian burden of glory [grace superabounds]."

Here is an abundant store of joy from God, of and through the One Man, Jesus Christ!

OF THE ONE MAN, JESUS CHRIST

In verse 15 Adam is identified simply as **the one,**" but Christ is identified as "**the One Man, Jesus Christ.**" The superiority of the act of our Lord and its effect is expressed even by the superiority of the terminology used in reference to Him. As the grace superabounds over the offense in the effort involved and its results, so also does Christ superabound in importance to humanity over Adam. Adam has affected us all drastically far beyond any of his descendants, but the One in Whom and through Whom and for

Whom Adam was created (Col.1:16,17), superabounds in critical value to the entire human race. Philippians 2:5-11 greatly helps to fill out the meaning of this grand reference to our Lord, as the One Man, Jesus Christ:

Christ Jesus . . . Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of ***humanity,*** *and being found in fashion as a* ***human,*** *He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of ***Jesus*** *every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that* ***Jesus Christ*** *is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father.*

In the coming of Jesus Christ in the likeness of humanity, emptied of His former glory, and in His humbling of Himself in obedience to the death of the cross we perceive the superabundance of God's grace in operation. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, being rich, because of you, He became poor, that you, by His poverty, should be rich" (2 Cor.8:9). In the grace of the Anointed Saviour, we become acquainted with the grace of God Who gave Him up for us all. "For in grace, through faith [surely Christ's faith], are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:8-10).

May it be, therefore, that we hold fast to this evangel and not be transferred away from that which calls us in the *grace of Christ* (Gal.1:6).

D.H.H.

GRACE AND GLORY

THESE LOVELY WORDS are inseparable. They comprise the initiation and conclusion of God's magnificent purpose. And if we would contemplate their expressive interplay, we must go to the letters of Paul, since he alone fathoms their reach and magnitude.

Wherever we wander in our study of Scripture, if we have learned to love the writings of the great apostle, we come back again and again to those words of his in the Ephesian epistle. There, in the first chapter, he displays the perfect interrelationship of God and the Son of His love. To note this is boon, indeed.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—even such a One blesses us *in* Christ, and chooses us *in* Him. He also designates us for *the place of a son.* What a lofty honor is this, and how rare the niche in the vast realm of His grace!

God graces us in His Beloved, lavishes on us *the riches of His grace,* makes known to us *the secret of His will,* seals us with *the holy spirit of promise,* and all these links of divine fashioning are for *the laud of His glory.* These are expressions of an exquisite grace, words to store in the memory, language to live with.

Now, if this were all, it might be thought that a partial, selfish strain pervaded such language, for the words are so markedly individual. Not so, however, for God moves from the intimacy of the personal to the magnitude of the whole. He passes from the immediate blessedness of His grace to the yet future effect of His glorious favor.

How like an all-wise and beneficent God! The very universe is to be headed up in the Christ—"both that in the heavens and that on the earth." How comprehensive is such a statement. If it were the earth only, it might be thought wonderful, as it affects the whole world of mankind. But this divine proposal encircles the universe—all realms in all space. Religiously, however, men are so puny in thought, so complacently selfish in outlook. Many are so earthbound, so concerned with the terrestrial. That which is above is so narrowed down to a "heaven" vouchsafed to merit or service, a goal to be won by effort and sacrifice.

It is not seen as it should be, that celestial realms are to be brought into a wonderful knowledge of God's grace, and through the joyous, unfettered testimony of God's great family—even the body of Christ. Indeed, it is His body which will be the rare complement *completing the entire universe.*

For this are we saved by grace, even to exhibit its excellency among the celestials. No part of the heavens or of the earth will be untouched. The potency of grace will be everywhere felt and acknowledged. On the earth, with rule vested in Israel, and above, with the ecclesia, the body of Christ, as the administrator, grace and glory will abound. And we may rest assured that it will be an all-conquering grace and a fitting glory in every domain. For is it not all in the hands of the Father glorious, the God of grace?

Is it not for this that God highly exalts the Son of His love? God "graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming Jesus Christ is Lord for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:9-11).

Even so. The coming of Christ in grace, His suffering for our sakes, and His merited exaltation, lead in God's own time and way to an expressive glory full and complete. Acknowledgment of God's Beloved as Lord, will most surely bespeak the Father's glory.

And what a name as the sole means of such a glory! A name, moreover, He did not make for Himself. Ah, no! God graces Him with that infinite, far-reaching designation, crowning it with glory and honor. Men have never invested the name with the fullness God will make it express. Instead of being the name *superlative,* it has been with many but a name *comparative.* Actually, it is the name which unifies and blesses the whole creation of God.

There is, today, far more concern with the status and power of the "church" than with the excellencies of the exalted and living Christ. That He alone is the great hope of mankind, is not the immediate interest of modern preachers and teachers. Far too much importance is attached to so-called education and science, and a presumed equality of mankind. But that all are equally sinners, yet all saved in the same marvelous Saviour, is not acknowledged. In other words, the power and wonder of God's grace is not perceived.

It would make all the difference if the essence of present day preaching were concerned with Christ as the Coming One, God's radiant Image, Whom one day all shall see. He is not only the Judge. Far too much teaching is tinctured with law, rather than saturated with grace. The mind of man needs to be filled with a vision of Christ as Saviour of all mankind. Even if it is realized now, *certainly,* and most blessedly, by few. Yet the few, if they know grace, take no credit to themselves for the blessing. It is supremely *"of God, in Christ,"* and they love to think it so.

But what of the many? Grace is not limited to its present rare interlude. God's purpose was conceived in grace, and its consummation shall partake of that rich quality. And the thought is not a figment of human imagination. If it were, the glory would most likely be given to man, as the

way of literature so abundantly shows. It is God revealed, as a fitting conclusion to His purpose of grace.

Will He not make life's broken circle whole,
As, working on, He moves to one rare goal—
The love of all His creatures, and praise from every soul?
Now, to our vision, passing interplay
Of good and ill, the bane of life's strange way.
Then, the dawn of God's own cloudless, fairest day.

Fullness of redemption indeed, and not for humans alone, but for all habitants of all realms in the universe. Grace and glory in veriest overflow. Not one being unblessed, for God is All in *all.* And, as "imitators of God, as beloved children," should we not be eager to sense and pass on this thrilling grace? We need no creedal niche or recognition for the exercise of this wondrous doctrine. On the streets and the byways of life, we can show both by look and word something of this overwhelming love of God.

Is it not true that we reflect in our lives the conception of God and of Christ which we have in our hearts? To believe, therefore, that not only are "all things possible with God," but that He has laid the charge upon Himself as "the Saviour of all mankind," is surely to believe gloriously of Him. But then, God is great, and greatly to be praised. The Son of His love, too, brings Him near to the hearts of men. For is He not God's Image, Firstborn of every creature? And the universe has been created, not only *through* Him, but *for* Him. A perfect universe it must surely be, if it is for Him Who gives Himself a ransom for all. His to hold in regal grace, till given up to God, even the Father.

A lifetime here is all too short to sound the praise of grace and glory. But in the oncoming eons we shall have time in richer measure, with thought and action gladly captive to Christ our Lord. His potent grace we all shall see, as with

the members of His body glorious we pass from glory to glory transcending.

But even here and now there is given to us a rare sense of God's grace. There is the intense realization it gives of salvation from self, and from the spirit of the world. The revelation to our hearts of the things we are *saved from,* and finer still, the unspeakable value of the things to which we are *drawn.*

These, as we contemplate them, and live for them, give us joy and peace. Therefore, whatever the character of our environment in a world at war, "we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.5:2).

Sunset and evening star proclaim His glory. Yet greater still, His shining in our hearts, that we may be illumined with a knowledge rare, even His glory in the face of Christ.

William Mealand

VOCABULARY INDEX FOR THE CVOT

This index is an attempt to provide users of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) access to full listings of the occurrences of each major Hebrew or Aramaic (Chaldee) word (except most proper names) used in the Old Testament.

It is admittedly more complex and less convenient than the Keyword Concordance published with the Concordant Literal New Testament. But until such a concordance using the vocabulary of the CVOT can be made available this may serve as a useful substitute.

This is an abridgment of a full list of the English terms used in the CVOT, as updated in 2009, as work proceeds on a first edition of the Version as a whole.

The list is keyed to Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance (EHCC, 5th edition), which is presently available under the title, Englishman's Hebrew Concordance (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody MA 01961-3473, ISBN 0-913573-21-3). The word entries in this latter edition are coded to the numbering system of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, and these numbers are also provided in this index.

This work is comprised of 321 pages, and is available without charge in PDF format. This file may be downloaded from **www.concordant.org,** Concordant Version section.

WHAT IS GRACE?

THE Greek word for "grace" is *charis,* and it is kindred to the word *chara,* joy. G. Campbell Morgan said, "Grace is that which gives joy. By the Greeks *charis* was used (1) of art, music, the beautiful, anything that gives joy; (2) of the desire to give joy to others. The word meant this before Christianity touched it. (3) Then it was used of both these things together, and (4) it is the activity that carries out the desire and actually gives joy. Predicate these mounting ideas of God. Grace is the desire in the heart of the blessed God to communicate His own joy to the hearts of others. Grace gladdens God. Grace is the passion of God to bless. Grace is the love of God seizing every opportunity to gladden the sinful and needful and graceless. Grace explains the mystery of the cross, for there grace took hold of sin and conquered and canceled it."

R. W. Dale's definition is worth remembering: "Grace is love which passes beyond all claims to love. It is love which after fulfilling the obligations imposed by law has still an unexhausted wealth of kindness."

J. H. Jowett said: "Grace is energy. Grace is love energy. Grace is a redeeming love energy ministering to the unlovely and endowing the unlovely with its loveliness."

And again, "Grace is the divine energy of holiness issuing in the ministry of love in quest of the unlovely, and by the communication of itself converting the unlovely into the lovely."

Alex Whyte said: "Grace from its nature has only one direction it can take. Grace always flows down. Grace is love indeed, but it is God's love to creatures who do not deserve His love. And thus it is that God's love to sinners is always called grace in the epistles. All He does for us in Christ, and all that is disclosed to us of His good will in the gospel is called grace. It has been designated 'the speech of infinite love.'"

George L. Rogers

OUT OF MANY OFFENSES

THE MAGNIFICENT passage of Scripture set before us in Romans 5:12-21 tells us of the grace of God operating through the obedience of Jesus Christ as it affects all mankind and deals with all their many offenses. It does so by making comparisons (both similarities and contrasts) between Adam, his act and its effect, and Christ, His act and its effect.

Now in considering the superabundance of God's grace over Adam's offense in Romans 5:15 Paul has pointed to its justifying and conciliating *effect* upon the many descendants of Adam, who, in addition to the first couple, have been afflicted with the operation of death. For the believer there is already an earnest of the spiritual blessings, gained through Christ's blood, which will be fully enjoyed in the oncoming eons (*cf* Eph.1:3-14; 2:4-7)). For the rest of mankind, the enjoyment of the grace and gratuity of God in the gift of His Son is almost entirely future. But it is certain, and humanity will be brought to a glorious position, far superior to Adam's experience in Eden, because of the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners (*cf* Rom.5:18; 8:21).

THE SUPERABUNDANT ACT

Yet the superabounding of the grace is not confined to its effect. Romans 5:16 reminds us of a past superabundance, manifested by the *act* of Christ itself. Christ's death met the superabundant challenge of *the many offenses* committed by Adam and everyone of his descendants. The

grace of God in the death of His Son does not arise in view of Adam's one act of sinning alone. It took into account every single offense of mankind, openly exposed (such as Cain's murder of his brother) or hidden even from the sinner who, in ignorance and infirmity, failed to maintain the standards of righteousness set by God. The immensity of the need is met by the superabundance of the grace in the task undertaken by Christ. Thus we read:

A. *And not as through one act of sinning*
  B. *is the gratuity.*
A. *For, indeed, the judgment is out of one*
    into condemnation,
  B. *yet* **the grace is out of many offenses**
    into a just award.

NOT AS THROUGH ONE SIN

And not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity. (Rom.5:16)

When Adam and Eve sinned that first sin, God could conceivably have sent His Son immediately to die for their sakes, so that they would be put to death with Him in Whom humanity was created. Thus the old humanity would have been done away with then and there. So also, God's Anointed One, Jesus Christ, could have been roused in new life, and with Him the first couple would be vivified as a new creation.

But then, they alone would have gained insight into the grace of God and the gratuity in grace. They alone would have been introduced to some experiential knowledge of the righteousness and power and wisdom and love of God. Yet even that would surely have been lacking in depth without the years of pain and travail, sweat and toil, family tragedy and corruption and stupidity that followed, as recorded in Genesis 4 and 5.

THE COST OF THE GRATUITY

Unlike the offense, the gratuity did not enter the world as a sudden and thoughtless act easily undertaken in accord with soulish desire. The gratuity was foreknown and counseled by God, calling for grief and sweat beyond the curse of Genesis 3:17-19. It was an act of supreme faithfulness, undertaken in the most difficult of circumstances, for the highest of causes. Christ became a curse for our sakes (Gal.3:13). He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil.2:8).

Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome that Christ Jesus came into the world to save **sinners.** (1 Tim. 1:15)

God's grace and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, that is, His righteousness as it is revealed through the faith of Jesus Christ, is far too rich and vast to be poured out on one human pair after one brief period of anxiety and embarrassment. In God's wisdom there would be countless descendants of Adam and Eve who, through many generations, would be brought under the reign of death and be constituted sinners. Each one would come to know weakness and sorrow and pain as allotted to them. This is so that God's righteousness and power and love might be engaged in His grace through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

THE JUDGMENT INTO CONDEMNATION

In context, the judgment (JUDGE-*effect*) is the result of the judging of Adam in Genesis 3, and the condemnation (DOWN-JUDGE-*effect*) is the further effect of Adam's offense as death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned (Rom.5:12-14). The judging of Adam as recounted in Genesis 3, includes the following highly significant question and verdict:

Then He asked: Who told you that you are naked unless you have eaten from the only tree that I instructed you by no means to eat from it? (Gen.3:11)

And to Adam He said: Because you hearkened to your wife's voice and ate from the only tree that I instructed you, saying you must not eat from it,
Cursed is the ground on your account;
In grief shall you eat of it all the days of your life.
Thorns and weeds shall it sprout for you,
And you will eat the herbage of the field.
By the sweat of your brow shall you eat your bread,
Until you return to the ground,
for from it were you taken.
For soil you are, and to soil you shall return. (Gen.3:17-19)

THE CONDEMNATION

The condemnation as it affects all mankind (*cp* Rom. 5:18) has been stated already in Romans:

Both Jews and Greeks [are] all under sin, according as it is written, that "Not one is just"—not even one . . . . No flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight . . . . For there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God. (Rom.3:9,20,23)

Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned. (Rom.5:12)

All of this comes out of the one act of sinning committed by Adam.

THE GRATUITY

In context, the gratuity (GIVE-GUSH-*effect*) of Romans 5:16 is the effect of "the grace of God and the gratuity in grace" of Romans 5:15. It is the joy-filled effect of the righteousness of God as it is made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ, in which the sinner is justified gratuitously in God's grace:

Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . . through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing . . . . Being justified **gratuitously** *in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.* (Rom.3:21-24)

Furthermore, the gracious gratuity of justification is expanded by God's gift of the conciliation of those at enmity with Him, through the death of His Son:

Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand . . . . For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life. (Rom.5:1,2,10)

MANY OFFENSES

Yet the grace is out of many offenses. (Rom.5:16)

Jesus our Lord . . . was given up because of our offenses. (Rom.4:24,25)

These two passages are parallel. The words,"the grace," in Romans 5:16 correspond with the clause, "Jesus our Lord was given up," in Romans 4:24,25. The phrase, "out of many offenses" in Romans 5:16 recalls the phrase, "because of our offenses" in Romans 4:25. These are the two fundamental parts of the evangel of God concerning His Son. The first part announces what was done by God through Christ, and the second part relates that deed to us. Jesus Christ was given up by God. This is the grace. He was given up because of many offenses. This grace arises out of the many offenses of mankind.

Earlier in Romans Paul described the judgment of God as it takes into account the many acts of sinning of man-

kind. This will be "the day of indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God, Who will be paying each one in accord with his acts . . . . For there is no partiality with God" (Rom.2:5,6,11). Furthermore, it is "the day when God will be judging the hidden things of humanity . . . through Jesus Christ" (Rom.2:16). Yet at that point, where for the first time in Romans 1:18-3:20 the apostle mentions Jesus Christ, he adds that God's judging of the hidden things of humanity is *according to,* or *in accord with* "my evangel."[1]

How does the just judgment of God through Jesus Christ accord with Paul's evangel? Romans 5:16 gives the answer. The just judgment of God impartially takes into account every act of humanity, including the hidden things, and does so through Jesus Christ. So also, Paul's evangel, announces that the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, takes into account every wrong of every person. The many offenses of mankind, added to the one offense of Adam constitute the humanly hopeless situation "out of" which the grace of God is put into action. It is under these conditions that *the saving grace of God makes its advent to all humanity* (Titus 2:11). When Christ died for our sins, He died for every sin without exception, including those that are hidden even from ourselves.

DAVID'S ERRORS

God saw into the heart of David and chose him as king over His people (1 Sam.16:7,12). Nevertheless, David was a sinner, and he openly acknowledged it in his psalms. It was not just his adultery with Bathsheba, involving the murder of Uriah, but he spoke of his transgressions (plural) which were many (*cf* Psa.32:5; 51:3). They were a matter of real concern, not only the notable wrongs which brought troubles to others, to his family and nation, as well as to himself, but the wrongs which no one seemed to have noticed and were even concealed to him. So it was that he cried out toward God, saying:

Who can detect inadvertent errors?
From those concealed to me, hold me innocent. (Psalm 19:12)

How many errors do we make? They are all offenses against the heart of God. Nevertheless, David prayed with trust in God: "Hold me innocent." Yet we have received God's message of grace concerning the death of His Son and our inclusion in that death. Thus, in view of our many offenses, each believer may exclaim with Paul, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord! (Rom.7:25). We have access to God in peace and stand before Him justified in His sight.

A RIGHTEOUS-EFFECT

The blessings of justification and conciliation are gathered together under the Greek word, *dikaiōma* in Romans 5:16. This term, literally signifying JUST-*effect,* was used twice before in Romans. In Romans 1:32 it refers to the effect of God's righteousness as expressed by His "just statutes." Similarly in Romans 2:26 Paul points to the effect of God's righteousness as expressed by the "just requirements" of the law. But now we stand in the environment of grace, and we see God's righteousness as it is manifested through the faith of Jesus Christ.

The CV uses the expression "just award" as the translation of *dikaiōma* in Romans 5:16, where it stands in contrast to "condemnation." Where condemnation means grief and pain and sweat under the reign of death followed by the state of death, *dikaiōma* speaks of a condition of joy and peace in a life that transcends present experience.

1. *cf Unsearchable Riches,* vol.94, pages 286,287.

How, then, can we express it and begin to understand it? We know what mortality is, and we know what death is in terms of loss and sorrow. But what is the gain and joy of the *dikaiōma*?

It is life! But to say that is inadequate.

Here in Romans, Paul is about to employ a series of phrases and expressions that point to life as it thrives and is enjoyed under the effect of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. They refer to the life gained through the death of Christ, mostly as it may be enjoyed today by the believer, in spirit, but they also provide insight into the superabundance of life for us in the oncoming eons, and then ultimately for all, when the entire creation shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God:

. . . those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be **reigning in life** *through the One, Jesus Christ.* (Rom.5:17)

. . . as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for **life's justifying.** (Rom.5:18)

. . . thus Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for **life eonian.** (Rom.5:21)

. . . even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also should be walking in **newness of life.** (Rom.6:4)

. . . [Christ] died to Sin once for all time, yet in that He is living, He is living to God. Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet **living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.** (Rom.6:11)

Such are the effects of God's giving of His Son for us in dealing with our many offenses.

D.H.H.

MISCONCEPTIONS CONCERNING JUSTIFICATION BY WORKS

Question:

I have been a believer in Christ Jesus and a student of the Scriptures for many years. A few years ago, through reading your literature, I became convinced of the eventual salvation of all mankind, and of the especial importance of the ministry of the apostle Paul, the apostle of the nations. I have likewise come to believe, through your writings, that all aspects of salvation, whether positional in Christ before God, or practical in the Lord as to our personal walk, are operations of God, in *grace,* and for *His* glory.

I am aware of the claims of some (indeed, of many) that stand in opposition in part or even almost entirely to your own teachings, including to each one of the doctrinal themes mentioned above. Generally speaking though, the more familiar I become with Concordant publications, the more I am able to detect the error in opposing views.

One subject that bothers me somewhat, however, is your teaching that within the New Testament writings, the epistles of Paul alone constitute "truth for today," in the sense of being truth that is directed *to* and *concerned with* "the ecclesia which is His body" (Eph.1:22), that is, "the body of Christ" (1 Cor.12:27; Eph.4:12).

Now it is not that I disagree with you in your teaching here for that is not the case. It is simply that I am still somewhat troubled by this position, even so—even if my feelings here are due simply to my own need for

further growth in the faith, besides to become less intimidated by peer pressure.

For example, a friend insists to me that we are not justified by faith alone, but by works as well. He says that, Yes, indeed he believes in justification by works (and not by faith alone), because the Bible teaches justification by works. For this he cites the words of James: "You see that by works a man is being justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24).

From this he concludes that if, in addition to our faith in Christ, we do not also have good works sufficient to justify us, we cannot be justified and so will not be saved. Similarly, he says that any "believers" that have but few good works yet manifest significant bad works, were either not saved in the first place, or even if they were once saved "probationally," nonetheless, unless they repent and do works of righteousness, in the end, they will not be saved, "for eternity."

I have found that some even among those who believe in the final salvation of all, in principle, hold essentially the same position as my friend. They only differ with him in saying that all will eventually be saved, while at the same time saying that, even so, any believers having insufficient good works yet substantial bad works, will forfeit eonian life, hence will not be saved "for the eons." They say that this is the teaching of James and that it is applicable to all in Christ; therefore, that it should be honored and accepted accordingly.

I would appreciate your comments on anything you wish to share here regarding my concerns, especially the claims made by many, that unless we satisfactorily avoid bad works, we will not be saved—whether for the eons or for eternity.

Answer:

I HAVE much empathy for you in your troubled *feelings* as to your faith in the evangel heralded by the apostle Paul. Paul's evangel, foundationally, is that of the all-sufficiency

of the grace of God through Christ for our justification, a justification which is apart from any works of righteousness performed by ourselves. This evangel was revealed to Paul *alone,* and is an evangel which is neither taught nor affirmed elsewhere, anywhere within the sacred scriptures outside the epistles of Paul.

The reason why I have much empathy for you in your troubled feelings in relation to this evangel, is because, in the early years of my faith, I nevertheless regularly experienced such troubling *feelings* myself; and, even now I still somewhat experience such feelings, at least at times.

After all, glorious as our evangel is, nearly everyone insists that our faith therein is not only false but also wicked. Such rejection by and contempt from others toward ourselves is not easy to bear, and is bound to have an adverse effect on us.

Beyond this, since we ourselves are but flesh, and since the disposition of the flesh is enmity to God (Rom.8:7), we cannot of ourselves even receive much less retain such a *God-alone glorifying* message. As "flesh," that is, as considered in ourselves, in our weakness (*cf* Psa.78:39), we cannot love and glorify God but only fear Him; and then not as one who wisely fears the discipline of a loving and beloved father, but only as one who desperately fears an inveterate enemy, an enemy far more powerful than oneself, an enemy toward Whom—whatever we may imagine or claim to the contrary—we are in fact filled with animosity and ill will.

What we both must do, then, by the *grace* of God, "as beloved children" (*cf* Eph.5:1), ones who would retain and continually affirm the evangel of their salvation, is not be over-anxious about the feelings of our flesh, which are by no means a reliable guide, but instead rely on the living God in the testimony of His word. This is even as the Proverb (29:25) declares: "A man's over-anxiety becomes

a trap for him, yet he who trusts in Yahweh shall be made impregnable"; and, the Psalmist exclaims (56:4): "In Elohim, I am praising His word; in Elohim I trust; I shall not fear; what can flesh do to me?"

THE PLACE OF JAMES' EPISTLE

For ourselves, under Paul's evangel, the allotment of life eonian is not a reward but a "*gracious* gift" (*cf* Rom. 6:23; *cp* Eph.2:5-7). Thus, "being justified in that One's [Christ's] *grace,* we may be becoming enjoyers, in expectation, of the allotment of life eonian" (Titus 3:7).

Under the evangel of the Uncircumcision, then, the allotment of life eonian is a *gracious gift* granted to all who are called, for "whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls, these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these He glorifies also" (Rom.8:30).

Yet under the evangel of the Circumcision, the situation is thus: "Happy is the man who is enduring trial, for, becoming *qualified,* he will be obtaining the wreath of *life,* which He promises to those loving Him" (James 1:12).

This is even as Jesus declared to His disciples, "Not everyone saying to Me 'Lord! Lord!' will be entering into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who is doing the will of My Father Who is in the heavens. Many will be declaring to Me in that day, 'Lord! Lord! Was it not in Your name that we prophesy, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name do many powerful deeds?' And then shall I be avowing to them that 'I never knew you! Depart from Me, workers of lawlessness!' " (Matt.7:21-23).

Under the evangel of the Circumcision, then, the allotment of life eonian is a *reward* granted solely to those who "keep the precepts" (*cf* Mark 10:17; Matt.19:17).

Since many of the usual false claims that we hear so often about salvation by works, about "probationary salvation," of our supposed need to have "sufficient good works

while not manifesting substantial bad works" if we would be saved, "whether for the eons or for eternity," arise from appeals to and the misapplication of declarations contained in the epistle of James, I will now address various points concerning this same epistle.

It appears that the author of the epistle of James, is James the brother of Jude and half-brother of our Lord. This is in keeping with the fact that Paul speaks of James who came to be the leader of the Jerusalem ecclesia, as "James, the brother of the Lord" (Gal.1:19).

The epistle of James is a hortatory entreaty of the evangel of the Circumcision. It is addressed "to the twelve tribes in the dispersion" (James 1:1), and is applicable especially to those among the twelve tribes of the dispersion who were also believers in Christ. It is fundamentally different both in character and content than the epistles of Paul, which proclaim the evangel of the Uncircumcision.

"None of the Circumcision epistles so clearly indicates the class to whom it is written as the letter of James to the twelve tribes in the dispersion. Its conflict with Paul's epistles is so pronounced that Luther rejected its authority, and endless attempts have been made to find a means of reconciliation, without coming to any satisfactory solution. Once it is apprehended that this epistle is for a different people and a distinct administration, all need of reconciliation vanishes and we are not tempted to tone down Paul or drag up James to a common level.

"The contrast between the ministry of James and that of Paul is graphically illustrated in their lives: Paul was born at a distance from the land of Israel, and had no relations with the Lord until after His ascension into heaven. James, on the contrary, was born of the same mother as the Lord, and lived in the land all his life. In Paul the spiritual comes to the fore; in James, the physical.

"The very name of James is suggestive. It is practically the

same as Jacob, or Supplanter, who, in his career, exemplified the energy of the flesh, and whose name was changed to Israel when the flesh was subdued. The name was also applied to the nation when their crooked ways called for it rather than for the name Israel ["upright with El," Gen. 32:28]. Hence it may be taken to indicate the spiritual state of those to whom this epistle is addressed.

"In the early part of Acts Peter has his rightful place at the head of the apostles, but, even as early as Paul's first visit to Jerusalem, James had a prominent place, though he was not an apostle (Gal.1:19). Fourteen years later he had risen to be one of the pillars in Jerusalem and was named before Peter and John (Gal.2:9). Peter was afraid of some who came from James (Gal.2:12).

"At the council in Jerusalem to consider the question of circumcising the nations and putting them under the law, James had the decisive word and formulated the decrees, which were hostile to the nations (Col.2:14), and which were nullified when the present secret administration was inaugurated (Eph.2:15).

"At Paul's last visit to Jerusalem James was apparently the only one worth mentioning in authority in the city. The Lord's chosen apostles have disappeared and in their position the people have placed one whose chief claim was his physical relation to our Lord. James rises in proportion to the depth of the nation's apostasy.

"So that, at the close of Acts we have two men who embody the two divergent lines, the downward trend of Israel and the upward trend of the nations. Paul repudiates all physical relationship to Messiah and enters the realm of spiritual blessedness among the celestials (2 Cor.5:16). James writes to adulterers and adulteresses (4:4), to those going from city to city trafficking and getting gain (4:13), to the rich who are hoarding in the last days (5:3).

"In this light we are able to understand the unusual approach to truth in this epistle. It begins with physical limitations and closes with physical healing. It teaches justification by works and law keeping. All these had their place in that failing economy, but let us beware that we do not adulterate the precious truth for the present with doctrines that primarily concern Israel in the last days.

"There are three Jameses mentioned in the Greek Scriptures, James, the son of Zebedee, the first martyr among the Twelve (Acts 12:2); James the Less, the son of Alpheus (Mat.10:3); and the writer of this epistle."[1]

LIVING FAITH[2]

The rejection of Christ, of course, results from unbelief. It is the unbelief of those to whom Christ remains veiled, who remain locked up in stubbornness by God Himself (Rom.11:32). On the other hand, as many wish to remind us, even though "the demons . . . are believing," they also "are shuddering" (James 2:19), evidently in view of whatever perception they may have concerning impending judgment (*cf* Matt. 8:29).

While it is always ideal to be believing, James explains that even so, "faith apart from works is dead" (James 2:20). A faith that fails to produce good deeds is certainly a "dead" faith. In a *practical* sense—for all the good that it does—it does not exist. This is obviously true, and the principle involved is as true today as in any other era.

Indeed, if our subject is that of *practical* salvation—being saved out of our failings and then enduring in a commendable walk—we agree with James that such a "dead" faith (even if it should theoretically exist) cannot save us; it can exercise no saving influence upon us at all. Such a faith—a faith that does not do anything or affect us in any

1. A. E. Knoch, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.351.
2. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.81, pp.39-48, adapted.

practical way—"*That* faith cannot save [us]" from following a most destructive course (*cp* James 2:14).

It must be noted, however, that James' subject is that of the *lack* of positive (or "saving") influence which inheres in a "dead" faith. His comments in 2:14 are not made in order to apprise us concerning what the divine response will be regarding the future life of the individual who finds himself in possession of nothing more than such a moribund faith. He does not say that *God* will not save such a man, but that such a faith will not save anyone. It is true that James warns of Gehenna elsewhere for the misuse of the tongue, but that is in another context (James 3:6; *cp* Mark 9:47; Isa.66:24).

Of course under law, *if* anyone's faith should thus be "dead," since such a person would be powerless, he could never endure and would not be granted eonian life. That is, God would not save him from eonian death. Nonetheless, this is not in view in James 2:14.

It is important to realize that James writes to *the twelve tribes in* the dispersion (James 1:1), not (solely) to the *believing* Jews *of* the dispersion. Certainly, he was not addressing the members of the body of Christ, those believers who enjoy the blessings of Paul's evangel for the nations. The character of the epistle is national; its counsels are directed to the dispersed citizenry of the nation of Israel. The Lord's own commission was itself only to that nation (Matt.15:24); James writes accordingly, addressing and having regard for all his brethren according to the flesh, doing so that all who had ears to hear might hear. As Paul has said, "How should they be hearing apart from one heralding?" (Rom.10:14).

It is these first century Israelites who are in view when James says "my brethren" (e.g., James 2:1; 2:14). They were meeting together in the various *synagogues* throughout the dispersion, where Moses had long been heralded every

sabbath, city by city (James 2:2; Acts 15:21). It was vital that they follow the law. Moses had given it, and it would be fully kept in Yahweh's kingdom, even as all the prophets and the Lord Himself had confirmed (Matt.5:17-20).

The kingdom was near, and, as the Psalmist said, "I will walk in wideness [i.e., in freedom], for I inquire of Your precepts" (Psa.119:45). Israel was about to be judged by their law of "freedom" (James 2:12). Their obedience afforded them freedom from the law's curses for disobedience. This made them free to enjoy the blessings which obedience alone could bring. They must diligently seek to obey, to avoid "being exposed by the law as transgressors. For anyone who should be keeping the whole law, yet should be tripping in one thing, has become liable for all" (James 2:9,10).

Practically speaking, the least infraction of the law made them "liable for all," since a single transgression would bring down as many divine "curses" (AV), or rather, "maledictions" (CV) as total disobedience (Lev.26:14,15; Deut. 28:15). (Civil *judgments* through appointed judges must not be confused with divine *maledictions.*) Any instruction enjoining mercifulness was especially important. "For the judging is merciless to him who does not exercise mercy" (James 2:13a).

"JUSTIFIED BY WORKS"

James 2:21-24 declares, "Abraham, our Father, was he not *justified by works* when offering up his son Isaac on the altar? You are observing that faith worked together with his works, and by works was faith perfected. And fulfilled was the scripture which is saying, Now 'Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness,' and he was called 'the friend of God.' You see that by works a man is being justified, and not by faith only."

Though it is not an accepted English form, when someone is "justified," he is actually "righteoused." That is, he is in some respect "made righteous" so as to be deemed, pronounced, or declared *to be* righteous (*cp* Luke 7:29; Rom.3:4). Regardless of the sense, when a man is said to be a "justified" man, that man is declared to be a *righteous* man.

James, however, is only dealing with individual acts, and is pointing out that when a man does what is right, it may be said of him—relatively speaking, with respect to that act—that he is a "righteous" man. Thus Abraham was indeed "justified" "when offering up his son Isaac on the altar" (James 2:21). Similarly, in a *metonymical* sense (i.e., *by association,* since obedience is a product of living faith), it may even be said that in his obedient act of offering up Isaac (Genesis 22:12), Abraham made as well a certain "fulfillment" (i.e., a "filling full") of the original declaration also recorded in Genesis which speaks of the time when he simply believed what God had said to him concerning the promised seed.

In making this connection, James cites Genesis 15:6, and points his readers to the time when "Abraham *believes* God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness" (James 2:23). As such, Genesis 15:6 speaks of an entirely different matter than that of Genesis 22:12. By association, however, there is actually a strong connection between these two passages. Those who would live uprightly, find the strength for such service only *by faith;* that is, in the enabling power which is afforded them by their faith in God and in His Word. "Now My 'just one *by faith* shall be living,' and 'If he should ever be shrinking, My soul is not delighting in him' " (*cf* Heb.10:38; *cp* Hab.2:4).

The Lord Jesus Himself speaks of men being justified with respect to their works, when relating the story of the

tribute collector who implored God, saying, "God, make a propitiatory shelter for me, the sinner!" (Luke 18:13). Since this prayer was such a *righteous* prayer, the Lord said of him—relatively speaking with respect to this prayer—"I am saying to you, this man descended to his home *justified . . .*" (Luke 18:14).

Similarly, or as James puts it, "Now *likewise,* was not Rahab the prostitute[3] *also* [i.e., like Abraham, in offering up Isaac] justified by works when entertaining the messengers and ejecting them by a different way? For even as the body apart from the spirit is dead, *thus* also faith apart from works is dead" (James 2:25,26; *cf* Josh.2:1-24; *cp* Heb.11:31).

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3. Hebrews 11:31 does not express approval of Rahab's prostitution, but commends her faith by which she received the spies in peace. Similarly, James 2:25, 26, does not commend her lie, but says that she was "justified" (i.e., that, in a certain respect, she acted righteously) when she received the spies with peace, entertaining these messengers of Joshua, and then "ejected them" (i.e., sent them out) by a different way.

After the death of Moses, when Israel was about to conquer the land of Canaan, Joshua sent two spies to enter Jericho on a reconnaissance mission. After the Israelite spies came to the house of Rahab, a prostitute, who lived on the wall of the city, their presence there was detected and authorities were sent to capture them. While admitting that the spies had been at her home, she then lied saying that subsequently they had left and that she did not know where they were, when, in fact, she had hidden them under an arrangement of flax wood on her roof.

Later, Rahab helped the spies escape from the city by letting them down the wall with a scarlet rope. Thus, in this incident, in which Rahab's acts were instrumental in relation to Israel's stated goal of their conquest of the land of Canaan, Rahab was "justified" (i.e., said to have acted rightly) with respect to her acts of receiving and entertaining Joshua's spies, even as in subsequently sending them out safely on their way. This is simply to say that, in relation to Israel's quest to conquer the land of Canaan and take it for themselves, Rahab's acts of assistance, being useful, thus, in this limited respect, were "right," or "justified."

We ourselves are thus "justified [or pronounced righteous] by works" daily, with respect to our upright acts and our obedient service unto God. This is so whenever we do what is right, to the degree that this is actually the case. In the appraisal of our actions in and of themselves, however, we ourselves are also pronounced *unrighteous* on a daily basis, whether by ourselves, our associates, or especially by God. That is, relevant to God's revealed will concerning our walk, By our righteous deeds shall we be justified, and by our unrighteous deeds shall we be convicted (*cp* Matt.12:36,37).

This ordinary or everyday sense, however, is the only sense in which James ever speaks of "justification." The epistle of James, or for that matter, the evangel of the Circumcision as a whole, neither knows nor permits any justification by God (Rom.8:33) which is conferred upon *sinners;* a justification which is made "in [Christ's] blood" (Rom.5:9); a justification both "out of" and "through" "Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3: 22,26b; 5:1); a justification which is "through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24).

It is altogether foreign and contradictory to the teaching of James that any such benefit should accrue to the irreverent; indeed, to *sinners*—to ones who are "not working" (Rom.4:5). And that such an incalculably valuable gift as that of God Himself justifying sinners should be dispensed at all, not to mention be dispensed "apart from law" (Rom.3:21) and even "*gratuitously* in His grace" (Rom. 3:24), was simply inconceivable to those such as James who were "seeking to establish their *own* righteousness" (Rom.10:3; *cf* Matt. 5:20).

It is not that what James has to say about justification (practical justification) or about the relationship between faith and works is wrong or is even in opposition to Paul's evangel, but that his words deal with an entirely different *type* of justification and with a different *aspect* of salvation from that of Paul's foundational message to the sinner.

Conversely, however, James' *evangel* is by no means in accord with Paul's, and indeed is quite the antithesis of it. James' entire concept of righteousness is the same as that of Moses: "that a man who *does* the same shall be *living* in it" (Rom.10:5; Lev.18:5; James 1:12; 2:10). Yet Paul's view is simply this: "If righteousness is through law, then Christ died gratuitously" (Gal.2:21). "For we, in spirit, are awaiting the expectation of righteousness *by faith*" (Gal.5:5).

And this righteousness is not our own, but "that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is *from God* for faith" (*cp* Phil.3:9). Consequently, insofar as our security in Christ is concerned, even if we were to be persisting in sin, grace would increase accordingly (*cp* Rom.6:1). Indeed, it would increase not only commensurately, but *superexcessively,* for, in this matter, even "where sin increases, *grace superexceeds,*" and reigns "for life eonian" (Rom.5:20,21). Yet this is not at all the case under the Circumcision evangel.

THE SPIRIT'S *LAW* OF LIFE

"James would not for a moment assert that a man is justified before God by works of law. Such an assertion has never been true [*cf* Rom.3:20; Gal. 2:16], and was never made by James or any other inspired writer . . . . James is denouncing a dead faith, a traditional faith, and a demon's faith (James 2:19,20,26), such a faith as some Jews had in Christ (John 2:23; 8:30,31, *cp* v.44).

"The works of which James speaks in affirming justification by works [as exemplified in Abraham and Rahab] were in both cases works which themselves need to be justified. Such works were justified only because they were the evidences that Abraham's and Rahab's faith was true.

"Paul is speaking of the justification of a convicted sinner: James is *showing* Abraham's [practical] justification as a believer. God had said that Abraham believed Him and

there and then it was reckoned to him for righteousness. James refers to the sacrifice of Isaac nearly fifty years later as the crowning evidence of Abraham's faith . . . . Throughout his argument James is pleading for a faith that gives *evidence* of genuineness, that will *show* faith by works."[4]

It is simply a fact that, all our failures notwithstanding, as a relative statement made in comparison to others, ones who are not in Christ, we who are members of the ecclesia which is His body, are not walking according to flesh, but are instead walking according to spirit: "Not according to flesh are they walking, but according to spirit" (Rom.8:1b).

Paul then immediately goes on to explain *why* what is so here, is in fact the case. It is so that we are not walking according to flesh but instead according to spirit, "*for* the spirit's *law* of *life* in Christ Jesus *frees* you from the law of sin and death. *For* what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, *did God*, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement [i.e., righteous effect, or result] of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit" (Rom.8:2-4).

Hence, to the degree that it is so that we are walking not according to flesh but according to spirit, to this same degree—in the *grace* of God, and *because* of the *spirit's law of life* in Christ Jesus—we *have been freed* from the law of sin and death.[5]

Knowing that in light of Christ's saving work both for us and in us (Rom.3:21-7:25), "Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus," we find ourselves endeavoring, more and more, "to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in the realization of God" (Col.1:10). J.R.C.

4. George L. Rogers, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.21, pp.70,71.
5. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.97, pp.234,235, adapted.

Contents:

193 Editorial
195 The Grandeur of Faith
199 God's Purpose
208 "A Shocking Blasphemy"
214 Reigning in Life Through the One
225 Man's Mission in Creation
233 "That Grace Should be Increasing"

SEPTEMBER, 2010

Volume 101 **Number 5**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

This book traces the divine function of *evil* (whatever is harmful or destructive) from its inception to its consummation, by presenting scriptural solutions to the various long-debated questions concerning God and His sovereignty.

As one of its subjects, it probes and takes issue with the commonly accepted explanation that Satan, and not God, is responsible for evil. To quote the book's author: "Almost all of us are shortsighted. We see the judgments, but fail to recognize that they are only part of God's way with mankind, that they are definitely not an end. We confuse the going with the goal. Judgment is God's strange work. He uses it as a preparation toward a glorious consummation."

The message in this book is especially valuable to us in these days of doubt and distress, to lead men to rely on and rest in God alone.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 2010
BEING THE FIFTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED ONE

EDITORIAL

How do we fit in? How can we get our bearings in life and in the world in which we live? Where do we come from, and where are we going? And why is our existence so mixed in with sin and sorrow and pain?

These are big questions, and there are no solid and satisfactory answers apart from the Word of God and what it says about God. God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them (Gen.1:1-31; *cp* Acts 17:24-26). He did so with a purpose in view which He carries forward in Christ Jesus, Who died for our sakes (Rom.5:6-8), and in Whom all will be headed up (Eph.1:9-11; 3:11).

In this issue of *Unsearchable Riches,* we are giving special attention to these big issues of God's purpose and the place He has designed for humanity within that purpose. God, Who creates all and is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, knows what He is doing and how it is to be done.

In his article on *The Purpose of God,* Vladimir Gelesnoff points to Colossians 1:15-20 as "a summary view of the Divine forepurpose" (p.201). First is the creation of all in Christ. This is matched by the reconciliation of all through Christ as the climax of the plan. The critical factor in between is the blood of Christ's cross.

Yet also in between creation and reconciliation is the experience of evil, the reign of death and the sin and offense and pain and sorrow which result. That is why God's grace in sending His Son to die for us is so important, and why its announcement is called an evangel, a "gospel," a welcome message of great joy. It is central to God's purpose

and the solid foundation of our faith, and indeed the source of spiritual strength for our walk (see the article starting on page 233). "The pain and sorrow of the reign of death over humanity because of Adam's offense are no match for the life which comes through Jesus Christ" (p.224).

Therefore, in accepting this evangel, we are becoming acquainted with God as God (*cf* Rom.1:21), and are built up in reliance on Him as the living and saving God (1 Tim. 4:9,10). It is a matter of faith. "Beneath a silent heaven we are called to this life of superb trust" (p.197). "When we know that God determines both the first and the last, then we can look upon all things intermediate with perfect trust and composure" (p.206).

God, Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, is working all together for good (Rom.8:28,32). Believing this, we are filled with happy expectation. "The toil and turmoil, the disappointment and the pain, the anxiety and the anguish, the dread and death, which seem so needless now, and so heartless and so cruel, these are the necessary preliminaries for the part which we are to play in the future" (pp.227,228).

"For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God. Yet not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruit of the spirit, we ourselves also, are groaning in ourselves, awaiting the sonship, the deliverance of our body. For to expectation were we saved" (Rom.8:20-24).

So it is that in knowing God has a purpose which He is carrying out in and through His Son Jesus Christ, and in knowing He has an expectation of glorious freedom for the entire creation, and in knowing we are included in a special way in that purpose, we get our bearings. To God be the glory! D.H.H.

THE GRANDEUR OF FAITH

THE grandeur of faith lies in its unique simplicity. It bears an investiture distinctly foreign to the phrase "Christianity," a term so variously construed as to be inexpressive of simple faith. Indeed, the institutions and creeds of Christendom have often been the bane of human history. Religion has too often spelt temporal power, and the vaunting of caste and clique. Even in its simpler forms it has but little in common with the soaring flights of faith.

So then, it is not for so-called Christianity or religion that contention is made, but for Scriptural faith in all its rare loftiness. And this is an inward thing, the throbbing pulsation of life, the hidden harmony of the heart which is right with God. It is intensely individual, and in its grip of the unseen, requires no ritual or formula to fashion its course. True faith seeks no sign, holds no doubt, and makes no appeal to the mental prowess of man. Its language is ever the same, even as with Job of old: "Though He slay me, *yet* will I trust in Him!" (Job 13:15).

Such is faith, and to those who experience its courage and insight, there is nothing in the nature of mirage to its vision of things Divine. All is based on the word of God, and the gauntlet is thus flung down. But where, and in whom, dwells this faith, so simple, yet so sublime? This grand repose of spirit in the invisible God is no monopoly of the wise or cultured, though they may be numbered among the happy ones. Experienced alike by scions of noble houses, and toilers of the masses, faith exults in God and the marvels of His grace. It soars above system and sect, for it exploits no name but one. With Paul, its noble pioneer, it

would fain revel in the unity of all God's people, happy to see all barriers down. Moreover, this precious faith has its own insignia. "The Lord knew those who are His, and, Let everyone who is naming the name of the Lord withdraw from injustice" (2 Tim.2:19). Herein we have the Divine seal with its indelible inscriptions, one facing Godward, the other manward.

How grand the sphere where faith, expectation and love are regnant. It is surely the "more excellent way," as portrayed by Paul to believers of old. And who shall say there is cant, superstition, or gullible credence in simple, Scriptural faith? Shall we exchange the definiteness of God for the vagueness of man? If the problems of life are not solved by the counsels of God, they will certainly find no solution in the schemes of man. "Desist for yourselves from looking to humanity" (Isa.2:22), writes the seer of old, and from the pen of Paul, "I came to be with you in weakness . . . that your faith may not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

The whole creation travailes in pain as it awaits the dawn of deliverance, the day of God's glorious liberty (Rom. 8:21,22). Herein lies the patience and triumph of faith. Where man fails God will succeed. Until that glad era, faith is calm amid the failure of man's high hopes, resting content in the light of God's goal, assured of Divine success.

Amid the chaos of creeds the instructed stand firm. And faith is instructed with knowledge and truth. Thus girded, the believer may stand alone. Aloof, it may be, yet is it not in "splendid isolation," with God and His word for solace and strength? Apostasy was prefigured by Paul, and down the ages has gathered force. Its volume rolls on, and will continue to its climax in all the glamour of religious unity and federation.

Still, amid all departure and apostasy there flourishes here and there the rare flower of faith. We see its beauty

in many sterile spots and uncongenial spheres. And what shall we say of its evidence in the province of pain and suffering? Shall not the martyrs of the past, a long, illustrious line, bespeak the nobility of faith? Of these, and of all in the grand realm of faith, it stands written, "[God] graces us in the Beloved" (Eph.1:6). What an inscription for the portal of "the family of faith."

"Apart from faith it is impossible to be well pleasing" (Heb.11:6). What a word for the religionist is enshrined in this declaration. And, in the words of another, "He who died at Calvary does not seek either our pity or our patronage. He claims our faith."

Beneath a silent heaven we are called to this life of superb trust. Yet the silence of God does not bespeak His indifference to a suffering world. His pity bears the stamp Divine, and shines out in the Son of His love. For, "even He also, being a Son, learned obedience from that which He suffered" (Heb.5:8). He knew, even as God. He came to feel as man. The illustrious One became poor, and learned obedience in the byways of earth. And, "it behoved Him," it became Him all the way from Nazareth to Calvary (*cf* Luke 24:46; Heb.2:27 AV).

The pathway of faith is profoundly simple. Its ethics are defined in the language of grace. The impelling power is that of entreaty, not command. It is finely expressed in the words of Paul: "I am entreating you, then, brethren, by the pities of God, to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service." Such an appeal touches the very springs of spiritual life, and prepares the heart for the happy rulings of grace. The precepts that follow form the true basis of a faithful walk. And faith exults in such a realm where godly freedom reigns.

There is great need for a wider recognition of the simplicity that is in Christ. But the currents of civilization are too strong, the institutions of religion too fondly cherished,

for that perfect display of faith which honors God alone in the exaltation of Christ. Truly, the night is far spent. We can but use the torch of truth to herald forth God's dawn. And, in the interval of His grace, may it be ours to manifest the quiet virtues of faith, expectation and love. Even until that day when faith shall be merged in sight, expectation find fulfillment, and love reign supreme.

William Mealand

THE GOD OF THE SCRIPTURES

Because of mistranslations, certain key truths which are "fundamental" to a true and satisfactory knowledge of God have been eliminated from the Bible to a sufficient extent to change Him from a God of love to a fiend of hate, except with regard to a very few.

But, some one will object, the Bible teaches that there is only one God, that He is all-powerful, and that He is love. So it does. But acts are more revealing than words. The word love cannot be applied to one who creates beings to torture them eternally. After all is said, if God is God (and He is!) the destiny of His creatures is entirely in His hands. They cannot thwart Him. It is only a would-be deity who is defeated by His own creatures. The travail of the eons, the sacrifice of Christ, the temporary sufferings of His saints, the judgments of the unbeliever, are the means needed to display His affection. This painful process does not prove that He has no heart. Rather it reveals it. In the original Scriptures all is in harmony with love, for God is love. But no amount of sophistry, no ecclesiastical threatening, will convince the honest heart that love acts as God is said to act in our common translations of the Scriptures. It has troubled thousands of humble believers, who had to harden their hearts in order to receive it.

I am in heartiest sympathy with all who hold to the Word of God, come what may. I held to eternal torment, in spite of the revolt of my reason and the strain on my faith, and the hurt in my heart, because I thought it was God's word. In fact I held it so strongly that I resented any attempt to investigate the matter. But when I studied the words of the original concordantly, I found that I had been misled. Now I can *really* believe that God is love, without any mental reservations, or any wish that He would not act so thoroughly out of accord with His character.

A. E. Knoch

GOD'S PURPOSE

In Paul's letters, repeated reference is made to God's "purpose" (Rom.8:28; 9:11; Eph.1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim.1:9). In all these scriptures the word is *prothesis.* Its force may be gathered from the fact that *prothesis* is used of the twelve loaves which were *placed before* the Lord on the Tabernacle table (Matt.12:4; Mark 2:26; Luke 6:4; Heb.9:2). *Prothesis* means *before-placed.* Hence the scriptures which speak of God's *prothesis* tell us that He has *placed before* Himself a definite aim or object which He is bent on achieving.

In Ephesians 3:11, the phrase occurs, "in accord with the *purpose* of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

This phrase is fraught with deep meaning; it indicates that God, through the eons, is prosecuting a certain work, in pursuance to a prearranged, definite plan. Nothing is left to chance, or to the emergencies of the case, but everything is arranged with perfect precision beforehand. This fact not withstanding, the prevalent idea among Christians is virtually the same as if God had no plan at all: they hold that God's purpose has sustained a rude setback at the hands of Satan, so that the whole period of sin's existence resembles a haphazard scramble between good and evil. Thus far evil has had the best of it, but the good will triumph in the end; or rather, while the good will not be absolutely triumphant, it will at least gain some advantages.

In opposition to this puerile idea, the apostle asserts the fact that God has a purpose, the purpose of the eons, prearranged and perfected before the initial step was ven-

tured upon: a plan providing for every event and movement, and according to which the minutest detail will be carried out. The program has been mapped out by God, and every step in the process even as the final outcome itself is infallibly settled.

It may be objected that, if this be so, man's free moral agency is completely ruled out. Yet, we reply, Let it be so that any mere human suppositions concerning free agency indeed be ruled out should any such notions be incompatible with the achievement of God's pre-determined purpose. In any case, our present question is in regard to God's *purpose* of the eons, which purpose He *will* achieve.

The belief of Christendom in respect to the work which God prosecutes may be summarized thus: In the beginning God created everything in six days, and rested on the seventh. But, His rest being disturbed by sin, He was obliged to resume work. Hardly had God finished His work and pronounced it "very good," than the devil appears upon the scene and unsets His work, spoiling everything. As a result, the Lord is compelled to go to work again in order to repair damages, and has been busy ever since straightening out the tangle. Ultimately, He will succeed in establishing something like the semblance of the pristine order. Even so, He will be unable to wholly undo the evil, or to entirely destroy the mischief wrought by the devil, since many will be irrecoverably lost, and will be eternally tormented in the lake of fire.

It is claimed that God will succeed in rescuing a portion (some say the minority, others, the majority) of humanity from this terrible doom, and to this end He works.

But who can, after sober reflection, adhere to a view like that above, a view which utterly traduces His character, representing Him to be a weakling, as One Who can be thwarted in His will, obstructed in His plans, and successfully resisted? Views responsible for such misconceptions must be at fault somewhere. Let us seek to find out where the fault lies.

The first chapter of Colossians, within the compass of a few verses, contains a summary view of the Divine forepurpose. The creation of all is the first movement in the execution of the plan; at the opposite extreme, as the climax of the plan, we have the reconciliation of all. The character of the intervening period, and the divine activities during its course, is graphically emphasized in the phrase "making peace through the blood of His cross" (Col.1:20).

Since reconciliation is here conceived as being from the very outset the climax of all that is created, it is evident that primeval creation was not the adequate expression of His consummated plan, but the preliminary stage, of a glorified world, in which weakness, flaw or failure can have no place. Hence creation may be said to have been complete only in the sense in which a step which is an integral part of a complex whole may be said to be complete in itself.

It might be said perhaps, if any one was disposed to play the part of an objector, that, according to this view, creation was not perfect. The answer is, the universe as it came forth from God was perfect, but it was not perfected with the perfection of maturity. We proceed to point out the difference between "perfect" and "perfected."

In the third chapter of Philippians, our versions use the word "perfect" in a way which suggests a contradiction; for, in verse 12, the apostle emphatically disclaims perfection, whereas, in verse 15, he as emphatically claims it for himself even as for those who were with him. The solution is simple: the Greek word rendered "perfect" in verse 12 is a verb in the perfect tense, whereas in verse 15 it is an adjective.

This fact puts a new complexion on the passage, and makes it one of singular cogency and force. The apostle says: "Not that I already obtained, or am already perfected."

In other words, to reverently paraphrase his sentence, I have not yet reached the goal; I am not yet crowned: What the Lord had in mind when He gave Himself for me, was not the present life of trial and training, but the crowning day, when my body of low estate will be refashioned so as to become in form like unto the body of His glory. That climax I can never attain until the Saviour Himself comes from heaven.

Meanwhile, there is a sense in which we can be "perfect" (i.e., "mature"): "Moreover, in what we outstrip others, there is to be a mutual disposition to be observing the elements by the same rule" (Phil.3:16). Thus the difference between "perfect" and "perfected" is the difference between the attainment which is a present possibility, and the attainment which is impossible until the resurrection; or, to state it otherwise, it is the difference between relative and absolute perfection, between the good work begun and the good work completed.

Our Lord furnishes a striking illustration of the distinction we seek to emphasize where He said, "Lo! I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I am being perfected" (Luke 13:32). Every act and word of His was perfect, indefectible, complete; but each was only *part* of a mission, so that while each step was "perfect," His ministry could not be *perfected* until the full number of steps had been reached.

It is thus also with creation. God leads it to the appointed goal not at one bound, but by a long process and a gradual one; a process marked by successive stages and those stages all contributing toward the appointed end. Thus creation, though perfect when looked at by itself, is seen to be incomplete considered as the initial step of a vast undertaking. The New Creation is no afterthought called forth by the opposition of the Adversary; rather, it is the foreordained culmination of a process appointed for creation, every

stage thereof being divinely prearranged. The New Heavens and New Earth are not something devised to replace those which the Adversary "spoiled"; they are the fruitage of creation's finished course—perfection perfected.

But if this is true of the material universe it holds good equally of man. In 1 Corinthians 15:45-49, the apostle draws a contrast between Adam and Christ; he shows how they *differed.* Adam was *not* like Christ; they were not "made" alike (v.45). Hence, there must be a material difference between Adam who was the "image and glory of God" (1 Cor.11:7), and Christ, who is the "image of the invisible God" (Col.1:15). Adam was a faint reflection, a shadow, a silhouette of the Deity; Christ is the effulgence of His glory, the very emblem of His assumption (Heb. 1:3).

Now, since those whom God foreknew were designated to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom.8:29), and since such conformity is only realized in resurrection, it is evident that man was to attain Christ-likeness by a process of development and testing. During this process, man would do so under certain restrictions, exercising his volition in response to God's revealed commands.

The creation of man, as of the entire present creation, was planned in view of "the fall" (that is, of the sin of Adam and the consequences thereof). Man's origin from soil makes his return thereunto possible. Adam bore in his primeval condition the possibility of death. There was—for this is the meaning of the tree of life—in Eden, a means of transferring man without death to a higher stage of physical life. If I err not, this is the significance of our Lord's transformation (*cf* Matt.17:2).

Our divine Lord, in compliance with the Father's will, took upon Himself the likeness of the flesh of sin, and as He went about doing the will of Him who sent Him, He endured the contradiction of sinners and resisted unto blood, striving against sin. In His perfect walk on earth,

as born of a woman, born under the law, He glorified His Father, did His will, magnified His law. What did He deserve personally, as man? His transformation furnishes the answer. But the glory into which He deserved to be transformed without tasting death, He reached only through the death of the cross.

The foregoing consideration accounts for the naiveness and childlike simplicity of the first human pair. Man was unfinished; he was only half-made. Like Ephraim, he was "an ember cake unturned" (Hosea 7:8). What could be expected of man in this crude, rough state?

These considerations have an important bearing on the question of salvation. We hear on every hand about "conditions" of salvation: theology loudly proclaims that man's salvation rests entirely on himself; that there are certain rules to be complied with in order to be saved; that God has done what He could, made man's salvation possible; and if man will repent and do many other things he will be saved; otherwise, not.

This colossal error roots itself in a misapprehension of salvation, and of God's work. The work of God, as has been shown, is to conform man to the image of God's Son. This is the task which God proposed to Himself, and He alone is responsible for its attainment. And now the question arises, What is salvation? The Scriptures answer that salvation is life—life from the dead. The Bible represents man in Adam as dead, having "no life" in him. When we here speak of "life," we mean physical existence; yet Scripture does not recognize mere physical existence as life.

After his transgression Adam had physical existence as much as before; but, he was dead unto God. Our Lord's saying, "Let the dead entomb their own dead," means that those bearing the corpse were as dead as the corpse itself. That saying illustrates precisely man's condition before God: physically he is active; figuratively, he is dead. Hence the

mission of Christ was to bring life to the world: ". . . My Father is giving you Bread out of heaven, the true, for the Bread of God is He Who is descending out of heaven and giving life to the world" (John 6:33).

Fallen man is not only guilty, needing justification, or sinful, needing cleansing; he is dead, needing life, and anything short of that is vain, futile. Salvation, then, is life for a dead race. The Scriptures bristle with this truth: it is the great central truth of the Word—Christ our life, not merely our wisdom, redemption, propitiation, or mediation. All this is true and blessed, yet it falls short of the fullness of His mission. He comes to bring *life;* He *is* our life, as He Himself declares: "I am the resurrection and the *life.*"

Salvation is the consummation of creation, the impartation of life to a dead race, thus bringing them finally to His image; and this work depends solely on God; it is not conditional, for if it were it would be contingent, in the sense of uncertain; but that is inconceivable. We cannot allow the thought that God's creative work is contingent, or that He would commence a work and not bring it to a worthy finish.

In a word, the truth on this point is this: all that *man* does has to do with his training, development, instruction; his final salvation—his entrance into life—in no sense or degree depends on what he does. The end is fixed and settled in the immutable purpose of God, and *all* will ultimately be vivified in Christ, as surely and unconditionally as all have died in Adam.

The misconceptions that many entertain on this subject arise from their religious training, and not from the teaching of the Bible. In current evangelical theology salvation is conceived of as nothing more than escape from the penalty of sin—(supposedly) the scorching fires of hell. In order to effect this escape, man must *do* certain things, thereby securing to his own credit the merit

which properly accrues alone to Christ. Add to this the ideas in vogue investing man with power to persistently resist His Maker, so that in vain God expends upon him all the resources of infinite mercy, wisdom, and power. Add these errors, and you have a groundwork of falsehood broad enough to build up almost any amount of tradition, superstition, and absurdity.

On the other hand, when we see the truth that salvation is life, the consummation of the creative work of God, the completion of Christ's mission, Who came to give life, Who is our life, and hence is called a "*vivifying* Spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45)—the life-giver of the world—discerning as well that this stupendous work of vivifying a dead race is entirely of God, and has nothing to do with the penalty for sin, any more than it has with the reward for good works—we shall cease talking about "conditions" of salvation. "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense *for all mankind* for condemnation, *thus also* it is through one just award *for all mankind* for life's justifying. *For even as,* through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:18,19).

Every passing hour brings man nearer to his final goal, which is immutably settled in the will of God. If it were not so, everything would be uncertain; if the final outcome were contingent, there could be no certainty as to what it would be. It might be chaos instead of a perfected consummation. When we know that God determines both the first and the last, then we can look upon all things intermediate with perfect trust and composure. Think you that God would make the ultimate results of His purpose—His "purpose of the eons *which He makes in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Eph.3:11)—depend upon weak, foolish mortals?—place the infinite in the hands of the finite? Verily, nay; the wisdom of God is not so foolish; God alone determines eternity.

It makes all the difference in the world whether we consider God's work as having been completed in Eden, and then upset by the Adversary, or whether we see that this work only began there, that Adam's sin was part of that work, and that redemption, resurrection, judgment, punishment, are simply steps and stages in the same creative process. According to current ideas the "fall" was an "accident," a mishap to God no less than man, and redemption is then degraded to the level of a makeshift expedient—a "scheme" as it is often called—to repair damages. Such a view makes God to be altogether such a one as ourselves, a being subject to accident and failure, instead of the One Who is operating all according to the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). Surely, no thoughtful, enlightened person can entertain ideas so derogatory to God's character.

God's work began with creation; the "fall" was a step in the same process; and, all the results of that step, up to the consummation, are further stages in the same process.

Vladimir Gelesnoff.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Two new booklets containing studies on important scriptural topics from the pen of A. E. Knoch are now available. The first is entitled: *What is Mankind, the Soul, Death?*, and the second: *Studies in First Corinthians Fifteen.* Together these new publications include six articles recently appearing in *Unsearchable Riches,* as follows: "What is Mankind?" "What is the Soul?" "What is Death?" "Undeniable Evidence for the Resurrection," "The Vivification of All" and "How the Dead are Roused."

The fundamental facts of human make-up are traced in the first booklet, as to body and spirit, which combine to make the living soul. This aids us greatly in grasping the seriousness of death. With these teachings of Scripture in view, the glory and victory of life through Christ, as presented in 1 Corinthians 15 are greatly clarified.

"A SHOCKING BLASPHEMY"

CONTROVERSY is fraught with dangers. Engrossed by the one desire to condemn a contrary view, the judgment of the controversialist becomes warped, and he does injustice to himself while he unconsciously misrepresents the position of his opponent. A fresh illustration of this is afforded by a recent criticism of our article "The Problem of Evil."[1]

We are not saying that our critic has deliberately misrepresented our position, but that his eagerness to condemn has prevented him from viewing the subject in its true perspective. He represents us as saying that "*God is the author of sin.*" We said nothing of the kind. Our critic has been misled from the very start by the unwarranted assumption that "evil" and "sin" are synonymous terms; on the strength of such assumption he has taken upon himself to change our statement. Since this point, as well as the whole subject of God's connection with evil is dealt with in a separate editorial, we will not here dwell on this point.

In dealing with Isaiah 45:7 we said that the interpretation of the passage which assumes that the word here rendered "evil" *always* means inflicted evil is unfounded. We stated that the Hebrew word here employed is not restricted in its biblical usage to inflicted evil, but is used of moral evil as well; then we gave Scripture evidence for this and referred to the concordance for fuller proof. Our critic bears me out on this point. He says: "The Hebrew word which is translated evil in this passage is the general word for evil covering both moral evil, the evil which one does, and natural evil, the evil which one suffers." Yet a little further he says that "a thorough examination of the concordance shows that Mr. Gelesnoff's statement is utterly false!" He first declares that the word covers both natural and moral evil and then denies it! In his efforts to denounce he has fallen into a glaring self-contradiction.

1. "Victor Gelesnoff's Shocking Blasphemy," in "*The King's Business*," vol.V, No.2.

Again he says: "The passage simply teaches that God sends men peace in heart and that God sends men disquiet of heart." But what says the context? It speaks of war and its accompaniments—the subduing of nations, the loosing of the loins of kings, the opening of doors and gates, the breaking in pieces of doors, cutting in sunder of bars, and acquisitions of treasures of darkness. Do these things take place in the human heart? War is the result of wrong doing. The so-called natural evils which afflict mankind are the direct result of Adam's disobedience; and since the so-called natural evil is a consequence of the moral, the passage which speaks of its origin necessarily employs the term in its inclusive sense. When facing the question of evil men are wont to dismiss it by saying that God *permitted* it. Just so. But how does Omnipotence permit a thing without assuming responsibility for the thing permitted?

Our critic says on this word: "Some of the meanings given to the word in one of the most modern and exact of Hebrew lexicons is 'adversity, affliction, bad, calamity.' These are the first meanings given. This lexicon among all the meanings given does not give sin at all among its meanings; the nearest it comes to it is in the last definition, 'Wrong.'" What are the facts? The Hebrew lexicon referred to is Dr. Strong's. The word in question is marked number 7451. The definition given is "*bad* or (as noun) *evil* (natural or moral)." Then follows a list (in alphabetical order) of the various renderings of the word in the AV, which our critic has mistaken for the lexicographer's "definitions." He

omits the definition given in the lexicon, which fully bears out our assertion; he palms off the renderings of the AV as "definitions," and only gives five of them, the first four and the last. Among the renderings which he leaves out is found "wicked." He takes from the "most exact" lexicon what suits his view and leaves out what is antagonistic to it. Is this the reason why the name of the lexicon is withheld from the readers?

"But we are not so much concerned with Mr. Gelesnoff's reasoning as we are with his teaching." Of course, one who starts with the determination to condemn is eager to get rid of the evidence. The subject of God's connection with evil was illustrated by an array of passages. Our critic ignores them as a negligible quantity. He simply says we are all wrong, and apparently expects his opinion to have the authority of an *encyclical,* for he does not trouble himself about giving evidence. Among the passages given was Romans 11:32.

> "For God locks up all together in stubbornness,
> that He should be merciful to all."

Will our critic construe this passage to mean that God sends peace and disquiet in the hearts of men, or will he charge the apostle with "shocking blasphemy." It is very convenient to form an opinion regarding the meaning of a passage, disregard the others dealing with the same topic, and when the opinion thus formed is called in question take shelter behind the declaration that those who live close to God need no concordance to decide whether a teaching is right or wrong. Fellowship with God cultivates Bible study, and the concordance is the best aid to it. Only a theology founded on human opinion need fear a concordance.

Our critic asserts that our position "is the position held generally by Pantheists, Christian Scientists, R. J. Campbell and others who are recognized as gross errorists." This

remark is wholly beside the mark. Pantheism accounts for the existence of evil by devising rival deities. The view which shifts the burden of responsibility from Omnipotence to a finite creature is much more akin to Pantheism than the view which believes in one Creator who is absolutely supreme. Christian Science attempts to solve the question of evil by saying that it is but an illusion of the mind. Here again eagerness to condemn has betrayed our critic into making an arbitrary statement which the facts will not bear out. Mr. R. J. Campbell expressed the idea that sin is a quest for God; the roué who goes out to corrupt innocence is, in a blundering way, seeking after God. Between Mr. Campbell's view and our position that God, as sovereign, and omnipotent, assumes full responsibility for all that takes place in the universe, and controls all things for the accomplishment of His purpose, is a vast gulf. A mind which confounds such radically different conceptions proves its incompetence to handle questions of truth. All this goes to show that criticism bent on condemnation is partial in its methods, and untrustworthy in its results.

"When we learned that he had been led to an acceptance of the position that the Church is not the bride of Christ, and that a new dispensation began in the closing verses of the 28th chapter of Acts, we began to tremble for him." The expression "bride of Christ" is not in the Bible. Revelation 21:9 speaks of the "bride, *the Lamb's* wife," and the phrase refers, not to the Church, but to the city New Jerusalem. In Scripture the church of this dispensation is spoken of as the Body of Christ, and never as the Bride. From the close of the Baptist's ministry the Bride is never mentioned until she reappears in Revelation (John 3:29; Rev. 21:2,9). The doctrinal part of the Ephesians has fully set forth the doctrine of the church as the Body, the practical part deals with the conduct which becomes the members of His body. In chapter 5:22-33 the apostle treats of the

conjugal relation. In verses 23-30 he institutes a parallel: the model for a husband's treatment of his wife is Christs' treatment of His body. In verse 31 he cites the words spoken by Adam at the institution of marriage in Genesis 2:24. Genesis records the marriage of Adam and Eve: it knows nothing of Christ and the church. It is claimed that Adam and Eve are *types* of Christ and the church. As there is no statement to that effect in the Bible, it is wholly gratuitous for anybody to make it. The first part of verse 32 is a comment on the citation from Genesis in the preceding verse: "For this 'a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh' is a great secret.'" The second part of the verse explains Paul's object in referring to Genesis: "Yet I am saying this as to Christ and as to the ecclesia." The physical relation between husband and wife is used to illustrate the higher spiritual relation between the Head and the members of the body. The earthly relationship is readjusted by a heavenly standard. The force of the "moreover" in verse 33 depends on the fact that the church is the body, not the bride. Without a shred of Scriptural warrant a pet doctrine is made the test of soundness as to faith, and dissent from man's statement of it is treated as pride and rebellion against God.

A word about the personal statements. I went to Chicago neither from Rochester nor from the tailor's bench. Neither was I led to Christ through the ministry of Mr. Gaebelein. I was led to a knowledge of evangelical truth by reading the New Testament, and took an open stand for Christ several years later in the Salvation Army. I had been engaged in Christian work for some time when I met Mr. Gaebelein. Unless meant as an insinuation, one is at a loss to understand why the mode of one's earning a living should be brought up at all. Erroneous statements are not easy to retract, hence it is regrettable that information of a personal character should have been publicly given out

without ascertaining its correctness. Since Dr. Torrey says that he was not certain of being correctly informed, the only right course was to refrain from divulging it. It has served no purpose, and in making it our critic has needlessly exposed himself to the charge of insinuation. Here is a most solemn warning for us all. The grounds of controversy are exceedingly slippery and full of pitfalls.

Our critic concludes by saying that his denunciation is prompted by loyalty to Christ. The inquisition claimed the same. We mortals are all too prone to think that *our* views of truth are *the* truth, and when differing views are put forth, we imagine that the faith trembles in the balance, and that we must defend it at all hazards; whereas the truth of the matter is that the faith is trying us and our exertions to defend it only mar the testing. Uzzah imagined that the ark was in danger of falling, and lost his life in an attempt to steady it. There are many sad sights in the world, but none is more pitiful and disgraceful than the sight of one servant of Christ denouncing another who cannot frame himself to pronounce his Shibboleth. Since our critic has not given my correct name, I sign my name in full.

Vladimir Gelesnoff.

THROUGH THE ONE

In Romans 5:17, the passivity of the recipients on either side of the parallel is emphasized by the statement that the reign of death is *through the one* and that the [life in which we shall reign] is *through the One, Jesus Christ.* An active appropriation by individuals must not be reckoned as one of the causes upon which greater certainty is established. One, Jesus Christ, is opposed to Adam. Divine judgment and grace flow through these two. Christ is the sole agent and instrument of God's saving activity. He alone honored God, while Adam dishonored Him. God has honored Him and made Him the depository of all good things. In Him is all the sufficiency of God, the completeness of His salvation. Such a salvation sets forth the power of God and seeks no power in the recipients. George L. Rogers

REIGNING IN LIFE THROUGH THE ONE

We are dying. Like a tyrant, death reigns over us as a powerful and persistent process of decline and decay. Because of one offensive act committed by our common ancestor long ago, we are, in our flesh, contaminated by mortality and alienated from God in pride and sin, knowing pain and sorrow and infirmity (Rom.5:12-14; *cf* 1:18-3:20; 8:20,22). Yet Christ Jesus came into the world to save us (1 Tim.1:15). He died for our sakes (Rom.5:6-8). As a result, because of the one superabundantly gracious and gratuitous act of the One in Whom we all are created (Col.1:16,20), we are blessed superabundantly with the grace and gratuity of righteousness and peace, expectation of God's glory and the pouring out of His love in our hearts (Rom.5:1-5). We are justified in His blood and conciliated through His death and shall be saved in His life (Rom.5:6-11).

ALL OF GRACE

This is exceedingly welcome news, but it is hard for human beings to accept it unreservedly. We are like Israel at Sinai and think that not only must we do our part, but we can. Nevertheless, in bringing the evangel, through the centuries, to us (*cf* Rom.1:15), where we are, Paul has made it decidedly clear that we are sinners and cannot stand justified before God by our deeds (Rom.1:18-3:20). If it is to be done, God must do it (*cf* Rom.8:3). Justification and conciliation and life without dying are gratuitous provisions of grace. There is no room whatsoever to be boasting in ourselves. Salvation is all of grace (Eph.2:8), based fully on what Christ has done. That is our joy and our peace and our boast. "May it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal.6:14).

In case there is any doubt about it, in Romans 5:12-21 Paul compares what Christ has done for us with what Adam has done to us. The likeness is that Adam was one individual and so is Christ, and they each did one thing that is absolutely critical to us all. Because of what Adam did, death reigns over humanity (Rom.5:14,17). We are all affected in a very important way, everyday of our lives, by what Adam did, and this is apart from any contribution from us. So also the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ brings about powerful effects, yet superabounding in power and influence, on humanity. We are justified in His blood, conciliated through His death, and we shall be saved in His life.

This is consistently set before us in Romans 5:12-21 and continually kept in view through the entire epistle. Salvation in grace is gratuitous. It is apart from works of law. It will be superabundantly actualized. To God be the glory!

DEATH AND LIFE

We are now looking at Romans 5:17. Here Paul paints a grand picture in words, a picture of sweeping contrasts between the chaos and darkness of the tyranny of death over us and the vivid brightness of the glorious and exalted life which has been gained for us by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus we read:

For if, by the offense of the one, **death** *reigns through the one, much rather, those obtaining the superabundance of the grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in* **life** *through the One, Jesus Christ.*

We can see that there are two lines of thought being contrasted here, the first relating to Adam and death and reigning, and the second to Jesus Christ and life and reigning. The words "For if" introduce what is said about Adam, and they are paralleled by the words "much rather" introducing what is said about Jesus Christ. At the ends of the thoughts, we find the parallel phrases, "through the one" and "through the One, Jesus Christ." In the middle there are two further points of contrast, which may best be seen by means of a more literal translation of the verse, adhering to the word order of the Greek text, and arranged as follows:

A. For if,
  B. (by) the OF THE ONE offense,
    C. the **death** reigns
      D. through the one,
A. much rather,
  B. the (one)s THE SUPERABUNDANCE OF THE GRACE AND THE GRATUITY OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS obtaining,
    C. in **life** they shall be reigning
      D. through the One, Jesus Christ.

To be sure, this translation is not very good English. The "B" lines are especially awkward. But the exactitude of the parallels is brought out much better using the Greek arrangement of words.

THE "A" LINES

The first point of contrast is made by the opening words of each section, "For if" and "much rather."

For if Adam brought about important consequences, *much rather,* Christ brings about vastly more important consequences.

If we think in any way that the consequences of the grace of God and the gratuity in grace which is of Jesus

Christ are not more certain and more effectual than the consequences of Adam's offense, we are in conflict to what Paul is saying here.

THE "B" LINES

Here the words "the offense" are matched against the words "the (one)s obtaining." A singular thing is set in contrast to a plurality of persons.

Here also the words "of the one" are matched against the words "the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness." And this match-up gets to the heart of the matter.

What particular offense is *the offense*? It is identified in Greek idiom as *the* "of the one" *offense.* As expressed in English idiom, the particular offense is "the offense of the one." The difference between the Greek wording and the English wording is not in the sense but in the emphasis. Greek idiom hastens to identify the particular offense while English idiom is satisfied to wait until the end of the phrase. The offense is Adam's disobedience of Yahweh's instruction not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which came with the warning: "for on the day you eat from it, *to die you shall be dying*" (Gen. 2:17; *cp* 3:17-19). This is fully in accord with our passage where one particular act of Adam and its effect of dying unto the state of death are in view. This is where death came in as a tyrannizing scourge.

THOSE OBTAINING

Who in particular are *the (one)s obtaining*? They are identified in Greek idiom as "The (one)s the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness obtaining." They are the superabounding grace and the gratuity of righteousness obtainers. Once again the Greek word order establishes the point of emphasis. Before these peo-

ple are said to be obtainers our attention is drawn to what it is that they obtain.

Obtaining, in this context of grace and gratuity, "is a modest word, humble, supplicating, and it puts us where we must stand—in debt to God."[1] Being enemies, God conciliates us to Himself, and He does so through the death of His Son. In God's grace we obtain His gratuitous grace.

We who are believing the evangel, to whom righteousness is reckoned, have obtained the conciliation (Rom.5:11). We cannot boast in this as though it were our achievement. Nor can we assume, in such a context as this where God's grace through Jesus Christ is the center of focus, that others who have not been graciously granted this grace will never obtain it. But it is most certainly so that we have obtained it and shall be reigning in life.

What is this that the obtainers obtain? What is it that is being emphasized here? We went to Genesis 2 and 3 to understand the emphasis in the Adam side of the contrast. We need to go to *the evangel of God concerning His Son* to understand what is obtained on the Christ side of the contrast. The superabundance of grace and the gratuity in righteousness have been set before us in Romans 3:21-5:11. They refer to the love of God which is *poured out* in our hearts. They refer to the gratuity and grace of the justification of sinners in the blood of Christ, and the added and superabounding gratuity in grace of the conciliation of enemies through the death of God's Son. This is what we have obtained.

IN ACCORD WITH THE SCRIPTURES

It was given to Paul to bring this evangel to the nations, but it accords with all the Scriptures (Rom.1:1, 2; 1 Cor. 15:3,4). Hence, in view of the context of Romans 5:17,

1. George L. Rogers, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.22, p.230.

where the opening chapters of Genesis have formed the background for what is said about the one man, Adam, we do well to recall what is said there as a background of the evangel of God.

This message of life and incorruption has its earliest foreshadowings there, most specifically in Genesis 3:15 in the prophecy concerning Eve's Seed. There would be One Seed of the woman Who, in being hurt by the Adversary, would put an end to his headship, that headship which is maintained by the possession of the might of death (Heb.2:14).

Furthermore, there are foreshadowings of righteousness and peace in the scenes of early humanity in Eden described in Genesis 1:26-31 and 2:7-25. God blessed Adam and Eve with life without sin and sorrow and with purpose and a personal relationship with Him. But the human pair were also without comprehension of God's love and grace, and without appreciation of the good He had provided.

Therefore, justification and conciliation through Jesus Christ go way beyond the experience of honorable occupation and regular contact with their Creator known by Adam and Eve in the garden. Nevertheless an outline of what God has in view for humanity can be traced there.

THE "C" LINES

The blunt declaration, *Death reigns,* is paralleled by the astonishing announcement that those obtaining the grace and the gratuity *shall be reigning in life.* Those who are reigned over by death and are still, in their flesh, infirm and irreverent sinners and enemies of God, yet who have obtained God's gratuitous favor of righteousness and peace through the death of God's Son, *they shall be reigning in life!*

Let us repeat this as expressed by Paul in Greek: "The ones *the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of the righteousness* obtaining, **in life** they shall be reigning!" Do we see the emphasis here?

Death reigns.

In **life** mortal sinners who obtain God's grace shall be reigning.

We will no longer be dying. We will no longer be sinning. But, knowing full well what death means and what sin means, and knowing what God's superabundant grace of access to Him in peace is, and what His gratuity of the righteousness of justification through the faith of Jesus Christ is—knowing these blessings from God full well in that day, *in life* we shall be reigning!

The words, "death reigns" are not paralleled by the words, "life reigns," yet the word "life" still gets first place in the second "C" line. This life will be "newness of life," that life which Christ Jesus is now living, which is the life of "living to God." This is how it is described in Romans 6:4 and 10 where Paul shows how this evangel of future life has meaning for us already. For now it is a matter of the "earnest of the spirit" (2 Cor.1:22; Eph.1:13,14). In the future eons we will enjoy righteousness and peace in fullness, with incorruption and immortality (1 Cor.15:53), in which in every way we will be *living* unto God.

REIGNING

In life we shall be reigning, not because we have done anything to deserve it, but because, while having fully experienced our undeservedness and inability in the flesh, we have obtained God's superabounding favor through the shed blood of Christ, through the death of God's Son. This is the wisdom of God and the power of God, to choose such creatures as we are, and to give us such a position of usefulness and of happiness for all concerned and to the glory of God, and to do all this on the basis of the cross of Christ (*cf* 1 Cor.1:18-25).

Again, because of the context, we do well to turn to Genesis. There we first catch a glimpse of God's purpose for humanity in terms of position and service:

And Elohim said: Let Us make humanity in Our image and according to Our likeness. Let them hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heavens, over the domestic beast, over every land animal and over every creeper that is creeping on the earth.

So Elohim created humanity in His image; in the image of Elohim He created it: male and female He created them.

Elohim blessed them, and Elohim said to them: Be fruitful and increase; fill the earth and subdue it. Hold sway over the fish of the sea and over the flyer of the heavens, over every domestic beast, over all the earth and over every animal that is moving on the earth. (Gen.1:26-28)

Then Yahweh Elohim took the human and settled him in the garden of Eden to serve it and to keep it. (Gen.2:15)

In making Adam in His image and likeness, God had a place and work in view for him and his descendants, the subjection of the lower, living creatures.[2] In this humanity would reflect the Subjector.

"It should not appear strange to find the thought of subjection permeating the whole history of humanity, or that God should take the title of Subjector throughout the eons, for, immediately after we are told that *humanity* was made in His *likeness*, with Adam at its head, this similarity is said to consist in *swaying* over fish and flyer and beast (Gen.1:26). This is emphasized by repetition. Humanity is not only to increase and fill the earth, but to *subdue* it and to *sway* over it (Gen.1:28). Humans are subjectors, like the Deity, for through them He will reveal Himself as such to the other creatures of the universe."[3]

2. *cf* the article in this issue entitled: *Man's Mission in Creation* pp.225-232.

3. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.45, p.69.

Yet this mission has never been carried out in full. In this respect the most significant verbs are *hold sway* and *subdue,* and *serve* and *keep.* It is not simply a matter of authority but of service as well. This began when Yahweh Elohim brought the various birds and animals to Adam to name (Gen.2:19,20), thus setting up a basis for an ideal rule of service and protection.

The offense of the one put this on hold.

Yet as far as the earth is concerned it will be resumed and carried forward under the reign of Christ where Israel will be given a special place:

They shall not labor for nought,
Nor shall they give birth in vain,
For the seed of Yahweh's blessed are they,
And their offspring with them . . . .
The wolf and the lambkin shall graze alike,
And the lion shall eat crushed straw like the ox,
And the serpent shall have soil as its bread.
They shall not do evil,
Nor shall they bring ruin in all My holy mountain,
says Yahweh . . . . (Isaiah 65:23,25)

IN LIFE REIGNING

As for us who have obtained the conciliation, we shall be living together with Christ, and living, as He is living, unto God (*cf* Rom.6:8,10,11). It will be a life of fullest vitality, truest understanding, purest righteousness and deepest peace. And in that all this is so it will be a life, not simply of existence, but of employment. In expanded meaning the words of Genesis 1:26-30 concerning Adam's position and service are brought to fruition for us by the words "in life reigning." This reigning will be described more fully in Ephesians where we learn that, as members of the body of Christ, in which we all have a part, we are

the complement of the One Who is completing the all in all (Eph.1:22,23; 4:16). Thus, in the oncoming eons God will be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:7). In 2 Timothy 2:12 we learn that those who endure will reign *together with* Christ, but all who are happening on the salvation which is in Christ Jesus shall be living together with Him. It is through what the One, Jesus Christ, has done, and not at all through anything we may do, that all of us shall live together with Christ, and in that life we shall reign as members of His body, employed in those good works which God makes ready for us (Eph.2:10).

THE "D" LINES

The passage does not end with what it says about us. It concludes by directing attention to *the One, Jesus Christ.* The superabounding grace and the gratuity of righteousness come through Him. Here in Romans 5:17 the One, Jesus Christ, is put in contrast to "the one" through whom death entered into the world. Jesus Christ is the One Channel of justification and conciliation and of vivified life, in which we shall reign.

Concerning *justification,* we have learned that it is gratuitously given in God's grace, *through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus* (Rom.3:24). It is a manifestation of God's righteousness *through Jesus Christ's faith* (Rom.3:21,22). It is not, as often claimed, simply a matter of forgiveness accompanied by a declaration of righteousness, but an actual achievement of justification by the righteous Justifier (Rom.3:26). How so? "God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, *Christ died* for our sakes. Much rather, then, being now *justified in His blood,* we shall be saved *in His life*" (Rom.5:8,9). Justification is not achieved through us, through our works or obedience, not even through our faith; it comes through

the One, Jesus Christ, through His faith, His obedience, His death on our behalf, followed by His resurrection.

Concerning the *conciliation,* in which God has opened up access into the grace in which we stand, the favor is, not only of righteousness in God's sight, but of peace before Him, Who pours His love out in our hearts (Rom.5:1-5). Like "the gratuity of righteousness," this "superabundance of grace" is established through Jesus Christ, that is, *through the death of God's Son* (Rom.5:10).

Consequently, we see that God takes us from sin and enmity, under the reign of death, to righteousness and peace, enjoyed in life. He does so *through the One, Jesus Christ.* No one else has a place in this "through." Jesus Christ alone is the One Channel through Whom God brings us into His superabounding grace and His gratuity of righteousness. We are the obtainers. Christ is the Getter, in faithfulness and obedience to His God and Father. Adam led the way in showing what we are. Christ brings mankind to the place which God had in view for us all from the beginning.

Through the One, Jesus Christ—these are the words that lead us to Romans 5:18,19. The glorious message concerning God's Son, which announces what God achieves through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ cannot be restricted by human offense and failure. There is no way in which human offense or the power of death can work themselves into what God's grace has accomplished and will realize through Jesus Christ. The pain and sorrow of the reign of death over humanity because of Adam's offense are no match for the life which comes through Jesus Christ. "For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22). We are those who are Christ's in His presence, but thereafter there will come a time when "the last enemy is being abolished: death" (1 Cor.15:23-26). D.H.H.

MAN'S MISSION IN CREATION

GOD HAS FASHIONED varied forms of life on the earth and in the heavens. Dimly we perceive in them a marvelous adaptation to their environment, and a wonderful correlation to each other. Each seems to have its own part to play in the general arrangement, and all together form a world, a cosmos, or system, in which every segment is dependent upon the rest and contributes its share to the complete scheme. Each has its particular function to perform which no other can accomplish. To be sure, the whole has apparently been disturbed, and appears to have been wrecked, yet there is enough concord for everyone to see that a Master Mind has planned it, and is still at work amidst its ruins.

Man has discovered the function of many of the animals, and has used some with considerable benefit to himself, but is still in the dark as to many others. But most astonishing of all is his abysmal ignorance as to himself. *Why did God create the human race? What is its mission in creation? What is its relation to the rest? How will it be accomplished?* These should be the most elementary questions for every son of Adam. It should be a shame not to master our mission, not to discern God's intention for us. Yet how few even think of these vital themes, or, if they meditate upon them at all, come to any concrete conclusion! Most of us are too self-centered to concern ourselves about the race to which we are bound by ties unbreakable, or we would realize that God's plan for all must include us as well.

Man's Mission is the subject of this series of studies. We hope to show that mankind is the most marvelous of all created beings, more glorious even than the mighty messengers, or angels, who are supposed to be the highest of God's creatures. We will seek to show that man's mission is that of *mediator* between the various sections of creation. As God's image and likeness he will reveal Him to other beings because he is like them also. We will endeavor to trace the fulfillment of his mission on the earth. As we, in this administration, have a special mission to the heavenly hosts, we will investigate especially the great change which is necessary to fit us for our service among the celestials.

MAN, THE MEDIATOR

Man's destined place in the universe is in closest harmony with his constitution. He is not an accidental combination of atoms, as scientists would have us believe, not an isolated intrusion in creation. God made him a mediator, with points of likeness to Himself on the one hand and points of contact with all other elements in creation on the other. This likeness is limited, of course, in both cases, or else God and His creation would be identical. We can see this more easily in the model Man, our Lord Jesus Christ, *in* Whom man's destiny will be fulfilled. As God's image, man sways over the rest of creation. That which he has in common with others fits him for his function as the interpreter of God to them. This shows us *why* man is made as he is. *Every* being, of course, is made for God, to worship Him. But man's special function, in contrast to other creatures, is to *represent God to all the rest* so that they also may know and adore the Deity Who created them.

By his body, made of soil from the ground, man is in touch with the world of matter, and with material forms of life, as well as with sentient or soulish creatures, like himself. Some parts of his body, as the hair and the nails

at their extremities, actually lack sensation, as if they were plants. The combination of soil and spirit makes him a living soul, with feelings like the animals. Yet the breath of God has given him a spirit which approaches that of the spirit world. These give him the place preeminent on earth, and fit him to be God's representative upon its surface. To take this place in the heavens, which is the lot of those who are saved in this administration of grace, calls for a great change in our body, a tremendous increase in spirit power, which will enable us to represent Him to the celestial realms. Such is God's grand program for mankind.

Adam and the race were created to represent Him to the lower creation on the earth as well as the higher creatures in the heavens. They fail to fulfill this in themselves, but *will accomplish it in Christ.* This explains why He, Who has this place preeminently, condescended to become a Man. As members of His body we will rule the realms celestial and reveal to the hosts of heavenly beings the wisdom and the grace of God. So on earth the chosen nation will not only rule mankind, but subdue the lower animals as well. This is only faintly realized as yet. It will be far nearer God's ideal in the eons to come, under the Headship of Christ. But it will not be fully enjoyed until the eonian times, the scene of sin and death, have fully run their course.

The eons are only a preparation for our place in God's purpose. Humble subjection to God is the goal of all men, not merely as an end in itself, but because of man's destined duties as God's representative to the other creatures of the universe. This gives us a clue to the character of our present experience and explains the suffering of the eons. Such training is essential for the work with which we will be entrusted. The toil and turmoil, the disappointment and the pain, the anxiety and the anguish, the dread and death, which seem so needless now, and so heartless and

so cruel, these are the necessary preliminaries for the part which we are to play in the future.

THE MEANING OF MAN'S NAME

God's revelation harmonizes perfectly with His creation, but man's translations and interpretations of God's Word often disagree with his vaunted science. Since both of these are faulty and imperfect, it cannot well be otherwise. It is astonishing, how some of the "unscientific" terms used in Hebrew fit the facts in nature. When we come to God's purpose, where man is utterly ignorant, the words used by Him, and especially the names, are most illuminating. The word "man," in English, tells us nothing beyond what we can learn by means of our senses. It gives us no clue to the part we play in the tragedy of the eons. It supplies us no hint as to why the human race was created, or what it is intended to accomplish. It is no revelation from God, unless we connect it with His Word. Then the word *man,* especially *human,* is enlightening and prophetic.

The name given to man by God when he was created ought to correspond to his place and portion in creation, for, in the Hebrew tongue, names are almost always laden with significance. *Adam,* or *adum,* as it should be, is in the same family with *adume* (the feminine form), which means *ground.* Hence I once thought that *groundling* would express its essence. But it is also like *dum,* meaning *blood,* so he could be called *bloodling.* Besides, *adm* is *red,* so he might be a *redling.* All of these are branches from the same stem, and undoubtedly have something in common with the name of mankind, but their ultimate relationship is deeper. It is found in the stem itself, *dm,* from which all spring. This seems to express the general idea of LIKEness. Indeed, *dme* denotes be-LIKE, and *dmuth,* LIKEness. We read in Genesis 1:26; 5:1 that man was made in the *likeness* of God. That is, *aDuM* was made in God's *DMuth.* The letters *DM* form the common stem.

MEDIUM OR INTERMEDIARY

A closer look at some of the words in this family will show that this likeness is a compound, complex similarity, not limited to one object, but linking together others with it. Perhaps a consideration of these will help us to see why it is that man has so many points of contact that he deserves this name. Let us see what the *blood* is like. First of all, it is different from the soil of which the body is composed, and from the air we breathe, for these are a solid and a gas, while it is a fluid. Nevertheless it is *like both,* for it is composed of both, and is the medium between the body and the elements on which it depends for subsistence. It can contact the air through the lungs, and the soil through food, and the digestive apparatus, on the one hand, and it can contact the bodily tissues on the other, because of its *likeness* to all of these. Does not man also fulfill some such function, as a mediator in creation?

The *ground (adume)* also is a sort of intermediary between the hard, rock-ribbed earth, and the air above it. Sun and wind weather the solid stone. Not only does it disintegrate and change to small particles, but it combines with the air to form new compounds which plants can assimilate. Though it is different from the rock and the air and the plants whose roots can find nourishment in its soil, yet it is the *intermediary* between all because of its points of *likeness* to all. In this it corresponds closely to the blood, only in a different sphere. The Hebrew names *blood* and *ground* seem to have a real "scientific" basis, and indicate the vital feature which characterizes them.

Just as the *ground (adume)* is the intermediary between the *inanimate* creation and *vegetation,* and the *blood (dum)* is the medium between *vegetable* and *animal* life, so *man-*

kind (adum) was created to be the mediator between *God* and the balance of *creation.* He will accomplish his mission through redemption in Christ, Who is the great Mediator between man and God. Thus we have a complete series of links of *likeness* between dead matter and the living God in these notable words: *ground (aDuMe), blood (DuM),* and *man (aDuM).* These connect the insensate stone to the living plant, the plant with the animal, and the animal with God.

Now that we have regained the name that God has given us, it may help us to retain it if we will trace the English through the French *homme,* and the Latin *homo,* to the Greek *hom-,* LIKE-, which is used freely in English compounds to express this idea, as in the word *homeopathy.* This, as we know, is based on the idea that *like* cures *like,* that the substance which causes a given symptom or disease in a healthy person, will cure it when given in minute doses. Paul, when the people of Lystra thought he was Hermes and wanted to sacrifice to him, told them that he and Barnabas were *homoiopatheis,* that is, men of *like emotions* as they (Acts 14:15). In that sense we are all homeopathists, for our emotions are like all the rest of mankind. As *human,* however, we are not like our fellowmen only, but have points of similarity to the other realms of creation. It is worth much to grasp this, for only thus can we grasp *why* man is constituted as he is, and *why* he must go through the valley of humiliation to prepare him to fulfill his function in the future glory.

Before we can fully apprehend and appreciate man's mission on the earth we will need to explore the Scriptures on the subject of the human *soul.* This theme is so thoroughly misunderstood that it hangs like a heavy curtain before the revelation of man's future, and hides the glory that will transform this scene of sickness, sadness and disease into a garden of health and delight and life

immortal. So we will pay especial attention to a consideration of the human soul, why man has it, what it is, where it goes in death, and whither it is leading the race in the future. As important as this is in regard to man's terrestrial heritage, it is still more vital in connection with his celestial realm. As it is now, in the blood of the flesh, it cannot have any place in the heavens. There must be a vast change in the human body before mankind can rule in the realms above.

Once we have a vision of man's exalted station above his fellow creatures, when he has taken his place in Christ, the Son of Mankind, many of the riddles of the universe will be solved, and contradictions will disappear. The special enmity of Satan against the race arises from the fact that he is aware of the place God has proposed for mankind, and he is out to hinder it if he can, or, at least, to allow us this exaltation only in subordination to himself. He lost no time in alienating Adam from God, and through him, the race as a whole. Little did he dream that this smart maneuver was a part of God's plan to draw mankind much closer to Himself, and, by the experience of evil, humble man so that he will gladly subordinate himself to *God* when the time comes for him to enter into his proper role as God's mediator to the creation.

The function of the flesh, especially in its mortal state, must be more fully understood, before we grasp the character of our mission. We must be thoroughly humiliated in ourselves before God can exalt us in Christ. Mankind as it is today, self-seeking, proud, detesters of God, can never fulfill its function. It cannot control itself. It is constantly divided by pride and envy and hate, which lead to division and dissension and strife. Can such a corrupt and conflicting company mirror the love of God to His creatures? The only remedy is to let man manifest the fruits of his flesh in such a manner as to bring him down into the dust. Thence

God can raise him up and use him, humble and contrite, to represent Him, and His love, to the whole creation.

After we have fully exposed the futility of mortal flesh we will be able to see the vital value of the *spirit* in the future, and give it the place of supremacy even now, while the flesh is still at work, dragging us down. And it will enable us to look forward with inexpressible joy to that great transforming change, which will rid us of the body of our humiliation and give us a body of glory. It will not only transfigure the saints of this gracious administration from soulish to spiritual, but also from soilish to celestial. Even as our mortal flesh unfits man for his place on earth, so our earth-bound body keeps us from our place in the heavens. What could be more delightful than to explore the details of that grand transformation which will make us, miserable mortals, all that we would be, yes, all that we should be, even in the eyes of God and all His creatures?

A. E. Knoch

THE POWER OF GRACE

My dear brother in Christ: You are in the seventh of Romans. You ought to thank God that you are wretched, for that is the surest indication of the presence of God's spirit. I hope you are near the end of the chapter. The only real deliverance for you is through *grace*.

The idea of "surrender" puts God in a false light. He is not fighting you. *He is for you.* Every time you sin grace abounds. There is no condemnation. *Yielding* is another unscriptural and subtle substitute. It is only a negative side of self help. Turn your eyes away from yourself to Christ and His transcendent grace. Where sin abounds grace superabounds.

The natural inference is that then you can sin all you wish with impunity. So man reasons. It works the other way. The certainty of punishment does not deter from sin, but the certainty of grace does. It is the most powerful of all incentives. Revel in the grace which is in Christ Jesus.

Yours by grace transcendent, ----------

"THAT GRACE SHOULD BE INCREASING"

Question:

The translation of Romans 5:21-6:2 in the Authorized Version is very different than that of the Concordant Version:

That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. (AV)

. . . that, even as Sin reigns in death, thus Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. What, then, shall we declare? That we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing? May it not be coming to that! (CV)

Even as in this passage, thus also in many others, whether due to problems of translation or simply of traditional teaching, most Bible readers do not seem to grasp even the gist of what the apostle Paul is saying. Perhaps I myself am included here, in this common lack of understanding. But I want to learn, so that I might know and understand truth. For now, I would especially appreciate your comments on this portion of Scripture which I have cited above, Romans 5:21-6:2, as well as on other notable passages within Romans 6 such as 6:12-16, and 6:22, 23.

Answer:

One of the difficulties of gaining a proper understanding of these verses which you mention even as of a great many

other scriptural passages, is the presence in such texts of the subjunctive mood, which is a subject with which few are acquainted, as is evident by the usual radical misuse of the words of translation which are indicative of its presence.

In Romans 5:21-6:2, the AV renders one of the two subjunctive verbs inherent here as if it were an indicative, in the phrase, "*Shall* we continue in sin . . . ?" While to the discerning reader, even so, the subjunctive sense of the construction may still be evident, it is clear that not many are discerning readers since the usual interpretation of this passage is, "*Ought* we to continue in sin? God forbid." (This is even as in the common phrase, "*Shall* we say, 'Good night'?", which is rightly understood as meaning, "*Ought* we say, 'Good night'?"). It is claimed, then, that the proper sense of Paul's words here are as follows: "We *ought* not continue in sin. God forbids us to do so." While such a thought is a stark truism indeed, it is nevertheless *not* reflective of what the apostle is actually saying.

The other subjunctive verb of this passage as it appears in the AV, is represented adequately as to its mood by the word "might" in the phrase "even so might grace reign" (5:21), even though, whether in the AV or the CV, most are apt to understand by this word not subjunctive-ness, but the notion of "possibility," in the sense of "perhaps, yet perhaps not," as in the everyday expression, "The weatherman says that it might rain tomorrow."

Since the subjunctive mood is employed in many passages of Scripture and this is so especially in Paul's writings, in order for us to understand what is being said in such instances, we must understand its nature and its purpose, while noting its presence wherever it occurs.

In the Concordant Version, the presence of the subjunctive mood (i.e., "mode" of expression), is indicated by the terms "should" for the future, or "may" for the present (also "might," e.g., Gal.1:4 CV; John 3:17 AV). Unlike

in common speech where "should" is ordinarily used to convey the sense of "ought," and "may" the sense of "permission" even as "might" the sense of "perhaps," in the Concordant Version *none* of these terms *should* be—that is, *ought* to be—thus understood.

Even in cases where it may "make sense" to take them thus (since in many of their usages, it makes no sense at all to take them thus), the application of any such sense to these subjunctive indicators is simply wrong. This is so no matter how desirable, popular, or seemingly appropriate such a sense may be. Even if one's interpretation of any scriptural phrases in which these terms appear—incidentally, on other grounds—*happens to be* reflective of truth (as in the case above concerning the common interpretation of Romans 6:1,2), any such interpretations remain misinterpretations of the texts in question, in which these terms appear.

Instead, in the Scriptures, these words "should," "may," and 'might" are used as verbal auxiliaries indicative of the presence of the subjunctive mood: They are ". . . used, [respectively,] for the future subjunctive, and for the present subjunctive . . . . [Should] *is not used in the sense of an obligation,* ought, and *none of the renderings [in the Concordant Version] should be so construed.*"[1]

Instead of such thoughts as "ought," "permission," or "perhaps," the subjunctive mood conveys the thought of "subjoined-ness" in the sense of *dependency.* It speaks of the dependency that obtains between the existence of a certain thing, and that to which it is subjoined, upon which its existence or occurrence depends. That is, the existence of the dependent thing *results* from the effective agency of that upon which its existence depends. If that upon which the existence or occurrence of something depends *for* its

1. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry "should," p.268.

existence or occurrence is itself certain, then the dependent thing is certain as well.

The subjunctive mood neither expresses nor entails uncertainty. Much less is its existence supportive of the fanciful notion that events spoken of as future events *are* by their very nature uncertain events. It is simply that, in many cases, it is used of things which are "contingent," in the sense of being, *to the human,* things of which it is uncertain whether they will occur. But this is common usage, not essential function. In itself, the subjunctive simply draws our attention to the fact that one thing is subjoined to another, upon which it depends for its own existence.

When speaking subjunctively, we are by no means affirming doubt, much less intrinsic uncertainty. In fact, in cases where something dependent, depends upon something certain, the dependent thing may well be spoken of not only subjunctively as "that which should be occurring," but indicatively as well, of "that which *shall* be occurring." By speaking subjunctively in such cases, however, we gain the advantage of keeping in mind the *dependency* of any certain occurrence or extant entity upon that of which it is the product or result.

DISCERNING THE SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD

Perhaps there is no clearer illustration of the force of the subjunctive mood than the words of our apostle in Ephesians 2:8-10 where he declares: "*For* in *grace,* through faith, are you saved, and this is *not out of you;* it is God's approach present, *not of works,* lest anyone should be boasting. *For His achievement are we,* being *created* in Christ Jesus for good works, *which God makes ready beforehand,* that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:8-10).

In a marvelous figure of condescension, God deigns to bring *us* an "approach present," one consisting of our very salvation itself, a salvation which is "*not out of* works," yet

rather one in which good works are nevertheless *included.* These good works, however, are ones which we perform, not as "self-made" men, but as God's own achievement, as those *being created* in Christ Jesus for good works, ones *which God makes ready beforehand,* "that we should be walking in them."

Our walking in these good works of our salvation depends upon the fact that we are God's achievement. As God's own achievement, granted to us as a gracious gift, God creates us in Christ Jesus for good works, good works which He Himself prepares beforehand for us to walk in. That we should be walking in them—which is to say, indicatively expressed, that *we shall* be walking in them—depends upon our being the achievement of God therein, walking in those good works which He prepared beforehand and has appointed thus, for our future service.

OUR WALK AND NEWNESS OF LIFE

Let us now consider the sense of the words in question, which are, as in the Concordant Version of Romans 6:1, "What, then, shall we declare? That we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing?" The thrust of Paul's question here is as follows: Is it the case, since *Grace shall reign,* through righteousness (which is the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith; *cf* Rom.3:22), *for life eonian* (indeed, through Jesus Christ our Lord; Rom. 5:21), that we, *therefore,* shall be persisting in sin (albeit for the purpose that Grace would thereby only increase)?

Paul answers his own question here by declaring, "May it not be coming to that!" (Rom.6:2; *mê ginomai,* NO MAY it BE BECOMING; *cf* e.g., Rom 6:15; 7:7, 7:15). This is as if to say, "No! Such an idea is not only mistaken, but abhorrent as well." Here is the point: It is not merely that such a terrible outcome *ought* never occur, but that, as a result of the truth of the evangel itself in its influence upon us,

such a terrible outcome *shall* never occur. It is quite wrong, then—if the truth is indeed as Paul declares it to be—to imagine that any failures in our walk are to be accounted for even in part as the result of any fancied "injurious influences" supposed to inhere in such a message.

Lest any man should be boasting in himself (*cp* 1 Cor. 1:29-31; Eph.2:9), it is "in the *grace* of God" (*cp* 1 Cor. 15:10) that those in Christ enjoy a corresponding measure of faithfulness of service. This is because God has *given* them a new disposition and a new walk, which, in relation to the measure of grace granted, accords not with the flesh but with the spirit (*cf* Rom.8:1-4). This is in accord with the identification with Christ granted them by being baptized not only into Christ but into His death as well (Rom.6:3).

"We, then, were entombed together with Him through baptism into death, that, even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, *thus we also should be walking in newness of life*" (Rom.6:4). "Thus you also, be *reckoning* yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom. 6:11). Certainly, in relation to eonian life, ". . . Sin shall not be lording it over you, for you are not under law, but under *grace.* (Rom.6:14). For ourselves, "Grace reigns," and will therefore have its way. Grace reigns "for life eonian" (Rom. 5:21). This is even as to say, "Yet," though the rations of Sin, indeed, are death, let Sin's vile rations be what they will, "the *gracious* gift of God is *life eonian,* in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:23).

THE POTENCY OF GRACE

How glorious to know, are these things concerning the reign of Grace on our behalf with a view toward God's granting us His gracious gift of life eonian. Sin's rations, quite literally, be damned: We are not under Sin, but under Grace!

As to life eonian, it does not matter how terrible Sin's rations may be, but only what God's gracious gift is.

Yet as concerns our walk at present, however, faithfulness remains vital if we would be pleasing to God and enjoy correspondent close fellowship with Him. It is very important, then, as we approach our present service, that we do so in the proper way and spirit, which is to "be *reckoning* yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:11). In thus, rightly, considering ourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, we do not do so categorically (as if our sins could not injure us in any way whatsoever), but relatively and proleptically, in *relation to* our *expectation* of life eonian which we are *anticipating.*

Accordingly, since it is a practical necessity that we should do so, Paul wisely entreats us thus: "Let not Sin, then, be reigning in your mortal body, for you to be obeying its lusts. Nor yet be presenting your members, as implements of injustice, to Sin, but present yourselves to God *as if* alive from among the dead, and your members as implements of righteousness to God" (Rom.6:12,13).

Still, it remains for us to perceive why, beyond this, Paul rightly entreats us thus. That reason—and here is the vital thing—is, "*For* [that is, 'Because'] Sin shall *not* be lording it over you, *for* you are *not under law, but under grace*" (Rom.6:14).

As concerns our present walk, in which, since if the right thing be *done* we must *do* the right thing, we therefore see the wisdom of entreating us to do what is needful unto this end. Still, why entreat *us* to do what is needful here if we in ourselves are but flesh, which is at enmity to God and not able to please Him (Rom.8:7,8)?

The answer is that concerning our walk, there is a marked degree to which even in this regard, Sin *shall not* be lording it over us. And the reason this is so is just one thing: It is *because,* even in relation to our walk, in measure, *we*

are not under Sin! This is to say that, therefore, to this degree, not only shall Sin within us *not* be lording it over us—having its way with us, causing us to sin even as to suffer its terrible consequences—but since we *are* instead under Grace, Grace *shall* be having *its* way with us, granting us heart disposition and efficacious desire to do acts well pleasing to God (*cp* Rom.11:36-12:1; Eph.3:20-4:1)!

As those who under the influence of Grace, are becoming "*concerned* to preside for ideal acts" (Titus 3:8), we are also "*learning* to preside over ideal acts for necessary needs, that [we] may not be unfruitful" (Titus 3:14). "*For the saving grace of God* made its advent to all humanity, *training us* that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon" (Titus 2:11,12; *cp* Rom.1:16: "The *evangel* . . . is *God's power for salvation* to everyone who is believing").

It is simply the case that "those of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together with its passions and lusts" (Gal.5:24), albeit that even the most noble among them do so neither perfectly nor continually. How glorious it is to know that every member of the ecclesia shall in some measure be applauded in relation to his or her service: "So that, be not judging anything before the season, till the Lord should be coming, Who will also illuminate the hidden things of darkness and manifest the counsels of the hearts. *And then applause will be coming to each one from God*" (1 Cor.4:5).

How many times have I sought to make these things known concerning the grace of God both as to our position in Christ and our service in the Lord. Yet it is always at this juncture that I must recall that, having presented them as clearly and forcefully as I am able, it is simply not my job to make them known in the sense of making them understood and acceptable. This is because "*God* makes [His Word] grow up" (1 Cor.3:6,7; *cp* Col.2:3). Still, it is to engage in such endeavors, that God has laid upon our heart; which work, then, we would seek to do. J.R.C.

Contents:

241 Editorial
243 Momentous Parallels
247 Racewide Condemnation and Vivification
257 Disobedience and Obedience
267 Critical Questions Concerning "The Many" and "On Which"
275 All Included in Christ
285 Consequently, Then

NOVEMBER, 2010

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EDITORIAL

THIS ISSUE of our magazine concentrates on Romans 5:18,19, that extraordinary passage of Scripture in which Christ's obedience in following the requirements of God's righteousness is paralleled with Adam's disobedience to the one instruction of God which put a restriction on his soulish pleasure. In what ways are these two diametrically opposite actions alike? They were both single acts of single individuals which, by themselves, radically affect everyone. They take hold on our destinies in directly opposite ways, the act of Christ overpowering that of Adam with superabounding results of righteousness and joy and peace. Nevertheless Christ's act is the same as Adam's act in inevitably affecting us all. What Adam did brings corruption, and what Christ did brings glorious life, but the effects each brings are universal, certain and entirely traced, as the case may be, to Adam or to Christ.

For the most part the articles here are reprinted in abridged form from earlier issues of *Unsearchable Riches.* In fact, the three longest are all from volume twenty-two (1931). They have been invaluable to me in my own studies of Romans, and even where I may have come to different conclusions on certain details, I have been greatly helped by the honest and straightforward adherence Brothers Knoch and Rogers gave to the words and thoughts of the text.

What Paul says about Adam and Christ, about death and life, about sin and righteousness, about all mankind and the many and those obtaining, about grace and gratuity, all of these subjects are highly significant and valuable (even critical) to us as believers.

Yet sadly there seem to be few who find spiritual strength and comfort in these verses. Poor translation is much to blame, and connected with this, a traditional theology which diminishes the glory of God by smuggling in works of law and limitations to the extent of grace.

Was Paul so confused about what he wanted to say in Romans 5:12 that numerous expositors, well trained in Greek, suggest he seemed to lose his train of thought (*cf* the comments concerning "on which," pages 277-280)?

How often do we hear those who claim to honor Christ exclaim as one brother does here: "It is beyond denial that Christ's one righteous act is the basis upon which all humankind will yet be freed from every effect of Adam's offense! (*cf* p.244)?

How many find that the words of Romans 5:18,19 "sparkle like a diamond" (p.247)? How many come away from a consideration of this passage with the following bold and true testimony: "As we passively were constituted sinners thus also shall we passively be constituted just" (*cf* p.266)? Or how many would say the following: "Adam's offense is an inverted silhouette, a shadowgraph reversed, of the sacrifice of Christ. In their main outlines, their outstanding features, they are alike, though as far apart as the poles in moral values" (p.283)?

What do these verses say to you? Do they add significantly to your appreciation of God and His grace as it operates in Christ Jesus? Do they rejoice your heart and instill consolation and assurance even in the midst of a world much afflicted with irreverence and unrighteousness, greed and hate and fear? Will all mankind enjoy justification of life and be constituted righteous because of the One Man, Jesus Christ, and His obedience to the death of the cross? Yes they will!

To God be the glory!

D.H.H.

MOMENTOUS PARALLELS

THE PARALLELS in Romans 5:18, 19 are perfect and momentous in significance. Adam's *one* offense is counteracted by Christ's *one* just award. Adam's disobedience is met by Christ's obedience. The act of Adam actually affects *all mankind*; through his disobedience, his many descendants were constituted sinners. So Christ's work, eventually, must also actually justify *all mankind* and consummate in the multitudes of mankind being constituted just. This cannot be during the eons, hence will not be fully accomplished until after the eons are past, when all are made alive in Christ (1 Cor.15:22). If Adam's offense only gave each one an opportunity to sin, so that some become sinners and others not, then we might say that Christ's work brings justification to all subject to their acceptance. But we must acknowledge that man has no choice in becoming a sinner. *Thus also* will it be through the work of Christ. Both are actual and universal.

ONE AND ALL

Consequently, then, as it was through one offense,
for all mankind for condemnation,
thus also it is through one just award
for all mankind for life's justifying.

Sin has fixed its fangs firmly on every one of Adam's sons. There is no escape for anyone. Sin is not evil theoretical, but actual and practical. It is not presented as a matter of

choice. It is powerful and sovereign. Adam's offense did not merely make it *possible* for men to sin and merit condemnation, it made it *impossible* for them to do otherwise.

We *dare* not refuse to believe that the work of Christ is "THUS ALSO." So that it is beyond denial that Christ's one righteous act is the basis upon which all humankind will yet be freed from every effect of Adam's offense. Truly, God encloses all in stubbornness in order that He may be merciful to all (Rom.11:32). And we may well ask, upon what other grounds could God justify the inclusion of all under sin? In order that He might condemn them? Never! But in order that He might create conditions in which He can reveal His love to them.

It is possible to conceive of the offense as the result of several acts of disobedience. It is possible to conceive of its taking effect in Adam's posterity, only upon their repetition of a like offense. But these suppositions are not true.

On the one hand it was a *single* offense. On the other it had a *universal* effect. "Thus also," with the work of Christ on Calvary. It was a single act. Not His lifelong service, but His death. And its acceptance is not based upon a repetition of a like act by each participant, but is as universal as in the type. Show me one man who is untouched by Adam's offense and I will allow that one man will not share in the grand benefits which Christ's death provides.

THE ONE CONTRASTED WITH THE MANY

For even as, through the disobedience of the one man,
the many were constituted sinners,
thus also through the obedience of the One,
the many shall be constituted just.

This statement explains the previous announcement, because it is introduced by the logical conjunction "for." The emphasis has been upon the single act of Adam and

the resulting condemnation and the single act of Christ and its acquittal as these affect all mankind. Now the contrast is not between one act and all mankind, but between a single human being Adam and Christ, respectively, constituting many sinners and many just.

The Greek *hoi polloi,* is literally "the many." To English ears this suggests the greater part, or the majority. But that this is not the thought conveyed by the phrase is evident from the other occurrences. It is used of the body (Rom. 12:5) and the loaf (1 Cor.10:17). It is not a *majority* of the members which make up the body, but *all*. Yet it is "*the* many" members who make up the one body. The contrast is not between all the members and *many*, but between "*the many*" and "*one.*" Just so in the fifth of Romans. The contrast is not with the "all mankind" of the previous verse. Just as the *many* members means *all* the members which make the one body so here, "the many" includes the all of the previous verse. They are constituted just through the obedience of One. The disobedience of one constituted not only him a sinner, but it included many others, just so the obedience of One constitutes not only Him but many others just.

And we can easily test this conclusion. Adam's disobedience constituted "the many" sinners. How many? Is there any human being (one excepted) who is not included in "the many?" Are not all constituted sinners? Is not this the clear testimony of multitudes of Scriptures? "There is none righteous—no, not one." The contrast then is between one and many. One man was the cause of all our woe: and One Man is the cause of all our weal. A single act of disobedience on Adam's part made many sinners. A single act of obedience will yet make many righteous.

"Are we to suffer, then, for what Adam did?" expostulates the sinner. How easy it is to see the point when it looks like a loophole to escape God's justice!

No, we answer, there is no need of that.

Disabuse your mind of the obstacles you fancy are in the way of becoming righteous. Acknowledge the fact that, so far as you are concerned, it is just as simple to profit by Christ's obedience as to be doomed by Adam's disobedience. Believe God's record concerning that obedience and the highest court in all the universe will acquit you of the entire calendar of crimes should you be guilty of them all.

The destiny of mankind does not depend upon the individual conduct of each one. All are sinners. All deserve to be sentenced. None deserve acquittal. And they are absolutely helpless. No one who acknowledges descent from Adam but must acknowledge, too, that through his disobedience they are sinners. Stubborn facts crowd in on every side to bear witness that cannot be gainsaid—sorrow, sickness, death—and a heart that cannot cease from sin. But what of that?

If Adam alone is to blame for this, then Christ alone will be to "blame" (may He forgive the word!) in the case of those who are acquitted! Just so. What encouragement there is in this! Make your case as bad as you can, O sinner; heap everything on Adam's head! I do the same with Christ. I did not have any chance to show what I could do to make myself what I am in God's sight. Christ did it all and by a single deed.

A. E. Knoch

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RACE-WIDE CONDEMNATION AND VIVIFICATION

ROMANS 5:18 is our present text. It makes some of the clearest and most perfectly balanced statements to be found in the epistle. On the face of them they are perfectly plain and intelligible. There would be no difficulty in accepting them at their face value if they were reconcilable with popular theology. It is significant that many learned and godly men seem not a little fearful lest these words should be understood as they read.

The present writer understands and in a measure sympathizes with the fears of such writers, because for many years he found this text very troublesome and sought in every possible way to bring its very disturbing declarations into harmony with his understanding of some other Pauline statements. Yet, though reinforced by all the glosses and arguments of the most reputable expositors, he found himself at a decided disadvantage in dealing with the questions of simple, honest people. And all the while his conscience and reason gave him the uneasy feeling that he was not treating the language of Scripture quite fairly.

LET GOD BE TRUE

The language itself is crystal clear. Every word sparkles like a diamond. Yet the statements cannot be harmonized with the traditional teaching as to human destiny. Such statements put many readers on the horns of a cruel dilemma. They wish to believe Scripture, but its statements are apparently irreconcilable. So some word or

other must be modified or rejected, with the result that the accuracy of God's Word is questioned by those who assert its full inspiration.

If a mechanic, while assembling a complicated piece of machinery, found parts for which there seemed to be no place or use, he would, if he were wise, conclude that somewhere he had built wrongly, and seek to find where he had erred. He would be assured that he was right only when all the parts were in their proper places and the machine ran smoothly and did the work it was designed to do. Not only would he be gratified with his own work, but he would admire the skill of the inventor and maker. How different is our feeling when we are obliged to discard or alter parts of God's Word in order to make it appear self-consistent! Confidence in that Word is impaired, human judgment is exalted, and theology assumes a superiority over inspiration.

THE EONS OF SCRIPTURE

There are many apparent contradictions in Scripture. The real contradictions, however, are between Scripture and misunderstanding or mistranslation of Scripture. For instance, the present text can never agree with the notion of endless, hopeless punishment of a part of humanity. All who believe in eternal punishment must limit many such statements as those now under consideration. If these statements are true, eternal punishment is not. Every difficulty vanishes as soon as the truth about the eons is known.

Many good translations do not contain the words "eternal" and "eternity." Scripture speaks of ages, or eons, of limited duration. The ages will have a consummation as they had a beginning. The whole drama of human history is unfolded within the ages, during which the movement from creation to new creation reaches the goal of a perfection which neither sin nor death can mar or terminate. The eons are but the temporary stage upon which the tragic struggle between Sin and Salvation for the possession of humanity is enacted. The eons are passing away one by one till the last shall have fled, and with it every vestige of sin and death and all the bitter travail out of which is issuing a glorious and completed new creation. The old is perishing; Christ is making all things new. He will present to His God and Father a delivered and new humanity which lives in God and in which God Himself shall permanently dwell.

What a happy solution of our problem is that which proves the harmony of all Scripture and attests its divine perfection! When the cause of confusion has been found and removed, the worth and fitness of every part is evident. When the truth concerning the eons displaces the error about eternity, judgment and grace are seen to work harmoniously together till each reaches its predestined goal.

ROMANS 5:18

Consequently, then,
As [it was]
through one offense
for all mankind
for condemnation,

THUS ALSO [it is]
through one just award
for all mankind
for life's justifying.

The logical connection between this verse and the lengthy preparatory argument is indicated by the two words **consequently**, **then**. *Consequently* (*ara*) marks the fact that all the steps of the argument, all the statements of similarity and dissimilarity, are now gathered up in a conclusion. *Then* (*oun*) picks up the thread that was dropped at the end of verse twelve and introduces a complete statement of the parallel there begun.

It remains to draw the conclusion, to complete the broken statement of verse twelve, and to show the race-wide application of these facts and forces. As the proposition of

verses 12-14 was a necessary logical basis for verses 15-17, so the facts of both verses 12-14 and of verses 15-17 are necessary to the conclusions of verses 18,19.

THE ALL-INCLUSIVE SCOPE

Consider the comprehensiveness and universality of the declarations before us. They sweep the whole field of human history through all generations in one panoramic view. All limited typical and antitypical eras, with the salvation of an elect few and the judgment and punishment of the majority, are swallowed up in their all-inclusiveness. Just as all humanity in the ages and generations are swept down to death in the current of the stream that flows through one offense, thus also shall all humanity be caught in the current of divine grace and borne on till it receives life and righteousness and rests on the bosom of God.

The correlative terms **as** . . . **thus also** strongly insist on the exact parallel between the statements made in the corresponding members. The first member now takes up the facts already demonstrated and restates them in such an antithetical way that one side of the parallel explains the other. It is just this exact correspondence that proves to be so distasteful to many. They flatly deny the *thus also*, and insist on adding terms of acceptance which entirely destroy all likeness and correspondence.

The whole previous argument, proving that one man's disobedience unfailingly brings death to all men, is gathered up in *as*, and it stands behind the *thus also* demanding a correspondingly universal result. If Adam's offense destroys all men, whatever their knowledge or ignorance of him, then the obedience of Christ should as unfailingly and as unconditionally save all.

It is manifestly wrong to add conditions on one side when there are no corresponding conditions on the other. To take part of verses 16,17 which present a contrast indicated by the words *not as* to disprove a parallel emphasized by *thus also* is to do violence to language, logic, and revelation. Scripture avenges itself upon those who so maltreat it—they cannot receive this most comforting truth in the love of it.

ONE JUST AWARD

One just award (*dikaiōma*) is now opposed to **one offense**. In verse sixteen it was the antithesis of condemnation. There it was a "gratuity" bestowed on certain recipients; here it is one justifying sentence which is the foundation of the conciliation. There it was the actual justification of individuals and ensured their reigning in life; here it is that which channels justification and life. There it was the end; here it is the means. There it was contrasted with condemnation which had resulted out of one to many; here it is opposed to the offense that merited the condemnation. There it was bestowed on a limited number of individuals; here the offense and the *dikaiōma* channel condemnation or justifying to all men without distinction. The offense involves all men including Adam and the *dikaiōma* involves all men, including Jesus Christ.

What, then, is the *dikaiōma*? It is a collective justifying sentence pronounced by God for all mankind on account of the obedience of the One. It is the righteous ground of the conciliation. God has conciliated the world to Himself because in Christ He dealt with its sin and offense. On the basis of the death of His Son He pronounces a righteous sentence over all for whose offenses Christ died. He was given up because of our offenses. Did God thereby achieve anything? That giving up won a just award and a conciliation for all. These are gospel facts which abide whether or not they are accepted or rejected. Man's ignorance and unbelief can never reverse the divine sentence. The transaction of the cross cannot be undone. Peace between God

and man has been declared, the divine justifying sentence has been uttered. It remains to preach this good news for the obedience of faith among the nations.

FOR ALL MANKIND

For all mankind, the first really universal statement since verse twelve, is found in both members of verse eighteen. In verses 15-17, despite the superabundance of grace, the superiority of the gratuity which consists of justification from many offenses, and the consequent reign in life of the recipients, Adam has had the advantage of Christ as to the number of men actually destroyed or saved. Against the many condemned by Adam a comparative few were justified by Christ. In verse eighteen, however, all mankind is equally affected in both cases. There is no "much rather," but the strictest equality.

It seems to be a matter of common honesty to say that the second "all" is just as comprehensive as the first. The collapse of the faith of some saints in the presence of such universal declarations is due to a failure to think of Christ as the Last Adam and so to recognize that His obedience affects the whole race as truly as did Adam's disobedience.

CHRIST AND MANKIND

Christ has a permanent relationship to the whole creation. This is the basis of all other rights and relations. He is the Firstborn of all creation. In the Firstborn the ideal perfections of the consummation of all things were objectified before the mind of God. He is God's prophecy of a perfected universe. The final glory of all creation is through the ages being evolved from Him in Whom the all is created (Col.1:15-17).

All is created in Him. The old creation is "in Him" as well as the new. The "in Him" of the old creation is parallel to the "in Him" of the new creation. While He personally

has introduced the new creation He has not abandoned the old. He is carrying on the universe (Heb.1:3). All is "in Him" as the effect is in the cause. He is the ground, the reason for its existence; it is "for Him." Its life and strength and order and permanence is rooted in Him. As the greater includes the lesser, so the same relation that exists between Christ and creation exists also between Him and the humanity which is a part of that creation. Humanity is from God, through the Son of His love and "in Him." Humanity was in Christ before it was in Adam, for all has been created through Him, He is before all and in Him all things consist, or cohere.

To limit the connection between Christ and mankind to a spiritual relationship deprives Him of the honor which belongs to Him as the Agent, Channel, and Upholder of creation. He sustains abiding natural relationships as real as His spiritual relationships. Had the race never been involved in sin it would have been His as it was God's.

Moreover, it would have been His in a special way. It was created for Him. Its ruin was specially His loss. It was His right as it was His interest to redeem it. The creation stands before God in Him and is related to God through Him. Just as our relation as saints to God is determined by our spiritual relationship to His Son, so as creatures our relation to God is determined by our relation to the Firstborn. All men as dependent creatures are in immediate and vital relation to Him, in Whose hand our breath is and Whose are all our ways. Adam is dead, having left us the legacy of sin and death. Christ lives as Firstborn of every creation, and creation has its being in Him.

ONE DIED FOR ALL

None but the sinless Second Man, Who knew the real offensiveness of sin and had a divine abhorrence of it, could deal with the sin of humanity. If it was necessary that

there should be on behalf of mankind a proper acknowledgement of sin and full consent to the justice of God's penalty by submission to it, no sinful and no private person could make that confession. Jesus Christ did this, not for Himself, nor for believers alone, but for all mankind. His death was not an individual and personal death. "One died for all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14). His death effected the death before God of all humanity. This death was not, of course, the death which Adam brought upon us. It was not for his one offense Christ was delivered up, but for our offenses.

Because all died in His death a just award has been pronounced for all mankind. It has won for all mankind a new relation to God in addition to the marred original relation. The establishment of this new relation is declared in the *dikaiōma* and in the conciliation. Christ has actually brought all mankind into a new, additional relationship to God. The original creature relationship is maintained and a gracious relationship has been established. Christ has secured actual benefits for all as surely as Adam injured all.

LIFE'S JUSTIFYING

For condemnation corresponds to **for life's justifying**. The corresponding phrases should help to elucidate each other. Condemnation is the opposite of justifying. There was a similar antithesis in verses sixteen and seventeen. There the justification assures a reign in life. As condemnation brings death, so justification brings life.

All mankind is condemned. Condemnation follows judgment. Racial death is a consequence, but it is also a penalty which God has mercifully inflicted. What should we think of God, Who is holy and righteous, if He did not pass judgment on what is unholy and unrighteous and offensive to Himself? Not to judge and condemn the marred, the insubordinate, and unfit would be to perpetuate it.

To immortalize sinners would be to "eternalize woe." It is all to God's glory that He has condemned a ruined race. Apart from any question of guilt or innocence He has doomed it as unfit.

The Second Man did not come to patch the old humanity but to make a new one.

Life's justifying corresponds to *condemnation*. *Justifying is dikaiōsis*. The *-sis* indicates *action* or *process*. The strongly active sense of the word fits the process through many generations of applying the collective *dikaiōma* to individuals till all mankind is justified and vivified.

Just as condemnation is to death, so justifying is to life. This is the true antithesis. Sin brings death to the sinner. It does so by the sentence of God. As the link between the offense and the death is God's condemnation, so also the link between the *dikaiōma* and the life is God's gracious justifying of the individual. "Life because of righteousness" is the opposite of "death because of sin" (8:10). Everyone whom God condemns must die and all whom God justifies must live. Christ's mission was to give life to the dead. In Him alone of all men was life: He alone was uncondemned and untouched by death. Life is more than resurrection, for there is a resurrection which is not to life but to judgment.

LIFE FOR ALL

The conclusions of this member are based on the revelation of 15-17. There the superabundance of grace exceeded the needs of the many. In verse twenty grace superexceeds the utmost increase of sin. Such excess of grace, if it be really grace, should lead us to expect salvation for all. Then grace was seen dealing, not with Adam's one offense, but with many personal offenses. But further, the recipients of grace got not only righteousness but life. Such is the life mentioned in verse eighteen. All men shall be justified to

life, but only those who receive righteousness in the present era will reign in life. All are not promised eonian life. Some shall suffer eonian extermination. Life cannot be theirs till their age-long term of punishment is ended.

The grace that justifies to life comes to the race from its Head, the Second Man and the Last Adam, Who is a vivifying Spirit. If He be really another Head, communication of life to His race forms a necessary part of the idea of His headship. His death was the death of all, His obedience procured a *dikaiōma* for all, His resurrection involves the resurrection of all, and all this is equally for all men.

But shall He not actually give righteousness and life to all? Shall the Firstborn of all creation through Whom are all things not make all things new? Shall the Firstborn from among the dead not impart to the remaining dead His own life? Shall not He through Whom all are resurrected vivify all?

All will be vivified in Christ, but each in His own order. Should we not expect the Last Adam, Who is expressly said to be a vivifying Spirit to give life to the dead? Relationship with such a Person involves ultimate spiritual life for the race in real unity with its second Head. Justifying of life is nothing less than the vivification of all mankind (1 Cor.15:22).

The means that God may use at any time or conditions He imposes are not now under consideration. What He has declared is that justification and vivification are for all men. He has inexhaustible resources of judgment and grace and patience. Man's resistance will be overcome. It is as impotent before His grace as before His condemnation. He points to the condemnation and says *thus also* and *much rather*. Shall we believe Him? Or shall we presume to correct and limit Him?

George L. Rogers

DISOBEDIENCE AND OBEDIENCE

(Romans 5:19)

THE Supreme crises of history are centered in the disobedience of the first man and in the obedience of the second. No other acts so affect the race as did these two, because no other men can ever stand in such vital relations to "the many" as they. In the respect that each act affects the character and destiny of the race, they are like each other. But in the character of the acts, the actors, and the destinies involved there is greatest difference. The disobedience and obedience were God-ward acts. These directly and immediately affect the status before God of all mankind. The first put an impassable barrier between God and man and brought man to death; the other removed every barrier and will bring every man up from death and sin to righteousness. Verse nineteen, then, presents the crises, the causes and the consummations of racial sin and salvation.

The comparison now made is no mere repetition of the preceding ones. It confirms and develops the conclusion stated in verse eighteen. One point in the comparison has yet to be made: Adam's disobedience has not been compared with Christ's obedience. These acts are the causes which constitute men sinners or just.

For

EVEN AS	THUS ALSO
through the disobedience	through the obedience
of the one man	of the One
the many	the many
were constituted	shall be constituted
sinners,	just.

EXACT CORRESPONDENCE

The exactitude of the parallel clauses is most striking. The connective *for* indicates that the new comparison is an explanation and a corroboration of the foregoing. It specially affixes the seal of certainty to the concluding words of verse eighteen, for its assertion is that the many shall he constituted righteous, which is something more than justification. It is not only the imputation but also the actual impartation of the righteousness which is inseparable from the new life in Christ.

The correspondences, emphasized by the **even as** and the **thus also,** should never be out of sight. *Even as* is stronger than the simple *as.* It is equal to *precisely as*. It was used in verse twelve, and implied the omitted *thus also.* Unlike that occurrence it is here followed by *thus also.* It is unfortunate that expositors often ignore these emphatic calls to note the exact and studied correspondence in each pair of clauses. It would be impossible for literary ingenuity to construct closer parallels and at the same time predicate acts and issues so diverse in character.

While this statement would be complete and quite intelligible if it stood alone, by its relation to the foregoing argument, of which it is the conclusion, it gains a strength and clarity which makes misunderstanding inexcusable. It differs from the preceding verses in its assertions and omissions. The "much rather," with its superabundant grace, does not appear, because actual results are being considered rather than the means employed. Adam's disobedience is not here regarded as offense calling for condemnation and bringing death. There is no mention of judgment. On the other hand, "the obedience of the One" is not spoken of as grace, or as procuring the just award and the gratuity. The assertions fix our attention on the actual states of sinfulness and righteousness resulting to the many from

the acts of Adam and Christ respectively. The new themes that call for consideration are four, namely, the disobedience, the obedience, constituting the many sinners, and constituting the many just.

THE SIN OF DISOBEDIENCE

The **disobedience of the one man** is the mother sin. Other words have been used to describe this act. It has been called sin, transgression, and offense. In the divine diagnosis of our common disease each of these words presents a distinct phase. *Disobedience* (*parakoê*) is in Greek BESIDE-HEARing. It is refusal to hear the voice of authority. This is manifested by neglect and violation of the command heard. In Adam's case there had been HEARing (*akoê*). He heard another voice also, more loved than God's (Gen.3:17). Adam refused obedience (*hupakoê*), UNDER-HEARing.

The Greek word for *obedience* conveys the idea subjection and deference as our English word does. Disobedience is selfishness in action. It is revolt against God by falsely assuming independence of Him. Disobedience to a command made Adam's sin transgression and offered offense to God.

CONSTITUTED SINNERS

It is *through the disobedience of the one man* that **the many were constituted sinners.** The one man is he, already mentioned four times, through whom sin entered the world. He was the sole instrument in the ruin of the many. To say that "they all participated mysteriously in the offense" is a direct contradiction of the text. They had no participation in Adam's act, nor did each become a sinner "by, as it were, participating in Adam's fall."

Denial of the inspired assertion that Adam alone constituted the many sinners carries with it the denial that

Christ alone will constitute the many righteous. The attack is made on the gospel of God, though the interpreters may not intend it. If I shared in Adam's disobedience I may share also in Christ's obedience. If I share responsibility for Adam's sin I may also have part in the merit of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The language of Scripture here is so simple that we need only cling to it to be safe and sure. To rationalize it is to obscure the facts.

Adam alone was actively disobedient; the many were passively *constituted sinners.* Apart from any active concurrence on their part, and independently of sinful acts of theirs the many were *constituted* sinners. Adam's sinful state became by transmission the actual state of all his descendants. The language forbids us to think they were made sinners by repetition of his sin. They could not share his act or his guilt. Nor were they accounted sinners. They were actually sinners by derivation from the first sinner. The verb is past, indicating that the fact was determined when Adam sinned. Should the last generation of the eon of the eons be born twenty thousand years hence, it will still be a generation of sinners constituted so through the disobedience of the one man.

All men alike are born sinners. They are sinners before they commit sin. This is not sin of act but sin of state. A popular distinction between "sin" and "sins" has much to recommend it. "Sins," which men commit in spite of knowledge of truth, of conscience, reason, law, and gospel, were dealt with in 1:18-3:20. These provoke God's indignation. "Sin" is inbred and inherited. It is not said to provoke God's indignation, having been already judged, and carrying with it a sentence of condemnation. Future judgment will not deal with "sin" but with "sins." Hereditary sin is a better term to describe it than "original sin." With Augustine "original sin" meant that all shared in Adam's original sin. When we reject his theory it is a misnomer

to use his term, though it is quite commonly and loosely used to describe inbred sin. Our inherited moral disability is sin and thus we are constituted sinners.

THE ACT OF OBEDIENCE

Turning to the brighter side of the parallel we are confronted by the comparative term **thus also.** The strong assertions now to be considered are made doubly strong as they stand in relation to the foregoing. The truth of the first member enhances that of the second. All the conviction gained from Scripture, observation, and experience of the truth of the dark side of the parallel is carried forward by the words *thus also.* The first statement is made in order to the second. This is indicated by the *even as.* The first side gives us a measuring line for the second. In spite of all attempts to limit or explain away its clear statement, this last member, like all God's Word, persists. Whenever the theological mists clear away the rock of Scripture is seen standing impregnable. So long as this verse obstinately refuses to vanish at the bidding of great and good but mistaken men we are assured of the complete triumph of the Second Man over sin and all its consequences.

The obedience of the One is the special aspect of Christ's redemptive work that is singled out as an exact antithesis to the disobedience of Adam. Two acts are compared, the one which introduced sin into the race and the one which introduces righteousness. God encountered the first man's rebellious act by an act of a directly opposite character. The obedience is an act, not a process. It is not "the collective obedience of the whole life of Christ" on earth. It is true that in the Levitical requirement the victim must be without blemish, yet an unblemished animal availed nothing for the offerer till it was presented and slain. Christ was indeed without blemish and thus met the requirement of the typical sacrifice; otherwise the offer-

ing up of Himself would be unacceptable and unavailing. His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross climaxed a life of obedience that had involved loss, humiliation and suffering. But His obedience must here be isolated from His holy life. With Adam's act God is comparing an act of obedience without parallel in human history, an act so unique and new that there lay in it the beginning and consummation of the new and perfect humanity.

THE DEATH OF THE CROSS

The obedience of Christ is mentioned in Philippians 2:8. In obedience He went all the length of dying, even dying the death of a condemned criminal. The cross is the central fact in Pauline preaching. Christ Himself looked forward to the death of the cross as the chief aim of His earthly mission. His most conspicuous and costly act of obedience was His voluntary submission to an undeserved death. The obedience that Paul compares with Adam's self-exalting disobedience is His utter sacrifice of Himself in the service of God and man.

Christ's obedient life and His obedience unto the death of the cross must be seen in their essential distinctness from each other and at the same time their essential relation to each other. The distinction and relation is clearly set forth in the meal offering and the bloody offerings. The meal offering sets forth the perfect Second Man. He is in absolute contrast with the first man and all his seed. To the fine flour of the meal offering was added oil and frankincense. This was offered to the priest, who burned it on the altar as a memorial and a sweet savor to Yahweh. It set forth the perfect humanity of the Last Adam, endued and energized by God's spirit, Who when tested by fire yielded nothing but a sweet savor to God. It memorializes an obedient and blameless life on earth which God can never forget.

But the meal offering was bloodless, and without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, no justification, no reconciliation, no access to God. The bloody offerings set forth the way of salvation. The meal offering was a necessary appendage to the burnt offering, as is clearly intimated in the oft used expression, "the burnt offering with its meal offering." The second Man needed to be perfect in life to be acceptable as a sacrifice to a holy God. There is no record of a meal offering being offered without an animal sacrifice, that is, without a soul being poured out unto death.

The refusal of Cain's offering is a protest against any bloodless offering, though it be ever so ideally beautiful. The worshiper could never stand before God without blood shedding. Thus the offerings distinguish in the sharpest way Christ's perfect obedience all His life and His obedience even unto the death of the cross. Scripture nowhere countenances a bloodless salvation. Salvation by character and obedience, even the character and obedience of Christ Himself apart from His cross, is teaching utterly repugnant to the gospel of God.

OBEDIENT TO DEATH

Christ voluntarily submitted to an undeserved death. Obedience even unto the death of the cross is an arresting statement. The collocation of obedience and death is striking. The collocation of death and disobedience provokes no inquiry, because the ration of sin is death. If death is the penalty of sin, it is right that sinners should die, but equally it is wrong that the Sinless should die. Why should the one perfect Man of all history be required to die the worst kind of death? Why should this Man Who always pleased God, Whose obedience was flawless, be forsaken by His God and Father in the hour of His direst need? Why should a life so fragrant with God's praise end in the

failure and disgrace of the cross? Why should God withdraw the light of His countenance from One Who was in that same hour glorifying Him in the supreme act of obedience in the history of the ever obedient Second Man?

Unlike other men, Jesus Christ was not mortal; death had not passed upon Him; He was not under condemnation as a member of a sinful race. His death was not compulsory, but voluntary. And yet it was not suicide, for He had the right to lay down His soul (John 10:18). He was not a cowardly suicide; nor was He a martyr. As an individual Person there was no reason for His death. As Son of God and Son of Man He was ideally righteous and holy. He died because of His connection with a race of sinners. That He knew no sin was the testimony of God and men. He was made sin for our sakes. That is why He died under the curse of God on the cross. He was an offering for sin, and sin has no sweet savor for God. He was identified with sin and a whole race of sinners. God smote sin and turned in abhorrence from the hideous thing which His Son had been made—the sin of the world.

Sin was abhorrent to Him as it was to His Father, yet being personally sinless He obediently took the sin of humanity to the cross for judgment, and He accepted its condemnation. He Who from the beginning enjoyed unshadowed fellowship with His holy Father was to know the distance that sin puts between man and God. He Who loved God as no other man could was to be bruised by Him and feel the stripes inflicted in His righteous indignation. Foreknowing the separation, the agony, the indignation, He was obedient to the death due to a criminal race. The law did not require His death: love required it. The crying need of a doomed humanity required it. How different the disobedience of Adam. He needed nothing to make him happy. Obedience would cost him no pain or loss or effort. Christ's obedience cost Him and His Father

more than heart can imagine. Yet the Father and the Son accepted the suffering by which the government of God and sinners can be reconciled and saved.

Christ's obedience was active alignment with the will of God. The loving will of His Father was to rescue lost humanity. It was obedience in His vocation as Saviour that led Him to the cross. He knew that the will of God is perfect and loving and that there is no right alternative to that will. Doing that will was His master passion. He saw the agony involved in His obedience, His soul shrank from the dread ordeal, and He prayed, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. However, not My will, but Thine be done." Submission can go no deeper.

In that act of obedient submission the Father's name was hallowed and His will done on earth as never before or since, here or elsewhere. For never again, not even in heaven by the Son of God Himself can obedience do more. Voluntary obedience to the death of the cross is the supreme proof of the second Man's absolute devotion to the will of God. He was willing to be condemned for the glory of God, and for the salvation of mankind.

CONSTITUTED RIGHTEOUS

The many, found on both sides of the comparison is, of course, the same. To limit the latter and make it less than the former emasculates the sentence and cuts the heart out of the truth here revealed. Anarchy in interpretation characterizes most of the evangelical commentaries on this whole passage. One asserts that in verse eighteen righteousness is "offered to all" and in verse nineteen "accepted by many," though the text says nothing of offer and acceptance, nor leaves any possibility of choice. Another says: "*The many* is the long line at the head of which stands one man, and *the many* is the line at the head of which stands Another man." And another: "*The many* respectively con-

nected with the heads." Are these two distinct companies? Does not the first many include all in the second many? Were the second many not first constituted sinners? Shall they not be constituted righteous even as they were constituted sinners?

Honesty and ordinary language sense compels belief that the many in both cases is the same company, which is related equally to the first and second Man.

Constituted sinners and *constituted just* are a perfect antithesis, just as condemnation is the antithesis of justification. Those who understand that **constituted just** means "to be reckoned righteous" miss the truth. The many were not accounted sinners, but were actually constituted sinners. Even so they shall be constituted just.

Life and righteousness is in Christ alone. None can be constituted just except by a vital, spiritual union with Him. Christ's original union with man in creature relationship and His later union by incarnation enabled Him to act on our behalf and secure for all an objective righteousness and conciliation. But only by a spiritual union can men partake of His life and righteousness even as we partake of Adam's sin and death by physical, union with him. The spiritual union with Christ which is the theme of the next three chapters, and which is now true of believers only, will according to the revelation we are considering be effected with the many, making each truly just as surely as they were made really sinners.

Were constituted and *shall be constituted* are both passive verbs. As we passively were constituted sinners thus also shall we passively be constituted just. It is not by might nor by power but by God's spirit. The first verb is past tense. Even those yet unborn were constituted sinners as decisively as Adam was. Even so in the process of time the many shall be constituted just.

George L. Rogers

CRITICAL ISSUES CONCERNING "THE MANY," and "ON WHICH"

Question:

Through your literature, I have become convinced of the eventual salvation of all mankind. This is even as you once wrote me personally, saying: "A Saviour is One Who saves, and God is the Saviour of *all mankind* (1 Tim.4:10). God wills *all mankind* to be saved (1 Tim.2:4), and is operating all according to the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). In the end, death will be abolished (1 Cor.15:26), and all will be vivified (1 Cor. 15:22). Thus, at the consummation (1 Cor.15:23b), all will become enjoyers of the glorious, immortal and incorruptible life of which, at present, Christ alone is the Firstfruit (1 Cor.15:23a)—all unto the end, 'that God may be All in all' (1 Cor.15:28)."

I am rejoicing in this great truth, and holding fast to it as well. However, when I attempted to share it with a friend, one of his objections was that while "many" will indeed be saved, this will not be the case concerning all. He makes this claim based on Romans 5:15 and 5:19 where the Authorized Version says "many" (not, "all"), and even the Concordant Version reads simply, "the many":

"For if, by the offense of the one, *the many* died, much rather the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to *the many* superabounds . . . . For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, *the many* were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, *the many* shall be constituted just" (Rom.5:15,19, CV).

Also, in Romans 5:12 where the Concordant Version says, ". . . thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned," what does "on which" mean?

I am hoping you can explain these things to me concerning these two difficult phrases, "the many," and "on which."

Answer:

IN ORDER to answer your question concerning the phrase "the many," I think it will be most helpful to consider these words of Romans 5:15 and 5:19 as they appear within their own scriptural context.

But before we do so, we need to learn (1) what the word "all" means; (2) what the word "many" means; and (3) what the phrase "the many" means. This is especially important since error and confusion abound concerning each one of these expressions.

"All" (considered as a whole, SIMULTANEOUS-EVERY, *[h]apan*) or "every" (considered individually; *pan*, sometimes idiomatically rendered "everything," "everyone," "entire," "all," or "continually [through every]"), means *the highest possible number; none excepted;* the whole or entirety. And, "all" always refers to the entirety *of that which is in view.* Thus, we must first determine the subject in view, and then learn from the word "all" that it is the entirety without exception of that which is being spoken of to which the word "all" refers.

In this connection, it is helpful to note that "all" is in essence an adjective, though it is sometimes used as a noun. For example, in the declaration, "God is the Saviour of all mankind" (1 Tim.4:10), the adjective "all" is the modifier of the noun "mankind": it informs us concerning those of mankind of whom God is the Saviour, declaring unto us that He is the Saviour of them *all.*

Yet in 1 Timothy 2:6 where we read that "Christ Jesus . . . is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all," "all" is

used as a noun, where the actual noun in view is omitted, even though it is elliptically understood.

In all such cases, where the noun to which the adjective "all" refers is implicit, not explicit, even though the noun in view is not expressed, it is nevertheless intended and therefore to be understood. In all such usages of "all," the all that is in view is to be determined either directly from the context itself, or if need be, indirectly from the nature of the case.

In 1 Timothy 2:6 the noun in view, to which the word "all" refers, is "mankind" as appears in verse four, where Paul declares that God wills that all *mankind* be saved and come into a realization of the truth. Thus, when we read in verse six that Christ Jesus is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for "all," we know that all here is in reference to all those whom God wills to be saved . . . namely, "all *mankind.*"

"Many" (*polu*) is a term of contrast; it is the antonym of "few." It speaks of "*many* in number" (that is, of a "*large*" quantity, or "*vast*" number, as opposed to a small quantity or of a group comprised of only a few).

A key point to note concerning the word "many" is that it does *not* mean a large number that is nevertheless less than all. In fact, the term "many" simply does not address the question of whether any certain "many" is or is not inclusive of any certain "all."

The mistaken notion that "many" means "less than all," is derived from confusion over popular usage (in which many confound common usage with inherent meaning), as exemplified in the following statement concerning the gathering of a group or club: "While a great many were in attendance, not all were able to come," in which the sense is that while a large number of group members were in attendance, even so, not all group members were present; some were absent.

Such a statement merely reflects common usage of the words "many" and "all"; in no way does it establish the notion that the word "many" either means or entails "less than all." For example, we could just as well say instead concerning the meeting of a group or club a statement such as the following: "Last night at our meeting, we had a record attendance. A *great many* indeed were present; in fact, *all* members were in attendance; *none* were absent."

"Many" (*polu*), which is an adjective (which if used alone must refer to a contextual or otherwise evident noun), is often translated "vast," as in the case of the "vast" throng gathered together in Luke 8:4: "Now a *vast* throng being together . . . ." In such cases, the Greek word for "throng" (*ochlos*) appears as well.

Yet in the case of Romans 5:15 and 5:19 where *polu,* which is to say, "many" or "vast" (as here, *polloi,* in its nominative, plural, masculine form) appears preceded by the definite article, "the," this phrase (*hoi polloi*) is translated "the many." Likewise, the usage of the definite article, "the," is that of a demonstrative pronoun, which is to say, "this."

Thus the sense of the phrase "the many" is "this vast"; that is, "this vast [company or throng]," which is to say, "*this* vast [company or throng *of which we are speaking*]."

Both in Romans 5:15 and 5:19 "the many," which is to say "the vast" company being referred to, is that of *all mankind* (*cp* Romans 5:12: ". . . thus death passed through into *all mankind,* on which *all* sinned," and Romans 5:18: "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for *all mankind* for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for *all mankind* for life's justifying").

The sense, then, of "the many" in Romans 5:15, is as follows:

"But not as the offense, thus also the grace. For if, by the offense of the one, *this vast* (throng) [namely, all mankind] died, much rather the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to *this vast* (throng) [namely, all mankind] superabounds."

Accordingly, the sense of Romans 5:19, which is said *in response* to what is declared in 5:18, may be accurately elucidated thus:

"[The truth is that] . . . as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. [This is so] *For* [that is, *because*] even as, through the disobedience of the one man, *this vast* (throng) [namely, all mankind] were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, *this vast* (throng) [namely, all mankind] shall be constituted just."

It is not that the truth of verse 19 (concerning "the many," i.e., "this vast [throng]") depends upon the truth of verse 18 (concerning "all mankind"), but that the truth of verse 18 (concerning "all mankind") depends upon the truth of verse 19 (concerning "the many," i.e., "this vast [throng]").

This is to say, what is true as stated in verse 18 concerning "all mankind," is true *because* of what is stated in verse 19 concerning "the many" (i.e., "*this* vast [throng]")! That " . . . as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, [and] thus also [that] it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying," is so, *because* ". . . even as, through the disobedience of the one man, *this vast* (throng) were constituted sinners, [and that] thus also, through the obedience of the One, *this vast* (throng) shall be constituted just."

"on which" all sinned

"Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, *on which* all sinned" (Rom.5:12).

Paul's "even as" here, concerning Adam in what befalls all mankind through the one act of this one man, is in

preparation for his "thus also," which he finally declares in verse 18 concerning Christ: "thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying."

Sin entered into the world through the single act of one man, Adam, when he disobeyed the command of Yahweh Elohim wherein He declared, "But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it; for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying" (Gen. 2:17).

Then, through sin (through this one sin of Adam), death entered into the world as well, "and thus *death* passed through into all mankind, *on which* all sinned."

We may note the literal sense of "on which" where it appears in a passage such as Acts 7:33: "Now the Lord said to him, 'Loose the sandals from your feet, for the place *on which* you stand is holy land'" (Acts 7:33; *cp* e.g., Mark 11:2; Luke 5:25).

But when "on which" is used figuratively, as here in Romans 5:12, it is employed thus in order to show the logical[1] relationship that obtains between initial dying unto death and subsequent sin. The *explanandum* (i.e., that which is to be explained) here is the fact that, following Adam's initial sin, which, among men, *resulted* in universal mortality, *subsequently,* in the presence of universal mortality, universal sinning *then* followed.

Why is this so? The *explanation,* or *reason* (i.e., that which tells us why something exists, or is so) for this phenomenon is given in the figurative words "on which," as

1. "Logic" speaks of methodology of reasoning or argumentation. A reasoned argument is an explanation which shows *why* something said to be so, is so. Explanation answers the question, Why? by providing the answer: "*Because* [or 'on account'] of this: . . . ." A logical explanation of why a second thing exists *subsequent* to a first thing, entails it being the case that the second thing exists as a *consequence* of the first thing. This is called "the necessity of the consequence."

they appear in the phrase, ". . . death passed through into all mankind *on which* all sinned." The figurative picture here is that death is that upon which sin is "seated"; the literal sense of this figure is that it is *on account of* death (i.e., by association, dying, or mortality; "on [*account of*] which") having passed through into all mankind that "all sinned." Indeed, in this respect there is no distinction among men, for "*all* sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23).

This sense is in accord with the entire train of the apostle's thought in verses 12 through 14, which is to show that *all* the evil which has befallen man, has come as a *result* of Adam's one act of disobedience. This itself is declared as a prelude leading to the glorious parallel (*cp* "even as," "thus also") revelation of the evangel (as set forth in verses 15 through 21) that *all* the good which the evangel reveals which comes to us through Christ, comes to us as the *result* of His one act of obedience to the death of the cross.

It is both unreasonable and contrary to the context to suppose that Paul mentions merely incidentally that our sinning follows mortality, that is, that it is simply *subsequent* thereunto, while at the same time insisting that it does *not* follow *consequent* thereunto, that is, as the consequence of our mortality, thus serving as the *explanation* of our engagement in sin.[2]

Rather, the entire tenor and force of Paul's argument in Romans 5:12-21 entails that the words "on which" be

2. The idea conveyed by the Authorized Version rendering here is even worse still, and simply absurd: ". . . and so death passed upon all men, *for that* [i.e., because] all have sinned." The idea asserted here is that, *because* of our *present* sins, *prior to* our present sins, mortality was *first* visited upon us, as a punishment for our sins yet to come, ones which we had not as yet committed, and, according to the received doctrine of free will, ones which perhaps we would never commit. It may be that few if any seriously believe this, but in any case these are the entailments of what the Authorized Version declares.

understood elliptically, in the sense of "on account of which," that is, *because* of which.

FURTHER SIGNIFICANT PASSAGES

"On which" (*eph [h]o*) is used figuratively in a similar way to its usage in Romans 5:12 in the remaining Pauline texts as well in which it appears:

"What fruit, then, had you then?—[lit.] *on which* you are now ashamed, for, indeed, the consummation of those things is death" (Rom.6:21).

The rotten fruit of our sins of former days in which we followed fast after sin, is fruit "on account of which" we are now ashamed.

"For we also, who are in the tabernacle, are groaning, being burdened, *on which* we are not wanting to be stripped, but to be dressed, that the mortal may be swallowed up by life" (2 Cor.5:4).

It is on account of the sufferings of our present bodies ("on account of which") that we are not wanting to be stripped even of such life as we have at present, and also want to be dressed in the glorious new body which God has promised us when we are vivified.

"Not that I already obtained, or am already perfected. Yet I am pursuing, if I may be grasping also that [lit.] *on which* I was grasped also by Christ Jesus" (Phil.3:12).

In spirit, even in his present career, Paul was pursuing that lofty goal of the resurrection-life to come. This is that also "on account of which" he was grasped also by Christ Jesus.

"Now I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that at length, for once your disposition toward me blossomed, [lit.] *on which* you were disposed also, yet you lacked occasion" (Phil.4:10).

It was on account of ("on [account of] which") the Philippians' disposition toward Paul having blossomed, that they had begun to be sensitive to, even as kind and generous toward their apostle. J.R.C.

ALL INCLUDED IN CHRIST

SIN and suffering and death came through the single offense of one man because all humanity was generated by him; so salvation comes through the solitary sacrifice of our Saviour since all were created in Him. God's method of salvation is *inclusion*, not *substitution.* Christ does not take the place of each sinner of the race, as though He were a mere man. He displaces Adam, and His work affects all, even as Adam's has done. He is the second Man, as though none had intervened between Him and the first. He is the last Adam, in Whom there is a new humanity, which will be blessed by His one sacrifice, even as the old humanity was doomed by Adam's single transgression.

The *why* of salvation may be answered by a single word—*love.* God saves because He loves. The *how* may also be explained by one word—*sacrifice.* But thoughtful saints are not satisfied with so summary an explanation. The further question arises, *How does sacrifice save?*

THE INCLUSION OF ALL

The *method* of salvation has proved a standing puzzle to expositors as well as to the inquiring student of the Scriptures. Why did Christ die, and how can that sacrifice effect the reconciliation of all? The solution lies in a closer acquaintance with Christ and His relations to God and to creation before He undertook the work of redemption and deliverance. As the Son of God's love, all was created in Him and through Him and for Him. Hence He

is closely related to creation apart from and prior to His sufferings and sin.

It seems difficult for us to associate Christ with aught else than redemption. The great truth that He is the Firstborn of *creation* seems to have vanished from the consciousness of Christendom. Yet it is vital to an understanding of deliverance.

The relation of the Son to creation is expressed by the title *Firstborn.* This is elaborated by a series of prepositions, *in, through, into* or *for,* and *before* (Col.1:16,17). These express the various aspects of His connection with creation, apart from sin or sacrifice. We are accustomed to think of this as God's universe. We should include Christ, for it is created in, through, and for Him. This is the basic truth which explains the manner of its deliverance. Its method cannot be understood unless first we see that the Saviour is not a distant, disinterested Victim, but as close of kin as could possibly be, apart from sin.

It is desirable to have a name for Christ as the One in Whom all was created. English has two words for *progenitor,* seeing that *procreator* has the same sense. We suggest that progenitor be applied to Adam as the generator of the race, and Procreator be reserved for God's Son as the One in and through Whom creation was effected. Then we can state our case clearly and succinctly thus: *As Adam, the progenitor of humanity, by one selfish act, involved it in unutterable woe, so God's Son, the Procreator of all, by one sacrifice, involves all in ineffable blessing.*

During the eons this is reserved for an election, who are redeemed through faith. All are not made alive *in* Christ until death is abolished at the consummation (1 Cor.15:26).

ONE FOR MANY

How can *One* Man settle for the sins of so many? This is, perhaps, the chief problem in the minds of many who

stop to think about the matter. It is evident that no mere man can die for another's sins, for he is doomed to death for his own. Nor could a sinless man (if such there were) take the place of the race simply because he has no sin of his own. That would keep him from perdition on his own account, but would not save anyone else. It is evident that Christ's sinlessness was not sufficient to make Him a sacrifice for all. He must be more than spotless to be adequate.

Let us consider our inclusion in Adam in connection with sin. We know that his transgression brought in death. He became mortal. His life became a slow death process. This he has passed on to us. Hence we also sin. It is evident that we were involved in Adam's judgment. If that had been different it would have affected us. If the question of sin had been settled while we were still in Adam we would have profited by it. Let us suppose that, through Christ, Sin had been completely repudiated while we were still in Adam. Then we would all have been saved in him. Here we have a clear illustration of how one can involve all. Adam did not act as a substitute for each of us in sin nor could he have done so if he had brought salvation. It is because we were and are included in him, that his fortunes affect ours.

DEATH PASSED INTO ALL

It is a mistake to suppose that Adam transmits sin. In his case death came through sin. In the case of his descendants, sin comes through the operation of death. The process of dying, due to a lack of vitality, is transmitted by generation, and this leads to sin. Romans 5:12 should read "*death* came through into all mankind, *on which* all sinned." Men do not sin because of the presence of some esoteric "principle" within them, but because they are deficient in vitality, because they are mortal, undergoing a process of corruption. Human nature, or instinct, and

conscience, are not sinful. They may be stifled by sin, but they are arrayed against it (Rom.1:26; 2:14,15,27). This is the key to the cure of sin.

Adam cannot save, for he became a sinner. However, to help us realize the place of Christ, we will suppose that he was sinless, and that sin came in some other way. Can we imagine how Adam would feel if he saw his progeny suffering and sorrowing in sin while he himself is exempt? Is it possible that he would not make some effort to deliver his offspring? The question is, would he have the right to stand for all? Could he alone shoulder the responsibility and deal with sin for the whole race? He surely could. If, while the whole human family was in him, he affected all for woe, it is evident that he may also effect its weal if he is able. This is the key to our difficulty. The fact that sin entered humanity by one man shows that its exit also may be through One. The first man contained the race. The second Man also; at one time, contained creation in Himself.

ONE DIED FOR ALL

Because creation was once in Him, as mankind was in Adam, the Son of God has the right and the responsibility to stand for all. The apostle reasons that the death of Christ affects all. "If One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14). Certain it is that Adam's one act has affected us all. If Another, Who included the race within Himself, acts so as to countervail and overwhelm Adam's sin, that must also eventually affect all.

There is nothing immoral in a Sinless One suffering *for* the sake of a sinner. It is utterly contrary to all righteousness for Him to suffer as a substitute or instead of a sinner. Adam did not sin as our substitute, but He sinned for us, or on our behalf. So Christ suffered for all. As all were in Him in the beginning so they are all seen in Him on Golgotha.

CHRIST MADE SIN

As Adam is entirely unable to save those whom he generated, it devolves on his Creator, Who, not being weakened by sin, is able to cope with it, to conquer it for all. Thus it is that the Son of Mankind came down from heaven to involve Himself in the sin of the race in order to save them from it. Until the cross, He was sinless, but there He was made to be sin itself, with a view to its repudiation at the end of the eons.

We are all suffering as a result of Adam's sin. We realize this through sad experience. It is not necessary to reason it out in order to prove it true. It should not be impossible, then, to conceive of the opposite. If Adam had achieved some great deed for Yahweh, not merely just or neutral, but excessively meritorious, more so than his transgression was bad, and God had rewarded him for it by multiplying the abundance of his vitality, would he not have transmitted this to us, his posterity? Life may be imparted as well as death. Life may be transmitted, even as death has been.

Moreover, if Adam should do this deed long afterward, let us say at the time that Christ suffered, then all of his posterity from that point would benefit. Would that be just to his previous progeny? Seeing that his future offspring are blessed merely because he is their progenitor, it would be necessary to make it retroactive, for he is progenitor of all. Superabundant life would come to all of his race, merely because they were once in him.

In a figure we have transferred all of this to Adam. It is not at all true of him, but it is of Christ. If sin and death and corruption can come through one man, then righteousness and life and incorruption can come through Another, provided that He also included the race in Himself. If we endure sin's penalties because of one sin we may also enjoy the awards of one act that exceeds the demands of right-

eousness. If the act that brought in sin was in no way the equal, in duration or quantity, of the results which flowed from it, there is no reason why the act which brings in righteousness and blessing should be commensurate, in duration or quantity, with the infinite fruitage which follows it.

As an aid in comprehending the difference in magnitude between Adam's act and Christ's sacrifice, let us consider the rivers of blood which flowed from the veins of innocent animals, merely to set forth His supreme sacrifice. There is nothing trivial here. Millions of animals yielded their lives simply to recall to mind the act that saves. Each one of these sacrifices was a far more serious affair than that which took place in the garden. Adam destroyed insensate fruit by eating it. The priests destroyed a sentient animal of much greater value and higher organization, simply to suggest a picture of Christ's sacrifice.

I do not think we have a right to expatiate upon the sufferings of these animals. I do not believe that it is God's purpose that they should suffer, even to portray His passion. A special method of killing was provided, so that they should not suffer. This consisted in draining out the blood at once. There is no sensation where there is no blood. Soul, or sensation (not life), is in the blood. Animals properly sacrificed do not suffer much. But the blood was not drained from the great Victim until after His sufferings were over. He suffered beyond our power to comprehend.

ROMANS 5

The true formula of God's method of salvation is given us in the fifth chapter of Romans. It may be arranged in a variety of ways, thus:

Adam's act *is to* Christ's act *as* Adam's effects *are to* Christ's effects.

Adam's act *is to* Adam's effects *as* Christ's act *is to* Christ's effects.

Christ's effects *are to* Christ's act *as* Adam's effects *are to* Adam's act.

This formula, for it is really only one, is worthy of our most earnest meditation. Our minds are unable to compute the staggering total of human woe. The fruit of Christ's travail is the unknown quantity which we wish to apprehend. How shall we attain a true estimate of the effects of the sufferings of Christ? *By comparing them with the pleasure of Adam.* The eating of the forbidden fruit gave Adam a micrometric measure of agreeable sensations. Compare this with the sufferings of the cross, physical torment for three long hours, spiritual agony due to God's withdrawal, all raised to the highest degree by the exquisite sensibilities of the Victim and His previous experience of divine glory and pleasure.

DISPARITY IN EFFECTS

As much more as Christ's sacrifice surpasses Adam's act in its quantitative values, so *much more* will be the measure of its effects over those of Adam's sin. As a result human sin dwindles down into a trivial affair *compared to* the blessings which are due from the cross of Christ. Let no one misunderstand me. I have suffered agonies in the last few years. As I write I am in pain. I do not minimize human sin or the suffering which it entails. But I do magnify the work of our Saviour. There is not much danger that my readers would believe me if I should say that, in the absolute sense, sin's effects are trivial. Not many are really deluded as to that. But, great as sin's havoc is, the happiness to come will dwarf it into insignificance.

This is best realized when we try to expatiate on the delight which came to Adam while he ate the offending fruit. Hardly anyone has ever thought of that. It seems of so little consequence. Yet it is the only *pleasure* which came to him in introducing sin. It is the only act which we can logi-

cally compare with the sufferings of Christ. It must sustain the same relation to it as the sufferings of humanity sustain to the bliss brought by His sacrifice. The quantitative difference between Adam's act and that of Christ is enormous. One is almost the least of pleasures, the other the greatest of agonies. So the ravages of sin will appear to us in the future bliss. They will be but light afflictions compared with the tremendous weight of blessedness which will come from the accursed cross.

POINTS OF CORRESPONDENCE

Ultimate reconciliation was first in the heart of God. There never would have been any estrangement without it. Therefore *enmity was introduced in a manner closely corresponding with the way it is overcome.* Because salvation was planned to be the great achievement of the Son of God's love, the One in Whom creation first came into being, therefore sin was planned to reach the race through the failure of the one in whom it was created. Adam's offense is an inverted silhouette, a shadowgraph reversed, of the sacrifice of Christ. In their main outlines, their outstanding features, they are alike, though as far apart as the poles in moral values.

We may suppose that sin could have been introduced in a different way. It might have been limited to Adam, and each of his progeny might have been tested as he was, so that it would have been an individual failure. Adam might have had a considerable progeny before his transgression, who would have been free from the effects of his offense. So the race might have been broken up into groups or units. But God did not arrange it so. Sin must enter through *one* man because it was to be settled through One. The relation between Adam and his descendants must correspond to that which existed between God's Son and creation. Both could act on behalf of all who had been in them.

THE DEATH OF THE CROSS

Christ emptied Himself of the form of God for the express purpose of becoming the Sacrifice for sin. Sin involves suffering and death, hence He took a mortal form, in which alone these could be endured. During His life and ministry He suffered from contact with the sins of others. But it is evident that men could not make Him to be sin without the aid and consent of God. In all their hatred He retained the smile and confidence of His Father, until He deliberately allowed Himself to be placed under the curse of the cross.

The key to the sacrifice of Christ lies in the *manner* of His death. Had He been stoned, according to Jewish custom, He would not have borne the sin of the world. God could not have made Him to be sin. But, because He was gibbeted, in Roman style, He came under the curse of Deity. "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree" is God's own mandate, made to fit this very case. This is what changes the whole scene from a martyrdom to a Sacrifice. It is *God's* act in forsaking Him on the cross, which constitutes the basis of our salvation.

In conclusion, let us look at God's salvation from the divine standpoint, ere sin had entered the scene. Since He is Supreme, sin could not insinuate itself apart from His purpose. Since sin is to be introduced to form a background for the revelation of His grace and love, He would surely provide for its control and conquest before it is allowed to play its part. This was done when *all was created in the Son of His love.* If men were logical, this statement alone would absolutely guarantee a universal reconciliation. Given a *God* worthy of the name, and a creation conceived in His *love,* the concept of an eternal torment is a noxious nightmare. Even annihilation is utterly subversive of His deity or a direct denial of His love. Both death and

suffering must be temporary and serve His purpose, or else He is a hateful and impotent fiend, a fool who cannot satisfy his own affections.

God's method of salvation was inaugurated long before men were lost. Later on, when sin was introduced, the process was copied from the earlier mode of salvation. In effect God provided the manner and means of salvation before there was any need for a Saviour. He operated through only two, His Son and the head of the human race. First He created all in His Beloved—which assures their ultimate weal—and later He puts all mankind in Adam—which involves their temporary woe. Their inclusion in Adam made them partakers of the effects of his offense. Their earlier inclusion in the Son involves them in the benefits of His sacrifice. The details of the application of His salvation during the eons should not obscure the universal ultimate, when the eons are over. All were in Adam, and are lost. All were in the Son of His love and shall be saved.

The key word is *in,* or *inclusion.* If anyone was not in Adam he is not a sinner and needs no salvation. If anyone was not in the Son of His love he will not be saved. But, since *all were* created in the Beloved, so long as my mind retains its sanity I shall assert that God Himself will lose His deity if He cannot satisfy His own affections by delivering those on whom His heart has been fixed since the very dawn of creation. May God Himself saturate our very being with the triumphant truth that *He is love, in creation* as well as in redemption. Creation was not the act of a neutral, insensible Power, without aim or object, but the achievement of a heart-hungry Father, seeking to satisfy the longings of latent love, Who first assures the salvation of His creatures ere He lost them for a time, that they might discern the depths of His affection and learn the lesson of His love.

A. E. Knoch

CONSEQUENTLY, THEN

THE SUPERABUNDANCE of the grace of conciliation for us who are enemies comes through the One, Jesus Christ. The gratuity of the righteousness of justification for us who are sinners comes through the One, Jesus Christ. And the reigning in life which is for us who obtain this grace comes through the One, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:17). Justification in God's sight and peace toward God and a life of vitality and purpose directed to God's glory, come about through one act of faith and obedience of the One, Jesus Christ.

The words "through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom" were the connecting link between Romans 5:11 and 5:12, and so also the words "through the One, Jesus Christ" in verse 17 are the connecting link to Romans 5:18,19. What the evangel says about us who are believing is joined to what the evangel says about all mankind by what it says about the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is not simply that because we have obtained God's grace, therefore all will obtain it. Rather it is because we have obtained it *through our Lord Jesus Christ* that it is certain that all mankind will obtain righteousness and peace and life to the glory of God. It is in light of Who Jesus Christ is and what He has done that all mankind will be brought into life's justifying.

There cannot be only a partial salvation when it is the work of Jesus Christ, Who came into the world to save sinners (Rom.5:8; 1 Tim.1:15). For God's righteousness to be made manifest it must take into account all the sins of all mankind (*cf* Rom.3:9-26; 5:16).

The evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ has no clauses in fine print which could deny the efficacy of the cross and the certainty of the benefits that were gained there and of their ultimate application to all the descendants of Adam.

Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just. (Rom.5:18,19)

CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS

The evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, tells us of God's powerful work of salvation from the great evil of death and sin. And what it says about Christ has important parallels with what has come upon humanity because of Adam's one offense. Just as one man's single act of disobedience and offense has drastically affected all mankind, *thus also* the One righteous and obedient act of the One Man, Jesus Christ, vitally affects all mankind. And just as the wrongs performed and suffered by humanity originated through one act of one man, thus also all that we long for, righteousness, peace, health, wisdom and worth and happiness, all that is good comes through One act of One Man. That Man is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and that act is His death, followed by His resurrection.

Jesus our Lord . . . was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying. (Rom.4:25)

Christ died for us (Rom.5:8). His blood was shed for the justification of sinners (Rom.5:9). And the death of God's Son was the means through which God conciliates those at enmity to Him (Rom.5:10,11).

This operation of faith and obedience is for all mankind, leading upward to the state of life which itself is righteous and in which all will be constituted righteous (Rom.5:18,19).

This is good news, and all its goodness and glory comes about solely through the One, Jesus Christ.

JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD

It is a matter of relationship. When we recognize Jesus Christ as the Son of God we recognize a high and unique relationship between Jesus Christ and His God and Father. When we recognize Jesus Christ as our Lord, we recognize His position over us as Master. But this relationship as it is made known in the evangel is much broader and higher and deeper. All of us were created in Christ (Col. 1:16). When He died all died (2 Cor.5:14).

The One Who is our Lord does not stand outside as an alien to the human race. He stands in relation to us as Adam stands, only much more vitally, for Adam is like us in having his origin in Christ. He is primary to humanity. Truly the evangel is not simply a message concerning our salvation and justification and expectation. It concerns God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. D.H.H.

REPOSING IN CHRIST

Carl Stark of New Baltimore, Michigan, age 93, passed away on September 26. Brother Stark was a sincere and thoughtful believer with whom we enjoyed fellowship on a number of occasions here in Southern California.

Fred Hansen of Santa Maria, California, age 82, died on December 3. Fred is survived by his wife Gwen, the granddaughter of A. E. Knoch and the daughter of Ernest and Alberta Knoch, by his three children, Karen, Cheryl, and Ken, as well as by many grandchildren. For many years Fred was a member of the board of directors of the Concordant Publishing Concern. A career math teacher, Fred was regarded not only as an outstanding instructor, but more especially as a mentor and example. Fred was a patient and kind brother in the Lord, beloved by many, including this writer. J.R.C.

INDEX TO VOLUME 102

Baptisms, The Various . . . 245
Baptized into Christ . . . 253
Christ and Paul . . . 51
Concordant Studies . . . 147,154,207,229,245
Devotional . . . 51
Evangel of God, The . . . 8
Evangel of Our Salvation, The . . . 11
Evangel of the Faith of Christ, The . . . 269
Expectation Reserved for Us, The . . . 99
Faith *of* Christ or Faith *in* Christ . . . 272
From Righteousness to Righteousness . . . 27
God's Evangel Concerning His Son . . . 8
God's Power for Believers . . . 259
Grace, and "The Ration of Sin" . . . 66
Grace that Reigns, The . . . 173
Grace that Superexceeds, The . . . 165
Grace Versus Sin . . . 155
"Honor Your Father and Mother" . . . 57
Human Soul, The . . . 37
"Imperceptible" or "Eternal" . . . 147
In Grace and Out . . . 229
Justification by Death . . . 7
Law and Justification, The . . . 207
Mission of Mankind, The . . . 37,74,107,125
Notable Effects of God's Own Righteousness . . . 11
Obituaries: H. Fisk 287, C. Johnson 56, W. Williams 287
Our Celestial Change . . . 107
Our Happy Expectation . . . 99
Overwhelming Grace . . . 181
Paul to the Romans . . . 27,85,165,173,219,259
Paul's Evangel . . . 281
Questions and Answers . . . 57,194, 269
Righteousness Revealed in Grace . . . 194
Sin Reigns in Death . . . 154
Slavery of Sin, The . . . 281
Soul not Immortal, The . . . 74
Studies in Romans . . . 155,253
Supremacy of Spirit, The . . . 125
Through the Obedience of the One . . . 85
What, then, shall We be Declaring? . . . 219
Words of Faith . . . 181

Contents:

2 "His Matchless Worth"
3 Editorial
7 Justification by Death
8 God's Evangel Concerning His Son
11 Notable Effects of God's Own Righteousness
27 From Righteousness To Righteousness
37 The Human Soul

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For God and His
Word

VOLUME 102

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and
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His Matchless Worth

Come, let us sing the matchless worth,
And sweetly sound the glories forth,
Which in the Saviour shine;
To God through Christ our praises bring,
The song with which the heavens ring,
Now let us gladly join,

How rich the precious blood He shed,
Our ransom from the guilt so dread
Of sin against our God!
How perfect is God's righteousness,
In which unspotted, beauteous dress
His saints have always stood,

Great are the offices He bears,
And bright His character appears,
Exalted on the throne,
In songs of sweet, untiring praise,
In solemn hymns and joyful lays,
Make all His glories known!

O, soon the happy day will come
When we shall reach our heavenly home,
And we shall see His face:
Then we our Saviour evermore
Shall praise and worship and adore,
And celebrate His grace,

Adapted from Samuel Medley,

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JANUARY 2011
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TWO

EDITORIAL

WRITING to the Corinthians about the same time as he wrote his epistle to the Romans, Paul thanked "God, Who . . . makes us competent dispensers of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, for the letter is killing, yet the spirit is vivifying" (2 Cor.3:6). He termed this work of dispensing "the dispensation of *righteousness*" in contrast to "the dispensation of death, by letters chiseled in stone" (2 Cor.3:7-9), given to Israel at Sinai. Concerning this ministry of dispensing an evangel centered on the theme of righteousness, the apostle added: "Therefore, having this dispensation, according as we were shown mercy, we are not despondent. But we spurn the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor yet adulterating the word of God, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in God's sight" (2 Cor.4:1,2).

In accord with this service of dispensing a message of righteousness, Paul introduced himself to the saints in Rome as "a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, severed for the evangel of God (which He promises before through His prophets in the holy scriptures), concerning His Son . . . Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.1:1-5). He was eager to bring this evangel to those in Rome, "For," he explained, "not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well. For in it *God's righteousness* is being revealed, out of faith for faith, according as it is written: 'Now the just [or, *righteous*] one by faith shall be living'" (Rom.1:15-17).

Our first thought about Paul's dispensation of righteousness would probably be that he was referring to the message of justification. That certainly was a key element of his teaching on the subject of righteousness. Yet in Romans where Paul presents the evangel of God in detail, before he expounds on the theme of justification he points to the righteousness of God. First of all he tells us there is a revelation of "God's righteousness" in the evangel (Rom.1:17). Then he tells us that this revelation of God's righteousness is "out of faith," which corresponds to his announcement in Romans 3:21,22, that the manifestation of God's righteousness is "through Jesus Christ's faith."

It is only after he speaks of his message as a revelation of God's righteousness, and then makes it clear that this manifestation of God's righteousness is channeled through Jesus Christ's faith, that he comes to the matter of righteousness as it relates to our faith ("for faith," "on all who are believing"). Justification is firmly established by the righteousness of God as it is revealed through the faith of Jesus Christ.

It is most beneficial to our faith and present living that we perceive and hold to the primacy of the revelation of God's righteousness in the evangel of God which Paul was dispensing. We see the righteousness of God in His giving of His Son for sinners. We see it in the just act of Christ in dying for sinners, indeed for all mankind. And, with God's righteousness in view, and with Christ's righteous work of faith and obedience in dying for sinners in view, we are brought to an appreciation of the righteousness of justification.

As in our last magazine, which centered on Romans 5:18,19, we present further thoughts on these verses in this issue, dwelling especially on what they say about righteousness. Brother Knoch's brief reminder of the essential relationship between justification and Christ's death follows

this editorial (p.7). Then my article entitled "God's Evangel Concerning His Son" (p.8) presents a survey of the various ways in which this evangel is expressed in Romans 5.

After this, in more extensive studies, Brother Coram and I offer somewhat new considerations on the Greek word meaning JUST-*effect* as it is used in the Scriptures, but especially in Romans 5:16 and 5:18. Some remarks differ in certain respects from those of Brother Knoch and Brother Rogers in our last issue, yet the intent is to build up and not tear down. Of this we may be certain: God's righteousness permeates the achievement of justification through the death of His Son. And thus it is made manifest.

Some of the problems involved with the translation of the Greek word meaning JUST-*effect* were discussed by Brother Knoch in the *Unsearchable Riches* editorial for March 1953, as follows:

"ALTHOUGH the making of the uniform sublinear was a tremendous and tedious task, the idiomatic version, in which English *usage* had to be considered, was much more trying. We were exceedingly desirous of translating all the key words connected with justification uniformly, but English usage calls for *two* stems, *just* and *right,* so we had to use both in order to distinguish between *just*-ice and *right*eousness. But the form JUST-*effect* cost us the most time and trouble. There seemed to be no question as to the force of the Greek suffix —*ma,* for it changed JUDGE into judg*ment,* or *sentence,* the *effect* of JUDGing. So we had to find some expression to give the *effect* of JUSTing, just as the suffix —*sis* expresses the *act* of JUST-ing, that is, *justifying.*

"But there was no English word to express this. Connected with the law, on God's side it referred to His just *statute* (Luke 1:6; Rom.1:32; Heb.7:1,10). On the human side it seems best expressed by just *requirements* (Rom. 2:26; 8:4), and as the *effect* of righteousness in the saints by

just *award,* either as a gratuity (Rom.5:16,18), or for conduct (Rev.15:4; 19:8). In the last instance we have a helpful figure, showing that the effect of just actions was graphically illustrated by the clothing of clean, resplendent cambric, which was *awarded* to the bride for her just conduct.

"Since the version was first issued we have made many efforts to improve this, but we have not found anything better."[1]

Since there seems to be no single English word corresponding to this Greek word meaning JUST-*effect,* the problem in providing an idiomatic translation is not so much that several English combinations of words are required, but in deciding what particular combination is fitting for any particular appearance of the Greek word. The best approach for the English reader is to consider every occurrence of the Greek term in its own context. This is the "concordant" method of studying and translating.

The closing contribution in this present issue of our magazine is a reprint of A. E. Knoch's article entitled, *The Human Soul,* first published in volume 36, pages 77-88. We can never truly see the seriousness of death until we see what the Scriptures teach about the soul. Clarity of understanding here opens up clarity of appreciation for the evangel.

We want to know what God says. But this is not for the sake of knowledge itself, but rather for the spiritual blessings that come along with a grasp of truth. The better we understand the evangel which speaks of God's righteousness manifested through the faith of Jesus Christ, the more our love will grow and our joy and peace will increase, and the more truly our reliance will be placed on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind.

D.H.H.

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.44, p.49.

JUSTIFICATION BY DEATH

A SINGLE MISTAKE, a single sin, cannot be tolerated by a holy God, no matter if it is involuntary. Even if God provides a ransom, a redemption, a pardon, or justification, it must be based on *death.* Let us never minimize the seriousness of sin. Nothing less than the *death* of God's Anointed Himself can put it away.

We had no choice or chance when it comes to sin, not even as Adam *seemed* to have had (although he also was carrying out God's intention). *All* humans are sinners because of Adam's transgression and the *dying state* which he transmits to every one of his descendants (Rom.5:12). So also is justification. All will eventually be justified (Rom.5:18), not by their own acts, or by law keeping, but by Christ's *death*, even as was the case in condemnation. The *death* of One Human, Jesus Christ, will eventually justify all. Grace makes all *believers* just now. Even as *mortality* makes men sinners in Adam, *death* justifies them in Christ.

Mortality, our present state of *dying*, is a confused condition, in which there is a mixture of right and wrong. Mortals can accomplish some commendable deeds, but the tendency is to sin. So also in the case of those in Christ who *died* with Him and have been roused with Him by faith. The spirit of life in them *wills* to do well, yet the sin that homes in them keeps them from accomplishing that which they desire (Rom.7:18). Humans are unjust sinners in Adam, whatever good they may perform. So also, saints are justified in Christ, whatever sin they may commit. It is not *our* acts that really matter, but the one offense of *Adam* and the one sacrificial death of *Christ* which count. And it is a great help to us to see the manner of His death. We were *crucified* with Him like felons, for such we are. Yet we will be glorified with Him like paragons, for such He is.

A. E. Knoch

GOD'S EVANGEL CONCERNING HIS SON

In the first eight chapters of Romans Paul is bringing to us the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. In its most fundamental form this message of good news announces that *Christ died for our sakes* (Rom.5:8). In 1 Corinthians 15:3,4, this evangel includes the addition that Christ was roused, for this is absolutely necessary in order for the benefits of His death to be realized (*cf* Rom.4:25; 1 Cor.15:14-19). This means that even when the evangel is reduced to its most essential factor, the death of Christ, in which sin and death are done away with, the resurrected life of Christ out from among the dead is to be assumed. Nevertheless, reduced to its most essential terms, the evangel of God announces that Christ died for our sakes.

There are two parts to this message. The first concerns God's Son, in what He did: "Christ died," and the second points to the purpose of this act: It is "for our sakes." Behind this proclamation is God in action, and in it God is made known. *God spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all* (Rom.8:32). In this, God's righteousness is being revealed, His love is being commended, His power for salvation is operating, His peace is given and His glory is set before us as a matter of expectation.

This evangel is expressed in many ways. In Romans 3:21,22 the words "Christ died" are brought before us in the phrase, "Jesus Christ's faith." And the words "for our sakes" are explained by the statement that "a righteousness of God is manifest . . . a righteousness of God . . .

for all, and on all who are believing." In Romans 3:24 the words "in Christ Jesus" and "in grace" and "through the deliverance" convey the message "Christ died." And the words "Being justified gratuitously" make the phrase "for our sakes" explicit.

In the following arrangement of key wordings of the evangel from Romans 5, the terms corresponding to the message that **Christ died** are set out by themselves in boldface type, and those corresponding to "for our sakes" follow in ordinary lightface type. Within these latter sections, specific references to the revelation of God are emphasized by the use of italics.

By faith
[we are] being then, justified.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ
we may be having peace toward God,
through Whom
we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation *of the glory of God.*

Yet not only so, but we may be glorying also in afflictions, having perceived that affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness expectation. Now expectation is not mortifying, seeing that *the love of God* has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is being given to us.
For Christ . . . died
for the sake of the irreverent, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era.
God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died
for our sakes.
In His blood,
we are being now justified,

through Him,
we shall be saved from indignation.
Through the death of [God's] Son,
being enemies, we were conciliated to God.
In His life [out from among the dead],
we shall be saved.
Through our Lord, Jesus Christ,
we are glorying in God.
Through Whom
we now obtained the conciliation.
Of the One Man, Jesus Christ,
the grace of God and the gratuity in grace superabounds to the many.
The gratuity . . . the grace out of many offenses
[leads] into a just award.
Through the One, Jesus Christ,
those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in life.
Through one just award
for all mankind for life's justifying.
Through the obedience of the One,
the many shall be constituted righteous.
Through righteousness,
Grace exceeds sin's increase and reigns for life eonian
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

If this analysis is germane, the terms *grace* and *gratuity,* as well as the Greek word rendered "just (award)" and "just (act)" may stand in the place of "Christ died" or in place of "for our sakes" depending of their position in the thought. But however the terms are understood, what is obvious here is that the many benefits presented are based not on human acts and deservings, but solely on God's gift of His Son, Who died for sinners.

D.H.H.

NOTABLE EFFECTS OF GOD'S OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS

IT is ironic that God's *righteousness* and its *effects*—which in truth are the very basis of the actual *evangel* itself—are usually claimed to preclude what is actually the evangel itself.

Indeed, it is in defense of the doctrine of eternal punishment that it is often said: "The eternal punishment of the lost reveals God's *justice* [i.e., His *righteousness*], even as the eternal life of the saved reveals His love. Therefore, *since* God is *just,* eternal punishment must exist."

The reasoning behind this claim seems to be, Since God is just in all that He does, and one of the things He does is impose eternal punishment, inasmuch as eternal punishment can hardly be an expression of His love, it must therefore be a revelation of His *justice.*

The defect in the above reasoning is in the falsity of the premise, "One of the things [God] does is impose eternal punishment."

Since God is the Saviour of *all,* the above premise in support of the eternal punishment of *some,* is necessarily mistaken. A saviour is one who saves, and God *is* the *Saviour* of *all* mankind, it being the case as well that He is *especially*—not, exclusively—the Saviour of believers (1 Tim.4:10).

Indeed, the declaration: "We rely on the living God, *Who is the Saviour of all mankind,* especially of believers," is "a *faithful* saying," being as well a saying "*worthy* of all *welcome*" (1 Tim.4:9). Therefore, the apostle Paul declares, "*These things* be charging and teaching" (1 Tim.4:11).

Whatever we have to "say," then, concerning salvation and its scope, must be founded upon and in accord with the faithful and welcome words, "God . . . *is* the *Saviour* of *all mankind* . . . ."

The common failure even to affirm, much less to charge and teach, "*these* things," that is, those words of Paul's of which the central declaration is that we rely on the living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind, calls to mind Paul's similar entreaty in which he instructs us concerning comfort for the bereaved, saying, "Console one another with *these* words" (1 Thess.4:18).

"These words" of our apostle are those through which he assures us concerning those who have entered the repose of death, that "If we are believing that Jesus died and rose, thus also, those who are put to repose, will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with Him . . . . for the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven . . . and *the dead* in Christ shall be rising first. Thereupon we, the living who are surviving, shall at the same time be snatched away together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be together with the Lord" (1 Thess.4:14-17).

Instead of, however, consoling one another with "*these* words," it is usual at funerals or memorial services for those in attendance naming the name of the Lord (among whom we take it that some are genuine believers) to tell vivid tales as to how it is that the one being memorialized did not actually *die* after all. It is claimed that, rather than reposing in the sleep of death, he or she has instead been transported from an old, inglorious life of mortality on earth, into a new, glorious life of immortality in heaven. To fill out the picture, such things are said as that the "newly-transferred" saint is now going about heaven glad-handing the other heaven-residing saints, besides even being received and personally embraced by the Lord Jesus Himself.

May God give us grace to reject cunning fables, ones supposedly scriptural in their substance, prominent among which is the claim that "Many will spend eternity in the fires of hell," even as the allied claim, as expressed in the celebrated verbiage of the poet Longfellow:[1]

> *There is no death!* What seems so is transition;
> This life of mortal breath
> Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
> Whose portal we call Death.

ILLUSTRATION AND EXEMPLARS

Casting aside such false traditions, let us now consider various notable effects, or products, of *God's own righteousness,* as they are scripturally revealed. Specifically, I wish to consider each of the ten passages in which the Greek word *dikaiōma* (JUST-*effect*) appears, giving special attention to those usages of this word in which it has a central place in relation to the *evangel* of God.

The suffix *-ma* (-EFFECT) is appended to many Greek nouns or adjectives. It is used to convey the idea of an *effect, result,* or *product* of the primary term itself to which it is appended.

A helpful illustration of the force of this word element may be seen in the contrast between *charis* (JOY, grace) and *charisma* (JOY-*effect,* grace [effect]). Whereas "grace" (*charis*) speaks of an *act producing* happiness, which is performed with a view toward the granting of an undeserved benefit (e.g., Rom.4:4; 11:6), "grace [-EFFECT]" (*charisma*) refers to the *result* of the corresponding act of grace, that is, to the gracious *gift* which is thereby granted (e.g., *cf* Rom.5:15,16; 6:23; 11:29).

In Romans 5 alone the suffix *-ma* is appended to var-

1. *The Collected Works of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (1807-1882), from "The Seaside and the Fireside; By the Fireside, 'Resignation.'"

ious terms in fourteen instances: 5:5: *pneumatos,* BLOW-*effect,* spirit; 5:15: *charisma,* GRACE-*effect,* grace [i.e., gracious gift]; *paraptōmati,* BESIDE-FALL-*effect,* offense; 5:16: *dōrêma,* GIVE-GUSH-*effect,* gratuity; *krima,* JUDGE-*effect,* judgment; *katakrima,* DOWN-JUDGE-*effect,* condemnation; *charisma,* GRACE-*effect,* grace [i.e., gracious gift]; *paraptōmaton,* BESIDE-FALL-*effects,* offenses; *dikaiōma,* JUST-*effect,* e.g., just [award]; 5:17: *paraptōmati,* BESIDE-FALL-*effect,* offense; 5:18: *paraptōmatos,* BESIDE-FALL-*effect,* offense; *katakrima,* DOWN-JUDGE-*effect,* condemnation; *dikaiōmatos,* JUST-*effect,* e.g., just [act]; 5:20: *paraptōma,* BESIDE-FALL-*effect,* offense.

In its essence, *dikaiōma* signifies: "the *result* [or "outworking"] *of* a right standard."[2] This is to say of any specific *dikaiōma,* that it is a just-standard *effect,* or result. It speaks of something which is the "product" of an already-existing right standard. Indeed, in every instance in Scripture, it speaks of what is the *effect* of the already-existing *right standard of God.*

Since English has no single noun which is the equivalent of the Greek noun *dikaiōma,* what we have endeavored to do in the Concordant Version translation of this word is to employ the English adjective "just" in boldface (which is the equivalent of the Greek stem *dik*) while supplying in lightface a contextually appropriate noun, one which speaks of whatever "righteous-standard-resulting" entity it may be that is evidently in view.

In the following three passages, it is clearly the just "statutes" of the law that are in view. These statutes result from God's right standard for human behavior.

Now they were both just in front of God, going in all the precepts and just (statutes) *of the Lord, blameless.* (Luke 1:6)

2. *cf* Keyword Concordance, entry "just (statute) . . ." p.166.

Indeed then, the former also had just (statutes) *of divine service, besides a worldly holy place.* (Hebrews 9:1)

. . . only in foods and drinks and baptizings excelling, and just (statutes) *for the flesh, lying on them unto the period of reformation.* (Hebrews 9:10)

In the following passage, "statute" also seems satisfactory, yet not in reference to a statute of Moses' law, but to a trans-administrational divine "word," evident to the enlightened conscience:

. . . those who, recognizing the just (statute) *of God, that those committing such things are deserving of death, not only are doing them, but are endorsing, also, those who are committing them.* (Romans 11:32)

Again, this just statute is the product of God's standard of what is right in view of human unrighteousness.

In Romans 2:26, we read: *If the Uncircumcision, then, should be maintaining the just* (requirements) *of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?*

Here, "just requirements" seems a satisfactory rendering so long as this is understood in reference to those requirements of the law which accord with principles of rectitude testified to by nature (*cf* Matt.22:36-40; Rom. 13:8,9; *cp* Micah 6:8). Such requirements are the results of God's right standards.

Dikaiōma is used twice in the Unveiling, in each case in reference to the blessings appointed unto the saints of that era and administration, which will be *awarded*[3] unto them *suitably,* according to God's own pleasure and intention:

Who may by no means be afraid of Thee, Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou only art benign. For all the nations shall arrive and worship before Thee, for Thy just (awards) *were made manifest.* (Revelation 15:4)

3. "Award" is to be distinguished from "reward," whereas "award" speaks of that which is *appropriately* "granted" or "bestowed," whether or not as a reward or compensation (*cf* 1 Peter 3:7; *cp* Acts 17:25; John 3:27).

And to her it was granted that she may be clothed in clean, resplendent cambric, for the cambric is the just (awards) *of the saints.* (Revelation 19:8)

These awards are just *because* they are the effects of God's just standards.

OLD AND NEW COVENANTS

The three remaining passages in which *dikaiōma* appears are all in Romans. Each one addresses vital considerations integral to the evangel of God and the justification of sinners:

that the just (intent) *of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit.* (Romans 8:4)

According to God's revealed, preceptive will, the law was given that it should be obeyed. Yet just as surely, according to His hidden, decretive will and intent, it was given that it should be disobeyed (*cf* Eph.1:11; Rom.9:19; 11:36).

Initially, through Moses, prior to giving the people the law and the conditions of His covenant,[4] Yahweh merely informed the sons of Israel thus, saying: "Now, *if* you shall hearken, yea hearken to My voice and observe My covenant then you will become Mine, a special possession, above all the peoples, for Mine is all the earth. As for you, you shall become Mine, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex.19:5,6).

Yet knowing no more than this—being ignorant not only of the particulars of the law and the terms of the covenant, but especially of the depravity of their own hearts—Israel,

4. After then having given Israel His law (Ex.20-31), as Yahweh finished speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai, He gave him "two tablets of the testimony [of the covenant], tablets of stone, written with the finger of Elohim" (Ex.31:18). These contained "the ten words" (i.e., the ten precepts, or "commandments," as recorded in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5; *cf* Deut.4:13).

in their naiveté and fleshly pride, declared: "*All* that Yahweh speaks *we shall do*" (Ex.19:8; *cp* Deut.5:27).

Subsequently, however, when the people saw that Moses was tardy to descend from the mountain, they quickly withdrew from the way in which Yahweh had instructed them. They assembled themselves *against* Aaron and said to him: "Rise! Make for us elohim who shall go before us, for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we know not what has become of him" (Ex.32:1). Soon, this stiff-necked people, through their swift rebellion and ensuing unbridled, wanton idolatry, had corrupted themselves and *voided* the covenant (*cf* Ex.32:1-35; *cp* Jer.31:32).

Indeed, O that there *were* such a heart in them, that they would fear Yahweh, and keep all His commandments always (*cp* Deut.5:29, AV; CV: "O that their heart *might become* this way with them: to fear Me and to observe all My instructions all the days . . ."). "Yet until this day Yahweh *has not given to you* a heart to realize and eyes to see and ears to hear" (Deut.29:4; *cp* Prov.4:23).

How marvelous, then, it is to know that in the oncoming eon, under the gracious provision of Yahweh's new covenant with His national people, He will give the sons of Israel the very thing which they had previously lacked, an obedient heart: "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I bestow within you, and I will take away the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. My spirit shall I bestow within you, and *I will make it* that you shall walk in My statutes and observe My ordinances, and *you will* obey them" (Ezek.36:26,27; *cp* Jer.31:31-33).

IMPOSSIBLE TO THE LAW

In their words there in Exodus 19:8, "All that Yahweh speaks we shall do," Israel epitomized the spirit of the flesh, inherent in the old humanity. Being ignorant of their own intrinsic inability and corruption (*cf* Rom.8:7;

Eph.4:22), while at the same time being unthankful to God for whatever goodness and ability they did enjoy, they imagined themselves to be, if not altogether pure, in any case, able and sound. It is the grace of God, indeed, then, as we would consider ourselves, in ourselves, for any of us to discern and freely acknowledge: "I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not" (Rom.7:18).

The essence of this nearly universally held delusion of self-sufficiency seems ideally captured in the words of the famous poem "Invictus,"[5] of which its most fondly cherished lines are these:

> It matters not how strait the gate,
> How charged with punishments the scroll.
> I am the master of my fate:
> I am the captain of my soul.

The current edition of the Concordant Version, renders Romans 8:4 as follows:

that the just (requirement) *of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit.*

As rendered here, as "just (requirement)," it may be understood in a similar sense as is suggested above for the usage of this phrase as it appears in Romans 2:26. This would be as broadly construed in reference to the deeper import of the law in respect of the pursuit of virtue, generally considered. Thus a true and useful sense may be obtained.

5. "Invictus" was the most popular work of the English poet William Ernest Henley (1849-1903). First published in 1888, it has been included in various anthologies. It is widely regarded as one of the favorite poems of the American people, which speaks volumes about the American people.

Many, however, reading this passage as it appears in our current, printed text, seem to gain no clear sense at all from it, while certain others take it in a narrowly construed sense from which they further extrapolate their own notion of advocacy of "Christian commandment-keeping." By this expression, they have in mind the practice of the believer obliging himself or herself to heed the specific words of the law as found in Exodus 20, most certainly including those particular words contained therein where Israel is told to remember the sabbath, to keep it holy (Ex.20:8; 8-12; AV).

The subject in view in Romans 8:1-4, however, is that, as a result of the salvation which Christ has achieved for us through the cross, "Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:1). Further, *because* of "the spirit's *law* of life in Christ Jesus," it is simply the case (albeit if only in a measured way at present) that those who *are* in Christ Jesus, are "not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit."

This is so, "For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the [*righteous-standard-resulting* entity] of the law may be fulfilled in us, [we] who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit" (Rom.8:3,4).

What was impossible for the law, was for the law to make men righteous. In itself, the law, indeed, is holy, and the precept holy and just and good; even ideal (Rom.7:12,16). Yet in relation to its apparent goal, it became "infirm through the flesh." Effectually speaking, in a figure, It was too weak to accomplish the very goal which it intended to achieve (*cf* Heb.7:19a; *cp* Heb.10:14).

Contextually, then, the "righteous-standard-*resulting*" entity which is "of" the law (i.e., with which the law in a

certain respect is concerned) which is in view here is the *actual* intent of the law (in the sense of telic "end," i.e., goal or consummation) to which it pointed.

This is none other than the revelation of the righteousness of God in the justification of sinners through the faith of Jesus Christ. Even though this righteous and powerful work is only in its incipience at present, even now it is being "fulfilled in *us,* who are not walking in accord with flesh, but *in accord with spirit.*"

This selfsame *dikaiōma* is clearly explicated by Paul in Romans 10:4, and how glorious it is to behold: "*Christ* is the *consummation* of 'law for righteousness' to everyone who is believing." This is to say, What was impossible for the law to achieve, *God Himself* even now is beginning to achieve: the justification of sinners through the faith of Jesus Christ.

That to which the ineffectual system of men following after the precepts of the law in the pursuit of righteousness *pointed,* is alone realized in Christ Jesus (*cf* Rom. 9:31; 10:5).

Therefore, I suggest that in Romans 8:4 *dikaiōma* might be more aptly and clearly rendered:

that the just (intent) *of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit.*

This just intent is just because it is the outworking of God's own standard of righteousness for human behavior.

JUSTIFICATION AND CONCILIATION

The two remaining usages of *dikaiōma* in the Greek Scriptures, are both found in Romans 5, in verses 16 and 18. What is said in each of these verses constitutes a vital part of the full declaration and explication of the evangel.

The evangel is the revelation of the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith in the justification and

conciliation of sinners (*cf* Rom.1:16,17; 3:22-24; 4:25-5:2; 5:9-11; 12-21). In simplest terms, this is "the evangel of [our] salvation" (*cf* Eph.1:13).

In order to understand and appreciate the evangel of our *justification* as well as that of our *conciliation,* we must have a clear picture of the meaning of each of these terms.

"Justify" is a causative verb. A "causative" is an action verb by which its subject "effects" or produces a change in or concerning its object. For example, "help" means to "cause to be helped"; "raise" means to "cause to be raised"; to "rectify" means to "make or set right"; "homogenize" means to "make homogeneous or uniform"; "purify" means to "make pure or clean."

Similarly, "justify" means to "cause to be just [or righteous]." To say, then, that God justifies sinners, is to say that God causes sinners to be (i.e., to become) just, or righteous. On behalf of sinners, on the basis of the saving work of Jesus Christ, God will realize His goal, that of constituting just the entire vast complement comprising all mankind (*cf* Rom.5:18,19).

When we are vivified (1 Cor.15:23), immortal and incorruptible, inhering in bodies of transcendent glory, conformed to the image of God's Son, we will then, in the highest sense, actually *be justified,* which is to say, *made righteous.*

When we speak of our present justification, making mention of ourselves as even now being "justified," we certainly do not have in mind our present constitution or the whole of our present walk. Instead, we speak of ourselves thus as being justified "in Christ," and this both in the sense of our close identification with Him as members of His body, and in the sense as well of what God has achieved through Him on our behalf.

And when we say that we are "complete" in Christ (Col. 2:10), we are by no means speaking of any fancied "com-

pleat-ness"[6] in or of ourselves. Instead, we are saying that, in and through Christ's saving work on our behalf, *all* has been *completed* to *ensure* that in the oncoming eons, we will actually *become* holy and flawless in God's sight (Eph.1:4,5).

In any instance where we speak of future glories which God has appointed unto us and speak *as if* these things were a present reality, we are obviously not speaking literally, for we are by no means unmindful of our present sorry state.

Instead, we are herein speaking *proleptically.* "Prolepsis" is the figure of *anticipation* in which one speaks of something future *as if* already done or existing. That is precisely the purview we assume as to God's promises of our future life and glory. In speaking of these as already attained, we are speaking of what is not as if it were, *because it will be* (*cp* Rom.4:17,18); for these promises are the word of God, Who does not lie (Titus 1:2).

"Conciliate" is also a causative verb. To conciliate, is to "cause to be conciliated." "Conciliate" is the Concordant Version translation of *katallassō,* which by its elements says: *down-change* (or "in accord with [a] change"). It is used definitively in 1 Corinthians 7:11. In speaking of the wife in marriage, Paul says, "Yet if she should be *separated* also, let her remain *unmarried* or *be[come] conciliated* to her husband. And a husband is not to leave his wife" (1 Cor.7:11).

Thus we learn that to be "conciliated" is to speak of the change that occurs when one who is *separated* from another, *becomes* united to the other party, placated and at peace.

6. To be "compleat," is to be highly skilled or accomplished; as in the phrase, in reference to a renowned thespian: ". . . the *compleat* actor; the consummate professional."

The evangel of conciliation is that God has *conciliated* us to Himself through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10,11). And yet, God not only conciliates us to Himself through Christ (2 Cor.5:18), but the further "word of the conciliation," is "how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them" (2 Cor.5:18,19).

Whether as vessels of mercy or of indignation, the *acts* of all will be judged (*cf* Ecc.12:14), whether at the dais of Christ, in the various judgments of the terrestrial kingdom, or in the presence of the great white throne.

Yet considered in the aspect of their offensive *effects,* our *offenses* (*paraptōmata,* BESIDE-FALL-*effects*)—which *offend* God and wound His heart—these effects of our failures He reckons not even to the world. And concerning ourselves, having been conciliated to God through the death of His Son, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life, in which evangel, we glory indeed.

Not only we ourselves, then, but even the people of the world as well, God has conciliated unto Himself. This is manifestly the *position* that God has granted us all, in His sight. Sadly, it is not altogether the *condition* even of our own hearts; much less is it the state of heart of unbelievers. So Paul entreats us, then—as those who through the death of God's Son, have been (positionally) conciliated to Him, *be becoming in practice,* conciliated to Him: "We are beseeching for Christ's sake, 'Be [*being*] conciliated to God!' For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming *God's righteousness* in Him" (2 Cor.5:20,21).

This is all to say: Lo! Behold *the righteousness of God:* Sinners made righteous before Him through the blood of His Christ; enemies conciliated to Him through the death of His Son!

TYPE AND ANTITYPE

And not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity. For, indeed, the judgment is out of one into condemnation, yet the grace is out of many offenses into a just (award). (Romans 5:16)

Here also in Romans 5:16 (similarly to the selfsame rendering found both in Revelation 15:4 and 19:8), *dikaiōma* speaks of the "RIGHTEOUS-*effect*" which is to be awarded or bestowed as a *result* of the standard of God's righteousness, in view of His grace in the work of Christ.

In Romans 5:12-19 the relationship that obtains between Adam and Christ is that of type and Antitype. An antitype is something (or someone) that is foreshadowed in its type. Adam is "a *type* of Him Who is about to be" (Rom.5:14), the impending One, Jesus Christ. A type is something that, be it ever so different from its antitype in other respects, nonetheless shares a particular characteristic *likeness* (i.e., commonality) with its antitype.

Between Adam and Christ, the likeness, or commonality, is that a single act of each one has an effect on all the rest of mankind—indeed an effect on all the rest that can only be described as one of vast proportions and of great moment. Both Adam and Christ, by each one performing a single act, does something that causes a tremendous change affecting all the rest of humanity.

What Adam does affects all mankind negatively, resulting in great adversity and suffering for all (*cp* Rom.5:12; Gen.2:17; 3:19). What Christ does affects all mankind positively, resulting in great benefit and blessing for all (Rom. 5:15-19; 1 Cor.15:22).

And, since it is "*not* as the offense, thus also the grace" (Rom.5:15), and, "*Not* as through one act of sinning is the gratuity" (Rom.5:16), something further becomes evident to us here:

Certainly, the benefits that we receive because of Christ's

act are no *less* beneficial to us than the injuries are injurious that we receive because of Adam's act. Nor is it a matter of the antitype's good merely cancelling out the type's evil.

It is rather that what Christ did *for* us is of *far greater consequence* for us, for actual benefit to be realized in our future life experience, than is what Adam did *to* us is, in actual evil imposed upon us, which is realized already in our present life experience, which has wrought such an abundance of adversity in our lives.

The grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ (in contrast to the former man, Adam, of whom Paul had just spoken), *superabounds* in its consequences which come upon that vast company ("the many") of whom Paul herein speaks.

This is the same "many" (i.e., "[*this*] many") of whom the apostle had just spoken, which is that most vast company of humans of which any can conceive, namely: "the many" comprising "all mankind" (*cp* Rom.5:12; 5:15).

"Even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned" (Rom.5:12):

Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just (act) *for all mankind for life's justifying.* (Romans 5:18)

In this case, our present Concordant Version rendering "just (award)" does not fit the case so well, for here in 5:18b, Paul is not speaking of the "award" which results *from* the act of Christ (as in 5:16 where he does just that), but is instead alluding to that righteous *act* of Christ itself which is in parallel to the unrighteous, offensive *act* of Adam (5:18a).

This *dikaiōma* (JUST-*effect*) calls to mind the evangel previously presented in Romans 1:17 and 3:21-24 as it is

now presented in its culminating effects on the entirety of humanity—"all mankind."

"As it was through one offense [of Adam] for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one JUST-*effect* for all mankind for life's justifying."

Here, the *dikaiōma* (i.e., JUST-*effect*)—which is itself the result of a right standard, God's own right standard—refers to the death of Christ as this unparalleled act of faith is related to the righteousness of God.

God did not merely "allow" His Son to die. Instead, according to His own specific counsel, God gave Christ up to be crucified (*cf* Matt.26:22; Rom.8:32). He was "given up *because* of our offenses and was roused *because* of our justifying" (Rom.4:25; Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:27,28; *cp* Isa.53:10a). "Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but *gives Him up* for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (*cf* Rom.8:32).

God's righteous standards which accord with His own righteousness, make it impossible that even a single sinner should be subjected to endless punishment. Instead, they require that Christ should be made a sin offering for all, a sin offering which results in the justification and conciliation of all mankind.

In this *dikaiōma* of Romans 5:18, that of the death of Christ, we perceive *righteousness of God* as it is *revealed in the evangel* (Rom.1:16,17). This righteousness of God is "through Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22); and, as it is displayed here in the zenith of its operations, we perceive it thus in its achievements on behalf of the entirety of humanity.

At the consummation (1 Cor.15:23,28), when the righteousness of God is realized in its glorious goal of making righteous and conciliating all, then, the "justifying" (i.e., the "making righteous") of life which is "for all mankind" (Rom.5:18) will be achieved. J.R.C.

FROM RIGHTEOUSNESS TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

In Romans 5:18,19, the evangel of God, announcing that "While we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes" is heightened and deepened. We now see that it truly encompasses the whole of humanity, illuminating the glory of God's purpose for humanity as it is centered in His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord:

> *Consequently, then, as it was through one offense*
> *for all mankind for condemnation,*
> *thus also, it is through one just* [*act*]
> *for all mankind for life's justifying.*
>
> *For even as, through the disobedience of the one man,*
> *the many were constituted sinners,*
> *thus also, through the obedience of the One,*
> *the many shall be constituted just.*

Commenting on verse 18, A. E. Knoch wrote, "Christ's one righteous act is the basis upon which all humankind will yet be freed from every effect of Adam's offense."[1]

What is said of Adam and his one act of offense opens up vital aspects of the evangel concerning Jesus Christ and His one act of righteousness. The evangel itself is found in the latter halves of verses 18 and 19. Here all is sourced in the righteousness of God, all is channeled through one righteous act of Christ, His act of faith-obedience in dying for sinners, and all is consummated in righteousness, both as to the entire human race and as to life itself.

1.*Unsearchable Riches,* vol.4, p.111.

THREE SIGNIFICANT WORDS

In this respect, three Greek words used by Paul in Romans 5:18,19 call for special attention. The first is *dikaiōma* in verse 18, which is translated "just award" in the CV, but rendered "just act" above. The second is *dikaiōsis* (also in verse 18), translated by the word "justifying." The third is *dikaion,* appearing at the end of verse 19 and rendered "just."

They belong to that important group of words (so central to Paul's presentation of the evangel in Romans) which are built on the root *dik-* meaning *just* or *righteous.* It is in the evangel of God concerning His Son that God's righteousness (*dikaiosunê*) is being revealed (Rom.1:17), now being made manifest through Jesus Christ's faith (3:21,22). We are justified (*dikaioumenoi*) gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24). Thus God is put on display as just (*dikaion*) and the Justifier (*dikaiounta*) of sinners as they are brought under the benefits of the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26).

The evangel reveals the righteousness of God in the death of Christ for sinners, securing the righteousness of justification, which will ultimately embrace all mankind. The message takes us from righteousness to righteousness.

In Romans 5:18 the word *dikaiōma* points to God's righteousness lying behind the righteous act of Christ in His death for sinners. There also the word *dikaiōsis* speaks of the righteous achievement of this work of righteousness for all mankind as it relates to life. Then in verse 19 the term *dikaion* describes the righteous state that will ultimately be enjoyed by the many individuals who have been so adversely affected by the disobedience of Adam.

It is all sourced in the righteousness of God. It is all channeled through the righteous work of Jesus Christ. It all culminates in a life and state of glorious righteousness.

EFFECTS OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Greek word, *dikaiōma,* is defined in the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE as "the result of a right standard" (p.166).

The underlying sense of the word is an effect resulting from a right standard, that is, the effect of true and uncompromised righteousness. Such an effect, whether a statute or requirement of law, or the awarding of justification, or the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ, is necessarily just.

In Scripture, *dikaiōma* always refers to a righteous thing, determined by the context, resulting from the operation of God's innate standard of righteousness. The *dikaiōma* of Romans 1:32, for example, is the effect of God's right standard for judging those who commit the wicked acts listed in verses 29-31. The just statute declaring that those committing such things are deserving of death results from God's right standard, His standard of what is right *in view of human unrighteousness apart from the achievements of the cross.*

The *dikaiōma* of Romans 5:16, however, is the effect of God's standard of righteousness *in view of the death of His Son for sinners.* It is the just award of justification, arising from God's righteousness in light of the blood of Christ (Rom.5:9). Because of the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners, God is now manifested as just in justifying sinners (Rom.3:21-26). The essence of God's inherent righteousness is of the highest standard; it is absolutely without flaw. There can be no cover-up and no room for questioning its results.

Justification is just! It is not simply a pronouncement based on sovereign authority, but is an actual achievement of God in sparing not His own Son but giving Him up for us all. God's righteousness saturates this achievement as fully as His power and wisdom (*cf* 1 Cor.1:18-25) and love (*cf* Rom.5:6-8; 8:33-39). The word *dikaiōma* in Romans

5:16 speaks of the just award of justification as the righteous effect of God's standard of righteousness in view of the death of Christ.

But what is the *dikaiōma* of Romans 5:18?

THROUGH ONE JUST-EFFECT

We have noted the striking parallel between the phrases "through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom" in Romans 5:11, and "through the One, Jesus Christ" in verse 17.[2] The obtaining of the conciliation and the reigning in life for those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness are channeled through Jesus Christ. These are the words of good news which immediately lead the way to the "Therefore" of verse 12 and the "Consequently" of 18. Paul is centering our attention on the evangel as it concerns God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. He continues to do this with the phrase "through one *dikaiōma*," in verse 18, and "through the obedience of the One" in verse 19. Whatever the *dikaiōma* is, it is associated intimately with Christ.

It may be, as reflected by the current CV rendering, that Paul used the word *dikaiōma* in Romans 5:18 with the same application as in verse 16. Through the one righteous award of justification for all mankind all will enjoy life's justifying. Such a thought necessarily involves the fact that Christ died for sinners. But in the context of Romans 5:18, it seems more likely that Paul has the righteous act of Christ in dying for sinners directly in view. Through the one righteous act of Christ's death for all mankind all will enjoy life's justifying.

Hence, in this view the JUST-*effect* of Romans 5:18 is the effect of God's standard of righteousness upon Christ Himself in His death for us while we remain wretched

2.*Unsearchable Riches*, vol.101, pp.285-287.

sinners and at enmity to God. It is Christ's faithful obedience in response to the requirements of God's righteousness. Much as the phrase, "Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22), speaks of our Lord's reliance on God, and His faithful obedience to the fearful task set before Him, in a similar way the word *dikaiōma* in Romans 5:18 speaks of Christ's death as the outworking of God's righteousness in Him.

The one offense was the effect of Adam's "BESIDE-FALL." The one *dikaiōma* was the effect of God's righteousness upon Christ. His death for sinners was the result of God's standard of righteousness operating in Him.

FOR ALL MANKIND

This one astounding act of righteousness in which the One, Jesus Christ, responded fully and faithfully to the standard of God's perfect righteousness, under the most horrendous of circumstances, is for all mankind. What Jesus Christ did in this one particular act of faith had all mankind in view and ultimately brings the benefit of "life's justifying" to all. Otherwise it would not *manifest* the glory and purity of God's righteousness. The idea of everlasting torment or eternal annihilation of some sinners does not, in any way, display the essence of God's righteousness.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The revelation of the righteousness of God is fundamental and primary to the evangel. It is not something to be assumed and then kept out of view while we decide what the evangel has to be saying. We must see it in the evangel, all along the way, in what was done and what was achieved.

We also must see God's righteousness as it is revealed in God's achievement through the obedience of Christ alone, apart from our efforts. A message placing requirements on us to do what is impossible for us to do cannot reveal the righteousness of God. Even more so, a mes-

sage that tries to incorporate concessions to human limitations, such as salvation for those who do the best they can as faithfully as they can, cannot make God's perfect righteousness known, and cannot lead to the justification of life which He has in view. He will not justify anyone on a basis which is not absolutely right.

The evangel is a message of God's grace. Justification is achieved apart from human works of law, solely by means of the faith of Jesus Christ, His obedience to the death of the cross. In not sparing His own Son, but giving Him up for us all, God achieves the righteous justification of all sinners and offenders and transgressors, and the conciliation and reconciliation of every enemy, and the justifying of life itself with all its sorrows and failures. The testimony will not be made manifest all at once, but in its own eras as God has determined (*cf* 1 Tim.2:6). But it is here in the evangel of God concerning His Son that we are to become acquainted with the fullness of God's righteousness, and here alone.

FOR LIFE'S JUSTIFYING

In Romans 5:8 Paul brings the evangel to us in plain and simple terms: "Christ died for our sakes." The "just act" of Romans 5:18 corresponds to the words "Christ died." The words "life's justifying" correspond to the phrase, "for our sakes."

But what does it mean that the one just act of Christ in dying for our sakes was for "life's justifying"?

The Greek word *dikaiōsis* is a noun formed from the verb *justify* (*dikaioō*). Most English translations use the word "justification" to represent this Greek word. But the CV uses "justifying" in order to bring out the sense of an act in progress which the *-sis* ending suggests. It is followed by the Greek word for "life" which is in the genitive case, so that a literal translation would be "justification of life" (as in the AV), or "justifying of life." Another way to express this construction where a noun is followed by another noun in the genitive case would be "life's justification," or as given in the CV, "life's justifying."

But the idea of life being justified is so foreign to traditional theology that it is hardly ever considered in commentaries and expositions on this passage. Consequently, even where the translation, "justification of life," is accepted the words are explained as meaning "justification leading to life," or sometimes, "justification and life," claiming an idiomatic use of the genitive case.

This is maintained despite the fact that the word *dikaiōsis* appears only one other time in Scripture and that but a short way back in Romans where the ordinary sense is accepted. In chapter 4, verse 25, it is joined by the pronoun "us" in the genitive case, literally, "justifying of us," or "our justifying" (the AV reading is "our justification"). There is no attempt, in translation or exposition, to claim an idiomatic use of the genitive here. The common sense is the obvious meaning.

Let us pause and give serious consideration to the possibility that Paul uses the phrase, "life's justifying," in the same way he uses the phrase, "our justifying," in Romans 4:25. In both cases the word *dikaiōsis* appears in direct connection with the evangel which says, "Christ died for our sins." Christ was given up because of our offenses. He was roused because of our justifying (that is, He was roused because our justifying had occurred in His death, the shedding of His blood). So also in our passage the evangel that Christ died for our sakes is declared in these words: It is through the one just act of Christ's death for all mankind, that life's justifying is achieved.

What Christ accomplished in dying for our sakes was manifold. In the present context alone we learn we are justified in His blood (Rom.5:9); we are conciliated to God

through His death (Rom.5:10); we shall be constituted just through His obedience (Rom.5:19). Now we are told that all mankind will enjoy life's justifying because of that one just act of Jesus Christ in carrying out the requirements of God's righteousness.

GOD GIVES US LIFE

Once again Paul is taking us back to Genesis, this time to the words of Genesis 2:7 where we read that "Yahweh Elohim formed the human out of soil from the ground, and He blew into his nostrils the breath of *life*; and the human became a *living* soul" (Gen.2:7).

Yet through this one man sin came into the world, and through sin came death as an operation of dying leading downward to the state of death (*cf* Gen.2:17), and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned (Rom.5:12). We were made to be *living.* Yet we came to be *dying.* The human was given life but soon came under the tyrannical reign of death.

Earlier in Romans Paul spent the equivalent of three chapters describing the terrible condition of humanity because of its irreverence and unrighteousness (Rom.1: 18-3:21). Apart from what Christ did for our sakes, we are not righteous, and we are deserving of death (Rom.1:32). What is sorely needed is that we be made righteous, and this means also that life itself be made righteous.

What do the facts of Romans 1:18-3:20 and Romans 5:12-14 say about God and about His righteousness? God "gives to all life and breath and all" (Acts 17:25), and yet "Not one is righteous" (Rom.3:10). Death reigns and all sin.

Accordingly, the Assembler wrote about life as he experienced its vanity (its transitoriness): "And I hated life, For to me the work was evil that was done under the sun, For the whole is vanity and a grazing on wind" (Ecc.2:17). So also the psalmist exclaimed to Yahweh: "For what futility have You created all the sons of humanity?" (Psa.89:47).

Here again the issue is the righteousness of God.

Can God's provision of life to human beings as it has developed because of Adam's one offense ever be fully justified?

Yes it can. Yes it must become so. Yes it will be so and fully experienced by all mankind. The evil, the vanity, the futility, all serve to the realization and appreciation of the goodness and wisdom and righteousness and love of God.

AN ENRICHED LIFE

This will be enjoyed in that justified life which comes through the just act of Jesus Christ. Because of His death we will live apart from sin and death, but not only this, but our life then will possess a vitality and significance that would be impossible without the experience of evil of the present transitory life. We will be constituted righteous, as verse 19 assures us. But also God's gift of life and its ruin and apparent futility as we know it now will be justified because of the way in which the vivified life in Christ is enriched by the sorrows, struggles and twisted thinking and action of the present life. It will not only be that we will be made righteous, but then also we will enjoy full realization of the goodness and righteousness of God.

Life as it has become because of Adam's one act of offense stands in contrast to the life which will become because of Christ's particular act of righteousness. The experience of irreverence and unrighteousness will open up the joyous appreciation of life justified. And the experience of infirmity, irreverence, sin and enmity which press down on us in this life, will effectively and exultantly open up the glory of the peace and the grace of access to God which will reign in life justified.

The Creator of life is the Justifier of life. He does this through that one astounding just act of Jesus Christ in dying for our sins.

CONSTITUTED JUST

Regarding verse 19, A. E. Knoch wrote, "Now the contrast is not between two *acts,* but between two single *human beings,* Adam and Christ. One constitutes many sinners, and the Other constitutes many just."[3]

To this we might add that while verse 18 speaks of all mankind as a unit, verse 19 speaks of the many individuals composing the human race. Verse 18 tells of two single acts and the way in which they affect the entirety of humanity. Verse 19 tells of two single individuals, Adam and Christ, and of the way they affect Cain and Abel and Seth and Noah and Abraham and Isaac and Ishmael and Jacob and Esau and Job and Ruth and Boaz and Saul and David and Absalom and Solomon and Josiah and his sons and Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel and Mary and Joseph and Peter and Judas and Paul and you and me and all the other billions of people who compose the multitudinous whole of mankind.

There is no pretense in this achievement of God channeled through the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ, our Lord. There are no limitations imposed because of human sin and offense and undeservedness. When Christ died all died (2 Cor.5:14). It is not because of us or anything we have done. It is because of Christ's obedience. Even as Adam's disobedience made us sinners, so also Christ's obedience makes us just, that is, righteous, in accord with God's timing (*cp* 1 Cor.15:23).

To be constituted just—this achievement of God in giving up His Son for our sakes, was anticipated in Romans 1:16,17. It prepares us for Paul's exposition of the power of the evangel of God's grace which follows in Romans 5:20,21 and chapter 6. We will look at these happy matters in more detail in our next article. D.H.H.

3.*Unsearchable Riches,* vol.4, p.112.

THE HUMAN SOUL

WHY? WHAT? WHERE? WHITHER? Such are the questions which arise when we consider the human soul and its place in God's purpose. Strange to say, the usual answers are shrouded in obscurity. Who can tell us *why* man has a soul? Who knows *what* it is? And who can tell us *where* it is and *whither* it goes at death? Incredible as it may seem, the popular translation of the Bible is most misleading, and will only confuse us if we seek light from it on this theme. The traditions of men had such a strong hold on the translators that they deliberately altered or ignored the word *soul* in the key passages. As a result it is commonly held that animals have no souls, instead of being like man in this respect. And none seem able to locate the soul, though it is in their very blood. Tradition teaches that, at death, the soul of the unbeliever goes to hell. The Bible shows that the spirit returns to God Who gave it (Ecc.12:7). Yet orthodoxy cannot define the difference! If the soul-spirit goes to both places at the same time, the terms heaven and hell must also mean the same!

The reader of the Authorized Version is hoodwinked as to the close relationship of the animals to man, by its discordant rendering of the word *soul* in its account of creation (Gen.1:20,21,24,30). Three times it is translated *creature*, although it is entirely distinct from the word rendered *create* which is found in the first verse. Once it is omitted. Although *soul* is used these four times of animals in the Hebrew, it is not rendered soul until it is used of man. The translators were evidently orthodox, and did not believe that animals are souls. Indeed, to this day pop-

ular theology teaches that the great distinction between the animals and man lies in this, that man has an "immortal soul" and the animal has none. This flatly contradicts the very first page of God's revelation. These discordant renderings have poisoned the well of truth as to the relation of man to the lower creatures.

These perversions are so serious that we will set them forth at length, along with a concordant rendering. In Genesis 1:20 the Authorized Version reads: "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving *creature* that hath life." It should read: "Let the waters swarm with the swarming thing, the living *soul.*" Here *creature* is put for *soul.* This is partially true, for all souls are *created* by God. But there is nothing in the Hebrew text or its Greek translation to indicate this thought. It is injected and the true idea is concealed.

The second occurrence (Gen.1:21) reads somewhat like the first: "And God created . . . every living *creature* that moveth." This should be: every moving, living *soul.* These occurrences show that, in contrast to plants, which also have *life*, *souls* may move about.

The third time *soul* is again rendered *creature* (Gen. 1:24): "Let the earth bring forth the living *creature* . . . ."

The fourth occurrence reads (1:30): "And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is *life* . . . ." This is not the intended thought. The last clause should read: in which there is a living *soul.* Plants have *life.* The animals on the land and air have more than that. They have sensation, and they alone can crawl and creep and fly. Only *they* are souls. *Living* plants are not included.

Perhaps we should warn our readers that the margins of some Bibles have added to the confusion by indicating that *soul* has been used for *life* (rather than *creature*) in some of these passages. This obscures the important fact

that animals are not merely called *souls,* but *living souls,* in all four occurrences, *the same phrase as is used of man.*

When man is formed (Gen.2:7)—the fifth occurrence of the word *nephesh*—the Authorized Version does not call him a *creature,* though he certainly was, nor does it omit the word *soul.* For the first time they translate correctly, and call him a *living soul.* Alas, in such a case the *correct* rendering itself is misleading, because it is not concordant. Instead of informing us that man became the *same* as the animals previously created, it tells us that he is something different. They were merely *creatures,* while Adam became a *soul!* This example alone should convince all that discordant renderings are dangerous. *They spoil even those translations which are correct in themselves!*

Why was man given a soul? Why can he sense the world about him and feel pain and pleasure? This function is essential to the part he plays in more ways than one. Only by an actual experience of good and evil can he be prepared for his destined duties. During the eons the experience of evil is necessary to bring man down to a realization of his absolute dependence on God for happiness, and the need of utter subjection for his welfare. Until mankind reaches this place at the consummation, the race is not fitted to fulfil its functions. Only the saints, as a kind of firstfruits, have taken their place, for, even now, the sovereignties and authorities among the celestials learn of the multifarious wisdom of God through the ecclesia (Eph.3:10). Only Christ Himself, the great Firstfruit, has entered into the glory.

But man was not made merely to enjoy himself. Indeed, he learns by sad experience that selfishness is an insuperable barrier to true happiness. Israel has sought its own welfare hitherto, when its real satisfaction lies in the blessing of the other nations. In seeking wealth and power and glory for itself it has forfeited pleasure for its own soul. So

with mankind as a whole. Its destiny is to bring blessing to the rest of creation, and apart from this it will fail to find the felicity which it craves. We have been given a soul, not merely to be able to experience the bliss of our own blessings, but to bring such bliss to the balance of God's creatures. That, indeed, is the greatest good that God has given us. It is blessed to give rather than to get.

Man's particular province on earth is the animal creation. To equip him for his place above them he is not only made in the image and likeness of *God,* but very closely resembles the *creatures* over whom he rules. Both have bodies from the soil and breathe the air of the atmosphere, and these are assimilated by means of the blood. As a result, they have consciousness and sensation, or a soul. Man and the animals have this in common, that they both are *living souls.* Man can mediate between God and the animals, for he has points of contact with both.

How dreadful it would be for the animals if men had no souls as they themselves do! Even as it is, we have far too little feeling for these creatures who are subject to us. The mere fact that we have societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals shows how callous we are, even when we ourselves share in the suffering that they endure. Man's inhumanity to man is, perhaps, just as bad. There is no question, however, that animals owe much to the fact that their human masters have souls like theirs, and are taught by their own experience how terrible suffering can be.

What the soul is, we have set forth fully elsewhere, but a fresh study from another standpoint may be helpful. Soul is *physical sensation,* not *spiritual life,* for which it is usually mistaken. A *soulish* man likes the pleasures produced by eating and drinking and all other agreeable and delightful sensations, rather than the intangible experiences of the spirit. These do not appeal to him. But the mere fact of having a soul does not imply the lack of spirituality. Man

has *both,* a spirit and a soul, that is, he has *life* and *sensation.* Yet the body is strongly inclined to follow its feelings. It is soulish at present. But the tyranny of the soul is a temporary condition, due to man's mortality. Had Adam been created immortal, so that he could not die, the life-giving spirit would have so dominated his actions that he would not have sinned. Thus will it be with all mankind, when they are vivified.

THE SOUL A COMBINATION, NOT AN ADDITION

Is the soul *material* or *immaterial? Is* man a soul, or *has* he a soul? All such questions show that the basic facts concerning the soul have never been grasped. The soul cannot be classified in this way. We might as well ask, Is the body a solid or water? *Is* a man anybody or *has* he a body? (The body, by the way, was not made of *dust,* but of *soil,* the very same as that which grows our food. Not much will grow without moisture.) The soul also is the product of a combination. Much of the language used of it is figurative. The body and the spirit are distinct entities that may exist apart from each other. Not so the soul. It is only the effect of their union. It has no existence apart from their combination. It is often spoken of as if it were a tangible thing, but that is due to the necessities of language. Literally, at death, the soul ceases to exist, because body and spirit separate. The same thought is presented in a different way when the soul is said to go to the imperceptible, the unseen. Death ends all perception, all sensation. This is expressed figuratively when the soul is sent to hades, the *imperceptible,* the *unseen.*

Has man a soul, or is he a soul? A great deal of useless argument has failed to settle this problem, because everything is taken literally, and figures of speech are not understood. That man has a soul is evident from the oft repeated "*my* soul." That man is *not literally* a soul, with-

out a body or spirit, is also evident, for these are the two elements producing a soul, and the latter is only the phenomenon resulting from their union. Besides, Scripture says not only that man became a living soul (Gen.2:7), but also insists that man is *soil* (AV, *dust*). He could not possibly be both at the same time. It is the figure of near association. That part of man is put for the whole which is uppermost in the context. In view of *life,* man is a *soul.* In view of *death,* man is *soil.* Since the human body now is *soulish* and *soilish* (1 Cor.15:44-49), man is hardly called a *spirit,* for that is subordinate. But when we receive our spiritual bodies, there is no reason why we should not be called *spirits,* in a figure, for spirit will be supreme. But there would be the danger of this word being taken literally, as though we had no bodies or souls.

To save ourselves the labor of investigating the vast field of theology, we will consider the very latest and best that we can find in contemporary theology as to the soul. The following quotation is taken from *Bibliotheca Sacra,* volume 101, page 18:

"The mystery of *life* is baffling and never more so than when an analysis of the immaterial part of man is undertaken. The whole reality of being is largely due to that in a living person which *actuates* the body, which sustains a CONSCIOUS relation to all things, and without which the body is not only *dead,* but immediately subject to *decay;* but as long as that reality remains in the body, *life* continues, the body is preserved, and its structure renewed. It is that which *thinks,* which FEELS, which reasons, which wills. It is that enigmatic actuality which comprehends, yet itself cannot be comprehended."

This quotation mixes SOUL and *spirit* together. In order to help in distinguishing them, we have put what refers to SOUL in small capitals, and what has to do with *spirit* in

italics. The word "mystery" is significant. The real "mysteries" of Scripture are merely *secrets.* Here, however, theology acknowledges that the "immaterial" part of man is an obscure, incomprehensible problem. To begin with, the division of man into "material" and "immaterial" parts, though it seems so fundamentally sound and logical, puts the whole matter on an unscriptural and misleading basis. It implies that man is composed of two utterly separate entities, which cannot unite to form a combination. It would be far more logical, since mankind is a unit, to speak of *three* divisions: the material, the immaterial, and their *resultant,* which would partake of both, yet may be quite different from either. *This* would be the soul.

But why introduce unsound terminology into the subject? "Mysteries" cannot be solved by such means. This one will vanish if we confine ourselves to sound words, used by God Himself, Who knows all about it. The soul must not be classified with the spirit, even if it seems to be immaterial, any more than we should classify an electric light in the same category as electric power. Soul, like light, is an effect which require's *both* a material and an immaterial cause, and cannot well be ranged under either category. As a filament plus current makes light, so the soil of the body, given life by the spirit, produces sensation or soul.

In the paragraph we have quoted, it will be seen that the *life* that *actuates* the body, so that it is *dead* and *decays* without it, is the *spirit.* But the human spirit is not CONSCIOUS, and does not literally FEEL anything. That is due to the action of the spirit on the soil. It is the soul. The mystery is practically solved if we keep the spirit distinct from the effects it produces upon the body, that is, *sensation.* In a later paragraph we are assured that "the distinction between *soul* and *spirit* is as incomprehensible as life itself, and the efforts of men to frame definitions must always be unsatisfactory." The real reason why this seems

so is the injection of false premises and futile reasoning, and a departure from sound words.

It may help us to see why another important matter cannot be solved by theology, when it fails to distinguish the soul from the spirit, and clings to the division into "material" and "immaterial." Up to this point it would seem clear that man is composed of only these *two* parts, but now it seems that there are three!

"A question arises at this point which has engaged and divided theologians in all generations, namely, is man a *dichotomous being*—two parts, material and immaterial with the supposition that soul and spirit are the same—, or is he *trichotomous* body, soul, and spirit? It would be readily conceded by all that, under any consideration, there is not the same breadth of distinction observable between *soul* and *spirit;* yet these terms are used synonymously. Thus the controversy is between those who are impressed with the distinctions and those who are impressed with the similarities. It would be well to recognize that, when so required, the Bible assigns to those two terms a distinctive meaning and that when no specific distinction is in view the Bible uses them as interchangeable. In other words, the Bible supports both *dichotomy* and *trichotomy."*

What a puzzling book it must be that is so inconsistent! But we may rest assured that there is no clash of this kind in the Scriptures. It needs only a single reading of the account of man's creation to see that man is *made* of *two* elements, and, then, *became* a *third* thing. The *two* and *three* do not clash. *Soil* and *spirit* are *two.* They alone, without any addition, compose man. The *soul* is *not* an *addition,* a *third* element. It is the *result* of the union of *soil* and *spirit.* Man is not made of two parts because soul and spirit are the same, but because the soul was not needed to make man, being the *effect of the union* of the body with the spirit. It

is therefore misleading to speak of the soul as "immaterial," for there can be no soul without the "material." And it is just as wrong to speak of it as "material," for the spirit is essential to its existence.

Soul and *spirit* are *never* used synonymously in the Scriptures. They are in theology and in popular usage. In fact, *soul* has almost usurped the place of *spirit* in religious circles. Why should there be the same breadth of distinction between *soul* and *body,* and *soul* and *spirit,* as there is between *spirit* and *body,* when *soul* is the *effect* of the *spirit* on the *body*? But that there is a great gulf between soul and spirit ought to be evident from the Scriptures, when the Bible translates *soulish* by *sensual,* which may be the opposite of *spiritual.* Soul and spirit are *never* interchangeable. The fact that our translators have rendered *soul* by *life* so often, has led to this deplorable confusion, and now supports it. It is practically impossible for anyone using such a discordant version to come to any clear understanding of his own constitution! He has a soul, yet doesn't know what it is!

WHERE THE SOUL IS

Where is the soul? Here we have a good illustration of the vast amount of confusion a single discordant mistranslation can make. Theology is permeated with the mistaken notion that the *life* is in the *blood!* It suffers from lack of clearness that it is the *soul* which is in the *blood.* As a consequence, it has practically lost the truth as to the soul. It labors and heaves with efforts to show that the soul is different from the spirit, all the while giving it the function of spirit, which is to impart life.

The blood itself is a combination, like the soul. It is composed of particles assimilated from food derived from the soil, and of gases derived from the breath taken from the air.

A human being, as at present constituted, will die if the

blood is drained from his veins. But he will also die from other causes, when he has plenty of blood. If the blood is temporarily withdrawn from a part of the body, that part is not dead, the *spirit* does not leave, but it is *unconscious*, because the *soul* leaves with the blood. There is no *sensation* in a limb from which the blood has been drained. Nature agrees with revelation that the soul is in the blood, and is dependent on the presence of the blood, not in the whole body, but in small sections of it.

Physiology, like theology, is all at sea as to the soul, although the evidence is plentiful on every side that sensation is in the blood. We were taught, and I think it is still the teaching of "science," so-called, that all sensation is in the *nerves.* There is doubtless a modicum of truth in this, for they probably connect members of the body with the brain, but much of this is quite unconscious. Many experiences show that, even when the nerves are whole, there is no sensation where there is no blood. Nature confirms revelation in this matter. Both agree that the removal of blood from a member of the body destroys *sensation*, not life, even if this would eventually follow.

A newspaper correspondent was seriously wounded while at the front line of the war, in Italy. Later, when recounting his experience, he reported that the most remarkable part of all was the fact that he did not suffer much, although his wounds were very bad and bloody. He inquired of others and found it so in all cases where much blood was lost. The doctor in charge of the hospital assured him that the most horribly mangled often suffered the least. He did not seem to understand why this is so, but came near guessing the truth that those who lost the most blood suffered the least.

The opposite is true of internal injuries. Not long since a friend fell down stairs and shattered a shoulder and a hip. There was no loss of blood, but every indication of the most excruciating pain. The suffering was so intense

that the realization of it almost made me ill and helpless. It confirmed my finding in the Scriptures, and I almost wished that some blood had been lost, or that it could be drained from those limbs which had been injured, or displaced by some other fluid temporarily. I was told many years ago, that an extractor of teeth injected water in the gums, and pulled teeth without pain.

The same truth comes out in an entirely different way in the experience of aviators. When "pulling out" of a swift dive, the blood, not being attached to the flesh, continues to go down when the body is forced to stop its descent. It leaves the upper part of the body, and, as a consequence, the flier becomes unconscious. There is a dangerous "blackout," so long as the heart is not able to pump the blood back to the head. From this we see that, not merely sensation, but *consciousness*, which consists in the exercise of the perceptive faculties, sight, hearing, smell, and taste, are absent when there is no blood in the eyes and ears and mouth and nose. So to speak they "go to sleep," along with the mental functions when blood leaves the brain.

God's law mercifully recognizes this fact. It demanded that, in killing an animal, the blood must be drained as quickly as possible (Lev.17:13). This is a great relief to those who imagine that the sea of blood which was shed on Jewish altars represented untold suffering and anguish. The exact contrary is the fact. These animals, had they lived until death by natural causes had overtaken them, would undoubtedly have had their share of suffering, as all animals do, especially in disease or old age. All this was spared them when they were killed in such a way as to drain the blood quickly from their veins. Where the blood flowed freely there was no pain. The same is true of the so-called "kosher" way of killing, used by the Jews today. It ought to be practiced by all, as the most humane of all methods of slaughtering animals.

Our Lord's resurrection body is the crowning demonstration that life is not in the blood. Were blood essential, it certainly would have been restored to Him in resurrection. But all the evidence seems to insist that His blood was shed, not only by the wounds of crucifixion, but by the spear thrust into His side (John 19:34). This was in contrast to the fate of the others who were crucified with Him, whose bones were broken. Like the sin offerings of old, no bone of Him was crushed. This corresponds with His own words to His disciples when they thought that He was a spirit. He did not claim that He was flesh and *blood,* but flesh and *bones.* It seems certain that His resurrection body had no blood, yet it was vital with life far beyond what He had before, for He became immortal. Surely if the life were in the blood, the loss of all the blood would not lead to life everlasting!

Once we are aware *why* we have a soul, and *what* it is, and *where* it resides, there is little difficulty in determining *whither* it goes at death. If it is the effect of a combination, and this combination is dissolved, then the effect disappears, just as the light vanishes when we cut off the current from the filament in an electric bulb. Let us not be misled by the figurative language of the Scriptures, and transform what the Greek calls the *imperceptible* into a "hell" with its connotations of fire, and devils and despair.

Its Hebrew name, sheol, has practically the same significance, for it is only a form of the stem which means ASK. It is the place of which nothing can be known. Both saints and sinners go there, but why should we paint it in lurid colors, either good or bad, when it cannot be perceived or known?

The soul is the sensation consequent on the combination of spirit with an organic body. At present it is found in the blood. In death the soul vanishes into the unseen.

A. E. Knoch

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Christ and Paul
57 "Honor Your Father and Mother"; Grace, and "The Ration of Sin"
74 The Soul Not Immortal
85 Through the Obedience of the One

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EDITORIAL

THE ORDER of the articles in this issue of our magazine is fairly well backwards in relation to that of Paul's letters. We begin with a meditation on Paul's prison epistles ("Christ and Paul") and end with notes on Romans 5:19 ("Through the Obedience of the One"). In between are questions and answers regarding the place of law and grace in Paul's ministry ("Honor your Father and Mother" and "Grace and the Ration of Sin"); plus a clarifying study of the present constitution and future mission of mankind ("The Soul not Immortal"). Yet the so-called "canonical order" of Paul's epistles, which if not inspired on the same level as the writings themselves, is certainly appropriate, begins with Romans, leading forward to the maturity of revelation in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, before concluding with the epistles of expectation and Paul's personal letters focused on the character and continuance of the faith.

In former years this magazine concentrated more, in accord with its name, on the *untraceable riches* of Christ (Eph.3:8, CV). Brother Mealand's meditation (first published in 1945) is especially representative of this emphasis. Although the other three studies give greater attention to the foundational themes of soul and flesh, law and grace, justification and conciliation, most thoroughly covered in Paul's earlier epistles, these are fundamental for our appreciation of our celestial expectation and the transcendent grace unfolded in the later writings.

We need both. We need to know and appreciate "the zenith of grace" which "was reached in the grand unfoldings of the prison epistles" (p.51), while never forgetting

the fundamental revelations of God's righteousness and love through the obedience of His Son, Jesus Christ. For indeed Ephesians takes up the themes of Romans 3:21-5:21, and expands on them, in its opening references to God's choice of us in Christ, "we to be *holy and flawless in His sight,* in *love designating us beforehand for the place of a son*" (Eph.1:4,5). So also Romans 3:24 and 5:8 lie behind the words of Ephesians 1:7 concerning the deliverance through Christ's blood. And Romans 5 as a whole provides the basis of Ephesians 2:8, in which we read: "For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present." Again, we see that Ephesians 3:17 points back to the glorious unfoldings of God's love described in Romans 5:5-8 and brought into our lives in Romans 8:35-39, in which we are *rooted and grounded.*

Brother Knoch once wrote, "Sinner, would you know how to be just before God? *Read Romans!"* Saint, would you be at perfect peace with God? *Read Romans!"* Then in his introduction to Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians he observed, "Paul's Perfection epistles are based upon his Preparatory epistles to the Thessalonians, the Romans, the Corinthians, and the Galatians. They are addressed to those who had received the truth taught in his earlier ministries . . . ."[1]

We would be like Timothy, believers who "fully follow" Paul in his teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings" (2 Tim.3:10,11). This certainly means retaining in heart and walk the evangel Paul brought to us, which we accepted, and through which we are being saved (1 Cor.15:1,2), as well as praying for a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of God, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ (Eph.1:3,15-17). D.H.H.

1. Concordant Commentary, pages 229 and 287.

CHRIST AND PAUL

WHY IS IT that today there is no impelling conception of the risen Christ and, through Him, of a gracious, understanding God and Father? And is it not true to say, that because of this lack, and understatement of the evangel, people are kept at a great remove from the glorious God they should intimately know?

From long years of experience and observation, we are inclined to think one reason lies in the fact that Paul's evangel and heralding of truth to the nations has been so tragically unheeded. Enrichment of life, and a rare illumination of mind in the things of God, always attended his ministry, and wherever a recovery of the precious truth he enunciated has been grasped, there has been vital blessing. It has not, however, been clearly seen that his teaching is progressive, ever mounting upwards and leading, as it were, to a pinnacle of grace and glory.

THE PRISON EPISTLES

Now, it is surely true to say that the zenith of grace was reached in the grand unfoldings of the prison epistles. Therefore it is for us in these later days to base our position upon them. Since within them we have Paul's latest and quite unique revelation from the ascended Christ Himself, should we not rest our constructive thinking on such a great announcement?

Paul alone gives us the truth of the body of Christ as a designation of those who, hearing him and others with him, have steadfastly stood by his teaching. But this is not

all. When the flood tide of grace came, and the apostle to the nations was entrusted with "the administration of the grace of God," so specially given to him, that body became a *joint body,* an altogether new and rare organism. And very simply and beautifully is it set forth.

"In spirit the nations are to be joint enjoyers of an allotment, and a joint body, and joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which I became the dispenser, in accord with the gratuity of the grace of God, which is granted to me in accord with His powerful operation" (Eph.3:6,7). But so short a quotation may fail to bring home to heart and mind the sublime import of the apostle's message. It calls for the whole chapter and paragraphs of the next. For there is Paul's fervent prayer and marvelous doxology, followed by an exhortation which surely stands alone for spiritual breadth and grandeur.

TRANSCENDENT REVELATIONS

Indeed, so transcendent a statement should in itself give settlement of belief, and, in harmony with the Philippian and Colossian letters, establish the standing and outlook of all believers. It is one of vivid clearness. Paul tells us there is "one body and one spirit, according as you were called also with one expectation of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all" (Eph.4:4-6).

Surely, in this sevenfold summary of belief, we have a spiritual program that should be satisfying to all believers in Christ Jesus. It is a simple yet comprehensive declaration, which, had it been faithfully adhered to, would have meant volumes of blessing to the assemblies of God's people. But when its clarity is marred by addition or subtraction of words, its beauty and beneficence are gone. We should remember that whatever preceded the teaching Paul unfolds in his rare trio of prison epistles, it is absorbed and

carried forward to a veritable zenith of grace. We do not read such language elsewhere, the phraseology of which is so fitting to this wondrous era of grace.

Maybe its purely celestial character is not seen as completing what hitherto was but fragmentary. In his presentation of the Christ of God, Paul is unique as the interpreter of the risen Christ "Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all" (Eph.1:22,23). Again, who but Paul so writes of Christ as the One through Whom God purposes to reconcile the universe to Himself (Col.1:20)?

A TENDENCY TOWARD CONFUSION

When we note the language which so characterizes Ephesians do we not feel that the last word has been written with regard to the present outlook and future destiny of the body of Christ? The tendency to merge teaching which should be kept apart, causes confusion of mind and detracts from the full enjoyment of the grace and truth for this time present.

Take, for instance, the subject of baptism. John's baptism by water was distinctly for the time being. Note the words of Christ Himself to John. "By your leave, at *present,* for thus it is becoming for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt.3:15).

It was truth *just for the time,* a test of faith at that particular era, and truth at that moment. It was also fitting that the King should thus come into line with the proclamation of the kingdom. Therefore, His disciples continued to administer the rite in accord with the evangel they preached. When, however, the kingdom proclamation met with final rejection at Rome, the practice of baptism appears to cease. And Paul emphatically declares that baptism is not included in his own special testimony (1 Cor.1:17). Therefore, the "one baptism" mentioned in

Ephesians is evidently in spirit, for everything in that unity is spiritual.

We may think of other things which obtained *just for the time*, but when we enter upon our celestial citizenship, things made with hands have little appeal. And the apostle Paul was brought into the light and liberty of this realm that he might pass on to others the illumination and enrichment he himself received.

PAUL'S APOSTLESHIP

It is well, too, to bear in mind the distinctiveness of Paul's commission. It so stands by itself. Some of its wording sets the apostle quite apart as a pioneer and pathfinder in the realm of grace. From the glory above the brightness of the sun came a voice in utterance of these expressive words: "I was seen by you for this, to fix upon you before for a deputy and a witness both of what you have perceived *and that in which I will be seen by you*, extricating you from the people and from the nations, to whom I am commissioning you" (Acts 26:16,17).

Now, the words purposely italicized above, surely prepare our hearts and minds for such a revelation as Paul unfolds in Ephesians. And that revelation discloses the transformation that was to affect the body of Christ. It was to become a joint-body. This was a new and unparalleled thing, a perfect equality of membership of the body of Christ unheard of before. Neither Peter, nor the other apostles present with Christ in His earthly ministry, mention anything like it. Paul's heralding of the evangel alone led to it as part of his stewardship to the nations.

There is nothing in nature, or in aught "made with hands" to compare with its divine beauty. Its grandeur is, that it is *"in spirit."* Why, then, seek to make a blend of Paul with Peter, or even with John? It is no disparagement to the other writers, to emphasize the value of Paul's ministry. If

we would realize maturity in both grace and knowledge, he is our true teacher. If we would live and walk in spirit, and enter into the very *"depths of God,"* he is also our guide.

Many godly men of the past, who from various causes may not have fully seen the vastness of such grace as the great apostle discloses, have yet sensed, as it were, something of its celestial character. Who but Paul gives us so exalted a conception of Christ? Who associates the Lord of life and glory with such fullness of reward and regal potency? And who, but he, points the believer to so glorious a consummation of God's purpose as we find unfolded in the sacred Scriptures?

As "the Image of the invisible God," Christ is set forth as by no other. Well, then, may the faith he brings us into be the *one faith* for believers of today. It makes Christ not only our Expectation, but the Reconciler of the universe. And for our everyday life, brings Him so near to our hearts. Should we not, then, thank the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as did Paul himself, for such rare communications of grace?

Well may Paul have found in Christ his all in all, for he had found in Him the Daysman of God Who could lay His hand upon them both. Paul knew man, but how much he also knew of the power of Christ! And so he was greatly used by God as the ambassador of Christ. It has been said that "Paul never knew Jesus in His lifetime, but nevertheless it was he who best understood Him." He proclaims the Christ of God in a way to bear Him to the heart in an effulgence of grace and glory.

Would that more preachers and teachers of today could thus see the might and majesty of Christ, as so set forth. But most of them hark back to Christ's earthly ministry or to other epistles rather than Paul's, and do not therefore reach the heights of grace and knowledge they would attain by study of Paul's peerless ministry. How enhanced

their messages would be if they heralded Christ as the Image of the invisible God and the Son of His love! Ministries would be profoundly changed, and their sermons, dry and dead, would be freshened by the dew of heaven and throbbing with life in its fullness.

A PRESENT NEED

There is need for Christ to be preached as Paul preached Him. And in his writings, the grandeur of the themes are their own eloquence as they so movingly tell of God's indescribable gift of the Son of His love. Preachers who would saturate themselves in such divine phraseology, could bring truths to the enlightenment of the heart, unheard of by many of God's people. Darkness would be pierced, and a wonderful light and liberty rest upon speaker and hearer alike. And to our God there would ascend a fragrant odor, for His Christ would be truly exalted, and His excellencies magnified as never before.

May it then be, that to us, to whom God has made known so rich an understanding and blessedness, there might increasingly come "the knowledge transcending love of Christ."

William Mealand

REPOSING

Our brother, Charles F. Johnson, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, was put to repose on April 20, at age 80. "Chuck" was born and raised near Baldwin, the youngest of eight children, among whom were Dorothy (Hibberd) and Lucile (Wimmer). They were deprived of many of the conveniences of life which most people in our country took for granted even in those days of economic depression, yet blessed with what was sufficient for real physical needs and even more so with what was, in his case, conducive for spiritual growth. For he enjoyed an acquaintance with the Scriptures from his youth, and God granted him a growing measure of faith centered on Christ and the grace of God in Him. We sorrow along with his family in this loss, while anticipating the glories ahead which we all shall share with our Lord.

"HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER"; GRACE, AND "THE RATION OF SIN"

Question:

A friend asked me about the verses in Ephesians 6 in which Paul, in his own somewhat recast form, makes quotations from the law of Moses, both from Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16:

> *Children, be obeying your parents, in the Lord, for this is just. 'Honor your father and mother' (which is the first precept with a promise), that it may be becoming well with you, and you should be a long time on the earth.* (Ephesians 6:1-3, CV)

My friend's concern here is whether from what Paul says in this text we should conclude that we as believers today are obliged to keep the law.

While I rarely look at commentaries, I looked up verse two because of the Old Testament reference, and was surprised that one commentary flatly said something which, upon reading, I nearly choked, which is:

"This verse proves the law in the New Testament is not abolished" (Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database).

A. E. Knoch did not address this issue in THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, but perhaps you will have some insight concerning it.

Answer:

THE question is whether the fact that Paul in Ephesians 6:2,3 makes quotations from Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16, proves that the law is not "abolished" in the

"New Testament." The further question, more relevant to ourselves, is whether Paul's act of making these citations from Moses, proves that the law itself, per se, as a body of instruction, is instruction which we as believers today must heed if we would be obedient to God.

This quotation which you provide from the Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary: "This verse proves the law in the New Testament is not abolished," is in any case syntactically awkward. It would be clearer to say (which presumably is the writer's actual thought): This verse proves that the law is not abolished in the New Testament.

Then, to make this claim be of any "legal appertainment" to ourselves, the further claim would need to be made: The law is applicable to believers today, who must obey its commandments if they would obey God.

There are two questions, then, before us: (1) Whether, indeed, Paul's act in Ephesians 6:2,3 of therein making quotations from Moses' law, "proves" (that is, entails it to be so) that the law is not abolished in the New Testament, and, (2) Whether what Paul says there, in any event, makes it the case that believers today must obey the precepts of the law.

These are the questions that naturally arise here, the correct answers to these questions being what we earnestly wish to obtain. But instead of asking, much less answering, either one of these questions, the Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary merely makes the *claim,* which, clearly stated, is: This verse, Ephesians 6:2, proves that the law is not abolished in the New Testament—the plain implication of which being, therefore, believers today must obey the precepts of the law.

How it is that the words of this verse, Ephesians 6:2, prove the law is not abolished in the New Testament, much less prove that believers today must obey the precepts of the law, is not stated. Instead, a mere assertion is made,

devoid of any proof—and yet it is made in such a way as if proof had been provided.

This is the fallacy of *petitio principii,* "begging the question" (i.e., "assuming the initial point," the point at issue). Even if a declaration, one not made as a proof-claim but simply as an assertion of truth, happens to be correct, speaking as if a sound *argument* has been given, especially when no argument at all has been given, is begging the question. Effectually, it is to "beg" the reader to agree with what is claimed *anyway*—even though no proof has been provided—*intimidating* him to do so as if the claim-maker's assertion were so "obviously true" that it was therefore somehow exempt from any need of proof.

The question whether the words of Ephesians 6:2,3 in which Paul refers to Moses' law, constitute proof that the law is not abolished in the New Testament, is easy to answer. Since all that Paul does here is merely *cite* Moses in certain words of his law, albeit in a way which is related to his own instruction in verse one, "Children, be obeying your parents, in the Lord, for this is just," this fact itself is not the *proof* of anything further. Therefore, the words of Ephesians 6:2 are certainly not the proof of this commentary's own claim, namely, that the words of Ephesians 6:2 prove that the law is not abolished in the New Testament.

After mentioning Moses' initial words thus, "Honor your father and mother," Paul then adds a word of his own: "which is the first precept with a promise." Our apostle's words here are interjectory in nature ("'Honor your father and mother'—*which is the first precept with a promise*—that it may be becoming well with you . . ."). His words which follow in Ephesians 6:3, "that it may be becoming well with you, and you should be a long time on the earth," are his own inspired version of Moses' words, declared unto Israel, "that your days may be prolonged and that it may

be well with you on the ground which Yahweh your Elohim is giving to you" (Deut.5:16; *cp* Ex.20:12).

As Paul notes, the fifth precept of the "ten words" of Moses' law, in its words "that your days may be prolonged and that it may be well with you on the ground which Yahweh your Elohim is giving to you" (Deut.5:16), is the first of these precepts with a specific promise "annexed" to it (as John Gill[1] once put it). Indeed, in the wisdom of God, it is not only the first precept, but the only one of the principal ten precepts of the law to which any such word of blessing is attached.

By his citation of these words of Moses, Paul illustrates to the children in the ecclesia what is involved in his own instruction to them, which is to be obeying their parents, in the Lord. In saying that they are to do so, Paul adds the words, "for this is just." In honoring their parents through their obedience to them, not only will the children be doing "the right thing" insofar as giving honor to whom it is due (*cf* Rom.13:7), but they will also be learning how to be subject to others, wherever this may be called for. The practice of deferring to the prerogatives of others, is a discipline which will be of great benefit to believing children, not only in their youth, but throughout their lives (*cp* "that it may be becoming well with you," Eph.6:3). Indeed, how many adults there are who suffer, and cause others to suffer as well, because of their failure to honor the rights of others by subjecting themselves to those self-same rights.

If one wishes to claim that a certain verse "proves" this or that, one should indicate the premises from which such a conclusion is supposed to follow. However, in connection with Ephesians 6:2, there simply are no collectively-true premises, each one true in itself, from which

1. John Gill (1690-1771), John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible, comment on Ephesians 6:2.

any such proof-claim in favor of present-day lawkeeping may be made.

Of course we do not say that the law was abolished, nor that there are none in Christ to whom it is applicable, but that, for certain, carefully-stated reasons, its precepts, as such, are not directed to ourselves, nor are we otherwise subject to them—including these words in question in Deuteronomy 5:16 and Exodus 20:12 of which Paul speaks.

I addressed this issue of Paul's citation of Moses here in Ephesians 6:2,3, specifically in one of my articles concerning the law, that entitled, "Grace and Obedience":

"What some call 'God's law'—that is, to speak plainly, the Ten Commandments and perhaps certain other laws from the books of Moses—is that which is said to constitute timeless righteousness. However reasonable and scriptural this notion may seem to be, it simply is not true. We do not seek to obey *as such* even a single one of the laws given through Moses. Similarly, we do not inconsistently set aside the fourth commandment, that enjoining sabbath-keeping, while seeking to heed the remaining nine ourselves. Not at all. It is merely incidental to our own obedience that, for example, Moses instructed the Israelite to honor his father and mother (the fifth commandment of the 'ten words'). *We* are to follow the apostle Paul fully in his teaching (2 Tim.3:10). *That* is why we, *like* Israel, are to honor our parents *also* (Eph.6:1-3).

"Anyone who is at all acquainted with the Pauline writings is aware that the apostle places much emphasis on the importance of the believer's *obedience.* He employs the imperative mood and gives many entreaties—clearly and directly—whenever he wishes to present the Lord's directives concerning us. In so doing, he sometimes presents various instructions to us that were indeed first given as laws for Israel of old, often interpreting them in a fuller and more

exalted sense (e.g., Eph.5:28). *Yet there is no such instruction anywhere in his writings concerning the sabbath.*

"Likewise, he nowhere teaches that the will of God with respect to the believer's walk may be found within the books of Moses. May these facts speak to us, concerning the genuine teaching of our apostle, who dared not to speak any of what Christ did not effect through him, 'for the *obedience* of the nations' (Rom.15:18)." [2]

GOD'S COUNSEL FOR TODAY[3]

God's law (i.e., the "law of the Lord"), given through Moses, is afforded a place in modern Christianity quite foreign to God's purpose. It is not realized that the law was given to Israel (and to Israel alone) not to show what man can do but what he cannot do.

Nonetheless, many a modern movement seeks to promote the observance of the law even today. For most, the main idea seems to be that man is obliged to keep God's "moral law," which they take to be the Ten Commandments. While these particular precepts had a central place within the Mosaic system, it is altogether unscriptural to suggest that they comprise the essence of abiding morality, or that all who would be moral today must yield to their demands . . . .

It is true that, under the evangel of the Circumcision, the law is "the superinduction of a better expectation," through which the believers of that calling draw near to God (Heb.7:19). Even so, on account of the flesh, effectually speaking, the law was "infirm" (Rom.8:3); thus its precepts were "weak and without benefit; for the law perfects

2. James Coram, "Grace and Obedience, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.80, p.222, 223.

3. James Coram, "The Scope of Divine Law," *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.82, pp.63-65, adapted.

nothing" (Heb.7:18). Consequently, to be Israel, under law, does not bring blessing, but condemnation and death.

Believers today are not under the corpus of law given to Israel of old. God has not imposed these laws upon us, notwithstanding the excellence we may perceive in them or any suppositions of our own as to their perceived appropriateness for our obedience today.

One may not "pick and choose" which of Moses' precepts he will take to himself and which he will not, according to his own speculations and reasonings to the effect that certain of these laws have been "done away" while others yet remain. Intrinsically, the *entire* law—even in its most minute particular—was holy, just and good, even ideal; and the Israelite under law was required to heed it.

Yet it by no means follows from this that its precepts and statutes constitute timeless righteousness with respect to the personal behavior of all men, everywhere, regardless of era or divine administration. Therefore it is both false and foolish to claim that if we would be holy and do what is just and good, we must do what Moses declares.

If God would have us know what is pleasing to Him with respect to the walk of the believer today, He must send us an apostle to make this known to us. And if it should be that any particulars encompassed within His will for us at present should include certain explicit counsel which, *incidentally,* was once also His counsel to Israel of old, then He will need to send us a spokesman or prophet to make this clear.

May the reader be given the eyes to see that God has done this very thing; and that He has done so through the ministry of the apostle Paul (the apostle of the *nations*), as recorded in his prophetic scriptures (*cf* Rom.11:13; 16:26).

ELLIPTICAL, YET MANIFEST

In closing our present inquiry concerning Ephesians

6:1-3, let us now read the entirety of this passage at once, considering it as a whole:

"*Children, be obeying your parents, in the Lord, for this is just.* 'Honor your father and mother'—which is the first precept with a promise—that it may be becoming well with you, and you should be a long time on the earth."

The careful reader will note that verses two and three: "'Honor your father and mother'—which is the first precept with a promise—that it may be becoming well with you, and you should be a long time on the earth," are a sentence fragment.[4] It will be noted as well that, except for Paul's inspired comment concerning the words which he cites and relates from Moses, comprised in verses two and three, the whole of that which Paul himself has to say

4. This is not to say that the words of verses two and three could in no case be used so as to form a complete thought. It is instead to say that in order for them to do so, they would need to inhere in a declaration that was a "stand-alone," independent statement, with their interjectory phrase being words of the original speaker. Here, however, they are used not independently but dependently, and, the interjectory words therewithin are not words of the original speaker, Moses, but of the citing-speaker, Paul, who in the remainder of this phrase is *citing* the one who originally spoke these words.

As the words comprising verses two and three appear here, conjoined to and as the complement of the words of verse one even as with the interjectory phrase, "which is the first precept with a promise" being words of Paul, not of Moses, they do not constitute a complete thought.

A sentence, or independent clause, requires at least a subject and a verb (a verb-only predicate), a predicate which modifies the subject, in view of which the subject is "predicated," which is to say, declared. Ordinarily, a sentence includes some additional words as well that explain the subject. The words of Ephesians 6:2, 3, however, even though numerous, as they are employed here within the whole of Ephesians 6:1-3, do not include even a verb, much less any further predicate phrase. Therefore, as used within this passage, they are not an independent clause or sentence, but only a sentence fragment.

here consists in verse one alone, namely, the words, "Children, be obeying your parents, in the Lord, for this is just."

Thus we begin to realize that Ephesians 6:1-3 must be read as a whole, *with special emphasis duly given to what Paul himself instructs* (albeit in close connection to that which he cites from Moses, and comments upon as well). When it is further recognized that the entirety of verses two and three are a sentence fragment, it becomes evident that these same words do not stand alone but are elliptical in nature. Hence the reader himself must supply the *self-evident* idea in view, in order to complete the thought. The ellipses here, therefore, must be along the lines of what I suggest in my following restatement of Ephesians 6:1-3, with ellipses herein supplied in the bracketed words:

"Children, be obeying your parents, in the Lord, for this is just. [And indeed, the instruction which God gave to Israel through Moses, namely,] 'Honor your father and mother'—which is the first precept with a promise—that it may be becoming well with you, and you should be a long time on the earth, [is instruction that *accords with* and *explicates* my own instruction to you, which is, again: Children, be obeying your parents, in the Lord, for this is just]."

The substantive content of an elliptical phrase is not open to speculation. Where an ellipsis occurs, the content of the ellipsis is both (1) self-evident, and (2) self-governing.

Where an ellipsis is present, while it is true that the specific words constitutive of the ellipsis are left to the reader to supply, the discerning reader will nevertheless perceive, not only that an ellipsis is necessarily present, but will also perceive the implicit *substantive essence* of the elliptical thought in view—which must be added to the explicit declaration, in order to complete the thought.

Therefore, the reader will supply the albeit omitted (i.e., elliptical) yet logically manifest idea in words which are, in fact, reflective of the essential thought in view. This is

the case even if a certain able reader should phrase the ellipsis somewhat in different words than another equally able reader.

In conclusion, then, we may be sure that in Ephesians 6:2,3, where Paul variously quotes and recasts certain words of "God's law" given to Israel (namely, "'Honor your father and mother' . . . that it may be becoming well with you, and you should be a long time on the earth"), he does not do so in support of any claim which asserts that we today must obey this self-same law. Instead, our apostle does so inasmuch as this instruction of Moses to Israel *accords with* and *explicates* his own instruction to us, which is: *"Children, be obeying your parents, in the Lord, for this is just."*

❊

Question:

(1) I am mindful that "eternal life" (or, life for the ages) is a "gift" (Rom.6:23, AV); but still, we must accept Christ in order to get this gift. I know that you emphasize that we are saved by grace, and I agree with this (Eph.2:8). And I also know that you put a lot of emphasis on the apostle Paul. But when he was asked, "What must I do to be saved?" he didn't say, You don't need to do anything; instead, he said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved . . ." (Acts 16:30,31, AV).

I will admit that if we get salvation for accepting Christ, this doesn't sound like salvation is a gift. On the other hand, we need to take responsibility for our actions.

(2) I know that I should not let sin be "running things" ("reigning" over me, so that I just give in and obey its lusts whenever temptation arises; Rom.6:12). Likewise, I know that even though we are under grace, I should always seek to do right and not sin. The truth is though, so many times, I just give in and go ahead and sin, anyhow. This is especially upsetting because I really do not want to sin, and I am so ashamed of myself for still being sinful.

(3) Why does the Concordant Version translate the first part of Romans 6:23, "For the ration of Sin is death"? This seems strange. I am used to reading this verse, as in the Authorized Version and other translations, "For the wages of sin is death," which seems easier to understand. "The wages of sin is death" makes sense, since we all die because of our sins, unless we accept Christ.

If you can clear up any of these things for me, I would be grateful.

Answer:

(1) The "grace" that says that one must do something in order to get that grace, is grace falsely so-called.

Even as you say, "If we get salvation for accepting Christ, this doesn't sound like salvation is a gift." I would only add that if it *were* the case that we *did* "get salvation" *for*—which is to say, in return for—accepting Christ, then salvation would not *be* a gift. That is, in that case, it would not be a *gratuitous* and *gracious* provision—uncalled for, and granted not as a reward, but as a favor.

Since, however, our justification *is* granted us "*gratuitously* in [God's] *grace,* through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24), it follows that we do *not* obtain salvation in return for believing, or in return for anything else that we do.

We would never say to the unbeliever: If you would become a saint (that is, one who is "in Christ"), there is nothing you need to do; it matters not whether you believe or do not believe.

Instead, in response to the question, "What must I be doing that I may be saved?" our answer is the same as that

of Paul and Silas: "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved . . ." (*cf* Acts 16:30,31).

This is simply to say, This is what one must do; one must believe. But this is only because salvation comes *through* faith; hence faith is not an option, but a necessity. Even so, this is not at all to say that we are *required* to believe; instead, it is simply to say that our salvation is not apart from faith, faith which God graciously grants us.

You are certainly correct to say that we need to " 'take responsibility'[5] for our actions." This is to say that we need to accept and acknowledge our own accountability, while seeking to fulfill our obligations. This fact, however, simply speaks of our duty, broadly construed. It does not follow from this that believing the evangel is something over which we exercise "veto power," in any sense of ultimate control.

Since our justification is granted gratuitously in God's grace—*not* in response to our having met some type of requirement—it follows that salvation is not granted in response to meeting *any* sort of a requirement, which includes any requirement over which we might exercise some sort of veto power or control.

Insofar as our salvation in Christ is concerned, the question as to the true nature of human choice is simply irrelevant (which question we are therefore not presently addressing). In connection with the evangel, then, it is a "red herring"[6] even to bring up the question of "free will," much less to affirm anything in particular concerning it.

Besides, believing the evangel does not result from some

5. For the various senses in which the word "responsibility" is used, and how these relate to certain scriptural issues, see "A Beneficient Divine Providence," *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.100, pp.67-78; and, the chapter "Responsibility," in our publication The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God.

6. This error in argumentation is also known as: *Smoke Screen; Wild Goose Chase; Throwing Sand in the Air:* "Smoked herring (early 15c.; they turn red when cured) supposedly was used by fugitives to put bloodhounds off the scent (1680's); hence, in a metaphoric sense (1884), a 'red herring' speaks of 'something used to divert attention from the basic issue' " (*Online Etymology Dictionary;* from Dictionary.com website: http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/red herring).

sort of mere human decision, but from the powerful operations of God. "Faith" (or "faith[fulness]," *cf* Gal.5:22) is a *fruit* of the spirit; not a "requirement" of salvation. It is "in the *grace* of God," then, that we believe (*cp* 1 Cor.15:10,11), being "*graciously* granted . . . to be believing" on Christ (Phil.1:29).

Thus "God parts to each"—that is, to each member of the ecclesia, which is to say, to each one whom He *calls*—"the measure of faith" which each one enjoys (Rom.12:3). Accordingly, then, among "those who are *called,*" all enjoy common faith, common faith in the declaration: "*Christ,* the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor.1:23b,24).

In this light, then, we especially rejoice in Paul's testimony: "Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God, who are *called* according to the purpose that, *whom* He foreknew, He *designates beforehand,* also, to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. *Now whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls, these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these He glorifies also*" (Rom.8:28-30; *cp* Eph.1:4; 2 Tim.1:9).

"being freed from sin"

(2) It is fitting that we be ashamed of our sins, especially when we contemplate our former days, before we first believed, when we lived as utter "slaves of Sin [and] were free as to Righteousness" (Rom.6:20,21). Even so,

now, as we find grace to do so, may we be "forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front" (Phil.3:13).

It is surely true, even as you say, that we should not "let" (that is, permit) "Sin" to be "running things in our lives, such that we "just give in and obey its lusts whenever temptation arises."

This idea of permission, however, is not Paul's thought here, in the words, "Let not Sin, then, be reigning in your mortal body, for you to be obeying its lusts" (Rom.6:12). "Let" represents the imperative mood. The sense is, We are to "see to it," *then,* that Sin is not "reigning" in our mortal bodies—standing over us as an utter despot, with a view to the accomplishment of its wicked goal: "for [us] to be obeying its lusts."

Paul had just said, "Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall be *living* together with Him also . . ." (followed by the intervening words:)

> ". . . having perceived that Christ, being roused from among the dead, is no longer dying. Death is lording it over Him no longer, for in that He died, He died to Sin once for all time, yet in that He is living, He is living to God. *Thus you also,* be *reckoning* yourselves to be: *dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord."*

The apostle *therefore* declares: ". . . Let not Sin, *then,* be reigning in your mortal body, for you to be obeying its lusts" (Rom.6:8-12).

In speaking herein of our "living together with Christ," Paul speaks primarily not of our *future* living together with Him, but of our *present* living together with Him, in spirit, by faith (*cp* Rom.8:13; Col.2:5). In using the imperative mood, Paul does not do so in order to set forth a legal command, but to provide us with a word of *encouragement* by way of entreaty for the sake of our faithfulness, lest sin

should be utterly "reigning" in our mortal bodies—doing whatever it wills, whenever it wills.

The basis of Paul's encouragement here is the fact that when Christ died for our sins (1 Cor.15:3), "we died together with Christ" (*cp* Col.3:3); hence, "we *believe that we shall* be *living* together with Him *also*" (Rom.6:8).

Paul therefore entreats us, on the basis of whatever measure of *strength* we may enjoy in the power of whatever measure of *faith* God gives us (*cf* Rom.12:3). Our faith is in the fact that, even now, since *we* shall be living together with Christ, *Christ,* therefore, shall be living together with *us.*

Since we died together with Christ—and one who dies has been "justified from Sin" (Rom.6:7)—as those now "being freed from Sin, yet [being] enslaved to God, *[we] have [our] fruit for holiness.* Now the consummation is life eonian" (Rom.6:22; *cp* 1 Tim.6:12).

In a corresponding sense, those in Christ Jesus "are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit" (Rom.8:4b). It is not just that this is the way we *ought* to be walking; instead, it is that this is the way that we *are* walking. While we are mindful that "even on our best days" this is so only in limited measure, may we not lose sight of the fact that, nevertheless, *we do have* a new and better walk in Christ—all our failings notwithstanding.

"RATIONS," NOT "WAGES"

(3) As you noted, the Concordant Version translates the first part of Romans 6:23 as, "For the ration of Sin is death . . . ."

It is true that, being such a familiar phrase to practically all readers of the English Bible, the Authorized Version's rendering seems easier to understand. Thus, according to popular tradition, it "makes sense." This is because almost everyone supposes that we die because we sin. Indeed,

this notion is in no small part based upon this mistranslation, "The wages of sin is death."

You spoke of our "accepting" Christ, saying that we will die unless we "accept" Him, whereas men die, of course, whether or not they accept Christ. In making mention of our "acceptance" of Christ, however, we are not to imagine some sort of "transactional" event. This is because our salvation is a matter of *grace;* hence it is not to be conceived of as if it were some sort of *quid pro quo* (i.e., "this for that") exchange. Instead, when speaking of our "accepting" of Christ, we are simply referring to our "taking Him along" with us, not only as we once first began to do so, but as we continue to do so, throughout our life of faith.

A messenger of the Lord, appearing in a trance to Joseph, said, ". . . *Take along*[7] the little Boy and His mother and flee into Egypt . . ." (Matt.2:13). When the apostles related to Jesus "whatever they do and whatever they teach," we read that Jesus, "*taking* them *along* . . . retreats privately into a city called Bethsaida" (Luke 9:10). "As, then, you *accepted* Christ Jesus, the Lord [i.e., as you once began to 'take Him along' with you]," be continuing, accordingly, to be ". . . walking in Him" (Col.2:6).

We do not die because we sin, but as a result of Adam's sin. Thus, to die, we are dying (*cp* Gen.2:17): ". . . Even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and *thus death passed through into all mankind,* on which all sinned . . ." (Rom.5:12). While it is on account of death (in the form of mortality) having become our portion that we ourselves sin, nevertheless, *death* "passed through into all mankind" because of Adam's sin.[8]

7. *Para lamb[an]ō* is variously rendered, "take along," "take aside," "accept."

8. *cf* James Coram, "Critical Issues Concerning 'The Many,' and 'On Which,'" *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.101, pp.271-274.

The word, *misthos* (HIRE) corresponds to the English "wages" (e.g., "for the scripture is saying: 'A threshing ox you shall not be muzzling,' and 'Worthy is the worker of his wages'" (1 Tim.5:18; *cp* 1 Cor.3:8; James 5:4).

The word *opsōnion* (PROVISION-PURCHASE), however, used here in Romans 6:23, does *not* speak of wages. Instead, it speaks of a *provision* which is granted to another.

Paul did not work for "wages"; rather, even as he says to the Corinthians, in a figure: "Other ecclesias I despoil, getting *rations* [i.e., "provisions"] for dispensing to you" (2 Cor.11:8; *cp* "Who is warring at any time supplying his own *rations?*" 1 Cor.9:7).

In Romans 6:23, the context is "*slaves* of Sin" (Rom.6: 17-20). *Slaves are not paid "wages";* instead, they are dispensed whatever *rations* their master sees fit to provide them. Throughout the context of Romans 6:6-23, sin is *personified* (thus it is capitalized in the Concordant Version, "Sin"); and, it appears not as a beneficent master, but as one who sees fit to grant its slaves nothing better than death itself. Death, in the form of the dying process (*cp* "on which all sinned," Rom.5:12), is what "sustains us" in Sin's service.

"The *slave* of Sin receives *rations,* not *wages.* He is not hired but fed . . . .

"The false idea that men die for what they *do* is based on this text, even though the context is not concerned with what we do, but what we *are.* Take away the inference based on the false rendering *wages* and the way is open to believe the uniform testimony of the Scriptures that *judgment* is the "wages" of sin (i.e., it is what we receive for what we do), not death, while our *mortality* is what leads us into death."[9] J.R.C.

9. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*: "Suffering vs. Death, vol.30, p.57; "On Which All Sinned," vol.30, p.276.

THE SOUL NOT IMMORTAL

THE EXPRESSION "immortal soul" flatly contradicts another popular saying "The *soul* that sinneth, it shall *die.*" Both cannot be true. In the original there are other passages which confirm the latter. Twice a *dead* soul is spoken of, but in both cases the Authorized Version has altered it to "dead *body*" (Num.8:6; Haggai 2:13). Now where does God ever speak of the soul as being immortal? On the contrary, He distinctly denies immortality to all except Christ, now that He has been vivified, and is beyond the reach of death (1 Tim.6:15,16). The doctrine of the soul's immortality is the false foundation of our creeds. Though definitely denied by the Scriptures, it continues to be the basis on which Christianity rests. As a result the facts as to the human soul and spirit are practically unknown, and resurrection, rousing and vivification, which are vital to God's truth, are almost forgotten.

THEOLOGY SINS AS TO SIN

Theology is thoroughly mistaken as to every aspect of sin. It fails to see that sin is a falling short. It ascribes it to an evil "principle," instead of a lack of spirit. It transmits death through sin instead of sin through death. It refuses to acknowledge that Christ can cope with sin through His sacrifice. It makes it eternal instead of limiting it to the eons. It makes it an unwanted intruder into God's plans instead of a means to accomplish His purpose. It seeks to show that Satan originated it, and so robs God of His deity. It seats sin in human *nature* instead of in the *flesh.* Now

we wish to show that theology is astray as to sin's *entrance* also. From this it would almost seem that theology is the greatest sinner of them all!

FLESH UNDER LAW

To understand why it was that Eve could not resist the prompting of the flesh, we may consider the same situation under the law. God's instructions to the first pair proved to be impotent, just as the law later was weak *through the flesh* (Rom.8:3). Even today there are many saints who strive to keep the law (which itself is a serious sin), but they find that the flesh foils their efforts (Rom.7). Even those who are delivered from the bondage of the law still find a conflict, in which the flesh lusts against the spirit (Gal.5:17). Crucifixion, not salvation, is the fitting fate for the flesh (Gal.5:24). It betrayed Eve, it destroyed Israel, it is the weakness and the woe of humanity.

THE FALL

That theological stand-by, the "*fall,*" is a term never used in this connection in the Scriptures, hence I have been suspicious of it, knowing that such words often cover a mass of ignorance, and hinder an approach to the truth. Besides, it is one of those traps which are baited with enough Scripture to snare the seeker after truth. If I had come right out and said that I did not believe in the "fall," the statement would have created a false impression, as if I did not accept what the *Scriptures* say with reference to the offense [BESIDE-FALL-*effect*] of Adam, which opened up the way for sin and death to all his descendents. As a fact, I *do* believe what *they* say, but not what *theology* has to say regarding a "fall," of which God's Word does not speak. The term was invented in order to relieve God of the responsibility of Adam's action, and so block the way to the truth, that, ultimately, all is out of God.

The idea which the "fall" is supposed to convey is something like this: God made all things perfect and never intended that Adam should transgress. He wanted Adam to enjoy a sinless, happy existence in paradise for all eternity. But, somehow, without God having anything to do with it, and without His fault, Adam spoiled His whole plan by eating an apple which He did not want him to eat. Apples are generally a healthful fruit. I usually eat one early in the morning, with no ill effects, but, somehow, it turned Adam and Eve into sinners beyond reclaim, except for those who are rescued through the death of Christ by faith. We dare not speak of this as due to a mistake on God's part, so we shove it off His shoulders to those of Adam, who passed on the blame to Eve, who, in turn, passed it on to the serpent. To show that we think it was really due to something like an accident on the part of our first parents, we call it the "fall."

Few think deeply enough to ask, *Why* did Adam fall? Why did not God make him so that he could not disobey? God can do this, and has done it in the case of Christ, and will do it for all His saints in resurrection. *Why* did He plant a tree right in the middle of Eden which could cause his fall, and then forbid him to eat of it? Would it not have been much wiser and safer to root it out altogether, and not allow a single tree of this kind anywhere within his reach, not even outside of the garden? And why allow the serpent access to Eve? Why create a serpent at all if that was the kind of an animal it was? But, deeper still, *what was there in Adam and Eve* which responded to the suggestion of the serpent, and was tempted by the fruit of the tree? Is it not clear that, *before they sinned,* there was something within them which yielded to the words of the serpent and caused them to eat of the forbidden fruit? What was this? Scripture calls it *the flesh.*

Apart from the outward incentive to call forth the tendencies of the flesh and cause it to step over the mark, all was very good. In Eden, man's whole environment was calculated to meet his physical desires. Nothing afflicted his soul, and he knew no evil. It needed the suggestion of the serpent to stir up the flesh in opposition to God. Evidently its *disposition* even then, as now, was enmity to God, or Eve would have resented the insinuations of the serpent. It did not have the ability to please God. It was not subject to God's law (Rom.8:7,8). These traits are not the result of mortality and sin. They were inherent in human flesh, put there by the Creator, for the same reason that He planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and sent the serpent into the garden. If Adam had been created immortal and sin-repellant, why plant the tree or send the serpent? It was all a part of the same plan, and was rooted deep in the heart of God, which craved the love and adoration of sinners saved by grace.

MAN CREATED MORTAL

Adam was mortal and depended on food and air for his subsistence. Had these been withheld, he would have wasted away. His life was contingent upon the continual renewal of his flesh by the blood due to the vitality derived from the soil and atmosphere, which, in turn, receive their vital virtues from the sun. Hence he was by no means immortal. Shut off the air from his lungs for a short time, and his spirit would have left him. Cut off food from his stomach for a long period, and his soul would have departed. Moreover, if he should breathe devitalized air, or gas, or should eat a substance which would interfere with the operation of his internal organs, such as we call poison, even if he should not die at once, it would introduce a gradual decay which would lead to death if no remedy were used to set matters right again.

It was the *flesh* in Adam that was vulnerable. To us the

flesh seems to be the substantial, permanent part of a human being. On the contrary, it is merely an evanescent, vitalized form of the ground on which we walk. The flesh of everyone changes continuously, so that, literally, we are not the same flesh that we were some time ago. The self-consciousness, the so-called "personality," is not inherent in the flesh at all. We certainly are the same person after having lived half a century, but we may have had seven different fleshly frames within that period. The figure "all flesh is grass" (1 Peter 1:24) expresses this most graphically. Most of us fail to find the figure and simply take it that *humanity* is as grass, and will pass away into oblivion. Not so. Only one feature of mankind is as evanescent as that.

The *flesh* is that corruptible part of man, as he is now constituted, in the first creation, which brought in infirmity, dishonor and death, and which continues to be the seat of sin. It is in contrast to other elements in man, and in conflict with them. Therefore we do not read that the corruption of all *mankind* brought on the deluge, but that all *flesh* had corrupted its way (Gen.6:12). Adam's life was limited because he also was *flesh* (Gen.6:3). God did not destroy all *animals,* but all *flesh* (Gen.6:17). It is startling and illuminating to read that, by works of law, no *flesh* at all shall be justified, yet *we* ourselves are justified by faith (Rom.3:20-24). Moreover, the *flesh* may be *exterminated,* yet the *spirit* saved (1 Cor.5:5). No *flesh* shall glory (1 Cor.1:29), and what a catalogue is given of the works of the *flesh* (Gal.5:19)! We should always distinguish between the whole man and the flesh, which is the knave, the rogue, the villain in the tragedy of humanity.

The important point to apprehend is that the flesh in the human pair, even before sin came in, was imbued with a leaning, a tendency, a disposition, a predilection, a proclivity, a proneness toward, a desire or lust for (1 John 2:16; 2 Peter 2:18) soul-satisfaction and pleasure and soul-

ish wisdom, that amounted to a will (Eph.2:3; Rom.8:3), which was at enmity with God (Rom.8:7), which made it sin's flesh (Rom.8:3), as well as man's. It is usual to ascribe "innocence" to Adam and his wife. This term is not used of them, and must be kept out of this investigation, lest it lead us astray. The fact is that both Adam and Eve are called *flesh,* and this figure, rather than the literal body, or man, is used of him and the race thereafter in close connection with *corruption* and *death* (compare Gen.2:23,24 with 6:3,12,13,17).

CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY

So-called "Conditionalists" rightly claim that *man is mortal,* and that there is *no immortality except in Christ.* But the word "conditional" is not in the Scriptures, and is rather indefinite. It seems to suggest that man must do his part in securing life, so I have kept clear of it, although I was convinced that man is not immortal and the only way he can receive endless life is through Christ, not through Adam. I would prefer to use the term as applied to Adam before he transgressed, and to all who eat of the tree of life in the eons to come. Adam had interminable life under certain conditions, so we may say that he had "conditional" immortality. So long as he was supplied with the necessary sustenance, ate nothing harmful, and was not destroyed by violence, there is no question that he would continue to live indefinitely. The same is true if he had been given access to the tree of life. That would even counteract harmful food, such as he had eaten. It gives "conditional" immortality.

THE "DEVIL" AND THE FLESH

The favorite lesson of a Sunday school superintendent was based on the following clever words, which were put on the blackboard as he proceeded:

I
ILL
VILE
EVIL
DEVIL

With this as a basis he would expatiate especially on the *vile*ness of the "devil." As an aid to the memory it was good. As an expression of Scripture it was bad, for it suggests that Satan is the source of man's immoral sins. It calumniates the Adversary and exculpates the *flesh.* Satan is not associated with the unmentionable depravities of humanity. These arise out of his own heart. They are resident in his flesh.

A simple and effective method of discovering the vast difference between the works of the flesh and the efforts of the Adversary is to study all the references to each in a concordance. Then it will be seen that Satan does not tempt men to commit the crimes we usually catalogue as immoral, while these are the specialty of the flesh. In general we may classify the crimes committed by or through Satan as *spiritual.* They are directed against God and His great goal rather than concerned with the corruption of man. Even when they affect the flesh, they aim at the *spirit.*

Perhaps the most striking passage to show the difference between Satan and the flesh is 1 Corinthians 5:1-5. Corinth seems to have been a very immoral city. Even one of the saints there sank below the level of that degenerate age, and Paul, though absent, directs the ecclesia how to deal with the case. We might imagine that he had fallen into the clutches of Satan, and that the apostle would seek to deliver him from the power of the Adversary. He does the very opposite! *He is not snatched away from Satan in order to be saved, but delivered to the Adversary in order that his flesh may be exterminated.* So it is that his *spirit*

was saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Satan is a spirit and is concerned with our *spirits,* not our flesh, except as it reacts on the spirit.

Job's case is very clear on this point. Satan did not tempt him to engage in an orgy of immorality. He filled his flesh with misery, so that Job should curse God and die (Job 2:9). The false friends did not apprehend this fact. Even Job did not understand that the real struggle was between God and Satan. Only at the end did he grasp the great truth that Satan's attack on his flesh was used by God for his highest spiritual benefit. It is thus that the Adversary fulfills his mission. It is his job to see that man is tried and tested, not, indeed, to prove his power, but to demonstrate his impotence.

When our Lord was tried by the Adversary, again it was an attack on His spiritual relationship to God, rather than any enticement to moral delinquency, and our Lord countered it accordingly. After having fasted for days, what crime could there be in turning stones into bread to assuage His hunger? Is not this miracle only the acceleration of the usual process of nature? Stone is weathered by the sun and air, and turned into soil. Plants reach down and take from it the substance and vitality which, in turn, is stored up in the grain. This is ground and kneaded and baked into bread for human consumption. He Who does this in the course of eons can do it in a second. In its place it is eminently right and commendable. Probably we shall experience an even greater miracle constantly in the glorious bodies which will be ours when vivified. Perhaps we will live directly on the sunlight which turns the stone into bread (Matt.4:1-4).

But the error here is fundamental. All life is sourced in *God* and it is not right to use His sustaining forces apart from His direction. Man, as he is now constituted, must, indeed, live on food which once was a stone, but not on

that *alone.* He must eat in accord with the word of the God Who created the food, and Who sustains the eater. At present man is not constituted to eat stones, for God wishes him to experience the evil connected with the production of his food. There must be toil and trial and tears in order to put him in his proper place before His Creator, and the Model Man is not going to evade these because He has the power to do so. He was still on the way to the cross, which must precede the path to the crown. Satan's object was not to make Him a glutton or a winebibber, as His human enemies called Him on a later occasion, but to draw Him away from absolute dependence on the word of the living God.

The cleverness of the Adversary is evident in his next proposition. Seeing that Christ is determined to be guided by the Scriptures, he quotes a passage to show that his request is in accord with what is written. He takes our Lord to that corner of the temple area which is built up high above the Kidron valley. I have stood upon the wall at this point, but it made me dizzy to look down. It certainly was not a temptation for my flesh to cast myself down. Rather the opposite, for the flesh shrinks from the possible suffering which would ensue if death were not instantaneous. Yet *He* certainly had no need to be afraid. His hour had not yet come. If He could walk on water, why not on air? After His resurrection He went to a spot within sight of the temple, on the other side of the Kidron, on the Mount of Olives, and ascended to heights which dwarf the temple wall to nothingness.

In the ninety-first Psalm there are many precious promises to the one who trusts in Yahweh and makes Him his refuge. Above all others, our Lord had a right to "claim the promises by faith." How many of the Lord's dear people try to do this today! How many are disappointed! How it has destroyed faith in the word of God! How much hypocrisy it

has engendered! If they really believed this passage, many would take much pride in displaying this faith by jumping down from all sorts of dangerous places, in order to put God on trial, to see if He is true to His word. But this is not faith, but the lack of it! It would be in direct conflict with another Scripture which forbids such dealings with the Deity. The Psalmist did not write concerning such a man. The promises are for those who really trust, and do not need to try to see if it is true. Such was the nature of Satan's trial. *It made no appeal to the passions.*

In his third attempt to win worship from our Lord, Satan is largely on Scriptural ground, and much that he says is true. The kingdoms of this world are in his hand, and he is able to give them to the man who will worship him. On the other side, Christ is entitled to this glory and will yet take His place at the head of the nations. Nevertheless our Lord indignantly spurned the offer, and bade Satan go hence, because he had claimed the worship that belongs to God alone and to those who represent Him.

The spiritual character of these trials should help us to understand that the mission of Satan is not in the realm of flesh, but of spirit. He is opposed to faith in God, even when he artfully suggests that we put God on trial or when he produces Scripture for his suggestions and demands. Few saints, alas! are able to counter with Scripture as our Lord did, because they do not intelligently apprehend the role in which Satan has been cast by God, and confuse it with that of a mythical "devil" who inflames the flesh and leads men to vile and vicious deeds. Only indirectly, as in the case of Adam, does the Adversary influence mankind in the direction of immorality, that is by leading him into opposition to God's will.

Satan sowed the darnel or "tares" among the disciples of the kingdom. This figure is most suggestive. An immoral man could hardly qualify, for the point lies in the outward

likeness of the two plants. Immorality cannot well be disguised sufficiently to fulfill the figure. On the contrary, as the disciples would be moral and upright, it would be such characters who could keep a place among them without detection (Matt.13:19).

Judas was an acknowledged apostle of our Lord for years. No one could have occupied such a public position for long if he had even a taint of immorality about him. Yet he is characterized by the same title as the Adversary (John 6:70).

It was the *self-righteous Jews* whom our Lord characterized as the offspring of the *Adversary* (John 8:44). Such a sinister name was never given by Him to tax gatherers and sinners. He showed the sincerest sympathy for those whose flesh had led them into sin, but utmost harshness clothed His dealings with those who were under the guidance of Satan. Surely God's thoughts are not ours, and His ways are not our ways!

That mankind is incurably opposed to God, even without Satan's temptations, is fully demonstrated by the thousand years during which the Adversary will be bound. Such a long period of probation, under the beneficent rule of Israel, in whose hearts God's law has found a place, during which there will be physical blessings such as this earth has not yet seen, ought to cure mankind of their enmity toward God. Instead of that, it flashes into a flame as soon as Satan reappears.

Satan, as well as man, fails because of the infirmity of man's flesh. He seeks to serve man, and is on the side of reform and world betterment—apart from God. He has most cleverly deceived Christendom, even as he deluded Eve, so that it now is well organized to further his schemes for a better world, without acknowledging the sovereignty of Israel's Messiah.

A. E. Knoch

THROUGH THE OBEDIENCE OF THE ONE

THE sober conclusion of Romans 1:18-3:20 is that not one is righteous—not even one. By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:10,20).

The exultant conclusion of Romans 3:21-5:21 is that all mankind will experience justifying of life, and that the many sinners who stand under the condemnation of death and sin shall be constituted righteous. The grace of God in giving His Son for our sakes superexceeds with righteousness and life over and against all the ever multiplying sins and offenses of mankind.

How did we get from no one being righteous in God's sight to all enjoying justified life and being solidly established in righteousness?

The evangel of God concerning His Son tells us how. It is through the one righteous act of faith and obedience of the One, Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is not through us. We are the obtainers of what God has achieved through the death of His Son. This is the message we, as those designated beforehand (Rom.8:30), are believing, upon which further outpourings of grace in Paul's later epistles are built. How necessary, then, to begin right—to begin with this evangel of God concerning His Son, for which Paul was severed.

WELL DONE

An evangel is a WELL-MESSAGE. The evangel announced in Romans announces a deed *well* done that it may be becoming *well* with us, for the glory of God.

In the parable of the talents entrusted to three slaves, the master said to each of the two who gained double from what they were given, "*Well* done! good and faithful slave" (Matt.25:21,23). In Ephesians Paul points to the ideal conduct of children, citing Deuteronomy 5:16 (*cp* Ex.20:12), "'Honor your father and mother' . . . that it may be becoming *well* with you" (Eph.6:1-3). The evangel of God, however, does not speak of the faithful acts of slaves to their lord, or the obedience of children to their parents, but of the good and faithful obedience of Jesus Christ to His God and Father in dying for sinners so that it might become well with them. What Christ did in thus honoring His Father ("not as I will, but as Thou!") was *well* done. He was good and obedient in every way, and His well-done work is the cause of it becoming *well* with us. It becomes well with us, not because of what we are or have done, but all because of what Christ is and has done so well.

WHAT HAS CHRIST DONE?

The WELL-MESSAGE of God concerning His Son says:

For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, died . . . . God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes. (Rom.5:6,8)

Christ died. The evangel, in which we stand and through which we are saved states as its foundational declaration that Christ died for our sins (1 Cor.15:3). Through the years of His terrestrial toil in which He took the form of a slave, in the likeness of humanity, He did many marvelous things, doing everything well and faithfully. But these deeds of obedience are not the subject of the evangel brought by Paul, by which, in believing it, we are being saved (1 Cor. 15:1,2). The *one* just act of Romans 5:18 is Christ's act of dying on the cross unto the state of death.

It was an act involving intense suffering, for it was the death of the cross (Phil.2:8), and this speaks of the greatest of pain and lowest of humiliation. The first word of Scripture describing His death is *hurt* (Gen.3:15). Later such verbs as *wounded* and *crushed* are used (Isa.53:5). In this we see the application of the words "you shall be dying" (Gen.2:17). But the manner of Christ's death must not be allowed to obliterate the seriousness of the fact that when He gave up His spirit He became dead. In this we see the application to Christ of the words "to die" in Genesis 2:17, as well as the principal way in which the sacrifices of old were types of Him.

To be sure, having announced that Christ died for our sins, and was entombed as the undeniable evidence that He was dead, the evangel which we have accepted continues with the exultant declaration that Christ was roused (1 Cor.15:4). For if Christ has not been roused we are still in our sins (1 Cor.15:17). Apart from His resurrection, there is no sequel of good in the death of the old humanity and no hope for a new creation. Consequently, the evangel of God concerning His Son concludes with the joyous word that Christ has been roused!

Nevertheless, the glory of the resurrection into a vivified life is built on the justifying which is secured in the shedding of Christ's blood. He was roused *because of* our justifying (Rom.4:25; 5:9). So that we would become dead to our sins and offenses we died together with Christ and were entombed together with Him, and then roused together with Him (Rom.6:2-4; Col.2:12,13; 3:3; *cp* Eph. 2:1-6). That Christ died is fundamental. This was absolutely necessary so that the old humanity would be crucified together with Him, and the body of Sin be nullified (Rom.6:6). "For one who dies has been justified from Sin" (Rom.6:7). Here we see, not only His obedience to His Father's will, but the love of Christ for us, and for all,

"judging this, that if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14). In the death of Christ, the dying, sinning race was put to death.

WELL FOR US

In announcing what Christ has done so well, the WELL-MESSAGE of God points to the ways in which this is well for us and altogether to the glory of God.

First of all the death of Jesus Christ (expressed by the words, "Jesus Christ's faith") is the channel through which the righteousness of God is made manifest (Rom.3:21,22). It is through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (in the shedding of His blood) that we are justified (Rom.3:24; 5:9). It is by this means that God is displayed as righteous in justifying sinners, as they become identified with the benefits of the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26).

Then, furthermore, it is in that Christ died for us as we are, irreverent and infirm sinners and wanting of the glory of God, that God commends His love. In the giving of His Son, Who died for our sakes, God exhibits the depths of His love, pouring it out even now in the hearts of the believer in bringing us before Him justified and conciliated to Him, in Whom we are glorying. This love delivers us who are sinners from condemnation into righteousness, but even more than this it draws us (who are enemies) in peace into what Paul will soon describe as "the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:21).

Consequently, we who are believing have gotten the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying "Abba, Father!" (Rom.8:15) through every experience of life. Thus we say with Paul, "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.8:38,39).

Moreover, what we have obtained in superabundance of grace and gratuity is, as Paul expresses it in 1 Timothy 4:10, a *special* salvation connected with God's glory as the Saviour of all mankind. God's righteousness manifested and operating through the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners is "for all," and it is in light of this fact that, by God's grace, it has already been applied to believers, *on whom* it is placed (Rom.3:22). This has been made clear in Romans 5, where, in expounding the evangel as it relates to the believer, Paul brings out the wider viewpoint involving all mankind in relation to Adam and to Christ, starting with verse 12.

Just as Adam brought in death and sin for all, so Christ brings in life and righteousness for all. Thus in Romans 5:18 we learn of the justifying of the lives of all mankind, and this achieved alone through the righteous act of Jesus Christ. Now in Romans 5:19 we are told that the innumerable victims who are constituted sinners through the disobedience of Adam shall be constituted righteous *through the obedience of Christ,* in God's grace, and *not* of themselves.

ROMANS 5:19

This evangel as it is evangelized in the second half of Romans 5:19 is now before us:

Through the obedience of the One the many shall be constituted just. (Rom.5:19b)

The *One* is the One Man, Jesus Christ (v.15), the One, Jesus Christ (v.17).

His *obedience* is His act of dying for sinners.

It is through this means, through Christ's obedience in dying on the cross unto death that sinners become *just,* that is, righteous-ones.

The *many* are the same many mentioned earlier in this verse, all the many people who are sinners because of the

disobedience of Adam. "The many" of verse 19 are the "all mankind" of verse 18.

THE ONE AND THE MANY

We must suppose that Paul knew what he was talking about and that he meant what he was saying. The context makes it certain that the word "one" in verse 19 first refers to Adam and then to Jesus Christ. We may also suppose that the connective term "For" at the beginning of verse 19 is used in the sense of "since;" verse 19 directly supports verse 18 and provides evidence for what has been said. Verse 19 does not introduce a new line of thought, but develops and adds to what was said in verse 18.

The word *many* in verse 19 corresponds with the words "all mankind" in verse 18, and the construction *even as . . . thus also* in verse 19 carries forward the *consequently as . . . thus also* construction of verse 18. The numerous parallels between and within the two verses make the suggestion that Paul had not given sufficient thought to what he was saying incredible.

Paul is expounding the evangel. He is showing us why it is called the WELL-MESSAGE of God. He is not saying that while Adam did something that affected everyone, what Christ did affects a lesser group of people, who nevertheless are many, but not so many as those affected by Adam. He has not begun an argument only to discover it makes him say more than he wanted to say, yet plowing ahead with it, nevertheless.

Enough of that! Abel and the apostle John are just as much part of the many who were constituted sinners because of Adam as Cain and Judas, and Cain and Judas are just as much part of the many who shall be constituted righteous as the faithful Abel and the beloved disciple of our Lord. They have all been constituted sinners because of Adam, and, while it certainly will not be at the same

time and in exactly the same way, they all will be constituted just because of Christ. That is what Paul is saying. And that is what he means to say.

CONSTITUTED

The ruling verb in Romans 5:19 is translated in most English versions either by the word "made" or the word "constituted." It is not that "make" is entirely misleading, but it best fits another Greek word, and fails to convey certain nuances of the Greek word, *kathisêmi.* A survey of the usage of the Greek word in Scripture is helpful. Its elements are DOWN-STAND. It is generally used in the sense of *place into* or *appoint to* a position (a place in which one stands, *cf* Rom.5:2 where our standing position is grace), such as a priest (Heb.7:28) or elder (Titus 1:5). But it implies more than appointment and envisions the carrying out of the functions of the position, or enjoying its values. That God constituted Joseph a governor indicates that Joseph was enabled to carry out the activities of rule. The seven men who were to be *placed* in a position of service were to be carefully chosen as those who would actually meet the need of the ecclesia at Jerusalem (Acts 5:3). In testifying that God *places* man over the works of His hands (Heb.2:7), Scripture foretells that which shall be truly realized in the future. We are to be given, not simply the position of righteousness, but the wherewithal of filling this position and experiencing its goodness. In other words, we will *be* righteous. That will be our state as well as our appointment.

This is what shall be. And it shall be so, not because we make it so, but because we shall be constituted to be so. The verb is future in tense and passive in voice. It is God Who does it, and He does it through the obedience of His Son. Here indeed is a matter of expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:2).

EARLY PREPARATIONS

Romans 1:17 is the first specific expression of the WELL-MESSAGE of God in this epistle, and Paul reiterates, in one way or another, what he says there as he proceeds. Sometimes, as in Romans 3:24 and 5:8 he evangelizes with different terms, but in at least two cases, he uses the very words of 1:17. The first half of 1:17 is expanded thought by thought in 3:22. And the second half of 1:17, where the apostle cites Habakkuk 2:4, is closely matched in wording by the second half of Romans 5:19. Both 1:17 and 5:19 tell of the glorious future of the "just" (the singular, *just one,* is used in 1:17 and the plural, *just ones,* in 5:19) based on the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ.

In addition, what the apostle writes in Romans 5:19 is bolstered by way of contrast with Romans 2:13 coupled with 3:10. No one can be just with God by works of law because no one is truly a doer of the law. The only way to righteousness is through the obedience of Christ. All in all, the important theme of righteousness is consistently developed and expanded from one passage to another in Romans.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS REVEALED

The wording of the evangel as given in Romans 3:22 recalls that of 1:17a, expounding the earlier declaration with added details. There are three principal parallels:

1:17 For in [the evangel] God's righteousness is being revealed
3:22 Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God

1:17 out of faith
3:22 through Jesus Christ's faith

1:17 for faith
3:22 for all, and on all who are believing

The evangel thus begins with God and centers on Christ and concludes with its significance for us. We note especially that the words "out of faith" in 1:17 are explained in 3:22 by the words "through Jesus Christ's faith." His faith, not ours, is the source ("out of") and the channel ("through") of God's operation of justification. Our faith is in His faith.

THE JUST ONES

The two key thoughts of the second half of Romans 1:17 come before us in the second half of Romans 5:19. Those who shall be constituted righteous, shall be so because of the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ. They shall be living in a state of righteousness. Here again the parallel expressions can be juxtaposed with telling effect. What is said in the earlier passage is clarified in the latter:

1:17 Now the just one . . . shall be living
5:19 the many shall be constituted just [ones]

1:17 by [literally, *out of*] faith
5:19 through the obedience of the One

Paul's citation of Habakkuk 2:4 supports what he had just written in 1:17a concerning the revelation of God's righteousness coming out of the faith of Jesus Christ and directed to the faith of believers. It also paves the way for 5:19 where Paul exults in the way in which the faith-obedience of the One, Jesus Christ brings righteousness into our very being. We shall be living, and in our living we shall be standing before God as just ones; we shall be living in the state of righteousness.

TO BE JUST WITH GOD

But had not Paul said earlier that there was another way in which a person might become just with God? "For not the listeners to law are *just* with God, but *the doers* of the

law shall be justified" (Rom.2:13). In the same context Paul directed attention to the revelation of the *just judgment* of God, in which God will be paying each one in accord with his acts: to those, indeed, who by endurance in good acts are seeking glory and honor and incorruption, life eonian . . ." (Rom.2:5-7). Yet this is said within the whole context of Romans 1-8 in which Paul is evangelizing the evangel of God. Indeed, Paul radically qualifies these indicative statements when he reaches his conclusion concerning humanity as a whole, apart from the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. "Not one is *just*—not even one" (Rom. 3:10). There are no doers of the law as it must be obeyed in order to be just with God. In God's just judgment, no one at all will be found who has sufficiently endured in good acts, so as to receive eonian life.

Romans 2:13 and 3:10 stand as a foil to Romans 5:19. Again let us place these passages together, thought by thought, to make the contrast more vivid:

2:13 *just* with God . . . the doers of the law
5:19 constituted *just* . . . through the obedience of the One

3:10 not one is *just*—not even one
5:19 the many shall be constituted *just*

In expounding the evangel of God, Paul is not speaking of being righteous in a relative way. (It is in contrast to the evangel that the apostle refers, in Romans 5:7, to the rare possibility of someone dying for the sake of a man who is *just* by human standards.) The evangel itself tells of absolute righteousness, of righteousness which is effected by God's righteousness and reflects God's righteousness.

The evangel has been much diluted by failure to follow the interconnections of Paul's thought. By works of law no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight. Through the obedience of Jesus Christ, every sinner shall be constituted just. This shall be realized in time, when death

is abolished and God is All in all. And even before then, those who have accepted this evangel in faith and have already obtained the superabundance of God's grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in life in the oncoming eons. This all comes about in one way only, *through the One, Jesus Christ.*

CHRIST'S OBEDIENCE

Romans 5:19 tells us of the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ, as contrasted with the disobedience of the one, Adam. The one act of sinning of the one man brought the reign of death into the very constitution of all mankind. Day by day, moment by moment, tissue by tissue, cell by cell, we are all dying. Gradually at first (for most of us), but inevitably, in our dying state of infirmity and corruption, we are on the way to the state of death. But through the one act of obedience of Jesus Christ, the countless individuals who have descended from Adam and Eve shall be constituted righteous.

No matter how obedient a person may be in relation to humanity in general, the word "obedient" as applied to them falls far short of its meaning as applied to Christ. The faith and obedience of the most faithful believer does not rate comparison with that of our Lord, Who died for our sakes, while we were still sinners.

How blessed is Christ's obedience. In Romans 3 it is called "Jesus Christ's faith" (v.22) and "the faith [which He maintained] in [the shedding of] His blood" (v.25). Because of the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ, in giving Himself for sinners, God is displayed as the *just* Justifier, and sinners are brought into a state of righteousness. Ultimately, all will enjoy these effects of perfect obedience.

Imagine, if you will, the results if His obedience needed to be supplemented by our own efforts. No, rather let us believe what the evangel declares is so.

IT IS WELL

This WELL-MESSAGE concerning the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is no pie-in-the-sky scheme for health and riches, but a message of righteousness and life already gained through the obedience of our Lord.

We remember the account of the Shunammite woman, whose only son, a gift of God, died. Summoned by a messenger, the prophet sent her the message, "Is all well with you? Is all well with your husband? Is all well with the child?" And she said, "All is well" (2 Kings 4:26). She had the viewpoint of the evangel. She could do nothing, and she did not try to do anything except to turn to one who was a type of Christ.

It is written that when Elisha came to her, "he closed the door about the two of them and prayed to Yahweh. Then he got up and lay on the child and placed his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, his palms on his palms. As he lay prone on him, the boy's flesh became warm" (2 Kings 4:32-34).

I do not know all that is pictured in this tender scene. But I believe it was a very personal matter when Christ died for me and for you. He closed the door of this mortal life about us, about Himself and me, about Himself and you, about Himself and each sinner individually, looking to His God and Father in faith and obedience. We died together with Him and were entombed together with Him, so that we would be roused together and be living together with Him, constituted righteous.

In Romans 5 we have concentrated on the evangel as it speaks concerning God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Paul will continue this viewpoint of superabounding grace for two more verses, and then he will bring these details of our identification with Christ in His death and resurrection into our lives in chapter 6.

D.H.H.

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 The Expectation Reserved For Us
107 Our Celestial Change
125 The Supremacy of Spirit

MAY, 2011

Volume 102 **Number 3**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

This book traces the divine function of *evil* (whatever is harmful or destructive) from its inception to its consummation, by presenting scriptural solutions to the various long-debated questions concerning God and His sovereignty.

As one of its subjects, it probes and takes issue with the commonly accepted explanation that Satan, and not God, is responsible for evil. To quote the book's author: "Almost all of us are shortsighted. We see the judgments, but fail to recognize that they are only part of God's way with mankind, that they are definitely not an end. We confuse the going with the goal. Judgment is God's strange work. He uses it as a preparation toward a glorious consummation."

The message in this book is especially valuable to us in these days of doubt and distress, to lead men to rely on and rest in God alone.

A. E. Knoch, paperback, 346 pages (ISBN 0-910424-59-4)

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR MAY 2011
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TWO

EDITORIAL

"For the saving grace of God made its advent to all humanity, training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon, anticipating that happy expectation, even the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who gives Himself for us . . ." (Titus 2:11-14).

If we can be living sanely and justly and devoutly in this current eon, it is truly a blessing. What is required of us for this to be so? It comes by means of the anticipation of our happy expectation, but this is not a matter of *requirement.* It is a *favor,* for expectation is one of the three "greater graces" which remain as gifts of God in the present era (*cf* 1 Cor.12:31; 13:13).

In accord with Paul's evangel, our expectation is an anticipation of happiness. It stands in strong contrast to the present eon, even to the events at its conclusion when the indignation of God will come upon the sons of stubbornness (Eph.5:6). The days are wicked, but the message of grace which we are believing directs our thoughts and behavior in such a way as to "reclaim" the era and fill us with songs in our hearts of praise and thanksgiving to our God and Father (Eph.5:15-21).

Concerning our expectation, Paul always spoke positively. When the Thessalonians were alarmed because of current events all about them, and in view of the dark and distressful days prophesied in association with Christ's return to set up His kingdom on the earth, he reaffirmed that fact, but added this remarkable word of expectation for us:

"God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the pro-

curing of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for our sakes, that, whether we may be watching or drowsing, we should be living at the same time together with Him. Wherefore, console one another and edify one the other, according as you are doing also" (1 Thess.5:9-11).

Then in his second letter he added:

"Now we ought to be thanking God always concerning you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, seeing that God prefers you from the beginning for salvation, in holiness of the spirit and faith in the truth, into which He also calls us through our evangel, for the procuring of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently, then, brethren, stand firm, and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, whether through word or our epistle. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, our Father, Who loves us, and is giving us an eonian consolation and a good expectation in grace, be consoling your hearts and establish you in every good work and word" (2 Thess.2:13-17).

In this present issue of our magazine we reprint three articles by A. E. Knoch, focused especially on the glorious change that will occur when we are vivified in Christ's presence. The first of these is excerpted and edited from a longer exposition entitled, "The Resurrection in Paul's Perfection Epistles," appearing in our January 1937 number (volume 28, pages 13-25). The other two complete the series entitled "The Mission of Mankind," and were originally printed in four installments: in volume 36, pages 163-172 and 217-225, and in volume 37, pages 41-48 and 85-96.

How fitting it is that it was in light of this expectation of our future bodily change for adaptation to our celestial calling, that Paul wrote:

"So that, my beloved brethren, become settled, unmovable, superabounding in the work of the Lord always, being aware that your toil is not for naught in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

D.H.H.

THE EXPECTATION RESERVED FOR US

THE expression, "the expectation [which is] reserved for you in the *heavens*" (Col.1:5), combined with the opening strain of the Ephesian epistle, "every spiritual blessing among the *celestials*" (Eph.1:3) is the crowning and concluding glory of the secret of the resurrection (*cf* 1 Cor. 15:51). We have heard of a tryst with our Lord in the air (1 Thess.4:13-18), and of the change of our bodies from soilish to celestial (1 Cor.15:49-53), but until we come to Paul's perfection epistles of Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, we have heard nothing of the place for which such a body prepares us, nor of the company for which it fits us. We must remember that much that is heavenly in *character* will be on the earth. The saints in Israel will have a heavenly home in the celestial Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22; Rev.21:2), but it descends out of heaven and is on the earth. The city descends to them. We ascend to our allotment. But it was not until the present administration was fully revealed, after Israel's temporary but definite setting aside, that Paul could come out clearly and make known the great truth that our future is not on earth but in the heavens, among the celestials.

Our future is inseparably linked to that of God's Anointed. Little do we realize the wonder of that word, "And thus shall we always be together with the Lord!" (1 Thess.4:17). When that was written God had not revealed everything concerning Him to His people. They knew little besides His terrestrial glories. But God had a secret surprise con-

cerning Christ which He reserved within His own heart. It was always His will to head up the universe in Christ, but only a small section of it was made known to mankind. The prophets had made it plain that He will be Head over all the earth when Israel is redeemed. But they did not give the slightest hint that He would be Head of the universe when an elected group out of the nations will be glorified. This is the secret made known in the opening of Ephesians (1:9-12). Paul, as an Israelite, would have had his place on earth. But God, Who operates the universe in accord with the counsel of His will, arbitrarily changed His allotment from earth to heaven. Who else were associated with Him in this adjustment? They are designated as those who are in a state of *prior expectancy* in the Christ (Eph.1:12).

THE PRIOR EXPECTANCY

No better phrase could be invented for those among the Circumcision who had received the revelations of Thessalonians and Corinthians, as well as all others who had part in the expectation which they reveal. The Authorized Version translation, "who first trusted" is untenable from every standpoint. The Revisers' version, "who before hoped" is very much better. The word has no reference to *trust or have confidence in*. The Authorized Version rendered the simple noun *elpis* hope fifty-three times, and only once *faith.* The verb *elpizō,* alas, they have rendered *hope* only thirteen times and *trust* eighteen, thus confusing it with *peithō,* which really denotes *trust or have confidence in*. The special word used to designate the *pre-expectants* occurs only in this passage, and is in a grammatical form which denotes a *state,* not an action. Paul, and those with him, came upon the scene much too late to either trust or hope before the twelve. But, in Thessalonians, Paul reveals *an expectation the fulfillment of which will precede that of the Circumcision.* It is those who have this expectation who will be associated with the celestial Headship of Christ, just as those who hold the expectation which will be fulfilled later will be with Him in His terrestrial reign.

ROUSE! O DROWSY ONE

Our *future* resurrection, rousing, and vivification is hardly mentioned in the perfection epistles, but the resurrection, or rather the *rousing*, of Christ, is made the basis of our walk. Once, indeed, we are urged to rouse and rise from among the dead (Eph.5:14), but this is figurative also, and is applied, not to the future fact, but to *our present conduct.* As is to be expected, Philippians develops this thought fully, yet it is found in Ephesians and Colossians as well.

The relation of the resurrection to "the mystery" is clearly defined in its categorical statement in Ephesians 3:6,7. In spirit, the nations are to be . . . *joint* partakers of the *promise* in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which Paul was the dispenser. All of the truth which we have hitherto considered, in Thessalonians, and in Corinthians, is ours now on an equal footing with the election out of Israel. We are *joint* partakers of it. These things themselves are not the secret. The promise was well known. But now it is changed in character in that all priority on the part of the Circumcision vanishes, little as there was of it in this connection. Ephesians reveals no new promise, but incorporates that given to Paul, at the same time completely severing us from that of the Circumcision.

In Philippians the apostle refers to our expectation by another characteristic expression. He calls it an *out*-resurrection—"if somehow I should be attaining to the resurrection that is out from among the dead" (3:11). The character of the epistle and the context show that this "attaining" was a matter of present personal experience. He wishes to anticipate in this life what will be his in the

resurrection. This expression is another way of putting the fact that we have a prior expectancy, but the comparison is even broader. Our expectation is compared with that of the Circumcision, who also have an expectation. The out-resurrection is a comparison with all the dead. In this the Circumcision will have a part, for they also will leave the unbelieving dead behind. All who will be raised *from among* the dead, from our Lord onward, will appropriate Christ and His righteousness and power, and have a knowledge of Him which Paul desired to attain in His present walk and experience. The out-resurrection is but another way of denoting the second class in the vivification of all, those who are Christ's at His presence (1 Cor.15:23). Only those in the out-resurrection have eonian life and reign with Christ during the eons of the eons. This is not limited to His body, but embraces all who are His, though Paul refers to that phase of it which we alone will know.

The positive side of this great truth is presented in Ephesians and Colossians. Not only are we to live as though resurrected from among the dead, but God "vivifies us together . . . and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus . . ." (Eph.2:5,6). This is our expectation in fact, yet our anticipation in spirit. It is a timeless truth whose power should transform our lives long before we possess immortality. In Ephesians the "together" is collective, with the Circumcision who receive this grace, and it is *in* Christ. Colossians unites us *with* Him personally. Entombed together, we were roused together also through faith in the operation of God, Who rouses Him from among the dead, and vivifies us together jointly with Him (Col.2:12,13).

We are never said to be *raised* with Christ, or to be *risen* with Him, as the Authorized Version renders it, for it is not our *bodies* which respond to the truth but our *spirits,* and it affects our *experience*, hence is compared with the *rousing* of our souls. This most powerful spring of godly living is used as the basis of the opening exhortation in the hortatory half of the Colossian epistle (3:1-5): "If, then, you were roused together with Christ, be seeking that which is above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Be disposed to that which is above, not to that on the earth, for you died, and your life is hid together with Christ in God. Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, then *you* also shall be manifested together with Him in glory. Deaden, then, your members that are on the earth . . . ." Here we see the fruit of our celestial expectation in a great *change* in our attitude toward the things of earth even as its realization will *change* our bodies. In anticipation we are seated among the celestials, but we walk as those whose allotment is above. It should loose us from the shackles of earth even as our vivification in the future will free us from the fetters of gravitation.

OUR HEAVENLY REALM

The most extended account of our future expectation to be found in Paul's perfection epistles is at the end of the third chapter of Philippians. He laments some whose conduct does not conform to our celestial calling, who to the terrestrial are disposed. For our realm has all along been in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him to subject to Himself even the universe (Phil.3:18-21). This is in absolute accord with the secret revealed to the Corinthians, adjusted and amplified to the transcendent glories of the crowning secret of Paul's latest revelation.

Neither Thessalonians nor Corinthians took us into the heavens or gave us a legal residence above. Thessalonians took us to the air and left us there. First Corinthians

hinted that there is a celestial body (15:40), and foretold our change. Here we have the completion of these unfinished unfoldings. We go to the air because that is on our way to the heavens, where we have our home. Our bodies will not only be *changed* to immortality and incorruptibility, but will be *transfigured* to accord with a celestial destiny. There is no single point of contrast in these gracious glimpses of our future. One step leads to the next in perfect sequence and accord. Each further unfolding included what had gone before. As all else, our blessed expectation went from glory to glory, each grander than before.

The same Paul who could say, "*we,* the living, who are surviving unto the presence of the Lord . . ." (1 Thess. 4:15), who could say, "we all, indeed, shall not be put to repose . . ." (1 Cor.15:51), he it is who says, in this, his latest revelation, "we are awaiting a Saviour also" (Phil.3:20). It is in the character of Saviour that Christ is coming to His celestial saints. Now we have bodies altogether unworthy of our heavenly destiny—weak, mortal, corruptible, earthbound, humiliating. These we cannot take to our celestial home as they are, so He will transfigure them, as He alone can do, Who has the ability to bring the whole universe beneath His beneficent sway.

THE EXPECTATION OF HIS CALLING

After expounding to us the universal headship of Christ, the apostle begins a most marvelous prayer for us who are of the nations (Eph.1:15-23). This new faith, which made the nations the peer of Israelites in an allotment unutterably higher than that which they will have upon the earth, called forth his thanks and the special request that God, as the Father glorious, may be giving us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in order to make it known to us. He would have our hearts' eyes enlightened, *first* of all, that we may perceive *the expectation of His calling* (Eph.1:18). Just

as the first hint of present truth came through the revelation of a new expectation, so now the first part of the new faith for the nations (which the apostle would have us grasp) is the expectation for which God calls us. Only in the light of this glory may we be enabled to realize the grandeur of this calling, for it is hidden now, and will be, until Christ appears.

Incorruption, glory, power—such are the splendid excellences of the resurrection body (1 Cor.15:42,43). And here, in this supreme revelation of our future fate, these are repeated and magnified. Paul prays that we may realize the *riches* of the *glory*, and the *transcendent greatness* of the *power* which is for believers. Our bodies are sown in dishonor and roused in glory. So also our present lot is one of humiliation. But our future allotment will not simply be glorious. That would not be too strong a term for the allotment of Israel on the earth. Ours will by far transcend it. We will have *riches* of glory. So also with power. Great indeed will be the power for the saints in the Kingdom, but ours will not be merely great, but surpassingly, *transcendently* great. Our prospect is superlatively supreme. We were last and least. We shall be first and foremost.

It would be practically impossible to convey an adequate idea of the power which is ours apart from the fact that Christ has already preceded us. His exaltation is an exhibition of the strength which will raise us to the empyrean. It is impossible for the human mind to imagine a display of power superior to that which has operated in the Christ, rousing Him from among the dead and seating Him at God's right hand. Who could be weaker than the despised Nazarene, crucified, forsaken, dead? And who, in all the universe, is so powerful as the Executive of the Deity? There can be no greater sum than the difference between zero and infinity, nor can there be any vaster difference in power than that between the dead Saviour and

our exalted Lord. Yet such is the only example which adequately conveys a conception of the power which God will use to exalt the members of the body of His Christ.

CHRIST'S UNIVERSAL HEADSHIP

The exaltation of Christ is no longer confined to earthly dignities. These are doubtless included, but are not so much as mentioned. *Universal* supremacy is His! Every form of intermediate rule is subordinate to Him. From the highest of all, probably symbolized by the twenty-four elders in His Unveiling (Rev.4:4), down to the least of the messengers, and every name of influence, all are placed beneath His feet. We do not share in this administration yet, but in the eons to come, just as Israel, as the bride of the Lambkin, will share His terrestrial honors, and administer the Kingdom on the earth, so will we partake of His celestial dignities, and administer the realms above. His universal headship will then be exercised by the ecclesia which is His body, His complement in the completing of all things (*cf* Eph.1:23).

Earth is far from being the whole of God's creation, nor are its denizens all of His intelligent creatures. We have not been given any definite idea as to the size or population of the universe, for it is probably so vast that human words would fail and human minds be utterly inadequate to comprehend its infinitude. So that much, indeed, remains of rule after the earth has been made subject to His scepter. Our future realm, our sovereignty, seems boundless in extent, for there is naught except the earth outside of it.

With a master hand and heart God works out His wonderful display on the black background of human misery and sin. This alone can adequately set forth the deathless splendor which will be our glorious heritage in the eons of the eons.

A. E. Knoch

OUR CELESTIAL CHANGE

A SERIOUS difficulty arises in reference to man's mission to the celestials. *His present body is not at all capable of carrying it out.* It is not adapted to any environment except the surface of the earth. When the Corinthians doubted the resurrection, this seems to have been the chief stumbling block. "How are the dead being roused, and with what body are they coming?" (1 Cor.15:35). The objector probably had no thought of heaven, but it furnished an opening for explaining the *secret* of 1 Corinthians 15:51, that those who received his ministry would not reappear as they had been in this life, but would enjoy a great and glorious transformation. This would take place when Christ calls them back from death at His presence, when He comes to the air for His beloved saints.

For Israel there is no need of much change except immunity from death. For the celestial saints, that is not enough. With a body of flesh *and blood* they would suffer intensely from a celestial environment. Those who talk glibly of "going to heaven," should not think only of the golden harps, but of the possible pain and distress which is the lot of human beings who ascend to a great height above their normal surroundings in the lower regions of the earth.

THREE SPHERES OF CREATION

In meeting this question, the apostle appeals to the facts of nature (1 Cor.15:36-49). He points to three distinct spheres, the plants, the animals, and the heavenly bodies, and draws a different lesson from each. He calls

attention to the *seeds* of plants, the *flesh* of men and beasts and flyers and fishes, and to the *bodies* of celestial beings. The terrestrial bodies differ from the glory of the celestial. These have many degrees of glory, as shown in the sun, the moon, and the stars. Then this is further elaborated and applied to the resurrection, and the marvelous change which will transform our corrupt, dishonorable, infirm, soulish, soilish frames into incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual, celestial bodies, fit for our high mission among the heavenly hosts.

RESURRECTION, ROUSING AND VIVIFICATION

Three distinct phases of our return from death to life are presented in the Scriptures, each of which is associated with a distinct feature of man's constitution. Resurrection is related especially to the body, rousing to the soul, and vivification to the spirit. Of course they are so closely involved with one another that one usually implies the rest of them.

Now in 1 Corinthians 15 Paul discusses our future change in detail as it affects the spirit, the soul, and the body. To each of these He returns. He appeals to the plant, the animal, and the mineral kingdom for illustrations. Indeed he ranges over the whole universe in his efforts to clarify this great change. The vivification of the spirit is explained by means of plants (1 Cor.15:36-38,43,44). The rousing of the soul is shown by facts regarding the flesh of animals (39,45,46). The resurrection of the body is illustrated by appeal to celestial as well as terrestrial bodies (40,41, 47-49). Each one of these is worthy of prolonged study, for they foretell an experience in store for us, which is most welcome and beyond everything that we can think or imagine. It will turn all our sorrow into joy, all our heartache into jubilation.

VIVIFICATION BY DEATH

The oldest life forms on the earth's surface, so far as I am aware, are plants. I once saw a tree in the high Sierras of California, which, so far as I could determine, dates back as far as the deluge, about four thousand years. Plants come much nearer to incorruptibility and immortality than animals. But this is not the illustration used to explain the resurrection. This tree has had no need of vivification, for it has never died. It is so vast in its proportions that it contains enough lumber to build a whole village.

All *life,* even that of plants, is due to *spirit,* and can only spring from spirit. But the mode of transmission in most plants differs from that in animals. In the latter the seed gradually develops into a new individual. In the grains the kernel does not bring forth another kernel, but produces a *whole plant,* with foliage and flowers, much more wonderful in form and appearance than itself. The point here seems to be that the vitality, the spirit of the seed is transmitted to a habitation quite different from that which it left, even if it is the same spirit. The great change is in the two *bodies* that the one spirit receives. A grain remains a grain until its form perishes. If its outward form does not decay and die, the plant does not spring up.

The usual translation of verse 36, "that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die," seems to suggest that only dead seed can produce a new crop. But quite the opposite is true. Dead seed will only decay. It will bring forth nothing. It should read, "What you are sowing is not vivifying if it should not be dying." That is, the *dying* (not *dead*) seed imparts its life to the new plant. In the process of doing this, it must give up its own life. It loses its form and what is left of it decays. There is no return from death as with us. We are not pointed to plants as *examples* of vivification such as we will experience at the presence of Christ.

Seeds are simply *illustrations* of how the same spirit may be clothed with a body far more marvelous than the one which has decayed.

The comparison between the seeds of plants and ourselves is not immediately enforced, but is delayed a few lines, in which the flesh of animals on earth and the bodies of celestial spheres are also introduced (verses 39-41), in order to cover the soul and body as well as the spirit, which we have just discussed. That the seeds are once more the subject in verse 42 is evident from the resumption of the figure of *sowing.* Terrestrial flesh and celestial bodies are not *sown.* So long as this picture is used, we may be sure that the comparison is between the seed and the plant which springs from it and stresses the *spirit.* Yet this is also linked to the next comparison, which concerns the soul, because our soulish bodies will be roused a *spiritual* body. It is important to remember that, although spirit and soul are often in view in this discussion, the dominating theme is the *resurrection body.*

As the seed in the soil goes to corruption, so it is with our mortal bodies. They are, so to speak, planted in the soil, and are returning to it. While the seed is left to decay in the earth, the plant is thrusting its blade above the ground, its stalk is shooting upward, its foliage is spreading abroad, its flowers are scenting the air. What a contrast! So it is with the bodies which our spirits now inhabit, compared with that which shall be. Like the seed sown in the soil, our mortal frames are dying, disintegrating, returning to the soil, until the spirit leaves and returns to God Who gave it. But this same spirit, like the vital force of the plant, will vivify a body which will never die, which the least tinge of corruption will never touch. What a relief! What a joy! How unutterably thankful we will be! Our adoration of God will no longer be handicapped by a corrupting corpse, but, rather, that by-gone experience will enable

us to enjoy it to the full, and respond to the grace of which it is an expression.

THE BODY THAT SHALL BE

Our present fleshly frame is sown in dishonor. It will be roused in glory (1 Cor.15:43a) Humiliation was God's aim in giving us the bodies which we now possess. Its very grace and beauty, when in its prime, only emphasizes the degradation to which it sinks as its vitality vanishes, its bloom fades, and its features are disfigured. Teeth decay, hearing becomes dull, sight becomes dim, and the bodily functions fail. Senility is a sad sight, indeed, unless we see in it a God-given contrast to the glory which is in store for us in the resurrection. Even to be rid of these inglorious signals of decay and death would be a consummation devoutly to be wished. But that is far from fulfilling the expectation held out to us. Even the glory of Adam's sinless form, doubtless clothed in a luminous robe of light, cannot compare with the celestial splendor that will be ours in that day.

It is sown in infirmity; it is roused in power (verse 43b). How helpless is a babe of the human race! Perhaps no other living thing is so dependent as a newborn child. And even when it reaches maturity, how pitifully puny man is when matched with the forces of nature! And how soon the strength of the mighty leaves them! A few score years and most men have spent their vigor. Work becomes a burden. Steps begin to totter. Backs begin to bend. Infirmity makes life an intolerable load, in case disease or violence has not cut short our career. All this would reflect seriously on the Creator if it were the object and end of His dealings with mankind. But it only enhances His fame, when we see that infirmity is merely the foil for the display of the future power that will be ours in resurrection. Then, by comparison, even the professional strong men of

today will be puny puppets. Then the work that wearied us once will be like a welcome relaxation.

It is sown a soulish body, it is roused a spiritual (verse 44). We may not be able to grasp this contrast as easily as the previous ones, but here we are given a clue which will lead us to see *why* our present bodies are corruptible and dishonorable and infirm. The life principle, spirit, is not paramount. Instead, it unites with the soil to form the soul, or sensation, and *this* takes the first place in controlling the body. As this is the principal point in the next discussion, we will not go into it further here. It will be much easier to understand after we have studied the place of the flesh in our present bodies.

SOUL AND FLESH

Having shown by the illustration of the seed that the same spirit may vitalize two different kinds of bodies, such as a bare kernel and a plant with branches, leaves, flowers and fruit, when the one first goes to corruption, Paul now turns to the soul, and appeals to the animal world to illustrate quite a different aspect of the return from death (1 Cor.15:39). There was no change in spirit, unless it be in quantity, in the plant. The change was in the structure, the body of the life form. But the soul of animals, being in the blood, is closely connected with the *flesh.* Superficially, one might expect that the different bodily *forms* or *shapes* be pointed out, which adapt each animal to its surroundings, the fish for the water and especially the bird for the air. But we will not receive wings in resurrection! The change goes deeper than that. It is our *flesh* that needs a renewal.

In order to be able to grasp the greatest change in resurrection we will need to be well grounded in the part played by the *flesh* in man as he now is. The lack of this knowledge has led to much misapprehension of man's past. It

is essential if we wish to apprehend his future. The flesh is the villain in the tragedy of human history. To it is due the failure and futility which has characterized his existence hitherto. It is impossible for us to realize this apart from God's revelation. Even then much has been missed, and believers themselves are tempted to try and improve the incorrigible flesh. It was not until Paul's epistles were penned, and we hid the final verdict condemning the flesh, that its true character and function could be understood. But when once we learn this, then we can see its real role from the very beginning.

VARIOUS FORMS OF FLESH

All flesh is not the same, however (verse 39). This is vital to our theme. We can see this in nature. Not only is there human flesh, but the various forms of animal life have flesh also. From these we may learn the needful lesson that all flesh is adapted to its sphere. The birds may fly in the air and the fishes swim in the sea, but woe to the bird that seeks the depths of the ocean or the fish that would fly in the empyrean! Both would die in a comparatively short time, because their flesh is not fashioned for such an element. Man may dive beneath the water and jump into the air for a short space of time. He may prolong his stay by artificial means for a longer period. But his flesh is so constituted that it cannot live anywhere except on the surface of the earth, for which it was made.

FLESH AND BLOOD GO TO CORRUPTION

Flesh and blood is not able to enjoy an allotment in the kingdom of God because it is *corruptible* (1 Cor. 15:50). Flesh *without* blood tends to disintegrate, decompose, decay, putrefy, and return to the soil from which it came. It is by a constant renewal of elements from the soil through the blood that living flesh is kept from total

decomposition or corruption, such as would take place if it were severed from the body altogether, and there were no blood to replace the waste, and repair the tissue. This is what takes place at death. The beginning of decomposition commences long before life ceases. That has been going on from the start, even before birth. Before death it is counteracted by the assimilation of food and oxygen in healthy, youthful organisms, but to a diminishing degree as age decreases the vitality.

Let us repeat this important fact in other words. Soil from the ground, formed into an organism by the hand of God, would soon return to the soil without blood to bring further supplies in the form of food, as well as oxygen from the air to replace the losses due to the disintegration which results from the life processes. If we take a piece of flesh which is cut off from these supplies and take no measures to hinder it from spoiling, it will soon decompose and disappear, with very disagreeable accompaniments. This simple fact in nature, which all men have observed, gives the word *flesh,* its special meaning and usage in God's word. It is the *corruptible* part of man, often miscalled his "sinful *nature,*" and other misleading terms. When mankind is called *flesh,* by the figure near association, it does not mean merely that he is composed of organic soil, or that he has a body, but that he is *corruptible* and *mortal.*

METABOLISM

The process of building and demolishing the bodies of living creatures is called *metabolism* by medical men, and is divided into *anabolism* (UP-CASTing) and *katabolism* (DOWN-CASTing). It is, in effect, living and dying at the same time. If the flesh were not continually supplied with fresh substance and energy by means of the blood, it would gradually waste away until all of it had returned to inorganic soil. It would go to corruption. The blood is needed,

not merely to build and to vitalize, but to repair the damage which is constantly occurring. This is what is meant by the phrase "flesh and blood" (verse 50). First of all, flesh continually inclines to decompose, yet is hindered by the blood, which reaches every part and counteracts decay.

ADAM AND EVE

This system of flesh and blood may last indefinitely, so long as it functions perfectly. It seems that Adam and Eve continued to keep themselves nourished and healthy by means of the fruits of Eden's garden. Even though their flesh was the same as ours (for we inherit ours from them), it was renewed as fast as it was broken down, so, for practical purposes, displayed none of the signs of decay.

The repair was so persistent and perfect that the measure of the flesh's decomposition was made up by the continual assimilation. But the moment that they ate a substance which, instead of repairing and restoring the flesh, acted rather to cooperate with the latter in its tendency to decay, then the flesh was no longer restrained as it had been, and a gradual process of corruption, or dying, changed the course of life toward death, and immediately dimmed the glory of primeval perfection.

Adam, in Eden, was not immortal in any sense. That he *could* die is evident from the fact that he *did,* eventually. That he was not immune from death even before he sinned seems indicated by the presence of the tree of *life* in the midst of the garden (Gen.2:9). Of this he could freely eat, though there was no need. As a result he was not *dying.* He was not undergoing the process of death, which characterizes all humanity since his expulsion from Eden, and will continue until the tree is restored in the future (Ezek. 47:12; Rev.22:2). The immortality of the soul, or of the spirit, or of the body, or of the whole man, is contrary to God's Word from beginning to end. Sin and death are nec-

essary for training man for his mission in the universe, as well as for his own knowledge of God, and His grace and love. Therefore Adam was made mortal and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was put within his reach, so that, through the discipline of death, he might be prepared for his place in the universe.

That the tree of life was not only a food, but also a medicine, is clear from later scriptures, and is intimated by Adam's expulsion from the garden. Even after he had offended, he was driven forth lest he take of the tree of life and live for the eon. The tree that he did not need before he sinned could have kept him from death afterward. In the next eon, when Christ is the great Priest of His people, the tree will be a panacea for the ills of the holy nation. Its fruit will be for food, but its leaves will heal them of their diseases (Ezek.47:12). In the new earth its curative power will be extended to the nations. That is why death will be no more (Rev.21:4). It is not that the nations will be immortal, or that the dying process has been done away with. That does not come until the consummation, when death is abolished (1 Cor.15:26). Were there no tree of life to arrest the ravages of the last enemy, death would still reap its grim harvest in the last eon.

THE TREE OF LIFE

There was an antidote for the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. All that Adam needed to do was to take of the tree of life, and the dying process, which had begun in him, would have been arrested. To those who are not in God's confidence it seems strange that He should have planted a poisonous tree in the midst of the garden, even if He did warn Adam not to eat of it. Yet it is stranger still that, after planting the tree of life, He would not let Adam eat of it in order to counteract the evil that had been done. And not only so, but why does He not give

us such a tree today, when it is so sorely needed? In the coming eons He will not withhold this boon from His people, and they will find relief from the weakness and the corruption which is inherent in the flesh, by eating the fruit of the tree of life (Ezek.47:12, Rev.22:2).

The setting of the scene in Eden was entirely contrary to the teaching of theology. To make it agree we would be forced to exchange the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden for the tree of life. If God wanted men to be immortal at that time He would have put this tree within man's easy reach and taken the fatal tree away entirely.

Moreover, why were the cherubim with their flaming sword not used to bar the *serpent* out of Eden *before* Adam sinned, rather than *Adam after* his transgression? Or why not to keep Adam away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, rather than from the tree of life?

CELESTIAL BODIES

It is significant that there is a change from *flesh* to *bodies*, when *celestial* creatures are discussed (1 Cor.15:40). The difference is defined as one of *glory.* For us, indeed, the flesh *as we now know it*, disappears in the celestial glory, when it is changed by His presence. Indeed, whatever glory our present bodies of flesh and blood may have in its proper sphere on the earth, it would no longer be glory in comparison with that above. We are not physically fit for any other environment except the terrestrial. The process, which slowly brings us down to the grave on earth, would be almost instantaneous if we should be transported into the heavens, above the atmosphere, deprived of oxygen and warmth. Heaven is supposed to be a place of utmost pleasure. But what little we know by experience of the upper regions above the earth would lead us to make it a scene of swift suffering and sudden decease.

But even if men could manage to overcome the lack of oxygen and the cold, how long could they live at a distance from the soil? This frame of ours is a soilish body, and cannot exist for long apart from the plant-producing ground. Even on the earth's surface he must often labor hard and sweat heavily to extract a living from the sod, in accord with God's curse upon the ground. It would not take long for hunger to drive a heavenly adventurer down to dine, for his flesh would soon fade away without constant replacement.

PLACES OR BEINGS

But it is doubtful if the term "celestial," or *on*-heavenly, refers to the upper regions of earth's atmosphere. It seems rather to denote that which, or those who, are *on* the heavenly luminaries, such as the moon, the sun, or the stars, for these are mentioned (1 Cor.15:41). The much-debated question as to whether these are inhabited has not been settled by scientists, but the Scriptures seem to clearly teach that there are created beings *on* the heavenly lights. First, however, let us note that these are never referred to as *human* beings, sons of Adam. What little we know of nature confirms the thought that mankind not only does not, but cannot, live *on* the orbs of space.

The Greek term *epouraniois* is indefinite. It may refer to things or persons. So far it seems that translators have preferred to add the word *places.* But a study of the Ephesian epistle will lead us to see that this is far from satisfactory if it is intended to exclude living, intelligent beings. Such passages as, "may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among[1] the celestials, through the ecclesia,

1. Our rendering "*among* the celestials" accords with the fact that English idiom usually demands "among" rather than "in" with the plural.

the multifarious wisdom of God" (Eph.3:10), clearly refer to the dwellers in the "heavenly places." The word "place" (which is not in the Greek, but is added by the translators for the sake of English idiom), puts a limit to the thought which is not in the original. The sense of "beings" is included in the rendering "among the celestials."

During an early epoch in my life, ere I was called by God, I was preparing myself to be an astronomer, so made an effort to acquaint myself with the nearer luminaries, especially the moon, for I had only a small telescope. Long continued observation of its different phases, especially of that intermediate zone where darkness and the light meet, as well as the crater-like spots, gave me much to think about, and convinced me that it was not fit for human habitation. The shadows of the mountains are exceedingly sharp, which seems to show that there is no atmosphere worth mentioning. They looked like the shadows in a vacuum. In that case it is probably very hot where the sun shines and very cold in the shade. I noticed this even on a high mountain on earth. I held out my palm to the sun, which burned on one side, while it was cold on the other.

The sun is generally too bright to bear observation through a small telescope, so I studied photographs, and observed sun spots through dark glasses. Once I made a considerable journey to get the best possible view of a total eclipse of the sun. When the moon was fully centered on its disc, the corona could be seen, long streamers of flame reaching out on all sides. The sun's surface seems to be in the greatest turmoil. The main fact that emerged was this: that human beings cannot exist in its terrific heat for a moment. If we can't even gaze at the sun unless it is totally eclipsed, except through dark glasses, and when we are at a vast distance, how could we live in the midst of such a turbulent lake of fire?

The other heavenly orbs were too far away for my tele-

scope. I could see faint rings around Saturn, but not clear enough to form any conclusions about it. But from photographs and the descriptions of those who have made painstaking observations, I am convinced that none are really fit for human habitation, unless, possibly, the planet Mars. Venus is too near the sun and so cloudy that we would be parboiled, perhaps, before we could reach its surface. The planets at a greater distance from the sun than our earth would probably be too cold. Beings constituted as we are, who must confine themselves within a narrow range of temperature, cannot even live in all regions of our own planet, let alone the outer realms of space, or the heavenly bodies with conditions vastly different from those on earth.

Of the stars we can say very little positively, as science is too theoretical to be a safe guide. But it seems evident that the solar system is a model for others in the universe and that the countless luminaries that can be seen by means of the photographic plate are the same as our sun, and may have satellites corresponding to it. I am convinced that we are not called to selfishly luxuriate in the "heaven" of orthodoxy, but to be God's representatives to all the orbs of space. It will be our more blessed privilege to give, rather than to get. It has seemed most significant to me that, when I first made up my mind to really study the Bible to see what it was all about, I started with Genesis and was stalled for very wonder at the statement: *He made the stars also.* To speak so of the myriads of mighty monsters in the infinite field of the heavens, was beyond man. These few words kindled my interest in the Bible, and in the stars of which it speaks so simply.

Since then I have come to know God and the special mission which He has given the ecclesia which is the Christ's body. We are blessed with every spiritual blessing among the celestials. Our home is not on earth, but in the heavens. Some day we shall visit our near neighbors, the moon

and Mars, and doubtless we will be able to live upon the sun and any of its satellites. Moreover, we will reach out to the stars, and spread the knowledge of God's name on every member of the milky way as well as on Sirius and Orion, from the North Star to the Southern Cross. Once we grasp the grace that is ours in Christ Jesus, and the glory of spreading His fame to all the universe, the stars are transformed from strange pin points of light into the most magnificent field of human endeavor ever granted to any of Adam's race.

I have lived much of my life in a clime where the stars come close to earth. I have lain for hours on my back on a roof-top in Jerusalem, simply soaking in the stars, which seemed so much nearer than in the northern zones where most of my friends reside. In the murky north it is not so easy to understand Yahweh's word to Abraham, for the stars are usually obscured, and only the greatest lights are always visible. But in Palestine, without a glass or telescope, on a clear night, the sight is bewildering, and no one would care to count their number. Of course those of minor magnitude are not visible to the naked eye, and a patient photographic plate will see many millions more. *This will be our parish*! To declare God's name to the denizens of this indescribable domain have we been "ordained!"

The greatest glory of earth will be the holy city, new Jerusalem, with its vast extent, and its enduring decorations of gold and precious gems. But this terrestrial glory will not compare with the celestial magnificence. The city, so wide and broad and high, sinks into insignificance before the immeasurable reaches of interstellar space, and the immensity of some of the stars.

There, vast audiences are waiting for the message that we bring, which we will announce, not only by word of mouth, but by our very presence and overwhelming glory, heightened by the background of human sin and enmity

to God, as witnessed by the pages of earth's history and sealed by the cross of Christ.

Since the airplane has been able to soar to inhuman heights, it has become abundantly clear that no man can live many miles above the earth. I have climbed mountains, much lower than this, and found breathing difficult, and sustained effort exhausting. High fliers must be provided with oxygen masks and heating equipment. Compared with other stellar distances, man can rise above the soil only a most minute measure. His present flesh binds him to the earth with a very short rope. He is a prisoner, confined within a narrow layer of air just above the surface of his habitance.

I am quite certain that the force of gravity, which we will call weight, would make it very awkward for us anywhere but on the surface of the earth. On the moon we might be mighty acrobats, yet on Jupiter we would be glued to the ground. But I do not need to prove this. Everyone of us knows that he has weight, and it takes quite an effort to lift one of our own size even a few feet from the ground. In our present bodies we certainly cannot jump from the earth even to the moon, our nearest neighbor, or to any other of the planets or the stars. We have a terrestrial body, not a celestial one.

How is it possible to overcome the force of gravity? Can our bodies be so changed as to lose all their weight? Just how they can be transformed we cannot tell, but there are indications all about us which give us a clue to the means. The clearest of all is a very simple experiment. Who, roughly speaking, can jump the highest? Why, the one who is the strongest, who has the most *power.* This is the key. Our present bodies are *infirm* because of their mortality. But mere muscular strength does not solve the problem. We are not fitted for any other environment, even under ideal conditions, and would need strength far in excess of the present.

Another illustration may help. We wish to offer an animal wholly to God. How can we send it aloft to the empyrean? In Hebrew it would be called an *ascent* offering. How did the priests send a heavy animal up to God? They *changed* its substance. Take an animal that cannot jump even its own height and apply power in the form of fire, so that it is resolved into gases, then these will ascend without effort seemingly, and all except a very small residue will float away above. The ashes that remain are nearly nothing in comparison with the weight of the beast. It would have been a tremendous task to carry the carcass up the sides of high Hermon or lofty Lebanon. In this simple fashion, however, almost all of it ascended as a restful odor to God.

The same thought is suggested by the action of the messenger of Yahweh, who left Manoah and his wife by ascending in the flame of the burning sacrifice (Judges 13:19,20). The point is that the force of gravity can be entirely nullified by giving the constituents of the body a different constitution. A diamond will sink in water, but soot, the very same substance, will float, and a carbolic gas will ascend to the sky. The flesh of a fish will float about in water, but, when eaten by a bird, will fly in the air. God gives the celestials a body that has no fear of fire, and that ascends without apparent effort to the empyrean. Of this nature will be the change of our terrestrial bodies when He comes. When we hear His shout and the dead are roused, then we will find ourselves able to sink upwards as it were, and meet the Lord in the air.

CONCLUSION

Man prides himself on being the most intelligent of earth's denizens, yet he cannot answer the most elementary questions about himself. He does not know whence he came, what he is, or whither he is going. He gropes about in a London fog. His thinking and acting is based on igno-

rance, conceit and selfishness. Even his highest efforts to benefit his fellows, economically, socially, politically, morally and religiously, unless based upon a recognition of God and His plans, are futile and doomed to failure, because they run counter to the current of His intention. Even the little light that man has is distorted. He is quite right in his yearning for immortality, but fearfully astray when he denies death in order to obtain it.

Once our heart sees clearly that the mission of mankind demands a period of preparation in which evil is the essential factor, how futile and offensive are all the efforts of men to avoid the sweat and tears and blood which is their lot! How pitiable is the pride that persists in making man the arbiter of his fate, the captain of his soul! How illusory are his dreams of happiness, how misleading the mirage of a new world with freedom from want and fear, in independence from his Creator.

Once we realize the loving and glorious purpose that underlies God's dealings with humanity, we no longer fuss and fret, and fear the future, we do not rebel at the misfortunes of our lot, the miseries of our existence. According to the grace and light vouchsafed to us, we bear our burdens with patience, we bow before the trials that assail us, we acquiesce in evil that is our part, we thank God for the deception, the injustice, the misery, the suffering, the anguish in the world, though it aches our hearts, and we glory in the future fruit of all this deluge of sin and insubjection when the lesson has been learned.

Glory awaits us, far beyond our fondest dreams! Blessedness will be ours beyond our most ardent anticipations! So great is God's grace that we, the last and lowest on the earth, shall be the first and foremost in the empyrean. All hail to our God and Christ Jesus, His beloved Son! For our mission to the celestials is the highest honor in the universe.

A. E. Knoch

THE SUPREMACY OF SPIRIT

THE FUTURE of humanity lies in its *spirit*. Our bodies indeed will be glorified, and our souls satisfied, yet even this exultant bliss will depend upon the fact that our very frames will be spiritual, and we will be vivified by the fullness of the spirit. The present mode of operation of the human spirit is not final, nor the ideal of the consummation. The spirit is now with us in humiliation and weakness, unable to dominate the body which it vitalizes. It is but the feeble flicker of a candle, as compared with the splendor of the sun in the future glory. Difficult as it is to define the function of the spirit in humanity today, we at least have our experience as a check. For the future we have nothing but the bare Word of God. Nevertheless, to really gain a clear conception of the human spirit in its essence, we must know it in the might of its manifestation, as well as in the hour of its humiliation.

The Word of God can penetrate up to the parting of soul and spirit. I doubt whether any other literature, unless it is based solely upon the Scriptures, is competent to do this. Even for well instructed saints, the boundary between soul and spirit is but faintly defined. Hence no one need be unduly concerned if our present attempt is not easy to understand at first sight. It is a field of thought where men, because they are living *souls*, find delving difficult. We are constrained, by our very constitution, to consider things by means of our senses. Hence we learn about the body with comparative ease. The soul also makes a strong impression upon us. But the spirit, which cannot be appre-

hended by our senses, especially if we seek its acquaintance through its effects, tends to sink to the level of the soul whenever we seek to seize upon its essence.

The language used of the spirit is, therefore, largely figurative, and may easily lead to false conclusions. The very word in Hebrew, *ruch,* is not literal. A recent Jewish translation, not seeing the figure, has tried to get an intermediate or composite meaning by rendering it "spirit-roaring" or "roaring," when it plainly denotes *wind.* He tries to force the figure into the meaning. Such a course has often caused confusion of thought, and is one of the chief pitfalls which beset the concordant student. We cannot deduce from the phrase "a *broken* spirit" (Psa.51:17) that the spirit must be solid substance because only such can be *broken.* Nor can we say that a *sore* (wounded) spirit (Prov.18:14) identifies the spirit with the body, for only living tissue can be *sore.* Deductions of this kind from figurative expressions are deceptive.

We speak of some of the manifestations of spirit as "feelings," whereas these are literally sensations, hence belong to the body and are the soul. But we must remember that no feeling is possible without the power of the spirit acting on the body. Hence the word "feeling" is largely used in a figurative sense, even when there is no direct bodily sensation. It is doubtful, however, if these are ever entirely absent, as the spirit affects the body, and through it the soul, very powerfully. Thus sorrow and contrition, joy and exultation, may arise purely from the spirit, but they never fail to affect the functioning of the body and thus are "felt" by the soul. Because we must speak of the manifestations of the spirit in terms of substance and sensation, we have almost lost the power of identifying the spirit, and confuse it with its effects.

In previous studies on this theme we have considered spirit in its manifestations, life and sensation. We tried to

show that, in man as at present constituted, this was dependent on breathing the oxygen of the air, just as the body is dependent on food, or oxygenated soil. Apart from breath, the spirit of man has no *conscious* existence. We said "It is impossible to perceive a human spirit apart from its two necessary causes, body and breath." "Breath is essential to spirit, life, and sensation." These statements must be kept well within their context, which deals with the phenomenal, the apparent, the soulish, what we can *per*ceive (not *con*ceive), that is, the "zoological aspect" of spirit, in humanity, before vivification. It will need restatement and modification, lest conclusions be drawn from this temporary and incomplete view, which will give us false impressions as to the essence of spirit itself. We now wish to form a *con*ception of spirit which goes beyond the possibilities of our present *per*ception.

A study of the human spirit in its *present* manifestation has shown that, *in life and consciousness,* it is dependent on the breath, on the oxygen of the air, which makes contact with the body through the blood. The power generated by the combination seems to be the food of the spirit, so to speak, and sustains our life. Withdraw the breath, and life and consciousness leave the body and the spirit no longer functions. This is because we now have a soulish body. But, in vivification, especially of those who are not only made alive but *changed,* this can no longer be the case. There will be no blood, even as our Lord had none in resurrection (*cf* Luke 24:39). We will be able to live consciously among the celestials and traverse regions of space where there is no air. As at present constituted, we cannot do this. Our bodies need to be replenished from the soil. They are soilish. Our spirits need to be sustained by the atmosphere. They function by means of a soulish body.

The fact that a *spiritual* body does not depend on breathing seems to show that, while this is its mode of function-

ing in a soulish body, it is not *essential* to the human spirit, even as it is not needed by spirit beings. We might make this clear by means of a parallel. The food we eat *seems* essential to the human body. Certainly it cannot live long, as at present constituted, without food, or apart from the soil from which our sustenance is derived. But the fact that the human body can also be a *celestial* one shows that the soil is necessary to the body only in its present state. If this is so as regards the body, how much more may it be true of the spirit! The further fact that there are spirits, without flesh and bones, makes it practically self-evident. Spirit in general, as well as the human spirit, cannot be confined to the conditions under which humanity exists during the process which involves humiliation and death and the withholding of the fullness of the spirit.

To simplify the subject, we will ignore the bodies and spirits of the circumcision saints who remain upon the earth. Their state reveals less of the spirit's power than ours, whose bodies will be changed for a celestial environment. What is revealed concerning our future frames seems to be the highest manifestation of the human spirit. Hence here we will receive the most help in understanding the spirit. And here we will be best guarded from allowing our present experience in a soulish body to obscure our apprehension of the glorious possibilities of the human spirit when fittingly equipped and at its best.

The secret of the resurrection reveals that, in our case, this terrestrial body will be *changed* to a celestial one. It will no longer be a *soilish* or a *soulish* body, but a *celestial* and a *spiritual* house. Nothing is said as to any change in our spirits. Then as now we will have bodies and spirits. But this body is *not* that which shall be. Would we not be informed if our spirits were different? Are we not justified in assuming that our spirit is the same and of the same kind? God's silence on this point seems conclusive.

This being so, it is evident that our previous studies of the spirit must be limited to its association with a soulish body. In humanity as at present constituted the spirit leaves with the breath, but in the resurrection body it does not. It is evident, therefore, that the present manifestation of the spirit in humanity does not reveal its essence, but is a temporary manifestation. We will need to add to our knowledge of its present operations what we know of it in vivification before we can form an idea of its essential nature.

As the resurrection bodies of the saints neither disintegrate nor die, there is no need of the blood stream to carry new supplies of substance to renew the waste which the dying process produces at present. Nor will it be called upon to convey oxygen from the air to sustain sensation and life. Hence the blood disappears in the body that shall be. It was not restored to our Lord in resurrection. Hence the spirit will not function through the breath and the blood, as is now the case. Life will no longer involve a process of combustion. Energy will come by other channels. This opens up to us a view of the spirit which transcends our present experience. Yet we must confess that, since this manifestation multiplies the power of the spirit, it must be a much better revelation of its essence.

For matters beyond our experience our language is quite inadequate, and it is difficult to make oneself understood. So we will only indicate the probable direction of truth by using an illustration. Our present state may be compared with a lamp. The wick represents the body, the oil the food it consumes, the light and warmth the soul, and the energy present the spirit. The lamp must be lighted to begin with. A certain amount of energy, in the form of heat, must be applied to it before it begins to develop heat itself. Then it burns by combining its fuel with oxygen, until some factor fails. So is man, cut off from the life of God.

But it will be different in the vivification. In the future

we will be more like a permanent electric bulb, which does not (or cannot) be used up, oxygen is excluded, but to which a continuous stream of energy is conveyed from without. So will we be when we are connected with the life of God.

In the case of the lamp it is difficult for us to think of the power apart from its effects. It has been stored in the fuel used. But we know that oil and oxygen (food and breath) would never unite unless first a certain amount of power is imparted. This corresponds with the impartation of the spirit to Adam.

But the wick eventually becomes burned up, which might illustrate the operation of death. The point is that now God gives the spirit to each descendant of Adam, but only in measure. There is no continuous supply. We live on for a brief period independent of God's immediate power.

A rather striking experiment I once saw in the laboratory of my dear departed friend, Vladimir Gelesnoff, may help our minds still further. Electrical energy is usually produced in a rather roundabout way, through the fall of water or the combustion of coal. The energy of the sun is stored up on the earth and recovered by means of machinery. Dynamos are needed to produce it. But this is not necessary. Heat can be derived directly from the sun. In the experiment to which I refer a small electric lamp was lit by catching the sun's energy in a substance which looked like yellow powder. Put this powder in the sunlight and it would absorb enough energy to light the electric bulb. Theoretically, such an arrangement would give continuous light, at least so long as the sun or some other source would supply the energy.

As energy produces light when applied to substances, so spirit produces life. Perhaps this will help us to broaden our ideas as to spirit, and not limit it to particular manifestations. The energy *applied* to the lamp, as well as that *produced* by the combustion of the oil by combining that

stored up in its substance with that in the air, and the energy in the electric current *is all essentially the same,* though quite different in its mode of manifestation. What we may say about the lamp and its energy may be quite true and helpful, yet it must not be made universal, or applied to all energy at all times. So it is with the spirit and the human body. At present it is not a spiritual body, but a soulish one. In a spiritual body the spirit will have a different mode of manifestation, hence the body itself must be modified.

Let us preserve the same distance between our parallels. Energy is not spirit. One produces *motion,* or *light,* the other *life.* Energy cannot be personal, spirit can. If the spirit in man is simply the latent energy stored up in him or produced by his body, then he is a robot, a mechanical marvel, a combination of substance and power, but lacking life. As life is unspeakably more than motion, so is spirit more than energy. Everywhere there is latent energy, which, when released, will produce motion, heat, light. The sun sheds it upon us in abundance. But spirit makes itself evident in a higher manifestation, and operates only in organized matter. Its realm is clearly defined in chemistry where organic and inorganic each has a field of its own.

THE SPIRIT IN PLANTS

Moreover, there is vast variety in the organisms which are vitalized by spirit. Plants live and breathe and have a limited motion not only downwards but also upwards against the force of gravity. They sometimes exert a tremendous amount of energy. The giant trees of California, the oldest and largest form of life on earth, pump up vast quantities of moisture from the ground to a height of two or three hundred feet. But plants have no sensation, no soul. The hair in man is somewhat like this. It may be cut off or otherwise mutilated without appreciable pain.

It seems to have no blood hence no sensation. In the hair, plant life seems to find its place in the human frame.

THE SPIRIT IN ANIMALS

In animals the spirit uses a higher organism, much more separate from the ground and independent of the earth. There is no need of constant contact with the soil. Substance, usually organized plant life, is absorbed from within, to sustain the flow of power. Breathing is also an inward process, in contrast to the leaves of the plant. Movement is extended to locomotion. So we see that the spirit operates in quite a different way, through different organs, but it is spirit nevertheless. Mankind has very much in common with animals. Both have locomotion and sensation, with such functions as feeling, smelling, hearing, and seeing. The point is that the instrument through which the spirit functions, rather than the spirit itself, determines the effect in each of the many forms of life.

Mankind occupies an intermediate place between animals and spirits. But the tendency of God's dealings with him is toward the spiritual realm. The change wrought at his vivification does not make him a spirit, but it brings him into a condition where he can associate with spirit beings and is able to judge them (1 Cor.6:3). In this way some section of humanity has contact with every part of creation, and is able to fulfill the functions which fall to it in Christ. We must not fail, therefore, to consider the human spirit in the future as well as in the present if we wish to understand its essence. In its present manifestations, and in our experience, it is almost impossible to consider it apart from the soul, through which alone we become conscious of it. Outside the Scriptures the words pertaining to soul and spirit are so confused that clear thinking is practically impossible. The soul is often spoken of when the spirit is intended, as well as the reverse.

SPIRIT BEINGS

Whatever may be the relation between matter and spirit, they are very different in the impression made upon us. Unclean spirits seem to desire to enter the human body, as in demoniacs. Celestial messengers may have spiritual bodies. Yet God Himself has no corporate organism outside of Christ. In all of these cases it is evident that a spirit being is able to exist and operate quite apart from a body. It is when they wish to make themselves known to mankind that some material form seems necessary. So God reveals Himself in Christ, the messengers become visible to human eyes, the evil spirits use the organs of a human being in order to communicate with us. The point we wish to press is this: A spirit *can exist* quite apart from a material form. Why should not this be true of the human spirit as well? We cannot perceive a spirit being apart from material substance, nor our own spirits, but does this prove their non-existence? *Existence* does not involve *consciousness* in humanity, however. Is it not wiser to consider all spirits as alike in the essentials, unless evidence proves the contrary? Is not this the reason why the word "spirit" is applied to all?

Some may say that this is reasoning from analogy, from spirit beings to human spirits, and is metaphysics and not Scripture. Quite the contrary. There is no reasoning whatever. There are no premises. *God, in His Word,* calls sensation in an animal a *soul,* and so we believe that the soul is the same thing in an animal as in a man, quite contrary to the reasonings of metaphysics. And since *God, in His Word,* uses the same term for the spirit in man as for another part of His creation, it is *faith,* and not reasoning, which bows to His revelation. We simply give spirit the same meaning throughout, whatever its manifestation may be. There is no figure. To insist that spirit is spirit is not

reasoning but revelation. So it is with every part of man's composition in the lower spheres of the animal kingdom. Body, blood, breath, etc., have one meaning in animals and in man. So it is with spirit.

The fact that the human spirit has no consciousness apart from a body should not enter into this question, for, in sleep, it has none even *with* a body. And God has been pleased to explain death to us by means of slumber. Consciousness is only one of the possible manifestations of the spirit, and belongs to the soul. In death the spirit returns to *God.* In resurrection and vivification it comes back to man. In the interval the *man* is dead, but the elements of which he was composed still *exist,* both matter and spirit. The matter is not used again, necessarily, for it was continually being renewed even during life. In vivification there is a vast *change,* this corruptible puts on incorruption and this mortal immortality, but this is concerned with the body rather than with the spirit. There is nothing to show that those who are alive become a different spirit, or that the spirit that returned to God remains with Him, or that it is altered, as is the case with the body.

The Scriptures do speak of a *new* spirit, but never in the literal sense of displacing the human spirit in resurrection. Ezekiel twice speaks of the new heart and the new spirit which will be given to Israel, and explains it as the spirit of Yahweh (Ezek.18:31; 36:26,27). In describing their spiritual resurrection it is again the spirit of Yahweh (Ezek.37). Although it is not so expressed in the Scriptures, all who receive the spirit of God may be said to have a "new" spirit. But let us keep all such matters out of the present enquiry, for they deal with a totally different phase of spirit manifestations. Neither let us bring in the many figurative expressions, as the spirit of grace, or truth, etc. These are not in point in the present investigation.

Thus mankind, in accord with the high counsels of God

concerning it, may be said to combine in itself all the grades of living creatures, from the plants to the spirits, from the most elementary cell to the very highest form, as in the Deity. Man partakes of plant life, of animal life, and of the life of spirits. But the latter is largely future, when all are vivified, and it is exemplified to the fullest extent only in the celestial selection, those who form Christ's body. We may consider its present state in humanity as an intermediate one. We are fitted to some extent to be set over the lower creatures, for we have bodies and souls like theirs. But, at present, we are beneath spirit beings, and cannot take our place over them until we have been equipped with our new habitations which are from the heavens.

BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT

It may be helpful to clarify the distinctions between soul and spirit before going further. The great gulf between *body* and spirit makes them antithetical in many ways, even if we consider matter as a manifestation of energy, as scientists do in these days. Material substance is tangible, and affects our senses. Spirit may not directly affect our bodily sensations. Paul speaks of his being in Corinth in the spirit and in the flesh. When he was there in flesh he could be seen and heard. When with them in spirit they had no organs to perceive him. Only indirectly, as they read his words with their eyes, or heard them read with their ears, or recalled his bodily presence with their memories, would his spiritual presence affect their thoughts and actions.

The distinction between soul and spirit is one of the most elusive there is. Let us see if we cannot simplify it by a process of elimination. All that is ours which is not matter or sensation is spirit. The problem is to apprehend that which cannot be perceived. The body is perceptible, the soul is perception itself, the spirit is imperceptible. That is why this term is also used to include the spirit world. Think-

ing is essentially unconscious, though it may be accompanied with sensations, either as cause or effect. A terrifying noise goes through the spirit and produces a sensation of fear. That thinking is essentially unconscious is evident when we "act before we think." The consciousness of danger sometimes comes after we have sought to evade it.

That the mind or spirit really operates without our knowledge or direction is evident from the many vital functions which operate independently of our will. In many the spirit is ceaselessly working to keep us alive. The lungs, the heart, the digestion, the brain—all these go on when we sleep, when our souls are not functioning, hence are due to vital energy, which is spirit.

Life, and spirit, its source, lie far beneath our consciousness, so we may recognize it only by its operation, where there is no sensation or will, in our own bodies. If the spirit were conscious we would be aware of all the vital organs and their movements. But life, as well as spirit, is not consciousness. That is only an effect, limited to certain combinations. Not only in sleep do the vital processes go on, but while we are awake our consciousness is limited, like our sight and our hearing, to a certain segment of the actual realm of life and motion. We do not see all there is, but only as through a narrow slit. Neither do we hear all sounds. Some are too low, others too high, for our ears. So it is with our spirit. We are aware of only a fragment of it. The rest is hidden from us, or known only from its effects. We can always be sure that where there is life there must be spirit, even though there is nothing which makes any impression on our senses.

In the resurrection we do not sow the body that shall be. God will give us a different body. In contrast to this the spirit comes back when we awake from death. Hence we are roused not merely sentient beings without any connection with the past, but the same individuals as before, capable

of profiting from our experiences before death. Otherwise these would have no value in God's great purpose.

"CONTINUITY" AND "IDENTITY"

The modern trend toward throwing doubt on the resurrection by questioning the "continuity" of "identity," etc., is no course for us to follow. It deals with the subject as if it were an ordinary event in the course of nature, apart from the special intervention of God. In that realm there is no resurrection, no rousing, no vivification. It is found only in the realm of miracles, only where God works a wonder. Once He is given His place, the difficulties disappear. I am of the opinion that both "continuity" and "identity" (whatever they really mean) are fully provided for in the spirit, which alone, of the two constituents of humanity, has not suffered change and disintegration, and which eventually attains the ascendancy, even as the body was the prime constituent at first. Man's impermanence, weakness, corruption, and change are all associated with his flesh. His permanence, power, glory, and unchangeableness are all resident in his spirit.

Such questions as "continuity," "identity," . . . "memory" in resurrection, and the time when the spirit is imparted to human beings, are not at all necessary to a knowledge of the truth. They are brought up here only because modern scientific enquiry thinks they are vital to the "problem." They are not definitely discussed in the Scriptures, hence it is not wise to take them seriously, or make them a part of our faith. To faith they are not "problems" at all, for resurrection, rousing, or vivification imply identity, continuity, and memory. The injection of the prenatal life of humanity, when the mother aids in the vital processes, as if it were the life of the mother and not of the child, and as if the child had no life, hence no spirit, before birth, should not and need not perplex. Life is instantaneous.

Its gradual development into independent and conscious life is only a transitional process, which does not affect the truth of resurrection.

Human life does not begin at birth, but at conception. It is always distinct from that of the mother. Even before birth a child can die without involving the death of its mother. It may act quite independently as when John the Baptist jumped when Miriam saluted Elizabeth (Luke 1:41). And he was filled with holy spirit, quite independently of his mother, even before his birth (Luke 1:15). Before birth and before weaning, the vital functions are partly performed for humans by their mothers, but this is quite a distinct matter from the importation of spirit and life. A transitory process like this will not aid us in our investigations, so is best left out of consideration.

FLESH AND BLOOD—FLESH AND BONES

The combination of flesh with blood seems to indicate our present soulish body, that of flesh and bones the spiritual body. The difference lies in the blood. This in turn involves much else, especially the soul, for, at present, the soul is in the blood. It also involves the whole method of sustaining and vitalizing the body, for both the air and the food are carried to the members of the body by the blood. Not only did our Saviour pour out His blood at His death for our sins, but He also inaugurated a new mode of human life apart from blood at His vivification. When Lazarus and others were raised the blood was still present and resumed its usual functions. Not so when our Lord took back the life He had laid down. The spirit vivified the identical body but not the blood that had been shed. It was not needed. And the body normally seemed to have powers which flesh and blood do not possess.

In contrast to the blood is the return of the spirit. The word *return* has proven to be the key to the death state.

So also the expression *turn back* may be of the resurrection. Jairus' daughter had died. In recalling her to life, we read that *her* spirit *turned back* (Luke 8:55). It seems to be more than mere consciousness or life, but a personal essence of which these are the tokens. It had left her body to return to God, but was brought back by our Lord. This expression is well worth pondering on a point where revelation is very reticent. Where evidence is scarce we must make full use of it, and one intimation in the sacred text is worth more than volumes from other sources. Figuratively the girl was only drowsing, and soon awoke. Literally she was dead.

THE SPIRIT IN LIFE

There are many notable contrasts between the spirit and the flesh in this life, as is evident from the strong moral tinge of their respective adjectives, *fleshly* and *spiritual*. This is greatly emphasized in redemption, for God, especially in this administration, appeals almost exclusively to our spirits. The results, also, are mostly confined to our spirits, even though our bodies (rather than our *flesh*) are vitalized with its life in a slight degree. But in vivification spirit is still more prominent, and flesh and blood is absent, even the body becoming spirit*ual*, though not spirit. If the place of spirit in life is so different from that of the flesh, so that it often stands in contrast to it, we should not expect it to share the fate of the flesh in death. Nothing is said of its dissolution. There is no hint of corruption. It does not go to the unseen, like the soul. The fact that it returns to the Creator Himself is suggestive of its high honor even in the dishonor of death.

Though spirit is, perhaps, the most difficult subject for us humans to comprehend, seeing that we are not spirits, yet even more perplexing is spirit in a state of non-manifestation. We may be able to grasp something of spirit as

it operates in us today, although we are so apt to confuse it with soul. We may even have a measure of apprehension for the operation of the spirit in vivification. But the interval between death and vivification, while the body returns to the soil and the soul to the unseen, from whence they came, seems to be an extraordinary tax upon our mentality. Here it is better to distrust our own thoughts altogether and allow a microscopical examination of the few divine allusions to the spirit at this crisis to make their impression on our minds.

The spirit of our Lord is especially emphasized at His death. When He had *committed* it to His Father (Luke 23:46), He *lets* it *out* (Matt.27:50) and *gives* it *up* (John 19:30). Let us consider each of these expressions carefully to see what we can glean from their meaning and usage.

The word *commit* is literally BESIDE-PLACE *paratithêmi* in Greek. In this sense it is used by our Lord when He instructs His disciples to place the fish and the cakes He had blessed before the throng (Mark 6:41; 8:6,7). As a faded figure, however, it is used by Paul when he gave a *charge* to Timothy (1 Tim.1:18). When speaking to the Ephesian elders at Miletus he committed *them* to God and to the word of His grace (Acts 20:32). Peter exhorts those who are suffering according to the will of God, to commit their *souls* to a faithful Creator, in the doing of good (1 Peter 4:19). Besides this, a slightly different form is used literally of the *cakes* and *fishes* (Mark 8:6), of *food* (Luke 10:8; 11:6; Acts 16:34; 1 Cor.10:27), and figuratively of a *parable* (Matt.13:24,31), of *possessions* (Luke 12:48), *teaching* (Acts 17:3), and of the *disciples* to the Lord (Acts 14:23).

We would not commend our bodies to His care, for we know that they are doomed to dissolution. No intelligent saint would commit his soul to God in death, for he knows that it will return to the unseen. But the Scriptures speak of the spirit in death as a matter which still persists

(although it does not *live*), and as a deposit to be left in the personal care of God or of His Christ. Not knowing that consciousness is connected with the *soul,* not with the spirit, it has been usual to use these facts to prove a conscious intermediate state. The reaction from this has left the spirit little more than the breath, which is lost and vanishes in the air. The truth lies in between. The spirit is that part of humanity which returns to God's special keeping, for in it lies the future of mankind and of the individual, when he finally fulfills his destiny in the image of God for which he was created.

It will be seen from this that, in the faded, figurative usage of the word, matters of special value, which are exposed to danger, are committed to those who are to protect and preserve them. The elders at Ephesus had among their number men who would draw disciples after themselves. What could Paul do about it? The only powers which could guard the rest against this course are God Himself and the word of His grace. In Peter, the souls of the saints are in danger. They are liable to persecution. Their Creator alone can guard their souls, and they can do their part by doing good. So, like the Lord's spirit in death, the Ephesian saints, and the souls of Peter's readers, are committed to *God,* for His safekeeping.

It would be well for us to meditate much on the fact that Christ committed His *spirit* to God. He did not commit *Himself,* or His *body,* or His *soul* (as most of His followers would do today). His body was committed to the tomb, where men could see it and guard it. His soul entered hades, the imperceptible, hence all sensation and consciousness vanished in oblivion. But we cannot help having the impression that the spirit was a treasure which was guarded by God. The Scriptures leave with us the impression that the spirit still *exists* (not *lives* or is *con-*

scious) a treasure to be kept by God Himself until resurrection or vivification.

GIVE UP AND LET OUT

The other expressions used point in the same direction. It would be unintelligent to *commit* the *soul* to God for there is no sensation. It is only in a very effective and self-evident figure that it is said to be in the imperceptible, or the unseen, for these are terms which denote oblivion. So also nothing is said of *giving up* the soul or *letting out* the soul, but this is predicated of the spirit. Our Lord Himself had been *given up,* a short time before, by Pilate (John 19:16). Always there must be some object to be given up or let out. It denotes the parting with some possession, the emergence of something which has been within.

The case of our Lord *may* have been exceptional, so it is well that we have the corroboration of Stephen, when he died. As they were pelting him with stones, he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" (Acts 7:59). That the Lord would receive *him* in resurrection was clear enough to Stephen. That He did not receive his body is also evident. And so with his soul. There is evidently a sense in which the spirit is "received" by the Lord while the soul sleeps and the body decays.

THE TWO WITNESSES

A very notable instance of the return to life is given us in the account of the two witnesses. We read that "spirit of life out of God entered into them and they stand on their feet." In the phrase "spirit of life," the word *life* is a metonymy, which shows the source of the life, that is, the spirit which imparts life. It is remarkable also that it is not *the* spirit *of* God, but [*a*] spirit *out of* God, evidently their own spirits which had returned to God in death, entering their bodies once more. This fully confirms the fact that,

in death, the human spirit is in God's keeping in such a way that it returns in resurrection.

In death the three human factors return whence they came. But there is a great difference between their sources, as also that to which they return. Two are impersonal. One is personal. The body comes from the soil and goes back to it. It is soil like any other soil. The same substance may, at different times, be a part of the tissue of two or more persons. The soul is even more vague. Out of oblivion it comes and into the imperceptible it returns. As we have seen, the breath seems to sustain the spirit, as food from the soil does the body. But the spirit is not breath by any means, and does not return to the air. It comes from *God,* and returns to *Him.* It is not merely a portion of power taken from the great universal reservoir of energy, and poured back into it again. In man it comes from the Deity. Here the creature contacts the Creator. It returns to the great Father of Spirits. Lacking life and consciousness, yet it has existence, and, in one case, *returned* to a lifeless body and brought it back to life. Hence we may commend it to His keeping at the approach of death.

GOD'S SPIRIT IN US

In vivification God will give us a far more glorious body than we now possess. Nothing like this is said of our spirit. It is not in the same class with the flesh. The disposition of the spirit is life and peace (Rom.8:6). The change in vivification (Rom.8:11) is not due to our spirit, but to the homing of God's spirit in us. Even in our mortal bodies, we have an earnest of His spirit, and it brings us a foretaste of future vivification, when we use our members to please God. And it is by the power of His spirit that our bodies will be transformed and glorified, not our own. In this way will God be All in us. Hence there is no need to change our spirits, or give them power or glory. The spirit

of God in us will be the source of continuous and unceasing strength, splendor, and delight. Our own spirits will be welded with His, no longer dragged in the dust by the death-dealing flesh, but raised to the highest heights by association with the life-giving spirit of God.

When the spirit is supreme our humiliation will be past. Our vitality will be so vast, we will be so vibrant with life, that incorruption, deathlessness, power, and glory will be as marked as corruption, mortality, weakness, and shame are now. And all will be brought about by simply imparting the spirit without measure. There is a close analogy between life and salvation. Physical life, like Israel's salvation, is a combination of works and grace. The spirit was *given,* yet it must be exercised. But the *grace* we now have is all of God, without any works of ours, so is like the fullness of the spirit and the life that is to be. It is simply God, by His spirit, becoming our *All.* No longer will we derive power, life, spirit from Him in driblets, through hindering channels, but we will bask directly in the beneficent beams of His irradiating spirit.

Mankind, to be human, must have a body. It cannot be changed into a formless spirit and remain humanity, or fulfill its functions in God's purpose. But hitherto the body has been a means of its humiliation and degradation. In the future the spirit will be the cause of its rise and exaltation. Now the spirit is suppressed and defeated. In the future it will be untrammeled and victorious. May this glimpse of its future permanence and power and supremacy help us in our present life to give it the place supreme!

Keenly conscious of the vastness of this theme, compared with our limited apprehension, we place these suggestive thoughts before our friends, and urge them to test all by the inspired Scriptures, where alone we find the truth in its purity.

A. E. Knoch

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 "Imperceptible" or "Eternal"?
154 Sin Reigns in Death
155 Grace *versus* Sin
165 The Grace that Superexceeds
173 The Grace that Reigns
181 Overwhelming Grace

JULY, 2011

Volume 102 **Number 4**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR JULY 2011
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TWO

EDITORIAL

GOD, Who is invisible, makes Himself known in two principal ways. Much of His imperceptible power is descried from the creation of the world in achievements far beyond anything we could do (Rom.1:20,21; *cp* Acts 17:24-29). But this does not make God known to us in such a way that we glorify and thank Him *as* God. It is only as God is illuminated "in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6), Who is the Image of the invisible God (Col.1:15), that His highly important, and truly representative attributes of righteousness and love and power for salvation are made manifest (*cf* Rom.1:16,17; 5:8). It is only as we become acquainted with God in this way, as He is unfolded in Christ (*cf* John 1:18), that we will glorify Him aright.

Both of these means for making God known are treated in Romans in passages that come under consideration in this issue of our magazine. And in both cases certain details of translation are given special attention.

The use of the word "eternal" for the Greek word, *aidios,* in Romans 1:20 obscures what Paul is saying about perceiving the power and divinity of the invisible God by means of His visible achievements in creation. See the opening article entitled, *"Imperceptible" or "Eternal"?* starting on page 147.

And the rendering of the Greek term, *ephō,* by the words "for that" or "because" in Romans 5:12, as well as translating the Greek preposition, *en,* by the English preposition "unto" in Romans 5:21, sadly distort Paul's comparison between Adam and Christ, with the result that what the apostle says about the grace of God made known through

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Jesus Christ, is not fully conveyed. This is treated in detail in several articles and brief notes (mostly concerning Romans 5:20,21) throughout the rest of the magazine.

How can we know God as God? The grace of God—what is it? We come to know God as God as He is made known in and through His Son, Jesus Christ. We come to know God's grace as it is put into action in the death of His Son for sinners. By means of Christ's act of dying on the cross, the effects of Adam's one offense on humanity are put to an end. This is not a cooperative work of deliverance in which we must make a contribution. But rather it is a work of grace. It is God's favor in the giving of His Son, resulting in the favor of righteousness and life and peace, not only for us, but ultimately for all mankind.

More and more I have come to appreciate the Concordant Version. This is not to claim it is perfect or that its goal of properly conveying in English what was originally expressed in Hebrew or Greek is always successfully achieved. But by its rendering of Romans 1:20 and even more so of Romans 5:12-21, I have come to grasp Paul's thoughts in these passages more clearly than possible from most other versions. And this is true in many other cases.

Indeed the work of translation is not an easy one. Among ourselves, as we examine God's Word, we keep asking, "What is this passage saying?" And then, "How can this best be conveyed in English, while still endeavoring to keep to our principles of consistency and contextual agreement?" Finally we must ask ourselves, "Will we be ready to reexamine what we have done and consider changes on the basis of evidence we may have overlooked and of sound argument?" Thus the struggle continues. Yet in this we are assured, that God is revealed to us in His Word and this especially as it speaks of Jesus Christ, our Lord, in type, in prophecy, and most particularly for us in the evangel of God which concerns His Son. D.H.H.

"IMPERCEPTIBLE" or "ETERNAL"?

In a very few instances, the Concordant Version departs entirely from the meaning usually assigned to a word, and gives it a new rendering. Such is the case with *aidios,* usually rendered *everlasting* or *eternal* in Roman 1:20 and Jude 6, the only occurrences. We owe an explanation to those who question our rendering.

Our suspicions were first aroused as to the usual claim that *aidios*—supposedly, even as *aiōnios*—*also* means "everlasting" or "eternal," by the passage in Jude 6 in the Authorized Version in which this word appears: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in *everlasting* chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Of what use would *everlasting* chains be if their use was limited, by the word *unto,* to a period which is exceedingly brief when compared to eternity?

Some have wondered how angels, or messengers, could be bound by chains. What sort of bonds could hold them? As we will soon see, this word *aidios* gives us the answer. They will not be forged of iron or of brass. They will be *imperceptible.* The material is "darkness" or gloom (Jude 6). Surely this is far more satisfactory than "everlasting . . . *unto,*" which is a contradiction in itself.

Romans 1:20, the remaining passage in which *aidios* appears, also presents a grave difficulty in the AV translation: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his *eternal* power and Godhead."

The whole passage is concerned with the evidence which the visible world furnishes for the apprehension of the *invisible.* God's "unseen" attributes are made obvious from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements—it being the case as well that thus His *imperceptible* power and divinity are *likewise* apprehended.

God's imperceptible power and divinity are the unseen attributes referred to which are apparent from His achievements in creation. The literary setting is a reversal, a common but striking device:

His unseen (attributes);
The creation
His achievements
Imperceptible power and divinity.

In the central members, "His achievements" is but an amplification of "creation," and in the other members the phrase "His imperceptible power and divinity," is but an amplification of "His unseen" attributes.

The power and divinity of God cannot be perceived directly in nature, but can be apprehended through His creative achievements. Every wind and wave is witness to an unseen force which impels it, with a hidden power like the electric current, to fulfil His will. Every living thing bespeaks a Living One Who is divine. This power and this divinity is imperceptible to the physical eye. It must be apprehended from the phenomena of nature.

There is nothing in the creation which conveys to the mind of man the *eternity* of God's power and divinity. The passage does not deal with time at all, but with the knowledge of God's *invisible* attributes, and a power and divinity which may be known only indirectly, through creation.

In Romans 1:20, the Concordant Version reads: "For His *invisible* attributes are descried from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements,

besides His *imperceptible* power and divinity, for them to be defenseless" (Rom 1:20).

Let us carefully note the context in Romans 1:20. God's invisible attributes are descried from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements. Is not power one of His invisible attributes? Is not divinity? These certainly cannot be seen or felt. They are imperceptible. Why not call them so? If His attributes cannot be seen with the eyes, neither can His power or divinity be perceived by any of man's senses.

The whole argument is concerned with the revelation of the moral in the material, the invisible by the visible, the *imperceptible* by the apparent. The injection of the idea of time is not only discordant but fallacious.

Even though there is nothing in creation to indicate the *duration* of God's power, on the other hand, all nature is vocal with evidence of a *might* beyond the human or the creature. It is the lenses which reveals His imperceptible power and divinity.

Let us be clear that two distinct terms are *both* commonly translated *eternal* and *everlasting.* One of these, *aiōnios,* eonian, has already been fully discussed in "The Eonian Times."[1] It speaks of *duration* during the eons.[2] The other word, *aidios,* has no connection with the eons and must present a different thought.

Since the usage of the word seemed to be at variance with its significance, we examined its elements with a view to discovering its literal, derivative import. The first element evidently is *a-,* meaning UN-. Its second element is *-id-,* which has come down to us in our word *id*ea. It

1. *cf* The excursus "'Everlasting' *not* 'Endless,'" (pp.199-269) in THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL, A. E. Knoch.

2. "Eon as Indefinite Duration," in three parts, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.86, pp.203-211, pp.247-258; vol.89, pp.170-180, James Coram.

means PERCEIVE. From it we have *id*ol, *id*olatry, *id*olator, referring to a god which the human senses can *perceive.* The nearest word is *[h]adês,* UNPERCEIVED, the unseen, in which the letter *i* has been dropped. Indeed, the elements are precisely the same. The only difference is in the ending, which does not affect the word's significance.

Let us note that, in Hebrew and Greek, and even in English, *consonants* are far more stable than vowels. We can alter the vowels in many words without affecting their primary sense. Come and came are the same word. Co*d*e and co*m*e are not. In Greek the vowels, even in the elements, are very unstable: *-gen-, -gin-, -gon-, -gnee*—all stand for BECOME.

In Hebrew this is still more noticeable. What, then, is the most important letter in the word *aidios*? It is the *-d-.* Yet the usual derivation, from *aei,* ignores it entirely! We are asked not only to ignore the determining consonant but to drop one vowel as well in order to trace an artificial relationship to *aei.*

If we derive *aidios* from *a-id,* there is no necessity to ignore or add anything. All is regular. We do not need to omit the vital consonant. All we need to do is to test our result by the contexts. Does *imperceptible* give us a vigorous, harmonious idea in the places where we find it, especially in Romans 1:20 where it is clearly used definitively?

Indeed, it is a difficult matter to see how *aidios* could ever be derived from *a-ei.* That the *a* in one carries the same force as the *a* in the other is freely acknowledged. But then the likeness ceases. *Id* cannot be found in *ei* even if they have one common vowel. The only reason they were ever associated was a supposed identity in meaning.

Perhaps the primary reason why *aidios* cannot well be derived from *aei,* is because *aei,* according to its elements, is UN-IF. Hence it is rendered "ever" in the Concordant Version, in the sense not of that which is endless, but of

that which occurs "unconditionally or on any occasion."[3] *Aei* (UN-IF) speaks of what occurs, so to speak, on a "no-'if'-about-it" basis." That is, it speaks not of what exists eternally or without end, but of what occurs *without question* or *without fail,* albeit, during the course of a finite period.

Pilate had *ever, aei,* granted a prisoner to the Jews at the Passover. He surely did not do this in eternity past or future. Thus "the throng, exclaiming, begins to be requesting [of him] according as he *ever* did for them" (Mark 15:8), that he should be releasing to them a certain prisoner (*cf* Mark 15:6,7; *cp* Acts 7:51; 2 Cor.6:10).

We have resolved *aiōn-ios* (feminine) / *aiōn-ion* (neuter) into its elements and found that it was composed of two parts, *aiōn,* an *eon,* and the adjectival ending *ios / ion,* which corresponds to our *ian.* Thus we have *eonian.*

Let us likewise analyze *aidios.* It is made up of three elements: *a-id-ion,* UN-PERCEIVE, and the same termination as eonian. Not only its etymology, but far more significantly, its definitive scriptural usage, yields the meaning *imperceptible.*

Aidios is very closely related to the word for "hades," *[h]adês,* the elements of which signify UN-PERCEIVED[4] (*cp eidon,* "perceive"[5]).

In fact, *aidios* (i.e., "imperceptible") is the corresponding descriptive form of *[h]adês* (i.e., the "unperceived"). Thus we have the adjective, "imperceptible," and the noun, "not perceived." Hence we could well render Jude 6 "*hadean* bonds" (not *chains*); but it is better to preserve the real meaning of the anglicized term *hades* by translating *imperceptible* bonds.

This is in closest harmony with the succeeding phrase,

3. Keyword Concordance, p.94, entry "ever."
4. Keyword Concordance, p.315, entry "unseen."
5. Keyword Concordance, p.221, entry "perceive."

"under gloom." To say that God has kept His deserting messengers under the gloom of imperceptible bonds for the judgment of the great day makes no demands on our credulity such as the binding of angels with *chains* whose "everlastingness" terminates at the judgment of the great day.

Imperceptible bonds are well calculated to bind angels: everlasting chains are hardly in keeping with such creatures.

At any rate, the epithet *everlasting* is quite useless, since it is immediately denied any force, for the chains are discarded at the judgment. This corresponds with the truth that *hades* (i.e., the unperceived, state or condition), comes to an end with the advent of the lake of fire. It finds its finish in the second death.

INTRA-SCRIPTURAL PERSPECTIVE

The word *aidios* has been the innocent cause of untold error. Because it is the basis of *aiōn* EVER-BEING (i.e., UN-IF-BEING),[6] men have given the word the idea of endlessness, which is a mistaken notion not only concerning *aiōn*, but, as we have shown above, concerning *aidios* as well.

Thus we have expunged the words "everlasting" and "eternal" from the sacred records. And is it not strange that they should ever have found a place there? No human being knows aught about eternity. We can go back, in spirit, to the past, but we can never go so far back but that a shoreless ocean of time still lies before us of which we know naught. And if we attempt to grasp the eternity ahead we gaze into the future wholly unfitted to comprehend its endless abyss of time.

Within the realm of revelation we are at home. We long for our Lord's advent, His revelation, the long day of His righteous rule, the new heavens and the new earth, and

6. Keyword Concordance, p.90, entry "eon."

the grand consummation. These are revealed, and we can readily read the future by their means.

But when all these waymarks have been passed, we shall be content to walk the eternal way without the need we now feel of knowing our future path. Now the present is discounted: the future is filled with blessing. Now faith and expectation urge us to hasten to the bliss that lies ahead.

But then all will be changed. Love alone will rule our hearts. The future will have no dread, neither will its expectations tempt us from a delectable present. With God as our All, the past will fill our cups with brimming bliss, the present will suffice to quaff its unfailing fullness, and the future will be but another present when we embrace it.

It is vain to tell the old man not to envy the days of youth; it is futile to tell the youth not to wish for the days of manhood; it is useless to ask a man to be satisfied with his lot; for each finds his all in himself. But when God becomes All in all His creatures, the past and future are swallowed up in a blissful, unbroken present.

It is the part of divine Wisdom to give a revelation suited to human need and capacity, and when endlessness is intended, to employ the negative terms "no consummation" (*cp* Luke 1:33b)—the very method to which men are forced when they seek to define "everlasting" and "eternal."

A. E. Knoch

(Adapted from *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.8, pp.33-36; vol.18, pp.244-247.)

THE FUNCTION OF THE LAW

The Mosaic law appears to place the responsibility of keeping it on the shoulders of Israel. But later revelation not only shows that it would not be kept, but that it was not given for that purpose, and indeed, it *could* not be kept by sons of Adam. It crept in, not to decrease sin, but to increase offense (Rom.5:20). If a law had been given to men who could have kept it, they would have done so, and displayed their own righteousness (Gal.3:21). But as it is, they cannot do so, and so, by their unrighteousness *and* its judgment, they display God's righteousness, which is the real aim of God's law. A.E.K.

SIN REIGNS IN DEATH

We all know that sin leads to death. But that the action is reciprocal, so that death is the cause, not merely of acts of sin, but of the practice and principle, which makes us sinners, has been practically lost to us because our translators gave it no place if they could help it.

The apostle tells us that sin reigns *in* death (Rom.5:21), but they changed this to *unto* death, thus spoiling the sense and the figure at one stroke. Sin's sovereignty is not *unto* death but *in* death. Death is the sphere of its sway, the only territory which yields homage to its horrid tyranny.

Let us not lose the force of this figure. Where death is, there sin is supreme. The process of dying, which we call life, produces that predilection to err which is called sin, and puts all under the absolute despotism of Sin. Apart from a new *life* no sinner can escape servitude from this master. Hence we read the glorious contrast: "thus grace, also, should be reigning, through righteousness, for eonian *life* through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:21).

We press the absolute tyranny of Sin in its own territory, death, not only for its own sake, but to impress the far more potent fact that Grace also is a tyrant, not one whit less securely seated than Sin. O, that the saints would only acknowledge its sway and bow to its beneficent despotism! We all allow Sin's sovereignty, but how few glory in the Grace that utterly displaces it?

A. E. Knoch

(Excerpted from *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.17, pp.136,137.)

GRACE *VERSUS* SIN

GOD HAS SHOWN us His glorious goal, which is a delivered and righteous and vivified humanity (Rom.5:18,19). But by what means shall God bring humanity into this goal? By law or grace? And if grace, is it adequate? The final *contrast* of Romans 5:12-21 is between sin and grace. And, as in every contrast between the destructive and saving forces, the superiority is shown to be with the latter—grace superexceeds the utmost increase of sin (verse 20).

The means are more than adequate; they are superexcessive. And the final *comparison* in verse 21, like the preceding ones, shows that the "thus also" of grace is as extensive as the "even as" of sin. The reign of grace is not limited to an elect few, nor is it less effective for those over whom it reigns than is the reign of sin.

Yet law came in by the way that the offense should be increasing.
Yet where sin increases, grace superexceeds,
That, EVEN AS — THUS ALSO
Sin — Grace
reigns — should be reigning
through righteousness,
in death, — for eonian life,
through Jesus Christ,
our Lord.

20. **Yet law came in by the way,** as it were alongside of sin and death, which had entered long before. This is said to show that beside these it can claim equality neither in time nor place, and that the need of it is temporary.

Law means the law of Moses. This is evident from verses 13, 14 and all the subsequent discussion about law.

Law brings in a responsibility which is not otherwise found in this whole passage. One of its functions is to put sin to our account. It instructs, stimulates, and reinforces conscience. It appeals to the best that is in us, enlisting mind and will in the war against the law of sin and of death. But it also stirs into active rebellion all the evil that is in us, giving an experience of conflict with sin and defeat by it, as set forth in chapter seven. It cannot be dispensed with. Law, added to the heritage of sin and death, will give to any man an experience of defeat, and wring from the wretched one the cry for rescue (7:24). This is the intention of the Lawgiver. Law is not intended to rescue from sin, but to prepare for its removal by grace.

The design of law is twofold. Its first aim is to increase the offense, but its remote and ultimate aim is that grace may reign. Law can be satisfied only as grace reigns. Grace consummates law.

God's first design in giving law is **that the offense should be increasing.** To increase the offense is not only the result, but the divine aim. This chief purpose of the mission of law must not be rejected as false, because it agrees with all that Paul says about it. It will not satisfy the text to say that it was to increase consciousness of sin. Consciousness of sin, indeed, increases by the increase of *the offense,* especially when one earnestly strives to obey law. But offense, sin, and grace are actualities that far surpass our consciousness or estimation of them. Man in his self-ignorance imagines that he can obey the law (Exodus 19:8). Israel under law continually increased the offense. Moses and Christ alike demand not faith in the law, but obedience to it. "This be *doing*" (Luke 10:28). By hearing and failing to do, the offense was increased. Every one who reads and approves the sermon on the mount without a full obedience only multiplies the offense and invites destruction (Matt.7:26,27).

The offense is that offense already mentioned four times (verses 15,17,18). The "many offenses" (16) are regarded as a multiplication of *the offense* of Adam. The singular, *the offense,* seems to be expressly chosen to indicate that all offenses are as such repetitions of the first offense. Offense in the head repeats itself in lawlessness and offensiveness in the whole family. Every offensive deed proclaims itself the offspring of the original offense. The function of law is to make it manifest that the first offense included in its character all possible offense. It shows also that mankind has not only inherited the status of sinners, but a proclivity to disobedience. Thus while Adam and the entire race have been left behind, the forces he introduced into the race remain, manifesting themselves in every life.

"Where no law is, neither is there transgression" (Rom. 4:15), but this cannot be said of *offense.* Offense has a much wider meaning than transgression. Gentiles without law and even saints offend. Christ was given up because of our offenses, but if these were offenses against the law, the gospel might be restricted to those who knew law. The world has offended (2 Cor.5:19); saints offend their Father and each other (Gal.6:1; Eph.1:7; Col.2:13).

The striking contrast of verse 20 is introduced by the words **where sin increases.** *Where* is wherever there is sin, and that is as wide as the world into which sin entered. *Sin increases* in all men. It multiplies with the multiplication of the race. Every child born into the world brings in more sin. The word *increases* pictures the great fecundity of sin. It multiplies like leaven, one sin being prolific of many others. This unlimited capability of multiplying itself is the most appalling fact about sin in view of all the evil wrought by one sin. Why does God allow sin to multiply? Why did He not prevent this monstrous increase by destroying the first sinners? Because sin can never, with all its fecundity, increase beyond the power of grace to con-

GLR.h (July, 2011 UR proof: 08/24/2011)

quer and cancel it. The greater the sin the more excessive is grace seen to be.

Grace superexceeds the utmost increase of sin. Paul had to coin a few words because he found none in the language that were big enough to express the great truths he had to reveal. *Huperperisseuō* was one of them. He took the word *perisseuō,* itself a strong word expressing excess or superfluity, and further strengthened it by prefixing *huper,* OVER, super, giving the word superlative force. The corresponding words *increases* and *superexceeds* are related as comparative and superlative. This superlative word is much stronger than the "much rather" found in the other contrasts.

The increase of sin must be far surpassed. Grace is not only enough, nor more than enough; it is superexcessive above all the multiplication of sin. When Christ fed the multitudes all were satisfied and there was a great surplus (Matt.14:20). So God's wealth of grace far exceeds all our need or asking or thinking. Sin increases, but grace does not. It is what it is, superlative in every sense. There is no possibility of increasing God's grace, of making it greater than it already is, though there may be increasing manifestations of it (6:1). Grace does not increase because God does not. Though sin should seek to dam up the flow of grace, its superexcess overflows and overwhelms and obliterates every obstacle.

Grace implies sin. It is more than love: it is love that can stop and righteously take the chiefest sinner into its bosom. Grace is found only where sin is, but where sin is there also is grace in rich excess. Grace is the only way of salvation; it is the characteristic truth of the gospel. Without it there is no evangel for sinners. Paul, the foremost of sinners, preaches grace out of his experience and as a revelation. The word is found in every section of every epistle of his, for in a word it states his gospel. God is One, and He is always a God of grace (Exodus 33:19; 34:6).

Grace alone can abolish sin. Did we know only of law and its penalties we should expect the increase of sin to evoke a corresponding outburst of divine indignation. But punishment would leave sin still the victor. Penalties do not save. Two and a half millenniums of punishment have fallen on Israel and the nation is not yet saved. But the nation shall be brought forth at once when God pours upon it the spirit of grace and supplication. No one, whether Jew or Greek, can ever be saved but by grace. Grace is the only power that can conquer and abolish sin, for so long as the just penalty of sin remains, sin still reigns in death. Punishment still leaves sin the victor and grace unsatisfied.

The very superexcess of grace assures us of its final victory over all sin. Grace and sin are irreconcilable enemies. Between them there must be age-long conflict, for grace will not condone nor tolerate sin. It can never cease its antagonism to sin and death till they are utterly extinguished. Can we be sure that the final victory will be with grace and not with sin? Can we be sure that the power of God for salvation is adequate to the task?

We belittle grace and underestimate the power of God when we think that they are scarcely great enough to cope with "willful sin." Some seem to think that grace can save good people, but that in especially bad cases grace is dependent on some help from the sinner himself. Grace needs no more help to save than sin needs help to slay. Grace alone is sufficient to the task. It does not spurn the use of means, but includes them. But instrumentalities should not be considered in a passage which singles out for contrast the two great pivotal facts on which turn the whole history and destiny of the race. Grace in every way superexceeds its antagonist sin, and therefore will not permit the continuance of sin in God's humanity. As the antiseptic properties of the ocean prevent the growth of putrefaction continually poured into it from many sources, as

the remedial forces of nature are continually combatting disease, so is grace checking and overcoming sin. The last word will be grace and not sin.

Sin and grace met and measured their strength at Golgotha. Sin showed its utmost enmity in its murderous assault upon the Son of God. It was allowed to come to a head, to appear at its wickedest and to do its damnedest that it might be dealt with centrally and finally. Grace exposed sin at the cross. Which proved the greater? Hate encountered suffering love; sin was vanquished by grace. If we see only man's sin crucifying the sinless Son of Man, we look for the fiercest indignation to be visited on him. Instead of wrath grace made its advent. But if we see man's sin crucified, then we see the victory and enthronement of grace. The grace that exhibits the bloodguiltiness of sin in the very act of mastering it takes away all doubt of the final issue. The victory of grace secures salvation for humanity.

21. In Romans 5:21 Sin and Grace, are personified as two rival queens. These royal figures occupy two thrones, each regarding the other as her implacable enemy and her rival in the struggle for absolute sovereignty in the domain of humanity. Grace has begun a war of expulsion and has brought her superior force into the field to fight till victory is won.

The ultimate design in giving law and the employment of the strength of grace is **that** . . . grace should be reigning for eonian life. God's ultimate aim in His use of law was not to increase the offense, but to show its impotence to save and so prepare for the reign of grace. Sin in the flesh is stronger than an external divine law. Law is not the antagonist of sin, nor do works of law help Grace in her warfare with Sin. Law retires and leaves the two combatants on the field. The correlatives **even as** . . . **thus also** again insist on exact correspondence. If sin really reigns in death, the achievement of grace shall not fall, either in

extent or efficacy, behind that of sin. Both claim the same dominion. Wherever Sin has extended her rule there Grace with her greater power and authority shall come. Though Grace ascended her throne later, her reign shall continue when Sin has been dethroned.

Sin reigns in death. Sin is not here an act but a state. It is larger than the offense. By the offense sin entered the world and took possession of men. It is the state or disposition which prompts all overt acts and offenses. Grace is likewise not an act; acts do not reign. Behind the activities of grace there is a divine achievement and a gracious attitude. Behind the activities of sin there is a principle and an attitude hostile to God. It is from this evil state that the saint seeks deliverance.

Sin's reign is not, as some versions say, *unto* death. It reigns *in* the kingdom of death. This, of course, is not physical death alone, for the reign of sin over men begins with their birth and brings them to physical death. Physical death is an illustration and a figure of the spiritual deadness which characterizes the old humanity. This death is a province which sin has won for herself, and she has the loyal support of her subjects. The saddest and most conclusive proof of her sway is our unconsciousness, hard to be broken, of our bondage to sin's tyranny.

Thus also grace should be reigning. Grace not only superexceeds sin but occupies a super-throne. Sin is enthroned in the hearts of sinners, but grace occupies the throne of the universe, the throne of God. The Judge is seated on a throne of grace. And the saving grace of God has made its advent to all humanity, proclaiming peace to all.

Will the sway of grace ever be as effective and widespread as that of sin? Sin still reigns over the majority of men; the creation itself is subject to vanity, and saints still sigh for complete deliverance from her tyranny. The future belongs to grace. The divine intention is that grace *should*

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be reigning even as sin *reigns. Reigns* is a timeless verb; *should be reigning* is future, How shall grace reign? How does sin reign? *Thus also* shall be the reign of grace. Sin is a usurper, but she has law on her side, for "the power of sin is the law" (1 Cor.15:56). But grace has satisfied law, she has invaded the domain of sin, and as she wrests from the usurper her victims she says to them, "Sin shall not be mastering you, for you are not under law, but under grace" (6:14). Every conversion to God, every resurrection rescues the subjects of sin. From the great stress laid on the superexcess of grace and the *thus also* of the comparison we may rightly infer that the victory of grace will be universal. That fact was positively stated in verses 18,19; the present text assures that grace has authority and power sufficient to break the stubbornest heart. Either sin or the Saviour must perish in this duel to the death. They will never agree to divide the spoils of battle.

Grace shall reign **through righteousness for eonian life.** Varied but accurate use of prepositions is a characteristic of Paul's writing. Note the *through* and *for.* The reign of grace is not *in* righteousness, which would be so if righteousness meant our justification, but *through* righteousness, which means the righteousness of God which He manifested at the cross. The issue of the reign is eonian life. The claims of law and justice have been satisfied and righteousness has enthroned grace, so that it can confer eonian life on the enslaved subjects of sin. The present evil state of the world is to be rectified on divine, that is to say righteous, principles. Grace rests on foundations of impregnable righteousness, but sin sits on a tottering throne vainly seeking her support from law, which has been honored and satisfied in the highest tribunal. Thus sinners are rescued by a God Whose methods are moral, a holy God Who does justice and judgment at any cost to Himself.

This was wrought *through* Jesus Christ, our Lord. Grace

is *through* Jesus Christ, Who vindicated God's righteousness at the cross. Through God's righteousness and through the obedience of Jesus Christ the reign of grace has begun.

Grace is possible only through the cross. And the cross demonstrates at once God's love of sinners and his hatred of sin. It solves a great problem. How can the love of God consent to the hopeless destruction of the sinner? On the other hand, how can the justice of God save him? God, like His Son, "loves righteousness and hates injustice." He loves a world of sinners, but He also loves justice. He will not save at the cost of righteousness! Thus God's attributes are parted by sin. A reconciliation needed to be effected between love and righteousness, between mercy and truth. This reconciliation of the claims of love and righteousness in God was effected at the cross. Grace is through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus. It is the going forth of all that is in Deity in a saving quest of sinning humanity. Grace is a synthesis of all the divine attributes; it is the reconciliation of all attitudes to the sinner. In grace divine righteousness is as favorable to the sinner as the divine love.

Grace is *for life eonian,* and life is the inclusive gift. It is the impartation of the life of Christ, which frees from the law of sin and of death. Grace will enthrone in life those who obtain it (17). These, first of all, are the elect who will reign for the ages, partners of the mediatorial reign of Christ, and exhibits of the transcendent riches of His grace (Eph.2:7).

There is a dispensational aspect of the reign of grace which satisfies the *even as* fully. Sin reigns in the death of all. Grace shall reign *thus also* over all men. Grace shall become as actually effective as sin is. Even now the dominion of sin is shrinking. This economy of grace has been longer in duration than the others. In the next two ages innumerable multitudes of the saints on earth and in

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heaven will enjoy eonian life and complete deliverance from sin and death. But there is an administration of untrammeled grace, in which grace shall reign over all mankind as she does not now, and that reign will be for eonian life to the exclusion of death.

The eon succeeding the great white throne judgment will probably exceed in duration all the eons during which sin reigns in death. It is God's dependable habit to shorten the eras of wrath and to lengthen the eras of grace. The last eon will be an era of unmixed grace.

The reign of grace brings eonian life to men. There will be no revolt, all will be subjected to the Son. Even the denizens of the underworld shall bow the knee in the name. of Jesus before the consummation (Phil.2:10). Sin shall not only be dethroned but repudiated by God and man as a result of the reign of grace.

God's grace shall reign **through Jesus Christ, our Lord.** Over the buried name of Adam the glory of the name of *Jesus* flourishes. In that name the saints now bow, we acclaim Him Lord, *our Lord,* to the glory of God, the Father. We are in this respect a kind of first-fruits of His creatures. Christ Himself is the Firstfruit. If it was righteous to rouse the Sinbearer from the dead, it is righteous to be gracious to all for whom He died and rose again. If we know what grace is, we know what is God's chief glory, and we know that the destiny of man will be whatever most glorifies God.

The fortunes of grace are the fortunes of our Lord. We see not as yet all things subjected to Him, but we see Him crowned with glory and honor. Even so grace is enthroned but all are not yet her subjects. Grace will get all her rights whenever all things are subjected to Him.

George L. Rogers

(Abridged and edited from *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.22, pp.497-512.)

THE GRACE THAT SUPEREXCEEDS

ROMANS 5:12-21 is especially important in defining the place of Christ in the evangel of God. If we can see how absolutely central and essential He is in the message we are believing we will be saved from much wretchedness (*cf* Rom.7:24,25).

Our place in the evangel is first defined in Romans 1:18-3:20. It is summed up in Romans 3:23. We are infirm, irreverent sinners, at enmity toward God (Rom.5:6-10), and reigned over by the tyrannizing power of death within (Rom.5:12,14,17). When it comes to righteousness and peace we can only be obtainers, and this is what we are in God's grace, through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom.5:11,17).

Yet we do have a place of participation in the evangel which will come before us in gripping detail in chapter 6. We died together with Christ, being identified with Him in His death and entombment, with the expectation that we shall be living together with Him also (Rom.6:2-11). This is a matter of faith, not of works, a spiritual operation, invisible, but powerful in us who are believing.

But now we are focusing on our need of the evangel, the message of God's glorious achievement through His Son. Here we stand with all mankind, infirm sinners, irreverent offenders, wholly dependent on God's grace in Christ Jesus.

THE GRACE OF GOD

The grace of God (*cf* Rom.5:15) is the grace which justifies through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). It is God's righteous achievement of justifi-

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cation of sinners as they are identified with the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26). Though given to us when we believe, it is not grounded on our faith, but on Christ's faith. Consequently, it debars human boasting, for it is apart from works of law (Rom.3:27,28).

God's grace is the realm in which we stand before Him, not only in being justified by Christ's faith, but also in being conciliated through His death as the Son of God (Rom.5:1-11). Here we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:1,2).

This is not of ourselves, but God's achievement in Christ (*cp* Eph.2:8-10). It is in view of the fact that we are sinners (and still remain sinners until we are constituted righteous when we are vivified in Christ) that Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8). God's grace as announced in His evangel concerning His Son is one hundred percent pure. It is not diluted or polluted by any contributions from us who are constituted sinners; it is operative only through the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:19).

Therefore, in the context of Romans 5, to speak of God's grace is to speak of His evangel concerning His Son. It is not enough to think of God's grace in terms centered only on what He *graciously gives* us. It is to be perceived, first of all, in terms of what God has *graciously done* in the giving up of His Son. For that grace, the favor of God's doing in and through His Son, is the basis of the favor of our obtaining of justification and peace toward God and reigning in life.

TWO INDIVIDUALS AND TWO ACTS

Throughout Romans 5:12-21 Paul focuses our attention on *two individuals,* the one man, Adam, and the One Man, Jesus Christ. What he says about the "many" who compose "all mankind" is welded to what he says about Adam and

Christ. These two are unique in that all others are critically affected by them.

Yet, furthermore, what Paul says about these two individuals is focused on *two acts.*

The first is Adam's one particular act of sinning, committed in the garden, bringing offense to God and introducing the reign of death over all mankind. And the second (which is the main point at issue) is Jesus Christ's one particular act of faith and obedience carried out on the Place of the Skull, resulting in the display of the glory of God's righteousness and love for all the many descendants of Adam. Both of these acts stand distinct from all other acts, affecting all mankind apart from any contributory act of any other person. What is said about the many acts of sinners and implied about the future acts of the many individuals of humanity when they are constituted righteous is viewed as they result from the two acts, first that of Adam and then that of Christ, which is superexcessively effective and good.

These two, singularly decisive acts are still uppermost in view in Romans 5:20. But now they are seen in relation to law. It is certainly so that much of Scripture is occupied by law, and this shapes our understanding of God. How, therefore, are we to relate the revelation of God provided by the evangel of His grace to that given through Moses?

ROMANS 5:20

Yet **law** *came in by the way,*
that **the offense** *should be increasing.*
Yet where **the sin** *increases,*
the grace *superexceeds,*

Law came in by the way. "It was not a normal necessity, nor did it make any vital change. Its effect was to alter the character of sin so that it became an offense. Just as Adam's

sin was against God's expressed command, and thus was a personal affront to God as well as a misdeed bringing harm on his own head, so those under the law, by sinning against light, greatly increased the sinfulness of sin."[1]

Rather than leading to righteousness, law put the spotlight on sin (*cf* Rom.3:20), and increased the offense. Yet in doing so it intensifies the glory of what Christ has done. The absence of law from Adam to Moses did not stop the effects of Adam's sin (Rom.5:13,14). Death continued to reign over humanity, bringing each one downward in irreverence and unrighteousness (*cf* Rom.1:18). The giving of the law not only failed to stop these effects but even magnified their calamity. Our desperate need of a Saviour Who will save apart from human input is thus underlined by law.

Altogether the history of humanity, whether under law or not, illuminates the necessity and glory of the cross of Christ and of its grace. Yet those under the law, even Moses himself, stand before us in special testimony to its impotence to rid us of sin. David's heart was directed to God, but in his flesh he transgressed against the law and could only plead in his wretchedness: "*Be gracious* to me, O Elohim, according to Your benignity" (Psa.51:1). Now to Paul, God has committed His evangel concerning His Son, which announces grace even beyond David's daring hope (*cp* Gal.1:6,11,12; 2 Tim.2:8.

Hence, Paul testifies (1 Tim.1:14,15),

The grace of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, foremost of whom am I.

God's grace is not simply one approach among many—one of several methods of dealing with irreverent and

1. A. E. Knoch: Concordant Commentary, p.235.

unrighteous humanity, including appeal to conscience and nature (*cf* Rom.2:14,15) and the granting of the law to Israel (*cf* Rom.2:17). These cannot lead to justification in God's sight and to glory and honor and peace in the day of God's just judgment, as Romans 3:9-20 makes clear. The effect of Adam's sin is too devastating and certain upon the human race. Death reigns within the flesh of us all. Grace is *the* one, divine way of operation which securely and finally establishes righteousness. And it alone faithfully reflects the heart of God.

Grace says, "While we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes." Law says, "You shall" do this, and "you shall not" do that. Grace tells us what *Christ has done,* and law instructs us on what *we must do* and what *we must not do.* For Paul there is no mixing of the two in the evangel of God. While he sustained the law in its proper sphere (Rom.3:31), and as an expression of God's just standards for human behavior (*cf* Rom.8:4), he is excluding law from the message of grace which he was heralding; he is not seeking to find a way to bring them together. Grace must stand alone as God's giving and God's achievement, through Christ.

THE OFFENSE

"The offense is that offense already mentioned four times (verses 15,17,18). The 'many offenses' (16) are regarded as a multiplication of *the offense* of Adam."[2] *The* offense is *the* sin of Adam which brought offense to God in that it was disobedience to His word. Yahweh Elohim had said, "From the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it." And then He added the explanation for this restrictive instruction: ". . . for, on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying" (Gen.2:17).

Adam did eat of that fruit, and on the very day that he

2. George L. Rogers: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.22, p.501.

ate he began to die. This process, tyrannizing over him so that he kept failing to attain to righteousness, continued until he was dead. It was the same for Eve, and for everyone of their descendants. "Thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned" (Rom.5:12).

THE GRACE

If the words "the offense" and "the sin" refer to the one specific act of Adam as it affects God and mankind, the words "the grace" may also be understood as a summation of the evangel which states first that Christ died, and second that this was for our sins.

All that this passage says about Adam enlightens us as to Christ, either by points of similarity or by points of difference, even direct antithesis. In setting the offense and its effects before us in uncompromising clarity, the apostle Paul directs our hearts to the priceless favor of the righteous act of Jesus Christ on our behalf, and its effects. And whereas the offense of Adam direly affects every single human being, the grace of God in the giving of His Son, Who died for sinners, shall joyously affect every single human being. There is a balance in this, but Paul would have us see there is no balance in the power and intensity of the effects. Where sin, as a multiplication of Adam's sin, increases, grace superexceeds as the supremely powerful and effective outworking of Christ's righteous act of obedience.

GRACE SUPEREXCEEDS

The religious human in me wants to say, "Hush, Paul! It is exceedingly good news that where sin increases, grace superexceeds. But it is dangerous to let just anyone know this. It may easily be misunderstood as *antinomianism* (against-law-ism), as though to say we can indulge ourselves in all sorts of immorality and still stand in grace, justified in

God's sight and conciliated before Him through our Lord Jesus Christ. The evangel of God's grace does say exactly that, of course, but should we not use a little discrimination in heralding it? I mean some people are always ready for any excuse to do the wrong thing. There is no need to shout this message of saving grace from the housetop."

But in accord with the measure of faith God grants to me, the believer in me avows, "The evangel of God concerning His Son is truth, and it is truth wholly unlike law, which cannot stop sin in the flesh, and only increases the offense.

The fact is that, as to my flesh, I am in the same boat as those "some people" I was talking about. Yet this evangel being evangelized in Romans 3:21-8:39 announces God's righteousness and love in justifying me by His grace through the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ, apart from any requirements of works set upon me. It tells of God's conciliation of me, the enemy, and this granted through the death of His beloved Son at the hands of those under law, both that of Sinai and that which was the epitome of civil authority among the nations.

I was not there, but what was displayed there of the human spirit, of human pride, stupidity and weakness expresses exactly what is in me. You are right, Paul! In the grace of God I am what I am, identified with Christ in His death and resurrection, holy and flawless in God's sight. Thus this eagerness of mine to bring this evangel! Not ashamed am I of this evangel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who is believing!"

Where sin increases, grace superexceeds!

Where Adam's offense grows larger due to my own contributions in failure and irreverence to its offensiveness, the grace of God and the gratuity of grace which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, still comes out on top! What Christ has done puts an end to what Adam has done and

brings in righteousness for all. Herald this word! Stand by it, opportunely, inopportunely, expose, rebuke, entreat, with all patience and teaching! (2 Tim.4:2).

How beautiful are the feet of those bringing such an evangel of superabundant good and overwhelming grace! (*cf* Rom.10:15; Isa.52:7; 1 Tim.1:14,15).

THE JOY OF GRACE

The superexceeding of the grace is a superexceeding of JOY, God's joy in giving His Son for me, the sinner, Christ's joy in obedience to the death 1of the cross, and my joy in obtaining what I so gravely need and in coming to know God as God. And it is a superexceeding of *power,* God's power for salvation from indignation into future participation in the glory of God, and salvation even now as it operates with spiritual invigoration.

D.H.H.

APART FROM LAW

When the truth for today is presented to us by Paul in Romans, it is not based on law, but on the *failure* of law. The great point here is that we have come to the *end* of the law. God has demonstrated that there is nothing in the law by which to attain salvation or blessing. That is not so with the Circumcision. God still keeps on in the kingdom eon with the law in order to make His demonstration complete. God limited His law to only a small people. Later on He actually writes the law upon the hearts of His people, and even that does not bring in perfection. When we come to the end of the dispensation of law and to the time when Paul begins to write, we have *a divine righteousness entirely apart from law.*

I thank God that, early in my experience as a believer, I was led to make a study of Romans. On this point Paul's evangel is radically different from what the Circumcision apostles had for Jews and proselytes. Paul brings us the blazing brightness of God's greatest grace both as luminary and as a vital power to enable us to live far above the thunders of the law. A.E.K.

(Excerpted from *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.37, p.286.)

THE GRACE THAT REIGNS

ROMANS 5:21 completes the comparison between Adam and Christ which was begun in verse 12 and had reached a climax in verses 18 and 19. But now "the Sin" refers, not directly to the sin of Adam itself, but to the effect of Adam's sin as it rules over us. This effect of Adam's sin is personified. Because of what Adam did, this insidious power called Sin reigns in death. But because of what Christ did, Grace, as God's power for salvation, shall[1] be reigning through righteousness.

Where sin increases, grace superexceeds . . .

that, even as **Sin** *reigns*
in death,
thus **Grace** *also should be reigning*
through righteousness,
for life eonian,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

SIN REIGNS IN DEATH

The AV rendering, "sin hath reigned unto death" may express a fact, but it does not convey to us what Paul is saying here in this context. As at the end of verse 12, "Death" is distinguished here as the ongoing "dying" process of Gen-

1. The aorist subjunctive verb, "*should* be reigning," often conveys a sense similar to a future indicative, "*shall* be reigning," as it does here where the certain and evident effect Adam's sin is set in comparison with the effect of Christ's work of grace. There is no sense of doubt involved in either case.

esis 2:17. In verse 12 Paul says that "death passed through into all mankind, *on which* all sinned." This opens the comparison with Christ, Whose one just act was for all mankind leading ultimately to life's justifying. And now Paul says that as, "Sin reigns *in* death [traced back to Adam]," Grace will reign through righteousness [as it is traced to Christ] for life eonian.

Death as the condition of dying has passed through the generations descended from Adam, entering into all mankind, reigning over us all so that we sin in this infirmity. Thus Sin reigns in us whose lives are diminishing and distorted, whose lives are dying lives.

When we see this we are ready for "thus Grace also."

THE REIGN OF GRACE

Even as Sin reigns in death with power and effectiveness, so Grace shall be reigning in the lives of humanity. At present this reign has begun to operate within us who believe the evangel that Christ died for our sins. The evangel of grace is the power of God for salvation to everyone who is believing (Rom.1:16). The righteous effect of the faith of Jesus Christ has already come on all who are believing (Rom.3:22). As previously noted, this theme of the power of God's grace will be developed in chapter 6.

Christ's death for sinners is the dynamic means God uses to save sinners. Christ died for all; consequently all will ultimately enjoy the salvation procured by Christ. But even now, in accord with this, the message of Christ's death for sinners is itself packed with power for those who are believing it.

"The law, indeed, is holy, and the precept holy and just and good," as Paul testifies in Romans 7:12. But he adds, "The law is spiritual, yet I am fleshly" (Rom.7:14). "Consequently, I am finding the law that, at my willing to be doing the ideal, the evil is lying beside me. For I am gratified with the law of God as to the man within, yet I am observing a different law in my members, warring with the law of my mind, and leading me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. A wretched man am I! what will rescue me out of this body of death? Grace! I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.7:21-25).

THE EVANGEL OF GRACE

Grace removes us from wretchedness. How is this? Grace is the message that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sins. Our sins have been dealt with, once and for all time (*cf* Rom.6:10), not by our efforts or sufferings but by what Christ did and suffered. This was the working out of the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ directed by the requirements of God's righteousness and love. Grace is the message that this was done for us as sinners, whether we struggle as Saul of Tarsus did, striving to uphold the law, or like Cain (Jude 11), going our own way apart from consideration of God's instructions. Law tells us to do what we cannot do in the flesh. Grace tells us what God has done in and through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Here alone is happiness and peace, and here alone is power for salvation in spirit at present, and with full realization in the future.

Grace reigns in the life of the believer. Grace tells us that we died to sin, that we have become planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, that our old humanity was crucified together with Him (Rom.6:2,5,6). This cannot be undone. Furthermore, Grace tells us that, without doubt and no matter what, we shall be of the resurrection also, living together with Christ and living to God (Rom. 6:5,8,11). This is certain, and it is its certainty that powerfully works within us for good.

We are not ashamed of this message which speaks the truth concerning our failure and weakness and God's successful and powerful grace. Power lies in truth, and the

truth is that in the grace of God Christ has died for our sins, and in this the sinner has died, along with every sin.

To repeat: The reign of grace has already begun, though as an earnest, a spiritual operation in the hearts and lives of believers (*cf* Eph.1:13). It will be operative with full realization in the oncoming eons when we are conformed to the body of Christ's glory. Israel, too, will know the power of grace in the new creation. But we also see that Romans 5:20,21 immediately arises out of verses 18 and 19, where the evangel of what Christ did is related to the needs of all who have been affected by Adam's disobedience. If Christ has died for us, it follows that He died for all. Therefore, the grace of God's gift of His Son to the death of the cross, and the grace of its superabounding effects, will grow and grow until it reigns in full experience in the lives of everyone. All mankind and all the wrongs and hurts, all the disappointments and failures of all mankind will ultimately be transformed by God under the reign of grace.

THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS

Sin reigns *in death.* This tells us of the realm in which Sin reigns.

Grace shall reign *through righteousness.* This tells us of the means for the reign of Grace. It certainly is so that the reign of Grace will be in the realm of righteousness (as well as the realm of justified life). But once again Paul points us to the basic evangel of God *concerning His Son,* to the *righteousness of God* as it is manifest in the *faith of Jesus Christ.* Here, our apostle is not so much concerned with where we are going as to how we get there.

The reign of grace comes about through righteousness. If we have been following what Paul says about righteousness in this epistle we will understand that he is speaking, first of all, of God's righteousness revealed, manifested and displayed through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.

1:17; 3:21,22,25,26), and not through our works or even our faith or faithfulness. In this we see the standard of His righteousness which cannot and will not be compromised by death and sin, or shared with self-satisfying contributions of dying sinners. And here we see the power of God's grace which righteously rids the world of death and sin.

God's grace exceeds the righteousness displayed in God's judgments. Like the righteousness of judgment the righteousness of God's grace in Christ does not overlook any sin and offense (*cf* Rom.2:16; 5:16). But, unlike the righteousness of judgment it deals righteously with every act of irreverence and unrighteousness in such a way that all shall righteously be constituted righteous.

FOR LIFE EONIAN

God's grace leads to life. We have seen that it brings life with a purpose, a vocation, a place of usefulness. Those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall (whenever they do obtain this grace) be reigning in life (Rom.5:17). This is the grand development of the words of Genesis 1:26-28 which Christ's death for sinners brings about. We have also seen that God's grace leads to life in which the experiences of the present life under the reign of death are justified (Rom.5:18). Now we see that God's grace leads to life freed from every element of death and decay. With the words, "eonian life," Paul recalls Genesis 3:22-24 where Yahweh Elohim barred the slowly dying Adam and Eve from the garden lest they eat of the tree of life "and live for the eon." Because of the operation of death in them, a life of continually increasing infirmity with no end in sight would only increase misery and despair for the human pair. In contrast to this, because of God's grace and under its reign, there shall be a life unencumbered by death, in which the knowledge of good and evil will be a blessing to the glory of God.

For us who are believing the evangel this will be life already in the oncoming eons in which we will be reigning, enjoying its justification and living to God (*cf* Eph.2:7). But this special experience of eonian life does not exclude the rest of mankind from its enjoyment, for there will be "an administration of the complement of the eras" in which God's will and purpose and delight to head up all in the Christ will be fully realized, in which we will have a special part (Eph.1:9-12,22,23). Because of God's grace in the giving of His Son for sinners, there will ultimately be life for all, life uncontaminated and unrestricted by death and sin. This will be when death is abolished and all are vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:24-27), when every knee shall be bowing and every tongue shall be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil.2:10,11). Thereafter, Christ, as God's beloved Son, to Whom God subjects all, will subject Himself to God, that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:27,28).

All of this, what we have now in spirit, and what will come in the future speaks of the effect of grace. As such it is marvelous, superabounding in glory above all that we can imagine.

But Paul closes this section of Scripture in which he shares riches of spiritual grace by pointing again to the grace of God's giving of His Son. For this grace and its reign comes about only "through Jesus Christ, our Lord." God did what was impossible for us to do, *sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin the flesh* (Rom.8:3). God *spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all* (Rom.8:32).

THE ONE CHANNEL OF GRACE

In Romans 5:12-21 Paul has said much about Adam and his one act of sinning and offense. But this is not his principal concern. Whatever has been recalled from the account of Genesis 2 and 3 is intended to aid in our appreciation of

the evangel of God concerning His Son. What is said about Adam is said because it helps us greatly in understanding Christ and what He has done. God's grace is channeled through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is to be seen in the death of *Jesus,* the Saviour, in His exalted position as the *Christ,* the Anointed One, and finally it is to be seen in His personal and endearing relationship to us as *our Lord.*

OUR LORD

The first person plural pronouns, *we, us* and *our* have not been used since Romans 5:11. Through this whole section of Romans 5:12-21 we are in view as part of "all mankind" and "the many," as sinners and offenders, and then as obtainers of grace. Now at the very end of this extraordinary section of Scripture Paul addresses us once again in a personal way in association with himself. We are among "the called of Jesus Christ" along with those who first received this letter (Rom.1:7). We have a Lord, and this Lord is Jesus Christ. We are highly blessed among mankind, in that we are believing the evangel now, and in that, being now justified in Christ's blood, and having now obtained God's conciliation through the death of His Son, we have been brought under the Lordship of Jesus Christ even in our present lives as descendants of Adam.

Who, then, is *our* Lord? He is God's Son, the Anointed One, Who came into the world to save sinners. And what He came to do, He did, although it has not yet been made manifest except to the eyes of the believer's heart.

We could not save ourselves. We could not make ourselves righteous in the sight of God. We could not come before God in peace by our efforts. We could not make our lives conform to the standards set by God for mankind in Genesis 1:27. And we could not become acquainted with God as God, with His righteousness and love and grace and power and glory, nor bring true and lasting glory to

Him Who made us. But all of this and more of glory upon glory has been gained for us *in grace,* through the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

It is through Christ Jesus our Lord that Grace shall reign over humanity. God's favor of righteousness and peace based on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is set to ascend the throne with power and authority over Adam and all his descendants. That is what shall be. But already, this grace of God and its gracious results have begun to rule in the lives of believers as they are believing. We already have come to recognize that Christ Jesus is our Lord, believing that while we are still sinners, He died for our sakes. We contributed nothing to this except to be sinners. Yet He died for our sakes, and we stand before God justified, enjoying access to His very presence, crying " Abba, Father," with the expectation of all the goodness encompassed in the glory of God.

FOR OUR JOY AND PEACE

Here is our happiness, that happiness which the Galatians lost in being transferred in mind and focus from that which called them in the grace of Christ (*cf* Gal.1:6; 4:15). May Grace be reigning in us more and more for our joy and peace in believing (Rom.15:13).

D.H.H.

THE DESPOTISM OF GRACE

The absolute despotism of Grace is set forth in the startling suggestion of Romans 6:1 that if we should be persisting in sin, *grace would increase.* While the following argument is against persistence in sin, it confirms the sovereignty of grace. Let us not deny this marvelous doctrine. It will give us rich, exultant liberty, ridding us of the thralldom of Sin, and giving us power to avoid the very sins which unnatural logic supposes we would eagerly follow, now that there is no condemnation even if we should sin. A.E.K.

OVERWHELMING GRACE

AT A MEETING which we attended some years ago, the Chairman suddenly exclaimed, "I do not think I am saved." But he did not say it quite like that, and he added something else. He said, "I do not *think* I am saved, I *know* I am saved."

Now was that brother justified in making such a confident claim—in taking it for granted already that he was saved, irrespective of what trials and experiences might befall him in the future?

Yes, indeed, for he based his claim on his appreciation of the fact that he was saved *"in grace,"* and upon his assurance of the absolute despotism of that grace in its workings on his behalf.

THE ABSOLUTE DESPOTISM OF GRACE

Strictly speaking, this phrase is not (in its English form, at least) a scriptural expression, but it is most certainly a scriptural concept, a scriptural theme. We have, in fact, taken it, word for word, from the comment in the CONCORDANT COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT by A. E.Knoch, on the first verse of Romans 6. What, then, is the meaning of "despotism"?

The dictionary defines a despot as "a ruler exercising or invested with *absolute power* in a state, irrespective of the wishes of those governed," and a secondary definition is "a tyrant." Similarly, despotism is defined as "absolute power: absolute government; arbitrary government." Both of these words are derived from the Greek *despotês*, which

is indeed a scriptural term, being several times translated in the AV as "lord" and "master," and in the CV as "owner." It is used of one, who has absolute possession of another, as the master of the slave. Look, for example, at 1 Timothy 6:1, "Whoever are slaves under the yoke, let them deem their own owners (*despotês*) worthy of all honor."

An earthly despot is a ruler who, as far as he possibly can, works all things according to the counsel of his own will; who heeds not the wishes of his subjects if they are in any way contrary to his purpose; who is ruthless in carrying out his designs.

Man has a saying that "all power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." It never does for men to have too much power. They cannot bear it; it invariably turns their heads, The whole course of history goes to show that a man with absolute power soon becomes a tyrant. Only God can be trusted with absolute power. And why can we trust and rejoice in the fact that God has something that we dare not trust in a man? Simply because we know that God always does right. He is love.

BUT GOD IS A DESPOT

Paul, in Ephesians 1:11, speaks of "the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will," and in Romans 9:19, he asks, "Who has withstood His intention?" Again, in 2 Chronicles 20:5,6, we read that "Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah in Jerusalem, at the House of Yahweh, before the new court, and he said: 'O Yahweh Elohim of our fathers, are You not the Elohim of the heavens? You are ruling over all the kingdoms of the nations; vigor and mastery are in Your hand, and no one is able to stand up against You." Yes, God exercises a despotic sway over the whole universe, but we are thankful for this, because He is love, and because everything He does is so *absolutely right.* Though He will brook no

opposition to the furtherance of His purpose, He is never a tyrant. If He inflicts evil upon any, it is always in order that good may follow. His sovereign will is the ultimate salvation and blessing of all, that He may be All in all.

As a Despot, *God demands one hundred per cent* loyalty, one hundred per cent righteousness, one hundred per cent affection, from His subjects. Back in Genesis, He formed Adam, and then Eve, an innocent pair in ideal surroundings, with whom He could walk and talk continually. But how much was needed to mar this happy state of communion? Only the eating of one piece of fruit.

GOD'S STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

It is true that this constituted an act of disobedience to the direct command of God. But let us ask ourselves whether such a disobedience in one of our children would have resulted in more than very temporary consequences. We suggest that by the next day the offense would have been forgotten. To us, the apparent triviality of the offense demonstrates the principle that the slightest flaw is sufficient to mar the whole in God's sight. The same principle was substantiated by Paul many centuries later when he said that "a little leaven is leavening the whole kneading" (1 Cor.5:6; Gal.5:9), and by James when he wrote, "For anyone who should be keeping the whole law, yet should be tripping in one thing, has become liable for all" (James 2:10).

Again, when God chose Israel to be His people, He designated them to be "a holy nation"—*wholly* for God—and anyone who defiled the nation by committing adultery was to be put to death—cut off from the people. The seventh day, too, was ordained to be a holy day, and anyone who failed to keep it holy to God, by working on that day for himself or his family, was likewise to be cut off. In the same manner, the sacrifices offered on the altar of the

tabernacle must be without blemish, and the officiating priests had to perform an elaborate ritual without mistake. All these things were examples, intended to demonstrate the absolute perfection of God's requirements. God's standard is one hundred per cent; ninety nine per cent will just not do.

HUMAN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

Now we know that this absolute standard of perfection was quite unattainable as far as humanity was concerned. After declaring in Romans 3:10 that, "not one is just, not even one," Paul was constrained to add (in verses 19 and 20), "Now we are aware that, whatever the law is saying, it is speaking to those under the law, that every mouth may be barred, and the entire world may become subject to the just verdict of God, because, *by works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in His sight*, for through law is the recognition of sin."

Here we have an impasse from which, humanly speaking, there is *no way out.* But with the next phrase, beginning "Yet now," Paul points to the solution to the dilemma *"apart from law,"* though he stresses that there are no distinctions among humanity, *"for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God."*

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS, POWER AND JUSTICE

Having made, and emphasized, this last point, Paul is ready to reveal the solution to the problem, and it is a solution which is provided in its entirety by God, and owes nothing whatever to human worth or human endeavor. It is summarized in this phrase, which we should all know by heart, *"Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus"* (Rom.3:24).

We have already seen how God lays down a standard of one hundred per cent. If He required this from us, we also

expect it from Him. For example, God's standard of faithfulness is one hundred per cent, and we expect it to be so. For if (to use an ordinary expression) God lets us down on even a minor point—if He fails to keep faith with us on just a small issue—what guarantee would we have that He will keep His word with regard to more vital matters? God must be faithful in all things if we are to have full confidence in Him; and so, throughout the scriptures, He gives us example after example of His faithfulness, particularly in the fulfilment of prophecies made centuries before.

We also expect God to be all-powerful. If someone were able to thwart Him in a small matter, what surety would we have that He might not, sooner or later, be overcome in a major issue? If He is not Almighty, Omnipotent, Supreme, where is the basis of our expectation? And again, if He is not all-wise and omniscient, where is the assurance that He will be able to settle all the problems of mankind and of the universe to the ultimate satisfaction of all?

All of us agree that God's justice, too, is above reproach, and God Himself is zealous to ensure that He shall be seen both as "just" and as *"a Justifier of the one who is of the faith of Jesus"* (Rom.3:26). Man's sense of justice, or, at least, of apparent justice, is generally much more acute than some of his other feelings. He is keen to sense an injustice, often, indeed, where there is no injustice. *Many a sincere student of God's Word will not subscribe to the theme of the absolute despotism of grace for fear that he may be accused of offending the absolute justice of God.*

GOD'S GRACE

Yet, if man demands one hundred per cent displays of God's justice, and of His power, and of His faithfulness, ought he not also demand and expect to find somewhere a hundred per cent demonstration of His grace, which is an expression of His love? If we may not permit the

slightest flaw in God's examples of holiness, or the smallest weakness in His displays of power, or the least lapse in His promises of faithfulness, shall we not expect at some time, a total, complete, all-comprehensive manifestation of His grace? We believe, surely, that the saints of today are among those through whom God has chosen to make this supreme demonstration, and that our salvation is due, *not* ninety-nine per cent to the grace of God, and one tiny per cent to our own efforts, *but one hundred per cent to His grace.*

Paul writes, in Ephesians 2:8-10, "For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For HIS ACHIEVEMENT are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them."

THE DISPLAY OF GOD'S GRACE

Our salvation is God's opportunity to show forth something that otherwise He would not be able to display so completely. Grace has been defined as "a benefit bestowed on one who deserves the opposite," and, as such, is an entirely unmerited favor, to be perfectly displayed in us, members of the ecclesia which is Christ's body, in transforming us from unworthy sinners to glorious likenesses of our Lord and Head. Add one iota of merit to our part in this transaction, and we take away something from the perfection of grace, which is operating on our behalf.

If, then, this grace is to be displayed in us in all its grandeur, it must be entirely removed from any suggestion of *works,* for, as Paul tells us in Romans 4:4, "to the worker, the wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as a debt." In other words, when we work, we *earn* our wages. If we are allowed to work for our salvation, to that extent we *earn it, and it is no longer entirely of grace.* Therefore Paul says, "in grace,

through faith, are you saved, and this is *not* out of you, it is *God's* approach present, *not of works,* lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8).

but surely, someone might say, "works come into it somewhere. what does it say here? 'For his achievement are we being created in Christ *for good works.*' This is where works come in."

How should we meet such a criticism? The answer is easy. We should reply, "You should have quoted the whole passage, which reads, 'For His achievement are we, being *created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand,* that we should be *walking* in them.'"

So these are really God's works, not ours. How can they be ours when they are made ready beforehand?

WHAT OF FAITH?

"But surely," someone else may object, "we may at least claim credit for believing? After all, comparatively few people have real faith in God. Does not that count for something?"

Regarding such an argument, A. E. Knoch writes, "Faith has not the least merit. We do not deem it meritorious to believe an honest man. It is no effort. It does no work. It is the simplest, easiest, freest channel God could choose to convey His righteousness to us. Let us exult in His explanation that it is of faith that it may accord with grace."[1]

"In grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present."

The fact is that no one can come to God of his own free will. No man can come to the Father except through Jesus, Who is "The way, the Truth and the Life," and no one can come to Jesus except he first be drawn by the Father (John 14:6 and 6:44). Paul tells us in Romans 12:3 that "God parts to each the measure of faith."

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.234.

OUR WILLINGNESS

Now a third argument is brought forward, the flesh being so loath to admit its utter impotence in the matter, and still desiring to claim a little credit for our salvation. "You must concede," the contention comes, "that we were willing to receive the faith when it was parted to us. We might have rejected it. Surely we can claim some credit for this?"

What does Paul say in Philippians 2:12,13? "With fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation into effect, for it is God, Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight." So that when God brought to our notice this gift of salvation in grace, He operated in our minds to make us embrace it! Recall Paul's prayer for the Philippians, "I am thanking my God at every remembrance of you, always, in every petition of mine for you all, making the petition with joy, for your contribution to the evangel from the first day until now, having this same confidence, that He Who undertakes a good work among you, will be performing it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil.1:3-6). Yes, from the very first day, God undertook a good work among us.

GRATUITOUSLY IN GRACE

All these thoughts bring us to Paul's message of Romans 3:24, "Being justified *gratuitously* in His grace." What is the meaning of "gratuitously"?

In John 15:25 the same word is used in the expression, "They hate me gratuitously." The AV rendering is, "They hated Me *without a cause.*"

Apart from their own pride and jealousy, there was no reason for the Jews to have hated the Lord. Jesus had given them no *cause* for offense. He had preached to them the good news of the kingdom, and had supplemented this with miraculous blessings—the feeding of their hungry ones,

the healing of their sick and even the raising of their dead. But in spite of all these, they hated Him—without a cause.

Similarly, God has loved us without a cause in ourselves. Why should God have chosen us to be recipients of so great a gift of salvation, when, in spirit realms, He might have found some worthy of honor and reward? The answer is, again that we are saved in order that grace might be displayed in absolute perfection; and, for this to be, it means that we, the recipients of this grace, must have been *entirely unworthy* of such a favor.

The plain fact is that every one of us came into the category of those described in the early chapters of Romans as having "sinned and are wanting of the glory of God." How much wanting matters not; many of us must have fallen far short of God's standards, but even a slight blemish would be sufficient to mar us in the eyes of Him Who has chosen us to be "holy and flawless in His sight" (Eph.1:4). How is it possible for us to attain such a state of perfection in God's eyes? Only by His grace, which allows Him to look at us *through Christ,* Who has become to us "wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance" (1 Cor.1:30). In looking at *us* through *Him*, God is able to see "what is not as if it *were* (Rom.4:17), and we, who in ourselves are frail and faulty, are seen by Him as "holy and flawless and unimpeachable" (Col.1:22).

GRACE SUPEREXCEEDS

But Paul, in Romans 5:20,21, carries us further, and shows that, where sin is great, grace is greater; that "where sin increases, grace *superexceeds*, that, even as Sin reigns in death, thus Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord." In Ephesians 1:7,8, the same apostle speaks of "the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the *riches* of His (God's) grace, which He *lavishes* on us." Grace never stops short;

it is not given sparingly; on the contrary, it is spoken of as "*superexceeding*," and as being "*lavished on us.*"

If ever we feel like saying, with Paul, "A wretched man am I! What will rescue me out of this body of death?" the answer should assuredly be that one word GRACE, which is regrettably omitted from the AV, but is in the original Greek. *Grace* will rescue us; grace that will not be thwarted; grace which is despotic in its determination to carry us through to that great salvation for which we have been designated beforehand. When God designated us right back before the disruption of the world to be conformed to the image of His Son, He had in mind that great provision of grace which was to operate on our behalf. Paul in 2 Timothy 1:9,10 speaks of God "Who saves us and calls us with a holy calling, *not* in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus *before times eonian*, yet now is being manifested through the advent of our Saviour, Christ Jesus." God did not choose us then to be failures. He did not choose us beforehand for some of us to fall out of the race. For all this we thank our God, through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.7:25).

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD

To save us, God gave His choicest gift, His most treasured possession, that which He loved most. *He gave that which was nearest to His own heart*. And this prompted Paul to ask a very pertinent question, "Surely He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?" (Rom.8:32).

And so, continuing our reading of Ephesians 2, we learn that "God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us (we also being dead to the offenses and the lusts), vivifies us together in Christ (in grace are you saved!) and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus, that, in the oncoming eons, *He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace* in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For in grace, through faith, are you saved."

Our so great a salvation is indeed in order that the grace of God may be displayed *in all its perfection and glory*, and not now only, but also throughout the oncoming eons. Its riches are transcendent. It lifts us from the lowest strata to the highest pinnacle; from earthly corruption to celestial incorruption; from mortality to immortality; from an earthly tabernacle in which we groan, to a glorious likeness of the Son of God Himself. Because of grace, we are transferred from a state of alienation from God to a position of sonship; from a condition of enmity to God to one in which nothing in the whole universe can separate us from His love; from a state in which everything in which all that we might do is a hindrance to His operations, to one in which all that He does in us is in glorious advancement of His purpose. Well might Paul refer to grace as God's *indescribable gratuity*" (2 Cor.9:15).

When God conceived His purpose, He planned for its ultimate aim, the reconciliation of all to Himself, to be accomplished through Christ and the ecclesia which is His body, the complement by which He is completing the all in all (Eph.1:23; 3:21). To make sure that this complement should be perfect for the role designed for it, He determined that its growth and development should be *entirely* His achievement. He did not conceive the end without ensuring the means.

GRACE OVERWHELMS

In 1 Timothy 1:14, Paul says, "The grace of our Lord *overwhelms,* with faith and love in Christ Jesus." In the scriptures, this is the only usage of the Greek word here

translated "overwhelm." This shows the absolute superiority of grace over opposing forces.

A while ago, we stood in a little boat at the very foot of the Niagara Falls. The Canadian part of the falls is in the form of a horseshoe; its brim is about 2,500 feet round, and its height over 150 feet. Had the boat been able to venture any nearer, it would surely have been overwhelmed by the immense volume and force of the water descending upon it from three sides. We backed off in awe at the majesty of the scene, but with an enhanced understanding of the meaning of the word 'overwhelm.'

"The grace of our Lord overwhelms," said Paul, and when he wanted an instance to prove his point, he has only to look at himself. He had been "a calumniator and a persecutor and an outrager" (1 Tim.1:13). He had locked up many of the saints in jails, and had voted to have them put to death (Acts 26:10). The case of Stephen was by no means the only one in which he had connived in murder. He had compelled many to blaspheme, and had persecuted them as far as the outside cities (v.11). He had ravaged the ecclesia of God (Gal.1:13). Yet, in spite of all this, he could say, *"The grace of our Lord overwhelms,* with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, *foremost of whom am I,* But therefore was I shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ should be displaying all His patience, *for a pattern of those who are about to be believing on Him for life eonian."*

Let us all rejoice in the *overwhelming power* of God's grace, which, in spite of all that is lacking in ourselves will surely carry us through—confirming us "until the consummation, *unimpeachable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."* For *faithful is God* (on Whom it solely and wholly depends), "through Whom we were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord" (1 Cor.1:8,9).

John H. Essex

Contents:

145 Editorial
194 Righteousness Revealed in Grace
207 The Law and Justification
219 What, then, shall We be Declaring?
229 In Grace and Out

SEPTEMBER, 2011

Volume 102 **Number 5**

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR SEPTEMBER 2011
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EDITORIAL

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS and God's grace are the principal themes of this issue of *Unsearchable Riches.* They are essential elements of the evangel of God concerning His Son, the WELL-MESSAGE that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and has been roused from among the dead. In this welcome message we also learn of God's wisdom and His power for salvation. And there also we come face to face with God's love which acquaints us above all else with God and the glory of His ways.

Hence, our testimony is:

"It is the *righteousness* (i.e., justice) of God that is *revealed, manifested,* and *displayed* in the evangel of God, which is the evangel of the *grace* of God" (p.198).

"Evil is not essentially a *penalty,* but a preparation. It is *humbling* and *revealing* and necessary for the appreciation of good and of God" (p.210).

"We declare that God's grace in the giving of His Son to the death of the cross for justification and peace and life is greater in effect and power over humanity than the sin of Adam" (p.226).

"The scene of our salvation is not in ourselves or our deeds, but in God's [grace]. He is the One Who is working and even prepares the good works which we may do" (p.297).

Righteousness and grace, along with wisdom and power and love, are definitive qualities of God. This becomes apparent to us, not in what we see and experience now in our flesh, but in our believing of God's evangel concerning His Son. D.H.H.

RIGHTEOUSNESS REVEALED IN GRACE

Question:

What is presented in Scripture as God's "grace," is instead, actually His *justice;* it is God's justice *disguised* as grace.

I am still surprised that Concordant continues to pass off grace as absolutely a disconnected state of mindless love with God. This is the way western Christianity has taught grace for eighteen hundred years: there is no reason for God to extend "grace" because humanity is unworthy, and therefore does not deserve to be rescued.

That's the way Paul has been interpreted in his epistles on the subject of grace. Of course, it is possible that Paul was not given the full revelation of what grace means. All I know is that "the creature was made subject to vanity, *not willingly*" (Rom.8:20, AV).

This means that God set up the whole scenario of the "fall" in Eden. Therefore, if He comes along and says His love to us on the cross is of "grace" without one iota of worthiness in us, we must say that such "grace" is disconnected from God's responsibility for sin. The problem with that is that we then become ones that were not worth dying for. God just pulled grace out of a hat in a blind state of *agapê* [love] and threw it at us, like Solomon threw his *eros*-love at his harem.

The truth behind grace is the *justice* of God to become responsible for setting humanity up for the entrance of Satan in the garden. There was no way the naïve couple could have withstood the onslaught of the master of deception. God knew that. He even planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

right in the middle of the garden to make sure they wouldn't miss it; then He took off!

Therefore, "grace" is a mask; it is a subterfuge simply for God's justice, in which He rescues those whom He first entrapped. We *are* worthy. This is to say: He *ought to* rescue us, since it is He Who entrapped us, having first of all ensured our waywardness by giving us sinful hearts.

If I place a one hundred dollar bill on the table, put a sign on my lawn that it's there, go off and leave the house unlocked, return to find the money gone, then report the theft to the police, I *am* the one who is responsible for the theft, ultimately. This is why reconciliation of the all is the final responsibility of God, because He will then own up to the fact of (at least) ninety percent of all humans not knowing Him.

By my not filing charges against the thief, both the police and the thief will get the impression that I am infinitely gracious, whereas the truth is that, unbeknownst to anyone else, I had actually arranged conditions so as to lure the thief into performing his thievery, thus entrapping him in his wrongdoing.

In such case, then, in which I decline to file charges against the thief, it's not actually that I am being gracious to him, but that, in light of my own acts of allurement and entrapment which prompted and induced his behavior, I am merely acting justly toward him. After all, I'm the one who encouraged and prompted his wrongful behavior in the first place—the scenario for which I had created myself, as a test for the thief.

In the case of God, the situation is even more serious. That is, in consideration of the sinful acts of His creatures, it is not only that He allures and entraps us into sin by placing us into the environment of this evil world in which we find ourselves with all of its advertisements and enticements of wickedness, but that He first of all constituted us sinners and made us flesh—giving us carnal minds which are at enmity

against Him, minds that are "not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom.8:7).

I understand that Concordant cannot teach this in its graphic form because it makes Paul a little wilted and it provokes outrage to consider God cooking up a conspiracy of evil against us. He had to hide behind grace because He knew humans would not understand. Maybe that includes Concordant.

Realize that in my words above such as where I speak of, in Scripture, God's justice (or righteousness) being "disguised as grace," even as of His "cooking up a conspiracy of evil against us," I intend these words in a benign sense. I am not accusing God or accusing Concordant. I realize these are words loaded with negative overtones. For that I apologize.

Answer:

I APPRECIATE that in speaking as you do, in various ways and places, of such things as of God's having "cook[ed] up a conspiracy of evil against us," you "intend [such] words in a benign sense," not in an accusatory sense. Even so, since, as you yourself acknowledge, such language "provokes outrage," and, as I explain below, either leads to or at least does nothing to obviate misperception of vital truth, I think it is far better that it not be used.

I appreciate, too, your not taking the usual man-exalting stand here, either in your description of the Edenic scene, or in your consideration of the human condition, according to which you view the old humanity as it truly is: *corrupt* in accord with its seductive desires (Eph.4:22), and *crooked* in its heart, being mortally ill therein (Jer.17:9; *cp* 13:23), from which, however awful they may be, spring the outflowings of life (Prov.4:23b).

Even so, I wonder how acquainted you actually are with our views. We are far from declaring, or any of our teachings entailing, that God's grace is at all, much less "absolutely a disconnected state of mindless love." To the contrary, we see God's grace as being vitally connected to His intelligence, founded upon His love, and a *manifestation* of His righteousness. According to the evangel, it is not that grace is a "disguise" of justice, but that grace is a *revelation* of justice, of what Justice is, and of what It will do.

The view of "western Christianity" for eighteen hundred years has indeed been that there is "no reason" for God to extend grace to sinners, since humans, being so sinful, are therefore unworthy (both in the sense of undeservedness and of worthlessness) of being saved. God's own responsibility for the human condition and state of affairs among men is either denied and rejected, or else, at most, only tepidly and inconsistently formally acknowledged, while in the end practically denied and repudiated, even so.

In contrast to any such views, however, we declare that the more sinful a man may be, the more he becomes a fit object of God's saving grace. We likewise are mindful that, rather than any of God's creatures being worthless to Him which He therefore would discard, the creation was subjected to vanity, not voluntarily, "but *because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation* that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:20,21).

We wish neither to think nor say anything at all as to what God "ought to" do with His creatures, whether in view of their sinfulness or otherwise. Even so, we are convinced that He is fond of humanity (Titus 3:4; *cp* Rev.3:19), and that "Christ came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15), it being the case that God does not dispatch His Son into the world that He should be judging the world, but that the world may be saved through Him (John 3:17).

Contrary to orthodoxy, we base salvation upon the blood of Christ alone, and the blood of Christ upon the gratuitous grace of God alone. Any notion of what one "deserves"

(and therefore "ought" to receive as one's "just deserts") is something that we would not presume, much less would found upon our own ethical notions of rectitude. To these, whatever their perceptions may be, we wish to give the least possible attention and not even the smallest portion of our trust.

Our view is, "Righteous is Yahweh in all His ways, and benign in all His works" (Psa.145:17). We would not presume, then, to say what God must do if He would do right, but rather that whatever He does, is what *is* right.

I should like to state that I too am strongly convinced of the ultimate responsibility of God for all things, out of Whom, through Whom, and for Whom is all (Rom.11:36; 1 Cor.8:6), the God Who makes the world and all that is in it, giving to all life and breath and all (Acts 17:24,25). I trust it is the case as well that I hold this conviction without either equivocation or inconsistency.

Our primary theme, in fact, is that it is the *righteousness* (i.e., justice) of God that is *revealed, manifested,* and *displayed* (*cf* Rom.1:17; 3:21,25) in the *evangel* of God, which is the evangel of the *grace* of God (Rom.1:1,16,17; 3:19-24).

Again, it is not at all that God's justice is somehow "disguised" as grace, but rather that God's genuine grace (as realized in the evangel of Christ), reveals, manifests, and displays God's genuine justice (i.e., righteousness) *to* us. This is to say that divine grace *informs* us as to the dictates of divine justice—both in its response and as to its decree—in consideration of human sin and sinfulness.

The situation among men is most grave: "all [are]under sin, according as it is written, that 'Not one is just'—not even one. Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God. 'All avoid Him: at the same time they were useless. Not one is doing kindness: there is not even one!' 'A sepulcher opened is their throat. With their tongues they

defraud.' 'The venom of asps is under their lips.' Whose mouth with imprecation and bitterness is crammed. Sharp are their feet to shed blood. 'Bruises and wretchedness are in their ways, and the way of peace they do not know.' There is no fear of God in front of their eyes" (Rom.3:9b-18).

Yet, astonishingly, God's response to mankind's terrible plight, is a message which can only be characterized as one of glad tidings indeed.

By way of prelude to the evangel itself we would note: The scripture having locked up all together under sin (*cf* Gal.3:22) "that every mouth may be barred, and the entire world . . . become subject to the *just verdict* of God" (Rom. 3:19), the Judge of all the earth will now execute His judgment (*cf* Gen.18:25) and announce His decree, which are as follows, *and are the evangel of God:*

Since, among men, "there is no distinction" as to who has sinned and who has not—"for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:22,23)—the God of all grace righteously declares "a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22a). This declaration of the *evangel,* which is "for all, and on all who are believing" (Rom.3: 22a), is the glorious *blessing* of "*Being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus*" (Rom.3:24). This evangel is the righteous adjudgment and decree that, through the work of Christ and as the achievement of God, all mankind—of whom none *are* righteous—nevertheless, in due course, will all be *made righteous.* This *is* the evangel!

UNSEEMLY CARICATURES OF TRUTH

Even though we cannot control what others wrongly infer or misconstrue from our words, our own usage of such terms as "deserve" (or "worthy") and "blame" are nevertheless consistent with our findings as to God's deity, as is our general understanding of this deep and profound subject.

You stated, "I am still surprised that Concordant continues to pass off grace as absolutely a disconnected state of mindless love with God," to which my reply here is as follows: Even if it should be gratifying to do so, I would suggest that it is just not helpful to make disparaging comments, to give others of whom we are critical "a piece of our mind," or the like. Our goal is not to "tell off" one another, but to help one another.

Insinuative expressions such as "pass off," speak of practical if not intentional acts which mislead. We certainly do not represent (either explicitly or effectively) grace as being (much less of grace as absolutely being) something that is disconnected from what God does, or otherwise as a disconnected state of love—much less of a disconnected state of mindless love. It is just that we do not make our own ethical "feelings" and suppositions the basis of what God must do, if He would retain His own righteousness.

Indeed, my sheerly "personal" (which is to say, pre-sufficiently-reflective) ethics accord with your own in the notion that God, indeed, "ought to" save and deliver us (i.e., that in this respect we are "worthy" of salvation), since it is God Himself Who put us in the very position in which we now find ourselves, that of being desperately in need of salvation. It is not that I "disagree" with this; it is just that, even in light of the above considerations, I still would not make what I, "in myself," suppose that God "should do," effectively the basis of what God should do. This is because, hitherto, I may have failed to note some important consideration here. And, it is especially because it is just not my place to inform God as to what He should do.

It would not be reflective of wisdom for me to presume that I already know what Righteousness will do, prior to God informing me of the same. Hence it is not proper for anyone to assert—certainly in any way that speaks of what

is innately one's own—any declaration as to what it is that Righteousness must do.

My definition of "grace" is not at all that of the common view thereof, which is that grace is ". . . a benefit bestowed on one who *deserves* the opposite." Hence, I do not wish to defend the definition of grace along these lines given in the Keyword Concordance (p.132). Even so, it is only if one takes the word "deserves" in the full-throated, common freewill-responsibility-entailing sense (which is *not* this word's only accepted usage), that an opponent would thus be afforded any grounds for criticism.

It is true that, the popular understanding of terms being what it is, I wish the Keyword Concordance had provided, instead of what it does provide, such a definition of grace as I propose below. Even so, I do not want to make overmuch of what is almost certainly a mere oversight.

I realize that it is I myself who brings up this matter concerning this deficiency of our own publication, and that you have not herein criticized us, as such. But even so, your idea does seem to be that we do, somehow—in our wider, actual teaching—in any case, at least effectively concur in such a common wrongheaded view of grace. This, however, is just not so.

In our view, grace is: *An act producing happiness, which is granted as a favor* (Rom.11:6), which is simply to say, granted *not out of works,* as a reward (Rom.4:4), but as an act of simple beneficence, inspired by love. However expressed, I have continually affirmed, explicated, and defended this definition of grace, even as the related yet discrete proposition that God's grace is granted gratuitously, in a way that is uncalled for, in view of any supposed right deed of our own, which has obliged God thus to act.

Human opinions of any sort either as to what we are "worthy" of, or, as to what our "just deserts" ought to be, are just that: human opinions. They are largely intuition-

driven, and can only be "proved" correct through circular reasoning; further, in my experience, they are invariably confounded by some combination of false ideas about human freedom, and/or are reflective either of pridefulness, mean-spiritedness and anger, or both.

RIGHTEOUSNESS *AND* GRACE

The common argument that there is "no reason" for God to extend grace because humanity is so very unworthy, conceives of a merit-based grace, in which "'grace' is coming to be no longer *grace*" (*cf* Rom.11:6).

"Reason" (i.e., motivation) for action is hardly confined to reward of merit; it may instead be prompted by love, kindness, pity, righteousness, and, grace.

One cannot disqualify oneself for grace, since grace is not a matter of qualification. Hence, Grace is not hindered by sin, but is rather victorious over it.

In reality, any blessing on the basis of our "own" virtue, would be precluded by our own sinfulness, since any virtue we may have is not only in short supply, but even that virtue is granted us by God. Unless God's *evangel* itself should *reveal* to us that God's "*righteousness*" itself will ensure our blessing, we could never know (and could hardly presume) this to be the case, since we have no innate way of finding this out, on our own.

The fact that we are so very sinful (i.e., in this usual sense, so very unworthy), rather than precluding grace, affords the very basis on which grace may be granted, in the case of any such ones as ourselves. This is to say that, if we were not to be blessed on a basis of righteous grace, there would be no other basis on which we could be blessed.

We certainly could not presume that we would somehow still be blessed anyway, on the basis of God's righteousness *instead* of His grace, on the dubious assumption that even in the absence of Grace, Righteousness would still prevail

(as if the former excludes the latter, and, the latter, the former). This is because we are not the arbiters of righteousness; instead, God is the arbiter of righteousness.

My perspective here is simply because I wish to avoid making my own views of "justice" (whatever any such views of mine may be) the basis of what is actually just. All of God's ways and deeds are righteous, if not in isolation (indeed, no deed of anyone, thus, is either right or wrong), then in the only way possible, which is *immanently* and *telically*, which is to say, in what He designs, intends, and achieves (*cf* e.g., Gen.50:20; James 5:11; Job 1:21; 42:11; Rom.8:28). Hence, since I do not see any of God's deeds as "wrong," I therefore would not speak disapprovingly of them.

This is why I decline to use any sort of coarse and negative (either explicitly or connotatively negative) language in reference to any of God's acts, for example, any such words as your expressions "subterfuge," "taking off," "trapped," "cooking up a conspiracy of evil against us," "master of deception," or any other of the many such expressions and idioms which you employ.

You say, "God had to hide behind grace because He knew humans would not understand. Maybe that includes Concordant." To the contrary, I would suggest that God has no need to conceal His righteousness "behind grace." This is because it is *in* His righteousness that He acts in grace. In our salvation, God not only acts in righteousness; He *also* acts in grace. It is not at all, then, that He would be obliged, even somehow on our behalf, to *mis*represent Himself as acting in grace—as if it were the case that, in salvation, God acts only in justice, and, not also in grace.

One can only come to the conclusion that, in salvation, God must cloak His righteousness in a spurious garment of grace—especially in any conclusion that posits its own findings against our own—by opposing what is an admix-

ture of that which is our teaching with that which is not our teaching.

You also say, "I understand that Concordant cannot teach this in its graphic form because it makes Paul a little wilted and it provokes outrage to consider God cooking up a conspiracy of evil against us."

We have not lacked for people becoming provoked at us for our teaching, even if we have sought not to provoke them. We do not present our ideas in street language, due to its frequent shortcomings of imprecision, inaccuracy, inadequacy, unseemliness, misleadingness, and, unworthiness.

Yet since it is in this selfsame manner, nevertheless, in which most people see fit to speak, and insist on speaking (even as by means of which to engage their minds in thought), our critics have not hesitated to characterize our views of God's deity as amounting to His having "cooked up a conspiracy of evil against us," and the like. (I am mindful that you use such an expression, at least in a way, affirmatively, unlike our usual critics in their own denunciatory use of such verbiage, and that, rather, this is how you see things and wish to express yourself, hereby affirming simply what you perceive as true, not, as such, in any particular reference to our own teachings.)

I would not (and do not) hesitate to say that God, righteously, and in love, has *given* us the experience of evil which we undergo (which includes our own sinfulness and sinful deeds, even as their consequences), and that He has done so in order to humble us by it (Ecc.1:13; *cp* John 3:27), as well as, more generally, that He has done so in order to achieve good and glorious ends otherwise unattainable. But this present evil which we undergo is only temporarily "against" us, even as mortality and death themselves—both of which God gives us, quite apart from our deeds—which, while certainly "against" us, are only temporarily so, not permanently. Ultimately, this God-

given experience of evil which we undergo is not against us at all, but is tremendously "*for*" us, in every way.

Provocative, inflammatory, or crude—not to mention critical or negative—language of any sort, then, in reference to God and His ways, is entirely out of place and improper.

It is not that we cannot speak "graphically" at all, but that any such language we use should *properly* "portray" our subject, presenting a clear and effective picture, vividly, yet faithfully (*cp* Gal.3:1).

Truth itself, even when presented in any "graphic form" which properly accrues to it, will neither "wilt" (i.e, somehow diminish) the apostle Paul, nor will that same truth itself provoke any warranted outrage (truth does not provoke outrage; it is rather that the foolish by their own foolishness are provoked to outrage concerning truth).

Undiscerning folk may be counted on to conclude in accordance with their own misperceptions. What is true itself, however, will not lead to any just conclusion to the effect that that same truth is tantamount (i.e., equivalent) to "God cooking up a conspiracy of evil against us." Such ones will indeed claim that one thing is tantamount to another, when, in fact, in important and vital ways, the first thing is very different than the second thing (even if it should be like it in a certain respect), where it is therefore the case that the first thing is *not* "tantamount" to the second thing.

Even as, as stated previously above, we cannot control what others wrongly infer or misconstrue from our words, neither can we control the wider mistaken conclusions which they draw from our teachings overall. It takes discernment and wisdom not to misapprehend, misapply, mischaracterize, misrepresent, what is actually an accurate explication of truth.

I wholly agree with the substantive essence of your

analogy concerning the scene in the garden of Eden. And, Romans 8:20 speaks to me as well, I expect, just as strongly as it does to you. I certainly agree with you concerning the common failure to affirm God's ultimate (be it ever so remote) responsibility for human sin. I likewise agree with you, then, that it is incorrect to say that it is we ourselves alone who are ultimately responsible for our sins, and that, therefore, we are not fit and worthy objects of Christ's death on our behalf—that thus we were "not worth" dying for.

We have to be careful with the words "worth" and "worthy," however, which while they are sometimes used in reference to "value" (I quite agree that we are "valuable," altogether precious in God's sight), yet in other cases have in view the notion of "desert" or "worthiness," concerning which idea, as I explain above, we must not make our "native" notions concerning justice,[1] the basis of what God must do if He would be righteous, and act righteously.

In any event, there simply can be no reason for anyone to think or speak in any way negatively of God and His ways, whether we are speaking formally or informally. While I am not one to avoid being "graphic" on every occasion, even so, I do not seek to speak frequently, much less constantly in such a manner—as some sort of "sensationalist" or provocateur. One may be explicitly clear, while avoiding completely being either crude and simplistic, or—which is far worse—critical and negative in any respect in relation to God and His ways, while at all times remaining reverent and worshipful of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. J.R.C.

1. Most people are wont to use the word "just" here, as opposed to its synonym, "righteous," since, common idiom being what it is, in the hearing of most, they can indeed more effectively, emotionally cash out their idea of what is proper and fair by means of the term "just," than by the word "righteous."

THE LAW AND JUSTIFICATION

THE LAW OF MOSES is given a place in modern Christianity quite foreign to God's purpose. Even true believers do not seem to understand its function, hence we will point out briefly what use God makes of it under the old and new covenants with the Circumcision, and why it is out of place today, especially in the evangel of the Uncircumcision. Originally God gave no code of conduct. Not until the sons of Israel were delivered from Egypt did He hand down instructions for their behavior along with penalties for disobedience. Moreover, He never gave the law to the great mass of mankind. Only a minute minority have been put under it. This should show that the idea that His dealings with all men is merely a question of obedience or disobedience to His commands, is far from truth and fact.

As the law is not of faith, but of works, it is only a *limited, local* and *national* demonstration, for *one nation* and *one land* and *one religion,* not for all men in every land and every nation. The evangel of the Circumcision retains it; that of the Uncircumcision acknowledges the lesson it has to teach, *but never seeks to repeat the demonstration.* The law was not given until Israel came to Sinai. Even they did not have it before. It was never given to the nations. They will not even have it in the millennium. Not even Israel can fulfill it in their dispersion. They must be in the land. If they had fulfilled it, they would never have had to leave the land. It cannot be kept anywhere else, or by any other nation. How absurd it is for Christianity to leave faith, which is for them, and purloin the law, which is not

theirs! They alter it from a national to an individual matter, from local to a world-wide scope, from a small minority to the great mass, from a demonstration of the frailty of the flesh to an attempt to prove the opposite.

MUTILATING THE LAW

In order to give this even a semblance of sanity, they are forced to mutilate the law or repudiate many of its precepts. Now there is no temple and no priesthood, so they invent many false and feeble imitations. They cannot go to the holy city several times a year, so they worship every Sunday instead of resting on the Sabbath. They divide the law into the "moral" and the "ceremonial" law in order to reject the latter, notwithstanding the dire penalties which would follow if Yahweh took them seriously. Faith makes free, but even a pretense of observing the law has brought Christendom into bondage and condemnation. Notwithstanding that they fail to do multitudes of things written in the law, which should condemn them, some find no rest, merely because a few points, such as Sabbath keeping, are deemed vital. They do not realize that the law is broken by a single failure of even a trivial matter. It is not necessary to be a flagrant criminal to bring down its curse. All who seek to keep it, break it.

One of the sad results of the illogical, hypocritical and unscriptural handling of the law in Christendom is an attitude of credulity and confusion toward the Word of God. Our daily experience does not correspond with what is written in the law. We may not see clearly that God is evidently dealing on an entirely different principle, but it is apparent that *the good do not prosper and the bad do not suffer,* as the law would lead us to expect. Quite the reverse is often the case. In almost every relationship in life the law of Moses is a misfit. Not only can it not be kept, but it will not operate. Some of its provisions clash with the

laws of other nations, to which God's saints must be subject (*cf* Rom.13:1).

One example of the ease with which even the saints are led astray because of a false apprehension of the function of the law, and of a failure to see that it is not of faith and contrary to the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus, is found in the attempt to prove that some of the modern nations are the lost ten tribes, who have risen to world dominance *while absent from the land while failing to fulfill the law, and while uncircumcised.* Uncircumcision alone would cut them off from Yahweh's people (Gen.17:14). See what the Jews suffer, many of whom make an earnest attempt to conform to the law! *These nations should not fare so well,* while breaking His covenant as well as His law. It should call down the thunders and lightnings of Sinai. If our country is indeed Israel, and prospers in spite of God's threats, we are facing a more terrible doom in the day of God's indignation than any other. To be Israel, under law, does not bring blessing, but condemnation and death.

CONDITIONS IN JOB'S DAY

The underlying purpose of God in dealing with mankind is brought before us in the book of Job, who lived before the law was given. According to popular notions prevailing in religious circles today, Job should never have suffered, for he was a just man and feared God. The evil that came upon him was not for any ill that he had done, or as punishment for any crimes that he had committed. He did not break any law and suffer its just penalty. God did not deal with him on the ground of law or of retribution at all. Even when sorely tempted to curse God, he did not yield to it. Nevertheless his trial continued until we are almost tempted to join his false friends and insist that he must be getting his just deserts, for God must not be accused of treating him unjustly.

We do not consider the *end* that the Lord has in view. We imagine all evil must be related to something *bad* in the *past* instead of something *good* in the *future.* We do not realize that evil is a *gift* from God, designed to bring us *down* to our proper place and raise God *up* to the position His deity demands in the glorious consummation, when He will be All in all. We need evil for what we *are,* and *shall be,* not merely for any wrong that we have done. Evil is not essentially a *penalty,* but a preparation. It is *humbling* and *revealing* and necessary for the appreciation of good and of God.

LAW OR GRACE?

The appalling pride and conceit and blindness of Christendom is evident from their attitude toward God's law. Though it was not given to them, and it is practically impossible for them to fulfill it, because of their position and physical descent, they insist on attempting what Israel utterly failed to accomplish and which has cost them unutterable suffering and woe. Believers who take up this intolerable burden are even more accountable, because, in doing so, they reject the grace for which the law should prepare them. Why keep on repeating a needless and painful, though imperfect demonstration, which will only confirm their need of the grace which God offers them so freely?

FALSE CONCEPTIONS

In most Christian lands there is a fundamentally false conception of the place of the law of Moses in God's dealing with mankind. This is especially the case where religion is under the patronage of the state, and is taught in the schools. Apart from the ritual, nearly all conduct is based on the ten commandments. People are told: Keep these, and God will reward you in this life, as well as in that which is to come. One might think that their failure to live up to God's standard would humble them and prepare them for His grace, but the law does not operate among individuals of the nations as in the nation of Israel, to whom it was given. There the whole *nation prospered* when they observed the law. But now many a saint who fulfills the law's "just requirements"[1] is called on to *suffer* because he lives godly in Christ Jesus. God does not fulfill His promises in the law to us today. The wicked may prosper and the good suffer sore inflictions. Does not this failure of the law lead to much of the indifference and unbelief in Christendom today?

During a sojourn in a community where almost the whole population had been brought up in a knowledge of the Bible, where nearly every pupil in the public schools had taken several years in religious instruction under the pastor of the state church, I made a special effort to determine the spiritual value of such training. Strange as it may appear, I found hardly any evidence of spiritual life. There was a callous indifference to the things of God, and a hard coating of self-righteousness which absolutely repelled the evangel. All of these people had been drilled in the law. They knew the ten commandments by heart from their

1. "For what was impossible to the law . . . did God . . . that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit" (Rom.8:3,4). *Dikaiōma* (JUST-*effect*) speaks of that which is the result (or "outworking") of a just standard. Thus, when rendered idiomatically, as here, as "just (requirement)" in reference to the just requirement of the law, any notion of requirement must be understood not in reference to something required of the human, but of what the law "required" of itself, in the sense of the "end" or goal which it sought. That idealized, "righteous intent" which the law sought but could not achieve—that of actually making men righteous—is, albeit in its incipience, being fulfilled in us even today, who are walking not in accord with the flesh, but in accord with the spirit (*cf* James Coram, "Notable Effects of God's Own Righteousness," *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.102, pp.11-26).

youth. It had been suggested that this is a good preparation for the grace of God, for the law would show them all that they were unable to keep it, and thus prepare them for the evangel. But man's innate self-righteousness only hardens under the impact of law.

Possibly the thunders of Sinai may open some hearts to God's grace, but it did not do so among these people. We know that it failed to do so even in Israel as a nation, although the law was adapted to them. If it is God's means of preparing for His grace, we should expect that He would have given it to all the people on earth instead of only to a very small minority. Today the very nation that has the law and takes it most seriously is most opposed to the evangel of grace, although a few of them are being reached by it. On the other hand, many have been and are being blessedly saved, who know little or nothing of the law of Moses. Practice seems to prove that it is not intended as a preparation for the evangel. It hinders and hardens, rather than helps and humbles the sinner in his approach to God.

Just as the truth of justification skips over the Acts of the apostles and the ministry of our Lord as well as the prophets and kings and judges of Israel, going back to Abram before his circumcision, so the relation of the saints today to the law goes back to the time when there was no law, when God dealt with the nations apart from Israel. Since then the nations have not been given the law, and the saints among them are not *joined* to the apostate nation in this regard, much as the Jews would have wished to have it so. They did not understand God's purpose in the law. They imagined, as most of Christendom does today, that God gave it for them to keep instead of for their condemnation.

LAW ENTERED BY THE WAY

Law is not the foundation of God's dealings with the race. It only came in by the way (Rom.5:20). Its object was

not to give men a standard of conduct by which they may walk to please God, but to transform *sin* into *offense.* It is only a temporary expedient in God's great demonstration, showing that man not only falls short of the glory of God, but is at enmity with Him. He not only *fails,* but *rebels.* The light of the law does not keep him from sin, but leads him on to offense.

The Circumcision evangel provides power to fulfill the law, but in the evangel of the Uncircumcision God's righteousness is manifested *apart from the law* (Rom.3:21). The early chapters of Romans review and restate the whole question of man's relation to God in order to clear the ground for a new foundation on which to rest a fresh revelation, quite distinct and different from the Circumcision evangel. It is not confined to the Circumcision and proselytes, but includes all mankind. It is not limited to the land. It does not appeal to God's written revelation, but to the light of nature and conscience, which takes the place of law among the nations.

In the coming eon the law that was engraven in stone will be written on the hearts of God's earthly people (Heb. 8:8-12). Strange as it may seem, the nations, who have no such law, already have a measure of it in their hearts. They do by nature what the law demands, and display the action of a law they never formally received. Their conscience, which usually leads them to accuse others and defend themselves, enforces it because they are likewise guilty. In this way they are a law to themselves (Rom.2: 3,14-16). This takes the place of the law of Moses, and is sufficient for the purpose. It is contrary to God's will and out of line with His plan to place the nations under the Mosaic legislation, and in many ways is entirely impracticable for either believers or unbelievers. If the whole world were put under the law, it would defeat the object of the law, which is to emphasize the infirmity of the flesh even

under the most advantageous circumstances. This can be shown only when those under it are specially favored.

TWO LAWS

Actually, there are two laws, one natural and universal, the other revealed and for a special people. Both operate to condemn and convict of shortcoming and sin. The law of Moses goes further, because God is disobeyed and defied when His instructions are not heeded. It changes a sin, or mistake, into a transgression, and a shortcoming into a personal offense. But, if the obtuse hearts of its hearers are conceited and callous enough to imagine that they can and do fulfill it (which, alas, is too often the case), it is no more effective as a preparation for the evangel than the law of nature among the nations. Indeed, Paul labors as long in the early chapters of Romans to bring those under law down to the level where they will accept God's righteousness (2:17-3:20) as was necessary in the case of the nations.

One striking difference between these two laws is brought out in the discussion in Romans. The law of Moses has its rewards and penalties in the *present* life, but all mankind looks forward to a *future* day when God's judgment will set right all the wrong that has accumulated. Both Jews and Greeks, those under revealed law and those under natural law, none will be excused, for neither law brings those under it to God's ultimate. No law succeeds in restoring the proper relationship between man and God, which is the object of judgment.

In the evangel of the Uncircumcision, God is *not* demonstrating man's failure and the futility of his efforts to do His will by any such means as the law, that is, by *works.* That experiment is finished, so far as we are concerned, and we are asked to accept the conclusion by *faith.* The first few chapters of Paul's epistle to the Romans discuss this matter fully. It is not limited to a chosen people, one

nation in one land, with special advantages, as in the Circumcision evangel, but deals with the whole race, every nation everywhere, including those under law. It considers the conduct of all, with or without divine illumination. In all it appeals to the light of conscience and nature, which leads men to judge their fellows. This leads to a revelation of God's judgment. If man judges his fellow, how much rather shall God do so! And a knowledge of the law will only make men's sins offensive.

APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS

Many *apparent* contradictions in the Scriptures come from lifting a thought out of its context. Thus we read that the *doers of the law will be justified* (Rom.2:13). Yet a little later this seems to be flatly denied when the apostle comes to the conclusion that *by works of law no flesh shall be justified* (Rom.3:20). Both passages apply to the same people, those under law, but they view the theme from entirely different angles. One statement is in the elementary realm of truth, the other in the practical realm of action. One is the basis of Paul's argument, the other is the conclusion. *This does not deny the premise.* We cannot say that the doers of the law will not be justified. The evidence introduced between these two statements makes it clear that *no one fulfills the conditions,* hence, though the *truth* remains, that justification is possible to law keepers, the *fact* is that the flesh in mankind finds it impossible to obey the law and reach justification by this means,

There is another apparent contradiction in connection with the nations who are not under the law, that has been used to utterly distort the evangel of God's grace. What can be stronger than, "to him who is *not working,* yet is *believing* on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his *faith* is *reckoned* for righteousness?" Nevertheless there are many who cannot receive this because "God...will be paying each one

according to his acts, to those, indeed, who by endurance in good acts are seeking glory and honor and incorruption, eonian life . . ." (Rom.2:6). They are both in Romans, and destroy one another if we do not leave them in their own context. The earlier one states the truth underlying God's judgment, but it is never realized because no one fulfills the conditions. This is *why* men are shut up to justification by faith. Their deeds never deserve the reward which God holds out.

This preview of God's judgment comes just before the statement which we have already considered. It is a parallel to "the doers of the law will be justified," for it has the same place in Paul's argument. Here we have endurance in good acts, and payment therefore, in place of law keeping and its reward. Just as there is no one able to claim justification on the ground of obedience to the law, so with those who are not under law. All fall short of the standard here set. Just as we cannot deny that the doers of the law will be justified, so we cannot say that those who endure in good acts will not be justified. That *would* be a contradiction. The further context, however, shows clearly that "not one is just" (Rom.3:10). So the conclusion that follows is not a contradiction, but a confirmation. Justification on the ground of acts is impossible in practice, hence God justifies on the ground of faith.

THE LAW AN ESCORT

For a long time I was misled by the AV translation, "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ" (Gal.3:24). This gives the impression that the law is to *teach* us the way to Christ, and that we must *learn* its precepts in order to find the way. If this is so, it is a substitute for the evangel, and men could be educated into Christ. But there is not the slightest warrant in the Greek for the rendering "schoolmaster." The only connection may lie in the fact

that the old-fashioned schoolmaster was sometimes more proficient with the rod than with the reader. In this he resembled the Greek *paidagōgos*, whose name he inherited. But the Greek slave used his means of physical persuasion to lead his charges to school, not to teach them in school. It is the *discipline* of the law which drives those under it to the Saviour, just as Israel's *failures* and consequent distress which made them call on Yahweh of old. Had they learned and kept the law, they would not have needed a saviour.

Strikingly different is the relation of the believer to the law today from that of the Circumcision. Their evangel is contained in the new covenant. Yahweh will not loose them from the law. Rather He will impart His laws to their comprehension and inscribe them on their hearts (Jer.31:33; Ezek.36:26,27). They will be given an inward impulse and a divine power to carry out God's precepts during the thousand years. They will fulfill it in the strength which He provides. It will no longer be a ministration of death.

WE DIED TO THE LAW

The very opposite is our portion, as well as of those of the Jews who, like Paul, received the evangel of the Uncircumcision. To them it *does* deal out death. They are caused to *die to the law* through the body of Christ. They are *exempted* from the law. They serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of the letter (Rom.7:1-6). Not the literal precepts, but the just requirements of the law are fulfilled in those who do not walk in accord with flesh, but in harmony with spirit (Rom.8:1-4).

What a relief for those who have earnestly striven to obey a part of the law, to be rid of its bondage! Very few realize that, if they are under law, they are under a curse. And this is true of them even if they succeed in fulfilling ninety-nine per cent of its injunctions. Only Christ can

reclaim those under this curse. This He will do when He comes to the Circumcision. But those of the nations, who have no law, should never have placed themselves under it.

Justification can never come through law-keeping. It came to Abraham long before the law was given. It comes to us who never received it. It comes to those under it only by means of death to it. Yet its righteous requirements are fulfilled by those who, having God's righteousness, not their own, are led by His spirit. Let us praise and glorify our God Who finds in Himself and in His Christ all that is needed to make us just, so that He can reconcile us to Himself and glorify us in His Beloved Son!

A. E. Knoch

THE LAW IN ROMANS

When the truth for today is presented to us by Paul in Romans, it is not based on law, but on the *failure* of law. The great point here is that we have come to an *end* of the law. God has demonstrated that there is nothing in the law by which to attain salvation or blessing. That is not so with the Circumcision. God still keeps on in the kingdom eon with the law in order to make His demonstration complete. God limited His law to only a small people. Later on He actually writes the law upon the hearts of His people, and even that does not bring in perfection. When we come to the end of the dispensation of law and to the time when Paul begins to write, we have *a divine righteousness entirely apart from law.*

God does not reckon on anyone justifying himself. In the fifth of Romans we read: "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense *for all mankind for condemnation . . . .*" Thank God there are no exceptions! It would nullify the work of Christ if a single soul should be able to work its way into salvation or justification or anything of that kind, either through law or apart from law. That which was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, in the sending of His own Son (Rom.8:4).

In his walk, the believer has the blazing brightness of God's greatest grace both as luminary and as a vital power to enable him to live far above the monitions of conscience or the thunders of the law.

A. E. Knoch

WHAT, THEN, SHALL WE BE DECLARING?

THE GRACE of God in giving His Son for sinners together with its effects of righteousness and peace superexceeds over the ever increasing accumulation of the sin of Adam so that it may be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord (Rom.5:20,21).

This is not an easy passage to understand, especially where our minds are occupied with ourselves and what we do rather than what has been done by God, and when our concept of the grace of God is mixed up with works of law. Paul knew this, and so, in Romans 6:1, he offers a wrongheaded wording of what he has just written, which he immediately dismisses in no uncertain terms.

In light of the evangel just presented, Paul asks: *What, then, shall we be declaring?* Shall we be declaring *that we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing?*

May it not be coming to that!

The declaration of Romans 6:1 may seem to follow the general pattern of thought of 5:20. But on further examination in light of the whole context, we see it is not a faithful re-wording of the declaration that where [the] sin increases [the] grace superexceeds. And it is not at all in harmony with the exultant declaration of Romans 5:21 that "even as Sin reigns in death, thus [the] Grace should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

Romans 5:20,21 is not a declaration of what we may do in order to serve God and the cause of grace. It is a dec-

laration which tells what God has done. The grace which superexceeds is the love of God commended to us in that while we are still sinners Christ died for our sakes. It is God's sparing not His own Son, but giving Him up for us all. It is, in truth, that declaration which, at the very beginning of this epistle, Paul calls the evangel of God concerning His Son.

THE DECLARATION BEING EVANGELIZED

Already in Romans, Paul has evangelized with the following words of grace: "Being justified gratuitously **in [God's] grace,** through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus . . . where, then, is boasting?" (Rom.3:24,27). In accord with this principle that grace debars boasting, Paul declares, "to him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness . . . . Therefore it is of faith that it may accord with **grace**" (Rom.4:5,16). Furthermore, "Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, **into this grace** in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.5:1,2).

In these passages the word *grace* focuses our attention on what God has done for us through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. The first passage declares the evangel of justification. We are justified through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. This is wholly the work of God's grace. There is no room for us to boast in ourselves. God's grace of justification is not a cooperative venture between Himself and us. If anything is left for us to do, then it is certain that we can never stand before God justified, and even worse God can never be just in justifying us.

Thus we see that justification is in God's grace, *out of* the faith of Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.1:17; 3:22-26).

Furthermore, in accord with this operation of pure grace,

God puts the righteousness, which He has gained for us through the faith of Jesus Christ, to our account when we are believing this evangel. It is out of Christ's faith, *for* our faith. This is also a matter of grace, for it does not rest on our works.

Therefore, we stand *in grace* (Rom.5:2). We stand in this particular grace that we are justified before God by means of the faith of Jesus Christ. But also, being justified out of Christ's faith, in God's grace, we who are believing this evangel, may be enjoying peace toward God even now. For, even though we are enemies in ourselves, we were conciliated to God, not by our endeavors to make peace with Him, but through the death of God's Son! And that alone!

To speak of justification, righteousness reckoned to us who are believing and the obtaining of the conciliation is to speak of God's grace, apart from works of law. These favors are outworkings of the one favor of God's giving of His Son, Who died for our sakes. Grace is what was done, and then grace is what results from what was done.

THE GRACE

We note this especially in Romans 5:15-21 where the words "the grace" refer to that one act of Jesus Christ which is contrasted to Adam's one act of sinning, and also to the results of this astounding act of our Lord.

Not as the offense, thus also **the grace**. *For if, by the offense of the one, the many died, much rather* **the grace** *of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds.* (Rom.5:15)

And not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity. For, indeed, the judgment is out of one into condemnation, yet **the grace** *is out of many offenses into a just award.* (Rom.5:16)

For if, by the offense of the one, death reigns through

the one, much rather, those obtaining the superabundance of **[the] grace** *and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ.* (Rom.5:17)

Where [the] sin increases, **[the] grace** *superexceeds, that, even as [the] Sin reigns in death, thus* **[the] Grace** *also should be reigning through righteousness for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.* (Rom.5:20,21)

In these verses we see that "the grace" stands in contrast to Adam's act and its effects. The grace is contrasted to "the offense," (verses 15 and 17), to "the one act of sinning" (verse 16), and to "the sin" (verses 20 and 21). As to its effects, the grace is contrasted to the entrance of sin and death into the world, to the reign of death in the lives of Adam's descendants, to the judgment of sinners which leads to condemnation, and to the horrible, snow-balling increase of the one little sin of Adam. What Christ did superabounds in its character and its effects over what Adam did.

"Not as the offense, thus also the grace." The offense was a relatively minor act of soulish disobedience which came about without a struggle, yet which brought dishonor to God, Who created humanity in His image and likeness. The grace was an act of superhuman pain and sacrifice in obedience and selflessness for the good of others and to the glory of God. Besides giving offense to God, the offense introduced death and sin into the world which tyrannize over the race. But the grace brings about the manifestation of the righteousness of God; for the sinner it establishes justification, peace and life of the highest value, superexceeding in the intensity, permanence and potency of these effects over sin and enmity and death.

As an act, the grace is the death, entombment and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and as the outcome of this act, the grace is justification, conciliation and the enjoyment of the glory of God. This operation of grace, declared in

the evangel of God characterizes the present era in which we live and grants spiritual power day by day to those who are believing it message.

GRACE AND HUMAN BOASTING

When the law was presented to Israel, the people declared: "All that Yahweh speaks we shall do" (Exodus 19:8). When the evangel of the grace of God is presented, the common reaction is: "Yes, but we still have to do such and such."

In one way or another, we want to be able to say we are ready to do something that qualifies as our contribution to God's grace. We may speak in terms of grace but still think in terms of law. It may be that we do not fully trust the grace of God and the gratuity in grace which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ. This is surely offensive to God, but it does not change the fact that we are justified and conciliated to Him in grace.

The evangel as a message of God's gratuitous giving and achievement has been declared, and this declaration ends in a period, not a comma followed by the conjunction, "but," and selected good works for us to do.

The declaration of grace is the evangel we are believing, and this is what prepares us for Romans 6. The basis and power for walking in newness of life is not law or any system of obligations, and it is not human resolve to keep such obligations, but it is *the grace,* the fact that Christ died, and this was for the good of humanity. We hear of this grace in the declaration that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes, and we are affected by this grace as we are believing it. We enter into Romans 6 by way of Romans 3:21-5:21, and most immediately by the revelation of the superexceeding vitality and glory of God's grace over every increase of sin, and the certainty of its reign over human lives. We stand in grace, and our walk is directed by grace.

In God's grace, this reign of His grace in justifying and conciliating us by means of the death of Jesus Christ, and confirmed by the fact He was roused from among the dead, has already begun to operate in the lives of us who are believing this evangel of grace. Ultimately, it will reign over all. But for us the reign of grace has begun ahead of time in connection with the earnest of the spirit.

GRACE SUPEREXCEEDS

To say that the grace which results in justification and God's reckoning of righteousness to the believer, and His gratuitous gift of conciliation, superexceeds over every increase of sin and shall reign over human lives is to testify to the greatness and power of God's grace channeled through His Son. The verb form states a fact. The grace *superexceeds*. Our attention is on the grace and what it does for us and to us who are sinners. The magnitude of its potency in dealing with sin in its ultimate realization is overwhelming. It is in accord with this magnitude that it exercises power even now over the lives of those who are believing its message.

But to say that we may persist in sin so that grace can increase is to turn the declaration of Romans 5:20 upside down. This draws attention to us and our doing, and this is to say that what we do makes grace what it is. This puts what we do in the driver's seat. If we cannot pay for grace, at least we can make it bigger.

May it not be coming to that!

The grace spoken of in Romans 5:20,21 is God's giving of His Son for sinners, and this has been carried out. And it is God's justifying of the sinner and conciliating of the enemy on the basis of Christ's death, and this is settled and sure. This grace *is* so superabundantly great that it superexceeds in power and victory and effect over all our many offenses (*cf* Rom.5:16), past and present and

future. We believe this even though we do not see it or feel it, and it is in our believing of it that it exerts power even now in our lives.

We do not make the superexceeding grace of God increase. Our Lord Jesus Christ has made it what it is by His faith and obedience. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, being rich, because of you He became poor, that you, by His poverty, should be rich" (2 Cor.8:9). It *is* superabundant, and it ever superexceeds every increase made to the sin of Adam. The *manifestation* of God's grace to us and our *recognition* and *appreciation* of the immensity of its glory and power, do increase. But the immensity of the glory and power of His grace itself cannot be made greater than it is.

The declaration of Romans 6:1 misreads the declaration of 5:20 and completely ignores what is said in 5:21. The grace superexceeds over every increase of sin *so that it should be reigning through righteousness*, reigning through that righteousness of God in justifying sinners which comes through the faith of Jesus Christ. What Adam did exercises control over our lives by means of the dying process which has passed through from Adam into the flesh of all his descendants (Rom.5:12). Thus Sin reigns in this condition of death first spoken of in Scripture by the words "to die shall you be dying" (Gen.2:17). But this reign is on its way out, and a new reign is coming in, at present in spirit as an earnest of what is to be. This is the reign of *The Grace*, the reign of God's love commended in the fact that Christ died for sinners, the reign of God's immense favor to us who are sinners at enmity toward Him.

THE RIGHT DECLARATION

Where the sin increases the grace superexceeds so that it shall reign in human lives. Once again we ask, What does this mean to us? What shall we say about it?

We declare that God's grace in the giving of His Son to the death of the cross for justification and peace and life is greater in effect and power over humanity than the sin of Adam. Furthermore, we declare that this grace will ultimately reign in the lives of every human being. Indeed, as we are believing this evangel of grace, its reign has already begun in our hearts.

How so?

The power is in the message of truth, and it is activated in the believing of that message. It is then experienced as a matter of continuing salvation in the retaining of that message (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1,2).

The Israelite was to repeat the law over and over again, soliloquizing on its every word (*cf* Psa.1:2). The Greek word used in the Septuagint Version for the Hebrew word rendered "soliloquizing" is employed by Paul in his first letter to Timothy, where it is translated "meditate." "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome . . . that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. These things be charging and teaching . . . . Till I come, give heed to reading, to entreaty, to teaching . . . . On these things *meditate*" (1 Tim.4:9-15). To soliloquize is to speak to oneself the thoughts revolving in the mind. For us, however, what we say to ourselves in our meditations is not the word of the law, but rather we are letting the word of Christ be making its home in us richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing ourselves; in psalms, in hymns, in spiritual songs, singing, *with grace* in our hearts to God (Col.3:16).

Because of the flesh, the law was not able to grant power for the keeping of its instructions. But the word of Christ is a message making known the grace which superexceeds the increase of sin. It is the word which says that *in grace, through faith, are we saved, and this is not out of us; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them* (Eph.2: 8-10). As this word makes its home in us in our believing of it, it becomes power for salvation.

THE GRACE OF DEATH WITH CHRIST

The grace of God is based upon the death of Christ, and this involves the death of humanity as it exists, a race of billions of sinners descended from Adam and including him. The words of 2 Corinthians 5:14 are plain words, as surprising and strange as they may seem to be.

For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died.

This is called the love of Christ. But it is also the grace of Christ which expresses the grace of God as it does the love of God (*cf* Rom.5:8). This constrains us. It has a powerful influence on us as we are believing it. None of us endured what Christ endured in dying on the cross. None of us felt the pain and experienced the horror of the forsakenness which Christ experienced. But His death meant our death. The old humanity continues, but it is doomed. It has received the sentence of death which will be carried out so that all will be vivified in Christ and live as He is living, that is, living to God (1 Cor.15:22; Rom.6:11).

But that looks to the future, and Paul is telling us in Romans 6 what all this means right now to us who are believing. We are those who are referred to in 2 Corinthians 5:15 as "those who are living," who "should by no means still be living to themselves, but to the One dying and being roused for their sakes."

We are those who, in God's grace, are believing that Christ died for our sins, that He was entombed and that He has been roused from among the dead. Already in spirit

we are living under the reign of this grace, For we are not under law, but under grace (Rom.6:14).

WHAT THE EVANGEL IS

Very early in Romans Paul declared, "Not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it *is* God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing" (Rom.1:16). What he meant by this is particularly being expounded in Romans 6. Paul is still evangelizing. He has not left the evangel behind. What he now says is not a new topic, but rather an expansion and practical explication of the message of the grace of God and the gratuity in grace which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ.

The evangel declares Christ died for all, and in that He died for all, all died. And in that He died for the believer, the believer died. And in that He died for me, I died.

Do we get the point? The evangel is that message of grace which declares that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and has been roused the third day. But in declaring this it declares that we died and shall be roused. It declares that we are baptized into the death of Christ Jesus and were entombed together with Him that we might be walking in newness of life. It declares that our old humanity was crucified together with Him that the body of Sin may be nullified, for us by no means to be still slaving for Sin. It declares that we died together with Christ and that we shall be living together with Him also.

The solution to the reign of death over us and the reign of sin in our dying condition begins with our death in the death of Christ, and it is with this in view that we are directed to a new way of life, patterned after the life of Christ, Who, being roused from among the dead, is living unto God.

With the declaration of grace, making its home in us richly, we are ready to direct our hearts to its application begun in Romans 6:2. D.H.H.

IN GRACE AND OUT

GRACE is a fundamental characteristic of the present administration of the secret (Eph.3:2,9). It is the favor of the previous transitional era continued and intensified and enriched. Superabundant grace (Rom.5:17) had already been manifested in justifying the nations apart from the law or works of any kind, through faith, that it may accord with grace (Rom.4:16). Grace glorious, rich, transcendent, is our portion now (Eph.1:6,7; 2: 7). That which the eye did not perceive, and the ear did not hear, and to which the heart of men did not ascend—whatever God makes ready for those who are loving Him—He has revealed to us by His spirit through His latest revelation (1 Cor.2:9,10). And is not this to be expected? So long as God was hindered by human help, His heart was restrained. So long as He was thwarted by creature attainments, His love could not find a free outlet. Grace, undiluted by law, unspoiled by works, unconfined by aught of man, is the fullest, freest outflow of God's essence, which is love.

But alas! Our tiny cups are far too small to contain it. Our unnatural hearts are too full of self to give God His place as our All. Our pride insists on having some share in the favors He bestows. How desperately the law-laden Jew clings to his own doings! If he cannot justify himself by law keeping, he will at least make it his rule of life after he has been justified. He cannot bear to be bereft of all merit. God must not be All. Man insists on doing his share in creating his future bliss. He must earn, he must deserve the blessings he receives, or lose his self-respect.

Paul found it necessary to devote a whole epistle to the defense of grace. The Galatians had started well, and had received the evangel which he had heralded with its abundant grace. But for Jews, who had been reared under the law, this was entirely too much to accept. The fact that God Himself had given the law was enough to convince them that He wished it to be kept. They did not realize that His intention was quite the reverse, that He wished to humble them and teach them their own incompetence and need of Him through its enactments. These Jews did not only try to keep the law themselves, but also sought to fasten it upon those of the nations who believed. Thus they ran counter to the grace which God had made the fundamental feature of the evangel of the Uncircumcision. With stern severity the apostle deals with these Jews because of the seriousness of their error. Even the Galatians are not spared. He tells them plainly that they had fallen out of grace (Gal.5:4).

The Galatian repudiation of God's grace is more virulent today than ever. Almost all "religious" training, even when definitely evangelistic, is centered in human effort and attainment. Not only is the evangel tainted with Circumcision requirements, such as repentance and baptism, which seem to give the seeker something he can do in order to assist God in securing his salvation, but the saint is loaded with duties which are to help God to finish His work.

But if the superabundant grace of Paul's evangel is repudiated, what shall we say of the rich, the glorious, the transcendent grace of this secret administration? Is it not possible, nay, probable, indeed, inevitable, that we also have repudiated it, at least to some extent? Alas! how could it be otherwise with mortal men? Christendom has hardly heard of the present grace, and those of us who have, are prone to mix in our own efforts and attainments as though these could procure the gratuities of God. There is a strong current which is corrupting the grace glorious, limiting it to those alone who receive, or understand, or think they perceive the higher truths of Paul's later epistles. It is always some human attainment which merits this grace, although, in the nature of things, this is impossible, for then grace is no more grace.

THE FUNCTION OF FAITH

It has been suggested that *faith is* an act of merit on our part which procures justification, and all who do not obey in this way do not deserve it. What a travesty of the truth! Faith has exactly the contrary action. *Because it has no merit,* it is the only requirement in this economy of purest and fullest favor. Any other condition would clash with it, but faith, having no deserts, is in full harmony with grace (Rom.4:16). Even faith *obedience* does not consist of acts performed in order to deserve God's gifts, but is a figure in which the obedience to God's law is displaced by faith in His Word. Faith is merely the channel *through* which grace may operate. It cannot act through works or attainments of any kind. These can only nullify its effects.

Justification is for those who believe *God.* It is not a prize awarded to those who believe *it,* or accept *it,* or grasp *it.* Probably most of the saints have heard little of justification and understood less. Even Luther does not seem to have made a clear cleavage between it and pardon or forgiveness. Shall we conclude, therefore, that Luther and the rest were not justified at all? Shall we shunt them into the kingdom on the earth because they mixed much of the Circumcision evangel into their message? But we are not justified by intelligence or insight, but by faith in God. Abraham was justified, first of all, not because he understood justification, but because He took God at His word concerning his seed. Justification is for all who put what faith they have in God, however feeble it may be. And they

are not more justified later when their faith is strengthened, for *God* is the Justifier, not the believer.

Faith is the channel of justification and should exclude all works, yet in these days even faith has been degraded to a meritorious act. To show the real character of grace as well as to guard the sense in which we fall out of it, we should closely follow the apostle's argument in Romans, especially the astonishing declaration made at the end of the fifth chapter. "Where sin increases, grace superexceeds, that even as Sin reigns in death, thus Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

That grace superexceeds all sin is quite the contrary to the teaching of Christendom. Alas! very few of us are able to realize it in our daily lives, and, as a consequence, we are still seeking something in ourselves, without the sense of grace in all its comforting and captivating loveliness.

If grace always superexceeds sin, we might ask, how can we *fall out* of grace? This, like all figures of speech is limited in its scope. It is impossible to escape the sphere of grace by any act of ours, even by circumcision, which was the sin of the Galatians. If the Galatians were no longer in grace Paul could not even have written to them. But in their experience and realization and appreciation they were no longer in grace, seeing that they sought to add meritorious acts of their own to perfect God's favor.

Even as the grace now regnant is richer and more glorious, and transcends that which brought justification, so also is the need for it. Who has fully grasped the grace which is ours in this administration? Paul, perhaps, and a few in his days. For centuries it was almost entirely unknown to men. The Reformation did not recover it. Since then only a comparatively few have been occupied with it. Alas! some who seek to make it known commit the fatal error of annulling it by making it a matter of attainment for the few, instead of a gratuitous gift for all who are hallowed by contact with God. If only those who understand the secret or "mystery" are embraced in it, how few will there be in this company! I would not care to be in it, for there would be enough of human pride and boasting to spoil it for one who has learned to distrust himself and look only to God. In it God will not be All. But blessed be God, *all* who are His now, no matter how ignorant, however wanting in attainments, *all* will be embraced by the grace glorious, just because it *is* grace! Let us thank Him at the bottom of our hearts for this marvelous truth!

(IN) *to*-GRACE *(chariti)*

One form of the word grace is particularly rich in its implications, yet it is rather difficult to carry it over into good English in some connections, especially with the verb *be.* It is simple when the verb will allow the use of the preposition *to,* as when Paul and Barnabas were given over *to* the grace of God (Acts 14:26). Webster's dictionary says that the dative "is generally indicated in modern English by *to* or *for.*" Much experiment convinced us that *to* is the best standard for the sublinear of the CONCORDANT VERSION, and subsequent experience has confirmed this. It is the best uniform rendering. In the version, however, the matter is far more complicated, for each verb has an influence on the following connective. We have tried specially hard to get a good rendering for the parenthesis in Ephesians 2:5.

We cannot say "to grace you are saved," so we first used Webster's second choice and rendered it "you have been saved *for* grace." This comes close to the sense, yet seems to limit it to the future. In some passages, as Galatians 5:1, *for* is fine. "For freedom Christ frees us!" And so it seems here, yet, for the sake of uniformity, we have considered adding a word thus: "to (enjoy) grace are you saved." These

renderings, however, do not fit well in similar passages, so we have adopted a regular rendering for such cases, by inserting the connective *in* in place of *to.*

The dative case, as shown on the chart, on page 16 of *The Greek Elements* answers the question *Where*? and indicates *rest in* the object named. Hence the characteristic connective is IN, which cannot be used for any other case. If we add *in,* then, for the dative, we are not likely to introduce any false relation. Hence we have thought it well to translate the dative "*in* grace" in all of those marvelous passages where this has to do with our present position. We, and other translators, have used *by,* which is, perhaps the most agreeable English. But *by* is so wide in its usage that it may also denote agency and efficient cause. Its nearest equivalent, in Greek (*hupo*) is never used with the dative. We seek to restrict this connective to the efficient cause in the CONCORDANT VERSION. This is especially clear in such statements as, "that which is declared by the Lord through the prophet (Matt.1:22). Grace is not the *efficient agent* (by) or the *channel* (through), but the *sphere in* which God operates in this and the preceding administration.

THE SPHERE OF GRACE

Justification is by God as the efficient cause (Rom.8:33), and *in* Christ (Gal.2:17), and therefore *in* grace. We are justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). It is not that grace is in the past, and exhausts itself in vindicating us, leaving us to stand in law or works, as the Galatians thought, nor is it merely the channel *through* which justification came. It is the element, the province in which justification is effected, which remains, not only to maintain our righteousness, but to form a fit field for the further outflow of God's favor. This is the glorious feature which we seek to

unfold in this essay. The dative form of the word grace (our word *charity* is a close transliteration), is not only bursting with gifts for us, but an apprehension of its nuances will preserve us from the prevailing tendency to make His gratuities attainable by means of human efforts or insight.

In the next passage in Romans where this precious form occurs, we have an example of the *expansive force* of grace. In comparisons you cannot simply confine it to the limits of the corresponding term. Therefore we read: "But *not* as the offense, thus also the grace. For if by the offense of the one the many died, *much rather* the grace of God and the gratuity *in grace,* which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many *superabounds*" (Rom.5:15). The offense brought death. To counteract and restore the damage wrought by Adam would only require that death be nullified by life. But being in Adam and being in Christ are not mere counterparts, one the exact equivalent of the other. We have heard much of this in some philosophies. But these reckon without grace. The gratuity we receive is *in grace,* and therefore it does not balance the evil, nor does it simply *abound.* It *superabounds.* What an intimation there is here of the untold treasures of grace which were still unknown when Paul wrote to the Romans!

Another helpful contrast is given us in the administrational section of Romans. Speaking of the few faithful ones who were left in Israel, Paul compares it with the time in Elijah's day when God still had seven thousand men left for Himself, who had not bowed the knee to Baal. "Thus, then, in the current era also, there has come to be a remnant according to the choice of grace. Now if it is in grace, it is no longer *out* of works, else the grace is coming to be no longer grace. Now if it is *out of* works, it is no longer grace, else the work is no longer work" (Rom.11:6). Note the change from *out of* works to the dative of grace. Works are the *source* in one case, but grace is the *sphere*

in the other. Israel *sought* her salvation and worked to attain it, but failed. The chosen, however, in grace, merely *encounter* it. They find it without seeking or working. God's favor is unspeakably more efficient and practical than all human exertions.

Even service, in the last analysis, is a question of grace. Grace is the sphere in which it reaches its richest fruition. Paul, in comparing himself with the other apostles, does not appeal to his superior training, his greater faith, or any of his undoubted attainments, but to grace alone. He says: "Yet, in the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace, which is in me, did not come to be for naught, but more exceedingly than all of them toil I—yet not I, but the grace of God which is with me" (1 Cor.15:10). The usual, and, at present, more agreeable formula, "by grace," is not wrong, yet it does not express the idea as well as "*in grace,*" which, we hope, will become so precious to those who grasp its significance, that they will soon find it more pleasing to the ear than "*by* grace." Service performed in an atmosphere of divine grace is sure to be more fruitful and exceed all that is done by the constraint of law or to attain merit. Grace is the ozone in which our faculties are vivified and leads to labors extensive like itself.

In Paul's latest and highest revelation a double appeal is made to the fact that salvation *through* faith (Eph.2:5,8), as heralded in Paul's evangel, is *in grace,* hence is the proper atmosphere for the further favors now revealed. The usual rendering is much used to prove that salvation is not of works, and suggests to most minds that the efficient cause of our salvation was grace. This is blessed, of course, yet seems rather incongruous in such an epistle as Ephesians, where it finds no close connection with the context. The point is that the condition of salvation which is theirs through faith, apart from works, is in the sphere of grace, hence they were vivified together with the Circumcision recipients of Paul's evangel when Christ was vivified. Such a blessing could not come to any mortal on the ground of attainment, and is possible only to those Whom Paul had previously put "in grace."

This is enlarged upon in one of the most precious passages even in this precious epistle. "For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:8-10). The scene of our salvation is not in ourselves or our deeds, but in God's favor. He is the One Who is working and even prepares the good works which we may do.

GRACE INVOLVES JOY

Grace, in Greek, comes from the stem joy, for that is its fruit. And so it is that we are exhorted, with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, *in grace,* to sing in our hearts to God (Col. 3:16). Grace can tune our heartstrings as nothing else can. Our vocal cords may not be able to voice the harmony within. Some of us cannot make music on an instrument or in our throats so as to enchant our fellow men. But all of us can make music *in our hearts to God.* And it will be found that songs which celebrate ourselves, our superiority and attainments, are rare, for these claims are not in grace, and put a damper on our joy.

INVIGORATED IN GRACE

At the very close of Paul's career he writes to Timothy, "You, then, child of mine, be invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.2:1). That is where real vigor and efficiency and power lies today. The whole tendency of our times is against it. Our youth is trained to be self-confident, self-assured, self-reliant. It is taught to depend on

it's own resources. Body and mind are developed so as to assure success. Power is sought from within. This is only a substitute for God's law and is useful only to prove its own fallacy. The saint should have no confidence in the flesh and expect nothing from it. But we have unbounded confidence in God's grace. The joy of the Lord is our strength. Let us be invigorated, in our weakness, by a practical realization of the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus. We are in grace. Let us make use of it and enjoy it. Timothy was frequently infirm in the flesh. But he was also continually invigorated in grace. May we never fall out!

FALLING OUT OF GRACE

Perhaps the best reason for choosing *in* to indicate the dative case of grace is the direct contrast which it presents, to Paul's graphic figure, when he described the Galatian apostasy. He said, "You fall *out* of grace!" (Gal.5:4). They had been in grace, or they could not have fallen *out* of it. In these days, when there is such a strong tendency to depart from the faith, it will be found that a falling out of grace usually accompanies error. Those who divide the saints into groups according to something in them have fallen out of grace. One who claims to belong to the 144,000 and leaves others in "the great company" proclaims his own merit, denies the one body, and has fallen out of grace. If we claim to belong to a higher and more privileged group in this administration, we destroy its very foundations, for it is based upon the *unity* of those far and near, the *oneness* of those privileged with those who had no covenant or claim on God. It is noteworthy that no one claims to belong to an inferior group. Let us not exalt ourselves at the expense of God's most precious exhibition of grace!

Falling from grace used to be a phrase applied to one whose conduct contradicted his profession. The reformed drunkard was said to fall from grace if he took to his cups again. It was freely used of so-called "backsliders," and carried with it the loss of salvation. But, of course, all this is entirely foreign to the context where it is found in the Scriptures. The Galatians did not lose their salvation, but their liberty (Gal.5:1-4). They still remained brethren. They had the spirit (Gal.3:2,3). They were disturbed, but not lost. All of us fail in doctrine or deportment. This, however, does not affect that which we have in grace. It was only in their thoughts and practices that the Galatians fell out of grace. Failure in these can only make it abound. In law failure is fatal, but grace is stimulated and multiplied by failure.

GRACE THE TOUCHSTONE

Since grace is the fundamental feature of this administration, which is especially designed to exhibit God's grace to the universe, all doctrine and all deportment may be tested by it. If we have drunk deeply of grace we intuitively shrink from all that involves merit on the part of man. Salvation with the slightest tinge of works, no matter how reasonable or how ably defended, or "proven" in the Bible, finds no response in our spirits. Destiny dependent on human attainment is utterly repugnant to us, for it is a falling out of grace and a repudiation of the very basis of this secret administration. And we will find that our conduct usually agrees with our teaching. Graciousness goes with truth: ungraciousness with error. Not that it is merely sentimental and will not rebuke and expose where this is needed, especially in these last days, but even this will be done in harmony with grace.

Here is where the spiritual saint is safer than the learned scholar. The question of truth may seem difficult in our present ignorance and the strange variety of interpretations which abound, but if God's grace has gripped us, this will be our guiding sun in the midst of the prevailing gloom. It will enable us to steer clear of all the sunken

rocks of human merit that threaten to make shipwreck of our faith. We will refuse to deduce from one set of passages what God plainly denies elsewhere when our reasoning leads us to lean on man instead of God, because this conflicts with the spirit of grace. O that our hearts were established firmly and finally in the freedom of His favor! Much as we value a knowledge of the external facts of God's revelation we have found that these are not acceptable to us in this administration unless our hearts are prepared by an appreciation of God's grace.

The most subtle danger for those who have seen universal reconciliation, is to make it depend in some measure on human merit. This glorious truth may easily degenerate into universal*ism.* There seem to be no doubt that it has done so in the past, and there are indications that it will do so again. Indeed, there are already strenuous efforts being made to show that Romans 3:10-19 is not true. It is implied that every mouth is *not* to be barred, that some *are* just, that some *are* seeking, that all will *not* be condemned at the great white throne, that God's grace is *not* needed for good men. How close this comes to salvation by character! Such is said to be the teaching of universalism. It makes my heart bleed to see this trend, and how some who are dear to me are dallying with it. I blame myself for this falling out of grace, for, if I had magnified God's grace as I should, they would never even consider such destructive teaching. Let us repudiate everything that slights His glorious grace, with all our hearts!

A. E. Knoch

EDITOR'S NOTE

The preceding article originally appeared in *Unsearchable Riches* for May 1940 (vol.31, pages 137-148). Where Brother Knoch used Romans 6:1 to express the character of grace in the section headed THE FUNCTION OF FAITH, this has been changed to Romans 5:20,21. D.H.H.

Contents:

241 Editorial
245 The Various Baptisms
253 Baptized Into Christ
259 God's Power for Believers
269 The Evangel of
the Faith of Christ
281 The Slavery of Sin

NOVEMBER, 2011

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES FOR NOVEMBER 2011
BEING THE SIXTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TWO

EDITORIAL

We seem to have reached a turning point in the publication of *Unsearchable Riches.* This issue has been long in preparation and is very late in publication. This is partly due to our decision to move the major storage of our literature and its shipping from California to Michigan. Besides involving the transfer of printed literature and mailing equipment, this involves some internal remodeling of an existing building near my home in Michigan, now mostly complete, and the building of a new storage facility (not yet begun). Our fellow worker, Tony Nungesser, will add the work of filling orders and maintenance to that of typesetting, proofreading and assistance to me in almost every phase of my own efforts. Jim and Suella Coram will continue to fulfill the business responsibilities, the processing of orders (which will be transmitted to the Michigan office by computer) and keeping of records. Besides contributing articles for the magazine, Jim will continue to handle and expand the internet phase of our ministry (see the announcement in this issue concerning the availability of the CVOT "on line").

As for the magazine itself, it seems best for us, at least for this year, to issue four issues only, rather than six, to be printed and mailed from California. But beyond this we are planning reprintings of books and booklets. The publication of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament as a single volume is a high priority, but this involves more than correcting typographical errors that crept into our present five-volume set. Many hours each week are devoted to this project as we endeavor to provide a higher

level of consistency and accuracy in our renderings. We are also aware that the CV "New Testament" will soon need to be reprinted. (And indeed a complete edition from Genesis to Revelation under one cover remains a fervent hope for us all.)

Realistically, as a whole this seems to be beyond our abilities and resources. For myself, after forty years of close involvement in the work of the Concern, I increasingly become aware of my mortality. We propose, but God disposes. Yet we want to let our plans and hopes be known to our readers, urging each of you to join us in prayer concerning these matters.

THE CURRENT ISSUE

This issue of *Unsearchable Riches* has as it theme, *Paul's evangel of grace,* especially as it is presented in Romans. The manifestation of God's righteousness apart from works of law, but rather through the faith of Jesus Christ, Who died for us while we were still sinners, may be given lip service, but it is widely resisted whenever anyone tries to take it seriously, and otherwise kept muzzled as much as possible. That grace should be seen as God's method of dealing with human sin may be preached, but where this is so, more often than not it is accompanied with addendums of warnings and rules calculated to bring the believer under law. This is what happened to the ecclesias in Galatia, who were being swiftly transferred from that which called them in the grace of Christ to a distorted evangel of works (*cf* Gal.1:6; 3:1-4; 4:15,21; 5:1-6).

I myself have often felt uncomfortable with Romans 6 because it seemed to go in a different direction than the preceding chapters. But more and more, as I give it renewed attention and focus on what Paul is actually saying, and try to keep it in context as it logically follows from chapter 5, it is becoming a growing source of joy and peace,

for endurance in faith and expectation. It has been a great help to me to see the force of the subjunctive verb form in verse 4 ("should be walking"), resting, as it does, on the certainty of Christ being roused "through the glory of the Father," and not on obligations I cannot fulfill. Again, to recognize that the obedience spoken of in verses 16-18 is a matter of setting my hearing under the message of grace, rather than under a message of law, is becoming increasingly rewarding to me, even though I have heard others point this out before. (I hope to take this up in my next installment on Romans.)

Along similar lines, I appreciate what Jim Coram is saying about the faith and faithfulness of Jesus Christ. This lies at the heart of the evangel. What a loss for believers who are subjected to the twisting of Romans 3:22 in modern translations which change Paul's words concerning "Jesus Christ's faith" to mean "[our] faith *in* Jesus Christ." For God to be the Just Justifier (Rom.3:26), there must be a manifestly righteous justification. And that cannot rest on our faith. It can only be channeled by God through the faith of Jesus Christ.

As for the subject of baptism as Paul introduces it in Romans 6:3,4, who can hear what our apostle is saying amidst the countless theories arising from the traditional assumption that a rite of baptism in water is in view? The articles by A. E. Knoch and George Rogers serve well in getting us on track. "[Paul] uses baptism *as a figure,* not as an essential rite . . . . We do not seek to *cleanse* our *flesh* in water, but we *discard* it in Christ's death" (p.246). "The key of water baptism not only fails to turn in the lock of Romans 6:3,4 and Galatians 3:27, but when forced, breaks it. Why not try the other key, that of baptism in spirit, which opens the lock instead of breaking it?" (p.257).

The article by Alan Burns was written over eighty years ago before the first edition of the CV was printed. Yet,

although we deleted a line or so and added a footnote, we generally retained his terminology and topical allusions as originally written. His clear and forceful defense of Paul's evangel as a message of God's deity and His grace for human sinners remains relevant for our own day. It is well stated that "There was nothing in Paul's gospel to make him ashamed" (p.286), nor for us as well.

About the same time that Alan Burns was writing the above, Brother Knoch wrote the following in reference to the message of God's conciliation of His enemies: "[It] is the essence of the evangel, that God is conciliated toward all. He is not concerned with sins, for Christ was made sin. No wrong doing can be a bar to His presence and favor. The evangel is good news, glad tidings concerning His Son, not bad news concerning the sinner. As dispensers of God's grace, let us absorb the spirit of love toward all, which pervades this secret administration. Not even the terrors of an orthodox hell are as potent to turn men from sin as the realization of His gracious attitude. Moreover, the preaching of the conciliation does not merely turn men away from sin. First of all it turns them to God. Abhorrence of sin is only one of the consequences. The driving force of fear is impotent compared with the drawing power of love."[1]

This brings me back to the matter of declaring and getting to know and perceiving what the evangel of God concerning His Son is saying to us. The more truly we hear and rehearse the words God speaks to us through His chosen apostle, while praying for growth in realization of what they say, the more surely we will be strengthened for endurance and patience with joy in our present lives. Thanks be to God for the all-sufficiency of His grace!

D.H.H.

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.17, p.3.

THE VARIOUS BAPTISMS

BAPTISM sets forth death and burial with Christ. But this is true only of the Uncircumcision, *not of the Circumcision.* The *usage* of words, their *figurative* force, is confined to each context, whereas the *meaning* is common to all. Baptism may figure one thing here and another there. Even among the Circumcision there is variety when its significance is in question. John's baptism was a sign of *repentance,* when done in water for entrance into the kingdom, even when it was a sham and performed by unbelieving Pharisees.

Pentecost added much to its significance. John had alluded to a baptism in spirit that was future, but Peter promises the spirit to those who are baptized (Acts 2:30). Yet when he carries the evangel to the proselyte Cornelius, the baptism of the spirit came *first* and cleansed the believers' hearts *by faith,* so that the baptism in water was only a confirmation needed for entrance into the earthly kingdom.

SALVATION BY BAPTISM

That baptism is "a saving ordinance" is put beyond question by Peter in his first epistle (3:21). He uses the deluge as a picture of the great cataclysm which precedes the kingdom. Noah and his family were *saved through* it. Baptism represents this as the means of saving them, if it is real, not merely a washing off of the external filth of the flesh, but the inquiry of a good conscience toward God. *Baptism is essential to the salvation of the Circumcision.* Moreover it will be essential after the kingdom comes. He

who believes *and is baptized* shall be saved (Mark 16:16). What tremendous efforts have been made to "explain" away these definite assertions, or to nullify them by means of other passages, from Paul's epistles! Let us *believe* them and *leave* them where they belong. Then we are free to accept all of God's revelations, without rejecting any. Faith demands baptismal salvation for those to whom it applies, but not for us, to whom it does not apply. Only in figure, in the baptism of Christ, in His death and burial, is baptism essential to our salvation.

Nevertheless, baptism holds a much more precious burden of truth for the Uncircumcision than any of its phases to the Circumcision. There was some progress even there, but Paul goes much further. In the epistle to the Romans, *after having shown that none are righteous, none do good, that mankind is a complete failure in the flesh,* he uses baptism to set forth *death* and *resurrection* with Christ. Undoubtedly some continued to be baptized in water while the kingdom was still in view. Yet Paul could not appeal to the experience of all, even at that early date. He does not tell them to be baptized. He ignores water baptism.

He had already set forth the basis of salvation, and had not mentioned baptism, but rather excluded it by insisting on salvation by faith alone, apart from works. He uses baptism *as a figure,* not as an essential rite. The truth there taught is itself sufficient to make this practice futile.

We do not seek to *cleanse* our *flesh* in water, but we *discard* it in Christ's death (Rom.6:3,4). The figure is an exceedingly powerful one. In water baptism we wash our *own* bodies to be cleansed. But this baptism into death is *not our death,* but *His.* The literal action is His, not ours. He had a baptism to be baptized with (Mark 20:22). But what need had He to repent, or have His sins pardoned, or His heart cleansed? Up to His sacrifice, *none.* At His offering of Himself for the sins of all mankind, *He needed*

to be baptized more than any one else in the whole universe, for He was made a sin offering for all. His baptism led Him into death, for only so could He be saved from the sin and uncleanness which He bore. He was baptized for *our* sins there. We were *in* Him. It was not His own sins which were washed away, but ours. This is the only real baptism. It accomplishes all that the ritual only suggests, and *far more than it ever meant to the Circumcision. We discard the symbol because we enjoy the substance.*

We have great sympathy with the strenuous attempts made to "prove" that baptism demands *immersion.* It is true that baptism means *dip*ize. But we can see that *dip* does not necessarily denote complete submersion when we read of our Lord and His disciples *dipping* their *hand in* the dish for a morsel (Matt.26:23; Mark 14:20; John 13:26).

If the figure were *our* baptism in water, as is generally supposed, then immersion would undoubtedly illustrate our burial and resurrection far better than the superficial baptizing such as was given even couches among the Jews (Mark 7:4), and in which they indulged before lunch (Luke 11:38). But the truth is not set forth, by *our* baptism. What is there to signify death in a mere plunge beneath the water? There should be a more suggestive action to set this forth. Immersion, indeed, is a much better picture of burial. But resurrection is weakened by the lack of anything to signify death. This is all unnecessary, for in our Lord's case, *the cleansing* which baptism in water merely *figures,* was done by *actual* death and burial and rousing. In our case the figure lies in our being *in* Him when He underwent the real cleansing at Golgotha.

Baptism in water *did not break down the physical barriers* which separated the saints of God, but baptism *in spirit* unites all into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, whether male or female (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal.3:28). We are all one in Christ Jesus. In the

book of Acts, where both baptisms had a place, the tendency of spirit baptism to override these barriers caused much dissension and confusion. The case of Cornelius is most instructive to show that baptism in water does not bridge the gap between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision, but the baptism in spirit does. Peter went to Cornelius before the latter was baptized at all, and used the fact of spirit baptism, not water, to justify his fellowship with these proselytes. So it will be in the kingdom. The nations will be baptized, but that will not give them the place of Israel by any means.

Baptism in water cannot form a vital unity. Its history as recorded in the Scriptures, and as seen in the church, is ample evidence of this. Under John's baptism, which was definitely divorced from spirit baptism, the unbelieving scribes and Pharisees baptized, yet we may be sure that this external sign of unity with those who received our Lord, did not make them one with Christ, Who also was baptized, neither with His disciples. Probably all of our Lord's followers were baptized, for they baptized more than John (John 3:26), yet many of these left Him later, and walked with Him no longer (John 6:66). Among those nearest to Him, the twelve apostles, who were counted as closely united to Him, we find Judas, who was even entrusted with the funds. Baptism did not create a living union among the disciples of John and our Lord before the spirit was given.

Although baptism is essential to the salvation of the Circumcision and is the door into the kingdom, it did not unite all who received it into one body. The great gulf between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision remained. As shown by the conduct of Peter and the believing Jews in the case of Cornelius, no union of the two classes could be considered by them, not even with proselytes of the gate. How much less with the nations as such! And this should

be perfectly understandable, in view of the promises to the physical seed of Abraham and David, which could never be carried over to all the nations without becoming void. No such commitments hinder God from uniting the saints into one body today, whether they belong to the Circumcision or the Uncircumcision, for our realm is *above,* in the heavens, and our blessings are *spiritual.* These have not been promised to anyone, hence may be enjoyed by the joint body, in which all the members are of equal rank, whether Circumcision or Uncircumcision.

In the kingdom itself the nations will be baptized, but the great disparity between them and Israel will be emphasized rather than removed. So far as we know, Israelites alone will do the baptizing and the teaching and the nations will yield obedience (Matt.28:19,20). Instead of being done away, the chasm between Jew and Greek will be greater than ever.

Modern efforts to attain church unity are greatly hindered by ignorance on this point. Large bodies of believers as well as nominal churchmen consider some kind of baptism necessary for unity, if not for salvation. Some would never part with infant baptism, on the ground that God is a God of love, and that its omission "would bring intense suffering to millions of mothers and fathers who now rejoice that if their children were called in their early years to their Heavenly Father they were already inside of the fold of God."

The prevailing view as to the place of baptism is thus expressed in the Encyclopedia Britannica: "Christian baptism is the sacrament by which a person is initiated into the Christian church." This would include infant baptism as well as believers' baptism. No doubt this idea arose from the fact that baptism is requisite for entrance into the kingdom on earth, and this kingdom is usually confused with the church. Gradually it has been further confused

with other things, such as regeneration. A curious explanation was given in early times by Tertullian. At that time a figure of a fish was much used to represent a believer, because the initial letters of the words *Iêsous CHristos THeou Uios Sotêr* (Jesus Christ God's Son, Saviour) spells *fish* (*ICTHUS*). So he said, "We fishes are *born in water,* conformable to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." This "proves" baptismal regeneration! It was called "the great circumcision," because some held that baptism took the place of this rite.

BAPTISM PROGRESSIVE

Baptism has usually been treated as a stereotyped figure with the same force wherever it is found. Rather it is like a chameleon, which conforms to its surroundings. All figures are like that. The *meaning* of a word is constant in the Scriptures, but its usage, and especially its figurative applications, vary with its context. In Acts it is distinctly implied that John's baptism was not the same as the later baptism (Acts 19:3,4). Few, it seems, have noticed this, and still go back to the rite under John.

Baptism is progressive. Even before Paul's epistles there was an advance in its significance. The baptism at Pentecost had far more to it than before the sacrifice of Christ. John's was one baptism of repentance for the forgiveness, or pardon, of sins. In Acts there were two baptisms, one in spirit and one in water. Then there is a return to one, in spirit. The Circumcision always require water. The Uncircumcision demand spirit.

John said, "I come baptizing in water" (John 1:26). But Peter, on the day of Pentecost, said, "You shall be obtaining the gratuity of the holy spirit" (Acts 2:38). Henceforth, in Acts, we have both water and spirit. The Circumcision received the holy spirit *after* they were baptized in water. But Cornelius, although he was only a proselyte, received

holy spirit *before* he was baptized in water. This is most significant, for before this, it seemed that water baptism was essential to the reception of the spirit. Once we see that spirit *followed* water with the Circumcision, but *precedes* it with the Uncircumcision, we should be ready to understand why there is a return to *one* baptism—that in spirit—when the Uncircumcision evangel of today was revealed by Paul.

Baptism in water certainly was a means of salvation, and will be again. The Scriptures distinctly teach it. For many years I rebelled at this, and tried to explain away the passages which taught it, because I filched the texts from the Circumcision and "applied" them to myself. How grand it is to be able to believe *all* Scripture and see the place which God has given each passage! Then we will not have to evade those which clearly teach salvation by water baptism. As I, myself, had undergone the rite, I was not prejudiced against it as those who had not been baptized. But I had studied Romans and could not reconcile the grace there revealed with salvation on any other grounds than grace and faith. Baptism was too near to salvation by works, which I abhorred.

Peter, in his epistle (1 Peter 3:20), confirms his Pentecostal practice. There was water enough in the deluge, and Noah and his relatives were saved through it. As a representation of this, Peter says, *baptism is now saving you.* And who would know better than Peter, in writing inspired epistles to the Circumcision? But he had had much experience of baptized disciples by this time. Many who had been baptized had fallen away when the kingdom did not materialize. So he qualifies his assertion to show that a mere superficial cleansing is not sufficient, it must be deeper. It is "not the putting off of the filth of the flesh, but the inquiry of a good conscience to God" (1 Peter 3:21).

Another passage, which clearly teaches salvation by water

baptism, is at the close of Mark's account: He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, yet he who disbelieves shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). I am unutterably thankful that this no longer disturbs me as it once did. Convinced as I was by my study of Romans that God alone is my Saviour, I could not understand how it could be otherwise here, until my eyes were opened to the various phases of God's operations, and the difference between the Circumcision evangel and that for today. In one, water baptism is essential. In the other, Paul thanked God that he had baptized no more, because God had not commissioned him to baptize, but to bring the evangel. For the Circumcision there must be baptism in water, even when the baptism of the spirit is added. But when God is not dealing with the flesh, then spirit baptism is necessary, and water is not needed.

A. E. Knoch

BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH

DURING the time of the readjustment of the saints, covered by Paul's early epistles, it is vital to note just what kind of baptism is before us, and to carefully scan the figures used. We are apt to put water baptism as the background for every reference. Our Lord referred, not only to water and spirit baptisms, but also to His *death* as the element of baptism (Luke 12:50). Is not this referred to by Paul in the sixth of Romans? We are baptized into *His death*. We do not go down into "a watery grave" of our own. We were entombed *together with Him* through baptism into death, that, even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also should be walking in newness of life (Rom.6:3,4).

May we never reason from one baptism to another, especially when it is a figure. Death, entombment and rousing are not implied by John's baptism, for many who received it later rejected their Messiah. Thank God for the baptism of John in water! Thank God for the baptism of Peter, which not only brought pardon, but the spirit! But, above all, let us thank Him for our baptism, our death, entombment and rousing *in Christ*, which leads to life and glory supernal, far beyond aught that was ever dreamed of by the Circumcision!

A. E. Knoch

BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

WE died to sin (Rom.6:2). As surely as Christ died to sin, just so surely all who are in Christ Jesus were baptized into His death, and thus we died to sin. The relation to sin of the saint who is in Christ Jesus is exactly the same as Christ's present relation to it. As He lives to God so in Him the saint lives to God. This is not an experience to be enjoyed, but a revelation as to what has happened to Christ and to all who were baptized into Him. Our duty is not to experience it, but to reckon it true.

Many believers find it difficult to believe the assertion that they died to sin. That they ought to die to it they will admit, but, they say, experience contradicts the statement that they died. Yet it is plain that the apostle affirms, not only of himself, nor of a special class, but of all who are in Christ Jesus, that they died to sin. He does not appeal to experience, either his own or theirs. He declares the truth on which they are to reckon. He points to Christ's death to sin, His entombment, His resurrection, and His present life to God and says that those in Christ Jesus participate in all these achievements. There is no reference to the subjective condition or experience of the believer. Let us hear him expound.

ROMANS 6:3

Or, if the assertion that we died to sin puzzles you, **are you ignorant** of that which all saints ought to know, that they were baptized into Christ's death, and thus they died to sin? You know they died to sin in this way, *or* you are

ignorant of the fact of baptism into Christ Jesus. The suggestion of ignorance of this truth gives the question a tone of reproof. The objector's only excuse for suggesting that Paul's evangel favors persistence in sin is his ignorance of that part of it which makes such persistence impossible. Whether or not there were any saints who were so ignorant in Paul's day, it is certain that there are many today who deserve the rebuke as much as the legalist objector, for they seek to explain away the fact of death to sin, and urge upon men the supposed duty of dying to it. They put the believer's death in the place of Christ's. Spiritual men flee from the ignorance which, on the one hand, makes the objector reach so absurd a conclusion, and which, on the other hand, mutilates the evangel.

As many as is a pronoun of quantity, and it means all without exception who are baptized into Christ are baptized into His death. So that baptism into His death is not something saints have yet to seek. There are not some saints who died to sin and others who did not. All **are baptized into Christ Jesus.**

The only place in this epistle where baptism is mentioned is in these two verses, where the fact of spiritual union with Christ is being declared. The saints are in Christ Jesus because they were baptized into Him. Nothing less than an actual spiritual union, which gives a saint a place before God in Christ Jesus, can meet the requirements of the argument of chapters six to eight. It is a sad proof of our departure from the Pauline revelation that there is so little agreement among saints and teachers as to what baptism into Christ Jesus is and what it accomplishes for the baptized.

This departure is because the majority are thinking of the wrong baptism. This error explains the confusion and disagreement that have marked the long controversy about the meaning and efficacy of baptism in general and about

this passage in particular. They who think of the immersion of believers in water in the name of Jesus Christ are not thinking in harmony with this revelation.

RITE OR REALITY?

As spiritual facts rather than eloquent ritual are in point, Paul cannot be speaking of water baptism, but of baptism in spirit, because the ideas of union with Christ, of death with Him, of entombment together with Him, and of resurrection and being alive to God in Him are all spiritual facts. Consistency demands that, if there is such a thing as spiritual baptism, that is what the word here means. Only when it is seen that the baptism is that in the spirit can the passage be cleared of all the difficulties which have been imported into it by the assumption that water baptism is meant. Every spiritually minded student of Scripture recoils from the idea that a ritual baptism can actually incorporate the baptized in the body of Christ. But when it is seen that the baptism is that of the spirit, a glorious, satisfying revelation of the evangel gladdens our heart, enlightens our intellect, and banishes perplexity.

Why do good men cling so tenaciously to the external, physical rite and forget the spiritual reality? It is true that the rite is full of significance, and yet it is devoid of real spiritual efficacy. When water baptism was instituted, it was plainly taught that it was but a symbol of spirit baptism. In Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts at the first mention of water baptism the speaker in each case points from John's baptism in water to Christ's baptism in holy spirit. People persistently cling to John, though he steadily points to the One stronger than he, Who should come after him and baptize in spirit instead of water (Matt.3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). In Acts 1:5 our Lord again distinguishes between John's baptism and His, saying: "You shall be baptized in holy spirit after not many of

these days." This promise of the Father was fulfilled to the company of believing Israelites who met in the Temple on the day of Pentecost. Again, when, as Peter preached to the proselyte Cornelius and his company, the holy spirit fell on them, Peter said: "Now I am reminded of the Lord's declaration as He said that 'John indeed baptizes in water, yet you shall be baptized in holy spirit'" (Acts 11:16; 10:45). The key of water baptism not only fails to turn in the lock of Romans 6:3,4 and Galatians 3:27, but, when forced, breaks it. Why not try the other key, that of baptism in spirit, which opens the lock instead of breaking it? The error of ignoring spirit baptism in these passages not only vitiates most of the explanations of them, but worse still, leads to a direct denial of any baptism in the spirit which actually introduces the saints into Christ Jesus.

IN SPIRIT

Baptism in spirit is quite as indispensable a part of our salvation as is our justification. It ranks in importance with the impartation of His life by the spirit, and all who have life in Christ are baptized into Him, are sealed, anointed, and are given the earnest of the inheritance of the saints in light. Only by baptism in spirit can anyone be placed into Christ Jesus and put on Christ.

All who are baptized into Christ Jesus are made one with Him in His saving deeds. They are not only baptized into the Person, but **are baptized into His death** also. The Person Who died to sin, was entombed, was roused and is living to God. None of these are private acts wrought for Himself alone; they are for all men. Only those who are in Him by spiritual baptism are actually sharers of His deeds. The statement that we died to sin is true only of those who are baptized into His death. The special aspect of His death is His death to sin. We must insist on the truth so clearly stated in the following verses that it is

a death not for sin but to sin, so that His connection with the race sin, which He was made, has been completely and finally broken. What the death which severed His connection with sin means to Him it must mean to all who are baptized into it.

Christ escaped from sin only by death. If we did not die with Him to sin, sin still has a claim on us that we cannot meet even should we die the second death. His death to sin—what shall we say of it? It was for all mankind. It is actually ours by our baptism into it. It is no "mystical," subjective death to sin wrought by identification of the human will with His. It is the historic, objective condemnation of the whole race and its sin in the person of the second Man. That death was for me; more than that, it was actually made mine by baptism into Christ, so that I am dead to sin just as He is.

INTO HIS DEATH

It is not baptism into death simply, but into *His* death. The word *His* is the most important one in the clause. In every respect His death was unlike every other. He is unique in all He is and does. God only knows all that Christ's death was to Him and to the universe. Death is the common doom of all the sons of Adam, yet He was not subject to that death. Other men are subjects of sin and death and condemnation: He knew no sin, was not mortal, nor doomed to death. Other deaths affect only the individual who dies: His death was racial. Others die in their sin: He died for and to their sin. He died for all: all others needed Him to die for them. By the common death of mankind God is not conciliated to the world: by His death we, being enemies, were conciliated to God. If man's death could crucify the old humanity, annul the body of sin, and release from slavery to sin, then Christ's death was a superfluity and without cause. None ever tasted death as He, or

endured the shame of the cross, the estrangement of God, and the curse of the law. There are depths and heights and lengths and breadths of meaning and value in His death that we cannot apprehend, but since we are baptized into it, all of its deliverance and wealth of blessing is ours. My death can do none of the things for God, for mankind, or for myself that Christ's death to sin did. I die because I am a sinner: the death He died was possible because He knew no sin. My death cannot condemn or remove my own sin: His death can annul sin in its totality.

Anyone who assumes to speak with adequacy of His death has not begun to think about it, yet we are sure that the meditations of our heart on this and all subjects will be acceptable to God in the measure in which they conform to His Word. We should listen so carefully as to hear what He says and avoid all misrepresentation.

George L. Rogers

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GOD'S POWER FOR BELIEVERS

NO SCRIPTURE is to be taken out of context, and this is certainly so of Romans 6. It is solidly built on the evangel of God concerning His Son as it has been unfolded in the preceding five chapters. What Paul has been saying concerning God's righteousness and love and grace, concerning Jesus Christ's faith in dying for sinners, and concerning the significance of Christ's death as it relates to all mankind, and most certainly as it relates in a special way now to us who are believing this evangel of God concerning His Son—all of this is the foundation of what he is now saying.

THE EVANGEL WHICH WE ARE BELIEVING

In God's *grace* we are justified through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). This gracious deliverance of sinners from the desperate situation described in Romans 1:18-3:20 is due to the faith of Jesus Christ. He died for the sake of (literally *over*) sinners. This is a work which manifests God's righteousness in that it does not rest at all on human acts of law, it is for everyone, and it takes into account every sin and offense. It is not a righteousness that mystifies us. It is made *manifest* in the evangel (Rom.3:20). Christ died for all, for all are sinners, irreverent and infirm (Rom.3:23; 5:6-8). Through that one righteous act of the One, Jesus Christ, all mankind will ultimately enjoy life's justifying and be constituted righteous (Rom. 5:18,19). Yet even now this justification is *on all who are believing* (Rom.3:21,22). We are those to whom the consummations of the eons have attained (1 Cor.10:11).

Consequently, in accord with this grace, God, in the present administration, reckons righteousness to us who are believing His evangel concerning His Son. "To the worker, the wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as a debt. Yet to him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness" (Rom.4:4,5). We are justified through the faith of Jesus Christ, and this is put to our account when we believe what God says to us, namely, that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and has been roused (*cf* 1 Cor. 15:3,4). Justification, achieved through the faith of Jesus Christ, is reckoned to us "who are believing on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead, Who was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying" (Rom.4:24,25). It is only in a figurative sense that we can say that we are justified by *our* faith. Our faith does not literally justify us, but in God's grace, the justification which has been secured through the faith of Jesus Christ is put to our account when we believe.

This is basic to our understanding and appreciation of Romans 6.

THE CONCILIATION

Furthermore (we being justified in God's grace by the faith of Jesus Christ, and blessed with the grace of righteousness reckoned already to us who are believing), God enriches this grace by granting access to Himself in peace with the expectation of all that constitutes God's glory (Rom.5:1,2). Being enemies, nevertheless we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, and thus shall be saved in His life from indignation and all the sin and offense that calls it forth (Rom.5:10,11). This also is not of ourselves, but rather comes to us through our Lord Jesus Christ, through His death. We have obtained the conciliation which has been granted by God (Rom.5:11).

This, too, is fundamental in leading us to the evangelical declarations of Romans 6.

SUPERABOUNDING GRACE

The reckoning of righteousness to us on the basis of Christ's faith-obedience and our obtaining of the gratuity of the conciliation, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, direct full attention to God's gift in the giving up of His Son for us, opening the way of approach in righteousness and peace to Himself; it is not of ourselves lest we be boasting in ourselves (*cp* Eph.2:8-10).

"Therefore," the situation is as follows: Even as sin and death came through the one man, Adam, leading inevitably to the judgment of condemnation, thus also righteousness, peace and life come through the One, Man, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:12-21). It is truly a matter of God's grace, His favor in sparing not His own Son Who died for our sakes, and His favor in graciously granting us faith to be believing this evangel even now, while all that we see seems to stand against it.

The grace of God superexceeds every increase which humanity adds to the offense of Adam (Rom.5:20). The reign of Sin in death which oppresses us all was overthrown with the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ, although this will not be put into experienced effect until all are vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:22). Death still tyrannizes, but its doom is certain. The reign of Grace shall rise in its place.

Yet already the grace which consists of God's righteousness operating through the faith of Jesus Christ has been applied to and set over us who are believing. Thus it becomes God's power for ongoing salvation in our walk and lives (*cf* Rom.1:16).

It is in view of this evangel that Paul now asks the question, "What, then, shall we be declaring?"

WHAT,THEN?

The conjunction "then" is used to introduce the logical conclusion of what has just been said.[1] What is the logical conclusion of the evangel of God's grace which has just been evangelized? Most particularly, what shall we be declaring to be the logical conclusion of the epochal declaration of Romans 5:20,21, that "law came in by the way, that the offense should be increasing. Yet where [the] sin increases, [the] grace superexceeds, that, even as [the] Sin reigns in death, thus [the] Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord"?

Shall we, then, be declaring that *we may be persisting in sin that [the] grace should be increasing?*

May it not be coming to that!

Then, what shall we be declaring?

Paul's answer is to refocus our attention on the evangel and illuminate it in even more glorious light. Now he draws our attention to God's grace to us in Christ Jesus in expanded detail, showing how it powerfully affects us in a deeply personal way. This is what we are to be declaring (6:1), getting to know (6:6), believing (6:8), perceiving with the eyes of our heart (6:9) and reckoning as so (6:11). We are saved in grace apart from our acts, but such acts of faith as declaring the revelation of the evangel and knowing what God has said to us and perceiving its glories with our minds and reckoning what is so to be so, are instrumental in being saved, day by day.

THE EVANGEL EXPANDED

The message itself, as it now is evangelized in Romans 6:1-11 continues as a message of God's grace through and in His Son, Jesus Christ. But now it is enlarged with the

1. *cf* **then,** KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.302.

illumination of its significance to us personally, as believers. Now we hear what has happened *to us* because Christ died for our sakes, and what shall happen because of this, as well as its significance for us in the present. These favors, secured and certain, both relating to the past and relating to the future, are stored with spiritual power for the present, in our lives.

What, then, has happened?

1. We died to sin.
2. We are baptized into Christ and thus baptized into His death.
3. We were entombed together with Him through baptism into death.
4. We have become planted together in the likeness of Christ's death.
5. Our old humanity was crucified together with Him.
6. We have been justified from Sin.

And what, then, shall be the effect of what has happened?

1. Even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus also we [shall] be walking in newness of life.
2. We shall be of the resurrection.
3. In that our old humanity was crucified together with Christ, our body of Sin [shall] be nullified.
4. We shall, by no means, be still slaving for Sin.
5. We shall be living together with Christ.
6. We shall be living to God as Christ is living to Him.

This is all a matter of grace. It is not of ourselves. But it has a powerful effect *on* us. In accord with this, A. E. Knoch wrote: "A realization of our death to sin and life in Christ will give us power to cope with sin, always remembering that sin cannot bring us into disfavor because of the superexceeding grace."[2]

2. CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.236.

THE EVANGEL OF OUR DEATH TO SIN

We died to sin, for we are baptized into Christ Jesus, and into His death. Indeed, we were entombed together with Him through baptism into death, having become planted together in the likeness of Christ's death. Our old humanity was crucified together with Him. For one who dies in this way has been justified from Sin!

When Christ died, all died (2 Cor.5:14), for Christ died for the sake of sinners, and all are sinners (Rom.3:23; 5:8). This is the key to the manifestation of God's righteousness. Every sinner and every sin must be obliterated from God's creation, yet in such a way that all will be brought into the glorious freedom of the sons of God. And this will be the position when God is All in all. It is through the one just act of Jesus Christ that sinners will be constituted righteous (Rom.5:18,19).

But this is to speak of what was accomplished in the past and of the full realization and enjoyment of it in the far future. There is a long expanse of time, filled with many events and many generations of human lives, between Christ's death on the cross and the exultant enjoyment by all mankind of its deliverance into life and righteousness. Paul speaks now of the special way this evangel relates to us with respect to the past and future, so that it may bring spiritual power into our lives in the present. What happened at the cross has no meaning to unbelievers, nor have the benefits of Christ's death *for* them been placed *on* them. But to believers, this evangel already has a great deal of meaning regarding both what has happened and what will happen, and this, in turn, holds a great deal of significance for the believer today.

We are believing that Christ died for us, and in believing this we are believing that we died. But more to the point, we are believing that, in being identified with the

death of Christ, we are those *who died to sin* and shall be *living to God.*

This does not mean that we cannot sin at present, or that we are now living as we shall be living, for we remain descendants of Adam, infected by the operation of death in our flesh. But it does speak of a reality. Just as it is true that God has reckoned righteousness to us who are believing, so is it true that God has placed us into the position of death to sin which Christ achieved for all mankind. Just as it is true that God has justified us through the blood of Christ and conciliated us to Himself, so is it true that we stand before Him having died to sin. It is not a matter of our experience. It is a matter of God's grace in and through Jesus Christ.

We have died to sin and to all its consequences.

Commenting on our death to sin as expressed in Ephesians 2:1 ("And you, being dead to your offenses and sins"), A. E. Knoch wrote: "It is not death in the absolute sense which is in view. It is death relative to sin, to offenses, to lust. These things, if allowed a place, would debar us from all blessing. It is marvelous to escape their consequences by faith in the blood of Christ . . . ."[3]

Marvelous indeed to know the grace of our death to sin! We have been granted that happiness for which David longed, for God is *by no means reckoning sin to us* (Rom.4:8). Sin along with its consequence of condemnation (*cf* Rom.5:16) is not being reckoned to us. "Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:1).

BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH

Paul does not refer here to a rite involving water and administered by human beings. Baptism in water does not

3. *cf Unsearchable Riches,* vol.21, p.261.

do what God has done in spirit. We need to know what Paul is talking about here. We are not to be ignorant of the fact that we are baptized into the death of Christ, and we need to understand that this is what makes it so that we died to sin and its consequences.

We are not ignorant that God is not reckoning our sins to us, and that He has put it to our account that we are righteous. This means that God sees us as we are in Christ, identified with Him in His death and entombment, and that we shall indeed be vivified in Him and live as He lives now, living to God. So also we are not to be ignorant that God has baptized us into Christ and into His death. This is a corollary to the fact that God is reckoning righteousness to us. It is also parallel to the fact that, when we believe the evangel of our salvation God seals us with the holy spirit of promise (Eph.1:13).

We see the pattern even more clearly in 1 Corinthians 12:12-19 where it is written that "in one spirit we all are baptized into one body." This is the work of God, for *God placed* the members, each one of them, in the body according as He wills. So also in Romans 6:5, Paul writes that we have been *planted together* in the likeness of Christ's death. This is surely the operation of God in His grace to us who are believing.

In spirit, God has even now applied to us who are believing what has been achieved for every sinner when Christ died.

That is what we are getting to know as we are believing the evangel. This is the logical conclusion to the evangel that God's righteousness as it is manifested through the faith of Jesus Christ has been placed on us who are believing.

ENTOMBED TOGETHER WITH HIM

The logical conclusion to being baptized into the death of Christ is that we were entombed together with Him into

death. Clearly this is a statement of fact concerning what happened when we were baptized into Christ's death. It is not something we are required to do ourselves or could do. It is an extension of the evangel, an elaboration of its details. God's righteousness demands that we be put to death and be put away into the state of death. This was done when Christ died for all and was entombed, but it has not been applied yet to anyone *except* to us who are believing. What grace that we have been entombed together with Christ! That is our position before God. We stand there justified and conciliated and dead to sin, wholly identified with Christ in His death and entombment.

EVEN AS, THUS ALSO

We followed Paul's thoughts in Romans 5:12-21 where he compared the one man, Adam, to the One Man, Jesus Christ, and the one offense, in disobedience, of Adam, to the one just act, in obedience, of Jesus Christ. Just as was so of the one, thus also is true of the Other. Both have a critical and all-encompassing effect on all humanity, apart from any input from us. Now in Romans 6:4, the apostle writes:

> **Even as** *Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father,*
> **Thus also** *we should be walking in newness of life.*

Paul cannot mean, "Even as Christ was roused from among the dead, thus also we *ought* to be walking in newness of life." The two thoughts do not match, nor does the second thought follow from the first. What happened to Christ through the glory of the Father does not entail an obligation on our part to walk in newness of life. Paul is bringing a message of grace, not law. Our walking in newness of life is compared as a matter of real likeness with the Father's glorious power in the rousing of Christ from among the dead. As Christ was roused, thus also we shall

be walking in newness of life. Both are by means of the glory of the Father.

In Greek, the aorist subjunctive verb (indicated in the CV by the word "should") is closely allied in its usage with the future indicative. It serves many times to draw our attention to a preceding statement which stands as its basis. We see this in verse 6 where the aorist subjunctive is indicated by the word "may." The contingency expressed in the verb "may be nullified" rests on whether or not it is certain that "our old humanity *was crucified.*" In effect Paul is saying that our old humanity was crucified so that the body of Sin *shall* be nullified. But he words it as he does in order that we give careful attention to the basis of the nullifying of the body of Sin. So also, in verse 4, in effect, Paul is saying, "Even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also shall be walking in newness of life, through the glory of the Father."

THE GLORY OF THE FATHER

This is the evangel of our future walk in newness of life gained for us by means of the glory of the Father. His glory is His power in giving life, a power which is exercised in righteousness (as we learned in Romans 3:21-26), and, in that He is the Father, a power which is exercised in love (as we learned in Romans 5:5-8). Walking in newness of life shall be enjoyed to the full, for we are glorying *in expectation* of the glory of God.

Nevertheless, as for the present, as we are getting to know that we shall be experiencing this newness of living as surely as Christ was roused through the glory of the Father, the characteristics of that future life begin to take hold in our present life, in accord with the earnest of the spirit.

Let us, then, be taking account of all aspects of the evangel of God, reckoning to be so what it declares to be so.

D.H.H.

THE EVANGEL OF THE FAITH OF CHRIST

Question:

A. E. Knoch, in THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, states the following concerning Romans 3:21-27:

(v.21:) "The previous section found no one just but God Himself. No one has been able to attain God's standard by doing good or keeping the law. How then may we become just before God ? Only by becoming partakers of His righteousness.

(v.22:) "The channel through which we may obtain this righteousness is *the faith of Jesus Christ.* He alone of all mankind, not only did good and kept the law, but He believed God even when He smote Him for our sins. It is out of *His faith* for our faith (1:17).

(v.24:) "They hated Him without a cause—gratuitously. Such is the meaning of this precious word. Justification on any other ground than the free and unforced favor of God is impossible, for none deserve it. But now Christ Jesus has effected a deliverance from all judgment, which is absolutely free to all who believe.

(v.25:) "The important point in this passage, however, is not our justification, but God's, for it is His righteousness which we receive. In Israel He had made provision for atonement, or a shelter from sins. This was not strictly just, for the penalty of these sins was still due. The answer to this, as well as the answer to His present work is found in the blood of Christ. That settles for sins, past, present and future. That vindicates God's justice and makes it possible for Him to be the Justifier of all who are of *the faith of Jesus.*

(v.27:) "Such a deliverance, entirely on the ground

of grace, bars all boasting, unless it be in Christ and in His God, Who has become our Justifier."

Mr. Knoch's claim here is that we become partakers of God's righteousness on the basis of Christ's *own* faith (that is, in contrast to *our* own faith). He states that the words "out of faith" speak of Christ's own faith ("*His* faith"), and plainly indicates that the words "faith of Jesus Christ" (v.22, AV) and "faith of Jesus" (v.26) are thus to be understood.

I note as well that while Knoch elsewhere (that is, in his comments upon various other Scripture texts) affirms the eventual salvation of all mankind, his comments here on Romans 3:21-27 speak only of God as "*our* Justifier," even as of justification being granted "absolutely free to *all who believe.*"

I would appreciate it if you could provide an explanation of the "genitive case," especially as it is used in the Greek phrase *pisteōs Iêsou Christou* (and similar phrases) which appears in Romans 3:22. While these Greek words are rendered "Jesus Christ's faith" in the Concordant Version, and "faith of Jesus Christ" in the Authorized Version and a few others, in most other translations they are nevertheless rendered, "faith *in* Jesus Christ" (for example, NAS, NIV, NKJV).

Precisely, what is an accurate and impartial translation of *pisteōs Iêsou Christou*? And, most importantly, how should these words be properly understood in their context?

Answer:

WITH RESPECT TO the primary constituents of our faith itself, we must "have," and implement, "a pattern of *sound words,* which [we] hear from [the apostle Paul], in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.1:13; *cp* 1 Tim.6:3). These are ". . . words . . . taught by the spirit, [by means of which we are] matching spiritual blessings with spiritual words" (1 Cor.2:12,13).

We need not be put off by the grammatical term "genitive case," though it does need to be understood. It merely speaks of the *associative relation between* a certain noun and another noun to which it refers. This relation is represented in English by the preposition "of," whereas in Greek it is marked by a case ending, that of the genitive case.

The *possessive* case in modern English, corresponds most closely to the Greek genitive case's *subjective* usage, which is also and by far its most common usage. An example of such usage may be found in the words of Ephesians 2:8: ". . . *God's* approach present," which in Greek is: *Theou to dōron* (literally, "OF-God THE oblation"), which speaks of "the approach present of God."

Grammatical *case* is the syntactical relationship of a noun, pronoun, or adjective to other words in a sentence, generally indicated by declensional endings in inflected languages (such as Greek), or by prepositions and word order in non-inflected languages (such as English).

The Greek genitive case includes the English possessive case. The genitive's presence is indicated in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT'S sublinear by OF- (when no connective is present; e.g., "son *of* David," Matt.1:20). OF is intended as a neutral means by which to indicate the genitive (that is, to indicate that, in some respect, "this is *of* that").

The main thing to keep in mind concerning the "genitive case," is that, in all instances, it speaks of that which is "of" something else: *of* the relation between one entity and another. The genitive case, therefore, may always be neutrally (i.e., non-interpretively) represented thus in *translation,* by the preposition "of."

In all instances, then, where one thing is said to be "of" another (e.g., "the love *of* God," or "the grace *of* Christ"), we should always ask ourselves: *In what sense* does, or *in what respect* is, that which is primarily in view related to that to which it *pertains.* This is to say, *How,* or in what way, is it the case that one thing is said to be "of" another thing?

In a given instance, upon critical reflection, in careful consideration of the context and nature of the case at hand, it should become evident what the "of-relationship" in view is, between one thing and another. The determination of sense here, however, in any certain instance, is ultimately not one of translation, but of correct *interpretive judgment*—whether of the Greek or its English equivalent.[1]

As is usually the case, one thing may be said to be "of" another, because it *belongs to* (or is the possession of) another. On the other hand, though such a usage is uncommon, one thing may be said to be *of* another—if it is clear that this is what is specifically in view—in consideration of its being directed *toward* another, which is the object thereof.

THROUGH FAITH *OF* CHRIST, OR FAITH *IN* CHRIST?

Though the Concordant Version sometimes renders the genitive as an adjective (e.g., "His messengers OF-POWER" as "**His power**ful **messengers**," 2 Thess.1:7), otherwise, the CV nearly always represents the genitive case either by the English "of,"[2] or by the English possessive case.

1. It is not that the Concordant Version never reflects the predilections of its translator, but that because of its own system and principles, these are greatly minimized within its pages. Even a generally "substantively literal" yet necessarily *idiomatic version* such as the Concordant Version, can by no means always provide a strict, word-for-word "formal correspondence" between its Greek text and its own renderings. Therefore, the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT's English sublinear even as other worthy grammatical tools, may well be consulted in all instances of critical interest.

2. An exception is the genitive "faith OF-TRUTH" in 2 Thessalonians 2:13, which the 1976 edition renders "**faith** in the **truth**." Perhaps the idiom is along the lines of the thought that the Thessalonians' faith partook of the nature of truth. Thus it was "of-truth faith." Truth indeed fosters confidence in itself. Like ourselves, the Thessalonians found faith growing in them as they received truth; hence, "faith OF-TRUTH."

The genitive case is the case of genus or kind. It is the *specifying* case; the case of appurtenance. The function of the genitive is largely adjectival (e.g., "the day of preparation," was the preparation day; Luke 23:54).[3] Indeed, the Concordant Version renders "[after] the exile OF-BABYLON," as "[after] **the Babylon**ian **exile**" (Matt.1:12). Similarly, "the blasphemy of the spirit" (Matt.12:31), in the Greek syntax, is "THE . . . OF THE spirit blasphemy."

The usual claim, however, is that the genitive "OF-Christ faith" is nonetheless translated true to sense as "faith *in* Christ," since, we are told, this phrase is an "objective genitive." It is said that as the phrase "faith of God" in Mark 11:22[4] concerns man's faith God-ward, the Pauline phrase "faith of Christ" concerns man's faith Christ-ward.

The answer to this, of course, is that it does not follow that if, in the nature of the case, "faith of God" in the preceding text involves man's faith God-ward, "faith of Christ," as Paul uses this expression, refers to man's faith Christ-ward. By such faulty logic as this, nearly anything can be "proved." Yet beyond such fallacious arguments, there is little to commend the claim that "faith of Christ" means *man's* faith *in* Christ.

3. *cp* A. T. Robertson, A GRAMMAR OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT, IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH, p.493; Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1934.

4. "And answering, Jesus is saying to them, 'if you have *faith of God,* verily, I am saying to you that whosoever may be saying to this mountain, 'Be picked up and cast into the sea,' and may not be doubting in his heart, but should be believing that what he is speaking is occurring, it shall be his, whatsoever he may be saying." It should be noted that *genuine* "OF-God faith" (as opposed to mere fleshly credulity in its name), necessarily incorporates the ablative sense of faith which is *from* God, according as He has spoken. Only then, in turn, does it become faith that is also God-ward.

Even on grammatical grounds the case here for an "objective" genitive (i.e., for a faith that is directed Christ-ward) is very weak. Yet if one insists on such an interpretation, it would then become necessary to refer this "faith in Christ" *not to man but to God,* in order for this expression to accord with the evangel itself, the revelation that justification is gratuitous and in grace, through the deliverance *which is in Christ Jesus.*

In the Pauline epistles, apart from the disputed cases in which the genitive is "Christ" or its equivalent, in every case (approximately twenty-four instances) in which "faith" is followed by a proper noun or pronoun in the genitive case, the genitive is unmistakably subjective. Twenty instances refer to the faith of believers; one to the faith of anyone who believes; two to the faith of Abraham; and one to the faithfulness of God.

In fact, the main reason for the acceptance of this interpretation (which is made a part of the translation itself in most modern Bibles) is the age-old tradition that affirms that one is saved by his own believing. Such a notion is then read into the text. In turn, it is further claimed that through such very passages, Paul himself sets forth the self-same teaching. Thus, through such circular reasoning, the rendering "faith *in* Christ" is justified by its advocates.

All that the Greek itself says and conveys, however, is: OF-Christ faith; that is, faith that, in some respect, has reference, or relates to Christ. The translation "faith *in* Christ," then, is not really a translation at all, but an interpretation. And, as popularly understood, as we shall see below, it is certainly a mistaken interpretation as well.

My reply to your question, then, is that in Romans 3:22 (and like phrases found elsewhere), "faith *of* Jesus Christ" (in Romans 3:22), is the accurate and impartial way to *translate* the Greek phrase, *pisteōs Iêsou Christou.*

It is critical that we be clear here about this matter: What the Greek *says,* in precise English equivalence, is

one thing: "faith *of* Jesus Christ." Then, to represent the apostle Paul as saying "Jesus Christ's faith" is to construe the Greek as straightforwardly subjective (i.e., as equivalent to the English possessive); to represent him as saying "faith *in* Christ" (that is, by corollary, "in" Him, in that it is, albeit in a somewhat strained sense, exercised "toward" Him) is to construe it objectively. Both of these are construals, which is to say, interpretations. If we would simply *represent* the Greek in English form, however, apart from construal—whatever we may understand concerning these words—we must *say* "faith *of* Jesus Christ."

It is simply mistaken, besides fatuous, then, to claim *either* (1), that "Jesus Christ's faith" is the "true and literal Scriptural meaning" (or similarly that, "faith of Jesus Christ," when "properly translated and understood, necessarily means Jesus Christ's own faith"), *or* (2), that "the consensus of recognized scholars is that the meaning of the Greek is 'faith *in* Christ.'"

Your further question: ". . . most importantly [of all], how should these words ['faith of Jesus Christ'] be properly understood in their context?" will be the subject of the remainder of this present article.

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

"The evangel speaks of the *death* of Christ. In Romans 3:22 this is expressed by the words "the *faith* of Jesus Christ." In this message concerning the humbling of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, there is a revelation of God's righteousness not manifested earlier in the pages of Scripture, though attested by types and foreshadows . . . .

"Once we understand that the apostle refers to God's own righteousness being made manifest (*cf* Rom.1:17; 3:21,22), we can readily see that this cannot be made known by means of *our* faith. Our believing is flawed, even that of the most mature of believers. Justification is not gained by

what we do, as Romans 3:20 has made clear. The evangel Paul is bringing declares that human works of law for justification are replaced, not by human works of faith, but by that great work of faith undertaken and completed by Jesus Christ. Human faith is important; it is the means by which we receive that which Christ has gained for us. But our faith is not brought into the picture here until later in verse 22 after the message concerning Christ Jesus has been set before us.

"God's perfect righteousness in gaining our salvation can be seen only as it is manifested in the faith of Jesus Christ in His steadfast reliance on God's word and His faith-obedience to the death of the cross. The evangel concerns Jesus Christ and what He did for sinners. It is in this message that God's righteousness is revealed . . . .

"To believe what God has said is to be faithful to what God has said, and the experiences of life, day in and day out, inevitably expose the weaknesses of human faith by means of human unfaithfulness.

"Hence, in the language of Scripture, both Hebrew and Greek, the word "faith" implies both believing and remaining faithful to what is believed. For human beings both faith and faithfulness are imperfect, or rather, for human beings faith/faithfulness (a single concept) *is* imperfect. But for Jesus Christ faith/faithfulness is without flaw, without weakness of any sort."[5]

THE WORK AND FAITH OF CHRIST

The great majority of advocates of the objective genitive here, having asserted that the faith in view is faith of which Christ is its object (this is all there is, as such, to the objective-construal position by itself, which claim alone at least might be an innocent enough claim), then proceed

5. Dean Hough: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.96, pp.183,184, 186,189.

further on at this juncture so as to make their actual primary claim—a claim which goes far beyond that of a mere objective construal.

Those who speak here of "faith *in* Christ," do not merely make an objective construal. Instead, they go far beyond this by asserting their further claim, which is that this "faith"—which they take to be "*in* Christ" (i.e., directed *toward* Christ)—is faith that is directed toward Christ *by ourselves.*

It never seems to occur to those who speak of our own "faith in Christ" as being, according to their claim, that by which we are justified, that even an objective construal here does not entail that this faith which has Christ as its object, is *our* faith in Christ—*our* faith of which Christ is its object.

Is it not so that "the faith(fulness) of God" *Himself* (Rom.3:3) is the decisive and far more important faith-(fulness) that is at least ultimately in view here, in Romans 3:22, and is the ultimate cause of our justification, in the faith(fulness) of Jesus Christ *Himself,* which is the proximate cause of our justification?

And is it not so as well that the righteousness of God is *revealed, manifested, and displayed,* in the strong and perfect faith(fulness) of Christ, not in our own weak and imperfect faith, in which it is, at best, but dimly and pitifully reflected?

We perceive the "faith of Jesus Christ" most especially in His faithful obedience unto the death of the cross. It was there, as was ever His practice, that He especially relied on the living God, putting His confidence in Him, "being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil.2:8).

It is therefore the faith(fulness) of God Himself, in the faith(fulness) of Christ Himself, through which we are "being now justified in His blood" (Rom.5:9)—"through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24).

All is out of God (Rom.11:36). Thus, ultimately—that is, in the sense "that there is no other God except *One*" (1 Cor.8:4)—therefore, it is so, even as Paul declares, that "there is *one* God—the Father, *out of* Whom all is—and we for Him, and one Lord—Jesus Christ, *through* Whom all is—and we through Him. But not in all is there this knowledge" (1 Cor.8:6,7).

Clearly, then, God's righteousness is (1) revealed (Rom. 1:17), (2) manifested (Rom.3:21), and (3) displayed (Rom. 3:26), in that "faith [which is] of Jesus Christ," in Christ's own faithfulness, which is itself the result of God's own faithfulness.

Just as we were not conciliated to God through our faith in the death of His Son, but through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10), neither are we justified through our faith in the blood of Christ, but through the blood of Christ itself (Rom.5:9; that is, His awful suffering unto death), which blood was the result of that faithfulness which was His own, which itself was the consequence of God's own faithfulness unto Him.

To read human responsibility and cooperation into the achievement of our justification, is to affirm nothing but mere human philosophy, based upon nothing better than mistaken inference from Scripture—itself founded upon nothing else than human ethics.

To do so, is to deny the *gratuitous grace* of God through which alone our justification is achieved. As a result, where we ought to be boasting solely in God through Christ, since we see our own faith—or rather, our own "responsibility" for our own faith—as the key to our own salvation, we end up boasting in ourselves instead.

When Paul wishes to speak of the believer's faith in (i.e., "into") Christ, he does so not by means of a genitive noun apart from a preposition, but by means of an accusative (i.e., objective) noun together with an accusative preposition: ". . . rejoicing and observing your order and the stability of your faith *in* (i.e., "into") Christ" (Col.2:5).

A parallel expression to the *faith* of Christ, is that of the *grace* of Christ: "*grace* which is *of* the One Man, *Jesus Christ*" (Rom.5:15). It would never occur to anyone to translate this text as "grace *in* Christ" (that is, grace "in" Christ in the sense that it is grace directed toward Christ), much less to claim that it speaks of the *believer's* grace! Yet the only real difference between the genitive "of Christ" here and that in Romans 3:22 and similar passages, is that here the phrase is appended as a modifier of grace, while in Romans 3:22 and allied texts (e.g., Gal.2:16,20) the same phrase functions as a modifier of faith.

Similarly, just as Romans 3:3 speaks of "the faith(fulness) of God," Romans 3:22 and 26 speak of the "faith(fulness) of Jesus Christ," the "faith(fulness) of Jesus." Further, the phrase "the faith of Abraham" in Romans 4:16 forms a precise formal parallel to the phrase "the faith of Jesus" in Romans 3:26. Thus, as these parallels between the faith of Abraham and the faith of Christ make clear, "the faith of Christ" refers to His faithful obedience unto death; our Lord's trust in God concerning the cross.

The very notion that those texts which say "faith of Christ" nonetheless have in view faith *in* Christ—*namely the believer's own faith in Christ*—is but the stepchild of the long-standing tradition that affirms that "justification *by* faith" means man's justification not by his performing works of law, but by his acceptance of Christ and assenting to faith in Him. The idea is that man saves himself, or if it is preferred, qualifies for God to save him, not by a former method, that of performing righteous deeds, but by a new method, that of acquiescing in faith.

Traditional theology is not merely saying that salvation comes upon believing in Christ, and not apart from or prior to. What it is also saying (even if more implicitly than explicitly) is that salvation is of the nature of an exchange,

a reward, requital, or compensation. When preachers say that salvation is "by faith [i.e., man's faith]," they are using "by" in a transactional sense, according to the meeting of a requirement (as in, "by doing your work, you are entitled to your wages").

The phrase "faith OF-Christ," however, is parallel to and must agree with the essence of the evangel itself, the revelation that we are "being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance *which is in Christ Jesus*" (Rom.3:24). The deliverance is not said to be through *our faith in* Christ Jesus, but through Christ Jesus Himself. Further, it will not do to attempt to avoid this truth by artfully claiming that while this is so, it is only so on the "condition" (i.e., based upon a requirement) that we accept and believe on Christ. Any such claim is spurious; for we are not justified on a "conditional" basis that we meet some sort of requirement. Instead, we are justified apart from law, on a gratuitous and gracious basis, which precludes any and all requirements.

Therefore, all passages which declaim "the faith of Jesus Christ," out of which we are justified, must be understood to be referring to a faith which is His own: Christ's own perfect faith—not man's faulty faith in Him.

Of course we ourselves can only *speak* of our justification by means of our own faith, since it is by faith that we apprehend what God has achieved through the work of the cross, even as what He will yet achieve in the eons ahead, when His promises are fulfilled. Still, our faith only gains for us a recognition of the justification which God has already established for us, through the faith which inheres in Christ, the faith *of* Jesus Christ Himself (*cf* Rom.4:25,5:1; 5:9). J.R.C.

Portions of this article were adapted from: James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.87, pp.181-192.

THE SLAVERY OF SIN

SAUL made havoc of the church (Acts 8:3). Is it poetic justice that the church has made more than havoc of Paul? It has retaliated in its apostate days, and with all of Saul's devotion to dogmatic traditionalism, in the names of its own high priests, continues to breathe out threatenings and slaughter against the doctrines and teachings of Paul. Saul did not understand the church, and the church has never yet understood Paul. Saul's butchery of the apostolic church has its comparison in the butchery of Pauline truth by an apostate church.

If Paul were to visit one of our "modern" churches one of the first things he would have to do would be to assert and vindicate his apostleship. To them he is more of a philosopher than an apostle. Instead of explaining, he needs explanation. He complicates rather than explicates the problem of the early church. The modern church would be much more comfortable if it could erase him from all consideration. Saul, however, could not get rid of the church, nor can the church on its part succeed in ridding itself of Paul.

There was nothing in Paul's gospel to make him ashamed. He did not have the ministerial cough when he came to speak of destiny. He did not "hem" or "haw" when the duration of sin was involved. If there be anything in our doctrine touching on the ultimates of the gospel that cannot be preached gladly and joyously, depend upon it that it is no part of Paul's gospel, for that was, and is, the gospel of the unashamed (Rom.1:16). When orthodox advocates say how saddened they are when they come to speak

of the future of the race, and even express wishes that their Bibles taught otherwise than they think they do, then and there, they are doing something Paul never had to do, viz., blushing with shame for ideas Paul never held and never had to regret.

Republicanism in politics answers to Arminianism in theology. Arminianism is theological republicanism. Republicanism is political Arminianism. History records the passing show of man's attempts at self-government. Rule by one man has shown its failure in the various monarchies of time. Rule by all men, or, at least, the majority, is daily showing its incompetence. So the race disintegrates and crumbles into the atomism created by sin. Nations are but multiplied individuals, they murder, they steal, they lie, and do on a larger scale what the individual does on a smaller one. The difference between them is amply explained by the multiplication table. So it matters not when we come to Romans three how we understood what is meant by the "all" that Paul uses. All nations, all families, or all individuals are equally inclusive.

ALL ARE SINNERS

It has been suggested in dealing with this same sweeping word when found in a context dealing with final salvation and redemption that it merely means "all without distinction" and not "all without exception." In that case the fulfillment of some of the most glorious forecasts of Christ's redemption work could be literally fulfilled and yet the fulfillment be a poverty-stricken one. Taking Jew and gentile as the great distinction made in the human race, then if but one solitary Jew and but one solitary gentile were the sum total of redeemed humanity this would yet be a literal fulfillment of "all without distinction." A similar method of interpretation would reduce Romans three to an indictment, not of the race, but of a few of the

worst criminals in it. "All have sinned" is "all without exception or distinction," as is the prophecy that all shall yet be reconciled to God. If a certain type of Calvinist employs such doubtful weapons against the "all" of redemption he should not cavil if the Socinian employs the same armory when attacking the "all" that speaks of human ruin.

Let us, however, suppose that someone objects that "their feet are swift to shed blood" is not true of all without exception, what then? We are not all actually murderers; our hands have not been stained with human gore. The flagrant crimes of the Decalogue could not be laid to our doors by our fellowmen. But our racial humanity is back of every crime committed; it is our humanity that has lied, stolen, blasphemed, and murdered. That humanity is *ours*: that humanity is *us.* And one who could read the secrets of the human heart, as an open page, could trace the acts of adultery to the longing thought. Are we not then *all* murderers, *all* thieves, *all* blasphemers? How can we escape the thrust of divine truth? It takes the hammer of divine truth to smash the Arminianism out of us. It smashed it out of Paul before he could write "In me . . . dwelleth NO GOOD THING." And when this happens to a man he cannot be even a republican, for one who knows he cannot rule himself well knows he cannot rule his fellows.

HUMAN SIN AND DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS

We would now glance at the fourth chapter of Romans, a chapter which is radiant with light concerning the gospel of the unashamed. The absoluteness of the divine grace is illustrated here. One would think after the dreadful story of chapters one and three that nothing further need be said as to man's ability to do anything but rot. The contrast continuously before us in Romans is precisely between human rottenness and divine righteousness. The flesh can produce the former and nothing but the former. The source

of such filth and vice and crime cannot and consequently will not believe in Christ. The reference to circumcision in this fourth chapter comes aptly after the description in the earlier chapters of what the flesh does, and before that great illustration of God's way of salvation found in the birth of Isaac. Circumcision was commanded only after Abraham's experience of the failure of the flesh (Gen.16 and 17:9). When Ishmael was born Sarah realized her deadness (Gen.16:12), but it would not seem as if Abraham had as yet reached that point where he could "consider his own body as dead." What he needed to learn was that the promise was to be fulfilled not by God and Abram and Sarai; nor by God and Abram; nor by God and Sarai. The divine title which was used for the first time immediately after the fleshly experience concerning Ishmael, showed that the divine promise was to be fulfilled, and could be fulfilled, only by THE ALMIGHTY GOD[1] (Gen. 17:1). Ishmael was the result of the weakling Abram's will. Isaac was to be the fruit of the will of the Almighty God.

In Genesis seventeen we have no "will you" or "if you will," instead we find the sevenfold I WILL of the ALMIGHTY GOD. We may draw a comparison between Genesis sixteen and seventeen and Romans seven and eight. Romans seven is the Abram chapter with its redundant "I"s. In Romans eight we have the Almighty God of Abraham with its "He will" so blessedly repeated, without a solitary condition being attached thereto. Romans seven records the defeat of the weakling (verse 23); Romans eight, the victory of Almighty God.

Now after the covenant of Genesis seventeen was made, based not upon human ability but upon the ability of the Almighty, the token of this covenant was given which was a symbol of death to the flesh. Isaac may be called a child

1. "I am El Who Suffices" (CV).

of resurrection. Abraham's faith as to the promised seed rested in a God Who "quickeneth the dead." Isaac could not come from a dead Abram. Can living faith come from a dead heart? Can a dead eye see? Can a dead brain think? When they can we shall have reason to believe that love to God can come from the carnal heart, and faith in Christ from the souls of those who hate Him.

Turn again to God's revelation of His omnipotence in Genesis seventeen. Think once more of His disclosure, "I am the Almighty God." That was the signature on Abraham's check. Read over the "I will's" again and think how vast the undertaking of God. It involved the control and government of centuries of unwritten human history, the acts and decisions of earthly monarchies, and the movements of national life, so that in the end, at some unknown future date, these promises should each and all be fulfilled. This involved as well the channeling of a myriad of human choices into effecting the divine purpose. Who is sufficient for these things? THE ALMIGHTY GOD! The God of Isaac! The God Who brings life out of death!

Man talks, or rather prattles, of his "sovereign choice." There is only room for one "sovereign choice" in the universe. God always has the last word. Man says "Give me liberty or give me death." Man thinks liberty and death are alternatives. Death is not alternative to liberty; it is a consequence of it. Give man liberty and you give him death. Adam had this boasted freedom, and "in Adam all are dying."

BOASTING EXCLUDED

"Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith." There is no ground for human pride in Romans one or three, where the works of the flesh are apparent. No excuse for boasting in the vain thoughts of philosophy. But could not man glory in

his *faith*? Does not the Scripture repeatedly say it was *Abraham's* faith? True, it does thus speak of it, but we find a parallel in the way God spoke of Isaac. Ishmael was Abraham's true child. Isaac was not as truly his child as was Ishmael. Nevertheless, when God would put Abraham's faith to the test He speaks of Isaac thus: "thy son, thine ONLY son, Isaac." The son that was his is not recognized as his, and the son that was not his is counted as "thine only son." And Abraham's faith no less than Abraham's child was the gift of God.

The theologian will aid the philosopher by suggesting that the gospel offer to "whosoever will" accepts man's freedom as a fact to be reckoned with, and without which no guilt could result from refusing the offer of grace. Apart from the word of God upon such a tremendous subject all man can offer upon this problem is an opinion, the value of which is merely more matter of opinion. If we can find out what God says upon this matter it will be no longer a puzzle. And, if we can discover a consistency in God's dealings with man's supposed freedom or ability in all the scriptures that record them, then we shall have an end to all argument upon the matter.

HUMAN INABILITY

When Israel received the law they were as sure of their ability to obey as the modern church is of its freedom to believe, "All . . . we will do." Now a concise summary of the law in its divine and human aspects was given by Christ: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Here it is, and it speaks to man *as if he had the ability to do so.* Later, man is given the gospel as if he had the ability to believe it. However, we are left in no doubt upon the matter by Paul. If the requirements of the law may be said to concern the doing, as the gospel concerns the willing of God's

good pleasure, then Paul tells us that neither the willing nor the doing can be done by us until they are done by God through us: "both to will and to do" (Phil.2:13).

The candlelight of philosophy has been appealed to by many who prefer it to the blazing sunlight of revelation. We have seen Plato's connection with the dogma of the soul's immortality. We have suggested the way in which Aristotle with his theory of eternal eons has helped create the ferocious deity of Christendom. Another philosopher, the more recent Kant, is appealed to as an authority on the subject of human freedom. His philosophic proof of man's ability may be found expressed in his dictum: "I ought; therefore I can." Viewed in the sunlight of Paul's doctrine of the law, or the simple summary of its requirements as given by Christ, what becomes of Kant's philosophy? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart"—true, I ought, but can I? The man who said "I can" was Kant! Neither can I! Well indeed, could another Festus say to our modem churches: "Much philosophy hath made thee mad."

Alan Burns

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

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REPOSING IN CHRIST

Harold Fisk of Hubbard, Ohio, passed away in late 2011. Brother Fisk was a long-time subscriber to *Unsearchable Riches.*

Walt Williams of Newberg, Oregon, age 85, died on December 9, with whom we enjoyed fellowship on several occasions.

INDEX TO VOLUME 103

Christ's Death and the Believers' Reckoning 123
Concordant Studies 65,99
Different Evangels, The 5
Faith of Abraham, The 21
Faith in the Supreme 29
God's Purpose for Humanity 127
Glorious Gospel of God's Grace 5,13,21,29,39
He Died, He Died—He is Living, He is Living 51
Human Destiny 127,147
Israel Under the Law 161
Justification by Faith 13
Notes on Romans 123
Paul to the Romans 51,115
Perceiving the Grace of God 183
Questions and Answers 183
Rich Man and Lazarus, The 85
Secret of the Resurrection, The 85
Taking Account of Grace 115
Untenable Texts 65
Walk of Abraham, The 39
We are Under Grace 173
Word of the Cross, The 99

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Our 103rd Year

(1909–2012)

Contents:

2 "The Supremacy of God"
3 Editorial
5 The Different Evangels
13 Justification by Faith
21 The Faith of Abram
29 Faith in the Supreme
39 The Walk of Abraham

FIRST QUARTER, 2012

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Word

VOLUME 103

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and
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The Supremacy of God

God is supreme, all-knowing and all-wise
Who can advise Him, or to Him dictate?
None is like Him, so glorious and so great.
His Name is written in the star-filled skies
And in the earth His power unerring lies.
His was the Mind to purpose and create,
And to allot to each his humble state;
In Him all live, Who every need supplies.

"Whose equal shall I be?" inquires the Lord.
Before His challenge other claims must fall.
His declarations stand; His sovereign word
May not return in vain, but must fulfill
The pleasure of the One, Who worketh all
According to the counsel of His will.

John H. Essex

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2012
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED THREE

EDITORIAL

As long ago as 1916, in an article entitled, "The Son of Abraham," A. E. Knoch wrote, "The faith of Christ is brought before us in the otherwise enigmatical statement *'from* faith *to* faith' (Rom.1:17, AV). Literally this is "*out* of faith *into* faith." There are two faiths in view. The latter is our faith; the former is Christ's. Justification is founded on His faith: it is conferred on our faith."[1] Later in his notes on Romans 3:22, he observed, "The channel through which we may obtain this righteousness [of God] is the *faith of* Jesus Christ. He alone of all mankind, not only did good and kept the law, but He believed God even when He smote Him for our sins. It is out of His faith for our faith (1:17)."[2] Then he repeated this important point in a study entitled, "Jesus Christ's Faith," published in 1938: "[Jesus Christ's] faith is the basis of justification just as our faith is the channel through which it is received and enjoyed."[3]

The five articles by Brother Knoch appearing in this issue of our magazine are abridged and edited from his series entitled *The Glorious Gospel of God's Grace,* first published in volumes 36 and 37. They distinguish the Evangel of the Uncircumcision as brought by Paul from that of the Circumcision as taught by Peter (*cf* Gal.2:7,8), doing so by comparing the events surrounding Abraham before he was circumcised (when he was called Abram)

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.7, p.266.
2. Concordant Commentary, p.233.
3. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.29, p.382.

with those after he received the covenant of circumcision, having received the name Abraham. In this way the great feature of the evangel of the Uncircumcision, which we have received, that of *faith alone, apart from works of law,* is clarified to our hearts. In taking up the subject of justification by faith, our brother concentrates on faith as it relates to the believer. We may say that these articles are expositions on the words "for faith" in Romans 1:17 and the words "on all who are believing" of Romans 3:22.

Yet, even though it is not put in terms of the faith of Jesus Christ, these articles fully recognize that justification is solidly based on Christ's death on our behalf. That needs to be kept in mind as we consider the glory of God's grace in conveying justification to us on the basis of faith alone. Justification has been gained by means of the faith of Jesus Christ alone, and it is reckoned to us on the basis of our believing, and that alone.

Furthermore, it is well for us to appreciate that even our believing is a gracious gift of God (Phil.1:29). Yet what a grand and glorious gift! Our whole reliance is on the living and supremely operative God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10). Like Abram in Genesis 15:6 we direct our faces, our attention, to what God has said concerning Himself as the Source and life and righteousness, through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom.4:17).

Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, where, then, is boasting? (Rom.4:24,27). There is no room in this evangel for boasting in ourselves, for we do nothing in receiving the benefits it announces, except believe that God speaks truly in saying to us that we are saved in grace, through faith (Christ's faith in which we place our faith), and this is not out of ourselves. It is God's present, bringing us near to Himself in peace and love (Eph.2:8,9).

D.H.H.

THE DIFFERENT EVANGELS

SALVATION, as seen in God's dealings with the Circumcision, *differs radically* from that which graces us who believe in the present secret administration. What is needed is an intelligent grasp of the *underlying purpose* of each, so that we cannot help keeping them distinct. This alone will enable us to enjoy the transcendent grace which is ours in Christ Jesus. Then we will never adulterate it with the greatly inferior ingredients which characterize the evangel of the Circumcision, as is almost universally done in Christendom today. We have already set forth the evangel for today at some length, in *The Mystery of the Gospel* and other works. Now we will explore still deeper, and also consider the evangel of the Circumcision in order to form a foil, to create a contrast, so that our hearts may grasp the transcendently transcendent grace which we enjoy in Christ Jesus. At the same time we will seek to understand why there are two evangels, and why one is concerned with faith and grace and the other with works and reward.

TRANSFERRED AWAY FROM GRACE

Let him be anathema (Gal.1:8,9)! How solemn are these words! We usually ignore them with the thought that they cannot possibly apply to us. Yet the appalling fact is that, with few exceptions, the beloved saints of God both believe and preach a *different* evangel, which is not another, and do not even realize it. Unlike the Galatians, they have not been transferred *swiftly,* but very slowly, away from the grace of Christ. Indeed, the most of them have not

changed, for they have never known it. Alas! A few who once seemed to enjoy His grace have suddenly turned from it, as did the Galatians. May God make His grace abound in their behalf!

How terrible it seems, when we look about us, and see great and good men, zealous in the work of the Lord, eager to spread the "gospel," or make known God's truth, that we are compelled to acknowledge that they come under this *anathema*! We dare not tell them that they are included, lest we give offense, and, figuratively, cut off their ears, and they will not even listen to the truth that alone is able to set them free.

This is probably our last effort to differentiate between these two evangels, so we solicit the prayers of all God's saints, that we may be empowered to reach the hearts of those who are under this solemn adjuration, but have never considered the possibility that it applies to them. We especially pray for those who, like the Galatians, have fallen out of grace (Gal.5:4), after having had a glimpse of the evangel which is ours in Christ Jesus.

A DEMONSTRATION OF FAILURE

Israel's salvation is a great *national* demonstration, in which that people as a unit are segregated to show what is in humanity. God deals with them in the *flesh,* and under *law,* and under a *covenant,* with a gradually increasing admixture of grace and faith. *The prime object of this prolonged and varied demonstration is not their salvation, but to show beyond question that mankind, even under the most favorable conditions is utterly lost without God.* Their testings prove conclusively that there is *nothing good in the flesh.* Their trial shows that men cannot *observe a law.* The tryout makes it clear that they are *incapable of keeping a covenant.* Works are of no avail in salvation. *Man's failure in this great demonstration is of the greatest value to the race and the universe.* Until we see this, we are inclined to question its worth, and charge *God* with failure, and to repeat the experiment in our own experience, only to involve ourselves in defeat, and in the disillusionment which is bound to follow.

The salvation we have today begins where Israel's leaves off. The Adamic race is discarded and there is a new humanity. We have no *confidence* in the *flesh*; we are *dead* to the *law*; we keep *no covenant*; we are *crucified* and *entombed* with Christ, and, by faith, are *roused* and *seated* with Him in a totally new environment, among the *celestials.* We profit by the failures of the Circumcision, and need not and should not imitate the distressing experiments which demonstrate, for all who can see, man's inability to save himself or to contribute anything towards his own deliverance. If we persist in repeating these tests, it will only further confirm our inability to our own confusion and discomfiture. The admixture of Circumcision truth, the mingling of Peter's evangel with Paul's, has made a medley which lacks the essential features of both. It is this mixture which has caused most of the confusion among the saints, and has well-nigh eclipsed the evangel of the Uncircumcision.

WORKS AND FAITH

There are really only two means of salvation in the eons, *works* and *faith.* Israel is the chosen example to expose the *futility* of works, even when flavored with faith. Not knowing God, or acknowledging His deity, Christendom is inevitably drawn away by self-confidence into the sphere of works, and seeks to justify this course by appealing to that part of the Bible which belongs to Israel, where works have a place. The continual confusion and conflict on this subject will never be settled until it is seen that both sides have support "in the Bible," when all of it is applied indis-

criminately to all, when it is not correctly cut. But when we realize that God uses works in Israel in order to demonstrate their *futility,* then we are more than ever satisfied to leave salvation to the Saviour, and to repudiate the false foundation of our own deeds.

DO AND LIVE *vs.* LIVE AND DO

The contrast between the gospel of the Circumcision and that of the Uncircumcision may be expressed in the same words if we only change their order. *Do and live* is the order for the Circumcision and all other religionists. Life as the result of human effort is one of the most illogical and preposterous propositions that can well be expressed. Nowhere, in the course of human history, has a man ever evolved *life* by his acts. He has succeeded infamously in doing his fellows to *death.* Why, then, should he be so insufferably conceited as to imagine that he can defeat death or bring about life by his puny and powerless practices? On the other hand, no one can do anything without the loan of life from God. This is evident everywhere, not only in the sphere of the evangel. Nothing but the salvation that gives life can enable us to work. The only salvation worthy of the name begins with the gift of life. With us it is *live and do.* We work because we *are* saved, not because we want to save *ourselves.*

The same kind of impermanent, transitory salvation will be found throughout the Circumcision writings. In my early life of faith I was troubled by these scriptures and sought a solution. I was deeply impressed by what we called the assurance of salvation, but could never find a satisfactory explanation of the sixth of Hebrews and other texts of like tenor until I began to see the difference between the truth for the nation of Israel and that for the other nations in this administration. Even the great stress laid on "safety, certainty and enjoyment" by my friends failed to explain how

some who had actually tasted of the powers of the future eon fell aside and were disqualified for the kingdom (Heb. 6:4-8). This clearly refers to those who listened to Peter on the day of Pentecost, who were saved from that crooked generation and added to the rest by the Lord Himself (Acts 2:40,47). The record in Acts runs along the same lines as the exodus. Many who were saved from Egypt fell in the wilderness, and many who were saved from that crooked generation fell away when the kingdom did not come, in the period of the book of Acts.

The unbeliever's favorite form of salvation is undiluted works, independent of God. The believer's favorite form of salvation is works with the help of the Lord. Few, indeed, dare to trust Him unreservedly as their Saviour. This sad state is largely due to the use of scriptures which do not apply to us today, but concern the Circumcision and their temporary testings, which are intended to show the *uselessness of works* as a means of salvation. Even those of us who are profoundly convinced that *grace* is the prime spring of God's dealings with His saints in this administration are inclined to leave it out of our dealings with one another. We prefer justice because we each feel that we have been just and, in case of a clash, the other has been unjust. We would like to display the justice of our cause before the saints and the world, when we ought rather to consider our fellow saint and hide his injustice, if it is that. Let us not seek to get our rights, to square up accounts now, but rather suffer wrong. The bema of Christ will set all right. It cannot be done before that day.

THE GREAT ENIGMA

"Enigma" is the divine description of God's earlier revelation to the Circumcision, to whom first were confided the oracles of God (1 Cor.13:12). Our venerable Authorized Version speaks of it as being seen "through a glass,

darkly," which is itself difficult to understand in these days of almost invisible glass. Rather, God spoke to them indirectly, and they perceived it as by means of ancient mirrors, or as we see things reflected in an imperfectly polished, uneven surface. Now, however, that we have the later revelation through Paul, all this can be rectified. We can by-pass the mirror and see things as they actually are, face to face (1 Cor.13:12). In order to look beyond the puzzling revelations before Paul came, we should always consider what he has to say, first, in order to get to the bottom, the solid substratum of actuality.

PAUL'S BASIC REVELATIONS

In these studies, before we search for the truth in the Circumcision writings on any point we will first see what Paul has to say, for he gives us the *result* of the experiments which were tried with Israel, and shows that, beneath the superficial and apparent object, there was a different and deeper aim. The surface failure is deceptive because, in reality, it is a success, seeing that the demonstration was intended to expose the inability of man in all his efforts. Nevertheless, when we examine the earlier records more minutely in this light, we will discover, as a rule, that it contains *intimations* of the truth which can hardly be seen without the later revelations. God knew very well how His experiments would turn out. He does not try them in order to learn the truth for Himself, but in order to demonstrate them to His creatures, and so prepare them for the consummation, when they will not look for aught in themselves, but find their All in Him.

SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE

One cause of confusion is the fact that Paul uses the same terms as the Circumcision evangel to denote the reality which has displaced the riddle. He goes so far as to

flatly contradict himself in the most important difference of all. Although he draws a sharp line between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision in Ephesians, he actually insists that the *Un*circumcision *are the Circumcision* in Philippians 3:3! As we have the reality, of which circumcision is only the outward sign, he boldly dubs *them* the *Maimcision,* who mutilate the flesh, while *we* are the true and *genuine Circumcision,* who cut off the flesh entirely. The figurative use of literal terms concerned with God's dealings with Israel, such as kingdom, pardon, etc., leads many to miss the force of God's latest unfoldings, and to mix it all into one incoherent mess.

BAPTISM

This highly figurative language has caused much confusion in connection with baptism. Although we are no more baptized than we are circumcised, the mere fact that our baptism is spoken of (Rom.6:4; Eph.4:5; Col.2:12), has led to great confusion of thought between the shadow and the substance. The circumcision evangel demands the shadow, ceremonial cleansing in water, whether the heart is purified, or not. But the evangel of the Uncircumcision insists only on the reality, our cleansing in Christ. An infant may be sprinkled with all the waters of the Jordan river, yet it will not be cleansed from sin. A man may be dipped under all the water in the seven seas, yet his heart will not be pure in God's sight. Baptism in Christ's death, that alone clears us completely from everything that defiles.

WHY THESE TWO EVANGELS

Why are there two evangels? Were the object of both merely to rescue the sinner from a terrible doom, then one should suffice. But when we see that one evangel is part of God's great demonstration of the futility and failure of the flesh, hence must be based on flesh, and the other

acknowledges the result of this demonstration, hence is based on spirit, then we see that they are nearly as wide apart as the poles. With such totally divergent objects in view they cannot help but differ radically, and any mixture is bound to be confusing and contradictory.

The confusion in Christendom comes from mixing and muddling two evangels with entirely different objects, and the result is a bewildering chaos in which neither one survives in anything like its scriptural form. Our religious leaders draw most of their doctrines from Peter, and have little patience with Paul, who alone has the truth for today, and who is the only one who can clear up the enigma of Peter's evangel as well. A great deal has been done by pointing out the differences which lie on the surface of the Scriptures. These definite statements should be enough. But there is such a tremendous weight of tradition to overcome that few are able to see what is so plainly written. For their sakes, and to establish those who see the truth, we will try to dig deeper, and examine more minutely those passages which deal with the matter. As Abraham's justification by faith is the seed plot of the uncircumcision evangel, his experiences will be considered at length.

ABRAHAMIC CONTRASTS

It will be of great interest and profit if we note carefully the striking contrast between Yahweh's dealings with Abram, His friend, before and after his circumcision, the differences between the fifteenth and seventeenth chapters of Genesis. In the former we have *faith* and *righteousness* and the *star seed.* In the latter we have *walk* and a *covenant* and the *sand seed.* These should never be confused, even when they seem to merge in the spiritual members of Abram's physical offspring.

A. E. Knoch

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

ABRAHAM is set before us as the great example of justification by faith. In the epistle to the Romans, after showing that no one comes up to the standard of God's glory, Paul makes known the foundation truth of the evangel of the Uncircumcision, that justification is by gratuitous grace, through faith (Rom.3:22-26). He then enlarges on this and shows that Abraham was justified by faith *before* he was circumcised. In our search for the underlying basis for the evangel for today, we will consider carefully what is revealed concerning Abraham at the time of his justification, and, later, when he was circumcised, and, in this way, throw further light upon the truth, so that we may grasp the full import of justification, the importation of God's righteousness, as contrasted with pardon or forgiveness, which is for the Circumcision, for this is a basic distinction between the two.

First, however, let us consider briefly what Paul reveals concerning this great grace. To begin with, he tells us that his evangel is God's power for salvation to everyone who is *believing* because in it *God's righteousness* is revealed out of faith *for faith* (Rom.1:16,17). Here we have a tremendous contrast to almost all previous revelation. There we are occupied with *man's* righteousness or rather *un*righteousness, from Adam on, and especially after Israel was given the law of Moses. *Hitherto God's righteousness condemned man. Now it is made a part of the evangel to save him.* Heretofore the revelation of His justice was *against* all because of their unrighteous *acts*, now it is *on*

all who are *believing* because it is a gratuitous gift of grace bestowed on men for their *faith* (Rom.3:21-24). Hitherto man has sought to display *his* righteousness through his *deeds,* and failed. Now God displays His righteousness by justifying those who *believe,* and it is an *unqualified success* (Rom.3:24-26).

No man, of course, could acquire God's righteousness by means of his deeds. At best he could only establish one of his own. Nor can a man acquire *his own* righteousness by believing. It is *God's* righteousness that is reckoned ours by faith. This shows one of the vital distinctions between the evangel for the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision. In uncircumcision Abraham received this favor quite apart from what he had done (Rom.4:1-6). Just how it was "reckoned" to him we hope to see when we consider the passage itself.

Paul goes on to say that the Uncircumcision who *believe,* like Abraham, overtake this divine righteousness, while the Circumcision who seek it by *works of law* do not find it (Rom. 9:30). Because they are ignorant of *God's* righteousness they seek to establish their *own* (Rom.10:3). The only One Who knew no sin was made a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming *God's* righteousness *in Him* (2 Cor.5:21). Paul considered his privileged place as one of the Circumcision a hindrance, and deemed it refuse, because it demanded a righteousness of his own, which he could not supply, and kept him from appropriating God's righteousness in Christ (Phil.3:8,9).

FAITH RIGHTEOUSNESS

Why should *faith* be reckoned for righteousness? Whatever is not of faith is sin. What God says is supremely right, and it is a mistake not to assent to it. Confidence in God is the aim and object of all human experiences, along with distrust in man. At the consummation, God will become

All in all, and man nothing in anyone. Whatever leads in that direction is in accord with God's purpose and will. When God speaks, no matter what He says, the only right lies in confidence in and conformity to His revelation. This alone will guide us to the universal goal. Nothing, therefore, can be more righteous than faith. It not only is right, but guides the believer aright, along the path that leads to the bread and wine of God, the life and joy which await all creation at the consummation. Those who have no faith cannot but stray from the way. They follow false trails that lead away from the goal. Even those who are respectable, and who know nothing of sordid sins, are bound to miss the path apart from faith. It is impossible to be right unless we believe what God has revealed.

HUMAN RIGHTEOUSNESS

In view of this, let us consider man's conception of justice. What is right and what is wrong? Where is the boundary between that which is good and that which is bad? Many vices are misplaced or exaggerated virtues, and virtues may easily become vices. Even grace without truth may harm more than help. Where shall we put the dividing line between firmness and obstinacy? When we consider ourselves justly indignant, others may think that we are unduly angry. When they are mild, we may mistake it for lack of zeal. Who is competent to judge another whose motives are hidden, and whose heart he cannot read? How much allowance shall be made for immaturity, ill-health or nervousness, which makes us act unnaturally? As we grow in grace we become more lenient, more sympathetic. That is why novices are not given control in an ecclesia, for the experience of evil is needed to temper the hand of justice and guide the heart in its decisions.

At the bema of Christ the decisions will be based on the *motives* behind our acts which no one else can see. That

is why we are told to judge nothing before the appointed time, till the Lord should be coming, Who will illuminate the hidden things of darkness and manifest the counsels of the hearts. The apostle adds the comforting conclusion that applause will be coming to *each one* from God (1 Cor.4:5). In another place he asks, Why are you judging your brother? Or why are you scorning your brother? For all of us shall be presented at the dais of God (Rom. 14:10-13). We all do things which some saints would condemn because of their background and upbringing, but which others would commend because of a different environment and experience.

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS *vs.* GRACE

I do not wish to be merely righteous in myself. I wish to be *gracious.* I do not demand my rights. I sigh for grace alone. I am already righteous in Christ, and I need no righteousness of my own. Much as I strive to be just, I am not at all satisfied that I attain to anything like that which God demands. Even if I fulfill my duty to my fellow men, I certainly do not do it to God. Even if my conscience is clear, that does not justify me. The most exemplary of all saints, when they enter the presence of God's glory, realize how imperfect their highest attainments must appear to Him.

Once we are thoroughly satisfied that self-righteousness is not within our reach, that we cannot live up to the standard set before us by God, or even attain the much lower grade of righteousness which would justify every act in the eyes of our associates, we will throw ourselves entirely on the grace of God and on the favor of our fellows. We will steer a course quite the opposite of those who feel that they must justify themselves at all costs or lose their pride and self-respect. We will acknowledge our shortcomings, even if we are not conscious of them, and throw ourselves on the forbearance and love of others.

The grand doctrine of justification or divine righteousness is not readily apprehended in the abstract, so we will take concrete and conspicuous examples which will help us to see how and why God can and does justify and vindicate that which is contrary to His will. Perhaps the best illustrations and the most glaring sins can be found clustered about the cross of Christ. And there we can easily distinguish between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision, for both were involved, yet they differ greatly from each other in their words and deeds. And here we can see also how necessary it is that judgment should be according to *words* as well as *works,* for the Jews really did not do very much outside of their false and furious accusations, while the aliens actually crucified the Christ. It was the words, rather than the works, that revealed the *heart,* on which all true adjudication must be based.

THE SOLDIER WHO STABBED HIM

Let us take the case of the soldier who stabbed our Lord, with a lance head (Matt.27:49, omitted in AV, John 19:34). In his case the great white throne judgment has already been anticipated in the Scriptures in a very remarkable way. There is no question that this soldier committed this crime, for we have a double witness in the Scriptures, and, in one case John, who was there, adds his solemn attestation, as follows: "And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true. And *he* is aware that he is telling the truth." Nevertheless other scriptures seem to contradict this, for they insist that the *Jews* stabbed or pierced Him. The prophet who foretold this circumstance lays the blame on his own people. In John's account, right after testifying that one of the soldiers pierced His side, this is given as the fulfillment of Zechariah 12:10: "*They* shall see Him Whom they *stab.*" According to this it was not one soldier, but the house of David and the dwellers in Jerusalem who

were chargeable with this climacteric and vindictive act which was to put His death beyond a doubt.

John, in the introduction to his Unveiling of Jesus Christ, seems to widen its scope still further, for he adds that all the tribes of the land will be grieving over Him (Rev.1:7). Indeed, the impression is created that Israel will acknowledge this crime as their own, although, as we have seen, a Roman soldier really perpetrated the deed.

All of this should help us to see how God can justify the nations, yet must demand repentance from Israel, although, in the last analysis, He will justify all (Rom. 5:18). In every case we must go beneath the surface and discover the *heart*. We will find that this is more important than mere *fact*. Israel did not stab Him in *fact*, yet in *heart* they were the guilty parties. The soldier was guilty in *fact*, but not in *heart*.

Let us seek to pronounce judgment on this Roman soldier. It is quite likely that he acted as a representative of the nations, and illustrated the relation of the nations to the death of the Saviour. Let us sit as judge and see if we can justify his deed. He was acting under orders. The centurion in charge stood by. He, also, was simply doing his duty. There is no record that they exceeded this or showed any personal cruelty or vindictiveness. On the contrary, the centurion was powerfully impressed with the manner of our Saviour's death, so unnatural in that He cried out with a loud, strong voice, just before He breathed His last. Then it was that he exclaimed, "Truly, this Man was God's Son!" (Matt.27:54). From the human standpoint it would be difficult to convict these men of any crime. Indeed, if they had refused they could have been court-martialed and disgraced. But what is right in the sight of men may be very wrong when related to God.

Can this act be justified in the sight of God? It is most remarkable that this deed was foretold in the Scriptures.

God's Word must be fulfilled! I doubt very much that the soldier knew of this prediction or that he deliberately set about to carry it out. He could not justify *himself* on this score. But can God condemn an act like this when there is no disobedience or enmity? It is possible that the stabbing was done twice, once before and once after His death. In that latter case it was done to make sure that life no longer was present. This alone was important, as, later on, rumors were spread that He had not really died. In this light it could be called a necessary or even a good act. But, much more than this, it not only fulfilled one part of God's Word, but made it unnecessary to break His bones, which would have made Him unfit to be the great Antitype of the Mosaic sacrifices (Num.9:12). If the lance head had not shown that He was already dead, they would have fractured His legs as they did those of the two robbers and the two malefactors.

So here we have an act, done ignorantly and in unbelief by one of the Uncircumcision, which might superficially be construed as an atrocious crime against God's Beloved, yet, judged from God's side as well as man's, we would not have it otherwise, and cannot justly condemn the one whose hands handled the lance head. Rather we find it in our hearts to justify his acts, even though we ourselves are immeasurably thankful that we were not called upon to have any personal part in it. We cannot say that we would *forgive* this soldier, for there are no feelings involved. We would not even be right to *pardon* him, for that would imply that he had done wrong. We simply are compelled to vindicate this evil deed. He did right. Does not this open up a vista of possibilities in regard to all the evil committed by sinners of the Uncircumcision? Nothing that they do is quite so bad in itself as giving the deathstroke to God's Beloved Son, so it may also be found within the scope of His gracious justification.

THE JEWS CALL DOWN JUDGMENT

But can we, in any way, *justify* the Jews? That they can be *pardoned,* or *forgiven,* is evident from our Lord's prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they are not aware what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). O that His saints would show this spirit to their persecutors! The Jews will eventually be justified *by* God when this is the portion of all mankind (Rom.5:18).

But judged by their law, and in the light of their evangel, we must condemn them. Had they been as true to Moses' law as the soldiers to the law of Rome we might have justified them also. But they went *contrary* to the law and the oracles that God had committed to them. The very revelation that should have prepared them for the Messiah, condemns them for rejecting Him.

The great Antitype of all the sacrifices was about to be offered. He was the true Passover Lamb. No bone of this is to be broken (Num.9:12). Yet they ask Pilate to have his legs fractured so that He could be taken down from the cross, lest He defile their festival! They are so holy that they commit the greatest of all sins! They break the law in order to break His bones!

Yet all had been foretold and must be fulfilled. They were the appointed priests, and must offer the Sacrifice, for all blessing depends upon it. Therefore they also will be justified, but not until the close of the eons. So long as they are under law, so long as they stand on the flesh, they receive pardon or forgiveness, or judgment.

In this their evangel differs from ours. We are pictured by the soldier who ignorantly thrust his spear into the side of His Saviour and was justified. They brought down upon their heads the sore afflictions and distress which still pursue the stubborn nation, which will not be pardoned until He appears.

A. E. Knoch

THE FAITH OF ABRAM

ABRAM was justified by faith. One would suppose that, henceforth, this would be God's method with His people always. How remarkable it is to find that, until Paul writes Romans, it is practically ignored! The Hebrew Scriptures and our Lord's ministry abound with the words *just* and *righteous,* but hardly a word is said concerning *faith* righteousness. Paul dwells upon it at great length. It is basic in the evangel of the Uncircumcision. But after Paul it is dropped once more. In fact James denies it and says that a man is not justified by faith only (James 2:24). It is only after Israel had failed utterly that the prophet Habakkuk reverts to the basic truth that the righteous by his faith is living (Hab.2:4). And it is only in view of Israel's apostasy as recorded in Acts that God goes back to the fundamental fact made known to Abram before he was circumcised, that faith in Him is reckoned as *righteousness. This great and gracious truth is no part of the evangel of the Circumcision.*

The evangel of the Circumcision is occupied with the righteousness (or rather the *un*righteousness) of man. The righteousness imparted by faith is *God's.* It is *His* power for salvation because in it God's righteousness is revealed. Paul puts this as the foundation of the evangel for today (Rom.1:17). It displays *God's* righteousness, that *He* should be just and the Justifier of the one who is of the *faith* of Jesus (Rom.3:25,26). The justification of the Circumcision is by law observance. Because they are ignorant of God's righteousness they seek to establish their own

(Rom.10:3). Even Peter, the greatest of the Circumcision apostles, who had been chosen to go to Cornelius (Acts 15:7) and who came nearer to understanding the power of grace than any other (Acts 15:11), had to be corrected and shown the truth (Gal.2:14-16).

Faith righteousness is first found in connection with Abram. He was prepared for the righteousness of faith by his previous experience with his fellow men. Everything *they* do is below the strict standard of justice. Everything *God* does far exceeds it. There is no neutral condition such as men would deem just and right. The action of Lot in going to Sodom was wrong. The men of that city were exceedingly wicked. The war of the kings was unjust. The spoiling of Sodom cannot be defended, especially the fate of Lot. Even the rescue of Lot does not set matters right. On the other hand, the act of Abram *exceeds* the strict line of justice. He *refused* his *just due* for the rescue. It is only when we come to the declarations of God that we have divine righteousness, but this far surpasses what we understand by that term. Abram's acceptance of God's unmerited favor is what constitutes his righteousness, because this is the aim and object of God's dealings with him, as it is with all of His creatures.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH

Faith righteousness is about to be reckoned to Abram. It is with this in view that we are given the episodes which precede it. There is a strong contrast between the unrighteousness connected with the conduct and capture of Lot, the campaign of the confederated kings, the offer of the king of Sodom, and the course of Abram in rescuing the captives, in refusing to accept a reward, and especially in paying tithes to Melchizedek, king of Salem. If we once see how wrong all of these doings were, excluding Abram's acts of faith, it will throw a flood of light upon the great

truth of justification by faith, and enable us to understand what faith righteousness really is. These incidents are not mere historical records. We must look beneath the surface to see their purpose. They are a moving picture showing that God is always right, and, unless man believes His Word and accepts His righteousness, he is always wrong. Everything which is not out of faith is sin (Rom.14:23).

The human idea of right is one of exact reciprocation, so much service for so much hire, so much protection for so much reward. Our great failure is that we carry this into our relationship with God, and thus drag Him down to our own level. Men are ever trying to pay God for His protection and give Him wages for His work. This may be considered right among men, but it is utterly wrong when applied to God. It is an insult to patronize Him. It is a shame to offer Him wages. We have nothing that He has not given us, and can do nothing for Him except in the strength which He provides. We are bankrupt when it comes to paying for His salvation and utterly destitute when we seek to settle for His services. It is absolutely wrong that we should even attempt to do these things, for they are contrary to His present place as the Deity and His future goal as our All.

When we focus our eyes upon men and their activities we are bewildered if we try to judge between them. There is no fixed standard by which to determine right from wrong. No one seems to be absolutely right or utterly wrong. The only settled standard is God's revelation. The simplest and most practical test is the consummation. *Whatever directly tends to subject men to God and make Him their All,* that is divinely right. Whatever tends otherwise and only indirectly effects God's intention, is wrong, even if it eventually contributes to His glory and His goal. It is only as we consider Abram's experience in the light of God's ultimate that we can understand how his faith is reckoned for right-

eousness. His acceptance of the Deity as his Shield and Hire was a great step toward God's goal. It was supremely right on the part of Abram although it far exceeded what we call righteousness on the part of God.

The roots of justification by faith are best seen in the early life of Abram. If we will compare his deeds and the acts of those about him with the divine standard, we will find that he is in harmony with God's goal, and that therefore his righteousness was not the neutral thing which exactly squares accounts, but, like God's, it exceeds the strict confines of justice as men see it, Abram allowed Lot to use a part of the land promised to him (to which Lot had no right), because it separated them, which was according to God's word and plan. This made it possible for God to deal with Lot apart from Abram. He refused all compensation for his efforts in rescuing Lot and in restoring to the king of Sodom what he had lost. This is far above the human idea of justice.

Abram was given the land of Canaan. From the superficial human standpoint it may appear *wrong* to take the land away from its inhabitants and give it to Abram and his seed. Seen from the vantage of the divine, it was supremely right. God alone is the actual Owner of the earth and its treasures, and He alone has the disposal of any part of it. The nations of Canaan not only had no title to the land they held, but they did not recognize the true Owner. They brought Him nothing for its use. Superficially again, Abram had even less claim on the land, for he was a stranger and made no improvements. The only rights he had were divine, and looked forward to the future, when Israel would bring a tenth of its produce to support His worship, and it would become a place where Yahweh would dwell and glorify His name. Neither Abram nor the nations in the land could make any *material* return for the use of the land, for this was also Yahweh's, and He has no need of anything that

they had. Abram alone paid the proper price when be built an altar and offered a sacrifice. *Worship, thanksgiving and praise,* the outflow of a grateful heart, these are the precious gems which God can use to adorn His diadem, and they are a rich rental for the promised land.

THE UNRIGHTEOUSNESS OF LOT

Let us consider Abram's dealings with his nephew. Lot was not the possessor of the promises, and he had no rights in the land of Canaan, either human or divine (Gen.12:7). As there was not room for the flocks of both of them, he should rightfully have withdrawn. Abram would have been within his rights if he had driven him out. When strife arose between their herdsmen, Abram was in line with God in his desire for peace, for God will eventually reconcile all to Himself. As the younger, Lot ought to have been subject to Abram, for that is the proper place of humanity in the consummation. In the East there is a constant reminder of this in the subjection of the younger to the elder. Of course, those who are older have had more experience, and are more fitted to rule, but that is not the basic fact. All, in their youth, should learn to realize the place which properly belongs to the creature, the necessary complement of the place of the Deity. But Lot does not volunteer to take this place. He probably thinks he has rights as well as Abram.

Abram, strange to say, although it does not belong to him, takes the place of subjection! He not only refuses to make good his rightful claim to the whole land, as promised him by God, and his rights as the elder, but gives Lot his choice. He took what was left. This Lot should never have allowed. Abram had taken *God's* choice for him, and was, acting along the line that leads directly to the consummation. This is what counts as righteous with God. This is divine righteousness. Abram had it, not because

he made a just division of the land between himself and Lot, but because he anticipated, by faith, the end that God has in view. On the other hand, Lot, though righteous among men, did not act according to faith righteousness, so he takes advantage of Abram, and appropriates the best part of God's gift for himself. His choice was soulish. He looked for physical satisfaction from the rich pastures of the Jordan valley. But when he came to dwell in Sodom, his soul was tormented by the lawlessness of his surroundings. Later, he lost all, and Abram had to come to his rescue. He was not in God's will, but served as a foil for God's dealings with Abram. His descendants became foes of the chosen people.

THE KINGS' INSUBJECTION

Abram's contact with the warfare of that day gives a further insight into his faith righteousness and the wrongdoing of the times. Of some of the kings, engaged in this conflict, we know that they had no right even to live, for later they were destroyed by God Himself. The rest of them were probably not so very much better. What real right did they have to the territory they claimed as their own? Did they pay Yahweh for the use of it? Did they give Him a tithe of what it produced? Did they thank and praise Him for it? And now some of them band together and subjugate the peoples about them and demand tribute, just as if they were God, the true Owner of the neighboring lands as well as their own. Had they been subject to God and acknowledged His rights, no such wrongs could have been perpetrated.

Abram, with his vast wealth, must have been a tempting object of plunder, but God kept the marauders away from him, although he was very close to their line of march. This was because he had set his heart on God, not on His gifts. Lot, on the contrary, was after wealth. His heart was

occupied with the lush land and the cattle and the goods, which he really owed to the God of Abram. He had no right to them, so they are taken from him, and he himself is carried captive together with all that is his. Abram could have said that it served him right. That would have been quite just from the human standpoint. In a land given to Abraham he had made trouble, and then actually took what he considered the choicest part of it for himself. He had treated Abram most unjustly. Abram was under no obligation, from the standpoint of human righteousness, to go to his aid, especially when he had to do it at the risk of his own riches and even of his life.

GOD AWARDS THE FOE TO ABRAM

The Authorized Version gives this episode a far more sanguinary coloring than the Hebrew warrants. It speaks of *arming* his *trained* servants, as if Abram had surrounded himself with a fighting force in order to be able to defend the land which Yahweh had given him. And then it speaks of the *slaughter* of the kings, as if there had been a bloody carnage, in which all the kings were slain. This would be quite out of line with faith. As Melchizedek said, the *Supreme* had *awarded* the foe into his hand. It was not due to his superior military might.

Abram's small band of three hundred and eighteen were *dedicated* to him, not *trained* to bear arms. It is not said that he *armed* them. The Revisers change to *led them forth.* The Hebrew uses the word *empty.* He *emptied* his establishment in order to get so many. We may suppose that the women looked after things during their absence. He *smote* the enemy and *pursued* them to the neighborhood of Damascus. He routed them by a surprise night attack, so that they fled, and left their prisoners and booty behind. It was God's doing, not Abram's, and he freely acknowledged it.

BEING BLESSED AND A BLESSING

In the righteousness of faith there is more than mere *possessing.* There is *blessing.* Abram was given a much greater gift than the land. He and his seed were to be *blessed* in it, and, far more than this, he was to be a blessing *to all the families of the earth.* Instead of resenting Lot's mercenary conduct and refusing to help him in his distress, he takes hold of God's promise by faith and rescues his relative and neighbors from their foes. He is confident that God will prosper him in it, for His word must be fulfilled. His land and his life are safe in Yahweh's keeping. As he has no son, he cannot die until provision has been made for the innumerable progeny which Yahweh promised. His life was insured by the Life Giver Himself. Later, the nation of Israel lost sight of this great truth. They wanted blessing for themselves, but were little concerned about the blessing of others. They implored for deliverance when in distress, but made no move to insure the well being of other nations when they needed help. In the future their blessing will rest largely on their ability to bring peace and plenty to the other nations of the earth.

What a contrast between Abram and the kings! They had no title to their own land, yet seek to extend their unjust holdings by force of arms. He had a perfect title to all that Yahweh had given him, yet he yields to Lot when he calmly appropriates the best part that he could find. They not only robbed God of His rights, but this led to much loss and harm and woe to their fellows and probably cost them many lives besides. So it must always be. Those who do not glorify and thank the Deity as God must suffer the righteous retribution of this fundamental error by being barred from blessing themselves, and of being a blessing to others. Abram's faith led him to give God His place, and this led to restoration and blessing.

A. E. Knoch

FAITH IN THE SUPREME

At this juncture (Gen.14:18) a most remarkable character is injected, whose name and title are most suggestive, in view of our present investigation of faith righteousness. In Hebrew his name, Melchizedek, means *king of righteousness,* or *righteous king,* and his title is *king of peace* (or *king of Salem*). He is priest of El Supreme (the Supreme Deity), the Owner of heaven and earth, the One Who actually rescued the captives from the kings and Who recovered the property which had been taken from Sodom and Lot. He alone is entitled to recompense. To Him alone is due the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving which His priest will offer in behalf of those who have been saved. So Abram gives Melchizedek tithes from all. *This is faith righteousness.* Before Abram considers any reward for his recovery of what had been carried away, he, through the priest of El Supreme dedicates a tenth of it to His worship.

It is worthy of note that the august title, *El Supreme,* first appears on the pages of revelation in connection with faith righteousness. Neither one of these exalted appellations is revealed before Melchizedek, the king of *righteousness,* comes upon the scene. Is this not because all genuine righteousness in the universe must be based upon the acknowledgment of God's deity and supremacy? This is the divine foundation of all real righteousness, the only stable basis on which any permanent right can rest. We will never understand faith righteousness until we realize what true deity involves, and the supremacy which belongs to it. All

right must be rooted in the Supreme Deity. None must be derived from any other source. Man's righteousness ignores both His deity and supremacy, hence is little more than a legal fiction, which will melt away once it enters into His august Presence. There may be a relative righteousness, man to man, but even this becomes unrighteous when it does not recognize the rights of the Supreme Deity.

A REALIZATION OF GOD'S DEITY

How few of the saints, even today, know God as the *Deity*! That is because they do not realize their own creaturehood. Like Abram in unbelief, they are convinced that *their* acts, *their* doings are indispensable, or else God cannot succeed in His plans. How many are seeking to forward the kingdom, yet succeed only in gendering Ishmaels that hinder rather than help! The whole of Christendom is like that. It has no real Deity, Who can walk alone without their help. *They,* rather than the Deity, are all-sufficient. How great have they grown in the earth! And almost all are sons of Hagar, in slavery, working, working, working to save themselves and the world. O that God would give us a realization of *His* Deity and *His* all-sufficiency! That Abram did not fully recognize this is clear, for God immediately goes on to put him through a series of tests, all of which are designed to demonstrate that the flesh is not a deity, and is *not* sufficient.

The title *Supreme* comes from the stem *ol,* ON, and branches out into *over, ascend* (the *ascent* or "burnt" offering), *elevate, surpass, uppermost,* or *supreme.* It is usually translated *most high,* or *Most High,* either as a mere descriptive adjective, or as a title. It is perfectly rendered by our English title, *the Supreme.* Its meaning is clear. He is *above* all others. He should be given that place in every realm. Nothing else can be really right.

OWNER

The title, "Owner of the heavens and the earth," fits perfectly into this picture. The customs connected with leases and property rights vary so much today from those which are recorded in the Scriptures that it is difficult to sort out suitable words in translation. Present practice is basically wrong. It rests on the false assumption that ownership is vested in man, that he can obtain *absolute* control of lands and houses and goods and even living creatures, and can *dispose* of these to others, as he wills. When God calls Himself the *Owner,* He challenges man's title to everything that he possesses. In Israel, under the law, there were few freeholds. Almost all the land remained in the hands of Yahweh, and was distributed by Him by means of the lot. It recognized that all ownership is vested only in God. To *believe* this because God has said it, is *right,* so that the very faith may be reckoned as righteousness.

As the thought of human ownership is so foreign to the Hebrew scriptures, there seems to be no special word to express it. In this passage it is really the *Acquirer,* the *Buyer,* for it was by *buying* that permanent possession was obtained. The Hebrew word is easily remembered, for *kne* is the same as *Cain.* Eve called him this because she thought she had paid for him in some way. Literally she bought or acquired him. This is the first intimation of his rebellion against God (Gen.4:10). But in English we cannot very well apply the name *Buyer* to God because He did not buy or acquire anything in a literal sense, seeing that all is out of Him. What the Hebrew means is that He occupies the control over all things that a buyer has over that which he has bought. Our term *Owner* is probably the nearest that we have. Among men, ownership comes by acquiring or buying. God has it by creation.

The word *holding* is another way of expressing permanent

possession in Hebrew. When his wife Sarah died, Abraham wanted a place for her and himself in the land as a token of his faith in God's promise. Joseph had the same wish. His bones were also buried there (Gen.50:25). So Abraham requested a *holding* (AV possession) in which to bury his dead. After characteristic palaver, he *bought* the cave of Machpelah for this purpose. The field, the trees and the cave were all "made sure" by the payment of a large sum of silver (Gen.23:3-20) so that Abraham became the "buyer" or owner in perpetuity. And, remarkable as it may seem, *it is still his*! No one has ever dared to dispute his title to it. I do not know just what its legal status is today, but I consider no other piece of real estate has its title so well insured as the tomb of Abraham. If he arose today, no one would care to take it from him. And his it will remain as long as the earth abides, as a token that God's promise will be redeemed. The land itself is such a "holding." It will be Abraham's for the eons (Gen.17:8).

MELCHIZEDEK

A great deal of mystery has been wrapped about the *man* Melchizedek. Some have even insisted that he was the Son of God Himself. But Scripture makes Christ of the order of Melchizedek, hence He can hardly be the King-priest Himself (Heb.6:20). As he is to picture the Son of God, the *record* gives us only such information as is needed in order to show the likeness. The writer in Hebrews emphasizes these points in order to stress the fact that our Lord was not a priest at all according to His birth and genealogy. Mary was no priest's daughter. And He could not even assume the priesthood on the strength of His legal relations to Joseph, who was of the tribe of Judah. Melchizedek, being entirely outside the line of Aaron, certainly had no place in the Aaronic priesthood. Hence his genealogy is not given. So also, no hint is given of his death.

This was omitted in order to create the impression of a final priesthood, which needs no successor. These things are true of the Son of God, and they are stated accordingly in the record of Melchizedek.

KING OF PEACE

The setting of this title is superb. Against the dark background of the kings of strife, who robbed one another of their sustenance and happiness, stands the figure of Melchizedek, in solitary majesty, feeding the faithful Abram with bread and wine. These are symbolic of the life and joy which comes to all who recognize the rule of the Son of God, of Whom Melchizedek was a picture.

Devastation and misery, destruction and death followed the footsteps of the conquering kings, and they themselves were smitten by Abram. Many of earth's kings are kings of unrighteousness, kings of strife. Like these of old they serve their purpose when we contrast them with the coming King, who alone can bring this tortured earth the peace for which it longs.

BREAD AND WINE

Not on bread alone shall man be living, but on every declaration going out of the mouth of God (Matt.4:4). Wine is rejoicing the heart of a mortal (Psa.104:15). The bread and wine given to Abram symbolized the sustenance and blessing which he received from Yahweh. It gave not life alone, but joy and satisfaction. He already was wealthy. The goods of Sodom might have increased his riches, but they would not have added to his happiness. A man's life does not consist in the superfluity of the goods that he possesses. Sodom's goods were his by right, from the human viewpoint, yet to accept them would be wrong from the divine, for they would have brought no blessing to Abram, and the loss would probably have made the Sodomites suf-

fer. Had Abram taken them, he would have accomplished the same result as the pillage of the kings, and put himself in a class with them. Rights that bring no blessing are wrong in God's sight.

THE BLESSER BLESSED

Not only is Abram blessed, but his Blesser is also blessed. This is the end and object of all righteousness. Looking at the matter from the standpoint of the universe, what can be basically right which does not contribute, to the blessing of its Creator and Sustainer? All of His handiwork proclaims His praise. We need but to look at the stars above to be overcome with amazed awe. We need but to glance at the flowers beneath our feet to be filled with worshiping wonder.

But how little does humanity heed these promptings to give Him the adoration which is His due! Even the creature blessings on which his very life depends bring forth no thankfulness. But Abram appreciates and acknowledges the blessings which he has received, and his heart responds. He gives God His due meed of blessing, because he realizes His protecting care and believes that He is the Supreme Deity Who will carry out all that He has promised.

How much blessing accrued to the Deity through the plunder of Sodom by the confederate kings? They, of course, thought that *they* would enjoy, their ill-gotten goods, but they had no thought of others or of God.

The restoration of the spoil, through Abram, had just the opposite effect. Though he took none of it, he was blessed, as well as those whom he rescued. But, above all, the real Rescuer, El Supreme, received His due in thanksgiving and blessing. This is the very summit of righteousness. Nothing else is so utterly and inexcusably wrong as the failure to recognize, to appreciate, and to recompense the Deity for His numberless and limitless benefactions.

To bless Him is the greatest act of righteousness of which His creatures are capable.

Abram received no reward for his great services in rescuing Lot and restoring what he and the king of Sodom had lost. Humanly speaking, that was wrong. Had not he, with a few helpers, overcome the confederate kings? No one would begrudge him a generous share of the booty to recompense him for his efforts on their behalf. But Abram looked at the matter quite otherwise, because he *believed* what Melchizedek, the priest of El Supreme had said, that *God had given his foes into his hand.* If the Supreme had done this, then *He* should get the reward, not Abram. So a tenth of the spoil was given to Melchizedek, as the representative of the Deity, to be used in His worship. This is faith righteousness. It is based on believing that God not only owns all, but shielded him in his effort to do the right, and that, if he was to get anything for it, the Supreme is the only One who could pay the price.

The king of Sodom would not have given a tenth for the worship of Yahweh. So he is taught the highest righteousness by the act of Abram. But men are not satisfied with a mere tithe, when they can take all. The king of Sodom expected Abraham to claim all the goods. Indeed, his speech implies that Abraham has a right to everything and everyone that he had brought back. So he begs for the "souls," the people and the animals, as a *gift,* and asks Abram to take the goods (Gen.14:21). Abram gladly *gives* him the souls, yet his faith righteousness balked at the idea of *taking* aught from the king of Sodom. He had tasted the bread and wine from the hands of God. He could not receive nourishment or blessing from anyone else, lest they displace the Deity, in Whom his faith found its All. How basically unrighteous it would be for the king of Sodom, who owed Yahweh far more than he could ever repay, to give Abram what he did not really possess!

THE GROUND OF FAITH

Because Abram believed, he was concerned about the promised posterity (Gen.15:2). How could God's word be fulfilled unless he had a son? Was he to adopt one? But he is not allowed to leave the ground of faith. He is still forced to *assume* what he had been told to *expect* (Heb. 11:1). He is once more assured that he will have a son. Then he is brought forth outside, and Yahweh says to him, "'Now look up toward the heavens and count off the stars if you can number them.' And He promised him: Thus shall become your seed." (Gen.15:5).

The point of this passage lies in the fact that there is no concession to unbelief. No son is given. No time is set. Physically there is no indication of any fulfillment. Rather the opposite, for Abram was getting older every day. Here we have the highest pinnacle of faith which Abram reached, for it is sheer unadulterated acceptance of God's Word, unaided by any outward sign, or the activity of the flesh. That is why this part of Abram's life is the example for the Uncircumcision, who also are justified by faith alone, apart from works (Rom.4:1-20; 10:1-10; Gal.3:6; Phil.3:9).

In the midst of Abram's concern about his successor, *God* steps in and makes a promise. *He does not do* anything, but merely tells what He will do. Abram also *does nothing.* He simply *believes* that God will do it.

The entire *absence of works* is the key to Abraham's individual relationship to God in uncircumcision. If God had *fulfilled* the wish of Abram at that time there would have been no room for faith. In that case Abram would doubtless have been grateful, but such help never could have displayed the deep and delightful confidence that Abram had in God. It would certainly not have brought to Abram the most marvelous gratuity that an unrighteous man can ever obtain.

THE EXCEEDINGLY VAST REWARD

Superficially, it seems as if Abram received no reward for the rescue of Lot and the captives of Sodom and the recovery of their goods. It looked as if he had not been treated righteously, though, of course, it was his own doing. The king of Sodom had offered to do the right thing. But his faith in God led Abram to act according to a higher rule of righteousness which measured everything by its relation to God, rather than man.

Consequently, after these things we read that Yahweh engages Himself to be the reward of Abraham, his exceedingly increased hire! (Gen.15:1) This is doubly marvelous. First of all, Abram had nothing except what God had given him. His servants, his strength, his very life, all were gifts from Yahweh. Besides, the success of the rescue was clearly due to God, who had awarded his foes into his hand. Abram was an unprofitable slave, as all of God's creatures must ever be, apart from the praise and worship which they offer to the Deity. Nevertheless, Yahweh insists on paying Abram the highest wages, the most enormous salary, the most stupendous reward that it is possible to imagine. *Yahweh Himself is his hire*! That is why Abram is easily the richest of all earth's denizens, the wealthiest of all mundane plutocrats. Almost all other men are burdened or even cursed if they have immense holdings, but Abram's riches always are a blessing because they are really and rightly his, and come from the actual Owner of all.

RECKONED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Much has been said and written concerning the righteousness which became Abram's. It has been called "forensic," as though the result of judicial procedure, which might be called a *legal fiction.* Bluntly stated, it hints that Abram did not do right, but God overlooked this and falsified the

record. If you look too narrowly at it you are inclined to see things you do not like. It seems almost like a sort of deception. Indeed, some of the more enlightened translators reject this term in favor of imputed. Theologians *"explain"* this, "to *attribute* or *ascribe vicariously."* The latter term is further defined as *"substitutional."* This, again, is generally accepted to mean "the righteousness of Christ" "accepted by the Divine Father as a substitute for the righteousness of mankind." It will be seen that each new term, each new explanation, calls for another, because it not only fails to satisfy, but actually seems to imply *un*righteousness on the part of God.

Let us rather proceed along the line of *faith.* Abram's passive acceptance, his belief that God is true, whatever He says, is the basis of God's reckoning. This attitude toward God is *right. The acceptance of God's revelation is not only more right than anything else in the world, but it also sets all else right.* It puts the Creator in His right place, and man in his.

But the point that is generally obscured by unbelief is this: The acts of the believer are made *actually* right by being *combined* with Christ's sacrifice. The two together are infinitely just, and are essential to God's intention, which is to make Himself known to His creatures. As a dark background is necessary to reveal His glories, the believer provides this by that part of his life which is lived in unbelief. The sins that condemn him are essential to the revelation of God's grace. When cleansed through the sacrifice of Christ, they are not merely nullified, nor are they destroyed, but they are transformed into acts essential to God's glory and the welfare of His creatures, hence are not merely reckoned right by a legal fiction, but are genuinely, gloriously right, reckoned by the highest standards in the universe.

A. E. Knoch

THE WALK OF ABRAHAM

WALK is the keynote of the salvation of the Circumcision (Gen.17:1,2). This is in crass contrast to the salvation of the Uncircumcision, which had been revealed to Abram at first (Gen. 15:6). There it was FAITH. But Abram had failed to believe as fully as he should have done. He still had confidence in the flesh. *This must be destroyed.* Therefore it is that Yahweh said to him, "*Walk* before Me, and become flawless." To me this now seems an impossible, a dreadful load. But to Abraham and to most of the saints, it is just such a task as they like, and for which they feel quite competent. The whole evangel of the Circumcision is based upon their fearful ignorance of themselves and their overweening confidence in their ability to please God to perfection. Even in my spiritual infancy I could not see why God should demand *flawlessness* of Abram. No one could fulfill that! Certainly Abra*ha*m did not! Why, then, demand the impossible? I did not see then that God did not intend that Abraham should succeed. He intended that he should fail, and thus lose the confidence he still had in his flesh, and place it in the Deity.

This is the essential distinction between the two evangels. God *wants us* to trust *Him* unreservedly and implicitly. He does *not* want *us* to trust in *ourselves. He* does not expect perfection in the keeping of a covenant, or a law, for *that* would lead to the very reverse of His intention. Only their *failure* will teach them their utter lack and His all-sufficiency. Of course He could not reveal this intention of His to them, or the demonstration would have been fruitless. This not only explains the failures of Abra*ha*m and the patriarchs, but the threefold apostasy of the nation,

as seen in the Hebrew Scriptures (e.g., Isa.6), in the "gospels," and in the book of Acts. They walked before Him very *im*perfectly indeed! Yet, in so doing, they have manifested to the world that the creature is impotent and sinful and offensive apart from the Creator. Man needs God, not only to create him, but to save him and to keep him. When this has been learned by bitter experience, men will be ready to recognize God as their All, and thus attain the goal of the eons.

The friend of God had a taste of both of these salvations, for he was justified by *faith* (Gen.15:5; Rom.4; Gal.3) and also by *works* (Gen.17:1; James 2:21-24). One was *before* he was circumcised, and apart from it. The other was *sealed* by circumcision. In the first, Abram did nothing but *believe God,* and righteousness was reckoned to him unconditionally, apart from works. In the second he is exhorted to *walk before God,* and be flawless, so that there should be a *covenant* between him and God, to make him a father of many nations. Let us not confuse the latter phrase with his faith-fatherhood of many believers *among the nations.* Here he is not the father of the nations as such, but only of a few individuals who have faith, chosen out of the nations.

ABRAM AND ABRAHAM

The name *Abram* comes from the Hebrew stems, *ab* (FATHER) and *rm* (HIGH). *Abraham* (with the *h*) is just the same except that an *e* is inserted *Abrem.* This implies the addition of another stem, making *Ab* (FATHER), *r(m)* (HIGH), and *em* (CLAMOR or throng). One of the *m's* is dropped in combining. Others derive it from *Ab* (FATHER), *rb* (GREAT), and *em* (throng). The difference is not much or vital, for GREAT and HIGH are both used as a faded figure merely to magnify the idea. Abram is the *personal* name, while Abraham unites him with descendants by including the stem THRONG. This corresponds to the two salvations. One is individual, the other *national.* Contrary to the usual idea, we are associated with *Abram,* not *Abraham.* The earlier part of his life, before his circumcision, is associated with the nations. The later enlargement was given in order to connect him with his physical seed.

I well remember listening with rapt attention to a brother who sought to show the difference between Abram and Abra*h*am. His thought was that the letter *h* was inserted in Abrm in order to indicate the addition of the holy spirit! Of course this would not be known to Abraham himself, or Paul, because neither the Hebrew nor the Greek has a letter *h.* The Greek simply doubles the *a, Abraam.* The Hebrew inserts an *e,* which is commonly mistaken for an *h.* As we have seen, it adds the element THRONG to the name. Besides, the name *Abram* is connected with *faith* and *righteousness. It* is the *spiritual* name, rather than Abra*h*am, which is not used until *walk,* with *physical* and *national* blessing, is in view. In *Un*circumcision it is Abram. Since this distinction is not observed in the Greek Scriptures, it is very difficult to carry it out, so we use Abraham, as a rule, to denote the man, apart from these distinctions. But in these studies we will try to keep the names separate.

THE ORIGIN OF CIRCUMCISION

It is in *this* light that we must view the rite of circumcision. It is the *sign* of the covenant which characterizes the salvation of the Circumcision. After promising the land to Abra*ha*m and his seed, God goes on to confirm it by the covenant of *circumcision* (Gen.17:9-14).

The *significance* of this sign is almost totally overlooked. In it God gives a foreview of the result of the demonstration He is giving. *It signifies the futility of the flesh.* As this small sample of the flesh is snipped off, so would God have us deal with the flesh in its entirety. This sign ought to have opened their eyes to the failure of the flesh,

which has been fully demonstrated since Abraham's day by no other group of the race as thoroughly as by the Circumcision. Let us note in passing that it is not intended for all mankind, but only the throng of nations who have descended from Abraham.

THE FAILURE OF FAITH

Just as Abram's experience from his call to his justification by faith is the key to the evangel of the Uncircumcision and righteousness by faith; so his further experience up to the time he received the rite of circumcision prepares us to understand the evangel of the Circumcision and righteousness by works. It is based on *the failure of the faith* and *the activity of the flesh.* Instead of waiting for Isaac, the promised son by the freewoman Sarai, he generates Ishmael by Hagar, the slave. This brings bondage, in which we find *walk,* and a *covenant,* and the *sign* of circumcision without in place of faith within (Gen.16, 17).

The actual acts of Abram which preceded his justification by faith were all righteous when reviewed in the light of God's rights and purpose. His faith in God's declarations had kept him from all wrong. But his walk which led up to his circumcision was wrong, because it was not founded on faith, but on the flesh. And, indeed, circumcision is a sign of this, for why should the flesh be cut off if it is righteous? Sarai acknowledges that she has done wrong, (Gen.16:5), and that this wrong comes upon Abram. He was wrong in that he hearkened to her advice. The wrong of it is much clearer when we consider how much evil it brought upon Abraham and his descendants. It brought immediate suffering on Sarai and Hagar.

THE REAL CIRCUMCISION

We are the *real,* the *genuine* Circumcision, because we offer divine service to God *in spirit,* and glory in *Christ Jesus* and have *no confidence in flesh.* The so-called Circumcision are only a *Maim*cision, for they merely mutilate the flesh, and lack the faith of which circumcision is simply the sign (Phil.3:2-5). They worship God in *flesh,* and glory in their *flesh* in direct contradiction to the import of this sign, which consists in the *removal,* the *cutting away* of a part of the flesh as a token of the stripping off of the *whole.* Let us be clear concerning this. We are not the *literal* Circumcision. We are the *figurative* Circumcision, the literal *Un*circumcision. The fact is that literal circumcision is itself only a sign, an indication, a token, an earnest, a label, in which a small part of the flesh is literally removed to signalize its utter failure and bankruptcy in its entirety. We realize and *enjoy* that which it merely *indicates.* We are the genuine *Circumcision,* even though our flesh is not mutilated as theirs is.

This is the actual, ultimate truth as to circumcision, and should form the *basis* of our study. We must remember, however, that all revelation previous to this is not written from this standpoint, but in an enigma, and is seen distorted, as in a mirror (1 Cor.13:12). *Yet even in that earlier unfolding we will find hints and intimations which would have led a spiritually minded saint into the truth.* This is clearly suggested before it was given to Abraham, for he was ninety-nine years old and his flesh was dead, so far as fulfilling the promise of God as to the seed was concerned. Abraham knew this, and said as much to God. He wanted to substitute other flesh, as his heir, but God wished to show that *all was dependent on Him, and not on flesh at all.* So He vivified, invigorated Abraham, gave him life after death, and then insisted on a sign of this, to keep it in continual remembrance, by cutting off a part of the flesh.

If a descendant of Abraham were spiritually minded, he would have deduced thus: I am supposed to be the literal seed of Abraham, but, in reality, I am not, for Abram had

no issue, except Ishmael, until he was physically incapable of propagation. At ninety-nine years he could not have further descendants, and he knew it and acknowledged it. His flesh was beyond hope. I am really a descendant of his faith and of God's vivifying power. This is what my circumcision signifies. Otherwise I would be an Ishmaelite, a product of Abram's unbelieving flesh and a slave girl, doomed to servitude and humiliation.

—But, alas, few in Israel were humble enough to feel the futility of the flesh.

All that we have that is of any value is *in Christ,* not in ourselves. Our circumcision also is in Him. Was His circumcision on the eighth day reckoned to us? By no means. That was made by hands, and consisted in cutting off a very small portion of the flesh. His real circumcision came at the cross, when He was cut off from the land of the living, and His flesh as a whole was stripped off and laid in the tomb. In Him, at that time, we stripped off the body of flesh (Col.2:11). This brings us into the place denoted by circumcision. We possess the spiritual reality of which the physical rite was merely the symbol. Having the thing itself we do not need the label. The label on an empty bottle is of no value. The contents are just as valuable without the label as with it, especially when its qualities are evident by their virtue and potency.

THE SIGN AND SEAL

It is of great help to impress upon our hearts, that circumcision is a *sign* and a *seal* (Rom.4:9-12). Then we will look beyond for that which it *signifies* and that which it *secures.* When we come to consider the case of Abraham, let us note that he had God's righteousness, by faith, long before he was circumcised; the rite did not add to either his faith or his own righteousness. It merely labeled him as one who possessed these things. Abram was secretly *reckoned* righteous in uncircumcision; but he was openly *recognized* as righteous by the sign and seal of circumcision. The reckoning was by *God* and was *immanent.* The *recognition* was for *men* and was *superficial.*

Our Lord acknowledged that the Jews were Abraham's seed in a physical sense; so also were the Ishmaelites and Esau's descendants. But they claimed Abraham as their father in a much deeper sense than that. He would not acknowledge that they were Abraham's children. That was presumption on their part. God, said He, could rouse such children out of the very stones, which they resembled, for they were hard hearted and lifeless clods of earth (Matt.3:9, Luke 3:8). They were so unlike Abraham in their *conduct* that they had no right to claim him as their ancestor. They were seeking to kill their own Messiah. Imagine Abram doing this! By their works they proved themselves to be descendants of the Adversary, not of Abram. So our Lord said to them, "If you are children of Abraham, did you ever do the *works* of Abraham?" (John 8:31-47). They had the circumcision on the eighth day, but they not only lacked the *faith* of which it was the sign and seal, but also the works which perfected it (James 2:22). Abraham offered Isaac by *faith*; they crucified Christ by *unbelief.*

I often think of this in connection with a story told by Dr. Weizmann, the Zionist leader, at a Jewish rally that I attended in Los Angeles. It concerned a Russian Jew who sought to escape from that country, who had a false passport. His name was Abraham, but his passport was in some other name, which was thoroughly drilled into him, as he could not read. But when he came to the border he was too excited to remember anything. They asked him his name, and he answered in great agitation: "I don't know! I forget! But I do know that it is not Abraham!" How true that was of all the Jews even Dr. Weizmann did not know. Whatever their name may be, they are not the children of

the friend of God, who trusted Him, and not their own arm. The Jews present (I was the only Gentile, so far as I know) were like that poor fellow. They collected money to *buy* Palestine, the land that was *given* to Abram and his seed! They were not even Jacob. He would not pay out good money to buy his own land!

As a result, Abraham became the father of two distinct classes, one of which the apostle associates with the reckoning of faith righteousness in *un*circumcision (to which the saints of the nations today belong) and the father of the Circumcision, but not those who merely have the outward sign and seal, but to those who *observe* the fundamentals of the *faith* in the footprints of Abram before he was circumcised. This distinction is vital, if we wish to understand the difference between the evangel of the Circumcision and that of the Uncircumcision. As the apostle explains fully elsewhere, Abram was not the father of those of the Circumcision who did not follow in his steps (Rom. 2:25-3:1). The Uncircumcision know him as their father on the ground of *faith alone.* The Circumcision may claim him only when they have the faith, the sign, *and the walk.*

When I first went to Denmark, the saints there were much disturbed by some teaching that had reached them, that Romans was "Jewish" because it brought in Abraham. As soon as I pointed out that it referred to His faith *before* he was circumcised the whole matter was clear, and they no longer repudiated Romans and other epistles of Paul on such dubious grounds. Abraham *before* he was circumcised was certainly not one of the Circumcision. The faith that he then had was the ground of blessing which made him the father of the Uncircumcision who believe, apart from works. He was certainly not a Jew, a descendant of his great grandson, Judah, or of his grandson Jacob, who, later, were all called "Jews," when they associated with the descendants of Judah as worshipers of Yahweh.

As circumcision is only an outward sign, its benefits are limited to those who have the corresponding inward reality. Those who walk flawlessly before God will be benefitted, but those who do not keep His law are practically uncircumcised. They are like an empty jar with a label. The label only misleads if the contents are gone. Another jar containing that which the label indicates, even if it has no label, is the real thing. Not only are the Uncircumcision who *believe* the real Circumcision (Phil.3:2,3), but the Jew who is circumcised in *heart,* in *spirit* not literally in the flesh is the genuine Circumcision. Nevertheless the outward sign entitled them to benefits not to be despised, the chief of which was that they became the repositories of God's revelation (Rom.3:2).

THE OBLIGATION OF CIRCUMCISION

Circumcision lays an obligation on all who have it far beyond their capacity to pay. It is like a label guaranteeing that the whole law has been observed. Anyone who uses it thereby advertises his ability to get along without Christ and His sacrifice. Circumcision is the real falling "from" grace. It is a fearful load to take upon ourselves, when God has not laid it upon us. No one can live up to this label. It must inevitably lead to the curse that rests upon all who fail to fulfill the least item of God's law. So blind were the Jewish "believers" in Paul's day that they insisted that circumcision was necessary for the nations for their salvation! Rather it clinched their condemnation.

The needlessness of circumcision for the nations is repeatedly emphasized by Paul in his epistles. It is so unimportant that it is not even worth the trouble to get rid of it. Each one is to remain as he was when God called him, either circumcised or uncircumcised. We ignore external nonessential labels and recognize only internal essential realities! For the Circumcision it is a precept of God to be kept. For

us circumcision is nothing (1 Cor.7:17-20). In Christ Jesus neither circumcision is availing anything nor uncircumcision, but faith, operating through love (Gal.5:6). In Him there is a new creation (Gal.6:15). It was the self righteous Pharisees who opposed Paul and insisted on circumcision and law keeping (Acts 15:5; 21:21). Not having *God's* righteousness, they sought to make one of their *own,* and managed to make the opposite.

The question of circumcision for the Uncircumcision was the cause of much grief and conflict during the early ministry of the apostle Paul due to the fact that circumcision was the hallmark of Yahweh's people. When Paul returned to Antioch after his first missionary journey, the Jews, especially some from Judea, opposed him violently because he had not made proselytes nor had them circumcised nor put them under the law. The commotion became so severe that the matter was referred to the apostles in Jerusalem. Peter seems to have been the only one among the Circumcision who had any sympathy with Paul's position. Even he would not have understood if he had not been prepared by means of the vision which he saw at Joppa, and had not seen God's hand in dealing with Cornelius (Acts 10:34).

Paul in his epistles, tells us far more about circumcision than any other inspired writer, even though he is the apostle of the *Un*circumcision. This is due to the fact that the true intent of the rite was not understood, and that religious unbelievers still clung to their own flesh and its works. Once we see the great contrast between Abram and Abraham, between faith and works, between God's righteousness and man's, between Paul's evangel and Peter's, our hearts will be filled with exultation that we did not receive a probationary pardon which depends upon our deeds, but were justified by grace apart from works dependent entirely upon faith in God. We are weak and wanting. He is the All-Sufficient!

A. E. Knoch

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 103rd Year

(1909–2012)

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 He Died, He Died—
He is Living, He is Living
65 Untenable Texts
85 The Rich Man and Lazarus

SECOND QUARTER, 2012

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, SECOND QUARTER 2012
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EDITORIAL

CHRIST DIED. But did He have to die? Or rather, *Why* did He have to die? And, getting even more to the point, What does it mean that He *died*?

If we do not have some understanding of what death is, literally and actually, we will not be able to appreciate fully the absolute necessity of Christ's death, and its vital importance to us and to all mankind. Nor will we be able to grasp the full value of resurrection and the superiority and grandeur of the newness of life which is ahead for us (and indeed for all) in vivification (Rom.6:4-7; 1 Cor.15:22-28).

At the end of his article entitled, "Figures of Death," first published in 1914, A. E. Knoch, added the following comments: "Death is not only described by means of figures, but it, in turn, is used, in several instances, as a figure of oblivion. An important example is its use to describe the relationship believers sustain to Sin (Rom.6:5-11). We were planted together in the likeness of Christ's death. He died to Sin once and for all. Thus we are to reckon ourselves to be dead to Sin . . . . If death is life in another sphere, then we are to live to Sin in a different way from formerly. If death is oblivion then we are to be living just as though we had really died and Sin no longer had any claims on us. This figurative use of death is a most powerful proof of an unconscious death state."[1]

I would add to this that in Christ's death, once and for all, there was not only oblivion, but the elimination of His own existence as the Sin Offering, the One Who faced

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.6, p.81.

and endured the death of the cross. When He was roused from among the dead, Christ was no longer dying (see the article on Romans 6:2-11 in this issue). So much of the immense and vital value of the cross of Christ is covered up by the traditional teaching concerning death. It is not in any way a state of life. In the death of Christ, death and sin were put to death. This will ultimately be realized in the vivification of all.

Yet many passages of Scripture as they are translated or as inferences are drawn from them seem to support the idea that there is life in death. It seems timely, therefore, to reprint here the studies entitled, "Untenable Texts" (including that on "The Rich Man and Lazarus") which were included in Brother Knoch's series, *The Secret of the Resurrection.*

May they be helpful toward growth in appreciation for the evangel of God concerning His Son. It is not our death that brings us into life, but God's achievement in and through the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Death is an enemy, and the last one to be abolished (1 Cor.15:26). We see its operation all around us, and we feel its effects within. We know its ongoing reign of horror. Yet, because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the experience of death has this great value, that it teaches, as nothing else could do, the glory and goodness of life as it shall be. Death is the end of all that is wrong, but it is not the end of us. For we shall be of the resurrection, walking in newness of life, and living to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Now, whenever, this corruptible should be putting on incorruption, and this mortal should be putting on immortality, then shall come to pass the word which is written, Swallowed up was Death by Victory! (1 Cor. 15:22,54). D.H.H.

HE DIED, HE DIED—
HE IS LIVING, HE IS LIVING

THE EVANGEL of God concerning His Son is a message of death and life. We see this first in Romans 1:4 where our Lord is introduced as being "designated Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the **resurrection of the dead.**" Here we see the grand culmination of Christ's death and resurrection, as it applies to humanity, all of whom are deserving of **death** (Rom.1:32).

Thus, at the very start, we know where the evangel is taking us. It goes from death to life, addressing humanity at its most helpless level (the level of absolute helplessness), and bringing it life of highest value because of acquaintance with that helplessness.

Yet in considering what the evangel means to us, we must never forget that it centers on Jesus Christ, our Lord. God "spares not His own Son, but **gives Him up** for us all" (Rom.8:32). The basis of this consummation of life out of death is the death and rousing of Jesus Christ Himself out from among the dead. We who believe place our faith on God "Who **rouses** Jesus our Lord from among the **dead,** Who was **given up** because of our offenses, and was **roused** because of our justifying" (Rom.4:24,25).

GOD'S WELL-MESSAGE

This evangel is explicitly proclaimed in Romans 5. It is a message of righteousness, peace and love. In believing this message we are positioned before God in grace and may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God (*cf* Rom. 5:1,2). Here is what we believe:

For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, **died** *. . . . God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ* **died** *for our sakes. Much rather, then, being now justified in His* **blood,** *we shall be saved from indignation through Him.*

For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the **death** *of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His* **life**. (Rom.5:6-10)

We are sinners because of the one offense of Adam which brought the operation of death into all his posterity. Yet through the righteous deed of Christ in dying for our sakes, the multitudinous race shall be brought into righteousness and a life otherwise unknowable:

. . . through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin **death**, *and thus* **death** *passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned.* (Rom.5:12)

For if, by the offense of the one, **death** *reigns through the one, much rather, those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in* **life** *through the One, Jesus Christ.*

Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for **condemnation,** *thus also it is through one just [act] for all mankind for* **life's** *justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.* (Rom.5:17-19)

A PSALM OF PAUL

The apostle is addressing the believer. We are to know that what Christ has done for us is a special application in grace of what He has done for all. Grace has already been set over us as a power, through the righteousness of God operating and manifested through Christ Jesus, for

life eonian (Rom.5:21). Thus we come to Romans 6:2-11 where the evangel as it speaks of death and life in relation to the believer is expressed by ten couplets of paralleled lines in a psalm-like form:

1. *We who* **died** *to sin,*
   How shall we still be **living** *in it?*
2. *Or are you ignorant that whoever are baptized into*
   Christ Jesus are baptized into His **death?**
   We, then, were entombed together with Him
   through baptism into **death,**
3. *That, even as Christ was* **roused** *from among the* **dead**
   through the glory of the Father,
   Thus we also should be walking in newness of **life.**
4. *For if we have become planted together in the likeness*
   of His **death,**
   Nevertheless we shall be of the **resurrection** *also,*
5. *Knowing this, that our old humanity was* **crucified**
   together with Him,
   That the body of Sin may be **nullified,**
6. *For us by no means to be still slaving for Sin,*
   For one who **dies** *has been justified from Sin.*
7. *Now if we* **died** *together with Christ,*
   We believe that we shall be **living**
   together with Him also,
8. *Having perceived that Christ, being* **roused**
   from among the **dead** *is no longer* **dying.**
   Death *is lording it over Him no longer,*
9. *For in that He* **died,** *He* **died** *to Sin once for all time,*
   Yet in that He is **living,** *He is* **living** *to God.*
10. *Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be* **dead,**
    indeed, to Sin,
    Yet **living** *to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.*

The language of the declaration and question of the first couplet reappears in the exhortation of the last couplet. Our present living is a matter of reckoning that the evangel of God concerning His Son as it is presented in Romans 6:2-11 (and indeed in Romans 3:21-6:11) is true. Our living is continually affected by our believing of the evangel, by our declaring in faith, and getting to know in faith, and perceiving in faith the grace of God in giving His Son, Who died for our sakes—the grace of God in already identifying us with Christ and His death and entombment, and the grace of God as it will realized and enjoyed when we are resurrected to newness of life in the future. This believing and declaring and getting to know and perceiving with the eyes of our heart is a matter of reckoning. It is a matter of taking account of what the evangel concerning Jesus Christ our Lord says. In this act of believing, this act of reckoning, the power of God is engaged in our day by day living (*cf* Rom.1:16,17).

Thus it is critical for us to be listening to the evangel, to be declaring it, to be mentally, from the heart, recognizing that all its vast goodness and wealth is ours. The old humanity is crucified. We have been justified from Sin. It is not a message telling us what we must do. It is a message centering on what God has done in and through His Son, Who died, and Who was roused from among the dead, and Who is living to God. He died, He died to Sin. He is living, He is living to God. And so also, we died to Sin and shall be living to God.

HOW SHALL WE BE LIVING?

1. *We who* **died** *to sin,*
   How shall we still be **living** *in it?*

There is power in truth and in meditating deeply on words of truth. In view of the truth of the superexceeding

superiority of God's grace over all sin, what shall we be declaring? (Rom.5:20-6:1). What is the truth that will guide us aright for living in a world of sin in which we are sinners? The first step the believer is urged to take, as Paul indicates here, is to declare the evangel which tells us we died to sin. Declaring and believing and perceiving the message of grace is the gateway to worthy living. The evangel that Christ died for our sins contains within it the earnest of the spirit for present living, not in declaring that we must die to sin, but rather that we died to sin.

This is not a statute of law, but the proclamation of grace. It is explained in the next few verses by means of several passive verbs which point to God as the active Doer, through our Lord Jesus Christ: We *are baptized* into the death of Christ Jesus. We *were entombed* together with Him into death. We *have become planted* together in the likeness of Christ's death. Our old humanity *was crucified* together with Him. The body of Sin *[shall] be nullified.* In that the believer has died, such a one *has been justified* from Sin.

We are sinners, but in God's sight, Who is calling that which is not as if it were (Rom.4:17), we are justified. Sin is not reckoned to us (*cf* Rom.4:8). Thus, with regard to our present living, we are reckoning ourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

BAPTIZED AND ENTOMBED

2. *Or are you ignorant that whoever are baptized into*
   Christ Jesus are baptized into His **death?**
   We, then, were entombed together with Him
   through baptism into **death,**

In believing the evangel we are believing that we are justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). It is the work of God through His Son. It is not our work, lest we be boast-

ing in ourselves (Rom.3:27; Eph.2:8,9). While we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8). And, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10), and thus are those who have *obtained* the conciliation (Rom.5:11).

Consequently, we are not ignorant that when we accepted the evangel in faith something was done to us by God, entirely apart from our physical acts or soulish feelings. "To him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness" (Rom.4:5). It is "on hearing" the word of truth, the evangel of our salvation, and "on believing also" that we are sealed, in Christ, with the holy spirit of promise, an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured (Eph.1:13,14). Justification and conciliation have been procured, and will be delivered to us. The figure of speech in Ephesians 1 is "sealed," and in Romans 6 it is "baptized." In both cases it is the operation of God by means of His spirit.

It is a great loss that so much of traditional comment on Romans 6:4 takes the baptism referred to here as a physical rite performed by sinners upon sinners. In spirit, God has "dipped" us into the death of Christ. By this means He has put our dead selves away, as the dead body of our Lord was entombed. This did not require an act of physical baptism occurring after we believe, as was practiced by the apostles (though seldom by Paul). It is truly a matter of spiritual grace, apart from works of law and involvement of the flesh. Let us get to know this grace and its powerful and good effect on our present living.

EVEN AS CHRIST

3. *That even as Christ* **was roused** *from among the* **dead**
through the glory of the Father,
Thus we also should be walking in newness of **life.**

Here the passive verb is related to Christ. He was absolutely unable to do anything, but in this position He was able to become a channel through which the glory of His God and Father would be manifested. In death, Christ depended fully on the Father for life. That is what death makes abundantly clear. It is the glory of the Father to bring life out of death, the glory of His power, the glory of His righteousness, the glory of His wisdom, and the glory of His love. This is the assurance of our future walk in newness of life. We shall be roused from among the dead by the Father's operation of power and love through Jesus Christ. And when this occurs we shall be walking in newness of life. Even as it has occurred for Christ, thus also it shall occur for us (except that this is channeled to us by God *through Christ*).

DEATH AND RESURRECTION

4. *For if we have become planted together in the likeness of His* **death,**
Nevertheless we shall be of the **resurrection** *also,*

We look back at what God has done in planting us together in the likeness of Christ's death. And we look ahead to standing up in newness of life in which we will be living to God as Christ is doing. The figure of baptism is changed here to the figure of planting. Paul uses a similar figure in 1 Corinthians 15:35-41 where, speaking of our resurrection bodies, he draws attention to what happens to a seed when it is *sown.* The old kernel dies and a plant with a new body emerges. As with Christ, when we believe and are identified with His death, something is done away with. And as with Christ, when we are resurrected to life, that which was done away with no longer exists. When Christ was roused, His existence as the Sin Offering was left behind, never to be repeated, never to be

needed again. Our existence as sinners will likewise be gone when we are resurrected. This is expressed in 1 Corinthians 15:22 and 53 by the words "vivified" and "immortality."

This evangel of what has happened and will happen, as it is patterned and made possible by the death and resurrection of Christ, has a powerful impact on our present lives as we are believing it. As he does in Colossians 3:16,17, Paul is saying here that we are to let this word of Christ be making its home in us richly, teaching and admonishing ourselves in *psalms,* in hymns, in spiritual songs, singing with *grace in our hearts* to God.

We are not affected by a message which says we must live a new life in order to be of the resurrection. No. We are affected by the message which says that, because of Christ's death and life, we shall be of the resurrection and enjoy a new life; thus may this faithful word work on our present thinking and living.

OUR OLD HUMANITY CRUCIFIED

5. *Knowing this, that our old humanity was* **crucified** *together with Him,*
   That the body of Sin may be **nullified,**

If we have been planted together with Christ in the likeness of His death, our old humanity has been crucified together with Him. And if our old humanity has been crucified together with Him, the body of Sin in which we presently live shall be nullified, abolished, fully and finally discarded.

The old humanity, being susceptible to corruption, became corrupted by the process of dying, through Adam's disobedience (Rom.5:12-19). This corruption is manifested in our bodies of Sin by means of infirmity and irreverence and unrighteousness. Paul writes of the future change of believers, noting that "The first man was out of the earth,

soilish; the second Man is the Lord out of heaven. Such as the soilish one is, such are those also who are soilish, and such as the Celestial One, such are those also who are celestials. And according as we wear the image of the soilish, we [shall] be wearing the image also of the Celestial" (1 Cor.15:47-49). In the wider viewpoint of the consummation the entire old humanity will be discarded and fully replaced by the new humanity, for in that Christ died for all, all died (2 Cor.5:14).

That this shall be for all, and that it is true already in God's sight for us, is an essential aspect of the righteousness of God, now being manifested through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.3:21,22). All that is wrong must be nullified and replaced by all that is right and good to the glory of God. This standard of God's righteousness is made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.3:21,26).

But now Paul speaks to the believer. As for us, each of us may be declaring, with Paul, that "With Christ have I been crucified, yet I am living; no longer I, but living in me is Christ. Now that which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith that is of the Son of God" (Gal.2:20). In this declaration of living faith there is an earnest of the spirit, bringing to us a foretaste, day by day, of our future living, when the fruit of the spirit (Gal.5:22,23) will fully dominate our lives.

JUSTIFIED FROM SIN

6. *For us by no means to be still slaving for Sin,*
   For one who **dies** *has been justified from Sin.*

The evangel tells us that there will be a day in which Sin shall not reign over us, when the body of Sin is absolutely nullified. We will not be slaving under Sin's tyrannical effects of infirmity, irreverence and unrighteousness. It is in view of this future that Paul's entreaties about pre-

senting ourselves to God and obedience to righteousness in the coming paragraphs have their basis and presently exercise their force.

This great expectation of emancipation from slavery to Sin is matched here with the grand assurance that we have been justified from Sin. Whereas Romans 1:18-3:19 led to the conclusion that, by works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight, now in Romans 6:7 we are assured that our identification with the death of Christ has brought us into that very position of justification in God's sight. It does not come by the channel of works of law, but rather by the channel of the death and resurrection of Christ and our death together with Him and expectation of life in which we will be living as He is living.

WE ARE BELIEVING

7. *Now if we* **died** *together with Christ,*
We believe that we shall be **living**
together with Him also,

Here is faith for our walk at its most essential level. We believe with respect to our past that we died together with Christ. We believe with respect to our future that we shall be living together with Him also. Indeed, as the exact form of the Greek verb expresses it, we who died together with Christ by means of God's grace, *are believing* that we shall be living together with Christ. Faith is an ongoing activity.

Our present is shaped continually by faith. We have no empirical proof that what the evangel says has happened and shall happen is so. From a human standpoint the faith that we can contribute nothing to the deliverance which Christ has already gained invites the suffering of scorn and rejection by others. Yet to us "it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake [for the honor of His Name], not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also" (Phil.1:29). Therefore, the believer keeps on believing that Christ crucified is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor.1:23,24).

NO LONGER DYING

8. *Having perceived that Christ, being* **roused**
from among the **dead** *is no longer* **dying.**
Death *is lording it over Him no longer,*

Christ is the One gazed upon by our eyes of faith. He is the One we perceive in coming to know what has happened to us in spirit and what is ahead for us. His complete deliverance from death is what ours shall be. We are deeply thankful for this death for what it has eliminated from our existence. In being the death of death, it is the final death which will never occur again. But this means nothing without Christ being roused from among the dead in a state in which there is no more dying and no more reign of death. As He was freed from death's bonds, so shall all mankind be freed when vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:22).

Concerning Christ, George L. Rogers wrote, "Death once mastered Him completely. He really died . . . . The severity of the sentence was not commuted in favor of the Person Who endured it; He was not treated as the Son of God, but as sin itself. Death's mastery could be broken only when justice had no further claim of any kind. Death had the same mastery over Him that Sin had over the race. He took the doom due, not to individual men, but to a whole humanity, which was destruction, that is, death. Our old humanity is not to be tormented, but abolished; it shall die. Death mastered Him only because it had first mastered us, and unless some one carried away the divine condemnation, no deliverance from the reign of death was possible."[1]

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.23, p.371.

HE DIED TO SIN

9. *For in that He* **died,** *He* **died** *to Sin once for all time*
Yet in that He is **living,** *He is* **living** *to God.*

Christ died. And in that He died, He died to Sin once for all time. And in that He died to Sin once for all time, He died for our sake, we who are sinners under the reign of death, that we too might die to the sway of this tyrant and its effects, and thus be justified from Sin and be living to God.

Christ died to what He had been made to be, the Sin Offering, the Antitype of all the sin offerings of old (2 Cor. 5:21). What He had been made to be was exterminated. That has no longer any rule over Him.

Yet as for us, through the one man, Adam, we have been made to be sinners, who are dying and will die (*cf* Rom. 5:12-14), absolutely helpless apart from the operation of God, the Father, through His Son, through His death to Sin, and His rousing from among the dead, in which He is no longer dying, and death is lording over Him no longer.

Throughout this section of Romans, our attention is called to the death of Christ, the very first declaration of the evangel as it is set before is in 1 Corinthians 15:3,4. *Christ died for our sins.*

Even though Paul speaks now in Romans 6:10 of Christ's death as it relates to Himself, in its context this is clearly related to the believer (and indeed, with Romans 5:12-19 in view, to all mankind as sinners). It is Christ's death to sin that establishes the righteous and loving process which leads to the ideal and glorious consummation when we shall be living to God. Yet already, as we are believing this evangel it works in us in accord with its spirit of grace.

Paul could have written simply that Christ died to Sin once and for all time. But he repeats the words "He died." This gives these words special emphasis. To say that the

Anointed One of God died is shocking enough. But to repeat it is calculated to make us stare and stagger and then to focus and seek to comprehend. This is serious. This is momentous. This is big.

And then Paul adds that this happened only once. It will never happen again. What it was meant to do was done. The one-time event was successful, and its happy results are sure and certain.

BUT DID CHRIST DIE?

It is uncanny that so many who testify that Christ died for their sins claim He was still alive while He was dead. The Adversary is very clever. As he attempted to do with our Lord in the wilderness (*cf* Matt.4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13), he has used words of Scripture to deceive even the chosen.[2] The result is that the value of Christ's death is only dimly perceived. When Christ died, He was no longer living, just as being roused from among the dead, He is no longer dying. He was among the dead. He was as they were and still are. But in this, Christ as the Sin Offering and corrupted humanity were done away with.

CHRIST IS LIVING

In being roused from among the dead, Christ is living ("He is living—He is living"), but not simply being alive once again. He is living to God!

But was He not always living to God, from before the world came into being, enjoying glory with His Father (*cf* John 17:5), and still doing so until He emptied Himself, yet truly even throughout His time in the form of a slave and likeness of humanity remaining obedient in all ways to His God and Father (Phil.2:6-8)? Yes indeed! But now He is One Who "has learned obedience from that which He

2. *cf* the articles discussing "Untenable Texts" in this issue.

suffered" (Heb.5:8), and Who has tasted death (Heb.2:9). So it is that here in the context of Romans 6:10, we perceive that Christ is living to God, *having died and having been roused from among the dead!* He is living to God as no other has (yet) ever done.

In this way Christ is the Firstfruit of vivification, but we shall follow (1 Cor.15:22,23). We shall be living together with Christ (Rom.6:8), but indeed we shall be living as He is living, living to God as those who know what death is and who will know with full realization the depths of the glory of God's provision of life in all its power and purity, in righteousness and peace and love.

Christ died. This is past tense. It was done once, and will not be repeated. Christ is living. This is present tense, action going on through time, but action that is shaped and defined by that which was done once for all time. So also, because of Christ's death and resurrection, it shall be for us.

THUS YOU ALSO

10. *Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be* **dead,**
indeed, to Sin,
Yet **living** *to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.*

We have heard a message of incalculable grace rising from the death and life of Jesus Christ, already granted in spirit to us who are believing and certain of future realization. What has been done and what shall be are as certain to be realized in experience by us as they are already by Christ. God has said this is true. We are reckoning it is true. This is an aspect of believing. It will come before us in the following verses, expressed by such verbs as "presenting" and "obeying" (putting our hearing under what God has said to us).

Now thanks be to God!

D.H.H.

UNTENABLE TEXTS

PERHAPS THE SUREST way of obtaining a satisfactory grasp of the relative weight of the two positions as to the "intermediate state" is to consider the character of the evidence adduced. On one hand we have plain statements of truth and fact. In dealing directly with the subject, the Scriptures inform us that death is a sleep, devoid of knowledge; that resurrection is an awakening from this condition. This is illustrated by examples. On the other hand we are not given a single positive statement, but all is inferred from passages which are obscure.

The book of Ecclesiastes makes a distinct point of the conditions of life and of death. The state of mankind during death is vital to its argument. "All that your hand finds to do, do with your vigor, *for* there is no doing, or devising or knowledge or wisdom in the unseen, where you are going" (Ecc.9:10). The death state is here described in unequivocal terms, and is made an incentive for earnest living. This is the testimony of David, too, when he says concerning a son of humanity: "His spirit shall go forth, and he shall return to his ground; *in that day his reflections perish.*" (Psa.146:4).

Yet it is claimed that the contrary view that death involves some kind of life is given support by a number of other passages of Scripture. In the following pages the major texts so used are examined in light of their contexts and sound translation principles. In each case the text used is found to be untenable in support of the claim of consciousness in death.

"TO DEPART AND BE WITH CHRIST"

sunechomai de ek tōn duo tên epithumian
I-AM-BEING-PRESSED YET OUT OF-THE TWO THE ON-FEELING

echōn eis to analusai kai sun christō
HAVING INTO THE TO-UP-LOOSE AND TOGETHER TO-ANOINTED

einai pollō gar mallon kreisson
TO-BE much for RATHER better

> Yet I am being pressed out of the two, having a yearning for the solution and to be together with Christ, for it, rather, is much better (Phil.1:23).

Perhaps no passage presents greater difficulties than where the apostle is supposed to be in "a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ . . ." (Phil.1:23, AV). And perhaps no passage presents the translators in a greater strait than this one. A glance at the Greek or the accompanying sublinear will show that the word which they rendered "betwixt" is really OUT. The evidence for this is overwhelming, for these very translators have made it so one hundred and sixty-five times. Besides this, they render it *of* with this significance three hundred and sixty-eight times, and *from* one hundred and eighty-one times. Only once are they driven to use *betwixt.* It is easy to see how they would be compelled, because of English idiom, to vary *out* to *from* or *of,* for these all have the same meaning and differ merely in usage. But if a thing is *betwixt* two others that is quite the opposite of being *out* of them. To show this difference more clearly, let us render a passage or two with "betwixt" and see what we get. We have already spoken of the resurrection *out from among* the dead and shall have occasion to enlarge upon this in the future. How silly this would sound if we render it "the resurrection *betwixt* the dead!" How dangerous it would be if Colossians 1:13 read, "Who hath delivered us *betwixt* the power of darkness!" How could we be "absent *betwixt*

the body" (2 Cor.5:8)? We may rest assured, then, that the apostle is not *betwixt* two things but out of them. The word rendered "I am in a strait" means to *press together,* and could be rendered "oppress" when used of sickness (See Matt.4:24; Luke 4:38; Acts 28:8). It is graphically used when the multitudes "thronged" Jesus (Luke 8:45). The word *strait,* having the idea of *confine* does not seem to give us the proper thought when He speaks of His ministry being *straitened* (Luke 12:50). Rather He was pressed together, constrained. Just so Paul was constrained by the love of Christ (2 Cor.5:14). The love that pressed upon the apostle Paul *broadened,* rather than straitened or narrowed him.

From this we see that in Philippians Paul was in no strait at all. He was being *pressed* out of the two (either living or dying) by a *third* thing—the glorious expectation of the return of his beloved Lord.

That the translators knew nothing of this blessed hope seems almost incredible, yet such was the case. It was nothing short of heresy. They knew of nothing *very* far better than living or dying. They could not see how death was *very* far better than life, so they simply left the word out altogether. Actually, the rendering "very" is still not ideal, for the thought of the Greek is not simply one of degree but of preference. We can say that Paul would much *rather* have the coming of Christ than either life or death, but we cannot say, in English at least, that it is "much *rather* better." The idiom of our language forces us to compromise and render, "for (it), rather, (is) much better." The sublinear, being consistent and unhampered by English idiom, will give us the true thought. There was really not much choice between life and death for one like the apostle, for whatever either might hold for Christ, they were both totally eclipsed by the expectation of serving Him in His very presence. For Paul to live was *Christ.* For him to die

would also be gain—for *Christ.* That this gain was to be for Christ rather than himself is also implied by what he had just written: "as always, now also, *Christ shall be magnified* in my body, whether through life *or through death* (v.20). His death as a martyr would further the effect his imprisonment had had; it would glorify Christ and encourage the saints. But such service cannot be compared with the service which we shall be able to render when we are in His ineffable presence. Not life for us—nor death—but the "solution," the presence of Christ! This is what "pressed" him out of the two—life or death. This is indeed "rather much better!"

The word here translated "depart" by the AV, is, in its only other verbal occurrence, rendered by "return" (Luke 12:36). Is there any reason for such opposites? Or, is it rather that the translators had not seen the real import of the word? When we turn to the only occurrence of the noun (2 Tim.4:6), we find it is also rendered "departure," but this is hardly satisfactory, for it must explain the idea of being "ready to be offered." Let us take a closer look at this word and its family to find its literal basis; then we will evaluate this meaning, to see if it agrees with the usage of the word.

The word is a compound of the prefix *ana-*, UP or *back,* and *luō,* LOOSE. We recognize this compound in our word *analysis.* English uses it in its literal sense, to loose a compound back into its elements. By looking up the usages of the simple uncompounded form, *luō,* we will find much evidence which will establish the sense of the compound; for example:

Matt.21:2 *loosen* the colt	Acts 27:41 *break up* ship's stern
John 2:19 *raze* the temple	2 Peter 3:10 *dissolve* elements

All these have the broad sense of disintegration, and this is the literal idea in the words *analuō* and *analusis,*

which we are considering. The effect of the added prefix *ana-* does not alter the basic sense, but rather gives a preciseness to *luō.*

When we combine these details, we conclude that Luke 12:36 speaks precisely of "*breaking loose* from the wedding festivities." It is not the "return," for this is covered by the next part of the verse. Paul uses this thought at 2 Timothy 4:6, for he is concerned with his imminent "dissolution," that is, his disintegration into the elemental parts of the human makeup; this he compares to what he was already—a libation.

We may now return to Philippians 1:23. Employing this understanding, we are able to correct the AV rendering "depart," and in its place put something which is in full agreement with all the occurrences. Paul was pressed out of the two—living or dying—and he yearned for the "solution" to his position, for only *that* would cause him to be together with Christ. Thus, Paul hoped to be called to meet his Lord in the air. This was his yearning.

The connection between the words "solution" and "dissolution" can be perceived when we reflect that we *dissolve* an element or substance, yet we *solve* a problem, and this was what Paul needed when he wrote from the Roman prison to the Philippians.

That this is the meaning intended, we are further assured by the next statement: "to be with Christ." How shall we be with Him? in death? No! When He comes and calls us to Himself in clouds, *then* (and not till then) we read "and *thus* shall we always be together with the Lord" (1 Thess.4:17).

"TODAY SHALT THOU BE WITH ME IN PARADISE"

In approaching this passage we will step aside for a moment to point out that this was not spoken to a dying *thief.* Two *malefactors* were led *with* Him to be put to death (Luke 23:32). After the soldiers had crucified Him and

parted His garments and watched Him and set the accusation over His head, *then* there were two *robbers,* beside the malefactors, crucified with Him. Both robbers afterwards reviled Him (Matt.27:35-38,44). When one of the malefactors blasphemed Him, then it was that the other one rebuked him and confessed his own guilt and the innocence of the One Who hung at his side. That he knew and believed the Scriptures and had heard of the Christ is evident from his request: "Be reminded of me, Lord, whenever Thou mayest be coming in Thy kingdom." Of that kingdom the prophets had foretold and he believed that the Man at his side was the King. That kingdom will not come until the kingdoms of this world are destroyed and give place to the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ (Rev.11:15). Among the glorious promises of that day the malefactor had doubtless often heard Isaiah's consolation read from the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the old Hebrew writings:

> And I will be comforting you, O Zion,
> And I comfort all her deserts,
> And I will place her deserts as paradise
> And her wilderness as the Lord's paradise.
> They shall find gladness and exultation in her,
> Confession and the voice of praise.
> (Isaiah 51:3, SEPTUAGINT)

To him the Kingdom was familiarly known as the "paradise" or park, the garden of Yahweh, Eden of old. It was to be a place of gladness and exultation. What a contrast with his present plight! Our Lord seizes this aspect of the coming Kingdom and holds it up against the dark background of that day's doings: "Verily, to you am I saying today, with Me shall you be in paradise" (Luke 23:43). At such a time, on such a day, what a comfort for the malefactor to look forward to the delights of the coming Kingdom!

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER PUNCTUATION

It is possible to strain this passage so as to punctuate as the AV, "Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). The original, with a consistent sublinear, is as follows:

kai eipen autō o iêsous amen soi legō sêmeron
AND said to-him THE JESUS AMEN to-YOU I-AM-saying TODAY
met emou esê en tō paradeisō
WITH ME YOU-WILL-BE IN THE PARK

> And Jesus said to him, "Verily to you am I saying today, with Me shall you be in paradise."

It will be noted that "today" follows immediately after "I am saying" and is separated from "you will be" by two words. Unless especially emphatic, the adverb (today) usually follows its verb (I-am-saying) as here. The most natural and unforced reading is to leave "today" with "saying" as it is in the Greek. The absence of the word oti, *that,* in the Greek, has been given as evidence to this effect, but such passages as Hebrews 3:7,15, James 4:13, where "that" is lacking, as in this passage, show how little dependence can be placed upon this argument. It proves nothing.

The Word of God knows of no paradise to which the malefactor and his Lord could go on that day. Both knew well that the Kingdom, of which they spoke, was a paradise. Hence our Lord tells this suffering companion that they both will be in *the* paradise. Not simply a paradise of which they had not heard, but *the* paradise of the Kingdom of which the prophets had written.

The phrase "to you I am saying *today*" may sound strange to our English ears, but no expression in the Scriptures may be judged by such a test. On many occasions it was used when the day referred to was especially notable (See Deut.30:15,16,18,19). Yet which of these could be compared to the day when Jesus spoke these words? For it was

a day of days, unpeered, unparalleled— the very opposite of paradise.

ALL, TO HIM, ARE LIVING

"God," we are told, "is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all, to Him, are living." This is supposed to prove that the dead are not really dead; hence they need no resurrection. But our Lord uses it to prove the opposite. "*Now that the dead are rousing,* even Moses divulges at the thorn bush, as he is terming the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. *Now* God is He, not of the dead, but of the living, *for* all, to Him, are living" (Luke 20:37,38).

This is the reply which He gave to the Sadducees, who deny that there is any resurrection (Luke 20:27). The mere fact that this passage could even be supposed to prove that the dead are alive shows how far the present attitude towards these things differs from their standpoint.

The point which the Lord proves is not life *in* death, but resurrection *from* death. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob died (Gen.25:8; 35:20; 49:33). Should the dead not be raised, then God would be the God of the dead. But as there is no life apart from resurrection, they must be raised. If there is a life apart from resurrection; if the dead are already alive, what need is there for resurrection? If Abraham is now alive why could not God be his God without resurrection?

The Sadducees were silenced and the scribes were so impressed that they dared not ask Him any more questions.

"ABSENT FROM THE BODY—PRESENT WITH THE LORD"

This quotation is not from the Scriptures, but rather a popular mis-quotation of 2 Corinthians 5:8. The contention is that "absent from the body" can be true only in a

disembodied state before the resurrection. This looks very plausible and demands consideration. The statement that "absent from the body" can only be realized in resurrection has been held up to ridicule on the ground that, in resurrection, we are *not* "absent from the body."

A careful canvas of the context will show, however, that the reference is not merely to *a* body, but to this burdensome body which we lay aside, and not to our glorious bodies of the resurrection.

First of all, let us consider the statement of 2 Corinthians 5:6, last clause:

> "whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord" (AUTHORIZED VERSION).
>
> "being at home in the body, we are away from home from the Lord" (CONCORDANT VERSION).

All will agree that the body here referred to can only be *this* body, not the spiritual body which we get in resurrection, for we will *not* be away from the Lord when we are at home in our heavenly habitation. The sense absolutely demands that we restrict the word "body" to the present burdensome tent or tabernacle.

Consider also, a few lines later; 2 Corinthians 5:10:

> "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (AUTHORIZED VERSION).
>
> "For all of us must be manifested in front of the dais of Christ, that each should be requited for that which he puts into practice through the body, whether good or bad." (CONCORDANT VERSION).

Here, too, at the *bema* or dais of Christ, we are compelled to limit the application to the deeds done in *this* body, not in the one we shall then wear.

In both of these passages the definite article (the) is depended on in the Greek to point out that not simply *a* body is intended but *the* body of which Paul has been

speaking. It will appear from this that an English version would be justified in treating the article as a demonstrative pronoun, which it really is in some passages. We might render it "this" without even going as far as the Authorized has done in inserting "this" in the first verse of the chapter.

But to the Scripture in point: it occurs midway between the two passages which have been quoted. It contains exactly the same words and in exactly the same grammatical construction as the one last quoted. It is this (2 Cor.5:8):

> "rather to be away from home out of the body and to be at home with the Lord." (CONCORDANT VERSION).

We now have, in a continuous connection, these three occurrences of the word "body":

Verse 6,	*tō sōmati*	to the body.
Verse 8,	*tou sōmatos*	of the body.
Verse 10,	*tou sōmatos*	of the body.

In the first and last the sense is limited to *this* body. Why not in the other?

Consider, also, the context, especially the first four verses of the chapter. The apostle had no desire to be "unclothed." Why should he change his mind so suddenly and now "much prefer" the unclothed condition?

The form which this text usually takes—"absent from the body: present with the Lord," is unscriptural and comes under the condemnation of 2 Timothy 1:13. When this text is read in the light of its context (always the best way), we cannot at all see how it can be forced to teach that "sudden death" is "sudden glory." This thought arises and is fostered by the omission of the words which are (unconsciously, perhaps) repudiated—*and to be.* The very fact that these words are almost universally discarded by those who use this text in opposition to the truth shows that they are an encumbrance to their understanding of the meaning of the passage. A true appreciation of the message conveyed absolutely demands that we retain them. It does not make them "of none effect."

It is well, then, to attune our hearts and heads to the spirit of the passage, which is not to contrast *a* body with the Lord's presence, but this temporary, burdened tent with the eonian weight of glory which awaits us. In *this* we groan, earnestly longing, *not* for the naked state of death, but the clothed eonian condition. Thus this Scripture agrees with the general tenor of God's Word, which teaches that those whom we reckon as dead have only been put to sleep (1 Thess.4:14).

"THEM WHICH SLEEP IN JESUS WILL GOD BRING WITH HIM"

The silence of Scripture as to the state between death and resurrection is most marked. Men are foolish enough to say that no one has ever returned from the realm of the dead, so that we might inquire as to what they saw and how they felt. Did not Lazarus come back after a sojourn of four days? What had he to say? *Nothing.* But the apostle Paul, when seeking to relieve the feelings of the distressed Thessalonians speaks right to the point. *"I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are reposing . . . ."* Surely *now* we will have some light on the vexed question! Our ignorance is to be taken away. We are to know! But not a word is given concerning the present state of those who are sleeping (except the fact that they *are* asleep). We are pointed forward to resurrection. Not a present harp but a future hope. And this is further emphasized by the statement that we who are alive and remain to the presence of the Lord shall not *precede them!* If they are already in His presence these words are worse than nonsense. They have not preceded us nor will we precede them in that glorious day, but together shall enter the Presence Ineffable.

Once more we are compelled to call attention to the defective translation which has been the cause of the difficulty in this passage. The following is the Greek and a consistent sublinear of 1 Thessalonians 4:14,15, followed by the Concordant Version rendering:

ei gar pisteuomen oti iêsous apethanen kai anestê
IF FOR WE-ARE-BELIEVING that JESUS FROM-DIED AND UP-STOOD
outōs kai o theos tous koimêthentas dia
thus AND THE GOD THE *ones*-BEING-REPOSED THRU
tou iêsou axei sun autō touto gar umin
THE JESUS WILL-BE-LEADING TOGETHER to-Him this for to-YOU
legomen en logō kuriou oti êmeis oi zōntes
WE-ARE-sayING IN saying OF-Master that WE THE LIVING
oi perileipomenoi eis tên parousian tou kuriou
THE *ones*-SURVIVING INTO THE BESIDE-BEING OF-THE Master
ou mê phthasōmen tous koimêthentas
NOT NO SHOULD-BE-OUT-STRIPPING THE *ones*-BEING-reposED

> For, if we are believing that Jesus died and rose, thus also, those who are put to repose, will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with Him. For this we are saying to you by the word of the Lord, that we, the living, who are surviving to the presence of the Lord, should by no means outstrip those who are put to repose . . . .

The death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus is the great example for all His saints. Just as God raised Him, so He will raise us through Him (2 Cor.4:14). It is a great pity that we should even be asked to look upon such a phrase as "sleep in Jesus" or even the revisers marginal correction "sleep *through* Jesus," for He is not and will not be the Author of death, but of life. It is a most incongruous idea to give Him the work of the Adversary (who has the jurisdiction of death, Heb.2:14), and have God working counter to Him and without Him in resurrection. No, indeed. We believe that God has raised Him and, since we

are one with Him, how can it be otherwise than that God will bring us from the dead *with* Him and *through* Him?

So that, when He comes to call His waiting people unto Himself, He does not bring the dead with Him to earth, but brings them with Him from death.

Let us, for the moment, suppose that the dead had already been with Him in the heavens. How then shall we reconcile this with the very next statement? We who survive, says the apostle, shall not *precede* (outstrip) those who are asleep. How foolish this would sound if the *dead* had already preceded *us*, some of them for nearly two thousand years! We shall not get ahead of them, even if they are asleep, for we are assured that *both-together*—those who have fallen asleep and we who survive—we shall unite to meet Him in the air. And *thus*—in resurrection— shall we always be together with the Lord! Not disembodied, but with glorious bodies. That glad day is not satisfied with introducing the living alone to their Lord, but the dead too, shall accompany them to our gathering together unto Him. Then we shall be like Him. Then we shall be for Him. And *He* shall be satisfied with us, for His beauty will be seen in us. His glory shall shine through us; His love will illumine us. But, best of all, God will gain the goal of His heart's desire when death and distance are defeated and life and love have brought His creatures back into His bosom.

"IN THE BODY OR OUT OF THE BODY"

Scattered throughout Scripture are unusual exhibitions of Divine power. These may never be appealed to in order to establish a general truth. The protest of the beast which Balaam rode is no proof that his kind are endowed with human speech (Num.22:28). Elijah was caught up in a whirlwind, yet who dreams that this describes the departure of all God's saints? (2 Kings 2:11). It is manifestly unwise

to bring up special and extraordinary experiences to disprove the ordinary rule. We would hardly care to walk the waves even though we have our Lord's case as proof that it can be done. How much more, then, when we have positive and particular instruction as to the state of the dead, should we refrain from discrediting God's Word by marshalling miraculous instances which seem to contradict it!

The case of John, who was "in spirit" in the Lord's day, shows the power of *God* to communicate with the human spirit. For the purpose of revelation, John was transported to a time or to a place which the body could not then have occupied, yet he is able to see and hear.

Paul, too, was caught away to paradise and the third heaven, and he was not aware whether it was in the body or out of the body, yet God was aware. The allusion was to an occurrence fourteen years prior, when his battered and bleeding body was left for dead outside the city of Lystra (Acts 14:19). The revelations then received augmented Paul's ministry, for they gave him transcendent truths and put them into their future perspective.

We must not decide that Paul was dead, for that is the very detail withheld, yet we do know that of itself, his spirit would have no consciousness when apart from the body, and it could receive no revelations unless his spirit was specially vivified. This is very evident in the case of the dead, for though they are asleep, they shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear shall live (John 5:25). They cannot remain dead, for His words are life, and they will be roused to life by His vivifying call. The power of God which was able to project John's spirit into paradise in the new earth, so that he saw and heard the wonderful future in store for the earth, or the still more marvelous visions which Paul had of that same paradise and the heavens above, these do not deny what God has revealed concerning the death state.

"WHOSOEVER LIVETH AND BELIEVETH ON ME SHALL NEVER DIE"

Upon the surface, taken apart from its context, this Scripture seems to teach the deathlessness of all believers. But if we consider its context and the real meaning of "never," this teaching becomes untenable.

That faith does not infer immortality is clear from our Lord's previous statement: "He that believeth in Me, *though he were dead*, yet shall he live." (John 11:25. The Concordant rendering is much more exact: "He who is believing in Me, even if he should be dying, shall be living."). When will this be? At the resurrection which ushers in the kingdom eon. With this in mind, He proceeds, "And everyone who is living and believing in Me, should by no means be dying for the eon." (v.26, CV). Those Israelites who have died in faith before the thousand years begin will be made alive at resurrection, but those who, *at that time*, will still be living will continue to live for the whole eon. They will not die for that "ever." It is important to put due stress upon the fact that it does not read simply, "whosoever believeth" but rather "whosoever *liveth* and believeth." This double thought must be taken in the light of the previous statement that *those who believe do die*, which debars the inference that faith is a guarantee of deathlessness, except in the case of those who are living when the resurrection takes place. They alone shall "never die."

"THE HEART OF THE EARTH"

The sooner the English reader realizes that he has but a translation of the Word of God, and that the idiom is not English nor even Greek so much as Hebrew, the sooner will he make solid progress in the knowledge of the truth. There is no doubt but that the phrase "in the heart of the earth" means in the *center* of the earth, in *English.* But

it matters not how *we* understand it. The real question is, how did those to whom it was spoken understand it? That they did not apprehend it to mean the *center,* but referred it to the *surface* is clear from other instances of its use.

We have the similar phrase, the "heart" of a tree, meaning (to us) the innermost part of the trunk. Absalom was left dangling by his hair from the branch of an oak. Yet we read that Joab took three darts and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while yet alive in the heart (KJV "midst") of the oak (2 Sam.18: 9-14). The two words we have rendered "heart" are exactly the same in the Hebrew.

But more conclusive is the phrase "heart of the sea." It is applied to the place at which the Israelites crossed the "Red" Sea (Ex.15:8; C.V. "heart of the sea"). It describes the way of a ship upon the surface of the sea (Prov.30:19). But the most striking and instructive example is its fourfold reference to the city of Tyre, which was partly on an island on the coast of Canaan. Indeed, the island was so near the shore that Alexander the Great, in order to conquer it, built a mole out of the ruins of the shore city and thus connected it with the mainland. Tyre was far, indeed, from being in the center of the sea in any sense. And if Tyre might be described as being in the heart of the sea, what difficulty can there be in speaking of our Lord's tomb as "in the heart" of the earth? (Matt.12:40). It may sound strange to *us,* but most natural to those who heard Him.

The same principle applies to the phrase "the lower parts of the earth" (Eph.4:9). Neither the Psalm which is quoted nor the context in Ephesians, give any color to a subterranean visit. The contrast is between Sinai (Psa. 68:17,18), when our Lord did not condescend to the lower parts of the earth (but came down only to a high, inaccessible mountain, and the captivity to the law was thus prefigured), and the humiliation of His earthly life, when He, literally as well as figuratively, condescended into the very

vales and depths (bringing gifts, and, through His death, resurrection and ascension, leading captive the captivity which Sinai had brought). The rendering "multitude of captives" has no foundation in fact. The baptism of our Lord actually took place at the lowest spot on the surface of the earth.

"THE SPIRITS IN PRISON"

Much of the misunderstanding on the subject of the death state arises from the supposition that man is essentially spirit and that the body is only a temporary imposition on the spirit. As a result it is popularly inferred that consciousness inheres in the spirit rather than in the soul. This view requires us to believe that the spirit which was imparted to Adam had a previous conscious life in God's presence to which it returned at death. It demands that each one of Adam's descendants come consciously from the Divine presence and return consciously as they came. As the Scriptures know nothing of any such previous life, and as no one has any distinct recollection of it, we are driven to the conclusion that the return of the spirit to God at death, far from proving that it returns consciously, is rather the unanswerable argument that its return is not a conscious one.

The very passages which are produced to prove this position are likewise evidence of its falsity. The one most frequently referred to is Acts 7:59. Yet Stephen did not go consciously into his Lord's presence, but, as the common text has it, he *fell asleep.* If we bow to the inspired account we dare not say that it was not Stephen who fell asleep, but merely his body. In line with all Scripture, sleep is associated with the whole man. It knows nothing of spirit-sleeping, or soul-sleeping or body-sleeping. All of these, at death, enter into a state which the Word of God compares to the repose of sleep.

The case of our Lord Himself, which has already been alluded to, ought to put this point beyond all question. He commended His spirit to His Father. How could He say, then, after His resurrection, that He had *not* yet ascended, if all the while His spirit had been consciously in the Father's presence, and had just *descended?*

A vast distinction, however, must be drawn between *being* a spirit and *having* one. In a figurative sense, if we wish to emphasize man's spiritual side, it would, in a sense, be just as right to call a man a spirit as it is to use the term "body," as is often done in English, or, when referring to sensation, to describe a man as a "soul," as is often done in the Scriptures. This is the well-known figure "synecdoche" or association, in which a part is put for the whole when that part pleads for prominence. It does not appear, however, that man is ever called a spirit even in this figurative fashion. A spirit has not flesh and bones, as our Lord had after His resurrection (Luke 24:39). A man may be obsessed or "possessed" by spirits, but nowhere is he spoken of as being a spirit himself. This fact will help us in the consideration of 1 Peter 3:18-20:

> . . . seeing that Christ also, for our sakes, once died concerning sins, the just for the sake of the unjust, that He may be leading us to God; being put to death, indeed, in flesh, yet vivified in spirit, in which, being gone to the spirits in jail also, He heralds to those once stubborn, when the patience of God awaited in the days of Noah while the ark was being constructed, in which a few, that is, eight souls were brought safely through water . . .

The spirits here spoken of are not the spirits of dead men, but they are messengers, spirit beings, commonly regarded as angelic. These are said to have been "stubborn" in the days of Noah. That was a time when the patience of God waited, for the irreverence of the ancient world had risen to heights where it was defiant to God, and really called for

the deluge to end their insubjection to Him. Noah became a herald of righteousness in the earth, heralding a judging by his building of the ark. Yet outside the earth, there were beings charged with controls, of whom we get brief glimpses in the Scriptures, yet who failed in their service.

By means of messengers, God carries out His many beneficial activities in the heavens and earth. Israel was inducted to the law on Sinai through messengers (Heb.2:2; Acts 7:53). Messengers or spirits (sometimes referred to as saints; compare Deuteronomy 33:2 AV, "holy ones" CV) also execute judging (Jude 15) and other duties. In the period while Noah was constructing the ark, certain spirits, evidently charged with this judging, became stubborn, resisting the execution of God's righteous judging of the earth; and instead they seem to have calumniated higher authorities, These "sinning messengers" were thrust into gloomy caverns and kept for chastening judging (2 Pet. 2:4,5). Due to their stubbornness, it was necessary to guard Noah, for his salvation was involved because of the activity of the stubborn messengers. To these "spirits in jail," Christ heralds the triumph of His obedience; this is said of Christ with reference to His resurrection, in the words "being gone to the spirits in jail." Thus these spirits become aware of Him, and that messengers and authorities and powers are subjected to Him.

Before Christ could be *made* alive (vivified) in spirit He must have *died.* There is no possibility here of a *continuance* of life in any sense. What evidence is there that only the body and soul were affected and that the spirit continued in consciousness? The spirit of mankind has no soul, or consciousness, apart from the body (Gen.2:7). It was not until resurrection that He was loosed from the pangs of death (Acts 2: 24). If this passage had read "*preserved* alive" or suggested that His spirit was not unconscious

when He was put to death, then there would be some ground for denying that death involves the whole man.

The peculiar phrases "put to death . . . in flesh" and "vivified in spirit" are in closest harmony with the context. The apostle of the Circumcision is encouraging his brethren by the example of Christ. Physical force was being used against them even as it had been used against their Lord. His enemies could reach His flesh and put Him to death in that way. But He was not raised from the dead into the same condition as before. He was "made alive" or vivified beyond the power of death. His body was such as defied death. They could not kill Him again because the spirit so energized His body that it was immune to the effects of physical force. He became a life-giving (vivifying) Spirit (1 Cor.15:45). This passage, then, deals with the vivification and ascension and exaltation of Christ, and the heralding of His accession to power to the spirits in the jail, who are under His jurisdiction, and not to some dim, uncertain experience before He was vivified.

Spirit beings may have consciousness, but *human* spirits under normal conditions have none apart from the body. At death they become as they had been before they were united to the body. Consciousness, in humankind, lies in the living soul.

HOLD FAST TO THE WORD

These are the principal texts which are adduced to prove an intermediate state. The closer they are read, the more apparent it becomes that they are *per*versions. They reflect the theology of the translators, instead of the inspired Word of God. Whom shall we believe—God or man? As for us, let it be ours to know and to appreciate Him through His Word, and to tear aside every veil that bars our raptured gaze.

A. E. Knoch

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

IN THE REVOLT against the traditions concerning the so-called "intermediate state" there has been a return to the teaching of the Scriptures. A careful consideration of the Law, the Prophets, and the Literature—as the sacred Hebrew writings were known (*cp* Luke 24:44)—and especially the book of Ecclesiastes, is proof positive that "the dead know nothing whatsoever" (Ecc.9:5). This is further confirmed by a close study of the later Greek Scriptures. In spite of the attempts on the part of the translators to conform their versions to the accepted tradition, enough of the truth was left to show that, apart from resurrection, even those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished (1 Cor.15:18).

But there is one passage which seems to teach the very opposite. It seems to run counter to the entire tenor of Scripture. As a result, there have been many attempts to explain it away. Many who see the truth clearly still feel that the features in which the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus is presented create a very real difficulty (Luke 16:19-31).

This thought also tends to linger because the passage is not contemplated as part of a larger discourse which extends from Luke 15:1 to 17:10. In this section the Lord deals with the situation which has arisen through His ministry; that is, the fact that it has divided the people into two classes: (a) those who wished to hear more, and (b) those who resent and reject His teaching, as well as despising the

class of people who do receive Him. Of the former class (a) were the tribute-collectors and sinners (15:1), while the latter (b) was comprised of the Pharisees, scribes and law teachers (15:2).

THE AUTHORIZED VERSION OF LUKE 16:19-31

The translation of this passage, as it is found in the "Authorized" version, is not far from the mark, though it might be more accurate in a few places. It may be well to point out that the story was not given out as an actual incident. This is the thought conveyed by the word rendered "certain." It really signifies "*un*certain." It is a very indefinite term, usually rendered "any"—and is often used to introduce ideal or typical characters. There is no evidence to support the assertion that "there *was* a rich man." Our Lord asserts the contrary when He inserts the word *tis* (ANY), making it an ideal rather than a real case. The "sumptuous fare" of the rich man has no particular reference to food, and cannot be taken in the derogatory sense which is usually attached to feasting. It is an element necessary to the parable and was but the exuberant gladness which even saints are exhorted to entertain, strengthened by the addition of the word "splendidly" (Acts 2:26; Rom. 15:10; 2 Cor.2:2; Gal.4:27; Rev.11:10; 12:12; 18:20). The CONCORDANT VERSION renders this "make merry" or "be glad." The "great gulf" or yawning chasm evidently was a waterway, for Abraham tells the rich man, "Neither may they *ferry* from thence to us" (verse 26). This word is used only when speaking of crossing water. And there must have been water for Lazarus to dip his finger into.

ABRAHAM'S TEACHING?

The gist of the teaching in this tale is summed up by Abraham when He says to the rich man, "You got your good things in your life, and Lazarus likewise evil things.

Yet now here he is being consoled, yet you are in pain" (16:25). This is not teaching from God's Word. It is contrary to all revelation to base happiness in the next life on poverty in the present one. This point alone should be sufficient to show that we have a parable before us. The doctrine is that of the Pharisees, and its untruth is being turned back upon them. The Lord is borrowing from the traditions current among the Pharisees, and into them He places the two classes of His hearers. The Pharisees are placed in a position completely contrary to that which they think they will be accorded. This is a very important point in the parable and really prepares for the concluding words which are placed in the mouth of Abraham (16:31).

WAS THE RICH MAN WICKED?

We are not at liberty to add to this scripture and to imagine that the rich man was wicked as well as wealthy. We are not told so, and his "faring" sumptuously was not necessarily any worse than the joy of heaven over the advent of the Kingdom and the authority of the Christ, for the same term is used of both (Rev.12:12). He was daily "making merry splendidly," regarding himself as under the favor of heaven, symbolized by the cambric and purple dress. Lazarus, who had been cast at the rich man's gate, yearned to be satisfied. Yet he was given no special attention by the rich man, even though he possessed the means to supply all his needs. These are the distinctions positively implied, and the parable is specially concerned with them, for these teachers should have supplied Yahweh's truth to those of Israel: figured by Lazarus. This class was now giving heed to the teaching of the Lord.

OBEDIENCE AND BLESSING

While it is true, in this administration, that God is selecting the base things (1 Cor.1:26-29), it is not so, necessar-

ily, under the law. Obedience to the law brought temporal blessing; suffering was generally the law's penalty for disobedience. Those who hearkened diligently to Yahweh's voice were to be blessed in every way (Deut.28:1-14), like the rich man. Upon those who would not hearken, came the curses which afflicted Lazarus (Deut.28:15,16). He had the "botch" or boils of Egypt (Deut.28:27), the sore botch which cannot be healed (verse 35). Lazarus had the sure tokens of Yahweh's displeasure, the rich man had every sign of His favor. This position (from the law's viewpoint) should be noted, and put alongside other distinctions in the parable. Considered thus, it is again confirmed that it is not the teaching of the law which is being considered, but rather the major theme of the whole discourse; that Messiah was being rejected, yet the despised were giving heed to Him.

"LIES" IN THE BIBLE

With these details clearly before us, we are led to inquire as to the reason for the elements which are brought into the parable: Abraham's bosom, the great chasm, and the impossibility of crossing it. Why are these particular things used to illustrate it? Before we go further, it is essential that we realize that much that is in the Bible is *not* true. Satan's first statement, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen.3:4) was not true, even if it has been incorporated into the creeds. And the woman's first utterance contains an element of falsehood, for God did not say "neither shall ye *touch* it" (Gen.3:3). The greater part of the book of Job is composed of man's false philosophy. Many a text has been taken from it because the preacher did not distinguish between the unsullied word or expression of God Himself and His *inspired record* of the false views and utterances of others. But we cannot put the details of the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus into this category, for it fell

from the lips of our Lord Himself. We must see that He is using the teaching of others in order to show its falseness.

FIGURES AND FACTS

The fact is that it is an impressive figure of speech. Figures are not, and indeed, cannot be, true as to fact, but are true to feeling. We never think of accusing Jesus with falsehood when He said "This is My body," or when He speaks of that same body as "the temple," so that He was misunderstood. Nor is it true that His disciples were "salt," or that the other Lazarus was literally "asleep" in the corrupting tomb. So that, when we suggest that our Lord told a story which was not true as to fact, but most impressive in the finer realm of feeling, we are simply expressing in words what is acknowledged by all, in various degrees. And we are simply applying a recognized principle to the case in hand. If anyone wishes to know where the denial of this plain principle leads, let him follow the controversy between the learned Luther and Zwingli. Luther's contention that the bread *is* the Lord's body was unwarranted by the facts. Faith is the acknowledgment of a *truth* which our senses are unable to test, not the acceptance of a *lie* which our senses deny.

If, then, this is a figure of speech, what figure is it? It is the figure we call Admission. By it, one side of this parable is admitted as though true, in order to deny it in the other side which corresponds and explains it. Although the verses are not directly termed a parable, it is apparent that the basic details were well known, and this is an essential element in a parable. The story must be familiar and commonplace. A picture is presented to the eye as one side of a parallelism, alongside of which we are supposed to put the hidden meaning. Though ideal, it may well be true as to fact; it is the interpretation which is true in a different realm.

ABRAHAM'S BOSOM

That the scene is a figurative one is evident, for the literal bosom of Abraham is not sufficiently capacious to hold the blessed dead. Yet he is made to figure felicity, since he was given the original blessing. In accord with this, Abraham is also made the principal speaker. It is essential that we take the terms and elements of the parable as the Lord's listeners would take them. They were accustomed to use Abraham's bosom as a figure of the highest blessedness. Their vivid oriental imaginations clothed the abstract idea of blessing with appropriate concrete forms. This presents no difficulty to their eastern minds. Many stories almost identical in their figures, were common in their traditions.

THE "GOSPEL OF NICODEMUS"

Later on these crude errors were repeated in the apocryphal "Gospel of Nicodemus," sometimes styled "The Acts of Pontius Pilate." The writer of this, adding to the record of the resurrection which occurred after the Lord was crucified (Matt.27:53), tells how Charinus and Lenthius, sons of Simeon (Luke 2:25) were raised, but could not talk until they had made the sign of the cross with their fingers on their tongues. Then they asked for a piece of paper on which each writes the forbidden account of what they saw in hell. Charinus gave what he wrote into the hands of Annas and Caiaphas and Gamaliel. Lenthius gave his to Nicodemus and Joseph. Then they vanished. What they wrote was compared and found to agree. Not even one letter was different, in the entire chronicle.

This narrative of what was seen in hell should be read by all who wish evidence (?) for the orthodox position on the "intermediate state." All was dark at first, but suddenly a "substantial purple-colored light" enlightens the place. Isaiah cried out that this was the fulfillment of his prophecy! (Isa.9:1; Luke 2:29). John the Baptist appears in his

part as the forerunner, reminding Adam of what Michael had told Seth at the gates of Paradise, when Adam had a headache. Michael had said to Seth, "Do not pray to God in tears and entreat Him for the oil of the tree of mercy wherewith to anoint thy father Adam for his headache, because thou canst not by any means obtain it till the last day and times, namely, till five thousand five hundred years be passed." Then comes Satan, boasting of his defeat of Christ in death, but he is soon followed by Christ Himself, Who makes the sign of the cross on Adam and upon all His saints, and leads them all, including David (in contradiction to Acts 2:34), into the heavenly paradise! There they met Enoch and Elijah. The "thief," too, had preceded them, having been given the sign of the cross so that the angel who is the guard of paradise will admit him! Lest anyone should take this as the Rich Man and Lazarus story is generally taken—as a narrative of facts—I beg to explain that I repeat these fables only that they may afford a contrast with the real source of truth on this question and to show that orthodoxy is following fables instead of the pure presentations of holy writ.

JEWS SIGNS ARE SEEKING

It was natural for the Jews to seek for a sign. They preferred to have someone rise from the dead rather than listen to Yahweh's words as recorded by Moses and the prophets. But, when another Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, did come forth from the tomb, having been in the unseen four days, what did they do? They sought to kill him (John 12:9-11)! And what did he report as to the realms of the dead? *Not one word!* Why? Because there was nothing for him to tell! Had he some tale like this, which would uphold their traditions and give the lie to Moses and the prophets, he would have been the petted idol of the day. This is the truth taught here: *Faith.* "They

have Moses and the prophets. *Let them hear them!"* Nothing else will persuade them, not even the return of Lazarus from the dead. *The great object of the story is to drive the faithless Pharisees back to the Scriptures.* The whip He uses is one of their own traditions.

THE TABLES TURNED

The Lord shows the powerlessness and absurdity of their departures from the written law by forcing these to their legitimate conclusion. They did not hesitate to put their doctrines into the mouth of Abraham, but the Lord used Abraham, the great example of faith, to turn them from their puerile deceptions back to the Scriptures which they had deserted. Thus, while, for the moment, He allows a portion of the position they hold, He does so in order to show them where they stand in respect to His own ministry, for Lazarus, representing those whom the Pharisees despised, is in the happy position which the Pharisees had appropriated for themselves, though they rejected Messiah.

"EPITROPE" OR ADMISSION

As we have mentioned, the real name of the figure of speech used here is "Admission" or *Epitrope*[1]. That which is false is seemingly granted or admitted for the time. It is closely allied to irony, which states the opposite of what is really intended. Figures such as these depend upon the occasion, upon the attending circumstances, to make them understood. They may be used only in the most serious discourse, when the climax is being attained. It must, of course, be clear to all what the speaker *really believes.* What he states must, in its first count, be that which his *listeners teach.* Then there is no possibility of mistaking the

1. See FIGURES OF SPEECH USED IN THE BIBLE, by E. W.Bullinger, page 972.

speaker's real meaning. For instance, when Micaiah told the king of Israel, "Go, and prosper, and Yahweh deliver it with the hand of the king," *we* would naturally think, unless we had entered into very close sympathy with the state of affairs, that the king ought to be pleased. But he knew what was in his own heart and that it was not in line with Yahweh, so he sees the meaning hidden behind the prophet's words. Yahweh was encouraging him to his own destruction (1 Kings 22:15).

Thus we see that Yahweh, by his prophets, actually used words *which were not true* as to literal fact, yet full of truth and force for the king in his rebellion.

Like this is the advice of the Assembler (AV, the "Preacher," Hebrew, *Qoheleth*). "Rejoice, choice youth, in your childhood, and let your heart make you cheerful in the days of your prime. Walk in the ways of your heart and by the sight of your eyes, yet know that for all these the One, Elohim, shall bring you into judgment" (Ecc.11:9). We do not take this advice as it stands. In fact it arouses the opposite desire, to *avoid* the ways of one's own heart and *distrust* one's own eyes, for, as he goes on to say, "childhood and early days are vanity" (Ecc.11:10).

Another example is in the prophecy of Amos:

> Go to Bethel and transgress!
> At Gilgal increase the transgression!
> And bring your sacrifices every morning,
> And your tithes every three days!
> Fume incense with leaven as acclamation,
> And proclaim the voluntary vows!
> Announce it, for so you love, sons of Israel,
> averring is my Lord Yahweh.
>
> —Amos 4:4,5. CV

This, indeed, pleased *them,* but who imagines that it pleased *Him,* even if He had not said plainly, "Go *not* to Bethel"?

In line with this was the advice given by our Lord to the scribes and Pharisees. After denouncing the murderous crew, He adds, "And you! Fill full the measure of your fathers!" (Matt.23:32). This they did in crucifying Him, but even they would hardly claim that it was done at His instigation.

THE LORD BORROWS THEIR TRADITION

Details for the story of the rich man and Lazarus are taken from the Pharisaic traditions of the day. As our Lord uses these traditions, He is careful to phrase His speech with their peculiar terms, such as "Abraham's bosom," "carried by 'angels'" (or messengers), etc., all of which He borrowed from the so-called "oral law," which He had denounced, and none of which has the least likeness to that written law which He hid in His heart. They knew full well that He was giving them their own and not His doctrine. In fact, matters had come to such a crisis that they would no longer listen to *His* teaching, so He uses some of their own, yet alters it to form a rebuke to their opposition to His ministry.

Seeing that this was the case, we have just the right material for the figure of Admission. Feeling gets the better of mere fact.

THE SETTING

The parable occurs at just such a juncture. The Lord had been speaking of another rich man and his unjust steward or administrator. He made friends for himself with his master's money. His master commends him for his prudence. Our Lord comments to His disciples, "And am *I* saying to you, Make for yourselves friends with the mammon of injustice, that whenever it may be defaulting, they should be receiving you into the eonian tabernacles? He who is faithful in the least, is faithful in much also, and he who is

unjust in the least, is unjust in much also. If, then, you did not come to be faithful in the unjust mammon, who will be entrusting to you the true? And if you did not come to be faithful in that which is an outsider's, who will be giving you that which is yours? No domestic can slave for two lords, for either he will be hating the one and loving the other, or he will be upholding one and despising the other. You cannot slave for God and mammon." And the Pharisees also, inherently *fond of money,* heard all these things, *and they scouted Him* (Luke 16:9-14). The Lord's disciples were to become the new stewards because Israel rejected Him (Luke 17:1-10).

The Pharisees scouted the Lord. But He does not leave them. He touches their weak point and holds them by it until He can enforce the lesson they so much needed. To go on correcting and denouncing them was useless, for they "stuck up their noses" in disdain and would not listen. The object before Him is to enforce His dictum, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass by than for one serif of the law to fall." And, since they would not listen to plain truth, He gives it to them in their own terms. Though, in the rich man, the Pharisee would fain see the Sadducee, yet by the realistic portrayal of his own conception of *hades* or the unseen (AV, "hell"), both are brought within the scope of the Lord's words. This is made doubly clear, for the rich man had five brethren who would not hearken to Moses and the prophets, either.

The skillful introduction of Abraham by means of their own pet phrase "Abraham's bosom" gives Him the opportunity of impressing all with the real sentiment of the "father of the *faithful.*" They claimed Abraham for their father while they were doing the work of the Adversary. And all because they did not follow in the faith which Abraham exemplified. How impressive, then, when their ears were closed to the Lord's teaching, to hear Abraham's voice

from the dead, as it were, warning them of their apostasy! *"They have Moses and the prophets. Let them hear them!" "If Moses and the prophets they are not hearing, neither will they be persuaded if someone should be rising from among the dead"* (16:29,31).

LET US BELIEVE ALL THE WORD

And may we press home this very exhortation? May we suggest that our Lord always believed and taught what had been revealed on the subject of death, and that not even the Pharisees themselves were deceived into thinking that He had abandoned the Scriptures and had instead embraced their notions as to the state of the dead?

It is to *faith* that we appeal. On another occasion, when our Lord was dealing with an unfaithful slave, He admitted that He was a harsh man (Luke 19:22). Shall we take this as our authority for denying all the grace and love which illumines almost every page of the sacred text? He admitted that He was a harsh man—but *is He?* And just so He admitted the traditions of His enemies, the Pharisees—but shall we follow them or take His own words *when dealing with His disciples on this very subject and heed His advice to believe all that God has spoken?* We will not place our expectation in Abraham or in any traditional intermediate state, but in Christ, not as—what shall we say? Scripture has no name for Him in connection with the intermediate state, so we will not invent one—but in CHRIST as THE RESURRECTION and THE LIFE.

A. E. Knoch

For those interested in further study on this subject we have available: *Death, Resurrection, Immortality* by Joseph E. Kirk, (111 pages, $7.00), the booklet: *The Rich Man and Lazarus* by Alan Burns, (30 pages, $2.00) and the booklet *What is Mankind, the Soul, Death?* by A. E. Knoch (48 pages, $4.00).

Unsearchable Riches

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FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 103rd Year

(1909–2012)

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 The Word of the Cross
115 Taking Account of Grace
123 Christ's Death
and the Believer's Reckoning
127 Human Destiny (Part One)

THIRD QUARTER, 2012

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EDITORIAL

In our current issue, in his writing, "The Word of the Cross" (p.99), John Essex sets forth this glorious "word," as it is declared and developed in Paul's evangel. This *word* is the word (that is, teaching) which *pertains to* the *work* of the cross. While it is based solely upon that work, the *word of* the cross is not the word which simply *affirms* that work itself (that of the death, entombment, and rousing of Christ), but is the word that reveals to us what are the *consequences* of Christ's death for sinners, in His obedience unto the death of the cross.

The article by George L. Rogers (p.123), in consideration of Romans 6:9-11, encourages us to be "*reckoning* [ourselves] to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord." To "reckon" is to "take into account"; to consider; to view (thus). We are to *reckon* ourselves: "*dead,* indeed, to Sin," doing so, in order that, *through the grace inherent to this perspective,* we might be "*living* to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

In its original form, the article beginning on page 127 of this issue, "Human Destiny," by Alan Burns, was first published in *Unsearchable Riches* nearly one hundred years ago (volume 4, December, 1912).

In 1929, in an obituary announcement of the author's death, A. E Knoch wrote concerning him: "Alan Burns was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but spent his youth in Ireland, where he was associated with the Salvation Army and the Plymouth Brethren. At about twenty-one years of age he went to New York City.

"An earnest seeker after truth and a student of the Scriptures, he became interested in the teaching of Dr. Bullinger,

and strongly attracted to the work of Vladimir Gelesnoff [co-founder of the Concordant Publishing Concern], when he began his ministry in New York. Brother Gelesnoff considered him the best gospel preacher he had ever heard.

"With the help of a few friends, who did the printing, Brother Burns started *Grace and Glory,* a little magazine which gave promise of much good. For lack of support, it languished and soon ceased, to be followed, not long afterwards, by *Unsearchable Riches,* which virtually took its place.

"Brother Burns became a valued contributor to the earlier volumes of our magazine . . . . The logical and powerful introductory articles in ALL IN ALL are by his pen . . . . We were continually receiving letters urging us to have more from Brother Burns."[1]

Dean Hough's article, "Taking Account of Grace" (p.115), while giving much attention to the faithful imperatives of our service as set forth by the apostle Paul in Romans 6:11-13, addresses these same imperatives from the true foundation of all faithful service, that of the grace of God. "Now in chapter 6 [Paul presents] the welcome *effects* of this evangel on the lives of those who are [attentively] believing it . . . . The message we are believing not only tells us of God's power in saving sinners for the life to come, but as it is being believed it becomes itself God's power for salvation in our present lives."

Though it is a grace that indeed comes to us "through many dangers, toils, and snares," we are thanking God for this same grace, which alone enables us to remain and continue on in our testimony thereunto. We do so in anticipation of the day in which this "grace glorious" will reach its zenith, when death is abolished, when, "in Christ, shall all be vivified," "that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:22-28).

J.R.C.

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.20, p.67.

THE WORD OF THE CROSS

"THE WORD of the cross has a far deeper significance than the death of Christ for our sins. It brings before us the manner of His death. The curse of the law was attached to such a death. It brought down the curse of God. On the human side, however, it showed what human religion and human wisdom can do. When God's Image was present among men they not only failed to appreciate Him, but displayed the innate hatred of their carnal religious hearts by dooming Him to the death of the vilest criminal. He Who spoke as never man spoke should have been welcomed by the wise men of the world, but they showed the essential stupidity of human wisdom by gibbeting the embodiment of all wisdom upon the ignominious cross. Yet God has made that scene of weakness and shame the brightest exhibition of His power and glory. Though it seems to sound the depths of powerless infamy, it eclipses all the power and wisdom of men. The word of the cross is still despised, but its proclamation is salvation to all who believe. The height and summit of man's wisdom cannot reach to the divine folly."[1]

Shall we, too, be writing stupidity and be penning utter foolishness? Does not the apostle Paul describe our subject as "stupidity indeed"? Have we not confirmation of this in the writings and sayings of many who profess to be wise in the world? Do not most of them expose their lack of interest in the theme by ignoring it completely!

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.249.

Yes, Paul describes "the word of the cross" as "stupidity, indeed, to those who are perishing," but he adds by way of contrast, "yet to us who are being saved it is *the power of God*" (1 Cor.1:18). And then the apostle proceeds, in perhaps the most scathing terms since Jesus lashed the scribes and Pharisees, to denounce the wisdom of the supposedly wise men of this eon, who seek in their own ways, and often without reference to God at all, to settle the great problems that only God can resolve. They seek salvation through science, and peace through philosophy; God provides both through the cross. But let us see what Paul says:

"For it is written, I shall be destroying the wisdom of the wise, and the understanding of the intelligent shall I be repudiating. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the discusser of this eon? Does not God make stupid the wisdom of this world? For since, in fact, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom knew not God, God delights, through the stupidity of the heralding, to save those who are believing, since, in fact, Jews signs are requesting, and Greeks wisdom are seeking, yet we are heralding Christ crucified, to Jews, indeed, a snare, yet to the nations stupidity, yet to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, for the stupidity of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor.1:19-25).

Now what does all this mean? There was some reason why humanity as a whole could not easily accept the teaching of Paul concerning the cross. The Jews, who were highly religious, viewed the matter with suspicion—to them the cross was a snare. The nations who were highly cultured, viewed it with disdain—to them the cross was stupidity. We may see why later. But for the moment let us realize this, that though Paul occasionally speaks of "*my* evangel," as in Romans 2:16, he never claims to be the author of it. Quite the contrary. In the very first verse of his Roman epistle, he

explains that he has been *severed*, or separated, from the rest to proclaim *the evangel of God*, which, in verse 16 of the same chapter, he declares to be "*God's* power for salvation to everyone who is believing—to the Jew first and to the Greek as well."

Yes, to those who are called, whether Jew or Greek, this evangel, which has for its keystone the word of the cross, is both the power of God and the wisdom of God, and it is something separate and distinct from anything that had been proclaimed before. It is fundamental to the purpose of God, and yet there are some peculiar things about this teaching of the cross.

For instance, if the cross is so important a feature of God's operations as Paul maintains, how is it that John never refers to it in his later writings? There is no mention of the cross in any of his three epistles, nor in the book of Revelation, the Unveiling of Jesus Christ, which he also wrote. True, we find allusions to "the *blood* of Christ" and "the *blood* of the Lambkin," but the *cross* is not mentioned. Why, again, has Peter, in his two letters, nothing to say about the *cross* of Christ? Or James? Or Jude? If the word of the cross is as important as Paul suggests, how is it that all these others (who, after all, were contemporary with Paul) seem to ignore it?

This is a question which all believers must face up to. It implies—it *must* imply—that Paul was giving a different message from the rest. If, as we surely believe, Peter, James, John and Jude all spoke as they were moved by the holy spirit, then, without doubt, they too would have been impelled to speak of the cross if it had been essential to their messages. We are forced to conclude that there is one great difference at least between the evangel as proclaimed by Paul, and that proclaimed by Peter, James, John and Jude, and that this distinction is to be found in their relationship and attitude to the cross of Christ.

For look how freely and emphatically Paul speaks of the cross. In 1 Corinthians 1:17 he expresses a concern lest, in his own preaching, the cross of Christ should be made void; and in the next verse he describes the word of the cross as the *power of God* to those who are being saved. A little later, in verse 23, he infers that, in his preaching of "Christ crucified," he is in fact proclaiming "Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God." Again, in the second chapter, he affirms his decision "not to perceive anything among you except Jesus Christ, and Him *crucified*." And yet Peter, James, John and Jude have nothing to say about the cross of Christ.

To put the matter simply, we would suggest that Peter, John, James and Jude are writing to a people who have not yet come to the cross of Christ, and therefore they find no occasion to mention it. Paul, on the other hand, is addressing a message to some who have reached the cross, and, indeed, have passed beyond it. Therefore, he refers to it freely. Peter and those with him are looking forward to the millennial reign of Christ in which many glorious things will be happening, particularly in relation to Israel and through Israel to the rest of humanity, but a time in which, nevertheless, the effects of what was accomplished on the cross will *not* be observed. After all, Jesus presented Himself to Israel as their King, and proclaimed and practiced the evangel of the Kingdom, before ever He was crucified. Paul takes us by faith into a time *beyond* the Millennium—into the fifth eon, the Day of God—an era in which the effects of the cross will be fully operative. And—wonder of wonders and grace beyond measure—he even invites us to enjoy the benefits of those effects over one thousand years in advance—now. This we do in spirit, and by faith. To find out what these benefits are—what the message of the cross really is—we must look at what Paul has to say about it.

THE WORD OF THE CROSS DEMANDS A NEW CREATION

Now you may be surprised to learn that the word "cross" never occurs in Paul's great epistle to the Romans—the first of his writings as they appear in our versions. In a letter which deals with such fundamental matters as justification, conciliation, and God's sovereignty, one might have thought that a mention of the cross would be indispensable. It is certainly there by implication, but the word "cross" itself is absent. It is implied in the one usage of the verb form, "crucify," and this, in its context, is significant, for it gives us the real clue to the meaning of the message of the cross. This is what Paul says:

"What, then, shall we declare? That we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing? May it not be coming to that! We, who died to sin, how shall we still be living in it? Or are you ignorant that whoever are baptized into Christ Jesus, are baptized into His death? We, then, were entombed together with Him through baptism into death, that, even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also should be walking in newness of life. For if we have become planted together in the likeness of His death, nevertheless we shall be of the resurrection also, knowing this, that our old humanity was crucified together with Him, that the body of Sin may be nullified, for us by no means to be still slaving for Sin, for one who dies has been justified from Sin" (Rom.6:1-7).

"*Knowing this, that our old humanity was crucified together with Him, that the body of Sin may be nullified*"—that is, brought to nought. Paul is simply telling us that there is no place for this body of Sin in the evangel of salvation which he is proclaiming. He confirms this in his letters to the Corinthians and Galatians. Let us look at Corinthians first.

The brethren at Corinth had acquired a not very enviable reputation on account of their panderings to the vices and lusts of the flesh. This was evidenced by their petty quarreling, by their strifes and divisions among themselves, and even by other practices that had been heard of among them. It is as a counter to all this that Paul, when he writes to them, lays such stress on the significance of the cross. "The word of the cross," he declares is "the power of God"; "Christ crucified," the "power of God and the wisdom of God." Far from pandering to the passions of the old humanity, tied to a dying flesh, they should have been thinking in terms of a new humanity, which comes with a new creation. "If anyone is in Christ," Paul tells them in his second letter, "there is a new creation: the primitive passed by. Lo! There has come new!" (2 Cor.5:17).

The new creation is something entirely of God, and shows forth *His* power and *His* wisdom. In His sight, the old humanity of a believer in Christ has had its day. It is regarded as being crucified on the same cross as that on which God's Son was crucified. The Corinthians should have seen it that way. And so, too, should we look upon our bodies of Sin. They cannot help our spiritual life in any way; rather, they only hinder. They cannot contribute one iota of merit towards our salvation; they cannot even in the most minute degree please God. No dying body can, and these are, in fact, dying all the time, as every ache and pain testifies. Then why not reckon them as being dead already! In the words of Romans 6:11, "Be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

But to be living in Christ implies a *new creation*. What a privilege, indeed, that God counts us as living to Him, even while we are physically retarded by these bodies of humiliation; but that is only because His Son dealt with the problem of sin in the flesh once and for all time on

the cross, and our bodies of Sin are reckoned by God as having been crucified on the same cross.

The Galatian case is rather different from that of the Corinthians. Their fault lay in trying to exalt the flesh, to give it an honor and a prominence to which it was not entitled. They sought to enforce the law of Moses on the basis that the flesh ought to be able to justify itself by keeping the law. Paul had to point out that "by works of law shall no flesh at all be justified" (Gal.2:16). Far from bringing credit to the flesh, the law only made sin in the flesh more manifest. Every additional commandment was one more to break. He asks them a direct question, "Undertaking in spirit, are you now being completed in flesh?" (Gal.3:3). The works of the flesh are given as adultery, wantonness, enmities, strifes, jealousies, dissentions, etc.; the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control. "Those of Christ Jesus," says Paul, "crucify the flesh with its passions and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

The Galatians were even being pressed to return to circumcision—the ritual which God had established with Abraham— but Paul counters this by saying that it had now become merely a means of glorifying the flesh. And then he adds, "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but *a new creation*" (Gal.6:14,15).

Again, *a new creation*. The word of the cross demands a new creation. Peter, James, John and Jude have nothing to say about this. They are looking for a new birth, in conformity with the words of Jesus to Nicodemus, "You must be begotten anew" (John 3:7). They are looking for a new birth within the framework of Israel's promises; this is a vastly different thing from a new creation outside of Isra-

el's promises. The new birth is a national blessing to fit Israel for the Kingdom, the thousand year reign of Christ on earth; the new creation is an individual blessing, and transports us in spirit past the millennial eon into the day of God, and fits us for our celestial destiny.

When Paul speaks of a new creation, he means "new" in every sense—new absolutely. This is not the case with Israel during the millennial eon, for Israel is but a nation reborn, of the same stock as the nation originally born at Sinai. In fact, the promises originally made to Israel at Sinai are repeated to the regenerated nation by Peter in his first epistle, when he calls them a "royal priesthood," a "holy nation." During the thousand years they will serve humanity as a priestly nation, fulfilling the functions originally assigned to them at Sinai, but which were lost to the old nation through its repeated idolatry.

But in spite of the new birth, and in spite of all that the regenerated nation of Israel can do during the millennial eon, let us not forget that it all ends in a tremendous rebellion against God, when Satan is loosed out of his prison, and he comes to deceive all nations which are in the four corners of the earth, to be mobilizing them for battle, their number being as the sand of the sea. This tremendous event is followed by the judgment of the great white throne, and in Revelation 20:11 we read that from the face of Him Who sits upon the throne, earth and heaven flee, and no place is found for them. They just cannot abide in the presence of the absolute righteousness and purity of the majestic Occupant of the throne. And John goes on to describe how all those who appear before the throne are judged in accord with their acts, and are condemned. This is the final condemnation of the flesh, and all that has been done in the flesh. But this is not the end, for John next perceives "a new heaven and a new earth, for the former heaven and the former earth pass away." And all the sorrow and mourning and misery connected with them pass away, too, for He Who is sitting upon the throne declares that He is making all *new.* This is in line with what Isaiah had prophesied centuries earlier when he said, "For behold Me creating new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor shall they come up on the heart" (Isa.65:17, CV).

This is the new creation, which John perceives only at the end of his visions, but to which Paul is pointing from the very beginning of his writings. The great point to be noted is that there is a complete break with the old. Nothing is carried over. And so it is, too, with the advance application of the new creation, as it affects a believer in Christ in this day of grace. The primitive, the old, is passed by. "Lo! There has come new."

The cross demands a complete break with the old, and provides the way for the provision of a glorious alternative in the new. To those who are not prepared to make this break, the word of the cross is just stupidity; for in clinging to the old, they must perforce be like the Corinthians, and pander to the desires of the flesh, or like the Galatians, and give the flesh an importance to which it is not entitled. It is in these two factors that many sincere believers, who are also religionists, become enemies of the cross of Christ.

But to see the full effects of the cross, and to appreciate its message in even greater grandeur, we must now turn to the prison letters of Paul.

THE BLOOD OF THE CROSS

"The blood of *Christ* is a most expressive figure of the *permanent power of His sufferings*. Thank God it is past, but its potency is permanent. It avails today, and will *never lose its power*.

"But the blood of His *cross*—this goes far deeper still. It

is not a mere literary variant, but a deliberate endeavor to distinguish between the death of God's Son and the *manner* of it. *Peace* is made by the blood of His cross. The blood is a reminder of its permanence. In Colossians 1:20 . . . the cross is the basis of reconciliation. On this basis He will carry on all His future work of ruling and judging, of rousing and vivifying the dead. We will have our share in His work of reconciling God's creatures among the celestials, for we are His complement . . . *as living examples of the power of the cross*. For this reason we read in Colossians 1:20 of the *blood* of His cross, for its abiding power will be the means at our disposal in bringing out *perpetual peace*."[2]

It used to be a practice among Greek writers to enter literary competitions in which they had to submit what was termed a trilogy, that is, three pieces with themes related to each other. Generally these were tragedies. Only a few specimens are now extant. But no trilogy submitted by any Greek writer for a competition could even remotely approach in grandeur the wonderful trio of letters written by Paul, which have come down to us as the epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians. We have compared them to a Greek trilogy only because we wish to emphasize that they should be regarded as a trio, with themes that are connected, and not as individual messages. There is, of course, nothing of a tragedy about them. On the contrary, their grandeur lies in the fact that they expand our conception of God's purpose to include the whole universe. Whereas earlier writings, not excluding those of Paul, have their settings on earth, the prison letters usher us straight into the vastnesses of the celestial realms. Outside of the prison letters, we have God's salvation extended to all mankind; inside the prison letters, it reaches out to include heaven as well.

2. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.52, p.174.

Now, one of the most interesting features of the prison letters is that in each one we have a remarkable description of Christ. The wider scope of these letters makes these descriptions necessary, and, as we examine them, we find that they are connected in a wonderful way. Let us do this, taking the Colossian account first.

Here we find Christ in His relationship to the *motive* behind all God's operations. God's purpose was conceived in *love*, which finds its first and greatest expression in "the Son of His love" (Col.1:13). It is as the Son of God's love that Christ is presented to us in this epistle, where He is also declared to be "the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and *He* is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him" (Col.1:15-17).

Here we are among the heights indeed. These are the mountain peaks—the Himalayas of the Scriptures. And we are among the heights again when we come to the Ephesian description of Christ, for there He is portrayed as being seated at the right hand of God, among the celestials, "up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending." It is in this account that Christ is given "as Head over all, to the *ecclesia* which is His body, the complement of the One Who is completing the all in all" (Eph.1:20-23). So, in Ephesians, we have Christ portrayed in His relationship to the ecclesia, the *medium* through which God's purpose is to be accomplished.

But what about the Philippian account? The description of Christ takes us again into the heights. On the one hand, we have Him "inherently in the form of God" and deeming it "not pillaging to be equal with God," and on the other

hand, we have Him highly exalted, and graced "with the name that is above every name." No heights can be higher than these, but between them, what do we find? A deep chasm, an almost bottomless rift, at the foot of which lies the cross. For He Who was in the form of God emptied Himself of all His pristine glory to take upon Himself the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and having done that, descended the valley still farther by humbling Himself and "becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil.2:5-9).

In this Philippian portrayal of Christ, we see Him in His relationship to the *means* by which God's purpose is to be accomplished. That means is the cross, and here the theme of the cross takes on a more profound significance. For the depths of a valley can best be appreciated from a vantage point on the heights, for then we can look straight down into the gulf below. That is exactly what we do in the letter to the Philippians. We endeavor to place ourselves (mentally) in the position that Christ occupied when He was in the form of God, and then, peering down, try to comprehend all that is included in the *death of the cross*. It is not just the death of Christ that counts, but all that goes with it—all that was attached to the cross—the degradation, the shame, the ignominy, the opprobrium, and above all the separation from God. For the cross was an execution stake for malefactors and murderers, and carried with it a curse.

If you really want to see what is implied in the term, "Christ crucified," which Paul was so determined to preach to the Corinthians, go to the Philippian epistle. No two words can be wider apart, yet they are brought together. *Christ*, the Anointed of God, once on the heights in the form of God, and deeming it not pillaging to be equal with God, yet now *crucified*, cursed among the malefactors at the bottom of the abyss. Cursed (Gal.3:13) because it was

to the *cross* that He nailed the old humanity with all its sin and wickedness, thereby settling the problem of sin once and for all. Truly, the depths of the Philippian epistle are the depths of love!

Now, what about the effects of the cross?

The Philippian account gives us the effects of the cross on *Christ Himself*. "Wherefore, also," continues the apostle—that is, *because* He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross—"God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father." Praise be to God!

The glory with which God graces His Son because of His obedience unto the death of the cross, is such that it not only exalts Christ above all else in the universe, but also brings all creation into recognition and acceptance of this fact. Every knee will bow to Him, every tongue will acclaim Him as Lord. All in earth and heaven will ultimately rejoice in Him as their Saviour, for it is at the name of *Jesus* that every knee will bow. Truly He will see the travail of His soul and be satisfied. And God too will be satisfied, for the acclaim that will be given to His Son is in accord with His own will and purpose, and will redound to His own great glory, for the Son is the One in Whom He constantly delights.

The Ephesian letter gives us also the *effect* of the cross on the *ecclesia*. It has a peace-making influence, settling differences between members. At the time Paul was writing, the most vital difference was that which divided the nation of Israel from the rest of humanity. This was a fleshly difference, inaugurated by God through the covenant which He made with Abraham, and marked by the rite of circumcision. For many centuries Israel had been the favored

nation, and will be again during the coming millennial era. But see what Paul says in Ephesians 2, verses 11-18:

"Wherefore, remember that once you, the nations in flesh—who are termed 'Uncircumcision' by those termed 'Circumcision,' in flesh, made by hands—that you were, in that era, apart from Christ, being alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and guests of the promise covenants, having no expectation, and without God in the world. Yet now, in Christ Jesus, you, who once are far off, are become near by the blood of Christ. For He is our Peace, Who makes both one, and razes the central wall of the barrier (the enmity in His flesh), nullifying the law of precepts in decrees, that He should be creating the two, in Himself, into one new humanity, making peace; *and should be reconciling both in one body to God through the cross*, killing the enmity in it. And, coming, He brings the evangel of peace to you, those afar, and peace to those near, for through Him we both have had the access, in one spirit, to the Father."

There are those today who would strive to make the unity of the church. The unity was made nearly two thousand years ago—on the cross! Ephesians goes on to ask us to *keep* the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace. Ephesians emphasizes unities—one . . . one . . . one! One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one expectation, and so on (Eph. 4:4,5). And if the cross effectively kills the racial enmity between Israel and the nations, so that those of either group can be at peace with each other in the ecclesia, we may be sure that it equally effectively kills all other fleshly enmities. In the flesh we may be of different nationalities, different colors, different sexes, yes, even of different sects, but if we are called believers, members of that one ecclesia which exists today, the ecclesia which is His body, we should recognize that the cross kills all these barriers to unity, and try to live as an example to the universe, doing our utmost to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace.

Let us then be done with idle words, with thoughtless remarks, with petty complaints, with unnecessary criticisms, with everything that might hurt or offend, for such things are of the flesh, and tend to destroy peace. It is necessary that we should remain in the flesh for the time being, for we have a mission of peace in the world. As ambassadors for Christ, we preach conciliation (2 Cor. 5:20). God is holding out the hand of friendship to all who will grasp it. But how can we preach peace—how can we be true ambassadors of the Prince of peace—if we allow strifes to arise among ourselves?

Discords are evidences of the old humanity recapping itself; by just so much as we give encouragement to the flesh do we become enemies of the cross of Christ. Let us never forget that the term "enemies of the cross" is used of those who are not walking according to the model offered by Paul (Phil.3:18,19). It was against a background of dissentions among such brethren that Paul preached his word of the cross (1 Cor.3:3,4).

The prison letters abound with advice as to how we should conduct ourselves, and rightly so, for we are God's achievement, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, and what is being accomplished in the ecclesia today is but a sample, a demonstration, of what will be accomplished throughout the universe tomorrow. Colossians opens up the field, and gives the widest possible application of the message of the cross, extending its effect to the whole of God's creations. Here we read:

"And *He* [Christ] is the head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (*making peace through the blood of His cross*), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:18-20).

This is the scripture which truly proclaims universal reconciliation. It is achieved through the blood of the cross. Because the One, Who was above all, descended to the point where He was below all; because the One, Who created all, humbled Himself to the point where He was accursed for all; the effects of the cross can, and will, be extended to incorporate every one of God's creation. For in that curse is included all the sin, all the iniquity, all the unrighteousness, that have plagued heaven and earth throughout the eons; in that curse is included all the enmity and alienation that have stood between God and His creatures; *and they are crucified for all time!*

This is the triumphant peace-making achievement of the love of God operating in the Son of His love. It is God's power for salvation, untouched and untainted by human effort, and it is all-sufficient, all-conquering, all-embracing, all-satisfying, and all-glorifying to God.

This is the Word of the Cross!

John H. Essex

RECONCILIATION TO GOD

Sin, offense and wickedness should not be judged and measured by the relations between man and man, but between man and God.

Justification is by blood, yet reconciliation is through death (*cf* Rom.5:9,10). The first has to do with acts, and calls for suffering. The second has to do with a condition, and demands the death state. We deserve both. To put it popularly (but imperfectly) mankind deserves both torment and annihilation, and Christ endured them on our behalf. Sinners will suffer affliction and distress in the judgment for what they *do,* and enemies enter the second death for what they *are.* The judging is concerned only with their acts, hence is followed by the second death, which deals with the deeper aspect. Their vivification at the consummation, being the nullification of *death* (1 Cor.15:22-26), deals with what they are, and so they are brought into reconciliation to God, which is established through the blood of Christ's cross (Col.1:20).

A. E. Knoch

TAKING ACCOUNT OF GRACE

FROM the "Yet now" of Romans 3:21 to the "Thus you also" of Romans 6:11 we have heard powerful and highly welcome declarations of truth. The evangel of God concerning His Son has been unfolded with words of *spiritual grace* (*cf* Rom.1:11), revealing God's righteousness, commending His love and opening the way of access to Him in peace. And all of these gratuities are channeled to us through our Lord Jesus Christ, through His faith-obedience, in that He died for our sake.

This evangel is wholly a message of human inability and deepest need and of divine achievement. We have nothing of ourselves to boast in. But we do boast (glory) in God (Rom.5:11) and in His evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, for it is God's power for salvation (Rom.1:1-5,16; *cf* 1 Cor.1:23-31; Eph.1:19; 2:8,9). It is in God's grace that we, who are sinners, are justified through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:23,24). It is in God's grace that we, who are enemies, stand before Him in peace, being conciliated to Him through the death of His Son (Rom.5:1,2,10). It is the grace of God and the gratuity in grace which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, which superabounds beyond the disastrous effects of the one offense of Adam, superexceeding every increase of that sin with indisputable righteousness (Rom.5:12-21).

This is the evangel which Paul is bringing us in Romans. Now in chapter 6 the welcome effects of this evangel on the lives of those who are believing it are set before us. The message we are believing not only tells us of God's power in saving sinners for the life to come, but as it is

being believed it becomes itself God's power for salvation in our present lives. The evangel is so characterized by grace that it can be identified by that one word, *grace,* under which we are securely placed (Rom.6:14).

The evangel tells us that God has achieved what is direly needed by us, yet impossible for us to gain by our efforts. It is the message of God's work of grace, carried out in His gift of His Son. Over and over Paul has made this clear:

A. *By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight.*
B. *Yet now . . . a righteousness of God is manifest . . . through Jesus Christ's faith.* (Rom.3:20,21)

A. *For all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.*
B. *Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus . . .* (Rom.3:23,24)

A. *While we are still sinners,*
B. *Christ died for our sakes.* (Rom.5:8)

A. *Being enemies,*
B. *we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son.* (Rom.5:10)

A. *As it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation,*
B. *thus also it is through one just deed for all mankind for life's justifying.* (Rom.5:18)

A. *Even as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners,*
B. *thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.* (Rom.5:19)

A. *Where the sin increases,*
B. *the grace superexceeds.* (Rom.5:20)

A. *As Sin reigns in death,*
B. *thus Grace also should be reigning through righteousness for life eonian.* (Rom.5:21)

The reality of sin and its effect on humanity, bluntly stated and boldly faced in points "A" is dealt with by the reality of God's righteousness and grace operating through the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners as announced in points "B." Points "A" present the need of the evangel, and points "B" present the evangel which meets that need.

There is One, and One only Who carries out the delivering work set before Him by His God and Father. We do not and cannot add to this work. For us the justification and conciliation and life are gratuitous. It is a work of God's grace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. The way in which this evangel speaks to us today, while death and sin continue to operate in us and all around us, now comes before us in Romans 6.

What we are to be doing these days as believers in a world dominated by irreverence and unrighteousness, and in a body corrupted by mortality, is to be *believing* the evangel, *declaring* it, *coming to know* it, *perceiving* it with the eyes of our heart, and *reckoning* its value that is, continually *taking it into account.* Consequently, in the opening verses of Romans 6, in urging these actions, Paul expands the evangel by expounding points "B" as they particularly apply to believers:

We are baptized into Christ's death.
We were entombed together with Him through baptism into death.
We shall be walking in newness of life through the glory of the Father even as Christ was roused by this means.
We have become planted together in the likeness of Christ's death.
We shall be of the resurrection also.
Our old humanity was crucified together with Christ.
Our body of Sin shall be nullified.
We shall by no means still be slaving for Sin.

We have been justified from Sin.
We died together with Christ and shall be living together with Him also.

To these vibrating words, telling us what has been done and what will happen, the apostle adds words of evangel as they relate personally to our Lord. In doing so he shows both the basis and the pattern of our death to Sin and our life of living to God:

Christ, being roused from among the dead, is no longer dying.
Death is lording it over Him no longer,
For in that He died, He died to Sin once for all time,
Yet in that He is living, He is living to God.

THUS YOU ALSO

This description of Christ's current life, in which He is dead to His former contact with sin as the Sin Offering, and in which He is living to God, has uplifting significance for us. Christ has died to Sin once and for all, and in that we are identified with Christ in His death, we are "dead to Sin." Furthermore, Christ, having experienced death, is living to God, and in that we, who know mortality, are "in Christ Jesus, our Lord," we stand in grace before God as living ones, as those who are alive to Him.

At present, this is our position in Christ, but not yet our experience. Nevertheless, our apostle draws us to his side and exhorts us to be taking account of the evangel's every word of grace, and of its certainty. It is the word of the faithful God. It is God's WELL-MESSAGE, allowing no boasting in ourselves, but bringing spiritual power for our living as it speaks to us of God's overwhelming grace:

Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed to Sin,
yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

THE IMPERATIVE MOOD

Paul gives stress to the value and importance of this reckoning by expressing it in what is termed by grammarians as the "imperative mood," which he continues to use in the next two verses. In everyday terms this verb form is often explained as making commands as distinct from giving information (the "indicative mood"). But more harmonious with the context of grace we might better see these imperatives as *exhortations* which arise from brotherly concern. When, in Romans 12:1, Paul repeats the exhortation of verse 13 concerning presenting our bodily members to God, he uses the verb "entreat," which, in Greek, has the sense of calling another person to one's side. There Paul relates his words to us as his *brethren* and speaks in view of *the pities of God.* So also here in Romans 6 Paul connects his imperatives firmly to the evangel of *God's grace.* Taking up the matter of our current living, which was introduced in Romans 6:1, our apostle and brother draws us to his side and directs us to be taking account of what has happened to us in grace and what shall occur, as a source of spiritual strength in our living.

BE RECKONING

The exhortation of Romans 6:11 serves as the major premise for the imperatives that follow. Paul does not begin by telling us we are to be living to God. Rather he first directs us to be taking account of the evangel most particularly as it relates the believer to the death and resurrected life of Christ. This is the leading imperative. The following exhortations, (1) "Let not Sin be reigning in your mortal body," (2) "[do not] be presenting your bodily members as instruments of unrighteousness to Sin," and (3) "[do] present yourselves to God as if alive from among the dead, and your members as instruments of righteous-

ness to God," are built on the exhortation: "Be reckoning yourselves to be dead to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

The root meaning of *reckon* is LAY*ize*,[1] that is, to lay to one's account, or to lay before one's consciousness, to take account of. God laid, or put righteousness to Abraham's account when he believed the promise concerning his seed (Rom.4:1-12), and God does the same for us who are believing His evangel concerning His Son (Rom.4: 23-25). Now in Romans 6:11 Paul exhorts us to be taking account of the blessings God has put to our account, in this case that God has baptized us into the death of Christ, and we stand before Him alive *in Christ Jesus, our Lord.*

Indeed, we are to be taking account of every blessing of God's grace, as they have been set before us in Romans, but especially in the present context, we are to take account of the high favor of our present standing before God as we are in Christ Jesus, Who is our Lord.

IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD

By works of law, no flesh at all can be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20). Yet now God has identified us with the death of Christ and views us in Christ, as He is, having died to Sin and living to God. Here Paul opens up this momentous theme of the believer's inclusion in Christ, which is greatly expanded in Ephesians and Colossians. God blesses us in Christ, chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world and graces us in the Beloved, in Whom our lot was cast also, that we should be for the laud of His glory, who are pre-expectant in the Christ (Eph.1:3-12). Eventually all will be vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:22), but already, in spirit, God has placed us into the death of Christ. Thus now God sees us in Christ Jesus our Lord, dead, indeed,

1. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.241.

to Sin, yet living to God, as Christ is living to Him. It is our happy task, to be setting this and every detail of the evangel of God's grace before our minds, taking account, over and over again, of its majestic glories.

THE LINKAGE

The imperative of Romans 6:11 leads us into the imperatives of verses 12 and 13. They are linked to the exhortation to be reckoning ourselves to be dead to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord, as indicated by the little word *then* at the beginning of verse 12. This term tells us that the new imperatives are logical conclusions to the imperative of verse 11.

Hence we may fill out Paul's words in such ways as the following:

[As the logical conclusion of taking account of God's grace in identifying us with the death of Christ and with His life,] *let not Sin be reigning in your mortal body, for you to be obeying its lusts.*

[As the logical conclusion of taking account of the grace of being made alive to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord,] *do not be presenting your members as implements of righteousness to Sin.*

[As the logical conclusion of taking account of God's grace in seeing us in Christ Jesus, our Lord,] *present yourselves to God as if alive from among the dead, and your members as implements of righteousness to God.*

If we do not see this connection between these exhortations and taking account of God's grace in identifying us with Christ in His death and resurrection, we may easily lose that happiness which grace (literally, JOY) brings with it. This is what happened to the Galatians (*cf* Gal. 4:15; 5:4), who wanted to bring in law, where all is grace. Hence Paul wrote to them, "O foolish Galatians! . . . This

only I want to learn from you: Did you get the spirit by works of law or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal.3:1). It is by the hearing of the evangel which manifests the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ, and in believing it and taking account of it, that we are endowed with spiritual strength. "Now the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control" (Gal.5:22,23).

WE ARE UNDER GRACE

We all want to heed Paul's imperatives of Romans 6:12,13. To be freed from the reign of Sin sums up our future state, and to present ourselves to God, living to Him, sums up our future sphere of activity. Yet how can even an earnest of such happiness enter into our lives today? It cannot be by law, for that only increases offense to God and our personal wretchedness (*cf* Rom.7:21-24). It is by taking account of grace! We are not under law, but under grace (Rom.6:14).

This is the type of teaching to which we are given over (Rom.6:17), which we are "obeying," UNDER-HEARING, or submissively hearing. Worthy walk comes by attentively listening to the evangel and making a reckoning of its superabundance of wealth in righteousness, in peace and in life. With reference to our current lives, Paul always points us to this message, not only as it is presented in Romans but in all his epistles. "For the word of the cross is stupidity, indeed, to those who are perishing, yet to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor.1:18). "Let the word of Christ be making its home in you richly" (Col. 3:16). "Be invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.2:1).

We are to keep this grace in view always. This is Paul's exhortation for believers today with regard to our way of living. We are secured and directed under grace. D.H.H.

CHRIST'S DEATH
AND THE BELIEVERS' RECKONING
(Notes on Romans 6:9-11)

DEATH is mastering Christ no longer for the reason that He Who died, died to sin once. Unlike the Levitical sacrifices; or the sin offerings on the Day of Atonement, which were repeated annually, His death occurred once for all time. Just as He is the last Adam excluding any possibility of a successor, so His death was the one judgment-death of the whole race excluding possibility of repetition. Adam's one sin is met and counteracted by the last Adam's one death. God, Who so severely punished Moses for smiting the rock a second time instead of speaking to it, as he was bidden, will not smite His Son a second time. To do so would deny the efficacy of the one death. Only apostates crucify for themselves the Son of God again (Heb.6:6).

If it be asked how sin and death could have a claim on the one sinless Man, the explanation is found in the declaration that "the One knowing no sin, He [God] made to be sin for our sakes" (2 Cor.5:21). The fact of His personal sinlessness must ever be maintained beside the fact that He was made sin. Sin was always foreign to Him personally, even when He was bearing the shame and doom of the sin of mankind. Though He was undefiled by sin, even when on the cross, being then, as always, absolutely devoted to the accomplishment of God's will for Him, He took upon Himself the responsibility for all humanity's sin and bore its utmost penalty. Thus He loved mankind, thus He loved justice, and thus He loved His God and Father.

The second part of verse ten, "yet He Who is living, is living to God," gives a further proof that death is no longer mastering Him. There is no connection with sin and death in that life which He now lives. Unlike His earthly life, in which He assumed responsibility for sin, His present life is righteously released from the connection He once had. Consequently, death cannot touch Him. God sent His Son into this world in the likeness of sin's flesh, and for sin, that is, as a sin offering. He participated in blood and flesh that He might accomplish a deliverance through His death (Heb.2:14). The abolition of sin and death being one of the chief purposes of His incarnation, it follows that He was much occupied with this part of His earthly mission until His task was accomplished. The redemptive work being done, and that which caused the estrangement of that dark hour being removed, the incarnate One can live to God as never before.

BE RECKONING

In verse eleven, Paul turns from revelation to exhortation. The condensed speech of inspiration allows no unnecessary exhortation and application. The first of many exhortations found in the epistle begins here. Exhortation is in contrast to what has been presented, for at no point have the readers been exhorted to believe; saints who have been justified by faith are addressed. But inasmuch as they may not be reckoning on the truth of their likeness to Christ, there is need of exhortation to do so. Justification is appropriated by faith; but we are not dead to sin and alive to God by reckoning. Baptism into Christ Jesus, with all that such a union brings, is not made ours by reckoning; it is true apart from our knowledge or reckoning. Such knowledge and reckoning are, however, prerequisites to practical deliverance.

"Thus you also be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus." This verse answers the following questions: Who are exhorted? You, the saints. What are we exhorted to do? To be reckoning. What are we to reckon? That we are dead to sin and alive to God. How far is the likeness between Christ and His members true? Even "thus also." What makes this likeness ours? We are in Christ Jesus. What is the practical value of such reckoning? It is a prerequisite to a walk in newness of life, to making sin's body inert, and to freedom from sin's slavery. There is also the value of transformation by occupation with God instead of occupation with sin, which is the first formula for holiness of life.

Reckoning is the mental activity of faith. The word has frequently been used in this epistle; God reckons faith for righteousness (4:3,6,8,9,10,11,22,23,24). Just as we reckon mankind to be justified by faith, so we must reckon ourselves to be dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus (3:28). Unless they are ignorant of this part of the gospel, believers must make this reckoning. Be reckoning is an imperative call to a continuous calculation of faith, and this is made necessary by the actual presence of the sin from which we have been justified. Reckoning, like faith, comes from hearing the good tidings, therefore the section before us should be our frequent study, since forgetfulness of the facts may lead to doubt and consequent loss of assurance and peace of conscience. Instead of being called to attain the impossible, the gospel calls us to believe what the power of God has wrought for us. We are not told to die to sin; reckoning turns our eyes to Christ and occupies us with His cross and His vindication and the blessedness of our union with Him.

SALVATION ACHIEVED IN CHRIST JESUS

God is true, and He speaks with accuracy. Had believers heard accurately they would have escaped many errors.

He has not told us to reckon that sin as a force in us is dead. The death of Christ did not eradicate sin's presence. If sin were eradicated, we should have no need to reckon it to be dead; it would be a constant realization in daily experience. The absence of evil thoughts and inclinations and spontaneous faith and all goodness would attest to all that sin had vanished. Reckoning sin to be dead is false and produces false professions of sinlessness and the evils of self-delusion and self-complacency. The presence of sin can be removed only by literal death. The change that is wrought in those who are alive at the presence of Christ is necessary just because sin dwells in us. Corruption and mortality are the results and evidences of sin, and these cannot have an allotment in the kingdom of God. Sin will be eradicated only when we exchange mortality for immortality (1 Cor.15:50-54).

When God says reckon we should not substitute realize, or walk, or struggle. This salvation is objective; it was achieved outside ourselves and in Christ Jesus. Therefore we must not look inward. The facts are not verifiable by our experience, though they make an experience possible. We shall fail to grasp what God has done if we seek to bring it down to the level of experience, for no one can presently experience the crucifixion of his old humanity, his death to sin, and his justification from sin.

We may substitute no other word for reckon, such as walk or struggle. Justification from sin is not ours because we may be walking in accord with spirit, but, on the contrary, it is a prerequisite to such a walk. Nor am I dead to sin when I am victorious in a struggle with temptation to sin; sin and death reigned, and I was not delivered by fighting, but by dying. Christ was not fighting sin on the cross; He was accepting sin's doom and dying to it. We shall get the exact truth as we note carefully just what happened to Christ and then reckon ourselves thus also.

George L. Rogers

HUMAN DESTINY

(Part One)

Am I a mere passing flash in the universal pan—a transient spark struck off on the anvil of Chance—an accident in the realms of Space? Have I just "happened?" or am I instead the partial fruition of some great design—a finite expression of an infinite thought, atomic in proportions, divine in grand potentiality? If there be a "Power not ourselves" behind the phenomena of creation, have I a place in His purpose? Have I been included in the wide sweep of His extensive plans? or am I of as little consequence to Him as is the mote in the sunbeam's path? Such is the problem as it affects the individual; and full evidence of its universal interest may be found in the never-ceasing attempt to dissolve those mysteries which hide its solution from the eyes of men, as also in the case with which priestcraft has gained its unholy ascendancy through claiming a special knowledge of, and power over, such matters.

When we rise from the problem as it affects the individual to the problem in its relation to the race, the sheer immensity of the question stuns us. The mere thought of an ocean of souls sweeping with unceasing flow over the falls of death makes us realize how impotent we are to find a solution of the enigma through a mere process of logic.

Such problems are the heritage of every man; and every religion which men have followed, and every philosophy which has engaged the mental powers of humanity, owe their existence to the pressure with which such problems have borne in upon the human heart. Religion—the man-

made kind—need not even be considered by us here; in its most presentable forms it is but a pious agnosticism—a devout ignorance. Religion seeks for feeling: philosophy knowing; but neither the head nor the heart are competent in themselves to grapple with the problem of destiny. Philosophy must necessarily prove itself inadequate for the task, for it has nothing from which to reason as a starting-point, and beginning nowhere it naturally ends nowhere. Philosophy being nothing more than a comparison of possibilities, ending in the selection of the most probable, cannot ever hope to attain to assured certainty. From such broken reeds we gladly turn, and all the more gladly since God has not left us like

> "Orphans crying in the night;
> Orphans crying for the light;
> And with no language but a cry!"

He has graciously revealed Himself, and in His Word has given us all necessary knowledge concerning "things to come."

In Christianity alone can we find the solution of this great mystery. Its teachings bear no trace of the labored speculations of the philosophers. Its assertions have no affinity with the rash dogmatism of mere cultured guesswork. Its pronouncements have the finality of truth. It lifts the veil between things present and things to come without the slightest vestige of that timidity which naturally springs from uncertainty of mind. It pushes materialism aside as being nothing but the weird fancy of disordered brains and callous hearts, shows that man is more than a product of blind forces with an origin in the unknown and a destiny in chaos, and instead traces his genesis to the God of a love which knows no ending, a patience which never wearies, and a wisdom able to overcome every obstacle

with which rebellious wills would seek to thwart His purposes of grace. It declares that this earth is not a whirling speck of matter severed from all other spheres of being, but rather that its past and future are intimately linked with the history and destiny of all other worlds, and that instead of its being—like a straw in a whirlwind—the sport of gigantic forces, is guided on its onward course by the finger of God to a place of government and rule in the reconstruction of the universe. Nor must we imagine that the plans of the Creator include merely the majority of men, for the God of the seemingly surplus sparrow will have no ultimate "waste" in the fulfillment of His will.

But the truth of God's Word and the theories of Christians are not synonymous terms, and as we are about to examine the latter the question as to how we may distinguish the true from the false here presents itself. Or if every theory contains something of the truth then we must determine how we may separate those elements we should accept from those we should reject. If we bear in mind that there is in truth a symmetry between its parts, then we shall find that harmony is one of the best tests we can apply to any doctrine submitted to us for examination. If a belief does not harmonize in full with the teaching of Scripture, and the revealed character of God, or if it emphasizes one of God's attributes so as to exaggerate it over His other perfections, then it must be more or less untrue.

In reading a poem if there is not a perfect balance maintained between the different lines we become aware of its imperfection of the lack of rhythm which it betrays, and we know that the meter has been thrown out of balance either by the presence of a superfluous syllable, or the absence of a necessary one. God is the great Poem of the universe, and His ways are but the poetry of His attributes in their activity. When, therefore, we seek to translate His ways into the terms of doctrinal statement, and our trans-

lation betrays a lack of the poise and balance belonging to His perfections, we know that such lack of harmony owes its existence to our having put into our statement something that should have been left out, or having left out something we should have put in.

In studying the theories of human destiny, instead of finding this symmetry and balance in them, we find the reverse: and, as this doctrine does not stand alone but is intimately connected with such vital subjects as the atonement, etc., we are not surprised to find that incongruity here has transmitted itself to these other articles of faith. And we may consequently expect that clearness of vision in one of these doctrines must exert a clarifying influence on our views in regard to those other subjects.

The importance of the doctrine of human destiny may also be inferred from the fact that so many departures from the Christian faith owe their existence to a revolt of conscience against those dogmas we call "traditional." Much of the deplorable teaching in regard to such doctrines as Inspiration is but the result of a revulsion against intolerable conceptions of God. If we can show that Scripture gives us a view of God marvelous in its perfect harmony, and altogether foreign to the caricatures of the creeds, then we shall have deprived Error of the main apology for its existence.[1]

Without further preface we will proceed to the examination of the principal theories which men have held, and still hold, in relation to the future life.

1. It is not denied that in many the apostasy is due to a moral antagonism to evangelical truth, with which we cannot have the slightest vestige of sympathy, but this should not blind us to the fact that with others the departure from traditional views arises rarely from intellectual difficulties. The latter class call for sympathy rather than caustic stricture.

THE DOGMA OF ETERNAL TORMENT

An exhaustive examination of the doctrine before us would require more space than could be profitably allotted to it in the pages of a magazine. The reader must therefore be prepared for a suggestive, rather than an exhaustive treatment of the subject; and not be disappointed should he find here but seed-thoughts requiring mental effort in their proper development.

We cannot rise from nature up to God; nor can we ascend from theory to truth. When we know God, then we can descend to an intelligent and enjoyable knowledge of nature, for then we have the key which unlocks the mysteries of the material world; similarly, when we possess truth we are in a position to analyze theory, for only then can we accurately discriminate between the various elements of which each and every theory is composed.

There is no truth (as held by man) entirely free from error, nor any error altogether devoid of truth; indeed, not a few doctrines which we call false are but grotesque truths—orthodoxies become heretical by distortion, exaggeration, or under-statement. The theory of everlasting punishment is no exception. It has elements of truth without a doubt, elements which have never failed to commend themselves to such as are "spiritual"; but, because other of its elements are "carnal," or earth-born, these latter have ever been the producing causes of heart-pain and soul-misery, the entire doctrine being accepted, nevertheless, supported as it apparently is by what purports to be a translation of the words of God, but which in reality is merely a transcription of certain theories of the translators. This is no reflection upon the personal integrity of the translators, nor upon the general excellency of their version, their work being referred to only so far as it touches upon the subject of human destiny. The truth of this will become evident as we proceed.

The dogma of endless torment rests upon a threefold basis, viz.,

(1) Assumption;
(2) Translation; and
(3) Tradition.

These are the three main props of an unsound doctrine, the strength of each depending to a large extent upon its fellows. We shall see how they bear the test of investigation.

(1) Assumption. Speculation—the mother of assumption—has, of course, no power for either good or evil in itself, it being simply a wild hazard at possible truth—drawing the bow at a venture, as it were; but when erroneous speculation crystallizes into unquestioned dogma, when its assumptions are foolishly and blindly accepted as incontrovertible fragments of absolute truth, then it acquires an authority, and wields a tyrannical despotism, to which it can advance no rightful claim. The baneful effects of such folly may be found in abundance in the sphere of science, where learned men have fathered not a few absurdities and, on the discovery of their mistakes, have attributed them to this very practice of accepting certain assumptions as being so obviously true as to require no proof. Many a scientific dogma has collapsed the moment its assumptive basis was called in question.

Taking things for granted, receiving without question certain propositions the truth of which is supposedly self-evident, has produced its own evil harvest in the domain of theology. Thus, having preconceptions as to what God cannot be, we interpret every scripture which declares what He is in such a way as will not conflict with those preconceptions of ours; having assumed that heaven cannot be this or that, we read every biblical reference to it in the light of these suppositions; having affirmed that the

only way the saint can leave the world is through death, we explain (?) every allusion to the second coming in harmony therewith. The church has found to its sorrow that its assumptions in regard to these and kindred subjects have been but so many barriers and obstacles in the way of entering into the mind of God on such topics, and that real progress only commenced with a searching criticism of theories we had brought to Scripture, rather than derived from it. But we have been slow to question the assumptions on which the dogma of endless torment is founded, assumptions just as gratuitous as those which have hindered progress in the other subjects referred to.

Now when Scripture describes the duration of punishment it does not do so in terms expressive of eternity. The Greek language was not without terms descriptive of endlessness, but the holy spirit, in revealing the truth of God, persistently refused to use those terms in connection with either sin itself, or its consequences. Instead of those terms—terms which man unquestionably would have employed—the spirit of God made use of others, denoting not endless but age-long duration. Whether the "ages" are eternal or not is a question which obviously cannot be determined by the word itself. In order to settle this point appeal must be made to that which alone can define the meaning of words, i.e., usage.

Just at this point we would mention one of the self-evident axioms of literary interpretation, namely, that to understand the scope of a writer's terminology we must study—not some other author's usage, but—the usage of that particular writer whose meaning we would obtain. If the writer himself defines the sense, and points out the limitations attached to the words he employs, then it would be sheer idiocy to try and force upon them the sense which other writers may have attached to their use. If Aristotle was the author of Romans through Philemon, then Aris-

totelian usage would define New Testament terms; but, seeing that Paul was the apostle whose pen was used in their production, common-sense itself demands that we consult the Pauline usage.

Had Paul's use of words been studied, the assumption that the age-times are eternal would never have been made. Had that assumption not been made, the dogma of endless torment would never have been foisted upon the church of God; but once made, the sluice-gates were opened to admit a torrent of semi-philosophical trash into the crystal stream of Bible truth. It is our urgent duty to filter out the adulterations as rapidly and as thoroughly as we can, depending on our gracious God for the ability necessary in such an important ministry.

As this—the definition of terms—is an important point, we will be pardoned for repeating ourselves a little. What the writer desires to emphasize is—even if it were granted that Grecian philosophers conceived the ages and eternity as being synonymous terms—that would not prove that Christian writers intended to convey pagan conceptions, especially when the New Testament use of the terms forbade such a supposition. To say because Christian writers and heathen philosophers employed the same terms they must therefore have used them with exactly the same associated ideas, is equivalent to saying because the term, "eons," was used to describe personal emanations from Deity— beings midway in station between Creator and creature—that consequently Paul taught the same Gnostic ideas when he also employed the same word in view.

The theory that the ages are eternal is the main assumption on which the dogma of endless torment rests, being always appealed to in fact as the final "proof" of every other assumption it contains. Think of appealing to one error in order to prove others! Imagine a heretic appealing to heterodoxy in order to prove his heresy! A chain,

we are told, is only as strong as its weakest link. This link in error's chain is not only weak, but FRAGILE.

Hitherto we have considered the purely assumptive basis on which the dogma of eternal torment is founded. God said *this,* but as men thought He meant *that,* they found no difficulty in omitting the words He used, and employing instead such words as they felt sure He meant to use! Alas for the day when theology undertook to correct revelation!

It is now in order to mention some other assumptions which have given to this dogma whatever consistency it possesses. Proving these assumptions false we destroy its consistency; and, its consistency destroyed, further belief in it is an affront to both revelation and reason.

The ideas of endless torment and the soul's inherent immortality are closely related; endless pain being impossible apart from conscious endless existence. And it is in keeping with this, that if men derived their doctrine of the ages from Aristotle, they should derive their doctrine of immortality from Plato. They are therefore related in their being so dependent on each other, as well as in having their sources amongst the gentiles, to whom without a doubt the oracles of God were *not* entrusted.

The supposition that immortality is the birthright of the natural man, without any reference to his moral fitness for such a priceless treasure, is one absolutely foreign to biblical revelation. So self-evident is this, many advocates of the doctrine feel constrained to claim, "Immortality in Scripture is nowhere revealed but everywhere assumed." The point they would wish to make is that inherent immortality was so obvious a truth it required no statement! Gladstone, in his *Studies of Butler,* remarks that the doctrine of immortality "crept into the church by the back door" and his concluding remarks on the *History of Opinion* are of value:

"Another consideration of the highest importance is that the natural immortality of the soul is a doctrine wholly unknown to the Holy Scriptures, and standing on no higher plane than that of an ingeniously sustained . . . philosophical opinion. And surely there is nothing, as to which we ought to be more on our guard, than the entrance into the precincts of Christian doctrine, either without authority or by an abuse of authority, of philosophical speculations disguised as truths of Divine Revelation. They bring with them a grave restraint on mental liberty; but what is worse is, that their basis is a pretension essentially false, and productive . . . of other falsehoods."

How true is his closing statement, "productive of other falsehoods"! One error must be sustained by another error; one assumption demands another in its support. "Taking for granted" something about the "ages of time," is quickly followed by "taking for granted" something about the souls of men. And if the assumption concerning the ages produced evil fruit in its effect on related subjects, so also did the acceptation of philosophy's "grand guess" in regard to the human soul weave a web of enchantment over every doctrine affected by it.

The Scriptures defined the limits of the ages, and clearly distinguished them from the eternity of which they formed a part: men, blinded by false pre-conceptions, defined the ages to *be* eternity, and not merely a part of it. The Scriptures emphasized man's mortality: men, under the glamour of philosophy, wrote poems about their immortality. The Scriptures spoke of the Creator as a God who suffered from sin, who could love and hate with an intensity of emotion unknown to man: men taught that God was beyond being affected by men's misdeeds. We cannot illustrate such methods of interpretation by the Philosopher's Stone, for whereas that mythical wonder-worker turned all it touched into gold, this method transformed the gold of divine truths into the dross of human deceits.

To examine in detail the other assumptions on which this doctrine is founded is hardly necessary just now, it being desired to merely emphasize the fact that these preconceived theories concerning the endlessness of the ages, the immortality of the soul, and the impassivity of God—theories which have so largely molded current theology—are but assumptions, and consequently are not to be regarded as clinching proofs of such a tremendous doctrine as the one before us.

(2) Translation. The second great support of this dogma is to be found in "versions" of the Bible, which we should ever bear in mind are not Scripture but translations of it. When the Bible was written, in its various parts, it was not written in English, French or German, but in Hebrew and in Greek; and, therefore, whenever a question of doctrine arises, resort must be made to the very terms God used, in order to obtain the very idea which God meant to convey. That the assumptions made by translators influenced their translations of the Bible is an undeniable fact, patent to every student who compares a literal translation with the ordinary version. For instance, where we read in the AV "everlasting" and "eternal," in Young's Literal Translation, we find the term "age-during"—the latter leaving the question open as to whether age-duration is eternal or not. The assumption that age-duration *must* be eternal led the translators of most versions to use infinite terms to describe a duration which the very Bible they were translating proved could not be endless.

False philosophy having produced this false translation, finds most of its strength and proof, to the great mass of Bible readers, in its own production. If Englishmen thought that the framers of the Magna Carta meant something other than just what they said, and altered it accordingly, subsequently appealing to this altered document as proof of their ideas, the situation would be anal-

ogous to the one before us—theologians appealing to the translation of their own views in order to prove them.

(3) TRADITION. Next, we find the element of stability which tradition yields. Tradition is the time-element in both truth and error; it does not make the truth a whit more certain, nor does it in the least detract from the falsity of error. Buddhism is older, but not truer, than Christianity. Sin itself is hoary-headed.

If we but grant the premises on which the dogma of endless torment is based, we cannot deny the rationality of the doctrine itself. The doctrine, as developed, may be manifestly inconsistent with the attributes of God, and still retain a logical consistency with its own arguments. Viewed in relation to its premises it may have a logical consistency; viewed in relation to the divine perfections it may manifest a moral inconsistency. The mental conflict, which the doctrine has occasioned in the minds of men whose orthodoxy cannot be questioned, cannot be attributed to any glaring, logical absurdity in itself—if all its premises were correct, the absurdity would lie with those who would contradict it. *If sin be eternal,* there is nothing illogical, and certainly everything is moral in the conclusion that eternal suffering is eternal sin's natural concomitant. We therefore find a logical consistency in the doctrine's agreement with its premise, but a moral inconsistency in the relation of that rashly-conceived premise with the known attributes, and revealed truths, of the God who made man for Himself.

Assumption, Translation and Tradition are then the triple foundation on which this mighty dogma rests. The assumptions may have been made by very wise men; the translations made by men of vast literary skill, who had accepted these assumptions; and the doctrines, thus supported, may have been accepted in unquestioning simplicity by very good men—AND STILL BE WRONG! In order, then, to regain the Word of God in all its purity, we must pass by

good men, learned men, and wise men, not because they have been wise, good, or learned, but just because they were *men,* and get back to *God.* We must let God speak for Himself, and instead of molding His words into conformity with our philosophies, rather mold and fashion all our thinking into harmony with His truth. And, instead of vitiating His divine revelations with our human premises, find all our premises as well as our conclusions in Himself alone, who is the Alpha and the Omega of truth.

UNIVERSALISM AND ANNIHILATION

Having considered the soul-crushing dogma of endless torment, it becomes us to make brief reference to its alternative doctrines. Before dismissing from our minds, however, the Augustinian doctrine—as it is called—of endless woe, we must be permitted to remark that if the assumptions on which that dogma is based are correct, and harmonious with Scripture—no matter how strange it may appear to us, nor how foreign it may seem to our conceptions of truth—we must, in the name of reason as well as faith, bow unquestioningly before the utterance of the Omniscience to which alone the entire and unbroken circle of truth can be familiar.

The same "reason" that insists upon a thorough criticism of every human interpretation demands, with equal insistence, an unquestioning acceptance of every divine revelation. The mere whisper of God into the listening ear of faith is more conclusively final than the loudest thunder of unaided reason. "*Unaided* reason" we say, wishing to distinguish between that misnamed "reason" which seeks to wrench the secrets of the universe from God by sheer force of mental powers, and the "reason" which most amply evidences its rationality in a recognition of its own limitations.

Nor should we forget that reason is as much of a necessity to faith, as is faith to reason—to an idiot, bereft of rea-

son, faith is impossible. Without faith, reason degenerates into agnosticism: without reason, faith declines into superstition. Faith, then, is not irrational; it may be opposed to sight, but should not be spoken of as if it were in opposition to reason. If, then, faith exists not apart from reason, and if reason be blind apart from faith, the question presents itself, will the truth as touching human destiny produce such a mighty conflict between the two as history and personal experience shows to exist in relation to the dominant doctrine? The consequence of such a conflict has been that some have doubted that to be faith at all which could so disagree with reason, and others have denied that to be reason which could be so out-of-joint with faith.

True reason acknowledges that sin must be met with punishment, and acquiesces in the thought that punishment must continue as long as sin endures. With such a doctrine it is not reasonable to quibble. But the theory to which reason objects is that of *endless* sin and *endless* punishment as necessary factors in a universe supposed to come from the creative designs of a perfect Deity; and the picture of a universe eternally midway between chaos and perfection—eternally half-damned—is one to which reason has never been able to reconcile itself.

Universalism, however, is not the product of either faith or reason, but the result of a sentimental shrinking from the facts of life, and the stern necessities of moral government—in short, it is neither rational nor believing. It is the extreme of two other extremes—the third point in a triangle of opposing theories: materialism, deifying reason and excluding faith; orthodoxy, exalting faith to the denial of reason; universalism, denying both by its misuse of sentiment. The Augustinian dogma failed to preserve the equipoise of the divine attributes, and sustain the harmonious relation of every divine perfection. But the universalist did not right the wrong by merely shifting

the undue emphasis from one set of attributes to another. Nor does a system commend itself to us which, in order to evade all thought of future punishment, found the fulfillment of every prophecy of judgment in the fall and ruin of Jerusalem. We may, therefore, brush universalism aside without further comment and proceed to the less objectionable views of annihilation, or as its advocates prefer to call it, "conditional immortality."

The doctrines of endless torment and conditional immortality have this in common, that both view the sinner's punishment as being eternal in its infliction—the first consciously so, the second unconsciously. Further, both doctrines are based upon assumption—the former assuming the endlessness of the ages, the latter assuming the endlessness of death. The prematurely accepted theory of the infinity of the age-times yielded strong support to the assumption concerning death's endlessness; for, the punishment of sin being revealed in Scripture as age-lasting, and that punishment being death, the supposed endlessness of the ages naturally attached itself to the wages of sin.

The advocates of eternal torment declare that, once sentence has been passed upon the offender against law, that offender can never come from under the law's decree. In this the exponents of conditional immortality agree. Both schools, therefore, are united against any possible restoration of the lost; the Augustinian finding the impossibility of such restoration in the fixed character of the punished; the annihilationist finding it in the nature of the punishment. The Augustinian reached his dogma by a series of presumptions as to man's being: the annihilationist reached his by presuming that death in its final infliction is instantaneous instead of being a process spread out over the periods of the eons; or, of acknowledging its infliction to be protracted, by concluding that the sinner's destruction is such as will preclude all hope of his resurrection in a body

minus that depravity of nature which so loudly demanded its own eradication.

The problem which confronts the annihilationist, of the dead being raised to die again, those once punished being raised in order to suffer a repetition of their punishment, is one of those jagged difficulties which no line of reasoning can ever remove from the doctrine of conditional immortality as generally formulated. But the suggestion that this resurrection of the wicked dead has reference to a fulfilling of God's gracious purposes in them is one which the annihilationist must reject in consequence of his assumptions regarding death, even as the Augustinian must equally reject it because of his assumptions regarding the eternity of eonian time.

The universalist exaggerated the scriptural terms descriptive of universal bliss—i.e., exaggerated them by ignoring, or minimizing, the import of those scriptures describing God's punitive attitude towards sin. No attempt was made to explain, or reconcile, the discord between these two classes of scripture, but one class was taken and the other, by a process of gross misinterpretation, simply ignored or explained away. The annihilationist, on the other hand, lacking a full-orbed conception of the divine wisdom, and failing to perceive how those threats of destruction could be reconciled with the promises of salvation, by minimizing the extent of the promises, exaggerated the real import of the threats.

The problem as to how there can be a real and complete fulfillment of the threats, and yet an equally real and complete fulfillment of the promises, is but the old problem of how law and grace can both be fulfilled, without being fulfilled at the expense of either. It is but the old problem re-stated in the future tense—the problem of soteriology becomes eschatological.

If God's righteousness and mercy both are abundantly

magnified and satisfied in the salvation of one soul, it is ample intimation that the restoration of every soul, without diminishing or dimming the glory of that righteousness, is not within the sphere of improbability.

Augustinianism involves the idea that some grim necessity demands the continuous maintenance of an eternal inferno within the bounds of the universe. Men have tried to apologize for such conceptions, and have not hesitated to teach that the terror of such a spectacle will effectually prevent a repetition of sin's entrance into the heavenly realms. This, however, is a universe dependent for its stability partly upon love, and partly upon hideous terror—an apology as nauseating as is the concept for which the apology is made.

Annihilation involves the view that whereas puny man possesses the unlimited ability to resist the will of God indefinitely, God is limited in His power to overcome that resistance, unable to influence the human heart so as to remove all rebellious feelings, unable to control circumstances so that by bitter experience itself man may learn the unprofitableness of sin, and turn from it to find true life and liberty in obedience to the divine will. We must choose either horn of the dilemma: either God is limited by man, or else man is encompassed by divine limitations, ones which, while not interfering with the practical freedom of the creature, still prevent ultimate suicide on his part. On our doctrine of destiny, will depend our belief whether God, in creating man, created him so that he could never really get beyond the reach of his Creator's love and enabling grace, or else made him as the pioneer engineers contrived their experimental locomotives: without a safety-valve.

The three great theories of human destiny may consequently be described as three great exaggerations. The Augustinian exaggerates the duration of punishment. The

annihilationist exaggerates the nature of punishment. And the universalist exaggerates certain elements in the nature of God. Each and all of these views amply illustrate what we referred to in the introduction as being "mistranslations of the divine perfections in the terms of our doctrinal statements." The final truth we must look for elsewhere, satisfied that when found it will combine the truth common to each, while eliminating the error attached to all.

We may talk, and write, as we please concerning the Creator's right to do as He pleases with those He creates; but we must not forget that the will of God is not something which can be understood apart from the nature of God. "Show me Thy glory," was Moses' plea, and God revealed it to him in the statements of His power and freedom to confer forgiveness upon His erring creatures. God is not experimenting in human life. He does not adventure at His creature's risk. He does not gamble on chance, or trust to a lucky turn of the wheel of life to bring a possible handful of His creatures back to Himself. In order to save one soul He is not compelled, by some hideous necessity, to damn a hundred. When His purpose in human life is completed, no debris will remain to mar the finished perfection of His work. The circle of human freedom is itself enclosed within the larger circle of the divine decrees: "Known unto God are all His works."

Sin's entrance into the universe did not take the Almighty by surprise. God knew what it would do prior to its entrance; and, when sin finally vacates the scene, it will do so defeated in every particular, not even a partial victor over any that God brought into existence for Himself. Sin will not remain in the universe, either as wielding the lash of endless torment, or holding the scepter of endless death. Death itself shall die, and destruction be itself destroyed. That such a glorious end is to be the grand climax of eonian time, it is now our province to show from the storehouse of God's revealed truth.

Alan Burns

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 103rd Year

(1909–2012)

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 Human Destiny (Part Two)
161 Israel Under the Law
173 We Are Under Grace
183 Perceiving the Grace of God

FOURTH QUARTER, 2012

Volume 103 **Number 4**

All in All

The blood of Christ is the basis of all blessing. The purpose of God determines human destiny. It does not depend on our deserts. The plan or process of God during the eons or ages must be distinguished from His purpose, which will not be fully accomplished until the eons are past. Herein lies the difference between the teaching of the Scriptures and the accepted creeds of Christendom. Sin and suffering, condemnation and death, endure for the eons, not "forever."

This realization makes it possible for us to believe *all* the Word of God. Those who cling to the creeds and "eternal" torment must deny certain passages in Paul's epistles which clearly and unequivocally teach the salvation of all mankind (1 Tim.2:4; 4:9,10) and the reconciliation of the universe (Col.1:20). They reject these portions of God's holy Word because they cannot be true if torment is eternal. If, however, judgment is not eternal, then we have the happy and exultant privilege of believing all the solemn threats of death and condemnation without the least reservation, and still accept God's grand goal to which all His labors lead.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FOURTH QUARTER 2012
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED THREE

EDITORIAL

THAT "Law demands *justice,* not *grace,*" is the fundamental point underlying the entire argument of A. E. Knoch's article in our current issue, "Israel Under the Law" (p.161). Therein, Brother Knoch concludes by saying: "For mortal man, justice means *death*, but grace gives *life*. May God grant that all who read these lines may not be enslaved by a law which is not theirs, but revel in the secret riches of grace, which God has reserved for faith among the *nations*, while Israel is not His people!"

In Alan Burns' article, "Human Destiny (Part Two)" (p.147), the author contemplates "the glorious end [that] is to be the grand climax of eonian time." As Brother Burns wrote in part one of this same exposition (*Unsearchable Riches,* vol.103, p.144), and which theme he now addresses in this concluding portion of this same writing, "When sin finally vacates the scene, it will do so defeated in every particular, not even a partial victor over any that God brought into existence for Himself. Sin will not remain in the universe, either as wielding the lash of endless torment, or holding the scepter of endless death. Death itself shall die, and destruction be itself destroyed."

Beginning on page 173, in his article, "We Are Under Grace," Dean Hough centers his thoughts upon the apostle Paul's astonishing words, "*you* are not under law, but under grace" (Rom.6:14). "One of the most startling summations of the evangel ever given," as it appears in "the words of Romans 5:20, [is] that 'where sin increases, grace superexceeds'! . . . . This highly unconventional teaching (all of grace) is still very much in the foreground in Romans six, and necessarily so. The faithful work of Christ in dying for

sinners is God's powerful means for complete deliverance from sin in the future, yet also, where it is being believed, it is God's means for joy and peace and all the fruit of the spirit in the present, in accord with the earnest of the spirit (*cf* Rom.1:16; Gal.5:22,23; Eph.1:13,14)."

My own article in this issue, continuing in our *Questions and Answers* series, is entitled, "Perceiving the Grace of God" (p.183). The question to which I reply is: What does salvation "by grace" *actually* mean and entail? It is clear that, that "Christ died for our sins," is the essential message of good news having to do with our salvation. But, does Christ's sacrifice for our sins secure and ensure our salvation, or does it just secure and ensure the possibility of our salvation?

My answer to this vital question is centered in the consideration that, "A favor or gracious gift . . . is not something that is due us because of something we have done, but is simply an act performed or provision made granted out of kindness and love in order to bring us joy, *irrespective of what we have done or not done, whether good or bad.* This is what grace *is;* and most importantly, this is what the grace of God is." J.R.C.

Currently, my wife Suella and I are visiting in our Almont, Michigan office, working here together with Dean Hough, Tony Nungesser, and Jerry Upton, who live nearby and ordinarily work from this location..

The new mailing address and phone number of the Concordant Publishing Concern is: P.O. Box 449, Almont, MI 48004; 810-798-3563.

Following our visit here, Sue and I plan to return to the Concern's property (and our home of many years) in Santa Clarita, California in order to attend to various duties there. These include the shipment of additional stock of Concordant publications from our old warehouse in California to our new office in Michigan.

We look to God for direction and wisdom in our continuance of the Concordant ministry, while at the same time asking our friends in faith to join us in earnest prayer for His gracious hand upon these same endeavors.

HUMAN DESTINY

(Part Two)

WHAT men teach about destiny we have seen. It is our province now to inquire what God has to say concerning it.

THE EONS

The reader will bear in mind that the words "eternal" and "everlasting" are not a translation of Scripture but an *interpretation* of it. Where man has "for ever" the original has such terminology as "for the age [eon]," or "for the ages [eons]." The perversion of the idea contained in the Scriptural terms may be seen in the fact that whereas the Hebrew and Greek words preserve and in fact emphasize the age-broken, or periodic character of that portion of eternity within the scope of revelation, the English terms *obliterate* its age-divided peculiarity, and state the idea of duration in the form of monotonous changelessness.

What God revealed (and man *concealed*) was that sin and its punishment are age-during, and what He did not reveal was that age-duration is eternal. But what God (in the Old Testament) had left undefined, that is what man hastened to stereotype into an exact term. God's foolishness was in this, however, as in everything else, wiser than man's wisdom, and God's silence more eloquent than human speech; so much so indeed, that it is more necessary we should have a right understanding of what God left out of the words He used in describing duration, than that we should have clear ideas of what man brought into them. Such phrases as "the endless ages of eternity," so remarkably present in religious literature of every descrip-

tion, are just as remarkably absent from the inspired literature of the Bible. The phrase "immortal soul" is a similar unscriptural expression.

PAUL'S TEACHING

The full doctrine of the eons and the final truth of destiny are to be found in the Pauline epistles. The endeavor to find a fully developed teaching of the ages in the Old Testament can only be likened to an attempt to read the detailed doctrine of Romans into the prophecy of Isaiah. True, it may be granted that as we have germinal beginnings of the apostle's masterpiece in Isaiah's "Old Testament Gospel," even so the intimations of the Hebrew Scriptures involve the subsequent teaching of Paul concerning the eons. Nevertheless, whatever may be said as to the *involved* truth of the Old Testament, it is only in Paul's writings that we find the *evolved* and complete doctrine of the ages. In Paul's epistles we therefore find the key to Old Testament teachings on this subject, and the solution of the entire problem.

In 2 Timothy 1:9 Paul uses an expression which is absolutely opposed to the theory that the eons and eternity are synonymous terms. The Greek words used are *pro chronōn aiōniōn,* which we find rendered in our English Version thus: "before the world began." Now the word for *world* is not *aiōniōn* ("eonian") but *kosmos* ("cosmos"), and as we do not find *kosmos* in the text, but *aiōniōn,* it is apparent at our very first glance that here was something in Scripture which its translators did not understand and which their translation was certain to keep anyone else from understanding either. Giving the word *aiōniōn* its rightful meaning, we translate the phrase thus, "before times eonian." (See also Titus 1:2 and 1 Corinthians 2:7.) Eternity cannot have had a beginning, but here we learn that the eons, or "ages," *did* have one. They are therefore not synonymous terms.

THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF DESTINY IN ROMANS

The doctrine of the eons is by no means an isolated one, but is intimately associated with every other scriptural teaching. Clarity in this subject is essential to clearness in others, and error here will inevitably produce confusion elsewhere. Proof of this is very evident in the epistle before us, the very lack of anxiety, or carefulness, on the author's part to prevent the reader from accepting his teaching in a full race-wide sense being only equalled by the corresponding anxiety on the part of his interpreters lest his words should be construed to have that meaning. Why Paul should have been so careless, and his modern expositors so careful, shows, if anything, a difference in point of view between him and them. Should we accept the scriptural teaching of the eons, then Paul's choice of terms will be appreciated by us; but, should we prefer the pagan notions concerning them, Paul's lack of restrictive language will become a matter for wonder, if indeed it does not become a fit subject for our criticism.

The most casual reader of Romans chapter five must recognize that the author deals in all-inclusive terms. He does not balance a race-wide over against an elective expression, but when writing of sin's ruin and redemption's scope employs the same unrestrictive word in both connections, without even a passing hint that we should understand sin and salvation as being other than co-extensive. He does not contrast "all" with "some," nor "many" with "few." His parallels are consistently drawn, and show that his object is not to present a numerical contrast but a moral one—the number involved remaining unaltered throughout his argument, the same *quantitative* words being used, where different *qualitative* terms are employed. The marked contrast between the qualitative words is no more evident than

is the lack of contrast between the quantitative expressions. Paul's object then is not to show the difference between one part of the race and another, nor between a majority in one condition and a minority in another, but to develop the difference between the race as related to Adam in flesh and the race as related to Christ in grace.

The mischievous assumptions concerning the ages effectually paralyze every attempt to interpret this great chapter in a way that will allow such obvious facts as these to have their proper force. The taking away of the limitations with which Scripture has surrounded the eons compels the adding of limitations to the revealed extent of reconciliation. Adding to Scripture in one respect necessitates taking from Scripture in another. The introduction of the eternal element into the age-terms leads naturally to the elimination of the universal element from the redemptive-terms. The commentaries of Christendom are witnesses to the beggarly, shrinking processes which men have resorted to in order to make Romans five utter the shibboleths of the Augustinian dogma.

Crediting the average man with an intelligence sufficient to express his thoughts in adequate language, it ill becomes us to question the ability of the divine Author of Scripture to reveal His mind in terms remarkable for their delicate and exquisite precision. When the Word declares "the many shall be constituted righteous" (in exact parallel to the phrase, "the many were constituted sinners"), why should we find it necessary to whittle down, or discount, such a statement into meaning no more than that they shall have an opportunity presented to them to become righteous? If what God meant was different to what God said, shall we conclude from that that God was at a loss for the right word when Romans was indited? Perish such thoughts! And yet the reader who would seek to learn the very thoughts of God by closely scrutinizing His very words

must recognize that his method must ultimately lead to believing what God has taught concerning the finite eons, and enjoying what He has revealed concerning His infinite grace. The belief that the words used by God in revelation adequately and exactly reveal His thoughts will not so much enable us to interpret the Scriptures as it will manifest how wonderfully the Scriptures interpret themselves.

Without the doctrine of the eons Romans five becomes a labyrinth, or maze, which the truth-seeker, bewildered by a thousand conflicting thoughts, and harassed by a myriad theories, may well hesitate to tread. With the key-truth of God's eonian purpose grasped, the passage loses its terror, and invites the simple to enjoy the rich banquet it sets before them. It reveals the awful potency of a single sin to ruin the race of man but shows on the other hand an act of righteousness no less potent in effecting its redemption. In Romans Paul declares: "By one man— sin; by one Man—righteousness." In Corinthians he proceeds: "By one man—death; by one Man—resurrection." Throughout the entire Pauline literature, the apostle exhausts the possibilities of both logic and language in showing the super-ability of God in dealing with His erring creatures. Romans five is especially remarkable for the manner in which it combines an exposition of "the love that will not be denied," with an exaltation of the righteousness that will not be stained.

Human sin and divine righteousness—what are they but the antipodes of the moral universe? How then can the righteousness be maintained, the sin condemned, and yet the sinner saved? We are writing on destiny, shall we then bring in the cross? Nay! rather, how shall we write of destiny and leave it out? It is the cross which has made grace possible. It is the cross which has made grace righteous. The eons find their center in it. Before they had being, it loomed—the altar of the sacrificial lamb—in all its crim-

son majesty, full in the vision of Deity (*cf* 1 Peter 1:19,20; 2 Tim.1:9; Titus 1:2). And the eons face crossward, bearing onward to its sacred base the humanity committed to the restoring discipline of Time. The cross is the grand foundation on which grace alone can build, and the appointed ground for the divine dispensation of life.

What would the reader have? Whittle off, and pare down the terms which Paul employs in our chapter, contract the language of the apostle, and the glories of that cross must inevitably be dimmed. View it as the triumph of Infinite Wisdom over the finite folly of the race, and we bow in worship before the One Who planned it, and Him whose blood has stained it red. Widen its sphere of triumph, and we deepen our conceptions of it as the instrument of Omnipotent Grace. The cross is adequate to the task of cleansing the Adamic race from the moral pollution of sin. May our faith prove adequate to believing that glorious truth!

DESTINY IN CORINTHIANS

Romans reveals to us the coming triumph of divine righteousness over human sin: Corinthians discloses the ultimate victory of vivified life over Adamic death. The resurrection of all is involved in Romans five; the righteousness of all in 1 Corinthians fifteen. In both epistles both righteousness and resurrection are viewed in their racial issues.

In line with the method adopted in these articles, the writer is more anxious to point out the erroneous assumptions which have molded current theology, than to give a detailed exposition of each passage. When we succeed in reading *out* of the Scriptures the many additional phrases which men have read *into* them, then the way becomes clear to enjoy the truth as Paul wrote it, and as God inspired it. Allowing the Bible to be its own interpreter; receiving its definitions as needing no correction by us; paying strict

attention to what it says, and how, in order to learn what it was meant to reveal; and accepting its language as requiring neither contraction nor expansion by us, has shown itself to be the only method of interpretation worthy of being called exact. We mention this because the unhappy process, and habit, of "discounting the grace of God," and the unfortunate position which compels those who occupy it to be perpetually explaining how the terms descriptive of salvation's scope really mean much less than they appear to convey on their surface, is as apparent in comments on 1 Corinthians fifteen, as it is in those on Romans five.

It is of course self-evident that if limitations be introduced into Romans five similar limitations must be also introduced into 1 Corinthians fifteen.

The doctrine of Romans forbids our contracting the scope of vivification in 1 Corinthians fifteen—in fact the revelation here can only be limited by ignoring the Scripture evidence concerning the eons, by changing or weakening some of the words employed, and by interpolating others.

It is generally conceded that in verses 23 and 24, vivification (AV *being made alive*) is spoken of as taking place in three grand divisions, or companies. Now, the only method by which allowance may be made for three such resurrection groups, in order not to conflict with the daring assumption of endless sin and torment, is to divide them as follows:

(1.) The resurrection of Christ;—"Christ the firstfruits."
(2.) The resurrection of those in Christ;—"those who are Christ's at His coming."
(3.) The resurrection of those out of Christ;—"the end when Christ delivers up the kingdom."

But it is evident that the Scripture under consideration challenges such a classification, for while the above analysis makes the third and last rank, consist of the unsaved dead—those *out of* Christ—the passage itself refers only

to the resurrection of those *in* Christ. To be "in Christ" means righteousness and life; "out of Christ" means condemnation and death. To read the resurrection of Revelation twenty, with its dread uprising of sinful men to meet their doom, as if it could thus be described as a resurrection "in Christ," is but to betray a deplorable ignorance of the precious and fragrant truths which cluster around these immortal words. But if Paul's language forbids our reading the rising of the lost into these three orders, or ranks, what shall we do with the third resurrection group spoken of here, which consummates the ranks, and which the context shows synchronizes with death's destruction?

How impossible it is to read Revelation 20 into 1 Corinthians 15 may also be seen from what both passages have to say about death. In the Apocalypse we learn that, at the close of one thousand years of the reign of Christ, death is limited to the lake of fire. Nothing is said about death's destruction, nothing about its cessation, but on the contrary its continuance for "the ages of the ages" is revealed. In Corinthians we read not of its limitation, but of its destruction. To interpret its destruction as being fulfilled in its localization is not to distinguish between things that differ, and in short, is but to quarrel with God's choice of terms, and question His mastery of man's vocabulary.

The attempt has been repeatedly made to identify the reign spoken of here (v.24) as being Messiah's reign as Son of David, an attempt which may only succeed when the testimony of the context is either explained away or placidly ignored. It is evidently as the divine Son that He finally subordinates Himself, and as Father that God takes over the kingdom rule from Him. As the reign of the Son is not located in the "impending eon," but in the "eon of the eon" (Heb.1:8), it becomes evident that the "end" or "consummation" spoken of here, has nothing whatever to do with the events connected with the transition from the

thousand years to the new creation. The truth is the event of Revelation 20 is not so much as touched on, or referred to in our chapter, the order of resurrection being:

(1.) The vivification of Messiah from the dead:
(2.) The vivification of those who are Christ's at His presence; and,
(3.) The vivification of all who become Christ's in the "age of the ages."

The final rank rises in the last eon, that age which witnesses the termination of the eonian reign, the triumph of eonian love, and the full and final extermination of death—God's last enemy.

The design and purpose of all creation is that it might be the temple of its Creator, God. Before ever a creative fiat went forth, the purpose that He should be "all in all" was formed—not All in *some,* not *Much in All,* but ALL in ALL. But, if death be eternal, God must necessarily be excluded from being all in some. Should eternal death be spiritual, then God must be excluded from the most kingly part of many of His creatures; should it be physical, His design of being All in all is just as impossible of attainment. But the destruction of death, connected as it is here with resurrection, shows that He will be *All* in all *physical* beings; while their being raised "in Christ" shows that He will be *All* in all *spiritual* beings.

That the ultimate subjection of the Universe to God will be internal and spiritual, rather than merely external, may be gathered from verse 28. In the matter of the "classes" of resurrection, as detailed in verse 22, we drew attention to the way in which all those ranks were grouped together under the common designation "in Christ." Here we notice that the subjection, to be shared in by all creation, is one which knows no difference in its intensity or reality, is no more perfect in some than in others, but equally perfect

in all, and indeed, linked as it is with the subjection of the Son, intimates that their subjection is not different in kind from His, nor His from theirs. It is true of course that the acts of Christ in both resurrection and subjection are unique, for He is the *First* in resurrection, and the *Last* in subjection—the Alpha of the one, as He will be the Omega of the other; but, as His vivification is the ideal norm, or type, of all subsequent vivifications, so will His subjection be the glorious crown and consummation of all preceding subordinations. The exponents of endless torment must be sadly conscious of the infinite difference between that merely, external subjection which they consider possible in the outer darkness of the damned, and that true and spiritual submission which will characterize the attitude of the redeemed, and the filial subjection which the divine Son will render to His Father—God. Recognizing such distinctions, let such find them, if they can, in the language before us.

Here let us direct our attention to the result of God's eonian dealings. God is ALL in ALL. The kingship has been delivered up to God, even the Father—as if to suggest that the family, rather than the kingdom, characterizes the ultimate state. The Adamic dead have *all* been raised *in Christ*; and now, perfected in His perfections, God Himself becomes ALL *in them.* Humanity in the Son, and God in humanity—do we wonder if the eyes of faith at times have blinked when called to gaze upon that wondrous goal? And God will have it *all*; He has written it *all*; and He meant to write *all*, and not a weaker word. Nor is it *over* all, as He could only be, in part at least, were millions damned in endless antagonism to His will. Nay! nay! Faith, too, will have it "God All *in* all."

DESTINY IN THE PRISON EPISTLES

In our remarks on the teachings of Paul's earlier epistles,

we noted that the burden of their message concerned the "things on the earth"—in other words, the Adamic race. In them we found no definite allusion to the future destiny of celestial beings, except so far as it was involved in, or affected by, that of humanity. But, if explicit mention of the "things of heaven" is absent from Paul's earliest writings that certainly cannot be charged to his later epistles, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. These, forming perhaps the smallest group of the New Testament writings, have the largest scope of any of the groups. They contain a digest of universal history, a compendium, we might say, of "the ways of God with men," and celestial beings, too. The group is a complete Bible in itself, though compressed within the narrow confines of a trinity of sacred writings. These epistles especially (and not the writings of Plato, nor the philosophic guesses of any other heathen writer) contain the solution of the problem of universal destiny, as Paul's earlier writings solve the question of human destiny.

Pharisaism is of many kinds. There is, for instance, the *individual* Pharisee, who, priding himself upon his fancied attainments, duplicates in every age him who, "speaking within himself," said "God, I thank Thee." Again, we have the *national* Pharisaism so sadly prominent in Israel's history, which looks upon special national place and privilege as being the result of, instead of an incentive to, a greater holiness than that manifested by those nations who were not so favored as they. And we also have a *racial* Pharisaism which speaks, and reasons, as if the children of Adam had a peculiar right to divine grace, a title to mercy, and a claim on God, not shared by any other race or rank of beings, in all the vast spaces of the universe. It is but the "I more" spirit of Saul the Pharisee drawn to the scale and magnitude of the human race. The publican (whether an individual, a nation, or a race), who draws nigh on the

ground of sprinkled blood alone, is surely not the one who should dictate to God as to who shall, and who shall not, be partakers of the bounteous largess of grace divine.

In Ephesians, where the vision of faith is directed onward to the "administration of the complement of the eras," in which *the all,* heavenly and earthly, angelic and human, are seen as headed up, consummated and completed, in God's Anointed One. There is not the slightest indication, in the language used, of a special class who are excluded from the universal Headship of Christ. It is apparently a *heading up* of the universe which knows nothing of an exclusion from, nor a distinction within, its sphere.

In Colossians, where the same words, *the all,* are used in different connections, first as created products and then as the subjects of reconciliation, we are reminded of Romans five, where, throughout the argument, the quantitative terms remained rigid and unchanged, and entirely unaffected by the constant flux in the qualitative expressions.

Philippians will be found to combine in one the teachings of both Ephesians and Colossians. In Ephesians we have Messiah's future Lordship, or Headship, over the *all.* In Colossians we find Him reconciling these *the all* unto Himself—for He must first cleanse in blood, before He may crown with glory, the sin-stained creation which He by grace has made His own, though it were already His by virtue of creative power. Philippians, without drawing distinctions of extent or degree, brings the entirety of universal being within the sphere of Jesus' name. "*In* the name of Jesus," or Yahweh-Saviour—not "*at* the name," which could imply a merely external, or formal acknowledgment—"every knee shall bow." Here we have the Colossian grace, as we are now to view the Ephesian glory. "And every tongue avow Jesus Christ as Lord"—the Headship of Ephesians, and the perfect submission of Corinthians, in one precious verse. As we remarked the absence of distinction between different kinds, or degrees of submission, in the Corinthian epistle, so must we likewise notice how distinguishing expressions are similarly absent from the passage before us. The acknowledgment of Jesus as Lord is not to be the product of the lash in some, and in others the luscious fruitage of redeeming love. The bended knee of all creation will be the uniform token of a universe whose heart is bowed in loving worship before the divine Joshua of God.

In Colossians we had a passing glimpse of the cosmos as it came fresh from the hands of the Creator. "In Him are the all things created, in heaven and on earth." Then ensued creation's swift descent into chaos, moral and physical. But Philippians discloses One "mighty to save," Who looked not unmoved upon the sin-wrecked scene. The glory of the "form of God" is laid aside, and He who bore it empties Himself. If ruin had entered by means of hateful pride, redemption comes by way of Him who "humbled Himself." If vain pride expressed its nature in acts of disobedience, He (whose glories were past the telling) "made *Himself* of no reputation" and "became obedient." The cross itself could not deter Him who already had sacrificed so much, from becoming Himself the crowning sacrifice of God upon the accursed tree. Sin had emptied heaven and earth of God; He takes upon Himself the emptying of earth and heaven of sin. And the result? Who can find words which will bear the burden of glory the answer holds? He who lay a lifeless form within the tomb, breaks forever the iron rule of death. He died, but not for Himself. He lives, and it is still for others. Heaven, earth, and subterranean now share without restriction in the glories of His exaltation. And if redemption had its genesis in the abdication of His rights on the part of the Lord of All, it finds its revelation in the abdication of all rebellious self-will, and insubordination, on the part of those who, in every

sphere, have questioned and denied the authority of God. Beginning with the laying aside of glory, Philippians 2:6-11 ends with the in-gathering of all the glory gladly rendered by a redeemed universe. Nevertheless, He Who "thought equality with God not a thing to be grasped," receives not the glory to Himself alone. The Self-subordinating One of 1 Corinthians 15 is the Self-emptying One of Philippians 2, who lays the glories of a restored creation, in all its parts, at the feet of "God, the Father."

CONCLUSION

We have but barely suggested the Biblical doctrine of destiny. An exhaustive exposition would require many volumes. Nor have we more than outlined the false methods, and the baneful results, of traditional interpretation. The "exegesis" which would seek to crush the idea of eternity into the time of the eons, which would inject a supposed numerical contrast into the moral contrasts of Romans five, which would insist that the raising of those "out of Christ" at the end of the impending eon is identical with the final rank of those raised "in Christ" at the end of the eon of the eon, as revealed in 1 Corinthians 15, and which would make the *limitation* of death to the lake of fire the fulfillment of its *destruction,* bears its own refutation in the confusion which its methods create.

It is not to be wondered at if such modes of interpretation necessitate the continual introduction into Scripture of countless interpolations and distinctions, the inspired omission of which can be appreciated by us when we start our inquiries with an acceptance of the Biblical doctrine of the ages, but which becomes a baffling mystery when we seek to open the locks of Scripture with a key forged on the anvil of Pagan philosophy.

Alan Burns

ISRAEL UNDER THE LAW

THERE ARE DEGREES of punishment in God's dealings with the Hebrew people. That is to say, a man is punished according to the light that he has. Those who came under the law when it was first given were judged according to the law. Although it was so severe even then, they did not, at that time, deserve the severity which came upon them later, when they had much more light (Heb.10:26-31). In Deuteronomy 17:2-7 we read:

In case there should be found among you, within one of your gates which Yahweh, your Elohim, is giving to you, a man or a woman who does evil in the eyes of Yahweh, your Elohim, so as to trespass against His covenant, and he goes and serves other elohim, and bows himself down to them or to the sun or to the moon or to any of the host of the heavens, something that I have instructed not to do, and it has been told to you, and you have heard it, then you will inquire diligently. And behold, if the truth of the matter is established that this abhorrence was done in Israel, then you must bring forth the man or the woman, who did this evil thing, to your gates, the man or the woman, and you will stone them with stones so that they die. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, the one about to die shall be put to death. He shall not be put to death at the mouth of one witness. The hands of the witnesses shall come to be the first against him to put him to death, and the hands of all the people afterward. Thus you will take out the evil from among you.

This is Moses' law. In these days even some of the saints seem to *want* the law. I marvel that anyone who has tasted God's grace should voluntarily descend from the heights of grace to the quicksand of law. Yet I was like that myself once. After having experienced the *grace* of God, however, there should be no tendency to go back to *law*. But such is man! We cannot grasp the fact that *in the flesh there dwells no good thing*. All that the experience of Israel under the law is intended to teach the universe is this simple lesson. As long as they depend upon themselves and what they can do, there is nothing for them but judgment. This is the basis for the epistle to the Hebrews. It is an entirely different basis from what we have today.

Seeing a "newspaper pulpit," I glanced it over and was astonished at the attempt to put everyone under law. They do not seem to be able to get along without bringing in something outside of the Scriptures to put us there. The main contention seems to be that man *must* be under God's "moral" law, though he need not fulfill the rest of it. I have not only translated the entire law, from the Original, but have compared the Hebrew text with the Greek. *There is no trace of such a distinction to be found in it*.

Who knows what God's "moral law" is? I looked it up in the dictionary. I confess I did not know even after that what it is. "Moral" has to do with right and wrong. Yet the greater part of the law has to do with right and wrong, so there is hardly any of Moses' law which has no "moral" tinge.

This "pulpit" speaks about the *ceremonial* law having been nailed to the cross, but goes on to say that God's ten moral precepts were spoken by His own voice from Mount Sinai and were entitled the "Moral Law." It might be that they were called that in the introduction to some translation, but you will not find such a designation anywhere else in the Bible. We are told that "It was written by the finger of God, and is *perfect* and *unchangeable*." I could not

help thinking that the Lord Jesus did not know this! He said, "You hear that it was declared to the ancients, 'You shall not murder.' Yet whoever should be murdering shall be liable to the judging. *Yet I am saying to you* that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to the judging" (Matt.5:21,22). Here we have something much more moral than this "moral" law. It goes much deeper. It is *spiritual*. It reaches the *heart*.

Again He said, "Yet whoever may be saying to his brother 'Raka!' shall be liable to the Sanhedrin. Yet whoever may be saying 'Stupid!' shall be liable to the Gehenna of fire" (Matt.5:22). Who has not done that? The admonition is far beyond the law written in stone. You can see that the latter is *not* unchangeable.

Again, "You hear that it was declared, 'You shall not be committing adultery.' *Yet I am saying to you* that every man looking at a woman to lust for her, already commits adultery with her in his heart" (Matt.5:28). *The law is intended to kill*. The law given by Christ cuts even deeper than the law given in the ten commandments. "Again you hear that it was declared to the ancients: You shall not be perjuring, yet you shall be paying to the Lord your oaths. *Yet I am saying to you* absolutely not to swear . . . ." What an idea that the law was the last thing! It was the kindergarten grade in regard to moral teaching.

The crime mentioned in Hebrews 10:29 is something far worse than anything that Israel could commit under Moses. It was not possible at Sinai to do things such as could be committed later. The light that came to Israel came not only through the prophets. It also came through their history. God revealed Himself to them step by step. They should have seen, but they were blind. That was all under the law. The whole generation that received it was buried beneath the desert sand. That is what the law did for them.

Moses himself was put to death. He did not die a natural death. This is in accord with what he gave to Israel. His was the dispensation of *death* (2 Cor.3:7). He gave a death-dealing thing to Israel and he was executed as a felon in the full vigor of his life.

Under the Judges also there was failure. What did they learn from their mistakes? At that time God was their Ruler, and they rejected Him. Then they wanted a king. At first God gave them a king of the kind *they* wanted—Saul. And then God very graciously gave them David. Even after all their sin and their deportation, God brought them back to the land. And then, in the fullness of time, He sent them His Son. Christ gave them illumination *far beyond* the light of the law. But, long before His ministry was completed, He had to tell His disciples that they were no longer to proclaim Him as Messiah, because the nation had rejected Him. After all their training under the judges and the kings and the prophets, when they were brought face to face with the very One Who gave the law, they rejected Him. They did not even observe the law when they put Him to death. They did not kill Him by stoning, but by a much more ignominious method. They did their very worst to Him.

But, according to His prayer, God forgave the *nation*. Then Peter comes along with a ministry that goes *far beyond* anything that they had had before. The *spirit* of God operated among them in a way that had been unknown to them previously. So we see that the epistle to the Hebrews is written to a nation that has repeatedly been warned and taught, and repeatedly rejected God's message. They had rejected God and the Messiah as King when on earth, and they had rejected Him as their Sacrifice, after He ascended to heaven.

In a sense it is true that the crime which called for the severest judgment was the crucifixion of Christ. Yet it is

after this that God introduces the *evangel* of the kingdom, with its pardon of sins, based upon the fact that Christ's death has settled the sin question for them. But when they also rejected this, they deserved a severer fate than they had ever had in the past because their guilt was much greater, the light they had was very, very much brighter, and the message much more precious.

The book of Hebrews describes this crisis in Israel, which comes at the end of the period dealt with in the book of Acts, and it is concerned with the *Hebrews*. This was my first great heresy: that *the book of Hebrews was written to the Hebrews!* It was written not only to Hebrews, but to some who had apostatized after all the light that God had given them. This is the condition in which they were. In passing, let us note that Saul of Tarsus was in the same place when God met him. But there is nothing about him in the book of Hebrews, and he was dealt with altogether contrary to its warnings.

If, after all that the Hebrews had seen, they sinned voluntarily when they should have been further convinced, and then went back, what can you do with them? There is nothing more for them. In Hebrews it is recognized that they all died. Yet some died in *faith*. The tree that had one thing after another done to it to make it produce fruit, but did not, that is Israel as a *nation*. They did not receive the grace accorded to the arch-sinner, Saul of Tarsus.

According to Scripture, the Hebrews were "holy" (set apart by God) whether they believed or not. They were God's people. They had a holiness that we cannot have. Again and again there was a measure of grace shown to Israel. But it is not to be called grace in comparison with what God has shown to us. After all their failures, there is no hope for these people as far as the kingdom is concerned. They will be justified and vivified with the rest of mankind at the consummation. But none of the Circumci-

sion writings deal with the consummation. That is entirely beyond their range. Their writers were acquainted with Him Who is saying: Mine is vengeance! I shall be repaying! [that is not grace] the Lord is saying . . . "Fearful is it to be falling into the hands of the living God." I can use that same sentence if I change only one word. For me it is *wonderful* to fall into the hands of the living God! David had a choice and fell into the hands of God instead of into the hands of men (2 Sam.24:14). I agree with him that this is by far the best. Don't fall into the hands of man, not even into your own hands! Don't fear if you fall into the hands of God. It is now entirely different from what is presented in Hebrews. Grace reigns!

We did not owe 10,000 talents, but Saul of Tarsus did. He was worse than the other Hebrews. He had the right to call himself the foremost of sinners. What Paul received and what we get, is not merely grace, it is the *riches* of God's grace. There is a tremendous difference between grace and the riches of His grace. If Christ had not prayed for the Israelites, I do not see how one of them would have escaped, except His own followers. But this grace that is ours does not simply put Paul into the kingdom, as apostle number thirteen, but he skips it into the new creation. The Israelites in the millennium may not have such a good place as we have been taught. Some of the nations they have baptized will join in the rebellion at its close.

The only way to escape from the flesh is to die. For us the beautiful thing about it is that Christ not only died, but *rose* and *ascended*, and we are *in Him*. And that brings us the *riches* of His grace!

THE TEN THOUSAND TALENT DEBTOR

The 10,000 talent debtor was *forgiven* (Matt.18:27). There we have forgiveness, and if that is all we have, we are not very fortunate, because even after such a tremendous amount was forgiven, the debtor did not behave himself, so he had to pay it back. Of course he never did, because he never could. The way he treated the man that owed him a small amount is a picture of Israel's relation to God. Israel was forgiven a tremendous debt, but when the nations wanted to be their pet dogs, their proselytes, they were not welcome. Cornelius did not owe anything like the amount that Israel did, because he never had the same light and obligations. Yet they objected to Peter's going to the foreigner. He merely *sinned*, while they *transgressed* and *offended* God. But when Israel did not want the evangel to go out to the nations, so that they too should be forgiven, then these pentecostals, who had been forgiven, had their pardon withdrawn. This corresponds to what we have in the epistle to the Hebrews.

Ephesians gives us forgiveness *according to the riches of His grace*. This is a very, very different matter. The great offense mentioned in the sixth and tenth chapters of Hebrews is that, after they had received light, after they had seen real miracles from the hand of God, then they went back on it. They were the very ones who, like the ten thousand talent debtor, would not let the nations have anything, even though they themselves had received so much.

After sin has been forgiven or pardoned, it is quite possible that the pardon may be withdrawn. But it is not so when the offender is dealt with in accord with God's grace. I would not say that in Romans we have the *riches* of His grace, but we do have His superexceeding grace, and that deals with sin in a very different way.

Let us read a little in the sixth chapter of this epistle, a part of the Scriptures that, as far as I know, is unknown to many, so far as their experience is concerned. "What, then, shall we declare? That we should be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing?" Now if this says anything, it says that, if this ten thousand talent debtor had sinned, his

pardon would have been extended. But it was not so. He was on probation. God has nothing like that today. Where sin increases, *grace will superexceed*. That is a very dangerous thing to say, I am told. But God has said it, so it is not nearly so dangerous as to reject it.

The saints have done such things to some of us that we are tempted to wish that they get what is coming to them. But we cannot do that, for now grace is what is coming to them!

If anybody tells me, "If you believe this you will go on in sin," I cannot accept that. We who *died* to sin, how shall we be continuing in it (Rom.6:3)? That throws a new light upon the matter, which is according to grace. When I am dead I do not care. I am not worrying about what will be done to me. Here is something, that the Circumcision knew nothing about, neither do those who appropriate their evangel. It was not true of them. God was still dealing with the Circumcision in order to show the futility of the flesh. Would a dead man get up from the grave and keep on sinning? Now there is no possibility of walking in newness of life unless we realize by faith that sin has been settled by Christ, and that we do not have to do anything about it. His death is all that God demands, and it should satisfy us also.

NOT UNDER LAW

Our sins ought not to trouble us any longer. My attention has been called to an explanation which seeks to keep us in the bondage of the law. We are told, "The expression, 'not under law, but under grace,' is sometimes used as an alibi for not keeping its precepts. The actual thought is, not under the condemnation of the law, but enjoying the favor of God's forgiveness." Let us turn up some of the passages that refer to being under law, and see if this statement is true. Take 1 Corinthians 9:20. Here Paul is speaking. "And

I became . . . to those under law, as under law, *not being myself under law*." It does not sound quite as if Paul understood the matter so. Then in Galatians 3:23, "Now before the coming of faith we were garrisoned under law, being locked up together for the faith about to be revealed. So that the law became our escort to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. Now, at the coming of faith, *we are no longer under an escort*."

I do not use the word "command" in the Concordant Version. It gives a harsh tone to that whole economy which I think is quite deceptive. God is giving *instruction* rather than commanding. The "ten *words*" are not "ten commandments," but they are the instructions of God, telling the Israelites how to act in order to be blessed. God showed what men ought to do, or at least what the nation of Israel as His chosen people ought to do. He did not give the law to anyone else.

We cannot fulfill the law because we are not under the law. Alas! Some of the Lord's people actually refuse grace and demand to have a part in their own salvation by observing a law which was given in order to convict of sin!

The only way to get out from under the law, if you are a Jew, is to die. To die with Christ is not only to get out from under law, but to be raised in Him. Then you are beyond the jurisdiction of the law.

It is well nigh impossible for us to keep even the laws of our own land, as they keep changing and multiplying faster than we can keep up with them. How do you know whether or not you are observing all of them? Even a lawyer couldn't be sure of that, there are so many. As to God's law, short and clear as it is, we know it was far beyond the possibility of being kept. Probably there were very few Israelites who came so near keeping the law as Moses. In transmitting this law, Moses says again and again that he acted according to the instructions given to him, and, just

as often, that the people rebelled against God. Nevertheless Moses himself was put to death for disobedience. He died while still vigorous because he was typical of this law that can kill, but not give life.

What is said in the tenth of Hebrews is so foreign to what we have today that we ought to be able to see at a glance that it refers to those in the Acts—the ten thousand talent debtor class—who would not let the other nations receive the grace of God. These are the ones spoken of in the tenth of Hebrews, and the whole thing applies to them alone. It cannot apply to us, because, being in Christ and having died with Him, there is absolutely no possibility that He should ever go back on us or that we should ever lose what we have. Here we have grace. As Paul says (Rom.6:15), "Should we be sinning, seeing that we are not under law, but under grace?" Anyone who has experienced the grace of God in truth has the best possible incentive to keep away from sin. If you know anyone who glories in grace (they are very scarce) you will find that such a one sins the least.

The grace of God is in *contrast* to the law. The truth for the present time begins where Israel *leaves off*. They have forgiveness of a sort. They have this and they have that, yet there is a continual failure, because it all depends upon their flesh. And it *should* be failure, because it is God's intention that man should learn what is in him by this means.

Many people today are terribly distressed about the condition of the world. Unless you know something of the truth of God, you ought to be driven to insanity by it. The way things are going in the world today, if we do not know what God intends by it, it should drive us to distraction. Thank God He is going to use it, and it is fulfilling His intention. And it is as it was with Israel. All the failures of Israel were absolutely necessary in order that we and the whole universe should know what is in the flesh.

God cannot be All in all in the consummation until we learn that. But, thank God, by His grace some of us have already learned a little of it.

If this ten thousand talent debtor been given the grace we received, he would never have seen his forgiveness revoked, no matter what he did. For, and this is the important fact, if he had really known the grace of God, he never would have treated his fellow slave in such a way.

If the Jews, during the period of the Acts, had had even a small inkling of divine grace, they never would have opposed the nations. They never would have opposed Peter for going in to see Cornelius. They never would have opposed Paul for going out to the other nations. They did not know the grace of God. If they had known it, they would have acted differently.

And so it is today. The power of the grace of God is the basis for conduct that pleases Him. He does not expect anything of the flesh.

Now that He has dealt with sin by means of death, even Jewish believers are beyond law. We are not concerned with the tenth of Hebrews except, as a part of God's revelation, it helps us to see the failure of even those who had received so much from God as Israel. Much care and many gifts God had given them. In spite of all their sin He brought them back to the land. After all of that He sent them His Messiah. And, when He came, they committed the greatest sin that was possible for any nation to commit.

They had been educated to accept Christ. If any nation should accept Him, *they* should have done so. They had the Scriptures, which made very clear Who He was. So it was that they became God's greatest debtors of all nations.

Now things are very different. The nations today never occupied any position like that. We had no claims on God, no land, no right to rule, and God has dealt with us on an entirely different ground, and that is on the ground of

grace, on the ground that follows the revelation He gave Israel, on the ground of failure, the failure of the flesh. And so long as we know that God has condemned the flesh to death and that we have died with Christ, we should no longer be concerned with ourselves, but with God and the transcendent riches of His grace, which He has lavished on those who have no claims on Him whatever, but rather deserved the opposite.

Law demands *justice*, not *grace*. For mortal man, justice means *death*, but grace gives *life*. May God grant that all who read these lines may not be enslaved by a law which is not theirs, but revel in the secret riches of grace, which God has reserved for faith among the *nations*, while Israel is not His people!

A. E. Knoch

THE POWER OF GRACE

Grace woos with far more effect than the fear of the law's penalties. To please God is a much more potent incentive for those who know Him than all the thunders of Sinai.

A true appreciation of the grace by which we are established, of liberty from the law, will give a joyous power over sin which the law never could impart. Grace liberates. Yet if we should voluntarily slave for Sin we should become in practice at least, that which we once were, of which we are now ashamed.

Eonian life is given to us as a free gift, altogether apart from our conduct (Rom.6:23). Does not this *very fact,* coupled with all His favors in the past and present, appeal to us most potently?

Our morality, or lack of it, does not affect our relationship with God. Grace knows no barriers whatever, either in our past, present, or future. On the other hand, however, our morals are far more tractable in the liberty of grace than under the lash of the law.

WE ARE UNDER GRACE

ROMANS begins with an apostle severed from his religious and ethnic connections in order to bring God's WELL-MESSAGE to sinners of all nations and peoples, a message of *grace, apart from works of law.* This evangel has been the focus of the letter from the beginning, and Paul does not leave it behind when he comes to chapter six and begins to direct special attention to the current lives of those who are believing this evangel.

In fact, Romans six develops from one of the most startling summations of the evangel ever given, the words of Romans 5:20 that "where sin increases, grace superexceeds"! What God has done for us through His Son, Jesus Christ, justifies from every increase of sin, past, present and future. This achievement will ultimately embrace all mankind as Romans 5:18,19 makes clear, but Paul speaks now of those who are believing, who have already obtained, in spirit, the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness. No sin can be charged against us, for we died to sin, having been baptized in spirit into Christ's death. This is a matter of grace. It superexceeds in its saving power over every sin that we commit in the flesh.

This highly unconventional teaching (all of grace) is still very much in the foreground in Romans six, and necessarily so. The faithful work of Christ in dying for sinners is God's powerful means for complete deliverance from sin in the future, yet also, where it is being believed, it is God's means for joy and peace and all the fruit of the spirit in the present, in accord with the earnest of the spirit (*cf* Rom.1:16; Gal.5:22,23; Eph.1:13,14).

Paul is now concerned especially with our current "living." How shall we who have died to Sin be living? The answer is that we are to keep our focus on God's grace which superexceeds sin with justification from sin. We are to declare it, get to know it, be believing it, and be perceiving it (Rom.6:2-10). Finally, in summing up all these activities of faith, our apostle and brother exhorts us to be taking account of all God has given us in identifying us with the death of Christ and positioning us in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.6:11). It is on the basis of this exhortation that we are led to the exhortations of verses 12 and 13.

"THEN" AND "FOR"

The imperatives of Romans 6:12,13 are thus joined to verse 11 by the connective "then" (with the sense of "therefore"). They are also joined to verse 14 by the double use of the connective "for" (with the sense of "because"). Thus they are enclosed within the great exhortation to take account of God's favors to us in Christ Jesus and the unqualified and fundamental declaration that we are not under law, but under grace:

Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Then:

1. *Let not Sin be reigning in your mortal body, for you to be obeying its lusts.*
2. *Nor yet be presenting your members, as implements of injustice [unrighteousness], to Sin,*
3. *but present yourselves to God as if alive from among the dead, and your members as implements of righteousness to God.*

For:

Sin shall not be lording it over you, **for** *you are not under law, but under grace.*

It is, with the evangel of God's grace in view, that the apostle now exhorts us with the words of Romans 6:12,13. Verses 11 and 14 establish the context of Paul's imperatives. We are not to go forward with Paul without God's word of grace to us. For this is what invigorates us with spiritual strength and endurance with joy in our current lives.

LET NOT

In order to convey Paul's meaning more clearly, the negative word "not" might better be placed in association with the reigning of Sin rather than suggesting the imperative is concerned with what the believer is not to do; thus: Let Sin not be reigning . . . ." By using what is called a "third person imperative," the apostle is concerned with what Sin is not to do rather than what we must not allow to happen. We are to let it happen, as it surely will when we are taking account of God's grace.

It is because of our taking account of God's grace to us in identifying us with the death of Christ and viewing us as we are in Christ Jesus, our Lord, that Sin steps aside from its reigning, even now while we live in mortal bodies. We are to let this happen as we are holding fast to this word of grace. By this means the reigning of Sin is halted, as it often is in times of great crisis when our full attention has to be given to the matter at hand. When we are obeying (UNDER-HEARing), that is, submitting our hearing under the message of God's grace, we are not listening to the lusts of our flesh. As Paul will put it in Romans 6:16-18, we cannot position ourselves under two masters at one time. When we are obeying, that is, submitting our hearing under the teaching of grace, we are not listening to Sin. The message that we died and are justified from Sin, so that sin is not reckoned to us, is effective against the reign of Sin, as we are attending to what it says "from the heart" (Rom.6:17). We may think grace gives encourage-

ment to Sin's reign. But in taking account of the grace that superexceeds over our sin, we are instilled with a growing appreciation of God which operates against Sin's tyranny. The evangel is not congenial to Sin.

PRESENTING

Paul continues this exposition of the power of the evangel in the believer's life, by the two exhortations of Romans 6:13: (1) Do not "be presenting your members, as implements of unrighteousness, to Sin." (2) "But [rather,] present yourselves to God as if alive from among the dead, and your members as implements of righteousness to God."

The Greek verb translated *presenting* is composed of the elements, BESIDE-STAND. It is sometimes used in the Septuagint Version for the Hebrew verb meaning *to station,* as in Exodus 19:17. Here, in view of the fact that they were sinners, the people of Israel were about to be pointed to righteousness by means of the law. Hence, as instructed, they "*stationed* themselves at the nether [literally, the *under*] part of the mountain." They presented themselves at the foot of the mountain in order to be placed under the law. In Deuteronomy 4:11, in recounting this incident, Moses used the verb "stand" instead of *station:* "Then you approached and *stood* below [literally, *under*] the mountain."

These passages may well have been in Paul's mind when he used the verb *present* in our text. As at Sinai, the concern in Romans six is the human situation in which we station ourselves and our members under the rule of Sin. But in contrast to Exodus 19, this concern is dealt with, not by stationing ourselves under law, but under grace. Paul directs us not to be stationing ourselves at the foot of the mountain where law is heard and Sin becomes offense and increases inordinately, but rather we are to present ourselves before God as we are in Christ Jesus, our Lord,

under the mammoth and superexceeding grace of God. Paul exhorts us to come before God with this in view, for this is where God has stationed us.

These imperatives are thus a matter of the *heart* (*cf* v.17), or *mind* (*cf* Rom.12:2). We do not stand before God under the terrifying sounds and sights of His presence at Sinai. The Israelites discerned the thunderclaps and the mountain smoking, and their reaction was to rove about and stand afar in fear (Ex.20:18-20). Yet we are stationed before God Who conciliates us to Himself. We may be having peace toward God through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access, by faith, into this *grace* in which we *stand* (Rom.5:2).

PRESENTATION OF OUR MEMBERS

As we are in flesh, as descendants of Adam, ever dying, cell by cell and inch by inch, our bodily members simply reflect our fleshly constitution (we are constituted sinners). Hence we are part of that human race described in Romans 3:10-18 by means of scriptural citations:

Not one is just—not even one.
Not one is **understanding.**
Not one is **seeking out** God.
All **avoid** *Him: at the same time they were useless.*
Not one is **doing** kindness: there is not even one.
A sepulcher opened is their **throat.**
With their **tongues** *they defraud.*
The venom of asps is under their **lips.**
Whose **mouth** *with imprecation*
and bitterness is crammed.
Sharp are their **feet** *to shed blood.*
Bruises and wretchedness are in their **ways.**
And the way of peace they do not **know.**
There is no fear of God in front of their **eyes.**

But, as believers, we have obtained "the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness" (Rom. 5:17), announced in the evangel. This invigorates us with spiritual strength even now as we continue to live in these mortal bodies. So Paul exhorted Timothy (2 Tim.2:1):

You, then, child of mine,
Be **invigorated** *by the* **grace** *which is in Christ Jesus.*

It is in view of the evangel proclaimed in the first eight chapters of Romans and affirmed by example as a manifestation of God's righteousness in chapters nine through eleven, that Paul soon will write (Rom.12:1,2):

I am entreating you, then, brethren, by the pities of God, to present your **bodies** *a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service, and not to be configured to this eon, but to be transformed by the renewing of your* **mind,** *for you to be testing what is the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect.*

Like the vibrating spirit in Genesis 1:2, the spiritual power of God vibrates in the message of grace. Thus stationing ourselves under the evangel our *minds* are renewed. We are *trained* by God's saving grace (Titus 2:11,12), and by this means our throats, our tongues, our lips, our mouths will more and more become crammed with words of joy and peace, reflecting the spirit of the evangel. So also the evangel steadies our feet in the way of peace, and our hands in being occupied with what is good (*cf* Eph.4:28; 1 Thess.4:11,12).

As for our eyes (in contrast to the sad state of Romans 3:18), the *perceiving* of the position of Christ in His life of living to God as it reveals what our life with Him shall be brings the fear of God to its highest and truest sense of awe, joined with that spirit of sonship in which we are crying, "Abba, Father!" (Rom.8:15). Later Paul will pray for the realization of the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,

the Father of glory, the *eyes of our heart* having been *enlightened* by the expanding message of faith which we are given (Eph.1:15-18).

All Paul's entreaties in the final chapters of Romans are built on the faith which we are believing. "Now may the God of expectation be filling you with all joy and peace *in believing,* for you to be superabounding in expectation, in the *power of holy spirit*" (Rom.15:13).

PRESENTATION AS IF ALIVE

We do not station ourselves before God as sinners who have tried our best to live new lives. But we present ourselves to Him with the results of Christ's death and resurrection in view. We come before Him as if we were already roused from among the dead into newness of life (which we shall surely be in resurrection). We station ourselves before God with its certainty held firmly in our hearts.

THE EVANGEL OF ROMANS 6:14

The imperatives of Romans 6:12,13 are not built only on the evangel of verses 3-11; they are also solidly supported by the summation of this message of grace given in verse 14. Here again Paul sets the evangel before us as it speaks of the future and of the past: (1) Sin shall not be lording it over us, and (2) God has placed us under His grace.

The "for" that opens Romans 6:14 points to the reason Paul can effectively direct us to position ourselves before God as if alive from among the dead, with our members as implements of righteousness. It is because we shall be that way. And we shall be that way because it is a matter of grace, not of law. It rests on what Christ has done in dying for our sins, and on God's grace in identifying us already with the death of His Son, not on what we do.

We shall be walking in newness of life through the glory of the Father. We shall be of the resurrection. Our body of

Sin shall be nullified. We shall by no means still be slaving for Sin. We shall be living together with Christ. *Sin shall not be lording it over us.*

NOT UNDER LAW

Through one man sin entered into the world, and through that sin the dying process which could not be reversed by human effort and which leads downward to the state of death entered also into the world and has passed through from parent to child and generation to generation into all mankind, "on which all sinned" (Rom.5:12). All mankind live with mortal bodies, and thus all sin and are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23).

Can nothing be done about this? Does God have a way of deliverance from mortality and sin?

Many years after this great evil began, God chose one nation of sinners, and gave them a detailed law directing them in the path of righteousness. It was not given right away after Adam sinned, but it "came in by the way." It was not given as a means of deliverance from sin; it came in by the way *that the offense should be increasing* (Rom.5:20). It was not a way of salvation from mortality and sin.

The ten words ("commandments") of Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 contain nine "you-shall-nots." Romans 6:14 contains one negative, but it is not a "you shall not" but rather a "you are not." It is a settled matter, and so also is the positive matter that we are under grace.

BUT UNDER GRACE

In the present context *grace* is a one-word expression of the evangel of God concerning His Son. By this term, the evangel appears before us as a message of divine favor, all of God, and not of ourselves. It is the message that manifests God's righteousness by means of the faith of Jesus Christ, apart from works of law (Rom.3:21,22). There is

no room for human boasting (Rom.3:27). Grace declares that we are justified gratuitously, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). For us who are not working, but are believing on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead, this grace is expanded in that God reckons righteousness to us already (Rom.4:4,5,24). Furthermore, this evangel announces that being justified, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:1,2). It is for sinners, who have not and cannot, by works of law, become anything else than being sinners, that Christ died (Rom.5:8). He died to put an end to what we are in the flesh—sinners. Law said Israel had to stop being sinners, and become righteous. Grace says God has put sinners to death in the death of Christ. Now as believers, we come to know that we have been baptized into Christ's death and shall be living together with Him in resurrection, no longer dying but living to God (Rom.6:2-11). All of this is packed into the word *grace* in Romans 6:14.

It is altogether a matter of invigorating JOY! We are not under law, but under grace which superexceeds every increase of sin. Law was the word of God set over Israel. Grace is the word of God which He has set over us. We are stationed under its declarations of death to Sin and life in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

This is a message that affects our living in a way that law could never do. Telling us what God has done, rather than what we must do, grace comes with spiritual power against the reign of Sin. It goes beyond the revelation of God's righteousness in His just judgments, for it manifests His righteousness in justifying sinners through the faith of Jesus Christ. It illuminates God's love in His work of conciliation through the death of His Son, rather than calling

on us to maintain the standards of divine service required under law in order to avoid His indignation. In this there is invisible power for our lives.

We are under grace continually, in our current living. When God viewed Israel, He saw them as they were in the flesh, sometimes upright, but often dishonoring to Him. When He looked at David, for example, in choosing him for kingship, He saw His heart which was directed toward Him. This also was the case when David came to the battlefield where Goliath mocked Israel's God, and Yahweh delivered Israel from the Philistines through David. Yet when God looked again and saw how David, the king of Israel, yet a man of flesh, lusted in his heart for Bathsheba, and arranged for the death of Uriah, his sin became the cause of many sorrows and afflictions, affecting not only David, but the nation as well.

Yet with us God sees us dead to Sin and living to Him, as we are in Christ. He always sees us where He has placed us: *under His Grace.* Consequently, Paul, in exhorting us to be presenting ourselves to God, is exhorting us to be stationing ourselves in mind and in heart before God with the evangel of God's superexceeding grace in view. In this exercise of faith is God's power for salvation.

GRACE IN OUR LIVES

We are finding that in guiding us in our daily living, Paul exhorts us to keep close to the evangel he was commissioned to bring to us. We are to *declare* it, *not be ignorant* of it, but rather get to *know* it, *be believing* it, *perceiving* what it says about Christ, *taking account* of its every revelation and *stationing* ourselves in mind and heart under its powerful message of grace. Now we are ready to go forward into verses 15 through 18 and consider the theme of *obeying* the teaching of grace, that is, listening attentively and submissively to its words of joy and peace. D.H.H.

PERCEIVING THE GRACE OF GOD

Question:

I know what many of the *blessings* of the evangel are (e.g., forgiveness, justification, conciliation, eonian life, immortality, incorruptibility, vivification), but I am not so clear concerning the *nature* of the evangel, that is, what it is and what it entails. Everyone says that we are saved "by grace"—or at least no one cares to say that we are *not* saved by grace—but as it turns out, what it means to be saved by grace, is variously defined.

Even among those affirming the final salvation of all, even as among those affirming eternal torment, grace is understood differently by some than by others. Most claim that one must meet some type of requirement in order to be saved, while a few claim that there is no requirement to be met. Some say that good works are required for life in the coming ages, yet others say that only faith in Christ is required. Still others claim that one's possession of eonian life turns on just one thing: one's willingness (according to one's own free will) to be *non-resistant* to the workings of the Holy Spirit.

In contrast to these various conditional views, some such as yourself teach that those who will enjoy eonian life are simply those whom God has chosen to receive it, according to His Own grace and purpose.

I am familiar with many of the arguments made by the advocates of these various positions; yet at least I am not fully confident just which of these teachings is correct. Can you help me see what the truth is concerning the evangel? I want to know what the evan-

gel *is,* which will make evident to me what the *nature* of the evangel is. I want to know what salvation "by grace" *actually* means and entails. I know that Christ died for my sins, and that this is good news having to do with my salvation. But does Christ's sacrifice for my sins secure and ensure my salvation, or does it just secure and ensure the possibility of my salvation?

Answer:

YOU have framed the question well; and that is a good start. May we now consider it carefully, and, especially, answer it correctly and faithfully.

It is upon "*hearing* the word of truth, the evangel of [our] salvation," and upon *believing* it also ("in Whom on believing also"), that "[we] are sealed with the holy spirit of promise (which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured) for the laud of [Christ's] glory!" (Eph.1:13,14).

In speaking of our initial "hearing"—to be sure, with "ears to hear"—and "*believing*" of the evangel of our salvation, we have in view the time when we first believe, as ones who now (1) *rely*[1] upon the evangel of our salvation's testimony as true, and so (2) are *convinced* (i.e., persuaded) that its testimony, in fact, is true, therefore *assume* it as well (i.e., take it to ourselves as our own).

Especially as concerns the evangel, every man who is

1. "Now faith is an *assumption* of what is being *expected,* a *conviction* concerning matters which are not being observed" (Heb.11:1). The Greek *elpizō,* as here, is sometimes translated "expect" in reference to something in the future. It is also, however, sometimes translated "rely," as in the testimony, ". . . we *rely* on the living God . . ." (1 Tim. 4:10; *cp* 2 Cor.1:10; Rom.15:12). Futurity (as in "expect") is incidental to *elpizō,* hence is not inherent to its essential meaning, which is "rely." More fundamentally then, we may understand faith as "an assumption of what is being *relied upon* [as true], a conviction concerning matters which are not being observed."

truly wise of heart concerning it, is one in whom Yahweh has *put* wisdom and understanding (*cp* Ex.36:1; *cf* Col.2:2; 2 Tim.2:7). If we would have wisdom and understanding, then, this must be given to us from heaven, for "a man can not get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27).

Still, wisdom and understanding come to us in measure, and that, in installments; gradually, not suddenly, all at once. To be sure, where one enjoys wisdom and understanding, God has given these self-same endowments. And, where one seeks for wisdom and understanding, one does so solely by God's grace. Even so, the means of grace through which we gain wisdom and understanding is our own actions and efforts in which we labor unto this end, in order to *acquire* them:

5 **Acquire wisdom; acquire understanding;**
Do not [l]forget, and do not [l]turn aside
from the **sayings of my mouth;**
6 **Do not [l]forsake her,**[2] **and she shall guard you;**
Love her, and she shall preserve you.
7 The **beginning of wisdom** is**: Acquire wisdom,**
And [i]with all your acquisition, acquire understanding;
8 **Highly regard her, and she shall raise you up;**
She shall [m]bring you glory [t]as you [l]embrace her;
9 **She shall [g]bestow** a **wreath of grace [>]on your head;**
A **crown of beauty shall she award** to **you.**
(Proverbs 4:5-9)

"Wisdom" is "the faculty which makes the highest and best application of knowledge."[3] To "understand," is to "make out the meaning";[4] hence, "understanding" is that enlightened intelligence which one enjoys when one has, in

2. "her": i.e., wisdom.
3. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry "wisdom," p.329.
4. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry "understand," p.314.

fact, made out the meaning of something. Through proper analysis of both the meaning (i.e., essential significance) and function of each of the words comprised in a clause or sentence, which together serve to form and convey a specific idea, we may know what that specific idea is.

This may be termed a clause's or sentence's "base-meaning," in contradistinction to its "sense-meaning," which is to say its "interpretative meaning." While establishing even the base-meaning of a statement is often a formidable undertaking, one requiring substantial reading comprehension skills, as a rule, further establishing *the sense in which* that statement should be understood (which is to say, its "interpretative meaning) is an even much more formidable undertaking.

For example, in the words of the evangel, "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor.15:3), the base-meaning thereof is that "the Anointed One died ["died" meaning the cessation of life] for [i.e., 'for the sake of," or "on behalf of"] our sins [i.e., our mistakes, our failings of the ideal]."

From the clause, "Christ died . . ." together with the knowledge that to "die" means to "cease to live," we may determine that when Christ died, He ceased to live, which is the base-meaning of this statement. Still, simply believing that Christ actually died, does not answer the further question of the interpretative meaning here, which is: In what sense did He die? or, In what way is it possible to die (i.e., to cease to live)? Specifically, did Christ die categorically or only bodily?

Further, to claim that it is, or is not, possible to die only corporeally while still remaining alive incorporeally, is a claim concerning the metaphysics[5] of death: Is it or is it not possible for one to die corporeally only (hence, in this

5. Metaphysics is the investigation of the nature of reality, seeking to determine what exists.

sense, to die), while still continuing to live, though only incorporeally? The answer to this question can only be discovered through an accurate knowledge of the metaphysics of death, specifically of human death.

The evangel, however, is simply that Christ died for our sins: that in being put to death (hence, in somehow ceasing to live), Christ did so for our sins.

A knowledge of *how* it was that, until the third day, Christ ceased to live, or of what it is for anyone to cease to live, is knowledge altogether distinct from a knowledge of the evangel itself. It is true that one may not *understand* the evangel fully or altogether correctly if one does not understand the true metaphysics both of life and of death. Nevertheless, one who *believes* that Christ *died* for our sins (who therefore has a *verbal* understanding of this declaration), *believes the evangel*—let his *metaphysical* understanding of death be what it will.

DISCRIMINATION OF SENSE

Before addressing your question specifically as to the nature of the evangel, I have first spoken somewhat of the more general matters of hearing and believing, of acquiring wisdom and understanding, even as of noting base-meaning while distinguishing it from interpretative meaning, that is, of the *sense* in which we should *understand* a statement to be so. These considerations which I have rehearsed briefly above, are directly relevant to your question; and, they are directly relevant as well to every other scripture-related question.

Our need is for eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart with which to believe. We are in desperate need of wisdom and understanding, for without these our quest for truth is hopeless. We have vital need as well to be intelligent in our faith, which critically includes discriminating between what is said, and the sense in which what is said

is to be understood, in light of an entire array of considerations relevant to whatever subject it may be that is at hand.

Let us, then, be praying unintermittingly, requesting, that the God our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giv*ing* us a spirit of wisdom and revelation, the eyes of our heart having been enlightened, for us to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength (*cf* Eph.1:17-19).

A CORRESPONDENT RANSOM FOR ALL

Now to your question: What is the *nature* of the evangel? Keep in mind in approaching this question that the evangel, in essence, is just one thing; it is that, "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures." More fully stated, even as the apostle Paul declares: "Now I am making known to you, brethren, *the evangel* which I bring to you, which also you accepted, in which also you stand, through which also you are saved, if you are retaining what I said in bringing the evangel to you, outside and except you believe feignedly. For I give over to you among the first what also I accepted, *that Christ died for our sins* according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:1-4).

The good news is that since Christ died for our sins, *our sins have been died for!* Indeed, ". . . We are observing Jesus . . . in the *grace* of God . . . tasting death for the sake of *everyone*" (Heb.2:9). ". . . Christ Jesus . . . is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all . . ." (1 Tim. 2:5,6). "God . . . wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4), and, "is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11).

Hence, "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome (for for this are we toiling and being reproached), that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. These things be charging and teaching" (1 Tim.4:9-11). "For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation . . . . The last enemy is being abolished: death. For He subjects all under His feet . . . . Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all" (1 Cor.15:22-28).

"For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, *if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died*" (2 Cor.5:14; *cp* Heb.2:9); and, "*. . . one who dies has been justified from Sin*" (Rom.6:7; *cp* vss.18,22; John 1:29).

"The evangel of [our] salvation" (Eph.1:13), which is the evangel that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor.15:3), is "the evangel of the *grace* of God": even as Paul declares, ". . . the dispensation which I got from the Lord Jesus, to certify *the evangel of the grace of God*" (Acts 20:24). "But not as the offense, thus also the *grace.* For if, by the offense of the one, the many died, much rather the *grace* of God and *the gratuity in grace,* which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds" (Rom.5:15). "Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying" (Rom.5:18).

THE SAVING GRACE OF GOD

To answer your question, then, What is the *nature* of the evangel? the answer is, as the passages above make evident, that the evangel is an evangel of *grace,* and, of a grace which *saves:* it is the evangel of "the *saving grace* of God"

(Titus 2:11). "Now *if it is in grace, it is no longer out of works,* else the grace is coming to be no longer grace . . ." (Rom.11:6a; *cp* Rom.4:4; Luke 6:32-35). Hence any claim that salvation depends upon some type of human contribution (such as good works, assent to faith, or non-resistance to the operations of God's spirit), is necessarily mistaken, being contrary to the nature of grace.

Further, it is not a question of the nature of man's will. That is, whether it is or is not the case that man possesses such a freedom of will as is popularly supposed, is simply irrelevant. This is because in the matter of our salvation in Christ, we are not called upon to fulfill requirements. Instead, we are saved by genuine, gratuitous grace, not by some sort of "grace," falsely so-called, that is perfectly indistinguishable from a reward.

The evangel of our salvation, is not an evangel which merely offers to save, but which actually achieves salvation, in the *grace* of God. Therefore, Christ's sacrifice for our sins actually secures and ensures our salvation; it does not merely secure and ensure the possibility of our salvation.

If any "gospel teaching" today either affirms or entails it being the case that salvation is granted only on the condition of some type of human obedience, especially some type of ultimately flesh-dependent human obedience, any such teaching is false, for it denies that salvation is truly a gracious gift, not something granted as a reward or compensation, on a *quid pro quo* (i.e., "this for that") basis.

Alternatively, if any gospel teaching claims that the blessing of the gospel is truly a gracious gift, but that the gracious gift consists not in actually achieving salvation on behalf of the sinner, but only in making salvation possible while leaving its outcome uncertain, that teaching is false as well.

This is because such a concept is synergistic in nature (i.e., co-operation based), and in the end, is not even synergistic, but autosoteric in nature (i.e., ultimately dependent

upon the human self alone). According to that conception, when God has done all that He will do, and will do no more, and yet man still remains unsaved, it is necessarily man alone who makes all the difference between success and failure. In that case, for all eternity, man would be able to boast that when God's work was completed and yet he himself, the sinner, was still lost, it was then that he himself independently pitched in and did whatever was necessary in order for "salvation" to be realized.

". . . The word of *the truth of the evangel* . . . is bearing fruit and growing . . . from the day on which you hear and realized *the grace of God in truth,* according as you learned it from . . . a faithful dispenser of Christ . . ." (Col.1:4-7).

It is vital that we know what "the grace of God in truth" is not only in the sense of the particular blessings of which it consists according to "the truth of the evangel," but first of all and more especially, what the expression "the *grace* of God," in itself, in truth, actually signifies.

That is, what does it mean for something to be a matter of the "grace," or "favor" of God, in contrast to something that is a matter of the reward, wage, or compensation of God? "Now to the *worker,* the *wage* is *not* reckoned as a *favor* [i.e., as a *gracious* gift], but as a *debt*" (Rom.4:4). A favor or gracious gift, then, is not something that is due us because of something we have done, but is simply an act performed or provision made granted out of kindness and love in order to bring us joy, *irrespective of what we have done or not done, whether good or bad.* This is what grace is; and most importantly, this is what the grace of God is.

In the interests, then, of your perceiving for yourself and gaining an assurance in the grace of God in truth as set forth in the evangel of your salvation, I would commit you *"to God and to the word of His grace,* which is able to edify and give the enjoyment of an allotment among all who have been hallowed" (Acts 20:32). J.R.C.

INDEX TO VOLUME 104

Adam and Christ 161
As a Human 51
Concordant Version, The 99, 100,103,114,127
Concordant Studies 148, 153, 181
Dying Unto Death 153
Epaphroditus' Sufferings 68
Example of Christ, The 5
For the Glory of God the Father 20
Genesis 2:5-17 146
Gracious Gift of God, The 183
Human Will, The 21
Instruction for Use 103
Judgment and Righteousness 114
Law and Grace 45
Notes and Reflections 100
Notes on Romans 43
Obedience of Christ, The 29
Obituaries: C. Cronk 144, A. Lonya 96, S. Maria 144, J. Shaw 144, L. Shaw 96, J. Yoder 96
Paul to the Romans 29, 51, 161, 171, 183
Peace and Plentitude 127
Psalm 72 110
Rations of Sin, The 181
Sacred Scriptures, The 99
Service of Timothy, The 61
Studies in Philippians 5, 21, 61, 68
Then and Now 171
To Die You shall be Dying 148
Two Teachings 45
Type of Teaching, The 43

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 104th Year

(1909–2013)

Contents:

2 "Grace"
3 Editorial
5 The Example of Christ
21 The Human Will
29 The Obedience of Grace
43 The Type of Teaching
45 Two Teachings

FIRST QUARTER, 2013

Volume 104 **Number 1**

All in All

The blood of Christ is the basis of all blessing. The purpose of God determines human destiny. It does not depend on our deserts. The plan or process of God during the eons or ages must be distinguished from His purpose, which will not be fully accomplished until the eons are past. Herein lies the difference between the teaching of the Scriptures and the accepted creeds of Christendom. Sin and suffering, condemnation and death, endure for the eons, not "forever."

This realization makes it possible for us to believe *all* the Word of God. Those who cling to the creeds and "eternal" torment must deny certain passages in Paul's epistles which clearly and unequivocally teach the salvation of all mankind (1 Tim.2:4; 4:9,10) and the reconciliation of the universe (Col.1:20). They reject these portions of God's holy Word because they cannot be true if torment is eternal. If, however, judgment is not eternal, then we have the happy and exultant privilege of believing all the solemn threats of death and condemnation without the least reservation, and still accept God's grand goal to which all His labors lead.

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For God and His
Word

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and
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Grace

Grace! 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear.

'Twas grace contrived the way
To save poor sinful man;
And all the steps that grace display,
Which drew God's wondrous plan.

Grace taught my roving feet
To tread the heavenly road;
And new supplies each hour I meet,
While pressing on to God.

Grace all His work shall crown
Until the end of days;
It lays in Heaven the topmost stone
And well deserves our praise.

Lowell Mason

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2013
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED FOUR

EDITORIAL

THE brief article by George L. Rogers contained herein entitled "The Type of Teaching" (p.43), sets the theme for this entire issue of *Unsearchable Riches.* The words of this title are from those of the apostle Paul where he declares to the Romans, "Now thanks be to God that you were slaves of Sin, yet [now] you obey from the heart *the type of teaching* to which you were given over" (Rom.6:17).

"'The type of teaching' referred to in Romans 6:17 was Paul's gospel," under the influence of which "one who is really united to Christ needs not the restraint of law nor the duress of fear to make him obey, any more than a loving mother must be compelled to care for her babe. The obedience for which Paul thanks God does not ask, 'Shall we sin?'" (p.43).

A. E. Knoch's article "The Example of Christ" (p.5), centered on Philippians 2:1-12, stresses the importance of the believer's self-humility: "May every gathering of saints take these things to heart! It is far more important to have the humble disposition of Christ than to have the most perfect spiritual and physical equipment" (p.9). Indeed, "Even the highest gifts are no ground for self-exaltation, for all comes from God and should be a cause of thankfulness, not pride. The best of us have *nothing that we did not receive.* Nothing has originated in us. We have no more right to it than the most despised of humanity. It is only when we lose sight of God's deity and our creaturehood that we preen our feathers or blow our horn" (p.8).

Brother Knoch's complementary, second article in this issue, "The Human Will" (p.21), addresses Philippians 2:13 where Paul informs us that "it is God Who is oper-

ating in you *to will* as well as *to work* for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:13). "This brief allusion to the human will throws a flood of light into a very dark and dismal doctrine which has so vitiated the theology of Christendom that it has practically robbed God of His deity and believers of a God worthy of the name."

Concerning this "willing" and "working" in which we engage, thus we learn that these themselves are according to God's operations in us for the sake of His delight (literal reading: "God . . . is the one-operating in you . . . the to-be-willing and the to-be-operating . . ." (CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT, English sublinear).

The remaining expositions contained herein, both of which are by Dean Hough, are "The Obedience of Grace" (p.29), and "Two Teachings" (p.45).

In the latter article, Brother Hough writes: 'There are two major teachings given by God, each of which is given to certain groups of people in view of human sin. The one is the teaching of law, delivered through Moses and given to Israel at Mount Sinai. The other is the teaching of grace based on the cross of Christ, delivered through Paul and given to believers chosen from all nations in the current era."

The former writing is centered upon Paul's words where he insists that while we are *not* under law, we nonetheless *are* under grace (Rom.6:14,15):

Yet "are we not aware of what it means to be under grace? Are we not aware of the importance to our current lives of stationing our hearing under the message of God's grace as a slave who listens carefully to his master's words? . . . Are we not aware that this evangel is like a master to us, and we are like slaves in fidelity to it? It is only as we hear and heed God's word of grace to us (not His word of law) that the reign of Sin in our lives can be attacked" (pp.32,33).

May God, then, be with us—in His *grace.* J.R.C.

Philippians 2:1-12

THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

PRACTICE is more powerful than precept. Deeds may do more than declarations in directing our lives. In Ephesians we have already been told how we should walk. In Philippians we are given examples of such conduct in the careers of others. We are pointed to the kenosis of Christ (He "empties Himself"), the forfeits of Paul, the solicitude of Timothy, and the suffering of Epaphroditus. These are the special characters in Holy Writ who are presented for our emulation within the boundaries of this present secret administration. Hence they should be frequent and foremost in our exhortations. They should be the leading characters in Christendom.

How far have we failed in this matter! More picturesque characters occupy the attention of Christians, and are hailed in their literature and songs. Even the children sing, "Dare to be a Daniel, dare to stand alone." But who does it? He would not be a second Daniel, but a fanatic. It is well to be reminded of the patience of Job. But we must not count on his reward. And it is excellent to consider the heroes of faith in the eleventh of Hebrews. But the object and end of their faith are not the same as ours. All of this is instructive and profitable, but cannot compare with the special examples selected by God for us, to guide our feet in His service in this era which is so different from all that preceded, or that will succeed it. Let us henceforth focus our attention on these models exclusively for awhile, and see if we can profit by their example.

This is especially true of the Psalms. In the dim light

of the Reformation and even among those more enlightened in later days, the Psalms have been acclaimed as the greatest source of strength for communion and conduct. Good as they are, they never attain, not even in their highest strain, to the grace and glory which should empower our conduct at the present time. In one way, indeed, the Psalms are in antithesis to present truth, and, we fear, hinder its full apprehension. Being concerned with Israel and the Kingdom, they are disposed to the terrestrial, which we should not be. When we leave them in their own setting, they are even more wonderful and helpful while singing with grace in our hearts to God (*cf* Col.3:16).

This celestial character of our walk is especially clear in connection with the example of Christ (Phil.2:5-8). In setting forth a synopsis of His humiliation, no details of His earthly life are given. The earth seems to serve only as a place on which to erect the accursed tree. There is no mention of His ministry to the Circumcision, or of His royal rights. He comes in the form of a *slave,* in the likeness of humanity. His life on earth serves as the supreme example for the Circumcision. He was their copy, their "underwriting." They are to follow Him in His footprints (1 Peter 2:21). For them no other example is needed. But with us it is different. Only His relation to the earth as the place of humiliation is put before us. The details must be filled in by others. These are involved in His cross, but they are not apparent until the depth of human infamy has been sounded by the apostasy of Israel.

EXHORTATION TO A MUTUAL DISPOSITION

We now come to the first of the four exhortations which are found in Philippians. It is strikingly like the opening exhortation in Ephesians 4:1-6. There humility was coupled with *unity.* The unity of the spirit is to be kept with the tie of peace. Where pride prevails this unity fails. So

also here. Humility is associated with a *mutual* disposition. The slight difference in viewpoint arises from the character of the epistles. It may be seen in the words used. In Ephesians it is *one.* In Philippians it is *same.* The spirit's unity consists in *one* body, *one* spirit, *one* expectation, *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God. Corresponding to this, in service there should be in all the *same* disposition, the same love, souls joined *together,* disposed to one thing (Phil.2:2). This might be called *the unity of the soul,* for it is the effect of the unity of the spirit, the outward evidence of the inward power.

Unity of spirit and a mutual disposition are the great need for effective service, even among believers. This is because we are by no means perfected as yet. We are still selfish. We are prone to two sins which should be utterly absent—strife and vainglory. These are products of pride. If we consider ourselves better than others it will lead to contention. If we desire that our superiority be recognized it will be naught but vainglory. No one knows how subtle and widespread these failings are because no one recognizes them as such. They are not condemned, but condoned. We do not expect anyone to allow his pride to be touched. We almost demand that this be resented. Humility—*true* humility—is considered a weakness unworthy of a man and a Christian.

It is not easy for us to recognize the justice of this. If we really possess superior qualities or have advanced to attainments beyond others, why should we not claim due recognition? The answer is very simple. All true worth will be rewarded in the future. But now is the time of *service.* It is most likely that, in that day, only that will be found genuine which did not fight for recognition. All other glory will be found without solid contents, an empty shell. It is impossible for us to decide even of ourselves, nor is it necessary. The truth for today is found only in unity, and the

service for today should be a mutual effort, unmarred by strife and vainglory.

Even the highest gifts are no ground for self-exaltation, for all comes from God and should be a cause of thankfulness, not pride. The best of us have *nothing that we did not receive.* Nothing has originated in us. We have no more right to it than the most despised of humanity. It is only when we lose sight of God's deity and our creaturehood that we preen our feathers or blow our horn. Then it is that we resent any lack of appreciation of our gifts or interference with our work. And this soon leads to dissension and division, which constitute the most glaring faults of Christendom, and are the conclusive evidence of its apostasy and shame.

Normally, we should look to Christians and Christendom to see the fruit of evangelical truth. That is what the "heathen" are compelled to do, apart from reading the Scriptures. What a consolation to look away from such hypocritical Christianity to Christ! Self-abasement, not self-exaltation—such is His disposition. What a comfort there is to be found in His love, which was fixed on others, not Himself. Here we can have real communion of spirit if our eyes and hearts are open to the truth. With Him we can have compassion and pity for those beneath us, not disregard or contempt. It is only by meditation on His career that we may realize the shortcomings of our own. His disposition is the test and corrective of our tendency to exalt ourselves.

There is a notable difference between the ecclesias of Corinth and Philippi. In the former there seems to have been much in the way of gifts and physical endowments. They sneered at the apostle's style of speaking. Yet they were full of factions. They wanted to reign. Yet they were fleshly and immature. Notwithstanding their own estimate of themselves, the apostle could not reveal to them

what was on his heart. We do not read of many gifts in Philippians. Instead of criticizing Paul's oratory they contributed to his support. So it is that we do not read of any schisms among them. And to them Paul writes as to those who have received the highest truth.

May every gathering of saints take these things to heart! It is far more important to have the humble disposition of Christ than to have the most perfect spiritual and physical equipment. A good speaker, with an agreeable presence, and equipped with much truth, is not to be despised. But, alas, too often, as in Corinth, he may divide instead of unite. Apollos did not wish to split the saints, but he did so by his good qualities. What should be cultivated by us all is this *mutual disposition* for, apart from our own pride, we have the *same* objects before us. And this can come only in the measure in which we partake of the disposition of Christ Jesus, as summed up in the phrase: *He stooped to serve.*

THE DESCENT OF CHRIST

The *kenosis,* or emptying of Christ, is the ideal for all creation in relation to God. Christ humbled Himself: God highly exalted Him. With us, alas, the tendency is just the opposite. We exalt ourselves so that God must humble us. In His case we have true humility exemplified as in no other, for He went from the place supreme to the deepest depth, and God has made Him Lord of all. Leaving the form of God He took that of a slave. Becoming like a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Apart from being God Himself, nothing can be higher than having the form of God. God Himself is invisible (1 Tim.1:17; Heb.11:27). To bring Him within the range of human comprehension He must be depicted by an Image, having a Form. The living God cannot be made known by lifeless representations. Hence He has chosen One, His

creative Original, in Whom all was created, to represent Him, to be the visible Image of invisible Deity (Col.1:15). His shape or form must be that which is suggestive of God, especially of the character which He assumes on any occasion, in order to reveal Himself to His creatures. Christ Jesus was that Form. In Him God was seen in such a theophany as suited the weakness of the human frame. Yet in visions He appeared in soul-dismaying splendor, as when Isaiah beheld His glory. This passage, as all else in this epistle, deals with service, not essential being.

As the subject of this passage is the height from which Christ descended, it does not treat of His relationship to God in other respects. The equality here spoken of does not arise from intrinsic identity but extrinsic form. Outwardly, to human gaze, He was God, Elohim and Yahweh. This it was which He did not deem pillaging. The fact that He could take the place of God without taking anything from Him is here introduced to show His supreme position in the universe. He was the Effulgence of God's glory (Heb.1:3), the most magnificent and sublime percept to be found. As there was no higher height, He could not be exalted without a previous descent.

Our disposition, and that of the world, is to hold fast to all the wealth and power and dignity to which we are able to attain. Indeed, we are disposed to seek still more, even when that which we possess has become a burden. The motto of the respectable and esteemed is "Ever upward"! It is pressed upon the aspiring youth and preached as gospel in our churches. Ever higher is the aim of the ambitious man. Even in the church this has found its full expression. It is seldom that a preacher does not desire a larger church, or welcome a higher ecclesiastical position. Alas, the most prominent men in Christendom have gone up and not down, and in most cases, have given an example just the reverse of that which our Lord has set before us.

CHRIST'S SELF-ABASEMENT

That, despite His supernal dignities, the disposition of Christ was one of love and compassion, and utterly lacking in selfishness and pride, is shown by His self-abasement. He *empties* Himself. What this means is clearly indicated by the change in *form.* He was not God and He did not become a slave. But He had God's form, yet He took a slave's form. He did not carry with Him any of the former into the latter. This is clearly shown by the word *empties,* Only when He was trans*formed*, *formed,* as on the holy mount (Matt.17:2), did His face shine as the sun and His garments become white as the light. In this vision He anticipates the form which He will have in the Kingdom, after His exaltation. But it was not a permanent form, only a vision. When He descended the glory was gone.

CHRIST'S SELF-HUMBLING

Not only does He *empty* Himself by taking the form of a slave, but He also *humbles* Himself, seeing that He came to be in the likeness of humanity. It is humiliating to belong to the human race. Let us take a place among those messengers from other spheres who have visited the earth, and know something of human history. What a sad, sordid, sinful spectacle do we see as we contemplate man's mistakes and misery! Apart from his future, I question whether any creature outside the earth would care to belong to our sin-cursed, death-doomed race. Normally we should be like our first parents, and hide ourselves for very shame. Were we not blinded to our state, and hardened to our fate, we would humble ourselves because we are not merely *like* humanity and *fashioned* as a man, but we actually belong to this base band.

Christ Jesus was not a human being as we are, for God was His Father, yet He bore our likeness. He was not a

man like the rest, for He had no sin and had life in such abundance that it would counteract the disease and death which is our portion. Though He had the likeness and the fashion of a man, He did not possess the mortality and the sin which is the cause of our humiliation. He was human in appearance, not in fact. He did not humiliate Himself simply because, like all of us, He shared the general disgrace. So sensitive was He to sin, that His association with it was enough to humble Him. Thus it was that He became the Man of Sorrows, and made close acquaintance with our grief.

We must not think that all this was independent of the will and heart of God. Quite the opposite. It was a path of *obedience* to God. And it was a revelation of the Deity quite as much as His previous condition. Indeed, the highest service lies in the lowest sphere. His humiliation revealed God's heart as His more glorious condition never could have done. Becoming like a man is only a step in His humiliation. He must stoop lower still, and become like the very worst of men, like the outcast of society, like the very vilest criminal.

It is disgraceful to die, but we do not discern the dire dishonor of it because we all share the shame. But it is far more humiliating to be executed as a criminal, to be deemed unworthy to live even among such sinners as mankind. Even here there are degrees of disgrace. But an agonizing and lingering death, exposed to public scorn, and in the special form on which the curse of God had been pronounced, with every token of human and divine displeasure, such a death is the deepest depth of degradation which can be imagined. Christ did not merely descend to share our common fate of dying and death, but to suffer so as to bring upon Himself the utmost humiliation from man and the deepest abhorrence from the Deity.

The cross of Christ! How little do we realize the abyss

to which He sank! As men cover the grave of a corrupting corpse with flowers, so Christendom has sought to obliterate the offense of the cross by giving the rude stake itself an artistic form. No cross-piece gave the crude pole on which He was gibbeted picturesque proportions. It was never intended to beautify the architecture of our churches or to be fabricated of precious metal and costly gems to adorn the vain worship of the flesh. How terribly has this so-called symbol been altered, both in form and in intent! It should be a symbol of shame, to be shunned with shuddering. In its popular form it has become a symbol of man's utter failure to grasp the deep and dire significance of the manner in which God's Christ was done to death by human hands.

O that the saints could grasp the vast distinction between the death of Christ and the manner of it! Too often, when we speak of the cross, we merely mean His death. Had He died a common death, it would not have revealed the heart of man or the indignation of God. That human beings have brought upon themselves the blood of God's Anointed tells the tale of their alienation as no other act could do. That this was done by those in closest official touch with God, the priests of Israel, is the best evidence of human depravity. Not only was Christ humiliated at the cross, but men were shown to be so low and vile, that naught but divine grace and love could ever give them the right to exist. Indeed, justice demands that they be crucified for this deed. Not only Christ, in fact, but the world, in truth, was on the shameful tree of Golgotha.

CHRIST'S EXALTATION

"Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him . . ." (2:9). Christ emptied and humbled Himself, but God exalts Him. He did not exalt Himself. Only God can truly exalt His creatures. For them the way to the heights lies through the depths.

They should share the disposition of God's Anointed, and, in due time, God will raise them up. As the result of His descent to the deepest humiliation He is now on the way to the highest place in God's universe. Already, in countless hearts, His Name ranks far above every other name. It is not merely great but gracious. None of the names on earth can compare with it. It does not inspire fear or admiration merely, but love and adoration.

The word here used is full of precious significance. God has *graced* Him with the Name which outranks all others in the universe. The root thought of this family of words is JOY. The verb *chairō* means *rejoice.* One of its nouns, *charis,* is *grace, favor, gratitude, bounty.* So this verb *charizomai,* JOYize, speaks of an act that brings joy. Usually this is produced by granting an undeserved boon, or bestowing benefits where the opposite is deserved. But here this winsome word tells us of the pleasure which the Name delectable will bring, not only to Him Who bears it, but to those who find it a Shelter and a Satisfaction to their hearts.

The name Jesus is full of precious significance. It is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Joshua. This seems to be shortened from Yahweh-Hoshea, Yahweh-Saviour. Yahweh is the title of the Deity as associated with time, especially the eonian times, that great group of eons in which God is revealing Himself through darkness and light, evil and good, sin and salvation. The cross of Christ stands in the very midst of these eons, and through it He will transmute all the evil into good. Yahweh is He Who will be and is and was. Hoshea is added to describe His work. Jesus is the appropriate name of the *Saviour* Whom God has given to rescue the creation from the thralldom of sin and destruction and death during the eonian times.

The worship and acclamation of the universe—such is the reward which comes to our blessed Saviour for His descent and humiliation. And this will not wait until the

consummation, when all are reconciled to God. During the eons many shall bow the knee to Him and acclaim Him Lord, for the glory of God, the Father. Even now His saints adore His Name, and own His lordship in their feeble way. Already He is at God's right hand, messengers and authorities and powers being made subject to Him (1 Peter 3:22). When He comes, the earth will own Him King. Even beings under the earth, of which we know so little, will adore and obey Him. Celestial, terrestrial and subterranean—all will bow the knee in worship and use their tongues to acclaim the Crucified before the eons end. Low as was His humiliation, so high will be His exaltation.

"For the glory of God, the Father." This is the object of it all, as well as the key to our understanding of it. Christ descended in obedience in order to glorify God, His Father. He was exalted for the same reason. And it is for this cause that every knee shall bow and every tongue acclaim Him Lord—because this not only elevates Him to the place supernal, but at the same time brings to God the glory which is His due. But it is not to God, as Creator, or as Judge. The name Jesus sets forth the *Saviour*; He glorifies the *Father.* There is no constraint here, except that of love. Those who worship Him as Saviour and acclaim Him as Lord become children of God, and give Him glory.

THE SAINTS' OBEDIENCE

Having meditated upon the obedience of Christ Jesus and its blessed results, Paul exhorts the saints to emulate His disposition in their own small sphere. Hitherto the Philippians had always been obedient to the truth which he had imparted to them when he was present with them. Now that he has still greater and grander grants of glorious grace for them, which he must send to them in his absence, he exhorts them to carry this out also, in their daily life. It is a high salvation indeed, but it calls for a

lowly walk in humiliation and suffering. It leads down, not up, so long as we are in these bodies of humiliation. With fear and trembling, we bow ourselves under the mighty hand of God, Whose spirit in us is the effective force.

Salvation is not only a future event, but a present power and should be the preponderant influence in our lives. God has a glorious goal for each one of us, just as He has for His Anointed. Let us learn from His example that self-emptying and humiliation, with all their discomfort and distress and agony, are God's will and the only way to attain the future exaltation. Let us not strive against it but be disposed to it, when it lies in the path of obedience, even though it brings fear and trembling with it. Let us be satisfied when *our* will is not consulted, and *our* work is not done, realizing that God's will and work are to be carried out through us, for His delectation. It is God Who wills as well as works in us for His delight. So great is the light shed upon the human will by this word that we will devote a later chapter to its discussion.

When we realize that God is the power of our life, it is revolutionized. Nothing enters it by chance, or by any means without the will of God. Why then murmur when it is not to our liking? It is a comfort that He *knows* our trials and a consolation that He *sympathizes* with us in our sorrows, but how much better to realize that it comes from Him and is a step, into the depths it may be, which leads to our exaltation? It is not a cause for murmuring, but for thanksgiving. Murmuring had no place in the life of our Lord. Not that He lacked occasion. The wise and intelligent in His day did not receive His message. Was He discontented? Quite the opposite. He said, "I am acclaiming Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for Thou hidest these things from the wise and intelligent and Thou dost reveal them to minors. Yea, Father, seeing that thus it became a delight in front of Thee" (Matt.11:25,26).

This is a very practical point with the writer and readers of these lines. We have marvelous things to teach. Humanly speaking, it seems impossible that the intelligent, even scholarly, leaders in Christendom should not grasp them eagerly. But they do not. Their wisdom seems to be useless in the realm of revelation. The fact that they do not receive it seems to reflect on our message, and we are tempted to murmur. Then, again, it is far pleasanter and more respectable to have many men of mental ability and high standing in the world to support and propagate the truth. Would it not have been better to choose priests and scribes as apostles rather than ignorant fishermen? By no means. Let us not murmur at God's ways in choosing the stupid and the weak and the ignoble and the scorned, for only thus can He give the flesh its proper place. Let us rather rejoice.

How many of us are prone to reason that, if this had only been so, that could not have happened. But all such reasoning is vain and a delusion. So intricate are the complex interrelations of human life and conduct that no rational reasoning is possible. It is almost invariably the product of unbelief. God's ways are not to be the subject of our syllogisms, for we are not at all equipped for logical deduction. Once we believe and realize that God's hand is operating all things in our lives, as well as in the universe, all desire to reason will leave us. Faith will replace reason, and dissatisfaction and perplexity will be replaced by contentment and understanding.

Should we come to be in complete concord with the control of God, it will make us "blameless and artless, children of God, flawless in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" (2:15). The world, and the saints who have not yet given God His place in their lives, do not fall in line with His will (even if they fulfill His intention), hence they lie athwart His way and are perverse, or they vary

their course, and are crooked. So long as we parallel His course, and do not plot and scheme to improve or evade His plans for us, we will be like His children, in Whom no flaw can be found. Such is the conduct which should come from the contemplation of the course of Christ. It should be the glad obedience of those who make God all in their lives and cheerfully acquiesce in His way for them, seeing that the suffering must precede the glory.

LUMINARIES IN THE WORLD

Such saints are not only a delight to God, but the light of the world. This world is a very dark and dismal dungeon. In their day, the disciples of our Lord were the light of the world (Matt.5:14). Since then the light has left Israel, as figured in the olive tree, some of whose boughs were broken off (Rom.11:17). Now the oil is found among the nations, some of whom have been grafted in. But the real luminaries are only those among them who live the evangel, "having on the word of life." They are clothed, as it were, with the luminous garments of God's revelation, and shine in a manner like our Lord when He was on the holy mount.

It is a glorious privilege to give expression to God's truth by verbal utterance or the written pages, by means of the words He has given us to make Him known. But here we have a different method, and, perhaps, a more effective mode of shedding the light of God. Not words for the ears, but works which can be heard by the hearts of our hearers, are the means brought before us in Philippians. These deeds will appear again in the day of Christ, to receive the reward which is their due. In these is Paul's boast, for they show, as nothing else could do, that his efforts had not been empty of results (2:16).

That the path of the Philippians had been a painful one, yet pleasing to God, is apparent from Paul's description of it. It was a *sacrifice.* The sacrifice of "burnt offering" or

ascent offering, which was wholly God's and ascended to Him as a savor of rest, was accompanied by a libation of wine, to express the joyful character of the sacrifice. How well this fits the circumstances here! Paul also suffers in his service, yet rejoices in it. The sacrifice is a joyous one. They rejoice, and he rejoices with them, and, to make it mutual, he would have them rejoice with him.

Notwithstanding its strong strain of humiliation and suffering, our service is one of joy and rejoicing. Short as it is, no other book contains the word rejoice as often as Philippians. Paul made his petitions with joy (1:4). He rejoices and will rejoice in the announcement of the evangel (1:18). He will abide for their joy of faith (1:25). He would have them fill his joy full (2:2). He joys and rejoices with the Philippians and asks them to joy and rejoice with him (2:17,18). He sends Epaphroditus that they may rejoice and receive him with all joy (2:28,29). He exhorts them to be rejoicing in the Lord (3:1). He calls them his joy (4:1). Again he exhorts them to be rejoicing in the Lord always, and repeats it (4:4). He rejoiced that their disposition toward him found expression in their contribution (4:10). What other book can match the overflow of happiness found here in Philippians?

Let us note also that this joy is not in their salvation but in their service. Undoubtedly they enjoyed the grace which had come to them in Christ. But this is a different matter. This joy is in the *Lord.* They were happy in serving and suffering in the midst of weakness, poverty and distress. This is the joy which accompanies our present path of hardship and humiliation. Indeed, it is the firstfruit of our downward disposition in obedience to the will of God.

Let us, then, cultivate the disposition which was in Christ Jesus, which is the very reverse of that which inspires the world and the flesh and the Adversary. Let us not strive to rise high, but to become low, not to rule but to serve,

not ourselves but others. Let us leave all exaltation in the hands of God, Who will raise us up and give us glory in His own good time, as He did with Christ Jesus. He that exalts himself shall be abased. But he whom God exalts shall share with Christ the glories which are His because He emptied and humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

A. E. Knoch

FOR THE GLORY OF GOD, THE FATHER

If all that Christ gains in His future exaltation is the forced acknowledgement of His omnipotence by unwilling knees and reluctant tongues, then all His humiliation has been in vain. As Yahweh, He could have accomplished this before He descended to the accursed tree. It is as Jesus (Yahweh-Saviour) that He will receive, without compulsion, the acclamation of all creation, the worship of every living intelligence. The glory and the grandeur of His exaltation is embodied in the lowly name which shall become supreme. His salvation shall assure Him universal worship; His deliverance will be the theme of world-wide acclamation.

The goal of all is the glory of God. The kenosis of Christ is the first step in bringing about the Fatherhood of the Deity. It is the only way that He could display the riches of His affection, the resources of His love. God has revealed Himself as a mighty Creator in His works. This does not satisfy His heart or the hearts of His creatures. He desires to be their Father. He must draw them by the cords of love. He must win their affection. This is the vast task which began with Christ's kenosis. This is the glorious consummation to which it leads. In eras yet to come God will be the Father of all His adoring creatures. This achievement will make the name of Jesus esteemed above all others in the eons of the eons and beyond.

A. E. Knoch

Philippians 2:12,13

THE HUMAN WILL

GOD is operating in us to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight (Phil.2:13).

This brief allusion to the human will throws a flood of light into a very dark and dismal doctrine which has so vitiated the theology of Christendom that it has practically robbed God of His deity and believers of a God worthy of the name. It is generally taken for granted that the Bible teaches that man, being made in the image of God, is absolutely sovereign in the realm of his will. Just as God can will, without being influenced by aught about Him, so we can create a decision out of the blue, without the least reference to what we are, or to the world about us.

This nightmare, we are given to understand, is not directly taught in the Scriptures, but must be predicated as its background, or else we could not understand its message! It is pathetic to see the zeal with which men, who have suffered much for God's name, spring up to attack any teaching which threatens the doctrine of man's free will and free moral agency. They have not a line of Scripture on their side, so they inject the idea wherever it seems feasible, and so seek a semblance of support.

ASPECTS OF OUR WILL

It will be worthwhile to consider some aspects of man's will, to see whether it is "free" or not, and to learn thus just what is meant by God operating in us to will. The wording of this passage will give us a hint, and, if we are correct, we will find ourselves in full harmony with its teaching when we are through.

What is the human will? Our text will help us to determine this vexing problem. The will of believers should be due to *God's operation.* It is not our action, but the result of His. So the will is a result, due to the operation of external factors. Probably we are not conscious of God's operation. We seem to be doing what we will. That is true of many functions of life. Our thinking, our breathing, the beating of our hearts, the manifold operations of digestion, all these are or should be, accomplished without our superintendence or conscious volition. And all are maintained and formed from external supplies or impulses. We eat, we breathe, we observe, and these make us what we are.

Where does the will come from? Do men create it out of nothing? That would be a feat more wonderful than any sleight of hand of which we have ever heard. If God is operating in us, is He then interfering with the creative capacity of His creatures? The wise man knows that the human will is easily influenced from without. In fact it can be changed easily by one who understands human weaknesses. It is manufactured out of motives. It is a compound, made out of what we are within and where we are without. Heredity and environment fuse together to form it. Our wills are determined for us to a large extent by our ancestors, especially one named Adam. The mixture is finished by our associates and associations. If we had brains enough we could figure out any given will-problem like a sum in arithmetic. A given man will react to a given situation as surely as half a dozen plus six make twelve.

AUTOMATIC PROCESSES

Oh, someone will exclaim, then man is a mere machine, an automaton, and is subject to a blind fate from which he cannot escape! How often have these words frightened us when we dared to think through to reality! No. Man is not a *mere* machine, but we must all admit that he has many

of the characteristics of one. The fact that he has a soul, and can sense outward things, does not prove that he can sense all of his own operations. If he were not automatic in most of his vital processes, he would be dead in a few minutes. Some of his functions are not within the sphere of his consciousness. The will is one of these.

Man is an automaton in many ways. What would become of him if he had to supervise all of his bodily functions, or if he were even conscious of them all? How could a man who had never even heard of physiology keep the blood pump going and the air bellows working and the stomach churning all at the same time? He would not dare to stop to take a bite to eat. He could not get a wink of sleep. He would, however, have the melancholy pleasure of knowing that he is no mere automaton. Thank God that He, in His wisdom, Himself attends to our vital functions, so that we may look away from them to Him.

THE BENEFICENT CREATOR

In these matters man is not subject to a "blind fate," but to a beneficent Creator. He provides parents and food and drink and air, not blindly, but blessedly. All this is a parable of those non-physical functions of our being, the mental, the emotional, and the voluntary. As Creator, God supplies us with the tendencies of our ancestors and with our surroundings and associates. These are incorporated in our mental tissue and enter our brains through our organs of sense. There are times when these two sources (heredity and environment) contribute materials which will not mix, and we cannot "make up our minds." But, in most cases, we subconsciously act upon the impulse provided by the union of these two streams without considering our course.

It is a stupendous blessing that this process is, as a rule, subconscious. If we had to stop and think and combine our hereditary tendencies with the fleeting impressions con-

stantly brought in by our eyes and ears and nose and nerves before we act, many would be run over by automobiles before they could walk. Our wills themselves sometimes prompt us to action before we have time to be definitely conscious of what we are doing. I well remember once resting quietly under a bush, when I heard a buzzing noise, and lazily turned my head to see if the wind was blowing the vegetation. But it flashed upon me in the midst of my sluggish motion, that it might be a rattlesnake. I jumped up so quickly that I still seemed to be thinking of the wind after I saw the snake strike at the spot where my head had been an instant before.

Man is like an automobile, a splendid vehicle to convey the knowledge of God to the creatures of His heart. Let us suppose that an automobile had a free will of its own. Who would care to ride if the steering gear demanded its independence, and turned off the avenue to climb a tree, or insisted on diving into a pit, instead of running on the road prepared for it? If automobiles had free wills the American people would soon be extinct. And if men could break away from the natural laws which guide them, they would utterly destroy one another in a fortnight. The measure in which they are lawless because of death and sin, is well within the reach of God's protecting arm. The steering gear has gone wrong, the wheels wobble, and the automobile seems to be blessed with free moral agency. If you wish to sell the machine it may be well not to boast of its superior spiritual endowments. One who has God's spirit has a steady steering gear and a Driver Who will get him there on the well paved path.

Our consciousness seems to be a sluggish bubble which rises from the operations of the mind and is hardly recognized until it breaks. There is a possibility of uniting sensations from without with the mental fiber within and of sending the resultant order to the muscles and even of acting before we are well aware of what we are about. This is the way the will usually works. It would be intolerable if we had to make up our minds regarding every act of life. It would take more nerve force than most of us possess. Most of our voluntary acts are replaced by habits—things we do "without thinking."

Too often the sinner is directed to manipulate his will, as though he could do anything with it. An evangelist is not supposed to twist and turn the human will by eloquent exhortations, but to provide divine material for the formation of God's will in men. Of what avail would it be to feed the famished with lectures on the digestive apparatus? It is just as useless to tell a man to will to come to Christ. Give the starving food, and the digestive apparatus, complicated as it is, will do its part. Give the sinner Christ and his will will work of its own accord. Preach the *Word.* This is the most effective motive power for moving the mind of man. By its means God's spirit will bring the sinner into line with God's will.

HUMAN IMAGININGS

Men imagine they are sovereign in the realm of the will and that no one can break their resolution—no, not even God. This is childish. They have no greater control over it than the captain of a sailing vessel has over the set of his sails. If he is not demented he will spread them to suit his course, and that is determined for him by the breeze. There are spiritual winds to which men bend their wills. They may whistle ever so long, but these spirit forces are beyond their perception and above their control. Hence men do the will of the flesh and obey the behests of evil spirit powers of which they seldom are aware. These now operate in the sons of stubbornness (Eph.2:2). The great movements in the world, the great leaders, can find success only when they fall in line with unseen spirit forces.

The unbeliever is the sport of the spirits of evil. It is the chief of the aerial jurisdiction who operates in them. Their wills are a compound of the soulish sensibilities of the flesh and the spirit of the world. The believer is not called upon to be passive, to "surrender," to "yield" as is so often taught, but that is what the unbeliever unwittingly does. That is what evil spirits crave. Intelligent subordination to God's revealed will is quite the opposite of a passive reception of passing impressions. The spirit of God does not produce such indefinite "guidance," such loose "leadings." God's spirit works only through His Word.

THE LIGHT OF REVELATION

Our course is often dark, and we need light, not vague "guidance." With a light we can intelligently pick our path, and choose our steps. We are not called upon to obey an inner voice or an outward impression, or to blindfold our eyes and follow an unknown guide, but to use the light of revelation. Within us is the flesh and without us is the spirit of the world and the world of spirits. These are always forcing themselves upon us and producing "impressions." It is true that, if we know the Scriptures, the divine directions will, to a large extent, displace these sinister influences, but this comes through the activity of faith, not the passivity which blindly obeys impulses. God seeks open-eyed, active obedience. The forces of evil desire blind passivity.

Saints who sincerely desire to do the will of God will find that it is not enough to "make up their minds" to do it. However strong their determination, it may not last. The wise way is to provide the will with motives which will keep them in God's will. Above all we must know Him through His Word. We must enter into His present plans and future purpose. Then, without straining ourselves to create an artificial will of our own, this knowledge will become the formative factor in our wills, so that actually

it will be "God Who is operating in us to *will* (as well as to work), for the sake of His delight."

Let me warn all against the fearful practice of making a medium out of God's holy Word. There are those who will insert a needle into the Bible, or open it at random in order to get God's "leading." God's Book is not a planchette, though I have no doubt that the evil spirits prefer it to every other way of deceiving their dupes. God controls our wills only when we intelligently absorb His thoughts, and weigh His ways, and luxuriate in His love. It is detestable idolatry to turn His revelation into a ouija board, and allow evil spirits to speak through its sacred sentences.

At Pentecost God's spirit came on the disciples for power, and uninstructed saints have longed for a repetition of this marvel ever since, not knowing that the spirit is at home in us, to impart not power but life (Rom.8:9). There is great danger in tarrying for the spirit, for deceiving spirits are eager to use such opportunities. In fact the history of all movements of this kind is sufficient evidence that they are merely a brand of spiritism, doubly deceptive because they seem to be based on the Bible, and succeed in arousing spirit manifestations which are mistaken for the power of God's holy spirit.

It is quite true that God revealed Himself directly through the prophets and those who had the gift of prophecy in the Pentecostal era. No one has it now. The only real prophets today are false prophets. If we expect God to speak to us directly through His spirit, apart from His Word, we are assuming the gift of prophecy. Today such a gift is not needed, for the truth has been fully revealed in the Scriptures. Moreover, the fact that those who depend on such revelations are led contrary to the Scriptures and to one another shows that they are not guided by the one spirit of God, but by the many spirits against which we are warned.

Much of the "waiting on God" or "going into the silence"

may be simply a form of spiritism. If we seek to shut out the distractions of the world about us in order to be able to give all our thoughts to God's revelation, that is good, very good. But if we imagine that making our minds a blank, or putting ourselves into a state of passivity will enable us to receive definite instructions from the holy spirit direct, we are under a strong delusion, and lay ourselves open to the deceiving spirits which characterize these last days. The holy spirit of God will indeed guide us into the truth, but only through the word of truth. There is no safety apart from God's written revelation. The spirit that speaks to us apart from it is evil, however much it may imitate the divine.

All who have had an intelligent experience of divine life will readily admit that even the saint cannot please God apart from His operation, and they are glad to have it so. Let them *believe* the passage before us, and seek to realize its force, and they will be gratified still more in the consciousness that even the spring of their good deeds flows from God. They become, as it were, a miniature universe, in which all is out of and through and for Him. The fact that they cannot independently will or work so as to please God will not disturb them in the least. Quite the opposite. They will find their all in Him, and this is only the normal complement of the great goal God has set before Him—to be all in them.

A. E. Knoch

THY WILL BE DONE

The whole mission of Christ may be summed up in the word, "will." He came to do the will of God (Heb.10:7,9). He amplified this when He said, "I am not seeking My will, but the will of Him Who sends Me" (John 5:30). This is emphasized by repetition, when, a little later, He protests, "I have descended from heaven, not that I should be doing My will, but the will of Him Who sends Me" (John 6:38). Thus He prayed in Gethsemane, "Not My will, but Thine be done!" (Luke 22:42).

A. E. Knoch

THE OBEDIENCE OF GRACE

WE ARE UNDER GRACE. We are not under law, but under grace (Rom.6:14). We are not under law as it "came in by the way" (Rom.5:20) through Moses at Sinai, but under the evangel of the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:15).

The clear statement that we are not under law, but under grace, is repeated apart from qualification in verse 15:

What then? Should we be sinning, seeing that we are not under law, but under grace?

The question, "Should we be sinning?" arises from the fact that we are not under law, but under grace. If it had occurred to Paul that he oversimplified his case in verse 14 he would hardly have repeated it word for word, introduced by the verifying expression, "seeing that," i.e., "seeing [it is so] that we are not under law, but under grace."

We are not under law. Even though, in bringing the evangel of justification in God's grace apart from works of law, Paul was not nullifying law (Rom.3:31), nevertheless we are not under law. The law is holy, and its every precept holy and just and good (Rom.7:12); yet we are not under the mastery of law. The law is spiritual (Rom.7:14), but law is not the word of God through which He channels His spirit to us. The just requirement of the law shall be being fulfilled in us (Rom.8:3,4), but it will not happen by the imposition of law over us, for we are not under law. We are exhorted to be exhibiting that great summation of those precepts dealing with our association with

fellow human beings, which is to love one another (Rom. 13:8-10); nevertheless those precepts and their summation are not the power of God to us for a walk of love.

We are not under law, and this is made fully clear in Romans chapter seven. But we are under grace, which is not law, and which is granted to us apart from works of law. This is the channel of God's spirit in our lives, and its truth is essential for a clear understanding of Romans chapter eight.

We are under the grace of God in which we are justified gratuitously through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). We are under grace in that, like Abraham before he was put under the law of circumcision, our believing of God's message to us is reckoned to us for righteousness (Rom.4:3-24). We are under grace in that we are justified by the faith of Jesus Christ and may be having peace toward God through Him, through Whom we have the access by faith into this grace in which we stand (Rom.3:22; 5:1,2). We are under the grace of God, Who commends His love to us, seeing that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8,15). We are under the gratuity in grace which is of the One Man Jesus Christ, seeing that, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10,15). We are under that grace and that gratuity in grace which always superexceeds over every increase of sin (Rom.5:20).

It is in this position, under grace, that we will hear the entreaties of Romans chapters 12-16. There is not the slightest possibility that we have not been identified with the death of Christ and shall not be of the resurrection and living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.6:3-11), for these are matters of grace. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.8:35-39), for the vast love with which God loves us is a matter of grace in Christ, and not of ourselves (Eph.2:4-10).

THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD

When the earth became a chaos and vacant, and darkness was over the face of the abyss, the spirit of God vibrated over the waters, and God said, "Let light come to be!" And light came to be (Gen.1:2,3). There was disruption, and there was the spirit of God, and there was the word of God. Where there was evil, it was being replaced by good by means of the combined operation of God's spirit and His word—of His power and wisdom.

What Paul is telling us now follows this primeval pattern. Here is sin, and here is God's word of grace—not the law, but God's evangel of grace concerning His Son. And this revolutionary word is the power of God for salvation to those who are believing. God's spirit vibrates where His word of grace is being believed, a spirit which brings its fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self-control into the lives of sinners who are taking account of this powerful word of light and love (Gal.5:22,23). So Paul asks the Galatians, "Did you get the spirit by works of law or by the *hearing* of faith?" (Gal.3:2,5). So also he later wrote of our position in Christ: "in Whom you also—on *hearing* the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation—in Whom on *believing* also, you are sealed with the holy spirit of promise (which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured) for the laud of His glory!" (Eph.1:13,14).

SIN AND GRACE

The idea that such divinely sourced grace encourages sin in the current lives of believers reflects a failure to listen to the evangel. The evangel of God says Christ died for our sins (1 Cor.15:3). That is how our sins are dealt with. We are justified in God's grace and stand before God in

grace, and because of this we shall be of the resurrection and walking in newness of life. It cannot be that this evangel of grace is a dangerous teaching, opening the way to increased sin in the present. Our spiritual strength arises from believing the word God has spoken to us. And this word is a message of grace.

It is when we shelve this evangel of grace, when we put it out of our mind and our heart, when we stop taking account of it, when we station ourselves under some other message, even under the holy and just and good law, that we forfeit the spiritual power God has provided for us (*cf* Rom.7:4-25). The Galatians put themselves under law and lost their happiness (Gal.4:15). The Corinthians were attracted to the wisdom and power of this world, and still had much to learn of the wisdom and power of God which was embedded in the word of the cross (1 Cor.1:18-31). So we also may get distracted from the word of God's grace, which reveals His righteousness, His wisdom, His power and His love. In every way, Romans six directs our attention to the spiritual power of the evangel under which we are placed, and not the least is this so of verses 15-18.

ARE YOU NOT AWARE?

As with the question of verse 1, Paul does not reply directly to the question of verse 15, but instead dismisses the insinuation, exclaiming,

May it not be coming to that!

Then he asks another question which directs the attention back to the evangel as a work of grace. To be under grace is to be under its vibrant mastery.

Are you not aware that to whom you are presenting yourselves as slaves for obedience, his slaves you are . . . ?

Are we not aware of what it means to be under grace? Are we not aware of the importance to our current lives of

stationing our hearing under the message of God's grace as a slave who listens carefully to his master's words? Are we not aware of the value of giving dedicated heed to the teaching God has placed over us? Are we not aware of the spiritual benefit to us day by day in believing the message of Christ's faith and obedience in His act of righteousness through which God's righteousness is revealed? Are we not aware that this evangel is like a master to us, and we are like slaves in fidelity to it? It is only as we hear and heed God's word of grace to us (not His word of law) that the reign of Sin in our lives can be attacked.

SUBMISSIVE HEARING

The root elements of the Greek verb translated *obey* are UNDER-HEAR, giving the sense of *submissively listening to* what is said to us. This Greek word is most often used in the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament for the Hebrew word for HEAR, especially when it gives the sense of "listen to," or "hearken to." The English word *obey* is derived from the Latin word *oboedire,* a compound term meaning, TOWARD-HEAR. In every case, in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and English, the basic, root element is HEAR. The prepositions *under* and *toward* serve to strengthen this sense, so that the hearing is understood as submissive to what is heard or keenly directed toward its message. The KEYWORD CONCORDANCE defines *obey* as "hear and heed" (p.209). To obey is to listen carefully so that the message heard comes across to us and affects us.

If God's word to us were a matter of law, our obedience would involve, first and foremost, paying careful attention to its instructions, and only then carrying them out.

But the word God gives us is not a word of law; it is an evangel of grace, and grace is JOY. This message does not tell us what we are to do, but what God has done and shall do for us through Christ. Obedience to this message is a

matter of earnest listening. But in accord with the character of the message, the heeding is a matter of joyful and thankful (WELL-JOYed) appreciation so that *it* can work in us. Let us, then, be aware of our place as ardent and careful listeners to God's word of grace:

Are you not aware that to whom you are presenting yourselves as slaves for UNDER-HEARING, *his slaves you are, whom you are* UNDER-HEARING,

1. *whether of Sin for death,*
2. *or of* UNDER-HEARING *for righteousness?*

Now thanks be to God

1. *that you were slaves of Sin,*
2. *yet you* UNDER-HEAR *from the heart the type of teaching to which you were given over.* (Rom.6:16,17)

All along here in chapter six Paul has been pointing to the evangel as God's power for salvation in our present lives. We cannot lose what Christ has gained for us and what God has given us upon believing this message, but we can fall out of the enjoyment of its blessings of the fruit of the spirit during the present, while we remain in these bodies of humiliation. If we are to be being saved from the reign of Sin in our lives, we need to *retain* the evangel (1 Cor.15:2) in our heart. We are to be *declaring* the evangel that Christ died for us while we are still sinners, and that we are identified with Him in His death, and shall be living to God as Christ is living to God, *not being ignorant* of such grace but be *believing* it, *perceiving* it, *taking it all into account* and *stationing* ourselves in mind and heart before God as He speaks to us of this word of gratuitous grace (Rom.6:1-13).

In accord with this we are to be *placing our hearing under* this message of grace and doing so with singleness of heart. This is what Paul has in mind here as he speaks of obedient slaves.

SLAVES OF SIN

Human beings, infected with death as a dying process, are slaves of Sin. We listen submissively to our desires, so that death increases its grip on us. Against this enslavement, God gave Israel the law (Exodus 20:20). But it only increased offense against God and wretchedness for the human in the increasing realization of failure. Law did not come with God's spiritual power as it will under the new covenant (Ezek.36:26,27). Yet now, God has given us grace, which is a different matter.

We do not escape the effect of Adam's disobedience, but, like a faithful slave, in giving attentive heed to Christ's obedience and its consequences, we are invigorated with spiritual strength against Sin's mastery.

OBEYING OBEDIENCE

Grace is the master which God has placed over us who are believing. But in Romans 6:16 Paul does not use the word *Grace* in speaking of our master, but rather he uses the word *Obedience.* We are like slaves who are listening carefully to our master, and this master is called Obedience! We are submissively hearing Submissive Hearing! Whatever can this mean? Are we to obey instructions set before us for our obedience? No indeed. That would mean we are really under law. We are to obey the message that tells of *Christ's obedience,* that is, attentively listen to the evangel of God, His word of grace, telling of the submissive hearing of Christ, His adherence to the will of His God and Father concerning Him.

As Paul has been often doing, he uses a key term to recall a full revelation already presented. Hence, as we have seen, the word *grace* in Romans 6:14 gathers together in itself all that the apostle has said about God's grace to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord. So also, the word *Obedience*

when it is used here in Romans 6:16 as our master, whom we are obeying (UNDER-HEARING), encompasses within itself the evangel of Romans 5:19 where the word *obedience* holds center place. By the single word "obedience," we are pointed back to the astounding teaching that "through the *obedience* of the One, the many shall be constituted righteous." In close connection with this, we are pointed back to all Paul has written concerning the *faith* of Jesus Christ, for the two qualities are like twins. So we keep listening to the evangel as it manifests God's righteousness through the *faith of Jesus Christ* (Rom.3:21,22). We submissively hear this evangel of Christ's submissive hearing of His Father's word to Him, this evangel of His faith-obedience. The pathway set before us here for our current lives is one of hearing the evangel of grace and being invigorated spiritually by what it says.

THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST

In Philippians 2:6-11 we find our apostle pointing us to the emptying and humbling of Christ Jesus Who was "*obedient* unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father."

Here is the evangel of grace presented again (as in Romans 5:19) in terms of the obedience (UNDER-HEARING) of Christ. It is not a message of law, but of a work completed by the One Whose disposition was wholly to give of Himself in hearkening to the will of and to the glory of His God and Father, for He prayed in Gethsemane, "Not as I will, but Thou!" (Matt.26:39). His obedience was one of hearing and doing; ours is one of hearing and appreciation of God Who works in us.

Thus as we are obeying, that is, listening receptively and humbly to this word of Christ's humiliation and exaltation, and holding fast to it, God operates in us, instilling in our hearts that awe and trembling joy which comes only from being overwhelmed by the magnitude of God's grace. In this way, we carry our salvation into effect (Phil.2:12,13), for the evangel of grace is God's power for salvation even now to those who are believing with listening hearts.

INTO RIGHTEOUSNESS

The obedience of the One, Jesus Christ, results ultimately in all the many sinners, all those who are affected by Adam's disobedience, being constituted righteous. His submissive listening to and faithful heeding of His Father's will for Him shall bring sinful mankind into righteousness. In the same pattern, our present believing and attentive hearing of this message concerning Jesus Christ brings righteousness into our current lives, not as it shall be, but in accord with the earnest of the spirit, the firstfruit of the spirit (Rom.8:23). It is obvious that our obedience does not constitute us righteous. That is the achievement of Christ's faith-obedience. But just as our believing is the basis for God reckoning righteousness to us (Rom.4:4-6), so also our submissive hearing of the evangel is the means through which God instills works of righteousness into our lives. These works begin with thankfulness to God, and they spread to spiritual qualities of love, joy and peace, of humility and patience and endurance, of kindness and faithfulness, and the like of these.

As it was with the Philippians, so also it is with us. As we are obeying [hearing and adhering to] the evangel Paul evangelized, God operates in us to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight. Thus it is our growing realization of how richly graced we are because of Christ's obedience that leads us into the paths of righteousness.

JOYFUL THANKS TO GOD

It is highly significant that righteousness is immediately associated with thanking God (Rom.6:17). The beginning and continuing accompaniment of righteousness in our current lives is the thankful recognition of God as Cause of all our blessings, the Giver of all the grace we have received.

To be under grace and enslaved to the message of Christ's obedience is a grand position of JOY. It does not lead to feelings of wretchedness under a burden we cannot bear, but to expressions of *joy* to God. Law leads to a focus on ourselves. Grace leads to a focus on God as He is made known through the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ. Grace means JOY. And the Greek word Paul uses here for expressing thanks to God is the same. It is JOY returned to God Who overwhelms us with His grace.

> *Now thanks* [JOY] *be to God*
> *that you were slaves of Sin,*
> *yet you obey* [UNDER-HEAR] *from the heart the type*
> *of teaching to which you were given over.*

When Paul was under law, having an outward confidence in his flesh that he could fulfill it, and was indeed, in relation to the righteousness which is in law, becoming blameless, he was inwardly wretched because he knew that he was not doing all that was required (Phil.3:4-6; Rom.7:21-24). Yet now he was delivered by God, through Christ, and standing before God in JOY, and while recognizing that this JOY is from God, he was directing JOY to God. He was thanking God Who is operating all and speaking to us in the words of His evangel of grace concerning His Son.

In today's world we hardly dare to say that Paul was thanking God for having given the experience of being a slave of Sin. Yet that is the first part of the full expression of thanksgiving to God given here verse 17. Throughout this extended passage the evangel is made known by way

of contrasts, and its glories could never be comprehended without the dark background. Thus the experience of slavery to Sin which is, in the absolute sense, out of God, as all is out of Him (Rom.11:36), prepares our hearts for the greatness and goodness of the teaching of grace to which God has given us over.

OBEYING FROM THE HEART

Paul entreats those believers who are literal slaves to be obeying their masters with fear and trembling, *in the singleness of their heart* (Eph.6:5). The sense conveyed by the figurative use of "heart" in Scripture is well expressed in the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE (p.141): "Figuratively, as the physical heart is the central and essential organ of the body, so [this word refers to] the center and core of man's spiritual being, not as with us, the seat of feeling and affection, but of motives (Matt.5:8), the understanding (Matt.13:18), [and] the reason (Mark 2:6)." It is akin to the mind. In subjecting our hearing to the message taught by Paul we focus our thinking upon it undistractedly from the core of our spiritual being.

OBEYING THE TYPE OF TEACHING

What may escape our notice in verse 16 (and in verse 18 as well) is made plain in verse 17. We may not catch Paul's meaning in personifying the words Obedience and Righteousness as one-word expressions of the evangel of God's grace, that teaching which God has placed over us as our master. But now Paul writes more explicitly and speaks of the believers as those who obey *the type of teaching* to which they are given over. We focus our hearing on the teaching of Christ's obedience, which indisputably is of the grace type, impressing its character of joy on us. We stand under that word of grace concerning Christ's faithful submission to His Father's will. God has given us over

to it, and in obeying it we listen to it with firm allegiance and are molded by it.

Early in this epistle when the apostle was recounting the irreverence and unrighteousness of humanity, he spoke of God *giving us over* to uncleanness, to dishonorable passions and to a disqualified mind (Rom.1:24,26,28). Yet now God has given us, who are believing, over to a message of grace centered upon Christ's obedience as it reveals God's righteousness. This sort of obedience, that of attentive listening, is altogether salutary for our minds and dispositions, and invigorating to a worthy walk.

The type of teaching to which we have been given over is that presented by Paul who was severed for the evangel of God. To Timothy Paul wrote: "You, then, child of mine, *be invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus.* And what things you *hear from me* through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who shall be competent to *teach* others also" (2 Tim.2:1,2). This is the teaching which is given to us, and which leaves its impression on us, who are listening to it, as type does on the printed page.

ENSLAVEMENT TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

In Romans 6:18, the teaching to which God has given us over is referred to as *Righteousness.* God has identified us with the death of Christ, so that we are freed from Sin's condemnation, and He has placed us in a position of faithful slaves who listen attentively to His word, which is in every aspect a message of righteousness:

Now, being freed from Sin,
you are enslaved to Righteousness.

The figure of slavery which Paul has introduced in verse 16 pictures dedication with singleness of heart to one's master. It does not speak here of forced labor, but of devoted commitment. It is essential, therefore, that we

know who our master is and what our master is saying to us. Our master is not Law telling us what we must do, but Grace which tells us what has been done for us. Our master does not tell us what we must do in order to be justified in the sight of God Who sees all as it truly is. But rather, our master, the Evangel of God's Grace, tells us that we are justified gratuitously through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus and stand before God, conciliated to Him through the death of His Son. Our master tells us of the faithful hearkening of Jesus Christ to the will of His God and Father so that sinners may be constituted righteous. It is under this master that we are positioned as devoted and attentive slaves.

We are enslaved to that message that teaches we have been freed from Sin's condemnation, in that we are baptized into the death of Christ, and are now put under the lordship of the manifestation of God's righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ, Who was obedient (UNDER-HEARING) to the death of the cross. This is enslavement to Righteousness, not to statutes and precepts requiring our acts of righteousness as set over Israel, but to that evangel of righteousness which has been taught to us and in which God is much more truly made known.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The evangel of God concerning His Son is first presented to us as a manifestation of God's righteousness (Rom.3:21). Indeed even before this its leading feature, as the power of God for salvation to those who are believing it, is the fact that "in it God's righteousness is being revealed," and this revelation arises out of faith, that is, out of Jesus Christ's faith (Rom.1:16,17; *cp* Rom.3:22). The revelation of the righteousness of God through the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ—this is our master. This is clearly not a matter of requirements of works of righteousness which we must

do, but a revelation of God's righteousness which shapes our thinking and bears the fruit of righteousness in our lives. In Philippians 1:9-11 this focusing on the message of Christ's obedience and God's righteousness is described as "testing the things of consequence." It is by this means that we are "filled with the fruit of righteousness."

A MESSAGE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

As we are listening to and holding fast to the message of *Christ's obedience,* so are we enslaved to this evangel in which *God's righteousness* is made manifest through the *righteous deed of Jesus Christ* which leads ultimately to *life's justifying* for all mankind (Rom.5:18), and on the basis of which, righteousness already is reckoned to us who are believing (Rom.4:4-8,23-25). God has freed us from Sin, in that He has baptized us into Christ's death so that we are dead to sin's condemnation (Rom.6:2,3; 8:1), and He has placed us under this evangel of grace (Rom.6:14) which is characterized throughout by righteousness. Even as, in God's grace, we are now hearkening to this message concerning the obedience of Christ, as a slave hearkens to his master, so we are enslaved to this same word of God as it reveals His righteousness through Christ's righteous act in the giving of Himself that we may be constituted righteous.

Hence by calling this evangel "Righteousness," Paul encompasses all that he has said on this theme, just as he did by the word "Obedience" in verse 16. He will repeat this in verse 19 with regard to our bodily members. And in verse 22 he will sum up this whole subject of the believer's present life of focusing on the evangel, as a matter of being *enslaved to God,* faithfully dedicated to Him as He speaks to us.

Thanks be to God Who enslaves us to this word of Christ's obedience and God's righteousness.

D.H.H.

THE TYPE OF TEACHING

OBEDIENCE from the heart evidences true faith, for with the heart the evangel is believed for righteousness. Accuracy of thought is desirable, but faith reaches out for Christ and works under the constraint of His love. One who is really united to Christ needs not the restraint of law nor the duress of fear to make him obey, any more than a loving mother must be compelled to care for her babe. The obedience for which Paul thanks God does not ask, "Shall we sin?"

The type of teaching referred to in Romans 6:17 was Paul's gospel. Had the Romans received the type of teaching taken to the Galatian churches by the subverters, Paul would have written them a corrective epistle instead of rejoicing in their obedience to what they had been taught.

One commentator writes: "It is only modern eyes that see distinct doctrinal types in the New Testament, and Paul, as far as he knew (1 Cor.15:11), preached the same gospel as the other apostles." On the contrary, what modern eyes are discerning ever more clearly are the really great differences which distinguish the two gospels which from the first separated into two companies the apostles of the Circumcision and those of the Uncircumcision. The writer quoted misses the meaning of his proof text. What Paul says there is that, though he and the other apostles differ, as they were obliged to do, yet "whether I," on the one hand, "or they," on the other, "thus we are proclaiming." What they agreed in proclaiming was the historic fact of the resurrection of Christ which they had witnessed at different times

and in different manners. Yet when Paul began to interpret the meaning of Christ's resurrection in that chapter, he taught truth foreign to the Circumcision message and revealed a secret that to them was always a secret.

"The type of teaching" was Paul's gospel in general, yet more specifically it was that part of it which is presented in this chapter. Consequently, Paul can say to the Roman saints "Are you ignorant," "Knowing this," "we believe," "having perceived" (verses 3,6,7,9). And this knowledge of theirs concerned features of his gospel no trace of which can be found in other inspired writings. This type of teaching declared the facts of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and these facts as affecting humanity at large, but especially those who are baptized into Christ Jesus and so are now sharing the likeness of His death and resurrection.

As the activity of the saints is seen in their obedience, so their passivity is seen in the fact that they were given over to the type of teaching as to the mastery of a new lord. The teaching reveals great divine achievements wrought for us, outside of us, and within us. We have no power to mold the facts without marring them, which, of course, would not be obedience to the teaching.

Corinth, from whence Paul wrote, was famous for casting statuary in metals. As Paul watched the process he saw, in the molten metals being poured into beautiful patterns, a picture of saints, pliant to the divine revelation, being fashioned into the image of God's Son. The truth must hold and mold the saints. We need to beware of the snare of trying to pour truth into the pattern of our philosophy. Even Christ never ventured to speak from Himself, but was a faithful Witness, speaking only the words that God gave to Him (John 8:28; 12:49; 14:24; 17:8,17). His fidelity to God's message and His obedience to God's will must fashion ours.

George L. Rogers

TWO TEACHINGS

THERE are two major teachings given by God, each of which is given to certain groups of people in view of human sin. The one is the teaching of law, delivered through Moses and given to Israel at Mount Sinai. The other is the teaching of grace based on the cross of Christ, delivered through Paul and given to believers chosen from all nations in the current era.

Moses introduces the first for Israel's attentive hearing in Deuteronomy 4:1 and adds in verse 9 the need to keep it before them:

Now Israel, hearken to the statutes and to the ordinances that I am teaching you today, to do them, that you may live and may enter and tenant the land that Yahweh Elohim of your fathers is giving to you . . . .

But guard yourself and keep your soul especially vigilant, lest you should forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they should withdraw from your heart, all the days of your lives.

Paul gives thanks for the second in Romans 6:17 (as rendered in accord with the root meaning of the word usually translated "obey"):

Now thanks be to God that you [hearken] from the heart [to] the type of teaching to which you were given over.

In both cases there is a teaching, and in both cases, those being taught are to listen attentively to it from the heart. The teaching to which Israel was given over was a teaching of statutes and ordinances that they were to do. It clearly

was of the law-type. But the teaching to which we are given over is a teaching of grace, telling us what has been done for us and its effects. It clearly is of the grace-type.

The teaching to which we are given over is the evangel of God concerning His Son. It is a message of grace, apart from works of law, telling us that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8). It declares that through this righteous act of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners, all mankind will ultimately enjoy life's justifying (Rom.5:18), and that through this faithful hearing and heeding of the will of His God and Father, the many sinners of humanity shall be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19).

Furthermore, this evangel of grace tells us that we who are believing it are already identified with Christ in His death. Our old humanity was crucified together with Him, and thus it is certain that we shall be living together with Him also (Rom.6:2-11). This teaching of the grace of God and the gratuity in grace which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ is set over us in our current lives, for us to listen to attentively as the source of spiritual strength in our daily lives.

The teaching which Paul evangelized produces a spirit of thankfulness to God on Whom we rely as the living God Who saves sinners (1 Tim.4:10), for He is working all together for good (Rom.8:28). To hearken to this evangel endows us with the spirit of sonship in which we cry "Abba Father" (Rom.8:15). As we live in a world of groaning and travailing, with this teaching in our hearts and minds we live with expectation of the full enjoyment of sonship ahead; we are awaiting it with endurance, knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.8:18-25,35-39).

We are not taught to devote our listening to precepts which we must do, but be listening to the evangel that we are justified gratuitously in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. Then, writing to us who

are believing and taking account of and listening to this message, Paul entreats us to walk in accord with it. We are not put under the law, but under grace which is a master which brings spiritual power to us rather than demanding power of us who are fleshly.

ENSLAVED TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

The teaching of the law was one of righteousness, as Moses made clear in Deuteronomy 4:7,8, again speaking to Israel:

For what great nation is there which has elohim so near to it as Yahweh our Elohim is in all that we call to Him? And what great nation is there which has statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law that I am putting before you today?

The type of teaching given through Moses was composed of righteous statutes and ordinances. It was a message of *righteousness,* in that every precept was righteous. But it did not lead to righteousness, for it is impossible for the flesh to do what is instructed in the law, apart from a special implanting of God's spirit (*cf* Rom.8:3; Ezek.36:27). That will be done. Nevertheless, the teaching as Moses put it before them, was to be hearkened to, and not that only, but every precept it instructed them to do was to be done, and if even one precept was not done, it would be as though none were done (*cf* James 2:10). That is what Israel was given over to.

The word of grace which we have heard is also a message of righteousness. But it speaks of righteousness made manifest and achieved for sinners through the faith of Jesus Christ and not by works of law (Rom.3:21-28). It tells us the obedience has already been carried out, not by us, but by our Lord. It tells us of the end of Sin's reign, of the end of wrong, the end of failure, the end of offense, the end of

transgression, the end of enmity and infirmity and irreverence. It tells us:

Now, being freed from Sin, you are enslaved to Righteousness.

The type of teaching given through Paul is a message of the highest order of *righteousness,* for it is built on the righteousness of God manifested through the righteous act of Jesus Christ for the justifying of life when all shall be constituted righteous. We are not set under righteous statutes and ordinances which we must do, but rather set under the teaching of righteousness which is the evangel of God concerning His Son.

God has enslaved us to this message of righteousness. And what a gracious enslavement this is! It is of the highest order of enslavement. It is not like the enslavement to Sin which tyrannizes us and twists our thinking and doing. Nor is it like enslavement to Law which leads to wretchedness, for it is not a message telling us that we must do what is impossible for us to do; it does not rest on our doing.

We are enslaved to a master which tells us the work is done. How is that again? We are enslaved to a master which tells us the work is done!

It tells us the Son of God emptied Himself of His glories and humbled Himself to a death of the severest of physical and mental suffering, for our sake, that we might be justified in full righteousness. Its name is grace, the obedience of Christ and the righteousness of God. Our master is that evangel which reports the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ, a finished work of righteousness that encompasses our every need and that of all mankind. We are to give our full attention to this teaching as ideal slaves who will not let their minds wander to other things and not try to insert their own reasonings and ideas into the word of our master.

So we listen loyally, to our master, this teaching of grace, that it may work in us. D.H.H.

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 104th Year

(1909–2013)

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 As a Human
61 The Service of Timothy
68 Epaphroditus' Sufferings
75 The Imitation of Paul

SECOND QUARTER, 2013

Volume 104 **Number 2**

All in All

The blood of Christ is the basis of all blessing. The purpose of God determines human destiny. It does not depend on our deserts. The plan or process of God during the eons or ages must be distinguished from His purpose, which will not be fully accomplished until the eons are past. Herein lies the difference between the teaching of the Scriptures and the accepted creeds of Christendom. Sin and suffering, condemnation and death, endure for the eons, not "forever."

This realization makes it possible for us to believe *all* the Word of God. Those who cling to the creeds and "eternal" torment must deny certain passages in Paul's epistles which clearly and unequivocally teach the salvation of all mankind (1 Tim.2:4; 4:9,10) and the reconciliation of the universe (Col.1:20). They reject these portions of God's holy Word because they cannot be true if torment is eternal. If, however, judgment is not eternal, then we have the happy and exultant privilege of believing all the solemn threats of death and condemnation without the least reservation, and still accept God's grand goal to which all His labors lead.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, SECOND QUARTER 2013
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED FOUR

EDITORIAL

THIS issue of *Unsearchable Riches* is centered upon our service in the Lord as those who belong to Him and are His *slaves:* "You are not your own . . . you are bought with a price" (1 Cor.6:19,20).

In this issue's first article, "As a Human," Dean Hough draws our attention to Paul's words in Romans 6:19 where the apostle "turns to his readers and speaks personally of his concern in writing this section of his letter: '*As a human* am I saying this, *because of the infirmity of your flesh:* For even as you present your members as *slaves* to Uncleanness and to Lawlessness for lawlessness, thus now present your members as *slaves* to Righteousness for holiness.'"

"What we need is grace. Indeed we do not know grace unless we recognize our need of grace. And that is made evident by the infirmity of our flesh" (p.53).

"How can slavery be a matter of grace? It has such a bad reputation! But truly it depends on the master. Just as we have lost the vital connection of the word *obey* with the act of *hearing,* so also we seem unable to appreciate the value of Paul's usage here of *slavery* as a figure of our position in our present living under grace . . . .

"The enslavement of Romans 6:18 is . . . altogether a positive matter. It is a position, not only of humble dependence, but of assurance and security as well.

"We are enslaved to the evangel of God which manifests His righteousness in justifying the irreverent through the righteous deed of Jesus Christ Who was made sin for our sakes. We are not dependent on making ourselves righteous by observing the law's demands. We are dependent on God's righteousness in justifying the irreverent through the faith of Jesus Christ" (p.55).

A. E. Knoch's complementary articles "The Service of Timothy" (pp.61-67) and "Epaphroditus' Sufferings" (pp.68-74) are also included herein.

"Between Paul and Timothy there was the loving and living relationship of father and child, and they both together attended to the affairs of Christ Jesus as though they were His loyal slaves" (p.67).

"The case of Epaphroditus is of more than passing moment because it confirms and crowns the great truth that, in this administration, God's power is perfected in infirmity" (p.71).

This issue concludes with Brother Knoch's extended writing, "The Imitation of Paul" (pp.75-96).

"Paul's service now comes before us, preceded by a three-fold warning which is the least heeded yet most needed portion of God's Word for His slaves in this era. The third chapter of Philippians brings before us Paul's conduct in connection with the present administration, for our emulation, and points out the pitfalls which are spread for our feet, or, rather, it warns us against those who have fallen into them . . ." (p.75).

May we be thanking God, our Father, according as our faith is flourishing and the love of each one for one another is increasing (*cf* 2 Thess.1:3). J.R.C.

As we do here, we often borrow from the rich heritage of the writings of A. E. Knoch, and indeed we agree wholeheartedly in much that he shared through his many years as editor of this magazine. Recently we have been reprinting articles from his pen which boldly distinguish Paul's message of grace in contrast to that of the law as given to Israel. We feel this is a most critical and timely matter for our faith in these days. It is for this reason that we reprinted the article entitled, "Israel Under the Law," in our fourth issue of 2012. Yet in doing so we made no mention that Brother Knoch changed his views regarding the place of the book of Hebrews (but certainly not regarding Paul's evangel) in a later series of articles, appearing in volume 49 of *Unsearchable Riches.* In fairness to his memory, we do so now.

AS A HUMAN

In Romans 6:19, Paul turns to his readers and speaks personally of his concern in writing this section of his letter:

As a human am I saying this,
because of the infirmity of your flesh.

He has been telling us of things we cannot perceive by means of our senses, concerning what has been done for us and what shall be in the future. But all along he has the present in view as introduced in verse 2 by the verb, *living:* "We, who died to sin, how shall we *still be living* in it?"

Our teacher and fellow human speaks in recognition of what we all are right now: infirm in flesh. And he wants us to know that the very things he has been saying about the past and the future are power to us in the present in view of the infirmity of our flesh. The believing and retaining of these revelations of a physically unseen and unfelt past and physically unexperienced future provide real strength for joy and peace and endurance and a worthy walk to us in the very perceptible present.

The first thing we are to know (that is, not be ignorant of) with regard to our living is that we died! We died to sin (Rom.6:2), for we are baptized into Christ's death (Rom.6:3). The baptism in view here is not a ceremony or physical "sacrament" performed by human beings and experienced in the flesh, but a baptism in spirit as an operation of God (*cp* 1 Cor.12:12,13,18; Col.2:12), Who has identified us with Christ in His death and entombment (Rom.6:3-7). This was not an event experienced in the flesh, but we believe it occurred; we have accepted it as so. It is a matter of spiritual grace. Our old human-

ity was crucified together with Christ, and sin is not reckoned to us (*cf* Rom.4:8,16-25).

With regard to our present living, our death together with Christ is fundamental. This has occurred, and nothing can change it, for it is a work of God in the death of His Son.

The next revelation which also is basic for our present living is that we shall be living together with Christ, Who is no longer dying, but is living to God (Rom.6:8-11). This also is certain and sure. Nothing can separate us from this operation of God's love. We died to sin and shall be living together with Christ. That is where God has stationed us. That is our position before Him. Consequently, Paul writes, "Thus you also be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:11).

So it is that Paul evangelizes the evangel of God's righteousness, love and grace as the channel of God's spiritual power everyday in the lives of believers. We need this spiritual power very much, for we are infirm in our flesh.

HUMANS ARE INFIRM IN THE FLESH

As a human, Paul himself is aware that good is not making its home in his own flesh (Rom.7:18). David also had written (Psa.6:2):

Be gracious to me, O Yahweh, for I am feeble;
Heal me, O Yahweh, for my bones are flustered.

As human beings we *all* are in the same fix (Rom.1:18-3:20,23). For it was through one man that sin entered into the world, and death entered through sin, and thus death passes through into all humanity, on which all sin (Rom. 5:12). We are all sinners because of death operating in us. We are feeble in our flesh and deserving of death as the consummation of our dying condition (Rom.1:32; 3:

23; 6:21). Not one of us can be justified in God's sight by works of law, simply because we are unable to fulfill its righteous requirements (Rom.3:20).

What we need is grace. Indeed we do not know grace unless we recognize our need of grace. And that is made evident by the infirmity of our flesh.

It has thus come about, in God's grace, that we have heard and accepted the evangel of His grace, which says: "For Christ, while we are still *infirm,* still *in accord with the era,* for the sake of the *irreverent* died. For hardly for the sake of a just man will anyone be dying: for, for the sake of a good man, perhaps someone may even be daring to die, yet God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still *sinners,* **Christ died for our sakes.** Much rather, then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from indignation, through Him" (Rom.5:6-9).

This is how God justifies the sinner who is infirm in flesh. God achieves this by means of the death of Christ in Whom we all are created (*cf* Col.1:16-20). It is not of ourselves (Eph.2:8,9; *cp* Rom.8:28-30). It is through the faith of Jesus Christ, Who died, and this was *for all* (Rom.3:22), so that, in the full and ultimate meaning of the cross, all died (2 Cor.5:14), and all will be vivified in Christ (1 Cor. 15:22). Now in Romans six Paul seeks to show what this evangel of God's grace means to us who already are believing it, during our lives as death operates in us and Sin exerts its corrupting influence.

BECAUSE OF INFIRMITY

In this, speaking as a human who is infirm in flesh to humans who are infirm in flesh, Paul recognizes our infirmity. In view of this weakness, he is not at all appealing to us to overcome our flesh by submitting our flesh to the demands of the law. The precepts of law are right-

eous and good, but our flesh is weak. Consequently, God has placed us under the teaching of grace! This teaching declares that what is impossible to the law because of the infirmity of the flesh, God does. He does this by sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh so that sin in the flesh would be condemned (*cf* Rom.8:3). Now, as a human who knows the infirmity of his flesh, Paul leads us to focus on this evangel of God's doing, in order that God's spiritual power may work in us in our present living.

The law, given through Moses, spoke to Israel as though they could be superhumans who could be so strong in the flesh as to do what they were instructed to do. They themselves said, "All that Yahweh speaks we shall do" (Exodus 19:8). They boasted in the law, but through the transgression of the law they dishonored God (Rom.2:23). (Yet they shall be shown mercy, and God will write the law on their heart; *cf* Rom.11:26-31; Jer.31:33; Ezek.36:26,27.)

But in saving us in His grace alone, God is wholly honored and glorified (as He shall be by all when He is All in all), for the consummations of the eons have attained to us (1 Cor.10:11). This is not of ourselves, and we enjoy it now in spirit. Boasting is debarred (Rom.3:27; Eph.2:8-10).

GIVEN OVER TO GRACE

Consequently, it is the word of God's evangel of undiluted grace which operates in us, as Paul wrote to the believers in Thessalonica (1 Thess.2:13):

And therefore we also are thanking God unintermittingly that, in accepting the word heard from us, from God you receive, not the word of men, but, according as it truly is, the word of God, which is operating also in you who are believing.

The teaching to which we are given over (Rom.6:17) is the teaching of grace. Paul calls it a *type* in that it impresses

its pattern on us who are believing it and attentively listening to it from the heart. It declares that our position before God is one of gracious deliverance from what we are in flesh. Yet it is not a position the excludes slavery, for we are enslaved to God's Word of Grace, which was called "Obedience" in verse 16 and is now called "Righteousness" in verse 18:

Now, being freed from Sin,
you are enslaved to Righteousness.

ENSLAVED

How can slavery be a matter of grace? It has such a bad reputation! But truly it depends on the master. Just as we have lost the vital connection of the word *obey* with the act of *hearing,* so also we seem unable to appreciate the value of Paul's usage here of *slavery* as a figure of our position in our present living under grace. Not every feature of a term is brought over in its figurative usage. Here the sense of humble attentiveness and dedication to the master is in view. This is in harmony with the verbs *obey* in its primary sense of submissive listening and *present* in the sense of mentally *stationing* ourselves under (or *standing beside*) the word of God's grace.

The enslavement of Romans 6:18 is, therefore, altogether a positive matter. It is a position, not only of humble dependence, but of assurance and security as well.

We are enslaved to the evangel of God which manifests His righteousness in justifying the irreverent through the righteous deed of Jesus Christ Who was made sin for our sakes. We are not dependent on making ourselves righteous by observing the law's demands. We are dependent on God's righteousness in justifying the irreverent through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.5:26). We are dependent on what God has done through the faith obedience of His

Son. By this means (and this means only) we are justified (righteous-fied) gratuitously in God's grace. Here is our security. It is not of ourselves. It is God's oblation and His achievement (*cf* Eph.2:8-10).

We are given over to this message, and it provides us with spiritual strength which we greatly need—strength for all endurance and patience with joy.

At Sinai, Moses gave God's word of law over to Israel, in view of their sinfulness. It declared: "Yahweh your Elohim shall you fear, and Him only shall you *serve*, and to Him shall you *cling* . . . ." (Deut.6:13). In Hebrew, the word for "serve" is the same as the word for "slave." Israel was to enslave (active voice) themselves to Yahweh, serving Him only. This single-minded slavery is elucidated by the verb *cling,* a verb expressing dependence and attachment. It was to be of the highest level, fully devoted and hallowed to Yahweh's word of law.

Yet this was to be a slavery of self-propelled doing, backed up by the fear of divine indignation. Nevertheless, they were no different from anyone else with regard to flesh and its infirmity (as testified by David). Saul of Tarsus learned that "the law is spiritual, yet I am fleshly . . . . Consequently, I am finding the law that, at my willing to be doing the ideal, the evil is lying beside me. For I am gratified with the law of God as to the human within, yet I am observing a different law in my members, waring with the law of my mind" (Rom.7:14,21-23).

What shall rescue us out of this body of death?

Grace! We are not under law, but under grace!

God has enslaved us to the evangel of Christ's submission to the will of His God and Father bringing about the manifestation of God's righteousness. This is indeed a slavery of blessing, in which we cling with ardent attachment to God's word of love, righteousness and peace. It is a slavery which exults in its master. Indeed it is a slavery,

not of one who fears indignation, but of one who has "the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying, 'Abba, Father!' The spirit itself is testifying together with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom.8:15,16). To be enslaved to God's message of righteousness achieved fosters the spirit of sonship in us.

PRESENTING OUR MEMBERS

Hence, continuing in Romans 6:19, Paul speaks of our enslavement under grace as it affects our bodily members such as our eyes and ears, our mouths and lips and throats, and our hands and feet. Because of the operation of death within, which stings us with sin (*cf* 1 Cor.15:16) our members easily come under enslavement to Uncleanness and Lawlessness. They are infirm. Yet by positioning our members at the side of the powerful evangel of God's *righteousness* manifested through the faith of Jesus Christ, for justification, our members are strengthened in a pathway of holiness:

A. *For even as you* **present** *your members*
as **slaves** *to Uncleanness and to Lawlessness*
into lawlessness,
B. *thus now* **present** *your members*
as **slaves** *to Righteousness*
into holiness.

The verb *present* occurs five times within seven verses (twice in verse 13, once in verse 16 and twice here in verse 19). It is a compound term in Greek, BESIDE-STAND, with the sense of being positioned or stationed by the side of something or someone. We see this in Matthew 26:53 where Jesus testified to Peter who did not understand the need of the cross: "Or are you supposing that I am not able to entreat My Father, and at present He will *station by My side* more than twelve legions of messengers?" As

previously noted, it is likely that Paul had the stationing of the people of Israel before Yahweh at the foot of Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:17; *cp* Exodus 34:2) in mind for purposes of comparison and contrast. They *stood below* (Deut.4:10) the mountain, positioned by the side of the fear-inspiring sounds and sights accompanying Yahweh's giving of the law. They were to keep themselves and their bodies under the instructions of the law in all their activities. They were to cling to Yahweh as He spoke to them in the law, keeping it always at their side as they lived their lives:

These words which I am instructing you today will come to be in your **heart**. *You will repeat them to your sons, and you will speak of them when you sit in your house, when you walk on the road, when you lie down and when you arise. You will tie them for a sign on your* **hand**, *and they will come to be for the browbands between your* **eyes**; *you will write them on the jambs of your house and on your gates.* (Deut.6:6-9)

The ease with which our bodily members come under the direction of the lusts of our flesh (*cf* verses 12 and 13), is something we are all familiar with. What comes out of human mouths is compared with the smell of an open sepulcher and the stinging poison of asps, defrauding and cursing with bitterness (Rom.3:13,14). This is uncleanness. The shedding of blood and the bruises and wretchedness which are scattered about in human pathways (Rom.3:15,16) testify to the human position of slavery to lawlessness.

We may say that this indictment of uncleanness and lawlessness in human behavior is a relative matter, not applying on the same level to everyone. But Jesus Himself included anger in the category of murder, and lust of the heart in the category of adultery (Matt.5:21-28). Our bodily members are given to uncleanness and lawlessness because of the infirmity of mortality which is in our flesh.

EVEN AS—THUS NOW

Paul's language reminds us of that in Exodus and Deuteronomy when God placed Israel under the law. The events at Sinai provide many helpful parallels for comparison and contrast for us who are placed under grace. But even more important are the ways in which Paul continues to gather together the themes he has already introduced in Romans in support of his current thoughts. Hence he takes the word *obedience* from Romans 5:19 and the word *righteousness* from the great, extended theme of divine righteousness and justification expounded from Romans 3:21 to the end of chapter five.

So also in Romans 6:19, Paul uses the formula, *even as . . . thus now* which was so prominent in chapter five, and most striking there in verse 18 and 19:

A. *Consequently, then, as it was through one offense*
for all mankind
for condemnation,
B. *thus also it is through one righteous deed,*
for all mankind
for life's justifying.

A. *For even as, through the disobedience of the one man*
the many were constituted sinners,
B. *thus also, through the obedience of the One,*
the many shall be constituted righteous.

In all three passages the A sections deal with our human infirmity in connection with Adam, and the B sections with righteousness in connection with Christ. What is true with respect to our future deliverance into righteousness has vital significance to us at present while we are infirm in flesh. What came through Adam is more than matched by what comes through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

The pattern of the evangel is also the pattern of our living. What Adam did, bringing in death, sin, offense, disobe-

dience, uncleanness, lawlessness—this is superexceedingly dealt with by what Christ did, bringing in life, righteousness, holiness. This is the message which directs our members as we station them under its influence. Mortality and sin, corruption and offense, uncleanness and lawlessness shall be put to an end by the death of Jesus Christ, and life's justifying when all are constituted righteous will take its place.

Over and over again, we take account of this word of God concerning His Son. We listen to it with fervent attention, stationing ourselves and our members at its side. This word, protective and comforting, encouraging and strengthening, is what we need as the closest of companions day by day. By this means we are being hallowed, our members becoming devoted more and more to God and His evangel even now, in accord with the earnest of the spirit.

Thus Paul guides us as one who understands our infirmity, yet has learned himself where real strength for worthy walk in our present lives is found. It is found in the very evangel we are believing for salvation secured at the cross and to be enjoyed in fullness in the future.

FOR HOLINESS

God has hallowed us in Christ Jesus (1 Cor.1:3). He has devoted us to Himself, so that we shall be living to Him as Christ is now living. This evangel of what God has done in Christ Jesus and shall bring into full realization is power for present holiness as well. Holiness is not our obligation to be fulfilled by self-effort. It is a fruit of grace (*cf* Rom. 6:22) which God works in us as we hold fast in faith to the evangel of God's righteousness and love, channeled to us through the death and resurrection of Christ. Here, like "righteousness" in Romans 6:16, holiness is the earnest of the enjoyment of what we shall be.

D.H.H.

THE SERVICE OF TIMOTHY
(Philippians 2:19-24)

As Paul is bound, and cannot visit the Philippians himself, he sends Epaphroditus and contemplates sending Timothy. In these two characters we have two "living expressions" of the evangel for this economy. They set forth the highest ideal in service and suffering. In Timothy we see the model slave. His very name is eloquent, for it means Honor-God. He is one of the few of whom it could be said that he did not seek his own, but others' good. In many ways he seems to be a typical character for the present, combining, in his own person, both Circumcision and Uncircumcision, and the weakness of the flesh with the power of the spirit.

The facts of Timothy's life, as recorded in the Scriptures for our instruction, are doubtless intended to give us a living picture of the inception of this administration. After Paul's separation from Barnabas, the Levite, he came to Lystra, the place where he had been stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19). It is more than possible that it was at this time that Paul received the transcendent revelations which he later makes known in his perfection epistles (2 Cor.12:2). So that Timothy, in *spirit,* commences with this administration, yet in flesh is connected with the previous kingdom heralding. He commences at Lystra and goes all the way to Rome, not only in flesh, but in spirit.

With striking attention to detail, we are told that he was the son of a *believing Jewish woman* (Acts 16:1). This Jewess belonged to the dispersion, evidently, as she is found outside the land, and wedded to a Greek. As such she may well represent that believing remnant of Israel

among the nations, to whom Paul was especially sent. But he also turned to the Greeks, and the company of people who received his message was a mixture of believing Israelites and Greeks. Such a combination, also, was Timothy. God will use this body of people in His highest service. So He used Timothy.

From the very beginning, Timothy earned the approbation of the brethren in Lystra and Iconium, where he lived (Acts 16:2). Probably he believed through Paul's ministry when he was there before, for, while he was, physically, the son of a Jewess and a Greek, spiritually he was Paul's child in faith (1 Tim.1:2,18; 2 Tim.1:2). This may illustrate an important point in service in the present administration which needs to be pressed. While the body of Christ is composed of those who are a mixture, physically, being from both Circumcision and Uncircumcision, this should not extend to their spiritual parentage. They should all be children of Paul. Those who receive life and are nurtured by means of his ministry are equipped for service today. Those who are mixed in their spiritual descent, being children of Peter as well as of Paul, are not fit to serve acceptably in this administration of God's grace.

It would seem that Timothy was with Paul much of the time thereafter. At Berea he remained behind when the Jews of Thessalonica came there, and Paul was sent away by the brethren but he soon received word to rejoin Paul at Athens (Acts 17:15). When he found Paul in Corinth, Paul was pressed to certify to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. When they opposed, Timothy probably listened to the memorable words, "Your blood be on your head! Clear am I! From now on I shall go to the nations" (Acts 18:6). Thus Timothy was present at the commencement of the Corinthian ecclesia, and actually experienced the great crisis there when Paul left his brethren according to the flesh and turned to the Uncircumcision.

The next time that we hear of Timothy he is sent with Erastus to Macedonia, and doubtless went to Philippi (Acts 19:22). Paul himself remained in the province of Asia. It is evident from this that he no longer was a mere attendant of the apostle, but was himself an apostle, commissioned by his spiritual father to represent him in the work. As Paul himself wrote to Timothy, he had fully followed his teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings (2 Tim.3:10). This is precisely what each slave of our Lord should do today if he wishes to render acceptable service, and to have a part in the ministry of this administration. Even the order in which these essentials are given is significant, for only those who *fully* follow Paul's teaching are really eligible for service and suffering.

Paul follows with the injunction, "Now *you* be remaining in what you learned and verified, being aware from whom you learned it . . ." (2 Tim.3:14). The tendency to forsake Paul's teaching is very strong. In his own days all in the province of Asia turned from him (2 Tim.1:15). Since then Christendom as a whole has left his teaching or so adulterated it with Circumcision doctrine that it is practically nullified. Therefore it should be our very special endeavor to guard against this propensity in ourselves. God graciously granted some light at the Reformation and through the so-called Brethren, but the reaction is very strong, and the light is dimmed. Even so with us. Already some are failing to *remain* in the truth, which few, indeed, have ever grasped in anything like its fullness.

Later Timothy was sent to Corinth also. In Paul's words concerning him we may receive further insight into his service. Paul writes to them, "I am entreating you, then, become imitators of me. *Therefore* I send to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will be reminding you of my ways which are in Christ Jesus . . ."

(1 Cor.4:16,17). Paul's "ways which are in *Christ Jesus*" is a key phrase for the present. Nowadays this is ignored. Paul is pushed aside and men are reminded of the ways of the *Lord Jesus* as He ministered to the Circumcision, as recorded in the four gospels. But Timothy was taught better. Being vitally connected with both sides, he knew that this is no model for the Uncircumcision. Paul's teaching calls for ways which accord with Christ Jesus in *glory,* not as a homeless Wanderer on earth.

Again the apostle writes: "If Timothy should be coming, look to it that he should be with you fearlessly, for he is working at the work of the Lord, as I also. No one, then, should be scorning him" (1 Cor.16:10,11). At another time Paul wrote to Timothy himself: "Let no one be despising your youth . . . " (1 Tim.4:12). And again; "God gives us, not a spirit of timidity, but of power and of love and of sanity" (2 Tim.1:7). Among the carnal Corinthians Timothy makes a pleasing yet pathetic contrast. Too young to command the respect due to an elder, he seems to have had a tendency to timidity and fear. How different from the popular conception of a great church dignitary of today! Youth is aggressive and self-reliant and needs little encouragement to assert itself. Yet the model here set before us is one whom the world (and most of the church) would despise, and who needed to be encouraged not to allow himself to be slighted.

INFIRM IN THE FLESH

Perhaps Timothy's tendency to timidity was due in measure to his physical condition. He had a weak stomach and was frequently infirm (1 Tim.5:23). Many of us may be able to sympathize with him in this, and can realize how it unfits one for that self-assurance which is deemed essential in those who must meet the public. But we may rest assured that it was given him by God, not to hinder

but to help, for the Lord's work never needs the arm of flesh, and in this administration of the spirit, great physical endowments may be a hindrance to genuine and acceptable service. Not that we should seek to be ill. We do all in our power to counteract our infirmities, yet thank God for those which remain, for they are doubtless needed in order to keep us lowly (*cf* 2 Cor.12:7).

Among the last words on record which Paul writes to Timothy we see how true Timothy remained to his father in faith, and how Paul longed for one on whose fidelity he could count. Perhaps we may take the action as symbolic for this present era, for the second epistle to Timothy deals with the last days. He writes, "Endeavor to come to me quickly, for Demas, loving the current eon, forsook me and went to Thessalonica . . ." (2 Tim.4:9,10). If there ever is to be a return to Paul, it must be done speedily. Demas is probably derived from the root *dem,* PUBLIC. The public, the mass, even of the church, have abandoned Paul. Not a few are antagonistic to him, even among those who, like the Thessalonians, were once lovers of our Lord's advent. Let us, then, in spirit, hasten back to Paul, and to the revelation which he gives from his prison in Rome.

Such is the career which prepared Timothy to be a model for service in this era. The quality of his preeminence in contrast to others is clearly seen in the short paragraph which Paul devotes to him in this epistle. He wishes to know how the Philippians are, so that he also may be of good cheer. He wishes to send someone, and his choice falls on Timothy, "for I have no one equally sensitive, who will be so genuinely solicitous of your concerns, for all are seeking that which is their own, not that which is Christ Jesus' " (Phil.2:20,21). Here he probes deep, into the very heart of the matter. Are we seeking our own, or that which concerns Christ Jesus? Do we serve selfish interests, or those of our Lord?

One of the delicate touches in this epistle lies in the word "equally sensitive." Though all is spirit now, in service the spirit should control and ennoble our sensations, and make us most sensitive to the welfare of those whom we seek to serve.

Two things are needed, a fine perception of the feelings of others and a genuine solicitude as regards their affairs. It would be useless to send some unimpressionable or callous representative whose heart strings could not vibrate in tune with theirs. And still less would be done if he were indifferent to their concerns. In service we should approximate the vital sympathy which each member of the human body shows for the others, for this is the figure used of our relationship in Christ.

"All are seeking that which is their own." What a word to find in this epistle, when, in the flush of their first love, the saints were nearer the ideal than at any time since! If all sought their own *then,* what shall we say *now*? Some, indeed, there have been, through the years, of whom we would say that they did not consider their interests, but gave up all for Christ. But, if we should ask them, doubtless they would also confess their failure in this regard. It seems to be the universal sin in service which few of us are able to overcome. Yet it should be our aim, despite our failures, to forget our own concerns in preoccupation with the things of Christ.

SLAVERY WITH PAUL

As we have seen in our review of Timothy's career, he had been thoroughly tested as a companion and servant of Paul. This is most aptly summed up in the words, "as a child with a father he slaves with me for the evangel" (2:22). Two pictures are presented here, child and father, slave and lord. Between Paul and Timothy there was the loving and living relationship of father and child, and they

both together attended to the affairs of Christ Jesus as though they were His loyal slaves.

I have often been criticized for using the word "slave" to describe the character of our service. But I delight in it. There is no question of its correctness. This alone should settle the point, for interpretation and feelings must be barred in translation. But here, for instance, it is in fullest harmony with the context, for a slave, who has no privileges or property of his own, makes a good figure for those who should not seek their own. I imagine that the objection may arise because we do not wish to serve without doing our own will and attending to our own welfare. But I glory in the "title" slave, and only wish my service were in accord with this lowly distinction.

Yet Paul was not willing to part with Timothy until his own matters (which were also his Lord's) had been settled. It must have been a vast comfort to him to have Timothy at hand in his imprisonment. At his first defense no one went with him, but all abandoned him (2 Tim.4:16). Perhaps this influenced him in calling for Timothy and keeping him until his fate had been finally decided. And, indeed, he would wish to send the news to his friends at Philippi as quickly as possible. What better commendation for the model slave than the fact that Paul would not part with him even though he would like to have sent him!

Such is the example set before us today: closest association with Paul in his teaching and ministry, and loyal devotion to him in his imprisonment. Is not this a picture of the path we should pursue in spirit? May the Lord send us slaves like Timothy, having His honor at heart, seeking that which is Christ Jesus', a genuine child in faith of Paul, following his teaching and practice, sensitive and solicitous of the welfare of the saints!

A. E. Knoch

EPAPHRODITUS' SUFFERINGS
(Philippians 2:25-30)

SUFFERING is the supreme service. It comes nearest to the sacrifice which our Saviour made for us. The service of the strong is acceptable to God, yet the work of the weak is far more welcome. It is a deeper display of sacrificial love and demands much more affection to suffer than to serve. It is when both are combined that we see the highest response to God's grace. And both are found in the four examples set before us. Christ was the supreme Sufferer. Paul had his splinter in the flesh and his persecutions. Timothy had his frequent infirmities and the evils from without. Epaphroditus, the apostle of the Philippians, was especially signalized by his suffering, which took him very near to death (2:25-30).

Suffering for God is the highest privilege which can be accorded His creatures. The Philippians themselves knew this by experience, for they were graciously granted not only to believe on Christ, but to suffer for His sake (1:29). In them the two extremes meet, for in no other part of God's Word is there so much emphasis on both suffering and rejoicing. And this is true of Epaphroditus also, for twice in this brief paragraph concerning his sufferings we read of the rejoicing of the Philippians in connection with it (2:28,29).

Epaphroditus signifies *charming*, and such is the account of his career in this epistle. We read of no great deeds that he had done, no "souls" that he had won, but only that he was commissioned to carry the gift of the Philippians to Paul.

He transformed this somewhat prosaic task into a memorable achievement by risking his soul in its accomplishment. So is it with earth's common occupations. Weakness and suffering may make them deeds of honor and charm, worthy of highest recognition, bringing joy and delight to the heart of God and man.

Epaphroditus is given five titles which are characteristic of his service. These are: brother, worker, soldier, apostle, and minister. The number is especially appropriate, as five is usually associated with weakness, the outstanding feature of service. On one side these remind us of the family circle, of the workshop, and of the army. Epaphroditus belonged to the same spiritual family as Paul. This, of course, is basic. Service *must* be based on spiritual, not on physical ties in this administration. Beyond this we *must* be *fellow* workers of *Paul* if our service is to be acceptable to God.

FELLOW SOLDIER

There seem to be four who take the title soldier in Paul's epistles, Paul himself, by implication, Epaphroditus, Archippus (Philemon 2), and Timothy. Paul's charge to Timothy is well worth pondering in this connection, for we may easily receive a false impression from the figure of a soldier. We associate it with violence and glamour. It really conveys the thought of devotion and suffering. Like all figures, only a section of the soldier's life is used in the likeness, not the whole. So that Paul wrote: "*Suffer evil* with me as an ideal soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.2:3).

Many who went through the war learned that real soldiering did not consist in parading about in fine uniforms, but in enduring all sorts of discomfort and hardship in the midst of rain and mud and weariness and wounds and death. It is this side of the soldier's life which portrays our course in His service. It is not simply endeavoring to accomplish His

work in pleasant surroundings, but in the midst of opposition and evils of all sorts, which test our endurance and try our physical frames to the utmost. Not that we seek suffering, or castigate ourselves. No soldier does that. He does the opposite. In every way he seeks to build up and conserve his forces for the fight. We do not invite evil, we face it. Then we thank God and suffer it, for His sake.

THE APOSTLE EPAPHRODITUS

We are far too prone to stereotype the usage of words and make a proper name out of a common noun. This is shown by the rendering of the Authorized Version in this place. Acting under the tradition that only the twelve could be named *apostles*, they changed the rendering here to messenger. How could the Philippians appoint an apostle? The same superstition insists that Paul took the place of Matthias. But apostle simply means *commissioner.* In some ways it would be far better if this term were used. That is why I have it in the sublinear. Are there apostles in the church today? Of course there are commissions and commissioners today. That is not the point. If we are asked whether *God* commissions men today the answer must be in the negative. The apostles are in the foundation.

Epaphroditus was the apostle *of* the Philippians. But that was a totally different matter from being God's apostle *to* the Philippians. He had no such authority over the ecclesia or its doctrine or practice such as Paul or Timothy might exercise. He was simply given the power to represent them in carrying their gift to Paul in Rome. He was not merely a "messenger." He may have conveyed a message as well, but his main business was to transport their present to the apostle. Being commissioned ("apostled") to do this he became their commissioner or apostle for the time. Such "apostles" may well find a place today. It did not occur to me at the time, but I also have done

this duty, and was an "apostle" for a brief period, empowered to convey a sum of money to evangelists at some distance from the city.

EPAPHRODITUS THE MINISTER

Yet I was also a "minister," for it ministered to the needs of the workers. How far this word has lost its proper usage is seen when we say that Epaphroditus was Paul's "minister." We may be sure that Paul did not attend his church, or listen to his sermons, or "sit under his ministry." To be sure, ministration is not simply serving or dispensing. It is a public office. The priests ministered in the temple (Luke 1:23; Heb.10:11). The political authorities are God's ministers (Rom.13:6). In this sense was Epaphroditus the minister of the Philippian ecclesia, inasmuch as he was their public functionary and attended to their ministration for them. As the priests brought the people's offerings to God, so he carried the Philippians' gift to Paul.

The charm of Epaphroditus is revealed in the exquisite sensitiveness of his character. He was depressed, not because he is infirm (though that may have been the case also), but because the Philippians had heard of his infirmity. Even though drawing near to death he is concerned about them, and the sorrow he causes them, rather than his own disability. Paul shares in this charming considerateness, and hastens his return to them, so that he, in turn, may not be burdened by their sorrow. Indeed, the whole interchange of sympathetic feeling is charming to a degree seldom seen among mortals. It is the delectable fruit of God's love, which should always grace the service of His saints.

INFIRMITY AND DEATH

The case of Epaphroditus is of more than passing moment because it confirms and crowns the great truth that, in this

administration, God's power is perfected in infirmity. Paul himself, after he had healed others, was given a splinter in the flesh (2 Cor.12:7). Today God's grace is our sufficiency. Paul gloried in his infirmities, that the power of Christ should tabernacle on him. This was by no means the teaching of the twelve, or even of Paul himself when he was connected with the heralding of the kingdom. That day of physical marvels was announced by displays of *power.* The *powers* (not the infirmities) of the coming eon were produced as tokens of its nearness. Even the nations were given gifts of healing, in view of the coming glory. But, as the kingdom heralding ceased, the powers that accompanied it withdrew.

There are circles of believers today who would not have hesitated to charge Epaphroditus with lack of faith, if not with actual sin, for his failure to appropriate the healing in the atonement. For them it is a disgrace to be ill, and, even if it is the consequence of their self-sacrifice in the Lord's work, it is a dishonor and a shame. How different was Paul's estimate! Quite to the contrary, he writes to them and to us: "*have such in honor,* seeing that because of the work of the Lord he draws near unto death, risking his soul that he should fill up your want of ministration toward me" (2:29,30). Infirmity of the flesh is as much in keeping with the truth today, as was the health and healing which accompanied the heralding of our Lord or of the twelve, or of Paul's own earlier ministries, which were still connected with the kingdom.

Paul was probably the greatest healer among the apostles. He more than duplicated every sign recorded of Peter in the book of Acts. The lame man at the Beautiful gate of the temple was not the beneficiary of so wonderful a miracle as was the lame man at Lystra (Acts 3:2; 14:8). Of whom else do we read such words as these: "powerful deeds, not the casual kind, God did through the hands of

Paul, so that the handkerchiefs or aprons from his cuticle are carried away to the infirm also, to clear the diseases from them. Besides, wicked spirits go out" (Acts 19:11,12)? In this matter Paul seems to have easily eclipsed all others.

FROM GLORY TO GLORY

Yet in this, as in all else connected with Saul, who is called Paul, there is a gradual but mighty change, which he himself describes as a going from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18). Superficially, one might expect that this would bring still more physical strength and healing, but the advance is confined to the spiritual sphere, while the physical wonders fade away with the failing kingdom hopes.

Personally, in immediate connection with the highest revelation of which Paul could boast (2 Cor.12:1-7), he is given a painful and irritating affliction in the flesh, in order to keep him down. He who healed others cannot heal himself. And when he prayed for its removal, his persistence did not avail. So far as we know it was never withdrawn from him, so that we must picture the great apostle himself as a pathetic figure physically, in the latter part of his career, as at once the revelator and exponent of the great truth for the present, that *God's power is perfected in human infirmity.* It was in his latest days, in prison and unable to cure himself or his friends, that Paul was most powerful.

PAUL AND HIS COMPANIONS

We see this change coming over the scene even more clearly in Paul's connection with his companions. Surely the great healer would wish to cure his own intimate friends and associates in the Lord's work. But, in proportion as the spiritual grace increased, the physical receded. His own child in the faith, whose service he so highly commends in this epistle, is *frequently* infirm (1 Tim.5:23). That Paul

is concerned about it is evident from the fact that he recommends, not a remedy, but a palliative. Weak Timothy became his most powerful aid. "Trophimus, being infirm, I left at Miletus" (2 Tim.4:20). In his earlier days, before the present grace was revealed, he would have healed him. Now infirmity is not to be removed but used. Through it God's power is to be revealed. Some day we shall see that Trophimus' infirmity effected more for God than the most wonderful miracle of healing would have done.

And so today. God's power is not apparent in mighty muscles or in buoyant health, neither of which is to be despised. He displays His glory in broken vessels of clay, so that the excellence of it is not of man but of God. And it is our duty and privilege to bestow especial honor on those who risk their souls in carrying out His work. God could easily keep them in health or cure their weaknesses, but that does not accord with the transcendent grace which is granted to us in this secret administration. Soon after it was revealed to Paul, long before it was made public in his imprisonment epistles, the physical blessings of the kingdom not only retired but, in Paul's case at least, were replaced by positive physical impotence and pain.

Epaphroditus risked his soul to fulfill his commission. It is evident from this that he did not shrink back in the face of danger. He knew before that it might cost him his health, if not his life. He had no such illusion as that the wonderworking apostle would heal him. He committed himself wholly into the hands of God, Who had mercy on him and spared his life. Now he has an honor compared to which all earthly glories fade away. What distinction can compare with his place among the slaves of God? For he it is who was chosen to be our model, to teach us how to serve God acceptably in suffering.

A. E. Knoch

THE IMITATION OF PAUL
(Philippians 3:1-4:1)

PAUL'S service now comes before us, preceded by a threefold warning which is the least heeded yet most needed portion of God's Word for His slaves in this era. The third chapter of Philippians brings before us Paul's conduct in connection with the present administration, for our emulation, and points out the pitfalls which are spread for our feet, or, rather, it warns us against those who have fallen into them. And, indeed, almost the whole of Christendom, including its most illustrious leaders and its most noble saints, have failed in a measure in finding the way of true service. Even in Paul's own day many were enemies of the *cross,* though zealous workers and saved believers. Today the apostasy is so general that few think of objecting to it or warning God's slaves against it.

The keynote of true service is rung out once again: "Rejoice in the *Lord!*" Not in ourselves, in the flesh, or the terrestrial at this time, but in Him, in spirit, among the celestials. To be safe, we should keep this ever before us. Paul apologized for repeating this so often, but it is sorely needed, for it is seldom heeded. Indeed, few realize the precise force of the simple terms used. It is a very different matter to rejoice in *Christ* in regard to our salvation and glory, and to rejoice in the *Lord* in relation to our service for His sake. This chapter deals with service, not salvation. It is saved saints who are enemies of the *cross* (not of Christ), whose consummation is destruction (so far as their service is concerned). This is no chapter for unbeliev-

ers, but for saints in their character as *slaves,* who rejoice in their Master, or *Lord.*

THE TRIPLE WARNING

The threefold warning is given to us in highly figurative language, hence it will be well to identify the figures, and put them into literal language. The warning seems to be a reversal, in which the first item corresponds with the last, so we will set it forth in this way, to help us to connect the corresponding parts.

Beware of curs,
beware of evil workers,
beware of the maimcision,
for we are the circumcision who are
offering divine service to God in spirit,
and are glorying in Christ Jesus,
and have no confidence in flesh.

From this it seems that "curs" are those of the nations who have confidence in the flesh, and the "maimcision" those who rest on their literal circumcision. The whole is in contrast to the previous eras when circumcision had its place and the nations were to be blessed through the physical seed of Abraham.

BEWARE OF CURS

The dogs of the East, when grown, were half-wild scavengers of the villages, without an owner, existing on the refuse or offal, and universally detested. Hence it became an epithet for those outside the pale of promise, in the same class, almost, with hogs. Our Lord said (Matt.7:6):

You may not be giving that which is holy to the curs, nor yet should you be casting your pearls in front of hogs lest at some time they be trampling them with their feet, and, turning, they should be tearing you.

Peter also speaks of both together in his parables (2 Peter 2:22). In order to convey this feeling of contempt we have not translated the word *kuōn* by *dog,* as is usually done, but by the more accurate *cur.*

Curs are outsiders (Rev.22:15). In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus we find a hint of this (Luke 16:21). But there is more than that in the picture Paul puts before us. They are outsiders who devour the offal of the Circumcision. The key to the correct interpretation lies in the following context. Paul recites a list of what he has as a physical descendant of Israel and then adds that he deems it *refuse* (3:8), that he may gain Christ. This refuse, this offal, which he has thrown away, is eagerly devoured by the curs, that is, those of the outside nations who seek to appropriate that which belongs to Israel in the flesh. They sometimes call themselves "spiritual Israel," and other euphonious terms, but here they are called "curs." They have confidence in the flesh. Beware of them!

EVIL WORKERS

Christendom has many "workers." It seems cruel and heartless to make most of them evil. Indeed, one is tempted to call all "Christian" work good, when the motive seems to be commendable. But one consideration alone shows that, in a very real sense the work of Christendom is evil. Until very recent times, the church had such confidence in itself that it proposed to bring about the conversion of the world without the coming of Christ. And, indeed, that is still the aim of the great majority of "Christian" workers. Yet all such efforts must be evil, despite their commendable object, for they propose to take the glory which belongs to Christ alone, and make it their own. All work which does not glory in Christ Jesus is evil. All which boasts in the flesh is evil. All which is disposed to the terrestrial is evil. Beware!

THE MAIMCISION

This is the epithet which reveals what the Circumcision really are in this era when the flesh has lost all standing before God. Circumcision was once a token of covenant relationship with the Deity. It entailed many precious privileges. It will have a great place in the future again, when the physical seed of Abraham will be restored to divine favor. But now circumcision has lost all virtue and has degenerated into a mere mutilation of the flesh. The right to the rite is a physical one. Descent from Abraham is essential, except for proselytes. This term may be applied to all who give it a place in service today, whether they are actual sons of Israel, or take this rite upon themselves in order to share in the blessings which it is supposed to bring.

Circumcision is a *cutting off* of the flesh, and was intended to set forth its futility. Had the Circumcisionists fully realized what the sign signified, they would have lost all confidence in the flesh. Instead they gave the flesh the highest place, and sought to make it the basis of all blessing. As we, who place no confidence in the flesh whatever, really carry out the true significance of the sign (even if we do not possess it) *we are the genuine Circumcision.* We have no ritual, no priesthood, no temple in which to go through the outward forms and ceremonies of the divine service, but, in spirit, we offer to God that essential worship which the temple service only shadowed. Too often, alas, the substance was lacking. We need no physical symbol. We dare not be circumcised. It has become a badge of apostasy. Beware of the maimcision!

PAUL'S PHYSICAL PREROGATIVES

But what of Paul himself? He certainly belonged to the Circumcision. What is his attitude toward these physical prerogatives of his? In seven distinct steps he describes

to us the height which he had attained in the divine religion. He could measure himself with the best of them. Narrower and narrower he draws the circle of privilege, until at last he stands almost alone, a solitary example, at the summit of human religious attainment.

CIRCUMCISION THE EIGHTH DAY

The rite of circumcision was not confined to the sons of Jacob or Israel. Abraham received it before Isaac was born, and he circumcised Ishmael and all who were in his house (Gen.17:24-27). After the example of Ishmael, his descendants perform the rite in the thirteenth year. Yet all who were circumcised reckoned themselves a special class, being associated with Abraham. Paul, in his claims, really goes back to Isaac, for he adds "the eighth day." This is a smaller circle of privilege than that of circumcision alone. The striking fact is that this class begins with him who was born of parents as good as dead, when the energy of the flesh was replaced by the power of faith.

OF THE RACE OF ISRAEL

Not all who were circumcised the eighth day belonged to the race of Israel. Esau and his descendants are not reckoned in this more highly favored class. Yahweh repeated His promises to the patriarch Jacob, not to Esau. The nation of God's choice is confined to the descendants of Israel. There was a covenant made with the Circumcision. But there was still another made with Israel when they came out of Egypt. To them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the legislation, the divine service, and the promises (Psa.9:4).

THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN

Benjamin was the best beloved of Jacob's sons after Joseph was taken from him. The tribe took a prominent

part in the affairs of Israel, and had the honor of having the temple and Jerusalem within its borders. Israel's first king, Saul, came from Benjamin. It was the only tribe which remained true to the house of David, when the ten tribes broke away. It was an additional honor to belong to such a tribe.

A HEBREW OF HEBREWS

In Paul's day the nation was divided into two parties, very much as in these days: one could speak of orthodox Jews and liberal Jews. All the Jews had learned to speak Greek, yet some of them had gone much further, and had forsaken the traditional customs to become Hellenists, with Greek culture and customs. This was especially the case among the dispersion. Paul had been born in Cilicia, so was especially tempted to leave the "Hebrews," as they were called, for more modern ways. Yet he did not yield to these influences, but clung to the traditions. Indeed, he was a leader among such. He even expresses his position here by a Hebrew idiom. For the superlative they used this form. The holiest division of the tabernacle they called the holy of holies. So, to express the fact that he was most "orthodox," he calls himself "a Hebrew of Hebrews." Religiously this was a more select class than the mass of the nation.

A PHARISEE

In relation to the law the Jews of our Lord's day were divided still more. Among the "Hebrews" there was a sect of special sanctity and severely strict in the law's enforcement. Notwithstanding the excesses to which Pharisees went in its interpretation, and the fact that they overloaded it with human additions, outwardly, at least, they were recognized as the champions of the law, and opposed all laxness in its observance. No doubt the most of them were hypocrites, as our Lord so clearly showed. But they

were pardonably proud in their stand for the Scriptures, and against human reason and philosophy. It was a distinct gain to belong to their ranks rather than to those who gave the divine legislation no such place in their lives.

PERSECUTING THE ECCLESIA

Paul was no half-hearted, indifferent religionist. Much as we may condemn his misdirected zeal in harassing those who had accepted the Messiah, we must allow that it testified to the earnestness and depth of his convictions. He was a zealous Pharisee, quite above the average in the intensity of his desire to serve the God of his fathers. Among his contemporaries he had a right to expect special recognition for his services on behalf of the Jewish faith, as he saw it.

BLAMELESS

A blameless reputation in the midst of the strict Pharisees was no light accomplishment. Let us not think here of sin, for the apostle himself confessed that, while, blameless in the sight of men, he was the foremost of sinners in the sight of God. It is clear that he carried out the observance of the law so fully and accurately that the most fault-finding Pharisee could not detect any lapse. A very notable achievement! It is a question whether Saul of Tarsus could do any more, religiously, to better himself or attain a higher standing in the flesh before God. And it is very much to be doubted whether any other man of his day could equal his record.

PAUL FORFEITS ALL

When Paul was on board the ship which was taking him to Italy, it entered a bay called Ideal Harbors. But, as it was not a fit place in which to winter, the navigator and the man who had chartered the ship proposed to go on

to Phoenix, in Crete. Paul expostulated, saying, "Men! I behold that sailing is about to be with damage and much *forfeit,* not only of the lading, and of the ship, but of our souls also" (Acts 27:10). The outcome was that the ship and its cargo were *forfeited* by their action in pursuing the voyage against the counsel of Paul.

We have brought in this incident in order to give a graphic illustration of the meaning of the word *forfeit,* which is one of the features of the passage before us (3:7,8,8). Like the ship, Paul was loaded with all sorts of valuable cargo, but he forfeited it all in the great crisis which he had just passed through. Indeed, the ship is a picture of the kingdom as heralded in the book of Acts, especially as it concerns Paul and those with him. At the end of the book it goes to pieces and all that belonged to it was lost; only those who believed were given to Paul, and with him went to Rome.

All these physical advantages were a gain to Paul, but they hindered a much greater gain. They seemed excellent in the dimness of human ignorance, but they became intolerable in the light of the knowledge of Christ. So Paul does not part with them reluctantly, but deems them to be no better than refuse, or offal to be thrown to the curs. All his cherished merit, his blameless walk, his proud pedigree, on which he had prided himself in days gone by, the like of which is the chief reliance of the religionist to this very day, were seen to be so many incumbrances to keep him from the complete appropriation of Christ. Away with it! May his example help us all to refuse the refuse which religion offers us, in order to keep us from the full appreciation of Him Who is our All!

GAINING CHRIST

But how could Paul speak of gaining Christ after all these years of sainthood and faithful service? How can he say "that I *may* be, found in Him" when He had been

"in Christ" for many years? He is "working out" the salvation he had received. He is carrying it into effect. While all believers rely on Christ for salvation, few indeed are wholly dependent on Him for service. To let those things go which seem an advantage to us is quite a different matter from forsaking recognized sin. The Jew must forfeit his most cherished prerogatives, and the gentile all his terrestrial advantages if he wishes to gain Christ in this sense. Christ must become their All in service as He is in salvation.

RIGHTEOUSNESS IN CHRIST

Saul was what he was in himself. His righteousness was his own, based on the law. Blameless as he appeared before his fellow men, at heart he was most unrighteous. This came to the surface in his zeal against Christ and His saints. Nothing could be more unjust than to sympathize with Stephen's murderers, or to persecute those who belonged to the Just One. Away with such self-righteousness! Now Paul wishes to be found *in Christ,* not having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God for faith (3:9).

TO KNOW HIM

The knowledge of Christ is especially extended to His sufferings and death, and to His resurrection. *There is no reference whatever to His life and ministry in the land as a Servant of the Circumcision,* which is knowing Christ after the flesh (2 Cor.5:16). Our vital connection with God's Anointed does not commence until His crucifixion, and associates us with His resurrection and ascension.

CONFORMED TO HIS DEATH

Righteousness demands the death of the unrighteous. This includes the whole race. Christ alone was righteous, hence He alone could die for the sake of others. His death

for us fulfills the demands of justice, yet at the same time involves our death in Him. We should have died on Golgotha rather than He. His sufferings were ours by right, not His. This knowledge puts an end to us and all our pretensions in the flesh. Paul no longer saw himself blameless before men but smitten and slain in the sight of God. He may have been a circumcised Israelite, a Hebrew and a Pharisee, but he was a dead one. The death of Christ put an end to all his physical pretensions, and absolutely settled his unrighteousness. Conformity to the death of Christ is the one absolute essential to acceptable service. So long as we still cling to something of our own, we cannot fully find our place in Christ.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS

None of us can actually endure the sufferings which came to Christ when He died on behalf of sinners. Nor can we add our own to His sufferings on behalf of the race, for He alone is qualified to save. Had we such sufferings to endure, they would be because of our own sins, and not those of others. How then can we enter into "the fellowship His sufferings?" By the vital recognition that these sufferings, being *for* us, were really ours, and show God's estimate of what we were in ourselves. This enables us to escape from ourselves and our supposed excellences in the flesh, and to transfer ourselves into Him. There we find all our supposed losses overwhelmingly recompensed.

THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

If we are identified with Christ in His death, then we will be in His resurrection also. Actually, literally, we will be made alive because we are His (1 Cor.15:22). But this is not in view here, for we are concerned with life and service for Him now, not in the future, when these warnings and exhortations will no longer be needed. We are not now

concerned with resurrection itself, but with a knowledge of its power in our present service. This is viewed from two different angles, both of which should powerfully affect our course. One is the past resurrection of Christ. The other is our own future resurrection.

There is a tremendous reservoir of potential power in the realization that our Lord has been raised from among the dead. Its implications are limitless. If He has accomplished this, He is able for all else. We have a Lord Whose power knows no limits, and does not even retreat before death, the last of all our enemies. All human effort is circumscribed and impotent in view of death. The work in which we are engaged is not so. It will not fail, because it is in the hands of the Deathless One.

ATTAINING TO THE OUT-RESURRECTION

We avow, as Paul did before Felix, "that there is to be a future resurrection of the just as well as the unjust" (Acts 24:15). "All who are in the tombs will be hearing His voice, and those who do good things shall be going out into a resurrection of life, yet those who commit bad into a resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28,29). These resurrections do not occur at the same time. There is at least a thousand years between them. Therefore it is necessary that the former should be an *out-resurrection,* for the rest of the dead do not live until the thousand years are finished (Rev.20:5). It is also evident that, should a resurrection occur even before this, it also would be an *out-resurrection.* It is important to note that Scripture does not distinguish these by a special phrase. We never read of an "out-resurrection from among the *saints.*" All are simply from among the *dead.*

It is evident from this that *out-resurrection* is for believers only and leads to eonian glory, in contrast to the latter resurrection, which leads to judgment. In the out-resurrec-

tion we will be sinless, and lead a life of perfect conformity to the will of God. This is the ideal to which our present life should conform. What would we not give to be as we will be when vivified! To serve as we will in that glorious time! What is more practical than to seek to attain it now?

Let us keep in mind the context in which this term is used if we wish to correctly interpret its message. Paul is concerned with his *service* (Phil.3:4-16). His previous course in unbelief led to the persecution of God's saints. Could anything be further from our occupation in resurrection? Now Paul wishes to regulate his actions so as to anticipate his behaviour in the out-resurrection. He puts it, "conformed to His death, if somehow I should be attaining to the resurrection out from among the dead" (Phil.3:10,11). For this he wishes to know the *power* of His resurrection.

That he is not referring to his own literal resurrection is evident from what follows. "Not that I already obtained, or have already been perfected . . . ." No one could possibly suppose that he had died and had been raised. But the conduct of the apostle may very well have been so like that which will be ours in resurrection, that his friends might easily suppose that God had already actually bestowed upon him the power which belongs to that day.

Christ Jesus has grasped, or taken hold of Paul in order to conform him to His own likeness. That will be openly manifest in the case of all saints when the out-resurrection actually takes place. But Paul wished to grasp that ahead of time, here and now. He wanted the power of that future life to transform his present career.

The powers of the coming eon were present in our Lord's ministry and in that of the twelve, and even in Paul's earlier course. Now that the kingdom is no longer the subject of testimony, these physical marvels have of necessity vanished. In their place we should seek to anticipate the spiritual powers of the future glory which awaits *us.* These are

in reality far greater than those of the kingdom, though their character is very different.

THE RACE

In order to give our service the proper direction and incentive, our career is compared to a race, yet not in regard to competition with others—that is not here, and would spoil the picture—but in regard to our attitude.

The racer pays no attention to that which is behind him. It would be a great hindrance. He does not stand up straight, but stretches far forward in the direction of the goal. He not only wishes to arrive there, but to cover the course in such a way that he will receive a prize, a reward for his efforts.

It is vital that we keep the picture here presented to us well within the bounds of the context. Much misunderstanding would have been avoided if thoughts foreign to the theme had not been worked into it. It is true that, in a race, many run and only one wins the prize. According to that there is no use for us to enter it, for Paul would surely carry off the single prize and the rest of us would have nothing but disappointment for our pains. But this aspect of a race is not at all in view here. The lessons are drawn from altogether different features, and this should not be allowed to intrude.

FORGETTING, NOT REGRETTING

Few, indeed, who have learned what they are in themselves, can look back without regret. Paul might have made much more mention of his past errors in his epistles. But he never brings them up without good cause. There is no power in our past, especially not in the years of self-exaltation before we began to find our all in Christ. Many are tempted to spend much time regretting their own ignorance and selfishness, and thinking how much bet-

ter it would have been if they had been enlightened at an earlier age. Such regrets weaken and unfit us for our forward striving toward the goal, conformity with Christ, and should be discouraged. Let us forget our past advantages and disadvantages and look ahead. Back of us is ourselves, ahead is Christ.

THE PRIZE

The prize set before us is God's calling above, which might be rendered the "up calling." Like our Lord before His exaltation, our present career is a "down calling," a descent, a humiliation. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto the death of the cross. Wherefore God highly exalts Him. Exaltation is the prize set before Him and us. The glory awaits us at the goal. God has called us, indeed, but He has not yet called us *up.* Now we need to be emptied of ourselves and be found in Him, in lowliness seeking *con*formation to His death, and a realization of the power of His resurrection. Then we will realize it to the full and attain the prize of prizes, *trans*formation into His glorious likeness. It is presented as a prize because it cannot be ours until we reach the goal at the end of the race, not that we alone win it in competition with others.

MATURE SAINTS

Among the saints there are many, if not most, who cannot follow what is here set forth. They have many things in the flesh, race, position, attainments, and reputation, which they cannot forfeit for Christ. Of conformity to His death they know little or nothing, nor of the power of His resurrection. In a word, they are *immature.* In the language of the race course, they lag behind and cannot see the goal.

There is a tendency to create a gap between the mature and the immature, those who have gone ahead in the race and those who lag behind. We would be inclined to urge

the laggards to mend their pace, and to catch up with those ahead of them. But the immature have no clear realization of their backwardness. They sometimes consider minority quite the normal state, and maturity an undue assumption. It seems a settled opinion that, in religion, there must be clouds and mystery. Clearness is only conceit. This comes largely because they are constantly occupied with the Scriptures intended for the immature, and have never followed Paul into perfection. But there is no exhortation to them to hurry, but to the mature to accommodate themselves to them. "In what we outstrip, there is to be a mutual disposition to observe the same fundamental rule" (3:16).

PAUL'S UNIQUE PLACE

Paul occupies a unique place in God's revelation. What other man could calmly put himself before us for imitation?

Peter would not do so. He would have his readers follow in the footprints of Christ (1 Peter 2:21). Yet in the section concerning our Lord in this epistle, we are not exhorted to go in His steps, but only to imitate the disposition which sent Him from heaven to the death of the cross. All intermediate "steps" between His incarnation and the cross are avoided by including His life's history in one word, "He humbles Himself." In His earthly career He was the great Example for those who will enter the kingdom which He heralded. But His conduct was not in accord with present truth, for this would have clashed with His whole ministry which was to the Circumcision, and confined to the earth.

Few who have considered the matter have not wondered at first how Paul could take so much upon himself. Not only could he make himself a model (1 Cor.4:16), but, quite unlike any other apostle, he could speak of *my* evangel (Rom.2:16; 16:25; 2 Tim.2:8), or *our* evangel (2 Cor.4:3; 1 Thess.1:5; 2 Thess.2:14), without the least attempt to

excuse himself. Some have thought it most irreverent for him to couple himself with the evangel after this fashion. And it cannot be condoned on any other ground than the real one, that to him was committed an evangel distinct from all the rest, which can best be described by this fact, rather than by any special side of it, such as *grace,* or *conciliation,* or *Uncircumcision.*

If Paul lived today Jeremiah would no longer be called the weeping prophet. Paul's lamentations over the saints would far exceed his over Israel. It seems almost incredible that even in Paul's day *many* were walking so as to cause him so much concern. What are these days compared to those? As lead to gold, as dusk to midday. If there were so many in those days who were *enemies of the cross* (3:18) how must it be today? Should we not expect to find nearly all in this category? Nothing else can be expected. There is an almost universal insensibility to the teaching of the cross, and its effect on the physical and terrestrial. The saints hold fast to their own righteousness, and will not let go. They do not care to be found in Christ.

ENEMIES OF THE CROSS

Paradox though it seems, most of those who are friends of Christ are enemies of His cross (3:18). They are willing to part with their sins and evil and take Him as their Saviour, but they do not wish to part with their goodness or personal advantages and superiorities and be found alone in Him. They do not realize that the manner of Christ's death puts an end to all that man is in himself. They wish to be somebody on their own account. And this makes them antagonistic to the cross. Their attitude is cloaked under various euphemistic terms, which reveal a latent pride in their origin or their character or their attainments in the flesh. All of this clashes with the cross.

WHOSE CONSUMMATION IS DESTRUCTION

This phrase kept me from grasping the tragic meaning of this passage for a long time. It seemed, indeed, that Paul was speaking of believers, for why should he mention any others when speaking of imitating his walk? No others but saints could come into view in this passage. But that the phrase "whose consummation is destruction" (3:19), should refer to them seems quite incredible, until the proper background is furnished by a consideration of the whole epistle, and especially this section of it. This letter deals with *service,* not with *salvation.* The disobedient among the saints have already been referred to as "curs," as "evil workers," as the "maimcision," terms whose harshness is excusable only on the ground of truth and necessity. They are intended to be helpful in rescuing the saints from delusive dangers against which they need an alarming admonition.

Here we have such a dire warning. It is a fact that all service done under the influence of the flesh will be destroyed. All self-righteousness must perish. That is its consummation. If it is not forfeited now, it will be burned up at the dais of Christ.

At the final consummation God is not only going to be in all, but *All* in all. What we have here is only the process to this end. The unbeliever will be prepared for it by judgment. The believer should anticipate it now in his service, by gaining Christ in the measure in which he forfeits that which is his own. But if he does not do so, he can look forward to nothing but the destruction of his deeds in that day, when he stands in front of the dais of Christ, to be requited for that which he puts into practice through the body, for it will be reckoned bad (2 Cor.5:10). If anyone's work shall burn up, he will *forfeit* it, yet he shall be saved (1 Cor.3:15).

WHOSE GOD IS THEIR BOWELS

This strong and striking figure seems to set before us a form of idolatry which puts the satisfaction of the flesh in the place of the Deity, so far as service is concerned. It is abundantly in evidence in most so-called Christian worship. Much more is done to satisfy the soul than to edify the spirit. Beautiful sights and melodious sounds and pleasant scents are used to attract, in place of the love of God and the glories of His Son.

WHOSE GLORY IS IN THEIR SHAME

Blind to the shame in which the cross of Christ has sunk all fleshly religion, it has become the boast of Christendom. An apt expression of this is the form which has been given to the cross itself. In place of the severe and shameful stake, the badge of human depravity, it has been converted into an ornament to adorn church buildings and their ritual and the dress of devotees. Much of the boast of Christendom is in things which are contrary to the cross of Christ, and which, if seen in its light, would cause deep humiliation and shame.

WHO ARE DISPOSED TO THE TERRESTRIAL

A disposition to the terrestrial is the normal attitude of man. Almost all of the Scriptures are concerned with the earth and that which takes place upon its surface. For Peter and the Circumcision to be thus disposed is quite in keeping with the character of their calling. But today it is a sign of immaturity and opposition to the cross, for the terrestrial is still outside of Christ, and, like the flesh, is not subject to Him, neither is it able. If Christ were today engaged in blessing the earth as He will bless it in the future, then, in Him, we also would be concerned with its betterment. But, *without Christ,* the cross has condemned

the world and its works, and we should not seek to do anything outside of Him.

Not that we are to be recluses and hermits, or do nothing to earn a livelihood. We have our duties. We must provide for our own and pay taxes. We must be subject to the authorities. But, in spirit, we are not of it, especially with any of its plans for self-improvement before the presence of Christ. Such efforts are contrary to the cross, and are antichristian in character, for they seek to displace Him, and make His presence unnecessary. We know that as a whole all such movements will end in failure, for the earth will need Him more and more, as time goes by, in spite of all that anyone can do. He alone can heal its mortal wound.

CELESTIAL CITIZENSHIP

In glorious contrast to our present place of humiliation on the earth is our potential place of exaltation in the heavens. We have no valid rights on earth. It, with its fullness, belongs to Yahweh, and He has not delegated any of its privileges to us. But why should we wish to meddle here, seeing that God has given us a far more glorious sphere? We are citizens of the heavens (3:20). We will not go there as fugitives of earth or as guests dependent on the hospitality of others. We will need no pass, no visa, as though we were foreigners, limited in our rights and restricted in our movements, alien expatriates, despised emigrants of a despicable and death-doomed race. This we would be in ourselves, but in Christ we are entitled to all the rights and privileges which He Himself can claim.

AWAITING A SAVIOUR

Salvation has its tenses, past, present, and future. We were saved, we are being saved, and we shall be saved. It is not finished until our Lord descends from heaven and we ascend to our allotment. We await Him in various char-

acters. He will come as a Saviour with regard to our bodies, for these have not yet felt His touch. Our salvation is still incomplete, and will remain so in the physical sphere as long as we are here.

THE BODY OF OUR HUMILIATION

No one is so keenly sensitive to the degrading corruption and impotence of our bodies as the saint who has caught a glimpse of His glory.

But the phrase means more than that. It is not merely a humiliating body, but the body which accompanies and accords with our humiliation (3:21). So long as we are in it we are to humble ourselves, as well as suffer the humiliation it involves. This is not the time for us to be glorified. The Corinthians were sated and rich and reigning, while the apostles were a gazing-stock to the world, but that was due to the Corinthians' carnality (1 Cor.4:8-10). A mortal body is the proper place to display our present humiliation. Undesirable as it is in itself, we should be thankful for it, as it prepares us to appreciate the body that shall be ours in the future.

THE BODY OF HIS GLORY

Paul never met our Lord in His post-resurrection body, as He presented Himself to His disciples. When he saw Him it was enveloped in a glory which the eyes of the disciples never could have borne. To the disciples on the way to Emmaus our Lord presented no outward evidence of His glorified position. This was dimmed, and invisible in His intercourse with the kingdom saints. This was not the body which pertained to His glory. This is not the prototype of our future frame. Even the transformation on the holy mount, though His face shone as the sun, seems to have been bearable to their sight (Matt.17:2). But when Paul saw Him on the Damascus road, the light irradiating

Him was above the brightness of the sun (Acts 26:13). Its beams were too bright for Paul's poor eyes, and blinded them, scorching the sclerotic coat into scales (Acts 9:18). Such is the body of His glory.

Contrary to our conceptions, glory and subjection go together. Now our flesh is not subject and is inglorious. Then it will be endued with power and effulgent in its splendor. This is because it is once more connected with the source of life and power and fully under the sway of Christ. Independence and insubjection drag down to degradation and death. Dependence and subjection lead to life and glory. The transfiguration of our bodies will inaugurate a similar operation to include the whole universe, for He is able to subject all to Him. In each case it will involve glorification, so that, at the consummation, when all will be subject, He will hand over to God a universe glorified as well as subject.

STAND FIRM

Having delivered his warnings, designed to shield us from the special evils which beset our course, Paul proceeds to add positive exhortations equally needed to aid us on our way. We are all liable to waver, to differ in our dispositions, to be depressed, to worry, to be engrossed by the evil rather than by the good (4:1-9). How wonderfully he introduces his words! His readers were beloved and longed for, his joy and wreath (4:1). It seems to me that, in milder measure, this is true of all to whom God's truth comes through Paul. I, for one, feel almost as if I were a Philippian, for I am certainly in his wreath and would like to be his joy, and love him and long to see him, as he would me, were we acquainted. Paul puts the personal touch here, and speaks as to particular friends.

Stand firm *thus* in the Lord, my beloved (4:1). Here is the tone which lifts the favorites of grace. There is no

threat of doom in case of disobedience, only the constraint of love. Since that day the slaves of the Lord have been inconstant, unsettled, unsteady, changeable, fluctuating, vacillating, wavering, restless, uneasy, erratic, fickle—anything but firm in the Lord in regard to His service in this era. We do not speak of Christendom, which has been far more constant in the service of the flesh and the terrestrial than the saints have been of Christ and the celestial. Yet God's patience has not been exhausted. The exhortation still calls to us, *stand firm in the Lord—thus.* As imitators of Paul, as forfeiting everything of the flesh and finding our all in Christ, there is a vast opportunity for service, such as seldom comes to the sons of Adam.

A. E. Knoch

Brother **Andrew Lonyo,** of Chesterfield Township, Michigan, died on May 26, 2013 at age 84. Rejoicing for many years in the grace of God and God's eonian purpose in Christ Jesus, Andy supported our work both financially and by means of his time with volunteer service. We will miss his happy smile and kind spirit, but praise God in knowing we shall be roused together in that day and always be together with our Lord.

Joseph Yoder, of Menifee, California, died on July 28, 2012 at age 85. Joe is survived by his wife Mary, as well as by his brothers Charles and David, and his sister Evelyn Tatton. The Yoder family have been friends and supporters of our work for many years, finding much of spiritual benefit and encouragement in the Concordant translation of the Scriptures, and especially in the evangel of our salvation as heralded by the apostle Paul.

Laurel Shaw, of West Covina, California, fell asleep in Christ on April 7, 2013 at age 87. Laurel, too, was a long-time friend and supporter of the Concordant ministry, together with her husband Jack who survives her. Her meek spirit and kind and gracious ways, were a salutary influence upon all who had the privilege of her close fellowship.

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 104th Year

(1909–2013)

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 The Sacred Scriptures
100 Notes and Reflections
102 Abbreviation Key
103 Instruction for Use
110 Psalm 72
114 Judgment and Righteousness
127 Peace and Plentitude

THIRD QUARTER, 2013

Volume 104 **Number 3**

Vocabulary Index

for the
Concordant Version of the Old Testament

This *Vocabulary Index* is an attempt to provide users of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) access to full listings of the occurrences of each major Hebrew or Aramaic (Chaldee) word (except most proper names) used in the Old Testament.

It is admittedly more complex and less convenient than the Keyword Concordance published with the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT. But until such a concordance using the vocabulary of the CVOT can be made available this may serve as a useful substitute.

This is an abridgment of a full list of the English terms used in the CVOT, still being updated in 2013 as work proceeds on a first edition of the Version as a whole.

The list is keyed to ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW AND CHALDEE CONCORDANCE (EHCC, 5th edition), which is presently available under the title, ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW CONCORDANCE (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody MA 01961-3473, ISBN 0-913573-21-3). The word entries in this latter edition are coded to the numbering system of STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE, and these numbers are also provided in our index.

321 pages; price: $16.00 (loose sheets); $20.00 (spiral bound)
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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, THIRD QUARTER 2013
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED FOUR

EDITORIAL

THIS ISSUE is devoted to the use of the *Concordant Version of the Old Testament* (CVOT). It begins with a portion of A. E. Knoch's word of praise and appreciation for God's Word as it appears in the *Concordant Literal New Testament*, followed by a few, selected notes and reflections by Brother Knoch concerning the history and aims of the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Next is a reprint of the *Abbreviation Key* and the *Instructions for Use* for the Version.

In the remainder of the magazine, I attempt to provide an example of putting the various features of the CVOT to use by means of a study of Psalm 72. The idiomatic translation of this psalm is provided on pages 110 and 112 with a more literal rendering offered on the facing pages of 111 and 113.

I have tried to draw attention to certain unique features of the Version as explained in the *Instructions for Use*, and use them in opening up the meaning of the psalm for a growing appreciation of its values. A translation is necessarily an interpretation. But the more closely it can follow the original wording the more likely it will reflect the right interpretation. In using the "concordant method" of translation we are dedicated to this goal. Without supposing we have reached it fully, in accord with Philippians 3:12 we nevertheless strive toward it.

As for Psalm 72, many will dispute, not only my understanding of its message, but our rendering of it in English. This is one reason why we have included a "literal" translation of the text as it appears in the Masoretic text. This offers

a more objective rendering of the Hebrew words and grammar as indicated by that text. The literal version provides a test for the idiomatic translation, but the Hebrew text as we have it is not without flaws. Where we have changed it by emendations supported by ancient translations and commentaries (including more recent textual commentaries), as well as by a recognition of possible scribal errors in copying the text, we have endeavored to keep the context of the passage in view as the determining factor.

There is little agreement concerning the meaning and message of Psalm 72, and for this reason it may have been a poor choice as a test passage for the CVOT. But it does afford special opportunity for focusing on one phase of God's operations as they relate to rule and subjection and the manifestation of His glory. Our own experience in flesh under governments ruled by others in flesh does awaken in us a desire for a kingdom and King such as David describes in this psalm. It will be a kingdom under law directed by Christ as the Son of David, centered in Jerusalem, yet indeed it will be a blessing to all the nations of the earth, and all will pray for Him and count Him and His rule blessed and happy.

But this phase of Christ's kingship is not our expectation. Our calling is in grace and our position is under grace; we are identified with the death of Christ already in spirit, and we will be living together with Him in the oncoming eons when God will be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace among the celestials. Our part is not in the terrestrial kingdom under Christ as the *Son of David,* but in His kingdom as the *Son of God's love* (Col.1:13). It is under Christ in this Position that all will be brought into reconciliation through the blood of His cross, the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love. Then it will be, to expand the words of Psalm 72:19 that the entire universe will be filled with the glory of God! D.H.H.

THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

GOD'S WORD is mankind's most precious possession. What are all the treasures in the world compared with it? Do they even begin to approach the riches which are brought to us by the knowledge of His mind, the appreciation of His love? Indeed, it is God Himself Who is revealed in the sacred scrolls. They alone are the channel of His light, and His life, and His love. Is it not the object of all creation and all revelation to lead us to a knowledge of the Deity? And is it not the finest and most fruitful work in the world to bring God's great gift nearer to earth's peoples in its original purity, preciousness and power, and to seek methods of making their access to this boon as easy and practical as possible? Every human undertaking, and every translation of the Scriptures, fails and falls short of perfection. Our finite understanding, our faulty opinions as to the meaning of words in the ancient languages of inspiration cannot be fully evaded. To reduce this baneful influence to a minimum should be our earnest endeavor if we wish to approach the ideal set before us.

It has pleased God to give us His revelation in languages not our own. He chose the tongues of the ancients, which He refined, to suit them for this purpose. The most tremendous task that can occupy the mind and heart of a mortal is to convey to the people of today the impression produced on the native reader of that day by the Hebrew, the Aramaic and the Greek original. This is what we endeavor to do.

A. E. Knoch

NOTES AND REFLECTIONS

GOD HAS SPOKEN! He talks to us in foreign tongues. Nothing is so imperative as a firsthand knowledge of His inspired revelation, without the intervention of human faults and disabilities. This is made impossible by the usual methods of translation. We can come much nearer to the ideal through systematic obedience to the laws of language, because, first of all, it leads to much greater accuracy, and, secondly, it is self-corrective. A word uniformly translated absorbs its true intent from its contexts.

The plan of the Hebrew Concordant Version is essentially the same as that employed in translating the Greek. Wigram's Englishman's Concordance was used in the preliminary work. It contains every Hebrew word found in the Scriptures, usually followed by all of the passages in which it occurs, as rendered in the Authorized Version, as well as two indexes. The English index lists every English word used in the AV, followed by every Hebrew word which it translates. The Hebrew index lists all the Hebrew words and every English word used to translate them.

The English vocabulary was formed as follows: The occurrences of each Hebrew word were studied as listed in Wigram, and the nearest English equivalent was written in our concordance. This was entered or underlined in the English and Hebrew indexes. Whenever it was discovered that a term had served as the translation of another Hebrew word it was crossed off, and all other translations of the Hebrew word chosen were likewise struck out. This process of elimination was continued with frequent changes and revisions, over a long period of time, until most of the

words in the divine vocabulary seemed to have been given their nearest English equivalent.

In this way the vocabulary of this version was built up before it was used in translation. This method forces us to be more consistent and accurate than would be possible without it. The chief advantage, however, is this, that it largely eliminates private opinion in the rendering of any particular passage. The words have already been fixed before the compiler comes to turn the sentence into English.

In order to secure uniformity, a card index was made of every form of every Hebrew word, and to each was added its English standard. The whole Hebrew text was copied, on special sheets in English, or Latin letters, so that the standards in the index could be placed beneath each word, making the sublinear uniform. As a companion to this, a complete Hebrew lexicon was written in loose leaf form, to record the standards and register further improvements.

After the vocabulary and grammar had been settled in this manner, about half of the Hebrew Scriptures were translated tentatively, using Ginsburg's Masoretico-Critical edition of the text as a basis, in order to test the vocabulary and the state of the text. The poetical portions were chosen because they contain many literary forms, especially parallelisms, with their synonyms, which are a great help in further refining the vocabulary, and in recovering the ancient text.

Not many changes were needed in the vocabulary, but the consistent renderings revealed the fact that even the Masoretic text, in many cases, has failed to preserve the original rendering. The rabbis seem to have realized that the text was gradually becoming more corrupt, so they sought to stereotype the form it had in their day. They did not change it, even when they knew that it was wrong, but put some of these mistakes on record in the margin.

A. E. Knoch

ABBREVIATION KEY

Sources of Variant Reading

~…~	Conjecture
…~	
7…0	Septuagint (LXX)
7…	
M…	Other manuscripts
…s	
Q…	Qumran (Dead Sea Scrolls)
S…	Samaritan Pentateuch
…n	
S…ph	Altered by Sopherim
Sy…c	Syriac
…c	

Examples of Combinations

7…~	Conjecture confirmed by Septuagint (LXX)
7…~c	Conjecture confirmed by LXX and Syriac
Q…~	Conjecture confirmed by Qumran
7…0	Insertion from LXX
7…Q	LXX and Qumran
M…cs	Other manuscripts and Syriac

Grammatical Indicators

=	dual or plural
`	Hebrew particle **ath**
´	emphatic pronoun
¦…	incomplete verb
…¦	participle
¯…	complete verb
…¯	infinitive
c	causative verb form
m	make verb form

Word Indicators

·	**the**	nr	**near**
›	**to** or **for**	o	**obligate**
+	**and**	ob	**obscure**
a	**any**	p	**pass**
ad	**adult-male**	pc	**precede**
af	**after**	pl	**place**
b	**become**	pr	**pray**
bd	**behold**	ps	**possess**
bf	**before**	pt	**palate**
bk	**back**	r	**remembrance**
br	**break**	ra	**radiant**
bt	**between**	ri	**rise** (noun)
cl	**clean**	s	**same**
cv	**covet**	sa	**say**
d	**do**	sc	**sacrifice**
…d	…**ward**	sf	**self**
du	**duration**	sl	**slaughter**
f	**from**	sp	**speak**
fl	**filter**	st	**station**
fr	**further**	stn	**stone**
g	**give**	not	**not**
h	**human**	t	**that**
i	**in**	u	**under**
j	**judge**	w	**which**
ki	**kind**	wi	**with**
mn	**many**	wt	**what**
mr	**moreover**	y	**yea**
mt	**mortals**	yr	**year**
n	**note**		

Footnote Abbreviations

◊	footnote symbol in text
Hb	Standard Hebrew Text
LXX	Septuagint
Ms	Manuscript(s)
MT	Masoretic Text (used for distinctions in the vowel pointings)
lit.	literally

INSTRUCTION FOR USE

THE PUBLICATION of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) is an ongoing project endeavoring to provide, in a consistent English translation, a closer reflection of the grammar, syntax and word usage of the ancient Hebrew manuscripts than can be found in other current versions. By analyzing the contextual usages, a single English word was first selected as the most suitable equivalent for each Hebrew word. To achieve readability some words were then given a limited number of idiomatic variants that are harmonious with the sense derived from the investigations. English words used as the common translation of particular Hebrew words, and even idiomatic variants, are generally not used for other Hebrew words.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TYPEFACES

Boldface type is used for words (or even parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew.

Lightface type is used for words (or parts of words) which have been added to clarify the meaning of the respective word in the Hebrew text, thus avoiding ambiguous renderings and making the English read more smoothly.

Examples from Genesis:

1:2 **over** the sur**face** = **over face**

1:3 **Let light come** to **be** = **Let light become**

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Where the definite article ("the") appears in the Hebrew, and we have omitted it, a small (·) takes its place on the word to which it belongs.

Example from Genesis 1:16:
ˈ**luminaries** = **the luminaries**

We have used a small "plus" sign (⁺) for the common Hebrew conjunction **and** when it is omitted in the CVOT or rendered by a different English conjunction.

Examples from Genesis 1:14:
⁺**that they** = **and they**
⁺ **for** = **and for**

Also, when the Hebrew preposition for "to" is not rendered by this term in English, or left untranslated we show this by the symbol (›), as in Genesis 2:3 where ›**by** represents the Hebrew preposition generally rendered **to.**

The symbol (ˋ) is used to represent a special Hebrew term which generally indicates the direct object of a sentence or clause. It occurs twice in Genesis 1:1 pointing to the two direct objects of the verb **created.** This is helpful to the translator because the position of the direct object varies in Hebrew in relation to the verb and subject.

In addition, a number of superior abbreviations and words are used to indicate variations from the standard translation of Hebrew terms. The abbreviations used are listed in our Abbreviation Key under the heading, *Word Indicators.* An example of this is the use of the term ^{d}**make** in Genesis 1:26 for the Hebrew verb for **do**. Another example is the term ^{h}**man** used in Genesis 17:12 where the Hebrew word literally meaning **human** appears when English idiom would more naturally call for the word **man**. (This distinguishes this term from the regular Hebrew word for "man," as used in Genesis 2:23,24.)

When the full word is given in superior letters we do not list it in our Abbreviation Key. An example of this is the rendering ^{way}**journey** in Genesis 30:36, where this rendering of the Hebrew word for **way** is distinguished from the regular Hebrew word for **journey** as found in Exodus 17:1.

VARIANT READINGS AND FOOTNOTES

Since the incorporation of variant readings from sources other than the traditional Masoretic text involves the judgment of the translators, all words and phrases which are not derived directly from the standard Hebrew text are indicated both at their beginning and end. The symbols used are listed in the Abbreviation Key.

When a variant reading replaces a reading in the Masoretic text or can be supported by a consideration of common scribal errors in copying the text, a footnote is usually provided to indicate the traditional reading or otherwise offer support for the emendation.

For example, in Genesis 2:2 our translation uses **sixth** in place of the Masoretic reading, **seventh.** As noted in the Abbreviation Key under the heading, "Sources of Variant Reading," the small italic ^{7} at the beginning of the word "sixth" indicates that this is the reading of the ancient Greek translation called the Septuagint (often identified in academic studies by the abbreviation LXX). In addition, the italic letters ^{n} and ^{c} at the end of the word inform the reader that the Samarita*n* Pentateuch and the Syria*c* translation of the passage also have this reading. The small symbol ~ at the end of "sixth" indicates that even though the Masoretic text has "seventh" (as shown in the footnote), the conjecture that "sixth" was the original word is given some support from the Masoretic reading itself. (In this case the two Hebrew words for *sixth* and *seventh* are similar enough to be confused, especially since they are both used elsewhere in the immediate context.) Contrary conclusions are offered by others, but it seems more likely to us that the original text distinguished between the *finishing* of Elohim's work on the sixth day and His *ceasing* from the work on the seventh day.

But when a variant reading is an addition which does

not replace a reading in the Masoretic text, there ordinarily will not be a footnote. For example, the CVOT inserts the conjunction **and** following the word **land** in Genesis 1:11 because it is found in the Septuagint version (^{7}), the Samaritan Pentateuch (^{n}), the Syriac version (^{c}) and certain Hebrew manuscripts such as the Targums (^{s}), even though it is absent in the traditional Hebrew text. The information provided by the superior indicators before and after the word in the translation text itself is sufficient, and no footnote is needed.

A special case is a variant reading based on the practice of certain ancient scribes called the *Sopherim* to substitute the Hebrew term "my-Lord" (*Adonai*) for the Name, *Yahweh*, in certain places out of a fear of misuing the sacred Name. In these instances the CVOT simply restores the Name with the indicators $^{s\text{-}ph}$ attached, as follows: ^{s}**Yahweh**^{ph}. No footnote is provided in these instances.

In some cases, footnotes provide alternate translations for especially difficult words or phrases, variant readings which are of interest but not inserted in the text, meanings of certain proper names and occasional cross-references. When these are not associated with notes on variant readings, they are referenced in the CVOT text by the symbol $^{\lozenge}$**.**

The word **haplography** is often used in footnotes; it refers to the common scribal error, where the copyist's eye skipped from one occurrence of a Hebrew letter, word or words to a similar terminology in the adjacent context, thus omitting a portion of the original text. This apparently occurred in Genesis 41:56, where two phrases beginning with "all" may well have appeared originally, but one phrase was lost when the eye of an early scribe moved from the first "all" to the second "all" in the process of copying the text.

EMPHASIS

Pronouns in Hebrew are expressed by distinct spellings of the regular verbs, but sometimes they are included as separate words as well. In such cases there is probably an intention of emphasis. This is indicated by an accent mark (ʹ) following the pronoun (as in Genesis 3:12, where the word "she" is accented) or by repeating the pronoun (as done with the words "I, I" in Genesis 19:19).

It is likely that when the definite article is used with the Divine Title, **the Elohim**, an *emphasis of particularity* is indicated. To reflect this, we generally use the rendering, "**the** One, **Elohim**" (*cf* Genesis 5:22), in such cases.

The normal word order in a Hebrew thought is verb-subject rather than subject-verb as in English. Hence, in the less usual pattern, when the subject occurs before the verb in Hebrew, a certain measure of emphasis is laid on the subject. Often this is shown by inserting the appropriate pronoun immediately after such a noun, as in Genesis 1:2, where the CVOT has "**the earth, it came** to **be** . . . ." This tells the reader that the Hebrew puts emphasis on the subject, "earth."

The unusual addition of the Hebrew letter *hê* to certain verb forms suggests an intensity of feeling that is difficult to express in English. Especially in the case of imperatives or exhortations, this is usually indicated in the CVOT by the addition of the lightface word "do" as in Genesis 11:3, "Do **let us** ˈ**mold** . . . ."

THE HEBREW VERB

The Hebrew language, strictly speaking, has no verb forms which express either past or future. There are two main verb forms:

1. When the verb inflections of person and number are indicated by *post*fixing equivalent endings to the verb

stem, the emphasis remains on the *fact*, for which the stem stands. We have rendered such forms by the Indefinite or simple present tense ("he-comes") or the past tenses ("he-came," "he-has-come," "he-had-come"). When the context indicates a future sense, we have used the auxiliary term "will" with this verb form ("he-will-come"), and when a sense of contingency is called for we use the auxiliary term "would" ("he-would-come"). Otherwise this form is indicated by the use of a superior, horizontal stroke (⁻) in front of the verb.

This verb form which lays emphasis on the *fact* expressed by the verb is usually called the preterite or perfect tense in Hebrew grammars. In rendering this form in our word-for-word "sublinear" we consistently use the simple present tense ("he-comes").

2. When the pronoun part of the verb is *pre*fixed, the emphasis shifts to the subject pronoun, thus indicating that it is in the *process* of carrying through an *action.* Generally, we have rendered this form by the progressive present tense ("he-is-coming") or the future tense with the auxiliary term "shall" ("he-shall-come," or "he-shall-becoming"). If the context indicates past time, the progressive past tense is used ("he-was-coming"). Where a sense of contingency is in view, the auxiliaries "should," "may" or "might" are used ("he-should-come," "he-may-come," "he-might-come"). This form is also used to express a mood of supplication or desire, and in such cases we use the auxiliary words "let" or "may" ("Let-it-come," "May-it-come"). Otherwise it is indicated by the use of a superior, vertical stroke (ˈ) in front of the verb.

This verb form which lays emphasis on the ongoing *action* expressed by the verb is usually called the future or imperfect tense in Hebrew grammars. In rendering this form in our word-for-word, "sublinear" we consistently use the present progressive tense ("he-is-coming").

THE PRINCIPAL DIVINE TITLE

The different forms of the Divine Title have been rendered as follows: **El, Eloah, Elohim.** In the popular versions, these three forms are rendered "God." However, some Bible translators have indicated the difference outside the text.

The shortest form of the Divine Title, **El,** is singular. It occurs over 200 times in the Old Testament, signifying the sense of Disposer or Subjector.

Eloah is also singular, and 41 of its 58 occurrences are found in the book of Job. In order to express motion or direction, the ending *-ah* (the Hebrew letter *hê*) is occasionally postfixed to a noun, such as west*ward*, east*ward* (Ezek.48:3). It is conceivable that the title **Eloah** refers to Christ and was intended to reflect the general direction of His activity, which is God*ward*, *toward*-the-Deity, *toward*-the-Subjector, *toward*-El (*cf* John 1:1).

The title **Elohim** is plural (*-im*) only in the sense that *El* (God) acts through *Eloah*, and others who are energized by the Spirit of *El*.

It should be noted that when the Divine Name or Titles are taken from the Septuagint, a strong element of conjecture is involved. The Greek *theos* could stand for *El*, *Eloah* or *Elohim*. *Elohim* has been adopted in the version as the most likely original form underlying the Greek. Likewise, the Greek *kurios* ("Lord") could stand for either the Hebrew *Yahweh* ("Jehovah") or "my Lord" ("Adonai").

THE TETRAGRAMMATON

The Divine Name, **Yahweh,** is composed of the elements of the verb "to become." In Revelation 1:4,8 John seems to interpret the meaning of the Name for his Greek readers: The One "Who is and Who was and Who is coming."

PSALM 72

Solomonic

72 O **Elohim,** [g]**bestow Your** right [7]**judgment~**[c]
[›]**on** the **king,**
And Your righteousness [›]**on** the **son of** the **king.**
2 **May he adjudicate Your people** [i]**with righteousness,**
And Your humble ones [i]**with** right **judgment.**
3 The **mountains shall bear peace for** the **people,**
And the **hills** blossom [i]**with righteousness.**
4 **He shall** [j]**redress** the **humble of** the **people;**
He shall save [›] the **sons of** the **needy** one
And crush the **exploiter**[l]**.**
5 [7]**He shall** [c]**abide long~ with** the **sun**
And before the **moon,** in a **generation of generations.**
6 **He shall descend like rain on** the **grassland,**
Like showers, drenching the **earth.**
7 [7]**Righteousness~**[cs] **shall bud in His days,**
And [mn]**abundant peace until** the **moon** is **no** more**.**
8 [+] **He shall** hold **sway from sea unto sea,**
And from the **Stream unto** the **limits of** the **earth.**
9 **Before Him ~**His **foes~ shall bow,**
And His enemies[l]**, they shall lick up** the **soil.**
10 The **kings of Tarshish and** the **coast**lands**,**
they shall render a tributary **present;**
The **kings of Sheba and Seba, they shall offer levy.**
11 **And all** the **kings shall bow down to Him;**
All nations, they shall serve Him.
12 **For He shall rescue** the **needy** one **imploring,**
And the **humble** one, [+]**when** there **is no helper**[l]
for him.

PSALM 72

To Solomon

72 Elohim, your-[judgments]
to-king, give,
And-your-righteousness to-son-of king.
2 **He-is-adjudicating your-people in-righteousness,**
And-your-humble-ones **in-judgment.**
3 **They-are-bearing, mountains, peace for-people,**
And-hills in-righteousness.
4 **He-is-judging humble-**one**s-of people;**
He-is-saving to-sons-of needy-one
And-he-is-crushing exploiting.
5 **[They-are-fearing-you] with sun**
And-before moon, generation-of generations.
6 **He-is-descending like-rain on-grassland,**
Like-showers, drencher-of earth.
7 **He-is-budding in-his-days, [righteous-**one**],**
And-many-of peace until no moon.
8 **And-he-is-swaying* from-sea unto sea,**
And-from-stream unto limits-of earth.
9 **Before-him they-are-bowing, [desert-tribes],**
And-his-enemy-ings, soil they-are-licking-up.
10 **Kings-of Tarshish and-coast**lands**,**
present they-are-returning;
Kings-of Sheba and-Seba, levy they-are-offering.
11 **And-they-are-bowing-down to-him, all kings;**
All nations, they-are-serving-him.
12 **For he-is-rescuing needy-**one **imploring,**
And-humble-one**, and-**there**-is-no helping**
for-him.

13 **He shall be** a **refuge** *on*-**for** the **poor and needy** one,
And the **souls of** the **needy shall He save.**
14 **From fraud and from violence**
shall He redeem their soul,
And their blood shall be precious in His eyes.
15 **And He shall be living;**
+ One **shall give to Him from Sheba's gold,**
And one **shall pray about Him continually;**
The entire day shall bless Him.
16 There **shall come** to **be** a **plenitude of cereal**
in the **earth** *i*-**to** the **summit of** the **mountains.**
Its fruit shall rustle like the **Lebanon,**
And they *f*-**of** the **city shall blossom**
like herbage of the earth.
17 **His Name shall** *b*-**remain for** the **eon;**
Before the **sun shall His Name be propagated,**
And all nations shall bless them**selves in Him**
and *m*-**call Him happy.**
18 **Blessed**[l] be **Yahweh Elohim,** the **Elohim of Israel,**
Doing marvelous[l] works by **Him**self **alone,**
19 **And blessed**[l] be **His glorious Name for** the **eon!**
+ `**The entire earth shall be filled** with **His glory!**
Amen and Amen.
20 The **prayers of David son of Jesse are** *all*-**ended.**

72:1 *7-~* **judgment:** Hb **judgments.**
72:5 *7-cs* **He shall** ◦**abide long:** Hb **They shall fear You.**
72:7 *7-~cs* **Righteousness:** Hb The **righteous** one.
72:9 *~-~* **foes:** Hb **desert-tribes.**

A number of changes have been made in our translation of this psalm since earlier printings, as we continue our attempts to recover the original Hebrew text in accord with readings in the ancient Versions and Hebrew commentaries, likely errors in scribal copying and contextual considerations.

13 **He-is-refuging on poor-**one **and-needy-**one,
And-souls-of needy-ones **he-is-saving.**
14 **From-fraud and-from-violence he-is-redeeming**
their-soul,
And-it-is-being-precious, their-blood, in-his-eyes.
15 **And-he-is-living*;**
And-he-is-giving to-him from-gold-of Sheba,
And-he-is-praying-him**self about-him continually;**
All the-day, it-is-making-blessed**-him.**
16 **It-is-becoming* plenitude-of cereal in-**the**-earth**
in-summit-of mountains.
It-is-rustling like-Lebanon,
And they-are-blosssoming from-city
like-herbage-of the-earth.
17 **It-is-becoming*, his-name, for-eon;**
Before sun it-is-propagating, his-name,
And-they-are-blessing-them**selves in-him, all nations,**
and-they-are-make-happying-him.
18 **Being-blessed Yahweh Elohim, Elohim-of Israel,**
Doing marvelous-ings, alone-him,
19 **And-being-blessed, name-of his-glory for-eon,**
And-it-is-being-filled his-glory, `**all the-earth,**
Amen and-Amen.
20 **They-are-caused-all, prayers-of David son-of Jesse.**

NOTES

Each group of words joined by hyphens (as well as single words) represents a single term in Hebrew.

Verbs followed by an * are shortened in the Masoretic text, indicating they were read with a tone of desire and supplication.

The definite article ("the") is shown only where it actually appears in the Hebrew, even though it is sometimes indicated by the pointed Masoretic text.

Bracketed words represent the Hebrew readings which we have emended in the CVOT.

JUDGMENT AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

PSALM 72 is headed, **To-Solomon,** a compound term which is rendered in the CVOT, **Solomonic**. It closes (along with the second scroll of Psalms) with reference to the prayers of David. From this we may view it as originally composed by David with his son, Solomon, in view. Yet the more we listen to its words, the more we begin to realize that "lo! more than Solomon is here!" (Matt.12:42; Luke 11:31), and more than his reign of forty years is here. Consequently, enlarging its scope and significance, this psalm should certainly be read in connection with those clear declarations in the Prophets (and even the Law and other Psalms), using similar words and thoughts, concerning the Promised One, the Son of David, the Christ, as King during His future kingdom on the earth. This is what continues to give the psalm value to His chosen people, and especially will do so during those dark days ahead of "the great affliction" (Rev.7:14).

And this is its value to us, for whatever is said about Christ and His reign, especially (as here) in relation to righteousness and peace and the glory of God, is truly beneficial to our learning, even if it is not directly concerning our calling. We are not under law, but under grace. But we rejoice in every phase of Christ's reign.

Consequently, from this perspective, seeing in David's prayer a prophecy of Christ as the King ultimately in view, we have capitalized the pronouns in reference to Him. Also, while we recognize the mood of fervent petition which seems to be sustained in the Masoretic Hebrew text

through much of this psalm (except verses 12-14), we have rendered the "imperfect" verb forms starting with verse 3, as declarations of what shall be. This is the pattern generally followed by the translators of the Septuagint Version, working from their unpointed Hebrew text.

In this article I propose to look at Psalm 72 as rendered in the CVOT, noting some of the Version's unique features. In attempting this, I will be considering its relationship to Solomon, but even more critically, watching for what is said concerning Christ and the terrestrial kingdom of God.

Yet also, taking a hint from the CVOT rendering of the Hebrew term "Selah" (as the AV transliterates it), which appears by itself here and there in certain psalms, I will insert an "Interlude"[1] from time to time suggesting points of comparison and contrast with our own calling under grace and expectation of Christ's celestial kingdom. For "All scripture is inspired by God, and is beneficial for teaching, for exposure, for correction, for discipline in righteousness, that the man of God may be equipped, fitted out for every good act" (2 Tim.3:16,17).

KING OF KINGS

The most important factor in the kingdom of God is the King. In its highest meaning, Psalm 72 sees Christ in the thousand year eon ahead, when He shepherds the nations with an iron club and assumes His position as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev.19:15.16). But unlike the emphasis in the vision given to John, this psalm focuses on the King's effect upon Israel and the nations during His days *after* the initial judgment in which He pours out the wine trough of the fury of the indignation of God. Judgment continues, but as an operation of *maintaining* wis-

1. I am taking this term to indicate a pause for meditation on what the psalm is saying.

dom, righteousness, peace and prosperity for all that eon, throughout all the earth.

David himself received Yahweh's unconditional covenant to raise up his seed and establish the throne of his kingdom for the eon (2 Sam.7:12,13). Regarding this, Yahweh's promise of the King and His eonian kingdom, was celebrated in Psalm 132:11, as follows:

Yahweh has sworn to David the **truth;**
He shall not turn back from it:
Out [f]**of** the **fruit of your loin**
Shall I set One [›]**on your throne.**

This lay on David's heart as he sang the words of Psalm 72. Whether or not Solomon was the Promised One, David knew it was certain that out of the fruit of his loin a King will rise Who will reign for the eon. It will be a reign of law in which the exploiter will be crushed and the wrongs of the humble and needy will be redressed. Those who are His foes and enemies will bow down to the soil and propagate His Name. All nations will bless themselves in Him and recognize Him as the Happy One Who brings happiness and succeeds in all that He does. The entire earth shall be filled with God's glory!

INTERLUDE

Yet the viewpoint of this psalm is limited. There is no explicit recognition of the death of Christ for sinners. The old creation remains. The people are under law, and in this, because of the flesh, there looms eventual failure when Satan is let loose from his jail (Rev.20:7). It is a part of the process which leads to the goal, a great step forward from what we experience now, but not yet that level of Christ's exaltation based solely and solidly on His obedience to the death of the cross (*cf* Phil.2:6-11).

It was given to Paul to make known the secret of God's

will. This accords with God's delight which He has purposed in Christ. It is "to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth" (Eph.1:9,10).

That was still a secret when Psalm 72 was written. Yet the wide extent of the millennial rule serves as an opening to the expanding revelation.

AN IDIOMATIC VERSION

In the Preface to the first edition of the Concordant Version of Genesis, A. E. Knoch wrote, "The version is, of necessity, somewhat idiomatic when this is necessary to carry over the sense of the original."[2] But by becoming familiar with the various features of the CVOT as explained in the *Instructions for Use* (pages 103-109) a more literal translation can be traced.

In the opening lines of our translation of Psalm 72, we find at least three of these features: (1) the use of boldface and lightface type, (2) the use of symbols and abbreviations, and (3) the insertion of a variant reading.

The idiomatic translation of Psalm 72:1,2 is:

O **Elohim,** [g]**bestow Your** right [7]**judgment**~[c]
[›]**on** the **king,**
And Your righteousness [›]**on** the **son of** the **king.**

By omitting the lightface words and changing **bestow** to **give** as indicated by the letter [g] and restoring the preposition **to** in place of **on** as indicated by the [›] symbol, and finally, by using the plural word **judgments** in place of the emendation, **judgment,** we can easily read the two lines more exactly as stated in the Masoretic text:

Elohim, give Your judgments to king.
And Your righteousness to son of king.

2. In A Beginning, Concordant Publishing Concern, 1957, pp.7,8.

Although this does not reflect the actual Hebrew word order in the first line (which places the imperative verb, *give,* at the end of the clause), it does illustrate how the CVOT can be used both as an idiomatic translation, and (with some limitations) as a tool for indicating a literal reading of the traditional Hebrew text.

But what does this mean? What does the psalmist desire for the king? Is there any value in using "bestow on" for "give to," and "judgment" instead of "judgments"?

BESTOW RIGHT JUDGMENT

The CVOT sees the giving as a *bestowal* of the *attributes* of judgment and righteousness, that is, judgment and righteousness as qualities rather than as acts. The psalmist prays that, by Elohim's bestowal, these may become part of the character of the king. He looks to Elohim to settle special *endowments* like wisdom or strength or integrity on the king.

But we have trouble with the word *judgment.* A. E. Knoch wrote: "Unfortunately the English word *judgment* has, by its contact with human affairs, taken on a vindictive tinge. We ought to have a new word which is neutral."[3]

Many English versions use the word *justice* here, and that has been urged on us. But *justice* is best reserved as a variant of the Hebrew word rendered *righteousness* in this passage. As an attribute, *judgment* is a matter of insight; it is the ability to make a wise decision. Solomon's judgment was an aspect of the wisdom which God gave him. That is not particularly implied by the word *justice,* which, as a quality, is a matter of rightness. The two words are companions, not equivalents; they complement each other in this description of ideal kingship. We have joined the two qualities into one when we add the lightface word "right"

3. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.17, p.120.

to judgment, but the better solution would be to see in the word *judgment* by itself the neutral meaning of the ability to make, or the act of making a wise decision whether or not it seems pleasant or unpleasant.

THE GIFT OF JUDGMENT

If the word, *judgments,* as given in the Masoretic text here, were the original term used, it would be best understood in reference to Elohim's *ways* or *patterns* of judging. This may be the sense in Psalm 10:5 where the ways of the wicked one are contrasted with Yahweh's judgments. Yet generally divine judgments have the sense of Yahweh's *acts* of judgment, as in Psalm 103:6 where they are set in parallel to His acts of righteousness:

Yahweh is the One [d]**executing** act**s** of **righteousness**
And right **judgments for all** those **being exploited.**

Indeed it is God's gift of the quality of judgment which will enable the king to execute right judgments. Both the attribute of judgment and the executing of acts of sound judgment are gifts from God for the king. But the fact that the ancient Septuagint and Syriac translations of Psalm 72:1 have the singular, *judgment,* in parallel to the singular, *righteousness,* in the second line, strongly support the emendation.

Righteousness and judgment as divine qualities are set before us in Psalm 89:14 where we read:

Righteousness and right **judgment** are the **basis**
of Your throne;
Benignity and truth, they stand [lpc]**before**
Your presence.

Here are four attributes: righteousness, judgment, benignity and truth[fulness]. They all are qualities uniquely characteristic of God. Similar usage is found in Psalm 37:6 and 97:2. Of special interest is the reading in Psalm 36:5,6,

where the Hebrew word for *judgments* (plural) appears in older, printed editions of the Hebrew text. But in reconsidering the textual evidence, the recent, standard edition, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia,*[4] places the singular form in the text line. The CVOT adopts that reading, as follows (Psa.36:5,6):

O **Yahweh, Your benignity** reaches [f]**to the heavens,**
Your faithfulness unto the **skies.**
Your righteousness is **like** the **mountain** range**s**
of El,
Your judgment like the **vast abyss:**
Both **human and beast You** [l]**save,** O **Yahweh.**

Here also, it is God's quality of judgment and His quality of righteousness, as well as His benignity and faithfulness which are specifically in view.

INTERLUDE

The subject of judgment in relation to the believer is not prominent in Paul's epistles, for we are positioned under grace in Christ Jesus, and nothing is now condemnation to us (Rom.6:14; 8:1). Yet as to our service in the Lord, He is our just Judge (endowed with the attribute of righteous judgment), Who will give "wreaths" at the dais to those who have served faithfully (*cf* 2 Cor.5:10; 2 Tim.4:8). We also are told that we shall judge the world, messengers and life's affairs (1 Cor.6:1-3). This is most astounding! In order to participate in such acts of judgment, we will need to be blessed with God's bestowal of *His* attribute of judgment. And this will most certainly be ours, for, on the basis of God's grace through the obedience of Christ to the death of the cross, we shall be conformed to the image of God's

4. edited by K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, Deutsche Bibelstiftung, Stuttgart, 1967, p.1118.

Son (Rom.8:29; 1 Cor.15:47-49). Thus even as the word of the cross (1 Cor.1:18-25) is the basis of our future place as judges, so also this message of God's grace is what works in us even now for adjudication [THROUGH-JUDGEment] among ourselves.

On the other hand, God's attribute of *righteousness* is central to the evangel of God which we have heard and believed. It is revealed to us in its full manifestation in God's work of justification through the faith of Jesus Christ. Paul writes: "For not ashamed am I of the evangel . . . . For in it God's righteousness is being revealed, out of faith, for faith" (Rom.1:16,17). That is not in view in Psalm 72.

GOD'S GIFT TO SOLOMON

As for Solomon, he asked for a hearkening heart to judge His people, and Yahweh replied (1 Kings 3:11,12):

[+]**Because** [w] **you requested** [`]**this** [·]**matter and have neither asked for your**self **many days, nor asked for your**self **riches, nor asked** for the **soul of your enemies**[l]**,** [+]**yet you have asked for your**self **understanding**[–] **to make out** right **judgment, behold, I will do according** to **your word.**

Following this promise, the Scripture recounts Solomon's particular act of judgment and righteousness regarding the two women who claimed to be the mother of the same child (1 Kings 3:16-27). This act of righteous judgment is an example of God's endowment of judgment and righteousness upon Solomon in action. The act arose from God's endowment which had become part of Solomon's character. As an act of judgment it was especially a reflection of the gift of wisdom (1 Kings 3:28):

[+]**When all Israel** [l]**heard** [`]**of the judgment** [w]**that the king had judged,** [+] **they** stood in [l]**fear** [f] **before** the **face of the king, for they saw that** the **wisdom of Elohim** was [i] **within him to** [d]**execute** right **judgment.**

FAILURE UNDER LAW

Yet Solomon did not fulfill the terms of Psalm 72. In instructing his successor, David had said: "I am going in the way of all the earth. So you will be steadfast and become manly. You will keep the charge of Yahweh your Elohim to walk in His ways, *to observe His statutes and His instructions, His ordinances*[5] *and His testimonies as written in the law of Moses,* so that you may act intelligently in all that you do and everywhere that you turn around" (1 Kings 2:2,3).

The law is holy and just and good, but the flesh is weak (Rom.7:7-14). Vladimir Gelesnoff summarizes Solomon's failure as the inability of the flesh to walk steadfastly in accord with the law of Moses:

"[Solomon] transgressed the law in *three* points, and the Lord raised unto him *three* enemies.

"The Mosaic law imposed upon the king three prohibitions: (1) to multiply horses, (2) to multiply wives, and (3) to multiply silver and gold (Deut.17:16,17). Solomon flatly violated these injunctions. He acquired thousands of horses for the royal stables, besides carrying on an extensive horse trade with the adjacent kings, for which purpose was organized a company of royal merchants (1 Kings 4:26; 10:28,29). He took one thousand wives (1 Kings 11:3). He multiplied gold and silver to such an extent that the former became very common, while the latter was thought nothing of in his days, its value being on a par with the stones on the street pavement (1 Kings 10:21,27).

"The selection of Egypt as a center for horse traffic naturally would induce many Israelites to settle there for commercial purposes. To offset this allurement the Lord

5. literally, **judgments;** we may say that ordinances are laws as they originate in the divine judgment of what is fitting in particular situations.

made Jeroboam, Solomon's opponent, a favorite at Pharaoh's court.

"Solomon married an Egyptian wife. This alliance tended to promote cordial relations between the two countries and foster friendship with Israel's ancient foe. To counteract the influence of Egypt the Lord endeared as a son to his father-in-law Solomon's implacable enemy.

"To check the unlimited flow of silver and gold which poured into Jerusalem, the Lord raised against Solomon the king of Syria, to harass the foreign traffic of Israel.

"Solomon made affinity with Egypt, and the Lord made Egypt the rallying center for his enemies!"[6] (*cf* 1 Kings 11:1-40).

Because of his flesh, Solomon failed to exercise judgment in his own personal life. This human problem will be largely remedied in the future kingdom when, under the new covenant, Yahweh will write His law on His people's heart (Jer.31:33,34). (But even that, as we have noted, is not a full solution.)

Over all will be the King, He Who comes of the seed of David, the One supremely in view in Psalm 72.

Accordingly, in Isaiah 11:1-9 we read of Him and His rule of righteous judgment in prophetic language of certainty:

> +**Then** a **Twig will** come **forth from** the **set slip of Jesse,**
> **And** a **Scion, it shall be fruitful from his roots.**
> **And** the **spirit of Yahweh will rest** up**on Him,**
> A **spirit of wisdom and understanding,**
> A **spirit of counsel and mastery,**
> A **spirit of knowledge and fear of Yahweh.**
> + **His scent**– will be **in** the **fear of Yahweh,**
> **And not** ›**by** the **sight of His eyes shall He judge,**

6. V. Gelesnoff: *The Pathway of Faith,* pp.40,41.

Nor ›**by** the **hearing of His ears shall He arbitrate.**
[+] **He will judge** the **poor** [i]**with righteousness**
And arbitrate for the **humble of** [Q]**the**[1] **land**
[i]**with equity.**
[+] **He will smite** [Q]**the**[1] **earth** [i]**with** the **club**
of His mouth,
And [i]**with** the **spirit of His lips**
shall He [c]**put** the **wicked** to **death.**
[+] **Righteousness will** [b]**be** the **belt of His waist,**
And ˙**faithfulness** the **belt of His loins.**
[+]**Then** the **wolf will sojourn with** the **lamb,**
And the **leopard, it shall recline with** the **kid,**
And the **calf and** the **sheltered** lion,
[7]**they shall graze~ together,**
And a **small lad** shall **lead**[l] [i]**among them.**
[+]**Then** the **young cow and** the **bear,**
they shall graze together,
[7]**And together**[0] **they shall recline their young,**
And the **lion, it shall eat crushed straw like** the **ox.**
[+]**Then** the **suckling will revel over** the **hole**
of a **cobra,**
And on the **light-shaft of** a **viper**
the **weaned**[l] child **will obtrude his hand.**
They shall not [c]**do evil,**
Nor shall they [c]**bring ruin in all My holy mountain,**
For the earth will be full of the **knowledge**
`of **Yahweh**
As waters are **covering** ‹ the **sea.**

We see that indeed the supplication of David for his son, Solomon, will be fulfilled in Christ. He will be endowed with the divine spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel and mastery. These are the attributes of kingship which are possessed by the Great Offspring of Jesse in His work of judging the poor with righteousness, redressing their wrongs and arbitrating for the humble of the land with equity.

This view of Psalm 72 as pointing to Christ is not a new one. One modern commentator notes: "The Targum at verse 1 adds the word 'Messiah' to 'the king', and there are rabbinic allusions to the psalm which reveal the same opinion."[7] It will certainly be with the Messiah in view that Israel will be soliloquizing this psalm in the coming days of the present wicked eon, when adjudication with righteousness will be obliterated from the world's rule. No one else can meet the standards set forth here for ideal rule.

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUDGMENT

However the close connection between the first two verses indicates that the supplication for Solomon continues in verse 2. Thus we see David praying that Elohim would bestow on Solomon those attributes for righteous actions which shall be manifested by the promised One.

May he adjudicate Your people [i]**with righteousness,**
And Your humble one**s** [i]**with** right **judgment.**

The attributes of judgment and righteousness requested in the first verse are reversed in the second verse and viewed as acts. Together the two verses exhibit the following structure:

A. *Judgment* as an attribute (v.1a)
B. *Righteousness* as an attribute (v.1b)
B. *Righteousness* in action (v.2a)
A. *Judgment* in action (v.2b)

Judgment and righteousness, righteousness and judgment—these are the qualities and ways of the King which lead to peace and plentitude.

The Hebrew word for *adjudicate* in verse 2 is not the same as the Hebrew word for *judge* ([j]**redress**) in verse 4.

7. Derek Kidner: PSALMS 1-72, *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries,* vol.14a, InterVarsity Press, 1973, p.254.

The context indicates that the two words are similar in meaning, but they do not have the very same meaning.

Searching out the two words in our VOCABULARY INDEX FOR THE CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT,[8] we find that *judgment* and *judge* are in the same family. But *adjudicate* is in a different family which includes the Hebrew word for *Lord.* (The verbs *rule* and *govern* are sometimes used in other translations where we have *adjudication,* and these would relate to the noun, *lord*, quite well.) We may say that adjudication speaks of an *authoritative* settling of a wrong, whereas the verb *judge* signifies the making of a *wise* decision.

INSCRUTABLE JUDGMENTS

What David prayed for will be brought to pass by God. But it was not to be fulfilled in Solomon. It is God's judgment that rule shall be placed in the hands of His Son, Who according to the flesh, comes as the Seed of David. So also it is God's judgment that Christ's reign on the earth shall not come until God's own determined time. And it is God's judgment that even when it comes as described in Psalm 72, it shall not be a full-fledged and unending operation of divine righteousness, peace and well-being. Nevertheless, that exaltation of Christ where righteousness, peace and glory triumph under His reign shall ultimately be enjoyed by all, everywhere.

"O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are *His judgments,* and untraceable *His ways!* For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" D.H.H.

8. available on our web site at *www.concordant.org* or in printed form from our office (P.O. Box 449, Almont, MI 48003).

PEACE AND PLENTITUDE

WHEN David's promised Seed will come to reign on the earth and adjudicate His people with righteousness and judgment (Psa.72:2), there shall be peace throughout the earth (Psa.72:3):

> The **mountains shall bear peace for** the **people,**
> **And** the **hills** blossom [i]**with righteousness.**

God's judgment is righteous, and this in turn bears the fruit of peace for the people along with righteousness among the nations. It has been observed that mountains and hills are often referred to in Scripture as figures of earthly powers.[1] In Solomon's day there was an unusual measure of peace widely spread on the earth. It was a time much different from the continuing warfare of David's days.

Yet in view of the millennium when Christ is King, the supplications for Solomon become full-fledged declarations of salvation. Instead of jealousy and hate, corruption and enmity, the governments and peoples of all the earth will be affected by Christ's kingship with policies of peace and ways of uprightness.

In Hebrew the word translated *peace* also holds the sense of *well-being.* It means an absence of turmoil and conflict, but also it signifies, by the figure of association, the presence of prosperity and plenty. Because of the qualities of judgment and righteousness bestowed on the King, there will be peace.

Yet that happy rule has not yet come; it did not come

1. *cf Unsearchable Riches,* vol.19, p.170.

even when Christ descended two thousand years ago as Jesus, "Yahweh-Saviour." He came to save His people *from their sins* (Matt.1:21), and this required His rejection and crucifixion before the peace and salvation spoken of in Psalm 72 could be realized. Yet, because of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God (*cf* John 1:29), that time of peace and prosperity shall be realized. What a day that shall be for all the earth!

INTERLUDE

In the meantime, for us who have been granted the grace of hearing and believing the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, and whose realm is inherent in the heavens, it is well to pray for our fellow human beings and those who are in superior station over us. This is as our apostle Paul wrote to Timothy (1 Tim. 2:1-4):

I am entreating . . . that petitions, prayers, pleadings, thanksgiving be made for all mankind, for kings and all those being in a superior station, that we may be leading a mild and quiet life in all devoutness and gravity, for this is ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour, God, Who wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth.

May God grant, in accord with the counsel of His will, a measure of judgment and righteousness to those around us and those above us even in the perilous periods in which we live (*cf* 2 Tim.3:1).

JUDGMENT AND SALVATION

Psalm 72:4 speaks surely of a far greater king than Solomon and a more blessed kingdom than his reign. Indeed Solomon's misrule culminated in Yahweh's promise that, rather than blessing, He would humiliate the "seed of David" (1 Kings 11:39). And after Solomon's death, all Israel came

to his son, Rehoboam, and spoke of the harsh service and heavy yoke that had been placed upon them by Solomon (1 Kings 12:4). This hardly fulfills the vision of Psalm 72.

Yet the King Who will come as the promised Seed of David will manifest judgment and righteousness in all His dealings. His judgment will be seen as just and fair by all. For those who have been exploited it will clearly be a matter of redressing their wrongs and delivering their souls from sorrow and pain. And for the exploiters who had crushed them (*cf* Psa.94:5), they will be exposed and crushed (Psa. 72:4) without grounds for complaint:

He shall [J]**redress** the **humble of** the **people;**
He shall save › the **sons of** the **needy** one
And crush the **exploiter**[L]**.**

The salvation spoken of here and later in verse 13 is salvation of the *soul* (*cf* v.9), which lays emphasis on the senses. The judgment will deliver the low and needy from sensations of despair to those of happiness and peace.

Thus it will be that Christ will come as the One Who is "speaking in righteousness" and is "abundant to save" (Isa. 63:1). And this will not be confined to the land of Israel alone, but will extend throughout the earth (Isa.42:1-4):

Behold, My Servant! I am upholding [i] **Him;**
My Chosen One Whom **My soul holds dear!**
I have [g]**bestowed My spirit** up**on Him,**
[Q]**And**[I] **He shall** [c]**bring forth** right **judgment**
to the **nations.**
He shall not cry out **nor lift** His voice,
Nor shall He [c]**make His voice heard in** the **street.**
A **reed** that is **bruised**[L]**, He shall not break,**
And a **flaxen** wick that is **dim,**
He shall not quench it;
Un**to truth He shall** [c]**bring forth** right **judgment,**
[Q]**And**[I] **He shall not be dimmed nor bruised**

Until He should place right **judgment in** the **earth**
And the **coast**lands [l]**wait for His law.**

INTERLUDE

Christ's reign on earth will be a glorious time of peace and salvation. Yet it will be under law, and Christ comes to us in grace, apart from the imposition of works of law.

We all are needy, yet also we all are enemies. This is a critical point in distinguishing our calling from that of the Circumcision. We are the infirm and lowly ones, not because we have been exploited, but because we have nothing of ourselves in which to boast (*cf* 1 Cor.1:26-29). The evangel of Romans 3:21-8:39 is not unfolded until it is recognized that, by works of law, no flesh at all can be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20). In accord with this, as enemies, although we bow in acclamation to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we are not crushed, but rather conciliated to God through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10). Such dominance of grace is not in view in Psalm 72.

ABIDING LONG

The first line of verse 5 in the Masoretic text reads: "*They shall fear You* with the sun." But the Septuagint translators seemed to have worked from a Hebrew text which read: "*He is being caused long* with the sun." Again, the two readings would appear much alike in the Hebrew. But the abrupt change of subject from "He," the King, to a plurality of people called "They," the changes of "He" to "You" in reference to the King, and the introduction of fear into this context disrupt the flow of thought.

Our "judgment" in favor of a slight change in the Hebrew, supported by the reading of the Septuagint, is truly harmonious with the context, not only of the psalm as a whole, but of the immediate context in which duration is emphasized. Hence we read (Psa.72:5):

[7]**He shall** [c]**abide long~ with** the **sun**
And before the **moon,** in a **generation of generations.**

The sun and moon speak of permanence in the sense of continuing through human history as far into the future as from the distant past. That is the viewpoint of the psalm. It does not speak of an everlasting kingship, for ultimately, when all is subjected to Christ, He will subject Himself to God that He may be All in all (1 Cor.15:28). Indeed, even the reign which is in view here in Psalm 72 will give way to a higher phase of Christ's kingdom in the new creation. Nevertheless He will abide long in carrying out the work of judgment, righteousness and peace described here. It will be a generation of generations, a grand and lasting generation of a thousand years which exceeds all past generations in glory.

REFRESHING AND ABUNDANT PEACE

In the last days of this eon, Christ will descend with indignation, but in "His days" of kingship during the millennium He will bring abundant peace (Psa.72:6,7):

He shall descend like rain on the **grassland,**
Like showers, drenching the **earth.**
[7]**Righteousness~**[cs] **shall bud in His days,**
And [mn]**abundant peace until** the **moon** is **no** more**.**

The fine figure of the King's descent like showers bringing a much needed drenching to the earth reflects one of the earliest prophecies of the rule of the One Who is just and upright, and Whose ways are right judgment. As his life drew to a close, Moses sang a marvelous song in praise of Yahweh, Israel's Elohim. It began in Deuteronomy 32:1-4 with words like those of Psalm 72:6, as follows:

[c]**Give ear,** O [l]**heavens, and** do **let me speak,**
And let the earth hear the **sayings of my mouth.**
My monition shall trickle as rain,

7**And**nc **my saying shall distil as night mist:**
As drizzle on verdure,
And as showers on herbage.
For the **Name of Yahweh am I proclaiming:**
Grant greatness to our Elohim!
The Rock—flawless are **His deed**s**,**
For all His ways are right **judgment.**
The **El of faithfulness and without iniquity;**
Just and upright is **He.**

That prophecy was like refreshing showers to Israel after the long journey through the wilderness. So Psalm 72 tells of the One Who Himself will descend to the earth with blessing, like rain on the grassland. After many generations of arid, human governments, He will establish Elohim's kingdom of judgment and righteousness and abundant peace.

According to Revelation 15:2-4, when Christ returns as the Lambkin, those who come off as conquerors will sing this song of Moses along with the song of the Lambkin, as follows:

Great and marvelous are Thy acts, Lord God almighty!
Just and true are Thy ways, King of the eons!
Who may by no means be afraid of Thee, Lord,
And glorify Thy name?
For Thou only art benign.
For all nations shall arrive
And worship before Thee,
For Thy just awards were made manifest.

In his comments on the book of Revelation, "The Unveiling of Jesus Christ," Brother A. E. Knoch wrote concerning this passage: "The prelude to the bowls includes the song of the Lambkin also. It is the complement of Moses' song. That dealt with Israel's past history, as the basis for the judgment in view. This deals with their future story

which follows these inflictions. Those who come off conquerors from the wild beast and from its image and from the number of its name, tune their lyres to the song of the Lambkin, which celebrates the acts and the ways and the name of the Almighty King.

"The song of Moses recites the failure of Israel's sons to worship their God, but the song of the Lambkin celebrates the glorious fact that all the nations will bring their service and adoration to Yahweh. They have seen His acts; they have learned His ways; they rejoice in His justice. Israel's priestly work prevails."[3]

RIGHTEOUSNESS IN HIS DAYS

The Hebrew text of the first line of verse 7 has an adjective, meaning "righteous (one)" or "righteous (thing)," but the Septuagint and Syriac translations, as well as Hebrew paraphrases have the noun form, "righteousness" as in the opening verses of this psalm. There is little difference in the Hebrew spelling of these two forms, but the parallel with "peace" in the second line of verse 7 makes it clear that righteousness itself, as carried out in divine judgment in the future kingdom on earth, is what shall bud in those days of Christ's kingship.

In harmony with this, Isaiah 32 opens with these words:

Behold, according **to righteousness** a **King shall reign,**
+**As for chiefs,** according **to** right **judgment shall they control.**

Christ shall reign, and under Him will be chiefs who will be endowed with the gift of judgment. Hence the prophet continues in Isaiah 32:16,17:

3. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.18, pages 232,233.

+**Then** right **judgment will tabernacle**
in the **wilderness,**
And righteousness, it shall dwell in the **crop** land**.**
+**Then the** [d]**work of righteousness will** [b]**be peace,**
And the service of righteousness, quietness¯
and trust unto the **eon.**

FROM SEA UNTO SEA

For a thousand years the qualities of judgment, righteousness and peace will dominate under the kingship of Christ. These qualities will extend everywhere (Psa.72:8):

+ **He shall** hold **sway from sea unto sea,**
And from the **Stream unto** the **limits of** the **earth.**

The boundary of the promised land itself will extend "from the Sea of Weeds to the sea of the Philistines and from the wilderness unto the Stream" (Ex.23:31). Yet Psalm 72:8 gives only one specific reference point, the Stream (which is the Euphrates). The identifications of the two seas are not specified, opening up the application to any land area between large bodies of water. Similarly, although the same Hebrew word is used for *land* and *earth,* the reference to Tarshish, the coastlands, Sheba and Seba in verse 10, which are outside the land of Israel, make it certain that indeed "all nations" (*cf* verse 11) of the earth are included under the sway of the King. The extent of Christ's effective reign will far exceed that of Solomon. Although centered in Jerusalem it will be global in its reach.

SUBJECTION OF ENEMIES

In verses 9-11 of our psalm the thought turns from words about Christ's effect on His people and the nations, to the response that shall come to Him from His former foes:

Before Him ~His **foes~ shall bow,**
And His enemies[l]**, they shall lick up** the **soil.**

The **kings of Tarshish and** the **coast**lands**,**
they shall render a tributary **present;**
The **kings of Sheba and Seba, they shall offer levy.**
And all the **kings shall bow down to Him;**
All nations, they shall serve Him.

There can be no doubt that these words apply in full truth only to the righteous One Who comes first in humility, riding on a donkey, the foal of a jenny, but Who shall cut off all the instruments of battle and speak peace to the nations (*cf* Zech.9:9,10). He shall hold sway throughout the earth. There shall be no warfare and no opposition, or self-serving policies among the nations.

The CVOT also emends the Hebrew in Psalm 72:9, replacing the unexpected reference to "desert-tribes," or "desert-beasts" (a term seldom used) with the word "foes." In this case, the emendation is not supported by the ancient versions, but the Hebrew words for *desert-tribes* and *foes* are very similar and could easily have been confused in copying.

The terms "foes" and "enemies" often appear in parallel (e.g., Psa.27:2; 74:10; 81:14; 89:42; Isa.1:24; 59:18; Lam.1:5; 2:4,17). Like *judgment* and *adjudication* they are similar in usage and meaning, but each provides its own distinct emphasis.

As indicated by our *Vocabulary Index* the word *foe* is in the CONSTRICT family and is often rendered *distress.* It speaks of those who oppose by distressing and constricting *acts.* While *enemies* certainly oppose by means of acts, these acts are seen as rising from an attitude of enmity within. Fundamentally a foe is an opposer in action and an enemy is that opposer in his schemes of the mind. In its most basic sense an enemy is an enemy in *comprehension* [THROUGH-MIND] (*cf* Col.1:21).

In Psalm 72:4, we saw that the King will crush the

exploiter. Now in verse 9 we learn that those who had sought to limit Him by wicked schemes and acts will bow to the soil before Him. By placing the subject before the verb in several lines here (an unusual word order in Hebrew), a special emphasis is laid on the fact that *enemies* and *kings* and *all nations* will be subjected! The CVOT attempts to show this emphasis by adding the verbal pronouns to the subjects in these instances: "His enemies, *they*," "kings of Tarshish and the coastlands, *they*," "kings of Sheba and Seba, *they*," and "All nations, *they*." These former enemies are marked out here as those now made submissive to the King.

RESCUE, REFUGE, SALVATION AND REDEMPTION

The tone of supplication is entirely absent even in the pointed Hebrew text in verses 12-14. The psalmist declares with conviction concerning the King:

For He shall rescue the **needy** one **imploring,**
And the **humble** one**, +when** there **is no helper**[l]
for him.
He shall be a **refuge** [on]**for** the **poor and needy** one**,**
And the **souls of** the **needy shall He save.**
From fraud and from violence shall He redeem
their soul,
And their blood shall be precious in His eyes.

The King's actions of rescue, refuging, salvation and redemption for His people in that day are certainties. The King rescues the needy one from his imploring, and He does the same for the humble one who is without help. He becomes a refuge from physical poverty and need, granting salvation for the suffering soul, redeeming the oppressed from fraud and violence.

The King will look on those whose blood was shed, from Abel through the time of Israel's great affliction, as

precious in His eyes (*cp* Psa.116:15). According to Daniel 12:2, these shall awake to eonian life in the kingdom. These were given the special privilege of becoming types of the One Who now redresses their wrongs along with all His needy people in that day. With these terms of rescue and refuge and salvation and redemption, together with the reference to the precious blood of the needy, the psalm brings us close to the theme of all scriptural themes: that of the One Who will rescue and save and redeem the sinner by *His* precious blood. It would be given to Isaiah to reveal that the One foreseen in Psalm 72 will be One Who would be given up to death because of the transgression of His people (Isa.53:4-10):

[so]**Surely He Him**self **has borne our illnesses,**
And our pains, He was burdened with **them;**
+**As** for **us, we accounted Him assaulted**[l]**,**
Smitten[l] **of Elohim and humbled**[l]**.**
+**Yet He** was **wounded**[l] [f] **because of our transgressions,**
[7]**And**[Q] **crushed**[l] [f] **because of our depravities.**
The **discipline of our well-being** was **on Him,**
And [i]**with His welt**s comes **healing for us.**
All of us, like a **flock, have strayed;**
Each to his own **way, we have turned around,**
+**Yet Yahweh Him**self **causes** `the **depravity of us all**
to **come** up**on** [i] **Him.**
Hard pressed is He, and He is **humbled**[l]**,**
+**Yet He is not opening His mouth;**
Like a **flockling to slaughter is He** [l]**fetched,**
And as a **ewe is mute before her shearers**[l]**,**
+ **He is not opening His mouth.**
From restraint and from judgment He is taken,
And `on **His personal** fate**,** [a]**who is meditating?**
For He is severed from the **land of** the **living;**
[f]**Because of** the **transgressions of My people,**

[7]**He is led to death~.**
And [Q]**they~** [lg]**appoint His tomb** `with the **wicked,**
[+] `With the **rich** [Q]**His sepulcher~,**
[on]**Although He had done no**[t] **wrong,**
And no[t] **deceit** was **in His mouth.**
[+]**Yet Yahweh desires** to **crush**[–] **Him,**
[Q]**And**[I] **He causes** [Q]**Him**[I] to **be wounded.**
Should His soul [l]**place** a **guilt** offering**,**
He shall see a **seed,**
He shall lengthen days,
And the **desire of Yahweh shall prosper in His hand.**

In accord with this prophecy, Peter will fill out the message of Psalm 72:12-14 with these words:

And if you are invoking the Father, Who is judging impartially according to each one's work, you may behave for the time of your sojourn, with fear, being aware that not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, were you **ransomed** *from your vain behavior, handed down by tradition from the fathers, but with the* **precious blood of Christ,** *as of a flawless and unspotted lamb, foreknown, indeed, before the disruption of the world, yet manifested in the last times because of you, who through Him are believing in God, Who rouses Him from among the dead and is giving Him glory, so that your faith and expectation is to be in God.* (1 Peter 1:17-21)

And Paul, who would become severed from his ties with Israel, yet whose heart would dwell on their future salvation with delight (Rom.10:1), also would write of the time when "all Israel shall be saved." That salvation accords with the words of Isaiah 59:20,21 and 27:9, as follows (Rom.11:26,27):

Arriving out of Zion shall be the **Rescuer.**
He will be turning away irreverence from Jacob

And this is My covenant with them
Whenever I should be eliminating their sins.

The One Who is the Redeemer and Rescuer of Israel from their sins and transgressions will be the Saviour of their souls in His days as perceived in Psalm 72.

Even as Israel failed to recognize their Messiah when He came before them, so even today they do not recognize the absolute need for His suffering and the shedding of His precious blood. But before they enter into the blessings spoken of in this psalm, He will reveal Himself to them and say to them as He did to John in vision, "Do not fear! I am the First and the Last, and the Living One: and I became dead, and lo! living am I for the eons of the eons" (Rev.1:17,18).

THE LIVING ONE

When Solomon was anointed king, the people shouted: "May king Solomon live!" (1 Kings 1:39). Literally, they said, "King Solomon shall be living!" But they shortened the verb, "shall be living," so as to speak hurridly, with emotion. By this means a mood of fervent supplication was probably expressed. For the equivalent expression in English, we would say, "Long live King Solomon!"

The very same shortened form of the verb "shall be living" appears in the Masoretic text of Psalm 72:15a. Yet in accord with the viewpoint of the prophets and the Septuagint Version, we are overlooking the shortened form of the verb and taking it in its regular, declarative sense. In reference to Christ, Psalm 72:15a declares as a further word of praise: "And He shall live!" or expressed more vividly: "And He shall be living!"

However often this psalm is read as the Masorites seem to have read it, with fervent hope and supplication, it seems very likely that in accord with its highest value, it will be

sung with with a tone of fervent exultation. The King shall be living! The One Who died, He shall be living, and He is the One Who shall be reigning for the eon!

Psalm 72:15a seems to stand out from all the rest of the psalm. It does not match the second line with parallel terminology, as in the other couplets, and thus invites special attention. If the resurrection of Christ is discerned in this psalm, it is here. And the resurrection means necessarily that He died.

We look back again at the Song of Moses, where we read of Yahweh in His work of adjudication, declaring of Himself, "I am the Living One for the eon" (Deut.32:40). The King shall be living as the One Who died, and lo! He is living!

INTERLUDE

I cannot pass by this remarkable line concerning the King as the living One in His terrestrial reign without some reference to Christ's significance to us now and in the future among the celestials as the living One. In that Christ died, He died to Sin once and for all time, and in that He is living, He is living to God (Rom.6:10). In that I have been baptized into Christ's death, so that I died together with Him, I shall be living together with Him also (Rom.6:3,8; Col.2:20; 3:3,4; 2 Tim.2:11), and in this, living to God.

This shall be true of us all. We shall know what life truly is. The association with Christ as the Head of the body will be spiritual, which is far closer than the physical nearness of Israel to their King in the millennium. But we all (ultimately all mankind) shall know Him as the One Who died for us and is living.

A LIFE OF BLESSING

The King (Who died for His people) shall be living, and He shall be blessed. And His kingship will be a blessing of vibrant life every day throughout the earth (Psa.72:15,16):

And He shall be living.
One **shall give to Him from Sheba's gold,**
And one **shall pray about Him continually;**
The entire day shall bless Him.
There **shall come** to **be** a **plenitude of cereal**
in the **earth** [t]**to** the **summit of** the **mountains.**
Its fruit shall rustle like the **Lebanon,**
And they [f]**of** the **city shall blossom**
like herbage of the earth.

GOLD AND PLENTITUDE

The presence of the One Who died and is living will be a blessing throughout the earth. He will be enriched with gold. And in this, judging from Solomon's example as a type of Christ, we may see Him as the One responsible for the radiant temple as the dwelling place of the glory of God. We also may see Him here as the Determiner of the earth's economy. Each individual will recognize the King's importance to his and her own life and will pray for Him. Every new day, from morning to night, will be a means to bless Him anew. There will be no famine, no failure of crops in the cultivated areas of the countryside, but a plentitude of cereal and fruit. And those of the city will be as flourishing as the blossoming herbage which will grow there and throughout the earth.

BLESSED AND HAPPY

In bringing judgment, righteousness, peace and well-being to the entire earth during the millennial eon the King will be honored and praised as no other king has ever been. His works shall be marvelous, and His Name shall be lauded wherever the sun shines. In blessing Him the people shall be blessed in Him, and in noting and singing of His happiness they are made happy, as Psalm 72:17 declares:

His Name shall [b]**remain for** the **eon;**
Before the **sun shall His Name be propagated,**
And all nations shall bless them**selves in Him**
and [m]**call Him happy.**

In calling the King happy, the nations will be testifying that their own happiness is sourced in Him. Not only the reign of Solomon, but the rule of Job in his land foreshadows, in remarkably similar language, that future time described here in verse 17. In his sufferings Job describes his former position and its effect on others who called him happy and testified in his favor (Job 29:7-16):

[i]**When I** went **forth**⁻ to the **gate**
standing **over** the **town**
And [l]**prepared my seat in** the **square,**
The **youths would see me and hide** themselves**,**
[+]**While** the **hoary headed would rise** and **stand.**
The **chiefs would restrain** [i] their **declarations**
And [l]**place** the **palm** [>]**over their mouth;**
The **voices of** the **noblemen were hidden** back**,**
And their tongue would cling to their palate.
[t]**When** the **ear heard,** [+] **it** [m]**called me** [l]**happy,**
And when the **eye saw,** [+] **it** [l]**testified** in **my** favor**.**
For I made a way of [l]**escape** for the **humble**
who **implored**[l]**,**
And the **orphan and him** who [>]**had no**[t] **helper**[l]**.**
The **blessing of** the one **perishing** [l]**came on me,**
And I caused the **heart of** the **widow** to **be** [l]**jubilant.**
I put on righteousness, and it [l]**clothed me;**
My right **judgment** was **like** a **robe and** a **turban.**
I became eyes to the **blind,**
And feet to the **lame** was **I.**
I was **father to** the **needy** ones**,**
And the **cause of** him **I knew not,**
I would [l]**investigate it.**

As happy as that time was, how much happier must Job's position have been when Yahweh blessed his latter years more than in the beginning (Job 42:10-12)! Not only in his sufferings, but in his governing as well Job stands as a type of Christ, Whose reign will surpass in glory every scriptural type.

MARVELOUS WORKS

The psalm closes in verses 18 and 19 with exclamations of praise to Yahweh Elohim, Who is responsible for the marvelous works of that coming kingdom, so that the entire earth is filled with His glory. "Amen and Amen," that is, *Faithful and Faithful* are these words:

Blessed[l] be **Yahweh Elohim,** the **Elohim of Israel,**
Doing marvelous[l] work**s** by **Him**self **alone,**
And blessed[l] be **His glorious Name for** the **eon!**
[+] [`]**The entire earth shall be filled** with **His glory!**
Amen and Amen.

Finally, at the end of both Scroll Two of the Psalms and Psalm 72 we are reminded of David who led the way in this collection of songs of praise and prayer to Yahweh Elohim:

The **prayers of David son of Jesse are** [all]**ended.**

In this study we have seen how David's prayer for Solomon becomes a prophecy concerning Christ and the blessings of His terrestrial kingship.

For us now, even when the lawless one has not yet been unveiled, whose presence is in accord with the operation of Satan (2 Thess.2:6-12), we hear of that blessed time of righteousness and peace under Christ's kingship with comfort and joy. How much more will these words from the Law and the Psalms and the Prophets mean to the faithful of Israel when the son of destruction arises over mankind at the end of this eon.

INTERLUDE

Now in view of our calling in grace, we declare:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ. (Eph.1:3)

And we pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of His Son, that we may perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints, and what is the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing (*cf* Eph.1:15-23).

D.H.H.

Brother **Jack Shaw,** of West Covina, California, died on July 1, 2013, at age 90. Jack's wife Laurel preceded him in death on April 7, 2013. They were married for almost 70 years. Jack was a devout believer who reveled in the evangel of Christ, and was a member of the board of directors of the Concordant Publishing Concern. He encouraged and helped us in many ways, most especially through the salutary influence of his abiding good cheer and kindness.

Stella Sta Maria, of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, died on April 7, 2013. She is survived by her husband Jeff (who is the Malaysian agent of the Concordant Publishing Concern), to whom she was married for 48 years. Stella had a quiet and unassuming manner, exemplifying the ideal of "the aged women [to be] in demeanor as becomes the sacred . . . teachers of the ideal, that they may bring the young wives to a sense of their duty to be fond of their husbands, fond of their children" (Titus 2:3,4).

Charles Cronk, of North Fairfield, Ohio, fell asleep in Christ on June 17, 2013, at age 60. From his youth, Charlie rejoiced in the grace of God in Christ Jesus. He had a great sense of humor and enjoyed making people smile.

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 104th Year

(1909–2013)

Contents:

145 Editorial
148 To Die You Shall Be Dying
153 Dying Unto Death
161 Adam and Christ and Us
171 Then and Now
181 The Rations of Sin
183 The Gracious Gift of God

FOURTH QUARTER, 2013

Volume 104 **Number 4**

Vocabulary Index

for the
Concordant Version of the Old Testament

This *Vocabulary Index* is an attempt to provide users of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT) access to full listings of the occurrences of each major Hebrew or Aramaic (Chaldee) word (except most proper names) used in the Old Testament.

It is admittedly more complex and less convenient than the Keyword Concordance published with the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT. But until such a concordance using the vocabulary of the CVOT can be made available this may serve as a useful substitute.

This is an abridgment of a full list of the English terms used in the CVOT, still being updated in 2013 as work proceeds on a first edition of the Version as a whole.

The list is keyed to ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW AND CHALDEE CONCORDANCE (EHCC, 5th edition), which is presently available under the title, ENGLISHMAN'S HEBREW CONCORDANCE (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody MA 01961-3473, ISBN 0-913573-21-3). The word entries in this latter edition are coded to the numbering system of STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE, and these numbers are also provided in our index.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FOURTH QUARTER 2013
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED FOUR

EDITORIAL

In the following pages we say much about Adam and Sin and Death, but this is so that we might focus on Christ and Righteousness and Life. And this is so that we might be growing in realization of God.

We begin with the CVOT of Genesis 2:5-17, matched on the opposite page by a literal rendering of the Hebrew. This is followed by two articles on the phrase, "to die you shall be dying," in Genesis 2:17, and Paul's explanation of this phrase in Romans 5:12. These two studies (and a later one on the word "rations") are a bit technical, dealing with grammar and word meanings. But the issue is a critical one. Is death being conceived of (in these passages) as a process which proceeds to a culmination of the body's return to the soil, the soul's return to the unseen and the spirit's return to God?

The three articles on Romans take the position that this is truly Paul's viewpoint in his exposition of the evangel of God. In Adam, human beings are sinners who are dying and shall die. Yet in Christ, we all shall be constituted righteous to the end that all will be living to God, so that He becomes All in all (*cf* Rom.5:18,19; 1 Cor.15:21-28).

In the meantime, only a few are believing this evangel which is wholly centered on God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and wholly directed to the glory of God. But as we are believing it we find it is the power of God for salvation. Thanks be to God that we have been given over to this teaching, listening to it attentively, from the heart (Rom.6:17)!

D.H.H.

GENESIS 2:5-17

5 +**As** for **any shrub of the field, it** had **not yet** |**come** into **being** *i***on earth, nor** had **any herbage of the field yet been** |**sprouting, for Yahweh Elohim had not** *c***made** it **rain on the earth, and** there **was no human to serve `the ground.**
6 +**But mist, it** |**ascended from the earth and irrigated** `the **whole** sur**face of the ground.**
7 + **Yahweh Elohim** |**formed `the human** out of **soil from the ground, and He** |**blew in**to **his nostrils** the **breath of life; and the human** |**became** › a **living soul.**
8 + **Yahweh Elohim** |**planted** a **garden in Eden,** *f***in** the **east, and there He** |*pl*|**put `the human whom He had formed.**
9 +**So Yahweh Elohim** *c***made** |**sprout from the ground every tree desirable**| **to** the **sight and good for food,** +**with the tree of life in** the **midst of the garden, and** also the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil.**
10 + There was a **stream** flow**ing forth from Eden to irrigate `the garden;** + **from there it** |**parted and became** › **four head**streams**.** 11 The **name of the** first **one** is **Pishon; it** is **the** one **surrounding `the whole land of Havilah where the gold** is**.** 12 + **The gold of** ·**that land** is *S***very***n* **good; the pearl** is **there and the onyx stone.** 13 + **The name of the second stream** is **Gihon; it** is **the** one **surrounding** `the **whole land of Cush.** 14 + **The name of the third stream** is **Hiddekel; it** is **the** one **going east of Asshur; and the** ·**fourth stream, it** is the **Euphrates.**
15 +**Then Yahweh Elohim** |**took `the human and** |**settled him in** the **garden of Eden to serve it and to keep it.**
16 **And Yahweh Elohim** |**instructed** *on* **the human,** › **saying¯: From every tree of the garden you may eat,** yea **eat¯.**
17 +**But from** the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you** must **not** |**eat from it; for** *i***on** the **day you eat¯ from it,** to **die¯ you shall be dying.**

A LITERAL RENDERING

5 **And-all shrub-of the-field not-yet it-is-becoming in-earth, and-all herbage-of the-field not-yet it-is-sprouting, for not He-causes-rain, Yahweh Elohim, on the-earth, and-human** there**-is-no to-serve `the-ground.**
6 **And-mist, it-is-ascending from the-earth, and-it-irrigates `all face-of the-ground.**
7 **And-He-is-forming, Yahweh Elohim, `the-human** of **soil from the-ground, and-He-is-blowing in-his-nostrils breath-of lives; and-he-is-becoming, the-human, to-soul living-**one**.** 8 **And-He-is-planting, Yahweh Elohim, garden in-Eden, from-east, and-He-is-placing there `the-human whom He-forms.** 9 **And-He-is-causing-sprout, Yahweh Elohim, from the-ground all tree being-desired to-sight and-good to-food, and-tree-of the-lives in-midst-of the-garden, and-tree-of the-knowledge-of good and-evil.**
10 **And-stream forthing from-Eden to-irrigate `the-garden; and-from-there it-is-being-parted and-it-becomes to-four heads.** 11 **Name-of the-one Pishon; it the-surrounding-**one **`all land-of the-Havilah which there the-gold.** 12 **And-gold-of the-land the-that good; there the-pearl and-stone-of the-onyx.** 13 **And-name-of the-stream the-second Gihon; it the-surrounding-**one **`all-of land-of Cush.** 14 **And-name-of the-stream the-third Hiddekel; it the-going-**one **east-of Asshur; and the-stream the-fourth, it Euphrates.**
15 **And-He-is-taking, Yahweh Elohim, `the-human, and-He-is-settling-him in-garden-of Eden to-serve-it and to-keep-it.** 16 **And-He-is-instructing, Yahweh Elohim, on the-human, to-say: From-all tree-of the-garden,** to**-eat you-are-eating.** 17 **And-from-tree-of the-knowledge-of good and-evil, not you-are-eating from-it; for in day-of** to**-eat-you from-it,** to**-die you-are dying.**

TO DIE YOU SHALL BE DYING

A NOTABLE PASSAGE—which, indeed, contains the very first mention of death in the Word of God—is the penalty imposed on Adam in case of his disobedience.

"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen.2:17, AV).

How are we to understand this statement? That Adam lived on for nine hundred years is beyond dispute (Gen.5:5).

"SPIRITUAL DEATH"

In my earliest efforts to solve this problem of the death which overtook Adam when be sinned, I fell back on a phrase then common among Bible expositors, that is, "spiritual death," in contrast to "physical death." Later, when I sought to avoid unsound unscriptural expressions, I was forced to drop these non-scriptural phrases. Then I saw how misleading they were. The effect of Adam's sin was not confined to his spirit, and his relationship to God. It vitally affected his physical frame. He became mortal, in the active sense of dying, and this he has transmitted to the race, which accounts for all disease and sin as well as alienation from God. Adam and his posterity have been *physically* dying ever since. It is true that he became *figuratively* dead to God, yet the figure is not founded on his spirit alone, but upon his future literal death, which included spirit, soul and body.

How confusing this manner of speaking may be can be seen in the death of our Lord. He died *physically* when He commended His *spirit* into the hands of His Father (Luke 23:46). So it is with all flesh, for it has no life apart

from the spirit. Literal death always includes both flesh and spirit, for the flesh returns to the soil when the spirit returns to God. The converse is true also. Death limited to one of man's components is impossible, or figurative. The fact that unbelievers are figuratively dead *to God* is based upon their literal death. They are not dead *to men,* spiritually or otherwise. They are simply so oblivious of the Deity as if they were literally in the grave.

The complementary terms "spiritual life" and "physical life" are also non-scriptural and unsound, for they imply that there is life apart from spirit. It is not easy for us to avoid them because we are not accustomed to the language of figures which is so freely used in the Scriptures. It is necessary for us to break with these misleading expressions, however, for it is practically impossible to grasp the truth as to death and life so long as we harbor them.

PROCESS AND CULMINATION

The literal Hebrew wording, "To die you shall be dying," brings before us a *process* of death, culminating, indeed, in actual death, but of indefinite duration in its operation.

The same phrase is used in a similar sense in Genesis 20:7; 1 Samuel 14:44; 22:16; 1 Kings 2:37,42; 2 Kings 1:4,16; Jeremiah 26:8; Ezekiel 3:18; 33:8,14.

The most interesting of these occurrences is 1 Kings 2:37, where we have the identical statement made to Shimei by Solomon in case he should dare to leave the confines of Jerusalem. "In the day . . . to die shall you be dying" gives us a perfect parallel case. And, like Adam, Shimei transgressed. And like him *he did not die* on the day he crossed the brook Kidron, but went to Gath after his servants and returned. This would not be so notable if Solomon had offered some excuse for not keeping his word and sending after him to fulfill his threat. Indeed, Solomon reiterates his previous words, not omitting the phrase "in the day"

and proposes to carry it into execution several days afterward! It is evident that his understanding of this phrase was quite different from the impression conveyed by our usual English translation.

Such evidence as this is valuable—far more valuable than the labored efforts of Hebrew scholarship. Learning is ever lame, but here is evidence of Solomon's interpretation of this phrase—and how many would dispute his knowledge of Hebrew?

DYING TO DIE

The penalty imposed upon eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was *death* (Gen.2:17). The AV rendering, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," seems to definitely declare that Adam would die the very day in which he ate. Nevertheless, the event showed that this could not be the meaning, for Adam not only did not die that day, but lived over nine hundred years (Gen.5:5). This is much longer than most of his descendants have lived. There is little doubt that the Hebrew could be rendered idiomatically as our popular version has it, so far as words and grammar go. The question is one of figurative language. They render the literal Hebrew TO-DIE YOU-ARE-DYING as a figure of speech in which the one form of the verb, TO-DIE, is used to emphasize the other, which gives it the sense of certainty. This figure is often used in the Scriptures.

DEATH UNKNOWN

But such a figure depends upon a background of experience. It is not likely that Adam was acquainted with death in any form, so that even its literal meaning would be difficult to grasp. Without understanding this first, a figure would be entirely incomprehensible to him. Moreover, the actual consequences, which followed the eating of the forbidden fruit, were exactly in accord with the literal Hebrew. The *dying* process began right after eating. Hitherto, food had imparted the needed substances for maintaining *life.* Now an element was introduced which produced a slow form of *dying,* accompanied by painful and humiliating experiences. In this way the fruit imparted the knowledge of both good and evil. Eventually, however, the evil prevailed, and Adam's body dissolved in *death.* All this is confirmed by the judgment passed upon him.

INHERITED DYING PRODUCES SIN

The forbidden fruit imparted to Adam and Eve the knowledge of good and evil. This tree is no longer with us, but the *death* which it imparted has been inherited by the whole race. *This it is what makes men sinners.* We do not need to be lured and deluded by a sinister spirit being in the form of a serpent, nor do we need to eat forbidden fruit. It is not that our *nature* is sinful, but because the *dying* process, which Adam first felt on the day he ate the forbidden fruit, has been continued and prolonged, not only until the day of his death, but in all his progeny. The life which he had received when Yahweh Elohim blew into his nostrils the breath of lives (plural), was not limited to himself alone, but included the entire race which springs from him. After his offense, he passed on the dying process, so that each one of his descendants also acquires the knowledge of good and evil. This is confirmed by Paul in Romans (5:12) where he says: "Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through to all mankind, *on which* all sinned."

NOT DEATH, BUT DYING

It was not Adam's *death* that gave him the knowledge of good and evil, but the experience of *dying.* There is no knowledge in the unseen which he entered at death

(Ecc.9:10). In Eden he had nothing but good, but did not appreciate it. Afterward, for nearly a thousand years, the good was accompanied by increasing evil as he grew older, so that he doubtless looked back to Eden and to his younger days with longing and appreciation. *The good had not given him the knowledge of evil, but the evil did endow him with the knowledge of good, and of God's goodness and love, which gave it.* That is the function of evil, and we may rest assured that God will see to it that it will not be overdone, lest it have the opposite effect, and show Him to be a god of hate.

EVIL LIMITED BY DEATH

If the lesson to be learned from the knowledge of evil were never finished, but continued endlessly, it would defeat the purpose God intended it to accomplish. If Adam were still alive, many thousands of years old, instead of nine hundred, decrepit, diseased, helpless and hopeless, would that serve the loving purpose of God? A measure of evil is necessary before men can appreciate the good that God gives them by His grace, before they are able to praise and adore Him for it. But endless, infinite evil would only turn His creatures' hearts against Him with utter despair and hate. So it is that *God has wisely shortened the process of dying by death*, where there is no knowledge whatever (Ecc.9:5), until the resurrection. Adam had been formed from the soil (2:7), and, in death, he was to return thither (3:19). And so with all mankind. God's purpose is served and their lesson is learned by a comparatively short course in evil on the earth.

A. E. Knoch

For the momentary lightness of our affliction is producing for us a transcendently transcendent burden of glory.
(2 Cor.4:17)

DYING UNTO DEATH

THE best commentary on the words "to die you shall be dying" in Genesis 2:17 is Romans 5:12.

Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death . . . .

Through one human, sin entered *into* the world, the system or arrangement of things which God had established. And through this one act of sinning death also came in as a corrupting process within the human pair. Considering Adam by himself as head of the human race (as Paul does), from that very day in which he disobeyed the instruction not to eat of the fruit of the one tree called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam was dying in such a way that he most certainly would die. So as to die, he was dying.

Moreover, this was an operation of death that spread to Adam's descendants:

. . . and thus, death passed through into all mankind . . .

What happened to Adam was passed on *into* all mankind. *Thus* it was that death as a process of dying which continues unto the state of death has infected the entire human race.

Furthermore, on account of this condition, all sinned.

. . . on which all sinned.

And so it continues to be. Sin reigns in death (Rom. 5:20). It does not reign in the state of death (for the dead cannot sin), but rather it reigns in this continuing operation of death inside us, which takes us downward to such

a state of dissolution that we die. It is this tyranny which calls for a solution in which it is abolished. And this can only be accomplished by the One Who came in the form of a slave and the likeness of humanity in order to die for us who are sinners.

We know we are dying, and we know we are sinners, and knowing how this came about is not as essential as knowing the fact that it is so. Yet the simplicity of cause and effect as Paul reviews it, centered upon one act of one human as it affects all humanity, is extremely helpful to us in understanding and appreciating the evangel of God which concerns one particular act of the One Human (the One in Whom we are created), Jesus Christ, as it affects all humanity. Adam is a type of Christ Who puts an end to sin and death, and brings in righteousness and life.

Our deep concern, therefore, is this word of God called His *evangel* concerning His Son. And we give attention to Genesis 2:5-17 (as Paul does in Romans 5) as it sheds light on God's glorious work of righteousness, power and love in the giving of His Son for sinners. To speak of Adam is to speak of sin and death, bringing humanity to ruin. To speak of Christ is to speak of righteousness and life, bringing humanity to life's justifying. In both cases ONE affects ALL.

HEBREW REPETITION

The Hebrew language delights in what seems to us to be redundancies. Verb forms are frequently used with their corresponding noun forms, striking us as almost unnecessarily stating the obvious. Egypt **oppressed** the Israelites with **oppression** (Exodus 3:9). In Lamentations 1:8 Jeremiah cries out over Jerusalem in that it has **sinned** a **sin**. There will be a future day when Yahweh asks the daughter of Zion, "Now why are you **shouting** a **shout**?" (Micah 4:9).

It is a matter of emphasis to be sure, but an emphasis made by employing a single concept both as verb and object.

The distinct functions of verb and object are retained. We could say that Egypt burdened the Israelites with oppression, or that Jerusalem sinned with idolatry, or that the daughter of Zion raised a shout. But this pattern of identifying the action and its results by means of one term keeps our minds on track. We are not allowed to miss the point.

Now, as we have seen, not only does Hebrew connect verbs with their corresponding nouns, but in a similar way it often joins two forms of a verb in one phrase, usually a finite verb with its infinitive form. This first occurs in Genesis 2:16 where God speaks to the human, Adam, with the first positive instruction of Scripture. The CVOT idiomatic reading is:

From every tree of the garden you may eat, yea **eat⁻.**

The emphasis indicated by the repetition of two forms of the verb "eat" is brought out by the AV rendering, "thou mayest *freely* eat," and most modern versions follow this pattern, using similar adverbs, such as "surely" or "indeed." The CVOT shows the emphasis by preserving the repetition of the verb "eat," joined by the lightface word, "yea." By heeding the information concerning verbs in our Instructions for Use and Abbreviation Key the student can trace out the actual verb forms used in the Hebrew idiom, but for now, we provide this in our (presently unpublished) literal rendering (see page 147) as follows:

From-every tree-of the-garden, to**-eat you-are-eating.**

The emphasis is on the act of eating. The verb "you may be eating" identifies the act, expressing it as an ongoing activity. (In this case the Hebrew indicates a mood of contingency based on Adam's desires as a "living soul"; hence we use the auxiliary *may*.) Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, long considered an authoritative and trustworthy work, describes this verb form as representing actions "which

are regarded by the speaker at any moment as still continuing, or in process of accomplishment."[1]

But the emphasis is not made by repeating the verb ("you may be eating, you may be eating"). It adds the infinitive "to eat" to the verb. As with the idiom using a verb with its noun form, where the noun retains its function as a noun, here also the infinitive retains its function, in this case as an infinitive of purpose. If we change the verb to a related one, we see how the infinitive works in this phrase: "To eat, you may be ingesting food." Here, the infinitive identifies the purpose of the act. Yahweh tells Adam, in effect: "So as *to eat you may be eating.*" Adam needs to eat. In order to meet that need he is to be eating the fruit of the trees of the garden.

With this in mind we come to verse 17 where God lays down a negative instruction, again the first of all such directives in God's Word:

17 +**But from** the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you** must **not** ˡ**eat from it; for** ⁱ**on** the **day you eat⁻ from it,** to **die⁻ you shall be dying.**

So as *to die,* Adam shall *be dying* should he eat of the fruit of this particular tree. The action is visualized as occurring in time, a process indicated by the suffix, *-ing.* The result of this process was to be that Adam would die. (A similar English expression is the judicial sentence: "He is to be hung by the neck *until dead.*" This called for both process and result in order to make certain that a possible breaking of the rope, or some other unforeseen event transpiring before death occurred, would not nullify the objective that the criminal would become dead.)

The negative instruction of Genesis 2:17 centers on the same act as the positive instruction of verse 16. Both have

1. Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar (E. Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley, editors), Oxford, 1976, p.313.

to do with eating, and in both cases the eating is specifically related to the trees of the garden. The act of eating is one of taking food and putting it *into* the body. It is a simple act. It is an elementary act. And it composes the dominate theme of Genesis 2:5-17. Note how we are prepared step by step for verse 17:

At one time there were no shrubs to bear fruit for eating (verse 5).

There was no rain to irrigate plants for food (verse 5).

And there was no human to take care of plants or to eat their fruit (verse 5).

But then we read that, as for irrigation, mist was ascending from the earth (verse 6), and this is expanded later in verse 10 by flowing streams of water in association with the lush garden.

But now in verse 7 a most important step is made: Yahweh Elohim formed the human from the soil of the ground in such a way that the human became a living soul, who had the desire for food and the ability to care for plants which produced the food.

At this point we read that Yahweh Elohim planted a garden in which He placed the human, and He sprouted trees which produced fruit for food, including two particular trees, one for living, and one for knowledge (verses 8 and 9).

The matter of the stream for irrigation (verse 10) completes the process of remedying the lacks of verse 5. (Verses 11-14, providing further information concerning streams and lands outside the garden and non-edible riches are not directly related to verse 17 except that they lay groundwork for matters which will become relevant should the instruction of verse 17 not be followed.)

Finally, with all the missing elements provided, we are prepared for the pivotal events of Genesis 2:15-17. There is the human, and there is the well-irrigated garden with

trees bearing fruit. All of this focuses attention on one particular act: *eating*.

Food is for the inside. So also, the penalty of eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was an internal matter. The dying would not be by means of stoning, sword, fire from heaven or the like, but would be related directly to the eating of the forbidden fruit. And this, as Paul testified, was passed through *into* all mankind from Adam.

SATAN'S STRATAGEM

In deceiving Eve, the serpent inserted a negative into Yahweh's exact words, saying: "*Not* to die shall you be dying" (Gen.3:4). This was a direct contradiction to what God has said. Eve also had obscured the clear simplicity of Yahweh's instruction by adding words He had not spoken. She spoke of not touching the tree, which is an external act, but Yahweh Elohim had spoken only of not eating, which is an internal matter. Then to distract Eve's mind further from God's words, the Adversary immediately directed attention to a truth which God had not spoken: "On the day you eat of it your eyes will be unclosed, and you will become like Elohim, knowing good and evil." In this way, the immediate issue, which was what God had said, was set aside. God's word was confused by Eve and then denied by the Adversary, who changed the subject.

In Romans 5 Paul speaks of death as it was described in Genesis 2:17. It is an ongoing operation which has passed into us from Adam. It is like a despot who reigns over us. Paul directs us to the issue at hand, the issue which the Adversary had so cleverly set aside.

To claim that Genesis 2:17 refers to "spiritual death" is to divert the subject into mystical channels of theology. It is to make an explanation which is not supported in the words God used even if it could have been understood by Adam. God's own explanation is given in Genesis 3:17-19:

[t]Because you hearkened to your wife's voice and [l]ate from the [7]only[0] tree [w]that I instructed you,[›] saying[¯] you must **not [l]eat from it,**

Cursed[l] is **the ground [i]on your [p]account;**
In grief shall you eat of **it all** the **days of your life.**
18 **[+] Thorns and weeds shall it sprout for you,**
And you will eat `the **herbage of the field.**
19 **[i]By** the **sweat of your brow shall you eat [7]your[0] bread,**
Until you return[¯] to the ground,
for from it were you taken.
For soil you are**, and to soil you shall return.**

To die, Adam was dying in a long process of grief and sweat until he would return to the soil.

OTHER OCCURRENCES

The phrase, "to die, [you are] dying," occurs elsewhere about twenty times in the exact form found in Genesis 2:17, with the infinitive "to die" joined to the progressive action verb. These later passages reflect the Genesis passage in pointing to a process of dying which leads to death, but, of necessity, in a shorter framework of time than might have been expected in ordinary circumstances. All who might have been or were placed under this sentence were already "dying in Adam" (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22), but this was understood as a hastening of the process by an imposed act of execution.

For Abimelech (Gen.20:7), Jonathan (1 Sam.14:39,44), Ahimilech (1 Sam.22:16) and Jeremiah (Jer.26:8) the sentence was not carried out for various reasons. But had Abimelech not returned Sarah to Abraham, or Saul been willing and able to carry out his threats, or the priests and prophets and people of Jerusalem not been turned from their evil intention against Jeremiah, death both as a hastened process and as a consummating state would have

occurred. As for Manoah (Judges 13:22), the sentence was in his mind, yet had it been imposed by God, Manoah and his wife would have experienced a quickened process of dying and its culmination in becoming dead. In the case of Shimei (1 Kings 2:37,42) the process of dying began in a legal sense, with execution hanging over him, as it were, from the day he crossed the Kidron, and culminating some days later in the act of Benaiah coming upon him, "so that he died" (v.46). For David's child of Bathsheba (2 Sam.12:14), Ahaziah (2 Kings 1:4,6,16), and Ben-hadad (2 Kings 8:10), the process of dying was already being shortened by illness before the sentence was proclaimed by divine authority, and it continued with the certainty of death in view until they died. Finally Yahweh warned the wicked of the house of Israel with these very terms (Ezek.3:18; 33:8), in which a fearful process was expressed as well as its outcome.

"DYING, THOU SHALT DIE"

The translation, "dying, thou shall die," suggested by the notes in THE COMPANION BIBLE,[2] at Genesis 2:17 and Numbers 26:65 has served well in opening up the meaning of the Hebrew. Although the infinitive is rendered as a participle, and the verb as a simple future, the end result represents the Hebrew meaning in idiomatic English quite well, except it does not clearly retain the sense of purpose. More cross-references are given than those mentioned above because passages using slight differences in the Hebrew from the exact form in Genesis 2:17 are included. Nevertheless, the sense of a process of dying leading to the state of death is applicable in all these instances.

D.H.H.

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2. THE COMPANION BIBLE, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, 1990, pages 6 and 222.

ADAM AND CHRIST AND US

We long to be removed from what we are and become what Christ is. We long to be removed from being slaves of Sin and to become slaves of God, Whose righteousness is revealed in the evangel, and Whose love is commended in the death of Christ for our sakes. Even as Christ died, but now is living to God (Rom.6:10), so we look forward with expectation to be as He now is.

We have death in us. It has passed into our race and reigns over us so that we sin (Rom.5:12-14,17). Death reigns in our bodies, and Sin reigns in death (Rom.5:21).

We long for it to be otherwise.

For believers, it is otherwise!

It is otherwise, not in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit (*cf* Rom.8:4), in accord with God's evangel concerning His Son.

We have died. God has baptized us in spirit into the death of Christ. Our old humanity has been crucified together with Christ (Rom.6:2-7). In our position before God we are dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus our Lord, and so our apostle urges us to be taking this into account (Rom.6:8-11) day by day.

We did not or do not feel or in any way experience by soulish sensations this crucifixion of our old humanity. We have no visible and tangible evidence of it. Yet it is declared to be so by the word of God. We believe it, and in believing it and declaring it and reckoning it is so, and listening attentively to it and presenting ourselves before God with this in mind and heart and being devoted to it as true like a slave who loves his master, we are invigorated by it in our walk and living.

Paul would have us listen to this seemingly unbelievable word and be clinging to it in faith (someday faith will be discarded for sight!). He would have us be declarers who declare the evangel of God's grace and of the gratuity of grace which is in Christ Jesus. Our teacher would have us be perceivers who perceive with the eyes of our heart what God has said about our position before Him in Christ (someday that position which has been procured by the faith of Jesus Christ will be perceived with full perception, in full realization!).

We cannot live now, in the flesh, as we shall live in bodies immortal and incorruptible, conformed to the image of God's Son. But to focus on this message in faith is to be invigorated by the earnest of the spirit, bearing the fruit of the spirit.

ADAM AND CHRIST

What we are in flesh because of Adam, and what we are in spirit because of Christ has been made plain time after time starting with Romans 5:12. *Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned . . . .But not as the offense, thus also the grace* (Rom.5:12,15). Hence we read of the two positions:

ROMANS 5:15

A. In **Adam**
  1. *By the offense of the one*
    2. *the many died.*
B. In **Christ**
  1. *The grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ,*
    2. *to the many superabounds.*

The effect of Adam's offense on his many descendants

is that they are dying unto death. The effect of God's grace operating through the gratuity which is in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ shall superabound over death and all its effects until all its many victims are delivered from it.

ROMANS 5:16

A. In **Adam**
  1. *The judgment is out of one act of sinning*
    2. *into condemnation.*
B. In **Christ**
  1. *The grace is out of many offenses*
    2. *into a* [*righteous*] *award.*

Adam's one act of sinning led to God's judgment which brought mankind under the condemnation of death as a process reaching to its state. The grace of God in not sparing His Son, but giving Him up for us all, and the gratuity in grace, which is the obedience of Jesus Christ in His death for sinners, deals with all the many offenses of all the many descendants of Adam, and brings about the righteous award of justification (*cf* Rom.3:21-28).

ROMANS 5:17

A. In **Adam**
  1. *By the offense of the one,*
    2. *death reigns*
      3. *through the one.*
B. In **Christ**
  1. *Those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness*
    2. *shall be reigning in life*
      3. *through the One, Jesus Christ.*

By the one offense of the one man, Adam, and through him, death reigns over humanity. That is how our dying condition as it leads downward to death began. As sin-

ners we may find this offensive to ourselves. Why should we be reigned over by a power that obtained its enthronement long before we were born? "O human! who are you, to be sure, who are answering again to God?" (Rom.9:20).

On the other hand, we who are believing have already, in spirit, obtained the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness which has come through the One, Jesus Christ. We shall be reigning in life, judging messengers and life's affairs, as instruments of God through whom He displays the transcendent riches of His grace. (And the fact is that all will ultimately be obtaining the joy and peace which Christ has gained for them, and all shall be living as recipients of God's favor.) Is it offensive to us that this is not at all of ourselves, but an operation of God in the giving of His Son, Who subjected His will to the will of His God and Father? (To be sure, it is offensive to those who wish to boast in themselves, and we all probably retain some measure of this pride.) We had no say in this grace, not being able to give our counsel to God concerning what He should do about sin and death. (And that is a good thing, too—a very excellent thing indeed!)

ROMANS 5:18

A. In **Adam**
   1. *It was through one offense*
      2. *for all mankind*
         3. *for condemnation.*
B. In **Christ**
   1. *It is through one just [deed]*
      2. *for all mankind*
         3. *for life's justifying.*

It was just a little offense. In fact some think it never occurred at all, seeing in the account of Genesis three a kind of parable, an elaborate figure of speech to describe

what is "natural" to the race and all living things. But our condition is a condition of condemnation from God resulting from His condemnation of Adam. It is a condemnation to a process of disintegration ending in the state of death. To see this is to increase in appreciation for Christ Jesus, our Lord, for what He did and its effects on the entirety of the human race. Only through the operation of God's righteousness in Christ's one most momentous and enormously important act in dying for sinners in obedience to God's will can this be achieved. That it shall be realized for all mankind is more certain than death, for death will be swallowed up by life (*cf* 1 Cor.15:54-57).

ROMANS 5:19

A. In **Adam**
   1. *Through the disobedience of the one man,*
      2. *the many*
         3. *were constituted sinners.*
B. In **Christ**
   1. *Through the obedience of the One,*
      2. *the many*
         3. *shall be constituted* [*righteous*].

We are constituted sinners. That is our constitution, our make-up. We cannot change it. All the wisdom of the wise and all the strength of the strong has never made us any different, nor will it ever do so. There is only one way by which sinners can become righteous in all they do and are. That is the way of Christ's obedience, the way of His death and resurrection.

The disobedience of Adam was his failure to hearken to the instruction God gave him concerning the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The obedience of Christ was His submissive listening to God's instruction to do what He did not want to do (Matt.26:39; Heb.10:2). (In

accord with Romans 6:16 we are to listen submissively, that is, be obedient to this word of Christ's obedience. Whether we do this or not does not change what Christ did and its effects on us in the oncoming eons, but not to do it certainly deprives us of spiritual strength and growth in our present life and walk.)

ROMANS 5:20

A. In **Adam**
   1. *Where sin increases*
B. In **Christ**
   1. *grace superexceeds.*

What Adam did can never exceed in its effects what Christ did. Grace triumphs over every sin. It always superexceeds with its saving and justifying goodness. This is seldom appreciated, or even wanted where there is trust in human wisdom and power.

ROMANS 5:21

A. In **Adam**
   1. *Sin reigns*
      2. *in death.*
B. In **Christ**
   1. *Grace [shall] be reigning*
      2. *through righteousness*
         3. *for life eonian*
            4. *through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

We see it all around us and know it within ourselves, this effect of Adam's sin in which death as a dying process leads downward to death as a state in which there is no element of life. But we are believing the evangel of God's grace which manifests the righteousness of God in justifying the irreverent through the blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and assures us of life eonian through the same One, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

ROMANS SIX

It is because of Sin reigning in death, and because we turn our attention away from God's grace that our minds get cluttered with such foolish declarations as that of Romans 6:1. As members of Adam's race we are not particularly attracted to grace from God which leaves us without His commendation of us and without warrant for boasting in ourselves. The evangel exposes us for what we are. Grace testifies that we are infirm in the flesh. It is God's answer to the outrageous boast of Exodus 19:8 when Israel declared: "All that Yahweh speaks we shall do."

Romans 6:2-11 corresponds with 5:1-11. What we are in relation to Christ is dominant:

We died to sin; we are baptized into Christ Jesus, baptized into His death, entombed together with Him through baptism into death.

Even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also [shall] be walking in newness of life.

Planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, we shall be of the resurrection also.

Our old humanity was crucified together with Him, that the body of Sin [shall] be nullified, for us by no means to be still slaving for Sin.

For one who dies has been justified from Sin.

We died together with Christ.

We shall be living together with Him also.

Romans 6:12-15 brings this message of our identification with Christ in His death and life into our lives. We are under this message of grace. It is not a message which opens the way to sinning, but a message of God's power for salvation, revealing His righteousness and Christ's faith-obedience, so that it works in us who are believing (*cf* Rom.1:16,17).

These middle verses of Romans six give us a new outlook concerning ourselves and what God has in view for us. The old is still here. But the new becomes operative in our minds, and this, in turn, works on our walk.

ROMANS 6:16-23

In the remaining verses of Romans six Paul continues this theme of the evangel's power in our lives. But here he resumes the comparison between what we are because of Adam and what we are in spirit because of Christ. We will never fully appreciate God's grace through Christ until we perceive our dire need of grace in view of the mastery of Sin over our dying flesh.

Hence in verses 16-22 the apostle contrasts life as an obedient slave of the master called "Sin" with life as an obedient slave of the master first called "Obedience" and then called "the type of teaching to which we are given over," and then called "Righteousness," and finally identified as "God." It is because of Adam and his one act of sinning that Sin has such mastery in human lives so that we listen attentively to its directives. The result is death, coming upon us as a condition which leads ominously to the absence of any element of life. But now a new Master has risen over us who are believing, not law demanding our obedience to instructions for righteous behavior, but the evangel of the obedience (the submissive hearkening) of the One Man, Jesus Christ, the evangel which is the teaching God has given us through His chosen apostle, the evangel manifesting God's righteousness in justifying the irreverent, the evangel which is God's evangel, making Him known through His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. This evangel is ultimately fulfilled and enjoyed in fullness with all being constituted righteous (*cf* Rom.5:18), but already it is set over us and bearing fruit in our lives. This is the type of teaching to which we are given over.

Attentively listening to and clinging to this word of grace strengthens us in a walk of righteousness. Paul, who also is a human being and knows our need, directs us to listen attentively like a loyal and loving slave (*cf* Exodus 21:5,6) to this word of God concerning His Son. The former enslavement is due to Adam's disobedience and is characterized by its focus on soulish desires and independence from God. The latter is due to Christ's obedience, which now becomes a directing power in the believer's life for joy and peace.

We may summarize verses 16-18 as follows, as they contrast these two enslavements with Adam and Christ respectively:

A. In **Adam**
   1. *we are slaves of Sin*
      2. *into death.*

B. In **Christ**
   1. *we are slaves of Obedience,*
      enslaved to the teaching of the evangel,
      enslaved to Righteousness,
      2. *into righteousness.*

Here we notice again that "righteousness" in verse 16 is the result of Christ's obedience, and in verse 18 it is parallel with Christ's obedience, His death for sinners, in which God's righteousness is made manifest. As we listen with dedication to the evangel of Christ's obedience which will be fully realized when we are constituted righteous, God works in us to be willing and working for the sake of His delight (*cf* Phil.2:12,13).

It is in Adam that we are slaves of Sin. It is in Christ that we are freed from the condemnation of sin reckoned to us (Rom.4:6-8; 8:1) and are brought under the powerful mastery of God's word of righteousness made manifest and of love put on display.

ROMANS 6:19

The pattern continues in verse 19 where Paul recognizes the effect of the forces of death and sin which oppress us, but, using the imperative voice, directs us to present our members, that is, *stand* them *beside*[1] the evangel of God's righteousness. This leads to holiness in our walk, a walk that is different from the lawlessness of the old humanity, and reflects the disposition of Christ as it is devoted to the glory of God (*cf* Phil.2:5-8):

A. In **Adam**
  1. *Even as you present your members as slaves*
     to Uncleanness and to Lawlessness
  2. *for Lawlessness*,

B. In **Christ**
  1. *thus also present your members as slaves*
     to Righteousness
  2. *for holiness.*

We can see, therefore, how critical Romans 5:12-14 is to Paul's presentation of the evangel of God concerning His Son. Our faith is not centered in Adam, but Adam is a type of Christ, so that what we know of him and his one act of sinning as it affects mankind, greatly aids us in becoming acquainted with Christ and His faith-obedience as it affects mankind, and especially now as it affects us who are believing.

These considerations on our relationship to Adam in flesh and to Christ in spirit will be continued in an article on Romans 6:20-22, followed by a meditation on Romans 6:23.

D.H.H.

1. *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.280.

THEN AND NOW

WE UNDERSTAND what we are in Christ most clearly when we recognize what we are in Adam. In Romans 6:20-22 these two positions are contrasted in terms of slavery and freedom. For the believer there is an old slavery and a new one, and an old freedom and a new one, each with contrasting results:

A. In **Adam**

1. *For when you were slaves of Sin*
   you were free as to Righteousness.
   2. *What fruit, then, had you then?*
      —of which you are now ashamed,
      3. *for, indeed, the consummation of those things*
         is death.

B. In **Christ**

1. *Yet now, being freed from Sin,*
   yet enslaved to God,
   2. *you have your fruit*
      for holiness.
      3. *Now the consummation*
         is life eonian.

Fresh in Paul's mind as he writes this passage is what he had just written in verse 11 concerning our identification with Christ in His death and the certainty that we shall be of the resurrection also, walking in newness of life. Thus we are to be reckoning ourselves to be:

1. Dead indeed to Sin,
2. Yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

We *were* slaves of Sin and free as to the mastery of the evangel of God's righteousness. That was where we stood

before God as unbelievers. But now He has baptized us into the death of Christ, so that we are dead to Sin and living to God. That is where He has placed us. This new position is *in Christ Jesus, our Lord.* As He has died to Sin once for all, so have we, and as He is living to God, so shall we.

In our old position, like all descendants of Adam, we were slaves of Sin without any power provided to make it otherwise. Before we believed we were *free from* the power of the evangel of God's *righteousness* in our lives. We were bearing the fruit of shame, with death as the certain consummation.

Now we stand before God under grace which enslaves us with love to Him as He is revealed in the evangel. We no longer are free from the spiritual power accompanying faith in the revelation of God's righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ. It is this power which produces fruit of holiness, the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control (*cf* Gal.5:22,23; *cp* Eph.5:9; Phil.1:11). The certain consummation before us is life eonian.

Life eonian is certain, for it has been procured (*cf* Eph. 1:14). It is God's gracious gift (Rom.6:23), not because of our bearing the fruit of devotion to God as slaves of holiness, but because of the devoted obedience of Jesus Christ. That is what makes the consummation of life eonian certain. It lies before us and works within us as we are believing.

The consummation of the enslavement to Sin which Adam's offense brought into the world is death. So as *to die,* human beings are dying. Had Christ not been given up because of our offenses and been roused because of our justifying (Rom.4:25), there could be no outlook for any of us, including Israel, but death. But because of God's love to us in that Christ died for the sake of sinners there is a new consummation in which all shall be vivified (1 Cor. 15:22). For the believer this has a spiritual application and

a spiritual invigoration today and will be fully enjoyed in the oncoming eons.

ENSLAVEMENT

It is a peculiar viewpoint of the modern, western world that every form of slavery is evil and most forms of freedom are good. This has tended to blur Paul's thought here in Romans 6.

To be a slave of Sin is indeed a great evil. But to be a slave of God as He is revealed in the evangel is a most blessed and happy position. So also to be free from the powerful influence of this evangel manifesting the righteousness of God in the justification of the irreverent is a position of genuine deprivation and evil, while freedom from the position of slavery to Sin by our identification with Christ transcends every vaunted freedom imagined by man.

There is certainly a sense of oppression in enslavement to Sin, comparable to the situation in Egypt when God's chosen people were put under hard service:

So the Egyptians made the sons of Israel serve [slave] with rigor, and they embittered their lives with hard service [slavery] in clay and in bricks, and with all service [slavery] in the field, all their service [slavery] which they served [slaved] among them with rigor. (Exodus 1:13,14)

In Hebrew the word for *slave* is the same word for *servant.* Yet we do not see it as a matter of wretchedness when we read that "Yahweh Elohim took the human and settled him in the garden of Eden to *serve* it and to keep it" (Gen.2:15. *cp* Gen.2:5). Here slavery is a blessing, devoid of any sense of rigor and hardness. It is a place of usefulness which exactly fits human needs and abilities. It all depends on the context, on what the service involves and its purpose, and most importantly on the master. Adam's slavery in Eden was most delightful and highly acceptable, although, not knowing good and evil, he did not realize it

until later when the ground was cursed and bore thorns and weeds, and he ate his bread in grief and by the sweat of his brow (Gen.3:17-19).

It is in accord with Israel's slavery in Egypt that humanity is a slave of Sin. Paul will soon write, "I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not. For it is not the good that I will that I am doing, but the evil that I am not willing, this I am putting into practice. Now if what I am not willing, this I am doing, it is no longer I who am effecting it, *but Sin which is making its home in me* . . . . A wretched human am I" (Rom.7:19,20,24).

Our enslavement to God as He is revealed in the evangel of grace, is an enslavement of love. This is pictured in the case of the Hebrew slave who rejected his release from servitude (Exodus 21:2-6):

When you buy a Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve you, and in the seventh he shall **go forth free gratuitously** *. . . . Yet if the servant should say, yea say,* **I love my lord,** *my wife and my sons; I shall not to forth free, then his lord will bring him close to the elohim, and bring him close to the door or to the jamb, and his lord will bore his ear with an awl; and he will serve him for the eon.*

WERE AND ARE

When Paul writes "you *were* slaves of Sin" (Rom.6: 17,20) he is not denying that Sin is making its home in our flesh (Rom.7:17,20). The tenses of past and present refer to our position before God, *in Christ Jesus, our Lord.* It is a position enjoyed in faith. God says we died to sin. This is the word of God in His evangel concerning His Son. As descendants of Adam we still sin in our flesh. But in believing the evangel that we, as slaves of Sin, have died, and that we are justified in God's sight, the evangel of God's righteousness and Christ's obedience becomes a new master in

our lives. This new master is not the law, which instructs us to live righteously. The new master is the glad message that we *are* righteous *in Christ Jesus, our Lord.*

Yes, we still sin. Indeed it is only as we know the tyranny of Sin in our flesh that the teaching of our death to Sin and to our enslavement to Sin becomes an evangel of great joy and power to us. Yet also it is only as we cling to this evangel as a slave who loves his lord and remains loyal to him that our new enslavement to God can become operative in our lives even now, against the tyranny of the old enslavement.

We listen to the welcome words that we *were* slaves of Sin, bearing fruit of shame, leading only to death, and that we *are* now freed from this enslavement. We stand beside this emancipating word and stand our members beside it. We are like slaves who are joyous, separated from embitterment, joined with loving appreciation for our new place and position in Christ. This is what God has given us in His grace. This is what Paul means by enslavement to God.

FREED GRATUITOUSLY

We are slaves who love our Lord. God has **set us forth free gratuitously** through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). Unlike the situation with the Hebrew slave this freedom remains even while we enjoy our new position as slaves to God. Being identified with the death of Christ, we are coming to realize the value of our new standing before God Who pours out His love in our hearts. As with the slave of Exodus 21:6 God has bored into our ear, but not with an awl, but with His instrument of love. This has to do with submissive listening to what God says to us in His evangel. We are attuned to the welcome saying that He is bringing to us in His word, a message that all is well, a word of joy and peace, in which God's power vibrates (*cp* Gen.1:2).

ENSLAVED TO GOD

Hence we see that in Romans 6:22 Paul climaxes a series of phrases concerning our present position:

(1) We are *under grace* (6:14).
(2) We are *submissive hearers of Christ's submissive hearing of His Father's will* (6:16).
(3) We are loyal slaves who *attentively listen from the heart to the type of teaching to which we are given over* (6:17).
(4) We are graced with *enslavement to* the evangel of God's *Righteousness* in the justification of sinners (6:18).
(5) We are *enslaved to God!*

The words, "enslaved to God," correspond to the words, "living to God," in Romans 6:10 and 11. First of all, Christ is living to God. This is a matter of enslavement, of full devotion and faithful listening to what God says to Him as seen most dramatically and unforgetably in His obedience (UNDER-HEARing) to the death of the cross.

So it is the gracious gift of God to us, not simply that we are justified and conciliated, but also that we are enslaved to Him. To be enslaved to the teaching of grace and to Righteousness as it characterizes the evangel is to be enslaved to God. Again and again it must be emphasized. Our enslavement to God is not an enslavement to Him as He spoke to Israel at Sinai. We are not slaves to the demands of His law, but to the declarations of His grace. It is in this message that God's power resides for present living, "training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon" (Titus 2:12).

While riding along a highway I noticed a car with a personalized license plate saying: OBEY GOD. I strongly suspect the owner of that vehicle did not mean to say what Paul is saying in Romans 6:16-22 about obedience and enslavement. In most peoples' minds obedience to God has to do with trying to carry out the "ten commandments." Few are able to connect the word "obey" with the evangel of grace, or the word "enslave" to God as the One has justified us gratuitously in His grace.

The human objection is: If God has done it all, what is there for us to do?

What we are to do is what Paul has been telling us in Romans 6. He would have us hearken to and hold fast to what God says to us so that God may be working in us. This is our enslavement. It is an enslavement to a message.

But again, to us as we are in the flesh, that seems to be a dangerous way of living which should not be boldly proclaimed.

Nevertheless, here in Romans 6 Paul is definitely thinking of slave-obedience as a matter of focusing on the evangel of God's grace.

We are enslaved to God, Who pours out His love in our hearts through the holy spirit (Rom.5:5). We are enslaved to God, Who brings us into the expectation of His glory in His work of salvation and peace. We stand in grace (Rom.5:2). God is not reckoning sin against us (Rom.4:8). It is for us to be believing this revelation of truth so that its power for joy and peace, patience and meekness and self-control might be exercised in our lives even now.

ASHAMED

The fruit of enslavement to Uncleanness and to Lawlessness, i.e., to Sin, is shame. Human beings know what shame is, and, like Adam and Eve, they try to cover up their shame and hide from God (*cf* Gen.3:7-10), or, on the other hand, bring it into the open as though it were not shame at all, but rather a cause for boasting, as Cain's grandson, Lamech, did (*cf* Gen.4:23,24). In either case it is shameful.

We are ashamed of the fruit of our enslavement to

Sin (Rom.6:21). But, like Paul, we are not ashamed of the evangel (Rom.1:16). When we first hear it, we may think it goes too far in its grace, not allowing anything of ourselves in which we may boast. Does it really say that where sin increases, grace superexceeds? Would this not be understood by most people to mean that "we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing?" Is it not an encouragement to sin to say we are not under law, but under grace? Shall we be sinning, seeing that we are not under law, but under grace?

May it not be coming to that!

What is not shameful is that God righteously justifies sinners through the faith of Jesus Christ—sinners who cannot be justified in His sight by works of law. What is not shameful is that we are justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. What is not shameful is that we are justified by the only means by which we can be justified. What is not shameful is the righteousness of God and the obedience of Christ. This, which is not shameful, does not bear fruit of shame.

FRUIT FOR HOLINESS

As slaves of God, clinging to Him as the One Who spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all, we have our fruit, not for shame, but for holiness. Yet, as with the words *obedience* and *slave,* there is much confusion with the word *holiness,* its verb form, *hallow,* and adjective form, *holy,* and especially concerning its related noun, *saint* (meaning, *hallowed* one).

"Holiness in man is a relation to God and not a moral or spiritual quality. A holy person is one who is set apart to God for His use . . . . In Scripture the verb to hallow means to devote a person or thing to God, and holiness is the result of that act, without the thought of change of moral quality being necessarily present. Thus Scripture often predicates holiness of that which can have no moral quality and even of those who are unbelieving and immoral. To sanctify, then, is not to cleanse from sin, but to dedicate something or someone to God."[1]

The verb here in Romans 6:22 is not *hallow,* but *enslave.* But the sense is similar. As believers, devoted like slaves to the God of grace and righteousness and peace, the fruit or result of that devotion is also set apart for God. It pleases Him. Our position before God is under grace, in Christ Jesus, our Lord. It is in believing this, in attending to it in mind, by ear and heart and mouth, that we grow in realization and appreciation of God, and we bear fruit which honors God—fruit for holiness.

CONSUMMATION OF DEATH

When we were unbelievers we did a lot of pretending. In the back of our minds (sometimes in the front) we knew we were in deep trouble and that we would die and that would be the end of it all. We may have found some comfort in philosophical and religious ideas that are not found in God's Word. Perhaps we tried to convince ourselves that we would continue to live in the "good" things we had done, and in people's memories, the ways by which we may have affected the world. Nevertheless, it is death as the very opposite of life that lies before humanity apart from God's love in sparing not His own Son, but giving Him up for us all.

LIFE EONIAN

We shall enjoy life eonian. It is God's gracious gift (as the next verse will remind us). It cannot be taken from us. But Paul is speaking of our lives as believers right now. We live day by day in awareness of what is ahead. We cannot

1. George L. Rogers: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.23, p.431.

prove this is so. What we perceive around us and in our flesh tells loudly against it being so. But our enslavement to God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ and as it bears fruit of devotion to God, makes the consummation of life eonian real to us. The outlook of those who are devoted in mind and heart to God as the God of grace is life eonian.

We know it is so that we shall enjoy life eonian because this glorious future does not rest on any endurance in good works of law which we have done (*cp* Rom.2:7; 3:20). It rests on God's grace which justifies us through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. It rests on what God is, righteous and faithful and loving, as He is manifested in the evangel we are believing.

The consummation of the life of the believer is not life as we have it in Adam, life corrupted by death operating in us, life of infirmity and failure and shame. It is life as Christ is living now. As Romans 6:9,10 makes clear the consummation set before us is:

1. That we shall be roused from among the dead, vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:22).

2. Like Christ we shall no longer be dying, Had Adam and Eve, after their disobedience, been allowed to eat of the tree of life and live for the eon they would have eonian life while still dying, eventually like those kept alive by artificial means while "brain dead." Our old humanity has been crucified with Christ. It is gone. We shall be living and walking in newness of life. Dying and death will be behind us once and for all time.

3. Eonian life for us will be a life of living to God in every way, a life of loving enslavement to Him. This is a life of true and vital significance and usefulness.

We now have the assurance of God's word that this is what shall be, and indeed as to our position in Christ this is how we now stand before God.

D.H.H.

THE RATIONS OF SIN

OBJECTION has been raised to the rendering "the *ration* of Sin is death." It is claimed that the usual rendering *wages* is more correct. What are the facts? The first thing to be considered is, Which Greek word is best rendered wages? The word *misthos* is the only other word rendered wages in the Authorized Version. It is translated *reward* twenty-four times, *hire* thrice, and *wages* twice. A careful study will show that *reward* is hardly correct, for it is usually a remuneration for service. *Hire,* on the other hand, is too harsh. But *wages* always suits.

The next inquiry is, What is the difference between this word and *opsōnion,* the other word rendered *wages*? Two of its occurrences seem to show that this word is not correct.

No one can read Paul's epistle's and fail to see that he did *not* work for wages. None of the ecclesias paid him a proper sum for his services to them. How, then, could he say, "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do you service" (2 Cor.11:8)? How much nearer the facts to render it, "getting *rations* for dispensing to you!" But the phrase "wages of Sin" (Rom.6:23) is still more objectionable. The context uses the figure "*slaves* of Sin." Now slaves are not paid wages, in the literal accepted sense of the term. And Sin, we may be sure, is not an exceptionally generous slave owner. It does *not* pay wages. The sinner does not look for a future pay day. All he gets is present *rations.*

Again, let anyone read Paul's defense in 1 Corinthians 9:1-7. Is he pleading for a salary? There we have three comparisons. One who tends a flock gets *milk* from it. One who plants a vineyard gets *fruit.* Quite a good ration, milk

and fruit. And the third figure should be in line. A soldier gets something to eat and drink also. In no case is a money payment in view. The apostle pleads only for rations, to enable him to work. The wages all wait until the future. He will receive them from the Lord, not from the saints.

With this agrees a near relative of the word, *opsarion*, food fish. The word ration cannot be deduced from this, or it also would be confined to fish. The meaning must be gathered from its usage, in its own contexts. These, if diligently investigated, will show that it does not refer to money, but food, not to wages, but *rations.*

Sin, like slave holders, does not pay *wages,* but only supplies *rations.*

A. E. Knoch

A PROVISION FOR SLAVES

RATION refers to the poor provision made for the sustenance of slaves. It is a scant reward for hard service. Death fittingly rewards the service of sin; the evil pair are always found together . . . .

The statement that death is Sin's ration destroys the error that death is a "debt of nature" and is without moral character. Death is as unnatural as sin is, and both are passing episodes in the purpose of the eons. The false philosophy that accepts death as natural denies the spiritual relation of men to the Creator and degrades them to an unmoral level where they have no kinship with Him. For man who is created in the image of God everything of good or ill that befalls him must have a moral and judicial significance. The cross is the consummate expression of the fact that the ration of sin is death and that death and sin are most unnatural.

George. L. Rogers

THE GRACIOUS GIFT OF GOD

How do we know that what is ahead for us is life eonian? We know it because it is *God's gracious gift.* And it is God's gracious gift *in Christ Jesus, our Lord* (Rom.6:23).

The certainty of life eonian is not based on anything we have done or do. It is not built on any efforts we make to carry out works required by the law. It is not even the result of enslavement to God in listening attentively to His evangel and bearing fruit for holiness.

Romans 6:23 is different from Romans 6:20-22 in that it leaves *our walk* and *our acts* out of the picture. This verse is not concerned with what we do but with what God does for us, in Christ, in contrast to and deliverance from Sin's mastery over us and its effect.

In Romans 6:23 God is the One Who acts in the giving of His gracious gift. Where we come into the picture is that we are graciously given life eonian, and we are graciously given this gift *in Christ Jesus, our Lord.* God is the Giver, and we are the obtainers. And Christ is the One in Whom God gives and in Whom we obtain. That is the only way to life eonian, but it is the way of certainty.

This is very radical. Eonian life is not something we earn. Nor is it anything we contribute to by doing something called "our part." It is God's gracious gift in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Yet, in that it is in Christ Jesus, it is indeed, something earned. But it is not earned by us, by works of law, not even by our faith. It is earned by the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ, by His death for our sakes, in which we are

put to death to Sin (and to law). The prepositional phrase, "in Christ Jesus, our Lord," is critical. It has a double application. It is not to be connected only to the words "life eonian," identifying our position in the enjoyment of life eonian, but also, most importantly, to the words "the gracious gift of God," telling us where God's grace is located, identifying Christ Jesus, the Anointed Saviour, as the One in Whom He graces us with eonian life. God graces us in Christ Jesus, our Lord, with life eonian in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

That is what makes life eonian certain.

For the ration of Sin is death, yet the gracious gift of God is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

As this message of our salvation is worded here, there are three parallel points of contrast and one vital point ending the verse which lacks an expressed parallel in the first half of the verse. Yet the context clearly supplies the missing phrase as shown by the following arrangement:

A. *For*
1. *the ration*
2. *of Sin*
3. *is death*
[4. in Adam].

B. *Yet*
1. *the gracious gift*
2. *of God*
3. *is life eonian,*
4. *in Christ Jesus, our Lord.*

The *ration* is contrasted to the *gracious gift* (the *charisma*).

The ration is *of Sin,* and this is set in contrast to the gracious gift which is *of God.*

The ration of Sin is *death,* which is put in contrast to God's gracious gift of *life eonian.*

God's gracious gift of life eonian is *in Christ Jesus, our Lord.* The contrast between this and Sin's ration of death being *in Adam* is not stated here. But this is clearly taught in Romans 5:12 and verified in 1 Corinthians 15:22. Humanity is afflicted by Sin's ration of death because of Adam's one act of sinning. *In Adam all are dying.* Nevertheless, *in Christ all shall be vivified.*

The omission here of the fact that human beings are under Sin's mastery and have death operating in them because of what they are "in Adam" serves to put the emphasis on the words "in Christ Jesus, our Lord." Adam is a type of Christ, but in the end all that relates to Adam is done away with, and Christ stands alone as the One in Whom God's purpose for humanity is achieved.

TWO POSITIONS

The opening line of verse 23 (section A) refers to the believers as they are (along with everyone else) as descendants of Adam, enslaved to Sin. Because God has baptized us in spirit into the death of Christ (Rom.6:3), we can speak of our enslavement to Sin as what we were "then" (Rom. 6:20,21). Yet in the flesh we still are experiencing the mastery of Sin which entered into the world through Adam.

The second sentence (section B) refers to the believers as they are "now" in spirit (Rom.6:22). This is where we are different from the unbeliever. We are not free from the influence of the evangel which proclaims the gracious gift of God. We are enslaved to God as He has revealed Himself in His love, in that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes.

Romans 6:23 is an exultant wording of the evangel of God concerning His Son. Yet, although it is often heard in what is called "evangelistic preaching," it is generally presented in such a way that it fails to convey its joyful message of grace. Many take it as a warning against sin and a call to submit to religious service so that one can escape

from "eternal death." But instead, it is a declaration (not a warning) concerning the power of Sin (not the effect of our sins) and what *God* has done about it (not what we must do about it).

The text is not speaking of our sins. It does not say that our sins produce death. The evil here is not our sins (as evil as they most certainly are), but Sin as a stern and oppressive slave owner. Because Paul's teaching in Romans 5:12-21, as it is based on Genesis 2:17 and 3:17-19, has been so confused by human tradition, it seems wise to me to keep going over the same ground: It was through one man that sin came into the world, and through this one act of sinning, death came into the world and passed into all mankind, and because of this all sin (Rom.5:12). It is in this situation where humanity is infected with the fatal disease of dying, that Sin reigns over us, so that we are enslaved to it (Rom.6:16,20). In doing so, it bears the fruit of shame as it did for Adam and Eve. And the consummation of this dying process, filled with corruption and shame, is death in its literal sense of the entire absence of life (Rom.6:21), the return to what we were before we were born, to what the Scriptures call "the Unseen."

Romans 6:23 is not telling us about the prospect of two eternally separated divisions of humanity, one of sinners who go to hell and the other of the saved who live forever in heaven. In that it is addressed to believers it is concerned with us in two contrasting ways, one as we are in the flesh (in Adam) along with all mankind, and the other as we are in spirit, being identified with the death of Christ. The verse is not contrasting the elect with the non-elect, the believer with the unbeliever, but God's chosen ones, who are believing the evangel, as we are in Adam with what we are in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Yet in speaking of us, in no way does it imply that some of mankind, who are indeed dying in Adam, will never be

vivified in Christ and be enjoying the justifying of life (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22; Rom.5:18). God's grace is unalterably opposed to eternal misery and barren loss. And His message of grace, when it is fully appreciated, will not allow any sense of hopelessness regarding others or indifference toward them to remain in the hearts of those who are chosen.

Nevertheless, in Romans 6:23 in its immediate application, both section A and section B speak of us as we are in the flesh, under Sin's mastery, and as we are under the mastery of the God of impacting grace in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

FOR

As noted in our studies on Romans 1:16-18 the conjunction "for" introduces "the logical reason" for what has just been said.[1] The reason why the consummation of shameful enslavement to Sin is death and that of devoted enslavement to God is life eonian is now set out before us.

THE RATIONS OF SIN IS DEATH

The CV translates the plural word "rations" as a singular in accord with English grammar to correspond to the singular word "death." But it marks it as a plural by inserting three small parallel lines before the word. Indeed, the rations are truly one thing, but one thing supplied continually over and over again. In this there is a plurality which should be kept in mind. Death keeps coming on us like an attacking army.

SIN'S MASTERY

In the context of Romans 6:15-23, the metaphor Paul uses is slavery. A slave's rations are not really wages (as the common English translation puts it), but simply what

1. *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.114.

is provided by the slave owner. In that the Greek word for *ration* means PROVISION-PURCHASE,[2] it would seem that they were provisions of food purchased by the slave with a pittance given by the master for this purpose. But any money involved was not payment for work, but simply means for maintaining the life and strength of the slave. The contrast here between rations and the gracious gift is between two kinds of provisions, neither of which is determined by the slave. But the rations differ greatly from the gracious gift in what they say about the slave owner and what they do for the slave.

Sin has no feeling for its slaves. Indeed it has no feeling at all. It is like a monstrous machine. It just does what it does and provides what it provides, and what it does and what it provides are both of them evil.

When sin came into the world it came by means of food which was eaten by Adam and his wife, and in eating this food they suffered the consequence: To die they were dying. In accord with this Paul speaks now of Sin, personified as a slave owner which provides its slaves with death as a process (we are dying), which leads to the eventual state of being dead. Rations are food, or means for getting food. The food provided by Sin is the decreasing vitality and strength of mortality, bringing us to death.

This is what we have in Adam.

THE GRACIOUS GIFT

The Greek word used here is not simply *grace* (JOY, *charis*), but JOY-*effect* (*charisma*). It is grace with an impact. In Romans 1:11 Paul speaks of the spiritual *charisma* that he wanted to share with the Romans. It was a powerful message of grace designed to impact their lives (most likely the word of the conciliation added to the revelation of God's righteousness in His work of justification through the faith of Jesus Christ as this is expounded in Romans 5:1-11). But it is the word's usage in Romans 5:15 and 16 along with the foundational word, *charis,* that is most helpful to us in the context of Romans 6:23. Let us look at that earlier passage with the rendering "gracious gift" being used for *charisma* and "grace" for *charis*:

But not as the offense, thus also the **gracious** gift. *For if, by the offense of the one, the many died, much rather the* **grace** *of God and the gratuity in* **grace,** *which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds.*

And not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity. For, indeed, the judgment is out of one into condemnation, yet the **gracious** gift *is out of many offenses into a just award.*

The *charisma,* as well as the *charis,* is Christ's faithful and obedient act of dying for sinners. Both terms are one-word expressions of the evangel we have received and are retaining, which declares that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor.15:1-3). Yet as summed up in the word *charisma* this message of grace is seen as a gift which has powerful effects.

OF GOD

The *charisma* is the marvelous provision of God for those He has enslaved to Himself. Here God is contrasted with Sin in the role of Slave Owner, and the superiority of His mastery over that of Sin is as great as the superiority of His gracious gift over Sin's rations, and as glorious and welcome and jubilant as eonian life is over death.

God is the Owner Who cares with deepest love for us, and this is expressed by His power-packed gracious gift. He commends this love of His to us in that while we are still sinners, His Anointed One, Who is His Son, died for our sakes, and this was in obedience to God's will. For God

2. *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.239.

spared not His Son, but gave Him up for us all. In this God not only acted through His Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord, but in Him, so that all that our Lord did manifested the mind and heart of God.

We know how powerful Sin is as a slave owner. How much more powerful and successful in His purpose for us is God! "What shall be separating us from the love of God *in Christ Jesus*? Affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? . . . Nay! in all these we are more than conquering through Him Who loves us" (Rom.8:35-37).

LIFE EONIAN

The gracious gift of God is life eonian, which, in this context as it relates to the believers, is life during the oncoming eons (*cp* Eph.2:4-10). It is not "eternal life," but life in the eons ahead in which all enemies are brought into subjection to Christ. In these periods of duration there will be much going on, for Christ will be reigning, and God will be bringing all into subjection to His Anointed One. But the eons ahead and the eonian life enjoyed in them are not eternal; rather they lead forward to the time when God becomes All in all.

The word "eternal" may sound pleasant and assuring to our ears, but if it has any real meaning as an adjective describing the life God gives us in Christ it seems to shut out any sense of activity, purpose and achievement in that life. Even to describe life when God becomes All in all as "eternal life" seems to suggest something static. And then to couple this with a concept of "eternal death" can only darken our appreciation of God's gracious gift. Life will not end with God becoming All in all, for death will have been abolished so that all will be, as Christ is now, no longer dying, but living to God. That is life with purpose and life which involves each one in that purpose.

In God's grace we lead the way in the enjoyment of the life gained for sinners by the death and resurrection of Christ. God's *charisma,* given to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord, is life eonian. This is not life as we know it now, or even as Adam and Eve knew it before they sinned, but life justified (Rom.5:18), in which Grace reigns through righteousness (Rom.5:21), and in which we will be living together with Christ, no longer dying, but living to God (Rom.6:8-11) with full appreciation of all His goodness, His righteousness and love, secured by His power and settled in His peace. It is life in which each one is given a special place of service in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

CHRIST JESUS, OUR LORD

How can we measure the grace, the *joy* of God's *charisma* achieved in Christ Jesus, our Lord, and granted to us as life eonian in Christ Jesus, our Lord? Truly this is grace with an impact. We, who are so much like Adam, have had enough of him. We would come to know more of Christ Jesus, our Lord, in Whom we have life eonian.

He is the Christ, the Anointed One in Whom all shall be headed up, not by the force of battle, not by the elimination of some (who somehow are not to be considered part of "the all") in everlasting death, but the same way our lot is cast in Him: by God's grace through His Beloved's blood (*cf* Eph.1:3-12).

He is Jesus, the Saviour, in Whose Name every knee shall bow and every tongue acclaim His Lordship (*cf* Phil. 2:9-11).

Already God has graciously given to us the assurance of life eonian in Christ Jesus as our Lord, this grace of expectation which impacts our lives with spiritual strength. To Him be the glory for His *charisma* and all its powerful and joy-filled effects!

D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME 105

Because of Another 115
Body and Ears of our Lord, The 45
Concerning What is "About to Be": "Pending" Versus "*Im*pending" 181
Concordant Studies 5, 21, 35, 45, 71, 99, 107, 159
Concordant Version of the Old Testament 149, 165
Concordant Version Notes 149
Devotional Studies 42
Evangel of our Salvation, The 61, 115
Figurative Death and Life in Paul's Epistles 51
Further Thoughts on Romans 7:24,25 162
God's Law of Grace 133
"Grace" in Romans Seven 159
Heaven and Hell 5
I Will Stand Erect 107
In the Hand of the Potter 42
Law and the Knowledge of Sin 126
Obituaries: E. Astarita 125, I. Beachy 20, D. Knoch 144, M. Rice 125, H. Tyndall 144, S. Vogel 78
Object of Creation, The 21
Parable of the Potter 137
Psalm Thirty-Eight 165
Questions and Answers 181
Rescue by Grace 169
Romans Studies 79, 87, 123, 126, 133, 169
Spirit of a Sound Mind, The 71
Thoughts on Law and Sin 79
Three Laws 123
Thus All Israel Shall be Saved 99
To Become Another's 87
Torturing Doubts and Exultant Faith 35
What then is the Law? 61

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 105th Year

(1909–2014)

Contents:

2 "A Prayer"
3 Editorial
5 Heaven and Hell
21 The Object of Creation
35 Torturing Doubts,
and Exultant Faith
42 In the Hand of the Potter
45 The Body and Ears of our Lord

FIRST QUARTER, 2014

Volume 105 **Number 1**

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and
the Judgments of God

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For God and His
Word

VOLUME 105

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and
James R. Coram

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A Prayer

God of my destiny, I bow to Thee;
Fashion me day by day:
Thine are the tools, and the artistry;
I, the lump of clay.

Make me a vessel well pleasing to Thee,
Fill it with love divine:
Only Thine alchemy I now can see:
Make of this water wine!

And with a gift so rare, I am content,
Where e'er Thou leadest me:
Filled at the fountain and then freely spent;
Let me return to Thee!

Shape me, O Master, to Thy sovereign will,
Sharp though the scalpel be.
Stamp me with Thy holy impress until
My all I find in Thee!

E.B.R.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2014
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED FIVE

EDITORIAL

THE first three articles in this issue are by Sigrid M. Knoch (1876–1967). Their content is original, in consideration of her own heartfelt questions and concerns. Yet they were prepared with the support of her husband A. E. Knoch, the co-founder of the Concordant Publishing Concern.

In *"Heaven and Hell, What Did Christ Teach About Them?"* the author declares, "Judgment is necessary in order to prepare the road for grace. Let us not confuse God's goal with the various steps leading to it. Gradually, He reveals His grace, drawing the circles wider and wider, one illumination following the other unto perfect day" (p.20).

"The Object of Creation" begins with the question, "For what purpose is man in the world?" and then replies, "This question is asked by all thinking men, but who is able to answer it? The solution is found in the Scriptures alone, and even there it is not on the surface" (p.21).

In *"Torturing Doubts, and Exultant Faith"* Sister Knoch earnestly asks, "If there is an eternal hell, no other but God Himself can have called it into existence, for no one else would have the power to do so." She then states, "If anything in God's creation can happen apart from His plan, where is there any security in this life or in that to come? Must we not give up our trust and faith in an Almighty God, or assume that sin and hell are a part of His plan?" (p.35).

After consideration of various such issues which had prompted her former "torturing doubts," she then, with rejoicing, turns to affirm her latter "exultant faith," stating: "After long years of torturing doubts, God had mercy on me and turned my darkness into light, my despair into

joy and my misery into exultation. He brought me into touch with His revelation, just as He had written it, apart from most of the mistranslations of well-meaning men, who were bound by creeds and tradition" (p.40).

In the devotional article, *"In the Hand of the Potter,"* William Mealand writes assuringly, "The prophet sees a vessel marred in the hand of the potter. Yet, as he gazes, it is made again, another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make. Now, in this pictured incident, we see that all throughout the vessel is in the hand of the potter. He is the determining and deciding factor.

"So is God, as witness His word to Jeremiah. 'O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel'" (p.42).

"As in creation [God] is our Potter, so in redemption. He makes and He remakes. And even as He took pleasure in His ancient people, a pleasure He will show yet again, so in those of a later day, whom He designates beforehand, He calls and justifies, and glorifies" (p.44).

The concluding article of this issue, by Dean Hough, is strikingly titled, *"The Body and Ears of our Lord."* The exposition begins thus: "The human body which was adapted for our Lord (*cf* Heb.10:5) was a body of humiliation, like our own. References in Scripture to His physical body are almost always in association with His sufferings and death. For it was in fashion as a human that He humbled Himself to the death of the cross (Phil.2:7,8). Yet now He has a body of glory, and it is in conformity to it that our body of humiliation will be transfigured (Phil.3:21)" (p.45) . . . . In the end there must be a Saviour, the Antitype of Psalm 40, Who would be given a body of humiliation and ears fully submissive to God's will and delight, even His desire (*cf* Isa.53:10)" (p.48).

J.R.C.

HEAVEN AND HELL

What did Christ teach about them?

THERE WAS A TIME when I thought I knew this well. But this knowledge, which seemed so clear, so blessed, so wonderful when it first dawned upon me, changed more and more into an unsolvable problem, yea, even a hideous nightmare, because of the way the matter was presented to me in all the churches and meetings I attended.

It was a problem indeed. I knew that Paul had written in Colossians 1:20: "By Him to reconcile all things to Himself," and in 1 Corinthians 15:28: "That God may be All in all." Also in Romans 11:36: "Of Him and through Him and to Him are all things." But then, had not the Lord Himself said: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"? And was not what He had spoken the final truth about these things?

At that time I thought I knew also what it was to be born again. But I, as well as my friends and co-workers began to be burdened by the awful realization of the fact that almost the entire human race was not born again, and therefore lost. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." We had Him, of that we were certain. And that certainty gave us cause for rejoicing and thanksgiving. But did not the verse go on: "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him"? Did this wrath not abide on nearly all those we knew and loved? The thought nearly drove us to despair.

We made the most violent efforts to press all those around us into the "kingdom of God," to "pull them out

of the fire." And, had we had great success, we might have been somewhat relieved. But the worst of it was that nearly all was in vain, when we had thought that God would surely bless our frantic efforts and give us souls in great numbers. The soil was so hard, the harvest so small, the power of the enemy so great, how were we to understand it? Why did God apparently do nothing to break this terrific power? How could He look on at all these "souls dying in sin"? Were they not damned for eternity? Did not His own Word confirm this?

But what did it mean, when you really thought it through? Is it not that God had called billions into existence, knowing that their end would be everlasting fire? Did He not know all beforehand? And had He not, then, been creating men for this purpose for thousands of years? And had not billions lived without even a possibility of being born again? The Bible became a terrific riddle. Even the Lord Himself seemed to have said contradictory things. Did He not say of infants that theirs was the kingdom of heaven? Were these babes in any way "born again"? Why, they had not even been baptized! And could anyone already be "born again" at that time? The Lord had not yet died. If the kingdom of heaven could be had before there was a cross of Calvary, why was it necessary for Christ to go to the cross?

And then Jesus told the people the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. The one went to hell, because he had received his good things in his lifetime. The other went to heaven, because he had received evil. Was that a new birth?

The matter is so serious, so important, the shadow which a false explanation throws on God's character so black, the consequences so awful (because men are driven away from such a God), that it is imperative to penetrate to the bottom of the question. So let us make earnest enquiries whether the usual interpretation of these and other passages of

Scripture is right. For these passages are the ones generally quoted as being the final answer to such questions.

After long years of searching and studying the entire Scriptures, God gave me the wonderful, liberating and satisfying solution—that all the passages quoted are clear and comprehensible, if applied solely to Israel in connection with the kingdom, promised alone to that nation, but that they raise endless and unsolvable problems as soon as we apply them to all men and eternal issues.

THE DIVINE REVELATION BEFORE CHRIST'S APPEARANCE

The so-called "Old Testament" promises in an unmistakable manner the future kingdom of God on this earth. Its king is the Messiah, through whose rule "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab.2:14).

The proclamation of John the Baptist and of Jesus Himself was concerning this kingdom.

To enter this kingdom, Israel must be "born again." Only in this connection could Nicodemus, as a master in Israel, know of it, and could Jesus speak about it at that time. What is usually called a "new birth" today is impossible apart from Christ's death. Yet at that time this death was a thing nobody was able to clearly grasp.

Jesus Himself was very definite about the fact that He was sent to Israel only. He even forbade His seventy disciples to go to others than their own people. Paul says of Him, that He had been a "servant of the Circumcision." Not before Calvary was this revoked. Only after Israel's rejection were God's plans concerning all mankind made known.

Who would think of forcing Christians today to be circumcised? To introduce the Mosaic sacrifices and rituals into our modern churches? We recognize what belongs exclusively to the old covenant people. Yet we fail to draw

the boundary line at the point when Israel was rejected and Paul commissioned to minister to the nations. We deliberately appropriate to ourselves what Jesus Himself carefully restricted to Israel alone.

How could He forbid His disciples to go even to Samaritans, if He had already preached the "conditions for eternal salvation?" And what could these conditions have been at that time, as His death could not yet be proclaimed? Is it right to seek for light on these fundamental questions in such parts of Scripture in which only a shadow is glimpsed of His death, and He is misunderstood by His nearest and dearest; in parts that, on this point, do not differ from the revelations concerning the suffering Messiah in the sacrifices, the psalms and the prophets?

Recently I read in an evangelical tract: "There is an eternal hell, as sure as the Son of God, coming out of eternity, proclaimed it." One thing at least seems clear to the writer of this statement. That is, that the eternal God, who dealt with human sin thousands of years before Christ's advent, had not proclaimed it. He seems also to know, that the word translated "hell" in the "Old Testament" meant only the state to which all dead, even the righteous ones, returned. If not, he would surely have quoted the texts in which Yahweh had already threatened the first human sinners with the consequences of their offenses. Apparently he was unable to discover such texts.

But if "eternal hell" was such a well known place to God's Son, coming out of eternity, it must at least have been in existence as long as sin had existed! What else could have induced God to make such an institution? Why then did He keep it secret from sinners until Christ's coming?

Only one explanation could be offered, and that is that before Christ's coming nobody was ever sent to "hell," because nobody even had a possibility of getting saved.

That is all very well. But could anybody be saved before

Christ died, saved and redeemed in the sense in which we understand it? And did not Christ speak of these things when He was still living?

If we now scrutinize His "threats about hell" a little more closely we discover further peculiarities. To escape the hell of the Rich Man it suffices to listen to Moses and the prophets or to receive ill during this life. The goats to the left go into eternal fire because they did nothing for His suffering brethren. You can escape the worm that dieth not, by mutilating your own body, whether figuratively or literally is here of no moment.

One thing remains certain. We have here a hell, from which man is not saved through faith in Christ, but from which he saves himself by his own doing. A hell in connection with which Christ's death on the cross is not even mentioned. And this is contrasted with an "entry to life," which man can accomplish himself, not only without Calvary's power, but before Calvary's cross, existed. Nevertheless we are most emphatic in asserting that even the most godly and good are lost without Christ, no matter how much they labor and struggle. Anyone who is able to straighten this out, should do it. I was forced to give up trying.

And if hell was so well known to the pre-human Christ, why did neither Adam nor Abraham, neither Moses nor David ever say a word about it? These were men who learned much from God concerning sin and His thoughts about sinners! Have we any right to evade the issue by saying that since Christ appeared the time of ignorance has come to an end, and man is in danger of hell because of the clearer light that Christ brought? He who says so should first prove that the time of ignorance really came to an end then for the vast majority of mankind. Are we to believe that, up to the year of His birth, or maybe to the year of His death, all the heathen in far-away China had gone to heaven, but from then on, to hell?

May nobody say that it is irreverent to use such language! It must be brought to light what the usual "hell-doctrine" really means, when we think it through to its logical conclusion. If the sending of Christ was the one great revelation of God's love, bringing blessing for all the nations and the reconciliation of the world to Himself, it surely does not hurl the great majority of mankind into a hell concerning which God had not said a word until then. If hell were "the wages of sin," God would have made this known in due time. Why must arrogant man say "hell" when God has said "death," and so fill the Bible and Christian doctrine with contradictions that refuse to disappear until we give death the place God gave it? So also with the fire, the worm and all other such judgments.

One who has realized that, in interpreting Scripture, it is most important not to apply everything to everybody without distinction, will receive a Bible full of light and consistent teaching instead of untenable notions that condemn themselves.

If Jesus really is what His name means, the great Yahweh-Saviour, it was not the object of His appearance to bring hell to all who did not accept Him at His coming. It was Israel alone to whom He came. Israel alone He addressed before dying for all mankind. Can we not see how utterly He confined Himself to Israel when on earth from the fact that even His disciples never thought He might also have come for the other nations? Not even after Jesus had instructed them for forty days concerning the kingdom did Peter know anything about His plans for others. He had to have the vision of the unclean beasts in the sheet before he could grasp this new truth.

Can we not see from all this, against what a false background we usually put the Lord's sayings? We connect them with ideas He never had in His mind and which no apostle could have connected with them. New birth, salvation, damnation, heaven and hell, all these have become to us mental conceptions which we believe to be solidly anchored in the Bible, yet which we nevertheless sadly misunderstand, forgetting to whom and in what connection these things were spoken.

WHAT JESUS REVEALED

There are people today who, under the weight of evidence, acknowledge that "eternal" in the Bible does not mean endless, but who, in spite of this, insist on the endlessness of suffering in hell, because the Lord said: "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." With this quotation they think they can still prove "eternal fire." As this seems to be the only argument left to them, it is worth while to demonstrate how untenable it is.

When our Lord came to this earth, this did not alter anything at first concerning the state of the vast mass of mankind and their standing before God. All were and remained what they had become in Adam, mortals on their way to death. It was just as Yahweh had told their first parents. Never did Jesus diverge from that. Never did He make death in Adam to mean life in unending anguish. He was the great, glorious expectation of all Hebrew prophecy. And in order to understand His words correctly we must also understand the prophets of old. What did they set before the longing eyes of the people? Was it bliss in "heaven" after death, or was it a renewed earth, in which the Anointed One of God would rule in righteousness? Were men to enter a "celestial kingdom" on high, or did this kingdom come down to them out of heaven? Would it be erected with the joyous applause of the nations or in the face of bitterest opposition and after terrible judgments? Everyone who knows his Bible a little, knows the answer to these questions. Did Jesus, John the Baptist, the Twelve and the Seventy proclaim the message of the heavenly king-

dom drawing near to the Jewish people, with its king and its power of healing and help for men on this earth? Or did they go to all nations with the gospel of the cross, that tears down all barriers between Jew and Gentile?

Just as well as we know that the message of the cross was not proclaimed until after Israel was rejected, we also know that it could not be proclaimed before there was a cross. We should know as well then that it will never do to sever vital parts of the kingdom message from where they belong and force them into the message of the cross, with which they can never harmonize organically.

What did our Lord have in view when He spoke of the worm and the fire? In Isaiah 66:23,24 we read: "And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another and from one sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against Me. For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh." Out of the preceding chapters we can clearly see that this will be in Jerusalem, in the kingdom of Messiah, which according to Revelation 20 lasts for a thousand years. The unbelieving dead are not raised until after the close of this period, when they shall be judged according to their deeds.

If Jesus, in connection with the kingdom message, also mentions this place where the rebels will be disposed of, it only proves the faithfulness with which He kept His commission. And when He adds that this worm and fire destroy in "Gehenna," this ought to forestall any error. For Gehenna is a valley near Jerusalem in which the offal of the city and also the corpses of executed criminals were destroyed by fires that were not quenched and by worms that went on multiplying.

Is it faithful, reliable interpretation that bows before everything that is written, if we say "immortal souls" instead of "corpses," if we make a place of judgment near Jerusalem to mean the future abode of all unredeemed mankind, if we turn events in the millennium into boundless eternity, the kingdom of God on earth into an unscriptural "other side," a punishment awaiting those unworthy of this kingdom into the fate of billions that never will come in contact with it? Can those who must fall back on such interpretations in order to prove an eternal hell be called trustworthy advisers and counselors? Can we even hope to be able to realize clearly what the cross does stand for if we mix up its message with elements alien to it?

What is the new birth? It is the requisite for entrance into the millennial kingdom of Israel, the great national repentance and conversion of an accursed and rejected people, which can take place only when the King Himself appears in glory, so that all eyes will behold Him, also those that have stabbed Him, and when all tribes of the land (of Israel) will wail because of Him (Zech.12:10; Rev.1:7). Israel proved themselves incapable of attaining to the new birth, when their Messiah came for the first time. In consequence they were cast off, lost their home and their temple, became a curse among all the nations and will remain under God's judgment until Christ comes for the second time, when all Israel shall be saved (Rom.11:26).

All this, Christian teachers have twisted until it means: "Whosoever is not born again will be lost for all eternity." What distortion of the Lord's words! No wonder they create such overwhelming problems.

THE LOST WILL BE FOUND

What does it mean to be "lost?" In the Original it is the same word as is translated "perish" or "destroy" in most of its occurrences. When used by the Lord in connection

with the kingdom message, it means to lose one's life during the judgments that precede His rule, without the hope of entering His kingdom, either by being preserved in the judgment or by resurrection. Only the righteous will be raised before (Rev.20:5,6; John 6:40; 11:25). Applied to the rest of mankind, to be "lost" means to die without redemption and therefore to go into the second death, which Jesus, while on earth, never even mentioned.

And what does it mean to be "saved" or to attain to "eternal" or rather "eonian life?" Well, it means just the opposite of being lost. For Israel, it means entrance into Messiah's kingdom, into that glorious life of the future eons on this earth. In connection with the message of the cross to all the nations, which is valid today, it means the destiny of those called out to be members of Christ's body. These do not perish during the final judgments, nor must they remain in death until called by God before the great white throne.

Their salvation will be by being "snatched away . . . to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess.4:17). And this will mean life with their glorified Head in His heavenly realms as long as the eons shall last. It was not Israel's Messiah on earth who proclaimed this message in Galilee and Judea. It was the resurrected and exalted Christ, sitting at the right hand of God, who entrusted this to His chosen instrument, Paul, as a special message. A message that could not be heralded until Israel's callousness and rejection had become an irrevocable fact and the kingdom was put off, consigned to an uncertain, faraway future.

The defender of "everlasting punishment" shows clearly how untenable his doctrine is by his "proofs" which he takes from prophecies concerning "the day of the Lord." The one who preaches Christ to sinners as the only means of salvation and at the same time threatens them with judgment proclaimed before His death for their sins, the one

who acknowledges no other justification than the one by faith, yet points to rewards for works (see the sheep and the goats) or even to compensation for earthly suffering (Lazarus), cannot claim to rightly divide the word of truth. If he wants to know who the sheep and the goats are he should read Joel 3, then he will see of which judgment the Lord is here speaking. He should not drag generations into this judgment who will never stand there. Surely our blessed Lord, who will sit on this throne, knew of what He spoke and that He addressed people who were familiar with Joel's prophecy, but knew nothing of the cross.

God judges the vast mass of mankind later, when this judgment will be past for more than a thousand years (Rev. 20:5,11,12). And those who today accept Christ will not come into either of these judgments. They belong to the ecclesia which is His body, and "shall be saved from indignation, through Him" (Rom.5:9). Those who see "the church" in the parable of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25 know little about its destiny.

And what the Lord will do at the end of this eon and the next cannot in any way alter His determination to become All in all, when even the rule of the Son comes to an end, because it has accomplished its purpose (1 Cor.15:25-28). May this passage speak for itself. It does not contradict the worm and the fire, as so many imagine. The worm and the fire will not survive the rule of the Son. The prophets cannot say enough of the length, the constancy and the unshakable nature of His kingdom. To most Christians it therefore seems certain that its reign will be eternal. And yet Paul tells us that it will have an end. Not one of the old prophets foresaw this. It was also not part of Christ's commission to disclose this when He was on earth.

Jesus, as "the Servant of the Circumcision"—neither in plain language nor in shadow or symbol—ever went beyond the scope of what had already been revealed to

His earthly people. Indeed, we could never understand Him, if He, as the Servant of the Circumcision, were to have spoken forth such an awful, revolutionary message. Such a doctrine as that of eternal hell would change the entire outlook of Israel's prophets.

Fire and worm in the vale of Gehenna were familiar and clear to His hearers. They knew what Isaiah had said about them. The nation had looked forward to the kingdom for centuries. The worst that could happen to an unworthy member was exclusion from the kingdom (*cp* Matt.8:11; Luke 13:28,29). The faint glimpse which they had concerning resurrection was concerned with entry into the kingdom. The other nations were to receive blessing and the knowledge of God during Messiah's rule. As far as they withstood Him, He would destroy them in the valley of Jehoshaphat or punish with other plagues (Joel 4; Zech.12, 14). The believing Israelite could know no more than this through his own sacred Scriptures. What a few sects may have supposed or what sophistic rabbis imagined is of no concern to us.

But did one single disciple of Jesus believe that all the heathen were eternally damned, and the greatest part of his own people likewise? Did one of them reason from His words as we do today? Many a parable was dark to them, and they asked their Master for an explanation. On hearing the word on the narrow entrance to the kingdom, they were amazed and astonished beyond measure. But we do not read that they were shocked on hearing about the worm and the fire, as a new and terrible message "out of eternity."

It would seem that they clearly understood these things. They were acquainted with their own prophets. They expected no setting up of the kingdom apart from judgment. Even after Christ's resurrection, they waited only for His ascension to the throne of David. No vision of "lost souls" drove them beyond the boundaries of their own people in order to "save" them. Even at Pentecost their message was the return of Messiah. What had the heathen to do with Him? When Cornelius received the holy spirit, they were stunned with astonishment.

But did not Jesus tell them to go to all nations? Indeed, but they were to do so with the message of the kingdom, which has nothing to do with the fate of the individual after death. Pentecost was, for the apostles, the first step towards the inauguration of the kingdom. The other nations were to receive blessing in it on this earth.

Jesus always instructed His disciples when the time for more and clearer knowledge had come. He explained to them His death and His exaltation, before they became witnesses of it. Through the vision given to Peter they learned of God's loving intentions towards the other nations. It seems that this was the first time they saw clearly enough to understand the allusions to this in the prophets (*cf* Acts 15).

But where did He give them light that went further and beyond the kingdom? When did He teach them the truth for today on the ground of Israel's rejection? Did He ever reveal to them that the worm and the fire ought to be understood in a new and different manner, extending far beyond Jerusalem and the kingdom, being universal and eternal, more eternal even than His own reign?

Fire and worm in the vale of Gehenna are clear and comprehensible. Put them into a "hell" on the "other side," and the problems pile up like mountains. No man has been able to find a solution. Those who think they have, inevitably will meet with some contradiction to it elsewhere in the Scriptures. And let us add here, that in the original text the verbs "dieth not" and "is not quenched" appear in the form which denotes a passing action, not a timeless fact. As this is not always easy to express in a modern language,

this important and helpful guide towards right explanation has also been hidden from the average Christian.

THE WORD OF THE CROSS

Today we are bidden to preach the cross and not the kingdom, neither its blessings nor its judgments. The cross is a stumbling block to the Jew, not the fulfillment of his highest hopes. It does away with all his people's prerogatives. It is the great symbol of his rejection. Therefore not one of the twelve was able to preach it. That was entrusted to Paul alone and to those connected with him.

Do not confuse the cross with Christ's sacrificial death. His death as the fulfillment of the entire Jewish ritual was also preached by the others. It brought about a shelter from sin, as the blood of the beasts foreshadowed. It protected from divine indignation. John the Baptist saw in Jesus the Lamb that bears the sin of the world. John writes of Him as the propitiation for our sins and for those of the entire world as well.

His blood cleanses from all sin. But the *cross* means more. It points to the *manner* of His death. The curse was connected with a death like this one. The cross is the display of what man is capable of in his own wisdom. On the cross where Israel murdered its Messiah in order to bring Him under the divine curse, God revealed in His wonderful wisdom to the entire universe the abysmal depths of depravity of the creature and the greatness of His own self-sacrifice and love.

What was an act of wild hatred towards Himself, He turned into a means of showing grace to all. On the cross all human virtue collapses. The nation of Israel has lost all claims to its privileges. God would have a right to cast it off forever. For as He approached it with the fulfillment of promise, it refused Him. If He, after a long time of judgment, will accept this nation again, this will bow and

humble them as nothing else could do so thoroughly. And in the meantime, the cross gave God the opportunity of bringing the other nations to Him.

Out of all mankind the cross gathers today an assembly, the ecclesia, Christ's body, standing on an absolutely different ground than the new birth for entrance into the kingdom. It is a new creation in Christ Jesus (2 Cor.5:17; Gal.6:15). In spirit, we are already seated in these realms: those of the administration following the kingdom, when God creates an order entirely new. In the kingdom, the privileges of the covenant people are still valid. In the new creation, these are all abolished, and therefore are today already abolished for all living in spirit in this new order.

Those in Israel who rightly understood God and His word, knew that it was His plan to bless all in Messiah's kingdom. But further none could yet see. The idea that blessing for the nations was possible on the ground of Israel's rejection of Messiah and the consequent rejection of the kingdom people, was one that nobody could have grasped. Paul alone learned it through the exalted Lord. This is the foundation of his message of the cross. And now Paul's view is still further enlarged. He may behold what no one else saw before him. Not only does he see the entire earth blessed and saved, but all reconciled whom God created—even the principalities and powers of the heavens (Col.1:20). So great is the power of the cross!

Those today who accept the evangel that Christ died for ours sins, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures (1 Cor.15:3,4), become members of the ecclesia which is His body, through which God makes known to the heavenly hosts the greatness of His wisdom (Eph.3:10). They have not only forgiveness of sin through the blood of the Lamb, but God's own righteousness is bestowed upon them.

All who are not reached by the message of the cross

today, or who reject it, must go into judgment, where they receive what their deeds deserve. They must go into the second death. They are not vivified or reconciled as long as death is not abolished. Only indescribable, unmerited grace makes it possible for us to escape this. But the fate of the others is not hopeless. To the contrary, the evangel has opened to us vistas of divine glory and love such as none of the ancients ever suspected. In the light of the cross we can see God's heart, how it embraces all He created. And we see everything in its right place, even His judgments.

Judgment is necessary in order to prepare the road for grace. Let us not confuse God's goal with the various steps leading to it. Gradually, He reveals His grace, drawing the circles wider and wider, one illumination following the other unto perfect day. We have a faint glimpse in Eden of the One crushing the serpent becoming brighter and brighter, until the rays lighten up the entire universe and nothing remains in darkness. And it is all occurring with marvelous order and succession, without flaw or contradiction, and leaving no problems and riddles, so that we can only adore God for such a revelation. Verily it is worthy of His name!

Let us leave to the earth what belongs to it and let us thank God that we may look up to our Lord, exalted over all the universe, to Him who sent us a message out of His glory, concerning the consummation of His ways:

God All in all

S. Knoch

Irene H. Beachy of Lititz, Pennsylvania, passed away on February 8, 2013. She and her husband, Eli, would often visit the Baldwin, Michigan annual fellowship. They began to see the greater truths of God's goal for mankind around 1974.

Irene was a happy, gentle woman and will be greatly missed . . . until the Lord's return.

THE OBJECT OF CREATION

FOR WHAT PURPOSE is man in the world? This question is asked by all thinking men, but who is able to answer it? The solution is found in the Scriptures alone, and even there it is not on the surface. It is one of the "deep things of God," hidden from the carnal mind, from the religious as well as from the intellectual searcher. It can be revealed only by God's spirit. To say that we can know why man was created, may seem a stupendous claim to many. Yet the purpose of man's existence may be determined by those who are guided solely by His Word, not by what they think, nor by the philosophical notions emanating from the human brain.

We learn of a first act of creation by God through the texts which tell us of His having originated the Christ, His Son. In Colossians 1:15 He is called the "Image of the invisible God," as well as, "the Firstborn of every creature." The word "image" means a visible representation and must speak to us of God's longing to be revealed. His objective in originating Christ was that this One should be His revelation. The word "firstborn" in the Scriptures is a figure of speech, denoting the highest in rank and station, the one who is to take his father's place. Christ appears as the Origin or Beginning of God's creation (Rev.3:14). He was present before anything else existed. No other being, no solar system, no speck of matter, was made before Him. There has been much theological discussion about whether the pre-human Christ was born from or created by the Father. All this is vain, for, in His case, there is no vital difference between the two thoughts. In Hebrews

2:11 we read that He is not ashamed to call the many sons, whom He glorifies, His brethren, because He and they are out of One. All—that is the entire universe—is *out* of God (Rom.11:36; 1 Cor.8:6).

But all is *through* Christ, as Paul discloses to us in such majestic words as these: "For in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth . . . all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him" (Col.1:16,17). "For us there is one God, the Father, *out* of Whom all is, and we for Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, *through* Whom all is and we through Him" (1 Cor.8:6). Since the invisible God wishes to be revealed, the One Who is His visible Image was brought forth in order to serve in this capacity. After bringing forth His Son, God needed intelligent beings to be the recipients of His revelation.

In Job 38:4, 7, God Himself asks: "Where were you when I founded the earth? . . . When the stars of the morning jubilated together, and all the sons of Elohim shouted with joy?" This one short passage teaches us wonderful and most important facts: that there were beings allowed to look on when God called some new, marvelous masterpiece into existence, ones who were able to appreciate the power and wisdom exhibited, and to rejoice in it. And it seems as if this grand and glorious universe was then not marred by any discordance, any trace of rebellion, enmity, sin.

Now some might think that this must have been a perfect world, a world which enjoyed a perfect revelation of God, which was therefore capable of bringing the most perfect satisfaction both to Him and to the creatures which He had made. But this was not so. All that His creatures were then able to see was a Creator of unlimited power and ability. His innermost heart remained hidden from them. They could know Him as the embodiment of might, but not as the embodiment of love. They could not know

good as long as there was nothing to contrast it with. They did not know evil. They did not know what it was to overcome evil and to develop good to its sublimest height in the struggle with sin. The Deity they could grasp resembled the One Whom countless unbelievers admire in nature.

God knew that another revelation was needed; needed for His own sake, for the sake of His Christ, and for the sake of His creatures. It was the revelation of evil. The old theological quarrel, whether Satan fell from a state of perfection, or whether he was created as the personification of wickedness, is in vain, for even had he once been good, God made him so that he could become the very embodiment of everything that is evil. And that is what he was made for. He was a necessity for God's most sublime revelation.

We have already referred to the earth's foundation as having taken place later than the creation of the celestial hosts. And the fact that Satan exercises power over this earth makes it most probable that it was made in order to become the scene on which the great struggle between good and evil was to be enacted. It is beyond question that Satan rules today. He himself tells Christ that all the kingdoms of the world were given to him and that he gives them to whomsoever he wills (Luke 4:6). Paul calls him the god of this eon (*aiōnos*, AV "world"; 2 Cor.4:4), and John tells us that the whole world is lying in the wicked one (1 John 5:19).

We also know that there was a disruption of the world, which may be attributed to the misrule and failure of the one who dominated it. This disruption is clearly suggested at the forefront of revelation. This harmonizes with the great truth that God did not create the earth "without form and void" (AV), or rather, "a chaos and vacant" (*cf* Isa.45:18, CV), but that it *became* thus (Gen.1:2, CV), and surely for a good reason.

Thus far we have an almighty God Who is Spirit and therefore invisible to those whom He has made. We have His visible Image, the Christ, and, we have a universe of suns and stars along with intelligent beings, created for the purpose of receiving the revelation of God, in order that He should be satisfied through their heartfelt response to it.

And, to activate this revelation, we have Satan, a being of incredible cunning, ability and power, to whom God gives a stage, a platform, on which he is to demonstrate just what he can do in opposition to God, and what his capacities are able to achieve while yet fearfully estranged from his wonderful Creator. The stage is the earth, on which Satan is allowed to display his true character. A fine object lesson for the hosts of heaven!

But will this alone accomplish God's purpose in creating evil (*cf* Isa.45:7)? Where would the revelation of God's heart come in? Where the revelation of the unutterable superiority of Christ over every other being, not as the Most High, but as the Most Worthy of all? Where the revelation of the value of absolute dependence on God in contrast to Satan's career of self-will and self-elevation? How would it benefit the witnesses of his misrule, if he were permitted to go on eternally as he has started to do, without his sin ever coming to a consummation, bringing about his utter defeat and the triumph of good?

The heavenly onlookers might even become accustomed to behold him running about on the earth, resisting God, yet never having an opportunity of really challenging Him; opposing Christ, yet never able to harm Him; resolute against all who were untouched by sin, but never in a position to tempt and mislead them. It would soon turn out to be a sort of platonic enmity of evil against good, never coming to a real decision. It would never become an adequate revelation of the depths of grace hidden in God and of the lengths to which His love would go; nor of the depths of

iniquity in Satan, and evil's awful culmination. Something more was needed.

So God went about to restore the ruined earth for the scene of His crowning revelation. This calls for circumstances in which Satan would have an opportunity to attack God, demonstrate all his antagonism toward God, and go to the incredible lengths of actually murdering God's Representative. Then, when he believes that he has triumphed over God, he must discover that he has brought about his own complete and final defeat, as well as the glorious victory of the One He wished to destroy.

Satan could never touch the Christ Who existed in the form of God. In order that He might be challenged by Satan unto mortal combat, the Son of God had to empty Himself of His divine majesty and take on a body adapted to this struggle, a body that could be hurt, broken, and sacrificed. As the first specimen of such a being, God created the first man, Adam.

It is hard to express in human words all that it must have meant to God when He formed this wonderful creature in His own image. Man had to be God-like to such an extent that the Christ could become a man without sacrificing His real status. Even in the glory, Christ is and always will be a Man. This one fact places man far above all the principalities and powers of the heavenly realms. Christ never took on their likeness, and God did not choose them to be the instruments of His crowning revelation unto the rest of creation. Once we grasp that we were made in order that Christ could, in our form and likeness, reveal to the universe what God is, what He Himself is, and what Satan is, we can only bow our heads in adoration. Such a vision, once it dawns upon us, is overwhelming. It is an answer to the question of our existence that surpasses in its marvelous grandeur all human explanations, as God's wisdom surpasses ours. But there it is, hidden in the Scriptures.

Paul says in Colossians, that Christ, on the cross, in stripping off the sovereignties and authorities (of wickedness, for Satan has many underlings), boldly made a show of them, triumphing over them in it. This certainly was no show for the people looking on. They saw nothing but utter weakness, defeat and death on Golgotha. It was a show for the benefit of all the heavenly hosts. And Peter speaks (1 Peter 1:12) concerning Christ's sufferings and the glories to follow, into which the messengers are yearning to peer. That is why Christ always calls Himself the Son of mankind and again and again says that His task on earth is "to reveal the Father." But this had to be in the form of a man. It was evidently a revelation superior to the one which He could become to the universe in His pre-human glory.

In Philippians we find much light on this subject. Christ emptied Himself of His divine form in order to become a man, and as a man became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Golgotha was the reason for His becoming a man, for it was God's central revelation to the entire creation. What is set before us on the cross cannot be surpassed by any other unveiling, or exhibition of power, splendor and majesty.

Evidently Satan craved to bring man under his power as soon as mankind appeared on the scene. In this way he wanted to wreck God's purpose with humanity. And yet he has only fulfilled it. God's wisdom, in truth, surpasses all our comprehension. Every move which His enemy makes against Him, He turns into victory for Himself, and into defeat for Satan.

Had man remained innocent, there would never have been a cross on this earth. It would not have come to a Golgotha. Christ would not have become a man. The history of mankind would not have been what God needed for His purpose. Living in a magnificent garden, with no

other task than to pick luscious fruit and associate with harmless animals—no member of such a humanity could ever become "a theater to the world and to messengers" (1 Cor.4:9), as God's plan demanded.

When Satan without effort misled the first human beings, he surely believed he had frustrated God's purpose. Now these creatures would no longer be dangerous to him. Now he would keep them in bondage, use them as his instruments to fight the Creator. On the very same day he learned from God Himself how terribly mistaken he had been. Now he himself had brought about the conditions necessary for the advent of the true Son of Mankind into his own domain! The very one whom he deceived first, the woman, would bring forth his destroyer. From now on, there would be a "Seed," which, standing on God's side, would be the enemy of Satan. His final dethronement by this Seed was now certain.

The entire story of mankind that follows is a work of God, step by step, to reach the cross on Golgotha. The nation that was to bring forth the One Who hurts the serpent, and at the same time, under Satan's leadership, become the instrument for His crucifixion, furnishes us example after example, how God prepares it for its destiny, how Satan in his turn tries everything to frustrate God's plan, and how he only gives God another opportunity to turn all his evil doings against himself.

If Satan had perhaps thought that man, after having become a sinner, would now never be able to conquer him, he overlooked the marvelous depths of God's plan of redemption. Adam, in spite of his innocence, was soulish. He was "flesh." This was never a match for Satan. God's intention was not to overcome Satan by a sinless first Adam, who knew neither good nor evil. To conquer a being like Satan, divine strength was needed. Evidently God had invested His enemy with so much power, that the

struggle between him and the Christ had to be in truth a deadly combat. Else it would only have been a sham. It would never have meant for God, nor for Christ Himself, nor for Satan, nor for creation, what God intended. But because Adam did not remain innocent, humanity could receive in Christ a new Head, a second Adam. After the disqualification of the first Adam, another One, immeasurably better, took his place. Never would humanity have welcomed the second Adam without the bankruptcy of the first one. God let Satan win a seeming triumph with his seduction of man, in order to turn evil into good by a far higher plan of love.

Though Christ was to hurt the head of the serpent on Golgotha all alone, yet He was also to make a multitude, called out of the mass of mankind, conquerors, in order that they might in due time reign together with Him. What no son of the first Adam was able to become through the life he inherits, he now could be through the life communicated to him by the Second. But how could man receive this divine life without first recognizing his own corruption? When God permitted Satan to poison man with sin, He made room for His life in all who are willing to consign to death the life of the first Adam. In this way Satan will be conquered by men after all. But by men, who, by the spirit of God, have received a power which the first Adam, in his innocence, never could know. If anyone thinks that redemption is nothing but restoration of innocence, as was found in paradise, then he is sadly mistaken. God let Satan rob man of this in order to give him His own righteousness instead. And if man was not to exalt himself in consequence of this fact, he had first thoroughly to learn the misery of his own sinful state.

With all his cunning and slyness, with all his desperate efforts, Satan, completely blinded, only brings about his own destruction. He himself makes provision for the cross

on which he is defeated. He does not foresee what it will mean for himself. He works into the hands of God. That is the drama of the universe, the spectacle which holds all the heavens spellbound. Because of this, mankind came into existence, to play the different parts which this stupendous event demanded. Satan surely did not realize what he would accomplish for the entire creation on Golgotha.

One is in fact tempted to speak of divine irony when one grasps how God lets His enemy, step by step, exert himself to bring about the cross, always hoping to harm his Creator, and yet only serving the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom.

WHY, GOLGOTHA?

Golgotha had to be, for God's sake. If God longed for the responsive love of creatures capable of appreciating what He is, nothing else could reveal to them everything that is in His heart as the cross could. There He gave His Beloved One for His enemies. There He provided for the reconciliation of every being which had been estranged from Him. There He made manifest His perfect justice when He justifies all mankind (Rom.5:18,19). There He showed to a wondering universe the unfathomable depths of the wisdom which finds a way to finally do away with all sin, without leaving the least flaw on His own righteousness. Never will His creatures cease to find new marvels in the cross of Christ.

Golgotha had to be, for Christ's sake. He was not only to be adored and honored as the mighty Representative of the all-powerful God, but to be worshiped as the One Whose obedience, self-denial and love surpassed everything that had been realized before. Christ was to be given the highest place above every other creature, not only because of His rank, but also because of His deeds. How could creation bring Him such heartfelt adoration, if He had only

been the Most High, because God made Him thus? The cross proves Him to be worthy of all honor, because of what He did there, quite apart from His divine station.

If God wanted to "highly exalt" Him (Phil.2:9), He could do it no better way than by first abasing Him to the depths of suffering and shame. Because He endured that, God gives Him a Name that is above every name. Because He descended so low, every creature will gladly and joyously acclaim Him as the One fit to be the Most High. Golgotha brought to Christ a wealth of honor to be had in no other way. Therefore it had to be, for His sake.

And Golgotha had also to be, that God might give Satan the crowning opportunity to display the depths to which wickedness can go. Nothing like what he did there, could ever have been considered possible by any intelligent being among the heavenly hosts. Now they may see what evil can come to. Now they may grasp its awful potentialities. But Satan, at the peak of his triumph, in reality was defeated, utterly brought to naught, displayed in all his iniquity before the horrified witnesses of his deed, and made a public show by the conquering Christ. Though God still lets him exercise dominion on earth, he is constantly overreaching himself, constantly showing his incapacity to accomplish anything perfect. God looks on calmly at his efforts to make some show of his capabilities, to lift humanity to all sorts of heights. God turns everything he does into a great failure while He holds ready His Christ. God will dethrone Satan finally, when his time is over. And then the terrible state to which he has brought the earth will be the foil for Christ's wonderful reign, which is to undo all he has done.

Hitherto we have contemplated only the grand and overwhelmingly glorious aspect of what it means to be a man. There is still another, darker side. Man was not only to be the creature in whose form Christ could become

God's crowning revelation. He was also to be the medium through which Satan reveals himself in his turn. The first man was trapped by Satan and brought under his sway. From then on, all men were used by him more or less to carry out his plans. Satan needs men to accomplish his aims. And God lets him have them. That was also according to His plan. The great tragedy featuring the conflict between good and evil, this spectacle for all the universe, is acted out by man. Tools of Satan on one hand, instruments of God on the other.

It is necessary that we also give due emphasis to the somber side of man's role, a side which should well keep us from all self-exaltation. We surely have nothing to boast of. And God was wise to have it be that way. If ever a human being should elevate himself because he wears the image of God, because he exists in the likeness of Christ, let him realize that not a single one of his race remained as God created him, that man fell short at the very start of his career. But that does not alter the fact that man carries out God's intention. Quite the contrary, man had to become a sinner for the same astounding reasons that there had to be a cross: for God's sake, for Christ's sake, for Satan's sake and for his own sake. That justifies God in making man so responsive to sin, that he gave way to it in the face of the first temptation God put in his path. If God had not wanted it to be thus, He could well have kept man from ever knowing evil.

But a neutral humanity was not what God needed, for man has a special task in the universe, or else his creation, different from the heavenly hosts, would have been, to say the least, superfluous. God needed sinners and enemies to reveal to the onlooking witnesses His power to redeem and reconcile, to take what Satan had spoiled and reshape it to something much higher; to make mere innocents into conquerors; former slaves of His adversary into victorious

overcomers, with the great enemy under their feet. He needed sinners, in order to awaken in them a response of gratitude and love, by saving them from their cruel bondmaster, such as would satisfy His heart. Their never-ending praise for His deliverance is something He would by no means want to go without. Surely, man had to become a sinner for God's sake.

And he had to become a sinner for Christ's sake. Christ yearns to have others partake of the glory which He Himself enjoys. He longs for a reward for His sorrows, namely, to be given those whom He delivers through His own blood. He needs a complement, a bride as well as a body, consisting of those whom He has made worthy to share His future reign, on this earth as well as in the heavenly realms. And such must be prepared for these tasks in the same way that He was prepared for His place above all. This preparation is by the cross.

Christ died on it a literal death. His redeemed ones are identified with Him in this death, accepting God's curse on the old humanity, as expressed through the cross. By dying to everything involved in the term "flesh," and living by the indwelling power of the risen, victorious Christ, they become what He seeks in order to satisfy His heart. And that which counts for God, when it comes to the gratitude and fervent love from those who are delivered from Satan's thralldom, counts for Christ in the very same way. Would He want to be without the praises and thanks of creatures whom He Himself redeemed at such tremendous cost? Any such adoration would be impossible in sinless man. Only a sinner needs crucifixion. In order to go literally to the cross, Christ took on Himself the sin of the world. In order to go figuratively to the cross, a man must realize his own shameful deserts.

And man had to become a sinner for Satan's sake, that is, so that he might carry out his enmity to the full. God

is also just to His great adversary. He furnishes him with material to give him an opportunity, to show what he can do. God lets him have billions of men, great empires, vast resources. Now let him prove that he can build a happy, peaceful world without God, that he can satisfy the craving of men's souls, that he can fill the void within them by what he has to offer. Power and glory, lust and pleasure, education and civilization, anything and everything that can be had, except the One Who alone can fill the human heart.

But man would have never been Satan's dupe and tool had he not been estranged from God. That was the necessary preparation for Satan's great demonstration, which he stages in his realm, the earth. Where has his rulership led to? Wars upon wars, sorrows upon sorrows, one form of government and administration of earth's affairs following upon the other. Every one a failure, every one ruined by the sin and selfishness of those concerned. And the greatest disappointment for humanity under his leadership seems just ahead, when man proposes to build a better world by his own plans and powers, blind to the fact that a hidden hand works behind the scenes; blind to the fact that Satan's public bankruptcy is almost due, ousted as ruler of this world-system, to usher in the rule of Christ.

And man had to become a sinner for his own sake. If God and Christ need human love and gratitude to satisfy the longings of Their hearts, it is the same with him. He needs the unutterable and never-ending joy of thanking and adoring a Saviour and Redeemer from his former woes. He could not appreciate freedom without having experienced slavery. He would not be able to value God's righteousness, had he not become unrighteous. He could not realize the grace of the cross, had he not been in need of it himself. And, last of all, he could never have been prepared for his station with Christ upon His throne, had he not been deep in the depths of shame and sin and helpless-

ness. Only with this experience behind him will he be fit for the exaltation which God has prepared for him. Without it he might glory in himself. Now he can only glory in Christ, knowing that through His indwelling power alone he will be counted worthy of this, the highest place in all the universe.

And if we still need more scriptural proof to show us that God made man in order to bring about His crowning revelation to all that He created, let us consider what Paul says in Ephesians 3:8-10, that it was granted to Him ". . . to bring the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ . . . that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God . . . ." And how can all the celestial beings, together with the terrestrial and subterranean ones, bow the knee in the name of Jesus (Phil. 2:10), because of His having gone to the cross, if they have no knowledge of this event?

Surely what is written is true: "That which the eye did not perceive, and the ear did not hear, and to which the heart of man did not ascend—whatever God makes ready for those who are loving Him. Yet to us God reveals them through His spirit, for the spirit is searching all, even the depths of God . . . . Thus also, that which is of God no one knows, except the spirit of God. Now we obtained, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we may be perceiving that which is being graciously given to us by God" (1 Cor.2:9-12).

S. Knoch

God locks up all together in stubbornness,
that He should be merciful to all. (Rom.11:32)
Indeed though He afflicts, yet He has compassion
according to the abundance of His benignities. (Lam.3:32)
God is love. (1 John 4:8)

TORTURING DOUBTS, AND EXULTANT FAITH

IF THERE IS an eternal hell, no other but God Himself can have called it into existence, for no one else would have the power to do so. Did He make it before or after sin entered the world? If *before,* we would be forced to believe that He deliberately created mankind for such a fate. Or did He *not* foresee sin and yet make hell, in order to dispose of sinners in case there would be some? Then why create human beings at all if this was such a risky matter? And if God instituted hell *after* Satan or Adam had sinned, because He was not able to keep them from sinning, where are His omniscience as well as His omnipotence? If anything in God's creation can happen apart from His plan, where is there any security in this life or in that to come? Must we not give up our trust and faith in an Almighty God, or assume that sin and hell are a part of His plan?

Why do we study the Bible in vain when we desire an answer to these questions, which are of fundamental importance to everyone who wants to know what sort of a God he is to worship? I have searched without getting any light on this subject. I ask why He gives us a book in order to reveal Himself to us and then not even tells us why He had to create doomed sinners. Heart and reason rebel against such a doctrine. It is a direct contradiction to God's own precept that we are to love our enemies. How can He ask us to do so, if He proposes to torture eternally not only His enemies, but also those who never heard of Him? It seems to me that if we tried to imitate God, as

orthodoxy depicts Him, we would become more like devils. And if He has to act like that for some reason which is beyond us, a whole huge vista of other perplexing difficulties opens up to our view.

A troubling problem to me is why a God, Who has the power to cast Satan into the lake of fire, as He himself says that He will, did not do it before he could do so much damage? Why does He let Satan remain at liberty for thousands of years? Why does He let him deceive and mislead billions? Why does He allow mankind under his leadership to ruin itself as well as the earth, this once wonderful achievement of His creative power?

And if all this had to be for some reason which we cannot fathom, why must humanity multiply at such a rate? If most men are only rushing to an eternal hell, why would not a wise and loving God let only comparatively few come into existence?

I, for my part, cannot understand how anyone who believes in an eternal hell dares to bring children into the world.

It has often seemed to me that it would be better to be born as an animal than a human being. An animal may have to endure awful sufferings, but there is always the certainty that these will finally end, whereas the lost sinner has no such hope.

With all our praise and thanks to God for His wonderful salvation of sinners through the death of Christ, the following questions still persist as unanswered by orthodoxy:

Why was Christ sent only after thousands of years of sin and death for countless multitudes? Why was He sent without providing that all could immediately hear of His sacrifice? Why has it been impossible to reach whole continents until very recently?

And even today, with all the modern facilities, why is mission-work not triumphant? Why all the dreadful handicaps, ill health, want of money, and so forth, with which God's witnesses have to struggle, not to mention the callousness of the hearts of unsaved men?

The Bible says that God alone can accomplish a change of these stubborn hearts. Why does He not do it, except for a few? To say that He saves all who are willing, explains nothing, for very few realize what it is all about. Besides, the Scriptures teach that God also does the willing. As soon as His spirit reveals to anyone his lost condition and God's love, his will agrees. Why does He not reveal Himself to all?

When we consider things as they are, it becomes very evident, that Christ saves not even one-twentieth of all mankind today. Is that the great, wonderful triumph of Golgotha? If a doctor discovers a remedy which saves only five percent of all cases, it is counted a failure. Golgotha's failure seems even worse. What about the word: "He shall bruise thy head," if the serpent gets almost all of the spoils?

According to popular evangelistic teaching, there is no salvation apart from Christ and the "New Birth." We are even forced to believe in the damnation of infants. Who is able to accept that? Nobody that I know of. So let us allow that God will save infants without conversion. Then heaven would be populated for the most part by the "souls" of babies. The few converted heathen of the last century are a mere nothing compared with the numbers that died without Christ.

Now it may be a small comfort that infants at least are not sent to hell. But if this is so, why prevent their dying? All the efforts of well-meaning people to save the lives of young children would only rob God of their souls, as experience shows that only a fraction are converted later.

And if God can save infants apart from their faith in Christ's death, why not also the heathen, who know hardly more about right or wrong than they do.

Why does not the Bible give us any definite light con-

cerning the salvation of children? The whole bulky book with all its information does not even tell us at what age responsibility begins. If men were responsible for their eternal fate, at least this question would have to be discussed more fully than others. And what about the responsibility of those who never heard about Christ? What about the responsibility for our bad dispositions, our environment, our education, our inherited alienation from God? Since God makes the world and *all* that is in it (Acts 17:24), I have concluded that in the end God alone must remain responsible for all that is possible in His creation.

Who other but God decreed that, after Adam's transgression, the poison of sin should pass through to all his descendants? Who other but God decreed that, in contrast to this, salvation is not passed on through any such channel, but must be appropriated by every individual? No such choice is left to him when it comes to sinning. He is a slave to sin from the beginning of his existence and cannot help himself and free himself of its tyranny. If responsibility played any part in this matter, God would have had to let every person come into the world as neutral as Adam, and free to choose for himself sin or obedience.

And not only that. Everyone would have to be as enlightened and privileged as Adam, who had personal communication with God Himself, with power to resist sin.

Another riddle is, in my opinion, that God never even warned the first human beings that an eternal hell would await them if they sinned, and not only them, but all their descendants. He only told Adam that he would die if he ate of the forbidden fruit. Is that not just the opposite of never ending life in torture, where death would be a mercy?

As we go on searching in the accounts of God's dealings with the race after it had been driven from Eden, more and more problems arise. God gives a law at Sinai and tells the people of Israel that He chooses them for His own. He

selects an entire tribe to serve Him in His sanctuary. He calls these men holy. How could they be that and yet for the most part be lost? Or did fleshly descent from Levi and temple-service save them? Was it then not rather an automatic, carnal thing that could save a man? Why this radically different way of salvation *now?* The one under the Old Covenant evidently was more successful. Where do we have a whole tribe of sanctified people today?

The whole Old Testament is a puzzle. Not a word is said corresponding to our concept of hell before Daniel's prophecy. Only then do we read about everlasting shame and contempt. All judgments are temporal and earthly. God has pity on people who cannot discern between right and wrong, like the Ninevites, whom He spared. And there it was only a question of a destruction of the town, not of an eternal hell. But today God is supposed to condemn even the ignorant forever.

On this point, something in the later Scriptures must be radically wrong, for how could Christ pray: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and yet hold out no hope outside of the "New Birth"? If we follow one of His words and believe that He will have mercy on those who know no better, we should leave the people as much as possible in ignorance. If we follow His other words, we would be forced to the most frantic efforts to warn everyone, even though we profess to believe that no one can come to Christ unless the Father Himself draws him.

The Bible seems one vast chaos, beyond understanding, full of contradictions. An omnipotent God, from Whom the devil takes almost everything, a God Who knows all beforehand, yet hinders nothing, Who is even concerned with the cattle of Nineveh, Whose Son is moved with compassion when He sees a mourning widow or a blind beggar, and yet He invents a hell of fire and keeps it going for ever! Where shall we look for light in such darkness?

EXULTANT FAITH

After long years of torturing doubts, God had mercy on me and turned my darkness into light, my despair into joy and my misery into exultation. He brought me into touch with His revelation, just as He had written it, apart from most of the mistranslations of well-meaning men, who were bound by creeds and tradition.

I found out that God is operating "*all* in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11), for *all* is "*out* of Him and *through* Him and *for* Him" (Rom.11:36). Indeed, He "locks up all together in stubbornness," but it is not to *damn* the most of men, but "that He should be *merciful* to all" (Rom.11:32). In order to display His love, He brought in sin and sorrow and death, for only so could He be the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim.4:10). In Adam, all are dying; thus also, in Christ, all shall be vivified (1 Cor.15:22). All mankind, through Adam's offense, deserve condemnation; but, in Christ, all mankind will be justified (Rom.5:18).

Not only will He bring all of earth's inhabitants back into the sunlight of His love, but, through the blood of Christ's cross, He will *reconcile all* to Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Col.1:20). The present enmity toward God on the part of terrestrial and celestial creatures will, in due time, be used as a background to display His love.

Sin and suffering are confined to the *eons* (or ages, as "forever" and "everlasting" should be translated). "Hell" stands for three different words, the *unseen*, *Gehenna*, and *Tartarus*, none of which mean anything like the traditional "hell." In Scripture, divine judgment always entails *setting right*, not condemnation, as an end in itself. Believers in Christ and His sacrifice are saved from the indignation of God. Unbelievers are judged and go into the second death. But all will be made alive when death, the last enemy, is abolished (1 Cor.15:26). Then, Christ will subject Himself

and all the rest of God's creatures to His Father, that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:28).

There will indeed be an awful judgment, but it will not merely "punish," but *set right* all wrongs. The Judge is the One Who emptied Himself of His glories as the channel of creation and came down to earth to become a Man, and to suffer and die to save all, especially those who believe (1 Tim.4:10). God has raised Him from the dead, and He has ascended into heaven; but, He will come again to receive us to Himself, that we may reign with Him over His celestial realms. And after that, He will return to earth to restore it and rule over it through His chosen people Israel.

S. Knoch

HUMILIATION BEFORE EXALTATION

Christ emptied Himself of all He was when He represented God's majesty in its most sublime glory, and took the form of a slave (Phil. 2:5-8). Only in this way could He reveal the depths of God's love by His suffering for sin. He became a man with the same flesh and blood as ours. But what distinguished Him from us was His spirit. He was begotten by the spirit to become flesh, designated Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness, the last Adam, a vivifying spirit.

And as such a man He descended still further and humbled Himself unto death. The Inaugurator of life went in obedience to the will of His Father, into the very jaws of the all-devouring king of terrors. And He descended far lower than the average man ever descends—down to the cross, the symbol of an utterly cursed state. He Who knew no sin was made sin. And cut off from the heretofore unbroken and continual living connection with His God, He was forsaken by Him and experienced death. This path unto the death of the cross He took upon Himself voluntarily, so that His Father's loving plan for the entire creation might be carried out.

Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him with the name that is above every name. Out of the deepest depths (for a greater humiliation has never been known in the universe), God begins Christ's exaltation by a stupendous exhibition of His might and divinity, the consequences of which are fraught with transcendent glory for us and all of His creation.

W. Prolingheuer

IN THE HAND OF THE POTTER

"I WENT down to the potter's house, and behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter. So he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make" (Jer.18:3,4).

The prophet sees a vessel marred in the hand of the potter. Yet, as he gazes, it is made again, "another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make." Now, in this pictured incident, we see that all throughout the vessel is in the hand of the potter. He is the determining and deciding factor.

So is God, as witness His word to Jeremiah. "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel." What sovereignty breathes in these words! As the clay in the potter's hand, *so* are you in My hand.

God is sovereign. Therefore of Israel He could say: "This people have I formed for Myself. They shall shew forth My praise" (Isa.43:21). And again in the same chapter: "I have created him for My glory. I have formed him. Yea, I have made him."

Truly, the hand of the Potter is here. I have *created, formed, made*. And, for *My glory*. Marred? Yes, but still in the hand of the Potter, to be eventually for His glory.

And, marvelous to relate, that very marring is the occasion for a new and wonderful fashion, the formation of an instrument that is also to be for His glory. Here we are immediately concerned. As participants of the grace glorious we are His achievement. We are in His hand.

He is making us. And all the while there is the closeness of Maker and made. And how blessed the consciousness of the Molder's far-seeing wisdom, which again and again amazes the mind! How blessed, also, the waiting, and sometimes the withholding, of His touch! It is then we perceive the marvels of His ordaining, the wisdom of His disposing, and that in His fashioning all is *together-acting-into-good* for those who love Him.

God would build for us a character far exceeding our earthbound comprehension. He would wean us from the things which too easily engross our attention, lifting us to a closer attachment to Himself.

Yet always, even hourly, we are in His hand. Of that we may be sure. But are we conscious of the great affinity—the closeness of Maker and made? A tower of strength lies in the thought, an utter rare content.

RELYING ON THE LIVING GOD

But are we as the clay, plastic, yielding, impressionable? We may be, in a wrong way. There are world forces so making appeal to our leisure moments that time is only too easily spent in studying their chronicled triumphs. Indeed, civilization is intoxicated by their glamor. We are perilously placed in this our age, in a civilization that crowds God out of its thought and program. Its god has lures at every turn of life's road, lures to which the soul so easily responds. And too readily are we pliant here.

But what of the Potter's touch, of the Master's molding? That is for the spirit, for the prayer life, and for the Scripture study, that therein we may be truly pliant, impressionable to a fine degree.

How great a thing it is to realize ourselves as in His hand! What equipoise and calm! For then, should wayward circumstance, or mood's despair come near, it is to

find us still within that hand. As our "faithful Creator" His word is confirmed to our hearts in all its fine gradations: "I have made, and I will bear. Even I will carry, and will deliver you."

As in creation He is our Potter, so in redemption. He makes and He remakes. And even as He took pleasure in His ancient people, a pleasure He will show yet again, so in those of a later day, whom He designates beforehand, He calls and justifies, and glorifies.

From out of the intrusive chaos, "Elohim is seeing all that He makes—it is very good." He takes pleasure in His own work. And its far-reaching issues are to constitute the delight of God's will. Far down the course of time there were those who should be His achievement in a wondrous, unique sense. His "*poiêma*" are we ("achievement," Eph. 2:10, CV). And its excellency will be celestially apparent above all earthly showing. The highest intelligences will, through these media, be satisfyingly instructed in the wealth of God's grace, as shown in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

For such display are we set. But what of our present sense of its dignity? The spirit may rise in exultation at the thought of such glory. But are there not hands, feet, and lips, for action even now? And the spirit of God has something to do with these members of the body.

Hands may not have the cunning of a Bezaleel, but they can be gentle, ministering hands. Our feet, too, may be treading the obscure ruts, yet willing feet for His revealed requests. And our lips. Someone once prayed: "Lord, take my lips, and speak through them. Take my mind and think through it. Take my heart and set it on fire."

If only thus we live and pray, what channels we could be! Vessels of honor, for and in the Potter's hand. Made, not only by Him, but for Him.

William Mealand

THE BODY AND EARS OF OUR LORD

THE human body which was adapted for our Lord (*cf* Heb.10:5) was a body of humiliation, like our own. References in Scripture to His physical body are almost always in association with His sufferings and death. For it was in fashion as a human that He *humbled* Himself to the death of the cross (Phil.2:7,8). Yet now He has a body of glory, and it is in conformity to it that our body of humiliation will be transfigured (Phil.3:21).

His body of humiliation was necessary so that He was able to die for the salvation of sinners (*cf* 1 Tim.1:15). Hence we read in Hebrews 2:9 that "we are observing Jesus, Who has been made some bit inferior to messengers (because of the suffering of death, wreathed with glory and honor), so that, in the grace of God, He should *be tasting death for the sake of everyone."* And again we read: "Since, then, the little children have participated in blood and flesh, He also was very nigh by *partaking of the same,* that, *through death,* He should be discarding him who has the might of death, that is, the Adversary, and should be clearing those whoever, in fear of death, were through their entire life liable to slavery" (Heb.2:14,15). So also the apostle Peter speaks of Christ, "Who Himself carries up our sins *in His body on to the pole*" (1 Peter 2:24).

The apostle Paul has expounded this *adaptation*, this bodily "change to conform to a purpose"[1] in no uncertain terms: "Christ Jesus . . . being inherently in the form of

1. *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, under **adjust,** p.9.

God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless *empties Himself,* taking the form of a *slave,* coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and, being found in fashion *as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*" (Phil.2:5-8).

This was His *body of flesh* in which, *through His death,* He reconciles us now, having made peace for the reconciliation of all *through the blood of His cross* (Col.1:20-22). In this, it was given to Paul to reveal God's achievement through Christ's death more fully than Peter saw it. It was not simply that human sins were carried up on the cursed pole in Christ's body, but the sinful race itself was identified with Him in His death. In that "One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14). For the believer, already, in spirit, we are identified with Christ's death and thus have died to sin, our old humanity being crucified together with Him (Rom.6:3-7). Furthermore, in accord with this grace we are "put to death to the law *through the body of Christ*" (Rom.7:4).

A BODY ADAPTED FOR CHRIST

In Hebrews 10:5-10, the writer cites the Septuagint translation of Psalm 40:6-8a and comments on its significance in relation to Christ as being the great Antitype of all the sacrifices:

Wherefore, entering into the world, He is saying,
Sacrifice and approach present Thou dost not will,
Yet a body dost Thou adapt to Me.
In ascent approaches and those concerning sin
Thou dost not delight.
Then said I, "Lo! I am arriving—
In the summary of the scroll it is written
concerning Me—
To do Thy will, O God."

Further up, when saying that "Sacrifice and approach present and ascent approaches and those concerning sin Thou dost not will, neither dost Thou delight in them" (which are being offered according to law), then He has declared, "Lo! I am arriving to do Thy will, O God!" He is despatching the first that He should be establishing the second. By which will we are hallowed through the approach present of the body of Jesus Christ once for all time.

However, instead of the line, "Yet a body dost Thou adapt to [or, *for*] Me," the Hebrew text reads, "(Both) ears You dig for me." Most English translations follow the AV, which paraphrases: "mine ears thou hast opened," conveying a sense of listening ears. This harmonizes with verse 8 where we read, "I delight to do what is acceptable to You, my Elohim." Some have noted a possible connection with the law's provision for a slave who prefers to remain in service to his master rather than being set free in the seventh year: "If the servant [slave] should say, yea say, I love my lord, my wife and my sons; I shall not go forth free, then his lord will bring him close to the elohim [arbiters], and bring him close to the door or to the jamb, and his lord will bore his ear with an awl; and he will serve him for the eon" (Exodus 21:5,6).

Indeed the reference to ears implies a sense of listening which is, in fact, the foundational requirement of a slave. In Hebrew *obedience* is *hearkening,* and in Greek it is UNDER-HEARing. This is symbolized for the loving slave whose ear is dug into by an awl. With reference to Christ, He took the form of a slave, and was extraordinarily obedient, that is submissively listening (by both ears) to His Father's will. To do what is acceptable to His God and Father is paramount to our Lord.

Yet also He was given a body in which this will could be carried out.

HEBREW POETRY

A distinctive feature of Hebrew poetry is the use of parallel thought-lines. Yet in Psalm 40:6, while the first and third lines are parallel, the thought seems to be interrupted by the second line, which lacks a parallel. Is it possible that the two middle lines, the one witnessed to by the Hebrew and the other as found in the Greek Septuagint translation, were both originally in Psalm 40? In that case there would have been a couplet of parallel lines within a couplet, which might be translated somewhat as follows:

Sacrifice and approach present You do not desire,
Yet a body have You prepared for me;
(Both) ears You have dug for me;
The ascent offering and sin offering You do not ask for.

We can see how well these lines would lead forward to verse 8. Yahweh, David's Elohim, had given him a body (*cp* Psa.139:13-15) and listening ears so that he delighted *to do* what is *acceptable* to Him. David was a man of action whose major concern was to do the right and faithful things set before him by his God. Yet, despite his many acts of righteousness and faithfulness David also brought dishonor to God through his body of flesh (*cp* Psa.51). In the end there must be a Saviour, the Antitype of Psalm 40, Who would be given a body of humiliation and ears fully submissive to God's will and delight, even His desire (*cf* Isa.53:10).

In this way also Psalm 40:6 would even more clearly serve as a background to Philippians 2:6-8 as well as be even more thoroughly fitting in the context of Hebrews 10.

But whether or not this conjecture can be sustained, we can surely rejoice in our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose body was adapted for the salvation of sinners and Whose ears were fully submissive to what was acceptable to His God and Father.

D.H.H.

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 105th Year

(1909–2014)

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Figurative Death and Life in Paul's Epistles
61 What, Then, is the Law?
71 The Spirit of a Sound Mind
79 Thoughts on Law and Sin
87 To Become Another's

SECOND QUARTER, 2014

Volume 105 **Number 2**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

This book traces the divine function of *evil* (whatever is harmful or destructive) from its inception to its consummation, by presenting scriptural solutions to the various long-debated questions concerning God and His sovereignty.

As one of its subjects, it probes and takes issue with the commonly accepted explanation that Satan, and not God, is responsible for evil. To quote the book's author: "Almost all of us are shortsighted. We see the judgments, but fail to recognize that they are only part of God's way with mankind, that they are definitely not an end. We confuse the going with the goal. Judgment is God's strange work. He uses it as a preparation toward a glorious consummation."

The message in this book is especially valuable to us in these days of doubt and distress, to lead men to rely on and rest in God alone.

A. E. Knoch, paperback, 351 pages (ISBN 0-910424-59-4)

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, SECOND QUARTER 2014
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED FIVE

EDITORIAL

ROMANS chapter seven is an especially challenging section of Scripture, calling for careful and prayerful consideration *within the context of the evangel.* The entire epistle is written by Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ, a called apostle, who was severed from the other apostles in order to bring *the evangel of God concerning His Son* (Rom.1:1-3). This has been burned into my consciousness from early youth, and I have tried to keep it in mind in preparing my articles on this letter.

This has not been so difficult in going through the sixty-four verses from Romans 1:18 through 3:30, for it is evident that this thorough exposure of human irreverence and unrighteousness is preparation for the revelation of God's righteousness made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ. Romans 3:21-5:21 is the evangel in its most fundamental glory. But starting with chapter six our apostle expounds the evangel as not only God's WELL-MESSAGE concerning what Christ has done for us in dying for our sins, and what this means for our future, but as the power of God even for our present salvation *as we are believing it* (*cf* Rom.1:16).

And here it must be distinguished from the law, God's word to Israel, given through Moses at Sinai. It is the evangel of God's grace concerning His Son, Who died for our sakes that is given to us as the source of spiritual power for our lives—not the law, but grace! This is essentially what the seventh chapter of Romans is saying.

Consequently, it seems especially important to me to

note and draw attention to the evangel as Paul brings it before us here. It was this which led me to see the word *Obedience* [UNDER-HEARing] in Romans 6:16 as a reference back to the evangel as stated in Romans 5:19 concerning the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ, and the word *Righteousness* in Romans 6:18 and 6:19 as a recapitulation of the evangel as first expounded in Romans 3:21-28, concerning the manifestation of God's righteousness.

Now also, as Paul contrasts these two messages of God, that of law and that of grace, I believe we need to keep all that Paul has said about the evangel in mind and give special attention to what he says here directly about the evangel in verses 4 through 6 and then in verse 25.

In this issue of *Unsearchable Riches,* we include three articles from past issues which have been of particular help to me in appreciating Romans seven.

Brother Knoch's study on Paul's use of the words *death* and *life* in both literal and figurative senses (p.51) is truly sensible and enlightening. It reminds us that every usage of such key terms must be kept in its own context.

Similarly, in his article, *What then is the Law?* Brother Coram supports this principle as it applies to Paul's writings and our need to hold fast to the evangel.

Then we reprint Brother Knoch's editorial for September 1930 concerning a sound *mind* (p.71). If our hands and feet are to be effectively directed in the right direction, it is of the utmost importance that our minds be focused on the evangel of God's grace.

Finally we share some brief notes on the chapter as a whole drawn from the CONCORDANT COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT, from George L. Roger's notes on Romans, and some previously unpublished notes by Edward H. Clayton (p.79).

My own notes on Romans 7:1-6 follow (p.87).

D.H.H.

FIGURATIVE DEATH AND LIFE IN PAUL'S EPISTLES

DYING AND LIVING are the most potent factors in human experience. Hence they are used in the scriptures, especially by Paul, for the most powerful spiritual realities. Before the saints literally expire, in their present career, they are represented as dying, dead, or entombed, as well as living, raised, roused, and vivified. We hope that these extreme contradictions will help all to recognize and appreciate figurative language, and to limit the scope of each figure to its context. No one can be literally dead and alive at the same time, nor can anyone die when he is dead, or be made alive when he is vivified, else death is no longer death, and life no longer life. In casual reading these figures may escape us. By grouping them and comparing and contrasting them, we may be able to discern their marvelous message with clarity and power.

The figure of proceeding from death into life is used by John of one who passes from unbelief into faith (John 5:24). It is not difficult to see the appropriateness of this figure, for before faith came we were not only literally dying, but were dead *to God.* that is, without any more active communion with Him than if we were corpses. But the statement is true only in things divine, for men are quite alive to that which pertains to this world. In Paul's epistles similar figures are used, but death there is usually associated with the *believer.* not the unbeliever, and it is connected with the death of Christ, in Whom we have died,

Let us note the striking contradiction between the two

figures of the believer, one of which looks upon him as having died, the other as living. In one series of passages we are represented as being dead (Rom.6:2,8,11; 8:10; Eph. 2:1,5; 5:14; Col.2:13; 2:20; 3:3). In the other we are alive (Rom.5:21; 6:4, 22,23; 8:2; 1 Tim.1:16, *etc.*). These contradictory statements should suffice to show that one, or both, must be taken figuratively. We could be these literally at different times; only figuratively can we be dead to some things and alive to others at the same time. Thus our body is dead because of sin, yet our spirit is life because of righteousness (Rom.8:10). Literally we would be all dead with a dead body, and all alive with a spirit that is life. Figuratively, we can hold them apart. Literally, the life that now is distinct from that which is to come (1 Tim.4:8). Figuratively we already possess eonian life, and we may rise from among the dead (Eph.5:14), we were roused with Christ (Eph.2:6; Col.2:12; 3:1), we may be vivified through the indwelling spirit (Rom.8:11).

DEATH, PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Not only are we represented as both dead and alive, but we seem to die repeatedly. In the distant *past* we died together with Christ (Rom.6:8; Col.2:20; 2 Tim.2:11). At *present* we are dead (Eph.5:14), our body is dead (Rom.8:10), and we are exhorted to deaden our members (Col.3:5). But how can this be if we died with Christ? There has been no resurrection since, and it is not a resurrection body which is dead. Moreover, all saints who have died had still another death, which was in the future for them. This was a literal death. The first two must be figurative. So that death for us is in all three tenses, *past, present.* and, possibly, *future.* In Paul's latest revelations these great truths are enforced as never before. Were we actually vivified, how could we rise from the dead (Eph.5:14)? And why should we deaden our members?

Not all believers are alike dead. The nations, never having been under law, cannot, of course, die to it. But the Jew could not extricate himself from its thralldom in any other way than by dying to it. Exemption from it cannot be obtained by any other means. Through the body of Christ, according to Paul's evangel, he and his brethren according to the flesh are now released from its yoke (Rom.7:4,6). In Galatia, where this was not understood, and Judaizers were seeking to bring the believers among the nations into the bondage of the law, this is emphasized. Paul avers: "I through law, died to law" (Gal.2:19). The law itself, in this slightly different figure, slew him, and released him from its bonds. Here, we repeat, is a death that none but a Jew can die. And, we might add, if he does, he will probably be more alive to God's grace than ever!

DEATH TO OFFENSES AND SINS

Death to sin involves us all. In Romans Paul brings it up to show that grace does not countenance persistence in sin (Rom.6:1,2). In the previous section of the epistle there is justification from sin (3:24). But this may not keep us from sinning. So we are given the further truth that, in Christ's death we also were involved, and then we died with reference *to sin,* hence should no longer live in it. A slightly different turn is given this figure in Paul's later epistles, for there death is introduced as the basis of unity between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision, and as a foil for the succeeding vivification (Eph.2:1,5). During our lifetime, indeed, we both were guilty of sins. But God seeks to reveal the riches of His grace toward us by dealing with them long before we committed them. In Christ, we died to sins, offenses and lusts, when He expired on Golgotha. That it was at that time, and not after our acts had become facts, is especially clear in Colossians: "(in which you were roused together . . . you also being dead

in the offenses and the circumcision of your flesh) He vivifies . . ." (Col.2:12,13).

Even though we died long since, yet we are exhorted to deaden, or put to death, our members which are on earth (Col.3:5). Alas, these often seem to be very much alive. Literally this could not be possible. But figuratively each figure fits its own context and is fraught with precious truth which in no way clashes. In other connections also, we are looked upon as dead. Paul exhorts us to rise from among the dead (Eph.5:14), which we could hardly do unless we were ourselves dead. In Romans he distinguishes between our body and spirit. The former is dead, the latter is life (Rom.8:10). Yet in Colossians it is the members of the *body* which are to be put to death!

DEATH WITH CHRIST

Our death with Christ involves our living, also, since He was roused from the dead (Rom.6:8-11; 2 Tim.2:11). From this we could easily reason that, since He cannot die again, neither can we, hence, for us there is no death, the resurrection is past already. But, even as our death with Christ is a figure (for we were not even alive at that time) so also is the life we have received. That is why the apostle adds, "Thus, *you* also *reckon* yourselves to be dead, indeed, *to Sin.* yet living *to God.* in Christ Jesus." The life is not literal, covering our whole experience, but only Godward. Much the same is brought before us in Colossians, where Paul says: "you died, and your life is hid, together with Christ, in God." The manifestation of this life awaits His presence. So also we died together with Christ from the elements of the world (Col.2:20). Figuratively we are not "living in the world," though it would be difficult to convince our fellows that this is literally the case.

The link between literal death and resurrection is usually the tomb. The fact that we were figuratively entombed

with Christ cannot lead to our literal resurrection but to that which is *like* it, a walk in newness of life (Rom.6:4).

The figure of death has many applications and must be interpreted in each case according to the context. It may refer to the *un*believer, who is dead *to God.* and it may denote the believer who is dead to *sin.* Figurative death is always limited *to* a particular sphere, while literal death includes all. Generally speaking, we die thrice. Twice figuratively, once with Christ in the past and again in our present reckoning. If the Lord does not come before, there is literal death in the future.

As our salvation at present does not directly affect our *bodies,* the figure of rising is not used as freely as *rousing* and *vivifying,* seeing that our *spirits* and *souls* are the sphere of God's power at the present time. Our bodies will not be changed until the presence of Christ (1 Cor.15:52). Whatever effect our salvation has upon our bodies comes through our spirit. We are inclined to think that the resurrection of the body is a figure suited to Romans, while Ephesians would use only the vivification of the spirit. Yet the contrary is the fact. It is in the second part of Ephesians, dealing with deportment, where we find the apt exhortation, "rise from among the dead!" (Eph.5:14). Here we are represented as dead. Yet the cry comes to us now, as it will come to the dead in the presence of Christ, to stand up from the surrounding corpses, that is, to walk as if our bodies had already been raised, when we will no longer be dragged down by its disposition, but conduct ourselves as we will do when we have a spiritual body. As we will see, the same truth is presented from the opposite side in Romans 8:11, where the spirit vivifies our mortal bodies. There the earnest, of the spirit which is ours now enables us to walk in measure as we will after being literally vivified, and have spiritual bodies.

The figure of *rousing* is in contrast to *sleep.* We are rep-

resented as *sleeping* in the *night* (even though this is man's *day*!), and the time has come for us to awake (Rom.13: 11), as well as having died. It is a question of sensation or consciousness, and is used in connection with offenses, sins and the lusts of the flesh (Eph.2:6). With reference to these things we were *roused* (together with some of the Circumcision), in Christ. The time element here is most interesting. This was done to two *groups* (*you* and *we,* Circumcision and Uncircumcision) in *Christ.* so could only have taken place when Christ was literally roused, on the third day after His crucifixion. Hence the verbs are indefinite, timeless. The participle BEING (2:1,4, 5) has no tense. It simply takes that of the context. The other verbs, *vivifies, rouses* and *seats,* are simply facts which may occur at any time. The context clearly puts all the action "in Christ," so that we were figuratively dead before we were born! More than that we were vivified, roused and seated among the celestials when He was made alive and ascended!

VIVIFICATION

Let us first fix the *facts* as to *literal* vivification. These are given us in Paul's great summary of human destiny (1 Cor.15:23) with such precision that we need never be in doubt on this grand theme. Let us cherish it in our heads and hearts: *in Christ, all shall be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation.* On *only three* occasions is there literal vivification. Except in the case of Christ, there is no individual operation of this kind. They are vivified as classes. No separate individuals will be vivified at the great white throne or even at the consummation. All who are Christ's must wait for His presence. There have been *resurrections* of individuals in the past due to His presence, but not *vivifications.* Apart from His literal presence there can he no

literal vivification. Apart from His presence, no saint will put on immortality. Until He trumpets, the dead will not put on incorruptibility. The mortal will not be swallowed up by life (2 Cor.5:4) until He comes. Then our celestial body, or habitation which is from heaven, takes the place of this groaning, mortal frame.

This is the way of *grace*! Let us not miss the richness and preciousness this truth contains! Only *grace* could exalt us before we degraded ourselves in sin. That our salvation is by *faith* is proof sufficient that it is in *grace.* Yet even that does not compare with placing us in Christ *before* our sins had been committed. Some are inclined to make faith a work of merit, and would limit the amount of blessing to the amount of faith. Notwithstanding God's plain assertion that *whom He justifies, these He glorifies also* (Rom. 8:30), some have even suggested that Ephesians is for only a few of the more faithful among the justified. This is the Galatian heresy in another form, a falling out of *grace. Glory* is as sure to the justified as to the glorified themselves. God spared not His own Son, but gave Him for the Roman saints, and together with Him He will *graciously* grant them *all*! (Rom.8:32).

The truth is that we are vivified in *Christ* (Eph.2:5), or *together* with Him (Col.2:13; 3:1). That we were literally in or with Christ on Golgotha, or received a deathless life nearly two thousand years ago, we hope no one will maintain. Yet that is the only Bible literal interpretation of the Greek text, as indicated by our being in and *together* with Christ. The life here spoken of we had before we were born and is the portion of all believers, even those who have died. It is not manifested now, but hid with Christ, in God. Christ is our Life. We cannot be manifested without Him (Col.3:3,4). This life was not *manifested* before we were born. It certainly cannot be manifested in our *death,* when it is hid even in our life. Apart from His pres-

ence, the world will never behold us as we are, even as it did not know Him in His humiliation, notwithstanding the life He lived and the deeds He did. Yet how grand is the truth that we are so involved with Christ that not only His death is reckoned as ours, but His vivification likewise! In fact we possess all that we will ever have in Him already, even if we do not yet enjoy it, as we shall in His presence.

We might reason that, since we were vivified in Him, we can by no means ever die, but go on living in spirit forever. But it would be just as logical to deduce that, since we were alive before we were begotten, we were never born. But it would be still more reasonable to say: since we were vivified and roused with Christ, the life and sensation due to this will be the same after death as before birth. As there was *none* before, neither will there be any after. But all of this reasoning is vain, for the vivification is figurative and not literal. We can test this very simply by the following phrase: for He not only rouses and vivifies, but *seats* us together among the celestials. Who would say that he has been literally seated at God's right hand since Christ ascended and took His place supreme? Moreover, a single individual is not in view here, but two groups. It is not that you have been seated there, with Christ, nor that you have been seated together with a Jew, but that both the Circumcision and Uncircumcision who received Paul's evangel are seated. A literal interpretation is excluded. It is contrary to the dictates of a sound mind. In the past as well as in the future vivification concerns *groups* or *classes*, not individuals.

That our joint vivification is not literal is evident from that fact that we are not actually roused from among the dead or seated among the celestials, as will be the case when our Lord comes for us. The literal sense is clearly evident from the connectives *in* and *together.* All is literally true of Christ. So close is our association with Him

that His glories are also ours, and will actually become a part of our experience when the time comes for the manifestation of the sons of God. And how can this marvelous matter be made plain to our minds and hearts more briefly and beautifully than by such a forceful figure? The offenses and sins were ours individually and literally, but the grace is only *in Christ*, together with all the saints of this administration. Christ is our Life, hence this does not date from our acceptance, but from His vivification. Now it is hid from the world, as He is, and it will not be manifested until the advent of His glory. This glory waits until Christ is manifested. Who would care to be glorified without Him?

Our present vivification is connected with our conduct, and arises from the figure that the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is life because of righteousness. The argument proceeds: Now if the spirit of Him Who rouses Jesus from among the dead is making its home in you, He Who rouses Christ Jesus from among the dead will also vivify your mortal bodies because of His spirit making its home in you (Rom.8:11). The homing of the spirit is a present experience and leads us into debt to the spirit. We should use it to put the practices of the body to death, and thus have a foretaste of the time when the body itself will be spiritual and we are actually vivified and beyond the possibility of death.

Were our mortal bodies vivified literally, then Paul would still be alive, as well as the Roman saints and, indeed, all believers since then would still be with us. Had the Romans received literal vivification, how could the apostle proceed to exhort them not to live in accord with the flesh, and to warn them that, should they do so, they are *about to be dying*? This statement, taken literally, has caused much concern, and obscured the whole teaching of the apostle as to grace, as if life depended on conduct. The

spirit that homes in us can, indeed, produce conduct like that which will characterize us when we are made alive in His presence, and if we live according to flesh it will lead to a walk *like* that of dying men. We keep on living literally whatever we do, but figuratively we live only when we put the practices of the body to death by the spirit which is homing in us.

As to time we were vivified with and in Christ in the past, we may be vivified by the spirit in the present, and we will be vivified by Christ's presence in the future. Thus we have vivification in all tenses. Yet it is evident that, if we were literally made alive in the past, there would be no need of it now, and, if we have it already, there is no need of it in the future. Both past and present are figurative, symptomatic, promissory, intimating and presaging the glorious day when our bodies will be made immortal or incorruptible and changed from soulish to spiritual and soilish to celestial.

The orthodox idea that the Christian "goes to heaven" when he dies probably arose from a misunderstanding of figures of speech and may have started as a "higher" interpretation of Pauline truth. It arose very early, for even in Paul's day there were those who taught that the resurrection was already past (2 Tim.2:18). It is being revived today, especially in Europe, and seems to be taught in America also. The idea is that, in Paul's later teaching, the believer receives not merely life, but vivification. That is, he cannot die, but lives on even when he seems to expire like other mortals. He already possesses life beyond death, so there is really no death possible for him. But this is directly contrary to the facts. Present vivification is taught in Romans, not Ephesians. Colossians expressly states that the life we have in Christ will not be manifested until He is. We are literally vivified only in His presence.

A. E Knoch

WHAT, THEN, IS THE LAW?

OUR recognition of the place of the law is central to our grasp of the evangel. Yet for most, failure to recognize their exemption from the law (Rom.7:6), has meant failure to recognize the actual nature of the evangel as well.

We know that the law was given to Israel of old for their obedience. We know (since the law is a part of the sacred scriptures inspired by God) that it is given to us with a view toward teaching, exposure, and correction; even as, with a view toward discipline in righteousness (*cf* 2 Tim.3:15-17). Even so, it does not follow from the fact of our possession and profitable use of the writings of the law, that the law has been given to us that we might obey its precepts.

Some wish to claim that since all of God's commandments are "righteousness" (Psa.119:172, AV; "all Your instructions are righteous," CV), and since we are to pursue righteousness (2 Tim.2:22), that we must pursue obedience to the commandments of the law. This, however, will not do; for according to such reasoning, it would follow that we would be obligated to heed *all* the imperatives of the law, a proposition which, as far as we know, no contemporary proponent of so-called "commandment keeping" wishes to advocate.

How absurd: Since God never gives wrong instruction, all instruction given by God is given to us. Besides, "acting righteously," in itself, is a relative term. That is, "righteousness" must be judged in relation to one's calling and allotment; its scope encompasses all that is right for a man to do, *according to the divine administration which per-*

tains to him; under which he is called, and, called upon to be faithful to his God.

All scripture is beneficial with a view toward our *discipline* in "righteousness"; it is given to us unto this end. That is, all scripture is beneficial unto the end not only of our discerning that which is right for us to *know* concerning others, but specifically unto the end of our discerning that which is right for us to *apply* to ourselves. Yet how foolish to conclude that since all scripture serves with a view toward the accomplishment of this goal, that a certain portion of scripture (viz., the portion containing the precepts of the law) is therefore applicable to ourselves, with respect to our own obedience.

May God grant us wisdom to recognize, and reject, the persuasive words of human wisdom (1 Cor.2:4), the many specious arguments and illogical reasonings which are, in fact, but so much foolishness. "Be observing *accurately,* then, brethren, how you are walking, not as unwise, but as wise, reclaiming the era, for the days are wicked. Therefore do not become imprudent, but *understand* what the will of the Lord is" (Eph.5:15-17).

ACCORDING TO *PROMISE*

Both in Romans 4 and Galatians 3, the apostle Paul considers the same essential question, which is: "What, then, shall we declare that *Abraham,* our forefather, according to flesh, has found?" (Rom.4:1), Abraham, who "believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness" (Gal.3:6; cit. Gen.15:6).

Abraham (FATHER-HIGH-throng; for Yahweh had appointed him the forefather of a throng of nations; Gen. 17:5), at the time that Yahweh promised to make him into a great nation, was still Abram (FATHER-HIGH) and was not as yet the father of anyone.

Yet Yahweh had not promised to make Abram into a great

nation (or in him to bless others) *if* Abram would believe, or *if* Abram would obey. Instead Yahweh simply *informed* Abram of the good news which He had appointed for him:

> "*I shall* make you into a great nation,
> And *I shall* bless you,
> *I shall* indeed make your name great,
> And *you will* be a blessing;
> *I shall* indeed bless those blessing you,
> And *I shall* curse the one maledicting you.
> In you all the families of the ground *will*
> be blessed" (Gen.12:2,3).

Thus Yahweh foretold the lot of Abram, his descendants, and all the families of the ground. In light of the certain eventuality of the outcome, then, by the necessity of the consequence, it follows that no other outcome was possible.[1] Besides, Yahweh had not merely predicted what the future would hold, but what He Himself would make come to pass.

Paul by no means rehearses these matters concerning Abraham incidentally; much less does he do so gratuitously. Instead, Paul wishes for us to perceive what Abraham "has found," since God's ways with Abraham, in principle (both before he believed, in Genesis 12, and, much later, when he finally believed, in Genesis 15), are both representative of and precedent-setting for His ways with us (*cp* Gal.3:8,9).

Even as that which God had appointed for Abraham

1. The accurate fore*telling* of specific future events entails the fore-*knowing* of these same events; the foreknowing of these events entails the *inevitability* of these events; the inevitability of these events entails the falsehood of traditional "free will" (i.e., the notion of a power of categorical contrary choice, even under exactly the same conditions). If a contrary course of events were actually possible, then Yahweh would know this to be the case. Yet such "knowledge," falsely so-called, would contradict Yahweh's actual knowledge; therefore, no such knowledge could ever exist, much less could the events which some imagine to be comprised therein, ever occur.

was determined by God, not by Abraham, thus also, that which God has appointed for us, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, is determined by God, not by ourselves, according to our deeds.

If we are Christ's, consequently, we are "of Abraham's seed" (metaphorically speaking); that is, literally speaking, we are enjoyers of an allotment *according to promise* (Gal.3:29; *cf* Prov.16:33).

If any should reply, "Yes, but the enjoyment of the allotment itself is out of obedience to law," Paul will rejoin, saying, "If the enjoyment of the allotment is of law, it is no longer of promise. Yet God has *graciously granted* it to Abraham through the promise [and therefore the allotment is *not* given out of obedience to law]" (Gal.3:18). Accordingly, "if those of the law are enjoyers of the allotment, [1] faith has been made void and [2] the promise has been nullified, for the law is producing indignation [not blessing]" (Rom.4:14,15a).[2]

"Therefore [the promise to Abraham] is of *faith that it may accord with grace,* for the promise to be confirmed to the *entire* seed, not to those of the law only, but to those also of the faith of Abraham, who is father of us all, *according as* it is written that, A father of many nations have I *appointed* you" (Rom.4:16,17a; cit. Gen.17:5).

ON BEHALF OF TRANSGRESSIONS

Since God has graciously granted the allotment to Abraham through the promise—and therefore, accordingly, through promise, has allotted the blessing of justification to us, out of Jesus Christ's faith (*cp* Gal. 2:16)—the burning question is: "*What,* then, *is* the law?" (Gal.3:19).

2. The only way obedience to the law could ever produce blessing, would be if the law were kept, perfectly and continually (*cf* Deut. 28:1-15).

"Brethren (I am saying this as a man), [even] a human covenant likewise having been ratified, no one is repudiating it or modifying it. Now to Abraham the *promises* were declared, and to his Seed. He is not saying 'And to seeds,' as of many, but as of One: And to 'your Seed,' which is Christ.[3] Now this am I saying: a covenant, having been ratified before by God, the law, having come four hundred and thirty years afterward, does not invalidate, so as to nullify the promise" (Gal.3:15-17).

"What, then, is the law?" Here is the answer: "On behalf of *transgressions* was it *added* . . . " (Gal.3:19a).

"Law changes sin from a mere mistake to the overstepping of a divine command. It enhances the sinfulness of sin. Transgression is sin against a known law, entailing not only the usual penalties, but the added displeasure of God against one who defies His precepts . . . . The promises Abraham received [which, incidentally, subsequently, came to be] in connection with the law, were unconditional; [ultimately speaking,] dependent only on God's faithfulness. They were given without any reference to the law and [thus] do not depend on any legal observance for fulfillment. When the law did come it did not confirm these promises. It was brought in to show how impotent their own efforts were when they sought to attain to Abraham's divinely given righteousness by the keeping of the law. The law hindered rather than helped. Instead of making them just, it drew down God's indignation for their failure to live up to it."[4]

3. Christ, our *only* Saviour, is represented by the *singular* "seed" of Abraham. That is, even as Abraham's offspring *alone* may possess their promised blessings, thus also our blessings in Christ depend *solely* upon His finished work (*cf Unsearchable Riches,* vol.81, pp.46-48, James Coram).

4. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, pp.234, 282.

Charin ("on behalf," CV) is the accusative form of "grace," and is used as a preposition with the genitive case ("*of* transgressions").

The Authorized Version, at least as interpreted by some, is very misleading here in its rendering "*because* of transgressions." The words "*because* of" have led some to imagine that transgression obtained prior to Moses; and that the reference here is merely to ceremonial laws which were temporarily added by Moses to an already extant timeless moral code (namely, to a code which, under Moses, was merely formalized as the "Ten Commandments"). All of this is perfectly false (as well as artful and unreasonable); yet it is instructive to note the lengths to which some will go in order to impose the law upon believers today.

The idea of the Greek word, *charin*, is that of an act done with the objective of somehow bringing favor (i.e., some type of benefit or advantage) to the object in view (*cp* Titus 1:5,11). This is just what the entrance of the law afforded to transgression. Hence the law was given *on behalf* of the resultant transgressions which came into being through the law. Where no law is, neither is there transgression (Rom.4:15); yet the bestowal of law gives rise to its violation, which is transgression. Transgression owes its very existence to law, and cannot exist apart from it. Thus, on behalf of transgressions, "law came in by the way, *that the offense should be increasing*" (Rom.5:20).

THE ESSENCE OF THE EVANGEL

The law, on behalf of transgressions, however, was added "*until* the Seed should come . . ." (Gal.3:19b). This fact is of special relevance to our understanding of the evangel, since we are apt to fear that our sins may bar us from its benefits.

In speaking of himself and of his fellow Israelites who had now obtained the evangel which he proclaimed (*cp* Gal.2:15), Paul declares:

"Now before the coming of [the] faith we were garrisoned under law, being locked up together for the faith about to be revealed. So that the law has become our escort to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. Now, at the coming of [the] faith [the faith of Christ; v.22], *we* are no longer under an escort, for *you* are all sons of God, through [the] faith [which is] in Christ Jesus. For whoever are baptized into Christ, put on Christ, in Whom there is no Jew nor yet Greek, there is no slave nor yet free, there is no male and female, for you all are one in Christ Jesus. Now if you are Christ's, consequently you are of Abraham's seed, enjoyers of the allotment according to the promise" (Gal.3:23-29).

As is true of all scripture, to avoid misinterpretation, this passage must be kept within its context and understood accordingly. The context is that of the epistle to the Galatians which is a defense of the exclusively-Pauline teaching of justification by faith (the faith of Christ). Specifically, the context is that of the evangel of the Uncircumcision (Gal.2:7)—the evangel *which* Paul was heralding among the nations (Gal.2:2).

Justification by faith is the essence of this evangel, the evangel of our salvation (*cp* Eph.1:13). Since Christ Himself died for our sins, our justification is the result! While He was given up because of our offenses, yet He has been roused *because of our justifying* (Rom.4:25). *This* is what makes Christ's death for us good news!

Accordingly, then, the good news is that, apart from law (Rom.3:21), through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, we are being justified (declared righteous) *gratuitously* in His *grace* by God Himself (Rom. 3:24). This is in anticipation of our promised glorious vivification when we will actually be constituted righteous.

This evangel is "in accord with the faith of God's chosen, and a realization of the truth which accords with devout-

ness, in expectation of life eonian, which God, Who does not lie, *promises* before times eonian, yet manifests His word in its own eras by heralding, with which [Paul# was entrusted, according to the injunction of God, our Saviour" (Titus 1:1-3).

These glorious declarations, however, are not revelations of the evangel of the Circumcision, but that of the Uncircumcision (Gal.2:7). Indeed, in a number of vital particulars, they are contrary to the Circumcision evangel. The evangel of the Circumcision consists only of pardon (which may be withdrawn); *it knows nothing of justification.* Under the evangel of the Circumcision, works of righteousness, according to Moses, are essential to life (i.e., to "remaining for the eon"; 1 John 2:17; *cp* Matt.7:21,23).

Yet under Paul's evangel, the evangel which, broadly speaking, is the evangel of the *Un*circumcision, not only are we justified apart from law, but, "where sin increases, graces superexceeds" (Rom.5:20); where there is persistence in sin, grace increases accordingly (Rom.6:1), for life eonian (Rom.5:21). *This is not true under the evangel of the Circumcision.*

NO LONGER UNDER AN ESCORT

Therefore, *as it stands in relation to the Pauline evangel,* the law is nothing more than a *former* escort. It is but an erstwhile servant; a pedagogue-slave which, while useful in its day in its ministrations on behalf of children, is now rendered wholly redundant, since the children have attained their majority.

It was the custom in well-to-do Roman families, to have the boys *escorted* to and from school under the guardianship of a slave. Yet the grown sons would scorn the escort of their boyhood days. His presence would be an insult to their manhood. Similarly, those today who know their majority in Christ refuse the bondage of the law as both

unnecessary and humiliating. We are not children but sons. Law leads minors. Faith controls sons.[5]

Thus, on behalf of transgressions, the law was added (yet incidentally so, with respect to the original promises made to Abraham) *until* the Seed should come. Insofar as Paul and those of his fellow Israelites to whom this evangel had been granted are concerned, the law had become their escort to Christ. Now at the coming of the *faith* (through the advent of Christ; *cp* 2 Tim.1:10), *such ones* ("*we*"; Gal. 3:25) are no longer under an escort. Thus, whoever—*among those who are in view in this context;* namely, among those who are blessed according to Paul's evangel—are baptized into Christ put on *Christ,* in Whom—with respect to Paul's evangel and insofar as it is concerned—there is no Jew nor yet Greek, nor any other distinction, for all, thus blessed, are one in Christ Jesus (*cf* Gal.3:27,28).

In service, or in the *Lord,* the slave was still a slave, the sexes were still recognized; but—under Paul's evangel—in *Christ,* in Whom we are complete (Col. 2:10), all physical distinctions vanish. By faith, all who are called according to the Pauline evangel (*cp* Gal. 1:6-9) have the same high place of privilege and are entitled to the promise and righteousness of which this evangel consists.[6]

Thus, in the accounting of God, we have been put to death to the law through the body of Christ (Rom.7:4). Hence, since it has no jurisdiction over us, we are *exempted* from the law (Rom.7:6). Righteousness is God's gratuitous gift to us, through the work of Christ.

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5. Adapted from the CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.282, A. E. Knoch. It should be noted that in declining to subject ourselves to the particulars of the *Mosaic* instruction, it is not that we have been given over to lawlessness. The entreaties of Paul for service in the evangel, inculcate a far more august (and encompassing) "morality" than that of the demands of Sinai.

6. Adapted from CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.282, A. E. Knoch.

We are God's *chosen* ones (Rom.8:33); chosen before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4). Accordingly, God has graciously granted each of us a measure of faith (Phil.1:29); at least in the reality of Christ's sacrificial work, if not in a true understanding of its significance and consequences.

Since God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, we have the *expectation* of salvation (1 Thess.5:8,9). Truly the love and grace of God inherent in the evangel, is the secret of devoutness (*cp* 1 Tim.3:16). Since we *shall* be living together with Christ (Rom.6:8), let us be walking in a way well pleasing unto the Lord.

Insofar as the evangel itself is concerned, whatever we may think or whatever we may do is simply irrelevant. The evangel is impregnable. That is good news indeed! And, that is what constrains us to respond to it worthily—to be adorning the teaching that is of God, *our Saviour,* in all things (*cf* Titus 2:10). J.R.C.

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THE SPIRIT OF A SOUND MIND

THE recognition and glorification of God *as God* is the basic qualification for the mental apprehension of truth. In the measure in which we deny His divinity or devise a dual deity our minds will falter and we will fail to grasp God's revelation of Himself, either in nature or in His Word. Those who do not hold to the recognition of God become mentally disqualified (Rom.1:28). Those who do not laud and thank Him as God have no proper premise for logical reasoning. Their deductions are vain and their heart is dark.

The basis of all sane and satisfactory thinking is the great truth that *all is out of God, and through God, and for God.* If you deny this, the foundation of a sound mental structure is lacking. It will affect all of your thought processes. This it is which afflicts the wise men of today. They are building castles in the air. Evolution goes back, back—to nowhere. The further back it goes, the more inexplicable is the riddle of creation, which it succeeds in shelving instead of solving. It is far easier to account for creation as it is today than involute in a primordial germ. The moment we learn that *God is the source of all,* reason reigns and revelation explains.

The same is true when we begin to realize that *all is through God.* The present perplexing chaos is not resolved by the injection of another God to account for its evil. This explanation has been current for millenniums, but it has paralyzed reason and darkened intelligence. It denies that all came out of God and that all is for Him. With a God in

the background Who is operating the universe in accord with the counsel of His own will, we can gaze upon the seeming inextricable maze and see the outlines of His grand purpose shaping to His glorious end.

That *all is for God* is the most potent mental medicine which has ever been manufactured. It is not too much to say that the only rational reaction to orthodoxy is insanity. No human mind dares to use its full functions to face the future as it is usually set forth. That way madness lies for those who have the mental equipment to rationalize and realize its awful implications. A God Who will lose the greater part of His creatures is hardly a safe sheet anchor in the storms to come. If He could not save all, He may lose all. There are no halfway measures with absolute deity. But when we know that all—the losing as well as the saving—is of Him, then we may also rejoice that, *when the process of revealing Himself has been accomplished through sin and sorrow and suffering,* then He will have *all for* Himself, as He has said.

We merely mention this great truth because we desire to devote considerable space to the *mind,* as connected with God's revelation. Emotion has largely displaced mind in many quarters. The fact that the learned are largely apostate has prejudiced us against mental processes. We do not see that it is the *lack* of sound mental principles which is misleading the learned. God does not denounce mental exercise. Transformation, by mental renewal, is the first step in walking with Him (Rom.12:2). We are beginning to realize that we can be of more help to the saints in directing mental methods than in correcting the errors to which false reasoning gives rise.

We wish to emphasize one point, which our readers can confirm for themselves by means of a concordance. *Reasoning is never commended in the Scriptures.* We are to believe God, not to make deductions from His words after

they have been combined with our own error. The latter has become almost universal. This accounts for so many divergent "interpretations." There is no cure for the present distress apart from a vigorous mental grasp of the word of God and a smashing attack on the false mental processes by means of which "truth" has become an antonym of the Scriptures. We call for an exposure of every teaching that masks as truth, that is reasoned from the Scriptures, yet fails to accord with its microscopic accuracy.

The arguments against the truth we teach are multiplying so rapidly that it is impossible to answer them all in detail. Nor is this necessary, for they all have this in common: they are based on reasoning *from* the Scriptures, instead of implicit belief *in* God. They usually are a form of syllogism, in which one of the premises is not fully expressed, in order that the conclusion may seem to be Scriptural. All that is necessary is to clearly state the premises, and the illusion vanishes. We wish to show our readers how to meet these objections for themselves, and especially to forestall the objections of those who are honestly desirous of the truth, yet are mentally misled by the error which they hold, and on which they base their thinking.

Too many of the saints are not open to this salutary mental readjustment. They are impatient of "syllogisms" and "premises." These names should not stumble us. We are constantly making syllogisms and using premises in our thinking. Is it not well that we should give them a handle, so that we may control them? Most reasoning is done in the dark. If we wished to thread a needle, and the blinds were drawn, we would stop to raise them. This is what we hope to do. Let us never reason without throwing a searchlight on our premises, to see if they are true. They very seldom are. The result will be that we will reason less and less, and believe more and more.

No better example can be given than the passage to

which we have already referred. All is out of, and through, and for God. Nothing is more reasonable, yet how unnecessary to prove it! All that human reason, in its present plight can do, is to seek to disprove it. Yet the moment that is attempted, mental retribution operates to disqualify the mind of the reasoner. He seeks to limit it by inserting the word "good." All *good* is of God, but evil is not! This flies in the face of the context, for it concerns God's repudiation of Israel and the locking of all in stubbornness. This is the opening wedge for the final deification of the devil and the dethronement of the deity. Reason leads to darkness. It is most unreasonable in the face of revelation. Let us test all attempts at logic, and reject every conclusion that makes the slightest discord with the minutest element of the sacred originals.

Since my earliest fellowship with God's people I have been rebuked for what was then called "head knowledge." Lately it has been strikingly stated thus: "Paul worked with his hands, not with his head." It is distinctly disconcerting to be called to task for this failing of mine. I cannot help it. It is inherited, in part. I have never learned to think with any other member of my body. When I came to know God I gloried in the fact that He had not given me the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a *sound mind* (2 Tim.1:7). I am somewhat dubious about Paul. Easily the most intellectual of all the inspired writers, I have taken it for granted that he was not averse to moderate mental exercise.

But I wish to assure my objectors that I also work with my hands. For most of the years of my ministry I made my living with my hands (though not to the entire exclusion of my brains). I am a printer. Quite a little of the mechanical work on the magazine and our other work is done by me. Perhaps I ought to say that my writing is done by my hands. Even Paul did not do that!

I am being continually classed with the Scribes of our Lord's day, because they knew the letter of the Scriptures. But our Lord did not denounce them on that account! It is no crime to know exactly what God has said! It is no proof of apostasy! Alas! how many are sheltering themselves behind a comfortable and lazy ignorance! How many practically reject God's written revelation by claiming to have a special enduement which enables them to know the truth without the labor and toil of recovering it in the Scriptures! I confess that I am compelled to study and investigate and search and continually readjust myself to God's living oracles. Many claim to be more fortunate. But, as they differ among themselves, only one *can* be right. *None* can be right!

Interpretation, in these degenerate days, has become almost wholly inference. Even inference is too strong a term. It is assumption, supposition. It rests chiefly on the fact that modern minds are so muddled, that any relationship of thought is mistaken for reasoning. It seems that, while we may not use our minds in sound and sensible inquiry, it is perfectly proper to use them in unsound speculation. It is quite right to formulate a theory and appeal to passages which have hardly a remote relation to the subject. It is quite commendable to propose a series of propositions, which convey a hazy impression and suggest a conclusion which clashes with clear statements of God's word!

We have need that God should keep our minds or apprehensions as well as our hearts, in Christ Jesus (Phil.4:7). Satan is blinding the *minds* of unbelievers (2 Cor.4:4). Paul prays that we may apprehend, or *mind* (it is the same word), his knowledge. Our Lord rebuked his disciples repeatedly because they did not *mind,* or apprehend, His words (Matt. 15:17; 16:9,11; Mark 8:17; John 12:40).

The relative importance of the mind in the present administration may be gathered from the frequency of

the occurrence of *nous,* MIND. It occurs only once before (Luke 24:45) and twice after Paul's epistles (Rev.13:18; 17:9), but over twenty times in the course of his letters. These are so suggestive and helpful for those who imagine that the mind is a hindrance to spirituality that we give all of them herewith.

One of the most solemn passages in the prison epistles refers to the mental state, the comprehension, or *through-mind,* of unbelievers. Their comprehension is darkened (Eph.4:18). Shall we be like them? Because mental keenness is not of itself sufficient to give us the knowledge of God, shall we glory in stupidity and denseness? Peter, who is generally supposed to have been an "ignorant" man, exhorts his readers to gird up the loins of their comprehension (1 Pet.1:13). Surely, we cannot do less, for Paul, we feel sure, used his feet to walk, his hands to work, but his mind to think.

Our transformation is effected by the renewing of our minds (Rom.12:2). Those who always want to be "practical" are usually impatient of doctrine and stress deportment. Mental renewal is a prime necessity if we wish to please God. Only thus can we know His will. This is not confined to Romans. It is amplified in Ephesians. The only way to put off the old humanity is to be rejuvenated in the spirit of our minds (Eph.4:23). The last occurrences are very searching, as they seem to apply with special force to these days. We read of men of a *decadent* mind (1 Tim. 6:5). Let us not boast in this as some are doing. Those who withstand the truth are of a *depraved* mind, disqualified for the faith (2 Tim 3:8). Are we in this class? It is only as we humbly acknowledge the prevalence of these dire conditions, and the possibility that we also may be tinged with them, that we have any assurance that we are qualified to grasp God's revelation of Himself.

nous, MIND in the Concordant Version

Luke	24:45	Then He opened up their *mind* to understand the scriptures
Rom.	1:28	God gives them over to a disqualified *mind.*
	7:23	warring with the law of my *mind*
	7:25	with the *mind* am slaving for God's law,
	11:34	For who knows the *mind* of the Lord?
	12: 2	by the renewing of your *mind,*
	14: 5	fully assured in his own *mind.*
1 Cor.	1:10	to the same *mind* and of the same opinion
	2:16	did anyone know the *mind* of the Lord?
	—	yet we have the *mind* of Christ.
	14:14	yet my *mind* is unfruitful.
	15	be praying with the *mind* also.
	—	be playing with the *mind* also.
	19	speak five words with my *mind*
Eph.	4:17	in the vanity of their *mind,*
	23	be rejuvenated in the spirit of your *mind,*
Phil.	4: 7	being superior to every *mental* state,
Col.	2:18	affectedly puffed up by fleshly *mind*
2 Thess.	2: 2	not quickly shaken from your *mind,*
1 Tim.	6: 5	altercations of men of a decadent *mind*
2 Tim.	3: 8	men of a depraved *mind*
Titus	1:15	But their *mind* as well as conscience has been defiled
Rev.	3:18	Let him who has a *mind* calculate the number
	17: 9	Here is the *mind* which hath wisdom.

Though not in Paul's epistles, the first occurrence is most suggestive, in this connection. The disciples had been with our Lord, yet had failed to grasp the vital points in His message. In resurrection He meets them again and works a special miracle to enable them to understand the Scriptures. What does He do? What part of them does He affect? He opens their *mind* (Luke 24:45). This is what is needed today. Let us not ignore or disparage the mind. It is the only medium through which we can understand God's word.

God gives over *those who refuse to recognize Him* to a disqualified mind (Rom.1:28). This is basic and important. The vanity of the world's wisdom lies in the fact that it excludes God. The truth of any system of theology is in direct ratio to its recognition of Him. Do you wish to have a mind qualified to enter into God's revelation? Then believe this simple statement: "All is out of Him and through Him and for Him." This is the only rational foundation for all mental processes. Deny this, in any degree, and your mind will suffer. This is the great premise from which alone sane conclusions may be drawn. It is the only proposition which can heal the mental mystification of God's saints. All who deny this are lost in futility and mental fog.

A. E. Knoch

STYN VOGEL

Our dear sister, Styn (VanHolten) Vogel, age 88, beloved wife of Brother Peter Vogel for sixty-five years, was put to repose on April 19, 2014. Born in the Netherlands she had lived for many years in Canada, most recently in Hamilton, Ontario. Her obituary in the Hamilton newspaper ends with a favorite verse of hers, testifying to her faith: "In Christ all shall be made alive" (1 Cor.15:22).

WALKING IN WISDOM TOWARD THOSE OUTSIDE

It is wisdom to deal with men in accord with God's will and purpose concerning them. If we imagine that those outside are doomed to destruction or eternal torment, it is practically impossible to avoid a hardening of the heart in regard to them, which will lead us to think and act contrary to the basic truths of their creation and reconciliation in love. Thinking of them as so much waste in God's operations in turn reflects upon His wisdom and love. These false conceptions of God's creation and goal, outside the Son of His love, make a wise walk toward those outside impossible.

What if they are the vessels of God's indignation now? In due time He will use them for His glory. We, the vessels of His grace, have no more right to His favor than those without. May this thought humble us before them.

A.E.K.

THOUGHTS ON LAW AND SIN

THE gospel declaration made to saints that "you are not under law" (Rom.6:14) is very distasteful to many of them because they suppose that Christian conduct consists of obedience to a law which demands of man only what is holy and just and good. Nevertheless, it is a central feature of Paul's evangel that the saint has been exempted from that same law. The need for this exemption is shown in this chapter, and the fact that such a need exists and that it demands deliverance from the mastery of law is eloquent testimony that there remains in the saint something that is not subject to law, nor indeed can be.

Because Paul proclaimed deliverance from law by the death of Christ the legalists perpetually joined issue with him. This feature of his gospel, absent from the gospel of the Circumcision, well nigh cost Him his life (Acts 21:28). It was this difference between their two gospels that made Paul withstand Peter at Antioch, that led to his declaration that justification is by faith and not by works of law, and that "I, through law, died to law, that I should live to God" (Gal.2:11-21). And it was the efforts of the legalists to subvert the gospel that occasioned the writing of the epistle to the Galatians, in which Paul shows that legalism for them would mean nothing short of separation from Christ (Gal.5:1-6).

There is a profound need for such a discussion as this chapter gives. It is made necessary by all that Paul has said about our crucifixion with Christ. There is nothing like this chapter elsewhere; it is fundamental to all that Paul in his

other epistles has to say on the subject of the saint's walk and his freedom from law as a rule of spiritual conduct. He defended that part of his gospel which declared that God's righteousness is reckoned to the believer by referring to the Hebrew Scriptures concerning Abraham's justification, and showed that his justification was not through law, but through faith. But when he proceeds to show that the saint is made dead to the law by the body of Christ, he supports the revelation by no scripture, because this is part of the secret of the gospel concerning which the Hebrew Scriptures were silent. He first interpreted the purpose of law as a preparation for a gracious justification (3:20), and now he relates his experience under law as proof of the need of deliverance from it in order to a walk which is worthy of the Lord. The law cannot sanctify and transform any more than it can justify. On the contrary, it forbids us to reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God, because it applies law to the sin which God has judged, and from which He justified us by death; it aggravates sin in the flesh and stirs into activity the law of sin which is in our members, and which brings us into captivity. Thus the teaching of Romans 6:1-14 involves death to law as well as death to Sin. G.L.R.

Or are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law), that the law is lording it over a man for as much time as he is living? (Rom.7:1)

The apostle now addresses particularly those who have been under law, that is, who were of the Circumcision. His appeal, however, is not to the law itself, but to the nature of all law, that it has jurisdiction only over those who are alive. A.E.K.

The conjunction "or" refers back to the statement of 6:14; you are not under law. It introduces a proof of that assertion, viz. law is limited to the living. E.H.C.

For a woman in wedlock is bound to a living man by law. Yet if the man should be dying, she is exempt from the law of the man. Consequently, then, while the man is living, she will be styled an adulteress if she should be becoming another man's, yet, if the man should be dying, she is free from the law, being no adulteress on becoming another man's. (Rom.7:2,3)

Verses 2 and 3 provide an illustration of freedom from law by death. Death is the only release from law. In the illustration a case is chosen where death leaves a living one in a new position. E.H.C.

The law of wedlock is given as a well-known example. A woman's subjection to her husband lasts only for his life. During his life she may have no relations with other men. After his death the ties which bind her to a new husband are just as sacred as those which united her to the former one. A.E.K.

So that, my brethren, you also were put to death to the law through the body of Christ, for you to become Another's, Who is roused from among the dead, that we should be bearing fruit to God. (Rom.7:4)

The illustration is now applied to the saints. The woman died to law by the death of her husband; so the saints died to law by the body of Christ. The woman, being freed, might become another's; so the saints, released from the mastery of law, become Another's. The result of exemption from law is that the saints may be fruitful to God. E.H.C.

A wife and her husband are one flesh (Gen.2:24), hence the *wife* dies with the husband, but the *woman* remains. Those united to Christ under law died with Him to the law. Union with Christ in resurrection is a new relationship beyond the sphere of the law. A.E.K.

For, when we were in the flesh, the passions of sins, which were through the law, operated in our members to be bearing fruit to Death. (Rom.7:5)

The sphere of the old life, before faith came, was "in the flesh." Then "the passions of sins, which were through the law, operated in our members to be fruitful to death." Thus is emphasized the necessity for death to law and to sin.

E.H.C.

Paul does not preach Christ as He was presented to Israel. The proper Object of our faith is the One Who died, was buried, and rose again, in Whom is all our deliverance. Further, he presents the saints as baptized into Him, so that they share, as well as His death to sin, His death to law. In Christ Jesus they are carried out of the old creation with its expectation of blessing in the kingdom.

G.L.R.

Yet now we were exempted from the law, dying in that in which we were retained, so that it is for us to be slaving in newness of spirit and not in oldness of letter. (Rom.7:6)

"Yet now;" here is the saints' present position—"exempted from law," for "when dying" we died to that in which we were retained. The saints are severed from the old to take up the new. Letter and spirit, in scripture, do not signify the mere difference between the literal and essential sense, but respectively indicate law and life. We are "to be slaving," for deliverance from law does not relieve us from serving, but rather introduces us to service produced by the operation of spirit, which is our new life.

E.H.C.

Exemption from the law applies only to those who were under the law. As the law is not unjust, like Sin, but just and holy, they continue to serve, no longer in letter, but in spirit.

A.E.K.

What, then, shall we declare? That the law is sin?

May it not be coming to that! But sin I knew not except through law. For besides, I had not been aware of coveting except the law said, "You shall not be coveting." Now Sin, getting an incentive through the precept, produces in me all manner of coveting. For apart from law Sin is dead. Now I lived, apart from law, once, yet at the coming of the precept Sin revives. Yet I died, and it was found that, to me, the precept for life, this is for death. For Sin, getting an incentive through the precept, deludes me, and through it, kills me. So that the law, indeed, is holy, and the precept holy and just and good. (Rom.7:7-12)

The mistaken deduction from the foregoing (verses 1-6) is that the law itself is sin. Else why cease to serve its letter? Or else how does it make sin more sinful and transform it into an offense? Sin is not known in its true character except through law. Instead of sin being ignorant inability, it becomes the opposite. It is active hostility. The law which seemed to be given to regulate, only roused it. Sin is dormant or dead until law comes and gives it life. The law which should have given the *sinner* life, gave life to *sin.* It should have been the death blow of *sin,* but it became the death of the *sinner.* All this shows how futile it is to try to reform or regulate or conquer sin. It not only acts in darkness and ignorance but transforms the very light into an agent of death. The law offered life to those under it, on terms which, apart from sin, were all that could be desired. But sin not only disabled them so that they could not take advantage of its provisions, but involved them in its condemnation by stirring their passions against its just decrees.

A.E.K.

The sin of coveting lies not in the evil of the thing desired, but in the very desire itself. The other precepts forbade overt acts which might be observed by others.

Saul had evidently got past the nine precepts with the feeling that he was blameless, but the tenth detected the first motions of sin in the inner and hidden life; it passed below the external behavior to the hidden movement of lust. A deep, spiritual purpose underlies the precept; it bids one to be content with what God gives. Desire for more calls God's will in question. The precept is used to discover in the human heart all manner of lawless desire. G.L.R.

The teaching that the saint is exempted from law leads to a serious inquiry regarding the character of law. The nature of law is fully vindicated; the law makes sin known by developing the specific hostility of sin; this function of law does not constitute the law to be sin; it is not the fault of law.

Sin exists apart from the law, and the latter only brings to light how bad matters are, making clear the necessity for the salvation of the evangel.

Sin finds incentive in the law's precepts. In a figure, sin, apart from law, is dead, yet sin uses law to effect, not the intention of law, but activities which accord with its own character.

The "I lived" of verse 9 becomes "I died" in verse 10 in the view of the precept. The insidious nature of sin is such that a "precept for life" becomes, because of sin, a precept "for death."

Verse 11 explains the "I lived" and "I died." Sin finds its power in the law's precept, and deludes, and kills.

The conclusion is unmistakable; the law is holy, with precepts holy, just and good. The fault is the fact of sin. E.H.C.

Become good, then, death to me? May it not be coming to that! But Sin, that it may be appearing Sin, is producing death to me through good, that Sin may become an inordinate sinner through the precept. For we are aware

that the law is spiritual, yet I am fleshly, having been disposed of under Sin. (Rom.7:13,14)

Still another query; did good (that is the law) become death? No! Sin leads to death. Sin misses the mark even when it has instructions from that which is good. E.H.C.

From the supposition that the law, being holy and just and good, involved him in death, it seems that what is good may become the cause of death. But such is not the case. It was not the *law* which produced death, but sin, misusing law. The real and apparent functions of the law are very different. And, in order to effect its real object, it was necessary that it should not appear on the surface. The apparent object of the law was to give life to all who consistently and constantly kept it. As it never gave life to anyone, for no one was able to fulfill its demands, it appears as if the law has failed of its primary object. And, further, as it revived the passions of sin which were dormant, it seems to have defeated its own aim. But the real object of the law was to reveal the inordinate sinfulness of sin, and in this it was most successful. A.E.K.

For what I am effecting I know not, for not what I will, this I am putting into practice, but what I am hating, this I am doing. Now if what I am not willing, this I am doing, I am conceding that the law is ideal. Yet now it is no longer I who am effecting it, but Sin making its home in me.

For I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not. For it is not the good that I will that I am doing, but the evil that I am not willing, this I am putting into practice. Now if what I am not willing, this I am doing, it is no longer I who am effecting it, but Sin, which is making its home in me.

Consequently, I am finding the law that, at my willing to be doing the ideal, the evil is lying beside me. For I am

gratified with the law of God as to the man within, yet I am observing a different law in my members, warring with the law of my mind, and leading me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (Rom.7:18-23)

This is the experience of one who does not realize his death to sin and the law, but who is endeavoring to keep the letter of the law. He finds that the law of sin in his members is far more potent than the law of God, which appeals to his mind. He *wants* to do good, but cannot. He does things which he hates to do, hence charges his misery to the indwelling sin, which has taken possession of his body. He is a wretched captive. This will be the experience of all who make an earnest effort to please God by obeying the letter of that law which was broken even before it reached the people (Exodus 32:19). A.E.K.

A wretched man am I! What will rescue me out of this body of death? Grace! I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Consequently, then, I myself with the mind, indeed, am slaving for God's law, yet with the flesh for Sin's law. (Rom.7:24,25)

What is the answer to this wretched man's cry? It is *grace.* There is no other deliverance possible. This brings us back to where this digression began, the reign of Grace at the end of the fifth chapter. It is only as we recognize the imperial sway of Grace, putting us beyond all possibility of condemnation, whether we sin or not, that we have real liberty and power sufficient to effect not only what was demanded by the law, but those higher duties which far transcend the righteous requirements of Sinai. Then we will not be wretched and self-occupied, but happy and exulting in God, in Whose favor we are basking, and Whose delight we are, in Christ. A.E.K.

The preceding notes were selected from the writings of E. H. Clayton, A. E. Knoch and George L. Rogers.

TO BECOME ANOTHER'S

We have become His Whose body was crucified for us and Who is roused from among the dead (Rom.7:4). This revelation of our place before God and in the world is set before us in a context announcing death to the law. We are justified in God's grace through the faith of Jesus Christ, apart from works of law (Rom.3:21,22). Law came in by the way that the offense should be increasing. Yet where sin increases, grace superexceeds (Rom.5:20,21). In view of our current lives as believers of this evangel we are directed and invigorated by this message of grace, centered in Christ Jesus, our Lord. We are not under law, but under grace (Rom.6:14). We are put to death to the lording of the law. And we are brought under the lording of Christ as He is made known in the evangel of God, the One Who suffered in body obediently unto death, and was roused from among the dead.

We do not become Christ's with respect to justification and peace before God by keeping the law, nor is our walk in the Lord empowered by its precepts. We belong to Christ. He is the *Another* of Romans 7:4. He is Grace Personified. In this way He lords it over us in our daily lives, by means of the word of God's grace concerning His death and His rousing from among the dead, and our identification with Him in these supremely critical events. Law tells us what we must do; the evangel of grace, centered in Christ, tells us what God has done through His Son. Where Christ is recognized as the Channel of God's grace for life and peace, there the believer bears fruit to God.

THOSE WHO KNOW LAW

Now Paul addresses those who KNOW law, saying: "Or are you UN-KNOWING, brethren, that the law is lording it over a human for as much time as he is living?" (Rom.7:1).

No doubt, as Brother Knoch wrote, "The apostle now addresses particularly those . . . who were of the Circumcision." Yet very few of us have escaped the impression that, in some sense, we are under the law. We need Paul's vigorous reminder here that we are exempt from it and are standing before God in grace alone. Perhaps our apostle would be surprised to see how widespread the Galatian error is found among us today. In any case, we truly would be sorely impoverished without Romans 7.

When one who knew the law asked Jesus, "Teacher, by doing what should I enjoy the allotment of life eonian?" the Lord said, "What is written in the law? How are you reading?" And the lawyer answered, "You shall be loving the Lord your God out of your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole strength, and with your whole comprehension, and your associate as yourself." Then the Lord said, "Correctly have you answered. This be doing and you shall be living" (Luke 10:25-28).

Thus Jesus made it evident to this law-expert that he was not doing what the law demanded. Yet the very foundation of the Lord's teaching was a sharpening and deepening of the law given at Sinai: "Till heaven and earth should be passing by, one iota or one serif may by no means be passing by from the law till all should be occurring . . . . For I am saying to you that, if ever your righteousness should not be superabounding more than that of the scribes and Pharisees, by no means may you be entering into the kingdom of the heavens" (Matt.5:18,20).

Again to the rich young ruler who asked, "Teacher, what

1. CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.236.

good shall I be doing that I should be having life eonian?" He answered, "If you are wanting to be entering into life, keep the precepts" (Matt.19:16,17). Then when Jesus defined the law in accord with its strictest demands, "the youth came away sorrowing" (Matt.19:22). As with Saul of Tarsus, a growing acquaintance with the law "killed" his self-deceived assurance.

The law's dominance over Israel was not changed when John the Baptist announced, "For the law through Moses was given; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Grace was necessarily added to law, for apart from the precious blood of Christ there is no ransoming of Israel from their vain behavior (1 Peter 1:17-21). Yet they remain under the law throughout the millennial kingdom in accord with the new covenant (*cf* Isa.51:4-8; Jer.31:31-34; Ezek.36:24-28). The Circumcision evangel remained one of faith plus works (James 2:8-19), of grace joined to law keeping.

On the other hand, in accord with the evangel given him by the ascended Lord, Paul says to us, "You are not under law, but under grace" (Rom.6:14). As for life eonian, he writes: "The *gracious gift of God* is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:23). Life eonian for us is solely the effect of God's grace in the giving of His Son Who died for our sakes while we remained sinners. If this is not clear enough, our apostle tells us bluntly that we were put to death to the law through the body of Christ and are exempted from it (Rom.7:4,6).

AN ILLUSTRATION

The illustration given in Romans 7:2,3 of exemption from the law by means of death is both fitting and instructive. In this case, a woman in wedlock is put to death as a wife when her husband dies. But she remains alive to become another's without being an adulteress. She is dead in one

sense, but alive in another. To be *exempt* from the law of the man (Rom.7:2) is to have died to that law, just as those who have been put to death to the law (Rom.7:4) are exempted from it, dying to its authority over them (Rom.7:6). The Greek verb rendered "exempt" is the same word as that translated "nullify" in Romans 6:6 and 1 Corinthians 15:24, and that rendered "abolish" in 1 Corinthians 15:26. In its word elements it is DOWN-UN-ACT. In our vernacular we might say, "put down and undone." It is a parallel term to the verb *die,* and is nearly as strong in expressing a decisive termination.

The woman, as a wife, died when her husband died. The law of the husband was no longer lording it over her.

SO THAT

"So that, my brethren, you also were put to death to the law through the body of Christ, for you to become Another's, Who is roused from among the dead" (Rom.7:4).

We learn as a result of this picture that our identification with Christ in His death (*cf* Romans 6:2-11) means not only removal (in spirit now and in full reality in the future) from Sin's lordship over us but also from the lordship of law.

But why give so much space to this?

We have only to compare the general understanding of our position under grace with what Paul says here to come to appreciate this chapter. Even in commentaries on this scripture the impression is often made on our minds that in some way to be under grace involves being under law. Some may say explicitly that we are exempt only from the lording of the "ceremonial" law, and not at all from the "moral" law. Others may rightly point out that we are not under the condemnation of the law, but deny (or at least fail to note) that Paul is speaking first of all of the *lording* of the law over the human (Rom.7:1). What Paul says

here displays the reality of his opening words in this epistle: Paul was *severed* for the evangel of God. What Paul writes here is distinct and differs from what is said concerning the law outside his writings.

CHRIST'S BODY

The death of Christ for sinners comes before us here in the words "the body of Christ." This means His suffering and death in His own literal body, in that body which was adapted for Him (Heb.10:5,10) for this very purpose that He would be able to die for sinners. It was that body in the form of a slave and the likeness of humanity in which He humbled Himself to the death of the cross (Phil.2:6-8). It was that body in the likeness of sin's flesh in which God sent Him to die for the condemnation of sin in the flesh (Rom.8:3). In being baptized in spirit into this death and entombed together with Him we have been put to death to Sin (Rom.6:2-10). But also, by this same means, we have been put to death to any lording of the law over us.

Paul speaks of Christ's body with reference to what he has just said about our body. Our body of flesh is a "body of Sin" (Rom.6:6). It is a "mortal body" (Rom.6:12), that is, a dying body in which Sin reigns (Rom.5:21). Ever since sin and death entered into the world through the one offense of Adam, human bodies have been bodies of humiliation (Phil.3:21), bodies of flesh in which, from that time, Sin makes its home (Rom.7:17,18,20). We cannot change this situation. There is only one way for it to be changed once and for all, and that is by death, which puts an end to the mortal body of sin, and a rousing to life in a new body in which we are no longer dying, and Sin no longer reigns. In that Christ's body was put to death, so our body of sin and death is put to death when we are identified together with Christ in His death.

Hence the believer who, by the death of Christ, is put

to death, not only to Sin, but also to the law and its lordship is brought under a new lordship. In Romans 6:14 the replacement of law was called *grace.* Here the new Master is revealed to be *Christ,* Whose body suffered death on our behalf, and Who is roused from among the dead. The word, *grace* in 6:14 and the words, *Another's, Who is roused from among the dead* in 7:4 are equivalents. *Grace* is a one-word summation of the evangel which concerns the Son of God, Whose body was put to death on behalf of the sinner and Who was roused from among the dead, no longer dying, but living to God. That which lords it over us is not "you shall do, and you shall not do," but: "*Christ* died for our sins . . . and *He* has been roused the third day" (1 Cor.15:3,4); "*Jesus our Lord* . . . was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying" (Rom.4:25); "while we are still sinners, *Christ* died for our sakes" (Rom.5:8); "the gracious gift of God is life eonian in *Christ Jesus, our Lord*" (Rom.6:23).

As Paul will soon express it (though in negative terms), since we are Christ's, we have His spirit (Rom.8:9). To belong to Him, and in holding this in mind and heart, the spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of sonship and the spirit of expectation and endurance, and of self-humbling and submissive listening to God's word for the glory of His God and Father (*cf* Phil.2:5-8), begins to take hold in our lives.

ROUSED FROM THE DEAD

The death of Christ is chaos and emptiness and darkness (*cp* Gen.1:2) apart from His rousing from among the dead. Apart from His resurrection, we are still in our sins (1 Cor.15:17), and when we die, that would be the end of us and any possibility for God's creation of life on the earth having any purpose for His glory. Sin and its reign, death and its reign—these cannot come to an end apart from His rousing.

This reference to the rousing of Christ from among the dead receives a full exposition in 1 Corinthians 15:12-57. Our hearts are rejoiced and our current lives stabilized by this message of victory over death and life to come:

> *Christ has been roused from among the dead, the First-fruit of those who are reposing. For since in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified . . . . Then shall come to pass the word which is written,*
>
> *Swallowed up was Death by Victory.*
> *Where, O Death, is your victory?*
> *Where, O Death, is your sting?* (1 Cor.15:20-22,54,55)

What happened in Eden is undone. It is now certain that death will be "abolished"—DOWN-UN-ACTED. Indeed the tragedy of Genesis 3 is more than undone; it is justified by the achievement of God Who brings all evil to good by the death of Christ followed by His resurrection.

He was roused from among the dead! And we belong to Him!

BEARING FRUIT TO GOD

We are under grace. We are Christ's. This is so that we may be bearing fruit to God (Rom.7:4).

Once again we remind ourselves that the "may" does not mean "ought to," or "possibly," but rather expresses a result contingent on what has just been said. We have become Christ's, Who is roused from among the dead. On the basis of the certainty of this we shall certainly be bearing fruit to God in the oncoming eons. Even as Christ is roused and living to God so also we shall be living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.6:11), bearing fruit to His glory. This speaks of the future.

But this has important reference to the present. What shall be affects us now as we are believing it. In our stand-

ing before God the passions of sins which operate in our flesh, bearing fruit to Death, that is, the chaos and nothingness of Death as a power, are things of the past. This is our present position in spirit. There is divine power in this evangel of what Christ has done and what shall be and in the revelation that we are identified with Christ in His death. The power is in the message of grace, not that of law. Law leaves us with much despair because it centers on us and what we *have* to do. The grace of certainty that we shall be living to God, which is based on what Christ has done, bears fruit in our lives even now as we hold fast to it. It, not law, bears fruit of love and joy and peace that honors God.

Yet if we suppose that grace is the law of Exodus 20 or Matthew 5 by a new name, we will be greatly impoverished. As Paul will soon show we are not under the law that says "You shall not be coveting" (Rom.7:7). There is no spiritual power for us in that instruction even though it is spiritual in speaking of spiritual behavior (Rom.7:14). The spiritual power for us is in the word that while we are still sinners who are disposed in flesh to covet, Christ died for our sakes. The transcendent riches of God's grace train us, as they did Paul, to be content in that which we are and have (Phil.4:11). So it is that, on the basis of the pities of God, Who has justified us gratuitously in His grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, Paul entreats us not to be coveting (*cf* Rom.12:1; 13:9).

A SLAVERY OF LOVE

We are under the power and influence of the evangel and are devoted to it, listening to it and invigorated by it. That is what Paul means by the verb "slaving" in Romans 7:6. Here Paul continues to associate the evangel with the highest form of slavery, in which there is love and devotion toward the master.

So it was with Paul himself who writes as a slave of Christ Jesus, severed for the evangel of God concerning His Son (*cf* Rom.1:1-3). Our apostle was not ashamed of this evangel even though it did not afford opportunity to gain praise for himself for making some contribution to its successful work of justification and the enjoyment of the glory of God. He had come to realize that he could contribute nothing, and in that he was unable to carry out all the requirements of the law, he was under condemnation. Grace was his JOY indeed. It was fully centered in Christ. This was his life, and this was his message. As he was the happy man of Romans 4:8, so he was the thankful slave of Romans 1:1, and of Romans 7:6.

So also it is for us who belong to Christ and eagerly and submissively listen to ("obey") the evangel which announces the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:19; 6:16). Like slaves we listen from the heart to the type of teaching to which we are given over (Rom.6:17)—to the type of teaching which centers on Christ. In this we focus our minds on the evangel of God, manifesting the righteousness of God and His love and glory. And this, in turn, affects our tongues and hands and feet. What a happy and powerful position, to be thus enslaved to God as He is made known in and through His Son (*cf* Rom.6:22)!

NEWNESS OF SPIRIT

It is not God's word given at Sinai that directs us in our living, but His word which tells of the death and rousing of Christ. This word of God is imbued with "newness of spirit," in contrast to the law which is "oldness of letter." In 2 Corinthians 3:1-11 Paul speaks of this evangel which he was dispensing as "a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, for the letter is killing, yet the spirit is vivifying." The new covenant which will be established for Israel will be one of law infused with the spirit of God, so that

they will know the law and do it. But the evangel as "a new covenant" is the message of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as it is set over us who are believing and who have been put to death to the law. This is a dispensation of righteousness, manifesting the righteousness of God in the justification of those who are products of the faith of Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.3:21-26). "Now the Lord is the spirit; yet where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Now we all, with uncovered face, mirroring the Lord's glory, are being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the spirit" (2 Cor.3:17,18).

Romans 8 will give much attention to the spirit as it vibrates over us in the evangel of God. Paul will call this evangel "the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:2). The law given through Moses will operate in the lives of Israelites by spiritual power in the kingdom ahead. The evangel of God operates now among believers as spiritual power in their lives, affecting their walk and filling their heart with happiness and peace. As slaves of the message of Christ's obedience and God's righteousness we do not get slavery's spirit to fear again, but the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying "Abba, Father!" (Rom.8:15). We are slaves who are sons. The two positions are one.

Spirit has been well described as "the imperceptible, intangible power of action, life and intelligence."[2] In the future, terrestrial kingdom, God will give His spirit to Israel in association with the letter of the law. But for us, in the future, yet also now in accord with the earnest of the spirit, it comes in association with the evangel of God's grace.

Thanks be to God that He has opened our ears and hearts and lives to this powerful word.

D.H.H.

2. Keyword Concordance, p.232.

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 105th Year

(1909–2014)

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 *Thus All* Israel Shall be Saved
107 I Will Stand Erect
115 Because of Another
123 Three Laws
126 Law and the Knowledge of Sin
133 God's Law of Grace
137 The Parable of the Potter

THIRD QUARTER, 2014

Volume 105 **Number 3**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

This book traces the divine function of *evil* (whatever is harmful or destructive) from its inception to its consummation, by presenting scriptural solutions to the various long-debated questions concerning God and His sovereignty.

As one of its subjects, it probes and takes issue with the commonly accepted explanation that Satan, and not God, is responsible for evil. To quote the book's author: "Almost all of us are shortsighted. We see the judgments, but fail to recognize that they are only part of God's way with mankind, that they are definitely not an end. We confuse the going with the goal. Judgment is God's strange work. He uses it as a preparation toward a glorious consummation."

The message in this book is especially valuable to us in these days of doubt and distress, to lead men to rely on and rest in God alone.

A. E. Knoch, paperback, 351 pages (ISBN 0-910424-59-4)

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, THIRD QUARTER 2014
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED FIVE

EDITORIAL

OVER a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"), though much remained still to be done. And since that time, while the Concordant Version of the New Testament has come through six editions, the Old Testament in its entirety has remained until quite recently "a work in progress."

Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT has been sent to the printers and should be available as a single, hardbound book by the end of November. (See particulars on p.114.)

Yet the translation of both parts remains a work in progress, as it must. We must be the first to admit that, despite our efforts, there remain inconsistencies in renderings and uncertainties as to the exact wording of certain original texts. Nevertheless, we strongly believe that the Concordant Version, as it now will exist in two separate volumes will prove unusually helpful in conveying God's Word to those who take advantage of its features.

Some of the features of consistency and harmony with original terms and grammatical forms provided by the CV are reflected in the articles appearing in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches.* The word "salvation" as it relates to Israel, is given careful attention as used in its contexts, in

the article, "Thus *All* Israel Shall be Saved" (p.99). Then follow some notes on problems related to the translation of the book of Job, with special attention to an emendation made in the CVOT in the first line of Job 19:26. This relates to the blessing of expectation given to this man in his extreme sufferings, and is truly harmonious with the context (p.107).

In the center of the magazine are four articles focusing on the evangel of our salvation, that most central and pivotal message of the Scriptures concerning the death of Christ on the cross followed by His resurrection, and the effects of these astounding events. In all four articles, "Because of Another" (p.115), "Three Laws" (p.123), "Law and the Knowledge of Sin" (p.126), and "God's Law of Grace," this message is distinguished from the law set over Israel at Sinai, especially as this theme is traced in Romans 7. The evangel of God's grace, which indeed is found in every translation of the Scriptures, is a "scandalous" message (*cf* p.117) in relation to human and religious pride, yet in view of the fact that we all are sinners, infirm in the flesh, it can only be a message of highest joy. It is a message of God's joy to us, stirring us to return joy to Him in the form of thanksgiving.

Finally we reprint an article written especially for young people by a former editor of our magazine (p.137). Yet as when it first appeared, so today it is so reflective of God as He is revealed in His Word and of His purpose as it is unfolded in His Word that we are sure it will encourage our readers of every age.

Now to Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen! (Eph.3:20,21)

D.H.H.

THUS ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED

NOW ISRAEL is *calloused, in part;* but when the Rescuer arrives out of Zion, *all* shall be *saved* (Rom.11:25-27). Not all of Israel are saved in this era of grace. Only a few accept the Messiah and are joined to the nations in blessings celestial. Neither are all of those scattered among the nations saved, for this is a time when God chooses and segregates an "out-calling," or ecclesia, commonly called a church. We have an *individual* salvation, not a national one. But, in the kingdom eon, God will deal with *nations* as such. These are brought before Him at the beginning of the millennium (Matt.25:32). Israel, as the head of the nations, will receive a special blessing. All Israel shall be saved, that is, all, *as part of the nation.* It is not easy for us to understand this, as it is contrary to our experience. We are inclined to make deductions from our standpoint, as if everyone had an individual salvation.

Let us note *where* this statement is found. It is not in the early part of the Roman epistle, where our personal justification and reconciliation are expounded. It belongs to the *national* section (9:30 to 11:36). There we read that *Israel,* pursuing a law of righteousness, into a law of righteousness does not outstrip (Rom.9:31). Yet this was *not true* of each *individual* in the nation. Paul certainly became subject to God's righteousness (10:3), although his people as a whole did not do so. In speaking of Israel, or any other nation, we should keep this in mind. Statements concerning a nation may be the reverse of the truth if applied to some individuals in it.

It is God's purpose to bless the *nations* through Israel. We could reason that, if Israel is not in her place, then there will be no blessing to anyone. But this is not so. Rather the *national* blessing is less in degree, and different in kind. The nations receive conciliation and take a place as God's witnesses under the figure of the olive tree. In this illustration it is vital to remember that the boughs of the olive tree are not saints or believers, but nations. The salvation of believers will not be affected even if the nation to which they belong should lose its place in the olive tree. The salvation of individuals at the present time does not follow the pattern of salvation in Israel, but goes back to Abraham and Adam, before Israel was a nation and God dealt with single individuals.

The question often arises, does this include every Israelite of all times, from Jacob on to the consummation? Or is it limited by the context to the nation which is present at the coming of Christ? That it includes the whole nation at that time is clearly indicated. And that every Israelite as well as every other human being will be saved *at the consummation* is also beyond question, for God is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of those who believe (1 Tim.2:4, 4:10). But there are many passages which conflict with the thought that unbelievers, the stubborn, those who reject their Messiah, will receive *eonian* life, or enjoy the allotment of the kingdom. Our Lord told the nation of His day plainly that the kingdom would be taken away from them (Matt.21:43). Most of His parables were spoken in order to warn them of this. It will be given to the regenerate nation of the day of Yahweh, who will bring forth its fruits. The "church" has tried to bring forth kingdom fruit, but it has all been sour and rotten.

All Israel has been saved before. Jude reminds his fellow Israelites that the Lord, after *saving* the people out of the land of Egypt, secondly *destroys* those, who do not

believe (Jude 5). Very few of those who were saved out of Egypt reached the land of promise. This should show us that salvation does not always mean what is popularly supposed. That is why there is no agreement among the sects of Christendom, especially where there is no correct cutting of the word of truth. The various salvations which belong to Israel, such as the exodus, should not be used to inject works and conduct into present day salvation, which is entirely a matter of faith and grace.

ALL WILL NOT ENTER THE KINGDOM

All Israel of the past will assuredly not *enter* the kingdom, as every saved one of that day certainly will. The evidence for this is so overwhelming that it seems superfluous to elaborate upon it. Matthew's account alone is full of intimations that the scribes and Pharisees, as a class, not only do not enter the kingdom, but shut it up against themselves, and then hinder others from entering (Matt.23:13). John the Baptist had warned them before this that they were candidates for fire, not for the kingdom (Matt.3:1). Hebrews, which was written after the nation had rejected the ministry of Acts, as well as that of our Lord, makes it clear that the tragedy of the wilderness was being repeated, for, as few who came out of Egypt entered the land (Heb. 3:12), so it was also with those who had tasted the powers of the future eon and the celestial gratuity and then fell aside (Heb.6:4). The promise was to *all* but only *some* enter (Heb.4:1-6).

ALL ISRAEL

All Israel shall be saved because the salvation, in this case, is that of a nation, not of individuals. We must keep in mind the parallel of the deliverance from Egypt. Not a single soul was forsaken, and even the cattle were all taken. Not a hoof was left behind (Ex.10:26). *All Israel was glori-*

ously saved. Not from *sin,* for they transgressed grievously in the wilderness. Not to *heaven,* for they looked forward to the promised land. They were saved from *Egypt,* and its bondage. So, in the future, even though their sins will be eliminated, and they will be rescued from the power of the nations, the question of individual *faith* is not in view, and we must not consider that each member of the nation is justified, or reconciled, or glorified, as is the case with us when we are delivered. The millennium must be kept in accord with God's plans for the *rule of the earth* through a *people,* while we are in harmony with His rule of the heavens through a single Man, Christ Jesus.

THE MILLENNIUM

The Lord's day, or millennium, is not the last eon, and does not bring us to the consummation. It is still far from perfection. In it and at its end great rebellions against Yahweh will occur among the nations. Millions upon millions will be killed by the plague and by fire from above. Even in Israel, Gehenna, the nearest to the popular conception of "Hell," will not be a permanent institution. The nations who come there to worship before Yahweh will not only see the magnificent temple in the holy oblation, but they will go forth to see the corpses of the mortals who trespass against Him, for their maggot shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched (Isa.66:24). Transgressors will not go unpunished, as they are today, but weeded out without delay. They will be made an example from which the representatives of the nations may learn the peril of disobedience.

Because the last lines of Isaiah ended the prophecy with such a terrible scene, the readers in the synagogues repeated the preceding verse in order to close the book with words of comfort. This illustrates a widespread impression, current today, that the millennium is God's ultimate. The word has become a synonym for unalloyed bliss. The dictionary defines it as a period of great happiness, good government and freedom from wickedness. This is only partially true. It is not until the next eon that God wipes away all tears and does away with dying and doom. These will still be present in the millennium, even within the holy nation itself.

Even in Israel there will be sin (*cf* Isa.66:23,24); but "No longer shall there be thence an infant of few days, Or an old man who shall not fill his days; For a youth shall die at a hundred years old, And he who misses a hundred years old shall be lightly esteemed" (Isa.65:20).

Dying is not done away with until the following eon, in the new earth. Death is not abolished until the end of the succeeding eon.

THE NEW COVENANT

Works characterized the old covenant made with Israel at Sinai. The one who should *do* the law should live by it (Rom.10:5, Lev.18:5). In contrast to this Yahweh will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah in the Lord's day. He will impart His laws to their comprehension and inscribe it on their hearts, so that they will understand it and have the *desire to do* it. We are tempted to consider this the best that anyone could have, and that it insures sinlessness. This is not the case. Let us remember that it is still within the eons. Let us especially note that the new covenant deals with *man's works* rather than God's. True, He removes many of the hindrances and disabilities which made it impossible for them to fulfill the law in the past. But *it is still law and human works,* and God's object remains the same, and that is to show them that, even with "divine aid," man is

still self-centered and a failure, and far short of God's goal, in which He is All in everyone.

The new covenant is based on *flesh,* for it is only for the descendants of Israel according to the flesh. Paul learned that, in his flesh, dwelt no good thing (Rom.7:13-23). Even when he was gratified with the law and willing to do it, his flesh interfered. Almost all religion, especially the "Christian" religion, seeks to improve the flesh. This is good, but it should not come under the name "Christian." In Jerusalem there is a chapel on one side of the main building for Christians, on the other for Moslems. When I announced that I would speak on the glories of Christ, they tried to have me change to a theme less objectionable to the Moslems. And the churches? They are now "institutional." The missions? They lure with meals. Flesh! Flesh!! Flesh!!!

When Israel is saved there is a proper place for such things. God gave them manna for their bodies in the desert. He gave them water in the wilderness. He will sustain them in their great affliction in the future. He will give them great abundance in the land. He sends His spirit on all flesh. The flesh has been at a vast disadvantage hitherto. Perhaps it only needs a better environment! This is the question to be answered in the early state of the kingdom. The new birth, the heart of flesh, do *not* lead to God's goal. They are not sufficient. They give place to a new *creation.*

ISRAEL'S SALVATION A TEMPORARY ACT

In the original the grammar helps a great deal to make a passage like Romans 11:25,26 this clear and definite. It declares that the saving here spoken of is an *action* going on at the time indicated by the context. It must be distinguished from the *fact,* as "He saves us" (Titus 3:5), and the *state,* "You are [have been] saved" (Eph.2:5). We ought to say that all Israel *will be being saved* when God deals with

them at the commencement of the day of Yahweh. But, this is too cumbersome in English. To keep these helpful, enlightening distinctions before the reader, the CV marks them when the English does not express them. Thus, in this case there is a small vertical line before '**save**. This alone will answer the questions which arise, for the verb refers only to an action which will take place in the future. It has no bearing on Israel in the past or present. Neither does it say anything about them thereafter. Had it been a fact, as "God saves all in Israel," it would be timeless and true, even if the action has not been completed. Had it indicated a state, then all Israel would be in a saved condition, and none of them would lapse thereafter. It is neither of these. Such grace is reserved for us.

This passage is much more definite once we grasp these simple grammatical distinctions. Many another passage may be cleared up in the same simple way. That is why the new edition of the version marks them when necessary. That the grammar, as thus explained, may be relied upon, is confirmed by many passages in the Scriptures. Many passages might be adduced to show that many Israelites are *not* included in this salvation of all Israel at this time. And they will show that this salvation does not necessarily include all Israel later on.

Our salvation is a timeless fact and a state or condition, while the salvation of Israel is an act, an event, a passing incident. Because Christendom chooses to extract its theology from the Circumcision writings rather than from Paul's, the salvation of the churches is usually a temporary action, induced by abnormal soulish excitement, brought about by physical distress or surfeit, by music or display, and lasting little longer than their duration. It is, in fact, a degenerated, exaggerated copy of the salvation of Israel. It should be, in contrast to this, an appeal to the spirit. It should not even "bring men to Christ." *It should bring*

Christ to men! It should herald *God's* attitude to them, because of the sacrifice of Christ. It should lead *away* from the *flesh.* It does not promise wealth or health. It prays the *enemies* of God to be *conciliated* to Him. It imparts God's righteousness to the sinner. A. E. Knoch

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DEATH CONDEMNS AND JUSTIFIES

Faith is a personal matter before God, but justification is not, any more than condemnation. We have no choice or chance when it comes to sin, not even as Adam *seemed* to have had (although he also was carrying out God's intention). *All* humans are sinners because of Adam's transgression and the *dying state* which he transmits to every one of his descendents. So also is justification. All will eventually be justified (Rom.5:18), not by their own acts, or by law keeping, but by Christ's *death,* even as was the case in condemnation. The *death* of One Human, Jesus Christ, will eventually justify all. Grace makes all *believers* just now. Even as *mortality* makes men sinners in Adam, *death* justifies them in Christ.

Mortality, our present state of *dying,* is a confused condition in which there is a mixture of right and wrong. Mortals can accomplish some commendable deeds, but the tendency is to sin. So also in the case of those in Christ who *died* with Him and have been roused with Him by faith. The spirit of life in them *wills* to do well, yet the sin that homes in them keeps them from accomplishing that which they desire (Rom.7:18). Humans are unjust sinners in Adam, whatever good they may perform. So also, saints are justified in Christ, whatever sin they may commit. It is not *our* acts that really matter with respect to justification, but the one offense of *Adam* and the one sacrificial death of *Christ* which count.

And it is a great help to us to see the manner of His death. We were *crucified* with Him like felons, for such we are. Yet we will be glorified with Him like paragons, for such He is.

The law only emphasized sin, heightening it to transgression, and so became a dispensation of *death* (2 Cor.3:7). It came in by the way, that the offense should be increasing. Paul's brethren, the Jews, were put to *death* to the law through the body of Christ (Rom.7:4). This does not imply that they should or would break God's law, on that account. On the contrary, the *just* requirements of the law are fulfilled by those who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit (Rom.8:4). A. E. Knoch.

I WILL STAND ERECT

WE READ in chapter one of the book of Job: "There was a man in the land of Uz. Job was his name. This man was flawless and upright, fearing Elohim and keeping away from evil. Seven sons and three daughters were born to him, and his acquisitions came to be seven thousand small cattle, three thousand camels, five hundred pair of oxen and five hundred jennies, beside very many servants, so that this man came to be the greatest of all the sons of the east" (Job 1:1-3).

We know of Abraham's brother Nahor who lived in Syria of the two streams and had eight sons (Gen.22:20-23; 24:10). The name of his firstborn Uz. The area where his clan lived, was probably called the country of Uz; it was in the general area where Abraham sent all the sons he had from Keturah. He sent all her descendents eastward to the land of the east (Gen.25:6), where, as it seems, Job had become the greatest man.

The book of Job does not refer to any events recorded elsewhere in Scripture, not even to those that were always in the mind of an Israelite. In the book of Job there is not the slightest reference to the call of Abraham, nor to Israel's family in Egypt, nor to Moses, nor to Yahweh's covenant with the sons of Israel.

The book of Job tells us the story of a man whom Yahweh called: "My servant Job . . . there is no one like him on earth, a man flawless and upright, fearing Elohim and keeping away from evil" (Job.1:8).

These had been Yahweh's words to the Adversary (Job

1:8). Then Yahweh gave him permission to attack Job, who now lost his farm animals his flocks, his camels, and finally his children. When Job received the bad news, he fell to the earth, worshiped Yahweh and said, "Naked I came forth from the belly of my mother, and naked I shall return there. Yahweh, He gives, and Yahweh, He takes away. Blessed be the Name of Yahweh." (Job.1:21). Job's intense faith saw the hand of God in everything that had happened to him so far. The Adversary's first attack against Job had failed.

In his second attack the Adversary smote Job with evil boils from the sole of his foot unto his scalp (2:7). The various symptoms of this skin disease with darkened and peeling skin add up to a hideous picture of a man whose sight had become utterly repulsive to others, even to his own wife. She said to him, "Are you still holding fast to your integrity? Scorn Elohim and die." Yet we read, "In all this, Job did not sin with his lips" (2:8-10) as he sat on the ashes.

In those days, a heap of dust, ashes and dirt could be found at the entrance of small towns. The basis of the mound was the ash that had been removed from baking ovens, and in the course of time it was reduced to fine dust and often reached a considerable height. Then the mound served both as a watchtower for the city and as the resort of outcasts. Job had accepted his new status as a piece of human trash, hence he was sitting in the midst of ashes.

The second chapter of Job ends with a short report about three of Job's friends who, after some lapse of time, had heard of his misery. Obviously Job had been the leading person in his own country, somewhere in the east; actually he had been greatest of all the sons of the east. And his three friends were probably influential in three neighboring countries.

The fact that they met by appointment shows that they were already acquaintances who felt it would be better to come *together.* They certainly were genuine friends,

and their motives for coming to condole with him and to comfort him, were sincere. When these three wise men finally met Job, they were horrified and speechless. Since they were true friends, they brought to Job the compassion of a silent presence, at least for the first seven days and seven nights.

The concluding sentence in chapter two reads: "And there was no one speaking a word to him, for they saw that his pain was very great." In chapter 3, verse 1, we read: "Afterward Job opened his mouth, and he maledicted his day, saying, "May the day perish in which I was born."

From hereon the following forty chapters are written in archaic Hebrew poetry which is almost a language by itself, with an ambiguous grammar and an almost total lack of conjunctives, prepositions, relative pronouns or signs for the accusative. Archaic Hebrew poetry in this, the oldest book of the Old Testament, uses these particles very sparingly so that specialists in the study of Job are still uncertain about the meaning of many passages which seem to be obscure, even incomprehensible. Let me give you an example: In Job 15:5 we have a verb form followed by two nouns. The literal translation is: "He trains your depravity your mouth." Now, who is *he*? So we go back to the preceding verse which ends with the word El, the singular of Elohim, God. But it could never be God Who is meant when It says, "He trains your depravity your mouth." Since *depravity* is masculine in Hebrew, we may conclude that Eliphaz was saying to Job, "For *your depravity* trains your mouth."

This is a very simple example of ambiguous grammar in archaic Hebrew poetry. Most other cases are more complicated, even more so, as Job's friends just do not speak like pious Israelites would. In the speeches of these forty chapters truth is mixed with error. Some statements may be understood as questions, but the lack of connective particles leaves many lines obscure. In addition there are many

words that occur only once or twice, and only in Job, and they may be either Hebrew or Aramaic. Hence we have followed Brother A. E. Knoch's advice and have consulted the best commentaries of those scholars who have given the matter special study.

The book of Job ends with chapter 42 where, in verses 2-6, Job speaks to Yahweh and says:

> **I know that You are** ˡ**able** in **all** things**,**
> **Wherefore I have professed** ideas
> ⁺**when I was not understanding,**
> **Marvelous** thought**s from me,** ⁺**that I** did **not** ˡ**know.**
> ›**With** the **hearing of** the **ear I had heard** of **You,**
> ⁺**But now my eye sees You.**
> **Therefore I** ˡ**recant and repent**
> **On soil and ashes.**

The following verses in chapter 42 are again in normal Hebrew prose, where we read that Yahweh Himself blessed the latter years of Job more than his beginning, so that he came to have a flock of 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 pair of oxen and 1,000 jennies, twice as many as there had been his before the disasters. He also came to have seven sons and three daughters. These children were equal in number to those he had lost.

Job continued living (obviously in the best of health) for a hundred and forty years. He saw his sons and his grandsons (and *their* sons and grandsons) four generations. "Then Job died, old and satisfied with days." Here the Septuagint adds that "all his years were 248 years when he died, satisfied with his days. And he will rise again with those whom Yahweh raises up."[1]

These words from the LXX may be a reflection on a few

1. The CVOT does not include this LXX reading, but it may be well for the student to add it by hand.

lines of poetry that are one of the highlights of the book of Job. In chapter 19, verses 25 and 27, we read these inspired words, spoken by Job:

> ⁺**Yet** as for **me, I know my Redeemer**ˡ is **living,**
> **And after** this **He shall arise on** the **soil;**
> **Whom I´ shall perceive for my**self**,**

These three lines are easy to comprehend; the expectation of resurrection lies at the very heart of Job's faith.

Yet the passage between these two verses is difficult to translate; it may serve as an example of the numerous lines that are ambiguous as they stand. Here as elsewhere in Job, the various English versions differ; and their translators admit that no single English translation is adequate to reflect the original Hebrew text. Here are more problems than in most other parts of the Old Testament.

If the Septuagint, the oldest Greek translation of the Hebrew text, were a faithful reflection of the original Hebrew wording, our job would be relatively easy. But the LXX translators omitted about 400 lines, especially where the meaning of a Hebrew sentence was hard to understand. Elsewhere the LXX translators often used a paraphrase or some kind or an explanation for a difficult Hebrew wording, instead of providing a literal translation.

One of the best commentary on translational problems in Job is that by a Frenchman, Edouard Dhorme.[2] It deals with every Hebrew word that is either rare or misspelt, and shows whether or not a satisfactory translation is to be found in the LXX or any other Greek, Aramaic, Syriac and Latin translations, and also what other commentators had to say about the problem.

Following a suggestion made by this scholar; we changed

2. A COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF JOB, translated by Harold Knight, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1984.

the sequence of letters and the vocalization of two Hebrew words in verse 26a, and we arrived at the following translation of Job 19:25-27.

25a +**Yet** as for **me, I know my Redeemer**ˡ is **living,**
25b **And after** this **He shall arise on** the **soil;**
26a **And** ᵃᶠ**behind my skin ~I will** stand **erect~,**
26b **And from my flesh I shall perceive Eloah,**
27a **Whom I´ shall perceive for my**self**,**
27b **And my** own **eyes will see, and not** an **alien**ˡ**.**

Hebrew poetry consists of thought rhymes, mostly in parallels. In verse 25a, we have: *is living;* this is balanced by: *arise on the soil,* in 25b. Then Job wants to emphasize that he himself, in person, will be present when his own eyes will see the Redeemer.

So he says in verse 26a, of the time when his present repulsive skin is gone, that is, "behind my skin ~I will stand erect~." This thought is balanced by the words in line 26b, "From my flesh I shall perceive Eloah [i.e., Christ].

This expectation of Job found its *first* fulfillment in chapter 42:5 after he had gained a fuller knowledge of God and of himself, so that he could say, "Now my eye sees You," for the eyes of his *heart* had been enlightened by God Himself.

Yet Job believed also in the ultimate fulfillment that comes through physical resurrection after death. And so in chapter 19, verse 27, Job adds,

Whom I´ shall perceive for myself**,**
And my own **eyes will see, and not** an **alien**ˡ**.**

Job expected to see Christ with his own eyes.

Before our emendation in verse 26a, we had an incomprehensible line: "And behind my skin they will encompass this." All translators and commentators agree that the Hebrew text is corrupted here. Many solutions have been offered, some of them requiring elaborate changes

of the Hebrew text. I know from Brother A. E. Knoch that he would have accepted a minimal change of the Hebrew wording as long as the thought rhyme remained intact. E. Dhorme insisted on just these two points, namely minimal change, and thought rhyme. And so he arrived at this emendation, "I will stand erect," in parallel to "I shall perceive Eloah." I am sure Brother A. E. Knoch would be fully satisfied with this emendation. However, in the late twenties, when he made a tentative translation of Job, no such commentary on Job was available. And so he was not satisfied with his first draft of his translation; he put it aside to be taken up under more propitious circumstances.

The epistle to the Hebrews begins with the statement that—by many portions and many modes, of old, God had been speaking to the fathers in the prophets. In the book of Job, God spoke to a man who in his day, was the greatest of all the sons of the east who were famous for their wisdom. Job was not an Israelite, but he may have been a descendent of Abraham's brother Nahor, who also believed in Elohim (Gen.31:53). Job may well be called a prophet in his own right, since he was inspired to speak the words about the Redeemer Whom he expected to see with his own eyes at the resurrection.

In our translations from the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, we have preserved the three different forms of the principle Divine title by transliterating them into their nearest English equivalents. The shortest form of the Divine title is the singular *El* that occurs times over two hundred times in the Old Testament, and may be rendered, *God, Deity, Disposer* or *Subjector.* The plural form *Elohim* occurs about twenty-four hundred times. We find this longer form in Job only in the Hebrew prose of the first two chapters. Elsewhere in the book, the divine title appears in the singular; it is either *El* or *Eloah.* The latter title means *God-wards,* and points to *Christ.* This Divine

title, Eloah, is very rare in the Old Testament; we find it only fifty-eight times, and forty-one of these occurrences are in the book of Job. In this way, the scroll as a whole points to Christ the Redeemer.

It is worth mentioning that Job, together with Noah and Daniel, is mentioned by Ezekiel (14:14) for his outstanding righteousness. And in the New Testament, James (5:7,11) exhorts his readers: "Be patient, then, brethren, till the presence of the Lord . . . . We are counting those happy who endure. You hear of the endurance of Job, and you perceived the consummation of the Lord, for very compassionate and pitiful is the Lord."

Herman H. Rocke

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is expected to be available by the end of November. It will be a book of 1,730 pages, 7" x 10.5" page size, printed on thin "Bible paper" and hardbound with black imitation leather. The price is set at $35.00 each (postage and handling additional).

The procedure followed in making the translation, and various typographical features of the Concordant Version are already familiar to most of our readers. But we take advantage of the present circumstance to rehearse these matters briefly here for those less familiar with them. By analyzing the contextual usages of each Hebrew and Aramaic word, a single English word was first selected as its most suitable equivalent. Then, to achieve readability, some words were given a limited number of idiomatic variants that are harmonious with the sense derived from the investigations. English words used as the common translation of particular Hebrew words, and even idiomatic variants, were not used for other Hebrew words.

Boldface type was used for words (or even parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. And lightface type was used for words (or parts of words) which were added to clarify the meaning of the respective word in the Hebrew text. In addition small symbols and abbreviations were inserted between or attached to words to represent omitted terms, to indicate grammatical features and the sources of emendations to the Hebrew text.

BECAUSE OF ANOTHER

Or are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law), that the law is lording it over a man for as much time as he is living? For a woman in wedlock is bound to a living man by law. Yet if the man should be dying, she is exempt from the law of the man. Consequently, then, while the man is living, she will be styled an adulteress if she should be becoming another man's, yet, if the man should be dying, she is free from the law, being no adulteress on becoming another man's. So that, my brethren, you also were put to death to the law through the body of Christ, for you to become Another's, Who is roused from among the dead, that we should be bearing fruit to God. (Romans 7:1-4)

HERE in Romans 7:1-4, through a striking illustration relating to marriage, Paul enforces the *graciousness* of the *evangel.*

It is important to see what Paul is *not* addressing in this passage as well as what he is. He is not addressing the question of what the corpus of instruction is that is applicable to those of the body of Christ concerning their behavior, if they would walk worthily of their calling and be pleasing to God. Neither is he addressing what the consequences will be of the personal failures of any among them who should fail thus to walk worthily.

His subject, instead, is the significance of the death of Christ for our sakes in the benefits which accrue to us as a result, in the *grace* of God.

Further, Paul is by no means herein giving us a treatise on wedlock, but only introduces the subject incidentally for

the purpose of reaffirming and defending the utter despotism of *the reign of Grace* with respect to *life eonian:*

". . . Law came in . . . that the offense should be increasing. Yet where sin increases, *grace superexceeds,* that, even as Sin reigns in death, thus *Grace* also should be reigning through righteousness, *for life eonian,* through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:20,21). ". . . Now the consummation is *life eonian.* For the ration of Sin is death, yet the gracious gift of God is *life eonian,* in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:22,23).

Or are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law) . . . .

This is as if to say, If you should decline, or at least hesitate to accept, the simple truth of the altogether *gracious* nature of the evangel in what God has achieved through the death of Christ, it must be, then, that while you are ones who "know law,"[1] even so, you evidently are ignorant of one of its fundamental principles. That fundamental principle is that:

". . . the law is lording it over a man for as much time as he is living?

Therefore, Paul would have us know, and know well, that law only has lordship over a man who is still a *living* man; it has no lordship over a *dead* man. Accordingly, previously here in Romans, in illustrating the benefits which redound to us through the death of Christ, the apostle has boldly declared our identification with Christ in His death—His death on our behalf, for our sakes:

In the reckoning of God, in the death of Christ for

1. Here, it may be that Paul is speaking especially to the Circumcision, though the principle to which he appeals is well known to all who are acquainted with law in general. That principle is that law has no jurisdiction over a dead man. The nature of all law is that it applies only to the living.

our sakes, "We . . . died to Sin" (Rom.6:2). Figuratively, in Paul's illustration, "Sin" is spoken of as if it were a person; indeed, an evil despot out to do us harm and work our ruin. The literal entity of which Sin-figurative speaks, is our sins themselves.

For a woman in wedlock is bound to a living man by law. Yet if the man should be dying, she is exempt from the law of the man.

Surely this is the ideal illustration (for it is the one which God's spirit has employed) of how it may be so that the status and concomitant privileges of one may be radically changed—indeed reversed even to the point of "exemption" from what would otherwise be one's standing—wholly apart from any doing of their own and solely because of what someone other than themselves has done.

Consequently, then, while the man is living, she will be styled an adulteress if she should be becoming another man's, yet, if the man should be dying, she is free from the law, being no adulteress on becoming another man's.

Just think of it: the woman may form the same relationship and engage in the same acts, in one instance when left to her own devices, such that she will be styled an adulteress, and yet in another instance solely because of something done by someone other than herself, such that she will be no adulteress, "on becoming another man's [woman]."

So that, my brethren, you also were put to death to the law . . .

Like the *wife* who died when her husband died, yet as a *woman* remained, when Christ died on our behalf, God accounted us as having been put to death to sin's power, that of the law in its capacity to condemn (*cf* 1 Cor.15:56). Though, as sinners, we died, as saints we remain alive, that we may become Another's, even the Lord Jesus Christ's. Thus we declare with Paul: "For I, through law, died to law, that I should be living to God. With Christ have I

been crucified, yet I am living; no longer I, but living in me is Christ. Now that which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith that is of the Son of God, Who loves me, and gives Himself up for me" (Gal.2:19,20).

. . . through the body of Christ . . .

The cross, truly, is the inscrutable wisdom of God even as the manifestation of His self-sacrificial love, in the death of the cross, in all its shame and horror. It is that ". . . the One not knowing sin, [God] makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:21). This is to say, Behold, the righteousness of God, *displayed in sinners,* whom He makes righteous through the sin offering which He makes on their behalf, in the sacrifice of His Son.

". . . Yahweh Himself *causes* the depravity of us all to come upon Him . . . . Although He had done no wrong, And no deceit was in His mouth . . . . *Yet Yahweh desires to crush Him, And He causes Him to be wounded*" (*cf* Isa.53: 6b,10a). "For of a truth, in this city were gathered against Thy holy Boy Jesus, Whom Thou dost anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the nations and the peoples of Israel, *to do whatever Thy hand and Thy counsel designates beforehand to occur*" (Acts 4:27,28).

. . . for you to become Another's, Who is roused from among the dead, that we should be bearing fruit to God.

Christ died for our sakes not in some abstract sense concerned merely with our own happiness; instead, He died for us that we may become His own, serving Him and bearing fruit to God. "For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life" (Rom.5:8-10).

SIN'S REIGN VERSUS GOD'S GIFT

"So that, my brethren, you *also* [like the woman whose husband has died] were put to death to the law through

the body of Christ" (Rom.7:4a). Even as, *solely because of the act of another* (namely, the man who dies), the woman, should she become another man's will not be styled an adulteress (Rom.7:3), thus also, *solely because of the act of Another,* even Christ the Lord, God will only deem us His saints and will not treat us as sinners *even if we should be persisting in sin—even if we should be increasing in sin* (Rom.5:20,21; 6:1).

While it is true that our awful enemy Sin has nothing better to give than the terrible rations of death, since, being under *grace,* Sin shall *not* be lording over *us,* we need not fear the forced imposition of any such rations! Let Sin's despicable rations be what they will, they will never be our portion. Indeed, "the ration of Sin is death, *yet* the gracious gift of God is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:23). "*Nothing, consequently,* is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:1).

What makes the "glad-tidings"—because of their significance—truly the *glad*-tidings, is the evangel (*cf* 1 Cor. 15:1) that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3,4). Therefore, fundamentally, we have no other message. Nothing else need be said nor can be said. Though, to Jews, the proclamation of "Christ crucified," indeed, is a "snare," and to the nations "stupidity," *yet* [it is] *to those who are called,* both Jews and Greeks: "*Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God*" (1 Cor.1:23,24; *cp* 2:2).

THE SNARE OF THE CROSS

The answer to the usual rhetorical claim: "Is not that a most scandalous message?!" can only be, Yes—but only so long as one's bases of truth are the intuitions of the flesh and the ethics of the world. And indeed it is just these that form the foundational principles of nearly all who are nam-

ing the name of the Lord (some part of whom are genuine believers), not to mention of practically all unbelievers.

Ironically, the declaration: "Christ crucified," is at once both the *evangel* of the cross, and "the *snare* of the cross" (Gal.5:11). It is true that this evangel is a snare most especially to the Jews, who "boasted in a law" (who, even so, through the transgression of the law were dishonoring God; Rom.2:23). Yet just as surely it is a snare as well to all who boast in themselves, even if they should do so unwittingly, and without any overt display thereof.

"The human tendency is to stand aloof from the humiliating fact that we can add nothing to the finished work of Christ's cross; this is its snare . . . . We are sons of Adam, and our most outstanding sin is pride. It is human to oppose the thought that we are helpless to produce righteousness and gain salvation. We may accept it with our lips, but we often find ourselves fighting it with our minds.

"Like an animal falling into a baited trap we may fall into many snares to our own harm, but the snare of the cross is not attractive, and we try to avoid it. There is no bait which catches our eye. Rather, the snare itself is exposed in plain sight and presents itself exactly for what it is . . . .

"Perhaps a more subtle religious attack against the snare of the cross is the suggestion that our standing before God is based on our faith. Not only what we do, but what we believe is considered essential for salvation.

"Indeed both our actions and our faith are of utmost importance for ideal service, but neither can add anything to the work of Christ at Calvary and His perfect faith by which we are justified. No one becomes a member of the body of Christ because he is orthodox nor because he 'has the truth' and stands for it. Nor do we have access to the Father's heart because we have performed the proper works of penitence and charity. We are God's called-out ones, and this is according to God's purpose (Rom.8:28-30) based on the gift of His Son for us all (Rom.8:32). Justification and conciliation are through the sacrifice and faith of Christ."[2]

The "snare" (Greek: *skandalon*) of the cross consists in its "scandalous" appearance in the eyes of all who boast in themselves, who seek in any worthiness of their own, not but a reflected glory of that which is wholly of God, but an independent glory of their own, concerning which they alone can boast, and that justifiably. Such ones cannot say, discerningly and from the heart: ". . . In the *grace* of God I am what I am . . . toil I—yet not I, but the *grace* of God which is with me" (1 Cor.15:10); and, "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the *cross* of our Lord Jesus Christ . . ." (Gal.6:14).

The snare of the cross snares all those thus ensnared through the agency of their own pride. Only thus, by metonymy, may it be said that the message of the cross is the snare of the cross.

The snare of the cross renders its "victims" unable to appreciate its joyous and wholly righteous nature so long as they remain ensnared by what they perceive to be its "scandalous and shameful" properties. Therefore, solely a realization of the truth of the evangel of the *cross,* alone, is able to free the victim of the snare of the *cross* from its powerful grip (*cp* Rom.9:33; John 8:32).

WE DIED TOGETHER WITH CHRIST

Any who truly believe this evangel of that which is ours "because of Another" and yet become "utensils . . . for dishonor" (2 Tim.2:20) as to their walk, only magnify the grace of their calling, as far as that is concerned, notwithstanding the terrible turpitude of their dreadful deeds. The lowliest and most fleshly Corinthian believer who long ago died

2. Dean Hough, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.67, pp.282,284.

in shame and apart from repentance, will be vivified in Christ's presence and will enjoy eonian life—*just as surely as the apostle Paul.*

This is simply because eonian life and glory are a *gracious, gratuitous* gift to us, not a reward. Indeed, we may test whether we ourselves are still ensnared by the snare of the cross according as whether we deem the above considerations shameful, despicable, and false, or instead, joyous, righteous, and true.

"Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall be living together with Him also" (Rom. 6:8). ". . . Let not Sin, *then,* be reigning in your mortal body, for you to be obeying its lusts" (Rom.6:12).

". . . Present yourselves to God as if alive from among the dead, and your members as implements of righteousness to God. *For* Sin shall *not* be lording it over you, *for* you are not under law, but under *grace*" (Rom.6:14).

In summary, the law is only lording it over a man for as much time as he is *living* (Rom.7:1), even as a woman is bound to a *living* man by law, but is not so bound to a *dead* man (Rom.7:2). Therefore, in the accounting of God, since *we died* together with Christ (Rom.6:8; *cp* Col.3:3) when He died for our sakes, there is no law that can speak our condemnation.

Since we *shall* be living together with Christ, and since Sin shall *not* be lording it over us, we are *therefore* entreated to obey! We do not obey to *become* exempt from the power of Sin, which is the law (1 Cor.15:56), but because we were put to death to the law through the body of Christ (Rom. 7:4) and thus were exempted from its condemning power (*cf* Rom.7:6). Therefore, because of the act of Another, even our Lord Jesus Christ, we may be having peace toward God and may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:1,2).

J.R.C.

THREE LAWS

THERE are three major laws[1] in Romans chapters 7 and 8. (1) Most prominently is "the law," sometimes simply called "law," which God placed over Israel (7:1,4,6,7,8, 12,14,16,21; 8:3,4). Paul calls it "the law of [the] God" in 7:22 and 8:7, while in 7:23, in relation to his upbringing as a Hebrew of Hebrews, he refers to it as "the law of my mind." (2) But also he refers to the effect of sin on us all as "a different law" in 7:23 and "Sin's law" in 7:25 as well as "the law of sin and death" in 8:2. (3) Finally (and this is by far the least recognized, yet it is most essential for our understanding of the passage) the apostle speaks of the evangel of God's grace as "God's law" in 7:25, and "the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus" in 8:2. This is the "law" which *God Himself* followed in "sending His own Son in the likeness of sins's flesh and concerning sin," the way of righteousness by which "He condemns sin in the flesh" (Rom.8:3).

"God's law" is the evangel of God concerning His Son (Rom.1:1-3), that WELL-MESSAGE of God which announces to us that, in commending God's love, Christ died for our sakes while we are still sinners (Rom.5:8). In Romans 3:28 this law was called "faith's law," in reference to "Jesus Christ's faith" through which God's righteousness is made manifest (Rom.3:21,22).[2] It is that word telling us of "the

1. A fourth law, called "the law of the man [husband]" is referred to in 7:2 for purpose of illustration.

2. *cf Unsearchable Riches*, vol.98, p.46.

grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ" (Rom.5:15). As the "spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus," it clearly declares that life, now and in the future, does not depend on us and our obedience to the law given at Sinai, but on Christ Jesus and His obedience even to the death of the cross. God's ways are not our ways, and the way to *life* is by means of the *death* of God's beloved Son. It is not by our works, but by means of God's gratuitous gift of joy in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Like Paul, we may be gratified in our mind with the law given at Sinai (Rom.7:22,23), for it is holy and just and good, but, as was our apostle's experience, this brings us deeply into wretchedness with every failure to maintain its precepts. Yet there is no failure in God's law of grace, for it *has been already* carried out in God's giving of His Son, and Christ's obedience unto the death of the cross. In centering our minds, as devoted and loving slaves, upon this message telling of God's law, wretchedness gives way to thankfulness of greatest joy to God. Here is our rescue in spirit for every day of our lives while we remain in our flesh. In God's grace we are submissively listening from the heart to the teaching which instructs us concerning God's righteousness and Jesus Christ's faith (*cf* Rom.6: 16,17). In being disposed to this there is spiritual power for life and peace (Rom.8:5,6).

Both "the law of God," given at Sinai, and "God's law" carried out in God's giving of His Son for sinners, are messages from God set against "Sin's law." The law given to Israel is good, but the human is fleshly and unable to keep it as presently constituted in a body of death (Rom.7: 12-24). But "God's law," His evangel concerning the death and resurrection of His own Son which leads to the end of sin and death is also God's power for salvation and rescue, in accord with the earnest of the spirit, even today while we remain in the flesh (Rom.1:16).

The warfare between the law of God and Sin's law is described in Romans 7:7-24, first as it affected Paul himself as Saul of Tarsus (Rom.7:7-12), and then as he continued to be aware of it as a human being, a descendant of Adam, still dying and still sinning while still knowing the law laid down at Sinai (Rom.7:13-24). But now, along with this operation of death and sin in his flesh, Paul had become aware of a third law, which he calls "God's law," and which fills his mind and heart with thankfulness to God. This was the evangel of God's grace, and it had powerful effects on his life, day by day as he enslaved his mind to it. Paul will call it "the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus" in Romans 8:3, for in it is God's spiritual power for the life and walk of the believer as set before us in Romans 8.

What is in our mind is critical throughout our present lives in which we are dying, and in which we are made wretched by sin. Now in Romans 7, by tracing his own experience, our apostle encourages us in the renewal of our minds by their enslavement to God's "law" carried out in not sparing His own Son but in giving Him up for us all.

In the articles to follow, we will look further at Paul's own account of the way these three laws affected his life.

D.H.H.

MARVIN RICE

Our brother Marvin Rice of Largo, Florida was put to repose on August 17. Yet we praise God for opening the evangel of His grace to him and for strengthening the gift of expectation in his heart, to which he often testified by word of mouth and printed pamphlet.

EMMANUEL ASTARITA

With sadness, we announce the death of our friend, Emmanuel Astarita on August 21. Born in Malta, but living many years in Kitchener, Ontario, before returning to the island of his birth in recent months, he was keenly occupied in mind with the Scriptural testimony to the faith of Jesus Christ and its effects.

LAW AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF SIN

THOSE who are put under the law and come to know what it says will come to know they are sinners.

Sin is not caused by the law; we all sin as a result of death which is in us because of Adam (Rom.5:12). The law is holy and just and good. *But* it makes sin apparent, and, because of the weakness and corruption of our flesh, sin increases where it is defined by the law. The outcome is death, both literal and figurative.

This is Paul's personal testimony in Romans 7:7-24.

What, then, shall we declare? that law is sin?

May it not be coming to that! But sin I knew not except through law. For besides, I had not been aware of coveting except the law said, "You shall not be coveting." Now Sin, getting an incentive through the precept, produces in me all manner of coveting. For apart from law Sin is dead. Now I lived, apart from law, once, yet at the coming of the precept Sin revives. Yet I died, and it was found that, to me, the precept for life, this is for death. For Sin, getting an incentive through the precept, deludes me, and through it, kills me. So that the law, indeed, is holy, and the precept holy and just and good. (Rom.7:7-12)

In Hebrew the word "sin" means MISS as in Judges 20:16 where it is said of seven hundred chosen men hampered in their right hand that "every one of these could sling a stone at a hair and not *miss*," that is, not *sin*. In Greek the root elements are UN-MARK, that is, fail to hit the mark. Law sets the mark. Sin misses the mark.

Knowledge is received by and stored in the mind. It grows as a process in time, a matter of getting to know. In Romans 7 Paul addresses those who are *knowing* law, that is, having been learning what it says, in particular those believers out of the Circumcision who had become acquainted with the law from their youth. Yet also most of us have gotten to know something about that law. This is because it is given such a prominent place in the Scriptures and has been often made central even where the evangel of God's grace is heralded. Consequently, what Paul says about the law in Romans 7 has practical value to us all, even those of us who have never been put under the law of Sinai. We need to understand that our present lives are to be directed and empowered by God's word of grace, His evangel concerning His Son, which directs us and invigorates us in accord with its holy, righteous and good spirit manifested in the disposition of Christ (Phil. 2:5-8). It is to this teaching so absolutely belonging to the grace-type that we are submissively listening as loving slaves (Rom.6:17).

But now in Romans 7 Paul speaks of the law of Sinai in order to aid us in becoming even more acquainted with grace by way of contrast.

THE SIN OF COVETING

Coveting is a sin rooted in the mind. So also is anger (Matt.5:22) and hate and greed and selfishness and the like of these.

The sin of Adam and Eve in eating of the forbidden fruit began when, through Satan's stratagems, Eve looked at and immediately *yearned for* what God's instructions had denied to Adam and herself (Gen.3:6). This was covetousness, which preceded the taking of the fruit and the eating of it. She was deluded, not simply by Satan's stratagems, but by the sin of covetousness which was dormant in her,

that is, it had been "dead," and she had "lived apart" from it until the law of Genesis 2:17 and Satan's use of it made covetousness UP-LIVE (the root meaning of the Greek word translated "revive" in Romans 7:9) in her.

This sin led to the sin of disobedience by both humans in eating the fruit, and the consequence of this was that death entered into their bodies and they began to be dying with fear as its first instalment.

This same pattern played out in Saul of Tarsus when he began to realize what the tenth precept of Exodus 20:3-17 was saying:

You shall not covet the house of your associate. You shall not covet the wife of your associate, his field, his manservant or his maidservant, his bull, his donkey or anything which is your associate's.

Young Saul had not stolen things that did not belong to him. Of that he was blameless. But in his mind he was desiring many such things. At some point he realized in his mind what this precept actually was saying, and thus he found he had been committing the sin of covetousness all the time and found that it was increasing.

Now in Romans 7, Paul looks back on this time and openly avows his sinfulness and recalls the place of the law in its discovery and enhancement. The hypocrisy is gone, whether or not all traces of covetousness and lust are gone. Under law he was guilty of all manner of coveting. Under grace he had learned to be content in what he was (Phil.4:11), and this is most significant in showing the power of the evangel.

But in the flesh he was still a sinner, and even in the matter of coveting he could not claim perfection of deliverance (*cp* Phil.3:11), as we might infer from passages such as 1 Corinthians 9:5,6, where he asked: "Have we no right at all to be leading about a sister as a wife, even as the rest

of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or have only I and Barnabas no right not to be working?" It seems wholly justified to us that Paul would sometimes feel he deserved better than he was experiencing. But in this there still was covetousness, a sin so commonly and easily committed by dying humanity that we hardly think of it as a sin. Yet the law very distinctly classifies it along with such sins as murder and adultery.

Indeed Paul was uniquely blessed, for he was given revelations which transcended those of any other apostle. "Wherefore also," he writes to the Corinthians, "lest I should be lifted up by the transcendence of the revelations, there was given to me a splinter in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, that he may be buffeting me, lest I may be lifted up. For this I entreat the Lord thrice, that it should withdraw from me" (2 Cor.12:7,8). Transcendently favored Paul was brought low lest he be lifted up in thinking he was better in himself than others and deserved the glorious experience God gave him. At that point, all he could think of was the pain and suffering of the "splinter" in his flesh. Consequently, with an element of covetousness toward those who were free from such buffeting as he was receiving, he entreated the Lord three times that it would withdraw from him.

What was the Lord's reply? Did He tell Paul, "You shall not be coveting"? Or did He say, "You must be content with what you are"? No indeed. Paul was not under law, and law would not help him at all. Such words of law would only make it clearer to Paul that he was a coveting sinner, a good lesson, but hardly helpful in dealing with his wretchedness. Most graciously and appropriately the Lord did not point to the law. Rather, in accord with the evangel, He protested to Paul, "Sufficient for you is My *grace*, for My *power* in infirmity is being perfected" (2 Cor.12:9).

Paul was under grace. Only the word of grace could give

Paul the spiritual strength to exclaim, "With the greatest relish, then, will I rather be glorying in my infirmities, that the power of Christ should be tabernacling over me" (2 Cor.12:10).

Thus, we see that Paul was learning contentment by being given over to the teaching of grace and by receiving the Lord's grace for application in every infirmity and experience of pain and depression.

LAW AND DEATH

The law given at Sinai is good in defining what is right and what is wrong, but in a practical sense, under present circumstances, its goodness does not lie in keeping sinners from sinning. Its goodness lies in its ability to make sinners aware that they are sinners. And the effect is death in the figurative sense of the killing of human pride and self-deception, with the outlook of condemnation and literal death unchanged.

Become good, then, death to me?

May it not be coming to that! But Sin, that it may be appearing Sin, is producing death to me through good, that Sin may become an inordinate sinner through the precept. (Rom.7:13)

The law is good, but it leads to death, and death is not good.

GOOD DOES NOT DWELL IN MY FLESH

Thus Paul as one who knows he is "an inordinate sinner" continues to testify, but now using the present tense:

For we are aware that the law is spiritual, yet I am fleshly, having been disposed of under Sin. For what I am effecting I know not, for not what I will, this I am putting into practice, but what I am hating, this I am doing. Now if what I am not willing, this I am doing, I am conceding that the law is ideal. Yet now it is no longer I who am effecting it, but Sin which is making its home in me.

For I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not. For it is not the good that I will that I am doing, but the evil that I am not willing, this I am putting into practice. Now if what I am not willing, this I am doing, it is no longer I who am effecting it, but Sin which is making its home in me. (Rom.7:14-20)

Truly the law, sourced in the spirit of the righteous God Who hates all unrighteousness, makes anyone who listens to it honestly and attentively very self-conscious. Accordingly, knowing the law as he does, Paul cannot speak of its effects without using the pronoun "I" over and over again.

A DIFFERENT LAW

The literal and dominant usage of the word *law* throughout the Scriptures is in reference to the law which God placed over Israel at Sinai. But here in Romans 7, Paul also employs the term in a figurative sense. He speaks now of Sin as a law, very different from the Mosaic law, yet like that law in that it is a power concerned with human behavior. The question before us now is whether or not the law of God given to Israel in the wilderness is able to overpower the law of sin (as it will do in the future, millennial kingdom).

Consequently, I am finding the law that, at my willing to be doing the ideal, the evil is lying beside me. For I am gratified with the law of God as to the man within, yet I am observing a different law in my members,warring with the law of my mind, and leading me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (Rom.7:21-23)

The "consequently" of Romans 7:21 arises from what the apostle has just said. Unless God provides a special measure of spirit, descendants of Adam who are placed under

the law of God, and who are gratified in their mind that it is good, nevertheless, are like every other human being in that sin dwells in their flesh. And the "law of sin" (which operates in their flesh) takes the "law of [their] mind" (the law of God as He revealed Himself at Sinai) captive.

Here are two laws, and because of the conflict between these two laws, Paul exclaims:

A wretched man am I! What will rescue me out of this body of death? (Rom.7:24)

Here Paul uses the very Greek word used in the Septuagint Version of Psalm 38:6. The condemnation demanded by the law of Sinai and the operation of the law of Sin in our dying bodies of flesh brings those knowing law into *wretchedness.*

Many interpreters of Romans 7:24 insist that Paul could not be speaking of himself in the present even though he uses the pronoun "I" and the present tense verb "am wretched." But if that is so, I do not see how Paul can help those believers under law, and indeed anyone who knows the law, when they become devastated by depravity. David, and Paul, and all of us experience the wretchedness which comes by being wretched creatures. But God gave Paul and has given us something He has not yet given those under the law. That is the evangel which says we are justified in God's grace and that there is no condemnation to us, for we are in Christ Jesus.

Yet our awareness of this grace is not a one-time thing that automatically remains strong in our consciousness. We need to keep enslaving our minds to God's evangel of grace which Paul is now about to call "God's law." It is this, the "law" God followed in sending His Son to condemn sin in the flesh through His death, that gives us spiritual strength and prepares us for the "entreaties" starting with Romans 12. D.H.H.

GOD'S LAW OF GRACE

ROMANS 7:25 brings us back to the evangel of God concerning His Son. Paul has not been directly concerned with it since verses 4 and 5 in which he reminded those who know law that in being identified with the death of Christ we have been put to death to the law. Since then, all that the apostle has been saying concerning the law of Sinai and sin in the flesh stands as a backdrop to the word of God's grace which we have received. Romans 7:7-24 prepares us marvelously for Romans 8, but our present passage is the glorious gateway to our growing enjoyment of the evangel in our daily lives.

However, this has not been much appreciated. Indeed few verses of Scripture have been so misunderstood and seemed so puzzling as Romans 7:25.

We are faced with two serious questions, the first concerned with the transmission of the Greek text, and the second with the meaning of a key phrase as it relates to the context. Did Paul originally answer his question about rescue from bodies of death with the exclamation, *Grace!* and did he refer to this message of God's grace by calling it "God's law"? Concerning the first we can only conjecture, but on the basis of the manuscript evidence and the way in which an original text can be corrupted in copying. As for the second, we need to give careful attention to the flow of Paul's thought and to his use of key terms in more than one way.

Both matters call for more thorough consideration than can be offered in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches.* But I

want to set forth briefly my reasons for answering "yes" to both questions.

GRACE!

Happily, even without accepting the insertion of the word *grace* in this text, most careful listeners to the first line of Romans 7:25 have explained that God in sending His Son, or the evangel of Christ's death for sinners is to be understood as the source of our rescue from the wretchedness of verse 24. *What* [or, *Who*] will rescue me out of this body of death?. We are *justified gratuitously in God's grace, through the deliverance* which is in Christ Jesus.

Yet there is good reason to believe that Paul's immediate answer to his question was originally the word *Grace* (the Greek word, *charis*) followed by "I am thanking God" (*eucharistō*) which appears in Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Alexandrinus (and other ancient manuscripts), or the word rendered "thanks" as in Romans 6:17 (*charis*), as it appears in Codex Sinaiticus (and other ancient manuscripts). Both *grace* and *thanks* have the same elementary meaning: JOY. In the context of Romans, Grace is joy received from God, and thanks is joy given to God in appreciation of what He has given. Both rescue us from wretchedness; as we take account of God's grace we are given joy, and as we thank God and thus give Him joy, our lives are lifted up in every way.

We conjecture that Paul originally expressed both grace and thanksgiving here, but that the first appearance of *charis* was lost by an early scribe in copying the text when he looked away from the text and, in looking back, his eye skipped ahead to the second occurrence. In God's grace (His joy to us), Christ has rescued us as a sure and certain accomplishment, though not yet experienced by us in body; and, on the basis of His death and resurrection, He shall rescue us in every way from death and sin in the future; and having accepted this evangel of grace, we are

spiritually invigorated in the present as we are believing it. So it is that we say in praise and appreciation: "Joy be to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

GOD'S WAY WITH US

God's way is not our way. He condemns sin in the flesh, not by requiring us to get rid of it by obeying the law, but by sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh, to die for sinners. In this way the old, mortal and sinful humanity was put to death. This is what Paul means by the words "God's law," in Romans 7:25b. This is the third law of the context, and the greatest of them all.

In Greek, to say "the law of [the] God" is not the same as saying "God's law."

The first puts the emphasis on the word "law." It is *the* law which revealed to Israel that they were sinners. It is the law which God, as He made Himself known to them in the wilderness, called on them to carry out in full and perfect action. It is the law they will carry out when God puts His spirit in them to do so, while Satan is imprisoned during the thousand years.

The second wording, "God's law," puts the emphasis on the descriptive term, "God's." What was given at Sinai was *law,* law which Israel must do, and which they shall do under the best of conditions. But "God's law" is law which is, in every way, characterized by God, carried out by God and glorifying to Him.

That Paul refers to "God grace" when he says "God's law" in Romans 7:25 is given strong support by the word "Consequently." As a consequence of grace-joy received from God and thanks-joy given to God Paul enslaves his mind and heart to this evangel. This is line with his urging in Romans 6:16-18 that we be enslaved to the message of Christ's obedience and God's righteousness, which is the type of teaching to which we are given over.

Furthermore, we note that Paul was merely *gratified* with the law of God, for it was good, but was used by Sin to kill him. But now, regarding God's law of grace, Paul was being devoted to it as a loving slave. This law takes the attention away from the human and places it on God. It leads away from wretchedness takes us in the direction of thanksgiving.

YET WITH THE FLESH

Yet as long as we remain in these dying bodies, sin is still with us, and wretchedness is not wholly or lastingly eliminated from our experience. This must surely be the case for even the most mature of believers. Otherwise, there is no need for us to be reminded of the evangel and be renewed in it, to listen to it attentively day after day and be enslaved to it.

CONSEQUENTLY

Consequently, we come back time and time again to the words of God's law of grace:

Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus.

For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm, through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh.

Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

D.H.H.

THE PARABLE OF THE POTTER

> *I went down to the house of the potter, and behold, he was making a work on the wheel stones. Yet the vessel which he was making with clay was ruined in the hand of the potter, and he turned back and made it into another vessel, just as it seemed upright in the eyes of the potter to make.*
> (Jer.18:3,4)

ONE OF the most wondrous word-pictures that God, in His wisdom, has wrought for us, in order to reveal Himself, is the parable of the potter.

Yet, in his vanity, man, soulish, soilish, and selfrighteous, has refused to accept his rightful role as the clay, and much prefers to imagine himself in the place of the potter.

But for those who believe God there can be no room for reasoning, or artificial arguments. God has spoken, and His word is clear. "Or has not the potter the right over the clay . . ." (Rom.9:21). God's place as the divine Potter is automatically presumed by the apostle Paul.

God is the One Who has designed and planned and purposed all. Before one molecule had come into being, His program was completed. That man would sin and need a Saviour was foreseen, for the Lambkin was slain from the disruption of the world (Rev.13:8).

CREATION CALLS FOR PLANNING

Christ cautioned the throngs about the costs of being one of his disciples by telling them the parable of the man

who proposed to build a tower. He said, "For which of you, wanting to build a tower, is not first seated to calculate the expense, to see if he has the wherewithal?—lest at some time, laying its foundation and not being strong enough to finish up, all who behold should be beginning to scoff at him, saying that 'This man begins building and is not strong enough to finish up!' " (Luke 14:28-30).

THE COST OF CREATION

Yet can we not see that we often may unwittingly assume that God has done what man himself admits is very foolish? Surely, if man is wise enough to plan his projects in advance, God has also, figuratively, "sat down" and counted the cost of commencing such a complex creation as that of which we became a part. The cost was Christ's cross. There was no other way. Yet God, in His limitless love, was willing to underwrite even such a costly cure, in order to bring His creation to the pre-appointed goal.

So God planned and prepared, provided the materials necessary directly out of Himself, and carefully created a vast universe, and peopled a seemingly insignificant planet with a race which, through their evil experiences, would be molded into useful, honorable vessels, well suited to serve Him.

VESSELS DO NOT MAKE THEMSELVES

It is obvious that these vessels did not create themselves. The sum and substance of their sorry contribution to the cosmos, thus far, is seen in their one original achievement: They have sinned, and transgressed, and offended their God.

Yet the most popular notion of man's origin, "evolution," is one which awards the crown of the Creator to the creature himself, and is based on the peculiar mathematical assumption that nothing can be added to nothing, and

equal something. Before our very eyes we are witnessing God's sentence on such who "offer divine service to the creature rather than the Creator . . . " so that "God gives them over to a disqualified mind." "Alleging themselves to be wise, they are made stupid . . . " (Rom.1:22,25, and 28).

But, no matter how the creature regards his Creator, God, as the master Potter, has reserved to Himself certain rights, which all the enlightened will concede are inherently *His* alone.

THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

God has reserved the right to choose whom He wills. Only God knows who is best suited to display whatever He is at the moment demonstrating. Abram did not choose God. God chose Abram and gave Him instructions (Gen. 12:1). Isaac did not choose to be the son of promise. But God said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," and disregarded Ishmael's priority as firstborn (Gen.21:12). Jacob is the prime example of God's overruling prerogative to choose whom *He* wills. Isaac's favorite was Esau, but God's choice prevailed (Rom.9:11-13; Gen.25:23; 27:27-29). And when men presume, like Joseph's brothers, to eliminate the one whom God has favored, they only serve to promote God's program, so that they themselves have to one day acknowledge God's choice (Gen.43:26).

A PURPOSE FOR EACH VESSEL

In order for the Potter to display His skill He must mold a variety of vessels, each expertly adapted to fill a particular need. So also, God, *wanting* to display His indignation and make His powerful doings known, has molded vessels of indignation adapted for destruction. But His reason for this is that He should also be making known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy (Rom.9:22,23).

Oh, that God might grant us to see the wisdom and love

which prompted Him to form *two* kinds of vessels. For without such a contrast we could never know the greatness of His grace and the disastrous results of disobeying God. This lesson learned, we may rejoice in *His* way, rest in *His* will and trust only in Him.

MERCIFUL TO ALL

Thus, it seems quite clear that when this display has served its purpose, two kinds of vessels will no longer be needed. But there is no wastebasket in God's ceramic shop. What is to become of the vessels of indignation? The Potter is not finished! He makes them into other vessels, which please Him; behold! He molds all into the image of His Son. *Now* there are only *some* vessels of mercy yet the Potter's wheel still turns and He shall yet be "merciful to *all*" (Rom.11:32).

"O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and will be repaid by Him? Seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:33-36).

God is the great master Potter, the Creator of the whole universe. As such He has certain prerogatives, including the right to choose, and the right to make two different kinds of vessels in order to carry out His plan and purpose.

RUINED

Now we shall look more closely at these vessels which were ruined in the hand of the potter. That what may look like flaws could develop in any part of God's perfect creation may be hard to understand at first. But we must remember that the planting of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was just as much a part of God's master

plan as was the planting of the tree of the living. As soon as God planted the tree that brought about mankind's original downfall, and truly long before, He knew what the sad result would be.

For sin and death must smash and destroy the vessels before the Potter can make them all anew. If there were another way—a better way—to achieve the glorious goal that God has set for mankind, a way which might have spared the vessels such harsh treatment in the hands of sin, we need not doubt that our loving God would have chosen it. But God knows, even though we may not realize it, that this is the most *effective* way—the perfect way—to attain to His goal and our good.

Let us consider for a moment the millions of humans whom the Potter has made. Is it not staggering to realize we have never looked upon one vessel which was not, in some way, ruined (AV, "marred")? Only one Man has trod this earth Who did not sin, and Who was not condemned by Adam's death sentence. All the rest are ruined. Except for Christ, there is not one vessel that could rightfully occupy a place of honor. All are what the pottery shops refer to as "seconds," which are usually sold only at a great discount.

While most will agree that all humanity bears the pockmarks of sin, very few realize that this situation came about, not by some ancient accident, but as the reasonable result of God's perfect plan. Some have asked: "But how can *imperfection* play a part in the plan of a *perfect* God? We happily answer: "In order to display His unfathomable wisdom and transcendent love." God molds weak vessels and uses them to show His strength. If the powerful do powerfully, how is God glorified? But if the weak overcome the strong, then God's influence becomes apparent. Therefore we are not living in the ruins of an accidental catastrophe, but in a world which unwittingly is fulfilling

every facet of its role, as foretold by Him Who fashioned every fragment of it.

Ruined *in the hand of the Potter* . . . but *still* in the hand of the Potter! Here is peace for all who will ponder these words! For whatever may be their present condition, each vessel still rests secure in His all-sufficient hands. Without Him all life in this vast universe would vanish. In Him we are living, and moving, and are (Acts 17:28). Only when we realize that all, really ALL is still in the hand of the Potter, can we "let nothing be worrying" us (Phil.4:6). For if, in all these many millenniums, God has not chosen to withdraw His hand from these marred pieces of clay, then we can rest in a future equally secure, never doubting that what He has promised, *this He will do*!

REMADE

The God Who formed the old creation will also fashion the new. The potter's prerequisite to remake an unsatisfactory vessel into a useful utensil is recognized by all. The same clay that went into the imperfect piece can be reworked and molded into a fresh form which will reflect his highest craftsmanship and add to his renown.

What is true among mortals also holds true of the marvelous master Potter of the universe, to Whom the wiliest rebel is actually only "putty in His hands."

HANDS NEVER LEAVE THE CLAY

God never "gives up." He will finish everything He has begun. As was pointed out above, there is no "wastebasket" in His pottery shop. Nothing need be discarded, for His skill at reworking is infinite. While some vessels now are needed to display His displeasure and are suited for destruction, it is wise to remember that "destruction" is the *same word* as "lost" in Greek, and the Shepherd never sleeps while there are yet "lost" sheep. No matter

how much reforming and refining are necessary, the Potter never takes His hand from the clay. He never throws any lump away, for He knows that its essential elements are most costly, and He believes in "thrift." Did our Lord just litter the landscape with the surplus fragments when He fed the five thousand? No, every scrap was gathered up! (John 6:11-14).

ENDLESS DAMNATION DISHONORS THE POTTER

The current delusion that the Scriptures teach an endless eternity of agony for the unbeliever, the unsuitable vessel, is a dishonor and a disgrace to the name and reputation of the greatest Artisan of all time. God knows what He is doing, and He understands what He is forming. Nothing comes as a surprise to Him, although our sins do bring sorrow to His heart. He recognizes what is best for every one of His creatures, and long ago determined the best method by which to bring each vessel to acknowledge that His way is always wiser.

Men theorize and reason wrongly. Yet, because He knows that they will benefit by swallowing the bitter fruits of their own belligerent behavior, He allows them to acquire nicks and scratches and be disfigured and deformed while following after the follies of their flesh.

But God never gave any of His creatures legs nimble enough to outdistance Him. God's patient pursuit of His wayward prodigals is the longest love story of them all. When Paul asked Timothy to offer prayer for all the sons and daughters of our ancient ancestor, Adam, he says that this will be welcome in the sight of our Saviour, God, Who *wills that all mankind be saved* and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:3,4). Again, in this same letter, Paul says that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of those who believe (1 Tim.4:10).

After death (the *last* enemy) has been abolished (1 Cor.15:

26), Christ will turn all things over to His Father, in order that God may become All in all (1 Cor.15:28). This is the ultimate outcome of God's infinite grace. This was the purpose for which He brought the universe into being. Vessels filled to overflowing with God's spirit, prepared for His praise and glory and honor; these were all seen in the potential progeny of Adam. Nothing need be thrown away, for the Potter would not rest until every shard has been reformed into the image of His Son. All this lies out there before us. Living in expectation, we anxiously await our new spiritual bodies which will be suited to the celestials. We were not chosen to be the few salvaged fragments from a devastated china shop; rather were we selected to be the chosen channels to carry the Creator's love and graciousness to every piece of unfit "earthenware" in the universe.

D. E. Knoch

DAVID ERNEST KNOCH

Brother, David Knoch, was put to repose June 20, 2014 at age 83. The first grandchild of A. E. Knoch, David was closely associated with the work of the Concordant Publishing Concern for several years both as a contributing editor of *Unsearchable Riches* and eager worker at many tasks, including Linotype operator for the Memorial Edition of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT and the early publications of the CV of Genesis and Isaiah. In his memory we reprint his meditation on Jeremiah 18:3,4, under the title, *The Parable of the Potter.* Goodnight good friend. We shall rejoice together with you in the oncoming eons when we are all live together with our Lord, and God displays through us the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

HELEN M. TYNDALL

On July 20, 2014 we lost for awhile our dear sister, Helen Tyndall, of Ludington, Michigan, at ninety years of age. Kind in heart and steadfast in faith, she gave of her time and means, and aided others in sharing the evangel and living it in many ways which those who knew her will long remember with thankfulness to God. We will know her again, transformed to the image of Christ, in that day.

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 105th Year

(1909–2014)

Contents:

145 Editorial
149 Concordant Version Notes
159 "Grace" in Romans 7
165 Psalm Thirty-Eight
169 Rescue by Grace
181 Concerning What is "About to Be":
"*Pending*" versus "*Im*pending"

FOURTH QUARTER, 2014

Volume 105 **Number 4**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

By analyzing the contextual usages of each Hebrew and Aramaic word, a single English word was first selected as its most suitable equivalent. Then, to achieve readability, some words were given a limited number of idiomatic variants that are harmonious with the sense derived from the investigations. English words used as the common translation of particular Hebrew words, and even idiomatic variants, were not used for other Hebrew words.

Boldface type was used for words (or even parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. And lightface type was used for words (or parts of words) which were added to clarify the meaning of the respective word in the Hebrew text. In addition small symbols and abbreviations were inserted between or attached to words to represent omitted terms, to indicate grammatical features and the sources of emendations to the Hebrew text.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FOURTH QUARTER 2014
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED FIVE

EDITORIAL

A FORMER schoolmate, on meeting me many years after we had gone our separate ways, asked me about my occupation. In trying to describe my work I mentioned, among other tasks, that I was involved in producing a translation of the Old Testament. He looked at me with some surprise and asked, "Hasn't that already been done?"

Indeed it has, and new translations come out fairly often, most with far more support, popular appeal and fanfare than the Concordant Version. Yet a translation that conveys God's word to us, in A. E. Knoch's words, "in its original purity," has not been done. That may not be possible, but it has been our endeavor. And now that we have published not only a Concordant Version of the Scriptures originally written in Greek, but of the Scriptures originally written in Hebrew and Aramaic as well, we can only say that it still remains our endeavor.

Nevertheless, we feel that much of what we have done can be of real help to those who use this Version, toward the goal of conveying God's thoughts as they were originally expressed in languages not our own.

Yet why use the title *Elohim* instead of *God* in Genesis 1:1, and such unfamiliar terms, as *chaos* and *vacant* as well as the verb *vibrate* in Genesis 1:2? And where the King James Version reads in Genesis 1:3, "And God said, Let there be light," is it any improvement to translate, "And Elohim said: Let light come to be" (and then add small symbols and abbreviations here and there together with a mixture of lightface and boldface type)?

Is there any justification for the numerous changes based on alterations to the Masoretic (Hebrew) Text, such as placing the words "And it came to be so" at the end of Genesis 1:6 rather than the end of verse 7, as well as adding these words at the end of verse 20? Why emend the traditional text at all (such as using the word "confluence" in Genesis 1:9 rather than "place," and "gratuitously" rather than "lively" in Psalm 38:19)?

We discuss these (and a few other) particular differences from most traditional translations in the present issue (*cf* especially pages 149-158), and have done so in past issues for other such alterations. Yet many emendations of this sort have not been explained beyond what is provided by footnotes in the Version. We do understand that some kind of review of all of these matters under one cover is in order. We have begun working on such a publication, yet realizing that it will probably not be available for some time yet (especially considering the size of our staff), we hope to present notes on many of the more significant emendations in upcoming issues of *Unsearchable Riches* (as well as our website).

Although we have not provided footnotes for them in the pages of the Concordant Literal New Testament, we do introduce a few such textual emendations there, most significantly the insertion of the word "Grace" as the answer to Paul's question of Romans 7:24. The evidence for this is provided and discussed on pages 159-164. This relates directly to my study on verses 24 and 25 as presented in this issue (pages 169-180).

In many ways the CVOT opens up new insights into God's Word, by emendations to the extant Hebrew text (called the Masoretic Text) based on ancient translations such as the Septuagint (Greek) and Syriac versions, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Samaritan Pentateuch and certain other sources such as mediaeval Hebrew manuscripts

of the Scriptures. The changes, however, are not based only on evidence from such external sources, but always we have endeavored to give careful consideration to the context. This admittedly adds an element of subjectivity. For instance, the innovative CVOT translation of Genesis 4:26 is based partly on the Septuagint Version, but mostly on the conjecture that the Hebrew text originally used a verb meaning "wound" rather than the similarly spelled verb "start" (or "begin") which is found in the Masoretic Text. What is most satisfying to us is that the passage becomes meaningful as a picture of Christ on the cross in the contrast it makes between Enosh and the fierce self-centeredness of Lamech described just prior to this passage in Genesis 4:23,24.

The great value of Scripture is its revelation of God, especially as He is made known in and through His Son, Jesus Christ. Of course the full picture that we can see now that we are acquainted with the evangel of God concerning His Son, was not available when the Hebrew Scriptures were given. But the pattern was always there, that is, the pattern of God's way of dealing with evil and bringing about good. God's ways are not our ways. (May I say here, in accord with my article on Romans 7:25, that God's law is not the law of God placed over Israel at Sinai? His own law for Himself is uniquely distinct.)

This is not to claim that every emendation to the Masoretic Text lying behind the CVOT is certain. But we believe that all in all it points in the right direction. The Version remains open to review and to revision based on further investigation and consideration of both textual and contextual evidence. This applies to our translation of the New Testament as well.

And with regard to this as it relates to the Concordant Literal New Testament, the article by James Coram on the Greek word *mellō* (pages 181-191) will be

of interest to many. The suggestion that the English word "pending" serves better than "impending" as a translation of *mellō* is a good one, and should help us better understand many passages where it is used.

I began this editorial on a personal note by recalling a conversation I recently had with a boyhood friend. I want to end it with a personal note concerning my present life. What I have been learning with deepening realization is the joy of thanking God in the midst of frustrations and discouragements and failures (Paul chose some other such terms in 2 Corinthians 4:8,9). As noted in the meditations on Romans 7:24,25, the Greek word for *grace* is the same word as that for *thanks.* And the root meaning of them both is JOY. Consequently (to repeat here what I say several times later), Grace is joy received from God, and thanks is joy given to God.

In Romans 5:17, Paul says, in speaking for us all, *Thanks be to God* that we submissively listen from the heart to the type of teaching to which we are given over. Again in 1 Corinthians 15:57 he says, with regard to our happy expectation, *Thanks be to God,* Who is giving us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Then also it may be so that in Romans 7:25, in response to God's grace in giving His Son for the condemnation of sin, Paul said, *Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord* (though the wording, *I am thanking God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord,* as given in the CLNT, is not without much the same spiritual value).

Especially in times of weakness, fleshly failure, sorrow, being cast down and such kinds of wretchedness, I find rescue in concentrating my mind on God's grace, leading me to say from my heart, *Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, my Lord.* What a joy it is that we may give joy to God in the form of thanksgiving for His joy to us!

That is my major thought in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches.* God's grace be with you all. D.H.H.

CONCORDANT VERSION NOTES

THE following notes on the opening verses of God's Word begin with the idiomatic rendering as provided by the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, followed by a more literal reading. The notes on Genesis 1,2 offer explanations on certain English words and grammatical forms used in the CVOT, and notes on verses 6 and 9 concern adjustments to the Masoretic Text. The more detailed commentaries are mostly selected from the writings of A. E. Knoch.

GENESIS 1:1

1 In a **beginning Elohim created `the heavens and `the earth.**

---

1 In-beginning creates Elohim `the-heavens and `the-earth.

1:1 **In** a **beginning.** It is characteristic of mortals, when estranged from God, to look back to the *time* of creation, rather than to the creation itself. The rendering "In the beginning," is probably as close to the significance of the Original as English idiom will allow; still it is sufficiently inexact to cause cloudy conceptions and questionings to arise. It seems to fix a definite point of *time,* and to be limited to the single act of creation, whereas the Hebrew is not the name of a specific instant in the past, but a descriptive term, giving *priority* or *origination* to the contents of the whole book.

created. The element of time is not inherent in the Hebrew verb. That is determined by the context. Hebrew verbs

are concerned primarily with the status of the act, that is, whether it is considered as a fact, or perceived as action going on, whether past, present or future. This verb states a fact. Because the context shows that this is something occurring in the past, we use the simple past tense in our translation: **created.** But in order to render the fact forms consistently we use the simple present throughout in our literal renderings. We might imagine that we are in school where facts and principles are set before us. This is the first fact of the Scriptures, the fact of creation by God.

God is the First Cause. He is responsible for the heavens and the earth and all that is on it.

CREATE

"To make something out of nothing," that is the usual definition of *create.* This is confirmed by the dictionary, which makes it: "To bring into being; to cause to exist . . . the world is regarded as brought into being out of nothing." But we have been unable to find any confirmation for this in God's Word. Indeed, the only passages which throw any light upon this point teach the opposite. Peter wrote to the dispersion, "You may be subject to every *human creation* . . . ." (1 Pet.2:13). No human can create anything out of nothing. When God created the Circumcision and Uncircumcision into one new humanity, these were already in existence (Eph.2:11-15). He simply made both one by putting them into Christ.

The Scriptures teach that all is *out of God* (Rom.11:36; 1 Cor.11:12; 2 Cor.5:18), not out of nothing. This includes all the substance of all later creations, for God's creative acts are not confined to the beginning. Not only was the joint body of Ephesians created out of the Circumcision and Uncircumcision, but we are a new creation, created in Christ Jesus, just as all was created in Him in the beginning (Eph.2:10; Col.1:16).

In Christ we can see clearly that creation was not out of nothing. He calls Himself "God's creative Original," or, as the AV has it, "the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev.3:14). And He Himself also said, "For *out of God* I *came forth* and am arriving" (John 8:42). What is better evidence than a double witness from the lips of Truth Himself? It is further confirmed by our apostle, Paul, who calls Him the "Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created . . ." (Col.1:15,16). All was in Him in the beginning, even as all humanity was in Adam at first. And we feel sure that all who love Him and have tasted of His grace will be slow to say that He was nothing, when they would never think of saying that Adam, in whom we were made sinners, was nothing.

God, when He created Adam, and humanity in him, did not create it out of nothing. He used previously created soil and atmosphere. These must be continually renewed in order to keep human beings alive. If we had been created out of nothing, then it might have been our lot to live out of nothing. This, I suppose, would be very welcome to some. But those who have tried it have returned to the soil from which they sprang.

Probably the worst effect which this false view of creation produces, is the warping of our thoughts as to the future. If creation came out of *nothing* it could easily return to oblivion. This would lend color to what is usually termed annihilation. On the other hand, if creation originated in *God,* then it is almost impossible for a sound mind to be fully content with any other ultimate than an enriched return to its Origin. This is marvelously expressed for us in the summary of the didactic portion of the book of Romans (11:36). There we are told that, not only is all *out of Him* in creation, but also *through Him* in the eonian times, and *for Him* in the consummation, when He becomes All in all.

THE DIVINE TITLE

Elohim. This is the common English transliteration of the most frequently used divine title. It is plural (or dual) in form, but is used with a verb that is singular in form. God is identified here as the supreme Subjector (**El**) acting through His Son (*Eloah*, **El**-*ward*) Who points us *toward El* (*cf* John 1:1,18).

`the heavens and `the earth. Hebrew often uses a special term that points to the direct object so that there can be no doubt concerning the object of the verb no matter where it appears in the sentence. We represent this with a forward accent mark (`) in our translation.

The subject is **Elohim**; the verb is **creates,** and the compound object is **the heavens and the earth.** It is a fact that God created the entirety of the world as we know it.

Hear Paul's grand declaration (Acts 17:24-28):

God, Who makes the world and all that is in it, He, the Lord inherent of heaven and earth, is not dwelling in temples made by hands, neither is He attended by human hands, as if requiring anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all. Besides, He makes out of one every nation of mankind, to be dwelling on all the surface of the earth, specifying the setting of the seasons and the bounds of their dwelling, for them to be seeking God, if, consequently, they may surely grope for Him and may be finding Him, though to be sure, not far from each one of us is He inherent, for in Him we are living and moving and are.

GENESIS 1:2

2 +**As** for **the earth, it came** to **be** a **chaos and vacant, and darkness** was **over** the sur**face of** the **abyss.**

And the **spirit of Elohim** was **vibrating over** the sur**face of the waters.**

2 +**And-the-earth, it-becomes** a **chaos and-vacant, and-darkness** is **over** the **face-of** the **abyss.**

And-the**-spirit-of Elohim** is **vibrating over** the **face-of the-waters.**

1:2 **became.** This verb also expresses an action as a fact. This process of becoming occurred in the past as the context indicates. But it is secondary to the fact of creation. God *creates* the heavens and the earth, and then the earth *becomes* a chaos and vacant, enveloped in darkness. It is not created out of chaos and emptiness and darkness, nor is it created in this form (*cf* Isa.45:18). God creates the heavens and the earth, and then the earth becomes disrupted.

Scripture gives a clear statement of the origin of the world about us when it informs us that Elohim created it. Then, with this foundational fact established, the subject of evil is introduced as a secondary development. With this in mind we are protected from supposing that evil is eternal, or is in any way outside of God's power and wisdom.

THE VERB "BECOME"

The verb *eie* BECOME occurs about two dozen times in this chapter alone, and everywhere denotes a *change*, and not mere existence. In the third verse it marks a change from darkness to light. In the sixth verse, two changes occur, an atmosphere is made and waters are separated. Four times, in verse fourteen, there are changes connected with the luminaries. The *progress* of events is marked by the sixfold repetition of becoming evening and morning. And so it is throughout the Scriptures. In the course of my work I have had to translate every occurrence in the sacred text, and have found that this is the *sense*, even if English idiom and context occasionally demand that it be rendered *come*, or a form of *be*. These cases are always

indicated in the CV. On the other hand, the forms of the copula BE are usually absent and we have to insert them in English, hence print them in lightface type.

CHAOS

The word *without form,* in the AV, is also rendered *confusion, empty place, nothing, nought, vain, vanity, wilderness*, and *waste* (Deut.32:10). How anything can exist *without* form is impossible to conceive, and hardly prepares us for what follows. Anything with a surface must have a form. The word *chaos* is just what is needed to suggest the necessity for the work done on the first two days. It is in full accord with the term *abyss*. It also implies that the earth was not a chaos when created. Chaotic conditions are not fit to *dwell* in, yet the first earth was created for that purpose. No *human* life was ever on that earth, for Adam, the first human, was *created* later (1:27). So also were the great monsters and every living, swarming soul and every flyer (1:21).

VACANT

The word *void* is also misleading here. To speak of an object as a void would indicate that it has no existence. But if it *contains nothing*, then it is *vacant*. This word is the complement of the word *fill* in verses twenty-two and twenty-eight where living souls are told to *fill* that sphere in which they live. Indeed, it may be in contrast to the fruitfulness and *increase* enjoined on all living souls. It seems to imply that the first earth had once been filled with some forms of life, such as plants, which are not said to have been specially *created* during the restoration of the earth, but only *brought forth*, the term used of soul life *after* the record of its creation (Gen.1:12,21,24).

Confirming and elaborating the assertion of Isaiah that the earth was originally created to be inhabited, Peter

speaks of it as a *world*, that is, all was systematically and orderly arranged, and provision was made to support inhabitants. But a waste and vacant abyss covered with water and shrouded in darkness is not habitable, and it can by no means be called a "world." As a matter of fact, the earth itself was not destroyed by water in the same sense as it will be by fire before the new creation. But the *world*, says Peter, *perished*. Becoming chaos and vacant conveys the same thought in different words. If we wish to express the matter literally and exactly, we would say that the *world* was restored in six days, though it is quite plain even if we say it was the earth.

A point of prime importance, which may only be inferred from the early record, is the positive statement that the earth was first formed *so as to be indwelt*. The fact the animals and man were created later does not deny that the earth was prepared as a habitation. The fact that plants are not definitely said to be *created* later suggests that there was verdure on the surface of the earth as originally created. In other words there was a cosmic order such as would sustain life on the original earth. And this it was which perished.

THE MEANING OF SPIRIT

How difficult it is to define spirit in literal language! But God provides a picture of it preceding even those of light and life. In the original Hebrew the word is WIND. It was a "wind" of God that vibrated over the waters and brought light. It is a pity that we cannot use this for both in other languages, for it is the inspired illustration of *spirit*. The wind *itself* cannot be perceived by our faculties. We can feel and see and hear and smell its *effects*, but the power itself lies beyond our apprehension. Our Lord compared its action to a powerful blast (John 3:8).

So it is that nature provides us with the clearest defini-

tion of the most intangible and spiritual of all things, the very essence of God, for He is not merely a spirit, but *is* literally Spirit.

A clear understanding of the very first action of the spirit of God may be of value in apprehending its further operations. The Authorized Version says that the spirit *moved*. This is correct, but it gives us no clue as to the character of its motion. The Hebrew word occurs only three times, so we will examine them all. The most helpful is found in Deuteronomy (32:11) where we read of a vulture that "*hovers* over her young." In Jeremiah 23:9 the prophet says "all my bones *are tremulous*." Not many of us have seen a vulture hovering over her fledglings. But some of us have observed a hummingbird, as it vibrates its wings when draining the nectar from a flower. I have seen a plungeon, on Lake Galilee, poised apparently motionless, by means of its vibrating pinions. Perhaps all of us have experienced what Jeremiah described as the shaking of his bones.

THE SPIRIT OF LIGHT

In bringing us back from death into life when we first believe, the spirit of God pursues the same course. "The God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts" (2 Cor.4:6). First the spirit hovers over the sinner in his darkness and enlightens him through the power of God's Word. One is a fine figure of the other, in a higher realm.

The Son of God, anointed by the spirit, is the Light of the world (John 1:9). We also, who have the spirit dwelling in us, are light (Eph.5:8), and children of light (1 Thess.5:5). We must understand the meaning of the literal operation in this passage before we can fully appreciate its force in these figures.

The procedure of God's spirit in restoring the earth was quite natural in its order and results. It is evident that a great catastrophe had reduced the surface of the earth, which had been created to be indwelt (Isa.45:18), to one vast mushy mixture, in which the atmosphere and the dry land were mingled with the water.

GENESIS 1:6

6 **And Elohim** [l]**said: Let** an **atmosphere come** to **be in** the **midst of the waters,** [+]**that it may** [b]**be separating** [bt] **waters** [›]**from waters.** 7**And it came** to [l]**be so.**

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6 **And-saying-is Elohim: Becoming-is** an **atmosphere in-**the**-midst-of the-waters, and-it-is-becoming** a **separating between waters to-waters.** 7**And-it-is-becoming so~.**

1:6 **And it came** to **be so.** The Masoretic Text has this clause at the end of verse 7. But the Septuagint version has it here at the end of verse 6, immediately following the words of Elohim. That is the pattern in verses 9, 11, 15, 24 and 30. What we see here is a clear and immediate connection between what Elohim says and the exact fulfillment of His words. And with this restoration (as it seems to us) of these words to the end of verse 6 this example of the power and truthfulness of God's words is impressed on us consistently at the very beginning of Scripture. In verse 3 the words of instruction were followed immediately by the identical words as fulfillment. With regard to the creation of the human, there is a fuller description of the way in which Elohim's words are carried out. But throughout this chapter the pattern is maintained. What Elohim says is to be comes to be so.

In accord with this principle, we are assured that God's many promises concerning Israel and ourselves and all mankind will be carried out.

GENESIS 1:9

9 **And Elohim** [l]**said: Let the waters** *f* **under the heavens flow together** in**to one** [7]**confluence~**Q**,** [+]**that the dry** ground **may** [l]**appear. And it came** to [l]**be so.**

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9 **And-saying-is Elohim: Flowing-together-are the-waters from-under the-heavens to** [7]**confluence~**Q **one, and-appearing-is the-dry-**ground**. And-it-is-becoming so.**

1:9 **confluence.** The Masoretic Text has the Hebrew word, *mqum* here, which we generally translated **place**, but the CVOT conjectures that a similarly spelled word *mque* (as used in verse 10 where it is translated **confluence**) was original. A fragment from the Dead Sea Scrolls has this word, *mque,* here, and the Septuagint Version supports this reading.

Although our translation does not note the relationship, the Hebrew verb rendered **flow together** also belongs to the same word family as **confluence,** to which we have given the name, STRETCH-TOWARD (also included in this word family is the word **expect**). It is common in Hebrew for a term and even various forms of that term to be repeated in a single thought for the purpose of emphasis. In this case the waters are said to be *stretching toward* a *stretch-toward*er, called the Sea. In reaching the Sea they did not stop their flowing, but continued to stretch toward another place, that is, returning (perhaps by underground processes) to their starting place in what we call the water cycle (see Ecc.1:7). Because this Hebrew word for **confluence** was used in the Hebrew text of verse 10 some such sense can certainly be understood even if the more general term, *place,* is used in verse 9. But we may give the matter more attention if we see how the concept of flowing waters, ever stretching onward, is being emphasized here, once as a verb and twice as a noun.

"GRACE" IN ROMANS SEVEN

BEFORE the word "grace" was allowed a place in Romans 7:24, more study was devoted to it than to any other critical reading. In extraordinary cases like this we did not confine ourselves to the three main witnesses which we record in the superlinear. We gave attention to the critical readings of this text as given in the most important manuscripts, early fathers, and versions. It will be of more than ordinary interest to note the various ways in which this text has appeared in these sources:

1. "I am thanking the God" is the reading of one set of witnesses, which includes Sinaiticus uncorrected, Alexandrinus, two Syriac versions, the Peshitto and the Harkleian, the Gothic version of Ulfilas, and most other Codices. Origen has it so twice out of three instances, and Chrysostom quotes it so once.

2. "Thanks (or *grace*) to the God" is the reading of Vaticanus and is followed by the Coptic Sahidic version, Origen one out of three instances, Methodius, a Bishop of Olympus, and Hieronymus, once out of two occurrences.

3. "Yet thanks (or *grace*) to the God" is the reading of Codex Ephraemi, a few other Codices, a few of the Boharic and the Armenian versions, and is so quoted by Cyril of Alexandria.

4. "The grace of God" is found in Codex Claromontanus, the Latin version, Hieronymus, one in two instances, and Origen's Latin in both of its occurrences.

Weymouth gives the consensus of modern editors as favoring "Thanks (or grace) to the God," but most of them

put "I am thanking" in the margin. Alexander Souter's edition reverses this, putting "I am thanking" in the text, and "Thanks to" in the margin.

OMISSIONS ARE COMMON

It is a point of principal importance that many of the mistakes in the ancient manuscripts are *omissions.* Only those actually engaged in transcribing will realize how easy it is to leave out a few words or a line.There can be no doubt that the scribe of Sinaiticus skipped many words which were restored by the corrector. The Alexandrian manuscript has thus lost quite a few whole sentences, and almost always the reason is apparent from the text itself.

Probably what happened here was that a very early scribe, in copying this passage came to the word grace, *charis,* and lifted his eyes from the copy. Then turning to it again, his eyes fell on the same combination of letters *charis* in "I am thanking" (*eucharistō*), a little further on. In this way, his copy skipped the word *grace,* for he had lost it in the word "thanking."[1]

This shifting from *grace* to *thanks,* in English, will be clearer if we explain that *thanks, gratitude, grace, rejoice* and *bounty* are all from the same element, *char-,* in Greek, which means JOY. Sometimes we must translate grace *gratitude* (1 Cor.10:30). The noun *grace* (*charis*) is translated by the noun *thanks* when it is an acknowledgment. The verb *thank* is WELL-JOY.

Surely all who are acquainted with the grace of God can see that there is a much deeper connection than a mere etymological one, for grace is the purest and most inexhaustible source of joy and thanksgiving.

1. The technical name for this type of omission in the process of copying a text is "haplography." It has occurred fairly often in the transmission of the Hebrew text, as noted in the CVOT.

GRACE IN ROMANS

Grace is the greatest gift and principal potency in the epistle to the Romans. To begin with, Paul received *grace* (1:5) as the power of his apostleship. He commences the epistle proper with *grace* (1:7). His first word concerning justification is that it is gratuitously in God's *grace* (3:24). Faith is chosen as the means of receiving it, because it is in accord with *grace* (4:16). Conciliation, also, is called the *grace* in which we stand (5:2). The answer to Adam's offense is *grace.* The *grace* of God and the gratuity in *grace* now superabound (5:15). Those who obtain this superabundance of *grace* shall reign (5:17). Where sin increases, *grace* superexceeds. *Grace* reigns (5:20, 21). We are delivered from sin and the law by being under *grace* (6:14). What else can deliver us from the law of sin and rescue us out of this body of death? Does not God do it by His *grace?*

There are degrees of grace. It may mean no more than *favor,* as when used of our Lord. But, with the call of Saul of Tarsus, it received an increase in intensity which pervades all his writings. Sometimes he adds such terms as superabundant (Rom.5:17), or riches of grace (Eph.1:7), or transcendent riches of grace (Eph.2:7), in order to express the highest degrees, but even without these, when applied to the salvation of sinners, and especially to the favor God shows the nations, that is, to those who deserve the opposite, it shines with a radiance which it reflects from its context. Indeed, how could a human language provide a word for such a marvelous idea? God refines and enriches such terms by the contexts in which He uses them. Grace has appeared *in* every administration, but the present is the only administration *of* grace.

Let us exult in this glorious grace! If we do, it will greatly help us to deal with others in grace.

A. E. Knoch

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON ROMANS 7:24,25

THE preceding article is excerpted and slightly edited from the Introduction to the 1930 edition of the CONCORDANT VERSION (New Testament with the Greek Text), page 42, and *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 39, pages 98-101.

It is most enlightening. Both the context and the remarkable variations of the ancient manuscripts strongly suggest that Paul originally answered his question of Romans 7:24 with the word *Grace!* (meaning JOY) and then followed it by giving joy to God in the form of thanksgiving. But there is a problem here. The corrector of Codex Sinaiticus (which Brother Knoch considered the source of the original reading), had inserted the Greek connective, *de,* along with the word *charis.* This little term, which is entered under the English word *yet* in our KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, page 337, is explained there as an "adversative connective" though "sometimes very slightly so," and often "used as a resumptive," and rendered *now.*

However, it would not accord with English idiom to translate *charis de* by "Yet grace!" or "Now grace!" as Paul's answer to his question of Romans 7:24. The first edition of the CV left the *de* untranslated, but the 1944 edition, called The International Edition, represented it by the word "why."

Brother Knoch discusses this problem and his solution in *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 39, page 99, as follows:

"The idiomatic version, however, caused considerable difficulty. It could be readily understood in Greek and other languages, but not carried over into idiomatic English. In German we can say, Yet grace! (Aber Gnade!). Such idiomatic difficulties are by no means rare. The word *de* needs two words, *yet* and *now,* regularly. But even these do not suffice for all cases. We were also compelled to use *but, even, however,* and, in this case, *why,* as an expletive, a usage given in Webster's dictionary, as well, in making a readable version. Such cases may occur only once, for they arise from odd eccentricities in our tongue, not from the regular rules of diction."

Yet after reviewing the entire matter for the 1966 edition of the CV, it was decided to leave the Greek term, *de,* untranslated once again. And this continues to be so in our current editions.

At this point, I can only present the case as seems most likely to me in light of the evidence. I am satisfied that Paul originally exclaimed, *Grace!* (*charis!*) as his answer to his question of verse 24, and he followed this with *thanks* (*charis*) to God. He did not first say *charis de,* but simply *charis* as a one word reference to the evangel of God's grace. It is most likely that the words, *charis de,* inserted by the corrector to Codex Sinaiticus (dated Fourth Century) were intended to indicate a replacement to the reading in the Sinaiticus original, *eucharistō.* The corrector's source read "Now thanks [*charis de*] to the God" (as in Romans 6:17) while the manuscript source used by the scribe who prepared the Sinaiticus manuscript read "I am thanking [*eucharistō* I-am-WELL-JOYing] to the God." Neither source manuscript had *both* Paul's reference to *grace* [JOY] received and his expression of *thanks* [JOY] given. Yet, on the evidence of the context and the combination of readings in the manuscripts, I can readily agree with Brother Knoch that Paul originally answered his question with the exclamation, *Grace!* and followed this with thanks to God. He wrote either *charis charis tō theō* [Grace! Thanks to-the God], or: *charis charis de tō theō* [Grace! Now thanks to-the God]. But the first use of *charis* was lost very early in the transmission of the epistle, as Brother Knoch explained it above.

Subsequently, other changes occurred in the copying of the text, mostly preserving Paul's thought of thanksgiving to God. But a major variant reading appeared as represented by Codex D (Claromontanus) and a few other ancient sources: *The grace of God!* Supposing that this was not Paul's original wording, it is remarkable that there were those in these early centuries who were so certain that it must have been that they adjusted the text accordingly.

In this we see a probable attempt to restore what seemed to be Paul's obvious answer to his question. But while it gives witness to Paul's answer to his question, it does not testify to his expression of thanksgiving.

WHO OR WHAT?

Of course the AV (in accord with the majority of the ancient manuscripts) reads, "*who* shall deliver me . . .?" and replies indirectly with the words "I thank God." Indeed the Greek pronoun here can correctly be rendered either "who" or "what" as required by the context. Yet it is doubtful that Paul simply pointed to the fact that God is the Rescuer. As Brother Knoch observed, "*All accept that.* It is a question of the *means* that He uses in doing so. Even if *grace* is inserted, it is *God's grace.*"

Paul reaches a high point of emotion in Romans 7:23,24. A short, direct answer that gets immediately to the point is most appropriate. It also seems most likely that Paul did not use a verb with the pronoun "I" here, but simply used the noun "thanks," so as to end with full attention on the One Who gives us grace and Him through Whom He gives it. *Charis* as *grace* draws attention to God, and *charis* as *thanks* is directed to Him. In accord with this, the words "God's law" in the next line focus our thoughts (our minds), seriously and joyfully, on God's own solution to sin and the wretchedness it brings.

D.H.H.

PSALM THIRTY-EIGHT

A **Davidic Psalm, For Remembrance**
38 O **Yahweh, do not** [l]**correct me in Your wrath**
[+]**Or** [l]**discipline me in Your fury.**
2 **For Your arrows, they have settled** deep **in me,**
And Your hand is settling down **on me.**
3 There **is no soundness in my flesh**
[f]**in view of Your indignation;**
There **is no peace in my bones** [f]**in view of my sin.**
4 **For my depravities, they pass** over **my head;**
Like a **heavy load, they are** too [l]**heavy** [f]**for me.**
5 **My welts stink** [7]**and**[c] **are putrefied**
[f]**In view of my folly.**
6 **I am wretched; I bow down very** [fr]**low.**
The entire day I walk in **somberness**[l]**.**
7 **For my hips, they are filled** with **searing** pain,
And there **is no soundness in my flesh.**
8 **I am torpid and** [fr] **utterly crushed;**
I roar out **from** the **anguish of my heart.**
9 O [S]**Yahweh**[ph], in **front of You** is **all my yearning,**
And my sighing, it is not concealed from You.
10 **My heart, it throbs; my vigor forsakes me,**
And the **light of my eyes, even that is no**t `with **me.**
11 Those **loving me and my associates,**
they are standing aloof from my contagion,
And my near friend**s, they stand far off.**
12 [+] Those **seeking my soul** [m]**lay** [l]**trap**s,
And those **seeking after evil** to **me, they speak woes;**
[+] **The entire day they** [l]**mumble deceptions.**
13 [+]**Yet I** am **like** a **deaf** man**; I** do **not** [l]**hear,**

And like a **mute** who does **not** |**open his mouth.**
14 +**So I** have |**become like** a **man who** is **not hearing,**
+ **In whose mouth** there **are no reproofs.**
15 t**But** ›**on You,** O **Yahweh, have I** c**placed** my **hope;**
You Yourself **shall answer,** O S**Yahweh**ph **my Elohim.**
16 **For I** sa**pleaded: Otherwise they might rejoice**
›**against me;**
i**When my feet slip**–**,**
they would magnify themselves **over me.**
17 t**But I** am **prepared**| **for limping,**
And my pain is in **front of me continually.**
18 **For I shall profess my depravity;**
I am |**anxious** f **because** of **my sin.**
19 +**Yet** those **be**ing **my enemies** Q**gratuitously**~**,**
they are plentiful,
And those **hating me falsely have multiplied.**
20 + Those **repaying evil** u**for good,**
They are my |**adversaries** u**in my pursuit**– **of** the
good.
21 **Do not** |**forsake me,** O **Yahweh;**
My Elohim, do not be |**far from me.**
22 Do **hurry to my help,**
O S**Yahweh**ph**, my Salvation.**
› **Permanent**|**, For Acclamation**

NOTES ON PSALM 38

This psalm provides an excellent background to Romans 7. There are striking parallels, but also important points of contrast. Both David and Paul speak as those who know the law and both are aware of the fact that they fail to keep its righteous precepts. David, however, is a sinner under the law, which, in its goodness and righteousness, calls for judgment on the sinner. And Paul is under grace.

So it is that David pleads before Yahweh from the depths

of his soul: "O Yahweh, do not be correcting[1] me in Your wrath or be disciplining me in Your fury." This was a critical issue for David, who had written in the opening lines of Psalm 32, "Happy he whose transgression is lifted away, whose sin is covered over! Happy the human to whom Yahweh is not reckoning depravity." Yet those under law could never reach to that happiness. In no way could David conclude his thoughts regarding sin with the words: "Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation" to me.

But the fact that law makes sin known (Rom.7:7) is as clear in Psalm 38 as it is in Romans 7. David cries out to Yahweh, "There is no peace in my bones in view of my sin. For my depravities, they pass over my head; like a heavy load, they are being too heavy for me."

When Saul of Tarsus realized what the precept against coveting was saying, it hit him just as the words of Nathan the prophet hit David who had sinned in his coveting for Bathsheba and in all the depravities that followed. Paul recounts his experience when he realized what the tenth commandment was saying: "I died, and it was found that, to me, the precept for life, this is for death. For Sin, getting an incentive through the precept, deludes me, and through it, kills me" (Rom.7:10,11). So David describes himself as "torpid and utterly crushed" (Psa.38:8).

The law is holy, and the precept holy and just and good; indeed it is spiritual (Rom.7:12,14), but we all are fleshly. Sin makes it home in us, as it did in David and Paul. Anyone who knows the law and is gratified that it points to what is ideal, will also become aware of a different law, the law of sin, which wars against it. Hence, Paul, speaking of himself in the flesh, exclaims, "A wretched man am I!"

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1. I am rendering this and subsequent verbs preceded by a vertical stroke in the literal sense of action going on, as explained in the Introduction to the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

(Rom.7:24), just as David cried out, "I am wretched; I bow down very low. The entire day I walk in somberness" (Psa.38:6).

The Hebrew word translated "wretched" here in the psalm would ordinarily be rendered "depraved," so that it speaks of recognition of the multitude of depravities referred to in verse 4. But the Septuagint translated it with a Greek word which referred not only to one's sinfulness, but also adds the sense of mental misery. This is the very Greek word Paul uses in Romans 7:24, conveying both the sense of the wretched, fleshly condition and the wretchedness in mind as well.

At this point of wretchedness, David and Paul part company. David roars out in the anguish of his heart. He focuses on his sufferings from the coldness of his friends, the open attacks of his enemies, and his own lack of defense. Thus he turns to Yahweh with the petition that He not forsake him and would hurry to his help. On the other hand, Paul comes to God with thanksgiving in view of His grace. Paul knows his sinfulness, but he keeps listening from his heart to the evangel. This is what vibrates over him with spiritual power every minute. His mind is not centered on himself and his sins, nor upon the law of God given to Israel in the wilderness. Rather it is enslaved to "God's law" by which He sent His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, to the end that sin is condemned. Paul is one of the happy human beings to whom, already, the Lord by no means is reckoning sin.

The Hebrew word for "gratuitously" (*chnm*) in verse 19 is found at this place in the Dead Sea Scrolls of the Psalms and is used in the similar passage of Psalm 35:19. This provides a further example of David as a type of Christ (*cf* John 15:25), and fits the context better than the Masoretic Text's word, *chiim,* meaning "life" (AV, "lively"). D.H.H.

RESCUE BY GRACE

WHEN Paul opened this letter centered on the evangel of God concerning His Son, by saying, "Not ashamed am I of the evangel" (Rom.1:16), he directly faced one of the most common criticisms brought against it. To declare that those believing the evangel are justified apart from works of law, gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, was considered highly dangerous. Indeed, it is still distrusted to the extent that where God's grace is announced, it is often, even commonly, replaced by law when it comes to our daily lives. Even when justification is recognized as wholly God's favor through the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ (to God be the glory!), the recognition that this word of the cross is the power of God (*cf* 1 Cor.1:18-25) for salvation in the present as well as the future is not widely appreciated.

Human sin is shameful. But Paul was not ashamed of the evangel, for it announces the condemnation of sin, and *it* is the power of God for salvation to everyone who is believing.

Yet those who are believing the evangel and are now standing before God justified gratuitously in His grace, do not always exhibit its power in their present ways of living. Nevertheless, Paul was not ashamed of the evangel. Whether or not the believer comes to know and be a partaker of the power which is there in believing the evangel, that is where it is, not in the precepts of the law, but in listening from the heart to the declarations of grace which are there in the evangel.

SIN AND GRACE

Earlier in Romans, after surveying, at great length, the miserable record of human irreverence and unrighteousness, including that of Israel under the law, the apostle Paul concluded, that by works of law no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight (Rom.1:18-3:20). Then he turned our attention to the evangel, which towers in contrast:

Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing . . . . (Rom.3:21,22)

We cannot be justified and stand before God in righteousness by works of law. *Yet now,* God's own righteousness is not simply attested, but is made *manifest* through the faith of Jesus Christ. This is for all, and this is even now, in spirit, placed on all who are believing.

However, before making plain exactly what this righteousness is, and how it is the solution to the wretched situation described in Romans 1:18-3:20, Paul brought that wretched situation before us again as the factor calling for God's manifestation of His own righteousness:

. . . for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God. (Rom.3:22,23)

Even though God's righteousness is placed *on* us (or, as Paul puts it later, "reckoned to us"), we are not allowed to forget that we are sinners in the flesh. This is as true of believers as it is of anyone else. And it is as true of one who sins in relatively small ways as it is of one who is a great sinner. It is only by the grace of God, through Jesus Christ, that we now stand justified before God:

Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus . . . where, then, is boasting? (Rom.3:24,27)

Law and works of law were kept out of the picture as Paul continued in chapters 4 and 5 to unfold the evangel for which he was severed. The deliverance which is in Christ Jesus is reckoned to us as a favor, a gift of joy, not as payment for good deeds we may have done or do:

Now to the worker, the wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as a debt. Yet to him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness. (Rom.4:4,5)

It is *on our believing* that this reckoning takes place (*cp* Eph.1:13), but the righteousness which is reckoned to us is not based on our faith, but on that of Jesus Christ. We are sinners who are graciously granted to be believing and be bringing honor to Christ through sufferings (Phil.1:29). Yet also, in the flesh, we keep accumulating a record of offenses against our God, many of them unnoticed by us, but also there are those that become sources of deep shame. It is while still being offenders in the flesh that we "are believing on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead, Who was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying" (Rom. 4:24,25). And in the flesh we are still sinners.

We never escape from being sinners while we remain in these bodies of death. "Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned" (Rom. 5:12). Yet above all this, we stand in grace before God:

Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God. (Rom.5:1,2)

Righteousness and peace are based wholly on the love of God in that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our

sakes, and in that while we are still enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son (Rom.5:6-11).

This is the evangel of God concerning His Son. It is in every way an evangel of grace. God's word of law "came in by the way, that the offense should be increasing. Yet where sin increases, grace superexceeds, that, even as Sin reigns in death, thus Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:20,21).

WHAT SHALL WE DECLARE?

At this point in Romans Paul turns our attention to our present lives. What shall we be declaring about this evangel of grace in relation to our way of living? Does it not encourage sin? Or at least fail to discourage it? Does it not say that we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing? May it not be coming to that! (Rom.6:1,2).

Law tells us what we are to do and are not to do. Does not grace tell us that we can persist in sin and consequently receive more grace?

No! The evangel is not like law in being concerned with what we must do and must not do. Nor is it concerned with what we may do. It is concerned with what God has done through the gift of His Son.

In directing us in our doing, Paul guides us to declare and take account of and listen to and enslave our minds to the evangel which tells us what God has done through Christ Jesus, our Lord.

THE LAW AND WRETCHEDNESS

Now in Romans 7, addressing, in particular, those who know the law, Paul has shown the goodness of the evangel in contrast to the holy and righteous and good law given at Sinai. He has done so by recounting his own experiences as one who knows the law. First he describes his life

as the law affected him when he was under it and so zealously struggling to fulfill its righteous standards (Rom.7:7-12) that in the Pharisaical viewpoint it could be said that he was becoming blameless (Phil.3:6). Yet he knew within himself that he did not stand before God as he stood before his fellow religionists.

And then the apostle has spoken further with fervent honesty, of his life as a believer who is not under law, but still is aware of its effects on the mind in relation to his fleshly failures (Rom.7:13-23). It leads to the cry: "A wretched human am I! What will rescue me out of this body of death?" (Rom.7:24). It is not that Paul did not know what would rescue him (for it is his purpose here to remind his readers of it), but the cry still arose in his fleshly experience when he failed to uphold what his mind knew the law set forth as righteousness. So also the believer is often led to this cry, and then, like Paul, we are led again and again to the evangel of God's grace, the word of God's giving of joy. And in view of this we are led, like Paul, to return grace in the form of thanks to God, through Christ Jesus, our Lord.

DELIVERANCE IN CHRIST JESUS

The answer to the cry for rescue had actually been already given (and Paul holds to it with ever renewing faith). It is well to repeat it once again. Paul and we who are believing stand before God "being justified gratuitously in His **grace** *through the* **deliverance** *which is in Christ Jesus"* (Rom.3:24)!

The apostle greatly expands this evangel, when in Ephesians 1:7 he tells of the deliverance through Christ's blood which we have in Him, and then, when in Colossians 1:12-14, he speaks of the Father's rescue of us *out of the jurisdiction of Darkness, into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in Whom we are having the deliverance.* This

deliverance is justification, figuratively termed "pardon" in order to express the love which is in the Father's heart in conciliating us to Himself through the death of His Son. Thus we are rescued!

It is a matter of gratuitous *grace.*

Yet as we have seen, this rescue is not our present experience *in the flesh.* In spirit we *have been* identified with Christ in His death, and *shall be* resurrected and be living together with Him as He is living, no longer dying and living to God (Rom.6:3-11). Nevertheless (and this has been Paul's point throughout chapters 6 and 7), our devoted attention to this word of completed and future deliverance in Christ Jesus, in God's grace, opens up a most joyful grace ("joyful joy") in the present for us who are believing. This word affects our walk; and in this way it is a rescue for us now, not as it shall be, but a rescue in accord with the firstfruit of the spirit which we have received as believers (Rom.8:23; *cp* Eph.1:13,14). This is a most happy blessing which we have as believers, and which unbelievers do not have simply because they have no viewpoint of what has been done at the cross, and what lies ahead because of Christ's faith-obedience. They are in the jurisdiction of darkness where this grace (JOY) is unseen. There is no firstfruit of the spirit apart from believing the evangel.

For us, however, grace leads us to dwell on what God has done through Christ. Indeed, what God has done in grace superexceeds over every increase of sin (Rom.5:20). To declare and believe and take account of this is not to take our sins lightly, but to take what God has done through Christ seriously and thankfully with joy.

A MIND CENTERED ON GRACE

From this fact of deliverance as made known in Romans 3:24, and the evidence provided by early manuscripts of Romans, it seems altogether likely that Paul originally

answered his question of Romans 7:24 with the one-word exclamation:[1]

Grace!

This single word sums up the evangel. By itself it has come to tell us what God has done in sending His Son for sinners in order to justify the sinner and condemn sin in the flesh (Rom.8:3), granting us the sure and certain expectation of God's rescue of us away from our body of death, with all its corruption and groaning (*cf* Rom.8:18-24). It is all of grace, God's operation of joy, soon to be termed "God's law." And this grace works in our minds even now with spiritual invigoration toward a walk that accords with what we believe (Rom.8:4-14).

Paul himself now testifies to this present aspect of our rescue. He continues to know the power of the law of sin in his members against the walk demanded by the law of Sinai. Yet now Paul had been rescued from the wretchedness of a position before God based on his doing what his body of death could not do. He had been rescued into God's gift of the joy of justification and of conciliation and of expectation of the glory of God.

Hence, in shouting the word, *Joy!* in the sense of *Grace!* (as it seems likely he did here) Paul could not refrain from returning *Joy* to God in the sense of *Thanks:*

Thanks[2] *be to God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord!*

In Romans 6:17 Paul gave thanks (JOY) to God for the change that has come about in the believers' lives. Like all human beings, we were "slaves of Sin" in our flesh *without any appreciation of the deliverance in Christ Jesus, or expectation of the glory of God.* But now something new

1. *cf* the article on the evidence for this insertion in the CLNT, p.159.

2. This is the reading of Codex Vaticanus, which seems to me to explain best why the word "Grace!" was lost early in the copying of Paul's letter, and serves best to explain the development of the other readings.

has come into our lives. And this is due to God. It is His grace that we listen submissively to, as the type of teaching to which we were given over. Righteousness and peace and life eonian are not due to us. They are due to God. It is His grace (JOY) to us, by means of the giving of His Son as announced in the teaching, and the fact that we have heard this teaching and are believing it, and live under its powerful influence (Rom.6:14). That is why we give *thanks* to God, returning *joy* to Him.

Now again, in Romans 7:25a Paul is giving thanks to God, giving Him JOY for His joy-gift to us of that rescue which puts our bodies of death to death through the death of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The giving of joy to God is channeled through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for God's gift of joy to us came through Him. The One Mediator of the getting and giving of grace is Jesus Christ, Who has become to us "wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and *deliverance*" (1 Cor.1:30). In view of such a message of grace, we might well take the familiar words of Psalm 119:97 and give them a new reference, exclaiming before our gracious God: *How I love Your evangel! The entire day it is my meditation.* Indeed, now in Romans 7:25b, Paul does this very thing while retaining the word "law," but giving it a new application:

Consequently, then, I myself, with the mind, indeed, am slaving for God's law, yet with the flesh for Sin's law. (Rom.7:25b)

It is from the words of Romans 7:25a that the "Consequently" of verse 25b arises. Grace tells us we have been rescued through God's identification of us, in spirit, with Christ and His death, and we shall be rescued from our body of death as Christ was rescued from death, to be walking in newness of life with transformed bodies, conformed to the image of God's Son. *Consequently,* in view of this

powerful and righteous and loving work of grace, which he now calls "God's law," Paul himself enslaves his mind to it.

THE JOYFUL SLAVE

Paul had introduced himself in Romans as a *slave of Christ Jesus,* a called apostle, severed for the *evangel of God* (Rom.1:1). The word "slave" is connected with the evangel of God's grace, the evangel which speaks of Christ's death for sinners, for their justification and as the foundation of God's gift of conciliation. Again, in Romans 6:16, the apostle asks us, who are believing this evangel:

Are you not aware that to whom you are presenting yourselves as slaves for obedience [submissive listening], *his slaves you are, whom you are obeying* [submissively listening to], *whether of Sin for death, or of Obedience* [the submissively listening of the One, Jesus Christ, Rom.5:19] *for righteousness?*

Paul leads the way. He was a joyful slave of Christ Jesus, in the pattern of the slave who loved his lord and would not leave him, described in the law (Exodus 21:5). Paul was devoted to God's word of grace, which is God's own unique law of operation, listening submissively to the highly welcome message of Christ's submissive listening to His Father's will that He was to die for sinners. So we also are to make this message, which concerns what God has done through Christ our continuing meditation.

THE MIND

The mind comes before the walk. Paul's mind was gratified with the law of God given through Moses. But now, as a great release from wretchedness, his mind becomes enslaved, devoted with joy, to God's law of grace manifested through the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ. This did not wholly rescue Paul's flesh from Sin's law, but in

bringing his mind under God's law Paul was bearing the fruit of the spirit in his living.

Under the law given to Israel, the mind was occupied with what must be done, and it was made wretched by not being able to do it. Under God's law of grace, the mind is occupied with what has been done *by God through Christ,* which means that nothing is now condemnation to us who are in Christ Jesus. It is this evangel which is God's power for salvation. In it is spiritual invigoration for our present walk.

In this is the "renewing" of our minds which Paul speaks of in Romans 12:2. Thus our mind becomes centered on the pities of God, not on what we must do, but on God's love commended to us in the death of Christ, and on God's conciliation of us to Him through the death of His Son. It is with this mind, ever being renewed, that the entreaties of Romans 12-15 become logical in divine service.

A NEW LAW

"God's law" of Romans 7:25 is not the same as "the law of the God" of Romans 7:22 and 8:7. The difference is not easily distinguished by western ears. But among people used to such figures of speech, it would not have been so difficult. The eastern ear would more easily have caught the change of emphasis that was there in eliminating the definite article before the word "law." *God's* law is *God's* own law, to which He adhered in directing His actions against the law of sin, indeed in condemning sin and bringing it to an end. The emphasis is on *God,* while in the wording, "the law of God," the emphasis is on *the law.*

In Romans 7:21-23 Paul tells of his gratification with the law of God given to Israel at Sinai. There is a sense of approval in the word "gratified," but even that is engulfed by wretchedness. The law could not deal with that "different law" in his members which he calls "the law of sin"

in Romans 7:23 (emphasizing it as an effective *law*) and "Sin's law" in Romans 7:25 (emphasizing it as the operation of *Sin,* personified). Yet now in Romans 7:25b our apostle tells of his own *enslavement* (far different from his life under the law of Sinai) to a new law, carried out through the faith of Jesus Christ. At present "God's law" of grace does not bring the operation of "Sin's law" on the flesh to its experienced end. Paul's body of flesh remained a body of death in which he was dying unto the state of death. But the more he devoted his mind to God's law of deliverance in Christ Jesus, our Lord, the more surely he was pleasing God in his walk, living in accord with spirit (as he guides us in Romans 8:4-14), and enjoying the spirit of sonship while awaiting its full realization with expectation (Rom.8:15-25). It was through his present devotion to the evangel of his past deliverance and future rescue that God operated in Paul at present to be willing and working for the sake of His delight (Phil.2:12,13).

OLD WORDS WITH NEW APPLICATIONS

This is not the first time we have had to be alert to unexpected applications of words in Romans. In Romans 6 Paul borrowed key terms from Exodus and Deuteronomy concerning the giving of the law, and applied them to the message he was bringing. We are to *present* ourselves to God (Rom.6:13,16,19). We are to *obey* [UNDER-HEAR] what God says to us, listening to this evangel as Israel was to *hearken* to what He spoke to them at Sinai (Rom.6:16, 17,18,22), in the sense of listening attentively to and taking account of its every word. Yet what we are to be UNDER-HEARing is not what God said there, but what He says to us now. As noted above, we are to be listening as faithful slaves to the type of teaching to which we are given over, that type of teaching which centers on the grace of Christ's obedience and God's righteousness.

And now Paul uses the very word "law" itself in reference to the evangel. The failure to recognize this distinction of laws has introduced a great deal of confusion concerning this passage. Some would remove Romans 7:25b altogether, as spurious. Others would move it back to a position before verse 24, as though it were saying the same thing as verses 21-23. Yet others keep verse 25 in its manuscript position but see Paul referring to the Mosaic law, and then try to explain how he could be enslaving himself to that law after saying we are not under it and have been put to death to it.

No, Paul uses an attention-getting figure of speech here in writing to believers who were used to such ways of speaking. The evangel is put in contrast to the law given through Moses, but it is like that law in that it is a message from God concerned with sin. But unlike the law of God given at Sinai, "God's law" is God's word concerning *His sending of His Son* for the condemnation of sin (Rom.8:3), not concerning the placing on the sinner of rules for getting rid of sin. God condemns sin by putting our old humanity to death in the death of Christ. That is His law.

Nothing is so effective for those whose flesh is subjected to Sin's law for the renewing of their minds and a bearing of the fruit of the spirit in their walk than this law.

NO CONDEMNATION

It is because of this law that nothing is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. This law, carried out by God in the giving of His Son, has been set against human sin, for *its* condemnation (Rom.8:3). This is what will change human behavior fully when every body of death is put to death and all are constituted righteous. And this now becomes to us who are believing it the source of strength (in accord with the earnest of the spirit) for our behavior in the current era, as we enslave our minds to it.

D.H.H.

CONCERNING WHAT IS "ABOUT TO BE": *"PENDING"* VERSUS *"IM*PENDING"

Question:

I find the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT very helpful. Through its use, I've been able to determine how the Concordant Version (CV) translates any certain Greek word, and, how the Authorized Version does so as well.

I've noted that in many cases a Greek word is represented in all instances either by a single English word (e.g., *amōmon* by "flawless") or by several English words that are either synonyms or at least closely related in principle (e.g., *mega* by "great," "large," "huge," "high," or "loud").

There are many other cases, however, in which the CV renders a Greek word by a variety of English words in which the underlying (one might say, synonymical-in-spirit) essential nature of these CV variant terms is not evident to me. Generally, the various CV words employed in such cases seem suitable in their contexts. Even so, the essence of their commonality (however diverse in expression) often eludes me.

Since the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT is by no means a word-for-word English rendering of the Greek Original (even though it seeks to be an accurate and faithful translation thereof), it would seem that the word "literal" in its title as being indicative of its nature is a misnomer. But perhaps I am missing something here.

I often compare the way a certain passage is translated in the CV to how it is rendered in the AV, in

many cases comparing it to several other translations as well. Though frequently much is the same or similar between translations, in many cases the differences between versions range somewhere between considerable and tremendous. I find it disconcerting that scholarly men should differ to such a degree as they do concerning what constitutes a proper translation of the same (or similar) original text.

Now, my specific reason for writing you is to ask for your help concerning the meaning of the Greek word *mellō*. The sense of this term is most puzzling to me. In most cases, the CV translates it "about to be" (e.g., "[concerning Jesus,] . . . that He was *about to be* passing through that way"; Luke 19:4). In such cases, *mellō* speaks of something that is soon to occur, whether immediately or in the near future.

Others among the many CV renderings of *mellō* as "about to be" include: (1) ". . . Herod is *about to be* seeking the little Boy to destroy Him" (Matt.2:13); (2) "the Son of Mankind is *about to be* given up into the hands of men" (Matt.17:2); (3) ". . . taking the twelve aside, He begins to tell them what is *about to be* befalling Him" (Mark 10:32); (4) ". . . He dispatches them two by two before His face into every city and place where He was *about to be* entering" (Luke 10:1).

In other instances, *mellō* is translated similarly as "impending" (which means "imminent" or "near at hand"). An example would be, in speaking of a fig tree, ". . . if, indeed, it ever should be producing fruit in the *impending* year . . ." (Luke 13:9).

Many of the occurrences of the CV rendering of *mellō* as impending, however, refer to events that even today are still future—ones which by no means have a relationship of imminency between themselves and the time in which the CV represents them as having been, even then, "impending."

A few examples of such supposedly-impending yet not-actually-impending events, are: (1) "For not to

messengers does He subject the *impending* inhabited earth, concerning which we are speaking" (Heb.2:5); (2) ". . . neither in this eon nor in that which is *impending*" (Matt.12:32); (3) "having an expectation in God, which these themselves also are anticipating, that there shall be a resurrection which is *impending* for both the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15).

Further, even in some cases of the rendering of *mellō* as "about to be," it does *not* refer to something that is actually about to be—something that is soon to occur, whether immediately or in the near future. Such instances include: (1) "for the Son of Mankind is *about to be* coming in the glory of His Father, with His messengers, and then He will be paying each in accord with his practice" (Matt.16:26); (2) "nevertheless death reigns from Adam unto Moses, over those also who do not sin in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him Who is *about to be*" (Rom.5:14); (3) "for I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory *about to be* revealed for us" (Rom.8:18).

(4) "But therefore was I shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ should be displaying all His patience, for a pattern of those who are *about to be* believing on Him for life eonian" (1 Tim.1:16); (5) "I am conjuring you in the sight of God and Christ Jesus, Who is *about to be* judging the living and the dead, in accord with His advent and His kingdom" (2 Tim.4:1); (6) "Are they not all ministering spirits commissioned for service because of those who are *about to be* enjoying the allotment of salvation?" (Heb.1:14).

Similarly perplexing (albeit contextually apt) is the CV rendering of *mellō*—of what is "about to be"—as "defer" (which means to "put off" or "delay"): "And now, why do you *defer?* Rise, be baptized, and bathe off your sins, invoking His name" (Acts 22:16).

I'm aware that I have much to learn concerning principles of faithful translation, of concordancy of

rendering, and, simply of how to determine word meaning. But I appreciate your help and look forward to your response.

Answer:

As you say, "the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT is by no means a word-for-word English rendering of the Greek Original . . . ." The common misconstrual here, however, is that what is "literal" is somehow a verbatim representation. Instead, what is literal is what is "*in accordance with, involving, or* being the primary or strict meaning of the word or words [in view]."[1]

As you have noted, the Concordant Version often uses a number of English words to represent a single Greek word. This is necessary in translation since the province or range of thought covered by any certain Greek word may be different than that of even the English word which most closely accords with it.

How original word meaning may be ascertained, as well as the nature, purpose, and limitations of an English *version,* are topics of great consequence, worthy of our best efforts in seeking a good understanding concerning them.

I appreciate where you speak of cases in which "the CV renders a Greek word by a variety of English words in which the underlying (one might say, synonymical-in-spirit) essential nature of these CV variant terms is not evident to [you]," where "the essence of their commonality (however diverse in expression) often eludes [you]."

I do not know what to say here except that it takes a certain aptitude as well as developed skill to be able to creatively test, reason, and conclude in such a way so as to note the underlying essential nature and commonality of

1. literal. (n.d.). Dictionary.com Unabridged. http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/literal

notion inherent to a group of synonyms and variants used to represent in translation a single original term. I would also say that, in the end, any such specialized skill, just as surely as any native ability or even the most hard-fought proficiency, is the gift of God (*cf* 1 Cor.4:7; John 3:27; Psa. 127:1). "May the Lord be giving you understanding in it all" (*cp* 2 Tim.2:7).

DEFINITIVE USAGE AND ESSENTIAL MEANING[2]

Definitive context alone determines meaning. We have a definitive context when, with respect to the meaning of a word in question, a certain idea alone satisfies such a context. We have the evidence of a word's meaning when that same meaning also fits all the occurrences in which the word appears. Due to considerations of idiom and other linguistic quirks, such a meaning may not always be readily expressed, and even where this is so it may not fit smoothly in all of the original word's contextual occurrences. But if a certain meaning is cognizable in all of a word's occurrences, while being singularly capable of satisfying those of its contexts which *in their nature* are definitive, we may be certain that such a meaning is indeed the word's own meaning.

Many passages simply are not definitive, even if they are otherwise very important passages. It is impossible for a word actually to have two or more meanings, however varied its usages may be. Communication would be impossible were we consistently to adapt the policy that words may have more than one meaning, or, to say the same thing, that they may have primary meaning, secondary meaning, tertiary meaning, and so forth. Meaning, that is, essence, is a singular concept. The existence of a plurality of lexical definitions (i.e., literary *usages*), even as of homonymical forms, does not change this fact.

2. James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.86, pp.188-192.

Through the passage of time, in the case of any certain word, many specialized usages may well develop, whether figurative or literal. These are the definitions of usage found in our dictionaries, commonly referred to as a word's meanings. Of course most may not realize that these usages, both literal and figurative ones, all stem from a common, basic meaning. We have called some of these faded figures, since, through the passage of time, the original essential meaning of such terms may no longer be widely recognized.

The reader is not to base the meaning of the Hebrew and Greek words in the Original upon the ordinary dictionary definitions for the words which appear in any version, including the Concordant Version. Instead, *where necessary, the English words in the Version are to be attuned* by the reader in such a way that they are brought into accord with the Original.

The essential idea or meaning inherent to a word will usually be found, even if not identified as such, among the definitions of usage of a word appearing in our dictionaries. Yet the essential definition is not always the first definition or the most common definition; and certainly, it is not always the idea that most readily comes to mind for the ordinary reader. Instead, the English STANDARDS for the Concordant Version are the words which, in their essence, were found most closely to correspond to the essence of the Hebrew and Greek words which they represent.

Because in certain passages a particular idea may seem more plausible to us than that which the definitive evidence appearing elsewhere reveals a word's true meaning to be, we must not imagine that such a word actually has an entirely different meaning in one passage than in another. This is true at all times, whether we are simply reading in our own language or are making a translation from one language to another. False never means true; good never means bad; happy never means sad; black never means white, and so forth.

It is vital to distinguish between word meaning and word usage; that is, between denotation and connotation, or essential meaning and referential meaning. It is true that the same word is sometimes used to convey a different idea in one text than in another. It does so, however, not by inherent signification but by contextual application, or usage. In such cases, a common word has in view one thought in a certain passage, and another thought in another certain passage. That is to say, in one text the same word speaks of or refers to a particular idea that it does not speak of or refer to in a different text. Properly speaking, then, such a word has a plurality of references, according to its varied usages. It does not, however, have a plurality of intrinsic significations or essential meanings.

A word's essential meaning is also its universal meaning. Even if not primarily in view, a word's essential meaning is present in all of its occurrences, wherever it is used. If this were not so, we could never determine how a word was presently used, for we would have no idea in mind to serve as a basis for our deliberations. Indeed, if a word's essential meaning were not present in all its occurrences, since the majority of a word's usages are nearly always indefinitive, in all such cases, it would be impossible to know what was to be understood by a word in question.

Due to idiomatic differences between the original and receptor language (especially scope of usage or idiomatic range), in translation it is often necessary to use a number of synonyms or other variants to translate a single word in the original. These variants may be quite different from each other in certain obvious respects. Even so, they generally share a common central idea among themselves, and, in any case, always *correspond* to the essential idea of the original expression. It is their idiomatic correspon-

dency which allows them to serve well in the translation of a single, original word. This is true even in rare cases where an original word covering a wide range of thought, requires antonyms in translation for certain of its usages (e.g., *obligate* and *borrow* represent the same Hebrew word in Deuteronomy 28:12). The fact, however, that in a translation intelligible, fluent English often requires the use of idiomatic variants, is certainly no proof that any particular word in the original text has a plurality of meanings.

In certain indefinitive passages, a term in question in the original may seem to be more correctly represented in English by some other expression than that which appears in the Concordant Version, even by a word that is of a radically different significance. This, however, does not make such suggested renderings correct, regardless of the zeal and persuasiveness of those advocating such renderings. Such suggestions can only be correct if they accord with the evidence found elsewhere in definitive passages.

THAT WHICH WILL "COME ABOUT"

It is helpful to note that our term under consideration, *mellō,* is to be distinguished from a different Greek word that is also translated "about" (in the sense of "concerning" or "within the sphere of"), the preposition *peri* (e.g., Luke 24:19; Matt.3:4), from which the English "perimeter" is derived.

Mellō, however, [to] be-ABOUT, is a verb (it is often used in the closely related functions of either adverb or participle; in the CV, the participle is often shown as '**about,** in reference to that which is "being-ABOUT").[3]

As you well note in the apt example texts you cite, some

3. In many instances, instructively and largely true-to-sense (even if loosely so), the Authorized Version renders *mellō* simply as "shall" or "shall be," or "will," "to come," "things to come," "afterwards," "yet"; subjunctively, as "should" or "would."

of the usages of *mellō* refer to "something that is soon to occur [or impending], whether immediately or in the near future" (e.g., Matt.2:13; 17:32; Mark 10:32; Luke 10:1; 13:9; 19:4). Yet as you also say, "many of the occurrences of the CV rendering of *mellō* as impending . . . refer to events that even today are still future" (e.g., Matt.12:32; Acts 24:15; Heb.2:5). And, according as you further say, "Even in some cases of the rendering of *mellō* as 'about to be,' it does *not* refer to something that is actually about to be—something that is soon to occur, whether immediately or in the near future" (e.g., Matt.16:26; Rom.5:14; 8:18; 1 Tim.1:16; 2 Tim.4:1; Heb.1:14).

These are all good and helpful points. However, it is not actually the case that, properly understood, any of the "not-actually-impending events" are presented in the Concordant Version as "supposedly" being impending. Let me explain:

The entry for *mellō* in the CONCORDANT LEXICON AND CONCORDANCE[4] (p.11) reads: "ABOUT (be-), be about *to act, that which is* future." The sense here is, *Mellō* signifies "to be about" [i.e., around, or present] in order to act; it speaks of that which *is* [i.e., has its being in, the] *future.* (Note that the notion of imminency simply does not inhere in the Greek word *mellō.*)

Much of the difficulty in grasping the sense of this word,

4. The title page of which reads as follows: "A companion to the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES; a comprehensive Lexicon and Concordance; a complete key to the Greek Scriptures and their English translations in the Concordant Version, giving the etymological analysis and idiomatic meanings of every Greek word used in divine revelation, confirmed by a complete concordance of every important grammatical form occurring in the three most ancient manuscripts, Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus, as well as the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT, the sublinear and the version." This work is available in its entirety on our website. Strong's numbers have been superimposed at every entry, greatly facilitating its use:
HTTP://CONCORDANT.ORG/CONCORDANT LEXICON/INDEX.HTML

mellō, is due to the fact that, in an idiomatic version for the sake of the ordinary reader, it often seems practically necessary to render it either "about to be" or "impending." Now while these English expressions indeed carry the sense of what is imminent or near at hand, *no such notion* is to be understood as the *meaning* (i.e., signification) of *mellō.*

As a matter of usage, many of the occurrences of *mellō* speak of events which *are* (which is to say, happen to be) imminent. Just as surely, however, quite a few other occurrences of *mellō* refer to events that are *not* imminent. It is evident, then, that the notion of imminency is not inherent to *mellō* itself and forms no part of its meaning. It is merely that the *English* expressions "about to be" and "impending" carry such a notion as ordinarily used. Therefore, in the Concordant Version, these terms need to be accommodated and understood by the student in the sense explained herein, not in their everyday usage.

Mellō refers to future presence, not to present imminency.

There is a great difference between an event that is "about to be," and one that, in due course, is "to-be ABOUT," as it were, surrounding us, in our midst.[5]

Even as there is a great difference between what is about to be or impending, and what will, in any case at some point, come to be "about," there is a great difference as well between what is *impending,* and what is simply *pending.*[6]

5. Other examples of the usage of "about" that accord with the meaning of *mellō* are: "Keep your wits *about* you." "There was a lot of flu *about*" (i.e., in the environs or vicinity). "Is John *about* [or "around"]?"; "I knew he was somewhere *about*"; "standing *about.*" One who is "up and *about*" or "out and *about,*" is one who is actively present and engaged. Used thus, "about" speaks of movement in an area, "around here," in the vicinity, in the neighborhood.

6. What is "pending," is what is yet within the period which awaits its conclusion, realization, or actualization. A pending action or event is one that is now in the period prior to its occurrence.

Something that will thus come to be "about" us (as in "roundabout" and "hereabout"), is something that will come to be *present.* Even if its occurrence may not be imminent, its occurrence is nevertheless now *pending,* and we may expect it, awaiting it with anticipation.

A "*mellō*-event" is one that will "come *about*" (or "come to pass"); its future occurrence is now *pending,* and, in its own appointed time, it will come to be.

All *mellō*-events are *pending* between their vantage point and point of future reference; only some *mellō*-events are *impending,* or imminent, between their vantage point and point of future reference. Whether imminency does or does not obtain between any certain *mellō*-event's vantage point and (future) reference point is strictly a matter of interpretive sense, not of word meaning.

You asked in particular about the CV translation of *mellō* as "defer" in Acts 22:16: "And now, why do you *defer?* Rise, be baptized, and bathe off your sins, invoking His name." In fact, this is an appropriate idiomatic translation of "to-be ABOUT." The sense is, Ananias declared unto Saul: "Why do you assign to baptism a *'to-be-*[about]*,'* that is, *future* as opposed to *present* status? Instead, *at present:* Rise, be baptized, and bathe off your sins, invoking His name."

ENDURANCE THROUGH FAITH

I find it edifying and encouraging in faith to investigate and consider the many issues related to our present subject, that of the determination of Scripture word meaning in general, and of the meaning and usage of our term of present inquiry, *mellō,* in particular. I trust that you will receive similar benefit as well, together with me, "out of the strength that God is furnishing" (*cp* 1 Peter 4:11).

"Now may the God of expectation be filling you with all joy and peace in believing, for you to be superabounding in expectation, in the power of holy spirit" (Rom.15:13).

J.R.C.

INDEX TO VOLUME 106

Buried, Ascended, Seated 110
Christ Died for our Sins 51
Christ, The Glory of Creation 46
Christ's Universal Headship 5
Concordant Studies 77, 147
Concordant Version, The 173, 187
Consequently Now 87
Crucified with Christ 99
Devotional Studies 46, 119
Fact Verb, The 187
For or Instead 76
Glorious Gospel of God's Grace, The 99, 110
God, Sending His Own Son 133
Greek and English Indefinite 173
Growth in Realization of God 123
Obituaries: K. Boughton 45, D. Cox 96, P. Feddema 191,
C. Lamkin 96, F. Portillo 96
Paul to the Romans 87, 133
Prayer for Making the Secret of Christ Manifest, A . . 35
Problem of Evil, The 137
Reconciliation of All 24
Secret of Christ, The 5, 12, 24, 35
Sin for Sin 137
Substitution of Inclusion 51
Supremacy of Christ, The 13
Together With Christ 119
What is a Version? 147

Unsearchable Riches

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FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 106th Year

(1909–2015)

Contents:

2 "A Hymn of Praise"
3 Editorial
5 Christ's Universal Headship
13 The Supremacy of Christ
24 The Reconciliation of All
35 A Prayer for Making
the Secret of Christ Manifest
46 Christ, the Glory of Creation

FIRST QUARTER, 2015

Volume 106 **Number 1**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

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and
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A HYMN OF PRAISE

In the name of Jesus every knee must bow,
And His peerless Headship every tongue avow.
He a name is given over every name.
For the Father's glory all must Him acclaim.

With unending praises sounding sweet and strong,
Heaven and earth uniting in spontaneous song,
Loud will swell the anthem every mouth will sing,
All extolling Jesus as their Lord and King.

For the holy scriptures speak of God's great love,
How He sent a Saviour forth from heaven above.
Yes, God's own Anointed human flesh assumed,
And for every creature died, and was entombed.

Emptied of the glory which He had before,
Humbling Himself further with the cross in store,
Christ, to death obedient, all His soul outpoured.
Now by God exalted, all must call Him Lord.

Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb once slain
To receive all honor, and in triumph reign.
God has made Him Sovereign, mighty King of kings,
Who alone is sinless, and salvation brings.

Sing in rising chorus all you tribes of earth!
Join, you hosts of heaven! magnify His worth!
Thus shall all creation hymns of joy rehearse,
Till its adoration fills the universe.

John H. Essex

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2015
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SIX

EDITORIAL

ALL of the articles included in this issue herald Christ as "The Glory of Creation." Indeed, this is the title of the brief devotional writing that closes our current number by William Mealand: "Once again His voice, as many waters, will command, subdue and attract. In realms above, and earth beneath, He will move as sovereign Lord. Illustrious Head over all, He is, as at the first, the glory of creation" (p.48).

The remaining four articles herein are by A. E. Knoch and are concerned with *the secret of Christ*.

The first of these is titled, "Christ's Universal Headship." "The secret of Christ is concerned with Christ Himself, not with His people. It was made known to other generations after a fashion, though not as it is now revealed. It was evidently made known to all the apostles and prophets . . ." (pp.10,11).

"The secret of Christ is briefly stated within the compass of two verses, as follows: '. . . *making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth*' (1:9,10)" (p.11).

The second of these is "The Supremacy of Christ." "The secret of Christ is not confined to earth, and the scope of this epistle is by no means limited to the ecclesia which is His body. We alone were *chosen* in Christ before the disruption, yet even before that, *all* was *created* in the Son, not only that on earth, but in the heavens as well. The august grandeur of this thought will overwhelm all those who have given some attention to the celestial spheres, or even gazed upon the starry host" (p.22).

"From the beginning all rule is His and all owe Him subjection. The authority of darkness is a usurper, and deserves no subjection at our hands. In being transported into the kingdom of the Son of His love we return to the only rightful Suzerain. His realm will one day spread to every corner of the universe and bring every creature to His feet" (p.23).

The third article here centered upon the theme the secret of Christ is, "The Reconciliation of All." "Within the compass of five verses we read no less than *eight* times that the given glory is all inclusive. He is the firstborn of *every* creature. *All* is created in Him, and *all* is created through and for Him. He is before *all. All* has its cohesion in Him. In *all* He is becoming first. The *entire* complement dwells in Him. He reconciles *all* through the blood of His cross (Col.1:15-20). And on two occasions this is amplified and defined as all that is in the heavens or on the earth. It is said to include both visible and invisible. What more could be said to impress us with the universal scope of the Son's activities?" (p.25).

The final article presented herein concerning the secret of Christ is, "A Prayer for Making the Secret of Christ Manifest." "Two closely related secrets filled the heart of the apostle in his imprisonment, besides the secret concerning this administration. The secret of the *evangel* (Eph. 6:19) and the secret of *Christ* (Col.4:3) were both pressing for utterance, so he especially urges the saints to pray for him that he may be able to make them known . . . .

"The secret of Christ should have a powerful influence on our walk and talk with those outside the family of faith. In measure it should be manifested by our conduct in the world as well as by our witness to the saints. May each one of us pray this prayer and seek to fulfill it in our own words and work!" (pp.35, 45).

J.R.C.

CHRIST'S UNIVERSAL HEADSHIP

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth. (Eph.1:3,9,10)

God's Anointed, and His universal sway, was a secret long drawn out. Ray upon ray was added to its luster until He came Himself in human guise and descended into the depths of death.

And when Messiah is finally refused and thrust from the earth most shamefully, then heaven opens to our view and we find the despised Nazarene seated upon the Universal Throne, wearing the diadem that rules the heavenly realms!

THE SECRET OF GOD'S WILL

To those in the embrace of the glory of His grace, God makes known the secret of His will to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up the universe in the Christ (Eph.1:9,10). He presses Wisdom and Prudence, with all the resources at their command, into the service of this great secret. Christ has many eonian glories. This is the highest of them all. He is the Son of Adam, the Son of Abraham, the Son of David. He is the King of Israel, the Owner of the land, the King of kings. All of these glories are not only confined to the earth, but find fulfillment in the day of the Lord. They do not enter

the final eon, when, as the Son of God, He administers the whole universe.

BOTH HEAVENS AND EARTH

The clearest intimations of the eon after the day of the Lord found in the Old Testament may be summed up in the statement that, in that era, Christ will continue to reign over the earth, even after His priestly functions vanish. The secret here revealed also definitely assigns Him the headship over the earth, and consists in enlarging the scope of His reign to include the heavens (Eph.1:10). *Christ is to be the Head of the universe!* That Messiah's rule included all the earth was a secret the initiates have known from early times. To be with Him in this earthly Kingdom was the high hope He put before His own. Even Paul, at first, had looked for this earthly paradise. But now, as we have seen, he longs for blessing in the heavenly spheres. His hope is no longer fixed on earth, but among the celestials.

It is not possible that there can be a blessed place, anywhere, apart from Christ. Our hearts have no heaven but where He is. So it is essential, at this point, to insert this secret of Christ, lest it seem that we are exalted and He is left beneath upon the earth. If our blessings are among the celestials, if we are to reign in regions supernal, it follows that these are beneath His sway, for we have naught without Him. Before this, God's revelation was confined to the earth. There was no necessity for revealing His higher glories, for His saints were not partakers in them. Now that our destiny is celestial, we are entrusted with a secret so staggering, so superb, that few of His saints have ever heard of it, almost none believe it, and these are unable to measure or even imagine its immensity.

Christ will be Head, not on the earth alone, but over the highest heavens. His sway will include the vast universe in its embrace. The heavenly realms, which men are only

beginning to explore, will all be beneath His pierced feet. Look with me, on some dark night, into the starry sky and behold a few of His domains. Come with me to the desert and see them double their number in the clearer air. Join me on yon mountaintop and peer through the greatest glass that man has made to search the star-strewn firmament. A thousand times as many stars swim past our wondering gaze. But mortal eyes are far too weak, even with the greatest of telescopes. Let us allow the stars to set their seal upon a photographic plate. So many millions more appear that our spirit falls upon its face in awe, for we have begun to glimpse the grandeur of His celestial kingdom.

THE COMPLEMENT OF THE ERAS

The complement of the eras lies between the judgment era of the great white throne and the close of all the eras, for it must be the last.

The word *plêrōma* is somewhat difficult to translate correctly. The usual rendering of the Authorized Version is *fullness.* But it never denotes the state of being full, but rather, as they have translated it in its first occurrence, that *which is put in to fill up* (Matt.9:16). It is *that which fills,* or the *complement.* The eras of human history will some day fulfill their cycle. The final era, which completes their number and rounds out their ministry, is characterized by the rule of one Man over the whole universe. He Who descended into the lowest depths to save, ascends to the highest place in order to rule.

It is worthy of note, in passing, that the Circumcision epistles never mention a *plêrōma,* for their ministry was not final. Paul speaks of the complement of the nations (Rom.11:12,20), of love as the complement of law (Rom. 13:10), of the ecclesia as the complement of Christ (Eph. 1:23; 4:13), of Christ as the complement of God (Col.2:9)

and of all else (Col.1:19). Only in Paul's epistles do we find God's work brought to final fullness. He alone adds the finishing touches. These are indicated by this word *plêrōma,* or complement.

The only indication of this era we have in the Old Testament is that rule, the reign of Christ and His saints, is to continue *further* than the priestly millennial reign. Priesthood is only for *olam* (Exodus 40:15, *eonian*). Kingship is for *olam va ad* (e.g., Exodus 15:18, *the eon and further*). This is in exact accord with the clearer details given us in Revelation. There we find that the reign of the saints as kings *and* priests is limited to the thousand years (Rev. 20:6). They still continue to reign in the next eon, but there is no temple and no priesthood. This is the complement of the eras. The throne of God and the Lambkin is upon the earth. John has no vision of the celestial allotment. That is a secret reserved for Paul and the celestial saints. Our portion is in the high heavens.

From our present viewpoint we are apt to get a most distorted view of God's dealings in the eonian times. We look back at almost seven and a half thousand years of human history and find it written with tears and blood. We look forward hopefully to a thousand years of bliss for suffering mortals, but even that blessed era will close in revolt and fire. Is this the full cycle of the eras? Has God accomplished all He set out to do? Has man been fully tested? Mankind has fully manifested its sin. We are satisfied on that score. But we are not sure that Christ has done all that He can do. He is a Man, and as a Man we are sure that He can bring humanity to the very summit of perfection. This He does not accomplish in the day of the Lord. Hence this is what is before Him in the day of God, which follows it.

How long will this final era be? There is no definite revelation given to us. We feel sure that the thousand generations of which the Psalmist speaks must be within the eonian times. This would give the eons a period of at least twenty thousand years. Perhaps it coincides with that great astronomical cycle, the precession of the equinoxes. That would be about twenty-four thousand years. During this period the sun seems to shift its crossing of the ecliptic, through all of its signs. In twenty-four thousand years the polar star seems to make a complete circle. If the eonian times are so long, we have only begun them, and there will still be nearly sixteen thousand years left at the end of the millennium. This leaves a long, long time for the final eon, the era which completes the cycle.

There is no such thing as chance in God's sight. A lottery, in Israel, was not an appeal to blind fate, but to Yahweh. We who believe, in this present era of grace, were taken by lot to share the celestial honors of our Lord. When the yearly meeting of farmers occurred in each community in ancient Israel, they divided into groups, and first of all the allotments were divided among the heads of these groups, who allotted them to the others. We belong to Christ. He is our Head. He has been allotted the heavens: our lot is cast in Him.

TWO SECRETS

Later, in Ephesians 3, we find Paul about to be praying. He proposes to indite a petition for power to grasp the *transcendent dimensions of the love of Christ* (Eph. 3:18-19). But he cannot proceed with his prayer until he has given, in breathless, hurried style, the ground on which his prayer is based. Twelve verses of the third chapter of Ephesians—from the second to the thirteenth inclusive—are a parenthetic prelude to the apostle's prayer. In them he gives a *summary of the grace* already set forth. This is, for us, one of the most vital and illuminating paragraphs in all the Word of God. It is a brief epitome of the Ephe-

sian secret, and includes also a concise statement of the secret of Christ, which is the subject of our present meditation (Eph.3:3-5,8).

It is impossible to have a clear conception of the present secret administration without a special knowledge of the secret of Christ. This is why, before the apostle defines the subject which is on his heart, he inserts another parenthesis to acquaint us with this distinct, yet related secret. The secret of Christ is in closest *accord* with the new revelation, but must never be confused with it. Perhaps nothing has done more to hinder the reception of present truth than the application of the phrase "*as* it was now revealed" (3:5) to the present *grace,* which was an absolute secret (3:2,9). How many have been on the verge of receiving the truth of the exclusiveness of Paul's ministry and then were turned aside by the little word "as," thinking it referred to the secret administration of the grace of God! Some of the best expositors have never been able to explain its apparent contradiction.

Let us first of all quote that part of this passage which presents the secret of Christ, so as to keep it distinct. In the third verse the apostle says that a secret was made known to him by revelation,

according as I write before, in brief, by which you who are reading are able to apprehend my understanding in the secret of the Christ, which, in other generations, is not made known to the sons of humanity as it was now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets.

Here we have a number of facts which show that he is not referring to the main subject, the secret administration. It is *according to* it, hence distinct from it. It had been referred to *briefly* (1:9,10), while the Ephesian secret had been set forth at length. The secret of Christ is concerned with Christ Himself, not with His people. It was made known to other generations after a fashion, though

not as it is now revealed. It was evidently made known to all the apostles and prophets. The Ephesian secret came only through Paul.

Any one of these five points is sufficient to show that we have two separate secrets in this chapter. The harmony between them, expressed by the words "according as" is a proof of their distinctiveness, not their identity. The fact that the secret of Christ had been widened in scope so as to include the heavens as well as the earth, brings it into full accord with the present grace, in which blessing is celestial.

The greater part of the first two chapters of Ephesians is taken up with an elaboration of its secret which is summarized in chapter three, verse 6. In contrast with this the secret of Christ is briefly stated within the compass of two verses, as follows: "*. . . making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth*" (1:9,10). Two verses for the secret of Christ: two chapters for the Ephesian secret. Surely Paul did not write briefly of the secret administration, but he did give a most succinct account of the secret of Christ (. . . to head up all in the Christ).

This secret, so briefly set forth, is concerned with the headship of Christ, not with the blessings of His saints. Among the celestials we will be associated with Him in His administrations. But on earth we have no such place. He alone is Head, yea, He is Head over us also. The secret administration raises us to a place of *equality* with an election out of the Circumcision. But this secret raises Christ to a place *above* all others. It is not the secret of the body of Christ, but of our Lord Himself.

Long before there was any body of Christ God began to give glimpses of Messiah's headship over the earth. From

the first promise of One Who was to bruise the serpent's head to the glorious visions of the prophets who foresaw the dominion of the King of kings, there was a continued advance in the revelation of this secret. From the mists of early intimations emerges God's promised Messiah, Adam's greater Son, and David's Lord, Who will resume the reins laid down by the father of the race and forfeited by Israel's kings. So was this secret made known to earlier generations. Now God has added the heavens to His realm, and has revealed Christ's heavenly headship to His apostles and prophets, especially to Paul.

Paul is not the exclusive recipient of the celestial side of Messiah's headship. Our Lord did not hide its heavenly character from His earthly disciples. He called them to Olivet to witness His ascension. The Circumcision are informed that He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens (Heb.1:3), and that messengers and authorities and powers were made subject to Him (1 Peter 3:22). Paul does not claim a monopoly of this knowledge or its dispensation. On the contrary, he is careful to inform us that it was made known to apostles and prophets, of which he was only one.

THE UNTRACEABLE RICHES

The untraceable riches of Christ refer to His celestial headship. His traceable riches are those recorded in the writings of the prophets, concerning the rule of the earth. No trace is found in these of His reign in the heavens. These riches are not "unsearchable" in an absolute sense. They can be traced now. But they were kept *secret* until God should reveal His plans for the celestials, and make known the universal scope of His purpose. Other apostles made this known to the Jews. Paul was honored with the commission to make it known to the Gentiles.

A. E. Knoch.

THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

CREATION and reconciliation are the scenes of the supremacy of God's Son. The secret of Christ comprises the *creation* of all *in* Him at the commencement, and the *reconciliation* of all *through* Him at the consummation. Let us approach this theme as the apostle does, through a prayer that the saints will realize what it involves for them, and that they give thanks for their part in His preeminence.

Therefore we also, from the day on which we hear, do not cease praying for you and requesting that you may be filled full with the realization of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, you to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in the realization of God; being endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, for all endurance and patience with joy; at the same time giving thanks to the Father, Who makes you competent for a part of the allotment of the saints in light . . . . (Col.1:9-11)

This prayer of the apostle is far more needed today than ever before. In the midst of billions of sermons, and millions of books and magazines devoted to theology, how little insight is there into the will of God as revealed in His latest revelation! How small is the appreciation of His wisdom, how feeble the understanding of His purpose! And, as a result, the conduct of believers is lacking in fruit and power, and there is a want of endurance and joy and thanksgiving for the blessings which are not realized or appreciated. Therefore it is our privilege to emulate the apostle and pray for ourselves and for our fellow saints that the

eyes of our hearts may be opened to see, and that it may lead to pleasing and thanking God.

THE REALIZATION OF HIS WILL

In the first of Ephesians we read of the *delight* of His will, the *secret* of His will, and the *counsel* of His will (Eph.1:5,9,11). It is His delight to make us sons through Christ. Love has given us the highest and nearest place. It is the secret of His will to head up all in heaven as well as upon earth in Christ. The counsel of His will is that we should be for the laud of His glory. Let us not degrade the apostle's petition to a mere request for individual guidance in each step of our career. If we know His will concerning Christ and ourselves, that will shine upon our path and remove the need of being led like a blind man, every step of our way.

Guidance should not be a matter dependent on external circumstances or inward impulses, but of wisdom and spiritual understanding. The lack of these has left the saints to the mercy of the forces of evil. Many who imagine that the holy spirit has given them a special and definite revelation are the dupes of evil spirits. They do that which is contrary to the will of God because they are not acquainted with it. They imagine that the Scriptures are not sufficient and need to be supplemented by direct revelations of His will as occasion arises, forgetting that, *in the Scriptures,* the man of God is fitted out for every good act (2 Tim.3:17).

Let us pray, then, that the saints may be *filled* with a realization of His will in *all* wisdom and spiritual understanding, for only thus can we walk worthily of the Lord for *all* pleasing, and bear fruit in *every* good work. Here it is not merely a matter of pleasing God or of doing good—we all may do that in some measure even in our ignorance—but of putting quality and flavor into our actions such as will delight God's heart. May our actions never appear to help

Him in His infirmity! Let them rather reveal Him and His power. Too much of Christian activity seems to be lending God a hand as if He needed it, and is thus offensive to the Deity. Only a realization of His will can save us from this false attitude toward God and enable us to walk worthily, so as to please Him in all.

THE REALIZATION OF GOD

That God may be All in all is the universal goal. All of His operations during the eons are directed to this end. The latest revelations of His will are especially adapted to display the excellences of the divine wisdom and love, so that all who realize His will will appreciate Him in the measure in which they understand it. As this is unfolded to our hearts we should grow in our appreciation of God, and thus approach the final goal ahead of others of His creatures. May God become All in us in increasing measure as we contemplate the secret of Christ, and see His hand and head and heart engaged in drawing His creatures to Himself through sin and salvation.

ENDUED WITH ALL POWER

Power we often associate with great physical manifestations, such as the powers of the coming eon (Heb.6:5), which will bring health, strength, and blessing to the earth and its inhabitants. But we are endued with power for a different purpose. Although it is in accord with the power of His glory, it is not evident in a lightning-like appearance, or irresistible strength. It is not manifest in the conquest and removal of evil, but in *endurance and patience with joy.* The weakness about us is in accord with God's purpose, so it is not to be removed but endured. Let us do it with joy. Though the time seems protracted, there is power, not only for patience, but for joyful expectation.

THE SAINTS' ALLOTMENT

. . . Who rescues us out of the jurisdiction of Darkness and transports us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in Whom we are having the deliverance, the pardon of sins, Who is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships, or sovereignties or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him. (Col.1:12-17)

Along with the joy which His power imparts in the midst of trial and distress, our hearts should overflow with thanksgiving for the lot which has fallen to us. From dupes of darkness we have become saints in light. We were deceived by the Adversary like all the rest, groping in the gloom of this world's illumination. Out of the darkness we came, in it we existed, and into it we expected to go. Death to us was a leap in the dark. But now all is light! All is out of, and through, and to God. We know whence we came, and whither we are bound. We know that every moment of our lives is in His loving care. Light has come into our lives! God does not leave His saints in the dark. Their allotment is in the light. They are sons of the light and sons of the day. They are not of the night nor of the darkness (1 Thess.5:5).

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

God is light. The powers opposed to Him are darkness (Eph.6:12). We all were once under the authority of darkness, that great spiritual dominion which holds sway over the whole world. Mankind at large is groping in the dark. Men know not whence they come nor whither they go, nor why they are so busy, running around in circles. But it will not be thus always. When this wicked eon ends, and the

Adversary who is deceiving the nations is in the abyss, the sun will rise, and darkness, and its forces, will not again hold sway over mankind. For this world darkness is at an end when the kingdom comes. Then the knowledge of God will cover the earth as the waters cover the floor of the sea.

In our individual experience we have already passed out of this dark eon into the next. We have already been rescued out of the authority of darkness and transported into the kingdom. Not, indeed, in fact, but in figure. The earthly kingdom has not yet come. The Adversary is not yet bound. But, thanks be to our Father, we are no longer subject to his will, nor are we victims of his deception. Our allegiance has been transferred to Another Who is our spiritual Suzerain. So that, in the spirit sphere, the kingdom has already come for us, minus all its physical manifestations. We are in a spiritual kingdom whose Sovereign is the same as the Messiah Who will one day reign over the nations of the earth. But in this kingdom He bears another title, to comport with its spiritual character. He is the Son—the Son of God's love.

Every title of our Lord reflects a glory all its own. As Christ, He will be the King, the Priest, and the Prophet of the coming eon. Yet even there, as the Son of David, He will have a special glory, confined to the chosen nation. As Son of Mankind, He will rule over the whole race which sprang from Adam. In all of these capacities He will be over the political powers on the earth. Not so the present spiritual kingdom. It does not conflict with man's rule. Indeed, we are obliged to be subject to the authorities, as well as to pray for them. Therefore His title in the present kingdom is not Christ. Neither is He the Son of any man, as David or Adam, but of God. God is a Spirit, and His Son is such in spirit, not in flesh.

In anticipation of the coming kingdom of God upon the earth, when the race shall be freed from the thralldom of its

spiritual despotism, the saints, and they alone, are rescued from the realm of darkness, and transported to a different allegiance, that of God's Son. To complete the picture, our sins are pardoned, and we have deliverance, as will be the case in the new earth. Let us not confuse this with other figures, such as justification, or acquittal. That belongs in the court room, and has to do with our relationship to the judgment, which will take place before the new creation. Now it is a question of entrance into a kingdom, and, as it is a figurative kingdom, we can enter it only by means of a figurative pardon.

Much has been made of the figurative terms in Paul's epistles, such as the covenants and the festivals, in order to show that he was writing only for Jews. Yet there is probably no passage so surely and conclusively "Jewish" as this reference to the kingdom and the pardon of sins, both of which, taken literally, are entirely, foreign to Pauline teaching. According to this method of interpretation, this passage should prove clearly that Colossians is a Jewish epistle, not intended for the present administration of God's grace. Yet, as a matter of fact, it, and Ephesians, are utterly devoted to this exposition of the present interval of God's grace. May this example help to show how unwarranted it is to make any of Paul's writings "Jewish" because of his figurative use of "Jewish" things.

Once we realize that much of the blessing which is predicted on the page of prophecy comes to us, in spirit, long before it is fulfilled in fact, such allusions should rather prove the opposite. For example, there is now a new creation. Is it not a marvelous method of transferring to our minds great spiritual realities which otherwise would be most difficult to express? I suppose no one takes this literally, so why take the kingdom, or the covenants so? In *figure*, we have these things now. In no way could we be led to understand our own blessings better than by illustrating them from Israel's history, by drawing pictures from the pages of prophecy.

So little are the saints familiar with figures of speech that this passage has been the cause of embarrassment to those who saw clearly the vast difference between justification and pardon. No doubt many have been hindered from enjoying the grand grace of justification simply because, in this passage, we are said to have the pardon of sins. Again, the present is so often called "the kingdom," in a vague way confusing it with the future literal reign of Messiah, that one is tempted to avoid further confusion by saying little or nothing about it. But it is a glorious truth, and worthy of our most earnest consideration, that, in spirit, the saints already partake of some of the blessings of the future kingdom, even though its physical wonders are by no means with us yet.

Yes, we are in the kingdom—the kingdom of the Son of His love. Quite a different matter from being a gentile under the iron club of Messiah's rule in the thousand years. Then righteousness will reign, and the nations will be kept at a distance from the God of Israel. They will not even be sons of the kingdom, but subjects, and subordinate. The Sovereign in our kingdom has a title of surpassing dignity and preciousness. "Christ" is official, and fits the functions which He fills during the eons, but not after they have passed away. The "Son" is personal, and describes His dignity in relation to God, even after the eons have come to an end. And the Son of God's love sets Him forth in the supremacy of His nearness and dearness to the Deity, the Peerless One, the Beloved Son. We are in the new creation.

IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

God wishes to be known and loved. This is the motive behind creation and reconciliation. Being invisible and

unapproachable, He has made an Image of Himself, and a Complement through Whom He can come into contact with His creation. These mediatorial glories belong to His Beloved Son, and make Him preeminent in all things, for they reach from the very beginning to the consummation, and make Him first in both creation and reconciliation.

To be known, God must be seen. He must be brought within the range of creature sensation. As this is impossible with essential Deity, Who is Spirit, it can only be accomplished by means of a Mediator, an Image which portrays in visible form the invisible essence of the Supreme. This was God's "Creative Original," the beginning, or origin, of all creation, for all else was included in Him. This makes Him the "firstborn" of all creation, not only first in time, but first in dignity and honor, and of itself entitles Him, not only to be the Sovereign of the saints in this administration, but to head up all things, both in the heavens and on the earth, as He will, in the complement of the eras, before the close of the eons.

Earthly rulers base their right to rule either on hereditary claims, or on their own accomplishments. Our Sovereign has a double right to reign. His is the oldest title in the universe, long antedating Adam, and He has entered the lists against the powers of evil and won the fight on Golgotha. Both diadem and wreath are His. His ancient rights entitle Him to universal sovereignty, and He will yet subject all beneath His feet. And, when all was lost, He brought it back to God, and thus has earned its heartfelt homage. In this universal reign of the Son of God we have the blessed privilege of being among the first to own His sway, and will be among the highest in His world-embracing sovereignty.

CREATION IN THE SON OF HIS LOVE

The wonders of these words are well worthy of our

admiring contemplation. Creation and love! How seldom are they brought together! We often hear of God's love in connection with redemption, but creation is usually associated with His power or His wisdom, but never with His affection. Few passages of Scripture delve as deeply as this into the origin of things, yet it is in thorough harmony with those basic truths that all is out of God (Rom.11:36) and God is love (1 John 4:8). The philosopher seeks in vain for the *why* of all things. Why is there a creation at all? Here is the answer. *God's love demands response.* Creation is not an end in itself. Although it displays God's wisdom and power, its underlying purpose goes far deeper, for it was created in love.

Had this simple yet profound truth ever penetrated into the hearts of the teachers of God's people, how revolutionary would have been its effect! True, with their lips they have preached the glad message "God so loved the *world,"* yet they have been even more zealous to confine His love to those who believe, since they could hardly reconcile eternal torment or annihilation with the operations of love. May He broaden our hearts and widen our understanding! All that God does is done in love. Creation as well as redemption and reconciliation have their roots in the divine affection. And for this very reason it is that all are lost and all will be saved, some indeed by faith, during the eons, yet others by sight, through judgment, all through the deliverance wrought by Him in Whom they were originally created.

We may well suppose that creatures of another sphere, who know little of humanity, would not find it easy to understand that all mankind was once in Adam. To us it is so commonplace that we fail to realize the marvel of it. Science has made futile endeavors to prove that man, as well as other creatures, gradually evolves into forms quite different from their progenitors, but without any prac-

tical success. They have not succeeded in robbing us of the wonder that in each single seed are almost infinite potentialities. These examples should aid us to understand, or at least to believe where we cannot apprehend, that simple yet sublime statement that all was created in the Son of God's love.

The secret of Christ is not confined to earth, and the scope of this epistle is by no means limited to the ecclesia which is His body. We alone were *chosen* in Christ before the disruption, yet even before that, *all* was *created* in the Son, not only that on earth, but in the heavens as well. The august grandeur of this thought will overwhelm all those who have given some attention to the celestial spheres, or even gazed upon the starry host. Here are marvels, and magnitudes, and measures which make the mind faint with solemn awe. Creation on earth, with all its many marvels, sinks into insignificance, when compared with the celestial realms. Had it not been hallowed by His presence and His sacrifice, we would think it mean beside the mighty majesty of the heavenly hosts. Yet all the creatures in the heavens were created in Him.

We should not think of creation here as so much material, or dead matter. Life itself and living creatures—those which can refuse or respond to the love of God—are before us in this connection. As they are viewed here as beneath His sway, we read of their various governmental forms, thrones or dominions, sovereignties or authorities. The very fact that, in the heavens as well as on earth, in the invisible as well as the visible creation such rule exists, is proof positive of the presence of sin. Government is a restraint which will not be needed when the eons are past. It will become inoperative at the consummation. Now it speaks of insubjection and the need of reconciliation. The presence of rule in the invisible, celestial realms shows that the creatures which were created in Him will

also be reconciled through Him and thus fulfill the object of their creation.

ALL THROUGH AND FOR

Since all ruling powers were once in Him, it is not at all strange that all rule should return to Him in the last eon. This is in line with the further truth that all is *through* Him and *for* Him. Creation was not an independent act, without any relation to subsequent developments. On the contrary, it was logically the result of God's purpose, which could not be fulfilled until the far future. Creation is, indeed, the prelude to reconciliation. The Son, in Whom it was effected, had far more in view, and it was only a preparation for the tragedy of the eons, and these, in turn, only the means for effecting the glorious consummation—God All in every one of His creatures.

So, not only was all *in* Him, but, at the same time it was also *through* Him and *for* Him. Without it He could not have accomplished His further work. Due to this relation of all parts of creation to Him it is held together by Him. Whatever differences and distances there may be between the various parts, such as between earth and the heavens, in Him they are welded into one, and, as we shall see, will be united under His headship in the last eon.

Such is the preeminence of the Image of God as the Firstborn of creation. From the beginning all rule is His and all owe Him subjection. The authority of darkness is a usurper, and deserves no subjection at our hands. In being transported into the kingdom of the Son of His love we return to the only rightful Suzerain. His realm will one day spread to every corner of the universe and bring every creature to His feet. All shall be subject to Him. We have the privilege of being among the first to yield to His beneficent sway.

A. E. Knoch

THE RECONCILIATION OF ALL

And He is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens. (Col.1:5-20)

Creation alone cannot reveal the heart of God. It must be supplemented by reconciliation. He Who is the Image of God must become His Complement. The Firstborn of creation must become the Firstborn from among the dead. As such our relation to Him is nearer and dearer. We are not only subjects in a spiritual kingdom, but we also belong to a spiritual body of which He is the Head. God's grace and love must be revealed against the dark background of human hate.

The Head of the body is this Sovereign, in Whom all rule had its origin, and into Whose kingdom we have been transported. Our relation to Him as saints is not based on His power in creation, but on His victory over death. He is the First to emerge a Conqueror from its dark shades, and thus He heads a new creation, a new race of mankind, which is not only given life, but immortality and incorruptibility, beyond the reach of death. This death-defying vitality will be granted to all in Adam in due course, but at present He alone possesses it. This gives Him the exalted dignity of Firstborn from among the dead. Some

of this high honor He will share with us at His presence, for then His saints also will be vivified, while the balance of mankind must wait until the consummation.

UNIVERSAL DIGNITIES

The supremacy of God's Son depends on the *universality* or *totality* of His many dignities. How extraordinary is the emphasis laid on this vital fact in this short passage! Within the compass of five verses we read no less than *eight* times that the given glory is all inclusive. He is the firstborn of *every* creature. *All* is created in Him, and *all* is created through and for Him. He is before *all. All* has its cohesion in Him. In *all* He is becoming first. The *entire* complement dwells in Him. He reconciles *all* through the blood of His cross (Col.1:15-20). And on two occasions this is amplified and defined as all that is in the heavens or on the earth. It is said to include both visible and invisible. What more could be said to impress us with the universal scope of the Son's activities?

THAT IN ALL HE MAY BE BECOMING FIRST

These precious words, as shown herewith, in large blue letters in a golden frame, are the chief ornament of the room in which I write. Long years ago I chose them as my motto, and decided to display them in a prominent place in my abode. When erecting a new house I evolved a plan so that they would become a permanent part of the building. Above the broad entrance into the drawing room was a board with a beautiful grain. On this I outlined these words in old English lettering and varnished them before the wood was stained, so that they stood out plainly when all was done. But, alas! When the home was sold, almost

the first act of the new owner was to remove all traces of my cherished motto!

Here we have a gem of purest ray serene, fit for the diadem of universal majesty! He was first in time and He must become first in all else. How many of mankind have striven for supremacy! Some have drenched the ground with blood in order to attain the highest place for themselves among the rulers of the earth. Many more in other walks of life have sought to reach the top, above their less fortunate fellows. These all exalted themselves, finding a futile and a fleeting eminence. How marvelous the contrast! He Who never sought His own advancement but only God's glory, Who abased Himself beneath all, He will become first in all.

Let us be very jealous for His glory, and allow no one else to filch it from Him. Let us be very zealous for His supremacy, and accord it to no other name but His. And let us guard each glory as we would a treasure trove. And, since His crowning glories as Complement of the Deity and Reconciler of all are so often denied to Him, let us make these the special theme of our meditation, and, if need be, let us maintain them and defend them to the last. In Him, the Firstborn from the dead, through the blood of His cross, God is completely equipped to consummate the purpose of love, and bring every enemy back to His bosom, not only saved, but reconciled.

THE ENTIRE COMPLEMENT

It is quite possible to imagine that God would delegate the honor of creation to one mediator and that of reconciliation to another. God needs both to carry out His purpose, so that each, in his measure, would contribute to the fulfillment of His plans. Then the honor of being God's complement would be shared by them. To put it figuratively, one would receive a place at His right hand, the other at

His left. Indeed, some have taught that God's complement consisted of a whole series of beings, independent of His Son, to whom He delegated creation. Not so! The *entire* complement, *all* that is needed by God in order to fulfill His will in connection with His creatures, finds its fit residence in His Son.

In Him the complement *delights* to dwell. It is not alone that He has the ability, the fitness, the competence to cope with all that is involved in this most marvelous function in the universe. All this He has, and far more. At His baptism, when the heavens were opened to Him, the voice declared, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I *delight*" (Matt.3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22). So again, when He was transformed on the high mountain, a voice came out of the cloud and testified to the delight of the Father in His Beloved (Matt.17:5; Mark 9:7). Peter reminds us of this in his epistle, and tells us that it brought Him honor and glory from God the Father (2 Peter 1:17). Long before, Isaiah records the same fact (Matt.12:18; Isa.42:1): "My Beloved, in Whom My soul delights."

Is it not striking that this recognition of the Son is one of the very few statements directly spoken by the Deity in the later Scriptures? This should give it the prominence which is its due in our hearts. What a contrast to His testimony concerning the rest of mankind! When the Lord stooped down to see how they are, He found nothing in which to *delight*. Not one was even just or kind (Rom. 3:10-18; *cp* Psa.14:2,3). Certainly there has never been one among Adam's descendants, apart from His grace, in whom He could find pleasure. In none of them could the complement find any place whatever.

The complement *plêrōma* is here personified (Col.1:19). It is represented as seeking a suitable dwelling place from which to carry out the purposes of God. In Him it has found a delightful abode, for He is not merely a means

of bringing back creation to what it was, but of bringing it on to fulfill its purpose. All too many of us imagine that we would be satisfied with a universe brought back to its pristine perfection, a world without sin, a sorrow-free existence. No such result would satisfy the heart of God. That would never justify the travail of the eons. That would never win the admiring approval of the universe. That would be vanity, a feeding on wind, a reaping of less than was sown, a losing venture.

And such would creation be, had it not been begun in the Son of His *love,* and should it not be finished by the same One through the blood of His cross. Love cannot be revealed without a background. Every blessing imaginable poured into the lap of a sinless creature is merely a matter of course, which evokes no thankful feelings, and provokes no response of love. I feel certain that Adam never thought of thanking his Maker for his superb health and strength. Yet I am profoundly grateful for the very little vigor needed to pen these lines. And when we, who have suffered much from illness and weakness, once attain our body of glory, how deep and lasting will be our thankful love to Him for all His superabundant grace!

In this passage nothing is said directly of the entrance and course of evil and sin, because this is no part of the work of the Son. But the introduction of estrangement is clearly implied by His death and His cross and the necessity of the reconciliation of all. It is no glory or honor to destroy God's work. This must, indeed, be done, but woe to him who does it! His course must be down and not up. The glory of the Son lies in this, that He undoes the work of the Adversary. Great as were His glories in creation, now that all have been estranged by sin He gains far greater glory by His suffering for all, so that all will be saved and reconciled, and so attain the original object of their creation.

God pity us if we see our salvation from our own side

only! The object of all is God, rather than His creatures. And the glory of God demands the exaltation of His Son. These are the chief considerations in the reconciliation of all. If a single one of those whom He created in love should fail to find the final goal which His love has set, then it is His wisdom and power which are brought into question, and His love which is open to doubt. Likewise, if one who was created in the Son of God's love should fail to be reconciled by the blood of His cross, would that not drag the Son down from the high place which God has given Him? Let us not darken the splendor of His achievement by our own dismal unbelief.

PEACE THROUGH THE CROSS

Enmity has come in through the entrance of death and sin. All of mankind, without exception, are estranged from God. It is more than likely that this discord has affected the whole creation, in varying degrees. To make peace between God and His unfriendly creatures is the greatest of all achievements. In this world of strife and contention the role of peacemaker is a difficult and discouraging one. For the most trivial causes enmity arises between man and man, section and section, country and country. Not long since a large part of the world was involved in a bloody war, and no stable peace has resulted from all of the strenuous endeavors to put an end to war. We talk of peace, yet there is unrest and misunderstanding almost everywhere, and the din of arms has never fully ceased.

By pride comes contention. Notwithstanding the shameful record of mankind since the dawn of history, men are proud of what they are and what they have accomplished and what they possess. Evil has been given them to humble them, they fail often and suffer much, the world is getting worse in almost every way, except material comfort, man's inhumanity to man cries to high heaven for redress,

and man's offensive attitude to the Deity is unpardonable, and yet man is haughty and stubborn and implacable. He refuses the overtures of peace which come to him in the evangel and is hastening on to the era of God's indignation, when man's doings will be destroyed, his power broken, and his pride leveled with the dust.

But even after a thousand years of peace his heart remains the same. Satan, loosed out of his jail, will find the same enmity, the same readiness to rise against God and His people as before. The experience of good does not bring permanent peace. It is through evil that peace must come. Though Christ Himself, the Prince of Peace, has ruled man for a millennium, that has not tuned his heart in unison with God. He does not make peace by His power or by His glorious government. Peace comes to the nations in this way in the eons of the eons, but heart peace with God comes only through His sufferings and shameful, ignominious death.

The cross, the inglorious, the disgraceful, the infamous, the opprobrious, the outrageous stake, the most disreputable death that man can devise, where weakness and shame combine to dishonor the High and Holy Son of God—here is where peace was made for all who are estranged, where the world was conciliated to God. With this as a basis, the Son will reconcile all God's enemies with him when the eons have run their course. In the cross we see the utter worthlessness of man as well as the supreme exhibition of the love of God. Reconciliation is effected by the revelation of God's love in the deepest display of human hate.

The cross, like a lightning flash, reveals the heart of man. He Who hung upon it was the Touchstone by which all things may be tested. When He appeared among His people humanity manifested itself as it really is. He should have been welcomed and honored and adored. By the condemnation of the only One Who deserved to live, mankind

has condemned itself, and sealed its own death warrant. By the shameful crucifixion of the Lord of glory men made it manifest that they, not He, deserve the death detestable. O that we all may learn what we really are in the light of the cross! This will burn out all our pride and prepare the way for peace. And thus it is that reconciliation comes. The cross will abase all into the dust, and humble their hearts before the Deity, and prepare them for the revelation of His love.

But if the cross only revealed what is in man it could not reconcile the race but would rather destroy it. Thanks be to God that it also reveals what is in God! It is the fullest revelation of His love. In it He seemed to side with man. Instead of rescuing His Beloved from their hate, He sends fire from above into His bones. He makes Him to be sin, Who knew no sin. He forsakes Him instead of the ones who deserved His displeasure.

The divine alchemy which transformed the Victim of human hate into the Sacrifice for their sins is almost too wonderful for human apprehension.

THE BLOOD OF THE CROSS

The cross was the supreme crisis in universal history, an event unique, unparalleled in the annals of time. Nothing has ever occurred which has such a profound effect upon the world. It will transform an alienated universe into adoring worshipers. It is a permanent, an abiding power which will never lose its potency. Today the cross avails to conciliate the world, and to reconcile those who receive the conciliation. But this will by no means exhaust its power. It will be the basis of all blessing in the eons to come, and will bring immortality and peace to all at the consummation. Death cannot stop its course, for Christ arose, the Firstborn, and all for whom He died (and He died for all!) will share His life when death is abolished.

The blood of *Christ* is a most expressive figure of the permanent power of His sufferings. The soul, sensation, feeling (not the life) of the flesh is in the blood. In the days of old this was sprinkled in the holy of holies once a year on the day of propitiation, and for a twelve-month period preserved the potency of the sacrifice. So it is with the suffering of Christ. Thank God it is past, but its potency is permanent. It avails today, and will never lose its power. The blood remains, as it were, within the holiest in heaven, to witness to His offering.

But the blood of His cross—this goes far deeper still. Only here do we have this notable expression. It is not a mere literary variant, but a deliberate endeavor to distinguish between the death of God's Son and the *manner* of it. This is done because here we have not merely the salvation or the justification of all, but the *reconciliation* of the universe. It is not a question of sin so much as of offense and enmity. In fact this passage is concerned with salvation only insofar as it is included in reconciliation. *Peace* is made by the blood of His cross. The blood is a reminder of its permanence.

This blood does not merely remind us of His death and suffering, but of the shame and enmity of man, and the *darkness* and *distance* from God endured by Him because of the *crucifixion.* Stoning would have brought death, but would have avoided much of the suffering and the curse of the Deity which rested upon the One Who was hanged upon a tree. The marvelous truth that all will be reconciled to God is based, not only on the suffering and death of Christ, but especially on the abject abasement involved in the manner of His death, coupled with the curse which it drew down from above.

RECONCILIATION BASED ON THE CROSS

The cry of the august Sufferer, "My God, My God, why

didst Thou forsake Me?" finds its answer in the cross. With any other form of death God would not have forsaken Him. He would rather have turned against His murderers. It would have increased the distance and estrangement between God and His creatures. It would have made enmity, not peace. But because He voluntarily placed Himself beneath the curse of God for the sake of His enemies, the result was reconciliation.

But let us note that the cross is brought in here parenthetically. It is the basis of reconciliation, indeed, but by no means includes all that He will do in order to bring back the universe to God. On this basis He will carry on all of His future work of ruling and judging, of rousing and vivifying the dead. All of His coming acts will have this grand goal in view, and we will have our share in His work of reconciling God's creatures among the celestials, for we are His complement. As living exemplifications of the power of the cross, we will have our part in the final and effectual peace propaganda. For this reason we read here of the *blood* of the cross, for its abiding power will be the means at our disposal in bringing about perpetual peace.

One of the most helpful contrasts between Ephesians and Colossians is on the subject of peace. In Colossians, as we have seen, it is universal in its scope, including not only earth's sinners, but His enemies in the heavens as well. But in Ephesians it is limited to believers, and has to do with the enmity between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision (Eph.2:11-18). This estrangement inhered in their flesh, and in the physical relation of Christ to the Circumcision. It found expression in the central wall in the sanctuary, which kept the Uncircumcision at a distance from God's dwelling place, and in the decrees issued by the apostles from Jerusalem. That fruit of peace was a new humanity, so that both the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision have access, in one spirit, to the Father. Though

based upon the cross, there is nothing there for those outside the household of faith.

The peace of Ephesians, in accord with the secret of the epistle, will continue during this administration of grace, but will retire in the following economies, when Israel once more comes to the front on the basis of physical preeminence. But the peace in Colossians, in accord with the secret of Christ, will not only continue throughout the eons, but will embrace all at the consummation. In Ephesians it is limited in both time and scope. It applies only to the Circumcision and Uncircumcision in this present era. But in Colossians it is extended to include those in the heavens as well as those on the earth. All are embraced by it, so that no enmity remains in God's universe.

To even list all of the passages which have been brought forward to blot out the great truth of the reconciliation of all would lead us too far afield at this time. They have been fully considered and discussed in separate essays. Correct concordant renderings automatically dispose of them, and, at the same time, confirm the great truth that God will become All in all at the consummation (1 Cor.15:28).

May God graciously give us faith to believe it! May our love for His Beloved constrain us to receive it! May mistaken translations of other passages not bar our way into this holy of holies, beyond the veil of His eonian dealings with His creatures! May not the false philosophical terms "everlasting" and "eternal," or "eternity," blind our eyes to the eons, the scene of the Sons's glories, their commencement in love, and their consummation in reconciliation! Here we stand on the summit of divine revelation. Here we can see all else below us, and see its place in God's purpose. May we not take some lower stand and deny this glorious consummation because it is hid from our gaze by the fogs of lower levels!

A. E. Knoch

A PRAYER FOR MAKING THE SECRET OF CHRIST MANIFEST

In prayer be persevering, watching in it with thanksgiving, praying at the same time concerning us also, that God should be opening for us a door of the word, to speak the secret of Christ, because of which I am bound also, that I should be making it manifest, as I must speak. In wisdom be walking toward those outside, reclaiming the era, your word being always with grace, seasoned with salt, perceiving how you must answer each one. (Col.4:2-6)

Two closely related secrets filled the heart of the apostle in his imprisonment, besides the secret concerning this administration. The secret of the *evangel* (Eph.6:19) and the secret of *Christ* (Col.4:3) were both pressing for utterance, so he especially urges the saints to pray for him that he may be able to make them known. He is not merely bound with metal chains. He is also "bound" to act by spiritual forces. As the literal Greek has it, he speaks, "as it is *binding*" for him to speak.

O that there were men today who knew these secrets, and not only could but would reveal them to the saints! O that all saints would unite in these prayers, no longer for the apostle Paul, but for pastors and teachers and evangelists everywhere! Is it not all too true that these secrets have been lost? Where are they made known? And do we not see the wisdom of God in this, that Paul, in urging the saints to pray for him, has left a permanent exhortation, a prayer which we all should pray, and which should awaken in our hearts a desire to enjoy these precious secrets our-

selves and to make them known to others? What other truths in God's Word are so burdened with prayer for their utterance? Does this not intimate that these truths are as desirable as rare?

The bulk of Paul's epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians is largely composed of *his* prayers for the saints, that *they* may realize the grace and truth which he reveals to them. But at the close of each epistle we have these two gems, each perfect in its own setting, in which the *saints* are exhorted to pray for *him* that he may be able to make this message known. It is a delight to study these brief requests and especially to compare them with each other. Their messages are very similar. The chief difference lies in the secret to be expressed or manifested. In Ephesians it is the secret of the *evangel*, which is barely mentioned in the body of the epistle. In Colossians, however, it is the message of the epistle itself which is pressing for expression.

PERSEVERING IN PRAYER

It is the precious privilege of all who are His to be concerned with everything which pertains to God and His purpose in both creation and reconciliation. And this includes everything, since all is serving His grand design. Our prayers may include all, in heaven as well as on earth, but, of course, may concentrate on the world about us, and especially on the saints, and on those who are actively engaged in carrying out God's purpose in making Him known, particularly those to whom His secrets have been confided, and who, like Paul, are held and hindered from heralding what is on their heart. For now, far more than then, these secrets find little utterance or entrance among the people of God.

Most of us have heard many prayers concerning many things. We ourselves, perhaps, have prayed much and often. But, as we look back upon them, are we not reminded of

the words of the apostle, that "we are not aware what we should pray for" (Rom.8:26)? Have not the most of our petitions been out of line with God's will? Do we not feel more and more that we desire to leave all details in God's hands because of our own ignorance of what should be? Yet, on the other hand, the definite instructions and exhortations which are given us, especially in the perfection epistles, as to the scope and subject of our prayers, are almost totally ignored. Should we hear them in public they would appear strange and mark the petitioner as peculiar, as, indeed, he would be.

WATCHING WITH THANKSGIVING

Perhaps most of us are inclined to wait until our prayers are answered to our satisfaction before we add our thanks. But that is because we have not yet fully found our All in God. We should learn to be especially thankful when matters do *not* turn out according to our wishes, for this is evidence enough that we were in the wrong, and harm would have resulted if our will had been carried out. We should thank as we watch. It is not our duty, in prayer, to instruct God what to do, or how or when to do it, but to recognize our utter incapacity to dictate these details, and to rejoice that they are in His skillful hands, so that we may thankfully acquiesce in every particular, even if it is contrary to our own will.

A practical instance is at hand. It is now many, many years since our own heart was overflowing in prayer and petition that expression might be granted to us to make known the secret of the evangel. Indeed, it seemed at the time that this should be our life work. There was much liberty in prayer, for there was no question of the Lord's will, seeing that He Himself had put the petition into our mouths. Yet it is clear from this secret itself that it has a temporary term, and that the faith is fading from the

earth, so that great things could not be expected, especially as the close of this administration seemed so very near. Nevertheless there has been much watching to see if some would not accept and appreciate the marvelous message of God's special grace, and much thanksgiving, not only for those who received it, but also for those who did not, for both fulfill God's purpose.

Of course it is a special joy to hear of those who not only receive this precious truth, but strive to make it known. And God has graciously stirred some hearts, who have given written or oral testimony to the truth, at various times and in various countries. May our prayers result in a blessed awakening to this great truth! And, at the same time, may He open hearts to explore and enjoy the secret of Christ, the subject of our present meditation.

CLOSELY RELATED SECRETS

These two secrets, that of the evangel, which involves the conciliation of the nations during the period of Israel's callousness, and that of Christ, which results in the reconciliation of all at the consummation, are very closely related in their present expression. Peace is the keynote of both. Even as conciliation is a precursor of reconciliation, so Christ's present attitude toward the nations may be looked upon as an anticipation of His attitude toward all in the last eon, when the secret of Christ will be fully unfolded. The secret of the evangel is, in part, but one aspect of the secret of Christ in its present expression. Therefore, in Ephesians, the apostle wishes us to pray for one, yet, in Colossians, for the other.

The secret of Christ is best set forth today by the expression "Christ among you, the expectation of glory" (Col. 1:27). Christ did not leave the land of Israel when He came in flesh. He was never among the nations. His presence in Israel was the assurance of future glory for all who received

Him, which will be fulfilled in the thousand years, on the earth. His figurative presence now, among the nations, is also the assurance of future glory, for all who believe, among the celestials. At the same time it involves the setting aside of the enmity which existed in the days of His presence, and this is the conciliation. It is *God* Who is conciliated, yet it is Christ Who acts accordingly, and Who visits the nations, in spirit, just as He had come to Israel in the days of old.

MAKING IT MANIFEST

The secret of Christ must be manifested. Why not simply tell it out to eager crowds and herald it forth in overflowing halls? Why not let the daily press put it on the front page, with gigantic headlines, in colored ink? Or at least the religious press should give it the publicity it deserves. Pamphlets and books could be written and exhibited everywhere. It seems quite simple. But Paul did not urge the saints in his day to use every avenue of publicity, but to pray to God to *open a door.* The fact is that all doors are shut and locked against the entrance of this truth. No human effort is able to open them. We are entirely cast upon God for the manifestation of the secret of Christ.

Indeed, among the saints themselves there are few hearts that are open to these grand verities. And here we find not merely closed doors but open opposition. These transcendent truths, which complete the Word of God, which round out revelation, which draw aside the enigmatic veil which hangs before God's previous unfoldings—these are rejected as heretical and false, although their simple terms cannot be misunderstood. It is a question of giving Christ the highest place, and the opposing powers will not accord Him this. So doors are closed, and arguments are brought forth to show that these words cannot mean what they say. It may be well to consider a few of these.

"THINGS"

Strange as it may seem, one of the first reasons given for rejecting the reconciliation of all when we began to make it known was that the word "all" in this passage refers to *things*, not to persons; to creation, not to creatures. So it is in the popular versions, especially in the Revised, which is exceptionally particular on such points. Yet stranger still is the fact that this is according to current scholarship, which confounds the indefinite forms of the Greek with the English neuter gender.

To what this leads may be seen in Galatians 3:22, where the Revisers changed the Authorized Version "the scripture hath concluded *all* under sin" to "the scripture hath shut up *all things* under sin." And this is "that the promise...might be given them that believe."

The mere fact that there is no estrangement between "things" and God, and therefore there can be no reconciliation, should suffice to show how groundless it is. In fact, the argument from "things" has little weight with intelligent searchers for truth, for, if we confine the preeminence of God's Son to His relation to the insensate matter of the universe, as, indeed, we must if *pan* is limited to *things*, the whole passage becomes absurd and intolerable. When it becomes evident, in the next paragraph, that the Colossians themselves were among these "things," few will care to limit the glories of the Son to the physical material of the universe, no matter how much Greek scholarship may stand back of the assertion. But the indefinite includes all genders as well as things.

Indeed, what other form than the indefinite could be used in this passage? Creation and reconciliation in Him were not confined to males or females, for, at his creation, even Adam was both, and this distinction would not apply to the creatures in the heavens. The universality of this passage cannot be confined to earthly conditions. In order to include all it *must* be expressed in terms that apply to all. To one who revels in this marvelous galaxy of glories, which exalts our beloved Lord as no other in God's precious Word, the continuous addition of the misleading word "things" in our popular versions seems as deplorable as it is unnecessary. It brings discord into this highest of harmonies. It seeks to dull His dignities, by making Him the Creator of lifeless substance, and not of living creatures.

You who use versions with "things" in Colossians 1:15-20, cross them out! Only by so doing may you be initiated into the secret of Christ. He is not merely the Creator of the dust beneath your feet, but He is *your* Creator! He is not the Reconciler of the soulless stone on which you stand, but He is *your* Reconciler! The simple fact that He appears here as the Son should show that He has to do with spirit and with *life.* He is not the Firstborn of dead substance but of living creatures.

SCOPE

Another bolt which has been used in order to keep the door from opening to allow the secret of Christ to enter is the plea that Colossians is concerned only with the church which is Christ's body, hence reconciliation can refer only to them. It is well to keep each statement in God's Word well within the scope of its context. But where, in all the sacred scrolls, is the range of the context any greater than in this passage? "Every creature" cannot be confined to the church which is Christ's body. "All in the heavens and on the earth" is as wide a scope as can well be imagined. With such a context, reconciliation *cannot* be limited to any body of God's creatures. It applies to all, sinners as well as saints, high and low, without any limitation whatever except previous estrangement.

UNIVERSALITY

Any attempt to subtract in the smallest degree from any one of the eight asseverations of universality in the first of Colossians I cannot help but feel is nothing less than *treason!* If He is the Firstborn of every creature *but one,* then He is not first in all! If a single creature was not created in Him, then His glory has suffered a severe eclipse! If another is before Him, then He is not first! If He is second in all, why not tell us of the one who is first? If only a part of the complement dwells in Him, then, of course, only a part will be reconciled through Him. Again I say, *Treason!*

The fact that almost all doors are closed to the secret of Christ today, especially among instructed saints, is a most illuminating commentary on this request for prayer. If Christendom had gone on in the truth, and the light had increased, then we might expect to find open doors. But the contrary has occurred. Apostasy from Paul is not confined to one province, as of old, but is well-nigh universal. And, as a consequence, the secret of Christ is not only unknown but shut out, debarred, yes, in some cases, detested. There is more need for prayer now than ever before that God will open doors for its manifestation.

WALKING IN WISDOM

"Be walking in wisdom toward those outside" (Col.4:5). These words follow immediately upon the reference to the secret of Christ. In Ephesians (5:15) we have a similar exhortation, but nothing is said of those outside. This is another of those delicate touches which distinguish the two epistles, for the secret of Christ brings us into much closer relation to unbelievers, by creation and reconciliation, in which they share, than the secret of Ephesians, in which they have no part. And how is it possible to walk in wisdom toward our fellow saints or toward the world

without a grasp of the great secrets which affect each so vitally? These alone will revolutionize the attitude of our hearts toward them and enable us to act in accord with God's purpose for them.

It is wisdom to deal with men in accord with God's will and purpose concerning them. If we imagine that those outside are doomed to destruction or eternal torment, it is practically impossible to avoid a hardening of the heart in regard to them, which will lead us to think and act contrary to the basic truths of their creation and reconciliation in love. Thinking of them as so much waste in God's operations in turn reflects upon His wisdom and love. These false conceptions of God's creation and goal, outside the Son of His love, make a wise walk toward those outside well-nigh impossible. But when we see the place of everyone in God's plans, it will soften our hearts and steady our heads, and we will be enabled to recognize His handiwork in the most worthless and most antagonistic of His creatures.

Looked at apart from God's purpose, the present era, like those before it, is vanity, and a feeding on wind. There is much talk of evolution and there is much real revolution, but the world as a whole seems to be slipping down into an abyss instead of climbing up into a paradise. Of what use is all the work and woe with which we are surrounded? We know that God will yet make excellent use of it. Man's day will reveal man's failure and futility. This is of no value in itself, but of surpassing worth in humbling man and in bringing him to accept and appreciate God's grace. In this way this wicked era will be reclaimed in due time. Yet wisdom will anticipate, and use the background of human incapacity and hate in order to display the fullness of God's competency and love.

Not only are we to deal graciously among ourselves (Eph.4: 32), but our conduct with those outside should

also be governed by this precious quality. Once we know that even they were created in love and will be reconciled by the blood of Christ's cross, we will recognize in their present state only a temporary estrangement from God, in which evil and sin play a painful yet salutary part. Far from harsh condemnation, we will sympathize with them in their condition, and speak and act in faith, knowing that they will yet fulfill the object of their creation, when God becomes All in them. What if they are the vessels of God's indignation now? In due time He will use them for His glory. *We,* the vessels of His grace, have no more right to His favor than those without. May this thought humble us before them.

Our Lord called His disciples the salt of the earth (Matt.5: 13). They alone could stay its corruption. Perhaps nowhere is the rottenness of the world more evident than in its utterances. Not only should our speech with them be gracious, but free from the decadent foulness which characterizes much of human intercourse. More than that, it should be a seasoning and a preservative, counteracting the decay all around us. And what is more effective for this than an exultant knowledge of God's grand goal, when all that is corruptible will have given place to that which is incorruptible and glorious?

A heart overflowing with expectation in the future which is in store for all of God's creatures is the best preparation for meeting and answering the questions of those outside. Apart from this knowledge the world has many queries to which even the saint cannot give a satisfactory reply. "Why does God, allow such terrible things to occur?" Such questions come from the lips of those who know nothing about God. And how few are able to show that God does not "allow" them to happen, but brings them about for His glory and our blessing? As a result the deity of most real believers is only a second or third rate god, who needs

to be excused for his dereliction of duty and defended for His impotence.

We should never be at a loss to answer the questions of the godless in regard to God's present operations and His prospective goal. This is seen fully only in the secret of Christ, which it is our privilege and duty to manifest. So that, unlike Ephesian truth, which is only for the saints and can only be grasped by these under circumstances which are all too rare in these days, the secret of Christ should have a powerful influence on our walk and talk with those outside the family of faith. In measure it should be manifested by our conduct in the world as well as by our witness to the saints. May each one of us pray this prayer and seek to fulfill it in our own words and work!

A. E. Knoch.

KENNETH LESTER BOUGHTON

Our brother, Ken Boughton, of Caldwell, Idaho, was put to repose February 2, 2015, at age 87. He formerly lived in the Los Angeles area where he became acquainted with the Concordant Publishing Concern and was an enthusiastic participant in our fellowship gatherings as well as frequent volunteer helper for all sorts of chores at our headquarters during the 1970's. He and his wife, Lucy (who died in 2008), raised their family and cared for dozens of foster children, setting a grand example of love within an environment of appreciation for God's love.

UR SEARCH

Unsearchable Riches magazine has been published continuously from 1909 to the present. *URsearch* is a browse and search Windows application, which comprises the entire contents of all *Unsearchable Riches* issues published from 1909 through 1999 (volumes 1–90). The contents is searchable, viewable, and selected pages may be printed. *URsearch* is available without charge, and may be downloaded from our website: WWW.CONCORDANT.ORG.

Unsearchable Riches issues from volume 87 (1996) to the present are available in *typeset* form (PDF format), and may obtained from our website as well.

CHRIST, THE GLORY OF CREATION

THE scriptures of truth take on a deeper meaning when we perceive the profound disclosure of Christ as the glory of creation. For when we see Him, who is the power and wisdom of God, creating and then fashioning anew this world of ours, we comprehend His majesty as never before.

Time was, when, maybe, we thought of Him only as the Saviour born at Bethlehem, and dying at Golgotha. And, even though we believed He rose again and would be returning, yet little did we think He was the august Firstborn, as Paul reveals Him in his enthralling Colossian passage (Col.1:16-20).

When, however, we read that all has been created *in* Him and *through* Him and *for* Him, it was borne in upon us that here were words to exult in. Words that so wondrously set forth the Christ of God as to compel and hold attention. The exalted estimate they give of Him is of such an unimagined grace and glory, as to create in the mind an indelible impression of His power.

Moreover, since He is the Firstborn of every creature and is before all, a perfect precedence, a noble priority is His. He is the great Antecedent, with an inherent right to commit Himself to His Father's purpose of the ages. Unaffected by and impervious to that sin and death which so spoiled the fair cosmos fashioned through Him, He rises triumphant above it all. The march of time, the trail of decay, affects Him not. Son of the Father's love, spotless Lamb of God, death masters Him not. He comes gloriously through, the all-conquering Firstborn from among the dead.

Great and marvelous indeed, are the achievements of God's illustrious Son, and just and true His ways. The glory of creation at first, He is the effulgence of an even fairer creation at last. For in the new heavens and earth, in which righteousness is dwelling, there will be an ever-increasing advance in the knowledge and love of God, the Father. The Christ of God will point the way so gloriously, in the wisdom and majesty of His ruling power, that the habitants of every realm will be happy and content.

And, greater still, they will see that the pathway of obedience to the will of God secures the highest quality of life. It is so now, as every saint can prove. And it is far better than being at the mercy of our own powers, ideas and self-sufficiency.

To see as God sees is to be enlightened indeed. And, with Paul as guide and interpreter, we are conducted to the heights of rare vision. The triumph and sway of Christ, as God sees it, is immeasurably greater than even some of His people conceive it to be. There are many who place limitations on the extent of His triumph. That the whole universe is *for* Him in as grand a sense as it was *through* Him, they cannot see. They counter the splendid truth by interposing man's perversity. There are, it is said, "incorrigibles," who, impervious to all appeals, must assuredly be lost, and that forever.

It cannot be too eloquently announced that Christ's sacrifice was *for all*. There is nothing to take its place, however it may cut across the pride of man. He, therefore, as the glory of creation, and its worthy Redeemer, draws *all* to Himself. Only thus can creation be *for* Him. Introduce a segment that is not for Him by dint of an opposing will, and to that extent creation is marred.

Reconciliation is divine, full and complete. Half measures do not go with God. With Him, the crowning issue will accord with the character and worth of the Sacrifice.

Therefore, the triumph of Christ must needs be complete. The blood of His cross bespeaks this, for realms on high and for earth below. A dignity attaches to the power of the blood which only His loved ones know. And some of these fail to realize the magnitude of its power.

There will come a time when the whole of creation will rise in full acknowledgment of His Lordship. Then, in a splendor words fail to describe, the entire universe, won to God, acclaims Christ as Lord, for the glory of God, the Father. No beings are untouched, their needs unmet. He is the Desire of every heart. This world, even as other realms, awaits the coming of the Lord of life and glory. He alone can draw all to Himself, and thus to God.

Would that now, in the interlude of God's grace, the Son of His love was more fittingly extolled! It is not enough that His earthly life and walk be stressed and praised. For, to the minds of many, thus presented, He is only the ideal Teacher to be copied and followed.

It may be we are even brought to the point of His wondrous death, and risen life. But we are left there. It is not enthrallingly shown that He died for all, the Just for the unjust, *to bring us to God*. And, that He not only lives, but is returning for His own believing people.

In the meanwhile we are thankful for all good that comes through human hands. Yet, we would fain acknowledge God in the understanding way which sees Him as moving and controlling all, both good and evil. At the same time the anointed eye can perceive, in the Word of truth, the exalted character of the Christ of God.

Once again His voice, as many waters, will command, subdue and attract. In realms above, and earth beneath, He will move as sovereign Lord. Illustrious Head over all, He is, as at the first, the glory of creation.

William L. Mealand

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 106th Year

(1909–2015)

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Substitution or Inclusion?
76 For or Instead?
87 Consequently Now

SECOND QUARTER, 2015

Volume 106 **Number 2**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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EDITORIAL

OUR theme in this issue is that of the *sacrifice* of Christ, which was *fulfilled* by God. God saves because He loves. And the way He saves is through sacrifice—*His own sacrifice of His own Son*—which sacrifice alone reveals the depth of His love.

To sacrifice is to incur a loss, to *give up* something valuable or desirable for the sake of something or someone else. Thus God gives up His Son to the death of the cross on behalf of needy sinners, who cannot save themselves. This is in light of their need and is according to the dictate of His own righteousness, in correspondence to His love.

In the sacrifice of Christ, in the crucifixion event, Jesus was "given up in the specific counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). Indeed, it was God Himself, albeit through human agency, Who *fulfilled* the suffering of His Christ (Acts 3:18). Thus "Yahweh desires to crush Him, and He causes Him to be wounded" (Isa.53:10). "For of a truth, in this city [Jerusalem] were gathered against Thy holy Boy Jesus, Whom Thou dost anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the nations and the peoples of Israel, *to do whatever Thy hand and Thy counsel designates beforehand to occur*" (Act 4:27,28). God spares not His own Son but rather *gives Him up* for the sake of us all (Rom.8:32).

Special emphasis herein is placed upon *how* the sacrifice of Christ saves. Did Christ die *instead* of the sinner, or *for the sake of* the sinner who was created in Him?

In A. E. Knoch's two articles, "Substitution or Inclusion?" (pp.51-75) and "For or Instead?" (pp.76-86), the theme is that of our "inclusion" *in* Christ, in creation: "*All was created in the Son of God's love* (Col.1:13-16) . . . . Creation should never be divorced from that substratum of divine affection

which brought it forth. This is the unbreakable tie which binds God to His creation, and the Son to every creature in the universe . . . .

"If anyone was not in Adam he is not a sinner and needs no salvation. If anyone was not in the Son of His love he will not be saved. But, since *all were* created in the Beloved, so long as my mind retains its sanity I shall assert that God Himself will lose His deity if He cannot satisfy His own affections by delivering those on whom His heart has been fixed since the very dawn of creation" (pp.51,52; 75).

To perceive more clearly our inclusion in Christ, however, it may be necessary for us to see that He died *for* us, *for* our sins, not as our Substitute, but as "the One giving Himself a *correspondent* Ransom [*antilutron*] *for* [*huper*] all" (1 Tim.2:6), acting thus *on our behalf.*

It is not just that the theory of substitution is untenable; it is, first of all, that it is not according to Scripture. It is true that the Greek word *anti* signifies "against"; however, it does so not in the sense commonly supposed. Scripturally, in its essence, that which is *anti* something else is that which stands "against" something else not in the sense of "opposition thereunto," nor in any sense of "as a substitute for." Rather, *anti* speaks of that which is "against" something in the sense that it is, in some respect, *adjacent,* and thus "correspondent" thereunto. Correspondency, is the essential notion of *anti,* and is the significative thread common to all its occurrences.

In his article, "Consequently Now" (pp.87-96), Dean Hough explains that it is "by means of God's spirit [that] we have been united with Christ in His death and life, and thus, in spirit, we stand before God, freed from the law of sin and death. This is our position in spirit, and our sinfulness and mortality in the flesh cannot separate us from it" (p.88).

Thus it is that, for our sakes: "Christ died for our sins *according to the scriptures,* and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day *according to the scriptures*" (1 Cor.15:3,4). J.R.C.

SUBSTITUTION OR INCLUSION?

SIN and suffering and death came through the single offense of one man because all humanity was generated by him; so salvation comes through the solitary sacrifice of our Saviour since all were created in Him. God's method of salvation is *inclusion,* not *substitution.* Christ does not take the place of each sinner of the race, as though He were a mere man. He displaces Adam, and His work affects all, even as Adam's has done. He is the second Man, as though none had intervened between Him and the first. He is the last Adam, in Whom there is a new humanity, which will be blessed by His one sacrifice, even as the old humanity was doomed by Adam's single transgression.

The *why* of salvation may be answered by a single word—*love.* God saves because He loves. The *how* may also be explained by one word—*sacrifice.* But thoughtful saints are not satisfied with so summary an explanation. The further question arises, *How does sacrifice save*? Many are the philosophies, and more are the illustrations used to show how Christ can save the sinner. These have come between us and the simple truth so effectually that it is almost impossible to brush them aside and get through to the facts. The only encouraging sign is that few who really investigate are fully satisfied with any "theory of the atonement" propounded hitherto.

THE WHY OF SALVATION

All was created in the Son of God's love (Col.1:13-16). God loved His Son. Creation should never be divorced from that substratum of divine affection which brought it

forth. This is the unbreakable tie which binds God to His creation, and the Son to every creature in the universe. Whatever occurs, this underlying love abides, even though it be eclipsed temporarily and assume the garb of hate. Like the foundation of the temple of Solomon, this solid substructure is seldom seen during the eonian times. It is covered by the debris due to the destructiveness of sin.

The immanent love residing in God and in His Son, which occasioned creation, craved a response from His creatures which they were not qualified to give. Like Adam, they had not the knowledge of good, hence could not appreciate or give thanks for it, or adore the Giver. As we are constituted, such a knowledge can come only through an experience of evil. That is why God planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden.

In considering Adam's transgression, almost everyone focuses his eye on the word "evil," as though the tree did not give the knowledge of *good.* This, coupled with the expressed warning of God, gives the impression that it was not His intention that Adam should get the knowledge of this tree. It would have been far simpler to cut it down if that were His object. God did wish Adam and his race to appreciate the good He gave them, even though it involved the knowledge of evil. The very act which brought sin into the race, while it was a direct transgression of His word, was in line with His underlying purpose, for it gave the knowledge of good.

Though God's love demanded the presence of evil and sin in order to make itself known, it also required that this process should be limited in time. Endless evil and sin would defeat the very purpose for which these were introduced. Hence a definite duration is devoted to this process, called the eonian times. These eons were made in God's Son (Heb.1:2). Sin and evil are strictly confined to them. The first three eons are devoted to the development of sin, the last two to its retirement. As a result, all creatures will revel in a knowledge of God's goodness and grace, and He will become All in all, thus accomplishing the object for which they were formed.

THE INCLUSION OF ALL

The *method* of salvation has proved a standing puzzle to expositors as well as to the inquiring student of the Scriptures. Why did Christ die, and how can that sacrifice effect the reconciliation of all? The solution lies in a closer acquaintance with Christ and His relations to God and to creation before He undertook the work of redemption and deliverance. As the Son of God's love, all was created in Him and through Him and for Him. Hence He is closely related to creation apart from and prior to His sufferings for sin.

It seems difficult for us to associate Christ with aught else than redemption. The great truth that He is the Firstborn of *creation* seems to have vanished from the consciousness of Christendom. Yet it is vital to an understanding of redemption. It corrects all those false ideas that He was an unwilling Sufferer, a third party upon Whom the role of scapegoat was forced, which led rationalists to the conclusion that the cross was an exhibition of injustice to One and partiality to others.

The relation of the Son to creation is expressed by the title *Firstborn.* This is elaborated by a series of prepositions, *in, through, into,* or *for,* and *before* (Col.1:16,17). These express the various aspects of His connection with creation, apart from sin or sacrifice. We are accustomed to think of this as God's universe. We should include Christ, for it is created in, through, and for Him. This is the basic truth which explains the manner of its deliverance. Its method cannot be understood until first we see that the Saviour is not a distant, disinterested Victim, but as close

of kin as could possibly be, apart from sin. A father toils and suffers for his family with no thought of injustice. Relationship calls for more than justice demands.

It is desirable to have a name for Christ as the One in Whom all was created. English has two words for *progenitor,* seeing that *procreator* has the same sense. We suggest that progenitor be applied to Adam as the generator of the race, and Procreator be reserved for God's Son as the One in and through Whom creation was effected. Then we can state our case clearly and succinctly thus:

> *As Adam, the progenitor of humanity, by one selfish act, involved it in unutterable woe, so God's Son, the Procreator of all, by one sacrifice, involves all in ineffable blessing.*

During the eons this is reserved for the chosen, who are redeemed through faith. All are not made alive *in* Christ until death is abolished at the consummation (1 Cor.15: 22-26).

GOD'S WAY OF SALVATION

Today, in evangelical circles, the doctrine of "substitution" is not only deemed scriptural but fundamental. The phrase "in our room and stead" is so widely used and accepted that it may seem blasphemy even to suggest that it is not satisfactory in describing God's way of salvation. Yet the dignities and prerogatives of Christ must not be eclipsed. He is more than a "means" of salvation.

The great fact that all was created in the Son of God's love is the only firm foundation for God's evangel. That the universe was in Him, as mankind later came to be in Adam, is the key to God's method of salvation. In God's thoughts, salvation is first. Sin is merely the necessary preliminary to make it possible. To reveal His love, God must be a Saviour. To reveal His salvation He must see that

all are lost. The method by which they are lost, through their inclusion in one offender, Adam, is a shadow of the method of their salvation, by inclusion in One, our Lord Jesus Christ. All were potentially saved before they were lost. God is not experimenting. He is not a gambler. He knows the outcome from the beginning. He is a great and glorious and gracious God.

INCLUSION

A good English word is sorely needed to express the idea conveyed by the preposition *in.* "Inness" is awkward and obsolete. "Immanence" is misleading. The best word available seems to be *inclusion.* It adds nothing to the word *in.* If we say that all humanity was *included* in Adam we have added nothing to the sense, but we have found a word which can be turned into a noun. We are practically compelled to say "the *inclusion* of all in Adam." We suggest this word as a special theological term to indicate the "inness" of the universe in Christ when it was created, as revealed in the first chapter of Colossians (v.16): "For in Him is all created."

There are a number of terms which may be used to express the "inness" of mankind in Adam and its consequences. Among these may be mentioned *relationship, headship, federal headship, representation, identification, unification,* and *solidarity.* But a close study of each one will show that it has no clear Scriptural basis, and is not fully satisfactory, yielding no definite explanation of the method of salvation.

RELATIONSHIP

The broad word *relationship* has much to commend it. The method of salvation is to be explained on the ground of our Lord's relation to the race rather than individual substitution. Its defect lies in its indefiniteness. It does not

specify the nature of the relation which He sustains to those He saves. Conversely, we are related to Him. But that does not give us the power and privileges which belong to Him. Relationship is right, but has no definite scriptural equivalent, and does little more than point out the direction of the truth. It is helpful in illustrating the fact that Christ had the privilege of doing far more than what is just for those to whom He was related by creation and generation. A father does not expect to be repaid for his sacrifices for his children. A Creator must care for His creatures.

HEADSHIP

Hitherto we have used the word *headship,* for lack of a scriptural noun. But headship is only one of the results of inclusion, and does not express the central idea. Humanity was included in Adam at a time when there was as yet no race, so that he was not its head, except in a potential sense. Sin did not affect all his progeny because of his *authority over* them, but because of his *inclusion* of them. "Inness" involves headship, for the father of a family is its head because of his priority and position. But his headship does not necessarily denote the fact that his offspring were in him and are involved in his activities for them. The *rule* of Adam over the earth and its creatures is best expressed by the term headship.

FEDERAL HEADSHIP

"Federal" headship brings before us a theological system which is quite unscriptural and inadequate. "Federal" theology is based on the theory that, before the "fall" man was under a "covenant of works," God having promised mankind, through Adam, the "federal head" of the race, eternal blessedness if he kept His law, but since the "fall" humanity is under a "covenant of grace," and God gratuitously promises the same blessing to all who believe in

Christ, the "Federal Head" of the church, whether by faith in a coming Messiah, in times past, or in the revealed Saviour, since His incarnation. This merely needs to be stated to show how unscriptural it is. These covenants are pure inventions, and are quite unknown to the divine records.

REPRESENTATION

Representation also possesses some elements of truth not found in *substitution.* All for whom a representative stands may be said to be in him. His acts are theirs. He is engaged *for* them. The difference between the two terms may be readily seen if applied to a delegate to a legislative assembly. If he is ill, another may act as his substitute in some of his work. That is one person taking the place of another. As a representative, however, he is supposed to be chosen to act *for* his constituency, not simply as a substitute for each of them. But representation fails to indicate any vital relationship. We did not choose a stranger to save us.

IDENTIFICATION

Identification seems to come still closer to the truth, for mankind and Adam were the same when it was in him. It does not, however, show how this identity came about. We cannot use it freely and say that we are all identical with Adam. There is always the possibility that it will be abused because it has implications which are not in *inclusion.* We were all included in Adam, and consequently are identified with him within certain limits, but we can hardly make the absolute assertion that each human is identical with him. The great diversities which have entered, such as sex and race and idiosyncracy, make it difficult to apply to the individual. One who has been in Adam may be a part of him, but not necessarily wholly the same.

UNIFICATION

Unification is a good word to express one aspect of our relation to Adam and to Christ. Being in Adam, we were one with him, and the race has been treated as though it were Adam in some respects. God speaks of only two men when dealing with life and with making all alive. Unification may express the fact that humanity and Adam are one and humanity and Christ will be one. But it does not explain how. A man and woman may be united and become one in an entirely different way. And the pressing need is to point out how mankind is united to Adam.

SOLIDARITY

Solidarity, a term sometimes used in this connection, is not very acceptable. It denotes a compact, rigid unity, which might well have characterized humanity if sin had not come in. It is true that all men are brothers beneath the skin, but they do not coalesce or combine. There is nothing in this term to indicate the source of their solidarity. It merely expresses a result, which is by no means as evident as it should be. It will be far more apt when used of the new humanity of the future. In Christ the present lack of solidarity will no longer obtain.

God's method of salvation has been much dimmed by terminology which does not reflect the language of the Scriptures. We should trace the details of God's design starting with the revelation that all was created in Christ.

ADAM A TYPE OF CHRIST

The truth that all creatures were in the Son of God's love is difficult to entertain or explain. It is much easier if we bring it down to our level, and see it illustrated in humanity. When Adam sinned we were *in* him. All that we are has come to us from him, so it must have been at least latent in him first. The investigations prompted by the theory of evolution have shown that no living thing transmits anything permanent from its environment or experiences. All comes to it through heredity, so that all we see is the development of potentialities which were given to the first member of each species at its beginning. The whole human race was created in the first Adam. In a very real sense all mankind sinned in him. It is impossible to be of his race and not partake of the penalty of his act. *In* Adam *all* are dying. Not through, but *in.*

In order to realize and appreciate what Christ is to creation, we will use Adam as an illustration. The weakness of this parallel lies in Adam's failure. To strengthen it we propose to relieve Adam temporarily of the disabilities brought about by sin, so that we can see more clearly what Christ would be, in his place, and what Christ is, in His higher and earlier position.

Let us suppose that sin had not come in and that Adam were alive today, the firstborn of humanity, the head of the human race. The fact that he was not *born,* but *created,* would not bar him from the title "firstborn," for that is a faded figure, indicating rank and dignity, even when literally untrue. He would not only be the one in whom the race had its rise, the one *through* whom it came into being, but, in a very real sense, the one *for* whom it exists. All humanity would belong to Adam. All would be members of his family. His honors as head of the race would depend on them. If there were no race he would have no headship. There would be no vital relation between him and his progeny.

Furthermore, let us suppose that, in our day, some spirit being from outside our world should entice a pair to sin and disobedience and death. What would be Adam's attitude toward this incursion into his race? Could he refrain from exerting all his power to recover his lost progeny,

even at the risk of suffering to himself? If he were sinless and powerful (as Christ), would he not take upon himself some of the consequences if he could recover his sons? Even if he found it necessary to judge the culprits, had he the power, would he not bring them back from death?

Now let us change our supposition slightly, so as to accord more fully with the facts. Leaving Adam alone untouched, let us suppose that sin is contagious, that it spreads from one to another until all humanity is inoculated with its deadly virus. What then would be Adam's proper reaction? Immune himself, would it not be torment for him to behold the plight of his progeny? Could he be inhuman enough to stand aside in his holiness and allow his race to go to wreck and ruin? If he were the least bit like Christ he would go far beyond the bounds of justice in his efforts to serve and to succor. Christ is not some cynical spirit from another sphere, unmoved by the plight of humanity. They are His. They are for Him.

Long before humanity was in Adam, all creation was in Christ. He is vitally related to every creature in God's universe. He included creation in a higher sense than Adam incorporated humanity. There is a unity among the genus *Homo* which declares their relationship to Adam. There is a oneness in all creation which proclaims its connection with Christ. Its cohesion is in Him. The scientific theory that the unity of creation points to a single origin finds its answer, not in a primordial germ, but in Christ. All its potentialities were in Him before they became manifest in the creatures of His hand.

SON OF MANKIND

Our Lord continually insisted on His close relation to mankind, as such, apart from redemption. This is concentrated in His title Son of Man, or, better, Son of Mankind, or of Humanity. That this title means far more than the

fact that He was a human being is evident wherever it is used. In Hebrew it could be rendered Son of Adam. This gives the key to its significance. He inherits the headship of the race. All that belonged to Adam, apart from sin, is His. Indeed, seeing that He is sinless and superior to Adam, He claims more authority than we would accord to Adam. Since Adam cannot fulfill his functions in regard to the race it devolves on the Son of Mankind to shoulder them.

The sabbath was made because of mankind, and for this reason the Son of Mankind claims lordship over it (Matt. 12:8). He has authority on earth to pardon sins (Matt.9:6). He came to seek and to save that which Adam lost (Luke 19:10). It is as the Son of Mankind that He suffered and died and rose and will come again in glory to rule the earth. As such all judgment is committed to Him (John 5:27). Every member of the race must stand before Him to give an account of himself. None of this is based on His redemptive work. It is His by creation. Adam, the subordinate source, has failed. Now Adam's Source descends to undo the work that Adam did, and do the work that Adam should have done.

THE NEW HUMANITY

The mode of application of the benefits of Christ's sacrifice is evident from the fact that He heads a new humanity (Eph.2:15; 4:24). He does not start, as Adam did, by wrecking His race. Nor does He commence by preserving a negative innocence. He transmits to each one of the new humanity the positive benefits and infinite values of His great sacrifice. Adam transmitted death, and through death sin. The channel is flesh. Christ transmits life, and through life righteousness and holiness. The channel is spirit.

Not all the saints will die. Not all will be made alive from death. Some will be living when Christ comes. How will they be rid of the presence and practice of sin? They will

be vivified, that is, become deathless. Mortal, they will become immortal. Death will cease to operate in them. They will have superabundant life, so that it will be impossible for them to sin. There is no such thing as the "eradication of the sinful nature." It will not be necessary to take out the propensity to sin. All that is needed is the reversal of the process started by Adam. He doomed us with the process and crisis of death. Vivification is the impartation of superabundant life.

NUMBER AND QUANTITY

To minds accustomed to the idea of substitution, there are two principal points that need explanation, in treatment of the method of salvation. They may be expressed by the commercial terms *number* and *quantity.* How can one Man take the place of so many? We have all heard stories of men giving their lives as substitutes for others. But they could save only one. Then, how can one sacrifice be sufficiently severe to outweigh the weight of all the sins which have ever been committed? In these regards, the theory of substitution is quite inadequate. Instead of explaining, it calls for explanation, and none can be given.

ONE FOR MANY

How can *One* Man settle for the sins of so many? This is, perhaps, the chief problem in the minds of many who stop to think about the matter. It is evident that no mere man can die for another's sins, for he is doomed to death for his own. Nor could a sinless man (if such there were) take the place of the race simply because he had no sin of his own. That would keep him from perdition on his own account, but would not save anyone else. It is evident that Christ's sinlessness was not sufficient to make Him a sacrifice for all. He must be more than spotless to be adequate.

Let us consider our inclusion in Adam in connection

with sin. We know that his transgression brought in death. He became mortal. His life became a slow death process. This he passed on to us. Hence we also sin. It is evident that we were involved in Adam's judgment. If that had been different it would have affected us. If the question of sin had been settled while we were still in Adam we would have profited by it. Let us suppose that, through Christ, Sin had been completely repudiated while we were still in Adam. Then we would all have been saved in him. Here we have a clear illustration of how one can involve all. Adam did not act as a substitute for each of us in sin, nor could he have done so if he had brought salvation. It is because we were and are included in him that his fortunes affect ours.

It is a mistake to suppose that Adam transmits sin. In his case death came through sin. In the case of his descendants, sin comes through the operation of death. The process of dying, due to a lack of vitality, is transmitted by generation, and this leads to sin. Romans 5:12 should read "*death* passed through into all mankind, *on which* all sinned." Men do not sin because of the presence of some esoteric "principle" within them, but because they are deficient in vitality, because they are mortal, undergoing a process of corruption. Human nature, or instinct, and conscience, are not sinful. They may be stifled by sin, but they are arrayed against it (cf Rom.1:26; 2:14,15,27). This is the key to the cure of sin.

Adam cannot save, for he became a sinner. However, to help us realize the place of Christ, we will suppose that he was sinless, and that sin came in some other way. Can we imagine how Adam would feel if he saw his progeny suffering and sorrowing in sin while he himself is exempt? Is it possible that he would not make some effort to deliver his offspring? The question is, would he have the right to stand for all? Could he alone shoulder the responsibility

and deal with sin for the whole human race? He surely could. If, while the whole human family was in him, he affected all for woe, it is evident that he may also effect its weal if he is able. This is the key to our difficulty. The fact that sin entered humanity by one man shows that its exit also may be through One. The first man contained the race. The second Man also, at one time, contained creation in Himself.

Because creation was once in Him, as mankind was in Adam, the Son of God has the right and the responsibility to stand for all. The apostle reasons that the death of Christ affects all. "If One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14). Certain it is that Adam's one act has affected us all. If Another, Who included the race within Himself, acts so as to countervail and overwhelm Adam's sin, that must also eventually affect all.

There is nothing immoral in a Sinless One suffering for the sake of a sinner. It is utterly contrary to all righteousness for Him to suffer as a substitute or instead of a sinner. Adam did not sin as our substitute, but he sinned for us, on our behalf. So Christ suffered for all. As all were in Him in the beginning so they are all seen in Him on Golgotha.

CHRIST MADE SIN

As Adam is entirely unable to save those whom he generated, it devolves on his Creator, Who, not being weakened by sin, is able to cope with it, to conquer it for all. Thus it is that the Son of Mankind came down from heaven to involve Himself in the sin of the race in order to save them from it. Until the cross, He was sinless, but there He was made to be sin itself, with a view to its repudiation at the end of the eons (2 Cor.5:21; Heb.9:26).

We are all suffering as a result of Adam's sin. We realize this through sad experience. It is not necessary to reason it out in order to prove it true. It should not be impossible,

then, to conceive of the opposite. If Adam had achieved some great deed for Yahweh, not merely just or neutral, but excessively meritorious, more so than his transgression was bad, and God had rewarded him for it by multiplying the abundance of his vitality, would he not have transmitted this to us, his posterity? Life may be imparted as well as death. Life may be transmitted, even as death has been.

Moreover, if Adam should do this deed long afterward, let us say at the time that Christ suffered, then all of his posterity from that point would benefit. Would that be just to his previous progeny? Seeing that his future offspring are blessed merely because he is their progenitor, it would be necessary to make it retroactive, for he is progenitor of all. Superabundant life would come to all of his race, merely because they were once in him.

In a figure we have transferred all of this to Adam. It is not at all true of him, but it is of Christ. If sin and death and corruption can come through one man, then righteousness and life and incorruption can come through Another, provided that He also included the race in Himself. If we endure sin's penalties because of one sin we may also enjoy the awards of one act that exceeds the demands of righteousness. If the act that brought in sin was in no way the equal, in duration or quantity, of the results which flowed from it, there is no reason why the act which brings in righteousness and blessing should be commensurate, in duration or quantity, with the infinite fruitage which follows it.

As an aid in comprehending the difference in magnitude between Adam's act and Christ's sacrifice, let us consider the rivers of blood which flowed from the veins of innocent animals, merely to set forth His supreme sacrifice. There is nothing trivial here. Millions of animals were deprived of their lives simply to recall to mind the act that saves. Each one of these sacrifices was a far more serious affair than that which took place in the garden. Adam destroyed

insensate fruit by eating it. The priests destroyed a sentient animal of much greater value and higher organization, simply to suggest a picture of Christ's sacrifice.

I do not think we have a right to expatiate upon the sufferings of these animals. I do not believe that it is God's purpose that they should suffer, even to portray His passion. A special method of killing was provided, so that they should not suffer. This consisted in draining out the blood at once. There is no sensation where there is no blood. Soul, or sensation (not life), is in the blood (Lev.17:11). Animals properly sacrificed do not suffer much. But the blood was not drained from the great Victim until after His sufferings were over. He suffered beyond our power to comprehend.

The true formula of God's method of salvation is given us in the fifth chapter of Romans. It may be arranged in a variety of ways, thus:

Adam's act *is to* Christ's act *as* Adam's effects *are to* Christ's effects.

Adam's act *is to* Adam's effects *as* Christ's act *is to* Christ's effects.

Christ's effects *are to* Christ's act *as* Adam's effects *are to* Adam's act.

This formula, for it is really only one, is worthy of our most earnest meditation. Our minds are unable to compute the staggering total of human woe. The fruit of Christ's travail is the unknown quantity which we wish to apprehend. How shall we attain a true estimate of the effects of the sufferings of Christ? *By comparing them with the pleasure of Adam.* The eating of the forbidden fruit gave Adam a micrometric measure of agreeable sensations. Compare this with the sufferings of the cross, physical torment for those long hours, spiritual agony due to God's withdrawal,

all raised to the highest degree by the exquisite sensibilities of the Victim and His previous experience of divine glory and pleasure.

As *much more* as Christ's sacrifice surpasses Adam's act in its quantitative values, so *much more* will be the measure of its effects over those of Adam's sin. As a result human sin dwindles down into a trivial affair *compared to* the blessings which are due from the cross of Christ. Let no one misunderstand me. I have suffered agonies in the last few years. As I write I am in pain. I do not minimize human sin or the suffering which it entails. But I do magnify the work of our Saviour. There is not much danger that my readers would believe me if I should say that, in the absolute sense, sin's effects are trivial. Not many are really deluded as to that. But, great as sin's havoc is, the happiness to come will dwarf it into insignificance.

This is best realized when we try to expatiate on the delight which came to Adam while he ate the offending fruit. Hardly anyone has ever thought of that. It seems of so little consequence. Yet it is the only pleasure which came to him in introducing sin. It is the only act which we can logically compare with the sufferings of Christ. It must sustain the same relation to it as the sufferings of humanity sustain to the bliss brought by His sacrifice. The quantitative difference between Adam's act and that of Christ is enormous. One is almost the least of pleasures, the other the greatest of agonies. So the ravages of sin will appear to us in the future bliss. They will be but light afflictions compared with the tremendous weight of blessedness which will come from the accursed cross (*cp* Rom.8:18; 2 Cor.4:17).

Ultimate reconciliation was first in the heart of God. There never would have been any estrangement without it. Therefore *enmity was introduced in a manner closely corresponding with the way it is overcome.* Because sal-

vation was planned to be the great achievement of the Son of God's love, the One in Whom creation first came into being, therefore sin was planned to reach the race through the failure of the one in whom it was secondarily created. Adam's offense is an inverted silhouette, a shadowgraph reversed, of the sacrifice of Christ. In their main outlines, their outstanding features, they are alike, though as far apart as the poles in moral values.

We may suppose that sin could have been introduced in a different way. It might have been limited to Adam, and each of his progeny might have been tested as he was, so that it would have been an individual failure. Adam might have had a considerable progeny before his transgression, who would have been freed from the effects of his offense. So the race might have been broken up into groups or units. But God did not arrange it so. Sin must enter through one man because it was to be settled through One. The relationship between Adam and his descendants must correspond to that which existed between God's Son and creation. Both could act on behalf of all who had been in them.

How can *One* Man settle the sins of so many? And how can one sacrifice be sufficiently severe to outweigh all the sins which have ever been committed? In these regards, the theory of substitution is quite inadequate.

THE DURATION OF SUFFERING

The theory of substitution demands that Christ should suffer, in time and extent, as much as the sum of all the suffering which it saves. An explanation of this has seldom been attempted. The usual suggestion is that the capacity of the Sufferer was so great that it was possible to concentrate it upon a single Victim, and compress it into the short period of His agony. This is most unsatisfactory, especially as to time. We cannot imagine that the anguish due to billions of beings for considerable periods (let alone for eternity), could be so condensed. It is beyond all comprehension. It appears to be both illogical and immoral.

If substitution is true, and eternal torment the destiny of all who do not believe on Him, He must, at the very least, suffer eternal torment to redeem a single soul. To save more, He should suffer this much multiplied by the number of the lost, not only in amount but in duration. If we see that eternal torment is not true, but that each sinner suffers only for the limited time between his resurrection and the second death, being *judged* according to his acts, the matter comes nearer the sphere of rational inquiry. We cannot comprehend even a single eternity, much less billions of them, but we can compute billions of periods not more than a hundred years in duration. Yet this is not much relief. Our Saviour did not and will not suffer many hundreds of billions of years in order to save His people or the race.

The quantity of His suffering is beyond computation, but the duration is well within our ken. His spiritual agony due to God's forsaking Him on the cross did not exceed three hours. If, for the multitudes who are saved by Him, each ought to have endured it for their fraction of the time, it would be so short that not one of them would feel it. Human functions are not quick enough to sense a hundredth of a second. If we divide three hours, or one hundred eighty minutes, or only about ten thousand seconds, by the billions who will be saved, each period would be practically imperceptible. There is no possible parallel between the time periods.

THE QUANTITY OF SUFFERING

The eating of fruit is not an uncommon or important action. In Adam's case its fearfully destructive power lay wholly in its relation to God. Apart from His prohibition it was a trivial incident. After God had spoken, it became

a sin, a transgression, an offense, a channel of unutterable woe to humankind. So with its counterpart. Many men have been executed. Some have been crucified, but they were already enemies of God. When Christ was crucified, it was the word of God that intervened and made Him accursed (Gal.3:13,14). Its relation to God changed it from a death to a sacrifice, charged with infinite power for good, with a scope unutterably wider and higher than Adam's sin.

It is evident that any attempt to show that our Saviour suffered the commercial equivalent of that which His creatures were doomed to endure is absolutely hopeless. It is illogical and unnatural. The true equation should read like this: As Adam's act is to the sum total of its effects, so Christ's suffering is to that which it accomplishes. We must compare Christ's act with Adam's offense, not with its effects on mankind. Mathematically speaking, the formula for substitution has ignored the main members of the equation, so that the formula is insoluble. It may be expressed thus:

Christ's act equals Adam's effects minus that endured by unbelievers.

His accomplishment is thus shown to be *much less* than Adam's, contrary to the truth.

God gives us the basic principles of His judgment of mankind in the second chapter of Romans. He will pay each one according to his acts. Those who endure in good acts, seeking glory and honor and incorruption, will get eonian life just as surely as others will get fury, affliction and distress, if they effect evil. The fact that no one qualifies for eonian life does not destroy the principle that God's judgments are just. He rewards as well as condemns with an even hand. If Adam's sin produces such a fearful crop of distress, the sacrifice of Christ must reap a harvest of untold happiness.

If we wish to understand sin's exit we should consider

its entrance. Adam enjoyed the pleasure of eating the forbidden fruit for a few moments, and it resulted in all the misery and woe which torments humanity. He did not experience an hour's pleasure to compensate for each hour of our pain. There is no comparison between the duration and extent of his indulgence and the length and amount of human suffering which it has occasioned. He was in no sense our substitute on the debit side of the account. Neither is Christ our substitute on the credit side.

It is a poor rule which does not work both ways. If Adam's momentary indulgence was effective in producing such stupendous suffering and loss because the race was in him, why should not the prolonged anguish of Christ operate to insure much greater happiness and gain, since He is the Son of God, in Whom all was created? His work avails for all, not because of its bulk or duration, but because of the potentiality of His relation to those for whom His sacrifice was offered.

If any comparison is to be instituted, we should note how very mild was Adam's enjoyment of the pleasure of sin. Christ's sufferings were immeasurably greater. No one would endure them for a billion such experiences as Adam had. Then, if Adam's mild act brought disaster to the race, shall not the awful sorrows of Golgotha retrieve the loss and immeasurably more? The Scriptures testify that this is true, hence we may assume that the comparison and reasoning are right. Christ's sacrifice brings us infinitely more blessing than we lost through Adam's sin.

BEYOND THE DEMANDS OF JUSTICE

If the sacrifice of Christ had risen above the strict standard of right just as much as Adam's offense had sunk below it, it would have sufficed for the recovery of the race. It would have eventually cancelled the effects of sin. But there would have been no gain. All of the pro-

cess would have been in vain. But Christ's work soared gloriously high above the demands of justice, far further than Adam's offense was beneath it. Hence there is no mere recovery, no return to innocence, no new probation on Adamic ground. On the basis of the knowledge of evil there is the appreciation of good and of the superexcess of grace which was made possible by the ravages of sin.

This point is of surpassing importance. The act which afflicts us was below the standard of justice. The act which graces us was immeasurably above the demands of righteousness. Christ's sacrifice was not merely just. Right cannot neutralize wrong. It was infinitely more than that. If Adam had never sinned again, if he had done many signal acts of justice, none of these would counteract his transgression. It brought him into a condition where he could not do anything of sufficient virtue to cancel his offense.

An act which so far transcends justice must appear unjust to those out of sympathy with it. The rationalist, who knows nothing of the love of Christ, is right in claiming that substitution is immoral. Yet even he will go far beyond the bounds of strict justice to save his own child from harm, and never think of that as aught but the very highest phase of morality. It is because saints have lost the sense of their relationship to God and His Son that they have floundered so feebly when they unfold the work of our Saviour. They fail to accord Him His place in creation, hence cannot understand the manner of His salvation.

Every time we transfer something to another without compensation it is, strictly speaking, a departure from justice. Whether it is injustice or kindness depends on our attitude toward the recipient. If we give unwillingly, moved by coercion, it is wrong. If we give freely, motivated by love, it is more than just, but not unjust. If Christ was dragged to death, an innocent and unwilling substitute, to expiate our guilt, it was the greatest wrong that has ever

been perpetrated. It is only the love of Christ for us and His devotion to God which redeems the cross from being the greatest crime that was ever committed. He had done nothing to deserve it. On the contrary, He was worthy of blessing and glory. He loved much, therefore He gave His soul and Himself for the objects of His affection.

THE TIME OF SACRIFICE

If he could have borne it, the suffering due to sin might have been laid upon Adam while we were still in him. Then we would have escaped, but we would not have learned the lesson which it is sent to teach. That was neither the right time nor the right person, but it would have affected all. Similarly sin could have been counteracted long before, when creation was still in the Son, even though it was unknown. He was the right Person and it would have affected all, but there would have been no beneficial results. It was only after sin had operated sufficiently to provide a contrast for good that the time was ripe for the sacrifice of Christ.

God could have repudiated sin and saved all immediately after the great Sacrifice had been accepted. What more is needed? Is anything still to be added to Christ's sacrificial work? He could do this at the commencement of the millennium, or of the new creation. Why does He not do so? Is it not clear that God deliberately delays the disposal of sin in order that it may accomplish the work assigned to it in His intention? He even leaves it to afflict the lives of His saints until their vivification.

THE DEATH OF THE CROSS

Christ emptied Himself of the form of God for the express purpose of becoming the Sacrifice for sin. Sin involves suffering and death, hence He took a mortal form, in which alone these could be endured. During His life and

ministry He suffered from contact with the sins of others. But it is evident that men could not make Him to be sin without the aid and consent of God. In all their hatred He retained the smile and confidence of His Father, until He deliberately allowed Himself to be placed under the curse of the cross.

The key to the sacrifice of Christ lies in the *manner* of His death. Had He been stoned, according to Jewish custom, He would not have borne the sin of the world. God could not have made Him to be sin. But, because He was gibbeted, in Roman style, He came under the curse of Deity. "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree" is God's own mandate, made to fit this very case. This is what changes the whole scene from a martyrdom, to a Sacrifice. It is *God's* act in forsaking Him on the cross, which constitutes the basis of our salvation.

THE SON OF GOD'S LOVE

In conclusion, let us look at God's salvation from the divine standpoint, ere sin entered the scene. Since He is Supreme, sin could not insinuate itself apart from His purpose. Since sin is to be introduced to form a background for the revelation of His grace and love, He would surely provide for its control and conquest before it is allowed to play its part. This was done when *all was created in the Son of His love.* If men were logical, this statement alone would absolutely guarantee a universal reconciliation. Given a *God* worthy of the name, and a creation conceived in His *love,* and eternal torment is a noxious nightmare. Even annihilation is utterly subversive of His deity or a direct denial of His love. Both death and suffering must be temporary and serve His purpose, or else He is a hateful and impotent fiend, a fool who cannot satisfy his own affections.

God's method of salvation was inaugurated long before men were lost. The precious blood of Christ was foreknown

before the disruption of the world (1 Peter 1:20). Later on, when sin was introduced, the process was copied from the earlier mode of salvation. In effect God provided the manner and means of salvation before there was any need for a Saviour. He operated through only two, His Son and the head of the human race (*cf* Rom.5:12-18). First He created all in His Beloved—which assures their ultimate weal—and later He puts all mankind in Adam—which involves their temporary woe. Their inclusion in Adam made them partakers of the effects of his offense. Their earlier inclusion in the Son involves them in the benefits of His sacrifice. The details of the application of His salvation during the eons should not obscure the universal ultimate, when the eons are over. All were in Adam, and are lost. All were in the Son of His love and shall be saved.

"Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome . . . that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers" (1 Tim.4:9,10).

The key word is *in,* or *inclusion.* If anyone was not in Adam he is not a sinner and needs no salvation. If anyone was not in the Son of His love he will not be saved. But, since *all were* created in the Beloved, so long as my mind retains its sanity I shall assert that God Himself will lose His deity if He cannot satisfy His own affections by delivering those on whom His heart has been fixed since the very dawn of creation. May God Himself saturate our very being with the triumphant truth that *He is love, in creation* as well as in redemption. Creation was not the act of a neutral, insensible Power, without aim or object, but the achievement of a heart-hungry Father, seeking to satisfy the longings of latent love, Who first assures the salvation of His creatures ere He lost them for a time, that they might discern the depths of His affection and learn the lesson of His love.

A. E. Knoch

FOR OR INSTEAD?

IT is a striking fact that God never speaks of Christ as dying "in our room and stead," or that He endured the cross as our "substitute." The mere statement of this fact is deemed by some as a thrust at "evangelical" truth. But in truth, the deepest spirituality and most evangelical doctrine sees in these unsound words a distinct menace to the glorious evangel of the happy God.

There is a great difference between acting *for* or acting *instead of* another. *Instead* implies two parties on the same level and of similar qualifications. A mother does many things *for* her child which the infant cannot do for itself. When it advances in years and has duties of its own the mother may, at times, take one of its tasks and do it in its place. Yet even then the very fact of her relationship involves the thought of favor shown by the greater to the lesser.

To reverse the situation, we may all speak *on behalf of* God and His Word, but woe be to us if we speak *instead* of it! Job's friends displaced the divine philosophy by their own, but Elihu spoke on His behalf. Only God's prophets, like Moses, may speak in His stead, for he was made a god to Pharaoh.

THE PREPOSITION *huper*

The following are most of the passages in which the precious preposition *for*^{s} (*huper*) is used of the work of Christ on our behalf. It will be readily seen that it is used far more freely than any other connective to indicate the relation of His work to us. It is of prime importance that we appreciate the full import of this preposition. We use *hyper* freely

in English in its literal meaning of OVER (in the genitive) and *above* (in the accusative). Morally, it means, *in behalf of, for the sake of, for*^{s}. Read over the list and see it never means *instead of.*

huper, OVER, above, for the sake of, for^{s}

Rom.	5: 6	For Christ . . . died *for the sake of* the irreverent
	7	For hardly *for the sake of* a just man will anyone be dying: for, *for the sake of* a good man, perhaps, someone may even be daring to die
	8	while we are still sinners, Christ died *for our sakes.*
	8:32	He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up *for* us all
	14:15	Do not, by your food, destroy that one *for whose sake* Christ died.
1 Cor.	5: 7	For our Passover also, Christ, was sacrificed *for our sakes.*
	11:24	This is My body, which is broken *for your sakes.*
	15: 3	Christ died *for* our sins according to the scriptures
2 Cor.	5:14	if One died *for the sake of* all, consequently all died
	15	And He died *for the sake of* all to the One dying and being roused *for their sakes*
2 Cor.	5:21	For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering *for our sakes*
Gal.	1: 4	Who gives Himself *for* our sins
	2:20	the Son of God, Who loves me, and gives Himself up *for* me.
	3:13	Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse *for our sakes*
Eph.	5: 2	Christ also loves you, and gives Himself up *for* us
	25	Christ also loves the ecclesia, and gives Himself up *for its sake*
1 Thess.	5:10	Who died *for our sakes* that, whether we are watching or drowsing, we should be living at the same time together with Him.
1 Tim.	2: 6	Who is giving Himself a correspondent ransom *for* all

Titus	2:14	Who gives Himself *for* us, that He should be redeeming us
Heb.	2: 9	so that . . . He should be tasting death *for the sake of* everyone
1 Peter	2:21	Christ also suffered *for your sakes*
	4: 1	Christ, then, having suffered *for our sakes*

On two occasions our translators have rendered it *in one's stead.* Both are glaringly faulty, even on the surface. In Philemon (13) Paul recognizes the inferior station of Onesimus. Philemon never would have served Paul as a slave. Onesimus did not take his place, but acted on his behalf. We do not pray *in Christ's stead:* Be conciliated to God (2 Cor.5:20). We are not taking His place, but speaking on His behalf. We are not equals. We cannot do His work. We are His slaves. He is our Lord. The very thought of doing aught in His stead is abhorrent to all who know themselves and a little of His supremacy.

Should we be unable to fix the meaning of *huper,* there are a few passages in which we could lower the sense to *instead of* and not detect our error. But there are many instances where such a meaning is absolutely impossible. Christ did not give Himself *instead of* our sins (Gal.1:4). How could we claim to suffer in Christ's stead? (Phil.1:29).

THE PREPOSITION *anti*

It is well known that the word *anti,* INSTEAD, has gradually changed so that it now means *against* in English. Even in the Scriptures, it does not cling to the literal *instead* at all times, but broadens into secondary meanings, just as *huper,* OVER, is used for *in behalf of, for the sake of.*

As a limited number of connectives must do duty for the whole field of thought and link all kinds of relations, it is obvious that, in some cases, where there is no exact link available, the one nearest in sense must be used. So that the connectives expand their meaning to include adjacent spheres of thought. They also have the tendency to become

fixed to certain ideas, so that, in English, the connective is practically determined by the word with which it stands, even when another seems more logical.

Literally, the law said "an eye *instead of* an eye" (Matt. 5:38). But this suggests that the aggressor's eye was *substituted* for his victim's, so that the eye of the victim was spared, and only the aggressor's eye was destroyed. This was not true. Both eyes perished. One eye did not replace the other. The law demanded an equivalent, not a substitute.

The sense of substitution clings to *anti* in some of its usages, as "*instead* of a fish will he be handing him a serpent?" (Luke 11:11), but far more frequently it loses the idea of replacing or replanting. From the fact that that which substitutes for another is usually of the same kind or measure or value, it is used of any equivalent or corresponding entity, that which will tip the opposite side of the scales.

The common phrase "evil *for* (*anti*) evil" (Rom.12:17; 1 Thess.5:15; 1 Peter 3:9) cannot be rendered "evil *instead of* evil," in the sense of substitution. An evil return is the same in kind. It corresponds to the original evil, but does not take its place. So also "grace *for* grace" (John 1:16). The grace which the disciples received was of like quality and measure as that bestowed on Christ, but it was, in no sense a substitute for it.

Anti is usually used in denoting the price of a thing, the money equivalent. If we should pay ten dollars for a Bible we do not give the money *because* we should give the Bible, but because it is its equivalent in value. The same is true of a ransom. When our Lord and Peter paid the half shekel as a ransom for (*anti*) them (Matt.17:27), it was not a substitute for their souls. The Septuagint denotes the relationship by the genitive case (Exodus 30:12) and by the preposition *peri,* which means *about, concerning* (Exodus 30:16).

There is a most striking passage, in which both *anti* and *huper* are used, which will help us. The Man, Christ Jesus,

is giving Himself a correspondent ransom (*antilutron*) for (*huper*) all (1 Tim.2:6). The price paid for all is much greater than for many. His soul was given for many. He gives *Himself* for all. The figure is taken from the atonement money. What He was to the saints in Israel He will become to all mankind.

The force of *anti* in connection with a ransom is fixed for us by the compound word *antilutron,* INSTEAD-LOOS-ener, correspondent ransom. A study of all the compounds with *anti* will convince us that it seldom keeps its literal sense of substitution. For instance, *antilegō* INSTEAD-say, does not mean to say something in place of another, but to *contradict* him; *antimisthia,* INSTEAD-HIRE, is not what is given in place of wages, but the equivalent, the *recompense.* So *antilutron* is not what is given in place of a ransom, but an equivalent or *correspondent* ransom.

This is confirmed by the fact that it is followed by *huper, in behalf of.* It is inconceivable how Christ should be Himself a substitute in the place of all. We can entertain such a thought when confined to the sacrifices under the law but that He Himself should take the place of His creatures is not only unscriptural but irrational. He is unspeakably greater than men. He gives Himself on their behalf but not in their place, as their substitute.

A RANSOM FOR MANY

There are two passages which, on their face, seem to teach that Christ, as a sacrifice for sin, suffered instead of (*anti*) those He saves. These are Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45, which read, "the Son of Mankind came to give His soul a ransom for (*anti*) many." We have purposely stated the matter as it *seems* to those accustomed to creedal evangelism, for they do not realize that their whole case lies in taking these texts out of their contexts and changing the wording to suit their ideas. Indeed, we cannot

blame them, for the Authorized Version translators have drastically altered the sense by substituting *life* for *soul,* as though our Lord was not aware of what He was saying, and they find it necessary to correct Him. It is absolutely necessary that we read the context of this passage, so we reproduce it herewith:

"Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, worshiping and requesting something from Him. Now He said to her, 'What are you wanting?' She is saying to Him, 'Say that these, my two sons, should be sitting, one at Thy right and one at Thy left, in Thy kingdom.'

"Now Jesus, answering, said, 'You are not aware what you are requesting. Are you able to be drinking the cup which I am about to be drinking?' They are saying to Him, 'We are able.' He is saying to them, 'Of My cup, indeed, you shall be drinking. Yet to be seated at My right and at the left is not Mine to give, but is for whom it has been made ready by My Father.'

"And when the ten hear, they resent about the two brothers. Now Jesus, calling them to Him, said, 'You are aware that the chiefs of the nations are lording it over them, and the great men are coercing them. Not thus is it among you. But whoever should be wanting to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever may be wanting to be foremost among you, let him be your slave, even as the Son of Mankind came, not to be served, but to serve and to give His soul a ransom for many' " (Matt.20:20-28, CV).

Let us then provisionally point out what these passages do *not* teach. They do *not* speak of the *death* of Christ. He gives His *soul,* not His *life.* There is nothing said about *salvation. Service,* not salvation, is in view. *Sin* is not at all before us, but lordship and subservience. *Sacrifice* is not here, though our tendency to insert the thought everywhere is hard to be controlled. When we see what is *not* there, these passages no longer intrude into the great doc-

trine concerning the method of God's salvation, and we are free to get a clear conception of the truth as set forth by the apostle Paul.

The context, which alone can guide us to the contents of these passages, is always ignored. Very few intelligent believers associate these words with the preceding exhortation. Instead, this saying is given a new setting, in the midst of evangelical teaching which was not due until after our Lord's sacrifice. At that time the disciples did not and would not consider His impending death, and they could not have associated these words with it. We, of course, cannot do otherwise, if we corrupt the translation to read *life* in place of *soul.*

This is a tragic illustration of the effect of scholarly translations. Any scholar will tell you that *soul* means *life* sometimes, for the Greek lexicons say so! In each case this word throws a false color over the whole passage, divorces it from its context, and injects it into a sphere of truth to which it does not belong, and then finally, so controls and distorts the so-called doctrine of "atonement" (to which the passages do not refer) that the plainest statements on that subject are denied, the special connective which is used is laboriously altered to agree with that in these passages, and any statement of the truth is made to seem unscriptural and false, so that honest seekers decry it and denounce those who offer them just what they are seeking.

The subject of the paragraph is twofold, *service* and *slavery.* It is *not* service and *sacrifice,* as we usually assume. The chiefs of the nations lord it over their inferiors, and their great men use coercion. Greatness, in Christ's kingdom, consists in serving. Superiority consists in slaving. He would have His apostles, all of whom desired to be great, and wanted the highest place like James and John, make this their own by humble service. Then He gives Himself as their Example, so that they could follow in His

footprints. He came to serve, not to be served. He came in the form of a slave, giving His soul as a ransom to free those who were in bondage to the law and the beggarly elements of the world. This is not their salvation from sin. That is presupposed. We are freed from law (if we were under it) by death to it. The *Circumcision* find freedom in following in His steps.

Our principal objection to the doctrine of substitution lies in the fact that it degrades our Lord to the level of those whom He saves. That objection cannot hold here, however, for He assumes the lowest place, being seen as a slave. As such He *serves* others, He does not save *them.* The ransom here brought before us is that of slaves. "Many," even His disciples, were held in involuntary servitude. Instead of being sons of God, they were in bondage under the ceremonial observances. The law made them slaves. He gave up His glory and entered into their place (*anti*) that this might be their ransom, so that they could go free until the jubilee.

It is very difficult for us, sinners of the gentiles, basing all on Christ's death and tracing all to His resurrection, to realize the status of His disciples before His sufferings on Golgotha. That they did not realize the necessity of His sacrifice is quite evident, for they did everything possible to prevent it. Indeed, the early proclamation of the kingdom had no sacrificial note in it. He did not speak of His suffering until the nation had rejected the proffered King. We look upon Christ entirely from the standpoint of His death. To us He is a personal Saviour first. To them this came last. At this juncture they were occupied with *reigning,* and He tells them that He is not only serving them but ransoming them from slavery to the law by taking the form of a slave.

I well remember the shock I received when I first

noticed the word "coming out" in John 10:9. I had been thoroughly indoctrinated with the idea that, if we entered in through Christ, we could never come out *and be lost.* Then the whole chapter distressed me. Finally, I saw that I was forcing into it ideas entirely foreign to the theme. It is beautiful as a figure of Israel, but it is most incongruous if we seek to distort it to fit the phraseology of some of our evangelicals today.

It was not until I had learned the true meaning of *soul* that I had any idea of the true force of *giving* the soul. Even after I found out that the word was *soul,* and not *life,* the thought persisted that the Lord was speaking of His death to ransom sinners. When I saw that I had no right to inject the idea of death it dawned on my mind that the giving of His soul consisted in taking the place of a slave. He was entitled to enjoy all the sensations which come with honor, wealth, and power. Instead of this He experiences the deprivations which accompany weakness, poverty and degradation. This *sentient experience* (such is the force of *soul*), in which He *correspondingly takes the place* (*anti*) of many, is the ransom which liberates them from slavery, *not redeems them from sin.*

I realize the tremendous power of theological tradition, so that the preceding explanation will appeal to very few, at first. I beg of them to read and reread the connection, time and again, in order to remove some of the false associations which cling to the passages. It is well to study them in their larger contexts. Note that they occur only in the first two synoptics with their narrow outlook. *They have no bearing on the bulk of mankind.* The "many" are not all. The Circumcision, under law, could not fulfill it. He *takes their place* under law and fulfills it for them. Here is the force of *anti.* This is not what He does for sinners in regard to their sin.

SUBSTITUTION

The idea of substitution was forced on my attention soon after I believed. What especially impressed my mind was the statement, by one presumably an adept in Greek, that the preposition *huper,* which is so often used to express the relation of Christ's work to His people, meant *in place of.* Since then I have examined every occurrence of every connective in the Greek Scriptures, some of them many times, and I have found that few facts are more evident than that *huper,* literally OVER, does *not* mean *for* in the sense of *in stead of,* but *on behalf of, for the sake of.* Applied to so great a theme and so exalted a Person, the distinction is of the utmost importance. God does much *for* His creatures, but He never acts in their stead. Christ, also, is so high above us that He cannot take our place, but must suffer on our behalf.

An instructive passage which gives us a clue to the usage of *huper* is found in Luke 9:50: "Who is not against you is *for* you. "Another is John 10:11 "The ideal shepherd is laying down his soul *for the sake of* the sheep." Another, Romans 8:26: "the spirit itself is pleading *for* us." Another, Romans 8:31: "If God is *for* us, who is against us?" 2 Corinthians 13:8: "For we are not able for anything against the truth but *for the sake* of the truth." Ephesians 3:1: "Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus *for* you, the nations . . ." Philippians 1:29: ". . . not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering *for* His *sake* also . . ." First Timothy 2:1: "I am entreating . . . that petitions . . . be made *for* all mankind, for kings . . ." These, and many others, show that *huper* cannot mean "in the room and stead," but *for the sake of, on behalf of,* without any idea of substitution or equivalence whatever.

The fact that "substitution" has such a large place in evangelical theology is in keeping with its poverty and lack of appreciation of the overwhelming value of Christ's sac-

rifice. It is in keeping with such terms as "atonement." It rises no higher in its conception of His glorious offering than a *remedy* for sin. Indeed, a "substitutionary atonement" is supposed by many to be the highest description of His work, when it is fitted only for the temporary results of animal sacrifice under the law.

Let us revel in the truth that Christ's death was *for our sakes,* not "in our room and stead." Endless reasoning will never satisfy the difficulties of His so-called "substitution." All these mental objections flee once we give Him His true place, so high above us that He could not take our place, but, in amazing condescension, suffered for our sakes. The language of theology drags Him down to equality with us. Let us seek to restore Him to it is true supremacy.

A. E. Knoch

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST

In the preceding articles, A. E. Knoch takes up the important issue of *how* Christ's sacrifice saves. How does the death of Christ on the cross become the means of the justification of the sinner and the reconciliation of the enemy of God? Is it because, as many have said, He thus became our Substitute, dying in our stead? Or is it because, as the One in Whom humanity was created, He becomes the One in Whom we are delivered (Eph.1:7)? Is His love for us deeply rooted as a matter of relationship by creation? Is it that even as Adam's one act of sin affects all humanity because we are his descendants by generation, thus also Christ's one act of righteousness in His death on the cross, affects all humanity because all were in Christ, by creation, before we were in Adam? The subject of our inclusion in Christ is pivotal to our understanding of the evangel. In that Christ died for all, all died (2 Cor.5:14). So also, in that He was roused from among the dead, no longer dying, but living to God, all shall be vivified *in Him* (Rom.6:10; 1 Cor.15:22).

But that glorious consummation, made certain by the death and rousing of Christ, is still far in the future. Nevertheless, already, in spirit, God has united us, who are believing, together with Christ in His death and life. That is the theme of the next article on the opening verses of Romans 8.

CONSEQUENTLY NOW

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER of Romans brings the evangel of God concerning His Son to a climax of grace and peace. The believer will turn to it often in the midst of the groaning and travailing of the present eon and the infirmity of the flesh. For we need constant reminding of God's giving of His Son for us and the assurance that He is working all together for good. In this there is spiritual strength for our daily walk, for joy and peace and endurance.

CONSEQUENTLY

But what is said here does not stand alone. It is solidly built on the first seven chapters. The immediate connection is made by the word "consequently" in the first verse, which continues the "consequently" of 7:25 where Paul enslaves His mind to what he calls "God's law." This, in turn, is in consequence of God's rescue of grace for which Paul is thanking God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

By the words,"God's law," Paul does not mean "the law of God" given to Israel at Sinai, referred to in Romans 7:22 and 8:7. His enslavement of mind is to the message of the obedience of Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.5:19; 6:16), and of the righteousness of God now made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.3:21,22; 6:18). It is the type of teaching to which we are given over (Rom.6:17). "God's law" is the evangel of God concerning His Son.

Paul's devotion, as a loving slave, to the evangel is the outworking of His thanksgiving to God for His grace which rescues us from sin and death through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

With this in view we exult with Paul that nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. For by means of God's spirit we have been united with Christ in His death and life, and thus, in spirit, we stand before God, freed from the law of sin and death. This is our position in spirit, and our sinfulness and mortality in the flesh cannot separate us from it.

For what was impossible to the law given at Sinai (because of the infirmity of our flesh), God did in sending His own Son for the condemnation of sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law shall indeed be fulfilled in us.

As we focus on this evangel, our disposition is moved from fear and wretchedness in the direction of God's spirit of love and life, and Christ's spirit of humble submission to God's will and confidence in His Father's goodness, in which we cry, "Abba, Father!"

For we are taking account of the expectation God has prepared for us, that of the glorious freedom of the children of God (which will ultimately embrace all), and we are awaiting our part in it all with endurance.

We do groan and travail in our present infirmity, but as we do we pray to God with an awareness that He is working all together toward the end of good.

JUSTIFICATION AND INCLUSION

Paul has not moved away from the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Even as he writes about our walk and disposition he continues to evangelize the evangel for which God has severed him from the former apostles. For that is the foundation of our faith and the source of spiritual power for our walk. It is a message of pure grace, apart from any law imposed on us to carry out. But it is centered on God's law of love which *He* has carried out in the giving of His Son. This is the essential basis of our life today as well as of that to come.

Consequently, Paul writes:

Nothing, **consequently,** *is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. (Not according to flesh are they walking, but according to spirit.)*[1] *For the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus frees you from the law of sin and death. For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit.* (Rom.8:1-4)

Here, in the first verse, are two profound and power-packed graces which now have been secured and which vibrate with spirit in our lives: (1) Nothing is now condemnation to us as we stand before the all-righteous and all-powerful and all-knowing God. This takes us back to Romans 3:21-5:21; it is *justification,* joined with *conciliation.* And (2) this grace is granted to us who, in spirit, have been placed before God *in Christ Jesus.* This takes us back to Romans 6:3-7:6; it is our "baptism into Christ," into His death and life, in which we are, in spirit, "dead indeed to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." A fitting term for this grace is "Inclusion."[2]

These two aspects of the evangel are reworded in verse 2 in inverted order: In spirit we have been given life in Christ Jesus (Inclusion) which frees us from the law of sin and death (Justification). In the center of his heralding of these astounding gratuities concerning our position in Christ Jesus, it appears that Paul inserted, by anticipa-

1. This line is absent at this point in the earliest manuscripts and references to this section of Romans, but is found in many later ones. If Paul originally included it here as well as at the end of verse 4, I believe it should be treated as a parenthesis.
2. *cf* the article entitled, "Substitution or Inclusion," pp.51-75.

tion, the line concerning our walk, which concludes verse 4. We must always relate our walk to God's grace in justifying us through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus and to our inclusion in Christ Jesus in His death and life, in which He is no longer dying, but living to God. What is said about walk here is placed securely within the evangel that nothing is condemnation to us, who are freed from the law of sin and death, in that we are in Christ Jesus and are given life in Him. That is where the matter of our present conduct must be kept, lest it slip away and become attached to the law of Moses as it is with the Circumcision evangel.

The evangel reveals that we stand before God justified and conciliated, and united with Christ Jesus in His death and resurrection. This is grace. That nothing is condemnation to us is grace. That we are spiritually positioned in Christ Jesus and have life in Him is grace. That we are thus freed from the law of sin and death is grace. That we shall be fulfilling the righteous requirement of the law is grace. And it is this grace (not the law given at Sinai) which is standing over us even in our present lives with powerful effect on our walk.

The basis of all these operations of grace is delineated in verse 3. It is the evangel that God sent His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh for the condemnation of sin in the flesh, that is, for its final elimination from humanity. Christ was made to be sin (the Antitype of the sin offering), that we might become God's righteousness in Him (2 Cor.5:21).

NOTHING IS NOW CONDEMNATION

We are justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. By means of God's spirit we are baptized into Christ Jesus, into His death and into His life, in which He is no longer dying, but living to God. Nothing is now condemnation to us, for we are in Christ Jesus. In spirit, we stand before God as Christ stands, roused from among the dead (*cf* Rom.6:9,10).

Let us, like Paul, enslave our minds to this word and achievement of God.

The "nothing" at the beginning of Romans 8 is an absolute negative. We see this again at the end of this chapter. It is in view of God's law of grace, in that God spares *not* His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, that we become persuaded that absolutely *neither* death *nor* life, *nor* messengers, *nor* sovereignties, *nor* the present, *nor* what is impending, *nor* powers, *nor* height, *nor* depth, *nor* any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Rom.8:31-39).

Condemnation comes about because of sin. But we have been put to death in the death of Christ, so that sin is not reckoned to us. "For one who dies has been justified from sin" (Rom.6:7).

Hence, "Condemnation is utterly out of the question for all in Christ Jesus. This is infinitely more than the atonement or shelter provided for sin by the sacrifices offered under the law. It is far beyond the pardon, or forgiveness, contained in the proclamation of the kingdom. The atonement needed to be renewed year by year, the pardon might be recalled, but the justification we have in Christ Jesus is nothing less than God's righteousness, which is absolutely inviolable. It was not secured by any act of ours and cannot be marred by aught that we can do. Sin only enhances the graciousness of it, but cannot sully or impair it."[3]

Again, "The saint is not under condemnation because that which would bring him into condemnation has itself been condemned . . . . *Nothing* either of sins committed or of sin transmitted can ever bring saints into condemna-

3. A. E. Knoch, Concordant Commentary, p.237.

tion. Whatever further discoveries I may make of the persistence and enormity of indwelling sin I fear no sentence of banishment and doom, for God has not only acquitted me from all charges, but has invested me with His own righteousness."[4]

NOW

It is the consequence of God's rescue of us in grace that nothing is *now* condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. By works of law no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight, *yet now*, a righteousness of God has been made manifest *through Jesus Christ's faith* for all, and on all who are believing (Rom.3:20-22).

Where once no flesh at all could be justified in God's sight, *now* God Himself has manifested His own righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ. God's righteousness is not simply that He has a right to do what He does, but that He does what is actually the right thing to do, ultimately to be enjoyed and applauded by all. God condemns sin and puts an end to sin and death through the death of His Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord. The consequence of this is that all mankind shall be constituted righteous (Rom. 5:18,19), yet already, for us who are believing, nothing is *now* condemnation, for we stand before God in Christ Jesus and are seen by God as He sees His Son (*cf* Eph.1:4).

IN CHRIST JESUS

We are in Christ Jesus because we have been baptized *in* spirit *into* Him; this means we have become united with Him in His death and life (Rom.6:3-11; Col.2:12). This baptism "into" Christ is, like our baptism "into" the body of Christ, a baptism "in spirit" (*cf* 1 Cor.12:13), carried out by God (*cf* 1 Cor.12:28).

Let us, like Paul, enslave our minds to this.

4. George L. Rogers, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.25, pp.35,36.

Regarding 1 Corinthians 12:13, A. E. Knoch wrote: "A most instructive and helpful distinction exists in the original text between baptism *in* a place or element, and *into* a condition or result. This is clearly seen in the declaration that, *in* one spirit, we all were baptized *into* one body. The spirit is the element *in* which we were baptized: the body is the resultant condition. We have thus become identified with the body of Christ."[5]

The resulting condition of our baptism into Christ is that nothing is condemnation to us, neither sin, nor death, nor the demands of the holy law given to Israel. For we are freed from the law of sin and death.

In being rescued from their wretchedness in Egypt, Israel was baptized *into* Moses *in* the cloud and *in* the sea (1 Cor.10:2). We, in being rescued from the wretchedness of captivity to the law of sin because of our body of death, are baptized *into* Christ *in* spirit. This evangel is the power of God to us who are believing it, and, continuing Paul's figure in 1 Corinthians 10, we "eat" and "drink" of this as we walk through the wilderness of our present lives (1 Cor.10:3).

The verbs used in Romans 6 and 7 have not been *eat* and *drink*, however, but the more literal terms of *declare*, get to *know, believe, perceive, take account of* ("reckon"), *present, submissively listen to* (UNDER-HEAR, i.e., "obey"), and *enslave* (in the sense of giving devoted attention to). But the point is certainly much the same. The evangel is vital to the living of our lives today.

THE SPIRIT'S LAW

The law of God given at Sinai was a law of instructions placed over Israel for them to carry out. We can understand this literal sense of the word, for we are under the law of our land. We also are gratified for such restraints

5. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.13, p.134.

on human behavior despite their many flaws and failures. But we also speak of the law of gravity, the laws of motion and similar laws of physics which do not refer to instructions we are to carry out, but to operations outside of ourselves which affect us.

What Paul calls "faith's law" in Romans 3:28 is such a law, that is, the law of Christ's faith, through which God's righteousness is made manifest in our justification (Rom. 3:22,24). So also is "God's law" (Rom.7::25), which is God's way of dealing with sin, His giving of His Son for sinners. Now we learn of "the spirit's law," which is the operation of God's spirit in identifying believers with the death and life of Christ.

These three laws are the same. They all refer to the evangel, to the message of God's grace in Christ Jesus, rather than to something we must do. This is what condemns sin and death and brings their hideous partnership to an end.

LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS

It is only by the death of Christ and God's rousing of Him from among the dead that we can have life in Christ Jesus. But because of God's grace in baptizing us, in spirit, into Christ and thus into His death and life, we already have this glorious gratuity. This is the grace in which we stand (Rom.5:2). It is not something we earn or achieve, but it is something we most certainly *have* in spirit, for it is given to us by God by means of our inclusion in the death and life of Christ Jesus.

Our inclusion in Christ is a truth and blessing that is not well known and appreciated. To recognize and glory in it is a matter of maturity, as Brother Knoch pointed out:

"*In Christ* we are complete. Not only are we mature but righteous and holy, strong and glorious—everything that God's heart could wish. Let us not discount this because our actions or the consciousness of our own vileness and

weakness and lack of holiness and righteousness and immaturity seem to deny it. Naught that we are or do affects our place in Him, for that is ours by grace, through faith, and depends on Him and not upon ourselves in any way. At the same time there is probably no more effective force to produce these graces in us than the consciousness and confidence that naught can disturb our completeness in Him, not even our own unbelief and failure and disgrace. I have emphasized and will continue to stress this great truth because it is the power apart from which exhortation degenerates into mere law keeping."[6]

Paul does not speak of us as living victoriously over the reign of sin and death, but of being *freed* from it. By this he surely refers to our position in Christ. We died together with Christ. We shall be roused together with Him, and now hold these positions of death and life in Him by the operation of God's spirit. Our need is to enslave our minds and hearts to this evangel of God, His "law," concerning His Son, for in this is spiritual power for the bearing of the fruit of the spirit.

FREED FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH

"The law of sin and death" is "the law of sin" (Rom. 7:23) and that of death as these two primal evils are introduced through Adam. "Through one man *sin* entered into the world, and through *sin death,* and thus *death* passed through into all mankind, on which all *sinned*" (Rom.5:12).

This clearly is a law which affects us, most insidiously. We have death operating in us; we are dying. And because of this we sin and eventually die. Paul exclaimed, "What will rescue me out of this body of death?" (Rom.7:24). And now because of God's grace through the death of Christ for sinners, and because we who believe have been united

6. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.25, p.66.

with Him in His death and given life in Him, we are freed from this law traced back to Adam, not from its present operation in our bodies, but from it in our position before God, due to the spirit's law of *life in Christ Jesus.* This is very real, not because we feel it and see it, but because God has said it is so, and we believe what He says.

But also there is nothing more powerfully good in its effect on us than the believing of God's word to us, which in our case is His evangel, not the law He spoke to Israel, but the "law" He speaks to us in saying that while we are still sinners, "Christ died for our sakes." God sent His own Son, sparing Him not, but made Him to be the Sin-Condemner Who takes away all sin.

ENTREATIES IN GRACE

Later in Romans Paul will repeat certain of the precepts of the law, adding many other guidelines, but not as precepts, but rather *entreaties* in view of the "pities of God" (Rom.12:1). These pities compose God's loving consciousness of human need, which He translates into the action of sending His Son for the condemnation of sin by means of the cross and the tomb. In accord with this, in a special way today, He expresses the love of His heart by identifying us already, in spirit, with Christ, and in this way freeing us from the law of sin and death. Here indeed is a message of saving power for our walk in the Lord and confidence in our God! D.H.H.

REPOSING

We have lost for awhile the following friends of our work and fellow believers in Christ: **Christina Hough Lamkin,** of McBain, Michigan, who died December 29, 2014 at age 98, **Frank Portillo,** of Phoenix, Oregon, who died March 5, 2015, and **Douglas Cox** of Kitchener, Ontario. who died in early April. Again and again and again we turn in the face of death to the certainty of life ahead because of the death and life of Christ.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 106th Year

(1909–2015)

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 Crucified with Christ
110 Buried, Ascended, Seated
119 Together with Christ
123 Growth in Realization of God
133 God, Sending His own Son
137 Sin for Sin

THIRD QUARTER, 2015

Volume 106 **Number 3**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, THIRD QUARTER 2015
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SIX

EDITORIAL

We perceive in the Genesis account of God's devisings concerning Joseph and his brothers, a type of His devisings concerning Christ and all mankind. To his brothers, Joseph declared: "You devised evil against me, yet Elohim, He devised it for good in order to accomplish, as at this day, to preserve many people alive" (Gen.50:20; *cp* Rom.15:4).

Even as God devised for good the same sin and evil that Joseph's brother's devised against Joseph, thus also God devises for good the same sin and evil that humanity devise against God and His Christ (*cf* "Standing by are the kings of the land, and the chancellors gathered in the same place, against the Lord and against His Christ" Acts 4:26; *cp* Acts 4:27,28; Gen.39:9; Psa.51:4).

The likeness here consists in God's having devised evil *for* good—good not only for the sacrificial victim, but good as well for those who, in the devisings of God, devised the very evil through which the good would result and be enjoyed.

In accord with this testimony of Genesis 50:20 as rehearsed above, the articles in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* are centered upon the power and wisdom of God in the cross of Christ.

Dean Hough's article, "God, Sending His Own Son," begins by asking the questions, "What is that *grace* of Romans 7:24 which will rescue us out of our bodies of flesh? [and] What is *God's law* to which we, like Paul, enslave our minds while we remain under Sin's law in our flesh (Rom.7:25)?" The answer, immediately given, is: "It is the evangel of God concerning His Son, which Paul has continually been evangelizing in this epistle, and which he now places before us explicitly in Romans 8:3. He sets it

forth here in contrast to the law of God placed upon Israel at Sinai, and in opposition to the law of sin and death established over humanity in Eden" (p.133).

A. E. Knoch's article, "Sin for Sin," explains how "God settles sin by sin. Every sin is transmuted by the sin of sins into an act essential to God's highest glory and the creatures' greatest good. All the righteousness and glory and honor which are Christ's, either before His incarnation or after His glorification do not offset sin. His undeserved humiliation and distress and shame and death are sufficient to transform all sin into righteousness and holiness and bliss" (p.144).

The devotional study by William Mealand, "Together with Christ," considers "how [both] death and life are associated in blessing for the believer" (p.119).

My article, "Growth in Realization of God," concerns "that which is imperative to our service if God would be pleased and we would be benefited" (p.123).

The remaining articles included herein, also by Brother Knoch, are "Crucified with Christ," and "Buried, Ascended, Seated."

In the former of these expositions, emphasis is placed upon our identification with Christ in His death: "*This is not applicable to God's earthly people.* You will not find it in the epistles to the Circumcision, for the simple reason that God is not through with them yet, but is still dealing with them in the flesh, and will deal with them so in the eons to come. Those with Paul skip all that, and have already attained to the consummations of the eons (1 Cor.10:11)" (p.99).

In the latter writing, we are encouraged by the words, "Our blessing will reveal the depths of God's love to an amazed universe, who will see through us what His grace can achieve, and so the worship and the acclaim and the glory will be His" (p.118). J.R.C.

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

WE HAVE DIED with Christ. *This is not applicable to God's earthly people.* You will not find it in the epistles to the Circumcision, for the simple reason that God is not through with them yet, but is still dealing with them in the flesh, and will deal with them so in the eons to come. Those with Paul skip all that, and have already attained to the consummations of the eons (1 Cor.10:11). We are far ahead of the Circumcision, in spirit. O, if our religious leaders could only see this! It is hard for them to see that Israel in the thousand years will have sacrifices and a priesthood. Why, all that is done away with, they imagine. How can it be revived again? They do not distinguish between God's dealings with the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision. They do not see that, in spirit, *we are beyond the millennium,* so that our blessings are not yet due even in that eon of physical marvels.

We have gone beyond those things, and when Christ comes, there will be in a sense, retreat, and the flesh will again have a place. *Death with Christ refers only to us.* I want to emphasize particularly that it is not death *in Christ.* A little later we have that fine figure of speech regarding what we are in Him. Our death is not the same as His death. He died *for* us and we died *with* Him. When we look to Him crucified we cannot picture ourselves as being *in* Him, because He was there on our behalf. Rather, we can see our place in those that were actually crucified with Him. It is remarkable that the Scriptures should give us any account of these executed criminals. Their crucifixion does not affect our salvation, nevertheless much is

said concerning them, so that we may recognize ourselves in these doomed men.

A marvelous passage in Galatians sets forth these great dividing truths. It reads as follows: With Christ have I been crucified, yet I am living; no longer I, but living in me is Christ (Gal.2:20). Notice that this reads somewhat differently from the AV. It is a beautiful example of emphasis. *Christ* has the emphatic position. It begins with Christ and ends with Christ. We are given the least emphatic place, together with a negative. The very form of this passage teaches us the truth which it sets forth.

We are not overly much concerned about the personalities of the two thieves and two malefactors. The whole point lies in the fact that they were crucified *with Christ,* at the same time and place with Him. That is the great point we ought to press today—crucifixion *with* Him. In them we see what we were in God's sight. He would put us there if we had our deserts. The point here is that we also deserve, not simply death, but a *shameful* death, and that ignominious end is pictured for us by these four who were crucified together with Him.

What kind of characters were they? Most of us would not like to be associated with them. But, thank God, we are! Because, unless we can see ourselves in their place, suffering the same shameful death that He suffered, until we can see that, we can never enter fully into the great truths that are for the Uncircumcision. As I said before, before God even commences with us, there is no need of further demonstrations. He had already proven just what we are, and that we cannot sink any lower. Later, the apostle shows the practical side: Now those of *Christ* Jesus *crucify* the flesh together with its passions and lusts (Gal.5:24). Notice that! God is demonstrating what men amount to in the flesh, so, at the very beginning of the truth for the Uncircumcision, Paul shows the foundation of it, the crucifixion of the flesh. Then again, in Galatians 6:12, "Whoever are wanting to put on a fair face in the flesh, these are compelling you to circumcise, only, that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ Jesus." Ever so many of the Lord's people are included in this category. Where are those who do not try to put on a fair face in the flesh? Christianity is largely an attempt to make something out of the flesh. But Paul says: "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world" (Gal.6:14). You see, it is not the *death* of Christ merely, for salvation, but the cross of Christ for humiliation. So few make the distinction, but there is a tremendous difference. It is the *shameful* death. *The end of the flesh is in view here.* All the attempts to be spiritual Israel, to associate ourselves with the physical features of the evangel of the Circumcision, all that is in connection with the flesh and is finished in our case. Alas, how few indeed see the truth that we have been crucified with Christ.

Crucifixion applies not only to us, but also to the whole world. If that truth were owned today, it would change the entire face of this earth. If the so-called Christian nations acknowledged that the world has been crucified, practically everything they are doing today would be stopped and they would do the opposite. If we realized what is written here concerning the world, it would change everything for us and give us peace.

If I did not have these truths and looked out on the world today, I would have to be exceedingly callous to endure what I see. There are all kinds of movements to make man better. They have been at it for four or five thousand years, and behold, where we are! And some folks seem to think they are really going to accomplish something! Those of us who went through the first world war are a bit skeptical, altogether apart from what the Scriptures have to

say. And those of us who know man and the flesh, as we have them in the Scriptures, don't expect any more from human efforts now than in the past, for the simple reason that God has already crucified the world.

Even in the accounts of our Lord's life, if we look beneath the surface, we can see intimations of this truth. There we have these four who were crucified with Him. There is a good deal of truth in connection with numbers in Scripture, and it may be that the figure *four* brings before us the *world* number. Years ago, when we were taught that there were only two crucified with Him, I could not understand why there were just two. But later I found out there were four, two robbers and two malefactors. They give us a picture of what we have in the world today. There are all sorts of pretense, but, if you will boil it down, this is what it amounts to. You can take your choice whether you are a malefactor or a robber, but we are all worthy of crucifixion. Indeed, we are both, for we not only wrong God, but rob Him every day. It may be very difficult to believe it, yet there is exactly where peace lies. We talk about peace, but there will be no real peace until we and the whole universe come to the conclusion that, not *Christ* should have been crucified, but *we*. When we get to that point, the rest will be comparatively easy.

The two malefactors were crucified with Him right at the beginning (Luke 23:32). Afterwards, when the soldiers had cast lots for Christ's garments and placed the inscription above His head, the two robbers were crucified (Matt.27:38). Doesn't it seem remarkable that here are four men and one of them, although he is a malefactor, is saved? He believed. Does it not seem that he is a picture of those who believe, who take their place by faith? We can add *amen* to what he has to say: "We are getting back the deserts of what we commit, yet this One commits nothing amiss" (Luke 23:41).

This man was crucified, not *in* Christ, but *with* Him. The others were also crucified with Him. At Golgotha we have the world and ourselves crucified, and on the other hand we have Christ crucified unjustly. And when we once see that, it seems to me it ought to be clear that the demonstration, which God began when He took up Abraham and Israel, is no longer needed in connection with the nations. If they were crucified with Christ, they are through with the flesh. We, having been crucified with Christ, have found the answer to the demonstration. *There is absolutely nothing in the flesh for God.* Those that are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom.8:8). The only thing we can do with it is to crucify it. Not a decent death, but a dreadful execution. Only thus can we recognize its ignominious character, its utter shamefulness. We acknowledge that we are not only worthy of death, but the disgraceful death of a criminal. This goes to the root of the matter.

God has gradually been working out through the history of Israel a demonstration that there is nothing good in the flesh. One trial follows another, and so it will be in the future, for it will continue to be necessary so long as the flesh is given any place. But it is no longer needed for us. God uses Israel in order to demonstrate what the flesh is, not only to themselves but to the whole creation. But with us He has another purpose, so the lesson is shortened. Here we have one of the great distinctions between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision. A main reason why so-called Christianity and the so-called church, even believers, fail to understand God's purpose, is that they are still along the old line. They still give the flesh a place. They do not realize the place that God has given it—*crucifixion.* Neither do they realize the place God has given the world—*crucifixion.*

Saints sometimes come to me and are discouraged about the way things are going in the world. Things are going all

right because they are going all wrong. God's intention, His ultimate purpose, is being fulfilled in it by that very fact. I do not expect things to go right, because this is the world that has been crucified with relation to us. We should not expect anything good from it. We should expect robbery from robbers. And that is what the world is in relation to God, a gang of robbers and malefactors. It is because of this that God will be able to glorify His grace. So you see that this great truth must first be laid down as a foundation before you can understand this favor.

Much good teaching concerning grace has failed to be fruitful because those who heard did not realize their need of it. They cannot consider themselves so utterly degraded, so grace is wasted on them. My prayer is that God may in some way or another make the reader of these lines realize the death to which God has put them by crucifixion. Then it will not be difficult to reveal His grace to them. As a matter of fact, the reason why we have been crucified with Christ is that God may reveal His grace, not only to us, but through us to others. Grace is not very easily apprehended by many of God's creatures. It is not His purpose to put them all through the mill that the Circumcision are going through. God is going to use us to display His wisdom and power, but particularly and especially His *grace* (Eph.2:7). In order to do that, He must treat us distinct from the Circumcision. They had certain privileges. They were near to God, and, logically speaking, God should give them the highest place. But God will do something very much greater than that. If He gave them the highest place in the universe, He would not be able to display that greater grace which makes us the highest. O, that we could see ourselves as crucified! Then God would reveal to us our glorious place in Christ, and we, would revel in the grace that make us the highest trophies of His love.

JUSTIFICATION AT THE CROSS

Perhaps the best way to get a grasp of these things is to go to the cross and see just how those who were associated with that great tragedy acted, and what they said. When we see justification actually in the experience of an individual, then it is much easier to understand. We will try if possible to give an example of how it works. In Germany I went to Witttenberg where Luther lived a great part of his life. It was an interesting place and contained many engaging objects. Not only that, but while I was there, attending a conference, I met about two hundred editors of religious papers, and I was always on the watch to see if any of them knew about justification. But they could not see any difference between it and forgiveness or pardon. All was put into one pot. But to me the distinction between the two things is tremendous. If the creation of God at the end will only be patched up, what kind of an achievement will that be? That would be very trying, not only for me, but for God. But if we get a grip of justification there will not be any patching, but, on the contrary, a vast display of the wisdom and grace of God. Evil will not only be absent, but it will be transformed into good, and only God can do that. And do not make a mistake as to my meaning. Somebody said that I taught that we should do evil that good may come. God can make good come out of evil, but we are not, by any means equal to God. He can do it, we cannot.

This may help us to distinguish between the two evangels.

Let us consider the case of the soldier that pierced Christ's side. In him the Scriptures give us an illuminating example of the possibility of justification, and, on the side, how God can use evil. The passage reads (John 19:31): "The Jews, then, since it was the preparation, lest the bodies should be remaining on the cross on the sabbath (for it was the great day of that sabbath), ask Pilate

that they might be fracturing their legs and they may be taken away. The soldiers, then, came and fracture indeed the legs of the first and of the other who is crucified together with Him." (Let us note, in passing, that they came to one, then to *another* and *then to the Lord,* Who was in the center. This is only one proof that the pictures which you see of the crucifixion are not complete. There were *two robbers* crucified with Him besides *two malefactors-five* altogether. Not merely three). "Yet, on coming to Jesus, as they perceived He had already died, they do not fracture His legs. But one of the soldiers pierces His side with a lance head, and straightway out came blood and water. And he who has seen has testified, and true is his testimony. And he is aware that he is telling the truth, that you, also, should be believing. For these things occurred that the scripture may be fulfilled, "A bone of it shall not be crushed." And again, a different scripture is saying, "they shall see Him Whom they stab."

Let us see if we can justify one of the soldiers who stabbed Him. I think we can do it very easily. He has done something that you and I would never think of doing. We would think it a very, very terrible thing. Nevertheless what about him? It seems to me that God intended he should be more or less a representative of the Uncircumcision there at the cross. Now the first thing we should allow is that this man was there doing his duty. He was not there alone, but a centurion was standing by to see that he played his part. So you see, from the human standpoint, we cannot condemn the man for doing what he did. Yet this man did a grievous sin, he actually thrust a lance into the side of the Lord. Nevertheless, it was his duty to do it. If he had not done it, he might have been court-martialed. The centurion was right there to see that he did it.

Now in Matthew 27:54 we read: "Now the centurion and those with him who are keeping Jesus, perceiving the

quake and the occurrences, were tremendously afraid, saying, 'Truly this was the Son of God!' "

And contrast these men with the Circumcision. Were *they* saying that? The Jews, because they were so holy, or thought they were, did not want the bodies left on the cross during that great sabbath day. So they asked Pilate that His legs should be fractured. Pilate and the soldiers did not know it, but the Circumcision knew that, according to the Scriptures, a sacrifice should not have its bones crushed. Yet here they were, actually demanding that the bones of the greatest Sacrifice of all should be broken! That was the kind of holiness they had! It was all superficial and hypocritical.

Here we have an exposure of the *hearts* of these Pharisees and of the Jewish nation. They were not allowed to break His bones or to crucify Him. But you will find all through the Word of God that *they* were the ones that did it. It was the attitude of the *heart* that counted. So here we have a great contrast between those present at the cross. It was *Israel* that was called upon to repent, not so much the centurion or the soldier. Repentance is in reference to the *heart.* It was not in reference to the fact of their crucifying Him with their *hands,* but with their *hearts.* And so it was, also, with reference to the lance head that went into His side. A little further along John quotes: "They shall see Him Whom *they* stab" (John 19:37; *cf* Zech.12:10). *They,* Israel, not the soldier. And in Revelation the same apostle says: "Every eye shall be seeing Him—those also who stab Him—and all the tribes of the land [of Israel] shall be grieving over Him."

John does not blame that centurion. He blames his own people. And he is right. They were doing their best to keep God's Word from being fulfilled. God had said that the bones of the sacrifice should not be broken and they wanted the Romans to do it.

But the soldier with the lance *fulfilled* the Word of God, inasmuch as it prevented the breaking of Christ's bones. And not only did his act uphold the law, but he fulfilled one of the prophecies by thrusting the lance into Christ's side. We certainly cannot blame him for fulfilling the prophecy. It seems to me that, if we were the judges, we would acquit him. We are not going to acknowledge that he did anything wrong. He did right. The things that he did were in fulfillment of God's Word. It had to be fulfilled. We are all agreed that he was justified in acting as he did. Now that is justification. The evil that took place there is connected with the greatest good to God's creation, and I am sure all of us are very, very glad this man committed this deed, even though we would rather not have anything to do with it ourselves.

The fact is that, at the cross, we have God actually using the nations to fulfill His will. Israel went counter to His will, though to fulfill His intention. And the nation of Israel, His own people, we find doing their worst to keep the nations from fulfilling His will. There we have more or less of a ground work for seeing why it is that God deals with the nations differently than with Israel.

The offense of Israel here was exceedingly great. I do not see how it could have been greater at that time. No worse conduct could be imagined than the conduct of Israel at the crucifixion.

The nations were not entirely guiltless. They derided Christ and plaited the crown of thorns, but it was a small thing compared with what Israel did. We must look at the heart. Yet Israel *did* nothing to speak of. They did not *act,* but they *spoke,* and it is by their words that we find where their heart is. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." But the nations—very little of what they did would be called an offense. They were not bitter against the Son of God. I suppose they would have treated

any prisoner in the same way as they did Him. But there was some offense on their part. Today God has removed that. Now there is conciliation. If that soldier had heard and accepted the evangel, he would have been justified. God meets with the whole of mankind on the ground of what they did at the cross.

I hope you can keep these thoughts clear—the difference between sin and offense. We are all sinning most of the time. Some people think they are not sinning, but I doubt that we can take many steps without destroying one of God's creatures, which might be considered a very serious crime. We take wrong steps frequently even as believers, but I hope none of us who do that would actually hurt the feelings of God. A child can take your watch and give it a good scrubbing, but if the child did not know any better, you could not very well feel hurt about it.

And so it is today. God is conciliated to the whole world, just as if they were like this soldier whom we have been considering. Whatever he did was in line with God's expressed will. Israel was not in line with His *will,* but with His *intention,* hence they also will be justified at the consummation. I am satisfied that this soldier had no idea of what a good thing he was doing, and as I said before, I would not advise him to do it again. But God can take all acts, even those as bad as that, and transform them into good. That is the basic truth that we have in Romans, in the present administration of God's grace. Not forgiveness, not pardon, that is for Israel temporarily in the eons. What we have is infinitely better, acquittal, not guilty, justification.

Don't think for a moment I am justifying myself. I cannot do that. This is all on God's side. The day is coming when all of us will see one of the most wonderful things it is possible to see—the wisdom of God in dealing with evil and sin.

A. E. Knoch.

BURIED, ASCENDED, SEATED

THE CROWNING CONTRAST between the glorious gospel of God's grace and the Circumcision may be expressed in the words *buried, ascended, and seated.* God has reached down deeper for us and has raised us higher to a more glorious and permanent position than even the twelve apostles who will share Christ's throne in the millennium. Peter will not even be the porter at heaven's gate, as is usually assumed. He will not ascend to heaven at all, for he will sit on his throne on earth, judging one of the tribes of Israel (Matt.19:28) during the thousand years. And his is a very special privilege which only the twelve apostles will share. In contrast, we, in spirit, have all been buried and have ascended and are seated together in Christ among the celestials. Only a few of the Circumcision attain to a high place in His earthly kingdom, for it is based on reward, while all who believe now ascend and sit with Him among the celestials, for it is the gift of *grace.*

BURIED WITH CHRIST

Those who have been crucified with Christ have also been buried or entombed with Him (Rom.6:4; Col.2:12,). Figuratively, in spirit and in truth, their flesh has been consigned to the grave, where sin and the law can have no further power over them. This is directly opposed to the evangel of the Circumcision, for it is Israel *according to the flesh* who are to rule over the nations as kings and priests in the day of Yahweh. They do not die to the law, for it is written on their hearts of flesh (Ezek.36:26,27). They do not die to sin, but are sustained by eating the fruit of the tree of life and drinking the water of life (Rev.22:1,2).

God is not through with His demonstration of the futility of the flesh in their case. Not only Israel must be further tested under a perfect government, but the nations also must be put under ideal conditions to show the weakness of the flesh. Today mankind might say that it has had no chance. Everything, within and without, is against it. Then this will be reversed, especially in Israel. It is only as we see that, even under the best environment, mankind is a failure apart from God, that we realize that burial is the only fate that fits the race that sprung from Adam.

In the Circumcision evangel the Uncircumcision are given a low place indeed, altogether subordinate to the favored nation. *But this is not nearly so low as that assigned to them in our gospel of grace.* Then we were aliens, afar off, unclean curs in the eyes of a Jew. Even in the millennium the nations will continue to rank far below Israel. But now God deals with us as dead and buried, put beneath the soil lest we pollute the atmosphere. If a live cur is better than a dead lion, what is our worth as a *dead* cur? In ourselves, in God's estimate, we have sunk far below the Circumcision. If we were to reason about the matter logically, then the proper place of the believer among the nations today should be far beneath that of any other era. Let us not miss this or refuse its humiliating message, for it is the essential foundation for grace. If the evangel Paul preached were for people so much better than the Jews that they will be rewarded with heaven for their goodness, then grace is gone. Then there is no evangel at all. Our burial makes it a superlatively *gracious* evangel, just as our ascent to the celestials and seat in Him makes it the most *glorious* of all the gospels God has given.

When Christ was entombed it was the first step in His exaltation to the highest place in the universe. His crucifixion had brought Him to the deepest depth. As His mediatorial, sacrificial work was finished, nothing more was

needed to justify mankind and reconcile the universe, so far as His suffering was concerned.

Indeed, in death no suffering was possible. Hence He was not hurried away into a criminal's grave, to go to corruption among the desecrated dead. Instead, a rich man gave Him his tomb, and His body was given tender care by His loving disciples. Is it not a marvel that His descent to the deepest depth on earth should fit Him for the highest heights of heaven? The same marvel is seen in our evangel. This tremendous contrast should enable us to grasp the fullness of God's grace. We miss this overwhelming favor if we confuse the two evangels. In one, a chosen nation is exalted to a promised place of supremacy on the earth. In the other, the dregs of humanity are exalted to supernal glory in the heavens, quite the reverse of what they expect or deserve.

No stranger, no uncircumcised alien, could be accorded a place in the tomb of an Israelite. Having been with Him in His crucifixion, we would be hustled off to the potter's field, and left to go to corruption among the dishonored dead, unless, indeed, our carcasses were burned in Gehenna, along with the rubbish and offal of the city. I once wondered why the priests bought a *potter's* field as a burial ground with the ill-gotten gain of Judas' betrayal. After living in Palestine, I have thought it likely that the field was something like the tombs of that day, or the catacombs, due to the removal of the clay deposits, and thus would provide an easy method of disposing of the carcasses of those who had no tomb of their own, and who did not belong to the favored nation.

The Field of the Potter, the cemetery for strangers, is the only proper burial place for the Uncircumcision, who could have no share in the tombs of Israel (Matt.27:7). When I explored some of the tombs near Jerusalem I marvelled at the vast amount of toil needed to hew them out of the

solid stone. It was a great disgrace for a man to be denied burial in the tombs of his fathers (1 Kings 13:22). Some of the kings were not entombed in the royal sepulchers (2 Chron.21:20; 24:25; 24:27). This is in line with the future of Israel, whose bodies will not be changed like ours, and fitted for a new sphere altogether. Like the new birth, in contrast with the new creation, theirs will be more of a renewal than a complete reconstruction. This is suggested in the mode of burial. Is that why the figure changes from entombment to *planting* (Rom.6:4,5)?

ASCENDED WITH CHRIST

Christ ascended to His Father soon after His rousing from the dead (John 20:17). About forty days later, He again ascended from the midst of the apostles, on the Mount of Olives. The latter event is the one usually referred to as *the* ascension. The former has been almost forgotten, and is usually ignored. Yet this *first* ascension, before He was touched by human hands, should be of overwhelming interest to us in this administration of grace. The one from Olivet is altogether concerned with the coming kingdom. Is it not strange that our Lord would not allow Miriam to touch Him at that time? A week or so later He invited doubting Thomas to thrust his hand into His side. Israel is the nation that knew Him according to the flesh. He was physically of the same stock. But Paul, even though he also was related to Him by fleshly ties, repudiates them (2 Cor.5:16). Would not our Lord's refusal to allow anyone to touch Him indicate that He could not concern himself with Israel until after He had gone on high and had been crowned with His celestial honors, and invested with those greater glories which His sacrifice deserved? Among these was the Headship of the universe and of that figurative body which would be composed of all who had, in spirit, been crucified with Him, and buried with Him, and now ascended with Him *before* His public ascension on Olivet.

The advent of Christ's presence when He comes to set up His kingdom will take place where He ascended. As we read in the prophets, His feet stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which is adjoining Jerusalem on the east (Zech.14:4), the very spot from which He ascended. I have spent much time on this sacred ridge, meditating on the marvelous scene which it has already witnessed at His ascension, and the far more glorious spectacle when He returns in the future. How fitting it is that the great King should reappear at the very point of His departure! It is a magnificent location, which can be seen from almost every part of Jerusalem, and even from beyond the Jordan on the east. Views of the whole city are usually taken from this site, as it is considerably higher and gives an unobstructed view of every part.

For many years, before I fully realized that Paul had given us a prior expectation, I used the words, "this Jesus Who is being taken up from you into heaven shall come in the same manner as you gaze upon Him going into heaven," in order to prove that Christ would return *personally* and *visibly.* But I failed to note that His coming to Olivet is to His earthly people. For us He does not come to the earth at all, but to the air. The truth for us is found in Paul's letters to the Thessalonians, not in Peter's address to the Jews. Unless we had Paul's epistles to the nations, we would never have known the great truths involved in His crucifixion, His burial and His ascension. For us Christ did not ascend publicly from the midst of His followers gathered on Olivet. He ascended as He will come, quite unknown to the world, unseen and unsuspected. At His return for us He will come back to within hail of the graves of those who, in spirit, had been buried with Him, and calls them to ascend to Him in the air, not to return and rule on earth, but to rise to heights supernal to reign with Him in realms celestial.

The uppermost thought in the mind of the disciples was the establishment of the terrestrial kingdom. They asked Him, "Lord, art Thou at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?" And, indeed, why was it not brought in at that time? The foundation had been laid. The great Sacrifice had been offered. The time was fulfilled. The King had been raised from the dead. But God's great demonstration of the infirmity and futility of the flesh would not be complete until this kingdom has been heralded, both in and out of the land, and *rejected* by the nation as a whole, under conditions such as cannot obtain in the Kingdom itself. The story of the book of Acts, like the account of the forty years in the wilderness, is a record of the failure of the flesh. Like the history of the kings of Israel, it shows how far the flesh is from the goal of God. To have restored the kingdom at that time would have made the experiment impossible. Nevertheless they are led out to the actual spot and shown the very manner in which He will return to set up the Kingdom for which they longed.

The context, the setting, everything connected with the Olivet ascension, shows that it has to do with Israel and the return of the Messiah in glory to the earth. Then it is that He will come on the clouds of heaven (Matt.24:30). True, *we* shall be caught up in *clouds* to meet Him when He comes for us, but *He* will not come on the clouds at that time (1 Thess.4:17). Our meeting will be in the *air,* not on the Mount of Olives. The greatest difference of all is found in the fact that *the disciples did not ascend.* The Circumcision evangel is utterly at variance with any such action. At this previous ascension from the garden of the tomb, in spirit, *He took us with Him.* If we were crucified with Him and buried with Him, then we also ascended with Him *before He made any physical contact with His Circumcision saints.* And, in contrast to the little group of disciples gazing at Him being taken from them, He left

none of us behind upon the earth, but brought us all into His heavenly haven above.

SEATED TOGETHER IN CHRIST

The *union* of Circumcision with Uncircumcision is one of the prime points of contrast between the two evangels. Proselytes were joined to Israel by a lengthy physical process. But the Circumcision who believe in this gracious era were made one with us in Christ when He was vivified, and are seated together with us in Him among the celestials (Eph.2:5,6). The great grace shown to the Circumcision under the evangel of the Uncircumcision is in striking contrast to the rejection, or tardy acceptance of the Uncircumcision who wished to join Yahweh's fleshly people.

Union, or incorporation into the nation of Israel, is primarily a matter of the flesh. Even those born into it are excluded if they have certain physical defects (Deut.23:1,2). An Ammonite or a Moabite was not allowed to enter the congregation of Yahweh until the tenth generation, because they were hostile to Israel at the exodus from Egypt, and tried to get Balaam to curse God's people. Yet an Edomite or an Egyptian and their children are shut out only to the third generation (Deut.23:3-8). The stranger who sojourns among them cannot keep the Passover with them unless he is first circumcised in flesh (Exodus 12:48).

Many seem to think that "gentiles" were not excluded from Israel when they believed the Kingdom evangel, and that the heralding of the Kingdom did away with all such barriers. On the contrary, our Lord Himself made it plain that He was not commissioned except for the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt.15:24). When the Canaanitish woman sought to have the demons driven out of her daughter, she actually worshiped Him, and pleaded with Him to help her. Yet He said, "It is not ideal to be taking the children's bread and be casting it to the puppies." All that

He gave her were the scraps that Israel let fall under the table. Only her great faith brought the blessing she desired, despite the hindrance of the flesh. Even then she was not united to Israel, and could not enter the sanctuary in which Yahweh had His dwelling place.

But was not Cornelius admitted into the sacred circle of the Circumcision? He was a devout man, who feared God with his entire house, giving many alms and beseeching God continually. Peter, by means of a vision, was assured that he was not common or unclean. God Himself had cleansed him. Let us suppose that such a man were among us today, only, instead of a gentile, he is a Jew. Would we receive him into fellowship? Of course we would! But it is very evident that he was *not* accepted by the Jews, for they opposed Peter, and even after they knew that the holy spirit had been poured out upon him and his friends, after they had been baptized, and after they manifested the gift of tongues, they are *not* joined to the nation of Israel. The Jews concluded from his case that God gives repentance unto life to the other nations also. And why is he excluded? *He was uncircumcised*! He had spiritual blessings bestowed upon him, but these were not the link in the evangel of the Circumcision. He is an example of the place given to the other nations in the Kingdom. They are blessed *through* Israel, but are *not joined* to the holy nation.

So persistent is the feeling of exclusiveness among the Circumcision that it is quite prominent even today among Jewish believers. The great church organizations almost all welcome Israelites to their communion, and there is no thought of keeping them by themselves. In fact, they are often accorded an honored place, because of their physical relationship with our Lord. I have never heard of a "gentile" Christian church. But wherever numbers of Jews believe there seems to be a tendency to form a distinct organization, a "Jewish" Christian communion, with

a distinct task. I am quite sure that they do not realize that such separation is *based on the flesh,* and does not accord with the spiritual union which characterizes all saints in this day of transcendent grace.

Much of the grace which characterizes God's present work, in contrast to that connected with the Kingdom to Israel is conveyed to us by the connectives TOGETHER and IN. Instead of being related to Messiah by ties of flesh, we are united to Christ by that which we have in common with Him, or by being figuratively in Him. Because these are *spiritual* realities, they are not hampered by the limitations of time or space. We had much in Him and with Him long before our birth. Yet the actual enjoyment of our blessings will be in a sphere for which we are not fitted as we are. He does not only act *for* us as our Saviour, but unites us *with* Him and counts us *in* Him in His official place and glory. These utterly transcend His physical contacts with saints in Israel.

The transcendent riches of God's grace will be displayed in the oncoming eons in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. This is not yet apparent except to the eye of faith. Physically, believers among the nations have not been seated together with believing Israelites among the celestials. We are all too conscious of our lowly and corruptible carcasses on the earth. Only by faith can we see ourselves in anticipation with immortal powerful, glorious, spiritual bodies, like that of Christ, our Saviour and Lord, seated among the celestials. There will be no real rest for us down here. Up there it would be ineffable even to *stand* in the presence of His majesty. Yet we shall *sit* at perfect ease, being conscious that not we alone are immeasurably blessed, but that our blessing will reveal the depths of God's love to an amazed universe, who will see through us what His grace can achieve, and so the worship and the acclaim and the glory will be His. A. E. Knoch.

TOGETHER WITH CHRIST

IN AN IMPRESSIVE PASSAGE Paul makes threefold mention of the lovely, intimate thought—"together with Christ." And in the thought we see how death and life are associated in blessing for the believer.

"If, then, you were roused *together with Christ,* be seeking that which is above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Be disposed to that which is above, not to that on the earth, for you died and your life is hid *together with Christ* in God. Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, then you also shall be manifested *together with Him* in glory" (Col.3:1-4).

The expression lies in a setting of rare contrasts. That *which is above* and that *on the earth.* Death and life are in contrast, too, as linked up with Christ, our Life. For Christ identifies Himself with us that we might be identified with Him. This is an ever present truth and reality, and there is yet to be an open manifestation of its blessedness.

Together with Christ. In an earlier epistle Paul brings out a kindred thought, and also contrasts death with life, in words of vivid certainty. It will be good to quote the paragraph in full.

"Now if we *died together with Christ,* we believe that we shall *be living together with Him* also, having perceived that Christ, being roused from among the dead, is no longer dying. Death is lording it over Him no longer, for in that He died, He died to Sin once for all time, yet in that He is living, He is living to God. Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:8-11).

There is a striking similarity of thought with the Colossian passage. The two are finely supplementary. The dying together ensures the living together with the ascended Christ. And since, unmastered by death, He Who is living is living to God, so reckoning ourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, we are living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

What a bond between ourselves and God's Beloved! We cannot remember too well, nor too often, the blessed fact that we died, and that, as the glorious outcome, our life has been hid *together with Christ in God.*

By all means should we be seeking that which is above, and be disposed thereto. For the moving impulse is not of command or demand. It is the urge of love and of life, the life celestial, "where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God." And where Christ is, harmonizes so well with who and what He is. It so takes our mind off and away from self to study the glorious place and position which is His. Then to think that, wondrous as it is, we are identified with Him, and in a superlative degree. Our citizenship is in the heavens *where He is.*

This rare thought should be the actuating impulse of the faith which relates to us in Him, in Whom our lot is cast. And it would be for all the saints, did they perceive the prospect of His call, and the greatness of His power for the enlightened and believing heart.

Yet, so few appear to see and to realize the grace and glory of such a faith. How, then, may we be seeking that which is above, with disposition that way? We must indeed first be extricated, rescued out of the authority of darkness, ere we can know true light and liberty. Above all else, we must fully perceive the vital associations which are ours as members of the body of Christ. Then, and then only, do we enter our lofty heritage, to be disposed to that which is above, *not to that on the earth.* And the negative is certainly emphatic.

Now, as the writer most gratefully found, the letters of Paul alone proved to be the way to such spiritual status and blessing. In them only lie the clearly marked lines of our position as believers in this era of grace. And for good reason. Paul was appointed a herald, apostle and teacher of the nations. Not one of the twelve so write, and with that distinctiveness of utterance which so altogether lifts the grace and glory of Christ above the earth.

Christ is exalted, it is true, but always in association with Israel and the earth. And this is as it should be, since Israel is to be the medium of rule in the earth when their Rescuer and Messiah shall arrive. The entire language of the writings outside Paul's is thus concerned, either with this present earth, or the new earth. And to this end their character displays a distinctive trend.

Moreover, we do not find elsewhere that nearness and intimacy of spiritual relationship between ourselves and Christ. And Paul alone speaks of the body of Christ, using as he does that exquisite expression which so befits the riches of the grace which the Father glorious lavishes on us. Only in Paul's letters, too, do we learn of that celestial destiny—our true bourne, and which is so far above the new earth, and the new Jerusalem when it has come down.

Do we not therefore see that, to enjoy our privilege and position as believers, we must of necessity delve into Paul's letters for our real sustenance and patient expectancy? Thus, except as they are read for their points of interest, we may rightly leave other letters to those who can more truly claim them as specially theirs.

Where, but in Paul's epistles, shall we note for our heart enrichment, the variety of spiritual utterance? Often paradoxical, it is true, but so blessedly and sublimely. How the heart is warmed and the spirit raised by the reading and study of the prison epistles! Words stand out with a light and power not found elsewhere.

Indeed, anyone who has been steeped in the Ephesian phraseology, who has realized its message, and has lived with it, knows full well the appeal of passage after passage like to our quoted texts. So, in conclusion, would we stress again the wonder of the words, *together with Christ.* As in Ephesians, "God . . . vivifies together in Christ, rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus." Words to live with in present blessedness, and an intimation of future glory.

In Colossians there is a climax of real grandeur. "For you died, and your life is hid *together with Christ in God."* Do we accept this statement, cheerfully and contentedly? A life hidden, one of detachment, at least in thought, from the world. Then comes the final expression of glad assurance. "Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, then you also will be manifested *together with Him in glory."*

What a life that will be! No longer hidden, and shared, maybe, with but few. But open, free and joyous, with full acknowledgment. And still, and always—*together with Him.*

William Mealand

GOD'S WORDS ENERGIZE US

Our Lord told His disciples that the *declarations* which He spoke to them are spirit and are life (John 6:63). This introduces us to the most vital of all the usages of the word *spirit* for us who are members of Christ. There is a sense in which God's words energize us, vitalize us. These words have no direct effect on our physical frames, but they put new life into our spirits. Hence "the body indeed, is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rom.8:10). This is due to the operation of the spirit of God through the Word of God, so that the part played by our own spirits is subordinate, and not always easily distinguished.

A. E. Knoch

GROWTH IN REALIZATION OF GOD

We are acquainted with the entreaty, "Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:7).

In the presence of such high entreaties, it is vital to our realization of truth to recognize that the apostle Paul does not come to us as a "second Moses." That is, Paul does not "command" us to do what is right on the grounds that if we fail to do so we will suffer the curses of the law, or, if we should continue to disobey, that we will "lose our salvation" and find ourselves among the vessels of wrath.

Paul comes to us, instead, as a wise counselor, as the Lord's apostle, encouraging us and building us up in faith. He entreats us concerning that which is imperative to our service if God would be pleased and we would be benefited. The fear and trembling that is to attend our walk as we carry our salvation into effect (*cf* Phil.2:13), is not a fear of divine wrath or a trembling born out of a contemplation of eternal punishment. Instead, it is a fear to offend our God and Father Whom we love; it is a trembling produced by an awareness of the fact that the spirit of the One Who rouses Jesus from among the dead condescends to make its home in us.

Insofar as the curses of the law are concerned, "Christ

reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes" (Gal.3:13). We "were put to death to the law through the body of Christ" (Rom.7:4); hence "we were *exempted* from the law" (Rom.7:6). Consequently, we "are *not under* law" (Rom.6:14). These things are related to us by Paul with reference to the fact that Grace *reigns* for life eonian (Rom.5:21); eonian life is a *gracious gift* (Rom.6:23).

DIVINE INDIGNATION

As to the question of divine wrath in the future "day of indignation," how thankful we are to affirm that, "being *now* justified in [Christ's] blood, we shall be saved from indignation through Him" (Rom.5:9). We are also mindful that, according to God's purpose, there are many who will be "vessels of indignation" (Rom.9:22), yet only unto the end that, in due time, they themselves should also be obtaining mercy (*cp* Rom.9:16; 11:32).

Those, however, who are "God's *chosen* ones" (Rom. 8:33; *cp* 2 Tim.2:10), having been *graciously* granted to be believing (Phil.1:29), have had the blessing of justification conferred upon them even now (Rom.3:22). In His kindness and grace to us, God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ Who died for our sakes, that, whether we may be watching or drowsing, we should be living at the same time together with Him (1 Thess.5:9,10).

If some will not, as it literally is, "*tenant* the reign of God" (i.e., have an allotment or "place" in His reign; Gal. 5:21; *cp* 2 Tim.2:12), it is not to say that they will not live under its jurisdiction. All who are members of the body of Christ will live under the jurisdiction of God's reign, whether or not they have a place in its governance.

Vivification and eonian life are a display of God's *grace;* they are not a display of a divine reward in response to man's faithfulness (Eph.2:5,7). They are not a matter of

qualification, but of favor. The fact that, relatively speaking, the reverse is true concerning the selection of those who will have a governing position within the kingdom is beside the point. The believer's eonian life depends solely upon the grace of God.

Concerning the oncoming eons: whether or not we take part in the reign *of* that day, we will, in any case, *in* that day, be roused, vivified and seated together among the celestials (Eph.2:5,6). Our "seat" among the celestials, speaks of a settled place of useful service. Every one of us will be pleasing to God and faithful in His service. "Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, *then you also* shall be manifested together with Him in glory" (Col.3:4).

JUSTIFIED FROM SIN

In the grace of God, Christ tasted death for the sake of *everyone* (Heb.2:9). "Christ Jesus . . . is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for the sake of *all* . . ." (1 Tim.2:6).

"For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently *all died*" (2 Cor.5:14). And, "one who dies *has been* justified from Sin" (Rom.6:7; i.e., "freed from Sin," *cp* Rom.6:18).

This justification *from* Sin which is now the portion of all, is wholly the achievement of the cross. "What was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh" (Rom.8:3). Thus in Christ we behold "the Lamb of God Which is taking away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

Sin in the flesh does not *await* condemnation; it has already *found* condemnation. Sin in the flesh is not *to be* condemned in a future judgment (such as in the second death); it *has been* condemned in a past judgment, the judgment of the cross. The sin of the world has been *taken away* through the sacrificial offering of the Lamb of God,

Christ Jesus our Lord. God made Christ ("the One not knowing sin") to be a sin offering (2 Cor.5:21). Indeed, in literal terms, "He makes Him [to be] *sin*"—that thus sin might be *condemned* and *taken away.*

Consequently, God has not only conciliated *us* to Himself through Christ, but has, in Christ, conciliated *the world* to Himself as well. Accordingly, He is not only dealing graciously with all *our* offenses (Col.2:13), but, concerning the world as well, He is "not reckoning *their* offenses to them" (2 Cor.5:18,19).

Sin speaks of *failure;* it speaks of that which "misses the mark," the mark or target of that which is inherently good, well pleasing and perfect (*cp* Rom.12:2). Sin in the flesh, "the sin of the world," has met its judgment through the One Who is the Sin Offering. Now, through the work of Christ, man is justified *from* the evil slaveowner, Sin (2 Cor. 5:14; Rom.6:7b). Man is declared to be in the only right relationship to Sin, which is to be freed from its jurisdiction. Sin personified (literally, man's sinful deeds), no longer has the prerogative concerning man's judgment. Instead, God through Christ has gained the prerogative!

Therefore, *God*—not Sin—will now determine each man's judgment and final destiny. And, He will do so according to His own purpose, not according to individual merit. Indeed many who will be subjected to God's indignation are far less deserving of it than others who will be saved from it. The vessels of mercy enjoy mercy solely because of God's gracious purpose, not because of any deservedness of their own (1 Tim.1:12-16; Rom.9:15,16).

WHAT THE HUMAN DESERVES

Insofar as "just deserts" are concerned, *all* are deserving of death (Rom.1:32). Considered in themselves, in their own sinfulness, apart from the divine purpose, humanity is well suited and worthy only of death. If this were the only

consideration, it would be altogether fitting not only to put man to death, but to leave him there on a permanent basis.

This is true of the entirety of humanity, not merely of some. Remember, all sinned; *and* all are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). The glory of God represents the only ideal standard of righteousness. It is not merely that man *comes short* of the glory of God that is significant. It is that he is found *wanting* of the glory of God. Not only have all mankind sinned, but all mankind—including those who are least offensive—are members of the old humanity which is *corrupted* in accord with its seductive desires (Eph.4:22).

WHAT GOD WILLS

Howbeit, in the end, God, Who loves all (John 3:16), and wills to save all (1 Tim.2:4), will become All in all (1 Cor. 15:28). In that day, God will fully manifest Himself as the One Who indeed is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim. 4:10). Until then, with respect to all interim judging, it is only a question of whether one best serves the divine purpose as a vessel of mercy or as a vessel of indignation.

OFFENSES NO LONGER RECKONED

The fact that God has conciliated the world to Himself and is not reckoning offenses to the all who have sinned, affirms the fact that man's sinfulness continues to be offensive to God. It is not that man's sinful ways are no longer offensive to the Deity. That is far from the case. It is that now that the Sin Offering has been made, God is no longer *reckoning* man's offenses to him.

It must be emphasized that the conciliation does not exempt man from his close and often painful connection with the generally attenuated yet sometimes full-toned indignation of God which, even now, is being revealed from heaven upon the irreverence and injustice of men

(Rom.1:18). We become acquainted firsthand with God's appraisal of sin whenever we ourselves experience the practical retribution which attends our own failures (*cf* Rom. 1:18-32; *cp* 1 Tim.6:9).

It does not follow from the fact that, as a timeless truth, *sin* has been taken away, nor from the companion fact that, personally speaking, *offense* is not being reckoned, that God will therefore do nothing at all insofar as personal adjudication is concerned with respect to the dreadful deeds of His beloved creatures. God will still bring every *act* into judgment (Ecc.12:14), both in the case of the believer (at the dais of Christ; 2 Cor.5:10) and of the unbeliever (before the great white throne; Rev.20:11,12).

GOD'S WORK OF JUDGMENT

Divine *judgment*, however, simply speaks of divine *decision*. For the sake of the accomplishment of the divine purpose, it remains *expedient* that the various judgments in which God would engage in response to man's wickedness still be carried out. Through these means, God will further make known the awfulness and injuriousness of sin.

Yet it must be recognized that the indignation in the day of the indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God (Rom.2:5), will itself proceed "according to" (or, "in accord with") that glorious body of divine revelation which Paul terms "my evangel" (Rom.2:16)! Paul's evangel is the evangel which reveals the eventual "life's justifying" and reconciliation of all mankind through the saving work of Christ (Rom.5:18,19; Col.1:20). How we rejoice to know that the events of the day of judging will proceed on the basis of and in the light of the glorious consummation when God becomes All in all.

In all future, adversative judgments, then, God will be mindful that the "sin in the flesh" of those undergoing judging has already been condemned and taken away through

the sacrifice of Christ. He will be mindful as well that, through Christ's sacrifice, every sinner—even the most wicked—is already joined to Himself. That is, this is so in fact, all human unbelief notwithstanding.

It is true that, in the current era, God *acts* in conciliation toward mankind. It is true as well that, in coming times of indignation, it will *appear* that God surely is reckoning the offenses of humanity against them. Yet in fact, in the depth of His heart, this will not be so. This is because, at the cross, God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself. The recognition that, practically, this is a truth applied in a special way in the present, must not be misused so as to obscure the realization that, factually, it is a timeless and abiding truth.

In His work of judgment, through Christ, what is seen on the surface covers what is in the depths of God, made known in the One revealed in Paul's evangel (*cf* 1 Cor.2: 6-10). Let no one imagine that Christ, the Righteous One, departs from virtue in assuming the role of Divine Indignation. He does so for the sake of the glory of God and the benefit of all concerned, being motivated by love, wisdom and perfect righteousness. His motives are of the highest order, and His purpose for the greatest good.

FOR GOD AND HIS GLORY

It is vital to realize that the divine indignation of the day of indignation will be the manifestation of an assumed character, not the reflection of what, deeply and ultimately speaking, is actually so.

Furthermore, the indignation of that day will be just the right amount, neither too much nor too little. It will soon be past, and, even as all else, will prove to be for the glory of God and the benefit of man. How glorious it is to know that God does not afflict "from His heart" (Lam. 3:33). How we rejoice in the realization that, ". . . though

He afflicts, *yet He has compassion according to the abundance of His benignities*" (Lam.3:32).

The Son of God, then, to Whom all judging has been given (John 5:22), will yet, as the Emblem of God's *assumption* (Heb.1:3), *assume* the role of One Who is indignant. For the sake of the fulfillment of the divine purpose, even as for the benefit of the creature, it is wise and expedient that Christ should be manifested thus. This theophany will occur principally in the conclusion of the current eon, and then in the day of judging following the thousand years. This assumed, indignant Character, while true to form, is not at all reflective of the heart of the One Who is love (1 John 4:8)—love, which is not incensed, neither is it taking account of evil (1 Cor.13:5), evil itself being the outworking of the divine intention (*cf* Rom.9:19).

God has a purpose in all that occurs (*cf* Rom.11:36). Man's injustice commends God's righteousness (Rom.3:5). "The truth of God," by virtue of its being afforded an entity of contrast through the vehicle of "my lie" (i.e., through the innumerable lies in which men so frequently engage), indeed, "superabounds." That is, God's truthfulness, in the face of man's untruthfulness, thus becomes much more apparent and precious "for His glory" (Rom.3:7).

God wants to display His indignation and make His powerful doings known (Rom.9:22). Accordingly, He has made the world and all that is in it (Acts 17:24), doing so in such a way that the world will surely contain both creatures and creaturely deeds well-suited to the visitation not only of His indignation but as well of all His concomitant, powerful deeds. "Yahweh has made *everything* for its own pertinent end, *yea even the wicked* for the day of evil" (Prov.16:4; *cp* Eph.6:13). All is not only *out of* God, and *through* God, but all is *for* God as well: *to Him be the glory* for the eons! Amen! (Rom.11:36).

According to Paul, everything that exists and everything that occurs is "for" God. That is, everything is for His purpose; it exists unto the end that the purpose which requires its ephemeral presence might be achieved. It follows, then, that all that is "not of God," faithfully speaking, is nonetheless out of Him, ultimately speaking.

WE RELY ON THE LIVING GOD

All will yet redound to God's glory. Thus we say, "to Him be the glory," in anticipation of and with a view toward the good that God will surely bring into existence out of the evil upon which the corresponding good is dependent.

God cannot be glorified as the Saviour He intends to become, unless His creatures are the kind of sinners they need to be unto this end. Nor can God bless each one with salvation from sin in the way and to the degree that He intends, unless each one's particular kind and degree of sin is fixed. Therefore, that all might accord with God's purpose, all accords with what must be (*cf* Rom.8:26). All, indeed, accords with what must be, since all is out of, through, and for God (Rom.11:36), Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11).

Nonetheless, human behavior still occurs voluntarily, according to one's own choice. It is not true that since all is out of God (and, therefore, that human choice is out of God), that it makes no difference what we do, or that future events will come about in spite of what we do. To the contrary, future events will come about *because* of what we do. Accordingly, since we cannot know what we will do before we actually do it, the matter of decision making, even as self-discipline and self-control, remains vital.

We are awaiting the realized achievement of the full Saviourhood of God. Unto this end, we *rely* on the living God (1 Tim.4:10). Accordingly, we give thanks to Him *in* everything (1 Thess.5:18) and *for* everything (Eph.5:20). We do so, in word and deed, in the form of our unfeigned

assurance and trust in His goodness and wisdom in the face of all the evil extant in the world, replete with such an abundance of horror and misery. God is *our Saviour,* and He is *the Saviour of all mankind.*

The existence of sin and evil is a harsh and unchanging reality. Whatever *we* may do, whatever our own course may consist of, in any case, the current eon itself will continue to be a wicked eon (Gal.1:4). We are all being afflicted. The entire creation—involuntarily—has been *subjected* to vanity, the slavery of corruption (Rom.8:20,21). It is on account of *God* that "we are being put to death the whole day," that "we are being reckoned as sheep for slaughter" (Rom.8:36). We are all dying; we are all sorrowing and groaning in our bodies of humiliation.

In his present state of corruption, man has become characterized by pride, bitterness and wrath. Yet a proud heart can only be changed by the transforming power of a thankful spirit. A spirit of thankfulness affirms that any virtue we may enjoy is ultimately God's gift to us, including the virtue that makes good use of the gifts which He grants.

A bitter and wrathful spirit can only be subdued by a spirit of kindness and love. God alone can grant us such a spirit. Yet the means of grace unto the possession of such an endowment may well be acceptance of and growth in recognition of God as God.

How helpful, then, it is truly to realize that the same awful deeds that man devises against us for evil, God designs for us for good (*cf* Gen.50:20; *cp* Rom.15:4). How beneficial it is to know that all is out of, through and for God.

It is in an awareness of this glorious truth that we say, "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, our Father, Who loves us, and is giving us an eonian consolation and a good expectation in grace, be consoling your hearts and establish you in every good work and word" (2 Thess.2:16,17). J.R.C.

GOD, SENDING HIS OWN SON

WHAT is that *grace* of Romans 7:24 which will rescue us out of our bodies of flesh? What is *God's law* to which we, like Paul, enslave our minds while we remain under Sin's law in our flesh (Rom.7:25)?

It is the evangel of God concerning His Son, which Paul has continually been evangelizing in this epistle, and which he now places before us explicitly in Romans 8:3. He sets it forth here in contrast to the law of God placed upon Israel at Sinai, and in opposition to the law of sin and death established over humanity in Eden:

For what was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh . . . .

It is because God sent His own Son concerning sin, for the condemnation of sin in the flesh that nothing is now condemnation to us. It is on the basis of this grace that God has given us life in Christ Jesus by means of His spirit. It is because of this that we stand in grace before God, freed from the law of sin and death, not because of works of law that we may have done, but because God spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all.

THE HUMAN SITUATION

The word "impossible" in Romans 8:3 sums up the human situation under the law given through Moses. The word "infirm" sums up the human situation in the flesh

as corrupted by sin and death because of Adam. With these two terms, Paul sums up all he has said concerning humanity and its desperate situation (*cf* Rom.1:18-3:20; 3:23; 5:12-14; 7:14-23).

By the human experience of sin and death, we are brought to the recognition that we cannot stop their operation. We all say with Paul, "I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not" (Rom.7:18). *Yet now*, because of God's righteousness, power and love in the giving of His own Son, this captivating, dominating, double-edged evil of sin and death is condemned to extinction.

For us who are believing this evangel, despite the fact that we remain sinners who are dying in the flesh, there is already a deliverance *in spirit* which seals our position in Christ until the day of whole deliverance (Eph.1:13,14). This earnest of the enjoyment of our future allotment is a spiritual blessing of highest value.

THE SENDING

All of Scripture directs us to this central event of the eons. Where there is chaos and emptiness and darkness God speaks in His evangel, and in His speaking He gives light and order and life (*cf* Gen.1:2-31).

It was not a sending to immediate and exalted rule, but to rejection and humiliation and most fearfully and vitally of all, to *death.* Christ's rule will come, and the glory of God will cover the earth and the transcendent riches of His grace will be displayed among the celestials. But all of this rests on the foundation of God's sending of His own Son, Who was obedient to His Father's will, even to the death of the cross.

In the meantime, you and I continue to live in this wicked eon, groaning and travailing in bodies made captive to sin. But thanks be to the Sending-His-Own-Son

God, we have received His evangel concerning His Son, and we have His own word for it that nothing is condemnation to us, and we stand before Him, in His sight, freed from the law of sin and death.

GOD'S OWN SON

Here in Romans 8:3 we are pointed to our Lord, Jesus Christ, as unique beyond all humanity. In appreciating our inclusion in Him and crucifixion together with Him, we also see He stands alone in many ways. He is God's Son in a special way, as the Son of His love, Firstborn of creation in Whom all was created and through Whom all shall be reconciled (Col.1:13-20). But He is God's own Son in His coming in flesh as well. He came of a woman, but not of a human father. For it is the man who is the transmitter of death, "on which, all sin." What is said in Romans 5:12-14 does not apply to our Lord. He was not born a sinner; He had to be *made* to be sin as the Antitype of the sin offerings (2 Cor.5:21). He had to lay down His life by His own act (John 10:17,18), by the giving up His spirit into His Father's hands (Luke 23:46; John 19:30).

So it was that Christ Jesus came in flesh (though apart from sin), and in this way He was identified with us, who were created in Him. He by-passed what we are in flesh because of Adam. But, since we all were created in Him, we who do not by-pass the infirmity transmitted by Adam, shall not by-pass the effects of Christ's death and (in God's own time) His vivified life. In that Christ died, all died, and in Him all shall be vivified. Consequently, the sin of His death was the most Awe-full of all deaths, the most Singular of all sins and the most Blessed in its results of all acts of all the eons. For us who are believing, this identification with our Lord, Who died for us and was roused, no longer dying, but living to God, is already ours in spirit.

CONCERNING SIN

God's sending of His own Son was "concerning sin." These two words were often used in the Septuagint Version of the "Old Testament" for what we call the "sin offering" and what the Hebrew simply called the "sin." This tells of a process of "sin for sin," just as the law demanded "eye for eye" and "tooth for tooth."[1]

In Romans 8:3 Paul brings to us the evangel of God concerning His Son just as surely as he does in Romans 3:21-28; in 4:23-5:11; in 5:15-19; and throughout the epistle in basing all that he says to this central message from God for which he was severed. In a remarkable way our text, extending into verse 4, parallels 2 Corinthians 5:21 in directing attention to God's part in the evangel and the place of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and its effect on us. We can see this in the following arrangement:

A. *God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh,*
B. *and concerning sin,*
C. *He condemns sin in the flesh, that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us . . . .*

A. *For the One not knowing sin, [God] makes to be*
B. *a sin offering*
C. *for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him.*

So it is that we are hearing the evangel of God's righteousness and grace, and of Christ's faith and obedience, and of the end of sin and death and coming about of righteousness as it presently applies to believers. This is how Paul introduces us to the themes of walk and disposition, God's spirit in us and Christ's spirit in us, and the blessing of expectation and of awareness of the goodness and love of God, which fill this eighth chapter of Romans.

D.H.H.

1. *cf* the article entitled, "Sin for Sin," which follows.

SIN FOR SIN

NOWHERE, perhaps, are man's theories and God's thoughts further apart than on the means of dealing with sin. This divergence is limited to theology, however, for in other walks of life man finds his ideas will not work, so reverts to the true and practical solution.

Man "atones" for misdeeds by good conduct. God demands another wrong to make a matter right. Let us admit that this seems so far wrong that few will even consider it. We have the proverb: "Two wrongs never make a right." Indeed, in man's moral ethics, uncontrolled by God, it *would* be a dangerous doctrine. For it is only when two wrongs are properly related to each other that they are mutually corrective.

Not long since I had a striking experience of how two mistakes may combine with a very happy effect. We were building an evangelistic van. Some one, unknown to me, jacked up one of the rear wheels. After the hardwood framework had been carefully set so as to be square and the posts perpendicular, the jack was found and taken away. Then the whole rear end leaned over to one side an inch or two. I tried hard to force the frame into position, but it had been securely bolted, and would not budge. After losing nearly a night's sleep over it, it suddenly occurred to me that the large swinging door would have a tendency to throw the posts out of perpendicular. On testing it out it was found that the weight of the door exactly counterbalanced the slant of the posts and made them perfectly plumb!

Here we have a practical example of a mistake and its

justification. I acknowledge freely that it was my mistake to get the door post out of plumb, but I insist that I was justified by the outcome. Any carpenter or builder can appreciate the possibility of making such a mistake, but they do not issue instructions to make them, for their happy outcome is beyond human control.

In other spheres, however, the principle is recognized and applied. In all commercial transactions and in bookkeeping it would be exceedingly silly to try to correct a mistake by doing right. If a man is overcharged, he is not satisfied to be charged what is right on other items, but wants a rebate. This, of course, is essentially wrong, for it is a payment for nothing. A friend recently forgot to deduct ten dollars from the bill for printing the magazine. How is he going to make it right? By not doing it again? No, but by wrongly deducting it from the next bill.

God's earliest lesson in "atonement" or covering is full of significance. Adam had sinned. He tried to cover himself with fig leaves. He did not do another wrong to cover his first offense. But God is not satisfied. He sacrifices an innocent lamb to provide a covering. On what ground could we have justified Adam if he had taken the life of a lamb to clothe himself? But are we not doing this very thing every day? Creatures against whom no charge can be laid are slaughtered for peltries to provide our covering. The sin that brought the need of covering demands another wrong to provide it.

Sin and sacrifice are constant associates—far closer in the vocabulary of the original than any English version. In the fifth of second Corinthians many margins make "He made Him to be *sin,*" "He made Him a *sin offering,*" on the ground that, in the Hebrew the phrase *sin offering* is simply *sin.* Our translators have not always been clear in their own minds how to render it. Thus, when they had always translated "for a sin offering," in the fourteenth verse of

the fourth of Leviticus they suddenly change to "for the sin." Whether it is rendered "a young bullock for the sin," or "for a sin offering" may not seem to matter much until we see that it applies to the sacrifice of the bullock, not to the sin of the congregation.

But, some will say, how can a sacrifice to cover sin be itself a sin? The point we wish to press at present is that, in the inspired language of scripture, there is no other term for it, and were we speaking Hebrew, we must always refer to the sin offering as the "sin." Nor can we convince ourselves that this is merely accidental, a curious circumstance, without reason or significance. On the contrary, it points to the path of truth. Let us consider carefully just what the offering of a sacrifice involves. Is there any aspect in which it too partakes of the nature of a sin, or mistake?

Since the flood it has become necessary for mankind to slay animals for food. Occasionally it is right to kill some unfortunate animal to put it out of its misery. But what would we think of the farmer who deliberately chose a young bullock, a perfect specimen of its kind, and killed it for no other purpose than to burn it up? He would be called a fool, or worse, a criminal. It was wrong to take the bullock's life. It did not deserve death, and its death served no useful purpose. Such an act would surely be a mistake, a sin. Yet this is precisely what the sacrifice for sin was, viewed apart from its sacred associations. Do we then wonder that it was called a sin by God Himself?

Let us consider the real nature of the sin offering, quite apart from those religious prejudices (which have no place in the Scriptures), which hamper our thought and chain our reason. The hunter who slays wantonly, for no other incentive than the lust to kill, justly forfeits the respect of mankind. Some may justify it as a sport, but who would consider the sacrifice of a young bullock in that light? Were the flesh or the skin needed or used for the support

of human life, it might be condoned. But no. The only reason for its death is that its owner has done wrong!

Can the slaying of a perfect, inoffensive, useful creature be regarded in any sense as right? Does it compensate for the sin for which it is offered? Does it alleviate the loss of the one who suffers from the sin? From the human standpoint, apart from the illumination afforded by divine revelation, it was a huge mistake.

Atonement, the covering of sin, was by means of a sin [offering]. One mistake, contrary to the Divine precepts, was temporarily met and covered by another, which was in accord with His ritual. Does not this account for the fact that the bullock was not burned on the altar, in the sacred courts, but at a distance far from the divine dwelling, outside the camp? Being a "sin," it was brought far from the holy dwelling place of God and consumed with fire.

It was thus that Elisha healed the waters of Jericho. Being so near the salt sea leads us to suppose the waters alkaline and thus unfit for use. What is the remedy? Elisha cast salt into the water. This should have made it worse, but, by the divine alchemy, it cleared the waters. God's ways and man's are not the same. We would not commend salt as a purifier of water unless the Divine Chemist prescribed it. Neither would we advise anyone to sin, in order to cover a previous sin. Only God's will and wisdom can correct sin by sin.

The cross of Christ is the touchstone of truth. If we find that it confirms our faith we need have no fear of its falsity. But if it fails to confirm it, we may well view our theology with suspicion and distrust.

We now desire to consider the great crisis in the career of Christ entirely apart from all else but His dealings with God. Man's attitude and acts, and Satan's persecution we reserve for another time.

It is evident on the surface that the latter part of our

Lord's ministry was weighted with His impending doom, which even caused a clash between Himself and one of His disciples. But it is not till we reach Gethsemane that the veil is torn aside and we get a glimpse of the awfulness of the cross as it affected His fellowship with God. Hitherto the will of Christ was in perfect parallel with that of His Father. True, He did not do His own will, but He acquiesced in the divine will cheerfully and with His whole heart. But now He begs that the cup pass from Him. His will was not at all in line with the will of God. But the will is not the final arbiter. The heart may furnish motives deeper and more powerful. So He adds "Not My will, but Thine, be done!"

We need not even ask the question whether He had a right to refuse to drink the cup which God had put to His lips. God Himself had opened the heavens and testified that He was delighted in His beloved Son. Christ had challenged any one to convict Him of sin and no one even dared to try. Pilate washed his hands of His case. Heaven and earth and the very demons declared His righteousness. There were no flaws in Him. Was it right, then, that He should suffer so severely that the very anticipation drew clots of blood from His agonized brow?

We are not now concerned with the physical pain and shame inflicted by men. How undeserved that was we shall see again. Men are ignorant, as He Himself declared when He prayed "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Men are unjust and hateful, so we have no difficulty in understanding their attitude toward the holy One of God.

We are now concerned only with those most mysterious and terrible of all His sufferings, the loss of fellowship, the averted face, the active hostility of God Himself, which wrung from Him the orphan cry "My God, My God, why didst *Thou* abandon Me?" The terror of those three hours of darkness, when the Sun of His life was hid from His

soul, surpass the power of the pen, yet the psalmist compares it with the force of fire and water and the sword.

This was God's dealing with His Son. Our present question is, Was it right? Did Christ deserve such suffering? Was there any ground, in His relation with God, for the distance and despair which He endured? All will agree, even an infidel will concede, that, if any one ever deserved the opposite it was that lowly, holy Man. We are face to face, then, with this great truth, that God did visit with direst evil the dearest object in His universe. God does inflict evil even where no direct cause exists.

The fact that sin had invaded the universe is no reason why Christ should suffer. The penalty of sin applies to the sinner, not to the only One Who was not corrupted by its contact. We are now confining ourselves to a consideration of the justice of His case, and exclude all higher thoughts.

It will not destroy this truth to say that His case was exceptional and that the apparent wrong was justified by the results to mankind and the whole creation. This is most true. It is the very truth for which we contend. God uses evil to attain a higher good. It is the means He employs in turning His creatures from neutral indifference to an active and affectionate response to His love.

The attitude of God toward Christ on the cross is, in reality, a much deeper "problem" than the entrance of evil or sin. When evil came into the creation, creation was neutral—neither good nor bad. If it did not deserve evil, neither did it deserve good. Not so with our Lord. The glories He had before He emptied Himself to become a man entitled Him to respect and honor. The life He lived, the service He performed in His humiliation called forth praise and demanded a suitable reward. There was not the slightest cause in Him for divine condemnation.

If we are backward in acknowledging that evil came into the world in accord with God's purpose, what shall

we say of His treatment of Christ? Christ did not want to drink the cup set before Him, yet this was God's will. The shame and indignity heaped upon Him during His ministry were not deserved. We acknowledge that men were awfully wrong in their treatment of Him. What then, shall we say of God Who forsook Him in His deepest need, Who sent fire from above into His bones, and more than this, *desired to crush Him!* (Isa.53:10). There was only one greater wrong in all the universe than that He should be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and that was that His sorest affliction should come from the heart of His God and Father.

Let every one who imagines that God has no connection with evil listen to that lonely forlorn cry of the forsaken Son, "My God, My God, why didst *Thou* abandon Me?" In vindication we point to the infinitely blessed results flowing from it. We find that even the Sufferer Himself shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. And this is the answer which suffices for the first entrance of evil as well as for its foremost example.

Murder is an evil of the first degree. To take the life of an enemy is usually punishable with death. To take the life of a friend is far worse, and one who slays his own beloved ones is usually adjudged insane, for it is a crime too terrible for a rational being to commit. It is this thought which intrudes itself upon us when we read of the faith of Abraham, when he offered up his son Isaac. He doubtless felt the same as we do about it, for we know that he consoled himself with the thought that God, Who was in reality responsible for the apparent crime, could take care of its consequences, for He could rouse Isaac from the dead.

The chief interest for us lies, not in Abraham's deed, for he did not actually slay his son, but in the great antitype, when God and His Son came to Calvary. Then there was no substitute, but the Father's knife found its sheath

in the Son Whom He loved, and in Whom all His hopes were centered. Our purpose in referring to it is to point out that, from every human standard, Abraham's intended act was insanely criminal. It was absolutely without justification apart from the revealed will of God. What had Isaac done to deserve death? And, infinitely more deserving as was the Son Whom he represented, why should He be slain? If we confine our inquiry to Christ and God, in their past relationships, and exclude the sin of man and creation and the benefits to come to all through His sacrifice, we must confess that it was a temporary wrong to the Victim. Is not this the thought underlying the statement that "He was made sin?" And this was for our sakes, that we might become God's righteousness in Him. No man made Him sin, and certainly Satan had no such laudable object in view. It was *God* Who did it, and to such purpose that it rectified and justified all other sins.

The prevalent conception of the perfected universe is one scarred and marred by sin. God's thought is infinitely higher. The cross of Christ has transmitted sin into righteousness, transgression into obedience, offense into reconciliation, hate into love.

Temporarily, during the earthly kingdom, sin is pardoned, offenses are forgiven. But eventually sin is justified, or vindicated. In itself it is criminal; in combination with the crime of the cross, it is an essential factor in the revelation of God's heart.

To capitulate: God settles sin by sin. Every sin is transmuted by the sin of sins into an act essential to God's highest glory and the creatures' greatest good. All the righteousness and glory and honor which are Christ's, either before His incarnation or after His glorification do not offset sin. His undeserved humiliation and distress and shame and death are sufficient to transform all sin into righteousness and holiness and bliss. A. E. Knoch.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 106th Year

(1909–2015)

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 What is a Version?
173 The Greek and English Indefinite
187 The Fact Verb

FOURTH QUARTER, 2015

Volume 106 **Number 4**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

By analyzing the contextual usages of each Hebrew and Aramaic word, a single English word was first selected as its most suitable equivalent. Then, to achieve readability, some words were given a limited number of idiomatic variants that are harmonious with the sense derived from the investigations. English words used as the common translation of particular Hebrew words, and even idiomatic variants, were not used for other Hebrew words.

Boldface type was used for words (or even parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. And lightface type was used for words (or parts of words) which were added to clarify the meaning of the respective word in the Hebrew text. In addition small symbols and abbreviations were inserted between or attached to words to represent omitted terms, to indicate grammatical features and the sources of emendations to the Hebrew text.

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BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SIX

EDITORIAL

It has been eighty-nine years since the Concordant Version of the "New Testament" was first published in one volume. It came to be referred to as the "Complete Edition," for it included the Greek Text with sublinear and superlinear on facing pages with the English translation (and the translator's notes). Later, what was first called the "Keyword Edition," but came to be known as the "International Edition," was published (1944). In this edition, much of the information provided by the Greek Text and its sublinear was indicated by signs and symbols inserted into the translation, as in our current edition, called the Concordant Literal New Testament (first published in 1966 as the "Memorial Edition," then slightly revised and published anew in 1976, reprinted in 1984).

Now that we have published the Concordant Version of the Old Testament (CVOT, first edition, 2014), we have begun the task of preparing a new edition of the Concordant Version New Testament (CVNT), to match in form and style with the CVOT. At first we thought this would require only re-setting the CLNT in type and inserting a few changes and corrections as noted since 1976. But it has become clear that a more thorough re-examination of the translation, if not required, would be wise and most beneficial. This is underway, with about a fourth of the whole already set in type in a *tentative* form. But hardly anything is finished in what we can be satisfied is a final form.

It is with this in view that we present in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches,* two landmark articles by A. E. Knoch

regarding the translation. The first, entitled "What is a Version?" (p.147) appears in full as originally published (except for a few typographical corrections) in the May 1939 issue of our magazine. It was written in anticipation of the "Keyword" Edition, when the only available CV was the Complete Edition. Consequently, some statements may be difficult to follow now unless the reader has both a copy of the CLNT and the separately published CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT before him or her. Yet the many concerns mentioned in it remain concerns for us now as we prepare a revised version. Matters of idiom, vocabulary, grammar, even spelling and diction, which Brother Knoch discusses, are still very relevant. The study is a long one, demanding careful attention, and perhaps it should be read in short sections at different intervals. Yet it should be of interest to all who wish to grow in appreciation and understanding of God's Word. To us in our present review of the Version, what Brother Knoch wrote here is of real and continuing help.

The second study (starting on page 173) is abridged and edited from its original appearance in the June 1922 issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, before even the Complete Edition was available. It deals entirely with a question of grammar: How should the Greek aorist verb be treated in English? The decision to render aorist verbs by English simple present verbs was likely more radical in 1922 than it is today, but even now probably only a few would consider it a wise and practical solution even when applied to a limited number of cases. Nevertheless, I believe it is one of the most helpful features of the CV. And, as suggested in my brief article starting on page 187, we are going beyond its application to the so-called "first aorist" verbs, and rendering even forms traditionally classified as aorists, but rejected by Brother Knoch as "true aorists," this way.

D.H.H.

WHAT IS A VERSION?

THE TURNING of the Sacred Scriptures into languages other than those in which they were written has been done in a variety of ways, which we may designate, according to their literal adherence to the text, *sublinears* or *interlinears*, *literal translations*, *translations*, and *versions*. Each one has its advantages and shortcomings. The CONCORDANT VERSION seeks to be of the greatest service by giving both extremes, a detailed *sublinear* and an idiomatic *version*, supplemented by a concordance. In the proposed Keyword edition the sublinear will be partly replaced by signs in the text and by explanations in the concordance.

The complete version, with the companion volume, gives the reason for most of the facts in the sublinear and the version, but, as idiomatic changes are not usually concordant, they have been ignored as not pertaining to the plan, as well as being self-evident in most cases. This no-man's land between the sublinear and the version is of special interest to many. A few find the apparent lack of uniformity inconsistent with the aim of the *version*, forgetting that they would not even have known this if they did not have the sublinear, which alone can be *uniform*. For all such as desire further information in these things we have jotted down a paragraph occasionally, and now combine these into an article, to show the need for *non*-uniformity in a *version*, and also reveal the effort made to make even this irregularity consistent within its limits.

As it will be necessary to use grammatical and other terms with which some of our readers may not be fully familiar, we will define them as occasion arises. Thus even

the unlearned student will find it easy to follow our explanations if he has a version at hand and consults the Greek, sublinear and version of each passage, as it is discussed.

As we have often been asked why the version varies from the sublinear, and why it differs from such works as Young's Literal Translation and Rotherham's Emphasized Version, as well as others, we will seek to make clear that the object before the translator was different in each case, and this affects their renderings. This may be understood better when I say that the Keyword CONCORDANT VERSION will differ slightly from the present text, because it is not accompanied by a sublinear. With a sublinear, a word in the Greek could be omitted if the English did not need it, because the reader had the sublinear at hand. But in the Keyword every word must be accounted for, even if it can only be indicated by a sign. The article will be represented in several thousand instances, when it cannot appear in English, by a dot.

One of the first translations which interested me, other than the Authorized and Revised Versions, was Rotherham's Emphasized. As a zealous seeker after truth, I was delighted with some of his passages, as quoted to me by a friend. Others could not bear the queer English, so I did not obtain a copy for myself until much later, when I wished to study the subject of emphasis. Here, also, I was disappointed, for, in reading it aloud with the stress as indicated, it did not seem to suit the context as a rule. Some things seemed over-emphasized, others not enough. I also hoped to get help with his vocabulary, but here also I found nothing because our plans were so different in practice. Although much more uniform than others, it was not sufficiently so to aid me. Yet I am very fond of Rotherham, though he convinced me that a combined "Version-Sublinear" was not practicable. A version must be idiomatic, like English, and a literal sublinear must be like Greek;

a mixture of the two makes an incompatible hybrid. So I chose rather to separate these two into a sublinear like Greek, and a version like English.

Yet even versions differ in their aim. There are traditional versions, which cling to the past, in which the language cleaves quite closely to the original, and "modern" versions, which not only use up-to-date phraseology, but are to a large extent "running commentaries," as Weymouth himself characterized his work. We seek to avoid both of these extremes, to use such language as Tyndale would have used *were he living today,* and to be as accurate as Weymouth would have been if he had lived in Tyndale's day.

In revising the version we have been impressed with the thought that all versions, from their very nature, must be full of minor deviations. So we would like to distinguish between a *translation* and a *version,* using the former term, in a special sense, for something between a version and a sublinear, in which the order of the words, the grammar and the rendering are close to the *Greek,* while, in a *version,* these things *vary* from the Greek and conform to *English* usage. A literal translation can be made quite uniform, and gives rise to little difference of opinion, but a version may vary in various directions, so that, of different renderings, several may be "Correct," according to the viewpoint of the one who makes it.

Some, including ourselves, would like to see all the *words* rendered uniformly or consistently, even at the expense of other things. Others lay more stress on *grammatical* uniformity, and would use a variety of words to attain this. Again, it is a question whether the *order* of the words is as important, or more so, than identical grammar. One of our associates wishes to preserve the participle wherever possible. Others think that this is not idiomatic. All of this shows that, in fact, a *version* is a continual deviation from the exact facts of the original, and demands, not merely

knowledge, but judgment, in its compilation. It calls for a continual weighing of the evidence, and often it is necessary to give one decision where it would be much easier to give two or three alternatives.

Faithfulness or "exactitude" is a very different thing in a version, and in a sublinear. The latter must be literal, and calls for comparatively little judgment in its determination. A version, however, though it may be literal so long as Greek and English run parallel, is especially valuable and faithful when it *departs* from literality in case this is misleading. Hence, even when based on a sublinear, *it consists of deviations from it,* mostly to give the language fluency, but also to express the proper sense. In the sublinear it is a question of the *meaning of words,* in the version of their *usage.* Hence they are not always the same. In a sublinear, the *remote* contexts, the other occurrences of the same forms, are the determining factor, while a version is concerned with the *immediate context.* There is a continual conflict between these two. A contentious translator will only stir up strife. A conciliating hand alone can bring satisfaction and repose.

NEAR AND FAR CONTEXT

To show how the two systems—concord with the near and with the remote contexts—clash, let us consider Hebrews 13:3, "Be mindful of those bound, as bound together; of those maltreated, as being yourselves also in the body." The remote contexts require that we change *those, bound* to *prisoners,* as this word is always so rendered elsewhere. It seems a pity to break the uniformity by rendering it *bound* in this single passage. But the meaning is the same, and the near context practically forces us to change, in order to conform to, and help the connection with "as *bound* together," as well as maintaining a harmony with *those maltreated.* The remote contexts call for *prisoner,* the near context demands *bound.*

Since the essence of a version consists in varying from the Greek to fit English diction or idiom, anyone should be able to find "departures from the original," "distortions," "perversions," etc., in almost every line. For instance, the first line of the CONCORDANT VERSION (the scroll of the lineage), contains two glaring blunders, for the Greek has no article before either the word "scroll" or the word "lineage." Some will insist that these are unwarranted and unpardonable additions to the Word of God, yet others are horrified at the English when the article is omitted. So do not be disturbed if the version is criticized because of its additions or omissions, its changes or contradictions, for all these must be there, or it would not be a *version* at all. From this it is clear that a translator must be a confirmed criminal, for he is forced to "change the word of God" in nearly every sentence. He must pass the death sentence upon himself to avoid the eternal torment to which the critics consign him for his uncounted crimes.

To one who seeks to do justice to the vocabulary, the grammar, and the emphasis of the Greek, and seeks to put all on as broad a basis as possible, the making of a version is a continual conciliation of clashing forces, and a constant exercise of judgment so as to use his knowledge wisely, and avoid the worst of two or more evils, while compelled to introduce into his work the lesser one. Here we have a good word, but the grammar will need to be violated if we employ it. There the emphasis seems so important that the grammar is once more desecrated. Yet in other cases it is the reverse. Usually the vocabulary is given first place, then the grammar, followed by the emphasis. But this order may vary according to the context. In Hebrew poetry, for instance, the order of the words may be deemed more essential than the grammar if it does not vitally change the sense, for it is essential to the diction.

Since this is so, do not be unduly distressed if someone

points out a place in the CONCORDANT VERSION where it has "departed from the Greek." The best course probably would be to show the critic several more in the same sentence, when this can be done. If anyone specializes on vocabulary, he can find quite a few idiomatic variations, thousands of cases where the connective differs from the sublinear and other occurrences, and such "errors." If he specializes in grammar, he can probably find many more. Few specialize in emphasis, but I have spent many months at it, and I regret that the grammar often hinders the proper placing of the words. I have been trying to "specialize" on a combination of all the features and do constructive work, that is, find a rendering which gives the proper emphasis with the correct vocabulary and grammar. The greatest lack in the present CONCORDANT VERSION is in the emphasis, and this we are specially seeking to improve.

To illustrate what is meant let us consider a suggested rendering of Acts 14:1. The Greek is: BECAME YET IN ICONIUM according-to THE SAME. The CONCORDANT VERSION reads: "Now in Iconium the same thing occurred." I am asked to change this to "Now in Iconium it occurred in accord with the same thing." I freely acknowledge that the idiomatic rendering leaves out a Greek word entirely. It will be indicated by (*ac*) in the Keyword edition. I may be greatly mistaken, but I cannot recognize the change as English. I have never seen any like it. If some great truth were at stake I would gladly adopt it and trust to time to make it idiomatic. But we say "the same thing" with "occurred" when we mean another of like nature. Without further evidence I am not inclined to make the change. It is neither Greek nor English, for the words are one and the idiom the other—a mongrel mixture.

In our attempts to make a version we should seek to avoid compromise, so that we produce a hybrid thing, which is neither fish nor fowl, neither literal nor idiomatic. A version, like a sublinear, should be *extreme.* Just as a sublinear should be impossible English, so a version should be impossible Greek. Those who criticize the sublinear because it is poor English are no more lacking than those who object to the version because it is poor Greek. There are *and must be,* disagreements and divergences.

Let us further illustrate these abstract ideas by a longer example. At the same time we will be able to explain some features of the proposed Keyword edition, which seeks to combine advantages of both version and translation by means of a concordance and special signs in the text. We will take the words spoken by the woman of Samaria to the men of her city, "Come hither! *Lo!* there is a Man Who told me all whatever I do. Is not *this* the Christ?" (John 4:29).[1] The sublinear reads:

HITHER BE-PERCEIVING human WHO said to-ME ALL as-much-as I-DO NO-ANY this is THE ANOINTED.

It will be seen, in this simple speech, that we have added and altered and omitted words which are in the original. The first question is, Why? The second one is, Can it be improved? That it is open to criticism we soon will see, but we shall also see that *all* versions are liable to this, for they are obliged to deviate from absolute uniformity with the pattern.

HITHER, OR COME HITHER

The Greek *adverb, deuro,* is usually used in a figurative

1. This current article was originally published in *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 30 (1939). The reading of John 4:29 cited here is from the 1930 edition of the Concordant Version which differs slightly from our current edition (sixth edition, third printing, 1983) which reads, "Hither! Perceive a Man Who told me all whatever I do. Is not this the Christ?" (John 4:29). Yet it still serves well, to illustrate important considerations involved in making a concordant *version* of the Scripture Original.

sense for the *verb, come* hither, just as in English. Usually they correspond perfectly. But there are passages where the English demands that we add the verb *come.* When our Lord called Lazarus from the tomb, He simply said "Hither! Out!" (John 11:43). That is how I would like to render it. But I have never seen an English version without the verb. It is too abrupt for us. So I have rendered it "[Come] out hither!" So also in the narrative of Acts 7:3. It was said to Abraham, "and [come] hither into the land . . . " The *come* seems necessary to us. So it seemed to me in John 4:29. But, in time, especially in case we are conversant with the Greek, the force of such a necessity may weaken. Now, it seems to me that we can manage without the verb in this passage. So I have canceled it.

It will be seen that this is not a question of "right" or "wrong," but of delicate nuances and various viewpoints. *Hither!* as a *passionate command* needs no verb. The heat of the moment drops all words not absolutely essential. But the quiet statement, "you shall [come] hither" demands a verb. Two practical considerations would eliminate the "come" in connection with this word. As a separate word it may be confused with the Greek word *erchomai,* COME. It is needed very seldom to reinforce *hither.* Hence, in the Keyword edition *come,* when used to help *hither,* will be printed in lightface type, to show that it is not in the Greek, in the few instances where it seems needed. Perhaps, in time, it may be dispensed with altogether. The use of this device may hasten this process, for many who use the Keyword version will omit the words not in the Greek.

Let me repeat, the two renderings, "Hither!" and "[Come] hither!" may both be justified, for the action of this verb lies in the adverb. In changing to "Hither!" I am aware that some may say it is too harsh, too commanding. The woman would hardly *order* the men of Samaria to go out. She would soften it, had she spoken English, by the word

"come." But this, again, is a question of habit. As the other occurrences of the word, without *come,* in the Scriptures, are not harsh, they will help to soften this passage. Let us not overemphasize such distinctions. The sense of the passage remains the same in either case.

PERCEIVE, OR LO, OR SEE

Western languages, as a rule, do not possess a good verb which includes knowledge gained by the use of all of the organs of sensation, such as the Greek *eidō,* PERCEIVE. This has cost me much labor and is largely responsible for making the CONCORDANT VERSION "peculiar." In English we overdo the use of the word "see," and employ it as a near metonymy for the exercise of all our organs of sensation. When we go to *see* anyone, we go to make his acquaintance through the medium of other senses as well as sight. Even a blind man can "see" his friends. It is a good figure, and well understood, but, in making, a *concordant version,* where we wish to distinguish *seeing* and *hearing* from *perceiving* with all the senses, it creates a difficult situation.

Were it not for English usage or "idiom" we would simply transcribe our sublinear, "Be perceiving [a] human." That would give the sense very closely, and amount to this: Use all your senses in making the acquaintance of this [not *male man,* but] human being. As a matter of fact the narrative lays all the stress on what they *heard,* not on what they *saw.* The woman was not impressed with the effect on her *eyes* but on her *ears.* She tells the men what He had *said* to her. She does not describe His appearance at all. And, when all was done, they declared that "we have *heard* Him, and we are *aware*" (4:42). Even in English, a better figure would be *hear,* rather than *see.*

In seeking to keep *see* separate from *perceive,* I found an agreeable substitute in our exclamatory particle *lo,* in the imperative. Although it is usually given as the equiv-

alent of *see,* it seems to have a wider usage, more like the word *attention!* So it seems quite a suitable rendering for *perceive* in the imperative. In the complete state, and in a few other cases, the verbs *be aware,* and *be acquainted* seem to be especially good renderings of this difficult verb. In fact the word *acquaint* seems the best when used of persons. So that, if we cannot well say "*Perceive a Man*" we can say "*Lo,* [a] Man," or "Acquaint [yourselves with a] Man." The latter brings out the sense most clearly, but the former seems far more fitting under the circumstances.

I was under the impression that "*Lo!* [a] man . . ." is too abrupt for English, so I inserted the words [there is]. Ordinarily we do not say lo! something, but use it only as an independent exclamation. This, however, jars when the grammar of the Greek, as *anthrōpon* (human) is the object of the verb PERCEIVE (lo!). Putting in *there is* makes it the subject of another verb. The sense is changed from "Perceive a Man" to "a Man there is." Of course it comes to the same thing, nevertheless we seek to avoid such changes when it can be done. Yet we must face the fact that in thousands of cases the grammar of English and Greek stubbornly disagree. The simplest things, such as singular and plural, cannot always be carried over. The gender is often different. These things *must* be "wrong" in a version to some extent, or it would not be a *version* at all. All will agree that the addition of *there is* does not really use *is* as a separate verb, but as an auxiliary to *lo,* making it transitive. It is an idiomatic phrase, in which *there* does not denote the place where, or *is* existence, both together as a phrase make it possible to add an object to the intransitive verb *lo.* Try it out with the verb *look!*

I find, however, that the exclamation *Lo!* can be used in English without *there is,* and with an object following. Indeed, I have so rendered it myself in 1 John 3:1: "*Lo!* what manner of love . . . ." It has the sense of *per-*

ceive in these cases. That it is exclamatory in this passage seems obvious from the context. The woman was very strongly moved. That is why she did not merely say "Come" but "*Hither!*" And "Acquaint yourselves with," in English, seems too labored for the occasion, when the same thought can be more forcefully indicated by the wondering and arresting *lo!*

There may be times when it seems that we are compelled to use *see* for *perceive,* as in John 1:39, "Come and *see.*" We will go through the whole list again and seek to reduce these to a minimum. Moreover, in such cases, we may put a small italic superior p ^{p} in front of the word, thus ^{p}see, and list these as idiomatic in the Keyword concordance. It does not seem wise to change to *see* in the passage before us, (*See* [a] Man) simply to preserve the supposed grammar of the word Man, in a case where this is not at all vital.

To distinguish the word PERCEIVE from the verbs SEE, BEHOLD, etc., is one of the difficult problems which the CONCORDANT VERSION seeks to solve. One who has not faced it in its entirety has no conception of the labor involved, or the many unimportant yet vexing variations which this makes in the grammar. To get the correct conception of the meaning of this word is far more profitable than preserving superficial grammatical uniformity, regardless of difficulties.

HUMAN OR MAN

As we have often spoken of the lack in our language, which forces us to use the same word "man" of a human being as well as of a mature male, we will not enlarge on it again in this connection. Years of work on a German version has deepened the desire to introduce the word *human,* as a noun, into English. I am thankful that we were bold enough to put it in the sublinear. I hoped that we could

transfer it to the Version some day. There has been a faint response, but by far too feeble to warrant its use in the Version yet. Here also, the truth lover will say the version is "wrong," yet the unsympathetic would say that *human* is "impossible," "peculiar," "freakish," etc. In either case we will be condemned for the word we retain.

TOLD OR SAID

The word "said" has a peculiar weakness in English, as compared with the Greek, as shown in this passage. There is no good *reason* why we cannot say "Who *said* to me all . . . ." It simply is not done. So here again the right is wrong and the wrong right, according as we look at it from the Greek or English standpoint. I would say that "said" is wrong in a *version* but right in a sublinear or *translation.* The distinction, however, is not usually vital, as the impression conveyed is the same in English, so we will not pursue a point of no practical import.

WHICH-WHICH OR WHATEVER

For our *whatever* the Greek has a very expressive term, *which-which.* Perhaps we can understand it better if we change one *which* to *that,* and render it "all *that-which* I do." We certainly cannot transcribe the *Greek* and say, "all *which-which* I do." Our word *whatever* fits almost all cases, so it must be a close equivalent of the Greek. But we cannot claim absolute conformity in our renderings.

NOT OR NO-ANY

The transference of the Greek negatives into English is an intricate problem. That is why, in the proposed Keyword edition, we have recourse to special devices in order to keep them distinct. In the sublinear of the complete edition we have made the relative negative *mê* No, and the absolute negative *ouk* NOT, but their difference is not

very clearly registered by these English words. Yet they at least indicate the fact of a distinction, which the student can supply from a consideration of the contexts. In the Keyword edition we hope to transfer this to the version by making it no[t] (with a weak t) when it should be *no,* and no^{t} (with a small t added) when it should be *not.*

The many combinations which contain these negatives make the matter still more complicated. Here, for instance, we have NO-ANY, and the only possible English rendering seems to be *not.* The meaning seems to be "Is no[t this by] any [chance] . . . ." In the Keyword this will appear as no[t]^{a}, with a weak t and a small high italic a, to indicate *any.* In German we can express it by *nicht etwa.* Here again, all English versions are "wrong," or at least they fall short. The only way to remedy the matter is by a sublinear or by artificial indications such as those used in the Keyword. At least I have never seen a very successful rendering of the syllable ANY.

THE ORDER OF THE WORDS

Once we get the sense fairly well fixed, the emphasis will claim our attention, and the order of the words demands recognition. Most of the changes in the Keyword edition are concerned with this matter. The first sentence in the passage before us follows the order of the Greek exactly so that in this particular it is quite correct. But in the second we encounter a difficulty which often confronts us in this work. English does not, as a rule, allow the negative at the beginning of a sentence, though, quite often, it is the most emphatic thing in it.

We have purposely chosen a passage which we can all consider dispassionately, and which some would not deem of any particular importance, even if it has been translated with much variety in various versions. The general sense is sufficiently clear in all of them so that no serious misun-

derstanding can result. The Revisers have placed the word "Can" in the question in place of the negative, thus: "Can this be the Christ?" Aside from our principle of cleaving as closely as possible to the words of the original, even in a version, may not this suggest a lingering doubt on the part of the woman rather than challenging any contradiction on the part of the men? In this case the spirit of the Revised Version does not appeal to me.

Disregarding English usage, we might render this thus: "No[t by] ANY [chance] THIS [One] is the Anointed!?" It seems to be an exclamation as well as a question, and to challenge contradictions by putting the negative at the very commencement of the sentence. But in English it seems practically impossible to give it the proper emphasis, either by position or in reading, especially as the following word demands even more stress, being a purely emphatic addition to the sentence. So that, in fact, all English versions are forced to fail in this regard. We hope to put one or two heavier letters to show the emphasis. As this is impracticable here we will use italics. We have indicated the emphasis thus, for the Keyword. Try it out by reading it forcefully aloud: H*i*ther! L*o!* a M*an* Who told Me all whatever I do. Is n*o*t[a] *this* the Christ?

Those who use the sublinear in their studies are usually strongly inclined to a literal rendering, regardless of the English, and some carry this so far as to look askance at any rendering which is otherwise. No one can object to this, for the sublinear was made in order to enable them to get the facts as they are in the Greek apart from English idiom. Yet I fear the most ardent students, including ourselves, are apt to carry this to extremes in our attitude toward the version. If this is simply to be a repetition of the sublinear it is of no use, and should not have been made. As we have a literal rendering, there is no such need of literality in our version as in the case of those renderings

which seek to combine a literal with an idiomatic version. We are free to be idiomatic, so long as the sense is clearly preserved, and the principles of consistency and exclusiveness are not violated, for these must be kept, if it is to remain a *concordant* version.

DICTION

In all of our writing we seek to use only such words and constructions as will be understood by all English readers, in any part of the world. We avoid peculiar or provincial language. But even this course has its weakness, for we are all inclined to think the best of English odd if it is otherwise than the speech of those about us. We speak of the King's English. I well remember the first time that the King of England spoke over the radio so that he could be heard in far off California. My son was anxious to listen in, and hear what the King's English is like. But he was taught a salutary lesson, for he could hardly understand it, seeing that the enunciation and pronunciation differed so from what he had been taught in school. What is the King's English? In the United States the unchallenged standard for words is Webster's Dictionary. In England I take it that the Oxford Dictionary is recognized as a rule, among the several works of this nature.

But when we go beyond words to constructions the confusion grows. An experience I have just had may help to illustrate and confirm this. To be safe, I have added three works on English to my tools, "The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English," "The King's English," and "A Dictionary of Modern English Usage." They are all from the Clarendon Press, Oxford, and one of the authors of each is the same person. I have dipped into "The King's English" a bit and have had several shocks. The first paragraph of the Preface ends thus: ". . . it merely shows that they have been among the necessarily limited number

chosen to collect instances from." The sentence ends with *from,* a "preposition" or connective. I still remember one of the rules intended to keep us from using bad English, given us in the lower grades in school: "Never use a preposition to end a sentence *with.*" We thought it a witty way of putting it, for the rule disobeyed its own command. Therefore it remained in my memory, and I have seldom committed this literary crime.

But now, what shall I think? In the very beginning of a book on "The King's English," which I am bound to recognize as the highest authority, I find this construction. As an editor, I would have changed this sentence to read "it merely shows that they *are* among the *few* chosen *from which* to collect instances." Now I am glad to have the consciousness that I have never condemned or ridiculed anyone for this fault. But I still feel that a connective is more naturally placed *between* the words it joins, rather than at the end of a sentence, where it stretches its hand out to vacuity.

Now, turning to the first chapter, I find that it begins, "ANY one who . . . " Again I am perplexed. So I turn up the point in the "Dictionary of Usage," which is intended to settle such matters, and, to my astonishment I find that it recommends "ANYONE," not "ANY one," one word, not two. One book, in practice, uses what the other volume *dis*approves! I suppose that the printer of one did not use the other! My rule is simple. When the *one* is a *numeral,* meaning *single,* it should be a separate word, but when it simply fills out a word it ought to be joined to it. The one exception seems to be the negative *no one.* Even here, the old word *none* might be extended in its usage, except that, in many instances, the emphasis would suffer.

Is it not evident, from these examples, that many a usage which we would condemn may be sanctioned by the highest authorities, and therefore it is more a matter of *disposition* than of knowledge? One who is well disposed can find evidence in favor of *any one* or *anyone,* but, if he is otherwise inclined, he can prove that either or both are wrong. And if it is a work which seeks to bring God's truth nearer to the people, the Adversary, who is a counterworker, will see to it that men take his point of view. I have used these examples because they occur in works of the very highest character, in order to show that the very best of scholars have need of sympathetic kindliness, and hope that each one of us, however high our attainments may be, may learn to look graciously on the failings of others, lest, at some time, they may prove to be our own.

Lest I should be judging the work unjustly, or according to my ignorance, or even by American standards, I sought for further light in the proper place, under prepositions. At the very end of the chapter is a bracketed note acknowledging that the "*Superstition* against ending clause or sentence with a preposition" is a "widespread *belief.*" It refers readers to an article in *Modern English Usage* on the subject. As a *superstition* consists in "credulity regarding the supernatural," and a *belief* is the "acceptance as true or existing (of any fact or statement)" according to the *Oxford Dictionary,* these words cannot be intended literally, but figuratively. They are a product of *feeling* rather than of fact. It seems that a reviewer had condemned *The King's English* out of hand on the ground that the first paragraph of the preface ended in a preposition. But the non-use of late prepositions is not supernatural, nor is it a fact, so I do not feel that I am guilty of superstition or of misguided faith.

Turning to the article in *Modern English Usage* on "Preposition at End," we find this offensive language repeated. It is called a "cherished superstition," yet "a very general belief." Dryden, it seems, an acknowledged English master, actually went through all his prefaces "contriving away

the final prepositions." A number of examples are given from leading English authors. One acquainted with the formation of Greek verbs will be struck with the fact that in English we also combine the so-called "preposition" with the verb in sense, though not in form. For instance "shine upon" is really the same as ON-SHINE. So it is usually a part of the verb which comes at the end of these sentences. *They are connectives, but do not connect,* for the next member either has been or is not expressed. They modify the sense of the verb. In such cases they should not be judged as "prepositions," but rather as "postpositions," according to Webster's Dictionary.

The final advice is based on the feelings of the writer. If the construction *sounds comfortable* at the end or has *compensating vigour,* use it. I imagine that the expert himself was far from comfortable when he found that his whole work had been condemned because he had ended its first paragraph with "to collect instances from." Would it not be more comfortable to use another verb for *collect-from?* Why not say "to *supply* [furnish, provide] instances." If we wish to keep the word *collect,* it would be terse, vigorous, understandable English to simply say, "to collect instances," leaving the *from* to the imagination. I have the feeling that the *from* is uncomfortable by itself, stretching out its hand in the dark, as it were, like a brave connective, but finding nothing to grasp [or take hold *of!*].

Pardon another personal experience! As a young typesetter I took the liberty once of using the "Commercial" *and* (&) because there was not room enough in the line, for the word itself. Though a half century has intervened, I have not forgotten the utter disgust on the part of the foreman, that such a gross stylistic error should be committed in our chapel. Yet he patiently explained to me that this character must not be used in anything except firm names. And ever since I have looked upon all printing which broke

this rule as of the lowest grade. Yet here is a volume which assumes to be the authority in such matters, yet the word "and" seems to be replaced by & throughout! I know that it is of no consequence, yet it makes uncomfortable reading, and leaves a poor impression. I would not care to use it even in the sublinear of the version, though perhaps I would if it were of any practical advantage.

BRITISH AND AMERICAN SPELLING

Occasionally I have seriously considered the advisability of inserting the *u* in such words as favo*u*r and hono*u*r, especially in the version, so as to avoid the prejudice which rejects everything American. With this in view I turned up the article on -OUR & -OR, and was agreeably impressed by the following:

"Our first notification that the book we are reading is not English but American is often, nowadays, the sight of an *-or.* "Yankee" we say, & congratulate ourselves on spelling like gentlemen, we wisely decline to regard it as a matter for argument; the English way cannot but be better than the American way; that is enough. Most of us, therefore, do not come to the question with an open mind. Those who are willing to put national prejudice aside & examine the facts quickly realize, first, that the British *-our* words are much fewer in proportion to the *-or* words than they supposed, &, secondly, that there seems to be no discoverable line between the two sets so based on principle as to serve any useful purpose. By the side of our *favour* is *horror,* beside *ardour pallor,* beside *odour tremor,* & so forth . . . .when some general reform of spelling is consented to, reduction of *-our* to *-or* will be one of the least disputed items, or, failing general reform, we shall see word after word in *-our* go the way of *governour.* It is not worth while to resist such a gradual change . . . ."

In view of these admissions, it does not seem wise to

insert the *u*, though I am sure that our American friends would not object, and would gladly accommodate themselves to the desires of others in such a trivial matter. To carry it out consistently, especially in matter already in type, would cost a considerable sum, besides much labo[u]r, and this may all be fruitless if a change is made. The American idea of adapting the language to the purpose of communicating ideas with as little useless ballast as possible, rather than keeping it fit for display in a museum of antiquities, is the natural outcome of the strenuous life which some of them were forced to live. When engaged in an argument with Indians they needed the lead for bullets, so cast out these idle mutes. As they are now falling into disrepute in English also, we will anticipate their exit from the British spellers, asking the indulgence of all who find our manners in this matter uncouth and ungentlemanly.

It seems as if the story is true which represents an Englishman in America asking for the name which is given to those who pursue no gainful vocation for a living. "We call them the *gentry*," said he. "We call them *tramps*," said the American, whose knowledge of the literary language was somewhat limited. It seems that people and letters which serve some utilitarian purpose do so at the risk of their social standing. Yet even after they have attained it they may revert to their former states. The well-known instance of *pig* being confined to the animal when in the care of Saxon herdsmen but *pork* when on the table of their French lords, is an example. *Pig* is too low to fall further, but *pork* has reverted to its low origin in the derivatives *porker* and *porkling*.

I confess to a certain amount of impatience, if not repugnance, in regard to *mere*, elegance, or euphony of style, not only in a version but also in other writings intended to open up the Word of God. But a version cannot ride rough shod over the feelings of its readers without repel-

ling them. A *w*ell worded phr*a*se may *o*ften b*e*, an *a*rtful *a*id to the m*e*mor*y*. The foregoing sentence is intended to be an example and a test of this fact. After reading it over a few times, emphasizing the italicized letters, almost anyone will be able to repeat it if given one word or phrase as a reminder. It has rhythm and rhyme. It is not true poetry, for it lacks elevation of thought. But it should not be despised on that account, and condemned as futile jingle, for it fulfills an important function if it assists the memory and smooths the way in reading. But such aids have a very limited sphere in a version, and consist largely in the insertion of weak syllables between two emphatic ones in order to aid in reading.

CEMETERY ENGLISH

I find fossils interesting, but I do not care to be one, or to make a fossil version. Fossils are dead, though unburied, like the religion of Christendom. It craves a fossil version, to accord with its own condition. What we need is a *living* version, pulsing with words that breathe, and move, and work, which are our companions in our week-day life, not our Sunday death. Yet this should not be carried to unnecessary extremes. If the past contains an expression which has no modern equivalent, and is really needed to complete our vocabulary, we should not hesitate to bring it back to life by contact with the living oracles.

A translator must peer ahead, not look behind. He will be read in the future, not in the past. The inscriptions on gravestones are doubtless interesting, but the inhabitants of a cemetery will not buy the Bible. Our most ambitious dictionaries are largely useless for translation, as they record what has been, not what will be. Tyndale, in his day, did not use the language of Wycliffe, nor would he use his own ancient vocabulary were he in the twentieth century. Let us seek to sense the trend of the language, especially

among those who are less bound by tradition, and anticipate the standard diction of tomorrow. But let us make it our special endeavor to mo[u]ld the language where necessary so as to be a better receptacle for God's revelation. We have more right to do this than those who express the thoughts of men. In fact it is our duty to do it, in order to reveal the heart of God.

Some forms that are in common use today are not yet archaic, but are rapidly becoming so. We should try to anticipate this, when possible. The word WITNESS, as a verb, especially in the combination, *bear witness,* is being displaced by *testify.* The word *witness* itself is being confined to the passive sense conveyed by *eye-witness.* Therefore the few passages where the older form was still used in the CONCORDANT VERSION, though they may sound unusual for a while, are better changed to the *uniform* rendering *testify,* with *attest* for the middle.

REGULAR IDIOMS

In order to deal consistently even with the aberrations of English idiom an effort will be made in the Keyword edition to note some of the variations due to English usage, especially those which occur frequently, in the lexical part of the concordance. Some words demand that they be followed by certain connectives. These may be noted with the words. Sometimes they refuse a connective in English, even though there may be one in Greek.

The differences by which a version varies from a sublinear should not degenerate into arbitrary interpretation, hence it is well to reduce these to rule as much as possible. This will also save many unnecessary special decisions. For instance, in such frequent phrases as THE esteem OF-Him, we leave out the THE always, OF-Him is changed to His and placed before the word, and esteem is regularly glory, thus: "His glory" in place of THE esteem OF-Him.

IDIOMS

The word *idiom* has been used as a cloak for false doctrine and unwarranted renderings. In fact anything that the church needs to hide her departure from God's Word can be supplied to her by a subservient scholarship under this pretense. And it can be used with great effect against real truth seekers, because they are supposed to be ignorant of ancient idiom, even if they reject it as absurd. Some even use the false logic that the church and its scholars, being in the majority, must be right. Real reasoning, based on revelation, would say that the Scriptures teach that the church will be apostate, hence the majority most probably will be wrong, and our attitude toward the popular teaching should be one of skepticism, and we should be open to any corrections based on the real facts of revelation. We hope that this discussion will make it clear that the CONCORDANT VERSION recognizes idiom in almost every sentence, even if it does not accept every attempt to justify the false teachings of the day by an appeal to this figure.

We should seek to distinguish between real idioms and merely *unusual* expressions and language. Thus, in German, the participle form of the verb, as "I am writing," is not used, hence it does not appear in the German version, but we distinguish it from the indefinite "I write" by a sign (ˈ). But in our English, though it is sometimes unusual to do so, we seek to retain this form (which should not be allowed to leave the language) because it expresses an important distinction in the Greek and Hebrew verbs. It seems to us that it is only in some cases that it is no longer English idiom to use it. In commands, we would not say "Be going!" but "Go!" on account of its brevity. In the infinitive we do not often say "to be going" but "to go." And we do not care for too many —ing's at one time. In these cases the CONCORDANT VERSION drops the —ing,

but will indicate it by an upright stroke (ˈ) in the Keyword edition, in case it is lacking.

THE DOUBLE NEGATIVE

"We don't know nothing" is generally rated as poor English, as used by those who are ignorant. But it has also been used by those well acquainted with its character, as a vivid and powerful figure of speech, with telling effect, and, as it is perfectly understandable and uniquely impressive, it will probably make a place for itself in the language in time. But, at present, it is still too strange and striking to be used to represent the Greek double negative.

TERSE PHRASES

English, especially as used in the colonies and the United States, has a strong tendency toward terseness of expression. A shorter form is favored, and much is abbreviated, and the longer forms have often taken on a special significance. Thus a Pharisee asked our Lord *so that He should be lunching with him* (Luke 11:37). We make this much shorter and ask others to *lunch* with us. If we use *so,* it would indicate the manner in which we did the asking. The *to lunch* is shortened from *in order to get Him to lunch,* which has much in common with the Greek. The future is taken for granted. The subjunctive is involved. The action is understood. So the Revision has *to dine,* even though they are somewhat inclined to give the Greek grammar where English idiom does not agree. In Luke 9:16 we have another such expression for "to place before."

THE GENDER

Due to the fact that Greek words which really have no trace of gender in their significance may be masculine or feminine, it is necessary, at times, to translate quite contrary to the Greek. Thus the word *word* is masculine, so

pronouns referring to it must also be of this gender. A Greek always calls a word "he." This caused much confusion for some in the first chapter of John's evangel, where it seems to support the customary interpretation that the "Word" is a Person, not a thing. Again, in John 12:48 we usually read that "He who is repudiating Me and not getting My declarations, has *One that* judges him: the word that I speak, that will be judging Him in the last day." Yet the context seems to clearly indicate that the *masculine, ton krinonta* (THE *one*-JUDGING) refers to the word *word,* which is also masculine, and therefore should be rendered *that which.*

WHAT A VERSION IS

The main object of this discussion is to help my friends to see what a *version* really is, and how, in many minute particulars, it is forced to differ from the original. These divergences cannot all be removed. The problem is not merely to reduce their number, but to eliminate those which affect the sense adversely, leaving those which affect the sense the least. Thus, in English, we are forced to ignore the gender as a rule, but without any appreciable loss, as the gender is mostly artificial. In the pronouns, indeed, we must alter the gender or give quite a false impression.

We sympathize most sincerely with all who are distressed at any deviation from the grammar of the Greek. For instance, very seldom can we carry over the middle signification, however much we would like to do so. An interesting case was brought to our attention recently. In Mark 4:14-20, in which the word *sow* is used in the *middle* for those sown beside the road, on rocky places, and into the thorns, but changes to the *passive* when referring to those sown on ideal earth. In German we can make a verb like this middle by adding *sich* as a rule, but *sich saaen* would mean that a *plant* scatters its own seed, and would

eliminate the Sower entirely, just as if we said "sow it*self*" in English, which we cannot very well do, as the word for *self* is lacking in the Greek. English has no word for the middle, like German.

Anyone who will compare any version with the CONCORDANT VERSION sublinear will see how often, in English, we must substitute a verb of fact for one of action, especially in the imperative. In giving a command we make it as short as possible. Where the Greek has *be repenting* (Matt.3:2) we shorten it to *Repent!* In German *all* of the verbs of action *must* be rendered "wrong," simply because the language will no longer bear the longer forms, even if they still exist. English is tending in the same direction. That is why it is hardly ever necessary to change a verb of fact to one of action, but the incomplete is often rendered as an indefinite. That is why, in the proposed Keyword edition, all the "wrong" verbs will he marked. In this regard we do not anticipate the future, but seek to stop the tendency, because it will mean a distinct loss to the English language.

A version, then, is a matter of judgment, rather than exactitude. In this it is in contrast to a sublinear, in which the order of the words, their form, and their composition are kept as closely as possible to the Greek. This should be retained in a version only to a degree compatible with intelligible, fluent English. But there is much room here for differences of opinion, and mutual forbearance. We feel sure that the CONCORDANT VERSION, with its friends, still leans too much in the direction of the sublinear, notwithstanding the fact that it, having such a complement, might well go to the opposite extreme. So far we have held too closely to the Greek idiom for fear of departing from the strict mode of expression in the Greek, and thus introducing our thoughts into God's Word. May He forgive our delinquencies in view of the motive that prompted them!

A. E. Knoch

THE GREEK AND ENGLISH INDEFINITE

THE entire scheme of the CONCORDANT VERSION founds itself upon a desire for unvarying consistency in setting forth the mind of God. The Greek language is capable of expressing with precision the finest and most delicate shades of meaning. With proper care it is possible to set over into English most (if not all) of the excellences of the God-given original.

In effecting a faithful reproduction of God's thoughts it was found necessary to consider each Greek word in all of its contexts in order to determine its scope and its most satisfactory English equivalent.

A similar process, though more arduous, was called for and diligently performed, to arrange these words in a proper grammatical setting to accord with the language of inspiration. The consideration of the nouns and adjectives did not present many serious difficulties. However, the Greek verb, which tradition had invested with almost insuperable difficulties, required a great deal of preliminary analysis and dissection.

At the first attempt to apply the prime principle of consistency to the rendering of the Greek verb, according to accepted grammatical doctrines, we soon found ourselves in clouds and chaos. This was especially true of the so-called Voices and Tenses. There seemed to be no correspondence between form and force.

This condition of affairs is recognized by the greatest scholars in this field, as the following facts and extracts from their writings show.

In A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research Professor A. T. Robertson has this to say regarding the translation of the aorist into English: "The Greek aorist indicative, as can be readily seen, is not the exact equivalent of any tense in any other language. It has *nuances* all its own, many of them difficult, or well nigh impossible to reproduce in English. We merely do the best we can in English to translate in one way or another the total result of a word, context and tense. Certainly one cannot say that the English translations have been successful with the Greek aorist . . . (Page 847). The English past will translate the Greek aorist in many cases where we prefer 'have' . . . (Page 848). The Greek aorist and the English past do not exactly correspond . . . . The Greek aorist covers much more ground than the English past . . . . The aorist in Greek is so rich in meaning that the English labors and groans to express it. As a matter of fact the Greek aorist is translatable into almost every English tense except the imperfect . . . ." Again, "The aorist is, strictly speaking, timeless."

Dr. Weymouth, in his pamphlet *On the Rendering into English of the Greek Aorist and Perfect,* criticizes the Revised Version for its treatment of the aorist. Falling in with the prevailing tendency, they had changed many renderings which are in the "perfect" (using HAVE) to the past tense. In fact they, generally speaking, regarded the aorist as referring to the past. Dr. Weymouth noted how often it makes poor English, and felt, in an indefinite way, that the aorist must not be confined to the past. He would have it rendered by the "perfect," as it often is in the Authorized Version, at the same time translating the perfect in this way as well. But if the aorist is I-HAVE-LOVED and the perfect also is I-HAVE-LOVED, what is the difference between them? After all, the chief function of a translation is to preserve the distinctions of the original.

Weymouth pleads for the perfect, as a rendering of the Greek aorist because it has a bearing on the present, which the past has not. He protests that "it is too commonly believed and taught that the Greek aorist indicative . . . is equivalent to the simple past tense in English (I *wrote,* I *loved,* I *brought* . . .)." He affirms that "the English past, used according to the *true English idiom,* will largely fail to coincide with the aorist . . . ." He makes the startling discovery that we sometimes give the English present the force of a future, giving the following examples: "We *start* tomorrow," "The king *comes* here tonight." He might have added the fact that this same "present" is used of the past also, as in "The king *comes* here since he was crowned."

He was on the verge of discovering that the English "present" is often used as a true indefinite. He even gives examples of such usage: "The Chronicle *states*—," "Clarendon *records*—," "Gibbon *informs* us—."

To prove that the aorist is not a simple past he gives the following instances in which both the AV and the Revisers render it by the perfect: We add the CV rendering to show that it can usually be still better rendered by the so-called English "present."

Mark	10:20	All these things I *have observed*
	CV	I *maintain* all these things from
Rev.	14:8	Babylon is fallen, is fallen
	CV	It falls! It falls! Babylon

Weymouth then makes the welcome admission that "*aorist* means *indefinite,* and we must bow to the authority of the Greek grammarians who held that name to be a suitable one . . . ." This is precisely the point for which we contend.

He then gives examples where he thinks the aorist should be rendered by the pluperfect and the translators have so given it.

Matt.	1:24	As the angel *had bidden* him
	CV	As the messenger *bids* him
Matt.	11:1	When *he had made* an *end*
	CV	When Jesus *finishes*
Matt.	27:31	When they *had mocked* Him
	CV	And when they *deride* Him
Matt.	26:19	As Jesus *had appointed* them
	CV	As Jesus *instructs* them
Mark	1:32	When the sun *had set*
	CV	When the sun *sets*

The following statement by Dr. Weymouth is a step in the right direction: "*The aorist is often used where our idiom demands the present* . . . but this gnomic aorist (as in James 1:11, "for the sun *rises*," etc.) and the epistolary aorist (2 Cor.8:18, we *send* with him the brother") need not here be enlarged upon." Weymouth touches the true sense of the aorist here, but, alas, he did not enlarge upon it! He recognizes its use in the statement of general truths or proverbs (the gnomic aorist). The very fact that it can be used of things which are true at all times and that English uses the "present" for this purpose is sufficient to identify them.

THE CONCORDANT VERSION

In planning a consistent version it is manifest that one of the most vital elements is the rendition of each verbal form by a fixed English equivalent. To investigate the possibility of such a course the verb was analyzed into all its forms and each was given its nearest English equivalent. In assigning the English equivalents, the first form dealt with was the incomplete present. The tendency at first was to assign to it the so-called English "present," the simplest form of the verb, as I-LOVE. But repeated experiments showed the inadequacy of this form to express the fact that the action was actually *in progress.* For this English has the special form, I-AM-LOVING. Exhaustive tests showed

that *this* was the true equivalent of the so-called Greek "present," though the strenuous tendency of our idiom to shorten all forms often demands the indefinite I-LOVE.

After all the other forms had been assigned and tested, the indefinite, or aorist, remained. What could be used for it? Nothing was left but the so-called English "present," as, I-LOVE, and it dawned upon the mind of the investiga- Greek "aorist." We have named it the English aorist. Exhaustive tests proved the correctness of this conclusion, and years of use in compiling the version have confirmed the fact that the English "present" is a very close equivalent of the Greek "aorist." True, there are, passages where it seems odd at first, but, close investigation shows it to be correct, and when the initial strangeness vanishes, it leaves a delightful sense of clearer vision into the realms of truth.

THE INDEFINITE DEFINED

The indefinite changes an act into a fact. It transforms deeds into truth. "John *baptized* in water" is a bald statement of an historical occurrence. "John *baptizes* in water" indicates the essential character of his ministry. It locates his action, not in the course of time, but in the wider sphere of truth. When Peter charges the house of Israel with the crucifixion of Christ, it is not simply the act but the attitude which he condemns. "You *crucified*" was true; "you *crucify*" is truth (Acts 2:36).

Here we have a hitherto secret combination for unlocking the door to the great depository of divine truth. We do not need to guess to distinguish what is *true,* but transient, from that which is *truth* and permanent. God has deposited the *truth* in the indefinite. If we but glance at such high unfoldings as are found in the first chapter of Ephesians, this fact will force itself upon us. Like a string of

pearls we read (Eph.1) of the One Who *blesses* us (verse 3), Who *chooses* us (4) and *designates* us (5) and *graces* us (6) and *lavishes* on us (8), Who *makes known* to us (9) the secret of His will. Read the passage in the CONCORDANT VERSION at least a dozen times, to wear off the strangeness; meditate on its unlimited scope in time, the aptness of its present application as well as its past and future place; then suddenly change the tense to the past and see what a chill falls upon the whole. Then change the verbs to the present incomplete, Who *is blessing,* Who *is choosing,* etc., and see how the thought shrinks.

The translators of the Authorized Version *felt* this and tried to express it by the perfect or complete tense, *hath* blessed, *hath* chosen, etc. This, however, confines all *action* to the *past,* and denotes the condition consequent on that action. It is, as though a father gives his son all that was coming to him and left him to make what he could of it. It puts God's active efforts for us into the past and leaves but a passive interest for the present and future. This is the very opposite of the truth and contrary to God's purpose, which is to draw us nearer to Himself by a constant flow of blessing. He does not start us off to go on alone. It is true, that He *has* blessed us. But it is truth that He *blesses* us now and in the future as well.

To one whose eyes have been opened to see it, there is an exquisite beauty in this. God fills the whole horizon. His immanence is everywhere. He is not behind or before, but both. His care for us can be traced in His purpose and its accomplishment.

True, some of the expressions seem strange to those accustomed to stereotyped English phraseology. We would say He *chose* us, in the past. At first we miss the precious fullness of the fact that His choice of us is not affected by time or circumstance. He chooses us today and will choose us in all the eons to come. It is not a mere act in the past

which may be repudiated should His attitude toward us change. It is a fact for all time. It is a guarantee that His gracious dealings with us do not alter. Time cannot modify or state impair His settled beneficence toward the objects of His affection.

AORIST

The name "aorist" was given to this verb form by the ancients, who used it continually in their conversation and literature, and who ought to have known what to call it. It comes from two Greek elements A-(UN-) and -OR-(SEE). As -OR-was usually preceded by the *h* sound, the verb *horizō* is almost the same as our word "horizon." This gives us the true thought—*without a horizon, indefinite.* As the aorist is indefinite as to time as well as to state it is doubly indefinite. So we will call it simply the INDEFINITE.

Consider the scope of the simple statement, I-LOVE. *It may include any or all the other states and tenses*! If I-WAS-LOVING, I-AM-LOVING, I-SHALL-BE-LOVING, I-LOVED, I-SHALL-LOVE, I-HAD-LOVED, I-HAVE-LOVED, or I-SHALL-HAVE-LOVED, then I-LOVE. It is at home in any condition at any date. It ignores both time and state.

TEST PASSAGES

We have considered the opening sentence of Ephesians and noted the marvelous richness imparted to its transcendent doctrines by the unbounded scope of the indefinite. Now we will consider a few more texts, and for our first test we will take a text in which there is action, past, present and future. In the AV, Romans 8:30 reads as follows: "Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." This verse is full of difficulties to the careful student. The "did predestinate" cannot be questioned, but how can Paul say that these were *called*

(in the past) when Romans was penned? If this is strictly true, then we have no place in this Scripture, for we were not called until the far *future* from that time.

The same difficulty applies to justification, but with far more force to glorification. If it was an error for some to teach that the resurrection was past already, why is the apostle allowed to teach that glorification, which is far more than resurrection, and includes it, is past? Of course no one takes this as it stands, and thus this translation breeds that miserable habit of slovenly interpretation, in which all idea of accuracy and definiteness is decried. If *glorified* here means *will glorify,* then we have the best of reasons for suiting *any* tense of Scripture to our own interpretation.

Now see how simply and grandly the whole passage responds to a true translation. "Now whom He *designates* beforehand, these He also *calls,* and whom He *calls,* these He also *justifies*: now whom He justifies, these He also *glorifies.*" The whole transaction is taken out of time and circumstance into the higher realm of truth. There is now no confusion created by the time when the epistle was written. He justified some before that, He was justifying them then, He has been since and will be in the future. All this is concisely and elegantly embraced in the indefinite form, *justifies.*

And glorification, though future, is itself glorified when we receive it as a great truth, rather than as a future act. This rendering blends beautifully with the great thought of the chapter, and imparts permanence and majesty to God's method of drawing us to Himself.

Our next example has proven a puzzle to the greatest Bible scholars. They have written reams of "Explanations" but the real difficulty remained. In 2 Timothy 1:10 the old version reads "*Who hath abolished death . . . .*" With all due respect to the Bible, we may safely conclude, from the sad evidences so abundant on every side, that death hath *not*

been abolished. It has been in the case of Christ. It will be for His own at His presence, and it will be for all at the consummation. The abolition of death is partly past but mostly future. How can we express this in English? By the very form by which we have chosen to render the Greek indefinite. All incongruity vanishes when we translate "Who, indeed, *abolishes* death . . . ." *Hath abolished* will not be true until after death has been done away with as the last enemy.

There is a negative test which supports our position as to the aorist, which supplies an interesting example. The statement "in Adam all *die*" (1 Cor.15:22) was quite perturbing to the writer at one time, as he clings hopefully to the expectation of being alive at the Lord's presence and being *changed* without passing through death, as set forth in this very chapter (verse 52). It was a welcome relief for him when he noticed that *die* is *not* indefinite, but incomplete. It should be rendered *are dying.* This is strictly, literally, actually true, even of those who will not die before He comes. We surely may be pardoned if we are very fond of the correct rendering. The translation we once preferred has become most distasteful to us. Let us not be fascinated by the face, but edited by the heart of a translation.

The verbal adjective or "participle" has no indefinite form in English, hence is especially difficult to translate. When preceded by the article, in the Greek, we can preserve the distinction thus: *the* [*one*] *-calling* may be rendered *he who is calling,* but, when indefinite, we may change it to *he who calls.* This effectually conveys the difference between them.

But when there is no article the case is not so readily solved. The nearest solution seems to be the addition of the indefinite *when.* There are times when the translator cannot ignore the distinct force of these forms. In Hebrews 6:10 the sense of the final clause depends solely on drawing

an accurate boundary between them. We cannot ignore the shade of difference and render this "*serving the saints and serving.*" The old version attempts to define the difference thus: "*in that ye have ministered* to the saints and *do minister.*" This rendering follows the interpretation instead of guiding it. They *supposed* that the past and present acts of the Hebrews are before us and thus they produced a version which seemed to correspond closely with its context.

Its grave defect is that it has no bearing on the *future.* And this, of course, was especially on the writer's heart, for this is an exhortation. The true rendering broadens out the statement to its necessary extent. God will not forget *when you serve*—at any time in the past or future—and *you are serving.*

Let us put our position to a different test. We will take the word "love" and discover, if we can, the distinction between the indefinite and other forms. Our first passage will be John 3:16. The usual rendering is "God *loved,*" which we change to "God *loves.*" Which is best? Is God's love a thing of the past? Is God not loving the world now? Will He not love it in the future? Surely His love is timeless! He *loved,* He *is loving,* and He *will be loving*: in brief, He *loves.* Does not this appeal to our hearts as well as our heads? However precious the old text may be, is it not a thousand times more precious in the new form? Suppose it does jar our ears at first, is not the great spiritual gain worth some temporary pain?

Christ's love is like the Father's love. It is timeless. Hence we read (John 15:9): "According as the Father *loves* Me, I, also, *love* you. "In contrast to this is the love of the saints for God, which is put in the present. *We are loving* God, seeing that He first loves us" (John 4:19). But, we hear our readers object, "The sentence does not balance. Either make it 'We love . . . He . . . loves . . .' or 'We are loving . . . He . . . is loving.' The former is far preferable."

As the lack of "balance" is in the inspired original, the question is really not one of translation but of revelation. God did not "balance" the sentence. Shall we "improve" on His work? Or shall we let the "defect" appear in the English rendering? Shall we not rather break our jaws over the most cacophonous wilderness of words in the world, rather than disturb the very shading of truth? The sentence does not balance because *it should not balance.* God's love and man's are different in their quality. It is not a natural instinct but a divine compulsion which urges us to love Him.

Can we not see the beauty of His love in this contrast? Shall we not revel in the distinction drawn by our Lord when He charges His disciples: "A new precept am I giving to you, that you *be loving* one another, according as I love you, that you too, *be loving* one another" (John 13:34)? This distinction "cumbers" all of John's writings. We would always use the indefinite forms. But the very love which burns within us bids us tear off the veneer that hides the surpassing excellence of His affection, and raises it above the feeble flicker of our own.

This thought is further unfolded when the indefinite form is used of men. Though men do not *love* God, they *love* darkness rather than light (John 3:19); they *love* the praise of other men (John 12:43), they *love* the wages of unrighteousness (2 Peter 2:15), they *love* their own souls (Rev.12:11). In contrast to this the Son of God *loves* righteousness (Heb.1:9). The only time it is used of our love toward God it is in the negative: "*Not* that we *love* God, but that He *loves* us" (1 John 4:10).

Further examples and contrasts are found in the following passages: "If you should *love* those who *are loving* you" (Matt.5:46). First we have the settled disposition, next the actual experience. Again (1 John 4:11): "Beloved, if God *loves* us thus, we, too, ought to *be loving* one another."

And again (John 15:12) "This is My precept, that you *be loving* one another, according as I *love* you." And (Eph. 5:25): "Husbands, *be loving* your own wives according as Christ, also, *loves* the ecclesia . . . ."

At first sight, the case of the woman who anointed our Lord's feet seems to be out of line with the indefiniteness of the aorist (Luke 7:47), for the Lord says, "She *loves* much." Yet the following context shows that He does not refer specifically to her act, but to her character. Hence it should be in the aorist.

The following references are given that those who wish it may have all the evidence. *I love* occurs in John 13:34; 15:9,12; Rom.9:13; Rev.3:9. *We love*: 1 John 4:10. *You love*: John 17: 23; 23:24,26; Heb.1:9. *He loves*: Mark 10:21; Luke 7:47; John 3: 16; 13:1; 15:9; Eph.2:4; 5:2,25; 2 Peter 2:15; 1 John 4:10,11,19. *They love*: John 3:19; 12:43; Rev.12:11.

The same great truth vibrates in the participle, where we translate it *who loves* and the present *who is loving*, when they are preceded by the article. Is it not infinitely better to say "Him who *loves* us," in Romans 8:37? And Galatians 2:20 is robbed of much of its sweetness in the old rendering, "Who *loved* me." The apostle's theme is not the past so much as the present and the future. "Who *loves* me" is full of solid satisfaction, entirely absent from the Authorized rendering. So in 2 Thessalonians 2:16, is not "Who *loves* us" more comforting than "which *hath loved* us?" The participle is found without the article in John 13:1. Its indefiniteness is quite apparent, though it cannot be expressed in English.

The vivid and lifelike changes of the verb in Greek offend our dull perceptions. Our minds are sluggish and do not respond to quick variations. We have a tendency to put everything in the past if it has already occurred, even if, for any reason, the *fact* rather than the act is in view. We would say (1 Peter 1:21) "God Who *raised* Him from the dead and *gave* Him glory," instead of "God Who *rouses* Him from the dead and *is giving* Him glory," as it is in the Greek. But Peter is not calling attention to past acts but present conditions. God's character, as the God of resurrection, is in point, not merely the past act. And it is especially appropriate that Peter should call attention to the One Who, indeed, *suffered* in the past, but Who is now actually obtaining the glory which follows. He is not reciting history but inculcating faith.

The value of this orderly disposition of the forms of the Greek verb cannot be overestimated. The earnest searcher after truth will find a haze removed from his eyes, and he will be able to follow God's thoughts clearly and precisely, if he distinguishes where God has been pleased to put a difference.

"If the shoe fits, put it on." This is the common sense method of distributing the English verbal forms among the Greek. Traditional grammatical tenets must fall before the fact that this plan *works.* The shoe may pinch at times, but that is because it is new, or some malformation is in the foot.

The little epistle of Jude furnishes a few interesting illustrations of the indefinite and the failure of the Revisers to recognize its force. They change the archaic *are crept in* of the AV to *crept in*—putting it all in the past. It should be *creep in* (verse 4). So also, where both have *prophesied,* it should read *prophesies,* for it is a fact for the future, rather than a past event (14). Was it not a calamity to change "the Lord *cometh*" of the AV to *came*? Surely that was not past in Enoch's day! It is not past yet! It should be "the Lord *comes*" as in the AV. The Lord has indeed come, but not in judgment. It is evident that the aorist is *not* a past tense.

An undoubted difficulty remains for discussion. Our mode of thinking offers no facilities for considering a past act as a fact. Let us take the most notable act in history, the crucifixion of Christ. Surely that was a past act and cannot

be repeated. Yet this is the very point the apostle presses in the sixth of Hebrews. There were some who were crucifying Him for themselves again. English may wince under the statement of Peter (Acts 2:36): "Jesus Whom *ye crucify.*" Peter was pressing on them, not merely the past act, but the present fact of their attitude toward Him. Perhaps few of them had taken an active part in the *act* of crucifixion. All who refuse Him are guilty in *fact.* This distinction is a very practical one. In Galatians 5:24 the AV tells us that "they that are Christ's *have crucified* the flesh." This has led to the logical deduction that this is a definite past experience, as was the case with Christ. It supports the doctrine of sinlessness in this life. The correct reading may grate on the English ear, but it conveys the truth. They *crucify* the flesh. It is a fact for the past, the present and the future. A knowledge of this distinction would have saved the saints from many a tremendous blunder and false step.

It would make this treatise too long and laborious to multiply examples. Few are without point. Many are most precious. Even as this is being written Ephesians 4:32 comes up in our hearts. " . . . and become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, *dealing graciously* among yourselves, even as God, in Christ, *deals graciously* with you." The contrast between *dealing* and *deals* fills our hearts to overflowing with thankfulness. His gracious dealings with us are timeless facts.

To conclude, try this experiment, if you have not already done so. Read the first chapter of Ephesians (which has many aorists) daily for a month. The initial strangeness will gradually vanish. The words will soon become quite familiar, the phrases friendly. The concord of words will, however, soon be overlooked in that higher accord which attunes us with the infinite grace and glory of God, which can be adequately seen only by means of the English indefinite.

A. E. Knoch

THE FACT VERB

ONE of the distinctive features of the English *Concordant Version* of the New Testament is its use of the simple present as a standard form for those Greek aorist verbs which A. E. Knoch considered "true aorists." This was introduced and defended in the June 1922 issue of *Unsearchable Riches* in an article entitled "The Greek and English Indefinite," which was reprinted in the introductions to the early editions of the CV. Portions of this study are now reprinted in this present issue of our magazine.

The Greek aorist is generally divided into "first" aorists and "second" aorists. But A. E. Knoch came to the conclusion that second aorists and certain other aorist forms were not true aorists at all, and should be classified under various other headings. Now, however, as we prepare a new printing of the CV "New Testament," we are treating all verbs traditionally classified as aorists as true indefinites in relation to time and state.

The aorist verb as Brother Knoch explains, is concerned with the *truth,* or the *fact* of the act. The time, whether past, present or future, and the state of the action, whether complete or incomplete, are left *indefinite,* and must be determined by the context. But the action itself is set forth as *definitely* so.

In accord with this we read the following in a grammar of the Greek New Testament, prepared for college students:

"We approach now the most prevalent and most important of the Greek tenses. It is also the most peculiar to Greek idiom. The fundamental significance of the aorist is

to denote action simply as occurring, without reference to its progress. It is the indefinite tense . . . . It states the *fact* of the action or event without regard to its *duration* . . . ."[1]

CHRIST GIVES HIMSELF

The use of the English "simple present" for Greek "first aorist indicatives" frequently requires some getting used to, and sometimes it may even introduce some initial confusion. For instance, when the CV reads, in Ephesians 5:2 (*cp* 5:25), that "Christ . . . *gives* Himself an approach present and a sacrifice to God" it does not mean to suggest He is presently giving Himself in this way. But, as with the accompanying clause, "Christ . . . loves you," the wording is intended to reflect the special sense of the Greek aorist in which the emphasis is wholly on the fact of the action. In this case, the time of the action is made clear by the reference to Christ's sacrifice. The verbs, *gives* and *loves*, draw attention fully to the truth of these actions.

Although we do not generally express ourselves this way in recounting an historical event, we still may say in English, for example, "On Christmas night in 1776 Washington *crosses* the Delaware River with his small army and *defeats* the opposing forces in Trenton, New Jersey." Such a use of simple present verbs may have the effect of bringing the reader into the historical event, as though present, and thus make it more vivid. It is this last effect, that of making the action more vivid, which especially parallels the use of the verbs in Ephesians 5:2. By using the indefinite verbs which focus on the fact of Christ's acts of giving Himself and of His loving of us in that giving, the acts are made more vivid than if they were expressed by verbs which draw attention to the element of time along with the particular action in view.

1. Dana, H.E, and Julius R. Mantey: A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, 26th printing, Macmillan, 1957, p.193.

As for myself I have come to appreciate the CV renderings of the verbs in Romans 8:30 and Ephesians 1:3-9a, which Brother Knoch discusses in his study. Referring to Romans 8:30, he points out that Paul treats God's action of designating us beforehand as a blessed fact for our awareness. It clearly occurred in the past. But we know that because of the term "beforehand" and not because of the form of the verb. As an aorist the verb impresses on us that God's prior designating of us is a gracious and gratuitous truth which we had nothing to do with, and which God Himself is fully responsible for. As such, it rejoices and strengthens us in the present while we live in the current era full of sufferings and groanings and corruption (*cf* Rom.8:18-23). And, as such, it gives us expectation for the future (*cf* Rom.8:24,25). So also it is a fact that God *calls* us, an act of God that occurred, in spirit, apart from sound and sensation, some time in our present life, but having its root long before this. But Paul speaks of it here solely as a truth which we hold close in our hearts; and here he does not even supply a word like "beforehand" or a phrase like, "on believing," as in Ephesians 1:13 to establish the time of the call. Yet as we give attention to the fact that God calls us, this most happy and blessed fact affects our *present* lives, bringing great spiritual strength day by day. Nevertheless we begin with the fact.

Again, God's act of justifying us has its roots in the shedding of Christ's blood (Rom.5:9) and then God's identification of us with Christ in His death (Rom.6:3-7), but it will not be fully realized until we are living to God together with Christ Jesus in the oncoming eons. The particular relationship of this work of God to time is made clear, if not in the immediate context, in other passages where regular "timed" verbs are used or further detail is given. But here in Romans 8:30 Paul would have us concentrate our

minds and hearts on the sure and certain truth of God's work of justification as it applies to us.

Finally, for our present endurance and joy Paul reminds us of the fact that God *glorifies* us, an act of God which will not be experienced until the future (*cf* Rom.5:2), but (and this is Paul's focus here) which is secured as an unalterable truth.

The same holds true for Ephesians 1:3-9a where the verbs, *blesses, chooses,* and *lavishes,* and the participles, *designating beforehand* and *making known* form a "string of pearls" (*cf* p.177) made up of facts of blessings which God gives us in Christ.

STRINGS OF PEARLS

But should not God's act of *foreknowing* us, announced in Romans 8:29 and His deed of *purposing* that which brings Him delight, brought out in Ephesians 1:9b, be included among the pearls set before us in these passages? These two verbs are traditionally identified as "second aorists," which the CV presently treats as past tense verbs ("foreknew" and "purposed"). But it is most likely that Paul used them as simple, fact verbs just as the "first aorists" in their contexts.

God's foreknowlege of us is understood as a fact whether or not Paul uses a past tense or an indefinite in Romans 8:29. But when we see that this act of divine foreknowing is the first of a series of blessings completed in verse 30, each one expressed with full emphasis on its vivid truthfulness, our appreciation for the passage will surely increase. God foreknows me exactly as I am, and yet He designates me and calls me and justifies me and glorifies me! Yet indeed (perhaps more in accord with Paul's thought), before sin and death entered into the world, God foreknows me as I shall be when I am glorified together with Christ. "What, then, shall we declare to these things? If God is for us (in ways such as these), who is against us?"

GOD'S PURPOSE

Our acquaintance with God and growth in the realization of Him includes the happy fact that He has a purpose which He carries out through times eonian. Paul makes mention of this specifically in Romans 8:29 in relation to God's acts of foreknowing us, designating us beforehand, calling us, justifying us and glorifying us. So also in Ephesians 1, we read of God's purpose as "the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11).

Furthermore, in Ephesians 1:9b the word "purpose" is used as a verb with God as the Subject. This verb is commonly classified as a "second aorist" which we will now translate as we have previously done with "first aorists." God *purposes* that which brings Him *delight,* and He does so *in Christ.* The present CV reading, using the English past tense, "He purposed," is not in any sense misleading. It is absolutely true that God purposed to head up all in the Christ before He began to carry it out. The question is, however, in using this form of the verb "purpose" in this particular context does Paul wish simply and solely to lay stress on the fact of God's purposing, or does he want us to give attention also to its determination in the past? It seems likely to me that the apostle speaks here of God's act of purposing in the same way he has been speaking of God's acts of blessing us. He wishes to focus our full attention on the transcendent truth that God operates in accord with the purpose of His delight.

D.H.H.

PETER FEDDEMA

It is with great sorrow that we announce the death of Peter Feddema of Kitchener, Ontario, on October 10, 2015. He was ever a keen student of God's Word and a staunch defender of the truth as he saw it, yet comforted and strengthened by the Scriptures' own testimony.

INDEX TO VOLUME 107

Concerning Jacob and Joseph 111
Concordant Version, The 4, 13, 61, 73, 146, 177
"Correctly Cutting" 115
"Correspondent Ransom" 122
Devotional 29, 94, 127
Enriched in Him 127
Evangel and our Walk, The 133
Faith of Jesus Christ, The 90
Figures of Speech 33
Firstborn, The 103
Jesus Christ's Faith 61
Just One, The 83
Justification 17
God's Evangel 4
Habakkuk 2:3,4 176
Not Ashamed 73
Notes on Romans 177
Obituaries: E. Beachy 132, G. Zatzsch 60
Paul and God's Purpose 29
Paul to the Romans 133
Romans, Concordant Version of 146
Simple Facts 13
Son of Abraham, The 51
Supremacy of Christ, The 99
Those Who Believe 94
"Through the Faith of Christ" 64
Understanding and Assurance 115
We are for God 28

JEWELL E. BYNOE

Jewell E. Bynoe, 90, of Arlington, Virginia, died on November 18. Jewell's passion was Christ. In his last days he often remembered to quote Scripture passages and sing hymns, when the rest of his memory had failed him.

A humble and gracious man, Jewell was the nephew of the late Leon Bynoe, founder of *Grace and Truth* magazine in New York City, a work that continues today in Witney England.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 107th Year

(1909–2016)

Contents:

2 "Love Embraces All"
3 Editorial
4 God's Evangel
13 Simple Facts
17 Justification
29 Paul and God's Purpose
33 Figures of Speech

FIRST QUARTER, 2016

Volume 107 **Number 1**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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Unsearchable Riches

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For God and His
Word

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Dean H. Hough
and
James R. Coram

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LOVE EMBRACES ALL

For so embracive is Messiah's realm,
That all things are subdued to Him, the Son,
Whose glorious scepter gleams with grace divine,
Impelling all to heart acknowledgment
Of His supremacy as Lord of all.
And then, the wonder of His grace appears
At high floodtide, for lo, the Son Himself
Is subject unto God, and all exult
In so august an ultimate of love.
'Tis then our God is All in all, and He
Attains His goal, His purpose, high and great.
Then Love's supreme, and in a radiant scene
Of light resplendent, happiness is full,
And joyful lips acclaim the Father's meed.

William Mealand

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2016
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

EDITORIAL

THE FIRST article in our current issue is entitled "God's Evangel" (pp.4-12), by Dean Hough. Select scripture passages such as the first paragraph of Romans are included as they presently appear in our work on a new edition of the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (CVNT).

Brother Hough's second article, "Simple Facts" (pp.13-16), explains that "a major change in the revised . . . [CVNT] is that all verbs and verb forms generally classified as aorists will be rendered as the present CLNT renders 'first aorists.' This means the Version will use what is generally understood as a 'simple present verb' more often than before . . . . What we need to understand is that the principal feature conveyed by aorists is not the timelessness of the action (though they often convey that sense), but the simple *fact,* the *truth* of the action" (p.13).

Donald Hayter's article, "Justification" (pp.17-28) explains in detail "the fact that, in Paul's message, the believer was *justified,* and that irrevocably, [and that this was] a fundamental and revolutionary change in the way God is dealing with sin" (p.17).

The devotional article, "Paul and God's Purpose" by William Mealand (pp.29-32) explains, ". . . to many of God's people larger thoughts have come, and a deeper comprehension of the magnitude of God's purpose. They see, as never before, how wonderful a God is theirs, and how great the Son of His love" (pp.29,30).

In J. W. Williams' writing, "Figures of Speech" (pp.33-48) it is acknowledged at the outset that "One of the greatest difficulties we meet in correctly understanding the Scriptures is that of distinguishing between literal and figurative language" (p.33). However, through diverse examples of figurative usage, the author not only sheds much light on the discernment of figures of speech, but does so in a way that is edifying and full of encouragement.

J.R.C.

The Concordant Version

GOD'S EVANGEL

1 Paul, a **slave of Christ Jesus,** a **called apostle,** ˚**severed**˚ [io]**for God's evangel** 2 **(which He promises**˚ **before through His** ˙**prophets in** the **holy scriptures),** 3 **concerning His** ˙**Son (**˙Who [b]**comes**˚ [o] **of** the **seed** of **David accord**ing to the **flesh,** 4 ˙Who is **designated God's Son** [i]**with power, accord**ing to the **spirit of holiness,** [o]**by** the **resurrection of** the **dead), Jesus Christ, our** ˙**Lord,** 5 **through Whom we obtain grace and apostleship** [io]**for faith's obedience among all the nations, for His** ˙**Name's sake,** 6 **among whom are you´ also,** the **called of Jesus Christ:** 7 **to all** ˙who [l]**are in Rome, God's beloved, called saints:**

THE FIRST paragraph of Romans, as it presently appears in our work on a new edition of the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (CVNT) is given above. It introduces the theme for the entire letter, *God's Evangel,* which Paul longed to share. So also do we, more and more, as we grow in realization of its riches and glory.

GENITIVE PHRASES

There are an unusual number of important genitive phrases in the opening seven verses. They can be picked out from the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT where one thing is said to be *of* another thing, but this is not always the pattern followed in the Version (*e.g.*the phrase "the Son of Him" would be awkward in English, so the more familiar wording, "His Son," is used with a raised dot before "Son" to indicate the definite article). The following is a list of genitive phrases in these opening verses of Romans:

slave of Christ Jesus
evangel of God
the prophets of Him
the Son of Him
seed (of) David[1]
Son of God
spirit of holiness
resurrection of dead (one)s
the Lord of us
obedience of faith
the Name of Him
called (one)s of Jesus Christ
beloved of God

There are two types of genitive phrases here, those with "the" before the first noun, and those without the definite article. When the definite article is present we are to give special attention to the first noun as a definite thing: definite prophets of God, a definite Son of God, a definite Name of the Lord, etc., while still giving full value to the second noun or pronoun. But when "the" is absent, while it may still be true that a definite thing is in view, that is not of foremost consideration. Rather, when there is no definite article, the second noun or group of nouns is given special stress: slave of *Christ Jesus,* evangel of *God,* obedience of *faith,* etc.

SLAVE OF CHRIST JESUS

Paul had the highest and most honorable position of service that any human being could have in his day. He was a "slave of *Christ Jesus.*" This was a slavery, not of fear but of love and privilege. Then, at a slightly lower level, but still higher than anyone today, he was a "called apostle," And

1. The name "David" is not written in Greek as a genitive, but was understood this way in a passage like this.

in third place, in relation to the apostles who were called before him, he was "severed for God's evangel."

SEVERED

Using the severing of the umbilical cord in birth as a figure of his distinctive call and commission to evangelize Christ among the nations, Paul writes in Galatians 1:15 that God *severs* him from his mother's womb. This was a cutting off from his fleshly relationship with the nation of Israel, which included his early avoidance of Jerusalem and of submission to those who were apostles before him (Gal.1:16,17). Then, even after he appears with "those of repute" in Jerusalem, and going from Jerusalem with Barnabas and John Mark to Antioch, we read that the Lord said, through the holy spirit, "*Sever,* by all means, to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them" (Acts 13:2). What is most surprising is that this severance is not just from his racial connection with Israel, but from Christ's chosen apostles, who were centered in Jerusalem. He (along with Barnabas) was cut off from the work of dispensing that was directed by Peter and the twelve.

EVANGEL OF GOD

The genitive phrase, *evangel of God,* in verse 1, does not have a definite article in Greek, but in the previous editions of the CV we have added one in lightface type: "(the) evangel of God." This was for proper English idiom. But in order to convey the special emphasis the Greek gives to the word "God" we now render this genitive phrase by means of what is generally called the "possessive case," or more correctly, the "Saxon genitive": *God's evangel,* This also has the advantage of not requiring the insertion of the definite article in lightface type.

In this there is perhaps a disadvantage in that we have changed the word order of the Greek. No translation is

perfect in every detail. But in this case there is the overriding advantage of giving emphasis to the fact that the evangel is characterized by God, a message which centers our attention on Him and not on the human (as does the law).

THAT WHICH IS OF GOD

The same emphasis on *God* is to be noted in verse 5 in the genitive phrase, *Son of God,* and in verse 7 in the words, *beloved of God.* By rendering the three phrases alike, with Saxon genitives, we may discern a trilogy of truth for our joy and thankfulness of heart: *God's evangel* concerning *God's Son* is being sent to *God's beloved* in the book of Romans.

At the end of Romans, and several more times in his epistles, Paul uses the full phrase, "the evangel of [the] God" (Rom.15:16), which is *the* distinct evangel of *the* One God with all the details which Paul has enunciated throughout the book. But here in the first verse of Romans (and nowhere else) only one detail is given. It is *of God;* it is *God's* evangel.

God's evangel is referred to as "the evangel of the Son of Him [i.e., God]" in verse 9. These are not two different evangels, but two different ways of pointing to the fact that this evangel has to do with the One most precious to God, His own Son, as well expressed in Romans 8:3. Where the flesh can do nothing in dealing with sin, God sends His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin (as the antitype of the sin offering), and by this means condemns sin in the flesh.

GOD'S PROPHETS

Paul was severed from the other apostles to bring God's evangel concerning His Son to us of the nations. But the message Paul brings is not severed from God's word through His prophets of old, for it has its roots in them

(Rom.1:2; 3:22). Yet even in drawing attention to these roots, our apostle points to them invariably with new significance. For much of what he sets before us here goes far beyond what had been said before. Always we will be greatly blessed if we listen carefully to this WELL-MESSAGE, as Paul writes it down, for it is in this message that God speaks directly to us.

SEED OF DAVID

The reference to Christ coming of the seed of David connects God's evangel with His promise given through Nathan the prophet of a future kingdom (2 Sam.7:12-16). It will be authenticated for the eon. Most of that passage refers directly to Solomon, but its full manifestation can only be realized in the Greater Seed of David, of Whom Paul speaks.

As Paul reacted to current events in his day (which he knew were bound to occur), so do we often look about ourselves with great sorrow and unintermittent pain at the political and social developments among our own peoples (*cf* Rom.9:1-5). Yet God's evangel which promises that the obtaining of the superabundance of grace and the gratuity in righteousness leads to reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:17), directs our hearts well beyond the eon God spoke of through Nathan, and even ultimately to a time when all mankind are constituted righteous (Rom. 5:19). In the meantime we are expectant of God's celestial kingdom under the One Who will reign until all enemies are put under His feet.

Accordingly, we see in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 the way in which God's evangel concerning His Son enlarges the significance of His position as David's Seed:

[20] **Yet now Christ has been roused**[c] [o]**from** among the **dead,** the **Firstfruit of** those who are [c]**reposing**[c]**.** [21] **For** since in fact through a **human** comes **death, through** a **Human also** comes the **resurrection of** the **dead.** [22] **For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be** [l]**vivified.** [23] **Yet each in** his **own class:** the **Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon** those who are **Christ's in His presence;** [24] **thereafter the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to** His **God and Father, whenever He should nullify** [e]**all sovereignty and** [e]**all authority and power.** [25] **For He** [l]**must be reigning until** [w] **He should place all His enemies under His feet.** [26] The **last enemy is being abolished**[c]**: death.** [27] **For He subjects all under His feet. Now whenever He may say that all is** [c]**subject**[c]**,** it is **evident that** it is **outside of** Him Who **subjects all to Him.** [28] **Now whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Him**self **also shall be** [l]**subjected to** Him Who **subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all.**

The aorist subjunctives, "should nullify" and "should place," join the aorist verb, "subjects," as simple, factual certainties. They are operations of God through Christ Jesus, our Lord, in His kingship, operations which accord with the words of Nathan, but are exceedingly more glorious because they are expressly built on God's evangel concerning His Son.

DESIGNATED GOD'S SON

God's evangel concerns God's Son. That is fundamental. It is true that the evangel does concern us as to its effects. But it wholly concerns God's Son as to what it announces: *Christ dies for our sins; He was entombed; He has been roused* (1 Cor.15:3,4).

The genitive phrase, "Son of Him" in Romans 1:3 becomes more exact in Romans 1:4, where (literally translated) He is designated "Son of *God* . . . out of resurrection of dead-(one)s." This has often been taken to say that Jesus Christ

our Lord is designated Son of God by means of His own resurrection *from* the dead. And while genitive terms may sometimes best be understood as conveying a sense of *from* rather than *of,* and God's rousing of Christ from the dead is an essential element of the evangel (*cf* Rom.4:25; 6:4; 7:4; 1 Cor.15:4,20), the parallel with Christ coming, according to flesh, of David's seed, which has reference to His *future* reign, supports the normal use of the genitive here. Nevertheless, both Christ's rousing from among the dead and our future resurrection appear as details in God's evangel concerning His Son in Romans 6:4,5, as follows:

. . . even as Christ is roused [o]**from** among the **dead through the glory of the Father, thus we´ also should walk in newness of life.** [5] **For if we have become planted together** in **the likeness of His** [·]**death,** [bt]**nevertheless we shall be of the resurrection also.**

The aorist subjunctive verb "we should walk," having as its basis the glory of the Father, and the future tense verb, "we shall be," having as its basis God's planting of us in the likeness of Christ's death, are parallel certainties. Christ is designated God's Son by the resurrection of dead (one)s, which is, like most consequences of Christ's death and life from the dead, a matter of faith and expectation. It is as we read in Romans 8:22-25:

[22] **For we are** [°]**aware that the entire creation is groaning together and travailing together until** [·]**now.** [23] **Yet not only** so, **but** we [s]**our**selves **also** who [l]**have the firstfruit of the spirit, we´** [s]**our**selves **also are groaning in ourselves, awaiting**[°] the **sonship, the deliverance of our** [·]**body.** [24] **For to** [·]**expectation are we saved. Now expectation, being observed**[°]**, is not expectation, for what any**one **is observing,** [a]**why is he expecting** it **also?** [25] **Now if we are expecting what we are not observing, we are awaiting**[°] it [th]**with endurance.**

FAITH'S OBEDIENCE

When he was Saul of Tarsus, the one who becomes Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, severed for God's evangel, was greatly absorbed with the law and with what, in his mind, he had to do in order to assure himself of a place in the kingdom. But (here I use English aorist verbs) the time comes when he obtains grace and apostleship for bringing God's evangel concerning His Son to people among all the nations for *obedience of faith.* This unique genitive phrase occurs only twice in Scripture, once here at the beginning of Romans (1:5) and again at the end of the letter (16:26). In the early editions of the CV it was translated in Greek word order with the definite article added in lightface type: "(the) obedience of faith." But our more recent editions use the single, hyphenated term: "faith-obedience," which places the emphasis appropriately on the word *faith.* Now, so that we can show there are two words involved here, and for consistency's sake as well, we use the Saxon genitive and render the phrase: "faith's obedience."

It would be even better if we could say, "faith's submissive-hearing," and perhaps that, or a similar expression, will be acceptable in time. Until then we need to train our minds to recognize that these words, *obey* and *obedient,* when used in the New Testament, do not *in themselves* convey a sense of *doing,* but of *careful listening.* They correspond best to the Hebrew expression, usually rendered "hearken." When what is heard is instruction of law, the attentive listening is to be followed by attentive doing. But when what is being heard is God's evangel, which instructs us as to what God has done through His Son, Jesus Christ, then the obedience, or submissive hearing, holds fast to that message of grace, a message, which as we soon hear in Romans 1:16 is *God's power* for salva-

tion. Spiritual invigoration for our doing arises from our faithful listening to God's WELL-MESSAGE to us.

Romans chapters six through eight are especially rich in showing us the relationship of faith's obedience to our present lives. For Paul himself it was an enslavement of his mind to what he was believing, which he called (using a forceful figure of speech which almost goes beyond the ability of our "western" ears to follow): *God's law* (Rom. 7:25). Yet in the context, it can only be, as with us, an enslavement of attentive listening to that type of teaching to which we are given over (Rom.6:17), that is, to the evangel of grace.

FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE

In accord with our practice in the CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, we capitalize the word *Name* when it is used in reference to Deity. We have not done so in previous editions, and we do not claim that the original sense intended by Paul could not be conveyed without this capitalization. Yet we believe it may be *helpful* for us to remind ourselves in this way that the word "Name" is indeed used in Scripture as though it were the divine Name itself, and that God's Son is graced with the Name that is above every name, so that every knee shall bow in the Name of Jesus, and every tongue will acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord.

CALLED AND BELOVED AND SET APART

God's evangel concerning God's Son is proclaimed by Paul in Romans. And it is sent, not only to first century believers in Rome, but to us now in the twenty-first century, who also are "called of Jesus Christ" and also are "God's beloved" and also are "called saints." Most appropriately, Paul inserts his opening words of greetings at this point:

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." D.H.H.

SIMPLE FACTS

A MAJOR CHANGE in the revised CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (CVNT) is that all verbs and verb forms generally classified as aorists will be rendered as the present CLNT renders "first aorists." This means the Version will use what is generally understood as a "simple present verb" more often than before. We discussed this in some detail in our most recent issue of *Unsearchable Riches* (Fourth Quarter, 2015).

Most of us have come to appreciate such wordings as: "For thus God *loves* the world . . ." (John 3:16), and even: "Now whom He [God] *designates beforehand,* these He *calls* also, and whom He *calls,* these He *justifies* also; now whom He *justifies,* these He *glorifies* also" (Rom.8:30). And we have come to rejoice in the sense of timeless facts which these "present tense" verbs convey. But this is more difficult when an aorist verb is used for what clearly is an action known to have occurred in the past with no particular timelessness being involved.

What we need to understand is that the principal feature conveyed by aorists is not the timelessness of the action (though they often convey that sense), but the simple *fact,* the *truth* of the action. Other verbs also express, or are intended to express facts. But the point is that when an aorist is used the full force of the verb is directed to the action as fact, no matter what the time of the action may be.

When, in his letter to the Galatians, Paul wishes to distinguish his ministry from that of the twelve, he recounts his striking avoidance of Jerusalem and any sign of subjec-

tion to "those of repute," writing with a predominance of aorist verbs. In so doing he speaks in a language of simple declaration, and every verb is backed up by his protest that in God's sight he is not lying. In rendering both first and second aorist verbs by English simple present verbs the CVNT attempts to reflect this tone of simple factuality (Gal.1:15-20):

15 **Now when** it **delights** ·**God,** ·Who **severs me** °**from my mother's womb and calls** me **through His** ·**grace,** 16 **to unveil His** ·**Son in me that I may be evangelizing**° **Him among the nations, I** do **not immediately submit**° it **to flesh and blood,** 17 **neither come I up** *io*-**to Jerusalem to**-*d* those ·who are **apostles before me, but I come away into Arabia, and I return again** *io*-**to Damascus.**

18 **Thereupon, after three years, I come up** *io*-**to Jerusalem to relate** my **story** to **Cephas, and I stay** *td*-**with him fifteen days.** 19 **Yet I be**come **acquainted** with **no**-*t* one **different** from **the apostles, except James, the brother of the Lord.** (20 **Now what I am writing to you,** ˡ**lo**°**! in** ·**God's sight,** I say **that I am not lying**°**.**)

Paul does not attempt to hide the facts, surprising as they may be. Indeed he dwells on them, and supports them by using aorist verbs. His apostolic and evangelistic work is to be distinguished from that of the twelve.

ALL SIN, GOD SPARES NOT, CHRIST DIES

Often God's evangel comes before us in Romans in the language of simple facts, apart from their relationship to time, that is, by means of aorist verbs. We have gotten used to the CV renderings of the first aorist verbs, "*spares* not" and "*gives* Him *up*" in Romans 8:32. We go over such passages in our minds often and are strengthened by this use of the simple present form for these verbs. We know these acts of God occurred in the past, but Paul is not leading

us to dwell on that here—only on the actions themselves. They are facts, and in this case they have a timeless quality.

Romans 1:18-3:20 exposes the acts of human irreverence and unrighteousness which so passionately call for God's evangel concerning His Son. Then this evangel is proclaimed in two verses (Rom.3:21,22) against a one-verse summation of that long indictment (Rom.3:23):

21 **Yet now, apart from law, God's righteousness is** °**manifest**° **(being attested**° **by the law and the prophets),** 22 **yet God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith** *io*-**for all, and on all** ·who are **believing, for** there **is no**-*t* **distinction,** 23 **for all sin and are wanting**° **of the glory of** ·**God.**

God's righteousness, now made manifest through Jesus Christ's faith, is set against the simple, indisputable fact that *all sin* and its effect (which continues) that *all are wanting of the glory of God.* The verb "sin" is a second aorist, while "are wanting" is a present progressive verb. Our previous use of the past tense for the second aorist verb was not entirely satisfactory: "all *sinned.*" The AV rendering, "all *have sinned,*" may seem better, but that is because of familiarity. Paul is not speaking of something confined to the past or brought to completion, but of a fact that afflicts us all day by day.

He repeats this in Romans 5:12 in tracing the fact of human sin to Adam through the introduction of death:

12 **Therefore, even as through one human** ·**sin enters into the world, and through** ·**sin** ·**death, and thus** ·**death passes through into all** ⁼**man**kind, **on which all sin—**

All human beings sin. But God *gives* (a first aorist verb) His only-begotten Son (John 3:16). The fact is that we sin. Now what does God do about it? Using an aorist participle, Paul directs attention to God, *sending* His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh, and concerning sin, He *condemns* sin in the flesh (Rom.8:3).

God's evangel concerning His Son takes full account of the fact that all sin. In response to this fact, God's evangel concerning His Son announces the astounding fact that God spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all. This is the most startling of all the evangelical facts, which is repeated throughout the heart of Romans for our faith: *Christ dies.*

ROMANS 5:6-8

6 **For Christ,** while **we** [l]**are still infirm, still** in **accord** with the **era, for** the **sake of** the **irreverent, dies.** 7 **For hardly for** the **sake of** a **just** man **will any**one **be dying**[c]**: for, for** the **sake of** a [·]**good** man, **perhaps** [a]**some**one **may even be daring to die,** 8 **yet** [·]**God is commending** this [·]**love of** [sf]**His** [io]**to us,** seeing **that,** while **we** [l]**are still sinners, Christ dies for our sakes.**

ROMANS 6:10

10 **for** in [w]**that He dies, He dies to** [·]**Sin once for all** time, **yet** in [w]**that He is living, He is living to** [·]**God.**

OTHER EVANGELICAL FACTS

The evangel does not end with the death of Christ. It is absolutely necessary that Christ die, but, thanks be to God, His evangel concerning His Son, tells us that God *rouses* the Lord (1 Cor.6:14), in which there is the assurance of rousing for us.

The evangelical facts of Christ's emptying of Himself and humbling of Himself to the death of the cross, followed by His exaltation are expressed in Philippians 2:7-12 by a series of aorist verbs:

Christ Jesus *empties* Himself.

He *humbles* Himself unto death.

God highly *exalts* Him and *graces* Him with a Name that is above every name.

D.H.H.

JUSTIFICATION

One of the contrasting features of Paul's evangel, which cut it off from that which was proclaimed by Peter and the other apostles, and which marks it as a new departure in God's ways, unique and to be distinguished from that which was heralded before, was *justification.* The fact that, in Paul's message, the believer was justified, and that irrevocably, is a fundamental and revolutionary change in the way God is dealing with sin. Previously He had passed over the penalties of sins in His forbearance, but now He justifies sinners. This amazing fact seems to grip but few. That God can justify that which has wrecked His creation, that He can change the character of these disruptive acts, is a miracle that only God can accomplish.

This must be apprehended in order to grasp the superiorities of Paul's evangel. That his message is an advance over what was proclaimed by our Lord and the twelve, and by Paul himself during a part of his ministry, is apparent to those who realize its distinctiveness. Repentance and baptism in water for the pardon of sins and the gratuity of the holy spirit are to be contrasted with faith and justification and the homing of God's spirit within the believer. What is essential to man's obedience becomes less onerous and exacting, and what is given by God is vastly superior. Repentance and baptism emphasize human activities, steps to be taken, things to be done. Man must change his mind regarding his sins, and he must be immersed in water. On the surface his own actions are predominant. He must alter his attitude toward his former aims. What he had previously thought to be right, he must now perceive to be sin.

His whole manner of life had been wrong, for it had not been directed toward God. Of this he needed to repent.

In faith, however, the emphasis is on God. He is the One Who has acted, and He has spoken regarding His actions, and what He says is true. Faith acquiesces in what God does. It is believing God. It looks away from human disabilities, and does not become absorbed with sins, but concentrates attention on God and His Word. "Let God be true, yet every man a liar!" are faith's words. Our feelings, our thoughts, our actions are probably wrong, but God's Word is meticulously exact and should be fervently believed.

GOING FROM FLESH TO SPIRIT

We see in Paul's evangel a withdrawal from the flesh and an emphasis on spirit. The essentially spiritual activity of believing God is linked with a baptism which is not apparent to the senses, but which is experienced in the spirit of the one believing, and this results in a justifying sentence. This in its turn has no physical foundation at present, but is enjoyed in spirit. It awaits its realization in the future day, when we shall be displayed flawless in His presence, unassailable, though many might wish to charge us with sin.

We do not justify our sins. The injuries we wittingly or unwittingly do to our fellow humans we dare not claim to be right. We cannot do evil that good may come. We cannot justify our conduct. But God is *able.* This is realized in spirit and is the only solid foundation of true happiness. In Paul's evangel the flesh is receding into the background. It finds its true place—crucified. The flesh, and that which pertains to it, meets its inglorious end on the cross, that shameful, dishonorable, degrading and accursed stake. This is the heart of Paul's evangel, not so that of the Circumcision.

BEING JUSTIFIED GRATUITOUSLY

Justification, the marvelous *gift* of God, so graciously granted to those who believe Him, is to be carefully distinguished from pardon. The two terms have different meanings and separate associations. It is true that each is linked with sin, each has to do with misdemeanor, with failure. Pardon, however, is temporary in character and hinges on subsequent good behavior. A persistence in sin after pardon would not necessarily bring forth fresh supplies of mercy. Pardon presupposes a repentant spirit and a changed disposition, leading to good works. The act or acts which were pardoned still retain their original character, they are still misdemeanors. It is as if the record has been erased, but future grants of mercy cannot be guaranteed. There is some uncertainty and doubt, for it depends in measure on subsequent good conduct.

Pardon is connected with the executive authority, the king or governor. He is lenient regarding past offenses, is merciful and willing to show grace. In the loose but expressive terms of idiom it is as if the authority were saying, "Let bygones be bygones. Shake hands and forget. Clean the slate of the past and start afresh." Firmly allied with this tolerant attitude is the tacit agreement that future conduct must show an appreciation of the favor accorded, as any future lapse might not meet the same clemency. This consideration of the term pardon we have transferred to our common understanding of the word and its associations, and such a meaning is clearly inherent in its usual scriptural usage also.

Notice that in Luke 1:77,78 pardon of sins is associated with the merciful compassions of God, and compare this with justification which is founded in His grace, a deeper and more God-like characteristic. In Luke 4:18 pardon is heralded to captives, and the oppressed receive its bene-

fits, figures which accord with its kingdom character. Its instability may be seen in Matthew 18:21-35, where our Lord utters the parable of the wicked slave whose lord had remitted to him vast debts which he was unable to pay. The slave, not appreciating the mercy shown, oppresses one of his own fellow slaves for an insignificant debt. His failure to show such mercy as he had himself received caused the pardon to be withdrawn and the wicked slave was forced to pay all that he owed. Our Lord ends by saying: "Thus shall My heavenly Father also be doing to you, if each one should not be pardoning his brother from your hearts."

These scriptures are true in their context, but should be cut off from Paul's marvelous unfoldings, where grace transcendent and unadulterated without aught of works is displayed.

THE ESSENTIAL PLACE OF EVIL AND SIN

In Paul's evangel is revealed a righteousness of God: No longer is God passing over the penalty of sins. No longer is forbearance necessary. No longer is sin covered up. The temporary expedient of pardon is replaced by something permanent, enduring. In Christ Jesus God has dealt with sin once and for all time. The sins of humanity, nay of all God's myriads of creatures, were dealt with at the cross. In Christ Jesus is deliverance for all. The sufferings of God's Anointed are of such intrinsic value that God is able, through them, to justify all sin. This is the marvel revealed in Paul's evangel.

How can it be said that God was righteous in cursing His Beloved? Did He do right in forsaking Him on the accursed stake? He gave His Son over to malignant men and malicious spirit foes, and did not move in His defense. It was God Who wielded the knife that slew this Sacrifice. It is important to view the death of Christ from the Godward aspect, as too great an emphasis on what man

did will cloud our minds to the vast issues involved. God was the prime mover in every detail surrounding the death of Christ. Satan, men and messengers were His agents in that dreadful tragedy. We do not minimize the fearful sin of those who had a hand in it, but we wish to stress the part God played in these events. Peter throws a flood of light on the sufferings of Christ when writing: "The precious blood of Christ, as of a flawless and unspotted Lamb, foreknown, indeed, before the disruption of the world" (1 Peter 1:19,20). Before that great cataclysmic upheaval which rent the primeval creation of God, spoiling and ruining its perfection and leaving it waste and sterile, empty and unproductive, useless to God and His creatures, before this had occurred, Christ was known as the flawless and unspotted Lamb. Even when all was still perfect, the sufferings of His Christ were part of God's eonian plan. Christ, too, in those distant days, knew of His agony and what the Father had willed for Him. But the first act of the eonian tragedy had not yet been staged. Satan had not yet been created to oppose and destroy. The first of the wicked eons had still to begin. Yet all was foreknown by God. We cannot, we must not relieve God of the responsibility of anything that has occurred since creation began in Christ. Evil and sin are not intruders invading the universe contrary to the intention of God. They are an essential ingredient of God's eonian plan and have been introduced by our loving, wise God to form the basis of His eonian operations. They are essential and fundamental to a full-orbed revelation of God.

Apart from sin the revelation of God would be incomplete. It is the mistakes, the injustices, the irreverence and the offenses that supply the material with which God works during the eons. Before the eons these were absent, and after they have run their course, there will be no necessity for such, for their work will have been done. In order

to understand the tremendous problems which life provides we must realize that all that occurs during the eons is in accord with the intention of God and is being used by Him to achieve the end He had in view ere the eons began, which end was to become All in all His creatures. Everything contributes to this grand goal.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF SIN

This understanding of the eonian tragedy is necessary in order to apprehend how God can justify sin. The damage and destruction, the suffering and shame can be justified because God Himself introduced into His creation the conditions which produced these results, but with an end in view which would fully justify the means. The three great pillars of truth which support and establish the great doctrine of justification are:

(1) All is out of God.
(2) All blessing is a result of the sufferings, death, and resurrection of His Son.
(3) All is for God. He will be All in All.

Who can compute the terrible toll of sufferings which has resulted from Adam's original sin? The history of the past two eons is darkened with despair, burdened with misery, and weighted with woe. What a deluge of disasters has proceeded from the disobedient act of one man! Its issue is seen in millions on millions of humans doomed from birth to sin. Suffering and misery have been the close companions of many for most of their days. None of us is capable of assessing the terrible destruction wrought in God's creation through sin. What measure of quantity shall we give to the sufferings of one human? Multiply this by the numbers born since Adam and what a soul-shattering sum of misery and woe is there represented! Yet all this our great God, Who is love, intended. Let this grip our hearts, for it is vital.

Who can measure the extent of the sufferings of Christ? To such a subject we must approach with reverent and adoring spirit, but it behooves us to give it our earnest consideration, for His sufferings form the basis of the salvation of all.

He had been the Father's beloved from the beginning. He was the only Son of God, fondled and favored. God had showered on Him all His affection and graced Him with all His gifts. He was unique in God's creation, having the glory of God and the spirit of God without measure. He was the Creator of all, for through Him the visible and the invisible universe was created. None but God was before Him in time, and no other was His equal in status. He was supreme. Before His humiliation He could view the entire universe as His handiwork, His achievement, created for His Father and Himself. It was His by right of creation and by right of gift, for for Him all was created. This exalted One was He Who suffered as a result of sin. He it was Who was smitten by the hands of His God, Who offered Him up a sacrifice to display the depths of His love.

ACCORDING TO GOD'S INTENTION

The sufferings of Christ are the answer to this tremendous question: Can God be just and a Justifier of the sinner? What miracle is wrought so that these acts of ours, which hurt and harm our fellow humans and offend our loving God, can be justified? How is a sinner acquitted by the court of heaven? The cross of Christ provides the answer. But wherein lies the potency of His sufferings? How does the blood of Christ alter the character of our actions? For this is what is required. It is no legal fiction that has been performed, whereby wrong is termed right. A sin must be transformed into an action that satisfies the requirements of a God Who is Light.

The answer is bound up with the tremendous truth that

all is out of God. God it was Who inflicted on man the tragedy of the eons. There was no question of choice by man in the matter. He was created by God with a view to his becoming involved in evil and sin. God is supreme and does with His creatures as He wills. He molds them to the pattern He intends, and we, the molded, cannot protest, "Why does He make me thus?" He who knows not the love and purpose of God might argue, "Why does He then blame, if all accords with His intention?" (*cf* Rom.9:19). But who are we to put such a question to our Creator? He is Supreme and is free to do with His creatures as He wills.

But does God stand aloof from the eonian tragedy, watching as a spectator His vast designs being worked out in His creatures, but unaffected Himself thereby? No, for He, the Lord inherent in all His works, is vitally involved in the dread result of sin, and affected more deeply than His creatures. Sin has ruined His handiwork, spoiled His creation, and has deprived Him of love and worship and glory which is His by right as the Source of all. We ourselves have some minute appreciation of the havoc wrought by sin, and feel each day the pains and penalties of sin's curse. Is this not a feeble replica of what God, the Source of all, must feel in the midst of His ruined achievements? Does He not react to the tragedy of the eons? Does His heart not ache? Are not the sufferings of humanity echoed in the heart of the Father? He, no doubt, suffers with His creation throughout the course of the eons. But sin's most bitter blow was dealt when it pierced His heart, depriving Him of His Beloved. Let us not think of our God as a hard, impersonal Deity, above and apart from eonian suffering, but a compassionate Father.

God has introduced sin into the universe with a view to the working out of His intention of ultimately becoming All in all. In order to attain this objective it is essential for all His creatures to be thoroughly convinced that God

Himself is the sum of all their desires, the fulfillment of all their hopes, and the consummation of life's experiences. It is essential that they know failure and distress, humiliation and pain, in order that when God reveals Himself to them, they will unhesitatingly and spontaneously worship and adore Him as their loving Father and Source of all bliss. God Himself introduced sin into the universe through the agency of Satan, and at the cross He Himself became most intimately concerned with the dread results of sin's curse. For His Son, His Beloved, was made sin for the sake of humanity. Sin which had wrecked and ruined His handiwork achieved its most frightful end when it killed His Son. What a dread catastrophe was this! Creation itself had been devastated by sin. Now He through Whom all began, and in Whom all has its cohesion, hung on a stake, derided by men, opposed by Satan, and deserted by His God. Thus evil and sin brought forth its most bitter fruit, and degraded the only begotten Son of God, so that He hung with the robbers and malefactors, among the outcasts of human society.

But this was in God's plan for His creation. Yet in it all God remained righteous. All His actions were unimpeachable. Although He introduced sin through the agency of His creatures, yet He did not sin in so doing. For it was no mistake, no failure of His. It was in accord with His intention, and it will be justified by the beneficial results obtained through its agency. As in the cross of Christ, which was man's most dreadful misdeed, yet God's righteous act, so in all else. God is justified in all He does. For His final intention to glorify Himself and bless His creatures is the dominating purpose which adds luster to all His eonian operations. In the brilliant glory of His ultimate the most somber and gloomy features of earth's history are transformed into a brilliant display of His power and wisdom and love.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF GOD

In the blood of Christ, sin is justified because through His sufferings God is able to uncover the deep reserves of love that otherwise would have remained hidden within His heart. It was essential for Him to offer His Son as a Sacrifice as it was the only way of displaying His love. The humiliation, shame, suffering, and death of Christ, the beloved Son of God, is God's method of displaying to the myriads of His creatures the vastness of His affection. Is this not a clear justification of sin? Let us express it clearly, thus:

God intended to reveal His love.

His affections could only be unveiled through the sacrifice of His Son.

Sacrifice could only be occasioned by some dire need.

The need for a Sacrifice was provided by a sin-wrecked universe.

The Sacrifice was first provided, and then the conditions that called for the Sacrifice were introduced. He first determined to reveal His grace and then supplied the circumstances that tested to the utmost limits the deep resources of His love and which revealed the immeasurable dimensions of His affection. The sufferings of Christ were the only method by which all this could be effected. It was essential therefore that they should occur. His sacrifice was determined by God before the disruption. Without it creation would have remained ignorant of the love of God. The divine order is the explanation of justification: the Sacrifice was provided first, sin came after. The crucifixion of the Son of God was in its final analysis an act of God. Man was offering up for God the Sacrifice Whose sweet savor would endure throughout the eons and beyond. Man's sin and degradation culminated in the sufferings of Christ, yet form the essential basis of God's glory and man's blessing. The sins of humanity from Adam onward partook of the same character as the supreme sin. Man at heart is irreverent, a detester of God, refusing to acknowledge Him, and failing to glorify Him as God. None seek out God, but all avoid Him. But this depravity, this ruinous behavior, that disrupts society and hurts and harms God, is justified, because only through it God is enabled to reveal the recesses of His heart through His indescribable gratuity. Justification is firmly founded in the grace of God.

God is just in justifying the sinner, but is He just in inflicting His Son with the indignities, the shame, the suffering and the death of the cross? How does God justify such treatment of His Son? His deserts were otherwise and He was suffering for the sake of others. Can this be justified? Yes, for the fruit of glory that Christ will garner as a result of His sufferings will be His reward for all He endured. Because of His obedience in leaving the heights of heaven and humbling Himself, even to the death of the cross, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with a name which is over every name, the name of Jesus, to which every knee will bow in adoring worship. This is His reward. Before His humiliation He had been sovereign in the universe, and now He is so once again, yet with a vital difference. Now He is Saviour, Deliverer, Reconciler. Through His sufferings He wins the affections and gets the unforced adoration of the myriads of God's creatures, and all this is God's doing. Will He not then justify His Father for all that He put on Him at Golgotha? During the final eons every creature in the heavens and on the earth and under the earth will have learned of the sufferings of the Christ, and of the depths of the Father's love revealed in them, and every knee will bow to Him Who died, acclaiming Him Lord, for the glory of God the Father. Very feebly we can enter into the joy, the satisfaction, the thankfulness that will be His as He views the vast potentials of love and adoration

that will be pulsing within the heart of each of the myriads of the Father's happy family.

Thus will all ultimately be justified. No other way would have done. God's matchless wisdom, serving in the cause of His love, has produced a method of salvation that calls forth the adoring wonder of our hearts. What a God we have! We worship before Him with Paul's words within our hearts: "O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? Seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!"

D. G. Hayter

WE ARE FOR GOD

It is not casting any disagreeable reflections on the Almighty to say He determined all things for good. Indeed, it is glorious to learn not only that there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, but that we are "for Him": "There is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, *and we for Him*" (1 Cor.8:6a). Why are we here? For what purpose do we exist? The answer is, "for God"; that is, for God Himself, even as for His purpose in which we have a place. Just think of it: God actually has a *purpose* for each one of us, that we should exist rather than not exist and that His goal concerning us should be realized. Each one of us, then, is important to God; and, lest His purpose concerning any one of us should fail, He has ordered the universe in such a way that all is out of Him and through Him; all, in the end, being for Him as well.

J.R.C.

PAUL AND GOD'S PURPOSE

IT IS NOT without significance that God's purpose concerning His vast creation should be associated with Paul. The very character of Paul's life seems to mark him out for the unfolding of God's rare design. The gifts bestowed on him, together with the unique ordering of his life and experience, wonderfully prepared him as the revealer of such lofty truth.

From his remarkable conversion on the Damascus road he was set apart for an entirely new and wider ministry, one most blessedly unfettered and free. And, in accord with this, Christ appeared to him, from time to time, imparting to him truths deeper and deeper, until, with enlarged vision, the apostle completed God's enlightening revelation through the Word of His grace.

How many will have thanked God for this wondrous knowledge, time alone will tell. It is of God, by His spirit, through His interpreter, the choice instrument of the Christ of God. Therefore, in the words of another:

"We limit not the truth of God
To our poor reach of mind,
By notions of our day and sect,
Crude, partial and confined.
No, let a new, a greater thought,
Within our hearts be stirred,
For God has still more light and truth
To break forth from His Word."

Thus, to many of God's people larger thoughts have

come, and a deeper comprehension of the magnitude of God's purpose. They see, as never before, how wonderful a God is theirs, and how great the Son of His love. They perceive the grandeur of His object, that no one be left outside the blessedness of His great salvation.

It is for all to realize. Maybe not now, yet, in the attainment of God's objective, certainly. For, as Paul puts it, "we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of those who believe." We who now believe, therefore, derive an added pleasure and joy in believing that when God's goal is reached, He will be the God and Saviour of all, in a real, far-reaching way. And who will be instrumental in such a climax, if not the Christ of God? Who but He could so rule and reign, subduing all hearts by the perfection of His kingly sway?

Since *in Him, through Him,* and *for Him,* are all things, such a climax and conclusion is just what we should expect. In such a magnificent way, God truly and royally rewards Him. Note how Paul reverts to this enthralling triumph of God's grace.

After the apostle has referred to Christ as "the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature," he continues. "For in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him . . . for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross) through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:16-20).

Could language be more comprehensive? Note the all embracive word *all,* so typical of the apostle Paul, who thought in great terms. For the individual assuredly, yet also collectively, in words of rare intimacy. But these are

but the stepping stones to a great beyond. All are to be brought into the light and knowledge of God. And let us always remember that God Himself will see to that. It is not altogether left to the endeavor of the church, as many think. It is far beyond that.

Now, there is a fine illustrative incident in Paul's career which well sets forth the operative power of the Father of glory in beneficent harmony with that of the Son. The shipwreck of Paul and of those with him, on the way to Rome, is an instructive story of God's way of salvation. It is good to read the whole account, but we quote outstanding parts. Paul, standing in the midst of those on board the storm-tossed bark, thus addresses them:

"And now I am exhorting you to be cheerful, for not one soul from among you will be cast away . . . . For there stood beside me this night a messenger, of God, Whose I am, to Whom I am offering divine service also, saying, 'Fear not, Paul! Before Caesar you must stand. And lo! graciously has God granted you all those who are sailing with you.' Wherefore, be cheerful, men, for I am believing God that thus it will be, even in the manner which has been spoken to me" (Acts 27:22-25).

Paul then entreated all to partake of nourishment, saying, "For this belongs to this salvation of yours, for not a hair from the head of one of you shall perish." So, we further read, *"and thus all came safely through on the land."*

Now, calm and beautiful as the Mediterranean can be, there are times when it is subject to a tempestuous wind called Euroclydon. And the transition is often easy and rapid. How like our life! Yet, amid it all, it is evident that reverent dependence upon God is the most becoming attitude of mind for the sons of Adam, liable as they are to shipwreck of faith, as well as of happiness, amid the quicksands of life. But all life, all experience, and all hope centers in the Son of God. Even so, the ship's company could

not be lost, because God had given them to Paul. Certainly there was human endeavor, but it was all in the oversight and guardianship of God.

Paul was a choice instrument in the saving of two hundred and seventy-six souls in the vessel. But who can say what will satisfy the heart of Christ if numbers are in question? Surely, no less than *all* for whom He died. Thus Paul writes, "[God] wills that all mankind be saved. For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and mankind, a Man, Christ Jesus, Who is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (the testimony in its own eras) (1 Timothy 2:4-6).

And again he writes, "for for this are we toiling and being reproached), that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. These things be charging and teaching" (1 Timothy 4:10-11).

Can we not then leave it at that, resting in the greatness and glory of His attractive drawing power? For He it is Who brings to completion God's purpose of grace, "the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord." And since this is a purpose transcending all human thought, it follows that it must be one of surpassing grandeur. It leaves nothing to be desired.

In the wideness of its range God is given glory from the whole of creation. A permanent, abiding glory, for does it not crown with moving eloquence the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice?

Honor therefore accrues to Paul for unfolding so noble a conception of God, revealing as he does the preciousness and high quality of reconciliation. A lovely term this, for reconciliation describes the condition of accord where previous estrangement has existed. And when its ministry has accomplished its beneficent purpose, God's evangel of grace will have come into its own.

William Mealand

Contributed

FIGURES OF SPEECH

ONE of the greatest difficulties we meet in correctly understanding the Scriptures is that of distinguishing between literal and figurative language. This difficulty is evident in the fact that the Great Teacher answered the question of His disciples as to why He taught in parables by saying that it was to hide the secrets of the kingdom from Israel at large and at the same time reveal them to the disciples for whom they were intended; for even they did not understand His figurative language until He interpreted the parables to them privately.

The difficulty is further manifest in such incidents as that in which He alluded to the doctrine of the Pharisees and the Sadducees as "leaven," and the disciples thought they should have brought their own bread with them to that place.

One value of figurative language is that so much can be revealed in so few words; but the brevity is the reason of the difficulty in understanding the figure. Many interpretations of parables, all divergent, have been made by authors of volume after volume on the subject.

Picture-writing and the art of painting show more yet than figurative language in condensed space, and such expression of thought is still more difficult to understand than such literary forms as parable and allegory, but a clay tablet, a mountain-side or a piece of canvas is not as expensive as the present cost of print.

The Great Teacher was the greatest adept ever to use figurative language, but His apostle to us is not far behind Him. Paul uses figures in most of his epistles. In Romans 7 he uses a very difficult figure of bondage under law, illus-

trating it by a combined figure of wedlock and of slavery. In the Corinthian epistles he uses such difficult ones as combined farming and house-building (1 Cor.3), and the seed sown in the soil to illustrate resurrection (chap.15). In 2 Corinthians 5 he uses a combined figure for a tent used for clothing. In Galatians 4 he uses the allegory we study. In Ephesians the believer is an armor-clad soldier. In Philippians we are garrisoned about with God's peace that fights all worries away. In Colossians we are assured that we are delivered from the realm of the king named "Darkness" and naturalized into the dominion of God's dear Son. He told the Thessalonians that they were no longer "children" of that night-Darkness, but children of the day, and therefore they were never to be figuratively asleep, but always watching for the Lord to come. Timothy, Titus and Onesimus were his "sons."

Such a wealth of figurative language is enticing. It challenges the wits to wrestle with the cryptic language and intrigues the spiritual appetite to feast on hidden manna that will make the spiritual man strong in the Lord for His service.

So we set ourselves to unravel the allegory in Galatians 4:19-5:4.

SLAVERY AND SONSHIP

Inspiration designates the story about Hagar and Sarah an "allegory." An allegory is distinguished from a parable by being more complete in the significance of every item of the story than a parable is. An allegory is generally fictitious, such as Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," but this one is an interpretation of real life-occurrences. A fable is not only fictitious, but unreal, as Jotham's story of the trees choosing a king (Judges 9:8). A type is an adumbration, or shadowy outline, of something future, corresponding only in prominent features to the real event.

In the broadest sense of the term, parable (Heb. *mashal*, Grk. *parabole*) includes all these figurative forms, for the word *parabole* means *cast beside* and so denotes any literary construction (or even any action) set beside a thought in an illustrative way, and is so used in Scripture, as any reader can see for himself by consulting a concordance or lexicon of the original languages.

Some of the marvels of inspiration may be seen in the use of seemingly trivial incidents to foreshadow events of tremendous importance, such as Abraham's slaves staying behind at the foot of Mount Moriah at the offering of Isaac, and thus prefiguring the three disciples in Gethsemane. And Ishmael's mocking baby Isaac portrays in this allegory the persecution and martyrdom of Paul and his associates by those represented by Ishmael. We shall comment on that in this study, but the case of Abraham's slaves must wait its turn.

In studying this allegory we should first of all understand that it is but a section of the argument to which the whole epistle is devoted—justification, that is, righteousness (5:6). Were the believers justified by *works*, or by *grace* through faith? Does God choose people for salvation because they previously earned it, or because He loves them first, and they lovingly work because of that? Are we saved because we have worked, or do we work because He has saved us?

Paul calls the Galatians his "children" (4:19), as he also implied that he was the begetting *father* of the Corinthians (1 Cor.4:15) and of Timothy, Titus and Onesimus. There is a great truth in that, pertaining to the comparative rank of an evangelist in the ecclesia as compared with other officials.

Here in 4:19, however, he boldly uses an arresting figure, implying he was the spiritual *mother* of these Galatian believers, just as a mother-to-be anxiously watches for

the first sign of independent life in her unborn child, to show his solicitude that these Galatian saints should manifest their quickening out of their old deadness in sin into spiritual life in Christ by developing in grace, instead of trying to make themselves grow by their own foetal works under law. Knowing their double-mindedness, he said, "I am perplexed about you," and he wished he could be present with them and speak in different fashion from what he had when he first gave them the good news of justification in grace without any "and" after it, or any mixture of their own works with it. But, being absent, he did the next best thing, and wrote this epistle to them.

Consider his shrewdness as a teacher. In verse 21 he says, in effect, "Since you want to be under law, let's make believe you are, and see how you come out." He proceeds by the allegory to show them that they will come out "at the small end of the horn," as we say, by losing their heritage as sons, comparable to Isaac, and be cast out of the inheritance, comparable to Ishmael. This is the main point in the allegory. We shall notice it in its place.

In this shrewdness he imitated the Great Teacher, who assumed with the Pharisees that they, the ninety-nine sheep, were where the song puts them, "safely in the shelter of the fold." The author of that hymn (mis-)interprets the parable to teach that it applies to the church, though the Teacher "left the ninety-nine in the *wilderness*," and went to seek the only sheep in His audience that wanted to be saved. The others, thinking themselves safe in the fold, drove the Shepherd away and killed Him, so they could stay where they were. And human beings call animals "dumb!"

The Father showed His wisdom, too, in giving Israel the king they wanted, to teach them how people come out when they love folly. It was probably the only way they could (I was going to say "would") learn. There is nothing like husks to teach a runaway boy the way back to the Father, as the companion parable showed.

So Paul took the Galatians to the law they yearned for, by citing the law in Genesis 21 and showing them things in it they had never seen. Probably none of us could have seen it if it were not shown to us. And we think we know so much!

People who want to put us under the fourth commandment say that "under the law" in Romans 6:14, "you are not under the law, but under grace," does not mean under the law, but under the *condemnation* and *penalty* of it by disobeying it. They might "get away with it" there, but what about here? Who would "desire to be under the law" in that sense, and be stoned to death? Worse yet, who would want to put our Saviour "under the law" (verse 4) in that sense? How then could we have any Saviour at all? If we want to add to the inspired words, let us add the true idea, under (the *jurisdiction* of) the law. That is the evident sense, for immediately after Paul speaks of these saints being under the law, he asks why they do not "hear the law," for the law does have a right to claim heed to what it says from those under its jurisdiction. And here, in Genesis 21, there was no ten-commandment law, but our God was plotting out an allegory of what was to be.

In studying figures it is the wisest course first of all to see if there is an inspired interpretation, for if we trust our own ability we can easily wander astray, since parables and other figures are difficult to understand. One half of the reason why the Son spoke the parables in Matthew 13, was to hide the secrets from Israel at large, the other half of the reason being to reveal them to the disciples to whom they belonged, by interpreting them.

We do have Paul's inspired interpretation of this allegory. It begins by saying that these two women (Hagar and Sarah) are two covenants, then he continues by explain-

ing eight of the ten items of the allegory. We will list them in parallel columns, placing the items of the allegory in the left-hand column and the items of the interpretation at the right, with item corresponding to item, with asterisks before the items Paul interprets, to show that we are not using guess-work on them. These eight interpreted items will thus furnish a safe guide to interpret the other two, Abraham representing God, and the promises about Ishmael made to Hagar in the wilderness of Beer-sheba representing the future destiny of Israel. We have divine authority for placing Abraham in the allegory to represent God (Rom.4:17), but the last item is but the author's suggestion and may be taken for whatever, if anything, it is worth.

If we were together in class, I would ask you to say which of the two women we should list first in the allegory, but since we cannot do that in print (since you can "peek" at the list even now, before you read down to it), I will just assert that even though we might reason from the pre-eminence of Sarah in the family and the fact that she was Abraham's wife before Hagar became physically united to him at Sarah's suggestion, and say that Sarah should therefore be listed first, it is not safe to reason in the face of revelation that calls merely for faith; for Paul says "The first, which is Hagar." So she comes in the list immediately after Abraham.

The reason for this is because God (represented by Abraham) had a relation to Israel under the law covenant (represented by Hagar) before He will yet have a relation to her (whom He wedded, nationally, at Sinai) when He brings her to Himself under another covenant represented by Sarah. And as Abraham was married to Sarah (a barren wife) before he had any children by her, so God made this other covenant with Israel (Gen.12) before it produced results of justification of the nation, so they first had to try the experiment, of works under the later Hagar-

covenant, to learn the folly of trying to help God out of a supposed difficulty as Sarah did. Christendom is still trying to help Him out of "the problem of evil" by needless apologies and apologetics instead of accepting in simple faith what He says about His relation to evil.

The interpretation of the allegory not only places Hagar as representing the law covenant, but also as being (figuratively) "Jerusalem that now (in Paul's time) is," for Jerusalem was the city of authority in apostolic times. It was the leaders there who remonstrated to Peter about preaching to Cornelius. And when certain men "from Judea" followed Paul to Antioch and told the believers from among the nations that they must be circumcised and keep the law or they could not be saved (Acts 15:1,24), it was at Jerusalem that the controversy was decided.

That controversy, as here in this Galatian epistle (5:2,6), centered on circumcision, merely because that was the badge of subjection to the law, the slave-brand, so to speak. In our time it is sabbath-keeping.

The only way Israel and mankind in general can learn the futility of self-salvation by works is by failure in the attempt by experience, so Hagar must have her fling at helping God before Abraham and Sarah produced Isaac in faith. And even then God had to wait till Abraham was ninety-nine years old and therefore as helpless as barren Sarah, before He quickened the bodies of them both to be parents, bringing Isaac into the world out of their deadness of parenthood as a representation of bringing the Greater Isaac from the dead because of our justifying (Rom.4:25). So only when we become "without strength" (Rom.5:6) can the blood be applied. A person full of good blood of his own spurns transfusion.

Since Hagar represented old Jerusalem as well as the old covenant, we write "Jerusalem" in parenthesis after her name. We do the same with Sarah, since she also rep-

resented another covenant and Jerusalem, the one "which is above." If you do not "peek" at the itemized list below before we get to it, you might be thinking that the Jerusalem that is "above" is the new Jerusalem that is to "come down from God out of heaven." Take a hint by the fact that, as the two women are two Jerusalems corresponding to two covenants, the one Jerusalem is above the other in the same sense that Sarah (illustrating the superior covenant) was above Hagar, though she may not have been taller or lived upstairs. A tent has no upstairs.

Was Ishmael a slave or a son? He was both. He was Abraham's son by begettal, but socially he was a slave too. The allegory contemplates him only as a slave. In the days of the old south if a plantation owner had children by a "mammy," the law made them slaves. Ishmael was a slave because *his mother* was. When the prodigal returned home in humiliation he renounced his sonship and begged to be only a hired man.

Abraham grieved when he had to choose between Sarah and Hagar in the case of Ishmael. God settled the dilemma by telling the good old patriarchal husband to obey his wife, the only such case in all the Book. And it was so because God was writing out the plot of this allegory in the matter.

God is Your Father: who is your mother? Don't feel too humiliated if you can't answer. I couldn't till last summer, and worse yet, I thought all the time another covenant was my mother. If you don't know your mother it's about time for the introduction. We'll get to it presently.

This whole controversy was a conflict between tradition and new truth. Tradition may be true, since it means only what is handed down. In this case it was the error of self-righteousness. Peter's faith was strained to the breaking-point when his heart was enlarged enough to love Cornelius, the foreigner, and it took a direct divine revelation to make the enlargement. It was the same when

the eleven took him to task about it. What would we probably have done if a new teacher should come among us and say "I know your Scriptures say so-and-so, but I say unto you . . ."? Even His miracles did not convince those too blind to see their significance and too stubborn to admit His sinlessness.

The slavery implied in the allegory is sin. Our Saviour spoke of it in this sense (John 8:31-36). So did Paul, extensively (Rom.6 to 8). The aptness of the figure consists in the fact that slavery generally exists only by *force*, especially by the authority of law, and that the motive that holds a slave in subjection is *fear*, as shown by the fact that slaves ran away (1 Sam.25:10) when hope of escape was stronger than fear of the increased hardship in punishment if they were caught. The fear that held slaves in law-slavery in this allegory was, in its extreme form, that of being stoned to death.

Paul's description of the inward struggle of those who would do good but found no way to perform it (Rom.7) is very striking in its slave-concept, for the person who would do otherwise, if he could, is a slave to a force greater than his will. He calls that power "sin that dwells in me." Wherever the law had jurisdiction, there was sin perforce, because nobody ever did or can fulfill the divine law but One. So He said, "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keeps the law?" Paul also proved both Jew and Gentile to be under sin (Rom.3:9). There are people yet who think they can fulfill the law perfectly and that they are doing it. When they say that, they prove their boast false, for boasting itself is prohibited by the Scriptures, and that they are sinning when they so speak by even the law itself, for instance, Deuteronomy 8:7-17. To say "We do not boast" is to boast. We do not boast. Therefore we do not say, "We do not boast."

As long as a person does not express what may be a truth

by voicing it in the minor premise, it remains true and all is well, but the instant he opens his mouth and speaks that truth it becomes an untruth and the syllogism wrecks itself.

So all those under law are inevitably slaves, as certainly as the fact that Sarah's effort to help God produce the promised son could never result otherwise than that the child to be born must be a slave from his first breath. This shows how impossible it is to become just and righteous by self-effort, whether that effort be to keep the divine law or personal resolutions or having "confidence in yourself" or any other of the fond prescriptions offered by philosophers, theologians, reformers or any other fleshly-wise hopers.

Another fact about slavery should be clearly understood. That is that the slave had no heritage whatever in the master's property (Gal.4:3-7). All that Hagar carried away when she and Ishmael left was enough bread and water to last a few hours.

The converse fact is that sons are heirs, as this sixth verse declares, also Romans 8:17 and Galalatians 3:26-29. Paul shrewdly sets these two facts before the Galatians, as much as to say "Now you see how you come out by making believe we are under the law."

At the council in Jerusalem, called to consider the controversy involved in this allegory, Peter asked the believers from among the Pharisees why they wanted to fasten a yoke on the necks of the new disciples that neither present Israel nor their fathers were able to bear, with an appeal to the believers to stand fast in their freedom as sons and refuse to become burdened with the "yoke of slavery." To say nothing of the impossible burden of trying to fulfill perfectly a perfect law, even such ceremonial requirements as sabbath-keeping do place a heavy burden on those who work among others who do not observe the seventh day. When the neighbors want to join together in some work

in which all must share, the sabbath-keepers cannot conscientiously help.

Now as to discovering our mother: She is revealed to us in verses 26 and 31, and identified as the covenant represented by Sarah, for she was the "free woman" cited in verse 31, called "Jerusalem" in verse 26. For as Hagar corresponded to Jerusalem of Paul's time, so Sarah must correspond to some contrasted Jerusalem. So she represented the "Jerusalem (covenant) which is above." Therefore, in whatever sense Sarah was "above," Hagar would be lower in the sense in which our mother-covenant is above the law. It is easy to see how Sarah was above Hagar—in authority. Thus our mother-covenant has greater authority and power than law. Law condemns (2 Cor.3:9). Anyone can condemn, but to transform into uprightness is much greater. So our mother must do the opposite, that is, justify. That fits the whole allegory, for the subject of it is justification. Then we must find the covenant that justifies us and put it in its place in the right-hand column opposite "Sarah (Jerusalem above)" which we put in the left-hand column.

Our mother is not difficult to find. She is right close in the context of the allegory (Gal.3:8), where justification by faith is said to be the blessing contained in the covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12. It is called a "covenant" in Acts 3:25,26, where Peter's inspired interpretation of the blessing, instead of being called justification, is expressed in corresponding words of being turned away from iniquities. So we have now found our mother. This blessing of justification is the "promise referred to in verse 28, where our mother is implied by saying we are "children." Since we are children of promise and children of a covenant which promised the blessing of justification, this promise of justification is evidently the "promise" referred to in this 28th verse. We find it previously in 3:29, where we

are told that if we are Abraham's seed because we are in Christ who is Abraham's Seed, we are heirs of the promise, because children are heirs.

Literally, justification cannot be called a covenant, because a covenant is an agreement between parties by which each assures to the other the performance of something called a "consideration." In justification nothing is done, or can be done by the one justified to bring about his justification. It is "not of works," as would be implied by calling it a covenant. So it is a covenant only in the figurative sense that such events as the rainbow was, that is, a one-sided covenant, a promise in which God binds Himself to its fulfillment in the strongest way possible, to assure those to whom He makes promises that He will perform them.

In this allegory of the justifying covenant Paul quotes Isaiah 54 as pertaining to it. For just as Sarah (representing the justifying covenant) was "desolate" (barren) of children (Israel as a nation) a long time while married to Abraham, even though Hagar had a son meanwhile, so this justifying covenant, represented by Sarah, was first barren; it had no national Israel justified till long after the nation was under law, represented by Hagar.

Now you see why we could not say the "Jerusalem which is above" is the New Jerusalem that is necessarily "above" since it comes down from God out of heaven, for she is "the Lambkin's wife" and therefore not our mother. It does not do to mix figures. What may be true in one may be false in another. Our Lord is both a "Lamb" and a "Lion" under different conditions. And again, "seed" in the parable of sowing is the Word, while in the next parable, the tares, it is "the children of the kingdom."

Likewise, we can see why it would not have done to say the "new covenant" is our mother, which would seem very plausible, for the new covenant is to be nationally with Israel, not the Body, though we get (individually) what Israel will

get nationally, that is, pardon (Eph.1:7; Col.1:14), as we are told that Paul ministered "a" new covenant of pardon, to us (2 Cor.3:6), though not "the" New Covenant.

Since we are children of a covenant made 430 Years before the law covenant, we are not related to Hagar, since she was not related to Sarah. Let us disown her for all time.

Let it be emphasized with all possible force that we receive real righteousness through justification, not a sham of simply calling us righteous by divine declaration without any expectation that the reckoned is ever to become real. Our righteousness is a perfect one, and is infinitely superior to self-righteousness. In view of this we are exhorted to live soberly, righteously and devoutly "in this present era," not wait for it "beyond the veil." Paul tells Titus to instruct believers to be careful to maintain good works. lt is in the "mortal body" that sin is not to reign (Rom.6:12).

Abraham	God
Hagar (Jerusalem "then")	*Covenant at Sinai
Ishmael	*"Her (Jerusalem's) children" (Israel)
Mocking	*Persecution
Cast out	*Rejected from grace
Good future promised Ishmael	Israel yet to be saved
Sarah (Jerusalem"above")	*Justifying covenant
Isaac	*"We"
Free son	*We not slaves under law
Isaac heir of Abraham	*We heirs of God

ISAAC OFFERED IN FIGURE

Isaac was raised from death figuratively (Heb.11:19), and there is evidently a representation in this figure in the twenty-second chapter of Genesis showing our Lord's sacrificial death and glorious resurrection (Heb.11:17-19).

The Greek word for "figure" in the AV here is *parabolê,* which is elsewhere translated "parable" as here in the CV. This shows, that parables generically include actions performed, as well as words spoken, to illustrate truth by a

casting beside, which is the literal meaning of *parabolê*; for the offering of Isaac consisted mostly of dramatic action, with very little being said during the performance.

The same significance of *parabolê* may be seen in Hebrews 9:9, where the whole dramatic symbolism of the tabernacle-service is designated a *parabolê* in the Greek (CV "parable"), for there also all was action, without any words to form the parable.

We write out this dramatic parabolism about Isaac in the double-column form, as follows:

Abraham	God
Isaac	God's Son
"Offer him"	(*)The crucifixion of Christ
3 days'journey	Christ's 3 days in the tomb
2 slaves	3 disciples
"Abide here"	"Watch and pray"
"The lad and I"	Jesus praying to the Father
"Worship"	His threefold prayer in Gethsemane
"Will come again to you"	He found them asleep
Wood laid on Isaac	He carrying His cross
Fire	Crucifixion sufferings
"Lay not thy hand"	*Resurrection of Christ

As before, the asterisk signifies the inspired interpretation of the figure, and the remainder is merely the author's.

The first asterisk is put in parenthesis because the death of Isaac representing our Lord's crucifixion is not so interpreted by inspiration, but only implied by Isaac's resurrection "in a parable" since there could be no literal resurrection without a previous death.

If the other listed items are correct, as manifestly evident and necessary accompaniments of the figure, they form a remarkable pre-picture of Gethsemane and Golgotha, and this record in Genesis would be part of "all the Scriptures" in which the risen Christ showed His sufferings to the amazed disciples on the way to Emmaus.

There are two aberrations in the light of truth coming through this figure: two slaves to represent three disciples, and Isaac carrying the wood during the three days when he was figuratively dead, for our Saviour carried His cross before His three days in death. However, in a dim foreshadowing such as this, such aberrations are no more serious than imperfect refraction in physical phenomena and it is remarkable that the events in Gethsemane should have been foreshown in seemingly trivial incidents two thousand years before they occurred.

Then, too, there was a three-day period at the end of our Saviour's life, just before His crucifixion (Luke 13:32-34) and at the close of it He did, like Isaac, carry the wood for His sacrifice. Nevertheless, Isaac carried the wood during the three days while he was figuratively dead, as shown by the fact that his figurative resurrection occurred when the messenger said to Abraham, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad," which would require Isaac's figurative death at the first verse, when the words "offer him" were spoken.

How heavy must have been the heart of that father in those three days, not only with paternal grief, but with the worse assault on his faith; for how could the blessing of the world through the promised Seed come if the line of descent should end with Isaac dead in sacrifice? When a saint is brought face to face with a seeming failure of God's Word, all seems to fall away from beneath the feet.

The father of the faithful saw two alternatives as ways out of his trial, both of which would resolve his doubt: God would either supply an animal for sacrifice (Gen.22:8,13), or else immediately restore Isaac to life (Heb.11:19). Both alternatives came true, though not both in fact, for only the first was true in fact and the second in figure.

The prophecies which reveal the restoration of Israel to the land and blessing under the rule of Messiah deal with many events, covering a considerable period of time

in great detail. As the coming of Christ consisted of many events, as His birth, His flight to Egypt, His life in Nazareth, His ministry, His "triumphal" entry, His suffering, crucifixion, death and resurrection, all foretold beforehand, so the various phases of the nation's return to Jehovah is not one single event, the coming of Christ, but a long series, which must be kept distinct, if we wish to avoid being deceived by those that are now taking place.

Through this resurrection of the Coming One figured in the person of his son, Abraham saw that Coming One by faith (John 8:56). He received the benefit of the Saviour's death and resurrection by viewing it prospectively, as we do retrospectively. The benefit was worth all the painful price it cost. Praise God, it always is. It was so with Job, with the shame of the Samaritan woman at the well, with the man born blind, and with Lazarus and his distressed sisters. It will be so with the church and with the whole groaning creation. As Abraham descended from mount Moriah, how much stronger must he have been, not only in faith, but also in spiritual understanding through experience!

When, in telling the patriarch to slay his son, God reminded Abraham of his love for Isaac, He was not unfeelingly harrowing the old saint's emotions and making the trial as difficult as possible. He was but building this figure to show how "God so loved the world."

One great truth emerges grandly into view in all such Scriptures as this one: Christ is so fully in them that "His name is called The Word of God." The Father was hanging His Son's portrait on all the walls along the passage-ways of time, not only that the elect might not miss "the Way," but that the mouths of the non-elect may not open in a syllable of boasting complaint at the great white throne, but become utterly subject to God's wonderful and sovereign grace.

How marvelous are His ways!

J. W. Williams

Unsearchable Riches

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FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

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Contents:

49 Editorial
51 The Son of Abraham
61 Jesus Christ's Faith
64 "Through the Faith of Christ"
73 Not Ashamed
83 The Just One
90 The Faith of Jesus Christ
94 Those Who Believe

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Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

By analyzing the contextual usages of each Hebrew and Aramaic word, a single English word was first selected as its most suitable equivalent. Then, to achieve readability, some words were given a limited number of idiomatic variants that are harmonious with the sense derived from the investigations. English words used as the common translation of particular Hebrew words, and even idiomatic variants, were not used for other Hebrew words.

Boldface type was used for words (or even parts of words) having exact counterparts in the Hebrew. And lightface type was used for words (or parts of words) which were added to clarify the meaning of the respective word in the Hebrew text. In addition small symbols and abbreviations were inserted between or attached to words to represent omitted terms, to indicate grammatical features and the sources of emendations to the Hebrew text.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, SECOND QUARTER 2016
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

EDITORIAL

ONE HUNDRED years ago, in the August 1916 issue of *Unsearchable Riches,* A. E. Knoch commented on Romans 1:17 as follows:

"The faith of Christ is brought before us in the otherwise enigmatical statement '*from* faith *to* faith' (Rom.1:17). Literally this is '*out of* faith *into* faith.' There are two faiths in view. The latter is our faith; the former is Christ's. Justification is founded on His faith: it is conferred on our faith. Abraham was constituted righteous for his faith: Christ makes all men righteous because of His faith. Hence we find the statement (which is so often referred to us who believe) 'the Just One shall live by His faith.' This refers to One only, not many or all, however aptly it may be 'applied' to them. He kept alive by His faith, and because of its surpassing perfection, it is the foundation of all other faith"

The article in which this quotation is taken is reprinted in the present issue, starting on page 51. Entitled, "The Son of Abraham," it recounts the glories of Christ as Abraham's Seed, Whose faith is the source of all blessings. The remarks quoted above appear on page 59.

Later (in 1938), Brother Knoch repeated this understanding of Romans 1:17 in an article entitled "Jesus Christ's Faith," although he was less definite on the application of Habakkuk 2:4 to Christ. This study is also reprinted here, but in condensed form, starting on page 61.

Through the years we have given increasing attention to the important subject of the faith of Jesus Christ. Two excellent articles on this theme are reprinted in this issue. The

first, from his series on Galatians is James Coram's study entitled "Through the Faith of Christ," starting on page 64. Here Christ's faith is convincingly assigned its right place over and against human works of law. Then starting on page 90, with the similar title, "The Faith of Jesus Christ," Phil Scranton helps us see something of the personal struggle and suffering which Christ's faith involved.

This latter contribution and William Mealand's meditation which concludes our magazine reflect more of what is involved in the words "for [our] faith" in Romans 1:17 than the other articles. Indeed, what a great blessing and privilege we have in faith.

But turning back to Brother Knoch's early comments on Romans 1:17 and the critical place of the faith of Jesus Christ, I wish to acknowledge my own indebtedness to him, in preparing my studies in this issue.[1] There may well be a double reference in the citation from Habakkuk 2:4, but surely the first and primary application is to Christ. Our faith is worth nothing apart from His faith. Our faith is in His faith. Hence it seems correct to me that the CV print the words "Just (One)" with initial capital letters in order to convey the dominant sense of the passage. The "first application" of the citation from Habakkuk in Romans 1:17 clearly should be to Christ. And its application to the individual believer who is just in the sense that justification has been reckoned to him or her upon believing, not on the basis of works of law, should be indicated in a footnote.

In the matter of faith, Christ is first (*cp* Col.1:19).

D.H.H.

1. I also wish to acknowledge the contribution of several current theologians who have taken decidedly untraditional positions similar to our own regarding Christ's faith. Among these are Richard B. Hays, in his book, The Faith of Jesus Christ (second edition, Eerdmans, 2002), and Douglas A. Campbell, in his large volume entitled, The Deliverance of God (Eerdmans, 2009).

THE SON OF ABRAHAM

THE TITLE Son of Abraham is burdened with blessing for all the nations of the earth, as well as the title to the land of promise. Only once is our Lord distinguished by this dignity. The opening words of Matthew describe Him as the Son of David and the Son of Abraham. In the genealogy which follows David is called "the king." His royal prerogatives are the ruling factor in Matthew's account, yet His secondary title, Son of Abraham is also acknowledged when the centurion's servant (8:5-13) and the daughter of the woman of Canaan (15:22-28) remind us that, through Abraham, all the nations of the earth are to be blessed. And it is in recognition of this title that the commission goes forth, at the close of Matthew's account, which includes all nations in its scope (28:18-20).

To apprehend the truth conveyed in this blessed title we must retire to a period anterior to the time of David, where the kingdom has its source; we must leave the law to the time of Moses; and, for the most precious part of the truth, we must go back to Abraham even before the institution of the rite of circumcision. The promises were made to Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the law was given (Gal.3:17); and he was accounted just before the sign of circumcision set its seal upon his flesh (Rom.4:10,11). Consequently it is possible, in Christ, to be of Abraham's seed, even though uncircumcised and unsubjected to the law (Gal.3:7,29).

THE STARS, AND THE SOIL GRAINS

Abram was charged to get out of his country, and from

his kindred and from His father's house (Gen.12:1). But, when he left Charan, Lot went with him, contrary to the command (Gen.12:4,5). Faith fails further when he goes down into Egypt to escape the famine (Gen.12:10). At his return trouble begins to brew because he had not left his kindred. Faith asserts itself, and he gives Lot the choice of the land. Thereupon Yahweh assures him that the land is his and his seed's for the eon and that his seed shall be as the "dust of the earth," or, rather, the soil grains of the land.

Lot may choose the richest for himself, but God will see that it is sure to Abraham's seed and thus reward the magnanimity of His friend. This promise is repeated to Jacob (Gen.28:14); and Balaam, seeking to curse Israel, is constrained to bless them with the exclamation, "Who can count the dust [soil-drift] of Jacob" (Num.23:10)? Solomon sets his seal to the fulfillment of this promise when he reminds Yahweh that He had made him king over a people "like the soil of the land in multitude" (2 Chron.1:9 AV).

In all these passages the words "dust of the earth" really refers to the soil of the land of Israel. It is a most apt figure, indeed, for in another and more literal sense the descendants of Jacob *in the land* were that very soil in corporate form. Was not this the thought in the Baptist's mind, when he declared "God is able out of these stones to raise up children to Abraham?" The stones decompose and form soil. The soil is incorporated into the plants which form fodder for cattle. And these, in turn, nourish and sustain the sons of Jacob, who are the seed of Abram. Among those who are included in this class we may count King David, and must not fail to include his greater Son, Who, *as to the flesh,* was David's seed (Rom.1:3), and Abram's too [even as the One Seed, Gal.3:16].

The context and the circumstances which attend this promise seem to limit this figure to that part of Abram's descendants who lived *in the land,* rather than on the whole earth.

Abram's faith, now that he is restored to full communion with God, ascends still higher. When Lot's selfishness costs him all that he has, including himself, Abram rescues him from the confederate kings. He meets Melchizedek, pays him tithes and learns that his God is Owner of the heavens and earth. As a consequence of having so rich a God he refuses to take so much of the spoils as a sandal lacing, lest any one (except God) should say "It is I who made Abram rich" (Gen.14:23). Then it is that Yahweh speaks to him and rewards him with the words "I am your Shield, your *exceeding great* Reward" (Gen.15:1). From this sublime peak of faith it is that God shows him what his recompense will be. "Now Look up toward the heavens and count off the stars, if you can number them . . . . Thus shall become your seed" (Gen.15:5).

Only one who has enjoyed the starlit nights of a country like the land of promise can realize the almost infinite number of stars which light the azure vault above from the torch-like Sirius to the filmy veil of the milky way stretching across the heavens. And only one attuned to the exquisite imagery of oriental speech can respond to the high feelings with which it invests the starry host. Scripture is far from silent on this sublime theme. The stars, we read, are made to rule the night (Psa.136:9). Joseph dreamed that the eleven stars made obeisance to him. And, when we find Israel in her royal glory, she is crowned with twelve stars (Rev.12:1). Is it not clear from this that the star seed are not the ordinary descendants of Abram, such as were figured by the soil, but saints—for the saints shall rule the world (1 Cor.6:2)—not only the saints in Israel's crown who are of the circumcision, who are born *from above* (John 3:3 not "again"), but *all* the saints; all who, like Abram, believe God and are accounted righteous (Rom.4:16-25)? That this star seed is not a figure confined to the saints whose des-

tiny is heaven will be seen when we note how often Israel is thus described (Exodus 32:13; Deut.1:10; 10:22; 28:62; 1 Chron.27:23; Neh.9:23). When Israel is apostate as in the opening chapters of the Apocalypse, Yahweh speaks to them through messengers who are represented as seven stars (Rev.1:16,20, etc). These suffer during the time of trouble, when the "little horn" casts them to the ground and stamps upon them (Dan.8:10). And in the resurrection those who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for the eons of the eons (Dan.12:3).

Outshining all the rest of this starry host is the Son of Abraham, for

A star will position itself from Jacob
And a scepter will arise from Israel. (Num.24:17)

He is the one bright particular Star Who will herald the dawn of the day of Yahweh. He is the Resplendent Morning Star (Rev.22:16) Whose early beams are the harbingers of a glorious day.

And shall we not read the story of the wise men in this light? It is told in the very book which opens with the mention of Abraham's Son. They recognized His star in the east and they knew that the Seed of Abraham, Who had been promised so long ago, was about to come and rule as was His right (Matt.2:1-10).

The promise of the star seed was made before the rite of circumcision had been given. It was further enforced by the ratification of the covenant on the part of Yahweh. As was the custom of the time, Abram prepared the covenant victims and was prepared to pass between the portions in token of his agreement to perform his part. But what part had he to perform? Nothing was to be left to him. All was to be left to God's grace. So he is put to sleep, and thus the symbols of God's presence pass between the victims in token of God's unconditional and irrevocable determination to fulfill the contract quite apart from Abram's efforts altogether (Gen.15:7-21).

THE SAND SEED

That Abram did not fully appreciate this is seen when he lends a hand and genders the unpromised, unrecognized son of the slave girl. Ishmael, however, at Abraham's sore request, is granted a measure of blessing. He is to become a great nation. But in Isaac, not Ishmael, must his seed be called. Isaac is not the fruit of the flesh. He is the first of the star seed. After Abraham had offered him upon the altar and had received him back in symbolic resurrection, the promise of the seed is renewed. His seed was to be as the stars of heaven, with the significant addition: *and as the sand which is upon the seashore.* Is not this a recognition of his purely physical progeny by Ishmael and his other children? All of these were circumcised in their flesh, so that all of the circumcised nations who sprang from Abraham are the fulfillment of this promise. That those who believe are not in view seems clear when we note the contrast between Jacob and Israel.

Jacob, the supplanter, will be multiplied as the sand of the sea (Gen.32:12) but Israel, the man of faith, shall be multiplied as the stars of heaven (Ex.32:13). Significant it is that this phrase is applied to Israel's *enemies.* The confederacy of Jabin, King of Hazor, was "multitudinous as the sand on the sea shore" (Joshua 11:4). The Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel "numerous as the sand on the seashore" (1 Sam.13:5). Hushai counselled Absalom, when he revolted, to gather all Israel "as numerous as the sand by the sea" (2 Sam.17:11) in order to fight King David. The stars would never join his treacherous host but would cleave to Yahweh's anointed. Israel's last enemies, after the thousand years, are described by this figure. The number of Gog and Magog is "as the sand

of the sea" (Rev.20:8). Perhaps this is the key to the position of the serpent as he (not John) stands upon the sands of the sea (Rev.13:1).

Our Lord uses this figure to describe the nation of Israel in His day. They were building on sand. They were depending on the physical descent from Abraham. They boasted, We have Abraham for our father! Yet all the while they were seeking to kill the true Son of Abraham! They depended on the law, which, like the seed of Abraham by Hagar, gendered to bondage. Hagar was a slave girl and Ishmael was born into slavery. So are all the rest of Abraham's seed who are bound under law and do not know the liberty which comes through the Son of Abraham's faith.

That the sands do not suggest the believers today is certain when we consider Isaiah's cry concerning the nation: "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sands of the sea" only "a residue shall be saved" (Rom.9:27).

When we remember that the divine figure for the nations is the sea and Israel the solid soil, the figure of the sea shore sand is seen to represent the physical seed of Abraham. It is an intermediate, half way place, always subject to the surging of the sea, unstable and unfruitful. Thus was Israel as a nation. Only a remnant among them rose to the dignity of believing God and becoming spiritual sons of Abraham. And those of this remnant were, usually, the poor, the despised, the outcast. Perhaps the most degraded of all, in the popular mind, were the tax gatherers, who farmed the taxes for the Romans.

"Let him be to you even as the man of the nations and tribute collector" (Matt.18:17) shows how low this class had fallen in the estimate of the people. The publicans were deemed no better than aliens. Matthew was one of these. Zaccheus was a chief tax collector, and therefore most unpopular. His low stature figures this. His position in the wild fig tree (sycamore) shows his elevation at the

hands of Israel's oppressor, Rome. Israel was the true fig tree. Rome was the unpalatable, wild variety.

But in spite of Zaccheus' physical and social lack, he had the one thing needful. He had faith. This constituted him a true son of Abraham. Indeed he is the only one who is specifically named as such (Luke 19:9). What a contrast between this ostracized traitor of Jericho and the great priest in the temple at Jerusalem! Yet their spiritual distance is still greater, for the priest is a son of Satan, the tribute collector a son of Abraham.

Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16) afford another notable contrast between the seed of Abraham by faith and that of his flesh. Both Lazarus and the rich man are acknowledged by Abraham, yet they are accorded places quite the opposite in death. Taking this death in the figurative sense which we ascribe to the prodigal in this very connection (Luke 15:24) and interpreting the double death dealing with the national demise of Israel, we find that now, during Israel's defection there are two classes. One, represented by the rich man, is the nation at large, suffering in the flame of persecution, which has followed them in all their weary wanderings. But a few—a remnant the apostle calls them—believe God and find refuge in Abraham's bosom. The comfort they enjoy is that of faith. These are the ones to whom the epistle to the Hebrews was written. While the kingdom is deferred, they, like the faithful of old, die in faith, not receiving the promises. They rest in Abraham's bosom.

Returning to the original promise to Abraham that his seed should be as the stars of heaven, we read the important addition: "And he believed on Elohim, and He reckoned it to him for righteousness."

Abraham believed God. That was all he did. So, today, he who believes God may enjoy the same blessing that came to Abraham. But it is well to note that belief was

not a constant trait of Abraham. Peer though he is of all the faithful except One, he failed (as all do) in his strongest point. Not so his greater Son.

Abram fled into Egypt to escape the famine, but Christ refused to make bread out of the stones to satisfy a fast of forty days (Matt.4:3,4). Abraham tempted God in the case of Hagar, but Christ refused to cast Himself down, saying "You shall not be putting on trial the Lord your God" (Matt.4:7). Abraham failed again at Gerar, but His Seed would not worship aught but God, in spite of a much greater temptation. Abraham's faith was great but his Son's faith was far greater.

The translators of our versions did not believe in Christ's faith, judging by the way they manipulated the passages which point it out. His preeminence in this regard is the special burden of the twelfth of Hebrews. There He is called the Inaugurator and Perfecter, or chief leader, of faith. The grand array of the faithful of the past are headed by His example. But none of them were perfect or mature in faith. Not so He. Faith finds in Him its only perfect Specimen.

The aptness of His example is lost in our translations. It is not "for" or in view of the joy set before Him that He endured the cross, but *in place of* the joy lying before Him, that He endures impalement, disparaging shame. The word is ANTI, as when we read that Herod ruled *in the stead* of his father (Matt.2:22). The proclamation of the kingdom was made by Him in all good faith. Had it been accepted the joy of reigning over His people and ruling the whole earth would have been His. *Instead* of this, His faith in God enables Him to endure His rejection and crucifixion. His reward now is that He has sat down at the right hand of God's throne. The joy of earth's throne is His only by faith in God's word.

How helpful this for the Hebrews! They were in much the

same position. When the kingdom was again proclaimed, after His ascension, they expected the joy of reigning with Him. But, just as in His case, the kingdom fails to materialize. Instead of the joy they anticipated, they endured much affliction and persecution. Hence He is given them for an Inaugurator. Let them follow His example. He is the One, too, Who is the Maturer of faith. Only by following Him will their faith come to fruition.

The faith of Christ is brought before us in the otherwise enigmatical statement "*from* faith *to* faith" (Rom.1:17, AV). Literally this is "*out of* faith *into* faith." There are two faiths in view. The latter is our faith; the former is Christ's. Justification is founded on His faith: it is conferred on our faith. Abraham was reckoned righteous by his faith: Christ makes all men righteous because of His faith. Hence we find the citation of Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17, "the Just One by faith shall be living." This refers to One only, not many or all, however aptly it may be "applied" to them. He kept alive by His faith, and because of its surpassing perfection, it is the foundation of all other faith.

Just as it was in Abram's case, faith and righteousness are inseparably linked together. Not only that righteousness will be ascribed to us as it was to Abraham when we, too, believe God, but the faith of Jesus Christ is always put as the basis out of which this blessing flows. For those who have not considered this aspect of Christ's work, we commend the earnest study of the following passages:

Romans	3:22	a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith for all who are believing
Romans	3:26	for Him to be just and the Justifier of the one who is (out) of the faith of Jesus
Galatians	2:16	a man is not justified by (out of) works of law, except alone through the faith of Christ Jesus
	16	that we may be justified by (out of) the faith of Christ

Galatians 3:22 that the promise [righteousness], out of Jesus Christ's faith, may be given to those who are believing

Philippians 3:9 not having my righteousness which is out of law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God for faith.

Note that in each case the blessing is that of being justified and in every instance the faith which He exercised is the ground upon which it is based.

This glory of His as the Inaugurator and Perfecter of Faith has long been eclipsed by unscriptural and gratuitous attempts to gild His glories. But it is our wisdom to abide by what is written, for much which *seems* to dignify His character is but a human caricature when viewed in His light.

Abraham had one son, whom he loved (Gen.22:2). So, too, there is One Who alone can claim, in His Own right, to be called the Son of Abraham. He is the Seed in whom all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. His faith is the foundation upon which God will finally justify all mankind (Rom.5:18). Then His blessedness will be more than the man of whom David sings,

Happy the human to whom Yahweh
is not reckoning depravity (Psa.32:2)

For He will be the Blesser.

A. E. Knoch

GUNTER ZATZSCH

We are sorry to report the loss of a dear friend of many years, Gunter Zatzsch. He was born in Dresden, Germany and emigrated to Canada after the war in the 1950's. He will be greatly missed by his friends at the Concordant bible study in Kitchener, Ontario and by all who knew him. Gunter was 86.

JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

FAITH is generally supposed to be restricted to the saints, and quite out of the question in connection with Christ, notwithstanding the fact that He is hailed as the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith (Heb.12:2). I do not remember ever reading of Jesus Christ's faith until I began to read my Greek text. Then it impressed me very much in my studies of the third of Romans. Nevertheless I was rather diffident in regard to it and said little until I was forced to translate this phrase in the version. Then the question arose, Am I mistaken as to the force of the genitive here? It does not seem possible that it denotes the faith of others in Him.

Nevertheless, a survey of various modern English translations of such passages as Romans 3:22,26; Galatians 2:16,20; Ephesians 3:12 and Philippians 3:9 made it evident that this is the usual understanding. But, as the *in* itself also occurs frequently, as Romans 6:11 "living *in* Christ Jesus," Romans 6:23 "eonian life *in* Christ Jesus," Romans 8:1 "those who are *in* Christ Jesus," Romans 8:2 "life *in* Christ Jesus," and Romans 8:29 "love of God *in* Christ Jesus," it seems unwise to insert it unnecessarily, especially as this is not the dative case to which *in* is confined. That *our* faith is *in* Him is a different thought from that expressed by the possessive case. That this truth concerning Jesus Christ's faith was lost early is seen from the fact that, while the earlier manuscripts still have it in Romans 3:22, Alexandrinus, written about the fifth century, has altered to *in Christ Jesus,* reversing the title as well, in order to correspond to the connective.

OUT OF FAITH, INTO FAITH

In connection with our survey we also looked in various versions at the phrase, rendered "from faith to faith," in the AV of Romans 1:17. It shows how cloudy the matter is. We have *from* faith *to* faith, *by* faith *unto* faith, *depending on* faith and *tending to produce* faith, *by* faith and *for* faith, and *by* faith *in order to* faith. Does not this show clearly that there is something in the background of these translations which makes this simple series of words an enigma to them? It is to be regretted that English will not bear *into* faith, for then the rendering of the CONCORDANT VERSION could at least be literal, and might, in time, be perfectly intelligible. Now the only clear explanation seems to be *out of* [Christ's] faith *for* [our] faith.

If we seek to explain the other renderings it seems to be impossible to get solid ground under our feet, for they almost all differ, yet which is to be preferred? None of them is covered by the quotation "the just by faith shall be living." It is only as we take it of Christ in the first place, the Just One because of His faith (though He did not need to be *justified* from sin by faith), the *source* of the revelation of God's righteousness, and make our faith the *object* (as the grammar of the Greek), that we can understand that, in both cases, a just one is living by faith. Indeed, the word *just* is in the singular here, as it is in Habakkuk 2:4, so that its first application may be to Christ Himself.

THROUGH FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST

The third of Romans, especially the paragraph from verses 21 to 28, is of the highest importance to the understanding of justification. It is *for* (into) all and *on* all who are believing *through* faith of Jesus Christ. Either it is His faith, that is, it belongs to Him (which is the usual sense of the genitive), or it comes from Him, though this would ordinarily demand more definite expression, by means of

a connective, as *from* or *out of.* Examples of the genitive *of* in Romans up to this point are as follows: 1:1 slave *of* Christ Jesus, 1:6 the called *of* Jesus Christ, 1:7 grace . . . and peace *from* [*apo*] Jesus Christ, 1:8 thanking *through* [*dia*] Jesus Christ, 2:16. From these we see that the slaves and called ones who *belonged* to Christ are simply denoted by *of,* but when such things as faith (or peace) come to us *from* or *through* Him, the relation is defined by a connective.

"Jesus" is our Lord's personal name, so it is difficult to understand anything else than the personal faith of the Man of Sorrows when we read of the "faith of Jesus" (Rom.3:26). Hence it is difficult to see why so many translators simply change it to *in.* The American Revisers seem to have recognized that it was not satisfactory, by their margin, at Romans 3:22 and 3:26. The simple sense seems to be that the Man Jesus had faith in God. In Galatians we have an echo of the passages in Romans. Here at Galatians 2:16 and 3:22 the American Standard (Revision), however, has reversed its attitude, and inserted *in* without putting "of" in the margin, where the Authorized Version was correct.

THE BASIS OF JUSTIFICATION

The confusion which exists among translators should convince us that some false notion is back of it, and should open our minds to the fact that our Lord, as a Man, had confidence in God (Matt.27:43), hence is the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, by far the greatest Example of the faith in the annals of mankind. And His faith is the basis of justification just as our faith is the channel through which it is received and enjoyed.

A. E. Knoch

The preceding article is abridged from the original study, published in *Unsearchable Riches* vol.29, pp.375-382.

"THROUGH THE FAITH OF CHRIST"

We, who by nature are Jews, and not sinners of the nations, having perceived that a man is not being justified by works of law, except alone through the faith of Christ Jesus, we also believe in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by the faith of Christ and not by works of law, seeing that by works of law shall no flesh at all be justified. (Gal.2:15,16)

As Paul herein explains to the Galatians, those who are truly enlightened believers in Christ—even if "by nature" they are Jews (and so inherently zealous for the law; *cp* Acts 21:20)—recognize that a man is not being justified by works of law, but through the faith of Christ Jesus.

Those who know the truth, even if they, like Paul, should be Jews from birth, and from their youth fully mindful of all that the law has to say as to the central place of *seeking* justification by works (*cp* Rom.2:13; 10:3), realize that, nonetheless, a man is not *being* justified by works of law—no matter how zealous he may be in his quest for attaining such a goal.

Yet as those who have been enlightened to perceive the evangel, Paul explains that "we" not only become aware of how justification does *not* occur, but of how it *does* occur as well. We perceive, says Paul, that it is through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24), which is to say that it is through the *faith* of Christ Jesus.

Such ones, then, may "also" believe "into Christ Jesus"—thus to restate the case more positively and boldly—that (1) they may be justified by the faith of *Christ*; and (2) *not* by works of law, seeing that, according as it is written, "no

living one at all can be righteous before [God]" (cit. Psa. 143:2; *cp* Rom.3:20).

Of course, this declaration that no living one at all can be righteous before God, is a relative statement made in relation to law. That is, no living one at all can be righteous before God *by works of law.* But, *by the faith of Christ,* we may be justified! *This* is the evangel; and this, Paul would have us know.

That justification is by the faith of Christ, is the answer to the age-old question, ". . . *how can* a mortal be righteous *before El*?" (Job 9:2). It is one thing to be righteous before men, but quite another to be righteous *before God.* It is one thing to be classed as "just" comparatively speaking, in contrast to those who are abjectly defiled; but it is quite another to be just *before God,* and thus to be declared righteous by God Himself.

In this respect, the words of Job's friend, Eliphaz the Temanite, are true enough: "What is a mortal that he should be cleared, or that one born of a woman should be *justified*? If even on His holy ones, He puts no reliance, and the heavens are not purged in His eyes, how much less man, who is abhorrent and spoiled, who is drinking iniquity like water" (Job 15:14-16).

Noble men often have sought righteousness before God on a basis of their own deeds; and, since compared to their fellows, at least they have approached more closely to the ideal, it is the custom among men to term such ones "righteous." But even such exceptional personages have fallen far short of the ideal. They too must be included among the "all" who not only have sinned but who have *also* been found wanting of *the glory of God* (Rom.3:23), which alone is the standard of true righteousness.

Though God has indeed graced such commendable ones with an uncommon measure of virtue, still, it is a virtue that is neither comprehensive nor constant. Even the noble,

then, are themselves extensively corrupted; and, even as the rest hopelessly lost apart from a Saviour. They too, on a basis of "works of law," can never be just "before God."

"NOT BY WORKS OF LAW"

The 1976 edition of the Concordant Version, in Galatians 2:16, renders the phrase which in the paragraph above I present as *"but* (through the faith of Christ Jesus)," as "*except alone* (through the faith of Christ Jesus)" (2:16). This was an attempt to clarify the 1930 edition of the CV which read, "except it be through . . ." even as the 1966 CV which was translated, "if it should not be through . . . ."

The problem here is that if the phrase in question, which follows the words "a man is not being justified by works of law," is taken as an exception under the circumstance of which a man is being justified by works of law, the truth is lost and the context itself is contradicted.

An attempt was made to circumvent this by the addition of the lightface "alone." Yet the undiscerning reader, upon noting that "alone" was added by the translator, may declare that he is not obliged to accept any such "additions." Such a one may then conclude—albeit contrary to the entire tenor of the passage—that Paul's thought is that while ordinarily a man is not being justified by works of law, when these, however, are coupled with faith in Christ, a man is being justified by works of law!

Since the Greek is IF-EVER NO (*ean mê*), our translators endeavored to reflect this fact in the English, while still providing a readable translation. Yet their renderings remained obscure, at least to the ordinary reader. We have noted that "but" (as in, "but for the grace of God, there go I") can serve well for this Greek phrase; in fact the Authorized Version renders *ei mê* (IF-NO) thus 53 times. We now propose to do the same for IF-EVER-NO in this passage, with a superior prefix "ex" (for "except") preceding in small type. Thus, in a future edition, the verse would simply read:

". . . a **human is not being justified**[c] [o]**by works of law,** [ex]**but through** the **faith of Christ Jesus."**

Though because of the idiosyncrasies of idiom, the sense of this text may be difficult to convey when rendered more strictly, in principle, the thought here accords with that of 1 Corinthians 12:3, where we read, "No one is able to say, 'Lord is Jesus.' except by holy spirit." That is, "No one is able to say 'Lord is Jesus.' *Except by holy spirit,* (this cannot be done)." Similarly, then, "A man is not being justified by works of law. *Except through the faith of Christ Jesus,* (this cannot be done)."

JUSTIFYING THE IRREVERENT

To be "justified"' is to be declared righteous; and, it is God Himself Who is our Justifier (Rom.8:33). Through the benefits afforded to us through the faith of Christ even now, *God* declares us righteous.

We are justified both in a vindicatory sense, as well as in an anticipatory sense. In the vindicatory sense, through the work of Christ, God is able to "justify" us in the sense of "show sufficient reason why" such sinners even as ourselves not only should exist but should also be saved. It is because it is only through sin, and the deliverance therefrom, that God's love and grace through the blood of Christ may be made known. God has need of irreverent sinners, to glorify His own Name in their salvation (Rom.4:5).

In the anticipatory sense, God justifies us through Christ thus, even now, calling what is not as if it were, because, in that day, the day of Christ's glorious advent we will then actually be *constituted* just. Then, we *will* be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom.8:29). In the day of our vivification, we *will* enjoy immortality and incorruption, even as great power and glory (1 Cor.15:42,43). We are await-

ing a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who *will* transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory (Phil.3:20,21). Surely, then, in an anticipatory sense as well, it should not surprise that, even today, God *already* declares us *righteous.*

Yet this is only so, "through the faith of Christ Jesus" (Gal.2:16). In Christ "we have boldness and access, with confidence, through *His* faith" (Eph.3:12). Accordingly, like Paul, we wish "to be found in Him, not having [our] righteousness, which is of law, but that which is through *the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God for faith"* (Phil.3:9).

Paul intimately associates "the faith of Christ Jesus," with "the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:22,24). He uses both of these phrases in identifying the means through which our justification is effected. It is through Christ's own faith, then, which became His faith*fulness,* that our justification is achieved. Our Lord's trust in God concerning the cross, which led to His faithful obedience unto death, is the sole instrumentality of our justification.

LIVING UNTO GOD

Now if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ, consequently, a dispenser of sin? May it not be coming to that! For if I am building again these things which I demolish, I am commending myself as a transgressor. (Gal.2:17,18)

Though a trivial act in itself, Cephas' refusal to eat with those of the nations (2:12), was fraught with serious consequences. Thus he affirmed that the uncircumcised believers were "common and unclean" (*cp* Acts 10:28; 11:3), and set up again the barrier of law. If we should put ourselves under law, by claiming that this is what Christ would have us do, we imply that, effectually, He is the dispenser of sin.

This is because, if He indeed would now have us take

up the very agency through which Sin revives, gets an incentive, and produces in us all manner of coveting (*cf* Rom.7:8-10), it is impossible to disassociate Him from our failures. Such, through works of law, was the nature of the old covenant under which God displayed man's failure in all its horror. Such is not the nature of the Pauline evangel, which is, so to say, "a *new* covenant" indeed (*cp* 2 Cor.3:6).

If Paul were to once again establish a policy of law-righteousness, which he had previously discarded (*cp* Phil.3:7), in so doing he would be "commending" himself as a transgressor. That is, thus he would be providing himself with the very means by which he would now have the "standing" of a transgressor. Where no law is, there is no transgression (Rom.4:15). Yet under law, sinners become *transgressors.* Paul refused to put himself in any such jeopardy ever again.

Submitting to public pressures (as Cephas did, and as the Galatians were doing) in a way that suggests we think the law has some force in justification is a sin and may give the impression that justification in Christ encourages such sinful hypocrisy. Yet the Galatians were making law-justification (Rom.2:13) an acceptable thing, at least in relation to circumcision, and so were rebuilding what they had demolished. Were they actually "under law" (in relation to Paul's evangel), their taking up with the law would have been a transgression! (There is perhaps some irony here.)

Under grace we have a "right" to do anything: "*All* is allowed me" (1 Cor.8:9; 10:23). But Paul was very jealous of the evangel and was sensitive to the effects our behavior will have on others. The saving grace of God trains us to act in accord with what we believe, that is out of love and with the glory of God always in view.

This can only be done by the saving power of the evangel itself. This is the message of Galatians 5:25, how it is that "*living* in spirit, *in spirit,* we may be observing the elements [of the law] also." The essential meaning of the law

(love for God and then for our fellow humans) is observed by those who are "living in spirit" (which means living in accord with the evangel; *cf* Gal.3:5).

For I, through law, died to law, that I should be living to God. With Christ have I been crucified, yet I am living; no longer I, but living in me is Christ. Now that which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith that is of the Son of God, Who loves me, and gives Himself up for me. (Gal.2:19,20)

"We have endeavored to transcribe this marvelous compendium of the faith as nearly as possible as it is in the Original, for even the order of the words is exquisite. The sentence opens and closes with *Christ,* and a negative *I* occupies its center. It may be shown graphically thus:

'WITH CHRIST
HAVE I BEEN CRUCIFIED,
YET I AM LIVING—
NO LONGER I,
BUT LIVING IN ME IS
CHRIST.'"[1]

FAITH'S LAW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

God has ordained a law for us! It is not a law of works; it is instead, "faith's law; for we are reckoning a man to be justified *by faith* apart from works of law" (Rom.3:28). This law states that: "through Jesus Christ's faith . . . [we are] being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:22,24). It is through this law of faith that we have died to all law concerned with sin and death. Christ died for our sins! Our sins have been died for, "that we should be living to God." Our living to God depends upon our having died to condemnatory law. Hence, as Paul declares, "With Christ

1. A. E.Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.281.

have I been crucified." Yet the wonder of it is that though it is true that in this respect we have "died," it is as a result of this very death, together with Christ, that in our spirits we now are living! So in saying "I" am living, Paul must add that it is "no longer I, but living in me is Christ."

It was not the power of the flesh, which is weakness, which was vitalizing Paul, but the power of Christ's spirit in him. As he said, "that [life] which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith that is *of* the Son of God, Who loves me, and gives Himself up for me" (Gal.2:20b).

I am not repudiating the grace of God. . . . (Gal.2:21a)

To "repudiate" something is to reject its validity, or to refuse to acknowledge it. It is to have "no place" for it, which is the meaning of the elements of the Greek word we translate "repudiate" (*atheteo,* UN-PLACE).

The apostle Paul, decidedly, was not repudiating the grace of God; he was rather exalting it, and giving it its rightful place.

. . . for if righteousness is through law, consequently Christ died gratuitously. (Gal2:21b)

The Galatians, however, in seeking justification through law instead of through the faith of Christ *were* repudiating the grace of God. "For if," as they fondly imagined, "righteousness is through law, consequently Christ died gratuitously" (2:21). A gratuitous act is an uncalled for or unwarranted act such as that of the hatred of the Jews for Jesus, whereby, in hating Him, since He had done nothing but good, they necessarily hated Him gratuitously (John 15:25).

The Galatians' repudiation of the *grace* of God was their main mistake; indeed, it was the essence of their apostasy. Their error did not simply consist, since they were not called to be proselytes of Judaism, in attempting to put themselves under law (Gal.4:21). The believers of the Circumcision, though under law, were in the true grace of

God (*cp* 1 Peter 1:10; 5:10,12), which all who were faithful to that calling freely acknowledged. The presence of law need not entail the repudiation of grace. Under the Circumcision evangel, while those who are chosen (i.e., "the elect") must qualify for entrance into the terrestrial kingdom by the performance of lawful deeds (*cp* Matt.7: 21-23), it is to the *grace* of God alone that they may ascribe the faithfulness of their service (*cp* Rom.1:5,6; Isa.26:12).

Let us note well that the Galatians' chief wrong was just one thing: their *repudiation* of the *grace* of God. They had been *transferred* from the evangel of the *grace* of Christ, to a different "evangel" (Gal.1:6), which, according to truth, was no evangel at all.

Everywhere in Scripture, especially within the Pauline epistles, "grace" is of the nature of a favor, or gracious gift. It is not granted "out of works," or in return for "services rendered" (*cp* Rom.4:4; 11:6). It is the very antithesis of a reward or compensation. We cannot qualify ourselves for it, nor disqualify ourselves from it. It not only knows nothing of "requirements," but precludes that very notion.

Having presented one's understanding of the nature of the evangel, it will hardly suffice merely to use the word "grace," as a summary term thereof, if one's understanding of the nature of the evangel itself, is not of the nature of *grace.* To do so would be as illegitimate as to describe a thorn and yet call it a rose.

If righteousness *were* through law, there would have been "no just cause" for Christ to have died. Then His death would have been both uncalled for and unwarranted. But since His death was *not* a gratuitous event it follows that righteousness is not through law and that the Galatians and all their imitators are *not* correct in seeking it on that basis.

May it be our privilege and portion, not to be imitators of the "foolish Galatians" (3:1), but of the apostle Paul, the apostle of the nations (Rom.11:13). J.R.C.

NOT ASHAMED

PAUL was not ashamed of the evangel even though, from the human standpoint it has all the characteristics of weakness and stupidity (*cf* 1 Cor.1:18-31). It is founded on the painful and shameful crucifixion of the Son of God, and yet it is identified as God's power for salvation to those who are believing it (Rom.1:16). Furthermore it claims that God's righteousness is revealed in it and His love commended when it says that He sends His own Son to die for the sake of irreverent, human beings, while they are still sinners, none of whom will ever be justified in God's sight by works of law (Rom.3:1-23; 5:6-8; 7:13-20; 8:3,32).

Even when the prophet Isaiah speaks of the coming of the One Who is to be exalted he speaks of Him as ruined in appearance, and says (can this be so?) that Yahweh Himself desires to crush Him and causes Him to be wounded (Isa. 52:13,14; 53:10). Elsewhere, the psalmist becomes a type of Jesus Christ, God's Son, being crucified as the lowest of criminals, when he cries out concerning his own troubles: "My El! My El! Why have You forsaken me?" (Psa.22:1; *cp* Matt.27:46). But perhaps most damaging of all to our human pride is the fact that the evangel is, and must be, a message of unqualified grace, of pure favor, all of God, all of grace. "For in grace, through faith [the faith of Christ Jesus], are you saved, and *this is not out of you* it is God's [sacrificial] present" (Eph.2:8; *cp* 3:11,12).

Nevertheless, along with Paul we say, "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal.6:14). And together with

Paul also each of us say, "Not ashamed am I of the evangel." The crucifixion and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, is the most important and consequential event in all the universe since the creation of the heavens and the earth.

God's evangel is His word to us that He has done (not simply made possible) that which is impossible to be done by any other way and yet must be done if our existence is to have any value and meaning.

So it was that Paul was eager to bring this evangel:

ROMANS 1:14-17

14 **To both Greeks and barbarians, to both wise and foolish,** a **debtor am I.** 15 **Thus** [t]this **eager**ness [ac]**of mine to** bring the **evangel**[c] **to you also,** [w]who are **in Rome.** 16 **For not** [l]**ashamed**[c] **am I** of **the evangel, for it is God's power** [io]**for salvation to every**one [w]who is **believing—to** the **Jew first, and to** the **Greek as well.** 17 **For in it God's righteousness is being revealed**[c]**, out of faith** [io]**for faith, accord**ing **as it is** [c]**written**[c]**: Now the Just** One [o]**by faith shall be living**[c]**.**

GREEKS AND BARBARIANS

It is in view of the fact that sin entered into the world through Adam and thus passes through into all mankind, Greeks and barbarians, wise and foolish, not exempting Jews, so that not one is righteous, not even one, that Paul now puts into writing what he has been heralding. There is no difference between Saul, the Pharisee, and the cultured Greek and the crude barbarian when it comes to the experience of missing the mark of righteousness set by God. Yet there is this difference that Saul thought there should be a difference. This was because in relation to the law as he was trained in it he was becoming blameless (Phil.3:6). And because of this foolishness of pride Saul was multiplying his sinfulness so that he was the foremost

of sinners (1 Tim.1:16). Yet he is shown mercy beyond any sinner, and obtains both grace and apostleship: *grace* to hear and accept and come to know God's evangel concerning His Son, and *apostleship* to announce it to fellow sinners, to the Jew first indeed, but most specifically and without shame to the Greek, that is, the non-Jew, as well.

It was because Christ died for sinners, that is, for all mankind, that Christ died for Saul. It is not because Saul was a Hebrew of Hebrews that Christ died for him. It was because he was a sinner like everyone else. Furthermore, it was not because he was zealous for the law that Saul was apprehended by the Lord on the road to Damascus and entrusted with God's evangel concerning His Son. It was because he was a sinner, yet not simply a sinner, but a self-righteous one who was going farther and farther away from the standards of righteousness set in the law. Thus he was a fit pattern for all the other sinners who would come to believe.

So it was that now, enriched by grace unexcelled, first as Paul the believer, and then as the apostle to the nations, he was a debtor to Greeks and barbarians, wise and foolish.

He knew firsthand how powerful and good and desperately needed God's evangel is. Consequently, he knew his indebtedness and felt genuine eagerness to share its spiritual grace to those fellow sinners of every sort who had not heard it and even to those who had heard and received it, but did not comprehend its gratuity. Such is its glory that its grace and power cannot be exhausted (*cf* Rom.5:20).

POWER FOR SALVATION

God's evangel is God's power for salvation to those who are believing it. It is power for salvation because it is a message of death(!), death of the old, and of life out of death. Sin must be condemned and the old humanity must be crucified. The sinner must be done away with, and yet

the person God created must be saved. And the only way this could be done is in the One in Whom all were created (Col.1:16). God's evangel, then, must most intimately concern His Son. If He dies, all die (2 Cor.5:14). And then they can be, and indeed will be vivified in Him (1 Cor.15:22).

The cross is the power of God, and the word of the cross is power to us, in spirit, even now as we are believing (*cp* Rom.8:1-17; 1 Cor.1:18-2:5; Eph.1:13,14).

RIGHTEOUSNESS, FAITH AND LIFE

In Romans 1:4, Paul parenthetically inserts God's evangel concerning His Son with regard to its future results. Christ will reign, as David's Seed, and He will resurrect the dead, indisputably designating Him to be God's Son. But now in Romans 1:17 the apostle points to the bedrock of the evangel, that finished work of Jesus Christ, our Lord, which is the basis and means for the glories to come.

But he does so in the briefest of terms, while still directing our hearts to the great themes of the evangel. Romans 1:17a condenses the evangel as it appears in Romans 3:21-8:39 into ten incisive Greek words, which are then given support in Romans 1:17b by a citation of eight equally incisive Greek words drawn from Habakkuk 2:4.

God's evangel as it is worded in Romans 1:17 joins the theme of *faith* with that of *righteousness,* and it joins both faith and righteousness with the theme of *life.* These are related first to God, then to Christ, and then, in third place, to the believer. The evangel reveals *God's righteousness* as the righteous Justifier [the One righteously making sinners righteous], by means of *the faith of Jesus Christ,* Who is the Just One [or, Righteous One], Who lived in faith's obedience unto the death of the cross, and is now living to God. This was certainly the way He lived when He was in the likeness of sin's flesh, sent by God concerning sin (Rom.8:3). And it was this faith and obedience (UNDERHEARing) to the death of the cross that was the channel to His life, roused from among the dead, which He is living now, living to God Who highly exalts Him with the Name that is above every name (*cf* Rom.3:21,22; 6:10; Phil.2:6-11). Finally, in relation to us, this message is for our faith, for us who are sinners, yet who have been chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world, and who are now believing, apart from sight, so that righteousness may be reckoned to us. Consequently we stand, even now, justified in God's sight and shall be living to Him as Christ is living to Him (Rom.4:5,22-5:11; 6:4-11), and may be blessed even now by the earnest of the spirit which accompanies our believing (2 Cor.1:22; 5:5; Eph.1:13,14).

Romans 1:17 followed by 1:18-3:20 is paralleled in a remarkable way by Romans 3:21,22, followed by 3:23. In both cases Paul brings God's evangel to us, that is, God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. And in both cases he relates what he says to the holy scriptures of old.

In the evangel God's righteousness is being *revealed* (Rom.1:17). God's righteousness is now made *manifest* [apart from law, yet attested by the law and the prophets] (Rom.3:21).

God's righteousness is being revealed *out of faith* (Rom.1:17). God's righteousness is manifest *through Jesus Christ's faith* (Rom.3:22).

God's righteousness is being revealed out of faith, *for faith* [according as it is written: Now the Just One, out of faith shall be living] (Rom.1:17). God's righteousness is manifest through Jesus Christ's faith *for all* (for all will ultimately acclaim in full conviction the Lordship of Jesus Christ), and *on all who are believing* now, apart from sight.

The message of God's righteousness, being revealed out of [Jesus Christ's] faith, for [our] faith, is most welcome because of God's indignation on *all the irreverence and*

unrighteousness of human beings, not one of whom is righteous (Rom.1:17-3:20). The message of God's righteousness, manifest through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, is a most welcome message because *all sin and are wanting of the glory of God* (Rom.3:21-23).

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

God is righteous. And this, which was upheld throughout scripture, is now unveiled, brought out in a way that it cannot be questioned. By the genitive phrase, *righteousness of God,* Paul is not speaking directly of a righteousness *from* God, as so many have thought and still insist. No matter how true it is that righteousness comes from God in His work of justification, the evangel itself makes it evident that God is righteous in this work of justification ("righteous-ification"), which leads finally to all being constituted righteous. It is God's own righteousness in doing this that is explicitly in view here. God's evangel is a message concerning *God's Son,* and it is a message of *God's power* for salvation, and in it *God's* own *righteousness* is revealed and made manifest (Rom.3:21) and placed on display (Rom.3:25,26).

Consequently, before the apostle expounds the evangel as it relates to our justification, he draws our attention to God's attribute of pure and absolute righteousness as it is brought to light in the evangel. What the welcome message of God's power for salvation tells us about God's righteousness is basic to our lives and ongoing appreciation of this evangel, of which Paul was not ashamed. The insight into God's righteousness which the evangel provides is a guard against much wrong thinking about God and His work of salvation. The idea, often vaguely felt, and sometimes clearly expressed, that salvation is a matter of God's grace but not of His justice (which is His righteousness), is mistaken. Such reasoning opens the way for the widespread error

of a gospel of grace mixed with human works. God's grace harmonizes fully with His righteousness, and in no way can this be compromised by requirements of human contributions. In fact, because of the nature of His righteousness God's grace could not be exercised apart from a sure and righteous foundation, and anything of ourselves can only corrupt that foundation, which is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If this does not, in itself, provide an actual, righteous basis for salvation, then it accomplishes no more than the sacrifices of sheep and goats. Christ is the Antitype of the propitiatory shelter (Rom.3:25) and of the sin offering (2 Cor.5:21) and of the approach present (Eph.2:8; *cf* 5:2). The types could only be a shadow of the operation of God which really brings an end to sin and offense, enmity and infirmity and death. God's righteousness in dealing fully and finally with sin is now revealed.

OUT OF FAITH

The phrase, "out of faith" (Greek: *ek pisteōs*) occurs twelve times in Romans (Rom.1:17,17; 3:26,30; 4:16,16; 5:1; 9:30,30; 10:6; 14:23,23), and eight times in Galatians (Gal.2:16; 3:7,8,9,11,12,22; 5:5), and nowhere else in Paul's writings. It parallels the phrase "through faith" (*dia pisteōs*) which is used in Romans 3:22 in reference to Jesus Christ's faith. Both phrases appear in Galatians 2:16 in reference to His faith.

Our faith could never be the source of a revelation of divine righteousness. The righteousness of God is made known by means of Christ's perfect faith in His Father's will and His unparalleled faithfulness in dying for our sake, for the sake of unrighteous enemies and irreverent sinners. What Christ has done in faith's obedience is the source of and means for this revelation of God's supreme righteousness.

"In Christ Jesus is the whole substance of our salvation,

and it is ours who are out of the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26). His faith, which is the original spring of our faith, is that by which He achieved deliverance from the sin which He was made and the death which was its penalty. Faith bore Him through the terrible ordeal of His last day, and faith was a significant element of His sacrifice, a sacrifice voluntarily made in the obedience of faith. He triumphed in faith where all others failed in unbelief . . . . Thus the manifestation of divine righteousness was made possible by the *faith of Christ,* and our faith in God is now rooted and grounded in His faith, a faith brought to its highest and fullest expression at the cross . . . . God's righteousness is being revealed out of Christ's faith into our faith."[1] Again, our believing that Christ died for our sins is not the cause of justification. Rather it is Christ faithfully dying for our sins that is the source of justification. In believing that Jesus Christ died for our sins we are believing that in His death, *He* is the source of justification. And in believing, the righteousness that Christ has gained is reckoned to us (Rom.4:11).

THE FAITH OF JESUS

If it is so that God is the righteous Justifier, it cannot be that He justifies *on the basis* of our faith. He justifies the human sinner only on one basis, and that is "the faith of Jesus" (Rom.3:26), that is the faith of the One Who came in the likeness of sin's flesh and was made sin for our sakes (Rom.8:3; 2 Cor.5:21). The faith of Jesus is the faith of the One Who is the Saviour, Who emptied Himself of His former glories and humbled Himself to the death of the cross. Human works, including the most commendable human act of faith outside of the faith of Jesus, must be set aside if the subject is the revelation of God's righteousness and

1. Herman H. Rocke: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.67, p.146.

the achievement of the work of justification. Hence when Paul exclaims: "Where, then, is boasting? It is debarred! Through what law? Of works? No! But through faith's law" (Rom.3:27), he can be thinking only of the faith of Jesus as a law that was perfectly carried out. "For we are reckoning a human to be justified by [Jesus Christ's] faith apart from works of law [imposed on, and even heeded as best a human being might do]" (Rom.3:28).

JUSTIFIED BY CHRIST'S FAITH

In Romans 5:1, also, the words "out of faith" (translated: "by faith"), have their primary application to Christ's faith. Just as peace toward God comes *through* our Lord, Jesus Christ, so also justification comes *out of* His faith. Further on, Paul makes it evident what he means by Jesus Christ's faith when he writes that "while we are still sinners, *Christ dies* for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). Hence, he expresses the evangel of justification by the blunt words "being now justified in *His blood*" (Rom.5:9).

And beyond the grace of justification reckoned to the believer, Paul heralds the ultimate application of the righteous results of Christ's death to all mankind. Life's justifying is for all mankind, and so all will be constituted righteous through the righteous effect of the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ (Rom.5:18,19). Yet not only "all mankind," but the "many" sins of all mankind must be brought under "the grace which is of the One Human, Jesus Christ" unto a righteous effect (Rom.5:15,16). What was done on Golgotha's hill was done for all, although its effects have been applied only to believers at present.

All of these passages testify to the truth that the faith and faithfulness of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners is the basis for our justification (our "righteous-ification") and the revelation of God as the righteous Justifier ("Righteous-ifier").

FOR FAITH

The revelation of God's righteousness by means of Jesus Christ's faith is for our faith. This revelation sourced in the faith of Jesus Christ is what we are believing.

The believer's faith must not be excluded from Paul's thought here. But our faith is centered on Christ's faith, and it is the means by which justification is being *reckoned* to us, not the means by which justification is *achieved.*

The fact that I have faith is not indicative of any achievement on my part but of incredible grace on God's part. Indeed, what a marvelous gift is faith apart from the evidence of sight!

The risen Jesus said to Thomas, "*Happy* are those who are not perceiving and believe" (John 20:29).

Paul wrote, "Jews signs are requesting, and Greeks wisdom are seeking, yet we are heralding Christ crucified" (1 Cor.1:22). To us it is *graciously granted* to be believing on Christ (Phil.1:29).

It is not that Thomas did not believe when he perceived the nail prints, nor that visible evidence is never effective in the support of faith. Just as he responded to what he saw by saying, "My Lord and my God!" so all will acclaim, "Jesus Christ is Lord!" as a matter of faith, to the glory of God, in His appointed time. But at present it is graciously granted to us that we walk by faith and not by perception (2 Cor.5:7). We are walking, not according to flesh, but in accord with spirit (Rom.8:4). God parts to us a measure of faith (Rom.12:2) concerning matters unaccompanied by visible evidence or even the support of signs.

What God says concerning the meaning of God's righteousness and Jesus Christ's faith in dying for our sins is altogether good news. It is exactly that which solves all the puzzles of His character and our existence. This is what is for our faith. Of it we are not ashamed.

D.H.H.

THE JUST ONE

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS is being revealed by means of Christ's faith. This revelation comes to us *out of* Christ's great act of faith in His God and Father and obedience to His Word in dying for human beings while they are still sinners. In support of this evangel the apostle Paul cites the words of the prophet Habakkuk here in Romans 1:17. He sees the prophecy of Habakkuk 2:4 as having its principal reference to Christ Jesus in His unwavering faith through the most difficult of situations, climaxing in His death on the cross. More than any other, Christ is the Just One (the Righteous One), and more firmly and enduringly than any other, He believed, throughout His life of humiliation, what God had spoken concerning Him.

Regarding this faith of Christ Jesus, our Lord, God spoke long ago through a chosen prophet, in an era of great distress.

THE HABAKKUK CITATION

The prophet Habakkuk lived in dark days when lawlessness and misery, devastation and violence, contention and quarreling were corrupting the entire society of Judea, centered in Jerusalem (Hab.1:2,3). The law which had been given to Israel so that they would fear the One Elohim and might not sin (Exodus 20:20) was torpid, and judgment was tortuous (Hab.1:4).

In such a time Habakkuk implored to Yahweh, crying, "How long [shall this go on], and You are not saving?"

And Yahweh replied with a message to the people:

5 **See,** [7]**treacherous**[l] ones[~cs]**, and look,**
And be amazed, be stunned,
For [7]**I** [l]**effect**[~c] a **deed in your days**
You would **not** [l]**believe though it were being related.**

What would not be believed even though it was being related as Yahweh's word through the prophet? It was, to begin with, that Yahweh was raising the Chaldeans, "that bitter and hasty nation," who would come from afar, "coming for violence" (Hab.1:6,9). That nation would be centered in one individual who "is making sport of every fortress" and "whose vigor is his eloah" (Hab.1:10,11).

Yet this operation of Yahweh was not to be a work of salvation. It would be violence against violence, treacherous ones against treacherous ones, misery upon misery. It was in view of this multiplication of troubles that the prophet spoke again to Yahweh (with considerable boldness), saying (Hab.1:12,13),

12 Are **You not from aforetime,** O **Yahweh?**
My Eloah, my Holy One, [s]**You**[ph] **shall not die.**
O **Yahweh, You have placed him for judgment,**
And, O **Rock, You have founded him for correction**[–]**.**
13 You are of **cleaner eyes** [f]**than** to **see**[–] **evil,**
And to **look**[–] [>]**at misery You are not** [l]**able.**
Why are You looking at the **treacherous**[l]**,**
Are [l]**silent** [i]**when** the **wicked** person is **swallowing**[–]
up one **more righteous** [f]**than he?**

Habakkuk agreed that the judgment and correction were necessary, but what of salvation from Yahweh, Who is of cleaner eyes than to look at such things and is not able to look at misery indefinitely? Will He not bring this cycle of human violence followed by divine indignation to an end?

Hence Habakkuk stood on guard and ready for further word from Yahweh, "to see what He shall speak to me" (Hab.2:1).

2 [+]**Then Yahweh is answering me and saying,**
Write the **vision, and make** it **plain on** [·]**tablets,**
That he may run who is **reading** [i] **it.**
3 **For** the **vision** is [fr]**yet for** an **appointed** time**;**
And it shall [7]**bud**[~] [>]**at** the **end,**
and it shall not prove a **lie.**

A vision is set before Habakkuk, and he is to record it plainly on tablets "that he may run who is reading it." This may remind us of Isaiah 40:31 concerning those who are expectant in Yahweh, who shall *run* and not be wearied, and walk and not faint. So also we read in Isaiah 52:7, "How comely on the mountains are the feet of the tidings bearer, who is announcing peace, bearing tidings of good, announcing salvation."

Yet the vision does not seem to be made clear in the Masoretic (Hebrew) text which continues to speak *about* it, but offers no message of peace and good and salvation for one who is expectant in Yahweh, no evangel for the tidings bearer to bring with running feet. The third and fourth lines of Habakkuk 2:3 seem to repeat the thought of the first two lines. The vision is for an appointed time when it will bud forth and not prove a lie. But what is the vision? What is coming at its appointed time? What is it that if it be dallying, the faithful Israelite is to tarry for it? What is it that shall come, yea come, and shall not be late?

According to the Greek translation called the Septuagint the third and fourth lines of verse 3 do not speak of "it" (that is, the vision), but of "Him" (that is, the Coming One"). The vision is of the Coming One Who shall come at the appointed time and not be late. That is an evangel of peace and good and salvation, worthy of the running feet of the tidings bearer who is expectant in Yahweh.

If this is so, then Habakkuk 2:4 also speaks of the Coming One, Who is now called the Just One (or, Righteous One).

With this in mind, we present now a tentative revision and expansion of Habakkuk 2:4 as indicated by the Septuagint:

3 **For** the **vision** is [fr]**yet for** an **appointed** time**;**
And it shall [7]**bud~** [›]**at** the **end,**
and it shall not prove a **lie.**
If [7]**He~ be dallying, tarry for** [7]**Him~,**
For [7]the **Coming** One **shall come~,**
[7]**and**[cs] [7]**He~ shall not be late.**
4 [bd]**If He is made presumptuous,**
His soul is not upright in Him;
[7]**If He is shrinking,**
My soul is not delighting in Him.[0]
[+]**Yet** the **Just** One [i]**by His faith, He shall live.**

With this reading we can see that Yahweh gives Habakkuk a vision of the Coming One, Who is the Just One Who will be living by faith. Yet the faith is no easy pathway, for the ordinary person would shrink from it and follow what would presumably be more beneficial. Yet the soul of the Coming One will be upright, and despite the immediate suffering will not be presumptuous and follow His own will. He will live "out of His faith" in accord with the word of God. In every way God will delight in Him.

In full accord with this, and surely with it in mind, Stephen, in reviewing the history of Israel's unfaithfulness, reaches a climax in shouting, "Stiff-necked and uncircumcised in your hearts and ears, you are ever clashing with the holy spirit! As your fathers, you also! Which of the prophets do not your fathers persecute? And they kill those who announce before concerning *the coming of the Just One,* of Whom now you became the traitors and murderers—who got the law for a mandate of messengers and do not maintain it!" (Acts 7:51-53).

There should be little doubt that, whatever words of

the prophets Stephen had in mind, he most certainly had Habakkuk 2:3,4 in view when he spoke of "the coming Just One." From Stephen's view the Just One had already come and lived a life of faith, culminating in being killed by His own people. And we may add that this faith of the One Who came opened the way to His living again in resurrection.

Later, the writer of the book of Hebrews cites lines from the Septuagint version of Habakkuk 2:3 and 2:4 in order to encourage the Hebrew believers in endurance and faith in their own days when what is expected is not what is being observed:

37 **For still how very little,** He ·Who is **coming° will be arriving and not delaying.** 38 **Now My ·Just** One [o]**by faith shall be living°, and If He should ever be shrinking°, My ·soul is not delighting in Him.**

In this preliminary revision of the CV of Hebrews 10:37,38, we see that the reference is to God's Son, as His Just One. Again, the Just One has already come and exercised faith to perfection. But the writer cites the words of the prophet as they were written and understood by Stephen, in order to draw attention to the strength and glory of Christ's faith. The Just One did not shrink, and God did indeed delight in Him (*cf* Matt.3:17; Matt.12:18 [*cp* Isa.42:1]; and Matt. 17:5). And thus He becomes the First and Highest Example of faith for the Hebrew believers. No one could come up to His level, but all will be encouraged in faith by keeping His faith in view.

Consequently, after presenting the vast cloud of witnesses in living lives of faith, the writer returns to Christ as the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith in chapter 12.

This focus on the faith of the Messiah was provided in the vision given to Habakkuk. He was not about to perceive the Coming One as He shall come in indignation and anger, going forth for the salvation of His people (*cf*

Hab.3:12,13) after which the earth will be filled with the knowledge of Yahweh's glory as the waters are covering the sea (Hab.2:14). Instead the Coming One, Who would not be late, would come first as the Just One, Who shall live by faith. Before He comes in the day of God's indignation, with fierce and decisive action against enemies within and without, seen by all, He must come as One Who lives by faith. That is, He Himself would not fulfill the place of Conqueror and King in Habakkuk's day, but He would come at the appointed time, and even then would live under conditions where the glory is not yet realized. And when that time arrives, instead of entering immediately into the promised joy set before Him, it would be His place to live by faith in accord with the words spoken through Isaiah the prophet (Isa.53:7):

7 **Hard pressed is He, and He** is **humbled**[l],
[+]**Yet He is not opening His mouth;**
Like a **flockling to slaughter is He** [l]**fetched,**
And as a **ewe before her shearers**[l] **is mute,**
[+] **He is not opening His mouth.**

In this we see the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, the Just One of Habakkuk 2:4, Whom Yahweh will desire to crush, and in Whose hand Yahweh's desire shall prosper (Isa.53:10). Yet as written in Isaiah 53:11, out of all this toil, God's righteous Servant shall justify many (Isa.53:11):

It is this coming, His coming that rests on faith, that must occur before the coming Habakkuk longed for. It is because of His coming and living in faith that the prophet's prayer in chapter 3 will be fulfilled.

3 **Eloah is coming from Teman,**
And the **Holy** One **from Mount Paran.**
His splendor covers the **heavens,**
And His praise, it fills the earth.

PAUL'S USE OF HABAKKUK 2:4

Ananias of Damascus told Saul, "The God of our fathers fixes upon you beforehand to know His will, *and to be acquainted with the Just One*" (Acts 22:14). Paul, in writing to the Romans, has not forgotten Who that Just One is.

As with Stephen in Acts 7:52 and the writer of Hebrews 10:37,38, so also for Paul in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11, Habakkuk 2:4 speaks as a prophecy of Christ, living in faith's obedience to the death of the cross. It surely is one of the passages expounded by the risen Lord on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:27). It certainly is one of God's promises of His evangel made before through His prophets in the holy scriptures (Rom.1:2).

We do not discard the application of the passage to God's people in times of distress and, as it may be, seasons of violence and lawlessness and contention, and in fact we see how this fits our situation even more emphatically than those of Israel, for our walk is fully by faith and not be perception. Indeed we are believers who are being saved with much daily joy and peace as we retain, in faith, the evangel of Christ's faith through our lives (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1-3).

But what has been missed is that here in Romans 1:17 Paul solidly bases our faith on the message of Christ's faith. Our faith is in His faith, which is "the deliverance in His blood" (Romans 3:24), in His giving of Himself for our sins, that He might extricate us out of the present wicked eon (Gal.1:3).

Therefore, Paul writes regarding his present pathway of living in faith: ". . . that I should be gaining Christ, and may be found in Him, not having my righteousness, which is [out of] law, but that which is *through the faith of Christ*, the righteousness which is [out] of God for [into] faith" (Phil.3:8,9).

D.H.H.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ

THE FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST

"HAVING perceived that a man is not being justified by works of law, except alone through the faith of Christ Jesus, we also believe in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by the faith of Christ" (Gal.2:16). The faith of Jesus Christ, not our own faith, is the basis of our justification. The righteousness of God is manifested for all through Jesus Christ's faith (Rom.3:21,22). This is a basic truth and foundational element of the evangel. It will pay us well to meditate on this wonderful faith of our Lord.

Faith in God is a matter of believing and depending upon His word and having confidence in His character, regardless of circumstances. The faith of Jesus Christ in His God and Father illustrates both of these aspects of faith.

BELIEVING GOD'S WORD

"My Son are You; I, today, have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I shall give the nations as Your allotment, and as Your holding, the limits of the earth" (Psa.2:7b,8).

Here is one of a number of promises made by God the Father to His only-begotten Son. In the weakened condition brought about by forty days and nights of fasting, Christ was offered the opportunity to hurry the fulfillment of God's promise if He would fall down and worship the Adversary (Matt.4:8-10). Similarly, Abraham was offered the opportunity to hurry the fulfillment of God's promise to him when Sarah suggested that he father a child by Hagar. So often we too, in our impatience and weakness of faith, want to "help God" fulfill His promises. But He needs no help—He desires our faith. The Lord's response

to the Adversary reflects both His faith and His reverence for His Father.

Christ still awaits His day of authority, but, like David, waiting on the Lord to remove Saul, He rests in faith, awaiting the Father's time. Facing death, the apparent end of all things for those in the flesh, the Lord Jesus said to Pilate, "Yet now is My kingdom not hence" (John 18:36). He believed He would have that promised kingdom, but that it was yet future, and thus He showed His belief that His Father would raise Him from the dead and eventually seat Him on His throne. This is the same faith that rouses us together with Him (Col.2:12).

HAVING CONFIDENCE IN GOD

Before Paul mentions the faith of Jesus Christ in Romans 3, he paints a vivid and detailed picture of human depravity as he progresses through the first three chapters. He does this because we cannot grasp the faith of Christ until we begin to realize the offensiveness of humanity's sin to God. As children, we probably behaved better for other adults than we did for our own parents. At home we knew where all the invisible boundaries were that could not be crossed. If we behaved poorly at a friend's house, and were confronted by his parents, we would study every expression of our friend in an effort to determine how serious the offense was. Our initial rearing is in the world—not in God's house, and we are incapable of realizing the degree of repulsion that God experiences from our sin. Only by examining Christ and the cross can we come to any realization of the offensiveness of sin to God.

But the Lord Jesus was "in the bosom of the Father," and knew the Father so intimately that He could "unfold" or reveal Him to the world's gaze (John 1:18). Christ knew the Father's love for humanity, but He also knew the unfathomable depth of offense that the Father suf-

fered because of mankind's sinfulness. Only Christ could realize how grievous a thing it was to bear the sin of the world. Only Christ could know how heinous He would be to the Father He loved when He bore our sin. Gethsemane speaks volumes of the close filial relationship between the Son and the Father and of the agony inflicted in the severing of that relationship.

Christ had the utmost confidence in the character of His God and Father. He could view the indignation of God over man's depravity and offensiveness and still not doubt His Father's reconciling love. How different this is from our faith! Some people believe they have already sinned so grievously that God could never dispose of their offense. Some think that God has tied His love before them on a string, so that He can retrieve it if they ever falter in obedience. Many observe God's indignation toward the world and conclude that if God exists at all, He is an angry God, devoid of love. Still others focus on God's reconciling love to the neglect of the inestimable cost of the cross to Him. A balanced faith will view God's love against the background of the offense of the cross.

FAITH AND THE FLESH

The cross of Christ sets before us the death of the flesh. All creation was in Christ and came into being through Him (Col.1:15-17), and in His death all may be viewed as having died: ". . . if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor.5:14). Thus the cross brings the end of all flesh before us. And the cross also marks the death of the flesh in the believer's life.

It is interesting that when the Lord Jesus came in flesh to His people under the law, He did not search for anyone who had fulfilled the law. Of course such a search would have been fruitless, but the point is that instead, He searched for those who had faith. Law is dependent

upon the flesh, and faith and the flesh are continually in opposition to each other. Faith forsakes all confidence in the flesh, even in the best things of the flesh, and clings to God Who is Spirit (Phil.3). Faith is spiritual. The presence of faith verifies that God has bestowed a spiritual ability. Faith is an act of maturity of which the flesh is incapable. In fact, all too often, faith only flourishes as our flesh becomes weaker and weaker with the advance of years. Yet Paul says of the believers who have received a realization of the cross, "those of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together with its passions and lusts" (Gal.5:24). And so the cross may be seen as the end of the flesh and also as the beginning of faith.

When Christ our Lord faced the cross, He faced it empty of all His rightful authority and ability. He faced the end of Himself, unless God would bring Him back. Faith in His God and Father was all and only what He had. Such is what God desires our condition to be. Oh that the flesh were dead and faith flourishing, that we rested immovable upon the word of God and upon His divine, immutable character!

J. Philip Scranton

OUT OF FAITH FOR FAITH

What is meant by the phrase "out of faith for faith?" Apparently little is realized, and less is preached, concerning Jesus Christ's faith! A study of most English translations reveals the fact that very few, if any, apprehended the far-reaching significance of the truth that our Lord Jesus Christ was "the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith" (Heb. 12:2), and due to this oversight, the very Scriptures which shed forth blessed rays of light for the comfort of the saints have been corrupted by the opinions of men, and the saints have suffered the loss.

Christ is the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, and it is "out of His faith" for "our faith" that the righteousness of God with eonian life is reckoned to us.

Adlai Loudy

Devotional

THOSE WHO BELIEVE

"FAITHFUL is the saying and worthy of all welcome . . . that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of those who believe." These words of Paul to Timothy are phrased in a most telling manner. The language is so distinctive and positive, and so all embracive, too.

It comprises a statement worthy, indeed, of all welcome, a counsel of great import. We are enjoined to rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind. What a magnificent salvation is this! What majesty of purpose, both in design and effect! See how the greater includes the less, yet the honor and blessing, too, of the seeming few who now believe. Is not the emphasis beautifully put—*"especially of those who believe!"*

The statement that God is the Saviour of all mankind, so supports and sustains the rare value and virtue of the fact which follows. For in a wonderful fashion, and in His own wise way, God is indeed the Saviour of those who believe. And to what a wondrous extent! To begin with, He effects a marvelous deliverance, a great rescue "out of the jurisdiction of darkness," and the many things which are against us, of the world, and of self. Saved in countless ways, could we but know them all! But how we forget, and maybe lack the discernment to perceive all the occasions of our deliverance!

It will be of rich profit to note the fine sequence of Paul's words in this unfolding of truth. So much is gathered up in clear and concise language, as to make the apostle's statement a vital expression of faith. *We rely on the living God.*

On the Supreme Being, of light, wisdom and love—the God of grace, and Father of glory. Before such an One, self reliance may well be "gone with the wind." Look to Him, then, in daily thankfulness, mindful of small benefits, and it will be found that there are many situations in life where such reliance brings results of great good. Such a course makes for repose, a quietude within which is a source of strength and a blessing to others.

The living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind. What a magnificent statement of grace and truth! How God-like and divine! Well may the Psalmist write, "Our God is the God of salvation." Man, now so marred, will be made anew, for unto God shall all flesh come, and not for judgment alone. That is but a part and process of God's high purpose. And, whatever there may be of correction and adjustment, in future experience, it will all be for an exalted end—even the acclaiming of Christ as Lord, for the glory of God the Father.

Less than this would be insufficient as a perfect conclusion to God's purpose. Suffering is a chastening agent of God, whether for the believer in the life that now is, or for the unbeliever in a life to come. But it is never purposeless. Even the Son "learned obedience from that which He suffered." And it all had to do with the efficacy of His sacrifice, His ransom for all. Indeed, such a sacrifice is measureless, for God is not only the Saviour of all humans, but the Reconciler of all beings in every domain of living intelligences.

The taint of sin of every kind, as it affects us humans, and other beings in the realms of space, will be touched and transmuted by the all powerful Christ of God. And the grace of God, in full display, will know no limiting bounds beyond which it cannot flow. Thus, in the whole stretch of God's creation, will all experience the rare virtue of Christ's transforming power. So will His reign and

rule bring every realm to complete acknowledgment of God. Then, in every sense of the great phrase, and in truest understanding, God will be All in all.

Surely, then, we cannot but see the positiveness of the clear statement that God is the Saviour of all mankind. Yet note how finely the expression is qualified—*"especially of those who believe."* So then, right here and now there is an intense application of this great and precious truth. Those who believe. Believe God, daily, going by His Word, and notably the unfoldings of Paul, His slave. For these assuredly hold teaching unique for all who would be vessels for honor in the service of God. To realize day by day the privilege and value of being in the rare company of His choice, is in itself a wonderful blessing. For we have so many causes for thankfulness, and above all, a right of way, an access by faith into a marvelous grace, and expectancy of the glory of God. A full salvation indeed!

How much of exquisite meaning there lies in the distinctive words so emphasized by Paul. *Especially of those who believe.* They supply a needful note, wisely qualifying the statement as a whole.

"Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome, that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of those who believe" (1 Tim.4:9-11). How excellent the pathway of proven grace! It is of God that we are in this way, and of God, too, that at long last, all mankind will know, indeed, that He is their Saviour.

But how blessed to be of those who believe now, while here below. What an ever mounting volume of thanks and praise we are able to ascribe to His wise and discerning grace! God has made peace in the Son of His love, and through the blood of His cross, effected a limitless salvation, even the reconciliation of all to the Father of glory. What grace to contemplate, and glory to enjoy!

William Mealand

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 107th Year

(1909–2016)

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 The Supremacy of Christ
103 The Firstborn
111 Concerning Jacob and Joseph
115 Understanding and Assurance
127 Enriched in Him
133 The Evangel and our Walk

THIRD QUARTER, 2016

Volume 107 **Number 3**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, THIRD QUARTER 2016
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

EDITORIAL

GOD SPEAKS to us in His Word. But what does He say?

Our concern is centered on this question, and this has directed our efforts in two principal ways: the *translation* of the Sacred Scriptures from their original tongues into our own language, and the publishing of studies and meditations on these texts, especially those of Paul, who is our apostle.

The concordant method of translation which calls for consistency in vocabulary and grammar has proved very helpful, but no translation is perfect. Review is always called for, and revision may be needed from time to time. This is what we are facing now with regard to the "New Testament," and we solicit your prayers.

Regarding one's understanding of these scriptures in translation, it is always beneficial to ask ourselves the four questions concerning a particular text, suggested by Brother Coram on page 136 of this issue: *What* does it say? *Whom* does it concern? *When* does it apply? and, *In what sense* is it true? As a corollary to the first question I would add: *How* does it relate to its context? This is what I tried to keep in mind in preparing my article on Romans 8:1-4, published here on pages 133-144.

Such considerations are highly important if we are to come to an appreciation of Scripture apart from intrusive, preconceived ideas of what we think it ought to say. As Brother Mealand remarks concerning the religious world, "Man is too much in the picture" (*cf* p.128). Even a passage so thoroughly dominated by the glories of Christ as Colossians 1:15-20, is widely qualified and distorted by notions

about an independent power of the human will and limitations to God's achievement in the giving of His Son. On this matter, see especially the selections from Brother Knoch's studies on Colossians and Genesis, accompanying Brother Nungesser's article on Christ as "The Firstborn" (pages 99-114).

Both in the work of translating the Scriptures and in our understanding of what God is saying to us in them, we need to keep our attention on Christ, and how it is that what He is and does is all to the glory of God, the Father.

Accordingly, the CV of Romans 3:21,22 has, from its first edition forward, made it clear that Jesus Christ's faith, not our faith, is the means by which God's righteousness is made manifest. This, and the reference to "the faith of Jesus" in verse 26 supports the understanding that all the references to faith in this section of Romans have Christ's faith in view.

This emphasis on Christ and what God achieves in and through Him is echoed in many places throughout this magazine, as illustrated by the following quotations:

"Creation and reconciliation are the scenes of the supremacy of God's Son" (p.99).

"The blood of Christ was shed due to His love and connectedness to every creature" (p.110).

"[Christ's] sacrifice constitutes a ransom that *corresponds' to the needs of all sinners: a Saviour* Who would die for the sake of *each and every* individual and thus actually *save* each one for whom He died" (p.125).

"None in themselves can find repose of heart and mind. It can but be in God's Beloved . . ." (p.127).

"That nothing at all is condemnation to us is settled by the grace of God in the sending of His Son, and the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for our sakes" (p.138).

D.H.H.

Colossians 1:15-20

THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

CREATION and reconciliation are the scenes of the supremacy of God's Son. The secret of Christ comprises the *creation* of all *in* Him at the commencement, and the *reconciliation* of all *through* Him at the consummation.

IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

God wishes to be known and loved. This is the motive behind creation and reconciliation. Being invisible and unapproachable, He has made an Image of Himself, and a Complement through Whom He can come into contact with His creation. These mediatorial glories belong to His Beloved Son, and make Him preeminent in all things, for they reach from the very beginning to the consummation, and make Him first in both creation and reconciliation.

To be known, God must be seen. He must be brought within the range of creature sensation. As this is impossible with essential Deity, Who is Spirit, it can only be accomplished by means of a Mediator, an Image which portrays in visible form the invisible essence of the Supreme. This was God's "Creative Original," the beginning, or origin, of all creation, for all else was included in Him. This makes Him the "firstborn" of all creation, not only first in time, but first in dignity and honor, and of itself entitles Him, not only to be the Sovereign of the saints in this administration, but to head up all, both in the heavens and on the earth, as He will, in the complement of the eras, before the close of the eons.

Earthly rulers base their right to rule either on hereditary claims, or on their own accomplishments. Our Sov-

ereign has a double right to reign. His is the oldest title in the universe, long antedating Adam, and He has entered the lists against the powers of evil and won the fight on Golgotha. Both diadem and wreath are His. His ancient rights entitle Him to universal sovereignty, and He will yet subject all beneath His feet. And, when all was lost, He brought it back to God, and thus has earned its heartfelt homage. In this universal reign of the Son of God we have the blessed privilege of being among the first to own His sway, and will be among the highest in His world-embracing sovereignty.

CREATION IN THE SON OF HIS LOVE

The wonders of these words are well worthy of our admiring contemplation. Creation and love! How seldom are they brought together! We often hear of God's love in connection with redemption, but creation is usually associated with His power or His wisdom, but seldom with His affection. Few passages of Scripture delve as deeply as this into the origin of things, yet it is in thorough harmony with those basic truths that all is out of God (Rom. 11:36) and God is love (1 John 4:8). The philosopher seeks in vain for the *why* of all things. Why is there a creation at all? Here is the answer. *God's love demands response.* Creation is not an end in itself. Although it displays God's wisdom and power, its underlying purpose goes far deeper, for it was created in love.

Had this simple yet profound truth ever penetrated into the hearts of the teachers of God's people, how revolutionary would have been its effect! True, with their lips they have preached the glad message "God so loved the *world,*" yet they have been even more zealous to confine His love to those who believe, since they could hardly reconcile eternal torment or annihilation with the operations of love. May He broaden our hearts and widen our understanding! All that God does is done in love. Creation as well as redemption and reconciliation have their roots in the divine affection. And for this very reason it is that all are lost and all will be saved, some indeed by faith, during the eons, yet others by sight, through judgment, all through the deliverance wrought by Him in Whom they were originally created.

We may well suppose that creatures of another sphere, who know little of humanity, would not find it easy to understand that all mankind was once in Adam. To us it is so commonplace that we fail to realize the marvel of it. Science has made futile endeavors to prove that man, as well as other creatures, gradually evolves into forms quite different from their progenitors, but without any practical success. They have not succeeded in robbing us of the wonder that in each single seed are almost infinite potentialities. These examples should aid us to understand, or at least to believe where we cannot apprehend, that simple yet sublime statement that all was created in the Son of God's love.

BOTH HEAVENS AND EARTH

The secret of Christ is not confined to earth, and the scope of Colossians is by no means limited to the ecclesia which is His body. We alone were *chosen* in Christ before the disruption, yet even before that, *all* was *created* in the Son, not only that on earth, but in the heavens as well. The august grandeur of this thought will overwhelm all those who have given some attention to the celestial spheres, or even gazed upon the starry host. Here are marvels, and magnitudes, and measures which make the mind faint with solemn awe. Creation on earth, with all its many marvels, sinks into insignificance, when compared with the celestial realms. Had it not been hallowed by His presence and His sacrifice, we would think it mean beside the mighty

majesty of the heavenly hosts. Yet all the creatures in the heavens were created in Him.

ALL THROUGH AND FOR

Since all ruling powers were once in Him, it is not at all strange that all rule should return to Him in the last eon. This is in line with the further truth that all is through Him and for Him. Creation was not an independent act, without any relation to subsequent developments. On the contrary, it was logically the result of God's purpose, which could not be fulfilled until the far future. Creation is, indeed, the prelude to reconciliation. The Son, in Whom it was effected, had far more in view, and it was only a preparation for the tragedy of the eons, and these, in turn, only the means for effecting the glorious consummation—God All in every one of His creatures.

So, not only was all *in* Him, but, at the same time it was also *through* Him and *for* Him. Without it He could not have accomplished His further work. Due to this relation of all parts of creation to Him it is held together by Him. Whatever differences and distances there may be between the various parts, such as between earth and the heavens, in Him they are welded into one, and, as we shall see, will be united under His headship in the last eon.

Such is the preeminence of the Image of God as the Firstborn of creation. From the beginning all rule is His and all owe Him subjection. The authority of darkness is a usurper, and deserves no subjection at our hands. In being transported into the kingdom of the Son of His love we return to the only rightful Suzerain. His realm will one day spread to every corner of the universe and bring every creature to His feet. All shall be subject to Him. We have the privilege of being among the first to yield to His beneficent sway.

A. E. Knoch

THE FIRSTBORN

CHRIST IS the Firstborn of every creature and all are created in Him so that all are related to Him (*cf* Col.1:15,16). If Christendom truly understood this passage, their idea that God is going to lose the vast majority of humanity could not find a place in their theology. Many sermons have been given where the minister concentrated on "all has its cohesion in Him" as if that is the most important part of Colossians 1:15-20. It is important, but Christ being Firstborn of every creature and the ramifications thereof are critical to the whole passage and its conclusion about the reconciliation of all to Him.

God has revealed to the apostle Paul, Christ's connectedness to the creation and to every being within the creation:

". . . out of [God] all is" (1 Cor.8:6), and so God is revealed as the original source of all. And then it is stated: "Jesus Christ, through Whom all is," thus showing us Christ as the channel through Whom all came into being. So we go back, way back before the eons. Seeing through the mists of time we get a glimpse of God's plan as it is revealed to us in its most primitive stage, as it is beginning to unfold. Before all the vast starry hosts of the heavens came into being through His Son, God had a plan which is called "the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Eph.3:11). That plan, conceived in God's heart, is being carried out through His Son.

The august wisdom involved in the planning stages must have been immense. How did God conceive all the parts of the atom along with gravity and energy and everything

in the universe being held together by forces we are just beginning to get an inkling of an understanding? How did God know to create humanity with its ability to replicate via sperm and egg? How did God know stars and planets would be needed in His grand design where no star or planet ever existed before? The vastness of God's creation with all the varied creatures just on our earth is so immense as to boggle the mind. Yet what we see today may be miniscule compared with the creation of the first eon or even the eon prior to the flood of Noah's day. Today we may be seeing only a remnant of the creation which survived the world-wide flood.

Before the creation came into being through God's Son, the existence of humanity was planned along with its disobedience, its ransom from bondage to sin and death and the exaltation of Christ as well as God being All in all. None of these are the outworkings of a causeless, humanistic evolution. Likewise, it was planned that the entire creation would be subjected to vanity with the goal of being freed from its slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God (*cf* Rom.8:20,21).

Many are the voices arising from humanity accusing God of all manner of evils throughout the ages. God deems it wise to educate humanity in the knowledge of good and evil. The education began with the first Edenic pair and still continues. At the consummation of the eons God is justified in all He does. And as Paul prophetically announces to his readers in Philippians 2:11, these things are for the glory of God, the Father. He will be glorified by all. This glorification reveals that at that future point in time, all have been brought into a realization of the truth. All in the celestials, terrestrial and subterranean finally perceive and enter into the actual goal God had for the eons.

But what is the means by which this goal will be realized? Let us now look at this passage concerning the Son

of God's love which shines so brightly among all the constellations of passages in God's Word:

15 **Who is** the **Image of the invisible** ˙**God, Firstborn of every creature,** 16 **for in Him is** ˙**all created,** ˙that **in the heavens and** ˙that **on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities,** ˙**all is** ˚**created**˚ **through Him and** *io*˙**for Him,** 17 **and He´ is before all, and** ˙**all has** its **cohesion in Him.**

18 **And He´ is the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is** ˙**Sovereign, Firstborn** *o*˙**from** among **the dead, that in all He´ may become**˚ *l*˙**first,** 19 *t*˙**for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell,** 20 **and through Him to reconcile** ˙**all to Him (**¯**making peace through the blood of His** ˙**cross), through Him, whether** ˙those **on the earth or** ˙those **in the heavens.** (Col.1:15-20)

This passage is glistening brilliantly with the glory of God's goal for the universe. Christ is the Image of the invisible God. He reveals to us God's wisdom, knowledge, power and love both in creation and by His act of ransoming and reconciliation.

A WONDERFUL CONNECTEDNESS

Christ is revealed as "the Firstborn of every creature, *for* [or, the reason why this is so, is that] in Him is all created." So there is a wonderful connectedness Christ has with every creature within the creation which He brought into existence. As the Firstborn, He has the immense responsibility of taking care of every creature with whom He is connected. He must be every creature's Kinsman Redeemer. We see this theme in the "Old Testament" concerning the firstborn of each family in Israel. The firstborn received the majority of everything the father had in order that, upon the decease of the father, the firstborn would take over the reins of the family.

Abraham had become very old and so Isaac was given everything Abraham had according to Genesis 24:36 and 25:5. This indicated Isaac was the true firstborn. "Abram was very heavy in cattle, in silver, and in gold" (Gen.13:2), and so all these went to Isaac in order to take care of the family. In the case of Jacob and Esau, Esau sold his birthright ("firstbornship") and relinquished the right to receive the majority of blessings from his father. It is interesting to note that the Hebrew word for "firstborn" and "birthright" belong to the same family, as seen by their spelling: *bkur* is used for "firstborn" and *bkure* for "birthright." "Birthright" could be thought of as "firstbornship." In Genesis 27, Jacob became the kinsman redeemer (Gen.27:28,29). Right afterward, in chapter 28, Yahweh revealed Himself to Jacob (Gen.28:13-15). Likewise, following Joseph's reception of the distinctive tunic, Yahweh revealed to Joseph the future when he would reign over his family rather than Reuben his brother, who was the firstborn from Leah. Reuben had his father's concubine Bilhah. Jacob was so upset concerning this that he made a distinctive tunic, not for Reuben but for Joseph, his firstborn from his beloved wife Rachel. Jacob was telling his family that Joseph was now the leader among his brothers even though Reuben was his firstborn (Gen.46:8; 49:3). Joseph would watch out for the kin related to him. This is exactly what he did when they came to him in Egypt. *That is why such a one is called the kinsman redeemer.* If the kin got into trouble, it was his responsibility to redeem them. This is a wonderful picture of the Grand Kinsman Redeemer, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in Whom we have deliverance (Rom.3:24).

It is of great interest that God sent all the plagues upon Egypt to free His people. It was only when God *ransomed* His people with the death of Egypt's firstborn that they were freed from slavery. What a fitting picture of the

death of God's Firstborn, the Firstborn of every creature, to ransom and free the entire creation from the slavery of corruption. Our salvation from sin and death was not without great sacrifice. Christ gave Himself a correspondent ransom for all. But why did He give Himself a ransom for all? *Because* He is the Firstborn of all and that is what His responsibility is: to ransom all connected to Him! Thus we read:

4 **[God]** [l]**wills** that **all** [=]**man**kind **be saved and come into** a **realization of** the **truth.** 5 **For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and** [=]**man**kind, a [h]**Man, Christ Jesus,** 6 Who is [-]**giving Himself** a **correspondent Ransom for**[s] **all . . . .** (1 Tim.2:4-6)

BOAZ, A TYPE OF CHRIST

Now, some may wish to claim that it was possible for Christ the Antitype, to fail as to His own responsibility here even as the original kinsman redeemer in type failed in the case of Ruth. So shameful it was for that kinsman redeemer not to redeem Ruth that the Scriptures refuse to even name him, calling him a "so and so" and "[of the] House of the Pulled-off Sandal." As proof that he had refused to carry out the responsibilities, if Ruth had been present, it would have been her right to receive so and so's sandal because this was so, and she was obliged to spit in his face. His duty was also to raise up offspring in the name of the deceased husband.

Boaz was next in line as a near kin to her, and it was he who redeemed her. It was through the kinsman redeemer, Boaz, that the Kinsman Redeemer of the universe came! From the book of Ruth we read concerning this:

4 [+] **Boaz had** gone **up** to **the gate and** [l]**sat** down **there,** [+ bd]**when the** kinsman **redeemer**[l] was **passing** by of **whom Boaz had spoken.** [+ 7]**Boaz**[0] [l]**said** [7]**to him**[0]**,** Do **turn in,** do

sit down **here, So-and-so. And he** ⌊**turned in and** ⌊**sat** down. 2 +**Then** 7**Boaz**0 ⌊**took ten men** f**of** the **elders of the city and** ⌊**said, Sit here.** +**When they were** ⌊**seated** 3 + **he** ⌊sa**stated to** the kinsman **redeemer**⌊**:**

Naomi, ʿwho **has returned from** the **field of Moab, has** put up for **sale** the **portion of the field** w**that** › **our kinsman Elimelech** ›**had.** 4 +**As** for **me, I** sa**thought I should reveal** it to **your ear,** › **saying**¯**, Acquire** it in **front of** ʿthose **seated**⌊ here, + in **front of** the **elders of my people. Should you** want to ⌊**redeem,** so **redeem** it. +**Yet should** 7**you~**cs **not** ⌊**redeem,** do **tell** › **me** so +**that I may know, for** there **is no** one **except you to redeem, and I** am **after you.**

+ **He** ⌊sa**replied, I´ shall redeem** it.

5 +**Then Boaz** ⌊sa**continued,** i**On** the **day you acquire**¯ **the field from** the **hand of Naomi,** + **you acquire ~**mr**also~ `Ruth, the Moabite wife of the dead**⌊**,** in order **to raise** up the **name of the dead**⌊ **on his allotment.**

6 + **The** kinsman **redeemer**⌊ ⌊sa**replied, I am not** ⌊**able to redeem** it **for my**self**, lest I** ⌊**impair** `**my** own **allotment.** As for **you, redeem** `**my redemption** right **for you**rself**, for I am not** ⌊**able to redeem** it.

7 +**Now this** was 7**the custom**c **beforetime in Israel,** on**concerning** ʿ**redemption and** on ʿ**exchange, to confirm every matter:** A **man would pull** off **his sandal and give** it **to his associate;** + **this** was **the attestation in Israel.** 8 +**So the** kinsman **redeemer**⌊ ⌊**said to Boaz, Acquire** it **for you**rself**. And he** ⌊**pulled** off **his sandal** 7**and** ⌊**gave** it **to him**0**.** (Ruth 4:1-8)

And from Deuteronomy we have this:

5 In **case brothers** ⌊**dwell together, and one** f**of them dies, and he** ›**has no son,** the **wife of the dead**⌊ one **shall not** b**come** to**d** **the outside, to** an **alien**⌊ **man. Her brother-in-law, he shall come** on**to her, and he will take her to him**self ›**as** his **wife and** m**perform** the ⌊**levirate** for **her.**

6 +**Then it will come** to **be, the firstborn whom she** ⌊**bears**

shall carry on the **name of his** father's ʿ**dead**⌊ **brother** so +**that his name may not be wiped** out **from Israel.** 7 +**But should the man not be** ⌊**inclined to take** `**his sister-in-law,** +**then his sister-in-law will** go **up to the elders** at**d** **the gate and say: My brother-in-law refuses to raise** up a **name for his brother in Israel; he** is **not** ¯**willing** to m**perform** the **levirate**¯ for **me.** 8 +**Then** the **elders of his city will call to him and speak to him.** +**But** if **he persists and says: I am not inclined to take her,** 9 +**then his sister-in-law will** come **close to him** ›**before** the **eyes of the elders,** + **pull his sandal off his foot,** + **spit in his face and answer and say:** as **Thus shall be done to** the **man who** will **not** ⌊**build** up `**his brother's house.** 10 **And his name will be called in Israel, House of the Pulled**⌊**-off Sandal.** (Deut.25:5-10)

ONLY CHRIST COULD RANSOM ALL

Had Christ reneged on His responsibility He would have just been a so and so. He would carry the disparaging title: House of the Pulled-off Sandal. Had He failed, who could have done what He was supposed to have done? No one! There just wasn't anyone in the universe. There wasn't another connected to every creature through the creative act of Christ! This is what the Colossian passage is showing us! It is so grand, so marvelous, and so spectacular. It is a marvel that so few have seen it. That so few have seen it is a testimony to the blindness of humanity.

The Father has given Christ all and has seated Him at His right hand. Rather than blessing the universe with physical goods, they are blessed with even greater, that is, spiritual. Immortality, incorruption, righteousness, reconciliation and love along with the fruit of the spirit, Christ is heavily weighted with these incredible treasures and He dispenses them to all in the universe with unstinted grace! It is through the blood of Christ's cross that every crea-

ture in the universe will be reconciled to God. The blood of Christ was shed due to His love and connectedness to every creature. Being the Firstborn of all creation He has responsibilities no one else had or could have. Being the Firstborn of all creation He is the Kinsman Redeemer of every creature of the entire creation since the entire creation came through Him! How spectacular—how wonderful for the creation that God had such a faithful Son! God gave His Son the faith and ability to go ahead with the incredible task of going to the cross, enduring the shame and facing death. He did it all in faithfulness to God and to His high office as the Firstborn of all creation. He did it due to the vast love with which He loves us. How grand is our Redeemer: Rather than ending up being just a so and so, He is given a Name above all names!

If the current theology of Christendom is correct, if Christ has failed to ransom and redeem the vast majority which Christendom has assigned to eternal loss, then Christ's name must be for ever relegated to that of a "so and so" and He must give every lost soul His sandal. Such is the scandalous nature and outcome of one who fails to redeem his kin. But a glorious picture emerges of One exalted to the highest place in the universe and given a Name above every name! Is it any wonder that, in the future, this grand display of adoration will take place:

[8] **. . . He humbles Himself, [-]becoming[o] obedient unto death, [y]even** the **death of the cross.** [9] **Wherefore, also, [']God highly exalts Him, and graces[o] Him** with **the Name** [']that is **above every name,** [10] **that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean,** [11] **and every tongue should acclaim[o] that Jesus Christ** is **Lord, [io]for** the **glory of God,** the **Father.** (Phil.2:8-11)

Anthony Nungesser.

CONCERNING JACOB AND JOSEPH

As we, who are chosen, are prone to do as Jacob did, and waste our lives in an effort to obtain what is already ours in Christ, his example should be of great value, to show us what we should *not* do. Let us not blame Jacob for doing as he did, but thank him for his example, lest we do likewise. Moreover, in contrast to Esau, who was "profane," in that he gave up his birthright for a single feed (Heb.12:16), Jacob prized it above all, and even descended to shabby trickery to get it. In the depths of his heart he was true to the Subjector, and valued His gifts, even if, with his twisted brain and reprehensible hands, he sought to steal them.

The most remarkable thing about Jacob is his flawlessness. Just as Noah was a just man (Gen.6:9) and yet drank too much (9:21), and Abraham and Isaac were justified and richly blessed in spite of their mistakes, so, in Genesis 32:28 Jacob is called Upright-with-El ("Israel"), and prospers greatly notwithstanding his atrocious tricks (Gen.30: 28-43). How can this be? He was no more "responsible" for them than for kicking his mother before he was born. Not only was he called without being even consulted, but all the crooked parts which he played were in the script before he came upon the stage. They were essential to the great purpose of the eons, the revelation of the Deity, so were not only right, but essential to His glory. So he is rewarded for them, rather than punished.

PARTIALITY OF PARENTS

It is only as we keep God's ultimate intention (not will)

in mind that we can understand the perverse partiality of the parents of the twins. Otherwise we would [il]logically expect Isaac to love Jacob, for the superior, the firstborn, Esau, was to serve the inferior, Jacob. In this he was justified, not from the physical aspect, but the spiritual. His love for Esau was based upon his fleshly appetite, the taste of his tongue. At the last, however, he recognizes his own blindness, and the hand of Yahweh in correcting his mistake (Gen.27:24-33). So it was with Rebecca. Although she recognized the divine prophecy, and gave Jacob his proper place, yet she was really to blame when Jacob deceived his father (27:6). So it is always, both good and ill, will work His will, or, rather, His intention.

THE BIRTHRIGHT

The patriarchs did not live on flocks alone, for they had bread, and now we read of lentils (Gen.25:34). It is somewhat surprising, however, to find Jacob stewing a stew. Esau was a good hunter, who supplied Isaac with venison, but it was uncertain. On this memorable occasion Esau had tried hard, so he was faint; in fact he spoke as if he was about to starve. This was quite improbable, and only shows how little he cared for his birthright, when he bargained it away for a single meal. Lentil stew is red (*adm*), so his name was later changed to Edom (*Adum*). Even his descendants and his land were given this name. What a shameful, sordid origin for the name of a country! Yet how fitting for the man and his descendants who bartered the most precious spiritual possession to satisfy his soul![1]

REJECTION OF ESAU

Jacob's deception of Esau is usually considered merely

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.50, p.11,12-14.

a mean trick played by him to get the blessing of the firstborn. This is a very superficial view. The matter had been settled and made known before he was born, by divine decree. "The greater shall serve the inferior" (Gen.25:23). "For, not as yet being born, nor yet putting into practice anything good or bad, that the *purpose of God* may be remaining as a *choice, not out of acts,* but of Him Who is calling" Who said, "Jacob I love, yet Esau I hate" (Rom. 9:11-13). Indeed, there were many actors in this episode. Elohim decreed it. Isaac sought to prevent it. Rebecca planned the deception. Esau had forfeited it by his indifference to its value, shown by trading it for one glutting of grub. It is only one scene in the great drama of divine determination. It agreed with God's glory.[2]

JOSEPH'S DISTINCTIVE TUNIC

In the Orient, the clothing is expressive of standing and rank. Jacob's sons probably dressed alike, unless the oldest, the firstborn, wore some distinctive mark. But Joseph was younger than they, and, so far as is recorded, had *done* nothing to merit such partiality. But Jacob, to express his love for the son of his beloved wife, made him a distinctive tunic (Gen.37:3). Others translate: "a coat of many colors" (AV), "a long robe with sleeves" (RSV), "a garment reaching far down," etc. The Hebrew is *kthnth* TUNIC, such as was made for Adam and Eve in Eden, and *shsim* LIMITINGS. In earliest days the styles did not change, and those in the same station in life would wear the same kind of clothing. But Jacob made a distinctive tunic for Joseph *limited* to him alone. This distinguished him from the rest, which they resented.

Is not this confirmed by the spiritual counterpart? Not, however, in His outward appearance, in His clothing, was

2. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.50, p.49.

Christ distinguished from His brethren, but in His spiritual words and actions. These were, like the robes, worn by the chief priest, for glory and beauty. And the fact that He was distinguished in this way made His brethren hate Him all the more. He was able to wear the white garments which were worn in entering the divine presence, and ask His hearers, "Who of you is exposing Me concerning sin?" In His words and deeds the purple is seen in Matthew, as the King, the crimson in Luke, as the Son of Mankind, the amethyst in John, as the Son of God. He, indeed, had "a coat of many colors." It is possible, though not certain, that Joseph was distinguished in this way, but we are not distinctly told so.

JOSEPH'S DREAMS

Joseph has been criticized for telling his dreams to his family (Gen.37:5-11). In ordinary circumstances, it might have been unwise, if not offensive. But we should always remember that *faith justifies* all actions. Joseph believed these revelations to be of God, so had a right to speak. Nay, it would have been wrong if he had not spoken. This is seen more clearly in the Antitype. He, also, was blamed because of His supposed pretensions, and denounced because He claimed to be the Messiah. When He stood before the chief priest, and was exorcised to tell whether he was the Christ, the Son of God, He replied, "You say it! Moreover, I am saying to you, Henceforth you shall be seeing the Son of Mankind sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then they said that He is a blasphemer, liable to death (Matt.26:62-67). Joseph was quite correct in making known his dreams. Even his brethren acknowledged this after they were fulfilled. So will Israel acknowledge Christ in that day![3] A. E. Knoch

3. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.50, pp.150-152.

UNDERSTANDING AND ASSURANCE

❉

"CORRESPONDENT RANSOM"
"CORRECTLY CUTTING"

Question:

I long to be "sound in the faith," even as Paul instructs (Titus 2:2). Yet I realize that practically every teaching is disputed by someone, and, that the Concordant teaching is usually a minority view, often even an extreme minority view. Can you help me in my quest for understanding and assurance?

Answer:

IN our quest for faithfulness, let us realize and rejoice that, ultimately speaking, maturity in faith is not our own work but is the Lord's work in us. While the usual claim that the believer "must cooperate with the Holy Spirit" is, strictly speaking, true, yet as popularly understood, it is false. The self-control which one must exercise in order not to quench the spirit is itself the fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5:23). Therefore, if it may truly be said of us that we have been "cooperative," let us not boast in ourselves that this is so, but thank and praise God that this is so.

Each believer belongs to the Lord; thus we are His "slaves." Accordingly, we are, so to say, His "household servants" (AV), His "domestics" (CV, Rom.14:4). Since we are but domestics ourselves, it is not our place to be judging *Another's* domestic (Rom.14:4a). We are not in charge. Consequently, not to us, but "to his own Master he is standing or falling" (Rom.14:4b).

Concerning the fellow domestic who has been "infirm in the faith" (Rom.14:1), the good news is this: the time will come when "*he will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make Him stand*" (Rom.14:4c).

Accordingly, then, in our quest for a faithful walk, my best advice is to take Proverbs 4:7 to heart, which is: "The principal thing is *wisdom;* acquire wisdom, and with all your acquisition, acquire *understanding."* Similar wise counsel is found in Proverbs 23:23: "Buy the truth, and do not sell it, [even as] wisdom and *discipline* and understanding" (Prov.23:23).

When we "understand" a certain thing, we truly discern its meaning. "Wisdom" is the faculty by which we make the highest and best application of knowledge. Since all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed in God (Col.2:3), "the assurance of understanding" (Col.2:2) is that which we have when God makes our faith grow up (1 Cor.3:5-7). Until then, "it is the glory of Elohim to conceal a matter" (Prov.25:2).

A man cannot hunger and thirst for that for which he has no taste. Apart from desire—*sufficient* desire—we cannot and therefore will not apply ourselves sufficiently to reach our goal. While progress in the faith is *by* and *in* the grace of God, it is *through* our own efforts, according to our strongest desires. One who is wise, therefore, will realize that "a man cannot get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27).

May the following thoughts be helpful to you in *slaving* for the living and true God, while *waiting* for His Son out of the heavens, Whom He rouses from among the dead, Jesus, our Rescuer out of the coming indignation (*cf* 1 Thess.1:9,10).

REALIZATION IN PRAYER

Just as proficiency in any field requires training and

experience, progress in the faith is impossible apart from *prayer* and education. This is God's *way;* it is His "means of grace." It is unrealistic and foolish to minimize the importance of either of these two entities.

In prayer, as in our walk in general, we are to become imitators of the apostle Paul; as he says, "according as I also am [an imitator] of Christ" (1 Cor.11:1). Thus we have the apostle "for a model" (Phil.3:17). We do well to note that his concerns and petitions to God are not for soulish welfare but for *spiritual enlightenment.* Among Paul's most notable prayers are these; may they be our guide as we seek wisdom from above and spiritual understanding:

"Therefore, I also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you *a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him,* the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for you to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His allotment among the saints, and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength" (Eph.1:15-19; *cp* 2 Cor.4:13).

"Be rejoicing *in the Lord* always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:4-7).

"We are thanking the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, always praying concerning you, on hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints, because of the expectation reserved for you in the

heavens, which you hear before in *the word of the truth of the evangel,* which, being present with you, according as in the entire world also, *is bearing fruit and growing,* according as it is among you also, *from the day on which you hear and realized the grace of God in truth,* according as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow slave, who is *a faithful dispenser of Christ* for us, who makes evident to us *your love in spirit.*

"Therefore we also, from the day on which we hear, *do not cease praying for you* and requesting that you may be *filled full with the realization of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,* you to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in *the realization of God;* being endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, *for all endurance and patience with joy;* at the same time *giving thanks to the Father,* Who makes you competent for a part of the allotment of the saints, in light" (Col.1:3-12).

FOUR VITAL QUESTIONS

In studying any passage of Scripture, we must always ask ourselves: (1) *What* does it say? (2) *Whom* does it concern? (3) *When* does it apply? and (4), *In what sense* is it true?

Unless we have no opinion at all concerning a certain subject, it will be impossible for us not to make some type of judgment concerning it with respect to these questions, even if we do not consciously rehearse these points or even know they exist. Therefore, it is by far the wiser course to keep these questions ever before us as we seek further light, and, as God grants it to us.

(1) *What* does it say? In order to judge correctly here it is essential that we learn the difference between an actual scriptural declaration and a mere human inference therefrom. We need to be especially clear as to the enormous difference between a *corollary* (that which, though not

expressed, must be true, in light of what *has* been said) and an *inference* (that which not only has not been expressed, but may well not be true at all, and, in any case, cannot be known to be true). We must not self-confidently presume that a writer is making an implication when it may well be that it is only we ourselves who are making an unwarranted inference.

It will not suffice to note that a certain translation may state a certain thing in a certain passage; for, for all their accord, there are many differences in rendering among translations, from one version to another. These differences are often by no means trivial or confined simply to choice of phrasing or even to significantly distinct ideas though only concerning minor points of teaching. To the contrary, in some cases, differences in translation declare completely opposite thoughts, even concerning subjects of the greatest consequence.

It is totally inadequate, not to mention dangerous, to approach the Word of God with no more in hand than the Authorized Version or some other all-too-frequently lawless and discordant translation. Indeed, we need much guidance and wisdom even with a faithful translation before us, and cannot hope to gain a good understanding without an accurate, concordant version.

If we would not blindly follow others, our only recourse, then, is to the authority of the Scriptures themselves, through a careful consideration of their own definitive usages of the words of inspiration. Such a pursuit entails, at minimum, at least some measure of intelligent, personal use of a concordance, one which provides access to all occurrences of those words of the Original concerning which the meaning is disputed.

(2) *Whom* does it concern? and (3) *When* does it apply? It does not follow from the fact that a certain revelation is "in the Bible," is "in the New Testament," or is included

among "the very words of Christ," that such a revelation therefore concerns ourselves. *This may or may not be the case.* Furthermore, some things that have a vital application, whether for Israel or the nations, are nonetheless only applicable within a certain era or under a certain administration. They are not necessarily in effect continually and interminably even for those to whom they do apply, much less with respect to all.

Such important questions as these must be intelligently and patiently considered; we must endeavor not to make rash judgments, decisions that are the fruit of our own imprudence and impatience, according to our ignorance and prejudice.

For example, in the matter of determining the scope of those who come under the purview of any certain passage, the word "all" is frequently misunderstood and misinterpreted. It must be recognized that even where the word "all" or any other "universal" expression is used (e.g., "each," "any," or "every"), the reference is always to *all*—to "each" and "every" one—of *those who are in view* within the scope of the subject matter of the text in question.

In some instances, the reference is to all believers (or, as the case may be, to all saints, humans, or even creatures) without distinction—apart from any limitations—whether of era or administration. In other cases, either the actual *context* of a passage or the nature of the case *limits* the application of such "universal" terms. It limits them solely to all those of a certain group or class, to those living at a certain time or under a certain administration or economy. Similarly, it is essential to recognize that a phrase which possesses mere *close proximity* to a *different context,* is not at all the same thing as a phrase which is inherently a part of the subject being addressed.

(4) *In what sense* is it true? Even if we have succeeded in discerning what has been said, whom it concerns and

when it applies, we are not ready to come to a conclusion until we resolve the vital question which remains, *In what sense* is this declaration true? That is, is it to be understood literally or figuratively; absolutely or relatively; and, peremptorily or provisionally?

All literature is comprised *primarily* of literal expressions, even if many figurative expressions should also be employed. Indeed, without an understanding of the literal it is impossible to discern the message of the figurative, for literal meaning is the basis of figurative application.

Therefore, the adage "whenever possible, literal" is essentially sound advice. We would prefer to refine this slightly, however, and say, "Whenever *viable*—all things considered—literal." Taking this approach will not close the door to the recognition of true figurative passages or otherwise diminish our insight to discern that which is *spiritual* (which is an entirely different matter from that which is *figurative*). To the contrary, it will form a sound basis for our study of literary figures and will tend toward awakening us to their presence. Though there are many figures of speech, by far the most common ones, metaphor and metonymy, are concerned, respectively, with either likeness to or association with the literal. Of course, when considering literal meaning, we must not confound essential *meaning* with derived *usage.* Similarly, we must note the difference between the many lexical *definitions* of a word's usage, and the vital, definitive *essence* of the word itself, which distinguishes it from other expressions.

When judging between the literal and figurative, if, because it would entail absurdity or contradiction to take a phrase literally we are constrained to deem it figurative, we must still ask ourselves, Of what does the figure consist and what is the literal *idea* behind the figure, which it merely serves to convey?

Yet wherever there is no compelling reason to take a

statement figuratively and we therefore judge it to be literal, we must still decide whether this literal statement is *absolute* or *relative.* If we should judge it to be truly absolute, we must regard it as universally so, without limitation of any kind. If we should regard it as relative, we must decide the *scope* of the subject matter to which this literal statement may be *applied.* Few scriptural passages are fully absolute, without limitation of any kind, even if they should be practically absolute. And many statements are by no means absolute, but are true only as they relate to a certain subject. It is strictly a matter of wisdom and discernment, based upon our total knowledge of all facts that have a bearing on a matter, as to whether we should judge a statement in one way or another.

It will not suffice merely to make bold claims as to the significance of a passage, especially when, if the truth be known, we may never have realized that such a thing as varied senses in which a passage may be taken even exists.

All these matters are concerned with wise and astute judgment. They are matters of "interpretation," which is merely to say they are matters concerning which we must make correct decisions. Though it is not *literally* true that "the Scriptures interpret themselves," nonetheless, the spirit of this aphorism is certainly true, as expressed through this metonymical figure!

The literal idea intended is that if we would truly *understand* (i.e., make out the meaning of) a certain text, we must make many correct decisions concerning it as we are guided by the many related scriptural matters with which it is associated or otherwise connected or dependent.

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Question:

Why, in 1 Timothy 2:6, did Mr. Knoch translate using the two words, "correspondent Ransom"? My wife asked me, "What does that mean?" I told her that I did not know why Mr. Knoch chose to use two words; and since the single word here in the Greek, *antilutron,* is only found once, there is nothing else to compare it with. I figured that what was meant by "correspondent [Ransom]," is "equal to the whole," or something similar. But it does not seem that the word "correspondent" was necessary in order to convey that thought, since it is followed immediately by "on behalf of all."

Answer:

I am pleased that your wife asked about this, that I might share a few words with you both concerning it.

Please see the *Unsearchable Riches* article, "For or Instead?" concerning this question (vol.81, pp.145-151; this article also considers the Greek word *huper* [OVER, or "for the sake of"], and is quite helpful in responding to the common claim that Christ is our "substitute").

While the compound *antilutron* only appears in 1 Timothy 2:6, *anti* is found in quite a few passages and *lutron* in several. The first element of *antilutron,* of course, is *anti;* it is sometimes rendered "for" in the CV (with a superior "id")—in the sense of "an eye *for* an eye" (i.e., "an eye *corresponding to* an eye").

The verb *lutroō* (LOOSEN) is translated either "ransom" or "redeem." "'Loosen' is used many times in the Septuagint for each of two Hebrew words, *gal* ('redeem') and *phde* ('ransom'). 'Ransom' is used only in relation to the claims of Yahweh, especially as to the firstborn of man and beast (Ex.13:13,15; 34:20; Num.3:46-49), as well as of vows involving death (Lev.27:3; 1 Sam.14:45).

"'Redeem' is used of human rights, as property (Ruth 4:4,6; Lev.25:25,54; 27:13,33), and the avenger (Num.5:8; 35:12,27). 'Ransom' involves the divine; 'redeem,' the human: the former is religious in scope; the latter, social,

and is seldom used in the later Scriptures (Luke 24:21; Titus 2:14)" (Keyword Concordance, p.239).

While, as a standard, we have assigned INSTEAD to *anti,* nevertheless, the essential thought, common to all contexts, is that of "corresponding to."

For example, Matthew 2:22 contains the phrase, "hearing that Archelaus is reigning in Judea *in the stead of* his father Herod . . ." concerning which it is evident that the sense is that Archelaus was now reigning *in correspondence to* the fact that Herod was now dead.

Similarly, in Luke 11:11 Jesus declared: "Now of some father of you a son will be requesting bread. No stone will he be handing him! Or a fish, also. *Not, instead* of a fish, a serpent will he be handing him!" (Luke 11:11). Even as every father knows that there is no suitableness in giving a stone to a son who asks for bread, he likewise knows that there could be no fit correspondence in handing a serpent to a son who had requested a fish: "Not [in correspondency to] a fish, a serpent will he be handing him!" since he knows very well that there is no fitting correspondency in acting thus in response to such a request.

Hence it is evident that the literal "instead" should not be understood in the sense of a replacement or substitute, but in the sense of an equivalence or correspondence. For example, the phrase "an eye for [lit. "instead"] an eye" (Matt.5:38), does not have in view the *substitution* of the aggressor's eye for his victim's, so that the eye of the victim was spared, and only the aggressor's eye was destroyed. "This was not true. Both eyes perished. One eye did not replace the other. The law demanded an *equivalent,* not a substitute."[1]

Indeed, in those instances where *anti* is idiomatically rendered "for," the discerning reader will recognize that

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.81, p.148.

the sense, in fact, is "corresponding to." Thus such passages constitute definitive evidence of the actual force of this word.

In order to incorporate the literal "instead" in the case of the common phrase "evil *for* (*anti*) evil," we might, however awkwardly, express Romans 12:17 thus: "To no one render [a new act of] evil *in the stead of* [i.e., in correspondence to the former act of] evil."

Thus, through these considerations of the essential meaning of *anti,* we learn that Christ is giving Himself as a "*corresponding-to*-Ransom" (i.e., idiomatically, as a "correspondent Ransom"), a *correspondent* Ransom which is given for the sake of *all.* That is, His sacrifice constitutes a ransom that *corresponds* to the needs of all sinners: a *Saviour* Who would die for the sake of *each and every* individual, and thus actually *save* each one for whom He died.

❊

Question:

Since all of the New Testament is true and is written by Christians for Christians, how can you say that only part of it applies to us?

Answer:

All Scripture is truth for today concerning the subject with which it deals and with respect to those who are concerned in it. All Scripture is *for* us in the sense that it is in some way beneficial to us, whether for teaching, exposure, or correction; and it is all given to us with a view toward our instruction in righteousness (2 Tim.3:16), so that we might know what is true. This is all unto the end that the man of God might truly be "equipped, fitted out for every good act" (2 Tim.3:17).

Yet if we should wish truly to engage in *faithful* acts, we must come to "know that which concerns [ourselves]"

(Col.4:8), and to distinguish it from what does not concern us, insofar as any certain act of human obedience, divine blessing, curse, promise, warning, or other teaching is concerned.

It is by no means ideal for us to take to ourselves those things in the Bible which do not belong to us. Such practices are mere religious thievery, no matter how hallowed by antiquity. The apostle Paul refers to those who (however sincerely) were taking up with those things which are concerned with the flesh and with the nation of Israel, as "curs," as "evil workers," and entreats the Philippians to "beware" of them (*cf* Phil.3:2-9).

It is true that we must not contrive artificial distinctions, imagining differences that simply do not exist. Yet it is just as true that we must not fail to note and heed all genuine distinctions; no matter how many of our own traditions may have to be set aside as a result.

Misplaced truth becomes insidious error, for it seems to have scriptural support. As little as it may be heeded, at least the principle of proper application seems to be acknowledged among virtually all believers. For example, hardly any seek to apply *all* the laws of Moses to themselves, or even *all* the imperatives of the Lord Jesus, which He declared within the compass of His personal ministry to Israel. We have yet to hear of any today who wish to make either male circumcision or animal sacrifices compulsory for salvation. This is so however much these same ones may differ among themselves or seek to press other "requirements" into service unto the same end.

Therefore, nearly all, even if tacitly, at least assent to the *principle* of "correctly *cutting* the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15), insofar as this entreaty has in view the fact that while all Scripture is for us, it is not all *to* us; it is not all applicable to believers today, to those who are the members of the body of Christ. J.R.C.

ENRICHED IN HIM

THERE IS a divine eloquence in the thought that we are enriched in Him. Note the fullness, the completeness so resident in the words, as they lie enshrined in Scripture. "For in everything are you enriched in Him, in all expression and all knowledge" (1Cor.1: 5).

In everything enriched. Made wealthy for all time in the bestowal of a great assurance, a rare position, and a most blessed standing. Nothing is wanting, "for in Him the entire complement of the Deity is dwelling bodily. And you are complete in Him Who is the Head of every sovereignty and authority" (Col.2:9,10).

The value of such a standing lies in the thought of its being *in Him*—the Christ of God, the Son of His love, glorious Head over all. A standing, truly, of wondrous worth, and one utterly beyond us, had not God revealed the grace of it to our hearts.

The heart of man did not ascend, nor could it aspire to such transcendent grace. It must be God-revealed. And so, through Paul, it came to our hearts in the light of His Word.

God shines in our hearts, and then alone, illumination is ours. For, by His spirit, God brings us to see, and also to realize, that in Christ is our completeness. Not in ourselves, for there can be no abiding self satisfaction. None in themselves can find repose of heart and mind. It can but be in God's Beloved, even "in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him" (Eph.1:9).

We see, then, how it is all of God that we should be so enriched in the Son of His love, and given so perfect a standing. God has given us His own sublime point of

view. He has shown us that, in His sight, we are complete. And, as a writer well expressed it, "It belongs no more to the giant in spiritual things than it does to the mere babe in Christ. The saint of fifty years' standing is in the sight of God not one atom more complete in this respect than the youngest believer." Of course, in the realization of so great a truth, one may have a deeper sense of it, but what God wants us to see, and truly grasp, is what the position is *in itself* and *in His own sight*.

It is the simple and obvious which is often passed by. And this is deadly true of the religious world. Man is too much in the picture. Far too much is he thrown back on himself, or on that vague term "Christianity," which he is so often told to embrace and accept. Rarely is the Christ of God set before him as the all glorious risen Son of God, Lord of the universe, and the One to Whom God has assigned future Rulership of all the realms of space.

COMPLETE IN CHRIST

It is, then, in Him that our completeness lies. What Christ is to God, that He should be to us. That is so all-important in the life of a believer. A grand subject for study is the Ephesian letter, for therein we see all that God has made Christ to be to His people. But so many fail to perceive this truth, that Paul so clearly unfolds. They are taken up with the four accounts and the sermon on the mount as being central to their faith, so do not see all that God has made them to be in Him. Hence they are ignorant of their standing in Christ, and of their perfection in Him.

By so many, the so-called Lord's prayer and the ten commandments are considered as sufficient for Christian position and profession. As a consequence the sheer freedom and blessedness of grace is not enjoyed. For this rare unalloyed pleasure and the glad experience of God's peace, we should study Paul's letters, for in them we have the loftiest

presentation of Christ as the all glorious Son of God. And the apostle to the nations brings Him so wondrously near to our hearts, and thus to our lives.

Especially in the Ephesian letter shall we find it so, for there he seems to reach the very pinnacle of grace. We are so taken up with God, the Father of Glory, and His choice and placing of us in the Beloved. What a standing and what a position and privilege is accorded us, and all "in accord with the counsel of His will!"

So, reading on and on, we find Paul's earlier statement, already quoted, fully confirmed. "For in everything are you enriched in Him, in all expression and all knowledge." And in this epistle, with its companion letters to the Philippians and Colossians, nothing is wanting to our completeness, our maturity as sons of God. There is a fullness of expression and of knowledge that makes us wise indeed and full of praise to God for the grandeur of His sublimest revelation.

Now, the assurance of salvation God would have us know is a *permanent* experience. It is not a thing of fits and starts, of transient feelings and emotions. It is an utter resting upon God's valuation of the incomparable worth and sacrifice of Christ. We therefore want to think of it as God thinks, Whose thoughts are unfolded to us in the Word of His grace. And let us ever bear in mind that the truth of the evangel of the glory of the happy God, with which Paul was entrusted, is not shaken by its not being believed. It remains true whether it is accepted or not.

However, God, being *the happy God*, wants us to exult in the tremendous character of it. Not to think of it in a numerical sense, as though it were to be judged by present day estimates with their various limitations. If we are wise to the marvelous extent and reach of God's saving grace, we shall the more appreciate its present worth and ultimate triumph.

Having, then, so perfect a standing, and one so altogether unmoved by this passing world, let us so grasp the glory of it as to intensely realize its power in our lives. Thus shall we experience a *state* in full keeping with our *standing.* But to know where we stand is vital. Then it follows, in God's own way and sequence, that our walk the more truly adorns the teaching of God as set forth in His Word.

We do well to remember that our character, however moral, does not determine this rare position before God. It is the realization of our position, and its attendant privilege, which effects our attitude and character before men. So often, to use a simple expression, "the cart is put before the horse." Far too frequently are people exhorted to do things, than just to believe God and to take His valuation and acceptance of Christ. And, resting there, to draw from it power and strength. Conscious, therefore, of our standing in Christ, our aim should ever be to raise our experience to its great level. As with Paul, it should be a case of "this one thing I do." Be pursuing, be grasping, that for which you were grasped by Christ Jesus. "Be carrying your own salvation into effect, for it is God Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:13).

There is a little word of Paul's quite worthy of note, especially in the way he uses it. It is the simple word *be.* And there is power in it, far more than in the word *do.* As you come across it you will see how positive it is. And there is action involved in the word, also. Out of many, here is a good illustration.

"Whatever is true, whatever is grave, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is agreeable, whatever is renowned—if there is any virtue, and if any applause, *be* taking these into account. What you learned also, and accepted and hear and perceived in me, these *be*

putting into practice, and the God of peace will be with you" (Phil.4:8,9).

How fine the concluding thought here—"the God of peace will be with you." Paul was able to say, "I learned to be content in that in which I am." Truly, God's peace "is superior to every frame of mind." Do we not see and sometimes intensely feel, how such God-given language fits our need? By all means, then, let us adhere to God's clear language, especially as enunciated by Paul, true herald to the nations. For it is in such expressions, that we most truly find the enrichment which is in Christ.

It is the highest medium of communication to our hearts, of God's purpose in Christ—God's purpose of the eons as it vitally affects the recipients of the evangel of the glory of Christ, and, indeed, as it affects the entire creation of God. Nor is such attention any disparagement to other writers of the Scriptures. Far from it, for all their writings contribute to the whole. But in this era of grace, so ushered in, and opportunely by Paul, we are the more concerned with the evangel he presents and heralds to the nations.

It may truly be said that Paul's letters bring to the heart and mind the highest truth concerning God and Christ, and that they bring that truth to a perfect and sublime conclusion. For, while they unfold an ideal order of going for believers of the nations, they also reveal a climax to God's purpose most satisfying to Himself as also to the creatures of His hand.

As to the emergence of full glory in the final issue of God's grace, Paul is a rare optimist with buoyant note. Only in reference to man and to "*man's day*" is he the pessimist. Our Lord Himself touched upon it, and His servant Paul discerned and experienced its fruit in a deep degree. From Constantine, all down the ages, apart from fitful gleams of light and obedience thereto, it has been and remains a dark picture.

But for the sons of light, though the night progresses, yet the day is near. Yes, as God counts time, *the day is near,* and wonderful days to follow, leading stage after stage to the cloudless day of God. The near and the far unite in grace and glory. And the glory of the Son will find full expression, for it will be the glory of a marvelous resignation, the triumphant close of a perfect reign. For then at last He resigns His throne, unquestioned and unmarred, to God.

"O Day-spring from on high, Whose cloudless light
Has beamed upon me, banishing my night
With dawn of heaven; Sun of Righteousness!
Rise, oh for ever rise! for ever shine
Brighter and brighter! from all weeping eyes
Remove all tears; and over all Thy saints,
And over earth and heaven, and o'er the bounds
Of time's dark night, and far into the depths
Of all the ages pour out the light,
Pour out the sea of glory, the full sea
Of all Thy glory—inexhaustible."

William Mealand

ELI R. BEACHY

Eli R. Beachy, 86, of Lititz, Pennsylvania, died on September 17.

A kind and gentle man, Eli was a devout believer in Christ Jesus, who loved, and had confidence in, the evangel of the grace of God.

Eli's wife Irene preceded him in death in 2014. We joyfully anticipate reuniting with them both in the day of Christ's appearing, which will be the day of their—even as of our own—glorification, in conformation to the image of God's Son.

"Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God, who are called according to the purpose that, whom He foreknew, He designates beforehand, also, to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren" (Rom.8:28,29).

THE EVANGEL AND OUR WALK

WHEN Paul boldly (some would say "rashly") sets forth God's evangel concerning His Son in Romans 5:20 as a message saying that, "where sin increases, grace superexceeds," he makes no attempt to water it down, but rather takes up an artful objection of *human wisdom* to it: If grace is so all-encompassing, we may as well be persisting in sin that it should increase. "No!" says Paul, and immediately he turns the attention away from human wisdom back to God's evangel of grace, which is the word of the cross, which is *God's wisdom* (1 Cor.1:18-25):

We are those who died to sin! (Rom.6:2).

But what can that mean? After all, in the flesh we are very much alive to sin. So Paul explains by pointing to what we have in spirit, and of this we must not be ignorant: We are baptized *into Christ Jesus,*[1] and this being so we are baptized *into His death* (Rom.6:3).

Our old humanity (which is what we got from Adam) is crucified together with Christ Jesus (Rom.6:6).

This being so, Paul's question seems not only reasonable but highly relevant to our present lives: How shall we still be living in sin? And here he is not denying that we still sin. He simply wants us to see how illogical it is to be still living in sin, when we are dead to it with regard to our position in Christ. In Christ Jesus we are freed from the law of sin and death, as Paul tells us in Romans 8:2. This

1. This means we are identified with Christ Jesus, both in His death and His resurrection, just as Israel, in the wilderness, was identified with Moses (*cf* 1 Cor.10:2), both in the sea, a figure of death, and in the new life under the guidance of the cloud.

is absolutely true in relation to what has occurred and will be so, and also as to our present position in the sight of God. And in listening attentively to this message of grace there is spiritual power (Paul calls this the "firstfruit of the spirit" in Romans 8:23) for a walk, even while in our flesh, that accords with this position. This, of necessity, is a relative matter, until the resurrection, a matter of growth, yet of highest value to us.

THE GRACE OF GOD

Already Paul had expressed the evangel in terms of grace and gratuity. By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20), for all sin and are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). Yet now God's righteousness is manifest *through Jesus Christ's faith* (Rom.3:21,22), that is *His* faith in dying for our sakes while we are still sinners (Rom.5:8). God's righteousness is revealed, and justification is achieved by this means only, not by our works, and (here we need to be clear) it is not even by our faith. It is by means of Christ's faith.

"Where, then, is boasting? It is debarred! Through what law? Of works? No! But through faith's law. For we are reckoning a human to be justified by [Christ's] faith apart from works of law" (Rom.3:27,28). The faith in view is the faith of Jesus Christ. God's righteousness is manifest through Jesus Christ's faith, so that we are justified gratuitously, in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24; *cp* Gal.2:16).

And what is His faith? "While we are still sinners, Christ dies for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). This is God's evangel, the message of His grace in not sparing His own Son, but giving Him up for us all (Rom.8:32). This testimony of a grace that is not of ourselves, but of God, through Jesus Christ, is consistently presented and upheld throughout Paul's epistles. But it is truly central in Romans.

NEWNESS OF LIFE

In that we are identified with Christ in His death, we are identified with Him in His life. This means that we shall be of the resurrection and walking in newness of life. When Paul says in Romans 6:4 that we "should" be walking in newness of life, he is not telling us we "ought" to be walking that way (as much as that may be so), but that, being baptized into Christ, *even as* Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, our walk in newness of life is *thus also* through the glory of the Father. The aorist subjunctive, indicated by the conditional word "should," directs us to see the basis of the condition. The basis of our walk in newness of life is the same ("thus also") as the basis of the rousing of Christ from among the dead. It is the glory of the Father which brings about newness of life. If we think we are obligated, of ourselves, to live today "even as" Christ lives today in resurrection, then we are wretched indeed. For we do not walk that way. The "should" of verse 4 has, in effect, the same force as the "shall" of verse 5. "*For* if we have become planted together in the likeness of [Christ's] death, nevertheless we *shall be* of the resurrection also," walking in newness of life, through the glory of the Father. This is a certainty.

In this we hear the evangel which is the power of God for salvation, not only in achieving justification and receiving conciliation, with expectation of a full realization and experience of a life and walk that is just as Christ Jesus, our Lord enjoys today, but also the power of God for salvation in accord with the earnest of the spirit, in our present walk. God has positioned us under grace. So if our walk is to accord in any way with the spirit which accompanies our believing of the evangel, we must first, and continually through our lives, be coming to know, and be taking into account, and be retaining, and be enslaving our minds to God's evangel.

So it is that in Romans 6 Paul presents the evangel to us not only as a message of Christ's death and resurrection, but a message of our identification with Him in His death and resurrection, an identification that is in spirit and which emits spirit.

By no means shall we then be slaving for Sin in the resurrection, for we died, and one who dies has been justified from Sin. Yet again, if we are baptized into Christ, so that this is true that we died together with Christ, it is true also that we shall be living together with Him also. Having died together with Him, Who is no longer dying, Who has died to Sin once for all, so also we are, in spirit, dead to sin. This is our position in Christ Jesus. And in that He is living to God, we are, in spirit, living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. That is where we are in spirit. (Keep taking this evangel into account!) This being so, how, then, shall we still be living in such a way that we are increasing our sins in order to get more grace?

In this way, Romans 6 brings God's evangel concerning His Son into our lives right now. Not only is it a message concerning what has happened and will happen because of the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ in dying for our sakes, but it is a message that vibrates over our darkened and corrupted lives, just as God's spirit vibrated over the disrupted earth in connection with God's words in Genesis 1:2, followed by verses 3-31.

It is our security and joy, continually to give our attention to this word of God concerning the faith of Jesus Christ and our inclusion in Him which we have in spirit, in which we are "dead, indeed to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord." And in that we have this blessing in Christ Jesus, we are invigorated by it by means of spirit. Brother A. E. Knoch expresses it well in his note on Romans 6:12: "A realization of our death to sin and life in Christ will give us power to cope with sin, always remembering that sin cannot bring us into disfavor because of the superexceeding grace."[2]

Accordingly, our apostle points to the ways in which our mouths and ears, as well as heart and mind may be involved with the evangel. It is the evangel that we are to declare and listen to and think about deeply, with thanksgiving. In chapter 7 Paul himself sets the example regarding the mind, when he attacks his wretchedness over the infirmity of his flesh by thanking God for His grace and enslaving his mind to God's "law," which is, most certainly, God's law of grace (Rom.7:21-25).

"Grace is the door that leads us out of Romans seven into Romans eight. It ushers us out of misery into the realm of pure delight. It transfers us from unsatisfactory, distressing self-inspection, where we are harassed with doubts and condemned by ourselves, into that marvelous realm which greets us in the opening of the eighth chapter. '*Nothing*, consequently, is now condemnation . . . .' Instead of continual condemnation grace absolutely defies all condemnation. Even where sin abounds, grace superabounds, so that sin itself is submerged in the redundance and superfluity of grace."[3]

We come, then, to the eighth chapter of Romans:

ROMANS 8:1-4

8 Nothing consequently is **now condemnation to** ˙those **in Christ Jesus.** [2] **For the spirit's ˙law of ˙life in Christ Jesus frees you from the law of ˙sin and ˙death.** [3] **For** ˙what was **impossible** to **the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh,** does **˙God, ¯sending** His s/**own ˙Son in** the **likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns ˙sin in the flesh,** [4] **that the just** requirement **of the law may be ful-**

2. CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.235.
3. A. E. Knoch: *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.12, p.57.

filled in us, who are **not walking** in **accord** with **flesh, but** in **accord** with **spirit.**

Here Paul continues this exposition of the evangel as it relates to us who are believing, telling us that as a *consequence* of God's law of grace, "Nothing . . . is now condemnation to those *in Christ Jesus*." That is absolutely so, as indicated by the emphatic negative, *ouden.* That nothing at all is condemnation to us is settled by the grace of God in the sending of His Son, and the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for our sakes.

Brother Knoch testifies concerning his growth in realizing what Paul wrote here, as follows: "Many a thankful thought have I wafted heavenward for 'no condemnation,' when once the great truth of justification had filled my spirit with overflowing joy. At that time I associated the words only with my vindication through the blood of Christ. I saw nothing more in them than Christ for me in death. When I came to translate I found that the Greek did not say *no* but *nothing.* It does not negative condemnation, but things. It began to dawn on me that *here we have more than justification stated negatively.* The previous chapters had been dealing with the sins of the saints. In the third chapter we have the justification of the sinner; here we have that of the saint. Nothing of all that we read of in the sixth and seventh chapters—sin, the flesh, the law—not even *these* can be our condemnation."[4]

We are under grace! We are under the evangel that nothing is condemnation to us.

THREE FURTHER ABSOLUTES

Now, added to the absolute truth that nothing is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus, are three further absolutes, the first called "the spirit's law," the second

4. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.27, p.169,170.

being God's evangel itself, and the third looking ahead to its future results in our lives.[5]

It is noteworthy that Paul uses four "aorist" verbs (*indefinite* as to time, so that the *fact* of the action is stressed) here in Romans 8:2-4. Grammatically speaking, two of these are in the indicative mode: "frees" and "condemns;" one is a participle: "sending;" and the fourth one is in the subjunctive mode: "may be fulfilled," which draws attention to the basis of this fulfillment, not self-effort, but God's sending of His Son Whose death as the Antitype of the sin offering puts sin under a sentence of condemnation that will be fully carried out. It is therefore a fact that we shall *fulfill* the just requirement of the law, absolutely and without flaw in the oncoming eons.

In using "fact" verbs, Paul emphasizes the actions as matters of highly important *truth.* They express facts which cannot be toned down or altered because of human irreverence and unrighteousness and infirmity. And they are stated in such a way that our full attention is to these actions as certainties.

5. Although missing in the earliest manuscript evidence, the phrase concerning our walk, which appears in the AV in verse 1 in connection with "no condemnation," has appeared here in all editions of the CV until now, in connection with verse 2. A. E. Knoch defended this reading in an article in *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.27, pages 159-170, on the basis of a marginal reading in Codex Sinaiticus, by the hand of a corrector in the sixth or seventh century. This editor claimed that he based his insertions on a second century manuscript of high reliability. Nevertheless the contextual evidence strongly supports the manuscripts which include this phrase only at the end of verse 4, where there can be no doubt of its originality. As rendered in the AV the phrase, seems to limit the "no condemnation" to those who walk in a certain way, thus suggesting that human behavior is the contributing source to this blessing. The CV has avoided this by connecting the phrase with verse 2, but this seems to make the freedom from the law of sin and death a relative matter, defined by our behavior rather than our position in Christ Jesus established by God's spirit.

LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS

Nothing is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. For the spirit's law of life *in Christ Jesus* frees us from the law of sin and death. Twice we hear these riveting words: we are *in Christ Jesus.* It is because we are positioned before God *in Christ Jesus* that nothing can condemn us. This is the grace in which we stand (Rom.5:2). Nothing we do can condemn us because we stand before God in Christ Jesus, and thus are free (in Him) from the law of sin and death. Our old humanity is crucified together with Christ. In Him it is dead, even as Christ no longer has death lording it over Him. This is truth for us due to the law of the spirit; it is the evangel as it applies to us, and as such it is absolute truth.

THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT

Later when Paul writes from a Roman prison of this grace in which we are saved, he makes certain we understand that "this is not out of you; it is God's approach present," through faith (Eph.2:8;9), that is, through Christ's faith. In Romans 3:27 Paul uses the words, "faith's law," to refer to this "law" by which justification is achieved and we are delivered from sin and death, not by human works, but in God's grace, through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.3: 21-28). Then in Romans 7:25 Paul uses the words, "God's law," to refer to this operation of God, through His Son, which rescues us from wretchedness. Thus the apostle thanks God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Paul enslaves his mind to this law of grace and love which God follows in sending His Son to die for our sakes.

Even as our flesh is under enslavement to Sin's law, our minds (like Paul's) and heart (*cf* Rom.6:17) need to come under enslavement to God's law, that is, His evangel concerning His Son, which now we see in its further development as the spirit's law. This law identifies those who are believing, not only with the death of Christ, but with His life in resurrection, and thus frees us, as we are positioned in Christ Jesus and stand before God, from the law of sin and death.

FREED IN CHRIST JESUS

This freedom is ours in that where it is impossible to keep the law of Sinai because of the law of sin in our fleshly members, God sends His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, and by this means He condemns sin in the flesh to final extermination. And this is so that the righteous requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us (Rom.8:1-4a). With the cross as its basis, there can be no doubt that the righteous requirement of love for God and our associate, which the law calls for, shall be fully and perfectly expressed in us. Because verse 3 is the basis of 4a, the "may" becomes a "shall." It is a vital feature of our happy expectation, that we shall be so constituted that we shall be righteous as Christ is righteous and be truly walking in love as He is walking in love.

Verse 3 is the key fact. Without God's sending of His own Son concerning sin there can only be condemnation for sinners, for we could never be freed from the law of sin and death and would never come close to *fulfilling* the law of love. The word "sending" is an aorist participle, or verbal adjective expressing a fact about God. He is the "sends-His-own-Son-in-(the)-likeness-of-sin's-flesh-and-concerning-sin" God.

In addition, we recognize that these actions, the freeing and the sending and the condemning and the fulfilling are *facts* which cannot be verified by our physical senses, but nevertheless are filled with spirit as we are believing them. The evangel says it is an unalterable truth even though we cannot prove it empirically that we are freed

(in our position "in Christ Jesus") from the law of sin and death, and that God condemns sin in the flesh, and that we shall fulfill the righteous requirement of the law (which is love), for all of these facts are based entirely on the fact of God's sending of His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin.

WALKING

Now in the middle of Romans 8:4 Paul changes from "fact" verbs to a present participle, along with the relative negative.[6] The believers are the "walking-no(t)-in-accord-with-flesh-but-in-accord-with-spirit" people.

To note that 4a speaks of fully and perfectly walking in love (which awaits our future conformity to the image of God's Son, *cf* Rom.8:29; Phil.3:21) while 4b speaks of a walk that always in our current lives has room for growth in love, is not to suggest any lessening of value to the words of 4b. Here indeed Paul points to something the believer has right now which the unbeliever does not have. It, too, is a matter of grace. We are walking all the time in our present lives under the vibrating influence of the truth that while we are still sinners Christ dies for our sakes, so that we shall in the future, in every way and without flaw of any sort, be walking in newness of life, living to God as Christ is living to God. So also, in Christ Jesus, we are living every day under the assurance that nothing is condemnation to us, that in Him we are freed from the law of sin and death, and that because of God's sending of His Son for the condemnation of sin we shall most certainly be fulfilling the righteous requirement of the law, which is love.

6. Unfortunately, by a typesetting error, the negative in verse 4 lacks the lightface "t" in the CLNT, which would identify it as a "conditional negative" (*cf* the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.206, under **no.**) This will be corrected in the revised CVNT.

This expectancy of glory to come is power to us now as we are focusing on it in mind and heart.

SPIRIT AND FAITH

Those who are walking in accord with spirit rather than flesh are those who are walking by faith rather than perception (2 Cor.5:7). The parallels of spirit to faith, and flesh to perception, are striking. Spirit is invisible power, and faith is a "conviction concerning matters which are not being observed" (Heb.11:1). Perception in 2 Corinthians 5:7 is the perception of our fleshly members.

Israel walked in the wilderness in accord with the directing of the cloud of smoke by day and the pillar of fire by night. These were continually visible to the physical eye and did not call for faith as it is central to our calling. Then also God's word came to them in the form of the law which looked to the flesh for its fulfillment. Yet we are not under law, but under grace (Rom.6:14), which focuses on what God has done in the sending of His Son for the condemnation of sin.

Always we walk under grace, so that we are invigorated by God's word, His evangel of His giving of His own Son, the word of the cross. It is God's WELL-MESSAGE, His wisdom and His power, speaking not of what we must do but of what God has done in and through His Son, and of its results. As we are believing this it bears the fruit of the spirit in us: *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control* (Gal.5:22,23).

WALKING IN LOVE

Hence Paul connects our walk, not with the law of Sinai, but with the evangel, which is faith's law, God's law of grace, the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus. And this, in turn, prepares us for the entreaties beginning in Romans

12:1 where the evangel is summed up in the phrase, "the pities of God."[7]

The entreaties of Romans 12 and 13 especially are thus built on the declaration of our position in Christ Jesus given in Romans 6 and now more precisely in Romans 8. Always our walk is guided and invigorated by God's evangel concerning the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ and its results. Our walk in the Lord is not the basis of our position in Christ, but our position in Christ is the moving influence of our walk. God's grace to us and Christ's faith and love in giving Himself for our sins, and the spirit's law of identifying us with Christ so that we have life *in Him,* this is what invigorates us in our walk. Thus we read, for example, in Ephesians 4:4:30-5:2:

"Do not be causing sorrow to the holy spirit of God by which you are sealed for the day of deliverance. Let all bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and calumny be taken away from you with all malice, yet become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, dealing graciously among yourselves, *according as* God also, in Christ, deals graciously with you.

"Become, then, imitators of God as beloved children, and be walking in love, *according as* Christ also loves you, and gives Himself up for us, an approach present and a sacrifice to God, for a fragrant odor."

A walk that accords with spirit is a walk that is becoming shaped by the message of God's grace in Christ, that evangel which vibrates over our lives as we are believing it.

D.H.H.

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7. The English word, *pities,* is not an exact equivalent of the Greek word, *oiktirmos,* at least in current English usage, but in that it expresses God's own feeling toward us in distress (*cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.225), we can see it as speaking of grace emanating from the depths of God.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 107th Year

(1909–2016)

Contents:

145 Editorial
146 Paul to the Romans
177 Notes on Romans

FOURTH QUARTER, 2016

Volume 107 **Number 4**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FOURTH QUARTER 2016
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

EDITORIAL

IN this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* magazine we present the current status of a Revised Concordant Version of Romans. It retains the features and follows the principles of translation of the previous editions, but there are a few changes in vocabulary and grammar. It is with the hope of solidifying appreciation for God's evangel as a message revealing *God's righteousness* by means of the *faith of Jesus Christ* that we now use the word "righteous" instead of "just" in key passages such as Romans 1:17 and 5:16 and 18, and have added the lightface "His" before the word "faith" in 3:25.

A review of Habakkuk 2:4 (see the revised translation on page 176) as cited in Acts 7:52 and Hebrews 10:37-39 convinces us that the quotation in Romans 1:17 refers principally to Christ Himself as the Righteous One, and to His faith. So also, looking again at Brother Knoch's editorial for March 1953 (*Unsearchable Riches* volume 44, pages 49-53) and Brother Coram's study in volume 102, pages 11-25, concerning the Greek words with the stem *-dik-* (JUST) encourages us to introduce the new variants, **righteous** (outcome) in Romans 5:16, **righteous** (response) in 5:18, and **righteous** (intent) in 8:4. See the notes on these passages, pages 183 and 186).

A number of the brief comments in the "Notes on Romans" article are taken from the CONCORDANT COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT, compiled by A. E. Knoch, and these are identified by the initials AEK. The rest are my own. D.H.H.

PAUL TO THE ROMANS

1 Paul, a **slave of Christ Jesus,** a **called apostle,** °**severed**° [io]**for God's evangel** [2] **(which He promises**° **before through His** ·**prophets in** the **holy scriptures),** [3] **concerning His** ·**Son** (·Who [b]**comes**° [o] **of David**'s **seed accord**ing to the **flesh,** [4] ·Who is **designated God's Son** [i]**with power, accord**ing to the **spirit of holiness,** [o]**by** the **resurrection of** the **dead), Jesus Christ, our** ·**Lord,** [5] **through Whom we obtain grace and apostleship** [io]**for faith's obedience among all the nations, for His** ·**Name's sake,** [6] **among whom are you´ also,** the **called of Jesus Christ:** [7] **to all** ·who |**are in Rome, God's beloved, called saints:**

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the **Lord Jesus Christ.**

[8] **First indeed I am thanking my** ·**God through Jesus Christ concerning all of you, that your** ·**faith is being announced**° **in the whole world.** [9] **For** ·**God is my Witness, to Whom I am** offer**ing divine service in my** ·**spirit in the evangel of His** ·**Son, how unintermittingly I am making**° **mention of you always** [on]**in my** ·**prayers** [10] **beseeching**°**, if** some**how, sometime, at length I shall be** |**prospered in the will of** ·**God to come to**[d] **you.** [11] **For I am longing to** [p]**see you, that I may share** [a]**some spiritual grace** with **you** [io]**for you** ·**to be established:** [12] **yet this is to be consoled together among you through** [i] **one another**'s ·**faith, both yours and mine.**

[13] **Now I** do **not** |**want you to be** |**ignorant, brethren, that often I purpose**° **to come to**[d] **you (and am prevented** ·**hitherto) that I should have** [a]**some fruit among you also, accord**ing **as** + **among the rest** of the **nations.**

[14] **To both Greeks and barbarians, to both wise and foolish,** a **debtor am I.** [15] **Thus** ·this **eager**ness [ac]**of mine to** bring the **evangel**° **to you also,** ·who are **in Rome.** [16] **For not** |**ashamed**° **am I** of **the evangel, for it is God's power** [io]**for salvation to every**one ·who is **believing—to** the **Jew first, and to** the **Greek as well.** [17] **For in it God's righteousness is being revealed**° [o]**by faith** [io]**for faith, accord**ing **as it is** °**written**°**: Now the Righteous** One, [o]**by faith shall be living**°**.** *Hk 2:4* ◊

[18] **For God's indignation is being revealed**° **from heaven on** [e]**all** the **irreverence and unrighteousness of human** beings ·who are **retaining the truth in unrighteousness,** [19] **because** ·that which is **known of** ·**God is apparent among them, for** ·**God manifests** it **to them.** [20] **For His** ·**invisible** attributes **are** |**descried**° **from** the **creation of** the **world, being apprehended**° by His ·**achievements, besides His** ·**imperceptible power and divinity,** [io]**for them** ·**to be defenseless,** [21] **because,** ¯**knowing** ·**God, not as God** do **they glorify or thank** Him, **but vain are they** made **in their** ·**reasonings, and darkened is their unintelligent** ·**heart.** [22] **Alleging** themselves **to be wise, they are** made **stupid,** [23] **and they change the glory of the incorruptible God in**to the **likeness of** an **image of** a **corruptible human** being **and flying** creature**s and quadrupeds and reptiles.**

[24] **Wherefore** ·**God gives them over in the lusts of their** ·**hearts** [io]**to** the **uncleanness of** ·**dishonoring**° **their** ·**bodies among them**selves, [25] those **who**[a] **alter the truth of** ·**God in**to **the lie, and are venerated, and** offer **divine service to the creature** rather [b]**than the** ¯**Creator, Who is blessed** [io]**for the eons! Amen!**

[26] **Therefore** ·**God gives them over** [io]**to dishonor**able **passions. For their** ·**females, besides, alter the natural**

1:17 out of [Jesus Christ's] **faith into** [our] **faith,** *cf* Ro 3:21,22; **the Righteous** [or, **Just**] One **out of faith shall be living,** *cf* Hk 2:4; Ph 2:8, in reference to the believer as **the just** one, *cf* Ro 4:5,23-25.

use into ˙that which is **beside nature.** 27 **Likewise also the males, besides, ¯leaving the natural use of the female, are inflamed in their ˙craving** *io*__**for one another, males** *i*__**with males effecting**°__ ˙**indecency, and getting back in themselves the retribution of their ˙deception which** ˡ**must** be. 28 **And accord**ing **as they** do **not test ˙God to** ˡ**have** Him **in recognition, ˙God gives them over** *io*__**to** a **disqualified mind to** ˡ**do** ˙that which is **not befitting,** 29 °**filled**° with *e*__**all unrighteousness, wickedness, evil, greed, distended** with **envy, murder, strife, guile, depravity, whisperers,** 30 **vilifiers, detesters of God, outragers, proud, ostentatious, inventors of evil** thing**s, stubborn to parents,** 31 **unintelligent, perfidious, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:** 32 those **who***a*__**, ¯recognizing the righteous** statute **of ˙God that** ˙those **committing ˙such** thing**s are deserving of death, not only are doing them, but are endorsing also** ˙those who are **committing** them**.**

2 Wherefore defenseless are you, O human! everyone ˙who is **judging, for in what you are judging** *d*__**an**__**other, you are condemning yourself, for you** ˙who are **judging are committing the same** things**.** 2 **Now we are** °__**aware that the judgment of ˙God is accord**ing to **truth** *on*__**against** ˙those who are **committing ˙such** thing**s.**

3 **Yet are you reckoning**° on **this, O human,** ˙who are **judging** ˙those **committing ˙such** thing**s, and** are **doing** the **same, that you´ will be escaping**° **the judgment of ˙God?** 4 **Or are you despising the riches of His ˙kindness and ˙forbearance and ˙patience, being ignorant that the kind**ness **of ˙God is leading you** *io*__**to repentance?** 5 **Yet** in **accord** with **your ˙hardness and unrepentant heart you are hoarding** for **yourself indignation in** the **day of indignation and revelation of** the **righteous judgment of ˙God,** 6 **Who will be paying each** one in **accord** with **his ˙acts:** 7 **to** ˙those **indeed** who *ac*__**by** the **endurance of good act**s **are seeking glory and honor and incorruption: life eonian;** 8 **yet to** ˙those *o*__

of faction and ˡ**stubborn indeed** as **to the truth, yet** ˡ**persuaded**° **to ˙unrighteousness: indignation and fury,** 9 **affliction and distress on every human soul** ˙which is **effecting**° ˙**evil, both of** the **Jew first and of** the **Greek,** 10 **yet glory and honor and peace to every** ˙ˡ**worker**° of ˙**good, both to** the **Jew first and to** the **Greek.**

11 **For** there **is no***i*__ **partiality** *b*__**with ˙God,** 12 **for whoever sin without law, without law also shall** ˡ**perish**°**, and whoever sin in law, through law will be** ˡ**judged.** 13 **For not the listeners** to **law** are **righteous** *b*__**with ˙God, but the doers of law shall be** ˡ**justified.**

14 **For whenever** they of the **nations** ˙who ˡ**have no law,** by **nature may be doing** ˙that which **the law** demands, **these having no law are** a **law to themselves,** 15 **who***a*__ **are displaying**° **the act**ion **of the law written in their ˙hearts, their ˙conscience testifying together and** their ˙**reckonings between one another, accusing or** + __**defending**° them 16 **in** *w*__**the day when ˙God will be judging the hidden** things **of** ˙¯**humanity (accord**ing to **my ˙evangel, through Jesus Christ**◊**).**

17 **Yet if you´ are being denominated**° a **Jew, and are resting**° **on law, and are boasting**° **in God,** 18 **and** ˡ**know the will, and are testing** ˙what thing**s** are of ˡ**consequence, being instructed**° **out of the law,** 19 **besides, you have confidence** in **yourself to be** a **guide of** the **blind,** a **light of** ˙those **in darkness,** 20 a **discipliner of** the **imprudent,** a **teacher of minors, having the form of ˙knowledge and the truth in the law—**21 **then** you, **the** one who is **teaching** *d*__**an**__**other, are you not teaching yourself? The** one who is **heralding not to be stealing, you are stealing!** 22 **The** one who is **saying not to be** committ**ing adulter**y**, you are** committ**ing adultery! The** one who is **abominating**° ˙**idols, you are despoiling** the **sanctuary!** 23 You **who are boasting**° **in** a **law, through the transgression of the law you**

2:16 Paul's evangel speaks of justification through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Ro 3:21, 22,24,26).

are dishonoring ˙God! 24 **For because** of **you the Name of ˙God is being blasphemed˚ among the nations, accord**ing **as it is ˚written˚.** *Ezk 36:20-23*

25 **For circumcision indeed is benefiting if you should be** putting **law** into **practice, yet if you should be** a **transgressor of law, your ˙circumcision has become uncircumcision.** 26 **If the Uncircumcision then should be maintaining the righteous** requirements **of the law, shall not his ˙uncircumcision be ˡreckoned** *io* **for circumcision?** 27 **And the Uncircumcision** who *o* **by nature** are **discharging the law**'s demands **shall be judging you,** ˙who **through letter and circumcision** are a **transgressor of law.**

28 **For not** ˙that which is *i* **˙apparent is** the **Jew, nor yet** ˙that which is *i* **˙apparent in flesh** is **circumcision;** 29 **but** ˙that which is *i* **˙hidden** is the **Jew, and circumcision** is **of** the **heart, in spirit, not** in **letter, whose ˙applause** is **not** *o* **of human** beings**, but** *o* **of ˙God.**

3 *a* **What then** is **the prerogative of the Jew, or** *a* **what the benefit of ˙circumcision?** 2 **Much** *ac* **in every manner. For first indeed that they are entrusted** with **the oracles of ˙God.** 3 **For** *a* **what if** *a* **some are unfaithful? Will not their ˙unfaith**fulness **ˡnullify the faith**fulness **of ˙God?** 4 **May it not** *b* **come˚** to that**! Now let ˙God ˡbe** *c* **˚ true, yet every human** a **liar,** *Ps 116:11* **even as it is ˚written˚:**

> **That so You should be justified in Your ˙sayings,**
> **And shall be conquering**
> *i* **when You** are **˙being judged˚.** *Ps 51:4*

5 **Now if our ˙unrighteousness is commending God's righteousness,** *a* **what shall we ˡdeclare? Not** that **˙God** ˙Who is **bringing on ˙indignation** is **unrighteous! (***ac* **As** a **human am I saying** it.) 6 **May it not** *b* **come˚** to that**! Else how shall ˙God be judging the world?** 7 **Yet if the truth of ˙God superabounds in my ˙lie** *io* **for His ˙glory,** *a* **why am I´ also still being judged˚ as** a **sinner,** 8 **and** why **not** say,

according **as we are ˡcalumniated˚ and accord**ing **as** *a* **some are averring** that **we are saying, that: We should do ˙evil that ˙good may come?—˭whose ˙judgment is fair.**

9 *a* **What then? Are we ˡprivileged˚? Undoubtedly not, for we previously charge˚ both Jews and Greeks to be all under sin,** 10 **accord**ing **as it is ˚written˚, that:**

> **Not** one **is righteous—not** *y* **even one.**
> 11 **Not** one **is ˙understanding.**
> **Not** one **is ˙seeking out ˙God.**
> 12 **All avoid** Him**:** at the **same time they are useless.**
> **Not** one **is ˙doing kindness:**
> there **is not even one!** *Ps 14:1-3*
> 13 A **sepulcher ˚opened˚** is **their ˙throat.**
> With **their ˙tongues they defraud.** *Ps 5:9*
> The **venom of asps** is **under their ˙lips.** *Ps 140:3*
> 14 **Whose ˙mouth** with **imprecation and bitterness is ˡcrammed.** *Ps 10:7*
> 15 **Sharp** are **their ˙feet to shed blood.** *Pr 1:16*
> 16 **Bruises and wretchedness** are **in their ˙ways,**
> 17 **And** the **way of peace they** do **not know.** *Is 59:7,8*
> 18 There **is no** *t* **fear of God in front of their ˙eyes.** *Ps 36:1*

19 **Now we are ˚aware that whatever the law is saying, it is speaking to** ˙those *i* **under the law, that every mouth may be barred, and the entire world may become˚ subject to** the **righteous** verdict of **˙God,** 20 **because,** *o* **by works of law, no** *t* **flesh** at *e* **all shall be ˡjustified in His sight, for through law** is the **recognition of sin.**

21 **Yet now, apart from law, God's righteousness is ˚manifest˚ (being attested˚ by the law and the prophets),** 22 **yet God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith** *io* **for all, and on all** ˙who are **believing, for** there **is no** *t* **distinction,** 23 **for all sin and are wanting˚ of the glory of ˙God.**

24 **Being justified˚ gratuitously** in **His ˙grace, through the deliverance** ˙which is **in Christ Jesus** 25 **(Whom ˙God pur-**

poses° for a **Propitiatory, through** His ˙**faith, in His** ˙**blood,** *io*˙**for** a **display of His** ˙**righteousness because** of **the passing over of the penalties** of **sins** which °**occurred before in the forbearance of** ˙**God),** 26 **toward the display of His** ˙**righteousness in the current era,** *io*˙**for Him** ˙**to be righteous and** a ˡ**Justifier** of **the** human *o*˙**by** the **faith of Jesus.**◊ 27 **Where then** is ˙**boasting? It is debarred! Through what law? Of** ˙**works? No***t*˙**! But through faith's law.** 28 **For we are reckoning**° a **human to be** ˡ**justified**° by **faith apart from works of law.**

29 **Or** is He **the God of** the **Jews only?** Is He **not of** the **nations also? Yes, of** the **nations also,** 30 **if so be that** ˙**God** is **One, Who will be justifying** the **Circumcision** *o*˙**by faith and** the **Uncircumcision through** ˙**faith.** 31 **Are we then nullifying law through** ˙**faith? May it no**t *b*˙**come**° to that! *bt*˙**Nay, we are sustaining law.**

4 *a*˙**What then shall we** ˡ**declare** that **Abraham, our** ˙**forefather, accord**ing to **flesh, has found?** 2 **For if Abraham is justified** *o*˙**by acts, he** ˡ**has** something to **boast** in, **but not toward God.** 3 **For** *a*˙**what is the scripture saying? Now Abraham believes** ˙**God, and it is reckoned to him** *io*˙**for righteousness.***Gn 15:6*

4 **Now to the** ˡ**worker**°**, the wage is not** ˡ**reckoned**° *ac*˙**as** a **favor, but** *ac*˙**as** a **debt.** 5 **Yet to** him ˙who is **no**t **working**°**,** yet is **believing on** Him ˙Who is **justifying the irreverent, his** ˙**faith is** ˡ**reckoned**° *io*˙**for righteousness.** 6 **Even as David also is telling** of **the happiness of the human to whom** ˙**God is reckoning**° **righteousness apart from acts:**

7 **Happy** they **whose** ˙**lawlessnesses are pardoned**
and whose ˙**sins are covered over!**
8 **Happy** the **man to whom** the **Lord by no means**
should reckon° **sin!***Ps 32:1,2*

9 **This** ˙**happiness then,** is it *on*˙**for the Circumcision or**

3:26 God righteously justifies **out of** (by means of) **Jesus' faith.**

on˙**for the Uncircumcision also? For we are saying, To** ˙**Abraham** ˙**faith is reckoned** *io*˙**for righteousness.** 10 **How then is it reckoned? Being in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.** 11 **And he obtains** the **sign of circumcision,** a **seal of the righteousness of the faith** ˙which is **in** ˙**uncircumcision,** *io*˙**for him** ˙**to be** the **father of all** ˙those who are **believing through uncircumcision,** *io*˙**for** ˙**righteousness** ˙**to be reckoned to them,** 12 **and** the **father of** the **Circumcision, not to** ˙those *o* **of** the **Circumcision only, but to** ˙those **also** who are observ**ing** the **elements of the faith** in **the footprints of our** ˙**father Abraham in uncircumcision.**

13 **For not through law** is **the promise to** ˙**Abraham, or to his** ˙**Seed,** for **him** ˙**to be enjoyer of** the **allotment of** the **world, but through faith's righteousness.** 14 **For if** ˙those *o* **of law** are **enjoyers of** the **allotment,** ˙**faith has been** made **void**° **and the promise has been nullified**°**,** 15 **for the law is producing**° **indignation. Now where no***t* **law is, neither** is there **transgression.**

16 **Therefore** it is *o* **of faith that** it may **accord** with **grace,** *io*˙**for the promise** ˙**to be confirmed to the entire seed, not to the** one *o* **of the law only, but to the** one **also** *o* **of** the **faith** of **Abraham, who is father of us all,** 17 **accord**ing **as it is** °**written**° **that:** A **father of many nations have I appointed you***Gn 17:5*—**facing which, he believes** it **of** the **God** ˙Who is **vivifying the dead and calling** ˙what ˡ**is no**t **as** if it ˡ**were—**
18 **who,** being *b*˙**beyond expectation, believes** *on*˙**in expectation,** *io*˙**for him** ˙**to become**° the **father of many nations,** accord**ing** to ˙that which ˡ**has been declared**°**: Thus shall be your** ˙**seed.***Gn 15:5* 19 **And no**t ⁻**being infirm** in ˙**faith, he considers his***sf* ˙**body, already** °**deadened**° (being ˡ**inherent**ly some**where** about a **hundred year**s) **and the deadening of the matrix of Sarah,** 20 **yet** *io* **the promise of** ˙**God is not doubted** in ˙**unbelief, but he is invigorated** by ˙**faith,** ⁻**giving glory to** ˙**God,** 21 ⁻**being fully assured also, that what**

He has promised°, He is able to do also. 22 **Wherefore also, it is reckoned to him** *io*for **righteousness.**

23 **Now it is not written because** of **him only, that it is reckoned to him,** 24 **but because** of **us also, to whom it is** l**about to be** l**reckoned°,** ˙who are **believing on** Him ˙Who **rouses Jesus our ˙Lord** *o*from among the **dead,** 25 **Who is given up because** of **our ˙offenses, and is roused because** of **our ˙justifying.**

5 ¯**Being then justified** *o*by **faith, we may be having peace toward ˙God, through our ˙Lord, Jesus Christ,** 2 **through Whom we °have the access also,** by **˙faith, into this ˙grace in which we °stand, and we may be glorying°** *on*in **expectation of the glory of ˙God.**

3 **Yet not only** so, **but we may be glorying° also in ˙afflictions, having perceived that ˙affliction is producing° endurance,** 4 **yet ˙endurance testedness, yet ˙testedness expectation.** 5 **Now ˙expectation is not mortifying,** seeing **that the love of ˙God has been poured° out in our ˙hearts through** the **holy spirit** ˙which is ¯**being given to us.**

6 **For Christ,** while **we** l**are still infirm, still** in **accord** with the **era, for** the **sake of** the **irreverent, dies.** 7 **For hardly for** the **sake of** a **righteous** man **will any**one **be dying°: for, for** the **sake of** a **˙good** man, **perhaps** *a*some-one **may even be daring to die,** 8 **yet ˙God is commending** this **˙love of** *sf*His *io*to **us,** seeing **that,** while **we** l**are still sinners, Christ dies for our sakes.** 9 **Much rather then,** ¯**being now justified in His ˙blood, we shall be** l**saved from ˙indignation through Him.**

10 **For if, being enemies, we are conciliated to ˙God through the death of His ˙Son, much rather,** ¯**being conciliated, we shall be** l**saved in His ˙life.** 11 **Yet not only** so, **but** we are **glorying° also in ˙God, through our ˙Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we now obtain the conciliation.**

12 **Therefore, even as through one human ˙sin enters into the world, and through ˙sin ˙death, and thus ˙death**

passes through into all =**man**kind, **on which all sin—** 13 **for until law sin was in** the **world, yet sin is not being** taken into **account°** when there l**is no law;** 14 *bt*nevertheless **˙death reigns from Adam unto Moses** *on*over ˙those **also** who do **not sin** *on*in **the likeness of the transgression** of **Adam, who is** a **type of** Him ˙Who is l**about** to **be.**

15 **But not as the offense, thus also the grace. For if,** by **the offense of the one, the many die, much rather the grace of ˙God and the gratuity in grace,** ˙which is **of the One Human, Jesus Christ,** *io*to **the many superabounds.**

16 **And not as through one** act of ¯**sinning** is **the gratuity. For indeed the judgment** is **out of one into condemnation, yet the grace** is **out of many offenses into** a **righteous** outcome. 17 **For if,** by **the offense of the one, ˙death reigns through the one, much rather,** ˙those **obtaining the superabundance of ˙grace and the gratuity of ˙righteousness shall be reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ.**

18 **Consequently then, as** it is **through one offense** *io*for **all** =**man**kind *io*for **condemnation, thus also** it is **through one righteous** response◊ *io*for **all** =**man**kind *io*for **life's justifying.** 19 **For even as through the disobedience of the one human the many are constituted sinners, thus also through the obedience of the One the many shall be** l**constituted righteous.**

20 **Yet law comes in by** the **way, that the offense should increase. Yet where ˙sin increases, ˙grace superexceeds,** 21 **that, even as ˙Sin reigns in ˙death, thus ˙Grace also should reign through righteousness** *io*for **life eonian through Jesus Christ, our ˙Lord.**

6 *a*What **then shall we** l**declare?** That **we may be persisting** in **˙sin that ˙grace should increase?**

2 **May it not** *b*come° to that! **We who***a* **die to ˙sin, how shall we still be living in it?** 3 **Or are you** l**ignorant that we, whoever are baptized into Christ Jesus, are baptized**

5:18 righteous response: lit. **righteous-effect,** rendered **righteous** outcome in v.16.

into His ˙death? [4] **We then are entombed together** with **Him through ˙baptism into ˙death, that, even as Christ is roused** *o*__from__ among the **dead through the glory of the Father, thus we´ also should walk in newness of life.** [5] **For if we have become planted together** in **the likeness of His ˙death,** *bt*__nevertheless we shall be of the resurrection also,__ [6] **knowing this, that our old ˙humanity is crucified together** with Him, **that the body of ˙Sin may be nullified,** for **us by no means ˙to be still slaving** for **˙Sin,** [7] **for** one ˙who **dies has been justified˚ from ˙Sin.**

[8] **Now if we die together** with **Christ, we ˡbelieve that we shall be living together** with **Him also,** [9] **having perceived that Christ, ¯being roused** *o*__from__ among the **dead, is no**^{t} **longer dying. Death is lording** it over **Him no**^{t} **longer,** [10] **for** in *w*__that He dies, He dies to ˙Sin once for all__ time, **yet** in *w*__that He is living, He is living to ˙God.__ [11] **Thus you also be reckoning˚ yourselves to be dead indeed to ˙Sin, yet living to ˙God in Christ Jesus, our ˙Lord.**

[12] **Let not ˙Sin then be reigning in your mortal ˙body,** *io*__for__ you **˙to be obeying its ˙lusts.** [13] **Nor yet be presenting your ˙members** as **implements of unrighteousness to ˙Sin, but present yourselves to ˙God as if ˡalive** *o*__from__ among the **dead, and your ˙members** as **implements of righteousness to ˙God.** [14] **For Sin shall not be lording** it over **you, for you are not under law, but under grace.**

[15] *a*__What then? Should we sin,__ seeing **that we are not under law, but under grace?**

May it not *b*__come˚__ to that! [16] **Are you not ˚aware that to whom you are presenting yourselves** as **slaves** *io*__for obedience,__ his **slaves you are, whom you are obeying, whether of Sin** *io*__for death, or of Obedience__ *io*__for righteousness?__ [17] **Now thanks** be **to ˙God that you were slaves of ˙Sin, yet you obey** *o*__from__ the **heart** the **type of teaching** *io*__to which you are given over.__ [18] **Now ¯being freed from ˙Sin, you are enslaved to ˙Righteousness.**

[19] As a **human am I saying** this **because** of **the infirmity of your ˙flesh. For even as you present your ˙members** as **slaves to ˙Uncleanness and to ˙Lawlessness** *io*__for ˙lawlessness, thus now present your ˙members__ as **slaves to ˙Righteousness** *io*__for holiness.__ [20] **For when you were slaves of ˙Sin you were free** as **to ˙Righteousness.** [21] *a*__What fruit, then, had you then?—__*on*__of which you are now ˡashamed˚, for indeed the consummation of those__ things is **death.** [22] **Yet now, ¯being freed from ˙Sin, yet ¯being enslaved to ˙God, you ˡhave your ˙fruit** *io*__for holiness. Now the consummation__ is **life eonian.** [23] **For the ¯ration of ˙Sin** is **death, yet the gracious** gift **of ˙God** is **life eonian in Christ Jesus, our ˙Lord.**

7 **Or are you ˡignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to** those who **ˡknow law), that the law is lording** it over a **˙human** *on*__for as much time as he is living?__

[2] **For** a **˙woman** in **wedlock is ˚bound˚ to** a **living ˙man** by **law. Yet if the man should die, she is ˚exempt˚ from the law of the man.** [3] **Consequently then,** while **the man** is **living, she will be ˡstyled** an **adulteress if she should become˚** *d*__another man's,__ **yet if the man should die, she is free from the law, ˙be**ing **no adulteress** on **¯becoming˚** *d*__another man's.__

[4] **So that, my brethren, you´ also are** put to **death to the law through the body of ˙Christ,** *io*__for you ˙to become˚__ *d*__An__**other's,** ˙Who is **roused** *o*__from__ among the **dead, that we should bear fruit to ˙God.** [5] **For when we were in the flesh, the passions of ˙sins,** ˙which were **through the law, operated˚ in our ˙members** *io* **˙to bear fruit to ˙Death.** [6] **Yet now we are exempted from the law, ¯dying** in that **in which we were retained˚, so that** it is for **us to be slaving in newness of spirit and not** in **oldness of letter.**

[7] *a*__What then shall we ˡdeclare?__ That **the law** is **sin?**

May it not *b*__come˚__ to that! **But ˙sin I know not except through law. For besides, I had not been aware** of **˙coveting except the law said, You shall not be coveting.** [8] **Now**

˙Sin, ¯getting an **incentive through the precept, produces°
in me** *e*__**all**__ manner of **coveting. For apart from law Sin** is
dead. 9 **Now I´ lived apart from law once, yet** at the **¯com-
ing of the precept ˙Sin revives. Yet I´ die,** 10 **and it is found**
that, **to me the precept** *io*__**for life, this**__ is *io*__**for death.**__ 11 **For
˙Sin, ¯getting** an **incentive through the precept, deludes
me, and through it, kills** me. 12 **So that the law indeed** is
holy, and the precept holy and righteous and good.

13 Does **˙good, then, become° death to me? May it no**t
*b*__**come°**__ to that**! But ˙Sin, that it may appear Sin,** is **pro-
ducing° death to me through ˙good, that ˙Sin may become°**
an *ac* **inordinate sinner through the precept.** 14 **For we
are °aware that the law is spiritual, yet I´ am fleshly, hav-
ing been disposed° of under ˙Sin.** 15 **For what I am effect-
ing° I ˡknow not, for not what I ˡwill, this I am** putting into
practice, but what I am hating, this I am doing. 16 **Now if
what I am not willing, this I am doing, I am conceding
that the law** is **ideal.** 17 **Yet now** it is **no***t* **longer I´** who **am
effecting° it, but ˙Sin** making its **home** *i* **in me.**

18 **For I am °aware that good is not** making its **home in
me (that is, in my ˙flesh), for ˙to ˡwill is lying° beside me, yet
˙to be effecting° the ideal** is **not.** 19 **For** it is **not** the **good**
*w*__**that I ˡwill**__ that **I am doing, but** the **evil** *w*__**that I am not
willing, this I am** putting into **practice.** 20 **Now if what I
am not willing, this I´ am doing,** it is **no***t* **longer I´** who **am
effecting° it, but ˙Sin** which is making its **home in me.**

21 **Consequently I am finding the law that,** at **my ˙willing
to be doing the ideal, the evil is lying° beside me.** 22 **For
I am ˡgratified° with the law of ˙God** *ac*__**as**__ to **the human
within,** 23 **yet I am observing** a **different law in my ˙mem-
bers, warring° with the law of my ˙mind, and** leading **me**
into **captivity** *i*__**to the law of ˙sin**__ ˙which **ˡis in my ˙members.**

24 A **wretched human** am **I!** *a*__**What will ˡrescue° me out
of this ˙body of ˙death? [Grace!]**__◊ 25 **I ˡthank ˙God, through**

7:24 [Grace!]: dropped out by haplography.

Jesus Christ, our ˙Lord. Consequently then, I´ *s*__**my**__self,
with **the mind indeed am slaving** for **God's law, yet** with
the flesh for **Sin's law.**

8 **Nothing consequently** is **now condemnation to** ˙those
in Christ Jesus.◊ 2 **For the spirit's ˙law of ˙life in Christ
Jesus frees you from the law of ˙sin and ˙death.** 3 **For** ˙what
is **impossible** to **the law, in which it was infirm through
the flesh,** does **˙God, ¯sending** His *sf*__**own ˙Son in**__ the **like-
ness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns ˙sin
in the flesh,** 4 **that the righteous** intent **of the law may be
fulfilled in us,** ˙who are **not walking** in **accord** with **flesh,
but** in **accord** with **spirit.**

5 **For** ˙those who ˡ**are** in **accord** with **flesh are ˡdisposed
to** ˙that which is **of the flesh, yet** ˙those who are in **accord**
with **spirit to** ˙that which is **of the spirit.** 6 **For the disposi-
tion of the flesh** is **death, yet the disposition of the spirit**
is **life and peace,** 7 **because the disposition of the flesh** is
enmity *io*__**to God, for it is not ˡsubject° to the law of ˙God,**__
for neither is it ˡable°. 8 **Now** ˙those who ˡ**are in flesh are
not ˡable° to please God.**

9 **Yet you´ are not in flesh, but in spirit, if so be that
God's spirit is** making its **home in you. Now if any**one ˡ**has
not Christ's spirit, this** one **is not His.** 10 **Now if Christ** is
in you, the body indeed is **dead because** of **sin, yet the
spirit** is **life because** of **righteousness.** 11 **Now if the spirit
of** Him ˙Who **rouses ˙Jesus** *o*__**from**__ among the **dead is** mak-
ing its **home in you,** He ˙Who **rouses Christ Jesus** *o*__**from**__
among the **dead will also be vivifying your mortal ˙bodies
because** of **His ˙spirit** making its **home** *i* **in you.** 12 **Conse-
quently then, brethren, debtors are we, not to the flesh,
˙to be living** in **accord** with **flesh,** 13 **for if you are living**
in **accord** with **flesh, you are ˡabout to be dying. Yet if,** in
spirit, you are putting **the practices of the body** to **death,
you will be living°.** 14 **For whoever are being led°** by **God's
spirit, these are sons of God.**

8:1 some manuscripts add**; No**t **accord**ing to **flesh are they walking;** *cf* v.4.

15 **For you** do **not get slavery's spirit** *io*to **fear again, but you get** the **spirit of sonship, in which we are crying, Abba, Father!** 16 **The spirit it**self **is testifying together** with **our spirit that we are children of God.** 17 **Yet if children, enjoyers also of** an **allotment, enjoyers indeed of** an **allotment** from **God, yet joint enjoyers of Christ's allotment, if so be that we are suffering together, that we should be glorified together also.**

18 **For I am reckoning° that the sufferings of the current era** do **not deserve** *td* **the glory** l**about to be revealed** *io*for **us.** 19 **For the premonition of the creation is awaiting° the unveiling of the sons of God.** 20 **For to vanity is the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because** of Him Who **subjects** it, *on*in **expectation** 21 **that the creation it**self **also shall be** l**freed from the slavery of corruption into the glori**ous **freedom of the children of God.** 22 **For we are °aware that the entire creation is groaning together and travailing together until now.** 23 **Yet not only** so, **but** we s**our**selves **also** who l**have the firstfruit of the spirit, we´** s**our**selves **also are groaning in ourselves, awaiting°** the **sonship, the deliverance of our body.** 24 **For to expectation are we saved. Now expectation, being observed°, is not expectation, for what any**one **is observing,** *a*why **is he expecting** it **also?** 25 **Now if we are expecting what we are not observing, we are awaiting°** it *th*with **endurance.**

26 **Now similarly, the spirit also is aiding° our infirmity, for** *a*what **we should pray°** for, to **accord** with **what** l**must be, we are not °aware, but the spirit it**self **is pleading for**s us with **inarticulate groanings.** 27 **Now** He Who is **searching the hearts is °aware** *a*what is **the disposition of the spirit,** *t*for in **accord** with **God is it pleading for**s the **saints.**

28 **Now we are °aware that, to** those who are **loving God, God is working all together** *io*for **good, to** those who l**are called accord**ing to the **purpose** 29 **that whom He foreknows He designates before**hand **also** to be **conformed** to **the image of His Son,** *io*for **Him to be Firstborn among**

many brethren. 30 **Now whom He designates before**hand **these He calls also, and whom He calls these He justifies also; now whom He justifies these He glorifies also.**

31 *a*What **then shall we** l**declare to***d* **these** things**? If God** is **for**s **us,** *a*who is **against us?** 32 **Surely He Who spares° not** His **own Son, but gives Him up for**s **us all, how shall He not, together** with **Him, also be grac**iously° grant**ing us all?**

33 *a*Who **will be indicting** *ag* **God's chosen** one**s? God, the** l**Justifier?** 34 *a*Who is **the** l**Condemner? Christ Jesus, the** One ¯**dying, yet rather** ¯**being roused, Who is also** *t*at **God's right** hand, **Who is pleading also for our sakes?**

35 *a*What **shall be separating us from the love of God in Christ Jesus? Affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?** 36 **Accord**ing **as it is °written° that**

> **On Your account we are being** put to **death°**
> **the whole day,**
> **We are reckoned as sheep** for **slaughter.** *Ps 44:22*

37 *bt*Nay! **in all these we are more** than **conquering through** Him Who **loves us.**

38 **For I am °persuaded° that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor** the **°present, nor** what is **impending, nor powers,** 39 **nor height, nor depth, nor any** *d*other **creation, will be** l**able° to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.**

9 The **truth am I telling in Christ, I am not lying°, my conscience testifying together** with **me in holy spirit,** 2 **that my sorrow is great, and unintermittent pain** is in **my heart—** 3 **for I´** s**my**self **wished° to be anathema from Christ—for**s **my brethren, my relatives accord**ing to the **flesh,** 4 **who***a* **are Israelites, whose** are **the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the legislation and the divine service and the promises;** 5 **whose** are **the fathers, and out of whom** is **the Christ accord**ing to the **flesh,** Who l**is** *on*over **all, God** be **blessed** *io*for **the eons. Amen!**

6 **Now** it is **not such as that the word of** ˙**God has lapsed,**
for not all ˙those **out** of **Israel, these** are **Israel;** 7 **neither**
that Abraham’**s seed are all children, but: In Isaac shall**
your seed be ˡ**called.** 8 **That is, that the children of the**
flesh, not these are the **children of** ˙**God, but the chil-**
dren of the promise is He reckoning˚ *io*__**for** the **seed.**
9 **For the word of** the **promise** is **this:** *ac*__**At this** ˙**season I**
shall ˡ**come**˚ **and** there **will be** for ˙**Sarah** a **son.** 10 **Yet not only**
so, **but Rebecca also** is **having** her **bed** *o* **of one, Isaac, our**
˙**father.** 11 **For not as yet** ¯**being born nor** ¯**putting** into **prac-**
tice anything good or bad, that the purpose of ˙**God may**
be remaining *ac*__**as** a **choice, not out of acts, but** *o* **of** Him
˙Who is **calling,** 12 **it is declared to her that: The greater**
shall be slaving for **the inferior,** *Gn 25:23* 13 **according as**
it is ˚**written**˚**, Jacob I love, yet** ˙**Esau I hate.** *Ma 1:2,3*
14 *a*__**What then shall we be declaring? Not** that there is
unrighteousness *b*__**with** ˙**God? May it not** *b*__**come**˚ to that!
15 **For to** ˙**Moses He is saying,**

I shall be ˡ**merciful to whomever I may be** ˡ**merciful,**
And I shall be pitying whomever
I may be pitying. *Ex 33:19*

16 **Consequently then,** it is **not of** him ˙who is **willing, nor**
of him ˙who is **racing, but of** ˙**God** the ˡ**Merciful.** 17 **For the**
scripture is saying to ˙**Pharaoh that:** *io*__**For this** selfsame
thing **I** *ro*__**raise you up, so that I should display**˚ **in you My**
˙**power, and so that My** ˙**Name should be published**˚ **in the**
entire earth. *Ex 9:16* 18 **Consequently then, to whom He**
ˡ**will He is** ˡ**merciful, yet whom He** ˡ**will He is hardening.**
19 **You will be protesting to me then,** *a*__**Why then is He**
still blaming˚**? for** *a*__**who has withstood His** ˙**intention?**
20 **O human!** *a*__**who are you´ to be sure** ˙who are **answer-**
ing again to ˙**God?** ˙That which is **molded will not** ˡ**protest**
to the ¯**molder,** *a*__**Why** do **you make me thus?** *Is 29:16; 45:9*
21 **Or** ˡ**has not the potter** the **right** over **the clay, out of the**

same kneading to make *w*__**one vessel indeed** *io*__**for honor,**
yet *w*__**one** *io*__**for dishonor?** 22 **Now if** ˙**God, wanting to dis-**
play˚ His ˙**indignation and to make His** ˙**powerful** doings
known, carries *i*__**with much patience** the **vessels of indig-**
nation, ˚**adapted**˚ *io*__**for destruction,** 23 it is **that He should**
also make known the riches of His ˙**glory on** the **vessels of**
mercy, which He makes **ready before** *io*__**for glory—** 24 **us,**
whom He calls also, not only out of the **Jews, but out of**
the **nations also.** 25 **As He is saying in** ˙**Hosea also:**

I shall be calling ˙those who are **not My people,**
My people,
And she ˙who is **not** ˚**beloved**˚**,** ˚**Beloved**˚**,**
26 **And it shall be in the place where it is declared**
to them, Not My people are **you,**
There they shall be ˡ**called**
sons of the **living God.** *Ho 1:10; 2:23*

27 **Now Isaiah is crying over** ˙**Israel, If the number of**
the sons of **Israel should be as the sand of the sea, the**
residue shall be ˡ**saved,** *Is 10:22,23* 28 **for** a ˡ**conclusive and**
ˡ**concise account**ing the **Lord will be doing on the earth.**
29 **And accord**ing **as Isaiah** ˚**declared before,**

Except the **Lord of hosts conserves us** a **seed,**
As Sodom would we become,
And *as* to **Gomorrah would we be likened.** *Is 1:9*

30 *a*__**What then shall we be declaring? That** the **nations**
˙who are **not pursuing righteousness overtake righteous-**
ness, yet a **righteousness** ˙which is **out of faith.** 31 **Yet Israel,**
pursuing a **law of righteousness, into** a **law of righteous-**
ness does **not outstrip.** 32 **Wherefore?** Seeing **that** it is **not**
out of faith, but as out of law works they stumble on **the**
stumbling ˙**stone,** 33 **accord**ing **as it is** ˚**written**˚**:**

ˡ**Lo**˚**! I am laying in Zion** a **Stumbling Stone**
and a **Snare Rock,**

And the one **believing on Him**
shall not be [l]**disgraced.**[Is 28:16]

10 Indeed, brethren, the delight of my ·**heart and** my ·**petition to**[d] ·**God for their sake** is [io]**for salvation.** 2 **For I am testifying to them that they** [l]**have** a **zeal of God, but not** in **accord** with **recognition.** 3 **For they, being ignorant of the righteousness of** ·**God and seeking to establish** ·their **own righteousness, are not subjected to the righteousness of** ·**God.** 4 **For Christ** is the **consummation of law** [io]**for righteousness to every**one ·who is **believing.**

5 **For Moses is writing** of **the righteousness** ·which is [o] **of law, that** a **human** ·who **does** the =**same shall be living**° **in it.**[Lv 18:5] 6 **Yet the righteousness** [o] **of faith is saying thus: You may not say in your** ·**heart,**[Dt 8:18; 9:4] [a]**Who will be ascending**° **into** ·**heaven?—that is, to lead Christ down—** 7 **or** [a]**Who will be descending**° **into the abyss?**[Dt 30:12,13]**—that is, to lead Christ up** [o]**from** among the **dead.** 8 **But** [a]**what is it saying? Near you is the declaration, in your** ·**mouth and in your** ·**heart**[Dt 30:14]**—that is, the declaration of** ·**faith which we are heralding** 9 **that, if ever you should avow** [i]**with your** ·**mouth the declaration that Jesus** is **Lord, and should believe in your** ·**heart that** ·**God rouses Him** [o]**from** among the **dead, you shall be** [l]**saved.** 10 **For** with the **heart it is** [l]**believed**° [io]**for righteousness, yet** with the **mouth it is** [l]**avowed**° [io]**for salvation.** 11 **For the scripture is saying: Every**one ·who is **believing on Him shall not be** [l]**disgraced.**[Is 28:16] 12 **For** there **is no**[t] **distinction** [bs]**between Jew and Greek, for the same** One is **Lord of all, being rich** [io]**for all** ·who are **invoking**° **Him.** 13 **For every**one, **whoever should invoke**° **the Name of** the **Lord, shall be** [l]**saved.**[Jl 2:32]

14 **How then should they invoke**° One [io]**in Whom they** do **not believe? Yet how should they believe** One **of Whom they** do **not hear? Yet how should they hear apart from** one **heralding?** 15 **Yet how should they herald if ever they**

should not be commissioned? According **as it is** °**written**°**:**
How beautiful are **the feet of** ·those bring**ing** an **evangel**° of **good!**[Is 52:7] 16 **But not all obey the evangel, for Isaiah is saying,**

Lord, [a]**who believes our** ·**tidings?**[Is 53:1]

17 **Consequently** ·**faith** is **out of tidings, yet the tidings through** a **declaration of Christ.**

18 **But, I am saying,** Do **they not hear** at [nt]**all? To be sure!**

Into the entire [l]**earth comes out their** ·**utterance,**
And into the ends of the [l]**inhabited**° earth **their** ·**declarations.**[Ps 19:4]

19 **But, I am saying,** Does **not Israel know** at [nt]**all? First Moses is saying,**

I′ shall be provok**ing you** to **jealousy** [on]**over** those **not** a **nation;**
[on]**Over** an **unintelligent nation shall I be vexing you.**[Dt 32:21]

20 **Yet Isaiah is very daring and is saying,**

I am found by ·those who **are not seeking Me;**
I become° **disclosed to** ·those who are
not inquiring for **Me.**[Is 65:1]

21 **Now to**[d] ·**Israel He is saying,**

The whole day I spread out My ·**hands to**[d] a [l]**stubborn and contradicting people!**[Is 65:2]

11 I am saying then, Does **not** ·**God thrust**° **away His** ·**people? May it not** [b]**come**° to that**! For I′ also am** an **Israelite, out of Abraham**'s **seed, Benjamin**'s **tribe.** 2 ·**God** does **not thrust**° **away His** ·**people whom He foreknows.**

Or have you not perceived in Elijah [a]**what the scripture is saying as he is pleading** with ·**God against** ·**Israel?**

3 **Lord, Your ˙prophets they kill, Your ˙altars they dig**
down, and I´ am left alone, and they are seeking my ˙soul.
1K 19:10,14

4 **But** *a* **what is the** divine **appraisal saying to him?**

I leave for **Myself seven thousand men who***a* do **not**
bow the **knee to the** image of **Baal.***1K 19:18*

5 **Thus then in the current era also,** there **has come** to **be**
a **remnant accord**ing to the **choice of grace.** 6 **Now if** it is
in **grace** it is **no***t* **longer out of works, else the grace is**
coming˚ to **be no***t* **longer grace. Now if** it is **out of works**
it is no*t* **longer grace, else the work is no***t* **longer work.**
7 *a***What then? What Israel is seeking for, this she** doe**s**
not encounter, yet the chosen encounter it. **Now the rest**
are calloused, 8 **even as it is** ˚**written**˚, ˙**God gives them** a
spirit of stupor,*Is 29:10* **eyes no**t ˙**to be observing, and**
ears not ˙**to be hearing, till** this **very** ˙**day.***Dt 29:4*
9 **And David is saying,**

Let their ˙table become *io* a **trap and** *io* a **mesh,**
And *io* a **snare and** *io* a **repayment to them:**
10 **Darkened be their ˙eyes, no**t ˙**to be observing,**
And their ˙backs **bow together continually.***Ps 69:22,23*

11 **I am saying then,** Do **they no**t **trip that they should**
fall? May it not *b***come**˚ to that**! But** in **their ˙offense** is ˙**sal-**
vation to the nations *io* ˙**to** provoke **them** to **jealousy.**
12 **Now if their ˙offense** is the **world's riches and their ˙dis-**
comfiture the **nations' riches, how much rather** ˙that which
fills them! 13 **Now to you am I saying, to the nations,** *on***in**
as much as indeed then I´ am the **apostle of** the **nations,**
I am glorifying my ˙dispensation, 14 **if** some**how I should**
provoke those **of my ˙flesh** to **jealousy and should save**
*a***some** *o* **of them.** 15 **For if their ˙casting away** is the **con-**
ciliation of the **world,** *a***what** will **the taking back** be **if**
not **life** *o***from** among the **dead?**

16 **Now if the firstfruit** is **holy the kneading** is **also; and**
if the root is **holy the boughs** are **also.** 17 **Now if** *a***some of**
the boughs are broken out, yet you´, being a **wild olive,**
are grafted among them and become˚ **joint participant of**
the root and ˙**fatness of the olive,** 18 **be no**t **vaunting**˚ over
the boughs. Yet if you are vaunting˚ **you´ are not bearing**
the root, but the root you.
19 **You will be declaring then: Boughs are broken out**
that I´ may be grafted in. 20 **Ideally!** By ˙**unbelief are they**
broken out, yet you´ ˚**stand** in ˙**faith. Be no**t ˡ**haughty, but**
ˡ**fear.** 21 **For if** ˙**God spares**˚ **not the** *ac* **natur**al **boughs, nei-**
ther will He be sparing˚ **you!** 22 **Perceive then** the **kindness**
and severity of ˙**God! On** ˙those **indeed** who are ¯**falling,**
severity, yet on you, God's kindness, if you should be
persisting in **the kindness: else you´ also will be** ˡ**hewn**
out. 23 **Now** *t***they also, if they should no**t **be persisting** in
˙**unbelief, will be** ˡ**grafted** in, **for** ˙**God** ˡ**is able to graft them**
in **again.** 24 **For if you´ are hewn out** *o* **of** an ˙**olive wild** *ac***by**
nature, and, beside nature, are grafted into a **cultivated**
olive tree, **how much rather shall these,** ˙who are in **accord**
with **nature, be** ˡ**grafted** in**to** ˙their **own olive** tree**!**
25 **For I am not willing** for **you to be** ˡ**ignorant** of **this**
˙**secret, brethren, lest you may be** passing for **prudent**
among yourselves, that callousness, *f***in part,** on ˙**Israel**
has *b***come until** *w* **the complement of the nations may**
enter. 26 **And thus** *e***all Israel shall be** ˡ**saved, accord**ing
as it is ˚**written**˚**,**

Arriving out of Zion shall be the ˡ**Rescuer.**
He will be turning away irreverence from Jacob.
27 **And this** is *b* **My ˙covenant** with **them**
Whenever I should eliminate˚ **their ˙sins.**
Ps 14:7; Is 59:20,21; Jr 31:34

28 *ac***As** to **the evangel indeed** they are **enemies because**
of **you, yet** *ac***as** to ˙**choice** they are **beloved because** of **the**
fathers.

29 **For unregretted** are **the graces and the calling of**
·God. 30 **For even as you´ once are stubborn to**ward ·**God,**
yet now are shown **mercy** at **their ·stubbornness,** 31 **thus**
these also are now stubborn to this ·**mercy of yours, that**
now they´ also may be shown **mercy.** 32 **For ·God locks** up
·**all together** *io*·**in stubbornness that He should be mer-**
ciful to ·all.

33 **O,** the **depth of** the **riches and** the **wisdom and** the
knowledge of God! How inscrutable are **His ·judgments,**
and untraceable His ·ways! 34 **For** *a*·**who knows** the **mind of**
the **Lord? or** *a*·**who becomes**° **His adviser?** 35 **or** *a*·**who gives**
to Him first, and it will be |**repaid him?** 36 seeing **that out**
of Him and through Him and *io*·**for Him** is ·**all: to Him** be
the glory *io*·**for the eons! Amen!**

12 **I am entreating you then, brethren,** *th*·**by the pities of**
·**God, to present your ·bodies** a **sacrifice, living, holy, well**
pleasing to ·God, your logical ·divine service, 2 **and no**t
to be |**configured**° **to this ·eon, but to be** |**transformed**° by
the renewing of your ·mind, *io*·**for you ·to be testing** *a*·**what**
is **the will of ·God, ·good and well pleasing and perfect.**

3 **For I am saying, through the grace** ·which is ¯**being**
given to me, to everyone ·who |**is among you, no**t **to be**
overweening *b*·**beyond what** your |**disposi**tion |**must be,**
but ·to be *io*·**of** a |**sane** |**disposi**tion, **as ·God parts to each**
the **measure of faith.** 4 **For even as in one body we** |**have**
many members, yet all the members |**have not the same**
function, 5 **thus we,** ·who are **many, are one body in Christ,**
yet ·individually members of one another. 6 **Now having**
graces excelling in **accord** with **the grace** ·which is ¯**being**
given to us, whether prophecy, exercise it in **accord** with
the analogy of the faith; 7 **or dispensing, in the dispen-**
sation; or the |**teacher, in ·teaching;** 8 **or the** |**entreater,**
in ·entreaty; the |**sharer,** *i*·**with generosity; the** |**presider**°,
i·**with diligence; the** |**merciful** one, *i*·**with glee.**

9 Let ·**love** be **unfeigned. Abhorring** ·that which is **wicked,**

clinging° **to ·good,** 10 let us have **fond affection** *io*·**for one**
another with ·**brotherly fondness,** in ·**honor deeming one**
another first, 11 in ·**diligence no**t **slothful,** |**fervent** in ·**spirit,**
slaving for **the Lord,** 12 **rejoicing** in ·**expectation, endur-**
ing in ·**affliction, persevering** in ·**prayer,** 13 **contributing**
to the needs of the saints, pursuing ·hospitality.

14 |**Bless** ·those who are **persecuting you:** |**bless, and** do
not |**curse**°, 15 so as **to be rejoicing with** those **rejoicing,**
lamenting with those **lamenting,** 16 **being** ·*s*·**mutually dis-**
posed to *io* **one another, not being disposed to** ·that which is
high, but being led° **away** *tg* **to the humble.** Do **no**t |*b*·**come**°
to pass for **prudent** *b*·**with yourselves.** 17 **To no one** |**render**
evil *id*·**for evil,** mak**ing** =**ideal provi**sion **in** the **sight of all**
=**man**kind, 18 **if** it is **possible** ·contingent *o*·**on you. Being at**
peace with all =**man**kind, 19 you are **no**t **avenging your-**
selves, beloved, but give place to His ·**indignation, for it**
is °**written**°**, Mine** is **vengeance! I´ will** |**repay!** the **Lord**
is saying. *Dt 32:35,36* 20 **But: If your ·enemy should be hun-**
gering, give **him** the |**morsel; if he should be thirsting,**
give **him** to |**drink; for** in **doing this you will be heaping**
embers of fire on his ·head. *Pr 25:21,22* 21 **Be no**t |**conquered**°
by ·evil; but |**conquer ·evil** *i*·**with ·good.**

13 **Let every soul be** |**subject**° **to** the |**superior author-**
ities, for there **is no***t* **authority except** set **by God. Now**
·those which |**are,** |**have been set**° **by God,** 2 **so that** he ·who
is **resisting** an ·**authority has withstood ·God's ·mandate.**
Now ·those who |**have withstood will be getting**° **judgment**
for **themselves,** 3 **for ·magistrates are not** a **fear to the good**
act, but to the evil. Now you do **no**t |**want to be fearing**°
the authority. |**Do ·good, and you will be having applause**
o·**from it.** 4 **For it is God's servant** *io*·**for you**r **·good. Now if**
you should be doing ·evil, |**fear**°**, for not feignedly is it**
wearing the sword. For it is God's servant, an **avenger**
io·**for indignation to** him ·who is **committing ·evil.** 5 **Where-**
fore it is **necessary to be** |**subject**°**, not only because** of

˙**indignation, but also because** of ˙**conscience.**

6 **For therefore you are settling taxes also, for they are God's ministers,** ˡ**perpetuated** *io*˙**for this** self-**same** thing. 7 **Render to all** ˙their **dues, to** ˙whom ˙**tax,** ˙**tax, to** ˙whom ˙**tribute,** ˙**tribute, to** ˙whom ˙**fear,** ˙**fear, to** ˙whom ˙**honor,** ˙**honor.**

8 **To no one** ˡ**owe** *n*˙**any**thing **except** ˙**to be loving one another, for** he ˙who is **loving** *d*˙an**other has fulfilled law.** 9 **For** ˙this: **You shall not** commit ˡ**adultery, you shall not** ˡ**murder, you shall not** ˡ**steal, you shall not** ˡ**testify falsely, you shall not** ˡ**covet;** *Ex 20:13-17; Dt 5:18-21* **and if** there is **any** *d*˙**other precept, it is** ˡ**summed**° **up in this** ˙**saying, in** ˙this: **You shall** ˡ**love your** ˙**associate as yourself.** *Lv 19:18* 10 ˙**Love is not working**° **evil to** an ˙**associate.** The **complement then of law** is ˙**love.**

11 **This also** do, **being** ˚**aware** of **the era, that** it is **already** the **hour** for **us to be roused out of sleep, for now** is **our** ˙**salvation nearer than when we believe.** 12 **The night progresses, yet the day is** ˚**near. We then should put**° **off the acts of** ˙**darkness, yet should put**° **on the implements of** ˙**light.** 13 **As in** the **day, respectably, should we walk, not** in **revelries and drunkenness, not** in **chambering and wantonness, not** in **strife and jealousy,** 14 **but put**° **on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be making**° **no provision** *io*˙**for** the **lusts of the flesh.**

14 **Now the** ˡ**infirm** in **the faith be taking**° **to** yourselves**,** but **not** *io*˙**for discrimination of reasonings.** 2 *w*˙**One indeed is believing to eat all** things, **yet the** ˡ**infirm** one **is eating greens.** 3 **Let not** him ˙who is **eating be scorning** him ˙who is **not eating. Yet let not** him ˙who is **not eating be judging** him ˙who is **eating, for** ˙**God takes**° **him to** Himself. 4 *a*˙**Who are you**´ ˙who are **judging** An**other's domestic? To** his ˙**own Master he is standing or falling. Now he will be** made to ˡ**stand, for the Lord is** ˡ**able**° **to** make **him stand.**

5 *w*˙**One indeed is deciding** for one **day** rather *b*˙**than** another **day, yet** *w*˙**one is deciding** for **every day. Let each** one **be**

fully ˡ**assured**° **in** his ˙**own mind.** 6 He ˙who is ˡ**disposed to the day is** ˡ**disposed to** it **to** the **Lord; and** he ˙who is **eating is eating to** the **Lord, for he is thanking** ˙**God. And** he ˙who is **not eating, to** the **Lord is not eating, and is thanking** ˙**God.** 7 **For not one of us is living to himself, and not one is dying to himself.** 8 **For** *bs*˙**both, if we should be living, to the Lord are we living,** *bs*˙**and if we should be dying, to the Lord are we dying. Then** *bs*˙**both if we should be living** *bs*˙**and if we should be dying we are the Lord's.** 9 **For** *io*˙**for this Christ dies and lives, that He should be** ¯˙**Lord of** the **dead as well as of** the **living.**

10 **Now** *a*˙**why are you**´ **judging your** ˙**brother? Or** *a*˙**why are you**´ **also scorning your** ˙**brother? For all** of **us shall be** ˡ**presented**° at **the dais of** ˙**God,** 11 **for it is** ˚˙**written**°**:**

> **Living am I**´**,** the **Lord is saying,**
> *t*˙**For to Me shall** ˡ**bow every knee,**
> **And every tongue shall be acclaiming**° ˙**God!** *Is 45:23*

12 **Consequently then, each of us shall be giving account concerning himself to** ˙**God.** 13 **By no means then should we still be judging one another, but rather decide this, not** ˙**to** ˡ**place** a **stumbling** block for a ˙**brother, or** a **snare.**

14 **I have perceived and am** ˚**persuaded**° **in** the **Lord Jesus that nothing** is **contaminating** *th*˙**of itself, except** that **the** one **reckoning**° **any**thing **to be contaminating, to that** one it is **contaminating.** 15 **For if because** of **food your** ˙**brother is sorrowing**°**, you are not** *t* **longer walking accord**ing to **love.** Do **not**, by **your** ˙**food,** ˡ**destroy that** one **for whose sake Christ dies.** 16 **Let not then your** ˙**good be** ˡ**calumniated**°**,** 17 **for the kingdom of** ˙**God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in holy spirit.** 18 **For** he ˙who **in this** is **slaving** for ˙**Christ** is **well pleasing to** ˙**God and** at**tested** by ˙˭**man**kind.

19 **Consequently then, we are pursuing** ˙that which makes for ˙**peace and** ˙that which is for **the edification of** *io* ˙**one**

another. 20 **Not on account of food** [l]**demolish the work of** ·**God. All indeed** is **clean, but** it is **evil to the human** ·who [th]**with stumbling** is **eating.** 21 It is **ideal not** ·**to eat** =**meat, nor yet to drink wine, nor yet** to do aught [i]**by which your** ·**brother is stumbling, or is being snared**° **or weakened.**

22 The **faith which you´** [l]**have, have** [ac]**for yourself in** ·**God's sight. Happy** is he ·who is **not judging himself in** that **which he is** at**testing.** 23 **Now** he ·who is **doubting**° **if he should eat is** °**condemned**°, seeing **that** it is **not out of faith. Now every**thing **which** is **not out of faith is sin.**

15 **Now we´, the able,** [l]**ought to be bearing the infirmities of the impotent, and not to be pleasing ourselves.** 2 **Let each of us** [l]**please** his ·**associate** [io]**for** his ·**good, toward** his **edification.** 3 **For** ·**Christ also pleases not Himself, but accord**ing **as it is** °**written**°**, The reproaches of** ·those **reproaching You fall** [on] **on Me.**[Ps 69:9] 4 **For whatever is written before is written** [io]**for** ·this **teaching** of **ours, that through the endurance and** [th] **the consolation of the scriptures we may** [l]**have** ·**expectation.**

5 **Now may the God of** ·**endurance and** ·**consolation grant you** ·**to be** [s]**mutually** [l]**disposed to** [i] **one another, accord**ing to **Christ Jesus,** 6 **that with one accord,** [i]**with one mouth, you may be glorifying the God and Father of our** ·**Lord Jesus Christ.** 7 **Wherefore be taking**° **one another to** yourselves **accord**ing **as** ·**Christ also takes**° **you to** Himself, [io]**for** the **glory of** ·**God.**

8 **For I am saying** that **Christ has become**° the **Servant of** the **Circumcision for** the **sake of** the **truth of God,** [io] ·**to confirm the patriarchal** ·**promises.** 9 **Yet the nations** are **to glorify** ·**God for**[s] His **mercy, accord**ing **as it is** °**written**°**,**

> **Therefore I shall be acclaiming**° **You among** the **nations,**
> **And to Your** ·**Name shall I be playing** music.[Ps 18:49]

10 **And again he is saying,**

> **Be merry, nations, with His** ·**people!**[Dt 32:43]

11 **And again he is saying,**

> [l]**Praise the Lord, all the nations,**
> **And let them laud Him, all the peoples.**[Ps 117:1]

12 **And again Isaiah is saying,**

> There **will be the Root of** ·**Jesse,**
> **And** He ·Who is **rising**° **to be** [l]**Chief of** the **nations:**
> **On Him will** the **nations** [l]**rely.**[Is 11:10]

13 **Now may the God of** ·**expectation fill you** with [e]**all joy and peace in** ·**believing,** [io]**for you** ·**to be superabounding in** ·**expectation, in** the **power of holy spirit.**

14 **Now I´** [s]**my**self **also am** °**persuaded**° **concerning you, my brethren, that you** [s]**your**selves **also are bulging** with **goodness,** °**filled**° with [en]**all** ·**knowledge,** [l]**able**° **also to be admonishing one another.** 15 **Yet more daringly** do **I write to you,** [f]**in part, as prompting you, because** of **the grace** ·which is ⁻**being given to me from** ·**God,** 16 [io]**for me** ·**to be** the **minister of Christ Jesus** [io]**for the nations, acting** as a **priest** of **the evangel of** ·**God, that the approach** present **of the nations may become**° **well received, having been hallowed**° [i]**by holy spirit.**

17 **I** [l]**have then** a ·**boast in Christ Jesus,** in ·that which is **toward** ·**God.** 18 **For I am not daring to** [l]**speak any of what Christ** does **not effect**° **through me** [io]**for** the **obedience of** the **nations,** in **word and work,** 19 **in** the **power of signs and miracles, in** the **power of God's spirit, so that from Jerusalem and around unto** ·**Illyricum I have completed the evangel of the Christ.** 20 **Yet thus** I am [l]**ambitious**° **to be** bring**ing** the **evangel**° **where**[e] **Christ is not named lest I may be building on** an**other's foundation,** 21 **but accord**ing **as it is** °**written**°**,**

> **They to whom it was not** ⁻**informed concerning**

Him, they shall ˡsee°,
And they who have not heard,
they shall ˡunderstand. *Is 52:15*

22 **Wherefore I was ˙much hindered° also ˙to come to**[d] **you.** 23 **Yet now having by no means still place in these ˙regions, yet having** [f]**for many years** a **longing ˙to come to**[d] **you,** 24 **as ever I may be going° into ˙Spain (for I am expecting,** while **going° through, to gaze°** upon **you, and by you to be sent forward there, if I should ever first be filled** [f]**in part** by **you)—**25 **yet now I am going°** [io]**to Jerusalem, dispensing to the saints.** 26 **For** it **delight**s **Macedonia and Achaia to make°** [a]**some contribution** [io]**for the poor of the saints** ˙who are **in Jerusalem.** 27 **For they** are **delight**ed, **and they are their debtors, for if the nations participate** in **their ˙spiritual** things **they ˡought to minister to them in ˙fleshly** things **also.** 28 When **then, ¯performing this, and ¯sealing° to them this ˙fruit, I shall be coming° away through you into Spain.** 29 **Now I am ˚aware that,** in **coming° to**[d] **you, I shall be coming°** [i]**with** the **blessing of Christ** which **fills.**

30 **Now I am entreating you, brethren, through our ˙Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the spirit, to struggle° together** with **me in ˙prayers to**[d] **˙God for**[s] **me,** 31 **that I should be rescued from the ˡstubborn in ˙Judea, and my ˙dispensation ˙**[io]**for Jerusalem may become° well received** by **the saints,** 32 and **that ¯coming to**[d] **you** [i]**with joy through** the **will of God, I should rest° together** with **you.** 33 **Now the God of ˙peace** be **with all of you! Amen!**

16 **Now I am commending to you Phoebe, our ˙sister, being** a **servant also of the ecclesia ˙in Cenchrea,** 2 **that you should receive° her in** the **Lord worthily of the saints, and may stand by her in whatever matter she may be needing you, for she´ becomes** a **patroness of many as well as** [s] **of my**self.

3 **Greet° Prisca and Aquila, my ˙fellow workers in Christ Jesus** 4 **(who**[a]**, for** the **sake of my ˙soul, jeopardize ˙**their [sf]**own neck**s, **whom not only I´ am thanking, but all the ecclesias of the nations also)** 5 **and the ecclesia** [ac]**at their house.**

Greet° Epanetus, my ˙beloved, who is the **firstfruit of the** province of **Asia** [io]**for Christ.** 6 **Greet° Mary, who**[a] **toils much** [io]**for you.** 7 **Greet° Andronicus and Junias, my ˙relatives and my ˙fellow captives who**[a] **are notable among the apostles, who also ˚come** to **be in Christ before me.** 8 **Greet° Ampliatos, my ˙beloved in** the **Lord.** 9 **Greet° Urbanus, our ˙fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my ˙beloved.** 10 **Greet° Apelles,** ˙at**tested in Christ. Greet°** ˙those who are [o] **of ˙Aristobulus.** 11 **Greet° Herodion, my ˙relative. Greet°** ˙those [o] **of ˙Narcissus** ˙who ˡ**are in** the **Lord.** 12 **Greet° Tryphena and Tryphosa,** ˙who are **toiling in** the **Lord. Greet° Persis, the beloved, who**[a] **toils much in** the **Lord.** 13 **Greet° Rufus, ˙chosen in** the **Lord, and his ˙mother and mine.** 14 **Greet° Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the brethren** [tg]**with them.** 15 **Greet° Philologos and Julia, Nereus and his ˙sister, and Olympas and all the saints** [tg]**with them.** 16 **Greet° one another** [i]**with** a **holy kiss. Greeting° you are all the ecclesias of ˙Christ.**

17 **Now I am entreating you, brethren, to be noting** ˙those who are **making ˙dissensions and ˙snares beside the teaching which you´ ¯learned, and** ˡ**avoid** [f] **them,** 18 **for ˙such** for **our ˙Lord Christ are not slaving, but** for ˙their [sf]**own bowel**s, **and through ˙compliments and adulation are deluding the hearts of the innocent.** 19 **For your ˙obedience reaches° out** [io]**to all.** [on]**Over you then am I rejoicing. Now I am wanting you to be wise indeed** [io]**for ˙good, yet artless** [io]**for ˙evil.** 20 **Now the God of ˙peace will be crushing ˙Satan under your ˙feet** [i] **swift**ly. **The grace of our ˙Lord Jesus** be **with you!**

21 **Greeting° you is Timothy, my ˙fellow worker, and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my ˙relatives.**

[22] **I′, Tertius, the ¯writer** of **the epistle, am greeting° you in** the **Lord.** [23] **Greeting° you is Gaius, my ˙host, and of the whole ecclesia. Greeting° you is Erastus, the administrator of the city, and Quartus, the brother.** *no 24*

[25] **Now to** Him ˙Who is ˡ**able° to establish you** in **accord** with **my ˙evangel, and the heralding of Christ Jesus** in **accord** with the **revelation of** a **secret °hushed°** in **times eonian,** [26] **yet ¯being manifested now** *bs*˙**and through prophetic scriptures, accord**ing to the **injunction of the eonian God ¯being made known** *io*˙**to all ˙nations** *io*˙**for faith's obedience—**[27] **to** the **only,** and **wise God, through Christ Jesus,** be ˙**glory** *io*˙**for the eons of the eons. Amen!**

HABAKKUK 2:3,4

3 **For** the **vision** is *fr*˙**yet for** an **appointed** time;
And it shall [7]**bud~** ›**at** the **end,**
and it shall not prove a **lie.**
If [7]**He~ be dallying, tarry for** [7]**Him~,**
For [7]the **Coming** One **shall come~,**
[7]**and***cs* [7]**He~ shall not be late.**
4 *bd*˙**If He is made presumptuous,**
His soul is not upright in Him;
[7]**If He is shrinking,**
My soul is not delighting in Him.*0*
+**Yet** the **Righteous** One **in His faith, He shall live.**

This revision of the Concordant Version of Habakkuk 2:3,4 is based on the Septuagint Version as reflected in Acts 7:52 ("the coming of the Righteous One") and Hebrews 10:37,38 ("For still how very little, He Who is coming will be arriving and not delaying. Now My Righteous One by faith shall be living, and: If He should ever be shrinking, My soul is not delighting in Him").

NOTES ON ROMANS

1:1 As a **slave of Christ Jesus** and a **called apostle,** Paul presents **God's evangel,** for which he was **severed** from the former apostles (Acts 13:2) and from his fleshly relationship to Israel (Gal.1:15).

Paul dates his apostleship from the commission he received at Antioch when he was severed from the rest to preach the evangel of God to the nations. Hitherto only Jews and proselytes like Cornelius heard the evangel. Now Paul is called to preach justification to the other nations. This evangel was promised before. AEK

God's evangel is that message from God *concerning His Son* which is the vehicle of *God's power for salvation,* and in which *God's righteousness is revealed* (Rom.1:3,16,17).

To the Corinthians Paul worded this evangel as he had brought it to them and as they had accepted it, as follows: "Christ dies for our sins in accord with the scriptures, and . . . He was entombed, and . . . He has been roused the third day in accord with the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:1,3,4).

1:3,4 God's evangel is **concerning His Son,** not concerning us or what we must do. It concerns **Jesus Christ, our Lord,** Who dies for our sakes and is roused from the dead (Rom.4:24,25; 5:8; 6:10; 8:3,32; 1 Cor.15:3,4).

With a view to future results of Christ's death and resurrection, Christ is identified as **David's seed, according to the flesh,** which speaks of His place as King (promised before, for example, in 2 Sam.7:12; Isa.9:6,7; *cf* Rom.11: 26,27; 15:12). Yet also, in accord with the evangel which is committed to Paul (2 Tim.2:8), this kingship will include

Christ's celestial kingdom (2 Tim.4:18), and His rule until all enemies are subjected under His feet (1 Cor.15:25-28).

This glorious future will involve **the resurrection of the dead** (*cf* Rom.6:5,6 concerning believers; 1 Cor.15:20-22 concerning all) by which operation Christ is **designated Son of God with power,** bringing life out of death by the **spirit of holiness** (*cf* John 5:26; 11:25). This is displayed in a limited measure during His earthly ministry (*cf* Mark 5:35-42; Luke 7:11-16; John 11:41-44), foreshadowing what will culminate in God's own time in the vivification of all. The evangel is a message of life out of death.

1:16 God's evangel is the message of **God's power for salvation.** From the human standpoint, the word of the cross appears to be a word altogether of shame, of weakness and stupidity, but the message of the death and resurrection of God's Son not only announces God's achievement of righteousness, holiness and deliverance for sinners, but brings these blessings into the lives of believers (*cf* 1 Cor. 1:18-31), in accord with the firstfruit (or "earnest") of the spirit (*cf* Rom.8:23; 2 Cor.1:22; 5:5; Eph.1:13,14).

1:17 God does not save unless it can be a righteous operation and ultimately be realized and enjoyed as so. His power and His righteousness are equal partners with His love, so that salvation is necessarily justification ("righteous-ification"), and indeed, vindication.

God's righteousness is being revealed out of faith. It is *made manifest through Jesus Christ's faith* (Rom.3:21,22). This accords with the words of the prophet: "Yet the Righteous One, in His faith, He shall live" (Hab.2:4, CVOT, revised[1]). When the Righteous One came (*cf* Hab.2:3; Acts 7:52; Heb.10:37,38) He was obedient in faith unto the death of the cross (Phil.2:8; 3:9). In that Christ dies once and for all time, all die (Rom.6:10; 2 Cor.5:14). Furthermore, all will be vivified in Him, (1 Cor.15:22). Consequently, God is now displayed as the righteous Justifier ("Righteous-ifier") of the human by means of the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26).

1. *cf* p.176.

This righteous work of God is already in operation in spirit in the believer's life. It is **into faith,** that is, for the believer's faith. The citation of Habakkuk 2:4, thus has an application to us as well, for righteousness is reckoned to us "who are *believing* on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead, Who was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying" (Rom.4:24,25). We who are believing *live* today in this faith, and we shall *live* in resurrection on the basis of Christ's faith (Rom.6:5).

1:18-3:20 This long section (corresponding to Romans 3:23) shows why God's evangel is so desperately needed, and thus so preeminently *well.* Here our attention is drawn to human irreverence and unrighteousness and the revelation of God's indignation. What is said about God's righteousness is related to His work of judgment. These sixty-four verses are in contrast to God's evangel concerning His Son, and make no reference to it or to Jesus Christ except in the brief parenthetical reference in 2:16.

2:16 With the mention of **the hidden things of humanity** (which makes any possibility of justification through God's righteous judgment wholly unlikely, indeed nil), Paul interrupts this long exposition of hopelessness to point ahead to **his evangel** which manifests God's righteousness **through Jesus Christ,** that is, *through His faith.* and announces justification *through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus* (*cf* Rom.3:21-24).

3:21,22 Justification as a manifestation of **God's righteousness** can come about only **apart from law,** and only **through Jesus Christ's faith.** *A human is not being justified by works of law, but rather through the faith of Christ Jesus* (Gal.2:16).

Christ alone of all mankind, not only did good and kept the law, but He believed God even when He smote Him for our sins. It is out of His faith for our faith (Rom.1:17). AEK

God's evangel is placed before us here in the words, **Jesus Christ's faith.** His perfect faith in giving Himself as a Correspondent Ransom for all (*cf* 1 Tim.2:6) is the message from God which we are believing. Our believing does not make it so, but rather, in believing what is so, we are blessed with joy and peace in expectation (*cf* Rom.8:24; 15:13).

3:23 *Not one is righteous* (3:10); *no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight by works of law* (3:20), **for all sin and are wanting of the glory of God.** This is the truth concerning humanity. But it is set before us in contrast to the truth of God's evangel concerning Jesus Christ which is now proclaimed as gratuitous deliverance.

3:24 They hated Him *without a cause*—gratuitously (John 15:25). Such is the meaning of this precious word. Justification on any other ground than the free and unforced favor of God is impossible, for none deserve it. AEK

God's evangel is a message of God's **grace,** i.e., of JOY gratuitously given by God in **the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.** It is not a covenant, or contract, between God and us, in which we place our faith in Christ so that God can do His part in delivering us from sin, but a gratuitous favor of God of justification already procured in the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus, which is put to our account when we believe. It is marked out "for all," for all are sinners, but it is even now placed "on all who are believing."

3:25 This message of grace centered in the faith of Jesus Christ is continued now as Paul speaks of Christ Jesus as the Antitype of the **propitiatory,** both the offering and the "mercy seat" (*cf* Lev.16:2-34), **through** [His] **faith,** and **in His blood** (*cf* Heb.2:17; 9:5,12,14.24).

It is essential to the manifestation and **display of God's righteousness** that the **penalties of sins** are not simply **passed over,** as **occurred before** under the law **in the forbearance of God.**

3:26 God's evangel points **toward the display of His righteousness in the current era.** How does it do so? God is displayed as **righteous** in His work of justification, by truly being the **Justifier** of the human (*cp* Rom.2:1,3; 3:28) **out of Jesus' faith,** that is, by means of His death for sinners (Rom.5:8,9).

3:27 Such a deliverance, entirely on the ground of grace, bars all boasting, unless it be in Christ and in His God Who has become our Justifier. AEK

3:28 Here also the **faith** by which justification for the human is secured is *Jesus Christ's faith.* Already it is reckoned to those who are believing.

4:3-5 reckoned into righteousness: Justification is achieved solely by means of Christ's faith unto the death of the cross, but (as with Abraham in uncircumcision) righteousness is *reckoned* to us, i.e. put to our account upon believing God's well-message concerning His Son.

4:13 the promise to Abraham, or to his Seed: The promise to Abraham of the allotment of the world was, in a true sense, a promise to Christ Who is the [singular] Seed of Abraham (*cf* Gal.3:16). There is no allotment from God which is not in its first and highest sense Christ's allotment (*cf* Rom.8:17; Eph.1:11,18-23).

As further developed in Galatians, the law was not given till hundreds of years after Abraham was counted righteous. The promises he received . . . were unconditional, dependent only on God's faithfulness. AEK

4:17 Abraham "faced" the promise and believed it **of the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were.** This anticipates the evangel as a message concerning Jesus Christ's faith. As the promised Seed our Lord

put His faith in God as the One Who vivifies the dead.
4:23-25 As for us, we also **are believing on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead.** We face the evangel which speaks not only of past achievements at the cross but of future glories which "are not" experienced at present, and, in God's grace, we believe it. Furthermore, *having perceived that Christ, being roused from among the dead, is no longer dying,* and *in that He is living, He is living to God,* we also *are reckoning ourselves to be dead indeed to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord* (Rom.6:9-11).
5:1,2 We stand before God, **being justified out of faith,** that is, the source of justification reckoned to us who are believing and of our position before God is Jesus Christ's faith.

Justification is the ground of peace. Sin no longer bars us from the presence of God. Yet peace is a favor infinitely beyond justification. God's affections are not satisfied with clearing us from all guilt. He craves our love and our adoration. Righteousness alone does not give us a passport into His presence, but this further grace of reconciliation urges us into full and affectionate fellowship with Him. AEK
5:6-11 Here is God's evangel concerning His Son, in which His righteousness is revealed. Here is the faith of Jesus Christ which is for our faith—for our believing.

God's way of winning our response is to pour His own love into us first, as exemplified in the death of Christ for us while we were most undeserving of His favor. The grace of it lies in the entire lack of anything in us to draw out His affections toward us. AEK

It is in view of the fact that we are **infirm,** and live **in accord with the era,** and are **irreverent,** and are **sinners,** and are **enemies,** that **Christ dies over us** ("for our sakes"). Even as God's spirit vibrated *over* the earth in its state of chaos and vacancy and darkness (Gen.1:2),

so the death of God's Son encompasses corrupted humanity under its continuing, powerful effects and brings forth justification and salvation and conciliation.
5:12-19 Death entered through sin at first, but now sin is transmitted through death. All sin because they are mortal. Christ brings life, which disposes of both death and sin. AEK

Here sin and death are traced to one human, Adam, so that we can know and appreciate God's evangel concerning His Son more clearly as a message of righteousness and life, through the One Human, Jesus Christ. With the help of verses 13 through 19 we can fill out the comparisons introduced here in verse 12:

Therefore, even as through one human sin enters into the world (even **through** his **one offense,** his **one act of sinning,** that is, **the disobedience of the one human),—and through sin, death, and thus death passes through into all mankind** (so that **death reigns,** and **the many** descendants of Adam **die,** which is to say that **death reigns through the one**),—**on which all sin** (even **those also who do not sin in the likeness of the transgression of Adam**), leading to the **many offenses,** the countless sins of mankind, bringing all **into condemnation,** even **the many** descendants of Adam being **constituted sinners** . . . .

Thus also the grace, which is of the One Human, Jesus Christ, even **through the obedience of the One,** that is, **through** His **one righteous** response (Christ's righteous response to His Father's will, in contrast to Adam's offensive response to Yahweh's instructions) there will be a **righteous** outcome and a **reigning in life** for those **obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness,** and ultimately **for all mankind** there will be the enjoyment of **life's justifying,** and all **the many** descendants of Adam, **shall be constituted righteous.**

5:18 The parallel here is perfect. Adam's one offense is counteracted by Christ's one righteous [act]. The act of Adam actually affects *all mankind.* So Christ's work, eventually, must also actually justify *all mankind.* This cannot be during the eons, hence will not be fully accomplished until . . . all are made alive in Christ (1 Cor.15:22). If Adam's offense only gave each one an opportunity to sin, so that some become sinners and others not, then we might say that Christ's work brings justification to all subject to their acceptance. But we must acknowledge that man has no choice in becoming a sinner, **thus also,** will it be through the work of Christ. Both are actual and universal. AEK

5:20 where the sin increases, the grace superexceeds. That which comes through the One Human, Jesus Christ superexceeds over that which comes through Adam. This is essential to the manifestation of God's righteousness.

6:1-17 The question of Romans 6:1 arises where the evangel of God's grace is not being retained in mind and heart, that is, not being *reckoned* ("taken account of"), as Paul urges in Romans 6:11, and being *obeyed* ("submissively listened to") **from the heart** as he reminds us in 6:17.

As we did not die, but Christ was crucified for us, we may reckon His death as ours, fully finishing our connection with sin . . . . A realization of our death to sin and life in Christ will give us power to cope with sin, always remembering that sin cannot bring us into disfavor because of the superexceeding grace. AEK

7:1 The apostle now addresses particularly those who have been under law, that is, who were of the Circumcision. His appeal, however, is not to the law itself, but to the nature of all law, that it has jurisdiction only over those who are alive. AEK

7:7-23 Sin is not known in its true character except through law. Instead of sin being ignorant inability, it becomes the opposite. It is active hostility. The law which seemed to be given to regulate, only roused it. AEK

7:24,25 What is the answer to this wretched man's cry? It is *grace.* There is no other deliverance possible. This brings us back to where this digression began, the reign of Grace at the end of the fifth chapter. AEK

It is likely that the word **Grace!** (Greek, *charis*) dropped out early in the copying of Paul's letter because of its similarity to the following expression of thanksgiving. This conjecture is supported by the context and by differences in the readings of the oldest extant manuscripts.

In place of Paul's wretchedness due to the law of sin in his members warring with the law of his mind (7:23), Paul is now **thanking God, through Jesus Christ** for His **grace,** which he calls **God's law.** This law is one of giving what was most precious and beloved to Him to bring those most offensive and irreverent toward Him to Himself in love, this being the only way in which they could be delivered righteously. Thus, in enslaving his **mind** to God's way of dealing with sin, by the giving of His Son, Paul is being transformed (*cp* Rom.12:2; Eph.4:23), despite the fact that **Sin's law** still operated in his flesh.

8:1-4 *God's grace, through Jesus Christ,* that is, *God's law* means that **nothing is now condemnation to those** who are **in Christ Jesus. For the spirit's law,** that law of God's spirit by which, in spirit, we are given **life in Christ Jesus** (*cf* Rom.6:11), **frees** us (in our position before God, *cf* Rom.5:2) **from the law of sin and death.**

God's evangel concerning His Son is a message of power for salvation in our lives, informing us of future deliverance in Christ Jesus and rescue and freedom from the old humanity, which we already are given in spirit. As with Paul, it is our joy and strength to enslave our minds to this "well-message," which the apostle now rehearses in language bursting with joyful significance:

What is **impossible** to **the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh,** does **God.**

What God does is carrying out His law in **sending** His **own Son in** the **likeness of sin's flesh.**

This sending of His Son in the likeness of sin's flesh was **concerning sin** (*cf* Lev.16:5; Heb.10:6,8; 13:11), that is, in this form (*cf* Phil.2:7,8), Christ was made to be the Antitype of the sin offerings (*cf* 2 Cor.5:21).

By this most holy operation of God's law, **He condemns sin** which has so severely corrupted us and our lives by its residence **in the flesh.**

The result finally will be **that the righteous** intent **of the law may be** [because it is based on God's sending of His own Son the "may be" becomes "shall be"] **fulfilled in us.** This is our expectation, vibrating with spiritual power on our walk, that it might be increasingly in accord with the spirit of God as exhibited and settled in the evangel.

8:9-17 God's spirit, which is a spirit of life, seen in His rousing of Christ Jesus from among the dead, and **Christ's spirit,** which in every way is a spirit of sonship, are **homing** in us who are believing God's evangel concerning His Son, taking it into account and listening to it with submissive attention.

8:18-21 The sufferings of the current era cannot come up to the measure of **the glory about to be revealed for us.** God has **subjected the creation to vanity,** but He has done so **in expectation** of its deliverance **into the glorious freedom of the children of God.**

8:22,26,28 We who are believing **are aware** of the creation's groaning and travailing, as well as our own groaning, yet **we are not aware** exactly **what we should pray for, to accord with what must be.** Nevertheless, God **is aware what is the disposition of the spirit** in our hearts. Furthermore, it is given to us who are **loving God** to be **aware that . . . God is working all together for good.**

8:28 This awareness is strengthened as we give attention to such details of God's *purpose* as the facts that **whom**

He foreknows, He designates beforehand to be conformed to the image of His Son, and **these He calls** and **justifies** and **glorifies.**

8:31,32 Paul uses mostly aorist verbs here, verbs which give all their force to the actions as facts, so that we might enjoy in spirit what we cannot prove by what we see and experience in body and soul. God's evangel is that **God is for us,** and this is known in that **He spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all.** These facts are the basis of our present joy and peace.

9:1-3 my sorrow is great . . . for I myself wished to be anathema from Christ. Paul was in acute sympathy with his brethren according to the flesh, for he himself had been the most rabid of all in opposing the Christ he now adored. This is a most apt confession, as he is about to introduce the great doctrine of the divine Sovereignty, for he is the star example of God's sovereign grace. AEK.

9:13-18 Jacob I love, yet Esau I hate . . . to whom He is willing He is merciful, yet whom He is willing He is hardening. The usual deduction from this is that God is not just. In a *man* this would not be right, but *it is God's sovereign privilege to display Himself through any of His creatures,* in any way best suited to the purpose. Love needed a Jacob for its display. Power needed a Pharaoh for its foil. Man cannot turn the tide of God's affections in his favor, nor can he stem the torrent of His wrath. In God's great purpose to eventually bless all mankind it is His prerogative to form and use suitable vessels to convey His mercy. Of such was Jacob. Esau was needed to emphasize Jacob's unworthiness. Pharaoh was elevated by God, not that his name might be great, but that God's Name might be made known through all the earth. AEK.

9:19-24 The questioner persists in looking at God's sovereignty from the human standpoint of the individual, when it should be viewed from the divine national vantage. God

has a large purpose which will eventuate in the blessing of all. But in the process of its fulfillment it demands the temporary use of some as foils to set forth His indignation and power, **that He should also make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy.** This chapter does not deal with the *destiny* of the individual. That has been settled. All mankind will be justified eventually (Rom.5:18). It is not difficult to see how God can justify Pharaoh, whom He hardened, lest his heart should soften and he should fail to oppose Him further. AEK.

10:1-13 Intense zeal, religious fervor, coupled with self-righteousness, does not lead to salvation. God demands subjection to His righteousness in Christ. The law should establish their unrighteousness and thus reveal God's righteousness, which is manifested in Christ. Israel, as a nation, will be saved when they see Him Whom they stabbed, and recognize Him as their Righteousness. AEK.

11:1-6 It would seem from the foregoing that God was through with His ancient and beloved people and was thrusting them away. But the apostle hastens to deny this assumption. **God does not thrust away His people whom He foreknows.** Their apostasy is only in *part,* and the term of it is *temporary.* That not all of Israel are thrust away is evident from his own case. He, of all Israelites, most deserved to be thrust from God's presence and blessing. Yet he is not included in the national defection. And he is not alone. Elijah thought that he was the only one in all Israel who did not bow the knee to Baal. But God, in His sovereign dealings, restrains seven thousand from worshiping the idol. Neither was Paul alone, for there was, as always, a remnant reserved by God. These, however, are not those who are more faithful than the rest, or more deserving than the mass of the nation. If it had not been for God's choice *in grace,* there never would have been a remnant.

11:17-24 It is a remarkable fact, generally unknown, that a very old olive tree, no longer capable of bearing, may be rejuvenated by a wild graft . . . . Israel is the old olive tree which becomes almost incapable of bearing the olives from which the light-giving oil was obtained. Some of the branches were broken out, and the nations were grafted in, and, through living contact with its root, becomes God's testimony in the earth. The light of God is now no longer with Israel, but with the nations. But all the light is derived from the Scriptures which came through Israel. Apart from the sacred scrolls, the nations shed no light. AEK

The apostle is dealing with Israel and the nations—*not individuals.* No individual believer will be broken out of the olive tree. *The nations, however, as such, no longer believe, and are due to be cut out of the olive tree.* AEK

11:26 Only a few, comparatively, are being saved among the nations, but when Israel again regains its proper place, *all* Israel shall be saved. Then the whole nation, from the least to the greatest, will know God. And they will become the light of the world, as they were always intended to be. AEK

11:32 God's purpose includes all nations. No matter what their present attitude toward Him, it is all a part of His plan and a preparation for the display of His mercy. Here we have the real reason why all, in turn, become stubborn. God Himself locks them up to it, not that He may condemn them, but that He may have occasion to manifest His mercy. AEK

12:1,2 Paul is not directing us by the righteous requirements of the law, but rather, he **is entreating** us **by the pities of God.** God's evangel concerning His Son, as a message of God's power for salvation, in which His righteousness is revealed, commending His love, gratuitously granting His grace and bestowing His mercy over all stubbornness, is summed up here by the words, "the pities of God." This is most appropriate for opening this final sec-

tion of Romans concerned with the believers' personal lives and walk, for it speaks of the evangel as it reflects God's own personal feelings toward us and all His creation. That all is out of God and through Him and for Him should not suggest any sense of impassivity on His part. He feels all the sufferings of the current eon, for it is part of that which is out of Him. He knows Paul's sorrow and unintermittent pain of heart, as well our own groaning and travailing, and He feels it all continually from the depths of His being. Yet He does so "in expectation that the creation itself shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:18-21). The greatest expression of His pity is seen in the sending of His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin (Rom.8:3), in not sparing Him, but giving Him up for us all (Rom.8:32). It is **through** these expressions of God's true being that Paul now entreats us, drawing us to his side as his brethren.

12:6-21 Thus Paul entreats us that, **having graces excelling,** we should exercise them **in accord with the analogy of the faith.** This goes beyond prominent activities of service to everyday, humble living, where, having the graces of faith and expectation and love (*cf* 1 Cor.12:31; 13:13), we may walk in accord with the analogy of the faith, that is the pattern of love set by our Lord in the evangel.

13:1 Unlike Israel, we do not come into conflict with the rulers of the world. The setting up of the kingdom will involve the subjection of them all to the suzerainty of Christ. But we have no place in that earthly kingdom. While Israel is thrust aside we must recognize the existing authorities. God is not at variance with present governments. It is not a question of obeying God rather than man, as when Peter refused the orders of the Sanhedrin. We must not withstand regularly constituted magistrates, but depend on God to overrule their acts if they

seem to conflict with our duty to God or our convictions of His truth. AEK.

13:8 The debtor is the servant of the lender. The servant of God should never be under obligation to another. Love alone is the great debt which never can be fully discharged. Law is useless where there is love, for every precept is more than met by the dictates of love. AEK

14:1 Fellowship among God's saints should not be based on knowledge or ignorance. God receives us even when we are feeble in faith. AEK

15:5-7 Paul prays that **the God of endurance and consolation** may grant us **to be mutually disposed to one another.** Such behavior accords with that of *Christ Who takes us to Himself, for the glory of God.* In this the evangel is being proclaimed by the believer's disposition.

16:25 The importance of this closing benediction is apparent from the fact that it was written by the apostle with his own hand after Tertius had finished the epistle. Paul characterizes the great themes of his epistle, **my evangel, and the heralding of Christ Jesus in accord with the revelation of a secret hushed in times eonian** (conciliation), in contrast with the evangel of God (1:1) which He promised before. The conciliation was *not* made known through the ancient prophets, but through *prophetic writings,* such as this epistle and 2 Corinthians. It is of principal importance that we see the point the apostle makes here, for otherwise we shall not appreciate the unique, distinctive character of the conciliation, which is first set forth in this epistle. The teaching of the fifth to the eighth chapters and especially the eleventh chapter is absolutely unknown in the prophets . . . . The conciliation was a secret they knew nothing of, for it makes Israel's defection the ground of worldwide, unbounded blessing to the nations until Israel is again in God's reckoning. AEK

INDEX TO VOLUME 108

Christ Crucified 89
Christ Dies 171
Concordant Version 5, 51, 97, 146
Crucial Questions about Resurrection 177
Discipline in Grace 129
Duration of Languages, The 120
Evangel in Romans, The 85
Evangel, The 151
From Mortality to Vivification 158
God's Evangel 69, 85, 89, 139, 171
Grace of God in Truth, The 111, 120, 130
Holy Spirit, The 84
Manner of Christ's Death, The 83
Mind of Christ, The 139
Notes on Galatians 15
Paul to the Corinthians (1) Chapters 1-11 51
Paul to the Corinthians (1) Chapters 12-14 97
Paul to the Corinthians (1) Chapters 15-16 146
Paul to the Galatians 5
Primitive Passed By, The 130
Resurrection Change 166
Rooted and Grounded in Love 103
Spiritual Endowments 111
Spiritual Gifts for Today 103
Studies in 1 Corinthians 15 . . . . . 151, 158, 166
Word of the Cross, The 69
Yet Now are Remaining 110

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 108th Year

(1909–2017)

Contents:

2 Paul's Testimony
3 Editorial
5 Paul to the Galatians
15 Notes on Galatians

FIRST QUARTER, 2017

Volume 108 **Number 1**

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For God and His
Word

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and
James R. Coram

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PAUL'S TESTIMONY

With CHRIST,
Have I been crucified,
Yet I am living;
No longer I,
But living in ME
Is CHRIST.
Now that which I am living
In flesh,
In faith
I am living,
The [faith]
Of the SON OF GOD
WHO loves ME
And gives HIMSELF up for ME.

Galatians 2:20

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2017
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

EDITORIAL

WE PRESENT herewith the current status of our revised CONCORDANT VERSION OF GALATIANS. Along with it are selected notes from Brother Coram's study on this epistle which appeared in volumes 82, 87 and 88 of *Unsearchable Riches* (occasionally updated), with a few added comments by A. E. Knoch (AEK) and myself (DHH).

The evangel of Christ *undistorted!* and those called in the grace of Christ *undisturbed!* That is what Paul has in view in his letter to the Galatians (*cf* Gal.1:7). Yet sadly, this message from God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord (*cf* Rom.1:1-5) is still being distorted and misunderstood even by the chosen.

This evangel is called "the evangel of *Christ*" in 1:7, which is that which calls us "in the *grace* of *Christ*" (1:6). This grace is Christ's giving of Himself for (over) our sins, so that He might extricate us out of the present wicked eon (1:4). Indeed the word "grace" by itself, or rather "the grace," as used in Galatians 5:4 is intended to recall the evangel of Christ, His giving up of Himself to death for our benefit. The Galatians fell out of the enjoyment of this most welcome message from God concerning His Son.

Yet another signifier of the evangel, much used in Galatians, but almost entirely covered up by tradition is the phrase "faith of Christ Jesus" in 2:15 (or "faith of Christ" in 2:15; "faith of the Son of God" in 2:20; and "faith of Jesus Christ" in 3:22). In these expressions we hear the evangel of Christ's faith as a matter of faithful obedience to the death of the cross (*cf* Phil.2:8), taking the pathway of His Father's will, rather than His own (Matt.26:39).

Regarding this way of wording the evangel, see especially Brother Coram's notes on Galatians 2:7 ("the evangel of the Uncircumcision") and 2:15 ("the faith of Christ"). Included there is a good discussion of the significance of the Greek genitive case and various ways in which it can be expressed in English. Wishing to bring the Greek meaning out as clearly as possible, and in a way in which it can hardly be misapplied, we are now using the so-called possessive case, in rendering these phrases in Galatians 2:15 and 3:22 ("Christ Jesus's faith," "Christ's faith," "Jesus Christ's faith"). We also use the full wording, "the faith" where it appears in the Greek so that the reader might more easily relate the thought to Christ's faith. And in 3:24 we have added the word "His" in lightface type to bring out the connection with the evangel of justification by Christ's faith previously presented.

That the reference is to Christ and His faith in 3:24 is made doubly certain when we follow the connection between what Paul says of the coming of the Seed in 3:19 and the coming of the faith in 3:23 and 3:25 as well as God's delegating of His Son *when the full time comes,* as the evangel is expressed in Galatians 4:3,4.

As for Galatians 2:20 (arranged as Brother Knoch suggested in his notes on Galatians for the first half of the verse, and carried further now on the second page of this magazine), there is no change in meaning when we replace the relative pronoun "that" with "the (faith)" as our translation of the Greek definite article ("the"), but it clarifies the point. As we continue to live in flesh, we, as believers, are living in the assurance of the evangel of the faith and faithfulness of the Son of God in dying for our sins. Here, as with Paul, is spiritual strength for our present lives as those who belong to "the family of the faith [of Christ]" (Gal.6:10). D.H.H.

PAUL TO THE GALATIANS

1 Paul, an **apostle (not from human** beings**, neither through** a **human, but through Jesus Christ and of God,** the **Father,** ˙Who **rouses Him** *o*˙**from** among the **dead),** [2] **and all the brethren** *tg*˙**with me, to the ecclesias of** ˙**Galatia:**

[3] **Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ,** [4] ˙Who **gives Himself** *ov*˙**for our** ˙**sins, so that He might extricate**° **us out of the** ˚**present wicked** ˙**eon, accord**ing to **the will of our** ˙**God and Father,** [5] **to Whom** be ˙**glory** *io*˙**for the eons of the eons. Amen!**

[6] **I am marveling that thus swiftly you are being** ˡ**trans-ferred**° **from** ˙that which **calls you in** the **grace of Christ** *io*˙**to** a **different evangel,** [7] **which is not** an**other, except** it be that *a*˙**some** ˙who **are disturbing you** ˡ**want also to distort the evangel of** ˙**Christ.** [8] **But if ever we also, or** a **messen-ger out of heaven, should be** bring**ing** an **evangel**° **to you beside** that **which we** *ev*˙**bring**° **to you, let him be anath-ema!** [9] **As we have declared before, and at present I am saying again, if any**one **is** bring**ing you** an **evangel**° **beside** that **which you accept let him be anathema!**

[10] **For at present am I persuading** as to **human** beings **or** ˙**God?**◊ **Or am I seeking to** ˡ**please human** beings**? If I still pleased human** beings**, I were not** a **slave of Christ.** [11] **For I am making known to you, brethren,** as to **the evangel** ˙which is ¯**being** *ev*˙**brought by me, that it is not** in **accord** with a **human.** [12] **For neither** do **I´ accept it** *b*˙**from** a **human, nor am I taught** it, **but** it comes **through** a **rev-elation of Jesus Christ.** [13] **For you hear** of **my** ˙**behavior**

1:10 persuading human beings **or** ˙**God:** Paul's persuading is manifest to God (2 Cor.5:11), not as pleasing human beings, but God (1 Th 2:4).

once, in ˙Judaism, that I [ac] **inordinately persecuted the ecclesia of ˙God and ravaged it.** 14 **And I progressed in ˙Judaism above many contemporaries in my ˙race,** being [l]**inherently exceedingly more zealous** for **the traditions of my fathers.** 15 **Yet when** it **delights ˙God,** ˙Who **severs me** [o]**from my mother's womb and calls** me **through His ˙grace,** 16 **to unveil His ˙Son in me that I may be evangelizing° Him among the nations, I** do **not immediately submit°** it **to flesh and blood,** 17 **neither come I up** [io]**to Jerusalem to**[d] those ˙who are **apostles before me, but I come away into Arabia, and I return again** [io]**to Damascus.**

18 **Thereupon, after three years, I come up** [io]**to Jerusalem to relate** my **story** to **Cephas, and I stay** [td]**with him fifteen days.** 19 **Yet I be**come **acquainted** with **no**[t] one **different** from **the apostles, except James, the brother of the Lord. (**20 [y]**Now what I am writing to you,** [p]**look°! in ˙God's sight,** I say **that I am not lying°.)** 21 **Thereupon I come into the regions of ˙Syria and ˙Cilicia. (**22 **Yet I was** [l]**unknown°** by ˙**face to the ecclesias of ˙Judea** ˙which are **in Christ.** 23 **Yet only they were hearing that: He** ˙who **once** was **persecuting us, now is evangelizing° the faith which once he ravaged.** 24 **And they glorified ˙God in me.)**

2 **Thereupon,** [th]**after** the lapse of **fourteen years, I again go up** [io]**to Jerusalem with Barnabas, ¯taking Titus also along with** me. 2 [y]**Now I go up** in **accord** with a **revelation, and submit° to them the evangel which I am heralding among the nations, yet privately to** ˙those of [l]**repute, lest** some**how I should be racing or run** [io]**for naught.** 3 **But not** [y]**even Titus,** ˙who is [tg]**with me, being** a **Greek, is compelled to be circumcised.** 4 **Yet** it is **because** of **the false brethren** who are **smuggled in, who**[a] **come in by** the **way to spy** out **our ˙freedom which we** [l]**have in Christ Jesus, that they shall be enslaving us—**5 **to whom, not** [y]**even** [td]**for** an **hour** do **we simulate** by ˙**subjection, that the truth of the evangel should continue** [tg]**with you.** 6 [y]**Now from**

˙those [l]**reputed to be** [a]**some**what**—what kinds, they once were is** of **no**[th] [l]**consequence to me (˙God is not taking** up the **human aspect)—for to me** ˙those of [l]**repute submit° nothing.** 7 **But on the contrary, ¯perceiving that I have been entrusted°** with **the evangel of the Uncircumcision, accord**ing **as Peter of the Circumcision** 8 **(for** He ˙Who **operates** in **Peter** [io]**for** the **apostleship of the Circumcision operates** in **me also** [io]**for the nations),** 9 **and ¯knowing the grace** ˙which is ¯**being given to me, James and Cephas and John,** ˙who are [l]**supposed to be pillars, give to me and Barnabas** the ¯**right** hand **of fellowship, that we indeed** are to be [io]**for the nations, yet they** [io]**for the Circumcision—**10 **only that we may be remembering the poor, which same** thing [this] **I endeavor also to do.** 11 [y]**Now when Cephas comes** [io]**to Antioch, I withstand him** [ac]**to** the **face,** [t]**for he was** °self-**censured°.** 12 **For before the coming** of [a]**some from James, he ate together with** those of **the nations. Yet when they come, he shrank** back, **and severed himself, fearing°** ˙those [o] **of** the **Circumcision.** 13 **And the rest** of the **Jews also** play the **hypocrite with him, so that Barnabas also is led away with their ˙hypocrisy.** 14 **But when I perceive that they are not** [l]**correct** in their **attitude toward the truth of the evangel, I say to ˙Cephas in front of all: If you´,** being [l]**inherently** a **Jew, are living as** the **nations, and not as** the **Jews, how are you compelling the nations to be judaizing?** 15 **We,** who by **nature** are **Jews and not sinners** [o] **of** the **nations,** 16 **having perceived** [y] **that** a **human is not being justified°** [o]**by law works,** [ex]**but through Christ Jesus's faith, we´ also believe** [io]**in Christ Jesus that we may be justified** [o]**by Christ's faith and not** [o]**by law works,** seeing **that** [o]**by law works no**[t] **flesh** at [e]**all shall be** [l]**justified.** 17 [y]**Now if,** while **seeking to be justified in Christ, we** [s]**our**selves **also are found sinners,** is **Christ, consequently,** a **dispenser of sin? May it not** [b]**come°** to that! 18 **For if I am building again**

these things **which I demolish, I am commending myself** as a **transgressor.** 19 **For I, through law, die to law, that I should live to God.** 20 *tg*__With Christ have I been crucified__, **yet I am living—no***t* **longer I,** *y*__but living in me is Christ.__ *y*__Now__ that **which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith, the** faith **of the Son of** God, Who **loves me, and gives Himself up** *ov*__for me.__ 21 **I am not repudiating the grace of** God, **for if righteousness** is **through law, consequently Christ dies gratuitously.**

3 **O foolish Galatians!** *a*__Who bewitches you,__ *ac*__before whose eyes Jesus Christ is graphically__ __crucified?__ 2 **This only I** l__want to learn from you:__ Do **you get the spirit** *o*__by law works or__ *o*__by tidings of faith?__◊ 3 *ts*__So foolish are you?__ __Undertaking__ in **spirit, are you now being completed** in **flesh?** 4 **So much** do **you suffer feignedly? Since surely** it **also** is **feignedly!** 5 He **then** Who is **supplying you** with **the spirit, and operating** works of **power among you—**do **you get the spirit** *o*__by law works or__ *o*__by__ the **tidings of faith**◊, 6 **accord**ing **as Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him** *io*__for righteousness?__ *Gn 15:6* 7 l__Know, consequently, that__ those *o* **of faith, these are sons** of **Abraham.** 8 *y*__Now the scripture,__ __perceiving before that God is justifying the nations__ *o*__by faith,__ brings **before** an **evangel** **to Abraham, that: In you shall all the nations be** l__blessed.__ *Gn 12:3;18:18* 9 **So that** those *o* **of faith are being blessed together** with **believing Abraham.** 10 **For whoever are** *o* **of law works are under** a **curse, for it is** __written__ **that: Accursed** is **every**one **who is not remaining** *i* **in all** things __written__ **in the scroll of the law to do them.** *Dt 27:26* 11 *y*__Now that in law no__*t* **one is being justified** *b*__with God__ is **evident,** *t*__for the Righteous__ One◊ *o*__by faith shall be living__. *Hk 2:4* 12 *y*__Now__ **the law is not** *o* **of faith, but** who **does them shall be living** in them. *Lv 18:5* 13 **Christ reclaims us** *o*__from the curse of the law,__ __becoming__ a **curse** *ov*__for our__ sakes, *t*__for it is__ __written__, **Accursed** is **every**one __hanging__ **on** a **pole,** *Dt 21:23; 27:26* 14 **that the blessing of Abraham may** *b*__come__ *io*__to the nations in Christ Jesus, that we may obtain the promise of the spirit through the faith__◊.

15 **Brethren (I am saying** this *ac*__as__ a **human),** a **human covenant likewise having been ratified, no***t* **one is repudiating or modifying** it. 16 *y*__Now to Abraham the promises are declared, and to his Seed.__ *Gn 13:15* **He is not saying, And to seeds, as** *on*__of many, but as__ *on*__of One: And to your Seed, which is Christ.__ 17 *y*__Now this am I saying:__ A **covenant, having been ratified before by God, the law, having** *b*__come four hundred and thirty years after__ward, does **not** l__invalidate,__ *io*__so__ as **to nullify the promise.** 18 **For if the enjoyment of** the **allotment** is *o* **of law,** it is **no***t* **longer** *o* **of promise. Yet God has grac**iously granted it **to Abraham through** the **promise.**

19 *a*__What then__ is **the law? On behalf of transgressions is it added until the Seed should come to Whom He has promised, being prescribed through messengers in** the **hand of** a **mediator.** *Ex 20:19* 20 *y*__Now__ there **is no***t* **mediator of one.** *Dt 5:5* **Yet God is One.**

21 Is **the law then against the promises of God? May it not** *b*__come__ to that**! For if** a **law is given** that is l__able__ **to vivify, really righteousness were out of law.** 22 **But the scripture locks** up **all together under sin, that the promise out of Jesus Christ's faith may be given to** those who are **believing.**

23 *y*__Now before the coming of the faith we were garrisoned under law, being locked__ up **together** *io*__for the faith__ l__about to be revealed.__ 24 **So that the law has become our escort** *io*__to Christ, that we may be justified__ *o*__by__ His **faith.**

3:2,5 hearing of faith: the Greek word akoê (hearing) refers to that whichis heard, i.e. tidings.
3:11 the Righteous One**:** *cf* Ac 7:52; Ro 1:17; Hb 10:37,38; it is not in law, that one is justified but by the faith of the Righteous One, Christ Jesus (2:16; 3:22), Who became a curse for our sakes (3:13).

3:14,23,26 the faith: Here also "the faith" refers first of all to Jesus Christ's faith (3:22) in giving Himself for our sins (1:4).

25 *y*Now at the ¯coming of the faith, we are no*t* longer
under an escort, 26 for you are all sons of God in Christ
Jesus through the faith. 27 For you, whoever are baptized
into Christ, put° on Christ, 28 in Whom there is no*t* Jew nor
yet Greek, there is no*t* slave nor yet free, there is no*t* male
and female, for you´ all are one in Christ Jesus. 29 *y*Now
if you are Christ's, consequently you are of ˙Abraham's
seed, enjoyers of the allotment according to the promise.
4 *y*Now I am saying, *on*for as much time as the enjoyer
of an allotment is a minor, in nothing is he of more ˡconsequence than a slave, being master of all, 2 but is under
guardians and administrators until the time purposed by
the father. 3 Thus we´ also, when we were minors, were
°enslaved° under the elements of the world. 4 Yet when
the full ˙time comes, ˙God delegates His ˙Son, *b*come° *o*
of a woman, *b*come° under law, 5 that He should reclaim
˙those under law, that we may get the place of a son. 6 *y*Now
seeing that you are sons, ˙God delegates the spirit of His
˙Son into our ˙hearts, crying Abba! ˙Father! 7 So that you
are no*t* longer a slave, but a son. *y*Now if a son, an enjoyer
also of an allotment from God, through Christ.

8 But then indeed having no*t* perception of God, you
are ¯slaves of ˙those who, by nature, ˡare not gods. 9 Yet now,
¯knowing God, yet rather ¯being known by God, how are
you turning about again *on*to the infirm and poor elements
for which you ˡwant to slave again anew? 10 Days are you
scrutinizing, and months and seasons and years. 11 I ˡfear°
for you, lest somehow I have toiled *io*for you feignedly.

12 ˡBecome° as I, *t*for I am ⁺even as you, brethren, I
ˡbeseech° you. In nothing do you injure me. 13 *y*Now you
are °aware that *th*during an infirmity of the flesh I bring
the evangel° to you ˙formerly. 14 And your ˙trial, in my
˙flesh, you do not scorn, neither do you loathe it, but as
a messenger of God you receive° me, as Christ Jesus.
15 Where then is your ˙happiness? For I am testifying to

you, that if possible, ¯gouging out your ˙eyes, you would
give them to me. 16 So that I have become your enemy by
being true to you!

17 They are ˡjealous over you, not ideally, but they ˡwant
to debar you that you may be ˡjealous over them. 18 *y*Now
it is ideal for you to be ˡjealous° in the ideal always, and
not only in my ˙ˡpresence *td*with you.

19 Little children mine, with whom I am travailing again
until *w* Christ may be formed in you! 20 Yet I wanted to
be ˡpresent *td*with you just now, and to change my ˙voice,
*t*for I am ˡperplexed° *i*about you.

21 ˡTell me, ˙you who ˡwant to be under law, are you not
hearing the law? 22 For it is °written° that Abraham has
two sons, one out of the maid and one out of the free
woman. 23 But the one indeed out of the maid is °begotten° according to flesh, yet the one out of the free woman
through the promise: 24 which*a* is allegorizing°, for these
women are two covenants; one indeed from Mount Sinai,
generating into slavery, which*a* is Hagar. 25 *y*Now Hagar
is ˙Mount Sinai in ˙Arabia; *y* it is in ˡline with the Jerusalem which now is, for she is in ˡslavery with her ˙children.
26 Yet the Jerusalem above is free, who*a* is mother of us
all. 27 For it is °written°,

> Be glad, barren one, ˙who are not bringing forth!
> Burst forth and implore, you ˙who are not travailing!
> *t*For many are the children of the desolate,
> Rather than of her ˙who ˡhas the husband.*Isa 54:1*

28 *y*Now you´, brethren, *ac*as Isaac, are children of promise. 29 But even as then, the one according to
flesh persecuted the one according to spirit, thus also it
is now. 30 But *a*what is the scripture saying? Cast out this
˙maid and her ˙son; for by no means shall the son of the
maid be enjoying the allotment with the son of the free
woman.*Gn 21:10* 31 Wherefore, brethren, we are not chil-

dren of the **maid, but of the free** woman.
5 Into ·this ·**freedom**◇ **Christ frees us! |Stand firm then, and be not again |enthralled**° with the **yoke of slavery.**
2 *p*·**Look! I´, Paul, am saying to you that if you should be circumcising**°**, Christ will |benefit you nothing.** 3 *y*·**Now I am attesting**° **again to every** *h*·**man** who is **circumcising**°**, that he is** a **debtor to do the whole law.** 4 **Exempted from ·Christ are you who**[a] **are being justified**° **in law. You fall out of ·grace.** 5 **For we´,** in **spirit, are awaiting**° the **expectation of righteousness** *o*·**by faith.** 6 **For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision is availing any**thing, **nor uncircumcision, but faith, operating**° **through love.**
7 **You raced ideally!** [a]·**Who hinders you not to be |persuaded**° by **the truth?** 8 ·This **persuasion** is **not** *o*·**of** Him ·Who is **calling you.** 9 A **little leaven is leavening the whole kneading.** 10 **I´ have confidence** *io*·**in you in** the **Lord that** in **nothing you will be |disposed other**wise. *y*·**Now** he ·who is **disturbing you shall be bearing** his ·**judgment, whosoever** [a] **he may be.**
11 *y*·**Now I, brethren, if I am still heralding circumcision,** [a]·**why am I still being persecuted**°**? Consequently the snare of the cross of ·Christ has been nullified**°**.** 12 **Would** that ·those who are rais**ing you** to **insurrection |struck**° themselves **off also!**
13 **For you´ are called** *on*·**for freedom, brethren, only** use **not the freedom** *io*·**for** an **incentive to the flesh, but through ·love be slaving** for **one another.** 14 **For the entire law is** °**fulfilled**° **in one word, in** ·this**: You shall |love your ·associate as yourself.**[Lv 19:18] 15 *y*·**Now if you are biting and devouring one another, |beware** that **you may not be consumed by one another.**
16 *y*·**Now I am saying, |Walk** in **spirit, and you should under no circumstances consummate** the **lust of** the **flesh.** 17 **For the flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit**

5:1 the freedom: freed into the freedom of being, like Isaac, children of promise.

against the flesh. *y*·**Now these are opposing**° **one another, lest you should be doing** *these* **whatsoever you may |want.**
18 *y*·**Now if you are |led**° by **spirit, you are not still under law.**
19 *y*·**Now apparent are the works of the flesh, which**[a] **are adultery, prostitution, uncleanness, wantonness,** 20 **idolatry, enchantment, enmities, strife, jealousies, furies, factions, dissensions, sects,** 21 **envies, murders, drunkennesses, revelries, and the like** of **these, which, I am predicting to you, accord**ing **as I ¯predicted also, that** ·those **committing ·such** thing**s shall not be enjoying** the **allotment** of the **kingdom of God.**
22 *y*·**Now the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith**fulness, 23 **meekness, self-control: against ·such** things there **is no**[t] **law.** 24 *y*·**Now** ·those **of ·Christ Jesus crucify the flesh together** with its ·**passions, and ·lusts.** 25 **If we may be living** in **spirit,** in **spirit we may be** observ**ing** the **element**s **also.** 26 **We may not |become**° **vainglorious, challenging one another, envying one another.**
6 **Brethren, if** a **human should be precipitated also in** [a]·**some offense, ¯you´,** ·who are **spiritual, be attuning ·such** a one **in** a **spirit of meekness, noting yourself,** that **you´ also may not be tried.** 2 **|Bear one another's ·burdens, and thus fill up the law of ·Christ.** 3 **For if any**one **is supposing** himself **to be any**thing, **being nothing, he is imposing on himself.** 4 *y*·**Now let each** one **be testing** his *sf*·**own ·work, and then he shall be having** his ·**boast** *io*·**for himself alone and not** *io*·**for** ·*d*·an**other,** 5 **for each** one **shall be bearing** his ·**own load.**
6 *y*·**Now let** him ·who is **being instructed**° in **the word be contributing to** him ·who is **instructing, in all good** things**.** 7 **Be not |deceived**°**, God is not** to **be |sneered**° **at, for whatsoever** a **human may be sowing, this shall he be reaping also,** 8 *t*·**for** he ·who is **sowing** *io*·**for** his *sf*·**own ·flesh,** [a]·**from the flesh shall be reaping corruption, yet** he ·who

is **sowing** *io* **for the spirit,** *o* **from the spirit shall be reaping life eonian.** 9 *y* **Now we may not be** l **despondent** in ˙**ideal doing, for** in **due season we shall be reaping,** if we do **not** l **faint**°**.** 10 **Consequently then, as we** l **have occasion, we are working**° *td* **for the good** of **all, yet specially** *td* **for the family of the faith.**

11 *p* **Look!** with **what size letters I write to you** with **my** own ˙**hand!** 12 **Whoever are wanting to** put on a **fair face in** the **flesh, these are compelling you to** l **circumcise**° **only that they may not be** l **persecuted**° for **the cross of** ˙**Christ Jesus.** 13 **For not** *y* **even they**´ ˙who are **circumcising**° **are maintaining law, but they** l **want you to be** l **circumcised**° **that they should boast in** ˙that **flesh of yours.** 14 *y* **Now may it not be** *o*° **mine to be boasting**°**, except in the cross of our** ˙**Lord Jesus Christ, through which** the **world has been crucified**° **to me, and I to** the **world.** 15 **For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is any**thing, **but** a **new creation.** 16 **And whoever shall** observe the l **element**s by **this** ˙**rule, peace** be **on them, and mercy, also on the Israel of** ˙**God.**

17 For **the rest, let no one** l **afford me** ⁼**weariness, for I**´ **am bearing in my** ˙**body the brand marks of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

18 **The grace of our** ˙**Lord Jesus Christ** be **with your** ˙**spirit, brethren! Amen!**

NOTES ON GALATIANS

1:1 Paul, an **apostle.** In this epistle to the Galatians, the characteristic words of thanksgiving or blessing, which introduce Paul's other epistles, are conspicuous by their absence. Instead of giving thanks, Paul "marvels" (1:6); instead of a word of blessing, he warns of anathema (1:8,9). Without any deference either to formality or pleasantry, Paul abruptly begins by insisting that his apostleship is "*not* from human beings, *neither* through a human," but that it is instead "through Jesus Christ and of God, the Father."

1:2 Grace to you and peace. Even if Paul must omit his usual introductory words of thanksgiving or blessing, that he might lose no time in pressing the urgency of his message upon the recipients of this epistle, he nevertheless does *not* omit his always-applicable (and, always-appropriate) words of greeting: "*Grace* to you and *peace* from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

That which is in grace is not out of works, "else the grace is coming to be no longer grace" (Rom.11:6). While a wage is not reckoned as a favor (or gracious gift), but as a debt (Rom.4:4), that which is reckoned as a gracious gift is not reckoned as a debt. Consequently, when believers, such as the Galatians, "fall out of grace" (Gal.5:4b), they do so only in their apprehension of grace, and in an appreciation of it, with all the practical benefit that this entails.

1:4,5 extricate. Even as God "extricated" ("lifted out") Joseph out of all his afflictions" (Acts 7:10), and, later on, extricated the sons of Israel out of Egypt (Acts 7:34), thus also, Christ Jesus "gives Himself for our sins, so that He might extricate us out of the present wicked eon." In

each case, the respective extrication is "according to [literally, "down"] the will of our God and Father, to Whom be [the] glory." The basis of the blessed deliverance is God's own decision so to act. What it "comes *down* to," then, is that Christ gives Himself for our sins, so that according to God's own will, such a glorious deliverance of us, out of this wicked eon (*cp* 1 Thess.4:15-17), should actually come to pass. It is not that Christ gives Himself for our sins so that such a deliverance might *possibly* come to pass, but then again might never come to pass at all. If God must wait on the human, and worse yet, *depend* on humanity, He can never act in grace, much less, can He glorify His own Name, alone, in our deliverance.

1:6 transferred. The Galatians were transferred from "that which" called them in the grace of Christ to a *different* evangel. "That which," in the Concordant Version, simply represents the Greek definite article ("the"). It is evident from what is said, however, that "the *evangel*" through which the Galatians were called into the *grace of Christ* brought by Paul, was that from which they were transferred to a different evangel. This is the central point: the message to which the Galatians had been transferred, which they deemed a message of good news, was nonetheless *different* than the evangel of the *grace of Christ*.

different. The Greek word, *heteros*, speaks of "*essential* difference," or difference in *kind*." Certainly grace is the essential characteristic of the evangel of Christ. Yet through his use of *heteros*, Paul thus insists that the spurious evangel by which the Galatians had become deceived, was, in its very essence, *different* than the evangel of Christ which Paul was heralding among the nations (2:2).

1:7 not an**other.** Furthermore, it was "*not another*." That is, it was not actually the evangel of the Circumcision (*cf* 2:7), even if the Galatians were so ignorant of the true nature of that evangel as to identify the heterogenous

corruption which they had embraced as the evangel of the Circumcision.

Here, for the English "another," the Greek is *allos*, from which "allotropic" is derived, which points to variation of *form*, to changes of properties *shown* by elements, without change of essential composition. Whatever the Galatians themselves might claim or imagine, Paul insists that their false gospel is *essentially different* from the evangel of the grace of Christ, and a gross caricature of the "other" evangel which was that of the Circumcision. According to truth, it is no evangel at all. Therefore, it should be rejected, not embraced.

1:8,9 let him be anathema. In the Septuagint (the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament), *anathema* is the translation of the Hebrew *cherem*. It speaks of something that is "devoted," yet in the sense of, unto adversative judgment; hence, "devoted to destruction" (or "loss," e.g., Deut. 7:26; Joshua 7:1,11-13). When Paul, then, says of any who bring a false gospel, "let him be anathema!" the sense is, let him be subject to *certain, adversative judgment.* The word itself, however, tells us nothing of the particulars or duration of any such judgment. For this we must consider the nature of the case, in any specific pronouncement of anathema.

The "anathema" which Paul foresees in Galatians 1:8,9, consists of many grave consequences, but these do not include being subjected to "eternal condemnation" (for God will abolish death and become All in all, 1 Cor.15: 26,28); neither does it consist in the loss of eonian life for any such opposing teachers, who nevertheless are in Christ (for eonian life is a gracious gift, Rom.6:23), nor that such must come under God's indignation (for God has not appointed us to indignation, 1 Thess.5:9a; *cp* Rom.5:9). Finally, this anathema does not involve soulish suffering. There is much that is *destructive*, that nonetheless is not

at all physically destructive. For example, untroubled resignation concerning, combined with an unbridled zeal to uphold, the teaching of a horrible hell where the vast majority of men must spend eternity, coupled with an ethic that can finally only thank oneself for one's exemption therefrom, is conducive neither to pity nor humility. Yet since most especially if they should enjoy a good measure of conventional well-being, are insensitive to the deep injuriousness of such attitudes and beliefs, they remain oblivious to the very real anathema to which their own apostasy has subjected them.

If people finally owe their enjoyment of divine blessing to themselves, it is impossible for them to thank God for it. Such cannot glorify God as God, and must to a considerable extent involve themselves in the veneration of the creature rather than the Creator. They cannot thank God alone even for their virtues, much less for their failures, which will yet bring glory to Him, for they imagine that they themselves are ultimately responsible for their deeds.

Anyone who is subject to such dreadful consequences as these, certainly has come under a great anathema, a tremendous course of destruction, to one's own loss. And, anyone who repudiates the grace of Christ for a different evangel—so long as he continues on in such a course—is indeed subject to just such consequences.

1:10 persuading. The reason why a certain adversative judgment must fall upon any who bring a different evangel to those whom God is actually blessing in accord with Paul's evangel is because in announcing his evangel, the apostle is not *persuading* "as to" human wants, but as to God, to Whom he is manifest (2 Cor.5:11; *cp* 1 Thess.2:4)). Paul's message, first of all, is *God's* message, and the apostle persuades human beings with God ever in view.

1:10-12 not seeking to please human beings. The reason why Paul was not *seeking* to please human beings, and

was *not still* pleasing human beings, was because the evangel which he brought was not in accord with *a human.* And, in turn, the reason why his evangel was not in accord with a human, was because he neither accepted it from a human nor was he taught it by a human. The word "human" is in the singular, as in the phrase "through *a human,"* in verse 1. The emphatic intimation here, through the repeated, singular form, is implicative of a *particular* human, likely Peter. But in a wider sense, neither is Paul's evangel in accord with a human, with respect to the entirety of the human race. The Hebrew term for human being is *adm* ("Adam"). The Circumcision evangel is very much concerned with the human race, not just Israel, and God's purpose for it is on the earth and in the flesh. So Paul has in mind to distinguish his evangel from that of the Circumcision (which is in accord with humanity). The apostle does not simply make a general contrast between a message from God that is divine in nature, and one concerned with ordinary human thinking and philosophy. But Paul's evangel is also different from that of the Circumcision which has much that accords with humanity, though indeed being of God and concerned with Christ.

the evangel, evangelized by me. While Paul is indeed relating "his story" in chapters 1 and 2, nevertheless his account focuses on "the grace of Christ" (1:6), "a revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:12), that is, "the evangel which is being brought by me" (1:11). So both Paul's story, and the message given to him, have this one pattern: not in accord with humanity, and being in accord with God and a revelation of Jesus Christ that came from God.

1:13,14 my behavior once, in Judaism. There was nothing in Paul's former career to account for his becoming a herald of the cross. Thus the apostle proves that it was simply absurd to suggest, as certain of his enemies were insinuating, that he had received his evangel from Peter.

1:15 Yet, when it delights God. The particle *de*, though sometimes rendered "now" (as previously done in the CV here), is perhaps better rendered here in its standard way by "yet." Though sometimes only slightly so, *de* is an adversative connective, in the sense that that which follows this expression and to which it refers stands against the subject which precedes it. Thus we understand that God's "delight" to unveil His Son in the foremost sinner (1 Tim.1:15,16), Saul of Tarsus, stood against Saul's Judaism, in which, in his unbelief, he had so ferociously persecuted the ecclesia.

mother's womb. Thus it becomes evident that "mother's womb," here, is not literal but figurative. Indeed, through the severing of the umbilical cord, all infants, when first born, are severed from their literal mother's womb. But Paul, in the considerations before us, was severed from *Judaism.* Judaism was that which had long been *nourishing* him, as well as being that in which he had enjoyed much *growth.* Hence, he speaks of it as having been his "mother's womb."

In being severed *from* Judaism, Paul was severed also *from* those of its practitioners who were believers in Christ (*cp* Acts 13:2), yet "severed *for* the [i.e., that] evangel of God . . . concerning His Son . . . Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom.1:1-4), which, in its most complete form, has been preserved for us in the epistle to the Romans. This evangel of God—which is also the evangel of Christ (Gal.1:7)—was revealed to Paul by Jesus Christ Himself. Hence, with reference to the one to whom Christ had revealed this evangel, Paul termed it "my evangel" (Rom.16:25).

1:16-24 I do not immediately submit. Paul had not received his evangel from those who were apostles before him, and was acting under a sense of a unique divine call that admitted of neither human validation nor supplement. Therefore, rather than seeking out one or more of

the twelve *for any reason whatsoever,* Paul instead came away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

"The natural course for one in Saul's case would be to go up to Jerusalem and submit to them what he had received from the Lord and seek their patronage and fellowship in its proclamation, or indeed, ask their opinion and permission to promulgate it. But what does he do? He goes into the desert where no human influence is at work. He waits three years before telling Peter about it, and then he does not even form the acquaintance of the twelve or of the ecclesia. They actually did not know him personally, though they were glorifying God for the great change in him. All of this shows conclusively that Paul did not at that time, derive his doctrine from Peter or the twelve." AEK

2:1,2 after fourteen years. Previously, Paul had "*related*" his story to Cephas (1:18). Now, he "*submits*" (2:2) the evangel which he was heralding among the nations to those in Jerusalem. In each case, he imparts something to the others; he does not learn from them. Initially, he had perceived that his evangel of grace apart from law was bound to be disturbing to many. Hence, he had prepared Cephas for this, before the crisis came. And now, fourteen years later, due to the ever-widening rift among many over issues of law-obedience, Paul goes up to Jerusalem to place his evangel before them.

2:3-6 false brethren. In Galatians 2:3, Paul refers to the time when "not even Titus, who is with me, being a Greek, is *compelled* to be circumcised." Yet Paul adds that nonetheless, "it was because of the false brethren who were smuggled in, who came in by the way to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, that they shall be enslaving us—" (2:4). That is—and the sense is so evident that Paul breaks off his words without actually expressing his thought—it was because of the claims (*cp* Acts 15:1,2,5)

of certain "false brethren" that Titus *was* then *pressed* by some to be circumcised, even though even these could not well *compel* him to undergo the rite, contrary to the counsel of the pillars of the Jerusalem ecclesia.

2:7 the evangel of the Uncircumcision. Considered In itself, it is possible to understand this phrase as a metonymy for "the evangel*ization* of the Uncircumcision." But it is not translation but interpretation to render this phrase, as in most modern Bibles, "the gospel *to* the Uncircumcision." Both "Uncircumcision" and "Circumcision" are in the genitive case. The sign of the genitive in English is OF- not TO-. Ideally, appropriate translation requires the former and precludes the latter. There may be a few cases where, due to the idiosyncracies of English, good diction may be strained if the genitive should be represented by OF. Nearly always, however, and certainly in this case at hand, it makes perfectly good English to say "the evangel of the Uncircumcision," as much so as to say, "the epistles of the apostle Paul." They are not the epistles *to* the apostle Paul, but the apostle Paul's epistles. Similarly, Paul does not speak of the evangel to the Uncircumcision, but of the Uncircumcision's evangel.

Paul speaks explicitly of "the evangel *which* I am heralding among the nations" (2:2); "the evangel *which* is being brought by me" (1:11); *which* he neither accepted from a human nor was taught by a human, that instead came to him "through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:12). The apostle himself will inform us as to its particulars. If we *believe* and *understand* both the revelations of Paul's evangel, according to Christ Himself, as well as the teachings of the twelve according as the Lord instructed them, we will soon know whether Paul's evangel "of the Uncircumcision" is a fresh revelation, distinct in various respects from the teaching of the twelve, or is, however expressed, essentially merely a restatement of their teaching.

It is not that the evangel of the Uncircumcision is the exclusive province of those of the nations; nor is it that the evangel of the Circumcision debars all but those who are Israelites by nature. It is rather that the evangel of the Uncircumcision is the evangel which is primarily for those of the nations, as brought to the nations through the ministry of the apostle Paul, who is the apostle of the nations (Rom.11:13; *cp* 1 Tim.2:7; 2 Tim.1:11; Eph.3:8).

Certain Israelites (such as Paul himself) are also called and blessed according to that evangel which, characteristically, is the evangel of the *Un*circumcision. Similarly, certain non-Israelites were themselves called and blessed according to that evangel which, characteristically, is the evangel of the Circumcision.

In the former case, any such descendants of Jacob lose their standing as Israelites and forfeit the advantages of the law—while concomitantly gaining the even greater benefits of the evangel of the Uncircumcision. If they are faithful, like Paul, they gladly forfeit all such benefits of flesh, while deeming them mere refuse (*cf* Phil.3:4-8).

In the latter case, like those of old who sojourned in Israel, any such non-Israelite believers who were nonetheless called and blessed according to the evangel of the Circumcision, were required to heed the law of Yahweh, which attended that evangel. Any such ones must become proselytes (*cf* Acts 2:10; 6:5; 13:43); that is, they must "come toward" Israel and observe the "one law," which applied not only to the native-born, but to the naturalized citizen as well (Ex.12:49). Initially, such ones had to undergo the rite of circumcision; subsequently, they would make a passover to Yahweh. They would then be deemed "natives of the land [of Israel]" (Ex.12:48,49). As naturalized Israelites, they would also be required to keep from violating the sabbaths, as well as to keep their hand from any evil, according to the law of Moses. Only thus could they hold

fast to Yahweh's covenant (Isa.56:1-7; *cp* Acts 15:21) and be *worthy* of the resurrection of the *righteous* (*cf* Luke 14:14; 20:35; *cp* Matt.5:17-20; 7:21-23).

Thus it is fitting for Paul to declare that God will be justifying the Circumcision "*out* of faith" and the Uncircumcision "*through the* faith" (Rom.3:30). In each case, the faith which justifies is "Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22); "Jesus's faith" (Rom.3:26). As in Romans 11:36, where it is revealed that all is not only *out* of God, but *through* God as well, here too in Romans 3:30, it is certainly likewise true that under God, both the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision owe not only the origin but the agency of their justification as well to the faith of Christ.

Yet in the case of the Circumcision believers, who must center much of their attention upon their own observance of the law, it is not so obvious that even so, their justification is solely out of Jesus Christ's faith. After all, this truth, as such, is not even a part of the evangel of the Circumcision, even though it is certainly true concerning them, even as Paul declares.

However, in the case of the believers of the Uncircumcision, who are not under law at all (Rom.6:14), for whom Grace reigns even where sin increases (Rom.5:20,21), whose very evangel *brings to the forefront* the fact that their justification is not only out of the faith of Christ but is *through* the faith of Christ as well, it becomes fitting for Paul to emphasize that God will be justifying them "*through the* faith [of Christ.]."

2:16 faith of Christ [or: **Christ's faith**]. In Galatians 2:16, Paul states that "we may be justified through the *faith of Christ* and not by works of law." Here we first need to consider the translation itself, "faith *of* Christ." This becomes a special need since most modern translations, even as they render "the evangel *of* the Uncircumcision" (2:7) as "the

gospel *to* the uncircumcised" (e.g., the NASB), translate "faith of Christ" similarly, as "faith *in* Christ."

This question as to the sense of this phrase is by no means solely a question of grammar; yet it is indeed a question in which grammatical issues are an important consideration. Grammatically, the question as to what is to be understood by *pistis Iesou Christou*, is a question of the usage of the *genitive* case. Grammatical *case* is the syntactical relationship of a noun, pronoun, or adjective to other words in a sentence, generally indicated by declensional endings in inflected languages (such as Greek), or by prepositions and word order in non-inflected languages (such as English).

The Greek genitive case includes the English possessive case, The genitive's presence is indicated in the Concordant Greek Text's sublinear by of-. It is the case of genus or kind. Its function is largely adjectival. Indeed, the Concordant Version renders "the exile of-Babylon" as "the Babylonian exile" (Matt.1:12). Similarly, "the blasphemy of the spirit" (Matt.12:31), in the Greek syntax is "the . . . of the spirit blasphemy."

In fact the main reason for the acceptance of the interpretation "faith *in* Christ" is the age-old tradition that one is saved by his own believing. Such a notion is then read into the text. Nevertheless all that the Greek says is: faith of-Christ; that is, faith that in some respect has reference, or relates to Christ. Even on grammatical grounds the case here for an "objective" genitive (i.e., for a faith that is directed Christward) is very weak. Yet if one insists on such an interpretation, it would then become necessary to refer this "faith in Christ" *to God*, not to the human, in order for this expression to accord with the evangel itself, the revelation that justification is gratuitous and in grace, through the deliverance *which is in Christ Jesus.*

When Paul wishes to speak of the believer's faith in (i.e.,

"into") Christ, he does so not by means of a genitive noun apart from a preposition, but by means of an accusative (i.e., objective) noun together with an accusative preposition: ". . . rejoicing and observing your order and the stability of your faith *in* (i.e., "into") Christ" (Col.2:5).

A parallel expression to the *faith* of Christ is that of the *grace* of Christ: "*grace* which is of the One Human, *Jesus Christ*" (Rom.5:15). It would never occur to anyone to translate this text as "grace *in* Christ," much less to claim that it speaks of the *believer's* grace! Yet the only real difference between the genitive "of Christ" here and those which we have considered elsewhere, is that here the phrase is appended as a modifier of grace, while in the others (as in Galatians 2:20) the same phrase functions as a modifier of faith.

The very notion that such texts as Romans 3:22,26 and Galatians 2:16 (also 3:22) which say "faith of [Christ]", nonetheless have in view faith *in* Christ—*namely the believer's own faith in Christ*—is but the stepchild of the long-standing tradition that affirms that "justification *by* faith" means man's justification not by his performing works of law, but by his acceptance of Christ and assenting to faith in Him. The idea is that man saves himself, or if it is preferred, qualifies for God to save him, not by a former method, that of performing righteous deeds, but by a new method, that of acquiescing in faith.

Traditional theology is not merely saying that salvation comes upon believing in Christ, and not apart from or prior to. What it is also saying (even if more implicitly than explicitly) is that salvation is of the nature of an exchange, a reward, requital, or compensation. When preachers say that salvation is "by faith [i.e., man's faith]," they are using "by" in a transactional sense, according to the meeting of a requirement (as in, "by doing your work, you are entitled to your wages").

The phrase faith OF-Christ however, is parallel to and must agree with the essence of the evangel itself, the revelation that we are "being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance *which is in Christ Jesus*" (Rom.3:24). The deliverance is not said to be through *our faith* in Christ Jesus, but through Christ Jesus Himself. Similarly, it is not revealed that we were conciliated to God through *our faith* in the death of His Son, but that we were conciliated to God *through the death of* His Son (Rom.5:10). Further, it will not do to attempt to avoid this truth by artfully claiming that while this is so, it is only so on the "condition" (i.e., based upon a requirement) that we accept and believe on Christ. Any such claim is spurious; for we are not justified on a "conditional" basis that we meet some sort of requirement. Instead, we are justified apart from law, on a gratuitous and gracious basis, which precludes any and all requirements.

Therefore, all passages which declaim "the faith of Jesus Christ," out of which we are justified, must be understood to be referring to a faith which is His own: Christ's own perfect faith in giving Himself to the death of the cross—not man's faulty faith in Him.

Of course we ourselves can only *speak* of our justification by means of our own faith, since it is by faith that we apprehend what God has achieved through the work of the cross, even as what He will yet achieve in the eons ahead, when His promises are fulfilled. Still, the saint's own faith only gains for him a recognition of the justification which God has already established for him—through the faith *of* Christ (*cf* Rom.4:25-5:1; 5:9).

2:17,18 a **dispenser of sin?** Though a trivial act in itself,

1. In order to express this sense unmistakably in English we render the phrases in our revised CV using the possessive case: "Christ Jesus's faith," and, "Christ's faith."

Cephas' refusal to eat with those of the nations (2:12), was fraught with serious consequences. Thus he affirmed that the uncircumcised believers were "common and unclean" (*cp* Acts 10:28; 11:3), and set up again the barrier of law. If we should put ourselves under law, by claiming that this is what Christ would have us do, we imply that, effectually, He is a dispenser of sin. This is because, if He indeed would now have us take up the very agency through which Sin revives, gets an incentive, and produces in us all manner of coveting (*cf* Rom.7:8-10), it is impossible to disassociate Him from our failures. Such, through works of law, was the nature of the old covenant under which God displayed man's failure in all its horror. Such is not the nature of the Pauline evangel, which is, so to say, "a *new* covenant" indeed (*cp* 2 Cor.3:6).

If Paul were to once again establish a policy of law-righteousness, which he had previously discarded (*cp* Phil.3:7), in so doing he would be "commending" himself as a transgressor. That is, thus he would be providing himself with the very means by which he would now have the "standing" of a transgressor. Where no law is, there is no transgression (Rom.4:15). Yet under law, sinners become *transgressors.* Paul refused to put himself in any such jeopardy ever again.

Submitting to public pressures (as Cephas did, and as the Galatians were doing) in a way that suggests we think the law has some force in justification is a sin and may give the impression that justification in Christ encourages such sinful hypocrisy. Yet the Galatians were making law-justification (Rom.2:13) an acceptable thing, at least in relation to circumcision, and so were rebuilding what they had demolished. Were they actually "under law" (in relation to Paul's evangel), their taking up with the law would have been a transgression! (There is perhaps some irony here.)

Under grace we have a "right" to do anything: "*All* is allowed me" (1 Cor.8:9; 10:23). But Paul was very jealous

of the evangel and was sensitive to the effects our behavior will have on others. The saving grace of God trains us to act in accord with what we believe, that is out of love and with the glory of God always in view.

2:20 crucified . . . living. Our living to God depends upon our having died to condemnatory law. Hence, as Paul declares, "With Christ *have I been* crucified." Yet the wonder of it is that though it is true that in this respect we have "died," it is as a result of this very death, together with Christ, that in our spirits we now are living! So in saying "I" am living, Paul must add that it is "no longer I, but living in me is Christ." It was not the power of the flesh, which is weakness, which was vitalizing Paul, but the power of Christ's spirit in him. As he said, "that [life] which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith, the faith *of* the Son of God, Who loves me, and gives Himself up for me."

2:21 not repudiating the grace of God. To "repudiate" something is to reject its validity, or to refuse to acknowledge it. It is to have "no place" for it, which is the meaning of the elements of the Greek word we translate "repudiate" (*atheteō,* UN-PLACE).

The apostle Paul, decidedly, was not repudiating the grace of God; he was rather exalting it, and giving it its rightful place. The Galatians, however, in seeking justification through law instead of through the faith of Christ *were* repudiating the grace of God.

Everywhere in Scripture, especially within the Pauline epistles, "grace" is of the nature of a favor, or gracious gift. It is not granted "out of works," or in return for "services rendered" (*cp* Rom.4:4; 11:6). It is the very antithesis of a reward or compensation. We cannot qualify ourselves for it, nor disqualify ourselves from it. It not only knows nothing of "requirements," but precludes that very notion.

If righteousness *were* through law, there would have

been "no just cause" for Christ to have died. Then His death would have been both uncalled for and unwarranted. But since His death was *not* a gratuitous event it follows that righteousness is not through law and that the Galatians and all their imitators are *not* correct in seeking it on that basis.

3:1 graphically crucified. "Graphically" is an idiomatic variant of *prographō* (BEFORE-WRITE), Which literally means, "write before" (e.g., Eph.3:3). Paul had "written before" the mind's eye of every one of the Galatians that Christ had died for their sakes, and that—in the bloody death of His crucifixion—they were now justified (*cp* Rom. 5:8,9). It was ever the burden of Paul's ministry to declaim the word recorded in Romans 8:32, which is: "*Surely* He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, *how* shall He not together with Him, *also,* be *graciously* granting *us* all?" (*cp* Gal.4:4). This is the truth which Paul vividly outlined and clearly set forth concerning "Christ crucified," graphically presenting it before the eyes of the Galatians.

3:2,5 tidings [hearing] of faith. *Akoê* literally means "hearing" (e.g., Mark 7:35). Sometimes, however, where it was noted that it was used metonymically of "that which is heard" (e.g., Matt.24:6; Rom.10:17), the Concordant Version renders it "tidings," in reference to the message itself which is *associated* with the "hearing" thereof. This clearly appears to be the sense as well in Galatians 3, verses 2 and 5, in the phrase, *ex akoê pisteos.* This is so, for, in the nature of the case, the Galatians got the spirit *out of* the *tidings* (or "message") of faith, which they heard and believed, the glad-tidings of Christ which are "of faith," i.e., which pertain or relate to faith, the faith of Christ for our faith (*cp* Rom.1:17; 3:22).

3:6-9 as Abraham believes God. There is a foundational

agreement in kind between Abraham's calling and faith and our own calling and faith. Similarly, since the most righteous thing that any man can do is to believe God's own word, when we ourselves also, even as Abraham, believe the word of His promise, our so doing is *reckoned* to us (put to our account) "for [i.e., "into"] righteousness" (Rom.4: 22-24). God appraises our believing as being among (and so, thus He accounts it "into") that class of deeds which He deems righteous. Even though faith extends no "rights" to its possessors, and is itself a gracious gift, it is nonetheless considered righteous by God Himself, besides being full of practical value for ourselves.

We are to know, "consequently, that those of faith, *these* are sons of Abraham" (3:7). Our faith does not make God's promise true; instead, it finds it true. Faith's acceptance of the divine promise does not entitle its bearer to the promise's blessing; rather, it *convicts* its possessor of the *truth* of the promise's blessing. Faith has no value whatsoever as "legal tender." It simply acknowledges that which was already true prior to and wholly apart from its subsequent acceptance thereof. It is not that we will obtain the blessing, "*if* we will believe it true." It is instead, that we *will* be blessed; *and,* we *believe* that this is true.

Since the scripture, "perceiving before" that God is justifying the nations by faith, it therefore, prototypically, "brings before" an evangel to Abraham, declaring that, "In you *shall* all the nations be blessed." "So that," those *of faith* are being blessed together with *believing* Abraham.

Our being "blessed *together*" with Abraham is on the common ground of faith, according to *grace* (Rom.4:16). It is not that our blessing "together" with him affords us the identical future allotment which God has appointed for Abraham. Similarly, while God will grant *us* eonian life even if we should be persisting in sin (*cf* Rom.5:20-6:1), no such principle obtained in the case of Abraham, concern-

ing whom law-obedience later received a vital place unto the realization of the blessing (*cf* Gen.26:5), its certainty in grace notwithstanding. This is so, even though Abraham's blessing also, even as our own, ultimately depended upon God alone.

3:10 under a curse. There are only two conceivable sources of blessing: (1) divine grace; and (2) human works of law [or, "law works"]. Only one of these, however, divine grace, is a viable source of blessing. The other, works of law, since it is infirm through the flesh (Rom.8:3), has been rendered ineffectual. That being so, whoever are "out of" law works are under a curse. This is because, "Accursed is everyone who is not remaining in *all* things written in the scroll of the law to do them" (3:10; cit. Deut.27:26; *cp* 28:15).

3:11-14 the Righteous One. It is evident that no one is being justified in law. It is less evident that no one can be justified, in the absolute sense of being *made* righteous, by their believing. Yet there is only one way by which anyone can be made righteous, and that is by the faith of Jesus Christ (which is primarily in view in verses 14,23 and 26 in the words "the faith"), Who becomes a curse for our sakes. The first and primary Subject of Habakkuk 2:4 is Christ, Who is the Righteous One (*cf* Isa.53:11; Acts 7:53; 22:14), Who came and lived by faith unto the death of the cross, and is living now in resurrection, no longer dying, but living to God (Rom.6:9,10). Yet in a secondary sense, we who are believing this evangel concerning Jesus Christ, are, like Abraham, reckoned righteous, and are living in faith. DHH

3:13 Christ reclaims us. It is not the province of law to justify, but to condemn. Effectually, the law merely says, "He who heeds my precepts shall find life in so doing"; which life no one ever finds since no one ever heeds its precepts (*cf* Lev.18:5; *cp* Luke 10:28). Like evil, law, too, is transitory. It lasts only until God's purpose through its

agency has been realized. Those who, like Abraham, are reckoned righteous (Gal.3:6), owe this not to law, much less to themselves, but to grace. Life comes to them not out of their imperfect (and so disqualified) law-obedience, but out of the *faith of Jesus Christ*, in becoming a curse for our sakes, that it may accord with *grace.*

3:16 which is Christ. Paul tells us here that the promises spoken to Abraham were spoken also "to his Seed . . .which is Christ." The exact words Paul uses, "to you . . .and your seed," appear in the promise of Genesis 13:15, and in context the word "seed" (which is in the singular) could (and does) well refer collectively to the whole of the countless descendants of Abraham who will enjoy the allotment of the land, mentioned in verse 16. (See also Genesis 12:3,7; 17:8,9; 24:7.). Yet whether or not Abraham understood it so, or most everyone who heard these words through the centuries before Paul understood it so, we are to hear in this word SEED a reference to Christ, and indeed give special prominence to this application. God directed His promise of the land and of the blessings connected with it, including the blessing of being a blessing, not only to Abraham and his descendants, but most importantly to Christ, Whose faith and obedience to the cross is the basis of the fulfillment of God's promises, indeed the whole of His purpose beyond the allotment of the land and embracing the "world" as Paul says in Romans 4:13 and ultimately the secret of God's will, to head up all in the Christ (Eph.1:9,10). The application of the word "seed" to Abraham's descendants is correct, but in a secondary way to its application to Christ. Like Habakkuk 2:4, Genesis 13:15 (and parallel passages) is in its primary significance, Messianic. DHH

3:19 On behalf of transgressions. "Law changes sin from a mere mistake to the overstepping of a divine command. It enhances the sinfulness of sin. Transgression is

sin against a known law, entailing not only the usual penalties, but the added displeasure of God against one who defies His precepts . . . . The promises Abraham received [which, incidentally, subsequently, came to be] in connection with the law, were unconditional; [ultimately speaking], dependent only on God's faithfulness. They were given without any reference to the law and [thus] do not depend on any legal observance for fulfillment." AEK

Charin ("on behalf," CV) is the accusative form of "grace," and is used as a preposition with the genitive case ("*of* transgressions").

The Authorized Version, at least as interpreted by some, is very misleading here in its rendering "*because* of transgressions." The words "*because* of" have led some to imagine that transgression obtained prior to Moses; and that the reference here is merely to ceremonial laws which were temporarily added by Moses to an already extant timeless moral code (namely, to a code which, under Moses, was merely formalized as the "Ten Commandments"). All of this is perfectly false (as well as artful and unreasonable); yet it is instructive to note the lengths to which some will go in order to impose the law upon believers today.

The idea of the Greek word, *charin,* is that of an act done with the objective of somehow bringing favor (i.e., some type of benefit or advantage) to the object in view (*cp* Titus 1:5,11). This is just what the entrance of the law afforded to transgression. Hence the law was given *on behalf* of the resultant transgressions which came into being through the law. Where no law is, neither is there transgression (Rom.4:15); yet the bestowal of law gives rise to its violation, which is transgression. Transgression owes its very existence to law, and cannot exist apart from it. Thus, on behalf of transgressions, "law came in by the way, *that the offense should be increasing*" (Rom.5:20).

until the Seed should come. Thus, on behalf of transgressions, the law was added (yet incidentally so, with respect to the original promises made to Abraham) *until* the Seed should come. Insofar as Paul and those of his fellow Israelites to whom this evangel had been granted are concerned, the law had become their escort to Christ. Now at the coming of the *faith* (through the advent of Christ; *cp* 2 Tim.1:10), *such ones* ("*we*;" Gal.3:25) are no longer under an escort. Thus, whoever—*among those who are in view in this context*; namely, among those who are blessed according to Paul's evangel—are baptized into Christ put on *Christ,* in Whom—with respect to Paul's evangel and insofar as it is concerned—there is no Jew nor yet Greek, nor any other distinction, for all, thus blessed are one in Christ Jesus (Gal.3:27,28).

Thus, in a figure, we become "of Abraham's seed;" that is, literally, we become enjoyers of an allotment *according to promise* (Gal.3:29). (It is not "the" allotment, or "the" promise; the definite article does not appear in the Greek).

In service, or in the *Lord,* the slave was still a slave, the sexes were still recognized; but—under Paul's evangel—in *Christ,* in Whom we are complete (Col.2:10), all physical distinctions vanish. By faith, all who are called according to the Pauline evangel (*cp* Gal.1:6-9) enter into the same high place of privilege, and are blessed with the common promise and righteousness of which this evangel consists. Thus, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, since all of the evangel's blessings are *graciously* granted to us, through promise, in Him.

4:4 come under law. Christ Himself was "under law." "Come of a woman," He "became" (in the sense of His practice and experience) "under law" That is, practically speaking, He became subject to (or "under," *cp* Matt. 8:8,9) its jurisdiction. The expression "under law" occurs nine times in the New Testament (Rom.6:14,15; 1 Cor. 9:20; Gal.3:23; 4:4,5,21; 5:18; Heb.7:11). In every case, its

usage makes evident that the sense is that of jurisdiction, authority or power (*cp* 1 Cor.15:56).

4:4-6 place of a **son.** Under Paul's evangel, none are "slaves" any longer; instead, all are *sons*; indeed, all are sons *of God.* We are all sons of God in Christ Jesus, through faith (Gal. 3:26); accordingly, we have "the *place* of a son" as well.

In the phrase "the place of a son," "son" is a figure of speech. Literally, the place of a son signifies *a place of great significance and worth, near and dear to the father's heart.*

Thus each one of us has a place of great significance and worth, near and dear to the heart of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently, God delegates the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying "Abba! Father!" It is the spirit of God's Son (*cp* Rom.8:9) which cries out within us, testifying that God Himself is our beloved Father. It is by the power of this spirit that we may concur in and affirm this testimony.

Whether we ourselves are male or female, we are all "sons" of God. In accordance with the evangel, all of its recipients are "sons" and all enjoy the "place of" a son. That is, we all "enjoy" this position in the sense that it is our possession, whether or not we enjoy it in the sense of enlightened, joyful discernment concerning it.

4:9 turning about again . . . to slave again anew. As previously rendered, the words "turning back" have led some to suppose that the Galatians were returning to the observance of idolatrous days or festivals. This is an impossible claim indeed, for the Galatians were being deceived not by idolatrous customs in Christian garb, but by Judaizing deceivers who were zealous for works of law, who hated the festivals of the nations with a passion (*cf* Gal. 1:13,14; 2:11). Indeed, the Galatians themselves wanted to be under law (Gal.4:21), and the law strictly prohibited the service of Yahweh Elohim according to the customs of the nations in the service of their gods (Deut.12: 30-32).

The verb, *epistrephō,* ON-TURN, does not signify a reversion to a former practice, but simply a turning in the opposite direction of one's present course. For example, in Lystra, by bringing the evangel to the throngs "to turn [them] back" from their idolatrous ways "to the living God" (Acts 14: 15), Paul was by no means intimating that they were formerly servants of the living God (*cp* 15:19; 26:20). While it is true that *epistrepho* is sometimes idiomatically rendered "turn[ing] back," the idea of a reversion to a former course once engaged in by the person(s) in view, is not its meaning or even its sense, as such (even though in some contexts such an idea is incidentally present). *Epistrephō* is often rendered "turn about" (e.g., Acts 16:18; 28:27), which more strictly represents its essence in English, and as the CV will now render it here.

The word, **again** (*palin*). however, does refer to a reversion. Its reference however, is not that of a reversion to a former practice (such as to the observance of a certain form of idolatry), but of a reversion to a former *practical condition* (viz., to a condition of slavery, albeit in a new form).

The common English usage of **anew** (viz., "once more" or "again") is not the essence of the Greek word *anōthen* (UP-PLACE). The idea is not that of a repetition of something former. Yet since this thought, incidentally, is present in both Galatians 4:9 and John 3:3,7 (which are the only passages in which *anōthen* is translated "anew"), this English word was chosen as the most expedient rendering in each of these texts. If we are to use the word "anew," we should take the phrase "slave again anew" in the sense of "revert to slavery once again" (albeit through a new means of bondage), not "become once again enslaved to the same specific practices to which one was formerly in bondage"

Anōthen (UP-PLACE) is often rendered "from above" (in space; *cp* Matt.27:51; John 3:1), as well as "from the very first" (in time; *cp* Luke 1:3; Acts 26:5). Obviously, in

Galatians 4:9 it is used in reference to time. The sense is, *from the outset*—"from the very first"—once the Galatians became disposed to "keep the law," they freely enslaved themselves to its bondage.

4:12 In **nothing** do **you injure me.** In denying the evangel, the Galatians did not injure Paul, even though they had become hostile to his message and now sought to repudiate it. By calling attention to the apostle's omission of law observance through their endeavors to heed its precepts, they did not make him unworthy before God. Instead, through their apostasy, they only injured themselves. Paul remains complete in Christ, whatever they may do. Actually, the Galatians themselves remain complete in Christ as well, even if their service in the Lord should be most unworthy, being out of harmony with the evangel and contrary to the apostle's teachings.

4:17 jealous over **you.** The Greek verb from which the English terms "jealous" and "zealous" are derived, is *zeloō*) (BOIL). Jealous and zealous, very likely, were once the same in English. Though *zeloō* admits of many connotations (hence these two English derivatives, each one itself having a number of definitions), its essence is perhaps most accurately signified by the word "enthuse"

The Galatians' deceivers were "enthusiastic" Christians! They were not only generally enthusiastic (intense, eager and zealous), but they were enthusiastic toward the Galatians in particular. They paid attention to the Galatians! Perhaps they effected their delusion as well "through compliments and adulation" (*cp* Rom.16:18). In any case, it is evident that the Galatians were favorably impressed by their ways and that this played a significant part in the Galatians, resultant delusion.

The Galatians' deceivers wanted to "debar" the Galatians from their, erstwhile-enjoyed, happy and fond association

with Paul (*cf* Gal.4:13-15), even as from Paul's message of sinner-justifying *grace* apart from law (*cf* Gal.1:6; 2:16). This in itself is unspeakably wrong. Yet the apostle adds that, not only was this so, but that they were motivated to do so out of a longing for the Galatians to "be jealous over them" (Gal.4:17).

That is, they were enthusiastic and zealous over the Galatians because they wanted the Galatians to be enthusiastic and zealous over them. Accordingly, their zeal also incorporated the characteristic which is expressed by the English "jealous," for it is evident that they viewed Paul more as a competitor than as an esteemed brother. Indeed, they must have denied his faithful apostleship (whether explicitly or implicitly; *cp* Gal.1:1,11), for it would seem impossible for them at once to affirm it, while repudiating his teaching.

4:19 Little children mine. The Galatians may be foolish, ungrateful and immature, they may fancy that Paul is their enemy because of his "lawless" message of grace, yet to the apostle, they remain his beloved "little children" ("little-offsprings OF-ME," CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT sublinear, p.549).

4:21-31 Tell me. If the Galatians wished to become such ardent devotees of the law, Paul would ask them only to comply with its own dictate (viz., "Cast out this maid and her son"; Gen.21:10), as recorded in the story of Hagar and Sarah, of Ishmael and Isaac. Essentially, the story teaches that works of the flesh, under a system of bondage, rather than being the key to God's allotment, are the lock which debars entrance into God's allotment.

The allotment which the Galatian believers longed for (even as we ourselves who are believing today) was salvation out of this present wicked eon (*cf* Gal.1:4), and salvation into glorious life and joy, in the presence of Christ Himself, in the oncoming eons.

Paul would have us know that God has *promised* this allotment to us, doing so in His *grace.* He chose us for it before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4), in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian (2 Tim.1:9). Accordingly, He has designated us beforehand for it (*cf* Rom.8:29), having *not* appointed us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess.5:9).

The allotment of life eonian is our expectation, not merely our hope, for it is God's gracious gift to us (*cp* Titus 3:7; Rom.6:23). Thus it is that Paul declares that we who now are blessed according to his evangel, even as Abraham, Sarah and Isaac of old, are "enjoyers of the allotment according to the promise" (Gal.3:29). That is, we are enjoyers of the allotment which God has for us according to the promise which He has made to us (*cp* Titus 1:1,2).

This is the evangel of our salvation. The evangel is not at all the foolish notion to the effect that if (and only if) we will keep the law satisfactorily (or otherwise engage in sufficient upright behavior) we then will be granted eonian life.

5:1 Christ frees us. In Christ Jesus, Who has become to us wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance (1 Cor.1:30,31), we are *complete* (Col.2:10). Therefore, in Him, in the benefits afforded us through His sacrificial death, we are *free* from any need to be "justified in law" (*cf* Gal.5:4). Christ is the "consummation" of "law for righteousness" (Rom.10:4). Obeying law in order to become righteous is something which is quite impossible for mortals (Rom.3:9,10; 8:3,7). In spirit, "law for righteousness" must ever point to Christ, in Whom alone its goal is realized (*cp* Rom.8:3,4). Only in Him is that which the law sought actually achieved. Through the one righteous response of Christ, life's justifying comes into all mankind (Rom.5:18). Through Him alone, this entire vast company shall be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19).

Strictly (since the dative case is used, together with the definite article), it is, "*Into this* freedom Christ frees us"! This freedom, allegorically speaking, is the freedom of being "not the children of the maid, but of the free woman" (4:31), which is to say, the freedom of Isaac; the freedom of being children of promise (4:28), according to grace.

5:2,3 if you should be circumcising. The words "if you should be circumcising, Christ will benefit you nothing," must not be wrenched from their context; much less are they to be understood categorically, for this would contradict not only the entire tenor of the epistle, but the very evangel itself. Paul speaks relatively, in relation to justification in law. The sense is, If you should be circumcising (in the interests of *justification*), Christ will benefit you nothing *in justification.* Thus, *Christ*—or *Circumcision*: which shall it be?

5:4 Exempted from Christ' Even as the words, "if you should be circumcising, Christ will benefit you nothing," are to be understood in relation to justification, the phrase, "Exempted from Christ," is likewise to be understood in this same connection. Accordingly, the word "Christ," herein, is used metonymically, in reference to His benefits, and that in the sense of one's own recognition thereof. The sense is, inherent to the view of one holding such a perspective, Those who are being justified *in law,* were thereby exempted from being justified *in Christ.* This is simply to say that it follows from the position that one *is* justified in law, that one is *not* justified in Christ. One precludes the other. Thus, in one's own perception, one "nullifies" or "makes unproductive" (as the Greek word translated here "exempted" is elsewhere rendered) the work of Christ in justification. Hence, in nullifying the true benefits of Christ, the Galatians repudiated the grace of God (*cp* 2:21).

You fall out of grace. Indeed, this is just what one does

who seeks a right standing before God by means of law, even if he should freely acknowledge the sacrificial death of Christ on behalf of his sins. In one's own recognition, one falls *out of grace,* not by practicing sin, but by falling *into law.* In truth, however, simply because it is *grace,* it is impossible for one to remove himself from its blessing, even by the darkest of deeds.

"Falling from grace,' is not, as usually supposed, a loss of the benefits of Christ's salvation through *breaking* the law, but is rather a loss of a realization of those benefits through attempting to *keep* the law. He who falls into sin does not forfeit the grace of God. Blessed to relate, grace abounds in such a case (*cf* Rom.6:1). But he who seeks to establish his own salvation by works has no need of the grace of God . . . . thus repudiates grace. He falls out of the sphere where grace operates. AEK

5:5 awaiting the expectation of righteousness by faith. Until the day of Christ's advent, we, in spirit, "as if present" (*cp* 1 Cor.5:3), are awaiting the expectation of righteousness [i.e., of justification], and we are doing so by faith centered in the faith of Christ.

Faith, operating through love, alone is that which avails. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision—nor any other human deed either of obeying or of omitting to obey law—avails anything at all, *in Christ Jesus.* It is in Christ Jesus alone that all aspects of salvation are achieved, "through the blood of His cross."

What is achieved in Christ, cannot be forfeited by the human. Hence all such entreaties, such as that of 1 Corinthians 10:24, should simply be understood as that which is expedient or edifying, pleasing to God and beneficial to man. Though all such words of entreaty of our apostle have a vital place in our service (even as the counsel of all necessarily universally-applicable words of wisdom throughout

all Scripture), even so, no scriptural entreaty of uprightness at all, however important, has any place whatsoever in our justification, in which we are complete in Christ.

5:11 the snare of the cross of Christ. If Paul had continued to herald circumcision, the *snare of* the cross of Christ would have been nullified. A "snare" *skandalon* is "a means of tripping or a cause of falling" (Keyword Concordance, p.275). The glorious truth associated with Christ's cross becomes just this to many, by means of which they trip, and fall into opposing error. That truth is the revelation that salvation is in grace and through Christ alone. This scandalizes both human pride and fleshly ethics, by which most are enslaved.

The evangel is simply unacceptable to those who wish to boast in something of themselves—something that *they* have done. In most circles today, "accepting Christ" (or alternatively, obeying Him as Lord) has supplanted first-century circumcision as the fancied "requirement" for salvation. Among the exponents of such views today, just as surely as among the circumcisionists of Galatia, thus the *snare* of the cross is nullified. By denying its truth, they remove its offense.

5:16-18 Walk in **spirit.** The spirit, ultimately speaking, is not controlled by the flesh; it is rather that the spirit must control the flesh. The spirit is not a "tool" in the hands of the flesh, the flesh having lordship over the spirit. The spirit is rather the power which must control "sin's flesh" (Rom.8:3) within the fleshly creature. It must ever be remembered that the flesh *will* dominate—it will dominate *us*—wherever God does not dominate the flesh. Therefore, we rely on God and not ourselves, having no confidence in the flesh.

5:22,23 fruit of the spirit. "The flesh acts; the spirit bears fruit, delicious not only to us but to God. Fruit is not

the result of mechanical effort but the natural expression of life and growth. If we love others we will need no legal restrictions to keep us from injuring them. Law is a useless encumbrance to those who walk after the spirit. They need no promptings to do good and are above the penalties imposed on evil doers." AEK.

against such things there **is no law.** Since the Galatians wanted to be under law (4:21), Paul dryly informs them that there is no law against either love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, or self-control. Since there is no law against any of these things, why not seek to manifest them, giving time and effort to their cultivation instead of to biting and devouring (5:15)?

5:24-26 those **of Christ Jesus crucify the flesh.** All those"of Christ Jesus" crucify the flesh in some measure. The flesh may be far from dead; but, at whatever rate, as we grow in the growth of God (*cf* Col.2:19), we progress in the crucifixion of the flesh. This is simply what is so. However limited and imperfect, a new disposition and a new walk is something that we *have*; it is not something that we ourselves create. Its presence is to be accounted for by "*the spirit's law of life* in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:2). We do well, then, to cease from all "vainglorious[ness]," believing and behaving as if the essential reason for our holiness were something of ourselves. Vain glorying only produces "challenging and envy" (5:26), not "God's administration which is in faith" (1 Tim.1:4b).

observing the **elements.** If it should be that we "may be living in spirit," which is to say, if it should be our experience to be manifesting the fruit of the spirit (*cp* 5:22-25), we will find that *in spirit*, we may also be (i.e., we shall also be) observing the elements (5:25). "The elements," refers to the particulars of the law (*cp* 4:3; Acts 21:24b). In the phrase, "in spirit, we may be observing the elements also,"

the words "in spirit" are an appositive explaining the sense which Paul has in mind in which the Galatians will, when living in spirit, at once, *also* be observing the elements. Then, besides exhibiting the fruit of the spirit, they will be "observing the law," indeed, though only figuratively, in its spirit or intent. Ideally, the goal of the law was to instill in any who would truly maintain it, these very same holy virtues which Paul rehearses in 5:22,23 (*cp* Lev.19:2; Rom.8:3). In actuality, however, such noble characteristics can only come into existence as fruit of the spirit, not as the force of law acting upon the flesh, which only makes matters worse (Rom.7:7-13).

Law is not laid down for the just, yet it is for the lawless and insubordinate (1 Tim.1:9), which sometimes includes believers in their practical affairs. We need to be mindful of the rules, that we might be "competing lawfully" (2 Tim.2:5), contending the ideal contest, so as to finish our career faithfully (*cp* 2 Tim.4:7). Even so, law cannot subject the flesh; and, in the measure that we are influenced by the spirit, law becomes redundant.

6:2 Bear one another's burdens. Since the Galatians are so taken with the idea of law, Paul says to them, "Bear one another's burdens [that is, ease the 'heaviness' of one another's loads], and thus fill up 'the law of Christ.'" Each one must indeed be bearing his *own* load (6:5), according to his own character and circumstances. But if we would fulfill "the law of Christ," here, we would seek to ease the other party's burden in it all by centering our attention not upon our displeasure with him but upon what will help him, even as make his situation less difficult to endure.

6:8 reaping life eonian. The literal, future allotment of eonian life is our expectation in grace (*cp* Titus 3:7; Eph. 2:5-7), and will be granted even where there is persistence in sin (*cf* Rom.5:20-6:1). Therefore, the "*reaping*"

of "life eonian," here in Galatians 6:8, which speaks of an attainment as the result of works, must be identified not with future, life eonian itself, but, through the figure of metonmy, with that which is associated with it even now. It is one's faithful relationship to the only true God, as well as with His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: "Now it is eonian life that they may know You, the only true God, and Him Whom You commission, Jesus Christ" (John 17:3). In this same sense, Paul sought to be attaining to the resurrection that is out from among the dead" (Phil.3:11), entreating Timothy similarly to "get hold of eonian life" (1 Tim.6:12).

6:12 persecuted for **the cross of Christ Jesus.** The Greek word translated "persecution" (*diōgmos,* CHASing), as a verb *diōkō,* is translated not only "persecute" but "pursue." It is used both of positive pursuing (e.g., 1 Thess. 5:15) and of negative "chasing" (as here, in 5:11 and 6:12). Such "chasing" may be overt or covert, subtle or obvious, even as slight or extreme. Those who take an open stand for the truth of the evangel, however, *will,* in whatever way or degree, be "persecuted" for so doing.

The significance of the cross as to the individual sinner concerns not so much what the sinner has *done,* but what the sinner *is.* One who sins, sins because he *is* a sinner. It is because he is such an awful person that he has done such awful things! The lusts of the flesh, collectively (even if not, perhaps, in some points, individually), are *his* lusts! If he is less guilty than others of certain of the more socially unacceptable works of the flesh, he is still quite guilty himself of various of the more socially acceptable fleshly desires.

The desire of the flesh is a terrible thing. This is so not only in its acknowledged perversions such as rape or murder, but in its perversions which, in its own perverseness, it deems only "minor shortcomings." These include sins such as self-exaltation, coveting, and ostentation, not to mention vanity, impatience, unkindness, strife, and anger.

How one may compare to other people is not the point. Every sinner *himself* is such a terrible sinner that none other than Christ Himself had to die for that sinner alone, let the sins and needs of others be what they will.

Further, every sinner himself is such a terrible sinner that his justification, hence, his salvation, would seem to be impossible. And, unless God should take the most extreme measures at unspeakably great cost both to Himself and to His Son, every sinner is such a terrible sinner that indeed his salvation would be impossible.

To speak as a human, By our sins, we have made ourselves the worst imaginable nuisance to God and caused Him an unfathomable measure of trouble. How would *you* like it if you had to give up *your* most precious child—the only one who had truly loved you and been obedient to you—to death, even a death of *crucifixion*? And most especially, how would you like it if you had to do this because it was the only way to ransom the rest of your children out of the terrible plight which had befallen them due to their own foolish wickedness?

Thus the significance of the cross, in respect to the sinner, is that such were *our* deserts. It is *we* who are deserving of death (*cp* Rom.1:32), not Christ. To say that crucifixion was the Roman death penalty, not the Mosaic, misses the point. The point is that the sufferings of the cross comprised the death which *God Himself* appointed unto His Son in His death for sinners (*cf* Acts 4:27,28). If some swift, painless, and shameless form of euthanasia performed in private might have sufficed, doubtlessly it would have been employed. No; to ransom such as ourselves, nothing less than an ignominious and public, literally *excruc*iating (i.e., "from the cross") death would suffice.

In relation to the sinner, considered as such, *this* is the significance of the cross. Since it is so exceedingly uncomplimentary of the flesh, however, the flesh does not care for

such a message at all. The believer, while actively believing under the influence of God's spirit, loves the word of the cross; for it at once serves to humble him and to exalt his God even as His vast love. Yet let that same believer be removed from vital influences of the spirit and left to himself, which is to say to his own flesh, and he will once again yield to whatever desires of the flesh happen to be his peculiar portion.

6:14 not boasting. Boasting is not confined to overt bragging, but includes all inward glorying and exulting as well, according to a boastful spirit (1 Cor.4:7; *cp* Prov.6:17a, "exalted eyes"). Preachers continually praise their converts for making their "decision for Christ." They are taught to think well of themselves for having used their "free will" aright in "accepting Christ," unlike so many others who have not done so. Indeed, if it is something ultimately of man himself alone which determines whether one enjoys eternal bliss or is subjected to eternal misery, how could one *not,* even if only inwardly, extol his own greatness for an achievement of such stupendous importance?

6:15 a **new creation.** In relation to that which God achieves in grace through Christ Jesus, what is true of circumcision is true of all law: *it is nothing.* Instead, in Christ Jesus, what is everything, is the new creation which God achieves for all through the blood of Christ's cross.

J.R.C.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 108th Year

(1909–2017)

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Paul to the Corinthians (1)
69 The Word of the Cross
84 The Holy Spirit
85 The Evangel in Romans
89 Christ Crucified

SECOND QUARTER, 2017

Volume 108 **Number 2**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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EDITORIAL

IN THIS ISSUE we present the first eleven chapters of our revised CONCORDANT VERSION OF 1 CORINTHIANS, in its present status (pp.51-68).

In "The Word of the Cross" (pp.69-83) by John Essex, the author declares: "The glory with which God graces His Son because of His obedience unto the death of the cross, is such that it not only exalts Christ above all else in the universe, but also brings all creation into recognition and acceptance of this fact. Every knee will bow to Him, every tongue will acclaim Him as Lord."

The brief devotional word "The Holy Spirit" (p.84) by A. E. Knoch, reminds us that "first of all, God gives us His spirit, preliminary to His further blessings. Thus we are enabled to perceive that which is being graciously given to us by God (1 Cor.2:10-13). This is the channel through which His love has found entrance into our hearts. Only thus can we rejoice in trials, afflictions and distresses."

"The Evangel in Romans" (pp.85-88) by Anthony Nungesser, which centers upon the question "Why is there so much evil in the world?" provides the following response to this selfsame inquiry: "Man, without divine illumination, is incapable of properly addressing this question. Paul, in Romans, gives us the Divine side of the answer to evil, its origin and eradication from the universe. In Romans chapter 8, the apostle pulls back the curtain, so to speak, and tells us concerning God doing something on purpose, doing something the creation did not volunteer for. He also tells us concerning God's goal to bring the creation into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom.8:19-21). This reveals to us that *God is right in what He does.* The end truly does justify the means!"

In "Christ Crucified" (pp.89-96) by Dean Hough, the theme is Christ's death for the sake of sinners as the manifestation of God's righteousness (*cf* Rom.3:21,22): "On the basis of Christ's death (which is for all), God is openly displayed as righteous in justifying the irreverent one (Rom. 3:26; 4:5). In Christ's death the old humanity is put to death, so that all will ultimately be vivified in Christ and constituted righteous (1 Cor.15:22; Rom.5:19) . . . .

"What is done is that Christ dies for the sake of all, and consequently all die. In 2 Corinthians 5:14, Paul uses a 'fact verb' ('dies') rather than a 'time verb,' such as 'died' or 'has died.' We know that Christ's death is in the past, but here and in many other references to it, Paul puts the stress on the timeless fact of Christ's death together with the timeless fact of its significance for mankind. The death of Christ Jesus is the death of the old humanity, of all sinners, apart from consideration of its realization in time. The evangel is a fact for us to believe, a fact that will be experienced in God's appointed time."

We must acknowledge that our response to this evangel of God, too often, is far from ideal. This is because in ourselves we are flesh, and "the disposition of the flesh is enmity to God, for it is not subject to the law of God, for neither is it able" (Rom.8:7). Our situation is thus: "the flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh. Now these are opposing one another, lest you should be doing whatever you may want" (Gal.5:17).

How we rejoice, then, that ". . . the *saving grace of God* . . . [is] training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon" (Titus 2:11,12). This is to say that a sane, just, and devout walk is *dependent upon* and the *result of* the training of God's saving grace.

Thus may we "be learning to preside over ideal acts for necessary needs, that [we] may not be unfruitful" (Titus 3:14).

J.R.C.

PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS (1)
(Chapters 1-11)

1 Paul, a **called apostle of Christ Jesus, through God's will, and Sosthenes,** a ·**brother,** [2] **to the ecclesia of** ·**God** ·which ˡ**is in Corinth,** ˚**hallowed**° **in Christ Jesus, called saints, together** with **all in every place** ·who are **invoking**° **the Name of our** ·**Lord Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours:**

[3] **Grace to** ⁼**you and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ.**

[4] **I am thanking my** ·**God always concerning** ⁼**you** *on* **over the grace of** ·**God** ·which is ⁻**being given** ⁼**you in Christ Jesus,** [5] *t* **for in every**thing **are** ⁼**you enriched in Him, in** *e* **all expression and** *e* **all knowledge,** [6] **accord**ing **as the testimony of** ·**Christ is confirmed among** ⁼**you,** [7] **so that** ⁼**you** are **not** ˡ**deficient**° **in** *n* **any grace, awaiting**° **the unveiling of our** ·**Lord Jesus Christ,** [8] **Who will be confirming** ⁼**you also** un**til** the **consummation, unimpeachable in the day of our** ·**Lord Jesus Christ.** [9] **Faithful** is ·**God, through Whom** ⁼**you are called into** the **fellowship of His** ·**Son, Jesus Christ, our** ·**Lord.**

[10] *y* **Now I am entreating** ⁼**you, brethren, through the Name of our** ·**Lord Jesus Christ, that all may be saying the same** thing, **and** there **may be no schisms among** ⁼**you,** *y* **but** ⁼**you may be** ˚**attuned**° *t* **to the same mind and** *t* **to the same opinion.** [11] **For it is made evident to me concerning** ⁼**you, my brethren, by** ·those **of Chloe, that** there **are strifes among** ⁼**you.** [12] *y* **Now I am saying this, that each of** ⁼**you is saying, I´ indeed am of Paul, yet, I of Apollos, yet, I of Cephas, yet, I of Christ.** [13] ·**Christ is** ˚**parted**°**! Not Paul is**

crucified [oe]**for** =**your** sakes**! Or into the name of Paul are** =**you baptized?** 14 **I am thanking** ·**God that I baptize not one of** =**you except Crispus and Gaius,** 15 **lest any**one **may say that** =**you are baptized into my** ·**name.** 16 **Yet I baptize the house**hold **of Stephanas also. Furthermore, I am not** °**aware if I baptize any other.** 17 **For** ·**Christ** does **not commission me to be baptizing, but to be** bring**ing** the **evangel**°**, not in wisdom of word, lest the cross of** ·**Christ may be** made **void.**

18 **For the word** ·**of the cross is stupidity indeed to** ·those who are **perishing**°**, yet to us** ·who are **being saved**° **it is God's power.** 19 **For it is** °**written**°**,**

> **I shall be destroying the wisdom of the wise,**
> **And the understanding of the intelligent**
> **shall I be repudiating.** *Is 29:14 (LXX)*

20 **Where** is the **wise? Where** is the **scribe? Where** is the **discusser of this** ·**eon?** Does **not** ·**God** make **stupid the wisdom of this** ·**world?** 21 **For since, in fact, in the wisdom of** ·**God, the world through** ·**wisdom knows not** ·**God,** ·**God delights, through the stupidity of the heralding, to save** ·those who are **believing,** 22 **since, in fact,** + **Jews signs are requesting, and Greeks wisdom are seeking,** 23 **yet we**´ **are heralding Christ** °**crucified**°**, to Jews indeed** a **snare, yet to** the **nations stupidity;** 24 **yet to** [s]**those** ·who are **called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ** is **God's power and God's wisdom,** 25 [t]**for the stupid**ity **of** ·**God is wiser** than ·**human** being**s, and the weak**ness **of** ·**God is stronger** than ·**human** being**s.**

26 **For** =**you are observing** =**your** ·**calling, brethren, that** there are **not many** =**wise accord**ing to the **flesh; not many** =**powerful, not many** =**noble,** 27 **but the** =**stupid of the world** ·**God chooses**°**, that He may be disgracing the** =**wise, and the** =**weak of the world** ·**God chooses**°**, that He may be disgracing the** =**strong,** 28 **and the** =**ignoble and the** °=**con-**

temptible° **of the world** ·**God chooses**°**, and** ·those which [l]**are no**t, **that He should discard** ·those which [l]**are,** 29 **so that no flesh** at [e]**all should boast**° **in** ·**God's sight.** 30 **Yet** =**you**´**,** [o] **of Him, are in Christ Jesus, Who becomes to us wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance,** 31 **that accord**ing **as it is** °**written**°**,** He ·who is **boasting**°**, in** the **Lord let him be boasting**°**.** *Jr 9:24*

2 **And I**´**,** ¯**coming to**[d] =**you, brethren, come not** [ac]**with superiority of word or of wisdom, announcing to** =**you the testimony of** ·**God,** 2 **for I decide not to** °**perceive any**thing **among** =**you except Jesus Christ and Him** °**crucified**°**.** 3 **And I**´ **come**° to **be** [td]**with** =**you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling,** 4 **and my** ·**word and my** ·**heralding** are **not** [i]**with** the **persuasive words of human wisdom, but** [i]**with demonstration of spirit and of power,** 5 **that** =**your** ·**faith may not be in** the **wisdom of** ·**human** being**s but in God's power.**

6 **Yet wisdom are we speaking among the mature, yet** a **wisdom not of this** ·**eon, neither of the chief** men **of this** ·**eon,** ·who are **being discarded**°**,** 7 **but we are speaking God's wisdom in** a **secret,** ·wisdom which [l]**has been concealed**°**, which** ·**God designates before—before the eons,** [io]**for our glory,** 8 **which not one of the chief** men **of this** ·**eon** °**knows, for if they know, they would not crucify the Lord of** ·**glory.** 9 **But accord**ing **as it is** °**written**°**,**

> Those things **which** the **eye** does **not perceive,**
> **And** the **ear** does **not hear,**
> **And** which do **not ascend on** the **heart of human**ity**—**
> **Whatever** ·**God** make**s ready** for ·those
> who are **loving Him.** *Is 64:4; 65:17*

10 **Yet to us** ·**God reveals** them **through His** ·**spirit, for the spirit is searching all,** +**even the depths of** ·**God.**

11 **For is any of** =**human**ity °**acquainted** with ·those things which are ·**human except the spirit of** ·**human**ity ·which is **in**

it? Thus also, ˙those things which are **of ˙God no**ᵗ **one** ˚**knows, except the spirit of ˙God.** 12 ʸ**Now we´ obtain, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit** ˙which is ᵒ **of ˙God, that we may perceive** ˙those things which are ⁻**being gra**ciously giv**en to us by ˙God,** 13 **which we are speaking also, not** ⁱ**with words taught** by **human wisdom, but** ⁱ**with** those **taught** by the **spirit, matching spiritual** blessings with **spiritual** words**.**

14 ʸ**Now** the **soulish human is not receiving**° ˙those things which are **of the spirit of ˙God, for they are stupidity to him, and he is not** ˡ**able**° **to know** them, seeing **that they are spiritually** ˡ**examined**°**.** 15 ʸ**Now he** ˙who is **spiritual is indeed examining all, yet he´ is being examined**° **by no**ᵗ **one.** 16 **For** ᵃ**who knows** the **mind of** the **Lord? Who will be redirecting Him?***Is 40:13,14 (LXX)* **Yet we´** ˡ**have** the **mind of Christ.**

3 And I´, brethren, am not able to speak to ⁼**you as to** ⁼**spiritual, but as to fleshly, as to minors in Christ.** 2 **Milk I** give ⁼**you** to **drink, not** solid **food, for not as yet were** ⁼**you able**°**.** ᵇᵗ**Nay still, not** ʸ**even now are** ⁼**you** ˡ**able**°**,** 3 **for** ⁼**you are still fleshly. For where**ᵉ there is **jealousy and strife among** ⁼**you, are** ⁼**you not fleshly and walking** in **accord** with **humani**ty**?** 4 **For whenever any**one **may be saying, I´ indeed am of Paul, yet** ᵈan**other, I, of Apollos, will he not be fleshly?**

5 ᵃ**What then is Apollos?** ʸ**Now** ᵃ**what is Paul? Servants** are they, **through whom** ⁼**you believe, and as the Lord gives to each.** 6 **I´ plant, Apollos irrigates, but ˙God** make**s** it **grow up.** 7 **So that, neither is he** ˙who is **planting any**thing, **nor** he ˙who is **irrigating, but God** ˙Who makes it ˡ**grow up.** 8 ʸ**Now** he ˙who is **planting and** he ˙who is **irrigating are** for **one** thing. **Yet each will be getting**° his ˙**own wage**s **accord**ing to his ˙**own toil.** 9 **For God's fellow workers are we. God's farm, God's building, are** ⁼**you.**

10 **Accord**ing to **the grace of ˙God** ˙which is ⁻**being granted to me, as** a **wise foreman I lay** a **foundation, yet** an**other**

is building on it. **Yet let each** one ˡ**beware how he is building on** it. 11 **For other foundation** ˡ**can**° **no**ᵗ **one lay beside** ˙that which is ˡ**laid**°**, which is Jesus Christ.** 12 ʸ**Now if any**one **is building** ᵒⁿ **on this ˙foundation gold and silver, precious stones, wood, grass, straw,** 13 **each** one**'s ˙work will** ˡ**become**° **apparent, for the day will** ˡ**make** it **evident,** ᵗ**for it is being revealed**° ⁱ**by fire. And the fire, it´ will be testing each** one**'s ˙work—what kind it is.** 14 **If any**one**'s ˙work will be remaining which he builds on** it, **he will** ˡ**get**° **wage**s**.** 15 **If any**one**'s ˙work shall be** ˡ**burned**° **up, it will be** ˡ**forfeited, yet he´ shall be** ˡ**saved, yet thus, as through fire.**

16 **Are** ⁼**you not** ˚**aware that** ⁼**you are** a **temple of God and the spirit of ˙God is** mak**ing** its **home in** ⁼**you?** 17 **If any**one **is corrupting the temple of ˙God, ˙God will be corrupting him, for the temple of ˙God is holy, which**ᵃ ⁼**you´ are.**

18 **Let no one be deluding himself. If any**one **among** ⁼**you is presuming to be wise in this ˙eon, let him become**° **stupid, that he may become**° **wise,** 19 **for the wisdom of this ˙world is stupidity** ᵇ**with ˙God. For it is** ˚**written**°**,** ˙He is **clutching**° **the wise in their ˙craftiness.***Jb 5:13* 20 **And again,** The **Lord** ˡ**knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain.***Ps 94:11* 21 **So that, let no one be boasting**° **in human** beings**, for all is** ⁼**yours,** 22 **whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or** the **world, or life, or death, or** the ˚**present, or** that which is **impending—all** is ⁼**yours,** 23 **yet** ⁼**you** are **Christ's, yet Christ** is **God's.**

4 Thus let a **human be reckoning**° with **us—as deputies of Christ, and administrators of God's secrets.** 2 **Here, furthermore, it is being sought**° **in ˙administrators that any** such **may be found faithful.** 3 ʸ**Now to me it is** ⁱᵒ the **least** trifle **that I may be examined by** ⁼**you or by humani**ty**'s day. But neither am I examining myself.** 4 **For** of **nothing am I** ˚**conscious**° as **to myself, but not** ⁱ**by this am I** ˚**justified**°**.** ʸ**Now** He ˙Who is **examining me is** the **Lord.** 5 **So that, be no**t **judging any**thing **before** the **season, till the Lord**

should come, Who will also ˡilluminate the hidden things **of ˙darkness and ˡmanifest the counsels of the hearts. And then ˙applause will be** *ᵇ*coming˚ **to each** one **from ˙God.**

6 *ʸ*Now **these** things, **brethren, I trans**fer in a **figure** *ᵢₒ*to **myself and Apollos because** of ⁼**you, that in us** ⁼**you may learn no**t ˙**to be** ˡ**disposed above what is** ˚**written˚, that** ⁼**you may no**t **be** ˡ**puffed˚ up, one over the one, against the** *ᵈ*other. 7 **For** *ᵃ*who **is** mak**ing you** to **discriminate? ʸNow** *ᵃ*what ˡ**have you which you** do **not obtain? ʸNow if you obtain** it **also,** *ᵃ*why **are you boasting˚ as** though **no**t ¯**obtaining?** 8 **Already are** ⁼**you** ˚**sated˚, already are** ⁼**you rich, apart from us** ⁼**you reign. And would** that ⁼**you surely reign, that we´ also should reign together** with ⁼**you!** 9 **For I** ˡ**suppose that ˙God demonstrates** with **us, the last apostles, as death-doomed,** *ᶠ*for **we become** a **theater to the world and to messengers and to human** beings**.** 10 **We** are **stupid because** of **Christ, yet** ⁼**you** are **prudent in Christ. We** are **weak, yet** ⁼**you** are **strong.** ⁼**You** are **glorious, yet we** are **dishonored.** 11 **Until the** *ᵃᵗ* **present hour we are hungering also and thirsting, and are** ˡ**naked and are** ˡ**buffeted˚ and** ˡ**unsettled;** 12 **and we are toiling, working˚** with our ˙**own hands. Being reviled˚, we are blessing; being persecuted˚, we are bearing˚ with** it; 13 **being calumniated˚, we are entreating. As** the **offscourings of the world we become,** the **scum of all** things, **hitherto.**

14 **Not** to be **abashing** ⁼**you am I writing these** things, **but as my children beloved** am I **admonishing** you. 15 **For if** ⁼**you should be having ten thousand escorts in Christ,** *ᵇᵗ*nevertheless **not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus, through the evangel, I´ beget** ⁼**you.** 16 **I am entreating** ⁼**you, then,** ˡ**become˚ imitators of me.** 17 **Therefore I send to** ⁼**you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in** the **Lord, who will be reminding** ⁼**you** of **my ˙ways** ˙which are **in Christ Jesus, accord**ing **as I am teaching everywhere in every ecclesia.**

18 *ʸ*Now *ᵃ*some **are puffed up as** though **I** were **no**t **coming˚ to***ᵈ* ⁼**you.** 19 **Yet I shall be coming˚ to***ᵈ* ⁼**you swiftly, if ever the Lord should will, and I will** ˡ**know˚, not the word of** ˙those who are ˚**puffed˚ up, but the power.** 20 **For not in word** is **the kingdom of ˙God, but in power.** 21 *ᵃ*What **are** ⁼**you wanting?** *ⁱ*With a **rod may I come to***ᵈ* ⁼**you, or in love** *ᵇˢ*and a **spirit of meekness?**

5 **Absolutely, it is** ˡ**heard˚** that there is **prostitution among** ⁼**you, and such prostitution (which***ᵃ* **is not** *ʸ*even ˡ**named˚ among the nations), so that** *ᵃ*some**one** ˡ**has** his ˙**father's wife.** 2 **And** ⁼**you´ are** ˚**puffed˚ up, and mourn not rather, that the** one who **commits this ˙act may be taken away** *ᵒ*from ⁼**your midst.** 3 **For I´ indeed, being absent** in ˙**body, yet** ˡ**present** in ˙**spirit, have already, as** if ˡ**present, thus judged the** one ¯**effecting˚ this:** 4 **In the Name of our ˙Lord Jesus Christ,** ⁼**you** ¯**being gathered, and my ˙spirit, together** with **the power of our ˙Lord Jesus,** 5 are **to give up ˙such** a one **to ˙Satan** *ᵢₒ*for the **extermination of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.**

6 **Not ideal** is ⁼**your ˙boast. Are** ⁼**you not** ˚**aware that** a **little leaven is leavening the whole kneading?** 7 **Clean out then the old leaven, that** ⁼**you may be** a **fresh kneading, accord**ing **as** ⁼**you are unleavened. For our ˙Passover also, Christ, is sacrificed** *ᵒᵛ*for **our** sakes 8 **so that we may be** keep**ing** the **festival, no**t *ⁱ*with **old leaven, no**r **yet** *ⁱ*with the **leaven of evil and wickedness, but** *ⁱ*with **unleavened sincerity and truth.**

9 **I write to** ⁼**you in the epistle no**t **to be commingling˚** with **paramours.** 10 **And undoubtedly** it is **not** as **to the paramours of this ˙world, or the** ⁼**greedy and** ⁼**extortionate, or idolaters, else consequently** ⁼**you ought to come out** *ᵒ* **of the world.** 11 **Yet now I write to** ⁼**you no**t **to be commingling˚** with **any**one ˡ**named˚** a **brother, if he should be** a **paramour, or greedy, or** an **idolater, or** a **reviler, or** a **drunkard, or** an **extortioner. With ˙such** a one you are **no**t

[y]**even to be eating.** 12 **For** [a]**what** is it **to me to be judging** ·those **out**side**? =You´ are not judging** ·those **within!** 13 [y]**Now** ·those **out**side, ·**God is judging. Expel the wicked** one [o]**from** among **yourselves**[s]**.**

6 1 **[lDare any of =you, having business** [td]**with** [·d]an**other, be [ljudged°** [on]**before the unrighteous, and not** [on]**before the saints?** 2 **Or are =you not °aware that the saints shall [ljudge the world? And if the world is being judged°** [i]**by =you, are =you unworthy of** the **least tribunals?** 3 **Are =you not °aware that we shall be judging messengers, not to mention life's** affair**s?** 4 **If indeed then =you should [lhave tribunals** for **life's** affair**s, the °contemptible° in the ecclesia, these =you are seating?** 5 **To**[d] **abash =you am I saying** this. **Thus is** there **not among =you** [nt] **one wise** man **who will be [lable° to adjudicate amidst his ·brethr**en, 6 **but brother is suing°** [wi] **brother, and this** [on]**before unbelievers!**

7 **Already indeed then, it is absolutely** a **discomfiture** for **=you that =you are having lawsuits** [wi]**among yourselves. Wherefore are =you not rather being injured°? Wherefore are =you not rather being cheated°?** 8 **But =you´ are injuring and cheating, and this** to **brethren!** 9 **Or are =you not °aware that** the **unrighteous shall not be enjoying** the **allotment** of **God's kingdom? Be not [ldeceived°. Neither paramours, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor catamites, nor sodomites,** 10 **nor thieves, nor** the **=greedy, nor drunkards; no**[t] **revilers, no**[t] **extortioners shall be enjoying** the **allotment** of **God's kingdom.** 11 **And** [a]**some** of **=you were these, but =you are bathed° off, but =you are hallowed, but =you are justified in the Name of our ·Lord Jesus Christ and** [f]**by the spirit of our ·God.**

12 **All is [lallowed me, but not all is [lexpedient. All is [lallowed me, but I´ will not be** put under its **[lauthority by any**thing. 13 ·**Foods** for **the bowel**s **and the bowel**s for ·**foods, yet ·God will be discarding these as well as those.** [y]**Now the body** is **not** for ·**prostitution, but** for **the Lord,**

and the Lord for **the body.** 14 [y]**Now ·God rouses the Lord also, and will be rousing us up through His ·power.**

15 **Are =you not °aware that =your ·bodies are members of Christ? –Taking then the members of ·Christ away, should I make** them **members of** a **prostitute? May it not** [b]**come°** to that! 16 **Or are =you not °aware that he** ·who **[ljoins°** a **·prostitute is one body? For He is averring, The two will be** [io] **one flesh.**[Gn 2:24] 17 [y]**Now he** ·who **[ljoins° the Lord is one spirit.** 18 **[lFlee** from **·prostitution.** The **penalty** of **every sin, whatsoever** a **human should do, is outside of the body, yet he** ·who is committ**ing prostitution is sinning** [io]**against** his **·own body.** 19 **Or are =you not °aware that =your ·body is** a **temple of the holy spirit in =you, which =you [lhave from ·God, and =you are not** your [sf]**own?** 20 **For =you are bought** with a **price. By all means glorify ·God in =your ·body.**

7 1 [y]**Now concerning what =you write to me:** It is **ideal** for a [h]**man not to be touching°** a **woman.** 2 **Yet because** of ·**prostitutions, let each** man **[lhave** a ·**wife** for **himself and each** woman **[lhave** her ·**own husband.** 3 **Let the husband [lrender to the wife** her ·**due, yet likewise the wife also to the husband.** 4 **The wife** has **not** the **[ljurisdiction of** her ·**own body, but the husband, yet likewise the husband also** has **not** the **[ljurisdiction of** his ·**own body, but the wife.** 5 Do **not [ldeprive one another, except** [a]**some**time it **should** be [o]**by agreement** [td]**for** a **period, that =you should have leisure** for ·**prayer, and =you may be** [on] **the same again, lest ·Satan may be trying =you because** of **=your ·incontinence.** 6 [y]**Now this I am saying** [ac]**as** a **concession, not** [ac]**as** an **injunction.** 7 **For I [lwant all human** beings **to be as** I **myself also, but each [lhas** his **own gracious** gift [o]**from God,** [w]**one indeed thus, yet** [w]**one thus.**

8 [y]**Now I am saying to the unmarried and the widows, that** it is **ideal** for **them if ever they should remain +even as I.** 9 **Yet if they are not controlling°** themselves, **let them marry, for it is better to marry than to be** on **[lfire°.**

10 *y*Now to the °married I am charging, not I, but the Lord: A wife is not to be separated from her husband. 11 Yet if she should be separated also, let her ˡremain unmarried or be conciliated to her ˙husband. And a husband is not to ˡleave his wife.

12 *y*Now to the rest am I´ *sa*speaking, not the Lord. If any brother ˡhas an unbelieving wife, and she´ ˡapproves of making a home with him, let him not ˡleave her. 13 And a wife who*a* ˡhas an unbelieving husband, and he´ ˡapproves of making a home with her, let her not ˡleave her ˙husband. 14 For the unbelieving ˙husband is °hallowed° *i*by the wife, and the unbelieving ˙wife is °hallowed° *i*by the brother, else consequently ⁼your ˙children are unclean. Yet now they are holy. 15 Yet if the unbeliever is separating°, let him ˡseparate°. A ˙brother or a ˙sister is not °enslaved° in ˙such a case. *y*Now ˙God has called us in peace. 16 For of *a*what are you °aware, wife—*if* will you be saving your ˙husband—or of *a*what are you °aware, husband—*if* will you be saving your ˙wife—17 except as the Lord parts it to each?

Each as ˙God has called him, thus let him be walking. And thus am I prescribing° in all the ecclesias. 18 Is anyone called having been circumcised°? Let him not be ˡde-circumcised°. Is anyone °called° in uncircumcision? Let him not ˡcircumcise°. 19 ˙Circumcision is nothing, and ˙uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the precepts of God. 20 Each one in the calling in which he is called, in this let him be remaining. 21 Are you called a slave? Let it not be causing you care. But if you are ˡable° to become° free also, use it rather. 22 For, in the Lord, he ˙who is ⁻being called a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise, he ˙who is ⁻being called, being free, is a slave of Christ. 23 With a price are ⁼you bought. Do not ˡbecome° the slaves of human beings. 24 Each one, in what he is called, brethren, in this let him ˡremain *b*with God.

25 *y*Now concerning the celibates or virgins, I ˡhave no*t* injunction of the Lord. Yet an opinion am I giving, as one who ˡhas enjoyed mercy° by the Lord to be faithful. 26 I am inferring then this ideal to be ˡinherent, because of the °present necessity, *t*for it is ideal for humanity ˙to be thus. 27 You are °bound° to a wife? Do not ˡseek to be loosed. You have been loosed° from a wife? Do not ˡseek a wife. 28 Yet if you ever should marry, also, you do not sin. And if the virgin should marry, she does not sin. Yet affliction in the flesh will ˙such be having. Yet I´ am sparing° ⁼you.

29 *y*Now this I am averring, brethren, the era is °limited°; that ˙furthermore, ˙those also having wives may be as not having them, 30 and ˙those lamenting as not lamenting, and ˙those rejoicing as not rejoicing, and ˙those buying as not retaining, 31 and ˙those using° this ˙world as not using° it up. For the fashion of this ˙world is passing by.

32 *y*Now I ˡwant ⁼you to be without worry. The unmarried one is ˡsolicitous about the things of the Lord, how he should please the Lord. 33 Yet he ˙who marries is ˡsolicitous about the things of the world, how he should please his ˙wife, 34 and is °parted°. The unmarried ˙woman as well as the virgin: the unmarried one is ˡsolicitous about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in ˙body as well as in ˙spirit, yet she ˙who marries is ˡsolicitous about the things of the world, how she should please her ˙husband. 35 *y*Now this I am saying *td*for ⁼your *s*own ˙expedience, not that I should cast a noose *on*over ⁼you, but *td*for ˙that which is respectable and assiduous—to be undistractedly for the Lord.

36 *y*Now if anyone is inferring it to be ˡindecent *on*for his ˙virgin, if she should be over her meridian, and thus it ˡought to ˡoccur°, what he ˡwill, let him ˡdo. He is not sinning. Let them ˡmarry. 37 Yet he who °stands settled in his ˙heart, having no necessity, yet ˡhas authority *c*as to his ˙own will, and has decided this in his ˙own heart (to be keeping his*sf* ˙virgin) ideally will be doing. 38 So that he also ˙who is taking his*sf* ˙virgin in marriage, ideally will

be doing, yet he ˙who is **no**t tak**ing out** in **marriage will be doing better.**

39 A **wife is** ˚**bound**˚ by **law** *on* **for whatever time her** ˙**husband is living. Yet if the husband should be put to repose, she is free to be married to whom she** ˡ**will, only in** the **Lord.** 40 **Yet happier is she if ever she should remain thus, accord**ing to **my** ˙**opinion.** *y* **Now I** ˡ**presume** that **I also** ˡ**have God's spirit.**

8 *y* **Now concerning the idol sacrifices: We are** ˚**aware that we all** ˡ**have knowledge.** ˙**Knowledge is puffing up, yet** ˙**love is building up.** 2 **If any**one **is presuming to** ˚**know any**thing, **he knows not as yet accord**ing **as** he ˡ**must know.** 3 *y* **Now if any**one **is loving** ˙**God, this** one **is** ˚**known**˚ **by Him.** 4 **Then concerning the feeding** on **the idol sacrifices: We are** ˚**aware that** an **idol** is **nothing in** the **world, and that** there is **no***th* *d* **other God except One.** 5 **For** ⁺**even if so be that** there **are** those **being termed**˚ **gods, whether in heaven or on earth, even as** there **are many gods and many lords,** 6 *bt* **nevertheless** for **us** there is **one God, the Father, out of Whom** ˙**all** is, **and we** *io* **for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom** ˙**all** is, **and we through Him.** 7 **But not in all** is there ˙this **knowledge.** *y* **Now** *a* **some,** ˙**used hitherto** to **the idol, are eating** of it **as** an **idol sacrifice, and their** ˙**conscience, being weak, is being polluted**˚**.** 8 *y* **Now food will not give us** a **standing** with ˙**God; neither if we should no**t **eat are we** made ˡ**deficient**˚**, nor if we should eat are we superabounding** in this**.**

9 *y* **Now** ˡ**beware lest** some**how this** ˙**right of** ⁼**you**rs **may become**˚ a **stumbling** block **to the weak.** 10 **For if any**one **should** *p* **see you,** ˙who ˡ**has knowledge, lying**˚ **down in** an **idol**'s **shrine, will not the conscience of him** who ˡ**is weak be** ˡ**inured** *io* **to the eating** of **the idol sacrifices?** 11 **For the** ˡ**weak** one **is perishing**˚ **also** *i* **by your** ˙**knowledge; the brother because** of **whom Christ dies.** 12 *y* **Now** in **thus sinning** *io* **against** ˙**brethren, and beating their** ˡ**weak** ˙**conscience,** ⁼**you are sinning** *io* **against Christ.** 13 **Wherefore, if food is snaring my** ˙**brother, I may under no circumstances eat** ⁼**meat** *io* **for the eon, lest I should snare my** ˙**brother.**

9 Am I not free? Am I not an **apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our** ˙**Lord? Are** ⁼**you**´ **not my** ˙**work in** the **Lord?** 2 **If to others I am not** an **apostle,** *bt* **nevertheless I surely am to** ⁼**you! For you**´ **are the seal of my** ˙**apostleship in** the **Lord.**

3 **My** ˙**defense to** ˙those **examining me is this:** 4 ˡ**Have we no right** at *nt* **all to eat and drink?** 5 ˡ**Have we no right** at *nt* **all to be leading about** a **sister** as a **wife,** ⁺**even as the rest** of the **apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?** 6 **Or** ˡ**have only I and Barnabas no***t* **right not to be working**˚**?** 7 *a* **Who is warring**˚ **at any time** supplying his **own rations?** *a* **Who is planting** a **vineyard and not eating** *o* **of its** ˙**fruit? Or** *a* **who is tending** a **flock and not eating** *o* **of the milk of the flock?**

8 **No**t **accord**ing to a **human am I speaking these** things. **Or is the law not also saying these** things? 9 **For in the law of Moses it is** ˚**written**˚**: You shall not** ˡ**muzzle** the **threshing ox. No**t for ˙**oxen is** the ˡ**care** of ˙**God!** 10 **Or is He undoubtedly saying** it **because** of **us? Because** of **us, for it is written that the** ˡ**plower** ˡ**ought to be plowing** *on* **in expectation, and the** ˡ**thresher to** ˡ**partake of his** ˙**expectation.** 11 **If,** *on* **in expectation, we**´ **sow the** ⁼**spiritual** in ⁼**you,** is it a **great** thing **if we**´ **shall** ˡ**reap of** ⁼**your** ˙**fleshly** things**?** 12 **If others are partaking of** ˙this **right** from ⁼**you,** are **not rather we?** *bt* **Nevertheless we** do **not use**˚ **this** ˙**right, but we are forgoing all, lest we may give any hindrance to the evangel of** ˙**Christ.**

13 **Are** ⁼**you not** ˚**aware that the** ˡ**workers**˚ at **the sacred** things **are eating** of **the** things *o* **of the sanctuary?** ˙Those **settling beside the altar** have their ˡ**portion**˚ **with the altar.** 14 **Thus the Lord also prescribes** that ˙those who are **announcing the evangel** are **to be living** *o* **of the evangel.** 15 **Yet I**´ do **not use**˚ *nt* **any of these** things. *y* **Now I** do

not write these things **that it may become° thus** *i*·**with me, for** it is **my ideal rather to die, than that any**one **shall be** mak**ing my** ·**boast void.**

16 **For if I should be** bring**ing** the **evangel°, it is not** for **me** to **boast** in, **for necessity is lying° on me, for it were woe to me if I should no**t bring the **evangel°!** 17 **For if I am engaging** in **this voluntarily, I** ˡ**have wage**s, **yet if involuntarily, I have been entrusted°** with an **administration.** 18 *a*·**What then is my** ·**wage? That,** in bring**ing** the **evangel°, I should place the evangel without expense,** so *io*·**as no**t ·**to use° up my** ·**authority in the evangel.**

19 **For being free** *o* **of all, I enslave myself to all, that I should gain the more.** 20 **And I become° to the Jews as** a **Jew, that I should gain Jews; to** ·those **under law as under law (not being** *s*·**my**self **under law), that I should gain** ·those **under law;** 21 **to** ·those **without law as without law (not being without God's law, but legal**ly **Christ's), that I should gain** ·those **without law.** 22 **I become° as weak to the weak, that I should gain the weak. To** ·**all have I become all, that I should undoubtedly save** *a*·**some.** 23 *y*·**Now all am I doing because** of **the evangel, that I may become°** a **joint participant of it.**

24 **Are** ⁼**you not** ˚**aware that** ·those **racing in** a **stadium are indeed all racing, yet one is obtaining the prize? Thus be racing that you may grasp** it. 25 *y*·**Now every** ·ˡ**contender° is controlling°** himself in **all** things; *t*·**they indeed then, that they may obtain** a **corruptible wreath, yet we** an **incorruptible.** 26 **Now then, thus am I´ racing, not as dubious, thus am I boxing, not as punching** the **air,** 27 **but I am belaboring my** ·**body and leading** it **into slavery, lest** some**how,** when ⁻**heralding to others, I** *s*·**my**self **may become° disqualified.**

10 **For I** do **not** ˡ**want** ⁼**you to be** ˡ**ignorant, brethren, that our** ·**fathers all were under the cloud, and all pass** *th* **through the sea,** 2 **and all are baptized into** ·**Moses in the cloud and in the sea,** 3 **and all eat the same spiritual food,** 4 **and all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank** *o* **of** the **spiritual Rock** which ˡ**follow**ed. *y*·**Now the Rock was** ·**Christ.**

5 **But not in the majority of them** does ·**God delight, for they are strewn along in the wilderness.** 6 *y*·**Now these** things **become types of us,** *io*·**for us no**t ·**to be lusters** after **evil** things**, accord**ing **as** *t*·**they´ also lust.** 7 **Nor yet be becoming° idolaters, accord**ing **as** *a*·**some of them, even as it is** ˚**written°, Seated are the people to eat and drink, and they rise to** ˡ**sport.** *Ex 32:6* 8 **Nor yet may we be** committ**ing prostitution, accord**ing **as** *a*·**some of them** commit **prostitution, and fall in one day twenty-three thousand.** *Nu 25:1-9* 9 **Nor yet may we be putting the Lord** on **trial, accord**ing **as** *a*·**some of them put** Him on **trial, and perished° by** ·**serpents.** *Nu 21:4-6* 10 **Nor yet be murmuring even as** *a*·**some of them murmur, and perish° by the exterminator.**

11 *y*·**Now all** ⁼**this befalls** *t*·**them typically. Yet it is written** *td*·**for our admonition,** *io*·**to whom the consummations of the eons have attained.** 12 **So that, let him** ·who is **supposing** he ˚**stand**s ˡ**beware** that **he should not fall.** 13 **No***t* **trial has taken** ⁼**you except** what is **human.** *y*·**Now faithful** is ·**God, Who will not be leaving** ⁼**you to be tried above what** ⁼**you are** ˡ**able°, but, together** with **the trial, will be making the sequel also,** ·**to** en**able°** ⁼**you to** ˡ**undergo** it.

14 **Wherefore, my beloved,** ˡ**flee from** ·**idolatry.** 15 **As to** the **prudent am I saying** it. **Judge** ⁼**you´ what I am averring.** 16 **The cup of** ·**blessing which we are blessing, is it not** the **communion of the blood of** ·**Christ? The bread which we are breaking, is it not** the **communion of the body of** ·**Christ?** 17 *t*·**For we,** ·who are **many, are one bread, one body, for we** ·**all are partaking** *o* **of the one bread.**

18 ˡ**Observe** ·**Israel accord**ing to the **flesh. Are not** ·those **eating the sacrifices participants** with **the altar?** 19 *a*·**What then am I averring? That** an **idol sacrifice is any**thing**? Or**

that an **idol is any**thing? [20] **But that** that **which the nations are sacrificing, they are sacrificing to demons and not to God.** [y]**Now I** do **not** [l]**want** [=]**you to** [l]**become**[°] **participants** with **the demons.** [21] [=]**You** [l]**can**[°] **not** [l]**drink** the **cup of the Lord and** the **cup of demons.** [=]**You** [l]**can**[°] **not be partaking of** the **table of** the **Lord and** the **table of demons.** [22] **Or are we** provok**ing the Lord** to **jealousy? Not stronger** than **He are we!**

[23] **All is** [l]**allowed me, but not all is** [l]**expedient. All is** [l]**allowed me, but not all is edifying.** [24] **Let no one be seeking the** welfare **of himself, but** ·that **of** [·d]an**other.** [25] **Every**thing ·that is [l]**sold**[°] [i]**at** the **meat market be eating, examining nothing because** of ·**conscience.** [26] **For the Lord's** is **the earth and** ·that which **fills it.**[Ps 24:1]

[27] **If any**one **of the unbelievers is inviting** [=]**you, and** [=]**you** [l]**want to** [l]**go**[°]**, be eating every**thing ·that is [l]**placed**[°] **before** [=]**you, examining nothing because** of ·**conscience.** [28] **Yet if any**one **should say to** [=]**you, This is** a **sacred sacrifice,** do **not** [l]**eat, because** of **that** one ·who **divulges** it, **and** ·**conscience.** [29] **Yet conscience, I am saying, not** ·that **of** yourself, **but** ·that **of** [·d]an**other. For why is my** ·**freedom being decided**[°] **by** an**other's conscience?** [30] **If I′,** with **grat**itude, **am partaking,** [a]**why am I being calumniated**[°] [ov]**for** that for **which I′ am** giv**ing thanks?** [31] **Then whether** [=]**you are eating or drinking, or any**thing [=]**you are doing,** [l]**do all** [io]**for** the **glory of God.** [32] **And** [l]**become**[°] **not** a **stumbling** block **to Jews as well as to Greeks and to the ecclesia of** ·**God,** [33] **accord**ing **as I′ also am pleasing all** in **all** things, **not seeking my** [sf]**own** ·**expedience, but** ·that **of the many, that they may be saved.** **11** [l]**Become**[°] **imitators of me, accord**ing **as I also** am **of Christ.**

[2] [y]**Now I am applauding** [=]**you that** [=]**you** [°]**remember**[°] **all of mine, and are retaining the traditions accord**ing **as I give** them **over to** [=]**you.** [3] [y]**Now I** [l]**want** [=]**you to be aware**

that the Head of every man is ·**Christ, yet** the **head of** the **woman** is **the man, yet** the **Head of** ·**Christ** is ·**God.**

[4] **Every man praying**[°] **or prophesying having** aught [ag]**on** his **head, is disgracing his** ·**Head.** [5] **Yet every woman praying**[°] **or prophesying** with **uncovered** ·**head is disgracing her** ·**head, for it is one and the same** as ·**being** [°]**shaven**[°]**.** [6] **For if** a **woman is not covering**[°]**, let her be shorn**[°] **also.** [y]**Now if** it is a **shame** for a **woman** ·**to be shorn**[°] **or shaven**[°]**, let her be covering**[°]**.** [7] **For** a **man indeed** [l]**ought not to be covering**[°] his ·**head,** be**ing inher**ently the **image and glory of God. Yet the woman is** the **glory of** the **man.** [8] **For man is not out of woman, but woman out of man.** [9] **For also, man is not created because** of **the woman, but woman because** of **the man.** [10] **Therefore the woman** [l]**ought to** [l]**have authority** [on]**over** her ·**head because** of **the messengers.** [11] **However, neither** is **woman apart from man, nor man apart from woman, in** the **Lord.** [12] **For even as the woman** is **out of the man, thus the man also** is **through the woman, yet** ·**all** is [o] **of** ·**God.**

[13] **Judge in yourselves**[s]**: Is it becoming** in a **woman to be praying**[°] **to** ·**God uncovered?** [14] **Is not** [y]**even** ·**nature** [s]**it**self **teaching** [=]**you that if** a **man indeed should** have [l]**tresses, it is** a **dishonor to him,** [15] **yet if** a **woman should** have [l]**tresses, it is her glory,** seeing **that** ·**tresses have been given**[°] **her instead of clothing?** [16] [y]**Now if any**one **is presuming to be rivalrous, we′** [l]**have no**[t] **such usage, neither the ecclesias of** ·**God.**

[17] [y]**Now** in giv**ing this charge** I am **not applauding,** [t]**for** [=]**you are coming**[°] **together, not** [io]**for the better, but** [io]**for** ·**discomfiture.** [18] **For first indeed** at [=]**your coming**[°] **together in** the **ecclesia, I am hearing** of **schisms inhering among** [=]**you, and** [a]**some part I am believing.** [19] **For it** [l]**must** be that there **are sects also among** [=]**you, that** ·those **also** who are **qualified may become**[°] **apparent among** [=]**you.**

[20] **Then,** at [=]**your coming**[°] **together** [on]**in the same** place,

it is not to eat the **Lord**'s **dinner,** 21 **for each** one **is getting** his ˙**own dinner before in the eating, and** *w*˙**one indeed is** ˡ**hungry, yet** *w*˙**one is** ˡ**drunk.** 22 **For** ˡ**have** ˣ**you no homes** at *nt*˙**all** *io*˙**in** ˙which **to** ˡ**eat and** ˡ**drink? Or are** ˣ**you despising the ecclesia of** ˙**God, and mortifying** ˙those who ˡ**have no**thing**? a˙What may I say to** ˣ**you? Should I applaud** ˣ**you in this? I am not applauding.**

23 **For I′ accept from the Lord, what I give over also to** ˣ**you, that the Lord Jesus, in the night** in **which He was given**° **up, takes bread,** 24 **and** ⁻giv**ing thanks**, **breaks** it **and says, This is My** ˙**body,** ˙ˡ**broken**° *ov*˙**for** ˣ**your** sakes**. This** ˡ**do** *io*˙**for** a ˙**recollection** of **Me.**

25 **Similarly, the cup also, after** ˙**din**ing, **saying, This** ˙**cup is the new covenant in My** ˙**blood. This** ˡ**do, as often as** ˣ**you** *m* **are drinking,** *io*˙**for** a ˙**recollection** of **Me.** 26 **For as often as** ˣ**you** *m* **are eating this** ˙**bread and drinking this** ˙**cup,** ˣ**you are announcing the Lord's** ˙**death until** *w* **He should come.**

27 **So that, whoever** *m*˙**should be eating the bread or drinking the cup of the Lord unworthily, will be liable** for **the body and the blood of the Lord.** 28 *y*˙**Now let** a **human** ˡ**test himself first, and thus let him** ˡ**eat** *o* **of the bread and** ˡ**drink** *o* **of the cup.** 29 **For he** ˙who is **eating and drinking unworthily is eating and drinking judgment to himself, not discriminating the body of the Lord.** 30 **Therefore many among** ˣ**you** are **infirm and ailing, and** a **considerable** number **are reposing**°**.** 31 **For if we adjudicated ourselves, we would not be judged**°**.** 32 **Yet, being judged**°**, we are being disciplined**° **by the Lord, that we may not be condemned** *tg*˙**with the world.**

33 **So that, my brethren,** when **coming**° **together** *io* ˙**to eat, be waiting**° for **one another.** 34 *y*˙**Now if any**one **may be** ˡ**hungry, let him** ˡ**eat** *i*˙**at home, that** ˣ**you may not be coming**° **together** *io*˙**for judgment.** *y*˙**Now the rest I shall be prescribing**° **as** soon as **I should come.**

THE WORD OF THE CROSS

For the word of the cross is stupidity indeed to those who are perishing, yet to us who are being saved it is God's power (1 Cor.1:18).

SHALL we, too, be writing stupidity and be penning utter foolishness? Does not the apostle Paul describe our subject as "stupidity indeed"? Have we not confirmation of this in the writings and sayings of many who profess to be wise in the world? Do not most of them expose their lack of interest in the theme by ignoring it completely!

Yes, Paul describes "the word of the cross" as "stupidity indeed to those who are perishing," but then he adds by way of contrast, "yet to us who are being saved it is the *power of God.*" And then the apostle proceeds, in perhaps the most scathing terms since Jesus lashed the scribes and Pharisees, to denounce the wisdom of the supposedly wise men of this eon, who seek in their own ways, and often without reference to God at all, to settle the great problems that only God can resolve. They seek salvation through science, and peace through philosophy; God provides both through the cross. But let us see what Paul says:

"For it is written, I shall be destroying the wisdom of the wise, and the understanding of the intelligent shall I be repudiating. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the discusser of this eon? Does not God make stupid the wisdom of this world? For since, in fact, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom knows not God, God delights, through the stupidity of the heralding, to save those who are believing, since, in fact, Jews signs are

requesting, and Greeks wisdom are seeking, yet we are heralding Christ crucified, to Jews, indeed, a snare, yet to the nations stupidity, yet to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, for the stupidity of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor.1:19-25).

Now what does all this mean? There was some reason why humanity as a whole could not easily accept the teaching of Paul concerning the cross. The Jews, who were highly religious, viewed the matter with suspicion—to them the cross was a snare. The nations who were highly cultured, viewed it with disdain—to them the cross was stupidity. We may see why later. But for the moment let us realize this, that though Paul occasionally speaks of "*my* evangel," as in Romans 2:16, he never claims to be the author of it. Quite the contrary. In the very first verse of his Roman epistle, he explains that he has been *severed,* or separated, from the rest to proclaim the *evangel of God*, which, in verse 16 of the same chapter, he declares to be "*God's* power for salvation to everyone who is believing—to the Jew first and to the Greek as well."

Yes, to those who are called, whether Jew or Greek, this evangel, which has for its keystone the word of the cross, is both the power of God and the wisdom of God, and it is something separate and distinct from anything that had been proclaimed before. It is fundamental to the purpose of God, and yet there are some peculiar things about this teaching of the cross.

For instance, if the cross is so important a feature of God's operations as Paul maintains, how is it that John never refers to it in his later writings? There is no mention of the cross in any of his three epistles, nor in the book of Revelation, the Unveiling of Jesus Christ, which he also wrote. True, we find allusions to "the *blood* of Christ" and "the *blood* of the Lambkin," but the *cross* is not mentioned. Why, again, has Peter, in his two letters, nothing to say about the *cross* of Christ? Or James? Or Jude? If the word of the cross is as important as Paul suggests, how is it that all these others (who, after all, were contemporary with Paul) seem to ignore it?

This is a question which all believers must face up to. It implies—it *must* imply—that Paul was giving a different message from the rest. If, as we surely believe, Peter, James, John and Jude all spoke as they were moved by the holy Spirit, then, without doubt, they too would have been impelled to speak of the cross if it had been essential to their messages. We are forced to conclude that there is one great difference at least between the evangel as proclaimed by Paul, and that proclaimed by Peter, James, John and Jude, and that this distinction is to be found in their relationship and attitude to the cross of Christ.

For look how freely and emphatically Paul speaks of the cross. In 1 Corinthians 1:17 he expresses a concern lest, in his own preaching, the cross of Christ should be made void; and in the next verse he describes the word of the cross as the *power of God* to those who are being saved. A little later, in verse 23, he infers that, in his preaching of "Christ crucified," he is in fact proclaiming "Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God." Again, in the second chapter, he affirms his decision "not to perceive anything among you except Jesus Christ, and Him *crucified.*" And yet Peter, James, John and Jude have nothing to say about the cross of Christ.

To put the matter simply, we would suggest that Peter, John, James and Jude are writing to a people who have not yet come to the cross of Christ, and therefore they find no occasion to mention it. Paul, on the other hand, is addressing a message to some who have reached the cross, and, indeed, have continued further with it. Therefore, he refers to it freely. Peter and those with him are looking

forward to the millennial reign of Christ in which many glorious things will be happening, particularly in relation to Israel and through Israel to the rest of humanity, but a time in which, nevertheless, the effects of what was accomplished on the cross will *not* be observed. After all, Jesus presented Himself to Israel as their King, and proclaimed and practiced the evangel of the Kingdom, before ever He was crucified. Paul takes us by faith into a time *beyond* the Millennium—into the fifth eon, the Day of God—an era in which the effects of the cross will be fully operative. And—wonder of wonders and grace beyond measure—he even invites us to enjoy the benefits of those effects over one thousand years in advance—now. This we do in spirit, and by faith. To find out what these benefits are—what the message of the cross really is—we must look at what Paul has to say about it.

THE OLD HUMANITY CRUCIFIED

Now you may be surprised to learn that the word "cross" never occurs in Paul's great epistle to the Romans—the first of his writings as they appear in our versions. In a letter which deals with such fundamental matters as justification, conciliation, and God's sovereignty, one might have thought that a mention of the cross would be indispensable. It is certainly there by implication, but the word "cross" itself is absent. It is implied in the one usage of the verb form, "crucify," and this, in its context, is significant, for it gives us the real clue to the meaning of the message of the cross. This is what Paul says:

"What, then, shall we declare? That we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing? May it not be coming to that! We, who died to sin, how shall we still be living in it? Or are you ignorant that whoever are baptized into Christ Jesus, are baptized into His death? We, then, were entombed together with Him through baptism into

death, that, even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also should be walking in newness of life. For if we have become planted together in the likeness of His death, nevertheless we shall be of the resurrection also, knowing this, that our old humanity was *crucified* together with Him, that the body of Sin may be nullified, for us by no means to be still slaving for Sin, for one who dies has been justified from Sin" (Rom.6:1-7).

"Knowing this, that our old humanity was crucified together with Him, that the body of Sin may be nullified"—that is, brought to nought. Paul is simply telling us that there is no place for this body of Sin in the evangel of salvation which he is proclaiming. He confirms this in his letters to the Corinthians and Galatians. Let us look at Corinthians first.

The brethren at Corinth had acquired a not very enviable reputation on account of their panderings to the vices and lusts of the flesh. This was evidenced by their petty quarreling, by their strifes and divisions among themselves, and even by other practices that had been heard of among them. It is as a counter to all this that Paul, when he writes to them, lays such stress on the significance of the cross. "The word of the cross," he declares is "the power of God"; "Christ crucified," the "power of God and the wisdom of God." Far from pandering to the passions of the old humanity, tied to a dying flesh, they should have been thinking in terms of a new humanity, which comes with a new creation. "If anyone is in Christ," Paul tells them in his second letter, "there is a new creation: the primitive passed by. Lo! There has come new!" (2 Cor.5:17).

The new creation is something entirely of God, and shows forth *His* power and *His* wisdom. In His sight, the old humanity of a believer in Christ has had its day. It is regarded as being crucified on the same cross as that on

which God's Son was crucified. The Corinthians should have seen it that way. And so, too, should we look upon our bodies of Sin. They cannot help our spiritual life in any way; rather, they only hinder. They cannot contribute one iota of merit towards our salvation; they cannot even in the most minute degree please God. No dying body can, and these are, in fact, dying all the time, as every ache and pain testifies. Then why not reckon them as being dead already! In the words of Romans 6:11, "Be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

But to be living in Christ implies a *new creation.* What a privilege, indeed, that God counts us as living to Him, even while we are physically retarded by these bodies of humiliation; but that is only because His Son dealt with the problem of sin in the flesh once and for all time on the cross, and our bodies of Sin are reckoned by God as having been crucified on the same cross.

The Galatian case is rather different from that of the Corinthians. Their fault lay in trying to exalt the flesh, to give it an honor and a prominence to which it was not entitled. They sought to enforce the law of Moses on the basis that the flesh ought to be able to justify itself by keeping the law. Paul had to point out that "by works of law shall no flesh at all be justified" (Gal.2:16). Far from bringing credit to the flesh, the law only made sin in the flesh more manifest. Every additional commandment was one more to break. He asks them a direct question, "Undertaking in spirit, are you now being completed in flesh?" (Gal.3:3). The works of the flesh are given as adultery, wantonness, enmities, strifes, jealousies, dissentions, etc.; the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control. "Those of Christ Jesus," says Paul, "crucify the flesh with its passions and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

The Galatians were even being pressed to return to circumcision—the ritual which God had established with Abraham— but Paul counters this by saying that it had now become merely a means of glorifying the flesh. And then he adds, "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but a *new creation.*" (Gal.6:14,15).

Again, a *new creation.* The word of the cross demands a new creation. Peter, James, John and Jude have nothing to say about this. They are looking for a new birth, in conformity with the words of Jesus to Nicodemus, "You must be begotten anew" (John 3:7). They are looking for a new birth within the framework of Israel's promises (*cf* Isa. 66:8); this is a vastly different thing from a new creation outside of Israel's promises. The new birth is a national blessing to fit Israel for the Kingdom, the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth; the new creation is an individual blessing, and transports us in spirit past the millennial eon into the day of God, and fits us for our celestial destiny.

When Paul speaks of a new creation, he means "new" in every sense—new absolutely. This is not the case with Israel during the millennial eon, for Israel is but a nation reborn, of the same stock as the nation originally born at Sinai. In fact, the promises originally made to Israel at Sinai are repeated to the regenerated nation by Peter in his first epistle, when he calls them a "royal priesthood," a "holy nation." During the thousand years they will serve humanity as a priestly nation, fulfilling the functions originally assigned to them at Sinai, but which were lost to the old nation through its repeated idolatry.

But in spite of the new birth, and in spite of all that the regenerated nation of Israel can do during the millennial eon, let us not forget that it all ends in a tremendous rebel-

lion against God, when Satan is loosed out of his prison, and he comes to deceive all nations which are in the four corners of the earth, to be mobilizing them for battle, their number being as the sand of the sea. This tremendous event is followed by the judgment of the great white throne, and in Revelation 20:11 we read that from the face of Him Who sits upon the throne, earth and heaven flee, and no place is found for them. They just cannot abide in the presence of the absolute righteousness and purity of the majestic Occupant of the throne. And John goes on to describe how all those who appear before the throne are judged in accord with their acts, and are condemned. This is the final condemnation of the flesh, and all that has been done in the flesh. But this is not the end, for John next perceives "a new heaven and a new earth, for the former heaven and the former earth pass away." And all the sorrow and mourning and misery connected with them pass away, too, for He Who is sitting upon the throne declares that He is making all *new.* This is in line with what Isaiah had prophesied centuries earlier when he said, "For behold Me creating new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor shall they come up on the heart" (Isa.65:17, CV).

This is the new creation, which John perceives only at the end of his visions, but to which Paul is pointing from the very beginning of his writings. The great point to be noted is that there is a complete break with the old. Nothing is carried over. And so it is, too, with the advance application of the new creation, as it affects a believer in Christ in this day of grace. "The primitive [the old] is passed by. Lo! There has come new."

The cross demands a complete break with the old, and provides the way for the provision of a glorious alternative in the new. To those who are not prepared to make this break, the word of the cross is just stupidity; for in

clinging to the old, they must perforce be like the Corinthians, and pander to the desires of the flesh, or like the Galatians, and give the flesh an importance to which it is not entitled. It is in these two factors that many sincere believers, who are also religionists, become enemies of the cross of Christ.

But to see the full effects of the cross, and to appreciate its message in even greater grandeur, we must now turn to the prison letters of Paul.

A TRILOGY FROM PRISON

It used to be a practice among Greek writers to enter literary competitions in which they had to submit what was termed a trilogy, that is, three pieces with themes related to each other. Generally these were tragedies. Only a few specimens are now extant. But no trilogy submitted by any Greek writer for a competition could even remotely approach in grandeur the wonderful trio of letters written by Paul, which have come down to us as the epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians. We have compared them to a Greek trilogy only because we wish to emphasize that they should be regarded as a trio, with themes that are connected, and not as individual messages. There is, of course, nothing of a tragedy about them. On the contrary, their grandeur lies in the fact that they expand our conception of God's purpose to include the whole universe. Whereas earlier writings, not excluding those of Paul, have their settings on earth, the prison letters usher us straight into the vastnesses of the celestial realms. Outside of the prison letters, we have God's salvation extended to all mankind; inside the prison letters, it reaches out to include heaven as well.

Now, one of the most interesting features of the prison letters is that in each one we have a remarkable description of Christ. The wider scope of these letters makes these

descriptions necessary, and, as we examine them, we find that they are connected in a wonderful way. Let us do this, taking the Colossian account first.

Here we find Christ in His relationship to the *motive* behind all God's operations. God's purpose was conceived in *love,* which finds its first and greatest expression in "the Son of His love" (Col.1:13). It is as the Son of God's love that Christ is presented to us in this epistle, where He is also declared to be "the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the heavens and that on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and *He* is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him."

Here we are among the heights indeed. These are the mountain peaks—the Himalayas of the Scriptures. And we are among the heights again when we come to the Ephesian description of Christ, for there He is portrayed as being seated at the right hand of God, among the celestials, "up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending." It is in this account that Christ is given "as Head over all, to the *ecclesia* which is His body, the complement of the One Who is completing the all in all" (Eph.1:20-23). So, in Ephesians, we have Christ portrayed in His relationship to the ecclesia, the *medium* through which God's purpose is to be accomplished.

But what about the Philippian account? The description of Christ takes us again into the heights. On the one hand, we have Him "inherently in the form of God" and deeming it "not pillaging to be equal with God," and on the other hand, we have Him highly exalted, and graced "with the name that is above every name." No heights can be higher than these, but between them, what do we find? A deep

chasm, an almost bottomless rift, at the foot of which lies the cross. For He Who was in the form of God emptied Himself of all His pristine glory to take upon Himself the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and having done that, descended the valley still farther by humbling Himself and "becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil.2:5-9).

In this Philippian portrayal of Christ, we see Him in His relationship to the *means* by which God's purpose is to be accomplished. That means is the cross, and here the theme of the cross takes on a more profound significance. For the depths of a valley can best be appreciated from a vantage point on the heights, for then we can look straight down into the gulf below. That is exactly what we do in the letter to the Philippians. We endeavor to place ourselves (mentally) in the position that Christ occupied when He was in the form of God, and then, peering down, try to comprehend all that is included in the *death of the cross.* It is not just the death of Christ that counts, but all that goes with it—all that was attached to the cross—the degradation, the shame, the ignominy, the opprobrium, and above all the separation from God. For the cross was an execution stake for malefactors and murderers, and carried with it a curse.

If you really want to see what is implied in the term, "Christ crucified," which Paul was so determined to preach to the Corinthians, go to the Philippian epistle. No two words can be wider apart, yet they are brought together. *Christ,* the Anointed of God, once on the heights in the form of God, and deeming it not pillaging to be equal with God, yet now *crucified,* cursed among the malefactors at the bottom of the abyss. Cursed (Gal.3:13) because it was to the *cross* that He nailed the old humanity with all its sin and wickedness, thereby settling the problem of sin once

and for all. Truly, the depths of the Philippian epistle are the depths of love!

Now, what about the effects of the cross?

The Philippian account gives us the effects of the cross on *Christ Himself.* "Wherefore, also," continues the apostle—that is, *because* He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross—"God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father." Praise be to God!

The glory with which God graces His Son because of His obedience unto the death of the cross, is such that it not only exalts Christ above all else in the universe, but also brings all creation into recognition and acceptance of this fact. Every knee will bow to Him, every tongue will acclaim Him as Lord. All in earth and heaven will ultimately rejoice in Him as their Saviour, for it is at the name of *Jesus* that every knee will bow. Truly He will see the travail of His soul and be satisfied. And God too will be satisfied, for the acclaim that will be given to His Son is in accord with His own will and purpose, and will redound to His own great glory, for the Son is the One in Whom He constantly delights.

The Ephesian letter gives us also the *effect* of the cross on the *ecclesia.* It has a peace-making influence, settling differences between members. At the time Paul was writing, the most vital difference was that which divided the nation of Israel from the rest of humanity. This was a fleshly difference, inaugurated by God through the covenant which He made with Abraham, and marked by the rite of circumcision. For many centuries Israel had been the favored nation, and will be again during the coming millennial era. But see what Paul says in Ephesians 2, verses 11-18:

"Wherefore, remember that once you, the nations in flesh—who are termed 'Uncircumcision' by those termed 'Circumcision,' in flesh, made by hands—that you were, in that era, apart from Christ, being alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and guests of the promise covenants, having no expectation, and without God in the world. Yet now, in Christ Jesus, *you,* who once are far off, are become near by the blood of Christ. For *He* is our Peace, Who makes both one, and razes the central wall of the barrier (the enmity in His flesh), nullifying the law of precepts in decrees, that He should be creating the two, in Himself, into one new humanity, making peace; *and should be reconciling both in one body to God through the cross,* killing the enmity in it. And, coming, He brings the evangel of peace to you, those afar, and peace to those near, for through Him we both have had the access, in one spirit, to the Father."

There are those today who would strive to *make* the unity of the church. The unity was made nearly two thousand years ago—on the cross! Ephesians goes on to ask us to *keep* the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace. Ephesians emphasizes unities—one . . . one . . . one! One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one expectation, and so on (Eph.4:4,5). And if the cross effectively kills the racial enmity between Israel and the nations, so that those of either group can be at peace with each other in the ecclesia, we may be sure that it equally effectively kills all other fleshly enmities. In the flesh we may be of different nationalities, different colors, different sexes, yes, even of different sects, but if we are called believers, members of that one ecclesia which exists today, the ecclesia which is His body, we should recognize that the cross kills all these barriers to unity, and try to live as an example to the universe, doing our utmost to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace.

Let us then be done with idle words, with thoughtless remarks, with petty complaints, with unnecessary crit-

icisms, with everything that might hurt or offend, for such things are of the flesh, and tend to destroy peace. It is necessary that we should remain in the flesh for the time being, for we have a mission of peace in the world. As ambassadors for Christ, we preach conciliation (2 Cor. 5:20). God is holding out the hand of friendship to all who will grasp it. But how can we preach peace--how can we be true ambassadors of the Prince of peace—if we allow strifes to arise among ourselves? Discords are evidences of the old humanity reasserting itself; by just so much as we give encouragement to the flesh do we become enemies of the cross of Christ. Let us never forget that the term "enemies of the cross" is used of those who are not walking according to the model offered by Paul (Phil.3:18,19). It was against a background of dissentions among such brethren that Paul preached his word of the cross (1 Cor.3:3,4).

The prison letters abound with advice as to how we should conduct ourselves, and rightly so, for we are God's achievement, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, and what is being accomplished in the ecclesia today is but a sample, a demonstration, of what will be accomplished throughout the universe tomorrow. Colossians opens up the field, and gives the widest possible application of the message of the cross, extending its effect to the whole of God's creations. Here we read:

"And *He* [Christ] is the head of the body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (*making peace through the blood of His cross*), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:18-20).

UNIVERSAL RECONCILIATION

This is the scripture which truly proclaims universal

reconciliation. It is achieved through the blood of the cross. Because the One, Who was above all, descended to the point where He was below all; because the One, Who created all, humbled Himself to the point where He was accursed for all; the effects of the cross can, and will, be extended to incorporate every one of God's creation. For in that curse is included all the sin, all the iniquity, all the unrighteousness, that have plagued heaven and earth throughout the eons; in that curse is included all the enmity and alienation that have stood between God and His creatures; *and they are crucified for all time!*

This is the triumphant peace-making achievement of the love of God operating in the Son of His love. It is God's power for salvation, untouched and untainted by human effort, and it is all-sufficient, all-conquering, all-embracing, all-satisfying, and all-glorifying to God.

This is the Word of the Cross!

John H. Essex

THE MANNER OF CHRIST'S DEATH

The word of the cross has a far deeper significance than the death of Christ for our sins. It brings before us the manner of His death. The curse of the law was attached to such a death. It brought down the curse of God. On the human side, however, it showed what human religion and human wisdom can do. When God's Image was present among men they not only failed to appreciate Him, but displayed the innate hatred of their carnal religious hearts by dooming Him to the death of the vilest criminal. He Who spoke as never man spoke should have been welcomed by the wise men of the world, but they showed the essential stupidity of human wisdom by gibbeting the embodiment of all wisdom upon the ignominious cross. Yet God has made that scene of weakness and shame the brightest exhibition of His power and glory. Though it seems to sound the depths of powerless infamy, it eclipses all the power and wisdom of humanity. The word of the cross is still despised, but its proclamation is salvation to all who believe. The height and summit of human wisdom cannot reach to the divine folly.

A. E. Knoch

THE HOLY SPIRIT

GOD'S LOVE has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is being given to us (Rom.5:5). Here is the spring of all true happiness.

It is the way of love to give. But God's spiritual blessings cannot be entertained except by His own spirit. Our spirits can grasp the things pertaining to humanity, but divine affairs lie beyond that sphere. And so, first of all, God gives us His spirit, preliminary to His further blessings. Thus we are enabled to perceive that which is being graciously given to us by God (1 Cor.2:10-13).

This is the channel through which His love has found entrance into our hearts. Only thus can we rejoice in trials, afflictions and distresses. Apart from its balmy strength they seem far more than we can bear. When the issue stands in doubt, the dread of future ill breeds death. But when we rest assured that His almighty power is guided by a heart whose every pulse beats thoughts of love to us, then we can bear with patience every test. And as we endure the storms in this, *His* strength, we become established, like the enduring oak whose sturdy trunk has drawn its strength from adverse winds. And so, stripped of that which pleases us below, our eyes turn upward and we rejoice in *expectation.* Not only that sorrows will then cease, and sighing flee away, but that we shall yet be all that we desire; yes, all that He desires, so that His love will find even in us a fit recompense and rest. O, to be like Him! to be with Him! We will satiate our hearts with Him.

A. E. Knoch

THE EVANGEL IN ROMANS

PAUL'S epistle to the Romans answers questions which have dogged mankind for millennia. Unenlightened man asks: "Why is there so much evil in the world? and why does God—if there even is a God—do nothing about it?" Many are the philosophers who have tried and fallen far short in tackling this problem. Mankind asks: "With all the death in the world, how can God be righteous? Why doesn't He put an end to all the suffering and evil now?" Evil, sin and death, their source and ultimate removal, are dealt with in the Roman epistle.

First of all, Romans deals with God's evangel (1:1) **concerning His Son** (1:3). Those words, about God's evangel concerning His Son, which Paul wrote at the beginning of Romans were not meant to fill up space on parchment. Rather, they set the tone for the rest of the entire epistle. For instance, a musician looks at the very beginning of a particular song to see what key it is in along with the timing. He knows the key and timing affect the entire song. He doesn't start just anywhere in the song and hope it comes out okay. He starts at the very beginning. This is where we must start, at the very beginning of Romans, in order to see how it affects the rest of the epistle. In the very beginning of the Roman epistle, we are told this is God's evangel concerning His Son. It is God's good news concerning what His Son has accomplished for all mankind through His death, entombment and resurrection, and, in fact, accomplished for the entire creation. The apostle Paul greatly enlarges the scope of influence in the evangel, beyond its impact on humanity. In Romans chapters 1

though 5, he deals with the way in which all mankind are recipients of what two men did. In chapter 8 he broadens the scope of influence. He wrote: "The creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom 8:21). Oh glorious revelation! This future freedom, which we enjoy but a taste of now, will be glorious indeed! In this evangel, God's righteousness is being revealed (1:17).

Paul lays the groundwork in Romans 1:18 to 3:20, by showing both Jews and Greeks to be all under sin. All avoid Him. All sin and are wanting of the glory of God. But why is this so? Why is it that all sin and are in need of God's glory? Also, if Paul had ended his treatise at this point, how would this have revealed God's evangel, the good news, concerning His Son? How would this reveal God's righteousness? Paul surely would have failed his objective. He would have ended where philosophers end. But thankfully, God, in Whom all wisdom and knowledge are hid, has graciously given us the answer to the problem:

Yet now, apart from law, God's righteousness is °manifest° (being attested° by the law and the prophets), yet God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith *io* **for all, and on all** ·who are **believing . . .** (Rom.3:21, 22).

Christ's faith in going to the cross, fully relying on God to fix these problems, dying and putting the old humanity to death, and being roused out of death displays God's righteousness. God is right in what He does!

In Romans chapter 5 and verse 12, Paul explains concerning Adam and how sin entered the world, and also how death entered into all mankind on which all sinned. Had he ended at this point, where would be the full evangel? Where would be the good news from God concerning His Son? How would this reveal His righteousness? Rather, Paul builds up to verses eighteen and nineteen.

Two men, one act which each man did, and two outcomes affecting all mankind. For once a divine revelation which far surpasses the so-called wisdom of the sages and philosophers! *This is the happy evangel concerning God's Son!* Finally we see the outcome for humanity which God will get due to the obedience of His Son! What an incredible sacrifice it was to set things straight!

Therefore, even as through one human ·sin enters into the world, and through ·sin ·death, and thus ·death passes through into all =mankind, **on which all sin—**

Consequently then, as it is **through one offense** *io* **for all =man**kind *io* **for condemnation, thus also** it is **through one righteous** response *io* **for all =man**kind *io* **for life's justifying. For even as through the disobedience of the one human the many are constituted sinners, thus also through the obedience of the One the many shall be !constituted righteous** (Rom.5:12, 18, 19).

Why is there so much evil in the world? Man, without divine illumination, is incapable of properly addressing this question. Paul, in Romans, gives us the Divine side of the answer to evil, it's origin and eradication from the universe. In Romans chapter 8, the apostle pulls back the curtain, so to speak, and tells us concerning God doing something on purpose, doing something the creation did not volunteer for. He also tells us concerning God's goal to bring the creation into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom.8:19-21). This reveals to us that *God is right in what He does.* The end truly does justify the means!

For to ·vanity is the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him ·Who **subjects** it, *on* **in expectation that the creation it**self **also shall be !freed from the slavery of ·corruption into the glori**ous **·freedom of the children of ·God** (Rom.8:20, 21).

He really is "working all together for good" (8:28). Most

atheists I have ever communicated with, focus only on the evil in the world. They are fixated on the evil which is wrecking lives. Their mantra is that there cannot be a God due to all the evil. They fail to see the forest for the trees. However, God desires us to come into a fuller appreciation of His evangel concerning His Son.

In Romans 9 through 11, Paul writes concerning the problem with Israel. He writes of vessels of mercy and indignation. What is the answer to his sorrow and unintermittent pain? Where is the evangel concerning the vessels of indignation? Where is the evangel of good news with regard to the problem of Israel? If we stop reading at the end of chapter ten we see no good news. Thankfully God has revealed to us the good to be brought out of all this in chapter 11:29-36:

For unregretted are **the graces and the calling of** ˙**God. For even as you´ once are stubborn to**ward ˙**God, yet now are** shown **mercy** at **their** ˙**stubbornness, thus these also are now stubborn to** this ˙**mercy of yours, that now they´ also may be** shown **mercy. For** ˙**God locks** up ˙**all together** [io]**in stubbornness that He should be merciful to** ˙**all.**

O, the **depth of** the **riches and** the **wisdom and** the **knowledge of God! How inscrutable** are **His** ˙**judgments, and untraceable His** ˙**ways! For** [a]**who knows** the **mind of** the **Lord? or** [a]**who becomes**[◦] **His adviser? or** [a]**who gives to Him first, and it will be** [l]**repaid him?** seeing **that out of Him and through Him and** [io]**for Him** is ˙**all: to Him** be **the glory** [io]**for the eons! Amen!**

Yes, God truly is righteous! This righteousness is revealed through Jesus Christ's faith. Had there been no cross, there could be no justification of God concerning His ways with mankind or His ways with all creation, nor of all He does. And of course, there could be no life's justifying of all mankind.

Anthony Nungesser

CHRIST CRUCIFIED

GOD'S EVANGEL concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, which Paul brings to us in Romans, is carried forward in 1 Corinthians as "the word of the cross," proclaiming "Christ crucified" (1:18,23) and culminating in the exultant words: "Christ has been roused from among the dead" (15:20). Christ's faith, which is explicitly worded in Romans 5:8 as His death for the sake of sinners, is the manifestation of God's righteousness (Rom.3:21,22). On the basis of Christ's death (which is for all), God is openly displayed as righteous in justifying the irreverent one (Rom.3:26; 4:5). In Christ's death the old humanity is put to death, so that all will ultimately be vivified in Christ and constituted righteous (1 Cor.15:22; Rom.5:19).

Now in the opening chapters of 1 Corinthians this message of the death of Christ for sinners is identified specifically as *God's power* (also brought out in Romans 1:16) and *God's wisdom.*

God's power and God's wisdom are put in contrast to human power and human wisdom. That God's evangel should be based on the cursed and indeed God-forsaken crucifixion of His Son is not at all what human power would have sought for salvation, or human wisdom would ever have imagined as a means for our deliverance from sin and death.

THE WISDOM OF GOD

Christ crucified is God's wisdom, the wisdom *of* God in which His power operates for salvation. This is boldly and

openly proclaimed now in God's evangel. But long ago, in the beginning of the book of beginnings, it was introduced, yet as a shadow, in the account of God's response to and correction of the nakedness of Adam and Eve. It is this message that Abel heeded and Cain entirely ignored, as we see in Genesis chapter 4.

Yet in the third chapter (verses 17-19) we hear also, a message that is loud and clear. Yahweh Elohim told Adam:

Cursed is the ground on your account;
In grief shall you eat of it all the days of your life.
Thorn and weed shall it sprout for you,
And you will eat the herbage of the field.
By the sweat of your brow shall you eat your bread,
Until you return to the ground,
for from it were you taken,
For soil you are, and to soil you shall return.

But this was not a message of God's wisdom for salvation. This is a reflection of the condition of humanity from which we need to be saved. Rather, it is in Genesis 3:21 where the wisdom of God for salvation is expressed, though indirectly, calling for a gift of faith:

And Yahweh Elohim made for Adam and his wife tunics of skin and clothed them.

The earlier passage was concerned with what the human would have to do. The second was concerned with what God did. Cain concentrated on the first and imagined that it spoke of a pathway to deliverance. "God helps those who help themselves." But Abel was given grace to hear and believe the shocking message in the words of Genesis 3:21 (*cf* Heb.11:4). In God's wisdom the nakedness of the human who was doomed to return to the soil was covered by God's own doing alone, and His doing (which is not even mentioned, but is certainly to be assumed) was the slaying of an innocent animal! The message was that

it would take a specific death to deal with the dying process of humanity. And, as we now know, that death provides more than a covering; together with resurrection it results ultimately in a new creation in which all are constituted righteous.

Consequently, when Cain brought an approach present to God it was a sample of the fruit of his sweat and grief in toiling in the field against the opposition of thorn and weed. It was a gift to God calling for His approval, and it was a matter of human boasting. Cain's labor was necessary, and in that sense it was, like obedience to law, right and good (*cf* Rom.7:12). But it did not contribute anything to his deliverance from sin and death. What Cain thought was wisdom was blindness and stupidity, as events bore out. Thus Cain becomes the type of the "wisdom" of humanity in the rejection of the reclining sacrifice at the portal (Gen.4:6) and the murder of his brother (Gen.4:8). In rejecting the type of "Christ crucified," he becomes the type of the forces of human wisdom and power involved in the crucifying of the Christ.

Yet when Abel (whose name means "Vanity," or "Transitoriness") brings an approach present to God it is in recognition of God's solution to human nakedness recounted in Genesis 3:21. It focuses attention on God's doing, and not on his own. It is in recognition of the wisdom and power of God for what is needed, and what is righteous. Thus Abel's present is a type of Christ, and he himself becomes a type of Christ crucified in his death.

WISDOM COMING FROM GOD

In 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 our attention is solidly focused on God and His wisdom and power in the crucifixion of His Son. From verses 26-29 we see that we ourselves are reflections of Abel who typifies "that which is not" (*cf* 1 Cor.1:28), so that there can be no doubt whatsoever

that we are saved in grace, not at all of ourselves (*cf* Eph. 2:8,9). And now we come to 1 Corinthians 1:30, where we read that we are

in Christ Jesus Who becomes to us wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance.

In perceiving that God works good for all by means of the apparent weakness and stupidity of giving His Son to the death of the cross we are brought into the highest realm of wisdom. The word of the cross is that message which makes God's wisdom known. It tells of an operation of wisdom that truly works in securing righteousness, holiness and deliverance for mankind, and in becoming the expression of God's love. The wise of this eon, like Cain, are continually coming up with schemes for the betterment of humanity, one scheme replacing another when it fails. But all schemes of human wisdom fail because we are sinners who can only miss the mark of goodness to which we aim in our imaginations. Even those schemes which are called "Christian" are characterized by the works of the flesh, because the reliance is always on the flesh, on what the human must do, rather than on what God does in the giving of His Son concerning sin (Rom.8:3).

What is done is that Christ dies for the sake of all, and consequently all die. In 2 Corinthians 5:14, Paul uses a "fact verb" ("dies") rather than a "time verb," such as "died" or "has died." We know that Christ's death is in the past, but here and in many other references to it, Paul puts the stress on the timeless fact of Christ's death together with the timeless fact of its significance for mankind. The death of Christ Jesus is the death of the old humanity, of all sinners, apart from consideration of its realization in time. The evangel is a fact for us to believe, a fact that will be experienced in God's appointed time. The elimination of the corrupt and failing human race is a necessity that God, in

His wisdom, recognizes, indeed *purposes* before the eons, and which He deals with in the greatest of wisdom. This wisdom gets rid of the old powerfully and effectively, but does so in such a way that humanity, and all that is created in Christ will come forth in life as a new creation in Christ.

This is the wisdom *of* God, and to believe it is to receive wisdom *from* God. This is the wisdom that truly brings grace ("joy") and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor.1:3). It is a wisdom that does not puff us up, for it exposes our own ignorance and weakness, and is entirely centered on what God does in and through His Son. The one who submissively listens to (the root meaning of "obey" is UNDER-HEAR) God's evangel of grace and peace, of deliverance through Christ Jesus, justification in His blood, and conciliation through His death, is one who has been given wisdom from God in His grace.

RIGHTEOUSNESS COMING FROM GOD

But more than this, Christ Jesus has become to us *righteousness from God!* God's righteousness, that is, the righteousness *of* God, is made manifest through Jesus Christ's faith (Rom.3:21,22). It is made known through Christ crucified. And this righteousness of God which is made manifest is that He is the Justifier (the "Righteous-fier") of the human being (the sinner, the irreverent one, the enemy of God) by means of Jesus's faith (Rom.3:26; 4:5), His death on the cursed tree. Therefore, in reference to us who are believing, we already stand before God justified, and shall be so in every way in our very being, when we are vivified in Christ and constituted righteous. Christ crucified is the One through Whom this righteousness comes to us from God. There is no other way to literal justification, the blessing of being *made* righteous. Our believing is the channel through which God *reckons* righteousness to us, but only God's giving of His beloved Son as the Anti-

type of the sin offering (*cf* 2 Cor.5:21) can make an irreverent sinner righteous.

HOLINESS COMING FROM GOD

God has set us apart from the rest of humanity, set apart to Him. This holiness is in Christ, a matter of identification, or inclusion in Him in His death and resurrection. In Romans 6:3,4 this is expressed as baptism into Christ Jesus and into His death, an operation of grace, not of ourselves or by another human. It is an operation of the spirit of God and in spirit, even as our membership in the body of Christ: "For in one spirit also we all are baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and all are made to imbibe one spirit" (1 Cor.12:13). We are not made holy by our own actions, holy as they may be. Holiness is from God by means of His spirit.

Hence, we are saints (holies).This is a blessing we have in Christ, in spirit; it is not perceived at present by our physical sense organs and experienced in our flesh, but it affects us in powerful ways as we take account of the word of the cross. Only the crucifixion of Christ as it is accepted and believed can bring about that spiritual and exotic fruit which combines the traits of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self-control (Gal.5:22,23) into one. This will be fully endowed within us in the future, and is being instilled in us now as an earnest (*cf* 2 Cor.1:22). Holiness from God is already ours in our position before Him, in Christ, and cannot be taken away from us.

Nevertheless we do not always live in accord with this position, or rather, we do not ever live today fully in accord with this position. Yet it is our security and strength in the current era to be aware of this position, and to reckon it as so (*cf* Rom.6:11). And, like Paul, we would be pursuing toward that which shall be (*cf* Phil.3:7-16).

"Be pursuing love" (1 Cor.14:1).

DELIVERANCE COMING FROM GOD

In accord with holiness and included in justification, is our deliverance (AV, "redemption"), and this also is from God through Christ crucified. It is our deliverance in Christ from all human weakness and failure and stupidity in flesh, which we all have from Adam downward. In flesh we are mortals who are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). In Christ we stand justified before God. Therefore Paul has written in Romans 3:24,27,

Being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, . . . where then is boasting?

God Himself has provided this deliverance. He has done so by means of the crucifixion of His Son. We had no part in this except to be blessed by it. It is gratuitous, and it is in God's grace. In spirit, we are delivered, removed and rescued from what we still are in flesh, corrupt and corrupting, infirm and irreverent, and never able to be justified in God's sight by works of the holy and righteous law.

There is only one way to be delivered from death and sin into life and righteousness, and that is by Christ crucified.

"WISDOM WE ARE SPEAKING"

Like Greeks in general (1 Cor.1:22), some among the Corinthians were evidently seeking wisdom beyond the word of the cross. Yet in every way Paul sought to keep their attention on Jesus Christ, and Him crucified (1 Cor.2:2), so that their faith would not be in the wisdom of human beings, but in the power of God (2:5).

Consequently, when Paul turns around and declares, "Yet wisdom are we speaking among the mature" (1 Cor.2:6), he does not mean that he is leaving the evangel of Christ

Crucified for a more "spiritual" message. For the word of the cross is the foundation of all spiritual truth. And in believing it we are exhibiting one of the greatest of spiritual endowments for us today (1 Cor.13:13). No believer can be growing into maturity without retaining that evangel which he or she first accepted as a minor in Christ. Where we all begin is with the evangel that "Christ dies for our sins" (1 Cor.15:1,3). And this is where we must stay in order to grow into maturity.

In speaking to the mature of God's wisdom in a secret (1 Cor.2:6,7), Paul was not telling them of some mystical revelation that takes their mind away from the stark and fundamental fact of the crucifixion of Christ for their sins. The secret of our future bodily change (1 Cor.15:51,52) is built on the fact that Christ Who dies for our sins has been roused from among the dead. He had not been alive in some "other" life; He was dead, for He was crucified. And then He was roused. In accord with this, and because of this, those who believe this will be roused from death (or at least from the dying condition in which we presently exist) and changed in body, living to God as Christ is living to God. Indeed the death of Christ puts an end to all death, for in Christ all shall be vivified (1 Cor.15:22).

So also, for example, the secrets made known in Ephesians are extensions of the deliverance which is through Christ's blood (Eph.1:7).

In believing the word of the cross, "we obtain, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we may perceive that which is being graciously given to us by God" (1 Cor.2:12). In believing "Christ crucified" we are given an earnest of "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16), the mind that puts the will of God above His own will and, in His crucifixion, opens up to us the mind and wisdom of God.

D.H.H.

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Contents:

97 Editorial
103 Spiritual Gifts for Today
111 Spiritual Endowments
120 The Duration of Languages
130 The Primitive Passed By
139 The Mind of Christ

THIRD QUARTER, 2017

Volume 108 **Number 3**

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, THIRD QUARTER 2017
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

EDITORIAL

We continue here with the presentation of the CVNT of 1 Corinthians, now centering on chapters 12 through 14, with comments from the writings of A. E. Knoch and James Coram. As I contend in my own article on 1 Corinthians 2:16 all that Paul writes in these later chapters is built solidly on the evangel summarized in the words, "Christ crucified." It is on the basis of this message that *God*, Who is operating all in all (12:6) places believers in the body of Christ (12:18,28). The apportioning of spiritual endowments is not the same today as it was when Paul wrote this epistle, but it remains the same that what is given is from God by His spirit, and that it comes from Him on the foundation of the word of the cross.

D.H.H.

PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS (1)
(Chapters 12-14)

12 [y]**Now concerning the spiritual** endowments**, brethren, I** do **not** [l]**want** [=]**you to be** [l]**ignorant.** 2 [=]**You are** [°]**aware that when** [=]**you were** of the **nations,** you were [l]**led**[°] **away to**[d] **the voiceless** [·]**idols, as ever** [=]**you were led**[°]**.** 3 **Wherefore I am making known to** [=]**you that no**[t] **one, speaking** [t]**by God's spirit, is saying: Anathema** is **Jesus. And no**[t] **one is** [l]**able**[°] **to say: Lord** is **Jesus, except** [t]**by holy spirit.**

4 [y]**Now** there **are apportionments of graces, yet the same spirit,** 5 **and** there **are apportionments of services, and the same Lord,** 6 **and** there **are apportionments of operations, yet the same God** ·Who **is operating** ·**all in all.**

7 [y]**Now to each** one **is being given**[°] **the manifestation of**

the spirit, with a view **to**[d] ˙**expedience.** 8 **For to**[w] **one indeed, through the spirit, is being given**° the **word of wisdom, yet to** an**other** the **word of knowledge, accord**ing to **the same spirit,** 9 **yet to** [d]an**other faith,** [i]**by the same spirit, yet to** an**other** the **graces of healing,** [i]**by the one spirit,** 10 **yet to** an**other operations of power**ful deed**s, yet to** an**other prophecy, yet to** an**other discrimination of spirits, yet to** [d]an**other species of languages, yet to** an**other translation of languages.** 11 [y]**Now all these** ˙**one and the same spirit is operating, apportioning to each** his **own, accord**ing **as He is intending**°.

12 **For even as the body is one and** ˡ**has many members, yet all the members of the one** ˙**body, being many, are one body, thus also** is **the Christ.** 13 **For in one spirit also we´ all are baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and all are** made to **imbibe one spirit.**

14 **For the body also is not one member, but many.** 15 **If the foot should say:** Seeing **that I am not** a **hand, I am not** [o] **of the body, not** [b]**for this is it not** [o] **of the body.** 16 **And if the ear should say:** Seeing **that I am not** an **eye, I am not** [o] **of the body, not** [b]**for this is it not** [o] **of the body.** 17 **If the whole body** were an **eye, where** were **the hearing? If** the **whole** were **hearing, where** were **the scent?** 18 **Yet now** ˙**God places**° **the members, each one of them, in the body accord**ing **as He wills.** 19 [y]**Now if** it **were** ˙**all one member, where** were **the body?**

20 **Yet now** there are **indeed many members, yet one body.** 21 **Yet the eye** ˡ**can**° **not say to the hand: I** ˡ**have no**[t] **need of you, or again, the head to the feet: I** ˡ**have no**[t] **need of** ⁼**you.** 22 [bt]**Nay, much rather,** ˙those **members of the body** ˡ**supposed to be** ˡ**inher**ently **weaker are necessary,** 23 **and which we** ˡ**suppose to be** a **more dishonored** part **of the body, these we are investing** with **more exceeding honor, and our** ˙**indecent** members ˡ**have more**

exceeding respectability. 24 [y]**Now our** ˙**respectable** members ˡ**have no**[t] **need, but** ˙**God blends the body together,** ⁼**giving to** ˙that which is ˡ**deficient**° **more exceeding honor,** 25 **that** there **may be no schism in the body, but the members may be** [s]**mutually** ˡ**solicitous** [oc]**for one another.** 26 **And whether one member is suffering, all the members are sympathizing, or one member is being esteemed**°**, all the members are rejoicing** [tg]**with** it.

27 [y]**Now** ⁼**you´ are** the **body of Christ, and members** [o] **of** a **part,** 28 **whom also** ˙**God indeed places**° **in the ecclesia, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, thereupon powers, thereupon graces of healing, supports,** ⁼**pilotage, species of languages.** 29 **Not all** are **apostles. Not all** are **prophets. Not all** are **teachers. Not all** have **powers.** 30 **Not all** ˡ**have** the **graces of healing. Not all are speaking languages. Not all are interpreting.** 31 **Yet be** ˡ**zealous** for **the greater** ˙**graces. And still I am showing** ⁼**you** a **path,** [ac]**suited** to **transcendence.**

13 **If I should be speaking** in **the languages of** ˙**human** beings **and of the messengers, yet should** ˡ**have no love, I have become resounding copper or** a **clanging cymbal.** 2 **And if I should** ˡ**have prophecy and should be perceiving all** ˙**secrets and** [en]**all** ˙**knowledge, and if I should** ˡ**have** [en]**all** ˙**faith, so as to transport mountains, yet** ˡ**have no love, I am nothing.** 3 **And if ever I should morsel** out **all my** ˙ˡ**possessions, and if I should give up my** ˙**body, that I should boast**°**, yet may** ˡ**have no love,** in **nothing** do **I** ˡ**benefit**°. 4 ˙**Love is** ˡ**patient, is** ˡ**kind**°. ˙**Love is not** ˡ**jealous.** ˙**Love is not bragging**°**, is not** ˡ**puffed**° **up,** 5 **is not** ˡ**indecent, is not** ˙**self-seeking, is not** ˡ**incensed**°**, is not** tak**ing account**° of ˙**evil,** 6 **is not rejoicing** [on]**in** ˙**unrighteousness, yet is rejoicing together** with **the truth,** 7 **is forgoing all, is believing all, is expecting all, is enduring all.**

8 ˙**Love is never lapsing: yet, whether prophecies, they will be** ˡ**discarded, or languages, they will** ˡ**cease**°**, or knowl-**

edge, it will be ˡdiscarded. 9 **For out of** an **instalment are we knowing, and out of** an **instalment are we prophesying.** 10 *ʸ*__Now whenever__ ˙**matur**ity **may come,** ˙that which is **out of** an **instalment shall be ˡdiscarded.** 11 **When I was** a **minor, I spoke as** a **minor, I was disposed as** a **minor, I** took **account**˚ of things **as** a **minor. Yet when I have become** a **man, I have discarded** ˙that which is a ˙**minor's.** 12 **For at present we are observing** *ᵗʰ*__by__ means of a **mirror, in** an **enigma, yet then, face to***ᵈ* **face. At present I ˡknow out of** an **instalment, yet then I shall ˡrecognize**˚ **accord**ing **as I am recognized also.**

13 **Yet now are remaining faith, expectation, love—these ˙three. Yet** the **greate**st **of these** is ˙**love. 14 Be pursuing ˙love.**

Yet be ˡzealous for ˙**spiritual** endowment**s, yet rather that ⁼you may be prophesying.** 2 **For he** ˙who is **speaking** in a **language is not speaking to human** beings**, but to ˙God, for no***ᵗ* **one is hearing, yet** in **spirit he is speaking secrets.** 3 **Yet he** ˙who is **prophesying is speaking to human** beings for **edification and consolation and comfort.** 4 **He** ˙who is **speaking** in a **language is edifying himself, yet he** ˙who is **prophesying is edifying** the **ecclesia.** 5 *ʸ*__Now I ˡwant ⁼you all to be speaking__ in **languages, yet rather that ⁼you may be prophesying, for greater** is he ˙who is **prophesying than** he ˙who is **speaking** in **languages, outside** and **except he may be interpreting, that the ecclesia may get edification.**

6 **Yet now, brethren, if I should come to***ᵈ* **⁼you speaking** in **languages,** *ᵃ*__what shall I be benefiting ⁼you if ever I should not speak to ⁼you either in revelation, or in knowledge, or in prophecy, or in teaching?__ 7 **Likewise** ˙**soulless** things**, giving** a **sound, whether flute or lyre, if they should not give** a **distinction to the utterances, how will the fluting**˚ **or the lyre** playing˚ **be ˡknown?** 8 **For if** a **trumpet also should give** a **dubious sound,** *ᵃ*__who will be preparing__˚ *ⁱᵒ*__for battle?__ 9 **Thus ⁼you also, if ⁼you should not give** an **intelligible expression through the language, how will it be ˡknown** ˙what is **being spoken**˚**? For ⁼you will be speaking into** the **air.** 10 There **are** *ⁱᶠ* **¯perchance, so many species of sounds in** the **world, and nothing** is **soundless.** 11 **If then I should not** ˚**perceive the import of the sound, I shall be** a **barbarian to the** one **speaking, and the** one **speaking** a **barbarian** *ⁱ*__to me.__ 12 **Thus ⁼you´ also, since ⁼you are zealots** for **spirit**ual endowments**, ˡseek that ⁼you may be superabounding to***ᵈ* **the edification of the ecclesia.**

13 **Wherefore let him** ˙who is **speaking** in a **language, ˡpray**˚ **that he may be interpreting.** 14 **For if I should be praying**˚ in a **language, my ˙spirit is praying**˚**, yet my ˙mind is unfruitful.** 15 *ᵃ*__What is it then? Should I be praying__˚ in **the spirit, yet I will be praying**˚ with **the mind also.** In **the spirit will I be playing** music, **yet I will be playing** with **the mind also.** 16 **Else, if you should be blessing in** the **spirit, how shall** he ˙who is **filling up the place of** a ˙**plain** person **be declaring ˙Amen!** *ᵒⁿ*__at your__ ˙giv**ing** of **thank**s, **since in fact he is not** ˚**aware** *ᵃ*__what you are saying?__ 17 **For you´ indeed are** giv**ing thanks ideally, but the** *ᵈ*__other is not ˡedified__˚**.**

18 **I ˡthank ˙God** that **I ˡspeak** in a **language** *ʳ*__more__ than **all of ⁼you.** 19 **But in** the **ecclesia** do **I ˡwant to speak five words** with **my ˙mind, that I should instruct others also, or ten thousand words in** a **language?**

20 **Brethren,** do **not ˡbecome**˚ **little children** in ˙**disposition. But** in ˙**evil be ˡminors, yet** in ˙**disposition ˡbecome**˚ **mature.** 21 **In the law it is** ˚**written**˚ **that, In different languages and** *ⁱ*__by different lips shall I ˡspeak to this ˙people, and neither thus will they be hearkening__˚ to **Me,** *Is 28:11,12* the **Lord is saying.** 22 **So that ˙languages are** *ⁱᵒ*__for__ a **sign, not to the ˡbelievers, but to the unbelievers. Yet ˙prophecy** is **not** for **the unbelievers, but** for ˙ˡ**believers.**

23 **If then, the whole ecclesia should come together** *ᵒⁿ*__in__ **the same** place, **and all should be speaking** in **languages, yet should plain** person**s or unbelievers enter, will they not**

be declaring that =you are |mad°? 24 *y*Now **if all should be prophesying, yet** *a*some **unbeliever or plain** person **enter, he is being exposed° by all, he is being examined° by all.** 25 **The hidden** things **of his ·heart are becoming° apparent, and thus, –falling on** his **face, he will be worshiping ·God, reporting that ·God really is among =you.**

26 *a*What **then is it, brethren? Whenever =you may be coming° together, each of =you |has** a **psalm, |has** a **teaching, |has** a **revelation, |has** a **language, |has** a **translation. Let all |occur° to***d* **edification.** 27 **Besides, if any**one **is speaking** in a **language,** *ac*by **two, or,** at **the most, three, and by instalments, let one also |interpret.** 28 *y*Now **if** there **should be no interpreter, let him |hush in** the **ecclesia, yet let him |speak to himself and to ·God.**

29 *y*Now as to **prophets, let two or three |speak, and let the others |discriminate.** 30 **Yet if it should be revealed to** an**other sitting** by, **let the first |hush,** 31 **for =you |can° all be prophesying** one *ac*by **one, that all may be learning and all be |consoled°.** 32 **And** the **spirit**ual endowment**s of prophets are |subject° to** the **prophets.** 33 **For ·God is not** for **turbulence, but peace, as in all the ecclesias of the saints.** (34 **Let the women in the ecclesias |hush, for it is not |permitted° to them to |speak, but let them be |subject°, accord**ing **as the law also is saying.** 35 *y*Now **if they |want to learn any**thing, **let them be inquiring of** their **·own husbands** *i*at **home, for it is** a **shame** for a **woman to be speaking in** the **ecclesia.)** 36 **Or from =you comes out the word of ·God? Or** *io*to **=you only** does **it attain?** 37 **If any**one **is presuming to be** a **prophet or spiritual, let him be recognizing that what I am writing to =you is** a **precept of** the **Lord.** 38 *y*Now **if any**one **is |ignorant, let him be |ignorant!**

39 **So that, my brethren, be |zealous ·to be prophesying, and the speaking in languages** do **not |forbid.** 40 **Yet let all |occur respectably and** *ac*in **order.**

SPIRITUAL GIFTS FOR TODAY

THE transcendent nature of the present outflow of God's favor corresponds with the exaltation of Christ among the celestials. Because He is "up above all the heavens" (Eph. 4:10), we are raised to the heights supreme. It is not, indeed, as the English may suggest, that He is located in space at a point outside of and beyond the universe, for that is a palpable absurdity. As to space, the universe is made up of the earth and the heavens. The more accurate Greek makes it *of* the heavens, for He is the highest *of* the celestial hosts, not as to space, but as to dignity and glory. There can be no higher exaltation. He is up over all who are of the heavens, that He shall be completing all (Eph.4:10, CV).

He Who descended into the lower parts of the earth has now ascended to the highest heavens. Just as the celestial aspect of the secret of Christ is the basis of the secret administration, so now also, the completeness of Christ's sweep of all creation is the basis of our maturity. A complete revelation raises us to the plane of adults. Being associated with Christ in His headship of the whole universe the believers now have attained their majority.

The inauguration of the present administration of God's grace brought many changes with it. This called for an *adjusting* of the saints, in the language of inspiration (Eph. 4:12). It is figuratively presented as the change from minority to manhood (Eph.4:13; 1 Cor.13:10). The new celestial destiny severed the saints from earthly, physical blessing, which they had enjoyed as guests of Israel's covenants. The new status of the nations demanded that their spir-

itual growth be completed, so that they may truly be the complements of Christ among the celestials.

The spiritual manifestations of so-called "gifts" give us a graphic illustration of the changes involved. The twelfth chapter of first Corinthians shows what the nations had before the secret was revealed. The fourth of Ephesians tells us what gifts are ours today. There are great changes. Most of the early gifts were dropped in this adjustment. They are no longer needed. Two new ones were added. Three are carried over. Of the gifts which enter this administration, apostles, prophets, and teachers were known before. They link us with the past. Evangelists and pastors are unique, for they had not been classed as gifts before.

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS

1 Cor.12:7-10	**1 Cor.12:28,29**	**1 Cor.13:8**	**Eph.4:11**
By the spirit for expedience	*By God in the ecclesia*	*Abrogated by maturity*	*Given by Lord for adjusting*
wisdom	1. apostles	prophecies	apostles
knowledge	2. prophets	languages	prophets
faith	3. teachers	knowledge	evangelists
healing	powers		pastors
powerful deeds	healing		teachers
prophecy	supports		**Eph.2:20**
discrimination of spirits	pilotage		*In the foundation*
languages	languages		apostles
translation	*(future transcendence)*		prophets

The accompanying lists of the spiritual endowments given in Paul's ministry will help us to compare and study these "gifts." First we have the nine gifts which were temporary expedients during the transitional era between the Pentecostal administration and the present. These are individual manifestations of the spirit. Next we have eight corporate endowments, connected with membership in the body of

Christ. These are arranged in the order of their rank. Note particularly that the first three—apostles, prophets, and teachers—are found again in Ephesians. Then we have a special list of those which were to be discarded by the incoming of maturity. The last column gives us the facts in Ephesians. First we have the list of those given for adjusting the saints. Finally we find that two of these are confined to the foundation. This leaves three spiritual endowments for the ecclesia today—evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

It is worth every effort needed to clear up the relation between the gifts in first Corinthians and Ephesians. Two extreme and opposing positions are based on untenable views of this relation. A large number of zealous believers claim that all of the gifts may still be appropriated by faith and that many are in exercise today. As in Corinth, they emphasize the gift of "tongues." Healing is also pressed. On the other hand, some cut off Corinthians entirely, claiming that we have absolutely no connection with them. We are told that the dispensation of the mystery is unique, and is neither a blend nor a development of Corinthians, but a newly *created* thing, far above all. In contrast with both of these positions, the Scriptures, both in Corinthians and Ephesians, illustrate the relation between the two by the figures of *minority* and *maturity*. This is the key to the subject.

This figure avoids both extremes. It is in harmony with the fact that some of the gifts were present in the past which are ours today. It agrees with the setting aside of the lesser gifts and the retention of the greater. It accords with the character of the gifts which have been retained and those which have been repudiated. Paul and others were apostles and teachers in Corinthians and remained such in Ephesians. They were not reappointed, as though their previous services were not recognized. The figure of a new creation is not in point here. A man is not re-

created when he reaches maturity. Some things remain as they were. Others are dropped because they are suited only to minority.

The believers among the nations had been enjoying some things, as the guests of Israel's promise covenants, which find no appropriate place among the spiritual, celestial blessings which characterize the present grace. Perhaps if such a change should be brought about in these days we would call it a reorganization. If a great business should change the sphere of its operations and the character of its products, some of its machinery would become useless and be discarded. Its system of doing business would be revised to suit the new conditions. So it was when this charter of our faith was first given. Some things were entirely dropped, others merely modified. Physical benefits vanished. Earthly disabilities disappeared. In Paul's preparatory epistles the believers are seen in the period of adolescence. They verge upon manhood. Some of the gifts given them at that time were the relics of childhood. Others were intended to develop them into manhood. The youth learns to talk and to care for his physical frame. These are represented by the gifts of healing and "tongues." The principal task of adolescence is the schooling and training for the duties of life. It is concerned with self-development, not with the care of others or the duties of maturity.

GIFTS FOR EXPEDIENCE

The manifestations of the spirit, given to the Corinthians, were *expedients* (1 Cor.12:7). Let us not miss this inspired characterization, which assures us that they were not ideal, permanent endowments, but only temporary measures to fill a lack which has since been supplied. "Now to each one is being given the manifestation of the spirit, *with a view to expedience.*" The Authorized Version rendering, "profit" is misleading, though of course

it is not untrue. Expedients are resorted to because they are profitable or helpful for a time. This word, *sumpherō,* they translate *profit* seven times, and seven times *expedient.* Another word, *oninêmi,* means *profit.* The loss of an eye or a hand can hardly be called *profitable,* though it may be *expedient* (Matt.5:29,30). It was *expedient* for the Lord to go away (John 16:7). Absence is not His permanent condition. All is allowed us, but not all is *expedient* (1 Cor.6:12). In every occurrence there is but a transient advantage gained by expedience.

This is confirmed by the fact that *none of these endowments are reaffirmed in Ephesians.* They are suited to the times of transition which introduced the present grace. It is put beyond all question by the further fact that *all three of the gifts which are definitely discarded are found in this list of expedient spiritual endowments* (1 Cor.12:7-10). These are prophecy, languages, and knowledge (13:8). They were necessary at that time, but such expedients are no longer needed since the present administration has been fully established. Instead of giving a few individuals supernatural fragments of information, God has completed the whole circle of knowledge in His latest revelation. This is open to all. Now each believer has access to all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, in Christ.

The more we know of the transitional era which accompanied Paul's early ministries, the more we see the necessity of temporary spiritual manifestations to tide the believers over into the present grace. Although we now have a record of this period in Paul's earlier epistles, as well as the full revelation which closed it, how few of the believers are really clear about it! Since early times the church has found this period prolific in confusion, for few understood that it was not a permanent part of the present. If this is so, how difficult must it have been for those who lived in those changing times to keep step with God's operations!

There was no finally formulated system of truth, as we now have it in Ephesians. God was still occupied with Israel. If we lived in an era in which God was winding up one system of truth while He was unfolding another, there would be more excuse for confusion than there is. They needed temporary help to tide them over the time of transition.

The expedients are of two different kinds. Some linked them on to the kingdom and the powers of the coming eon. These were *powerful deeds, healing, languages* and *translation.* These will find their fullest fulfillment in the millennium. Humanly speaking, if Israel had not rejected the Messiah in Acts, these gifts would have flourished more and more, yet they would be exercised only in subordination to Israel. They could not continue when Israel was set aside. The other gifts linked them to the approaching change, when Israel should be rejected. Without knowing what was in store for them, they would naturally fall into folly and ignorance. Hence some were specially endowed with knowledge and wisdom. Their faith would fail, as did that of so many in Israel, as the kingdom receded. There was need of the gift of prophecy, to receive direct word from God. Spirits must be discriminated, lest they be led contrary to God's intention. All of these gifts are displayed in Paul's epistles to them. All of the other group were found exemplified in the narrative of Acts, which begins with a special exhibition of "tongues" and ends with a notable example of healing (28:8).

But do we not need all of these things today? As our blessings are spiritual, among the celestials, we cannot claim the physical endowments of the coming eon. Instead of healing we are given grace for our infirmities. Instead of power we are promised weakness (2 Cor.12:9). Languages are directly denied to an era of maturity (1 Cor.13:8). Wisdom and knowledge, faith, and prophecy, and the discrimination of spirits may be greatly needed today, but they are

no longer individual gifts granted miraculously. All the wisdom and knowledge we need is found in the secret now revealed. That is God's final word to us. No gift of prophecy is needed (1 Cor.13:8). And by this completed revelation we may test all spirits. The dispensation in which we now live abrogates all of the spiritual manifestations which the apostle so carefully labeled *expedients.*

We are not aware that this point has been pressed before. Hence we wish to urge it upon all who believe God. Many lines of reasoning may be developed to show that these gifts are no longer with us, but none should appeal to the man of God as the word here used by the holy spirit. Before we are even told that these gifts existed, their temporary character is asserted. This will be enough for everyone who wishes to believe God. We do not doubt that there are spiritual manifestations today which seem to correspond to the lesser gifts. Such there were even in those days. A special gift was needed to discriminate the spirits. If this endowment existed today it would unhesitatingly class all of these as the work of deceiving spirits. It is an effort to engross the believers with the things of minority in order to keep them from attaining majority, which is the primary object of the real gifts we have today.

Let us note carefully the opposite effect, the direct contrast, between the modern "gifts"—healing and tongues —and those given us by God. The former drag us back to childhood; the latter bring us to manhood. Pastors, evangelists, and teachers are given "toward the adjusting of the saints for the work of dispensing, for the upbuilding of the body of Christ, unto the end that we should all attain to the unity of the faith and of the realization of the son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of Christ's complement, that we may by no means still be minors, surging hither and thither and being carried about by every wind of teaching . . ." (Eph.4:12-14). Languages

are listed by God as the least of all the gifts of minority. True pastors, evangelists and teachers lead in the contrary direction, toward maturity. That is their special function if they are faithful.

MATURE IN CHRIST

There are many methods of testing God's servants today which are without warrant in the Word. Success sometimes signifies failure in God's sight. Here, however, we have God's standard. Here He tells us what He expects. The test we should apply is found in this passage. Do they dispense that which edifies the body of Christ, so that all have one faith and realize their sonship and maturity in Christ? Alas! the very idea of maturity is unknown to many and their ministry is more calculated to make infants out of full-grown believers than to make mature saints out of minors. Let us note that *the prime object of the gifts we now possess is to lead the saints beyond the lesser gifts which characterized minority.* We are mature in Christ! Let us not relapse into infancy!

A. E. Knoch

YET NOW ARE REMAINING

Strange as it may seem, the principal excellence of the path suited to transcendence (1 Cor.12:31) lies in the lack of the special gifts or graces of which Paul has just been speaking! The more excellent way knows no select endowment of prophecy, or of languages, or of knowledge. These were to cease to function. Only three things are left on the perfect path—faith, expectation, love. These are not special graces for a few, but freely enjoyed by all.

In contrast with the lesser gifts, such as prophecy, languages and knowledge, faith and expectation abide *until the glory,* when faith will be replaced by sight and expectation by fulfillment. Then only love remains without ceasing. Only love never lapses. It is the supreme, the essential, the never ending grace, the way *most* excellent.

A.E.K. (adapted)

SPIRITUAL ENDOWMENTS

THE tremendous growth and success of the modern charismatic movement has brought considerable respectability and acceptance to practices which nearly all deemed spurious only a few decades ago. Nonetheless, many outside the movement, perhaps out of fear of the unknown and due to their aversion to activities and mannerisms which often seem strange or distasteful, too often reject its claims out of hand. Others, however, are far too ready to accept its claims, being unduly influenced by the fervor and sincerity of many a "charismatic Christian."

On the one hand, those who are profoundly impressed by the knowledge that practically all of the famous scholars and theologians of centuries past did not speak in tongues deem this fact to be a virtual disproof of the modern custom. To them, it is inconceivable that such a vast body of devout and spiritual believers would have lacked such a gift were it of God.

On the other hand, those who are deeply influenced by their own experiences, having become convinced of the rectitude of such a remarkable and intimately personal phenomenon as tongues-speaking, are nearly always full of confidence concerning the validity of their practice. Even though in most cases it is a learned skill, acquired through instruction and example, it is deemed to be a supernatural divine gift. To its practitioners, the proposition that modern glossolalia constitutes the scriptural gift of languages is generally beyond question. The erstwhile paucity of those possessing the gift is of no moment to the convinced charismatic, for he has tasted for himself and is

acquainted with countless others who have done the same. He does not *think* he is correct; he *knows* that he is.

In reply to all such imaginings and appeals to man—whether to venerated church history or to exalted contemporary experience—we can only say, "Let no one be boasting in human beings" (1 Cor.3:21). "If we are obtaining the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater" (1 John 5:9). It is of no consequence whatever, insofar as truth is concerned, whether any certain belief should be popular or unpopular, applauded or condemned among men. Our appeal can only be to the Scriptures themselves.

THE BASIS OF LANGUAGES

Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Now concerning the spiritual endowments, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant" (1 Cor.12:1). He begins by reminding them of their own former unbelief and spiritual darkness, saying, "You are aware that when you were of the nations, you were led away to the voiceless idols, as ever you were led. Wherefore I am making known to you that no one, speaking by God's spirit, is saying: Anathema is Jesus. And no one is able to say: Lord is Jesus, except by holy spirit" (1 Cor. 12:2,3). Before God began to enlighten them, the Corinthian believers were just as blind as anyone else, and were therefore to recognize the cause of the glorious change that had occurred in their lives for what it was, the powerful operation of God's holy spirit.

Since the Corinthians, however, were minors in Christ and were fleshly (1 Cor.3:1,2), they were "puffed up, one over the one, against the other" (1 Cor.4:6). Consequently, they did not realize that every good thing they enjoyed, including those things which others among their brethren may not have possessed, was God's gift to them in such a way that any boasting in themselves was completely unwarranted. "Now what have you which you did not *obtain*? Now

if you *obtained* it also, why are you boasting as though not obtaining?" (1 Cor.4:7).

The apostle Paul makes it plain that *all* that we have—whether riches, health, success, understanding, self-discipline, willingness, good character, faith or even some special spiritual endowment—is that which we have but received from God. Everything we possess is given to us by God, even those things which we "take" to ourselves through much time and effort. "He Himself *gives* to all life and breath and *all*" (Acts 17:25).

When noting the differences between ourselves and others, do we ever stop to think, and then face the fact, that all these things have their own cause? They are all caused to be as they are. Do we realize, then, that it is altogether foolish to be "puffed up" about our own virtues and powers while looking down upon others in their weaknesses and incapacities?

Among the Corinthians, "not all [were] speaking in languages. Not all [were] interpreting" (1 Cor.12:30). Rather than being proud, and imagining that their fellow believers *could have* had the ability to do so but had somehow failed to supply something of their own toward the acquisition of this power, those who did have a gift of language were to understand that "there are apportionments of *graces* [OF-GRACE-*effects*, *charis-maton*] yet the same spirit, and there are apportionments of services, and the same Lord, and there are apportionments of operations, yet the same God, *Who is operating all in all* . . . apportioning to each his own, *according as He is intending*" (1 Cor.12:4-6,11).

At that time, the apostle Paul himself possessed a certain special endowment of language, and exercised it more than any of the Corinthians (1 Cor.14:18). And, as he said concerning another gift, that of continence, "I want all men to be as myself, also, *but* each has his own *gracious* gift [*charisma*] from God, one indeed, thus, yet one thus" (1 Cor.7:7).

The English adjective "charismatic" is from the Greek noun for "grace," *charisma,* JOY [GRACE]-*effect.* It speaks of that which is the *product* of God's *favor,* not that which is given as a reward or due to qualification. The leaders of the modern religious movement which styles itself the "charismatic" movement, however, while placing much emphasis on speaking in tongues, nearly always insist that "the gift" is readily available to all who will merely do this or that in order to get it. Such also claim that the phenomenon of modern glossolalia is an integral and vital element in a spiritual walk. Indeed, they often thus distinguish themselves from other believers who do not share their views on this theme (or perhaps their related views concerning such things as bodily healing or forms of worship) by speaking of themselves as the dispensers of "the *full* gospel." Though they may speak of "grace," the fact is that in this matter of tongues, and concerning other endowments as well, they insist that most, if not all, finally depends not upon the grace of God but upon man and his "free will."

Nonetheless, the basis of one's possession of any spiritual endowment—in any era and under any administration—is the all-sufficient *grace* of God, the endowment itself being possessed by its recipient solely due to His will.

THESE LANGUAGES OF OURS

The Greek word for "tongue," man's principal organ of speech, is *glossa,* from which our word "glossary" is derived. When it is used literally (e.g., Mark 7:35) it is translated "tongue" in the CV. When it is used figuratively, as a figure of association for the body of words which are common to a community or nation, it is translated "language."

It is beyond question that the "tongues" spoken on the day of Pentecost were normal coherent languages and not unintelligible ecstatic utterances. "And at the fulfillment of the day of Pentecost they [the twelve] were all alike in the same place. And suddenly there came out of heaven a blare, even as of a violent, carrying blast, and it fills the whole house where they were sitting. And seen by them were dividing tongues as if of fire, and one is seated on each one of them. And they are filled with holy spirit, and they begin to *speak* in different languages, according as the spirit gave them to declaim.

"Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem, Jews, pious men from every nation under heaven. Now when this sound occurs, the multitude came together and was confused, for each one hears them speaking in his own *vernacular* [*dialektos*] . . . ." As these Jewish pilgrims themselves declared, concerning what they heard, "[we are] hearing, each in our own vernacular in which we were born" (Acts 2:8), "we are hearing them speaking in these languages of ours of the great things of God" (Acts 2:11).

This passage is the only passage in all the Scripture which actually describes the nature of the gift of languages given by the holy spirit, and its testimony is clear. The only other two occurrences concerning this gift in the book of Acts are in 10:46 and 19:6. There is certainly nothing in either of these passages to show that that which occurred was the giving forth of unintelligible sounds or ecstatic nonlinguistic utterances. To the contrary, since no description is given, it is evident that Luke expects the reader to have prior knowledge of what he means from his explicit description already given in chapter 2.

Like those of Acts 10:46 and 19:6, the new tongues of Mark 16:17 are not described. The entire list of items (Mark 16:17,18), however, are said to be *signs,* signs of the then-imminent terrestrial kingdom, and refer to miraculous abilities such as those exercised by the apostles. Therefore it is reasonable to assume that the tongues referred to are the miraculous languages described elsewhere, in Acts 2.

Furthermore, the account itself (in Mark 16:20), besides

the general record of the book of Acts, makes it evident that the commission spoken of here was fulfilled. Such practices were hardly the norm for ordinary believers even during the period covered by Acts, much less for those living beyond the close of that period.

Despite its length, 1 Corinthians 12-14, the remaining, and longest, portion of Scripture which includes any information concerning the gift of languages, does not state explicitly what the tongues are. Certain passages in 1 Corinthians 14, however, obviously refer to actual languages, while others are simply not definitive. Yet even in these indefinitive passages, it can be demonstrated that actual *language* fits the context very well. Though in a few such passages some may *infer* or *suppose* the presence of ecstatic utterances, since such passages, in fact, are simply indefinitive, it can hardly be proved that even any of these texts must refer to non-linguistic, incommunicative ecstatic sounds and not to actual language.

Therefore, any who engage in non-linguistic utterances purported to be the scriptural gift of languages, do not do so in response to revelation but to speculation. Such "tongues" are not of faith, but only of inference. It follows, then, that their supposed interpretations are merely a "parading of what one has [heard], feignedly [*eikê,* SIMULATEly], puffed up by his fleshly mind" (*cp* Col.2:18). Such "interpretations" are by no means a word of the Lord. It is not that the intention is to pretend, but that the action, nonetheless, is imitation or simulated, not genuine.

THE PURPOSE OF LANGUAGES

1 Corinthians 14:22 is the only passage which states what the purpose of the true spiritual endowment of languages is. It is preceded, first of all, by the entreaty, "Brethren, do not become little children in disposition" (1 Cor.14:20a). Regrettably, as the entire tenor of 1 Corinthians 14 makes evident, hitherto, some of the Corinthian believers had indeed been disposed to "showing off" their gift of languages. One should never seek to display even a genuine gift at an inopportune time, inexpediently, or for an unsuitable purpose. Therefore, Paul's counsel is, "in evil be minors, yet in disposition become mature" (1 Cor.14:20b).

The apostle continues on, saying, "In the law it is written that, in different languages and by different lips shall I speak to this people, and neither thus will they be hearkening to Me, the Lord is saying" (1 Cor.14:21). Paul's inspired conclusion then follows, and let us take special note of it: "*So that* languages are *for a sign,* not to the believers, but to the unbelievers" (1 Cor.14:22).

It is therefore unscriptural to regard the purpose of tongues as devotional or as a means of private prayer and praise to God. And Paul has already made it clear that languages are not for use in the ecclesia, or assembly: "I thank God that I speak in a language more than all of you. *But, in the ecclesia,* do I want to speak five words with my mind, that I should instruct others also, or ten thousand words in a language?" (1 Cor.14:18,19).

The passage to which Paul refers is Isaiah 28:11,12. It prophesies destruction upon Israel. The context speaks of God's judgment upon His people due to their unbelief (apparently in reference to the invasion of the Assyrians, who spoke a language foreign to the Israelites). Paul, drawing a certain principle from this passage (which, in itself, deals with an entirely different matter), says, "*So that*"—because of the the validity of the principle which he has noted in Isaiah 28:11,12—it is evident that God's purpose in the gift of languages which He had given to some of the Corinthians was that their ability to speak in languages different than their own might serve simply as a *sign,* and at that, not as a sign to the believers themselves, but as a sign to the unbelievers in their locality (1 Cor.14:22).

The general principle which Paul notes in the passage from Isaiah, which he therefore recognizes as also being true in the case of any proper implementation of special languages among the Corinthians, is that whenever God speaks to those who are "in flesh" (Rom.8:9), those who are not energized by His spirit, *they will not hearken* to His message, regardless of what it may consist of, and even if its means should be most extra-ordinary or even miraculous.

The unbeliever receives a sign, a sign that God gives spiritual endowments, but he does not accept it. A "sign" is simply "an act or circumstance which has a meaning or message" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.270). Acts 2:4-11, on the day of Pentecost, is a specific instance in which tongues served as a sign to unbelieving onlookers. It seems likely that this was the case as well concerning the prophesied "new languages" of Mark 16:17-20, under Christ's commission to herald the evangel to the entire creation. Paul explains that languages were to continue to serve as a sign to unbelievers through the testimony of the Corinthians.

In all cases, the basic testimony set forth to the lost is that, This Jesus, Who died for men's sins, is the very Christ of God, Whom God raises and exalts to His right hand (*cp* Acts 2:32,33; 1 Cor.15:3).

It may be that the languages signified as well that the nations would be included among the beneficiaries of the evangel of Christ. Its recipients were not to be confined to the people of Israel, but would include "whosoever the Lord our God should be calling to Him" (*cp* Acts 2:39). "For thus the Lord has directed us: I have appointed you for 'a light of the nations; for you to be for salvation as far as the limits of the earth.' Now, on hearing this, the nations rejoiced and glorified the word of the Lord, and they believe, whoever were set for life eonian" (*cp* Acts 13:47,48). Faith is truly the gift of God, granted to His chosen ones. Otherwise, even where God's testimony is wholly beneficent,

attended by the miraculous and of the most glorious nature possible, men will still not believe what He says.

As remarkable as it may seem, the purpose of the miraculous languages was to afford a sign to the *un*believer (1 Cor. 14:22a). This reminds us of Philippians 1:28 where Paul explains that whenever unfaithful believers oppose the truth, this is "to them a proof of destruction [or 'loss']."

In the first of these matters, a sign of divine salvation is given to *unbelievers*! In the second, proof of their error is given to *opposing* believers! Yet in both cases, because of human stubbornness (*cf* Rom.11:32), God's testimony serves not to establish man's faith but as a testimony against his unbelief.

To the recalcitrant unbeliever, God's "sign" signifies nothing. To him, "Christ crucified" is either a stumbling block or abject foolishness. Likewise, to the deceived saint, God's "proof" proves nothing, for he already has "the truth," no matter how strongly deluded he may actually be. Yet in each of these matters, to those who have eyes to see, God's sign is significant and His proof is convincing.

We know, then, at least for a time and among certain believers, whether in Jerusalem, Caesarea, Ephesus, or Corinth, that the miraculous languages which attended their testimony to the saving work of Christ thus served as a sign to unbelievers.

Yet what we actually need for ourselves today—and no matter how good certain popular customs may *seem*—is the fostering (NOURISHMENT) which can only come from "*the words of the faith and of the ideal teaching which you have fully followed*" (1 Tim.4:6). It is much easier to gain a soulish proficiency in zealous vocalizings while calling these things spiritual than it is to become *sound in the faith* (Titus 2:2), spiritually endowed so as to be loving our Lord Jesus Christ not only with good intentions, but *in incorruption.* "Grace be with all who are loving our Lord Jesus Christ in *incorruption! Amen*!" (Eph.6: 24). J.R.C.

THE DURATION OF LANGUAGES

JUST AS 1 Corinthians 14:22 is the only passage which states the purpose of the gift of languages, 1 Corinthians 13:10 is the only passage that reveals when this gift will cease. Having made mention in 1 Corinthians 12:28 of certain subordinate graces pertaining to "species of languages," Paul states that not all are speaking in these languages or interpreting them. "Yet," he tells the Corinthians, "be zealous for the *greater* graces" (1 Cor.12:31a), those spiritual endowments which are *greater* than languages or tongues.

Being *zealous* for the greater graces, however, should never be identified with any seeking to acquire whatever powers one may vainly imagine to be "available." One should be zealous for those services and servants which God *has* appointed in the ecclesia, regardless of what one's own allotment may be, and pray for the wisdom and discernment to recognize that which is faithful and true. Any personal ability to "prophesy" (1 Cor.14:1), that is, in one sense or another to serve as God's spokesman, must be genuine and divinely appointed, not self-contrived.

Then, at this juncture, Paul declares, "And still I am showing you a path, suited to transcendence" (1 Cor.12:31b). The term "and" points to something *in addition* to what he has just said. The word "still" (*eti,* also rendered "more" in the CV, an adverb of time or degree) indicates that Paul wishes to continue on in order to say more than simply what has gone before concerning the various spiritual endowments which currently obtained among the Corinthians. The sense is, that, within the scope of this present epistle, in addition to expressing the things which

he has just stated, he also is showing them something more, namely "a path," one which is "suited to *transcendence.*"

He does so through the agency of the following section of the epistle, which we know as chapter 13. This "more excellent way" is a course which is in contrast to and far advanced beyond that with which the Corinthians were presently acquainted through their various extant spiritual endowments.

This *transcendent* path obtains (1) during an era which is in contrast to the very time then present in which Paul was writing ("at present"; 1 Cor.13:12, *arti,* idiomatically, "just now"), and yet (2) in an era in which "faith, expectation [and] love—these three" are "remaining" or continuing on. "Yet now are remaining faith, expectation, love—*these three*" (1 Cor.13:13). Paul thus uses *arti* ("at present") in contrast to *nun* ("now," i.e., ["going on from] now" or "beyond the present period," "an adverb of time in contrast with the past"; KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.208).

It is clear, then, that the era in which this "path" may be walked, a path in which faith, expectation and love—these three—remain, is an era which extends beyond the immediate present in which Paul wrote and yet exists prior to the day of Christ's advent. Faith and expectation are of such a nature that they themselves will no longer be needed then, once faith gives way to sight and future expectation becomes present possession.

In 1 Corinthians 13:8-10, Paul says, "Love is never lapsing: yet, whether prophecies, they will be discarded, or languages, they will cease, or knowledge, it will be discarded. For out of an instalment are we know*ing,* and out of an instalment are we prophesy*ing.* Now whenever maturity may be coming, that which is out of an instalment shall be discarded."

It is obvious that prophecies themselves, those revelations of truth made known by God's spokesmen who declared

His word and will, will never be discarded. Though predictive prophecy will be fulfilled, that will hardly warrant its nullification (*katargeo,* DOWN-UN-ACT, "discard," "nullify," CV), or afford any incentive to discard God's own word. The same is true of knowledge. We can hardly afford to discard what little we know. Are we to anticipate becoming altogether ignorant in the day of Christ's advent, or, alternatively, perhaps to follow such a quest at present? Likewise, all sensible people realize that communication, or even private thought, is impossible apart from language. Undoubtedly then we shall speak by means of language, and assuredly we do so now.

It is not language that is in question but the *gift* of language which ceases. Prophecy, the word of God and of the Lord, stands, but the *gift* is discarded. Knowledge is much more abundant than ever before, since the word of God has been completed (*cp* Col.1:25), but the *gift* of knowledge itself (supernatural divine endowment apart from previous preparation) is discarded once it is rendered redundant. None of these three expressions in 1 Corinthians 13:8, "prophecies," "languages," or "knowledge," are literal. Each is a figure of speech, the common figure of association termed *metonymy* in which that which is *associated* with the subject stands for the subject itself. The sense is that the time will come when those spiritual endowments which are *associated* with prophecy, language, and knowledge will cease or be discarded.

OUT OF AN INSTALMENT

We are told why this is so in the verse which follows: "*For* out of an instalment are we knowing, and out of an instalment are we prophesying" (1 Cor.13:9). It is not, as in the Authorized Version, "we know in part," but, "*out of* an instalment are we know*ing.*" The Greek is *ek, out of,* not, *in,* and the incomplete verb form should be rendered "knowing," not "know" The passage does not speak of the Corinthian believers' knowledge, but of the *source* of their knowledge.

"In that era," insofar as their standing *in flesh* was concerned, the believers among the nations, "the nations *in flesh,*" were "apart from Christ, being alienated from the citizenship of Israel"; they were "guests of the promise covenants, having no expectation, and [were] without God *in the world*" (Eph.2:12). After all, the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the legislation and the divine service, were *Israel's;* whose are the fathers, and out of whom is the Christ according to *the flesh* (Rom.9:4,5). At that time, neither the revelation of the secret (Eph.3:6) nor of the celestial allotment (Eph.1:3,18) which is for the ecclesia which is Christ's body had been made known. Consequently, the place and destiny of these Gentile believers to whom Paul ministered—entirely apart from the covenant of the law and yet in strict accord with the new revelations which he alone had received from the risen Christ—was most *enigmatic* (*cf* 1 Cor.13:12). There was, therefore, a great need for further unfoldings of knowledge to the Corinthians, beyond the limited instalment which Paul had already made known to them, that they might more clearly apprehend their true place and purpose.

Even then, however, the Corinthians were the body of Christ (1 Cor.12:27), for God placed the members, each one of them, in the body (1 Cor.12:18). As Paul said, "in one spirit also we *all* are *baptized* into one body . . . and *all* are made to imbibe one spirit" (1 Cor.12:13). Being baptized in holy spirit (*cf* Acts 1:5), even at Pentecost, was a separate matter from speaking in languages, which was also granted to the twelve. "And they are filled with holy spirit, *and* they begin to speak in different languages" (Acts 2:4).

It is perfectly false to equate either baptism in holy spirit, or filling with holy spirit, with speaking in languages. Both

"baptism" and "filling" associated with holy spirit may readily be conferred entirely apart from any gift of languages (*cp* Acts 6:8,10; 7:55; 1 Cor.12:13; Eph.5:18). Conversely, one may well experience modern pseudo "tongues" apart from even the baptism of the spirit, much less its filling, while imagining that he has received both.

At the time 1 Corinthians was written, the spiritual endowments then granted were given to each "with a view to *expedience*" (1 Cor.12:7). In that era, it was *expedient* that some should exercise these various abilities associated with prophecy, language and knowledge, for the word of God had not yet fully been made known. Consequently, it was *then* true that "out of an instalment are we knowing, and out of an instalment are we prophesying" (1 Cor.13:9).

Similarly, it was also true, then, "in that era," that speaking in languages, while in need of strict regulation that all might occur "respectably and in order" (1 Cor.14:40), was not to be forbidden. "So that, my brethren, be [being] zealous to be prophesying, and the speaking in languages do not [be] forbid[ding]" (1 Cor.14:39).

The words "zealous" and "forbid" are in the incomplete verb form (as indicated in the CV by the vertical stroke preceding them). Their reference is to the conduct of the Corinthians at the time then present.

It should also be noted that Paul had by no means instructed every individual believer either to be prophesying or to be speaking in languages. Those to whom God had not given these special graces could hardly exercise gifts which they did not possess. While the Corinthians were to be "*zealous for*" (*cp* 1 Cor.14:1,39) all the spiritual endowments that God had truly given, they were not, unlike so many today, to crave, seek after, or plead for personal, supernatural or miraculous powers.

In the Greek, the sense of Paul's words is that the Corinthian believers, at the time then present, were to be being

zealous for "*the* . . . prophesying," and were not to be forbidding "*the* . . . speaking . . . in languages" in which some were able to engage. That is, all were to be exercising zeal concerning the revelations which God was making known to them through those certain ones among them who were specially graced with the gift of prophecy. Likewise, no one was to be *forbidding* those who actually had a gracious gift of language from exercising it, even within the ecclesia.

In deference to the immaturity of the Corinthian believers, Paul had granted that, when they came together, if "two, or, at the most, three" wished to speak in a language, they had permission to do so. Yet, if they should thus speak, they were not to make a long, uninterrupted testimony in the language, but only to speak "by instalments"; that is, in brief phrases or sentences, so that someone who was able to "interpret" (i.e., "translate," 1 Cor.12:10) might readily do so for the sake of those hearing (1 Cor.14:27).

While Paul did not wish anyone to *forbid* those with a gift of language from engaging in a conservative exercise of the gift while within the assembly, he did make his own will, and example, known, saying, "I thank God that I speak in a language more than all of you. *But* in the ecclesia do I want to speak five words with my mind, that I should instruct others also, or ten thousand words in a language?" (1 Cor.14:18,19). By immediately adding the words, "Brethren, do not become little children in disposition. But in evil be minors, yet in disposition become mature" (1 Cor.14:20), he intimated that it was certainly immature, even for that day, to fail to follow his example with regard to the exercise of this gift.

Just as it is true that certain of the Corinthians once exercised gifts of prophecy, language and knowledge, it is equally true that "whenever *the maturity* may *come,* that which is out of an instalment shall be *discarded*" (1 Cor. 13:10). It is not simply "maturity," but "the" maturity (the

Greek contains the definite article). In fact, in the Greek, "maturity" is an adjective, "mature." Therefore, "the mature" is used elliptically, the figure in which that which obviously constitutes the subject at hand is omitted for the sake of good diction, in order to avoid redundancy.

The "maturity," or " mature," even if the definite article did not appear, would have to be in reference to the maturity of the context. And since the definite article does appear, this fact is specifically emphasized, to draw our attention to it.

Similarly, in the Greek, the phrase, "that which is out of an instalment [shall be discarded]," contains merely the definite article, "the," where "that which" appears in the CV for the sake of English idiom. Therefore, in the Greek, this phrase, THE OUT OF-PART (WILL-BE-BEING-DOWN-UN-ACTED), is elliptical as well. It refers to the *nullifying* of the early, or "out of part" *gifts.*

The maturity of the context, beyond any doubt, is the maturing (i.e., completing or "*finish*ing") of the agency of "knowing" which has just been referred to in verse 9, the partial revelation which had already been given to the Corinthians. As in verse 12, where he uses "we" and even "I" (though evidently representatively, not necessarily of himself as such), similarly, here in verse 9, when speaking collectively of the ecclesia as a whole, Paul says, "out of an instalment are we knowing, and out of an instalment are we prophesying."

The sense is, Whenever the mature *instalment* of knowledge is provided, which may then lead to a fuller "knowing," *then* the *gifts* of prophecy, language, and knowledge will "cease" or "be discarded."

YET THEN, FACE TO FACE

In preparing the Corinthians for the final unfoldings of his prison epistles, Paul illustrates this change by means

of a figure in which a child, when reaching his majority, *discards* the activities and implements of his minority. "When I was a minor, I *spoke* as a minor, I was disposed as a minor, I took account of things as a minor. Yet when I have become a man, *I have discarded that which is a minor's*" (1 Cor.13:11).

This illustration is interjected between the apostle's pronouncement in verse 10, that the mature instalment of knowledge will mean the abrogation of the gifts of verse 8, and the explanation of why this is so in verse 12: "*For at present* we are observing by means of a mirror, in an enigma, yet then [whenever the maturity may be coming; v.10], face to face. At present I know out of an instalment, yet then I shall recognize according as I am recognized also" (1 Cor.13:12).

The common view of 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 is that it contrasts our present experience with our future glory in resurrection. Now we are supposed to see through a glass darkly, but then we will see face to face and know even as we are known. The apostle, however, is not comparing our experience in this life with that of the next. Rather, he is contrasting the former partial revelation, with the entirety of revelation which will be enjoyed when the finishing instalment of divine truth is made known.

It is not a matter of "now"—continuing on from now, throughout this mortal life—that we today peer through a "glass darkly," but that the body of believers as a whole at the time in which Paul was writing were observing "by means of a *mirror*" (*esoptron,* INTO-VIEWER), that is, "in an *enigma*" (*ainigma,* ENIGMA). An enigma is that which is baffling or inexplicable. As we mentioned earlier, since what knowledge the Corinthians did have was only derived from a part, or initial instalment of the total revelation which God would provide for the members of Christ's body, any among them who were even somewhat

enlightened and yet who longed for additional unfoldings, would have necessarily remained quite perplexed concerning various aspects of their own place and purpose within the divine counsels.

Were they to participate in the kingdom of the heavens and one day stand up in an allotment on the earth along with the prophets of old and all others who were worthy of this through their obedience to the law? If so, how could they enjoy such a place without becoming proselytes or practicing the law's righteousness? These and many related matters made the time then present full of enigma.

Yet, when the mature or finished instalment of knowledge comes, Paul explains that they will then see "face to face." The terminology in this figure (it is in juxtaposition to "by means of a mirror") seems to be based on Numbers 12:8 where the prophets saw "in enigmas" but Moses spoke with Yahweh directly, or "mouth to mouth." "Mouth to mouth am I speaking with him [Moses]," Yahweh declares, "and *manifestly, not in enigmas.*" Even as the figure "face to face" answers to "by means of a mirror," thus also, the literal "recognize according as I am recognized also" answers to "in an enigma."

The phrase "according as" in verse 12, speaks not of degree of recognition, but of *kind* of recognition. In the Greek, it is one word, the compound *kathos* (DOWN-AS). It is an adverb not of degree but of kind. Its first element speaks of that which is foundational, what something "comes down to."

Paul's point is a simple one. Whenever God should *finish* His work of revealing His word, the Corinthians would then be freed from the enigmas which necessarily attend an incomplete revelation. Even as the limitations which befall a man who can only view himself by means of a mirror do not apply to those who can view him directly or face to face, thus also, now that the word of God has been completed, believers today are freed from the enigmas of an incomplete revelation.

What God has said has made it evident that the genuine gift of languages ceased to be exercised and was no longer given once the final instalment of the Pauline revelation was made known. Since that time, scripturally speaking, no one has ever "spoken in tongues."

Let us, then, humbly set aside all forms of contemporary glossolalia, the counterfeit "tongues" of today, that we might be growing and maturing in the transcendent grace of God which is ours in Christ Jesus. J.R.C.

DISCIPLINE IN GRACE

That the the foolish will misuse scriptural truth, does not make it untruth, nor does it make it so that the truth should be undisclosed to them, or otherwise kept a secret. Furthermore, those who are wise, to the degree that they are wise, will not misuse truth, and will instead find its testimony beneficial.

As believers, we are not promised (nor is it entailed) that since we are members of the body of Christ, we will, at least eventually in the course of our present career, repent and become characterized by faithfulness.

Even so, all those "of Christ Jesus" *crucify* the flesh (*cp* Gal.5:24). In the grace of God, we indeed "impale" it—thus initiating its eventual death, the fact of its resiliency to death itself notwithstanding.

If (by the "if" of argument) we *died* together, we shall be *living* together also (2 Tim.2:11; *cp* Rom.6:4; Col.3:3). As ones being justified in God's grace, we may be becoming enjoyers, *in expectation,* of the allotment of *life* eonian (Titus 3:7).

Yet it is only if we are *enduring* that we shall be *reigning* together also (2 Tim.2:12). Those of us whom God deems characterized not by endurance in faithfulness but rather by works of the flesh, shall not have a position, or "tenancy," *in* the *reign* of God—notwithstanding the fact that any such ones will nevertheless live *under* its jurisdiction (*cp* Gal.5:19-21; Eph.2:4-10).

All of us in our daily lives, sad but true, persist in some measure of sin. It is not *irksome* (*cp* Phil.3:1), then, but rather a *relief* to hear and know that for those under grace, where there is persistence—an ongoing continuance—in *sin* (as is the case with every one of us), there is a corresponding increase in *grace* (Rom.5:21). J.R.C.

THE PRIMITIVE PASSED BY

THE PATH "suited to transcendence" (1 Cor.12:31), is the path of truth for believers today. On this pathway, only "faith, expectation, love—*these three*" are "*remaining*" (1 Cor.13:13). The gifts of 1 Corinthians 12 as a whole were concerned only with the early period of the ecclesia's development. In that era, that entire complement of spiritual endowments was *being* given with a view to *expedience* (1 Cor.12:7), since the word of God had not yet been completed (*cf* Col.1:25). Yet now the word of God *has* been completed, through the final Pauline perfection (or "maturity") epistles of Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians. Consequently, since much that was once *expedient* is no longer *appropriate,* such provisions have ceased or been discarded.

Now, through the final writings of Paul, we may learn of the change within and full development of his evangel—going "from glory to glory" (*cf* 2 Cor.3:18). Thus we will be able to discern the truth which is applicable to ourselves today.

Like Peter, in an earlier era and former administration, we too need to be "established in the present truth" (*cp* 2 Peter 1:12), the truth for our *own* era and administration. We need to know, "that which concerns [*ourselves*]" (Col.4:8), that we might "stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God" (Col.4:12).

It should be no cause for alarm that we have found that only some of the specific gifts of 1 Corinthians 12 have been carried over (or rather, reintroduced) into the era of maturity. Through one means or another, God will always

give us all that we need, all that is best for us, to accord with the era and the administration. For while we do find that certain gifts, in suitably adjusted form, are indeed transposed into the present administration, no mention is made of any others having been sustained.

As Paul declares, even in the perfection epistle of Ephesians, "[the ascended Christ] gives these, indeed, as apostles, yet these as prophets, yet these as evangelists, yet these as pastors and teachers" (Eph.4:11). This makes it evident that these services are included within God's provision for the ecclesia today, even in the era of maturity, not only in the former era, in which the ecclesia began. Though the provision of these gifts for believers today *accords* with the presence of these same gifts in the era which preceded the present, the present provision is not necessitated by the former presence.

It is not that any of us are apostles or prophets, but that we are "being *built on* the foundation of the apostles and prophets," the apostles and prophets of the ecclesia which is Christ's body, "the capstone of the corner being Christ Jesus Himself" (Eph.2:20).

HEALING

"Many will still ask, What of the other gifts, especially healing, which is not specifically said to have ceased? The answer is not far to seek. Physical healing is clearly promised in many a passage, but it has no place in the more excellent way we are considering. Ephesians promises all *spiritual* blessings among the celestials (Eph.1:3), but there is not a single word as to physical health on the earth. Philippians brings before us three of the most spiritual of God's slaves in this era of transcendent grace. Paul himself had a thorn in the flesh, and could not get rid of this physical infirmity, because *it was necessary for the perfection of grace.* God's power can only be perfected in infir-

mity (2 Cor.12:8), and Paul, who healed others, learns the deeper lesson of abiding under the power of Christ. This was *after* he began to walk the more excellent way.

"Timothy, next to Paul, is the greatest of all the apostles for this era of grace. He, too, treads the path of perfection, and suffers 'often infirmities' for which Paul prescribes a little wine, instead of exercising his gift of healing.

"And now we are told of Epaphroditus, who risked his soul for the saints, and nearly died while he was staying with Paul, to his great sorrow. He was on the more excellent way. No one on the more excellent way ever used the gift of miraculous healing even though he had it (Phil.2:25-30).

"Before Paul received this ministry he was the greatest healer of all the apostles. He more than duplicated all that Peter did. But when the great change came, as Israel's rejection of Messiah became more apparent, he decided no longer to know Christ after the flesh; he gave notice that the signs which accompanied the proclamation of the kingdom would cease, and intimated that God had something much better in store for the saints, not on earth but in the heavens, not in the physical realm, but in the spiritual.

"Knowing Christ according to 'the flesh' (2 Cor.5:16), refers to Christ's flesh not Paul's (*cp* Rom.9:3-5). Paul certainly would not claim a fleshly knowledge of [i.e., relationship to] Him as the basis of his ministry hitherto. But he had been proclaiming Him as the Messiah of Israel, as to His physical relationship to the Circumcision. Christ was a Jew and lived and died in their land and will restore the kingdom to them on the basis of their *physical* relationship to Him. Gentile blessing on earth must flow through this channel. Paul had been proclaiming Him as Israel's Messiah. This is 'knowing Christ after the flesh.' Healing and all the other gifts were associated with knowing Christ after the flesh. They continued in connection with that ministry.

"At that point in Paul's career when he wrote the second

epistle to the Corinthians, he decided no longer to know Christ after the flesh (2 Cor.5:16). He was entering the more excellent way. Christ according to the flesh corresponds to the 'regeneration' (or 'renascence,' CV), as the kingdom is called (Matt.19:28). Its proclamation leads to the kingdom and the millennium. That will be very good. It will be excellent. But Paul, in spirit, has come to the end of the millennium and enters the new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). The result of no longer knowing Christ according to the flesh is that 'if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: *the primitive passed by.*'

["The primitive" is in the plural, *ta archaia,* "the primitives," or "THE ORIGINals" The reference with regard to that which is "passed by," is to the *beginning,* or *original* economies which were concerned with Christ according to the flesh, along with *all* their attendant accoutrements. Whatever gifts we may have *in common* today with the believers of those early eras, even those under Paul's early ministry, are *incidental to,* not necessitated by, the original gifts' erstwhile presence.

We enjoy the fullness of the "untraceable riches of Christ to the nations," and are enlightened according to "the administration of the secret, which has been concealed *from the eons* in God, Who creates all, that now [from the time of the revelations of Ephesians onward] may be made known to the sovereignties and authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord; in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence, through His faith" (Eph.3:8-12).]

"This is the more excellent way. The new birth leads to millennial blessing of which the gifts were the sign. The new creation introduces us to an unutterably higher sphere of blessing, based on faith, which asks for no signs.

"As Paul gradually entered this path his own health

became impaired, he could not cure his dearest friends; he even left one of them, Trophimus, at Miletum, sick. Ask him, in his Roman prison whether the gift of healing has become inoperative. His answer might well be, If it has not, why am I afflicted, and why is Timothy often ill, and what of Trophimus and Epaphroditus? . . .[1]

MERCY AND GRACE FOR TODAY

Though we may hardly expect the miraculous signs associated with Israel's Messianic Kingdom in an era and administration which is completely divorced from it, this is no indication whatever that we may not make our requests known to God (*cf* Phil.4:6,7). God may well be merciful to us and grant us recovery, even if, like Epaphroditus, we should become "very nigh death" (Phil.2:27). It is not that we today are to rule out any hope of God's mercy and grace with respect to our bodily infirmities merely because the special *gift* of healing of 1 Corinthians 12 through the hands of certain men, no longer continues. May it not be coming to that! If it is His intention, His decretive will, God will surely deliver us from any ailment—for the time He intends and to the degree He intends—whether through means ordinary or extraordinary. Indeed, in the last analysis, "A man can not get *anything* if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3: 27).

Any today who truly experience the mitigation, remission or removal of pain or disease, enjoy their deliverance only because of God and His powerful operations. This is so regardless of the means that may be employed for this purpose and however questionable certain avenues of relief may be. For God is operating all according to the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). But this does not mean, if we wish to be *faithful,* that we should follow after successful "Christian healers" any more than we should consult efficient Eastern oracles.

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.15, pp.303-305.

The ecclesia which is Christ's body, of which believers today are members, is a uniquely Pauline revelation and is not at all in view in Acts, especially in its earlier portion. Nothing is more mistaken than to claim that the present ecclesia began at Pentecost, or that we should pattern the present church order after the events and practices which come before us in the early chapters of Acts. Consequently, we need not strain our credulity to the breaking point in order to convince ourselves that the charismatic movement of today constitutes a genuine renewal of the teachings and practices of Pentecost. We should by no means expect the miracles and special visitations of the Lord which are recorded in the book of Acts, now that the administration of the secret (Eph.3:9) has come, and the word of God has been completed. Acts is simply a chronicle of the deeds of those whom it concerns, and is written from a Jewish perspective in anticipation of the terrestrial kingdom. It is a continuation of the account of our Lord's ministry as recorded by Luke, and is concerned with Israel's *rejection* of the evangel of the kingdom.

Even the most zealous "Pentecostal" believers of today who are at all objective, sometimes discount the prophecies, healings and tongues utterances which they themselves witness. This is because the prophecies are often proved false and the healings questionable, even as the tongues of little correspondence to the scriptural examples but of much correspondence to the repetitive, incoherent sounds made by their mentors and associates.

Since many pursue these "gifts" out of a clean heart, having engaged in sincere prayer that they might know the truth, they deem it impossible that the suggestion could perhaps be true that thus they are in the trap of the Adversary. Yet many such brethren see nothing incongruous in confidently insisting that those who differ with them—

believers no less sincere than themselves who nonetheless deem these sensational practices spurious—are necessarily deceived by the devil.

Even where significant predictions occasionally prove accurate, this is no indication that any today are actually serving in the capacity of divine prophet. Indeed, "Who is this who speaks and it is coming to be, when my Lord did not instruct? Is not the evil and the good faring forth from the mouth of the Supreme?" (Lam.3:37,38; *cp* Isa.55:10,11).

As to so-called faith healing, the observations of A. E. Knoch many years ago seem applicable still today: "Some cases can be cured temporarily, but others are beyond its reach. The cases fall into precisely the same groups as other systems of mental healing. Functional diseases or functional complications which usually accompany organic maladies are usually mental in their origin, and can be cured by 'faith,' however induced. It is merely the power of mind over matter.

"Now we must concede that the appeal to God's Word is the strongest possible incentive to faith, and that mental healing under the guise of the miraculous should have far more success than appeals to philosophy or 'science' or merely the power of repetition. These all depend on the fact that there is no organic disease, but only disturbances in the mental control of the body. If we add to this the immense psychological effect of mass meetings, we have one of the most powerful natural means of ameliorating functional disease.

"Everyone knows the vivifying effect of joy and happiness, and the depressing effect of worry. The mental state powerfully influences the action of all the vital organs. Even blindness and paralysis may be caused by purely mental emotions. Such cases as these can be cured by the mental healers of today, and especially by those who seek to operate under the banner of the Bible. But not

one of them can accomplish the healing which attested our Lord's messiahship or the nearness of the kingdom in the days of the apostles."[2]

THE SECRET NOW MANIFEST

Prophecy, even as special endowments of preliminary knowledge, prepared for further unfoldings and maturity. Similarly, the amazing gift of languages, *once and for all,* served as a sign to *un*believers. For it gave evidence to man's unrelenting love of the darkness instead of the light, even where the glorious message of enlightenment was attended by such a stupendous marvel.

The present administration of God's grace, in the language of inspiration, called for an "*adjusting of the saints, . . .* for the upbuilding of the body of Christ, unto the end that we should all attain to the unity of the faith and of the realization of the son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ" (Eph.4:12,13). The time has come when the apostle is admonishing and teaching so as to be presenting every man mature in Christ Jesus (Col.1:28). This was impossible at the time when 1 Corinthians was penned. Yet later on, Epaphras, struggling for the Colossians in prayer, did so that they might "stand mature and fully assured in *all* the will of God" (Col.4:12).

It was granted to Paul, for us, "to *complete* the word of God—the secret which has been concealed from the eons and from the generations, yet *now* is made manifest to His saints, to whom God wills to make known what are the glorious riches of this secret among the nations, which is: Christ among *you,* [and] the expectation of glory [which concerns *you*]" (Col.1:25-27). "Nations" and "you" are both plural, so *en* ("in" when used with a singular object)

2. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.15, p.307.

should be rendered "among" in English. This does not refer to Christ's presence, by His spirit, within the individual believer (which was not a secret; *cf* Rom.8:9; Gal.2:20), but to the presence of the Christ of God now (Who, formerly, according to flesh, was associated solely with the nation of Israel) among the very nations themselves: *Christ* among *you!*

"Christ, Who never went among the nations before His ascension, met Paul outside the land, on the Damascus road, not as the lowly Jesus, but as the glorified Son of God. Gradually, in spirit, through the apostle's ministries, He unfolds His secret purpose to be to the nations, in spirit, all that He had been to Israel in flesh, and far more. This is the secret: *Christ among the nations, a glorious expectation.* Not a subordinate place in the earthly kingdom, but a preeminent place in His celestial domains"[3]

As those who recognize that the "primitives" (or "beginning" things) are indeed "passed by," we rejoice in the glorious unfoldings which are given to us now, those revelations which complete the word of God and afford us our position of maturity in which we are complete in Christ (Col.2:10). May God grant that our love might be superabounding still more and more in realization and all sensibility, for us to be testing the things of consequence (Phil.1:9,10). We pray as well for a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him, the eyes of our heart having been enlightened, for us to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His allotment among the saints (Eph.1:17,18).

We are awaiting Christ's presence by faith, in expectation, and through love. For, as our apostle has said, and we have discovered, "Yet now are remaining faith, expectation, love—these three. Yet the greatest of these is love. Be pursuing love" (1 Cor.13:13; 14:1). J.R.C.

3. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.304.

THE MIND OF CHRIST

THE revision of the CONCORDANT VERSION of 1 Corinthians 2:16 reads as follows:

> For who knows the mind of the Lord?
> Who will be redirecting Him?
> Yet we have the mind of Christ.

We who are spiritual, that is, we who have been given the spiritual endowment of faith (*cf* 1 Cor.13:13), as well as expectation and (greatest of all) love, have a new understanding, a renewed mind, a changed outlook on life and God, and on what is truly of consequence. The mind of Christ is that mind which led Him to empty Himself of all His glories, and humble Himself in obedience to the will of His God and Father unto the death of the cross (*cf* Matt.26:37-44; Phil.2:5-8). It is revealed here in the words "Christ crucified" (1 Cor.1:23; 2:2). In the death of Christ in suffering and forsakenness, we perceive a mind that focused in faith on every detail of God's word to Him.

Thus to have the mind of Christ is to focus on what God says to us, which is the word of the cross, to listen attentively to ("obey") the message, "Christ crucified." For Christ it was a message of what He must do. For us it is a message of what has been done, and it is this which moves us in our thinking, for joy and peace, and in our doing, which is summed up in the word "love."

The question here, however, is "Who *knows* the mind of the Lord?" This is an exact quotation from the Septuagint translation of the opening line of Isaiah 40:13 where

the Lord (Hebrew, "Yahweh") is seen in His glory as the One Who comforts Jerusalem as their Ruler and Shepherd in the promised kingdom. Yet this glory did not follow the deportation to Babylon and their return after seventy years (as Isaiah's words might have suggested), nor even when, many centuries later, the Coming One was born in the line of David and heralded that kingdom Himself. The comfort comes after Israel receives shelters for every single one of their sins (Isa.40:2 CVOT), not because of their own sufferings, but because the Lord would be the Antitype of the propitiatory shelter sacrifices. The words of Isaiah 53 concerning This One as a Man of pains, smitten of Elohim and humbled, and wounded because of Israel's transgression (Isa.53:3-5) would have to be fulfilled before the words of Isaiah 40:1 would have full force. And even yet Isaiah's prophecy has not come into realization. It is in view of this that attention is drawn in Isaiah 40:13 to the mind (the Hebrew uses the word "spirit" to encompass all that is invisible in us) of the Lord and its impenetrability to the human mind. The mind of the Lord is one that holds fast to the necessity of His humiliation before there can be the enjoyment of His exaltation.

No one can truly know this mind with any depth of understanding apart from the blessing of believing the word of the cross. When our Lord told the disciples clearly that they were going up to Jerusalem, and that all as to the Son of Humanity, written through the prophets would be accomplished, for He would be given up to the nations and be scoffed at and outraged and spat upon, and be scourged and killed, and the third day He would be rising, "they *understood none* of these things, and this declaration was hid from them, and they *knew not* what was said" (Luke 18:31-34).

However, while not knowing with understanding what this mind set of Jesus meant, nor how critical it was, Peter

heard the words themselves enough to be shocked by them, and he began to rebuke the Lord, saying, "Propitious be it to You, Lord! By no means shall this be for You!" (Matt. 16:21,22). In this he sought to redirect the Lord. Consequently the Lord called Peter His adversary: "Go away behind Me, satan!" (Matt.16:23).

The human mind sees the cross of Christ as stupidity and weakness, but the mind of those who are believing sees it as God's wisdom and God's power (1 Cor.1:18-25). Those who crucified the Lord of glory would not have done so had they truly known what it was about (1 Cor.2:8). Yet, in His grace, God has revealed something of the cross to us and makes known through His spirit some its glorious results, that we may be perceiving them in faith (*cf* 1 Cor.2:9-13).

Yet even those who have accepted God's evangel concerning His Son will sometimes become captured by their own thoughts of how sin must be dealt with, and, like Peter, they will become enemies of the cross of Christ (Phil.3:18).

Thus, for example, we hear (and sometimes think and say ourselves) that justification is a cooperative endeavor involving more than the death of Christ and our identification with Him, requiring something of ourselves. This is to make the cross of Christ only a partial contribution to deliverance, which. when all is said and done, means there can be no lasting deliverance from sin and death at all.

Even though Peter would have had the Lord change His mind, and others told Him in mocking disbelief to come down from the cross, which indeed He had the power to do, and even though He Himself was brought to cry out in dazed confusion and pain, "My God! My God! Why do You forsake Me?" nevertheless, He was not redirected from His Father's will.

May it be that our minds focus more and more on the word of the cross, on that message of God's wisdom and power and righteousness which centers fully on Christ

and what He has done, and not on ourselves. In this is spiritual power for us in our lives, for joy and peace and growth in love.

Accordingly, Paul entreats us in Philippians 2:5-8:

5 **For let this** ˡ**disposition be in you, which** is **in Christ Jesus also,** 6 **Who,** being ˡ**inherently in** the **form of God, deems**° it **not pillaging** ˙**to be equal** with **God,** 7 *bt*˙**nevertheless empties Himself,** ¯**taking** the **form of** a **slave,** ¯**coming**° to **be in** the **likeness of human** beings**,** 8 **and** ¯**being found** in **fashion as** a **human, He humbles Himself,** ¯**becoming**° **obedient unto death,** ʸ**even** the **death of the cross.**

The AV speaks here of the "mind of Christ," where the CV has the "disposition of Christ." The Greek word rendered "disposition" is not the same as the word "mind" in 1 Corinthians 2:16, but refers to what we call the bent or inclination of the mind. Indeed this is not the human disposition which is directed to pride and boasting and the achievement of comfort and happiness by way of human effort. But in accepting and retaining the word of the cross we are endowed spiritually with a growing measure of this disposition of Christ.

TOGETHER-STEPIZE

Now how is it that we have chosen to use the English verb, "redirect" for the Greek word *sumbibazō* (TOGETHER-having-STEPize) in 1 Corinthians 2:16? First of all (as we have noticed) it seems undeniable that Paul adopts the words of Isaiah 40:13 as they appear in the Septuagint translation. The opening line of this verse in the Septuagint is: "Who knows (the) mind of (the) Lord?" These very words are used here and also in Romans 11:34. The second line in the Septuagint begins a question (which is expanded in the third line): "And who becomes His counselor [or: adviser]?" and this is quoted in Romans 11:34,

but omitted in 1 Corinthians 2:16. Then, in a third line, the Septuagint completes the question concerning a counselor, one "who will be together-stepizing Him," which appears here in 1 Corinthians 2:16 as a question by itself (but omitted in Romans).

When a counselor is in view, the "together-stepizing" is the act of drawing information together in order to direct, or as the case may be, redirect the one being counseled, in the proper or advantageous steps to be taken. No one can do this to the Lord.

This verb is used in the Septuagint nine times. It appears three times in place of the Hebrew verb *cause*-KNOW (or "inform"); once in place of the Hebrew verb *cause*-UNDERSTAND (or "give understanding to"); and five times for *cause*-AIM (or "direct"). In three of these passages it is used as the act of a counselor (Psalm 32:8; Isaiah 40:13; and Isaiah 40:14). Rather than asking "Who will be informing Him?" in Isaiah 40:13, and "Who gives understanding to Him?" in Isaiah 40:14, and "I shall direct you in the way you should go" in Psalm 32:8, as they usually do for these verbs elsewhere, the Septuagint translators employed this rarely used verb, *sumbibazō*, which, although being closely aligned in meaning, conveys its own nuance of informing one of the steps that should be taken in the present situation.

Since Hebrew and Greek have other verbs for the sense of "direct" and "counsel" and "advise" it seems best to find another term for a concordant version, yet one that conveys the sense suggested by the context. When it comes to the message "Christ crucified," the question, "Who will be redirecting Him?" is in full agreement with the context. No one could redirect Him in His obedience and faithfulness to the cross, and no one today can redirect its significance in relation to sin and death.

Christ crucified is the only solution to sin. And Christ crucified is the only means by which death can be abol-

ished. It is this evangel which exposes the mind of Christ and operates to redirect our minds.

1 Corinthians continues to take up various issues of a practical nature, both concerning our daily living and our assembling with other believers, all of which are built on the word of the cross, "Christ crucified." This word is often stated explicitly, as in 5:7, "our Passover . . . Christ, is sacrificed for our sakes;" in 6:20 and 7:23, "you are bought with a price;" in 8:11 where attention is directed to "the brother, because of whom Christ dies"; in 10:16 concerning the "communion of the blood of Christ" and 11:26 concerning the "announcing [of] the Lord's death until He should come." In all of these Paul is not laying down precepts of law, and certainly not establishing religious rituals, but is encouraging a state of mind and pattern of living in which the message, "Christ crucified," is kept vibrant and powerful before us.

The extended discussion of "spiritual endowments" starting in chapter 12 and culminating with that endowment of love most perfectly displayed by our Lord in His giving of Himself for sinners which is always to be the central theme in our "coming together," leads us to the great evangelistic message of chapter 15. Here the word of the cross, which is "Christ dies for our sins," is seen to include the word declaring, "He has been roused." And this full message is the basis for God to become All in all.

D.H.H.

The following is a tentative CV rendering of the Septuagint Version of Isaiah 40:13, using the verb "redirect" for the verb, *sumbibazō*:

13 [a]**Who knows** the **mind of** the **Lord?**
And [a]**who becomes His counselor,**
Who will be redirecting Him?

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 108th Year

(1909–2017)

Contents:

145 Editorial
146 1 Corinthians 15–16
151 The Evangel
158 From Mortality to Vivification
166 The Resurrection Change
171 Christ Dies
177 Crucial Questions About Resurrection

FOURTH QUARTER, 2017

Volume 108 **Number 4**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FOURTH QUARTER 2017
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

EDITORIAL

THIS ISSUE of *Unsearchable Riches* features our revised translation of 1 Corinthians, chapters 15 and 16, with articles centered on chapter 15, surely one of the highlights of Scripture as a whole.

The first three articles are selected from A. E. Knoch's "Studies in 1 Corinthians 15" (available from us in booklet form). This is followed by some thoughts I have been putting together on the relationship of the evangel Paul evangelized with the opening chapters of Genesis. We conclude with Jim Coram's defense of Paul's clear teaching in 1 Corinthians 15:22 that all human beings will ultimately be vivified in Christ.

Not all references to passages in this chapter are worded exactly as in the revised CV given on pages 146-150. Some appear as in the CLNT, and in my own article I go further toward a more literal rendering, and even word my own thoughts as much as possible with simple "fact" verbs. James Coram has replaced renderings of the Greek word, *anthrōpos*, as "man" by the more exact translation, "human" (and the plural "men" by "human beings"). This may be difficult to get used to at first (just as using the English simple "present tense" as consistently as possible for the Greek "aorist" verbs will often seem awkward), but in time, with continued reading, its advantage of exactitude should become appreciated.

Altogether, such changes are made with the hope that the original wordings in Greek may be conveyed more exactly in English, toward the end that we all may be standing firm in the faith (1 Cor 16:13), and living now more in accord with the faith. D.H.H.

15 [y]**Now I am making known to** [=]**you, brethren, the evangel which I evangelize**[°] **to** [=]**you, which also** [=]**you accept, in which also** [=]**you** [˚]**stand,** 2 **through which also** [=]**you are being saved**[°]**, if** [=]**you are retaining** the **word** [a]**which I evangelize**[°] **to** [=]**you, outside** and **except** [=]**you believe feignedly.**

3 **For I give over to** [=]**you among** the [=]**first what also I accept that Christ dies** [ov]**for our** [·]**sins** in **accord** with **the scriptures,** 4 **and that He is entombed, and that He has been roused**[°] **the third** [·]**day** in **accord** with **the scriptures,** 5 **and that He is seen** by **Cephas, thereupon** by **the twelve.** 6 **Thereupon He is seen** by **over five hundred brethren at once,** [o] **of whom the majority are remaining hitherto, yet** [a]**some are** put to **repose also.** 7 **Thereupon He is seen** by **James, thereafter** by **all the apostles.**

8 **Yet last of all, even as if** a [·]**premature birth, He is seen** by **me also.** 9 **For I´ am the least of the apostles, who am not competent to be** [l]**called**[°] an **apostle, because I persecute the ecclesia of** [·]**God.** 10 **Yet** in the **grace of God I am what I am, and His** [·]**grace,** [·]which is [io]**in me,** does **not come** to **be** for **naught, but more exceedingly** than **all of them toil I—yet not I, but the grace of** [·]**God which** is [tg]**with me.** 11 **Then whether I or** [t]**they, thus we are heralding, and thus** [=]**you believe.**

12 [y]**Now if Christ is being heralded**[°] **that He has been roused**[°] [o]**from** among the **dead, how are** [a]**some among** [=]**you saying that** there **is no**[t] **resurrection of** the **dead?** 13 [y]**Now if** there **is no**[t] **resurrection of** the **dead, neither has Christ been roused**[°]**.** 14 [y]**Now if Christ has not been roused**[°]**,** for **naught consequently** is **our** [·]**heralding, and** for **naught** is [=]**your** [·]**faith.** 15 [y]**Now we are being found**[°] **false witnesses also of** [·]**God,** seeing **that we testify** [ag]**by** [·]**God that He rouses** [·]**Christ, Whom consequently He rouses not, if so be that** the **dead are not being roused**[°]**.** 16 **For if** the **dead are not**

being roused[°]**, neither has Christ been roused**[°]**.** 17 [y]**Now if Christ has not been roused**[°]**, vain is** [=]**your** [·]**faith—**[=]**you are still in** [=]**your** [·]**sins!** 18 **Consequently** [·]those **also** who are put to **repose in Christ perish**[°]**.** 19 **If we are having** an **expect**ation **in Christ in this** [·]**life only, more forlorn** than **all human** beings **are we.**

20 **(Yet now Christ has been roused**[°] [o]**from** among the **dead,** the **Firstfruit of** [·]those who are [˚]**reposing**[°]**.** 21 **For since in fact through** a **human** comes **death, through** a **Human also** comes the **resurrection of** the **dead.** 22 **For even as, in** [·]**Adam, all are dying, thus also, in** [·]**Christ, shall all be** [l]**vivified.** 23 **Yet each in** his [·]**own class:** the **Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon** [·]those who are [·]**Christ's in His** [·]**presence;** 24 **thereafter the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to** His [·]**God and Father, whenever He should nullify** [e]**all sovereignty and** [e]**all authority and power.** 25 **For He** [l]**must be reigning until** [w] **He should place all His** [·]**enemies under His** [·]**feet.**[Ps 110:1] 26 The **last enemy is being abolished**[°]**:** [·]**death.** 27 **For He subjects all under His** [·]**feet.**[Ps 8:6] [y]**Now whenever He may say that all is** [˚]**subject**[°]**,** it is **evident that** it is **outside of** Him [·]Who **subjects** [·]**all to Him.** 28 [y]**Now whenever** [·]**all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Him**self **also shall be** [l]**subjected to** Him [·]Who **subjects** [·]**all to Him, that** [·]**God may be All in all.)**

29 **Else** [a]**what shall** those **be doing** [·]who are **baptizing**[°]**?** It is [ov]**for** the sake **of the dead absolutely if** the **dead are not being roused**[°]**.** [a]**Why are they baptizing**[°] **also** [ov]**for their** sake**?** 30 [a]**Why are we´ also** in [l]**danger every hour?** 31 [ac] **Daily am I dying. By** this [·]**boast of yours, brethren, which I** [l]**have in Christ Jesus, our** [·]**Lord,** 32 **if,** [ac]**as** a **human, I fight wild beasts in Ephesus,** [a]**what** is **the benefit to me? If** the **dead are not being roused**[°]**, we may eat and drink, for** to**morrow we are dying.**[Is 22:13] 33 **Be no**t [l]**deceived**[°]**: evil conversations are corrupting kind characters.** 34 **Sober up righteously and** do **no**t **be sinning, for** [a]**some** [l]**have** an

ignorance of God. To[d] **abash** =**you am I saying** it.

35 **But** [a]**some**one **will be protesting, How are the dead being roused**°**? Now** with **what body are they coming**°**?** 36 **Imprudent** one**! What you´ are sowing is not being vivified**° **if it should not die.** 37 **And what you are sowing you are not sowing the body** ˙which **shall** ˡ**come**° to **be, but** a **naked kernel,** [if] ¯**perchance of wheat or** [a]**some of the rest.** 38 **Yet** ˙**God is giving it** a **body accord**ing **as He wills, and to each of the seeds** its ˙**own body.** 39 **Not** [e]**all flesh** is **the same flesh, but** there is [other] one **indeed of human** being**s, yet** an**other flesh of beasts, yet** an**other flesh of flyers, yet** an**other of fishes.** 40 There are **bodies celestial as well as bodies terrestrial. But** a **different** ˙**glory indeed** is that **of the celestial, yet** a **different** ˙that **of the terrestrial,** 41 an**other glory of** the **sun, and** an**other glory of** the **moon, and** an**other glory of** the **stars, for star is excelling star in glory.**

42 **Thus also** is **the resurrection of the dead. It is** ˡ**sown**° **in corruption; it is** ˡ**roused**° **in incorruption.** 43 **It is** ˡ**sown**° **in dishonor; it is** ˡ**roused**° **in glory. It is** ˡ**sown**° **in infirmity; it is** ˡ**roused**° **in power.** 44 **It is** ˡ**sown**° a **soulish body; it is** ˡ**roused**° a **spiritual body.**

If there **is** a **soulish body,** there **is** a **spiritual also.** 45 **Thus it is** ˚**written**° **also, The first human, Adam, becomes** [io] a **living soul;** [Gn 2:7] **the last Adam** [io] a **vivifying Spirit.** 46 **But not first the spiritual, but the soulish, thereupon the spiritual.**

47 **The first human** was **out of** the **earth, soilish; the second Human** is **the Lord out of heaven.** 48 **Such as the soilish** one is, **such** are ˙those **also** who are **soilish, and such as the Celestial** One, **such** are ˙those **also** who are **celestials.** 49 **And accord**ing **as we wear the image of the soilish, we shall be wearing the image also of the Celestial.**

50 [y]**Now this I am averring, brethren, that flesh and blood is not** ˡ**able**° **to enjoy** an **allotment** in the **kingdom of God, neither is** ˙**corruption enjoying** the **allotment** of

˙**incorruption.** 51 [y]**Look**°**!** a **secret to** =**you am I telling! We all indeed shall not be** put to ˡ**repose, yet we all shall be** ˡ**changed**°, 52 **in** an **instant, in** the **twinkle of** an **eye,** [i]**at the last trump. For He will be trumpeting, and the dead will be** ˡ**roused incorruptible, and we´ shall be** ˡ**changed**°. 53 **For this** ˙**corruptible** ˡ**must put**° **on incorruption, and this** ˙**mortal put**° **on immortality.**

54 [y]**Now whenever this** ˙**corruptible should put**° **on incorruption and this** ˙**mortal should put**° **on immortality, then shall** [b]ˡ**come**° to pass **the word** ˙which **is** ˚**written**°**,**

Swallowed up **is** ˙**Death** [io]**by Victory.** [Is 25:8]
55 **Where** is **your** ˙**victory, Death?**
Where is **your** ˙**sting, Death?** [Ho 15:14]

56 [y]**Now the sting of** ˙**Death** is ˙**sin, yet the power of** ˙**sin** is **the law.** 57 [y]**Now thank**s be **to** ˙**God,** ˙Who is **giving us the victory, through our** ˙**Lord Jesus Christ.**

58 **So that, my beloved brethren,** ˡ**become**° **settled, unmovable, superabounding in the work of the Lord always, being** ˚**aware that** =**your** ˙**toil is not** for **naught in** the **Lord.**

16 [y]**Now concerning the collection** ˙[io]**for the saints, even as I prescribe to the ecclesias of** ˙**Galatia, thus do** =**you´ also.** 2 [ac]**On one of** the **sabbaths let each of** =**you** ˡ**lay** aside [b]**by himself** in ˡ**store** that in **which**[a] **he should** ˡ**be prospered, that no collections may** ˡ**occur**° **then, whenever I may come.** 3 [y]**Now whenever I may come**° **along,** =**whomsoever** =**you should** at**test through letters, these shall I be sending to carry away** =**your** ˙**grace** [io]**to Jerusalem.** 4 [y]**Now if it should be worth**while for **me also** ˙**to be going**°**, they shall be going**° **together** with **me.**

5 [y]**Now I shall be coming**° **to**[d] =**you whenever I may pass through Macedonia, for I am passing**° **through Macedonia.** 6 [y]**Now** ¯**perchance I shall be abiding** [td]**with** =**you, or wintering also, that** =**you´ should send me forward where-**

soever I may be going°. 7 **For I** do **not** ˡ**want to** ᵖ**see** ⁼**you at present** ⁱ **on** the **way, for I am expecting to stay** ᵃ**some time** ᵗᵈ**with** ⁼**you, if ever the Lord should permit.** 8 **Yet I shall** ˡ**stay in Ephesus till** ˙**Pentecost,** 9 **for** a **door has opened** for **me, great and operative, and many** are **opposing°.**

10 ʸ**Now if Timothy should come,** ˡ**look** to it **that he should be**ᶜ° ᵗᵈ**with** ⁼**you fearlessly, for he is working°** at **the work of** the **Lord, as I also.** 11 **No** ᵃ**one then should scorn him.** ʸ**Now send him forward in peace, that he may come to**ᵈ **me, for I am** awaiting° **him with the brethren.**

12 ʸ**Now concerning** ˙**brother Apollos, I entreat him much that he may come to**ᵈ ⁼**you with the brethren, and it was undoubtedly not** his **will that he should come now, yet he will** ˡ**come°** **whenever he should have** an **opportunity.**

13 ˡ**Watch!** ˡ**Stand firm in the faith! Be** ˡ**manly°! Be** ˡ**staunch°!** 14 **Let all** ⁼**your** actions ˡ**occur°** **in love!**

15 ʸ**Now I am entreating** ⁼**you, brethren—**⁼**you are** °**acquainted** with **the house of Stephanas and Fortunatus, that it is** the **firstfruit of** ˙**Achaia, and they set themselves** ⁱᵒ**to** the **service** for **the saints—**16 **that** ⁼**you´ also may be** ˡ**subject°** **to** ˙**such, and to every** ˙ˡ**fellow worker and** ˡ**toiler.**

17 ʸ**Now I am rejoicing** ᵒⁿ**at the presence of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus,** ᵗ**for** ˙this **deficiency** of ⁼**yours, these** men **fill up,** 18 **for they soothe** ˙**my spirit and** ˙⁼**yours. Then be recognizing** ˙**such.**

19 **Greeting°** ⁼**you are the ecclesias of the** province of **Asia. Greeting°** ⁼**you much in** the **Lord are Aquila and Prisca, together** with **the ecclesia** ᵃᶜ**of their house.** 20 **Greeting°** ⁼**you are all the brethren. Greet°** **one another** ⁱ**with** a **holy kiss.**

21 **The salutation** is by **my** ˙**hand—Paul's.** 22 **If any**one **is not** ˡ**fond** of **the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema! Maran atha!**

23 **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ** be **with** ⁼**you!** 24 **My** ˙**love** be **with all of** ⁼**you in Christ Jesus! Amen!**

THE EVANGEL

(1 Corinthians 15:1-11)

CHRIST is the solitary subject of the evangel, and three facts concerning Him, all of which took place within the narrow compass of three days, constitute its essence. He died, was entombed, and has been roused. His death was for our sins; His resurrection is evidence of their removal. So simple, yet so sublime, is the message that saves! Who can measure the depths of love which it reveals, or scale the heights of glory which it unveils? It sinks the most august Personage in the whole universe down into the deepest degradation and it carries Him up to the highest heights in the heavens. It concerns God's anointed Saviour and that part of His career which effects our salvation. Apart from these three facts there is no evangel. The death of Christ is sad news, not glad tidings, apart from His resurrection.

To be sure, there is much more to be said as to the effects of His sacrifice Godward and manward. Especially today, as the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians makes clear, we should herald the conciliation, for God is conciliated in this administration. If we faithfully bear witness to the work of Christ and the influence it has had upon God, then its application to mankind will not fail to accomplish its mission.

A TEACHING EVANGEL

Many a time, in my early efforts to serve my Lord, have I heralded the evangel to the lost. In preparation, I often pondered the opening words of the fifteenth of First Corinthians, and sought to make it the basis of my mes-

sage. But the bare facts of the evangel are soon stated, and more was needed to fill in its outline. So it was that I gradually took to what was then called a "teaching gospel," and this eventually led to teaching the saints in place of evangelizing sinners. I would heartily commend this "teaching evangel." It seeks to fill out the skeleton here given from other portions of the Word. This is, in fact, suggested by the phrase "in accord with the Scriptures," which is twice used in this condensed outline, as if to show its importance, and to intimate that these brief words are but an epitome of vast *fields* of truth which are elaborated elsewhere in the Sacred Scrolls. The great subject of sacrifice is involved in His death. And the greater subject of resurrection is implied in His rousing.

CHRIST—THE ANOINTED

Until we know *Who* it is that died, the evangel will have little meaning or power. In Christendom somewhat is known of His life of humiliation on earth, but how little of His official glories as God's Anointed Prophet and Priest and King! The mere mention of the name "Christ" in any gospel assembly should awaken feelings and thoughts such as the name "Messiah" brings up in an intelligent synagogue of the Jews. The most Blessed Being in the universe, the Image of the Deity, the Channel of all creation, the Effulgence of God's glory, His Beloved Son, the promised Seed of the woman Who will bruise the serpent's head, the Seed of Abraham and David's Heir, the Prophet like Moses and the Priest after the order of Melchizedek, the promised Saviour of the world—such is the One Who died, was entombed, and rose. He should be made known to all as the Lord of life so that they may realize, in some degree, what it meant for Him to die. He should be exalted to His place supreme so that men may get at least a glimpse of His humiliation.

DIED FOR OUR SINS

That *such* a Christ should die—this is the great marvel. That He, through Whom all life has come, should enter the realms of death, opens up to our gaze the vast vista of God's love, for death could never have touched Him except as a Sacrifice for the sins of others. But here, again, false conceptions of death rob the truth of all reality. Death is no longer an enemy. It is regarded as only a higher form of life. Apart from the physical sufferings, Christendom makes death a portal to glory instead of the gate to shame. Knowing not the high honors of Christ nor the deep disgrace of death they cannot compute the vast distance between them, so cannot realize or appreciate the descent of Christ to the cross or the glory of His resurrection.

IN ACCORD WITH THE SCRIPTURES

To trace the types of Christ which speak of His death for sin is a task by itself, beyond the scope of the present treatise. Before the entrance of sin God provided Him, as a flawless and unspotted Lamb (1 Peter 1:20), Whose precious blood alone could cleanse away the sin that was to come. And when sin actually entered, Yahweh straightway made coats of skins for Adam and his wife, to clothe them (Gen.3:21), and these must have come from animals which died for their sins. Abel brought to Yahweh the firstborn of the flock and of their fat (Gen.4:4). When God chose to dwell among His people Israel He could be approached only through the death of victims on sacrificial altars slain, all of which foretold the death of Christ. Unnumbered multitudes of animals yielded up their souls merely to portray His death for sin. Rivers of blood have flowed merely to point onward to the precious blood of Golgotha.

In every case the shadow had the shape of the reality. There is a marvelous harmony between the types and the

august Antitype. Under the ritual of the law, only flawless animals could be offered, so that His flawlessness might be recognized. All of the details of His death were presented typically by the various offerings, especially those for sin, and by the Passover lamb, and the sacrifices on the day of "atonement" or propitiation. I would press upon those who preach or teach the gospel, to dwell upon the way in which His sacrifice fulfilled all that was written of it in the Scriptures. Let not the mere statement suffice. So may we kindle a living faith in God and His Word in breasts that know Him not, should we show how fully the substance satisfies the shadow.

HE WAS ENTOMBED

As an evidence, both of His death and of His resurrection, we must press the fact of His entombment. There must be no question of the reality of His entrance into the death state, or it will react upon the reality of His resurrection. Let us note exactly what is said, for very few in Christendom now believe it. The attack on the great truth of the resurrection begins by setting aside the words, "*He* was entombed," and putting in their place, "His *body* was buried, but His soul and spirit were alive outside the tomb." As a matter of fact, few actually believe that *He* died for our sins. They have no need for the tomb, except as a temporary receptacle for His outer shell, not His real Self.

The reverent student who reads God's account of the creation of mankind will note that Adam was formed *of soil from the ground* (Gen.2:7). Later this is made still more emphatic. In judging him God said, "By the sweat of your brow shall you eat your bread, until you return to the ground, for from it were you taken. *For soil you are,* and to soil you shall return" (Gen.3:19). Humanity is not composed of spirits clothed with a mantle of flesh. It has no expression apart from a body. The spirit imparts life and

power and makes it a living soul, but, apart from the body, it is not a spirit or a soul. When a man dies *he* is buried or entombed, not his body merely. If this is not so, resurrection is a farce and deserves the fate which has befallen it. Christendom has repudiated death, so why should it witness to the resurrection? If *He* was not entombed, neither was *He* raised.

ROUSED THE THIRD DAY

After Isaac had been taken from Abraham by the command to slay him, he recovered him on the third day (Gen. 22:4; Heb.11:17,18). Joseph was in prison two full years or "years of days" (Gen.41:1), and was released and exalted on the *third* "years of days." Our Lord Himself referred to Jonah's escape from the fish as a type of His resurrection. Along with the sacrifices which were required to be without corruption, these instances foreshadow the great fact that Christ, though dead, saw no corruption.

Besides this there are other pictures of resurrection, such as the two birds used in the cleansing of the leper in the fourteenth chapter of Leviticus. One bird was not enough to set forth the truth, for it was slain and its blood applied. So another was associated with it by dipping it in the blood of the slain bird. With this token of death upon it, it was set free to fly away into the heavens, a blessed and beautiful exhibition of life beyond suffering and death.

WITNESSES OF HIS RESURRECTION

"The matter shall be confirmed at the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses" (Deut.19:15). Men are fallible, and may be mistaken, so it was laid down in the law of God that matters of importance should not be determined by the testimony of a single witness. The thought of a double witness is employed in a variety of ways in establishing the most important event which has ever

occurred in the history of the earth. He was seen by individuals and by more than five hundred at once. Two of the pillars of the Circumcision saw Him, Cephas and James. He was seen at least twice by the twelve, who would be especially competent to testify, as they had spent so many months with Him before.

Still the most striking and satisfactory testimony of all is that of Paul himself. All of the other witnesses were friends of our Lord and inclined toward His teaching. Saul of Tarsus was His worst enemy. He persecuted those who believed in His resurrection. There cannot be the least suspicion that his testimony is biased in favor of our Lord. He lacked what the Circumcision had, a personal acquaintance with Him before His death, but this is far more than balanced by his enmity, which would dispose him to testify *against,* not *for,* the truth.

Though Paul saw Him *last* after His resurrection, at the same time he saw Him *first* as a foretaste of His return to earth. He saw Him in glory so bright that it struck him blind. He saw Him as Israel will see Him in the future, not as the disciples saw Him in the past. In the regeneration, when the nation shall be born at once, then the Messiah will appear in His glory, and they will see Him as Paul did on the road to Damascus, returned to earth, surrounded with celestial splendor. Will anyone who sees Him thus need any further evidence of His resurrection? So overwhelming was this proof to Paul that it instantaneously transformed him from a fanatical persecutor to an adoring slave, just as will be the case with Israel in the future. Is not this why he calls himself a premature birth? While Israel is not regenerated, he was, in a figure, because he saw the *glorified* Christ, Whom none of the others had yet seen.

THE GRACE OF GOD

Paul's whole career, after he had met the Lord in glory,

was evidence for the resurrection, for the power of Christ's resurrection wrought in him. And this power came to him through the channel of *grace.* Let us not miss the emphasis which he places on this, the reigning characteristic of this administration. This he declares, in one of those beautiful examples of divine rhetoric in which lovers of literature delight (15:10):

> Yet in the *grace of God* I am what I am,
> And *His grace*, which is in me, does not come to be
> for naught,
> But more exceedingly than all of them toil I
> —yet not I,
> But the *grace of God* which is with me.

It is this grace, operating in God's saints today, which first empowered Paul, which bears witness to a living, glorified Christ, at God's right hand. Later, in the Philippian epistle, Paul expands this thought. Through the power of Christ's resurrection, fellowship in His sufferings, and conformity to His death, he strove to attain to an experience such as will be ours in the resurrection (Phil.3:10,11). The conduct of every saint should be ample evidence that Christ is no longer in the tomb, but is risen and gracious in His glory.

Thus the apostle lays before those who deny the resurrection, the evidence which supports it. He gives the historical testimony of actual witnesses, fully competent to decide, in sufficient numbers and reputation to shut out all deception. No event in the history of the world is better attested. But the evidence is not confined to the past. It is a vital force operating in every true believer. The grace which flows from His glorious resurrection produces a power which should transform our lives so that we may walk as partakers of the power of His resurrection, and living reflectors of His glory.

A. E. Knoch

FROM MORTALITY TO VIVIFICATION
(1 Corinthians 15:20-28)

"ALL IN ALL"—such is the august goal of our God! He will yet be everything to every one of His creatures, as it is fitting that He should be. Nothing less will satisfy His heart or the heart of our Saviour. Nothing less will vindicate His love or form a fit conclusion for the tragedy of the eons. Let us with joy believe it. Let us exult as we receive it! May these three simple syllables, that an infant's lips can lisp, become the very basis of our being, the background of every act, the key to every occurrence, a light in every darkness, a balm for every wound. They are the pole star of all true philosophy, the consummation of all wisdom. They are the heart of the compend of divine revelation, "Out of Him and through Him and for Him is all" (Rom. 11:36), and reflect back upon the dismal story of sin and suffering the bright and beneficent beams of the immanent love of God, for which the darkness and death we now endure is but a fleeting foil.

Christ *has* been roused from among the dead, and not only so, but He is the Firstfruit of those who are reposing. Just as, each year, a sheaf of grain was waved before Yahweh as a token and promise of the coming crop (Lev. 23:10), so Christ, in His recall from death, was but the beginning, to be followed, in due course, by the whole harvest. All is reckoned as being in the Firstfruit, so that, in another place, the apostle says, "If the firstfruit is holy, the kneading is also" (Rom.11:16). What is true of one is germinally true of all the rest. So that we need only look

at Christ to see what God's heart has in store for all the creatures which His hands have made. His vivification is the sample and gives certainty to all the rest.

In his epistle to the Romans, the apostle shows how Christ's work parallels and far more than corrects the one act of Adam, to which is traced the entrance of sin and death (Rom.5:12-19). In fullest accord with this he now develops the same thought in connection with *life*. In this also, Christ is far more than the equivalent of Adam. Death, as well as sin, came in through the first man. So life, as well as righteousness, comes in through the Second, our Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, this goes far deeper, for it is death working in us which is the cause of our sin.

Far more than our decease was brought in by Adam, and something which affects our souls much more than the sleep which closes our career. God did not say to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen.2:17 AV). If He had, Adam would have died the very day in which he was judged. He might then have had no progeny of sinners. In the precise language of the Hebrew, He said, "to die you shall be dying." That is, there would be dying as well as death. As we now know, there is a long process of disintegration, with which we are all acquainted, even though we are accustomed to calling it life.

Ever since Adam sinned, he and his descendants have been dying. Like ripe fruit plucked from the tree, our bloom soon passes away, and we show a slow process of decay. In Adam, all are dying, even while they are still alive. That is the "life" that we inherited from our disobedient parent, which not one of his descendants has ever evaded.

Thus, we read, shall all be vivified. The contrast is not between the crisis of actual death and the resurrection, but between the dying process and a life process, beyond the touch of death.

THE CRISIS OF DEATH

The contrast in this glorious promise is between mortality and immortality, between our present mode of existence and the glory before us. That vivification is far more than resurrection is abundantly evident, for it is for those who have not died as well as for those who repose. Our Lord is not only the Resurrection but the Life (John 11:25). Not only could He call back Lazarus from the tomb to life like that he had before, and thus be his Resurrection, but, in the days to come, He will call Lazarus once again, to a life indissoluble and incorruptible, and thus become his Life.

For death the cure is resurrection, but for dying we need life. The crisis of death is a single act and so is resurrection. Each may occur in an instant of time. This is not before us in this parallel (1 Cor.15:22). The words "are dying" and "shall be vivified" are in the incomplete tense in the Original, which denotes an action in progress. The long drawn-out activity of death in dragging men down to the grave is put in contrast with the endless activity of life in imparting incorruption, power and glory. All who endured the first shall enjoy the second. Here is a message for mankind which should lift it above its misery! Knowing this, we can even enjoy the weakness and humiliation of our present state in anticipation of the glory for which it is the necessary prelude.

THE THREE CLASSES

The three classes of the vivified are distinguished from each other in character and time. Christ is a class by Himself. Then there is the group of faith, those who are His. Thereafter, to complete the "all," come the remainder, who have no special designation, except that, at present, they may not be called His, hence do not believe. This agrees with the classification elsewhere given, where God

is called the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers (1 Tim.4:10).

The time of vivification varies with each class. Christ, as we know, has been beyond the dominion of death ever since His resurrection. "Those who are Christ's" will be vivified at His presence (1 Cor.15:23). This seems to be at the crisis of the eons, between the three evil and the two good ones. As the great object of the apostle here is to show that *all* will be made alive, he does not give details concerning this second class, or tell us when this presence takes place. The term he uses, the *parousia,* the BESIDE-BEING, is broad enough to include all that is written elsewhere concerning the coming of Christ to Israel (*cf* Acts 1:11) and, before that, to us (1 Thess.4:16,17). The main point of this part of Paul's presentation lies in the last word, the *consummation.*

THE CONSUMMATION

In place of naming, the third class to be vivified the apostle simply tells us that after the vivification of the second class there will be a consummation. He names an event, not the dead who are left. The fate of the third class is so involved in this event, that we need only to understand it in order to be informed of their future. This grand truth seems to be almost unknown in Christendom. Although the very climax and fulfillment of all revelation, it has been eclipsed by human perversions. As a result the god of Christendom has lost the essential attributes of Deity. He is like the foolish man who started to build but could not finish. Theology brings nothing to a conclusion. It attains no definite goal. Sin, suffering, and insubjection are never conquered. God is compelled to work an eternal miracle in order to maintain a never-ending eyesore in His creation, once so subject, so sinless, and so good.

The consummation consists in *subjection*. Christ Him-

self will be subject when He has subjected all. Here we have a key to all the evil in the world. It is due to *insubjection* to God. This is seen clearly in the character of the eons. The evil eons are either anarchistic or under human government. The good are under the scepter of Christ. The very name, the Kingdom, speaks of subordination. Adam's insubjection brought in sin. Christ's obedience and reign will restore all to its proper place beneath the rule of God. This is not an endless, hopeless task which never comes to fruition. It will be accomplished. It will find its finish at the close of the eons. It is the consummation of the eonian times. Intelligent and loving subjection on the part of all His creatures brings us to the goal, God All in all.

Christ will give up the Kingdom to *God* as *Father.* These two names reveal to us the object of the eonian times. They show us their root and their fruit. From being *creatures* of the great *Subjector,* who have rebelled against His rule, mankind is brought to loving obedience, as *children* of the *Father.* If that time could be described as a day, we might call it the day of the Father. Now we have man's day, for man is ruling. Soon will come Yahweh's day, to be followed by the day of God. Then will come the final, the finishing time, the "day" of the Father, in which God becomes the loving Ruler of His own household, and all creation will be one vast family, knowing no subjection except to Him, no laws but filial obedience. The Kingdom will be handed over to God, yet this will transform it into a universal family.

It is the office of Christ, God's Anointed, to bring this about. It is astonishing to note how this is to be done. The method is entirely negative and consists in making certain things *inoperative* (15:24,26).

It is usually supposed that the universe is so essentially wrong that it requires *positive* corrective acts to set it right. From this basic revelation it appears that what is needed is the negative abolition of activity in two distinct directions, the cessation of all subjecting powers over and *outside* of man, and the stopping *in* man of the force which subjects him to sin. In other words, man is now subject to other men and to the operation of death within him. Make these activities inoperative and he will be subject to God. Man was made by his Creator for subjection to the Deity. This is his normal condition, to which he returns as soon as alien restraining influences have been removed. Add to this negative removal the positive experiences which were his while insubordinate, and we have all that is necessary to make the creatures of God not only obedient, but adoring children of the Father; children to whom He is Everything.

Death is the last enemy to be made inoperative. To many the inclusion of death in a discussion of subjection seems strange and misplaced. This arises from the mistaken idea of death which prevails. Not only do men make the death state one of life, but they fail to grasp the fact which appears at the very forefront of revelation, that death is operating in every descendant of Adam during this life. All are dying. Moreover, that great truth, that *death* is transmitted (*not* sin), so that we sin because we are dying, has been obscured by translators and is unknown to theology (Rom. 5:12). But once we understand that all of our insubordination is due to the immanence of death in our members and that we cannot be normally subject so long as it operates in us, then we are prepared to give death the place accorded to it in this discussion.

If we stop the activity of death in humanity it cannot be insubordinate of itself, for it was not only created out of God but *for* Him. I once wondered why death was the *last* enemy. Now I know that it must be so, for its abolition by itself would remove all the rest, were they not already abolished. If death (and, as a consequence, sin, which is its fruit) should be made inoperative at the beginning of the thousand years, there could be no reign and no rebel-

lion, for insubjection would be absent. Where all are subject to God all other forms of subjection must vanish. Subjection to anyone but God is abnormal. That is what brought in sin. Its gradual abolition in the eons to come will lead mankind up to the consummation. Make death inoperative and the last vestige of insubjection vanishes. It must be the last enemy because its abolition completely subjects all to God.

The consummation, then, does not follow immediately after the vivification of those who are Christ's. The second class are made alive in order to have a part in the *reign* of Christ. The end cannot come so long as there is such a thing as reigning. The interval between the second and the third class consists largely in Christ, with His saints, taking over the government of the universe. No rule, however, can exist where there is no insubjection, for no one who is subject to God needs any intermediary sovereignty or authority or power. These, taking the place which belongs to God, are in their very nature abnormal, opposed to God's ultimate, unless they are temporary and retiring, having their own withdrawal as their aim, being merely scaffolding to be removed when its purpose is accomplished. Such is the nature of the rule of Christ. It is not the object but the means. It aims at its own recall.

THE REIGN OF CHRIST

"For He must be reigning until . . ." (1 Cor.15:25).

This passage, because it goes to the very bottom of things, bares to our gaze the true nature of rule. How much disturbance and distress have come to mankind through the operation of human government! From the days of Noah till the present, oppression and tyranny have been the order of the day, wars of aggression and succession have bathed the world in blood, and even the best of governments have left much to be desired. Human government

is certainly abnormal. And will the reign of Christ with the saints restore ideal conditions? Is not the rebellion at the end of the thousand years an emphatic denial? The reign will be righteous and good, and will bring much blessing because God will be back of Christ, so that it will approximate the ideal. But evil is not banished from the universe by intermediate rule, but by the gradual and final withdrawal of all rule.

Almost all other rule tends to draw men away from subjection to God. Christ's rule will be devoted to restoring them to the normal. It will continue *until* all rule is concentrated in His hands. All enemies will be put under His feet.

What is needed to restore all to more than normal perfection is to stop the activity of death. This is done, at the last, by the vivification of all. The dead and the living, all who are still within the clutches of death in any of its manifestations, are made alive. This is the point of this passage. It puts universal life in place of universal death.

This passage affords a splendid lesson in intelligent interpretation. The apostle insists that Christ subjects all under His feet. He proceeds, "Now whenever He may be saying that all is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him." That which is self-evident and altogether contrary to the object of the whole, need not be stated. Paul need not say, "He subjects all *except God.*" But a most important point arises, which is also self-evident, and that is *that there are no other exceptions.* And if the word "all" has no other exceptions here, why should it have them in similar connections elsewhere? Nor is it a sign of superior acumen to insist that stones and sticks are not included. Such an objection is only a sign that the objector is not yet fully subject in his mental operations. It suffices to know that, as a result of Christ's reigning, there will be no insubjection left in all the universe, so that He may hand it over to the Father that God may be All in all.

A. E. Knoch

THE RESURRECTON CHANGE
(1 Corinthians 15:50-58)

"*Look! a secret to you am I telling! We all indeed shall not be put to repose, yet we all shall be changed*" (1 Cor.15:51). This is the secret of the resurrection. It reveals the one feature which will distinguish our vivification from that of the Circumcision. It declares that our bodies will not be raised soilish but celestial, not with blood, but vivified directly by spirit. The soil and air are mediums through which the power which comes from the sun is supplied to our bodies. In our new bodies these will not be needed. Life will flow to us directly from its divine source, and abundantly, unhampered by the means of supply.

The change will come "in an instant, in the twinkle of an eye, at the last trump. For He will be trumpeting, and the dead will be roused incorruptible, and *we* shall be changed" (1 Cor.15:52). Here we have the same prior expectancy (Eph.1:12) which was revealed first to the Thessalonians. Here are the two classes, the survivors and the reposing, and the Lord Himself descends with the trumpet of God (1 Thess.4:15,16). In Thessalonians all is colored by the consolation which the apostle wished to impart. Here it is concerned with the *change* which the secret reveals. There we find that the dead will be roused first, so that they and the living will be snatched away together in clouds. Here we learn that it will all be the work of an instant, in the time it takes an eyelid to raise or lower, not even during the short period in which the trumpet will be blown, but at the last blast.

"For He will be trumpeting, and the dead will be roused incorruptible, and *we* shall be changed." Again we notice the order, for it agrees with the previous word, that the dead in Christ shall be rising first (1 Thess.4:16). Paul conforms fully in every way to his former revelation. He simply enlarges upon that side of it which deals with our bodies. Here he uses a remarkable phrase which is the equivalent of vivification. The words "roused incorruptible" assure us of unending life. Two things are predicated of the body, sensation and incorruptibility. They are aptly chosen, for they assure us that the changed body, though bloodless, will have a soul, and, though once corrupted, will never return to decay again. Incorruptibility is especially used of the dead, for the opposite has been their lot. "This corruptible must put on incorruption."

"This mortal must put on immortality." This is a word for the living. The process of dying must be replaced by deathlessness. It would be much to be assured that we should never die, but this is infinitely more. Mortality is not merely the possibility of death but the actual process, which loads our whole lives with sickness and with sin. Who would care to live endlessly in dire decrepitude? What we need is deliverance from the enduring of death in our experience, not merely freedom from the dread of death in the future. And this is our expectation! Death may, indeed, relieve us of our daily distress, and put us to repose, yet we do not wish oblivion but life. We want our bodies changed from mortality to immortality, from soulish and soilish, to spiritual and celestial. Such is our constant longing and ardent expectation.

DEATH SWALLOWED UP BY VICTORY

"Now, whenever this corruptible should be putting on incorruption and this mortal should be putting on immortality, then shall come to pass the word which is written:

Swallowed up is death by Victory.
Where is your victory, Death?
Where is your sting, Death?"

Although this statement has immediate application to our change, it is well to note the precise wording, for it has a much wider scope. It reads, not, "when" but "whenever." Every time there is vivification will this note of victory ascend. And it is not "fulfilled" but "come to pass," for the fulfillment occurs only at the consummation, when death finally and fully ceases to operate. Many false conclusions have been hastily deduced by not observing the precise introductory words in each reference to previous revelation. This statement includes more than our vivification in its embrace. It concludes the whole subject and stretches forward to the consummation.

Death is presented here in its two aspects, as operating in us and stinging us, and, when we expire, as having the victory over us. Both aspects are dealt with in vivification. We will no longer be dying and we will never die. There will be no present pain nor future victory. No one needs to ask where death's sting is today, for each one of us has it festering in his own flesh. No one needs to inquire for death's victory, for the earth has become a charnel-house, full of dead men's bones.

DEATH'S STING

"Now the sting of death is sin . . . ." This is a difficult statement to understand before we grasp the fact that sin is due to death operating in us. The rendering of the Authorized Version in Romans 5:12, "for that all have sinned," instead of "*on which* all sin," completely reverses the true relationship. The state of dying would be unutterably more bearable if it did not make us sinners. It is not the dying that hurts, but sin, which is its sting. If sin were absent,

even death would lose its painfulness and much of its dishonor. This is also the solution of the question. How shall we be made sinless in the resurrection? Nothing is said of this in the Scriptures, because it is self-evident that, if sin is due to dying, it will be unknown where there is abundant life. Vivification is the sovereign cure for sin. So it was with our Saviour. Sin He could not, for in Him was life. Even if it was not indissoluble before His death, yet it was abundant, and no one could take it from Him. He laid it down of Himself. At the very end, in a loud voice, He committed His spirit to God. In Him was no sin because the life He had direct from God swallowed up the inheritance of mortality and death which He had from Adam through His mother.

THE LAW, THE POWER OF SIN

"Now the power of sin is the law" (1 Cor.15:56).

If the law could have given life, it would have enabled those who received it to fulfill it. In Romans seven the apostle lays down the principle that, apart from law, Sin is dead. He lived, apart from law once, but the precept revived Sin. The law, ostensibly given for the preservation of life, became his death. There is no vivification through the law! It abets Sin and spreads death.

Over both of these, both Sin and the Law, the companions of Death, we have a present victory in spirit, as set forth in Paul's Roman letter. This is a blessed foretaste of our great and glorious victory over Death itself when our change comes. The world celebrates its great victories of arms after they occur, as perforce it must. But it is far better to enjoy them beforehand, in the times of defeat and death, for then the tidings of success are most needed and appreciated. It is our privilege to celebrate the most illustrious of all victories, over the greatest and the latest of all our enemies long before it actually occurs.

SETTLED AND UNMOVABLE

"So that, my beloved brethren, become settled, unmovable, superabounding in the work of the Lord always, being aware that your toil is not for naught in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58). The present conquests of Death, through Sin and the Law, may make us uneasy, restless, agitated, spasmodic, desultory and wavering in our work for the Lord, unless we are enabled to look forward to the coming victory. With this in view we need not worry about the outcome. That is certain, sure, and glorious! Contrary to all appearances, our toil is not in vain. All of our longings and aspirations will be fulfilled. If God has given us the heart of an evangelist who would like to see every single soul saved, our longing will yet be satisfied. If we desire to perfect the saints in the knowledge of God, this will be accomplished. In the certainty of final victory, let us be steady, undeviating, and full of zeal.

GOD IS ABLE

In conclusion, we need not be concerned about the resurrection, how it will be brought about and what it will accomplish, as though it were a work of man, or as if God had exhausted His resources. We cannot even understand His wonders in nature. *God* is able to fulfill all the pleasure of His will, and *He* will give each one *that which pleases Him.* He Who raised our Saviour from the deepest depths of degradation and death up to the highest pinnacle of immortality and glory, in order that He may administer the celestial realms and prepare them for the consummation, when God will be reconciled to all, He loves us and will give us immortality and glory celestial so that we may share in the mighty task of revealing His grace and love to the whole creation, so that every creature in the realms celestial may find in Him their All. A. E. Knoch

CHRIST DIES

IN Scripture as a whole, the evangel that Christ dies and is roused is the connection between creation and God becoming All in all. We can see this in the following series of texts, expressed primarily with fact verbs and rendered somewhat more literally than in our printed, idiomatic versions.

1. Elohim **creates** the heavens and the earth (Gen.1:1).
2. The earth **becomes** a chaos and vacant, and darkness is over the face of the abyss. And the spirit of Elohim is vibrating over the face of the waters (Gen.1:2).
3. Elohim is creating humanity in His image; in the image of Elohim He **creates** it: male and female He **creates** them (Gen.1:27).
4. Through one human sin **enters** into the world, and through sin death, and thus death **passes through** into all humanity, on which all **sin** (Rom.5:12).
5. Christ **dies** over our sins (1 Cor.15:3).
6. [God] **rouses** Christ (1 Cor.15:15).
7. [God] **subjects** all to [Christ]. Now whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who **subjects** all to Him, that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:27,28).

GOD CREATES

The fact is that the heavens and the earth do not cause themselves to come into being. Anyone who knows anything about the world in which we live, both the earth and the vast worlds beyond, knows that there has to be

extraordinary wisdom and power behind its existence. The Hebrew title, Elohim, is a plural signifying two or more. The Hebrew verb is a singular and speaks of an act of One Who acts through the One Who is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, in Whom all else is created (Col.1:15-17). *For us there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is, and we through Him* (1 Cor.8:6).

By all means let us investigate into the marvelous ways and arrangements of the universe as far as we possibly can. And let us do so scientifically. But unless we accept that God is its Source (through the one Mediator; 1 Tim.2:6), we will never be able to know that what *is* has meaning.

THE EARTH BECOMES

The second fact in our list is that the earth which God creates becomes a chaos and vacant. The immediate cause for this disruption is not given, only the fact that a complete lack of order and life develops. Furthermore, darkness is over the face of the abyss.[1]

We may not assume that this disruption is outside of God's purpose, for He is working all *in accord with* the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). Nevertheless chaos is not His goal in creation: "For thus says Yahweh, Creator of the heavens; He is the One, Elohim, the Former of the earth and its Maker, He Himself establishes it; He does not create it a chaos, *He forms it to be indwelt*" (Isa.45:18).

Consequently, expressed first by a participle ("vibrating") and followed by a series, mostly consisting of ongoing action verbs ("is saying," "is becoming," "is seeing," "is separating" etc.), we learn of Elohim's activity in bringing the disrupted earth back to order with light and separation of parts and the bringing forth of life. And because of the evil of chaos, vacancy and darkness, His creating and restoring activity is being seen, by the immense contrast, as good, even that which is very good.

1. The rendering, "submerged chaos," used in the 1957 CV edition is possible (or perhaps "sea of chaos"), but even the word "abyss" may suggest the sense of a thick, impenetrable mixture of gases, liquids and solids covering the earth.

ELOHIM CREATES HUMANITY

The culminating activity in Genesis 1 is that "Elohim is creating humanity in His image, in the image of Elohim." Then, immediately this is expressed by the verb "create" repeated in its fact form: He [Elohim] *creates* it [humanity], male and female He *creates* them (Gen.1:27). Here is a new and very momentous act. It corresponds in fundamental importance to the opening fact: Elohim *creates* the heavens and the earth.

SIN AND DEATH ENTER

This act of the creation of humanity is described in more detail in Genesis 2:7 by the ongoing action verbs "is forming," "is blowing," and "is becoming." So also the determinative events of Genesis 3 are mostly worded the same way: "Yahweh Elohim is instructing" (2:16), "The serpent is saying" (3:1), "the woman is seeing, is taking, is giving" and "he [Adam] is eating" (3:6). But all that happens there is summed up by Paul in Romans 5:12 by means of fact verbs. Through one human the chaos of sin *enters* into the world, and through it comes the vacancy and darkness of death which *passes through* into all humanity, on which all the descendants of Adam *sin*. We all fail to hit the mark of perfection.

Unlike Genesis 1:2 the immediate cause of this disruption is revealed as the Adversary. He is the one who brings over humanity a jurisdiction of darkness (*cf* Col.1:13).

But where is God in all this? Does He not know? Or has He been outmaneuvered? May it not come to that! Out of Him and through Him and for Him is all (Rom. 11:36)! He is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). The Seed of the woman will come and nullify the headship and authority of the one who has the might of death. And this will be done through Christ's shed blood, foreknown before the disruption of the world (1 Peter 1:20), through His death, followed by His vivified life (*cf* Gen.3:15; Heb.2:14; 1 Cor.15:24,25).

This brings us to the evangel which is evangelized to us in 1 Corinthians 15 and expressed by fact verbs:

CHRIST DIES

The chaos and vacancy and darkness of Genesis 1:2 is replaced by the power of God's vibrating spirit which operates in connection with His words of Genesis 1:3-30, but the evil is not destroyed; it is not abolished. It crops up again, and it is still here. It must be done away with to a finality. And the only way for that to be done is the way God does it, by a reversal of the evil, a complete reversal of sin and death, by the operation of God in and through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

He is made to be Sin. He dies. In that He dies He dies over[2] all of us who are sinners and over our sins, as the following texts from Paul's epistles testify:

2. The Concordant standard for the Greek preposition *[h]uper* is OVER. When followed by a genitive noun or pronoun this is generally translated "for the sake of" in the CV. But sometimes in such constructions *[h]uper* is translated "over"(see for example, 2 Cor. 5:12; 7:4, "boasting *over* you"). This opens up a connection with the two uses of "over" (Hebrew, literally ON; Septuagint, literally ON-UP, an adverb, rendered variously, *upon* or *over* or *above*) in Genesis 1:2. Here we may see that the darkness over the chaotic abyss foreshadows the death of Christ; and the spirit vibrating over the waters foreshadows His resurrection, rousing and vivification.

"For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, *over* the irreverent *dies*" (Rom.5:6).

"God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ *dies over* us" (Rom.5:8).

"Surely He Who *spares not* His own Son, but *gives* Him *up over* us, how shall He not, together with Him, also be graciously granting us all?" (Rom.8:32).

"Do not, by your food, destroy that one *over* whom Christ *dies*" (Rom.14:15).

The Lord Jesus, in the night in which He was given up, takes bread, and giving thanks breaks it and says, This is My body, *broken over* you" (1 Cor.11:24).

"Christ *dies over* our sins in accord with the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3).

"For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that if One *dies over* all, consequently all die. And He *dies over* all that those who are living should by no means still be living to themselves, but to the One Who *dies* and is being roused *over* them" (2 Cor.5:14,15).

"For the One not knowing sin, He *makes* to be Sin [as a sin offering] *over* us that we may become God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"Now that which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith, the faith of the Son of God, Who loves me, and *gives* Himself *up over* me" (Gal.2:20).

"Christ *reclaims* us from the curse of the law, Who *becomes* a curse *over* us" (Gal.3:13).

"Be walking in love, according as Christ also loves you, and *gives* Himself *up over* us, an approach present and a sacrifice to God" (Eph.5:2).

"Husbands, be loving your wives according as Christ also loves the ecclesia, and *gives* Himself *up over* it" (Eph.5:25).

"For God does not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, the One Who *dies over* us" (1 Thess.5:9,10).

"For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and humanity, a Human, Christ Jesus, the One Who *gives* Himself a Correspondent Ransom *over* all" (1 Tim.2:5,6).

". . . anticipating that happy expectation, even the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who *gives* Himself *up over* us" (Titus 2:14).

These passages are our joy and peace. The evangel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who is believing.

In the ultimate sense God does all that His evangel proclaims; He loves and spares not and gives up and makes to be Sin.

Consequently, it is as the Image of the invisible God, that Christ loves and gives Himself up in faithfulness and obedience. Christ dies over us who are sinners, which means He dies over all, for all are sinners. He dies over our sins, which means He dies over every sin of every sinner, for He could not die over the believer's sins without dying for the sins of all humanity.

Yet in a special sense (*cf* 1 Tim.4:9,10) He dies over us who are believing for present and eonian salvation. We are those of whom it can be said already that He foreknows and designates beforehand, and calls, and justifies and glorifies (Rom.8:29,30; *cp* Eph.1:3-12).

All of this is so because Christ dies over us, but also because God rouses Him from among the dead.

THE ROUSING AND SUBJECTING

It is because of the fact that Christ *dies* exactly and faithfully as God *wills*, that all *die* in His death. And it is because of the facts that Christ dies and God *rouses* Him that all are vivified in Him. And it is because of the facts that Christ dies, and God rouses Him and subjects all to Him, that all is seen as very, very good. And on these bases Christ subjects Himself to God that He may be All in all.

D.H.H.

CRUCIAL QUESTIONS ABOUT RESURRECTION

We have been asked to reply to a book entitled Crucial Questions About Hell.[1] For the most part, the author simply makes a case for eternal punishment and Hell such as will appeal to and, we suppose, satisfy the so-called evangelical public. Will all who die in unbelief, including those who have never heard the gospel, experience the horrors of an orthodox Hell for all eternity? According to the author, they will indeed.

Remarkably however, Mr. Fernando only considers the vital scriptural points at issue in this controversy quite cursorily. For example, his treatment of 1 Corinthians 15:22 is not even two pages in length. But at its end he concludes, "the second 'all' in these two texts [the other text being Romans 5:18] refers to all *those who* are in Christ, and that only includes those who believe" (p.58).

By this he means to say that even though the apostle Paul declares that "all" shall be vivified, we are to understand the "all" to be only all those who accept Christ and believe during their present lifetime.

WHO ARE "THE ALL"?

Verse 22, however, informs us of nothing of the kind! Instead, the purpose of verse 22 is to tell us *why* it is so that "through a *human* came death, [and] through a *Human*,

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Ajith Fernando, 1991; Crossway Books: Wheaton Illinois, ISBN 0-89107-762-6.

also, comes the resurrection of the dead" (verse 21). The text explains that this is so, "*for* even as, in Adam, *all* are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall *all* be vivified" (verse 22). The antecedent, then, for "all" in both clauses of verse 22, is "human[s]" (from the word "HUMAN" in both respective clauses of verse 21). Therefore, the elliptical noun to be supplied following "all" in both clauses of verse 22 ("in Adam, all . . .", "in Christ, all . . .") is "humans"—all "humanity," all *human beings.*

The theme which is in view throughout this entire section, to which Paul makes the extended reply of verses 20-28, is that of the universal forlornness of *all human beings* if there is no resurrection of the dead (*cp* vss.12, 19). Further, it is in the context not merely of believers, but of *all human beings* (v.19), in which Paul declares that Christ is the Firstfruit of those who are *reposing* (v.21). "Repose" is the figure of euphemism by which, in gentleness, we make mention of the dead who are lying in their graves. Those who died in unbelief are lying in their graves quite as much as those who died in faith. Hence it is vain to claim that "the reposing" are confined to dead believers. Clearly, the expression comprises all *the dead,* not merely those of a certain class.

Let us rehearse again the theme that is in view and the considerations attending it. The overriding theme is the universal hopelessness of *all human beings* apart from resurrection. Yet the marvelous point to note is that while it is indeed the case that, considered in themselves, the dead are utterly hopeless, *Christ* is the *Firstfruit* (*cp* Acts 26:23) of a company which comprises *all* the dead! Christ, in vivified glory, is the Firstfruit of the "reposing," that is, of the dead. "Firstfruit" speaks of the first fruit to ripen and be presented to God (*cp* Lev.23:10). If the firstfruit is holy, so are the rest (*cf* Rom.11:16). A tree bears only one kind of fruit (*cp* Matt.7:17,18; 12:33). The fruit that death's tree,

utterly powerless in itself, will nonetheless yet bear by the hand of the Almighty, finds its Exemplar in Christ's glorious resurrection. "The reposing" are those who will yet constitute fruit for God such as is exampled in the victorious resurrection of Christ Himself.

"FOR EVEN AS . . . THUS ALSO"

Christ is the Firstfruit of those who are reposing, "for since, in fact, through a *human* came death, through a Human, *also,* comes the resurrection of the dead" (v.21). Notice, the subject is not the resurrection of some certain company among the dead; it is rather simply the resurrection of "the dead" (literally, the "standing up of dead ones"). It is the case that through a *human* came death, and that through a *Human,* also, comes the resurrection of the dead, "*for* even as, in Adam, *all* are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall *all* be vivified" (v.22).

The theme, the hopelessness of *human beings* apart from resurrection, is established in verses 12-19. The fact that Christ has been roused out from among those who are dead as the Firstfruit *of* the ones "having been reposed" (literal rendering), is declared in verse 20. That in verses 21 and 22 Paul's subject continues to be all mankind, is made evident by the overall logical flow of the text. And, that this is and necessarily continues to be the true range of his subject, is protected against all intelligent denial by the subject-maintaining causal conjunctions "*for*" at the beginning of both verse 21 and 22.

The fact is that the noun "human" appearing in both clauses of verse 21, constitutes the identification of the elliptical adjective "all" appearing in both clauses of verse 22. This makes the scope of the "all" in both clauses of verse 22, all *humans.*

To claim that at least in the second "all" of verse 22 (the all who will be vivified), this refers *not* to all humans but

only to all who believe and even then only to all who believe during this life, is to do extreme violence both to the text and the context. The apostle Paul says no such thing; nor, certainly, does he say anything from which such a notion would follow. To the contrary, what he does say here precludes any such notion.

Rather, what actually follows from what Paul plainly declares, is that other passages of Scripture are being misinterpreted if from one's understanding of other texts, one has concluded that only those who believe during this life will be saved.

what is the parallel?

The author of Critical Questions About Hell, freely acknowledges that "if the parallelism [in these two verses] were carried out absolutely, we would have to concede that every human being will experience a blessed resurrection at the end" (p.57). Such an admission is tantamount to saying that if such an "absolute" parallelism were the teaching of these texts, universal vivification would be true and eternal punishment would be false. This is a telling statement. He tacitly admits that such an understanding of these passages is certainly possible, even while insisting that it would be an incorrect interpretation.

Mr. Fernando concedes that both passages employ parallelism, but denies that they employ what he conceives as "absolute" parallelism. Such a claim, however, is confused indeed; or rather it is simply nonsense. Rationally, there is no such notion as a "non-absolute" parallelism. Even as with figures of likeness (such as metaphor and type), thus also with the literary device termed parallelism, the likeness (or "parallel") is always "absolute" *in that respect which is under consideration.* Otherwise, we would not have a parallel! Different entities, in all their respective particulars, obviously are not identical; no one supposes

that they are. But in those specific things in which substantially different entities are *alike,* there is no such thing as *non*-absolute likeness or parallelism.

The reason why ("For," 1 Cor.15:22a) "through a *human* came death" (v.21a), is because in *Adam,* all (humans) are dying (v.22a). And, the reason why "through a *Human* also, comes the resurrection of the dead" (v.21b), is because, in *Christ,* all (humans) shall be vivified (v.22b).

Notice: all humans *are* dying; and, all humans *will* be vivified. This is the primary revelation of this passage. Paul then goes on to tell us why both death *and resurrection* are a reality. Death, indeed, is a reality—"for . . . all are dying." And, contrary to the claims of some of the Corinthians, the *resurrection* of the dead is a reality as well—"for . . . all shall be *vivified.*" If all shall enjoy that glorious, immortal and incorruptible life of which Christ is even now the Firstfruit (v.23), it certainly follows that all will live. And since all indeed will gloriously *live*—let the Corinthians say what they will—it follows as well that the dead will be "resurrected" (i.e., "stand up" in life from among the dead). Therefore, the claim made by some of the Corinthians that there is no resurrection of the dead (v.12), is wholly false.

what is the scope?

The primary question concerning both the first and the second clause of 1 Corinthians 15:22, is the scope of the word "all" in the phrases, "in Adam, all . . .", and "in Christ, all . . . ." As we have already explained, the scope of the "all" in each of these clauses, is determined by the noun appearing in each clause's corresponding clause in verse 21. In the case of both the "all" appearing in 1 Corinthians 15:22a and that in 22b, the antecedent noun in verse 21 is "human" (or "Human"). Hence it is simply a fact that the elliptical noun to be supplied to the adjective

"all" in both clauses of 1 Corinthians 15:22, is "humans"—all humanity, all human beings. The sense, then, of Paul's words is that, "even as, in Adam, *all [humans]* are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall *all [humans]* be vivified." In the wisdom of God, the revelation of this vital passage is made in such a way that all who are able to receive its truth may find assurance that they indeed have done so. And, in the wisdom of God, its truth is also declared in such a way that those to whom its enlightenment has not been given, may, in their own minds, justify their unbelief.

Many Scripture passages use the expression "in Christ" (or its equivalent) in what is termed the "locative" sense (e.g., Rom.8:1). Thus one is said to be located "in" Christ. Such a locative sense is not literal, however, but figurative. The literal idea of thus being "in Christ," is *identification with* Christ. Those who are "in Christ," belong to Christ; they are His, and have the closest possible association with Him. In those passages in which the subject is *being* "in Christ" (i.e., when the sense is, *those who are* "in Christ"), "in" is used not instrumentally, but locatively.

Conversely, other Scripture passages, use the phrase "in Christ" in what is known as the "instrumental" sense (e.g., Eph.2:5-7,10,13). The instrumental "in" is the equivalent of "by means of" (*cp* 1 Cor.15:21,22). For example, the instrumental "in" reveals *how* we are chosen (we are chosen "in Him"; Eph.1:4).

Usage determines sense. For example, when we read of those who came to be "in Christ" before Paul (Rom.16:7), it is evident that the locative sense is intended. And, just as surely, where we read of the covering that was remaining at the reading of the old covenant, and learn that this was so, "for only *in Christ* is it being nullified" (2 Cor. 3:14), it is evident that the instrumental sense is meant. Indeed, the phrase, "in Christ is it being nullified," is parallel to "in Christ, shall all be vivified." "In Christ, shall all be vivified," then, no more means "those who are in Christ shall be vivified," than "in Christ is it being nullified," means "those who are in Christ is it being nullified," which means nothing at all.

UNTENABLE INTERPRETATION

It should be noted that in 1 Corinthians 15:22, Paul does not say, "all in Adam" and "all in Christ," but, "in Adam, all," and "in Christ, all." It is unconscionable to reverse the scriptural syntax as so many do, when interpreting this passage. It is unconscionable as well, when the apostle's words already express a clear thought as they stand, to revise his words so as to express a *different* clear thought than *his* clear thought.

If it is allowed (and it cannot fairly be denied) that the scope of the "all," in each case, is "humans," some will then try to represent Paul as if he had said, "all [mankind] *in Adam . . .*" and "all [mankind*] in Christ . . . .*" They then go on to claim that the apostle should be understood here as having said "all mankind *who* are in Adam," and "all mankind *who* are in Christ," indeed as having said, "all mankind who are in Christ *today.*" Finally, concerning the latter clause, they finish their work of corruption by their consummate "interpretation": "[*only*] all mankind *who* are in Christ [*today*]"!

Their consciences having been cauterized, many consider themselves quite at liberty to set forth such "interpretations" as the very word of God. After reversing the syntax, and, quite unwarrantedly, adding the word "who" to each clause (not to mention after having added the words "only" and "today" to the second clause), many still have the audacity to represent such an "interpretation" as Paul's true thought.

Such, however, is a gross misuse of the word "interpretation." The province of exegesis (i.e., of *legitimate* inter-

pretation), is to *bring out* what is actually present, to *clarify* what is actually said or entailed, even though it may not immediately be evident to all. Even as paraphrase may recast, exegesis may lead forth. Neither paraphrase nor exegesis, however, may change *what* has been declared into a non-equivalent declaration.

WHAT IS THE SENSE?

We indeed need to *discern* what Paul has said, but we must realize that he has already spoken, *saying* what he meant, and *meaning* what he said. That is, his declarations already *have* meaning. We cannot give it to them; we can only note the meaning that they already possess.

When a declaration, as it stands, is already clear, we may not claim the presence of ellipsis, so as to warrant our additions. Any such "ellipsis" is not ellipsis at all, but corruption. Genuine ellipsis does not *change* the sense, but makes explicit the sense that is already present, albeit in compressed form.

Nor may we change the scripture syntax when by so doing we change the scripture sense. The syntax we are considering is the syntax of these scriptural phrases in question in 1 Corinthians 15:22, "in Adam, all . . .", and "in Christ, all . . . ." The words "in Adam" and "in Christ," are prepositional phrases. Prepositional phrases may be used as adverbs or as adjectives. When we say, "in Christ, shall all be vivified," we are using the words "in Christ" adverbially, so that "in Christ" modifies "vivified." Such a construction answers the question how, or where, all shall be vivified. The sense is: *all* (in this case, all human beings) shall be vivified, but they shall be vivified, *in Christ* (i.e., not otherwise or elsewhere).

The *non*-scriptural construction, however, "all in Christ," presents us with a *different* thought from that of the scriptural syntax, "in Christ, all." And, as it is popularly understood, this non-scriptural syntax presents an *unscriptural* thought. In the construction, "all in Christ," the phrase "in Christ" is used adjectivally, so that it modifies the adjective (used as a noun) "all." In this case, the sense is that "the 'in Christ' all" are the "all" who shall be vivified.

Before we even attempt to judge the sense or scope of such a phrase, we must realize that such a phrase does not declare Paul's idea. Whether or not, on other grounds, such a thought, in some sense, may be true, such a thought is not revealed here.

Actually, even with this construction, since the "all" in this text, regardless of syntax, is all mankind, and since, it is the secret of God's will, in due time, to head up *all* in the Christ—whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Eph. 1:10)—we could only legitimately identify "the 'in Christ' all" here as all mankind. Therefore, by any legitimate interpretation, even if the syntax is reversed, the vital sense will not be changed. The truth revealed in this passage can only be lost by (1) reversing the syntax of these key phrases so as to change Paul's thought; (2) placing an illegitimate limitation on the word "all"; and (3) adding false notions to the text; namely, the spurious claim, contradicted by this very passage, that *only* those who are in Christ *today* will ever be saved.

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

One who is familiar with the passages which declare that it is "in" Abram and "in" his seed that all nations shall be blessed (Gal.3:8; *cp* Gen.12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14), would naturally assume that Paul is speaking along similar lines here in 1 Corinthians 15:22, using the instrumental "in" in a parallel way. Let us note as well that it is that which in principle is "the blessing of *Abraham*," which comes to the nations "in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3:14). Therefore, the words here, "in Christ Jesus," must be understood

in an instrumental (i.e., in a by-means-of) sense. Thus they speak of Christ as the One Who is God's Chief Instrument.

The fact is that these texts which rehearse promises of blessing in Abram and in his seed, are texts which indisputably employ the instrumental "in." In such passages of Scripture, both Abram and his seed are surely typical of Christ in His saving work on behalf of all. It is very likely, then, on this basis alone, that the sense of "in Christ, shall all be vivified," is "by means of Christ," shall all be vivified. It should be noted, however, that the only difference in 1 Corinthians 15:22 between an instrumental "in Christ" and a locative "in Christ," is that the former sense reveals the *means* of the vivification of all, whereas the latter sense relates the *sphere* in which the vivification of all shall occur. The point is this: *both* senses affirm the vivification of all human beings, and preclude the traditional doctrine of eternal punishment.

It is (1) instrumentally "in," (2) transmissionally "through," and (3) objectively "because" of what Abram did in believing God that all nations shall enjoy blessing in the coming kingdom. ("In" is *en,* "through" is *dia,* and "because" is *dia* with the accusative [i.e., objective] case.) And, it is *in, through* (i.e., by means of), and *because* of what Christ did in His obedience to the death of the cross, that all mankind shall be vivified (1 Cor.15:22). In, through, and because of the obedience of Christ, this entire vast throng—all humanity— shall actually be constituted righteous, and, accordingly, be granted "life's justifying" as well (Rom.5:18,19).

The author's claim that salvation is only for "all who are in Christ" (p.56) is misleading and ultimately false. It is true that, at present, the Scriptures only term those who are *chosen* (who, accordingly, are graciously granted to be believing) as being "in Christ." But it is just as true that, in the distant future, all will come to be "in Christ," for it is the secret of God's will (in accord with His delight, which

He purposed in Christ), to have an administration of the complement of the eras to head up *all in the Christ* (Eph. 1:9,10). In that day, *all*— whether those on the earth or those in the heavens— will be in Christ *together,* for all will be "*summed*" up (or "headed" up) in Him.

It is true, in the nature of the case, that in an originative sense (as in "[Levi was] *in* the loins of his father," Heb. 7:10), all were once, in this respect, even locatively, "in Adam." But—and this is by far the more important consideration—long before this and yet in a similar sense, all were first of all "in" Christ, "in Him [in Whom] is all created" (Col.1:16). So there is a sense in which all were once even locatively in Adam, and, far more gloriously, in Christ, even as a sense in which all will thus be in Christ at the consummation.

Indeed, men are estranged from Christ today, and indeed, most die in such a condition. But it is just as true—stated as a fact, with reference to all intelligent creatures—that in God's own time, "*in [Christ]* the entire complement *delights* to dwell" (Col.1:19). "And [this is so for God delights] to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:20). How we long for that day, the goal of the universe, when God is All in all (1 Cor.15:28). It is this very outcome which is the purpose of the eons which God makes in Christ Jesus our Lord (*cf* Eph.3:11).

DOES "ALL MANKIND" INCLUDE ALL MANKIND?

On page 57 of CRUCIAL QUESTIONS ABOUT HELL, the author suggests that since in the words "all mankind" in Romans 5:18a ("for all mankind for condemnation"), *Christ* is not included, this shows that it is not unreasonable to claim that, in Romans 5:18b, in these same words, "all mankind," neither are the vast majority of mankind included! That is, by the words "all mankind," orthodoxy

here wishes us to understand not, all mankind, but only a comparative few of mankind!

Surely no one who was not desperate to establish the teaching of eternal punishment would ever make such a claim. The fact is that the scope of the "all" in the phrase "all mankind" in Romans 5:18, is decided by the "all mankind" into whom death passed through as a result of Adam's sin (Rom.5:12). Christ alone is excepted. Therefore, it is Adam and all his descendants who are in view, in both clauses, in Romans 5:18, in the words "all mankind."

The author observes, concerning various verses in 1 Corinthians 15 which are in near proximity to verse 22, "that [according to these texts] it is those who are in Christ or belong to Christ who are raised." He then says (p.58), "Surely, then, we must conclude that when [the apostle Paul] says, '. . . in Christ all will be made alive' he means that it is those who belong to Christ's *race*—that is, those 'in Christ'—who will be resurrected."

But what kind of logic is this? Will not *all* who are in the tombs be resurrected (John 5:28,29)? When the thousand years are past, will not the rest of the dead be roused (Rev.20:5)? Besides, since no doubt the author would not actually claim that only a few will even be so much as resurrected at all, it is confusing to speak as if he were defending such a proposition. In any case, the question is not whether all will be *resurrected* (at some point, for some purpose), but whether, ultimately, all will be *vivified.* This is because while resurrection may or may not include vivification, vivification, in the nature of the case, entails resurrection, while at the same time transcending it.

The author wishes to suggest (pp. 57, 58) that since in various statements in proximity to verse 22 which are doubtlessly *somehow* related to it, only those who are presently God's people are in view, it follows that in the extended passage at issue (verses 22-28), only God's people as well

are in view. The author is an intelligent man, and, we suppose, is rarely guilty of such fallacious assertions in everyday life. Were it not that he is under the sway of orthodoxy, no doubt he would not make such irrational claims.

On page 57, Mr. Fernando goes on to say that it is "those in Christ, unlike unbelievers, [who alone] will experience the resurrection." Here he wrongly employs the words, scriptural in themselves, "the resurrection," as a denominative, as if their reference here were to eternal life as opposed to eternal Hell. He then asks us to see verses 19, 31, 32 and 58 as proof of the validity of his claim that only those who die in faith will be saved. None of these verses, however, support his claim. He reasons as if it follows that since neither passage A, B, or C address a certain subject, neither does passage D consider that subject.

Also on page 57, Mr. Fernando claims still further that in these passages at issue (Romans 5:18,19; 1 Corinthians 15:22-28), "Paul is talking about two *races* of humans. The first is Adam's race. It includes all those who sin and are thus under condemnation. The second is Christ's race. They are the people who are 'in Christ'—that is, those who through faith have received salvation."

This claim about "two races" is merely, by way of diversion, step one in an attempt to justify the claim that the all who are dying in Adam are not the same all who will be made alive in Christ. It is a standard claim of church antiquity, which Mr. Fernando by no means introduces but simply rehearses. But if "group A" *were* a different company than "group B," it would hardly need to be proved that those comprised in the second "all" were a different "all" than the first "all." This, however, is what is at issue. Such a claim is to be proved, not merely pleaded for through circular reasoning, by means of some artful subterfuge about a plurality of "races."

WHAT IS ACHIEVED IN CHRIST?

For the reasons I have rehearsed earlier in this exposition, we may be certain that the only "race" in view in these texts is the human race. In both passages (Romans 5:18,19; 1 Corinthians 15:21,22), and in each case, both in that which comes to be through Adam and in that which is achieved through Christ, all mankind are affected. The condemnation of death and dying which befall *all mankind* through the disobedience of the one man, Adam, is put in parallel to vivification and life's justifying which God grants to all mankind through the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ. *Even as* the one apportionment, *thus also* the other. One is the work of Adam; the other is the work of Christ. Both Adam and Christ affect all the rest.

In these matters of justification and vivification, which form the heart of true soteriology and eschatology, neither our sins nor our virtues have any place whatever. All is due to Christ. Nonetheless, since orthodoxy, in its Arminian form, cannot abide that salvation is truly in grace and through the unaided work of Christ, and, in its Calvinistic form, cannot believe that Christ, salvifically, died for all, orthodoxy simply has no room for the truth.

Mr. Fernando insists that the "all" who shall be vivified and constituted righteous—in a word, that the "all" who shall be saved—are confined to those who are "in Christ" during this present lifetime. All the rest (which is the vast majority of the human race) will have to burn in "Hell" for all eternity, being subjected to abject misery of unspeakable proportions, without any hope of relief or reclamation. Otherwise, orthodoxy must be wrong—and that can never be!

The author of CRUCIAL QUESTIONS ABOUT HELL, like countless other believers, has simply been given over to a foolish and blasphemous myth. How we thank God that he will not have to believe it "for ever and ever"! In light

of the words of Paul, however, as well as the testimony of history, no doubt only a few such ones will be granted a realization of the truth on this theme during their present lifetime. Though contrary to God's will, good and well pleasing and perfect, such delusion is in accord with what must be (*cf* Rom. 8:26). We may be sure as well that it is in accord with God's wisdom (*cp* 1 Cor.1:31), and that it will yet eventuate in His glory (*cf* Rom.11:36).

"Our Saviour, God . . . wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and humanity, a Human, Christ Jesus, Who is giving Himself a Correspondent Ransom for all (the testimony in its own eras)" (1 Tim.2:3-6).

It is in accordance with this foundational revelation of the evangel that Paul was "appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the nations in knowledge and truth" (1 Tim.3:7).

In summary, ". . . *not as* through one act of sinning is *the gratuity.* For indeed the judgment is out of *one* into condemnation, yet *the grace* is out of *many* offenses into *a righteous outcome*" (Rom.5:17). Instead of simply "cancelling out" the condemnation that resulted through Adam's one act of sinning, rather, the saving grace of God in Christ produces a righteous outcome: *the justification and vivificaton of all human beings.*

Let us not expect others to understand, much less accept, our teaching. We may be happily surprised when a few of them do so, but let us not expect this to occur. May we ourselves, however, clearly understand why we believe what we believe; and let us be certain that our reasons for our faith are sound and conclusive.

Let us rejoice that those who presently oppose, one day will believe the truth. We may be sure that they will do so, for He Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (Eph.1:11; 1 Tim.2:4). J.R.C.

INDEX TO VOLUME 109

Apprehending the Word that God Declares 71
Creation and Disruption 115
Death of All in the Death of Christ, The 39
Disposition which must be, The 79
Epistle for the Heart, An 5
God's Evangel of Righteousness 57
Grace and Obedience 87
Holy Spirit of God, The 128
In Accord with the Scriptures 31
Kingdom in the "Old Testament", The 149
Kingdom of God and Kingdom of the Heavens, The 186
Life and Peace 111
Myth of Free Will, The 133
Obituaries: T. Hough, 48; K. Jones 48
Paul to the Corinthians (II) 12
Reign, Resurrection and Revelation 147
Romans 3:21-26 51
Romans 7:21-8:8 100
Spirit and the Mind 101
True Spirituality 169
Wisdom are We Speaking Among the Mature 179
Word in Due Season, A 177

REPOSING IN EXPECTATION

We did not know **Frances Stewart** of Butler, Tennessee, personally, and learned of her recent death only by means of the postal return of the latest issue of *Unsearchable Riches.* But we came to know something of her heart through her letters and generosity (despite clear poverty as the world deems riches), which always directed our hearts with thanksgiving to God.

We had more personal acquaintance with **Robert ("Bob") Todd,** (living most recently in Richmond, Indiana, but formerly in southern California), who was put to repose on February 18, at age 87. Following in the footsteps of his late father, Harry Todd, and aunt, Grace Todd, he spoke boldly to others and wrote with enthusiasm about God as the God of love, Who is the Saviour of all mankind.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 109th Year

(1909–2018)

Contents:

2 God's Aching Heart
3 Editorial
5 An Epistle for the Heart
12 Paul to the Corinthians (II)
31 In Accord with the Scriptures
39 The Death of All
in the Death of Christ

FIRST QUARTER, 2018

Volume 109 **Number 1**

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Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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For God and His
Word

VOLUME 109

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and
James R. Coram

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GOD'S ACHING HEART

O God, our Father, we look to You,
And Him Who died on the cursed tree,
Steadfast in faith and honor true,
He kept Your word obediently.

For eons long You looked with dread,
Till the fulness of time had come,
Your Son of love in tomb laid dead,
The world about in woe struck dumb.

He did all You had bid Him do,
The Son of Your heartfelt delight,
But oh the loss it meant to You,
Your Son made sin in day turned night.

Your perfect Son, so marred, so bent,
The sun itself refused to shine,
The earthquake shook, the curtain rent,
And tombs were opened as a sign.

He died, but now alive again,
You roused Him from the silent tomb;
He did it all for mortal men,
To save from sin and death's dark gloom.

Tony Nungesser

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2018
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED NINE

EDITORIAL

We have been presenting revisions of Paul's four "Preparatory Epistles" (Romans through Galatians) in recent issues of *Unsearchable Riches,* and conclude here with 2 Corinthians. Often neglected, yet rich for what it says about God's grace and Christ's love, especially in chapters 3-5, and the way it can affect our lives, it is, as A. E. Knoch puts it, "An epistle for the Heart" (see pages 5-11).

Throughout his ministry, Brother Knoch gave much attention to the subject of the *conciliation,* as it is developed in 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. He writes concerning the present administration that the keynote is: "Not the sinner conciliating God by penance or prayers, but God conciliating the sinner . . . . God insists on being at peace with the world, no matter how they treated His Son, or Paul, or any of His ambassadors . . . . What a marvelous token of His grace and love that *God* (not the sinner) does the beseeching now!" (see pages 9 and 10). This is the principal theme of Brother Knoch's book, The Mystery of the Gospel, available from our office.

It was early on in his preparation of the first edition of the Concordant Version (Greek Scriptures, 1926) that A. E. Knoch became convinced that the phrase, "faith of Jesus Christ," in Romans 3:22, is a reference to the evangel of Christ's death for sinners and resurrection. God's righteousness is made manifest through Jesus Christ's faith. To translate this phrase as though it spoke of the believer's faith *in* Christ Jesus is not only contrary to "concordant principles," but misleading and harmful to our faith.

Through the years this theme of the faith of Christ has been carried forward in various articles published in this magazine. But recently, these have multiplied, as the subject of Christ's own personal faith has become recognized by many others outside of our own small circle, and we ourselves have grown in appreciation of its importance and centrality to the Scriptures as a whole. Justification is achieved through the faith of Jesus Christ in obedience to the death of the cross. It is reckoned to those who are believing this evangel (Rom.4:23-25), but it is based entirely on Christ's faith and faithfulness in dying for sinners.

Now while working on a revision of the CLNT we have come to see how many other passages, especially in Romans and Galatians, carry this reference to the evangel forward simply by the words "the faith" or even the word "faith" alone. And this has affected our translation as we have previously noted, regarding, for example, Romans 3:25. Further, in connection to this, and without changing the CV rendering, Paul's use of Psalm 116:10a in 2 Corinthians 4:13 can be readily appreciated for our edification as a reference to Christ's "spirit of faith," the same spirit given to the believer as an earnest (see pages 31-38).

That we see the evangel dispensed by Paul as a message concerning what God has done through His Son, rather than instruction about what we must do is fundamental to our walk and spiritual growth. It is a message entirely of grace. Yet this grace is not fully grasped unless we see that what God achieves through Christ encompasses all humanity, for all are sinners. This is an important point made in Paul's presentation of the evangel in 2 Corinthians 5:14,15, a powerful passage for any believer's careful attention. My own thoughts on the passage, especially as it relates to "all" is reprinted in this issue, starting on page 39.

D.H.H.

AN EPISTLE FOR THE HEART

SECOND CORINTHIANS is an epistle for the heart. It engages us with the fond solicitude which stirs the affections of the apostle for his much loved Corinth. It was written because he wished to spare them and dreaded the severity which his presence might demand.

This loving epistle reveals an aspect of the evangel which is well-nigh lost. This is the conciliation. God is love. He will not rest satisfied in merely justifying us. He wishes to clasp us to His heart. To restore His creatures to righteousness may indeed erase the stain of sin, but offers no valid reason or excuse for sin's intrusion into the universe. But if the entrance of sin is to bear the precious fruit of reconciliation, if it is to bring us infinitely nearer to God than is possible without it, if it is the means of revealing God's love to us, then may we give thanks even for the sin which is the source of our sorrows. Sin made man not only a sinner, but an enemy of God. It brought in estrangement. The mediation of Christ not only saves and justifies, but removes every barrier for the free outflow of God's love. God now condescends to beseech the sinner to be conciliated to Him. What can be more gracious than this?

Such is the aspect of the truth in this epistle. More than anything else he has written, this reveals the personal experiences and inward emotions of Paul during one of the most fruitful periods of his ministry. Instead of the smiling, complacent, comfortable existence which is usually supposed to be the ideal of Christianity, we find him full

of fears within, distracted with fightings without, restless, sick, and despondent. Yet all of this was in perfect accord with his fervent love for the saints and his vehement desire to lead them on into an appreciation of God's love. The consolation and comfort he received in his afflictions fitted him to console and comfort others. It reveals God in the light of His affections.

One short verse in the book of Acts (Acts 20:2) hurries us over the whole period referred to in this epistle. This alone should suggest the total divergence of their respective themes. Acts deals with Christ after the flesh, as the Messiah of Israel, and always gives the other nations a place subordinate. At the juncture when this epistle was written Paul first made known the truth of the conciliation, that God, in Christ, is beseeching all men to be reconciled to Him. Physical relationship to Christ no longer counted with Paul after this.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

Paul's afflictions were, in a very real sense, "the sufferings of Christ" (2 Cor.1:5), for they came, not as the result of his misdeeds, but because he proclaimed Christ's evangel. Not long before he had been in danger of death at the hands of a mob in Ephesus. He was suffering from some physical ailment. He was in much suspense about the Corinthians and their reception of his previous epistle. When he finds that they, too, have suffered, though it be for their own wrong doing, he is swift to console them, and sees in his own afflictions the means used by God to prepare him for this ministry. All this should be an object lesson to us to show how sin and suffering is being used by God to bring our hearts into closer union with Himself and with one another. And affliction is the surest means of ridding us of confidence in ourselves and of placing our reliance in God. Suffering for Christ's sake is the highest

honor which can be accorded to mortal man. Just as His sufferings are the basis of the glories that shall follow, so our sufferings for His sake are sure to yield an untold harvest of happiness and exultation when He appears.

GOD'S SPIRIT

The operation of God's Spirit is here seen under three distinct figures: the anointing, the seal, and the earnest (2 Cor.1:21,22). Prophets and priests and kings were anointed for their office. They were anointed with oil. We are anointed with the spirit, as Christ, the Anointed, was at His baptism. This qualifies us for service. The seal is the sign of possession. We belong to God. The earnest is that small instalment of the spirit which we have received, which is the pledge of its fullness in the day of deliverance.

FROM GLORY TO GLORY

The account of Moses' reception, after his forty-day session on Sinai, is found in Exodus 34:28-35 (*cp* 2 Cor.3:7-16). It is evident that they saw Moses' face even though they could not look intently at it. Moses did not hide the glory from them. He did not put the covering on his face *till* he had done speaking with them, but *when* he had finished (Ex.34:33). Later he put it on again "*until* he entered to speak with Him" (v.34). He hid the *nullifying* (2 Cor.3:7) of the glory, which indicated the transient, fading character of the law. As Paul says (2 Cor.3:13), it was done so that the sons of Israel should not observe the *consummation* of that which is being nullified. Now, instead of a covering on Moses' face, there is one on Jewish hearts, which hides from them the true character of the covenant of Sinai. It had a glory once, but it has long since been eclipsed in Christ. This they will not discover until they turn back to the Lord.

A bright torch, which will illuminate the night, becomes

black when held up to the noonday sun. So the law, a bright exhibition of the righteous character of God, turns to blackness before the transcendent effulgence of grace which is now revealed. It had a glory but lost it all by contrast to the glory excelling. Since, then, the law's glory is darkened by a greater glory, how much greater must be the glory of this administration of grace!

The ancient mirror was a burnished metal surface which reflected the light as well as the image of the one who used it. Paul did not climb the steeps of Sinai and bring back a transient reflection of the Lord's glory, as Moses did. He beheld Him continually, as we behold our faces in a mirror. The glory of the Lord irradiated him. It did not fade, but became brighter and brighter. Contemplation of the Lord led to likeness to Him. This is a beautiful epitome of Paul's ministries. He began with grace on the road to Damascus. He dispenses justification at Pisidian Antioch. He reveals the conciliation to the Corinthians. He teaches the truth transcendent from his Roman prison. Grace upon grace and glory upon glory! (2 Cor.3:17,18).

THE IMAGE OF GOD

Few subjects for meditation will be found so full of blessing as that of the Image of God (2 Cor.4:4; Col.1:15). John presents Him to us as the Word of God, through Whom we *hear* Him; Paul shows us the One in Whom we can *see* God. God Himself cannot be seen, for He is invisible. Hence it is that He has given us an Image of Himself which we can discern. And just as we give the picture or statue of a person the same place in our minds and in our speech as the person himself, so Christ is seen in the Scriptures, addressed as God as if equal to God. Unlike the inflexible image of a lifeless photograph, He is instinct with the life of God, and changes to accord with the divine assumptions (Heb.1:3).

THE EVANGEL OF THE GLORY OF CHRIST

"The evangel of the glory of Christ!" (2 Cor.4:4). Would that our evangelism reached to this altitude! And why are Christ's glories so lacking in the gospel efforts of today? Because the god of this eon not only blinds the minds of the unbelievers, but he centers the gospel on sin and self and sanitation—anything except Christ and His glories.

MOMENTARY AFFLICTIONS

How shall we characterize *our* trials if Paul's were only momentary and light (2 Cor.4:17)? At times he even despaired of life. Just before this he had been crying to God to remove the splinter in the flesh. But what is all this to him in view of the transcendent revelations of the future of which he had become the depository and dispenser? *We* would speak of our *present* burdens and of the *lightness* of our load in the resurrection, but he reverses this. The glory of that day would be an unbearable burden to our present bodies. Our burdens are light indeed in view of that transcendent outcome.

THE WORD OF THE CONCILIATION

"All is of God!" This is the key to real evangelism. Here we have, in brief, the heart of the true evangel for the world in this administration of grace. The keynote is *conciliation.* Not the sinner conciliating God by penance or prayers, but God conciliating the sinner. The sinner may be most offensive and insulting, but God does not reckon these offenses against him. Let this be clear. God is not charging men with sins, for Christ died for sins. He is not pressing their offenses, for He is bent on conciliation. The evangel is not concerned with the sinner at all, but with God's attitude toward him and with the sufferings of Christ. He has placed in us, not the message of judgment, but the word of conciliation.

BE CONCILIATED TO GOD

God insists on being at peace with the world, no matter how they treated His Son, or Paul, or any of His ambassadors. He will withdraw us, His ambassadors, before He declares war. What a marvelous token of His grace and love that *God* (not the sinner) does the beseeching now!

We are ambassadors for the high court of heaven, proclaiming peace and conciliation. When the sinner receives the conciliation there is mutual reconciliation between him and God. Sinner, God is beseeching you, through us, "Be conciliated to God!" (2 Cor.5:20). Your sins are no hindrance, for He has made Christ a Sin Offering for our sakes that we may become God's righteousness in Him. There is nothing for you to do but to accept His proffered love. Simply thank and adore Him for His grace.

THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE

By a bold figure of speech Paul likens his spiritual warfare to the pulling down of the forts of the enemy, and leading all opposition into captivity (2 Cor.10:3-6). The most powerful weapons are not material but spiritual. Neither are place and prestige as potent as truth.

The unspiritual fleshly minded man looks only on the surface. But nowhere are appearances so deceiving as in things spiritual. Our Lord Himself had none of the superficial marks of greatness. Paul seems to have been especially deficient in those qualities which were demanded from those who aspired to leadership in the world. His public speaking seems to have been the special point on which his enemies attacked him. Greek orators were probably the most accomplished the world has ever seen. By comparison Paul's presence was weak and his delivery contemptible. But what has become of all those masters of forensic art? They are dead, and their efforts have died with them.

The few that remain are models of beauty but are devoid of all spiritual power. Paul's words transformed his hearers, not by his mode of delivery, but by their truth and potency.

SUFFICIENT IS GOD'S GRACE

Who would not be elated beyond measure at such revelations as had been confided to Paul (2 Cor.12:7)? But he had good reason to refrain from boasting. A painful physical infirmity was given him to keep him humble. A *thorn* in the flesh is hardly adequate, a *splinter* is nearer, but still too weak an expression, for Paul would not entreat thrice for the removal of some minor distress. But it was not removed.

Instead, he received grace and the assurance that God's power finds infirmity its fittest tool. He needs none of man's strength. It hinders the manifestation of His power.

O, that we could learn this lesson! We repine and are dejected when infirmity and persecution and necessity press upon us, when we should rejoice. Paul delighted in them, not for their own sake, but that the power of Christ may be manifested through them. May His grace be our sole sufficiency!

TOKENS OF AFFECTION

The epistle closes with characteristic tokens of affection (2 Cor.13:11-14). Throughout the appeal is to the feelings. This is especially true of the evangel and its proclamation. God on His part *beseeches* the sinner to be *conciliated.* The saint is *reconciled.* He is not merely righteous, but at perfect peace with God.

This is the fruit of the evangel which is so delicious to God's heart and to ours. Let us not fail to appreciate the marvelous affection of His message!

A. E. Knoch

PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS (II)

1 Paul, an **apostle of Christ Jesus, through God's will, and** ·**brother Timothy, to the ecclesia of** ·**God** ·which [l]**is in Corinth, together** with **all the saints** ·who [l]**are in the whole** of **Achaia:**

[2] **Grace to** [=]**you and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ.**

[3] **Blessed** is **the God and Father of our** ·**Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of** ·**pities and God of** [e]**all consolation,** [4] ·Who is **consoling us** [on]**in our every** ·**affliction** [io] ·**to** [l]en**able**[°] **us to be consoling** ·those **in every affliction, through the consolation** with **which we** [s]**our**selves **are being consoled**[°] **by** ·**God,** [5] seeing **that, accord**ing **as the sufferings of** ·**Christ are superabounding** [io]**in us, thus through** ·**Christ our** ·**consolation also is superabounding.**

[6] [y]**Now whether we are being afflicted**[°] [ov]**for** [=]**your** ·**consolation and salvation,** or **whether we are being consoled**[°] [ov]**for** [=]**your** ·**consolation,** ·which is **operating**[°] **in** the **endurance of the same sufferings which we**´ **also are suffering,** [7] **our** ·**expectation also** is **confirmed over** [=]**you, being** [°]**aware that, as** [=]**you** [l]**are participants of the sufferings, thus of the consolation also.**

[8] **For we** do **not** [l]**want** [=]**you to be** [l]**ignorant, brethren, concerning our** ·**affliction** ·which [b]**comes**[°] **to us in the** province of **Asia, that we are** [ac] **inordinate**ly **burdened over** our **ability, so that we despair of** [l]**life also.** [9] **But** [s]**we**´ [°]**have the sentence of** ·**death in ourselves, that we may be having no confidence** [on]**in ourselves, but** [on]**in** ·**God,** ·Who [l]**rouses**

the dead ones**,** [10] **Who rescues**[°] **us** [o]**from** a **death of such proportions, and will be rescuing**[°]**;** [io]**on Whom we** [°]**rely that He will still be rescuing**[°] **also;** [11] [=]**you also assisting together** by a ·**petition** [ov]**for us,** in order **that,** [o]**from many faces He may be thanked** [th]**by many** [ov]**for us** for **the gracious** gift given [io]**to us.**

[12] **For our** ·**boasting** [l]**is this, the testimony of our** ·**conscience: that in holiness and sincerity of** ·**God, not in fleshly wisdom, but in** the **grace of God, we behave** ourselves **in the world, yet more superabundantly toward** [=]**you.** [13] **For no**[t] **other** things **are we writing to** [=]**you** [bt] **than what** [=]**you are reading or recognizing also.** [y]**Now I am expecting that** [=]**you will** [l]**recognize**[°] **ultimately,** [14] **accord**ing **as** [=]**you also recognize us** [f]**in part,** [f]**for we** [l]**are** [=]**your glory**ing **(even as** [=]**you also** are **ours) in the day of our** ·**Lord Jesus.**

[15] **And** in **this** ·**confidence I** [l]**intended**[°] **former**ly **to come to**[d] [=]**you, that** [=]**you should have** a **second grace,** [16] **and through** [=]**you to pass through into Macedonia, and to come again from Macedonia to**[d] [=]**you, and by** [=]**you to be sent forward into** ·**Judea.** [17] **Intending**[°] **this then, consequently** do **I** [na] **use**[°] ·**lightness? Or what I am planning**[°]**, am I planning**[°] **accord**ing to the **flesh, that it may** [l]**be** [b]**with me: "'Yes, yes," and: "'No**[t]**, no**[t]**'"?**

[18] [y]**Now** ·**God** is **faithful,** [t]**for our** ·**word** ·**toward** [=]**you** [l]**is not: "Yes" and "No**[t]**,"** [19] **for the Son of** ·**God, Jesus Christ,** ·Who is **heralded among** [=]**you through us—through me and Silvanus and Timothy—becomes**[°] **not "Yes" and "No**[t]**," but in Him has become "Yes."** [20] **For whatever promises** are **of God,** are **in Him "'Yes." Wherefore through Him also** is **the "Amen" to** ·**God,** [td]**for glory, through us.** [21] [y]**Now** He ·Who is **confirming us together** with [=]**you** [io]**in Christ and anoints us** is **God,** [22] ·Who **also seals**[°] **us and gives the earnest of the spirit in our** ·**hearts.**

[23] [y]**Now I**´ **am invoking**[°] ·**God** as a **witness on** ·**my soul, that** to [l]**spare**[°] [=]**you, I come no**[t] **longer** [io]**to Corinth.** [24] **Not**

that we are lording it over =**your** ·**faith, but** |**are fellow workers of** =**your** ·**joy, for** =**you** °**stand** fast in **the faith.**
2 **Yet I decide this** with **myself, not again** ·**to come to**[d] =**you in sorrow.** 2 **For if I´ am** mak**ing** =**you sorry,** [a]**who also is** ·**gladdening me, except** he ·who is made |**sorry**° [o]**by me?** 3 **And I write this same** thing **to** =**you, lest** ¯**coming I may have sorrow from** those on **whom it was binding to be** caus**ing me** to |**rejoice; having confidence** [on]**in** =**you all,** [t]**for my** ·**joy** |**is** that **of** =**you all.** 4 **For out of much affliction and pressure of heart I write to** =**you, through many tears, not that** =**you may be** made **sorrow**ful, **but that** =**you may know the love which I** |**have** [io]**for** =**you more superabundantly.**
5 [y]**Now if any**one **has** caus**ed sorrow, he has not** made **me sorry, but** [f]**in part (lest I may be burdening)** =**you all.** 6 **Enough to** ·**such** is **this** ·**rebuke,** ·which is **by the majority.** 7 **So that, on the contrary,** =**you** are **rather to** deal **grac**iously° **and console, lest** some**how** ·**such may be swallowed** up by **the more excessive sorrow.** 8 **Wherefore I am entreating** =**you to ratify** your **love** [io]**to him.**
9 **For I write also** [io]**for this, that I may know** =**your** ·**testedness, if** =**you** |**are obedient** [io]**in all** things. 10 [y]**Now** with **whom** =**you are** deal**ing grac**iously° in **any**thing, **I also. For** in **what I´ also have** deal**t grac**iously° **(if I have** deal**t grac**iously° in **any**thing), it is **because** of =**you in** the **face of Christ,** 11 **lest we may be overreached by** ·**Satan, for we are not** |**ignorant of the** things **he apprehends.**
12 [y]**Now** on ¯**coming** [io]**to** ·**Troas** [io]**for the evangel of** ·**Christ, and** a **door being** °**open**° for **me in** the **Lord,** 13 **I** °**have no**[t] **ease** in **my** ·**spirit** at **my no**t ·**find**ing **Titus, my** ·**brother, but** ¯**taking leave**° of **them, I come away into Macedonia.**
14 [y]**Now thank**s be **to** ·**God,** ·Who **always** give**s us** a |**triumph in** ·**Christ, and** is **manifesting the odor of His** ·**knowledge through us in every place,** 15 [t]**for we** |**are** a **fragrance of Christ to** ·**God, among** ·those who are **being saved**° **and**

among ·those who are **perishing**°**:** 16 **to** [w]**these indeed** an **odor** [o] **of death** [io]**for death, yet to** [w]**those** an **odor** [o] **of life** [io]**for life. And** [td]**for** =**this** [a]**who** is **competent?** 17 **For we** |**are not as the majority,** who are **peddling the word of** ·**God, but as** [o] **of sincerity, but as** [o] **of God, in** the **sight of** ·**God in Christ are we speaking.**
3 **Are we beginning**° **again to** |**commend ourselves? Or** [no] do **we** |**need, even as** [a]**some, commendatory letters to**[d] =**you or** [o]**from** =**you?** 2 =**You´** |**are our** ·**letter,** °**engraven**° **in our** ·**hearts,** |**known**° **and** |**read**° **by all** [h]**people,** 3 [t]**for** =**you** |**are manifesting**° a **letter of Christ, dispensed by us, and** °**engraven**°**, not** with **ink, but** with the **spirit of** the **living God, not** [i]**on stone tablets, but** [i]**on** the **fleshly tablets** of the =**heart.** 4 [y]**Now such** is the **confidence we** |**have through** ·**Christ toward** ·**God** 5 **(not that we** |**are competent** [f]**of ourselves, to reckon**° **any**thing **as** [o] **of ourselves, but our** ·**competency** is [o] **of** ·**God),** 6 **Who also** make**s us competent dispensers of** a **new covenant, not of** the **letter, but of** the **spirit, for the letter is killing, yet the spirit is vivifying.**
7 **(**[y]**Now if the dispensation of** ·**death,** [i]**by letters** °**chiseled**° **in** =**stone,** [b]**comes in glory, so that the sons** of **Israel** are **no**t |**able**° **to look intently into the face of Moses, because** of **the glory of his** ·**face,** ·which is **being nullified**°**,** 8 **how shall not rather the dispensation of the spirit** |**be in glory?** 9 **For if** in **the dispensation of** ·**condemnation** is **glory, much rather the dispensation of** ·**righteousness is exceeding in glory.** 10 **For** ·that **also** which |**has been glorified**° **has not been glorified**° **in this** ·**par**ticular, **on account of the glory** |**transcend**ent. 11 **For if** ·that which is **being nullified**° is nullified **through glory, much rather** ·that which is **remaining,** remains **in glory.**
12 **Having then such** an **expectation, we are using**° **much boldness,** 13 **and** are **not even as Moses. He** |**placed** a **covering** [on]**over his** ·**face,** [td]**so** that **the sons** of **Israel** were **no**t ·**to look intently** [io]**to the consummation of** ·that which is

being nullified°. 14 But their ˙apprehensions are calloused, for until ˙this **very day the same covering is remaining** *on*__at the reading of the old covenant, not being uncovered°, *t*__**for** only **in Christ is it being nullified°. 15 But till today, if ever** the **reading°** of **Moses should** be **reach**ed, a **covering is lying on their ˙heart. 16 Yet if ever it should reach** a **turn**ing **back to***d* the **Lord, the covering is ˡtaken° from about** it.)

17 *y*__**Now the Lord ˡis the spirit; yet where the spirit of** the **Lord** is, there is **freedom. 18** *y*__**Now we´ all,** with **˚uncovered° face, mirroring° the Lord's glory, are being transformed°** into **the same image, from glory** *io*__**to glory, even as from** the **Lord,** the **spirit.**

4 Therefore, having this ˙dispensation, according **as we are** shown **mercy, we are not ˡdespondent. 2 But we spurn° the hidden** things **of ˙shame, not walking in craftiness, nor yet adulterating the word of ˙God, but** by **˙manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to***d* **every human** being's **conscience in ˙God's sight.**

3 *y*__**Now if also our ˙evangel ˡis ˚covered°, it ˡis ˚covered° in** ˙those who are **perishing°, 4 in whom the god of this ˙eon blinds the apprehensions of the unbelieving** *io*__**so** that **the illumination of the evangel of the glory of ˙Christ, Who is** the **Image of the invisible ˙God,** does **not ˙irradiate** them. **5 For we are not heralding ourselves, but Christ Jesus** the **Lord, yet ourselves ⁼your slaves because** of **Jesus, 6** *t*__**for the God** ˙Who **says** that, **out of darkness light shall be shining,***Gn 1:3* is He **Who shines in our ˙hearts,** with a view **to***d* the **illumination of the knowledge of the glory of ˙God in** the **face of Jesus Christ.**

7 *y*__**Now we ˡhave this ˙treasure in earthen vessels, that the transcendence of the power may ˡbe of ˙God and not** *o*__**of us. 8 In every**thing, **being afflicted°, but not ˡdistressed°; ˡperplexed°, but not despairing°; 9 ˡpersecuted°, but not ˡforsaken°; ˡknocked down°, but not perishing°—**

10 always carrying about in the body the deadening of Jesus, that the life also of ˙Jesus may be manifested in our ˙body. 11 For we´ ˙who are **living are ever being given° up** *io*__**to death because** of **Jesus, that the life also of ˙Jesus may be manifested in our mortal ˙flesh. 12 So that ˙death is operating° in us, yet ˙life in ⁼you.**

13 *y*__**Now** we **having the same spirit of ˙faith,** in **accord** with ˙what is **˚written°, "I believe, wherefore I speak also,"***Ps 116:10* **we´ also are believing, wherefore we are speaking also, 14 being ˚aware that** He ˙Who **rouses the Lord Jesus will be rousing us also, through Jesus, and will be presenting** us **together** with **⁼you. 15 For ˙all** is **because** of **⁼you, that the grace, ⁻increasing through the majority, should superabound** in **˙thanks**giv**ing** *io*__**to the glory of ˙God.**

16 **Wherefore we are not ˡdespondent, but ⁺even if our ˙out**ward **human is decaying°,** *bt*__**nevertheless** ˙that **within us is being renewed° day ⁺by day. 17 For the momentary light**ness **of our ˙affliction is producing°** for **us** a *ac*__**tran-scendent**ly *io*__**transcendent eonian burden of glory, 18** at **our not noting** ˙what is **being observed°, but** ˙what is **not being observed°, for** ˙what is **being observed°** is **temporary, yet** ˙what is **not being observed°** is **eonian.**

5 For we are ˚aware that if our ˙terrestrial ˙tabernacle house should be demolished, we ˡhave a **building** *o*__**of God,** a **house not made** by **hand**s, **eonian, in the heavens. 2 For in this also we are groaning, longing to be dressed°** in **our ˙habitation** ˙which is **out of heaven, 3 if so be that, ⁻being dressed° also, we shall not be ˡfound naked. 4 For we also,** ˙who **ˡare in the tabernacle, are groaning, being burdened°, on which we are not wanting to be stripped°, but to be dressed°, that the mortal may be swallowed** up **by ˙life. 5** *y*__**Now** He ˙Who **produces° us** *io*__**for this same** long-ing is **God,** ˙Who is **also ⁻giving us the earnest of the spirit.**

6 Be**ing then courage**ous **always, and ˚aware that, being at home in the body, we are ˡaway from home from the**

Lord 7 **(for** *th* **by faith are we walking, not** *th* **by perception),**
8 **yet we are** ˡen**courage**d, **and are delighting rather to be away from home out of the body and to be at home** *td* **with the Lord.** 9 **Wherefore we are** ˡ**ambitious**° **also, whether at** ˡ**home or away from** ˡ**home, to be well pleasing to Him.**

10 **For** ˙**all** of **us** ˡ**must be manifested in front of the dais of** ˙**Christ, that each should be requited**° *td* **for** ˙that **which he** puts into **practice through the body, whether good or bad.**

11 **Being** °**aware then** of **the fear of the Lord, we are persuading human** beings**, yet we are** °**manifest**° **to God.** *y* **Now I am expecting to be** °**manifest**° **in** ⁼**your** ˙**consciences also.**

12 **Not again are we commending ourselves to** ⁼**you, but** are **giving** an **incentive to** ⁼**you** by **boast**ing **over** ⁼**you, that** ⁼**you may** ˡ**have** it *td* **for** ˙those who are **boasting**° **in personal** appearance **and not in heart.** 13 **For whether we are beside ourselves,** it is **to God, whether we are** ˡ**sane,** it is **to** ⁼**you.**
14 **For the love of** ˙**Christ is constraining us,** ⁻**judging this, that if One dies** *ov* **for** the sake **of all, consequently** ˙**all die.**
15 **And He dies** *ov* **for** the sake **of all that** ˙those who are **living should by no means still be living to themselves, but to the** One Who **dies and** is **roused** *ov* **for their** sakes.

16 **So that we´, from** ˙**now** on, **are** °**acquainted** with **no**ᵗ **one accord**ing to **flesh. Yet** ⁺**even if we have known Christ accord**ing to **flesh,** *bt* **nevertheless now we** ˡ**know** Him so **no**ᵗ **longer.** 17 **So that, if any**one is **in Christ,** there is a **new creation: the** ⁼**primitive** ⁻**passed by.** *p* **Look**°**!** there **has** *b* **come** ⁼**new!**

18 **Yet** ˙**all** is *o* **of** ˙**God,** ˙Who **conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and** Who **gives us the dispensation of the conciliation,** 19 **how that God** ˡ**was, in Christ, conciliating** the **world to Himself, not reckoning**° **their** ˙**offenses to them, and** Who **places**° **in us the word of the conciliation.**

20 *ov* **For Christ then are we** ˡ**ambassadors, as of** ˙**God entreating through us. We are beseeching**° *ov* **for Christ's**

sake**, "Be conciliated to** ˙**God!"** 21 **For the** One **not** ⁻**knowing sin, He makes** to be **sin** *ov* **for our** sakes **that we´ may become**° **God's righteousness in Him.**

6 *y* **Now, working together, we are also entreating** ⁼**you not to receive**° **the grace of** ˙**God** *io* **for naught.** 2 **For He is saying,**

> In a **season acceptable I reply** to **you,**
> **And in** a **day of salvation I help you.** *Is 49:8*

p **Look**°**! Now** is a **most acceptable era!** *p* **Look**°**! Now** is a **day of salvation!**

3 We are **giving no one cause to stumble in** *n* **any**thing, **lest flaws be** found with **the service,** 4 **but in every**thing we are **commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,** 5 **in blows, in jails, in turbulences, in** ⁼**toil, in vigils, in fasts,**
6 **in pureness, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in holy spirit, in love unfeigned,** 7 **in** the **word of truth, in** the **power of God, through the implements of** ˙**righteousness of the right** hand **and of** the **left,** 8 **through glory and dishonor, through defamation and renown, as deceivers and true,** 9 **as** ˡ**unknown**° **and** ˡ**recognized**°**, as dying, and** *p* **look**°**! we are living, as** ˡ**disciplined**° **and not** put to ˡ**death**°**,** 10 **as sorrowing**°**, yet ever rejoicing, as poor, yet enriching many, as having nothing and retaining all.**

11 **Our** ˙**mouth is** °**open toward** ⁼**you, Corinthians: Has** ⁼**your** ˙**heart** °**broadened**°**?** 12 **Not** ˡ**distressed**° **are** ⁼**you in us, yet** ⁼**you are** ˡ**distressed**° **in** ⁼**your** ˙**compassions.** 13 *y* **Now** as a **recompense** in *s* **kind (as to children am I saying** this**),** ⁼**you´ also be broadened!**

14 Do **not** ˡ**become**° **diversely** ˡ**yoked** with **unbelievers. For** *a* **what partnership** have **righteousness and lawlessness?** 15 **Or** *a* **what communion** has **light** *td* **with darkness?** *y* **Now** *a* **what agreement** has **Christ** *td* **with Belial? Or** *a* **what part** a **believer with** an **unbeliever?** 16 *y* **Now** *a* **what concur-**

rence has a **temple of God with idols? For** =**you´** l**are** the **temple of** the **living God, accord**ing **as** ·**God says, that: I will be** mak**ing** My **home** *i* **and will be walking** *i* **in them, and I will be their God, and they´ shall be My people.** *Lv 26:11,12; Jr 24:7* 17 **Wherefore, Come** *o* **out of their midst and be severed,** the **Lord is saying. And** l**touch**° **no**t the **unclean, and I´ will** l**admit**° =**you,** *Is 52:11,12* 18 **and I will** l**be** *io***like** a **Father to** =**you, and** =**you´ shall** l**be** *io***like sons and daughters to Me,** the **Lord Almighty is saying.** *2 Sam 7:8,14*

7 Having then these ·**promises, beloved, we should cleanse ourselves from every pollution of flesh and spirit, completing holiness in** the **fear of God.**

2 Make **room** for **us. We injure no***t* **one; we corrupt no***t* **one; we overreach no***t* **one.** 3 **I am not saying** this with a view **to***d* **condemnation, for I have declared before that** =**you are in our** ·**hearts** *io* ·**to die together and to be living together.** 4 **Much** is **my boldness toward** =**you; much** is **my boasting over** =**you. I am** °**filled**° **full** with ·**consolation, I am superexceeding**° **in** ·**joy** *on***in** *e***all our** ·**affliction.** 5 **For** +**even** at **our** ¯**coming into Macedonia, our** ·**flesh** °**has no***th* **ease, but** we are l**afflicted**° **in every**thing**: outside fightings; inside fears.**

6 **But** ·**God,** ·Who is **consoling the humble, consoles us** *i***by the presence of Titus,** 7 **yet not only** *i***by his** ·**presence, but** *i***by the consolation also** with **which he is consoled** *on***over** =**you, informing us** of =**your** ·**longing,** =**your** ·**anguish,** =**your** ·**zeal** *ov***for my** sake**; so that I rather rejoice** 8 **that** +**even if I** make =**you sorry** *i***by** an ·**epistle, I am not regretting**° it, +**even if I** di**d** l**regret**°**. For I am observing that that** ·**epistle** makes =**you sorry,** +**even if** it is *td***for** an **hour.** 9 **Now I am rejoicing, not that** =**you are** made **sorry, but that** =**you are** made **sorry** *io***to repentance. For** =**you are** made **sorry accord**ing to **God, that in nothing** =**you may** suffer **forfeit** *o***by us.** 10 **For** ·**sorrow accord**ing to **God is producing**° **repentance** *io***for unregretted salvation, yet the sorrow of the world is producing**° **death.**

11 **For** *p***look**°**! this same** thing—for =**you** ·**to be** made **sorry accord**ing to **God—how much it produces**° **in** =**you** of **diligence, but** also **defense, but** also **resentment, but** also **fear, but** also **longing, but** also **zeal, but** also **avenging! In every**thing =**you commend yourselves to** l**be pure** in ·this **matter.** 12 **Consequently,** +**even if I write to** =**you,** it is **not on account of the** one who **injures, but neither on account of the** one **injured, but on account of** ·**manifest**ing **to***d* =**you** =**your** ·**diligence** ·*ov***for our** sake **in** ·**God's sight.**

13 **Therefore we are** °**consoled**°**, yet** *on***in our** ·**consolation we rather are rejoiced more exceedingly** *on***in the joy of Titus,** *t***for his** ·**spirit has been soothed**° *f* **by** =**you all,** 14 *t***for if I have boasted**° **any to him over** =**you, I am not disgraced, but as we speak all in truth to** =**you, thus also our** ·**boasting** ·*on***before Titus comes** to **be truth.** 15 **And his** ·**compassions** *io***for** =**you** l**are superabundantly more, having** a **recollection**° of **the obedience of** =**you all, as with fear and trembling** =**you receive**° **him.** 16 **I am rejoicing that in every**thing **I am** l**encourage**d **in** =**you.**

8 *y***Now we are making known to** =**you, brethren, the grace of** ·**God** ·which l**has been bestowed**° **in the ecclesias of** ·**Macedonia,** 2 *t***for in** a **test of much affliction, the superabundance of their** ·**joy and the** *ac***corresponding depth** of **their poverty superabounds** *io***to the riches of their** ·**generosity,** 3 *t***for accord**ing to their **ability, I am testifying, and** *b***beyond** their **ability,** of their **own accord,** 4 **with much entreaty beseeching of us the grace and the fellowship of the service** ·*io***for the saints;** 5 **and not accord**ing **as we expect, but themselves they give first to the Lord, and to us through God's will.** 6 *io***So** that **we** ·**entreat Titus that, accord**ing **as he undertakes**° **before, thus also should he complete** *io***in** =**you this** ·**grace also.** 7 **But even as** =**you are superabounding in every**thing—in **faith and**

word and knowledge and [e]**all diligence and the love** that flows **out of** =**you in**to **us—that** =**you may be superabounding in this** ·**grace also.** 8 **I am not saying** this [ac]**as** an **injunction, but through the diligence of** [d]**others, testing also the genuine**ness **of** ·this **love of yours.**

9 **For** =**you** |**know the grace of our** ·**Lord Jesus Christ, that being rich, because** of =**you He becomes poor, that** =**you´,** by [f]**His** ·**poverty, should be rich.** 10 **And in this I am giving** an **opinion, for this is** |**expedient** for =**you, who**[a]**,** [f]**for** a **year past, undertake**° **before, not only the do**ing **but the willing also.** 11 **Yet now complete the do**ing **also, so that, even as the eagerness** ·**to** |**will, thus also** may be **the completion out of** ·what you |**have.** 12 **For if** ·**eagerness** |**lies**° **before,** it is **most acceptable accord**ing to **whatever** [if] one **may** |**have, not accord**ing to **what he** |**has not.**

13 **For** it is **not that to others ease, yet to** =**you affliction,** 14 **but** [o]**by** an **equality, in the current occasion,** =**your** ·**superabundance** is [io]**for** [t]**their** ·**want, that** [t]**their** ·**superabundance also may come**° to **be** [io]**for** =**your** ·**want, so that** there **may come**° to **be** an **equality,** 15 **accord**ing **as it is** °**written**°**: the** one with ·**much increases not, and the** one with ·**few lessens not.** *Ex 16:18*

16 [y]**Now thank**s be **to** ·**God,** ·Who **imparts the same diligence** [ov]**for** =**you** [i]**to the heart of Titus,** 17 [t]**for he indeed receives**° **the entreaty, yet** being |**inherent**ly **more diligent,** of his **own accord he comes out to**[d] =**you.** 18 [y]**Now we send together with him the brother whose** ·**applause in the evangel** is **through all the ecclesias,** 19 **yet not only** so, **but** who is **selected also by the ecclesias** to be **our fellow traveler** [tg]**with this** ·**grace** ·which is **being dispensed**° **by us to**[d] **the glory of the Lord** [s]**Him**self; **our eagerness also,** 20 **putting this** so that **no** [a]**one should** find **flaw**s° in **us in this** ·**exuberance** ·which is **being dispensed**° **by us,** 21 **for we are providing** the **ideal, not only in** the **sight of** the **Lord, but in** the **sight of human** being**s also.**

22 [y]**Now we send together** with **them our** ·**brother, whom we test in many** things, **often, being diligent, yet now much more diligent, yet** with **much confidence** ·[io]**in** =**you,** 23 **whether** [ov]**for** the sake **of Titus, my mate and fellow worker** [io]**for** =**you, or our brethren,** the **apostles of** the **ecclesias,** the **glory of Christ.** 24 **Then the display of** =**your** ·**love and our boasting over** =**you** [io]**to them** is **being displayed**° [io]**in** the **face of the ecclesias.**

9 **For indeed, concerning the dispensation** ·[io]**for the saints, it is superfluous** for **me** ·**to be writing to** =**you.** 2 **For I am** °**aware** of =**your** ·**eagerness,** of **which I am boasting**° **over** =**you to** the **Macedonians, that: "Achaia has been prepared**° [f] a **year past." And** =**your** ·**zeal provokes the majority.** 3 **Yet I send the brethren, lest our** ·**boast**ing ·**over** =**you may be** made **void in this** ·**part**icular, **that** =**you may be** °**prepared**° **accord**ing **as I** |**said,** 4 **lest** some**how, if** the **Macedonians should come together** with **me and should find** =**you unprepared, we´ may be disgraced (**not **that we should** |**say** =**you!) in this** ·**assumption of** ·**boasting.**

5 **I deem**° it **necessary then, to entreat the brethren that they may come before** [io]**to** =**you and should adjust before**hand =**your** ·**bounty** as °**promised**° **before. This to** |**be ready thus, as** a **bounty and not as greed,** 6 **yet** as **this:** ·who is **sowing sparingly, sparingly shall be reaping also,** *Pr 11:25* **and** ·who is **sowing** [on] **bounti**fully, [on] **bounti**fully **shall be reaping also,** 7 **each accord**ing **as he has proposed**° in his ·**heart, not** [o] **sorrow**fully, n**or** [o] **of compulsion, for** the **gleeful giver is** |**love**d by ·**God.**

8 [y]**Now** ·**God is** |**able to lavish** [e]**all grace** [io]**on** =**you, that having** [e]**all contentment in every**thing **always,** =**you may be superabounding** [io]**in every good work,** 9 **accord**ing **as it is** °**written**°**, "He scatters; He gives to the drudges; His** ·**righteousness** |**remains** [io]**for the eon."** *Ps 112:9* 10 [y]**Now He** ·Who is **supplying seed to the** |**sower, and bread** [io]**for food, will be furnishing and multiplying** =**your** ·**seed and be** mak-

ing the product of =**your** ·**righteousness grow,** 11 **being enriched**° **in every**thing, *io*·**for** *e*·**all** the **generosity, which***a* **is producing**° **through us thank**sgiv**ing to** ·**God;** 12 *t*·**for the dispensation of this** ·**ministry not only is replenishing the wants of the saints, but** is **superabounding also through much** =**thank**sgiv**ing to** ·**God,** 13 **through the testedness of this** ·**dispensation, glorifying** ·**God** *on*·**at the subjection of** =**your** ·**avowal** *io*·**to the evangel of** ·**Christ, and** in the **generosity of the contribution** *io*·**for them and** *io*·**for all,** 14 **and** in **their petition** *ov*·**for** =**you, longing to be acquainted** with =**you, because** of **the** |**transcend**ent **grace of** ·**God on** =**you.** 15 *y*·**Now thank**s be **to** ·**God** *on*·**for His** ·**indescribable gratuity!**

10 *y*·**Now I´, Paul,** *s*·**my**self **am entreating** =**you, through the meekness and leniency of** ·**Christ, who,** *ac*·**as** to **per**sonal appearance **indeed** am **humble among** =**you, yet being absent,** have |**courage** *io*·**toward** =**you.** 2 **Yet I am beseeching**° that I may **no**t, **being present,** have ·**to** have **courage** with **the confidence** with **which I am reckoning**° **to dare** *on*·**any** ·who |**reckon**° **us as walking accord**ing to the **flesh.** 3 **For walking in flesh, we are not warring**° **accord**ing to the **flesh.** 4 **For the weapons of our** ·**warfare** are **not fleshly, but powerful to** ·**God toward** the **pulling down of bulwarks;** 5 **pulling down reckonings and every height elevating**° itself **against the knowledge of** ·**God, and** lead**ing** into **captivity every apprehension into the obedience of** ·**Christ,** 6 **and having** all **in read**iness **to avenge every disobedience, whenever** =**your** ·**obedience may be completed.**

7 **Are** =**you looking** at ·that *ac*·**on** the sur**face? If any**one **is presuming to have confidence** in **himself to** |**be Christ's, let him be reckoning**° **this again** *on*·**with himself, that accord**ing **as he** is **Christ's thus also** are **we.** 8 **For if ever I, besides, should also boast**° *a*·**some**what **more excessive**ly **concerning our** ·**authority (which the Lord gives us** *io*·**for building** you up **and not** *io*·**for pulling** =**you down), I shall not be** put to |**shame,** 9 **lest I should seem as ever terri-**

fying =**you through** ·**epistles,** 10 seeing **that he is averring, "**His ·**epistles indeed** are **weighty and strong, yet** his ·**bod**ily ·**presence** is **weak and** his ·**expression** to be °**scorned**°**."** 11 **Let** ·**such** a one **be reckoning**° **this, that such as we** |**are** in ·**word, through epistles, being absent, such also, being present,** are we in ·**act.** 12 **For we are not daring to judge** ourselves **by, or compare ourselves** with, *a*·**some** ·who are **commending themselves. But they´, measuring themselves** *i*·**by themselves, and comparing themselves** with **themselves,** do **not** |**understand.**

13 *y*·**Now we´ shall not be boasting**° *io*··**immeasurably, but accord**ing to **the measure of** our ·**range—which measure** ·**God parts to us—to reach**° **on as far as** =**you also** 14 **(for** it is **not as** though, **not reaching**° **on** *io*·**to** =**you, we are overstretching ourselves, for we outstrip** others +**even as far as** =**you in the evangel of** ·**Christ),** 15 **not boasting**° *io*··**immeasurably in others' toils, yet having** the **expectation,** =**your** ·**faith growing**°**, to be magnified among** =**you** *io*·**superabundant**ly, **accord**ing to **our** ·**range,** 16 so as **to** bring the **evangel**° *io*··**beyond** =**you, not to boast in** an**other**'s **range** over *io*··that which is **ready.** 17 *y*·**Now** he ·who is **boasting**°**, in** the **Lord let him be boasting**°**.** *Jr 9:24* 18 **For not** he ·who is **commending himself** *t*·|**is qualified, but whom the Lord is commending.**

11 **Would** that =**you** had |**borne**° **with any little imprudence of mine! But** also **be bearing**° **with me,** 2 **for I am** |**jealous** over =**you** with a **jealousy of God. For I betroth**° =**you to one Man, to present** a **chaste virgin to** ·**Christ.** 3 **Yet I** |**fear**° **lest** some**how, as the serpent deludes Eve** *i*·**by its** ·**craftiness,** =**your** ·**apprehensions should be corrupted from the singleness and** ·**pureness** ·which is *io*·**in** ·**Christ.** 4 **For if indeed he** ·who is **coming**° **is heralding** an**other Jesus whom we** do **not herald, or** =**you are obtaining** a **different spirit which** =**you** do **not obtain, or** a **different evangel which** =**you** do **not receive**°**,** =**you are bearing**°

with him **ideally.** 5 **For I am reckoning° to** be ˚**deficient** in **nothing** pertaining to **the paramount apostles.** 6 **Yet +even if** I am **plain** in ˙**expression,** *bt***nevertheless** I am **not** in ˙**knowledge, but in every**thing made **manifest in all** *io***for** ⁼**you.**

7 **Or do I sin** in **humbling myself that** ⁼**you´ may be exalted,** seeing **that I evangelize the evangel° of** ˙**God to** ⁼**you gratuitously?** 8 **Other ecclesias I despoil,** ⁻**getting rations** *td***for** ˙**dispensing** to ⁼**you.** 9 **And being present** *td***with** ⁼**you and** in **want, I am not** an **encumberance** to *nt***anyone (for the brethren** ⁻**coming from Macedonia replenish my** ˙**want**s**), and in every**thing **I keep and shall be keeping myself** that I be **not burdensome to** ⁼**you.**

10 The **truth of Christ** ˡ**is in me,** *t***for this** ˙**boasting shall not be** ˡ**barred°** *io***from me in the regions of** ˙**Achaia.** 11 **Wherefore?** Seeing **that I am not loving** ⁼**you? God is** ˚**aware!** 12 *y***Now what I am doing and will be doing** is **that I should strike off the incentive** from ˙those **wanting** an **incentive, that in what they are boasting° they may be found accord**ing **as we also.** 13 **For** ˙**such** are **false apostles, fraudulent workers, being transfigured° into apostles of Christ.** 14 **And no***t* **marvel, for** ˙**Satan** *s***him**self **is being transfigured° into** a **messenger of light.** 15 It is **no***t* **great** thing, **then, if his** ˙**servants also are being transfigured° as dispensers of righteousness—whose** ˙**consummation shall be accord**ing to **their** ˙**acts.**

16 **Again I am saying, no** *a***one should presume me to** ˡ**be imprudent. Otherwise surely, +even if** it **should** be **as imprudent, receive° me, that I´ also should boast°** *a***some little!** 17 **What I** ˡ**speak, I am not speaking** in **accord** with the **Lord, but as in imprudence, in this** ˙**assumption of** ˙**boasting.** 18 **Since many are boasting° accord**ing to **the flesh, I´ also shall be boasting°.** 19 **For with relish are** ⁼**you bearing° with the imprudent, being prudent.** 20 **For** ⁼**you are bearing° with** it **if any**one **is enslaving** ⁼**you, if any**one **is devouring, if any**one **is obtaining, if any**one **is elevating°** himself, **if any**one **is lashing** ⁼**you** *io***in** the **face.** 21 *ac***By** way of **dishonor am I saying** this, **as that we´ are** ˚**weaken**ed.

*y***Now in whatever any**one **should be daring (in imprudence am I saying** it**), I´ also am daring.** 22 **Hebrews** ˡ**are they? I also! Israelites** ˡ**are they? I also!** The **seed** of **Abraham** ˡ**are they? I also!** 23 **Servants of Christ** ˡ**are they? (Being insane, I am speaking.) Above** them am **I! In** ⁼**weariness more exceedingly, in jails more exceedingly, in blows inordinately, in deaths often.** 24 **By Jews five times I get forty** *b***save one.** 25 **Thrice am I** flogged with **rod**s**, once am I stoned, thrice** am **I shipwreck**ed, a **night** and a **day have I** *do***spent in** a ˙**swamp,** 26 in **journeys often,** in **dangers of rivers,** in **dangers of robbers,** in **dangers** *o* **of** my **race,** in **dangers** *o* **of** the **nations,** in **dangers in** the **city,** in **dangers in** the **wilderness,** in **dangers in** the **sea,** in **dangers among false brethren;** 27 **in toil and labor, in vigils often, in famine and thirst, in fasts often, in cold and nakedness;** 28 **apart from** ˙⁼what is **outside,** ˙that which is **coming upon me** *ac* ˙**dai**ly**, the solicitude** for **all the ecclesias.**

29 *a***Who is** ˡ**weak and I am not** ˡ**weak?** *a***Who is** ˡ**snared° and I´ am not** on ˡ**fire°?** 30 **If** I ˡ**must** ˡ**boast°, I will be boasting°** in ˙that which is **of my** ˙**weakness.** 31 **The God and Father of the Lord Jesus,** ˙Who ˡ**is blessed** *io***for the eons, is** ˚**aware that I am not lying°.** 32 **In Damascus the ethnarch of Aretas, the king,** ˡ**garrisoned the city of** the **Damascenes, wanting to arrest me,** 33 **and I am lowered in** a **wicker basket through** a **window through the wall, and escape his** ˙**hands.**

12 **If boasting°** ˡ**must** be, though it is **not** ˡ**expedient indeed, yet I shall also be coming°** *io***to apparitions and revelations of** the **Lord.** 2 **I am** ˚**acquainted** with a **human in Christ, fourteen years before** this **(whether in** a **body I am not** ˚**aware, or outside of the body I am not** ˚**aware—** ˙**God is** ˚**aware), such** a one is **snatched** away **to** the **third heaven.** 3 **And I am** ˚**acquainted** with ˙**such** a **human (whether in**

a **body or outside of the body I am not ˚aware—˙God is ˚aware),** 4 **that he is snatched** away **into ˙paradise and hears ineffable declarations, which** it is **not ˡallow**ed a **human to speak.** 5 **Over ˙such** a one **I shall be boasting˚; yet over myself I shall not be boasting˚, except in my ˙infirmities.** 6 **For if ever I should want to boast˚, I shall not ˡbe imprudent, for I shall be declaring** the **truth. Yet I am ˡreticent˚. No** *ᵃ*one **should reckon˚** *ᵢₒ* **me** to be **above what he is observing** of **me or any**thing **he is hearing** *ᵒ* **of me.**

7 **Wherefore also, lest I** *ᵐ*should **be ˡlifted up** by **the transcendence of the revelations,** there **is given to me** a **splinter** in **the flesh,** a **messenger of Satan, that he may be buffeting me, lest I may be ˡlifted˚ up.** 8 *ₒᵥ*For **this I entreat the Lord thrice, that it should withdraw from me.** 9 **And He has protested to me: "ˡSufficient** for **you is My ˙grace, for My ˙power in infirmity is being perfected˚."** With the **greatest relish, then, will I rather be glorying˚ in my ˙infirmities, that the power of ˙Christ should tabernacle over** *ₒₙ* **me.** 10 **Wherefore I ˡdelight in infirmities, in outrages, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses,** *ₒᵥ*for **Christ's** sake, **for whenever I may be ˡweak, then I ˡam powerful.**

11 **I have become imprudent; ⁼you´ compel me. For I´ ˡought to be ˡcommended˚ by ⁼you, for I am not***ᵗʰ* **deficient** in **any**thing pertaining to **the paramount apostles, ⁺even if I ˡam nothing.** 12 **Indeed, the signs of** an **˙apostle are produced among ⁼you in** *ᵉ*all **endurance, besides in signs and miracles and power**ful deeds**.** 13 **For ˡis** there **any**thing in **which ⁼you are discomfited above the rest** of the **ecclesias, except that I´** *ˢ*myself **am not** an **encumbrance** to **⁼you?** Deal **grac**iously˚ with **me** for **this ˙unrighteousness!**

14 *ᵖ*Look˚**! this third** time **I ˡhold** myself **ready to come to***ᵈ* **⁼you, and I shall not be** an **ˡencumberance, for I am not seeking ⁼yours but ⁼you. For the children ˡought not to be hoarding** for **the parents, but the parents** for **the children.** 15 **Yet with** the **greatest relish shall I´ ˡspend and be ˡbankrupted˚** *ₒᵥ*for the sake **of ⁼your ˙souls, ⁺even if loving ⁼you more exceedingly diminish**es your **ˡlove˚** for **me.**

16 *ʸ*Now **let ˡbe, I´** do **not overburden ⁼you, but** being **ˡinhere**ntly **crafty, I get ⁼you** by **guile!** 17 Does **not any**one **of** those **whom I have dispatched to***ᵈ* **⁼you? Through him** do **I overreach ⁼you?** 18 **I entreat Titus, and dispatch together** with him a **˙brother.** Does **Titus** *ⁿᵃ* **overreach ⁼you? Walk we not** in **the same spirit? Not** in **the same footprints?**

19 **Again ⁼you are presuming˚ that we are defending** ourselves **to ⁼you. Facing ˙God, in Christ, are we speaking, yet ˙all, beloved,** *ₒᵥ*for the sake **of ⁼your ˙edification.** 20 **For I ˡfear˚, lest** some**how,** on **¯coming, I may not find ⁼you such as I ˡwant, and I´ may be found** by **⁼you such as ⁼you** do **not ˡwant; lest** some**how** there be **strife, jealousy, ⁼fury, factions, vilifications, whisperings, ⁼puffing up, turbulences.**

21 **Not again** at **my ¯coming may my ˙God humble me toward ⁼you and may I mourn** for **many** ˙who **ˡhave sinned before and are no**t **¯repenting** *ₒₙ*of **the uncleanness and prostitution and wantonness which they commit.**

13 *ᵖ*Look˚**! This** is the **third** time **I am coming˚ to***ᵈ* **⁼you.** *ₒₙ*At the **mouth of two witnesses, and three, shall every declaration be** made to **ˡstand.** 2 **I have declared before, and am predicting as** when **being present the second** time, **and now, being absent, to** ˙those **having sinned before and to all the rest, that if I should come** *ᵢₒ* **˙again, I shall not ˡspare˚,** 3 **since ⁼you are seeking** a **test of Christ ˙speaking in me, Who is not ˡweak** *ᵢₒ*for **⁼you, but ˡpowerful among ⁼you.** 4 **For ⁺even if He is crucified out of weakness,** *ᵇᵗ*nevertheless **He is living** *ᵒ*by the **power of God. For we´ also are ˡweak together** with **Him, but we shall be living together** with **Him** *ᵒ*by the **power of God** *ᵢₒ*for **⁼you.**

5 **ˡTry yourselves, if ⁼you ˡare in the faith; ˡtest yourselves. Or are ⁼you not recognizing yourselves that Christ**

Jesus [l]is in [=]you, except [=]you [l]are [q]somewhat **disqualified?** 6 [y]**Now I am expecting that [=]you will [l]know[°] that we´ [l]are not disqualified!** 7 [y]**Now we are wishing[°] to[d] ·God** that **[=]you do no**t do [n]**any**thing **evil, not that we´ may appear qualified, but that [=]you´ may be doing** ·that which is **ideal, yet we´ may [l]be as disqualified.** 8 **For we are not [l]able[°]** for **any**thing **against the truth, but** [ov]**for** the sake **of the truth.** 9 **For we are rejoicing whenever we´ may be [l]weak, yet [=]you´ may [l]be powerful. [y]Now this are we wishing[°] also: [=]your ·adjustment.** 10 **Therefore I am writing these** things, **being absent, that, being present, I should no**t **use[°] severity, accord**ing to **the authority which the Lord gives me** [io]**for building** up **and not** [io]**for pulling down.**

11 **Furthermore, brethren, [l]rejoice, [l]adjust[°], be [l]entreated[°], be [s]mutually [l]disposed, be at [l]peace, and the God of ·love and of peace will [l]be with [=]you.** 12 **Greet[°] one another [i]with** a **holy kiss.** 13 **All the saints are greeting[°] [=]you.**

14 **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of ·God and the communion of the holy spirit** be **with [=]you all! Amen!**

THE NEW COVENANT

The new covenant of Jeremiah 31:32-34 is not a covenant or contract at all. It is called a "covenant" merely because it replaces the former one. In this new relationship of Yahweh to His earthly people, nothing is dependent upon them. There is no "we will" in it at all. It is all "*I* will." The same figure is used by Paul in describing our relationship to God, because he contrasts it with the law of Sinai (2 Cor.3:6-11). It is like the new "covenant" of Israel in this, that it is not dependent on us, but on God. Nevertheless it is utterly unlike Israel in the kingdom who will still remain under the literal law, even though it is written on their hearts and apprehensions. Paul does not dispense a literal law, as Moses did, which led to transgression and death. He dispensed a spiritual "law" which gives life.

A. E. Knoch

IN ACCORD WITH THE SCRIPTURES

THE APOSTLE Paul tells us that the evangel concerning the death of Christ and God's rousing of Him on the third day is in accord with the scriptures (1 Cor.15:3,4). This is borne out in Romans 1:17, for example, where he cites Habakkuk 2:4 in reference to Christ as the Righteous One Who lives by faith, facing death, through which God's righteousness is revealed (*cp* Rom.3:21-26). Similarly, Paul uses Genesis 1:2,3 in 2 Corinthians 4:6 as a pattern of God's ways in dealing with evil, set at the very beginning, and now most gloriously carried forth in God's dealing with sin in the giving of His Son. Then, a few verses later, in 2 Corinthians 4:13,14, he quotes words from Psalm 116:10, which in the highest meaning of the psalm center on Christ and His faith. There truly is a central theme throughout God's Word, one which points to God's glory through His beloved Son.

In the following pages I offer some thoughts on these two passages in 2 Corinthians, not at all as though final and exhaustive, but hopefully that they may open up a greater appreciation of the evangel of the glory of God which is made known through the faith of Jesus Christ.

LIGHT SHALL BE SHINING

The evangel of the glory of Christ (2 Cor.4:4) illuminates those who are believing it. Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God, loves all, in that He dies for the sake of all (literally, "over all," 2 Cor.5:14), while they are still sinners (Rom.5:8). In this evangel the knowledge of the glory of God is illuminated in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor.4:7).

The face of Moses glowed with great glory, expressing the glory of the law which he received. It was to bring the fear of God over the faces of the people of Israel to dispel the darkness of sin which covered them (*cf* Exodus 20:20). But it was a fading glory, being nullified (2 Cor.3:6,7). Yet now the face of Jesus Christ, along with His whole appearance, ruined in His rejection by human beings, glows with the illumination of the glory of God in the evangel. In this, the evangel of the glory of God, we come to know God's righteousness (2 Cor.3:9-11; Rom.3:21,22), and His wisdom and power, and His love above all, shining out from the darkness of sin and death.

At the very beginning of God's word He says in effect: *Out of darkness light shall be shining* (2 Cor.5:6):

. . . creates Elohim `the heavens and `the earth.
[2] **And the earth becomes** a **chaos and vacant, and darkness** is **over** the **face of** the **abyss.**
And the **spirit of Elohim** is **vibrating over** the **face of the waters.**
[3] **And saying is Elohim: Light is coming** to **be! And light is coming** to [l]**be.**

As expressed in Hebrew, two fundamental facts come before us: God *creates* the heavens and the earth, and the earth *becomes* a chaos and vacant with darkness spread *over the face* of this lifeless sea of chaos. This is followed by the vibrant, ongoing action of God's spirit *vibrating over the face* of these dark and deep waters of chaos. Then, as action in progress, God *is saying* words of great power for deliverance out of darkness: "Light is coming to be!" And exactly in accord with what He is saying, thus "it is coming to be."

The evil is necessary in order for the good to be known. Light is coming out of darkness. A separating of elementary provisions for life is coming out of chaos. And life is

being brought forth out of the vacancy. "And seeing is Elohim all that He makes; and behold, it is very good" (Gen. 1:31). In this the pattern of God's ways is set before us: Creation; Darkness; Light; Good.

Then once again, God's very good act of creating is disrupted by chaos, the chaos of sin, and by vacancy, the vacancy of death, all covered by darkness. This is expressed in Romans 5:12 by three fact verbs: ". . . through one human sin *enters* into the world, and through sin death, and thus death *passes through* into all humanity, on which all *sin.*" As with Paul, the "sentence[1] of death" (2 Cor.1:9) is in us all, for "in Adam all are dying" (1 Cor.15:22a). Nevertheless, once again God is saying (as He speaks to us in His evangel), "Out of darkness light shall be shining," for "in Christ shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22b).

So we see that this light which is coming to be illuminated in the face of Jesus Christ tells us not only of the end of the darkness of sin and death, but it begins and rests on one tremendous sin and one most horrible of deaths. "One dies over all" (2 Cor.5:14). And "the One not knowing sin" is made to be sin (2 Cor.5:21). This is the very foundation of the evangel, the well-message, which God is speaking. Here is light shining in the face of Jesus Christ, the face of an abyss of sorrow and suffering, which is the face of love: "For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that if One dies for the sake of all, consequently all die" (2 Cor.5:14).

The goodness of life and righteousness and joy and peace and love constituting the glory of God cannot be known until the evil of sin and death is known. Accordingly, the enjoyment of the goodness of life and righteousness and

1. Here the former CV word, "rescript," is replaced by the more familiar word, "sentence." The Greek term is literally FROM-JUDGE-*effect.* The effect of judging is "judgment," and that which results from judgment is a "sentence."

joy and peace and love and all that brings glory to God rests on the death of Christ. His death is the means by which sin and death are put to death and righteousness and life are enthroned everywhere.

THE SAME SPIRIT OF FAITH

Along with Paul and the Corinthians God has given us a measure of the same spirit of faith that is manifested by Jesus Christ (2 Cor.4:13). Through all His days in the likeness of sin's flesh, our Lord held fast in faith to the purpose for which God sent Him concerning sin (Rom.8:3), humbling Himself to the death of the cross (Phil.2:6-8). So also we are walking by faith and not by perception (2 Cor.5:7). And what we are believing is that Christ, in faith, dies over our sins and is roused from among the dead.

God gives us the earnest of the spirit in our hearts (2 Cor. 1:22). Spirit is "imperceptible, intangible power,"[2] and at present we have a foretaste of the spirit we shall enjoy in the future, placed within us (in our hearts). Preeminently, we have received the blessing of the spiritual endowments of faith, expectation and love (1 Cor.13:13). We have heard the evangel, and God has granted us the spirit of faith. As with the Corinthians, the "letter of Christ," the evangel, is engraven "not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God" on our hearts (2 Cor.3:3).

CHRIST AND BELIEVERS BELIEVE

Yet the spirit of faith is not only a power which we share with other believers, but, as Paul presents it here in 2 Corinthians it is imperceptible power which we have together with Christ until faith is turned to sight. The evangel is a message sourced and centered in Christ's faith, for faith (Rom.1:17).

2. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.282.

It has not been much recognized, but Psalm 116 is "Messianic," that is, like Psalm 22, its highest application is to the Messiah, to the Anointed One, to Christ. This is surely what Paul has in view here in 2 Corinthians 4:13 when he quotes the words of Psalm 116:10a as rendered in the Septuagint Version, "I believe, wherefore I speak also." The apostle and those with him believed the evangel of Christ's death and resurrection, and therefore that is what they spoke. Yet also we believe this message from God, and we speak it. Yet again, and even more basic to Paul's thought here, Christ Himself believed He was to suffer and to die and be roused, for this was His Father's will, and He spoke of it openly.

And even now, exalted on high, He lives to God in faith and expectation of His future reign. Wherefore, as an earnest, the same spirit of faith which operates in Christ operates in our hearts, so that we believe this message from God, and testify to it as true and vibrant and critical to us all. In this there is grace upon grace.

WHAT IS WRITTEN

In the following translation of Psalm 116 we have made two principal changes from the current CV. (1) All verbs appear in what seems to be present tenses, but in reality are intended to represent the two aspects of Hebrew verbs, neither of which identify the time of the action (which is determined by the context). The two aspects are: the fact form which gives stress to the fact of the action, and the progressive form which draws attention to the action in progress, continuing before us. And (2) nouns and personal pronouns referring, on the first level, to the psalmist are capitalized in order to show that in their highest application they refer to Christ, and those referring to Yahweh now are seen in reference to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

PSALM 116

1 **I love** Him [t]**because Yahweh is hearing ˋMy voice,**
My supplications;
2 **For He stretches out His ear to Me,**
And I am calling on Him [t]**throughout** all **My days.**
3 The **cables of death envelop Me,**
And the **constrictions of** the **unseen,**
they converge upon **Me;**
I am finding distress and affliction.
4 [+]**And I am calling** [i]**on** the **Name of Yahweh,**
Oh Yahweh, do **make** a way of **escape** for **My soul.**
5 **Gracious** is **Yahweh and righteous,**
And our Elohim is **compassionate**[l]**;**
6 The One **guarding** the **simple** is **Yahweh;**
I am impoverished, and He is saving ˃ Me.
7 **Return to your rest, My soul,**
For Yahweh, He deals bountifully [on]**with you.**
8 [t]**Indeed, You extricate My soul from death,**
ˋMy eye from tears,
ˋMy foot from foundering.
9 **I am walking before Yahweh**
In the **lands of the living.**
10 **I believe;** [t]**wherefore I am speaking:**
I´ am very much **humbled;**
11 **I´ say in My consternation**[–]**,**
Every [ˋ]**human** is a **liar**[l]**.**
12 **What** can **I be restoring to Yahweh**
For **all His** bountiful **dealings** [on]**toward Me?**
13 **I am taking up** the **cup of salvation**
And call [i]**on** the **Name of Yahweh.**
14 **I am paying My vows to Yahweh**
[pr]**Indeed in**[d] **front ˃of all His people.**
15 **Precious in** the **eyes of Yahweh**
Is **the death ˃of His benign** one**s.**

16 **Oh Yahweh,** seeing **that I** am **Your Servant,**
I am **Your Servant, Son of Your maidservant,**
You open ˃up My bonds;
17 **I am sacrificing to You** a **sacrifice of acclamation**
And call [i]**on** the **Name of Yahweh.**
18 **I am paying My vows to Yahweh**
Straight in[d] **front ˃of all His people,**
19 **In** the **courts of Yahweh's house,**
In your midst, Jerusalem.
Praise Yah!

THE PSALM AND THE EPISTLE

Throughout 2 Corinthians Paul relates his sufferings and the dangers he endured to the sufferings and death of Christ as proclaimed in the evangel. But also he points ahead in expectation to the future life when he and his fellow believers will be living to God, even as Christ, in resurrection, is living. In marvelous accord, the experiences of the psalmist in Psalm 116 foreshadow Christ's afflictions, death and rescue unto a life of service to God, service of One Who has experienced suffering and death. Not only the words of Psalm 116:10a resound in the apostle's mind, but many other lines of the psalm seem to be reflected in what he writes—reflected, that is, in the way its words concerning Christ foreshadow the words of this epistle concerning Him and their significance to us in our lives.

Thus, in the words of the psalmist, Christ speaks of finding distress and afflictions, but more than these, the cables of death envelop Him and the constrictions of the unseen converge upon Him. Yet God is compassionate, and He saves Him, extricating His soul from death. Every human is a liar, counseling different paths, but Christ believes God and places His reliance on His will.

Again, the words of Psalm 116:6b in relation to Christ match those of 2 Corinthians 8:9 concerning the grace of

our Lord in relation to us. "I am impoverished, and He is saving Me." So Paul writes, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, being rich, because of you He becomes poor, that you by His poverty, should be rich."

EXTRICATED FROM DEATH

The extrication of Christ from death is the extrication of His soul by His God and Father (Psa.116:8). In death there is no sensation. Christ's soul had been in the "Unseen," the place (or state) in which there is no perception, no awareness. Yet God *rouses* Him from among the dead in that, instead of the tears of sorrow His eye looks ahead to the happiness of God's glory, and instead of the downward path to humiliation His foot is directed to the service of living to God in the lands of the living (Psa.116:8,9).

Now in 2 Corinthians, Paul is speaking of what he is believing, and is filled with expectation of extrication from death: "Wherefore we are speaking also, being aware that He Who rouses the Lord Jesus will be rousing us also, through Jesus, and will be presenting us together with you" (2 Cor.4:14).

The life of Jesus out of death has a present application in spirit while we are still in our mortal flesh (2 Cor.4:11), but when we are roused and presented together in the future life our present momentary affliction will be succeeded by "a transcendently, transcendent, eonian burden of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).

"For we are aware that if our terrestrial tabernacle house should be demolished, we have a building of God, a house not made by hands, eonian in the heavens" (2 Cor.5:1). In our present bodies we are groaning, not wanting to be stripped in death, but that "this mortal may be swallowed up by life" (2 Cor.5:4). Then we will be fully living to God, taking up "the cup of salvation" (*cf* Psa.116:13) with our Lord. D.H.H.

THE DEATH OF ALL IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST

GOD'S EVANGEL concerns His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.1:1-5), and it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing (Rom.1:16). In 2 Corinthians 5:14,15, we find this evangel stated in especially striking terms and see its powerfully saving effects on the apostle Paul and the believers to whom he wrote:

"For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One dies for the sake of all, consequently all die. And He dies for the sake of all that those who are living should by no means still be living to themselves, but to the One Who dies and is roused for their sakes."

Here the evangel is presented in terms of Christ's love. To humanity in general it would seem odd, at the very least, to speak of the *death* of the One Who is loving and the *death* of those who are being loved as an evangel. But the evangel brought by Paul centers, as here, on death. Most essentially the evangel speaks of the death of Christ (e.g. Rom.5:6-11; 1 Cor.15:1-4; 1 Tim.1:15), but His death leads to the death of sinners, and in that often overlooked fact lies a blessing of matchless value.

A LIVING FAITH

From the context of 2 Corinthians 5 we perceive that Paul's life is constrained and shaped in every detail by the love of Christ as revealed in His death for sinners. He lives what he believes. Paul endures affliction and sorrow and the slanders that continually seemed to plague his ministry in order to bring the evangel to the Corinthians and

encourage their spiritual growth. "In everything being afflicted, but not distressed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; knocked down, but not perishing . . . being aware that He Who rouses the Lord Jesus will be rousing us also, through Jesus, and will be presenting us together with you. For all is because of you, that the grace, increasing through the majority, should be superabounding in thanksgiving to the glory of God" (2 Cor.4:8,9,14,15).

If the Corinthians think Paul has some ulterior purpose for personal gain in any particular action (such as boasting over the Corinthians), they will be far off the mark (*cf* 2 Cor.5:12,13). He is motivated and directed by that love which leads Christ to die for sinners like Saul of Tarsus and which embraces the entire human race.

Indeed it is more than the fact that Christ dies for him that invigorates Paul to labor and suffer to bring this message of love to others. It is Christ's love in dying for everyone with the result that the entirety of the old, corrupt human race dies in the death of Christ, that leads the apostle in his toil and afflictions to love and encourage, admonish and commend people he formerly would have despised and shunned. Paul does not say here that if One dies for *us* (who are the elect), consequently *we* die, though that would be a true statement and even appropriate to the context. Yet it would not sufficiently express the motivations and genuine concerns that are in the apostle's heart.

Therefore, in speaking of what constrains him in his actions, Paul has to point to the all-encompassing scope of the evangel of Christ's love. It is only after this association of all sinners with the love of Christ in His death that Paul distinguishes the believers as "those who are living." All are identified with Christ in His death, though only some, called out from the whole, are now being invigorated in new life by the evangel. The grace enjoyed in spirit

by some at present and in fulness in the oncoming eons does not make Christ's death of no effect for the rest.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

It is soon before writing here of the love of Christ that Paul reminds the Corinthians that his message illuminates "the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God" (2 Cor.4:4). The glorious love of Christ is paramount in this evangel, and in loving us by dying for us Jesus Christ is illuminating "the knowledge of the glory of God" (4:6). As the Image of the invisible God, Christ is making known the glory of God, and as the One Who dies for all, Christ is making known the love of God.

The love of Christ, illuminating the love of God, is very real. It is not only an emotion of good will, affection and commiseration, but is also a preeminently wise and righteous and powerfully active seeking of good for its object. Christ's death cannot illuminate the glory of God if it is merely a *picture* of the intensity of His love. The death of Christ is not a sort of ultimate gesture but is a desperately needed action leading surely and effectively to the desired good.

Therefore, it is love that cannot fail. Not only does it act in accord with its goal of good, but it is certain to achieve that goal.

Divine love faces the problem of human sin and death and does the very thing needed in order to solve that problem. It expresses the deepest of affection but does so by faithfully carrying out and gaining the good that is so direly needed. This is a love that can never envision nor ever allow defeat. It can never clash with God's power, for God's power is great enough to achieve what His love desires. It can never be in competition with God's righteousness, for God's righteousness is revealed in the very evangel which

declares His love. It can never stand in opposition to any aspect of the character of God, for He is love.

ONE DIES

The death of Christ is required by the terrible corruption that engulfs humanity. Nothing else can end this corruption, and no one else can do it. The old humanity must be put to death, effectively and finally.

How is this to be done? The testimony of the evangel shows us it has to be done by the death of the *One* Who is responsible for humanity, in Whom we have our origin. Paul reminds us in Colossians 1:16 that "in Him, is all created." There is a vital connection between Christ and humanity that goes back to Genesis 2:7, before sin and death corrupts the race, when Yahweh Elohim forms Adam and breathes into his nostrils the breath of life. Hence we read in 1 Timothy 2:5,6, of Christ as the one Mediator of God and humanity, Who, as a Human, is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all.

In both 2 Corinthians 5:14 and 1 Timothy 2:5, Christ is referred to as "One" in contrast to "all." This is a reflection of the fuller development of this contrast in Romans 5:12-19. Like Adam, but in a greater way, Christ is *One* Whose actions affect *all* humanity, including Adam. In the final analysis, the destiny of the human race is dependent on the work of the One, Jesus Christ, rather than on all the various activities, good and bad, of the many individuals.

In accord with the principle of "sin for sin" ("an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"), the sin of the death of our sinless Lord puts to death the sin-corrupted human race. Christ is made to be Sin, or the Sin Offering, for the sake of sinners, as Paul expresses it at the end of our chapter (2 Cor.5:21). As the Sin Offering Christ dies for all humanity since all are sinners. He cannot die for me as a sinner unless He dies for us all. But now, having done so, the way

is opened up for my salvation, and of necessity for the ultimate deliverance of all.

The more we learn from Scripture concerning the death of Christ, the more firmly we understand what Paul means when he writes, "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal.6:14).

The death of Christ on Golgotha, nearly two thousand years ago, is the darkest event of history. Yet it is our glory, our boast, because of what it accomplishes.

We must be willing to acknowledge and prepare ourselves to exult in the fact that we would not have the blessings of faith, expectation and love in our lives if Christ has not died for sinners. The evangel tells us of something that has happened. It occurs long before we believe. Our believing that Christ dies for our sins does not make Christ's death for our sins happen. Our believing does not make what we believe true. It has been true for nearly two thousand years. To be sure, our believing does bring the power of the evangel into our lives, and by its means God seals us with the holy spirit of promise to the deliverance of that which *has been procured* (Eph.1:13,14). This unique and special salvation for our present lives and into the oncoming eons is not promised to the unbeliever. Nevertheless, as important as our believing is, it does not in any measure take away from what Christ has done for all and must surely be enjoyed by all in God's own time.

ONE DIES FOR THE SAKE OF ALL

We have come to know "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," that, being rich, because of us He becomes poor, that we, by His poverty, should be rich" (2 Cor.8:9). The difficulty, however, comes not simply in realizing that the death of Christ proves to be a good thing for us, vital to our

present lives and our future salvation, but also seeing that it is a good thing for all and vital to the glory of God. This death of Christ on the cross, so shameful, so evil in itself, so base and miserable and abhorrent, has come to mean to us power for our present lives and the solid basis of our expectation for the future. But how much more is this so for us when we come to realize that Christ's death is for all.

This is stated twice in 2 Corinthians 5. "One dies for the sake of all" (v.14), and "He dies for the sake of all" (v.15). It is a matter to be emphasized. It should never be diluted by conclusions about human sinfulness and stubbornness that do not take Christ's death for sinners into account. Even less should it be qualified and altered by traditional ideas about divine wrath and judgment which place God's righteousness and love in separate compartments. What Christ has done for all must have the final say about the destiny of all. Our understanding of the words "One dies for all" must correspond with the revelation of the love of Christ and accord with the evangel which we believe.

ALL DIE

Seeing that Christ dies, all die. That is, the old humanity is put to death. In saying this we are indeed speaking of what is objectively true and not yet of what is true subjectively, or experientially. We are pointing to an accomplishment that has not yet become realized subjectively, in experience. Even for the believer the old humanity is still with us, though in believing that we are identified with the death of Christ we are spiritually strengthened to be putting away the acts of the old humanity. But the point we must make here is that what God has declared is objectively true must and certainly will become wholly, subjectively so.

How then, can the death of all be a good thing? Only as it is a real and final elimination of the old dying and sinful

race. Paul had been writing of the operation of death in our bodies in the preceding paragraphs of 2 Corinthians: "our outward man is decaying" (4:16); "we are groaning" (5:2); ". . . being burdened" (5:4). In love, Christ dies, and He dies for all so that their sinfulness and suffering and weakness and dying might be put to death. This is an act of supreme love, requiring drastic sacrifice and producing transcendent benefit.

The apostle Paul clearly apprehends *our* death in the death of Christ as beneficial. He uses much the same language as 2 Corinthians 5:14 elsewhere in speaking of the believer's involvement in the death of Christ. "We, who *die* to sin, how shall we still be living in it? Or are you ignorant that whoever are baptized into Christ Jesus, are baptized into His *death*? We, then, are entombed together with Him through baptism into *death* . . . planted together in the likeness of His *death* . . . our old humanity is *crucified* together with Him . . . we *die* together with Christ . . ." (Rom.6:2-8). "If, then, you *die* together with Christ from the elements of the world . . . for you *die,* and your life is hid together with Christ in God" (Col.2:20; 3:1-3). "With Christ have I been *crucified*" (Gal.2:20).

The involvement of all in the death of Christ must ultimately be beneficial to all, even as in such rich ways it has begun to benefit us.

THOSE WHO ARE LIVING

The passages just quoted show that identification with Christ in His death is followed by identification with Him in His life. "Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead indeed to Sin, yet *living* to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:11).

For the apostle Paul the conviction that Christ dies for all, and that consequently all die, changes his life. Once full of bitterness and hate toward Gentiles and even toward those

Jews who were less law-minded and law-enslaved than he was, Paul is now expecting good things of the fleshly Corinthians (v.11) and even boasting over them (v.12). This is the love of Christ in action in Paul's own life.

This sort of behavior is not something forced. It is not something motivated by a desire for commendation, nor even by a sense of obligation. It is simply the operation of the evangel of God's love within us. Paul genuinely seeks the good of the Corinthians and finds every opportunity to encourage them in their faith. This is the kind of living that is unto "the One dying and being roused" for our sakes.

The fact that Christ dies for me, and that I die in the death of Christ brings love for Christ into my life, so that I am not living to myself but to Him (*cp* Gal.2:20). The further evangel that Christ dies for those chosen in Christ, and that the old humanity of my fellow believers is put to death in the death of Christ, increases my love for Christ and is reflected in my concern for these brothers and sisters in Christ. Furthermore, the revelation that Christ dies for all, and that all die in the death of Christ can only multiply and widen this love for my Lord and become reflected in my outlook toward the human race of which I am a part. Of such an evangel, who could be ashamed? (*cf* Rom.1:14-16).

OBJECTIONS

There are a number of theories, all too popular within Christianity, that oppose this testimony to the love of Christ. Often these objections are mutually exclusive; they contradict each other as well as obscure the evangel.

One theory is that Paul is speaking only of a restrictive "all" in passages such as 2 Corinthians 5:14,15. This view sees Paul as thinking of believers only, of "all the elect" and of no other individuals. But, to their credit, those who

take this view still acknowledge that what Christ has done, even though for a select few, cannot fail to be realized.

Another concept is that while Christ dies for everyone, without exception, not everyone will enjoy the benefits of His love. This, it is explained, is because the human has the free and independent power to reject what Christ has done, and so His death actually gains nothing of lasting value for many sinners. While recognizing that God's Word teaches that Christ dies for everyone, this message is drastically distorted by claiming that Christ's death for the sinner is not sufficient in itself for the sinner's salvation. Exactly what the sinner must do is in dispute and often kept vague. But the result is that in the final analysis salvation is dependent on us.

Certain terminology is sometimes used in order to give the impression that the evangel of 2 Corinthians 5:14,15, is not as glorious as it appears to be. We are to understand the word "all" as "all kinds of people," that is, "all without distinction" but not "all without exception." Or, alternatively, we must see the verb "die" at the end of verse 14 as speaking of a "potential" identification with the death of Christ. And this potentiality is to be understood as something that indeed will never become an actuality for all.

Such explanations are traitorous to the evangel. They constrict the love of Christ. They obscure the contrast between the *One* and the *all*. They limit the value and effects of the death of Christ. They distort the character of Christ's life now in resurrection and exaltation, and in so doing they lessen the power of the evangel in the believer's present life. Above all else they hide the glory of God that is illuminated in the death of Christ for all.

AN APPEAL

No one would use these arguments unless there is a conviction that many sinners suffer everlasting condemnation.

The idea of eternal hell is set against the revelation that all are identified in the death of Christ. My appeal is to reverse this line of thought and set the scriptural teaching concerning the significance of Christ's death and resurrection against these traditional concepts of everlasting loss.

The Word of God does not contradict itself. It certainly does not oppose a portion of itself to its highest revelation of glory and victory in Christ. The evangel concerning our Lord Jesus Christ must be the final arbiter of all controversies concerning human destiny. The identification of sinners in the death of Christ is evangelical truth of the highest order. It does not eliminate the biblical revelations concerning God's wrath and judgment but helps make them meaningful as processes along the way rather than final goals. There have been mistakes in traditional interpretations and in the translation of certain scriptural terms. But there is no mistake in what the Scriptures say about the purpose and results of Christ's obedience to the death of the cross.

If Christ dies for the sake of all, and if the consequence of this is that all die, then it must be true, as we read in 1 Corinthians 15:22-28, that all shall be vivified in Christ, and God shall become All in all.

D.H.H.

REPOSING

Our good friend **Kenneth Jones** of Seattle, Washington was put to repose August 27, 2017, age 99. His daughter, Janice Thompsen, wrote, "It was a great boon when Dad received a 'Concordant' understanding of the Bible after reading God's Eonian Purpose." We ourselves remember Ken's steady good cheer at several fellowship conferences in Seattle in the past.

My own brother in the flesh as well as spirit, **Thomas Hough** of Almont, Michigan was put to repose March 12, age 78. Tom was a great encouragement to us in his quiet and steadfast faith. We will miss him very much.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 109th Year

(1909–2018)

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Romans 3:21–26
57 God's Evangel of Righteousness
71 Apprehending the Word that God Declares
79 The Disposition which Must Be
87 Grace and Obedience

SECOND QUARTER, 2018

Volume 109 **Number 2**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, SECOND QUARTER 2018
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED NINE

EDITORIAL

IN THIS ISSUE we give special attention to Romans 3:21-26, in the article of this same name by Dean Hough, which begins on page 51: "*God's righteousness plus Jesus Christ's faith* equals the justification of all. This is the formula of Romans 3:21-26 as rendered in the Concordant Version." Following the article itself, we feature the rendering of the Concordant Version of Romans 3:21–26 as it is worded in four editions: 1926/1930; 1942/1944; 1966/1976; and the tentative Concordant Version, 2018.

Our second article, also by Dean Hough (page 57), emphasizes that the evangel stands on the foundation of God's righteousness: "The evangel defines this righteousness of God as that which demands and brings about the good outcome of salvation from the expected sentence of condemnation to the assured achievement of justification for irreverent sinners (*cf* Rom.4:5). We need to focus on this righteousness which is God's own righteousness if we are to appreciate the full significance of our justification (i.e., righteous-ification)."

Next is the writing,"Apprehending the Word that God Declares," by Robert Edwards (page 71). "In its Scriptural signification, 'apprehend' means 'mentally perceive' (*neō,* MIND). This accords with one of the definitions of the English 'apprehend' which is, 'to grasp the meaning of; understand, especially intuitively; perceive' . . . . For believers, (scriptural) 'apprehension' is the state of mind that one enjoys when one has become familiar with the correctly partitioned truth of God's Word (*cp* 2 Tim. 2:15). This speaks of the faithful understanding which the Lord gives to us: '*Apprehend* what I say, for the Lord will

be giving you understanding in it all' (2 Tim.2:7; *cp* John 3:27; Col.2:2,3)."

In my article beginning on page 79, I give special attention to the words of Paul in Romans 12:3, "[the] disposition [which] must be." Paul entreats us "not to be overweening beyond what your disposition must be, but to be of a sane disposition, as God parts to each the measure of faith" (Rom.12:3).

To be "overweening" is to be "*over*-disposed," which is to say "excessively attentive." While we need to be attentive to our duties as opposed to neglecting them, very often, it is when we "try too hard" to do right, that we end up doing wrong, even if, in some cases, in some new and different way. We may indeed conquer a certain failing (for example, that of drinking too much wine), only to add a new failing to our repertoire in its place (for example, being boastful—whether inwardly or outwardly—about the fact that we no longer drink too much wine).

What may well be within the scope of our general ability to do, in a certain state of mind even as in the particular and unique circumstances in which we find ourselves may also be beyond the purview of our present preferences and prevailing powers to perform.

The final article in our current issue is entitled, "Grace and Obedience" (page 87). In the early part of this article I address the importance of—and the difference between—"the allotment of eonian *life*" (Titus 3:7), and, "the allotment of the *reign* of God" (Gal.5:21). The former endowment is granted as a *gracious gift,* outright; the latter is granted as a *reward* for faithful service, yet in a way that nonetheless debars all human boasting. This is all to say, "so that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight," let us declare, sanely, consistently, and from the heart, "He who is boasting, *in the Lord* let him be boasting" (1 Cor.1:29,31). J.R.C.

ROMANS 3:21–26

GOD'S righteousness plus Jesus Christ's faith equals the justification of all. This is the formula of Romans 3:21-26 as rendered in the Concordant Version. It can be arranged as follows:

A. Yet now, apart from law, **God's righteousness** is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet **God's righteousness**

B. through **Jesus Christ's faith,**

C. for ["into"] **all**
(and on **all** who are believing),
for there is no distinction, for **all sin**
and are wanting of the glory of God,

C. **being justified** ["righteous-ified"] gratuitously in His grace,

B. through the **deliverance** which is **in Christ Jesus**
(Whom God purposes for a Propitiatory,
through **(His) faith,** in **His blood,**

A. for a display of **His** [God's] **righteousness** because of the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before in the forbearance of God), toward the display of **His righteousness** in the current era,

D. for **Him** [God] **to be righteous** and a **Justifier** [Righteous-ifier] of **the (human)** by [out of] **Jesus's faith.**

The passage begins and ends by drawing attention to God's righteousness (sections A). Next, in sections B, the

emphasis is on Christ Jesus's faith (that is, His obedience to the death of the cross, the shedding of His blood). He, in His faith in what God had willed for Him to do, and in His faithfulness to that will, is presented as the means by which God's righteousness is made manifest. Then, in third place, the way in which God's righteousness, now manifested through Jesus Christ's faith, affects human beings is set forth (the middle sections C). Finally, in verse 26 which is section D, this whole evangel as it concerns God and Jesus and the individual human being (now referred to simply by a definite article in the genitive case singular, "of the"), is summed up. God righteously righteous-ifies you and me and each sinner by means of the obedient Jesus (*cf* Rom.5:19), the One humbled to the death of the cross in faith and faithfulness.

Romans 1:18-3:20 has made it clear that in one way or another, or rather, in many, many ways, all human beings are unrighteous. All are under sin. Not one is righteous, not even one! As our Bible is divided into verses, this section is composed of sixty-four verses, the equivalent of two whole chapters. There is no way in which a human being can be *made righteous* by acts required by righteous standards of righteous behavior. This is the third reason why Paul was not ashamed of the evangel. (1) It is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing. (2) In it God's righteousness is revealed, by means of ("out of"] Christ's faith, for our faith (Rom.1:16,17). (3) We all desperately need it. The evangel which reveals God's righteousness by means of Christ Jesus's faith tells us of the only way to justification (or, to use an invented word so that the relationship to the word "righteousness" is shown: *righteous-ification*).

This righteous-ification by means of Christ's obedience to the death of the cross, is for all human beings. Since this is so, it is for those human beings who are presently believing this astounding message of joy and peace. But it

is not exclusively for us. It is for us because it is for all, and we are part of all humanity. (Yet this message manifesting God's righteousness through Christ Jesus's faith is already a spiritual power placed *on* us, day by day through our present lives. We are sealed with the earnest of the spirit unto the future deliverance of that which is procured, as Paul tells us in Ephesians 1:13,14. Indeed Paul writes of us in Romans 8:30 as those whom God designates beforehand, and calls, and *justifies,* so that also we look forward to a special future glorification.)

God is the Saviour of all humanity, but especially of believers (1 Tim.4:10). All shall be vivified in Christ, but each in his own class (1 Cor.15:22-28). All are being justified in a proleptic sense; the battle has been won, but what has been gained has not come into effect. Nevertheless already righteous-ification has been put to the account of those who are believing. Justification is a matter in progress and is certain to be enjoyed by all, for all shall be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19), and when God is All in all (1 Cor.15:28), His righteousness shall be realized and praised with joy throughout the universe.

In the current edition of the CV we indicate the distinction in verse 22 between the phrases "for all" and "on all who are believing" by commas. (This is also done in Young's Literal Translation.) Now we will show this by the use of parentheses, so that it cannot be overlooked. Paul writes to believers, but here he gives primary attention to what God's righteousness and Christ's faith mean for all. We see how coherent this principal point is if we read the passage apart from parenthetical points: By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight . . . . *Yet now, apart from law, God's righteousness is manifest . . . yet God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith for all, . . . for there is no distinction, for all sin and are wanting of the glory of God, being justified gratuitously . . . .*

The usual understanding of this passage, as it is supported by most translations, offers little appreciation for the words "righteousness of God" as it speaks of the fact that God justifies righteously. To justify is almost always taken to mean "to declare just" (as a matter of divine authority?) despite the fact that *-ify* words in English generally suggest causation, as does the particular Greek verb used here.

But perhaps even more distressful is that what is said here about what Jesus Christ does for justification is made to refer to something we must do if we want to be justified. Paul writes of Jesus Christ's faith, not our faith in Him. He refers to our believing only as it centers on the faith of Jesus Christ.

What shall I say, referring now to the change we are making by joining verse 24 directly to verse 23 instead of starting a new paragraph with verse 24? Here we are doing what most other translations do. Yet because they make the words "faith of Jesus Christ" to mean "faith in Jesus Christ," and they do not accept the words, "and on all," they lead us to suppose Paul is writing only of believers here. Yet there is this great problem: In a passage which follows a long dissertation about the unrighteousness of everyone, and includes the statement that all sin, they discredit the evangel by relating it only to some sinners. Paul does not say, as some commentators say, that even as sin is universal so also justification is universal in a restrictive sense of availability. That is not what is being said here. Sin is not something that is simply available. All sin, and all come under the ongoing operation of being justified gratuitously in God's grace.

D.H.H.

§

Following this article are four editions of the Concordant Version of Romans 3:21–26.

ROMANS 3:21–26
As Worded in Four CV Editions

CONCORDANT VERSION OF 1926/1930:

21 Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God has
been manifested (being testified to by the law and the
prophets), 22 yet a righteousness of God, through Jesus
Christ's faith, for all and on all who are believing, for there
is no distinction, 23 for all sinned and are wanting of the
glory of God.

24 Being justified gratuitously by His grace, through the
deliverance which is in Christ Jesus 25 (Whom God pur-
posed for a Propitiatory, through faith in His blood, for a
display of His righteousness because of the passing over
of the penalty of sins which occurred before in the for-
bearance of God), 26 toward the display of His righteous-
ness in the current era, for Him to be just and a Just-
ifier of the one who is of the faith of Jesus.

CONCORDANT VERSION OF 1942/1944:

21 **Yet now, apart from law,** a **righteousness of God** is °**manifest** (be**ing attested by the** A**law and the** A**proph-ets),** 22 **yet** a **righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith,** io**for all, and on all** who are **believing, for** there **is** no[t] **distinction,** 23 **for all sinned and are wanting of the** A**glory of** ·**God.**

24 **Being justified gratuitously** in **His** ·**grace, through the deliverance** which is **in Christ Jesus** 25 **(Whom** ·**God purposed** for a F**Propitiatory** shelter, *Lv 16:14* **through** ·**faith in His** A·**blood,** io**for a display of His** ·**righteousness because of the passing over of the penalties of sins** which °**occurred before in the forbearance of** ·**God,** 26 **toward the display of**

HIS ˙**righteousness in the current era,** *io*˝**for** ˝ **Him** ˙**to be just and** a ˡ**Justifier of the** one who is *o* **of** the **faith of Jesus) . . . .**

CONCORDANT VERSION OF 1966/1976:

21 **Yet now, apart from law,** a **righteousness of God is** ˚**manifest**˚ **(being attested**˚ **by the law and the prophets),** 22 **yet** a **righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith,** *io*˝**for all, and on all** ˙who are **believing, for** there ˡ**is no***t* **distinction,** 23 **for all sinned and are wanting**˚ **of the glory of** ˙**God.**

24 **Being justified**˚ **gratuitously** in **His** ˙**grace, through the deliverance** ˙which is **in Christ Jesus** 25 **(Whom** ˙**God purposed**˚ for a **Propitiatory** shelter, **through** ˙**faith in His** ˙**blood,** *io*˝**for** a **display of His** ˙**righteousness because** of **the passing over of the penalties of sins** which ˚**occurred before in the forbearance of** ˙**God),** 26 **toward the display of His** ˙**righteousness in the current era,** *io*˝**for Him** ˙**to be just and** a ˡ**Justifier** of **the** one who is *o* **of** the **faith of Jesus.**

TENTATIVE CONCORDANT VERSION, 2018:

21 **Yet now, apart from law, God's righteousness is** ˚**manifest**˚ **(being attested**˚ **by the law and the prophets),** 22 **yet God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith** *io*˝**for all (and on all** ˙who are **believing** it)**, for** there ˡ**is no***t* **distinction,** 23 **for all sin and are wanting**˚ **of the glory of** ˙**God,** 24 **being justified**˚ **gratuitously** in **His** ˙**grace, through the deliverance** ˙which is **in Christ Jesus** 25 **(Whom** ˙**God purposes**˚ for a **Propitiatory, through** His ˙**faith, in His** ˙**blood,** *io*˝**for** a **display of His** ˙**righteousness because** of **the passing over of the penalties** of **sins** which ˚**occurred before in the forbearance of** ˙**God),** 26 **toward the display of His** ˙**righteousness in the current era,** *io*˝**for Him** ˙**to** ˡ**be righteous and** a ˡ**Justifier** of **the** human *o*˝**by Jesus's faith.**

GOD'S EVANGEL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

It is God's righteousness which comes to the rescue of sinners who stand under the righteous verdict: *Not justified!* (*cf* Rom.3:19,20). The new pronouncement: *Being Justified!* (*cf* Rom.3:24) stands on the foundation of God's righteousness. The evangel defines this righteousness of God as that which demands and brings about the good outcome of salvation from the expected sentence of condemnation to the assured achievement of justification for irreverent sinners (*cf* Rom.4:5). We need to focus on this righteousness which is God's own righteousness if we are to appreciate the full significance of our justification (i.e., righteous-ification).

GOD'S GLORIOUS RIGHTEOUSNESS

In a notable reflection on Romans 3:21, A. E. Knoch wrote: "We are apt to be unduly concerned with our own righteousness, either through our acts, or our faith in God. The first thing to be established is God's righteousness. If He is not just, our righteousness, even if we had any, would be of no avail."[1]

That righteousness of God which is now made manifest is glorious beyond human imaginings. It retains all the characteristics of righteousness presented in the previous section of Romans. It is a righteousness that is without partiality (*cf* Rom.2:11). Therefore it is concerned with all of humanity (*cf* Rom.3:9-12). It refuses to overlook any wrong,

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.40, p.43.

even the hidden things of humanity (*cf* Rom.2:16). Therefore, it is concerned with all the many sins and offenses of Adam's seed (*cf* Rom.1:18-32). This is what Paul tells us with clarity and joy in Romans 5:12-19, but it is also found here in 3:22 in the words "for all," and in the logical connection between Romans 3:23 and verse 24.

Also, in accord with Romans 3:3,4, God's righteousness as it is made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ involves His faithfulness to His Word. What He has spoken He will bring about in full realization. Indeed all the features of divine righteousness which are commended by human unrighteousness are carried forward in the message of the evangel.

This leads us to that aspect of divine righteousness which is revealed in the evangel and which could not be shown by God's righteous work of judgment. God's righteousness as it is now being made manifest apart from human works is one that demands and achieves a good end for humanity and glory for God. It is God's righteousness that His stated purpose for humanity (that it be created in His image and likeness, Gen.1:26, and that all be seen as very good because it is very good, Gen.1:31), be realized.

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND SALVATION

That God's righteousness always leads to, and must lead to a good end was foreshadowed in the Hebrew Scriptures which attest to it. The types, of course, are never perfect. God's righteousness as it was perceived by the psalmists or prophets does not exhibit its full glory as we may perceive it now in faith within the message of the evangel. But the pattern of divine righteousness is there.

We note this pattern in Psalm 98:2, where God's righteousness is paralleled with His work of salvation:

Yahweh has made known His salvation;

To the eyes of the nations He has revealed
His righteousness.

Here is a picture of the fulfillment of God's promises going back to Genesis 12:2,3 when God told Abram He would make of him a great nation which would be blessed and would become a blessing to all the families of the ground. Hence the psalmist adds (Psa.98:4):

Raise a joyful shout to Yahweh, all the earth!

We can see now that the righteousness of God in His work of salvation from sin and death, through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus, lies behind this achievement of which the psalmist sang. That salvation of Israel (even unto the blessing of all nations) into the promised kingdom under the Messiah's reign could never come about apart from Jesus Christ's faith exhibited at the cross. Yet for us, these words of the psalmist's joy serve as a type of that highest manifestation of God's righteousness which comes through the "one righteous act of Jesus Christ" which is for all mankind for life's justifying (Rom.5:18).

So also, in Isaiah 59:16, we read of Yahweh's deliverance of Israel from His enemies. No one else can turn back transgression from Jacob:

Yet His own arm shall save for Him,
And His own righteousness, it will support Him.

The work of God in rescuing His chosen people, spoken of in these passages, is great and glorious, but it does not reach to the fullness of salvation and revelation of God's righteousness announced in the evangel of God which we are so privileged to believe. Nevertheless the pattern is the same. For Israel and for the nations in the coming kingdom, and for the promised Saviour and Anointed One, Jesus Christ, in setting up this kingdom, God's righteousness is seen in an achievement of salvation.

These operations of salvation are operations of righteousness. But what could not have been fully manifest to the prophet and the psalmist was that these righteous and saving works of God have a solid and sure basis in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, in His death on the cross for the salvation of sinners. That basis has now been laid down, and it is that which is declared in God's evangel. It is in that message of salvation in terms of justification that we who are believing can even now see this righteousness of God. We are believing that we are justified in His blood and conciliated through His death, and that all on the earth and all in the heavens shall be reconciled to God through the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love (Col.l:13-20).

JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

God's perfect righteousness in gaining our salvation can be seen only as it is manifested in the faith of Jesus Christ in His steadfast reliance on God's word and His faith-obedience to the death of the cross. The evangel concerns Jesus Christ and what He did for sinners. It is in this message that God's righteousness is revealed.

Hence Paul connects *faith* with *Jesus Christ* in the grammatical construction known as the "genitive case." This often corresponds to the English "possessive case," telling us what the subject *has.* Jesus Christ Himself *has faith,* and His faith is defined for us in His giving of Himself to the death of the cross for such sinners as we are.

The context of Romans shows that the faith being spoken of is focused on what God has said. "For what is the scripture saying? Now 'Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness'" (Rom.4:3; based on Gen.15:6). When God said, "A father of many nations have I appointed you," Abraham "faced" this word and believed it "of the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were" (Rom.4:17). This promise of God was

not doubted in unbelief, but Abraham "was invigorated by faith, giving glory to God, being fully assured also, that, what He has promised, He is able to do also" (Rom.4:20,21).

But this assurance of Abraham was eroded by circumstances. Consequently, as the years passed without any realization of the promised fatherhood, Abraham's faith that "God is able to do what He has promised" was altered to something like this: "God will do what He has promised when I help Him out." Hence he hearkened to Sarai's voice and fathered a son through Hagar (Gen.16:1-4).

Even with Abraham, who is set forth as the great human example of faith, there were times when faith faltered. Where God's word is believed despite the evidence of what is seen to the contrary, the believing may still become weakened as the visible evidence against God's promise becomes stronger and stronger. Because the English language distinguishes between "faith" and "faithfulness" we might say that Abraham had strong faith but was not fully faithful to what he believed. But this is making a distinction where there really is no distinction. If Abraham was not fully faithful, his faith was not perfect. To believe truly what God has said is to be faithful to what God has said, yet the experiences of life, day in and day out, inevitably expose the weaknesses of human faith by means of human unfaithfulness.

Hence, in the language of Scripture, both Hebrew and Greek, the word "faith" implies both believing and remaining faithful to what is believed. For human beings both faith and faithfulness are imperfect, or rather, for human beings faith/faithfulness (a single concept) *is* imperfect. But for Jesus Christ faith/faithfulness is without flaw, without weakness of any sort.

With Jesus Christ faith is faithfulness, and it is so without the slightest defect. But does His faithfulness truly involve faith? That is, does the fact that He endured the

cross and gave Himself a correspondent Ransom for all, dying for the salvation of sinners, involve an act of believing without literally seeing, as our act of believing must be? As the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, as He endured the cross and despised its shame, was believing that the joy lying before Him would come (Heb.12:2), and He was doing so without seeing. He suffered great agonies, but, in faith, He declared in prayer before His Father, "Not as I will, but as You!" (Matt.26:39).

WHAT DID HE BELIEVE?

What did Jesus Christ believe? As with Abraham, and as with us as well, His faith was centered in what God has said. He faced the declarations of God concerning Himself and was invigorated by faith, giving glory to God. He lived "on every declaration of God" (Luke 4:4; *cp* Matt.4:4). In doing this, He needed to abide faithfully even upon those words which spoke of His sufferings and death, for that was God's purposed pathway to His exaltation (*cf* Phil.2:9,10).

The necessity of His humbling and suffering and shame, culminating in the loss of fellowship with and spiritual empowerment by His God and Father for three fearful hours on the cross (*cf* Matt.27:45,46), and then His death and entombment, had all been revealed from Genesis and throughout the sacred writings entrusted to Israel. The glories would come *after* such sufferings (1 Peter 1:11) and could not be separated from them.

The hurting of the heel of the promised Seed (Gen. 3:15), the making of clothing for Adam and Eve from the skin of a slain animal (Gen.3:21), God's heeding of Abel's approach present from the firstlings of the flock (Gen.4:4), and all the slaying of living creatures as offerings, described in the law given at Sinai, spoke to Him of what the God of all righteousness had purposed for Him.

The words of David also spoke of what our Lord faced

in His humiliation: "My El! My El! Why have You forsaken me?" This psalm also voiced God's *answer* in terms of the praise and glorification of Him (Psa.22:1,21*c*-31). Again the words of the prophets spoke of what was set before Him: ". . . so ruined was His appearance more than any man . . . smitten of Elohim and humbled" (Isa. 52:14; 53:4). So also the prophet Habakkuk was given a vision of the Coming One (Hab.2:3 LXX), Who, before He comes in splendor and anger in chariots of salvation, would come as "the Righteous One," Who shall live "by His faith" (Hab.2:4; 3:3,8,12,13).

Jesus Himself testified to this before He was crucified: "Thenceforth begins Jesus to show His disciples that He *must* be coming away into Jerusalem and to be suffering much from the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and to be killed, and the third day to be roused" (Matt. 16:21). Afterwards He spoke to those with Him on the road to Emmaus, "and beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interprets to them, in all the scriptures, that which concerns Himself" (Luke 24:27). His faith was centered in, and He was faithful to all that God had said concerning Him.

THE VALUE OF JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

It is not simply the fact that God makes Himself known through His Son, Jesus Christ that is so astounding. But the fact that this manifestation comes by means of Christ's faithfulness in dying for sinners, and by this means only, is what takes our breath away. We tremble in view of this tremendous act of faith of our Lord. It must not be degraded into a mere matter of martyrdom. It was that which was necessary for the display of the righteousness of God as the Justifier (Righteous-ifier) of sinners. This most critical work which is for the justification of sinners has been done. This is the power of the evangel for our salvation

every day in our lives, in our hearts and our walk, in assurance and expectation and reliance on the living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind. Our joy and peace rest upon His faith which was faithfully heeded and kept.

The value of the faith of Jesus Christ lies deeply in the way in which it brings God's righteousness to light. It is a work of faith that covers the entire ground of human sin and enmity, that which is apparent and that which is hidden from view. No sin and no sinner can be left outside the realm of the divine righteousness being revealed in the evangel.

The faith of Jesus Christ calls for nothing less.

FOR ALL, AND ON ALL BELIEVERS

What God has done in not sparing His Son but in giving Him up for sinners points ahead to a future realization which encompasses the entirety of the human race. But, in God's grace, the justification which has been gained by our Lord Jesus Christ as the outworking of God's righteousness is even now applied to those who are believing, who are, in themselves, sinners just like everyone else.

As rendered by the CV, Romans 3:22[2] contains two prepositional phrases joined by "and," each with a distinct object:

for *all,*
(and **on** *all who are believing),*

Romans is addressed to those who have accepted the evangel in faith (Rom.1:8), both Greeks and barbarians,

2. Although present in numerous manuscripts from the seventh century A.D. and later, the earliest, extant Greek manuscripts lack the words "and on all," except for the insertion of these words in Codex Sinaiticus (fourth century) by a later hand. Most modern translations follow the shorter reading, thus suggesting that Paul was concerned with believers only in this passage. The longer reading, however, is defended in this article by contextual considerations: 1. The longer reading provides an immediate and clear connection with the "all" of Romans 3:10,12, and the race-wide viewpoint of 1:18-3:20. 2. We see why Paul speaks of God's righteousness as being manifest when we understand that it is concerned with everyone. 3. The longer reading helps us as believers to see ourselves as part of the human race, with special blessings but not as exclusive objects of God's righteousness.

both wise and foolish (Rom.1:14). It reflects Paul's eagerness to bring the evangel anew to the believers in Rome, to the Jew first and the Greek as well (Rom.1:15,16). The letter is written with believers, indeed *all* believers, directly in view. But after making this clear, the apostle devotes what amounts to one eighth of the entire epistle to establish the fact that *all* mankind are sinners. He directs attention to "all the irreverence and injustice of human beings" (Rom.1:18), to the fact that sinners are deserving of death (Rom.1:32) and the fact that everyone who condemns the unrighteousness of others is condemning himself (Rom. 2:1-3). Because of this, the apostle points out that God's indignation is coming on humanity in the form of being given over to their decadence, and it will come in the future upon unrighteous humanity in the day of God's indignation and righteous judgment (Rom.2:4-10). This includes the Jew, despite the fact that God has promised much in the way of prerogative and benefit, to which He will be faithful (Rom.2:17-3:4). Yet the Jew also must be judged fairly (Rom.3:5-8). *All* are under sin (Rom.3:9).

Not one human being is righteous.

It is thus altogether fitting in this context that when Paul returns directly to the subject of the evangel of God concerning Jesus Christ, he should make reference to the entirety of the human race. The problem which he has set forth in Romans 1:18-3:20 embraces all humanity. There can be no doubt that Paul is relating the evangel to all humanity in Romans 5:12-19. Similarly, the "for all" of Romans 3:22 should be understood as referring to all humanity, just as the "all" and the "not one" of 3:9-20.

Indeed there is a striking parallel in terminology between the phrase we are looking at in Romans 3:22 and the phrase in Romans 5:18:

God's **righteousness through** *Jesus Christ's faith* **for all . . . .**

through *one* **righteous** *[response]* **for all humanity . . . .**

In both passages the death of Jesus Christ on the cross is associated with righteousness. In Romans 3:22 it is presented as "Jesus Christ's faith" which manifests "God's righteousness."

In 5:18 it is simply called "one righteous response," that is, Christ's response to God's will in dying for sinners which is the effect of the demands of God's righteousness. Both passages also use the preposition "through" in the same sense. It is "through" the channel of that most pivotal and supremely righteous act of Christ upon Golgotha—it is "through" His faith, that all mankind will be blessed with justification.

Just as God's righteousness in judgment is related to all humanity in Romans 1:18-3:20, so is God's righteousness as it operates through the death of Jesus Christ related to all humanity, here in Romans 3 and again in Romans 5.

DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS MANIFESTED

We have noted from the testimony of the law and the prophets that God's righteousness was associated, not only with divine judgment but also and most essentially with salvation. The righteousness of God being made manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ must indeed take into account every sin of every sinner. But in doing so it leads to salvation. If there are no saving results, God's righteousness could never be made manifest in the act of giving His Son to the sufferings and death of the cross. If there are no

saving results for all, even if only one human being were to be left under the power of sin, the righteousness of God would remain a mystery.

How could we as believers who were chosen by God and designated for the place of a son long before we were born, come to perceive God's righteousness if only a chosen few are ever brought into salvation, while the rest are to be eternally denied the effects of Christ's faithful obedience to the cross? In that case God's righteousness would, at the very least, be trapped forever in obscurity. Salvation is in grace apart from works. No believer is able to boast in himself for that justification he has been graciously granted. No wonder that most of those who hold to the common view of everlasting loss for some (even the majority) of mankind seldom speak of God's own personal righteousness in relation to salvation.

God's righteousness as it is manifested through Jesus Christ's faith is a quality of God that has all humanity in view; it is for all. It is activated in a righteous operation which manifests God's righteousness at every turn. It leads to salvation. It leads to justification. It leads to God's glory. It righteously brings an end to the irreverence and unrighteousness of all humanity and supplants it with life's justifying (Rom.5:18).

ON ALL WHO ARE BELIEVING

In Romans 3:22 both prepositions, the "for" (Greek, *eis*), and the "on" (Greek, *epi*), preserve the focus on God and His activity and reflect the human position as receivers of what God has done. This is not to say that believing and receiving are not acts. But they are acts that center upon and direct attention to God and His acts. They are acts of appreciation and reliance and enjoyment. We would boast in ourselves if justification came by way of our obedience to instructions of law. But our act of believing, if it

is defined scripturally (and is not made to be an act that makes the difference between eternal bliss and everlasting hell) puts the spotlight on the One we believe. God is the One Who establishes justification and brings its values into our lives. The gaining of justification is the operation of God by means of the faithful obedience of His Son. The granting of justification to us when we believe is also His work. And our act of believing, which is itself a gracious gift which God parts to us, is the means God has chosen to convey what He has gained for all to us.

As for the present, righteousness is reckoned to us. This blessing is presented especially in Romans chapter four. That is surely a major significance of the word "on." Paul had used this preposition earlier in reference to God's indignation when he wrote, "God's indignation is being revealed from heaven *on* all the irreverence and unrighteousness of human beings" (Rom.1:18). It is God Who expresses His indignation in the giving over of sinners to their lusts and dishonorable passions and a disqualified mind. It is God also Who now expresses His grace in the reckoning of the righteousness achieved through the obedience of Jesus Christ to those who are believing.

This theme of God's present placement of the justification earned by Christ upon the believer will come before us as we continue forward from Romans 3:26. It is hardly enough to say that we are exceedingly blessed. But we are blessed in a way that blesses God (*cf* Eph.1:3) for His righteousness in His work of righteous-ification, a righteousness that is without mystery and redounds to His glory.

THE BELIEVERS IN RELATION TO ALL

As believers we receive special and transcendent blessings, not the least of which is the revelation that God's righteousness operates for the good of all. We receive blessings others do not receive, but we are still part of the

entirety of the human race. In coming to appreciate our blessings we are not crippled in mind concerning God's purpose for the rest of humanity, of whom we are a part. We are part of the "all" in the phrase "for all," even as we are part of the "all" in the clause "all sin and are wanting of the glory of God."

Note how Paul encloses the reference to believers between two references to all mankind:

> *God's righteousness through Christ's faith for all,*
> *(and on all who are believing),*
> *for there is no distinction, for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.*

Paul is not referring to two exclusive groups, such as believers and unbelievers, in Romans 3:22. He is referring to the whole of humanity and then to a special part of that whole. The believers are included in both the "for all" and the "on all who are believing."

When it comes to being a sinner, as well as when it comes to being objects of the righteousness of God as it operates through the faith of Jesus Christ, there is no distinction. The effects of this righteousness of God are for all, and will ultimately be enjoyed by all, even as all are sinners who, in themselves, stand in great need of the glory of God. The believer must realize that the benefits we receive now and in the eons ahead are due to the operation of the righteousness of God and are based upon what God accomplished for all humanity in the giving of His Son. Like the Jew of old, we who believe the evangel must realize that we all are sinners just like everyone else, and we are dependent on God and what He does through Christ for the benefit of all.

A PARALLEL PASSAGE

There is a striking parallel between these words in

Romans 3:22 and 1 Timothy 4:10. The righteousness of God as it is manifest through the faith of Jesus Christ is for all and on all who are believing. God is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. In both cases the emphasis is on God first of all. He is the Saviour. He is righteous in His work of justification. 1 Timothy had previously identified God's will to save all mankind (1 Tim.2:4) with Christ Jesus giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (2:5,6). Our passage in Romans identifies the manifestation of God's righteousness with the faith of Jesus Christ. The objective in both cases embraces all humanity with a special application to the believers.

A SOLID JUSTIFICATION

Paul has not told us simply that we are justified. He would have us see the basis, nature and scope of this justification which God has graciously and gratuitously granted to us. Its basis is solidly laid in the faithful act of Jesus Christ in His death for sinners, and its nature is solidly embedded in the righteousness of God. This being so, its scope is universal.

To be a believer of this evangel—what a benefit, what a prerogative, what a blessing for our lives every day! Thanks and praise be to our God!

D.H.H.

THE FAITH OF CHRIST

No other influence in all the world has overflowed in song like the joyous faith of Christ. It has inspired the most glorious melodies and the sweetest and most enduring songs. Its hymns transcend all others. Even in this wicked eon the praise of God or the blessing of His saints finds more expression in exultant song than all the other emotions of mankind. None of the religions of the world have a sacred repertoire to compare with ours, either in number, variety or elevation of thought. Our joy must overflow. Our praise must find utterance. (A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.18, pp. 56,67).

Ephesians 2:10

APPREHENDING THE WORD THAT GOD DECLARES

We should make every effort to *apprehend* the *word* that *God* declares to us for faith. "Apprehend" is derived from the Latin *apprehendere* the meaning of which is "to grasp" or "seize." In its Scriptural signification, "apprehend" means "mentally perceive"[1] (*neō,* MIND). This accords with one of the definitions of the English "apprehend" which is, "to grasp the meaning of; understand, especially intuitively; perceive." *This* is the sense of "apprehend" that we are concerned with, that of mentally perceiving (i.e., grasping, or seizing) the *word* that *God* declares to us for faith.

The difficulty here is that many readers are unfamiliar with the definition of "apprehend" which appears above. Instead, the notion that commonly comes to mind upon hearing the word "apprehend," is that of its alternative definitions: (1) "take into custody; arrest by legal warrant or authority," and, similarly, (2) "expect with anxiety, suspicion, or fear; anticipate." Neither of these definitions is the definition of "apprehend" as it is used in the Concordant Version which is, once again, "mentally perceive." Therefore, in every instance where we read the term "apprehend" in the CV, we should think the thought, "mentally perceive"; hence, therein, wherever we may encounter the word "apprehend," we should never call to mind any such thought as that of being taken into custody, or of being exercised by anxiety, suspicion, or fear.

1. Keyword Concordance, entry "apprehend," p.17.

Thus, in our writing or speaking about Scripture, we employ the essential meaning of "apprehend" which is to grasp, or seize, through mental perception. For believers, (scriptural) "apprehension" is the state of mind that one enjoys when one has become familiar with the correctly partitioned truth of God's Word (*cp* 2 Tim.2:15). This speaks of the faithful understanding which the Lord gives to us: "*Apprehend* what I say, for the Lord will be giving you understanding in it all" (2 Tim.2:7; *cp* John 3:27; Col.2:2,3).

INSTRUMENTS OF APPREHENSION

Many study aids may be used to assist in apprehending what Christ says to us. Such helpful works will assist us in gaining a knowledge of the essence of meaning, idiomatic considerations, contextual bearing, and grammatical usage of the vocabulary terms comprised in the extant Greek and Hebrew textual documents of the "Old Testament" and "New Testament." Proper usage of such tools fosters *apprehension*. "Idiom" is a way of expression that is peculiar to a specific group of people. It is the manner in which this group speaks among themselves. Idiom carries sense that is apprehended by those who make up this specific group, or who otherwise become familiar with their literature.

It is not, fundamentally, the classic literary works of a language with which we as believers are especially interested. It is with the literary works commonly referred to as "the Bible" with which we have to do. Hebrew idiom is important here. It is the expression of thoughts in Hebrew idiom that is superimposed upon common Greek grammar that we must toil to apprehend. Grammar is the system of structure and rules which govern a language. Each language has its own common and nuance system of grammar. Over time, application of grammar may adjust to idiom and cultural usage.

TRANSLATION, IDIOM, AND GRAMMAR

Translation from the original languages of Scripture into English is frequently difficult because of differences in idiom and implication of grammar from one language to another. These differences can make for difficulty in exchanging thoughts as well as loss of intended meaning. We will focus upon the difficulty of English to capture the impact of Hebrew idiom and the nuance of grammar of the original languages in the translation of Ephesians 2:10.

GOD'S GOOD WORKS

Ephesians 2:10 features a portion of God's work and its achievements. God's works are purpose-focused. They are designed to be useful in accomplishing the goals of *His* will. To this end, they are *good* works. Work that is in line with a (righteous) determined purpose is good. God's works are always aligned with *His* purpose—to reconcile all of *His* creation to *Himself* through the blood of Christ's cross (Col.1:20). God's work is Christ-centered. The outcome of God's good works in Christ are certain to achieve the decisions of *His* will in due season. In verse 10, the good works of God are many. They include creating us (i.e., the ecclesia) in Christ Jesus for good works— preparing these good works for us beforehand, and ensuring that we should be walking in them, for "His achievement are we."

GOD CREATED THE ECCLESIA FOR SERVICE

Even now, albeit in the incipient phase of His work, we are an achievement of God's work in Christ Jesus. He created us to work within the administration of Christ Jesus. In Christ, factually speaking, we are created holy and flawless, made ready to be useful in achieving God's purpose in Christ Jesus. The outcome of His creative work in us is spiritual in character. It is God's doing that puts this holiness and flawlessness in us, even if it is not readily percepti-

ble in us at present being obscured by our own fleshliness. Even so, in the measure granted to us, it is ours today as an *earnest* (2 Cor.1:22; Eph.1:14) or pledge of the fulness thereof with which He will endow us when we are glorified—in the day when we are conformed to the image of His Son (Rom.8:29,30). The achievement of *God's* work is, alone, our qualification to be useful in His service. In His wise counsels, He completed this work before the effects of sin entered the world.

GOD PRE-PREPARED GOOD WORKS FOR US

God's achievements include the *preparation and realization* of good works for us to perform. They were crafted in accord with His will for us in Christ Jesus, beforehand—that is, before the disruption of the world. He prepared these works without receiving counsel from us. No opinion or ratification came from us. Rather, all is done according to the *delight* of His will, which is: to head up all in the Christ, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Eph.1:10). These works are not an afterthought nor are they an adjustment to sin. His works for us are useful in nurturing our growth and in the display of the glories of Christ Jesus to others. They agree with His purpose in Christ, and are therefore *His* good works.

IDENTIFYING GOD'S GOOD WORKS FOR US

Now the question remains concerning our walk in God's good works. God's good works for us are not secret, yet they must be identified by us. They are purpose-focused, and managed in the administration of His grace by Christ Jesus, Who is Head of the ecclesia. They support Christ's agenda in completing God's purpose to become All in all (1 Cor. 15:28). In this present season, His work in us includes any worthy service that we may perform on behalf of others, our own unworthy deportment otherwise notwithstanding. These are features of our growth toward maturity in Christ (*cf* Eph.4:11-13). Work generated by men in themselves, well-intentioned or not as it may be, does not qualify as God's good works for us and in us. In the oncoming eons, His good works in us will display not the work of the earnest of His spirit which we enjoy even today, but will then display the fulness of His glory in us as members of the new creation in Christ Jesus (*cf* 2 Cor.5:17; Gal.6:15).

CLASSICAL GREEK ADJUSTED BY COMMON GREEK

It is the case that God prepares good works for us "that we *should walk* in them." Yet is it so that we *do* walk in these good works—even at present, not only in the eons to come? Traditional English *interpretation* of classic English translation (as concerns the phrase, "*should* walk . . ."), misapprehends "should" as an English synonym for "ought," instead of, according as it actually is, the English representation of the Greek aorist subjunctive, which speaks not of duty, but of dependency.

Our walk of good works is the outcome of the work which God does in us. First, He has created us in Christ Jesus for good works. Second, He has made ready these good works beforehand. This is certain, not uncertain. Third, our performance of them is ensured. The context, idiom, and grammar (both in the Greek and in the English as well)—not to mention the nature of the case—reflect this certainty, here in the final clause of Ephesians 2:10 which employs the aorist form in the subjunctive mood, which states a fact not yet fulfilled. In effect it is a future tense.

In classical Greek grammar the use of the subjunctive mood was understood by many as entailing uncertainty in the completion of a stated objective or activity. It is understandable how the subjunctive mood itself may have been supposed in itself to involve uncertainty, since from the viewpoint of our own ignorance of the future, *to us,* prac-

tically all future events are indeed uncertain. The subjunctive mood itself, however (as typically represented in the Concordant Version by "should,"[2] "may," or "might") merely speaks of *dependency* (i.e., of "subjoined-ness"). This is to say that the use of the subjunctive mood speaks of it being the case that any particular occurrence of the subjunctive calls to mind that upon which its related verb (e.g., as here, "walk") *depends* (or is contingent) for its own occurrence.

It seems more correct, then, simply to say that if that upon which the instantiation of any certain activity or event depends is itself certain (i.e., certain to act or occur), then that which is its *effect* is also certain to occur.

This is all to say that the good works which God prepares beforehand that we *should be* walking in them, speaks not of good works in which we "ought" to be walking. Instead, it speaks of good works in which we *shall* be walking, since we walk in them thus, as God's achievement. This is so since it is "in grace, through faith [that we are] saved, and this is not out of you, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8,9).

In the New Testament, God's Word uses common Greek as the language of expression. Therein, an additional notable example of the Greek subjunctive appears in Philippians 2:9-11: "Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him,

2. Wherever "should" appears in the Concordant Version, it appears not as the representative of a corresponding Greek word, but as an indicator of the presence of the Greek *subjunctive.* It modifies the contextual verb to which it refers. §"While 'should' is regularly used in the CV to indicate the subjunctive, sometimes 'may' is used instead for this same purpose, as an idiomatic variant, in cases where it is preceded by 'ever,' to denote contingency. *Should is not used in the sense of an obligation [i.e., 'ought'] and none of its renderings should be so construed.* Note the order of the words. *You should* is an obligation, but *should you* shows that it stands for *may you ever.* Similarly, the CV sometimes implements the rendering of the subjunctive as '*sh*may'" (Keyword Concordance, entry "should," p.268, §adjusted).

and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee *should bow,* celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue *should acclaim* that Jesus Christ is Lord, *for the glory of God, the Father."*

The bowing of every knee, and the acclaiming of every tongue that Jesus Christ is Lord is because "[Christ] humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil.2:8).

"*Wherefore,* also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, [in order] that every knee should bow . . . and every tongue should acclaim that Jesus Christ is *Lord, for the glory of God, the Father."* Therefore, in the end, that is, at "the consummation" (*cf* 1 Cor.15:23b), every knee is certain to bow, and every tongue is sure to acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father.

Understanding Given by His Grace

One's *apprehension and correct understanding* of the scriptural sense of the subjunctive mood (as represented in the CV by "should," "may," and "might"), even as all else that is holy and good in our lives, is dependent upon our Lord's influence of *grace* upon our hearts and minds. Misunderstanding is generally imposed by a lack of *apprehension* of God's purpose and work in Christ Jesus for us, as members of His body. Lack of understanding concerning *God's will* imposes the challenge of neither identifying nor recognizing God's good works, which He makes ready beforehand for us.

In the current era, our personal or corporate agenda may compete with the purpose that God has set for us in Christ Jesus. Our own opinions and decisions generate work that is outside of the will of the Lord. Though seemingly beneficial in a sense, these works are not useful in achieving

God's purpose in Christ Jesus. Such in actuality flesh-based "good" works are not the good works that God has prepared for us beforehand. They are works that we ourselves have generated according to our own purposes and desires, as members of "the old humanity which is corrupted in accord with its seductive desires" (Eph.4:22). Many such church-work examples abound.

OUR MATURITY IN CHRIST

At present, we need to apprehend that God's will for us is maturity: "that we should all attain to the unity of the faith and to the realization of the son of God, to a *mature* man" (*cp* Eph.4:13). His primary good work for us is the "adjusting of the saints" unto this end ("toward the adjusting of the saints"; Eph.4:12). Thus God gives "work assignments" and purpose to us in His Word. It is He Who provides the power of His spirit to achieve our growth toward maturity in our walk (*cf* Phil.2:13).

GOD'S GLORIOUS WORKS FOR US IN CHRIST JESUS

In that day, in the presence of Christ Jesus in His glory, God's work-assignment and purpose for us changes from measured progress made toward maturity, to that of "maturity-accomplished." This glorious end will be fully realized in us "that, in the oncoming eons, *He should display* the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:7).

GOD'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Again, our position in Christ Jesus is the outcome of the delight of God's will. He created good works for us beforehand, receiving no counsel from us. Finally, He ensures "that we *should walk in them* by the power of His spirit. We are an outcome of His work in Christ Jesus. We are God's achievement.

Robert G. Edwards

THE DISPOSITION WHICH MUST BE

(Romans 12:3)

For I am saying, through the grace which is given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to be overweening beyond what your disposition must be, but to be of a sane disposition, as God parts to each the measure of faith (Rom.12:3).

"Long before we were aware of anything, the minutest detail, as well as the great outlines of our career, were determined, and our most fervent wishes were granted, in the love of God (Rom.8:26-39).

"In the language of inspiration, the idea of prayer is essentially concerned with HAVING. To this is added the thought of *good*, WELL-HAVE, that is, a *wish*. If this is directed TOWARD anyone, especially the Deity, then it is TOWARD-WELL-HAVING, *prayer*.

"According to the Authorized Version, we *ought* to know what to pray for (Rom.8:26). The word *ought*, however, stands for the word *dei* (it-is-BINDING), hence cannot be rendered *we* ought, but *it*. It does not refer to *us*, but *what*. We are not aware *what* must be, so that we can pray accordingly. If it referred to us, then the word *hemas* (US) would have to follow, as in Acts 27:26, *it-is-binding us* to fall on a certain island. This passage also shows that the word means *must*, not "ought." *Ought* belongs to the word OWE, as in John 13:14, "you also *ought* to be washing one another's feet . . . ."

"The difference between the AV *as we ought* and the CV *to accord with what must be* [WHICH is-BIND-ING]

is almost infinite. One confines us to *ourselves* and our soulish and selfish interests. The other occupies our spirits with God and His great plan and purpose. Our prayer should always be in tune with His universal symphony. It is impossible for us to know the infinite details of His grand designs. These are as fixed and immutable as His holy Word.

Not a 'jot or tittle,' not one iota or serif, not the smallest letter or even a part of a letter of His revelation can be changed by our prayers, neither can the minutest part of His plan for us be altered by our petitions. In one case we look within at our failing selves, in the other we look above, at the infinite perfection of God. Our attitude and outlook are revolutionized.

"Let us beware, in our prayer, that we do not set ourselves above the Supreme. Let us not inform Him Who knows all, or reform Him Who has made all. He is not an idol of putty, so that we may remold Him to conform to ourselves. Those who know Him do not wish to change Him. They are satisfied and delighted to have Him as He is. Neither do they wish to change His purpose or His plan. His will, to them, is the only good. They wish to change themselves, not Him. They would have Him inform them, through His Word. They want Him to conform them to His will."[1]

NOT TO BE OVERWEENING, IN LIGHT OF WHAT MUST BE

While the principal modern definition of "overweening" speaks of overconfidence, conceit, or brashness (and all of these we surely wish to avoid), such a sense does not capture the essence of meaning of the Greek scriptural term itself here, *[h]uper phroneō,* of which its elements say, "be-OVER-DISPOSED." The notion "to be disposed (to)"

1. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.77, pp.5-7.

accords with that of the English *ween,* which simply means "to think; suppose . . . or imagine (something)."

The sense of the Greek word which the CV translates "overweening," then, would seem to be "*over*-disposed (to)." It is indeed our duty to be attentive, or disposed, to a faithful walk, "to pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace . . ." (2 Tim.2:22). But we should not pursue any such ideals in an excessive, or "*overly*-intent" way. Each one of us have our decided limitations; this is because God has granted us not measureless grace, but a *measure* of grace in His service.

Even where the accurate CV rendering "overweening" has been accepted, this entreaty in Romans 12:3 for us not to be "overweening," or engaged in any kind of excessive dwelling on the self (even in the interest, specifically, of faithfulness to God), has sometimes been misunderstood.

This is because of the phrase, "beyond what your disposition must be." Some have taken the entreaty as saying we should be attentive (even if not overly so) to overcoming our shortcomings, *except* for certain ones which "must be." It is felt that in such cases, since there is nothing we can do about them, Paul therefore makes an exception.

But it is also supposed that in all other matters progress is finally up to the individual, not to God. Of course there is an abundance of opinionated disagreement as to just what one can and cannot help doing, with the judgments concerning these things nearly always being much more favorable toward oneself than toward one's associates. Such imaginings have led away altogether from the original purpose of Paul's words, and have actually caused an increase in, albeit hyper-zealous, *failures* of walk among believers.[2]

The words "beyond what your disposition *must be,*" first of all, are an expression of realization and understanding that it is inevitable, until the time God conforms us to

2. The adage, "the only thing worse than a sinner is a reformed sinner," comes to mind here.

the image of His Son, that we will all remain, to whatever degree, far from perfect, according to our own disposition. Until then, no one can achieve perfection in the disposition of Christ.

Paul's words are plain: "your disposition *must* be." We need to face these words and recognize their significance. Now if it should be true that even some of the things to which we are disposed must be—and who has authority to say which ones are excluded?—there is no logical ground for objecting should we find that this is true concerning all.

Now in saying that a certain thing, at present, must be, we are not at all suggesting that *God* will not change it at a later time (perhaps, even in the immediate future), and do so *through* our toils. Our only point is that whatever must be—whatever it may consist of at any certain time—is that which cannot be otherwise.

If we know God's good purpose in evil, we may be afforded much consolation and insight through these words, even as when the apostle says, "it *must be* that there are sects also among you" (1 Cor.11:19), or, "for what we should be praying for, to accord with *what must be,* we are not aware" (Rom.8:26).

Here, in the opening words of Romans 12, we stand in the presence of the great truth that *all* is out of, through, and for God (Rom.11:36). *Since this is true,* our disposition, even as all else, is necessarily included in that which must be.

That which must be is that which occurs due to a cause. A caused event cannot be avoided, any more than an uncaused event, were such an event ever to occur, could be avoided. Either one chooses as he does due to a cause, or he does not. And, either way, "free will" is impossible.

"It is often said that no one can change the past. This is true enough, but it is seldom added that no one can change the future either. If the past is unchangeable, the future is unavoidable—on anyone's account. The future exists, timelessly, of the sequence of events that will happen, whether determined to happen or not, and it makes no sense to speak of avoiding those events than it does to speak of avoiding those events that have already happened."[3]

Even if, though unscripturally, we were to conceive of the future as that which "need not be," instead of, scripturally, as that which "must be," the popular conception of free will would still be precluded. Either way, free will is false. It is not simply that it is *not* true, but that it cannot even possibly *be* true.

It is not a question whether an event is a *divinely* determined event or a *self*-determined event.[4] In fact, it is not a question of whether an event is a determined event at all. The point is this: ultimately speaking, there are only three possible accounts of human behavior, (1) a causative account, (2) a non-causative account, and (3) an account that is partially causative and partially non-causative. And, all three of these accounts preclude free will.

One cannot categorically avoid doing what he does, (1) if all of his deeds are ultimately caused, (2) if none of his deeds are ultimately caused (i.e., if, thus, they are all acts of "sheer chance," due to nothing whatsoever), or (3) if some of his deeds are ultimately caused and some others of his deeds are not ultimately caused.

Therefore, it follows—"on anyone's account"—that categorical avoidance of future events (i.e., contrary choice, or "free will") is simply impossible. This conclusion can be evaded and denied; it can be disliked, disapproved of, and condemned. Through misrepresentation, it can be made to

3. D. C. Dennett, Elbow Room: *The Varieties of Free Will Worth Wanting,* p.124 and p.127 note; Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1985.

4. Behavior determined from within (i.e., solely due to internal causes) would still be determined behavior. It would be impossible to avoid, as much so as behavior determined from without, or, as much so as undetermined behavior.

appear ridiculous and immoral. It can be ignored, neglected, or misused. It can be practically denied even where not propositionally denied. Or it can simply not be understood and recognized. Nevertheless, since this conclusion, indeed, is conclusive, it cannot be made inconclusive.

THE BASIS OF PAUL'S ENTREATY

Though free will is false, and all must finally accord with "what must be," Paul's entreaty, nevertheless, remains: "I am entreating you *then,* brethren, by the pities of God, to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God, your logical divine service, and not to be configured to this eon, but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, for you to be testing what is the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect" (Rom.12:1,2).

In making his entreaty, Paul tells us plainly why he is entreating us. It is because of all the good news he has presented hitherto (especially the good news that all is out of, through, and for God), and because the evangel is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing (Rom.1:16).

The basis for the apostle Paul's entreaty is the glorious fact that all is out of, through, and for God. Though it is impossible for us to do anything of ourselves, since God, nonetheless, can do all these marvelous things of Romans 12:1,2 *in us,* and since the means He uses to accomplish this through us is the influence of His Word upon us, the apostle declares, "I am entreating you *then,* brethren, through [these] pities of God . . . ." (Rom.12:1; *cp* Eph.3:20,21).

Consequently, in seeking to heed his entreaty, we must remember that we cannot exceed the limitations imposed upon us (1) by our present *disposition* (i.e., inclinations and preferences of mind) "which must be," and (2) by the limited degree of power inherent in the limited measure of faith which God has dispensed to us. We will do well to view all our endeavors in light of these realities,

and to recognize that these limitations will lie upon us in all our pursuits.

Whatever progress in useful service we may achieve will only take place because it too comes to us out of, through, and for God. It will be for His glory, not our own. But the emphasis we are especially considering at the moment, as recorded in Romans 12:3, is the emphasis of Paul's seeking our *response* to the entreaty which he has just given us in verses 1 and 2.

The words "beyond what your disposition must be," were not written to inform us that Paul would not bother to entreat us at all concerning certain aspects of our walk, no matter how deficient. For indeed, he has just entreated us to present ourselves to God ideally, in a way that debars all such unprofitable over-attentiveness to self. It cannot be that he immediately contradicts himself.

Similarly, neither are we implausibly to reason along the lines that even though many things need not occur, since there are at least some (imperfect) things which must occur, the apostle would not have us much concern ourselves with living above their lowly level. After all, apart from some special revelation, we could never know just what was to be included in either category!

We believe that God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11) and that all thus accords with what must be. We are not fatalists, however, but ones who, ultimately speaking, rely upon God alone. Indeed, it is a mistake to suppose that full acceptance of the deity of God implies fatalism. Fatalism says that future events will come about *in spite of* what we do. Divine determination says that future events will come about *because* of what we do. Fatalism says that my morrow is determined no matter how I struggle. The divine decree declares that my morrow is determined *through* my own struggle (*cp* Isa.55:10,11).

"For I am saying . . . not to be overweening . . . but to be of a sane disposition, as God parts to each the measure of faith" (Rom.12:3). Paul's point is this: We are not to be engaged in any kind of phrenetic, frenzied "overstriving," but simply to be of a sane disposition—"as God parts to each *the measure of faith"—which alone is able to produce the fruit of faithfulness* (*cp* Gal.5:22). Now we rely upon the living God. *He* is our Saviour, our Deliverer and Sustainer in our faithfulness as well, even as in all else.

OUR DISPOSITION IS GIVEN BY GOD

The phrase "beyond what your disposition must be," then, does not exempt us from seeking certain ideals. Instead, they are words of understanding and consolation, that we might avoid unbridled self-condemnation when we fail, and self-righteousness and pride when we succeed. For, "A human cannot get anything if it should not be given him out of heaven" (John 3:27). Therefore, *whatever* disposition we may have is the disposition God has given us. It is what "must be." And, beyond the effects of what our disposition must be, in the nature of the case, we cannot go.

The sense is: Do not be phrenetic, but rather, sane. Yet, in endeavoring to heed this counsel, remember that you cannot heed it perfectly, for you cannot transcend what your disposition must be. Even so, be of a sane disposition, as God parts to each the measure of faith, the measure of faith which produces corresponding faithfulness of walk.

Let us seek to heed Paul's words of entreaty and counsel here, but only with the prayer that in it all *God* might be fulfilling every delight of goodness and work of faith in power, so that the name of our *Lord Jesus*—not *our* name—may be glorified in us, and we in Him, in accord with the *grace* of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ (*cf* 2 Thess.1:11,12). J.R.C.

GRACE AND OBEDIENCE

THERE are certainly parallels between the evangel of the Uncircumcision and that of the Circumcision, but these parallels do not include the *necessity* of our doing such things as avowing our faith verbally (though we gladly do so) or obediently persevering (though we seek to do so). We do not "do" *in order* to live, but *because* we live (*cp* Rom.10:5; Rom.8:1b,2).

If we genuinely believe, it is evident that we have been called and are among the chosen. Though it is the desire of our heart to be faithful to the Lord, it is not *necessary* for us to obey in order to have future eonian life.

When we are vivified, seated together among the celestials, rejoicing in eonian life and glory, this will not be the generosity of God's reward, but a display of the transcendent riches of His *grace* (Eph.2:5-7). Eonian life under the Circumcision calling, however, *is* a *reward;* it is only for those who are worthy (Luke 20:35), for those who are *doing* righteousness (1 John 2:3,4,14; *cf* 1 John 3:7-10). Though most cannot see this, this is the basic distinction between the gospel of the Circumcision and that of the Uncircumcision.

Yet it is necessary for us to obey if we would *reign* during the future eons (2 Tim.2:12a), if we would enjoy the allotment of God's "*kingdom.*" In Greek, the *noun* "reign" (or "king[dom]") is *basileia,* and the *verb* "reign" is *basileuō;.* Paul is very clear, and we are not to be deceived: those whose continued, habitual activity (or "practice," *prassō*) is that of the works of the flesh, "shall not be enjoying the allotment of the [*reign*] of God" (Gal.5:21; *cp* 1 Cor.6:9;

Eph.5:5). The literal English equivalent of the Greek is, "THE-*ones* such PRACTICING, KINGdom [i.e., *reign*] OF-God NOT WILL-BE-tenantING."[1]

That is, those who have habitually practiced the works of the flesh, will not be taking part (having a "tenancy" or "allotment") in God's *rule.* Those who do not *endure* now, will not *reign* then.

Yet this is not at all to say that those who do not endure now will not *live* then. Since eonian life is a matter of *grace,* it follows that, on the one hand, there is nothing we can do to gain it, and on the other, that there is nothing we can do to lose it. "We all, indeed, shall not be put to repose, yet we *all* shall be changed, in an instant, in the twinkle of an eye, at the last trump" (1 Cor.15:51,52a). In that day, we *all* shall be changed, not merely those among us who have endured. "Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, *then* you also shall be manifested together with Him in glory" (Col.3:4).

We must distinguish between the allotment of God's *kingdom* [i.e., "reign"] and the allotment of *eonian life.* Though we will not all take part in God's reign, nonetheless we will all *live* under its jurisdiction. It is immediately following Paul's words in which he soberly declares that the unjust, indeed, shall not be enjoying the allotment of God's *kingdom,* or *reign,* that he joyously adds the following contrastive statement: "*But* you are bathed off, *but* you are hallowed, *but* you were *justified* in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God" (1 Cor.6:11).

As those who have been justified (i.e., made righteous) in God's grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24), we have the *expectation* (not merely a possible "hope") of "the allotment of *life eonian*" (Titus 3:7). Therefore, we will *live* throughout the coming eons—

1. CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT, p.551; sublinear, Gal.5:21.

not to mention be *saved* from the indignation of God (1 Thess.5:8-10)—even if it should be that we do not *reign.*

Besides, those who do reign will no more be able to boast in themselves of their endurance than those who live will be able to boast in themselves of their membership in the ecclesia. *All* will then say, "in the *grace* of God, I am what I am" (*cp* 1 Cor.15:10). Indeed, if we cannot wholeheartedly say this at present ourselves, we are not *faith*fully enduring in the first place, but are instead only boasting in ourselves, according to human tradition; if so, we can hardly expect to be among those who will reign.

Let us soberly recognize that those who are practicing the works of the flesh will not be "tenanting" (or having an allotment in) God's reign. Yet let us happily rejoice that, "being justified in that One's grace, we may be becoming enjoyers, in expectation, of *the allotment of life eonian*" (Titus 3:7).

If we would faithfully endure, it will be necessary for us to learn what we must do unto this end. Instruction precedes obedience. For this we will have to learn how to "*correctly* cut the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15), as Paul says, "that you may know that which concerns you" (Col.4:8).

For example, concerning the matter of deciding for days, it is not that the law has been "done away," or that the sabbath has been changed to Sunday. It is only that the believers of the nations did not need to keep the law of Moses to be saved (Acts 15), as even the Jerusalem leaders recognized. The "law of God," when the reference is to what was given through Moses, is spoken of interchangeably as the law of Moses and that of the Lord (e.g., Luke 1:6; 2:22-24,39; John 1:17; Heb.10:28). The claim which some make that while the "law of *Moses*" has been rescinded, the "law of *God*" must be obeyed by "Christians" today not only to be faithful but to be saved at all, is unwarranted.

As used by most, there is much more mischief and con-

fusion concerning the word "Christian" than there is light and understanding. Paul managed to write all of his epistles without employing it even once. In the Scriptures, this expression (*Christianos,* ANOINTED-[Latin suffix]) is a *worldly* term of contempt for the followers of Christ. When we are speaking from a secular vantage point, perhaps we might use it ourselves (though without any contempt) of any today who are naming the name of the Lord. But we would do well to confine our usage to this application.

What some call "God's law"—that is, to speak plainly, the Ten Commandments and perhaps certain other laws from the books of Moses—is that which is said to constitute timeless righteousness. However reasonable and scriptural this notion may seem to be, it simply is not true. We do not seek to obey *as such* even a single one of the laws given through Moses. Similarly, we do not inconsistently set aside the fourth commandment, that enjoining sabbath-keeping, while seeking to heed the remaining nine ourselves. Not at all. It is merely incidental to our own obedience that, for example, Moses instructed the Israelite to honor his father and mother (the fifth commandment of the "ten words"). *We* are to follow the apostle Paul fully in his teaching (2 Tim.3:10). *That* is why we, *like* Israel, are to honor our parents also (Eph.6:1-3).

Anyone who is at all acquainted with the Pauline writings is aware that the apostle places much emphasis on the importance of the believer's *obedience.* He employs the imperative mood and gives many entreaties—clearly and directly—whenever he wishes to present the Lord's directives concerning us. In so doing, he sometimes presents various instructions to us that were indeed first given as laws for Israel of old, often interpreting them in a fuller and more exalted sense (e.g., Eph.5:28). *Yet there is no such instruction anywhere in his writings concerning the sabbath.* Likewise, he nowhere teaches that the will of God

with respect to the believer's walk may be found within the books of Moses. May these facts speak to us, concerning the genuine teaching of our apostle, who dared not to speak any of what Christ did not effect through him, "for the *obedience* of the nations" (Rom.15:18).

ZEALOUS FOR LAW, SAVED THROUGH GRACE

Among the Jews there were tens of thousands who had believed, and they were all inherently zealous for the law (Acts 21:20). Under the economy of the law, it was essential that the believers should display their own righteousness (Matt.5:20). If they would enter into life, they must "keep the precepts" (Matt.19:17). Throughout their generations they were to teach their sons, "It shall come to be righteousness for us when we observe to do all this instruction before Yahweh our Elohim, just as He had enjoined on us" (Deut.6:25).

Understandably, then, at Jerusalem some from the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, assuming that any believers of the nations would have to become proselytes and keep the law even as they (*cp* Matt. 23:15; Isa.56:1-7), "rose up, saying that [these] must be circumcised, besides charging them to keep the law of Moses" (Acts 15:5). So the apostles and elders there gathered together to see about this matter (Acts 15:6).

"Now there coming to be much questioning, rising, Peter said to them, 'Men! Brethren! You are versed in the fact that from the days at the beginning God chooses among you, that through my mouth the nations are to hear the evangel and believe. And God, the Knower of hearts, testifies to them, giving the holy spirit according as to us also, and in nothing discriminates between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. Why, then, are you now trying God, by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we are strong enough to bear? But

through the *grace* of the Lord Jesus we are believing, to be saved *in a manner even as* they'" (Acts 15:7-11).

The idea behind the Greek phrase for "in a manner even as they" (*kath on tropon kakeinoi*), is that the Jews themselves would only be saved (through the grace of the Lord Jesus) based upon the same method or by the same means as that which God was already using to save the nations. Since the Jews had to bear the yoke of the law anyway, though they, like their fathers, were not strong enough to do so, it was evident that God would have to employ extremely powerful means if they should ever be saved. And if there was to be any expectation of their being able to keep the law satisfactorily, they would have to be regenerated—that is, they "*must* be begotten anew" (John 3:7b). Through the holy spirit of God they were enabled to do what was otherwise impossible.

Concerning all such ones the apostle John writes, "*Everyone*[2] who *is* believing that Jesus is the Christ *is* begotten of God. And *everyone* who *is* loving Him Who begets *is* loving him also who is begotten by Him. *In this we know* that we are loving the children of God, whenever we may be loving God *and may be doing His precepts.* And His precepts are not heavy, *for all*[2] that *is* begotten of God *is* conquering the world. And this is the [agency of] conquest that conquers the world: *our faith*" (1 John 5:1-4).

"*Everyone*[2] who *is* begotten of God, *is not* doing [i.e., practicing] sin, *for* His [God's] seed is remaining in him, *and he* [relatively speaking] *can not be sinning, for* he is begotten of God" (1 John 3:9; *cp* 1 John 1:8).

2. "Universal" terms must always be interpreted according to their context. They always refer to all *who are in view*—within the scope of the context or in the nature of the case. In this instance, the words "everyone" and "all" have in view (and are confined to) all those who are called into Christ through the evangel of the Circumcision.

In light of all this, the fact that these Jews were believing through the *grace* of the Lord Jesus becomes much more meaningful to us. This believing of theirs itself had only occurred since they were "to be saved," though in the same *manner* (*tropos,* through the same "method" or "means") which God would use for the salvation of the nations.

God's method for effecting salvation—the means which He always employs—is the power of His own word: He speaks and it is done; for He *causes* the testimony of His word to be fulfilled. His creatures are merely the men of His counsel (Isa.46:11). His word, which fares forth from His mouth, never returns to Him empty. But rather, it does whatever He desires, and prospers so as to accomplish that for which He sends it (*cp* Isa.55:10,11).

A DOOR OF FAITH

During the conference at Jerusalem, a time was provided so that the entire multitude might hear the testimony of Barnabas and Paul. As at Antioch, they informed the Jerusalem assembly of whatever God had done with them, explaining *not* how He had pointed those of the nations to the existing door of proselytism but how He had "*open[ed]* to the nations a door of *faith*" (*cf* Acts 14:27). Moreover, Barnabas and Paul wisely unfolded "whatever signs and miracles God does among the nations through them" (Acts 15:12). As a result, the Jewish believers were afforded assurance that their ministry was of God.

It must have been astonishing for these Jewish believers to discover that Paul, unlike themselves, was *not* compelling the nations to be judaizing (*cp* Gal.2:14). Yet since they recognized that *God,* nonetheless, had entrusted Paul with the evangel of the Uncircumcision "according [i.e., just as surely] as Peter [with that] of the Circumcision," knowing the *grace* which *was* being given to *Paul,* James and Cephas and John gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand

of fellowship even so (Gal.2:7-9). As Peter had said before to the doubting apostles and brethren of Judea concerning the nations, "If, then, God gives them the equal gratuity as to us also, when believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I—able to forbid God?" (Acts 11:17).

Consequently, having pointed out that the words of the prophets (his citation is Amos 9:11,12) are in *agreement* in principle with this ministry of Paul's, James says, "Known from the eon to the Lord is His work" (Acts 15:18). That is, from of old God has known what His work would include, and, astonishing as it may be, His work includes this ministry of Paul's among the nations—even though it is apart from the law (*cp* Acts 18:13).

"Wherefore, *I* decide," says James, "not to be harassing those from the nations who are turning back [or "turning about"] to God, but to be writing an epistle to them to be abstaining from ceremonial pollution with idols, and prostitution, and what is strangled, and blood. For Moses, from ancient generations, city by city, has those who are heralding him, being read on every sabbath in the synagogues" (Acts 15:19-21).

James is saying that if any among the gentile believers *should* be directed of the Lord to become proselytes, they could readily find synagogues where Moses was being heralded every sabbath and thus be afforded instruction in his writings. *If* this should occur, any subsequent law observance by such gentiles would not be wrong. But, in light of Paul's unique and yet faithful ministry among the nations, it becomes evident that gentile believers must not be *charged* to keep the law of Moses or told that they cannot be saved apart from circumcision.

However, James did consider it necessary to burden the gentiles with a few instructions of his own (though he claimed they were the counsel of the holy spirit as well), even terming them, "essentials." Yet these instructions

were only concerned with abstinence from idol sacrifices, blood, strangled animals, and prostitution. It is interesting to note what he deemed absolutely "essential" while also noting that they were the *only* things he included in this category.[3]

Since not even James, through his personal decrees, had attempted to enjoin sabbath observance upon the nations, and since any such decrees as those which he did make are now "erased" (Col.2:14) and "nullified" by Christ Himself (Eph.2:13-18), Paul says, "Let no one, *then,* be judging you in food or in drink or in the particulars of a festival, or of a new moon, or of sabbaths, which are a shadow of those things which are impending—yet the body is the Christ's" (Col.2:16,17), and, "you are complete in Him" (Col.2:10).

Regardless of the value of any such individual rules, since the decrees which James had set forth are not to be viewed as obligatory, it is even more unwarranted to suppose that various points of the law of Moses, such as those having to do with food and drink and various days, ought to be observed. After all, not even James (who was not an apostle) had said that these things should be attended to, much less had Paul given any such instruction!

The Colossians were not to permit others to "judge" them (to impose their opinions upon them) with respect to the "elements of the *world,*" that is, with respect to the partic-

3. Evidently, the purpose of these *decrees* was merely to make it possible for the Jews to have social fellowship with the believers among the nations without offending Jewish ethics. A Jewish believer, due to the proscriptions of the law, would be asking for all its curses should he be found eating at the same table with a gentile who had served an idol sacrifice, or strangled meat, or blood. Though it is true that Paul, when passing through Syria and Cilicia "gave over" *James'* decrees to the believers there (Acts 16:4), later on he practically repealed them when he made the eating of meats offered to idols a matter of individual conscience (1 Cor.8:1-13; *cp* Eph.2:15).

ulars of the Mosaic SYSTEM (*cp* Gal.4:3,9,10; Acts 21:24). Instead, they were to heed Paul's own counsel to "*Beware* that no one shall be despoiling you through philosophy and empty seduction, in accord with human tradition, *in accord with the elements of the world, and not in accord with Christ*" (Col.2:8). Misplaced truth *is* human tradition. All that is not in *accord* with (*kata,* DOWN) *Christ*— whatever teaching there may be that fails to base all upon the intrinsic sufficiency of His sacrificial work— is wrong and will rob us of the truth. This is so even if such teachings should seek to promote the observance of the very components (i.e., "elements") comprised in Yahweh's own law, given to Israel.

Nearly all who advocate present-day sabbath observance teach that we *must* observe this day and cannot be saved unless we do. This is a far more serious error than merely affirming that we *should* observe the sabbath, but need not do so to be in Christ or to be vivified in the day of His appearing.

Yet even the claim that we *should* observe the sabbath is simply incorrect. Most do not seem to realize that Paul, the apostle of the nations, was extremely critical of any who had received his evangel who were nonetheless "scrutinizing" days (Gal.4:10) and otherwise seeking to "judaize" (*cp* Gal.2:14)—to follow the ways of the Jews by attending to those things which pertain to the covenant from Mount Sinai (Gal.4:21, 24, 30).

If any should wish to observe the sabbath, to whatever extent, as a matter of sheer personal preference, that is one thing, whether or not such a decision should reflect mature judgment. But, in any case, there should be no suggestion that it is somehow pleasing to God for us to do so any more than to circumcise, or that those who do *not* follow the practice of observing days, including the sabbath, are therefore displeasing to Him. J.R.C.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 109th Year

(1909–2018)

Contents:

97 Editorial
100 Romans 7:21–8:8
101 Spirit and the Mind
111 Life and Peace
115 Creation and Disruption
128 The Holy Spirit of God
133 The Myth of "Free Will"

THIRD QUARTER, 2018

Volume 109 **Number 3**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, THIRD QUARTER 2018
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED NINE

EDITORIAL

When we hear the phrase "God's law," for many, the idea that comes to mind is that of "the ten commandments"[1] as recorded in Exodus 20. It is a mistake, however, to conceive of the word "law," or of such phrases as "the law" or "God's law" as if any of these constitute a denominative, a veritable proper noun, indeed, a most unusual proper noun of singular, exclusive reference.

An awareness of this common misconception becomes especially important to us as we approach the epistles of Paul, giving special attention therein to his evangel, which he was heralding among the nations. Therein, while his usage of the word "law" is often in reference to God's law which He gave to Israel, this is not always the case. The apostle sometimes speaks of law generically, in reference to law per se, with respect to its inherent nature and ramifications (e.g., Rom. 7:1-4). Paul speaks as well of what effectively is the law of sin and death, how it is that "through one human sin enters into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passes through into all human beings, on which all sin" (Rom.5:12).

Conversely, it is in the evangel of God's *grace*, in which Paul heralds the *law* of God—"*God's law*" (Rom.7:25)—*which*

1. The traditional phrase "the ten commandments" as ordinarily construed has in mind the ten precepts which Elohim gave to Israel through Moses as recorded in Exodus 20:3-17. In the Scriptures, these precepts are called "the ten words": "Moses wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, *the ten words*" (Ex.34:28; *cp* Deut.4:13; 10:4). Each one of these ten "words" constituted an authoritative utterance of "the One, Elohim" which He gave to the nation of Israel. The "Ten" provided the sons of Israel not only with these self-same instructions in their own right, but served as well as a principled foundation which directed the people to the many, detailed particulars of the Law (namely, the law of Yahweh, given through Moses to Israel) as a whole.

he identifies as "*the spirit's law of life*" (Rom.8:2). This vital theme of "God's law" as appertains to the evangel and closely related topics are addressed in Dean Hough's article, "Spirit and the Mind" (p.101).

On page 100, the text of Romans 7:21-8:8 is presented as it appears in our tentative CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, this text being the portion of Scripture primarily addressed in the article which follows.

The classic Meditation entitled "Life and Peace" by William Mealand, begins on page 111. Perhaps like no other, this little work makes manifest, truly, "The mindset of the spirit is life and peace" (Rom.8:6).

The article "Creation and Disruption" (p.115) by A. E. Knoch, considers the question, Why was the earth not left as it was when originally created, providing the answer, "Because it is the stage on which God reveals, not only His creative power, but the deeper attributes of wisdom and grace and love."

In my article, "The Holy Spirit of God" (p.128), I address many of the issues that arise concerning "HOLY SPIRIT," and "THE HOLY SPIRIT," as to the various usages of these phrases, including ones which speak of God Himself, still others being in reference to His powerful operations. Foundationally, I explain the meaning of the phrase itself "the HOLY SPIRIT of God" (Eph.4:32), which is: "the *consecrated imperceptible power of* God."

In our final article, "The Myth of Free Will" (p.133), I rehearse what the traditional notion of free will is stipulated to be. In addition, I seek to draw attention to important aspects of volitional *freedom* (i.e.,"freedom *of* will"), ones which indisputably do obtain and are the possession of us all. Finally, I explain why the central claim of the free-willist (namely, that of a capacity of ultimate control over one's decisions) is incoherent and untenable, since there is no possible scenario under which any such capacity might exist.

J.R.C.

WE LIVE in a disrupted world where the chaos of sin and vacancy of death, covered over by the darkness of ignorance brings much wretchedness. This is the world we know in flesh. It is real to us because we hear its sounds with our ears of flesh, see it sights with our eyes of flesh and are occupied with its ways by our minds of flesh.

Yet for us who are believing God's evangel concerning His Son there is another life, which we have in spirit and by the spirit of God. This is our "life in Christ Jesus." We do not yet know it fully, but we are becoming acquainted with it in our minds which affects our actions as God's spirit works together with what He says to us in His "it-is-WELL-MESSAGE."

As we consider this evangel again in this magazine, along with the scriptural themes of God's holy spirit and will, we say with Paul, "Thanks be to God!" which is to say "Joy be to God for His joy to us in His rescue of us through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (*cf* Rom.3:24; 7:24,25). Thanks be to God that He has not given us free will, that is, a will that is without a cause, nor the ability to act apart from His operation of all in accord with the counsel of His will (*cf* Rom.8:28; 11:36; Eph.1:11). Thanks be to God that His righteousness is not dependent on our obedience to His law of righteousness, nor on our faith, but rather rests fully on the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ (*cf* Rom.3:21,22,26; Phil.2:6-8). Thanks be to God that in His power and wisdom He has first of all seen to it that we become slaves of sin, but now already He has given us over to that type of teaching which reveals His righteousness and love (*cf* Rom.6:17,18). Thanks be to God that victory over death and sin which entered into the world through the one sin of Adam and passes upon all (Rom.5:12), has been accomplished through our Lord Jesus Christ (*cf* 1 Cor.15:57), and will be enjoyed by all (*cf* Rom. 5:18,19; 1 Cor.15:22). "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity!" (2 Cor.9:17).

D.H.H.

ROMANS 7:21–8:8

21 **Consequently I am finding the law that,** at **my** ˙**willing to be doing the ideal, the evil is lying**° **beside me.** 22 **For I am** ˡ**gratified**° **with the law of** ˙**God** *ac***as** to **the human within,** 23 **yet I am observing** a **different law in my** ˙**members, warring**° **with the law of my** ˙**mind, and** lead**ing me** into **captivity** *i***to the law of** ˙**sin** ˙which ˡ**is in my** ˙**members.**

24 A **wretched human** am **I!** *a***What will** ˡ**rescue**° **me out of this** ˙**body of** ˙**death? [Grace!]** 25 *y***Now thank**s be **to** ˙**God,** rescue is **through Jesus Christ, our** ˙**Lord. Consequently then, I**′ *s***my**self, with **the mind indeed am slaving** for **God's law, yet** with **the flesh** for **sin's law.**

8 **Nothing consequently** is **now condemnation to** ˙those **in Christ Jesus.** 2 **For the spirit's** ˙**law of** ˙**life in Christ Jesus frees** ⁼**you from the law of** ˙**sin and** ˙**death.** 3 **For** ˙what is **impossible** to **the law, in which it was** ˡ**infirm through the flesh,** does ˙**God,** ⁻**sending** His *sf***own** ˙**Son in** the **likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns** ˙**sin in the flesh,** 4 **that the righteous** intent **of the law may be fulfilled in us,** ˙who are **no**t **walking** in **accord** with **flesh, but** in **accord** with **spirit.**

5 **For** ˙those who ˡ**are** in **accord** with **flesh are setting** their **mind**s on ˙that which is **of the flesh, yet** ˙those who are in **accord** with **spirit** on ˙that which is **of the spirit.** 6 **For the mindset of the flesh** is **death, yet the mindset of the spirit** is **life and peace,** 7 **because the mindset of the flesh** is **enmity** *io***to God, for it is not** ˡ**subject**° **to the law of** ˙**God, for neither is it** ˡ**able**°**.** 8 *y***Now** ˙those who ˡ**are in flesh are not** ˡ**able**° **to please God.**

SPIRIT AND THE MIND

GRACE!
Through Jesus Christ.
God's law.
The spirit's law.

Paul's letter to the Romans expounds *God's evangel,* His "it-is-WELL-MESSAGE." This message (greatly needed and deserving of all welcome in our days) is compressed into one word in Romans 7:24, *Grace.* In Romans 7:25 it resounds in the banner phrase, *Through Jesus Christ,* and is captured in the words, *God's law.* And in Romans 8:2 this evangel as it works in us who are believing is called *The spirit's law.* This is God's law of grace as it operates in our lives today while we still live in flesh under the law of sin and death. By the spirit of God and in spirit we have *life in Christ Jesus!* This needs to be in our minds that it may also affect our spirits and our actions.

Therefore, it is well. Despite the law of sin and death which operates in our flesh, *Nothing is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus* (Rom.8:1). For sin itself has been put under condemnation (Rom.8:3).

GRACE!

The Greek word *charis* is generally translated **grace,** but sometimes, as in Romans 7:25, it is given the variant, **thank**s (with a lightface "s" to show that it is a singular noun). It may be helpful to use the standard term JOY to understand how the two renderings represent one Greek word: Grace is the *joy* which God gives us. Thanks is the *joy* we give God. In the current revision of the CV we are

conjecturing that Paul originally included the word *charis* twice in succession[1] in his reply to the question, "What [or Who] will rescue me out of this body of death?" His immediate answer is an exclamation: *Charis!* The joy of grace will rescue me! The second use of the word is also an expression of joyful emotion: *Charis de* to God! Now joy be to God in the form of thanks.

Even if we do not agree that the word "grace" was here twice in Paul's original letter, the reply to the question of Romans 7:24 must accord with the words of Romans 3:21-24. There we are told that God manifests His righteousness by justifying the sinner gratuitously, in *His grace* (that is, in His joy of giving that which brings joy to us) through *the deliverance* which is *in Christ Jesus.* That deliverance is apart from law works required of the sinner as set forth in the first five books of the Bible, called the "Torah" (the Hebrew term for "law"). The rescue comes about *through Jesus Christ,* through His obedience (submissive hearing) and faith to the death of the cross. His obedience was His attentive listening to God's word concerning Him, that He would be "smitten of Elohim and humbled" (Isa.53:4), so that it was binding that, when the time came He must go to Jerusalem and suffer much and be killed (*cf* Matt.16:21). His faith was His conviction concerning God's rousing of Him on the third day and the joy which would follow (*cf* Heb.11:1; 12:2). These were very central matters in God's purpose in carrying out the counsel of His will (Acts 2:23; Eph.1:11), and our Lord fully submitted to them. So also Paul, made wretched by the law of sin and death in him, listened attentively to God's word

1. Previously we followed the conjectured *charis* (Grace!) with the verb, *eucharistō* (I-am-thanking) as found in Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Alexandrinus. Now we are accepting the reading, *charis de,* ("Now thanks," as in Romans 6:17) for the beginning of verse 25, taking the marginal reading in Codex Sinaiticus as a replacement for *eucharistō.*

spoken to him, not of what he must do, but what God had done through Jesus Christ. These were words fully of JOY. And thus we join Paul in giving JOY to God in the form of thanks for the JOY He gives to us, that is, for the rescue which comes through Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is, in its future and final realization, a full deliverance for everyone from sin and death into righteousness and life. It is binding that it shall be. Yet now, for those who are believing God's evangel, this deliverance is our present position in spirit, instilling into our lives the spiritual blessings of enhanced life and garrisoning peace (*cf* Phil.4:7).

"Justified then by faith [i.e.,the faith of Jesus Christ], we may be having *peace* toward God, *through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom* we have the access also, by faith, into *this grace* in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.5:1,2).

The entire human race is suffering and doomed, apart from the grace of God in not sparing His Son, but giving Him up for us all (*cf* Rom.3:20,23; 8:32). Yet because of that grace, the entire creation will be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom.8:21), and all who are dying in Adam will be vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:22).

"But not as the offense, thus also *the grace.* For if, by the offense of the one, the many die, much rather *the grace of God* and *the gratuity in grace which is of the One Human, Jesus Christ,* to the many superabounds" (Rom.5:15). And this superabounding is not only to life, but "for life's justifying" (Rom.5:18).

To speak of the work involved in making God's evangel an evangel of grace is to speak solely of what God has done through Jesus Christ's faith, the grace of God in giving His Son Who dies for the sake of sinners, or rather *over* us all, encompassing us in His love (Rom.5:6-8). If we introduce human contribution into this equation, it will not compute.

We sin, which is to say we fail. "Yet where sin increases the grace [of God] superexceeds" (Rom.5:20).

As for us who are believing this evangel, we are not under law, but under grace (the evangel of God's joy given to us) (Rom.6:14,15). That is where we stand. As Israel, standing at the base of the mountain, was positioned under law, so we, standing under God's evangel of grace, are positioned under its spiritual influence.

Our future rescue from all wretchedness (*cp* Rom. 7:24) is certain. It has been established (but not brought into a complete realization and enjoyment). Yet also now, moment by moment, it is ours in spirit.

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD

It has only recently been brought to my attention that the phrase, "through Jesus Christ, our Lord," is not simply referring to Him as the Channel through which we direct our thanks to God. He is this Channel because He is the Channel of our rescue from our bodies of death and from the law of sin.

Again and again, especially in Romans 5, we hear this condensation of the evangel. Peace toward God comes *through our Lord Jesus Christ* (Rom.5:1). That is, it comes by means of the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for our sakes. So also we have access *through Him* into the *charis,* the JOY in which we stand (Rom.5:2). It is not by means of law works, but through what Jesus Christ has done in obedience to His Father's will.

Again, we will be saved from indignation, *through Him* as the One Who shed His blood on our behalf (Rom.5:9). And accordingly, we are conciliated to God *through the death of His Son* (Rom.5:10); indeed we who are believing have obtained the conciliation *through Him,* through our Lord Jesus Christ Who dies for us while we are still enemies (Rom.5:11).

We hear the words "through the One, Jesus Christ" in Romans 5:17, and "through the obedience of the One" in 5:19, and "through Jesus Christ, our Lord" in 5:21, and we hear God's evangel concerning His Son. It is through His faith that there shall be a reigning in life instead of sinning in our dying bodies. It is through the death of the obedient One that all who are constituted sinners shall be constituted righteous. It is through the death of Jesus Christ, our Lord, that grace reigns for life eonian.

Thanks be to God, Who rescues us in His grace *through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

GOD'S LAW

"Consequently," in recognition of this grace, Paul, even while his flesh served "sin's law" was slaving for God's law of grace and peace *with his mind* (Rom.7:25). This enslavement of mind was daily a rescue from the wretchedness of his acute awareness of his failures and infirmity as a sinner.

God's law for dealing with sin is for Him to give up His own Son to the death of the cross. God's law is a law of grace and of gratuitous giving; it is a law of love, but also, as must be because it reflects what God is, it is a law of righteousness which does that which is right and makes all right. In carrying out this law God accomplishes that which is impossible for the law which He set over Israel to do. God does what the human cannot do by any means whatsoever. He does it by sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh, and sending Him in this way concerning sin (as the Antitype of the sin offering, *cf* 2 Cor.5:21) in order to condemn sin in the flesh to its final extermination (Rom.8:3).

As the words of the law given to Israel were to come to be in their hearts by repeating them in every way and under every situation (*cf* Deut.6:6-9), so the words of God's law, His evangel concerning His Son, came to be in Paul's

mind and heart and comprehension by assiduous attention to its every detail. This enslaved attention was his obedience [UNDER-HEARing] to Christ's obedience to the death of the cross (*cf* Rom.6:16; Phil.2:8). When Paul cried out to God for deliverance from the splinter in the flesh added to the excessive sufferings of his ministry, the Lord protested, "Sufficient for you is My grace" (2 Cor.12:8,9). Paul's complaint was, in fact, a matter of coveting what God had not given him. The Lord's protest pointed Paul to the incomparable deliverance into life and peace, which God had given him. To Paul, in a very practical way, while he remained in the flesh, the evangel was God's power for salvation (*cf* Rom.1:16). Full salvation from all wretchedness is future. Yet rescue into peace of mind and joy of heart is ours today as the earnest of the spirit operates together with our believing of the evangel of God's grace through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Thus Paul becomes the pattern for us who are believing (1 Tim.1:16), not only as a sinner saved by grace, but as a sinner sustained by grace.

THE SPIRIT'S LAW

It is because of God's law in sending His own Son for the condemnation of sin in the flesh, that nothing is now condemnation to us (Rom.8:1). In believing this word of God's grace, we are positioned in spirit before God in Christ Jesus. We are identified with Him in His death (as we learned from Romans 6:3-7), but also, as now clearly stated, we are identified with Him in His life. We are, by means of God's spirit, and in spirit, having "life in Christ Jesus."

In harmony with the context Paul calls this operation of spirit "the spirit's law." It is like the law God placed over Israel in the wilderness in that it is "an established rule of action." But it is unlike that law in that it does not look to human action to be carried out, but to God's action already

carried out through Jesus Christ, our Lord. That is where its power lies for any pleasing of God in our lives.

SPIRIT IN ACTION

From the beginning God's spirit is placed between darkness and God's word (*cf* Gen.1:2,3). God creates the heavens and the earth, and the earth becomes a chaos and vacant, overspread by darkness. It is at this point of disruption that the spirit of God is first introduced as it vibrates over the chaotic abyss. Then immediately we hear God (Elohim) speaking: "Light is coming to be!"

And light is coming to be!

Yet this is not all, for Elohim is being heard again and again, in five more "days." until He is seeing all that He makes, "and behold, *it is very good*" (Gen.1:6-31). There is tremendous power in what God says when activated by His spirit. Exactly what He says is exactly what occurs.

First there is the fact of creation. Then there is disruption. And then, when there is the greatest of need, the spirit of God is seen vibrating over the disrupted, terrestrial system. Then there are words of God, words of evangel which call for light instead of darkness and order instead of chaos and life instead of vacancy, so that finally all that has been done is seen to be very good. Each step is important, creation, disruption, the vibrating of God's spirit and the word of God spoken, culminating in that which is very good being perceived.

This pattern resumes with the creation of humanity (Gen.1:27; 2:7), which is very good, followed by the disruption of Genesis 3. "To die, you shall be dying" (Gen. 2:17). That which was seen as very good, was not yet that pure goodness of God becoming All in all which is still to be. Opposition leading to death and sin has not yet been abolished. Paul has now described that renewed extension of disruption in the stark and sober words of Romans 5:12.

Through one human sin enters into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passes through into all human beings, on which all sin.

This is the law of sin and death.

What shall rescue us? God's grace, through Jesus Christ, shall rescue us:

God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh, and sending Him this way *concerning sin, . . . condemns sin in the flesh.*

For us who are believing this evangel, it is our rescue even now as we enslave our minds to it—not to the law of Sinai, but to God's it-is-WELL-MESSAGE centered upon His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who dies concerning sin. This word of God is our rescue in spirit, capable of bringing about a renewing of our minds (Rom.12:2), with a positive outlook on life, which brings us peace.

The law of sin and death continues to operate, but as we proceed on our journey under these conditions in flesh, we walk under the spiritual guidance of what we are believing (*cf* Rom.8:4) even as Israel walked in the wilderness under the physical guidance of a cloud by day and fire by night. We are aware—we who are loving God Who commends His love to us in that, while we are still sinners, Christ dies for our sakes—we are aware that God is working all, both good and evil, together for good (Rom.5:8; 8:28).

THE MINDSET OF THE SPIRIT

As Paul enslaved his mind to God's law of grace, so in Romans 8:5-11 he speaks of us setting our minds on the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus.

Previously the CV has used the English terms "be disposed" for the Greek verb *phroneō,* and "disposition" for the nouns, *phrên* and *phronêma.* These have served well in that the translation is consistent, and the understanding conveyed is correct as long as a sense of mental inclination is seen. But these are not common usages of the words "dispose" and "disposition," and even when they are so understood, they may seem a bit stiff and formal, so that the force and relevance of the Greek words in this context may not come through. Here in the context of Romans 8 the AV renderings, "mind" and "be minded," seem to serve better, so that the association with Romans 7:23,24 where Paul speaks of his mind, and with Romans 8:19 concerning the intuitive inclination (or longing) of the creation is more readily seen. Indeed in a context in which the word "spirit" occurs more frequently than in any other portion of Scripture, there is a fine harmony between that term, defined as "the imperceptible, intangible power of action, life and intelligence," and a person's mental inclinations.

How we think, and what we think affects our actions. There is "spirit" (intangible power) in our thoughts. In setting our minds on the things of the flesh, our walk (that is, our living of our lives) corresponds with those things which are transient ("vanity" as described in the book of Ecclesiastes). Yet in setting our minds on the spirit-animated revelations of God concerning the death and rousing of Christ and its effects, we will be strengthened and encouraged in heeding Paul's entreaties beginning in Romans 12:1.

LIFE AND PEACE

The mindset of the flesh, which is the mindset of all of us as we are constituted because of Adam's sin (*cf* Rom. 5:19), is like "death." It is occupied with insubjection to the good and righteous standards of the law of God given at Sinai (whether or not we know that law or have been put under it); it is not able to please God. But the mindset of the spirit is life and peace (Rom.8:6-8). That is, as we set our minds on our identification with Christ in His life where He is no longer dying, but is living to God (Rom. 6:10), our lives are invigorated with meaning, not just a

smidgen of meaning, but with the perception that God is working everything together for good, which is quite an all-encompassing thing. And this works against any concept of life that is reflected in the early chapters of Ecclesiastes, for example, or by Saul of Tarsus when he discovered that he could not keep the law against coveting, a mindset much like death itself (*cf* Rom.7:10,11) and of wretchedness. The mindset of the spirit vibrates against such dark outlooks and makes life vibrant with the peace of sanity and the happiness of expectation.

Some may say that the believer no longer faces the frustration of Romans 7:18-24. But we are still in the flesh. The full rescue is future. Nevertheless Paul speaks here about the life in Christ Jesus which is ours now in spirit and shall be ours in every way in the oncoming eons. To occupy our minds with this "saving grace" *hits* us in a positive way with growth toward spiritual maturity.

"For the saving grace of God made its advent to all humanity, training [literally "hitting"] us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and righteously and devoutly in the current eon, anticipating that happy expectation, even the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who gives Himself for us, that He should be redeeming us from all lawlessness and be cleansing for Himself a people to be about Him, zealous for ideal acts" (Titus 2:11-14).

What a happy expectation indeed! This is what the mindset of the spirit dwells upon. "For to expectation are we saved . . . . Now if we are expecting what we are not observing, we are awaiting it with endurance" (Rom.8:25).

We have this treasure of God's evangel in earthen vessels (2 Cor.4:7), and it is not backed up by visible signs and wonders. But as we set our minds on this grace of God, it is backed up by invisible power from God, power of uplifted life and sustaining peace. D.H.H.

LIFE AND PEACE

AGAIN and again in the divine literature we see phrases of power and beauty which breathe contentment and repose. It is as though coming from the fret and jar of city commotion, we enter an old-world garden, rich with fragrant quietude. Immediately the spirit feels the lull of repose, the charm of silence. It is an interlude of calm for the tired or fevered spirit.

In like manner these words of rare intent call us apart from the whirl of life, and bid us rest awhile. And should we luxuriate in the language of Paul, how blessed is the ease of heart and mind! For there is such a wealth of spiritual expression which continually rings true to experience as we open our minds to its power. Truly, "the path of life leads upward for the intelligent one" (Prov.15:24), and "The mindset of the spirit is life and peace" (Rom.8:6).

Amid the surge of modern city life the brain is crowded with many thoughts, and God is easily forgotten. The ways of the world and their occupation with the visible and tangible things of earth, tend to submerge the spiritual, so that we ever require the "one thing needful" as our happy portion. Therefore we would set our minds often on God and His evangel concerning the Son of His love, that life and peace may be truly ours.

So it is that Paul directs our believing to "Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead ones, Who is given up because of our offenses, and is roused because of our justifying" (Rom.4:24,25). And thus he adds, "Justified, then, by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we

have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.5:1,2).

Here is life which is life indeed, and peace which is God's own calm! For the people of God this life and peace has ever existed, and is perpetuated when the mind is set on the spirit's law which is "life in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:2). Without hearing the grace we have heard, the Psalmist exulted with expectation, "You shall acquaint me with the path of life; Satisfying rejoicings are in Your presence; Pleasantness is at Your right hand" (Psa.16:11). And again, "How precious are Your thoughts to me, O El! How plentiful are their sums!" (Psa.139:17). As for us, Paul writes, "For you do not get slavery's spirit to fear again, but you get sonship's spirit in which we are crying, 'Abba, Father!' The spirit itself is testifying together with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom.8:15,16).

These thoughts of the infinite One for the children of His choice, are spread as a banquet in the grand area of His Word. There they lie, extending as it were, from valley to mountain, from the mists of early, formative revelation, to the unclouded splendor of the highest peaks of truth. Things spiritual, vibrant with life and peace; and devotion to them an "open sesame" to the mind of God. And the more we are taken up with them the deeper is our joy.

There is a beautiful expression of this desire for God in the sixty-third Psalm. Note the line sequence:

"*My soul thirsts for You; My flesh craves for You like a land arid and faint, without water . . . .*

As with fatness and richness my soul shall be satisfied, And with jubilant lips my mouth shall praise . . . .

My soul clings to You; Your right hand upholds me" (Psa.63:1,5,8).

Thirst is followed by satisfaction which inspires keener trust.

Yet how more joyfully do we, like Paul, while still under sin's law, cling with our minds to God's law of grace. and find refreshment of spirit. "Nothing . . . is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. For the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus frees [us] from the law of sin and death. For what is impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, does God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the righteous intent of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit" (Rom.8:1-4).

Here indeed we see beauties which flood our hearts with the consciousness of God. And as we love them because they reflect the divine, we are truly taught of God. Thus we read with an ever-deepening discernment and appreciation, reveling in the things which make for life and peace.

God alone can soothe the overcharged heart and His quietness expel trouble. "Be still, and know!" Stillness is requisite for knowledge. And to be a student of things divine is to cherish the best kind of knowledge, for the choice carries with it a foretaste of the life of the oncoming eons. Other knowledge may be desirable, and of some value, but it does not impart life and peace.

Things of earth please for the moment, break as a bubble, and pass. But the life which is from God in Christ is deep and strong. Its endless flow is shrined in calm. Paul knew its grand repose when he penned his fine testimony: "I learned to be content in that in which I am. I am aware what it is to be humbled as well as aware what it is to be superabounding. In everything and among all am I initiated, to be satisfied as well as to be hungering, to be superabounding as well as to be in want" (Phil.4:11,12). We comprehend the apostle's attitude as we note another declaration: "For whatever promises are of God, are in Him 'Yes.' Wherefore through Him also is the 'Amen' to God, for glory, through us" (2 Cor.1:20).

What enrichment is ours in the beloved One, for who but He can ensure the peace of earth, and the final calm of the wide universe. Limitless wealth and ability is His. Therefore, in the present evil age we should endure, "as seeing Him Who is invisible." And as we mature in faith we restfully fall in with divine appointments. We find it easier to forego cherished plans, largely leaving the shaping of our course to Him.

Our spiritual blessings among the celestials constitute our highest call to life and peace. Yet even so, "devoutness with contentment is great capital" (1 Tim.6:6), and there are many humble souls who prove this, to whom higher knowledge has not come. Pure in heart, they see God in so many ways, that their hearts truly sense His rare repose. It is good to know such people of God, for they are life oases in the desert wilds. They just exhale life and peace.

However, apart from such refreshment, we must prove for ourselves the blessedness of God's will. He has revealed so much for head and heart, that we may well be taken up with the unfoldings of His mind. Therein lies our peace as we ascend faith's mountain. And the life of the ages gilds its crest. The foretaste of glory may be ours, however toilsome the ascent. It was so with Paul. See how he pierces the filaments of sense and space. His pen depicts no earthly potentate as holding him in thrall, but gives the higher view that makes for life and peace.

Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus! He looked beyond the passing moves of men to the prime Mover of all things. He kept his vision clear.

O that we might lift our eyes to the great Invisible, that such poise may be ours as to ensure a light regard for things of earth, and a more deeply rooted affection for things above. For, to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

–adapted from a Meditation by William Mealand

CREATION AND DISRUPTION

To really comprehend the truth presented to us in the creation and disruption of the earth, we must consider its place in God's primeval purpose, and its relation to His other creations in the universe. When we consider the sun and the stars, with the beneficent brilliance, the earth is dark and dismal and utterly dead apart from their light and heat. It takes a very low rank, if not the lowest, now that it is, to a considerable degree, still a disintegrating chaos. Why was it not left as it was when originally created? Because it is the stage on which God reveals, not only His creative power, but the deeper attributes of wisdom and grace and love.

GOD'S WISDOM

God's wisdom needs a foil for its fullest display. To be sure, the creation itself calls for a measure of intelligence far beyond that of any of His creatures, to which He has imparted the minute measure that they possess. The earth is filled with examples of divine providence which makes all who ponder them marvel. But one who has turned his eyes to the empyrean, and considered the stars and their systems, the milky way with its myriads of luminaries, God's wisdom seems to be unfathomable. Truly, we can say with the psalmist (Psa.8:4-6):

4 **What** is a **mortal that You are** [l]**mindful** of **him,**
[+]**Or** a **son of mankind that You are visiting him?**
5 [+] **You make him** [l]**lack** a **little** [f]**of** [7]the **messengers**[cs]**,**
And with **glory and honor You** [l]**crown him.**
6 **You** [c]**give him** the [l]**rule** [i]**over** the [d]**works of Your hands;**
All have You set under his feet:

From this it is evident that God planned the earth and man for a special purpose which could not be fulfilled apart from it. Paul tells us that He creates all, and especially the present secret administration that He might make known to the sovereignties and authorities among the celestials the *multifarious* wisdom of God. Here, on this chaotic earth, in this sinful world, His wisdom has deeper and direr problems to solve than in the rest of the universe, hence it presents a better field for its display (Eph.3:9-10). This scene of sin seems to be the best background on which to reveal the deepest depths of divine wisdom.

LOVE AND GRACE

Love lacks a foil for its display in a perfect environment. If the earth had not been wrecked and ruined in the beginning and all nature were pleasant and perfect as on the original earth, and if Adam had not introduced sin and dying and death, how little need would there be of God's intervention in the affairs of mankind! He would remain the unknown, the unloved Deity, unneeded, unwanted and unappreciated by the creatures of His hand and heart, and without the affection which He craves, not only from mankind, but from the celestial hosts as well.

Above all other things there was need of *sin*, which would produce suffering and misery, so that there would be the need and the desire for a *Saviour*; as well as estrangement and enmity in human hearts, so that there could be reconciliation, and humanity could be drawn closer to the heart of God than any others of His creatures. This demands an imperfect environment to produce it.

The Subjector wishes to reveal His hand by making the first last and the last first (Luke 13:30). This will not only be so on the earth in the kingdom, but in the universe as well. The dregs of earth will become the highest among the celestials. His Son came down to the deepest depths

of earth, and to the dreadful death of the cross, in order to be raised to the place supreme. So, also, the despised of this world will be made judges of messengers (1 Cor.6:3). If God is to be All in all (1 Cor.15:28), it is necessary that He do all according to His will even in the wicked eons when men act as a foil to show His all-conquering might. An estranged humanity on a disintegrating earth provides Him with the opposition that He needs.

THE READJUSTMENT

Even as Adam was *not restored* to his original sinless condition, but was fitted for a comparatively short and evil life ending in death, so the earth was *not restored* to its primeval perfection, but *readjusted* to become a disintegrating habitation for mankind for the evil eons, until it is destroyed by fire, and a *new creation* restores it to more than its primeval perfection. This readjustment brought a measure of light, but a measure of darkness remained. The water was divided by the atmosphere, some above, some below. Then less than half of the land surface became dry. When we compare this with the future new creation, when there is *no* night, and *no* sea, and the log of life, in place of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we realize that the first week's work was not a complete restoration, but only a readjustment, to set the stage for the eons of *evil*.

God saw all that He had made and found it very good (Gen.1:21). This is the divine viewpoint, with which we heartily agree. It seems to contradict the human aspect, which we have been considering. These two seem to differ because God looks at the intrinsic essence and the ultimate result, while we see nothing but the temporary outward appearance. When we consider the conclusion of the eons, even the evil eons are transformed into good by the result. For the great purpose of revealing God's wisdom and love all the evil background is indispensable and

effective, hence beneficial. But to shortsighted humans, who cannot see the sequel, it *seems* to be bad, very bad.

MODERN THEOLOGY ASTRAY

The apostasy of modern theology, on the subject of creation and disruption is revealed by the popular discordant translations. They render DOWN-CASTing almost always by "the *foundation* of the world." To agree with this they convey the false idea that the earth was created "without form and void," although they definitely deny this in Isaiah 45:18. What kind of a "foundation" is without form and void? The foundation of the physical system in which we live was perfect. It was the wrecking of that system that made it a chaos, and demanded, not a restoration to the former ideal condition, but an adaptation or re-adjustment to set the stage for the tragedy of the eons.

PETER ON THE DISRUPTION

The apostle Peter foretold the presence of those who claim that "all is continuing thus from the *beginning of creation.* For they want to be oblivious of this, that there were heavens of old, and an earth cohering out of water and through water, by the word of God; through which the then world, being deluged by water, *perished*" (2 Peter 3:6). This was such a complete destruction that it is compared with the future dissolution of the elements by fire, which will call for a new creation. Peter definitely goes back to the *creation,* and describes the earth as we find it *submerged,* as in the second verse of Genesis. Then the whole old world *perished,* and the week's work was needed to make it habitable again.

We were taught that this referred to the flood of Noah's day, but found that unsatisfactory. This does not lead us back to the *beginning of creation* (2 Peter 3:4). Most of earth's *inhabitants* were drowned in the later deluge, but

there was no need of a week's work or to create anything anew. The flood is compared with another event: "according as it occurred in the days of Noah, thus will it be in *the days of the Son of Mankind* also" (Luke 17:26). Peter, like the writer of Hebrews (Heb.4:3), connects the disruption of the world, right after its creation, with its dissolution by fire and the new earth in the new creation (2 Peter 3:10-13). This is one of the keys which show us the harmonious balance of God's operations.

RESULTS

A great work can only be properly judged by its outcome. Every part of it, especially the preparations for it, must be seen in the light of the final effect. Only by a full realization of the results of God's dealings with the earth and humanity, are we able to judge and appreciate His power and wisdom and love. If popular theology were correct and the great majority of earth's denizens were doomed to everlasting death or despair, then the creation of the earth, its chaos and partial readjustment, the introduction of sin and offense, the deluge, God's dealings with Israel, and the terrible judgments of the future—all the fearful suffering of mankind—will reveal the Creator and Subjector in the worst possible light as *lacking* power and wisdom and love.

But if we accept His own words as to the future our estimate of Him will be the reverse of this. If all mankind will be saved (1 Tim.4:10), and justified (Rom.5:18), and reconciled (Col.1:20), and thus were prepared by their suffering and sorrow to enjoy God's love endlessly, what a blessed boon will that be for them and for God! They will look back upon their brief burdens with thankful hearts and adore the One Who thus drew them to Himself.

But His chosen ones, the saints, have the greatest incentive to praise God for the ruin that followed creation, for

it has given them the greatest privilege that can come to a creature, to be God's ambassadors, to make Him known, not only to mankind, but to messengers in other realms, and to reign with Christ, until all God's creatures are brought back to Him in love and He is All in all.

The chaos following creation was the initial preparation for God's great purpose to draw His creatures close to Himself, through their suffering, and the suffering of His Son for their sakes. Let us, then, not only admire His power and wisdom in creating the heavens and the earth, but bless and adore Him for the subsequent destruction of them and their readjustment for the purpose of revealing His grace and His love.

THE EONIAN OPERATION

The *creation* of the heavens and the earth was the *beginning* of the grand operation of the eons. If we turn to the consummation which ends them, we will find the final activity, which will complete the subjection begun so long before. The beginning, however, was in the *physical* sphere, but the end will be in the *spiritual.* As the sudden disruption of the earth was followed by a week of readjustment, so the insubordination of the first human is being followed by the gradual subjection of all mankind in the eonian times. At their conclusion the Father will have subjected all under the feet of the Son, *by means of His spirit.* Then the Son Himself will no longer subject others, but be subjected Himself. Then *one spirit of subjection* will prevail, so that the Subjector, by His spirit, will become All in all. He was All in Himself, then All in His Son, and, later, All in His saints at their vivification, and will be All in all the rest of humanity at the consummation.

CREATION—WHY SO

Once we know that the material creation is God's revelation of Himself in a tangible form, which humanity can

perceive, it takes only a short step to realize *why* it was later made *as* it is. It was created perfect in the beginning. But this failed to reveal the deepest and most precious attribute of God's heart. Therefore, when it was readjusted from the disruption of the second verse of Genesis, it was permeated with evil, such as intermittent darkness, and with combinations of life-giving with death-dealing elements in the air and water and land. This was done in such a way as to bring about the evil eons, and the greatest of all sins, the crucifixion of Christ, by which His love is fully revealed. Yet this will be remedied by a new creation. But this is not the only result. It also gives us a *preview* and a *picture* of the *spiritual* course of God's method of uniting all to Himself at the consummation.

NEW CREATION

The mere fact that there will be a *new* creation in which darkness, and the other deficiencies of this readjustment, will be removed, should show that this arrangement is by no means ideal. Why do away with the night and the sea and the decadence introduced just before the eonian times, if these were perfect equipment at their beginning? And how can we avoid the clear indication that the spirit of Elohim was responsible for these temporal deficiencies?

CREATED EVIL

A truth greatly needed in these days by those who wish to understand and appreciate God's eonian operations, is His deliberate and designed use of *evil.* If we can show this on the grand scale of the eons, it may help much to recognize it in the minor relations of life. One reason why this is not generally recognized, is the unscriptural idea of *punishment* that prevails. All judgment, which is really *righting* wrongs, has been perverted into vindictive punishment with no hope of correction, such as the theological

theory of the final fate of the unbeliever. The Subjector's great readjustments in commencing each eon have been popularly degraded from preparations for future eons to visitations of vengeance for past misdeeds.

PUNISHMENT

Before I examined the vocabulary of the Scriptures scientifically, I was under the impression that it was full of the idea expressed by *punish* or *punishment.* I certainly was biased *in favor* of it. But, now that I look for it among the list of English words used to make the Concordant version, I find only three occurrences in the whole book. Not once is it needed in the Hebrew. There is plenty of judging, correcting, etc., but not punishing. In the Greek it is used twice of Saul of Tarsus' treatment of those he persecuted (Acts 22:5; 26:11). Here it fits well, for, as Aristotle says of the Greek word, it is penal, and indicates the satisfaction of the one who inflicts it. Only those who *believed* on Christ were *punished* by Saul, not those who rejected Him! In Hebrews 10:29 punishment is only a supposition concerning the unworthiness of those who trample under foot the Son of God. God gets no satisfaction out of the suffering of His creatures, but visits evil on all, even on Christ and Paul, for their own good and for the benefit of others.

THE DELUGE AND THE RESTORATION

Both the deluge and the restoration (Acts.3:21), which precedes the kingdom of Christ, are *readjustments,* preparing for the impending eon. Far too much emphasis has been laid on the idea that they both are the punishment for the conduct of mankind during the previous eon. The mere fact that they fall upon comparatively few of the antediluvians and of those in this eon (for most have died before they are inflicted), should show that they can reach only a minute minority of the great mass who have sinned in

the foregoing eon. Billions who have lived in this eon have already died, and will not suffer the impending inflictions. All of these, who are not believers, will be judged at the great white throne, *not* during the readjustment for the succeeding eon. In this these catastrophes are alike. They are preparatory, not personal or penal.

DELUGE READJUSTMENT

As *all* flesh was ruining its way on the earth (Gen.6:12), and mankind was to be given a new start in the impending eon under a different form of subjection, and only Noah, who was just by faith, had found grace, with his family, *all* the rest of the race was drowned in the deluge. In this way the race itself survived, and was given a new start.

Physically, this present eon was to be an era of failure by disintegration (Heb. *bl*). So it was commenced with a major example of it, for the word deluge (*m bul*) has this meaning, and Babel (*b bl*), which tore mankind apart, was also of this nature. Even soil on which no moisture had fallen before, is now being eroded by the rain. Mankind was held together before the flood, by having one succession of rulers, the firstborn succession of Adam. Now they are split apart, into many nations, by a motly mass of rulers, in order to make man's rule a failure.

RESTORATION

In contrast to this, *many* will be *saved through* the impending indignation. We know of 144,000 especially. The fact that a third of mankind will be slain by the sixth messenger (Rev.9:15,18) leaves the impression that many will go through the indignation, not only in Israel, but also among the other nations, to form the nucleus of the kingdom of the Son of humanity over the whole race.

Physically, the changes will be *beneficial,* as a rule. The great earthquakes (Rev.8:5; 11:13), especially that

one which jars every mountain and island out of its place (Rev.6:14), may be used to change the earth itself back to its normal and original place, and bring back the climate, and restore the year back to its normal and original length of three hundred and sixty days.

GOD IN PHYSICAL SPHERE

In the physical sphere God alone acts to prepare and adjust the elements for each eon. No human would presume to have had any hand in these great transactions. We have learned how to predict the weather, to a limited extent, but who would even dare to turn back a tornado, or stop a cyclone? All we have done along this line has been to darken the atmosphere with smoke or infest it with deadly fumes. A single major earthquake calls for more power than the combined might of all mankind. Now that we have learned to harness the atom, our main purpose, apparently, is to destroy one another with it.

The counterpart of God's physical operations will be found in each eon. The offensive sin of Adam channelled *chaos* into the *spiritual* world. In this mankind lived before the flood. There was spiritual darkness, thirst, and hunger, which overwhelmed them all in death, even before the deluge. Yet they lived much longer than we do today. In the counterpart of that eon, long life will be restored, and, the *Second* Adam will reverse the downward course introduced by the first. So we see that God's great plan is essentially a *reversal.*

VIBRATION THE ACTION OF SPIRIT

The fact that the vibration of the spirit introduces the whole account of the readjustment, and that no other *action* is needed to account for the results, seems to show clearly that all further change is due to this activity of the *spirit.* As not only light, but water and air and land

are essential for life on earth, and the spirit is called the spirit of *life* (John 6:63; Rev.11:11), the forms of life that follow, the vegetation, the souls in the water, in the atmosphere, and on the land, including humanity, are all due to this primal pulsation of spirit. This seems to give some validity to a basic theory of science, that light and life are the expression of periodic vibration. This is not modern, but was taught long before the coming of Christ, and may have been based upon this divine revelation. The different forms that the same material can take, as ice, water, steam, should help us to see its possibilities.

LIGHT

One thing seems well established, both by God's Word and His works; that *light* is udulatory energy. First of all, it enables us to see. But it can also be transformed into warmth and work. It raises enormous amounts of water in the form of vapor, which, falling back upon the earth, and running down as streams, may be harnessed to produce electricity, and reappear as light, to shine in the darkness, even as at the beginning. To the spiritual observer the daily change from darkness to light repeats before his wondering gaze the first grand achievement of the vibrating spirit in the preparation of the earth as the stage on which the tragedy of the eons is being enacted.

But the light spoken of in Genesis did not come from the sun, for the celestial luminaries could not be seen without an atmosphere, and were not listed until the fourth day. Strange to say, men used to ridicule this, although they themselves were able to light up the night to some extent. In the far future they will have no need for the sun nor the moon, for the glory of God will illuminate the holy city, new Jerusalem (Rev.21:22-23). And night will be no more, and they have no need for lamp light and sunlight, seeing that the Lord God will be illuminating them (Rev.22:5).

DISRUPTION INDEFINITE

The phrases "from the" and "before the disruption" are printed with a lightface "the" in the present CV, to show that there is no article "the" in the Original. But few seem to note this fact or take heed to its message. The disruption here indicated is world disruption *in general, a condition, a fact,* not any special act, but necessarily beginning with the *first* of the series. It embraces physical as well as spiritual disruption, the so-called "fall " of Adam as well as making the earth a chaos and vacant, briefly, *before,* or *from* the operation of *evil* in the earth or in humanity. If a particular world had been intended it would have been named and preceded by the article *the.* We may change the CV to "world disruption" in the future.

CREATED AND DISRUPTED

Just as Adam was *created* quite perfect in his way, but *became* a sinner, so the earth also had been *created* fit for habitation, but *became* a chaos and vacant. In both cases there was a "disruption of the world," and this phrase may well refer to either or preferably to both, for both together commence an interval in which God, by means of both material and spiritual disruption, reveals Himself as Saviour and Lover, preparing for the revelation of His power when He will create them anew. Each one of us will go through this process also, *both physically and spiritually,* and, at present, is in a condition akin to the "disruption of the world." This should help us to grasp the force of this expression.

THE WORLD

Only one "world" or SYSTEM could have existed when Cain slew Abel. As this term usually refers to the order or arrangement of human society, it goes back to the subjection of Adam under the Elohim, the Subjectors, and his descendants. It was this miniature world which was disrupted when Adam sinned, transgressed and offended God. The slaying of Abel by Cain was the most flagrant and atrocious result of that disruption, the first time that human *blood* was shed by a fellow human. If the world had not been disrupted, Cain would not have slain his brother.

BEFORE AND FROM

Before any disruption God loved His Son (John 17:24) and foreknew Him as the flawless and unspotted Lamb (1 Peter 1:20), and chose us in Him (Eph.1:4). This shows that sacrifice was in God's heart even before sin was introduced. But it was not till Adam's sin, or from a disruption, that His Kingdom was made ready (Matt.25:34), blood was shed (Luke 11:50), the works occurred (Heb.4:3). Then the suffering of Christ was due (Heb.9:26), and, in a sense, He was the Lambkin slain as soon as sin entered (Rev. 13:8). The names of all in the scroll of life were entered in that far distant past, so the disruption did not affect their fate (Rev.17:8).

SIN'S DISRUPTION AND REPUDIATION

The effects of the initial disruption could only be met by sacrifice (Heb.9:26). So Abel sacrificed a sin-offering. But Cain refused to do this, and brought a bloodless offering of fruit, which God could not accept, as it failed to recognize the curse of death. It is only at the conclusions of the eons, and of the worlds, that the sacrifice of Christ will have its full effect. Then sin will be repudiated as an instrument of divine revelation, so there will be no more disruptions after the consummation. By means of these disruptions, countered by the sacrifice of Christ, God will draw all mankind into the embrace of His paternal love.

A. E. Knoch

THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD

Question: "The Concordant Version's rendering 'holy spirit' (instead of, 'Holy Spirit') seems strange to me. When I try to show my friends how accurate and helpful the Concordant Version is, they are stumbled by the rendering 'holy spirit,' instead of 'the Holy Spirit,' by which phrase they understand 'the third Person of the Holy Trinity.' In any case, why do you use a small 'h' and 's' instead of a capital 'H' and 'S,' especially since you use a capital 'H' on 'He,' 'His,' and 'Him' where these pronouns are used in reference to God or to Christ? Also, what is the difference between 'holy spirit' and 'the holy spirit,' in those instances in which the Greek definite article (as indicated by 'the') is included in the Original? And finally, in texts in which the definite article does not appear, is it correct to say 'a holy spirit' instead of simply 'holy spirit'"?

Answer: I sympathize with you on the problem of the lower case "holy spirit" in the CV, which is an attempt to be neutral in translation. In the Explanatory Information section of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT WITH KEYWORD CONCORDANCE (p.620), it is stated that, "[in nearly all cases,] it is left to the reader to decide for himself which aspect of SPIRIT is in view in a given occurrence . . . . It was decided to keep personal concepts out of the controversy by not capitalizing the word spirit in its various occurrences. This should not be taken as a symptom of irreverence toward GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT but rather as a sign of human incompetence to deal with the problem in a satisfactory manner, without injecting personal opinion, and thus detracting from the laud of His glory." Perhaps a "better" solution (though probably impractical in a version) would be to set this phrase in small caps, as "HOLY SPIRIT," as I sometimes have done in expositions, at least in the midst of exegesis.

Through fallacious thinking (e.g., certain false assumptions as to idiom), it is sometimes possible to misuse the fact of the presence of the definite article ("the"). As a rule, however, noting its presence can be quite helpful. One important point is that "the" can always be converted either to "this" (near demonstrative pronoun) or "that" (far demonstrative) without changing the sense, though often with the result of the *clarification* of the sense. This helpful practice of noting that "'the' [actually] equals 'this,'" cannot change the sense of any text; but, besides affording clarification, it will often manifest the invalid nature of popular reasoning such as that founded on the common expression "*the* gospel," from which it is concluded that "there is only one gospel," when sane logic on this very point will preclude such a conclusion.

Where the *definite* article is not present, however, it does not follow that the (English) *indefinite* article ("a") is necessarily to be understood. That depends upon the nature of the case. For example, take the case of "HOLY SPIRIT." Unless, in some instance, the particular *usage* entails a reference to a specific, discrete "HOLY SPIRIT," we should simply say, "HOLY SPIRIT" (instead of either "the HOLY SPIRIT," or "a HOLY SPIRIT"). But where, again, in the nature of the case, it is evident that a *discrete* entity *is* in view, then we not only *may* but should employ the indefinite article (e.g., "*a* day of salvation; 2 Cor.6:2). If, in such instances, we were to use no article at all, (1) we would fail to indicate the fact that a discrete entity is in view; and (2) we would violate the dictates of good English. Conversely,

if, in such cases, we should employ the definite article, those who falsely imagine that its import is "the *one and only* [such entity]," instead of, its true sense, "[this or that] [such entity]," would be given grist for their mill.

Hence, in answer to your question concerning instances in which the definite article is not included in the Original, while in such cases it would not necessarily be mistaken to say "*a* HOLY SPIRIT," it would only be correct to do so in instances in which it was evident that a discrete HOLY SPIRIT was in view. In most usages of Greek nouns in cases where they appear without the definite article, however, a discrete entity *is* in view, and, therefore, in English, the indefinite article "a" should be employed (as in 2 Cor.6:2). This is because, while, in Greek, the idea conveyed by the English "a" is understood (not expressed), in English, according to custom, it must be expressed.

In trying to help your friends who are hindered by tradition, point out to them that *holy* means "consecrated" (or "devoted"), and *spirit* means "imperceptible power." Hence, "HOLY SPIRIT" means "consecrated imperceptible power." Now, "[imperceptible] power" is a *thing*, not a person. Hence, if, in any certain passages (such as Acts 13:2), personal qualities should be ascribed to HOLY SPIRIT, it follows that such usages are not literal, but figurative. They are the figure termed Personification, by which personal qualities are ascribed to non-personal entities, even as in the case of Law, Sin, Death, Righteousness, Grace, and so forth.

In some usages of HOLY SPIRIT, a compound figure is involved, by which (as in Acts 13:2) not only is the usage a matter of Personification, but of Metonymy; that is, of the association of the personified entity with an actual being, namely, God Himself. It is also helpful to note that wherever we read of "HOLY SPIRIT," or of "the HOLY SPIRIT," this is a contraction (hence, the figure of Omission, or

Ellipsis) of "HOLY SPIRIT [e.g., which is of God]," or "the HOLY SPIRIT [*of* God]" (*cp* Eph.4:30).

These are all objective facts that must be intelligently grasped. They should be wholeheartedly embraced and applied by all, prior to any judgments as to interpretation. Indeed, apart from such knowledge, legitimate hermeneutics is impossible.

One should also become acquainted with what orthodox Trinitarianism actually affirms,[1] noting especially that—be its exponents ever so zealous in their claim that "Jesus is the second Person of the Trinity"—*Trinitarianism's own interpretation* of the sense in which this proposition is to be understood, entails it also being so that Jesus is only God in a sense that is incompatible with the proposition that He is *literally* and *absolutely* (hence, identificationally) God.[2]

Many of our friends seem unable to concentrate sufficiently to grasp such particulars, or else are disinclined to do so. Yet those outside are usually far too prejudiced against our teaching to give it a fair hearing; and unless given special grace, will not thank us for proving their beliefs to be false. This makes it impossible for them to grasp what we are actually saying. Most would have us simplify things more than we can or should. They want our explanations to be sufficiently simple that they themselves need not gain any new proficiencies, nor otherwise put themselves to much inconvenience.

It is all too human simply to "get on a bandwagon," thus avoiding the labor of adequate study. One bandwagon, in

1. *cf Unsearchable Riches,* "The Doctrine of the Triune God," vol.22, pp.167-192.

2. *cf Unsearchable Riches,* "One God and One Lord," vol.85, pp.215-224; *cp* "One God and One Lord," part two, vol.85, pp.251-263; "Yahweh is the Only Elohim," vol.86, pp.10-18; and "The Only True God," vol.86, pp.63-74.

acceptance of Trinitarianism, is promoted by appeals to human authority and tradition, and especially by the bias-inducing claim that one's acceptance of the tenets of Trinitarianism is essential to salvation (however unthoughtfully those tenets may be embraced). The other bandwagon, in rejection of Trinitarianism, often finds its appeal among those lacking sufficient interest in accuracy and fairness, and is often promoted through misrepresentation, mockery, and the destruction of straw men (in its "disproofs" of Trinitarianism). Of course if we would be faithful, we must avoid the latter wagon as surely as the former.

In light of such needs, then, for progress toward maturity, may we "not cease praying," for one another and for all, "requesting that [we] may be filled full with the realization of [God's] will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, [us] to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and *growing in the realization of God*" (Col.1:9). J.R.C.

SPIRIT

Spirit is the invisible, intangible power of action, life, and intelligence. It is an intelligent principle of action (Luke 9:55; 2 Cor.12:18), as the spirit of meekness (1 Cor.4:21), of prophecy (Rev.19:10), of faith (2 Cor.4:13), of sonship (Rom.8: 15), of power and love and sanity (2 Tim.1:7), of slavery (Rom. 8:15), of stupor (Rom.11:8), and of the world (1 Cor.2:12). It is used of the life principle common to animals (Ecc.3:21), and mankind (Gen.6:17). It is also applied to metaphysical beings (2 Chr.18:20) without flesh or bones (Luke 24:39), which are usually unclean or evil (1 Tim.4:1), as well as demons (Luke 4:33) and messengers (Rev.4:5).

Its highest use denotes the divine power as manifested in His invisible, intangible operations (John 4:24), the Spirit of God, that holy Spirit (Matt.1:18; John 3:8; Acts 13:2) which comes on men for power (Acts 1:8), baptizes for cleansing (Acts 1:5) and unifying (1 Cor.12:13), filling for utterance (Acts 2:4; Eph.5: 18), sealing for safety (Eph.1:13), and homing (1 Cor.3:16) for permanent fellowship. A. E. Knoch

THE MYTH OF "FREE WILL"

We all need to see to our "responsibilities," thus fulfilling our duties. By practicing proper "role responsibility," we learn to live "responsibly," which is to say dutifully and uprightly. It is important for us to realize that we are "responsible" for our actions, in the sense of being answerable for them or subject to their consequences. This is simply to say, we are *accountable,* or subject to judgment, for our deeds.

Accordingly, we must realize that the so-called "fatalistic" notion is false (even as absurd) which affirms that since the particulars of our future course are fixed, therefore we might just as well be careless as careful, while making no more attempt to pursue a life of virtue and industry than of sin and sloth.

Furthermore, we must remember that we act voluntarily, according to our own choices, apart from compulsion (i.e., force, contrary to our own will). Good results require good actions; and good actions require good decisions, according to self-discipline. Therefore, in the words of the Psalmist, let us "withdraw from evil and do good" (Psa.34:14a; 37:27a).

For discipline in righteousness, these are the things we need to know, and be reminded of, even as teach to our children; not prideful notions of "free will" which preclude our being able to thank God alone for our virtues while trusting in His wise and good design concerning all.

It by no means follows from the reality and importance of role responsibility that what is actually contended for by those who advocate "free will," therefore exists. We do well to recognize this simply because it is true; yet especially because of the deleterious consequences of believing in free will.

Free will, in fact, is an untenable position. Either events occur due to that which causes them to occur, or events occur due to nothing at all. If what happens is caused to happen, it cannot be prevented from happening. And, if what happens is not caused to happen, neither can it be prevented from happening. In the former example, the event is the effect of its cause; in the latter example, the event is not an effect, and it has no cause.

But one has no more ultimate control over that which simply occurs, due to nothing at all, than over that which is made to occur, as the effect of a cause. In the former case, determinism is affirmed; in the latter case, indeterminism is affirmed. But in either case, ultimate control is precluded.

Ultimate control is sometimes technically termed "categorical could-have-done-otherwiseness." The common name for categorical could-have-done-otherwiseness, is "free will."[1]

The above considerations prove that whether determinism, indeterminism, or some combination of the two constitutes the true account of human affairs, in any case, the notion of ultimate control (i.e., free will or moral responsibility) is necessarily mistaken.

Whether or not God determines "whatsoever comes to pass" (as affirmed in the illustrious Westminster Confession), is not the issue insofar as the question of whether or not free will obtains is concerned. The point is that free will is impossible—whether determinism is true or false. Consequently, under any possible scenario, free will is false, and, whether God determines all events, some events, or no events.

1. Free will, in turn, is sometimes termed "moral responsibility." This is a most confusing expression; for indeed, as explained above, there is an uncontested sense in which our wills are free as well as our actions of a moral nature, we ourselves being "responsible for" our actions. No such considerations, however, constitute any proof whatsoever that, ultimately speaking, under the conditions that obtained, our past actions could have been different than they were.

The fact that mainstream "freewill responsibility" not only is not true but cannot possibly be true, may be cogently argued as follows:

> If determinism is true, then all events, including any person's decisions and actions, are fully determined by circumstances which are ultimately beyond that person's control. If this is so, then that person could not have decided or acted differently. Hence, the person was not free [in the usual freewill sense].
>
> If determinism is false, then there are at least some events which are not fully determined by antecedent circumstances. To the extent that human decisions and actions are among those events which are not fully determined, those decisions and actions occur by pure chance [i.e., due to nothing]. But what occurs by pure chance is not within a person's control. Therefore, to the extent that decision and action are not determined, the person is unfree.
>
> But determinism is either true or false. Hence a person is never free with respect to decisions, actions, or the results of actions.
>
> But a person is morally responsible for an action or occurrence only if he is free in that respect.
>
> Therefore, no one is ever morally responsible for any decision, action, or outcome.[2]

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TRUTH[3]

All the details of the life of every person, exist among

2. See the discussion of this dilemma in A. S. Kaufman, "Responsibility, Moral and Legal," THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PHILOSOPHY, pp.183-188, ed. Paul Edwards (New York: Macmillan, 1967); cited in the Introduction to FREEDOM OF THE WILL, by Jonathan Edwards, The Library of Liberal Arts edition, pp.xxxii, xxxiii, by Arnold S. Kaufman and William K. Frankena (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1969).

3. Portions of the following section were adapted from METAPHYSICS, second edition, chapter six, pp.58-71, by Richard Taylor (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1974).

that class of statements which happen to be true. This is so whether or not we know them to be true, and, whether or not any certain of their particulars concern the past or future. Anything that is true concerning the future, as much so as anything that is true concerning the past, is timelessly true today.

This is so simply on the basis that there is such a thing as truth, and that this has nothing at all to do with the passage of time. Though truth often concerns events which once were not, which later come to be and later still cease to be, the truth itself concerning these events never becomes true, nor ceases to be true; it simply is true.

Now that which is true concerning any particular event entails the certainty of that event. This is because that which is true cannot possibly be untrue; for then it may be untrue, which is contradictory to the fact that it is true. Similarly, the certainty of an event entails its inevitability. This is because that which is certain cannot possibly be uncertain; for then it may be uncertain, which is contradictory to the fact that it is certain.

Whether any individual event should be a past event or a future event is beside the point. Therefore, the events of the future are as inevitable as the events of the past.

It is important to realize that every meaningful statement, regardless of subject, is either true or else it is false. There is no middle ground. This principle thus is appropriately called the law of the excluded middle. It has nothing to do with what tense the statement happens to express, nor with the question whether anyone, man or God, happens to know whether it is true or false.

In principle, it is vouchsafed by the apostle Paul in his instruction concerning supervisors in the ecclesia, that they are to "uphold the faithful word according to the teaching, that [they] may be able to entreat with sound teaching as well as to expose those who contradict" (Titus 1:9).

No such ministry would be possible apart from one's acknowledgement and consistent application of this first principle of sound thinking, "the law of the excluded middle." It is only on a basis of this principle that we are able to judge whether one proposition contradicts another or not. Nothing could be more foolish, then, than the false piety of repudiating the very rudiments of sanity and soundmindedness through their dismissal as being but "vain philosophy." As was declared unto Peter, "What God cleanses, do not you count contaminating!" (*cp* Acts 10:15b).

THE WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Let us remember that God knows all; which is to say that He is omniscient. "If our heart should be censuring us, God is greater than our heart, and He knows all" (1 John 3:20). That is, God knows everything that is true; which includes the knowledge concerning every false statement that it is false, as surely as the knowledge concerning every true statement that it is true.

He therefore knows not only the day and hour of your birth, but He knows, as you surely do not, the date of your death, even the exact moment and the circumstances thereof. Accordingly, then, He knows whether an ant walked across my desk last night, and if so what ant it was, how long it remained, and so forth. This is because He knows every truth about this insect that there is. Similarly, of course He knows when some ant will again appear on my desk, if ever. He knows the number of hairs on my head, notes the fall of every sparrow, knows why it fell and why it was going to fall. This is because God knows, concerning any statement whatever that anyone could formulate, that it is true, in case it is, and otherwise, that it is false. That which His prophets proclaim, is simply that minute portion of the sum of His knowledge which He is pleased to communicate to men.

Consider the further example that it is true that Pres-

ident Kennedy was murdered. This means that it was true that he was going to be murdered: that the future would include that very event. That is, if the statement made now, that President Kennedy has been murdered, is a true one, then, most assuredly, the prediction made before the event, that he was going to be murdered, was true as well. The two statements have exactly the same content, and are in fact the same statement, except for variation in tense.

It is correct as well to say that the murder of President Kennedy was inevitable. This is because no man is able to avoid what is truly described, nor bring about what is falsely described. No one can make false that which is true, any more than make true that which is false.

The true answer to the question, then, "Will President Kennedy ever be murdered?" should such a question have been asked (as it undoubtedly was asked by many) prior to that fateful day of November 22, 1963, would have been, "Yes, he will be murdered; that is the only possible thing that can happen."

Of course it is true that if better precautions had been taken, then President Kennedy would not have been murdered. But then it is true as well that since they were not taken, neither were they going to be taken.

THE POWER OF TRUTH

It bears repeating that either a statement is true or else it is false. Hence a statement concerning the occurrence of a future event is either true or else it is false. Therefore, since statements concerning the occurrence of future events are either true or else they are false, it is incorrect to say that statements concerning future events are *neither* true *nor* false.

All that has happened and all that will happen, is a part of whatever is true. Therefore, it is incorrect to say that truth concerning some future events does not yet exist. This is because *whatever will* happen is that concerning which it is now already true that it will happen.

Since the truth concerning all that will happen already exists, it follows concerning any certain past event that, before it happened, it was already true that it was going to happen. Hence if I should eat an apple tomorrow, it was already true today that I *would* eat an apple tomorrow, even as that, on the morrow, I could not *not* eat an apple. These principles are as true concerning all events and all persons, as they are concerning some events and some persons. Whether the subject at hand is myself and my eating of an apple tomorrow, Satan and his mobilization of the nations for battle at the end of the thousand years, or God Himself and His swift response thereunto in sending fire out of heaven to devour them (Rev. 20:7-9)—*whatever will* happen is that concerning which it is now already true that it will happen; and, already true that it will inevitably happen.

It is neither the pastness nor the futurity of an event that proves an event's existence inevitable; it is rather the existence of the truth concerning it that proves its existence inevitable. Whatever *has* already happened, cannot avoid its past existence; and, whatever *will* yet happen, cannot avoid its future existence. This is because all the details, past or future, of the life of every person, are incorporated within the compass of that which is true. Therefore, whatever is true concerning the future is no more avoidable than whatever is true concerning the past.

Every argument against the teaching that future occurrences are as unavoidable as past occurrences, is based upon the assumption that we are free to realize various alternative future possibilities—the very thing that is at issue.

Sound logic and conclusive evidence can only bring conviction to those who are open to conviction and capable of being convinced. In His own time, such logic and evidence is indeed "powerful to God toward the pulling down of bulwarks; pulling down reckonings and every height elevating itself against the knowledge of God, and leading into cap-

tivity every apprehension into the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor.10:4,5). But before such a time and apart from the special illuminating grace attending thereunto, sound logic and conclusive evidence are powerless indeed in the face of an opinion nourished by invincible pride. It has well been said that most men would sooner lose their souls than be divested of that dignity which they imagine rests upon their freedom of will.

VESSELS IN THE POTTER'S HANDS

It needs to be realized even in the case of, humanly speaking, unintentional deaths by accident, that such events occur according to divine appointment. In Israel of old, if a man smote another inadvertently, that is, apart from "malicious intent," still, it was to be understood that "the One, Elohim, *He* had *fated* him into his hand" (Ex.21:12,13).

Similarly, Samson, contrary to the revealed will of God through the law of Moses, sought to take a Philistine woman as his wife. His parents attempted to dissuade him from his sin, but Samson would only say, "'Get her for me: for she pleases me well.' But his father and mother did not know that it was of Yahweh [that this occurred], for He sought an occasion against the Philistines" (Judges 14:3,4). In violating the revealed (or preceptive) will of God, Samson thus fulfilled the decretive will (or hidden intention) of God.

Samson was a vessel in the Potter's hands; he was decidedly not a "free moral agent" (in the usual "freewill" sense of this expression). Yet, just as surely, he was liable for his actions, subject to their consequences.

It is not at all, as some will claim, that such principles "do not make any sense": they make perfect sense. It is merely that men do not approve of them, and, unwittingly, honor the ethics of the world and the defilements of their own conscience above the Word of God.

Since God is love, even as good and wise in the highest possible degree, He always does what is best. And, God knows which course of historical events, considered not only on the whole but in view of their every detail, would have the greatest tendency toward the ultimate good. He has therefore made the eons (*cp* Heb.1:2) in such a way that the eonian times should comprise those very events, and no others, which, with respect to His purpose, He deems best. Indeed, He would *sin*—which He cannot do, for He cannot deny Himself—were He to arrange the course of history in any way but the best way; or fail to arrange it at all, in some respects, thus leaving it to chance that some events might well occur that would not be best, in respect of His purpose.

Since, within the eonian times, to accord with His purpose, God knows that, among men, it is best that there should be "vessels" both of indignation as well as of mercy (Rom.9:21), even as, within the ecclesia, that there should be "utensils" both of honor and dishonor (2 Tim.2:20,21), it is of Him that there *are* vessels both of indignation and of mercy, even as utensils both of honor and dishonor. In light of these august considerations, we wish only to reply, "to Him be the glory!"

To those who wish to scoff or complain in light of the fact that God still "blames" (i.e., charges with wrongdoing and holds accountable) men for their sins when they have therein fulfilled His intention, we would merely reply with Paul: "O man! who are you, to be sure, who are answering again to God? That which is molded will not protest to the molder, 'Why do you make me thus?' Or has not the potter the right over the clay, out of the same kneading to make one vessel, indeed, for honor, yet one for dishonor? Now if God, wanting to display His indignation and to make His powerful doings known, carries, with much patience, the vessels of indignation, adapted for destruction, it is that He should also be making known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He makes ready before for glory—us,

whom He calls also, not only out of the Jews, but out of the nations also" (Rom.9:20-24; *cp* 9:19).

REJECTION AND COMPROMISE

Let us note well that the events of the future are inevitable—period; *not,* regardless of what we do. It does not follow from the inevitability of future events, that any certain events are inevitable "no matter what." Future events do not come about in spite of what we do, but because of what we do, even as because of other occurrences which affect us, in addition to our own deeds. Therefore, diligence, duty, and discipline, are as important to those who reject free will as they are to those who accept it.

We need not fear the consequences of our unequivocal rejection of "free will" so long as we maintain such a stance not in isolation but in close connection with a strong emphasis upon the indispensability of self-discipline—albeit a self-discipline which is the fruit of divine grace. All that one will "lose" by the rejection of free will is a strong incentive to pride and anger. Only those who take pleasure in these sins, will regret to see the primary agency which fosters them meet its justly-deserved demise.

The teaching of God's deity in itself is of a wholly salutary nature; any foolish misuse thereof may not be charged against it. The man who believes the truth that all is of God—who also loves and pursues righteousness, who is contrite and ashamed when he sins, while longing for and seeking self-reform—should not be faulted for believing that his sin was inevitable. His sin was inevitable, in the counsels of God, and will yet redound to His glory. The man who believes and speaks thus is not making an "excuse," but is rather giving an account. He is not excused from the consequences of his actions, but he is "excused" from having "misused his free will," for he does not have a free will.

We must remember that free will is nearly universally

accepted as not only true but as essential both to morality and justice. Since this is so, and yet men are not in ultimate control of their decisions, it should not surprise us that most are unable to transcend their own ethics and prejudices—not to mention emotions and confusion of mind—concerning this theme. Indeed, it is only in the grace of God that any are able to do so.

Nearly all reject the proposition that free will is false, even when confronted with the issues which so easily decide the question. Yet a few, ones who to some extent may perceive the force of the argument against free will, while not overtly rejecting the proposition that such a belief is false, resourcefully still find one way or another to excuse themselves from accepting it.

May we not be startled by such rejection of truth. It must be realized that neither this present writing nor any other will have any widespread impact upon popular error: for it is written that "the era will be when they will not tolerate sound teaching, but, their hearing being tickled, they will heap up for themselves teachers in accord with their own desires, and, indeed, they will be turning their hearing away from the truth, yet *will* be turned aside to myths" (2 Tim.4:3,4).

TRUTH IS BENEFICIAL

Some who acknowledge that free will is false, nonetheless, whether at work or in the home, commonly speak and comport themselves as if it were true. Most such ones, if not oblivious to or at least uncaring concerning this inconsistency, will appraise it as being, at most, only a minor deficiency. This is so, even though so much of their self-pride, even as impatience and anger toward others, is the direct result of their practical acceptance of free will. It is not that they occasionally lapse into such inconsistencies (as do we all), but that such an outlook constitutes their habitual way of life.

A few have even said that, "for our own good, we need

to think, and practically believe, in such a way so as to hold ourselves responsible [in a conventional "freewill" sense] for our own behavior."

That, however, is the equivalent of saying that, "for our own good, we need to think, and practically believe, in such a way so as to hold ourselves *to be* that which we do not actually hold ourselves to be"; that, for our own good, we need to hold to that which we know to be false.

How we wish that such ones might have as great a zeal for the repudiation of what is false, as they claim to have fear of the misuse of what is true! Obviously, if we would be faithful, we must not misuse the truth; but we must first of all *freely accept the truth while living according to its principles;* otherwise faithfulness is impossible. Let us never imagine that what we need, "for our own good," is a healthy dose of sheer falsehood.

The man who does not believe in free will, certainly has uncommon insight. But the individual who does not merely disbelieve the myth of free will, but positively believes the glorious truth that all is out of, through, and for God, and, to His glory (Rom.11:36), has been given a rare gift indeed. Perhaps only one condition among men is even rarer still, and that is for one who does indeed believe that all is out of, through, and for God, substantially to apply his belief both to his own practical affairs and to those of the world around him, doing so in a truly beneficial way.

Yet no such positive and constructive course can even be undertaken, until one takes the preliminary step of recognizing that, in any event, free will does *not* exist.

In anticipation of blessed days to come in which all our brethren will gladly join us in proclaiming, "out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:36), may those of us who acclaim Him thus even today, be speaking the truth in love, with all humility and meekness. J.R.C.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 109th Year

(1909–2018)

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 Reign, Resurrection and Revelation
149 The Kingdom in the "Old Testament"
169 True Spirituality
177 A Word in Due Season
179 Wisdom are we Speaking Among the Mature
186 The Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of the Heavens

FOURTH QUARTER, 2018

Volume 109 **Number 4**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED NINE

EDITORIAL

In our lead article for this issue, "Reign, Resurrection and Revelation" (pp.147, 148) Dean Hough writes, "It is God's evangel of light concerning His Son, Who shall reign until all disorder is removed, and death itself is abolished, that enlightens us as we listen to it submissively."

"These three evils, sin, death and increasing ignorance of God, continue to plague humanity; they lie at the root of human afflictions and sorrows, insecurities and fears. Yet God has given us His evangel, which is light (*cf* 2 Cor.4:6), in which He is revealed as the God of righteousness, power, wisdom and love" (p.148).

These considerations are followed by this issue's banner article, the classic work, "The Kingdom in the 'Old Testament'" (pp.149-168) by Vladimir Gelesnoff. "The great need for clarity on this elementary theme is evident on all sides, and grows as the apostasy proceeds apace. Hence I take this opportunity of commending it to all who wish to aid their fellow saints to gain an insight into God's grand purpose through the nation of His choice and their Messiah, Christ Jesus our Lord" (A. E. Knoch, vol.29, pp.210).

In "True Spirituality" (pp.169-176), I point out that "Above all, to be spiritual, we must be motivated and characterized by *love*, even if we should often fail therein. Love's greatest goal is to promote the welfare of the beloved, even if the beloved, in his own indiscernment and suspicions, may sometimes doubt love's presence or question love's motives."

My brief article "A Word in Due Season" (pp.177,178) in introductory form, addresses the question "When and how should truth be shared?" I address this same question

more fully and specifically in the writing that follows, "Wisdom Are We Speaking Among the Mature" (pp.179-185):

"Concerning the infirm, in our interpersonal relationships with other believers, Paul would have us be taking such ones to ourselves, 'but not for discrimination of reasonings' (ibid). That is, we are not to do so in such a way that leads 'into,' results in, or otherwise draws to the fore, differences of opinion. The apostle would have us know that these faulty discriminations (as to what is true and what is not) themselves are the fruit of the misuse of the ratiocinative process, and that such mistaken deductions can only be expected from those who are infirm in the faith" (p.181).

"It is infinitely better to follow well than to lead poorly. Certainly, we should not seek to lead in a range (*cp* 2 Cor. 10:13-16) where we have not been invited to serve, lest our labors become more of an interference than a constructive service. The first principle of doing a good job, is knowing whether we are in a position to do a good job. We must not, in any event and no matter how sincerely, merely try to "get in the act" (pp.184,185).

The final article in this issue is, "The Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of the Heavens" (pp.186-191) by A. E. Knoch. "There is a perennial interest in the question, What is the difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the heavens? In many instances there seems to be no distinction at all" (p.186).

"The two kingdoms . . . contain much in common and are often equivalents. But they always keep their own coloring and one phrase can never be used where God in His excellent wisdom has been pleased to place the other.

"The kingdom of God is very seldom mentioned in the epistles, stress being laid upon its character. It is never, however, spoken of as a present reality upon the earth . . . (p.189)." J.R.C.

REIGN, RESURRECTION AND REVELATION

In Romans 1:3,4, our apostle points us to two fundamental and essential glories of Christ which form a vital part of God's evangel concerning His Son. He is the One (1.)Who comes of David's seed according to the flesh, and (2,)Who is designated God's Son with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the dead one's resurrection.

These glories are inserted parenthetically between the words "God's Son" and His identification as "Jesus Christ, our Lord." However, because they appear as an aside does not mean they are disconnected with the evangel. Indeed what is said briefly and parenthetically here is developed in great detail in 1 Corinthians 15:12-57 in connection with the evangel as it is announced as a message of powerful grace in 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. The death and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor.15:3,4) is the basis for Christ's future *reign* and His work of *resurrecting the dead,* even (in God's own time) the vivification of all in Him. (And these themes are developed much further in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians in connection with the secret of Christ.) Nevertheless, in Romans Paul hastens ahead to focus on a third glory resulting from the death and resurrection of God's Son. And that is the *revelation* of God's righteousness (Rom.1:17; 3:21-26). For there will be no reigning of Christ and no resurrection of the dead apart from the righteousness of God.

The pattern followed here was first set in the opening chapters of Genesis. There God's creation of the heavens and the earth is followed by the earth becoming a *chaos* and *vacant,* enveloped by *darkness* (Gen.1:1,2a). This is

reversed by the vibrating of God's spirit in association with God's words, bringing forth *order* where there had been chaos, and *life* where there had been vacancy, enveloped in *light* where there had been darkness (Gen.1:2b-31).

Yet once again, following this "very good" achievement, chaos enters into the world in the form of *sin,* and vacancy enters in the form of *death (cf* Rom.5:12). These, in turn, are enveloped by the darkness of removal from the special relationship with God which Adam and Eve enjoyed in the garden.

These three evils, sin, death and increasing ignorance of God, continue to plague humanity; they lie at the root of human afflictions and sorrows, insecurities and fears. Yet God has given us His evangel, which is light (*cf* 2 Cor.4:6), in which He is revealed as the God of righteousness, power, wisdom and love.

The light of Genesis 1:3 due to God's vibrating spirit operating in His word was the begining of a process in which the chaos and vacancy and darkness of Genesis 1:2a was reversed. Light must come first and cover the chaotic abyss, so that the orderly separation of light from darkness. and waters above from waters below, and atmosphere from the waters, and the waters from the dry ground, could occur. And then came life with the orderly rule of luminaries, culminating in the making of humanity in the image and likeness of God (Elohim) for holding sway over the lower life forms and filling and subduing the earth.

It is God's evangel of light concerning His Son, Who shall reign until all disorder is removed, and death itself is abolished, that enlightens us as we listen to it submissively. But neither the reign of Christ or the vivification of all in Him are the highest results of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the light of the revelation of God of which His evangel speaks that completes the glory to come. D.H.H.

THE KINGDOM IN THE "OLD TESTAMENT"

THE QUESTION, What is the kingdom of heaven? is of perennial interest. The bewildering diversity of answers has been the subject of anxious inquiry. We have endeavored to answer that question from Scripture, and now place our findings before truth seekers.

It is a canon of exegesis to interpret any phrase or word in the Scriptures by its presence in other parts of the Bible. Adhering to that principle, we find that the phrase "the kingdom of the heavens" is founded on Daniel 2:44 as well as 7:27.[1] An examination of that basic passage in the light of the immediate context and the prophecy as a whole establishes the following facts:

1. The kingdom of the heavens is a kingdom in the sense in which the empires represented by the parts of the great image were kingdoms.

2. It is limited to the *earth,* embracing the kingdoms under the whole heaven.

3. It is the kingdom of a *people.*

4. It is a *future* kingdom.

And now, to clearly comprehend the subject, we must

1. "In their days, that is, of these kings, the Eloah of the heavens will set up a kingdom that for the eons shall not come to harm. His kingdom shall not be left to another people. It will pulverize and terminate all these kingdoms, and it shall be confirmed for the eons" (Dan.2:44); "And the kingdom and the jurisdiction and the majesty of the kingdom under the entire heavens will be granted to the people of the saints of the supremacies. Their kingdom is an eonian kingdom, and all other authorities shall serve and hearken to them" (Dan.7:27).

scan the progressive unfolding of the kingdom idea in the Hebrew Scriptures. In fewest words we deal with the subject.

To begin with, we must concede that the Bible is not merely a book of moral and religious principles in mystical language, but a consistent, systematic disclosure of an explicit purpose which has been in operation since the dawn of time. To grasp that purpose it is requisite to admit that God's ways are admirably adjusted to the physical and moral condition of mortal man, and that His revelation is suited to his mental calibre. Israel's history affords convincing proof of this. When Yahweh descended on Mount Sinai with burning fire and murkiness, the tornado, the blare of the trumpet and the voice of declarations, the sons of Israel trembled at the majesty of the theophany. They cried to Moses: "Speak *you* with us that we may hear; yet *Elohim* must not speak with us lest we die" (Ex.20:19; *cp* Heb.12:19). In effect their argument comes to this: The brightness of the fire is too dazzling for our eyes: the roaring tempestuous trumpet overtaxes our hearing. Let God speak to us through you. We can behold your form, we can hear your voice: but this awful sight and deafening sound we are incapable of bearing.

In fine, they expressed the desire to see the Deity in man's guise, and hear Him speak with a man's voice. God graciously acceded to their request. He said to Moses: "They have done well in all that they have spoken. A Prophet shall I raise up to them from among their brothers, like you, and I will put My words in His mouth, and He will speak to them all that I shall instruct Him" (Deut.18:17,18). Accommodation to Israel's level was complete. Such perfect adaptation, coinciding with their wish in every respect, involved, in the very nature of the case, grave accountability. Hence the solemn warning of verse 19: "Yet it will come to be

that the man who should not hearken to My words that the Prophet shall speak in My name, I Myself shall require his blood from him." In accordance with this promise, when the fullness of the time came, the only begotten Son put on the garments of flesh.

As the infinite God has declared Himself through His Son's assuming "the likeness of sin's flesh," so He has conveyed His thoughts in the language of sinful men: He has clothed them in the very words in which mortals interchange ideas; He has used them with the significance which inheres in them in the tongue employed. Ordinarily we speak plainly: so does He. Occasionally we employ figures and emblems, parables and illustrations: so does He. Because an orator chances to use a figure or an illustration to make his point more vivid and impressive, do we, in perusing his oration, change the meaning of the words as alchemy does, or would, the substance of metals? Assuredly not. If, then, God has spoken to us "as man speaks with man," it is clear that we must treat His word in the same way in which we do other literary productions—consider the words in their fundamental and unquestioned usage, and not think of proposing arbitrary or speculative senses for them.

To alter the meaning visible in the words by permutative spiritualization is to make the Bible the convenient material for every kind of "private interpretation," as the confusing variety of opinions on the subject of the kingdom manifestly proves. Men have imagined that God could not have a kingdom in the ordinary sense of the word, and in order to reduce the material to a relation with that preconceived notion, it has been necessary to interpret it in a manner which, it must be admitted, invests it with the qualities of a riddle rather than those of a formal communication.

The first chapter of Colossians views the beloved Son in

the effulgent glory of creation and reconciliation. Past and future are vitally related to the Firstborn from the dead. First is the creation of all things in Him (Col.1:16). This is the starting point: it looks to a dateless past. Next comes the reconciliation of all through Him (verse 20). This is the goal: it points to a distant future. We observe that, in both creation and reconciliation, two spheres appear—the heavens and the earth. These two spheres must not be fused, and what pertains to the one must be rigidly excluded from what pertains to the other.

If creation and reconciliation embrace two spheres, earth and heaven, His purpose must necessarily bear this twofold stamp, and as enunciated in Scripture, it appears to do so.

The burden of God's purpose on its terrestrial side is a *kingdom.* Its focus is a *nation*—Israel. Its keynote, *dominion.* The end in view, the restoration of the earth. Israel is an instrument for *rule.* Through their medium God will establish His government in the earth, shepherd the other nations, and administer the affairs of this nether sphere. The burden of God's purpose on its celestial side is *revelation.* Its focus is the *church which is His body.* Its keynote, *grace.* The end in view, the restoration of the heavens. The Church, both now and hereafter, is a medium for *display.* Through that spiritual corporation God will exhibit the transcendent wealth of His grace throughout the oncoming eons (Eph.2:7). Hence the astounding statement, almost staggering in its immensity, "we became a *theater* to the world and to messengers and to men" (1 Cor.4:9).

Leaving for the present the consideration of that side of God's purpose which concerns the heavens, we proceed to trace the development of the kingdom idea, confining ourselves to the Hebrew Scriptures, and resolutely adhering to the sound principle of taking each word at its face value. We shall show that, in the totality of its features, such an interpretation will justify itself by the general cogency of its results.

Lexicons define a "kingdom" as "a territory, people, state, or realm, ruled by a king . . . [a] monarchy" (Funk and Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary). A potentate, a metropolis, a territory, a people, a system of administration and dependencies—these are the ideas which the word suggests; and it is reasonable to suppose that, in adopting it, Scripture intends to convey no other ideas than those ordinarily implied. The assumption thus advanced may easily be tested. But at what point shall our investigation begin?

When the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, He declares to the nations on His right, "Hither, blessed of My Father! Enjoy the allotment of the kingdom made ready for you from the disruption of the world" (Matt. 25:34). Here we learn that (1) the Father has *prepared* a Kingdom, and (2) that He has prepared it *from the world's disruption.* This sends us to the opening page of the Bible.

Genesis 1:1 asserts the creation of the heavens and the earth in the beginning. And it is unnecessary to say that they came forth from the hand of God in utmost perfection and beauty. We have an express statement to the effect that they were not created "waste and void," as they afterward *became* (Isa.45:18). Genesis 1:2 describes the chaos—the result of disruption. The following verses (3-25) relate the rehabilitation of the ruins. When the earth was made fit for habitation, Adam appears upon the scene, and the Creator delivers to him the following charge: "Be fruitful and increase and fill the earth, and subdue it. And *sway* over the fish of the sea, and over the flyer of the heavens, and over the beast, and over all the earth, and over all life moving on the land." (Gen.1:28).

Moreover, God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden "to serve it and to keep it" (Gen.2:15). The

words "serve"[2] and "keep" suggest, respectively, cultivation and supervision. The task assigned is development of natural resources and their administration, as well as dispensing the products of the soil to the creatures under him, along the lines indicated by the Creator (Gen.1:29). On the surface, we have here something concrete to which each subsequent declaration sustains a relation.

Adam's defection threw the vast machinery of the universe out of gear. It is important to note, however, that though his apostasy changed God's method of dealing, it did not alter His purpose; for, three millennia afterwards, David, in poetic language, muses in wonderment over the truth revealed to our progenitor in Eden: that a *man* is given authority to rule for God (Psa.8).

Of the earliest age we have only the scantiest outline. The events of nearly two millennia are condensed within the compass of two chapters (Gen.4:1-6:8). Yet, notwithstanding its brevity, this fragment unveils a criminal career of unmatched activity and extraordinary character. Here is murder and blasphemous assumption of deity: violence and abuse of the sexual relation; talent and inventive genius employed in the service of lust; cities sodden in sensuality and reeking in crime. Wickedness assumed such grave character and gigantic proportions that the total destruction of the race—except eight souls which had not participated in the prevailing forms of wickedness—was the only effective remedy.

After the deluge, the charge to multiply and fill the earth, formerly given to Adam, is renewed to Noah and his three

2. The Hebrew word for "serve" ("dress," AV) is the same rendered "to till" in Genesis 2:6; 3:23; 4:12. Adam was a tiller of the ground before the fall, not in consequence thereof. Indeed, he was contemplated for that occupation from the outset (Gen.2:5). The only difference before and after the fall lay in this: whereas before, the ground responded generously to his efforts afterwards it yielded scanty returns.

sons. The original idea of dominion is confirmed. The corrupt practices of the antediluvians, however, introduced new elements of disorder in the relations of man to nature and the animals. These new conditions are met. "The fear of you and dismay due to you shall come on every living animal of the earth, even on every flyer of the heavens, and in all which is moving on the ground, and in all the fishes of the sea. Into your hand are they given. *Every moving animal which is living is coming to be food for you.* As the green herbage, I give to you all. Yea, only flesh with its soul, its blood, you shall not eat" (Gen.9:2-4).

But there is another point. From the experience of the antecedent age emerged another problem. With the exception of marriage, there had been no defined relations and responsibilities. Each man was a law unto himself. There was nothing to safeguard life from lawless encroachments. The extent to which violence had prevailed pleaded for a restraint of some sort. And this is precisely what God proceeds to do. "Yea, and your blood for your souls I will require. From the hand of every living animal will I require it, and from the hand of humanity. From the hand of a man's brother I will require the soul of a human. The shedder of the blood of a human, by a human his blood shall be shed, for in the image of the Elohim has He made humanity" (Gen.9:5,6). The progenitors of the race are invested with authority requisite for the enactment and maintenance of these obligations.

Though there is no categorical statement bearing on the point, the implication that Noah's sons were to establish in their respective lines government on the basis of responsibility between man and man, is required by the trend of the narrative as a whole. From them mankind branches off in three streams, subdivided into lesser divisions, nations, families (Gen.10:5,20,31,32), each with a specific vocation and definite destiny in view, as will be

presently shown. The division of mankind into nations was of divine appointment (Gen.10:25; Deut.32:8; Acts 17:26), with the evident intention of founding a supervisory system that would insure effectual enforcement of the principles entrusted to Noah's sons. Moreover, we are informed (Deut.32:8) that, in dividing Adam's sons into nations, the bounds of their habitation were assigned with a view to Israel as a ruling nation, with centralized authority.

This system of administration, in its broad features, is outlined in Noah's prophecy (Gen.9:25-27). Supremacy, political and religious, belongs to Shem. He monopolizes blessing. The tent of God is in his midst. The Deity is known as "the God of Shem." The Japhetic peoples, enlarged by a policy of expansion due to conquest and colonization, surround that center. Subordinate to both are the Hamitic nations. We are not required to understand the "servitude" of this passage in the sense of slavery; it implies no more than subjection; they do not enjoy political autonomy. The occasion to divulge the position and function of a ruling people in a more detailed manner was furnished by the nations attempting to gather around a center of their own on the plains of Shinar (Gen.11:1-9). God upset their scheme, and, by confounding their speech, consolidated the national boundaries, which thereafter became philological as well as geographical. This brings us quite naturally to the next stage.

In the very land where a centralization diametrically opposed to His purpose had been attempted, God appears to a descendant of Shem—Abraham—and speaks as follows: "You go from your land and from your kindred and from your father's house to the land which I shall show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, and you must become a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and those making light of you I will curse. Blessed in you and in your seed are all the

families of the ground" (Gen.12:1-3). So, we see, the early intimation of a *great nation* is assuming definite shape. The initial announcement shows its greatness to consist in the enjoyment of blessing in a measure and to a degree not shared by others, and in the further fact of its being a *medium* of blessing to all the families of the ground.

Upon Abraham's return from Egypt, after his separation from Lot, Yahweh said to him, "Lift your eyes, pray, and see. From the place where you now are, northward and toward the south-rim and eastward and seaward, for all the land which you are seeing, I am giving it to you, and to your seed, till the eon" (Gen.13:14,15). Henceforth, a *land* is inseparably associated with that nation. Later on, its boundaries are determined and its possession for an inalienable inheritance is pledged to Abraham's posterity by an immutable, *unconditional* covenant—a covenant in which God assumes all obligations, Abraham being a mere spectator to the transaction—sealed with God's oath (Gen. 15:12-21; *cp* Heb.6:13-18).

Anterior to this covenant, Abraham was promised an *heir* and posterity numerous as the sand of the sea. Striking is the strange incompatibility of His counsels with the agents chosen to carry them out. He said He would make a great nation—of whom? A man as good as dead—that is, whose virility was destroyed by senile decay—and a barren woman, past the age of child-bearing. Again, He said: "In Isaac shall your seed be called." But he, too, had a barren wife. "Isaac is entreating Yahweh for the invigorating of Rebecca, his wife, for she is barren. And Yahweh is being entreated by him, and Rebecca, his wife, is pregnant" (Gen.25:21). Also, in the cases of Jacob's wives, we read, "God opened her womb" (Gen.29:31; 30:22).

God is the Fulfiller as well as Giver of the promise; and His method of procedure makes it evident all along that their realization is not "by natural course," but by direc-

tive—is it too much to say creative?—acts on His part. The increase in Egypt under conditions where other nations have either perished or lost their identity; the exodus; the passage through the wilderness; the events in the land—in a word, every phase of Hebrew history justifies the saying of the Psalmist, "He has not done so for any other nation" (Psa.147:20), and affirms them to be a people of His *own* making.

We are now to consider a departure fraught with disastrous consequences to Israel. They reach Sinai. Moses ascends to the One, Elohim. Then Yahweh calls to him from the mountain, saying: "Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and tell to the sons of Israel, *You* have seen what I did to the Egyptians when I bore *you* on vultures' wings and brought *you* to Myself. Now, if you shall hearken, yea hearken to My voice and observe My covenant then you will become Mine, a special possession, above all the peoples, for Mine is all the earth. As for you, you shall become Mine, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex.19:3-6a).

God bids them take a retrospect of His wondrous doings. As a vulture soaring high in the air scorns every impediment which obstructs a pedestrian's course, so had God carried them through the dangers of the desert. Recall the facts. He led them dryshod across the sea; sweetened the waters of Marah; gave them bread from heaven and water from the rock; He satisfied their hunger and assuaged their thirst. How different their part had been! They had *under*estimated His power. "Can He provide a table in the wilderness?" They had doubted His presence. "Is the Lord in our midst?" And now, in the face of such experiences, they *over*estimate their own strength. "Whatsoever the Lord has spoken *we will do.*" Alas! they had not learned the lessons which one of their illustrious sons learned so thoroughly in a later day, "I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying

beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not" (Rom.7:18); it is only, "For all am I strong *in Him Who is invigorating me—Christ!*" (Phil.4:13).

They are about to enter the land. Thus far they are not hedged by restrictions. Every step of the way has developed a tendency to resist God's appointments; yet they express confidence in their ability to conform to His requirements without even knowing what is expected of them. Entrance into the land under such circumstances means a certain recrudescence of the scene at Babel. Goodness has been outraged, so they are placed under a stern, inflexible schoolmaster—the law—to learn the exceeding sinfulness of sin. A covenant *conditioned by obedience on their part,* is entered into. "And no more will the feet of Israel wander from the ground which I gave to their fathers, *should* they hearken to do according to all which I instruct them, and to all the law they were instructed in by My servant Moses" (2 Kings 21:8).

On the other hand, if they will not hearken to the voice of Yahweh their Elohim, to observe and to do all His instructions and His statutes, then "Yahweh shall lift up against you a nation from afar, from the end of the earth, just as the vulture swoops down, a nation whose tongue you have not heard, a nation strong of face who neither lifts the face of the old one with partiality nor is gracious to the youth" (Deut.28:15,49,50).

The Sinaitic covenant was a temporary expedient to restrain inevitable outbreaks of sin. Imposed unto a period of reformation (Heb.9:10), it could not invalidate the Abrahamic covenant ratified beforehand (Gal.3:17). On entering the land the nation solemnly assumes its duties. Heaven and earth are summoned as witnesses. Six tribes stationed on Mount Gerizim pronounce the blessings; six tribes pronounce the curses from Mount Ebal. As the

Levites read the curses, the people respond "Amen" (Deut. 27:15-26; Josh.8:30-35).

Their career in the land was a mournful record of law-breaking and apostasy. King, priest, and people, "did that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh." So, true to the terms of the covenant, "He causes to go up against them the king of the Chaldeans, and he slays their chosen ones by the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and has no pity on young man and virgin, old man and very aged—the whole He has given into his hand . . . And he deports those left of the sword unto Babylon" (2 Chron.36:17,20). But at the moment when the nation is being removed because of its unworthiness, the promise of God is announced (Jer.31:31-34):

"Behold the days are coming, averring is Yahweh,
when I contract with the house of Israel,
And with the house of Judah, a new covenant.
Not as the covenant which I contracted with their forefathers,
In the day I held fast their hand to bring them forth from the land of Egypt,
Which covenant of Mine they annulled,
And I loathed them, averring is Yahweh.
For this is the covenant which I will contract,
With the house of Israel after those days, averring is Yahweh.
I will bestow My law within them,
And I will write it on their hearts,
I will become theirs for Elohim,
And they shall become Mine for a people.
And no longer shall they teach, each man his associate,
And each man his brother, saying, 'Know Yahweh,'
For all of them shall know Me,
From their smallest unto their greatest, averring is Yahweh,
For I will pardon their depravity,
And I will remember their sin no further."

The first covenant had failed owing to their mortal corruption: so, by a new covenant, God pledges Himself, without any obligation on their part, not only to pardon their sins and reinstate them as a nation in their land, but also to regenerate them so as to make further defection impossible.

The next stage in the unfolding of the purpose is the choice of a King. Like the preceding, this item, too, is made public in consequence of failure on man's part. The anarchy under the judges and the venality of Samuel's sons led Israel to demand a king. Let it be understood, there was no sin in asking for a king. God intended that Israel should have one. Jacob looks forward to the time when the Prince of Peace shall arise out of Judah with the sceptre (Gen.49:10), and Balaam beholds His star from afar (Num.24:17).

The mistake lay in asking for a king *like unto the nations.* Samuel makes it clear that such monarchic rule means tyranny. Under Saul they tasted it to the full. At length, after much disciplinary trial, David, the first king of Israel "according to God's own heart," i.e., His definite choice for the throne, is crowned. He desired to build a house for Yahweh. This he was not allowed to do, but on that occasion God made with him an eonian covenant, "arranged in all things and observed" (2 Sam.23:5) to raise him a "seed," the throne of whose kingdom will be "established for the eon" (2 Sam.7:11-17). Along with this promise goes the choice of Jerusalem for a metropolis. The kingdom idea is thus completed.

To clearly understand subsequent developments, we must bear in mind, that, while this covenant is *unconditional,* and therefore irrevocable (Psa.89:28-37), God reserves the right to inflict such remedial punishment as the delinquency of David's successors may necessitate.

The books of the Kings and the Chronicles detail the his-

tory of the Davidic dynasty. Their tale supports the censure of the Son of Sirach:[3] "Except David and Hezekiah and Josiah, all committed trespass: the kings of Judah failed" (Ecclus.49:4). We have observed that David's descendants would be chastised for iniquity "with the club of mortals, and with the contagion of the sons of men" (2 Sam.7:14); in other words, through calamities inflicted by men. A long series of such disciplinary measures failed to produce adequate salutary effects (1 Kings 11:11,12; 2 Chron.12:2; 16:9; 21:10,16; 24:24; 28:5,6,9; 33:11). Therefore He delivered them into the hands of the Chaldeans. But at the time when Zedekiah is deposed and carried to Babylon in fetters, the inviolability of the promise is solemnly reiterated (Ezek.21:25-27):

"And you, violated, wicked prince of Israel,
Whose day comes in the era of depravity's end,
Thus says my Lord Yahweh:
Take away the turban, and heave off the crown.
This shall not remain thus.
The low elevate, and the lofty abase.
Depraved, depraved, depraved will I constitute it.
Moreover, this shall not come to be again
till He comes Whose is the judgment,
And I will give it to Him."

This great declaration molds and governs the outlook of exilic and post-exilic prophecy. The crown being removed

3. i.e., the censure of the author of the book of this title, known today as Ecclesiasticus (from the Vulgate). This work is one of the earliest of the deuterocanonical/apocryphal books. It would appear that the original title, according to the afterword in the Hebrew text, was "Wisdom . . . of the Son of Sirach." It is a notable example of the Hebrew "*Hokmah*- [i.e., 'Wisdom'] literature." Modeled in great part on Proverbs, it concerns itself with ethical maxims and folk-sayings, expressions of praise and lament, besides observations about Jewish life and religious mores in the second century B.C.

from David's house until the Rightful One comes, it looks forward to His advent (Jer.23:5,6):

"Behold! Days are coming, averring is Yahweh,
When I will raise for David a righteous Sprout,
And a King shall reign and use intelligence,
And He will execute judgment and justice in the land.
In His days Judah shall be saved,
And Israel shall tabernacle trustingly,
And this is His name, by which they shall call Him:
Yahweh, our Righteousness."

The kingdom of Judah was reduced to a province of the Babylonian empire. But no sooner are the Jews and the temple vessels brought to Babylon, than Nebuchadnezzar is divinely instructed of the future mapped out for the people he has deported. He fell asleep, absorbed by the question, *What shall come to pass hereafter?* That night's dream was a complete answer to the thought which had preoccupied his mind: "The great Eloah makes known to the king *what shall occur after this*" (Dan.2:29-45). A succession of empires are to lord over the Holy Land, but at an appointed time the kingdom shall be restored to Israel.

The decree of Cyrus permitted the Jews to return and rebuild the temple at Jerusalem. A small remnant returned under Nehemiah and Zerubbabel. In the reign of Darius the new temple was finished (Ezra 6:15). Conditions, however, were different from what they had been. Nation, king, and priest had experienced failure through sin and were alike under judgment. The second temple had no coffer ("ark," AV). Without a propitiatory shelter ("mercy-seat," AV), the annual cleansing of the nation from sin was no longer possible. What standing had the people? is the question emerging from the failure of the Aaronic priesthood. The Book of Zechariah has this situation in view.

On the face of things, the vision in Zechariah, third chapter, deals with the removal of the iniquity of the priesthood and the land (verses 4 and 9). It was the second year of

Darius (1:7). The Lord has returned to Jerusalem with compassion; the work of the house is allowed to proceed (Zech.1:16; Ezra 4:24). The prophet sees Joshua standing before the messenger of Yahweh in filthy garments. Using his uncleanness as a point of attack, Satan seeks to stave off the prosperity promised to Jerusalem, once more chosen by Yahweh (Zech.3:2; *cp* 1:13,17). Satan is rebuked. The messenger commands those before him (before Joshua—the priests and Levites) to take off from him the filthy garments, while saying to him, "I cause your depravity to pass off you" (verse 4). Then Joshua is arrayed in rich apparel, and the messenger gives assurance that he and the Levites (that stand before him) will be given charge over the courts of the house (verse 7). But what of expiation? As the vision fades, there comes a voice (verses 8 and 9):

"Hear, pray, Joshua, the great priest, you and your associates who are sitting before you, for they are mortals of a miracle, for behold Me bringing My servant, the Sprout. For behold the stone which I bestow before Joshua; on one stone are seven facets. Behold Me engraving its graving (averring is Yahweh of hosts), and I remove all the depravity of that land in one day."

The stone reminds us of the *two* stones which were engraven with the names of the sons of Israel and put on the shoulders of the high priest. To signify the removal of all division or difference between the tribes or between them and Yahweh, here we have only *one* stone. This stone has seven "eyes" or "sparkles," or facets, for seven indicates satisfaction, as this is its meaning in Hebrew. Moreover, men had engraved the stones which Aaron wore, but now Yahweh Himself will engrave their names, so that they will ever be before Him, and His power will preserve them in His presence. So will it be within the house, where Joshua, the great priest, officiates. As a consequence, Yahweh Himself will also remove the depravity of the whole land. The single gem with seven facets engraven with His

own hands within the temple will find its external fulfillment in unity, satisfaction, and holiness throughout the land. Only thus will they be able to enjoy sitting under their vine and fig tree; joyful worship and righteous government (Zech.3:6-10).

Then will He "cleanse the sons of Levi, and cupel them as gold and as silver. And they shall come to be for Yahweh, bringing close the approach present in righteousness. Then the approach present of Judah and Jerusalem is congenial to Yahweh, as in the days of the eon, and as in former years" (Mal.3:3,4).

The relations between priesthood and royalty form the theme of chapter 6. Retribution for the heathen which scattered Judah and Jerusalem has been repeatedly affirmed (Zech.1:15, 18-21; 2:9). Now, at length, the prophet beholds its enactment. Four chariots drawn by horses of different colors come out from between two mountains of copper. Three chariots go out, to the north and south (chapter 6, verses 1-6). The fourth is detailed to patrol Israel's land (verse 7). In the opening vision of the series (1:7-11), the angelic horsemen were sent on a tour of inspection and returned with the report "all the earth is sitting still, and is quiet." Now they go forth from the divine presence to rest His spirit, which is to say, to execute His vengeance (*cp* Isa.48:14; Ezek.5:13).

The intention of the last scene (Zech.6:9-15) is obvious: it supplements Ezekiel's words at the time of the exile with regard to the passing away of the crown from Judah until He comes Whose right it is. Was the crown to be restored now that the seventy years had elapsed? What follows supplies the answer. The prophet is instructed to take silver and gold from the returned captives and make a crown. The announcement follows (Zech.6:12,13):

"Behold the Man! Sprout is His name.
And from under Him shall it sprout.
And *He* shall build the temple of Yahweh,

Even *He* shall build the temple of Yahweh,
and *He* shall bear the splendor.
He shall sit and rule on His throne,
And there comes to be a priest at His throne,
And the counsel of welfare shall come to be
between the two of them."

The announcement over, the prophet is directed to deposit the crown in the temple as a memorial to keep alive the hope of Israel. Zechariah extends the exilic predictions of the Coming One in one important particular: The Branch will unite the royal and the priestly with beneficial results—"the counsel of welfare shall come to be between the two of them."

The promise of a personage who combines the royal and the priestly, not through blood descent, but by divine appointment, recalls two instances where a priest-king appears to confer blessing after Israel's enemies have been reduced to subjection.

Abraham the Hebrew, returning from the slaughter of the kings, was met and blessed by Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High (Heb.7:1).

Psalm 110 commemorates the making of Jerusalem the seat of government after the discomfiture of Jebus. The story is told in 2 Samuel 5-8. David proceeded to make it the center of religious life. Gathering "all the chosen men of Israel," he took up the Coffer of God. In the course of these proceedings, though a king, he performed priestly functions: "Girded with a linen ephod . . . . David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before Yahweh" (2 Sam.6: 14,17; 1 Cor.15:27; 16:37, AV). This was a realization of the language of the psalm: "You are a priest for the eon, according to the order of Melchizedek" (Psa.110:4).

In other ways, besides the offering of sacrifice, the king played a priestly part. We read of Melchizedek that he "brings forth bread and wine" and "blessed" the patriarch

(Gen.14:18,19). So also it was with David: "He blessed the people in the name of Yahweh of hosts. And he apportioned to all one perforated wafer, and of broiled beef, and a portion of wine, and a cake of raisins" (2 Sam.6:18,19). In this particular also, the King of Israel walked in the footsteps of Melchizedek.

Malachi draws a dark picture of the remnant in the land. The symptoms of decay appearing at the time of the return have developed into full-blown apostasy. At the fore is a corrupt priesthood, sodden in formalism, steeped in self-righteousness, and an indifferent people bringing polluted offerings to God's altar. In the background, far away in the darkness of heathendom, Yahweh's name is great among the nations, and incense and a pure offering are offered unto Him (Mal.1:11). The foreview is the same as in Zechariah (Mal.3:1):

"Behold Me sending My messenger, and he surfaces the way before Me. And suddenly, the Lord Whom you are seeking is coming to His temple, and the Messenger of the covenant, in Whom *you* are delighting. Behold! He comes! says Yahweh of hosts."

Were it not for the traditional ideas imbibed from youth, we would never have imported anything entirely *new* into Matthew's gospel. It continues the story where Malachi left it. The same temple, the same indifferent priesthood, the same corrupt people, the same outside nations bringing a pure oblation. The only difference is: Malachi says of the messenger, "I send him"; of the Lord, "Behold! He comes!" But in Matthew the messenger *has* come, the Lord *is* present.

To recapitulate: Taking the word "kingdom" in its ordinary usage, we have traversed the Old Testament and found a doctrine in no sense mysterious or recondite in character. Beginning with the general idea of *dominion,* the disclosure moves steadily onward, terminating with a *king.*

Let us retrace the steps. Adam is invested with authority to rule for God and to exercise *dominion* in the earth. To Noah and his three sons the general idea of dominion is confirmed. In their days mankind is divided into *nations,* and government established on the principle of mutual obligations between man and man. At the time of Abraham another factor appears—a *great nation* with the promise of a *land* and a *seed.* In the reign of David three items are added: a *city,* a *throne,* a *king.*

After Malachi no prophet's voice was heard in Israel for three centuries. Decade after decade wore wearily away, bringing no relief to the favored nation. Dismayed by the delay, many abandoned the hope of a Messianic kingdom as an idle dream. Holy men and women suffered all the pangs of hope deferred. At length, the time of visitation dawned. Before ever that day arrived, however, and while as yet the sinful nation persisted in departing from God, John the Baptist, greatest of women-born, had monitions of coming glory, and he has told us (John 1:33) of mysterious messages that came to him respecting the Coming One. He was grieving over the sin of his nation, then in imminent danger—"already the ax is lying at the root of the trees. Every tree, then, which is not producing ideal fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire"—when, in response to the tidings that reached his ears from the far-off regions of glory, he lifted up his voice in the desert, and the point and substance of his message was—"*The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near!*"

Vladimir Gelesnoff

CORRECTLY CUTTING THE WORD OF TRUTH

The apostle Paul's entreaty to Timothy about "correctly cutting the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15), is surely ideal counsel.

Elaborating on this principle, Miles Coverdale, in 1535, wrote: "It shall greatly helpe ye to understande Scripture, if thou mark, not only words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before, and what followeth."

TRUE SPIRITUALITY

For is any of humanity acquainted with those things which are human except by the spirit of humanity which is in it? Thus also, those things which are of God no one knows, except by the spirit of God. Now we obtain, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we may perceive those things which are graciously given to us by God, which we are speaking also, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, matching spiritual blessings with spiritual words. Now the soulish human is not receiving those things which are of the spirit of God, for they are stupidity to him, and he is not able to know them, seeing that they are spiritually examined. Now he who is spiritual is indeed examining all, yet he is being examined by no one. For who knows the mind of the Lord? Who will be redirecting Him? Yet we have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor.2:11-16)

Literally, we are "matching spirituals—spirituals"; that is, matching "that which is spiritual with those who are spiritual" (CV, 1966 edition); and, "matching spiritual blessings with spiritual words" (CV, 1976 edition). Not only is the soulish man, who does not have the spirit of God (*cp* Jude 19), unable to receive those things which are of God's spirit (1 Cor.2:14), but "minors in Christ" as well, since they are still fleshly, cannot be *spoken to as* spiritual, for they are only able for milk, not solid food (1 Cor.3:1,2).

Nevertheless, the time comes, as it did for the Corinthians, when it is then expedient at least *to present* more mature considerations before those who cannot yet fully

grasp them, that they might somewhat come under their influence even so, and be nourished thereby accordingly.

To be sure, some, indeed many, will continue to resist the very help that they need. For example, many may well fail to see the importance of the subject of this present writing, and so will make little attempt to hear and heed our message. After all, at present, we are not dealing with any single biblical doctrine, as such, in the usual sense, but are "only" considering the underlying principles of understanding vital to them all!

Yet the faultfinder will declare, and perhaps not only to himself: "Where is the *love* in such writing! Indeed, where is love in the *life* of such a one who insists on speaking thus! Since other good authors, ones which I far prefer, write in a different tone and manner, how can such a tone and manner as this be either needed or worthy? Since *I* deem the love of God attenuated at best in any such exposition, surely such exposition is woefully inadequate!"

Yet others, appreciating not being talked down to, while recognizing the indispensability of sound principles in the acquisition of truth, may benefit much by being pointed in the right direction. Perhaps in the process, they may become suspicious as well that we may not be so deficient in love after all, as they formerly had supposed.

But whatever the individual reactions of various believers may be to such efforts, how we rejoice to know that even those who at present may yet be spiritually supine, nevertheless one day "will be made to *stand*, for the Lord is able to make [them] stand" (Rom.14:4). Hence we would speak of all such ones with respect and fraternity, apart from scorn or spirit of condescension.

A SPIRIT OF SANITY

There is much confusion among believers concerning the nature of the spiritual, even as of the intellectual. Many

disparage the intellectual, or at least minimize its importance. Many imply that it is as well somehow unloving to stress the intellectual, suggesting that we can hardly do so while remaining spiritual ourselves. Some would identify the pursuit of truth with lifeless "head knowledge," never realizing that one's quest for truth instead might well be from the heart, out of a love of God and a longing to be faithful and well pleasing to Him.

In our society today, there is much antipathy toward the intellectual. Accordingly, there is also much resistance to learning. Specifically, there is much resistance, as adults, to learning that which we did not learn as children or in our youth. So long as we remain intractable, intransigent in our disinclination toward further learning, such a disposition will prove impervious to the communication of knowledge. We resent being told that we "have to think," and are prepared to justify whatever claim can most convincingly excuse us from this obligation.

It is often supposed that the spiritual largely obviates the intellectual. In some cases, the irrational is maintained on the grounds that, in any case, it *is* "spiritual," whether rational or not. There is often little concern whether the convincingly spiritual is also the actually sane. Even among those of normal demeanor, ones who are by no means given over to the sensational or the abjectly superstitious, most fail to see the importance of language skills, critical thinking, and logical discipline.

Even those who are zealous Bible students, commonly seem to imagine that there are no special disciplines essential to competency that must be mastered; at least none beyond those in which they suppose themselves already to enjoy a sufficiency. Be they ever so naïve and unaware, so long as they are sincere, studious, knowledgeable in their way, while being willing to glean whatever seems right to them from various helps, they are confident that

they can "know the Bible" quite as well if not better than the next fellow.

Such believers seem to be little aware that it is not so much "study" that is needed, but a special spiritual gift of discernment in the hearing of the Word. Yet they seem even less aware that this gift is not operative apart from a vital connection to certain intellectual abilities, ones that are indispensable and that cannot be circumvented.

It may well be that such ones do not need us, or even our counsel as such; but they are simply deluded in failing to realize that, in any case, they *do* need—and need to gain—both the gift and agency of which we speak.

I would distinguish here between one's own *possession of* such abilities, and one's capacity to *recognize* such abilities in others, ones within the ecclesia who are more able to help us than others. It is not at all that we ourselves must have such skill and competency, but that we must, in any case, be able to *recognize* and *value* such proficiencies, wherever they may be found, that we might *avail* ourselves of them.

It is by no means so that every believer must possess great astuteness, transcendent perspicacity, and extraordinary acumen. But it is instead, if we would *understand* truth, that we *do* need to have the ability to grasp simple and sound, decisive points of teaching, while possessing the objectivity and willingness to act upon them, in order that we might follow truth wherever it may lead. Hence, we must pray for a spirit of wisdom and revelation (Eph.1:17), which necessarily incorporates a corresponding spirit of discernment and intellectual capacity. Unless God should grant us this further spiritual endowment, we can only reject the proffered help of those who could help us most, while embracing instead the well-intentioned but misguided efforts of those who can only mislead us.

To say that we neither need intellectual abilities ourselves nor the capacity to recognize them in others but can do without them altogether, while gaining a knowledge of truth instead by immediate divine imposition apart from rational means, is itself an irrational claim. To "know," is to perceive with the mind, which entails rational activity and precludes irrational activity.

Except in the trivial sense of merely formally holding a correct position, it is likewise irrational to speak of *possessing* truth, apart from *recognizing* truth. Truth is "that which corresponds with the actual facts, in contrast to the false" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.310). We do not possess truth with our hands or feet, but with our minds. We cannot possess truth apart from rational mental activity. Therefore, besides becoming fond of what is "good . . . just, benign, [and] self-controlled," may we be becoming fond as well of what is "*sane*" (Titus 1:8).

WALKING ACCORDING TO KNOWLEDGE

If we would know what it means to be "spiritual," we must first define "spirit." "Spirit" (*pneuma,* BLOW-*effect*) is "the imperceptible, intangible *power of* life, action, and intelligence. The divine power as manifested in His invisible, intangible operations" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.282). We are only truly *spirit*ual, then, to the degree that we *know* the truth and *live* according thereunto.

The spiritual is not indicated by the illogical, not to mention the irrational; nor is it reflected by strange "religious" mannerisms or vocalizations, any more than by quarrelsomeness or uncleanness. Nor is the spiritual reflected by contempt for or failure to deal graciously with those who may err in such intellectual or behavioral matters.

The spiritual is instead manifested in a mind that *understands* the evangel of grace, even as in a walk which has come under the *influence* of the evangel of grace. As vital as *living* according to truth surely is—and it is certainly

possible to live contrary to what we know—it must be realized that we cannot live according to (i.e., based upon) that which we do not yet know.

Above all, to be spiritual, we must be motivated and characterized by *love,* even if we should often fail therein. Love's greatest goal is to promote the welfare of the beloved, even if the beloved, in his own indiscernment and suspicions, may sometimes doubt love's presence or question love's motives. Even so, love is patient, and love is kind. Love finds no satisfaction in the shortcomings of others. Love no more exhibits contempt than it creates unrest; love rather manifests pity, in a spirit of humility.

INTELLIGENCE VS. STUPIDITY

As such, it is of no importance whether we express ourselves through the use of technical terms and in an academic manner, or in the most elementary speech and uncultivated way. It is only a question of whether what we say is *correct,* even as *sufficient,* whether expressed formally or informally.

Fundamentally erroneous notions concerning education, however, whether sins of commission or omission, ones that are of such a nature as to greatly hinder or even preclude one's growth in truth, must be repudiated before greater progress in truth can be made. These include: (1) anti-intellectual bias; (2) the presumption that non-scholars do not need and may safely ignore scholars; (3) the claim that understanding exists even where its professed possession, when expressed, evinces a profound lack of understanding; (4) ignorance of the fact that it is over-simplification and sheer inaccuracy which are the real dangers, not needless complexity, which constitutes only an unnecessary burden.

The plain person who understands key issues correctly, even though conceived in the simplest of terms, may be

far advanced in truth beyond the most erudite scholar who fails to understand key issues correctly. The plain person, however, who understands key issues incorrectly, does not understand truth, and lags far behind the erudite scholar who understands key issues correctly.

Both the ordinary person and the scholar need to be *humble* believers. Prideful ignorance is no more a virtue than pride of knowledge. And, both the ordinary person and the scholar need to be *intelligent* believers.

"Intelligence" simply speaks of the ability to learn or understand. In the Scriptures, "stupidity" does not speak of a lack of normal intelligence, in the everyday sense, but of being insipid or dull; of lack of *sens*ibility, in certain respects, in relation to truth.

The "stupid" are in a *stupor;* they are "stunned," or in a state of stupefaction. "Because, knowing God, *not as God* do they glorify Him or thank Him, but *vain* are they made in their *reasonings,* and *darkened* is their *unintelligent* heart. *Alleging* themselves to be wise, they are *made stupid*" (Rom.1:21,22).

A "stupid" man, then, lacks discernment; he fails to *recognize* the truth. He has no *taste* for it, and so cannot distinguish it from the false. Of course this may only be so in relation to certain subjects, not all subjects. Indeed, the most brilliant of men, whether on the whole or in relation to their field of expertise, may be altogether "stupid" in certain other connections.

In speaking of our need to be "intelligent" believers, we have in mind the ability to learn what is necessary in order to understand vital points. In consideration of aptitude, we refer primarily to wisdom, good sense, and a willingness to learn, whether one's general intelligence quotient, in the conventional sense, should be high or low. Intellectuality, then, thus understood, is *not* some elitist advantage for the few (much less is it a superiority complex or spirit

of aloofness), but is rather the privilege of all who would recognize their need to *think* with their mind, even as to speak with their tongue.

It is irrational to imagine that we can understand what we have never learned. It is not a question of the form of our education, but of whether we have *learned* (not merely assented to) what is to be known. Learning is a means of grace; it is the means of grace which God has ordained with a view toward our possession of understanding. If we know anything, it is entirely of God that this is so. Boasting in self is wholly excluded.

Yet since we would *love* our God and Father, not only with our whole heart and whole soul, but with our whole *comprehension* (e.g., Matt.22:37) as well, we long to be found faithful, and realize that for this we must first of all *learn* what is true.

J.R.C.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH

"Stand, then, girded about your loins with truth" (Eph.6:14)! This reminds us of a similar appeal which our Lord Jesus once pronounced during His earthly ministry: If ever you should be *remaining in My word,* you are truly My disciples, and you will *know the truth,* and the truth will be making you free (John 8:31,32). Though these words were spoken to believing Jews, the fact still stands today that it is *truth* alone which can liberate mankind; everyone who harbors delusions is in bondage, and is caught in a net from which truth alone can free him. When Paul exhorts us to pray for all mankind, for kings and all those in a superior station, he does so because God wills that all mankind be saved and come to a *realization of the truth* (1 Tim.2:1-4).

All saints have a measure of truth. At least they believe that Christ died for their sakes while they were still sinners, even though they may not see that they are *justified* in His blood, and will be saved from God's indignation (Rom.5:8,9; 1 Thess.1-10; 5:9).

Herman H. Rocke

A WORD IN DUE SEASON

Question:

When should we seek to tell others of the salvation of all mankind even as of universal reconciliation? I would like to share these great truths with everyone I know. In fact, I frequently mention these things to others, even though few indeed accept what I say. Eternal punishment is such a dishonor on the name of God, and I want others to know the truth! Recently, someone with whom I had shared the truth, a person who did not accept it or reject it but only cautioned me concerning it, said, "Even if what you say may be true, you should be reserved in making such a claim, since most are more apt to be stumbled than helped by such knowledge." Can you help me with these concerns?

Answer:

Surely not many holding to the salvation of all, even any who may hold it in foolishness and shame, would be apt, on average, to be any *more* injured through such a *misuse* of this truth, than by their unblinking acceptance *instead* of its opposite. I doubt very much that the "sensitive spirits" of those who proved themselves so able to bear the burden of eternal torment with nary a whimper, would have their tender psyches disturbed overmuch by any possible worry that the salvation of all just might be true. The danger we normally face, instead, is that of "fighting" over doctrine (2 Tim.2:24), together with all the sorrows and evils which so frequently attend controversy. Engaging in

"controversy for nothing useful, to the upsetting of those who are hearing" (2 Tim.2:14), is neither good for us nor for our opponents.

The truth that God will one day abolish death and become All in all (1 Cor.15:26,28), even as the related truth, that of God's purpose, through Christ, to reconcile all, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens (Col. 1:20), should not be announced in isolation, apart from either adequate foundation or competent defense. Nor should we, as such, equate this teaching with "*the* truth," as if to suggest that we are called to be doctrinaires, ones who are overly-occupied if not pre-occupied with this specific "doctrine" itself, as such. Such an unbalanced approach is unseemly, and brings opprobrium upon the very truth for which it seeks to stand.

This is especially so in the case of the immature who need to learn restraint, to whom "God . . . All in all," may mean little more than "no eternal hell—all will be saved." Such "teaching" is often more reactionary against contrary tradition than it is instructive in positive truth. While good intentions are commendable, surely we need to be circumspect and prudent in what we say.

Though what I present above captures my primary thoughts on this question, I would not be understood in the slightest "legalistic" spirit. Such is by no means my intended sense. I realize that none of us can but approach such ideals, and I would not at all wish to "jump on" others where any may seem to go contrary to such advice. I would only help those to whom God gives help through my efforts, wishing all others well in their chosen course.

This question at hand, which I shall concisely express as, "When and how should truth be shared?" is another question which we often receive. The following writing presents various considerations related to this topic.

J.R.C.

WISDOM ARE WE SPEAKING AMONG THE MATURE

WHERE, in reference to his original ministry to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul declares that (during that former period) he decided not to "perceive" anything among them "except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor.2:2), I take him to be indicating that, for a time (*cp* Acts 18:11), he taught them little else beyond this basic theme, even if he presented many particulars within this revelation. He sought to lead them to the level of progress in faith where it was now evident that they had truly *grasped* the message of "Christ crucified," for it is this glorious truth alone which forms the basis of all else. The apostle came to them in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling. His appearance was not impressive (*cp* 2 Cor.5:12; 10:1; Gal.4:14), and neither did he use the sort of methods that the dictates of human wisdom would commend as "effective persuasion techniques."

Where God truly grants faith, such man-made methods are hardly necessary, but are rather an affront; yet where such techniques are employed, though many "converts" may be gained, most of them may not be genuine. Indeed, even any among those whom God truly has called who nonetheless are subjected to such improper influences, are not made the better but the worse, as a result of the usual "Christian tactics," which prevailed even in Paul's day. But that the Corinthians' faith might not be in the "wisdom" of men but in the *power* of God, the apostle conducted himself in such a way as he herein relates (1 Cor.2:3-5).

By his words, "Yet *wisdom* are we speaking among the

mature" (2:6), I take him to mean just what he says. "Wisdom is too high for the fool" (Prov.24:7); or, "Unattainable to a foolish man are the dictates of wisdom" (Rotherham). Most, indeed, are not truly grounded even in the rudimentary elements of the oracles of God, and so have need, not of "solid food," but of a *proper and adequate* understanding of "milk"; that is, of the rudiments of Christ, as rehearsed in Hebrews 6:1, 2.

Since this counsel, here, however, is to the Hebrews, whose expectation was the new covenant heralded by the prophets, it may not be that Paul would necessarily have those who receive his evangel fully follow this pattern. Still, we all do well to learn of those basics at some appropriate juncture, and to be led forward toward the gaining of an understanding of in what sense it is that any of these do or do not apply to ourselves, even as in the various respects in which we may benefit through an appreciation of God's counsels for others. My most basic thought, then, from this passage in Hebrews, would simply be that of learning the principle: rudimentary elements (milk), *first;* advanced teachings (solid food), *second.*

Yet, alas, like the Hebrews, the situation today among most is one in which even good and moderate teaching is often perceived as "[just so many] words, many and abstruse . . . *since* you have become dull of hearing" (Heb. 5:11). There are not many who, "because of habit, have faculties exercised for discriminating between the ideal and the evil" (5:14). Indeed, this is so, for most take the true to be false and the false to be true; this is especially so where the false is popular or otherwise persuasive.

The immature and infirm mostly do not recognize their true state. Consequently, they take faithful dispensers to be fraudulent workers, yet fraudulent workers to be faithful dispensers. Humanly speaking, the situation seems (and is) quite hopeless. Yet we must go on, seeking to be faithful ourselves, remembering that *God* is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending (Eph.3:20). On certain occasions, we observe Him doing just this, granting enlightenment and sanity to some, together with corresponding assurance and joy.

LOGIC VS. "REASONING"

We must not deprecate or demean others, no matter how deluded we may suppose them to be. Spiritual delusion is no more to be the object of ridicule, than moral weakness or physical malady. Let us truly be walking in love, manifesting pitiful compassions unto all, besides kindness, humility, meekness, patience, bearing with one another and dealing graciously among ourselves, if anyone should be having a complaint against any (Col.3:12-14).

It is not that "correct doctrine" is not important; it is very important. It is simply that the reality is that because of "reasonings" (i.e., both in a pejorative and metonymical sense), there is much infirmity among believers which is the fruit "of reasonings," as reflected in the wide diversity of opinion which prevails (*cp* Rom.14:1).

Concerning the infirm, in our interpersonal relationships with other believers, Paul would have us be taking such ones to ourselves, "but not for discrimination of reasonings" (ibid). That is, we are not to do so in such a way that leads "into," results in, or otherwise draws to the fore, differences of opinion. The apostle would have us know that these faulty discriminations (as to what is true and what is not) themselves are the fruit of the misuse of the ratiocinative process, and that such mistaken deductions can only be expected from those who are infirm in the faith.

We all must "reason" continually, in the non-pejorative sense; that is, we must ever be logical, deciding according to the facts and the truth entailed thereby. The problem is, though, that most do not know what is truly at issue, are unaware what facts bear upon a question, are frequently

illogical, or are otherwise unable to deal sanely and competently with the Scriptures.

The point is that we will be foolish *ourselves*—even if we ourselves are not markedly infirm in the faith as such—if we should nonetheless engage those who *are* infirm, in any sort of dialog which results in "discrimination [or "difference(s)"] *of reasonings*"; that is, in strained relations as the result of disagreement over contested issues. Such arguments need not even be quarrelsome ones (in the metonymical sense of "argument"), but simply, in the literal sense, the exchange of reasons for or against a certain opinion.

Paul does not here envision, which we only rarely experience anyway, a circumstance in which another truly comes to us for help; in humility, seeking direction and assistance from us. Instead, he contemplates the usual situation which commonly obtains in which one party simply is believing "this," and yet the other party is believing "that"—and yet neither is seeking the other's instruction or assistance. Where we perceive the other person to be infirm in *the faith* (the body of teaching heralded by Paul as revealed to him by Christ) and yet have occasion to have fellowship with him, Paul would encourage us in this, but not "for [into] discrimination of reasonings." If others do not seek our help (and few indeed truly *seek* our help), Paul counsels us *not* to engage them in such disputed questions as are apt to result in "discriminations."

Since we are often perceived as "heretics" or worse, most who view us thus simply refuse my fellowship peremptorily. Yet I have a few community friends or others who though they have some notion as to certain distinctives in my faith (ones which they reject), nonetheless enjoy my friendship, both personally and even as a believer in Christ. They know that I am somewhat a knowledgeable person, but this has by no means led them to seek my assistance. So long as we speak of everyday affairs, or even, on occasion, briefly, of the death and resurrection of Christ itself, everything is fine. But years ago, and ever since, whenever I dared to go even a little farther, it soon became evident that my endeavors were not expedient. Hence, in the case of any involvements I continue to have with any such fellow believers, while I seek to maintain their friendship, I do so by being simply a personal friend.

IMITATING PAUL

If any among us should seek to do the work of an evangelist, pastor, or teacher, whenever we are therefore engaged in presentations before others, obviously, we should seek to follow Paul's pattern and instruction as relates to such service. But even such ones themselves, do well to follow Paul's advice here (in Romans 14:1) in their everyday "private-citizen encounters" with the "Christian public."

With Paul, the time came in his service to the Corinthians when, even though they were still immature and infirm (many being fleshly ["jealousy and strife"] and boastful; 3:1-4; 4:6-8), it had become needful to write the epistle to them which we call 1 Corinthians. In this letter, Paul *presents* all manner of glorious and intermediately-mature revelations. As to how much of it they understood, even as whether he had an opportunity later on to elucidate and clarify that which he herein simply presents, we can know but little. And, of course he goes even further in presenting the completed teachings of maturity, in his prison epistles.

Thus the facts seem to be that, for the apostle Paul, the time came when he began to present somewhat more advanced, still more advanced, and then finally ultimate, mature teachings. So when he says, "yet wisdom are we *speaking* among the *mature*" (2:6; which decidedly excluded the Corinthians), I take it that he is speaking primarily in a connotative sense, by association, thus indicating that it

was his (and Sosthenes'; *cp* 1:1) custom of seeking to elaborate upon and freely consider in a fuller way, "wisdom" among the "mature."

That is, Paul sought to confine his "speak*ing*" of things of "wisdom," to those who were at least beginning to be in a position to benefit from such speech. Thus he sought not his own expedience, but that of "the many" (10:33; *cp* Col. 4:5,6). Those teachings which are not only "full of wisdom" themselves, but which, the point is, *require substantial wisdom* on the part of the hearer if he would receive them and be benefited by them, he endeavored to be *"speaking,"* among those who had matured sufficiently to be profited thereby. No doubt, even Paul himself could only approximate this ideal; yet we should endeavor to do the same.

In seeking to apply these considerations to our own situation today, I would conclude that we must first decide whether we ourselves do well to serve as teachers (*cp* James 3:1). If we soberly conclude that perhaps we are able, sufficient to engage in such service faithfully, then let us by all means do so. But if wisdom should dictate (God giving us wisdom) that such is not our service, this will not be the slightest disgrace upon ourselves. Yet—if I may employ the apt old joke—it *will* be to our disgrace, in God's sight, if we should misinterpret the clouds shaped in the form of the letters "PC," as "Preach Christ," when to us their intended message instead was, "Pick Cotton." In the words of the beloved comedian, Jimmy Durante, "Everybody wants to get in the act!" Yet—and this was his whole point—for most, it would be far better to enjoy the show from the audience, than to spoil the show from the stage.

It is infinitely better to follow well than to lead poorly. Certainly, we should not seek to lead in a range (*cp* 2 Cor. 10:13-16) where we have not been invited to serve, lest our labors become more of an interference than a constructive service. The first principle of doing a good job,

is knowing whether we are in a position to do a good job. We must not, in any event and no matter how sincerely, merely try to "get in the act."

Where such counsel goes unheeded, we may be sure that this too is in the purpose of God. But if we desire truly to be "found faithful" (1 Cor.4:2), may we pray for wisdom in a realization of what this entails.

You, then, child of mine, be invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus. And what things you hear from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who shall be competent to teach others also. Suffer evil with me, as an ideal soldier of Christ Jesus. No one who is warring is involved in the business of a livelihood, that he should be pleasing the one who enlists him. Now if anyone should be competing in the games also, he is not given a wreath if ever he should not be competing lawfully. The toiling farmer must be the first to partake of the fruits. Apprehend what I say, for the Lord will be giving you understanding in it all. (2 Tim.2:1-7)

Yet whether we serve as teachers to certain others or not, wherever we encounter those who are infirm in the faith, ones who, in any event, have not come to us seeking our assistance, we ourselves greatly err in not heeding Paul's advice, "Now the infirm in the faith be taking to yourselves, but not for discrimination of reasonings" (Rom.14:1).

Even if we do not teach, where God opens a door, He may still give us opportunity to minister to others in a wonderful and invaluable way, by giving us the service of directing friends or acquaintances to the ministry of those who can best be of service to them in the teaching. As a result, old friendships may be fostered and new friendships made, with much joy and good fellowship among all. Such fellowship may *then* include the blessing of intelligent, edifying discussion in things of consequence, speaking God's wisdom in a secret, "among the mature" (1 Cor.2:6,7).

J.R.C.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS

THERE is a perennial interest in the question, What is the difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the heavens? In many instances there seems to be no distinction at all. In Matthew 19:23, 24 we read of both kingdoms in connection with the rich man who clung to his possessions. Their general identity is recognized again and again when the "kingdom" is spoken of without any word to tell us which one is referred to. Parallel passages abound in the gospels where Matthew uses the phrase "kingdom of the heavens" and the other evangelists use "kingdom of God."

The former phrase occurs only in Matthew's account. But Matthew also uses the phrase "kingdom of God." These cases are of special interest, therefore, in helping us to an understanding of the distinction between the two expressions.

"The kingdom of God" occurs as follows in Matthew. The three most ancient manuscripts omit it in Matthew 6:33.

Now if I am casting out demons by the spirit of God, consequently you have a foretaste of the kingdom of God. (12:28)
. . . for the rich to be entering into the kingdom of God. (19:24)
. . . the tribute collectors and the prostitutes are preceding you into the kingdom of God. (21:31)
. . . the kingdom of God will be taken away from you. (21:43)

If we can discover some element in these passages foreign to the rest, which makes it repugnant to our spiritual apprehension if we substitute "heavens" for "God," then

we will be able to enjoy the light and blessing which He has intended by using two phrases rather than one only.

The basic thought of the "kingdom of the heavens" is found in Daniel 2:44, where we read: "In their days, that is, of these kings, the Eloah of the heavens will set up a kingdom that for the eons shall not come to harm. His kingdom shall not be left to another people. It will pulverize and terminate all these kingdoms, and it shall be confirmed for the eons." It will not be restricted by treaties with other nations, nor will it be subject to the powers of darkness.

This passage, combined with a close reading of all later references to this kingdom, show us plainly that it is confined to the earth. Its limits do not extend beyond this planet. Besides this it belongs to a people. It is the sovereignty of one people or nation over other nations, such as was the case with Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece, which once had world-wide sway. It is a future kingdom which is not yet set up.

In contrast to this, the kingdom of God was already in exercise in heaven, though not on earth, as our Lord taught His disciples: "Let Thy will come to pass, as in heaven, on earth also" (Matt.6:10).

The kingdom of God, while it will include the earth, is not confined to it, but embraces the universe, except such parts as are in rebellion against Him. The kingdom of the heavens has no place outside the earth. The former is a present reality in heaven, but neither are yet established on earth.

The kingdom of God is the sovereignty of a Divine Person. The kingdom of the heavens is a kingdom which, indeed, finds all its authority in Him, yet is delegated to a people. "And the kingdom and the jurisdiction and the majesty of the kingdom under the entire heavens will be granted to the people of the saints of the supremacies.

Their kingdom is an eonian kingdom, and all other authorities shall serve and hearken to them" (Daniel 7:27).The twelve apostles shall be seated on twelve thrones, judging (i.e., ruling) the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt.19:28). Others shall have authority, some over five cities, some over ten. This authority is referred to when he tells them to teach or disciple all the nations (Matt.28:19).

An example may help to impress what we have been seeking to set forth. What, we will ask, was the difference between the kingdom of King George V and the kingdom of Great Britain? The king's dominion extended over England and all its dependencies. In England he was the king; in India he was the emperor. But there is a sense in which every Englishman who voted in the home country had a hand in the government of India. So, too, a place in the kingdom of the heavens, includes a place of authority over the other nations.

The earthly kingdom has no jurisdiction over demons. So the fact that He cast them out was a sign that the kingdom of God had come upon them (Matt.12:28).

The case of the rich man (Matt.19:24) is true of both kingdoms, but entrance is even more difficult in respect to God's personal rule.

The tax gatherers and harlots will have nothing but judgment in the kingdom of the heavens. The tax gatherers were traitors to that kingdom. But the self-righteous Pharisees, who had a great deal to say about their own fitness for the divine presence—they had even less right than those whom they despised. And this shows another characteristic distinction, arising from the fact that one kingdom involves subjection to God Himself where no deception is possible, while the other has to do with authority vested in human hands. The kingdom of God will have no such history as the kingdom of the heavens. In the latter there will be feigned subjection, which will break out into

rebellion when Satan is loosed from his chains. Loyalty to God Himself has a personal element similar to loyalty to a sovereign, which is much more than the subjection of a dependent realm.

Our last quotation deals with the fruits of the vineyard. There is no question here of the relation of Israel to the other nations. In subjection to God they would have furnished Him with the wine which cheers both God and man (Judges 9:13). So it is not the kingdom of the heavens which is taken from them, but the kingdom of God. This will be given to a nation which will bring forth its fruits. It will be taken from the apostates and given to the faithful and spiritual.

The two kingdoms, then, contain much in common and are often equivalents. But they always keep their own coloring and one phrase can never be used where God in His excellent wisdom has been pleased to place the other.

The kingdom of God is very seldom mentioned in the epistles, stress being laid upon its character. It is never, however, spoken of as a present reality upon the earth. It is spoken of as future (1 Cor.6:9,10; 15:50; Gal.5:21; Eph. 5:5; 1 Thess.2:12; 2 Thess.1:5; 2 Tim.4:1,18). It is associated with the Circumcision (Col.4:11).

THE KINGDOM OF THE FATHER

The "kingdom of the Father" is another phrase which contains a precious truth in advance of either of the ones we are considering. If the kingdom of the heavens expresses the relation of dependencies to another people and the kingdom of God the personal loyalty to a sovereign, then the Father's kingdom expresses the position of the King's children. This filial relationship promises no political prestige, but speaks rather of provision and character, which his fatherhood implies. He is the Father of the righteous (Matt.13:43). He it is who is petitioned for bread and for-

giveness (Matt.6:10), and He will provide the wine in the coming kingdom (Matt.26:29). Its full and perfect expression awaits the consummation, when the Son gives up the kingdom to God, even the Father (1 Cor.15:24). It is a kingdom in name only, for all sovereignty and authority and power are unnecessary and unknown.

THE KINGDOM OF THE SON

There is one kingdom, however, which is in power at the present time. This is the kingdom of God's beloved Son (Col.1:13). The authority of darkness, with spiritual forces of wickedness, who are the real sovereigns in this sombre scene (Eph.6:12), is strictly a spiritual kingdom. It does not displace the sovereignties of this world at all. So also is the Son's kingdom. It is a strictly spiritual sovereignty. We were once subjects of the domains of darkness. Now we are subjects of the kingdom of the Son of His love. All the while, however, we are still subject to the human governments under which we live. We are not loosed from them. We are exhorted to be subject to rulers as to God's ministers (Rom.13:6).

Some day the kingdom of God's Son will find expression on earth. That will be after this old earth has been replaced by a new one. Then God will dwell with all mankind and all will be willing, worshiping subjects of His beloved Son. So perfect will this reign be that the time will come when all sovereignty and authority and power will be abrogated and the Son Himself will become subject to the Father (1 Cor.15:27).

Just as the early ministry of Paul was the spiritual counterpart of the millennial reign, in which he acted as a priest in the evangel of God (Rom.15:16), so the present kingdom is a spiritual foretaste of the succeeding kingdom of the Son, which follows it, in the eon of the eon (Heb.1:8). We have not the powers of the coming eon, but

the affectionate perfection which characterizes the rule of God's Beloved.

So long as sin and insubordination hold sway, there can be no happiness apart from government. But when, at length, all is perfect, when sin is gone, and not the least breath stirs contrary to His wish, what need for government? The "kingdom" will exist only in name, giving place to the Father's guiding hand.

Then, when government itself is gone, will we learn the real lesson it was meant to teach: that His will alone is good—good for His glory and for our welfare. And when this is acknowledged by every heart then will God indeed be All in all.

A. E. Knoch

GOD ALL IN US

Perhaps it would not be too much to say that God is *something* in everyone in this life. Even the unbeliever and the atheist, especially in their earlier years, have at least a tinge of God-consciousness, especially when overwhelmed with sudden terror or dismay. But it is not until He reveals Himself to His chosen, that they begin to *realize* the part He plays in their lives, and that He becomes the focus of their consciousness. At first this may be very weak; but, as they become mature, He takes a larger and larger place in their experience. The heathen have idols made by human hands. Let us beware lest we also worship a deity who is not and will not be our all, made by human heads.

Most delightful, then, is it to contemplate that distant day when God will be All in *all.* Because of the unbelief of Christendom we are prone to emphasize the second *all,* and rightly insist that it admits of no exceptions. *Every* creature of His hand will then be close to His heart. Yet we should not confine our contemplations to the number alone, but also maintain the full meaning of the first *All.* God will not occupy a small fraction of our lives, nor even half or three-fourths. He will be *everything* to us. There will be nothing in our experience that will not be divine. Every occurrence, each incident, large or small, important or trivial, will come to us consciously as a gratuity given by God, and it will bring a constant response of adoring worship.

A. E. Knoch

INDEX TO VOLUME 110

Deeming it to be Refuse 37
Disposition of Christ, The 182
Do not Worry about Anything 45
Epaphroditus' Sufferings 107
Example of Christ, the 63
Growth in Realization of God 89
Human Will, The 79
Imitation of Paul, The 114
Introduction to Philippians 6
Joint Participants of Grace 33
Kenosis of Christ, The 147
Obituaries: H. Watts, 48; E. Bumgarner 192
Paul's Affairs 53
Philippians' Contribution, The 21
Philippians 1:3-11—4:14-20 21
Philippians 3:1-21 37
Philippians 1:12-30—4:10-13 52
Philippians 2:1-18 63
Philippians 2:13 79
Philippians 2:19-24 99
Philippians 2:25-30 107
Philippians 3:3-4:9 114
Philippians 2:1-30 182
Premonition 78
Service of Timothy, The 99
Studies in Philippians . 5,21,53,63,79,99,107 114 147,182
Translation Notes 32

REPOSING IN EXPECTATION

Our good friend, Ed Bumgarner of Bessemer City, North Carolina passed away in April of this year. He loved reading *Unsearchable Riches* and looked forward to the day when his favorite verse: 1 Corinthians 15:28, will come to pass. He was 87 1/2 years old and is survived by his wife Lorena, and his son Andrew. It was always a blessing to visit with Ed, Lorena and Andrew and his wife, Carol, at the Bible fellowships.

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 110th Year

(1909–2019)

Contents:

2 I see Thee, Lord, in everything
3 Editorial
5 Framework of Philippians
6 Introduction to Philippians
21 The Philippians' Contribution
33 Joint Participants of Grace
37 Deeming It to be Refuse
45 Do Not Worry about Anything

FIRST QUARTER, 2019

Volume 110 **Number 1**

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A Quarterly Magazine
For God and His
Word

VOLUME 110

co-editors:
Dean H. Hough
and
James R. Coram

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I see Thee, Lord, in everything

That nature brings to view—
The buds that blossom in the spring,
The birds that in full rapture sing,
The flowers of varying hue.

I see Thee in the sun, whose beam
Adds splendor to the day,
And in the moon's nocturnal gleam;
Their welcome rays from heaven stream
To drive the gloom away.

I see Thee in each tiny star
That twinkles in the night.
Those lights from circling spheres afar
Declare Thy glory, Lord, and are
A witness to Thy might.

I see Thee in Thy Word, and praise
The wisdom of Thy plan.
Thy Word of truth, O Lord, displays
The endless wonders of Thy ways
Revealed therein to man.

I see Thee best in Him, Who came
From realms of light above,
To suffer trials, death and shame,
That He might glorify Thy Name,
And show Thy boundless love.

The countless seasons onward roll,
Thy purpose to complete;
Thus wilt Thou reach Thy final goal,
When all respond to Thy control
And worship at Thy feet.

John H. Essex

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2019
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TEN

EDITORIAL

THIS issue features the first two articles comprised in the series *Studies in Philippians* by A. E. Knoch. The first of these articles is preceded by a chart, "Framework of Philippians, Complex Reversion" (p.5).

"The Philippian epistle is a divine commentary on the latter half of Ephesians, and, like it, is especially concerned with the deportment demanded by the transcendent doctrine developed in the first half of the Ephesian letter. This is the key to its contents. *It does not deal with doctrines, but with deportment.* This will illuminate many a difficult passage in it and this has been allowed to color the wording of the version.

"As shown in [this] literary framework, the epistle is a perfect, though complex reversion. Its controlling theme is Participation in the Evangel, not only by its public proclamation, but especially by a conduct consistent with its teachings."[1]

As stated in the first of these two articles included herein, "Introduction" (pp.6-20), "As Ephesians is the great exposition of the truth of this secret administration so Philippians opens up new vistas of *service.*" (p.6).

In the second of these two articles, each in its own way introductory in nature to the Philippian epistle, "The Philippians' Contribution" (p.21-31), Brother Knoch states, "Among the most precious privileges which come to us with the reception of Gods unspeakable gift, is that of giving, of participating in the service of heralding the evangel

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.67, p.129.

by supporting the efforts made to spread the knowledge of God" (p.21).

On page 30, we have included "Translation Notes" concerned with two changes in vocabulary from the previous CV editions as these appear herein, reflective of our prospective revision at Philippians 1:7. "The word 'right' is used in place of 'just,' and 'setting (my) mind' is substituted for 'disposed.'"

Next is Dean Hough's exposition, "Joint Participants of Grace" (pp.33-36): "The revelation of God's righteousness in dealing with human unrighteousness is sourced in Jesus Christ's faith in dying for sinners, and this is for the cause and invigorating power of our faith" . . . . God's righteousness is revealed by means of [Christ's] faith, that is, *out of* (Greek, *ek*) His faith, and this is *for* (the cause of), that is, directed *into* (Greek, *eis*) the believer's faith" (p.33).

This is followed by my writing entitled, "Deeming It to be Refuse" (pp.37-44). "Many who are friends of Christ, are nevertheless *enemies* of the *cross* of Christ, insofar as its significance is concerned in the achievement of God's purpose to become All in all (1 Cor.15:28). The consummation which is theirs ('whose consummation') for such unfaithful *service* is that of a certain 'destruction' (or 'loss'), namely that which will obtain when they, even as ourselves, are manifested before the dais of Christ and are requited for their practices through the body, whether good or bad (2 Cor.5:10)" (p.44).

The concluding article for this issue is, "Do Not Worry About Anything," (pp.45-48) by William Mealand. "There is an elixir of life in words like these. Touching life at all points, they embrace every experience, and affect every problem. How positive they are, how emphatic! There is no room left for the smallest doubt to intrude. The words are just an exquisite echo of the Psalmist's thought—*'fret not thyself!'*" (p.45). J.R.C.

FRAMEWORK OF PHILIPPIANS

Complex Reversion

INTRODUCTION 1[1]
Salutation 1[2]
The Philippians—Contribution—Doxology 1[3]
Paul—his bonds in Christ 1[12]-1[18]
Paul—his indifference 1[19]-1[26]
The Philippians—suffering with Paul 1[27]
Exhortation to imitate Christ 2[1]
CHRIST 2[5]
[1] In God's form, [2] Slave's form } **Empties Himself**
[3] Human shape, [4] Death, [5] the Cross } **Humbles Himself**
Exhortation to Obedience 2[12]
TIMOTHY—his character and service 2[19]
EPAPHRODITUS—his character and his sufferings 2[25]
Exhortation to Beware 3[1]
PAUL 3[4]
[7] Law justness—blameless
[6] Zeal—persecuting saints
[5] Law—Pharisee
[4] Hebrew of Hebrews
[3] Tribe of Benjamin
[2] Race of Israel
[1] Circumcision
Exhortation to imitate Paul 3[17]
The Philippians—their care of Paul 4[10]
Paul—his complacency in want 4[11]
Paul—his strength in Christ 4[13]
The Philippians—Contribution—Doxology 4[14]
CONCLUSION 4[21]
Salutation 4[23]

FELLOWSHIP IN THE EVANGEL
THE LIVING EXPRESSION OF THE EVANGEL

INTRODUCTION

PHILIPPIANS, almost more than any other epistle, must be considered as a unit. Its truth is so little known or practiced, and so distinctive in character, that a passage outside its context, or severed from the main theme, may suggest a thought quite contradictory to its message. "Work out your own salvation" (AV rendering) is only one of such statements which may be used to give the truth an entirely false twist. Unless the theme of the epistle is seen to be *service,* even those who are well aware of their transcendent blessings in Christ will be stumbled by passages which seem to call in question the precious truths already taught.

As Ephesians is the great exposition of the truth of this secret administration so Philippians opens up new vistas of service. The tendency observable in Paul's earlier epistles, in contrast with the book of Acts, is carried on to its consummation. Not only is Israel set aside, but all that pertains to the flesh and the earth is forfeited in order to gain Christ and conform to our celestial citizenship. The cross finds its full expression first in this epistle. This is sorely needed today, for without a due appreciation of its meaning we will be sure to fail in our walk and service.

I would especially urge those who seek to serve the saints to take Philippians to heart. The more I have meditated upon it, the more I have been appalled at our great lack in living up to it.

Another thought has impressed me. In these perfection epistles there is no enigmatic teaching. We do *not* observe as in a mirror, but face to face (1 Cor.13:12). This should

make it clear and easy, but, not being mature, most of us find it difficult. For instance, the statement "it is God Who is operating in you to will as well as to work" goes right to the root of the matter, and leaves no haziness whatever, as was the case in almost all previous revelation, which leaves us with the impression that *we* are the operating force in willing as well as in working. Let us never seek to modify or annul such clear declarations, which give us the final analysis and take us back to first causes, by bringing in others which deal with apparent processes, as used by God in testing men.

On the contrary, we should take Philippians as final, and God's previous unfoldings as more or less superficial and partial and obscure. It can be explained by the latest revelation, but not the latest by it. Of course Philippians is "extreme," for the cross is extreme and God is extreme in His desire to become *All* in His creatures. So let us not allow this word to frighten us and keep us from obeying the truth.

And let us not fail to note the joyous, yes, jubilant character of our service. True, it may be done in weakness and suffering, amid failure and envy and strife, yet beneath all is the promise and purpose of God, and in all we have the nearness of our Lord. Although this is the time of our humiliation, we anticipate the glory. While looking our afflictions in the face, we shout to all our fellow slaves (Phil.4:4): "Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again I will declare, be rejoicing!"

THE SLAVES' EXHORTATION
(Philippians 1:1-2–4:21-23)

THE PHILIPPIAN EPISTLE comes to us from two *slaves,* not from an *apostle.* It is an *exhortation,* designed to affect our feet, rather than a revelation for the enlightening of our minds. Paul and Timothy do not present the truth as to

our position in Christ, but the path to be pursued by the Philippians, after they know their place in Him. It consists principally of four "living expressions" of the evangel, which are set forth for us to follow. Christ, Timothy, Epaphroditus, Paul—these are the patterns who give us a clue to the conduct which becomes us today—Christ and Paul in particular.

Philippians follows Ephesians. Whatever we may hold as to the sequence of the books in the Bible, Paul's epistles come to us in an order undoubtedly divine, for it is the same in all the manuscripts. The Roman Group—Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians—form a unit by themselves, and do not depart far from the great truths of justification, conciliation, and glorification. Romans, like Ephesians, has a completeness all its own, yet it is supplemented by the two epistles to Corinth, as to conciliation and glorification, and Galatians is a most masterly commentary on its treatment of justification.

Philippians occupies the same relation to Ephesians that the Corinthian epistles do to Romans. This similarity is even more strikingly seen in Galatians and Colossians. Galatians is practically confined to the first of the three great subjects of Romans—justification. It leaves conciliation and glorification to the Corinthian letters. So Colossians also deals principally with the first aspect of the secret of Ephesians—our relationship to God. It leaves the other two to Philippians. In this epistle, then, we may expect to find set forth the *conduct* which flows from our relationship to *Christ* and to our *fellow saints.* The power of the appeals will depend largely on our apprehension and appreciation of the last two items of the secret—that we are a joint body, and are joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which Paul became the dispenser.

Just as Galatians is an excellent help in understanding

justification, and the Corinthian epistles in developing conciliation, so Philippians may assist us in further founding and confirming our knowledge of Ephesians, although it is intended for those who already apprehend that great unfolding of present truth. It will especially help to correct such faulty ideas as we may have in regard to the last two items of the secret. This is especially true of the evangel, for the Philippians were active participants in it from the first (1:5). And this very same evangel remains with them. He unfolds no new one to them. Now, however, they are *joint* partakers in its grace, whereas, at first, they partook of it as guests of Israel (Eph.2:12).

Both Ephesians and Colossians are easily divisible into two parts, doctrine and deportment. No such division can be seen in Philippians, for it is all devoted to conduct. It, indeed, divides into two complementary halves, for a glance at its structure will show that it is a reversion, dealing principally with living expressions of the evangel. In the first half are the examples of Christ and Timothy. These are balanced in the second by those of Epaphroditus and Paul. In the first part we are exhorted to imitate Christ (2:1); in the second we are bidden to imitate Paul (3:17). These facts are of vital value in the interpretation of this epistle, for some passages in it, divorced from its controlling theme, may be made to appear to teach truth quite beyond and contrary to Ephesians, but when kept within the bounds set by the epistle itself, and applied to our experience, they are in fullest accord with the previous epistle and its transcendent revelations.

A casual reading of Philippians gives little idea of the symmetry and beauty of its structure. Yet, for a close consideration of the epistle, there is no key comparable to a clear exhibition of the literary framework. The mind is likely to be lost in a maze of detail and forget the theme under discussion. Indeed it is not always easy to seize

the real subject without some such aid as the structure affords. Perhaps the common impression of this epistle is that, like our own letters, it is a jumble of this and that and the other, without any designed relation between its parts. A so-called "analysis" is apt to be arbitrary and is usually derived from the interpretation, instead of aiding it. But a real "framework" should be as self-evident as the skeleton of an animal, with all its parts symmetrical and complementary, making their relationships quite obvious to all.

THE FOUR EXAMPLES

The framework of Philippians shows that its subject is *participation in the evangel.* We must not limit this to the heralding of "the gospel" to unbelievers. It includes all of the glad message as it was revealed, not only as imparted to faith, but as expressed in life. In the second half of Ephesians we are *told* how we should walk; here we are *shown.* There the basis of conduct is truth. Here it is illuminated by example. The greater part of this epistle is devoted to *living expressions* of the evangel. The service and suffering of its greatest exponents are presented for our consideration. Christ Himself, in His descent from the form of God to the shame of the cross, is presented for our imitation. Corresponding to this we have Paul's descent from a self-righteous Pharisee to conformation to the death of Christ. The center of the epistle depicts two ideal characters—Timothy for service, and Epaphroditus for suffering.

In accord with its character, the hortatory passages in Philippians are not grouped together at the close, as in Ephesians and Colossians, but are scattered symmetrically throughout the epistle. They appear before and after the two great examples, The apostle pleads for a humble and obedient disposition like our Lord's (2:1-5,12-18). He exhorts us to imitate himself and beware of those who act otherwise (3:1-3,17-21). The question may arise, Since

Ephesians has already dealt with the conduct which comports with its new revelation, what room is left for exhortation in Philippians? The answer is that here also we see the special character of this epistle. The exhortations are general in Ephesians, here they apply particularly to *service.* Ephesians indeed dealt with the slaves of masters on earth. Philippians deals with the conduct of all saints in their character of slaves of a heavenly Master.

INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

1 Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus [i]who [l]**are in Philippi, together** with the **supervisors and servants:**

[2] **Grace to** [=]**you and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ.**

To correspond with their special character, both Philippians and Colossians, unlike Ephesians, are written jointly by Paul and Timothy. In Colossians Paul speaks as an *apostle,* Timothy as a *brother,* but in Philippians both bow themselves under the yoke of servitude to Christ Jesus. They are *slaves.* Here there is no secret unveiled, as in Ephesians. Here we are concerned with deeds rather than with words, with walk on earth rather than with our position in the heavens.

[21] **Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. Greeting** [=]**you are the brethren** [tg]**with me.** [22] **Greeting** [=]**you are all the saints, yet especially** [i]those [o] **of Caesar's** [i]**house.**

[23] **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ** be **with** [=]**your spirit! Amen!**

As the conclusion shows (4:21-23), the saints in Rome, especially those of Caesar's household, join him in greeting the saints in Philippi. Both are eloquent witnesses to the service of these slaves.

THE SAINTS IN PHILIPPI

Philippi does not enter into his ministry until after Paul's separation by the spirit (Acts 13:2) and his further separation from Barnabas (Acts 15:39). It enters soon after Timothy becomes Paul's companion. Very definite leading by the holy Spirit, which forbade his speaking in the province of Asia and Bithynia, forced him to the seacoast at Troas, where he had the Macedonian vision. Thereupon Paul crossed over into Macedonia to help them (Acts 16:6-10). Philippi was the first stopping place, as it was the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, and a Roman colony. There it was that Paul met Lydia, the seller of purple in Thyatira, and drove out the python spirit from the maid. And there he was flogged and jailed and put in the stocks, and prayed and sang hymns to God. There it was that the jailer was saved, and exulted, believing in God, with all his house.

Such is the background in the book of Acts. All is still on kingdom ground. There is baptism, and the casting out of demons, and a miraculous earthquake, all of which belong to the kingdom which is the theme of the "Acts" (Acts 1:6;28:31). Since then vast changes had taken place. The record of Acts itself had practically closed. Israel had been thrust aside. God's salvation is dispatched directly to the nations, without their mediacy. The apostle has made known the great truths of justification, conciliation, and glorification in his epistles to the Romans, the Corinthians, and the Thessalonians. These he undoubtedly made known to them in his later visit (Acts 20:6). But of these truths the Acts knows nothing. Far less should we look there for the latest revelations, which Paul sent from his prison in Rome. So that we must leave the Philippi of Acts in the far distant background, with great spiritual changes between that and the writing of this epistle.

Not only is this epistle written by slaves, but it is written especially to supervisors and servants. It is very evident that, in respect to service, there were distinctions between the saints. This is necessary wherever a number of individuals unite in striving to accomplish a common end. The experienced should supervise. The capable should serve. This is fitting and proper.

ORDER IN THE ECCLESIA

It is evident to everyone that the order in the various churches of today is not that found in the Scriptures. No church has several "bishops," or supervisors, as in Philippi, except those few who are striving to conform to the divine model. In those days, besides the gifts, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (Eph.4:11), there were supervisors and servants for service, as well as elders for rule. The function of a "bishop" has usually been confused with that of an elder, so that today we have "episcopalian" (ruled by bishops) and "presbyterian" churches (ruled by elders). Ephesians does not deal with the local ecclesia, hence there is no mention of local elders or supervisors or servants. So also, Philippians is concerned with *service*, not with rule, hence elders are not mentioned, although their work of supervision is brought before us.

SUPERVISORS OR "BISHOPS"

When we see how far modern ecclesiastical organizations have departed from the ideal set before us in the Scriptures, there is a tendency to recognize no order as divine in the ecclesia. But this will lead us from one error into another. This epistle reveals the root of the present apostasy in this regard in its opening exhortation. Supervisors and servants are especially exhorted to imitate the *humility* of Christ and to follow Paul in his repudiation of earthly honors. Contrariwise, they have been transformed into "bishops" and "deacons." Instead of visiting the saints

in their own ecclesia, the bishop has a high place over the clergy of many churches. In order to recover the divine idea of the office of a bishop we will need to note carefully all that is said on the subject in the Scriptures. In order to get the exact significance of the word, we set forth a concordance of its occurrences. The word in parenthesis is the Authorized Version rendering.

supervision, visitation *episkopê*

Luke	19:44	you know not the era of your *visitation* (*visitation*)
Acts	1:20	His *supervision* let a different one take (*bishoprick*)
1 Tim.	3: 1	if anyone is craving the *supervision* (*office of a bishop*)
1 Peter	2:12	glorifying God in the day of *visitation* (*visitation*)

supervise, *episkopeō*

Heb.	12:15	*supervising*, that no one be wanting (*looking diligently*)
1 Peter	5: 2	*supervising* . . . nor yet as lording it (*taking the oversight*)

supervisor, *episkopos*

Acts	20:28	*supervisors*, to be shepherding (*overseers*)
Phil.	1: 1	with the *supervisors* and servants (*bishops*)
1 Tim.	3: 2	the *supervisor*, then, must be (*bishop*)
Titus	1: 7	a *supervisor* must be unimpeachable (*bishop*)
1 Peter	2:25	Shepherd and *Supervisor* of your souls. (*Bishop*)

As is usual, the Authorized Version itself is witness to the true meaning of this word, for it renders it *overseer* (Acts 20: 28) and *taking the oversight* (1 Peter 5:2). It is characteristic that the Authorized Version should introduce one of the ecclesiastical titles used in the church at the time it was translated, for it was particularly desired not to disturb the church order then existing. Luther also made it plain that he was not of those who discard everything not found in the Scriptures. He wished to leave everything in the Catholic ritual as it was unless definitely contrary to

the Word. Hence the ecclesiastical order of the Lutheran church still contains much which has been carried over from Romanism. But, even when translated "bishop," the spiritually intelligent will detect a vast gulf between the ecclesiastical dignitary of today and the humble supervisor of the early church. Who would class a bishop with a servant, or even with a "deacon" (Phil.1:1)? And who would expect to find several bishops in one church, as in Philippi? And who would exhort a bishop not to lord it over the flock? Is that not the very essence of his office? Today we have one bishop over many churches, then there were many in one ecclesia. Now bishops rule over ministers and deacons, then they were associated with them in serving the saints.

ON-NOTE

The Greek words we are considering are formed from *epi*, ON, and *skop*, NOTE, ON-NOTE, and are the usual terms for *visit, visitor, visitation.* It seems from this that the principal duty of the supervisor is to visit or "look after" the saints. It is the service done by a pastor. The word pastor is literally, *shepherd.* When Paul was passing Ephesus for the last time (Acts 20:28), he exhorted the *elders*, "Take heed to yourselves and to the entire flocklet among which the holy Spirit appointed you *supervisors, to be shepherding* [or *to be pastors of*] the ecclesia of God . . . ." This was evidently a Presbyterian-Episcopal church, for the elders were also bishops! And they were the ones who did the pastoral work as well! Ecclesiasticism is difficult to avoid in these days, but those who give themselves to the Lord's work and are entitled to live of the evangel should strive their utmost not to lord it over the saints. Now that there are no apostles, church government is a local matter, in the hands of the elders in each ecclesia. The Word does not sanction any ruler outside the ecclesia except the Lord Himself.

The terms, elder, bishop, pastor, and teacher should not describe distinct ecclesiastical offices. Though the chief function of an elder is to *preside* (1 Tim.5:17), yet when Titus was instructed to constitute elders in each city, Paul also calls them supervisors: "If anyone is unimpeachable, the husband of one wife, having believing children, not accused of profligacy or insubordinate—for the *supervisor* must be unimpeachable . . ." (Titus 1:6,7). And the supervisors are to shepherd, or be *pastors* (Acts 20:28). Besides, some of the elders had the gift of *teaching,* and one who toils in the Word is to have special honor and to be supported in his work (1 Tim.5:17,18). Paul probably combined all these gifts and services in himself. Any layman in an ecclesia may become a servant, and when he becomes older, a supervisor and an elder, besides exercising one of the gifts, evangelist, pastor, or teacher.

Apart from apostolic supervision, the Pauline ecclesias were given no human head to unite and rule over the ecclesia as a whole, or over any groups of them. All of the functionaries, servants, supervisors, and elders, were *local,* and had no service or jurisdiction outside their own ecclesia. The gifts, indeed, may have had a wider sphere, but it is likely that evangelists and teachers, when they went to other fields, cooperated with the local ecclesia, if there was one, and deferred to the elders in matters of church order. One might almost say that the early church had no head. The need for a human head was not felt until the church lost contact with its heavenly Head, and wandered away from His Word. If all were subject to Him there would be the fullest cooperation and unity. Israel did not recognize Yahweh as their King, so they asked for a man. After the same example of unbelief, the church has chosen bishops and popes, and has called councils, and conferences and assemblies. These have succeeded, not in

uniting the saints into one body, but in dividing them into many hostile camps.

All "church government" in the Scriptures, apart from the apostolic office, is *local.* No bishop, no elder, has any jurisdiction beyond the assembly where he lives. There were no unions of several companies, or of all in a given city, or district, or country. There were no ecclesiastical authorities outside the local gathering. Every ecclesiastic who rules over more than one group of saints or over the local officers is usurping the place of Christ, for God has given the headship of the church to *Him.*

Since there was no corporate unity among the saints on earth, their relation to the government was an individual one. And this consisted simply in submission to the superior authorities (Rom.13:1) and in praying for them (1 Tim.2:2). If each individual believer would do this the probability is that the saints would lead a mild and quiet life. Their ability to carry on the functions for which they are left on the earth would be much greater than under the present system, when by organized numbers, they seek to influence governments in their favor, to their own eventual loss.

SERVANTS OR "DEACONS"

Perhaps no better evidence can be offered for the defection of the church from the spirit of humility inculcated in Philippians than the change from supervisor to "bishop," and from plain servant to "deacon" or "minister." It is evident that the latter term once meant no more than servant, or our translators would not have rendered Matthew 20:26, "whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister". In Matthew 23:11 they translate the same word servant. Some of the functions of these "deacons" or "ministers" are: keeping house, like Martha (Luke 10:40), drawing water (John 2:9), and it is specially used of those who waited on the table at meals (Luke 22:27; Acts 6:2).

Hence it also has the sense of serving out or *dispensing.* It refers to lowly duties, not dignified display. I well remember my first experience as a deacon. The office fell to my lot without appointment or election. My duties consisted in cleaning out the meeting place each week. I had others do such things for me in business and at home, but I considered it an honor to perform such a service as to the Lord. It gave me much joy and satisfaction, and to this day I feel more confident of a reward for wielding a broom in those happy days than for the higher work of wielding a pen in the defense of the truth in the long years that have followed.

A concordance of *diakonos* shows that it is not the special title of a church official. Magistrates are also "deacons" or "ministers." It is a general term, applicable to all who serve others or serve out something. It also shows that the terms *minister* and *deacon* are equivalents in the Scriptures, though they are so far apart in modern ecclesiastical usage. Every deacon is really a minister and every minister a deacon. To escape such confusion the *Concordant Version* avoids ecclesiastical terms wherever possible. It has made servants out of the deacons and ministers.

THE FUNCTION OF A MINISTER

"Minister" is used by the Authorized Version at all times for another Greek word, *leitourgos,* for which it is more appropriate, and the *Concordant Version* follows its example. As it is also a form of service which the Philippians, as a whole, rendered to Paul (2:17,30) through Epaphroditus (2:25), it will be well to include it in our study at this time, although such ministers have no permanent place in the church order. The term was applied only on special occasions, when some public service was performed, as can be seen when its occurrences are consulted in a concordance.

The public nature of the service rendered by a "minister" is evident from the occurrences, as well as the derivation

of the word. It is literally PEOPLE-ACTer, one who acts for other people, who *officiates.* Thus it is used four times of the priesthood (Luke 1:23; Heb.8:2;9:21; 10:11). A priest ministers or officiates. When Paul acted as a priest of the evangel of God, he was a minister (Rom.15:16). Paul was not the minister of Philippi. On the contrary, the Philippians were ministers of Paul (Phil.2:17,30). This consisted in the supply of his temporal needs. They had failed in this until Epaphroditus was sent to minister to Paul for them.

To give a modern example: One morning a brother, a baker by trade, called at the publication office and handed over a special collection taken by the ecclesia for the work. He was their "minister" on this occasion. When a special effort is to be made in which the whole ecclesia joins, they may choose one of their number to act for them in forwarding their bounty. By this act he becomes their "minister," in the true, biblical sense of the word. Too often our Lord's words (Matt.20:26) are literally, instead of figuratively, true. In these days the "minister" expects to be treated as the greatest in the ecclesia, instead of the least. True greatness does not consist in superior education, manners, or social position, but in lowly service.

ELDERS

Elders, as we have seen, are not in view as such, in Philippians. Age should teach wisdom, and experience should develop ability to direct. Therefore the older men were usually looked upon to *preside over* the affairs of an ecclesia. As elders, they were over those who served. But they usually did their share in serving also. It seems to be taken for granted that they would supervise (Titus 1:5-7). Such as did so appear in Philippians, classed as supervisors. Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus deal with rule in the ecclesia. Hence elders are brought before us there. In Philippians we are interested in the service of all, including the elders.

The question as to the manner of choosing elders, now that there are no apostles to constitute them, should seldom come up. Those who have the necessary qualifications should be evident to all, and they should be recognized without further ceremony. This has worked practically for many years even in these days. Other methods lead to much that is evil. Especially is this so when there are definite terms of office, with elections occurring frequently. The church of God is not a democracy, ruled by the majority. They should bow to the Word and to those who possess the qualifications which are therein prescribed. Elders may ask the opinion of anyone or of the whole ecclesia, but they should not base their action on this alone, but upon the experience and wisdom which their years should bring, in accord with the Scriptures.

THE SALUTATIONS

The epistle begins with Paul's usual, but highly significant salutation of grace and peace (1:2). In accord with this theme-setting word of greetings a striking phrase closes the epistle in the salutation at the end. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your *spirit*!" The striking absence of *physical* blessing in the epistle is emphasized at its close by limiting God's grace to the spirit, in contrast to the body and the soul, which were prominent in the evangel of the kingdom. Contrast the salutation of the apostle John to Gaius. He emphasized the *soul* (3 John 2). But Philippian service brings in a new note. There is suffering in present service. Christ descended to death. Paul is in bonds, and his afflictions are intensified even by his fellow slaves. Epaphroditus is infirm and risks his soul. All grace is in spirit. Hence, in closing, Paul calls down this grace upon the Philippians—and upon us—that we may find our highest bliss in serving Him in the midst of physical infirmity, not in flesh, but in spirit.

A. E. Knoch

THE PHILIPPIANS' CONTRIBUTION

Philippians 1:3-11–4:14-20

3 **I am thanking my** ˙**God** *on*-**at every** ˙**remembrance of** ⁼**you,** 4 **always, in every petition of mine** *ov*-**for** ⁼**you all, making the petition with joy,** 5 *on*-**for** ⁼**your** ˙**contribution** *io*-**to the evangel from the first day until** ˙**now,** 6 **having this same confidence, that He** ˙Who **undertakes** a **good work among** ⁼**you will be performing** it **until** the **day of Jesus Christ:** 7 **accord**ing **as it** ˡ**is right** for **me to be setting** my **mind** in **this** way **over** ⁼**you all, because** ⁼**you,** ˙**having me in** ˙**heart, both in my** ˙**bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the evangel,** ⁼**you all** ˡ**are joint participants** with **me of** ˙**grace.** 8 **For** ˙**God** ˡ**is my Witness how I am longing** for ⁼**you all in** the **compassions of Christ Jesus.** 9 **And this I am praying , that** ⁼**your** ˙**love may be superabounding still** ʳ**more and** ʳ**more in realization and** ᵉ**all sensibility,** 10 *io*-**for** ⁼**you** ˙**to be testing** ˙what things are of ˡ**consequence, that** ⁼**you may** ˡ**be sincere and no stumbling** block *io*-**for** the **day of Christ,** 11 ˚**filled** with the **fruit of righteousness** ˙that is **through Jesus Christ** *io*-**for** the **glory and laud of God.**

AMONG the most precious privileges which come to us with the reception of God's unspeakable gift, is that of giving, of participating in the service of heralding the evangel by supporting the efforts made to spread the knowledge of God. In this the Philippians as a whole are our example, for they seem to have excelled all others in their contributions to the evangel from the beginning to the very end of

Paul's career. Therefore an entire section is set aside for this subject both at the commencement and at the conclusion of the epistle. Let us seek to enter the delightful atmosphere which pervades it and lifts it heaven-high above the plane on which this matter is usually found in the churches of today.

God loves a gleeful giver. Giving grudgingly or of compulsion is of no real advantage to anyone, and an abomination to God, as though He were in need, and wished to exploit His creatures instead of contrariwise to lavish His abundance upon them (2 Cor.9:7,8). It is the motive that counts. In some lands there is a regular church tax, and payment is compulsory. Let no one imagine that much of this will be reckoned as given to the evangel. In other lands all sorts of expedients are used to lure the cash out of the pockets of reluctant members. What a falling off there would be if only those whose hearts were stirred by God's grace should be allowed to contribute to His work! But the real value would not be less.

Paul did solicit contributions from the saints, yet not for himself, but rather for the poor among his own people in Judea, according to his agreement with James, Cephas, and John, when their fields of service were separated (Gal. 2:10). This was on a much lower plane, however, and fits only in that intermediate administration when the nations accepted the spiritual riches which belonged to Israel, and sought to pay for them by sending material aid (Rom. 15:27). They were in the position of debtors at the time, and were under obligation to the nation of God's choice. So will the nations be in the next eon, and even in the last, when their kings bring their glory into the new Jerusalem (Rev.21:24). This is not the motive which moved the Philippians to make their contributions to Paul.

It is not at all likely that Paul received enough to keep body and spirit together for his service to the saints. He had

a trade at which he worked when he could. At Corinth he was employed in tent-making along with Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:3). Although, in answering the Macedonian call, he had found much response to the evangel in that province, not one of the ecclesias sent him help after he left them except the Philippians. More than that, there were times when he was in actual need (Phil.4:16). The last years of his life as a prisoner relieved him of the burden of self-support, yet here it is that the gift of the Philippians fits in. Taking his career as a whole, Paul, perhaps the most deserving of all God's slaves, did not receive even a slave's rations for his service to the saints.

But he did not complain. Rather he exulted that he had preached the evangel to the large Corinthian ecclesia gratuitously. Note the words he uses. He *despoiled* other ecclesias, *getting rations* for dispensing to them. He was actually in want in Corinth, but he did not become an encumbrance to them, but received help from Macedonia. He always endeavored to keep from becoming a burden (2 Cor.11:7-9).

Not that he did not know his rights in the matter. Strangely enough, he has to defend himself to these very Corinthians, who did so little for him when he was among them. Listen to his expostulation: "Have we no right at all to eat and drink? Have we no right at all to be leading about a sister as a wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or have only I and Barnabas no right not to be working? Who is warring at any time supplying his own rations? Who is planting a vineyard and not eating of its fruit?" (1 Cor.9:4-7). Possibly no man ever deserved as high wages as Paul. He sowed a most marvelous crop of spiritual seed among the nations, and, in justice, he should have harvested a tremendous crop of worldly wealth. But how much nobler was his course, as he himself said: "We do not use this right, but we are for-

going all, lest we may be giving any hindrance to the evangel of Christ" (1 Cor.9:12).

With such an experience back of him, no wonder that Paul had a very soft spot in his heart for the Philippians, whose practical sympathy came from the depths of their heart and never needed any prompting on his part. The material donations were transformed into the fragrant incense which delights the heart of God as well as provides for the needs of His unselfish slave.

With this before us we can better appreciate the opening and closing strains of the Philippian epistle. Paul begins: "I am thanking my God at every remembrance of you, always, in every petition of mine for you all, making the petition with joy, for your contribution to the evangel from the first day until now . . ." (Phil.1:3-5). The very first time that he preached the evangel in Philippi, Lydia generously urged him to come to her house and remain (Acts 16:15). He seems to have stayed there until he left, as he returned there, after coming out of the jail, before leaving the city (Acts 16:40). Soon afterward he was in Thessalonica, and it seems that they sent several times during his sojourn there. No doubt they were responsible for the contributions sent from Macedonia to Corinth (2 Cor.11:9). And this is crowned by their latest donation, sent to his prison in Rome, by the hand of Epaphroditus (Phil.2:25).

It is this persistent continuance which gave the aged slave the confidence that they would not fail in the future, that "He Who undertakes a good work among you will be performing it until the day of Jesus Christ" (1:6). Let us not dilute this statement into a mere promise that God will save everyone whom He calls. That is true and precious, but it applies to all. This is a rarer grace, which is, alas, not found in every ecclesia. In fact we do not read of it in connection with any other, and we know that it was lacking in some. It may be that the Philippians could not

send him much at a time, but they continued to send what they could, and this recurrent token of their affection for him and their desire to have a share in his service led to the conviction that they had become "incorrigible" givers. May we emulate their example.

No one can blame Paul for being partial to the Philippians, in view of their attitude toward him. When he was free and went about confirming and defending the evangel they had him in their heart, and were given grace to do their part in supporting his hands. And, now that he is in bonds, they did not reason that his bread and water are sure, being supplied by the state, but they sent their "apostle and minister," that is, they commissioned Epaphroditus to go to Rome with supplies to use in ministering to Paul. Being now aged, his life could no doubt be made much easier. This seems to have especially touched his heart. In a sense he was laid aside and had not the same claim on their aid as when he was actively going about and heralding the evangel. But they remained true to him, so that he longed for them all in the compassions of Christ Jesus.

As a result of this interchange of loving service, Paul is led to pray for the Philippians (1:9-11), that the love which has led them to care so faithfully for him and his service may be superabounding still more and more in *realization* and all *sensibility* for them to be testing what things are really of consequence, in order that they may be sincere and no stumbling block for the day of Christ, having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which is through Jesus Christ, for the glory and laud of God (1:9-11). Here we have a hint of what is on Paul's heart in writing the epistle. They have been giving to him, and now he desires that they, in turn, receive all that is theirs, in the latest and highest revelation, which he has just made public, and of which they have doubtless read in the so-called epistle to the Ephesians.

As in his marvelous opening prayer in Ephesians, he prays that they may be granted the *realization* of Him Who has given new treasures of grace (Eph.1:17)—the very same word which expresses his desire for the Philippians. In reality the word embraces even more than this, and might be rendered *appreciation.* This is all that is needed to make a saint happy. This is more than enough to repay us for all that we may do to forward the evangel or contribute to the support of its heralds. Paul could not repay his friends in material goods, but in spiritual wealth he had unutterably more than was needed to recompense even the model Philippian ecclesia.

But how can he convey it to them? Merely to write it out for them is not enough. Ephesians has now been before the saints for centuries, with very little realization or appreciation of the grandeur of its grace. The Philippians had doubtless heard it only recently. To them it would be new. For them it would involve a spirit of wisdom and revelation quite beyond the average. Yet this alone is the field in which their love can unfold still further, and so the Lord's slave prays that this gift may be theirs as well.

Yet he does not develop the thought as in Ephesians, but, in harmony with the trend of the epistle, he adds the word *sensibility.* He would trace the truth further, in its operation through their *faculties* (SENSE-KEEPers). He is concerned with the conduct which should characterize it. He would have them live it out in their lives. The new revelation brings with it a flood of apparent problems which will confuse their feet if they are not able to fully realize its import. Many practices which hitherto have seemed vital now fall away. To let go that which belongs to the past and grasp that which lies before, such is the crisis which confronted them at this time.

THINGS OF CONSEQUENCE

Christendom is chiefly occupied with the husks of divine

truth and knows but little of the kernel. This is because it has failed to realize the latest revelation. Hence it fails to function accordingly, and is occupied with things which are no longer of consequence. Indeed, there are hardly any, even among intelligent believers, who realize that there is any such thing as a crowning revelation in Ephesians which clears away all the enigmas of the fragmentary unfoldings which went before, and which brings the saint to maturity. As a consequence there is but little real sincerity. Almost everything is partly sham. And the path of both saint and sinner is strewn with stumbling blocks which will cause much loss in the day of Christ, when the conduct of the saints is tested by fire.

The word "consequence" is a difficult one to translate concordantly into English, and it may be that in this passage, it carries with it the ideas suggested by its elements, THRU-CARRY. In Hebrews 10:14 a word with the same elements is rendered "to a finality." That is, things of consequence are those which are not merely the scaffolding of truth, which will be removed at last, but the final forms, which are permanent. Israel had mostly shadows. We now have the substance. The process of divine revelation deals much with the flesh. The end is found in spirit.

As this epistle itself points out the things which are of no consequence, we need not linger over the thought. Paul especially deals with the prerogatives of the Jew in flesh, and is glad to forfeit them all, and deems them refuse in order to gain Christ, which is of the greatest consequence. Hitherto the saints were concerned with terrestrial things; now it is of the most vital importance that we recognize our celestial citizenship. Now it is necessary that Paul be taken as a model for our walk. Otherwise we will be sure to do the inconsequential things which, alas, are not lacking in dire results.

THE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Righteousness should bear fruit. It may be that the particular righteousness here in view is the conduct of the Philippians in contributing to Paul's support and the evangel. That was just. Some may reason that the glad tidings are free, that grace demands no payment for the benefits it brings. That is true. But is it right to drink of a fountain and not even tell others about it? In the last analysis, the Philippians had done no more than their duty in contributing to the evangel. But the fact that it was not done as a duty, but was the spontaneous outgrowth of the new life they had received, gives it a precious character not possessed by righteousness alone. It produced satisfaction and pleasure such as we experience when tasting of luscious fruit. It is delicious.

And this brings us to the most excellent and final fruit of all. It will be for the glory and laud of God. Briefly summed up, the prayer of Paul expresses his desire that these saints, whose love for him and the evangel has been practically expressed by many a gracious gift, may lead to their appreciation of God's greatest and latest revelation of His grace in giving the nations an equal place in the celestial honors of Christ's body. But, beyond this, he especially wishes that they may walk in accord with this final unfolding, and thus bring to God the glory and the applause which is the object and end of all things.

THE PARALLEL PASSAGE

14 **Moreover, =you do ideally** in your **joint contribution** in **my ·affliction.** 15 *y*__Now__ **=you´ Philippians also are °aware that, in** the **beginning of the evangel, when I come out from Macedonia, not one ecclesia participates** with **me** *io*__in__ the **matter of giving and getting, except =you only,** 16 *t*__for in Thessalonica also,__ **=you send,** + **once and twice,**

*io*__to my ·need.__ 17 **Not that I am seeking for** a **·gift, but I am seeking for ·fruit** ·that is **increasing** *io*__for__ **=your account.** 18 *y*__Now I am collecting all, and am superabounding. I have been filled full,__ **¯receiving** *b*__from Epaphroditus the__ things *b*__from__ **=you,** an **odor fragrant,** a **sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to ·God.** 19 *y*__Now my ·God shall be filling__ **=your every need** in **accord** with **His ·riches in glory in Christ Jesus.** 20 *y*__Now to our ·God and Father__ be **·glory** *io*__for the eons of the eons! Amen!__

This phase of the joint participation in the evangel—the contribution of the Philippians to its support—is taken up again in the corresponding section, near the end of the epistle shown above. We will skip all in between and consider what Paul writes there as well (4:14-20). Here he changes the formula "a good work" to "do ideally." Many versions have practically blotted out the fine distinction between the *good* and the *ideal.* In fact the Authorized Version almost always renders both by "good," though sometimes by "well," as in this case. But here we have a deed which is more than merely good. It perfectly fits the circumstances, and is eminently acceptable and appropriate not only in the eyes of Paul, but of God.

I take it that there is a correspondence between *their* gift to Paul, and the grace which he has for them. He speaks of superabounding, of being filled full, of being paid in full, and it is very probable that he, as a Roman prisoner, was not in actual need, as had been the case before. It would seem that this gift was a material counterpart of the lavish grace then being dispensed to the nations, hence an acceptable and *ideal* contribution at this particular crisis. It was good for them to relieve the physical needs of the apostle during his itinerant ministry. It is *ideal* that he is overwhelmed with good things at the time when he has opened the flood gate of blessing for the nations.

Paul had not always been so satiated with good things. Yet was not this in spiritual accord with his ministry? He had been dispensing grace, but so long as Israel was the channel of blessing the vast riches of grace could not be revealed. Now that God goes to the nations directly, Paul's physical surroundings change to accord with it. This, of course, is no excuse for the ecclesias of Corinth, who would have allowed him to hunger if Philippi had not come to the rescue. Undoubtedly their excellent conduct in this matter, humanly speaking, entitled them to receive the supreme epistle on the subject of conduct, and enabled them to live according to a standard which is the highest presented to mortal man.

FRUIT, NOT GIFTS

In these days of systematized budgets, and envelope systems, and all sorts of schemes to finance the work of the church (we will not say, of the Lord), we have forgotten the great difference between gifts to support the work and fruit which pleases God. We want quantity, not quality. We reason that the unbeliever's money will buy just as many Bibles as the believer's. Not so thought our Lord. The widow's mite in His sight was more than a whole chest full of common coin. This is the point in Philippians. That Paul should be supplied is only a secondary side of the matter. That they should have given expression to their hearts, without any prompting or coercion, but simply as the outflow of their appreciation and love, makes their gift acceptable to God and is entered to their account, to meet them again in the day when all will receive awards for the good done in the body.

A FRAGRANT ODOR

This is the quality which pleases God in our efforts to work for Him. Not *great* doings, but *gracious* deeds rise

to perfume His presence. Not mere service but sacrifice ascends to Him. Not the high achievements of a master mind and an indomitable will, but the humble attempts of a submissive and grateful heart are pleasing in His presence. Some may be too rich, or too great or too strong to procure a proper perfume for our God, but no one is too poor or too small or too weak to find a fragrant odor in which He can delight.

On the occasion of the collection for the saints in Judea, Paul, speaking of the saints in Macedonia, says that "the corresponding depth of their poverty superabounds to the riches of their generosity." And again, "according to their ability . . . and beyond their ability, of their own accord, with much entreaty beseeching of us the grace and fellowship in a service for the saints . . ." (2 Cor.8:2-5). This seems to show that the church chosen to be our example in acceptable giving was a very poor one. How happy would it make their hearts to hear the words of Paul as he assures them: "Now my God shall be filling your every need in accord with His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (4:19). God will not be outdone in giving. With all His riches in glory in Christ Jesus He is able to repay a thousandfold every generous impulse of the lowliest saint.

The epistle proper closes much as it began, with an ascription of praise to our God and Father, closely related to the subject of giving. In this eon we can expect but little public response to the gracious gifts of our God. But in the eons to come His gifts will receive more appreciation, and His glory will no longer be hid. And the most potent means of displaying to the whole creation, in the heavens as well as upon the earth, the excellent graciousness of His gifts, and the love which is their source, will be the story of that secret by which He fills the heights of heaven with the lowest dregs of earth.

A. E. Knoch

TRANSLATION NOTES

TWO CHANGES in vocabulary from the previous CV editions appear in the prospective revision at Philippians 1:7. The word "right" is used in place of "just," and "setting (my) mind" is substituted for "disposed."

Even though the word JUST is used as the English standard for all Greek words in the *-dik-* family, and this is mostly reflected in our translation (*just, justice, justify, justly,* etc.), its usage does not correspond to the scriptural usage of these Greek words as well as *righteous* (or, *right*). Both English words are used to refer to that which is right, but "just" is used more in a judicial sense, while "righteous" covers more ground, and is able more clearly to express the sense of "without wrong" when used of God or Christ, as well as describing our future state (*cf* Rom.5:19). Most English translation have recognized this by translating the noun (*dikaiosunê*) "righteousness" rather than "justice." However, English does not include the word "righteous-ify"), so we must continue to use "justify" for the Greek word *dikaioō*. Of course Paul was not claiming that he was absolutely without wrong in all his doings (as God is), but he was without wrong in setting his mind as he did with regard to the Philippians.

As for the use of "setting (one's) mind" instead of "disposed," (and "mindset" for "disposition"), the change makes the intended sense more explicit and clear. It is true that the Greek word used here (*phroneō*) does not include their word for "mind," but it may have developed from their word for the diaphragm, suggesting perhaps an idea in ancient Greece that our thoughts are pumped up in us by this inner structure as long as it operates. In any case, the English verb "be disposed" was used in the CV hopefully to convey a sense of mental inclination, which is supported by the Greek word in its contexts. Yet an even more forceful sense of active mental engagement is conveyed by the (relatively new) English word "mindset" and its verb forms. This is especially true when it is used of both Christ and the believer in Philippians 2:5. D.H.H.

JOINT PARTICIPANTS OF GRACE

PAUL'S letter to the Philippian saints is concerned with conduct as it reflects God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. What he writes here is built on what he writes in the first five chapters of Romans, and corresponds especially with what he writes in Romans chapters 6 through 8.[1] Paul is not ashamed of the evangel even though it leaves no room whatsoever for human contribution and boasting. It is *God's* power, not human power, for salvation, and it reveals *God's* righteousness (not requiring human righteousness, but rather Christ's righteous response to His Father's sending, *cf* Rom.5:18) in gratuitously justifying the human by means of *Jesus's faith* (Rom.1:16,17; 3:21-28). God's righteousness is revealed by means of [Christ's] faith, that is, *out of* (Greek, *ek*) His faith, and this is *for* (the cause of), that is, directed *into* (Greek, *eis*) the believer's faith.

Four Greek words in Romans 1:17 provide, in a nutshell, the evangel and its operation in the believer: *ek pisteōs eis pisteōs* ("out-of faith, into faith"). The revelation of God's righteousness in dealing with human unrighteousness is sourced in Jesus Christ's faith in dying for sinners, and this is for the cause and invigorating power of our faith.

Philippians emphasizes the "into faith" part of this message. But, like Romans 6-8, it is built on the "out-of faith"

1. This is not to deny its special relationship with Ephesians and Colossians, but to recognize that even the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ (Eph.3:8) is built on God's evangel of grace concerning His Son as expounded in Romans (*cf* Eph.2:8,9).

part, which tells of the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ. That is never left behind when further revelations are made regarding the future and the present lives of believers. Yet not only is Philippians built on that message of God's sending of His Son concerning sin, and His Son's faith in and faithfulness to that sending, but this evangel appears implicitly throughout the letter, and at significant places most explicitly. This is the message of God's gratuitous grace which God worked out in the Philippians' lives, as He jointly worked it out in Paul's (Phil.1:7; 2:13).

OUT OF FAITH

We must not take up the matter of conduct apart from God's evangel concerning His Son. This evangel is not a summons to righteousness, nor even to faith. Rather it is an announcement of grace which is a revelation of the righteousness of God and a commendation of the love of God, bringing joy and peace and spiritual invigoration to the believer. Philippians begins with Paul thanking *God* (not the Philippians) for what the Philippians had become and were doing (Phil.1:3-7).

In Romans 3:21,25 and 26, the words, "out of faith," become "through Jesus Christ's faith," then "the faith," and then "out of Jesus's faith." These references to the death of Christ for sinners as His "faith" are repeated in Galatians 2 and 3 as well, and in Ephesians 3:12, and also in Philippians 3:9. But in Philippians 2:5-8 they become the disposition, or "*mindset* which is in Christ Jesus." The faith of Jesus Christ, which is His mindset, is defined first as His *emptying* of Himself, followed by His *humbling* of Himself in becoming *obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

The basic meaning of "grace" is JOY. Joy and peace come to us from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. They come from God Who spares not His own Son, but

gives Him up for us all (Rom.8:32), and thus through the Lord Jesus Christ, Who was obedient even to the death of the cross. They do not arise from the law, but from Jesus Christ's faith. And this is for our faith. This is for our believing, which brings with it joy and peace, and working in us, by God's grace, it infuses in us a mindset which corresponds to that of Christ Jesus.

FOR FAITH

Faith is a spiritual endowment of grace given to us by God and much needed today (*cf* 1 Cor.12:1,32; 13:13). Our faith is not the cause of justification and deliverance from sin and death, but is graciously given to us by God (Phil.1:29) on the basis of Christ's faith. As with Abraham, justification gained by Christ is *reckoned* to us who are believing what God says to us (Rom.4:20-25).

The evangel which Paul was bringing is for the progress and joy of faith (Phil.1:25). It does not bring a sense of wretchedness as the law brought to young Saul of Tarsus (Rom.7:21-24). Rather it brings a glorying (boasting) in Christ Jesus, which grows and superabounds more and more as we set our minds on it.

In Romans 5:19 the faith of Jesus Christ is called His "obedience" (UNDER-HEARing). That is, He listened attentively to the will of His God and Father for Him, and submitted Himself under its every term. While we are still sinners He dies for our sakes (Rom.5:8). In Romans 6:16,17 our apostle guides us to become slaves who are obeying this obedience of Christ. This means that the teaching of Christ's obedience is that message from God which we are to be listening to submissively. God does not put us under instructions of what we are to do (such as He did for our Lord), but under the declaration of what Christ Jesus has done, which powerfully affects our conduct.

This same pattern comes before us in Philippians 2:5-13.

The Philippians were always obeying the evangel Paul brought to them. They were hearkening to the message of the mindset of Jesus Christ in emptying Himself, taking the form of a slave, and humbling Himself in obedience unto death. And as they put their hearing under that evangel of grace (with joyful fear and exultant trembling) God was working in them to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight.

They were thus carrying their own salvation into effect, not by obedience to the law, but by setting their minds on the mindset of Christ in dying for their sake. That also is where and how God is working in us today.

As Saul of Tarsus, a Hebrew of Hebrews, Paul had gained much by listening to the words of God given in the law. But now God had made him acquainted with Jesus Christ as His Saviour, the One Who was obedient unto death. And he deemed what he had gained by his attentive listening to the law as a forfeit "because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" his Lord. Now he was *having* righteousness *from* (Greek, *ek,* out of) God. God was working out righteousness in Paul's life as he focused his mind and heart on the knowledge of Christ Jesus His Lord (Phil.3:4-12).

Here we see once again how much is missed, not only when righteousness is perceived to be the fruit of works of law, but when it is understood as based on our faith. What is said *of Christ Jesus our Lord* must not be taken to be *of the human.* This is so that what is said of Him may become operative in the believer. Our conduct is the result of God operating in us as we are believing and setting our minds to what Christ has done.

That explains why our conduct is crowned in Philippians 4:4, with these words: "Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing."

D.H.H.

DEEMING IT TO BE REFUSE

(Philippians 3:1-21)

For the rest, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. (3:1a)

As we consider Paul's entreaty here for faithful service to our Lord, let us continually be rejoicing in the *Lord.* While whenever we are not distracted from so doing, we cannot but rejoice in *Christ* in connection with our future salvation and glorification, here we are not called to a contemplation of these, but are instead enjoined to be rejoicing in our *Lord* in consideration of our *service* as *slaves* for His sake.

To be writing the same to you is not, indeed irksome for me, yet it is your security. (3:1b)

It is as if Paul is apologizing for repeating his entreaty so often for us to be rejoicing in the *Lord.* But since few seem even to grasp the point of his words in this connection, and even those who understand them need special grace in order to heed them, it is critical that he repeat and stress them on behalf of us all.

It is by no means irksome for Paul to be writing the same to us, for it is our *security* that he should do so in the interests of our faithful service, lest we be left to our own devices and be put to shame.

Even if inconsistent in their theology, in their way, all believers rely on *Christ* for salvation. Few indeed, however, have no confidence in the flesh (Phil.3:3b), which is to say, no confidence in themselves but in God (*cf* 2 Cor.1:9) as concerns their *service* for their *Lord,* upon Whom they are wholly dependent for any success therein.

Because of the darkness of our minds, intuitively, such

an approach seems out of the question, since it conflicts with our received ideas as to moral responsibility. We fail to recognize that in our endeavors in which we *effect* (or produce) our own salvation as concerns our practical affairs, it is in fact *God* Who is operating in us for the sake of His delight both the willing and the doing in which we engage unto this end (*cf* Phil.2:12,13).

Yet if we should come to realize that as the Image of the invisible God, it is Christ Himself Who *as our Lord* motivates and inspires us so that we *therefore* enjoy a demonstrable measure of ability (i.e., "invigoration") in His service, how can we not but rejoice in Him? "For the rest, brethren mine, be *invigorated* in the *Lord* and in the *might* of *His strength*" (Eph.6:10). Hence, "Be rejoicing in the *Lord* always! Again, I will declare, be rejoicing!" (Phil.4:4).

Beware of curs, beware of evil workers. (3:2)

Those who are figured here as "curs," who, however fine fellows they may be in their own person, are in a certain respect not doers of good, but "evil workers." This is because, however unwittingly, they stand in opposition to the apostle in his insistence on our putting no confidence in the flesh, whether as concerns not only our ancestral pedigree but even our own righteousness which is of law.

Those who see value and importance in those very things which Paul deems his refuse, who therefore insist on retrieving them out of Paul's refuse container, are indeed, in this respect, like the wild dogs of the east, who are quite undiscriminating in what they are willing to ingest.

Beware of the maimcision, for we are the circumcision who are offering divine service in the spirit of God, and are glorying in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in flesh. (3:3)

In the present administration, unlike in previous ones, "Circumcision is nothing . . ." (1 Cor.7:19). What was once a token of covenant relationship with the Deity, is now a mere

mutilation of the flesh. Conversely, as those who place no confidence in the flesh and are glorying in Christ Jesus, we become the genuine Circumcision, for this is what the rite signified, in the cutting off of the flesh. Circumcision—as the type of all law-obedience for salvation—has become a badge of apostasy. Beware, then, of the maimcision!

And am I having confidence in flesh, also? If any other one is presuming to have confidence in flesh, I rather: in circumcision the eighth day, of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, in relation to law, a Pharisee, in relation to zeal, persecuting the ecclesia, in relation to the righteousness which is in law, becoming blameless. (3:4-6)

All of these are concerned with confidence in the flesh; most have to do with a place of nobility for an esteemed Israelite under law, while two of these (membership in the sect of the Pharisees, and zealotry for the putative virtue of persecution of the ecclesia) are concerned simply with the approval of one's peers in the pursuit of "orthodoxy."

But things which were gain to me, these I have deemed a forfeit because of Christ. But, to be sure, I am also deeming all to be a forfeit because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, because of Whom I forfeited all, and am deeming it to be refuse . . . (3:7,8a)

The Greek word which the CV translates "refuse," *skubalon,* is an interesting term. It is a New Testament *hapax legomenon* ("[something] said only once"); that is, a word that occurs only once in a single corpus or body of literature.

The AV translation "dung" accords more with the usage in Josephus (*Jewish War,* 5.571) where in the final siege of the Romans in the Jewish War (66-73 A.D.) some of the Jews were reduced to such straits that they searched the sewers for old cow dung and ate the "*offal*" (*skubalon*; i.e., the residual garbage) therefrom.

The CV translation "refuse" corresponds to the usage

found in the apocryphal work *Sirach* (or *Ecclesiasticus;* 27:4): "As when one sifts with a sieve, the *refuse* [*skubalon*] remains; so also the filth of man in his speech." Similarly, in the collection of the Rylands Papyri (2.149.22; 39-40 A.D.) the writer speaks of animals grazing on "the *gleanings* [*skubalon,* i.e., 'residuals'] of my vegetable-seed crop." Apart from connotative usage, then, the essence of *skubalon* appears to signify that which remains as a residue, which is appropriately discarded as worthless.

These things which had been "gain" to Paul, he now deems a "forfeit" (i.e., something to which the right is lost). He does so gladly "because of Christ"—with a view to "gaining Christ" in his own awareness and practical service, in consideration of the true significance of the cross, in the victory achieved there.

Paul accordingly not only *forfeits* all (giving up the rights and benefits thereof), but deems it as *refuse* as well, which is to say as mere residue, which is to be *discarded* as worthless.

It is "the righteousness which is *in* law" (Phil.3:6) and "*of* law" (Phil.3:9), which includes God's law given to Israel but is not confined to it, which most cannot believe we are to deem as refuse and so discard accordingly insofar as our standing before God is concerned. Yet it is here that we are "complete" in *Christ* (*cf* Col.2:10), and so simply have no need of law-obedience for our justification.

Further, we cannot "fully follow [Paul]" in his "teaching" (2 Tim.3:10) for our service in which he gives no entreaty for us to heed any directives of Moses at all per se, while at the same time taking it upon ourselves to look to Moses' law for instruction concerning our walk. Instead, our apostle declares, since we are complete in Christ, "Let no one, *then,* be judging you in food or in drink or in the particulars of a festival, or of a new moon, or of sabbaths, which are a shadow of those things which are impending—yet

the body is the Christ's" (Col.2:16,17). As those who are so closely identified with Christ as to be figured as members of His own body (Eph.5:30), we simply have no need to be "scrutinizing" days and months and seasons and years (*cf* Gal.4:10) within a code of law never given to us, which we are nowhere enjoined to heed.

The "all" which Paul deems a forfeit and as worthless refuse includes all that which the Israelite people deemed most valuable—in which they placed their *confidence,* albeit, as aptly termed by Paul, a "confidence in flesh," whether of heritage, peer approval, or obedience to law.

Insofar as their standing before God was concerned, they were *confident* that their pedigree and law-obedience were the *sine qua non* ("without which, not") of divine blessing.

Today, perhaps all believers are enlightened sufficiently to know that, in Christ, it is simply not important whether we are of Israelite descent at all, or whether we have obeyed the law concerning circumcision. Many, however, suppose that what is in fact a certain "righteousness in law" is essential to their salvation. This is so whether such a righteousness in law is based upon various portions of the law of Yahweh given to Israel, particular instructions of Jesus given to his disciples, or sundry imperatives of service contained in the epistles of Paul.

Many suppose that they must avoid various sins while achieving at least some minimal level of virtue or else they will be confined to hell for all eternity.

Others, more enlightened in a way, recognize that one's outward acts (whether of sinful deeds or virtuous endeavors) are simply *not* determinative of one's destiny.

Such ones, however, insist that a certain inward activity of mind in which one willingly acquiesces to the influences of the spirit and thus accepts Christ as one's Saviour, *is* determinative of one's destiny unto salvation.

Such a mental act, however, is deemed not as simply a

proximate cause of one's salvation, one which itself is but the fruit of divine grace, but instead as *a requisite act, ultimately under one's own control, which is the ultimate cause of one's salvation.*

In the end, then, those holding this position finally make man his own saviour just as surely as those who do so more overtly through explicit appeals to law-obedience if one would escape hell and gain heaven.

. . . that I should be gaining Christ, and may be found in Him, not having my righteousness, which is of law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God for faith: (3:8b,9)

Thus we "gain Christ" in a true recognition of Him; we decidedly do not gain Christ as our Saviour by our correct understanding of His truth, but by God's own choice "before the disruption of the world" (Eph.1:4), in accord with the grace given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian (2 Tim.1:9). We would be found in Him as those not having their own righteousness which is of law, but that which is through the faith(fulness) of Christ, the righteousness which is from God, [based] "on the [i.e., 'this'] faith" (literal rendering).

This is all unto the end:

to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, conforming to His death, if somehow I should be attaining to the resurrection that is out from among the dead. Not that I already obtained, or am already perfected. Yet I am pursuing, if I may be grasping also that for which I was grasped also by Christ Jesus.

Brethren, not as yet am I reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one thing—forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus. (3:10-14)

We may conform ourselves to His death, by "*reckoning* [ourselves] to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:11). Then, in contending the ideal contest of the faith, we may, *in spirit,* even seek the attainment of "the resurrection that is out from among the dead," as those who would "get hold of eonian life" (1 Tim.6:12; 19) even now.

Even Paul could only pursue this goal that he might grasp it; he had not yet obtained it or become already perfected therein. Thus he emphasizes the importance of "forgetting" (figuratively, at least) those things which are behind that he might stretch out to those in front: namely, the pursuit of the prize, that of *a vital, present-day foretaste* of God's calling above in Christ Jesus in the coming eon, which itself is not a prize at all, but a gracious gift, granted to us gratuitously in God's grace.

Whoever, then, are mature, may be disposed to this, and if in anything you are differently disposed, this also shall God reveal to you. (3:15)

How encouraging these words are! If we are not yet sufficiently mature to grasp the true sense of Paul's words here, do not be worrying about anything (*cf* Phil.4:6), God shall reveal it to us in due course. To our own master we are standing or falling. Now we will be made to stand, for the *Lord* is able to make us stand (*cf* Rom.14:4).

Moreover, in what we outstrip others, there is to be a mutual disposition to be observing the elements by the same rule. (3:16)

As we observe the elements of our faith and its concomitant faithfulness (*cp* Rom.4:12), while recognizing that we possess an enlightenment enjoyed by few others, let us be disposed not to this fact alone. Instead, let us have a "mutual disposition" which includes a mindfulness as well to this "same rule" of outstripping others when it comes to "elementing" our faith, that is to engaging in a faithful walk, suited to the nobility of our position as sons of God and ambassadors of Christ (*cf* Gal.6:15,16; Eph.1:5; 2 Cor.5:20).

Become imitators together of me, brethren, and be noting those who are walking thus, according as you have us for a model . . . (3:17)

In all of these things, let us be imitating Paul, while noting others as well who are walking thus, for we have all such ones as a model (*cf* 2 Tim.3:10,11).

. . . for many are walking, of whom I often told you, yet now am lamenting also as I tell it, who are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose consummation is destruction, whose god is their bowels, and whose glory is in their shame, who to the terrestrial are disposed. (3:18,19)

Many who are friends of Christ, are nevertheless *enemies* of the *cross* of Christ, insofar as its significance is concerned in the achievement of God's purpose to become All in all (1 Cor.15:28). The consummation which is theirs ("whose consummation") for such unfaithful *service* is that of a certain "destruction" (or "loss"), namely that which will obtain when they, even as ourselves, are manifested before the dais of Christ and are requited for their practices through the body, whether good or bad (2 Cor.5:10). "If anyone's work shall be burned up, he will forfeit it, yet he shall be saved, yet thus, as through fire" ((1 Cor.3:15).

For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself. (3:20,21)

Our realm inheres in the heavens, where God rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:5-7). How we long to have the body of our humiliation conformed to the body of His glory. Yet this is just what He will do, "in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself." How great is our Saviour, the *Lord* Jesus Christ! J.R.C.

DO NOT WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING

"DO NOT worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:6,7).

There is an elixir of life in words like these. Touching life at all points, they embrace every experience, and affect every problem. How positive they are, how emphatic! There is no room left for the smallest doubt to intrude. The words are just an exquisite echo of the Psalmist's thought—*"fret not thyself!"*

How complete, how inclusive the injunction is! Do *not* worry about *anything.* Not a single thing. But can we realize it? Is it possible to live up to such a counsel of perfection? A thousand times, yes! And for the great reason that this rare paragraph enshrines a God-given assurance. There is a promise, a pledge of a superior peace—the peace of God, His perfect provision for the keeping, the steadying of our hearts in Christ Jesus.

What an expression of God's solicitude! And for each of us to *make true* in the circumstances of life. How true, rests with the quality of our reliance upon God, in how far we leave things to Him, for His working out. And His appointment is never a disappointment. Therefore, on no account are we to worry. It does no good, changes nothing, nor ever gives us back the thing we prized. It enfeebles and wastes our strength, keeps the brain excited, the blood feverish, and the heart beating wildly.

If, then, we must not worry, and there are things in

life calculated to make us anxious, how may we displace worry? By taking God into our confidence as we voice immediate needs. "With thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." Note the proviso—*with thanksgiving*, which in itself affects the burdened mind. Indeed, thankfulness for the simple things of life, the ordinary, forgettable things, means much.

The tragic indictment of the ancient world was that, "knowing God, not *as God* do they glorify or thank Him." Stars in the heaven are thanked, and saints in the calendar, but not God. May we be giving thanks always, for all things, to God. Untold occasions call for it, and a voiced acknowledgment deepens our consciousness of His daily care.

No aspect or department of life is outside the interest of God, our Father. He is at all times an interested Listener. Our requests, therefore, may be unreservedly made known. Let them flow forth, without any concern as to how they will be met. That rests with God's will and wisdom, according to which, all the intricacies of life are appointed. Has He not ordered them, appointing each one, both good and ill?

There are some things in life God would not have us change! And happy are we, if, in the acceptance of them, we see the Father's own rare ordering. Let us so live, in the spirit of a line from a hymn: "I do not ask to see the distant scene, one step enough for me." It suffices that we make our requests known to God, and leave them with Him. This done, with thanksgiving, there will come to heart and mind, God's own wonderful peace.

"And the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus." Here, in a peace which surpasses all power of thought, lies the strength and joy of Paul's counsel of perfection. It is the peace of God, in contrast with and superior to all human counsel, palliative, or panacea.

Gift of the God of peace; it is the only calm in a world of unrest. But O, how this peace differs from that which the world offers! We see the word used all around us. Yet how little it conveys, how far short it falls, of all that such a word "peace" should stand for! Does it not look lost, as a wandering star from its orbit?

Only as linked with God and His ministering grace, does the Word hold real comfort and consolation. In such union it has vital power, confirming its frequent and heartening occurrence in the calm of a rich content. The peace of God. Grace and peace. Yes, yes. In spite of all around us, and the tangle of daily events. For our hearts shall be as a citadel, gloriously kept. "The Lord is thy Keeper."

What a glad secret of life! One that Christ Himself exemplified. He did not worry or fret impatiently. He *trusted*, He rested supremely in God. He gave Himself completely over to God. He prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass by from Me. Moreover, not as I will, but as You!" (Matt.26:39).

How sublime an example of utter submission to God's will! There has been but One, and there will never be another so altogether acquiescent to the Father's will. The purpose, will, and majesty of God, the Father, was everything to Him. How much so we have yet to see. In the meanwhile, let us hold by this superior peace. It is resident in Him. *He* is our peace, and He is on the throne, even the throne of the universe.

Therefore, "do not worry about anything." Rather, "with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." In these two statements we have first a prohibition, then an injunction. Is it not that prayer should be the death of care? It follows, however, that the source or cause of worry should not be self-made. It should be that imposed on us, and not something fashioned by ourselves which we persist in carrying. This we must throw away. Life, to be happily

lived, must have in all its aspects, a felt consciousness of God. At all times there should be a sense of God's ruling. For, not only is God operating the universe in accord with the counsel of His will, but Christ is carrying it on by His powerful declaration. What control is here, and how complete! Just to feel that we are entirely in God's hands, flung upon His care and control, is to know a peace inviolate.

What small resemblance to the faith of Christ our faltering trust displays. Self looms so largely with us, and thus disquietude. Not so with our Lord. He displayed the dignity of complete assurance. Rejecting His disquietude, He puts in its place the thought of the majesty and power of God the Father.

Let us learn of Him to quietly accept our Father's will. Let us be disposed to that which is above, where Christ is, enthroned at God's right hand. Then shall we know the peace of God, and how superior it is to every frame of mind. And the God of peace *shall* be with you, in every moment, every hour.

"Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace."

William Mealand

HARRY WATTS

War veteran, bus driver, husband, father, friend of many, brother in the Lord, Harry Watts was a servant of a small monthly assembly in Kitchener, Ontario, for many years. He died at the age of 95 on May 10, 2019.

He was a man of optimistic expectation (not simply "hope"). This was because God graciously granted him faith centered in the giving of His Son for sinners. Those who knew him will miss him for awhile. But God's purpose for him in Christ will be realized, as it will for us all together.

Unsearchable Riches

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Our 110th Year

(1909–2019)

Contents:

49 Editorial
53 Paul's Affairs
63 The Example of Christ
79 The Human Will
87 Growth in Realization of God

SECOND QUARTER, 2019

Volume 110 **Number 2**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TEN

EDITORIAL

AS WE CONTINUE to give special attention to Paul's letter to the Philippians, let us rejoice with our apostle in all that he writes concerning Christ Jesus, our Lord. No matter the motive, "Christ is being announced" still today, and we are rejoicing in this also, and we will be rejoicing as Paul was rejoicing, nevertheless, even in the restrictions placed on his ministry (Phil.1:18). What a joy it is for us to meditate on these things of consequence (Phil.1:10) together with our readers!

"Short as it is, no other book contains the word rejoice as often as Philippians" (p.77).

God's evangel of grace (JOY) and peace which Paul was bringing does not accord with human wisdom, but it is "God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it" (Rom.1:16). This salvation "is not only a future event, but a present power and should be the preponderant influence in our lives" (p.74).

We hear the message of what has been done in bold and faithful terms in Philippians 2:6-8, and of that which shall be in 2:9-11. In accord with the apostle's special concern in this epistle for our present conduct, this evangel is introduced with his entreaty: "Let this disposition ["mindset," revised CVNT, *cf* p.52] be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also" (Phil.2:5).

Consequently, in our present lives we are to be setting our minds and subjecting our hearing to this message of Christ's mindset and obedience. As we do so, God will be working in us to will as well as to work in carrying our salvation into effect, for the sake of His delight (Phil.2:12,13).

Regarding this, we direct attention especially to the articles beginning on pages 79 and 87.

We present now the particular sections of Philippians (as currently being revised) under discussion in the articles that follow: D.H.H.

PAUL'S AFFAIRS (Phil.1:12-30)

12 *y*Now I am intending =you to |know, brethren, that my ·*ac*affairs have rather come to be *io*for the progress of the evangel, 13 so that my ·bonds in Christ become apparent in the whole pretorium and to all the rest, 14 and the majority of the brethren, having confidence in the Lord as to my ·bonds, are more exceedingly daring to |speak the word of ·God fearlessly. 15 *a*Some indeed are +even heralding ·Christ because of envy and strife, yet *a*some because of delight also; 16 ·these indeed *o* of love, having perceived that I am |located *io*for the defense of the evangel, 17 yet ·those are announcing ·Christ out of faction, not purely, surmising to |rouse affliction in my ·bonds. 18 *a*What *for* then?—Moreover, seeing that by every method, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being announced , I am rejoicing in this also, and will be rejoicing *bt*nevertheless.

19 For I am °aware that, for me, this will be eventuating *io*in salvation through =your ·petition and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 in accord with my ·premonition and expectation, that in nothing shall I be put to |shame, but *i*with *e*all boldness, as always, now also, Christ shall be |magnified in my ·body, whether through life or through death. 21 For to me ·to be living is Christ, and ·to die, gain. 22 *y*Now if it is ·to be living in flesh, this to me means fruit from work, and *a*what I shall be preferring I am not making known. 23 (Yet I am being pressed out of the two, having a ·yearning *io*for the solution and to |be together with Christ, for it rather is much better.) 24 Yet ·to be staying in the flesh is more necessary because of =you. 25 And having this confidence, I am °aware that I shall be remaining and shall be abiding with =you all *io*for =your ·progress and joy of ·faith, 26 that =your ·glorying may be superabounding in Christ Jesus in me through my ·presence *td*with =you again. 27 Only be |citizens walking worthily of the evangel of ·Christ, that whether ¯coming and ¯making =your acquaintance or being absent, I should be hearing of =your ·concerns, that =you are standing firm in one spirit, one soul, competing together in the faith of the evangel, 28 and not being startled by ·those who are opposing in *n*anything, which*a* |is to them a proof of destruction, yet of =your salvation, and this from God, 29 *t*for to =you it is graciously granted, ·*ov*for Christ's sake, not only ·to be believing *io*on Him, but ·to be suffering *ov*for His sake also, 30 having the same struggle such as =you perceive in me and now are hearing to be in me.

PAUL'S AFFAIRS (Phil.4:10-13)

10 *y*Now I rejoice in the Lord greatly that at length, for once your ·|mindset *over*toward me blossoms, *on*to which =you were setting your mind also, yet =you were lacking occasion . 11 Not that I am hinting *ac*at a want, for I´ learn to |be content in that in which I |am. 12 I am °aware what it is to be |humbled as well as °aware what it is to be superabounding. In everything and among all am I °initiated , to be |satisfied as well as to be hungering, to be superabounding as well as to be in |want . 13 For all am I |strong in Him ·Who is invigorating me—Christ!

THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST (Phil.2:1-18)

2 If then there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any communion of spirit, if any =compassion and =pity, 2 fill my ·joy full, that =you may be setting

your **mind** [ss]**mutually, having** [ss]**mutual love, joined** in [=]**soul, being set** in **mind to** ·**one** thing—[3] **nothing accord**ing with **faction, nor yet accord**ing with **vainglory—but** with ·**humility, deeming one another** [l]**superior** to one's [=]**self,** [4] **not each noting** ·that which is his [sf]**own, but each** ·that **of** [d]**others also.**

[5] **For let this** [l]**mindset be in** [=]**you, which** is **in Christ Jesus also,** [6] **Who,** being [l]**inhere**ntly **in** the **form of God, deems** it **not pillaging** ·**to be equal** with **God,** [7] [bt]**nevertheless empties Himself,** [–]**taking** the **form of** a **slave,** [–]**coming** to **be in** the **likeness of human** beings, [8] **and** [–]**being found** in **fashion as** a **human, He humbles Himself,** [–]**becoming obedient unto death,** [y]**even** the **death of the cross.**

[9] **Wherefore also,** ·**God highly exalts Him, and graces Him** with **the Name** ·that is **above every name,** [10] **that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean,** [11] **and every tongue should acclaim that Jesus Christ** is **Lord,** [io]**for** the **glory of God,** the **Father.**

[12] **So that, my beloved, accord**ing **as** [=]**you always obey, no**t **as in my** ·**presence only, but now much rather in my** ·**absence, with fear and trembling, be** carry**ing** ·your [sf]**own salvation** into **effect ,** [13] **for it** [l]**is God** ·Who is **operating in** [=]**you** ·**to** [l]**will as well as** ·**to** [l]**work** [ov]**for** the sake **of** His ·**delight.** [14] **All be doing without murmurings and reasonings,** [15] **that** [=]**you may become blameless and artless, children of God, flawless,** in the **midst of** a **generation crooked and perverse among whom** [=]**you are appearing as luminaries in** the **world,** [16] **having on** the **word of life,** [io]**for my glory**ing [io]**in** the **day of Christ, that I** do **not run** [io]**for naught, neither** that **I toil** [io]**for naught.** [17] **But** [+]**even if I am** a [l]**libation on the sacrifice and ministration of** [=]**your** ·**faith, I am rejoicing** myself **and rejoicing together** with [=]**you all.** [18] [y]**Now** to be [ss]**mutual,** [=]**you´ also be rejoicing, and be rejoicing together** with **me.**

PAUL'S AFFAIRS

(Philippians 1:12-30–4:10-13)

THE AFFAIRS of Paul, the slave of Christ Jesus, at the crisis which introduced the present administration of God's transcendent grace, are of extraordinary interest and importance to those who wish to walk in accord with the will of God. As the framework of Philippians shows, he discusses his affairs twice, in two balancing sections, one near the beginning, and the other at the end of the epistle. First he brings up his bonds in Christ (1:12-18). Corresponding to this he speaks of his strength in Christ (4:13). In the early part of the epistle he expands on his indifference to death (1:19-26). In the latter he declares his complacency in want. Besides this, in each section, he touches on the experience of the Philippians, their suffering with Paul (1:27) and their care of him (4:10).

PAUL'S BONDS IN CHRIST

The vast divergence between the Kingdom and the present is graphically set forth by the bonds of Peter and Paul. Herod had Peter bound with two chains, besides the four quaternions of soldiers to guard him (Acts 12). Paul, in Rome, seems to have been bound with only one chain (Acts 28:20; Eph.6:20; 2 Tim.1:16) with a single soldier to guard him (Acts 28:16). Yet God is not hindered by man's might. He acts in accord with His spiritual plans. The Kingdom is a display of His power on earth. Hence its chief representative must be freed. The present is a display of God's weakness, hence Paul is not set at liberty by miraculous means. To Peter God sends His messenger.

The very gates of the jail opened to him spontaneously. He is extricated out of the hands of Herod. So long as the Kingdom was being heralded, Peter had power superior to all of earth's rulers.

And, so long as this Kingdom was the subject of Paul's preaching he also was freed from jail, as at Philippi itself (Acts 16). But now that the Kingdom has been definitely rejected by the Jewish nation, God has changed His mode of operation, so that it is quite the reverse. The symbol of the evangel becomes a chained ambassador (Eph.6:20). Nothing else could so graphically illustrate the fact that God is conciliated toward this warring world. He is for peace with mankind, and even the most flagrant provocation, such as the imprisonment of His ambassador, will not change His attitude toward it. So, for two whole years at the commencement of this economy, God stages a picture which portrays its essential features.

To us, with our dull minds and feeble apprehensions, this change in the outward fortunes of God's chosen witness may not mean very much. But this was especially real to the Philippians, as Paul's release from prison, with the accompanying earthquake, must have been one of the most cherished memories of the jailor and all the members of the ecclesia at Philippi. At first sight it would seem to them, as it does to most of us, that Paul's imprisonment must be a great hindrance to the evangel. Not merely that he himself could no longer go about to make it known, but that his sufferings would intimidate others, so that the evangel would cease to be heralded at all, or at least with far less boldness than before. All of this arises from a failure to realize the vast change the evangel itself had undergone, which made so striking a contrast in its symbolic expression.

With this in mind we are able to understand why Paul assures the Philippians that his affairs were no hindrance,

but rather had come to be for the progress of the evangel. Since they had given the message such hearty support, this would be most welcome in their ears. Paul has not been robbed of an audience. Quite the contrary, he has been brought to the most desirable audience that could be found. The whole pretorium heard of him. This was not necessarily, as some translations have it, the "palace" of the emperor, but the guard, which had an enormous influence, and may have been used by God as a means of spreading the evangel far more effectively and expeditiously than if the apostle had been at liberty. He came into touch with Caesar's very household (4:22).

It may also have been intended by God to serve notice on the political powers that this evangel could not come into conflict with their authority. The Kingdom message and the mixed message of the church in these degenerate days are a menace to the governments of the earth, but the true evangel for today has no right to interfere with this world's politics. Can we not see all this in the fact that Paul was put under the power of the Roman guard in the capital city itself? There was no friction there, and this may have been a great help in allaying suspicion elsewhere, for the Romans were quick to crush any sect which had political aims. Moreover, Paul was allowed many privileges. Perhaps it was the gift received from Philippi which enabled him to hire a house of his own (Acts 28:30).

It is only as we realize that Paul's bonds are in fullest accord with the evangel in its latest form, that we are able to appreciate his insistence on *boldness* in making it known. A prisoner of Caesar's can hardly be bold. But if the bonds are in *Christ*, and according to God's will, and calculated to advance the evangel, then it may be heralded freely and boldly, as it is fitting that it should. Hence Paul asked for prayer that he might open his mouth with boldness, to make known the secret of the evangel, for which

he was conducting an embassy in a chain, that in it he should be bold, as he must speak (Eph.6:19-20). We have every reason to think that this prayer was answered, and that, though he was bound, the evangel was free and was heralded with the utmost fearlessness.

Nor was Paul alone in this. The majority of the brethren, instead of being timid in their heralding lest they also be put in a chain, are more exceedingly daring to speak the word of God fearlessly. They realized that God had placed Paul in an ideal position to defend the evangel. Here he could "teach that which concerns the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unforbidden" (Acts 28:31). The evangel wins its way in the very capital of its enemies. This must have been a very great consolation and encouragement to him. Instead of his imprisonment becoming the death blow of the glad tidings, it is the signal for fresh confidence and new delight.

So great became the confidence—one is almost tempted to say carelessness or recklessness—that some even pretended to preach Christ in order to bring Paul into trouble. Possibly their faction did not realize the full truth of the secret of the evangel, and heralded a semi-kingdom mixture as many have done since, to which the authorities could rightly object. Be that as it may, even their envy and strife, so unbecoming to those who pretend to proclaim peace, even that does not hinder the evangel, for Christ is announced nevertheless. Hence Paul is rejoicing in the advance of the evangel, which seems to make better progress against the wind than with it. May we also learn this lesson, and rejoice that neither foe nor friend can find a means of defeating His gracious purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord.

PAUL'S INDIFFERENCE TO DEATH

To magnify Christ is the one object now before His aged

slave, and he tests everything which comes to him from this standpoint alone. Of course the great question before him and before his friends, the Philippians, is the outcome of his imprisonment. He must face the possibility that the verdict will be death. But this does not disturb him. Either life or death must be met in the same way. He is concerned rather that he may not be put to shame in anything, that even the fear of death shall not make him timid, that his customary boldness in making Christ known may not be lacking as he faces the fate of a martyr.

So he weighs all the possibilities and finds that he has no real choice in the matter. Living, to him, meant Christ. Dying, as a witness for Christ, would be gain to both himself and the cause of Christ. If he lives, there will be fruit from further efforts. Whether these will equal the results of a martyr's death could not be known, so he does not give his preference (1:22). At this point the attentive reader of the usual versions finds that Paul goes on to contradict what he has just been saying. He has made it clear that he is indifferent, yet he now goes on to say that he is in a strait betwixt these two, which is quite the opposite of indifference. But then he makes it clear that he is *not* in a strait at all, but prefers to "depart" (which must mean death). This, he says, is far better. In brief, he wished to be convicted, yet made every effort to defend himself!

The lack of all consistency in the passage, as ordinarily translated, is matched by its utter lack of conformity to the Original, in which there is no such confusion of thought. What Paul has said as to his own attitude is not denied. He is quite complacent as to the outcome of his trial, so far as he himself is concerned. Yet from *their* standpoint he realizes that his continuance in the flesh would be of more advantage. Therefore he is confident that he will remain and abide for their progress and joy of faith, that their glorying may be superabounding in Christ Jesus, through

his presence with them again. He was later released, and doubtless was with them as he had hoped. But, as this part of his career is not symbolic of the present grace, it is suppressed in the Scriptures. We are to look upon him as bound in body but free in spirit to the last.

When I was in Rome I was surprised to find that the statues of Paul usually put a sword in his hand, until my guide explained that it was customary to depict each of the saints with the instrument that caused his death. Judged by the other relics in Rome, especially the traces left by Peter (who never was there) we may be quite certain that Paul was *not* executed with the sword, if he was killed at all. The legends to this effect cannot be substantiated by the Scriptures. This relieves us of another incubus of theology, the mythical second imprisonment of the apostle. All such additions to the sacred text are mischievous and altogether unnecessary for faith.

Paul, in characterizing his death, speaks of it as a libation, a dissolution, (2 Tim.4:6). This has no suggestion of violence, as is the case with Peter. The course and outcome of Paul's trial is given us in his second epistle to Timothy. "At my first defense no one came along with me, but all abandoned me. May it not be reckoned against them! Yet the Lord stood beside me, and He invigorates me, that through me the heralding may be fully discharged, and all the nations should hear, and I am rescued out of the mouth of the lion. The Lord will be rescuing me from every wicked work and will be saving me for His celestial kingdom . . ." (2 Tim.4:16-18). These words seem to show clearly that he was released, and that his confident words to the Philippians were fulfilled.

In view of all these facts the ordinary renderings, which make Paul desirous of death, are to be viewed with suspicion. In that case his release was "far worse" than his death! A concordant rendering, as usual, disposes of all

of the difficulties. Paul was not in a strait *betwixt* life and death, but there was pressure from both which took him *out* of them. The accurate, literal rendering is I-AM-BEING-pressed YET OUT OF-THE TWO. Neither life nor death has the attractive power of another, a third alternative—to be together with Christ. This is what should always be before our hearts, as it was with Paul. This is the solution to the question, life or death? The answer is *neither.* Rather let us have immortality when we are together with Christ, for it, rather, is much better.

Death is not far better than life, and Paul could not have made such a statement. This whole passage has lost its force because the church has lost its proper expectation. Death was always banished from the presence of Christ when He was on earth. No one goes to Him in death. If any did they would be dead no longer. It is His presence which calls them back to life in the resurrection. Let us be like Paul. Between life and death we would not choose, but rather let us yearn for that gracious and glorious event which is ever imminent—the presence of Christ and our gathering together unto Him.

PAUL'S COMPLACENCY

Paul's experience with the evangel, as well as his varying supply of material support had taught him one of the most blessed of all lessons—that of contentment apart from prevailing circumstances. He had learned to be content in that in which he was (4:11-12). Humbled and hungry, or superabounding and satisfied, he did not wish it otherwise. The reason was that he had been *initiated.* This word *mueō* is closely connected with the word mystery *musterion.* In earlier eras God not only hid what He purposed in the future, but, as a result, it was unknown why He dealt as He did with His creatures. Since He has made His purpose fully known, we have the privilege of going behind

the scenes, and know that every detail of our experience has a blessed sequel, hence do not wish to change aught in the least. We know why God sends us wealth and want, and we are content, even if it does not suit our souls.

THE PHILIPPIANS SUFFER WITH PAUL

Philippi was a Roman colony, so that it was a Rome in miniature and much would be made of the duties as well as the privileges of citizenship. Paul uses this as the basis of his exhortation for the future. They have heard of his concerns. Now he hopes to hear of theirs, that they are standing firm in one spirit, one soul, competing together in the faith of the evangel (1:27). Later on he uses this same figure to enforce the great truth that their citizenship belongs to the heavens (3:20). But here we have rather the unity or community of effort which should characterize every local company of believers who seek to spread the glad tidings. Not only is there the sevenfold unity of the spirit to unite them (Eph.4:3-6), but there should also be a unity of soul and of effort in service.

Faithful heralding of the evangel is bound to stir up opposition. It reveals the destruction of the stubborn as well as the salvation of those who believe, notwithstanding its insistence on peace, and that God is now conciliated, so that all may be reconciled to Him by simply receiving the proffered gift of Christ. The city that flogged and imprisoned Paul because he had done a good deed, which interfered with the sordid gains of a few of their number, would not hesitate to mishandle those who followed in his steps.

There is one thing which is even better than serving our blessed Lord, and that is to suffer for His sake. It seems to be a special grace granted to the faithful, more especially as they have fellowship with Paul and with the struggle which came to him when he first made public the present secret administration. Much of this suffering arises from

the great changes which were introduced and because only a few cut cleanly with the past. Others held on to it with its religion and fleshly prerogatives. This was aggravated as time went on. All Asia and eventually nearly all the saints everywhere forsook Paul and his final message. The few who have had even an inkling of it have had to suffer, not merely from unbelievers, but from their own fellow saints.

These are not the sufferings of Paul which came to him from lack of support, or danger, or his many enemies. These could not touch him now. But they were none the less real and painful. In this very epistle he speaks of envy and strife and faction (1:15,17), of evil workers, of the maimcision (3:2), of the many whose walk made them enemies of the cross, who are disposed to the terrestrial (3:18-19). And if such were present in his days, what must be the case today? Is there envy or strife or faction? Are there evil workers, Judaizers, enemies of the cross among the saints now? Are some disposed to the terrestrial? Very few of us are not included in these terms. If Paul were present he would be a great sufferer, even if he had no wants and endured no afflictions. And so it will be with us if we are fully in fellowship with him (2 Tim.3:12).

Paul *lamented* over the enemies of the cross. What a lamentation there would be if any number of the saints were so sensitive at the present time! Even where the *death* of Christ is preached, the *manner* of it, and its utter condemnation of the flesh and the world are seldom seen in our conduct. And celestial citizenship has been exchanged for terrestrial dominion or service, with good government or social reform or sanitation as its aim. It is simply that we whose eyes are opened to these lamentable conditions have been hardened to them. If we were not callous our suffering would incapacitate us for service.

But ours is not to dwell upon such things, but rather

on the side of rejoicing. The suffering will have a glorious compensation in the future. And the present is never without ground for joy. To correspond with the section which speaks of the Philippians' suffering with Paul, we find him rejoicing greatly that their disposition toward him had found expression. In the living language of the epistle it is compared with a plant which was waiting for warmth in order to bloom. Now that their disposition had blossomed in their contribution, he has occasion to rejoice greatly.

Such were Paul's affairs at the beginning of this economy. And, in a very real sense, such are his affairs today. The difference is only one of degree. It is only as we are in living sympathy with his way at this juncture that we will be able to walk and please God under the very special conditions which pertain to the present grace. I will not apologize in the least for going into his affairs in some detail. It can hardly be overdone. When so much time is spent in following in the footprints of Christ *when He was ministering to the Circumcision,* leading to endless perplexity, it is high time that we consider the conduct of the one whom God has given as a model for us who are of the Uncircumcision. This alone will enable us to walk worthily of the special and supernal calling with which He has called us.

A. E. Knoch

Who can walk worthily of a calling which he does not apprehend? Let us not strive to be what we are not. All God asks of us is to live up to what He has made us.

The preparation for such a walk, the power for such deportment, lies in a consciousness of our high social standing among God's nobility. Among men we readily recognize a nobleman by the superficial niceties of his conduct. We ought to be the true nobility, known by the deeper and more enduring virtues which adorn the doctrine we profess.

A. E. Knoch

THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

(Philippians 2:1-18)

PRACTICE is more powerful than precept. Deeds may do more than declarations in directing our lives. In Ephesians we have already been told how we should walk. In Philippians we are given examples of such conduct in the careers of others. We are pointed to the kenosis of Christ (He "empties Himself"), the forfeits of Paul, the solicitude of Timothy, and the suffering of Epaphroditus. These are the special characters in Holy Writ who are presented for our emulation within the boundaries of this present secret administration. Hence they should be frequent and foremost in our exhortations. They should be the leading characters in Christendom.

How far have we failed in this matter! More picturesque characters occupy the attention of Christians, and are hailed in their literature and songs. Even the children sing, "Dare to be a Daniel, dare to stand alone." But who does it? He would not be a second Daniel, but a fanatic. It is well to be reminded of the patience of Job. But we must not count on his reward. And it is excellent to consider the heroes of faith in the eleventh of Hebrews. But the object and end of their faith are not the same as ours. All of this is instructive and profitable, but cannot compare with the special examples selected by God for us, to guide our feet in His service in this era which is so different from all that preceded, or that will succeed it. Let us henceforth focus our attention on these models exclusively for a while, and see if we can profit by their example.

This is especially true of the Psalms. In the dim light of the Reformation and even among those more enlightened in later days, the Psalms have been acclaimed as the greatest source of strength for communion and conduct. Good as they are, they never attain, not even in their highest strain, to the grace and glory which should empower our conduct at the present time. In one way, indeed, the Psalms are in antithesis to present truth, and, we fear, hinder its full apprehension. Being concerned with Israel and the Kingdom, they are disposed to the terrestrial, which we should not be. When we leave them in their own setting, they are even more wonderful and helpful while singing with grace in our hearts to God (*cf* Col.3:16).

This celestial character of our walk is especially clear in connection with the example of Christ (Phil.2:5-8). In setting forth a synopsis of His humiliation, no details of His earthly life are given. The earth seems to serve only as a place on which to erect the accursed tree. There is no mention of His ministry to the Circumcision, or of His royal rights. He comes in the form of a *slave,* in the likeness of *humanity.* His life on earth serves as the supreme example for the Circumcision. He was their copy, their "underwriting." They are to follow Him in His footprints (1 Peter 2:21). For them no other example is needed. But with us it is different. Only His relation to the earth as the place of humiliation is put before us. The details must be filled in by others. These are involved in His cross, but they are not apparent until the depth of human infamy has been sounded by the apostasy of Israel.

EXHORTATION TO A MUTUAL DISPOSITION

We now come to the first of the four exhortations which are found in Philippians. It is strikingly like the opening exhortation in Ephesians 4:1-6. There humility was coupled with *unity.* The unity of the spirit is to be kept with

the tie of peace. Where pride prevails this unity fails. So also here. Humility is associated with a *mutual* disposition. The slight difference in viewpoint arises from the character of the epistles. It may be seen in the words used. In Ephesians it is *one.* In Philippians it is *same.* The spirit's unity consists in *one* body, *one* spirit, *one* expectation, *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God. Corresponding to this, in service there should be in all the *same* disposition, the same love, souls joined *together,* disposed to *one* thing (Phil.2:2). This might be called *the unity of the soul,* for it is the effect of the unity of the spirit, the outward evidence of the inward power.

Unity of spirit and a mutual disposition are the great need for effective service, even among believers. This is because we are by no means perfected as yet. We are still selfish. We are prone to two sins which should be utterly absent—strife and vainglory. These are products of pride. If we consider ourselves better than others it will lead to contention. If we desire that our superiority be recognized it will be naught but vainglory. No one knows how subtle and widespread these failings are because no one recognizes them as such. They are not condemned, but condoned. We do not expect anyone to allow his pride to be touched. We almost demand that this be resented. Humility—*true* humility—is considered a weakness unworthy of a man and a Christian.

It is not easy for us to recognize the justice of this. If we really possess superior qualities or have advanced to attainments beyond others, why should we not claim due recognition? The answer is very simple. All true worth will be rewarded in the future. But now is the time of *service.* It is most likely that, in that day, only that will be found genuine which did not fight for recognition. All other glory will be found without solid contents, an empty shell. It is impossible for us to decide even of ourselves, nor is it nec-

essary. The truth for today is found only in unity, and the service for today should be a mutual effort, unmarred by strife and vainglory.

Even the highest gifts are no ground for self-exaltation, for all comes from God and should be a cause of thankfulness, not pride. The best of us have *nothing that we did not receive.* Nothing has originated in us. We have no more right to it than the most despised of humanity. It is only when we lose sight of God's deity and our creaturehood that we preen our feathers or blow our horn. Then it is that we resent any lack of appreciation of our gifts or interference with our work. And this soon leads to dissension and division, which constitute the most glaring faults of Christendom, and are the conclusive evidence of its apostasy and shame.

Normally, we should look to Christians and Christendom to see the fruit of evangelical truth. That is what the "heathen" are compelled to do, apart from reading the Scriptures. What a consolation to look away from such hypocritical Christianity to Christ! Self-abasement, not self-exaltation—such is His disposition. What a comfort there is to be found in His love, which was fixed on others, not Himself. Here we can have real communion of spirit if our eyes and hearts are open to the truth. With Him we can have compassion and pity for those beneath us, not disregard or contempt. It is only by meditation on His career that we may realize the shortcomings of our own. His disposition is the test and corrective of our tendency to exalt ourselves.

There is a notable difference between the ecclesias of Corinth and Philippi. In the former there seems to have been much in the way of gifts and physical endowments. They sneered at the apostle's style of speaking. Yet they were full of factions. They wanted to reign. Yet they were fleshly and immature. Notwithstanding their own estimate

of themselves, the apostle could not reveal to them what was on his heart. We do not read of many gifts in Philippians. Instead of criticizing Paul's oratory they contributed to his support. So that we do not read of any schisms among them. And to them Paul writes as to those who have received the highest truth.

May every gathering of saints take these things to heart! It is far more important to have the humble disposition of Christ than to have the most perfect spiritual and physical equipment. A good speaker, with an agreeable presence, and equipped with much truth, is not to be despised. But, alas, too often, as in Corinth, he may divide instead of unite. Apollos did not wish to split the saints, but he did so by his good qualities. What should be cultivated by us all is this *mutual disposition* for, apart from our own pride, we have the *same* objects before us. And this can come only in the measure in which we partake of the disposition of Christ Jesus, as summed up in the phrase: *He stooped to serve.*

THE DESCENT OF CHRIST

As the *kenosis,* or emptying of Christ, is fully discussed elsewhere[1], we will confine ourselves here to the lesson which it should bring us. It is the ideal for all creation in relation to God. Christ humbled Himself: God highly exalted Him. With us, alas, the tendency is just the opposite. We exalt ourselves so that God must humble us. In His case we have true humility exemplified as in no other, for He went from the place supreme to the deepest depth, and God has made Him Lord of all. Leaving the form of God He took that of a slave. Becoming like a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

1. In our 48-page booklet, *The Pre-existence of Christ,* and "The Kenosis Of Christ," *Unsearchable Riches* vol.21, pp 197-231.

Apart from being God Himself, nothing can be higher than having the *form* of God. God Himself is invisible (1 Tim.1:17; Heb.11:27). To bring Him within the range of human comprehension He must be depicted by an Image, having a Form. The living God cannot be made known by lifeless representations. Hence He has chosen One, His creative Original, in Whom all was created, to represent Him, to be the visible Image of invisible Deity (Col.1: 15). His shape or form must be that which is suggestive of God, especially of the character which He assumes on any occasion, in order to reveal Himself to His creatures. Christ Jesus was that Form. In Him God was seen in such a theophany as suited the weakness of the human frame. Yet in visions He appeared in soul-dismaying splendor, as when Isaiah beheld His glory. This passage, as all else in this epistle, deals with service, not essential being.

As the subject of this passage is the height from which Christ descended, it does not treat of His relationship to God in other respects. The equality here spoken of does not arise from intrinsic identity but extrinsic form. Outwardly, to human gaze, He was God, Elohim and Yahweh. This it was which He did not deem pillaging. The fact that He could take the place of God without taking anything from Him is here introduced to show His supreme position in the universe. He was the Effulgence of God's glory (Heb.1:3), the most magnificent and sublime percept to be found. As there was no higher height, He could not be exalted without a previous descent.

Our disposition, and that of the world, is to hold fast to all the wealth and power and dignity to which we are able to attain. Indeed, we are disposed to seek still more, even when that which we possess has become a burden. The motto of the respectable and esteemed is "Ever upward"! It is pressed upon the aspiring youth and preached as gospel in our churches. Ever higher is the aim of the ambitious

man. Even in the church this has found its full expression. It is seldom that a preacher does not desire a larger church, or welcome a higher ecclesiastical position. Alas, the most prominent men in Christendom have gone up and not down, and in most cases, have given an example just the reverse of that which our Lord has set before us.

That, despite His supernal dignities, the disposition of Christ was one of love and compassion, and utterly lacking in selfishness and pride, is shown by His self-abasement. He *empties* Himself. What this means is clearly indicated by the change in *form.* He was not God and He did not become a slave. But He had God's *form,* yet He took a slave's *form.* He did not carry with Him any of the former into the latter. This is clearly shown by the word *empties,* Only when He was trans*formed,* as on the holy mount (Matt.17:2), did His face shine as the sun and His garments become white as the light. In this vision He anticipates the form which He will have in the Kingdom, after His exaltation. But it was not a permanent form, only a vision. When He descended the glory was gone.

Not only does He *empty* Himself by taking the form of a slave, but He also *humbles* Himself, seeing that He came to be in the likeness of humanity. It is humiliating to belong to the human race. Let us take a place among those messengers from other spheres who have visited the earth, and know something of human history. What a sad, sordid, sinful spectacle do we see as we contemplate man's mistakes and misery! Apart from his future, I question whether any creature outside the earth would care to belong to our sin-cursed, death-doomed race. Normally we should be like our first parents, and hide ourselves for very shame. Were we not blinded to our state, and hardened to our fate, we would humble ourselves because we are not merely *like* humanity and *fashioned* as a man, but we actually belong to this base band.

Christ Jesus was not a human being as we are, for God was His Father, yet He bore our likeness. He was not a man like the rest, for He had no sin and had life in such abundance that it would counteract the disease and death which is our portion. Though He had the likeness and the fashion of a man, He did not possess the mortality and the sin which is the cause of our humiliation. He was human in appearance, not in fact. He did not humiliate Himself simply because, like all of us, He shared the general disgrace. So sensitive was He to sin, that His association with it was enough to humble Him. Thus it was that He became the Man of Sorrows, and made close acquaintance with our grief.

We must not think that all this was independent of the will and heart of God. Quite the opposite. It was a path of *obedience* to God. And it was a revelation of the Deity quite as much as His previous condition. Indeed, the highest service lies in the lowest sphere. His humiliation revealed God's heart as His more glorious condition never could have done. Becoming like a man is only a step in His humiliation. He must stoop lower still, and become like the very worst of men, like the outcast of society, like the very vilest criminal.

It is disgraceful to die, but we do not discern the dire dishonor of it because we all share the shame. But it is far more humiliating to be executed as a criminal, to be deemed unworthy to live even among such sinners as mankind. Even here there are degrees of disgrace. But an agonizing and lingering death, exposed to public scorn, and in the special form on which the curse of God had been pronounced, with every token of human and divine displeasure, such a death is the deepest depth of degradation which can be imagined. Christ did not merely descend to share our common fate of dying and death, but to suffer

so as to bring upon Himself the utmost humiliation from man and the deepest abhorrence from the Deity.

The cross of Christ! How little do we realize the abyss to which He sank! As men cover the grave of a corrupting corpse with flowers, so Christendom has sought to obliterate the offense of the cross by giving the rude stake itself an artistic form. No cross-piece gave the crude pole on which He was gibbeted picturesque proportions. It was never intended to beautify the architecture of our churches or to be fabricated of precious metal and costly gems to adorn the vain worship of the flesh. How terribly has this so-called symbol been altered, both in form and in intent! It should be a symbol of shame, to be shunned with shuddering. In its popular form it has become a symbol of man's utter failure to grasp the deep and dire significance of the manner in which God's Christ was done to death by human hands.

O that the saints could grasp the vast distinction between the death of Christ and the manner of it! Too often, when we speak of the cross, we merely mean His death. Had He died a common death, it would not have revealed the heart of man or the indignation of God. That human beings have brought upon themselves the blood of God's Anointed tells the tale of their alienation as no other act could do. That this was done by those in closest official touch with God, the priests of Israel, is the best evidence of human depravity. Not only was Christ humiliated at the cross, but men were shown to be so low and vile, that naught but divine grace and love could ever give them the right to exist. Indeed, justice demands that *they* be crucified for this deed. Not only Christ, in fact, but the world, in truth, was on the shameful tree of Golgotha.

CHRIST'S EXALTATION

"Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him . . ." (2:9). Christ

emptied and humbled *Himself,* but *God* exalts Him. He did not exalt Himself. Only God can truly exalt His creatures. For them the way to the heights lies through the depths. They should share the disposition of God's Anointed, and, in due time, God will raise them up. As the result of His descent to the deepest humiliation He is now on the way to the highest place in God's universe. Already, in countless hearts, His Name ranks far above every other name. It is not merely great but gracious. None of the names on earth can compare with it. It does not inspire fear or admiration merely, but love and adoration.

The word here used is full of precious significance. God has *graced* Him with the Name which outranks all others in the universe. The root thought of this family of words is JOY. The verb *chairō* means *rejoice.* One of its nouns, *charis,* is *grace, favor, gratitude, bounty.* So this verb *charizomai,* JOYIZE, speaks of an act that brings joy. Usually this is produced by granting an undeserved boon, or bestowing benefits where the opposite is deserved. But here this winsome word tells us of the pleasure which the Name delectable will bring, not only to Him Who bears it, but to those who find it a Shelter and a Satisfaction to their hearts.

The name Jesus is full of precious significance. It is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Joshua. This seems to be shortened from Yahweh-Hoshea, Yahweh-Saviour. Yahweh is the title of the Deity as associated with time, especially the eonian times, that great group of eons in which God is revealing Himself through darkness and light, evil and good, sin and salvation. The cross of Christ stands in the very midst of these eons, and through it He will transmute all the evil into good. Yahweh is He Who will be and is and was. Hoshea is added to describe His work. Jesus is the appropriate name of the *Saviour* Whom God has given to rescue the creation from the thralldom of sin and destruction and death during the eonian times.

The worship and acclamation of the universe—such is the reward which comes to our blessed Saviour for His descent and humiliation. And this will not wait until the consummation, when all are reconciled to God. During the eons many shall bow the knee to Him and acclaim Him Lord, for the glory of God, the Father. Even now His saints adore His Name, and own His lordship in their feeble way. Already He is at God's right hand, messengers and authorities and powers being made subject to Him (1 Peter 3:22). When He comes, the earth will own Him King. Even beings under the earth, of which we know so little, will adore and obey Him. Celestial, terrestrial and subterranean—all will bow the knee in worship and use their tongues to acclaim the Crucified before the eons end. Low as was His humiliation, so high will be His exaltation.

"For the glory of God, the Father." This is the object of it all, as well as the key to our understanding of it. Christ descended in obedience in order to glorify God, His Father. He was exalted for the same reason. And it is for this cause that every knee shall bow and every tongue acclaim Him Lord—because this not only elevates Him to the place supernal, but at the same time brings to God the glory which is His due. But it is not to God, as Creator, or as judge. The name Jesus sets forth the *Saviour;* He glorifies the *Father.* There is no constraint here, except that of love. Those who worship Him as Saviour and acclaim Him as Lord become children of God, and give Him glory.

THE SAINTS' OBEDIENCE

Having meditated upon the obedience of Christ Jesus and its blessed results, Paul exhorts the saints to emulate His disposition in their own small sphere. Hitherto the Philippians had always been obedient to the truth which he had imparted to them when he was present with them. Now that he has still greater and grander grants of glori-

ous grace for them, which he must send to them in his absence, he exhorts them to carry this out also, in their daily life. It is a high salvation indeed, but it calls for a lowly walk in humiliation and suffering. It leads down, not up, so long as we are in these bodies of humiliation. With fear and trembling, bowing ourselves under the mighty hand of God, Whose spirit in us is the effective force, we should seek to work *out* what is within.

Salvation is not only a future event, but a present power and should be the preponderant influence in our lives. God has a glorious goal for each one of us, just as He has for His Anointed. Let us learn from His example that self-emptying and humiliation, with all their discomfort and distress and agony, are God's will and the only way to attain the future exaltation. Let us not strive against it but be disposed to it, when it lies in the path of obedience, even though it brings fear and trembling with it. Let us be satisfied when *our* will is not consulted, and *our* work is not done, realizing that God's will and work are to be carried out through us, for His delectation. It is God Who wills as well as works in us for His delight. So great is the light shed upon the human will by this word that we will devote a later chapter to its discussion.

When we realize that God is the power of our life, it is revolutionized. Nothing enters it by chance, or by any means without the will of God. Why then murmur when it is not to our liking? It is a comfort that He *knows* our trials and a consolation that He *sympathizes* with us in our sorrows, but how much better to realize that it comes from Him and is a step, into the depths it may be, which leads to our exaltation? It is not a cause for murmuring, but for thanksgiving. Murmuring had no place in the life of our Lord. Not that He lacked occasion. The wise and intelligent in His day did not receive His message. Was He discontented? Quite the opposite. He said, "I am acclaiming You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for You hide these things from the wise and intelligent and You reveal them to minors. Yes, Father, seeing that thus it becomes a delight in front of You" (Matt.11:25,26).

This is a very practical point with the writer and readers of these lines. We have marvelous things to teach. Humanly speaking, it seems impossible that the intelligent, even scholarly, leaders in Christendom should not grasp them eagerly. But they do not. Their wisdom seems to be useless in the realm of revelation. The fact that they do not receive it seems to reflect on our message, and we are tempted to murmur. Then, again, it is far pleasanter and more respectable to have many men of mental ability and high standing in the world to support and propagate the truth. Would it not have been better to choose priests and scribes as apostles rather than ignorant fishermen? By no means. Let us not murmur at God's ways in choosing the stupid and the weak and the ignoble and the scorned, for only thus can He give the flesh its proper place. Let us rather rejoice.

How many of us are prone to reason that, if *this* had only been so, *that* could not have happened. But all such reasoning is vain and a delusion. So intricate are the complex interrelations of human life and conduct that no rational reasoning is possible. It is almost invariably the product of unbelief. God's ways are not to be the subject of our syllogisms, for we are not at all equipped for logical deduction. Once we believe and realize that God's hand is operating all things in our lives, as well as in the universe, all desire to reason will leave us. Faith will replace reason, and dissatisfaction and perplexity will be replaced by contentment and understanding.

Should we come to be in complete concord with the control of God, it will make us "blameless and artless, children of God, flawless in the midst of a crooked and per-

verse generation . . ." (2:15). The world, and the saints who have not yet given God His place in their lives, do not fall in line with His will (even if they fulfill His intention), hence they lie athwart His way and are perverse, or they vary their course, and are crooked. So long as we parallel His course, and do not plot and scheme to improve or evade His plans for us, we will be like His children, in Whom no flaw can be found. Such is the conduct which should come from the contemplation of the course of Christ. It should be the glad obedience of those who make God all in their lives and cheerfully acquiesce in His way for them, seeing that the suffering must precede the glory.

LUMINARIES IN THE WORLD

Such saints are not only a delight to God, but the light of the world. This world is a very dark and dismal dungeon. In their day, the disciples of our Lord were the light of the world (Matt.5:14). Since then the light has left Israel, as figured in the olive tree, some of whose boughs were broken off (Rom.11:17). Now the oil is found among the nations, some of whom have been grafted in. But the real luminaries are only those among them who live the evangel, "having on the word of life." They are clothed, as it were, with the luminous garments of God's revelation, and shine in a manner like our Lord when He was on the holy mount.

It is a glorious privilege to give expression to God's truth by verbal utterance or the written pages, by means of the words He has given us to make Him known. But here we have a different method, and, perhaps, a more effective mode of shedding the light of God. Not words for the ears, but works which can be heard by the hearts of our hearers, are the means brought before us in Philippians. These deeds will appear again in the day of Christ, to receive the reward which is their due. In these is Paul's boast, for they

show, as nothing else could do, that his efforts had not been empty of results (2:16).

That the path of the Philippians had been a painful one, yet pleasing to God, is apparent from Paul's description of it. It was a *sacrifice.* The sacrifice of "burnt offering" or ascent offering, which was wholly God's and ascended to Him as a savor of rest, was accompanied by a libation of wine, to express the joyful character of the sacrifice. How well this fits the circumstances here! Paul also suffers in his service, yet rejoices in it. The sacrifice is a joyous one. They rejoice, and he rejoices with them, and, to make it mutual, he would have them rejoice with him.

Notwithstanding its strong strain of humiliation and suffering, our service is one of joy and rejoicing. Short as it is, no other book contains the word rejoice as often as Philippians. Paul made his petitions with joy (1:4). He rejoices and will rejoice in the announcement of the evangel (1:18). He will abide for their joy of faith (1:25). He would have them fill his joy full (2:2). He joys and rejoices with the Philippians and asks them to joy and rejoice with him (2:17,18). He sends Epaphroditus that they may rejoice and receive him with all joy (2:28,29). He exhorts them to be rejoicing in the Lord (3:1). He calls them his joy (4:1). Again he exhorts them to be rejoicing in the Lord always, and repeats it (4:4). He rejoiced that their disposition toward him found expression in their contribution (4:10). What other book can match the overflow of happiness found here in Philippians?

Let us note also that this joy is not in their salvation but in their service. Undoubtedly they enjoyed the grace which had come to them in Christ. But this is a different matter. This joy is in the *Lord.* They were happy in serving and suffering in the midst of weakness, poverty and distress. This is the joy which accompanies our present path

of hardship and humiliation. Indeed, it is the firstfruit of our downward disposition in obedience to the will of God.

Let us, then, cultivate the disposition which was in Christ Jesus, which is the very reverse of that which inspires the world and the flesh and the Adversary. Let us not strive to rise high, but to become low, not to rule but to serve, not ourselves but others. Let us leave all exaltation in the hands of God, Who will raise us up and give us glory in His own good time, as He did with Christ Jesus. He that exalts himself shall be abased. But he whom God exalts shall share with Christ the glories which are His because He emptied and humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. A. E. Knoch

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PREMONITION

In choosing a word for a divine vocabulary it is a translator's earnest wish to find one, in each case, which exactly covers the original for which it stands. But, alas, this is not always to be had. The word *apokaradokia,* FROM-SKULL-SEEM, is one of the most baffling examples. We have rendered it *premonition,* but not without a *presentiment* that our choice would be criticized.

The word is used twice in Scripture (Rom.8:19 and Phil.1:20), where it has to do with the *intellect,* the *formation of ideas,* and extends thought into the *future,* and is closely related to *expectation.* But it is, in some way, inferior to expectation, or we would have an anticlimax in Philippians. The most important point to observe is the fact that the lower creation shares this with man. In Romans we would hardly expect to find that the creation has *expectation,* because that is intelligent, not instinctive. It seems much more likely that the word has to do with an intuitive, unintelligent, subconscious attitude toward the future.

The question is, What shall we call it? The central *meaning* of *premonition* is correct (that simply of intuitive anticipation). Only it has fallen into bad company. I hoped to redeem it by putting it in the best society, *where no one can possibly charge it with being evil.* But it is not easy to regain a lost character. We must give it time. (Adapted from *Unsearchable Riches* vol.26, pp.39-42). A. E. Knoch

THE HUMAN WILL

(Philippians 2:13)

GOD is operating in us to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight (Phil.2:13). This brief allusion to the human will throws a flood of light into a very dark and dismal doctrine which has so vitiated the theology of Christendom that it has practically robbed God of His deity and believers of a God worthy of the name. It is generally taken for granted that the Bible teaches that man, being made in the image of God, is absolutely sovereign in the realm of his will. Just as God can will, without being influenced by aught about Him, so we can create a decision out of the blue, without the least reference to what we are, or to the world about us.

This nightmare, we are given to understand, is not directly taught in the Scriptures, but must be predicated as its background, or else we could not understand its message! It is pathetic to see the zeal with which men, who have suffered much for God's name, spring up to attack any teaching which threatens the doctrine of man's free will and free moral agency. They have not a line of Scripture on their side, so they inject the idea wherever it seems feasible, and so seek a semblance of support.

It will be worthwhile to consider some aspects of man's will, to see whether it is "free" or not, and to learn thus just what is meant by God operating in us to will. The wording of this passage will give us a hint, and, if we are correct, we will find ourselves in full harmony with its teaching when we are through.

What is the human will? Our text will help us to determine this vexing problem. The will of believers should be due to *God's operation.* It is not our action, but the result of His. So the will is a result, due to the operation of external factors. Probably we are not conscious of God's operation. We seem to be doing what *we* will. That is true of many functions of life. Our thinking, our breathing, the beating of our hearts, the manifold operations of digestion, all these are or should be, accomplished without our superintendence or conscious volition. And all are maintained and formed from external supplies or impulses. We eat, we breathe, we observe, and these make us what we are.

Where does the will come from? Do men create it out of nothing? That would be a feat more wonderful than any sleight of hand of which we have ever heard. If God is operating in us, is He then interfering with the creative capacity of His creatures?

The wise man knows that the human will is easily influenced from without. In fact it can be changed easily by one who understands human weaknesses. It is manufactured out of motives. It is a compound, made out of what we are within and where we are without. Heredity and environment fuse together to form it. Our wills are determined for us to a large extent by our ancestors, especially one named Adam. The mixture is finished by our associates and associations. If we had brains enough we could figure out any given will-problem like a sum in arithmetic. A given man will react to a given situation as surely as half a dozen plus six make twelve.

IS THE HUMAN A MACHINE?

Oh, someone will exclaim, then man is a mere machine, an automaton, and is subject to a blind fate from which he cannot escape! How often have these words frightened us when we dared to think through to reality! No. Man is not

a *mere* machine, but we must all admit that he has many of the characteristics of one. The fact that he has a soul, and can sense outward things, does not prove that he can sense all of his own operations. If he were not automatic in most of his vital processes, he would be dead in a few minutes. Some of his functions are not within the sphere of his consciousness. The will is one of these.

Man is an automaton in many ways. What would become of him if he had to supervise all of his bodily functions, or if he were even conscious of them all? How could a man who had never even heard of physiology keep the blood pump going and the air bellows working and the stomach churning all at the same time? He would not dare to stop to take a bite to eat. He could not get a wink of sleep. He would, however, have the melancholy pleasure of knowing that he is no mere automaton. Thank God that He, in His wisdom, Himself attends to our vital functions, so that we may look away from them to Him.

In these matters man is not subject to a "blind fate," but to a beneficent Creator. He provides parents and food and drink and air, not blindly, but blessedly. All this is a parable of those non-physical functions of our being, the mental, the emotional, and the voluntary. As Creator, God supplies us with the tendencies of our ancestors and with our surroundings and associates. These are incorporated in our mental tissue and enter our brains through our organs of sense. There are times when these two sources (heredity and environment) contribute materials which will not mix, and we cannot "make up our minds." But, in most cases, we subconsciously act upon the impulse provided by the union of these two streams without considering our course.

It is a stupendous blessing that this process is, as a rule, subconscious. If we had to stop and think and combine our hereditary tendencies with the fleeting impressions constantly brought in by our eyes and ears and nose and nerves

before we act, many would be run over by automobiles before they could walk. Our wills themselves sometimes prompt us to action before we have time to be definitely conscious of what we are doing. I well remember once resting quietly under a bush, when I heard a buzzing noise, and lazily turned my head to see if the wind was blowing the vegetation. But it flashed upon me in the midst of my sluggish motion, that it might be a rattlesnake. I jumped up so quickly that I still seemed to be thinking of the wind after I saw the snake strike at the spot where my head had been an instant before.

Man is like an automobile, a splendid vehicle to convey the knowledge of God to the creatures of His heart. Let us suppose that an automobile had a free will of its own. Who would care to ride if the steering gear demanded its independence, and turned off the avenue to climb a tree, or insisted on diving into a pit, instead of running on the road prepared for it? If automobiles had free wills the American people would soon be extinct. And if men could break away from the natural laws which guide them, they would utterly destroy one another in a fortnight. The measure in which they are lawless because of death and sin, is well within the reach of God's protecting arm. The steering gear has gone wrong, the wheels wobble, and the automobile seems to be blessed with free moral agency. If you wish to sell the machine it may be well not to boast of its superior spiritual endowments. One who has God's Spirit has a steady steering gear and a Driver Who will get him there on the well paved path.

Our consciousness seems to be a sluggish bubble which rises from the operations of the mind and is hardly recognized until it breaks. There is a possibility of uniting sensations from without with the mental fiber within and of sending the resultant order to the muscles and even of acting before we are well aware of what we are about. This is

the way the will usually works. It would be intolerable if we had to make up our minds regarding every act of life. It would take more nerve force than most of us possess. Most of our voluntary acts are replaced by habits—things we do "without thinking."

Too often the sinner is directed to manipulate his will, as though he could do anything with it. An evangelist is not supposed to twist and turn the human will by eloquent exhortations, but to provide divine material for the formation of God's will in men. Of what avail would it be to feed the famished with lectures on the digestive apparatus? It is just as useless to tell a man to will to come to Christ. Give the starving food and the digestive apparatus, complicated as it is, will do its part. Give the sinner Christ and his will will work of its own accord. Preach the *Word.* This is the most effective motive power for moving the mind of man. By its means God's Spirit will bring the sinner into line with God's will.

Men imagine they are sovereign in the realm of the will and that no one can break their resolution—no, not even God. This is childish. They have no greater control over it than the captain of a sailing vessel has over the set of his sails. If he is not demented he will spread them to suit his course, and that is determined for him by the breeze. There are spiritual winds to which men bend their wills. They may whistle ever so long, but these spirit forces are beyond their perception and above their control. Hence men do the will of the flesh and obey the behests of evil spirit powers of which they seldom are aware. These now operate in the sons of stubbornness (Eph.2:2). The great movements in the world, the great leaders, can find success only when they fall in line with unseen spirit forces.

The unbeliever is the sport of the spirits of evil. It is the chief of the aerial jurisdiction who operates in them. Their wills are a compound of the soulish sensibilities of

the flesh and the spirit of the world. The believer is not called upon to be passive, to "surrender," to "yield" as is so often taught, but that is what the unbeliever unwittingly does. That is what evil spirits crave. Intelligent subordination to God's revealed will is quite the opposite of a passive reception of passing impressions. The Spirit of God does not produce such indefinite "guidance," such loose "leadings." God's Spirit works only through His Word.

Our course is often dark, and we need light, not vague "guidance." With a light we can intelligently pick our path, and choose our steps. We are not called upon to obey an inner voice or an outward impression, or to blindfold our eyes and follow an unknown guide, but to use the light of revelation.

Within us is the flesh and without us is the spirit of the world and the world of spirits. These are always forcing themselves upon us and producing "impressions." It is true that, if we know the Scriptures, the divine directions will, to a large extent, displace these sinister influences, but this comes through the activity of faith, not the passivity which blindly obeys impulses. God seeks open-eyed, active obedience. The forces of evil desire blind passivity.

Saints who sincerely desire to do the will of God will find that it is not enough to "make up their minds" to do it. However strong their determination, it may not last. The wise way is to provide the will with motives which will keep them in God's will. Above all we must know Him through His Word. We must enter into His present plans and future purpose. Then, without straining ourselves to create an artificial will of our own, this knowledge will become the formative factor in our wills, so that actually it will be "God Who is operating in us to *will* (as well as to work), for the sake of His delight."

Let me warn all against the fearful practice of making a medium out of God's holy Word. There are those who

will insert a needle into the Bible, or open it at random in order to get God's "leading." God's Book is not a planchette, though I have no doubt that the evil spirits prefer it to every other way of deceiving their dupes. God controls our wills only when we intelligently absorb His thoughts, and weigh His ways, and luxuriate in His love. It is detestable idolatry to turn His revelation into a ouija board, and allow evil spirits to speak through its sacred sentences.

At Pentecost God's Spirit came on the disciples for power, and uninstructed saints have longed for a repetition of this marvel ever since, not knowing that the Spirit is at home in us, to impart not power but life (Rom.8:9). There is great danger in tarrying for the Spirit, for deceiving spirits are eager to use such opportunities. In fact the history of all movements of this kind is sufficient evidence that they are merely a brand of spiritism, doubly deceptive because they seem to be based on the Bible, and succeed in arousing spirit manifestations which are mistaken for the power of God's holy Spirit.

It is quite true that God revealed Himself directly through the prophets and those who had the gift of prophecy in the Pentecostal era. No one has it now. The only real prophets today are false prophets. If we expect God to speak to us directly through His Spirit, apart from His Word, we are assuming the gift of prophecy. Today such a gift is not needed, for the truth has been fully revealed in the Scriptures. Moreover, the fact that those who depend on such revelations are led contrary to the Scriptures and to one another shows that they are not guided by the one Spirit of God, but by the many spirits against which we are warned.

Much of the "waiting on God" or "going into the silence" may be simply a form of spiritism. If we seek to shut out the distractions of the world about us in order to be able to give all our thoughts to God's revelation, that is good, very good. But if we imagine that making our minds a blank, or

putting ourselves into a state of passivity will enable us to receive definite instructions from the holy Spirit direct, we are under a strong delusion, and lay ourselves open to the deceiving spirits which characterize these last days. The holy Spirit of God will indeed guide us into the truth, but only through the word of truth. There is no safety apart from God's written revelation. The spirit that speaks to us apart from it is evil, however much it may imitate the divine.

All who have had an intelligent experience of divine life will readily admit that even the saint cannot please God apart from His operation, and they are glad to have it so. Let them *believe* the passage before us, and seek to realize its force, and they will be gratified still more in the consciousness that even the spring of their good deeds flows from God.

They become, as it were, a miniature universe, in which all is out of and through and for Him. The fact that they cannot independently will or work so as to please God will not disturb them in the least. Quite the opposite. They will find their all in Him, and this is only the normal complement of the great goal God has set before Him—to be all in them.

A. E. Knoch

SCRIPTURE OCCURRENCES OF "WILL"

If our readers will consult all of the occurrences of *thelêma*, WILL, they will obtain both pleasure and profit. Out of about sixty occurrences at least fifty speak of the will of God. Man's will is not very important, according to the divine reckoning. The list begins with "Thy will be done" (Matt.6:10) and ends with "for Thy pleasure [*will*] they are" (Rev.4:11). In Romans 2:18 God's will is recognized as the will which needs no further specification. The Jew knew the will because he had the divine oracles. The coming kingdom is briefly characterized as the time when men will not do their own will, but the Father's.

A. E. Knoch

GROWTH IN REALIZATION OF GOD

We are acquainted with the entreaty, "Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again I will declare, be rejoicing! Let your lenience be known to all men: the Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus" (Phil.4:7).

In the presence of such high entreaties, it is vital to our realization of truth to recognize that the apostle Paul does not come to us as a "second Moses." That is, Paul does not "command" us to do what is right on the grounds that if we fail to do so we will suffer the curses of the law, or, if we should continue to disobey, that we will "lose our salvation" and find ourselves among the vessels of wrath.

Paul comes to us, instead, as a wise counselor, as the Lord's apostle, encouraging us and building us up in faith. He entreats us concerning that which is imperative to our service if God would be pleased and we would be benefited. The fear and trembling that is to attend our walk as we carry our salvation into effect (*cf* Phil.2:13), is not a fear of divine wrath or a trembling born out of a contemplation of eternal punishment. Instead, it is a fear to offend our God and Father Whom we love; it is a trembling produced by an awareness of the fact that the spirit of the One Who rouses Jesus from among the dead condescends to make its home in us.

Insofar as the curses of the law are concerned, "Christ

reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes" (Gal.3:13). We "were put to death to the law through the body of Christ" (Rom.7:4); hence "we were *exempted* from the law" (Rom.7:6). Consequently, we "are *not under* law" (Rom.6:14). These things are related to us by Paul with reference to the fact that Grace *reigns* for life eonian (Rom.5:21); eonian life is a *gracious gift* (Rom.6:23).

DIVINE INDIGNATION

As to the question of divine wrath in the future "day of indignation," how thankful we are to affirm that, "being *now* justified in [Christ's] blood, we shall be saved from indignation through Him" (Rom.5:9). We are also mindful that, according to God's purpose, there are many who will be "vessels of indignation" (Rom.9:22), yet only unto the end that, in due time, they themselves should also be obtaining mercy (*cp* Rom.9:16; 11:32).

Those, however, who are "God's *chosen* ones" (Rom. 8:33; *cp* 2 Tim.2:10), having been *graciously* granted to be believing (Phil.1:29), have had the blessing of justification conferred upon them even now (Rom.3:22; 5:1). In His kindness and grace to us, God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ Who died for our sakes, that, whether we may be watching or drowsing, we should be living at the same time together with Him (1 Thess.5:9,10).

If some will not, as it literally is, "*tenant* the reign of God" (i.e., have an allotment or "place" in His reign; Gal. 5:21; *cp* 2 Tim.2:12), it is not to say that they will not live under its jurisdiction. All who are members of the body of Christ will live under the jurisdiction of God's reign, whether or not they have a place in its governance.

Vivification and eonian life are a display of God's *grace;* they are not a display of a divine reward in response to man's faithfulness (Eph.2:5,7). They are not a matter of

qualification, but of favor. The fact that, relatively speaking, the reverse is true concerning the selection of those who will have a governing position within the kingdom is beside the point. The believer's eonian life depends solely upon the grace of God.

Concerning the oncoming eons: whether or not we take part in the reign *of* that day, we will, in any case, *in* that day, be roused, vivified and seated together among the celestials (Eph.2:5,6). Our "seat" among the celestials, speaks of a settled place of useful service. Every one of us will be pleasing to God and faithful in His service. "Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, *then you also* shall be manifested together with Him in glory" (Col.3:4).

JUSTIFIED FROM SIN

In the grace of God, Christ tasted death for the sake of *everyone* (Heb.2:9). "Christ Jesus . . . is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for the sake of *all* . . ." (1 Tim.2:6).

"For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently *all died*" (2 Cor.5:14). And, "one who dies *has been* justified from Sin" (Rom.6:7; i.e., "freed from Sin," *cp* Rom.6:18).

This justification *from* Sin which is now the portion of all, is wholly the achievement of the cross. "What was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh" (Rom.8:3). Thus in Christ we behold "the Lamb of God Which is taking away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

Sin in the flesh does not *await* condemnation; it has already *found* condemnation. Sin in the flesh is not *to be* condemned in a future judgment (such as in the second death); it *has been* condemned in a past judgment, the judgment of the cross. The sin of the world has been *taken away* through the sacrificial offering of the Lamb of God,

Christ Jesus our Lord. God made Christ ("the One not knowing sin") to be a sin offering (2 Cor.5:21). Indeed, in literal terms, "He makes Him [to be] *sin*"—that thus sin might be *condemned* and *taken away.*

Consequently, God has not only conciliated *us* to Himself through Christ, but has, in Christ, conciliated *the world* to Himself as well. Accordingly, He is not only dealing graciously with all *our* offenses (Col.2:13), but, concerning the world as well, He is "not reckoning *their* offenses to them" (2 Cor.5:18,19).

Sin speaks of *failure;* it speaks of that which "misses the mark," the mark or target of that which is inherently good, well pleasing and perfect (*cp* Rom.12:2). Sin in the flesh, "the sin of the world," has met its judgment through the One Who is the Sin Offering. Now, through the work of Christ, man is justified *from* the evil slaveowner, Sin (2 Cor. 5:14; Rom.6:7b). Man is declared to be in the only right relationship to Sin, which is to be freed from its jurisdiction. Sin personified (literally, man's sinful deeds), no longer has the prerogative concerning man's judgment. Instead, God through Christ has gained the prerogative!

Therefore, *God*—not Sin—will now determine each man's judgment and final destiny. And, He will do so according to His own purpose, not according to individual merit. Indeed many who will be subjected to God's indignation are far less deserving of it than others who will be saved from it. The vessels of mercy enjoy mercy solely because of God's gracious purpose, not because of any deservedness of their own (1 Tim.1:12-16; Rom.9:15,16).

WHAT THE HUMAN DESERVES

Insofar as "just deserts" are concerned, *all* are deserving of death (Rom.1:32). Considered in themselves, in their own sinfulness, apart from the divine purpose, humanity is well suited and worthy only of death. If this were the only

consideration, it would be altogether fitting not only to put man to death, but to leave him there on a permanent basis.

This is true of the entirety of humanity, not merely of some. Remember, all sin; *and* all are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). The glory of God represents the only ideal standard of righteousness. It is not merely that man *comes short* of the glory of God that is significant. It is that he is found *wanting* of the glory of God. Not only do all mankind sin, but all mankind—including those who are least offensive—are members of the old humanity which is *corrupted* in accord with its seductive desires (Eph.4:22).

WHAT GOD WILLS

Howbeit, in the end, God, Who loves all (John 3:16), and wills to save all (1 Tim.2:4), will become All in all (1 Cor. 15:28). In that day, God will fully manifest Himself as the One Who indeed is the Saviour of all mankind (1 Tim. 4:10). Until then, with respect to all interim judging, it is only a question of whether one best serves the divine purpose as a vessel of mercy or as a vessel of indignation.

OFFENSES NO LONGER RECKONED

The fact that God has conciliated the world to Himself and is not reckoning offenses to the all who sin, affirms the fact that man's sinfulness continues to be offensive to God. It is not that man's sinful ways are no longer offensive to the Deity. That is far from the case. It is that now that the Sin Offering has been made, God is no longer *reckoning* man's offenses to him.

It must be emphasized that the conciliation does not exempt man from his close and often painful connection with the generally attenuated yet sometimes full-toned indignation of God which, even now, is being revealed from heaven upon the irreverence and injustice of men

(Rom.1:18). We become acquainted firsthand with God's appraisal of sin whenever we ourselves experience the practical retribution which attends our own failures (*cf* Rom. 1:18-32; *cp* 1 Tim.6:9).

It does not follow from the fact that, as a timeless truth, *sin* has been taken away, nor from the companion fact that, personally speaking, *offense* is not being reckoned, that God will therefore do nothing at all insofar as personal adjudication is concerned with respect to the dreadful deeds of His beloved creatures. God will still bring every *act* into judgment (Ecc.12:14), both in the case of the believer (at the dais of Christ; 2 Cor.5:10) and of the unbeliever (before the great white throne; Rev.20:11,12).

GOD'S WORK OF JUDGMENT

Divine *judgment*, however, simply speaks of divine *decision*. For the sake of the accomplishment of the divine purpose, it remains *expedient* that the various judgments in which God would engage in response to man's wickedness still be carried out. Through these means, God will further make known the awfulness and injuriousness of sin.

Yet it must be recognized that the indignation in the day of the indignation and revelation of the just judgment of God (Rom.2:5), will itself proceed "according to" (or, "in accord with") that glorious body of divine revelation which Paul terms "my evangel" (Rom.2:16)! Paul's evangel is the evangel which reveals the eventual "life's justifying" and reconciliation of all mankind through the saving work of Christ (Rom.5:18,19; Col.1:20). How we rejoice to know that the events of the day of judging will proceed on the basis of and in the light of the glorious consummation when God becomes All in all.

In all future, adversative judgments, then, God will be mindful that the "sin in the flesh" of those undergoing judging has already been condemned and taken away through

the sacrifice of Christ. He will be mindful as well that, through Christ's sacrifice, every sinner—even the most wicked—is already joined to Himself. That is, this is so in fact, all human unbelief notwithstanding.

It is true that, in the current era, God *acts* in conciliation toward mankind. It is true as well that, in coming times of indignation, it will *appear* that God surely is reckoning the offenses of humanity against them. Yet in fact, in the depth of His heart, this will not be so. This is because, at the cross, God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself. The recognition that, practically, this is a truth applied in a special way in the present, must not be misused so as to obscure the realization that, factually, it is a timeless and abiding truth.

In His work of judgment, through Christ, what is seen on the surface covers what is in the depths of God, made known in the One revealed in Paul's evangel (*cf* 1 Cor.2: 6-10). Let no one imagine that Christ, the Righteous One, departs from virtue in assuming the role of Divine Indignation. He does so for the sake of the glory of God and the benefit of all concerned, being motivated by love, wisdom and perfect righteousness. His motives are of the highest order, and His purpose for the greatest good.

FOR GOD AND HIS GLORY

It is vital to realize that the divine indignation of the day of indignation will be the manifestation of an assumed character, not the reflection of what, deeply and ultimately speaking, is actually so.

Furthermore, the indignation of that day will be just the right amount, neither too much nor too little. It will soon be past, and, even as all else, will prove to be for the glory of God and the benefit of man. How glorious it is to know that God does not afflict "from His heart" (Lam. 3:33). How we rejoice in the realization that, ". . . though

He afflicts, *yet He has compassion according to the abundance of His benignities*" (Lam.3:32).

The Son of God, then, to Whom all judging has been given (John 5:22), will yet, as the Emblem of God's *assumption* (Heb.1:3), *assume* the role of One Who is indignant. For the sake of the fulfillment of the divine purpose, even as for the benefit of the creature, it is wise and expedient that Christ should be manifested thus. This theophany will occur principally in the conclusion of the current eon, and then in the day of judging following the thousand years. This assumed, indignant Character, while true to form, is not at all reflective of the heart of the One Who is love (1 John 4:8)—love, which is not incensed, neither is it taking account of evil (1 Cor.13:5), evil being the outworking of the divine intention (*cf* Rom.9:19).

God has a purpose in all that occurs (*cf* Rom.11:36). Man's unrighteousness commends God's righteousness (Rom.3:5). "The truth of God," by virtue of its being afforded an entity of contrast through the vehicle of "my lie" (i.e., through the innumerable lies in which men so frequently engage), indeed, "superabounds." That is, God's truthfulness, in the face of man's untruthfulness, thus becomes much more apparent and precious "for His glory" (Rom.3:7).

God wants to display His indignation and make His powerful doings known (Rom.9:22). Accordingly, He has made the world and all that is in it (Acts 17:24), doing so in such a way that the world will surely contain both creatures and creaturely deeds well-suited to the visitation not only of His indignation but as well of all His concomitant, powerful deeds. "Yahweh has made *everything* for its own pertinent end, *yea even the wicked* for the day of evil" (Prov.16:4; *cp* Eph.6:13). All is not only *out of* God, and *through* God, but all is *for* God as well: *to Him be the glory* for the eons! Amen! (Rom.11:36).

According to Paul, everything that exists and everything that occurs is "for" God. That is, everything is for His purpose; it exists unto the end that the purpose which requires its ephemeral presence might be achieved. It follows, then, that all that is "not of God," faithfully speaking, is nonetheless out of Him, ultimately speaking.

WE RELY ON THE LIVING GOD

All will yet redound to God's glory. Thus we say, "to Him be the glory," in anticipation of and with a view toward the good that God will surely bring into existence out of the evil upon which the corresponding good is dependent.

God cannot be glorified as the Saviour He intends to become, unless His creatures are the kind of sinners they need to be unto this end. Nor can God bless each one with salvation from sin in the way and to the degree that He intends, unless each one's particular kind and degree of sin is fixed. Therefore, that all might accord with God's purpose, all accords with what must be (*cf* Rom.8:26). All, indeed, accords with what must be, since all is out of, through, and for God (Rom.11:36), Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11).

Nonetheless, human behavior still occurs voluntarily, according to one's own choice. It is not true that since all is out of God (and, therefore, that human choice is out of God), that it makes no difference what we do, or that future events will come about in spite of what we do. To the contrary, future events will come about *because* of what we do. Accordingly, since we cannot know what we will do before we actually do it, the matter of decision making, even as self-discipline and self-control, remains vital.

We are awaiting the realized achievement of the full Saviourhood of God. Unto this end, we *rely* on the living God (1 Tim.4:10). Accordingly, we give thanks to Him *in* everything (1 Thess.5:18) and *for* everything (Eph.5:20). We do so, in word and deed, in the form of our unfeigned

assurance and trust in His goodness and wisdom in the face of all the evil extant in the world, replete with such an abundance of horror and misery. God is *our Saviour,* and He is *the Saviour of all mankind.*

The existence of sin and evil is a harsh and unchanging reality. Whatever *we* may do, whatever our own course may consist of, in any case, the current eon itself will continue to be a wicked eon (Gal.1:4). We are all being afflicted. The entire creation—involuntarily—has been *subjected* to vanity, the slavery of corruption (Rom.8:20,21). It is on account of *God* that "we are being put to death the whole day," that "we are being reckoned as sheep for slaughter" (Rom.8:36). We are all dying; we are all sorrowing and groaning in our bodies of humiliation.

In his present state of corruption, man has become characterized by pride, bitterness and wrath. Yet a proud heart can only be changed by the transforming power of a thankful spirit. A spirit of thankfulness affirms that any virtue we may enjoy is ultimately God's gift to us, including the virtue that makes good use of the gifts which He grants.

A bitter and wrathful spirit can only be subdued by a spirit of kindness and love. God alone can grant us such a spirit. Yet the means of grace unto the possession of such an endowment may well be acceptance of and growth in recognition of God as God.

How helpful, then, it is truly to realize that the same awful deeds that man devises against us for evil, God designs for us for good (*cf* Gen.50:20; *cp* Rom.15:4). How beneficial it is to know that all is out of, through and for God.

It is in an awareness of this glorious truth that we say, "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, our Father, Who loves us, and is giving us an eonian consolation and a good expectation in grace, be consoling your hearts and establish you in every good work and word" (2 Thess.2:16,17). J.R.C.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 110th Year

(1909–2019)

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 The Service of Timothy
107 Epaphroditus' Sufferings
114 The Imitation of Paul

THIRD QUARTER, 2019

Volume 110 **Number 3**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, THIRD QUARTER 2019
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TEN

EDITORIAL

In the three articles from his "Studies in Philippians" series, reprinted in this issue of *Unsearchable Riches*, A. E. Knoch directs our attention to the way in which Timothy, Epaphroditus and Paul serve as ideal examples of believers letting the disposition (i.e., the mental inclination, or *mindset*) of Christ make its home in them. As they "obeyed" (UNDER-HEARd), listening subjectively to the evangel of Christ Jesus's emptying of Himself of His glories above, and His humbling of Himself to the death of the cross, God was working in them to will as well as work for the sake of His delight (*cf* Phil.2:5-13). Even as Christ Jesus took on the form of a slave in His obedience to God's will, so "in Timothy we see the model slave" in his service (*cf* p.99). So also Epaphroditus, in setting his mind on what he had "in Christ," even consolation, and comfort of love, communion of spirit, compassion and pity" (*cf* Phil.2:1), so his charm "is revealed in the exquisite sensitiveness of his character" (*cf* p.110).

As for Paul, who else so truly exhibits the mindset of Christ in his conduct and service? He forfeited all that he had gained in flesh because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ which was founded on God's evangel of grace. "All his cherished merit, his blameless walk, his proud pedigree, on which is the chief reliance of the religionist to this very day, were seen to be so many incumbrances to keep him from the complete appropriation of Christ. Away with it! May his example help us all to refuse the refuse which religion offers us in order to keep us from the full appreciation of Him Who is our All!" (p.121).

We provide below the portions of Philippians (revised)

which concern Timothy and Ephaphroditus. That concerning Paul is given at the end of the magazine.

D.H.H.

THE SERVICE OF TIMOTHY (Phil.2:19-24)

19 [y]**Now I am expecting, in** the **Lord Jesus, to send Timothy to** [=]**you quickly, that I´ also may be** of **good** [l]**cheer** when I **know** of **your** [·]**concerns.** 20 **For I** [l]**have no**[t] **one equally sensitive, who**[a] **will** [l]**be** so **genuinely** [l]**solicitous** of [=]**your** [·]**concerns,** 21 **for** [·]**all are seeking** [·]that which is **of** their [sf]**own, not** [·]that which is **of Christ Jesus.** 22 [y]**Now** [=]**you** [l]**know his** [·]**testedness, that as** a **child** with a **father, he slaves** [tg]**with me** [io]**for the evangel.** 23 **This** one, **indeed then, I am expecting to send—as ever I may perceive** my course **from the** things **about me—forthwith.** 24 **Yet I have confidence in** the **Lord that I´** [s]**my**self **shall also be coming quickly.**

THE SUFFERING OF EPAPHRODITUS (Phil.2:25-29)

25 [y]**Now I deem** it **necessary to send to**[d] [=]**you Epaphroditus, my** [·]**brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, yet** [=]**your apostle and minister** for **my** [·]**need,** 26 **since in fact he** [l]**was longing** for [=]**you all and** [l]**depressed, because** [=]**you hear that he is infirm.** 27 **For he is infirm, also, very nigh death, but** [·]**God is merciful to him, yet not** to **him only, but** to **me also, lest I should have sorrow on sorrow.** 28 The **more diligently then I send him, that** [¯p]**seeing him again,** [=]**you may rejoice and I´ may** [l]**be more sorrow-free.** 29 [l]**Receive him then in** the **Lord with** [e]**all joy, and** [l]**have** [·]**such in honor,** 30 seeing **that because** of **the work of** the **Lord he** draws **near unto death,** [¯]**risking** his [·]**soul that he should fill up** [=]**your** [·]**want of** [·]**ministration toward me.**

THE SERVICE OF TIMOTHY

Philippians 2:19-24

As Paul is bound, and cannot visit the Philippians himself, he sends Epaphroditus and contemplates sending Timothy. In these two characters we have two "living expressions" of the evangel for this administration. They set forth the highest ideal in service and suffering. In Timothy we see the model slave. His very name is eloquent, for it means Honor-God. He is one of the few of whom it could be said that he did not seek his own, but others' good. In many ways he seems to be a typical character for the present, combining, in his own person, both Circumcision and Uncircumcision, and the weakness of the flesh with the power of the spirit.

The facts of Timothy's life, as recorded in the Scriptures for our instruction, are doubtless intended to give us a living picture of the inception of this administration. After Paul's separation from Barnabas, the Levite, he came to Lystra, the place where he had been stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19). It is more than possible that it was at this time that Paul received the transcendent revelations which he later makes known in his perfection epistles (2 Cor.12:2). So that Timothy, in *spirit*, commences with this administration, yet in flesh is connected with the previous kingdom heralding. He commences at Lystra and goes all the way to Rome, not only in flesh, but in spirit.

With striking attention to detail, we are told that he was the son of a *believing Jewish woman* (Acts 16:1). This

Jewess belonged to the dispersion, evidently, as she is found outside the land, and wedded to a Greek. As such she may well represent that believing remnant of Israel among the nations, to whom Paul was especially sent. But he also turned to the Greeks, and the company of people who received his message was a mixture of believing Israelites and Greeks. Such a combination, also, was Timothy. God will use this body of people in His highest service. So He used Timothy.

From the very beginning, Timothy earned the approbation of the brethren in Lystra and Iconium, where he lived (Acts 16:2). Probably he believed through Paul's ministry when he was there before, for, while he was, physically, the son of a Jewess and a Greek, spiritually he was Paul's child in faith (1 Tim.1:2,18; 2 Tim.1:2). This may illustrate an important point in service in the present administration which needs to be pressed. While the body of Christ is composed of those who are a mixture, physically, being from both Circumcision and Uncircumcision, this should not extend to their spiritual parentage. They should all be children of Paul. Those who receive life and are nurtured by means of his ministry are equipped for service today. Those who are mixed in their spiritual descent, being children of Peter as well as of Paul, are not fit to serve acceptably in this administration of God's grace.

It would seem that Timothy was with Paul much of the time thereafter. At Berea he remained behind when the Jews of Thessalonica came there, and Paul was sent away by the brethren but he soon received word to rejoin Paul at Athens (Acts 17:15). When he found Paul in Corinth, Paul was pressed to certify to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. When they opposed, Timothy probably listened to the memorable words, "Your blood be on your head! Clear am I! From now on I shall go to the nations" (Acts 18:6). Thus Timothy was present at the commencement

of the Corinthian ecclesia, and actually experienced the great crisis there when Paul left his brethren according to the flesh and turned to the Uncircumcision.

The next time that we hear of Timothy he is sent with Erastus to Macedonia, and doubtless went to Philippi (Acts 19:22). Paul himself remained in the province of Asia. It is evident from this that he no longer was a mere attendant of the apostle, but was himself an apostle, commissioned by his spiritual father to represent him in the work. As Paul himself wrote to Timothy, he had fully followed his teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings (2 Tim.3:10). This is precisely what each slave of our Lord should do today if he wishes to render acceptable service, and to have a part in the ministry of this administration. Even the order in which these essentials are given is significant, for only those who *fully* follow Paul's teaching are really eligible for service and suffering.

Paul follows with the injunction, "Now *you* be remaining in what you learned and verified, being aware from whom you learned it . . ." (2 Tim.3:14). The tendency to forsake Paul's teaching is very strong. In his own days all in the province of Asia turned from him (2 Tim.1:15). Since then Christendom as a whole has left his teaching or so adulterated it with Circumcision doctrine that it is practically nullified. Therefore it should be our very special endeavor to guard against this propensity in ourselves. God graciously granted some light at the Reformation and through the so-called Brethren, but the reaction is very strong, and the light is dimmed. Even so with us. Already some are failing to *remain* in the truth, which few, indeed, have ever grasped in anything like its fullness.

Later Timothy was sent to Corinth also. In Paul's words concerning him we may receive further insight into his service. Paul writes to them, "I am entreating you, then,

become imitators of me. *Therefore* I send to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will be reminding you of my ways which are in Christ Jesus . . ." (1 Cor.4:16,17). Paul's "ways which are in *Christ Jesus*" is a key phrase for the present. Nowadays this is ignored. Paul is pushed aside and men are reminded of the ways of the *Lord Jesus* as He ministered to the Circumcision, as recorded in the four gospels. But Timothy was taught better. Being vitally connected with both sides, he knew that this is no model for the Uncircumcision. Paul's teaching calls for ways which accord with Christ Jesus in *glory,* not as a homeless Wanderer on earth.

Again the apostle writes: "If Timothy should be coming, look to it that he should be with you fearlessly, for he is working at the work of the Lord, as I also. No one, then, should be scorning him" (1 Cor.16:10,11). At another time Paul wrote to Timothy himself: "Let no one be despising your youth . . ." (1 Tim.4:12). And again; "God gives us, not a spirit of timidity, but of power and of love and of sanity" (2 Tim.1:7). Among the carnal Corinthians Timothy makes a pleasing yet pathetic contrast. Too young to command the respect due to an elder, he seems to have had a tendency to timidity and fear. How different from the popular conception of a great church dignitary of today! Youth is aggressive and self-reliant and needs little encouragement to assert itself. Yet the model here set before us is one whom the world (and most of the church) would despise, and who needed to be encouraged not to allow himself to be slighted.

Perhaps Timothy's tendency to timidity was due in measure to his physical condition. He had a weak stomach and was frequently infirm (1 Tim.5:23). Many of us may be able to sympathize with him in this, and can realize how it unfits one for that self-assurance which is deemed essential in those who must meet the public. But we may

rest assured that it was given him by God, not to hinder but to help, for the Lord's work never needs the arm of flesh, and in this administration of the spirit, great physical endowments may be a hindrance to genuine and acceptable service. Not that we should seek to be ill. We do all in our power to counteract our infirmities, yet thank God for those which remain, for they are doubtless needed in order to keep us lowly (*cf* 2 Cor.12:7).

Among the last words on record which Paul writes to Timothy we see how true Timothy remained to his father in faith, and how Paul longed for one on whose fidelity he could count. Perhaps we may take the action as symbolic for this present era, for the second epistle to Timothy deals with the last days. He writes, "Endeavor to come to me quickly, for Demas, loving the current eon, forsook me and went to Thessalonica . . ." (2 Tim.4:9,10). If there ever is to be a return to Paul, it must be done speedily. Demas is probably derived from the root *dem,* PUBLIC. The public, the mass, even of the church, have abandoned Paul. Not a few are antagonistic to him, even among those who, like the Thessalonians, were once lovers of our Lord's advent. Let us, then, in spirit, hasten back to Paul, and to the revelation which he gives from his prison in Rome.

In a like symbolic sense we may take the reference to Timothy in Hebrews, if, indeed, it be the same Timothy there as elsewhere. Nothing is said in other places of his imprisonment. Now we are told, "Know that our brother Timothy has been *released* . . ." (Heb.13:23). Here we have a contrast. In Ephesians, Paul is imprisoned. In Hebrews, Timothy is at liberty. Does this hint that he is not involved in the fate of the Circumcision as set forth in this epistle? Physically, having a Jewish mother, he could easily be caught in the apostasy of Israel, and be bound by her defection. But he is not only freed from all physical relationships in Christ; he is at liberty to go out and serve

even when the Circumcision are restrained by the change of administration.

Such is the career which prepared Timothy to be a model for service in this era. The quality of his preeminence in contrast to others is clearly seen in the short paragraph which Paul devotes to him in this epistle. He wishes to know how the Philippians are, so that he also may be of good cheer. He wishes to send someone, and his choice falls on Timothy, "for I have no one equally sensitive, who will be so genuinely solicitous of your concerns, for all are seeking that which is their own, not that which is of Christ Jesus" (Phil.2:20,21). Here he probes deep, into the very heart of the matter. Are we seeking our own, or that which concerns Christ Jesus? Do we serve selfish interests, or those of our Lord?

One of the delicate touches in this epistle lies in the word "equally sensitive." Though all is spirit now, in service the spirit should control and ennoble our sensations, and make us most sensitive to the welfare of those whom we seek to serve. Two things are needed, a fine perception of the feelings of others and a genuine solicitude as regards their affairs. It would be useless to send some unimpressionable or callous representative whose heart strings could not vibrate in tune with theirs. And still less would be done if he were indifferent to their concerns. In service we should approximate the vital sympathy which each member of the human body shows for the others, for this is the figure used of our relationship in Christ.

"All are seeking that which is their own." What a word to find in this epistle, when, in the flush of their first love, the saints were nearer the ideal than at any time since! If all sought their own *then,* what shall we say *now?* Some, indeed, there have been, through the years, of whom we would say that they did not consider their interests, but gave up all for Christ. But, if we should ask them, doubtless they would also confess their failure in this regard. It seems to be the universal sin in service which few of us are able to overcome. Yet it should be our aim, despite our failures, to forget our own concerns in preoccupation with the things of Christ.

As we have seen in our review of Timothy's career, he had been thoroughly tested as a companion and servant of Paul. This is most aptly summed up in the words, "as a child with a father he slaves with me for the evangel" (2:22). Two pictures are presented here, child and father, slave and lord. Between Paul and Timothy there was the loving and living relationship of father and child, and they both together attended to the affairs of Christ Jesus as though they were His loyal slaves.

I have often been criticized for using the word "slave" to describe the character of our service. But I delight in it. There is no question of its correctness. This alone should settle the point, for interpretation and feelings must be barred in translation. But here, for instance, it is in fullest harmony with the context, for a slave, who has no privileges or property of his own, makes a good figure for those who should not seek their own. I imagine that the objection may arise because we do not wish to serve without doing our own will and attending to our own welfare. But I glory in the "title" slave, and only wish my service were in accord with this lowly distinction.

Yet Paul was not willing to part with Timothy until his own matters (which were also his Lord's) had been settled. It must have been a vast comfort to him to have Timothy at hand in his imprisonment. At his first defense no one went with him, but all abandoned him (2 Tim.4:16). Perhaps this influenced him in calling for Timothy and keeping him until his fate had been finally decided. And, indeed, he would wish to send the news to his friends at Philippi as quickly as possible. What better commenda-

tion for the model slave than the fact that Paul would not part with him even though he would like to have sent him!

Such is the example set before us today: closest association with Paul in his teaching and ministry, and loyal devotion to him in his imprisonment. Is not this a picture of the path we should pursue in spirit? May the Lord send us slaves like Timothy, having His honor at heart, seeking that which is of Christ Jesus, a genuine child in faith of Paul, following his teaching and practice, sensitive and solicitous of the welfare of the saints!

A. E. Knoch

RISKING HIS SOUL

Our Lord taught His disciples that he who prefers the indulgence of his physical senses to loyalty to Christ, who shrinks from the discomfort and distress which they must endure, he shall lose his soul in the time of Christ's exaltation. He who "loses his soul" for Christ's sake, he will gain it in that glorious future kingdom. In the phraseology of today's theology, to "lose your soul" is the very worst calamity which can occur. It is equivalent to "eternal damnation." Yet our Lord used these very words and urged His disciples to "lose their souls." "For whosoever should be wanting to save his soul shall lose [or "destroy"] it" (Matt.16:25). He who would save his soul (which is continually put before the sinner today) was to be discouraged and restrained by the fact that such would destroy their souls. Once we allow the true scriptural force of "soul" the passage is luminous with meaning and "the salvation of soul" takes on an entirely different color. This phrase, so loudly proclaimed today, is never once used in Paul's epistles. In fact, he very seldom speaks of the soul. Indeed he highly commends Epaphroditus for "risking his soul" for the sake of his fellow Philippians (Phil.2:30). This risk was evident in his sickness and depression which accompanied it. Paul could never commend anyone risking their salvation for any cause. But in Hebrews and James' and Peter's first epistle, which are concerned with the physical blessings of the earthly Kingdom, in these letters we read of the salvation of the soul.

A. E. Knoch

EPAPHRODITUS' SUFFERINGS

Philippians 2:25-30

SUFFERING is the supreme service. It comes nearest to the sacrifice which our Saviour made for us. The service of the strong is acceptable to God, yet the work of the weak is far more welcome. It is a deeper display of sacrificial love and demands much more affection to suffer than to serve. It is when both are combined that we see the highest response to God's grace. And both are found in the four examples set before us. Christ was the supreme Sufferer. Paul had his splinter in the flesh and his persecutions. Timothy had his frequent infirmities and the evils from without. Epaphroditus, the apostle of the Philippians, was especially signalized by his suffering, which took him very near to death (2:25-30).

Suffering for God is the highest privilege which can be accorded His creatures. The Philippians themselves knew this by experience, for they were graciously granted not only to believe on Christ, but to suffer for His sake (1:29). In them the two extremes meet, for in no other part of God's Word is there so much emphasis on both suffering and rejoicing. And this is true of Epaphroditus also, for twice in this brief paragraph concerning his sufferings we read of the rejoicing of the Philippians in connection with it (2:28,29).

Epaphroditus signifies *charming*, and such is the account of his career in this epistle. We read of no great deeds that he had done, no "souls" that he had won, but only that he was commissioned to carry the gift of the Philippians to Paul.

He transformed this somewhat prosaic task into a memorable achievement by risking his soul in its accomplishment. So is it with earth's common occupations. Weakness and suffering may make them deeds of honor and charm, worthy of highest recognition, bringing joy and delight to the heart of God and man.

Epaphroditus is given five titles which are characteristic of his service. These are: brother, worker, soldier, apostle, and minister. The number is especially appropriate, as five is usually associated with weakness, the outstanding feature of service. On one side these remind us of the family circle, of the workshop, and of the army. Epaphroditus belonged to the same spiritual family as Paul. This, of course, is basic. Service *must* be based on spiritual, not on physical ties in this administration. Beyond this we *must* be *fellow* workers of *Paul* if our service is to be acceptable to God.

FELLOW SOLDIER

There seem to be four who take the title soldier in Paul's epistles, Paul himself, by implication, Epaphroditus, Archippus (Philemon 2), and Timothy. Paul's charge to Timothy is well worth pondering in this connection, for we may easily receive a false impression from the figure of a soldier. We associate it with violence and glamour. It really conveys the thought of devotion and suffering. Like all figures, only a section of the soldier's life is used in the likeness, not the whole. So that Paul wrote: "*Suffer evil* with me as an ideal soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.2:3).

Many who went through the war learned that real soldiering did not consist in parading about in fine uniforms, but in enduring all sorts of discomfort and hardship in the midst of rain and mud and weariness and wounds and death. It is this side of the soldier's life which portrays our course in His service. It is not simply endeavoring to accomplish His

work in pleasant surroundings, but in the midst of opposition and evils of all sorts, which test our endurance and try our physical frames to the utmost. Not that we seek suffering, or castigate ourselves. No soldier does that. He does the opposite. In every way he seeks to build up and conserve his forces for the fight. We do not invite evil, we face it. Then we thank God and suffer it, for His sake.

THE APOSTLE EPAPHRODITUS

We are far too prone to stereotype the usage of words and make a proper name out of a common noun. This is shown by the rendering of the Authorized Version in this place. Acting under the tradition that only the twelve could be named *apostles,* they changed the rendering here to messenger. How could the Philippians appoint an apostle? The same superstition insists that Paul took the place of Matthias. But apostle simply means *commissioner.* In some ways it would be far better if this term were used. That is why I have it in the sublinear. Are there apostles in the church today? Of course there are commissions and commissioners today. That is not the point. If we are asked whether *God* commissions men today the answer must be in the negative. The apostles are in the foundation.

Epaphroditus was the apostle *of* the Philippians. But that was a totally different matter from being God's apostle *to* the Philippians. He had no such authority over the ecclesia or its doctrine or practice such as Paul or Timothy might exercise. He was simply given the power to represent them in carrying their gift to Paul in Rome. He was not merely a "messenger." He may have conveyed a message as well, but his main business was to transport their present to the apostle. Being commissioned ("apostled") to do this he became their commissioner or apostle for the time. Such "apostles" may well find a place today. It did not occur to me at the time, but I also have done

this duty, and was an "apostle" for a brief period, empowered to convey a sum of money to evangelists at some distance from the city.

EPAPHRODITUS THE MINISTER

Yet I was also a "minister," for it ministered to the needs of the workers. How far this word has lost its proper usage is seen when we say that Epaphroditus was Paul's "minister." We may be sure that Paul did not attend his church, or listen to his sermons, or "sit under his ministry." To be sure, ministration is not simply serving or dispensing. It is a public office. The priests ministered in the temple (Luke 1:23; Heb.10:11). The political authorities are God's ministers (Rom.13:6). In this sense was Epaphroditus the minister of the Philippian ecclesia, inasmuch as he was their public functionary and attended to their ministration for them. As the priests brought the people's offerings to God, so he carried the Philippians' gift to Paul.

The charm of Epaphroditus is revealed in the exquisite sensitiveness of his character. He was depressed, not because he is infirm (though that may have been the case also), but because the Philippians had heard of his infirmity. Even though drawing near to death he is concerned about them, and the sorrow he causes them, rather than his own disability. Paul shares in this charming considerateness, and hastens his return to them, so that he, in turn, may not be burdened by their sorrow. Indeed, the whole interchange of sympathetic feeling is charming to a degree seldom seen among mortals. It is the delectable fruit of God's love, which should always grace the service of His saints.

INFIRMITY AND DEATH

The case of Epaphroditus is of more than passing moment because it confirms and crowns the great truth that, in

this administration, God's power is perfected in infirmity. Paul himself, after he had healed others, was given a splinter in the flesh (2 Cor.12:7). Today God's grace is our sufficiency. Paul gloried in his infirmities, that the power of Christ should tabernacle on him. This was by no means the teaching of the twelve, or even of Paul himself when he was connected with the heralding of the kingdom. That day of physical marvels was announced by displays of *power*. The *powers* (not the infirmities) of the coming eon were produced as tokens of its nearness. Even the nations were given gifts of healing, in view of the coming glory. But, as the kingdom heralding ceased, the powers that accompanied it withdrew.

FROM PHYSICAL TO SPIRITUAL

There are circles of believers today who would not have hesitated to charge Epaphroditus with lack of faith, if not with actual sin, for his failure to "appropriate the healing in the atonement." For them it is a disgrace to be ill, and, even if it is the consequence of their self-sacrifice in the Lord's work, it is a dishonor and a shame. How different was Paul's estimate! Quite to the contrary, he writes to them and to us: "*have such in honor*, seeing that because of the work of the Lord he draws near unto death, risking his soul that he should fill up your want of ministration toward me" (2:29,30). Infirmity of the flesh is as much in keeping with the truth today, as was the health and healing which accompanied the heralding of our Lord or of the twelve, or of Paul's own earlier ministries, which were still connected with the kingdom.

Paul was probably the greatest healer among the apostles. He more than duplicated every sign recorded of Peter in the book of Acts. The lame man at the Beautiful gate of the temple was not the beneficiary of so wonderful a miracle as was the lame man at Lystra (Acts 3:2; 14:8).

Of whom else do we read such words as these: "powerful deeds, not the casual kind, God did through the hands of Paul, so that the handkerchiefs or aprons from his cuticle are carried away to the infirm also, to clear the diseases from them. Besides, wicked spirits go out" (Acts 19:11,12)? In this matter Paul seems to have easily eclipsed all others.

Yet in this, as in all else connected with Saul, who is called Paul, there is a gradual but mighty change, which he himself describes as a going from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18). Superficially, one might expect that this would bring still more physical strength and healing, but the advance is confined to the spiritual sphere, while the physical wonders fade away with the failing kingdom hopes.

Personally, in immediate connection with the highest revelation of which Paul could boast (2 Cor.12:1-7), he is given a painful and irritating affliction in the flesh, in order to keep him down. He who healed others cannot heal himself. And when he prayed for its removal, his persistence did not avail. So far as we know it was never withdrawn from him, so that we must picture the great apostle himself as a pathetic figure physically, in the latter part of his career, as at once the revelator and exponent of the great truth for the present, that *God's power is perfected in human infirmity.* It was in his latest days, in prison and unable to cure himself or his friends, that Paul was most powerful.

GRACE INCREASES

We see this change coming over the scene even more clearly in Paul's connection with his companions. Surely the great healer would wish to cure his own intimate friends and associates in the Lord's work. But, in proportion as the spiritual grace increased, the physical receded. His own child in the faith, whose service he so highly commends in this epistle, is *frequently* infirm (1 Tim.5:23). That Paul

is concerned about it is evident from the fact that he recommends, not a remedy, but a palliative. Weak Timothy became his most powerful aid. "Trophimus, being infirm, I left at Miletus" (2 Tim.4:20). In his earlier days, before the present grace was revealed, he would have healed him. Now infirmity is not to be removed but used. Through it God's power is to be revealed. Some day we shall see that Trophimus's infirmity effected more for God than the most wonderful miracle of healing would have done.

And so today. God's power is not apparent in mighty muscles or in buoyant health, neither of which is to be despised. He displays His glory in broken vessels of clay, so that the excellence of it is not of man but of God. And it is our duty and privilege to bestow especial honor on those who risk their souls in carrying out His work. God could easily keep them in health or cure their weaknesses, but that does not accord with the transcendent grace which is granted to us in this secret administration. Soon after it was revealed to Paul, long before it was made public in his imprisonment epistles, the physical blessings of the kingdom not only retired but, in Paul's case at least, were replaced by positive physical impotence and pain.

Epaphroditus risked his soul to fulfill his commission. It is evident from this that he did not shrink back in the face of danger. He knew before that it might cost him his health, if not his life. He had no such illusion as that the wonderworking apostle would heal him. He committed himself wholly into the hands of God, Who had mercy on him and spared his life. Now he has an honor compared to which all earthly glories fade away. What distinction can compare with his place among the slaves of God? For he it is who was chosen to be our model, to teach us how to serve God acceptably in suffering.

A. E. Knoch

THE IMITATION OF PAUL

Philippians 3:1–4:9

PAUL'S service now comes before us, preceded by a threefold warning which is one of the least heeded yet most needed portions of God's Word for His slaves in this era. The third chapter of Philippians brings before us Paul's conduct in connection with the present administration, for our emulation, and points out the pitfalls which are spread for our feet, or, rather, it warns us against those who have fallen into them. And, indeed, almost the whole of Christendom, including its most illustrious leaders and its most noble saints, has failed in a measure in finding the way of true service. Even in Paul's own day many were enemies of the cross, though zealous workers and saved believers. Today the apostasy is so general that few think of objecting to it or warning God's slaves against it.

The keynote of true service is rung out once again: "*Rejoice* in the *Lord!*" Not in ourselves, in the flesh, or the terrestrial at this time, but in Him, in spirit, among the celestials. To be safe, we should keep this ever before us. Paul apologized for repeating this so often, but it is sorely needed, for it is seldom heeded. Indeed, few realize the precise force of the simple terms used. It is a very different matter to rejoice in *Christ* in regard to our salvation and glory, and to rejoice in the *Lord* in relation to our service for His sake. This chapter deals with service, not salvation. It is saved saints who are enemies of the *cross* (not enemies of Christ), whose consummation is destruction

(so far as their service is concerned). This is no chapter for unbelievers, but for saints in their character as *slaves,* who rejoice in their master, or *Lord.*

THE TRIPLE WARNING

The threefold warning is given to us in highly figurative language, hence it will be well to identify the figures, and put them into literal language. The warning seems to be a reversal, in which the first item corresponds with the last, so we will set it forth in this way, to help us to connect the corresponding parts.

> Beware of curs,
> beware of evil workers,
> beware of the maimcision,
> for *we* are the circumcision who are
> offering divine service in the spirit of God,
> and are glorying in Christ Jesus,
> and have no confidence in flesh.

From this it seems that "curs" are those of the nations who have confidence in the flesh, and the "maimcision" those who rest on their literal circumcision. The whole is in contrast to the previous eras when circumcision had its place and the nations were to be blessed through the physical seed of Abraham.

BEWARE OF CURS

The dogs of the East, when grown, were half-wild scavengers of the villages, without an owner, existing on the refuse or offal, and universally detested. Hence it became an epithet for those outside the pale of promise, in the same class almost with hogs. Our Lord said:

> You may not be giving that which is holy to the curs, nor yet should you be casting your pearls in front of hogs, lest at some time they be trampling them with their feet, and, turning, they should be tearing you. (Matthew 7:6)

Peter also speaks of both together in his parables (2 Pet. 2:22). In order to convey this feeling of contempt we have not translated the word *kuōn* by *dog,* as is usually done, but by the more accurate *cur.*

Curs are outsiders (Rev.22:15). In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus we find a hint of this (Luke 16:21). But there is more than that in the picture Paul puts before us. They are outsiders who devour the offal of the Circumcision. The key to the correct interpretation lies in the following context. Paul recites a list of what he has as a physical descendant of Israel and then adds that he deems it *refuse* (3:8), that he may gain Christ. This refuse, this offal, which he has thrown away, is eagerly devoured by the curs, that is, those of the outside nations who seek to appropriate that which belongs to Israel in the flesh. They sometimes call themselves "spiritual Israel," and other euphonious terms, but here they are called "curs." They have confidence in the flesh. Beware of them!

EVIL WORKERS

Christendom has many "workers." It seems cruel and heartless to describe them as evil. Indeed, one is tempted to call all "Christian" work good, when the motive seems to be commendable. But one consideration alone shows that, in a very real sense much of the work of Christendom is evil. Until very recent times, the church had such confidence in itself that it proposed to bring about the conversion of the world without the coming of Christ. And, indeed, that is still the aim of the great majority of "Christian" workers. Yet all such efforts must be evil, despite their commendable object, for they propose to take the glory which belongs to Christ alone, and make it their own. All work which does not glory in Christ Jesus is evil. All which boasts in the flesh is evil. All which is disposed to the terrestrial is evil. Beware!

THE MAIMCISION

This is the epithet which reveals what the Circumcision really are in this era when the flesh has lost all standing before God. Circumcision was once a token of covenant relationship with the Deity. It entailed many precious privileges. It will have a great place in the future again, when the physical seed of Abraham will be restored to divine favor. But now circumcision has lost all virtue and has degenerated into a mere mutilation of the flesh. The right to the rite is a physical one. Descent from Abraham is essential, except for proselytes. This term may be applied to all who give it a place in service today, whether they are actual sons of Israel, or take this rite upon themselves in order to share in the blessings which it is supposed to bring.

Circumcision is a *cutting off* of the flesh, and was intended to set forth its futility. Had the Circumcisionists fully realized what the sign signified, they would have lost all confidence in the flesh. Instead they gave the flesh the highest place, and sought to make it the basis of all blessing. As we, who place no confidence in the flesh whatever, really carry out the true significance of the sign (even if we do not possess it) *we are the genuine Circumcision.* We have no ritual, no priesthood, no temple in which to go through the outward forms and ceremonies of the divine service, but, in spirit, we offer to God that essential worship which the temple service only shadowed. Too often, alas, the substance was lacking. We need no physical symbol. We dare not be circumcised. It has become a badge of apostasy. Beware of the maimcision!

PAUL'S PHYSICAL PREROGATIVES

But what of Paul himself? He certainly belonged to the Circumcision. What is his attitude toward these physical prerogatives of his? In seven distinct steps he describes to us the height which he had attained in the divine reli-

gion. He could measure himself with the best of them. Narrower and narrower he draws the circle of privilege, until at last he stands almost alone, a solitary example, at the summit of human religious attainment.

CIRCUMCISION THE EIGHTH DAY

The rite of circumcision was not confined to the sons of Jacob or Israel. Abraham received it before Isaac was born, and he circumcised Ishmael and all who were in his house (Gen.17:24-27). After the example of Ishmael, his descendants perform the rite in the thirteenth year. Yet all who were circumcised reckoned themselves a special class, being associated with Abraham. Paul, in his claims, really goes back to Isaac, for he adds "the eighth day." This is a smaller circle of privilege than that of circumcision alone. The striking fact is that this class begins with him who was born of parents as good as dead, when the energy of the flesh was replaced by the power of faith.

OF THE RACE OF ISRAEL

Not all who were circumcised the eighth day belonged to the race of Israel. Esau and his descendants are not reckoned in this more highly favored class. Yahweh repeated his promises to the patriarch Jacob, not to Esau. The nation of God's choice is confined to the descendants of Israel. There was a covenant made with the Circumcision. But there was still another made with Israel when they came out of Egypt. To them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the legislation, the divine service, and the promises (Rom.9:4).

THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN

Benjamin was the best beloved of Jacob's sons after Joseph was taken from him. The tribe took a prominent part in the affairs of Israel, and had the honor of having the temple and Jerusalem within its borders. Israel's first king, Saul, came from Benjamin. it was the only tribe which remained true to the house of David, when the ten tribes broke away. It was an additional honor to belong to such a tribe.

A HEBREW OF THE HEBREWS

In Paul's day the nation was divided into two parties, very much as in these days: one could speak of orthodox Jews and liberal Jews. All the Jews had learned to speak Greek, yet some of them had gone much further, and had forsaken the traditional customs to become Hellenists, with Greek culture and customs. This was especially the case among the dispersion. Paul had been born in Cilicia, so was especially tempted to leave the "Hebrews," as they were called, for more modern ways. Yet he did not yield to these influences, but clung to the traditions. Indeed, he was a leader among such. He even expresses his position here by a Hebrew idiom. For the superlative they used this form. The holiest division of the tabernacle they called the holy of holies. So, to express the fact that he was most "orthodox," he calls himself "a Hebrew of the Hebrews." Religiously this was a more select class than the mass of the nation.

A PHARISEE

In relation to the law the Jews of our Lord's day were divided still more. Among the "Hebrews" there was a sect of special sanctity and severely strict in the law's enforcement. Notwithstanding the excesses to which they went in its interpretation, and the fact that they overloaded it with human additions, outwardly, at least, they were recognized as the champions of the law, and opposed all laxness in its observance. No doubt that most of them were hypocrites, as our Lord so clearly showed. But they were pardonably

proud in their stand for the Scriptures, and against human reason and philosophy. It was a distinct gain to belong to their ranks rather than to those who gave the divine legislation no such place in their lives.

PERSECUTING THE ECCLESIA

Paul was no half-hearted, indifferent religionist. Much as we may condemn his misdirected zeal in harassing those who had accepted the Messiah, we must allow that it testified to the earnestness and depth of his convictions. He was a zealous Pharisee, quite above the average in the intensity of his desire to serve the God of his fathers. Among his contemporaries he had a right to expect special recognition for his services on behalf of the Jewish faith, as he saw it.

BECOMING BLAMELESS

A blameless reputation in the midst of the strict Pharisees was no light accomplishment. Let us not think here of sin, for the apostle himself confessed that, while blameless in the sight of men, he was the foremost of the sinners in the sight of God. It is clear that he carried out the observance of the law so fully and accurately that the most faultfinding Pharisee could not detect any lapse. A very notable achievement! It is a question whether Saul of Tarsus could do any more, religiously, to better himself or attain a higher standing in the flesh before God. And it is very much to be doubted whether any other man of his day could equal his record.

PAUL FORFEITS ALL

When Paul was on board the ship which was taking him to Italy, it entered a bay called Ideal Harbors. But, as it was not a fit place in which to winter, the navigator and the man who had chartered the ship proposed to go on

to Phoenix, in Crete. Paul expostulated, saying, "Men! I behold that sailing is about to be with damage and much *forfeit*, not only of the lading and of the ship, but of our souls also" (Acts 27:10). The outcome was that the ship and its cargo were *forfeited* by their action in pursuing the voyage against the counsel of Paul.

We have brought in this incident in order to give a graphic illustration of the meaning of the word *forfeit*, which is one of the features of the passage before us (Phil.3:7,8). Like the ship, Paul was loaded with all sorts of valuable cargo, but he forfeited it all in the great crisis which he had just passed through. Indeed, the ship is a picture of the kingdom as heralded in the book of Acts, especially as it concerns Paul and those with him. At the end of the book it goes to pieces, and all that belonged to it was lost; only those who believed were given to Paul, and with him went to Rome.

All these physical advantages were a gain to Paul, but they hindered a much greater gain. They seemed excellent in the dimness of human ignorance, but they became intolerable in the light of the knowledge of Christ. So Paul does not part with them reluctantly, but deems them to be no better than refuse, or offal to be thrown to the curs. All his cherished merit, his blameless walk, his proud pedigree, on which he had prided himself in days gone by, the like of which is the chief reliance of the religionist to this very day, were seen to be so many incumbrances to keep him from the complete appropriation of Christ. Away with it! May his example help us all to refuse the refuse which religion offers us, in order to keep us from the full appreciation of Him Who is our All!

Is it not all too true that the religious gains in Christendom today are nothing more than what Saul had in Judaism? Good birth, membership in an accredited denomination, zeal, and an irreproachable life—what more do you wish in a "Christian"? Yet not one of these things is vital, and

every one may be a hindrance to the acceptance of Christ, not merely as our Saviour, but as our All. Indeed, the religionism of today is little more than a camouflaged Judaism, in which the flesh seeks to make itself acceptable to God, apart from, or with the aid of Christ.

GAINING CHRIST

But how could Paul speak of gaining Christ after all these years of sainthood and faithful service? How can he say "that I may be found in Him" when He had been "in Christ" for many years? He is "working out" the salvation he had received (*cf* 2:12; 3:3). He is carrying it into effect. While all believers rely on Christ for salvation, few indeed are wholly dependent on Him for service. To let those things go which seem an advantage to us is quite a different matter from forsaking recognized sin. The Jew must forfeit his most cherished prerogatives, and the Gentile all his terrestrial advantages if he wishes to gain Christ in this sense. Christ must become their All in service as He is in salvation.

RIGHTEOUSNESS IN CHRIST

Saul was what he was in himself. His righteousness was his own, based on the law. Blameless as he appeared before his fellow men, at heart he was most unrighteous. This came to the surface in his zeal against Christ and His saints. Nothing could be more unjust than to sympathize with Stephen's murderers, or to persecute those who belonged to the just One. Away with such self-righteousness! Now Paul wishes to be found *in Christ, not* having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God for faith[1] (3:9). Since Job's day men hang with death-clutch to their own righteousness (Job 27:6):

1. or: "on the basis of that faith," *cf* CVNT, p.143.

> I will hold fast to my righteousness, and I shall not relax.

But God, by His grace, can loosen this grip by a sight of His Christ, and by the gift of His own righteousness in His Anointed.

TO KNOW HIM

The knowledge of Christ is especially extended to His sufferings and death, and to His resurrection. *There is no reference whatever to His life and ministry in the land as a Servant of the Circumcision,* which is knowing Christ after the flesh, which Paul repudiated (2 Cor.5:16). Our vital connection with God's Anointed does not commence until His crucifixion, and associates us with His resurrection and ascension.

As the succeeding section of this paragraph seems to be another reversal, we will set it forth so as to help our minds to follow the course of thought (3:10-12):

> To know Him,
> and the power of His resurrection,
> and the fellowship of His sufferings,
> conforming to His death,
> if somehow I should attain to the resurrection
> that is out from among the dead.
> Not that I already obtained, or am already perfected.
> Yet I am pursuing, if I may be grasping . . .

CONFORMING TO HIS DEATH

Righteousness demands the death of the unrighteous. This includes the whole race. Christ alone was righteous, hence He alone could die for the sake of others. His death for us fulfills the demands of justice, yet at the same time involves our death in Him. We should have died on Golgotha rather than He. His sufferings were ours by right, not His. This knowledge puts an end to us and all our pretensions in the flesh. Paul no longer saw himself blameless before men but smitten and slain in the sight of God. He may

have been a circumcised Israelite, a Hebrew and a Pharisee, but he was a dead one. The death of Christ put an end to all his physical pretensions and absolutely settled his unrighteousness. Conformity to the death of Christ is the one absolute essential to acceptable service. So long as we still cling to something of our own, we cannot fully find our place in Christ.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS

None of us can actually endure the sufferings which came to Christ when He died on behalf of sinners. Nor can we add our own to His sufferings on behalf of the race, for He alone is qualified to save. Had we such sufferings to endure, they would be because of our own sins and not those of others. How then can we enter into "the fellowship of His sufferings"? By the vital recognition that these sufferings, being *for* us, were really ours, and show God's estimate of what we were in ourselves. This enables us to escape from ourselves and our supposed excellences in the flesh, and to transfer ourselves into Him. There we find all our supposed losses overwhelmingly recompensed.

THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

If we are identified with Christ in His death, then we will be in His resurrection also. Actually, literally, we will be made alive because we are His (1 Cor.15:22). But this is not in view here, for we are concerned with life and service for Him now, not in the future when these warnings and exhortations will no longer be needed. We are not now concerned with resurrection itself, but with a knowledge of its power in our present service. This is viewed from two different angles, both of which should powerfully affect our course. One is the past resurrection of Christ. The other is our own future resurrection.

There is a tremendous reservoir of potential power in the realization that our Lord has been raised from among

the dead. Its implications are limitless. If He has accomplished this, He is able for all else. We have a Lord Whose power knows no limits, and does not even retreat before death, the last of all our enemies. All human effort is circumscribed and impotent in view of death. The work in which we are engaged is not so. It will not fail, because it is in the hands of the Deathless One.

ATTAINING TO THE OUT-RESURRECTION

The word *exanastasis,* OUT-UP-STANDing, has excited so much interest that it is only just that we pay particular attention to it, and to the doctrines to which it has given rise. This word occurs but once, hence cannot be compared with its other occurrences. We must appeal to aids of a different kind. In this case it is very simple to find help, for words compounded of the element *ek,* OUT, usually retain the meaning of their parts, so that there we have to do with a resurrection, not *of* the dead merely, but *out from among* the dead. There is a strong tendency, however, to limit this phrase still further, so that it might read, "out from among the *saints,*" or "out from among the *church.*" Beyond this the question also arises whether there is such a resurrection in the other Scriptures, to which reference is made, or does this suggest a resurrection elsewhere unrevealed? Is there an "out-resurrection" apart from Paul's highest revelation in Ephesians?

We must not fail to notice, however, that, so far as the actual letters in the manuscripts are concerned, and so far as the sense goes, there are other passages which also speak of OUT-UP-STANDings. In the following citations the Greek is precisely the same as in this passage. A difference arises only when we divide the text into "words" as in English. Each of these is an *ex anastasis,* while in Philippians it is an *exanastasis.* The space after the *x* is the only difference, and this is not in the Original.

Acts	26:23	if He, the first *out* of a *resurrection* of the dead
Rom.	1: 4	[*by* or] *out* of *resurrection* of the dead
Heb.	11:35	women obtained their dead [*by* or] *out* of *resurrection*

Besides this, the same sense is conveyed when the connective *ek,* OUT, *follows* the word, as in these passages:

Luke	20:35	those deemed worthy to happen upon that eon and the *resurrection out* of the dead
Acts	4: 2	announcing in Jesus the *resurrection out* of the dead—
1 Peter	1: 3	through the *resurrection* of Jesus Christ *out* of the dead

The corresponding verb, OUT-UP-STAND, is never applied to the dead (Mark 12:19; Luke 20:28; Acts 15:5).

From this it will be seen that the term *out-resurrection* is a name for the thought expressed in the phrase *raise out* or *from among* (Matt.17:9; Mark 6:14; 9:9,10; 12:25; Luke 16:31; 24:46; John 20:9; Acts 10:41; 13:34; 17:3,31; Eph.5:14).

We avow, as Paul did before Felix, "that there is to be a future resurrection of the just as well as the unjust" (Acts 24:15). "All who are in the tombs will be hearing His voice, and those who do good things shall be going out into a resurrection of life, yet those who commit bad into a resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28,29). These resurrections do not occur at the same time. There is at least a thousand years between them. Therefore it is necessary that the former should be an *out-resurrection,* for the rest of the dead do not live until the thousand years are finished (Rev.20:5). It is also evident that, should a resurrection occur even before this, it also would be an *out-resurrection.* It is important to note that Scripture does not distinguish these by a special phrase. We never read of an "out-resurrection from among the *saints.*" All are simply from among the *dead.*

It is evident from this that *out-resurrection* is for believers only and leads to eonian glory, in contrast to the latter resurrection, which leads to judgment. In the out-resurrection we will be sinless, and lead a life of perfect conformity to the will of God. This is the ideal to which our present life should conform. What would we not give to be as we will be when vivified! To serve as we will in that glorious time! What is more practical than to seek to attain it now?

Let us keep in mind the context in which this term is used if we wish to interpret its message correctly. Paul is concerned with his *service* (Phil.3:4-16). His previous course in unbelief led to the persecution of God's saints. Could anything be further from our occupation in resurrection? Now Paul wishes to regulate his actions so as to anticipate his behavior in the out-resurrection. He puts it, "conformed to His death, if somehow I should be attaining to the resurrection out from among the dead" (Phil.3:10,11). For this he wishes to know the *power* of His resurrection.

That he is not referring to his own literal resurrection is evident from what follows. "Not that I already obtained, or have already been perfected . . . ." No one could possibly suppose that he had died and had been raised. There was no need to reassure anyone on that point. But the conduct of the apostle may very well have been so like that which will be ours in resurrection, that his friends might easily suppose that God had already actually bestowed upon him the power which belongs to that day.

Christ Jesus has grasped, or taken hold of Paul in order to conform him to His own likeness. That will be openly manifest in the case of all saints when the out-resurrection actually takes place. But Paul wished to grasp that ahead of time, here and now. He wanted the power of that future life to transform his present career.

The powers of the coming eon were present in our Lord's ministry and in that of the twelve, and even in Paul's earlier course. Now that the kingdom is no longer the subject

of testimony, these physical marvels have of necessity vanished. In their place we should seek to anticipate the spiritual powers of the future glory which awaits us. These are in reality far greater than those of the kingdom, though their character is very different.

A semi-literal interpretation of this passage has been proposed. It is asserted that, if we are conformed to His death, then we will also be raised from the dead after three days. But, if we are to take this literally, then we must make it all literal. We have not only died, but have been crucified. To be literally conformed to His death, we must go to Jerusalem, and have ourselves crucified on Golgotha, and be laid in the nearby tomb, and then rise and show ourselves by many infallible signs. We might manage to be crucified and entombed, but no literal resurrection would follow on the third day. Paul did not do this literally. But he sought to do it figuratively. Literal resurrection is no attainment, but conduct like that which will be ours in the resurrection is a goal toward which we all should strive.

Other grave difficulties attend this interpretation. To begin with, *all* believers of this administration of God's grace are planted in the likeness of His death and shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, for our old humanity has been crucified together with Him (Rom.6:5). This occurs at the time of our baptism. We were entombed together with Him through baptism into death. If this is to be taken literally in regard to the *time* of the entombment and in regard to the death, then it must be literal throughout, especially as nothing is said here as to the time, but the mode is insisted upon. Consistency demands, then, that each believer be literally crucified and entombed when he is baptized by the spirit, and literally roused after three days, and literally reveal himself with the same, uncorrupted body on earth before ascending above.

But when the Scriptures speak of our literal death, this

is denied. In the resurrection this *corruptible* must put on incorruption (1 Cor.15:53). Our Lord saw no corruption (Acts 2:27). If we are to be conformed to His death in our literal death, then we should not see decay. But we trust that what has been said of the passage as a whole will be sufficient to show that it is not concerned with our future lot but our present service, not with the literal resurrection but with the knowledge of its power.

THE RACE

In order to give our service the proper direction and incentive, our career is compared to a race, yet not in regard to competition with others—that is not here, and would spoil the picture—but in regard to our attitude. The racer pays no attention to that which is behind him. It would be a great hindrance. He does not stand up straight, but stretches far forward in the direction of the goal. He not only wishes to arrive there, but to cover the course in such a way that he will receive a prize, a reward for his efforts.

It is vital that we keep the picture here presented to us well within the bounds of the context. Much misunderstanding would have been avoided if thoughts foreign to the theme had not been worked into it. It is true that, in a race, many run and only one wins the prize. According to that there is no use for us to enter it, for Paul would surely carry off the single prize and the rest of us would have nothing but disappointment for our pains. But this aspect of a race is not at all in view here. The lessons are drawn from altogether different features, and this should not be allowed to intrude.

FORGETTING, NOT REGRETTING

Few, indeed, who have learned what they are in themselves, can look back without regret. Paul might have made much more mention of his past errors in his epistles. But

he never brings them up without good cause. There is no power in our past, especially not in the years of self-exaltation before we began to find our all in Christ. Many are tempted to spend much time regretting their own ignorance and selfishness, and thinking how much better it would have been if they had been enlightened at an earlier age. Such regrets weaken and unfit us for our forward striving toward the goal, conformity with Christ, and should be discouraged. Let us forget our past advantages and disadvantages and look ahead. Back of us is ourselves, ahead is Christ.

THE PRIZE

The Prize set before us is God's calling above, which might be rendered the "up calling." Like our Lord before his exaltation, our present career is a "down calling," a descent, a humiliation. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God highly exalts him. Exaltation is the prize set before Him and us. The glory awaits us at the goal. God has called us, indeed, but He has not yet called us up. Now we need to be emptied of ourselves and be found in Him, in lowliness seeking *con*formation to His death, and a realization of the power of His resurrection. Then we will realize it to the full and attain the prize of prizes, *trans*formation into His glorious likeness. It is presented as a prize because it cannot be ours until we reach the goal at the end of the race, not that we alone win it in competition with others.

MATURE SAINTS

Among the saints there are many, if not most, who cannot follow what is here set forth. They have many things in the flesh, race, position, attainments, and reputation, which they cannot forfeit for Christ. They would not think of refusing them as refuse in order to gain Christ. Of con-

formity to His death they have known little or nothing, nor of the power of His resurrection. In a word, they are *immature.* In the language of the race course, they lag behind and cannot see the goal. Those who are mature, whose hearts have been opened to the final revelations through Paul, who are no longer puzzled by the enigmas of previous revelation but see face to face (1 Cor.13:12), should be disposed like Paul (3:15). Eventually all will come to this knowledge (3:15).

There is a tendency to create a gap between the mature and the immature, those who have gone ahead in the race and those who lag behind. We would be inclined to urge the laggards to mend their pace, and to catch up with those ahead of them. But the immature have no clear realization of their backwardness. They sometimes consider minority quite the normal state, and maturity an undue assumption. It seems a settled opinion that, in religion, there must be clouds and mystery. Clearness is only conceit. This comes largely because they are constantly occupied with the Scriptures intended for the immature, and have never followed Paul into perfection. But there is no exhortation to them to hurry, but to the mature to accommodate themselves to them. "In what we outstrip, there is to be a mutual disposition to observe the same fundamental rule" (3:16).

THE IMITATION OF PAUL

Paul occupies a unique place in God's revelation. What other man could calmly put himself before us for imitation? Peter would not do so. He would have his readers follow in the footprints of Christ (1 Peter 2:21). Yet in the section concerning our Lord in this epistle, we are not exhorted to go in His steps, but rather to imitate the disposition which sent Him from heaven to the death of the cross. All intermediate "steps" between His incarna-

tion and the cross are avoided by including His life's history in one word, "He humbles Himself." In His earthly career He was the great Example for those who will enter the kingdom which He heralded. But His conduct was not in accord with present truth, for this would have clashed with His whole ministry which was to the Circumcision, and confined to the earth.

Few who have considered the matter have not wondered at first how Paul could take so much upon himself. Not only could he make himself a model (1 Cor.4:16), but, quite unlike any other apostle, he could speak of *my* evangel (Rom.2:16; 16:25; 2 Tim.2:8), or *our* evangel (2 Cor.4:3; 1 Thess.1:5; 2 Thess.2:14), without the least attempt to excuse himself. Some have thought it most irreverent for him to couple himself with the evangel after this fashion. And it cannot be condoned on any other ground than the real one, that to him was committed an evangel distinct from all the rest, which can best be described by this fact, rather than by any special side of it, such as *grace*, or *conciliation,* or *Uncircumcision,* all of which have their place, but fail to convey its every aspect.

If Paul lived today perhaps Jeremiah would no longer be called the weeping prophet. Paul's lamentations over the saints might far exceed his over Israel. It seems almost incredible that even in Paul's day *many* were walking so as to cause him so much concern. What are these days compared to those? As lead to gold, as dusk to midday. If there were so many in those days who were *enemies of the cross* (3:18) how must it be today? Should we not expect to find nearly all in this category? Nothing else can be expected. There is an almost universal insensibility to the teaching of the cross, and its effect on the physical and terrestrial. The saints are like Job; they hold fast to their own, and will not let go. They do not care to be found in Christ.

ENEMIES OF THE CROSS

Paradox though it seems to be, most of those who are friends of Christ are enemies of His cross (3:18). They are willing to part with their sins and evil and take Him as their Saviour, but they do not wish to part with their goodness or personal advantages and superiorities and be found alone in Him. They do not realize that the manner of Christ's death puts an end to all that man is in himself. They wish to be somebody on their own account. And this makes them antagonistic to the cross. Their attitude is cloaked under various euphemistic terms, which reveal a latent pride in their origin or their character or their attainments in the flesh. All of this clashes with the cross.

WHOSE CONSUMMATION IS DESTRUCTION

This phrase kept me from grasping the tragic meaning of this passage for a long time. It seemed, indeed, that Paul was speaking of believers, for why should he mention any others when speaking of imitating his walk? No others but saints could come into view in this passage. But that the phrase "whose consummation is destruction" (3:19), should refer to them seems quite incredible, until the proper background is furnished by a consideration of the whole epistle, and especially this section of it. This letter deals with *service,* not with *salvation.* The disobedient among the saints have already been referred to as "curs," as "evil workers," as the "maimcision," terms whose harshness is excusable only on the ground of truth and necessity. They are intended to be helpful in rescuing the saints from delusive dangers against which they need an alarming admonition.

Here we have such a dire warning. It is a fact that all service done under the influence of the flesh will be destroyed. All self-righteousness must perish. That is its consumma-

tion. If it is not forfeited now, it will be burned up at the dais of Christ. At the final consummation God is not only going to be in all, but *All* in all. What we have here is only the process to this end. The unbeliever will be prepared for it by judgment. The believer should anticipate it now in his service, by gaining Christ in the measure in which he forfeits that which is his own. But if he does not do so, he can look forward to nothing but the destruction of his deeds in that day, when he stands in front of the dais of Christ, to be requited for that which he puts into practice through the body, for it will be reckoned bad (2 Cor. 5:10). If anyone's work shall burn up, he will *forfeit* it, yet he shall be saved (1 Cor.3:15).

WHOSE GOD IS THEIR BOWELS

This strong and striking figure seems to set before us a form of idolatry which puts the satisfaction of the flesh in the place of the Deity, so far as service is concerned. It is abundantly in evidence in most so-called Christian worship. Much more is done to satisfy the soul than to edify the spirit. Beautiful sights and melodious sounds and pleasant scents are used to attract, in place of the love of God and the glories of His Son.

WHOSE GLORY IS IN THEIR SHAME

Blind to the shame in which the cross of Christ has sunk all fleshly religion, it has become the boast of Christendom. An apt expression of this is the form which has been given to the cross itself. In place of the severe and shameful stake, the badge of human depravity, it has been converted into an ornament to adorn church buildings and their ritual and the dress of devotees. Much of the boast of Christendom is in things which are contrary to the cross of Christ, and which, if seen in its light, would cause deep humiliation and shame.

WHO ARE DISPOSED TO THE TERRESTRIAL

A disposition to the terrestrial is the normal attitude of man. Almost all of the Scriptures are concerned with the earth and that which takes place upon its surface. For Peter and the Circumcision to be thus disposed is quite in keeping with the character of their calling. But today it is a sign of immaturity and opposition to the cross, for the terrestrial is still outside of Christ, and, like the flesh, is not subject to Him, neither is it able. If Christ were today engaged in blessing the earth as He will bless it in the future, then, in Him, we also would be concerned with its betterment. But, *without Christ,* the cross has condemned the world and its works, and we should not seek to do anything outside of Him.

Not that we are to be recluses and hermits, or do nothing to earn a livelihood. We have our duties. We must provide for our own and pay taxes. We must be subject to the authorities. But, in spirit, we are not of it, especially with any of its plans for self-improvement before the presence of Christ. Such efforts are contrary to the cross, and are anti-christian in character, for they seek to displace Him, and make His presence unnecessary. We know that as a whole all such movements will end in failure, for the earth will need Him more and more, as time goes by, in spite of all that anyone can do. He alone can heal its mortal wound.

CELESTIAL CITIZENSHIP

In glorious contrast to our present place of humiliation on the earth is our potential place of exaltation in the heavens. We have no valid rights on earth. It, with its fullness, belongs to Yahweh, and He has not delegated any of its privileges to us. But why should we wish to meddle here, seeing that God has given us a far more glorious sphere? We are citizens of the heavens (3:20). We will not go there as fugitives of earth or as guests dependent on the hospi-

tality of others. We will need no pass, no visa, as though we were foreigners, limited in our rights and restricted in our movements, alien expatriates, despised emigrants of a despicable and death-doomed race. This we would be in ourselves, but in Christ we are entitled to all the rights and privileges which He Himself can claim.

AWAITING A SAVIOUR

Salvation has its tenses, past, present, and future. We were saved, we are being saved, and we shall be saved. It is not finished until our Lord descends from heaven and we ascend to our allotment. We await Him in various characters. He will come as a Saviour with regard to our bodies, for these have not yet felt His touch. Our salvation is still incomplete, and will remain so in the physical sphere as long as we are here.

THE BODY OF OUR HUMILIATION

No one is so keenly sensitive to the degrading corruption and impotence of our bodies as the saint who has caught a glimpse of His glory. But the phrase means more than that. It is not merely a humiliating body, but the body which accompanies and accords with our humiliation (3:21). So long as we are in it we are to humble ourselves, as well as suffer the humiliation it involves. This is not the time for us to be glorified. The Corinthians were sated and rich and reigning, while the apostles were a gazingstock to the world, but that was due to the Corinthians' carnality (1 Cor.4:8-10). A mortal body is the proper place to display our present humiliation. Undesirable as it is in itself, we should be thankful for it, as it prepares us to appreciate the body that shall be ours in the future.

THE BODY OF HIS GLORY

Paul never met our Lord in His post-resurrection body,

as He presented Himself to His disciples. When he saw Him He was enveloped in a glory which the eyes of the disciples never could have borne. To the disciples on the way to Emmaus our Lord presented no outward evidence of His glorified position. This was dimmed, and invisible in His intercourse with the kingdom saints. This was not the body which pertained to His glory. This is not the prototype of our future frame. Even the transformation on the holy mount, though His face shone as the sun, seems to have been bearable to their sight (Matt.17:2). But when Paul saw Him on the Damascus road, the light irradiating Him was *above* the brightness of the sun (Acts 26:13). Its beams were too bright for Paul's poor eyes, and blinded them, scorching the sclerotic coat into scales (Acts 9:18). Such is the body of His glory.

Contrary to our conceptions, glory and subjection go together. Now our flesh is not subject and is inglorious. Then it will be endued with power and effulgent in its splendor. This is because it is once more connected with the source of life and power and fully under the sway of Christ. Independence and insubjection drag down to degradation and death. Dependence and subjection lead to life and glory. The transfiguration of our bodies will inaugurate a similar operation to include the whole universe, for He is able to subject all to Him. In each case it will involve glorification, so that, at the consummation, when all will be subject, He will hand over to God a universe glorified as well as subject.

STAND FIRM

Having delivered his warnings, designed to shield us from the special evils which beset our course, Paul proceeds to add positive exhortations equally needed to aid us on our way. We are all liable to waver, to differ in our dispositions, to be depressed, to worry, to be engrossed

by the evil rather than by the good (4:1-9). How wonderfully he introduces his words! His readers were beloved and longed for, his joy and wreath (4:1). It seems to me that, in milder measure, this is true of all to whom God's truth comes through Paul. I, for one, feel almost as if I were a Philippian, for I am certainly in his wreath and would like to be his joy, and love him and long to see him, as he would me, were we acquainted. Paul puts the personal touch here, and speaks as to particular friends.

Stand firm *thus* in the Lord, my beloved (4:1). Here is the tone which lifts the favorites of grace. There is no threat of doom in case of disobedience, only the constraint of love. Since that day the slaves of the Lord have been inconstant, unsettled, unsteady, changeable, fluctuating, vacillating, wavering, restless, uneasy, erratic, fickle—anything but firm in the Lord in regard to His service in this era. We do not speak of Christendom, which has been far more constant in the service of the flesh and the terrestrial than the saints have been of Christ and the celestial. Yet God's patience has not been exhausted. The exhortation still calls to us, *stand firm in the Lord—thus.* As imitators of Paul, as forfeiting everything of the flesh and finding our all in Christ, there is a vast opportunity for service, such as seldom comes to the sons of Adam.

THE SCROLL OF LIFE

To imitate Paul should be very much easier for the saints among the nations than for one from among the chosen race. I have found, in my own personal intercourse with the sons of Israel, that a sense of superiority, on account of their physical pedigree, is seldom counted as refuse. They are fond of quoting, "To the Jew first." And this is often encouraged, rather than discouraged, by non-Jews who have not gone on to maturity. But there is one point in which those of the favored nation still differ from the

rest. They have their names in the book of life. They are not removed when they accept Christ and, like Paul, are given a celestial allotment. Hence, if we wish to distinguish them from the rest we may use the formula here adopted, "whose names are in the scroll of life" (4:3).

To help converted Jews realize that their physical advantages must all be forfeited if they are to gain Christ, is a special service to which Paul first devotes himself and then asks the help of his genuine yokefellow. He entreats two who serve, Euodia and Syntyche, to a mutual disposition. Nothing is said as to the nature of their difference, unless the meaning of their names contains a hint. Euodia (WELL-WAY) probably corresponds to our "Luck," while Syntyche (TOGETHER-HAPPEN) may be rendered "Fortuity," or "Coincidence." But it is far more likely that both of them, as well as Clement, and the rest whose names are in the scroll of life were not easily disposed to forfeit all that they had in the flesh, hence were in special need of assistance in this matter.

REJOICING IN THE LORD

"Be rejoicing in the Lord always! Again will I declare, Be rejoicing!" (4:4). If we look at ourselves, we are sad. If we consider our work, we are despondent. But if we view all *in the Lord,* we have every cause to be glad. And this is just what we will do if we imitate Paul. In our flesh, on earth, the scene is very somber, indeed. In Him in the celestials it is full of joyful expectation. Our weaknesses and our failures should not hinder our rejoicing, for even they will contribute to the glory of His achievements. He is not weak! He makes no mistakes! He will accomplish more than our hearts can wish, and satisfy every desire which God has implanted in us. Let us ever rejoice in Him, and do so all the more when disappointed in ourselves and in our fellows.

THE LORD IS NEAR

"Let your lenience be known to all men: *the Lord is near*" (4:5). What a help it is to realize the nearness of the Lord! Paul himself, at his first defense, was abandoned by all. Yet the Lord stood beside him and invigorated him (2 Tim.4:16,17). True humility will lead to lenience. But moderation and mildness, are almost sure to be misunderstood and will invite their opposites. When foes and friends take advantage of us there may be a strong temptation to teach them a salutary lesson by using such severity as the occasion seems to demand. It is in us to wish to put things right ourselves. At such times we need to remind ourselves that we are not alone. Severity is not necessary. The Lord is near, and will not only invigorate us, but see that others are put in their places.

THE PEACE OF GOD

Those who are justified by faith may be enjoying peace *toward* God (Rom.5:1) with reference to themselves. Through Christ, we may be on terms of close friendship with Him. Yet there is much outside of ourselves which may disturb us and ruin our service for Him. Life may be full of perplexing and harassing situations, which produce fear and dejection, unless we enjoy the peace *of* God, and are able to view them from this point of vantage. God is not disturbed by anything, seeing that all is out of Him, and through Him, and for Him (Rom.11:36). He is its Source, and He controls its course. He is using it all to effect His purpose. So He cannot be uneasy or fearful about it. Neither should we. That is why Paul wishes us to combine thanksgiving with all our prayers and petitions.

Let us not pray and wait fearfully to see if God will comply with our requests, and hold it against Him if there is no immediate response, or if things go contrary to our wishes, nor let us thank Him only when He does what we demand.

The thanksgiving should always accompany the prayers and come *before* its fulfillment. In fact we should be thankful when God does *not* fulfill our petitions, for we do not know what to pray for, and the most spiritual petition is that which recognizes our inability, and pleads with inarticulate groanings (Rom.8:26). Peace based on answered prayer may be turned into worry over unfulfilled requests.

Thanksgiving is the incense which will make our petitions agreeable to God. At the same time it is the only power which will preserve our peace. It is like a military garrison that keeps all worry away from our hearts and apprehensions. And indeed, why worry, when we know that all is in the hands and hearts of God and His Christ? All about us loom danger and distress and strife, and we are forced to speak to God about it, and He would have our hearts exercised by it. But faith in Him and confidence in His Christ rejoices in the storm, knowing that He will rise and speak His, "Peace! Be still!" The calm that will surely follow has already found a place in our hearts. We need not be timid. Let us be thankful for both the storm and the calm, for these reveal to us the peace that presides in the heart of God, which may be ours by faith in Him.

THE GOD OF PEACE

Essentially, God is a God of peace. The strife and enmity which now seem to deny this fact, are only means to make it manifest. Moreover, in the midst of all the turmoil there is much which is in accord with the Deity. This we should not forget. Let us not confine our contemplations to the false, the fanatical, the unjust, the impure, the disagreeable, and the disreputable, for there is much that is virtuous and commendable. Especially should we consider the deeds of faith, the fruit of God's own Spirit. And first among these is Paul himself. "What you learned also, and

accepted, and hear and perceived in me, these be putting into practice, and the God of peace will be with you" (4:9).

A LIVING EPISTLE

Everything that we can learn about Paul at this period of his life is of particular importance to us, for he is a living epistle, a practical exposition of his own precepts. Apparently, all his affairs are going wrong. Actually they are all going right. His work seems to be hindered in every way. In fact it is being forwarded. He has much reason to be downcast. But he rejoices as never before. He not only has peace with God, and enjoys the peace of God, but is in fellowship with the God of peace.

May our meditations on this epistle enable us to serve Him more acceptably, with some flavor of the disposition which led our Lord down to the death of the cross, with a taste of the service of Timothy and the sufferings of Epaphroditus, and in tune with Paul, that we also may forfeit all to gain Christ! A. E. Knoch

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THE EXAMPLE OF PAUL (Phil.3:1-4:9)

3 For **the rest, my brethren, be rejoicing in** the **Lord. To be writing the same to** =**you** is **not indeed irksome** for **me, yet** it is =**your secur**ity. 2 |**Beware** of ˙**curs; |beware** of ˙**evil workers. |Beware** of **the maimcision,** 3 **for we´ |are the circumcision** ˙who are offer**ing divine service** in the **spirit of God, and** are **glorying in Christ Jesus, and |have no**ᵗ **confidence in flesh.**

4 **And** am **even I having confidence in flesh, also? If any other** one **is presuming to have confidence in flesh, I rather:** 5 in **circumcision** the **eight**h **day,** ᵒ **of** the **race** of **Israel, of** the **tribe** of **Benjamin,** a **Hebrew** ᵒ **of Hebrews,** in ᵃᶜ**relation** to **law,** a **Pharisee,** 6 in ᵃᶜ**relation** to **zeal, per-**

secuting the ecclesia, in ᵃᶜ**relation** to the **righteousness** ˙which is **in law,** ⁻**becoming blameless.** 7 **But** thing**s which**ᵃ |**were gain to me, these I have deemed** a **forfeit because** of ˙**Christ.** 8 **But, to be sure, I am also deeming all to |be** a **forfeit because** of **the |superior**ity **of the knowledge of** ˙**Christ Jesus my** ˙**Lord, because** of **Whom I forfeit** ˙**all, and am deeming** it **to |be refuse, that I should gain Christ,** 9 **and may be found in Him, no**t **having my righteousness,** ˙which is ᵒ **of law, but** ˙that which is **through Christ's faith, the righteousness** which is ᵒ**from God on** the basis of ˙that **faith:** 10 ˙**to know Him, and the power of His** ˙**resurrection, and the fellowship of His** ˙**sufferings, conforming to His** ˙**death,** 11 **if** some**how I should attain** ⁱᵒ**to the resurrection** ˙that is **out** ᵒ**from** among the **dead** one**s.** 12 **Not that I already** ⁻**obtained, or am already** ˚**perfected. Yet I am pursuing, if I may grasp also** that ᵒⁿ**for which I am grasped also by Christ Jesus.** 13 **Brethren, not as yet am I´ reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one** thing**—forgetting indeed** ˙those thing**s** which are **behind, yet stretching out to** ˙those **in front—**14 ᵃᶜ**toward** the **goal am I pursuing** ⁱᵒ**for the prize of** ˙**God's** ˙**calling above in Christ Jesus.** 15 **As much as, then,** we are **mature, we may be setting** our **mind to this, and if** in **any**thing =**you are differently setting** your **mind, this also shall** ˙**God |reveal to** =**you.** 16 **Moreover,** ⁱᵒ**in what we outstrip** others, there is **to be** a ˢ**mutual |mindset to be** observ**ing** the **element**s by **the same rule.**

17 |**Become imitators together of me, brethren, and be noting** ˙those who are **walking thus, accord**ing **as** =**you |have us** for a **model,** 18 **for many are walking,** of **whom I often |told** =**you, yet now** am **lamenting also** as **I |tell** it, ˙who are **enemies of the cross of** ˙**Christ,** 19 **whose** ˙**consummation** is **destruction, whose** ˙**god** is ˙their **bowel**s, **and** whose ˙**glory** is **in their** ˙**shame,** ˙who to **the** =**terrestrial** are **setting** their **mind.** 20 **For our** ˙**realm is |inhere**nt

in the **heavens, out of which we are awaiting** a **Saviour also,** the **Lord, Jesus Christ,** 21 **Who will** |**transfigure the body of our** ·**humiliation,** to **conform** it **to the body of His** ·**glory,** in **accord** with **the operation** ·which en**ables Him** +**even to subject** ·**all to Himself.**

4 So that, my brethren, beloved and longed for, my joy and wreath, be standing firm thus in the **Lord, my beloved.** 2 **I am entreating Euodia and I am entreating Syntyche to be setting** their **mind** ·s**mutually in** the **Lord.** 3 **Yes, I am asking you also, genuine yokefellow, be aiding them,** these women **who**[a] **compete together** with **me in the evangel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers whose** ·**names** are **in** the **scroll of life.**

4 **Be rejoicing in** the **Lord always! Again, I will** |**declare, be rejoicing!** 5 **Let** =**your** ·**lenience be known to all human** beings**: the Lord** is **near.** 6 Do **no**t |**worry** about **anything, but in every**thing, by ·**prayer and** ·**petition, with thanks**giving, **let** =**your** ·**requests be made** |**known to**[d] ·**God,** 7 **and the peace of** ·**God,** ·that is |**superior** to **every** frame of **mind, shall be garrisoning** =**your** ·**hearts and** =**your** ·**apprehensions in Christ Jesus.**

8 For **the rest, brethren, whatever** |**is true, whatever** is **grave, whatever** is **righteous, whatever** is **pure, whatever** is **agreeable, whatever** is **renowned—if** there is **any virtue, and if any applause, be** tak**ing these** into **account.** 9 **What** =**you learn also, and accept and hear and perceive in me, these be** putt**ing** into **practice, and the God of** ·**peace will** |**be with** =**you.**

PHILIPPIANS 3:9

The last words of this verse in Greek are: *on the-faith,* which the CV has rendered "for faith," indicating that Paul refers to his own faith. But it is probable that he means "on [the basis of] the faith" just mentioned, thus seeing Christ's faith as both the channel and the basis of God's gift of righteousness.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 110th Year

(1909–2019)

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 The Kenosis of Christ
182 The Disposition of Christ

FOURTH QUARTER, 2019

Volume 110 **Number 4**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FOURTH QUARTER 2019
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TEN

EDITORIAL

We conclude another year of publication of *Unsearchable Riches,* this time with four issues centered on Paul's letter to the Philippians. For the most part the articles have been reprints, with A. E. Knoch's "Studies in Philippians" leading the way, along with two of James Coram's more recent studies on this epistle. In this issue we now join the early article on "The Kenosis of Christ" by Brother Knoch. With this, along with Brother Coram's article entitled, "The Disposition of Christ" we focus our attention on the heart of the epistle (chapter 2, verses 5-11) which brings the evangel to us in powerful terms. It is the message of Christ's emptying of Himself of the form of God and descending to the form of a slave in fashion as a human, and then humbling Himself even lower, in obedience to His God and Father, to the death of the cross. Then when all humbling is completed in death, God rouses Him and highly exalts Him beyond any former position of honor with the ultimate bowing of every knee and the acclaiming of every tongue. Yet this acclamation is, in accord with Christ's disposition (or mindset), in its highest focus, not for His own glory, but *for the glory of God the Father.*

In this we see why God sent His own Son so low. It was that all of us might be brought out of sin and corruption and darkness to the righteousness and life and light of Christ's exalted reign. But again, we perceive that this is not the highest goal of it all, for all reaches to *the glory of God the Father Who shall become All in all.*

Yet for us now the evangel is first bringing us to both the emptying (*kenōsis*) and the humbling (*tapeinōsis*) of

Christ before it takes us to His exaltation and sets before us our grand and gracious subjection to Him and not ours alone, but that of all. As an especially striking testimony I would urge the reader to linger long on Brother Knoch's own meditation on the humiliation and pain of our Lord Jesus Christ, as it culminated in God Himself forsaking His Obedient One in the darkest of all hours of the eons:

Thus our brother writes: "Here we are able to glimpse the bottomless abyss of His humiliation. Here He Who knew no sin was made sin. Here He Who alone had kept the law endured the law's anathema, 'Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree!' Instead of communion He endured God's curse! Instead of fire coming down from above upon His murderers, it enters His bones. Hitherto sinless, He becomes sin, and like the sin offering, He is shut out of God's holy presence . . . . This is the folly that is wiser than man, the weakness that is stronger than all, the display of love which will overwhelm every heart" (pp.178,179).

But there is much more which hopefully will send the reader anew to this epistle, not only concerning our Lord's obedience and its future results to the glory of God, but also, the effect of this evangel on the believers' present lives. After all, Philippians is an epistle of service and walk. However, the evangel is the engine which energizes us in our behavior. In this respect I point to Brother Coram's article on "The Disposition of Christ," in which he seeks to bring a practical understanding to the English reader of Paul's own guidance expressed in Greek nearly two thousand years ago. Thus concerning Paul's words, "Let this disposition be in you which is in Christ Jesus also" (Phil.2:5): he reminds us: "We must look to God in His saving grace to transform us by the renewing of our mind (Rom.12:2), if we would in any measure at all fulfill this lofty counsel" (p.182).

D.H.H.

THE KENOSIS OF CHRIST

THE supreme example of self-abasement set before us in the Scriptures is the descent of Christ from the form of God to the death of the cross, from the zenith of celestial glory to the deepest depth of earthly degradation. We are exhorted to cultivate His humble disposition, so contrary to all our own ambitions and counter to the spirit of the world about us, that we may emulate Him in devotion to the welfare of others, though it involves our own humiliation. In the course of this exhortation we are reminded of the *kenōsis* of the Christ, that which changed Him from the form of God to the form of a slave. The Authorized Version does not really translate, but substitutes the oratorical paraphrase, He "made Himself of no reputation." The Revisers courageously give the bold but literal root rendering, He "emptied Himself" (Phil.2:5-11).

This simple statement would never have caused the untold confusion which still seems to surround it, if the commendable zeal of the early fathers and the Nicean council against the Arian faction had not led them to invent a creed, calculated to clear up its meaning. The supposition that men could express clearly and concisely what the Scriptures had failed to clarify is repugnant to anyone who has imbibed but a modicum of the self-effacing disposition which is in Christ Jesus. The early fathers of the church not only fought for their own superiority in the church but their councils actually considered their creeds superior to the inspired utterances of the Scriptures.

These earnest men would probably have excused them-

selves on the ground that the creed was *in accord with* the Scriptures, hence not in conflict with the sacred writings. They desired a condensed summary of its teachings. They flagrantly ignored the exhortation to retain the pattern of sound words (2 Tim.1:13) and finally settled on expressions which they themselves were reluctant to allow. One such was the Greek word *homōusion,* literally, LIKE-BEING, or like-estate, as descriptive of Christ in the form of God. This by no means settled the point, for it was far more susceptible of devious interpretations than the text it was supposed to explain. As the dogmas of the Nicean creed still dominate the theology of the day, especially the *kenōsis* of the Christ, we will give it as it was first issued by the council.

THE NICEAN CREED

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things, both visible and invisible; and in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, *that is to say of the substance of the Father, God of God and Light of Light, very God of very God,* begotten, not made, *being of one estate* [*homōusion*] with the Father, by whom all things were made on earth; who, for us men and our salvation, came down and was made flesh, made man, suffered and rose again the third day, went up into the heavens, and is to come again to judge the living and the dead, and in the holy Spirit . . . .

This was much modified by succeeding councils, for it did not prove to be as satisfactory as they hoped. Indeed, when we come to examine it, what is there in it? Most of it is a jumble of scriptural phrases, to which we can offer no vital objection except the absence of their contexts. The non-scriptural phrases (which we have italicized to make them prominent) are also unscriptural and irrational. They have been "explained" for more than a millennium, yet no one knows what they mean. They are still repeated as though of far greater sanctity than the words of God Himself. What is the "substance" of the Father?

How can God be "of God?" What is Light "of Light?" What is "very" God "of very" God? What is the "one estate" (or substance) of the Father?

We do not bring up these questions to answer them, but to press the point that they cannot be answered. All acknowledge this. Some seem to think that this alone proves that they are true, as though God is more intent on mystifying His creatures than on revealing Himself. We desire to make the definite charge that these false, futile additions darken counsel by words without knowledge, and must be repudiated rather than acknowledged, if we are ever to have any satisfactory insight into the past or future glories of the Son of God. To confine our investigations to the sacred text should ordinarily be sufficient. Yet earnest and honest truth seekers have become so saturated with the errors of the creeds, that they, unconsciously no doubt, view the oracles of God by the light of these human speculations and theories instead of allowing the human accretions to wither away in the light of divine revelation.

A collection of creeds is an interesting and instructive exhibition of human incapacity. With hardly an exception they are *un*scriptural in every place in which they are *non*-scriptural. Even when they present fragments of the pattern of sound words, these are isolated from their special setting and divorced from their true application. I see no harm in a series of propositions, expressed in scriptural language and kept in their proper place, to indicate the dominant ideas which a group of saints desire to declare and defend. But I would insist on two essentials: the words must be "sound" or scriptural, and the context must be indicated. In this way they are linked up with the divine oracles themselves and the deplorable confusion fostered by the creeds can never occur.

The rational reaction to the Nicean creed should be somewhat as follows: As it was made in the heat of con-

troversy, mainly to oppose Arian teaching, it probably fails, in going to extremes in the opposite direction. The desire to emphasize the deity of Christ led to statements unwarranted by the Word. The causes which called forth the creed were by no means ideal. Its effects also have been most unsatisfactory. Instead of clearing up the matter once for all, it has been the fruitful source of innumerable and unprofitable speculations, until the verdict has finally been given that it not only *has not* but *cannot* be understood. Then the subject is conveniently relegated to the occult by calling it "the *mystery* of the Godhead."

This is a most mischievous "mystery." It is not only unknown to the Scriptures but altogether contrary to the whole purpose of revelation. God has written a book and has sent His Son in order that He should *not* be a mystery. He desires to be known by means of His various revelations in our Lord Jesus Christ. If this is a "mystery," beyond mortal minds, then His whole purpose is a failure. There are secrets in the Scriptures which men could by no means imagine until the time of their revelation. These are called "mysteries" in some of our versions. But the relation of Christ to God was never made a secret. Failure to understand it is not due to God's hiding but to human faithlessness and lack of spiritual perception.

We cannot help having a deep sympathy for the early fathers in their effort to understand what they professed to believe. Faith is not credulity, and craves the consent and coöperation of the mind. While it is intensely "rational" to believe God, even when we can not understand Him, it is the height of credulity to believe men when their statements clash with the evidence of our senses or the operation of our intellect. If the Nicean creed were inspired by God, nothing would be more reasonable than to believe it, though its statements transcend reason. Being of men, it cannot be super-rational, and must be irrational.

The Nicean creed drove the church into the darkness of the middle ages. The Reformation revived the subject of Christ's humanity and deity, and sought to reconcile them on the same lines as the early fathers, who never solved the riddle. Beginning with the same misconceptions, modern theologians have been no more successful. They cloud the issue with credal pre-suppositions which effectually keep them from actually considering the Scriptures. Some have made close, scholarly, consistent studies of Christ's *kenōsis*, which should have made the subject clear. But even they are forced to conclude that the solution is as far away as ever. Their eyes are holden by the "truth" with which they approach the subject. Their light is darkness. No wonder the Scriptures refuse to unlock with such a key!

A thoughtful consideration of the matter should suggest to them that their credal assumptions are the cause of all the confusion. It is these that prevent the Scriptures from shining forth. But, like apostate Israel, there is a veil on the heart of Christendom and its orthodox leaders. Evangelical Protestant expositors are more enslaved by the "infallibility" of the ancient fathers than others are by the decrees of the Roman pontiff. If they could only see that the course of the church is to be down and not up, then they could readily understand that its councils are more likely to be wrong than right. They are by no means a court of appeal from the Scriptures.

Besides the intellectual paralysis induced by credal tradition, the subject is heavily handicapped by unsound words and phrases. Much is made of the two "natures" of Christ, and we are continually referred to His "Person." Nothing concerning these can be found in the Word, but the church council at Chalcedon declared that these two "natures" are perfectly and organically united in one "Person," yet are distinct(!). We are told that we must neither "confound the natures, nor divide the person." The best

way to do this is to ignore them both, yea, rather, deplore them both, and rigidly exclude them from the problem, for they are false factors which will lead us off into an inextricable maze and mental mist.

In Paul's exhortation he presents for our emulation two distinct acts of Christ, the *kenōsis* and the *tapeinōsis,* the *emptying* and the *humbling.* The first describes His descent from the form of God to the form of a slave; the second His descent from the fashion of a man to the fashion of death most detestable to men and most obnoxious to God—the death of the cross. As He was in the form of God before He took the form of a slave and a human frame, the *kenōsis* is the inspired term for the change which accompanied His incarnation. Hence it has been made the focal point for the discussion of His "nature and Person."

First let us define our terms. What is the literal meaning of *ekenōsis*? We may at once discard the common rendering "made Himself of no reputation." The words do not at all represent the Greek, and they have acquired a sinister tinge akin to *disreputable,* which is far from the spirit of the passage. We may be sure that Christ did not commit some sin, some offense, in order to lose His reputation. It is appalling to think that devout and sincere followers of our Lord, who would lay down their lives for His Word, are content to support and circulate such an inconsistent and suggestive translation of this passage.

All are agreed that the literal meaning of the Greek root *ken* is EMPTY, hence the Revisers translate "emptied," which the CONCORDANT VERSION modifies to "empties," because it is a question of fact, not of time, as indicated by the use of the indefinite. There is no strictly literal example of this meaning of the word in the Scriptures. The nearest we can get is used in the phrase "send away empty" (Mark 12:3; Luke 1:53; 20:10,11). In Mark we have a slave sent to farmers to collect the rent for his master. He expects

to carry away some of the fruit of the vineyard, but they dispatch him "empty"—without any grapes. We have the same illustration in Luke 20:10,11.

In most of its other occurrences English idiom forbids the use of the word "empty." Instead, the Authorized Version uses "vain" or "make void." The latter phrase is, perhaps, as close as we can come to the idiomatic meaning of *kenoō,* the word we are studying. There is no better way to assimilate the true meaning of "He empties Himself" than to consider every other passage in which the word occurs. In Romans 4:14 we read: "if those of law are enjoyers of the allotment, faith *has been made void* [literally, *emptied*], and the promise has been abrogated." An "empty" faith would, in this case, be one without any effect.

In 1 Corinthians 1:17 we read: "For Christ does not commission me to be baptizing but to be preaching the evangel, not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ *should be made void,*" (or *empty*). The Authorized Version gives the thought here in its rendering, "lest the cross of Christ *should be made of none effect.*" If it were "emptied" the result would be the same as if there were no cross at all.

In the two remaining passages, 1 Corinthians 9:15 and 2 Corinthians 9:3, Paul is concerned that his boasting should not lack results. In the latter instance he has been boasting that "Achaia has been prepared a year past!" If, after all, they should not be ready, then his boasting would be "empty." In these passages the idea is referred to the past, hence they are not as helpful as the other occurrences in fixing the meaning of the word.

Now we are ready to make the application. If faith "emptied" had no effect whatever, and the cross "emptied" totally nullified any results flowing from it, then when Christ, in the form of God, "emptied Himself," or "made Himself void" (as in the other passages), He made

the form of God of none effect, *He carried nothing that was His in that form into the form of a slave.*

This is the Scriptural answer to innumerable theories as to the extent and character of His *kenōsis.* The bare word "empty" must be enriched by its usage in the Scriptures before we fully comprehend its force in this passage. Perhaps a more colorful and accurate rendering would be, "He *vacates* Himself." We should not ask, "Of *what* did He empty Himself?" The passage fails to specify the details because it includes all. Naught that He was in the form of God was transferred into the form of a slave. He retained only Himself, or as a theologian would express it, His personality. The effect of the form of God on the form of a slave is expressed by the literal "empty" and the idiomatic "void" or "none effect."

This conclusion "empties" the *kenōsis* of its imaginary value in determining the two forms in which He is found in this passage. The form of a slave was not merely a veiling of the form of God. It was no mere limitation of His powers. It was not acting a part. He did not retain all His supposed "attributes" except "omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence," as some assert. The very variety of these theories should be sufficient proof that they have no substratum of truth. The difference between the two forms must be gathered from the qualifying words. One was the form of *God;* the other of a *slave.* These suggest a contrast rather than a continuation.

Our conclusion is in happy harmony with the purport of the passage. The disposition which is in Christ Jesus is one of complete humiliation. Applying it to our conduct, we are not asked to limit it to a few of our greater dignities. The specific statement is a decided negative: "*not* each noting his own things." The same may be seen in the lesser example, Paul, who could say "I am deeming *all* to be a forfeit" (Phil.3:8). He had much indeed, in the flesh,

of which he was proud. He gave it all up in order to be found in Christ. He had the disposition of Christ Jesus.

THE MEANING OF "FORM"

Nowhere, in this passage, do we find the influence of the creeds more powerfully present than in the attempt of many orthodox theologians to give the word "form" a special and extraordinary significance. In fact the Nicean creed did little else than to repudiate the word "form" and substitute "substance" or *homōusion* "like-estate," and add other confirmatory phrases. Form refers to external appearance. They insist that it must include internal essence. We ourselves were carried along with this traditional view, notwithstanding the concordant evidence against it. The following passages constitute the scriptural evidence:

morphê, FORM

Mark	16:12	He was manifested in a different form to two of them
Phil.	2: 6	subsisting in the form of God
	7	taking the form of a slave

morphōmai, FORM

Gal.	4:19	until Christ may be formed in you

morphōsis, FORMing

Rom.	2:20	having the form of knowledge and truth in the law
2 Tim.	3: 5	having a form of devotion, yet denying its power

Leaving the Philippian text out of consideration, only one of these passages will allow the popular idea that "form" is intrinsic and essential, and is "indicative of the interior nature." In Galatians Paul is certainly speaking of an inward work of grace, not a mere outward copy. He desired to see Christ formed *in* them. This passage satisfied us, at one time, that the word "form" meant more than what strikes the eye. We failed to note that this sense is conveyed by the word *in,* not by the verb *form.* Its presence is against our supposition. *It would not be needed if*

form itself meant an inward work. It proves positively that "in" is absent from its meaning.

The other occurrences are most helpful and suggestive, for in each case there is a decided contrast. In Romans (2:20) the word form is used of the opposite of reality. The Jews did not actually possess the knowledge and truth in the law. All they had was the outward form. This usage of the word should be conclusive, yet it is no more so than Paul's description of the men in the last days who have a *form* of devoutness, *yet deny its power.* If that "form" is not superficial, lacking the corresponding inward grace, it certainly would not be devoid of power. What could be more conclusive than these two contrasts? In each the form is in contrast to the reality. It does *not* correspond to that which is within.

We must recognize that our Lord's descent from the form of God to the form of a slave is not the only change of form which He experienced. On the holy mount He was transformed (*metamorphōmai,* Matt.17:2; Mark 9:2). After His resurrection He was manifested in a different form to two of them (Mark 16:12). A careful consideration of these incidents will lead to the conviction that there was no intrinsic change in Him on these occasions. His face shone and His garments became white as the light, but there was not the least indication of inward alteration when He was transferred.

After He rose from the dead, He was seen by Mary Magdalene. He was evidently the same in appearance as before His death, for she eventually recognized Him even though she was not expecting to see Him alive. But when He accompanied the two disciples to Emmaus, He assumed a different *form.* For the purpose in hand there was no necessity for Him to make any essential change in His "nature" or essence. All He needed was an appearance which they would not recognize. Indeed, they partially pierced His disguise, for their hearts responded to that which came from within Him, which the outward form failed to affect.

For our purpose it is sufficient to insist that our Lord is not confined to the two forms of which the apostle speaks in Philippians. After He appeared in the form of a slave He was temporarily transformed before some of His disciples in the midst of His ministry, and He assumed an unusual form after His resurrection. We might insist that His subsequent appearances in glory, such as blinded Saul of Tarsus, and caused the beloved apostle to fall at His feet as dead, are still different forms, suited to His new glories. Certainly He is no longer in the form of a slave. In His future unveiling He will be invested with a form in keeping with the might and majesty of His universal empire.

But one more occurrence remains. This is found in the passage itself. At first sight it seems to contradict all that we have learned concerning the true meaning of the word "form." Our Lord took the form of a slave. Are we to understand that He became a servant only in appearance, not in fact? All are agreed that Christ was the ideal Servant. He was not merely clothed in the habiliments of service, but He served. He Himself assures us that "the Son of Mankind came, not to be served, but to serve . . ." (Matt.20:28; Mark 10:45). Paul gives Him the title "Servant of the Circumcision" (Rom.15:8). There can be no question that Christ is the supreme Servant of God and of men. Why then merely assume the *form* of a servant, as it is usually translated?

The solution is simple. He did not take the form of a *servant,* but of a *slave.* The Revisers insert "bond-servant" in their margin. Nor is this a trite distinction. It is maintained throughout the Greek Scriptures. Nowhere else in the more than one hundred and twenty occurrences of the word slave *(doulos)* is it ever applied to our Lord. He

was a slave extrinsically, not intrinsically. He appeared as a slave, but He was never in bondage. His own characterization of slavery was never true of Him. "The slave is not aware what his lord is doing" (John 15:15). His was intelligent, voluntary service.

The Greek word for slave or bond-servant *(doulos)* has a more definite and specific signification in the Scriptures than in the Septuagint. There it was used for the Hebrew *obed*, any sort of service or servant. It is certainly not confined to bond service, for it is used of Jacob's service for his wives (Gen.31:41). It is translated *till* and *dress*, in reference to Adam's farming and gardening (Gen.2:5,15). It is frequently called upon to denote the service of the tabernacle. It is the true Hebrew equivalent of our *serve* and *servant.* During the three hundred years between the Septuagint and the Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *diakonia* assumed the meaning of *service,* and forced *douleia* into the specific sense of involuntary servitude. It is often rendered *bond* (1 Cor.12:13; Gal.3:28; Eph.6:8; Col.3:11; Rev.13:16) in antithesis to *free.* Our Lord was never in bondage, however He may have given that impression by His aspect.

Moreover, the expression "slave" falls far short of indicating what He really was. Even "servant" deals with nothing more than His work. It does not tell us Who the Servant is. As a matter of fact, all will agree that His service was *not* that of a slave but that of a Son. If "form" indicates the inward reality, He should have appeared as the Son of God. If we apply the evidence of this phrase logically, we must admit that, actually, He was far, far above a slave, and, therefore, when He was in the form of God, He must have been far, far above God. But if the "form" is *assumed* in each case for the purpose of divine revelation, all is clear. It is not the function of Christ to display Himself but to reveal God.

To put the matter bluntly, the form of God was not an

outward indication of what He was Himself, but a representation of His God. The word "form" is out of place if we simply mean that His external appearance was consistent with His internal essence. That would not even need to be stated. The mere use of the term *form* should be enough to prove that outwardly He seemed to be Another. His exaltation consisted, not in actually being that Other, but in having the visible appearance proper to the Deity.

Furthermore, just as the Philippian passage does not give all the forms in which He appeared after His incarnation, for He was not in the form of a slave on the holy mount, so it does not refer us to all the forms which He took prior to His *kenōsis.* Besides appearing in the form of God He also appeared in the form of a man and as a messenger. In Philippians we are called upon to consider His highest and His lowest manifestations, for these alone are called for by the exhortation. This discussion has been almost paralyzed by the assumption that Christ had one settled pre-incarnate form, and one fixed form on earth, and a single unalterable form in the resurrection. This is contrary to the facts.

Much light is shed on the form of our Lord before His incarnation by the statement that humanity was created in the image and likeness of God. Mankind is not the original, but a copy. This must have reference to externals, for the language is otherwise unnecessarily involved. *In* our Image and *as* our Likeness, suggests, first of all, that the invisible God has an Image and Likeness from which a copy could be made. Humanity cannot be a replica of God Himself, Who is Spirit and invisible. The race was made in accord with the form taken by Christ as the Image and Likeness of God. Therefore, if we find our Lord in a form like a man, that is not because He has imitated us, but because humanity was patterned after Him.

He it was Who communed with Adam in the garden of

Eden. There is no need to debate whether He was in the form of God or that like man when He visited Adam. It was probably both, for the first man was himself clothed in a robe of light and had an aura of glory which we might mistake for divine. Undoubtedly, the Elohim of that early paradise was in the form of God, which is always presented with human characteristics. It is not that God imitates mankind, in order to reveal Himself to humanity, but that man was formed after the divine Image, and is a replica of his Maker. Our Lord, therefore, probably appeared in Eden as a Man of surpassing outward glory, subdued, perhaps, to accommodate Himself to the capacity of His creature.

It is probable that, in His subsequent patriarchal appearances, this glory was further dimmed, or mortal men could not have lived in His presence. Cain was able to endure the sound of His voice. When He came to visit Abraham as one of three men (Gen.18:2), the patriarch is evidently aware of His identity, for he calls Him the Judge of all the earth (Gen.18:25), yet he entertains Him as though He were a man. As He withdrew from familiar intercourse with mankind, His glory was augmented. At Sinai, only Moses dared climb the holy mount. A few of the people saw the God of Israel. Perhaps it is only here and in the awful theophanies of Ezekiel and Daniel that we have that manifestation which Paul characterizes as the "form of God."

Let us remember that the divine form does not preclude the likeness of humanity. Ezekiel expressly states that, upon the likeness of the sapphire throne was a likeness as the appearance of a *man* (*adam* Ezek.1:26). In the center of a sublime setting for the vision of God, the divine majesty is seen in human form with superhuman glory. Isaiah, in his sixth chapter is not so specific. Nevertheless, what other than a human shape can be imagined? He sits on a throne. He speaks a human language. All of this seems conclusive that the form of God is like that of a

glorified man, because He is both the Image of God and the pattern of humanity.

In the resurrection the Lord could readily assume another form. The powers of a physical frame, such as He then possessed, are quite unknown to us, who are deadened by sin and enslaved by corruption. Before He took a body of flesh, there is no reason why His appearance to human perceptions should not be absolutely under His control. It is largely a question of glory or the diffusion of power. When He was transformed from a slave upon the holy mount His physical frame underwent no change in shape. The difference seemed to consist principally in the effulgence of light. His very clothing became glistening. The Son of God is the effulgence of the divine glory. This shone through the temporary and abnormal form of a slave on the holy mount.

After all of this investigation we came back to the simple, natural, unforced meaning of the words. The form of God was the material, visible representation of the invisible spiritual Deity. No one has ever seen God (John 1:18), for He is invisible (Col.1:15). In Colossians the Son of God supplies the needed link with creation because He is the Image of God. In Philippians we have the same thought with only a slight variation, to suit the context. Both the Form and the Image appeal to the eye. This is after the manner of Paul. John appeals to the ear, for he calls Him the Logos, or Word of God. In each case Christ is the Mediator of God and mankind. Human ears cannot hear God and human eyes cannot see Him, but they can listen to the living Word and perceive the Image and the Form.

The Form, however, was not the means of communication, but the evidence of exaltation. When Isaiah saw Yahweh, exalted and uplifted on His glorious throne, with all the accompaniments of Deity, he was overwhelmed by the awful sublimity and magnifical majesty of Him Who

sits on the throne. Though he was the great prophet who rebuked the failings of his people, he is utterly humiliated by the sight, and cries out in dismay, "Mine eyes see the King, Yahweh of hosts!" The representation he saw was the Image of Yahweh. The Form that he saw was the glory of God. The marvel for us to discern is this: that this glorious One was not disposed to exploit that glory for His own ends. He had the *heart* of God as well as the form of Deity, and was disposed to vacate it, empty Himself of it, and take the form of a slave in order to further reveal God's inmost affections.

EQUAL WITH GOD

There is much confusion in our translations in regard to the equality with God which comes in connection with the form of God. Was this a possession or a prize which He did not seize? The Authorized rendering, "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," evidently conveys the idea that He *was* equal. The margin in some editions, however, change "robbery" to "a thing to be grasped at," which implies that He was *not* God's equal. This interpretation is followed by the Revisers, who render it, "counted it not a prize to be on a equality with God" and gives us the marginal alternation, "a thing to be grasped." The tendency of modern scholarship is against the idea that Christ was, in any sense, God's equal. This, we are told, is a height to which He did not aspire.

But modern scholars are no more infallible than ancient creeds. Indeed, since we know that the normal tendency is toward apostasy, we should always ask for the evidence. A literal concordant translation of the clause is as follows: "NOT SNATCHing deems THE TO-BE EQUAL to-God." Does *snatching harpagmon* refer to the *act* or the *thing*? In the original the word occurs in four forms, as follows: *harpazō,* SNATCH, *verb; harpax,* SNATCHer; *harpagê,* SNATCHing, *noun,* and *harpagmos,* SNATCHing, another form of the noun. The poverty of the English language makes it necessary for us to use —ing for two distinct forms of the noun. The point in our problem lies in distinguishing between them. Why did the inspired writer use the special form *harpagmon* in this passage instead of the usual *harpagê*?

The Authorized Version renders *harpagê, extortion* (Matt.23:25), *ravening* (Luke 11:39), and *spoiling* (Heb. 10:34). "The *spoiling* of your goods" evidently refers to the *pillage* of their goods. In both of the previous references, men are said to be *full* of extortion or ravening. It is evident that this word does not refer directly to the act, but to its effects. On the other hand the ending of *harpagmos* connects it with a group of words which convey the idea of *action.* If one denotes *pillage,* this should be *pillaging,* the committing or carrying out of the act. The same distinction is seen in *baptismos,* baptizing (Mark 7:4; Heb.6:2; 9:10) and *baptisma,* baptism (Matt.21:25, etc.). Hallowing and cleansing are further examples. The pillaging in this passage is an act, not a thing.

Equality with God was not a thing Christ refused to grasp. He acted as God's equal and He did not deem the act extortion or ravening or spoiling or robbery, to use the renderings of this root given in the Authorized Version. It was not pillaging. The point of the passage lies in the extremes—equality with God and the death of the cross. The apostle is going to the limit in his exaltation of Christ. To all appearances the form of God put Him into the place of equality with God. Creatures, seeing Him, saw God, and addressed Him by means of the titles which belong only to God and to His Image and Form.

The principal objection to this interpretation from the standpoint of language is the following disjunctive, "but." It would be fatal were it not for the fact that, in Greek, this disjunctive has a wider range than our English "but" and

includes our "nevertheless" (Mark 14:29; Acts 9:6; Rom.6:5; 1 Cor.8:6; 9:2,12; 2 Cor.4:16). He was in the form of God, and deemed equality not pillaging—*nevertheless* He emptied Himself. To show the transcendent humility of His disposition He must be exalted first. It is no great thing for a subordinate or a sinner to be humble. It is the marvel of the universe that the highest perceptible Being has stooped to its lowest depth. Equality always denies identity, and must ever be relative, or it becomes identity. It is the *Form* which was equal with God.

Too little attention has been paid to the denial that equality with God would amount to pillaging on His part. However we translate the word, all agree that it consists in taking away the possessions of another by violent or unjust methods. This involves two distinct parties, one of whom lacks what another has. Christ lacked equality with God, yet, being in the form of God He *assumed* it. In doing so He did not deprive God of anything, hence did not deem it pillaging. Indeed, since He appeared to those who beheld Him as God would appear if He were visible, He could take nothing from God without, at the same time, investing Him with it. The glory Isaiah saw was the glory of *God,* yet he saw it in the form which was Christ.

In this statement we were careful to use the word *assume,* because such key words should be taken only from the divine vocabulary. Among the glorious ascriptions to the Son of God in the opening prelude of the epistle to the Hebrews are the two declarations that the Son is the Effulgence of God's glory and the Emblem of His *assumption.* The usual renderings of this word *hupostasis, confidence, person, substance,* must yield to the one idea which suits each text, as we have fully explained elsewhere. The assumptions of Deity are made known in the Son, Who likewise assumes the character in which God is presented.

We find then that Christ took all that belonged to God

in such a way that there was no wrong involved. As He was the only Mediator through Whom God could come into contact with His creatures, He must assume equality with the Deity or fail to properly present Him. An idol misrepresents God. It would be deception to give it divine attributes. The true Image reveals God and should have all that may be perceived of Deity.

The word "equal" may easily provide material for endless controversy. But this is not at all necessary, for all expressions are used in a relative sense. If all the terms we use were taken in an absolute sense, without reference to the subject, the scope, or the context in which they are employed, there would be an end of all intelligent intercommunication. The subject is the visible, tangible *Form* of God, such as His creatures can perceive. In every particular this Image appeared to be equal to, or the same as, God Himself.

Of one thing we may be sure. He did not only empty Himself of the form of God, but He also left equality behind. When the Jews charged Him with making Himself equal to God (John 5:18) He does not defend the supposed claim. Instead, He points out the inequality between the Son and the Father. This may help us to perceive what constituted the equality. The Son can *do nothing of Himself.* When He was in the Form of God no such inequality could be perceived. The fact that the Form of God could lay aside equality is sufficient to show the distinction between the invisible, immutable Deity and His Image. He could not lay aside equality with Himself!

The *kenōsis* of our Lord consisted in vacating His place supreme, in which He manifested the heights of God's glory, apart from sin, for the place of a slave, in which He reveals the depths of His love, by suffering for sin.

Much futile reasoning has been indulged in concerning the *nature* of God. The Form of God has been identified

and interpreted as His nature. This word is never used in the Scriptures in connection with this theme. To bring it in only betrays ignorance and creates confusion.

THE FORM OF A SLAVE

We must reiterate the fact that the *kenōsis* did not make Christ a *slave.* He became a *servant* in the *form* of a slave. Though His service is so fully set forth in the Word, there is not a single hint that He was, in bondage to either man or God. Though the term slave *doulos* is freely used of His disciples and the saints, He never takes it or accepts it as His own. His service was *not* that of a slave, for He knew His Father's will and what He was doing. But those who saw His form found no indication of His divine commission in His physical circumstances. He appeared to be like other men, sold and subject to forces outside of themselves, entirely apart from their own volition.

THE INCARNATION

Some may ask, How was the *kenōsis* accomplished? We know that, in the process, He came to be in the likeness of humanity. Nothing of the form of God is carried over. His "self," or personality, vacates the glorious form and takes up its abode in a physical body *adapted* for His mission. Like all mankind His body came from Adam through His mother, but unlike them, His spirit did not come through the first man and his posterity, but directly from God Himself.

Instead of confining their attention to the *kenōsis* theologians could far more profitably have concerned themselves with the *katartisis,* the readjustment, or adaptation, of Christ's body. Whatever body He had before incarnation, it is evident that it was not fitted for the great object for which He came. It was not mortal. It could not die. He must have a body, not mortal in the sense of dying, but mortal in the sense of capable of death. He must be the great Antitype of all of the sacrifices. Hence we read (Heb.10:5):

> Sacrifice and approach present
> You do not will,
> Yet a body do You *adapt* to Me.
> In ascent approaches and those concerning sin
> You do not delight.
> Then said I,
> 'Look! I am arriving—In the summary of the scroll it is written concerning Me—
> To do Your will, O God.'

The Authorized Version rendering, "prepare," fails to fully convey its significance. The body He took was in the nature of an *equipment,* purposely designed for sacrifice. The human body is especially adapted to this, hence He was found in the likeness of humanity. Such phrases as this and that which describes Him as being "in *fashion as* a man" confirm the fact that the human element in His constitution was in His body, His flesh, that which has the shape and tangible likeness of humankind.

This process confirms and emphasizes the facts of our findings. Almost all theories of the *kenōsis* demand some definite connection between the form of God and that of a slave, in order that there may be the transference of attributes or power or glory or "nature" or something—no one seems sure just what. But there is no ground for this whatever. The virgin Mary was an entirely new element in His new form. The spirit of God, His Father, is not identified with His previous form. There is an entire break, except in selfhood. This may be illustrated by death and resurrection, though we do not by any means imply that it was either. The body dissolves in death. Other elements will constitute the resurrected frame. Only the personality continues.

There is no dual "nature," one a remnant of His previous form and one acquired by generation from Adam. The *kenōsis* denies this rather than supports it. It is a vain speculation founded on error. The transference of personality does not create such a monstrosity. It is reasonable,

sane, and scriptural. Christ could speak of His place with the Father before the world was without implying that His human body was involved.

Some may marvel that there seems to be no definite statement on this subject in the Scriptures. Rather let them be amazed that no attention is paid to the one there given. It is just where we would expect to find it, at the very opening of Paul's Roman epistle (Rom.1:3,4). The moment he mentions the Son, he halts the flow of the argument to give a lucid, cogent, and satisfactory explanation of the incarnation. The parenthesis reads as follows: "Who comes of the seed of David according to the flesh, Who is being designated Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead." His "personality" is divided into two elements, flesh and spirit. His flesh comes from David: His most holy spirit comes from God. His soul was the result of their union.

Only His soul is complex. He does not have a divine body and spirit, and a human body and spirit merged into one. His body was not divine. He had a spirit which was superhuman. The supposed difficulties connected with the fusing of the two diverse elements are mostly imaginary. Once we see that the union is found in His *soul*, which is the seat of consciousness, sensation or experience, all becomes clear. The souls of all humanity are the product of these two elements, flesh and spirit. Our own soul, our own sensation, is the effect of body and breath, just as that of Adam, when he was created (Gen.2:7). The difference between other men and the Son of God is not in the number or name of their components, but in the spirit He received at His generation. The divine spirit operates as readily with flesh as the human spirit which we have.

The differences between Him and us are all connected with the spirit. Let us note how briefly the apostle deals with His human side. He is of the seed of David according

to the flesh. No further explanation is necessary or desired. But when His spirit is in view, we are given intimations of the great distinguishing qualities which emerge. He is designated Son of God *with power*, or, as we are accustomed to put it, He is *powerfully* designated Son of God. The human spirit is weak and is being destroyed by sin and death. Every human born into the world (except our Lord) is so lacking in vitality and enslaved to sin, that his life is but a lingering death. In contrast with this, the spirit He was given made Him *powerful* and *holy*. The latter quality is emphasized by using the Hebrew idiom—the spirit of holiness—His *holy* spirit.

Man's spirit fails in death. Christ's spirit restores life. There can be no greater proof that He is the Son of God, that His is a powerful and holy spirit, than in counteracting the effects of infirmity and sin, by the resurrection of the dead. A preacher once decided that he would study the funeral sermons of our Lord in order to improve his own. But he could not find any! Until His own decease, we do not find our Lord in the presence of death except as its conqueror. He shared the intense vitality imparted to Him by God, in recalling the dead to life. The little girl, the widow's son, and Lazarus, all acknowledged the power of His holy spirit, which marked Him off from all mankind. He was the *Son of* God as to His spirit. On this all else is based. It is vital. It is essential.

The more vague, yet graphic language of the Hebrew seer suggests an illustration of this vital union (Isa.11:1):

> Then a Twig will come forth from the set slip of Jesse,
> And a Scion, it shall be fruitful from his roots.

The Twig is the natural growth from the stock of David's father, just as the flesh of Christ came from him by natural generation. The scion, or graft, however, is abnormal. It is not taken from Jesse, but from his root. It does not grow

from him but is grafted into him. Yet the scion combines perfectly with its stem. It shares the life of the stock, yet the form and flavor of the fruit flows from the scion, not the stock. Thus does the flesh and spirit unite in Christ, only the spirit dominates the flesh and determines the rich quality of His words and works.

The humanity of Christ is best learned by a comparison with Adam, from whom all humanity flows. This is done by Paul in his first Corinthian letter (15:45). "The first man Adam became a living soul; the last Adam is a vivifying Spirit." The language is emphatically figurative. Adam was not devoid of a body and a spirit, but these are dominated by his soul. Men today are soulish, ruled by their sensations. In contrast with this the last Adam was a Spirit. We know that He also had flesh and a soul. He spoke of both. But these were subordinate to His spirit. Hence He is called a Spirit, though He vehemently denied being such in resurrection, when He appeared more like a spirit than before His death. Other men receive no spirit until they breathe at birth. He was generated by the holy spirit of God.

Similarly, the first man was out of the earth, soilish; the second Man is the Lord out of heaven. Adam was not entirely soil. God gave him the breath of the living. So with his descendants. They are soilish, though they breathe the air of heaven. So with the second Man. His body was of soil, as other men. But his personality is not to be traced to the soil as ours is. He was in the heavens and came down. He is a celestial.

All of this, though occurring in a passage on resurrection, has to do with His incarnation, His humanity before He was roused. Then He was the Lord out of heaven and a life-giving Spirit. He was far superior to Adam. They were not on the same plane. Adam imparted death to himself and to his posterity. The last, Adam restored life to the

dead who met Him during His earthly ministry, and will impart it to all who die in the first Adam.

To conclude: The generation of Christ by the holy spirit of God is the cause of His deity and the key to His humanity. In mankind spirit and flesh naturally operate to give life and sensation, or soul. So His divine spirit naturally operated with His human body to make Him what He is. To insist on meaningless, unscriptural phrases, such as "a *real* Man," and "*very* God" is only a mask of ignorance. He is *not* the same as other men. He is *not* the same as God. He is their *Mediator.* He has a divine spirit and a human body. His flesh came through Mary and David and Abraham and Adam. His spirit came from God.

HIS HUMILIATION

The humiliation of Christ is the second step in His descent from divine equality to unexampled shame. It must not be confused with His *kenōsis,* or self-voiding. That was effected before His humiliation, and led to His coming into a human likeness. It was only after He was found in fashion as a man that He humbled Himself. The same disposition governs both. He refused to exalt Himself and seeks the weal of others. But the mere fact of becoming a man is not necessarily humiliating. Apart from sin, mankind made in the image of God is a noble race. It is no disgrace to be human.

The theologians of the Reformation, as well as more modern writers, are very insistent on the "true" humanity of Christ. Again and again we are warned that He was a "real" Man. It reminds us of the opposite extreme of those who insist that He is "very" God. Then when they try to combine the "real" Man and the "very" God, by means of the two "natures" they find themselves outside the Bible altogether, for no such monstrosity is found within its covers. No one is very sure what "very" and "real" mean in

this connection. Only, as it seems to be the height of heresy to believe otherwise, most of us keep the peace and save trouble by nodding a dubious affirmation.

If the term "real" implies that He is exactly the same as other men, we deny it absolutely. His spirit came from God, and differed radically from others. That He was in all things *like* His brethren (Heb.2:17) has reference to His capacity for suffering and consequent sympathy for those in trial. Such expressions must be subject to their contexts and the facts. He is often called a "Man." It would be intolerable pedantry if the Scriptures always reiterated distinctions which have no bearing on the matter in hand. But when the actual subject of His relationship to the race is discussed—as in this passage—the language is most exact. Then we learn that He came to be in the *likeness* of humanity, and was found in *fashion* as a man (Phil.2:7).

Christ is the *Mediator* Who links humanity with its Creator, so that He is neither man nor God in an absolute sense, yet He is either in a relative one. The combination is not that of two alien "natures" which can never be harmonized, but that of body and spirit, the same elements which unite perfectly to form the souls of all other men. His humanity consists in a body derived from Adam through the virgin Mary, His human mother. His deity consists in a vivifying spirit directly from God. These two fuse freely to make a Man unique and a God unparalleled—the peerless Man and the only begotten God (John 1:18).

That His generation by holy spirit did not affect His physical form in such a way as to publicly differentiate it from other men is evident. Even when the Jews knew that He claimed to be God's Son, many could see nothing to substantiate it, or, at best, held Him for a prophet. His deity was not evident, for His form was that of a slave. He was so like other men that they took Him for a mere man. How is it that the spirit to which He owed His life did not

alter His physical appearance and make Him a superman whom the world could recognize?

We must remember that, in the beginning of the race, Adam was formed from the soil of the ground before the breath of the living was added to vitalize his frame. When the spirit was added, it did not affect his size or shape. It simply made him *live.* That is the function of spirit. It imparts life. The entrance of sin introduced death. Humanity became a dying race. The spirit remains with its members only a brief span of years. Sin was perpetuated by the transmission of death. Such would have been the case with Christ if He had been a "real" man, and had had a human father. Instead, the spirit gave Him *life, abundant life.*

Here is the basic distinction between Christ and other men. Their vitality is limited. Their life is a process of dying. This is what makes them sinners. Sin is not some subtle, unknown principle which mysteriously passes on from parent to child. It is the by-product of the death process. This is what we inherit. This is what makes sinners of us all. If our Lord had received His spirit by human generation, His life also would have been a process of dying and might have ended in a natural death, and He would have been forced to sin. But, thank God, the spirit He received gave Him life—abundant life—so that death was not operating in Him, and sin found no soil in Him. Sin can thrive only in men who are dying.

Let us adoringly acknowledge then that Christ was made in the *likeness* of humanity. He was not simply spotless and unsullied in His acts. It was not that He succeeded in overcoming the universal tendency to sin which afflicts humanity, but that He had no such tendency to overcome. This was not due to some special miraculous intervention which counteracted the sin He should have inherited from His mother Mary, but simply and solely to the divine paternity which endued Him with a fresh, a sin-repelling vital-

ity, which would have kept Him alive forever if He had not deliberately laid down His life for us, in order that He might take it up again in resurrection.

There is a designed contrast between the words *form* and *fashion (schêma)* in this passage. It is usually explained that *fashion* is the *outward* and *accidental*, while *form* is the *inward* and *essential.* We have seen the fallacy of this. Form is the external, and by no means necessarily indicates the inward essence. Christ was not the form of Himself, but of Another. Such a distinction has no place whatever in this passage. A "fashion" is rather a temporary and special kind of form. This is evident from the single other occurrence: "The fashion of the world is passing by" (1 Cor.7:31). The present form of the world is abnormal and fleeting. So with mankind. Its present "fashion" is degrading, but, like all such fashions, is due to change.

We are now approaching the heart of our subject—the humiliation. *Because He was found in fashion as a man,* He humbled Himself. Being a human being is not in itself a cause for humiliation. The day is coming when it will be the cause for highest exultation. But to be found in the shape in which humanity finds itself now, its present "fashion"—sunk in sin and degradation, at enmity with God—this is the proper reason for the deepest humiliation and self-abhorrence.

Human depravity was the prevailing "fashion" of the race when Christ found Himself a member of it. This is by no means its *natural* state, either internally or externally. We have so corrupted the meaning of the word *nature* that we have lost much light on the problem of sin. Human *nature (phusis)* is not at fault. It has not been debased by sin. The real meaning of the word in the Scriptures is *instinct.* The sins which afflict mankind are *against* nature (Rom. 1:26). The nations do by nature (or instinct) the things contained in the law (Rom.2:14). Nature teaches us correctly

(1 Cor.11:14) if we only heed it. Nature, or instinct, may, like conscience, be stultified and suppressed by sin, but it is not, in itself, sinful.

The "fashion" of humanity which leads to humiliation is not the result of a sinful "nature." Nor does the remedy consist in the impartation of a new "nature." There is no passage of Scripture to prove that the "nature" of Christ was different from other men. The intrusion of this term is a hindrance to the apprehension of the truth. It is true that, by nature, or in the course of natural generation, the Jews became sons of indignation just as did the nations (Eph.2:3), but nature here is merely the channel, not the cause of sin. Human nature, or instinct, and human conscience remain in spite of sin and as a protest against sin. Why, then, make them sin?

The humiliation of the divine Man may be graphically figured by exaggerating the lack of life, which is the real support of sin. It was as though He alone were endowed with life and all about Him were putrefying corpses. An intolerable stench and gruesome sights certify to the degradation of mankind. Indeed, the world to which He came was a vast cemetery and a slow funeral procession in which all were marching to a ghastly tomb. We do our best to hide this shame. We deny death and deck it with flowers. We refuse to bow our heads or humble our hearts, even when death ends in actual disintegration and corruption.

But death, the process of dying, the only form of life we know since Adam's transgression, was quite as offensive to His sensitive soul as the dissolution of the body is to us. All about Him death reigned, and was evident to His perceptions by its effluvium, sin. "I am come that you might have life," He tells them, but their senses are so far gone that they do not even know that they are dying and reeking with the offensive evidence of mortal disintegration. Once we see that His spirit, fresh from God, gave Him life

abundant, so that He was mortal only in the sense that He *could* die, not in the sense that He was undergoing the process—as all other men—we hold the key to His unique humanity and need no creeds to supplement the simplicity of the divine oracles.

He was not as other men in this regard, and, if He had shared the disposition of His fellows, it would undoubtedly have been the basis of great pride and boasting. Let us put ourselves in His place. All that we do is right. Almost all that others do is wrong. Could we endure such a test? Instead of humbling us it would make us haughty. All we would care to do would be to condemn. Here is where His disposition shines. Here is a glory, a moral excellence, which could not be revealed by Him when in the form of God. That glorious theophany was not a full-orbed revelation. It needed to be complemented by His course when found in fashion as a man. God, in His lofty excellence, cannot reach our hearts. We must see Him in the midst of misery and woe. Here it is that He wins our affections through the humiliation of His Anointed.

THE DEATH OF THE CROSS

Death itself is a humiliation, whatever may be its form. It cannot be dissociated from sin in some shape. Much greater was its shame to Him Who not only had life in Himself, but Who had recalled the dead to life. It is evident that His death was entirely voluntary. Neither the Jews nor the Romans could take His life from Him. Whatever disgrace His death may bring to Him, He brings it on Himself. He needed no one to humble Him. He humbled Himself. His death was due to obedience, not to man, but to God.

But the shame of His death is not to be compared to the degradation of the cross. It is the *manner* of His death that plunged Him into the deepest abyss of abject ignominy and utter despair. Some forms of death have a halo about

them, and call forth the applause of men. But the cross was reserved for the vilest and meanest of criminals. From the human aspect the Roman law had no more degrading death than crucifixion. Like hanging at the present day, it was the symbol of the most shameful end which could be devised to put a stop to a detestable career. The pain, the publicity, the appalling ignominy far exceeded the very worst of modern methods of execution.

CHRIST WAS HUNG ON A STAKE

How far all this is from the mind of Christendom is evident by the present prevalence of this dreadful symbol. To be sure, there is not the slightest ground for supposing that our Lord was hung upon a cross of any kind. It was a mere stake or pole, without any cross-piece. There was nothing ornamental about it. But the figure of the cross has seized the imagination of the masses. If they had any sense at all of its shuddering horror, it would be avoided and banned as accursed, instead of lending its shape to jeweled pendants and ecclesiastic art. All this is a travesty, an insult, to the awful humiliation of which it is supposed to be the sign.

The human side of the crucifixion is a tragedy not altogether beyond the reach of our apprehensions. We have some standards of comparison by which to acquaint ourselves with some aspects of it. If He were a man like other men we could possibly plumb its dreadful depths. But He was not as others. Shame is relative. A callous brute does not feel an insult which would torture a sensitive soul. No mere man could suffer from the taunts, the mockery, the ignominy of the cross, as One Who came from the heights of glory, where the very cherubim veiled their faces in His presence. He alone can realize the stupendous contrast, or feel the fearful horror of being despised by the dregs of Adam's degraded race.

But the manward side of the cross cannot be compared with the Godward aspect of the accursed tree. Men had long been hostile to Him. The cross was but the culmination of a long course of events in which He suffered the ridicule and abuse of His fellows. Not so the curse which fell from heaven when the sun withdrew and the darkness hid the scene from mortal gaze. Through all of His humiliations heretofore He had been upheld by the hand of God. At the very crisis of His ministry, when it became apparent that He was rejected, He could find consolation in fellowship with the Father. "I am acclaiming Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, seeing that Thou dost conceal these things from the wise and intelligent . . ."

GOD'S PLAN PREVAILS

It must have been in the nature of a grave disgrace for Him to realize that His efforts had not succeeded in their apparent object. It is extremely trying even in these days for His servants to find such a feeble response to God's truth, notwithstanding the knowledge that the apostasy is part of God's plan. Yet He always had recourse to God and never failed to find solace in His presence. Until He hung upon the tree God's smile was His constant comfort. He never forsook Him. The more men withdrew, the closer God came. In the natural course of events, we would expect all others to flee, but that God would stand by Him in the supreme crisis of the cross.

From this standpoint, we view from afar the starkest tragedy of all creation. Here we are able to glimpse the bottomless abyss of His humiliation. Here He Who knew no sin was made sin. Here He Who alone had kept the law endured the law's anathema, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree!" Instead of communion He endured God's curse! Instead of fire coming down from above upon His murderers, it enters His bones. Hitherto sinless, He becomes

sin, and, like the sin offering, He is shut out of God's holy presence. In solemn sympathy with the awful darkness that enveloped His soul, the sun, a symbol of God's light and life and love, hides its beams until the work is finished and His God once more has ears to hear His cry.

"Eloi! Eloi! lema sabachthani?" that is "My God! My God! why didst Thou abandon Me? " gives us the character and suggests the cause of Christ's deepest humiliation. His persecution by men and desertion by His disciples is a disgrace hardly worthy of mention in comparison with His abandonment by the Deity. It pleased God to bruise Him. Why? That He may bless all others. That He may be just and the Justifier of those who believe. That God may reconcile all His creatures to Himself. The abandonment of Christ by God is the source of all salvation, the root of all reconciliation. This is the folly that is wiser than man, the weakness that is stronger than all, the display of love which will overwhelm every heart.

We must not miss the vivid contrast presented by the exalted station of Christ as the equal of God and His abandonment on the cross. He begins as close to God as possible. No creature could approach the Deity except through Him. To all intents and purposes, He was God, so far as creation is concerned, and He had the form which is suitable to the Supreme. In the dark hours of the crucifixion He is at the opposite extreme. In the midst of physical degradation and moral ignominy He hears the taunts of those who claimed the closest communion with His God, and the contempt of the lowest of the vicious and the vile. He is as far as possible from the place He once had occupied.

It were well if all theological theories regarding God and His Christ were examined in the darkness of the cross. Absolute Deity does not address another Deity as "My God." God the Father is Supreme. He has no God. If He had He would not be God. Absolute Deity cannot be abandoned

by Another, is not dependent on Another, and certainly would not suffer humiliation if anyone deserted Him. Neither can He die, and commit His spirit to God Who gave it. On the other hand a man like other men might do all these things and affect little except his own soul. Nothing would be accomplished for others. No One but a Mediator, divine in spirit, human in body, with a soul the fusion of both, will satisfy our reason or fulfill God's revelation.

We have no hesitancy in averring that death is not possible to proper deity. We cannot even force our imagination to conceive of the death of God, for with Him all life would vanish from creation. It is even difficult for us to realize that the Son of God could sink to such a state. He Who gave life to others, even after they had died, could have kept Himself alive under all conditions. This is both reasonable and scriptural. But it is no less rational and revealed that He had the right to die, if it was God's will. And this is precisely what He claimed. He became *obedient* unto death—even the death of the cross!

HIS EXALTATION

"Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:9-11). It is essential that we see the close connection of this exaltation with His humiliation, as well as its contrast to the glories which were His before He emptied Himself. Both can be summed up in a single word—salvation. It is concentrated in His name. He was Yahweh. Now He is Jesus—Yahweh the *Saviour.*

Before His *kenōsis,* when He was in the form of God, He was such because God had given Him that honor. He did not seize it for Himself. So also is His present and

future exaltation. It is God's response to His sufferings, a reward for His humiliation. To the name that once stood for the highest of God's theophanies, Yahweh, has been added the greatest of God's activities—salvation. As Yahweh, Christ could have coerced the knees of all creation and required the acclaim of every creature, for He had the right to universal homage. But He did not choose to enforce His rights, but rather relinquished all in order to win their hearts by the more potent process of suffering and shame.

If all that He gains in His future exaltation is the forced acknowledgment of His omnipotence by unwilling knees and reluctant tongues, then all His humiliation has been in vain. As Yahweh He could have accomplished this, before He descended to the accursed tree. It is as Saviour that He will receive, without constraint, the acclamation of all creation, the worship of every living intelligence. The glory and the grandeur of His exaltation is embodied in the lowly name which shall become supreme. His salvation shall assure Him universal worship, His deliverance will be the theme of world-wide acclamation.

The goal of all is the glory of God. The *kenōsis* of Christ is the first step in bringing about the Fatherhood of the Deity. It is the only way that He could display the riches of His affection, the resources of His love. God has revealed Himself as a mighty Creator in His works. This does not satisfy His heart or the hearts of His creatures. He desires to be their Father. He must draw them by the cords of love. He must win their affection. This is the vast task which began with Christ's *kenōsis.* This is the glorious consummation to which it leads. In eras yet to come God will be the Father of all His adoring creatures. This achievement will make the name of Jesus esteemed above all others in the eons of the eons and beyond.

A. E. Knoch

THE DISPOSITION OF CHRIST
(Philippians 2:1-30)

If, then, there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any communion of spirit, if any compassion and pity, fill my joy full, that you may be mutually disposed, having mutual love, joined in soul, being disposed to one thing—nothing according with faction, nor yet according with vainglory—but with humility, deeming one another superior to one's self, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also. (2:1-4)

Here, we find the usage of "if" termed "the if of argument"; it is the equivalent of "since" (*cp* Rom.8:31).

There is such an abundance of "comfort of love," "communion of spirit," besides "compassion and pity" afforded us in Christ. *Since,* then, this is so, *in* the empowerment we find through the comfort of love, communion of spirit, even as compassion and pity which is in Christ, Paul would have us "fill [his] joy full" by being "*mutually* disposed" toward one another, "having *mutual* love, *joined* in soul."

Our apostle would have us be "disposed to *one* thing": "*Nothing according with faction, nor yet according with vainglory.*"

"Faction" (*eritheia,* STRIFE-) is "a group or clique within a larger group . . . ; party strife and intrigue; dissension."[1]

"Vainglory" is "excessive elation or pride over one's own achievements, abilities, etc.; boastful vanity"[2] (*cf* Galatians 5:26: "We may not become vainglorious, *challenging* one another, *envying* one another").

1. Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1); based on the RANDOM HOUSE UNABRIDGED DICTIONARY, Random House, Inc. 2006.
2. *ibid.*

Accordingly, then, the apostle Paul would have us "with humility, [be] deeming one another superior to one's self, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also."

Eritheia ("faction, CV) is a derivative of *eris* (STRIFE), which itself is the equivalent of the English "strife," which speaks of "enmity or zeal in action, evil competition"[3] (*cf* Rom.13:13, "strife and jealousy"; *cp* 2 Cor.12:20).

If "with humility," we are "deeming one another superior to one's self, not each noting that which is his own, but each that of others also," we will simply have no room for faction, strife, vainglory, jealousy, competition, envy, or challenging of one another. May the virtues and the benefits we find in Christ as we center upon them, keep us from engaging in these sundry yet closely related evils.

For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also, Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and, being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (2:5-8)

We are to "see to it" ("let this disposition be in you") that the disposition of Christ be in us, living and operative in our lives. This is our duty, or "role responsibility"; the fact that we have no resources of our own with which to fulfill this obligation does not exempt us therefrom, apart from which we cannot be well pleasing to God. Therefore, we must look to God in His saving grace to transform us by the renewing of our mind (Rom.12:2), if we would in any measure at all fulfill this lofty counsel.

3. KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry "strife," p.290.

"The supreme example of self-abasement set before us in the Scriptures is the descent of Christ from the form of God to the death of the cross, from the zenith of celestial glory to the deepest depth of earthly degradation. We are exhorted to cultivate His humble disposition, so contrary to all our own ambitions and counter to the spirit of the world about us, that we may emulate Him in devotion to the welfare of others, though it involves our own humiliation.

"In the course of this exhortation we are reminded of the *kenōsis* [i.e., 'emptying'] of the Christ, that which changed Him from the form of God to the form of a slave . . . .'

"In Paul's exhortation he presents for our emulation two distinct acts of Christ, the *kenōsis* and the *tapeinōsis*, the emptying and the humbling. The first describes His descent from the form of God to the form of a slave; the second His descent from the fashion of a man to the fashion of death most detestable to men and most obnoxious to God, the death of the cross. As He was in the form of God before He took the form of a slave and a human frame, the *kenōsis* is the inspired term for the change which accompanied His incarnation."[4]

THE FORM OF GOD[5]

The entire *complement of* the "Deity" [or, "*d*eity," *theotês*, PLACERship, the "GOD*ness*" or PLACERship *of* God] is dwelling *bodily* in Christ (Col.2:9). In a *bodily* way, the entire array of *that which pertains to* God is *dwelling in* Christ. Since the entirety of that which pertains *to* God yet cannot be communicated *by* God in Himself, Who is spirit, is dwelling bodily *in* Christ, it follows that Christ Himself is *not* the Deity.

Similarly, since, in His "pre-existence," Christ alone was

4. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.21, pp.197,202.

5. James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.86, pp.69,70.

"inherently [lit., "inhering," i.e., existing by right] in the form *of* God," He, accordingly, "deem[ed] it not pillaging to be *equal with* God" (Phil.2:6,7).

Since Christ is the Son of God, He is a Being distinct from God. Christ therefore was not equal to God in an identification-of-person sense; instead, the *appearance* of Christ was in a form which is to be identified as that which is proper to Deity. To all appearances, Christ was the same as, or "equal to," God.

We are not told that Christ is a Form of God (and, therefore, that Christ is a mere Form, instead of a tangible, actual Being). Instead, we are told that God's Anointed, *Christ,* before He emptied Himself, was "inherently *in* the form *of* God" (Phil.2:6). Form refers not to inward essence but merely to external appearance (e.g., 2 Tim.3:5). The form of God was not a manifestation of what Christ was in Himself, but a representation of His God. His glory consisted not in actually being the Deity, but in possessing the visible appearance through which God had chosen to manifest Himself.

"The form of God," does not refer us to that of which God Himself is composed, nor is it an expression corollarial to the notion that God Himself is a corporeal being. Instead, it refers to the personal *appearance* of *Christ,* in which He inhered and thus deemed it not pillaging to be *equal* with *God* (lit., "ANOINTED JESUS WHO IN FORM OF-GOD belongING . . ."). Christ was inherently in the "of-God" *form;* thus He *appeared* to be the Deity. He Who is the Image of the invisible God, existed in the form which is proper to Deity, the form in which God would have Himself made manifest.

IN THE NAME OF "JESUS"!

Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the

name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father. (2:9-11)

It is in response to the fact that Christ voluntarily emptied Himself, descending from the highest to the lowest place, that God now highly exalts Him. Even so, in bestowing the name Jesus (*Iêsous;* "Yahweh-SAVIOUR) upon Him, God does not *reward* Him with this name, but instead *graces* Him with this name, the name that is above every name.

Our Lord declared, "Now the Father, remaining in Me, *He is doing His works*" (John 14:10). All is *out of* God (Rom. 11:36), including the obedience of Christ unto death (*cf* Acts 4:27,28). Christ's obedience, too, then, even as our own, is ultimately the work of God. All is *for* God (Rom. 11:36), to Whom alone all ultimate glory is due.

It is in the name of "Jesus," that is, "Yahweh-*Saviour,*" that every knee should be bowing, whether celestial, terrestrial, or subterranean, and every tongue should be *acclaiming* that Jesus Christ is *Lord,* to the glory of God, the *Father.* Thus it is evident that it is the *Saviourhood* and *Lordship* of Jesus Christ even as the *glory* of God as *Father,* that is in view here, when every knee bows and every tongue declares.

By usage, it is necessarily an "acclamation" (as opposed to a negative "confession"); that is, a proclamation made with enthusiastic approval, for all is declared unto the *glory* of God—the glory of God, *the Father.*

In the coming eons, those who are God's people, will enjoy either "the allotment of the land" (Matt.5:5), or an allotment among the celestials (*cf* Eph.1:3; 2:6), in the case of those whose "realm is inherent in the heavens" (Phil.3:20).

However, during this extended period, by far the greater portion of mankind's only allotment will be a "subterranean" one, in the sleep of death.

"Subterranean" (*kata chthonion,* DOWN-TERRANEAN), by its elements, signifies "down" (or "in accord with") "[the] terrain." Nevertheless, even those who in oncoming eons know no other allotment than a "down-terranean" one (save for the day of their judging), will, at the consummation (1 Cor.15:22,23,28), be vivified themselves, and join in the *universal* chorus, bowing their knee and acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father.

So that, my beloved, according as you always obey, not as in my presence only, but now much rather in my absence, with fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation into effect, for it is God Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight. (2:12,13)

"*So that* . . . ." That is, since it is the case that the glorious goal which he has just rehearsed, in due time, *will* be achieved, in light of this, Paul goes on to entreat, saying: "according as you always obey, not as in my presence only, but now much rather in my absence, with fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation into effect . . . ."

"According as you always obey . . . ." It is true that because of "the spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus," all genuine believers have a new disposition and a new walk, according to the *measure* of grace granted them (*cf* Rom.8:1-4). However, because of the limited and imperfect obedience of even the most noble of believers, it is evident that Paul's words here are not intended categorically but relatively, and are more exhortative in their intent than strictly accurate in their historicity. To speak thus, however, in such a case, is reflective of wisdom, as in the adage, penned many centuries after the lifetime of Paul: "Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you will help them become what they are capable of becoming."[6]

". . . *with fear and trembling,* be carrying your own sal-

6. Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749–1832).

vation into effect, *for it is God Who is operating in you . . . .*" We do not fear and tremble in light of the impending era of indignation, for "being now justified in [Christ's] blood, we shall be saved from indignation through Him" (Rom.5:9). Accordingly, we enjoy "the expectation of salvation, for God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:8,9; *cp* 1 Thess.1:10).

Still, since it is God Himself Who is operating in us as we carry our salvation into effect, it is only fitting that we do so "with fear and trembling." Any literal "fear" here, however, is simply that of a healthy fear to displease, born out of a longing to be well pleasing. Our "fear" of God—which is the beginning both of wisdom and of knowledge (Psa.111:10; Prov.1:7)—is essentially a matter of deep reverence and extreme awe. It is a reverential fear, motivated by love and gratitude, not by a spirit of terror. Similarly, we would tremble solely out of awe and wonder, in consideration of the wondrous fact that God Himself deigns to operate in *us*.

First of all, here, we should note that any "salvation" that we carry into effect, is necessarily a practical salvation, not our positional salvation in Christ. Our positional salvation in Christ is "not in accord with our acts, but in accord with [God's] own purpose and the *grace* given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian" (2 Tim.1:9; *cp* Eph.1:4).

Conversely, our practical salvation, by which, as the case may be, we are either *delivered* from sin and danger, or *kept* from sin and danger, is something in which we are very much involved, for it is we ourselves who must carry it "into effect."

Even so, our need for God is just as vital as concerns our practical salvation as in the matter of our positional salvation in Christ, through the blood of His cross. Ultimately speaking, we are no more capable in ourselves of either

delivering or keeping ourselves from sin and danger, than we are of achieving a justified standing before God through our own works. It follows, then, whenever we do either *get* ourselves out of trouble or *keep* ourselves out of trouble, that we do so as God's achievement (*cf* Eph.2:10), not as some sort of demigods that are ultimately, somehow "on their own"—ones who accordingly enjoy their own independent glory, quite apart from the Almighty.

How glorious it is to learn, then, that when we ourselves, as the proximate cause thereof, "effect" or "produce" our "own [practical] salvation," we do so as those in whom God Himself, as the ultimate cause thereof is "operating," doing so "for the sake of His delight." Literally, it is God Who is operating in us, "THE TO-BE-WILLING AND THE TO-BE-IN-ACTING" (Phil.2:13) in which we engage, in all such cases.

All be doing without murmurings and reasonings, that you may become blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse among whom you are appearing as luminaries in the world, having on the word of life, for my glorying in the day of Christ, that I did not run for naught, neither that I toil for naught. (2:14-16)

Where the Scriptures speak against "reasonings," they have in view not the ratiocinative (i.e., "reasoning") process itself, per se, which indeed is essential to rational thought, but the "*wicked* reasonings" (Matt.15:19) and "*evil* reasonings" (Mark 7:21) which arise out of man's own sinful heart. These result in evil and wicked acts (hence they are wicked and evil reasonings), whether one's syllogisms employed unto such ends, as such, should be valid or invalid.

We would not "murmur," nor wickedly "reason"; and, we would avoid all such evils that we may be becoming blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse indeed.

But even if I am a libation on the sacrifice and ministration of your faith, I am rejoicing myself and rejoicing together with you all. Now, to be mutual, you also be rejoicing, and be rejoicing together with me. (2:17,18)

Under the law, the priest poured a "libation" (i.e., liquid offering) onto the sacrifice (Num.15:5). Paul had simply "poured himself out" into the lives of the Philippians, as they presented themselves before God in the actions related to their faith, which is to say, in the "sacrifice and ministration" thereof. Even so, in this, he was rejoicing, and entreats the Philippians to join him in rejoicing as well.

Now I am expecting, in the Lord Jesus, to send Timothy to you quickly, that I also may be of good cheer when I know of your concerns. For I have no one equally sensitive, who will be so genuinely solicitous of your concerns, for all are seeking that which is their own, not that which is Christ Jesus'. (2:19-21)

Of all those whom Paul might send to assist the Philippians, Timothy alone was suited for faithful service. Alas, all the rest were seeking that which was their own, not that which is Christ Jesus'.

Now you know his testedness, that, as a child with a father, he slaves with me for the evangel. This one, indeed, then, I am expecting to send—as ever I may be perceiving my course from the things about me—forthwith. Yet I have confidence in the Lord that I myself shall also be coming quickly. (2:22-24)

As we make our plans concerning any proposed future activities, rather than seeking the guidance of signs or miraculous revelations, let us instead imitate Paul here as well and be *perceiving* our course "from the things about [us]," as a more faithful indicator of what may lie ahead.

Now I deem it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, yet your apostle and minister for my need . . . . (2:25)

Epaphroditus' "apostleship" or commission consisted simply in acting as courier in order to bring the Philippians' contribution to Paul. This example illustrates the elementary, essential meaning of the term.

. . . since, in fact, he was longing for you all and depressed, because you hear that he is infirm. For he is infirm, also, very nigh death, but God is merciful to him, yet not to him only, but to me also, lest I should be having sorrow on sorrow. The more diligently, then, I send him, that seeing him again, you may be rejoicing and I may be more sorrow-free. Receive him, then in the Lord with all joy, and have such in honor, seeing that because of the work of the Lord he draws near unto death, risking his soul that he should fill up your want of ministration toward me. (2:26-30)

"Ministration" (or "ministry," *leitourgia,* PEOPLE-ACT-ion) speaks of active, personal service on behalf of another (*cf* Luke 1:28; *cp* 2 Cor.9:12). Even if the Philippians were willing to make some contribution to Paul's need, they were deficient in the matter of "ministration" or personal care on his behalf.

Concerning Epaphroditus: "This is a most pathetic picture of the suffering which often accompanies the service of the Lord in this economy. In the previous economy Paul could and would have healed Epaphroditus, for his very handkerchief was potent with power (Acts 19:11,12). That course was in keeping with the kingdom which he then proclaimed. But now, when all blessing is spiritual (Eph.1:3), Paul does not attempt to heal Epaphroditus and tells Timothy to use a sip of wine for his frequent infirmities (1 Tim.5:23). How full of feeling is the statement that he was depressed, not by his own condition, but because the Philippians had heard of it and would be concerned about him!"[7] J.R.C.

7. A. E. Knoch, THE CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.299.

INDEX TO VOLUME 111

Blood of Christ's Cross, The 95
Christ in Judgment and Salvation 138
Colossians 1:1-2; 4:10-18 23
Colossians 1:3-8; 4:7-9 39
Colossians 1:9-2:7 51
Colossians 4:2-6 85
Colossians 2:8-23 97
Colossians 3:1-4:1 109
Colossians 1:19-20 177
Complement of the Deity, The 160
Death of the Cross, The 133
Except What is Human 116
Framework of Colossians 2
God and Christ 155
God's Will and Intention 123
Growing in the Realization of God 177
His Grandest Glories 10
Introduction and Conclusion (to Colossians) 23
Love and Will of God, The 167
Mutual Reports 39
Obituaries: K. Land 114, B. Thompson 115
G. Venlet 38
On Thy Account 147
Paul to the Colossians 3
Philosophy and Religion 97
Questions and Answers 133
Reconciliation of All to God, The 186
Secret of the Christ, The, (Its Realization) 51
Secret of the Christ, The, (Its Manifestation) 85
Studies in Colossians 10,23,39,51,85,109
That Which is Above 109

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Contents:

2 Framework of Colossians
3 Paul to the Colossians
10 His Grandest Glories
23 Colossians (Introduction and Conclusion)
39 Mutual Reports (Colossians 1:3-8–4:7-9)

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FRAMEWORK OF COLOSSIANS

Repeated Reversion

SALUTATIONS

INTRODUCTION 1[1-2]

MUTUAL REPORTS

Report of Epaphras to Paul 1[3-8]

THE SECRET OF CHRIST

THE SECRET OF CHRIST
Its Realization 1[9]-2[7]

CORRECTION

DOCTRINE 2[8-23]
Philosophy 2[8]
Empty Seduction 2[8]
Human Tradition 2[8]
Elements 2[8]
God's Complement **2[9]**
Our Complement **2[10]**
Circumcision, Baptism
Decrees 2[11-14]
Sovereignties and
Authorities 2[15]
Shadows, Food and Drink 2[16-19]
Teachings of Men 2[20-23]

DEPORTMENT 3[1]-4[1]
Christ in Heaven 3[1-4]
Put to Death Members
on Earth 3[5-7]
Put Off the Old Humanity 3[8-11]
Put On the Young Humanity 3[12-17]
Modify Relationships on Earth 3[18-21]
Master in Heaven 3[22]-4[1]

THE SECRET OF CHRIST
Its Expression 4[2-6]

Tychicus to the Colossians 4[7-9]

CONCLUSION 4[10-18]

PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS

1 Paul, an **apostle of Christ Jesus, through God's will, and** ˙**brother Timothy,** [2] **to the saints and believing brethren in Christ in Colosse:**

Grace to ⁼**you and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ.**

[3] **We are thanking the God and Father of our** ˙**Lord Jesus Christ, always praying**° **concerning** ⁼**you,** [4] on ¯**hearing** of ⁼**your** ˙**faith in Christ Jesus and the love which** ⁼**you** ˡ**have** *io*˙**for all the saints,** [5] **because** of **the expectation** ˙**being reserved**° for ⁼**you in the heavens, which** ⁼**you hear before in the word of** ˙**truth of the evangel,** [6] ˙which, **being present** *io*˙**with** ⁼**you, accord**ing **as in the entire world also,** ˡ**is bearing**° **fruit and growing**°**, accord**ing **as** it is **among** ⁼**you also, from** the **day** on **which** ⁼**you hear and realize the grace of** ˙**God in truth,** [7] **accord**ing **as** ⁼**you learn** it **from Epaphras, our** ˙**beloved fellow slave, who** ˡ**is** a **faithful dispenser of** ˙**Christ** *ov*˙**for us,** [8] ˙who **makes evident also to us** ⁼**your** ˙**love in spirit.**

[9] **Therefore we**´ **also, from** the **day** on **which we hear,** do **not** ˡ**cease**° **praying**° *ov*˙**for** ⁼**you and requesting**° **that** ⁼**you may be filled full** with **the realization of His** ˙**will, in** *e*˙**all wisdom and spiritual understanding,** [10] ⁼**you to walk worthily of the Lord** *io*˙**for** *e*˙**all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing**° **in the realization of** ˙**God;** [11] **being endued**° *i*˙**with** *e*˙**all power,** in **accord** with **the might of His** ˙**glory,** *io*˙**for** *e*˙**all endurance and patience with joy;** [12] at the **same time** giv**ing thanks to the Father,** ˙Who makes ⁼**you competent** *io*˙**for** a ˙**part of the** al**lot**ment **of the saints, in** ˙**light,** [13] **Who rescues**° **us out of the jurisdiction**

of ˙Darkness, and transports us **into the kingdom of the Son of His ˙love,** 14 **in Whom we are having the deliverance, the pardon of ˙sins,** 15 **Who ˡis** the **Image of the invisible ˙God, Firstborn of every creature,** 16 *t* **for in Him is ˙all created,** ˙that **in the heavens and** ˙that **on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, ˙all is ˚created° through Him and** *io* **for Him,** 17 **and He´ ˡis before all, and ˙all has** its **cohesion in Him.**

18 **And He´ ˡis the Head of the body, the ecclesia, Who ˡis ˙Sovereign, Firstborn** *o* **from** among **the dead** ones**, that in all He´ may become° ˡfirst,** 19 *t* **for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell,** 20 **and through Him to reconcile ˙all** *io* **to Him (¯making peace through the blood of His ˙cross), through Him, whether** ˙those **on the earth or** ˙those **in the heavens.**

21 **And ¯you, being once ˚estranged° and enemies** in **˙comprehension,** *i* **by ˙wicked ˙acts,** 22 **yet now He reconciles** *i* **by His ˙body of ˙flesh, through His ˙death, to present ¯you holy and flawless and unimpeachable in His sight,** 23 **since surely ¯you are persisting** in **the faith, ˚grounded° and settled and** are **not being removed° from the expectation of the evangel which ¯you hear** ˙which is **heralded in the entire creation** ˙which is **under ˙heaven of which I´, Paul, become°** the **dispenser.** 24 **I am now rejoicing in my ˙sufferings** *ov* **for ¯you, and am filling up in my ˙flesh, in** His **stead, the deficiencies of the afflictions of ˙Christ,** *ov* **for His ˙body, which ˡis the ecclesia** 25 **of which I´ become°** a **dispenser,** in **accord** with **the administration of ˙God,** ˙which is **granted to me** *io* **for ¯you, to complete the word of ˙God—**26 **the secret** ˙which **ˡhas been concealed° from the eons and from the generations, yet now is** made **manifest to His ˙saints,** 27 **to whom ˙God wills to make known** *a* **what** are **the glori**ous **˙riches of this ˙secret among the nations, which ˡis: Christ among ¯you, the glori**ous **˙expectation—**28 **Whom we´ are announcing, admonishing every human and teaching every human in** *e* **all wisdom, that we should present every human mature in Christ Jesus;** 29 *io* **for which I am toiling also, struggling°** in **accord** with **His ˙operation,** ˙which is **operating° in me** *i* **with power.**

2 **For I ˡwant ¯you to ˚perceive what** the **struggle amount**s to which **I am having** *ov* **for ¯your** sakes **and** for ˙those **in Laodicea, and whoever have not seen my ˙face in flesh,** 2 **that their ˙hearts may be consoled, united in love, and** *io* **to** *e* **all** the **riches of the assurance of ˙understanding,** *io* **unto** a **realization of the secret of the God and Father of ˙Christ,** 3 **in Whom all the treasures of ˙wisdom and ˙knowledge are concealed.** 4 *y* **Now I am saying this, that no one may be beguiling° ¯you** *i* **with persuasive word**s. 5 **For ⁺even if,** in **˙flesh, I am being absent,** *bt* **nevertheless,** in **˙spirit, I ˡam** *tg* **with ¯you, rejoicing and observing ¯your ˙order and the stability of ¯your ˙faith** *io* **in Christ.**

6 **As then ¯you accept ˙Christ Jesus, the Lord, be walking in Him,** 7 **having been rooted° and being built° up in Him, and being confirmed° in the faith accord**ing **as ¯you are taught, superabounding in it** *i* **with thank**sgiv**ing.**

8 **ˡBeware** that **no** *a* **one shall be ˙despoiling ¯you through ˙philosophy and empty seduction,** in **accord** with **˙human ˙tradition,** in **accord** with **the elements of the world, and not** in **accord** with **Christ,** 9 *t* **for in Him the entire complement of the Deity is dwelling bodily.** 10 **And ¯you ˡare ˚complete° in Him, Who ˡis the Head of every sovereignty and authority,** 11 **in Whom ¯you are circumcised also** with a **circumcision not made** by **hand**s**, in the stripping off of the body of ˙flesh in the circumcision of ˙Christ.** 12 **Entombed together** with **Him in ˙baptism, in Whom ¯you are roused together also through the faith**fulness **of the operation of ˙God,** ˙Who **rouses Him** *o* **from** among **the dead** one**s,** 13 **¯you also being dead to the offenses and the uncircumcision of ¯your ˙flesh, He vivifies us together** *tg* **jointly** with **Him,**

¯deal**ing grac**iously° with **all our ˙offenses,** 14 ¯**erasing the handwriting** of **the decrees against us, which ˡwas hostile to us, and has taken it away out of the midst,** ¯**nailing it to the cross,** 15 ¯**stripping**° **off the sovereignties and ˙authorities,** *i*˙**with boldness He makes** a **show** of them, ¯**triumphing** over **them in it.**

16 **Let no** *a*˙**one then be judging** ⁼**you in food or in drink or in** the **partic**ulars **of** a **festival, or of** a **new moon, or of sabbaths,** 17 **which ˡare** a **shadow of** ˙those things which are **impending—yet the body** is **the Christ's.** 18 **Let no one be arbitrating against** ⁼**you,** who ˡ**wants, in humility and** the **ritual of the messengers,** to ˡ**parade what he has seen, feignedly,** ˡ**puffed**° **up by his** ˙**flesh**ly ˙**mind,** 19 **and not holding the Head, out of Whom the entire body, being supplied**° **and united**° **through the assimilation and ligaments, is growing** in **the growth of** ˙**God.** 20 **If then** ⁼**you die together** with **Christ from the elements of the world,** *a*˙**why, as living in** the **world, are** ⁼**you** subject to ˡ**decrees**°**:** 21 **"You should not touch, nor yet taste, nor yet** come into **contact"** 22 **(which** things **are all** *io*˙**for corruption from** ˙**use),** in **accord** with **the directions and teachings of** ˙**human** beings**?—**23 **which***a* ˡ**are (having indeed** an **expression of wisdom in** a **will**ful **ritual and humility and asceticism) not** *i*˙**of any value** *td*˙**against** the **surfeiting of the flesh.**

3 **If then** ⁼**you are roused together** with ˙**Christ, be seeking** ˙that which is **above, where** ˙**Christ ˡis, sitting**° *i*˙**at** the **right** hand **of** ˙**God.** 2 **Be setting** your **mind** on ˙that which is **above, not** on ˙that **on the earth,** 3 **for** ⁼**you die, and** ⁼**your** ˙**life is** ˚**hid**° **together** with ˙**Christ in** ˙**God.** 4 **Whenever** ˙**Christ, our** ˙**Life, should be manifested, then** ⁼**you´ also shall be ˡmanifested together** with **Him in glory.**

5 **Deaden then** ⁼**your** ˙**members** ˙that are **on the earth: prostitution, uncleanness, passion, evil desire and** ˙**greed, which***a* ˡ**is idolatry,** 6 **because** of **which the indignation of** ˙**God is coming**° **on the sons of** ˙**stubbornness—**7 **among whom** ⁼**you´ also once** ¯**walked, when** ⁼**you were living in these** things.

8 **Yet now** ⁼**you´ also put**° **away** ˙**all** these: **anger, fury, malice, calumny, obscenity out of** ⁼**your** ˙**mouth.** 9 Do **not** ˡ**lie**° *io*˙**to one another,** ¯**stripping**° **off the old humanity together** with **its** ˙**practices,** 10 **and** ¯**putting**° **on the young,** ˙which is **being renewed**° **into recognition,** to **accord** with the **Image of the** One Who **creates it,** 11 **wherein** there ˡ**is no***t* **Greek and Jew, Circumcision and Uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free**man, **but** ˙**all and in all** is **Christ.**

12 **Put**° **on then as** ˙**God's chosen** one**s, holy and** ˚**beloved**°**, pitiful compassions, kindness, humility, meekness, patience,** 13 **bearing**° **with one another and** deal**ing grac**iously° among **yourselves, if any**one **should be having** a **complaint** *td*˙**against any. Accord**ing **as the Lord also** deals **grac**iously° with ⁼**you, thus also** ⁼**you.** 14 *y*˙**Now** *on*˙**over all these** put on ˙**love, which***a* ˡ**is** the **tie of** ˙**maturity.** 15 **And let the peace of** ˙**Christ be arbitrating in** ⁼**your** ˙**hearts,** *io*˙**for which** ⁼**you are called also in one body; and ˡbecome**° ⁼**thankful.** 16 **Let the word of** ˙**Christ be** mak**ing** its **home** *i* **in** ⁼**you richly, in** *e*˙**all wisdom, teaching and admonishing yourselves;** in **psalms,** in **hymns,** in **spiritual songs, singing** *i*˙**with** ˙**grace in** ⁼**your** ˙**hearts to** ˙**God.** 17 **And every**thing, *a*˙**whatsoever** ⁼**you may be doing, in word or in act,** do **all in** the **Name of the Lord Jesus Christ,** giv**ing thanks to** ˙**God,** the **Father, through Him.**

18 ˙**Wives, be ˡsubject**° **to** your ˙**husbands, as ˡis proper in** the **Lord.** 19 ˙**Husbands,** ˡ**love** ˙your *sf*˙**own wives and be not** ˡ**bitter**° **toward them.** 20 ˙**Children,** ˡ**obey** your ˙**parents** *ac*˙**in all** things, **for this ˡis well pleasing in** the **Lord.** 21 ˙**Fathers,** do **not** ˡ**vex** ⁼**your** ˙**children, lest they may be ˡdisheartened.**

22 ˙**Slaves,** ˡ**obey** *ac*˙**in all** things your ˙**masters accord**ing to the **flesh, not** *i*˙**with eye-slavery, as human-pleasers, but** *i*˙**with singleness of heart, fearing**° **the Lord.** 23 *e*˙**All, whatsoever** ⁼**you may be doing,** ˡ**work**° *o*˙**from** the **soul, as to the**

Lord and not to human beings, 24 **being** °**aware that from** the **Lord** =**you will be getting**° **the compensation of the enjoyment of** an **allotment:** for **the Lord Christ are** =**you slaving.** 25 **For he** ·who is **injuring shall be** |**requited**° for that **which he injures, and** there |**is no**[t] **partiality.**

4 ·**Masters,** |**tender**° ·that which is **righteous and** ·**equitable to** your ·**slaves, being** °**aware that** =**you´ also** |**have** a **Master in** the **heaven**s.

2 In ·**prayer be persevering, watching in it** [i]**with thanksgiv**ing, 3 **praying**° at the **same time concerning us also, that** ·**God should open** for **us** a **door of the word, to speak the secret of** ·**Christ, because** of **which I am** °**bound**° **also,** 4 **that I should** make **it manifest, as I** |**must speak.** 5 **In wisdom be walking toward** ·those **out**side**, reclaiming**° **the era,** 6 =**your** ·**word** being **always** [i]**with grace,** °**seasoned**° with **salt, perceiv**ing **how** =**you** |**must** |**answer**° **each one.**

7 **All my** ·[ac]**affairs shall be made** |**known to** =**you** by **Tychicus,** a ·**beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow slave in** the **Lord,** 8 **whom I send to**[d] =**you** [io]**for this same** thing, **that** =**you may know** ·that which **concerns** =**you and he should be consoling** =**your** ·**hearts,** 9 **together** with **Onesimus,** a ·**faithful and beloved brother, who** |**is** one [o] **of** =**you. They shall make** |**known to** =**you all** things ·**here.**

10 **Greeting**° =**you is Aristarchus, my** ·**fellow captive, and Mark,** ·**cousin** of **Barnabas (concerning whom** =**you obtain directions: if he should come to**[d] =**you, receive**° **him),** 11 **and Jesus,** ·|**termed**° **Justus,** ·who |**are** [o] **of** the **Circumcision. These** are the **only fellow workers** [io]**for the kingdom of** ·**God who**[a] **become** a **solace to me.**

12 **Greeting**° =**you is Epaphras,** ·who is one [o] **of** =**you,** a **slave of Christ Jesus, always struggling**° [ov]**for** =**you in** ·**prayers, that** =**you may stand mature and fully** °**assured**° **in** [e]**all** the **will of** ·**God.** 13 **For I am testifying** of **him that he** |**has much misery over** =**you and** ·those **in Laodicea and** ·those **in Hierapolis.**

14 **Greeting**° =**you is Luke, the beloved** ·**physician, and Demas.** 15 **Greet**° **the brethren in Laodicea, and Nympha and the ecclesia** [ac]**at her house.** 16 **And whenever the epistle should be read** [b]**to** =**you,** [do]**cause that it should be read in the Laodicean ecclesia also, and that** =**you´ also may read** ·that **out of Laodicea.** 17 **And say to Archippus: "**|**Look** to **the service which you accept in** the **Lord, that you may be fulfilling it."** 18 **The salutation** is by **my** ·**hand—Paul's.** |**Remember my** ·**bonds!**

·**Grace** be **with** =**you! Amen!**

EDITORIAL NOTES

WE GIVE special attention to Paul's letter to the Colossians in this issue. It begins on page 2, in place of the usual poem, with the Framework as used in the first edition of the Concordant Version. Its usefulness is especially noted on page 19 under the subheading, THE LITERARY STRUCTURE.

The revised CV of Colossians as it currently stands follows. Changes in 2:12 are of particular interest. The terms "Entombed together" and "are roused together" both reflect what we recognize now as *fact* verb forms, where the fact of the action is emphasized irrespective of the time. Furthermore, the phrase, "through faith *in* the operation of God" is changed to a more literal rendering of the Greek: "through the faithfulness *of* the operation of God." To be roused together in Christ is certainly a matter of faith, and indeed of our faith. But here Paul points to God's faith in His faithful operation of rousing.

In accord with Brother Knoch's desire that the CV translation be an ongoing project, he himself discusses on pages 13-19, changes made in Ephesians 1:15-17 from the first edition (called the "Complete Edition") to the later editions. In this case, he maintained that the original thought was correct, but not well expressed in English idiom and according to the Concordant principle of consistency.

Along with, and beyond such matters, may we all be rejoicing in the revelations of "the Christ of Colossians." D.H.H.

HIS GRANDEST GLORIES

CHRIST and His highest honors come before us in Colossians, even as the *saints* and their celestial blessings are the theme of Ephesians. There the transcendent truths of the present secret administration were set forth as they affect the believers among the nations, who become peers of an election out of Israel in spiritual, supernal dignities. Here these tremendous truths are a halo on the brow of *Christ.* His glories as the Messiah of Israel on the earth are magnified to universal dimensions. *All* is *created* in Him in the beginning, and *all* is reconciled in Him at the consummation (Col.1:16-20). On earth, at present, He is not confined to Israel in flesh, but, in spirit, is found *among the nations.* This is the basis of their future bliss (Col.1:27).

Colossians and Ephesians are very similar, for they teach the same truth, though from different standpoints. To fully appreciate and enjoy these epistles, which are two of the most precious portions of God's revelation for us in this secret administration, it is necessary that we clearly grasp the distinctive view presented in each. Even as Philippians can only be understood in the light of *service,* so Colossians can only be clear to those who see that it deals with *Christ's* relation to the present, even as Ephesians was especially concerned with the place of the *saints,* especially the Uncircumcision.

In reference to the body of Christ the two epistles are complementary. In Ephesians the emphasis is on the *members* of the body, while Colossians presses *Christ's headship* over the ecclesia. Ephesians elaborates the relation of the members to God and to one another, as well as to

Christ Himself. Colossians is largely confined to our connection with Him alone.

In Ephesians, the bulk of the epistle is concerned with an orderly and positive presentation of the truth. Colossians, however, devotes the corresponding space to the correction of departures from it.

Ephesians is general, with no local allusions. Colossians is concerned with a special situation, and a particular ecclesia.

In Ephesians the previous disabilities of the nations *in flesh,* alienated, guests, without prospects, far off (Eph. 2:11-13) are used to form a contrast to their present *spiritual* privileges as fellow-citizens, members of God's family, with a part in the temple (Eph.2:19,20). In Colossians this contrast is replaced by comparing Christ's limited glories in Israel, *in flesh,* with His vast *spiritual* glories among the nations and in the entire universe. This contrast is not directly expressed, as in Ephesians, but is evident in the figures of the kingdom (Col.1:13), and the startling announcement that He is *among the nations* (Col.1:27) whereas He would not leave the land during His ministry to Israel, before His crucifixion.

In Ephesians the body of Christ is the complement of the universe (Eph.1:23). In Colossians we are complete in Him. There the ecclesia is the final factor in bringing all under the headship of Christ. On the earth His headship is exercised through His apostles and the holy nation. These are, figuratively speaking, His "filling" on earth, who share His spiritual might and majesty, and so are, officially, a part of Him. The ecclesia which is His body has the same function in His celestial dominions. These two, earth and heaven, constitute the universe, so that no more "filling" is needed to administer all creation. Hence we are the final "filling," the *plêrōma,* or complement, that which fully fills, so that no more is needed. The adminis-

tration of the universe is amply provided for, both on earth and in the heavens.

In Colossians Christ is a double Complement. He is all that God needs (Col.2:9), and all that we need (Col.2:10), to be complete. God needs a visible and tangible expression suited to the capacities of His creatures, and Christ fulfills this fully by means of the body in which He came to do His will (Heb.10:5).

We, also, find our Complement in Him. All the rites and ceremonies pertaining to the flesh, such as circumcision and baptism, which were deemed essential to a standing before God, are now found in His death, His burial, and His rousing. What *He has done, not* what *we do,* fully equips us for the divine presence. In Ephesians, *we* are the complement of all, but in Colossians *He* is our Complement.

In time, our choice is carried back to before the disruption (Eph.1:4). Christ is carried back to creation, for He is the Firstborn (Col.1:15). Our blessings are among the celestials. *All* was created in and through and for Him (Col.1:16). We are joint-members of the body (Eph.3:6). He is Head of the body (Col.1:18). We, as His complement, *complete* the universe (Eph.1:23). He uses the entire complement to *reconcile* the universe to God (Col.1:20). In Ephesians the secret consists of the *joint*-enjoyment of the allotment among the celestials, the *joint*-membership in the body, and *joint*-participation in the promises by the *saints* among the nations. In Colossians the same truth is expressed by putting *Christ among* the nations, instead of in Israel, to whom He has hitherto been confined (Col.1:27).

The secret of Christ, that He is to head up the entire universe (Eph.1:10) had been partially made known to the prophets of old, though not in its fullness, "as it is now revealed" (Eph.3:5). That part of this secret which they made known, His messiahship to Israel, is used as a background in this epistle. His future kingdom in the new earth is used to figure His present spiritual dominion, "the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Col.1:14). His future presence in Israel, constituting them the ruling nation, finds its parallel in His present spiritual presence among the nations, constituting them His complement for the future administration of His celestial realms (Col.1:27; Eph.1:21-23).

"YOUR FAITH" AND "ACCORDING-TO YOU*p* FAITH"

Colossians is by no means a repetition of Ephesians. Even those paragraphs which seem to be parallel have minute variations which, when sympathetically examined, will show how exquisite the separate details harmonize with the special subject of the whole. Thus, in Colossians, we read of "*your* faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints" (Col.1:4), which is very simple and readily understood. Why then, in Ephesians, should we find "the *according-to you* faith, and the [faith] for all the saints" (Eph.1:15)? The Authorized Version renders both "your," but the Revisers, who were keen in such matters, changed it to "which is *among you.*" One of the best German versions reads "*in* you." Another has "*with* you," but puts "*concerning* you" in the margin, as the real translation. Luther has "*with* you." The YOU is plural *(p).*

Before examining the evidence, let us remind ourselves that Ephesians is devoted to setting forth precisely what this marginal reading ("concerning you") suggests, that is, the special faith which concerns us in this administration as distinct from the truth for other times, and, besides, it seems to have no special bearing on any particular group of saints (as the Ephesians), unless this passage is so interpreted. If all the saints in Christ Jesus are before us, and the apostle refers to that body of faith which is especially theirs, then this peculiar wording, "the *according-to you* faith" is not only fitting but necessary to express his thought.

But, if he is simply referring to the faith exercised by the special group whom he addresses, then the simple "*your* faith," as in Colossians, is appropriate. One phrase fits Ephesians, the other Colossians.

But how should THE according-to YOU *(tên kath humas)* be translated? That it should not be rendered simply "your," as in the Authorized Version, seems beyond question, first, because this is the regular rendering of the simple genitive pronoun OF-YOU*p (humōn)*, which occurs ever so often, and concerning which there is never any difference of opinion. Consequently the *accusative* pronoun, with the connective DOWN *(according-to* with the accusative), a combination which occurs but seldom, should at least be translated otherwise in order to preserve the distinction. In order to help us to arrive at a clear conception of the nature of this special phrase in Greek we present a number of passages in which this same combination is found, grouped according to the nature of the context, which helps to determine the translation into English.

THE *according-to* YOU OR ME

Acts	24:22	[Felix] shall investigate *your affairs*
Eph.	6:21	may become acquainted with *my affairs*
Phil.	1:12	*my affairs* have rather come
Col.	4: 7	All *my affairs* shall be made known.

This group seems to sustain the idea that it does not refer to possessions so much as to things pertaining to the person in question. Felix would investigate the circumstances leading to Paul's arrest and the charges against him. The saints would wish to be informed of Paul's case at court. Paul's faith would hardly be included in the reports, as this is contained in the letters themselves.

THE *according-to* [SOMETHING]

1 Tim.	6: 3	teaching *in accord with* devoutness
Titus	1: 1	truth which *accords with* devoutness
Heb.	11: 7	righteousness which *accords with* faith

In these passages *harmonious relation* is expressed plainly by the connective which we are considering. Teaching and truth cannot possess devoutness but they should never conflict with it. Righteousness cannot have faith, but it can be in accord with it. From these passages we may see clearly that mere possession is not in view when this connective is used.

THE *according-to* YOU [SOMETHING]

Acts	17:28	some poets *of yours* have declared
	18:15	questions about . . . a law *of yours*,
Eph.	1:15	the faith which *relates to you* [this faith *of yours*]

Here we have the closest parallels to our text. Certain Greek poets sustained a relation to Paul's hearers, and the law was related to the Jews as this faith was related to those who received Paul's epistle. The law reference is especially helpful, for we are well acquainted with the relation of the law to the Jews. It applied particularly to them and to no others, which seems to be the special point of the passage, for Gallio would not judge according to a law not pertaining to his jurisdiction.

The question of idiomatic translation alone remains. The phrase "of yours," is a peculiar English idiom, in which two signs of the genitive (*of* and *-s*) are added to a word already genitive (your), giving it, not only emphasis, but a vague kind of relativity. This seems to serve very well in connection with the law, as most readers are more or less clear that it was exclusively for the Jews. It would also serve in Ephesians if it were as well known that *the* faith which it reveals relates exclusively to the saints today. Would "this faith of yours" convey the same impression as "this law of yours?" It is questionable, but it may be wise to use it to secure uniformity.

The expression "according-to" does not always comply with the demands of English idiom, as these examples

abundantly show. Hence it is necessary at times to use substitutes, as "suited to" (1 Cor.12:31), "savor of," "corresponding to," "relate to," as was done in this passage (Eph. 1:15). In view of the following sentence, "and that for all the saints," however, which should make its meaning clear, we are considering the rendering "of yours," which will be uniform with the two other occurrences, and avoid the use of the word "relates" in this single passage. Then it will read, "Therefore, *I* also, hearing of this faith *of yours* and that for all the saints . . ."

In passing, let us note that the phrase "when hearing" is not intended as a mark of *time.* A participle is a tenseless verbal adjective. Hence we use *when* to make it *indefinite.* The very highest authorities and Greek scholars, as well as one version, give the participle a "present" force, but this is utterly untenable, although English idiom compels the addition of the present verb in many passages. Here is where a sublinear should help. The Keyword edition has all these verbs in lightface because they are not in the Greek. "On hearing" or "when hearing" show the basis of Paul's thanksgiving and prayer.

Perhaps the idiomatic "*on* hearing" would show this best. The point is that he could not thank or pray as he did until first he had heard. In Colossians he heard of their faith and love. In Ephesians the faith was revealed to him apart from any particular group of saints, and leads to petitions which apply to all the saints of this administration.

It remains to add a few words as to the Greek text in this passage. We do not, as a rule, countenance the many omissions in the text used by the Revisers, merely because a word is not found in Vaticanus. Here most manuscripts add the words "the love" in the following sentence thus: "your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints" (AV). But the most ancient, the three used in compiling the Concordant Version, did not have these words. They

were added by a later editor in Sinaiticus. On many occasions the additions of this editor are of great value. But in Ephesians he seems to be recording the attempts of early expositors to make this epistle understandable after its message was lost. So that his addition of "the love" in this place lacks the weight which his notations usually have.

The thought that we have a special faith is so foreign to theology that this passage has caused much perplexity to translators. The Revisers have added the words *ye shew,* thus: "the faith which is among you, and which [ye shew] toward all the saints." But how can we show faith to the saints? If this is the individual faith of the believer rather than that which they believe, then this should be rendered *into* or *in.* But how could they have faith *in* the saints? The passage can hardly be understood or translated so long as the faith exercised by each one is in view. But once we see that this rare and peculiar expression is used to indicate the things to be believed by them alone, as the law was to be obeyed by Israel alone, and in each case was in accord with their peculiar place in God's purpose, all is clear.

With this beginning of Paul's prayer the following petitions, for a spirit of wisdom and revelation, possess much more point. He prays, in fact, that they may be enabled to comprehend what he writes to them in this epistle. That this is most appropriate is evidenced by the fact that, even if it was understood by its first recipients, there is very little to show that it has ever been apprehended since by any considerable number of saints. It has seldom been accorded its proper place by teachers of the Word. The apostasy from Paul started in his lifetime and has continued ever since.

When the true import of this phrase first dawned upon me it seemed to me that I had discovered a key to the epistle, and I was greatly concerned to give it a clear expression in the version. Hence the rendering "the faith which

relates to you," which still seems to me better than any other I have since seen. But my zeal led me too far in the following petitions, where I made the indefinite pronoun *auton* (OF-it or -Him) refer to this faith. Logically and indirectly I am still convinced of this, but grammatically the word *faith* is feminine in Greek and would be referred to as *her (autês).* It would be *her* realization, *her* calling, *her* allotment, *her* power (Eph.1:17-19).

There is a problem in Greek grammar which deserves further study. The so-called *neuter* forms are not confined to *things,* so the CONCORDANT VERSION has changed the name to *indefinite.* For instance, the article *ta,* indefinite plural, is responsible for the word *things* ten times in the Revised Version of Colossians 1:16-20. And yet it seems clear that impersonal *things* are not at all in view, especially as regards reconciliation. So also, in such expressions as *the stupid, the weak* (foolish *things,* weak *things,* RV, 1 Cor.1:27) it is certainly evident that *things* are not meant, for they are not stupid. It is clear that, in these passages, the indefinite *includes* the other genders. At one time I considered this sufficient ground for the rendering *its* in place of *His* in Ephesians 1:17-19, but now I freely confess that it is inadequate, and so have changed the version to *His* in these verses.

This correction, however, does not affect the rendering of "according-to you," in the beginning of the prayer. Whether the apostle prays that the *faith* may be realized, or *God,* Who gives the faith, comes to much the same result. Whether it is the expectation of *its* call or *His* in it, is not vital. Whether it is the riches of the glory of *its* or *His* allotment, is the same, for in either case it is His. And, even if not expressly limited to the faith by the grammar, all of this which we have from God is nevertheless within the boundaries of the faith to which the apostle refers before commencing his petitions. The call is not God's call to Israel,

but to us, and the expectation and allotment and power is *in accord with (kata),* celestial glory unknown before.

THE LITERARY STRUCTURE

A grasp of the controlling theme of an epistle greatly aids in its apprehension. The same is true of its parts. When we are sure of the subject of any section its interpretation is safer and more satisfactory. And when we can get a view of the whole epistle at a glance, showing the symmetrical relation of its parts, our dull minds are relieved, and our eyes are opened to the special subject of each section, and its relation to the whole, or, perhaps, a similar section in the corresponding member, and its contrasts as well as its likenesses. A casual reading of Colossians will hardly discover the symmetry of its structure or the exquisite relation of its parts, so we reprint the structure for those who may not have seen it before (*cf* p.2).

Within the salutations, and the mutual reports, one at each end, we find the body of the epistle, which deals with the *secret of Christ,* that great revelation concerning Him which had been hitherto withheld or only partially made known, but is now necessary, since the saints have a place among the celestials. Twice is this secret the subject, once in reference to its realization by us, and, near the end, in connection with its expression to others. Between these two come correction in doctrine and in deportment. Perhaps we might come closer to the facts if we further characterized these as *warning* in reference to teaching, and *exhortation* as to walk.

THE SECRET OF CHRIST IN EPHESIANS

It will be seen from this that the controlling theme is the secret of Christ, just as the framework of Ephesians shows that it is concerned with the secret of this administration. Before entering upon our studies in Colossians

it may be well to see what Ephesians has already revealed on this theme, for it is there that we read of the secret of Christ for the first time, and there we have clear indications, not only of its contents, but also of its relation to the present administration of God's grace. It were well if we had these two secrets distinct in our minds before we enter into Colossians.

The first intimation of the secret of Christ in the Ephesian epistle is found in that marvelous opening effusion in which God's blessedness is the keynote of a symphony of blessings for us, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavishes on us, in all wisdom and prudence, making known to us the *secret of His will* . . . to head up *all* in the Christ—in the heavens as well as on the earth. Hitherto the headship of Christ had been confined to the earth. His heavenly headship had been kept secret. But now that an election out of the earth is to share His celestial glories, these must be made known. This, then, is the essence of the secret of Christ—*His universal headship.* Not only is He to have the throne of David, and be King of kings upon the earth, but He will reign throughout the starry spheres, including all creation.

Once more, at the end of the first chapter of Ephesians, when praying that we may perceive the transcendent greatness of the power which operates on our behalf, we are reminded of the mighty strength which roused Christ from among the dead and seated Him at God's right hand among the celestials, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is future: and subjects *all* under His feet. This is the Ephesian aspect.

Here we have still further light. The throne of David is still vacant. The Son of Mankind has not yet taken His seat as earth's Suzerain. He was rejected on earth, but He was acclaimed in the heavens. There He already has the highest

place, at the right hand of the throne of God, though all may not yet respond (1 Peter 3:22). All varieties of heavenly government are subordinate to His sway. There is no name above that of the despised Nazarene. From the accursed cross, beneath the lowest dregs of earth, He has ascended to the highest heights of heaven. Even now He has this place in heaven, and in the eons to come He will include the earth in His universal sway. That Messiah should be Head in heaven even before He took earth's sovereignty was part of the secret hitherto unknown.

Such is the side of the secret of Christ which is set forth in Ephesians. As we shall see, much more is revealed in Colossians, because Ephesians treats of it only insofar as it makes contact with the main theme, which is another secret. This is why, when the apostle comes to make a categorical statement of the three items which characterize the present administration, he prefaces it with a brief allusion to the secret of Christ (Eph.3:3,4). Referring to the passages we have just been considering, he says, "(according as I write before, in brief, by which you who are reading are able to apprehend my understanding in the secret of the Christ, which, in other generations, is not made known to the sons of humanity as it is now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets)."

That these words refer to the secret of Christ, in contrast to the secret administration which is defined in the following words, is clear from the phrase "in brief." The secret administration had been set forth *at length.* Almost all of the preceding chapters was devoted to its details. Hence it was by no means brief. But the two allusions to the secret of Christ (Col.1:10,20-22) were very short, and gave only that side of this secret which was in point. So, likewise, "as it is now revealed" fits the secret of Christ, for the prophets had spoken of His earthly headship. But

it cannot apply to the secret administration, as that was absolutely unknown. No apostle or prophet could have had any inkling of it.

Such is the sum of our knowledge of this secret before we come to Colossians. It was concerned almost wholly with the future. It was limited largely to His relations to the ecclesia which is His body. He will be Head of all. The holy nation will rule the earth in His name. The ecclesia which is His body will be His administrator in celestial spheres. Thus the whole universe will find their Head in Him.

Colossians reveals the secret of Christ in all its fullness. It is not briefly set forth, in relation to the special faith which is ours in Christ, but fully revealed, in relation to all creation, on earth as well as among the celestials, including the nations, as well as Israel, the celestial hosts as well as the members of His body. He is not only Israel's Messiah, and the Saviour of the nations, but the Head of the entire universe and the Reconciler of all.

In Him dwells the Complement of the Deity. At the beginning all is created through Him and at the Consummation all is reconciled through the blood of His cross. And in the eons of the eons He will be the supreme and only Head of all.

O that God would enlarge the hearts of His holy ones to make room for the Christ of Colossians! Some of our hearts, alas, are so shrunk, that we welcome Him only as our own personal Saviour. Even this overflows its narrow confines. May His spirit expand it, by His grace, to give Him His place as Israel's Redeemer, as the Saviour of all mankind, as the Head of all creation, and the Reconciler of all who are stranged from God! Only such a Christ can satisfy the heart of God. Only such a Christ should satisfy our own hungry hearts.

A. E. Knoch

INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

Colossians 1:1-2; 4:10-18

PAUL—what a wealth of grace and overwhelming glory fills our hearts at the very mention of his name! He was the erstwhile enemy of Christ and rabid persecutor of His people, who hunted them down even in distant Damascus. In an instant the glory of Christ stops him in his mad career, and wins his heart, henceforth to worship and work for Him alone. Can grace ever gain a more splendid trophy than Saul of Tarsus, the chief of sinners, yet supreme among the saints? But how much greater was the grace that still awaited him! From glory to glory God led him on, until he reaches the highest honor ever accorded a mortal, for he is the vessel chosen to fill up God's Word and to reveal God's latest secrets, the fruit of His highest thoughts and His deepest love.

Paul presents himself in this epistle as an apostle, for he has been commissioned, and has authority to write and set forth the truths and reveal the secrets which it contains. Apostles are in the foundation (Eph.2:20). These were needed to form a solid substratum for God's operations among mankind. Paul appears alone as apostle in his salutations, especially in those in which his authority is necessary to certify to his words. Yet he sometimes associates others with him, in other capacities. In Colossians, as in second Corinthians, "brother" Timothy joins in the salutation. He is not seen as an apostle, but simply as a brother in the faith.

CHRIST JESUS and Jesus Christ—what a vast difference

between these two titles, though one is merely a transposition of the other! Jesus Christ is the humble, despised, rejected, crucified Messiah. His glories wait until the future, at the time of His return to earth. At present He has no place down here. But Christ Jesus! Already He is highest in the heavens. Seated at the right hand of God, there is no dignity to equal His. All might and power, all sovereignty and authority among the celestials is centered in Him. There He is not humbled, but honored! There He is not despised, but praised! There He is not rejected, but acclaimed! There He is not crucified, but glorified! We hail Him, not only as the coming King upon the earth, but as the present Head of all celestial might and majesty! Hail! Christ Jesus!

THROUGH THE WILL OF GOD

The will of God is the positive pole of the divine intention. God is carrying out His great purpose of revealing His heart by means of two contrary currents during the eons. The mutual reaction of these upon each other accomplish His purpose. One current coincides with His will. The other goes counter to it. One movement is headed by Christ. The other is led on by Satan. Saul of Tarsus, before he met the Lord, was fulfilling the divine intention, for he was preparing the black background on which alone the highlights of God's grace could be displayed. But he was going counter to God's will. After his call, Ananias said to him, "the God of our fathers selects you to know His *will*" (Acts 22:14).

A true apostle must come through the will of God and conform to that will in his words and works. Thus all is traced back to the divine volition. The source of all is found in God's love and its determination to win a response through its activity on our behalf. God wants our love, hence wishes us to know His will. The apostle's first prayer

opens with this petition: That you may be filled with the realization of His will (1:9). This is a root which bears much fruit. Without it our walk will lack those qualities which are dear to God's heart. Wisdom and understanding, as well as a fruitful walk, must grow out of an apprehension of God's will.

TO THE BRETHREN IN COLOSSE

The epistle is addressed, in the first place, to Colosse. Yet it was also sent to Laodicea, and, indeed, is especially meant for all who had not seen Paul's face in the flesh (4:16; 2:1). Like its companion epistles, Ephesians and Philippians, the very mode of communication is in accord with its contents. Flesh has no place. Paul is bound (4:18). He could not go to Colosse in order to tell them these transcendent truths by word of mouth, but is compelled to have his words committed to writing, so that they will be seen rather than heard, and not only can be transported vast distances, far beyond the reach of his voice, but may be imperishably preserved for the future. And so they have come to us.

The recipients of this epistle are distinguished by two tokens—holiness and faith. On God's side they were saints, hallowed by contact with Him. On the human side they had believed in Christ. The title here may be Christ Jesus, as in Alexandrinus, to accord with Ephesians. As the apostle has connected his apostleship with this title, this must be the same in shortened form. This epistle was not sent to all saints without discrimination. In those days there were still some of the Circumcision, as we shall see, to whom Paul was not sent, whose faith did not lay hold of Christ as at present, exalted, but who looked forward to His future rule upon the earth. The faith of the Colossians is expressly said to be in Christ Jesus (1:4).

Faithfulness and trust are the accompaniments of belief.

In the original there are no distinct terms for them. By the figure of association the Greek uses *believing* for *faithful* throughout. Thus, in this very epistle, Paul refers to Tychicus as "a beloved brother and *believing* servant" (4:7). Because belief produces fidelity it is used for it in a figure. English itself has this figure, though it is faded. What is *faithful* if not full of faith, or belief? Yet it has come to mean *trustworthy, dependable,* and the word *believing* is reserved for its literal sense. As we have seen, we must use *faithful* with service, yet when this is not clearly in view it may be better to use *believing.* In connection with *brethren,* believing is probably better, inasmuch as this epistle is not especially devoted to service.

THE INVOCATION

The invocations in Paul's three prison epistles are identical. Just as the body of the epistles commence with blessing or thanking, so the first wish of the apostle's heart for his readers is *grace.* Divine favor lavished upon those who deserve God's indignation will yet be the most precious gem in the crown of His glory. His creatures will be awed by His infinite might. They will be amazed by the wonders of His works. They will marvel at His wisdom. Their hearts will swell with thankfulness for His kindness. Far more precious will be the praise and worship which His mercy will call forth. Yet the highest adoration and the deepest affection will come to Him from those who realize the depths of their deserts and the corresponding heights to which His grace has exalted them.

We should make more of His grace. Not only should it warm our own hearts at all times, but it should pervade our walk and our service. Oh, how great a transformation would it work in the heralding of the evangel, if it were presented in its purity and power! Grace that Saul encountered on the Damascus road. Grace that Paul received to serve the

saints. Grace that enabled him to suffer for Christ's sake. Let us not confine it to the past, to our call, when we first believed. This invocation is not for unbelievers, but for us. Our salvation is not only *by* but *to* or *in* grace (Eph.2:5). Not only did it begin with grace, but it continues so, and will finish with the greatest display of all, when our bodies will be transfigured and glorified.

First grace, then peace. First justification, then reconciliation. Were God not gracious, what could there be but indignation and enmity? But now that His favor hovers over us as a benediction, we may have peace with Him, peace in our spirits, peace with our fellow-saints and the world, yea we may enter into the peace *of* God, and enjoy some measure of the calm with which He is filled, Who knows the end from the beginning, and Whose great aim is to overcome all enmity with love, and clasp His whole creation to His heart in the bonds of perfect and perpetual peace.

These blessings can come from one source alone—from God, Who now looks upon us as His children, and through our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator between us, our Saviour and Lord. We are no longer merely creatures of the great Creator. We have entered the circle of His family and now are children of an affectionate Father. He will be gracious to us and give us peace, through the work of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Indeed, He is our Peace, for He not only reconciles us to God through the blood of His cross, but removes the barriers between the saints, and makes the despised Uncircumcision one with the privileged Circumcision.

THE CONCLUSION

The conclusion of Colossians (4:10-18) consists of greetings whose range corresponds to that of the epistle, as well as Paul's special greetings and directions. The greetings of the group from the Circumcision come first. Christ's head-

ship over the earth is a part of the secret of Christ, and was first revealed, hence it is in keeping with this epistle to bring in three who are associated with Him in this phase of the kingdom. The transition from the heralding of His earthly kingdom to the present is an interesting yet intricate subject. Perhaps there are a few indications here which may help us to understand the place of the believing Circumcisionists when the nation becomes calloused (Rom.11:25) and the heart of the people is made stout (Acts 28:27).

At first glance there seems to be no particular reason for bringing in the characters here presented. Yet one cannot help being struck with their diversity. First we have Aristarchus, Mark, and Jesus, who are definitely said to be of the Circumcision. Then there is Epaphras, fully of the nations. Then there is Luke, who supposedly was closely associated with the Circumcision before the secret of Christ's heavenly headship was made known. May not these be representative of the classes to which they belong? What is said of them is worth the closest attention. And what is *not* said of them, but of the others, is equally striking.

THE CIRCUMCISIONISTS

Aristarchus, Mark, and Jesus are said to be *ek peritomês* OUT OF-Circumcision. Does this mean that they had come out from the Circumcision, as Paul had, or were *still of* the Circumcision? The English might easily suggest the former. This can best be settled by studying the same expression elsewhere. The following passages will show that it clearly denotes those who are still *of* the Circumcision. This is very striking in view of the injunction of the apostle in this very epistle to strip off the old humanity and to put on the young, wherein there is no circumcision (3:9-11). It seems that we must take these Circumcisionists as such.

ek peritomês, OUT OF-Circumcision

Acts	10:45	the believers *of* the *Circumcision* . . . with Peter
	11: 2	those *of* the *Circumcision* doubted [Peter]
Rom.	4:12	not to those *of* the *Circumcision* only
Gal.	2:12	fearing those *of* the *Circumcision*
Titus.	1:10	especially those *of* the *Circumcision*

The Circumcisionists connected with Peter had certainly not come *out* of the Circumcision, but were insistent on the rite, not only for themselves, but for the nations also. Their charge against Peter was, "You enter to men having uncircumcision, and you eat together with them!" (Acts 11:3). So that there is a strong presumption that here, in this universal epistle, we have a group of men representative of the kingdom. And, indeed, does not the apostle actually connect them with the kingdom, using the very terms with which the book of Acts describes this ministry (Acts 28:31)?

The more we consider these three Circumcisionists, who are honored with a place in this epistle, the more we are impressed with the fact that they were not taken at random, but specially chosen to represent the Circumcision as a whole, that is, the believers among them, for whom the epistle to the Hebrews was especially written. The mention of Barnabas suggests the gradual introduction and exemplification of the truth through him and Paul and Timothy and Titus and Onesimus, as has already been set forth in the study "From the Levite to the Slave." May not these men be chosen to set forth the opposite, the declension of the Circumcision, and their state, now that the nation is callous?

ARISTARCHUS

Aristarchus, if, indeed, it is the same man, was a Macedonian of Thessalonica (Acts 27:2; 20:4; 19:29). But, as this is mentioned expressly elsewhere, and not brought in here,

we should leave it out of consideration. There could easily be several men of the same name. The point to press is his Greek name and its meaning. He must have belonged to the dispersion. His name signifies "best-chief," a title well suited to the Circumcision among the nations, for, in the kingdom, they will rule among them. But, alas, he is in prison! He is a captive! Politically, he has no authority whatever. Is not this a realistic picture of the kingdom at present, politically?

MARK

Mark brings before us quite a different picture. His name is not Greek, but Roman. He is especially related to Barnabas, the Levite. He does not represent the place of the Circumcision *over* the nations, but as *serving* the nations. In this they failed utterly. They opposed Peter as well as Paul in every attempt to bring salvation to the aliens. Mark, indeed, was not so bad as that. He left Jerusalem and went with Barnabas and Saul to Antioch, and started with them on their first missionary journey. Yet "John," as Mark is called, left them at Perga, Pamphylia, and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). Paul and Barnabas had been chosen by the *spirit* (Acts 13:2), while Mark had been chosen because he was related to Barnabas in the *flesh*. He is representative of the Circumcision in their failure to *serve* the nations.

It would appear that he was not very welcome in Colosse, and would not have been received by them without special directions from the apostle. Surely we can understand this sentiment among the ecclesias which had received the truth of the present secret administration through Paul. Mark would have much to give concerning the life of Christ in the past and His glories in the future, but evidently did not go along with Paul, either literally or figuratively, while they had gone on to maturity. There is a strong inclination,

in such a case, to break off all fellowship, just as there is a tendency to cut all connection between this administration and the past on the part of those who first begin to grasp its glories. But let us remember that, in the secret of Christ, the terrestrial as well as the celestial is needed, and they have Him as their common Head.

Let us then, in spirit, receive Mark, that is accept his ministry, as, indeed, we may by using his account of our Lord's life, if, indeed, the tradition is correct that he wrote it. But let us note, at the same time, that the Circumcision, who should have been the teachers of the nations, were not welcome in the early ecclesias, and almost lost their place of service.

At the present time, it would probably be quite otherwise. Mark would be received with open arms. Was he not an inspired penman? No need to write ahead lest he be not received. Cloudy conceptions of Circumcision truth, with a dash of heaven to flavor it, is the staple diet of most of Christendom.

In Mark we see the Circumcision serving us. Although they belong to a different administration and have another destiny, we cannot get along without their help. Paul's epistles need all the other writings as a background. Do they not give us the details of God's dealings with the earth and Israel? Without these even the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus could not be fully apprehended. This aspect corresponds closely to the figure of the olive tree, in which the wild boughs are partakers of the root and fatness of the tree. As a light producer, Israel continues to function, through the oracles committed to them, although it comes through the nations who temporarily displace them in the olive tree.

JESUS, TERMED JUSTUS

The third in the group of the Circumcisionists has a purely Jewish name; indeed, it is the name above every name,

the personal name of their Messiah. Probably "Jesus" was deemed too sacred to be commonly used, so he was given another, and called Justus. The name Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua, Yahweh the Saviour. This is the name by which Israel will be saved, for Yahweh alone can save them. But, alas! even believers in Israel did not trust wholly in Him, but in the law and their physical rights as members of the chosen nation. And what better name for this than the Latin Justus, from *jus,* law, right, justice? Therefore salvation was taken from the nation and is heralded to the nations (Acts 28:28). They must learn God's righteousness now, before they experience His salvation.

These only of Paul's fellow workers for the kingdom of God became a solace to Paul. Many others of Paul's fellow workers were far more than a comfort to him, so we must restrict this to the Circumcision and the kingdom. No doubt there were many of the Circumcision who had heralded the kingdom, but nearly all seemed to oppose Paul and his ministry, and were a menace to the ecclesias among the nations, with their insistence on law-keeping and religious rites. How much there may lie behind that word "solace!" The Jews had done much to distort the evangel of Christ, and caused Paul much misery. But these three seem to have been of a different spirit, so that he could cooperate with them in those things which they had in common.

I take this as a little foretaste of the time to come, when the terrestrial and celestial will be in fullest harmony under their mutual Head. For the present, however, I take it that this delightful miniature portrays to us the fortunes of the Circumcision in the present administration. Politically they are captives, not rulers. The kingdom cannot be heralded. In service their testimony is to be received. But they have lost their salvation. And is not this the exact counterpart of what we have at the close of Acts?

There seems to be a general impression that any gospel may be preached at any time. Not so! Even the present evangel of God's grace would work havoc if heralded among the nations in the thousand years. Nor can the evangel of the kingdom be heralded today. First of all it must go to the people of the covenant first, apart from whom there can be no kingdom. And the last words to this people put them into a condition where they can neither hear nor see, lest God be healing them. God has given them a spirit of stupor. For nearly two thousand years they have been this way, and they are even more callous than they were. Herald the kingdom to them, and there would be no response. No one has any commission to herald it until this ban is removed.

Of course the church talks about "the kingdom" and appropriates quite a little of its setting in order to produce the grotesque caricatures which parade as churches in the world today. But few, if any, really herald the political side of the kingdom, and seek to open the eyes of the sons of Israel, so that they may accept its message, and so that the nations also may rejoice with His people. This would be the real kingdom evangel. Repentance and baptism are preached for the remission of sins, but how many consider this a passport into the millennium? Tatters are taken from the gospel of the kingdom and patched on to a self-made story, of many kinds and differing qualities, but nearly all land their devotees in heaven, not on earth. The gospel of the kingdom is not heralded today and no one believes it, hence, no one is won for the kingdom in this era of God's grace.

But this does not cut us off from *everything* connected with the kingdom. Politically—and in this lies the essence of a kingdom—it is futile and false to herald the kingdom evangel. The Circumcision cannot hear, and there can be no blessing except as they are the channel of it. Now there

can be blessing apart from them, yet not in their kingdom. But, in other spheres, we have much in common. The One Who will be Head in the kingdom is already the Head in the empyrean. He Who will save Israel is already our Saviour.

A genuine kingdom evangel to the nations would insist on our subjection to the holy nation. It would promise no blessing except through and with them. So few have such an evangel that we may be sure that the kingdom evangel is as little preached today as the true one for this era. And if the destiny of the saints were dependent on the gospel they hear, almost all of them would need to be divided into several parts to match the fragments of evangels they have patched together. Since even the Ephesians needed Paul's prayer that they might perceive the prospect of their calling, so it is quite possible to have a calling and yet be in ignorance concerning its riches.

The evangel of the kingdom is not the fact that Christ will take over the rule of the earth with Israel as the leading nation, but that this is *near.* John the Baptist did not repeat what is written in the prophets, but prefixed his heralding with the *time* of its appearance. As it is in the Greek this has the emphasis: "*Near* has come the kingdom of the heavens!" (Matt.3:2). Our Lord repeated this with the same stress on the word *near* (Matt.4:17). The apostles had the same message at the beginning of Acts. "Repent, then, and turn about for the erasure of your sins, so that the seasons of refreshing should be coming . . ." (Acts 3:19). This nearness recedes throughout the book, until, at the end, it is gone. Meanwhile Paul reveals a new secret, that it is *not* near, but must wait until the complement of the nations may enter (Rom.11:25).

EPAPHRAS

Epaphras is in striking contrast to the Circumcision. He was a Colossian, hence of the Uncircumcision, and is called

a *slave* of Christ Jesus. Though without any physical advantages, how high is his spiritual stature! He is called a faithful dispenser of Christ (1:7). Through him it was that the Colossians had heard the evangel, and now that he cannot serve them by his presence, he agonizes in prayer during his absence. Note the subject matter of his petitions. This shows how fully he was in line with God's thoughts and desires at the time. He wished them to stand *mature* and *fully assured* in *all* the will of God (4:12). It is for this that the gifts are given (Eph.4:11-14). Evangelists, pastors, and teachers should lead the saints from minority to maturity. Paul himself had prayed that they be filled with a realization of God's will (1:9).

Epaphras is a model for those whose hearts have been turned to the service of the saints. He did not *say* his prayers. How much of our praying is mere talk! Possibly he could not even put his petitions into words. To him it was a struggle, a contending. And he was in misery concerning those on whom his heart was set. Is seems strange, at first, that he should be miserable. But those who have been in a similar position will not fail to understand and sympathize with him, especially in these days of declension and apostasy. It is heartbreaking to hear that those who once reveled in God's grace have been led aside and give place to human merit. It is bitter to hear of pride, dissension, division, where once the peace of God presided. Perhaps Epaphras had no such experiences, yet even in those days it meant much misery to bear a company of saints upon one's heart.

LUKE AND DEMAS

We are so accustomed to the idea that Luke is the writer of the account which bears his name, as well as the Acts, that we are tempted to connect these with him at all times. But it is a fact that the Scriptures themselves do not men-

tion his name in that connection. Hence we will not bring this in here. He was the most constant of all Paul's friends, for he remained when all others had left (2 Tim.4:11). No doubt, as a physician, he was helpful to Paul and others, for he seems to have been beloved as such. This is in contrast to the Circumcision evangel, and shows that it is no longer in force. It includes miraculous healing for the body, so that there was no place for a physician.

Demas is in direct contrast to Luke, for he abandoned Paul out of love for the current eon (2 Tim.4:11). Perhaps his name means *popular,* as *dêmos* is *populace.* May he not represent that vast company of believers who are so concerned not to go contrary to the good opinion of this eon that they cannot remain with Paul's teaching, if, indeed, they have ever known it? All Asia seems to have turned away from him during his imprisonment. Conformity to the times will surely separate from Paul. The whole history of Christendom shows that this became chronic, and only occasionally has there been a return to some of his teaching. And when a little is recovered it is soon abandoned once again. Let us all take this to heart. The danger of abandoning Paul is always present, and is usually popular, and we should guard against it.

LAODICEA

Because of the character of the message sent to the ecclesia in Laodicea (Rev.3:14) in the day of the Lord, the name has become a synonym for apostasy. But this should not be applied to the ecclesia of Paul's day. Nothing is said to indicate a low spiritual condition at that time. It seems to be brought in here in order to show the general character of this epistle. It could be read to them as well as to the Colossians.

Of the Laodicean letter from Paul we have no hint elsewhere in the Scriptures, so that some have supposed that

it was lost. But there are good grounds for the opinion that the epistle to the Ephesians is in view, for that, according to the best readings, has no definite address, and must have been put before *all* the saints in Christ Jesus, either by sending a copy direct, as to Laodicea, or by loaning, as in Colosse. As we have already seen, the epistles are complementary, and both are needed in order to bring the saints to maturity.

ARCHIPPUS

Paul calls Archippus a fellow soldier when writing to Philemon (2). But here he appears in the character of servant. He seems to have undertaken some special service, but was lax in carrying it out. Hence the gentle admonition of the apostle, which many of us may well take to ourselves. Has the Lord laid any special task on our heart? Sometimes it comes with irresistible force. There is an unshakable conviction that a certain work must be done and we must do it. It may be accompanied with a painful and humiliating consciousness of our own unfitness and inadequacy, and a foreboding of suffering and scorn, but it is evidently of the Lord, and such things characterize His service. But they dishearten and discourage. There is a continual temptation to leave the task undone, and escape the consequences. Nothing that we do is as well done as we would wish, so the only relief seems to be to drop it all. Perhaps it was so with Archippus. May the Lord give each one of us grace to fulfill the service which He has assigned to us!

THE SELF-WRITTEN SALUTATION

To this day much of the writing in the orient is done by professional scribes. While waiting in the post office of Smyrna, not so very far from Colosse, I saw a scribe write a letter for a woman, which she dictated. There is no doubt that Paul could write, for he makes a point of doing so at

the close of some of his epistles, in order to certify to their genuineness (2 Thess.3:17,18), for it seems that some had produced forgeries. Possibly he penned the whole of Galatians (Gal.6:11). It has been suggested that an eye infirmity made it difficult for him to write small enough. Be that as it may, Colossians has Paul's sign manual to show that it is genuine.

But he does not close with his signature. His heart is too full to refrain from a few more outbursts. And so he unburdens himself by adding "Remember my bonds! Grace be with you!" Great was his desire for sympathy in his sufferings, and that these should be understood in their relation to the truth. Paul's bonds are not merely an incident in his personal career. They became the standing symbol of God's relation to the world and of the place of the flesh in God's present work of grace, in contrast to the kingdom that is to come. Spiritual blessings among the celestials are ours, coupled with *no* special physical blessings among the terrestrials. And, as we thankfully accept Paul's wish that grace be with us, let us remember that it was with him in a superlative degree even in his imprisonment. Grace now, but glory in the future!

A. E. Knoch

GERTRUDE VENLET

My cousin Gertrude was to me much as I assume his grandmother Lois and mother Eunice were to young Timothy in acquainting him with the sacred scriptures (2 Tim.1:5; 3:15). Yet in accord with this era of the completed word (Col.1:25), the emphasis was always on the epistles of Paul. She, in turn, learned much from good teachers including her father, Howard Hough and husband, D. W. Venlet, and especially from the writings of A. E. Knoch. She passed along much spiritual grace through mailings, most significantly the small periodical entitled, *Faith Fellowship.* She died January 13, 2020 at age 95, in expectation of the "glorious appearing" of her Saviour "through the gloom," as she often expressed it in song. D.H.H.

MUTUAL REPORTS

Colossians 1:3-8–4:7-9

NO PHYSICAL contact united Paul with the Colossians. They had never seen him, nor he them. Nevertheless, there was a deep mutual concern, so that each was informed of the other through intermediaries. Paul learned about the Colossians through Epaphras, who had them on his heart (1:7). The Colossians were informed of Paul's affairs through Tychicus and Onesimus (4:7-9), who were with Paul in Rome. This is in delightful harmony with the truth of this era, in which the physical has no place, yet there should be mutual concern and loving consideration.

Ephesians ascribes blessedness to God for His blessings. Philippians opens with thanksgiving for their contribution to the evangel. Colossians begins with thankfulness to God for their faith and love. In the first the blessedness lies in God alone, and depends only upon His own gracious operations, apart from their effect in the recipients, for, at the time, these wonderful revelations were unknown, so could not have borne fruit. Philippians goes back to their service under a former administration. So also in Colossians. That which they had heard *before* had produced faith in Christ Jesus and love toward all others who were hallowed by the same belief.

Thanksgiving and prayer go together (Phil.4:6). Especially at this juncture in the apostle's ministry we can understand how great would be his desire that these unknown believers, whose faith had been exemplified by their love to their fellow saints, should share "the expectation which

is reserved" for them "in the heavens" (Col.1:5), of which they had indeed heard, yet which was just then being fully revealed. Does not the same spirit of prayer well up within us when we hear of a company of believers? Do we not wish that we could share with them these glorious gratuities of grace? Do not our hearts yearn to bring them these blessings? No words may form on our lips, but, in spirit, we pray as Paul prayed for the Colossians.

Now are remaining, faith, expectation, love (1 Cor.13:13). These three graces greet us at the very threshold of Colossians (1:4,5): faith in Christ Jesus, love for all the saints, a heavenly expectation. Though one of the supreme triad of epistles, there are no wonder-working gifts, no "tongues," no healing for the body. These are left behind in the era of minority. From the very first we are in the atmosphere of maturity. The three abiding graces form the only fit entrance into the present administration. Where they are found there are open hearts ready for the highest and best that God has to bestow.

Their faith was fixed on Christ Jesus, our ascended and glorified Lord, in His celestial exaltation. The importance of this can be realized only in the light of the subsequent revelation of their celestial destiny. The heralding of "Jesus Christ," the rejected and returning Messiah, has glories all its own, but it is not a fit basis for a celestial allotment. Moreover our faith is of a more exalted, a more blessed kind. The Circumcision have a vast amount of tangible evidence to build upon. The powers and signs wrought by Christ and His apostles produced a faith which too often did not stand the test. How do we know that our allotment is in heaven? We have no evidence at all outside the bare Word of God. To such faith alone comes God's highest revelation.

The love of the Colossians was true to its noble nature in that it included *all* of the saints. It was not called forth

by their good qualities or worthiness, but rested solely on a mutual relationship to God. We may well be fond of those of the saints whom we know and whose virtues call forth our appreciation. But it is our privilege to imitate God in that deeper and finer affection which flows out to those also who do not deserve to be loved in themselves, who, indeed, sometimes repel rather than attract. God finds the springs of love in His own heart, so that it flows forth to all His saints, in Christ. If He lavishes His love upon them, why should not we follow His example?

Paul prays for the Colossians because of the expectation which is reserved for them in the heavens. In a similar strain he had prayed in Ephesians for a spirit of wisdom and revelation that they might perceive the expectation of His calling (Eph.1:17,18). Like Ephesians, also, the scene of blessing is not left on earth but is immediately transferred to heaven (Eph.1:3). Philippians puts us in a heavenly realm (Phil.3:20). So these three ranking epistles unite in raising us above the terrestrial to our place supreme among the celestials. They are alone in this, although hints were not lacking in Paul's previous epistles.

As a notable example of the many vital contrasts between Colossians and Ephesians, note the way in which their common expectation is put before us. In Colossians the matter is very simply presented: "the expectation . . . which you hear before" (YE-BEFORE-HEAR, *proêkousate*). In Ephesians, however, it is not *hearing before,* but *expecting.* Were this all, then we would have simply "you expect before" (YE-BEFORE-EXPECT). Instead it is the plural form of HAVING-BEFORE-EXPECTED, not a *verb,* but a *participle,* not a *fact,* but a *state.*

Years of investigation and experience has confirmed us in our classification of the Greek verb into three grand functions: *act, fact,* and *state* (it is writing, it writes, it has been, or is written). The lack of these distinctions

in current grammars is unscientific, and leads to confusion, which obscures vital differences in the text. Much clarity is attained and many differences vanish if we note whether a verb speaks of an action under way at a given time or a fact apart from time. So, also, it is a vast advantage to distinguish between these two and a verb which brings before us the *state* resulting from an action, and the *act* or mere *fact. It is written* is not the same as *it is writing* or *it writes.* So important do we deem these distinctions that they will be specially indicated throughout in the Keyword edition when the form is not standard. A vertical line will indicate an *|act,* a horizontal a *¯fact,* and a tiny circle the *˚state.*

The *state* resulting from an action, called the *complete* or *perfect,* indicated by HAVE in the sublinear of the CONCORDANT VERSION, has been made the subject of special investigations. While the STANDARD with HAVE seems to be the best for the sublinear, idiomatic English seems best served, as a rule, by forms like *it is written,* rather than *it has been written.* That is, the verb *is* or *are,* with an *adjective* describing the *state* is the clearest and most concise idiomatic equivalent for the so-called Greek "perfect." The Authorized Version has often used it most happily in the formula "it is written," and we have adopted this throughout (Matt.2:5). It often helps us in determining the best rendering if we turn it into this idiomatic form.

THE *ones*-HAVING-BEFORE-EXPECTED of Ephesians (1:12) may be resolved into *who are preëxpectant.* The early editions of the CONCORDANT VERSION had *who are in a state of prior expectancy,* which amounts to the same thing. Though somewhat more explicit, it adds too many words which really belong in a grammar rather than in a version. So we are thinking of coining *preëxpectant.* As the Greek is not a verb, the BEFORE does not tell us *when* the expecting occurs. Being a verbal *adjective,* it tells us

what *kind* of expecting it is. The thought in the mind of the writer of Ephesians is most uncommon, hence it has found expression in a word and form very seldom found. The *time* is *present,* a state in which those who received the epistle were when they received it. A past action is only implied and is not in point.

This is practically settled for us when we see that this state is *in Christ.* It refers to the future coming of *Christ* before He is expected by Israel as inducing a present state. We are now preëxpectant, since we wait for Christ to come *before* His advent to Israel.

Ephesians is concerned with all the saints who had received Paul's special ministry, and he coins this term in order to describe them, for it most accurately summarizes what he had taught the Thessalonians (1 Thess.4:15) and Corinthians (1 Cor.15). It is to these that he submits his latest revelations.

THE WORD OF TRUTH OF THE EVANGEL

The so-called "genitive" case in Greek is one of the trials of the translator and interpreter, especially when it is doubled, as in "the word of truth of the evangel." As the English possessive covers part of the ground it is often possible to use it, especially when the article is lacking. For example, we may say "the word of God" or "God's Word" without any appreciable difference in sense. In fact it usually amounts to little more than an emphatic adjective, as in the eleventh verse of this chapter, "the might of His glory," which denotes that might which is associated with His glory, so, at the same time, is His glorious might.

Some phrases do not create any serious difficulty in English, as, for instance, "the word of truth," because we have become accustomed to them. Yet it is a question whether many really grasp their significance. What is "the word of truth?" If we change to the possessive, "truth's

word" it may be somewhat clearer. If we use an adjective, "the true word" the sense is much more definite, yet it insists that the word *is* true, while "the word of truth" refers to the word *as* truth.

Perhaps this can be seen better in the phrase "the truth of the evangel." This means the same as "the evangel's truth." Here we have not that part of the evangel which is true (while other parts may be false), but the evangel *as* truth. Hence it must be the true evangel. A special case which has received much consideration is the phrase "the administration of the secret" (Eph.3:9). Even if we substitute the possessive, and read "secret's administration" the English still persists in suggesting the *action* of administer*ing* the secret, while the Greek refers to the administration (not *of*) but pertaining to or characterized by the secret. We have sought to avoid this by rendering "secret administration," but it may be wiser to translate as usual, and leave the explanation to the interpretation.

It is when there are *two* genitives that the question arises, how to make them intelligible to the English reader. The connective "of" is far too vague to give any definite idea of the relationship of the words to each other. If we could say "the word *dealing with* the truth *pertaining to* the evangel," this might help, yet it would involve much interpretation on the part of the translator. "The true expression of the evangel" seems to be the nearest clear cut idiomatic rendering we can find, yet it may be wiser to follow the Greek idiom and leave the explanation to the interpreters.

In Ephesians we read that the saints of the Uncircumcision, on hearing "the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation" were sealed with the holy spirit (Eph.1:13). Colossians is corrective, so there is a special emphasis on the *truth,* in contrast to what is false. Not only did they hear "the word of *truth* of the evangel," but through it they realized the grace of God in *truth* (1:7). As we will see when

we come to the doctrinal portion of the epistle, philosophy and tradition threatened to rob them of the truth. But they had heard the true evangel and received the true grace of God from Epaphras. They had commenced well.

As a dear old brother expressed it many years ago, most of the Lord's saints are born in a fog. They listen to a "gospel," consisting of some truth mixed with much error. The mere fact that God graciously saved them under it, gives this gospel a strong hold on them, and sanctifies its false elements along with the true. From the very beginning they are under a handicap, so that any great degree of truth is unattainable. How thankful should we be if, in our case, God has called us through an evangel which approximates the word of truth! How grateful should all those be who were brought to the knowledge of God where grace was dispensed in truth!

None of us may have listened to an Epaphras, or anyone who could compare with him as a faithful dispenser of Christ. That was a vital and a vigorous evangel! In the entire world it was growing and bearing fruit, not only in Colosse. In Christendom today it has degenerated into a religion or a philosophy, so that its vitality is largely gone, and its grace has vanished. But in those days it came to the nations with a freshness and pristine power which has seldom, if ever, been equaled since. Alas, how few of the most advanced saints have "realized the grace of God in truth!"

As Epaphras is related to Paul in service, he calls him his beloved *fellow slave.* In reference to the Colossians he is not their slave, but their *servant,* and so a *dispenser* of Christ to them. Perhaps his special characteristic lies in the fact that he was not satisfied to merely bring Christ to men for salvation, but he struggled in prayer that they might stand *mature* and *fully assured* in all the will of God (4:12). He it is who reports to Paul, and who makes evident to him their love in spirit. Doubtless this epistle is based

on his report, and is also an answer to Epaphras' prayers for the Colossians.

TYCHICUS REPORTS TO THE COLOSSIANS

In the complementary part of the epistle (4:7-9), a report goes from Paul to the Colossians, borne by two who are with him. Not much is said of these concerns in this epistle, as they belong in the sphere of service, and so are found in Philippians. However necessary it may have been for Paul to know about the Colossians, it was far more needful that they should know and understand the significance of the events which have befallen him as the prisoner of the Lord. Can we imagine with what tension the ecclesias established by Paul or on his teaching would watch the course of events which threatened to put an end to his career and, perhaps, utterly wipe out his testimony in the earth?

To the human eye the course of the apostle seemed to indicate the end of his career. It would leave the believers among the nations in a position of great perplexity. The contrary was the result. Paul's imprisonment led to the spread of the evangel, both by himself among the guard, and by others who were emboldened by his example. The status of the believers among the nations was fully cleared up by the revelation of the two secrets—that of Christ in Colossians, and of the new administration in Ephesians. The apostle explains much of this himself to the Philippians. He leaves it to others to do this to the Colossians and those who received the Ephesian epistle (Eph.6:21,22).

Tychicus, the fortunate, seems to have been the principal agent of the apostle in this matter. If Ephesians was a circular letter, he may have gone among the ecclesias in order to assure the saints that God was using the apparent evil in order to promote the evangel, and, at the same time was using the occasion in order to divulge His latest

and highest revelation, the supernal destiny of the nations, together with the lavish grace which characterizes the new administration which follows on the setting aside of Israel until the complement of the nations has come in.

In Ephesians Tychicus seems to be commissioned for the one purpose of making known *Paul's* concerns to others (6:21,22), but in Colossians he not only makes known all of Paul's affairs, but also that they may know what concerns *them* (4:8). The word *you* (the things which concern *you*) is found in Vaticanus and in Sinaiticus. Alexandrinus and Sinaiticus corrected read *us*, but Sinaiticus was changed back again by the latest editor. The tendency, we submit, would be to make Colossians and Ephesians the same, hence *us* is not as probable as *you*. In fact, until we take into account the contents of the two epistles the reading we have used seems out of line with the context.

In Ephesians we have a full account of "the things which concern *you*" (the saints), hence Tychicus had no need to make these known to those who received that epistle. But Colossians does not contain the things that concern them so much as the things that concern Christ. The Colossians, as well as all saints of this secret administration, need to know what concerns *them*, especially what had been made known just at this juncture. This revelation was soon lost, and is almost unknown today. Hence it seems trite, if not foolish, for Tychicus to inform the Colossians of their own affairs. Only as we realize the great change which had taken place in their status, can we see how vital it was for him to tell them of these things, as well as to explain the career of Paul.

What a consolation it must have been to the Colossians to get the report of Tychicus! From dark forebodings their hearts are filled with joy unutterable and full of glory. Behind the dismal clouds of distressing circumstance God's brightest sun is shining with beams of almost unbearable

brilliance. Paul's imprisonment, though the end of earth's physical expectations for a time, is but the beginning of a celestial, spiritual administration which will far excel all that God has previously revealed. And *they,* they are chosen to fill the highest place in God's purpose of love.

With Tychicus goes Onesimus, a typical specimen of the grace now being disclosed to the nations. Just as he was an unprofitable, runaway slave who was returned to his master by Paul during his imprisonment, so the nations are fleeing far from God, yet are being brought back to Him through Paul's gracious evangel. We would recommend the reading of Paul's letter to Philemon in this connection. How clearly does grace shine in every line! From the lowest in the social scale on earth, Onesimus is graced with the highest honors in the heavens. He shares with Tychicus the privilege of conveying to Colosse, his own home, the report which will bring so much joy and blessing.

Would that the saints today were more concerned about Paul and his imprisonment, with all that is involved! So important does he deem it that he cannot close the epistle until he has written with his own hand, *Remember my bonds!* Yet let us not only recall his chains but the whole crisis through which he passed, for it was all symptomatic and expressive of the grandest truths and greatest revelations ever made to mortal man. Let us take the report as sent to ourselves, and let us seek to enter into their joy, and return thanks to our God for the grandeur of His grace.

A. E. Knoch

Who is This Who Came from Glory?

He is God's Anointed One!
He is His Beloved Son!
His Effulgence, Pledge of love —
Laud His Name, all names above!

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FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 111th Year

(1909–2020)

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 The Secret of Christ (Its Realization)
85 The Secret of Christ (Its Manifestation)
95 The Blood of Christ's Cross

SECOND QUARTER, 2020

Volume 111 **Number 2**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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EDITORIAL

"THE *secret* of *Christ,*" which is "the secret of [God's] will" (Eph.1:9), is "to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up *all* in the Christ—both those in the heavens and those on the earth—in Him in Whom our lot was cast also" (Eph.1:10,11a). And, "through [Christ] to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col.1:20, *cp* 1:19).

In its essence, "the *secret* of the *evangel*" (Eph.6:19), the conciliation, is that "God . . . conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation" (2 Cor.5:18,19).

In this current issue, however, we are concerned specifically not with the secret of the evangel but with the secret of *Christ.*

The first of the articles herein concerns the secret of Christ in "Its *Realization.*" A. E. Knoch writes:"Creation and reconciliation are the scenes of the supremacy of God's Son. The secret of Christ comprises the *creation* of all *in* Him at the commencement, and the *reconciliation* of all *through* Him at the consummation (p.51) . . . . May God become All in us in increasing measure as we contemplate the secret of Christ, and see His hand and head and heart engaged in drawing His creatures to Himself through sin and salvation" (p.53).

As stated on page 73 of this same article, "In its realization the secret of Christ varies according to the adminis-

tration in which it operates. In this economy it anticipates in spirit, what will take physical form on the earth in the last two eons. We already have the kingdom and the new creation, for which the world still waits. By a similar figure of speech, we already have the presence of Christ, which will make those future eras so glorious. But all is in spirit, and in expectation.Yet the conciliation may be received and enjoyed by all who believe."

The second article in this issue concerns the secret of Christ in "Its *Manifestation.*" On this theme Brother Knoch writes: "As we have seen, the secret of Christ is best set forth today by the expression 'Christ among *you,* the expectation of glory—[that concerns you]' (1:27; *cp* 4:8). Christ did not leave the land of Israel when He came in flesh. He was never among the nations. His presence in Israel was the assurance of future glory for all who received Him, which will be fulfilled in the thousand years, on the earth. His figurative presence now, among the nations, is also the assurance of future glory, for all who believe, among the celestials. At the same time it involves the setting aside of the enmity which existed in the days of His presence, and this is the conciliation. It is *God* Who is conciliated, yet it is Christ Who acts accordingly, and Who visits the nations, in spirit, just as He had come to Israel in the days of old" (p.89).

"Through many dangers, toils, and snares we have already come." Like Paul himself so many years ago who was once "the young man called Saul" (Acts 7:58) yet who later became "Paul, the aged" (Philemon 9), those of us still participating in the Concordant ministry who once were young must acknowledge that we too are now among the aged. We are grateful to our many friends in faith with whom we have had the privilege of fellowship over the years, now decades. May God empower us all, for "all endurance and patience with joy" (Col.1:11). J.R.C.

THE SECRET OF CHRIST

ITS REALIZATION

COLOSSIANS 1:9-2:7

FIRSTBORN OF CREATION

CREATION and reconciliation are the scenes of the supremacy of God's Son. The secret of Christ comprises the *creation* of all *in* Him at the commencement, and the *reconciliation* of all *through* Him at the consummation. We will leave the latter for a later meditation. But let us approach the theme as the apostle does, through a prayer that the saints will realize what it involves for them, and that they give thanks for their part in His preëminence.

This prayer of the apostle is far more needed today than ever before. In the midst of billions of sermons, and millions of books and magazines devoted to theology, how little insight is there into the will of God as revealed in His latest revelation! How small is the appreciation of His wisdom, how feeble the understanding of His purpose! And, as a result, the conduct of believers is lacking in fruit and power and there is a want of endurance and joy and thanksgiving for the blessings which are not realized or appreciated. Therefore it is our privilege to emulate the apostle and pray for ourselves and for our fellow saints that the eyes of our hearts may be opened to see, and that it may lead to pleasing and thanking, God.

THE REALIZATION OF HIS WILL

In the first of Ephesians we read of the *delight* of His will, the *secret* of His will, and the *counsel* of His will (Eph.1:5,9,11). It is His delight to make us sons through

Christ. Love has given us the highest and nearest place. It is the secret of His will to head up all in the heavens as well as upon earth in Christ. The counsel of His will is that we should be for the laud of His glory. Let us not degrade the apostle's petition to a mere request for individual guidance in each step of our career. If we know His will concerning Christ and ourselves, that will shine upon our path and remove the need of being led like a blind man, every step of our way.

Guidance should not be a matter dependent on external circumstances or inward impulses, but of wisdom and spiritual understanding. The lack of these has left the saints to the mercy of the forces of evil. Many who imagine that the holy spirit has given them a special and definite revelation are the dupes of evil spirits. They do that which is contrary to the will of God because they are not acquainted with it. They imagine that the Scriptures are not sufficient and need to be supplemented by direct revelations of His will as occasion arises, forgetting that, *in the Scriptures* the man of God is fitted out for every good act (2 Tim.3:17).

Let us pray, then, that the saints may be *filled* with a realization of His will in *all* wisdom and spiritual understanding, for only thus can we walk worthily of the Lord for *all* pleasing, and bear fruit in *every* good work. Here it is not merely a matter of pleasing God or of doing good—we all may do that in some measure even in our ignorance—but of putting quality and flavor into our actions such as will delight God's heart. May our actions never appear to help Him in His infirmity! Let them rather reveal Him and His power. Too much of Christian activity seems to be lending God a hand as if He needed it, and is thus offensive to the Deity. Only a realization of His will can save us from this false attitude toward God and enable us to walk worthily, so as to please Him in all.

THE REALIZATION OF GOD

That God may be All in all is the universal goal. All of His operations during the eons are directed to this end. The latest revelations of His will are especially adapted to display the excellences of the divine wisdom and love, so that all who realize His will will appreciate Him in the measure in which they understand it. As this is unfolded to our hearts we should grow in our appreciation of God, and thus approach the final goal ahead of others of His creatures. May God become All in us in increasing measure as we contemplate the secret of Christ, and see His hand and head and heart engaged in drawing His creatures to Himself through sin and salvation.

ENDUED WITH ALL POWER

Power we associate with great physical manifestations, such as the powers of the coming eon (Heb.6:5), which will bring health, strength, and blessing to the earth and its inhabitants. But we are endued with power for a different purpose. Although it is in accord with the power of His glory, it is not evident in a lightning-like appearance, or irresistible strength. It is not manifest in the conquest and removal of evil, but in *endurance and patience with joy.* The weakness about us is in accord with God's purpose, so it is not to be removed but endured. Let us do it with joy. Though the time seems protracted, there is power, not only for patience, but for joyful expectation.

THE SAINTS' ALLOTMENT

Along with the joy which His power imparts in the midst of trial and distress, our hearts should overflow with thanksgiving for the lot which has fallen to us. From dupes of darkness we have become saints in light. We were deceived by the Adversary like all the rest, groping

in the gloom of this world's illumination. Out of the darkness we came, in it we existed, and into it we expected to go. Death to us was a leap in the dark. But now all is light! All is out of, and through, and to God. We know whence we came, and whither we are bound. We know that every moment of our lives is in His loving care. Light has come into our lives! God does not leave His saints in the dark. Their allotment is in the light. They are sons of the light and sons of the day. They are not of the night nor of the darkness (1 Thess.5:5).

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

God is light. The powers opposed to him are darkness (Eph.6:12). We all were once under the authority of darkness, that great spiritual dominion which holds sway over the whole world. Mankind at large is groping in the dark. Men know not whence they come nor whither they go, nor why they are so busy running around in circles. But it will not be thus always. When this wicked eon ends, and the Adversary who is deceiving the nations is in the abyss, the sun will rise, and darkness, and its forces, will not again hold sway over mankind. For this world darkness is at an end when the kingdom comes. Then the knowledge of God's glory will cover the earth as the waters cover the the sea.

In our individual experience we have already passed out of this dark eon into the next. We have already been rescued out of the authority of darkness and transported into the kingdom. Not, indeed, in fact, but in figure. The earthly kingdom has not yet come. The Adversary is not yet bound. But, thanks be to our Father, we are no longer subject to his will, nor are we victims of his deception. Our allegiance has been transferred to Another Who is our spiritual Suzerain. So that, in the spirit sphere, the kingdom has already come for us, minus all its physical manifestations. We are in a spiritual kingdom whose Sovereign is the same as the Messiah Who will one day reign over the nations of the earth. But in this kingdom He bears another title, to comport with its spiritual character. He is the Son—the Son of God's love.

Every title of our Lord reflects a glory all its own. As Christ, He will be the King, the Priest, and the Prophet of the coming eon. Yet even there, as the Son of David, He will have a special glory, confined to the chosen nation. As Son of Mankind, He will rule over the whole race which sprang from Adam. In all of these capacities He will be over the political powers on the earth. Not so the present spiritual kingdom. It does not conflict with man's rule. Indeed, we are obliged to be subject to the authorities, as well as to pray for them. Therefore His title in the present kingdom is not Christ. Neither is He the Son of any man, as David or Adam, but of God. God is a Spirit, and His Son is such in spirit, not in flesh.

In anticipation of the coming kingdom of God upon the earth, when the race shall be freed from the thralldom of its spiritual despotism, the saints, and they alone, are rescued from the realm of darkness, and transported to a different allegiance, that of God's Son. To complete the picture, our sins are pardoned, and we have deliverance, as will be the case in the new earth. Let us not confuse this with other figures, such as justification, or acquittal. That belongs in the court room, and has to do with our relationship to the judgment, which will take place before the new creation. Now it is a question of entrance into a kingdom, and, as it is a figurative kingdom, we can enter it only by means of a figurative pardon.

Much has been made of the figurative terms in Paul's epistles, such as the covenants and the festivals, in order to show that he was writing only for Jews. Yet there is probably no passage so surely and conclusively "Jewish" as this reference to the kingdom and the pardon of sins,

both of which, taken literally, are entirely foreign to Pauline teaching. According to this method of interpretation, this passage should prove clearly that Colossians is a Jewish epistle, not intended for the present administration of God's grace. Yet, as a matter of fact, it, and Ephesians, are utterly devoted to the exposition of the present interval of God's grace. May this example help to show how unwarranted it is to make any of Paul's writings "Jewish" because of his figurative use of "Jewish" things.

Once we realize that much of the blessing which is predicted on the page of prophecy comes to us, in spirit, long before it is fulfilled in fact, such allusions should rather prove the opposite. For example, there is now a new creation. Is it not a marvelous method of transferring to our minds great spiritual realities which otherwise would be most difficult to express? I suppose no one takes this literally, so why take the kingdom, or the covenants so? In *figure*, we have these things now. In no way could we be led to understand our own blessings better than by illustrating them from Israel's history, by drawing pictures from the pages of prophecy.

So little are the saints familiar with figures of speech that this passage has been the cause of embarrassment to those who saw clearly the vast difference between justification and pardon. No doubt many have been hindered from enjoying the grand grace of justification simply because, in this passage, we are said to have the pardon of sins. Again, the present is so often called "the kingdom," in a vague way confusing it with the future literal reign of Messiah, that one is tempted to avoid further confusion by saying little or nothing about it. But it is a glorious truth, and worthy of our most earnest consideration, that, in spirit, the saints already partake of some of the blessings of the future kingdoms, even though its physical wonders are by no means with us yet.

THE SON OF HIS LOVE

Yes, we are in the kingdom—the kingdom of the Son of His *love.* Quite a different matter from being a gentile under the iron club of Messiah's rule in the thousand years. Then righteousness will reign, and the nations will be kept at a distance from the God of Israel. They will not even be sons of the kingdom, but subjects, and subordinate. The Sovereign in our kingdom has a title of surpassing dignity and preciousness. "Christ" is official, and fits the functions which He fills during the eons, but not after they have passed away. The "Son" is personal, and describes His dignity in relation to God, even after the eons have come to an end. And the Son of God's love sets Him forth in the supremacy of His nearness and dearness to the Deity, the Peerless One, the Beloved Son. We are in the new creation.

IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

God wishes to be known and loved. This is the motive behind creation and reconciliation. Being invisible and unapproachable, He has made an Image of Himself, and a Complement through Whom He can come into contact with His creation. These mediatorial glories belong to His Beloved Son, and make Him preëminent in all things, for they reach from the very beginning to the consummation, and make Him first in both creation and reconciliation.

To be known, God must be seen. He must be brought within the range of creature sensation. As this is impossible with essential Deity, Who is Spirit, it can only be accomplished by means of a Mediator, an Image which portrays in visible form the invisible essence of the Supreme. This was God's "Creative Original," the beginning, or origin, of all creation, for all else was included in Him. This makes Him the "firstborn" of all creation, not only first in time,

but first in dignity and honor, and of itself entitles Him, not only to be the Sovereign of the saints in this administration, but to head up all things, both in the heavens and on the earth, as He will, in the complement of the eras, before the close of the eons.

Earthly rulers base their right to rule either on hereditary claims, or on their own accomplishments. Our Sovereign has a double right to reign. His is the oldest title in the universe, long antedating Adam, and He has entered the lists against the powers of evil and won the fight on Golgotha. Both diadem and wreath are His. His ancient rights entitle Him to universal sovereignty, and He will yet subject all beneath His feet. And, when all was lost, He brought it back to God, and thus has earned its heartfelt homage. In this universal reign of the Son of God we have the blessed privilege of being among the first to own His sway, and will be among the highest in His world-embracing sovereignty.

CREATION IN THE SON OF HIS LOVE

The wonders of these words are well worthy of our admiring contemplation. Creation and love! How seldom are they brought together! We often hear of God's love in connection with redemption, but creation is usually associated with His power or His wisdom, but never with His affection. Few passages of Scripture delve as deeply as this into the origin of things, yet it is in thorough harmony with those basic truths that all is out of God (Rom.11:36) and God is love (1 John 4:8). The philosopher seeks in vain for the *why* of all things. Why is there a creation at all? Here is the answer. *God's love demands response.* Creation is not an end in itself. Although it displays God's wisdom and power, its underlying purpose goes far deeper, for it was created in love.

Had this simple yet profound truth ever penetrated into the hearts of the teachers of God's people, how revolutionary would have been its effect! True, with their lips they have preached the glad message "God so loved the *world,*" yet they have been even more zealous to confine His love to those who believe, since they could hardly reconcile eternal torment or annihilation with the operations of love. May He broaden our hearts and widen our understanding! All that God does is done in love. Creation as well as redemption and reconciliation have their roots in the divine affection. And for this very reason it is that all are lost and all will be saved, some indeed by faith, during the eons, yet others by sight, through judgment, all through the deliverance wrought by Him in Whom they were originally created.

We may well suppose that creatures of another sphere, who know little of humanity, would not find it easy to understand that all mankind was once in Adam. To us it is so commonplace that we fail to realize the marvel of it. Science has made futile endeavors to prove that man, as well as other creatures, gradually evolves into forms quite different from their progenitors, but without any practical success. They have not succeeded in robbing us of the wonder that in each single seed are almost infinite potentialities. These examples should aid us to understand, or at least to believe where we cannot apprehend, that simple yet sublime statement that all was created in the Son of God's love.

The secret of Christ is not confined to earth, and the scope of this epistle is by no means limited to the ecclesia which is His body. We alone were *chosen* in Christ before the disruption, yet even before that, *all* was *created* in the Son (Col.1:16), not only that on earth, but in the heavens as well. The august grandeur of this thought will overwhelm all those who have given some attention to

the celestial spheres, or even gazed upon the starry host. Here are marvels, and magnitudes, and measures which make the mind faint with solemn awe. Creation on earth, with all its many marvels, sinks into insignificance, when compared with the celestial realms. Had it not been hallowed by His presence and His sacrifice, we would think it mean beside the mighty majesty of the heavenly hosts. Yet all the creatures in the heavens were created in Him.

We should not think of creation here as so much material, or dead matter. Life itself and living creatures—those which can refuse or respond to the love of God—are before us in this connection. As they are viewed here as beneath His sway, we read of their various governmental forms, thrones or dominions, sovereignties or authorities. The very fact that, in the heavens as well as on earth, in the invisible as well as the visible creation such rule exists, is proof positive of the presence of sin. Government is a restraint which will not be needed when the eons are past. It will become inoperative at the consummation. Now it speaks of insubjection and the need of reconciliation. The presence of rule in the invisible, celestial realms shows that the creatures which were created in Him will also be reconciled through Him and thus fulfill the object of their creation.

ALL THROUGH AND FOR

Since all ruling powers were once in Him, it is not at all strange that all rule should return to Him in the last eon. This is in line with the further truth that all is through Him and for Him. Creation was not an independent act, without any relation to subsequent developments. On the contrary, it was logically the result of God's purpose, which could not be fulfilled until the far future. Creation is, indeed, the prelude to reconciliation. The Son, in Whom it was effected, had far more in view, and it was only a preparation for the tragedy of the eons, and these, in turn, only the means for effecting the glorious consummation—God All in every one of His creatures.

So, not only was all *in* Him, but, at the same time it was also *through* Him and *for* Him. Without it He could not have accomplished His further work. Due to this relation of all parts of creation to Him it is held together by Him. Whatever differences and distances there may be between the various parts, such as between earth and the heavens, in Him they are welded into one, and, as we shall see, will be united under His headship in the last eon.

Such is the preëminence of the Image of God as the Firstborn of creation. From the beginning all rule is His and all owe Him subjection. The authority of darkness is a usurper, and deserves no subjection at our hands. In being transported into the kingdom of the Son of His love we return to the only rightful Suzerain. His realm will one day spread to every corner of the universe and bring every creature to His feet. All shall be subject to Him. We have the privilege of being among the first to yield to His beneficent sway.

FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD

Creation alone cannot reveal the heart of God. It must be supplemented by reconciliation. He Who is the Image of God must become His Complement. The Firstborn of creation must become the Firstborn from among the dead. As such our relation to Him is nearer and dearer. We are not only subjects in a spiritual kingdom, but we also belong to a spiritual body of which He is the Head. God's grace and love must be revealed against the dark background of human hate.

The Head of the body is this Sovereign, in Whom all rule had its origin, and into Whose kingdom we have been transported. Our relation to Him as saints is not based on

His power in creation, but on His victory over death. He is the First to emerge a Conqueror from its dark shades, and thus He heads a new creation, a new race of mankind, which is not only given life, but immortality and incorruptibility, beyond the reach of death. This death-defying vitality will be granted to all in Adam in due course, but at present He alone possesses it. This gives Him the exalted dignity of Firstborn from among the dead. Some of this high honor He will share with us at His presence, for then His saints also will be vivified, while the balance of mankind must wait until the consummation.

UNIVERSAL DIGNITIES

The supremacy of God's Son depends on the *universality* or *totality* of His many dignities. How extraordinary is the emphasis laid on this vital fact in this short passage! Within the compass of five verses we read no less then *eight* times that the given glory is all-inclusive. He is the firstborn of *every* creature. *All* is created in Him, and *all* is created through and for Him. He is before *all. All* has its cohesion in Him. In *all* He is becoming first. The *entire* complement dwells in Him. He reconciles *all* through the blood of His cross (Col.1:15-20). And on two occasions this is amplified and defined as all that is in the heavens or on the earth. It is said to include both visible and invisible. What more could be said to impress us with the universal scope of the Son's activities?

THAT IN ALL **HE** MAY BE BECOMING FIRST

These precious words, as shown herewith, in large blue letters in a golden frame, are the chief ornament of the room in which I write. Long years ago I chose them as my

motto, and decided to display them in a prominent place in my abode. When erecting a new house I evolved a plan so that they would become a permanent part of the building. Above the broad entrance into the drawing room was a board with a beautiful grain. On this I outlined these words in old English lettering and varnished them before the wood was stained, so that they stood out plainly when all was done. But, alas! When the home was sold, almost the first act of the new owner was to remove all traces of my cherished motto!

Here we have a gem of purest ray serene, fit for the diadem of universal majesty! He was first in time and He must become first in all else. How many of mankind have striven for supremacy! Some have drenched the ground with blood in order to attain the highest place for themselves among the rulers of the earth. Many more in other walks of life have sought to reach the top, above their less fortunate fellows. These all exalted themselves, finding a futile and a fleeting eminence. How marvelous the contrast! He Who never sought His own advancement but only God's glory, Who abased Himself beneath all, He will become first in all.

Let us be very jealous for His glory, and allow no one else to filch it from Him. Let us be very zealous for His supremacy, and accord it to no other name but His. And let us guard each glory as we would a treasure trove. And, since His crowning glories as Complement of the Deity and Reconciler of all are so often denied to Him, let us make these the special theme of our meditation, and, if need be, let us maintain them and defend them to the last. In Him, the Firstborn from the dead, through the blood of His cross, God is completely equipped to consummate the purpose of love, and bring every enemy back to His bosom, not only saved, but reconciled.

THE ENTIRE COMPLEMENT

It is quite possible to imagine that God would delegate the honor of creation to one mediator and that of reconciliation to another. God needs both to carry out His purpose, so that each, in his measure, would contribute to the fulfillment of His plans. Then the honor of being God's complement would be shared by them. To put it figuratively, one would receive a place at His right hand, the other at His left. Indeed, some have taught that God's complement consisted of a whole series of beings, independent of His Son, to whom He delegated creation. Not so! The *entire* complement, *all* that is needed by God in order to fulfill His will in connection with His creatures, finds its fit residence in His Son.

In Him the complement *delights* to dwell. It is not alone that He has the ability, the fitness, the competence to cope with all that is involved in this most marvelous function in the universe. All this He has, and far more. At His baptism, when the heavens were opened to Him, the voice declared, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I *delight*" (Matt.3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22). So again, when He was transformed on the high mountain, a voice came out of the cloud and testified to the delight of the Father in His Beloved (Matt.17:5; Mark 9:7). Peter reminds us of this in his epistle, and tells us that it brought Him honor and glory from God the Father (2 Peter 1:17). Long before, Isaiah records the same fact (Matt.12:18; Isa.42:1): "My Beloved, in Whom My soul delights."

Is it not striking that this recognition of the Son is one of the very few statements directly spoken by the Deity in the later Scriptures? This should give it the prominence which is its due in our hearts. What a contrast to His testimony concerning the rest of mankind! When the Lord stooped down to see how they are, He found nothing in

which to *delight.* Not one was even just or kind (Rom.3: 10-18; LXX Psa.14:2,3). Certainly there has never been one among Adam's descendants, apart from His grace, in whom He could find pleasure. In none of them could the complement find any place whatever.

The complement *(plêrōma)* is here personified (Col. 1:19). It is represented as seeking a suitable dwelling place from which to carry out the purposes of God. In Him it has found a delightful abode, for He is not merely a means of bringing back creation to what it was, but of bringing it on to fulfill its purpose. All too many of us imagine that we would be satisfied with a universe brought back to its pristine perfection, a world without sin, a sorrow-free existence. No such result would satisfy the heart of God. That would never justify the travail of the eons. That would never win the admiring approval of the universe. That would be vanity, a feeding on wind, a reaping of less than was sown, a losing venture.

And such would creation be, had it not been begun in the Son of His *love,* and should it not be finished by the same One through the blood of His cross. Love cannot be revealed without a background. Every blessing imaginable poured into the lap of a sinless creature is merely a matter of course, which evokes no thankful feelings, and provokes no response of love. I feel certain that Adam never thought of thanking his Maker for his superb health and strength. Yet I am profoundly grateful for the very little vigor needed to pen these lines. And when we, who have suffered much from illness and weakness, once attain our body of glory, how deep and lasting will be our thankful love to Him for all His superabundant grace!

In this passage nothing is said directly of the entrance and course of evil and sin, because this is no part of the work of the Son. But the introduction of estrangement is clearly implied by His death and His cross and the neces-

sity of the reconciliation of all. It is no glory or honor to destroy God's work. This must, indeed, be done, but woe to him who does it! His course must be down and not up. The glory of the Son lies in this, that He undoes the work of the Adversary. Great as were His glories in creation, now that all have been estranged by sin He gains far greater glory by His suffering for all, so that all will be saved and reconciled, and so attain the original object of their creation.

God pity us if we see our salvation from our own side only! The object of all is God, rather than His creatures. And the glory of God demands the exaltation of His Son. These are the chief considerations in the reconciliation of all. If a single one of those whom He created in love should fail to find the final goal which His love has set, then it is His wisdom and power which are brought into question, and *His* love which is open to doubt. Likewise, if one who was created in the Son of God's love should fail to be reconciled by the blood of His cross, would that not drag the Son down from the high place which God has given Him? Let us not darken the splendor of His achievement by our own dismal unbelief.

WHAT ARE "THINGS"?

The neuter gender, in English, is used only for *things* as a rule, not for persons. In Greek, however, the so-called "neuter" seems to be much wider in its scope, and to include, rather than to exclude, the genders, so it is called "indefinite" in the Concordant grammar. In this passage (Col.1: 16-20) it is of considerable importance to be clear on this point. The Revised Version introduces the word "things" ten times, not because it is in the Greek, but to show that the gender is neuter. They speak of all *things* created, *things* visible and things invisible, things created, before all *things,* all things consist, in all *things* . . . preëminence, reconcile all *things, things* on earth, *things* in the heavens.

I feel sure that anyone who reads the passage with this in view, and especially if the word *things* is emphasized, will feel that something is amiss. The more the passage is studied the more it seems evident that *not things,* but persons are intended. These "things" are *in* the heavens and *on* the earth, hence they cannot refer to the material creation as a whole. They are detailed as thrones or dominions or sovereignties or authorities, which, indeed, are forms of government, and so "things," but very evidently stand for those who are subject to them. And how can *things* be reconciled? Were the Colossians (1:21) among these *things?* The introduction of this word, it seems to us, though warranted by the grammars, has thrown a veil over the whole passage and made it unintelligible to some extent.

One cannot help but admire the consistency of the Revisers in this particular, when, in Galatians 3:22, they translate: "Howbeit the scripture hath shut up all *things* under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." In John 6:37 they yielded to the context. Instead of following their usual rule and translating, "Every*thing* (*pan*) . . ." they compromise with, "All *that which* the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." These two passages should suffice to show that *things* is an unfortunate rendering of this Greek form in some cases, and that it may be used of both genders, or without reference to any gender.

PEACE THROUGH THE CROSS

Enmity has come in through the entrance of death and sin. All of mankind, without exception, are estranged from God. It is more than likely that this discord has affected the whole creation, in varying degrees. To make peace between God and His unfriendly creatures is the greatest of all achievements. In this world of strife and conten-

tion the role of peacemaker is a difficult and discouraging one. For the most trivial causes enmity arises between man and man, section and section, country and country. Not long since a large part of the world was involved in a bloody war, and no stable peace has resulted from all of the strenuous endeavors to put an end to war. We talk of peace, yet there is unrest and misunderstanding almost everywhere, and the din of arms has never fully ceased.

By pride comes contention. Notwithstanding the shameful record of mankind since the dawn of history, men are proud of what they are and what they have accomplished and what they possess. Evil has been given them to humble them, they fail often and suffer much, the world is getting worse in almost every way, except material comfort, man's inhumanity to man cries to high heaven for redress, and man's offensive attitude to the Deity is unpardonable, and yet man is haughty and stubborn and implacable. He refuses the overtures of peace which come to him in the evangel and is hastening on to the era of God's indignation, when his doings will be destroyed, his power broken, and his pride leveled with the dust.

But even after a thousand years of peace his heart remains the same. Satan, loosed out of his jail, will find the same enmity, the same readiness to rise against God and His people as before. The experience of good does not bring permanent peace. It is through evil that peace must come. Though Christ Himself, the Prince of Peace, has ruled man for a millennium, that has not tuned his heart in unison with God. He does not make peace by His power or by His glorious government. Peace comes to the nations in this way in the eons of the eons, but heart peace with God comes only through His sufferings and shameful, ignominious death.

The cross, the inglorious, the disgraceful, the infamous, the opprobrious, the outrageous stake, the most disreputable death that man can devise, where weakness and shame combine to dishonor the High and Holy Son of God—here is where peace was made for all who are estranged, where the world was conciliated to God. With this as a basis, the Son will reconcile all God's enemies with Him when the eons have run their course. In the cross we see the utter worthlessness of man as well as the supreme exhibition of the love of God. Reconciliation is effected by the revelation of God's love in the deepest display of human hate.

The cross, like a lightning flash, reveals the heart of man. He Who hung upon it was the Touchstone by which all things may be tested. When He appeared among His people humanity manifested itself as it really is. He should have been welcomed and honored and adored. By the condemnation of the only One Who deserved to live, mankind has condemned itself, and sealed its own death warrant. By the shameful crucifixion of the Lord of glory men made it manifest that they, not He, deserve the death detestable. O that we all may learn what we really are in the light of the cross! This will burn out all our pride and prepare the way for peace. And thus it is that reconciliation comes. The cross will abase all into the dust, and humble their hearts before the Deity, and prepare them for the revelation of His love.

But if the cross only revealed what is in man it could not reconcile the race but would rather destroy it. Thanks be to God that it also reveals what is in God! It is the fullest revelation of His love. In it He seemed to side with man. Instead of rescuing His Beloved from their hate, He sends fire from above into His bones. He makes Him to be sin, Who knew no sin. He forsakes Him instead of the ones who deserved His displeasure.

The divine alchemy which transformed the Victim of human hate into the Sacrifice for their sins is almost too wonderful for human apprehension.

THE BLOOD OF THE CROSS

The cross was the supreme crisis in universal history, an event unique, unparalleled in the annals of time. Nothing has ever occurred which has such a profound effect upon the world. It will transform an alienated universe into adoring worshipers. It is a permanent, an abiding power which will never lose its potency. Today the cross avails to conciliate the world, and to reconcile those who receive the conciliation. But this will by no means exhaust its power. It will be the basis of all blessing in the eons to come, and will bring immortality and peace to all at the consummation. Death cannot stop its course, for Christ arose, the Firstborn, and all for whom He died (and He died for all!) will share His life when death is finally abolished.

The blood of *Christ* is a most expressive figure of the permanent power of His sufferings. The soul, sensation, feeling (not the life) of the flesh is in the blood. In the days of old this was sprinkled in the holy of holies once a year on the day of propitiation, and for a twelve-month preserved the potency of the sacrifice. So it is with the suffering of Christ. Thank God it is past, but its potency is permanent. It avails today, and will never lose its power. The blood remains, as it were, within the holiest in heaven, to witness to His offering.

But the blood of His *cross*—this goes far deeper still. Only here do we have this notable expression. It is not a mere literary variant, but a deliberate endeavor to distinguish between the death of God's Son and the *manner* of it. This is done because here we have not merely the salvation or the justification of all, but the *reconciliation* of the universe. It is not a question of sin so much as of offense and enmity. In fact this passage is concerned with salvation only insofar as it is included in reconciliation. *Peace* is made by the blood of His cross. The blood is a reminder of its permanence.

This blood does not merely remind us of His death and suffering, but of the *shame* and *enmity* of *man,* and the *darkness* and *distance* from *God* endured by Him because of the *crucifixion.* Stoning would have brought death, but would have avoided much of the suffering and the curse of the Deity which rested upon the One Who was hanged upon a tree. The marvelous truth that all will be reconciled to God is based, not only on the suffering and death of Christ, but especially on the abject abasement involved in the manner of His death, coupled with the curse which it drew down from above.

The cry of the august Sufferer, "My God, My God, why didst *Thou* forsake Me?" finds its answer in the *cross.* With any other form of death God would not have forsaken Him. He would rather have turned against His murderers. It would have increased the distance and estrangement between God and His creatures. It would have made enmity, not peace. But because He voluntarily placed Himself beneath the curse of God for the sake of His enemies, the result was reconciliation.

But let us note that the cross is brought in here parenthetically. It is the basis of reconciliation, indeed, but by no means includes all that He will do in order to bring back the universe to God. On this basis He will carry on all of His future work of ruling and judging, of rousing and vivifying the dead. All of His coming acts will have this grand goal in view, and we will have our share in His work of reconciling God's creatures among the celestials, for we are His complement. As living exemplifications of the power of the cross, we will have our part in the final and effectual peace propaganda. For this reason we read here of the *blood* of the cross, for its abiding power will be the means at our disposal in bringing about perpetual peace.

One of the most helpful contrasts between Ephesians and Colossians is on the subject of peace. In Colossians, as

we have seen, it is universal in its scope, including not only earth's sinners, but His enemies in the heavens as well. But in Ephesians it is limited to believers, and has to do with the enmity between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision (Eph.2:11-18). This estrangement inhered in their flesh, and in the physical relation of Christ to the Circumcision. It found expression in the central wall in the sanctuary, which kept the Uncircumcision at a distance from God's dwelling place, and in the decrees issued by the apostles from Jerusalem. That fruit of peace was a new humanity, so that both the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision have access, in one spirit, to the Father. Though based upon the cross, there is nothing there for those outside the household of faith.

The peace of Ephesians, in accord with the secret of the epistle, will continue during this administration of grace, but will retire in the following economies, when Israel once more comes to the front on the basis of physical preëminence. But the peace in Colossians, in accord with the secret of Christ, will not only continue throughout the eons, but will embrace all at the consummation. In Ephesians it is limited in both time and scope. It applies only to the Circumcision and Uncircumcision in this present era. But in Colossians it is extended to include those in the heavens as well as those on the earth. All are embraced by it, so that no enmity remains in God's universe.

To even list all of the passages which have been brought forward to blot out the great truth of the reconciliation of all would lead us too far afield at this time. They have been fully considered and discussed in separate essays. Correct concordant renderings automatically dispose of them, and, at the same time, confirm the great truth that God will become All in all at the consummation (1 Cor.15:28).

May God graciously give us faith to believe it! May our

love for His Beloved constrain us to receive it! May mistaken translations of other passages not bar our way into this holy of holies, beyond the veil of His eonian dealings with His creatures! May not the false philosophical terms "everlasting" and "eternal," or "eternity," blind our eyes to the eons, the scene of the Son's glories, their commencement in love, and their consummation in reconciliation! Here we stand on the summit of divine revelation. Here we can see all else below us, and see its place in God's purpose. May we not take some lower stand and deny this glorious consummation because it is hid from our gaze by the fogs of lower levels!

CHRIST AMONG THE NATIONS

In its realization the secret of Christ varies according to the administration in which it operates. In this economy it anticipates in spirit, what will take physical form on the earth in the last two eons. We already have the kingdom and the new creation, for which the world still waits. By a similar figure of speech, we already have the presence of Christ, which will make those future eras so glorious. But all is in spirit, and in expectation. Yet the conciliation may be received and enjoyed by all who believe.

Having given the broad outlines of the secret of Christ in its timeless, universal aspect, we now have a paragraph devoted to this secret as it especially applies to us in this present administration. The Colossians had not only been lost, and were now saved; they had not only been sinners, and were now justified; but they had been *estranged* and *enemies,* and were now *reconciled.* Here we can see the close relation of the secret of the evangel to that of Christ. Both go deeper than sin and deal with offense. They go beneath the outward act to the inward motive. They deal not merely with failure, but with enmity.

ENEMIES IN COMPREHENSION

Even one whose outward behavior and treatment of his fellows is beyond reproach may be a bitter enemy of God in his heart. Indeed, it is quite possible to be charitable and philanthropic with a mind that defies and decries the Deity. The attitude of the heart is far more vital than external conduct in our relationship to God, especially with reference to ultimate reconciliation. That is why the Colossians are first characterized as estranged and enemies in their comprehension. Thinking precedes and prepares for conduct, and our thoughts concerning God must be corrected before our walk can be brought into harmony with Him.

Wicked acts arise from this spiritual friction with the Deity just as sinful deeds do from the lack of vital connection with Him. Men may not be conscious that the enmity in their comprehension is against God, for they have no personal acquaintance with Him. Rather it expresses itself in their dissatisfaction with their fate, or with the providence of God. For their good they are not thankful, and for their evil they blame Him, Who, they feel, might have hindered it. Is it not striking that an "act of God" in legal parlance, is a calamity for which He alone can be made responsible? His daily goodness, His continual kindness, are matters of course. Man, out of tune with His Creator, does not only fail or fall short, his mind becomes actively opposed to Him, and his acts wicked.

I have not the impression that the Colossians were especially wicked in the usual sense of that word, as, for instance, the Corinthians, but that their state was rather that of the average one who is reconciled to God. The consummation will not only consist in all of God's creatures being at peace with *each other.* That is only one result of their reconciliation to God. Sin, offense, and wickedness should not be judged and measured by the relations

between man and man, but between man and God. It will be found in the judging that many who entirely escaped the condemnation of a human judge because they never seriously infringed upon the laws of society will be found among the most wicked in God's sight because they were at enmity with Him.

Justification is by blood, yet reconciliation is through death (Rom.5:9,10). The first has to do with acts, and calls for suffering. The second has to do with a condition and demands the death state. We deserve both. To put it popularly (but imperfectly) mankind deserves both torment and annihilation, and Christ endured them on our behalf. Sinners will suffer affliction and distress in the judgment for what they *do,* and enemies enter the second death for what they *are.* The judging is concerned only with their acts, hence is followed by the second death, which deals with the deeper aspect. Their vivification at the consummation, being the nullification of *death,* deals with what they are, and so reconciles them to God.

HOLY AND FLAWLESS AND UNIMPEACHABLE

When we, like the Colossians, are reconciled to God, it reverses our relationship to Him, to man, and to our acts. We were unholy, not fit to come near God's dwelling place, shut out from His presence and blessing. Now we are holy, fit to approach into the very light of the shekinah, loaded with spiritual blessings. We were full of flaws, sinful, lacking in everything, weak, worthless and withering away. Now we are flawless in Him, without defect or imperfection, waiting for the glory. Once we dreaded the very thought of a judgment, but now we are unimpeachable, beyond the imputation of aught to which objection could be made. All of this is implied and included in our reconciliation. All of this is necessary to perfect peace.

GROUNDED AND SETTLED

But few of those who believe ever become grounded and settled in the vital verities of our faith. How seldom do we see a saint get beyond the forgiveness of sins to actual justification, as set forth in the early chapters of Romans! Yet far rarer are those who enjoy the peace of the fifth chapter, and accept the conciliation offered to God's enemies! Many of the saints still lack the peace which is theirs, and fail to fully enter into the conciliation. Such will find it difficult to go on into the great secrets of the later epistles. Paul takes it for granted that the Colossians are grounded and settled in the evangel they have heard.

THE EXPECTATION OF THE EVANGEL

The complete restoration of peace to which the evangel gives rise is not confined to the breasts of believers. It embraces all, the creatures above as well as below mankind. When man became the enemy of God he dragged down the lower creation with him. It has become subject to vanity in expectation of being freed from the slavery of corruption when the sons of God are unveiled (Rom.8: 19-22). The creation on earth will have its part in the glorious future! What a relief from the narrow outlook of a "personal" salvation, with a few favored companions, while all the rest of creation is left to its fate, is this grand and glorious reconciliation which embraces all that is now out of harmony with God!

But this is a future expectation. We are far from its realization yet. The task for the present is to make it known, to herald it abroad. It is to this that Paul applied himself. It is quite possible that he and others completed the heralding to the creation according to the closing words of Mark's account. It will be our special privilege to herald this evangel to the hosts of heaven when we are glorified.

But now our special task is to dispense it on earth, among men, especially among the saints. Our future ministry will be carried out in power and glory. Our present work is often associated with infirmity and suffering. That will be crowned with ultimate success. Now we may count on comparative failure. So it was with our Lord and so will it be with us. This is not our day. That is still to come.

THE DEFICIENCIES OF HIS AFFLICTIONS

When Christ was on earth He suffered much from the very ones who should have been His most loyal supporters in establishing the kingdom. Not only the chief priests and the scribes, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, but even His own disciples and apostles were the cause of much real distress. And this was particularly true in regard to those revelations which go beyond the confines of their narrow hearts. After He had ascended Peter also had difficulties with his Jewish colleagues, who sought to monopolize God's favor and shut out the despised gentiles. But Paul had far more to bear in this direction than Peter, for he widened the area of blessing to reach all mankind.

Now that the evangel of the reconciliation of all is being heralded, it is accompanied by the same sufferings and further afflictions. The time is coming when we will herald this blessed evangel among the celestials, but then there will be no suffering. Its dispensing among men, in Christendom, especially among zealous adherents of narrow-hearted orthodoxy, has been and always will be followed by persecution and affliction. And it is most fitting that it should be so, for this will be a vast advantage in its future heralding, as it contrasts God's heart with that of His creatures, even when they have tasted of His grace. Let us, like Paul, rejoice in any sufferings we may be privileged to enjoy in dispensing this grace.

Strange as the thought may be to some of us, there can

be little doubt that, if Christ were now among us, as He was among His own in Israel, He would suffer at the hands of His own saints. These the apostle calls the deficiencies of His afflictions, which He would bear for the sake of His body, the ecclesia, were He actually in their midst. These fell to the lot of Paul, and fall upon all who occupy a similar position. Let us not think of Paul's imprisonment as his only suffering at this time. There were those who sought to rouse affliction for his bonds (Phil.1:17). He had a great struggle for the sake of the Colossians themselves (2:1). It must have pained him much to hear of the ritual and philosophy which was threatening to despoil them of the truth of their completeness in Him (2:8-10).

TO COMPLETE THE WORD OF GOD

The secret of Christ is the capstone of divine revelation. Until it was made known the Word was fragmentary. It was confined mostly to one nation or to one race upon the earth. The rest of the universe seemed to be outside the range of Christ's sacrifice and activities. It is only when He receives His place as the Head of all and the Reconciler of all, and especially as the Head of the body, through which the celestial realms will be administered and reconciled, that the plan and purpose of God is seen in its completeness. The record in the Scriptures concerning man and the earth, as administered through the holy nation, though it occupies the bulk of God's Book, deals with only a small segment of creation. But Paul embraces all within the scope of his unfoldings. Hence he rounds out or completes the Word of God.

CHRIST IN OR AMONG

The blessed truths that we are *in* Christ, and that Christ is *in* us were freely made known by the apostle Paul in his early epistles, especially in the eighth chapter of Romans,

which deals with those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom.8:1) and who have Christ in them (10). In Paul's vigorous and vital expostulation against the Judaizers he emphasizes the presence of the living Christ within him. He cries, "With Christ have I been crucified, yet I am living—no longer I, but living in me is Christ" (Gal.2:20). It is the vital power of the indwelling Christ that enables us to walk worthily. But this is never presented as a secret. This cannot be the truth brought before us in Colossians.

The connective *en* in Greek denotes *in* with the singular, but may also stand for *among* with the plural. It has been so rendered over a hundred times in the Authorized Version. In this passage it is of the highest importance that we decide whether the secret is "Christ *in* you" (individually) or "Christ *among* you" (the nations). Seeing that "Christ *in* you" was well known before, and deals with the individual believer's experience rather than the secret of Christ, it is not likely that it is brought up here as a secret. Christ *among* the nations, however, is a new thought, a secret hitherto, and fully in line with the figure of the kingdom in the preceding context, and a vital part of the secret of Christ, which is the subject of this part of the epistle.

CHRIST AMONG THE NATIONS

Christ in flesh, when on earth, confined Himself to one nation, Israel. His presence brought with it the glorious prospect of the kingdom as promised in the prophets. Those who received Him and acknowledged Him as their Messiah were filled with high hopes. Some of them wished to secure for themselves the best places in the coming glory. The question in their hearts was, *When?* "Art Thou at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). From His very infancy the saints, like Simeon, looked upon Him, not only as the Salvation of the nation, but as "the Glory of Thy people Israel" (Luke 2:30-32). He was,

indeed, Christ *among* them, the expectation of glory.

In considering this secret we must keep in mind the scope of Christ's kingdom as set forth in the earlier part of this chapter. It is universal, and embraces all thrones and dominions and sovereignties and authorities, invisible as well as visible, celestial as well as terrestrial (16). This is the secret "as it was now revealed" (Eph.3:5). To administer the kingdom on earth Messiah will use the nation to which He is united by physical ties. The hundred forty-four thousand will rule among the peoples. The apostles will adjudicate the tribes. But in the heavens Christ will use His spiritual relatives, the saints who are joined to Him among the nations. They have the glorious expectation of having an even more exalted position in His celestial realms.

Before His ascension He never went among the other nations. In a very real sense, His presence in Israel demanded the degradation of Rome from her place as the leading nation on the earth. Even if He had gone among the various nations of that day, it could not have been a token of their glory in the future, but of their subjugation to the favored people. They can only be subordinate in the coming kingdom, on the earth. In flesh, Christ is of the seed of David, and the nations have no part in Him. It is only in spirit, in His celestial domains, that there is any prospect for the saints in the nations. They cannot have a seat at His right or His left in Jerusalem, but far higher honors are open to them in the empyrean.

"Christ among you, a glorious expectation" is that aspect of the secret of Christ which is the counterpart of the secret in Ephesians. It is the secret of Christ as far as it applies to the present administration and to the nations. It gives believers among the nations the same relation to the celestial kingdom as believers in Israel had to the earthly rule. It gives them an expectation comparable to the kingdom,

the longed-for millennium, for which every faithful heart in Israel yearned, yet with a grace and glory as far above it as heaven is high above the earth, and with a kingdom so much greater and grander that our earthborn faculties and expressions fail to function in view of their appalling immensity and majesty.

PRESENT EVERY MAN MATURE

Is not Christ, as proclaimed among the more faithful in Christendom, far smaller than He is here revealed? With commendable zeal He is set forth as their personal Saviour, and the end of all things seems to have been reached in delivering them from the effects of their sins. We can only be thankful for this much, for even this is lacking in the formal churches of Christendom. But such selfish happiness is not permanently satisfying, especially when associated with the realization that millions, if not most of God's creatures, are suffering, or as orthodoxy insists, always will suffer. There is something repulsive about happiness which is not affected by the woes around it, which is callous to the agonies of others.

Many have wondered how the saints could be happy in glory when a glance over the parapets of heaven would reveal the tormented in hell. But this sound instinct has been stifled by an appeal to credulity. We are assured that the Scriptures so teach and God will make our hearts impervious to the pains of others. How horrible is this thought! What a spurious heaven is that which consists of self-gratification and a lack of all feeling for the fate of fellow mortals! To be delivered from such false notions of God's salvation is itself a cause for much thankfulness. Our choice by God is not an end in itself. We were selected, not to be blessed so much as to be blessers. And in making others happy is the only true and abiding happiness.

How blessed is the place of Abraham and his seed!

For in them shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And such is the secret of our future bliss. As members of Christ's body we will bring blessing to all the creatures of the empyrean. Through us He will rule the celestial hosts, and through us they will be brought into living contact with the grace and love of God. Our happiness will not be enjoyed in spite of contact with the hopeless horrors of a medieval hell, but because we will be the channel of blessing to the countless creatures who come within the scope of Christ's celestial rule. Therein is true and abiding happiness, in bringing to the creatures of God's hand the precious gifts of His heart.

So long as we are cramped and confined by a selfish longing for mere physical well-being in the future—and most of us would be unutterably thankful for that—our hearts will be closed to the sublimity of the glory which awaits us. It is not a question of restoring a single soul to happiness, or even of saving a multitude of sinners from their fate, but of reconciling a whole universe to God, of bringing bliss not only to innumerable creatures throughout the infinitudes of stellar space, but of satisfying the heart of God by means of a universal response to His love, so that He may take His true place in every heart He has created.

Christ among the nations as the pledge of our future glory, leading to the exaltation of Christ as the Head of all in the heavens as well as on the earth, and to the ultimate reconciliation of all at the consummation because the entire complement delights to dwell in Him—such is the supreme revelation brought by Paul, which leads us out of the partial and immature conceptions of His plans into a mature and complete grasp of His full purpose. In Ephesians maturity consists in finding *our* all in Christ, but, in Colossians it demands that we see in Christ all that *God* needs to carry out His eonian purpose.

Here is perhaps the highest sphere of service today—

admonishing and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we should present every man mature in Christ Jesus (1:28). This Paul does in the body of the epistle as we shall see. Even in his day it was not an easy task, for he speaks of it as *toiling* and *struggling,* as though progress were not only laborious but against heavy opposition. If this was so in his day, how much more now! Maturity has been branded as a crime by Christendom, and even zealous defenders of the Bible toil and struggle *against* the truths for which Paul once contended.

Few, indeed, are there among the saints who do not need to be *admonished* because of teaching or practice which conflicts with maturity. And all of us need to be *taught* the great truths concerning Christ which are unfolded in this epistle. Because these are unknown or denied, maturity has practically vanished. Is it not worth severe toil and a tremendous struggle to recover these treasures of wisdom and knowledge and to set them before the saints? O that God, in these last days, would raise up men like Paul, mature themselves, and powerfully impressed with their privilege of proclaiming the secret of Christ, the complement of God!

True riches, untold wealth, lie in the assurance which comes from an understanding which leads to a realization of this secret, which His God and Father has revealed concerning Christ, in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed (2:2,3). It consoles the heart as well as satisfies the head. It is the end of all philosophy, and the apex of all love. The whence, the why and the whither of all things is unfolded to us in this all-embracing "mystery."

But the saints have been beguiled and despoiled of this vast spiritual treasure by the persuasive words of men. The rites of religion and the reasonings of philosophy have effectually robbed them of this wonderful wealth. Though

the words still stare at us in the Bible, faith fails to see them, because it is blinded by false flares of human tradition. There is need, not only of a positive setting forth of the truth, as has already been done, but of a negative admonition, such as follows. This was called for in Paul's day, and was more needed and less heeded as the apostasy from Paul proceeded.

The same Christ Who met us at the beginning of our new life should accompany us all the way. He is all we needed for salvation, and He is more than sufficient for our walk. We should be rooted in Him alone, and not seek sustenance or support in aught else. We should be built up in Him only, and not seek edification in any other "means of grace." And may it be the lot of every reader of these lines to find a firm foundation for his faith in the secret now at length revealed, while his heart overflows with thankfulness for all that Christ is to him, and to the saints, to the whole creation, and to God.

A. E. Knoch

How restful it is to look upon a task all finished! And such a task! And so well done! How we should charge our hearts to enter and enjoy this solid satisfying portion.

Whatever joys and glories the future may have in store, even though our bodies be changed at His coming, nothing can add to our completeness in the Anointed. No ordinances upon the flesh, no prayer, no worship, no service, nothing can make us more acceptable; nothing can remove defilement or any other barrier to approach, for now we are perfectly equipped for His presence. The spirit of our God has cleansed us to His perfect satisfaction. Nothing can bring us nearer, nothing can make us dearer.

A. E. Knoch

THE SECRET OF CHRIST

ITS MANIFESTATION

COLOSSIANS 4:2–6

TWO CLOSELY RELATED SECRETS filled the heart of the apostle in his imprisonment, besides the secret concerning this administration. The secret of the *evangel* (Eph. 6:19) and the secret of *Christ* (Col.4:3) were both pressing for utterance, so he especially urges the saints to pray for him that he may be able to make them known. He is not merely bound with metal chains. He is also "bound" to act by spiritual forces. As the literal Greek has it, he speaks, "as it is *binding*" for him to speak.

O that there were men today who knew these secrets, and not only could but would reveal them to the saints! O that all saints would unite in these prayers, no longer for the apostle Paul, but for pastors and teachers and evangelists everywhere! Is it not all too true that these secrets have been lost? Where are they made known? And do we not see the wisdom of God in this, that Paul, in urging the saints to pray for him, has left a permanent exhortation, a prayer which we all should pray, and which should awaken in our hearts a desire to enjoy these precious secrets ourselves and to make them known to others? What other truths in God's Word are so burdened with prayer for their utterance? Does this not intimate that these truths are as desirable as rare?

The bulk of Paul's epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians is largely composed of *his* prayers for the saints, that

they may realize the grace and truth which he reveals to them. But at the close of each epistle we have these two gems, each perfect in its own setting, in which the *saints* are exhorted to pray for *him* that he may be able to make this message known. It is a delight to study these brief requests and especially to compare them with each other. Their messages are very similar. The chief difference lies in the secret to be expressed or manifested. In Ephesians it is the secret of the *evangel*, which is barely mentioned in the body of the epistle. In Colossians, however, it is the message of the epistle itself which is pressing for expression.

PERSEVERING IN PRAYER

It is the precious privilege of all who are His to be concerned with everything which pertains to God and His purpose in both creation and reconciliation. And this includes everything, since all is serving His grand design. Our prayers may include all, in heaven as well as on earth, but, of course, may concentrate on the world about us, and especially on the saints, and on those who are actively engaged in carrying out God's purpose in making Him known, particularly those to whom His secrets have been confided, and who, like Paul, are held and hindered from heralding what is on their heart. For now, far more than then, these secrets find little utterance or entrance among the people of God.

Most of us have heard many prayers concerning many things. We ourselves, perhaps, have prayed much and often. But, as we look back upon them, are we not reminded of the words of the apostle, that "we are not aware what we should pray for" (Rom.8:26)? Have not the most of our petitions been out of line with God's will? Do we not feel more and more that we desire to leave all details in God's hands because of our own ignorance of what should be? Yet, on the other hand, the definite instructions and

exhortations which are given us, especially in the perfection epistles, as to the scope and subject of our prayers, are almost totally ignored. Should we hear them in public they would appear strange and mark the petitioner as peculiar, as, indeed, he would be.

WATCHING WITH THANKSGIVING

Perhaps most of us are inclined to wait until our prayers are answered to our satisfaction before we add our thanks. But that is because we have not yet fully found our All in God. We should learn to be especially thankful when matters do *not* turn out according to our wishes, for this is evidence enough that we were in the wrong, and harm would have resulted if our will had been carried out. We should thank as we watch. It is not our duty, in prayer, to instruct God what to do, or how or when to do it, but to recognize our utter incapacity to dictate these details, and to rejoice that they are in His skillful hands, so that we may thankfully acquiesce in every particular, even if it is contrary to our own will.

A practical instance is at hand. It is now many, many years since our own heart was overflowing in prayer and petition that expression might be granted to us to make known the secret of the evangel. Indeed, it seemed at the time that this should be our life work. There was much liberty in prayer, for there was no question of the Lord's will, seeing that He Himself had put the petition into our mouths. Yet it is clear from this secret itself that it has a temporary term, and that the faith is fading from the earth, so that great things could not be expected, especially as the close of this administration seemed so very near. Nevertheless there has been much watching to see if some would not accept and appreciate the marvelous message of God's special grace, and much thanksgiving,

not only for those who received it, but also for those who did not, for both fulfill God's purpose.

Of course it is a special joy to hear of those who not only receive this precious truth, but strive to make it known. And God has graciously stirred some hearts, who have given written or oral testimony to the truth, at various times and in various countries. May our prayers result in a blessed awakening to this great truth! And, at the same time, may He open hearts to explore and enjoy the secret of Christ, the subject of our present meditation. These two secrets, that of the evangel, which involves the conciliation of the nations during the period of Israel's callousness, and that of Christ, which results in the reconciliation of all at the consummation, are very closely related in their present expression. Peace is the keynote of both. Even as conciliation is a precursor of reconciliation, so Christ's present attitude toward the nations may be looked upon as an anticipation of His attitude toward all in the last eon, when the secret of Christ will be fully unfolded. The secret of the evangel is, in part, but one aspect of the secret of Christ in its present expression. Therefore, in Ephesians, the apostle wishes us to pray for one, yet, in Colossians, for the other.

As we have seen, the secret of Christ is best set forth today by the expression "Christ among *you, the expectation of glory" (1:27). Christ did not leave the land of Israel when He came in flesh. He was never among the nations. His presence in Israel was the assurance of future glory for all who received Him, which will be fulfilled in the thousand years, on the earth. His figurative presence now, among the nations, is also the assurance of future glory, for all who believe, among the celestials. At the same time it involves the setting aside of the enmity which existed in the days of His presence, and this is the conciliation. It is God* Who is conciliated, yet it is Christ Who acts accordingly, and Who visits the nations, in spirit, just as He had come to Israel in the days of old.

MAKING IT MANIFEST

The secret of Christ must be manifested. Why not simply tell it out to eager crowds and herald it forth in overflowing halls? Why not let the daily press put it on the front page, with gigantic headlines, in colored ink? Or at least the religious press should give it the publicity it deserves. Pamphlets and books could be written and exhibited everywhere. It seems quite simple. But Paul did not urge the saints in his day to use every avenue of publicity, but to pray to God to *open a door.* The fact is that all doors are shut and locked against the entrance of this truth. No human effort is able to open them. We are entirely cast upon God for the manifestation of the secret of Christ.

Indeed, among the saints themselves there are few hearts that are open to these grand verities. And here we find not merely closed doors but open opposition. These transcendent truths, which complete the Word of God, which round out revelation, which draw aside the enigmatic veil which hangs before God's previous unfoldings—these are rejected as heretical and false, although their simple terms cannot be misunderstood. It is a question of giving Christ the highest place, and the opposing powers will not accord Him this. So doors are closed, and arguments are brought forth to show that these words cannot mean what they say. It may be well to consider a few of these.

"THINGS"

Strange as it may seem, one of the first reasons given for rejecting the reconciliation of all when we began to make it known was that the word "all" in this passage refers to *things,* not to persons; to creation, not to creatures. So it is in the popular versions, especially in the Revised, which is

exceptionally particular on such points. Yet stranger still is the fact that this is according to current scholarship, which confounds the indefinite forms of the Greek with the English neuter gender. To what this leads may be seen in Galatians 3:22, where the Revisers changed the Authorized Version "the scripture hath concluded *all* under sin" to "the scripture hath shut up *all things* under sin." And this is "that the promise . . . might be given them that believe."

The mere fact that there is no estrangement between "things" and God, and therefore there can be no reconciliation, should suffice to show how groundless it is. In fact, the argument from "things" has little weight with intelligent searchers for truth, for, if we confine the preëminence of God's Son to His relation to the insensate matter of the universe, as, indeed, we must if *pan* is limited to *things*, the whole passage becomes absurd and intolerable. When it becomes evident, in the next paragraph, that the Colossians themselves were among these "things," few will care to limit the glories of the Son to the physical material of the universe, no matter how much Greek scholarship may stand back of the assertion. But the indefinite includes all genders as well as things.

Indeed, what other form than the indefinite could be used in this passage? Creation and reconciliation in Him were not confined to males or females, for, at his creation, even Adam was both, and this distinction would not apply to the creatures in the heavens. The universality of this passage cannot be confined to earthly conditions. In order to include all it *must* be expressed in terms that apply to all. To one who revels in this marvelous galaxy of glories, which exalts our beloved Lord as no other in God's precious Word, the continuous addition of the misleading word "things" in our popular versions seems as deplorable as it is unnecessary. It brings discord into this highest of harmonies. It seeks to dull His dignities,

by making Him the Creator of lifeless substance, and not of living creatures.

You who use versions with "things" in Colossians 1:15-20, cross them out! Only by so doing may you be initiated into the secret of Christ. He is not merely the Creator of the dust beneath your feet, but He is *your* Creator! He is not the Reconciler of the soulless stone on which you stand, but He is *your* Reconciler! The simple fact that He appears here as the *Son* should show that He has to do with *spirit* and with *life.* He is not the Firstborn of dead substance but of living creatures.

SCOPE

Another bolt which has been used in order to keep the door from opening to allow the secret of Christ to enter is the plea that Colossians is concerned only with the church which is Christ's body, hence reconciliation can refer only to them. It is well to keep each statement in God's Word well within the scope of its context. But where, in all the sacred scrolls, is the range of the context any greater than in this passage? "Every creature" cannot be confined to the church which is Christ's body. "All in the heavens and on the earth" is as wide a scope as can well be imagined. With such a context, reconciliation *cannot* be limited to any body of God's creatures. It applies to all, sinners as well as saints, high and low, without any limitation whatever except previous estrangement.

UNIVERSALITY

Any attempt to subtract in the smallest degree from any one of the eight asseverations of universality in the first of Colossians I cannot help but feel is nothing less than *treason!* If He is the Firstborn of every creature *but one,* then He is not first in all! If a single creature was not created in Him, then His glory has suffered a severe eclipse! If

another is before Him, then He is not first! If He is second in all, why not tell us of the one who is first? If only a part of the complement dwells in Him, then, of course, only a part will be reconciled through Him. Again I say, *Treason!*

The fact that almost all doors are closed to the secret of Christ today, especially among instructed saints, is a most illuminating commentary on this request for prayer. If Christendom had gone on in the truth, and the light had increased, then we might expect to find open doors. But the contrary has occurred. Apostasy from Paul is not confined to one province, as of old, but is well-nigh universal. And, as a consequence, the secret of Christ is not only unknown but shut out, debarred, yes, in some cases, detested. There is more need for prayer now than ever before that God will open doors for its manifestation.

WALKING IN WISDOM

"Be walking in wisdom toward those outside" (Col.4:5). These words follow immediately upon the reference to the secret of Christ. In Ephesians (5:15) we have a similar exhortation, but nothing is said of those outside. This is another of those delicate touches which distinguish the two epistles, for the secret of Christ brings us into much closer relation to unbelievers, by creation and reconciliation, in which they share, than the secret of Ephesians, in which they have no part. And how is it possible to walk in wisdom toward our fellow saints or toward the world without a grasp of the great secrets which affect each so vitally? These alone will revolutionize the attitude of our hearts toward them and enable us to act in accord with God's purpose for them.

It is wisdom to deal with men in accord with God's will and purpose concerning them. If we imagine that those outside are doomed to destruction or eternal torment, it is practically impossible to avoid a hardening of the heart

in regard to them, which will lead us to think and act contrary to the basic truths of their creation and reconciliation in love. Thinking of them as so much waste in God's operations in turn reflects upon His wisdom and love. These false conceptions of God's creation and goal, outside the Son of His love, make a wise walk toward those outside well-nigh impossible. But when we see the place of everyone in God's plans, it will soften our hearts and steady our heads, and we will be enabled to recognize His handiwork in the most worthless and most antagonistic of His creatures.

Looked at apart from God's purpose, the present era, like those before it, is vanity, and a feeding on wind. There is much talk of evolution and there is much real revolution, but the world as a whole seems to be slipping down into an abyss instead of climbing up into a paradise. Of what use is all the work and woe with which we are surrounded? We know that God will yet make excellent use of it. Man's day will reveal man's failure and futility. This is of no value in itself, but of surpassing worth in humbling man and in bringing him to accept and appreciate God's grace. In this way this wicked era will be reclaimed in due time. Yet wisdom will anticipate, and use the background of human incapacity and hate in order to display the fullness of God's competency and love.

Not only are we to deal graciously among ourselves (Eph.4:32), but our conduct with those outside should also be governed by this precious quality. Once we know that even they were created in love and will be reconciled by the blood of Christ's cross, we will recognize in their present state only a temporary estrangement from God, in which evil and sin play a painful yet salutary part. Far from harsh condemnation, we will sympathize with them in their condition, and speak and act in faith, knowing that they will yet fulfill the object of their creation, when God

becomes All in them. What if they are the vessels of God's indignation now? In due time He will use them for His glory. *We,* the vessels of His grace, have no more right to His favor than those without. May this thought humble us before them.

Our Lord called His disciples the salt of the earth (Matt.5:13). They alone could stay its corruption. Perhaps nowhere is the rottenness of the world more evident than in its utterances. Not only should our speech with them be gracious, but free from the decadent foulness which characterizes much of human intercourse. More than that, it should be a seasoning and a preservative, counteracting the decay all around us. And what is more effective for this than an exultant knowledge of God's grand goal, when all that is corruptible will have given place to that which is incorruptible and glorious?

A heart overflowing with expectation in the future which is in store for all of God's creatures is the best preparation for meeting and answering the questions of those outside. Apart from this knowledge the world has many queries to which even the saint cannot give a satisfactory reply. "Why does God allow such terrible things to occur?" Such questions come from the lips of those who know nothing about God. And how few are able to show that God does not "allow" them to happen, but brings them about for His glory and our blessing? As a result the deity of most real believers is only a second or third rate god, who needs to be excused for his dereliction of duty and defended for His impotence.

We should never be at a loss to answer the questions of the godless in regard to God's present operations and His prospective goal. This is seen fully only in the secret of Christ, which it is our privilege and duty to manifest. So that, unlike Ephesian truth, which is only for the saints and can only be grasped by these under circumstances which

are all too rare in these days, the secret of Christ should have a powerful influence on our walk and talk with those outside the family of faith. In measure it should be manifested by our conduct in the world as well as by our witness to the saints. May each one of us pray this prayer and seek to fulfill it in our own words and work!

A. E. Knoch

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST'S CROSS

The will of God, and His love for His Son, envisioned the blood of Christ's cross (Col.1:20). Reconciliation cannot be achieved without the blood, which speaks of suffering. In Leviticus 17:11 we read (CV): "For the soul of the flesh, it is in the blood." The soul is a matter of our feelings and senses. Christ laid down His soul (John 10:17) which became sorrow-stricken to death (Matt.26:38).

These sufferings were necessary for the work of reconciliation, which in turn makes it possible for Christ to receive a kingdom of the reconciled. These sufferings were so severe and vast in their extent that they will lead to a reconciliation no less vast. The reconciliation is to be universal.

In this we can see how it was that God's love for Christ as His Son prompted Him to prepare the sufferings of the cross. We can begin to grasp the significance of Isaiah 53:10, where we read, "Yet Yahweh desires to crush Him, and He causes Him to be wounded."

As the blood speaks of pain and agony, so the cross speaks of humiliation and shame. The death on the cross was a sacrifice, but it was an extremely ignominious one. It was a curse to be hung on a tree (Deut.21:22,23). This was a nailing to a stake, as was done to the lowest of criminals and outcasts. As such it demanded estrangement between

God and His Son (Matt.27:46), yet this was an estrangement which ends all estrangement.

How amazing it is that this humiliation becomes the background for the display of God's love for His Son! It prepared the way for the exaltation of Christ above every throne and lordship and sovereignty and authority, and every name which is named.

Even as the shame of the cross was necessary for the glorious reign of Christ as the beloved Son, so also was His humiliation necessary in order for us to be glorified with Him. "For the One not knowing sin, [God] makes to be sin for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor.5:21). But even here, the glory which arises from the humiliation of Christ does not end. Through the enmity of the cross the enmity between God and His creation is removed. It was God's love for His Son which prepared the cross so that He might achieve reconciliation.

In conciliation the barriers are removed between God and humanity (2 Cor.5:18,19). In reconciliation there is a full appreciation and enjoyment of the peace and access which this removal of enmity has produced. The cross assures this establishment of peace in the hearts of all of God's creatures (Col.1:20), but it is only believers who enjoy it "now" (Col.1:22) as we persist in the faith and are grounded and settled and are not removed from the expectation of the evangel of grace (Col.1:23).

However, every point of this evangel demands that the reconciliation be universal and eventually apply to all who are estranged. The blood, the Son's sufferings, demands that all enmity be removed from the universe. The cross, the Son's humiliation, demands that full value be given for the price paid. God's love for His Son demands that He receive a kingdom of fully reconciled creatures, and that none be denied to Him.

D.H.H.

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Contents:

97 Philosophy and Religion
109 That Which is Above
116 Except What is Human
123 God's Will and Intention
133 The Death of the Cross
138 Christ, in Judgment and Salvation

THIRD QUARTER, 2020

Volume 111 **Number 3**

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PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

Colossians 2:8-23

Christ, with His secret glories, is the determining factor in doctrine and deportment for today. When we give Him His high place in our heads and hearts we cannot go far astray. Now that Paul has set forth the secret of Christ, he deals with departures from it in doctrine (2:8-23), and discusses its bearing on our conduct (3:1-4:1). Doctrinal departure may be grouped under two distinct heads, that which comes from men, and that which comes from God. Reasoning and ritual are the two dangers against which we are warned.

If we realize our completeness in Christ and His glory as the complement of the Deity, we are immensely wealthy. We possess riches beyond the power of figures to express. We cannot consider the millionaires or billionaires of these last days in our class, for their riches are loaned to them only for a few brief years, and even then they bring with them more care than contentment, more unpleasantness than joy. Ours is sure to us for all time. On one point, however, we are like them. We may lose the enjoyment of it for a season. This may be taken from us if we do not beware.

Philosophy and religion have robbed us of more vital values than any other foes. One denies Christ His place as the Complement of God. The other refuses to accept Him as the Completeness of the saints. In these days the extreme of these two movements may be seen in Modernism on the one hand and Romanism on the other. A vain philosophy is seeking to eliminate God and His Christ from the universe. An empty ritual is seeking to displace the work

of Christ. We may not go to either of these extremes, yet in all of us lies the tendency to put reason and religion in the place of God's Anointed. Hence the apostle's warning.

BEWARE

In Ephesians we are warned to beware how we *walk* (Eph.5:15). In Philippians we have a threefold warning as to our *service* (Phil.3:2), but in Colossians it is applied to departure from the great *doctrine* of Christ as the Complement of all. The saints are almost all being robbed, yet, as it were, in a legal way, so that they are not aware of the great loss which they have sustained. Indeed, most of them cling to the substitutes, and would feel themselves robbed rather if these were taken away from them. Thus, not being even aware of their vast loss, they cannot beware lest it be taken from them. In these days the situation has been reversed. The saints have lost these precious possessions and now need rather to *recover* their property.

The saints as a whole *have* been despoiled through philosophy and empty seduction, in accord with human tradition, in accord with the elements of the world. What is needed is that we recognize this in our own case and seek to remedy it insofar as we are able. Two things are necessary in order to accomplish this. First, we must seek to absorb into our whole being the great companion truths of Christ as the Complement for God and man. Then we should examine the Scriptures so that we may recognize the enemies of these vital verities, rationalism and religion. Both pervade Christendom today to an extent that would astonish the saints if they only realized it. Christendom is poor today, beggared by these two robbers, who have taken our Christ from us.

PHILOSOPHY OR HUMAN TRADITION

Men allege themselves to be wise, yet are stupid. Their

heart is darkened. They are vain in their reasonings. Yet even many of the leaders in Christendom laud man's "God-given reason," and encourage us to make use of it, especially in the search for truth. To be sure, such reason as man has left was given him by God, but, knowing God, they did not glorify or thank Him as God, hence *they were made vain in their reasonings* (Rom.1:21). As many, if not most, of the saints are partakers in this sin of not glorifying God *as God*, they also manifest the futility of reasoning, especially in the things of God.

Perhaps no better example can be given of the vanity of human ratiocination where God's glory is denied than the imbecility of the evolutionary hypothesis. I consider the mere fact that this silly theory could be entertained by the scientific world for so long a time as ample evidence of the intellectual decadence of this era. There has never yet been found a single fact on which to form a logical syllogism on which to base the theory of evolution, yet the great majority of western scientists swallowed it whole, and sneer at all who do not share their infatuation. The real basis of the theory lies in its irrational commencement without a creation, and its continuance without a Creator. It robs God of His glory, gives Him no thanks, so, morally and rationally, *must be* a vacuous vanity.

But even we, though saints, are not exempt from this law. Few, indeed, glorify God *as God* in these days, and, as a result, their mental processes are clouded and confused, and lead to error, rather than to truth. I have ceased to expect full clarity of thought from anyone who does not bow to the absolute deity of God, without reservation or restriction. The nearer there is an approach to this the more will reason be rational. Yet the nearer we come to the acknowledgment of God's deity, the more we will discard reason for faith, and philosophy for revelation, and the less will we be guilty of injecting philosophy into God's Word.

This has been a sore evil in these latter days, especially among those who seek to be Bible students. With many of them the Scriptures have been transformed into a bog of proof texts instead of a full-fledged faith to be believed. Philosophies are propounded and supported by texts from Genesis to Revelation, with little regard to their contexts or actual contents. Figurative statements have been treated as if literal and used to prove that which is not true. Philosophy is then installed in the place of Holy Writ, and demands implicit faith, such as should be given to the Word alone.

The only true philosophy must be based upon the great truth that, in Christ, the entire complement of the Deity is dwelling bodily. Even those who recognize God, such as Solomon, find unsolved problems in the world as it is. If he, with all his wisdom, as well as a measure of revelation, could not finish his philosophy, what can other men do? Many have tried it, and have only led mankind further from God and the truth. A great scientist and believer once expressed his conviction that, if we only knew all, we would conclude that this world is the very wisest and best that could be. But the accepted philosophers have taken the opposite stand, and have sown distrust and hatred and despair in the hearts of mankind. A close student of Schopenhauer has said, "He seems to have the key for a few doors of our life, but he has none for its exit."

The world, as it is, is abnormal, and presents no proper premises for reason to build upon. Things are wrong, and the wrongs are not righted. It is only as we bring in God, and His activities in Christ, in the past and in the future, that all becomes rational and understandable and glorious. In His Beloved, and through Him, He will fulfill all the beneficent designs which move His heart. And all that God needs or will use in accomplishing His purpose, is in Him. If, indeed, we also have a part in this glorious

work, it is only because we are in Him. In ourselves we contribute only to the negative, the destructive, the preparatory phase of God's plan. The positive, the constructive, the conclusive work is all done by Christ, or through those who are His.

We are not philosophers, indeed, and have no philosophy in fact, but we have the reality, the substance, of which philosophy is only the shadow, the elusive phantom. The philosophers nearly all disagree. Were they good reasoners, they would deduce from this fact alone that philosophy is mostly a bad dream. And not one of these philosophies is complete or satisfactory since they deal with a transitory phase of God's dealings with man as if it were the whole. They have no light beyond the tomb and know nothing of judgment and reconciliation. We have what the philosopher is seeking, and find all included in Christ, Who is the Wisdom of God.

Christendom, and even the vast majority of the saints within it, do not know Christ thus. The title "Complement" is His because He brings all to a satisfactory *Completion.* But the final phase of God's purpose has been hid from Christendom, so that the creation which it commences in chaos, manages to bring millions of sentient beings into existence, not for their own happiness or the glory of God, but for their unending torment and the eternal disgrace of the Deity. Any philosophy based on the creeds of Christendom must lead to desperation and insanity. Even when death is made to end all, oblivion is no jewel in God's crown, and is no rational apology for creation. Reason and revelation demand that God be glorified, that suffering receive a satisfactory explanation, and that a *completed,* not a shattered universe crown the efforts of Deity and the intervention of His Anointed.

Perhaps the greatest treasure of which the saints have been despoiled is the reconciliation of all. Almost pre-

cisely the same words are used to introduce this glorious truth. Let us refer to it again (1:18-20): "that in all He may be becoming first, seeing that the entire complement delights to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all to Him . . . ." It is because He is God's Complement that all will be reconciled. If He does not reconcile all, that all will not be complete and He is not God's Complement. The full force of "complement" or "fullness" is denied by nearly every saint who bears His name. Only a tiny remnant dares to acknowledge Him as God's Complement. All the rest have been robbed of a jewel of far more value than any gem in any diadem of any potentate of earth.

THE ELEMENTS OF THE WORLD

One of the worst robbers in Christendom is ritual. Nor should we confine this term to those vast communions which use it in their form of worship. Ritual is not merely a recalling of the Jewish service and sacrifices in such things as the celebration of the mass among those whose Christianity is no more than a name, but includes the rite of baptism among those who are alive, and intelligent, and active in the service of our Lord. For the spiritual believer there is more danger in ritual than in rationalism, for ritual is divine in its origin, and seems to be God's will, when the Word of truth is not correctly cut.

Ritual can only be countered by the precious truth of completeness in Christ. Religion implies incompleteness and demands that something be done to fill our lack. Circumcision, baptism, the keeping of decrees, of festivals, and all religious ritual are intended to make us more acceptable to God in ourselves, though none of them is more than a mere shadow. Christ is the Reality which they portray, and, in Him, we have the substance, hence do not need the shadow. Indeed, if we seek to make ourselves complete by means of these shadows, the reality will be

lost to us. Few things are more needed in these days than a knowledge of our completeness in Christ.

REAL CIRCUMCISION

A considerable portion of mankind is distinguished by the sign of circumcision, because they are descendants of Abraham, and should shadow forth the fact that blessing comes through faith, not through flesh. It signifies that the flesh is cut off. It foreshadowed the cross of Christ, where He was cut off, and all further hope of anything through His flesh was at an end. In Him we also were cut off, and our flesh has no place before God. If then, our flesh is cut off, why act as if it were not so? The Circumcisionists of Paul's day lacked the reality. In fact they fought against it. With them the flesh was vitally important. They were not the circumcision, but the *maim*cision (Phil.3:2). The rite itself kept them from the reality. And so it will rob all who submit to it now that we are complete in Christ.

GENUINE BAPTISM

Circumcision was needed to enter into the community of God's people. Baptism speaks of a much nearer approach. It was for the priests when they came near to worship in the tabernacle and the temple. Symbolically it cleansed the flesh whenever it sought the divine presence. The reality is found in the entombment of Christ. The body that bore the sin of the world was laid away in the tomb. Thus has God dealt graciously with all of our offenses. All the water in the world could not have removed a single one of them. It can only indicate the actual cleansing. To repeat the rite, now that we have the reality, is to deny the great truth that we have all of which it speaks, in Christ our Complement.

The great proof that we have had the real baptism is that we are roused and *vivified* jointly with Him (Col.

2:12,13). One who is vivified cannot offend again, but is wholly without sin. Why should such a one be baptized? Should Christ once more return to the tomb because of our offenses? Or is He alive beyond the reach of sin and death? As He is, so are we, in spirit. Already, in God's sight, we are as we shall be in the future, when in the presence of our Lord, immortal, incorruptible. His burial is our baptism, and His vivification is our life.

ERASING THE DECREES

Not only did the Jews of Paul's day seek to insist on the circumcision and baptism of converts, but they sought to put them under law. Their attempt to enslave them under the law of Moses did not succeed, due to Paul's energetic remonstrance, as we see in his Galatian letter, but this did not hinder them from making rules of their own for them, which, while they seem to free them from the observance of the Mosaic ritual, nevertheless brought them under the authority of the apostles just as if they were subjects in the millennial kingdom, instead of having a celestial allotment of their own.

THE DECREES OF JAMES

So far as the relation of the nations to God is concerned they will be under the sovereignty and authority of the chosen nation in the future on the earth. Nevertheless that nation, by crucifying their Messiah, has forfeited all right to such a place, and will exercise it only when once again restored to divine favor. In the book of Acts, where Israel is continually becoming more and more apostate, and James, who was not an apostle, gets the upper hand, it seems utterly unwarranted on their part to assume to dictate to the converts among the nations, except as we view this as a foretaste of the kingdom.

Although Christendom has not given much heed to the

decrees, issued by James, the same thing has been repeated thousands of times in its many organizations. Men have arisen and taken upon themselves to rule and regulate the conduct of the saints by means of "disciplines" and "manuals" and other substitutes for the law, usually incorporating a portion of the Mosaic code in their own. All such attempts to bring us into bondage to human "sovereignties and authorities" are destructive of our completeness in Christ. He has nailed them to His cross. They are not *for* us, but *against* us. They are hostile to us. They bring us into bondage, after Christ has made us free. In Him we need no regulations from the hands of men.

Israel had a *divine* law, which was holy and just and good. But did it make them complete for God's presence? Far from it! Rather it revealed their incompleteness. How then shall human enactments help to make men acceptable to Him? They do not! They have the opposite effect. Let us strip them off! Such human additions to God's requirements were given the greatest weight in Israel, but it did not help them to recognize their Messiah, but rather to crucify Him. His crucifixion was a public spectacle showing how weak and worthless such things were, and at the same time a repudiation of them, and a triumph over them. No human enactment, unless it be the decree that caused Christ to be crucified, furnishes us fully for the future.

For us the figure of the body takes the place of the shadows of the law. Instead of ceasing work on a Saturday we look above and see Christ *seated* at God's right hand, His work on our behalf completed. The difference is vast. Not our work, or even our cessation from work, makes us meet for glory, but our position in Christ has already placed us there in spirit. Knowing this, we will allow no one to judge us, should we work on the seventh day of the week, or should we eat that which has been offered to idols, or fail to keep a festival found in the law.

LET NO ONE JUDGE YOU

The decrees issued from Jerusalem were partly concerned with food. The nations were not to be allowed to eat anything which had been strangled, or blood (Acts 15:20). Now the apostle puts an end to such prohibitions. The law of Moses dealt with such matters as food and drink, the details of a festival, the new moons, and the sabbaths, not that it might make those who kept it perfect thereby, but, partly at least, in order to foreshadow the true perfection of the future in connection with Christ. He is the true Food and Drink. The festivals point to His work and the sabbath to the cessation of all work for salvation, in Him. All of these have a future fulfillment on the earth, hence have their place with the people of the earth, but not with us, whose destiny is different.

LET NO ONE ARBITRATE AGAINST YOU

Israel had a divine ritual. It would have been high-handed presumption for anyone of the people to enter the holy places. Such a one would send his representative or messenger, the priest, in his place, and not without due regard to the formalities prescribed by the Mosaic ritual. It seems like real humility today to take a far-off stand, and allow another to take our place in approach to God, by means of elaborate rites and splendid ceremonies, which appeal to the eye, but it is a sham. The mind of the flesh can actually pride itself on this humility, and turn against those who consider themselves fit for God's presence for no other reason than their confidence in Christ.

HOLDING THE HEAD

Ritual calls for the intervention of intermediate messengers, such as priests or clergy, and these take the place which belongs to Christ as the Head of the body. Ritual

demands an organization rather than a living organism, in which each member is in living connection with the Head. We should hold fast the Head and reject all interfering substitutes. Ritual demands stagnation, faith brings growth. Occupation with the shadows and symbols is not to be compared with vital union with Him to Whom they point. Let us not be subject to these but to our living Head, and grow into the assurance of our completeness in Him, where no rites or ceremonies are needed to finish our perfection.

DEATH TO THE ELEMENTS OF THE WORLD

In Christ we have died to everything which is against us. In Him we died to sin (Rom.6:2). Those under the law died to it (Gal.2:19). We have been crucified to the world (Gal.6:14). The "elements" of the world had their proper place in the past, in Israel. During their minority they were enslaved to these elements (Gal.4:3). When the Galatians went back to these things they scrutinized days and months and seasons and years (Gal.4:9,10). The elements are poor and infirm, yet there is a continual tendency on the part of the saints to fall back to them. Religion is practically composed of them. But we have died to them.

Were we living in the world, as Israel was under the law, then we would have part in the "Christian religion," with rules and regulations and a ritual to be observed—just as most of the saints are! Then, indeed, all would be negative—you shall *not* touch this or taste that, nor make contact with the other. These regulations are made by men and seem to be wise measures for the conduct of religious worship. How much better that all churches go through the same ritual each Sunday! And what an advantage that all observe the same calendar and the same festivals each year! From the standpoint of the world this all seems excellent, but it is fit for infants, not for full-fledged saints.

Willful humility has no value in God's sight. In one of the great confessions in a foreign country, every time the Lord's supper is observed, the whole congregation must repeat together something like the following: "I, poor, miserable, sinful creature, confess herewith all my sins . . . ." Yet, after reiterating this for a lifetime, most of them never realize that they are anything of the kind. In other places they fast and castigate themselves. But all of this is powerless to effect its purpose. All of it is directed toward the improvement of the flesh, yet it only serves to make it worse. We have died to the elements of the world, and are mature in Christ, hence pay no heed to human decrees.

SOUL OR SPIRIT

Philosophy is dependent on human experience, which is abnormal at present, hence it cannot reason to any satisfactory conclusion. Religion seeks to deal with the sensations rather than the spirit, hence lacks permanent power. Both utterly fail to settle the problems with which they deal. They are essentially soulish, not spiritual. Christ and His cross and His crown are the only satisfactory solution to the riddle of the universe. He exemplifies God's Wisdom and God's Righteousness. He is all that God needs to effect the purpose of His love with creation. He is all that we need in order to fully fit us for that perfection. He is our Philosophy and our Religion. A. E. Knoch

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With the preceding article and that which follows we complete the reprint of Brother A. E. Knoch's series of studies on Colossians. Originally published in 1940,41, they direct our attention to that epistle which especially centers on Christ and His relationship to God and to us. This epistle is much needed for our continuing meditation.

D.H.H.

THAT WHICH IS ABOVE

Colossians 3:1–4:1

OUR BODIES have not yet been *raised* to celestial spheres, but, in spirit, we have been *vivified* together with Christ (Eph.2:5) and *roused* with Him (Col.3:1). Hence come the great conflicts in our conduct, for while we are on earth in flesh, our spirit and our soul belong *above,* where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. The body apart from the spirit is dead. As our life is hid together with Christ in God, we are dead to the things of this nether sphere. We have no future on the earth. Any moment may call us away to our celestial home.

This includes far more than death to *sin,* as set before us in the sixth of Romans. This exhortation is not based on Christ's *descent* for us, but on His *exaltation* among the celestials. It does not appeal to His past suffering for our sakes, but to His future glory and our public manifestation with Him in it. The power of that glory is already operating in our spirits and attracts our souls as a magnet to the empyrean. Our life is an invisible one, even as Christ is hid from mortal gaze. We belong to the celestials.

Correct conduct consists in conformity to truth. All our acts should fit the facts. So long as we belonged to this earth and the decadent humanity which inhabits it, we deported ourselves accordingly. Now that our vital interests have been transferred to a higher and nobler sphere we should comport ourselves as becomes its dignity and glory. We no longer belong down here. The earth with the human beings upon it is no connection to be proud of. We should be glad to be rid of our relationship to such a race,

and to enter into practical possession of our new dignities by conducting ourselves as those of a higher, nobler, and yet humbler company.

PUT TO DEATH

God's indignation is coming on the sons of stubbornness because of their sins and transgressions and offenses. True, this does not meet them, as a rule, in this life, but it will surely visit them in the judgment and in the days of vengeance, when God deals with the race as a whole. Not only the baser sins will endure His indignation, but some which almost parade as virtues will call down His wrath. Greed is the worship of things, the reliance on the creature, and will be dealt with as idolatry, for it puts possessions in the place of Him Who must possess the undivided loyalty of every heart. Reliance on riches is idolatry, for One alone is reliable.

Once we lived in these things, but now we should gladly put them in the place of death, so that they have no more attraction, no further power, no longer any part in our lives. Death to the indulgences of the flesh! Death to all evil desires that drag us down!

THE OLD AND THE YOUNG HUMANITY

The race of mankind is hopelessly decrepit and depraved. In a fine figure its conduct is compared with the clothes with which it covers its nakedness. But its outward behavior is by no means ideal. Its conduct is no fit covering for us. Hence we are exhorted to strip it off and put on a different dress, more suited to our new relations. We are to leave off anger, fury, malice, calumny, obscenity, and falsehood. These are no fitting garment for the young humanity which has Christ as its Image. Such should put on the very opposite. Anger, fury, malice, should be replaced by compassion and kindness, calumny and obscenity out of your mouth by humility, meekness, patience, gracious forbearance.

The cause of much misconduct in the old humanity is its shattered condition. It is split up into conflicting factions. In it the Greek is set against the Jew, the Circumcision against the Uncircumcision, the slave against the freeman. Its unity is destroyed, its parts are antagonistic. There is mutual distrust and jealousy and hatred between its sections. All this is done away in the young humanity, in which Christ is everything to each one. It is, and always will remain, an indivisible unity, with no friction or faction. In Christ we recognize no distinctions, such as mar humanity. Race, religion, ritual and social standing all disappear. These are the hindrances to unity which must be discarded.

GRACE OUR GUIDING STAR

How has the Lord dealt with us? He has not merely been kind and forgiving, but, above all, *gracious.* Grace does not get, but gives. Grace does not condemn, but condones. Grace does not hinder, but helps. Grace does not find fault, but freely bestows its favors. No matter what we are or what we have done, we can always be sure of sufficient grace from our adorable Lord. O that we could count upon the same consideration from those who are His! O that we would show the same grace to all who are the recipients of His favor!

LOVE, THE TIE OF MATURITY

With whatever else the young humanity may be clothed, it should always wear, over all, the magic mantle of love. The ties that bound together the sections of the old humanity also divided these from one another. Descent from Abraham united some, yet severed them from the rest. But love makes no divisions, no separations. Hence it is the bond that binds abidingly, and abolishes all dividing barriers. It is God's love expressed in terms of grace which has

united us to Him, and it is the same love which will unite us to one another.

THE ARBITRATION OF PEACE

Christ has made peace. In Him and through Him all cause for strife and dissension has been done away. He has made peace between us and God when we were enemies. He has made peace between the Circumcision, who were near, and the Uncircumcision, who were far from Him. In the days to come He will be the Prince of Peace. During His reign upon the earth there will be no wars upon the earth, no armies, no soldiers on land or sea or in the air. So even now, in Him, all cause for contention is unknown. Dissension among the saints should always be settled by an appeal to this peace. Love should weld all who are Christ's into one, and peace should preserve the unity of love.

BE THANKFUL

One of the most elementary demands upon the creature is thankfulness. It is because men were not thankful that God has given them over, that their heart is darkened (Rom.1:1). Not, indeed, as a punishment for their ingratitude, but rather to introduce a process by means of which mankind will learn by their lack to appreciate the gifts of God. It is difficult to see how anyone who has even a dim apprehension of his place in Christ should not overflow in gratitude. Yet it is well for us to continually remind our hearts to bring their adoring response and lay it at the feet of Him Who hungers for the homage of all the hearts He has created.

TEACHING, ADMONISHING, SINGING

All conduct depends upon a knowledge of God and His Christ, as found in His Word. Therefore the one who desires to walk acceptably should make his heart a home for the

word of Christ in such a redundant measure that philosophy will be replaced by real wisdom, and ritual by genuine, heartfelt homage and worship. The secret of Christ is the sum of all philosophy, and the goal of all wisdom. It should be the basis of our teaching and admonition, along with all the rich grace which accompanies it, and then it will overflow in affectionate response to God in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

DO ALL IN THE NAME

The secret of Christ unfolds to us the great truth that God will fulfill all His will through His Anointed. He was the medium of creation and will be the means of reconciliation. All is *through* Him even as all is *out of* God. All the divine activities during the eons are under His control. Hence all that we do or say should be in His name. It is the incense which makes all acceptable. Even our thanks should not ascend to God without its savor.

SUBJECTION

Subjection is one of the great lessons of the eons. The future does not consist in the self-assertion and independence of God's creatures, but in their subjection to Him (1 Cor.15:28). Even the Son Himself, the great King and Head of the whole universe, will resign all rule and take the place of subjection. It is the only normal and natural condition for a creature. There can be no ultimate perfection so long as all are not in delightful and loving subjection to the Creator. Hence it is one of the chief lessons of the eons to learn to be subject, each in his own sphere. Even masters are reminded that they have a master above them.

In these degenerate days there is a strong tendency to throw off all yokes, and to demand a spurious liberty and independence. This generally accompanies the repudiation of God and the rejection of the lordship of Christ.

Where men will not bow in subjection to God, it follows that the authority of the husband is weakened, that children will not obey their parents, and that workers will not take their proper place beneath their superiors. Among the saints subjection to God should be emphasized, as well as to one another, for it, rather than a theoretical liberty, brings blessing and happiness.

The eons are a training school for the future, and are intended to teach, not merely the creature's dependence upon God, but that insubordination leads to suffering and even death. Herein we see the reason for our social institutions, and the various ranks of mankind. Theoretically, we imagine that mankind would be happier if all were on a level, and there were no subordination. So they would, *if all were subject to God.* So it will be after the eons are past. But, until then, subjection is God's means of preparing for that blessed ultimate. In the various relations of life we must learn to be subject, each in our sphere.

There is no call upon us to rule, even though this is implied in the subjection of others. The husband is not told to lay down the law, but to love. Parents are not told to be strict with their children, but to refrain from vexing them. Masters are not exhorted to domineer over their slaves, but to be just and equitable in dealing with them. The grace we have received will help us to bow in acquiescent subjection, and also greatly soften the severity and harshness usually associated with human authority. Man's inhumanity to man has become a proverb. It has its place in God's purpose, as a contrast to God's loving rule. It is our privilege to reflect this in our earthly relationships, as well as our own affectionate subjection to Him in the consummation.

CONCLUSION

Colossians is colossal in its scope. Written, indeed, by the apostle of the nations to them, yet it deals with the

secret of Christ, which is not confined to us or to this present administration, but reaches back to creation and on to the ultimate reconciliation of all. The Son of God's love, and His activities, from the commencement to the consummation, filling the earth and the heavens, bringing all back to God's heart—such is the background of this epistle. From these transcendent verities follow the truth for us and for today. His high heavenly honors He shares with us, having made us complete in Him. Hence we turn our gaze from the earth to that above.

O that God would open hearts to receive and revel in these revelations! How these would deliver them from their bonds! How these would illumine their darkness! How they would outgrow the immature conceptions of Christianity which stunt and dwarf their spirits! Here we have the fullest knowledge, the highest wisdom, the greatest glory, the very pinnacle of God's revelation. O that God would open the eyes of His saints! Alas! As a whole they reject His glories in place of receiving them. Most of them oppose His blessings in place of believing them. But, thanks be to God, the time is coming when all will find in Him their All. The day is approaching when all will see in Him God's Complement, One competent to reconcile to God all that is now estranged.

A. E. Knoch

Bob Thompson, of Brantford, Ontario, Canada, passed away on May 18, 2020. Bob was a pillar in the Kitchener Concordant Group which began in the 1970's. His favorite topic was concerning the full control of God in our lives. Bob is survived by his loving wife, Jean. We look forward to seeing him in the snatching away to meet our Lord in the air.

Kitty Land, of Benton, Arkansas, was put to repose on August 22, 2020. She greatly rejoiced in God saving all mankind. I, Tony Nungesser, remember with great fondness fellowshipping with her husband Garland as well as with Kitty at the Bible conferences. She is survived by Garland, her two children, as well as by grandchildren.

EXCEPT WHAT IS HUMAN

"NO TRIAL has taken you except what is human. Now, faithful is God, Who will not be leaving you to be tried above what you are able, but, together with the trial, will be making the sequel also, to enable you to undergo it" (1 Cor.10:13).

There is no escape for a human being from being human. It is especially unfortunate that the AV uses the word "escape" in this passage to describe God's faithful provision for us in the face of human trials. Most modern translations follow the same pattern with renderings such as "a way out." But in using the Greek term signifying *out-stepping,* Paul does not refer to an escaping from human trials but the "sequel" (CV) or "issue" (Darby) of the trials. It is what God is bringing out of the trial that is in view, not our removal from the trial or a provision of a way of escape.

Trials, in the literal sense of the Greek word, are *probings.* They are not matters of judgment against wrong actions, but may often truly seem unaccountable to us, as it was with Job. They are common to all humanity. But the difference for believers lies in their acquaintance with the God of purpose, power, wisdom and grace, the God of righteousness and love and deliverance. Our attention is focused on God. In the experience of trial, in prayer and petition, with reliance and assurance, we give recognition to God and are strengthened in all endurance and patience, even "with joy" (*cf* Col.1:11).

This does not necessarily mean that the probing is taken away. And even if it is, this does not mean that another one

will not take its place. In this present life, there is no way out of the human experience of probing trials. But *God is faithful, and He is making the sequel "together with the trial."*

THE ENDURANCE OF JOB

In encouraging patience and endurance under trial, James writes to Israelites in dispersion: "You hear of the endurance of Job, and you perceive the consummation of the Lord, for very compassionate and pitiful is the Lord" (James 5:11; *cp* 1:1,12). Here the association of human *endurance* in trial and the Lord's *consummation* is somewhat different from that of God's *sequel* and the human *undergoing* of trial. The corresponding terms, endurance/undergoing and consummation/sequel, are reversed in the two passages. Thus we infer from James that the Lord's consummation is based on human endurance, while in Paul's letter the human endurance in undergoing trial is settled on our appreciation of the divine sequel which is being prepared whether we appreciate it or not.

These are not contradictory thoughts, but they do represent different stages of divine disclosure. For Israel the promises of blessing are predominantly presented as dependent on human obedience. Under law they were to obey so that Yahweh would bless. But even with Israel, the principle is to be adjusted when God puts His law within them and writes it on their heart (Jer.31:33). Then it will be seen that the blessing ultimately does not come from human obedience (for Israel proves disobedient) but comes as God's own accomplishment (*cf* Ezek.36:22-32). The consummation the Lord prepared for Job will also be finally seen as fully out of God Who granted Job that measure of endurance he displayed.

Under Paul's evangel, the mature position of beginning with the revelation of divine grace and leading from that to its powerful effects in our lives is clearly set forth from

start to finish. There is no suggestion of uncertainty concerning the end results. And it is because of that outlook that the divine sequel becomes an influence of grace rather than something seen as dependent on human action.

However, although James does not look as deeply into the significance of human trials as Paul does, James's reference to the example of Job is relevant to all who are undergoing trial, whatever our calling may be. Job is an excellent example for us all, even under the evangel of grace.

"THERE WAS A MAN"

We may well wonder at first how James could have seen Job as a pattern of endurance. Yet in consideration of the intensity of his afflictions and sorrows, so that he would prefer death to life, we begin to understand something of what James had in view. It was not a matter of stoicism with Job. There was no attempt to overcome passion or subdue pain and grief. It was an endurance that recognized the realities of the trial and searched persistently for an understanding of it. It was a very human endurance, not one of giving in to the suffering nor of seeking to rise above the suffering, but of longing to see that it truly came from God Who acts in accord with His purpose.

The book begins, "There was a man . . . ." Job, however, was not an ordinary man, but one who "was flawless and upright, fearing Elohim and keeping away from evil" (Job 1:1). He was a wealthy man with seven sons and three daughters whom he valued very much (1:2-5). But for all his uprightness, Job was probed with a trial that was altogether human, though uniquely concentrated and severe. It is the superexcellence of Job's goodness and the intensity of his trial that makes his example so striking and helpful to us in our (relatively) lesser afflictions.

Indeed, Job *remains under* the trial; that is the meaning of endurance. He endures with human anguish, but always

looking to God for an answer to the incessant *Why*? of his heart. "Why is [God] giving light to the miserable, and life to the bitter of soul?" (Job 3:20). Addressing God as the Preserver of mankind, he asks, "Why have You established me as Your target mark, that I should become a load to You?" (7:20). In seeing himself as already condemned he pleads, "Why is this that I should be wearied in vain?" (9:29).

In this we find the pattern of Job's endurance. It was a matter of hope for understanding, and it was a hope that looked to God. While he was undergoing the trial Job did not perceive the "consummation of the Lord." But he felt with every ounce of his being that the Lord must have a reason for the probing and a consummation in view. Job longed to be assured he was not really "wearied in vain."

Job's endurance is shown in the unrelenting focusing of his thoughts on God. "As for me, I would speak to Him Who-Suffices, and to plead with El is what I desire" (13:3). "My eye weeps forth to Eloah" (16:20).

If only Job could know that God was making an outstepping for the trial, not simply an escape from it, but a resulting issue that was of value and benefit. Indeed, in a well-known passage Job hints at such a sequel: "Yet as for me, I know that my Redeemer is living, and after this He shall arise on the soil; and behind my skin I will stand erect, and from my flesh I shall perceive Eloah" (19:25,26).

That Job longed for a message from God which gave meaning to his trial is clear. The very longing helped him endure. And in the end, when Yahweh Himself does speak to Job (chapters 38-41), such a sequel of good is grasped by this troubled man, who now declares, "With the hearing of the ear I had heard of You, but now my eye sees You" (42:5).

SALVATION

All along Job had pleaded for a word from God. When it came it was not what we might have expected. But this

was long before Christ came and died for the sake of sinners, and long before the evangel of salvation in Christ could have been made known. Nevertheless, it was a powerful and effective message to Job and quieted all his cries.

In His answer, Yahweh turned the tables on Job and asked him a number of questions. "Where were you when I founded the earth?" (Job 38:4). "In all your days have you ever instructed the morning?" (38:12). "Do you give the horse its mastery?" (39:19). Perhaps the most telling of these appeared after Job was completely silenced in the early part of chapter 40. We might condense this final series of questions as follows: "Do you have an arm like El's? . . . Then even I Myself shall acclaim you, because your right hand has brought salvation to you" (40:9,14).

The forceful irony of this question sums up the divine revelation. Job could not save himself, but the One Who has that arm of power which Job lacked, He can and does bring salvation.

James saw the consummation of Job's trial as coming from the Lord, but also, apparently, in response to Job's endurance. Yet James did not see, or at least did not draw attention to the hidden operation of God in and with the trial. 1 Corinthians 10:13, however, shows that the endurance of Job was in itself a gift given by God. Under grace, we may see Job's endurance as sustained by the faithfulness of God as He made Himself known to Job. This endurance in hope was vindicated by Yahweh's revelation of Himself as Cause and Provider of everything in the universe, from climatic conditions to the stars of the heavens, from the weakest and most ignorant of beasts to the most powerful. All that exists must be traced to God. Consequently it all lies under the disposition of His intention. There is reason and purpose for everything because there is God Who is over it all.

Yet while Job had a fervent hope that God was operating behind the scenes for a divinely perceived goal, and this hope aided Job in keeping him from despair, we are given assurance of *expectation.* We are told directly and without reservation that God is operating all together for our good (Rom.8:28), and the operating of His purpose is centered in Christ (Eph.1:9-11). In every trial we may be assured that God is making the sequel together with the trial.

Consequently, we rejoice with Paul that we stand in grace and "may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God. Yet not only so, but we may be glorying also in afflictions, having perceived that affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness expectation. Now expectation is not mortifying, seeing that the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is given to us" (Rom.5:2-5).

Here we realize that the sequel that sustains us in trial is more than a hope for a consummation God has in view. It also consists of the expectation of that consummation and the assurance that God is able to bring us into that consummation, and not only able but will do so also (*cf* 1 Thess. 5:24). God is making the sequel to all that is troubling and disturbing in the current eon. Together with every probing that comes from the hand of God, He is making the outstepping, the sequel that will prove to make it all worthwhile, and not only worthwhile but of such value that we would not have had it otherwise.

NOW FAITHFUL IS GOD

Hence the spotlight shines on God. When we experience troubles, especially those inexplicable probings of human beings which, like Job's trials, cannot be easily traced to our own failings, as many as they may be, we do well to turn our full attention upon God. In this we find strength for undergoing the trial: "Faithful is God." Faith-

ful is God Who will not leave us to be tried above what we are able to undergo. Faithful is God Who is *making* the sequel, the God Who is doing that which is for good. "Faithful is God, through Whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9). "Faithful is He Who is calling you, Who will be doing it also" (1 Thess.5:24).

We may not ever see the sequel of a trial during our lifetime, but that is not the point Paul is making in 1 Corinthians. The undergoing of trials is not a matter of experiencing the sequel but of appreciating the fact that God is already making the sequel while the probing goes on. God is *faithful* in all that He undertakes.

But there is one aspect of God's sequel that we probably all experience even while the trial continues. That is the knowledge of our *inability,* and a deeper appreciation of God, Who Himself enables us to undergo the probing. Now thanks be to God, Who is making the sequel to every human trial, granting us endurance in expectation, through our Lord Jesus Christ. D.H.H.

EDITORIAL NOTES

In times of unusual stress and uncertainty, such as the present, we need all the more to be growing in the realization of God, for that is the channel of spiritual power "for all endurance and patience with joy" (Col.1:10,11). We are reminded of this again when our brother, A. E. Knoch writes: "I have ceased to expect full clarity of thought from anyone who does not bow to the absolute deity of God, without reservation or restriction" (p.99). Then again he observes concerning the present: "Things are wrong, and the wrongs are not being righted. It is only as we bring in God, and His activities in Christ, in the past and in the future, that all becomes rational and understandable and glorious. In His Beloved and through Him, He will fulfill all the beneficent designs which move His heart" (p.100).

D.H.H.

GOD'S WILL AND INTENTION

In translating the ninth of Romans, verse nineteen, I felt almost as if the text before me was faulty. It should surely read, "who hath resisted His will?" Yet the word is not *will*, but *intention*. There seemed so little difference, at the time, that I did not appreciate the concordant rendering myself. Since then I have been most thankful for it. It helps to solve one of the deepest difficulties and contradictions connected with the place and problem of evil. To the question, Who hath resisted His will? we may answer, *Many*, if not all. But to the query, Has anyone withstood His intention? the reply is the opposite, for *no one* can thwart Him. Even when withstanding His will we are fulfilling His intention.

ROMANS NINE

There are not many passages in God's Word like the ninth of Romans. Seldom are we taken behind the scenes into the realm of the absolute. Much in this chapter *seems* to contradict other portions of the Scriptures, because they deal with processes, as seen by man, while this is concerned with causes, known only to God. God has a goal. In order to reach it He must have had absolute control from the beginning. All the intervening process, no matter what it may appear to be to men, must be the working out of His original intention. He is the great Potter. His creatures are clay. This is true only in regard to God's intention. Viewed in relation to His will they are not at all the passive material suggested by the clay. "You will *not*" (*cf*

Matt.23:37) describes man's antagonistic attitude toward God's revealed will.

The case of Pharaoh is the classic example of the chasm between God's revealed will and His hidden intention. His revealed will was very plain. "Let My people go!" It seemed to be fulfilled in the liberation of Israel. But no one who reads the account and believes it can escape the conviction that God's intention included more than His revealed will, and that it involved opposition to that will. This much might be easily inferred if Pharaoh had been hard-hearted enough to play his part. It is put beyond doubt by the action of God in hardening his heart.

God's revealed will was limited to the release of Israel. His intention was to display His own power and glorify His name in all the earth. This is given us as a specimen of His complete purpose and of the process by which He will attain it. Mankind does not comply with His will; His saints do not comprehend His intention. Yet He uses both the opposition and the ignorance to effect His object. No doubt many in Israel were fervently praying that Pharaoh's heart would soon soften, and he would let them go. God's answer to their prayer was to harden his heart. They sighed for salvation. He wrought with a view to His own glory.

It takes little imagination to picture this scene. Its continuous repetition during the first three eons makes it most important to our spiritual welfare. The same conflicting forces are at work today. It is quite conceivable how the saints would have managed the affair. They would have implored Yahweh to compel Pharaoh to let them go. Perhaps they would call a grand prayer meeting for this purpose. Perhaps they would set aside a week of intercession. "We know not what to pray for" was as true of them as of us. Perhaps they would be "definite" in their petitions, and insist that He melt the heart of the king, and so remove his opposition.

How much there is of this today! Many brethren unite in great "world movements," seeking to soften the heart of mankind, trying to do away with sin, seeking to abolish the many evils that harass us, uniting against war and vice and corruption, for all of these are against the revealed will of God. These efforts, we are told, are *practical.* They are not mere theory, words without works. Of what use is such an article as this, for example, to stem the tide of iniquity? Using the same figure, I would advise all that the tide will become the highest in all history, and that no human effort will be able to stop it, for it is necessary to fulfill God's intention.

The Israelites hoped Yahweh would soften Pharaoh's heart. What they wished was to quietly slip out of Goshen into the promised land. They wanted none of the terrible signs. They did not ask for the passover. Surely they would not have entered the trap which threatened to destroy them. They did not ask for the miraculous passage through the Sea. The forty years in the wilderness was not of their choosing. The most illustrious epoch in their history was forced upon them. It was a continuous exhibition of disobedience to God's will. Yet who doubts for a moment that it was in line with His purpose?

GOD'S WISDOM AND POWER

Now that all is past and we can get a true perspective of these events, who would prefer to have Israel's prayer answered? It was not necessary to soften Pharaoh's heart. It was too soft already. If it had not been hardened the exodus would have been a flat, uninteresting story, with no outward manifestations of Yahweh's power of love. Its glory would be gone. Its God would be unknown. The wisdom and power of Egypt must be exposed by conflict with the wisdom and power of God. His attributes must be revealed by contrast with the mightiest and wisest of humankind.

The antitype of this marvelous period of Israel's history lies just before us, only the miraculous manifestations will be far more wonderful than of old. God is today hardening the world's heart in preparation for that epoch. Men are approaching the wisdom of ancient Egypt in their knowledge of nature, and are far surpassing it in power. Shall Yahweh weaken them before using them as a foil to display His might? Rather it is His wisdom to harden their hearts, so that, in opposing His will, they may fulfill His ultimate intention.

MAN'S WILL, AND GOD'S

Too often we are told that, if man has no free will, he is a mere automaton. This is a mistake. The so-called "freedom" consists merely in the lack of *conscious* coercion. Being ignorant of the constraining or restraining influences which determine his conduct, and altogether unaware of ulterior forces, he subconsciously *yields* at the very time that he imagines he is most independent. His freedom of will is simply ignorant unconsciousness or submission to environment or heredity.

In relation to the will of God, men are consciously independent. They can accept it or reject it, and imagine that no other force but the divinity enthroned within them has anything to do with their decision. But when we find the niche assigned them in God's intention they are (thank God!) the most utterly dependent slaves of circumstance it is possible to imagine. It will be found that, throughout their lives, they were not more masters of their fate than they were of the date and details of their birth.

The doctrine of man's free will peoples the earth with a race of puny gods. We object to the dual gods of Persia or the many deities of the Greek and Roman pantheon, yet these ancient pagans never rose to the absurdity of making every man a god. The possession of a free, untrammeled,

unconquerable will is the exclusive attribute of deity. Only One God can possess it. Our blessed Lord Himself did not claim it. He came, not to do His own will, but the will of Him Who had sent Him.

ILLUMINATION OF DEITY

The failure to recognize both the divine will and the divine intention has led to incalculable confusion and misunderstanding. Those who reject God's intention rob Him of His godhood and deify man. Those who confuse His intention with His revealed will make of Him a love-lacking tyrant, a hard-hearted monster. Others, who wish to believe all the Scriptures have to say, are not clear how to harmonize His character, with the presence of sin, especially when it becomes evident that sin has a place in the attainment of His ultimate purpose.

All evil and every sin reverses its character completely when we take it from the limited light of God's revealed will to the universal illumination of His intention. This is the reason that we do not hesitate to believe the Scriptures that all is of God. No sin remains such when completely illumined by His intention. It is a failure, a sin, and subject to dire penalties when man commits it, but it is no longer a mistake when it finds its place in God's purpose. The same act which brings shame and dishonor on the creature, when subjected to the divine alchemy, is transmuted into a source of glory and peace to God.

Such general observations are apt to be dismissed as bordering on blasphemy. But let anyone take the great sins in the Scriptures and ponder all their aspects. Each one is essential to God's plan. But it is better to be specific. Pharaoh is the great sinner in this scene. He is the one who opposes God's expressed desire. Make him willing or compliant with God's command, and what is left? In that case God would have failed in His object. To avoid this He

finds it necessary to stiffen the opposition. *Yahweh hardens Pharaoh's heart in order that he may sin against Him!* Some insist that God cannot have such a close connection with sin. They would prefer to fix the blame on Pharaoh, or on Satan. But, while Yahweh directly causes Pharaoh to sin, *by doing so He Himself avoids failure of sin.*

NEED FOR CAREFUL DISCRIMINATION

Any lack of discrimination when speaking on these themes is likely to cause confusion. The same statement may be both true and false. Two directly contradictory assertions may both be true or both be false, according as they are related to God's will or to His intention. A beloved brother, who had been meditating on these things, made the statement that Adam's "fall" was really a fall upward. I would strenuously object to such a suggestion, apart from explanation. Adam's sin and transgression and offense were very bad and degrading when viewed as disobedience to God's will. When associated with the work of Christ and God's ultimate purpose it was the very best he could have done. Even its immediate effects were not all evil, for he obtained a knowledge of good, impossible in his previous condition.

So with sin as a whole. We almost dread to speak of it in relation to God's ultimate, for few, even of His beloved saints, have seen behind the scenes, and almost any assertion would be false if related to His revealed will. Is sin good? *No!* It is the worst thing in the world. No words can express our horror and detestation of it. Is sin good? *Yes!* Not, indeed, in itself, but its effect will be beneficent beyond anything else this world can give, when combined with the mediatorial work of Christ and the reconciliation of which it is the occasion.

Perhaps this is why some beloved brethren insist that I teach that God sins, or is the Author of sin. I have never

said this or even thought it, so far as I am aware. If I have unwittingly done so, I humbly retract and recant. But I am informed that various passages in my writings on this subject imply it, though they do not express it in so may words. When I review these passages, I do not see the implication. I did not intend such a thought. I did not express it. To my own consciousness, I did not even imply it. Some inferred from the apostle Paul's teaching that they should do evil that good may come. If *he* could be misunderstood, I count it an honor to be in the same condemnation.

But what is an implication? Is it not the result of combining what we think with another's statement? It is reasoning from two premises, one our own and one supplied by another. In its crudest form the argument may be stated thus: I believe that all is of God. My inquisitors insist that sin is part of the "all." Therefore, I believe that God sins. It seems very logical *to them.* I may object and say that I do not concur in their conclusions. I may even say that my premise is not mine, but God's. But no. My scheme is simply an attempt to exonerate Satan and prepare people for the homage which he will demand at the time of the end! Away with such a fellow from the earth!

This places me in a strange position. I cannot but consider their deduction a mistake in logic, a transgression of morals, and even an offense. In short, it is a full-orbed sin. I am eager to acknowledge, however, that it is of God. But even my small mind, weakened by overwork, and dulled by distress, has not the slightest difficulty in discriminating between the human and the divine aspect of these acts. God is making no mistakes. His servants are. He will justify their injustice, not because they are in line with His will, but because they are carrying out His intention. I have no hesitation in thanking God for this distressing antagonism, for I know that in His hands it is no error. Truth as this needs opposition for its development and dissemination. It takes friction to rub off the rust of centuries.

The difficulty seems to be that we cannot easily view an act from its moral character. We do not readily see that no act is sinful in itself, but in its relations. The act of plucking and eating fruit is not necessarily a sin. Yet it was humanity's primal error. The mistake lay in its relation to the God Who had forbidden it. If He had commanded it, it would have been commendable. Now that we know that it was essential to His intention, that He had provided for it before it occurred, that He arranged everything so that it should occur, we see that, though it was a sin in relation to His will, it was no mistake in view of His benevolent intention.

THE LAW

Perhaps the greatest example of the distinction between God's will and His intention is found in the law promulgated from Sinai. Yahweh made known His will in a complete code of laws, besides the condensed commandments which were carved in stone. The Jew, who was resting on law, is said to "know the will" (Rom.2:18). But if it was God's intention that the nation should keep the law, it certainly was a dismal failure on His part. They broke its greatest precept before it reached them.

But, though the failure of the law seems to be contrary to the will of God, it actually was a fulfillment of His intention. It was really given that "every mouth may be barred, and the entire world may become subject to God's righteous verdict, because, by law works, no flesh at all shall be justified in His sight" (Rom.3:19,20). The law which, ostensibly, was to deter from sinning, actually was given for the detection of sin. It was given to prove that no one could keep it. Beneath the revelation of God's will in it was His intention that it should not be kept, but should accomplish its object through its infraction.

"law comes in by the way, that the offense should increase" (Rom.5:20). How differently did Israel, at Sinai, feel about it! They were quite sure that they would greatly lessen the distance between themselves and Yahweh by their obedience to His precepts. Why had He told them what He wanted them to do and to avoid unless it was His will to carry out His instructions? The *will* of Yahweh was clear. But His *intention* was quite concealed. He could not make known His intention at that time without frustrating it.

SIN

This should help us in considering the larger question of sin. Sin is always against the revealed will of God. No one can possibly find any excuse for sinning so far as His expressed precepts are concerned. Both conscience and nature add their voice to restrain us from wrong. But we do sin. How can we be *justified* unless the sin is, in some sense, justifiable? We know that it is God's intention to draw His creatures into loving intimacy with Himself through sin and a Saviour. We know that the temporary term of sin will leave the world infinitely richer in the knowledge and appreciation of God. It will bring God immeasurable treasures of love and adoration. As a whole, its results vindicate its presence for a time. What is true of all sin must be true of every sin.

This truth is the foundation of the doctrine of justification. Because it has been lost, justification has also disappeared, or has been degraded to a pardon or an "imputed" fiction. Few believe that God actually justifies believers. They imagine He only alters the court records, so that no one can legally prove their guilt. It is of the utmost comfort and satisfaction to know that all that we have done is vindicated by the part it plays in carrying out His intention. Do not let anyone sell you an imitation justification! God's is the actual, the genuine, the precious reality.

THE CONSUMMATION

All that the usual theology has to offer us at the consummation, even in the saved, is a partial, patched, repaired and repainted universe. The song of the saints will be in a minor key, "I was a *guilty* sinner." Their joy will be clouded by eternal regret and shame for their part in the tragedy of the eons. The eonian times will be the eyesore of eternity. Oh! if they only had not been! And so will God's wisdom and power be questioned, and His glory dimmed, for He Himself must be the chief culprit in the collapse of His creation.

But away with such unworthy thoughts! The consummation will not reveal a patched, but a perfected universe. We will not be worrying about our past sins, but overwhelmed with God's wisdom and love in their vindication. Much as they distress us now, much as we fear them and avoid them and dread the very possibility of further sin, God will see to it that they will leave no stain, no blot to mar the bliss eternal, but will blend into His benign designs, and discover to a delighted universe the delicious depths of love which could not be displayed by any others device, or appreciated by any other plan.

This teaching is also the substructure for a mature experience in the things of God. It gives stability, a calm confidence in the face of the chaotic conditions which surround and engulf us. We are not worried, as once we were, by the awful opposition to God's will, nor do we fear for the fulfillment of His purpose. The flood tide of evil and sin, however contrary to His will it may be at present, is essential and indispensable to His intention and the ultimate realization of His will.

He is the great Alchemist Who will transmute everything into glorious gold by contact with the accursed tree.

A. E. Knoch

THE DEATH OF THE CROSS
*
CHRIST, IN JUDGMENT AND SALVATION

Question:

Can you inform me as to the meaning of the word "cross" as well as concerning the meaning of the phrase "the death of the cross"? I have been told, since the common symbol of the cross is pagan and the Greek word translated cross does not actually mean *cross* but simply "stake" (without any crosspiece), that symbols of the cross should not be used and that even the word "cross" itself should not be used in reference to the death of Christ.

Answer:

THE Greek word translated "cross" is *stauros,* to which we have assigned the standard STANDer.[1] *Stauros* is apparently derived from *stau,* which was the name of an ancient Greek letter which "stood between" "E" (*epsilon*) and "Z" (*zayta*) and was retained as a numeral = 6.

The noun *stauros* ("cross," CV) is used simply of an *upright pale* or *stake* in the ancient Greek epic poem *Odyssey* (traditionally attributed to the ninth century B.C. poet Homer).[2]

1. That is, an upright device (see entry "cross," Keyword Concordance, p.63); *cp* the term "stanchion," in the sense of a *standing* support.

2. On *stau* and *stauros:* LIDDELL & SCOTT'S GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1850, p.1378; ref. *Odyssey,* 14, 11; *cf Iliad,* 24, 453).

While the verb *stauroō* ("crucify," CV), similarly, is used in early antiquity in the sense of "to fence with pales," the later use, as an instrument of death as in the New Testament and as corresponds to the modern "crucify," may be seen as early as the second-century B.C. in the works of the historian Polybius.[3]

It is evident, then, that by our first century A.D., the use of *stauros* for the Roman instrument of death by affixation to a wooden device, was well established. It spoke of a vertical-standing, fearful instrument of death, by affixation thereunto and hanging thereupon; but it said nothing as to the particular form of any particular *stauros*-instrument.

Under Moses' law, death was by stoning (e.g., Deut. 21:20,21; 22:20-24). Afterward, the corpse was sometimes hung upon a tree (Deut.21:22,23). This served at once as a warning to others (*cp* Joshua 10:26) as well as an especial mark of God's malediction ("one being hung is under a malediction of Elohim"; Deut.21:23).

This explains Galatians 3:13: "Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes, for it is written, Accursed is everyone hanging on a pole . . . ."[4]

The cross (*stauros*) is often called a "pole" (Acts 5:30; 10:39; 1 Peter 2:24). The Greek word here, *xulon* (WOOD), however, unlike the English "pole" which speaks of shape, refers not to the shape of the object, but to the material from which it is made. Thus, by means of the word *xulon* (WOOD), the cross (*stauros*) is connected with the Hebrew

3. THE VOCABULARY OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT, James Moulton and George Milligan (London: Hodder and Stoughton, Limited, 1949, pp.586,587; ref. Polybius i. 86. 4).

4. "Pole" is one of the idiomatic variants used in the Concordant Version for the Greek *xulon*, for which we have assigned the standard WOOD. *Xulon* is "the solid fiber of the trunk and branches of a tree, *after cutting*, hence [is used] of many things made of wood" (Keyword Concordance, p.331).

Scripture concept of deepest humiliation and shame (*cf* Heb.12:2; *cp* Deut.22:23).

In the Hebrew Scriptures, we discover the awful associations connected with one who was hanged upon a tree. And, in the Greek Scriptures, we perceive something of the horror of the ignominious pain and shame of "the death of the cross" (Phil.2:8). Through a familiarity with these considerations, we begin to understand one of the reasons why the heralding of "Christ crucified" so thoroughly *scandalized* the Jews (*skandalizō*, SNARE; 1 Cor. 1:23), thus entrapping them in their snare of unbelief.

Crucifixion was originally an Oriental punishment. That is, it was practiced in the countries east of the Mediterranean or the ancient Roman empire. It was practiced by the Persians, the Phoenicians, the Carthaginians, and the Egyptians. Later, it was practiced by the Greeks, probably in imitation of the Persians, and by the Romans who likely learned it from their enemies the Carthaginians. Being mindful of its horror and tortuous nature, the Romans reserved it for slaves, for especially egregious criminals, and for provincials, deeming it too deep a disrespect to impose it on a Roman citizen.

"There were two kinds of cross [*stauros*]:

"(1) The *crux simplex*, which was a single stake. Sometimes the victim was fastened to it by his hands and feet, the former being extended above his head. Usually, however, it was a sharpened stake, and the victim was impaled upon it. It passed through the length of his body, issuing from his mouth.

"(2) The *crux compacta* [i.e., joined together], which was composed of two pieces. It had three forms: (1) The *crux decussata* [i.e., in the shape of an "**X**"] . . . . (2) The *crux commissa* [i.e., set together, at the start of the beam] . . . resembling the letter '**T**' . . . . (3) The *crux immissa* [i.e., growing out, in the sense of 'above'], which had the top

of the upright protruding above the transom, '**t**.' From the middle of the upright there projected a peg . . . on which to support its weight, the body rested as on a saddle."[5]

Since it is evident from the Scripture account that our Lord was not impaled upon a sharpened stake, and it seems unlikely that the less common practice of attachment by the hands and feet to a post was employed, it has generally been assumed that Christ was executed upon a two-piece device according to the most common prevailing custom, upon which the hands would be outstretched upwardly and then nailed to a crossbar or *patibulum.* Whether the terrible tool of death were in the shape of a '**T**' or a '**t**,' there would have been room in either case for the attachment of the board inscribed with His name and accusation put up over His head (Matt.27:37).

Thus, by *stauros,* all that can be known is that it was a vertical-standing device composed of wood, which served as the means of execution. Since these fearful contrivances were fashioned in various shapes, and we possess neither declarative nor corollarial evidence of the shape of the particular *stauros* upon which Jesus was put to death, we therefore do not know its shape. We do know, however, that the word *stauros* does not speak of any certain shape, and therefore that it provides us with no evidence concerning this minor question.

Instead of giving undue attention to minutiae, we would instead center our thoughts on things of consequence, namely, upon the purpose and achievements of God as a result of the death of Christ and our justification "in His blood" (Rom.3:25; 5:9).

As to the historical issue of certain cross-shaped pagan images, let me say in reply that what pagans may have

5. Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, David Smith, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917, p.397).

done with cross-like symbols before the death of Christ has nothing to do with how the Romans crucified people.

It is well to become acquainted with the fact that various popular traditions such as the religious observance of Christmas or Easter are not to be found in the Scriptures. Indeed it is true that certain of the accouterments attending such traditional observances have been adapted from their earlier "heathen" connections and pressed into "Christian service." As is our own practice, if one considers such things unfitting, one may simply decline to incorporate them into one's own customs. We need not become preoccupied with such things and their perceived evils, nor should we make overmuch of our knowledge concerning them while diminishing much that is excellent in the faith and lives of many of those devoted to such enshrined traditions.

We have nothing to do with the customs of ancient pagans nor with any more or less t-shaped objects of veneration which some among them evidently possessed.

We would say, however, that a common symbol need not have a common identification. Further, the *appropriateness* or *tastefulness* of the use of any such "logo" is manifestly a subjective question. Certainly, in a particular culture, some might well and with a clean heart see fit to exhibit such an emblem of their faith, while others, equally sincere, might deem it inappropriate to do so.

Let us not confound the issue here, by confusing those who "venerate" or worship a cross with those who consider the cross as a symbol of faith in Christ, and so view it as a symbol of their own faith in Him accordingly. While it is not our custom to employ such a symbol personally or as a part of our ministry, we realize that many see fit to do so, and we see no reason to think less of them because of this.

Even though the meaning of the word *stauros* does not include the notion of "cross member," *neither does it exclude it.* The question is not, What was its import in the

most ancient usage of this word, but, What is its essential meaning and what was its referential meaning in first century Palestine under Roman rule.

Of the latter there can be no question. There, the term *stauros* was used of the awful wooden instrument of death—whatever its shape—which served as the means of execution of convicted persons in the Roman world.

The learned definition of "cross" found in Webster's New International Dictionary is as follows: "A structure, *typically* an upright supporting a horizontal beam, anciently used in the execution of malefactors."[6]

Since this accords fully with both the New Testament usage of *stauros* as well as with the best historical records concerning crucifixion practices, it follows that the modern word "cross," rather than being a supposedly improper term that we should somehow repudiate, is instead the ideal word to use when translating the Greek *stauros.* Therefore, in speaking of the instrument of Christ's death, not only *may* we use the word "cross," but we may do so freely, without reservation.

❊

Question:

I was always taught that Jesus suffered for our sins on the cross, bearing our sins away, so that we who believe would be saved. But if all will eventually be saved, why is there still a future day of judgment, a "day of indignation and revelation of the righteous judgment of God"? Concerning the judgment of that day, Paul says that "indignation and fury, affliction and distress," will come upon those "persuaded to

6. Webster's New International Dictionary, second edition, unabridged (Springfield, Mass.: G & C Merriam Company, Publishers, 1957, p.630).

unrighteousness," even "on every human soul which is effecting evil" (Rom.2:5-9). In a word, if Jesus suffered once for all, taking away the sin of the world, why should there be a day of judging and a second death?

I am struggling with the teachings in the last three chapters of the book of Revelation. It is difficult to square these chapters with a belief in universal salvation.

Also, if it is true that Jesus died for everyone and that everyone will be saved in the end, why, then, are only certain ones to receive an eonian salvation?

Answer:

In replying to your questions, I would like to begin by making a general comment regarding the last three chapters of Revelation, chapters 20–22. In fact, concerning salvation, it is no more difficult to square these chapters with a universalist belief than with a partialist belief.

Let me explain what I mean. You are correct that (*a*) there is nothing in Revelation 20–22 that teaches the eventual salvation of all. But I wonder if you have also noted that (*b*) neither is there anything within this section of Scripture which precludes the eventual salvation of all. Statement (*a*) *and* Statement (*b*) are *both* fully true.

Revelation 20–22 neither affirms nor denies the eventual salvation of all. It simply does not address the question. In fact, if this portion of Scripture were all that had been provided us concerning distant future events, we could neither say that all will or will not be saved. In that case, we could only say that we have no testimony either affirming or denying either proposition.

As far as the apostle John is concerned, he simply speaks of the second death; he does not address the question of whether there is any life beyond the second death for those having been committed to it.

But it does not follow since John does not address this question here, that neither does any other writer inform us concerning it elsewhere. Much less does it follow because *John* is not granted a vision of a day when those who had entered the second death will finally be delivered from it, that there simply is no deliverance from the second death.

Paul necessarily sees farther into the future than John; and, unlike John, Paul alone—to whom it was given to *complete* the word of God (Col.1:25)—deals with ultimate issues:

"For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22). The vivification of all, however, will occur in "classes": the *Firstfruit* of vivification is Christ Himself; *thereupon,* in due course, those who are Christ's will be vivified; and, *thereafter,* the consummation of the vivification of all will finally occur.

This will be whenever Christ may be giving up the kingdom (lit., the "reign") to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power. He *will* achieve this, since He must be reigning *until* He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. *The last enemy is being abolished: death.* And, this *will* occur, since He subjects *all* under His feet. Finally, "the Son Himself" also shall be subjected to God, "Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all" (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22-28).

It follows, then, that at the consummation, every person who entered the second death will be fully returned to life, but this time to unspeakably glorious life, in immortality and incorruption, no longer subjected to vanity but instead truly constituted righteous—vivified—fit for the indwelling of God Himself in such a way that He may be All in all.

From these considerations it follows as well that the apostle John's vision is one of an epochal period, not of endless duration. We know this simply because while John, in Revelation 21 and 22, speaks of the reign of Christ, of saints, and

of kings of the earth, while affirming the presence of the second death, Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15, speaks of Christ reigning until He gives up the reign (the kingdom); indeed, of the time when all sovereignty and authority is nullified (which therefore includes that of both the saints and the kings of the earth), and even of the time when death itself is abolished, the glorious day when all will finally have that life of which Christ is the Firstfruit, all unto the end that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:28).

SET FOR LIFE EONIAN; SIN, OFFENSES, AND ACTS

You also asked, "If it is true that Jesus died for everyone and that everyone will be saved in the end, why, then, are only certain ones to receive an eonian salvation?"

In reply, I would simply say that while the living God, on Whom we rely, is the Saviour of all mankind, He is *especially* the Saviour of believers (1 Tim.4:10). Eonian salvation is the "special" salvation granted to God's chosen ones, who are also graciously granted faith.

That is, to a very *special* extent or degree, the One Who is the Saviour of all mankind is also the Saviour of believers *in particular,* to whom alone, eonian life is given.

Here it is important to keep in mind that faith is *the consequent gracious blessing* given to those who are, first of all, chosen, foreknown, designated beforehand, and then, in due time, called and granted faith (*cp* Eph.1:4; Rom. 8:29,30,33; Acts 13:48; 1 Cor.1:24; Phil.1:29).

We are not told why we are chosen and others are not, with respect to membership in the ecclesia and the blessing of eonian life. We simply know—as concerns untold other things as well concerning which we are likewise not informed as to the particular "why" of things—that God has actually *chosen* (i.e., "willed") that things be as they are, not otherwise, to accord with His purpose (Eph.1:11).

We stand in awe of it all, relying on Him as the Almighty, trusting in His wisdom, goodness, and love.

Now, finally, let me address your primary concern, which you yourself summed up as follows: "In a word, if Jesus suffered once for all, taking away the sin of the world, why should there be a day of judging and a second death?"

I would first of all stress, since the Lamb of God did indeed take away the sin of the world (John 1:29), not only do we who are God's chosen one's not suffer for our *sins*, but neither does any one else suffer for his or her *sins*.

This, however, in no way denies the consideration—which is another matter—that in this life, "God's indignation *is being revealed* from heaven on all the irrever*ence* and unrighteous*ness* of men who are retaining the truth [i.e., whatever truth they do know] in unrighteousness." This is, "the retribution of their deception which must be" (Rom.1:18,19,27b). That is, God's "indignation" here is upon the irreverence and unrighteousness itself; a consequence of this, it is true, is that the effects thereof are experienced by those engaged therein.

This consequence, however, is not in the form of "maledictions" along the lines of the "curses" of the law. Instead, though often dreadful deeds do indeed result in present-day suffering, this is by no means always the case.

It seems evident that "the retribution of their deception" has both a subjective and an objective aspect. That is, we human beings are deceived and led astray both in and as a result of our deeds of irreverence and unrighteousness. If we were not already corrupted, we would never do these things; and, as those who have done them, we must also experience something of what God thinks of them, even if the penality here consists in continuing on in our darkness (which is by no means a trivial judgment in itself), whether or not it also includes consequent, corresponding suffering.

There are three terms to consider: (1) "sins" (which refers to one's *failures;* lit., "missings" of the mark); (2) "offenses" (which speaks of that which wounds the feelings); and (3) "acts" (i.e., actions, or "works," which speaks simply of deeds themselves, without, at least as such, noting their "missing" or "offending" aspects).

As the Lamb of God, the Sin Offering, Jesus takes away the *sin* of the world (John 1:29); and, God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself (i.e., uniting them unto Him; *cp* 1 Cor.7:11), which entails His not reckoning their *offenses* to them (2 Cor.5:19).

Therefore, men's ongoing practices in which they continue to miss the mark of God's ideals, and continue as well to be offensive therein, do not stand in the way of their salvation. In Christ, God has made provision for their needs concerning both their failings and the offensiveness thereof. Therefore, neither men's sin's nor their offenses inhibit their salvation: God has formed the decision (1 Tim.2:4) that all mankind be saved; and, in Christ, all *shall* be vivified (1 Cor.15:22).

These considerations, however, glorious and significant as they are, do not change the fact that God will bring every *act* into judgment (Ecc.12:14; God's "judgment," simply speaks of that which God decides to do or bring to pass). Now, in judgment, there are two grand classes of humanity: (1) vessels of mercy, and (2) vessels of indignation (Rom.9:22,23; it should be kept in mind that even the vessels of indignation will subsequently enjoy mercy themselves; *cf* Rom.11:32).

All God's judgments (i.e., everything that He decides to accomplish) are ultimately salutary and corrective. In judgment, in His judging of a part of mankind, God will display His mercy therein, according to His grace ("mercy" is the mitigation, or diminution, of the severity of judgment). And, in His judging of the remainder of mankind, God, Who is love (1 John 4:8; *cp* 1 Cor.13:5), in the person of

His Son, will *assume* the role (*cf* Heb.1:3) of One Who is indignant, thus *manifesting* a corresponding severity, with a view toward displaying His indignation and making His powerful doings known (Rom.9:22).

This is what God has determined to do, and He will do it. He has a purpose in it all, and that purpose is to glorify Himself and bless His creatures—to the degree and in the way that He intends.

In consideration of the second death, we need only note that it is not according to God's purpose for all to live during the eon of the eons, which is the final duration, prior to the consummation (it is this eon which is the object of John's vision of Revelation 21,22). It was not God's purpose for us to have lived in times of old. For such a long expanse of time, there was no life for us to be found. Similarly, then, even as we ourselves were not afforded life in millennia past, neither will the majority of mankind be endowed therewith during the eon of the eons.

But it is according to God's purpose for the day of judging to transpire subsequent to the thousand years, and yet prior to the eon of the eons. And, in that "day" (we do not know its duration, but take it that even if comparatively brief it will not be an insignificant period; *cf* Matt.12:42), the *acts* of the *vessels* of indignation will be judged; where appropriate, in severity. Following the day of judging, those brought forth for judging (*cf* John 5:29b) will be returned to death, being *cast* into the lake of fire: "This *is* the second *death*—the lake of fire" (Rev.20:14b).

We who are God's chosen ones, who are vessels of mercy, will enjoy eonian life until the consummation when we *together with all mankind* will enter upon the field of endless life which follows.

In closing, I would only declare, "Now thanks be to God, Who is giving us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.15:57). J.R.C.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 111th Year

(1909–2020)

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 On Thy Account
155 God and Christ
160 The Complement of the Deity
167 The Love and Will of God
177 Growing in the Realization of God
186 The Reconciliation of All to God

FOURTH QUARTER, 2020

Volume 111 **Number 4**

Concordant Version of the Old Testament

Over a century has passed since a "concordant version" of the Scriptures was first proposed by A. E. Knoch and Vladimir Gelesnoff. When the translation of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," was then published in 1926, an announcement was made that work had begun on the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament"). Now after all these years, with thanksgiving to God, we announce that the entire CONCORDANT VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT is now in print and available to order.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FOURTH QUARTER 2020
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN

EDITORIAL

WHEN Brother A. E. Knoch introduced his *Studies in Colossians* to the readers of this magazine he said they were dealing with an epistle that was "the very summit of revelation" (*Unsearchable Riches,* vol.31, p.1, Jan. 1940). In this way we also may look at Colossians, especially as it unfolds "the secret of Christ" (Eph.3:4) expressed there as the reconciliation of all through the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love (Col.1:13,20).

There was much unrest and disruption of political systems in 1940 in the initial stages of a great war. And we may say that something similar is happening today, although due to what Scripture would call "plague" rather than war. For the believers, eighty years ago, and for us now, Paul's letter to the Colossians (written nearly two thousand years ago), was, and is a powerful and consoling source "for all endurance and patience with joy" (Col.1:11).

In this issue the various articles, at one point or another direct us to Colossians 1:20. But more so, they direct us to the prayer of Colossians 1:9-11 which prepares the way for that summit revelation of Christ's exaltation, the reconciliation of all through Him. The prayer for the realization of God's will and growth in the realization of God is one for seeing Him more and more clearly as the Father of the Son of His love, Who wills with delight not only the reconciliation of all, but the blood of Christ's cross through which the all-encompassing peace is achieved.

Thus James Coram writes (pages 147-154) of the will of God as the determining factor in all that occurs, even the existence of evil (which is a temporary matter for ultimate and permanent good): "in the relative sense, many things

are 'not of God,' for they are contrary to His preceptive will as well as to His callings (e.g., 1 John 3:10; Gal.5:8). But even these, absolutely speaking, find their source, means and goal in the counsels and operations of God" (p.154).

In growing in realization of God and of His will, we come to see that from creation to consummation He carries on His operations in and through His Beloved Son. Thus William Mealand writes, in commenting on 1 Corinthians 8:6: "Would we know God aright? Then we must take true measure of His love as displayed by Christ, for in Him such love is given its desired expression" (p.157). Indeed *all* is out of God, the Father, and all His Being is made known, and all His doing carried out through the Lord Jesus Christ. In this Christ is "the Complement of the Deity" (as A. E. Knoch points out on pages 160-166). He is not the Deity. "The title 'Complement' is Christ's because He brings all to a satisfactory *Completion*" (p.163).

Next comes an article entitled "The Love and Will of God" (pages 167-176) selected mostly from A. E. Knoch's writings. Paul speaks of God operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. And here too he directs our attention to the secret of God's will which accords with His delight (Eph.1:9,10). As companion letters, there is everywhere in Ephesians a mutually supporting connection with Colossians, which we do well to note, and as Brother Knoch so often observed.

As for my own articles on Colossians 1:19,20 (pages 177-191), they are based on a change in the CV rendering of verse 19, yet a change (I believe) that will enhance our appreciation of God's will, its counsel and purpose, and indeed its delight—that is, His delight that the Son of His love be His Complement; and His delight that all be reconciled to Him through His Beloved Son. May all the articles presented here comfort and console our hearts and strengthen our spirits in faith and love and expectation with growth in the realization of God. D.H.H.

ON THY ACCOUNT

WE TRUST this study will make it evident that traditional "free will,"[1] is unscriptural, but no more so than fatalism. Yet both these philosophies contain vital truth. Free will ideally recognizes the essential place of those things which are means to an end, and fatalism truly perceives that whatever God has appointed will surely come to pass, according to His own operations. Truth is not made the worse for the company in which we may find it.

Neither are we contending for any cold, secular determinism which knows nothing of loving design, wise direction and glorious purpose. We seek only to point the believer in Christ Jesus to the divine disposings, the gracious counsels and operations of his God and Father, that he may know Him, trust Him and rely upon Him:

"For I laid all this on my heart, and my heart saw all this: That the righteous and the wise and their services are in the hand of the One, Elohim" (Ecc.9:1). "Just as you have no knowledge what the way of the wind may be, Or how bones are formed in the belly that is full, Thus you can-

1. Traditional "free will," is sometimes called "mainstream free will." This is the notion of alternative possibilities in the sense that—not hypothetically but actually—in any certain point in time, even as in any given circumstance and particular state of mind, one might *choose* to do one thing *or* another thing. The unspoken premise here is that what one "chooses" to do is something that is ultimately under one's own control. It is evident, however, that any such power of ultimate control cannot actually exist. This is because either one chooses as one does due to something, or due to nothing. In either case, any fancied power of ultimate control is precluded, and therefore cannot exist.

not know the work of the One, Elohim, *Who made everything*" (Ecc.11:5). "Again I saw under the sun That the race is not to the fleet, Nor the battle to valiant masters, Nor even bread for the wise, Nor riches for the understanding, Nor even favor for the knowing, For season and mischance [or, 'occurrence'] shall *happen* to them all. For, moreover, a man does not know his season, Like fish that are held in a vicious weir, And like birds that are held in a snare, So the sons of humanity themselves are trapped by a season of evil, When it falls on them suddenly" (Ecc.9:11,12). "I applied my heart to inquiring and exploring by wisdom concerning all that is done under the heavens: It is an experience of evil Elohim has given to the sons of humanity to humble them by it" (Ecc.1:13).

Indeed, "According as it is written [Psa.44:22], that '*On Thy account* we are being put to death the whole day, We are reckoned as sheep for slaughter' " (Rom.8:36).

"Account" is a variant of *logos*, LAY (say)ing; it is usually translated "word." The sense is, concerning the evils that attend our course, God has decided, and He has spoken, saying that this should be our lot, even if the particulars concerning the affairs of each person are far too numerous to record as part of His written Word. Indeed, "Who is this who speaks and it is coming to be, when my Lord did not *instruct?* Is not the evil and the good faring forth from the mouth of the Supreme?" (Lam.3:37, 38). "For, *as* the downpour and the snow is descending from the heavens, Yet it is not returning there, but rather soaks the earth, And *causes* it to bear and to sprout, *So* shall My *word* which shall fare forth from My mouth. It shall not return to Me empty, But rather, it does that which I desire, And prospers in that for which I sent it" (Isa.55:10,11).

It is on account of God that we experience evil, and, as surely as "sheep [are set] for slaughter," we will continue to be subjected to it. But this is only so that in the midst of

our afflictions and sufferings we might find the assurance of God's love. It must be a vast love (*cp* Eph.2:4), full of patience and power, for the opposition is fierce and formidable. Though all manner of things threaten to separate us from Him and do their utmost toward that end, in all creation *nothing is able* to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. In all our pains, "we are *more* than conquering through Him Who loves us" (Rom.8:37). As good as it is to "conquer," it is far better to be inseparable from the love of God.

When we are conformed in character to the image of God's Son and given a glorious body even as His own (Rom.8:29; Phil.3:21), it will be a great understatement to say that we have conquered our failings and overcome our afflictions. As good as it is to meditate upon the marvelous and total victory which lies ahead, it is even better to meditate upon God's present love for us and what this love portends. His grace upon us consists of far more than the eventual defeat of Sin. Its riches are to be found in a realization of His love. Since God is *able* and since He *loves us*, "neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.8:38,39). Through Him Who loves us, we are "more than conquering"; we are loved.

GOD HAS MADE US

Most believers seem to realize that at least the rest of creation never comes into existence, and can never be sustained, except according to divine providence. Yet if men and their ways were somehow an exception to this, we might never have been born at all. The "possibility" of our having been generated by chance is even far more remote than the absurd fantasy that, "Given enough time

and typewriter ribbons, a roomful of monkeys could both create and type out the Encyclopaedia Britannica." It is vital to recognize that "Yahweh, *He* is Elohim; He it is Who has *made us*, and we are His" (Psa.100:3).

Left to the winds of chance, we could never have become "pre-expectant in the Christ," and destined to be "for the laud of [God's] glory" (Eph.1:12). We could never have become ourselves, with all the countless things that make us unique, except through our own actual parents, and through that unique begettal, in all its details, which resulted in our birth, to say nothing of all that has happened since. The truth is, most do not even realize that God is their Creator, much less the Creator of evil. They merely think He created all the natural processes which made their life "possible," and then left whatever might happen to freewill chance.

HONORABLE DEEDS AND DIVINE PROVIDENCE

The truth of our words is well represented in the following popular claim: "My parents, even as all of their ancestors before them, '*chose*' to have me—or at least they *could have* chosen not to. *No one had to be conceived.* Otherwise, there would be no honor in the bed of matrimony or dishonor in adultery."

Such words, which are most persuasive to those attuned to the world's ethics, are actually altogether foolish. In response we can only say, "Let no one be deluding himself. If anyone among you is presuming to be wise in this eon, let him become stupid, that he may be becoming wise, for the wisdom of this world is stupidity with God" (1 Cor.3:18,19).

Such claims can never be maintained. For the determination of what is honorable or dishonorable is not to be discovered by the supposed relationship between human actions and free will, but by ascertaining what God has

said is right and what He has *said* is wrong, according to *His* revealed, preceptive *will.*[2]

Even this changes in many ways, depending upon the divine administration under which we are living. It was not wrong for the people of Israel to omit performing those things which were only given through the apostle Paul many centuries later. And it is not wrong for us today to refrain from doing many an external thing that brought dishonor and severe judgment to the transgressor of the law of Moses. For he was under the law of Yahweh, and subject to its curses. However, for ourselves, "Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes" (Gal.3:13).

Though we are not lawless people—we are not without God's law, His rules of action for us (1 Cor.9:21)—nonetheless we are not *under* law at all, but under grace (Rom. 6:14). Therefore we are certainly not under the law which God gave to Israel through Moses. To be "under law" is to be subject to the lordship of Sin and Death (Rom.6:9,14), because of one's having committed a violation of law. For "sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4), and the "ration of Sin is

2. In Scripture, the reference of any certain occurrence of the phrase "the will of God," is evident either from its context, or in the nature of the case. Any particular usage of this phrase seems to always have in view either what we may term, "the will of God, preceptive," or "the will of God, decretive."

The preceptive will of God, consists in the precepts, or instructions, which God has decided, or chosen, to enjoin upon us for our obedience. Such passages point us to the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect (e.g., Rom.12:2; *cp* 1 Thess.5:18).

The decretive will of God, is the will of God with respect to what He has decided, or chosen, should exist, occur, or come to pass. Such passages reveal the divine plans, those things which God has purposed to happen or transpire. God is operating all according to the counsel of His own will. Concerning all things, He has decided what should occur. Consequently, He acts accordingly, operating all, causing everything that happens to come to pass (Eph.1:11).

death" (Rom.6:23a). But, "Sin shall not be lording it over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Rom.6:14). For ourselves, "now the consummation is life eonian." For "the gracious gift of God is life eonian, in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:22,23).

The unbelief of the Jews remained a dishonor to them, even though they were unable to believe (John 12:39). Yet to the chosen ones, "according to the foreknowledge of God" (1 Pet.1:1,2), who were believing "through the grace of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 15:11), was "the *honor,* yet to the unbelieving: . . . [the dishonor of being those who rejected Christ] who are stumbling also at the word, being stubborn, *to which they were appointed also*" (1 Pet. 2:7,8). Their stumbling was to be accounted for by their being stubborn, yet they were appointed to this by God (*cf* Isa.6:9,10; Rom.11:32).

It is hardly to the dishonor of a woman of the most excellent virtue and strength of character that she is unable to engage in base, sordid acts. She *cannot* choose them, for they are abhorrent to her. Likewise, the vile, wicked acts of those "that do not stop from sin" (2 Pet.2:14), who love unrighteousness and commend the unclean, do not become any less abominable because they are but flesh, and the flesh is not able to be subject to the law of God (Rom.8:7).

Apart from God's all-encompassing operations, any number of things might have hindered either the beginnings of our life or its continuance at countless points along the way. Consequently, we thank *Him* for our life and breath and all. It is far from ideal to think of ourselves, more or less, as self-made men. For it is not our name that is to be glorified but His. To be faithful, our prayer can only be that our God should be fulfilling every delight of goodness and work of faith and power in us (2 Thess.1:11). Prayer must never be based upon the proud sentiment, "Help me, but not too much, for I still want some glory of my own."

It is God Who fulfills all that is good in us. As the Lord Jesus said of Himself, "Now the Father remaining in Me, He is doing His works" (John 14:10). For ourselves as well, then, it can only be thus, "so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, in accord with the *grace* of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess.1:12).

INTERCONNECTION AND DEPENDENCY

Not realizing that God's creation of evil is a righteous creation for the good of all and for His own glory, many express shocked disbelief when hearing us say that it is the work of His hand. Yet their unbelief concerning His creation of evil distracts them from facing the fact that neither do they believe that He is the Maker of good, certainly not in man's personal character and well-being, since these, indeed, depend in such great measure on his own choices, and yet it is insisted that nothing at all, certainly not God, causes him to choose as he does. Therefore, notwithstanding its followers' best intentions and outward forms to the contrary, traditional Christianity has largely become an "a-theistic" religion. For the realm of Chance is under the direction of no one at all.

Christianity often represents itself as if it were dualistic: "God only makes good, the Devil makes evil," only to turn about and become polytheistic: "Where you spend eternity is 'up to you.'" It likes to pretend to be monotheistic: "God is the sovereign Lord of all"; but in the end, proves itself, practically speaking, to be atheistic: "Man, even as God, possesses free will [that is, the power of contrary choice], and is not caused to behave as he does."

Nonetheless, if God had not caused someone to bring the evangel to us, or if we had died prior to such a time, we would hardly have been in a position to believe, or to do anything else. Yet, as history and universal experience

have shown, things quite inconsequential in themselves have often altered the subsequent course of men's lives in far-reaching ways. This principle of interconnection and dependency is true of all things and at all times, though it should spread to concern itself with multiplied trillions upon trillions of details throughout all time.

The secret of God's will (Eph.1:9) is "to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ . . . in Whom *our lot was cast also*" (Eph. 1:10,11). This reminds us of Proverbs 16:33: "It is the lot that is cast forth in the bosom; Yet from Yahweh is its every judgment." That is, the determination of our destiny, and the destiny of all, is entirely in the hands of God. This is the very point of the figure, "in Whom our lot was cast also." God appoints His Son "enjoyer of the allotment of all" (Heb.1:2), and "Head over all" (Eph.1:22). And when God heads up all in Christ, all will find their allotment in His allotment. None will receive anything but what is first of all His. Truly, all is of God.

However, *relatively* speaking, many things are "not of God," for they are contrary to His preceptive will as well as to His callings (e.g., 1 John 3:10; Gal.5:8). But even these, *absolutely* speaking, find their source, means and goal in the counsels and operations of God. "Let all the earth fear Yahweh; . . . For He spoke, and it came to be; He enjoined, and it stood firm. Yahweh, He annuls the counsel of the nations; He repudiates the designs of the peoples. The counsel of Yahweh shall stand for the eon, The designs of His heart for generation after generation" (Psa.33:8-11).

It is true that God's preceptive will and counsel can be repudiated, indeed this is usually the case today. But it is just as true that His decretive will and counsel shall stand. "All My counsel shall be confirmed, And all My desire will I do" (Isa.46:10b). It will come to pass, on account of Him.

J.R.C.

GOD AND CHRIST

To us there is one God, the Father, out of Whom all is, and we for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is, and we through Him. (1 Corinthians 8:6)

How simple yet sublime a creed is expressed in this lucid utterance! It touches head and heart alike, gathering up in one grand pronouncement statements in similar strain, which reveal the conception we should cherish of God and Christ.

Faith to live upon must ever be linked with intelligence. There must be grasp of truth in ways which bring God and Christ rightly before our minds. And in such an epitome of faith and truth the apostle Paul conveys much. It is like looking at a great picture in which all details of form and coloring conspire to the effective wealth of the whole. Orderly design is blended with living warmth, and the grip of its conception grows upon the gaze. The more we look, the more we see.

And so, in this fine and forceful language, intensity of gaze brings out beauty upon beauty for the joy and peace of belief. In the opening pronoun we not only become sightseers, but recipients. For "*to us,*" creatures of a brief and checkered day, as to this earth life, is given the glad knowledge which lifts us from the welter of gods many, and of lords many.

"To us there is one God, the Father." What self-interpretation! "*One God, the Father*! How much is enshrined in the thought! Towering far above the wisdom of conti-

nents, the lore of sages, all that meets our need as erring children is resident in the words.

"*One God.*" And to us, as to Israel, comes the great declaration, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut.6:4).

Then comes all the tenderness and wealth of the words, "The Father." "*The Father.*" Therefore, a Son. One upon Whom to lavish all that a father truly finds it in head and heart to bestow. And even in our weak conception of the filial relationship there come glimpses of its outreaching greatness.

But we are always learning, and ever to find that the divine constructions placed upon the word are fully borne out by faith's experience. And, as the massive, basic support of all that this may mean, we read farther, that it is "the Father, out of Whom all is."

Creation, of which we are but frail yet precious units, not only out of God august, omnipotent and supreme, but forth-flowing even out of the Father, and that through the beloved one Lord, Jesus Christ. Think of it! All that God, the Father, would fain reveal in the holding of such a title, such a relationship, poured out in and through the Son of His love.

Is God love? Has He shown it? Let us mark the words. It is not only that out of Him "all is" but that through the Son, "all is." So, through the one Lord, Jesus Christ, is the ebb and flow of that great stream of life we call humanity. And not only humanity, but all intelligences which are out of God—all, all are through Him.

There is the going forth of the wonderful, throbbing creation, still God's creation, in spite of all its shame and tears, its tarnished glory. And then the sweet and glowing return. "*We for Him.*" "*We through Him.*" Thus we live, move, and have our being for God, and it is "through Him," Whose pre-eminence is so signally graced throughout the

ages. And this "*precedence of all*" is the great pledge of fulfillment of the words "*for Him.*" He stands first, bearing in His gracious pre-eminence the potentiality which reaches out to the utmost bounds of time and space.

Let us take in the full force and meaning of such precedence, and the stupendous possibilities of Christ's coming forth out of God. The sweetness of our meditation of Him will be enhanced, too, as we discern the beautiful character of the filial bond. In terms of simple grace and truth Christ emphasizes this again and again.

Said He: "I came forth and am arriving out of God" (John 8: 42).

"The Father is loving the Son and has given all into His hand" (John 3:35).

"The Father is fond of the Son, and is showing Him all that He is doing" (John 5:20).

Do we not see in these statements the magnitude of the Father's love? And the Son is the recipient of its highest charges, the One through Whom they will take effect. And the Sonship reflects the Fatherhood. The triumph of love waits on both.

Christ's arrival out of God stood for complete manifestation of God's love. He came forth vested with all its grand essentials to fully accomplish the purpose of it. And it is the love as thus shown, that we must always look at when we consider the character and destiny of this, our sphere. Men generally, and some believers, too, are so readily apt to associate events with an issue of their own calculation. To such, love is not the persistent, pursuing and permanent thing which lies back of all that is and shall be. Yet this is the love which inheres the filial tie in the relationship of God and Christ.

Would we know God aright? Then we must take the true measure of His love as displayed by Christ, for in Him such love is given its desired expression. The phrase

immediately preceding Christ's great title as the "Image of the invisible God," is that sweet, alluring sentence, "the Son of His love."

Never was there such Sonship, as never such Fatherhood. In the depth of each sublime quality lies the assurance of creation's high destiny. Absolute perfection pertains to each. From start to finish, love is the presiding element. Right to the end of an infinite purpose this love flashes forth via the Son. Not intermittently, like the flashing of those publicity signs we often see, but with permanent luster. There is no break. Hence the beauty of Peter's words, "Whom, not perceiving, you are loving, in Whom, not seeing at present, yet believing, you are exulting with joy ineffable and glorious."

Via the Son. He Who could say with such fervency, "My Father," "My God," thus passing to us that blessed right. Moment by moment He lived in the sweetness and strength which dwelt in the words. They empowered Him to empower us. Note how the spirit of sonship breathes through the intercessory prayer of our Lord, as set forth in John's account.

The dignity and preciousness of our own position as "among the celestials," is foreshadowed in the glorious language which graced the lips of Christ, "I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in one, and that the world may be knowing that Thou dost commission Me and dost love them according as Thou dost love Me" (John 17:23). And into such an affinity and fondness are we brought by the will and designation of God.

Even so, are "*we for Him.*" And then, as Paul so aptly puts it in Romans eight, "*God is for us.*" God for us! Could words be more heartening? Yet, at times, how long it takes us to realize them in the value they possess. How long to find sanctuary in "the love of God in Christ Jesus." And

then, in quietness and confidence, are we indeed "more than conquerors through Him Who loves us."

THE CHANNEL SUPREME

Through Him, the Channel supreme, God is for us, and we for Him. Such are the simple but glorious dimensions of our faith. "One God, the Father, out of Whom all is." What scientific or philosophic phrase could convey so much? It is the last and best word on Creator and creation, linked as it is with the harmonious language, "one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is."

And we? How great our place, how meet our praise! O that in all He came first, as befits His precedence of all. Then indeed, through Him, should we realize how much we are for God. We should thus be growing in the realization of God, and in the giving of thanks to the Father.

And being more and more "for Him," we should become "imitators of God, as beloved children, and be walking in love." And it is a great thing to display to others the manner and attitude which we know God so faithfully displays to us. What honor, too, is conferred upon us by the injunction!

God and Christ. Father and Son. Did we but imitate God more as Father, through Christ, the Son of His love, we should be more capable in the expression of our faith, both for ourselves and others. And we should maintain the dignity of our calling, for as members of the body of Christ we have a position to maintain. To this end may the greatness of our faith, as enshrined in the words we have studied, keep us more completely and satisfyingly under the sway of the spirit.

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor the future, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

William Mealand

THE COMPLEMENT OF THE DEITY

THE greatest need to an understanding of such themes as "the deity of Christ" is a concordant vocabulary. The Authorized Version (and the Revised to a lesser extent) has so thoroughly juggled the essential words that it is foolish to expect clarity from their use. The subjoined concordance of the special terms used is given, not to clarify, but to show the source of the confusion. The word "Godhead" is freely used of terms which should be distinguished. Very few who use the terms "deity," "divinity," "divine" and Godhead, can give definitions of them sufficiently exact to keep them distinct.

theios, adjective

Acts 17:29 that the *Godhead* is like unto gold or silver or stone
2 Pet. 1:3,4 According as his divine power hath given unto us . . . that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature

theiotês, noun

Rom. 1:20 his eternal power and *Godhead;*

theotês, noun

Col. 2: 9 in him dwelleth all the fulness of the *Godhead* bodily

Careful analysis and investigation has revealed the fact that English possesses close equivalents for each of these Greek words. We have the terms *divinity deity,* as well as *divine.* In view of the supreme importance of this theme, it seems inexcusable to use one vague, misleading, obsolete compound for all three Greek words when appropriate English expressions were constantly being used in

theological literature. We will now give the concordant renderings of these words in their contexts, so that everyone may judge for himself of their suitability.

theios, divine

Acts 17:29 we ought not to be inferring that the *Divine* is like gold, or silver, or stone
2 Pet. 1:3,4 So has all of His *divine* power . . . been presented to us . . . that through these you may become participants of the *divine* nature

theiotês, divinity

Rom. 1:20 For His invisible attributes are descried from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements, as well as His imperceptible power and *divinity*

theotês, deity

Col. 2: 9 Christ, for in Him the entire complement of the *Deity* is dwelling bodily

Concerning the meaning of *divine,* the adjective, there can be no question. It may be used of power, of nature, of objects of worship, even of idols, which are supposed to be *like* that which God is. Paul did not speak to the Athenians about a "Godhead" of which they had never heard. He had never heard of it himself. He objected to the pedestals of stone, and the statues wrought with precious metals, which they thought God-like or divine. These things are not *like God.* They are not *divine.*

The English word "divinity" is particularly well suited to the context in Romans. There is a broad scope about it which accords well with the glimpses of God we get in creation. In it we learn of His imperceptible power and divinity. Everywhere in nature are evidences of superhuman attributes, beyond the powers and comprehensions of His creatures. We see a Divinity in nature and a Deity

in revelation. This is the force which divine usage gives to these words. Let us not use them in any other sense.

The third word, "deity," is specially before us in our present considerations. The single occurrence is sufficient to fix its meaning clearly. It supplies a term greatly needed in this discussion. It is *not* applied to Christ. It is applied to the Deity Whose complement He is. So far as the revelation of Himself is concerned, the Deity needs a Complement, an Image, a Word, a Mediator, to make Himself known. Christ is the Complement Who fulfills these functions fully. The entire complement of the Deity dwells in Him in bodily form.

Christ is not the complement of Himself. He is not engaged in revealing Himself. He acts for Another. That Other is termed "the Deity" in *contrast* with Christ. To say that the fullness of the Deity dwells in the Deity is not only unscriptural but an affront to the spirit of a sound mind. Outside of Christ there is a Deity. Inside of Him is the complement of this Deity. For the purpose of revelation, so far as our senses are concerned, Christ is that Deity. It is His function to show us the Father. Yet, in so doing, He distinguishes Himself from His God, Who is here given a special term belonging to Himself alone. It will greatly aid us if we also confine the term "Deity" to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, and refrain from applying it to our Lord.

It will be seen from this that it is entirely inadequate to call Christ "divine." This means no more than God-like, which, in some measure, characterizes all His works, and may be used of any of His operations and attributes. He was indeed divine, but in a sense so superior to others that the adjective holds Him down to their level instead of exalting Him to God's. Similarly, there was divinity in all His deeds, but here also, He surpasses the best that is conveyed by the term. The Scriptures use this term of that which is seen

in creation, apart from Christ. Hence confusion is easily introduced by speaking of the "divinity of Christ."

The term *theotês, deity,* however, is used by God in expressing the relationship between Him and His Christ. God claims it for Himself and denies it to His Son. It is the inspired term to note the distinction between them. The *plerōma,* the complement of the *Deity* dwells bodily in Christ. If He also were Deity, then we would have the useless assertion that the complement of the Deity dwells in the Deity, and we take away all reason for the existence of Christ, making Him identical with His God, and of no real use in the revelation of the Deity.

THE COMPLEMENT

The title "Complement" is Christ's because He brings all to a satisfactory *Completion.* But the final phase of God's purpose has been hid from Christendom, so that the creation manages to bring millions of sentient beings into existence, not for their own happiness or the glory of God, but for their unending torment and the eternal disgrace of the Deity. Any philosophy based on the creeds of Christendom must lead to desperation and insanity. Even when death is made to end all, oblivion is no jewel in God's crown, and is no rational apology for creation. Reason and revelation demand that God be glorified, that suffering receive a satisfactory explanation, and that a *completed,* not shattered universe crown the efforts of Deity and the intervention of His Anointed.

Perhaps the greatest treasure of which the saints have been despoiled is the reconciliation of all. Almost precisely the same words as are used here in Colossians 2:9 are used to introduce this glorious truth in 1:18-20, ". . . that in all He may be becoming first, seeing that the entire complement delights to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all to Him . . . ." It is because He is God's Com-

plement that all will be reconciled. If He does not reconcile all, then all will not be complete and He is not God's Complement. The full force of "complement" is denied by nearly every saint who bears His name. Only a tiny remnant dares to acknowledge Him as God's Complement. It is a jewel of far more value than any gem in any diadem of any potentate of earth.

TRADITIONS OF MEN

"The deity of Christ" is a mischievous phrase, made by man, intended to glorify Christ, but used as a shibboleth to indict all who will not bow to man's dictum. It is the fruit of ignorance and tradition, and few who use it or who seek to impose it on others are able to give an accurate idea of what it conveys. Used in opposition to the error which makes Christ a mere man, it may be temporarily condoned, but as a positive statement of faith it is out of accord with the Scriptures, a mere human invention, without any claim on our faith, and destructive to a clear understanding of the glories of God and of Christ.

The strength of Trinitarianism lies in a naive assumption that one who rejects it must necessarily go to the opposite extreme, and be a Unitarian. It is taken for granted that, if the Son of God is not, in every way, coequal with the Father, He must necessarily be nothing but a descendant of Adam. Thus Scripture is ruled out altogether, for in its pages is not a single text for either position. Therein Christ is God's Image and man's Saviour, God's Word and our Redeemer. He is subject to the Deity, yet Lord of all creation. The unique glories of Christ have been eclipsed by both sides of this controversy, each forcing Him to one extreme or the other, when He belongs between, and can lay His hand on both God and man.

The name "Unitarian" is not unscriptural, and some who claim it may not degrade Christ to the level of humankind, but only insist that there is but *one God,* as Scripture emphatically declares. But, now that it is represented by an organization with a creed which practically rejects the supernatural, it is not at all applicable to those who believe in monotheism yet do not drag our Saviour down from His high honors. It is to be regretted that an expression which is Scriptural should become the symbol of much that is not of God. But Trinitarianism is a term which has no place in God's vocabulary, either in intent or fact. The number three is carefully kept from all contexts which concern the Deity.

Seeing that the thought of the Trinity is absent from God's revelation and is only derived from it by a process of inference, it has been found necessary, not only to prop it up, but continually to guard its supports. In addition the word has been invested with a superstitious sanctity, so that it is more sacred than the Scriptures themselves.

Trinitarianism rests, not on the utterances of God, Who alone could have revealed it, but upon the consensus of evangelical creeds, the credulity of good and learned and honored men. It is significant that no argument for the Trinity seems satisfactory to those who propose it. They nearly all fall back upon the fact that it has prevailed ever since men ceased to depend on vital contact with God's Word written, and substituted for it the condensed formulas which could be mumbled by any unbeliever, and which have become the backbone of nominal and apostate "Christianity."

The Fundamentalists boldly and blessedly support the teachings of God's Word concerning creation. But with regard to faith in the Deity, what men have *evolved from the Scriptures* appeals to them far more than the sacred text itself. They cannot understand how a sane man cannot see God in nature, while they themselves fail to give His Word the supreme place in their theology. Being champions of

the Bible, they subconsciously include in it the acknowledged creeds and popular interpretations. Let the Fundamentalists and Evangelicals openly declare that their creed is not essential, but only God's Word is fundamental, and they will break down the barrier that holds back God's most abundant blessing. A. E. Knoch

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GOD'S DWELLING PLACE IN SPIRIT

The entire complement of God is the family described in Ephesians 2:20, which, in verse 16 of chapter 3, is shown to consist of "every kindred in the heavens and on earth," for all are portrayed as being named after Him. It is God's aim, which He will undoubtedly fulfill, to become, in fact and in acknowledgment, the Father of all. We are already acknowledging Him as our Father, but are we grasping the truth that we should even now be exhibiting those traits of character which are agreeable to the statement that we are "being built together for God's dwelling place, in spirit"? We are indeed the firstfruits of that wider complement of God which is being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and of which the capstone of the corner is Christ Jesus Himself, in Whom the entire building, being connected together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord. Are we perceiving its breadth and length and depth and height? Are we understanding that the whole desire of God for His creation is stemming from the love which is constantly welling up within His own heart? And in all this, are we discerning the love of Christ as well? The two are distinct, though complementary. But if the love of Christ is so great as to be "knowledge transcending," how are we to measure the love of God Himself? Obviously we cannot, but we do know that He is able to do superexcessively above anything that we are asking or apprehending.

John H. Essex

THE LOVE AND WILL OF GOD

GOD, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, Who chooses us in Christ before the disruption, is "in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved" (Eph.1:5,6). In this rich revelation we find the basis of all our blessing in *the love and will* of God. His love predestined us to sonship, His will is to display that love by an exhibition of His grace, possible only through the disruption and the entrance of sin. We were in the Son of His love in the beginning, according to His purpose, we are in the Beloved through the grace glorious which now graces us in Him.

IN LOVE

God begins all in love. The very universe was created in the Son of His love (Col.1:13-16). If the eyes of our hearts were open to this great truth, we could not help seeing that His goal must consist in the display of His affection. We would not be blinded by the intermediate processes, but recognize that these are the necessary background for its revelation. God is love, hence He must commence and consummate all in love, even though the path between is wet with weeping and hard with hatred and dumb with dread and death. Love is the root and love is the fruit of God's whole purpose. Let us, who are privileged to enjoy a taste of its entrancing sweetness before the goal is

gained, look back to its inception, and fix our hearts firmly in that primeval plan.

All this is Godlike. It transcends our human ways and thoughts. Man knows little of what he is about, and he does not understand, far less control, the process. The future is hid in darkness. Whence he comes or whither he goes he knows not, neither does he know the way. But, with God, the end was the beginning. The final outcome determined the commencement and the course of its accomplishment. If He is to end in being beloved by all His creatures, He must begin in love. The substratum of every step He takes, no matter how it may appear on the surface, is love. It is not simply the silver lining of the cloud, the ameliorating circumstances which attend evil, but the burden of woe is itself imposed by love, for a time, in order to procure its own appreciation, when it is removed.

THE DELIGHT OF HIS WILL

The word "will" has been hardened by opposition. It suggests stern inexorable adamantine determination. But, before there was aught to clash with it, God's will had no such iron aspect. Then it was immersed in love. Its decrees were its delight. As the servant of love it determined that its master should not only be known, but should receive the heartfelt adoration of all who were the objects of its affection. God's will does not delight in its power or inevitability, but in the fruit of His favor. It seeks the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved (Eph.1:6).

No epistle is so full of grace as Ephesians. It not only begins and ends with grace, as most of Paul's epistles do, but strains the capacity of human speech to express its lavishness. Romans presents salvation through grace (Rom.3:24; 4:16; 11:6). Ephesians goes further, and presses salvation *in* or *for* grace (Eph.2:5,8). This is not in the past for the sinner, as most versions suggest, but the grace which is the

result of being saved. It is the vast storehouse of *grace* on which we may draw at any time. The forgiveness of our offenses is in accord with the riches of His *grace* (Eph.1:7). Our future will display its transcendent wealth (Eph.2:7). Thus the eons will be dazzled with its glory.

The grace glorious has two distinct aspects, deliverance and dominion. From the lowest place in the universe the saints are taken and raised to the highest in this administration of God's grace. Sinners from the depths and darkness of divine displeasure are exalted to the highest pinnacle of His favor. From being a curse to themselves and all who came near them, they are transformed into a blessing to the utmost bounds of God's creation.

THE SECRET OF HIS WILL

At present most of God's creatures are out of harmony with Him. He is either unknown, ignored, or defied. The ideal relationship with God is well expressed by the word "complement." We should combine with Him to make one harmonious whole. All that is in Him should find a response in us. There should be such mutual reciprocation in every relationship of life as will be most delightful to both. As Creator we should take our place as His creatures. As Father we should be His beloved sons: He the Reconciler, we the reconciled. He the Deliverer, we the delivered. But, more than this, we are accorded a place with Christ in His work of revealing Him to the celestial hosts. It is only as we ourselves are *filled with His affection* that it can overflow to others.

HIS GLORIOUS RICHES

No epistle in the Scriptures is so full of harmonies as Ephesians. There is a continual assurance that each phase of our blessing is in accord with all the rest. Our sonship suits the delight of His will (1:5). The "forgiveness" of

our offenses is raised on the scale to harmonize with the riches of His grace (1:7). The secret of His will is consonant with His delight (1:9). Our predestination is in unison with His purpose (1:11). Paul's dispensation agrees with God's grace which, in its turn is attuned to His powerful operation (3:7). The insight of the celestials is in line with the purpose of the eons (3:11).

God's riches are glorious. In these last days riches have increased. There are many men of vast wealth, and fortunes have been amassed which are amazing. Great as is their material magnificence, they are sadly lacking in moral glory. Much of our unrighteousness and crime is connected with money. It occasions far more misery than it alleviates. In general, riches are a menace to society. Yet all will acknowledge that wealth has power. It is fast becoming the paramount force in human affairs. It overrides social prestige and political influence. What could we not accomplish with an unlimited command of means! Yet one thing cannot be bought by all the wealth of all the world. That is *love.* God's wealth alone has the moral glory that influences the affections.

Outwardly we may be as weak as Timothy, with his frequent infirmities. We may be clothed in rags and live in the meanest of shelters. There may be nothing to indicate that we are rolling in the real riches. This wealth is not for the outer man at present. It is spiritual, and for the spirit. It is for the man within. Men behold the external appearance, God looks on the heart. Through His spirit our hearts become the habitation of Christ. This is the ground of our strength, for our vitality and stability depend upon the apprehension of God's love which has been poured out into our hearts through His holy spirit (Rom.5:5). As a plant seeks its sustenance and strength in the soil, so we should search for our sustentation and support in the subsoil of God's activities, the fact of His affection. We can flourish

in no other ground. Here alone can our roots find nurture and our trunk find strength. Both of these are necessary for fruit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control (Gal.5:22).

CHRIST'S UNIVERSAL HEADSHIP

To those in the embrace of the glory of His grace, God makes known the secret of His will to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up the universe in the Christ (Eph.1:9,10). He presses Wisdom and Prudence, with all the resources at their command, into the service of this great secret. Christ has many eonian glories. This is the highest of them all. He is the Son of Adam, the Son of Abraham, the Son of David. He is the King of Israel, the Owner of the land, the King of kings. All of these glories are not only confined to the earth, but find fulfillment in the day of the Lord. They do not enter the final eon, when, as the Son of God, He administers the whole universe.

The clearest intimations of the eon after the day of the Lord found in the Old Testament may be summed up in the statement that, in that era, Christ will continue to reign over the earth, even after His priestly functions vanish. The secret here revealed also definitely assigns Him the headship over the earth, and consists in enlarging the scope of His reign to include the heavens (Eph.1:10). *Christ is to be the Head of the universe!* That Messiah's rule included all the earth was a secret the initiates have known from early times. To be with Him in this earthly Kingdom was the high hope He put before His own. Even Paul, at first, had looked for this earthly paradise. But now, as we have seen, he longs for blessing in the heavenly spheres. His hope is no longer fixed on earth, but among the celestials.

It is not possible that there can be a blessed place, anywhere, apart from Christ. Our hearts have no heaven but

where He is. So it is essential, at this point, to insert this secret of Christ, lest it seem that we are exalted and He is left beneath upon the earth. If our blessings are among the celestials, if we are to reign in regions supernal, it follows that these are beneath His sway, for we have naught without Him. Before this, God's revelation was confined to the earth. There was no necessity for revealing His higher glories, for His saints were not partakers in them. Now that our destiny is celestial, we are entrusted with a secret so staggering, so superb, that few of His saints have ever heard of it, almost none believe it, and these are unable to measure or even imagine its immensity.

Christ will be Head, not on the earth alone, but over the highest heavens. His sway will include the vast universe in its embrace. The heavenly realms, which men are only beginning to explore, will all be beneath His pierced feet. Look with me, on some dark night, into the starry sky and behold a few of His domains. Come with me to the desert and see them double their number in the clearer air. Join me on yon mountaintop and peer through the greatest glass that man has made to search the star-strewn firmament. A thousand times as many stars swim past our wondering gaze. But mortal eyes are far too weak, even with the greatest of telescopes. Let us allow the stars to set their seal upon a photographic plate. So many millions more appear that our spirit falls upon its face in awe, for we have begun to glimpse the grandeur of His celestial kingdom.

The headship of Christ must not be confounded with His salvation. The rule of our Lord should never be confused with reconciliation. Universal reconciliation cannot occur until He *abdicates* the throne. His headship *ceases* when He hands over the Kingdom to God the Father. The universal sovereignty of the Son of God *precedes* the consummation. Universal reconciliation follows it. His headship is

in the last eon. Reconciliation does not become universal until after the eonian times are past. The complement of the eras lies between the judgment era of the great white throne and the close of all the eras, for it must be the last.

The word *plêrōma* is somewhat difficult to translate correctly. The usual rendering of the Authorized Version is *fullness.* But it never denotes the state of being full, but rather, as they have translated it in its first occurrence, that *which is put in to fill up* (Matt.9:16). It is *that which fills,* or the *complement.* The eras of human history will some day fulfill their cycle. The final era, which completes their number and rounds out their ministry, is characterized by the rule of one Man over the whole universe. He Who descended into the lowest depths to save, ascends to the highest place in order to rule.

It is worthy of note, in passing, that the Circumcision epistles never mention a *plêrōma,* for their ministry was not final. Paul speaks of the complement of the nations (Rom.11:12,20), of love as the complement of law (Rom. 13:10), of the ecclesia as the complement of Christ (Eph. 1:23; 4:13), of Christ as the complement of God (Col.2:9) and of all else (Col.1:19). Only in Paul's epistles do we find God's work brought to final fullness. He alone adds the finishing touches. These are indicated by this word *plêrōma,* or complement.

The only indication of this era we have in the Old Testament is that rule, the reign of Christ and His saints, is to continue *further* than the priestly millennial reign. Priesthood is only for *olam* ("forever"). Kingship is for *olam va ad* ("forever *and* ever"). This is in exact accord with the clearer details given us in Revelation. There we find that the reign of the saints as kings *and* priests is limited to the thousand years, (Rev.20:6). They still continue to reign in the next eon, but there is no temple and no priesthood. This is the complement of the eras. The throne of God

and the Lambkin is upon the earth. John has no vision of the heavens. It is a secret reserved for Paul and the celestial saints. We have no part in the new Jerusalem. Our portion is in the high heavens.

From our present viewpoint we are apt to get a most distorted view of God's dealings in the eonian times. We look back at almost seven and a half thousand years of human history and find it written with tears and blood. We look forward hopefully to a thousand years of bliss for suffering mortals, but even that blessed era will close in revolt and fire. Is this the full cycle of the eras? Has God accomplished all He set out to do? Has man been fully tested? Mankind has fully manifested its sin. We are satisfied on that score. But we are not sure that Christ has done all that He can do. He is a Man, and as a Man we are sure that He can bring humanity to the very summit of perfection. This He does not accomplish in the day of the Lord. Hence this is what is before Him in the day of God, which follows it.

How long will this final era be? There is no definite revelation given to us. We feel sure that the thousand generations of which the Psalmist speaks (Psa.105:8) must be within the eonian times. This would give the eons a period of at least twenty thousand years. Perhaps it coincides with that great astronomical cycle, the precession of the equinoxes. That would be about twenty-four thousand years. During this period the sun seems to shift its crossing of the ecliptic, through all of its signs. In twenty-four thousand years the polar star seems to make a complete circle. If the eonian times are so long, we have only begun them, and there will still be nearly sixteen thousand years left at the end of the millennium. This leaves a long, long time for the final eon, the era which completes the cycle.

There is no such thing as chance in God's sight. A lottery, in Israel, was not an appeal to blind fate, but to Yahweh.

We who believe, in this present era of grace, were taken by lot to share the celestial honors of our Lord. When the yearly meeting of farmers occurred in each community in ancient Israel, they divided into groups, and first of all the allotments were divided among the heads of these groups, who allotted them to the others. We belong to Christ. He is our Head. He has been allotted the heavens: our lot is cast in Him.

THE COUNSEL OF HIS WILL

Yahweh had counselled with His people Israel concerning their blessing and destiny. It was quite clear even to the apostle Paul that he would have his place in the earthly Kingdom of which the Hebrew prophets and our Master Himself had spoken. How could he look forward to aught else but what Yahweh had revealed? But now, without explanation, *his blessing and destiny both are changed.* What right had God to make this alteration? Did He confer with Paul about it first? Did He consult anyone affected by it? We may be sure He did not do it without competent advice. But to whom could He go? Who was able to advise Him? *No one!* So He takes the counsel offered by His own determination. In this crisis He retires into the privacy of immanent and absolute deity and bases this fresh departure on the immutable sovereign will which underlies every activity in the universe.

How Godlike is this thought! He does not apologize to Paul. He does not even explain. Why should He? He is the Deity. He does what He wishes. Notwithstanding appearances, this is precisely what He is doing everywhere and at all times. He is not hindered by His own revelations. He is operating the universe in accord with the counsel of His own will. It always was His intention that Paul (and we) should be associated with Christ's heavenly headship. And it was His will that this should be kept secret until

Israel had been thrust aside. To Paul, to us, He wishes to be known as the only and absolute Deity, Who is working our welfare even when we are not aware. He would have us trust in Him, not merely His promises.

THE WISDOM OF GOD'S WILL

God's will is sourced in Himself, and is determined by what He is. As He is essentially Light and Love, it is His will to reveal Himself, especially His affection. As no other motives can change this, His will is constant and His purpose immutable. As He has all power, nothing is able to thwart His will. But, as He has all wisdom, and revelation is best accomplished by the use of opposites, He uses darkness to reveal the light, evil to give the knowledge of good, and hate to impart a comprehension of His love. These temporary intentions seem to oppose His will, but must eventually serve in fulfilling it. Then there will be no night and no more doom, and all will be reconciled to God.

THE LAUD OF HIS GLORY

The revelation of God is a synonym for His fame or glory. What He does is so marvelous and what He is is so wonderful that no glory could exceed His unveiling. Let us not be satisfied with a knowledge of His acts, or an acquaintance with His ways. These are but the pathway to a knowledge of Himself. Let us go on until we no longer "stand on the promises," but rest in God. Hitherto God had stressed His ways and words and demanded faith in their fulfillment. Now He makes known His secrets, which deal with previously unknown activities. From these we learn His inmost motives, and we learn the great lesson of the eons, to trust all to Him. The *future*, beyond the consummation, is unknown. But the *God* of the post-eonian eternity we know, and that is all we want to know!

A. E.Knoch

GROWING IN THE REALIZATION OF GOD

We have reprinted A. E. Knoch's *Studies in Colossians* in this volume of *Unsearchable Riches.* These were originally published some eighty years ago, based on the Concordant Version as it existed at that time, which was principally translated by Brother Knoch. The translation is excellent, and the studies very insightful, well worth sharing again and again, for they point to a highly important and relevant portion of God's Word for us. And they do so in a way that speaks truly to both our minds and hearts. For example:

"All that God does is done in love" (p.59).[1]

"Creation was not an independent act, without any relation to subsequent developments. On the contrary, it was logically the result of God's purpose which could not be fulfilled until the far future. Creation is, indeed, the prelude to reconciliation" (p.60).

"In the cross we see the utter worthlessness of man as well as the supreme exhibition of the love of God. Reconciliation is effected by the revelation of God's love in the deepest display of human hate" (p.69).

ALL THAT GOD DOES

Creation in the past and reconciliation in the future. And in between the cross. These three acts of God are the critical points of all His doings. They are carried out

1. All quotations are from the present volume of *Unsearchable Riches,* unless otherwise noted.

in love. Creation is an act of God's love. Reconciliation is an act of God's love. The cross is an act of God's love. My existence is an act of God's love related to the act of creation. My future is to be one of reconciliation and peace, which will come about as God's doing, in and through the Son of His love, in creating me in Him and reconciling me through Him, through the blood of His cross.

"In [the Son of His love], the Firstborn from the dead, through the blood of His cross, God is completely equipped to consummate the purpose of love, and bring every enemy back to His bosom, not only saved but reconciled" (p.63).

COLOSSIANS 1:3-20

With these most critical acts of God in mind, creation, the cross and reconciliation, let us look at Colossians 1:3-20 again, with a change of wording in verse 19 from that given on pages 3 and 4 of this present volume of *Unsearchable Riches:*

3 **We are thanking the God and Father of our ˙Lord Jesus Christ, always praying˚ concerning ⁼you,** 4 on ⁻**hearing** of ⁼**your ˙faith in Christ Jesus and the love which ⁼you** ˡ**have** *ᵢₒ*˙**for all the saints,** 5 **because** of **the expectation ˙being reserved˚** for ⁼**you in the heavens, which ⁼you hear before in the word of ˙truth of the evangel,** 6 ˙which, **being present** *ᵢₒ*˙**with ⁼you, accord**ing **as in the entire world also,** ˡ**is bearing˚ fruit and growing˚, accord**ing **as** it is **among ⁼you also, from** the **day** on **which ⁼you hear and realize the grace of ˙God in truth,** 7 **accord**ing **as ⁼you learn** it **from Epaphras, our ˙beloved fellow slave, who** ˡ**is** a **faithful dispenser of ˙Christ** *ₒᵥ*˙**for us,** 8 ˙who **makes evident also to us ⁼your ˙love in spirit.**

9 **Therefore we´ also, from** the **day** on **which we hear,** do **not** ˡ**cease˚ praying˚** *ₒᵥ*˙**for ⁼you and requesting˚ that ⁼you may be filled full** with **the realization of His ˙will, in** *ₑ*˙**all wisdom and spiritual understanding,** 10 ⁼**you to walk worthily of the Lord** *ᵢₒ*˙**for** *ₑ*˙**all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing˚ in the realization of ˙God;** 11 **being endued˚** *ᵢ*˙**with** *ₑ*˙**all power,** in **accord** with **the might of His ˙glory,** *ᵢₒ*˙**for** *ₑ*˙**all endurance and patience with joy;** 12 at the **same time** giv**ing thanks to the Father,**

˙Who make**s** ⁼**you competent** *ᵢₒ*˙**for** a ˙**part of the** al**lot**ment **of the saints, in ˙light,**

13 **Who rescues˚ us out of the jurisdiction of ˙Darkness,**
And transports us **into the kingdom of the Son of His ˙love,**

14 **In Whom we are having the deliverance, the pardon of ˙sins,**

15 **Who** ˡ**is** the **Image of the invisible ˙God,**
Firstborn of every creature,

16 *ₜ*˙**For in Him is ˙all created,**
˙That **in the heavens and** ˙that **on the earth,**
The visible and the invisible,
Whether thrones, or lordships,
Or sovereignties, or authorities,
˙All is ˚created˚ through Him and *ᵢₒ*˙**for Him,**

17 **And He´** ˡ**is before all,**
And ˙all has its **cohesion in Him.**

18 **And He´** ˡ**is the Head of the body, the ecclesia,**
Who ˡ**is ˙Sovereign, Firstborn** *ₒ*˙**from** among **the dead** ones,
That in all He´ may become˚ ˡ**first,**

19 *ₜ*˙**For in Him** God **delights** for **the entire complement to dwell**

20 **And through Him to reconcile ˙all** *ᵢₒ*˙**to Him**self
(⁻**Making peace through the blood of His ˙cross**),
Through Him, whether ˙those **on the earth or** ˙those **in the heavens.**

THREE REALIZATIONS

Colossians begins with a prayer of thanksgiving (1:3-8) followed by a prayer of request (1:9-11), and these in turn open the way to the hymn of thanksgiving (1:12-20) divided here into two parts, the first concerning **the Father,** and the second **the Son of His love.** The prayers direct attention to the blessing of realization three times, First thanksgiving for the Colossians' realization of *God's grace* (1:6), second the request for them to be filled full with the realization of *God's will* (1:9) and third the request for their growth in the realization of *God* Himself (1:10).

The believer begins with the realization of God's grace. This is set forth most fully in Romans as the manifestation of God's righteousness in the gratuitous justification of the sinner out of and through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.3:21-26). For this we give thanksgiving to God.

PRAYING FOR REALIZATION[2]

Paul's prayer of request in Colossians 1:9-12 is for realization that directs our walk and our way of living. He requests God that we may be filled full with the *realization of His will* with all wisdom and spiritual understanding—not as an end in itself, but so that we may walk worthily of our Lord Jesus Christ for every act of pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work. This request is then expanded with the "and" of the last phrase of verse 10, Paul now requesting God that in filling us full with the realization of God's will, He may be giving us growth in *the realization of God* Himself! And this also is not an end in itself. Growth in the realization of God leads to our being endued with all (spiritual) power, in accord with the might of God's glory

2. *Realization* is a strengthened knowledge (ON-KNOWledge) that connects with some vital fact; it is often translated *recognition* in the CV (*cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE p.242).

(His glorious might). And even more than this, the realization of God builds up all endurance and patience with joy as we live our present lives in this world of darkness, that is, this world filled with ignorance of God.

How important therefore are these realizations. We do well to repeat Brother Knoch's comments: "Let us pray, then, that the saints may be *filled* with a realization of [God's] will in *all* wisdom and spiritual understanding, for only thus can we walk worthily of the Lord for *all* pleasing, and bear fruit in *every* good work. Here it is not merely a matter of pleasing God or of doing good—we all may do that in some measure even in our ignorance—but of putting quality and flavor into our actions such as will delight God's heart" (p.52).

And again: "The latest revelations of [God's] will are especially adapted to display the excellences of the divine wisdom and love, so that all who realize His will will appreciate Him in the measure in which they understand it. As this is unfolded to our hearts we should grow in our appreciation of God, and thus approach the final goal ahead of others of His creatures. May God become All in us in increasing measure as we contemplate the secret of Christ, and see His hand and head and heart engaged in drawing His creatures to Himself through sin and salvation" (p.53).

Here certainly is power for all endurance and patience with joy.

THE HYMN

Thus Paul sings in a sort of double hymn, easily memorized, but in a form that is poetically condensed, first concerning the Father, then concerning the Son of His love. But all is for our realization of God and of His will. What is said about the Son in verses 14-20 is a revelation of God's love which is vital to our walk and for endurance

and patience with joy, just as what is said about the Father in verses 12 and 13.

That we are having the deliverance and pardon of sins, in Christ, and that He is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, is no less a revelation of God's will for a realization of God than the fact that God makes us competent for a part of the allotment of the saints in light. It is God Who creates all *in* and *through* and *for* the Son of His love. So also God places Christ as the Cohesive Factor for all of creation, bringing all together harmoniously. As for us whom God already rescues in spirit out of the jurisdiction of darkness and transports into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in doing this it is God Who gives us His Son as our Head, the Head of His body, those *called out* for a special place as the complement of the One Who is completing the all in all (Eph.1:22).

In taking account of all this concerning the Son of God's love we are being filled with a realization of God's will and are growing in the realization of Himself. For it is His God and Father Who makes our Lord Jesus Christ Sovereign and Who rouses Him as the Firstborn from among the dead. It is God, out of Whom and through Whom is all in the absolute sense, Who makes known His love in granting to Christ First Place in all His eonian operations.

To be growing in realization of these glories of Christ is to be growing in the realization of God Who has purposed them and Who brings them about in operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:13).

GOD DELIGHTS IN THE SON

In Ephesians 1 Paul speaks of the delight of God's will in relation to *our sonship* (v.5) and of God's delight itself in relation to the secret of God's will to head up all in the Christ (verses 9 and 10). Now in Colossians 1 where *Christ* is identified as the *Son* of God's love (v.13), the

verb "delights" is used in relation to the entire complement dwelling *in* Christ and all being reconciled *through* Him (verses 19 and 20).

In commenting on the words "the entire complement," Brother Knoch first writes: "In Him [Christ] the complement *delights* to dwell" (p.64). Yet he follows this with a review of those occasions in our Lord's earthly ministry when God directly speaks of *His* delight in His Son: "At His [Jesus's] baptism, when the heavens were opened to Him, the voice declared, 'This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I *delight*' (Matt.3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22). So again, when He was transformed on the high mountain, a voice came out of the cloud and testified to the delight of the Father in His Beloved (Matt.17:5; Mark 9:7). Peter reminds us of this in his epistle, and tells us that it brought Him honor and glory from God the Father (2 Peter 1:17). Long before Isaiah records the same fact (Matt.12:18; Isa. 42:1): 'My Beloved, in Whom My soul delights' " (p.64).

It is clear that whatever Brother Knoch understood by taking "the entire complement" as the subject of the verb "delights," he was not distinguishing this from God's delight for His Son in Whom the entire complement of the Deity dwells, and through Whom all is reconciled.

GOD AND CHRIST AS RECONCILERS

In his studies on Ephesians, commenting on the headship of Christ, Brother Knoch writes: "The rule of our Lord should never be confused with reconciliation. Universal reconciliation cannot occur until He *abdicates* the throne. His headship ceases when He hands over the Kingdom to God the Father . . . Reconciliation does not become universal until the eonian times are past" (p.172).

God as the Father is the Reconciler of all that is estranged from Him. He does this through His Beloved Son. But it does not become a completed and fully experienced

achievement until God becomes All in all (1 Cor.15:28). The consummation is the viewpoint of Colossians 1:19,20. *God* is the Reconciler of the all.

In Ephesians 2:13-19, however, Christ is presented as the Reconciler of those afar (termed "Uncircumcision") and those near (termed "Circumcision"). So also in Colossians 1:21 Christ is seen as the Reconciler of us who once were, in our comprehension, estranged from and enemies to God. These passages do not speak of universal reconciliation, but of processes toward that goal. Colossians 1:19, 20, however, speaks of the goal. Consequently it speaks of God as the Reconciler, through His Beloved Son, making peace through His cross. Here God is the Reconciler Absolute, and His Beloved Son is the Channel through Whom God operates with delight in bringing all to this glorious consummation.

CONTEXT AND GRAMMAR

We have seen that in every way the context, near and far, supports the revised reading of Colossians 1:19. It is God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who delights the homing of all that is needed to complete His purpose of love to be placed in Christ—in the Son of His love.

19 [t]**For in Him** [the Son of God's love] God [the Father]
delights for **the entire complement to dwell,**
20 **And through Him** [the Son of His love] God delights
to reconcile [a]**all** [io]**to Him**self
(God [-]**making peace through the blood**
of His [Christ's] [c]**cross),**
[God reconciling the all] **through Him** [Christ],
whether [c]those **on the earth**
or [c]those **in the heavens.**

There remains for now a few comments on the grammar: The Greek verb in verse 19, *eudokêsen,* can be taken as *it-delights,* referring to "the entire complement," or *He-delights,* referring to God [or, the Father] understood from the context. English translations are about equally divided on this point, the AV, for example, inserting "the Father" as the subject of the verb, but the RSV having "the fulness of God was pleased." Throughout the hymn the identification of the pronouns *He* (or, *it*), and *Him* must be decided by the context and Paul's message as a whole. The first "Him" in verse 20 clearly refers to Christ and the second "Him" refers to God—"through Christ" all reconciled "to God." Yet, as now rendered in the revised CV (p.179), it is necessary in English to add a lightface "-self" to the "Him." This corresponds grammatically with Ephesians 2:15 ("that [Christ] should create the two, in Himself") and Philippians 3:21 ("the operation which enables [Christ] even to subject all Himself"). In these two passages the original texts of codices Alexandrinus, Vaticanus and Sinaiticus have only the personal pronoun "Him" as here in Colossians 1:20. But the CV has chosen to use the reflexive form ("Himself") as inserted in the margin of Sinaiticus by a later (often reliable) hand. Nevertheless, it is evident that the personal pronoun "Him" was sometimes used in the sense of "Himself" (*cf* Matt.6:19 where the pronoun "your" needs to be taken as "yourself" in English).

The revised reading is thus possible grammatically, and highly likely contextually. God delights to have the entire complement dwell in Christ, and He delights to reconcile all to Himself through Christ. In no way does this detract from the glory and honor of Christ (as presented, for example, in Ephesians 2:15 and Philippians 3:21). He is the One, and only One, in Whom and through Whom, and through the blood of Whose cross, God's purpose of love and delight is made known and is brought about.

D.H.H.

THE RECONCILIATION OF ALL TO GOD

ALL who are estranged from God will be brought into the enjoyment of that reconciliation and peace toward God which has been established through the blood of Christ's cross. This is assured in the words of Colossians 1:19,20:

19 [t]**For in Him** God **delights** for **the entire complement to dwell**

20 **And through Him to reconcile** [v]**all** [io]**to Him**self ([u]**Making peace through the blood of His** [v]**cross), Through Him, whether** [v]those **on the earth or** [v]those **in the heavens.**

A PIVOTAL POINT

This passage is a pivotal point in Colossians. It is the climax of that portion of the hymn of 1:12-20 which focuses on Christ as the Son of God's love, the Image of the invisible God in Whom God delights to have the entire complement dwell. As such Colossians 1:20 is vital for the realization of God (1:10) as He is revealed as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (1:3). It is also the major basis for our appreciation of the reconciliation God has made and for persistence in the faith day by day, as presented in the rest of the epistle. Colossians 1:19,20 cannot be passed over lightly. All believers should take this announcement of universal reconciliation very seriously and with the highest degree of optimism.

THE REALIZATION OF GOD

In Colossians 1:10, Paul prays for growth in the realization of God. The great impediment to this realization is

the presence of sin and estrangement which keeps God's creatures at a distance from Him. It is in the removal of this estrangement that God makes Himself known to us, and this operation is carried out in and through His Son. Hence, Paul precedes his prayer for the realization of God Himself by reference to the realization of God's *grace* (1:6) and the realization of God's *will* (1:9), both of which relate to the death of Christ.

God's *grace* is made known to us in the evangel which declares that Christ dies for our sins, is entombed and has been roused (1 Cor.15:3,4). We all are sinners, being justified gratuitously in God's *grace,* through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:23,24). In *grace,* through faith, are we saved, and this is not out of ourselves; it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should boast (Eph.2:8,9). The evangel tells us that God gives and we receive. It declares that God acts and we are blessed.

God's *will* is similarly revealed in the message of Christ's death for sinners. God *wills* that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). Hence God counseled (intended) the death of His Son (Acts 2:23; 4:27,28), sparing Him not, but giving Him up for us all (Rom.8:32). Not only was this God's intention, but because of the glorious results of the cross it was God's *will,* as our Lord indicated in Gethsemane (Matt.26:42).

We cannot grasp the riches and power and glory of God's grace or perceive the righteousness and wisdom and love of His will as they are manifested in the death of His Son apart from seeing their results. His will involves the giving up of His Son to death in light of the good it would achieve (and it alone could achieve) not only for human sinners, but for all of estranged creation in blessing and realization.

In Colossians this evangel is expressed most strikingly in Paul's soaring hymn of praise in 1:12-20.

THE CHRIST OF COLOSSIANS

In this marvelous passage Paul sings of Christ, of Whom God is the God and Father, and in Whom all are reconciled to God. This hymn speaks of Christ in relation to God three times. First of all He is the Son of God's love (1:13). Then He is the Image of the invisible God (1:15). And finally He is the One in Whom God delights that the entire complement [of the Deity] should dwell (1:19), and through Whom God delights to reconcile all to Himself, making peace through the blood of Christ's cross.

Colossians 1:19,20 is the climax of this hymn. All else leads forward to this conclusion. Christ reveals God as the One Who brings estrangement and enmity and evil itself to an end by means of one astounding act at the cross.

THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

As the One in Whom, through Whom and for Whom all is created (Col.1:16,17), Christ reveals the invisible God. In the work of creation Christ images God's power and intelligence. But until the cross He could not reflect God's love and His delight which shapes His power and which infuses His wisdom.

We cannot realize God as He is if we see Him only as a God of supreme ability and power. Christ as Creator mirrors God's power and divinity (Rom.1:20). We must also know the joy and peace that comes with a realization of God in reconciliation. Consequently, in His love for His Son, God counseled that Christ would not only be the Image of His hand, but also be the Expression of His heart's desire. In all things Christ becomes first (Col.1:18).

There are other powerful creatures, created in Christ Who is the Firstborn of every creature, who are referred to in verse 16 as "thrones, lordships, sovereignties and authorities." But they cannot reflect the love of God. Certain among them might be able to bring creation into an

imposed order, but they could not gain what God wills for His universe in expressing the desire which is in His heart. The Image of the invisible God must be also the Son of His love in order to convey this love to all His creatures personally.

This Christ does for us already *in spirit* as the Head of His body which is that out-calling of human beings, chosen and called in grace, delivered from sin and death into righteousness and life by His death and resurrection. He also does this as Sovereign over all the powers of the universe, exalted as Saviour and Lord, in light of His obedience to the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8-11). And again He does this as the "Firstborn from among the dead," the One in Whom all who are dying will be vivified, He Himself leading the way (1 Cor.15:22).

Consequently, Christ is the Image of the invisible God, not simply by the work of creation itself, but also by bringing all of creation to its intended completion. This is the theme now of the dramatic, closing lines of the hymn.

IN WHOM THE ENTIRE COMPLEMENT DWELLS

The Son of God's love, the Image of the invisible God, is now to be seen as the One in Whom the entire complement dwells. It may have been that some people, known to the Colossians, were referring to spiritual lordships and sovereignties as the "pleroma" or complement of God. History records such a religious concept some years later, and the terminology used here suggests it was already appearing to the dilution of Christ's honors in people's minds.

Christ is the One and the only One in Whom the "entire *complement*" is making its home. In Colossians 2:9 we learn that this "entire complement" is the "entire complement of the Deity." It refers to that which makes God complete. God delights to reveal Himself in the fullness of His love in Christ as the One Who shed His blood at the cross for

the reconciliation of all. As the One in Whom the entire complement [of the Deity] dwells, Christ becomes the Channel through Whom all is reconciled to God. In this, Christ makes God fully known and appreciated everywhere throughout the universe.

"AND YOU"

Paul has finished his hymn recounting the glories of Christ, ending with Christ as the One through Whom God reconciles all to Himself. Now he turns back to the "brethren in Christ" (1:2), and addresses us personally: "And you, being once estranged and enemies in comprehension, by wicked acts, yet now He reconciles by His body of flesh, through His death, to present you holy and flawless and unimpeachable in His sight" (Col.1:21,22).

Here, Christ is seen as the Reconciler, for our present reconciliation to God, in spirit, is part of the process toward the glorious consummation of the reconciliation of all.

All the requirements for reconciliation are accounted for. There is estrangement and enmity. That is the sorry but necessary contribution we have made to the process. There is the death of God's Son Who has come among us in a body of flesh like ours. And there is the God and Father of Christ Whose will and delight is to bring us to Himself, through His Son, in realization and appreciation of Himself.

What God intends the blood of Christ's cross to accomplish for all who are estranged from Him, He has already granted to us in spirit. What we have now is based on what Christ has gained for all. In seeing the certainty and the grace of this peace which we have received on the basis of Christ's death for us, and in "persisting" in this faith (Col. 1:23) we will surely be experiencing much of the peace of this reconciliation today. This is the basis of the believers' assurance and walk in these present times of uncer-

tainty and struggle. We believe this evangel which says that God has doomed the estrangement of His creation to extinction through the death of His beloved Son. And in believing this our hearts are consoled (Col.2:2) and our faith stabilized (2:5).

PERSISTING IN THE FAITH

According to Colossians 1:23, if we believe that we have (in spirit) been delivered from estrangement and enmity by the death of Christ and have been brought into reconciliation by His blood, apart from our own works, and we persist in this faith, we will be experiencing much of this reconciliation even now. The evangel is full of riches of assurance. But the horror of unending torment or annihilation debilitates faith. And the view of God that such concepts demand constantly erodes the peace of reliance on Him and the assurance of His glorious delight in Christ that the evangel of Colossians 1:19,20 presents.

We cannot grow in realization of God's wisdom and power or His goodness and love if we suppose He is not able or not willing to bring all into that peace and happiness which the cross of Christ has gained. It is what such a tragedy painted by traditionalism says about God and the cross of Christ that should convince us that all passages of Scripture dealing with judgment and condemnation speak of temporary means and not everlasting states. There is no deficiency in the effectualness of the cross of Christ and no dualistic contradiction in the will of God.

Christ does die for all, and therefore all will be reconciled to God.

We are thanking the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for the glorious achievement of His delight through the blood of Christ's cross. It is a triumph over our enmity and hostility, and that of all His estranged creatures, and it will be manifested in the deeply felt and fully appreciated reconciliation of all. D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME 112

Address on the Envelope, The 15
Among the Celestials 99
Believing the Evangel 89
Blessed in Christ 88
Faith Accords with Grace 119
Foreknown and Chosen of God 163
God Chooses us in Christ 156
In Grace and Out 42
Justified 137
Obituaries: O. Hunt 50, M. A. Fry 50
One God and One Lord 66
Our Saviour, God 33
Our Blessings are in Christ 146
Paul to the [Ephesians] 5
Paul to the Thessalonians (I) 170
Paul to the Thessalonians (II) 177
Spiritual Blessings 51
Trumpet of God, The 181
Whose Faith? 111
Yahweh is the Only Elohim 127

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 112th Year

(1909–2021)

Contents:

2 Framework of "Ephesians"
3 Editorial
5 Paul to the [Ephesians]
15 The Address on the Envelope
33 Our Saviour, God
42 In Grace and Out

FIRST QUARTER, 2021

Volume 112 **Number 1**

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For God and His
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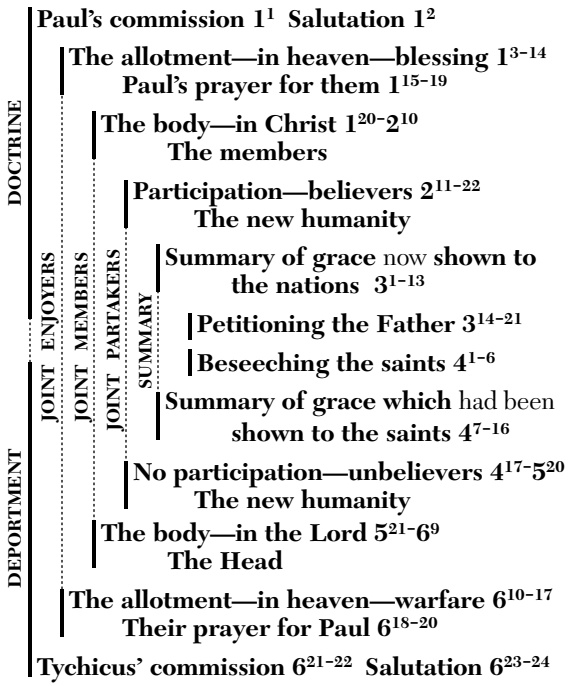
FRAMEWORK OF "EPHESIANS"

Reversion



UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2021
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

EDITORIAL

WITH this issue of our magazine we turn our attention to the book of Ephesians, which from the first issue one hundred and twelve years ago was, to A. E. Knoch, the focus of his attention and concern. It is an epistle of love delighting in secret surprises and gifts which gather grace "as they are undeserved and unexpected" (p.15).

It was given to Paul to dispense the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations, and to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret which has been concealed from the eons in God. Yet this evangel is in accord with the gratuity of the grace of God (Eph.3:1-9). All that Paul makes known, including that which had been concealed from the eons in God *accords* with his previous dispensing of the gratuity of the grace of God. The transcendent riches of God's grace in vivifying those of the Circumcision and those of the Uncircumcision together, *jointly,* in Christ, and rousing us together and seating us together among the celestials in Christ Jesus (Eph.2:4-7) have their harmonious contact with the superabounding grace made known in Romans and the earlier epistles. And that grace as it concerns Jesus Christ, our Lord, is traceable to the law and prophets (Rom.3:21) while being a message "apart from law" (Rom.3:21). It is God's operation of love in and through the giving of His beloved Son that gives unity to all of God's Word.

Yet indeed Ephesians (along with its companion epistles) reaches to heights of God's grace and measures of His love that were unknown before, although preparations had been laid down for them.

Hence in taking the theme of "His Achievement Are We" (Eph.2:10), which flows from the fact that God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:11), James Coram points to the basic issues of "faith, choice, foreknowledge, voluntary action, judgment and trials" (p.35), as they are dealt with throughout Scripture. But he does so especially in relation to "the evangel for today" which is *the evangel* of the grace of God, "through Jesus Christ's faith" (p.36).

Finally we reprint an abridgement of Brother Knoch's article, "In Grace and Out" (first published in volume 31, pages 137-148), which begins: "Grace is a fundamental characteristic of the present administration of the secret (Eph.3:2,9). It is the favor of the previous transitional era continued and intensified and enriched . . . . Grace, undiluted by law, unspoiled by works, unconfined by aught of man, is the fullest, freest outflow of God's essence, which is love" (p.42).

Here, as is fitting, much attention is given to Ephesians 2:5,8, where our salvation is twice located "in grace." Yet it was not given to our brother (or previously to me, or most others I know of) that Paul was referring to Christ's faith, not our faith, in verse 8. Thus we insert a lightface "His" in our revision of the CV (p.7). We are saved in God's grace (both superabounding grace as found in Romans, and transcending grace as found in Ephesians) through the channel of Christ Jesus's faith, and this whole operation of salvation is not of ourselves. It is altogether God's approach present. Regarding this, I hope, God willing, to prepare a defense for our next issue. It has become clear to me that Paul had in mind (and those receiving the letter) that the words "through faith" recapitulate the phrase "through Jesus Christ's faith" in Romans 3:22 (*cp* Rom. 3:26; Gal.2:16; 3:22, as well as Eph.3:12).

D.H.H.

PAUL TO THE [EPHESIANS]

1 Paul, an **apostle of Christ Jesus through God's will, to all the saints** ˙who ˡ**are also believers in Christ Jesus:**
[2] **Grace to** ⁼**you and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ.**
[3] **Blessed** is **the God and Father**
of our ˙**Lord Jesus Christ**
˙Who **blesses us** ⁱ**with every spiritual blessing,**
among the celestials,
in Christ,
[4] **accord**ing **as He chooses**° **us in Him before world disruption, we to** ˡ**be holy and flawless in His sight, in love**
[5] ⁻**designating us before**hand ⁱᵒ**for** the **place** of a **son** ⁱᵒ**for Him through Christ Jesus;** in **accord** with **the delight of His** ˙**will,** [6] ⁱᵒ**for** the **laud of** the **glory of His** ˙**grace, which graces us in the** °**Beloved**°**:** [7] **in Whom we are having the deliverance through His** ˙**blood, the forgiveness of** ˙**offenses** in **accord** with **the riches of His** ˙**grace,** [8] **which He lavishes** ⁱᵒ**on us; in** ᵉ**all wisdom and prudence** [9] ⁻**making known to us the secret of His** ˙**will** (in **accord** with **His** ˙**delight, which He purposes**° **in Him)** [10] ⁱᵒ**to** have an **administration of the complement of the eras, to head**° **up** ˙**all in the Christ—both** ˙that **in the heavens and** ˙that **on the earth—in Him** [11] **in Whom our lot is cast also, designated before**hand **accord**ing to the **purpose of the** One Who is **operating** ˙**all** in **accord** with **the counsel of His** ˙**will,** [12] ⁱᵒ**that we** should ˙ˡ**be** ⁱᵒ**for** the **laud of His glory,** ˙who are °**pre-expectant in the Christ.**
[13] **In Whom** ⁼**you also—**on ⁻**hearing the word of** ˙**truth, the evangel of** ⁼**your** ˙**salvation—in Whom** on ⁻**believing**

also, =you are sealed with **the holy ·spirit of ·promise** 14 **(which |is** an **earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment,** *io*-**to** the **deliverance of** ·that which has been **procured)** *io*-**for** the **laud of His ·glory!**

15 **Therefore, I´ also,** on **¯hearing** of ·this **faith** *ac* of **=you**rs **in the Lord Jesus, and** ·that *io*-**for all the saints,** 16 do **not |cease°** giv**ing thanks** *ov*-**for =you, making° mention** *on*-**in my ·prayers** 17 **that the God of our ·Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of ·glory, may give =you** a **spirit of wisdom and revelation in** the **realization of Him,** 18 **the eyes of =your ·heart having been enlightened°, ***io*-**for =you ·to °perceive**

***a*-What |is the expectation of His ·calling,**
And *a*-what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints,

19 **And *a*-what the |transcend**ent **greatness of His ·power** *io*-**for us** ·who are **believing,**

in **accord** with **the operation of the might of His strength,** 20 **which is °operative in the Christ, ¯rousing Him *o*-from** among the **dead** one**s and ¯seating Him *i*-at His right** hand **among the celestials,** 21 **up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name** that is **being named°, not only in this ·eon, but also in** ·that which is **impending:** 22 **and He subjects all under His ·feet, and gives Him,** as **Head over all, to the ecclesia** 23 **which*a* |is His ·body, the complement of the** One **completing° the all in all.**

2 **And =you, being =dead to =your ·offenses and ·sins,** 2 **in which once =you ¯walked,** in **accord** with **the eon of this ·world,** in **accord** with **the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now ·operating in the sons of ·stubbornness** 3 **(among whom we´ also all ¯behaved** ourselves **once in the lusts of our ·flesh, doing the =will of the flesh and of the =comprehension, and |were,** in our **nature, children of indignation, +even as the rest),** 4 **yet ·God, being rich in mercy because** of **His vast ·love** with **which He loves us** 5 **(we also being =dead to the offenses and the lusts), vivi-**

fies us **together in ·Christ** (in **grace =you |are** one**s having been saved)** 6 **and rouses** us **together and seats** us **together among the celestials in Christ Jesus,** 7 **that in the oncoming° ·eons He should display° the |transcend**ent **riches of His ·grace in** His **kindness** *on*-**to us in Christ Jesus.**

8 **For** in **·grace, through** His **faith, =you |are** one**s having been saved,**
And this is **not out of =you;**
It is **God's** ·approach **present,**
9 **Not out of works, lest any**one **should boast°.**

10 **For His achievement |are we, created in Christ Jesus** *on*-**for good works, which ·God** make**s ready before**hand, **that we should walk in them.**

11 **Wherefore, |remember that once =you, the nations in flesh—**·who are **|termed° "Uncircumcision" by** ·those **|termed° "Circumcision," in flesh, made** by **hands—**12 **that =you |were,** in **that ·era, apart from Christ, being °alienated°** from **the citizenship of ·Israel, and guests of the promise ·covenants, having no expectation, and =without God in the world.**

13 **Yet now, in Christ Jesus, =you´, who once |are far** off, **are become near *i*-by the blood of ·Christ.** 14 **For He´ |is our ·Peace,** ·Who **makes ·both one, and razes the central wall of the barrier (the enmity in His ·flesh),** 15 **¯nullifying the law of ·precepts in decrees, that He should create the two, in Himself, into one new human**ity, **making peace;** 16 **and He should reconcile ·both in one body to ·God through the cross, ¯killing the enmity in it.** 17 **And ¯coming, He** brings the **evangel°** of **peace to =you,** ·those **afar, and peace to** ·those **near,** 18 *t*-**for through Him we ·both have had the access, in one spirit, to***d* **the Father.**

19 **Consequently then, no***t* **longer |are =you guests and sojourners, but |are fellow-citizens of the saints and** belong to **·God's family,** 20 **built** *on* **on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,** the **cap**stone of the **corner being Christ**

Jesus Himself, [21] **in Whom the entire building, being connected° together, is growing into** a **holy temple in** the **Lord:** [22] **in Whom** =**you´ also are being built° together** [io]**for** ·**God's dwelling place, in spirit.**

3 On this behalf I, Paul, the prisoner of ·**Christ Jesus** [ov]**for** =**you, the nations—**[2] **since** =**you surely hear** of **the administration of the grace of** ·**God** ·that is **given to me** [io]**for** =**you,** [3] [t]**for** [ac]**by revelation the secret is made known to me (accord**ing **as I write before in brief,** [4] [td]**by which** =**you** who are **reading are being able° to apprehend my** ·**understanding in the secret of the Christ,** [5] **which,** in [d]**other generations, is not made known to the sons of** =**human**ity **as it is now revealed to His** ·**holy apostles and prophets): in spirit** [6] **the nations** are **to** |**be**

Joint enjoyers of an **allotment,**
And a **joint body,**
And joint partakers of the promise
in Christ Jesus,

through the evangel [7] **of which I** ¯**became** the **dispenser,** in **accord** with **the gratuity of the grace of** ·**God,** ·which is **granted to me** in **accord** with **His** ·**power**ful ·**operation.** [8] **To me, less than the least of all saints, is granted this** ·**grace: to** bring the **evangel°** of **the untraceable riches of** ·**Christ to the nations,** [9] **and to enlighten all** as to [a]**what** is **the administration of the secret,** ·which |**has been concealed° from the eons in** ·**God,** ·Who **creates** ·**all,** [10] **that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of** ·**God,** [11] in **accord** with the **purpose of the eons, which He makes in** ·**Christ Jesus, our** ·**Lord;** [12] **in Whom we are having** ·**boldness and** ·**access** [i]**with confidence, through His** ·**faith.** [13] **—Wherefore I am requesting°** you **not to be** |**despondent** [i]**at** ·those **of my afflictions** [ov]**for** =**your** sake **which**[a] |**are** =**your glory.**

[14] **On this behalf am I bowing my** ·**knees to**[d] **the Father**

of our ·**Lord Jesus Christ,** [15] [o]**after Whom every kindred in** the **heavens and on earth is being named°,** [16] **that He may give** =**you,** in **accord** with **the riches of His** ·**glory, to be made staunch** with **power, through His** ·**spirit,** [io]**in the human within,** [17] ·**Christ to dwell in** =**your** ·**hearts through** ·**faith, that** =**you, having been rooted° and grounded° in love,** [18] **should be strong to grasp°, together** with **all the saints,** [a]**what** is **the breadth and length and depth and height** [19] **—to know the love of Christ as well** which is **transcending** ·**knowledge—that** =**you may be completed** [io]**for the entire complement of** ·**God.**

[20] [y]**Now to** Him ·Who is |**able° to do superexcessively above all** [w]**that we are requesting° or apprehending, accord**ing to **the power** ·that is **operating° in us,** [21] **to Him** be ·**glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus** [io]**for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen!**

4 I am entreating =**you then,**
I, the prisoner in the **Lord,**
to walk worthily of the calling with **which** =**you are called,**
[2] **with** [e]**all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing° with one another in love,** [3] **endeavoring to** |**keep the unity of the spirit** [i]**with the tie of** ·**peace:**
[4] **One body and one spirit,**
According **as** =**you are called also** [i]**with one expectation of** =**your** ·**calling;**
[5] **One Lord, one faith, one baptism,**
[6] **One God and Father of all,** ·Who is [on]**over all and through all and in all.**

[7] [y]**Now to each one of us is given** ·**grace** in **accord** with **the measure of the gratuity of** ·**Christ.** [8] **Wherefore He is saying,**

¯**Ascending** [io]**on high, He captures captivity**
And gives gifts to =**human**ity.*Ps 68:18*

[9] [y]**Now the "He ascends,"** [a]**what** |**is it except that He first descends also into the lower parts of the earth?** [10] He

˙Who **descends** ˡ**is** the **Same** ˙Who **ascends also, up over all** who are **of the heavens, that He should complete** ˙**all.** 11 **And** the **same** One **gives** ˙these **indeed** as **apostles, yet** ˙these as **prophets, yet** ˙these as **evangelists, yet** ˙these as **pastors and teachers,** 12 **toward the adjusting of the saints** *io*˚**for** the **work of dispensing,** *io*˚**for** the up**building of the body of** ˙**Christ,** 13 **unto** the end that **we should** ˙**all attain** *io*˚**to the unity of the faith and of the realization of the son of** ˙**God,** *io*˚**to** a **mature man,** *io*˚**to** the **measure of** the **stature of the complement of the Christ,** 14 **that we may by no means still** ˡ**be minors, surging**˚ **hither** and **thither and being carried**˚ **about** by **every wind of** ˙**teaching,** *i*˚**by** ˭**human** ˙**caprice,** *i*˚**by craftiness** with a view **to***d* **the systematizing of the deception.**

15 *y*˚**Now being true, in love we should** make ˙**all grow into Him, Who** ˡ**is the Head—**˙**Christ—**16 **out of Whom the entire body, being articulated**˚ **together and united**˚ **through every assimilation of the supply,** in **accord** with the **operation in measure of each one's part, is making**˚ for **the growth of the body,** *io*˚**for** the up**building of itself in love.**

17 **This then I am saying and attesting**˚ **in** the **Lord: By no means** are ˭**you still to be walking accord**ing **as** those of **the nations also are walking, in** the **vanity of their** ˙**mind,** 18 ˙their **comprehension being** ˚**darkened**˚**, being** ˚**estranged**˚ from **the life of** ˙**God because** of **the ignorance** ˙that ˡ**is in them, because** of **the callousness of their** ˙**heart**s, 19 **who***a***, being** ˚**past feeling, in greed give themselves up** with ˙**wantonness** *io*˚**to** *e*˚**all uncleanness** as a **vocation.**

20 *y*˚**Now** ˭**you**´ do **not thus learn** ˙**Christ,** 21 **since surely, Him** ˭**you hear, and** *i*˚**by Him are taught (accord**ing **as** the **truth** ˡ**is in Jesus),** 22 **to put**˚ **off** from ˭**you,** *ac*˚**as** regards your ˙**former behavior, the old human**ity ˙which is ˡ**corrupted**˚ in **accord** with its ˙**seductive** ˙**desires,** 23 **yet to be** ˡ**rejuvenated**˚ in **the spirit of** ˭**your** ˙**mind,** 24 **and to put**˚ **on the new human**ity ˙which, in **accord** with **God,** is **created in righteousness and benignity of the truth.** 25 **Wherefore,** ¯**putting**˚ **off the false,** let **each be speaking** the **truth with his** ˙**associate,** *t*˚**for we** ˡ**are members of one another.**

26 **Are** ˭**you** ˡ**indignant**˚**, and not sinning?** Do **not let the sun be sinking on** ˭**your vexation,** 27 **nor yet be giving place to the Adversary.** 28 **Let** him ˙who is **stealing by no means still be stealing: yet rather let him be toiling, working** with his ˙**hands** at ˙what is **good, that he may** ˡ**have to be sharing** with one ˙who is **having need.** 29 **Let no tainted word** at *e*˚**all be issuing**˚ **out of** ˭**your** ˙**mouth, but if any** is **good toward** ˙**need**ful **edification, that it may give grace to** ˙those **hearing.**

30 **And** do **not be** caus**ing sorrow** to **the holy** ˙**spirit of** ˙**God** *i*˚**by which** ˭**you are sealed** *io*˚**for** the **day of deliverance.** 31 **Let** *e*˚**all bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and calumny be taken away from** ˭**you** *tg*˚**with** *e*˚**all malice,** 32 **yet** ˡ**become**˚ **kind** *io*˚**to one another, tenderly compassionate,** deal**ing grac**iously˚ among **yourselves, accord**ing **as** ˙**God also, in Christ,** deals **grac**iously˚ with ˭**you.**

5 ˡ**Become**˚ **then imitators of** ˙**God as beloved children,** 2 **and be walking in love, accord**ing **as** ˙**Christ also loves** ˭**you, and gives Himself up** *ov*˚**for us,** an **approach** present **and** a **sacrifice to** ˙**God,** *io*˚**for** a **fragrant odor.**

3 *y*˚**Now** *e*˚**all prostitution and uncleanness or greed—let it not** *y*˚**even be** ˡ**named**˚ **among** ˭**you, accord**ing **as is becoming** in **saints—**4 **and vileness and stupid speaking or** cruel **jesting, which are not proper, but rather thanks**giving. 5 **For this** ˭**you** ˡ**perceive, knowing that no***t* **paramour** at *e*˚**all or unclean or greedy** person, **who** ˡ**is** an **idolater, is having** any **enjoyment of** the **allotment in the kingdom of** ˙**Christ and of God.** 6 **Let no one be seducing** ˭**you** with **empty words, for because** of **these** things **the indignation of** ˙**God is coming**˚ **on the sons of** ˙**stubbornness.** 7 Do **not then** ˡ**become**˚ **joint partakers** with **them,** 8 **for** ˭**you** ˡ**were once darkness, yet now** you are **light in** the **Lord.**

As children of light be walking 9 **(for the fruit of the light** is **in** *e*__all goodness and righteousness and truth__**),** 10 **testing** *a*__what__ |__is well pleasing to the Lord.__ 11 **And be no**t **joint** |__participant__s in **the unfruitful** ·__acts of__ ·__darkness,__ **yet rather be exposing** them **also,** 12 **for it** |__is__ a **shame** +__even__ **to** |*sa*__speak__ of **the hidden** thing**s occurring**°, done **by them.** 13 *y*__Now all__ ·that which is **being exposed**°**, by the light is** made |__manifest__°**, for every**thing ·which is mak**ing manifest**° |__is light.__ 14 **Wherefore He is saying,**

|__Rouse!__ ·|__drowsy__ one,
And rise *o*__from__ among **the dead** one**s,**
And ·__Christ shall__ |__dawn upon you!__

15 **Be observing accurately then, brethren, how** =__you are walking, not as unwise, but as wise,__ 16 **reclaiming**° **the era,** *t*__for the days__ |__are wicked.__ 17 **Therefore** do **no**t |__become__° **imprudent, but** |__understand__ *a*__what the will of the Lord__ is. 18 **And be no**t |__drunk__° with **wine, in which** |__is profligacy, but be__ |__filled__° **full** *i*__with spirit,__ 19 **speaking to yourselves; in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and playing** music **in** =__your__ ·__hearts to the Lord,__ 20 giv**ing thanks always** *ov*__for all__ things, **in** the **Name of our** ·__Lord, Jesus Christ, to__ our ·__God and Father,__ 21 **being subject**° **to one another in** the **fear of Christ.**

22 **Let the wives be** |__subject__° **to** ·their **own husbands, as to the Lord,** 23 *t*__for__ the **husband** |__is head of the wife__ +__even__ **as** ·__Christ__ is **Head of the ecclesia, and He´** |__is__ the **Saviour of the body.** 24 *bt*__Nevertheless, as the ecclesia is being subject__° **to** ·__Christ, thus__ are **the wives also to** ·their **husbands in every**thing.

25 ·__Husbands, be loving__ your ·__wives accord__ing **as** ·__Christ also loves the ecclesia, and gives Himself up__ *ov*__for its__ sake, 26 **that He should hallow it,** ¯__cleansing__ it in **the bath of the water** (*i*__with__ His **declaration),** 27 **that He´ should present to Himself** a **glorious** ·__ecclesia, not having spot or wrinkle or any__ ·__such__ things**, but that it may** |__be holy and flawless.__ 28 **Thus the husbands also** |__ought to be loving__ ·their *sf*__own wives as__ ·their *sf*__own bodies. He__ ·who is **loving** his *sf*__own__ ·__wife is loving himself.__ 29 **For no***t* **one at any time hates** his *sf*__own__ ·__flesh, but is nurturing and cherishing it,__ accord**ing as** ·__Christ also the ecclesia,__ 30 *t*__for we__ |__are members of His__ ·__body.__ 31 *id*__For this__ **“**a *h*__man shall__ |__leave his__ ·__father and__ ·__mother and shall be__ |__joined to__ *td* __his__ ·__wife, and the two will__ |__be__ *io* __one flesh.”__ *Gn 2:24*

32 **This** ·__secret__ |__is great: yet I´ am saying__ this as *io*__to Christ and__ as *io*__to the ecclesia.__ 33 **Moreover,** =__you also__ ·__individually, each be loving__ his *sf*__own__ ·__wife thus, as himself, yet that the wife may be fearing__° **the husband.**

6 ·__Children, be obeying__ =__your__ ·__parents, in__ the **Lord, for this** |__is right.__ 2 **“**|__Honor your__ ·__father and__ ·__mother”__ **(which***a* |__is__ the **first precept** *i*__with__ a **promise),** 3 **that it may become**° **well** with **you, and you should** |__be__ a **long time on the earth.** *Ex 20:12; Dt 5:16*

4 **And** ·__fathers,__ do **no**t **be vexing** =__your__ ·__children, but be nurturing them in__ the **discipline and admonition of** the **Lord.**

5 ·__Slaves, be obeying__ your ·__masters accord__ing to the **flesh with fear and trembling, in** the **singleness of** =__your__ ·__heart, as to__ ·__Christ,__ 6 **no**t *ac*__with eye-slavery, as human-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of__ ·__God__ *o*__from__ the **soul,** 7 **with good humor slaving as to the Lord and not to human** beings**,** 8 **being** °__aware that, whatsoever good each__ one **should do,** for **this he will be** |__requited__° *b*__by__ the **Lord, whether slave or free.**

9 **And** ·__masters, be doing the same toward them, being lax__ in ·__threatening, being__ °__aware that their__ ·__Master as well as__ =__yours__ |__is in__ the **heavens, and** there |__is no__*t* __partiality__ *b*__with Him.__

10 For **the rest, brethren mine, be** |__invigorated__° **in** the **Lord and in the might of His** ·__strength.__ 11 **Put**° **on the panoply of** ·__God, to__*d* ·en**able**° =__you to stand__ up **to***d* **the strat-**

agems of the Adversary, 12 *t*for it ˡis not ours to ˙wrestle *td*with blood and flesh, but *td*with the sovereignties, *td*with the authorities, *td*with the world-mights of this ˙darkness, *td*with the spiritual forces of ˙wickedness among the celestials. 13 Therefore take up the panoply of ˙God that ⁼you may be enabled to withstand in the wicked ˙day, and ⁻having effected° all, to stand.

14 Stand then, girded° about ⁼your ˙loins *i*with truth,
+ With the cuirass of ˙righteousness put° on,
15 And your ˙feet ⁻sandaled° *i*with the readiness
of the evangel of ˙peace;
16 *i*With all ⁻taking up the large shield of ˙faith,
*i*By which ⁼you will be ˡable° to extinguish
all the°fiery° ˙arrows of the wicked one.
17 And receive° the helmet of ˙salvation
And the sword of the spirit,
which ˡis a declaration of God.

18 *th*During every prayer and petition be praying° *i*on every occasion (in spirit being vigilant also *io*for it *i*with *e*all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints, 19 and *ov*for me), that to me expression may be granted, in the opening of my ˙mouth *i*with boldness, to make known the secret of the evangel, 20 *ov*for which I am conducting an embassy in a chain, that in it I should speak boldly°, as I ˡmust speak.

21 *y*Now that ⁼you´ also may be ˡacquainted with my ˙*ac*affairs, and *a*what is engaging me, all will be being made known to ⁼you by Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord, 22 whom I send to*d* ⁼you *io*for this same thing, that ⁼you may know our ˙concerns, and he should be consoling ⁼your ˙hearts.

23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 ˙Grace be with all ˙who are loving our ˙Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption! Amen!

THE ADDRESS ON THE ENVELOPE

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to call the saints who are also believers in Christ Jesus (Eph.1:1)

LOVE delights in secret surprises. Its gifts gather grace as they are undeserved and unexpected. This precious quality greatly enhances the riches of God's love. From its hiding place in the inmost recesses of His affections He has brought forth a surprise such as He only could have planned, so wondrous is the wisdom it reveals, so fathomless the affection it unfolds. Among the many secrets of Holy Writ we have chosen to meditate upon the one which most closely concerns us in this eon, that secret economy or administration which God concealed from previous eons in Himself, but which is now made known in the Ephesian epistle, by which the very heavens are apprised of the variety of God's wisdom, and the whole universe will yet learn the transcendent wealth which is found in His favor. The object of such love is love responsive. The secret that reveals the activities of His heart should kindle a kindred flame in ours, and lead to the adoration which is His due. This is the goal before us in these meditations. Let us not rest satisfied until the flood of His affection overflows our swelling hearts in appreciation and praise.

EPHESIANS 1:1

1 Paul, an **apostle of Christ Jesus through God's will, to all the saints** ˙who ˡ**are also believers in Christ Jesus:**

God has revealed Himself in many ways in His Word. The historic, prophetic and literary portions are usually in the form of short scrolls or pamphlets. His latest and

highest communications have come to us in the form of letters, or, being formal and of a public character, *epistles.* When the postman brings a large stack of mail, we must first sort it out, if several receive their letters at the same address. Before we open it and read it we must make sure for whom it is intended.

In early days there were no envelopes, so the address of an epistle was always the burden of its opening lines. So the epistolary portions of the Scriptures are usually introduced by some specific indication as to the particular person or persons from whom the epistle comes and to whom it is to go. Peter and James are especially particular on this point. Paul always prefixes his name, and usually follows with the character he assumes in writing and a concise description of those he is addressing.

The name "Paul" has a strange sound to one accustomed to the Hebrew titles of so many of the ancient scrolls. Of course, Paul was an Israelite, like most of the other sacred penmen, but God changed his Hebrew name, Saul, to a foreign one, "Paul." This change was made at that crisis in his career when he was severed from his associates for a special ministry to the nations (Acts 13:2,3). Not only that, but the *very first time that we read of the evangel being proclaimed directly to a gentile,* not a proselyte, we are told casually that Saul "is also Paul." Furthermore this gentile was also called by this name, for he was the proconsul Sergius Paul. Still more significant are Paul's dealings with Elymas, the magician, who sought to pervert the proconsul from the faith. He undoubtedly is representative of Israel, and foreshadows the opposition to Paul's ministry for the nations. The climax is capped by Paul's miracle, so unlike his other gracious deeds. He brought blindness on the apostate Jew "until the appointed time." What a marvelous miniature of Paul's ministry! During Israel's blindness he brings salvation to the nations (Acts 13:6-12).

The name "Paul" is in full accord with his ministry. Though usually taken as a Roman name meaning "little," it seems far more likely that it is Greek, (though the Latin also had this root) from the element *pau,* meaning CEASE, from which our English word *pau*se is derived. His name should always suggest to us the *pause* in God's dealings with Israel, the *interval* during which the nation is blind, like Elymas, until the appointed time. How suggestive this is! Every time we attempt to enter one of Paul's epistles we are notified that what follows is to be applied during the period of Israel's blindness. And the fact that all of his epistles are thus marked, stamps them as one, and identifies them with this period, when God's grace goes out to the nations.

Paul introduces himself according to the character of the epistle. Is it concerned with *service?* Then he speaks of himself as a slave. Is it *authoritative?* Then he appears as an apostle. Where *fellowship* is the theme he associates others with him in his salutation. The Perfection epistles, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, are fine examples. As he alone is the *authoritative* revelator of the mystery, he presents his credentials in Ephesians as an *apostle;* as service and fellowship are uppermost in Philippians, he introduces himself as a *slave,* along with Timothy; as Colossians is concerned with correction and communion, he is again an *apostle,* along with Timothy.

The revelation of the secret depends on the authority of Paul as an apostle. There were not wanting those who questioned or denied his right to the title. He was not one of the twelve. He could not qualify for such a place. He did not become an apostle until after the main ministry of the twelve had been accomplished. The one who took Judas's place had to be taken from among those who had been with Christ all the time from John's baptism until His ascension (Acts 1:21,22). This was the one condition,

and Paul had not been with Him at all. Moreover, his apostleship was based on the very reverse of this. It was necessary that he should *not* know our Lord until after His ascension, for he is the apostle of *Christ* Jesus, the *glorified,* not *Jesus* Christ, the *rejected Messiah.*

The title apostle has often been defined as "one sent." But it has not the usual element for *send.* This is *pempō.* Apostle is made up of two elements, *apo,* FROM, and *stellō,* PUT. Its literal meaning is to put some one at a distance, as a representative. Its nearest English equivalent is *commissioner.* An apostle was given a commission, with authority to enforce it. The commissions for the twelve were given them by the Lord while He was yet with them. Paul did not receive his from them or through them, but from the Lord Himself. The vast differences between his commissions and those of the twelve should show how utterly impossible it is that Paul should be numbered with the eleven.

Apostolic authority was by no means confined to the twelve. Among the Circumcision there must always be so many, and no more or less, for Israel's twelve tribe's call for twelve rulers. But no such condition determines the number of apostles among the Uncircumcision. Paul, however, is so great that he overshadows the others far more than Peter does his fellow apostles. Indeed, it is probable that, if we confine ourselves strictly to this final and culminating revelation of the mystery, Paul is its only apostle. Though Timothy is included in the salutation to Colossians, his apostleship is not recognized there. He is simply *brother* Timothy. And, now that the men have passed away, and Paul alone has left inspired epistles, he has become for us the one and only apostle, the only authority in doctrine and practice.

Repeatedly, Paul ascribes his apostolic office to the will of God (1 Cor.1:1; 2 Cor.1:1; Col.1:1; 2 Tim.1:1). None of the twelve do this. They were chosen by Christ in accord

with the revealed *counsel* of God. Their commissions, their careers, all about them, was in line with Yahweh's promises in the Law and in the Prophets and in the Psalms. Some details and developments may have been secret, but their whole course was in keeping with a program previously prepared. One of the special points in Paul's call was that he should know God's will (Acts 22:14). This cannot refer to a knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures, but to matters still unrevealed. It was Paul's special privilege to explore new and unknown fields of God's purpose. To be appointed an *apostle by His will* is suggestive of a fresh departure in the divine activities.

Thus far the writer of Ephesians has introduced himself. Now he writes the address on the envelope. When he indicates the destination of his letter, he characterizes those to whom he is writing. He sends it "to all the saints who are also believers in Christ Jesus." It is said that an expert can read the history of a man's health by looking at his teeth. So we can see the apostasy from Pauline teaching in the interpolations and mistranslations and interpretations of these simple words.

It is evident that the force of "*being* . . . in Christ Jesus" was lost very early. As is the case today in many quarters, the names and titles of our Lord had no special significance. Indeed, in the highest evangelical circles the irreverent use of our Lord's personal name is very painful to sensitive spirits. And how few would recognize the great distinction between "Christ Jesus" and "Jesus Christ"! Yet this is the whole point in this address.

All who are in touch with God are holy ones or saints. This is the most inclusive name by which they can be known. From Adam and Abel to the last to be called in the eons to come, in every era, and in all the various administrations, not only men but messengers, are called holy ones, or saints. When Paul wrote this epistle the saints

were divided into two classes. One group, associated with the twelve apostles, mostly of the Circumcision and proselytes, were proclaiming *Jesus* Christ as the rejected Messiah. The other group, associated with Paul, mostly of the Uncircumcision, recognized His present heavenly exaltation, which is expressed concisely and forcibly in the title *Christ* Jesus. To this class this epistle was sent.

No more correct or concise direction could be given for the delivery of this epistle. It is not for unbelievers, but for saints. It is not for those in Jesus Christ, but those in Christ Jesus. Try as we will, we cannot find any better address for the envelope, even though we should add much to it. It is for some Jews and some gentiles, hence we cannot easily draw a line there. Though mostly for the Uncircumcision, it also includes some of the Circumcision. We cannot use this distinction. There is only one way to divide them, and that is their attitude toward Christ, as expressed in the two titles Jesus Christ and Christ Jesus.

Since the significance of the title "Christ Jesus" was lost, this sentence in the salutation has been beyond the apprehension of copyists and translators, hence they have tried to remedy the apparent fault. So the scribe of Alexandrinus, or some one before him, added "in Ephesus" in order to make sense. It is most likely that this epistle was sent to Ephesus as well as to all the Pauline ecclesias, and there may have been a tradition to that effect which led to the insertion of this phrase. But the character of the epistle is such that it is clearly a *circular* letter, one copy of which might be addressed particularly to Ephesus, but which is by no means to be confined to that ecclesia.

We are confirmed in this position by the fact that both Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, the most ancient of our manuscripts, were originally written without "in Ephesus." In Vaticanus someone has added it in the margin. It can be seen at the end of the third line of the center column, not

far below the heavy ornamental bar which disfigures the upper margin of the manuscript. In Sinaiticus it is by a later hand. It is clear that the phrase ("in Ephesus") has crept in, and was not a part of the early texts, or of the original autograph. Only the difficulty of translating without it has kept it there. The critical editors usually put it in square brackets. A few mark it to be omitted in their margin. Hardly any hold with the so-called "received text" in retaining it without question. It should be omitted.

This epistle contains no local allusions. The apostle has no special place in mind. The theme is developed along the broadest lines. There are no special expedients as in Corinth, no corrections as in Galatia and Colosse. Every part of the epistle applies equally to all the ecclesias. It is of such a character that it could not be withheld from any saint in Christ Jesus, in any place or at any time. It applies to us today as fully as if we had just received it fresh from the pen of Paul.

This epistle was for *all* the saints in Christ Jesus. It should have been sent to all the saints who had come under Paul's teaching. It would not have been understood by any others. Since it was *written* for them, surely it must have been *sent* to them. Only some of these were at Ephesus. Others were at Corinth and Thessalonica and in Galatia, as well as Philippi and Colosse, wherever Paul and his preaching had penetrated.

We call it "Ephesians." As we need some name to distinguish it, this will serve the purpose better than any other because it has become inseparably associated with this epistle in all that has been said and written about it for centuries. So "Ephesians" it shall be, with the distinct understanding that this name is a mere expedient. If the title had not already been misappropriated we would suggest calling it Paul's General Epistle or his Perfection Epis-

tle, as we have already used the plural of the latter phrase for Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians.

In the transitional era preceding the present secret administration of God's transcendent riches of grace, Paul wrote his epistles to the Thessalonians and to the Romans, the Corinthians, the Galatians, as well as his first letter to Timothy. The question arises, did the revelation of the secret in Ephesians and its companion epistles annul the previous revelation completely, and ignore its recipients, so that Romans to Galatians and Thessalonians are obsolete, or do they still stand just as they are, so that Ephesians is a mere addition to their message? Or is there a third course indicated, between these two extremes, their acceptance as a whole, yet with *modifications in detail* to accord with the later revelation? Is this epistle addressed to those in Christ Jesus to whom Paul wrote his previous epistles?

The third item of the secret settles these questions for us satisfactorily. We are *joint* partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which Paul *became* the dispenser (Eph.3:6,7). Note the past tense of *became.* It tells us that Paul is speaking of the evangel which he *had preached.* It is limited by the title "Christ Jesus" to that which is recorded in his previous epistles and does not include his ministry in the synagogues in Acts. In this evangel the nations had been partakers, but not *joint* partakers. It was to the Jew first. The nations had a secondary place. The secret now revealed is not that the nations are to be partakers, but that they are to be *joint* partakers.

Broadly speaking, we have a complete answer to our questions here. All of Paul's previous epistles are definitely declared to be ours, yet with such modifications as the abrogation of Israel's priority involves. Ephesians does not restate Paul's previous evangel, for that would have been useless. All to whom the new revelation came were

acquainted with it. All that they needed was the ability to adapt it to the larger light.

As a consequence, the epistle to the Ephesians is full of contacts and contrasts with Paul's previous teaching. Not only are we given the broad basis on which to build our attitude toward Paul's other writings, but many of the details are developed for us, and the character of the link between the two is carefully considered. We will confine ourselves in this study to these two aspects. In what particulars and how does the fact that we are now *joint* partakers affect Paul's previous epistles? What is the character of the link between them? Is it a sheer break, a mere development, or a super-added glory?

The third item of the secret is elaborated in the last eleven verses of the second chapter. There the apostle would have them remember what they were *in flesh,* during the previous era, before Ephesians was penned. This chapter will help us greatly in our quest. But it is of the utmost importance to note that the contrasts are *not* between the position the nations occupied *in spirit,* as revealed in Paul's epistles, but with their place *in flesh,* as seen in the book of Acts. Indeed, the great difficulty which almost everyone has in understanding this chapter lies in the failure to make this distinction.

The disabilities are all *physical,* not spiritual. In Paul's previous epistles the spiritual unity of Jew and gentile is emphasized; in Acts their physical differences are to the fore. It is only in flesh, as seen in Acts, that the nations are apart from Christ, alienated from the citizenship of Israel, guests of the promise covenants, having no expectation, and without God in the world. This is graphically illustrated for us by the presence of Trophimus, the Ephesian, in Jerusalem, where the very rumor that he had been brought near to God in the sanctuary, caused the riot which led to Paul's imprisonment (Acts 21:27-29).

All these physical disabilities are largely ignored in Paul's writings, so the contrast is developed by references to Acts. The great change is symbolized by the razing of the central wall of the barrier, which Trophimus was supposed to have passed (Eph.2:14), and the nullifying of the apostolic decrees (Eph.2:15; Acts 15:20; 16:4). The consequence is that *the place accorded the nations in the book of Acts is no longer true at all.* There they were guests and sojourners; now we are fellow citizens. There they were outsiders; now we are members of God's family; there they were kept away from the sanctuary; now we are God's dwelling place, in spirit (Eph.2:19-22).

Now these contrasts are emphatically *not* with the position of the nations in spirit in Paul's previous epistles, but with their physical standing at the time when these epistles were written. In them these physical disabilities are hardly mentioned, and one who reads them today would scarcely know that these existed. The great gulf between Paul's written ministry and the record in Acts may be seen by comparing the record of his stay in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9) with the epistles written to the same place not long afterward. In Acts it is all Jewish. In the epistle one would hardly guess that there were any Jews in the city. To be sure there were a vast multitude of the *reverent* Greeks allotted to Paul, but the very term in Acts suggests proselytes.

The point for us to see is that, while Acts is in *contrast* to Ephesians, the epistles are in *contact* with it. Without actually revealing the secret of *joint* participation, the nations, *in spirit,* have access into the presence of God (Rom.5:1,2), unhindered by the barrier wall in the sanctuary at Jerusalem; the decrees issued by the apostles are not even mentioned, and physical relationship to Christ is definitely ignored (2 Cor.5:16). These epistles are preparatory to Ephesians. Trophimus and Paul, in Acts, are far

apart in flesh; in the early epistles they are near, in spirit; in Ephesians they are one.

The second item of the secret is that we are a *joint* body. No body is known in Acts, though it undoubtedly existed at the time. But Romans and Corinthians reveal the existence of the body long before the secret of the *joint* body was made known. Our main question might be restated in concrete terms thus: Is the body of Romans and Galatians the same one as we have in Ephesians, or a different one entirely? We are compelled to take a middle ground. It is the same body, but changed. It is composed of the same class of saints, but its constitution has been altered to agree with the higher and later revelation.

The body in Corinthians was not a *joint body.* The meaning of this term is not as clear as it might be in English. It describes a body in which *believing Jews and gentiles* are of equal rank, respectability and honor. There is no such thing on earth. No bodies we are acquainted with are joint bodies. The word had to be coined in Greek, for the thought was unknown. It may be that there are celestial bodies like this, but none on earth. The body as described in Corinthians at such length was such as we know—an earthly body in which the head held the highest rank and each member differed from all the others in respectability, strength and honor. God blended them together by mutual sympathy and need.

In the Corinthian body the Circumcision would claim the better parts. The gifts—first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers, and after these the lesser graces—would claim superior places. But in a *joint body* these distinctions disappear. Now *Jew and gentile* are both the subjects of such transcendent riches of grace that they are joined in one (Eph.2:1-10). The inequalities produced by the gifts are no longer possible in the realm of purest grace. No one can boast, for all are His achievement.

We are warranted, then, in taking the truth of the one body as in Romans (12:4-8) and First Corinthians (12: 12-31) with such modifications as Ephesians calls for. The body is the same, it is composed of the same class of saints, but it has been affected by the change in administration. Not only are the members all of the same rank now, being a joint body, but the gifts in the body are adjusted. Those which accorded with the Kingdom ministry of Acts have ceased, for blessing on earth is no longer in view. Only apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are found in Ephesians (4:11).

This is in perfect accord with the teaching of the thirteenth of First Corinthians, for some of the gifts are there definitely limited to the era of immaturity. Even prophecy is given its place in Ephesians. It, together with the apostolic office, is in the foundation (Eph.2:20). Now that the foundation has been securely laid we have no need for the authority of an apostle or the revelations of a prophet. Any prophecy which could come today could only lay a different foundation, which is not of God. Of all the false prophets who have proclaimed themselves in later years, not even one has so much as understood what the true foundation for the present grace is.

The destiny of the one body is not clearly revealed in the earlier epistles. Only Ephesians gives us the grand truth that it is the complement of Christ with respect to His celestial place, and will be His executive in ruling the entire universe (Eph.1:22,23). It could not be revealed at that time, for the secret of Christ's universal headship had not been made known. Acts gives Him no sovereignty in celestial realms. So far as its testimony goes, He has no Kingdom until He returns to earth, and will have none elsewhere.

But there are hints in Paul's previous epistles which need little stressing to suggest a celestial sovereignty. Paul asks the Corinthians, "Are you not aware that we shall be

judging messengers . . . ?" (1 Cor.6:3). And he insists that there are celestial bodies in the resurrection (1 Cor.15:40). Is not this almost equal to saying that some of mankind would have a celestial destiny?

The first item of the secret is that the nations now are joint enjoyers of an allotment (Eph.3:6). This is elaborated in the opening section of Ephesians (1:3-14). The subject is developed until we are given a distinct point of contact with Paul's previous epistles. This new revelation was to be limited to those at that time who were in a state of prior expectancy in Christ (Eph.1:12). There is not a single suggestion of such a class in the book of Acts. Yet it is the burden of the Thessalonian epistles. There we find that they were waiting for His Son from heaven (1 Thess.1:10). They were not in darkness, that the day of the Lord should overtake them as a thief (5:4). They were not appointed to indignation, such as the saints in Israel must endure before the Lord comes to them. They were to procure salvation, whether watching or drowsing. This was to occur by the Lord's descent out of the heavens, and their snatching away to meet Him in the air (1 Thess.4:13-17). This was a special revelation through Paul, after his separation from the Circumcision, not even alluded to in Acts, so altogether outside the Kingdom ministry to the nation of Israel. It gave the nations a prior expectation. It became a distinguishing mark of those who receive Paul's message, so that, in seeking for some feature to indicate the recipients of the new revelation, he seizes on this special expectation, to be realized before Christ came to the Circumcision.

But what does this involve? The saints, as well as the subject, are left "in the air." This is hardly a permanent dwelling place. Will they come down again and be subservient to Israel? Or will they ascend with Him to celestial realms? Ephesians supplies the answer. Should they descend, they could never be *joint* allottees. Israel has the first place on

earth for the eons. We cannot oust them. God's gifts may be delayed, but they are never regretted. We must ascend if we are to be joint enjoyers of an allotment. But how can we have any place among the celestials apart from Christ? So the apostle first unfolds the secret of Christ, His universal headship (Eph.1:10). We are to have our position *with Him* in the heavens.

The first Corinthian epistle leads to similar reflections. How were we to judge messengers, or rule them, from our inferior station on the earth? The way of a bird in the air is beyond our control. How shall we exercise authority over messengers who can fly through the realm of space? The answer is hinted in his fifteenth chapter. Why speak of celestial bodies in connection with our resurrection? What has the glory of the sun, the moon and the stars to do with our vivification? He does not say. But he tells a *secret.* We shall be changed. Are not all to be changed in resurrection? That is no secret. But the instantaneous change he alluded to was something unknown before. It could be nothing less than a body fitted for celestial scenes.

Thus, while we find a continual contrast to all that pertains to the Circumcision and the book of Acts, we find a continual contact with Paul's previous epistles. It is enigmatic (1 Cor.13:12), to use Paul's own characterization. The tendency is clear enough, for it is away from the physical and terrestrial to the spiritual and celestial. But our destiny is not, and, indeed, could not be revealed so long as God was lingering over His apostate people Israel. It was from glory to glory, each higher revelation being built on its predecessor (2 Cor.3:18).

Another satisfactory solution of our inquiry can be found in the special provision made to bring the saints of Paul's day into their new standing in Christ Jesus. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are given for the *adjusting* of the saints, with a view to the work of

dispensing, for the *upbuilding* of the body of Christ, until we should all attain to the *unity* of faith, and the realization of a son of God, to *mature* manhood, to the *adult* stature of Christ's complement, that we should by no means still be minors . . ." (Eph.4:11-14).

The words we have italicized are worthy of close study in this connection. None of them suggests a break. The first one is the most important. What is meant by *adjusting?* Our common version renders the verb *mend* (Matt. 4:21; Mark 1:19), *perfect* (Matt.21:16; Luke 6:40; 2 Cor. 13:11; 1 Thess.3:10; Heb.13:21; 1 Peter 5:10), *fit* (Rom. 9:22), *restore* (Gal.6:1), *prepare* (Heb.10:5), *frame* (Heb. 11:3), *perfectly join together* (1 Cor.1:10). It is evident that it is impossible to get the true sense through the English renderings. The CV uses the synonyms *adjust, adapt, attune.*

The most of the usual renderings are in accord with our contention that there was no rupture, no break, in passing from the previous to the present administration of God's grace. Yet one word, *mend,* does suggest this. We are told that James and John, with their father, were *in the ship* mending their nets (Matt.4:21). Now this is most unusual. I have seen some fishermen *adjusting* their nets in their ship, so that there will be no trouble when they let it fall over the side for another catch, but I have not noticed that nets were *mended* on board. They are taken to some more convenient, roomy place. Every time they are used they must be folded in their place for the next catch. Only seldom were they mended. The evidence is all in favor of *adjusting* rather than mending.

There are some passages in which *mending* will not do at all. The Lord did not come with a *mended* body, but one *adapted* to His new sphere of service (Heb.10:5). It was not the form of God *repaired.* So we may be sure that the gifts were given to *adjust, adapt, attune* the saints to the new revelation. The same ministry is needed today, for

those who have received the truth of Paul's earlier epistles. We freely concede that much more than this is needed in most cases, for the majority of the saints are stranded in Acts. Nothing but a decided break with that administration will be sufficient to prepare them for even the rudiments of the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus.

The adaptation was based on the change from an incomplete to a complete revelation of God's purpose, from an inferior to an equal station in His grace, and from a terrestrial to a celestial destiny.

The next important function of the gifts to the ecclesia was to bring them out of minority into maturity. This may be a sudden transition, but it does not involve the repudiation of everything, far-reaching as the change may be. Paul, in the thirteenth of First Corinthians, dwells at some length on minority and maturity and makes it clear that, in that era, the saints were not mature. "For," he says, "at present we are observing by means of a mirror, in an enigma, yet then, face to face" (1 Cor.13:12). He is not speaking here of meeting the Lord, but of full knowledge in an era yet to come when the saints would become mature. That time came when Ephesians went forth.

It is still the function of the pastor and teacher to lead his hearers out of minority into maturity. But, alas, how many of the leaders of His beloved saints are themselves mature? The most alluring spiritual height seems to be those gifts which mark minority. The body of Christ is being dragged down, not built up. Spirituality is usually confounded with emotion, and often with striving after those transient gifts.

Is there any wonder that they are surging hither and thither, and whirled about by every wind of teaching? So long as the saints prefer the minority of Paul's earlier epistles or the infancy of Acts, they will be unstable as to the truth, or firmly fixed in error.

Another interesting token of the close relationship of all Paul's writings is found in the latter part of Ephesians. He does not hesitate to appeal to teaching not found in the earlier portion. The panoply of God (Eph.6:13) consists, in part, of righteousness and of the evangel of peace. This evangel is for the feet—indicating our contact with the world. It is not the peace of the second of Ephesians, between Jew and gentile, but of the fifth of Romans and the fifth of Second Corinthians. Righteousness takes us back to the third and fourth chapters of Romans.

Justification is not mentioned in the prison epistles. Neither is conciliation. These themes are practically confined to Paul's preparatory epistles (Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians). They are not affected by the new revelation and suffer no vital modification, unless we wish to note that the different prepositions used in regard to the justification of the Circumcision and Uncircumcision—*out of* and *through*—no longer have any force (Rom.3:30). Both are now justified through faith, for there are no longer any believers among the Circumcision who have not become participants of this grace.

The rendering "ordinances" (Eph.2:15), suggests that all the observances, especially baptism and the Lord's dinner, are done away. But the translation is quite incorrect. The reference is to the decrees issued by the apostles (Acts 15:20). There is no hint that observances, as such, are abolished. Each must be examined on its own merits. Whatever was given specially to Paul after his separation has a strong claim on permanence. What drifted in from the previous Kingdom testimony is not so secure.

Baptism in water was never given to Paul. Christ sent him, not to baptize, but to preach the evangel (1 Cor.1:17). He seldom did it himself. He teaches that we all are baptized in one spirit into one body (1 Cor.12:13). The body of Christ cannot exist apart from the baptism of the spirit. So

there are two baptisms in his earlier epistles. In Ephesians there is but one (Eph.4:6). Baptism in water loses even the precarious place it had. Water baptism is not for us.

The Lord's dinner is very different. Paul did not receive it from those before him, as we would expect. He received it by special revelation from the Lord (1 Cor.11:23). He commended it to the Corinthians, and corrected its abuse. How different from the treatment accorded baptism in the same epistle!

Another important contrast is the continuance of the gifts. They were to be limited to the minority status of the ecclesia and were to vanish with the advent of maturity. But, with the full realization of the impending change, he ignores any suggestion of recall when dealing with the Lord's dinner. It is to be observed till Christ's coming. The "covenant" associated with it is the dispensation of righteousness (2 Cor.3:6,9) which comes before us in literal language in the third and fourth chapters of Romans.

To conclude: Ephesians is a general epistle written by Paul to those who, like himself, had been severed from the rest, and associated with Christ in glory, rather than in His rejection. When the destiny of the twelve apostles and those associated with them had been clearly revealed, and culminates in the Kingdom of Israel on earth, the destiny of this new departure was unknown. Ephesians unfolds this secret, hence it is only for those who are "in Christ Jesus." Today, notwithstanding the fact that the church knows nothing of this, and follows the twelve apostles, and rejects Paul and his teaching, the Kingdom administration is no longer in force. By grace, all are associated with the risen and ascended Christ. Let us pray that God will reveal to His saints the transcendent glory which is theirs in "Christ Jesus."

A. E. Knoch

OUR SAVIOUR, GOD

GOD ALONE is our Saviour. Through Isaiah, He declares, "I, I, Yahweh am El [God]! And there is no Saviour apart from Me" (Isa.43:11). *He* is the Subjector and the Saviour: "An El, just, and a Saviour. *And none is there except Me*" (Isa.45:21).

Our need for God is an all-encompassing one. We need Him "every hour," continually, not merely upon occasion. For at all times we either need to be saved from sinful practices or to be preserved in the paths of righteousness.

The presence of God's saving power is often unrecognized, even among those in whom it is operating extensively. Ignorance of divine grace is a primary cause of human ingratitude. Men are inordinately proud of their self-control, for they suppose it to be their own creation. They do not realize that self-control, along with all else that is virtuous and agreeable, is always a fruit of the spirit (Gal.5:23); it is never a work of the flesh.

It is a major step forward when the unbeliever finally turns to God, having discovered that he is not really self-sufficient after all. It is at least as great an advancement when the believer repudiates all confidence in the flesh, and begins to rely upon God alone.

Whenever we are faithful, it is true, in a relative sense, that thus we "save ourselves" (for example, from withdrawing from the faith; *cf* 1 Tim.4:1,16). But we only do this *in His grace.* Therefore boasting in man is debarred: "Toil I—yet not I but the grace of God which is with me" (1 Cor.15:10).

Our actions are God's channels; they are not a source,

but a conduit. Any course of action which we may take which is essential to a goal, is the fruit, not the root of salvation. Though practical salvation is *through* our works, it is not *out of* our works. For grace is not out of works, and salvation is both in and by grace. "Now if it is in grace, it is no longer out of works, else the grace is coming to be no longer grace" (Rom.11:6). Should we be enabled to carry such marvelous salvation into effect in our lives, this will be so thanks to our Saviour, not ourselves: "For it is God Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:13).

All that is faithful and pleasing to God is due in its entirety to His gracious provision and direction. A realization of this truth is essential to maturity and humility. For no one can walk humbly with his God who conceives of himself as the one who finally turns defeat into victory. Therefore, we must not boast of what we have "let" the Lord do in our lives. Submission to Him can never afford us an occasion for self-boasting, but only a further opportunity to thank God for His saving grace.

It wounds our self-respect to think that we might actually need such a gracious and powerful provision. And when we recognize God's true grace, it cuts ever so deeply into our pride. Many are ready to assure us that such grace is neither given nor needed. We find such claims to be quite flattering; they make it easier for us to preserve our self-reliant attitudes and ways.

However, we will do well to consider the story of the gracious creditor and his two debtors, one of whom owed ten times more than the other. Since neither were able to pay, "he *deals graciously* with them both" (Luke 7:42). Though both were appreciative, it was the one "with whom he deals the more graciously" who was "loving him more" (Luke 7:42,43). Similarly, when God gives us an understanding and appreciation of the *graciousness* of His operations, both for us and in us, we are enabled to love Him more.

May we not, like Belshazzar, exalt ourselves over the Lord of the heavens, in Whose hand is our breath, and "for Whom" are all our paths (*cf* Dan.5:23). When we exalt ourselves, due to our failure to perceive God's all-sufficient hand upon us, we fail to honor Him. When we take such an approach, our career can only be "weighed on the scales and found lacking" (*cf* Dan.5:27).

TWO FUNDAMENTAL ERRORS

Most believers consider "free will" and "eternal punishment" to be foundational truth. However, a few consider these same concepts to be foundational error. Of course many among those on both sides of these questions have simply taken a position; most are not aware of the basic issues to be decided. Consequently, confusion is perpetuated, prejudice and ignorance prevail, and these important matters are never resolved.

We propose to examine many of the basic issues involved in these questions, such as faith, choice, foreknowledge, voluntary action, judgment and trials. The fulcrum point of our considerations will be God's achievements through the death and resurrection of Christ. What is the scope of these achievements in our salvation and with respect to His ultimate purpose to become All in all?

The prevailing idea today is that God saves us (from "eternal punishment") only after we first save ourselves from being disqualified for His alleged "gift." While He wishes to assist us even in this, He will only do so if we are willing and cooperative. One must save himself from unwillingness. Finally, we are left on our own. When we need Him the most, He will do nothing. That is: *God helps those who help themselves.*

Though it is acknowledged that we cannot earn salvation, it is insisted that we still have to qualify for it! Such a claim is nonsensical, for "earn" and "qualify" are synonyms.

The basic idea of *compensation* is common to both. For example: a successful salesman qualifies for a luxurious vacation by earning a sufficient number of bonus points.

The popular idea that we must qualify ourselves for salvation in order to escape being consigned to everlasting punishment is a repudiation of God's grace. Besides, all power and ability come from God, Who alone is our gracious Saviour.

This is our theme throughout this study. The purpose for its writing is to make known this great truth. We are taking up the error of human free will first, and the error of everlasting punishment second.

FAITH AND THE EVANGEL FOR TODAY

It is wonderful to know that "Christ Jesus came into the world *to save* sinners" (1 Tim.1:15), not merely to make it possible for sinners to be saved. Similarly, we were not conciliated to God through accepting Christ or believing in the death of His Son. Instead, "We were conciliated to God *through the death of His Son*" (Rom.5:10). Likewise, Christ did not die in order that our sins might be forgiven; for He would never need to die for God merely to forgive us. He died that God as our judge, might have a just basis for justifying us or declaring us righteous. He "was given up because of our offenses, and was roused *because of our justifying*" (Rom.4:25). We are "now justified in His blood" (Rom.5:9).

But this is only so "through Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22), "the faith of Jesus" (Rom.3:26). This is what such passages as these say; they speak of Christ's own faith, not of our faith in Christ. They no more mean our faith in Him, than the words "the faith of Abraham" (Rom.4:16) mean our faith in Abraham! It is incorrect to translate them otherwise. To do so is to interpret, not translate. But since men are so confident that they are saved (from "Hell") through "accepting Christ," they assume that any reference to faith in association with Christ must be their own, instead of His. They think of their own faith as what keeps them from being lost. Such a conception of "grace" is perfectly indistinguishable from a reward.

THUS YOU BELIEVE

Faith is essential to our salvation, but it is not a "requirement." It is "essential" only in the sense that there are none in Christ but those who have faith in Him; they all genuinely believe that He died and rose (*cf* 1 Thess.4:14). All such ones are brethren in Christ. For God gives all His people at least some faith in at least this much. God is especially (though not exclusively) the Saviour of believers (1 Tim.4:10); it is these chosen ones who alone are "happening upon the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with glory eonian" (2 Tim.2:10).

Why did the Corinthians believe? Was it merely the result of a "free will" decision of their own, or was it because, like Paul, God's powerful grace was with them in a wonderful way? To all who have eyes to see, Paul's words concerning this matter are unmistakable:

Paul had been the foremost of sinners (1 Tim.1:15). For beyond all others, he had committed much contrary to the name of Jesus the Nazarene, and punished and persecuted the ecclesia of God exceedingly (1 Cor.15:9; Acts 9:1; 26:9-11). Therefore it required "all His patience" (1 Tim. 1:16) for the Lord to deal with this terrible sinner and to graciously save him. Many years later, when writing his Ephesian epistle, Paul painfully recalled those evil days, and in light of them could only speak of himself as "less than the least of all saints" (Eph.3:8).

"*Yet, in the grace of God* I am what I am [now]" (1 Cor. 15:10a), Paul insists to the Corinthians. For the Lord had met him on the Damascus road. The faith and love of

Christ Jesus came over him and changed him from being the foremost sinner among men into the faithful and obedient apostle to the nations, of whom we are to become imitators (1 Cor.11:1; Phil.3:17).

Paul accounts for the faith of the Corinthians (even as the heralding of the twelve, *cf* 1 Cor.12:5) on this same ground: "His grace, which is in me, did not come to be for naught, but more exceedingly than all of them toil I—*yet not I, but the grace of God* which is with me. *Then,* whether I or they, *thus [houtos,* THE-SAME-AS] we are heralding and *thus you believe*" (1 Cor.15: 10b,11).

The grace of God is effective, not merely potential. Faith is God's gracious gift to us, with which He *overwhelms* our former unbelief, imparting to all whom He calls a measure thereof, whenever it delights Him to unveil His Son in us (*cf* Phil.1:29; 1 Tim.1:13-16; Rom.12:3; Gal.1:15,16). This proves that salvation is not a refusable offer, and that faith is not spiritual currency. Faith is not meritorious. Accepting Christ is not a transaction. Salvation is a gracious gift, not a covenant or agreement. Those who are yet of a mind to "strike a deal" with God, are in no mood to acknowledge their need of a Saviour.

CHRIST PAID ALL

Salvation in Christ is not "the greatest bargain in all the universe," for it is not a bargain at all. It is neither cheap nor expensive. It *is free.* We need not be "willing to pay the price," for there is no price to pay. Christ paid it all. He was made sin; God condemned sin in the flesh in the sacrifice of His Son (2 Cor.5:21; Rom.8:3).

Salvation is not a reward for having done the right thing, or for "meeting conditions." As with Abraham (Rom.4: 16-21), our faith reveals to us what is already true, concerning what God has promised. It gives us assurance.

"God, Who saves us and calls us with a holy calling," has

promised to glorify and conform to the image of His Son, all those whom He chose "in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian"; this evangel "now is being *manifested*" (2 Tim.1:9,10). "Now you, brethren, *as Isaac,* are children of promise" (Gal.4:28; *cf* Rom.9:9-11). *This* is the gospel—not some offer of a way to escape "Hell."

The customary "invitation" or "altar call" of today is simply a vain tradition of men (*cf* Mark 7:8). Since it "gets results," it is used. Through it many become converts to the "Christian religion." The number of those from among such throngs whom God Himself has already chosen is known to Him, not ourselves. Such popular techniques are based upon the false idea which has well been termed, "decisional regeneration."

However, such presentations are not faithful ones. For Christ is to be announced and proclaimed, not offered as a "great opportunity" (*cp* Acts 13:38,39). This is to be done so that, "whoever *were set* for life eonian" (Acts 13:48; *cf* Eph.1:3-6) may believe "through *grace*" (Acts 18:27; *cf* Rom.10:14,15).

"Yahweh, our Elohim, *You are the Setter* of welfare on the hearthstones for us, For, moreover, *You contrive all our doings for us*" (Isa.26:12).

THOSE WHO ARE CHOSEN

It is no part of our calling or service today to be crying out to men, "Repent! for near is the kingdom of the heavens!" (Matt.3:2); or, "Return and turn away from all your transgressions, And your depravity shall not become a stumbling block to you" (Ezekiel 18:30). Instead, in this present "day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2), we are to dispense "the word of the conciliation," "how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them" (2 Cor.5:18,19). This tremendous change

in the divine dealings during the present administration is "the world's riches" (Rom.11:12) quite apart from their acceptance or appreciation of it.

The terrible judgments which are predicted for "the conclusion of the eon" (Matt.24:3) are yet to come at the close of this present age. They are for that era. But this present era is not that future era. The present administration, as a foretaste of God's glorious plans for the new creation, is not concerned with such matters. It is utterly anachronistic to herald wrath in a day of conciliation.

The evangel for today is to be proclaimed on behalf "of those who are *chosen,* that they also may be happening upon the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with glory eonian" (2 Tim.2:10). Most of those who are naming the name of the Lord have never heard a clear presentation of the evangel of God. Instead they have been subjected to a great deal of confusion, in the midst of which, and in spite of all the error, "Christ crucified" was still proclaimed (*cf* 1 Cor.1:23). And, in such cases, God has used *this* marvelous message—not the contiguous "profane prattlings" which were also present (2 Tim.2:16)—to bring many of His people into the beginning of their life of faith. Therefore, "seeing that, by every method, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being announced, I am rejoicing in this also, and will be rejoicing nevertheless" (Phil.1:18).

The evangel is not to be conceived as the presentation of an investment opportunity, a "good deal," through which all who are smart enough to recognize a good thing when they see it and willing to pay the price to "get in" may do so. One does not "join" the ecclesia (out-called ones) of God, as if it were a fraternal organization or some popular "church": "Yet now God [the Placer] *placed* the members, each one of them, in the body according as He wills" (1 Cor.12:18).

The truth is, though we too were once terrible sinners,

even as the rest, "when the kindness and fondness for humanity of our Saviour, God, made its advent," it came to us "*not* for works which are wrought in righteousness which we do, but *according to His mercy*" (Titus 3:4,5a). God *chose* to be merciful to us, we did not put Him under obligation to be merciful. *He* decides to whom He will grant His mercy, and when He will do so. We did *not* qualify for it; therefore God was not obligated to give it.

Salvation is not afforded man at his own convenience, whenever he would care to take it to himself. Furthermore, there is no injustice with God in acting purposefully, choosing some for certain blessings and positions which He does not grant to others. "For to Moses He is saying, 'I shall be merciful to whomever I may be merciful, and I shall be pitying whomever I may be pitying'" (Rom.9:15). When God is merciful to us, it is only because He is also gracious to us (*cp* Exodus 33:19).

Most seem to conceive of one's obtaining of the holy spirit in a way similar to that of Simon, the magician. Like him, they "*infer* that the gratuity of God is [somehow] to be *acquired*" (Acts 8:20). Whether one seeks to acquire the holy spirit through money, or faith, the principle is the same. God's gifts are not for sale. Peter's testimony to those who would represent salvation in Christ as an acquisition for which men may qualify, is, "Your heart is not straight in front of God. Repent, then, from this evil of yours" (Acts 8:21,22).

Let us rejoice in the realization that *God* is our Saviour! —"*He* saves us, through the bath of renascence and renewal of holy spirit, which He pours out on us richly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour" (Titus 3:5b,6). This is so, "that, being justified in that One's grace, we may be becoming enjoyers, in expectation, of the allotment of life eonian" (Titus 3:7).

James Coram

IN GRACE AND OUT

GRACE is a fundamental characteristic of the present administration of the secret (Eph.3:2,9). It is the favor of the previous transitional era continued and intensified and enriched. Superabundant grace (Rom.5:17) had already been manifested in justifying the nations apart from the law or works of any kind, through faith, that it may accord with grace (Rom.4:16). Grace glorious, rich, transcendent, is our portion now (Eph.1:6,7; 2:7). That which the eye did not perceive, and the ear did not hear, and to which the heart of men did not ascend—whatever God makes ready for those who are loving Him—He has revealed to us by His spirit through His latest revelation (1 Cor.2:9,10). And is not this to be expected? So long as God was hindered by human help, His heart was restrained. So long as He was thwarted by creature attainments, His love could not find a free outlet. Grace, undiluted by law, unspoiled by works, unconfined by aught of man, is the fullest, freest outflow of God's essence, which is love.

But alas! Our tiny cups are far too small to contain it. Our unnatural hearts are too full of self to give God His place as our All. Our pride insists on having some share in the favors He bestows. How desperately the law-laden Jew clings to his own doings! If he cannot justify himself by law keeping, he will at least make it his rule of life after he has been justified. He cannot bear to be bereft of all merit. God must not be All. Man insists on doing his share in creating his future bliss. He must earn, he must deserve the blessings he receives, or lose his self-respect.

Paul found it necessary to devote a whole epistle to the defense of grace. The Galatians had started well, and had received the evangel which he had heralded with its abundant grace. But for Jews, who had been reared under the law, this was entirely too much to accept. The fact that God Himself had given the law was enough to convince them that He wished it to be kept. They did not realize that His intention was quite the reverse, that He wished to humble them and teach them their own incompetence and need of Him through its enactments. These Jews did not only try to keep the law themselves, but also sought to fasten it upon those of the nations who believed. Thus they ran counter to the grace which God had made the fundamental feature of the evangel of the Uncircumcision. With stern severity the apostle deals with these Jews because of the seriousness of their error. Even the Galatians are not spared. He tells them plainly that they had fallen out of grace (Gal.5:4).

The Galatian repudiation of God's grace is more virulent today than ever. Almost all "religious" training, even when definitely evangelistic, is centered in human effort and attainment. Not only is the evangel tainted with Circumcision requirements, such as repentance and baptism, which seem to give the seeker something he can do in order to assist God in securing his salvation, but the saint is loaded with duties which are to help God to finish His work.

But if the superabundant grace of Paul's evangel is repudiated, what shall we say of the rich, the glorious, the transcendent grace of this secret administration? Is it not possible, nay, probable, indeed, inevitable, that we also have repudiated it, at least to some extent? Alas! how could it be otherwise with mortal men? Christendom has hardly heard of the present grace, and those of us who have, are prone to mix in our own efforts and attainments as though these could procure the gratuities of God. There is a strong cur-

rent which is corrupting the grace glorious, limiting it to those alone who receive, or understand, or think they perceive the higher truths of Paul's later epistles. It is always some human attainment which merits this grace, although, in the nature of things, this is impossible, for then grace is no more grace.

(IN) TO-GRACE *chariti*

One form of the word grace is particularly rich in its implications, yet it is rather difficult to carry over into good English in some connections, especially the verb *be.* It is simple when the verb will allow the use of the preposition *to,* as when Paul and Barnabas were given over *to* the grace of God (Acts 14:26). Webster's dictionary says that the dative "is generally indicated in modern English by *to* or *for.*" Much experiment convinced us that *to* is the best standard for the sublinear of the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT, and subsequent experience has confirmed this. It is the best uniform rendering. In the version, however, the matter is far more complicated, for each verb has an influence on the following connective. We have tried specially hard to get a good rendering for the parenthesis in Ephesians 2:5. We cannot say "to grace you are saved," so we used Webster's second choice and rendered it "you have been saved *for* grace." This comes close to the sense, yet seems to limit it to the future. In some passages, as Galatians 5:1, *for* is fine. "For freedom Christ frees us!" And so it seems here, yet, for the sake of uniformity, we have considered adding a word thus: "to (enjoy) grace are you saved." These renderings, however, do not fit well in similar passages, so we have adopted a regular rendering for such cases, by inserting the connective *in* in place of *to.*

The dative case, answers the question *Where?* and indicates *rest in* the object named. Hence the characteristic connective is IN, which cannot be used for any other case.

If we add *in,* then, for the dative, we are not likely to introduce any false relation. Hence we have thought it well to translate the dative "*in* grace" in all of those marvelous passages where this has to do with our present position. We, and other translators, have used *by,* which is, perhaps the most agreeable English. But *by* is so wide in its usage that it may also denote agency and efficient cause. Its nearest equivalent in Greek, *hupo,* is never used with the dative. We seek to restrict this connective to the efficient cause in the CONCORDANT VERSION. This is especially clear in such statements as, "that which is declared by the Lord through the prophet" (Matt.1:22). Grace is not the *efficient agent* (by) or the *channel* (through), but the *sphere in* which God operates in this and the preceding administration.

Justification is by God as the efficient cause (Rom.8:33), and *in* Christ (Gal.2:17), and therefore in grace. We are justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). It is not that grace is in the past, and exhausts itself in vindicating us, leaving us to stand in law or works, as the Galatians thought, nor is it merely the channel *through* which justification came. It is the element, the province in which justification is effected, which remains, not only to maintain our righteousness, but to form a fit field for the further outflow of God's favor. This is the glorious feature which we seek to unfold in this essay. The dative form of the word grace (our word *charity* is a close transliteration), is not only bursting with gifts for us, but an apprehension of its nuances will preserve us from the prevailing tendency to make His gratuities attainable by means of human efforts or insight.

In Paul's latest and highest revelation a double appeal is made to the fact that salvation through faith (Eph.2:5,8), as heralded in Paul's evangel, is *in grace,* hence is the proper atmosphere for the further favors now revealed.

The usual rendering is much used to prove that salvation is not of works, and suggests to most minds that the efficient cause of our salvation was grace. This is blessed, of course, yet seems rather incongruous in such an epistle as Ephesians, where it finds no close connection with the context. The point is that the condition of salvation which is theirs through faith, apart from works, is in the sphere of grace, hence they were vivified together with the Circumcision recipients of Paul's evangel when Christ was vivified. Such a blessing could not come to any mortal on the ground of attainment, and is possible only to those whom Paul had previously put "in grace."

This is enlarged upon in one of the most precious passages even in this precious epistle. "For in grace are you saved, through faith, and this is not out of you; it is God's oblation, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them." The scene of our salvation is not in ourselves or our deeds, but in God's favor. He is the one Who is working and even prepares the good works which we may do.

GRACE INVOLVES JOY

Grace, in Greek, comes from the stem joy, for that is its fruit. And so it is that we are exhorted, with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, *in grace,* to sing in our hearts to God (Col.3:16). Grace can tune our heartstrings as nothing else can. Our vocal cords may not be able to voice the harmony within. Some of us cannot make music on an instrument or in our throats so as to enchant our fellow men. But all of us can make music *in our hearts to God.* And it will be found that songs which celebrate ourselves, our superiority and attainments, are rare, for these claims are not in grace, and put a damper on our joy.

FALLING OUT OF GRACE

Perhaps the best reason for choosing *in* to indicate the dative case of grace is the direct contrast which it presents, to Paul's graphic figure, when he described the Galatian apostasy. He said, "You fall *out* of grace!" (Gal.5:4). They had been in grace, or they could not have fallen *out* of it. In these days, when there is such a strong tendency to depart from the faith, it will be found that a falling out of grace usually accompanies error. Those who divide the saints into groups according to something in them have fallen out of grace. One who claims to belong to the 144,000 and leaves others in the great company proclaims his own merit, denies the one body, and has fallen out of grace. If we claim to belong to a higher and more privileged group in this administration, we destroy its very foundations, for it is based upon the *unity* of those far and near, the *oneness* of those privileged with those who had no covenant or claim on God. It is noteworthy that no one claims to belong to an inferior group. Let us not exalt ourselves at the expense of God's most precious exhibition of grace! Falling from grace used to be a phrase applied to one whose conduct contradicted his profession. The reformed drunkard was said to fall from grace if he took to his cups again. It was freely used of so-called "backsliders," and carried with it the loss of salvation. But, of course, all this is entirely foreign to the context where it is found in the Scriptures. The Galatians did not lose their salvation, but their liberty (Gal.5:1-4). They still remained brethren. They had the spirit (Gal.3:2,3). They were disturbed, but not lost. All of us fail in doctrine or deportment. This, however, does not affect that which we have in grace. It was only in their thoughts and practices that the Galatians fell out of grace. Failure in these can only make it abound. In law failure is fatal, but grace is stimulated and multiplied by failure.

GRACE THE TOUCHSTONE

Since grace is the fundamental feature of this administration, which is especially designed to exhibit God's grace to the universe, all doctrine and all deportment may be tested by it. If we have drunk deeply of grace we intuitively shrink from all that involves merit on the part of man. Salvation with the slightest tinge of works, no matter how reasonable or how ably defended, or "proven" in the Bible, finds no response in our spirits. Destiny dependent on human attainment is utterly repugnant to us, for it is a falling out of grace and a repudiation of the very basis of this secret administration. And we will find that our conduct usually agrees with our teaching. Graciousness goes with truth: ungraciousness with error. Not that it is merely sentimental and will not rebuke and expose where this is needed, especially in these last days, but even this will be done in harmony with grace.

Here is where the spiritual saint is safer than the learned scholar. The question of truth may seem difficult in our present ignorance and the strange variety of interpretations which abound, but if God's grace has gripped us, this will be our guiding sun in the midst of the prevailing gloom. It will enable us to steer clear of all the sunken rocks of human merit that threaten to make shipwreck of our faith. We will refuse to deduce from one set of passages what God plainly denies elsewhere when our reasoning leads us to lean on man instead of God, because this conflicts with the spirit of grace. O that our hearts were established firmly and finally in the freedom of His favor! Much as we value a knowledge of the external facts of God's revelation we have found that these are not acceptable to us in this administration unless our hearts are prepared by an appreciation of God's grace.

A. E. Knoch

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 112th Year

(1909–2021)

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Spiritual Blessings
66 One God and One Lord
88 Blessed in Christ
89 Believing the Evangel

SECOND QUARTER, 2021

Volume 112 **Number 2**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, SECOND QUARTER 2021
BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

EDITORIAL

WE BEGIN this issue of our magazine with Ephesians 1:2,3, which may be translated and arranged as follows:

2 **Grace to** =**you and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ.**
3 **Blessed** is **the God and Father of our** ·**Lord Jesus Christ**
·Who **blesses us** *i*·**with every spiritual blessing,**
among the celestials,
in Christ,

We end with Romans 5:8,9, which may be translated and arranged as follows:

8 **yet** ·**God is commending** this ·**love of** *sf***His** *io***to us,** seeing **that,**
While **we** |**are still sinners,**
Christ dies *ov***for our** sakes**.**
9 **Much rather then, justified now in His** ·**blood, we shall be** |**saved from** ·**indignation through Him.**

The title of the middle article is "One God and One Lord," taken from 1 Corinthians 8:5,6 where we read:

5 **For** +**even if so be that** there |**are** those **being termed**° **gods, whether in heaven or on earth, even as** there |**are many gods and many lords,** 6 *bt***nevertheless**
To us there is **one God, the Father,**
out of Whom ·**all** is, **and we** *io***for Him,**
And one Lord, Jesus Christ,
through Whom ·**all** is, **and we through Him.**

In one way, the articles might well be considered in

reverse order, starting with James Coram's presentation of the evangel of our salvation as an announcement of God's grace centered on the death, entombment and rousing of Christ (pp.89-96). Then our brother lays down the case for a clear concept of our Lord as the Image of God and Mediator between God and humanity (pp.66-87). Thus with this foundation we may take up Brother Knoch's study of our spiritual blessings among the celestials which are "in Christ" (pp.51-65 and an appendix on p.88).

But if, as believers we start with the transcendent riches of *God's grace* as they begin to be unfolded in Ephesians 1:2,3, and then give attention to the Person and place of *Christ* in Whom we have all our blessings, it is well to end again with the evangel itself. For it is the beginning of our faith and yet needs always to be recalled and considered anew even as we are taken from glory to glory. D.H.H.

REPOSING

Orville Hunt, of Palm Bay, Florida, was put to repose on June 27, 2021 at age 82. Born and raised in Wisconsin where he attended a Bible college and where he met and married his wife Connie. They spent eight years in the Philippines in a mission centered on the evangel of God's grace, but restricted to believers. It was after their return, settled in Michigan, that Orville's concept of Christ's work at the cross magnified as it ultimately embraces all humanity. Thus as his faith expanded, his ministry contracted, and he took on work as a roofer. But as we knew him as host and teacher, we knew him as a gracious brother, reflecting in his life and words the evangel he believed.

Mary Ann Fry, of Spencer Port, New York, was put to repose on June 21,2021. She and her husband, **Edison W. Fry,** who predeceased her in 2007 rejoiced in God, studying His word early in the morning every day. They passed their love and faith to their three children. Mary Ann's famous sayings during difficult times were "Everything is happening according to God's plan" and "Trust in God—He doesn't want us to worry."

SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

> Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing, among the celestials, in Christ. (Eph.1:2,3)

"GRACE to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." Divine favor, and the weal it works, is the height of human blessedness. The usual Eastern salutation was *Peace!* It was a wish for welfare in all things. Paul always prefaces it with *grace.* This is the keynote of our relationship to God and Christ in all of Paul's epistles. And he does not only wish us to have it, but he proceeds to present it to us. This is especially true of the epistle before us. In it the grace of God is not only the first to greet us as we enter, but enriches us with its lavish redundance to the very end.

Nowhere is this invocation more fitting than here, for it introduces us immediately to the grandest and most glorious exhibition of divine favor which ever illumines God's love, either in the past, the present, or those wondrous future eons which are the special display of His power and perfections.

"Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing, among the celestials . . . ." With inimitable wisdom the whole message of this epistle is compressed into these two introductory phrases, *every spiritual blessing* and *among the celestials.* All the rest may be referred to these two themes. The secret itself begins with a repetition of the first, for

everything said to be "joint" is *in spirit* (Eph.3:6). And the three items of the Ephesian secret are entirely dependent on the fact that our blessings are not on earth, but *among the celestials.*

The strongest possible stress, however, is laid on the statement that our blessings are *spiritual.* It is difficult to see how greater emphasis could be given this foundation fact. Ephesians, the fullest exposition of God's present dealings with the nations, opens with this striking declaration, and it is confirmed at every step. The believers among the nations have become joint enjoyers because they were sealed with the spirit of promise (1:13). In flesh, they were apart from Christ (2:12). Access to the Father's presence is by spirit (2:18). We repeat, the mystery itself is limited to the realm of spirit. It is only *in spirit* that we are joint allottees, and a joint body and joint partakers.

The full force of this phrase will not dawn on us until we have fully considered its implications. When we say that our blessings are among the celestials, nothing is actually said of our place on earth, but the mere mention of the higher sphere is the most conclusive evidence that our blessings are *not* on earth. So with the character of our bliss. The word *spiritual* is contrastive. It insists that the physical and the soulish have no place in our blessedness.

In the Kingdom Israel will have spiritual blessings, but they will be mingled with all the delights which we can only sip, because of the frailty of our mortal frames. Disease and death, which crush our efforts to quaff the cup of pleasure to the full, will be defeated. The paradise, the "heaven" of which men dream, will be on earth.

Our blessings are above all this. It is not really right to say that we will have no physical or soulish blessings, because this would indicate a lack, a loss, a deficiency. The positive statement that we have every spiritual blessing, in Christ, gives us the gold that makes silver and copper of no account. So superior is the spiritual bliss that all need, all desire, for the inferior felicity will vanish. At present we do not apprehend this. We long for the lower delights. But they are not ours in Christ. Just as we will be satisfied with being "confined" in a universe and leave the earth for Israel, so we will be supremely content with our transcendent spiritual felicity and leave the physical pleasures to the earthly people.

We must also read this phrase in the light of the previous position of those to whom it was written. They had already enjoyed some spiritual and physical blessings, in anticipation of the future Kingdom, in which they were supposed to have a part. There is a change in two directions. Their place in flesh vanishes and leaves them no title to physical felicity. Their place in spirit develops until it includes the very limits of spiritual bliss.

It is evident that these phrases, "spiritual blessings" and "among the celestials," are new revelations, and denote a change in God's dealings with the believers among the nations. The celestial destiny was not made known before, though much had been revealed in preparation for it, as we shall see when we consider the phrase more closely. So also, the exclusively spiritual character of our blessings had not been previously expressed, yet there had been a constant trend in their direction, from the very first indication that God was doing a distinct work among the nations. They were weaned from the physical gradually. Here we have the climax, for all physical precedence must be set aside in the administration of the mystery.

The general teaching of the Scriptures as to spirit is well worthy of our attention, and may be considered later when we inquire into the subject of spiritual endowments. At present let us consider the theme in connection with the blessing of the believers among the nations through the ministry of Paul, first as it appears on the surface in the

history of his acts, and then as seen in the doctrine of the spirit in his preparatory epistles.

Parabolically, we are given a graphic representation of the retirement of the flesh and the ascendency of the spirit in the apostle's personal career. From his call to his severance at Pisidian Antioch, his ministry was based entirely on his physical presence. He spoke by word of mouth only. He wrote no epistle. Later, when he went among the nations, he supplemented his personal presence by writing to the Thessalonians, and to the Corinthians, and to the Galatians, and to the Romans. But before he writes to the Ephesians he is put in prison. Physically, he is retired from service. Only by his epistles he held spiritual communion with the saints. It is a parable of the spirit's gradual ascendency over his fleshly presence in the ministry.

As we shall see, this is often enforced in his writings, and it is even emphasized in the account of his ministry in Acts. His very severance was by the direct decree of the holy spirit, and he is sent forth in the same way (Acts 13:2,3). This is in undoubted contrast to our Lord's method with the twelve apostles. These He separated and sent forth during His physical presence on the earth.

Those who can see beneath the surface will discover continual intimations of the tendency toward spirit throughout Paul's acts. Consider the marked contrast between his long personal sojourn in Ephesus and his last visit. He did not even go to the site of the city, but called the elders to meet him at Miletus (Acts 20:17). He told them that they would see his face no more. Physically, he faded from their view, never to return. Spiritually, he came to them again in this epistle (for it undoubtedly was sent to Ephesus, too). They were pained to part with him, but who can tell what joy he brought to them in his spiritual return?

The prophecy of Agabus (Acts 21:11) points in the same direction. Its very wording is significant. "This the *holy spirit* is saying, 'The man whose girdle this is, shall the Jews in Jerusalem be binding thus, and they shall be giving him over into the hands of the nations.'" The holy spirit is the speaker. The girdle speaks of service. It was the action of the Jews in Jerusalem which was forcing the flesh to retire. They were compelling Paul to enter a ministry to the nations in which his flesh would have no place. All this is graphically represented, not only by the action of Agabus, but by the actual occurrence.

Have we ever fully realized the meaning of Paul's imprisonment at the close of Acts? Have we comprehended the significance of the fact that the perfection epistles come to us from a *prisoner*—a man who cannot claim or dispense physical benefits, or serve by means of his personal presence? There is a close accord between the circumstance and the substance of all revelation. While Paul's flesh is being confined, his spirit is set free.

THE SPIRIT IN THIS ECONOMY

The great change in the operation of the spirit can be understood only when we carefully consider the force of the terms used. We read of the spirit *coming on* for power, of *filling* for utterance, of *baptism* for cleansing, of *sealing* for safety, of the *earnest* as a pledge, and of *homing* for communion. The first of these, *coming on* for power, Paul never applies to the nations. The last, *homing* for communion, which takes its place, is used only by Paul, in view of the impending climax of Ephesians. Instead of receiving an occasional visitation, the believers among all nations become the permanent home of the holy spirit. This is not for the operation of miraculous displays, but for the maintenance of constant fellowship. Almost all of these are continually confused with the baptism of the spirit, which we will consider first.

THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT

What is the baptism in holy spirit? Aside from the promise given by John the baptist (Matt.3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33) that they would be baptized in holy spirit at the coming of Christ, and our Lord's declaration that they should be baptized with holy spirit at Pentecost (Acts 1:5), we have only one other mention of spirit baptism in the Scriptures. This is Paul's declaration that, "in one spirit we all are baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slave or free" (1 Cor.12:13).

If we allow an interpretation of this phrase which is often heard, that the baptism of the spirit is known only when evidenced by miraculous manifestations, we are confronted with a serious difficulty at the outset. We know that many are members of the body of Christ who have never experienced some of these supernatural signs, yet we are assured by the apostle that *all* who are members of Christ's body have become such by the baptism of the spirit. We must either deny that all who are members of Christ have this baptism or modify our conception of its meaning to accord with the experience of all who are His.

Baptism in water was the type or symbol of the spiritual reality. It spoke of *cleansing* and *union.* It was ceremonial washing, and associated its subjects by a common bond. Saul of Tarsus washed away his sins (Acts 22:16). The sons of Israel were baptized into Moses (1 Cor.10:2). These two thoughts—cleansing and unity—are only typified by water, but realized in spirit. The disciples were cleansed on the day of Pentecost and the believers in Corinth were united into one body by the baptism of spirit.

There is not the least suggestion of power in the term baptism—either in water or in spirit. John the baptist wrought no miracles, neither did his baptized disciples. Those who were baptized by our Lord's followers received

no enduement. His apostles and disciples needed a special commission to enable them to cast out demons, cure the sick, or strengthen the infirm. Their baptism conferred no power. The same is true of the antitype. The baptism of the spirit does not endue the believers with might. It only *cleanses* and *unifies.*

At first sight, this seems to be contradicted by the record in Acts. Did not the Lord say that they would be baptized in holy spirit at Pentecost (Acts 1:5)? And did not the holy spirit come with power, accompanied with tongues of fire and the gift of languages? This is true. At Pentecost they were not only *baptized in* holy spirit, but the holy spirit *came on* them (Acts 1:8) and they were *filled* with holy spirit (Acts 2:4). The power was not due to baptism but to the other manifestations of the spirit's presence.

Consider carefully the two distinct promises given by our Lord concerning Pentecost. First He said, "*You* shall be baptized in holy spirit after not many of these days." Then, when the testimony to the Kingdom is before Him, He says, "But you shall be obtaining *power* at the *coming* of the holy spirit *on* you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in entire Judea and Samaria, and as far as the limits of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Power is not associated with baptism, but with the *on-coming* of the spirit. The figures are opposites. Baptism is a *dipping in.* Power springs from a *coming on.*

The same important distinction is manifest in the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians. The baptism of the spirit is the ground of *unity,* not of *power.* The spirit is the *channel* of the graces, which it gives and operates. What a vast difference between this thought and the *dipping* of all *in* the spirit! O that we could clear away the cloudy conceptions which are confusing so many believers today! The baptism of the spirit has become connected with so much which is unwarranted by the Word that it has become the

cause of division, rather than unity. We beg of all to search and see that *baptism never brings power.* It never is the source of spirit manifestations. It is used only of cleansing and consequent unity.

The perversion of the doctrine of spirit baptism should be a helpful warning to those whose hearts yearn to know and obey the will of God, for it points out how easily we may deflect from the truth unless we use the utmost care and accuracy in considering the inspired records. It shows how easily we may reason from false and insufficient premises, and found a great movement on a figment of human imagination. Power came down at Pentecost. The disciples were baptized in holy spirit at that time. But this does *not* prove that one was the consequence of the other. The fact that power was promised in connection with the coming on of the spirit, and is never associated with baptism, disproves it. Yet what a marvelous movement is based upon this blunder! An untold amount of teaching concerning the operation of God's holy spirit is centered around this serious error. Good men and godly find it a challenge to their faith, and they seek to make it their own. The lesson we should learn is the stupendous importance of trifling departures from the Word. The enemy may use them to deceive and to seduce the very elect.

The great lesson for service in this economy of God's grace is almost the reverse of that which obtains at Pentecost. That power did not continue. Let anyone trace the exhibition of power through the book of Acts and he will be convinced that, as the Kingdom hope vanishes, power also departs. At the beginning the twelve are mightily endued and are able to brave the opposition of their rulers. At the end they have been forced from the holy city and their cause is lost. Only a lone apostle, a prisoner in Rome, remains as God's ambassador. All the power he has, lies in his weakness.

That is the great lesson which is needed today. God's strength is now being perfected in infirmity. God is working with weak instruments so that the glory may be His. Great power would disqualify us. It is one of the special excellencies of grace that it operates more freely in infirmity than in strength. God can, and has, wrought great things through those whom He has empowered. He is doing far greater marvels through the feeble, the faint, those who cannot claim a share in the glory of His achievements. Let us, like Paul at the close of his career, boast in our lack of physical power, for then we are more acceptable servitors of His grace.

THE "COMING ON" OF THE SPIRIT

In ancient times the spirit of the Lord came upon those who were His instruments. Balaam prophesied under its power (Num.24:2). Othniel delivered Israel (Judges 3:10), and Gideon acted in its strength (Judges 6:34). When Samuel anointed David the spirit of Yahweh came upon him from that day forward (1 Sam.16:13). His captain, Amasai, had the spirit come upon him (1 Chron.12:18). The spirit of God came upon Azariah the prophet, and he encouraged Asa to put away the idols out of the land (2 Chron.15:1,8), as well as on Zechariah the priest, who was stoned in the court of the temple (2 Chron.24:20,21). The spirit of Yahweh fell on Ezekiel (Ezek.11:5); He worked, not by an army, nor by power, but by His spirit (Zech.4:6).

This same *coming on* is continued as the *power* of God's operations when Christ and His apostles were proclaiming the Kingdom. He Himself was generated in this way (Luke 1:35). Such was the power of Pentecost (Acts 1:8). But never, in all of Paul's career, does the spirit operate in this way. It is not now an occasional outpouring. The spirit is not outside of us. It dwells in us. It is there, not

to work miracles, but to vivify every act of these mortals bodies (Rom.8:11).

At Pentecost the spirit *came on* them for power, *filled* them for utterance, and they were *baptized in* it for cleansing. The baptism and the filling continue, but the coming on is replaced by another nearer and closer relationship which was not known at Pentecost. Only in Paul's epistles do we read that the spirit is *making its home* in the believers (Rom.8:9,11; 1 Cor.3:16; 2 Tim.1:14). Instead of an occasional visitation it has a settled habitation.

As this operation of the spirit is most important in its contrast with the present method, we give a list of the passages in which it is referred to, so that the student may study them for himself. There is some variety in the imposition of the spirit. It *falls* on the proselytes (Acts 10:44; 11:15). It will be *poured* on Israel and all flesh in the coming Kingdom (Acts 2:17,18) as it was in the past on the believing proselytes (Acts 10:45). It is *placed* on Christ (Matt.12:18). It *remains* on Him (Mark 1:10; John 1:32,33).

THE HOMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Up to the end of Acts the spirit is found ON the saints: from Romans, through Paul's epistles, the holy spirit makes its home IN the members of His body. This change is fraught with far-reaching significance. There is all the difference which we find in Israel's early history, where Yahweh manifested Himself in two distinct methods. He occasionally came upon men, such as Othniel and Gideon, David and Amasai, Zechariah and Ezekiel, energizing them for some superhuman effort. But He also made His home in the holy of holies. One was intermittent and temporary. The other was His permanent abode.

Since sin has invaded the universe God makes His home in inaccessible light (1 Tim.6:16), and in houses specially prepared and sanctified for His presence, such as the tabernacle of the wilderness, the temple of Solomon, the more glorious sanctuary of Ezekiel (Ezek.43), in the person of His Son (John 2:19-21) and, in this economy of transcendent grace, which anticipates the glories of the ultimate consummation, in the bodies of His believing people. In the time to come He will dwell in a temple made of living stones. They will be a part of His abode. We, each one, are His temple.

We need not doubt the reality of His homing in Israel's sanctuaries. Our version is inaccurate in saying that the Most High *dwelleth* not in temples made with hands. He is not now *dwelling,* or making His home in them. It is very true that He does not make His home in Ezra's building (Ezra 6:3), or Herod's house, or the temple of the end time (2 Thess.2:4). But we may be sure that the tabernacle and the temples of Solomon and Ezekiel are hallowed by the Shekinah. In the past He dwelt in houses made by men's hands, and He will deign to do so once again. But now He is not making His home in such structures, but in bodies made by Himself as the Creator and hallowed by the sacrifice of Christ.

The figure of the temple is transferred to our bodies by the apostle. "Are you not aware that you are the temple of God and the spirit of God is making its home in you?" (1 Cor.3:16). As the presence of Yahweh sanctified the temple, so we also are holy because we are His home. This is the true basis and power of holiness. It is not in ourselves, but in Him Who homes in us.

The homing of the spirit is set forth most fully in the eighth of Romans (verses 9-11). There we read, "Yet *you* are not in flesh, but in spirit, if so be that God's spirit is making its home in you . . . . Now if the spirit of Him Who rouses Jesus from among the dead is making its home in you, He Who rouses Christ Jesus from among the dead will also vivify your mortal bodies because of His spirit

making its home in you." This is the marvelous and continual miracle of the spirit in this economy. It gives life to the dead. We should be in constant enjoyment of resurrection power, which makes the body of sin, though dead, the instrument of righteousness.

The spirit homing within us, not only hallows our mortal frame and gives it life, but also guards that which He has committed to us. Paul charged Timothy, "Guard that ideal thing committed to you, through the holy spirit making its home in us" (2 Tim.1:14). These three passages fully set forth the present place of the holy spirit in contrast with its place in the past. Then its presence was occasional and extraordinary. Now it is the normal experience of all believers. Then God dwelt in temples, now He homes in those whom He has hallowed.

THE SEALING AND EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT

The sealing and earnest of the spirit are also exclusively ours. In fact, as both are permanent and the earnest is a foretaste of the very blessings we are considering, these tokens could not be given to other believers. As these phases of the spirit's operation will come before us at length a little later on (Eph.1:13), we will not unfold them at this point.

The full import of the phrase "spiritual blessings" cannot be obtained by reasoning. We are not able to formulate premises from which any safe deductions can be made. This may be illustrated by what may be termed the Kingdom argument, which is as follows: There are spiritual blessings in the Kingdom. We are in the "kingdom" (Col. 1:13). Hence all of the spiritual blessings of the Kingdom are ours. This is beautifully simple and convincingly logical, if only the premises were true.

The "kingdom" in which we find ourselves today is, in some ways, a contrast to the Kingdom of the heavens. That will destroy and displace the kingdoms now on earth. That

will rescue mankind from human rule and deliver them into the Kingdom of Christ, as the Son of Mankind. "The kingdom of the Son of His love" delivers us out of the jurisdiction of darkness into a realm which in no way interferes with our subjection to the powers that be. It is a strictly spiritual kingdom, in opposition to Satan's present sovereignty.

That it is not even the spiritual counterpart of the millennial Kingdom is evident from the title used. The "kingdom" of the *Son* (Heb.1:8) is not to be referred to the thousand years, but to the "eon of the eon"—the succeeding eon, in the new creation. The reason doubtless lies in the fact that, in that future "kingdom" of the Son, unlike the millennium, there will be conciliation. God will be on terms of amity with all mankind. It is not the rule of the iron club, but of the scepter of the *Son*—a title of relationship and affection. Such is the future type of the present "kingdom" of the Son of His love (Col.1:13).

Without repeating all that we have written on the subject of the heavenly kingdoms, we wish to press the two great phases of the future sovereignty of the earth and their spiritual counterparts, so that we may not be misled by mistaken analogies.

As to *time*, let us note that the *Priest*-Kingdom of Christ and His saints is for the thousand years. This is commonly called the millennium. Let it be clearly noted that this has two distinct aspects toward the nations. It is a Melchizedek reign. Christ and Israel are intermediaries between God and the nations. They are *Priests* as well as Kings.

The spiritual counterpart of this period is found in Paul's earlier ministries, when he as a *priest* ministered the evangel of God to the nations, and as an ambassador conveyed the decrees of the elders to his converts. During this interval we find the powers of the coming Kingdom exercised by Paul himself and by those who received his message. There was blessing in body and soul as well as in spirit, but all in subordination to Israel.

But the reign of the saints is not limited to the millennium. That is only the first phase of the coming Kingdom. They are to reign for the eon of the eons, *but not as priests.* Priesthood vanishes in the new creation. The power of God's Christ is replaced by the loving sway of His *Son.* The present "kingdom" is the spiritual anticipation of this sovereignty. Hence it is called "the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Col.1:13). The figure is continued in Colossians, for we are said to have deliverance and the pardon of sins, *in this "kingdom."*

Christendom has confused the spiritual counterparts with the future fulfillments, so that the coming Kingdom has been spiritualized away. Others have reversed this process, and have tried to make the Kingdom a present reality. Let it be ours to separate the coming phases, the Kingdom of Christ for a thousand years, the sovereignty of the Son, for the final eon, and the kingdom of the Father, after the eons are past. And let us also distinguish the anticipatory spiritual fulfillments. The Kingdom of Christ, and the powers of the millennial era do not illustrate *our* blessing. *The succeeding "kingdom" of the Son speaks of the present grace.* We are in a new creation.

Beyond this, let us note that the present "kingdom" is a figure of speech. There are certain points of likeness between that which we enjoy and that which will be the position of the nations in the new creation. We are not at liberty to define these similarities. This is done for us by the spirit. The nations at that time will not be rescued from their human governors. Neither are we. They will be liberated from the thralldom of Satan and his hosts. So are we. We are rescued out of the jurisdiction of darkness (Col.1:13).

Godward, they will have deliverance and the pardon of sins. *Considering ourselves under the figure of this "kingdom" of the Son,* we also have these blessings, for they are the only means of conciliation known to government.

These two aspects are the only ones which we have any right to press without doing violence to the laws of language and the Word of God. There are aspects of that "kingdom" of the Son which have no counterpart in the present. Indeed, they are contrary to this administration. For instance, Israel will still rule over the nations. That must not be imported into the present grace. Likewise, there will be physical felicities at that time to which we are strangers. These are not elaborated in the figure, hence we may lawfully deduce that they are *not* a part of the picture.

Even now, therefore, we have spiritual blessings among the celestials, though we have no physical blessings among terrestrials. Unknown, despised on earth, yet we are the first of its inhabitants to be freed from the fearful influence of the powers of darkness, who are hurrying humanity to its doom. They already recognize us as the supreme sovereigns of the universe, to whom, as members of the body of Christ, is pledged the pinnacle of creature bliss.

The negative implications of this great declaration are of tremendous practical importance. The mere statement that our blessings are among the celestials, rules out the terrestrial felicities of the favored nation. And the fact that they are spiritual, sets aside the soulish, sentient, sensual, as well as the fleshly and material, which have so large a place in Israel's promised Kingdom. And the great exemplars given us in Philippians fully confirm this truth. None of them were noted for either health or wealth. On the contrary, Paul dilates on his distresses, Timothy has frequent infirmities, and Epaphroditus lingered near the doors of death. These men gave a living expression to the great motto which appears above the portal to present truth:

SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS AMONG THE CELESTIALS.

A. E. Knoch

ONE GOD AND ONE LORD

THE SCRIPTURAL EXPRESSIONS FOR "GOD" signify neither supremacy nor unoriginatedness of being. And, these terms may be used either in a relative sense or in an absolute sense—even when used in a literal sense and in a faithful sense. "God" is a title which speaks of Subjectorhood or Placership.

Ultimately speaking, "there is no other God except *One*" (1 Cor.8:4). "The *Head* of Christ is *God*" (1 Cor. 11:3). The God and Father of the believer is also "*the God of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Eph.1:17). We believe, then, that the Supreme God is the One Whom the apostle Paul terms "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph.1:3), Whom Christ Himself terms "the *only* true God" (John 17:3).

While we believe "even if so be that there are many being termed 'GODS,' whether in heaven or on earth, even as [there is a sense in which] there are many gods, and many lords, nevertheless for us there is *one* God, *the Father,* out of Whom all is, and we for Him, *and* one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is" (1 Cor.8:5,6).

It is revealed that, in Christ, "the entire complement of the Deity is dwelling bodily" (Col.2:9). If the entire complement of the Deity, however, *dwells in* Christ, this does not make Christ God, any more than if the entire complement of a salesman's samples are contained in a box, the box is the salesman's samples. The box remains the entity containing the samples, not the samples themselves.

It is revealed as well that Christ, before taking the form of a slave and coming to be in the likeness of humanity,

"being inherently [lit., "inhering"] in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God" (Phil.2:6). This fact, however, again, is no proof that He is God but is rather a disproof of any such proposition. One who is equal with another is not the other but himself. Equality between *two,* regardless of their nature and regardless of the particulars of that equality, is not a proof of identity but of its denial. Equality always denies identity, and must ever be relative, else it becomes identity. Then, it is no longer equality. If Christ our Lord, in some respect, is equal with God, this proves that Christ is not God and that God is not Christ.

"The Word" of God in John 1:1 may well have in view not only God's personified Word, Christ, but His written word as well. In any case, "THE WORD was *toward* God." Any sense, then, in which it is correct to say that "the Word *was* God," must be compatible with the Word's being, first of all "*toward* God." This fact precludes the Word's being literally and identificationally God, and entails Its being God only figuratively, in a representative sense. Hence it is simply incorrect to reason that if in John 1:1 Christ is the Word, it follows that He is therein affirmed to be God, in either a literal or absolute sense.

Since we wish to consider the nature of God's being according to the claims both of Trinitarianism and Modalism, a word needs to be said concerning the English word "being" itself. One who has "being," merely speaks of one who *exists* or *is* (*cp* Heb.11:6). Similarly, an "entity" is that which has existence. And, the modern term "person" simply means a being characterized by conscious apprehension, rationality, and a moral sense, whether or not a corporeal being or a human being. Anything that *has* being, is anything that has existence. But when we speak of *a* being, we mean a "person," the expression "person" being understood in accord with the definition stated above. In this

sense, then, God is a "Person." "Personal" qualities are those characteristics which pertain to a person; specifically, conscious apprehension, rationality, and moral sense.

Academic Trinitarians, however, do not use the word "person" in the sense presented above. This has resulted in much confusion. This is especially so since ordinary folk who feel obliged to believe in "the Persons of the Godhead" are unaware what this very phrase is supposed to mean.

The teaching of Trinitarianism is that God is one Being, existing eternally in three hypostases: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. More succinctly stated, God exists in three hypostases.

"Hypostasis" is the formal, theological equivalent for the popular term "person." In Trinitarian theology, that which is to be understood by the latter expression, is that which is defined by the former. The Trinitarian definition of "person" is, "one of the three modes of being in the Godhead; a hypostasis."[1] The word "hypostasis," itself, simply means that without which something cannot be, the "*essential* nature of anything; a subject in which attributes are conceived to inhere, or a . . . *mode* of existence."[2] A hypostasis, then, is an "essentiality."

It needs to be emphasized that the orthodox Trinitarian does not affirm that God is both one and three in the same sense. He rather affirms that within the one God there are three distinct "Persons," each one of Whom is uncreated and of the same essence or nature (any distinctions between the three being ones of service or office). By "person," however, the knowledgeable Trinitarian does *not* mean a literal person, in the sense of an actual, living being; instead, he uses the word "person" strictly in an

1. Webster's New International Dictionary, second edition, unabridged; p.1828.
2. ibid., p.1229.

accommodated sense as a token for the technical "hypostasis" (i.e., essentiality).

Consequently, then, more clearly stated, God is one Being, existing eternally in three essentialities: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Briefly, God exists in three essentialities.

The Trinitarian, if he would maintain a viable monotheism and yet avoid adopting opposing views, has no recourse but to affirm that these three essentialities are *modes of* the same Being, three modes in which God *always and actually exists* (not to be confounded with Modalism, the opposing doctrine which affirms a plurality of divine modes merely in the sense of divine roles in which God Himself is *sometimes presented*).

To be consistent, orthodox Trinitarianism must affirm and does affirm,[3] that by the "Trinity" they mean that God has His existence in three distinct modes, each of which being marked by a certain, "personal" quality. These modes are denominated, respectively, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

It is confusing, however, for Trinitarians to claim that these three hypostatic (i.e., essential) modes are "distinct but not separate." This is because "distinct" and "separate" are synonyms. It is only a question of idiom whether we use one term or the other. What the Trinitarian actually means to say, however, by the slogan "distinct but not separate," is that while there are distinctions which separate what is to be *understood* concerning each hypostasis, one from another, nonetheless these distinctions do not constitute any of the three hypostases separate *beings*.

Even so, if the three hypostases termed the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are in fact three modes or ways

3. "In theological language we would define a person [i.e., a hypostasis] as a mode of subsistence which is marked by intelligence, will, and individual existence" (Loraine Boettner, Studies in Theology, chapter 3, "The Trinity," p.109; Presbyterian and Reformed: Philadelphia).

in which God subsists (i.e., continues to exist), then it follows that each itself, literally speaking, is not God Himself. Each of these three cannot literally be God, but rather a mode *of* God's existence, a way in which *God* subsists. It would only be, wherever any of these are termed God, or spoken of as God, that we are to understand, by figure of association, God Himself.

Trinitarians, indeed, as a shibboleth, insist on declaring, "Jesus is God." Yet however important this affirmation is conceived to be as a righteous slogan, such is not actually an accurate statement of Trinitarianism itself.

An outsider might reasonably suppose that by the affirmation "Jesus is God," the Trinitarian means to say that Christ is the Deity, the one true God. The Trinitarian's actual claim, however, is that the Son, Christ Jesus, even as the Father and the Holy Spirit, is a hypostasis or essential mode in which God subsists. That is, Christ Himself is not a Being or Person, but is instead an aspect *of* a Being or Person.

One who believes such a proposition cannot, apart from self-contradiction, also believe that Jesus, in a literal, identificational sense, *is* God.

Yet they do wish for Christ to have "full Godness," including, by all means, uncreatedness, together with no immanent subordinancy to the Father, only "economic" subordinancy. They also wish for both the "Father" and the "Holy Spirit" to have full Godness, including uncreatedness, whatever Their respective administrative offices. And, they wish for there to be only one actual Being Who is God.

With such a wish list, however, the Trinitarian simply has no alternative but to conceive the Deity as a Being comprised of three hypostatic (i.e., inherently essential) modes, three *person-like aspects* that *have* being, but do not, individually in themselves, constitute *a* Being. Simply stated, God consists of three person-like aspects, one of Whom (or rather, of Which) is Christ.

But from this it follows that none of these three, including Christ, is an actual Being. Therefore, as presented in Trinitarianism, Christ is not a Person in the actual sense of the word but a Thing. Specifically, according to such a system, Christ is not, identificationally, God, but is only God, synecdochically speaking (i.e., by near association), the partial Thing being put for the whole Being. This hardly makes Christ "fully God," but only ("fully" or otherwise) an *aspect of* God.

Indeed, the knowledgeable Trinitarian affirms that not only the word "person" but all nouns and pronouns in reference to the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit, are not literal (which would make them references to actual Beings), but are "accommodations," mere anthropomorphisms.

MODALISM: JESUS ALONE IS GOD

In considering the claims of Modalism as to how it is that "Jesus is God," it is helpful to note that Modalists rarely if ever explicitly distinguish the figurative, representative "is" from the literal, identificational "is." Accordingly, in certain instances, at least to many, it may not be clear which of these two senses Modalists have in view. Indeed, one often wonders whether it is clear even in Modalists' own minds which sense they have in view, or even if they make this distinction at all.

No being "is" another being, literally speaking. And, there is one God, Who is a Being. It follows, then, were it to be affirmed that Christ is the Deity (is Yahweh Elohim, is God) representatively and that God alone is a Being, it could only be that by the term, "Christ," a representative *thing* is put for the One represented. Hence, in such a case, in saying that Christ is God, one would not be speaking in a literal, identificational sense, identifying a named *person* with one of his titles, but in a representative sense, identifying some*thing* that somehow pertained *to* a person with the person himself.

This, however, is not the Modalist position; nor is it the Modalist's claim. Instead, the Modalist's notion and assertion is that the Being, Christ, is actually God Himself. Accordingly, the Modalist likewise claims that "the Father" is only a character or role in which *Jesus* is sometimes *presented.* But from this, since no being is another being, it follows that no such Being as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ actually exists. This is because if Jesus is God the Father, "God the Father" is a character or role, not a being. To say otherwise would be to say that there are two beings each of whom are God, which is to say there are two Gods, which is impossible since there is one God.

Modalists, however, in addition to affirming that Christ is identificationally the Deity, *also* affirm that Christ is a theophany, a visible manifestation of God; God manifested in a physical form in flesh; God appearing in the form of a man. Thus, Christ is the form of God; He is the *form* in which God *appears.*

The Modalist acknowledges that God is spirit, and that He Himself does not have a body. The Modalist acknowledges as well that the form in which God appears is a body, and that that form is not only an appearance but a real human body.[4]

The claim that Jesus is God manifest in flesh, may be restated as God is *manifested in* the flesh of Jesus. From this, however, it only follows that God is *represented by*

4. "Since God is an invisible Spirit and is omnipresent, He certainly does not have a body as we know it . . . . Jesus is God manifest in flesh . . . . The New Testament records no theophanies of God in human form outside of Jesus Christ. Of course, He was not just God appearing in the form of a man, but He was God clothed with a real human body and nature . . . . God manifested Himself in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ" (David K. Bernard: The Oneness of God,Word Aflame Press, Hazelwood, Missouri, 1983), pp.12,27,40,302.

Jesus, which is to say that Jesus, *representatively speaking,* is God. But from this it does not at all follow that Jesus is literally, identificationally, the Deity. The Modalist's error is that He claims that Jesus is literally God, and offers as proof the proposition that Jesus is figuratively God. If the Modalist grasped his error here and were consistent, he would soon repudiate Modalism.

If the Modalist's claim were simply that Christ is representatively God and that He is the Image of God, he would be affirming our position, not his own. But if his claim instead is that Christ is identificationally God, he is denying that the God and Father of Christ is a Being; that is, he is denying that the God and Father of Christ, Himself exists.

Such a proposition, however, is impossible, for "there is no other God except One . . . . the Father, out of Whom all is" (1 Cor.8:6). It should further be noted that since Christ is the *Image* of the invisible God (2 Cor.4:4; Col. 1:15), He cannot be God Himself. Whatever its particular nature, whether an image is an entity or a being, it is always a copy, not an original. Since Modalists themselves acknowledge that Christ is a Being, and must affirm with the Scripture that He is an Image, it follows that He is not the One Whom the Image represents, God Himself, but is a Being distinct from God. Christ, then, the Image of God, is not God, but a Being Who represents and reflects God.

Modalists acknowledge that "God" is a term which speaks of a Being, and that "Christ" is a term which speaks of a Being. What they deny, however, is that these two expressions refer to two Beings. Instead, Modalists insist that these two expressions refer to the same Being. That is, Modalists deny that God is one Being and that Christ is Another. Indeed, since Modalists insist both (1) that Christ *is* God, and (2) that there is only *one* Being Who is God, they have no recourse but to claim that the expressions

"God" and "Christ" refer to the same Being. Accordingly, when declaring that "Christ is God," Modalists use the word "Christ" as a term of *identification* for God, even as we use the words "Abraham Lincoln" to identify the man who was President of the United States during the Civil War. Even as it was declared, "Abraham Lincoln is President," Modalists declare, "Jesus Christ is God."

From the premises Christ is God and there is one God, it follows that the titles "Father" and "Son" are not titles, respectively, of One Who is the Father and of Another Who is the Son, but of One Who is both the Father *and* the Son. According to Modalism, this One is Christ Jesus. Hence the basic Modalist claim, "Jesus is God."

Accordingly, Modalists also claim that all the divine names and titles of Scripture are names and titles of Jesus, Who is God Himself. Whether in reference to various *roles* in which He serves or *modes* in which He is manifested, Modalists reason that since every divine name or title is a name or title of God, and Jesus is God, every divine name or title is a name or title of Jesus. It is on this basis that Modalists claim that "Jesus is the Father," and, "Jesus is the Son." Their thought is that, representatively speaking, "the Father" is Jesus, and "the Son" is Jesus. That is, the expression "the Father" is a term which represents Jesus in a certain role, and the expression "the Son," likewise, represents Jesus in a certain role.[5] As we have already shown, however, in making such claims, Modalists are quite mistaken.

5. "The fact that Jesus is God is as firmly established in Scripture as the fact that God is one . . . *the Scripture* identifies Jesus as the same being as God—the same being as the Father . . . . the three terms . . . [Father, Son] and [Holy Ghost] . . . . indicate three different roles, modes, functions, or offices through which the one God operates and reveals Himself . . . . *the* Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are manifestations of the one God with no distinctions of person being possible"; ibid., pp.55,125,211,252.

GOD'S IMAGE AND EXPRESSION

God in Himself is invisible and inaudible (1 Tim.1:17; John 5:37; *cf* Heb.11:26,27). God is spirit (John 4:24), without intrinsic form or shape. God is omnipresent, filling heaven and earth (Jer.23:24), pervading the universe (Psa.139:7,8). In Himself, He is indiscernible and unknowable by ones such as ourselves, limited by sentient faculties. If God would make Himself known, revealing Himself to our sight and hearing, He needs an Image, an Expression, a Mediator between Himself and mankind. *That which fills* this need—"the complement of the Deity" (Col.2:9)—dwells bodily in the One Who is His Christ, His only-begotten Son, Christ our Lord.

Christ's glory consists not in being the Deity but in revealing the Deity to us. Even as John so gloriously declares, He "tabernacles among us, and we gaze at His glory, *a glory as of an only-begotten from the Father,* full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

The Scriptures reveal that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt.16:16). Since our Lord is God's *Christ* (i.e., Anointed) and Son, it follows that He is not God. All would acknowledge that the fact that Solomon was David's *son,* proves that Solomon was not David. Yet due to the blinding power of tradition, few are able to see that, just as surely, the fact that Jesus is the *Son* of God, likewise proves that He is not God.

Instead of simply affirming that Christ is the Son of God, orthodoxy has instead claimed that while it is true that Christ is God's Son, it is also true that He is God Himself. Thus it is claimed that Christ is *fully* Man *and fully* God.

Yet since such a proposition is self-contradictory, it is not only false but also incoherent. Even so, from the days of the early church councils, the teaching of the "deity of Christ" has been deemed essential truth. Accordingly,

the advocates of this teaching have made countless arguments in its defense.

Since the Scriptures expressly declare that Jesus is indeed God's Christ and Son, the orthodox themselves must acknowledge that this is so. Yet what they have *also* affirmed, *besides* His being the Christ and the Son of God, is that Jesus is God Himself. Ironically, by insisting that Jesus is God, traditionalists have effectually denied the very truths which they formally affirm, our Lord's divine Christhood and Sonship.

The primary stratagem in defense of the Trinitarian teaching that Jesus is "God, the Son," has long been the artful claim that Christ has "two natures." According to one of these natures, He is human; according to the other, He is God. He is God-Man; that is, He is both Man *and* God.

In the fourth ecumenical council, held in Chalcedon (modern Kadiköy, Turkey) in 451 A.D., not only were the earlier creeds of Nicaea (321) and of Constantinople (381; subsequently known as the Nicene Creed) approved, but Pope Leo I's *Tome* confirming two distinct natures in Christ was also approved, over against the teachings of those who denied this papal dogma. "The overall effect [of these and other rulings] was to give the church a more stable institutional character."[6] Yet however effective this council may have been in the service of organized religion, it was only one of the many formalized departures from scriptural truth which have obtained throughout church history.

"The unique glory of Christ Jesus as the Mediator of God and mankind has often been obscured by explanations made in defense of 'the deity of Christ.' In his book entitled, The Lord From Heaven, Sir Robert Anderson says, 'With us, therefore, the issue is a definite and simple one, namely, whether Christ is God or only man.' This statement neither defines nor clarifies the theme, for the evidence is abundant on both sides. Moreover, this declaration disregards the special place of Christ as the divine Link between God and man. The Scriptures are emphatic concerning His work of mediation. 'There is *one* God, and *one* Mediator of God and mankind, a Man, Christ Jesus . . .' (1 Tim.2:5). Those who make Him either Deity absolute or merely human must do so by avoiding this truth and all the divine explanations of those relationships by which Christ bridges the chasm between us and God.

6. "Council of Chalcedon," The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th edition, vol.2, p.711.

"All saints believe that, in some sense, Christ is a Mediator between God and man. Some hold Him to be absolute Deity, yet are compelled to acknowledge some limitations. Others make Him a mere man, yet more than all other men. His true place is seldom clearly defined. The solution lies in the great truth that our Lord is unique, quite unlike any other personage in the universe. We do not need to effect a compromise between the conflicting views concerning Him, for both are wrong, though each contains elements of truth. Let us not allow such explanations to rob us of the Mediator, the Christ we need.

"The key to His present constitution is very simple. He is derived from two distinct sources. His spirit is directly from God, unlike any other man. His body, however, is purely human. His soul, which is the consciousness resulting from this combination, is a thing unmatched, capable of direct communion with the Supreme Spirit, and condescending to the corrupt condition of mortal men.

"The point we wish to press is this, that the likeness of Christ to God, instead of incorporating Him into the so-called 'Godhead,' is itself the most satisfying evidence that He is not the Supreme. Nothing is similar to itself, except in a rhetorical figure. Likeness disappears in iden-

tity. Nor can this be limited to 'personality,' for Christ and God are alike apart from 'personality.'"[7]

MYTHICAL CLAIMS

The claim that Christ has a "dual nature" is central not only to Trinitarianism but to Modalism as well. Hence, according to this theory too, Christ is "both fully God and fully man at the same time."[8] Indeed, Modalists suppose that nearly all that militates against their position may be shown to be false either by claims such as that the Father is a role not a Being, or by the claim that Christ has two natures.[9]

For example, in explaining the plaintive words, "My God! My God! Why didst Thou forsake Me?" (Matt.27:46) the Modalist insists that we are to understand that this was only Jesus' "human nature" crying out.[10]

If it should be suggested that if Jesus is God and since He prayed to God this would entail His praying to Himself, the Modalist's ready reply is that, rather, what transpired was that the human nature of Jesus prayed to the

7. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.74, pp.147,148.

8. David K. Bernard: THE ONENESS OF GOD, Word Aflame Press, Hazelwood, Missouri, 1983, p.88.

9. For the Modalist, "either the multiple attributes and roles of God or the dual nature of Jesus Christ," are the explanation of (i.e., the means which he employs to set aside) all that would otherwise debar his position; ibid., *cf* p.135.

10. ibid., *cf* pp.146-234, especially pp.170-198. The author considers a wide range of texts which, to non-Modalists, plainly preclude Modalism. The essence of his justification of Modalism in the face of all such passages of Scripture is simply that "Jesus had two natures—human and divine, flesh and Spirit, Son and Father" (p.198) . . . . The New Testament . . . teach[es] the dual nature of Jesus Christ and this is the key to understanding the Godhead. Once we get the revelation of who Jesus really is— namely, the God of the Old Testament robed in flesh—all the Scriptures fall into place" (p.232).

divine spirit of Jesus that dwelt in Him. Similarly, when Christ died on the cross, it is affirmed not that *Christ* (Who, it is claimed, is God) died, but only that the human body of Christ died, the divine spirit leaving the human body only at death.

Our response to all such ingenious claims, is that no passage of Scripture either declares or entails any such thing as the "dual nature" of Christ, or the proposition that "Christ is fully God and fully man." "The dual nature of Christ," then, is not of faith; it is rather merely an artful contrivance, concocted in the first place in an attempt to support a false theory. The very idea for which it seeks to stand is irrational and absurd.

"Nature" is a singular concept; it speaks of one's inherent character or basic constitution. Whatever the particulars of one's nature may be, one who is fully one thing is not fully another. A mule may be the progeny of a donkey and a mare, but it is "fully" neither of these. It is the offspring of its parents; its nature incorporates elements from each; but its nature is not fully the same as either.

"Christ is the *Mediator* Who links humanity with its Creator, so that He is neither man nor God in an absolute sense, yet He is either in a relative one. The combination is not that of two 'natures' which can never be harmonized, but that of body and spirit, the same elements which unite perfectly to form the souls of all other men. His humanity consists in a body derived from Adam through the virgin Mary, His human mother. His deity consists in a vivifying spirit directly from God. These two fuse freely to make a Man unique (1 Tim.2:5) and a God unparalleled—the peerless Man and the only begotten God (John 1:18)."[11]

"THERE IS ONE GOD . . . AND ONE LORD"

It is revealed that "There is one God, *the Father,* out

11. A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.21, p.222.

of Whom all is . . . *and* one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is" (1 Cor.8:6). The appositive, "the Father," identifies Who the one God is. The only true God, then, is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (*cf* John 17:1-3). Hence we are "to be slaving for the living and true God, and to be waiting for His Son out of the heavens, Whom He rouses from among the dead, Jesus, our Rescuer out of the coming indignation" (1 Thess.1:9,10).

Yet the teaching of Modalism affirms that Jesus Himself in an ultimate sense is not the Son of the living and true God but is the living and true God Himself. In support of this teaching, it is claimed that the Greek word *kai* has two significations, in most cases, simply that of conjointness (i.e., "and"), but in some cases, that of identification (i.e., "even," in the sense of "that is," or "which is the same as"). Accordingly, Modalists claim that 1 Corinthians 8:6 should be translated, "There is one God . . . *even* one Lord, Jesus Christ."

The claim is that sometimes when *kai* stands between a noun and a preceeding noun it identifies the latter expression as being essentially the same as the former. Since Modalists already believe that Christ is one and the same Being as God, they suppose that this notion that *kai* sometimes means "the same as" gives support to their basic claim.

The fact that in certain passages which speak of God and Christ together, the Authorized Version sometimes renders *kai* as "even," further confuses the issue while, at least to some, seeming to give credence to Modalism. It should be noted, however, that even in such cases the AV only renders *kai* as "even" in reference to God as "Father"; it does not translate *kai* in such a way so as to identify God as actually being Christ Jesus (e.g., 2 Corinthians 1:3, "God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"; where the CV is "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," *cp* Eph.1:3; 1 Pet.1:3).

It does not follow that because a prima facie-reasonable translation can be made by saying, as in 2 Corinthians 1:3, "God, even [*kai*] the Father . . ." that the purpose of *kai* in such a passage is to *identify* God as being the same Being as the Father.[12] While it is true that God is the same Being as the Father, the fact that these two expressions often appear together, joined by *kai* ("and"), is no proof that this is so. The point of the *kai* is that the Deity is both our Placer *and* our Father. Similarly, He is both our Saviour *and* our Lord, even as, under God, Christ is *both* of these to us as well.

Even so, many Modalists imagine that the various greetings in Paul's epistles should be translated along these lines: "Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, *even the Lord Jesus Christ*" (e.g., 2 Cor.1:2), the sense being that "God, our Father" is one and the same Being as "the Lord Jesus Christ." It should be noted that Modalists do not claim that the phrase "grace and peace" should be rendered "grace, even peace," as if grace and peace were the same, yet they turn about and claim that the phrase "God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ" should read "God, our Father, *even* the Lord Jesus Christ," as if these Two were the same Being.

It simply is not true that the reason why Paul conjoins "God, our Father" with "the Lord Jesus Christ" is for the purpose of identifying the former Being as one and the same as the latter. Indeed, since God is the God and Father *of* Christ, it is simply impossible for Him to also be Christ Himself. This consideration alone debars any claim that *kai* may be rendered "even" in the various greetings found in Paul's epistles from God our Father *and* the Lord Jesus Christ.

12. Additional texts in which the AV translates *kai* as "even" in reference to God as "Father" are 1 Corinthians 15:24, James 3:9, and 1 Thessalonians 3:13.

The simple fact is that *kai* corresponds to our "and," and does not mean "even." Indeed, in cases where one word or phrase is to be identified with another, the Greek particle *per*—which does correspond to the English identificational "even"—is used, not the connective *kai.* For example, "Now at the festival he released to them one prisoner, *even* whom they requested" (Mark 15:6). Similarly, "Thou dost give them blood to drink, *even* what they are deserving!" (Rev.16:6).

THE GREAT GOD AND OUR SAVIOUR

While in the Concordant Version, "even" is used in a number of passages to translate *kai* (i.e., AND), almost none of these are the "and" of parallelization, but that of ascendency (e.g., Jude 23) or of argument (2 Cor.4:16). Further, it is not that a certain word or phrase preceded by another word or phrase and joined by *kai* could not possibly be set in parallel, but that such a usage is exceedingly rare. In fact, we know of only one such passage, Titus 2:13, "anticipating that happy expectation, *even* [*kai*] the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ."

It is not that *kai* itself ever signifies the idea of "even." It is rather, as in Titus 2:13, that when two clauses joined by *kai* are used as parallels (as sometimes in Hebrew poetry, where one idea is expressed in two different ways), idiomatic translation requires the use of "even."

The parallel in view here in Titus 2:13 is between, clause one, "that happy expectation," and, clause two, "*and* the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ . . . ." Thus, the evident elliptical phrase in clause two is supplied by clause one itself, the sense of the whole being as follows: "*and* the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ [*is that happy expectation*]."

Modalists, however, reasoning that if it is proper thus

to set "that happy expectation" in parallel to the advent of the glory of Christ, it is proper as well within this same verse, to identify the phrase "the great God" with the following phrase, "our Saviour, Jesus Christ." Thus Modalists claim that this verse in its entirety should read, "anticipating that happy expectation, *even* the advent of the glory of the great God, *even our Saviour, Jesus Christ.*"

It is true that "the great God," here, is indeed "our Saviour, Jesus Christ." But it is not true that Jesus Christ is herein "identified as God," in the ordinary sense of this expression, whether by means of the conjunction *kai* or otherwise. That Christ is the great God referred to here, does not make Him the supreme God, the Deity Himself.

Modalists reason as if it follows, since through the use of the word *kai* our happy expectation is declared to be the advent of Christ's glory, that through the use of the word *kai* here as well, then, the words "the *great* Placer" may somehow be construed to be in reference to "the *supreme* Placer," and, that the supreme Placer or God thus contemplated is Jesus Christ! The fact, however, that the *kai* of parallelization, however rare, is itself a legitimate usage, is no indication that it is present in any certain construction.

Since, for the many reasons we have presented, we may be certain that Christ is *not* God and God is *not* Christ, we may be certain as well that it is only an empty claim that any such usage of *kai* is present either in Titus 2:13 in the phrase "the great God and *our* Saviour, Jesus Christ," or in any of the various phrases within the Pauline greetings in which "God" is conjoined with "Christ."

GOD AND CHRIST

In Titus 1:4, the Concordant Version, as is ordinarily the case, translates *kai* as "and" ("Grace and peace from God, the Father, *and* Christ Jesus, our Saviour"). One would suppose that such a rendering is hardly to be faulted. Nonetheless, some adamantly claim that this translation is

"inconsistent" and "wrong." Such ones insist that this verse should read, "Grace and peace from God, the Father, *even* Christ Jesus, our Saviour."

In Titus 1:4, however, there is no reason to suppose Paul wants to explain in different words what he says in the first clause. In this case, he adds a new thought by saying grace and peace also come from Christ Jesus our Saviour.

It is true that Paul heralded according to the injunction of God, "our Saviour" (Titus 1:3), and, that in his introduction to this epistle, he includes a word of grace and peace from Christ Jesus "our Saviour" (Titus 1:4). It is true as well that, in an ultimate sense, there is only one Saviour, God (termed Yahweh Elohim in the Hebrew Scriptures), even as that there is a sense in which Christ is the true God, Yahweh Elohim. It hardly follows from these facts, however, that Christ is identificationally God. Nor does it follow that Titus 1:3,4 proves such a proposition to be so, or that verse 4 should be rendered, "Grace and peace from God, the Father, *even* Christ Jesus, our Saviour."

It would certainly accord more with the rest of Scripture, as well as with Titus 3:4-6 where our God and Saviour is said to pour out His blessings *through* Jesus Christ our Saviour, to see God our Saviour as the Source of our salvation and Jesus Christ our Saviour as the Channel. While Christ, then, relatively speaking, is our God (our "Placer") and Saviour, absolutely speaking, He is *not* our God and Saviour.

COMMON MODALIST FALLACIES

Modalism, besides claiming that the Father is *not* God Himself but only a divine role, goes on to claim that, conversely, "Jesus *is* God." Indeed, this latter claim is Modalism's primary contention. Modalists, accordingly, even go so far as to claim that where we read of "the Father," even "the God and Father of Christ," this is actually Jesus presenting Himself in such a role. Similar claims are made as well concerning the Son, and, by many, concerning the Holy Spirit as well. The idea is that since it is *Jesus* Who is actually *God* Himself, and since by "Father," "Son," and "Holy Spirit," we are to understand merely divine roles, inasmuch as these roles are roles of God and Jesus is God, they are therefore roles of Jesus!

This claim, however, is based upon the false premises that the Father is not God Himself but only a divine role, and that Jesus is God Himself. Since the premises are mistaken, the conclusion is wrong.

In order to cover a few remaining points, I wish to present the following dialog between a hypothetical (yet quite typical) Modalist and myself:

Modalist's Claim: God dwells within Christ, Who is God Himself. Christ is God robed in a body of flesh.

My Reply: It is gloriously true that God "dwells" within Christ, which speaks of His special and abiding presence within His Anointed. But it does not follow from this, nor is it true on other grounds, that Christ is God Himself, or is God Himself in a particular form ("robed in a body of flesh"). Indeed, if "Christ" is a *Being* within Whom God dwells, then Christ cannot be God, since if He were there would be two Beings Who are God. But if by "Christ" you mean simply a body of flesh, physical substance, then "Christ" is not a being but a Thing. Yet if "Christ" is a Thing (simply a body, not a Person) within Which God dwells, then He (or rather, It), is not a Being. This, however, cannot be so, for since Christ (not merely Christ's body) has the characteristics of a Being, *He* therefore *is* a Being.

Modalist's Claim: God generated Himself within Christ.

My Reply: If Christ Himself, as I affirm, in opposition to Modalism, is a Being Who is begotten of (or generated by) another Being, God, a Being Who, as a result of generating Christ did not Himself cease to exist, then

Christ is not God but is, as the Scriptures plainly declare, God's Son. Yet if, as is claimed by Modalism, you wish to affirm that in generating Christ, God also "generated *Himself*" within Christ, where He now dwells, this is simply to claim anew your previous claim, which I have already proved to be false.

Modalist's Claim: Christ has two natures; He is fully man and fully God.

My Reply: To say that Christ has two "natures" or is a Being comprised of both God and man, is to say that Christ is a Being comprised of two Beings. Such an assertion cannot be true, since the "nature" of one's "being" is a singular concept. A being's nature may be comprised of many particulars or entities essential to itself, but together they comprise only one nature. One being cannot consist of two beings, for one being, *is* one being, not two. It cannot consist of more than it is. It is as mistaken to say that even if other beings cannot have two natures Christ can have two natures, as it would be to say that if God should make a triangle it can have four sides.

Modalist's Claim: Jesus Christ, He alone is Yahweh Elohim, the God of Israel, the *one* God revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures, apart from Whom there is none else.

My Reply: Of course "Jesus Christ, He alone is Yahweh Elohim, the God of Israel, the one God revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures, apart from Whom there is none else." But it does not follow from this that Christ is *identificationally* Yahweh Elohim, that *thus* He is the one God of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Modalist's Claim: If Jesus Christ is not the one God of Scripture, then there is Another Who is the one God instead. But this is contradictory to what you already have claimed to believe, that Jesus Christ is the one God. You worship not one God but two, and do not really believe that there is one God but two Gods. You teach that there are two Gods; that is idolatry, and you are an idolater.

My Reply: Your argument involves the fallacy of equivocation, and is therefore invalid. Hence your bold claim as well that we are idolaters, is quite unfounded. That is, since we do not affirm that, in addition to the sense in which the Father is God, Christ as well is God in this same sense, it is pointless for you to appeal to what in itself is true, the fact that there is *some* sense in which we believe that there are "many gods" (1 Cor.8:5), and, in certain respects, believe that the title "God" applies to Christ.

When we use an expression in one sense in one place and in another sense in another place, and yet you argue as if we used it in the same sense in both places, you are committing a fallacy of equivocation by failing to note what we actually have done, while arguing *as if* we did what we did not do. Anyone who is convinced by such a claim is guilty of this fallacy, and has been convicted not by truth but merely by a specious argument. The entire notion is simply an illogical inference, not a corollary, and is therefore completely invalid.

The fallacy of equivocation is involved as well in the false conclusion, commonly entertained both by Modalists and Trinitarians, that if there is one Being Who is unoriginated and supreme to Whom the title "God" applies, since this title applies to Christ (e.g., Heb.1:8; Titus 2:13; 1 John 5:20), He is therefore unoriginated and supreme.

May we be graciously granted to be believing that "the only true God" is the One Whom the Lord Jesus Christ Himself addressed as "Holy Father" (John 17:11). In praying to His Father, Christ declared, "Now it is eonian life that they may know Thee, the *only* true God, and Him Whom Thou dost commission, Jesus Christ" (John 17:3).

The only true God is "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory" (Eph.1:17). Hence, "for us there is one God, *the Father,* out of Whom all is . . . *and* one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all is" (1 Cor.8:6). Though indeed, "not in all is there this knowledge" (1 Cor.8:7), may this knowledge be in us so that we may rejoice in our Lord and glorify our God in truth. J.R.C.

BLESSED IN CHRIST

We may read through the accounts of our Lord's life and the Acts without ever encountering the phrase "in Christ"; it is almost exclusively a Pauline thought. Its first occurrence is in Romans 3:24, where our deliverance is said to be "in Christ Jesus." Paul's epistles are full of it, but Hebrews and James do not contain it. In Peter and John, James and Jude it is limited to His earthly glories (1 Peter 3:16; 5:10,14; 1 John 5:20; Jude 1).

All that is ours by grace is "in Christ." Indeed we may say that, by grace, all is ours in Him, even though the blessings are confined to realms celestial. In Him there is deliverance (Rom.3:24), justification (Gal.2:17), no condemnation (Rom.8:1), freedom (Gal.2:3), holiness (1 Cor.1:2), eonian life (Rom.6:11,23), a new creation (2 Cor.5:17), and all our expectation (1 Cor.15:19). It is only as we become acquainted with His worth and high deserts that we can grasp what God has given us, for it is to be lavished upon us, not according to what we are in ourselves, but in harmony with our place in Christ.

Let us exult that our blessings are "in Christ." Were they in us, even in an infinitesimal degree, they would not be sure or satisfactory. Indeed, they would not be blessings worthy of the name. There is nothing in us to deserve them. We have not the power to preserve them. They would have no more value than an unsigned check for many millions. When tempted to doubt our possession of every spiritual blessing among the celestials, all we need to do is to remember that these are in Christ. We cannot doubt His deserts. He is entitled to all that God will give Him, and to all that we will share with Him. Outside of Christ we are mean and miserable. In Him we are rich beyond the dreams of avarice, and blessed beyond all human thoughts of bliss.

A. E. Knoch

BELIEVING THE EVANGEL

THE MESSAGE of Christ crucified was a snare to the Jews (1 Cor.1:23). It by no means met their approval that God's Anointed should fail to remove the Roman yoke of bondage which lay so heavily upon the people. And that He should suffer and die, stumbled them altogether (1 Peter 2:8). To the Greeks, in their perpetual quest for "wisdom" and fondness of intellectual splendor, the heralding of Christ crucified was extremely stupid (1 Cor.1:23). For to them our Lord was merely a dead man hanging on a cross. He was not what men expected the Christ to be. Such a One as He was not acceptable to them, for He did not meet their preconceived standards.

Similarly, that our present salvation in Christ and resultant eonian life and glory should be entirely a gracious gift, and therefore a blessing which is only given to those of God's own choosing, is an altogether unacceptable concept to the great majority of those who are naming the name of the Lord. It is not what they expected the gospel to be, and, in their conceit, many consider it very significant insofar as truth is concerned that they should disapprove of it.

Nonetheless, the evangel of our salvation is that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and roused the third day according to the scriptures (1 Cor.15:3,4); that, in God's reckoning, we were crucified together with Christ, and died together with Him (Rom.6:3,8). The evangel reveals to us that before the disruption of the world, in accord with *His* will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, God had already chosen us in Christ, to be holy and flawless in His sight, and designated us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus (Eph.1:3-6).

A HOLY CALLING

How wonderful it is to know that God saves us and calls us with a *holy* calling, a calling which is to be distinguished from others in which requirements are a factor, for we are saved and called not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian (2 Tim.1:9). What good news this is!

We are called according to the purpose that, those whom God foreknew, He designated beforehand also, to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. Now the truth is, those whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls, these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these He glorifies also (Rom.8:29,30). This is God's message of grace to us, we who are His chosen ones, according to Paul's evangel (Rom.8:32,33; 16:25).

Therefore, evangelization is not to be conceived as an offer of how one may qualify for glory and escape wrath, for it is not an offer at all. Instead, it is simply an announcement, a heralding of these great truths which constitute the evangel of our salvation. *They are all fully true entirely apart from our faith in them and acceptance of them.*

ABRAHAM, FATHER OF US ALL

Abraham is the father of us all in this very respect: God had already chosen Abraham before He made Himself known to him, and had already decided as well just what He would do for him and through him. He *informed* him of His plans: "A father of many nations *have I appointed you*" (Rom.4:17; Gen.17:5); "Thus *shall be* your seed" (Rom.4:18; Gen.15:5); "At I this season' *I shall come 'and there will be* for Sarah a son'" (Rom.9:9; Gen.18:10).

When Abraham believed God's declarations concerning himself, he did not make them true, nor did he thus qualify himself to be the object of His promises (Rom. 4:16-22). He faced the truth, and believed it of the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were (Rom.4:17). For the word of God was already sure. Therefore, it was impossible for Abraham either to qualify or disqualify himself for those things which God had already decided to give him.

Abraham's faith gave him conviction and expectation; it afforded him assurance. For God had already determined what He would bring to pass with regard to Abraham and his seed prior to the time in which He revealed this to Abraham, and quite apart from any of his own opinions in the matter. Indeed, if he had failed to believe God's word to him, while it is true that he thereby would have lost all the power and joy of faith, nevertheless, he would not have nullified God's promises: "For what if some disbelieve? Will not their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? May it not be coming to that!" (Rom.3:3,4). The same would be true in our case, were we to disbelieve. In fact, beyond the message that Christ died for their sins, most believers seem to be full of unbelief concerning the evangel of their salvation. Yet its glorious message remains true on their behalf nonetheless.

According to His will, God graciously grants at least a small measure of faith concerning the work of Christ and His victory over death to all who are His (*cf* 1 Cor.15:10,11; 1 Thess.4:14; Rom.12:3). But whatever faith each one may have as a result, does not make the evangel of his salvation become applicable to him, for it was already applicable to him long before he was born, and certainly long before he first believed. One may possess great riches of which he is ignorant. As with the slaves during the American civil war who heard and believed the news of their emancipation, we do not make the gospel of our salvation true by

believing it. When we believe, we only enter into a realization and appreciation of what is already true.

THE EVANGEL OF THE CIRCUMCISION

In the evangel of the Circumcision (Gal.2:7), in itself, the privilege of life in the terrestrial kingdom in the coming eon is a reward for obedience, and God is a Rewarder therein. It is not a gracious gift, or an unmerited provision. While it is quite true that the obedience of the elect in Christ under the evangel of the Circumcision is due solely to the grace of God, that is another matter.

Those who are worthy to happen upon that eon and the resurrection from among the dead (Luke 20:35), will be requited, or repaid, with the consummation of their faith, the salvation of their souls (1 Peter 1:9). On the other hand, the lawless will be requited with the wages of injustice (2 Peter 2:13). Even those who once fled from the defilements of the world by a recognition of Christ, would find their last state worse than the first if they should again be involved in these. It were better for them not to have recognized the way of righteousness, than, recognizing it, to go back to what was behind, from the holy *precept* given over to them (2 Peter 2:20,21). In all such cases, due to one's having disqualified himself for eonian life, such a course can only lead to eonian death (Heb.6:4-8).

Personal righteousness is a prerequisite for entrance into the kingdom of the heavens (Matt.5:17-20); the workers of lawlessness will be told to depart; only the one who *does* God's will may enter into life in the coming eon (Matt.7: 21-23; 1 John 2:17). In that calling, the Lord's counsel, even to the disciples, was, "If your hand should ever be snaring you, strike it off. It is ideal for you to be entering into life maimed, rather than, having two hands, to come away into Gehenna, into the unextinguished fire" (Mark 9:43).

The "wreath of *life*" is given to the Circumcision believers who endure trial and become *qualified* (James 1:1,12). In essence, the Lord informs them, "Become *faithful* unto death, and I shall be giving you the wreath of *life*" (Rev. 2:10). There is an abundance of testimony, all to this same end, throughout all of the Greek scriptures—except within the epistles of Paul in his presentation of the evangel which is for the members of Christ's body.

In Paul's evangel, with respect to one's being in Christ and receiving eonian life, personal righteousness has no place at all, and is to be deemed as refuse (Phil.3:7-9). In his evangel of grace, insofar as life eonian is concerned, "where sin increases, grace superexceeds" (Rom.5:20,21). This is not true under the evangel of the Circumcision. But it is true according to Paul's evangel for the nations, the evangel of the Uncircumcision (Gal.2:7).

REQUIREMENT, REQUITAL AND REWARD

We need to understand just what it is that constitutes one a merchant, employer or rewarder. Then, if we should find that God exhibits these characteristics with respect to our salvation in Christ, we should freely acknowledge that He is such a one, and not a dispenser of gracious gratuities.

It is a deception to reject or deny terminology which describes one's true position in an accurate way and to claim to believe the scriptural words of the evangel, when, in fact, this is not the case. We do not change the nature of our position by giving it a name which describes something else.

Men will be rewarded, or compensated, for their work, for the deeds that they do (Heb.10:35; Col.3:24). The same is true concerning one's pay or wages: "Lo! I am coming swiftly, and My wage is with Me, to pay each one as his work is" (Rev.22:12). Wages are given to the *worker;* they are a *debt* owed to him, not a gracious gift or favor (Rom.4:4). For ourselves, our own practices, both good and bad, will

"fetch" (*komizō,* FETCH) their own "requital," or repayment (2 Cor.5:10; Eph.6:8).

An employer *requires* that his employee do certain work in order to receive his pay. A rewarder only grants his reward to one who *qualifies* himself for it by meeting the conditions of the *offer.* The idea is that of an *exchange:* this *for* that. One who meets the conditions or stipulations attending such an agreement *obligates* the one making the offer to give it to him in return. By definition, such a relationship between two parties is that of a contract or covenant.

The essential element in all such relationships is that the first party *requires* the second party to do or furnish to him something which upon receipt, obligates the first party to reciprocate, and thus "meet his part of the bargain."

A merchant will say to a customer, "In return for your money, I will give you my goods"; or, "Except you give me your money, I will not give you my goods." It is merely incidental that the merchant's requirement, in this example, is that of money. For it is not the nature of his requirements that makes him a merchant, but the sheer fact that he imposes requirements upon the dispensing of his goods, and will not give them out unless the requirements are met.

There is nothing at all dishonorable as to one's being a merchant, if this should be the case. But if anyone, *according to his own policies,* is indeed a merchant, neither he, nor we, should try to deny this.

It must be understood that in all such instances as we have illustrated, one *does* act as a merchant (or, as an employer or rewarder), and not at all as a dispenser of gracious gifts. He by no means gives his goods away gratuitously; for he insists that all who would acquire them meet the established conditions.

FAITH MAKES THE EVANGEL KNOWN

Therefore, it is not at all proper to attempt to represent

God in our salvation even as a man who presents a gift (such as a valuable watch) to an associate for his acceptance. In this example it is only true *merely in the nature of the case* that if the man would enjoy his benefactor's gift he must accept it. For the benefactor does not at all *require* the man to accept it, nor does he promise to kill him if he should fail to do so! And yet it is insisted that God does require our acceptance of His supposed offer, and that He will at least kill us for a time, if not torment us in fire for all eternity, if we should fail to accept it.

Besides, in this matter of the evangel of our salvation—unlike in the example of the watch—our being endowed with the graces thereof does not even involve our acceptance of the message! *For Christ died for our sins whether we think so or not.* In God's sight, we died to sin when He died for our sakes, even if we should deny this to be true. And, the fact is, God long ago had already chosen those of us who are now in Christ, according to His pre-eonian grace and purpose, designating us beforehand to be conformed to the image of His Son, having set His hand to call us, justify us and glorify us, all in His time.

This is the evangel of our salvation—whether we think so or not! If we are believers at all, we are included, but not because we believe. Our faith affords us assurance of our salvation *in Christ;* it makes the truth known to us. Indeed our being saved out of unbelief is in itself a great saving work of God (*cf* Eph.1:19,20; *cp* Col.1:13).

The evangel of our salvation (*cf* Eph.1:13) is fully true in itself, and entirely apart from whether we should believe some of it, all of it, or none of it. Therefore, let us stop all our ill-disguised proud boastings as to how it is that we, unlike other men, have been good enough to "accept Christ," and thus have saved ourselves from wrath while obligating God to bless us. Such concepts are present, whether expressed or not, whenever salvation is conceived in a con-

ditional way, whenever such "steps" are believed finally to occur because of man's actions rather than God's.

Such inner pride—though in most cases it exhibits itself outwardly as well—may well pass for humility, but only among those of a similar disposition. However pleasantly it may be manifested, it is still a boasting in man, for it adds to the work of Christ. Consequently, the advocates of all such views are following a course that is destructive to faithful service in the Lord, and one's appreciation of the truth of the evangel. For, however unintentionally, in denying the full significance and purpose of the cross of Christ, they have thus become its enemies (Phil. 3:19; *cp* Gal.5:11b).

"Now I am *making known* to you, brethren, the evangel which I bring to you, which also you accepted, in which also you stand, through which also you are [being] saved, if you are retaining what I said in bringing the evangel to you, outside and except you believe feignedly" (1 Cor.15:1,2). Paul made the evangel *known—the evangel that Christ died for our sins, was entombed, and that He has now been roused! If we are retaining this evangel in unfeigned faith, being attentive to it, then it is* having some measure of practical saving influence upon us, cleansing and keeping us in many ways.

Yet if the evangel's significance has become clouded to us through a mistaken belief that it is finally by our own obedience—the cross of Christ notwithstanding—that we fend off God's indignation, we will lose much precious truth of great practical value. For, with such an outlook, our life of faith will necessarily become self-centered, instead of Christ-centered. "Yet God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ dies for our sakes. *Much rather then,* justified now in His blood, *we shall be saved from indignation through Him*" (Rom. 5:8,9). J.R.C.

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 112th Year

(1909–2021)

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 Among the Celestials
111 Whose Faith?
119 Faith Accords with Grace
127 Yahweh is the Only Elohim
137 Justified

THIRD QUARTER, 2021

Volume 112 **Number 3**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

This book traces the divine function of *evil* (whatever is harmful or destructive) from its inception to its consummation, by presenting scriptural solutions to the various long-debated questions concerning God and His sovereignty.

As one of its subjects, it probes and takes issue with the commonly accepted explanation that Satan, and not God, is responsible for evil. To quote the book's author: "Almost all of us are shortsighted. We see the judgments, but fail to recognize that they are only part of God's way with mankind, that they are definitely not an end. We confuse the going with the goal. Judgment is God's strange work. He uses it as a preparation toward a glorious consummation."

The message in this book is especially valuable to us in these days of doubt and distress, to lead men to rely on and rest in God alone.

A. E. Knoch, paperback, 346 pages (ISBN 0-910424-59-4)

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, THIRD QUARTER 2021
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

EDITORIAL

We are privileged to begin this issue with A. E. Knoch's classic writing, "Among the Celestials." We find this work not only to be full of interest but most insightful as well concerning its theme—in respect both to realm and inhabitants:

For us ". . . the highest blessing does not consist in being in a place, however glorious it may be, but rather in a position of beneficence toward others. Our blessings among the celestials will correspond with the exalted opening strain of this epistle [Ephesians]. We will be blessed because we will bless. We do not look for languorous luxury or magnificent mansions, but to be the means of making others happy" (p.101).

In the article, "Whose Faith?" (p.111), Dean Hough responds to this question, saying: "The faith of Ephesians 2:8 is Christ Jesus's faith. This passage stands as the solid foundation of the transcendent riches of God's grace in His kindness to us *in Christ Jesus* just expounded in the preceding verses. These have been expressed in fact verbs: God *loves* us in that He *vivifies* us *together* in Christ and *rouses* us *together* and *seats* us *together* among the celestials in Christ Jesus. We are to see these as settled facts, made certain because they are established and settled *in Christ Jesus.*"

In the exposition, "Faith Accords with Grace," I explain, "With regard to God's declarations and promises concerning ourselves, as with Abraham, God has made them matters 'of faith' *that they may accord with grace* (Rom.4:16). The very *purpose* in their being matters which are of *faith*,

is that they should already be true prior to the time in which we first believe them" (p.122).

In the next article of our current number, "Yahweh is the Only Elohim" (p.127), I consider both the meaning and usage of the title, "ELOHIM": "In the overwhelming majority of the occurrences of ELOHIM . . . this term is *not* used in reference to certain creatures who, in a relative sense, may also bear this title together with the Supreme, but in an absolute sense in reference to Yahweh Himself alone, Who is the supreme and only true God. For example, '. . . Yahweh, *He* is the *only* Elohim. There is *no one else* aside from *Him*' (Deut.4:35). 'So you know today, and you recall it to your heart that Yahweh, *He* is the *only* Elohim in the heavens above and on the earth beneath; there is *no one* else' (Deut.4:39)."

Even so, it is fallacious to suppose "that either supremacy or unoriginatedness is entailed by the word 'God' "—*in itself, as such.* "It is a fallacy as well that wherever the word appears it speaks of the same being. And finally, it is a fallacy that if the word is used in a certain sense in one place, it is used in the same sense in another place" (p.135).

We conclude our current issue with Brother Hough's writing, "Justified" (p.137). "When Jesus our Lord was roused from among the dead the great work of justification had been achieved, not applied to sinners, but achieved for them. He was roused *because of* our justifying (Rom.4:25). When He was roused, the justifying work had occurred already, and thus His rousing became the evidence that our sins have been dealt with (*cp* 1 Cor.15:17) . . . .

"It is out of the faith of Jesus Christ that we are justified. Justification in this literal sense is not merely a declaration of God, decreed on the basis of divine authority for the benefit of certain individuals who have taken the right steps of faith. It is a work that manifests the righteousness of God (Rom.3:21)" (p.142). J.R.C.

AMONG THE CELESTIALS

Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing,
among the celestials, in Christ. (Eph.1:3)

THE Word of God opens with a significant division of the universe into two distinct spheres—the heavens and the earth. Apart from a special purpose in this distinction and a desire to emphasize the celestial sphere, the natural introduction would have embraced all in one term, and we would have read of the creation of the universe as a whole. As the account of creation proceeds, we soon see that it is practically confined to the earth. The sun, moon and stars are mentioned, but only as they are related to the main theme of the passage.

Throughout subsequent revelation, apart from occasional glimpses, such as the celestial session at the commencement of the book of Job, the Scriptures to the Circumcision are concerned with the earth. Only as celestial beings visit, or Satan and his hosts invade, the lower sphere, are we apprized of their existence. Prophets and apostles are all concerned with the restoration of the earth and anticipate a place in the millennial kingdom and the new creation. None of them hint at a celestial destiny; they know nothing of "going to heaven." David did not and will not ascend above, but will have his allotment in the land (Acts 2:34).

The blessings promised to the earth are, to a large degree, physical and soulish. The climate will be made comfortable and salubrious, the soil will be fertile, so that the vine, the fig and the olive will flourish and food will

be plentiful. Disease will be banished and death almost unknown. The land will be allotted to the saints of the Circumcision, and Israel will rule the nations for God and bring them to God. They will be a Kingdom of priests. No blessing will come to the nations direct. All will flow through redeemed Israel.

Inasmuch as the rendering "among the celestials" is different from that usually given, it behooves us to examine the evidence on which it is based. The Authorized Version has "heavenly *places,*" which Newberry changes to "heavenlies" in the margin. There is nothing to indicate that *places* are intended. The gender is usually given as neuter, but both the article *the* and the adjective have this form in the masculine as well. It may refer to celestial people as readily as to celestial places, so far as the grammar of the Greek is concerned.

In Greek a single connective, *en,* does duty for *in* and *among.* As a rule it should be rendered *in* with the singular and *among* with the plural. The Authorized Version recognizes this by rendering it *among* quite frequently in such phrases "among the people" (Matt.4:23, etc.), and "among the soldiers" (Acts 12:18), for the essential meaning of *in* and *among* is the same. The difference is entirely a matter of usage.

I suppose that all translators are agreed that *ouranios,* the adjective of *ouranos, heaven,* is correctly rendered *heavenly.* Four times it is applied to God as the heavenly Father (Matt.6:14,26,32; 15:13), once to the heavenly host at the birth of our Lord (Luke 2:13), and once to the apparition on the road to Damascus (Acts 26:19). This evidence is sufficient to prove that "heavenly" or even "heavenly places" is inadequate in our text, for there the word has the prefix *ep-* (ON-) before it. What can be meant by the ON-heavenlies?

In three contexts ON-heavenly is set in contrast to ON-

earthly (John 3:12; 1 Cor.15:40; Phil.2:10). It is evident that, in every case, that which is ON-earthly is actually *on* the earth, so that the prefix may be taken literally, and means *terrestrial,* as it is rendered in the fifteenth of first Corinthians. So, likewise, ON-heavenly may be taken quite literally, as that which is *on* the heavenly bodies. There is no English word with this precise thought, so the best we can do is to use *celestial* in this sense. In the singular it is little more than an alternative for *heavenly,* but in its plural form it comes very close to the meaning and usage of the Greek.

Our blessings, then, are indeed in heavenly *places,* but far more than that, they are among celestial *beings,* that is, those who are on the heavenly bodies as we are on the earth. This is most suggestive, for the highest blessing does not consist in being in a *place,* however glorious it may be, but rather in a position of beneficence toward others. Our blessings among the celestials will correspond with the exalted opening strain of this epistle. We will be blessed because we will bless. We do not look for languorous luxury or magnificent "mansions," but to be the means of making others happy.

If, then, our blessings do not consist in a selfish enjoyment of our riches in Christ, but in dispensing our wealth to others among the celestials, we are confronted with a consideration of the problem which science still seeks to solve, that is, the habitability of the planets of the solar system, or, indeed, of any of the stellar systems which are scattered over the heavens. Science is limited to the sphere of human sensation. It seeks physical evidence of the existence of beings in the heavens.

Reverent students of the Scriptures are quick to question the teachings of science, especially when its tenets seem to conflict with the Bible. So many of the theories of science, such as evolution, the geological ages and uni-

formitarianism (which rejects the great cataclysmic crises of the disruption and the deluge, which have disturbed the earth's crust), clash with God's Word, that it should lead us to be careful in accepting anything not in close accord with what is written in the Scriptures of truth.

But not all science is theory. Not all is false. Not all is contrary to God's revelation. The practical benefits derived from it during the past century give evidence that man is actually becoming acquainted with the physical universe. Indeed, more progress has been made in the realm of nature than in the investigation of Scripture. Let us not reject anything simply because it is called science. Above all, let us make sure what the Scriptures actually teach before proclaiming their conflict with the knowledge of nature.

Many different cosmological theories have been presented to me for confirmation from the Scriptures, and I have examined the evidence presented with much care. I can only state my present conviction that God "is hanging the earth upon nothingness" (Job 26:7). This is the only explanation which needs no further elucidation. It is more scientific than anything science has to offer. It corresponds with every test which our senses can apply. It is the only cosmology which seems to harmonize with the celestial destiny set before us. Heaven is not a small enclosure, shut off from all else. It includes the whole universe, apart from the earth.

It is not in the least likely that mankind, as *at present constituted,* could live anywhere else in the universe. But God is not limited in His creation to the making of men. Even on earth we have a vast variety of forms of animal life very different from man, though they also are flesh. Birds can fly in the air and fishes can live in the depths of the sea. Why cannot God create for each sphere a creature suited to its environment? We have His definite statement that there are bodies celestial as well as terrestrial, and that these are *different* (1 Cor.15:40,41).

Judging from the few celestial beings who have come to visit us, the difference between a celestial and a terrestrial body consists largely in the lack of the very limitations which confine us to the earth. How can a messenger or angel, such as Gabriel, fly across the void of interstellar space without being able to overcome the force of gravitation? The larger planets or still larger stars could easily be peopled by creatures not in the least hampered by weight which would glue us to their surface.

The same is true of temperature. Few human beings could long endure exposure to the chill of an Arctic or Antarctic winter. But we are told that there is nothing else so severe as the cold of interstellar space. How could these celestial visitors withstand this, to us, unendurable frigidity? They have celestial bodies, which are like the stars, to which they are often compared. They are independent reservoirs of light and heat and power. We are absolutely dependent on the sun for life and all its factors. They are diminutive suns themselves, and do not need its ministrations.

Again, how could a human being survive the absence of all those elements which sustain his bodily frame, such as air, water and food? At present we could not. But it is not at all impossible that celestial bodies could dispense with these essentials. They are only a form of that power or energy which comes to us from the sun. So the ultimate source of physical life and activity is not the earth, but the sun, whose rays pervade the whole solar system. Even if a celestial body is dependent on the sun as ours is, it is not difficult to imagine that power could be absorbed directly, instead of through the ingestion of physical substance as at present.

Among the interesting, physical experiments of the

co-founder of this magazine, V. Gelesnoff, was one by means of which he managed to extract electrical energy directly from sunlight. It was, in effect, an electric battery, consisting of certain chemicals, which could be charged by merely exposing it to sunshine. Such solar cells are now in use on the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem highway. They are absorbing solar energy by day and powering a flashing amber traffic light by night. This illustrates the point before us. There exist, in all parts of the solar system, and probably in all the universe, sufficient stores of power for the use of any body equipped to utilize it.

But it is by no means proven that the power of celestial bodies is dependent on the sun or stars. If something similar to atomic energy could be made available it would supply all the power needed to transform us all into celestial beings capable of overcoming all the forces of gravitation and able to endure any extreme of temperature and sustain life without the air or the products of the soil. The power is already provided. All that is needed is a body so changed that it can utilize it.

The greatest and grandest exhibition of the powers of a celestial body is seen in the ascension of Christ. More than that, it shows how a human body, once weary with a few hours' walk (John 4:6), once hungry for a few figs (Matt.21:18), once too weak to carry the cross to Golgotha (Luke 23:26), can be gloriously changed so as to rise without effort from the earth to vanish in the sky, and, to all appearances, leave behind it every opportunity of nourishment or repose. Cannot such a body be at home in any part of God's universe?

We may conclude then, that both nature and revelation demand the presence of celestial creatures and that these are to be found on the heavenly bodies which gleam above us in the vault of heaven. Furthermore, though now we are tied to earth, weak, inglorious vassals of the ground,

wearing the image of the soilish, we shall wear the image of the celestial, and, with bodies changed, we shall rise to meet our Lord in the air, and henceforth be released from the thralldom of earth to wend our way at will among the starry hosts.

Once we realize that the universe is not a barren waste, created only to afford material for human speculation, but was formed to be inhabited by creatures made by God for His own glory, there is much we would like to know about them. Are there many or few? What are they like? Why are we not given a complete account of them in the Scriptures? These and many other questions press for answers.

It is evident that very little, indeed, is said concerning the celestials in the Scriptures. There are several good reasons which suggest themselves. First, there is our innate inability to understand what is not human. The language of mankind is not a fit vehicle for celestial things. Our Lord gave voice to this in His interview with Nicodemus. "If I tell you of the terrestrial and you are not believing, how shall you be believing if I should tell you of the celestial?" (John 3:12). This is often exemplified by those who seek to define the earth's relation to the heavens by earthborn phraseology. They do not realize its inadequacy.

It is not God's plan at present that we should know much of the affairs of the celestials, but rather that they should learn the lessons of His dealings with us. The earth is the stage on which the tragedy of the eons is enacted. No other place can claim a Golgotha. No other sphere has sunk so low in sin or has received such rich grants of grace. The apostle claims that he is a theater, not only to men, but to messengers (1 Cor.4:9). Peter tells us that they are yearning to peer into the salvation of the Circumcision (1 Pet. 1:12). Paul makes it evident that the sovereignties and authorities among the celestials are even now aware of the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus (Eph.3:10).

The fact that most of the celestial beings who have visited the earth are called *messengers* has led to the idea that all of the celestial host are "angels." They are only the couriers between the earth and the heavens. Those who were gazing at Paul certainly brought him no message, so we may rest assured that their message was about Paul, and was delivered to those who sent them. It seems as though the heavenly hosts took a livelier interest in Paul and his experiences than did his fellow men on earth.

The significance of human events is better known in the heavens than on the earth. Until the heavenly host apprized the shepherds, men paid no heed to the birth of the Saviour. Such prophecies as are found in Daniel were mostly communicated through the medium of messengers. The "messenger of Yahweh" was the regular channel through which He sent word to His people.

In the Hebrew Scriptures we may learn quite a little concerning messengers or "angels," and their superhuman powers. Often they appear in the form of men and do nothing out of the ordinary. At other times they are invisible, or manifest themselves in miraculous ways. A quaint and curious example comes before us at the time of Israel's wilderness journey. Balaam is confronted by the messenger of Yahweh in invisible form, but so real and substantial was his sword and the arm that wielded it, that he assured Balaam if his jenny had not interfered, he would have slain him (Num.22).

Matter is not necessarily visible to human eyes. Many hard substances not only transmit light, but are so nearly invisible to creatures such as we are that they deceive us. Many a bird has lost its life by flying full force against a pane of glass. Even living creatures, as some jellyfish, are practically invisible, especially in water. Celestial messengers are normally invisible to human eyes. Elisha was guarded by an invisible army which appeared as fire to the

opened eyes of his servant (2 Kings 6:17). But transparent substances have not the power of becoming opaque at will. Another illustration will show this.

We may not be able to explain this invisibility, but even our present restricted knowledge of nature supplies evidence as to its possibility and may even give a clue as to the manner in which it may be accomplished. We may learn a lesson from the propeller of an airplane. When at rest or turning slowly it is easily seen, but as it turns faster and faster the eye refuses to follow. When in flight the propellers can seldom be discerned; they move too swiftly for human sight.

It takes *power, speed,* to elude the human eye. This is probably the secret of angelic invisibility. They can apply the power they possess to their bodily frames in such a way as to become unseen at will. Our Lord's resurrection body possessed this power. To become seen He did not need to "materialize," as some have suggested, for He had the same body which had suffered death. He did not vanish by going away or dematerializing, but by simply becoming unapparent to them (Luke 24:31). He was there, but invisible to the human eve.

The messenger of Yahweh did another wonderful thing when he came to Manoah and his wife (Judges 13:19-20). He ascended in the flame of the altar, thus demonstrating his defiance of the force of gravitation and his ability to bear with extremes of temperature which would end the life of one such as we are now. The same is evident in the army that hovered about Elisha, for their chariots were of fire.

To be told that our blessings are among the celestials without any previous preparation would invite incredulity and skepticism, as the idea of the resurrection did in Corinth (1 Cor.15:35). In answering the question, "With what body are they coming?" the apostle prepares us for

the heavenly destiny now revealed. He does not content himself with making the resurrection body incorruptible, glorious, powerful and spiritual, but insists on a still greater change than these words suggest. It will no longer be soilish, but celestial. It is no longer to be a terrestrial body. We are to wear the image of the celestial (1 Cor.15:39-52). This much he made known to the Corinthians long before the secret of Ephesians was revealed.

Even earlier in his ministry he wrote to the Thessalonians in a similar strain. The Lord's descent from heaven for us will not bring Him down to earth. That will occur later when He comes to the Circumcision. He will call us up to meet Him in the air (1 Thess.4:16-18). And, henceforth we are to be with Him thus. Such an ascent demands powers far superior to those which we now have. It practically involves the possession of a celestial frame such as the Circumcision do not enjoy.

With these two premises—that we shall receive a celestial body in the resurrection, and shall rise to meet the Lord and *always be with Him*—we might easily reason out the celestial destiny which accords with the revelation of the mystery. Of what use would celestial bodies be on the earth? And surely the Lord Himself, since He does not even come down to earth to receive us, is not coming to set us back on the earth after a brief sojourn in the air, for the earth is about to be the scene of awful judgments from which His presence rescues us.

Since we have such a destiny it is natural that we should wish to learn as much as possible of the celestial beings and even gain all the information we can concerning the heavenly bodies. For this we are still largely dependent on the telescope. For the former we have recourse to a microscopic examination of the Scriptures.

As we are to rule in the celestial realms, they are introduced to us in terms which describe various forms of government. There are sovereignties, authorities, powers and lordships (Eph.1:21). In this regard the celestial realms are like the earth. The same terms can be applied to both. Government so highly specialized as these words indicate, assures us of the presence of rational, intelligent, yet insubordinate creatures, with a capacity for the enjoyment of God, but evidently not sufficiently acquainted with Him to be left without creature restraint.

Like those of earth, the celestial rule and influence is apportioned to various grades. The highest are called sovereignties. These are first-rate powers or empires. The term "principality," if taken in its literal sense of *principal*, would be a good English equivalent, but it is now used of small or subordinate princedoms. Thus, Wales is a principality, but Great Britain is a sovereign power. The sovereignty is the highest form of celestial government.

The celestial domains, like those of earth, are divided into lesser jurisdictions. The authorities at the head of these dependencies possess delegated power similar to the governor of a province. Pilate is an apt example of such power exercised in behalf of Caesar.

The companion terms, power and lordship, seem to be close synonyms of the first pair, sovereignty and authority. Power, or ability to enforce its will, is characteristic of sovereign states, so that they are frequently called "powers." The Greek word for lordship is similarly related to authority. It comes from a root meaning SANCTION. So that an authority is such, not because of its power, but because it has the sanction of its superior sovereignty.

These celestial beings must never be confused with the messengers or "angels." It is certainly a crude conception of heaven which peoples it with nothing but messengers. Earthly courts have their couriers, to keep them in contact with distant realms. But no one ever imagines that whole kingdoms are composed of couriers because one has come

on a visit. The fact that a celestial visits the earth in itself constitutes him an "angel." No other would be sent.

No one would presume to tell us the number of the stars. Only a very few, comparatively, are visible to the unaided eye. Even the observer at the most powerful telescope sees only a small fraction of those known to exist. The photographic lens reveals millions invisible to human gaze. But it is most wholesome to know that their number is so vast, for the great God Who made them all is greatly magnified by His handiwork.

Neither can anyone presume to take a census of the starry realm. But enough is told us to show that their number is beyond all human computation. We are given a hint as to the number of messengers. In the last book of the Bible (Rev.5:11) we are told that ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands surround the throne. There are evidently more than a hundred million of them. Each one could readily represent the same number of celestials, so that there may easily be billions on billions in the celestial spheres. Let it suffice us to know that we are not to be the channel of blessing to a few angels, but to numbers of celestials so vast that, even if we knew the figures, they would be beyond our mental comprehension.

Let us revel in our privileges and prospect. The heavens are higher than the earth and we are highest in the heavens. The lowest in this celestial exaltation would not exchange with John should he be granted the seat at the right hand of Christ in the Kingdom. Messengers, whose majesty and might would make us quail and quake at present, will be beneath our sway in the celestial realms. The highest dignitaries in the universe will gladly bow before the members of Christ's body, which will have the place supreme, not only in rule, but in the dispensation of God's favor and in the reconciliation of the celestial hosts to Him. We who were last have become first. Such is the potency of grace!

A. E. Knoch

WHOSE FAITH?

THE FAITH of Ephesians 2:8 is Christ Jesus's faith. This passage stands as the solid foundation of the transcendent riches of God's grace in His kindness to us *in Christ Jesus* just expounded in the preceding verses. These have been expressed in fact verbs: God *loves* us in that He *vivifies* us *together* in Christ and *rouses* us *together* and *seats* us *together* among the celestials in Christ Jesus. We are to see these as settled facts, made certain because they are established and settled *in Christ Jesus.*

How important is it that these acts of God are carried out *in Christ Jesus*? The phrase itself appears so often in Ephesians that we might call the epistle the "In-Christ Epistle"—in Christ, in the Beloved, in Him, in Whom, in the Christ, in the Lord Jesus, in Christ Jesus, in Christ Jesus, our Lord, in the Lord, in Jesus. Each designation points to Him in a certain way in accord with its context. Ephesians 2:5 has "in the Christ" and verse 6 and 7 both have "in Christ Jesus," and this is repeated in verse 10, "For His [God's] achievement are we *in Christ Jesus* for good works, which God makes ready [readies] beforehand, that we should walk in them." We see, then, that the context here lays emphasis on Him as God's *Anointed One,* His Title of glory, and adds His Name of humiliation and obedience as the Saviour, Jesus, Who makes the grace of God known.

But where is He in verse 8? God is there, for the grace is *His* grace as established in verse 7. And we are there as the ones having been saved. Is it also, as widely understood, that we are there as the ones through whose faith we have

been saved? The "you" here are believers, but our faith is not coupled with God's grace in this completed work of salvation which is not out of ourselves. The salvation is in God's grace through Christ Jesus's faith.

THE PREPOSITION "THROUGH"

The preposition "through" does not appear so often in Ephesians as the preposition "in." But in certain key cases it is used with Christ or His death as its object. God designates us for the place of a son *"through Christ Jesus"* (Eph.1:5). And we are having the deliverance in Christ Jesus "through His blood" (Eph.1:7). In accord with this we learn that God reconciles those termed "Uncircumcision" who were once far off with those termed "Circumcision" in one body *"through the cross,"* for *"through Him"* [Christ], we both have had the access in one spirit to the Father[1] (Eph.2:11-18). This matter of access to God as our Father comes before us again in Ephesians 3:12 where we read: "In Him [Christ Jesus, our Lord] we are having boldness and access with confidence, *through His faith.*" This is definitely not our faith. It is the faith of Christ Jesus, our Lord, His faith that God's will must be done and that it was the right way even when, in the case of the cross, it was not His own will (*cf* Matt.26:38-44).

With this in view we are ready to return to Ephesians 2:8. But one more passage beckons. Surely (it will be thought) Ephesians 3:17 speaks of the faith of believers, through which Christ's dwelling in our hearts may be grasped. Yet we need to note the definite article shown by the raised dot before "faith." Paul speaks of "the faith," that is, a definite faith, which would seem to point back to verse 12 where he refers to (as the Greek puts it literally) "the faith of Him," that is the faith of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

1. Note the connection with the place of a son and our access to the Father.

His dwelling in our hearts is a matter of God's grace and blessing which comes about through Christ's faith and love, which is expressed later in Ephesians 5:2 as His giving up of Himself for us as an approach present and a sacrifice to God, for a fragrant odor.

To review: the blessing of sonship with which we are blessed by God (blessed is He as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ) is channeled to us through Christ Jesus (Eph.1:5), that is, through His faith in dying for us, His love indeed that He dies for all, and thus all die proleptically (2 Cor.5:14). We are having deliverance from what we are in Adam, the old humanity—deliverance which comes through Christ Jesus's blood, His faithful suffering and death in accord with God's purpose (Eph.1:7). The reconciliation of us who once are far off with those near is an evangel of peace which comes about through Christ, that is, by His blood (Eph.2:13,18). This peace involves access in one spirit to God as our Father, which is elaborated in Ephesians 3:12 as a matter of boldness and confidence through the faith of Christ Jesus our Lord. Finally, the prayer that we may be strong to grasp the breadth and length and depth and height of God's love revealed in the secret of the joint body and our celestial expectation includes the dwelling of Christ in our hearts through the channel of His faith and love (Eph.3:14-18).

All of these blessings are channeled through Christ Jesus's faith. And this is for our faith.

With this in view we can now return to Ephesians 2:8, which, may be arranged as a hymn along with verses 9 and 10.

EPHESIANS 2:8-10

8 **For** in ·**grace** ¦**are** =**you** one**s** **having been saved**
through His **faith,**
And this is **not out of** =**you;**

It is **God's** ·approach **present,**
9 **Not out of works, lest any**one **should boast**°**.**
10 **For His achievement** ˡ**are we,**
Created in Christ Jesus *on* **for good works,**
Which ·**God** make**s ready before**hand,
That we should walk in them.

Even as God will display the riches of His grace in His kindness to us *in Christ Jesus,* so God has saved us in grace *through the Same One's faith.* This is the pattern of Ephesians 1:5 and 1:7 and 2:16,18, and 3:12 and 3:17, and only this harmonizes fully with the rest of this hymn.

If we have been saved through our faith, how does this fit in with the "this is not out of you"? If it is our faith then God's approach present is limited in its effect. If it is not of our works, but still of our faith, boasting is not entirely excluded. What we are is therefore not wholly God's achievement, for our faith has thus entered into the process. We are ones having been saved, and this is God's achievement. God has created us *in Christ Jesus* as saved ones who are created for good works which God makes ready for us to walk in. The salvation and the achievement are God's, in His grace, through Christ Jesus Whose faith is shown in His becoming God's approach present.

ON BELIEVING

Yet of course Ephesians directs attention in its opening prayer to "this faith" of ours (Eph.1:15), which is "the word of truth" that *we are believing* (Eph.1:13). The faith that accords to us is the message that centers on the faith of Christ Jesus and brings us of the nations who once are far off near (with boldness and access) to God. This is by His blood (Eph.2:13) which is to say by His faith through great suffering in His obedience to the death of the cross. Even as, in Romans, where God's evangel is a message of salvation revealing God's righteousness "out of [Christ's] faith, *for [our] faith*" (Rom.1:17), so the evangel of our salvation in Ephesians is the message opening up transcendent glories in Christ, channeled through His faith. Our faith is in His faith. The message of His faith is for our faith.

Consequently, we are told that "on believing" this evangel we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise—sealed to the deliverance of that which has been procured (Eph. 1:13,14).

To be sure, we can call this sealing a "salvation" which begins when we believe this message of the completed salvation which is in God's grace and through Christ Jesus's faith. Indeed that is how Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians 15:1,2. We are presently *being saved* through our acceptance and believing and retaining of the evangel Paul brings. But the evangel which we are believing is an announcement of a completed salvation. It tells us of *Christ's* faith (not ours), His faith in dying for our sins and being entombed, and that He has been roused (1 Cor.15:3,4).

Ephesians 1:13,14 speaks of our believing of the evangel of our salvation. Ephesians 2:8-10 *is* the evangel of our salvation which we have heard and accept and believe in accord with the measure of faith God graciously gives us. And this evangel is an announcement of God's grace channeled through Christ Jesus's faith. It tells us we *have been saved.* We have been saved in God's grace, through Christ Jesus's faith, and *this* (this whole operation of God's grace channeled through Christ Jesus's faith) is not out of us. It is God's approach present. It is not out of *our* works, but through our Lord's faith (which indeed speaks of a most tremendous and meritorious work).

This distinction must be kept in view. The sealing and the being saved from much irreverence and from much ignorance and much that presses down on us in this life is associated with our believing of the evangel. But the sal-

vation completed at the cross (we cannot believe we have been saved unless it is true that we have been saved) is completed through Christ Jesus's faith.

This is verified by parallel passages elsewhere such as the following:

ROMANS 3:24

Ephesians 2:8 opens with the word "grace" (literally, "the grace") in the dative case, which the CV translates as "in **grace**."[2] This usage of "grace" in the dative case occurs also in Romans 3:24 with the addition of the pronoun, "His," referring to God, which the CV renders "in **His grace**." There also it is followed by a "through" phrase: "*through* the deliverance which is *in Christ Jesus.*" That phrase corresponds with the highly significant phrase in Romans 3:22, *"through Jesus Christ's faith."* "Jesus Christ's faith" refers to His death, and "the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" refers to one of its results, that is, God's achievement (that which has been procured) by means of the faithful obedience of our Lord in dying for our sins.

Furthermore, where Romans 3:24 has "being justified *gratuitously,*" Ephesians 2:8 has "having been saved, and this is *not out of you.*" Justification is a specific aspect of salvation which is gratuitous, not out of us, but rather channeled to us *through* the death of Christ as the Saviour.

In addition the Romans passage is followed in 3:27 with the logical and fully appropriate questions and answers: "Where, then, is boasting? It is debarred! Through what law? Of works? No! But through *faith's* law." Likewise

2. This could be rendered "to grace" or "by grace," but using what is called the dative of location, the CV takes Paul to speak of grace as the environment in which we have been saved; see the article by A. E. Knoch entitled "In Grace and Out" in *Unsearchable Riches*, First Quarter, 2021, especially pages 44-46.

Ephesians 2:9 declares that God's approach present, which is the means of our salvation in His grace through the faith of Christ Jesus, that is, His death, is "not of works *lest anyone* should *boast,*" glorying in their own acts. Salvation as a completed blessing is *not* of ourselves! It is gratuitous in God's grace through Christ Jesus's faith! The pattern of God's evangel set forth in Romans 3:21-26 is the pattern of the evangel of our salvation set forth in Ephesians 2:8.

GALATIANS 2:16

Galatians 2:16 which refers explicitly first to "Christ Jesus's faith" and then to "Christ's faith" is also a telling parallel to Ephesians 2:8. Justification is *not out of works* except *through* [the "law" of] *Christ Jesus's faith.* Here Paul indulges in wordplay giving a double meaning to the term "law," first, literally in reference to works imposed on Jews as human beings by the law given at Sinai, and then viewing Christ Jesus's faith figuratively as a law work ("faith's law") which He maintained fully and successfully—the one exception to the failure of law works to result in justification. We see the same "law" in Galatians 6:2 where Paul directs us to be bearing one another's burdens and thus "fill up" in our present behaviour, "the law of Christ," that is, His law of faith in His bearing of the burdens of humanity in His death. So in Ephesians 2:8 our completed salvation is to be seen as channeled *through* [the law of] Christ Jesus's faith. It is *out of* [sourced in] *Christ's faith and not out of human law works.*

Traditionally these passages have been understood as contrasting human works of law with the believers' faith. There is certainly a contrast there, but our believing is an act,[3] although a mental one. Yet even where human faith

3. "act" and "work" are translations of the same Greek word.

is as great and pure as Abraham's, it is not perfect, but only in accord with the measure graciously granted by God (Rom.12:3; Phil.1:29). Indeed the contrast between Christ's faith and human works is much more relevant and impressive to our understanding of the evangel of our salvation in God's grace than the traditional understanding where Christ is left out of the contrast.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

Thus Ephesians 2:8 can be clearly seen (as it truly is) to be an announcement of God's grace through Christ's faith in obedience unto the death of the cross. It is not a contract where God's grace is dependent on our faith. The evangel of our salvation is an announcement of what God has done through the faith and love of Christ Jesus, Who gives Himself up for us, an approach present and a sacrifice to God.

Now we can appreciate God's grace of salvation more clearly and begin to grow in realization of it more surely. It is not out of ourselves. What we are is God's achievement in and through His Son.

All of this is in delightful harmony with those passages which speak explicitly of Christ's faith: God's righteousness manifested *through Jesus Christ's faith* (Rom.3:21,22); His righteousness displayed out of *Jesus's faith* (Rom.3:26); the human being justified through *Christ Jesus's faith* we also believe in Christ Jesus that we may be justified out of *Christ's faith* (Gal.2:16); Paul living in *the faith of the Son of God* (Gal.2:20); the promise out of *Jesus Christ's faith* given to those who are believing (Gal.3:22); we are having boldness and access with confidence, *through His faith* (Eph. 3:12); and Paul not having his righteousness, which is out of law, but that which is *through Christ's faith* (Phil.3:9).

D.H.H.

FAITH ACCORDS WITH GRACE

IN THIS ERA of great withdrawal from the faith, it is nearly always claimed that salvation in Christ is conditional. Those who express interest in meeting God's supposed requirements are considered "candidates" for salvation. Of course in such an environment words like "free" and "grace" will almost surely be present as well. Many will acknowledge that men cannot come to Christ apart from God's call and that salvation is of the Lord. But in the presence of a basic representation of salvation as a thing of reward, all claims about "free grace" necessarily become nominal, mere "empty words" through which many are seduced (Eph. 5:6). It is dishonest to attempt to deny this, or to cloud the issues. Yet it is the work of the Adversary to do this very thing, and he does it well (*cf* 2 Cor.11:3,4; 11:13-15).

ANNOUNCING THE EVANGEL

Rather than presenting the unbeliever with an offer, the *announcement* to him should be that Jesus the Nazarene is indeed the Christ of God, and that He died for the sins of the unbeliever as well as those of the believer, in the grace of God having tasted death for the sake of everyone. *If* he genuinely believes, having done so apart from all threatenings and inducements merely to profess that which is not his own, he should in due time be taught the counsels of God. It is especially important for the believer to learn of those things with which he is personally concerned as a member of the body of Christ. Apart from

either frantic hurry or undue delay, he should be taught basic truths such as our election in Christ before the disruption of the world, and God's great goal, to become All in all at the consummation.

At no time should the salvation which we have in Christ be presented as a reward, and certainly not as a mere refusable offer that depends upon man as the key to its success.

SUFFERING EVIL WITH THE EVANGEL

If it must be that some cannot agree, let us all, above all else, seek to be walking worthily of the calling with which we were called, with all humility and meekness, with patience, "*bearing with one another in love,* endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace" (Eph.4:1-3). Let us rejoice that the infirm one in the faith, whoever he may be, will be made to stand, "for the Lord is able to make him stand" (Rom.14:4).

To those who are able to perceive the true graciousness of the evangel (*cf* Col.1:6), we would say, Be prepared to "suffer evil with the evangel" (2 Tim.1:8). For men *love* the darkness rather than the light (John 3:19). They may follow error out of ignorance, but this is no indication that they will turn from it when it is exposed in its true character. To the contrary, it may be that at such times they will contend for it all the more zealously. We once did the same, and are by no means superior to others.

If we should find that God has graciously enlightened us concerning the faith, and yet would avoid being puffed up, let us always seek to think and act in ways that accord with this glorious evangel. "Now may the God of expectation be filling you with all joy and peace in believing, for you to be superabounding in expectation, in the power of holy spirit" (Rom.15:13).

RECEIVING AND ACCEPTING CHRIST

When we believe the evangel, we believe Christ. Upon believing, having heard the word of truth, the evangel of our salvation, we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise (Eph.1:13). Thus we first "accept" (or "take along," *paralambanō*) Christ, as well as the evangel that He died for our sins according to the scriptures (Col.2:6; 1 Cor. 15:3). One should never put a contractual connotation upon the word "accept" when speaking of our initial acceptance of Christ. There is nothing contractual in the evangel of grace, nor can there be.

The Greek term for "accept" is a compound expression, *para* and *lambanō.* The first part means "beside"; the second part means "come into possession of" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, entry "get," p.121). When *lambanō* is used actively it is translated in the CV by "take"; when it is used passively, it is rendered "obtain" (in many cases, the AV gives the sense well by the rendering "receive"). Often it is translated in the CV simply as "get." The compound, BESIDE-GET, in addition to being rendered "accept," is often translated "take along" (e.g., Matt.2:13,14). These English variants are required because of the differences between Greek and English idiom. In all cases, the reference is to that which one somehow comes to have, or possess.

However, popular misuse of these words has caused much confusion. This is true both of the word "receive" (as in the emotional appeals made to the unbeliever to "receive" Christ), and with the term "accept" as well (as in, "If you would avoid eternal burnings, 'accept' Him today"). That is, the connotations and inflections foisted upon these words by preachers, are strictly their own. *They find no support whatever in the Scriptures.*

The apostle Paul makes it plain that *all* that we have—whether riches, health, success, understanding, self-disci-

pline, willingness or faith—is that which we have received from God. Everything we possess is given to us by God, even those things which we "take" to ourselves through much time and effort. "He Himself *gives* to all life and breath and *all*" (Acts 17:25).

PRIDEFUL EXALTATION

The inveterate pride of man is exemplified in all its horror in the person of the Pharisee who prayed—and yet "prayed this *toward himself,*" (Luke 18:11) saying—"'*God, I am thanking you* that I am not even as the rest of men, rapacious, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tribute collector. I am fasting twice of a sabbath. I am taking tithes from all whatever I am acquiring.' Now the tribute collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his chest, saying, 'God, make a propitiatory shelter for me,[1] the sinner!' I am saying to you, this man descended to his home justified, rather than that one, for everyone who is exalting himself shall be humbled, yet he who is humbling himself shall be exalted.'"

When noting the *differences* between ourselves and others, do we ever stop to think, and then face the fact that all these things have their own cause? They are all caused to be as they are. Do we realize that it is therefore altogether foolish to be "puffed up" about our own virtues while looking down upon others in their weaknesses? To the proud Corinthians the apostle Paul says, "For who is *making* you to discriminate [that is, to '*differ*']? Now what are you having which you do not obtain [or, "receive"]? Now if you obtain it also [even as others], *why are you boasting as though you do not obtain?*" (1 Cor.4:7). May God grace us all, as those who have received and accepted Christ, to

1. Literally, "be being propitiated to me," that is, favorably inclined.

stop thanking ourselves for this, and recognize that this was "neither of the will of the flesh, neither of the will of a man, but *of God*" (*cf* John 1:12,13).

JUSTIFIED BY FAITH

When we believe, our faith is reckoned, or accounted, for ("into," *eis*) righteousness (Rom.4:5). God considers our faith in His declarations to be a righteous faith; for it is always *right* to believe what He says. However, *salvation from sin is only to be found in the work of Christ,* not in one's faith in the work of Christ.

Paul does not say that to him who is not working, yet is believing (Rom.4:5), his faith qualifies him for salvation! He does not say that we are justified because we believe or in return for believing. This is not the case. Our Lord "was roused," not merely to make it possible for us to be justified, but *"because of our justifying"* (Rom.4:25). *"Justified, then, out of His faith,* we may be having peace toward God, *through our Lord, Jesus Christ"* (Rom.5:1). We are justified out of Christ's own personal faith (Rom.3:22,26). It is not through our faulty faith, but through the matchless faith of our Lord Jesus Christ that we have peace toward God. His work of faith affords this to us. Our faith only makes this known to us.

With regard to God's declarations and promises concerning ourselves, as with Abraham, God has made them matters "of faith" *that they may accord with grace* (Rom. 4:16). The very *purpose* in their being matters which are of *faith,* is that they should already be true prior to the time in which we first believe them.

God "is justifying the irreverent" (Rom.4:5), doing so *gratuitously, in His grace* (Rom.3:24). In the very nature of things, when acting in *grace,* God must act purposefully, according to *His* choice and apart from any obligation to requite His creatures for their actions (*cf* Rom.9:11; 11:6).

It is fitting that those chosen ones who are called in this current era of the *display* of God's righteousness (Rom. 3:26) should have faith. *Their faith points to Christ,* in Whom, through His sacrificial death, God's righteousness is manifested. It is manifested, not through our faith, but "through Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22). God unveils (*cf* Rom.1:17) His righteousness to men by justifying them gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). This glorious gratuity is "for all," "for all sin and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). It has been *bestowed* upon God's chosen ones at present (it is "on all who are believing"; Rom.3:22). God has done this in order that we might constitute a special display, or example, of this great blessing which He has purposed for all. Through the obedience of Christ, this and related glorious benefits will actually be given to all mankind (*cf* Rom.5:15,16,18,19).

NOT WORKING, YET BELIEVING

Many eagerly seek to point out to us that faith is not work. However, they only do this in the interest of making faith—though technically not work—a "condition of salvation" nonetheless. If they cannot qualify by their good deeds, they hope to at least be able to do so by their faith. They would not have God save them solely because of His love and grace, according to His own will, power and purpose. Besides, "if that were true" all the glory would be His!

What they fail to realize is that while faith, in *itself,* is not an act, one's possession of it is nonetheless the product of mental *activity.* Indeed, when one is *actively* engaged in *believing,* he is involved in much mental work.

Many are more persuaded by a single inference of their own—no matter how poor—than by all the plain declarations of Scripture to the contrary. For example, many

attempt to validate the idea of conditional salvation by citing Paul's statement in Romans 4:5 concerning one who is "not working, yet is believing." The usual assertion concerning these words is to the effect that one may believe and yet still avoid all work. From this it is inferred that while one cannot qualify for salvation by "working," he must qualify for it by believing. It is supposed that if one should be found believing, doubtlessly his believing constitutes the fulfillment of a requirement! Thus conditional salvation is "proved" to be true, and all else in the Word of God twisted in order to conform to this false idea.

THE EVANGEL DEBARS BOASTING

It needs to be recognized that any issues concerning the nature of human choice simply have no bearing on the theme of the saving work of Christ. This is because, considered at its deepest level, salvation is without fail a matter of *gratuitous grace,* not of qualification or reward. Boasting in man, then, is debarred; to God alone be the glory. Since we are justified *gratuitously*—without any warrant, insofar as *anything* we may have done is concerned—we cannot boast in ourselves that we are justified (Rom.3:27).

The truth of the evangel—the grace of God in truth—*debars* all boasting in man (Rom.3:27). The evangel of grace precludes boasting; this is to say that it is afforded no place in which it might even possibly be exercised. It is not merely that we *should not* boast, but that, in ourselves, we *cannot* boast! "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal.6:14).

Since we are believers, we are to recognize that God has called and justified us at this time. But we are not to imagine that inasmuch as most men persist in unbelief, He therefore intends to damn them for all eternity.

GOD'S GOODNESS TOWARD ALL

Our faith is evidence of our *calling* (1 Cor.1:23,24), of our having been *chosen* (1 Cor.1:26-29) for membership in the body of Christ and for life eonian. If others do not believe, they will not enjoy the life of the coming eons. But this is only because, *according to God's wise counsels and purpose,* they have not been *chosen* for this particular allotment.

We ourselves have not been chosen to have a part among those who will be vivified at the consummation, which will doubtlessly be an inexpressibly glorious experience for all concerned. We will never know the experience of having been brought from under the rod of God's indignation in severe chastening judging, only to be embraced in the arms of His love at the consummation. Let us not underestimate the preciousness of this blessing for those for whom it is intended.

It is true that we will have been vivified already, long before this time. Unlike the unbeliever, we are saved from indignation, and will enjoy life in the eons of the eons. But let us never glory in our own blessings in ways that lead us to doubt the goodness of God's counsels concerning the rest of men.

Since God is so exceedingly good, all will receive whatever is best for *Him* and best for *them.* This is true even if this should include the experience of a temporary enlistment as a vessel of indignation in order that man's unrighteousness might commend God's righteousness (*cf* Rom.3:5; 9:22).

When we believe God in these matters, our faith accords with His operations in grace, and is centered in His gracious promises. Thus we are enabled to believe, and to rejoice in our happy expectation. Let us be invigorated by the *grace* which is in Christ Jesus (*cf* 2 Tim.2:1)!

J.R.C.

YAHWEH IS THE ONLY ELOHIM

"GOD IS SPIRIT" (John 4:24). "God no one has ever seen" (John 1:18a). Since God is spirit, He is therefore invisible, intangible, imperceptible. He is all-sufficient; He is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. While such, indeed, are among God's attributes, it is not inherent in this title (i.e., "the Subjector," or "God") that this is so. God alone is unoriginated and supreme; but it is neither entailed in nor does it follow from the fact that the Almighty is "God" that He is unoriginated and supreme.

It is true that in certain of its occurrences, the primary divine title, ELOHIM, does not refer to the supreme and only true God, but to a plurality of certain of His creatures. Clearly, in such cases, reference is made to a plural number of such beings, each one of whom, in some capacity, is a "subjector."

In the overwhelming majority of the occurrences of ELOHIM, however, this term is *not* used in reference to certain creatures who, in a relative sense, may also bear this title together with the Supreme, but in an absolute sense in reference to Yahweh Himself alone, Who is the supreme and only true God. For example, ". . . Yahweh, *He* is the *only* Elohim. There is *no one else* aside from *Him*" (Deut.4:35). "So you know today, and you recall it to your heart that Yahweh, *He* is the *only* Elohim in the heavens above and on the earth beneath; there is *no one* else" (Deut.4:39).

There are not only those both in heaven and on earth who are *termed* "GODS" (or "ELOHIM"), but there are also

those who *are* "GODS" ("there *are* many gods and many lords"; 1 Cor.8:5). "*Nevertheless,*" declares the apostle Paul, "for us there is *one* God, *the Father,* out of Whom *all* is . . . ."(1 Cor.8:6).

Just as Paul identifies to us Who the one true God is, saying that He is "the Father, out of Whom all is:" Moses identified the one true God to Israel, declaring that He is the One Whose name is Yahweh.[1]

Indeed, this is Israel's great confession: "Hear, Israel! *Yahweh* [is] our Elohim; Yahweh [the only] One" (Deut.6:4).

"The first Hebrew sentence that a Jewish child learns is [this very verse]:

SH'MA YISRAEL YAHWEH ELOHENU YAHWEH ECHAD
Hear, Israel! Yahweh our-Elohim, Yahweh One

"The observant Jew is required to recite it twice daily, in the morning and at nightfall, together with three related passages. He may add verse 5 ("So you will love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your intensity"), sometimes including the following verses 6-9; also Deuteronomy 11:13-21 and Numbers 15:37-41"[2]

1. The Divine Name, *Yahweh,* is composed of the elements of the verb "to become." Yahweh is "I am that I am:" or literally, "I am becoming Who I am becoming" (Ex.3:14). In Revelation 1:8 John seems to give the meaning of the Name for His Greek readers: Who is and Who was and Who is coming (*cf* 1:4; 4:8 and 11:17; 16:5 where the future is omitted). Though these passages in Revelation speak directly of God Himself in contrast to Jesus Christ (*cp* 1:5), it is important to remember that while, absolutely speaking, Christ is not God Himself ("Yahweh," in the Old Testament), representatively speaking, Christ indeed is Yahweh, Who alone is God Himself (*cp* Zech.14:3,4).

2. Herman H. Rocke, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.78, p.280.

The sense is that *not two* (or more) are Israel's "elohim," but only *one* is their Elohim. That *one* is *Yahweh* alone. To express the ellipsis inherent in the second clause, we would say, "Yahweh is our Elohim; Yahweh—*One*—[is our Elohim]."[3]

The title of this Jewish key prayer, "Shema," is taken from the first word of Deuteronomy 6:4, *Sh'ma* (Hear!). Most Jewish translators and commentators give the sense the same as that which appears in the Concordant Version. "The belief that God [Elohim] is made up of several personalities, such as the Christian belief in the Trinity, is a departure from the pure conception of the Unity of God. Israel has throughout the ages rejected everything that marred or obscured the conception of pure monotheism it had given the world, and rather than abandon that pure monotheism, rather than admit any weakening of it, Jews were prepared to wander, to suffer, to die."[4]

"Yahweh" is the name of the divine Being Himself, Whose chief title is "Elohim." The literal significance of the word ELOHIM is "TOward-SUBJECTORS."

The shortest form of the divine title, *El,* which is singular, is the same in form as the connective *to* and the pronoun *these. To* and *these* indicate the direction, disposition, or subjection of that which is in view. For example, "The water from under the heavens shall flow together *to* one place" (Gen.1:9), *disposes* or *subjects* the waters. "*These* are the genealogical annals" (Gen.2:4), *places* the genera-

3. The Authorized Version rendering of Deuteronomy 6:4, ". . . the LORD our God is one LORD," is confusing and misleading. The Revised Version (1901) is to be commended for including the correct sense in its margin (". . . Jehovah is our God, Jehovah alone"). The Revised rendering, however, which appears in its main text, ". . . Jehovah our God is one Jehovah," is even more perplexing than the AV translation.

4. J. H. Herz, editor: THE PENTATEUCH AND HAFTORAHS, Soncino Press, London, 1972, p.770.

tions before the mind of the reader. This is the underlying thought in accord with the true proverb, "Man proposes but [God] disposes."[5] It would seem, then, that the essential thought of the divine title (which appears in three forms, *El, Eloah,* and *Elohim*) is *Subjector, Disposer,* or *Placer.*

We may be certain that this assumption is correct since the Greek equivalent, *Theos,* which is derived from *the-,* PLACE, signifies the *Placer.* This may be confirmed from many words which share this common stem such as *tithêmi, place, lay, appoint, assign,* or *atheteō,* which means "repudiate" or *have no place for.* The meaning of *the-* may be seen as well in such English words as *theme, thesis,* and *theater,* in which a certain entity (whether a topic, proposition, or drama) is placed before an audience.

The intermediate form of the divine title is *Eloah,* which is also singular. 41 of its 58 occurrences appear in the book of Job. In order to express motion or direction, the ending *-ah* is occasionally postfixed to a noun, such as west*ward* (Num.2:18). This same ending, which means *-ward* (i.e., "[to]ward"), appears in Elo*ah* as well. This calls to mind John 1:1 where we read that "the WORD was *toward* God." We are mindful that Christ's name is called the "Word" (or "Expression") of God in Revelation 19:13. Surely all that Christ is and does directs us toward God.

It is conceivable that the title *Eloah,* in an ideal sense, was especially intended to reflect the general direction of Christ's activity, which is God*wards, toward*-the-Deity, *toward*-the Subjector, *toward*-El. Perhaps certain of its usages even entail this thought though we cannot be certain. That the word indentifies the one so termed as Christ however, is not something that these morphological considerations themselves can prove. Indeed, in certain instances, we may be sure that ELOAH does not in any

5. *cf* A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.24, p.173.

respect speak of the true God, Eloah of Israel, but of a foreign eloah or god (e.g., Dan.11:37,39). The main point to note, however, is that whatever the original reason may have been (which may be lost to antiquity) for the employment of this special singular form which incorporates a suffix signifying *-ward,* this form as well, when used of the Eloah of Israel, ultimately directs us to the only true God.

The longest form of the divine title, *Elohim,* which contains the plural ending *im,* occurs much more frequently than either of the other forms. In a number of its occurrences it speaks of a plurality of beings, of various creatures, whether righteous or unrighteous, whether in heaven or on earth, of whom all are in some respect "subjectors," working *toward* the accomplishment of their own purposes, which, in the highest sense, all direct us *toward God* and the accomplishment of His purpose (*cp* Isa.10:5-15). All such "subjecting ones," in one way or another, are engaged in subjecting others, in the disposition of their affairs, in placing them under a certain authority. And, all such ones, in so acting, are the agents of the Supreme Subjector; thus they are included among "the men of His counsel" (*cp* Isa.46:11).

Many of the passages in which "elohim" appears merely speak of the idolatrous "elohim" the gods of the nations which Israel was prone to worship. Aaron declared to Moses: "The anger of my lord must not grow hot. You know the people that they are unbridled, for they said to me: Make *elohim* for us who shall go before us, for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt we know not what has become of him" (Ex.32:22,23; cit. Acts 7:40; *cp* Acts 7:43; Amos 5:25-27; Ex.22:20; Deut.7:25).

It is with such "elohim" in mind that Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "that which the nations are sacrificing, they are [actually] sacrificing to *demons* . . ." (1 Cor.10:20). This

was so, by whatever name these "gods" of the nations may have been known. Such deceiving spirits actually are not *worthy* of the title "subjectors," for their subjection was unto evil ends and was not in the faithful service of the true God.

In the Song of Moses, in Deuteronomy 32:21, Yahweh speaks of Israel having followed such unclean spirits, ones which were called "elohim" yet were only so in an evil sense, unworthy of the name: "As for them, they make Me jealous with a *non-el*. They provoke Me to vexation with their idols of vanity. As for Me, I shall make them jealous with a *non-people;* with a decadent nation shall I cause them vexation." Paul speaks of the time when the Galatians once, like the Thessalonians, had turned about "to God from idols, to be slaving for the living and true God" (*cf* 1 Thess.1:9). Until that time, however, and in a similar sense to that of Israel in her idolatrous worship of a "non-el," the Galatians had been "slaves of those who, by nature, are not gods" (Gal.4:8). These demons, however, were quite real, and certainly *subjected* the natives of Galatia to much evil. Therefore, it is only with a *faithful sense* in view that these wicked spirits were deemed "not gods."[6]

It is certain that Galatians 4:8 should be understood in such a sense as is suggested here, for there are a considerable number of scripture passages which speak of both men and messengers as being "elohim" (i.e., "subjectors"), each one, under God, working in his own *faithful* capacity toward the achievement of his own respective service.

6. Some, in an effort to "prove" Trinitarianism, have found support for their claim in Galatians 4:8. Their notion is, based upon their own pre-supposition that the Galatians' erstwhile idols were *in no sense whatsoever* actually "gods," therefore "ELOHIM" is a term descriptive of *nature*, one which entails both supremacy and unoriginatedness. Hence it can legitimately only be used of the "Triune God" of their creeds. This illogical claim is simply contrary to the facts, and fails to note the sense and corollaries of Deuteronomy 32:21, to which Paul alludes.

Note the following texts: "You shall not maledict the *elohim* [i.e., the arbiters or judges; *cf* Ex.21:6], and a prince among your people you shall not curse" (Ex.22:28). "Then the sheiks of Edom are flustered; the *arbiters* [*elohim*; i.e., judges, or disposers] of Moab, quivering took hold of them. All the dwellers of Canaan are dissolved" (Ex.15:15).

"If the thief is not found then the possessor of the house will be brought near to the *elohim* [or "judges"] to show whether or not he has put forth his hand on the work of his associate. In every matter of transgression over a bull, over a donkey, over a flockling, over raiment or over every lost thing which one says that this is it, unto the *elohim* shall come the word of the two of them. Whom the *elohim* shall condemn, he shall repay double to his associate" (Ex.22:8,9).

YOU ARE ELOHIM

Of the sons of Israel, collectively, it is written, "I Myself have said: you are *elohim,* and sons of the Supreme are all of you" (Psa.82:6). How glorious to know that these words will find a fulfillment in the kingdom of the heavens. Then, Israel will be the head and not the tail; then, in the kingdom, the chosen race will indeed be a "royal priesthood," a "holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9). Citing the very words of Psalm 82:6, Jesus declared to the Jews, "Is it not written in your law that: 'I say you are *gods*'? If He says those were *gods,* to whom the word of God comes (and the scripture can not be annulled), are you saying to Him Whom the Father hallows and dispatches into the world that: You are blaspheming, seeing that I say: *Son* of God am I?" (John 10:34-36).

The words of Psalm 97:7, in reference to Yahweh, "bow down to Him, all you *elohim,*" are interpreted in Hebrews 1:6 as "worship Him, all the *messengers* of God!" In speaking of Christ, Hebrews 1:9 (citing Psalm 45:7) declares, "You love righteousness and hate unrighteousness; there-

fore God Your God *anoints* You with the oil of exultation beyond Your partners." Though there are others, whether celestial or terrestrial, who are themselves "anointed ones" of God (i.e., "christs"), who thus are our Lord's "partners" (*metochon,* WITH-HAVer) in divine service, Christ's own anointing and corresponding divine service is certainly beyond that of any others.

In Hebrews 1, verses 8 and 9 (citing Psalm 45:6,7), God declares to the Son, "Your throne, O God, is for the eon of the eon," and "God Your God anoints You." The text of Psalm 45:6,7 itself reads: "Your throne, O *Elohim,* is for the eon and further . . . .*Elohim* Your *Elohim* anoints You."

In these verses of Psalm 45, not only is God termed "Elohim" but the Son is also termed "Elohim." While it is true that the mere form of this word is plural, it is just as true that each of the two Beings Whom it herein represents are singular Beings.[7] One is God Himself, "the Majesty in the heights" (Heb.1:3), at Whose "right hand" the other One so addressed, termed "the Son," is seated. As is the case as well in the vast majority of the texts in which ELOHIM appears in which it is used in reference to God Himself ("Yahweh Elohim"), this form is used here not of a plurality of beings but, respectively, of Two individual beings, God and His Son.

It follows, then, the claims of Mormonism, among others, notwithstanding, that the plural form ELOHIM does not *mean* a "company" or "family" of beings. That it is *used* of a plurality of beings in certain passages and that certain of these are, under divine inspiration, *interpreted* accordingly in the New Testament[8] no one doubts. That however,

7. It should be noted that the plural form, "elohim," is used as well of *individual* gods of the nations (*cf* 1 Sam.5:7; Judges 11:24; 1 Kings 18:24).

8. *cf* John 10:34,35; Acts 7:40,14:11,19:26; 1 Cor.8:5; Gal.4:8.

is not the issue. Indeed, it is just as true, and far more to the point that in many places and in all cases in the Greek New Testament God always used the Greek singular for Elohim whenever referring either to Himself or His Son.[9]

Perhaps, as many scholars have suggested, when "ELOHIM" is used of Yahweh Himself, the plural form "*Elohim*" is an idiom termed *plural amplitudinus* or plural of majesty, which originally had in view the plenitude of God's operations in which He acts through others who are energized by His holy spirit. Some such explanation must account for the mere plural form. This is because in the vast number of passages which speak of Yahweh Himself as "Elohim"' even as where, under God, Christ as well is denominated by this same title, a single Being alone is addressed or is in view.

It is a fallacy that either supremacy or unoriginatedness is entailed by the word "God." It is a fallacy as well that wherever the word appears it speaks of the same being. And finally, it is a fallacy that if the word is used in a certain sense in one place, it is used in the same sense in another place. Each of these errors has been the source of much confusion. Collectively, the volume of deception which they have wrought is simply incalculable. If we are not snared by these errors ourselves, this can only be attributed to the grace of God.

We are often praying for a realization of God's purpose of the eons which He makes in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph. 3:11), even as for discernment concerning His allotment

9. For example, in Exodus 3:16 when God spoke to Moses out of the flaming thornbush, He revealed Himself as the *Elohim* of Abraham, and the *Elohim* of Isaac, and the *Elohim* of Jacob. Yet when our Lord cites this passage in proving the necessity of resurrection (Matt.22:32), and Steven brings it before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:32), neither translates *Elohim* as plural. Thus we may be certain concerning Yahweh, that *He* is the Subjector and Placer (not "subjectors" or "placers" of Abraham, or Isaac, and of Jacob).

among the saints, in which we have a part. May we complement such prayers by a request for the most fundamental realization of all, which is simply a realization of *Him* (Col.1:10). Truly, may the eyes of our heart be *enlightened,* in a realization of the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory (*cf* Eph.1:15-19). J.R.C.

THE TITLE, "GOD"

The word "God" (or "god"), like all titles, concerns itself with office or service. In Greek, its stem, *the-,* signifies PLACE; hence, the complete form, *theos* (GOD), means PLACer. This idea fits all the contexts in which *theos* is used. *Theos* is not only the original Greek word for the English "GOD," but is also the inspired translation of the Hebrew "ELOHIM," in all corresponding New Testament citations of Old Testament texts which refer to God Himself.

Any references to those lesser beings to whom the title GOD ("placer" or "subjector") also applies notwithstanding, then, we say, Nevertheless, there is only *one* God. He alone is the Supreme, the Almighty One. He is the God, and Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and He is "the only *true* God" (John 17:3).

It is Christ Himself Who insists that this is so. The adjective, *alêtheia* (TRUE), speaks of that which is in accord with the facts. In accord with the actual, literal facts, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ alone is God. He is the only Placer Who is not Himself placed by another. He alone is self-existent and self-sufficient. All others to whom this title is ascribed, *including Christ,* possess it in a derived sense, *not* in accord with the facts absolute, but relatively speaking, or, in some figurative way.

Supremely speaking, there is only *one* true God, even though, speaking relatively, and even in a righteous sense, "there *are* many gods" (1 Cor.8:5). For, indeed, "there are those being *termed* gods, whether in heaven or on earth" (1 Cor.8:5; *cp* Ex.22:8,9; Psa.82:6). Consequently, we should hardly be surprised that, in certain passages, Christ also is so termed (*cf* Titus 2:13; Heb.1:8; 1 John 5:20b). Except for God Himself, Christ certainly has a right to this title in a way unspeakably above that of all others, to whom it is also properly applied. Yet conversely, we must also realize that the ascription of the title "God" to Christ—in certain senses and in various connections—is no more indication that He is the Deity than that any others to whom this title is also ascribed are the Deity. J.R.C.

JUSTIFIED

WHEN Jesus our Lord was roused from among the dead the great work of justification had been achieved, not applied to sinners, but achieved for them. He was roused *because of* our justifying (Rom.4:25). When He was roused, the justifying work had occurred already, and thus His rousing became the evidence that our sins have been dealt with (*cp* 1 Cor.15:17). Therefore, we read (Rom.5:1):

A. **Justified, then,**
  B. **out of** His **faith**,
A. **we may be having peace toward God,**
  B. **through our Lord, Jesus Christ** . . . .

Here we see a twofold pattern where God's gracious gratuity of justification (A) is based on the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ Who is given up to death because of our offenses (B). We, who are believing, are even now living in a state of justification in God's sight, and because of this extraordinary favor we may be enjoying peace toward God. The justification is *out of the faith of Jesus Christ*, and the peace comes *through Him as our Lord and Saviour.* The "A" sections speak of what we receive, and the "B" sections speak of Christ, Who gains what we receive. This wording of the evangel is repeated in strikingly similar correspondence a few verses later, in Romans 5:9:

A. **justified now**
  B. **in His blood,**
A. **we shall be saved from indignation,**
  B. **through Him.**

It is the shedding of Christ's blood—it is the faith-obe-

dience of Jesus Christ to the death of the cross (Rom. 3:21; Phil.2:8) that is the source of our justification and the resultant enjoyment of peace toward God. This pattern of the evangel where righteousness and peace are solidly based on the faithfulness of our Lord in dying for sinners, is introduced in Romans 3:24,25 where we read, in accord with the twofold pattern noted above:

A. **being justified gratuitously** in [God's] **grace**,
  B. **through the deliverance** which is **in Christ Jesus**
A. **(Whom God purposes** for a **Propitiatory**,
  B. **through** [His] **faith in His blood** . . . .

The gratuity of righteousness is *out* of Jesus Christ's faith (*cp* Gal.3:22). The "faith" of Romans 5:1 is His faith in obedience to God's will, and His faithfulness in His suffering and death. This is the faith that justifies. Our faith comes into the picture as it rests on His faith and as the provision through which God reckons to us the righteousness established by Christ. So also, in Romans 3:24,25, justification is through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, not in us, but in Him; and "the faith" which brings about propitiation is our Lord's faith expressed in the shedding of His blood. Justification and peace are the accomplishments of God through the faith of His Son Who dies for us while we are still sinners.[1] Such a work of justification has become the manifestation of God's own righteousness (Rom.1:17; 3:21,25,26). It is a work of justification, in God's grace, that is without flaw. It is ironclad—no, it is gold-clad and wholly indestructible. It is righteous in every way, and it will result in the enjoyment of life's justifying by all mankind, so that the many sinners from Adam on downward will be constituted righteous (Rom.5:18,19). There is no way this will not occur.

1. Paul uses fact verbs here: *we are sinners; Christ dies.*

And thus we who are believing this evangel may already be enjoying peace toward God. Later, writing to us who are of the Uncircumcision, according to flesh, Paul reveals that we are brought near to God *by the blood of Christ* Who is our *Peace* (Eph.2:13,14). Once again, in accord with the pattern of Romans 5:1,2, Paul writes that it is *by means of the blood of Christ Jesus,* indeed *through His faith,* that we have boldness and *access* before God (Eph.3:12).

THEN

The fifth chapter of Romans does not stand by itself. It develops from all that has been laid down in the epistle from the beginning, but most directly and vitally from Romans 4:25. This is the force of the word "then" in Romans 5:1. Jesus our Lord is given up because of our offenses and is roused because of our justifying. Justified, then, out of such faith as this, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

It is because our offenses have been successfully dealt with in God's giving up of His Son to the death of the cross and the entombment, as made evident in the fact that He is then roused from among the dead, that the apostle now speaks of peace in connection with justification. What God does in giving up His Son, and what His Son does in faith and faithfulness—this is the basis of our justification, and this, in turn, opens the way to peace toward God.

JUSTIFIED

In that Jesus our Lord is given up because of our offenses, and in that He is roused because of our justifying, we now are standing before God, in His sight, holy and flawless (*cf* Eph.1:4). This is a dramatic reversal of the situation earlier described by our apostle: "Out of law works, no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight" (Rom.3:20). Yet now God's righteousness is made manifest "for Him

to be righteous and a Justifier of the human out of Jesus's faith" (Rom.3:21,26).

Consequently God righteously reckons the righteousness established by the death of Christ to us even now while we still live in the flesh. Our position before God is described by an aorist passive participle, "Justified," simply stating the fact. This cannot be taken away because it is not based on what we do or how we feel, but rather on what our Lord has done, and what God has put to our account.

Justification has occurred on the basis of Christ's faith. That is the first point being made in Romans 5:1. Moment by moment, we are living in a state of justification in the sight of God, Who is not pretending or resting on mere forensic judgment, but is seeing accurately and truly what has been gained through the death of His Son. It is a work of gratuitous grace as far as we are concerned, but it is righteously founded on what Christ has done.

THE END OF ADAM'S LINE

How did it happen? How did the crucifixion and entombment of Jesus Christ bring justification to us who are sinners, and conciliation to us who are enemies in our offensiveness before God?

When Christ dies, all of us human beings die (2 Cor. 5:14) in the sense that the old humanity is decisively and unconditionally put to an end. Eventually this will take the form of full experience, when no one at all will be found as a sinner and everyone will be vivified and constituted righteous (Rom.5:18). What is accomplished will become a reality in full realization. The old state of sin under the power of death that started with Adam is doomed.

Paul will repeat this exultant word of truth in speaking of us who are believing the evangel and are viewed by God as we shall be when we are glorified (*cf* Rom.8:30). In spirit, we are baptized *into the death* of Christ Jesus (Rom.6:3).

We are entombed together with Him (Rom.6:4). Our old humanity is crucified together with Him (Rom.6:6). We die together with Christ (Rom.6:8).

One who dies has been justified from sin (Rom.6:7).

Christ does not suffer in our place. We are crucified together with Him. He does not die as our Substitute, but the sinner dies in Him in Whom all of us are created (*cf* Col.1:16).[2] He suffers and endures the cross (*cf* Heb. 12:2), and we do not, but nevertheless we die. He is given up *because of* our offenses. He also dies *for the sake of* our sins (1 Cor.15:3), that is, He dies so that our sins might be put away to a finality (*cp* 2 Cor.5:17; Heb.10:1-14). He dies so that the sinner, the old creation, might be put to death, and all might ultimately be vivified in Him (*cf* 1 Cor.15:22), blessings now applied to us in spirit.

OUT OF FAITH

Romans 5:1 does not speak of actual justification coming out of *our* faith. The word "faith" in Romans 5:1 must be understood in reference to *Christ's* faith, as we have noted above. To be sure, the believer's faith is given much attention in Romans 4, and in verse 24 Paul has just spoken of us "who are *believing* on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead." But our believing is not the source of justification but the occasion upon which God reckons righteousness to us in this present era while we are still in the flesh. Only in a figurative way, in reference to the way in which justification is applied to us in this era, can we relate justification to our faith. And even then there is no place for boasting in ourselves. Literal justification as a righteous work of God, in its essential sense of being caused to be righteous, does not rest on our faulty faith.

2. See the article, "Substitution or Inclusion?" in *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.22, pp.549-573; reprinted in vol.106, pp.51-75.

If justification as a display of God's righteousness requires human faithfulness in addition to Christ's, there would be no solid basis, indeed no hope for peace. If such justification could, in some cases, be somehow partly earned by such a measure of faith even as exhibited by Abraham in Genesis 15 or Paul on the Damascus road the whole matter of peace toward God would best be set aside from our considerations.

NOT OUR FAITH, BUT HIS

Hence it is out of the faith of Jesus Christ that we are justified. Justification in this literal sense is not merely a declaration of God, decreed on the basis of divine authority for the benefit of certain individuals who have taken the right steps of faith. It is a work that manifests the righteousness of God (Rom.3:21). If, then, justification manifests God's righteousness, it must have a solid basis in righteousness, one that bypasses human requirements and lies outside of human efforts. Every wrong must be righted. Every sin and every sinner must be dealt with in such a way that all mankind may be brought into the profound and glorious state of "life's justifying" (Rom.5:18).

At the very beginning of Romans, the apostle writes that the evangel of God concerning His Son reveals God's righteousness "out of [the Righteous One's] faith." It is "for [our] faith," but the revelation of God's righteousness is sourced entirely in the faith of Jesus Christ, in His obedience to the death of the cross. It comes *out of* His faith.

If we are to grasp the reality of the peace which God has set before us, we must come to appreciate the righteousness of justification as it is announced in the evangel Paul is bringing in Romans. In their deepest significance, the words "out of faith" here in Romans 5:1 as well as in Romans 1:17 refer to the faith of Jesus Christ as presented explicitly in Romans 3:22-26, where "*through* Jesus Christ's faith" is used.

MAY BE HAVING

Much has been written about the correct grammatical form of the verb "have" in Romans 5:1. Brother Knoch observed: "The Authorized Version says 'we *have* peace.' Yet the two leading manuscripts read 'we *may* be having peace.' The difference is very slight in the original, only the *length* of the letter *o,* but the same sound. But the fact is, that those who are justified, have so little conception of what this implies that they . . . are *not* at peace with God. It is only as we fully grasp the force of justification, that it excludes all possibility of condemnation (Rom.8:1) and is not dependent on our acts or feelings, that we have settled peace, and are really reconciled with God."[3]

Our faith does come into the picture here, however, but not in the word "faith," but rather in the pronoun "we." The antecedent of this pronoun is the phrase "[those] who are believing" in Romans 4:24. Justification comes out of Jesus Christ's faith; the enjoyment of peace toward God is for those who are believing this evangel. Hence, in context, Romans 5:1 declares: "Justified, then, out of [Jesus Christ's] faith,, we [who are believing this evangel] may be having peace toward God."

But even here, Paul puts the spotlight on the faith of Christ, for not only is justification sourced in His faith, the peace that believers may be having is to be recognized as coming *through our Lord, Jesus Christ.* We are conciliated to God *through the death of His Son* (Rom.5:10). The emphasis in Romans 5 continues to be on the message we are believing concerning God's Son. The value of our faith is fully dependent on His faith.

3. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.47, p.193.

The physical fact is that we are still in the flesh, and in focusing on our own faith without appreciating the centrality of Christ's faith, we tend, on one hand, to get depressed and discouraged, or on the other hand become proud and self-righteous, both evils arising from comparisons with the faith of others. These bring about the very opposite of a state of peace and drive us away from enjoyment of peace toward God. Paul would have us focus our believing on the faith of Jesus Christ which is the source of justification. That is the pathway to peace toward God because it brings us to the awareness of what He has done in and through His Beloved.

PEACE TOWARD GOD

What is this peace we may be having toward God? It is the enjoyment of the *access* and *standing in grace* which we have before God because of being justified through the faith of Jesus Christ. But this is more than standing before Him apart from His indignation. Indeed, propitiation has been achieved through Christ's faith as it involved the shedding of His blood (Rom.3:25), but the term Paul is about to use in defining this peace is not *propitiation,* but *conciliation* (Rom.5:10,11; *cp* 2 Cor.5:18.19). There is no condemnation for us (Rom.8:1), and that speaks of peace. But also from a positive standpoint, the peace we may be enjoying is built on God's love (Rom.5:8) and brings us into the position of sons to God, in which the spirit of sonship in us cries out to Him, "Abba, Father!" (Rom.8:15).

Justification comes out of the faith of Christ. With this One, Who dies for us, and thus establishes our justification—with this One as the Conveyer of peace, we may be sure that all estrangement between us and God is gone, and in its place is the peace of a son, a peace built upon God's righteousness and love.

D.H.H.

Unsearchable Riches

**A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD**

Our 112th Year

(1909–2021)

Contents:

145 Editorial
146 Our Blessings are in Christ
156 God Chooses Us in Christ
163 Foreknown and Chosen of God
170 Paul to the Thessalonians (I)
177 Paul to the Thessalonians (II)
181 The Trumpet of God

FOURTH QUARTER, 2021

Volume 112 **Number 4**

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

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As one of its subjects, it probes and takes issue with the commonly accepted explanation that Satan, and not God, is responsible for evil. To quote the book's author: "Almost all of us are shortsighted. We see the judgments, but fail to recognize that they are only part of God's way with mankind, that they are definitely not an end. We confuse the going with the goal. Judgment is God's strange work. He uses it as a preparation toward a glorious consummation."

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FOURTH QUARTER 2021
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

EDITORIAL

WHAT is going on? That is a question many are asking today. We begin this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* with a good answer: "Love longs for love responsive" (p.146). This has been going on since creation. God longs for us to know His love and respond with love for Him.

Yet in order for this to be, there must be the experience of evil. "Creatures of Adam's race cannot appreciate good apart from evil" (p.161). This brings us directly to a deeper and truer wording of our question: What is *God* doing? "Ephesians 1:11 declares that *God* . . . is operating . . . all. Romans 8:28 reveals that He is doing so for *good*" (p.167).

It is within this purpose of God, Who is operating all for good, that He chooses us, and does so *in Christ* (see pages 146-169). Further with regard to God's grace to us, who are believing His evangel concerning His Son, I contribute two brief suggestions, the first on page 176 on 1 Thessalonians 1:3, and the second on page 180 concerning 2 Thessalonians 2:6,7. So also there are future matters such as our Lord's descent for us described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (p.174). This is discussed in the article entitled, "The Trumpet of God" (pp.181-192). The central figure in God's operation for good is His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and the central and vital fact concerning Him is: "Christ dies and He rises" (1 Thess.4:14, p.174). And Christ's death and resurrection does not concern us only, who are believing it now, but all humanity, and all creation, and all that is going on. "Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace continually by every means" (2 Thess.3:16).

D.H.H.

OUR BLESSINGS ARE IN CHRIST

Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing
among the celestials,
in Christ. (Eph.1:3)

LOVE longs for love responsive. It has one aim: to kindle a kindred fire from its flame. We share our heart's secrets with those we love. God is not a man, but He too, reserves His secrets for His own.

To Abraham, His friend, Yahweh unbosoms Himself with regard to Sodom's awful doom. To us, His beloved ones, He has revealed the secret of God, which can only be consummated by the fiery judgments which usher in Yahweh's day (Col.2:2; Rev.10:7).

Prophet after prophet inquired as to the periods of time connected with Messiah's suffering and His glories. But it is to His disciples that the Master reveals the secrets of the Kingdom (Matt.13:11). The nations that sought not after Him are told the secret, as to the duration of Israel's blindness, which Isaiah longed to know (Rom.11:25).

But from all these He had concealed His latest, choicest secret, now at length revealed. If Israel spurns the love He lavishes upon her, it must needs find outlet in another channel. The present secret administration of the grace of God—of which the patriarchs and prophets, disciples and apostles, never dreamed—leads His own into the hidden treasuries of His heart (Eph.3:3,6,9).

In this balmy spirit we desire to inquire into God's secrets. With the apostle we are convinced that, should we be perceiving all secrets, yet have no love, we are nothing (1 Cor.13:2). We know, too, that He Who bids us do everything in love is the first to fulfill His own request (1 Cor.16:14). All His actions are done in love, but some of His words excel in displaying His affection. Chiefest among these fond tokens are the secrets He has confided to His own. Indeed, it is only as we grasp the breadth and length and depth and height of the administration of the secret that we are enabled to appreciate the dimensions of Divine love and to respond to the affection from which this secret springs (Eph.3:18,19).

And, since it has pleased Him to tell us these secrets, shall we turn a deaf ear to the heart beats that only those who lie in His bosom can detect? Shall we spurn His confidence and count His words as idle tales, profitless and vain?

The Secret of the Evangel speaks of favor shown to those without. The secret administration, however, deals with the relationship of those within.

When Messiah's *heavenly* glories are revealed, a remnant of His earthly people are chosen to share His celestial honors. Their allotment is transferred from earth to heaven. The aliens who believed did not have even an earthly allotment. What place, then, shall be given them, in the heavenly realms? Shall they, like those upon the millennial earth, be subordinate to the chosen nation?

No! *They share equally in this high and overwhelming glory! This is the secret, till then unknown and unknowable.* This is the climax of God's grace and love, the finishing touch that rounds out the moral universe. By it sin is dethroned from the heavens, whence it sprang. Heaven, and not earth, is the scene of our coming glory, and there, unlike the future glorious earth, Jew and gentile are of *equal* exaltation. Paul and others of the chosen nation will

partake of the celestial allotment, but they will have no preeminence over us poor sinners of the gentiles. We rank equally with them in this supernal glory! This we commonly term "The Mystery," or *The Secret Administration.*

GOD'S ANOINTED

"Christ" is the title of our Lord which gives us His official standing as God's Executive. He is the One Whom God has *anointed* to fulfill all His will. It is not His personal Name, but an official designation which He shares with others. It is only because of the preeminence of His anointing that He is *the* Christ, Who needs no added name or appellation to distinguish Him from His inferiors.

"Christ" is the anglicized form of the Greek *christos* (which comes from the element *chri*), meaning ANOINTED. We should call Him God's ANOINTED. Thus it always is in the sublinear of the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT, and so it would be in the Version had the usual designation not become so universal, or had it not such an unbreakable hold on the life and literature of the believers. While we *call* Him Christ, therefore, let us always connect this title with that sacred rite which alone endues God's representatives. The Christ is God's Anointed.

We should also identify it with the Hebrew title Messiah. It is so translated only twice (Dan.9:25,26), but it occurs often in the Hebrew Scriptures. As perhaps nothing else will so instill in us the import of this title as a consideration of these occurrences, we will give the most instructive, grouping them as connected with priests, kings, and prophets. Let us note that all three of these were anointed. The Messiah is not merely a King, as is usually supposed, but also a Priest and a Prophet. So He is set forth in His unveiling (Rev.1:1).

ANOINTED PRIESTS

All of the ministering priests in Israel were anointed with the holy anointing ointment (Ex.28:41). This is a type of that holy spirit which Christ shares with all who are in Him. The ingredients, therefore, must bring before us the attributes or qualities which it confers. It is a mingling of the bitter and the sweet. Many of the saints imagine that the spirit bring's no bitterness, no suffering. This is denied by the very first and most abundant of its ingredients.

The principal spice used in compounding the holy ointment used for the induction of priests into office was myrrh. It is the usual word for BITTER in Hebrew. This is its chief characteristic. It is obtained from a low, thorny, scraggly tree which grows chiefly in Arabia. A puncture or incision of the bark produces a white, viscid liquid, which soon hardens into a gum. It has an acrid taste, with peculiar aromatic flavor. Its odor alone is not disagreeable. This we take as indicating the spirit of humility and suffering which made Him a Man of Sorrows. This was not acceptable to those who had not received the spirit.

The second ingredient was a special quality of the well-known cinnamon. It was not bitter, but sweet. It was the inner rind of the tree of the same name found chiefly in Ceylon. Some have suggested that *sweet* cinnamon was obtained from the roots rather than the branches. The adjective is certainly in striking contrast to the preceding myrrh, *bitter.*

The third ingredient, called sweet calamus, seems to have been a sort of aromatic reed or grass, such as are found in India, like the lemon grass. No aromatic grasses are found in Palestine. It also is sweet, in contrast to the bitter myrrh.

The fourth ingredient, called *cassia* in the Authorized Version, should be distinguished from the spice which has this name in Hebrew (Psa.45:8). It is probably the cinnamon cassia, which is coarser and more pungent than ordinary cinnamon. It also comes from afar, for it is not native in Palestine.

These latter three spices suggest those sweet graces, such as love, joy, and peace, which are imparted by the spirit and which should characterize those who have received its anointing. All of these were blended into one aromatic ointment in a base of olive oil. The latter is itself an emblem of holy spirit, hence we may take the aromatic compound as suggesting the effect of its application and the fragrance of its operation. All of the spices were imported. They were not natives of the land. Is not this a striking feature of the graces of the spirit? They are strange to this world. The bitter and the sweet come from some other clime.

ANOINTED KINGS

The first king to be the Lord's anointed was Saul. Samuel anointed him king over Israel at the request of the people (1 Sam.9:16). At Gilgal he is recognized as Yahweh's anointed (1 Sam.12:3,5). When Samuel went to anoint David (1 Sam.16:3) he first supposed that it was to be Eliab, Jesse's kingly-looking son (1 Sam.16:6). David himself recognized Saul as Yahweh's anointed (1 Sam.24:6, 6,10) on two occasions when Saul's life was in his hand, so that he refused to kill him (1 Sam.26:9,11,16,23). Not only that, but when a young Amalekite brought him Saul's crown and told how he had killed the king, David had him slain for destroying Saul, because he was Yahweh's anointed (2 Sam.1:14, 16).

David was the next king to receive the anointing (1 Sam. 16:12). The house of Judah anointed him (2 Sam.2:4,7) and later his rule extended to Israel (2 Sam.5:3,17; 12:7). Absalom began his rebellion by being anointed (2 Sam. 19:10). Solomon was first anointed when David was old (1 Kings 1:30,39; 1 Chron.23:1). He received a second anointing (1 Chron.29:22). The later kings, such as Jehu (1 Kings 19:16) were all anointed. Even foreign rulers, such as Hazael, king of Assyria, received the rite.

ANOINTED PROPHETS

Elijah anointed Elisha to be prophet in his place (1 Kings 19:16). Little is said of such anointings. Perhaps the reason is that the actual application of the symbolic ointment, which was legally essential for the public functions of priesthood and rule, did not necessarily include a portion of the spirit which it symbolized. Priests were often unspiritual and kings stubborn. Saul had received the outward anointing, but lacked the inward graces of which it spoke. A prophet, however, *must* have the spirit in its actual power, for he is God's man who steps in when priests and kings, who have the symbol but not the reality, have failed.

All of these were *christs.* This is not irreverence, but the very opposite, for they were anointed in order to teach men beforehand concerning THE Christ. There were priests, but He is the *chief* Priest. There were kings, but He is the *great* King. There were prophets, but He is THE Prophet. It would be a vast gain if we could either drop the Greek form "Christ," or use it of the types which foretold Him. As it is, let us always remember that Messiah is the Hebrew and Christ the Greek expression for the *Anointed.*

It is not good for us to constantly differentiate between Him and those who are called the same. The names Joshua and Jesus should be alike. The title Lord, in the Greek, is applied to men who are *masters* of slaves, hence it should always be Master. And Christ should either be applied to all who are anointed, or changed to Anointed. In this way we would preserve the links God has made between His Son and those who help to make His glories known. As our language and customs do not allow these things to be done, we can obtain nearly the same benefit by means of literal renderings and sublinears.

Thus briefly we have sketched the background of that simple yet stupendous statement which introduces Him to

us in Matthew's account (1:16): "Who is termed 'Christ'." Only one fully saturated with the significance of previous anointings will perceive the magnificent majesty and solitary supremacy with which this title invests Him. The glory and power of all kingship and priesthood and prophecy find their focus in Him. All phases of the divine activities are centered in the Anointed.

We are apt to confuse the various operations of the spirit of God. The anointing is sometimes taken for the coming on of the spirit. That they are distinct is evident from the fact that most of them on whom the spirit came never had been anointed. Balaam and Othniel and Gideon and Amasai and Azariah probably never knew what it was to be anointed. It is clearer still in the experience of David and Saul. After the young son of Jesse had received the rite, "the spirit of Yahweh came upon David from that day forward." "But the spirit of Yahweh departed from Saul and an evil spirit from Yahweh troubled him" (1 Sam.16: 13-15). Both were anointed, yet the spirit came on one and avoided the other.

CHRIST

Our Lord was born as the Christ. John the Baptist was *filled* with holy spirit before his birth, but His very generation was by the holy spirit. He was never subjected to the rite after His coming in flesh. He was the Christ at His *birth.* We read of "Jesus Christ's *birth*" (Matt.1:18), "where the Christ is *born*" (Matt.2:4). The messenger told the shepherds that "today was brought forth to you a Saviour, Who is Christ, the Lord" (Luke 2:11). The great truth is that Jesus *is* the Christ, not that He became such when He entered His active ministry.

As a preparation to empower Him for His ministry, the spirit came upon Him at His baptism, in appearance as if

it were a dove (Matt.3:16; Luke 3:22). There is no reason for making this His anointing. It is never so called. He is termed Christ not only from His birth but even before. When the apostle speaks of Him subsisting in the form of God, he calls Him by this title (Phil.2:5,6). He Himself proclaimed His anointing in Nazareth (Luke 4:18). But long before this He was anointed with the oil of exultation beyond His partners (Heb.1:9). The holy anointing oil was but a suggestion of those exultant spiritual graces which empowered Him to *fulfill* the offices which His partners only prefigured.

While a few faithful Israelites, like Simeon (Luke 2:26), may have recognized His anointing in His infancy, few, even of His disciples, seemed to grasp it fully. When the great crisis in His ministry came, and His rejection was assured, then it was that Peter confessed that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God. Yet even he would not have known this apart from a special revelation (Matt.16: 16,17). It was not until after His resurrection that He is fully and freely accorded the title Christ by His disciples. And the fullness of its force does not dawn upon us until Paul, in His epistles, expatiates upon the universality of His power and dominion.

The Christ of the Circumcision is the Messiah of the Hebrew Scriptures. Only Peter seems to gain a furtive glance of His celestial glory. He writes of "Jesus Christ, Who is at God's right hand, being gone into heaven, messengers and authorities and powers being made subject to Him" (1 Peter 3:21,22). Otherwise He is the great King Who will rule the earth through the sons of Israel; as well as the chief Priest and the Prophet, like Moses, on Whom all the bliss of the millennium is based.

IN CHRIST

The universal headship of Christ is first revealed in

Ephesians (1:10). The heavens, as well as the earth, are to be subject to His direction. Only as we know Him as God's Executive in all the vast concerns of redemption and salvation throughout the universe, in order to bring all back to Himself in reconciliation, can we realize in some measure the force and fullness of what it means to be IN CHRIST.

We may read through the accounts of our Lord's life and the Acts without ever encountering the phrase "in Christ"; it is almost exclusively a Pauline thought. Its first occurrence is in Romans 3:24, where our deliverance is said to be "in Christ Jesus." Paul's epistles are full of it, but Hebrews and James do not contain it. In Peter and John, James, and Jude it is limited to His earthly glories (1 Peter 3:16; 5:10,14; 1 John 5:20; Jude 1).

All that is ours by grace is "in Christ." Indeed we may say that, by grace, all is ours in Him, even though the blessings are confined to realms celestial. In Him there is deliverance (Rom. 3:24), justification (Gal.2:17), no condemnation (Rom.8:1), freedom (Gal.2:4), holiness (1 Cor.1:2), eonian life (Rom.6: 23), a new creation (2 Cor.5:17), and all our expectation (1 Cor.15:19). It is only as we become acquainted with His worth and high deserts that we can grasp what God has given us, for it is to be lavished upon us, not according to what we are in ourselves, but in harmony with our place in Christ.

It is a false humility which denies our right to such high deserts, or seeks to sully the splendor of such grace by intruding some merit of our own. This is overwhelmingly true of our spiritual celestial honors, which would be altogether beyond our reach even if we were as innocent as Adam before he sinned, or as righteous as Daniel, who will not attain to them. There is service and reward, but this is "in the Lord," not "in Christ."

The lordship of Christ is a truth sorely needed by the saints, for there is much service which does not recognize

Him as the only One Who has the wisdom and the right to direct the activities of those who are His slaves. He alone will reward those who please Him, and that which is done without His direction and authority is worse than wasted. But there is still sorer need to distinguish His lordship and our slavery and its rewards, from our place in Him as the Anointed, in Whom we are free, and are the objects of undiluted, unmerited, overwhelming grace.

THE JUST DESERTS OF CHRIST

This distinction is intensely practical. In Christ all differences vanish, for they would limit the outflow of grace. There is no Circumcision and Uncircumcision, no male or female, no slave or freeman. The Jew can claim no precedence over the gentile in this secret economy. A man has no more in Christ than a woman. A slave is as free and as rich as his master. But this is not true "in the Lord." This is not the basis of conduct. The slave must obey his master in the Lord. The wife should be subject to her husband "in the Lord." Conduct is regulated by our relation to Him as Lord. But this does not affect our position "in Christ."

Let us exult that our blessings are "in Christ." Were they in us, even in an infinitesimal degree, they would not be sure or satisfactory. Indeed, they would not be blessings worthy of the name. There is nothing in us to deserve them. We have not the power to preserve them. They would have no more value than an unsigned check for many millions. When tempted to doubt our possession of every spiritual blessing among the celestials, all we need to do is to remember that these are in Christ. We cannot doubt His deserts. He is entitled to all that God will give Him, and to all that we will share with Him. Outside of Christ we are mean and miserable. In Him we are rich beyond the dreams of avarice, and blessed beyond all human thoughts of bliss.

A. E. Knoch

GOD CHOOSES US IN CHRIST

> Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before world disruption, we to be holy and flawless in His sight. (Eph.1:3,4)

GOD'S GLORY is the universal goal. From the tiniest insect in its aimless-seeming way, to the most sovereign sun star in its parabolic path, all have one common aim, one pure purpose to perform. Men may deem the one a foolish, fruitless wandering; they cannot see the star's objective; but God has harnessed both to His chariot of glory. The earth is His most fruitful field. Mankind is the creature fittest to display His varied excellence.

God's goal is not gained until He receives the heartfelt adoration of all His creatures. Great as are His efforts on our behalf, they are but the means to make Him known. Ephesians does not find its climax in the mystery itself, but in a prayer for its appreciation (3:18,19). Even before the secret was made known the apostle could say, "If I . . . should be perceiving all secrets . . . yet have no love, I am nothing" (1 Cor.13:2). Nothing has any vital value unless it leads to love. It is the glory of God's wisdom that all things in the universe, including sin and hate, shall be lured into the livery of love. Hence a knowledge of the secret is not sufficient or satisfactory to God unless it includes a heart-hungry occupation and enjoyment of the surpassing love of Christ, which transcends all knowledge.

CHOSEN BEFORE THE DISRUPTION

Christ is the Chosen of God (Luke 23:35). He is God's Elect. In this sense, all others belong to the non-elect. This does not by any means imply that all but Him are damned. On the contrary, if Christ had not been chosen, no one would be saved. Election is never an end in itself. It should not be made a means of condemnation, for it is always an avenue of blessing. One is chosen and anointed to save all. Some are chosen in Him to reach the rest. God's great purpose to clasp all creation to His heart is carried out by a series of elections. Christ is chosen as Mediator, and, in Him, some are called out to convey His blessings to the earth, others to channel them to the celestials.

Let us rid our hearts of the destructive delusion that election is the only portal to salvation. Let us purge our spirits of the insane reasoning which deduces the eternal damnation of the non-elect from the fact that they are not chosen. The alternative of election is not eternal perdition. Christ was chosen to save, not to condemn. Others are selected for a like purpose, for fellowship in worldwide blessing.

He who, with Pharisaic pride, plumes himself that he belongs to the elect, who looks down from his superior station upon the non-elect, who calmly surveys their luckless state and consigns them all without a pang to eternal torment, may well beware lest he has been selected by himself. God's elect have no place for pride, but are submerged in humility by the operation of His grace. A sense of his own sin and insufficiency constrains the believer and softens his attitude toward the sinner. The true attitude of God's elect is an exultant consciousness that their blessing is to be the means of blessing to others. Associated with Christ, they have their part in God's great purpose, until creation reaches its predestined goal.

Election is a dignity and an honor. It places Christ at

the head of all creation. It sets His saints at the summit of all God's works. It is far more than salvation. Indeed, in Christ, its chief exponent, salvation is not for Himself at all, but for others. He needed none. This is the true connection of salvation with election. It is not that the elect are merely saved, but that they have the exultant privilege of association with God's Chosen One in making known His salvation to His creatures.

The wide divergence between salvation and election is strikingly evident in the case of Judas. He was one of the twelve. These were selected from the disciples, so, in a superior sense, they were the elect (Luke 6:13). Our Lord did not blunder in His choice of Judas. Long before His betrayal, He asked them pointedly, "Do not *I* choose you, the twelve, and one of you is an adversary?" (John 6:70). It was necessary that He should be betrayed by a friend, hence it was essential that one should be chosen to act the part. For a time this choice gave him the high honor of close communion with Christ and His apostles. But it was not, in this case, accompanied by salvation.

THE DISRUPTION

We have already seen something of the scope in space occupied by the Ephesian epistle (Eph.1:3). It is not confined to the earth, as previous revelation, but explores the limits of the universe. It also breaks all bounds as to time. All of God's previous dealings were connected with the eonian times and the scenes of sin. Paul alone takes us back before the eons and leads us on beyond their close. He alone deals with God's activities before the disruption and beyond the consummation (Eph.1:4; 1 Cor.15:24).

The word "disruption" is usually translated "foundation." As there is another word, *themelios,* for foundation, the vocabulary method demands that we distinguish between them. In the sublinear of the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT

we have the elements of this word. Its literal meaning is DOWN-CASTING. *Kata* means DOWN, *bolê,* CAST. We have almost the same word in English in catabolism, the series of changes by which living matter breaks down within an organism. Moreover, the verb, *kataballō, is translated cast down* twice in the Authorized Version (2 Cor.4:9; Rev. 12:10). In the former passage the meaning is fixed by the contrast. We can hardly say "*founded,* but not destroyed." It means to *cast down,* not *found.*

This term is not connected with creation, but redemption. It is the earliest date on the calendar of sin. Adam's offense in Eden is by no means the beginning of evil in the world. Long before the restoration of the earth for his habitation, there had been a catastrophe which can only be accounted for by a disruption of some sort. Perhaps we have a record of it in the second sentence of Genesis, which should read, "and the earth *became* a chaos and vacant." It certainly was not so in the beginning. God did not create it a chaos (Isa.45:18). It became so because of the entrance of sin and evil.

It may be profitable to pause here to point out the tendency of our translators to bow to the accepted dicta of science. There is every effort in the opening verses of Genesis to countenance the idea that creation began in chaos. Not only is it suggested that the creation originally was waste and barren, despite the definite denial of Isaiah (Isa.45:18), but the words *tohu va-bohu,* rendered *without form and void,* are utterly misleading. How can the earth be "without form"? As a material substance it must have some shape. Why translate the same word *(tohu) vain* in Isaiah 45:18? It always refers to a *chaos.* And how can the earth be *void*? If it were it would not be! This word *(bohu)* refers to *vacantness.* The earth became a chaos and vacant, not without form and void.

This is most suggestive. There must have been a time

anterior to this when it was not a chaos and vacant, but fertile and productive. All of God's creations are perfect and mature. Adam was not created an infant. He was full-grown, with every faculty developed when he rose from the ground. So the earth was created for habitation, but the even course of events was shattered by the entrance of sin and the consequent disruption, which called for the restoration recorded in the succeeding verses of the first of Genesis.

That the disruption has to do with sin, and not with creation or foundation, is apparent from the passages in which it appears. The Lamb was foreknown *before* (1 Pet. 1:20) and slain *from* the disruption (Rev.13:8). Now there is nothing sinful in founding a world. There is no need for a sacrifice. The disruption is the signal for the reign of sin and, in God's purpose, doomed to death the sacrificial lamb. Even before, in anticipation of this catastrophe, the Lamb was foreknown, for God provides for all apparent emergencies before they appear.

The disruption is put in opposition to the repudiation of sin at the conclusion of the eons (Heb.9:26). The necessity for the suffering of Christ began with the entrance of sin. To connect it with God's work in founding the earth borders on blasphemy. A sacrifice has been needed ever since the disruption. The power of the blood of Christ will prevail until sin is repudiated. This is at the conclusion of the eons. Without being dogmatic, we infer from this that these are the two boundary monuments of the eonian times. Sin's entrance at the disruption and its exit at its repudiation, mark the commencement and consummation of the eons. The eonian times are in the service of sin. Before the eons sin was absent, beyond them, it will be repudiated.

With this background we should be able to extract some of the sweet preciousness of being chosen in Christ before

the disruption of the world. Not merely a long while ago. Not merely when His purpose was freshly formed. It was *before sin entered.* God's love and election were ours, not merely before we had offended Him, but before there was any barrier between Him and His creatures. Now we are enmeshed in sin. How marvelous it is to look back to God's choice of us in Christ, before a single failure or offense could come between! God's love and choice of us is not only superior, but anterior to sin! We are found in His heart before evil had invaded the universe!

If we were chosen before sin came on the scene, why then did God allow its intrusion, and why did we need to be drawn into its terrible toils? In order that His love would not be wasted with its own outflow, but receive an affectionate response. Creatures of Adam's race cannot appreciate good apart from evil. All that God's love could lavish on them would fail to reveal His heart unless it be displayed on a black background. But sin is not first or last in God's purpose. It is only a brief parenthesis in His dealings with creation. Through it the Creator is transfigured into the Saviour, the Redeemer, the Reconciler.

HOLY AND FLAWLESS

We were chosen, not to be innocent merely, but to be holy and flawless. Holiness repels sin and flawlessness displaces imperfection. One who has never known a scratch cannot begin to realize the joyous satisfaction of perfect freedom from every flaw. Only those seared by sin can exult in holiness. So we can readily read between the lines and see that our election by God before sin's disruption involved far more than the creation perfectness of Adam. It calls for a knowledge of good which can come only through the perception of evil. It demands deliverance from sin. It destines us to dominance over sin. In this sense, the elect

only are holy, for they alone repudiate sin during the eons and repel it while in its presence.

What a blessed prospect is ours! Sick of sin, full of flaws, all that we do tainted, all that we are blighted, our very best unsatisfactory in the light of God's presence—how awful and terrible if we must continue forever in such a plight without hope! Many of us are calloused by continual contact with evil, and sensitive spirits find surcease in God's grace, but what a relief will come to all in that happy day when His primeval purpose concerning us is realized! We shall not be afraid of sin. It will flee from us! We will not be ashamed of our imperfections. All our blemishes will have disappeared, our flaws will all have vanished!

The supreme sweetness of God's choice does not lie alone in likeness to Him. It is blessedness, indeed, to get, yet it is far more blessed to give. God gives, and so do those whom He selects. Christ is the supreme example. He chose twelve to aid in dispensing blessing in the Kingdom. Many more are selected in Israel, who will deal out blessing in the future. Paul was chosen to reach the members of His body, and these, as we have seen, had been chosen before the disruption, for the most glorious and far-reaching beneficence it is possible to conceive.

And then—how comforting it is even now!—then we shall look back and thank our God, not only for His choice before the disruption, but for sin and evil, and for our sorrow and shame, which will give flavor to our flawlessness, and beauty to our holiness. Without the night we would not enjoy the day. Without the darkness there is no light visible. The disruption will enable God's creatures to enjoy His beneficence and love. And, above all, it will bring Him the praise, the adoration, the overflowing love from surcharged hearts, which would have lain dormant and dead without its provocation. Let us thank God for the disruption and His choice of us before it came about!

A. E. Knoch

FOREKNOWN AND CHOSEN OF GOD

THE MEMBERS of Christ's body were *"foreknown"* by God (*cp* Rom.8:29). God's holy nation, the people of Israel, are also among those "whom He foreknows" (Rom.11:2). Thus "the purpose of God may be remaining as His *choice,* not out of our acts, but of Him Who is *calling*" (*cf* Rom.9:11).

We are "called according to the purpose that *whom* He foreknows He designates beforehand also to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom.8:29). The thought here is not that He knows something *about* us, but that He "knows" *us.* This speaks not of His ignorance of others, but of His special "knowledge" of us.

God's literal prescience or foreknowledge of our faith or works cannot be in view, for membership in the body of Christ is a matter of grace, not reward. Since salvation is not a matter of qualification, it is surely mistaken to assert that foreknowledge is merely knowing ahead of time who will qualify to be saved. Besides, "free will" faith and acts could never be foreknown. Since there is always a "chance" they might never occur, their future existence could not be an object of knowledge. On the other hand, where faith and acts *are* foreknown, their occurrence is inevitable, and thus it becomes impossible but that they should occur.

In such cases as this, in which God's "foreknowledge" of *us* is in view, foreknowledge is a figure of speech. It is not only—wonderful as it is—that we are "known" by Him today, but that we *were fore*known by Him long ago as well. "Now if anyone is loving God, this one *is known* by Him" (1 Cor.8:3). And, as those "whom He foreknows,"

our calling itself is founded upon God's predesignated purpose to conform us to the image of His Son. The same is true concerning those in Christ among the Circumcision. In writing to the believing expatriates of the dispersion, Peter reveals that they were "chosen . . . according to the *foreknowledge* of God" (1 Peter 1:1,2).

Literally, we know facts, for example, "knowing this before" (2 Peter 3:17). Figuratively, we "know," or have a certain relationship with persons. In making his defense before Agrippa, Paul declared, "My life indeed then, from youth, which coming to be from the beginning among my nation, besides in Jerusalem, all the Jews are *acquainted* with, *knowing me before,* from the very first" (Acts 26:4,5). "Know" is continually used in ordinary speech in just this way, as well as in many passages throughout the Scriptures (e.g., Jer.1:5; Hosea 13:5; Amos 3:2; Matt.7:22,23; John 10:14,15; Gal.4:9; 2 Tim.2:19).

In Romans 8:29, God's *fore*knowledge of us has in view gracious gifts and a glorious relationship with Him. In His own counsels, God had already established these things on our behalf long ago, long *before* we were born. Thus we were "foreknown" by God, having already been chosen by Him, according to His purpose, and "His vast love with which He loves us" (*cf* Eph.2:4).

This is not a matter of partiality at all, but of purposeful *choice*—"according as He chooses *us*" (*cf* Eph.1:4). Its motive is the accomplishment of a glorious goal; it is not born out of prejudice. Yet purposefulness, even as partiality, involves the choosing of some and not others (in any purpose that is less than universal in scope). This is so concerning God's choice of us, even as in an orchestra director's choice of the members of his orchestra. He chooses those whom he judges to be best suited to his purpose. The act of choosing need not involve the slightest taint of partiality. Furthermore, God does not choose us simply

that we might be blessed, but in order to make a display of His grace in us (Eph.2:7), and that we should become a blessing to others, serving in His work, "to have an administration of the complement of the eras to head up *all* in the Christ" (Eph.1:10) and "to reconcile *all* to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens" (Col. 1:20). Our calling involves "the multifarious wisdom of God" being "made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, *through the ecclesia*" (Eph.3:10).

Among the Corinthians (and we are hardly any different), it was "the stupid things of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the wise ones," even as the weak, ignoble and contemptible, and "the things which are not," He chooses, "that He may be disgracing the strong things"—and, "that He should discard the things which are, *so that no flesh at all should boast in God's sight*" (1 Cor. 1:27-29). Not many wise, powerful or noble, "according to the flesh," are even called: Thus "you are observing your calling, brethren" (1 Cor.1:26).

TWO CALLINGS

God's calling of the nation of Israel into the kingdom of the heavens, in which "many are the called, yet few are the chosen" (Matt.22:14), is an entirely different calling than the calling which Paul presents here for the members of the body of Christ, according to his evangel.

In our holy calling, God's choice precedes His call, and that by a vast expanse of time (2 Tim.1:9; Eph.1:4). God's call is of His chosen ones, and they *will* respond. In Paul's evangel, election is *first.* Subsequently, all these chosen ones are called; then they are all justified and finally all glorified. All who are called were first *all* chosen.

But in the calling concerning the kingdom of the heavens, the opposite is the case. Many who were called are finally

not chosen. Their election is *last.* Only a *few* of the vast number who are called are finally chosen (*cf* Matt.22:14).

Worthiness is essential for entrance into the kingdom of the heavens (*cf* Matt.22:8; Luke 20:35). Yet for ourselves, worthiness is not essential to the allotment of life eonian (*cf* Rom.5:20,21; Titus 3:7), but only to having a part, or allotment, in God's *kingdom* (His government or "reign"; *cf* Gal.5:21; 2 Tim.2:12). All the members of Christ's body will enjoy glorious life in the oncoming eons, and they will possess it as a gracious gift (*cp* Eph.2:7; Col.3:3,4; 1 Cor.15:51-53).

NOW WE ARE AWARE

The awareness that God is working all together according to His counsel and purpose (Rom.8:28-30; Eph.1:4-12), and that this includes His knowledge and choice of us before we were born, seldom dawns on the believer early in his faith. But when it does, and we are able to put aside our false and prideful notions of free will and contrary choice, we are bound to increase in satisfaction and usefulness.

The CLNT of Romans 8:28 reads, "Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God . . . ." Though this rendering is certainly in accord with the truth, the thought presented in the Greek text is an even wider and more glorious one. It is not only that God is working all together for *the good of* those individuals who are loving Him, but that God is working *all* together for good. Period. His operations for good are not confined to matters of our own welfare, but concern the best interests of all. They encompass all that exists and all that occurs. God is the Worker of all, for He "is working all."

Ephesians 1:11 declares that *God* (*Theos,* PLACER) is operating (IN-ACTing) *all.* Romans 8:28 reveals that He is doing so for *good.* This is His *purpose.* Paul says that those individuals who are truly loving *the Placer* not only believe

this, but are *aware* that this is so. Immature believers may love the "heavenly Father" while being very far from loving *God,* "the *Placer*"—"the only true *God*" or Subjector (John 17:3). God cannot be *loved* as God when He is not even recognized (much less glorified and thanked) *as God.*

The phrase, literally," TO-THE *ones*-LOVING THE God," is not in the genitive case (OF), but the dative (TO). It is an appositive, making reference to how matters appear (*cp* James 4:17) in the eyes of those believers who have this awareness (compare the "we" here with the "you" of Romans 6:17, concerning those who "obey from the heart the type of teaching to which" the Roman saints were "given over"). The main unfolding here—that God is working all together for good—though marked by great intellectual depth, is an easy to understand thought. It may be difficult, or rather, impossible, for most to believe, but what a wonderful awareness this is!

Syntactically however, these verses as a whole are rather complex and difficult to translate into English. This is especially so since an ellipsis is required with regard to the thought presented in the latter part of verse 28 and in verse 29.

We might phrase the passage as follows: "Yet we are aware that, to those who are loving God, God is working all together for good, to those [believers], who are called according to the purpose that whom He foreknows, He designates beforehand, also to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren [there is this awareness]."

The definite article, which appears here twice in the dative case (represented by the phrases "to those who are loving God" and "to those, who are called"), in both cases is used as a demonstrative pronoun. Though in the first statement the correct sense can be conveyed by the English far demonstrative, "those," it is important to note that Paul's

reference is to his near-at-hand subject, those believers who, in fact, are loving *God.* But in its second occurrence, the near demonstrative, "those," must be used in order to retain the sense. For the apostle is speaking of those who are loving the Placer and of *their* resultant awareness. It is *these* believers who are being spoken of.

Paul does not say, however, that the remaining members of the ecclesia are not chosen in grace and predesignated of God. Indeed it is the very revelation of Ephesians chapter 1 that they too are so chosen and designated (*cp* vs.1 and 4). But it is "those who are loving God" who are in *view* in Romans 8:28,29.

In the nature of the case, then, the entire ecclesia is included in verse 30: "Now whom He designates beforehand these He calls also, and whom He calls these He justifies also; now whom He justifies these He glorifies also."

In the Authorized Version, *proorizō* is translated "predestinate," as well as "ordain" and "determine before." The Concordant Version translates it uniformly as "designates beforehand." This is its sense; it simply speaks of what is designated or specified. Its significance is clearly illustrated in Acts 11:29 (without the auxiliary, *pro,* BEFORE): "Now according as any of the disciples thrived, each of them *designate* something to send to the brethren dwelling in Judea, for dispensing." Man often fails to accomplish his plans, the things that he designates to accomplish. But God's plans, the things He designates to occur in His own wise counsels, always come to pass, for it is He Who fulfills them all (Isa.46:9-11).

In the Scriptures the expression "designate beforehand" is only used in reference to a few subjects, all of them of great consequence. Yet it should never be inferred from this that these are therefore the only things God *designates* beforehand. Besides, that is not the issue. Instead, the question is, Does God *operate all* (Eph.1:11)? and, absolutely speaking, Is there any other God (or Placer) except One, "the Father, out of Whom all is" (1 Cor.8:4-6)?

"What, then, shall we be declaring to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Surely He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also be graciously granting us all? Who will be indicting God's *chosen* ones? God, the Justifier? Who is the Condemner? Christ Jesus, the One Who dies, yet rather is roused, Who is also at God's right hand, Who is pleading also for our sakes?" (Rom.8:31-34).

In choosing us, God has acted neither as a rewarder nor arbitrarily. Instead, in His grace, He *chose* us. It is what He *preferred* to do. Others may be better or worse than ourselves, but we are those whom God has chosen. As the dictate of His wisdom, and in accord with His purpose, He chose each one of us. He has not revealed why He selected us instead of others to be members of Christ's body. *But we know that He has done so* and that this was the best decision that could have been made, for it was His decision.

"Now we ought to be thanking God always concerning you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, *seeing that God prefers you from the beginning for salvation,* in holiness of spirit and faithfulness of truth, into which He also calls us through our evangel, for the procuring of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess.2:13,14). We will never fulfill this duty until we believe that God has indeed thus preferred us. God's purpose cannot fail, and His purpose in preferring us from the beginning and calling us into salvation is to procure the *glory* of Christ our *Saviour.*

When we enter into a settled conviction concerning these things, we will be shocked that we ever wanted to limit God's foreknowledge or mix His grace up with our responsibility. Finally, therefore, the fact that we were foreknown and chosen of God, apart from anything in ourselves, will become to us one of the most precious revelations of all the Scriptures. J.R.C.

PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS (I)

1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the ecclesia of the **Thessalonians, in God,** the **Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ:**

Grace to =**you and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ.**

2 **We are thanking** ·**God always concerning** =**you all, making**° **mention of** =**you** *on* **in our** ·**prayers,** 3 **uninter-mittingly remembering**

=**Your** ·**work of the faith**
And ·**toil of the love**
And ·**endurance of the expectation**
of our ·**Lord Jesus Christ,**

in front of our ·**God and Father,** 4 **having perceived, brethren** °**beloved**° **by** ·**God,** His ·**choice of** =**you,** 5 *i* **for the evangel of our** ·**God** does **not** *b* **come** *io* **to** =**you in word only, but in power also, and in holy spirit and much assurance, accord**ing **as** =**you are** °**aware. Such** *as* **we become among** =**you, because** of =**you.**

6 **And** =**you´ become imitators of us and of the Lord,** ¯**receiving**° **the word in much affliction with joy of holy spirit,** 7 **so that** =**you become**° **models to all the** |**believers in** ·**Macedonia and in** ·**Achaia.** 8 **For from** =**you has been sounded**° **forth the word of the Lord, not only in** ·**Mac-edonia and in** ·**Achaia, but in every place** =**your** ·**faith** ·**toward** ·**God has come out, so that we** |**have no need to be speaking** of **any**thing, 9 **for they´ are reporting con-cerning us, what kind** of an **entrance we have to** *d* =**you, and how** =**you turn about to** *d* ·**God from** ·**idols,**

To be slaving for the **living and true God,**
10 **And to be waiting for His** ·**Son out of the heavens,**
Whom He rouses *o* **from** among **the dead** ones**,**
Jesus, our ·|**Rescuer**° **out of the coming**° ·**indignation.**

2 For =**you** *s* **your**selves **are** °**aware, brethren, that our** ·**entrance** ·**to** *d* =**you has not come** to **be** for **naught,** 2 **but** though ¯**suffering before and** ¯**being outraged in Philippi, accord**ing **as** =**you are** °**aware, we are bold**° **in our** ·**God to speak the evangel of** ·**God to** *d* =**you** *i* **with** a **vast struggle.** 3 **For our** ·**entreaty** is **not out of deception, nor yet out of uncleanness, nor yet** *i* **with guile,** 4 **but accord**ing **as we have been tested**° **by** ·**God to be entrusted** with **the evan-gel, thus are we speaking, not as pleasing human** beings**, but God,** ·Who is **testing our** ·**hearts.** 5 **For neither** do **we at any time become flattering in expression, accord**ing **as** =**you are** °**aware; neither** with a **pretense** for **greed, God** is **witness;** 6 **neither seeking glory** *o* **from human** beings**, neither from** =**you, nor from others,** when we |**could**° |**be** *i* a **burden as Christ's apostles.** 7 **But we become gen-tle in** =**your midst, as** *if* a **nurse should be cherishing** her *sf* **own** ·**children.** 8 **Thus** be**ing ardently attach**ed° to =**you, we are delighting to share** with =**you not only the evan-gel of** ·**God, but** our *sf* **own** ·**souls also, because** =**you come** to **be beloved** by **us.**

9 **For** =**you are remembering, brethren, our** ·**toil and** ·**labor: working**° **night and day** *td* **so** as **not** ·**to be burden-some** to **any of** =**you, we herald** *io* **to** =**you the evangel of** ·**God.** 10 =**You** are **witnesses, and** ·**God, how benignly and righteously and blamelessly we become to** =**you** ·who are **believing,** 11 **even as** =**you are** °**aware how** we are to **each one of** =**you, as** a **father** to his *sf* **own children, consoling and comforting**° =**you and attesting**° 12 *io* **unto** =**you** ·**to be walking worthily of** ·**God,** ·Who **calls** =**you into** His *sf* **own** ·**kingdom and glory.**

13 **And therefore we´ also are thanking** ·**God uninter-**

mittingly that, in ¯**accepting** the **word heard** *b*__**from us,**__ from ·**God** =**you receive**°**, not** the **word of human** beings**, but accord**ing **as it truly** |**is, God's word, which is operating**° **also in** =**you** ·who are **believing.**

14 **For** =**you´ become imitators, brethren, of the ecclesias of** ·**God** ·which |**are in** ·**Judea in Christ Jesus.** *t*__**For** =**you suffer the same,** +__**even** =**you by** your **own** ·**fellowtribesmen,** **accord**ing **as they also by the Jews,** 15 ·who **kill the Lord Jesus as well as the prophets, and banish us, and** are **not pleasing to God, and** are **contrary to all human** beings**,** 16 **forbidding us to speak to the nations that they may be saved,** *io*__**to** ·**fill up their** ·**sins always. Yet the indignation outstrips** *on*__**to them** *io*__**to** a **consummation.**

17 *y*__**Now we´, brethren, bereaved of***f* =**you** *td*__**for** the **period of** an **hour,** in **face, not** in **heart, endeavor** the **more exceedingly to** *p*__**see** =**your** ·**face,** *i*__**with much yearning,** 18 **because we want to come to***d* =**you, indeed I, Paul,** + **once—**+__**even twice—and** ·**Satan hinders us.** 19 **For** *a*__**who** is **our expectation, or joy, or wreath of glorying? Or** is it **not** +__**even** =**you, in front of our** ·**Lord Jesus, in His** ·**presence?** 20 **For** =**you´** |**are our** ·**glory and** ·**joy.**

3 **Wherefore,** when we could **by no means longer** |**refrain,** it **seems well** for **us to be left in Athens alone,** 2 **and we send Timothy, our** ·**brother and God's servant in the evangel of** ·**Christ,** *io*__**to** ·**establish and to console** =**you** *ov*__**for** the sake **of** =**your** ·**faith.** 3 **No one** is ·**to be** |**swayed**° *i*__**by these** ·**afflictions, for** =**you** *s*__**your**selves **are** °**aware that we are** |**located** *io*__**for this.** 4 **For** +__**even when we** |**were** *td*__**with** =**you, we** |**predicted to** =**you that we are** |**about to be** |**afflicted**°**,** **accord**ing **as it comes**° to **be also, and** =**you are** °**aware.**

5 **Therefore,** when **I also** could **by no means longer** |**refrain, I send** *io*__**to** ·**know** of =**your** ·**faith, lest** some**how the** |**trier tries** =**you and our** ·**toil may come**° to **be** *io*__**for naught.** 6 **Yet at present,** because of **Timothy's** ¯**coming to***d* **us from** =**you, and** ¯bring**ing us** the **evangel**° of =**your** ·**faith**

and =**your** ·**love, and that** =**you** |**have** a **good remembrance of us always, longing to** *p*__**see us even as we also** =**you—**__ 7 **therefore we are consoled, brethren,** *on*__**over** =**you** *on*__**in** *e*__**all our** ·**necessity and affliction, through** =**your** ·**faith,** 8 *t*__**for now we are living if ever** =**you´ are standing firm in** the **Lord.** 9 **For** *a*__**what thanks**giv**ing are we** |**able**° **to repay to** ·**God concerning** =**you** *on*__**for** *e*__**all the joy** with **which we are rejoicing because** of =**you in front of our** ·**God,** 10 **night and day superexcessively beseeching**° *io*__**to** *p*__**see** =**your** ·**face and to adjust the deficiencies of** =**your** ·**faith?** 11 *y*__**Now may our** ·**God and Father** *s*__**Him**self, **and our** ·**Lord Jesus, direct our** ·**way to***d* =**you!**

12 *y*__**Now may the Lord** cause =**you** to **increase and superabound** in ·**love** *io*__**for one another and** *io*__**for all, even as we also** *io*__**for** =**you,** 13 *io*__**to** ·**establish** =**your** ·**hearts unblamable in holiness in front of our** ·**God and Father, in the presence of our** ·**Lord Jesus with all His** ·**saints.**

4 For **the rest, then, brethren, we are asking** =**you and entreating in the Lord Jesus, that accord**ing **as** =**you accept** *b*__**from us** ·**how** =**you** |**must be walking and pleasing God (accord**ing **as** =**you are walking also), that** =**you may be superabounding** yet *r*__**more,** 2 **for** =**you are** °**aware** *a*__**what charges we give to** =**you through the Lord Jesus.** 3 **For this** |**is** the **will of** ·**God:** =**your** ·**holiness.** =**You** are **to be abstaining**° **from** *e*__**all prostitution;** 4 **each of** =**you** is **to be** °**aware** of his *sf*__**own** ·**vessel, to be acquiring**° it **in holiness and honor,** 5 **not in lust**ful **passion even as the nations also** ·who are **not** °**acquainted** with ·**God.** 6 **No** one is ·**to be circumventing and overreaching his** ·**brother in the matter, because the Lord** is the **Avenger** *c*__**of all these,** accord**ing **as we say to** =**you before also, and certify**°**,** 7 **for** ·**God calls us, not** *on*__**for uncleanness, but in holiness.** 8 **Surely** in **consequence then, he** ·who is **repudiating is not repudiating** a **human, but** ·**God,** ·Who is **also giving His** ·**holy** ·**spirit** *io*__**to** =**you.**

9 *y*Now concerning ·brotherly fondness, we ˡhave no*t* need to be writing to ⁼you, for ⁼you´ *s*yourselves ˡare taught by God *io* ·to be loving one another, 10 for ⁼you are doing it also *io*to all the brethren ·who are in the whole of ·Macedonia. *y*Now we are entreating ⁼you, brethren, to be superabounding yet *r*more, 11 and that you be being ambitious° to be being quiet, and to be being engaged in your ·own affairs, and to be working° with ⁼your ·hands, according as we charge ⁼you, 12 that ⁼you may be walking respectably toward ·those outside and ⁼you may be having need of nothing.

13 *y*Now we are not wanting ⁼you to be ˡignorant, brethren, concerning ·those who are reposing°, lest ⁼you may be sorrowing° according as the rest also ·who are having no expectation. 14 For if we are believing that

Jesus dies,
and He rises,

thus also, ·those who are put to repose, will ·God, through ·Jesus, be leading forth together with Him. 15 For this we are saying to ⁼you *i*by the word of the Lord, that we´, the living, ·who are surviving° *io*to the presence of the Lord, should by no means outstrip ·those who are put to repose,

16 *t*For the Lord *s*Himself will be descending° from heaven
*i*With a shout of command,
*i*With the voice of the Chief Messenger,
And *i*with the trumpet of God,

and the dead ones in Christ shall be rising° first. 17 Thereupon we´, the living ·who are surviving°, shall at the same time be ˡsnatched away together with them in clouds, *io*to meet the Lord *io*in the air. And thus shall we always ˡbe together with the Lord. 18 So that, be consoling one another *i*with these ·words.

5 *y*Now concerning the times and the eras, brethren, ⁼you ˡhave no*t* need to be ˡwritten° to ⁼*you*, 2 for ⁼you *s*your-

selves are accurately °aware that the day of the Lord is as a thief in the night—thus is it coming°! 3 *y*Now whenever they may be saying, "Peace and security," then extermination is standing° by them unawares, even as a ·pang over the ˡpregnant, and they may by no means escape.

4 *y*Now ⁼you´, brethren, ˡare not in darkness, that the day may overtake ⁼you as a thief, 5 for ⁼you´ ˡare all sons of the light and sons of the day. We ˡare not of the night nor of the darkness. 6 Consequently, then, we may not be drowsing, ⁺even as the rest, but we may be watching and be ˡsober. 7 For ·those who are drowsing are drowsing at night, and ·those who are ˡdrunk° are ˡdrunk at night. 8 Yet we´, being of the day, may be ˡsober, ¯putting° on the cuirass of faith and love, and the helmet, the expectation of salvation, 9 *t*for ·God does not appoint° us *io*to indignation, but *io*to the procuring of salvation

through our ·Lord Jesus Christ,
10 the One Who dies *ov*for our sakes,

that, whether we may be watching or drowsing, we should live at the same time together with Him. 11 Wherefore, be consoling one another and edifying one the *one*other, according as ⁼you are doing also.

12 *y*Now we are asking ⁼you, brethren, to °perceive ·those who are toiling among ⁼you and presiding° over ⁼you in the Lord and admonishing ⁼you, 13 and to be deeming° them exceedingly distinguished in love, because of their ·work. Be being at peace among yourselves.

14 *y*Now we are entreating ⁼you, brethren: Be admonishing the disorderly, be comforting° the fainthearted, be upholding° the infirm, be being patient toward all. 15 Be seeing that no *a*one may render evil *id*for evil to anyone, but always be pursuing ·that which is good *io*for one another as well as *io*for all. 16 Be rejoicing always. 17 Be praying° unintermittingly. 18 In everything be giving thanks, for this is God's will in Christ Jesus *io*for ⁼you.

19 **Be not quenching the spirit.** 20 **Be not scorning prophecies.** 21 **Yet be testing all, retaining the ideal.** 22 **From every**thing **wicked** to the **perception, be abstaining°.**

23 *y*[**Now may the God of** ·**peace** *s*[**Him**self **hallow** =**you wholly; and may** =**your unimpaired** ·**spirit and** ·**soul and** ·**body be kept blameless in the presence of our** ·**Lord Jesus Christ!**

24 **Faithful** is He ·Who is **calling** =**you,**
Who will be doing it **also.**

25 **Brethren, be praying° concerning us also.** 26 **Greet° all the brethren** *i*[**with** a **holy kiss.** 27 **I am adjuring** =**you** by **the Lord,** that ·this **epistle be read to all the holy brethren.**

28 **The grace of our** ·**Lord Jesus Christ** be **with** =**you! Amen!**

FAITH, LOVE, EXPECTATION

In 1 Thessalonians 1:2,3 Paul gives thanks to God, unintermittingly remembering the Thessalonians' work and toil and endurance. These are responses respectively to faith, love and expectation, the three remaining spiritual endowments of 1 Corinthians 13:13. But does Paul speak solely of their faith and their love and their expectation as given to them by God? Without developing the suggestion fully, but with the support of the revised translation, I am putting forth here an expanded meaning of the passage which has long been in my mind.

Starting with the third line, it can be read as Paul's remembrance of the Thessalonians' endurance resulting from "the expectation of our Lord Jesus Christ." That is, the believer's endurance in expectation through all the opposition of present experience and what is seen, is grounded and settled (*cf* Col.1:23) on our Lord Jesus Christ's expectation. Our expectation of always being together with Him (1 Thess. 4:13) is assured in that it is His expectation, and that is the essential source of endurance.

So also (working backward in verse 3) our toil of love develops, and can only truly develop from "the love of our Lord Jesus Christ (*cf* 2 Cor.5:14; Eph.5:2). And again, our work of faith is grounded in and grows out of "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ" in His obedience unto the death of the cross" (*cf* Gal.2:20; Phil.3:8). D.H.H.

PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS (II)

1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the ecclesia of the **Thessalonians, in God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ:**

2 **Grace to** =**you and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ.**

3 **We** |**ought to be thanking** ·**God always concerning** =**you, brethren, accord**ing **as it** |**is meet;** seeing **that** =**your** ·**faith is flourishing, and the love of each one of** =**you all** *io*·**for one another is increasing,** 4 **so that we** *s*·**our**selves |**glory**° *i* **in** =**you in the ecclesias of** ·**God,** *ov*·**for** =**your** ·**endurance and faith in all** =**your** ·**persecutions and the afflictions with which** =**you are bearing**°**—**5 a **display of the righteous judging of** ·**God,** *io*·**to** ·**deem** =**you worthy of the kingdom of** ·**God,** *ov*·**for which** =**you are suffering also,** 6 **if so be that** it is **right** *b*·**of God to repay affliction to** ·those **afflicting** =**you,** 7 **and to** =**you** ·who are **being afflicted**°**, ease with us** *i*·**at the unveiling of the Lord Jesus from heaven with His power**ful **messengers,** 8 **in flam**ing **fire, dealing out vengeance to** ·those who are **no**t °**acquainted** with ·**God and** ·those who are **no**t **obeying**◊ **the evangel of our** ·**Lord Jesus Christ—**9 **who***a* **shall** |**incur** the **righteousness** of **eonian extermination from** the **face of the Lord, and from the glory of His** ·**strength—**10 **whenever He may come to be glorified** *i* **in His** ·**saints and to be marveled** at **in all** ·who **believe** (seeing **that our** ·**testimony** *on*·**to** =**you is believed) in that** ·**day.**

1:8 obeying: listening submissively to the evangel, *cp* Ro 1:5 **faith's obedience.**

11 *io*For which we are always praying° also concerning
=you, that our ·God should count =you worthy of the call-
ing, and should fulfill every delight of goodness and work
of faith in power, 12 so that the Name of our ·Lord Jesus
may be glorified *i* in =you, and =you in Him, in accord
with the grace of our ·God and the Lord Jesus Christ.
2 *y*Now we are asking =you, brethren, *ov*for the sake of
the presence of our ·Lord Jesus Christ and our assem-
bling *on*to Him, 2 *io*that =you ·be not quickly shaken from
your ·mind, nor yet be ⌊alarmed°, *n*either through spirit,
*n*or through word, *n*or through an epistle as through
us, as that the day of the Lord is °present. 3 No *a*one
should delude =you *ac*by *n*any method, *if* *t*for should not
the apostasy come first and the human of ·lawlessness
be unveiled, the son of ·destruction, 4 ·who is opposing°
and lifting° himself up *on*over everyone ⌊termed° a god or
an object of veneration, so that he is seated *io*in the tem-
ple of ·God, demonstrating that he himself ⌊is God? 5 Do
=you not ⌊remember that, still being *td*with =you, I ⌊told
=you these things?
6 And now =you are °aware ·what is detaining, *io*for him
·to be unveiled in his *sf*own ·era. 7 For the secret of ·law-
lessness is already operating. Only *till*when the *at* pres-
ent ⌊detainer may come° to be out of the midst, 8 + then
will be ⌊unveiled the lawless one (whom the Lord Jesus
will ⌊despatch with the spirit of His ·mouth and will ⌊dis-
card by the advent of His ·presence), 9 whose ·presence
⌊is in accord with the operation of ·Satan, *i*with *e*all power
and signs and false miracles 10 and *i*with every seduc-
tion of ·unrighteousness among ·those who are perish-
ing°, *id*because *w* they do not receive° the love of the
truth *io*for their ·salvation. 11 And therefore ·God will be
sending them an operation of deception, *io*for them ·to
believe the falsehood, 12 that all may be judged ·who do
not believe the truth, but delight in ·unrighteousness.

13 *y*Now we´ ⌊ought to be thanking ·God always concern-
ing =you, brethren, °beloved° by the Lord, seeing that
·God prefers° =you from the beginning
*io*for salvation,
In holiness of spirit and faithfulness of truth,
14 into which He also calls us through our ·evangel, *io*for the
procuring of the glory of our ·Lord Jesus Christ. 15 Con-
sequently, then, brethren, ⌊stand firm, and ⌊hold to the
traditions which =you are taught by us, whether through
word or through our epistle.
16 *y*Now may our ·Lord Jesus Christ *s*Himself, and ·God
our ·Father, ·Who loves us, and gives us an eonian conso-
lation and a good expectation in grace, 17 console =your
·hearts and establish you in every good work and word.
3 ·Furthermore ⌊pray°, brethren, concerning us, that the
word of the Lord may ⌊race and be ⌊glorified°, accord-
ing as it is *td*with =you also, 2 and that we should be res-
cued from ·abnormal and wicked human beings, for not
for all is the faith. 3 Yet faithful ⌊is the Lord, Who will be
establishing =you and guarding you from the wicked one.
4 *y*Now we have confidence *on*in =you in the Lord that what
we are charging, =you are doing also and will be doing.
5 *y*Now may the Lord direct =your ·hearts into the love
of ·God and into the endurance of ·Christ!
6 *y*Now we are charging =you, brethren, in the Name
of our ·Lord Jesus Christ, to be putting° yourselves from
every brother who is walking disorderly and not in accord
with the tradition which they accept *b*from us. 7 For =you
*s*yourselves are °aware how you ⌊must be imitating° us, *t*for
we are not disorderly among =you, 8 neither do we eat
bread gratuitously *b*from anyone, but *i*with toil and labor
we are working° night and day, *td*so as not ·to be burden-
some to any of =you. 9 Not that we ⌊have not the right,
but that we may give =you ourselves as a model *io*for you
·to be imitating° us. 10 For +even when we ⌊were *td*with

=**you, we** gave **this** |**charge to** =**you that: "If any**one **is not willing to be working**°**, neither let him be eating."** 11 **For we are hearing** that ᵃ**some among** =**you** are **walking disorderly, working**° at **nothing, but** are **meddling**°**.** 12 ʸ**Now** ˙**such we are charging and entreating in** the **Lord Jesus Christ, that working**° **with quietness they may be eating** their ˢᶠ**own** ˙**bread.**

13 ʸ**Now** =**you´, brethren, should not be despondent** in **ideal doing.** 14 ʸ**Now if any**one **is not obeying our** ˙**word through** ˙this **epistle,** let it **be** a |**sign**° to =**you as** to **this** one, **not to be commingling**° with **him, that he may be abashed;** 15 **and** do **not be deeming**° him **as** an **enemy, but be admonishing** him **as** a **brother.**

16 ʸ**Now may the Lord of** ˙**peace** ˢ**Him**self **give** =**you** ˙**peace continually** ⁱ**by every means. The Lord** be **with** =**you all!**

17 **The salutation** is by **my** ˙**hand—Paul's—which** |**is** a **sign in every epistle: thus am I writing.** 18 **The grace of our** ˙**Lord Jesus Christ** be **with** =**you all! Amen!**

CONCILIATION AND LAWLESSNESS

Despite the confusion and stresses of our times it remains "a most acceptable era," for "Now is a day of salvation!" (2 Cor.6:2). It is God's grace to us to know that "all is out of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ" (2 Cor.5:18). But in doing so "God was, in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them" (2 Cor.5:19). Yet there is a dark side to this operation of peace. With the conciliation, which is "the secret of the evangel" (Rom.16:25; Eph.6:19), comes "the secret of lawlessness," which Paul, the apostle of the conciliation, tells the Thessalonians is "already operating" (2 Thess.2:7). Nevertheless, the unveiling of the lawless one "with every seduction of unrighteousness" (2 Thess.2:8-10) is still being detained (v.6), and we continue to live in a most acceptable era. "Consequently, then, brethren," Paul writes in 2 Thessalonians 2:15, "stand firm, and hold to the traditions which you are taught by us whether through word or through our epistle."

D.H.H.

THE TRUMPET OF GOD

> For this *we are saying to you by the word of the Lord,* that we, the living, who are surviving to the presence of the Lord, *should by no means outstrip those who are put to repose,* For the Lord *Himself* will be descending from heaven with a *shout of command,* with the voice of the *Chief* Messenger, and with the trumpet of *God,* and the dead ones in Christ shall be rising *first.* Thereupon we, the living who are surviving, shall *at the same time* be *snatched away together* with them in *clouds,* to meet the Lord in the *air.* And *thus* shall we always be together with the Lord. (1 Thess.4:15-17)

UNTIL a beloved brother in Christ and in the Lord, F. H. Robison, requested me to set forth the difference between the "trumpet of God" in this passage and the seventh trumpet in the Unveiling of Jesus Christ (Rev.11:15) I had never noticed the fact that the seventh trumpet does indeed loom up in the background of this passage, and probably gave rise to the peculiar form in which it is cast. One would suppose, from the emphasis, that the Thessalonians had been told that, at the presence of the Lord, the living *will* outstrip the dead, and that He will *not* blow the trumpet, and that the dead will *not* rise until later, at another time, and that the meeting will be on the earth. And so they had, no doubt, been informed, for *this is just how it will be when the Messiah returns to Israel.* What Paul now tells them is quite the reverse of that which he had said before, hence he insists that it comes from the Lord.

In our quotation we have italicized the emphatic statements which are in striking contrast to the course of events when the seventh messenger introduces the reign of Christ over the world kingdom by his blast. It is difficult to account

for the striking form in which the apostle expresses himself unless we keep this in mind and note that he is concerned to show that he is *not* speaking of the presence of the Lord at the commencement of the kingdom, when the living *will* outstrip those reposing, and the Lord will *not* blow the trumpet Himself and the dead will *not* be rising first, and will *not* be snatched away at the same time with the living, and they will *not* meet Him in the air. Practically every particular clashes with the occurrences when this seventh trumpet sounds.

First of all, why should Paul insist that he was saying this by the word of the Lord? Had he been speaking from himself? Was not all of this epistle inspired? The statement seems purely emphatic, and is introduced because what he is about to say regarding the presence of the Lord for the nations is in contrast to the presence of Christ for Israel. Doubtless he was well acquainted with the close of Daniel's prophecy. That he had instructed them along these lines is clear from his question in the second epistle: "Do you not remember that, being still with you, I told you these things?" (2 Thess.2:5). Then he had told them that the resurrection would occur some time after the presence of Christ. Now he wishes them to receive a further revelation somewhat similar, but not to be confused with that which he had already given. This is a new truth, which he had *not* told them previously.

The close of Daniel's prophecy seems to give us a clear idea of some of the principal events at the epiphany or presence of Christ when He comes to set up the kingdom. This will occur three and a half years—twelve hundred sixty days—from the middle of the last heptad, commonly called "Daniel's seventieth week." But everything connected with the kingdom does not take place at once. Thirty days later (1290 days from the same starting point) the offering that was stopped is resumed. Forty-five days after this

(1335 days) seems to be the time set for the resurrection of Daniel and the kingdom saints. Thus the *living* saints, who have gone through the tribulation, will enter the kingdom seventy-five days *before* the dead are raised.

Is not this what Paul has in mind when he insists that we, the living, who are surviving unto the presence of the Lord, *will by no means outstrip those who are put to repose?* This is precisely what *will* be the case in Israel, and, up to this time, this was the only resurrection of the saints of which they could have heard. Does not this account for the emphatic double negative, NOT NO, *by no means?* Here was a new revelation, a presence of the Lord in which the dead do not come behind the living. If Daniel and the saints with him are "blessed" though they must wait (Dan.12:12), how much more blessed are those who do not need to wait, but arise immediately! They do not even wait until the Lord touches the earth, but are drawn to Him by the magnetism of His presence while He is in the air. Thrice blessed are those who are put to repose in this day of grace!

But why is this? If Christ is present on earth at His epiphany, why do not the saints rise to greet Him? But we must remember that the mere presence of Christ does not raise the dead. If that were so, all would have been raised when He was here in humiliation, or, at least, after His own resurrection, before His ascension. His *word* is needed to recall the dead to life. And, at the seventh trumpet, the blast is blown by a *messenger, not by Christ Himself.* No messenger can raise the dead, no matter how long or loud he blows. The seventh trumpet is also the third *woe* (Rev.11:14). It does not bring life, but death; it works no weal, but woe. Hence it is not fitting that the Living One should blow this trumpet. Nor is it meet that it should recall the dead to life.

The scenes at the beginning and end of this adminis-

tration are often confused in the minds of the saints. And this is not strange. Every great change or adjustment is bound to bring with it a period more or less chaotic. In Berlin, where some of this is being written, they are cutting through two grand boulevards, one north and south, the other east and west, right through the heart of the city. Some of it needs no change. "Unter den Linden" remains as it was. Yet in one spot a whole block of magnificent houses was pulled down to make an open place. The confusion was quite orderly, yet it was there, and even the well-informed could not say just how everything would be. So it was in the beginning of this administration. A grand boulevard had to be cut for *grace* right through from beginning to end.

Yet the confusion at the end is even worse, partly because it is still future, while the beginning is past, but more because it is not merely a peaceful readjustment, but a great battle line, darkened by His dreadful indignation and the din of destruction. Here are no clear limits, for it is the twilight between night and day. We cannot say this moment is in man's day, for he is still ruling, nor can we reason that the same moment is in the Lord's day, for He is thundering, but it is a time like no man's land, which belongs to both sides until the issue is decided. I would not stake off an exact boundary here. Reasoning is useless on such vague "premises."

BY NO MEANS OUTSTRIP

As we have seen, in the kingdom the living meet the Messiah *first,* and the dead do not rise until seventy-five days later. Unlike our upward call, His presence in Israel will at first call for sorrow. All the tribes of the land will be *grieving* over Him (Rev.1:7). It will not be a scene in which the dead would be welcome or happy. Hence there is a delay, as in the case of Joseph's brethren, until the

affairs of the living have been adjusted, and normal relations are restored between them and their great Deliverer. After that the dead are raised in Israel, and the thousand years' reign commences.

In this way two periods of a thousand years' duration are formed, one commencing seventy-five days later than the other. Satan will be bound at the epiphany of Christ, so will be loosed before the saints have completed their term of office. His insurrection, after he has been loosed, lasts as long as the time between Christ's presence and the proper commencement of the kingdom administered by the saints. This seventy-five day delay is in strong contrast to the course of events when the Lord comes for us. Then the resurrection comes first, though we who survive are by no means left behind, for both unite in rising to meet our Lord in the air.

But why should there be this difference? The answer is simple—*grace.* The kingdom on earth is introduced by judgment, and this demands time for its execution, even where the saints are concerned. No such preliminaries are needed with us, for we are vivified first, before we are called upon to give an account of our actions in the body. With them He appears to those who await Him (Heb.9:28). They may feel the force of His indignation in the bowls. In the brief period following His advent, the living saints receive their wages (Rev.11:18) and the living nations are judged (Matt.25:31-46). But we are not appointed to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, the One dying for our sakes, that, whether we may be watching or drowsing, we should be living *at the same time,* together with Him (1 Thess.5:9,10).

Grace removes the differences between us. Were resurrection a matter of merit, some of us would fall far behind, while some, I am sorry to say, feel that they should be raised at the time of their decease, if not soon after. But

grace is a great leveler. There will not be a split second of priority in the resurrection. We will *all* be *first*! *None* will be *last!* In Israel the circumstances are such that the resurrection of the faithful of old is not due until the kingdom has been inaugurated.

HIMSELF

The reason why the living will not outstrip those who are reposing is found in the precious word *Himself.* In the work of woe, of devastation and death, He sends *seven* messengers, but in His prior presence, which Paul is now presenting for the first time to the saints, the Lord *Himself* will not only descend from heaven, but will *Himself* blow the trumpet, so that the effect will be the opposite of the woe trumpets. His is the voice that even the dead can hear! Indeed, it affects them first. Instead of waiting for two months or more, they are first to feel the vivifying power of His voice, and catch up with the living as they are snatched away from the earth into the air. And *He* it is Who blows the trumpet of God, not another!

It is possible that the Greek text of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is idiomatic, and so does not determine who does the trumpeting. It may be translated "it will be trumpeting," if we ignore the fact that it is grammatically active voice, so does not blow itself. Perhaps a small leeway is left to the bias of the translator. This is indicated in the sublinear by the fact that the He is printed with a small e, not a capital E. And I am certainly partial in my judgment in this matter. A trumpet is usually sounded by someone, so it is only a question of who does it. In this case it will rouse the dead, and I challenge anyone in the universe, apart from Christ, to do it! I have heard many a trumpet sound. Earth will hear the terrible blasts of the seven messengers at the time of the end. But no dead are roused! When these

come forth I am reminded that He alone has this honor. All shall hear *His* voice, and not another's! Whose voice but His can rouse the dead?

The Authorized Version and Revised Version rendering, however, "the trumpet shall sound" seems to indicate that the Greek reads "the trumpet shall trumpet," for they translate the verb *trumpet* as *sound* elsewhere. Let it be clearly understood, then, that the only rendering to which no objection can be raised on the score of bias is "He shall be trumpeting." This is active voice in English, as in Greek. The grammar cannot be criticized. But if we render the word "it shall be trumpeting" we should have an object. Either it must be trumpeting *something,* or the verb becomes *middle,* not *active,* in its significance. The trumpet trumpets itself. Hence, if we translate *it* in place of *He* we say that this is not literal but a figure of speech, in which the active voice is used for the middle. The context or the interpretation may compel us to do this. But we should not do it until we are compelled.

Trumpets *sound.* This is what the Scriptures actually say in several passages (Matt.24:31; 1 Cor.14:8; Rev.8:13). In these the Authorized Version and the CONCORDANT VERSION agree. But they also *trumpet.* This word does not seem to have been in use as a verb in early English, so the Authorized Version renders it *sound a trumpet* (Matt.6:2; 1 Cor.15:52) or simply *sound* (Rev.8,9,10,11). In doing this they blot out a distinction which the CONCORDANT VERSION seeks to preserve. Now in English the verb *sound* is often middle in signification. We can use it as active, "He sounds a trumpet;" as passive, "a trumpet is sounded;" or as middle, "the trumpet sounds." This accounts for the unusual rendering of the Authorized Version. Having lost sight of the Trumpeter, they let the trumpet itself rouse the dead without His help.

Sound or blow a trumpet is found in the Septuagint,

and is there expressed by *trumpet a trumpet,* or *trumpet in a trumpet* (1 Sam.13:3; 2 Sam.2:28; Isa.27:13; Jer. 51:27; Ezek.7:14), hence it could easily have been used in 1 Corinthians 15:52. But as it is not we cannot fully endorse the Authorized Version rendering today, although it is difficult to see how they could have avoided using the phrase in their days, if *trumpet* was not used as a verb. But they could just as well have rendered it "He shall sound a trumpet," as to change it to the middle, "the trumpet shall sound." Happily they did not change the next verb, "they shall be raised" to "they shall rouse," and thus ascribe this wondrous work to human beings. Is it not evident that He Who rouses is the One Who blows the trumpet?

Beloved reader, do you think that Gabriel, or any other messenger can rouse the dead? Do you look for the voice of the seventh messenger to recall you to life? Its blast will blight those who are blighting the earth (Rev.11:18), but not a soul will respond from the unseen. And let me confide to you a private opinion of mine which you may wish to share with me. If the messenger who blows the seventh trumpet were Christ, He might empty the tombs of Israel, and the resurrection would occur ahead of time! No! No! Trumpets have blown and more will blow, but the dead will hear them only when He will be trumpeting. It is not the trumpet that has the power, nor the sound that has authority, but the *One Who does* it. He and He alone is able to vivify His beloved saints.

THE SHOUT OF COMMAND

What is trumpeted? In Revelation the trumpet is not used to give any orders, but is a symbol of warlike destruction. No one is given any order, or commanded to act. But this is just what characterizes the trumpet which will not only recall the dead to life and mobilize them and the living, but will order them to ascend to Him. This command

is given by means of the voice of the Chief Messenger, through the trumpet of God. It tells us what to do. It is like the shout of an officer to his men, "Forward, *march!*" Only with us it will be more like, "Live! Arise! Ascend!" Is this the third woe? I do not find it so!

THE CHIEF MESSENGERS'S VOICE

There was a time when I thought that Gabriel or some other "angel" would accompany our Lord and serve with his voice on this occasion. But, in other places it is plain that the dead, like Lazarus, will hear *His* voice. This opened to my gaze a new glory of our Lord. I had never thought of Him as an "angel," even though He seems to be the "Angel of the Covenant" of the Hebrew Scriptures. But now I see that, when He comes to us, He comes as a Messenger from *God,* and such He is above all of the "angels." *He is the Chief Messenger.* His voice alone can cope with this tremendous task. Not merely must it cover the earth, but it must vivify the saints. He may have given His disciples authority to raise the dead when the kingdom was heralded, but no one has that power now. And they did not vivify, but died themselves, and need His power to give them life eonian. Let us listen for *His* voice, not another's!

THE TRUMPET OF GOD

This is the trumpet *of God!* May we never confuse it with the trumpets of doom which fill the earth, with its most fearful inflictions! May we be preserved from identifying it with the third trumpet of woe, which stands at the summit of earth's sorest sorrows! Can there be any greater contrast than the death-dealing deeds done under the trumpets of woe, in one of which a third of mankind is killed (Rev.9:18), and the trumpet of *God* which brings incorruptibility to untold myriads of the reposing believers, immortality to millions of surviving saints, and power

and glory inexpressible to both? We need only to change "trumpet of *God*" to "trumpet of *woe*" in our passage to see how utterly flagrant and false it would be. We could not console anyone with a trumpet of woe (1 Thess.4:18)!

THE DEAD RISE FIRST

To us, with our outlook, it seems strange that the dead should not rise for more than a month in the millennium. And it also seems unnecessary to insist so strongly that the dead will not be left behind at that time. It seems a matter of course. Why not? But, in view of the previous teaching of the Scriptures and the order of events in the day of the Lord, it is well that this is made so clear. It is also a wholesome restraint on us, who are so inclined to make the dead rise long before and go to heaven or some twilight intermediate bourne, as flitting shadows unknown to God's revelation.

AT THE SAME TIME

Here we find a fine fault in the literary language of the Scriptures. "At the same time" "together" is tautology, redundancy, excessive verbiage, a fault all who study rhetoric are taught to avoid: But, like many bad things, it may be used for good. Lawyers use it so as to avoid leaving a legal loophole. The Scriptures usually repeat for the sake of emphasis. Here, it seems, we have both. The point is important. Large "movements" in Christendom deny that the dead will be caught away *at the same time together* with the living at the presence of the Lord. Hence its emphasis is more than justified and the "fault" is found to be a highly finished literary feature.

SNATCHED AWAY IN CLOUDS

When the Son of Mankind comes He will dispatch His messengers (not necessarily "angels") with a loud-sounding trumpet, and they will assemble His chosen ones from the four winds, from the extremities of the heavens to their extremities (Matt.24:31). There are no dead here. They are not snatched away from the earth but gathered together on it, from every place under the heavens. *He* is on the earth, and they are gathered to Him *there.* When He comes to us we perform a feat which none of the kingdom saints could accomplish. If He came only to the air, they could not meet Him there, and ever be with Him *thus.* But we will float and rise above the earth like the vapor that is drawn up by the presence of the sun. And *thus* shall we always be together with Him. This would ruin the whole millennium if it applied to Israel. They will have Him in the land and on the throne of David, not in the air.

IN THE AIR

In the kingdom all will remain on earth. Neither revelation nor reason will grant any of the kingdom saints a journey into the air, to meet the Lord there. His feet shall stand *upon* the Mount of Olives. I feel quite certain that I have stood close to the place where He will descend, if not upon the very spot, for I made a point of wandering about the southern end of the Mount of Olives in order to visualize the scene as vitally as possible. But when the trump of *God* shall sound we will not only be vivified but *changed,* so that He will not need to descend to the earth to meet His saints. They will not be struck down by the last woe trumpet, but carried aloft in clouds by the transforming power of His grace, on their way to the celestial allotment which He has prepared for them.

TOGETHER WITH THE LORD

The figure of clouds is well chosen. I hesitate to spread a figure out beyond its proper bounds, so only suggest the following. Some have found it difficult to see how we

could always be with the Lord, when He is to be on the earth. A single question may clear that up. Where are the clouds? Are they in the air or on the earth? It is quite possible for a cloud to be both. Clouds on the ground, which we call fogs, are in the air quite as really as those above a high mountain peak. The ground is not their place, but *they can descend if occasion demands.* In the intricate and eventful history of the universe our Lord will not be *confined* to the earth nor *banished* from it. So will we be also. But we will be *independent* of it, and *with Him*—and that is more than we can say of the most deserving of the saints in Israel, or on the earth. I, for one, am content to be WITH HIM ALWAYS.

A. E. Knoch

INDEX TO VOLUME 113

Advent of God's Grace, The 86
Boundary Line, The 101
Choosing What is Choice 155
Common Faith, The 84
Concordant Version, The 19,70,80,95
Deliverance by Blood 51
Faith and Love in Christ Jesus 27
First Ephesian Prayer, The 147
Fully Follow Paul (2 Tim.3:10-13) 40
Glory of His Grace, The 4
God Makes our Trials 108
God's Evangel for our Faith 175
Human Love and Freedom 9
Ideal Acts 92
Introduction to Philemon 94
It is God Who is Operating 142
Judgment and Indignation 71
Knowledge of Good, The 163
Message, The 131
Note on Forgiveness, A 58
Obituaries: J. R. Coram 99, P. Evely 144, C. Shirk 96,
E. Tatton 107, G. Upton 33, C. Yoder 107
Paul and God's Evangel 115
Paul to Philemon (1:1-1:25) 95
Paul to Timothy I (1:1-6:21) 19
Paul to Timothy II (1:1-4:22) 34
Paul to Titus (1:1-3:15) 80
Pause, Repeat and Reflect 70
Righteous One, The 185
Rooted and Grounded in Love 4,51,59,101
Secret of His Will, The 59
Studies in Titus 84,86,92
Translation Notes 83
What is Judgment? 79
When it Delights God (Gal.1:10-17) 120
Worthy of All Welcome 30

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Contents:

3 Editorial
4 The Glory of His Grace
9 Human Love and Freedom
19 Paul to Timothy (I)
27 Faith and Love in Christ Jesus
30 Worthy of All Welcome
34 Paul to Timothy (II)
40 Fully Follow Paul

FIRST QUARTER, 2022

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THE RACE YOU RUN IS HIS RACE TOO

Let's run the great race;
You need not be a seer.
Keep a good steady pace;
From the start we're nearer
To the end, to the goal.

A wreath of righteousness
For those who run aright.
It is not won by swiftness;
Keep the end in sight,
One day we will be whole.

A great example is our Father
Whose race began eons ago.
There's eons yet in order to gather
All above and all below
Gathering all from pole to pole.

So when you get weary
From running the race,
His goal won't miscarry;
He'll finish with grace
Under His loving control.

Tony Nungesser

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2022
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

EDITORIAL

IN THESE DAYS and increasingly in the days to come we need to set our minds and hearts on God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. That God spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all (Rom.8:32)—that thus Christ Jesus comes into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15), is the critical point of our faith. Indeed it is the critical point of God's eonian operations. The entrance of sin and death into the world, the promises of life to come apart from sin, of kingdom, both terrestrial and celestial, of salvation and reconciliation of all (p.30), are empty and meaningless apart from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. All the revelations of "The Glory of His Grace" (p.4), made known through our apostle Paul (p.40), all that Scripture makes known about God's ways and achievements (p.9), all these riches of truth concerning which this magazine gives so much attention, are dependent on this one act of faith and love (p.27) described in 1 Timothy 1:11 as the evangel of the glory of the happy God. And for us as we live in present times, so brief and ever changing and insecure, this message of overwhelming grace is our daily source of joyful expectation and peace.

In this issue we present our revision of Paul's two letters to Timothy (as they presently stand). Even here in personal letters where the pronoun "I" naturally occurs often we perceive the spirit of "yet not I, but the grace of God" (1 Cor.15:10) throughout in the many reminders of the evangel of God centered in Christ. Therefore we are led to say with Paul: "The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit! Grace be with you! Amen!" (2 Tim.4:22).

D.H.H.

THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE

GOD, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, Who chooses us in Christ before the disruption, is "in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will, for the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved" (Eph.1:5,6). In this rich revelation we find the basis of all our blessing in the love and will of God. His love predesignated us to sonship, His will is to display that love by an exhibition of His grace, possible only through the disruption and the entrance of sin. We were in the Son of His love in the beginning, according to His purpose; we are in the Beloved through the grace glorious which now graces us in Him.

IN LOVE

God begins all in love. The very universe was created in the Son of His love (Col.1:13-16). If the eyes of our hearts were open to this great truth, we could not help seeing that His goal must consist in the display of His affection. We would not be blinded by the intermediate processes, but recognize that these are the necessary background for its revelation. God is love, hence He must commence and consummate all in love, even though the path between is wet with weeping and hard with hatred and dumb with dread and death. Love is the root and love is the fruit of God's whole purpose. Let us, who are privileged to enjoy a taste of its entrancing sweetness before the goal is

gained, look back to its inception, and fix our hearts firmly in that primeval plan.

All this is Godlike. It transcends our human ways and thoughts. Man knows little of what he is about, and he does not understand, far less control, the process. The future is hid in darkness. Whence he comes or whither he goes he knows not, neither does he know the way. But, with God, the end was the beginning. The final outcome determined the commencement and the course of its accomplishment. If He is to end in being beloved by all His creatures, He must begin in love. The substratum of every step He takes, no matter how it may appear on the surface, is love. It is not simply the silver lining of the cloud, the ameliorating circumstances which attend evil, but the burden of woe is itself imposed by love, for a time, in order to procure its own appreciation when it is removed.

PREDESTINATION

Let us not confuse predestination (predesignation, CV) with election. God's election or choice, one of the most precious pearls in the Scriptures, has been foully soiled in the mire of human theology. It has been divorced from service and associated with salvation. From a means of blessing to those outside its range, it has been made a curse. Theology leaves the "non-elect" to hopeless, endless retribution. Scripture makes them the beneficiaries of the blessings bestowed on the elect. Theology, as a rule, knows no distinctions between the various classes of the elect.

In the Scriptures there are at least five distinct spheres where God's choice has been exercised, so that all the elect are also nonelect with reference to some other service. Thus it comes to be that, if all the nonelect are damned, as theology teaches, then all are doubly damned, and none are saved!

Predestination deals with a distinct aspect of God's

choice. It designates beforehand the destiny of God's creatures during the eonian times. It assigns them their proper relationship to God and His Christ. It defines the exact place accorded them in the process of redemption. The Greek word is a compound of *pro,* BEFORE, and horizō, SEEize. From the latter word we have our word *horizon,* the line which defines the boundary between earth and sky. Its force is to *designate,* define.

SONSHIP

In the evangelical effort to emphasize the necessity of the new birth we have lost the much greater truth of sonship. It is only as we see that the birth from above is an earthly thing, confined to the Kingdom proclamation concerned with the nation of Israel, and foreign to the truth for today, that we are prepared to enjoy the much higher honor of sonship. We are too much given to illogical "reasoning" and spoil many a figure of speech by smothering its point in false inferences. The new birth is a figure of the inception of life. Sonship is a figure of investiture with the honors and dignities of maturity.

In ancient times sonship was a recognized social institution and was never confounded with birth. Girls as well as boys were born, but they never were given the place of honor. A man may have had many boys, but only one could attain to the dignity of his father. He was usually the eldest, though this was not always the case. But real sonship comes before us clearly only in case a man had no children. If he had wealth and honor, he must choose someone to be his heir. A slave was often chosen for sonship. Such a case is portrayed in "Ben-Hur." This is the place that love has given us. We are designated for the place of a son through Christ Jesus.

When the one thus chosen came of age there was usually a magnificent ceremony and entertainment to celebrate the

event. And this is what we are awaiting. Nor are we alone in our expectancy. The whole creation is looking for the day when we will openly assume the place of sonship. "The hopefulness of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God" (Rom.8:19). "The entire creation is groaning together and travailing together until now. Yet not only so, but we ourselves also who have the firstfruit of the spirit, *we* ourselves also are groaning in ourselves, awaiting the sonship, the deliverance of our body" (Rom.8:22,23). We shall have the thrice-blessed place of being delivered and by our deliverance delivering the groaning creation.

Throughout Scripture the word *son* is used in a much higher sense than child. Those who are led by the spirit of God, these are the sons of God. Only in the measure in which this is true of us today can we claim to be *sons.* In the resurrection we will always be utterly under the control of His spirit. This will conform us to His character; it will make us true representatives of His glories. Then He will be truly displayed in us and through us. And this is the object of sonship and predesignation. It is not simply negative salvation from sin but positive possession of flawless holiness and high honors which will reveal the glory of His grace to the celestial hosts.

In the Scriptures "son" is an index of character. Paul did not call Elymas a "*child* of the devil" (Acts 13:10, AV), but "*son* of the Adversary." We are not "*children* of light, and the *children* of the day" (1 Thess.5:5, AV). We are "*sons* of the light and *sons* of the day" (CV). We were "*sons* of stubbornness" (Eph.2:2; 5:6; Col.3:6), not "*children* of disobedience" (AV). We are not "*children* of Abraham" (Gal.3:7, AV), but "*sons* of Abraham" (CV). It is a pity that most versions should have obscured the great truth of sonship by such frequent perversions. Hundreds of times we read of the "*children* of Israel." It should be the "*sons* of Israel." Those who use these translations are at their mercy. It is

practically impossible for them to apprehend and enjoy the great truth of sonship, for the passages in which it is especially displayed have been degraded to the lower relationship of children.

THE DELIGHT OF HIS WILL

The word "will" has been hardened by opposition. It suggests stern inexorable adamantine determination. But, before there was aught to clash with it, God's will had no such iron aspect. Then it was immersed in love. Its decrees were its delight. As the servant of love it determined that its master should not only be known, but should receive the heartfelt adoration of all who were the objects of its affection. God's will does not delight in its power or inevitability, but in the fruit of His favor. It seeks the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved (Eph.1:6).

No epistle is so full of grace as Ephesians. It not only begins and ends with grace, as most of Paul's epistles do, but strains the capacity of human speech to express its lavishness. Ephesians presses salvation *in* grace (Eph.2:5,8). This is the grace which is the result of being saved. It is the vast storehouse of *grace* on which we may draw at any time. The forgiveness of our offenses is in accord with the riches of His *grace* (Eph.1:7). Our future will display its transcendent wealth (Eph.2:7). Thus the eons will be dazzled with its glory.

The grace glorious has two distinct aspects, deliverance and dominion. From the lowest place in the universe the saints are taken and raised to the highest in this administration of God's grace. Sinners from the depths and darkness of divine displeasure are exalted to the highest pinnacle of His favor. From being a curse to themselves and all who came near them, they are transformed into a blessing to the utmost bounds of God's creation.

A. E. Knoch

HUMAN LOVE AND FREEDOM

ALL is to God's glory (Rom.11:36). "Now to Him Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, *to Him* be the glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus" (Eph.3:20,21). We do not at all have and never will have any *independent* glory in an absolute sense. God's creatures are constituted to manifest *His* glory, not to create their own.

There is nothing unseemly in the fact that God makes this present world (SYSTEM) and *all* that is in it (Acts 17:24). And it is certainly not unsuitable that it should be in His counsels to make all that is good, especially our love for Him. This love is still ours to possess and enjoy, though His by achievement: "For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:10). Though God certainly has not forced us to love Him, or rather merely to pretend to do so, nonetheless, He has introduced a myriad of *influences* into our lives which He has wisely designed in such a way that they are certain to affect us so that we genuinely and voluntarily love our Subjector. Greater is the efficacy of our Lord's grace unto righteousness than the (albeit) formidable force of sin's flesh unto unrighteousness (*cf* 1 Tim.1: 12-16; 1 Cor.15:10).

All causal synonyms are of the same basic significance. They point us to that which occurs or comes into being as the product of the agency which produces it. Effects are *determined* by causes. Once a cause occurs, its effect

becomes necessary; it cannot not occur. It makes no difference whether the occurrence in question is that of a nail being driven into a board or of a man being influenced to make a choice. The existence of causality is not dependent upon one's awareness or acknowledgement of its presence.

It is only a matter of idiom when we say that an object falls to the ground "due to" the "pull" of gravity, that electrical "force" "makes" a motor operate, or that a man is "influenced" by his associates. Whenever we speak of such things as good "influences" or bad "effects," we are making reference to the presence of causative agencies.

Influences are always fully causal in nature, even if, in many cases, in themselves they are only *necessary* causes, not *sufficient* causes. Regardless, an influence that does not influence is not an influence. A cause which effects nothing and affects no one, is not a cause.

The verbs "influence" and "affect" are often used as figures of association in reference to collective causative factors which, when acting synergistically, together cause a certain event to occur or a certain effect to result. This is to say that when these *necessary* (which is to say, indispensable) *causes* causally interact and coalesce, they constitute a *sufficient cause*.

All genuine influences *produce* their own effects. They make certain things necessary, even if they do not make certain other things necessary.

When we ask the question, Why? we are often inquiring concerning the purpose of something that has occurred. That which has a purpose is *purposed* to occur—it is *caused* to occur *for* a specific purpose. It is evident that whatever occurs for a purpose takes place due to a cause, for it is absurd to conceive of a thing of chance having a purpose. Why? is frequently asked as well when seeking for an explanation, for that which will account for or reveal the particular cause or reason of an occurrence. The word "why,"

in itself, always presupposes causality; it merely seeks to know the particulars involved in a certain matter. Anyone who believes in free will should never ask, Why? concerning any of life's affairs.

GOD'S OWN COUNSELS; MAN'S CHOSEN DEEDS

In Romans 14:12, the apostle Paul says, "Each of us shall be giving account concerning himself to God." It is foolish, however, to think of this accounting as an occasion for divine retribution upon free will sin. For if, as claimed by the advocate of free will, we are *not* caused to choose and act as we do, then we are certainly no more "responsible for" (able to avoid) our deeds than if we are caused to do them. Indeed, it would be impossible to give any *account* whatever for a free will or uncaused event, in the sense of giving an explanation for its occurrence. If we are wise, we will not dread the day when we will give an account of ourselves to God, but anticipate it, yearning to learn of His good purpose concerning all.

God's gracious workings certainly are the greatest "force," or power, in all the universe. The voluntary love and service which they produce are created just as effectively and surely as any compelled, involuntary servitude could ever be. For they are the product of God's own counsels, channeled through His achievements in the cross of Christ, and He would not have them fail.

That which is "voluntary" is that which we volunteer to do, as contrasted with what is compulsory. We *choose* to do such things, actually preferring them (however wisely or unwisely) over other activities. They are not simply the consequence of our choice of certain things, but to us they are "choice" in themselves, in the sense of preferable, in accord with our current desires, however excellent or awful our current desires may be. The fact that voluntary acts

are those that we do by choice has no bearing whatever on the question of whether their presence is necessary or unnecessary, avoidable or unavoidable. That for which we volunteer is a voluntary act or a chosen course of action. Whether our preference is itself the product of a cause or a thing of chance will not have any bearing upon our having chosen it. For this will remain true in either case.

It is not as if the Scriptures, whether by declaration or corollary, actually affirm the notion of free will. Free will is merely presupposed, and is therefore read into the Scriptures. It is not that it is found there; it is rather that advocates of that view, inferring its presence and abhorring any thought of its absence, unwittingly seek to put it there.

Since both determinism and indeterminism (or any combination of the two) preclude free will, free will, therefore, cannot be true. Further, since in all possible worlds, free will is precluded, it is impossible to give any objective account of how it might exist. That which is necessarily unreal, cannot be made real by the mere force of rhetoric. All that one can do in the interests of free will is to engage in circular arguments on its behalf, special pleading, on the assumption of a necessarily incorrect premise.

Actual self-determination would only be a rejection of divine determination. This would simply mean that man determines his own future instead of God. It would constitute polytheism instead of monotheism. But at least it would not be a notion of literal, actual chance. It would still be a deterministic concept. But if, as is also confusingly claimed by the advocates of conventional free will, nothing determines man—even from within himself—to choose and act as he does, then so-called "self-determination" itself would finally be but a thing of sheer chance, uncontrolled and uncontrollable. No one could be commended or criticized for such acts, for their presence would be due to nothing at all.

Under such a system, all instruction—whether entreaties, discipline, warnings or incentives—would be in vain. For none of these could *affect* even a single person. They could have no affect at all upon anyone whomsover; there would be no advantage to their presence, and no disadvantage to their absence. Therefore, it is free will (in its actual "chance" nature), not divine determination, that would make human effort and endeavor to be useless.

We thank God for *all* things, including our love for Him; it is not a thing of caprice or chance, but the product of a cause. Blissfully, and actually, we "can't help" loving Him: "We are loving God, *for* He first loves us" (1 John 4:19)!

FREEDOM VS. FREE WILL

Scriptural freedom—freedom worthy of the name—is not a power of "free will." No one can be what he is not. Neither personal maturity nor progression in the understanding of scriptural administrations brings the power of contrary choice, or, as popularly expressed, "free will independence." The era in which any particular man may live relative to the various administrations, has no bearing on this issue. For the idea known as "free will" is false in itself, and therefore cannot be true at any time or under any conditions. This is so even though many who do not understand, and yet imagine that such a power is essential to spiritual adulthood, have claimed that it is the hallmark of maturity. To the contrary, the mature believer, first of all, will *recognize,* and then glorify and thank, God *as God,* Who alone is the Subjector of all (*cf* Col.1:10; Rom.1:21). Certainly, he will not care to champion "free will." In the meantime, belief in free will no doubt will continue to prevail in the lives of those who are "puffed up" by their fleshly minds (*cf* Col.2:19; 1 Cor.4:6,7).

Just because it *is* sound, sound teaching concerning God's deity will not be tolerated, and certainly will not be

widely accepted. The foolish cannot recognize its validity and wisdom, and "minors in Christ" are *not able* for solid food (1 Cor.3:1,2). It takes wisdom even to recognize truth, and much grace to follow it. God alone can supply these.

No one, including God Himself, ever chooses by means of freewill chance. In choosing as He does, God is subjected neither to chance nor to sinfulness. He chooses what is best, *because* of His own wisdom and righteousness. Out of His own perfection, He is caused to choose as He does. His preferences do not exist by chance! It is certainly no dishonor upon the Deity for His choices to be caused, especially when we see that their only cause is His own perfection. Would we prefer instead for them to be due to the operation of some competing power to whom He must be subject, or even to be a thing of actual chance and so due to nothing at all? Yet these are our only conceivable alternatives.

It is evident, therefore, that the actual notions advocated under the clever and confusing banner "free will," namely the absence of causality and the presence of avoidability, are claims which not only fail to attend even a single created being at any time and concerning any thing, but are things from which no one is any further removed than the Supreme Deity, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory.

Even God cannot deny Himself (2 Tim.2:13); He is not "free" to be foolish or sinful in any way, but enjoys the "bonds" of His own righteousness, goodness, love and grace, in which He is always constrained to do what is best and act ideally. Whatever God chooses to do is chosen because He conceives its presence to be preferable to its absence. However, God's choices, unlike our own, are never shortsighted, or the product of sinful desires, but are the reflection of the perfection of His Being.

Scriptural freedom, of which we enjoy a small measure

by the power of the holy spirit of God, is freedom from Sin, not abandonment to chance. Each of us experience this freedom even now, though in a limited way. This is reflected in the disposition and walk of all those who are truly "in Christ Jesus" (Rom.8:1-4). But we long for the day when we will enjoy its fullness. Then we will possess such unbounded liberty that we will *not be free* to sin (*cf* Rom.8:29; *cp* 1 John 3:9; John 8:31-36).

FOR FREEDOM CHRIST FREES US!

As those who were obeying from the heart the type of teaching given over to them by the apostle Paul (*cf* Rom. 6:17), the Romans had *not* gotten "slavery's spirit to fear again" (Rom.8:15).

The foolish Galatians, however, had again become "enthralled with the yoke of slavery" (Gal.5:1a). They wanted to be under law (Gal.4:21). God's message to them was "grace and peace" (*cf* Gal.1:3), but in their apprehensions, they had fallen out of grace (Gal.5:4b). Therefore, the apostle shouts to them, "For freedom Christ frees us! *Stand firm, then,* and be not again enthralled with the yoke of slavery" (Gal.5:1).

It is vital that we heed Paul's counsel. For the power of Sin is the law (1 Cor.15:56). Those who were under law and yet not in the grace of God, were ever "in fear of death," for through their entire life they were liable to slavery (Heb. 2:15), subject to all the law's curses at their least infraction of its precepts (*cf* Deut.28:15). Anyone who should be keeping the whole law, yet should be tripping in one thing, becomes liable for all (James 2:10).

Living in such an environment, rather than eliminating sin, actually leads to its increase. "At the coming of the precept Sin revives" (Rom.7:9). "Sin, *getting an incentive through the precept,* deludes me, and *through it,* kills me"

(Rom.7:11). We need to be in a realm which is "apart from law," where "Sin is dead" (Rom.7:8).

God has put us in just such a place. In His grace, He has justified us apart from law, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:21,24) and has placed us "in Christ." Here we are safe. Our life is hid together with Christ in God (Col.3:3).

In Romans 6:13 we are entreated to present ourselves to God as if alive from among the dead, and to present our members as implements of righteousness to God. Yet if the apostle's words following this statement were to accord with the popular beliefs of today, the passage would have to read, "You must do this, for Sin *shall* be lording it over you if you do not." His inspired words, however, are just the opposite of this: "[Be heeding my words,] For Sin shall *not* be lording it over you, *for* you are *not* under law, but *under grace*" (Rom.6:14).

The ground and strength of the apostle's entreaty is our freedom from Sin's lordship. Since we are "under grace" and Sin shall not be lording it over us any longer, we are free from the deleterious influence which Sin produces in us through its insistent misuse of the law of God. Law is laid down for the lawless and insubordinate (1 Tim.1:9), which, in ourselves, includes us all. But it is not laid down—even to the slightest degree—as a means toward the achievement of our righteousness. Righteousness is not out of law (*cf* Gal.3:21b). If righteousness is through law, consequently Christ died gratuitously (Gal.2:21).

Those who are resting on law, on man's obedience to legal precepts, are doomed to despair. In speaking of himself and his fellow—Israelites, Paul says, "We were garrisoned under law, being locked up together for the faith about to be revealed. So that the law has become our *escort to Christ,* that we may be justified by faith" (Gal.3: 23,24). Indeed, "the scripture locks up *all* together under

sin, that the promise *out of Jesus Christ's faith* may be given to those who are believing" (Gal.3:22). We do not *seek* a righteous standing before God by our obedience. Instead, through the work of Christ, all God's chosen ones *find* such a privileged position.

THE GLORIOUS FREEDOM OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD

The entire creation has been subjected to vanity, the slavery of corruption, of which the sufferings of the current era are the result. None of God's creatures volunteered for this; all were subjected to it because of God (*cf* Rom.8:18-22). But He has subjected us to this experience in which we groan and travail, "in expectation that the creation itself, also [not only believers], shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom.8:21). Therefore, we are expecting what we are not observing, and are awaiting it with endurance (*cf* Rom.5:3-5; 8:25).

If we would be faithful, our primary desire must not be for the elimination of our miseries, but for the ability to be active in our love for God even if our trials should remain. If we would be true, it is absolutely out of the question for us to give first place to personal gratification (*cf* 2 Tim.3:4,8). All manner of secular schemes and "Christian" concoctions may well alleviate our pains, but only at the terrible price of imbibing their spirit and coming under their sway. They are "affording exactions rather than God's administration which is in faith" (1 Tim.1:4).

The only wise counsel, then, "for all endurance and patience with joy" (*cf* Col.1:11b), is the advice which Paul gave to Timothy. It is this: *"Be invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus"* (2 Tim.2:1). There is much *grace* for us in Christ Jesus. This grace is able to deal with our troubles and failings *in the way that God intends* (*cf*

2 Cor.12:9). It comes to us through our active and grateful mindfulness of the sacrifice of Christ in which He died for our sakes. Invigorating grace also comes to us through our believing, understanding and rejoicing in the unbounded benefits which God will surely bring to all through Christ's saving work.

All have been subjected to vanity, and, at the consummation, all will become subjected to God, that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:28). It is necessary to suffer in the vain bonds of corruption in order to reveal the glory of the great God Who alone can deliver from such a fearful condition. There must be sinners if sinners would be saved. If God would be glorified as their Saviour and if they would know the unspeakable blessing of salvation from all sin and shame, they must experience a short season of evil. It is in view of such considerations that our apostle joyously declares, "I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us" (Rom.8:18).

The obedience of Christ unto death, even the death of the cross, has only led to His exaltation. God is love (1 John 4:8b). "If He afflicts, yet He has compassion according to the abundance of His kindnesses" (Lam.3:32). He is the Saviour of *all* mankind (1 Tim.4:10). God highly exalts His Christ, "and graces Him with the Name that is above every name ["Jesus," Yahweh-SAVIOUR], that in the Name of *Jesus* every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:10,11). All are *bound,* that they might enjoy this freedom. And, all are bound to enjoy this *freedom!* God has given us His word on this. We long for the consummation, and await it in expectation, with joyful confidence in "the kindness and fondness for humanity of our Saviour, God" (Titus 3:4).

J.R.C.

PAUL TO TIMOTHY (I)

1 **Paul,** an **apostle of Christ Jesus, accord**ing to the **injunction of God, our Saviour, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ, our** ˙**Expectation,** [2] **to Timothy,** a **genuine child in faith:**

Grace, mercy, peace, from God, our Father, and Christ Jesus, our ˙**Lord.**

[3] **Accord**ing **as I entreat you, remain**° **with** them **in Ephesus,** when **going**° **into Macedonia, that you should charge** [a]**some no**t **to be teaching differen**tly, [4] **nor yet to be heeding myths and endless genealogies, which**[a] **are affording exactions rather than God's administration, the** administration which is **in faith.**

[5] [y]**Now the consummation of the charge** [l]**is love out of** a **clean heart and** a **good conscience and unfeigned faith,** [6] from **which** [a]**some,** ¯**swerving, are turned aside into vain prating,** [7] **wanting to** [l]**be teachers** of the **law, not apprehending** [n]**either what they are saying,** [n]**or** that **concerning** [a]**which they are insisting**°**.** [8] [y]**Now we are** °**aware that the law** is **ideal if ever any**one **should be using**° **it lawfully,** [9] **being** °**aware** of **this, that law is not** [l]**laid**° down for the **righteous, yet** it is for the **lawless and insubordinate,** the **irreverent and sinners,** the **malign and profane, thrashers of fathers and thrashers of mothers, homicides,** [10] **paramours, sodomites, kidnapers, liars, perjurers, and if any** [d]**other** thing **is opposing**° ˙[l]**sound teaching,** [11] in **accord** with

the evangel of the glory
of the happy God,

with **which I**´ **am entrusted.**

[12] **Grate**ful [l][hv]**am I to** Him ˙Who **invigorates me, Christ Jesus, our** ˙**Lord,** [t]**for He deems**° **me faithful,** ¯**assigning**°

me [io] a **service,** [13] **I,** ˙who **former**ly ˡ**am** a **calumniator and** a **persecutor and** an **outrager: but I am** shown **mercy,** seeing **that I do** it **being ignorant, in unbelief.** [14] **Yet the grace of our** ˙**Lord overwhelms with faith and love, the** faith and love which is **in Christ Jesus.** [15] **Faithful** is **the saying, and worthy of** [e]**all welcome, that**

Christ Jesus comes into the world to save sinners, foremost of whom ˡ**am I′.** [16] **But therefore am I** shown **mercy, that in me,** the **foremost, Jesus Christ should display**° [e]**all** His ˙**patience,** [td]**for** a **pattern of** ˙those who are ˡ**about to be believing on Him** [io]**for life eonian.**

[17] [y]**Now to the King of the eons,** the **incorruptible, invisible, only,** and **wise God,** be **honor and glory** [io]**for the eons of the eons! Amen!**

[18] **This** ˙**charge I am committing**° **to you, child Timothy, accord**ing to **the preceding prophecies** [on]**over you, that in them you may be warring the ideal warfare,** [19] **having faith and** a **good conscience, which** [a]**some,** ¯**thrusting**° **away,** make **shipwreck** [ab]**as** to **the faith;** [20] **of whom** ˡ**are Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I give up to** ˙**Satan, that they may be trained no**t **to** ˡ**calumniate.**

2 **I am entreating, then, first of all,** that **petitions, prayers, pleadings, thanks**giv**ing be made**° [ov]**for all human** beings**,** [2] [ov]**for kings and all** ˙those **being in** a **superior** station, **that we may be leading** a **mild and quiet life in** [e]**all devoutness and gravity,**

3 **For this** is **ideal and welcome in** the **sight**
of our ˙**Saviour, God,**
4 **Who** ˡ**wills** that **all human** beings **be saved**
And come into a **realization of** the **truth.**
5 **For** there is **one God,**
And one Mediator of God and human beings**,**
a **Human, Christ Jesus,**
6 ˙Who **gives Himself** a **Correspondent Ransom** [ov]**for all**

(the testimony in its **own eras),** [7] [io]**for which I′ am appointed** a **herald and** an **apostle (I am telling** the **truth, I am not lying**°**),** a **teacher of** the **nations in knowledge and truth.**

[8] **I am intending**°**, then,** that ˙**men be praying**° **in every place, lifting up benign hands, apart from anger and reasoning.** [9] **Similarly, women also** are **to be adorning themselves in raiment, decorously, with modesty and sanity, not** [i]**with braids and gold, or pearls or costly vesture,** [10] **but (what is becoming to women professing**° a **reverence** for **God)** [th]**with good works.** [11] **Let** a **woman be learning in quietness** [i]**with** [e]**all subjection.** [12] [y]**Now I am not permitting** a **woman to be teaching nor yet to be domineering** over a **man, but to** ˡ**be in quietness** [13] **(for Adam is first molded, thereafter Eve,** [14] **and Adam is not seduced, yet the woman, deluded, has come** to **be in** the **transgression).** [15] **Yet she shall be** ˡ**saved through the child bearing, if ever they should remain in faith and love and holiness with sanity.**

3 **Faithful** is **the saying: "If any**one **is craving**° the **supervision, he is desiring** an **ideal work."** [2] **The supervisor, then,** ˡ**must be irreprehensible,** the **husband of one wife, sober, sane, decorous, hospitable, apt to teach,** [3] **no toper, not quarrelsome, but lenient, pacific, not fond of money,** [4] **controlling**° his ˙**own house**hold **ideally, having** his **children in subjection with** [e]**all gravity—**[5] [y]**now if any**one **is not** °**aware** how **to control** his ˙**own house**hold, **how will he** ˡ**care**° **for the ecclesia of God?—**[6] **no novice, lest** ¯**being conceited, he should fall** [i] **into** the **judgment of the Adversary.** [7] **Yet** he ˡ**must** ˡ**have** an **ideal testimony also from** ˙those **outside, that he should no**t **fall** [i] **into** the **reproach and trap of the Adversary.**

[8] **Servants, similarly,** are to be **grave, not double-tongued, not** ˡ**addicted to much wine, no**t **avaricious,** [9] **having the secret of the faith in** a **clear conscience.** [10] [y]**Now let these also first be** ˡ**tested**°**: thereafter let them be serving, being**

unimpeachable. 11 The **wives, similarly,** are to be **grave, not adversaries, sober, faithful in all** things. 12 **Let servants** ˡ**be** the **husbands of one wife, controlling**° **children and** ˙their **own house**holds **ideally,** 13 **for** ˙those who **serve ideally are procuring**° for **themselves** an **ideal rank and much boldness in faith, the** faith which is **in Christ Jesus.**

14 **These** things **I am writing to you,** though **expecting to come to**[d] **you more quickly,** 15 **yet if I should be** ˡ**tardy, that you may be perceiving how** one ˡ**must** ˡ**behave**° **in God's house, which**[a] ˡ**is** the **ecclesia of** the **living God,** the **pillar and base of the truth.** 16 **And avowedly**° **great** ˡ**is the secret of** ˙**devoutness,**

Which is manifested in flesh,
Justified in spirit,
Seen by **messengers,**
Heralded among the **nations,**
Believed in the **world,**
Taken up in glory.

4 [y]**Now the spirit is saying explicitly, that in subsequent eras** [a]**some will be withdrawing**° from **the faith,** giv**ing heed to deceiving spirits and** the **teachings of demons,** 2 **in** the **hypocrisy of false expressions,** ˙their **own conscience having been cauterized**°; 3 **forbidding to** ˡ**marry, abstaining**° from **foods, which** ˙**God creates** [io]**to** be **partaken** of **with thanks**giv**ing** by ˙those who **believe and** ˚**realize the truth,** 4 seeing **that every creature of God** is **ideal and nothing** is to be **cast away, being taken**° **with thanks**giv**ing,** 5 **for it is being hallowed**° **through** the **word of God and pleading.** 6 By **suggesting**° **these** things **to the brethren, you will** ˡ**be** an **ideal servant of Christ Jesus, fostering**° with **the words of the faith and of the ideal teaching which you have fully followed.** 7 [y]**Now** ˙**profane and old womanish myths be refusing**°**, yet be exercising yourself** [td]**in devoutness,** 8 **for** ˙**bodily exercise** ˡ**is beneficial** [td]**for** a **few** things, **yet** ˙**devoutness** ˡ**is beneficial** [td]**for all, having promise** for the

life ˙which **now** is, **and** ˙that which is **impending.**

9 **Faithful** is **the saying and worthy of** [e]**all welcome** 10 **(for** [io]**for this are we toiling and being reproached**°**), that**

We ˚**rely on** the **living God,**
Who ˡ**is** the **Saviour of all human** beings**,**
Especially of believers.

11 **These** things **be charging and teaching.** 12 **Let no one be despising your** ˙**youth, but** ˡ**become** a **model** for **the believers, in word, in behavior, in love, in faith, in purity.** 13 **Till I** ˡ**come**°**, be** giv**ing heed to** ˙**reading, to** ˙**entreaty, to** ˙**teaching.** 14 **Be not neglecting the grac**ious gift which is **in you, which is given to you through prophecy with** the **imposition of the hands of the eldership.** 15 On **these** things **be meditating. In these** ˡ**be, that your** ˙**progress may** ˡ**be apparent to all.** 16 **Be attending to yourself and to the teaching. Be persisting** in **them, for** in **doing this you will be saving yourself as well as** ˙those **hearing you.**

5 An **elder**ly man **you should not upbraid, but be entreating** him **as** a **father,** the **younger** men **as brethren,** 2 the **elder** women **as mothers,** the **younger as sisters, in** [e]**all purity.** 3 **Widows be honoring,** ˙who are **really widows.** 4 [y]**Now if any widow** ˡ**has children or descendants, let them** ˡ**learn to be** ˡ**devoted** to ˙their **own house**hold **first and reciprocate** by **paying** ˙their **progenitors, for this** ˡ**is welcome in** ˙**God's sight.** 5 [y]**Now** ˙one **really** a **widow, and** ˚**alone**°**,** ˚**relies on** ˙**God and is remaining in** ˙**petitions and** ˙**prayers night and day.** 6 **Yet** she ˙who is **being prodigal,** though **living, is** ˚**dead.** 7 **These** things **also, be charging, that they may** ˡ**be irreprehensible.** 8 [y]**Now if any**one **is not providing** for his ˙**own, and especially** his **family, he has disowned**° **the faith, and** ˡ**is worse** than an **unbeliever.** 9 **Let no widow be** ˡ**listed**° **of less** than **sixty years, having been**[c] the **wife of one man,** 10 ˡ**attested**° [i]**by ideal acts: if she nourishes children, if she is hospitable, if she washes** the **saints' feet, if she relieves** the ˡ**afflicted**°,

if she follows up with **every good work.** 11 **Yet** the **younger widows** ˡ**refuse**˚**, for whenever they should be restive against** ˙**Christ, they are wanting to be marrying;** 12 **having judgment** seeing **that they repudiate** ˙their **first faith.** 13 **Yet** at the **same time they are learning** to be **idle also, wandering**˚ **about the homes. Yet not only** are they **idle, but gossips also, and meddlers, speaking** ˙what they ˡ**must not.** 14 **I am intending**˚**, then,** that **younger** widows are **to be marrying, bearing children, managing** the **house**hold, **giving** an ˙ˡ**opposer**˚ **nothing** as an **incentive favor**ing **reviling,** 15 **for already** *a*˙**some are turned aside after** ˙**Satan.** 16 **If any believing** woman ˡ**has widows** with her, **let her be relieving**˚ **them, and let not the ecclesia be** ˡ**burdened**˚**, that it may relieve** ˙those who are **really widows.**

17 **Let elders** ˙who ˡ**have presided ideally be** counted ˡ**worthy**˚ **of double honor, especially** ˙those who are **toiling in word and teaching,** 18 **for the scripture is saying: "**A **threshing ox you shall not be muzzling,"** *Dt 25:4* **and "Worthy** is **the worker of his** ˙**wages."** *Lu 10:7* 19 **Against** an **elder** do **not** ˡ**assent to** an **accusation outside** and **except** *on*˙**before two or three witnesses.** *Dt 19:15* 20 ˙Those who are **sinning be exposing in** the **sight of all, that the rest also may** ˡ**have fear.** 21 **I am conjuring**˚**, in** the **sight of** ˙**God and Christ Jesus and the chosen messengers, that you should guard these** things, **apart from prejudice, doing nothing** *ac*˙**from bias.** 22 **On no one be placing hands** too **quickly, nor yet be participating** in the **sins** of **others. Be keeping yourself pure.** 23 **No** *nt* **longer be drinking water** only, **but be using**˚ a **sip** of **wine** *bc*˙**for** your ˙**stomach and your** ˙**frequent infirmities.** 24 *a*˙**Some human** beings**'** ˙**sins** ˡ**are taken for granted, preceding** them **into judging, yet** *a*˙**some are following up also.** 25 **Similarly the ideal** ˙**acts also** are **taken for granted, and** ˙those **having** it **otherwise** ˡ**can**˚ **not be hid.**

6 **Whoever** ˡ**are slaves under** the **yoke, let them be deeming**˚ ˙their **own owners worthy of** *e*˙**all honor, lest the Name**

of ˙**God and the teaching may be** ˡ**blasphemed**˚**.** 2 **Yet let** ˙those **having believing owners not be despising** them seeing **that they** ˡ**are brethren, but rather let them be slaving** for them, seeing **that they are believing and beloved,** ˙**being supported**˚ by **the** slave's **benefaction.**

These things **be teaching and entreating.** 3 **If any**one **is teaching differently and is not approaching**˚ with ˡ**sound words,** even ˙those **of our** ˙**Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching** in **accord** with **devoutness,** 4 **he is** ˚**conceited**˚**,** ˡ**versed** in **nothing, but** ˡ**morbid about questionings and controversies, out of which is** *b*˙**coming**˚ **envy, strife, calumnies, wicked suspicions,** 5 **altercations of human** beings of a ˚**decadent**˚ ˙**mind and** ˚**deprived**˚ **of the truth, inferring** that ˙**devoutness** ˡ**is capital.** 6 *y*˙**Now** ˙**devoutness with contentment** ˡ**is great capital;** 7 **for nothing** do **we carry** *io* **into the world,** and it is **evident that neither** ˡ**can**˚ **we carry any**thing **out.** 8 *y*˙**Now having sustenance and** ˭**shelter,** with **these we shall be** ˡ**sufficed.** 9 *y*˙**Now** ˙those **intending**˚ **to be** ˡ**rich are falling** *i* **into** a **trial and** a **trap and** the **many foolish and harmful desires which** *a* **are swamping** ˙**human** beings *io*˙**in extermination and destruction.**

10 **For** a **root of all of the evils** ˡ**is the fondness** for **money, which** *a*˙**some, craving**˚**, are led astray from the faith and try themselves** on **all sides** with **much** ˭**pain.**

11 *y*˙**Now you´, O human of** ˙**God, be fleeing** from **these** things: **yet be pursuing righteousness, devoutness, faith, love,** with **endurance, suffering,** and **meekness.** 12 **Be contending**˚ **the ideal contest of the faith. Get hold**˚ **of** ˙**eonian life,** *io*˙**for which you are called, and you avow the ideal avowal in** the **sight of many witnesses.**

13 **I am charging you in** the **sight of** ˙**God,** ˙Who is **vivifying** ˙**all, and of Jesus Christ,** ˙Who **testifies** in **the ideal avowal** *on*˙**before Pontius Pilate,** 14 that **you keep** ˙this **precept unspotted, irreprehensible, unto the advent of our** ˙**Lord, Christ Jesus,** 15 **which, to** its **own eras, the happy**

and only Potentate will be showing:
He is ˙**King of** ˙ˡ**kings**
And Lord of ˙ˡ**lords,**
16 ˙Who **alone** ˡ**has immortality,**
Mak**ing** His **home** in **light inaccessible,**
Whom not one of ⁼**human**ity **perceives**
Nor is being able to perceive,
To Whom be **honor and** ˙**might eonian! Amen!**
17 ˙Those who are **rich in the current eon be charging no**t **to be** ˡ**haughty, no**r **yet to** ˚**rely on** the **dubiousness of riches, but on God,** ˙Who is **tendering us all** things **richly** *io***for** our **enjoyment;** 18 **to be** do**ing good acts, to be** ˡ**rich in ideal acts, to** ˡ**be liberal contributors,** 19 **treasuring up** for **themselves** an **ideal foundation** *io***for** ˙that which is **impending, that they may get hold**◦ **of** ˙**life really.**
20 **O Timothy,** ˙that which is **committed** to you, **guard, turning**˚ **aside** from **the profane prattlings and antipathies of** ˙**false**ly **named "knowledge,"** 21 **which** *a***some** are **professing**◦**.** *ab***As to the faith, they swerve.**
˙**Grace** be **with you! Amen!**

PAUL'S PERSONAL EPISTLES

Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus are concerned with conduct in service. Not only are they given instructions for their own guidance, but rules are laid down for the selection and service of elders, or supervisors, and servants. These two classes were officially recognized and appointed and their functions defined. Besides this there are exhortations for all the various classes in the ecclesias, old and young, the rich and the dependent widow, and slaves. Indeed, these epistles contain the constitution of the out-calling. The second epistle to Timothy is especially applicable to the last days.

A. E. Knoch

FAITH AND LOVE IN CHRIST JESUS

MUCH has been lost by taking passages referring to Christ's faith to speak of our faith in Him. This also may well be so with certain passages in I and II Timothy where faith is said to be "in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.1:14; 3:13; 2 Tim.1:13; 3:15). Does Paul speak here of the believer's faith in Christ Jesus or Christ Jesus's own faith, that faith which is in Him? (Or perhaps are both applications somehow in view?).

This article is meant to be introductory to the matter, and not at all a thorough investigation. And it will consider it primarily as it appears in 1 Timothy 1:14 where not only faith is in view, but love as well.

Previously the CV has indicated that Paul speaks of his faith and love in Christ Jesus. It is true that the grace of our Lord overwhelms [Paul's former hateful calumniation, persecution and outrage, and his unbelief] with faith and love in Christ Jesus (that is, his hate is replaced by love, and his unbelief by faith). Yet that is not what Paul says here.

There can be no doubt that there was a change in Paul. The context, as it leads from verse 12 makes this clear. But also the context as it leads from verse 11 makes it clear that the evangel of the glory of the happy God is in view as well, and this is brought before us in plain and striking terms in verse 15. "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that *Christ Jesus comes into the world to save sinners.*" And then Paul brings himself back into the picture by saying he is the foremost of sinners.

Let us note, therefore that Paul refers to himself by

the personal pronouns "I" and "me" in verses 12 and 13 six times (as translated in the CV), and often before. But he does not do so in verse 14, and not again until the end of verse 15[1]. We may well assume, on the basis of verse 13 that the grace of our Lord overwhelms Paul's unbelief and hate. But Paul says only and simply: "the grace of our Lord overwhelms" [OVER-MOREIZE]. This opens up the application not only to Paul, but to all sinners as brought out in verse 15 (and later affirmed in 1 Timothy 2:4,5).

To repeat, verse 14 does not bring over the personal pronouns of verse 13, but rather refers to "our Lord" as in verses 1 and 12, and to "Christ Jesus," as in verses 2,12 and 15.

THE IN CHRIST JESUS

The Greek construction "the in Christ Jesus," is an appositive to "faith and love." The words "faith and love" are to be understood following the definite article "the," hence: Grace overwhelms ". . . **with faith and love, the** faith and love **in Christ Jesus.** Yet surprisingly (here and in 2 Timothy 1:13) the definite article is singular in Greek, so that the "faith and love" is considered to be one thing here, hence "the faith and love thing." It is, perhaps, the faith and love *character* (or *mindset ["disposition"]* as in Philippians 2:5), or the faith and love *way of operating*, that is in view. Christ's faith is His loving faith.

The evangel of the glory of the happy God is being brought before us as a matter of faith and love which as a single quality is in Christ Jesus. It is faith joined with love that leads Christ Jesus to come into the world system as it exists, to *empty* Himself and *humble* Himself in *obedience* even to the death of the cross (Phil.2:5-8) in order to save sinners!

1. The pronoun "our" includes Timothy and relates them to Christ Jesus as Lord.

Yet of course this appositive can be taken as a reference to Paul's own faith and love (*cf* 1 Tim.1:5) as given to him in Christ Jesus, just as grace is given to us in Christ Jesus (2 Tim.1:9). Nevertheless, to receive grace in Christ Jesus it must first be in Christ Jesus (*cf* 2 Tim.1:9). So also faith is first (and of primary importance) to be understood as *in* Christ Jesus.

Indeed this appositive construction often is clearly alternative to the genitive "of" construction. Paul addresses the Corinthians as "the ecclesia of God, the [ecclesia which is] *in* Corinth" (1 Cor.1:2; 2 Cor.1:2), while he writes to the Galatians as "the ecclesias *of* Galatia." Thus "the faith and love *in* Christ Jesus" would likely be understood as equivalent to "the faith and love *of* Christ Jesus."

And once again, there is no direct reference to Paul in 1 Timothy 1:14 while there is double reference to our Lord Christ Jesus. We must give first place to what is said, over and above what may be assumed.

Once we see the emphasis on Christ Jesus's faith (joined with love) in 1 Timothy 1:14 we can make the connection with passages in Romans, Galatians, Ephesians and Philippians which speak of Christ's faith. God's evangel is first of all a message of Christ's loving faith in emptying Himself, humbling Himself, giving Himself to the death of the cross. This is His faith following the will of His God and Father Who sends and gives and spares not His only Son for the sake of sinners. This is Paul's testimony throughout his epistles. The evangel is "out of faith, for faith" (Rom. 1:17)—out of the Righteous One's faith, Christ Jesus's faith, for our faith.

Paul's hateful unbelief has become loving faith, but he is not thinking of himself in 1 Timothy 1:14, but of that which he is believing, our Lord Christ Jesus's own grace and faith and love.

D.H.H.

WORTHY OF ALL WELCOME

(1 Timothy 4:9-11)

SOMETIMES when we are wearied of unfulfilled promises, unfinished endeavors and unsatisfying possessions we look about us and wonder, Is there nothing that is of lasting consequence? Everything seems to come short of our expectations. We even let ourselves down.

But, when we turn to God's Word, all our longings are met. Human words and schemes fail, but God and His sayings are faithful. Consider this: *Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome (for for this are we toiling and being reproached), that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all human beings, especially of believers. These things be charging and teaching* (1 Tim.4:9-11).

All of God's words are faithful and call for eager acceptance, but here is a saying which is marked off with special emphasis and magnified with special importance. And then by coupling this passage with its parallel in 1:15, our consolation is complete: *Christ Jesus comes into the world to save sinners.*

Nothing else, perhaps, is so vital to us and so revealing of God as this pronouncement of God's work of salvation. Will we not welcome such overwhelming grace, coming as it does with Christ Jesus's faith and love, sending Him into this world of shame, to save ignorant, calumniating sinners like us? With open arms, with humbled spirits and with receptive hearts, we grasp these words gladly. If there is reproach in welcoming such joy, inexplicable

as such reproach might be, there is also reliance. If there is toil in holding faithfully to such faithful sayings, there is also the peace and satisfaction of becoming acquainted with the living God.

Strangely, however, the majority of humanity have habitually welcomed what is unfaithful, untrue, and ultimately dishonoring to God. This is the tragic record of human history, and it is at the very core of human distress. Eve hearkened to the Adversary's lie. Cain refused to avail himself of God's provisions. And down through the centuries it has remained the same. Men prefer the false to the faithful.

GOD IS THE SAVIOUR

It is good news to our hearts that entirely apart from our own efforts, God Himself is the Saviour of all human beings. This word dispels all our worries. Nevertheless, some would secretly nourish the idle fancy that God needs certain additions to His grace from us. The Galatians, for example, by turning their backs to the goodness that is in grace and welcoming instead that which was worthless (Gal.4:9) were suffering much loss of inner joy and peace.

Salvation is God's favor. He purposes, and He performs. And we receive.

This is worthy of our fondest and fullest acceptance. It is the most persuasive evidence there could be of the life and activity that is in God. In the midst of testing we are refreshed by placing our complete confidence in this God Who saves. On Him we can rely!

GOD *IS* THE SAVIOUR

There is no comfort in maintaining what is not true. Yet some have claimed that God has limited Himself as to the time of salvation. Of course we would not deny that today is a day of salvation (2 Cor.6:2) and that this era is limited (1 Cor.7:29). Yet God never ceases to be the Saviour of all

human beings. This is what He *is,* and He always remains faithful to this designation.

Some of the Thessalonians evidently became shaken and alarmed, fearing that God's work of salvation had ceased (2 Thess.2:1-5). Yet even in the day of His indignation God continues to save. And He does not stop until all are delivered safely to Himself (1 Cor.15:24-28).

It is only by embracing this faithful word that fear and doubt can be removed. That God's character continues to be that of the Saviour is worthy of our warmest welcome. Does it not secure and strengthen us? Even though His enemies increase, yet God, nevertheless, is their Saviour. We are thus assured that what He *is* will someday be fully effected. All human beings will then know God in truth as their Saviour.

GOD IS THE *SAVIOUR*

Perhaps in all the annals of human history no declaration so deserving of acceptance has been so neglected or opposed as this, that God is the *Saviour* of all mankind. Some among the Corinthians attacked it by denying the resurrection, its very foundation (1 Cor.15:12). Today, men continue to reject the reality of our danger. Death is not a friend; it is the greatest of all enemies (1 Cor.15:26). From it and its sting of sin (1 Cor.15:56) we must be saved.

God is the *Saviour.* That means He actually delivers us from the perilous position in which we are born as sons of Adam.

These words have tremendous power to comfort and soothe our every anxiety and rejoice our dejected spirits. This is our God, the One Who is the *Saviour* of all human beings. What positive quality does He lack? Power? Wisdom? Love? All of these are seen in the God Who does such a great work as this! There is no room for failure in

Him. There can be no weakness and no indifference in the One Who saves all. Yet He is especially the Saviour of those who are believing this evangel as worded so well in 1 Timothy 2:5,6. *For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and human beings, a Human, Christ Jesus, Who gives Himself a correspondent Ransom for all.*

As believers who receive God's special eonian salvation, we should find particular pleasure in keeping this faithful word, and even more so in sharing it with others. There is One on Whom we can rely. There is a truth that will never let us down. There is a place where we can go when we are distressed and be filled with satisfaction and happiness. Faithful is our God. Faithful is His work. Faithful is His Word. And Faithful is the saying that He is the Saviour of all.

D.H.H.

GERALD W. UPTON

Our fellow worker and brother in the Lord, "Jerry" Upton was put to repose on January 26, 2022, at age 87. Born and raised in the industrial area of southeast Detroit, he lived most of his life in the Detroit area, finally settling with his wife, Alta, north of the City, not far from our office in Almont. A laborer who did not finish public school, he nevertheless was an avid reader, mostly on scriptural topics. His journey of faith took him from storefront "charismatic" attendance to a more sober law-centered association focused on the Old Testament and the "circumcision" writings, and then finally to fellowship centered on Paul's evangel of grace and God's present administration in faith.

In recent years Jerry enthusiastically aided us in proofreading chores, and encouraging fellowship, as his confidence in God's purpose of love through our Lord Jesus Christ for each and every individual grew. We will miss him greatly.

PAUL TO TIMOTHY (II)

1 Paul, an **apostle of Christ Jesus, through God's will,** in **accord** with the **promise of life, the** life which is **in Christ Jesus,** [2] **to Timothy,** a **child beloved:**

Grace, mercy, peace, from God, the **Father, and Christ Jesus, our ˙Lord.**

[3] **Grate**ful **ˡam I to ˙God, to Whom I am** offer**ing divine service from** my **ancestors** *ⁱ***with** a **clear conscience, as I ˡhave** an **unintermittent ˙remembrance concerning you in my ˙petitions, night and day,** [4] **longing to** *ᵖ***see you, ˚remembering˚ your ˙tears, that I may be filled full of joy,** [5] **getting** a **reminder of the unfeigned faith** which is **in you, which***ᵃ* **first** make**s** its **home** *ⁱ* **in your ˙grandmother Lois, and** in **your ˙mother Eunice.** *ᵍ***Now I am ˚persuaded˚ that** it is **in you also.**

[6] *ᵇᶜ***For which cause I am reminding you to be rekindling the grac**ious gift **of ˙God which ˡis in you through the imposition of my ˙hands,** [7] **for ˙God gives us not** a **spirit of timidity, but of power and of love and of sanity.** [8] **You may no**t **be ashamed, then,** of **the testimony of our ˙Lord, no**r **yet** of **me, His ˙prisoner, but suffer evil with the evangel** in **accord** with the **power of God,**

[9] ˙Who **saves us and calls** us with a **holy calling,**
Not in **accord** with **our ˙acts,**
But in **accord** with His **own purpose and grace,**
The grace which is **ˡgiven to us in Christ Jesus,**
before times eonian,
[10] **Yet now manifested through the advent of our ˙Saviour, Christ Jesus,**
Who **indeed abolishes ˙death,**
Yet illuminates life and incorruption

through the evangel [11] *ⁱᵒ***of which I´ am appointed** a **herald and** an **apostle and** a **teacher of** the **nations.** [12] *ᵇᶜ***For which cause I am suffering these** things **also, but I am not ˡashamed˚, for I am ˚aware Whom I have believed, and I am ˚persuaded˚ that He is able to guard** ˙what is **committed** to **me,** *ⁱᵒ***for that ˙day.**

[13] **ˡHave** a **pattern of ˡsound words, which you hear** *ᵇ***from me, in faith and love, the** faith and love which is **in Christ Jesus.** [14] **The ideal** thing **committed** to you, **guard through** the **holy spirit** ˙which is mak**ing** its **home** *ⁱ* **in us.**

[15] Of **this you are ˚aware, that all** ˙those **in the** province of **Asia are turned from me, of whom ˡare Phygellus and Hermogenes.**

[16] **May the Lord grant mercy to the house**hold of **Onesiphorus,** *ᵗ***for he often refreshes me and is not ashamed** of **my ˙chain,** [17] **but, ¯coming˚** to **be in Rome, he seeks me diligently and finds** me. [18] **May the Lord grant to him to find mercy** *ᵇ***from** the **Lord in that ˙day! And how much he serves in Ephesus you´ ˡknow quite well.**

2 You´, then, child of mine, be ˡinvigorated˚ *ⁱ***by the grace, the** grace which is **in Christ Jesus.** [2] **And what** things **you hear** *ᵇ***from me through many witnesses, these commit˚ to faithful human** beings**, who***ᵃ* **shall ˡbe competent to teach** *ᵈ***others also.**

[3] **Suffer evil with** me **as** an **ideal soldier of Christ Jesus.** [4] **No***ᵗ* **one** who is **warring˚ is ˡinvolved˚** in **the ¯business of** a **˙livelihood, that he should please the** one who **enlists** him. [5] *ᵍ***Now if any**one **should be competing** in the games **also, he is not** given a **ˡwreath˚ if ever he should no**t **compete lawfully.** [6] **The toiling farmer ˡmust** be the **first to ˡpartake of the fruits.** [7] **ˡApprehend what I ˡsay, for the Lord will be giving you understanding in** it **all.**

[8] **ˡRemember Jesus Christ,** ˙Who **ˡhas been roused˚** *ᵒ***from** among the **dead** one**s,** is **out of** the **seed** of **David,** in **accord** with **my ˙evangel,** [9] **in which I am suffering evil unto bonds**

as a **malefactor—but the word of** ˙**God is not** ˚**bound**˚**.**
10 **Therefore I am enduring all because** of ˙those who are **chosen, that they´ also may happen** upon **salvation, the** salvation which is **in Christ Jesus with glory eonian.**
11 **Faithful** is **the saying:**
For if we die together,
we shall be living together also;
12 **If we are enduring,**
we shall be reigning together also;
If we are disowning˚**,**
*t***He´ also will be disowning**˚ **us;**◊
13 **If we are being unfaithful,**
*t***He´ is remaining faithful—**
He ˡ**cannot disown**˚ **Himself.**
14 Of **these** things **be reminding** them, **conjuring**˚ them **in the Lord's sight not to** engage in ˡ**controversy** *io***for nothing useful,** *on***to** the **upsetting of** ˙those who are **hearing.**
15 **Endeavor to present yourself to** ˙**God qualified,**
An **unashamed worker,**
correctly cutting the word of ˙**truth.**
16 **Yet** from ˙**profane prattlings** ˡ**stand**˚ **aloof, for they will be progressing** *on***to more irreverence,** 17 **and their** ˙**word will** ˡ**spread as gangrene, of whom** ˡ**are Hymeneus and Philetus,** 18 **who***a* **swerve** *ab***as** to ˙**truth, saying** that **the resurrection has already occurred, and are subverting the faith of** *a***some.**
19 **Howbeit, the solid foundation of** ˙**God** ˚**stands, having this** ˙**seal:** The **Lord knows** ˙those who ˡ**are His, and, Let every**one ˙who is **naming the Name of** the **Lord withdraw from unrighteousness.**
20 *y***Now in** a **great house** there ˡ**are not only gold***en* **and silver utensils, but wooden and earthenware also, and** *w***some indeed** *io***for honor, yet** *w***some** *io***for dishonor.** 21 **If, then, any**one **should ever purge himself from these, he**

2:12 i.e., disowning from reigning together with Him.

will be a **utensil** *io***for honor,** ˚**hallowed**˚ **and useful to the Owner,** made ˚**ready**˚ *io***for every good act.**
22 *y***Now** from ˙**youthful desires be fleeing: yet be pursuing righteousness, faith, love, peace, with all** ˙who are **invoking**˚ **the Lord out of** a **clean heart.** 23 *y***Now** ˙**stupid and crude questionings be refusing**˚**, being** ˚**aware that they are generating fightings.** 24 *y***Now** a **slave of** the **Lord** ˡ**must not be fighting**˚**, but be gentle toward all, apt to teach, bearing** with **evil,** 25 *i***with meekness training** ˙those who are **antagonizing**˚**,** seeing **whether** ˙**God may give them repentance to be coming into** a **realization of** the **truth,** 26 **and they may sober up out of the trap of the Adversary, having been caught**˚ **alive by him,** *io***for that** one**'s** ˙**will.**
3 *y***Now this** ˡ**know, that in** the **last days perilous periods will be** ˡ**present**˚**,** 2 **for human** being**s will be selfish, fond** of **money, ostentatious, proud, calumniators, stubborn to parents, ungrateful, malign,** 3 **without natural affection, implacable, adversaries, uncontrollable, fierce, averse to** the **good,** 4 **traitors, rash,** ˚**conceited**˚**, fond** of their own **gratification rather than fond** of **God;** 5 **having** a **form of devoutness, yet** ˚**denying**˚ **its** ˙**power. These also be shunning.** 6 **For** *o* **of these** ˡ**are** ˙those who are **slipping** *i* **into** ˙**homes and** are lead**ing** into **captivity little women,** ˚**heaped**˚ with **sins, being led**˚ by **various lusts and gratifications,** 7 **always learning and yet not at any time** ˡ**able**˚ **to come into** a **realization of** the **truth.** 8 *y***Now** by the **method** by **which Jannes and Jambres withstand Moses, thus these also are withstanding**˚ **the truth, human** beings of a ˡ**depraved**˚ ˙**mind, disqualified** *ab***as** to **the faith.** 9 **But they shall not be progressing** *on* **more, for their** ˙**folly shall** ˡ**be obvious to all, as** ˙that **of those also becomes**˚**.**
10 *y***Now you´ fully follow** me in **my** ˙**teaching,** ˙**motive,** ˙**purpose,** ˙**faith,** ˙**patience,** ˙**love,** ˙**endurance,** 11 ˙**persecutions,** ˙**sufferings, such as occur**˚ **to me in Antioch, in Iconium, in Lystra: persecutions such as I undergo, and**

out of them **all the Lord rescues° me.** 12 **And all** *y* ˙who are **wanting to ˡlive devoutly in Christ Jesus shall be ˡpersecuted.** 13 **Yet wicked human** beings **and swindlers shall ˡwax** *on* ˙**worse** and worse, **deceiving and being deceived°.**

14 *y*__Now you´ be remaining in what you learn and are convinced of, being__ °__aware__ *b*__from__ ⁼*a*__whom you learn__ it, 15 __and that from__ a __babe you are__ °__acquainted__ with __the sacred scriptures. the__ scriptures which are ˡ__able°__ __to__ make __you wise__ *io*__for salvation through faith, the__ faith which is __in Christ Jesus.__

16 *e*__All scripture__ is __inspired__ by __God, and__ is __beneficial__
*td*__for teaching,__
*td*__for exposure,__
*td*__for correction,__
*td*__for discipline__ ˙which is __in righteousness,__
17 __that the human of ˙God may ˡbe equipped, °fitted° out__ *td*__for every good act.__

4 **I am conjuring°** you **in** the **sight of ˙God and Christ Jesus,** ˙Who is ˡ**about to be judging** the ⁼**living and** the ⁼**dead,** in **accord** with **His ˙advent and His ˙kingdom:**

2 **Herald the word.**
Stand by it, **opportunely, inopportunely,**
Expose, rebuke, entreat,
*i*__with__ *e*__all patience and teaching.__

3 **For** the **era will ˡbe when they will not be tolerating° ˡsound teaching, but,** ˙their **hearing being tickled°, they will be heaping up** for **themselves teachers** in **accord** with ˙their **own desires,** 4 **and indeed, they will be turning** ˙their **hearing away from the truth, yet will be ˡturned° aside** *on*__to ˙myths.__

5 **Yet you´ be ˡsober in all** things**; suffer evil as** an **ideal soldier of Christ Jesus; do** the **work of** an **evangelist; fully discharge your ˙service.** 6 **For I´ am already** a ˡ**libation°, and the period of my ˙dissolution is °imminent.** 7 **I have contended° the ideal contest. I have finished** my ˙**career.**

I have kept the faith. 8 **Furthermore,** there **is ˡreserved°** for **me the wreath of ˙righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will be paying to me in that ˙day; yet not to me only, but also to all** ˙who °**love His ˙advent.**

9 **Endeavor to come to***d* **me quickly,** 10 **for Demas, ¯loving the current eon, forsakes me and goes** *io*__to Thessalonica,__ __Crescens__ *io*__to Galatia, Titus__ *io*__to Dalmatia.__ 11 **Luke only ˡis with me. ¯Taking** *up* **Mark, ˡlead** him back **with you***sf*__, for he ˡis useful to me__ *io*__for service.__ 12 *y*__Now Tychicus I dispatch__ *io*__to Ephesus.__ 13 When you ˡ__come°__, ˡ__bring the traveling cloak which I leave in Troas__ *b*__with Carpus, and the scrolls, especially the vellums.__ 14 __Alexander the coppersmith displays° to me much ⁼evil: the Lord will be paying him__ in **accord** with **his ˙acts—**15 __whom you´ also ˡguard°__ against, **for very** much **has he withstood ˙words** of **ours.**
16 *i*__At my ˙first defense no__*t* __one comes° along with me, but all forsake me. May it not be reckoned__ against **them!**

17 **Yet the Lord stands beside me,**
And He invigorates me,
that through me the heralding may be fully discharged, and all the nations should hear; and I am rescued out of the **mouth of the lion.**

18 **The Lord will be rescuing° me**
from every wicked work,
And He will be saving me
*io*__for His ˙celestial ˙kingdom:__
To Whom be ˙**glory** *io*__for the eons of the eons.__
Amen!

19 **Greet° Prisca and Aquila and the house**hold **of Onesiphorus.** 20 **Erastus remains in Corinth, yet Trophimus, being infirm, I leave in Miletus.** 21 **Endeavor to come before winter. Greeting° you is Eubulus and Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brethren.**

22 **The Lord Jesus Christ** be **with your ˙spirit! ˙Grace** be **with ⁼you! Amen!**

FULLY FOLLOW PAUL
(2 Timothy 3:10-13)

PAUL encouraged Timothy in *fully following* him in his teaching (2 Tim.3:10). This was the ideal course. In the past Timothy had "fully followed" "the ideal teaching" (1 Tim.4:6). Now Paul seeks to remind him that by continuing to do so, he will save both himself and those who hear him from withdrawing from the faith (*cf* 1 Tim.4:1,6,16).

Only a very small percentage of believers seem to have a practical awareness of the importance of following Paul in his teaching, in the heralding of his evangel. And fewer still have been able to do so, for most have not "followed" (understood) his words. Sadly, they have not, to adapt Luke's words on a different theme, "fully followed all accurately" (*cf* Luke 1:3). However, since we are aware that God is working all together for good, we recognize that all our disappointments are actually but His appointments, in His great wisdom and love. Therefore let us be gracious toward those who are blind to the evangel of the glory of Christ (2 Cor.4:4), realizing that "*all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are *concealed*" in God (Col.2:3).

God must *reveal* His truth to us; otherwise we cannot grasp it. Those who herald and teach the Word faithfully are mere "servants . . . , *through* whom you believe." Yet, "God's farm, God's building, are you" (1 Cor.3:5-9). We are "His achievement" (Eph.2:10). And we are all members of Christ's body. But, "all the members have not the same function" (Rom.12:5). Likewise, even those of similar services can only serve "in accord with the grace which

is given to [them]" (Rom.12:6). God is "apportioning to each his own, according as He is intending," "operating all in all" (1 Cor.12:6,11). All do not make the same progress, or grow at the same rate. However, "the entire body . . . is growing in *the growth of God*" (Col.2:19). As with the seasons of the year, "For everything there is a stated time, And a season for every inclination under the heavens" (Ecc.3:1). This is the way that it is, and we will do well to accept it, for human murmurings and reasonings will not change God. Indeed, they make it evident that those who engage in them do not "fully follow" Paul.

PAUL'S DISTINCTIVE MESSAGE

All scripture is a revelation of truth concerning the subject with which it deals. Therefore we must not confound different subjects. It is foolish to suppose that the Lord's own words to the disciples and the throngs (as in "red letter" Bibles) are on a higher level than His words through His apostles. Neither is it true that He gave an identical message to all who were His apostles. For the nature and purpose of the ministry of the twelve was quite different than that of Paul's ministry. It is not pleasing to God for us to take to ourselves things which He has given to Israel alone. It needs to be appreciated that stealing the belongings of others is no more to be applauded than is the dereliction of one's own duties.

It is a great advance to recognize the fact that all in the "New Testament" except for Paul's epistles is concerned with the establishment of the kingdom of God upon the earth. It is all according to the ancient Hebrew prophets, and concerned with *Israel's* affairs, both in the conclusion of this eon and in the impending one. Apart from Peter's brief allusion to Isaiah as to "new heavens and a new earth" and John's vision of the new earth, nothing is said of any matters beyond the terrestrial events of the com-

ing eon. And only as the nations of the earth are blessed *with* Israel in that day, do they even come into the picture. Therefore, only by grasping Paul's teachings, especially his mature unfoldings, can we, as believers of the nations, become informed of those things which concern ourselves. For Paul "was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher *of the nations*" (2 Tim.1:11).

To enter into life in the Messiah's kingdom, one must be just and worthy, having demonstrated a satisfactory measure of personal righteousness according to both Moses' law and the precepts of the Lord which He proclaimed during His ministry to the sons of Israel. For those of that calling, these things are essential. They were never rescinded, nor could they be (*cf* Matt.5:20), on behalf of the disciples or any of those reached through their ministry. And, in the coming era of the conclusion of this present eon, they will become equally applicable to the believing Israelites and proselytes of that day. None can enter into the kingdom on earth except under these conditions. Thus, it is "a cramped gate and narrowed way . . . leading away into the life" thereof, "and few are those who are finding it" (Matt.7:14).

Now the fact is that of the many groups which suppose that the scriptural promises concerning the kingdom of the heavens are for themselves, none even attempt to keep but certain parts of the law, and that not apart from a confused admixture of things from Paul. If life in the terrestrial kingdom were their calling, they would all be disqualified for it. Worst of all, they conceive of man's obedience, finally, as a human contribution through which he qualifies himself for "eternal" life. Yet this is contrary to the genuine evangel of the Circumcision, which is a message of *grace* to all those of that administration who are in Christ. Though under law, they are nonetheless in the true grace of God, in which He provides all that is needed for

their obedience, through His marvelous workings in the lives of His people. But today, hardly any of this is perceived. Instead, believers are subjected to a terribly confused and corrupted "gospel," which is not a message of grace at all, but a travesty, for the most part a perverted caricature of the evangel of the Circumcision.

But we rejoice to know that neither darkness nor disbelief can annul the completeness in Christ (Col.2:10) which is the possession of all the members of His body. Its members have this blessing and all its benefits, even if they have never heard of it, or even if they should deny and oppose it. For in our calling it is not a matter of our knowledge, nor of our walk, but of the fact that *God* in His grace, apart from law, justifies us gratuitously and *places* us in the body (1 Cor.12:18), having chosen us in Christ so long ago (Eph.1:4). Though our service to Christ as our Master ("in the Lord") may be quite deficient, God's ability to gain and maintain for us our secure place as members of Christ's body, is most efficient.

But it is only as we are able to "follow" Paul's writings as to their actual teachings, that we can be in a position to follow him in such a way so as to be teaching accordingly ourselves. May we be included among those who "are not as the majority, who are peddling the word of God" and "adulterating" it. Let us become qualified, competent workers, speaking "as out of sincerity[1], . . . as of God, in the sight of God, in Christ" (2 Cor.2:17; 4:2).

IMITATING PAUL

Not only are we to follow Paul, we are to "imitate" him as well (*mimeomai,* "attempt the same thing in the same manner," KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.154). This entreaty

1. *eilikrineia,* SUN-JUDGment, that which is "free from falsehood," KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.272.

is presented in several passages (*cp* 2 Thess.3:6-9; 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil.3:17; *cf* 4:1,9). Paul explains why we should do so: "Become imitators of me, *according as I also am of Christ* [imitating]" (1 Cor.11:1). Though Paul's service was not perfect, as the Lord's own would have been, had He carried out Paul's ministry personally instead of through the apostle, he was still an unusually faithful servant and is worthy of our imitation. There was much accord between Paul's actual service and those entreaties which the Lord had revealed to him to give to the members of His body. Therefore, immediately upon having declared matters of the greatest consequence as to his evangel and its service, he says: "Become imitators together of me, brethren, and be noting those who are walking thus, according as you have us for a model" (Phil.3:17).

Paul's evangel is only "his" in the sense that it is the distinctive message which the Lord first entrusted to him (*cf* Gal.1:6-12; 1 Thess.2:13). It is also "the evangel of Christ" (e.g., 1 Cor.9:12). Indeed, in the highest sense, Paul's evangel is "God's evangel" (e.g., Rom.1:1). But it is not the same evangel of Christ, or of God, which is presented elsewhere (e.g., Mark 1:1; 1 Peter 4:17). It is true that it has a number of *similar* features, and, when given its proper place, is in *harmony* with all other revelation. Nonetheless, likeness is by no means identity. In various respects, Paul's evangel is unique, and presents us with revelations that are quite different and far more glorious than those found elsewhere. We become aware of this as God *establishes* us in accord with Paul's evangel (Rom.16:25).

Now you fully follow me in my teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings, such as occur to me in Antioch, in Iconium, in Lystra: persecutions such as I undergo, and out of them all the Lord rescues me (2 Tim.3:10,11). We will still be very deficient in our service, even if our teaching itself should

find full accord with Paul's, if we fail to follow those things which attended his teaching.

Let us consider Paul's *motive* and *purpose.* The nature of that which causes us to act, and the goal we have in mind in so doing, determine the character of our actions. For an act is neither sinful nor upright of itself, but due to the motives which produce it and the reasons for which it is done. One may well act in a way that results in certain benefits, and yet still fail to perform a good act. For if our acts, merely as a by-product thereof or as a veil to hide our true designs, should result in certain benefits to ourselves or others, this is no indication of their uprightness. For whenever we do helpful things, but as those who are motivated by selfishness or otherwise sinful gain in so doing, our acts remain essentially sinful ones. This is due to our unworthy reasons for so doing and their motivating effect upon us. Paul, however, was graciously constrained by the love of Christ, and sought only to boast in the cross of Christ, while seeking the welfare of others, unselfishly and gladly giving the glory for all things to God (2 Cor. 5:14; Gal.6:14; Rom.11:36).

Paul was singleminded for God and His Word: ". . . of nothing have I a word, nor yet am I making my soul precious to myself, till I should perfect my career and the dispensation which I get from the Lord Jesus, to certify the evangel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24). Timothy imitated him in "seeking . . . that which is of Christ Jesus'" (Phil.2:21), instead of selfish interests.

Paul's *faith* was genuine, firm, settled and unmovable. He was persuaded by the truth, and had a strong expectation concerning all of God's promises. Since his faith was stable and sure, he could face the terrible reality of so many of his circumstances, being confident of the Lord's saving power, even if He was not presently exercising it.

All true faith in God and in His Word, is His gracious gift; He alone is able to dispense and sustain it.

The apostle's *patience* is a marvelous model for us to imitate. For example, among the Thessalonians he was gentle, as a nurse cherishing her own children (1 Thess.2:7), waiting for God to perfect His work among them. Of course, those outside had contempt for his message, were stumbled by it and considered it foolish, often causing him great personal injury as well (2 Cor.6:3-10). But the worst pains came to him daily, and were not from the outside but from within. They were the result of his heartfelt solicitudes for all the ecclesias (2 Cor.11:28), in all their doubts, departures, neglect, ingratitude and otherwise shameful deeds. Yet to such ones Paul could say, out of much patience, "Being reviled, we are blessing; being persecuted, we are bearing with it; being calumniated, we are entreating" (1 Cor.4:12,13).

Paul's *love* was one of "being ardently attached to you, . . . delighting to share with you not only the evangel of God, but our own souls also, because you come to be beloved by us" (1 Thess.2:8). In criticizing the Corinthians, Paul said, "Not to be abashing you am I writing these things, but as my children beloved am I admonishing you . . . . I am entreating you, then, be becoming imitators of me" (1 Cor.4:14,16). In his love, he taught the truth, seeking not to please men, but to edify his fellow believers through the word of God's grace. He did not compromise, and because of this, being true to the brethren and their best interests, he appeared to some to have become their enemy (Gal.4:16). Above all else, we must be walking in love, for without it we are nothing (1 Cor.13:2).

Paul's ministry was a great wonder of *endurance* in the face of so many afflictions of the worst sort. Yet his endurance produced testedness, which, in turn, resulted in "expectation" (Rom.5:4). Trials often serve to increase

expectation, our reliance upon God, and an increase in our trust. Besides actual expectation, which must be confined to our confidence in God's glorious promises for ourselves and for all in the times ahead, we may have figurative expectation concerning even our trials. That is, we may have the positive and joyful *outlook* which we *associate* with our literal expectation in God's happy promises, concerning even those affairs of life which would otherwise mortify us. For, in themselves, indeed, our failings and sufferings are humiliating and painful, sometimes even disgraceful.

But we believe that God will bring great good out of them all, such good as would have been quite impossible had they never occurred! At the deepest level, it is God Who makes our trials, and Who promises to give us sequels to them all someday (1 Cor.10:13). To enable us to undergo them at present, Paul would have us accept and be attentive to these things. Out of a deep appreciation of these very matters, Paul could say, "Now expectation is not mortifying, seeing that the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is given to us" (Rom.5:5).

Even the persecutions and sufferings, such as those which Paul underwent in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra,[2] were trials concerning which he could say, "out of them all the Lord rescues me" (2 Tim.3:11). Though we may not be called upon to suffer the degree of pain and persecution which was Paul's, still, to fully follow him, we will need to undergo those which are appointed to ourselves.

2. In Antioch, Pisidia, the Jews were filled with jealousy and "were contradicting the things being spoken by Paul, blaspheming" (Acts 13:45). They roused up persecution for Paul and Barnabas, and ejected them from their boundaries (Acts 13:50). In Iconium, the same thing occurred" (*cf* Acts 14:1-7). In Lystra, "Jews from Antioch and Iconium come on, and persuading the throngs, and stoning Paul, they were dragging him outside of the city, inferring that he is dead" (Acts 14:19).

DEVOUTNESS AND PERSECUTION

And all who are wanting to live devoutly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted (2 Tim.3:12). Persecution (CHASing) can take many forms. May we cause no one to "chase" after us with evil intent because of our own foolishness or offensiveness. We are to suffer evil "with the evangel" (2 Tim.1:8), not precipitate persecution by being obnoxious. Yet in some way, and to some degree, all those who are wanting to be living devoutly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted. Like Paul, we will suffer "for His sake" when others misunderstand and mistreat us due to our firm stand for "the faith of the evangel" (*cf* Phil.1:27-30).

Yet wicked human beings and swindlers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived (2 Tim.3:13). Many of these may not be wicked in their deportment, or committed to swindling others through their message. God alone knows the heart. With some, such deceptions may be intentional, though not often obviously so. Yet in many cases, and with those who may otherwise be commendable individuals, there will only be a certain likeness to the patently wicked man and the swindler.

Such things as these *"shall"* occur, for that is what the future holds. However, we may be certain that God has a good purpose in them all. After all, He is ideally good and full of power, and yet it is in His universe that these things exist. Concerning our God, the only true Subjector or Placer, Paul has said, "This One am I announcing to you. The God Who makes the world [human society as presently constituted] and all that is in it . . . . He Himself *gives to all* life and breath and all" (Acts 17:24,25).

May it please our God and Father to direct our steps in such a way that we may be characterized as those who "fully follow" the apostle Paul, for the glory and laud of God. J.R.C.

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Our 113th Year

(1909–2022)

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Deliverance by Blood
59 The Secret of His Will
70 Pause, Repeat and Reflect
71 Judgment and Indignation
80 Paul to Titus
84 The Common Faith
86 The Advent of God's Grace
92 Ideal Acts
94 Introduction to Philemon
95 Paul to Philemon

SECOND QUARTER, 2022

Volume 113 **Number 2**

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EDITORIAL

"SIN brings misery on mankind; *transgression* calls down indignation; but an *offense* is the wound that aches God's heart" (p.56).

"We are having the *forgiveness* of *offenses* in accord with the riches of [God's] grace, which He lavishes on us" (Eph.1:7). God forgives us for having offended Him, for having wounded His feelings.

God loves us with a vast love (Eph.2:4); as his children, we belong to Him. Hence it is unsurprising that in our distressing deeds and fleshly foolishness we *offend* our God and Father. Howbeit, how wondrous it is that it is as we become more sensitive to our offensiveness to Him in respect of our multitudinous failings, that we gain a greater desire to be well pleasing to Him in the casting aside of these selfsame wrongful ways. Even if at best our progress in so doing is measured, for this progress we are unspeakably thankful to Him in His kindness to us.

"No epistle in the Scriptures is so full of harmonies as Ephesians. There is a continual assurance that each phase of our blessing is in accord with all the rest" (p.59).

"When, in Greek, the definite article ("the") follows the word or words it modifies, we are being led to pause, repeat in our mind what has just been said, and reflect on it as it is further defined" (p.70).

"Much of our thinking is distorted by pride. Even if we have been graced to come to Christ as our Lord and Saviour, that is no indication at all that we are particularly inclined to repudiate our trust in the flesh as to our daily affairs" (p.71).

Pages 80-83 contain our revised Concordant Version of Paul's epistle to Titus, with translation notes.

"Paul saw Titus as 'a genuine child in accord with *the common faith*' (1:4). What we have in common is not the same measure of faith (*cf* Rom.12:3), but the truth we are believing. It is 'the faithful word' (Titus 1:9)" (p.84) . . . . "The common faith is the evangel of which Paul is not ashamed, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it (Rom.1:16)" (p.85).

"The *advent* of God's grace is the *intervening, rescuing and glorious appearance* of God's joyful favor to humanity in the gift of His Son" (p.87). "What could be more sane? What could be more productive of righteousness and devoutness than a faith centered upon the blessed advent of God's grace for salvation to all which is revealed in the evangel?" (p.91)

"It is true that 'righteousness' encompasses many particulars. Yet in our wider pursuit of 'righteousness, faith-[fulness], love, [and] peace' (2 Tim.2:22), there are certain things that are basic to our approach, besides being practical necessities along the way" (p.92) . . . . "It is critical, then, that we become '*concerned* to be presiding for ideal acts' (Titus 3:8). Indeed, we cannot very well 'be *learning* to preside over ideal acts for necessary needs' (Titus 3:14), unless we first become *concerned* to do so" (p.93).

On page 94, we present an Introduction to Philemon, which is "the only private, personal letter from the pen of the apostle Paul . . . a perfect specimen of its kind. Its powerful yet pathetic appeal is the ripe fruitage of that overwhelming grace which Paul dispensed from his Roman prison. Himself a prisoner, he captures the runaway slave and gives him the freedom of Christ, yet sends him back to the master from whom he had escaped."

On pages 95-96 we close this issue with our revised Concordant Version of Paul's epistle to Philemon. J.R.C.

DELIVERANCE BY BLOOD

IN THE BELOVED we are having the deliverance through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His grace, which He lavishes on us . . . (Eph.1:7,8).

Those who have the sublinear of the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT will note why the word deliverance is used, rather than redemption. Redemption or ransom is LOOSEN*ing*. Deliverance is far more; it is FROM-LOOSen*ing*. Its special force is evident in the fourteenth verse of this chapter, where the sealing of the holy spirit (which is only for those who have been redeemed) is until the *deliverance* of that which has been procured. Deliverance by blood is not simply a guaranty of future good, but a present realization and enjoyment of freedom from God's indignation. It is not that we *will* have this, but we *are having* it now. This word is peculiarly Paul's. He uses it seven times out of its ten occurrences.

Deliverance is by blood and by power. It averts God's just sentence and it rescues from the evil circumstances of human life. In Egypt, the firstborn were delivered from the death stroke of the destroying messenger by the blood of the lamb (Exodus 12). The whole nation was delivered from the armies of Egypt by the outstretched arm of Yahweh.

All Israel was shielded from the inflictions that fell on Egypt by the divine mercy alone. But if Egypt's firstborn are to be slain, justice demands that Israel's firstborn suffer a like penalty. Their only escape lay in a release acceptable to Yahweh. As the firstborn are to be delivered, a lamb is taken for each household. There was not one lamb for each person, nor yet one for the whole nation, as in the Antitype. There was, roughly speaking, one lamb for each firstborn.

So we see that the *firstborn,* and they alone, *were delivered by blood.* They form a select company in the wilderness. No wonder that Yahweh does not wait a day before He tells them: "Hallow to Me every firstborn male . . . It is Mine" (Ex.13:1,2). And no wonder that it became a statute in Israel that every firstborn animal was to be sacrificed to Yahweh. Only the firstling of an ass and the firstborn of mankind might be ransomed, and each with a lamb. If not, then the animal's neck was to be broken (Exodus 13:13).

Thus it was when they came out of Egypt. But when Yahweh pitched His tent in their midst in the wilderness the ransom of the firstborn passed over to the tribe of Levi. They were hallowed and set apart from the rest of the nation to wait on Him. They were numbered by themselves (Num.3:12). This is a precious picture of Yahweh's estimation of the blood, and it shows how He has only those near Him who know a blood deliverance. *All* Israel were delivered from Egypt by *power,* but only those hallowed by blood could draw near to Him. The rest were kept outside His habitation.

We would miss much, indeed, if we did not see in this history a type of God's Lamb and the blood He shed on Golgotha, which is the sole ground of confidence of the ecclesia of the firstborn (Heb.12:23). It portrays that later exodus, as told us in the treatise called Acts. Once the nation was identified with Moses. Then marvelous power was put forth to deliver them from the bondage of Egypt and bring them into the promised land. Now "the powers of the impending eon" (Heb.6:5) are put forth on behalf of the people, not only to indicate deliverance from their enemies, but as a prelude to the coming Kingdom.

Once the land lay but a short journey across the desert sands. Now the Kingdom has drawn very near. No long deferred delay is necessary. But, even as they spent forty years in the wilderness for lack of faith, so now, for forty

years, they try God's patience by refusing to trust in His Prophet, of Whom Moses had told them (Deut.18:15-18). Once a few entered Canaan and brought back some of its goodly fruit. So now they are given a taste of the celestial gratuity (Heb.6:4).

But, alas! The majority never reached that delectable land! All lacked confidence in Yahweh except Caleb and Joshua. So now, the nation fails to enter the Kingdom because of unbelief. They cling to the law and their own dead deeds. The majority, in both cases, never knew deliverance by blood, though surrounded by tokens of His ability to deliver them by His power. If we dwell too long on deliverance by power, it is only to keep it distinct from blood deliverance, and to note its contrast. Deliverance by power will come before us again. For us it is future. Deliverance by blood, however, is our present portion.

The treatise on the Kingdom of God, called the "Acts of the Apostles," will never be fully understood until these two distinct deliverances are perceived. The whole nation of Israel partook of a measure of blessing, even in unbelief. The Circumcision epistles, Hebrews, James, Peter, John, and Jude, should be read in this light. How many of God's dear people, sheltered by the blood, have needlessly shuddered under the dark shadows of the sixth and tenth of Hebrews! These apply to those who had known only the premonitory evidences of a future deliverance by power. They have no bearing on those beneath the blood.

Deliverance by power is brought by *strength;* the blood is a memorial of *weakness* and *suffering.* The soul of the flesh is in the blood (Lev.17:11). Sensation is situated in the crimson stream. There is nothing in the actual substance of the blood which has any intrinsic value. The animals slain under the divine ritual did not suffer, it is true, for the blood was poured out so that sensation fled. But in the great Antitype, when God's Son *poured out His soul*

unto death, it was not until after He had suffered that the blood was shed. The blood figures the abiding efficacy and value of His sufferings.

Deliverance by power needs no memorial other than its own effects. Deliverance by blood reminds us of a Sacrifice. In the tabernacle types, there was an annual repetition of the great day of Atonement, or Shelter. The victim was slain but once a year, but its blood was efficacious for a twelve month. The crimson spots upon the Propitiatory preserved all its value for the eyes of God. So with the great Antitype. The virtue and value of His death, and all its precious fragrance will never cease. Though the actual blood has long since been lost, in figure it will remain forever, the memorial of the sufferings which will deliver the whole creation.

They crucified Him. Little did they dream that thus their foulest deed would bring them fairest favor. Little did they know that the physical agony was but the sign of far sorer sufferings, due to His severance from God's face. Yet now the suffering all is past. This fact alone should make our hearts a well of gratitude, not because of what it brings to us, but what it means to *Him.* The wormwood and the gall have been displaced by perpetual pleasures at God's right hand. The sufferings, the darkness and despair, are far beneath our fathoming. And so are the glories also—higher than our eyes can reach, though we yet shall see and share them with Him.

A suitable reward for all He did we never could have offered Him. But God has given Him a place and a portion which it should be our delight to trace and bid our hearts confirm. His death is past, yet, though eons draw upon the resources of His blood, they never will exhaust its potency or drain the wealth it brings to God. Upon His sufferings, upon the blood which speaks of it, reposes this deliverance, rich and rare. But the severance from a doom

well merited, wondrous as that blessing is, is but the lower score of the divine harmony. Before touching the higher keys, let us sound these lower notes.

SIN

The whole creation is under law. All else would be confusion, chaos. Breaking the laws of nature brings on a retribution none can stay. Failure to conform to law in any sphere is sin. Had man not swerved from his lawful course, he would be perfect, and would measure up to the standard God Himself had set. To lack aught of this ideal condition is proof positive of sin, of lawlessness.

All failure is sin. In the olden time there were men in Israel so expert with the sling that when they shot they never "sinned" (Judges 20:16). That is, they never *missed the mark.* This is the essence of sin. It is not confined to overriding known commands. It includes every failure to attain perfection, in every sphere, material, mental, or moral. Let us, in spirit, transport ourselves into the consummation, when sin shall be banished. Suppose (which cannot be) that in that bright scene a single ray of light should depart from its appointed, God-given path. Suppose that one thought should stray into devious ways. Suppose that a solitary act should be unholy. Such lawlessness, such sin, would once again drag down all to wreck and ruin. In the beginning a single sin brought about the moral chaos that we see.

TRANSGRESSION

Adam's guilt was far heavier than this. He did not merely fail, for he transgressed. Before He sinned God had spoken, showing him the boundaries of obedience and where sin's territory began. God had said, "you must not." Yet he did. He walked right over the prohibition God laid down. He trespassed into the realm of the forbidden. This was

more than sin. It was not the lawlessness of failure or of ignorance, but of light. It was a *transgression.*

OFFENSE

Yet a deeper, darker side than even this marked Adam's act. God had been with him as a friend. He had supplied a present bounty for every need. He had given Adam a place superior to every creature that he knew. He had done everything to win his heart. The serpent knew what would most wound God's affections. It aims directly at these deeper feelings, and insinuates that God is dealing deceitfully with His creatures. And Eve believes the lie! *Sin* brings misery on mankind; *transgression* calls down indignation; but an *offense* is the wound that aches God's heart.

THE FORGIVENESS OF OFFENSES

Perhaps the word "forgiveness" here should be put in quotation marks, for it suggests the pardon granted in the proclamation of the Kingdom, though it is now adapted to a higher sphere. That pardon, however, was in line with the limited mercy dispensed at that time, this is in accord with His *grace,* yes, the *riches* of His grace. Hence, though the word "forgiveness" is used, the thought is immeasurably above its former usage. Moreover, this is connected, not with sins, but offenses. Sins may be pardoned, but offenses against the feelings must be forgiven.

THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE

The forgiveness of offenses seems to be so far below the sphere of truth in the Ephesian epistle that those who are most enlightened are tempted to look askance at the phrase and wonder if it is well founded in the ancient text. They have learned that pardon, or forgiveness (it is the same word) is probational. It belongs to the proclamation of the terrestrial Kingdom. Many who gained pardon, like

the ten thousand talent debtor, lost it through misconduct. The great mass of pentecostal believers, by their refusal to allow pardon to be preached to the gentiles, had their own pardon revoked.

Paul, meanwhile, has heralded a far higher, a far greater grace than the *pardon* of sins through repentance and baptism. He set forth justification by faith, through the unforced favor of God, which leads us into a sphere where condemnation no longer exists (Rom.8:1). It is absolutely without admixture of works, either before or after it is received. It cannot be forfeited by aught that we can do. Having this, shall we go back to pardon, even if it is in Ephesians?

Ephesians does not deal with the pardon of sins, but the forgiveness of *offenses.* It is not in the sphere of government, or of the courtroom, but of the home. It has reference, not to God's rule, or His righteousness, but His *feelings.* We are not forsaking justification for a lower benefit. We are going on to a higher, even if one of the terms is borrowed from the lower. We have not only sinned and are justified, but we have offended God, and are forgiven.

This forgiveness, however, is not measured by the mercy shown to the Circumcision. That, as we have seen, was comparatively stinted and probational. It sprang from pity rather than love. It was temporary because its term depended on its possessor instead of on God. This forgiveness is *according to the riches of His grace.* It were wise never to leave off this phrase. We have *not* "the forgiveness of sins" but "the forgiveness of offenses *according to the riches of His grace." This raises it to the level of its context. This makes it glow with glory.*

The grand gulf between the probational pardon of sins granted to the Circumcision and this rich deliverance is best seen in their results. The majority of those who were pardoned fell away and forfeited eonian life. We, who receive the forgiveness of offenses, not only remain in grace, but

are the recipients of its lavish gifts. We alone are associated with Christ in the administration of the complement of the eras, in which He attains His highest eonian dignities. We were last. We are destined to be first.

A. E. Knoch

A NOTE ON FORGIVENESS

In Ephesians 1:7 Paul speaks of our present deliverance through the Beloved One's blood which he defines as the forgiveness of offenses. Yet it seems to me that Brother Knoch's comments on this forgiveness lacks the clarity of his explanation of the deliverance through Christ's blood. He seems to suggest that "forgiveness" is not the best term for Paul to have used in this context, although he upholds it in its contextual sense "in accord with the riches of [God's] grace which He lavishes on us."

Forgiveness is not justification, but the forgiveness of offenses which we are having accords with the rich grace of justification which has been procured through the suffering and death of God's beloved Son. To be reckoned righteous (*cf* Rom.4: 5,24) is not the same as being constituted righteous (Rom. 5:19). Conciliation is not the same as reconciliation, but in that it comes about through the death of God's Son (Rom.5: 10,11; 2 Cor.5:18,19), it accords with the grace of reconciliation which has been procured (indeed for all) through the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love (Col.1:13,20). Had Paul used the word "conciliates" here in Ephesians as he does in Romans and 2 Corinthians, his point might be clearer to us, for forgiveness and conciliation speak of our present blessing of peace toward God and removal from His indignation on the basis of the suffering death of God's Son. These are temporary, but as Brother Knoch points out they are not provisional and cannot be retracted. They are secured unto the full enjoyment of righteousness and reconciliation (when we shall not offend or sin) is delivered to us.

D.H.H.

THE SECRET OF HIS WILL

AT PRESENT most of God's creatures are out of harmony with Him. He is either unknown, ignored, or defied. The ideal relationship with God is well expressed by the word "complement." We should combine with Him to make one harmonious whole. All that is in Him should find a response in us. There should be such mutual reciprocation in every relationship of life as will be most delightful to both. As Creator we should take our place as His creatures. As Father we should be His beloved sons: He the Reconciler, we the reconciled. He the Deliverer, we the delivered. But, more than this, we are accorded a place with Christ in His work of revealing Him to the celestial hosts. It is only as we ourselves are *filled with His affection* that it can overflow to others.

HIS GLORIOUS RICHES

No epistle in the Scriptures is so full of harmonies as Ephesians. There is a continual assurance that each phase of our blessing is in accord with all the rest. Our sonship suits the delight of His will (1:5). The "forgiveness" of our offenses harmonizes with the riches of His grace (1:7). The secret of His will is consonant with His delight (1:9). Our predestination (predesignation) is in unison with His purpose (1:11). Paul's dispensation agrees with God's grace which, in its turn is attuned to His powerful operation (3:7). The insight of the celestials is in line with the purpose of the eons (3:11).

God's riches are glorious. In these last days riches have increased. There are many men of vast wealth, and for-

tunes have been amassed which are amazing. Great as is their material magnificence, they are sadly lacking in moral glory. Much of our unrighteousness and crime is connected with money. It occasions far more misery than it alleviates. In general, riches are a menace to society. Yet all will acknowledge that wealth has power. It is fast becoming the paramount force in human affairs. It overrides social prestige and political influence. What could we not accomplish with an unlimited command of means! Yet one thing cannot be bought by all the wealth of all the world. That is *love.* God's wealth alone has the moral glory that influences the affections.

Outwardly we may be as weak as Timothy, with his frequent infirmities. We may be clothed in rags and live in the meanest of shelters. There may be nothing to indicate that we are rolling in the real riches. This wealth is not for the outer man at present. It is spiritual, and for the spirit. It is for the man within. Men behold the external appearance, God looks on the heart. Through His spirit our hearts become the habitation of Christ. This is the ground of our strength, for our vitality and stability depend upon the apprehension of God's love which has been poured out into our hearts through His holy spirit (Rom.5:5). As a plant seeks its sustenance and strength in the soil, so we should search for our sustentation and support in the subsoil of God's activities, the fact of His affection. We can flourish in no other ground. Here alone can our roots find nurture and our trunk find strength. Both of these are necessary for fruit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control (Gal.5:22).

CHRIST'S UNIVERSAL HEADSHIP

To those in the embrace of the glory of His grace, God makes known the secret of His will to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up the universe in the Christ (Eph.1:9,10). He presses Wisdom and Prudence, with all the resources at their command, into the service of this great secret. Christ has many eonian glories. This is the highest of them all. He is the Son of Adam, the Son of Abraham, the Son of David. He is the King of Israel, the Owner of the land, the King of kings. All of these glories are not only confined to the earth, but find fulfillment in the day of the Lord. They do not enter the final eon, when, as the Son of God, He administers the whole universe.

The clearest intimations of the eon after the day of the Lord found in the Old Testament may be summed up in the statement that, in that era, Christ will continue to reign over the earth, even after His priestly functions vanish. The secret here revealed also definitely assigns Him the headship over the earth, and consists in enlarging the scope of His reign to include the heavens (Eph.1:10). *Christ is to be the Head of the universe!* That Messiah's rule included all the earth was a secret the initiates have known from early times. To be with Him in this earthly Kingdom was the high hope He put before His own. Even Paul, at first, had looked for this earthly paradise. But now, as we have seen, he longs for blessing in the heavenly spheres. His hope is no longer fixed on earth, but among the celestials.

It is not possible that there can be a blessed place, anywhere, apart from Christ. Our hearts have no heaven but where He is. So it is essential, at this point, to insert this secret of Christ, lest it seem that we are exalted and He is left beneath upon the earth. If our blessings are among the celestials, if we are to reign in regions supernal, it follows that these are beneath His sway, for we have naught without Him. Before this, God's revelation was confined to the earth. There was no necessity for revealing His higher glories, for His saints were not partakers in them. Now that our destiny is celestial, we are entrusted with a secret

so staggering, so superb, that few of His saints have ever heard of it, almost none believe it, and these are unable to measure or even imagine its immensity.

Christ will be Head, not on the earth alone, but over the highest heavens. His sway will include the vast universe in its embrace. The heavenly realms, which men are only beginning to explore, will all be beneath His pierced feet. Look with me, on some dark night, into the starry sky and behold a few of His domains. Come with me to the desert and see them double their number in the clearer air. Join me on yon mountaintop and peer through the greatest glass that man has made to search the star-strewn firmament. A thousand times as many stars swim past our wondering gaze. But mortal eyes are far too weak, even with the greatest of telescopes. Let us allow the stars to set their seal upon a photographic plate. So many millions more appear that our spirit falls upon its face in awe, for we have begun to glimpse the grandeur of His celestial kingdom.

The headship of Christ must not be confounded with His salvation. The rule of our Lord should never be confused with reconciliation. Universal reconciliation cannot occur until He *abdicates* the throne. His headship *ceases* when He hands over the Kingdom to God the Father. The universal sovereignty of the Son of God *precedes* the consummation. Universal reconciliation follows it. His headship is in the last eon. Reconciliation does not become universal until after the eonian times are past. The complement of the eras lies between the judgment era of the great white throne and the close of all the eras, for it must be the last.

The word *plêrōma* is somewhat difficult to translate correctly. The usual rendering of the Authorized Version is *fullness.* But it never denotes the state of being full, but rather, as they have translated it in its first occurrence, that *which is put in to fill up* (Matt.9:16). It is *that which fills,*

or the *complement.* The eras of human history will some day fulfill, their cycle. The final era, which completes their number and rounds out their ministry, is characterized by the rule of one Human over the whole universe. He Who descended into the lowest depths to save, ascends to the highest place in order to rule.

It is worthy of note, in passing, that the Circumcision epistles never mention a *plêrōma,* for their ministry was not final. Paul speaks of the complement of the nations (Rom.11:12,20), of love as the complement of law (Rom. 13:10), of the ecclesia as the complement of Christ (Eph. 1:23; 4:13), of Christ as the complement of God (Col.2:9) and of all else (Col.1:19). Only in Paul's epistles do we find God's work brought to final fullness. He alone adds the finishing touches. These are indicated by this word *plêrōma,* or complement.

The only indication of this era we have in the Old Testament is that rule, the reign of Christ and His saints, is to continue *further* than the priestly millennial reign. Priesthood is only for *olam* ("forever"). Kingship is for *olam va ad* ("forever *and* ever"). This is in exact accord with the clearer details given us in Revelation. There we find that the reign of the saints as kings *and* priests is limited to the thousand years (Rev.20:6). They still continue to reign in the next eon, but there is no temple and no priesthood. This is the complement of the eras. The throne of God and the Lambkin is upon the earth. John has no vision of the heavens. It is a secret reserved for Paul and the celestial saints. We have no part in the new Jerusalem. Our portion is in the high heavens.

From our present viewpoint we are apt to get a most distorted view of God's dealings in the eonian times. We look back at almost seven and a half thousand years of human history and find it written with tears and blood. We look forward hopefully to a thousand years of bliss for

suffering mortals, but even that blessed era will close in revolt and fire. Is this the full cycle of the eras? Has God accomplished all He set out to do? Has humanity been fully tested? Mankind has fully manifested its sin. We are satisfied on that score. But we are not sure that Christ has done all that He can do. He is a Human, and as a Human we are sure that He can bring humanity to the very summit of perfection. This He does not accomplish in the day of the Lord. Hence this is what is before Him in the day of God, which follows it.

How long will this final era be? There is no definite revelation given to us. We feel sure that the thousand generations of which the Psalmist speaks must be within the eonian times. This would give the eons a period of at least twenty thousand years. Perhaps it coincides with that great astronomical cycle, the precession of the equinoxes. That would be about twenty-four thousand years. During this period the sun seems to shift its crossing of the ecliptic, through all of its signs. In twenty-four thousand years the polar star seems to make a complete circle. If the eonian times are so long, we have only begun them, and there will still be nearly sixteen thousand years left at the end of the millennium. This leaves a long, long time for the final eon, the era which completes the cycle.

There is no such thing as chance in God's sight. A lottery, in Israel, was not an appeal to blind fate, but to Yahweh. We who believe, in this present era of grace, were taken by lot to share the celestial honors of our Lord. When the yearly meeting of farmers occurred in each community in ancient Israel, they divided into groups, and first of all the allotments were divided among the heads of these groups, who allotted them to the others. We belong to Christ. He is our Head. He has been allotted the heavens: our lot is cast in Him.

At this point it is well to draw the attention of our readers to the fact that *nothing in the first twelve verses of Ephesians is directly concerned with the nations.* We have been taking this for granted, for reasons which will presently appear. But, first of all, it applies to Paul and those of the Circumcision who received his message. It is all in the first person. Six times he speaks of *us,* twice of *we,* once of *our.* In contrast to this he begins verse thirteen with an emphatic *you*—the Uncircumcision, the nations. It is necessary to note this in order that we may understand fully one statement which, while true of the aliens, was especially important in connection with the Circumcision who were chosen for this grace.

THE COUNSEL OF HIS WILL

Yahweh had counselled with His people Israel concerning their blessing and destiny. It was quite clear even to the apostle Paul that he would have his place in the earthly Kingdom of which the Hebrew prophets and our Master Himself had spoken. How could he look forward to aught else but what Yahweh had revealed? But now, without explanation, *his blessing and destiny both are changed.* What right had God to make this alteration? Did He confer with Paul about it first? Did He consult anyone affected by it? We may be sure He did not do it without competent advice. But to whom could He go? Who was able to advise Him? *No one*! So He takes the counsel offered by His own determination. In this crisis He retires into the privacy of immanent and absolute deity and bases this fresh departure on the immutable sovereign will which underlies every activity in the universe.

How Godlike is this thought! He does not apologize to Paul. He does not even explain. Why should He? He is the Deity. He does what He wishes. Notwithstanding appearances, this is precisely what He is doing everywhere and at all times. He is not hindered by His own revelations.

He is operating the universe in accord with the counsel of His own will. It always was His intention that Paul (and we) should be associated with Christ's heavenly headship. And it was His will that this should be kept secret until Israel had been thrust aside. To Paul, to us, He wishes to be known as the only and absolute Deity, Who is working our welfare even when we are not aware. He would have us trust in Him, not merely His promises.

THE LAUD OF HIS GLORY

The revelation of God is a synonym for His fame or glory. What He does is so marvelous and what He is is so wonderful that no glory could exceed His unveiling. Let us not be satisfied with a knowledge of His acts, or an acquaintance with His ways. These are but the pathway to a knowledge of Himself. Let us go on until we no longer "stand on the promises," but rest in God. Hitherto God had stressed His ways and words and demanded faith in their fulfillment. Now He makes known His secrets, which deal with previously unknown activities. From these we learn His inmost motives, and we learn the great lesson of the eons, to trust all to Him. The *future,* beyond the consummation, is unknown. But the *God* of the post-eonian eternity we know, and that is all we want to know!

THE PRIOR EXPECTANCY

Here we have an entirely new destiny. How are these elect to get to their celestial allotment? Israel's saints will be recalled to life on the earth just before the millennial reign. The day of the Lord will have commenced more than seven years before. During this period God's attitude toward the earth will not be one of conciliation, as it must be in this economy of grace. He will be indignant and visit this scene with the terrors of His vengeance. We cannot be here then. It follows that the celestial company

here revealed must be taken from the earth at least about a decade before Israel's saints are roused, hence they have a prior expectation (Eph.1:12).

The ancient prophets, our Lord, and His apostles, give no hint of any coming prior to His presence in person on the mount of Olives (Zech.14:4; Acts 1:12). This teaching is confirmed by Peter and James and John, and the unknown author of Hebrews. All expected a furious time of affliction, through which those who call upon the Name of Yahweh would be saved.

But there is a very real sense in which Christ has already come in glory. He was present to Paul, on the Damascus road, in blinding splendor, long before the time predicted by the prophets. And it is to this same apostle that He later reveals His presence in the air before the time of Jacob's affliction. To the Thessalonians, who were sorrowing for their dead, and who supposed themselves to be overtaken by the time of trouble, Paul reveals the presence of the Lord *in the air* before that dread day. As a consequence, those who received this teaching through him had the expectation of meeting the Lord before He would come to Israel. They were called *pre-expectants,* they had a prior expectation.

As we have already seen, the great truth of the "mystery" came only to this class. It was not sent to, nor intended for, nor received by, the bulk of the Circumcision. The calling above was a fitting prelude to the celestial destiny later revealed. In a very real sense it left the saints "in the air." They could not come back to earth beneath the black thunderclouds of raging wrath. They could hardly remain in the atmosphere. The matter was left in suspense. All that was revealed was that they would ever be with the Lord (1 Thess.4:17). Now we have the logical outcome. He is exalted to celestial supremacy. Hence we must share it with Him.

Before the apostle sums up and defines the present

secret administration in the third chapter, he refers us to this mystery again. After mentioning the administration of the grace of God that is given to him for us (Eph.3:2), he inserts a parenthesis to show the relation which Christ's celestial headship sustains to the present secret administration, introducing it by the connective *according as*: "according as I write before [in Eph. 1:10], in brief, by which you who are reading are able to apprehend my understanding in the secret of Christ, which, in other generations, is not made known to the sons of humanity as it was now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets" (Eph.3:3-5). This reference to *the secret of Christ* is usually confused with the secret administration, which is the main subject of the chapter. These two are quite distinct. This concerns Christ's headship over the earth, which had been revealed in the prophets, and His headship over the heavens, which was only now made known to the apostles, including Paul. The secret of the present administration of grace, was made known through Paul alone, and had been hid in God. No one can have a satisfactory grasp of the present grace who does not distinguish between the secret of Christ, gradually unfolded during the past eons, and the secret economy, securely locked up in the very heart of God, and not revealed until Israel was set aside.

To Paul, and to those of the Circumcision who received this message, the celestial allotment was a marvelous advance. To be sure, if Paul should claim His due in the Kingdom, some would give him the place for which John asked. Perhaps he would be entitled to the seat at Christ's right hand. I know of no one who could successfully dispute his right. Yet he, who might have had the highest place on earth, is merely a member of the joint body in this new secret administration of the grace of God. But every member of this body is graced with a glory which grants him a place superior to the highest of earthly honors.

If this means much to Paul, what does it mean to us, sinners of the nations? We have no claim to the lowest place in the terrestrial Kingdom. We have no allotment at all in that administration. We have no deserts whatever. God is not obliged to bless us. He has not bound Himself by any such covenant with the nations. Yet such is His passion for the display of His grace, that BECAUSE *Paul was His worst enemy,* BECAUSE we have no deserts but destruction, BECAUSE we are lowest and last, we shall share with Christ, His highest and His best. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so is grace, and its gifts, higher than the rewards of righteousness in the earthly Kingdom.

Hence "do not cause sorrow to the holy spirit of God by which you are sealed for the day of deliverance.

"Let all bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and calumny be taken away from you together with all malice.

"Yet become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, *dealing graciously among yourselves,* according as God also, in Christ, deals graciously with you!" A. E. Knoch

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THE HUMAN

In the introduction to the first edition of the CONCORDANT VERSION, A. E. Knoch expressed the hope that the English word "human" could be used consistently for the Greek word *anthrōpos* in a revision of the CV "at no distant future." That was about one hundred years ago. Whether or not this conforms well with current usage (it certainly does so more readily than in the 1920's), we are using it more consistently in the current revision to distinguish it from *anêr,* the Greek word for "man." This is especially important when God's Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord is referred to as an *anthrōpos,* as in 1 Timothy 2:4, and (already rendered this way) in Philippians 2:8. His association with humanity as a human, capable of dying and being made sin, is critical to His place as the Mediator between God and the entire human race. In accord with this change in translation we have adjusted the preceding comments on the Greek word *plêrōma* where Christ's rule over the universe is in view (top of pages 63 and 64). His exaltation comes by way of His humbling of Himself as a human.

D.H.H.

PAUSE, REPEAT AND REFLECT

WHEN, in Greek, the definite article ("the") follows the word or words it modifies, we are being led to pause, repeat in our mind what has just been said, and reflect on it as it is further defined. This most often occurs in Paul's writings when the subject is grace. Note how this is done in the following verse portions as rendered in our revised CV:

. . . the grace of ˙God and the gratuity in grace, the grace which is **of the One Human, Jesus Christ . . . .** (Rom.5:15)

. . . graces excelling in **accord** with **the grace, the** grace which is **given to us . . . .** (Rom.12:6)

. . . the grace of ˙God, the grace which is **given to ¯you . . . .** (1 Cor.1:4)

. . . and ¯knowing the grace, the grace which is **given to me . . . .** (Gal.2:9)

. . . in **accord** with **the gratuity of the grace of ˙God, the** grace which is **given to me . . . .** (Eph.3:7)

. . . His own purpose and grace, the grace which is **ˡgiven to us in Christ Jesus . . . .** (2 Tim.1:9).

. . . be ˡinvigorated© ⁱby the grace, the grace which is **in Christ Jesus . . . .** (2 Tim.2:1).

This construction with grace in view also occurs in Romans 15:15, 1 Corinthians 3:10 and 2 Corinthians 8:1.

In every case the grace points in one way or another to God's evangel concerning His Son, His death and resurrection, and its effects. The more we pause, repeat in our mind and hearts and reflect on such passages, the more surely we will be *invigorated* by this grace, in walk and thankfulness with praise to God.

D.H.H.

JUDGMENT AND INDIGNATION

MUCH OF OUR THINKING is distorted by pride. Even if we have been graced to come to Christ as our Lord and Saviour, that is no indication at all that we are particularly inclined to repudiate our trust in the flesh as to our daily affairs. Indeed many seem to become much more proud and self-reliant after "conversion" than ever before.

When our minds are puffed up by concepts of free will and self-satisfaction over our "decision for Christ," we lose any real appreciation for God's grace in choosing us before the disruption of the world and calling us entirely apart from anything in ourselves that might make us more worthy than anyone else. We begin to think that we at least are more "willing" and sufficiently disciplined than others, and so it is only right that the unbelievers should be condemned to unending torment or loss.

Just think of it! For all "eternity" we can say, "All those miserable sinners burning in hell could have gone to heaven too. Certainly the work of Christ saved no one at all, including myself. It wasn't supposed to. All it did was make salvation possible. Besides, every single one of those sinners deserves to be in everlasting burnings, for, unlike me, they didn't do what they should have and could have done. And here I am, in eternal bliss, perfectly good and perfectly happy, even though billions of my fellow creatures are perfectly miserable and doomed to stay that way forever! Yet, in the end, I only got here myself because of what I did, not because of the sacrifice of Christ. *I chose* to meet God's demands for His so-called 'free gift' and did so. I wasn't given any special grace; it wasn't any easier for me

than for anyone else. It's too late now anyway, so let them burn. Too bad for them, but not for me. I'm happy, and so is God. In fact we're all happy here."

Many do not seem to realize that one does not succeed in avoiding boastfulness by simply being modest. For such a person is still a boaster, albeit a modest and pleasant boaster instead of a haughty and vocal boaster. *One can only avoid boasting in self by truly ceasing to believe, think and say things that are inherently of a boastful nature.* It is only the word of the cross that effectively and wisely trains us in this true humility (*cf* 1 Cor.1:18-30) so that if anyone is boasting, "in the Lord let him be boasting" (1 Cor. 1:31; *cp* Gal.6:14). It is an empty gesture to go through the motions of "giving all the glory to God," while at the same time continually believing, thinking and often even insistently declaring that good decisions and acts are things which ultimately owe their existence to one's own self, God having but made them "possible." May He enlighten us to see, truly, that it is "in the grace of God" that "I am what I am" (1 Cor.15:10).

It is wonderful to know that man's rebellion, including all our proud imaginings, are no problem to God whatever. For whenever He exercises His strong and saving hand, His people volunteer: "Your people will be willing in the day of Your potent power" (Psa.110:3). "Alas, my Lord Yahweh! Behold, You Yourself made the heavens and the earth by Your great vigor and by Your outstretched arm. Nothing at all is too marvelous for You" (Jer.32:17). He is saying, "All My counsel, it shall be confirmed, And all My desire shall I do" (Isa.46:10).

SUBJECT TO HIS JUDGMENT

Men are *accountable* to God; they are subject to His wise judgment, for the sake of His own purpose and their good. They are *not* "responsible" in the sense of being able

to avoid, or prevent, their actions. May God cause us to remember this when we begin to boast in ourselves, or, to grovel in undue self-condemnation. Let us not foolishly use the freedom of this truth as an incentive to the flesh, yet let us not deny or neglect it out of fear of so doing (*cp* Gal.5:13). And when others offend and injure us, may God bring us to our senses by powerfully impressing these things upon our minds once again, that we may be enabled to be much more sympathetic to all, "bearing with one another and dealing graciously among yourselves, if anyone should be having a complaint against any. According as the Lord also deals graciously with you, thus also you. Now over all these put on love, which is the tie of maturity" (Col.3:13).

We, who in ourselves are nothing and useless (Rom.3:12; Gal.6:3), are nonetheless called upon to live by these lofty ideals, and a great many others. They are our duties (or, in this sense, our "responsibilities"), and it will be our loss to the degree we fail to carry them out. It is evident, then, they are not given to us so that we might glorify ourselves through our faithfulness, but to leave us no recourse than to turn to our God and Father for His saving grace if we would fulfill them at all.

Divine indignation is a "theophany," a *manifestation* of the Deity. God's "indignation" is a figure of *likeness*; expressed in ordinary language, we have called it "condescension"—a matter in which God condescends to being "spoken of as if 'He' were human . . . so that He may reveal Himself in terms within the range of human perception" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.358).

In the day of His righteous judgment, God will pay each one in accord with his acts (Rom.2:6). For their evil deeds, they will receive "indignation and fury, affliction and distress" (Rom.2:9). Through this wise and expedient exhibition, He will present Himself thus. The technical term for such figures as divine "indignation and fury" (even as divine

"regret" or "repentance") is *anthropopatheia* (human emotion). As with all divine manifestations, this theophany will be effected through His Son, "Who is the Image of the invisible God" (2 Cor.4:4), "the Effulgence of His glory and the Emblem of His *assumption*" (Heb.1:3), to Whom He has given all judging (John 5:22).

GOD DESIGNS ALL FOR GOOD

God is—literally and absolutely speaking—angry at no one at all. At the deepest level, God is love (1 John 4:8) and love is not incensed (1 Cor.13:5). All is out of, through and for Him, occurring in accord with the counsel of His will according to which He operates all. Thus all accords with "what must be" (Rom.8:26).

This divinely assumed role in which Christ will be manifested as the righteous God Who can only be indignant with those who are "persuaded to unrighteousness" (Rom.2:8), will prove to be an altogether wise and expedient exhibition. For, at once, it will commend God's own righteousness (when set in contrast to man's unrighteousness; Rom.3:5) and chasten (2 Peter 2:9) those of whom He is fond in a way that is best for them. We mortals cannot become indignant without also becoming sinful (*cf* Eph.4:26). But God is able to manifest Himself in such an assumed role for the sake of His own glory and the benefit of all concerned, while all the while acting in and being motivated by love and perfect righteousness. His motives are of the highest order, and His purpose is for the greatest good.

The story of Joseph and his brothers clearly illustrates the fact that since God operates all together for good, there is therefore no ground whatever for literal, absolute indignation toward anyone. At the human level it was a sordid tale of jealousy and hatred, wickedness and guilt. Though at first the brothers had plotted to put him to death (Gen. 37:18-20), they finally sold him into the hands of Midianite merchants (Gen.37:28). Years later, however, after having been brought there as a slave, Joseph rose to a very high station in Egypt and was finally appointed its governor by the Pharaoh.

Yahweh was with Joseph and gave him the wisdom to recognize that *He* had devised his evil experience, doing so for the good of all concerned. Joseph, perceiving the hand of God in it all, realized that his brothers were but the men of His counsel, instruments in His hands. Therefore, not only was Joseph not angry with his brothers, but he did not want them to be upset with themselves either: "And now do not be grieved nor let it be hot in your eyes that you sold me hither, because Elohim has sent me on before you for the preservation of life . . . . Elohim sent me on before you to set up for you a remnant on earth and to preserve lives in a great deliverance. So now, *not you sent me here, but the One, Elohim*" (Gen.45:5,7,8). "You devised evil *against* me, yet Elohim, He devised it *for* good in order to accomplish, as at this day, to preserve many people alive" (Gen.50:20).

It was not that God merely (as some will say) "allowed but did not cause" the actions of Joseph's brothers. No, to the contrary, God actually *designed*—He planned and brought to pass—the brothers' evil (and sinful) deeds. But He did so for good, in the best interests of all concerned and for His own glory.

The apostle Paul reveals that the Hebrew scriptures—"whatever was written before"—are to be understood as *representative* of God's ways with ourselves (Rom.15:4). For, if not, they could hardly afford us "endurance," "consolation" and "expectation" as to our own trials and sufferings.

GOD'S WILL AND INTENTION

These matters, undoubtedly, are among "the depths of God" (1 Cor.2:10). While He is able to reveal them, He is

surely able to conceal them: "I am acclaiming You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for You hide these things from the wise and intelligent and You reveal them to minors. Yes, Father, seeing that thus it becomes a delight in front of You." (*cp* Matt.11:25-27).

The Lord Jesus made this acclamation of praise to God at the very time when He had just reproached the cities in which most of His powerful deeds occurred, "for they do not repent" (Matt.11:20). Our Lord recognized that it was God's intention (or decretive will) that His preceptive will—Christ's own call for repentance—should be withstood.

Christ speaks of God as acting intentionally, actually *hiding* His truth, not merely "allowing" men to remain ignorant of it. Similarly, by removing our blindness (while we are yet minors in faith), He *reveals* His truth to us. God is leading us toward maturity, "to all the riches of the assurance of understanding, unto a realization of the secret of the God and Father of Christ, in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed" (Col.2:2,3).

In order to "hide" the truth from us, no other means are needed than our own flesh, the Adversary, and the influences which come upon us from this deceived world in which we live. We will do well to follow the Lord's example and entrust ourselves to God, not to mortal flesh: "Jesus Himself did not entrust Himself to [the Jews], because of His knowing all human beings, for He had no need that anyone should testify concerning humanity, for He knew what was in humanity" (John 2:24,25).

Since God is good, we know that He has a good purpose not only in the good, but in the evil as well, in darkness even as in light. For God is operating all together for good. May He grace us to perceive His glory concerning all (*cp* John 12:41).

The words "counsel" and "will" are common nouns. In

some passages they are used in reference to God's counsel, or advice, which men will do well to heed that they might receive the benefits attending such a course. Such passages speak of God's preceptive will, those things which He has *chosen* for man's *instruction.* They point us to "the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect" (Rom. 12:2; *cp* 1 Thess.5:18).

In other passages, the terms will and counsel reveal the divine plans, those things which God has decided should occur. These passages speak of God's decretive will, what He has purposed to happen or transpire. God is operating all according to the counsel of His own will. Concerning all things, He has decided what should occur. Consequently, He acts accordingly, operating all, causing everything that happens to come to pass (Eph.1:11). The only advice acceptable to Him is that of His own decisions (*cp* Rom.11:35). Concerning all, God has decided what is best, and, He will do what is best. For He is God.

GOD IS LOVE

It is not that His indignation is not "real," but that it fails to reveal His inmost Being. It is a genuine divine *assumption,* one of many roles the Deity assumes during the eonian times. Each one is full of wisdom and according to His purpose. The purpose of this assumption is to make a *"display"* of indignation, "and to make His powerful doings known" (Rom.9:22). God *is* love. He is not indignation.

"We are never told that God is justice, or God is power, or God is wisdom. These are His attributes, not His essence. The distinction is of vital import, in the conflicting maze of reasoning concerning God's ways and words. Righteousness and power and wisdom are relative, but love is absolute. He is never so just as when He justifies the unjust, for that is in line with His love. He is never so strong as when His weakness overpowers human strength, for that links it

to love. He is never so wise as when His foolishness confounds the wisdom of men, for that glorifies love.

"All His attributes appear and withdraw at the beck of love. All serve it and never go counter to its commands. We cannot reason that God will do thus and so because He is just, or strong or wise. Love may not give leave. But we can safely lay our heads on the bosom of His love and there learn the great lesson that He *is* love, and has both the power and wisdom to carry out the dictates of His affection. What clearer proof can be given that all that He has done and is doing is leading up to that grand ultimate when He will be All in all, and love will rest in being loved?"[1]

God's judgments are not in opposition to or a denial of Paul's evangel, the *good* news of life's justifying for all mankind, being constituted righteous one day through the obedience of Christ (Rom.5:18,19). For God *is* the Saviour of all mankind, and all *will* be made alive (1 Tim. 4:10; 1 Cor.15:22). The glorious fact is, our Saviour, Christ Jesus, "indeed abolishes death" (2 Tim.1:10), and God "*is* vivifying *all*" (1 Tim.6:13)!

In the midst of speaking of God's severity in the day of judging, Paul rejoices to interject that even this is "according to" his *evangel* (Rom.2:16; that is, "in accord with," or founded upon his evangel; *kata,* DOWN). The indignation and death which precede the glorious consummation are only temporary and will soon pass; love and life are permanent and will never lapse.

We who are members of Christ's body have not been appointed to indignation, but to salvation (1 Thess.5:10). We shall be saved from the indignation of God through Christ (Rom.5:10). For in the oncoming eons, God has purposed to display the transcendent riches of His grace in us (Eph.2:7). For ourselves, *Grace reigns* "for life

1. Concordant Commentary, p.371; A. E. Knoch.

eonian" (Rom.5:21), even if our work is a loss and we get no wages (1 Cor.3:14,15). Therefore, God's good news to us is, "Where sin increases, grace superexceeds" (Rom. 5:20). "Now thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity!" (2 Cor.9:15). J.R.C.

WHAT IS JUDGMENT?

It is a sad commentary on the human race to find that the word "judgment" is so unstable and liable to deterioration. This must be because men are so unjust and vindictive themselves. The word has come to mean condemnation and punishment almost exclusively, when it ought to be neutral. How seldom is it used in a good sense among us! It will be worth a good deal of effort to restore its true meaning, if only to keep us from distorting it in connection with the great white throne. Let us note first what company it keeps in the Greek Scriptures.

The Pharisees were not slow to *condemn* others. Yet our Lord rebuked them for passing over *judgment* and the *love* of God. They neglected the reparatory side of judgment. The *poor* (Prov.29:14; Psa.72:4) they failed to judge, and the *fatherless* (Isa.1:23; Psa.10:18), that is, they did not protect them in their rights. Our Lord combined *judgment* with *mercy* and *faith.* These, the weightier matters of the law, they neglected. Such a "judgment" certainly did not mean punishment. Instead of so judging, the scribes devoured widows' houses, though they were swift to condemn those who did not keep the traditions (Mark 12:40).

Perhaps the best place to show that judgment is always *right,* is found in Abraham's appeal to the Lord, when He spoke of the state of Sodom. The Authorized Version reads, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do *right*" (Gen.19:25)? I agree that they expressed the sense correctly, yet I deplore the fact that, in doing so, they passed up a notable opportunity of anchoring the true meaning of the word *judgment* in our language. The Hebrew reads, "The Judge of the whole earth, is He not doing *judgment."* It is clear that anything wrong would not be judgment in Abraham's eyes. If anyone in Sodom should suffer unjustly that would not be *judgment,* and would be wrong. *There is absolutely no injustice in divine judgment.* It is rather, *the righting of what is already wrong.* A. E. Knoch

PAUL TO TITUS

1 Paul, a **slave of God, yet** an **apostle of Jesus Christ,** in **accord** with the **faith of God's** ⁼**chosen** one**s, and** a **realization of** the **truth, the** truth which **accord**s with **devoutness,** 2 *on*in **expectation of life eonian, which** ·**God,** Who does **not lie, promises**° **before times eonian,** 3 **yet manifests His** ·**word** in its **own eras** *i*by **heralding,** with **which I´ am entrusted, accord**ing to the **injunction of God, our** ·**Saviour,** 4 **to Titus,** a **genuine child accord**ing to the **common faith:**

Grace and peace from God the **Father, and Christ Jesus, our** ·**Saviour.**

5 **On this behalf I leave you in Crete, that you should amend the** things that are **lacking and constitute elders** city *ac*by **city, as I´ prescribe**° **to you.** 6 **If any**one ˡ**is unimpeachable,** the **husband of one wife, having believing children (not** *i*under the **accusation of profligacy or insubordinate)—**7 **for the supervisor** ˡ**must** ˡ**be unimpeachable as** an **administrator of God, not** given to **self-gratification, not irritable, no toper, not quarrelsome, not avaricious;** 8 **but hospitable, fond** of that which is **good, sane, righteous, benign, self-controlled;** 9 **upholding**° **the faithful word accord**ing to **the teaching, that he may** ˡ**be able to be entreating** *i*with ·ˡ**sound** ·**teaching as well as to be exposing** ·those who are **contradicting.**

10 **For many** ˡ**are insubordinate, vain praters and impos-ters, especially** ·those *o* **of the Circumcision,** 11 **who** ˡ**must be** ˡ**gagged, who***a* **are subverting whole house**holds**, teaching what** they ˡ**must not on behalf of sordid gain.**

12 *a*One *o* **of them, their own prophet, says: "Cretans** are **ever liars, evil wild beasts, idle bellies."** 13 **This** ·**testimony**

ˡ**is true.** *bc*For **which cause be exposing them severely, that they may be** ˡ**sound in the faith,** 14 **not heeding Jewish myths and precepts of human** beings who are **turning**° **from the truth.** 15 **All indeed** is **clean to the clean, yet to the** °**defiled**° **and unbelieving nothing** is **clean, but their** ·**mind as well as** ·**conscience is** °**defiled**°**.** 16 **They are avowing** an °**acquaintance** with **God, yet** by ·their **acts are disowning**° Him, **being abominable and stubborn, and disqualified** *td*for **every good act.**

2 *y*Now you´ **be speaking what is becoming to** ·ˡ**sound teaching.** 2 The **aged** men are **to** ˡ**be sober, grave, sane,** ˡ**sound** in **the faith,** in ·**love,** in ·**endurance;** 3 the **aged** women, **similarly, in demeanor** as **becomes** the **sacred, not adversaries, nor** °**enslaved**° by **much wine, teachers** of the **ideal,** 4 **that they may** bring **the young** wives to a ˡ**sense** of their duty **to** ˡ**be fond** of their **husbands, fond** of their **children,** 5 **sane, chaste, domestic, good,** ˡ**subject**° **to** ·their **own husbands, that the word of** ·**God may not** be ˡ**blasphemed**°**.** 6 **The younger** men, **similarly, be entreating to be** ˡ**sane** 7 *ab*as to **all** things, **tendering**° **yourself** a **model of ideal acts, in** ·**teaching** with **uncorruptness, gravity,** 8 with **words sound, uncensurable, that the** *o* **contrary** one **may be abashed, having nothing bad to** ˡ**say concerning us.**

9 **Slaves** are **to be** ˡ**subject**° **to** their **own owners, to be well-pleasing in all** things**, not contradicting;** 10 **not embezzling**°**, but displaying**° *e*all **good faith**fulness, **that they may be adorning the teaching** ·that is **of God, our** ·**Saviour, in all** things.

11 **For the grace of** ·**God** makes its **advent,**
Giv**ing salvation to all human** beings**,**
12 **Training us that,** ⁼**disowning**° ·**irreverence**
and ·**worldly desires,**
We should live sanely and righteously
and devoutly in the current eon,
13 **Anticipating**° ·that **happy expectation,**

[+]**Even** the **advent of the glory of the great**
God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,
14 **Who gives Himself** [ov]**for us,**
That He should redeem[°] **us from** [e]**all lawlessness**
And cleanse for **Himself** a **people** to **be**
about Him,
Zealous for ideal acts.
15 **Be speaking** of **these** things **and be entreating and exposing with every injunction. Let no one be slighting you.**

3 Be reminding them to be [l]**subject**[°] **to sovereignties, to authorities; to be yielding, and to** [l]**be ready** [td]**for every good act,** 2 **to be calumniating no one, to** [l]**be pacific, lenient, displaying**[°] [e]**all meekness toward all** [=]**human**ity. 3 **For we´ also** [l]**were once foolish, stubborn, being deceived**[°], [l]**slaves** of **various desires and gratifications, leading** a life **in malice and envy, detestable, hating one another.**
4 **Yet when the kindness and** [·]**fondness** for **humanity**
of our [·]**Saviour, God,** make**s** its **advent,**
5 **Not** [o]**for works, the** works **in righteousness**
which we´ do,
But according **to His** [·]**mercy, He saves us**
Through the bath of renascence and renewal
of holy spirit,
6 **Which He pours out on us richly**
through Jesus Christ, our [·]**Saviour,**
7 **That, justified** in **that** One**'s** [·]**grace,**
We may become enjoyers [ac]**in expectation**
of the **allotment of life eonian.**
8 **Faithful** is [·]this **saying, and I am intending**[°] **you to be** [l]**insistent**[°] **concerning these** things, **that** [·]those who [l]**have believed God may be** [l]**concerned to be presiding**[°] for **ideal acts. These** things [l]**are ideal and beneficial** for [=]**human**ity. 9 **Yet be standing**[°] **aloof** from **stupid questioning and genealogies and strifes and fightings** about **law, for they** [l]**are**

without benefit and vain. 10 A **sectarian human, after one and** a **second admonition, be refusing,** 11 **being** [°]**aware that** [·]**such** a one **has turned**[°] himself **out, and is sinning, being self-condemned.**
12 **Whenever I shall be sending Artemas to**[d] **you, or Tychicus, endeavor to come to**[d] **me** [io]**in Nicopolis, for there have I decided to winter.** 13 **Send Zenas, the lawyer, and Apollos forward diligently, that nothing may be lacking to them.** 14 [y]**Now let** [·]those who are **ours also be learning to preside**[°] over **ideal acts** [io]**for** [·]**necessary needs, that they may not be unfruitful.**
15 **Greeting**[°] **you are all** [·]those **with me. Greet**[°] **our** [·]**friends in faith.** [·]**Grace** be **with** [=]**you all. Amen!**

TRANSLATION NOTES

1:5 The second aorist verb, "I leave," and the first aorist, "I prescribe" are both *fact* verbs referring indeed to past actions, but giving them emphasis, apart from time. They are *not* present tense verbs as we are apt to take them, but simple statements of truth. The context tells the time. The verb tells the facts.

2:11 The verb, "makes its advent" (literally "on-appears") is also a fact verb. Again the time of the appearing is established by the context, but the verb simply and wholly is concerned with the evangelical fact of God's grace making its advent.

Furthermore, by the Greek syntax (in most ancient manuscripts) we are to connect the term "saving" (or "salvationing") with the words "to all humans." Paul does not say that the advent is made to all people, but rather the grace as a saving operation is to all.

3:8 The faithful saying, in this case, is surely the evangel as stated in 3:4-7. That message of God's kindness, fondness and mercy and Jesus Christ's grace for justification and a future allotment speaks of things of which we (like Titus) are to be insistent.

D.H.H.

THE COMMON FAITH

In writing to Titus Paul does not go very far without mentioning faith. What he is and does is "in accord with the *faith* of God's chosen ones" (Titus 1:1). So also he closes with the fond reminder: "Greet our friends in *faith*" (3:15). Like the word *grace,* which is also there in the beginning (1:4) and end (3:15), *faith* occupies a prominent position in Titus as also in all of Paul's epistles, and it generally recalls in one way or another, the evangel.

Paul saw Titus as "a genuine child in accord with *the common faith*" (1:4). What we have in common is not the same measure of faith (*cf* Rom.12:3), but the truth we are believing. It is "the faithful word" (Titus 1:9). In Romans, the foundation letter, our apostle calls this "God's evangel" (Rom.1:1), and in 1 Corinthians he presents it by these words: "Christ dies for our sins in accord with the scriptures, and . . . He is entombed, and . . . He has been roused the third day in accord with the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3). Now also to his genuine child in faith Paul brings the common faith (which Titus already has accepted and believes) before him as our Saviour Jesus Christ's *giving of Himself for us,* that He should redeem us from all lawlessness and cleanse for Himself a people to be about Him, zealous for ideal acts" (Titus 2:13,14).

The common faith is therefore the message we are believing, the message of the faith of Jesus Christ Who gives Himself in obedience unto the death of the cross (Phil.2:8) for our sakes. This message is "truth, the truth which accords with devoutness" (Titus 1:1). To uphold it is to be "sound in the faith" (Titus 1:13; 2:2). Thus what this

faith, its grace and glory, its revelation of God and what He achieves in the sending of His Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin for the condemnation of sin (*cf* Rom.8:3), becomes a training force in our lives for living sanely and righteously and devoutly in the current eon of chaos, vanity and darkness. ("Not that I already obtain [this], or am already perfected," says Paul, "Yet I am pursuing, if I may grasp also that for which I am grasped also by Christ Jesus," Phil.3:12.) The common faith is the evangel of which Paul is not ashamed, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it (Rom.1:16).

TWO FAITH PASSAGES

Thus, then, in this brief, personal letter concerned with practical matters of the believers' lives and assembling together, the evangel itself is the dominant force, often in single words or phrases, but also in two notable passages where it is presented explicitly in fuller detail. These two passages are Titus 2:11-14 and 3:4-7.

These passages stand apart from instruction for sound teaching and ideal acts in that they explicitly tell us what the sound teaching is and what empowers ideal conduct. The focus is wholly on God as He is made known through Jesus Christ's giving of Himself. It is not our righteous acts that are in view, but God's grace and glory, His kindness and fondness for humanity, His mercy. God is the Saviour through Jesus Christ, our Saviour. We are the saved, who are cleansed in spirit, anticipating that happy expectation of life eonian. This is true of us as chosen ones out of all human beings, all of whom are objects of God's grace of salvation and will ultimately know and enjoy His kindness and fondness.

We need to be speaking of these things (2:15) and be insistent concerning them (3:8). They are the common faith which trains us in sanity and ideal acts. D.H.H.

THE ADVENT OF GOD'S GRACE

THE BASIS of the salvation of all mankind is Christ's death for sinners, followed by His resurrection and exaltation. The faithfulness of the One Who sheds His blood for all is what brings about life's justifying for all (Rom.3:22; 5:8,18,19). It is in Christ Who dies for our sins and is roused that all who are dying in Adam will be vivified (1 Cor.15:3,4,22). The exaltation of Christ with all bowing in the Name of Jesus, the Saviour, and all acclaiming His Lordship for the glory of God the Father arises from His obedience to the death of the cross (Phil.2:8-11). The reconciliation to God of all on earth and in the heavens is accomplished through the blood of the cross of the Son of God's love (Col.1:13-20). That God is the Saviour of all mankind is God's accomplishment through Christ Who gives Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim.2:4,6; 4:9,10). It is all of God through Christ, gratuitous and full of grace.

Paul's concern in writing is the edifying of the believers. Consequently he focuses on the evangel of God as it particularly relates to us. But since our blessings are based on God's purpose for all human beings, on what Christ has done for the entire human race, it is altogether natural that he will bring this wider view forward at significant points.

For example, the apostle guides us toward a prayerful concern for all mankind on the basis of God's will to save all (1 Tim.2:1-4), and encourages us in devoutness in light of the fact that God is the Saviour, not only of the believers, but of all human beings (1 Tim.4:8-12). A similar pattern is displayed in Paul's letter to Titus.

THE GRACE OF GOD

In Titus 2:11,12, Paul writes, "For the grace of God makes its advent, giving salvation to all human beings, training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and righteously and devoutly in the current eon."

The *advent* of God's grace is the *intervening, rescuing and glorious appearance* of God's joyful favor to humanity in the gift of His Son. In Titus this revelation of God's grace focuses, as it does throughout Paul's ministry, on the death of Christ and its effects. It is the evangel that Christ "gives Himself for us, that He should be redeeming us from all lawlessness" (Titus 2:14); it is the saving and justifying work of God which is channeled through Jesus Christ (Titus 3:4-7). This is God's evangel concerning Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.1:1-5), that Christ dies for our sins and is entombed and has been roused the third day (1 Cor.15:1-4). This appearance of God's grace in Christ's death for sinners lies at the very root of what Paul calls *the faithful word* and *sound teaching* (*cf* Titus 1:1,4,9,13; 2:1,8,10).

This grace of God is consistently presented throughout Paul's epistles in the clearest of terms:

1. It reveals God's righteousness (Rom.1:17; 3:21) rather than demanding our righteousness, and it commends God's love (Rom.5:8) and is His wisdom and power (1 Cor.1:23-25) rather than being conditioned on human acts.

2. Not only is God's grace of justification and salvation wholly of God, through His Son, it fully recognizes that we are sinners (Rom.3:23), and even features this fact by the type of people being called today, so that no one can boast in themselves (Rom.3:27; 1 Cor.1:29; Eph.2:9).

3. God's grace is founded solely on the faithfulness of Jesus Christ in His death for human beings, all of whom are sinners (Rom.3:23; Gal.2:16; Col.1:20,22).

Even in this letter to a "genuine child according to the common faith" (Titus 1:4), to one well acquainted with the revelation of God's grace which Paul was heralding, this evangel is everywhere assumed and specifically recounted at least twice. Throughout this letter it is the grace of God in saving sinners that shapes and directs the apostle's thoughts and words. He hardly can entreat and instruct and guide Titus in the concerns of his own tasks without continued reference to this foundational message of the grace that saves.

SALVATION TO ALL HUMAN BEINGS

Paul's principal concern in this passage is to remind Titus of the practical power of the evangel in the believer's life. The evangel of God's grace trains *us.* But in referring to God's grace, the apostle makes special reference to its relation to *all.* This connection of God's purpose for all with His special purpose for us is found in other passages from Paul's writings, such as Romans 3:21-28; 5:17-19; Ephesians 1:10-14; Colossians 1:20-22 and 1 Timothy 4:10. Now once again we find that the disciplining value of God's grace in our lives is related to the truth that this grace involves the salvation of all human beings.

Note how this is brought out in Darby's translation where we read: "For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared, teaching us . . ." and the New Revised Standard Version: "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us . . . ." No doubt it is because such renderings seem to the traditionalist to say too much about the effects of God's grace that the Jerusalem Bible paraphrases the passage as follows: "You see, God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race;" and, giving a different slant, the New World Translation has: "For the undeserved kindness of God which brings salvation to all sorts of men has been manifested."

Of course Paul did not use the word "possible" or speak of "all sorts of" people, and even if he had it would not mean that what is "possible" for God to do will not be done (especially since He wills this very salvation of all humanity, 1 Tim.2:4), or that Christ's death for all sorts of people excludes any of the human race. But such attempts to qualify Paul's actual words appear designed to preserve a doctrine that *not* all humanity will be saved. The effect is to suggest that Paul used an expression that seemed to honor God's grace more than he intended.

Why mention salvation in relation to all humanity in this context at all if these or other qualifications are to be understood? The use of the term "possible" seems intended to suggest that what God has done in saving sinners is not sufficient for saving anyone unless we do our part. It implies that nothing was actually achieved for anyone when Christ died for sinners, and that it depends on the human being for the cross to have any meaning to the sinner.

The use of the gloss "all *sorts of*" is equally puzzling. It is generally defended by noting Paul's reference to "aged men" and "aged women" and "younger men" and "slaves" in Titus 2:1-10. These are certainly different sorts of people. But the fact that those being saved today include old people and young, slaves and free, only confirms the truth that Christ died for everyone and that salvation is not at all dependent on human works or standing. We rejoice that God's present calling includes sinners of all ages and positions, all nationalities and races, male and female, young and old. But if a corollary of this present inclusiveness is that many people of every sort will eternally be excluded from God's gratuitous grace, then the joy and strength we get from this passage is considerably dimmed and our comprehension of God's grace considerably confused.

When this feature of diversity among believers is associated with a conviction that present unbelievers can never

be saved, the whole point of the passage becomes twisted. This sort of thinking is more likely to train human beings in callous self-satisfaction and hypocrisy, or, on the other hand, in crippling anxiety and anguish over the lost, or even more likely in continued fluctuation between these evils of mind, than in a spirit of sanity, righteousness and devoutness.

It is the grace of God as manifested in the death of Christ and its effects for the salvation of human beings that is in view here, and it is this that serves to discipline the believer in his and her daily living. The words "salvation to all human beings" must not be made to draw attention away from God or distort and confuse the meaning of His wisdom and righteousness and love.

TRAINING US

The apostle is concerned with the effects of the grace of God on believers in their present lives. These effects are reflected in our thinking as well as our action. The grace of God trains the believer in a good and sane state of mind as well as good conduct. It leads to sanity and devoutness as well as right behavior.

These are qualities that are essential to Titus' service. But in pointing to God's grace, which motivates such thinking and acting, Paul is concerned that God's grace be seen in relation to its significance for all people. God's grace (to use various connecting terms inserted by different English translations) "brings" or "comes with" or, even better, gives salvation to all human beings. The grace of God which has made its appearance in the death of Christ for sinners *means* salvation to all humanity. And in that God's grace has this wide and glorious significance it has a powerful impact on us who believe, a sure and effective impact of sanity in relation to the world in which we live, and right-

eousness in our deeds, and a healthy and growing reverence toward God.

Paul has already drawn attention to this. Slaves who are believing that in His grace God is their Saviour and that His grace means ultimately the salvation of all mankind are led appropriately and naturally to a sane and righteous subjection to their owners and a devout and faithful walk before God (Titus 2:9-13). Under the effects of God's grace, they are not obsessed with fears and resentment and covetousness as so often happens in human affairs. Their realm is inherent in the heavens. God is working all together for good. Their afflictions are momentary and light in relation to the glory to come. But beyond themselves, they are aware that God's grace means salvation for everyone, including their masters who may not be presently saved from dependency on their transitory riches and power, having no enjoyment of Christ as their expectation. God's grace means salvation for them as well, in God's own time.

What could be more sane? What could be more productive of righteousness and devoutness than a faith centered upon the blessed advent of God's grace for salvation to all which is revealed in the evangel?

Hence Paul instructs Titus to "be speaking what is becoming to sound teaching" (Titus 2:1). It is the sound teaching which centers on the advent, the coming into this world, of God's grace for salvation to all humanity, even on His kindness and His fondness for humanity (Titus 3:4), that will guide the believers, both aged and young, both men and women, into sober and sound and good lives (Titus 2:1-8).

It is this evangel which ultimately embraces the whole of humanity in the saving work of God that *trains* us who are believing. At the root of the Greek word for "train" is the term *hit*. Nothing can hit us so constructively and effectively as the grace of God in its vast scope and rich blessedness.

D.H.H.

IDEAL ACTS

THE ESSENCE of "the kingdom of God," whether in its present governance within our hearts, or in its future implementation, under Christ, over the nations of the earth in the coming eon, is *"righteousness and peace and joy in holy spirit"* (Rom.14:17). Hence it is that "he who in *this* is slaving for Christ, is well pleasing to God and attested by humanity. Consequently, then, we are pursuing that which makes for peace and that which is for the edification of one another" (Rom.14:18,19).

It is true that "righteousness" encompasses many particulars. Yet in our wider pursuit of "righteousness, faith-[fulness], love, [and] peace" (2 Tim.2:22), there are certain things that are basic to our approach, besides being practical necessities along the way. Thus, through his epistle to Titus, the apostle Paul speaks concerning these as follows:

"Be reminding them to be subject to sovereignties, to authorities; to be yielding, and to be ready for every good work, to be calumniating no one, to be pacific, lenient, displaying all meekness toward all humanity" (Titus 3:1,2).

It is necessary for us to be subject to those in authority over us, whether in the civil government under which we live, in our employment, or within our own families.

We must not "calumniate" (i.e., defame or disparage) others, but instead be pacific and lenient, "displaying all meekness [i.e., mild-manneredness] toward all humanity."

"For we also were once foolish, stubborn, being deceived, slaves of various desires and gratifications, leading a life in malice and envy, detestable, hating one another" (Titus 3:3).

Therefore, if we would now become "well pleasing" (Rom.12:1) to God in our walk, we must be "*transformed* by the renewing of [our] mind" (Rom.12:2).

It is critical, then, that we become "*concerned* to be presiding for ideal acts" (Titus 3:8). Indeed, we cannot very well "be *learning* to preside over ideal acts for necessary needs" (Titus 3:14), unless we first become *concerned* to do so.

In order to inculcate this concern within us, having first frankly stated how sinful and detestable "we also" once were, our apostle then interjects:

"Yet when the kindness and fondness for humanity of our Saviour, God, makes its advent, *not for works, the works in righteousness which we do, but according to His mercy, He saves us* through the bath of renascence and renewal of holy spirit, which He pours out on us richly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that, justified in that One's grace, we may become enjoyers in expectation of the allotment of life eonian" (Titus 3:4-7).

"Faithful is this saying, and I am intending you to be *insistent* concerning these things, *that those who have believed God may be concerned to be presiding for ideal acts.* These things are ideal and beneficial for humanity" (Titus 3:8).

"*Not* for works . . . which we do, but *according to His mercy, He saves us*"! And, as concerns His mercy, as related by Paul, God is saying: "I *shall* be being merciful to whomever I *may* be being merciful, and I *shall* be pitying whomever I *may* be pitying" (Rom.9:15). In the original text to which Paul refers, it is: "I will be *gracious* to whom I am being gracious and will show *compassion* to whom I am showing *compassion*" (Exodus 33:19). Thus mercy accords with *grace,* even as pity accords with compassion.

"Consequently, then, it is *not* of him who is willing, *nor* of him who is racing, *but of God, the Merciful*" (Rom.9:16).

Hence, then, "that those who have believed God may be *concerned* to preside for ideal acts," "I am intending you to be *insistent* concerning these things" (Titus 3:8).

J.R.C.

INTRODUCTION TO PHILEMON

THIS, the only private, personal letter from the pen of the apostle Paul, is a perfect specimen of its kind. Its powerful yet pathetic appeal is the ripe fruitage of that overwhelming grace which Paul dispensed from his Roman prison. Himself a prisoner, he captures the runaway slave and gives him the freedom of Christ, yet sends him back to the master from whom he had escaped.

This note was doubtless written at the same time as the epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians. Onesimus accompanied Tychicus (Eph.6:21) to Ephesus and Colosse (Col. 4:7-9). From the fact that Onesimus is spoken of as "one of you" (Col.4:9), we may infer that Philemon belonged to the ecclesia at Colosse, and that he was given the message to masters in that epistle at the same time (Col.4:1). But this precious little letter goes far beyond what is "just and equal" so far as Onesimus is concerned. No picture of God's grace can better this. Not only a slave, but subject to torture and death for stealing from his master, he is first reconciled to God through Paul's preaching, and then is reconciled to his master through Paul's pleading. He is caught upon the very crest of the great tidal wave of grace which was just then ready to overflow the whole world. The transcendent grace of Paul's perfection epistles was doubtless his precious possession even before it was delivered to Philemon. Can we realize what this must have meant to him? To be taken from the deepest depths of social degradation and to be seated with Christ in the celestial realms, by faith, almost exhausts the possibilities of grace. And now upon all this, he is given this precious passport to his master's heart! Is it not a lovely little letter?

A. E. Knoch

PAUL TO PHILEMON

1 Paul, a **prisoner of Christ Jesus, and** ˙**brother Timothy, to Philemon, the beloved, and our fellow worker,** [2] **and to** ˙**sister Apphia, and to Archippus, our** ˙**fellow soldier, and to the ecclesia** *ac*__**at your house:**__

[3] **Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

[4] **I am thanking my** ˙**God always, making**° **mention of you** *on*__**in my** ˙**prayers,** [5] **hearing of your** ˙**love and the faith which you** ˡ__**have toward the Lord Jesus and** *io*__**for all the saints,** [6] **so that the fellowship of your** ˙**faith may become**° **operative in** the **realization of every good** thing ˙which is **in us** *io*__**for Christ Jesus.** [7] **For much joy** do **I have and consolation** *on*__**in your** ˙**love,** seeing **that the compassions of the saints are** °__**soothed**°__ **through you, brother.**

[8] **Wherefore, having much boldness in Christ to be enjoining you** as to ˙what is **proper,** [9] **because** of ˙**love I am rather entreating, being such** a one **as Paul** the **aged, yet now** a **prisoner also of Christ Jesus.** [10] **I am entreating you concerning my** ˙**child, whom I beget in my** ˙**bonds, Onesimus,** [11] ˙who **once** was **useless to you, yet now** is **useful to you as well as to me,** [12] **whom I send back to you. Him—this** *is* means **my** very ˙**compassions—take**° **to** yourself, [13] **whom I**´ ˡ__**intended**°__ **to be retaining** *td*__**for myself that,** *ov*__**for your** sake, **he may be serving me in the bonds of the evangel.** [14] **Yet apart from your** ˙**opinion I want to do nothing, that your** ˙**good may not be as** *ac*__**of compulsion but** *ac*__ **voluntary.** [15] **For perhaps therefore is he separated** *td*__**for** an **hour, that you may collect him** as an **eonian** repayment, [16] **no**ᵗ **longer as** a **slave, but above** a **slave,** a

brother beloved, especially to me, yet how much rather to you, in the **flesh as well as in** the **Lord!** 17 **If, then, you** ˡ**have me** for a **mate, take**˚ **him to** yourself **as me.** 18 ʸ**Now if** in **any**thing **he injures you, or is owing** aught, **this be** charg**ing to my account.** 19 **I, Paul (I write** with **my** own ˙**hand), I´ will be refunding** it. **(Not that I may** ˡ**say to you that you are owing me** ⁺**even yourself!)** 20 **Yes, brother, may I´ "profit**˚**"**◊ from **you in** the **Lord! Soothe my** ˙**compassions in Christ!**

21 **Having confidence** in **your** ˙**obedience, I write to you, being** ˚**aware that you will** ˡ**do** ⁺**even above what I** ˡ**say.** 22 ʸ**Now** at the **same time,** make ˡ**ready also** a **lodging** for **me, for I am expecting that, through** ⁼**your** ˙**prayers, I shall be** ˡ**grac**iously grant**ed to** ⁼**you.**

23 **Greeting**˚ **you are Epaphras, my** ˙**fellow captive in Christ Jesus,** 24 **Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my** ˙**fellow workers.**

25 **The grace of our** ˙**Lord Jesus Christ** be **with** ⁼**your** ˙**spirit! Amen!**

1:20 "profit˚**": "Onesimus"** means **"Profitable."**

CHARLES SHIRK

Our dear friend in the Lord, Charles Shirk, was put to repose on his birthday, May 8, at age 88. Charles resided in Lake View Terrace, California. He is survived by his wife Norma Jean, son Brian, and daughters Carolyn and Marilyn.

We first met Charles in 1979, forty-three years ago. He was a close student of Scripture, often sharing with us a word of his latest findings through the Concordant Version, even as the expository writings in *Unsearchable Riches* magazine.

For many years, Charles would come in to our office weekly, assisting my wife Suella in the processing and shipping of orders.

Charles enjoyed an unusually clear and consistent grasp of the *grace* of God, keenly noting its many and varied *usages* throughout Scripture, yet while ever maintaining its essential *meaning* of gratuitous favor. As Charles would joyfully relate on many occasions, "Where, then, is boasting? It is debarred!" (Rom.3:27). J.R.C.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 113th Year

(1909–2022)

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 James Robert Coram
101 The Boundary Line
108 God Makes Our Trials
115 Paul and God's Evangel
120 When it Delights God
131 The Message
142 It is God Who is Operating

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, THIRD QUARTER 2022
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

EDITORIAL

God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). This operation and this counseled will are determined and settled in accord with God's *purpose*, of which there are no changes. Yet from our standpoint things keep changing. In September Jim Coram and I spoke by phone, as we have been doing for many years, concerning the next issue of *Unsearchable Riches* (this third issue for 2022). It was our last conversation, for within days he was in the hospital with severe intestinal pain, and within weeks he was taken from us in death (see p.99). Of course, for us, there are always changes, changes in plans, changes in associations, changes round about us in human ways and thinking, some hardly noticeable, others very evident. But with God, Who brings about changes, there is no change of purpose toward which He is operating all "for the laud of His glory" (Eph.1:6,12,14).

The writer of Hebrews takes notice of an adjustment of the eons occurring in his days (Heb.11:3). In the article entitled "The Boundary Line," A. E. Knoch discusses this adjustment in terms of a change in God's administration (pp.101-107). This change brings many rich blessings, but it does not come without trials, which, as Brother Coram shows from the Scriptures, are made by God for our good (pp.108-114).

It was given to Paul to be severed from Judaism and the former apostles to make known the features of God's present administration, which brought about much change. This decisive separation is examined in the two articles, "Paul and God's Evangel" (pp.115-119) and "When it delights God" (pp.120-130). Consequently we center our-

attention on Paul's epistles, for he is our apostle, and he brings God's evangel with a fulness that corresponds with the features of God's present administration which is in faith (1 Tim.1:4).

But these changes all are dependent on the greatest changing event of the eons, the death and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Without that no promise can be fulfilled and no purpose of good can be achieved. Therefore the announcement of this astounding occurrence is called "God's *evangel,*" His welcome and good and triumphant announcement of what happened in that brief time of three days nearly two thousand years ago, and its results.

In the last two articles Jim Coram and I contemplate some features of this message (pp.131-144). We cannot exhaust its riches of revelation. But in this we must begin: "The evangel is not good advice; the evangel is good news" (p.142). As certain scholars put it these days, the "gospel" is not 'contractual" but is "apocalyptic," by which is meant it is not "God will save you if you do such and such," but is revelatory, that is, a revelation (or "unveiling") of what has been done, its present significance and future results. This has been set forth anew where the Greek genitive construction "faith *of* Christ" is seen to be exactly that, and not "faith *in* Christ" as usually translated. Our faith is not something to boast in as though it arises from ourselves and is the source of deliverance from sin and death. Rather it is something to be thanking God for, and praying that it might grow along with growth in realization of God's righteousness and power and love in His sending of His Son and the faith and obedience of His Son to the death of the cross. This has called for changes in the CV translation (as in Ephesians 2:8, see *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.112, pp.111-118) which hopefully can be discussed further in these pages, God willing. D.H.H.

In Memoriam

James Robert Coram

Our fellow worker, Jim Coram, was put to repose early in the morning of October 10, 2022. He had been in and out of the hospital several times in recent months because of recurring intestinal pain, and previously it always seemed he could be restored to normal. He spoke with me by phone cheerfully as we discussed finishing plans for this third issue of *Unsearchable Riches* for 2022 just days before he suffered what proved to be his final relapse.

He was born on April 13, 1946 in Columbus, Ohio and grew up in that general area. A talented musician, he yet turned to printing as a vocation. After a stint in the military reserves, he became interested in the Bible and joined an association which centered its attention on law observance. There he met and married his faithful companion, Suella Beth, who survives him. Soon after their marriage they left the religious organization they belonged to and were directed to the teachings of the Concordant Publishing Concern. It was the great contrast between grace and law that changed the direction of their thinking and provided answers to many perplexing questions.

A quick learner, Jim started a Bible class and became acquainted with other teachers and groups in the midwest, corresponding also with others at a distance. He did some printing for the Concern, and in connection with his own ministry. But in 1981 circumstances brought about the loss of the Coram's home where also the printing establishment was centered. It worked out, however, that they were to move to California, printing equipment and all, with their young son, Marc, and Tony Nungesser who had been assisting Jim in his work.

That opened up a forty (plus) year association with the CPC and *Unsearchable Riches* magazine which was not without troubles and trials, but of which he would assess (speaking for us all) in 2005 as follows:

"As concerns our own personal faith and as concerns our publication *Unsearchable Riches* as well, we can only say that we are thankful for the faith God has given us and for the little place of service He has allowed us to be in."[1]

Concerning "the little place of service" which God gave him we give God thanks for much that enlightens and encourages in his writings and recorded messages. He took up many scriptural issues and shared spiritual truth with boldness and meticulous scrutiny. His studies on Galatians in particular and the series "His Achievement are We" will be consulted often with profit. His "Questions and Answers" examine a variety of subjects that have become obscured by tradition and popular misconception. Perhaps above all else his thoughts on causation, pointing all to God as First Cause, leading to final glory, call for our serious attention.

Yet it would be wrong to speak only of his many contributions to scriptural understanding and not that, like us all, he was a human being who knew the suffering and groaning of Romans 8:18-23. For that is what gives the scriptural revelations of God's purpose and operations through Jesus Christ their continuing value.

His son Marc, read from 1 Corinthians 15 at the graveside service held on October 28 near Mission, Texas, where he had been living with his wife, Suella. He rests now in peace, waiting for that shout of command, and that glorious change into the image of his Lord, of which our apostle has written. D.H.H.

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.96 p.262.

THE BOUNDARY LINE

WHERE is the boundary line between the Pentecostal era and the present secret administration of God's grace? What part of the Scriptures applies to us and what was written to the Circumcision? The scriptural line is clear cut and conclusive. It may be briefly stated thus: *All of Paul's writings are for us: all the rest are primarily for the Circumcision.* This is as simple as it is satisfactory. It will stand every test. Those who take *all* of the New Testament as truth for *today* are in error. The great foundation for Christian doctrine is supposed to be the book of Acts. To learn that this treats of the terrestrial *Kingdom* is a vast step in the right apportionment of the truth. With it go the writings of James, Peter, John and Jude, which are based on the Gospels and addressed to the Circumcision.

There is a tendency on the part of some who have gone thus far, to question whether all of Paul's writings may be for us. This applies only to his earlier letters. All are agreed that his prison epistles apply to the present. But his pre-prison letters, which were penned during the era covered by the book of Acts, are questioned. It is found that the later epistles contain much which the early ones do not reveal. Where shall we draw the line?

Those who have lived near the boundary line of two different countries will understand some of the difficulties connected with this subject. Twice have I stood on the line between the United States and Mexico. Once, many years ago, I could not see just where the line was, for there seemed to be no artificial indication. The country on either side looked alike. Both Spanish and English were current speech above and below the border. But there was a sub-

tle change in the moral atmosphere. Rows of guns were stacked before the adobe custom house in Mexico. The mud-walled church was over a hundred years old. The greatest differences were invisible. I hardly realized that I was under another government, among a people with distinct customs and a different mode of life.

It were well if we could learn the lesson of the border in dealing with borderland writings. We once thought that the mere mention of the word "church" in Acts proved that it was for us. Let us not imagine that language settles such things. The Thessalonian letters were the first of Paul's epistles to be written during the Acts era. We must expect the language to be like that on the border. Because I use some Spanish words in my conversation does not prove that I am in Mexico. It may suggest that I live near that country. So the presence of Kingdom expressions in border epistles proves nothing except that they are such.

We should be prepared to find much in the latter part of Acts, in connection with Paul's ministries, which has a strong leaning toward present truth. The very call of Saul is far more in keeping with the grace now shown to the nations than the Kingdom administration of Acts. His turning to the nations points in the same direction. The raising of Eutychus is a specially strong intimation of something beyond the Kingdom proclamation. It is all border truth. But, in Acts, Paul never steps over the border. *This he does for the first time, when he writes his letter to the Thessalonians.* There the evangel is reduced to its gracious simplicity. All that they did was to *receive it.* They became imitators of Paul, which is quite contrary to Kingdom teaching, and in thorough accord with the present. They are taught to *wait*, not watch, for God's *Son* out of the heavens, not after the great affliction when Christ comes to Israel, but before God's indignation is poured upon the earth (1 Thess.1:3,6,10).

Perhaps, to elaborate the illustration, it would be more correct to say that he is *on* the border in his preparatory epistles. I well remember visiting the international boundary line a second time where it was clearly defined by a high wire fence. I made a point of standing on foreign ground with one foot back whence I had come. Though I still stood partially on home soil, I was headed for another land. So is Thessalonians, and Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians. The political superiority of Israel lingers slightly in these letters. Israel's dominance is discounted, yet her ascendency is still acknowledged in some respects. The full entrance of the nations into their present position of highest privilege is not made known until it is revealed in the first chapter of Ephesians. We shall now consider the first full revelation of the present place of the nations. This is not border truth. This is not transitional. It is the final definition of our position in God's purpose.

In the opening paragraphs of Ephesians (1:3-12) we have been reading of the supreme place accorded to some of the Circumcision, who are associated with Paul. We have taken it for granted that the same is true of us. We have anticipated Paul's inclusion of the nations (Eph.1:13,14). Let us now meditate on this memorable declaration: "In Whom *you* also [the Uncircumcision]—on hearing the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation—in Whom on believing also, you are sealed with the holy spirit of promise (which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment, to the deliverance of that which has been procured) for the laud of His glory!"

These words are of supreme import to us, sinners of the Gentiles. They should be graven on our monuments, they should be preached from our pulpits, they should be harbored in our hearts. They mean more to us than the Magna Charta to the English or the emancipation proclamation to the southern slaves. They are our fortune, and our fame.

They bring us more of wealth, of power, and of prestige than the highest flight of our ambition dares to dream. Yet how little have the nations noticed them! How seldom are they mentioned! How generally are they ignored!

The logical argument is this: The transcendent blessings Paul had outlined are *spiritual* (Eph.1:3). The nations had received the spirit, by faith, when hearing and believing the evangel. Now this spirit is an earnest of the very allotment which he has been revealing. Hence they also are included in the grace glorious, and are blessed with every spiritual blessing among the celestials! They had enjoyed the *earnest* of this allotment from the day that they believed. But they did not dream at that time that the possession of the spirit had any promissory value. Now it becomes the title to high celestial honors and makes them joint allottees with the celestial section of the Circumcision.

To stop here and fully investigate the spirit and its operations would break the thread of thought. Hence we will return to this aspect at a later time. While we have the clue fresh in our minds, let us hurry on to the next unfolding, for it commences with a "therefore." Translators are at a loss to render "THE *according*-to YE BELIEF" (Eph.1:15). The Authorized Version ignores the preposition *(according-to).* The Revisers seek to express it by "the faith . . . which is *among* you," but they show their indecision by suggesting "in" in the margin. Rotherham makes it the faith "on your part." But a little consideration will show that Paul cannot be writing of their act of faith in receiving the evangel, for he had known of that for many years, when he was among them in person. Why should he bring it up at this late date? He is dealing with something new, something recent.

Paul here refers to the teaching which he has just enunciated in the preceding verses 1-14. What he has in mind is that peculiar body of truth which was *theirs* to receive,

and he calls it "this faith of *yours*" or "this faith which relates to you."

THE CELESTIAL FAITH RELATING TO YOU

The Greek text of Ephesians 1:15 differs from Colossians 1:4. The most ancient and almost complete manuscripts, the three used in compiling the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT, did *not* have the word "love" in Ephesians 1:15. It was added by a later editor in Sinaiticus. On many occasions the additions of this editor are of great value. But in Ephesians 1:15 he seems to be recording the attempts of some early expositors to make this epistle understandable after its message as a circular letter was lost; even though some of the Church Fathers (Origen, Pelagius, Jerome, Augustine, Cyril) *omit* the word "love" when they quote from Ephesians.

Colossians is by no means a repetition of Ephesians. The two paragraphs that seem to be parallel have minute variations which, sympathetically examined, will show how exquisitely the separate details harmonize with the special subject of each letter. In both epistles Paul presents himself as an apostle, for he has been commissioned, and has authority to write and set forth the truth and reveal the secrets which it contains.

In Ephesians Paul appears *alone as apostle* in his salutation. Here his full authority is necessary to certify to his words of *teaching.* Colossians is the complement of the doctrinal section of Ephesians. Two secrets dominate both. Ephesians elaborates the present secret administration of the grace of God with celestial blessings for us, the *members* of the body of Christ: Colossians dwells upon the secret of Christ, Who is the *Head* of that body. In Ephesians, Paul *teaches* the truth, while he *corrects* departure from it in Colossians.

Epaphras seems to have been the principal teacher in

the Colossian ecclesia. It was from him that *Paul and Timothy* had heard of the faith and love which they exercised. Hence he writes, "We are thanking . . . on hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints." Considering the circumstances, the simple term "your faith" was appropriate.

Ephesians, however, was a circular letter, copies of which were sent to a number of Pauline ecclesias. Here Paul writes of "the according to ye faith" or *the faith which relates to ye*, for which the CV has *this faith of yours.* He does not speak of the act of faith which the believers in all his ecclesias had been exercising ever so long, but rather of that body of faith which was especially theirs, namely *the message of this epistle,* which Paul alone had heard from his Lord and which he is now passing on to all his readers: "Therefore, *I* also, on hearing of this faith of yours in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you . . . ."

After having outlined it in Ephesians 1:1-14, the apostle is not changing the subject when he comes to verse 15, but is rather continuing it as is evident from the use of the conjunction *therefore.* There is one body of faith for us, of the celestial, spiritual allotment, and another, a terrestrial inheritance for the Circumcision and all the nations who are going to be blessed with and through them. We are not dependent on the national restoration of Israel any longer, for our blessings are supernal, among the celestials. In those days this new body of faith was in contrast to the [faith that was] for all the other saints. If the first half of verse 15 were understood, there would have been no need for inserting the word "love" in the second half.[1]

1. The *Unsearchable Riches* issue No.1 of volume 31 contains 5 pages (40-44) dealing with the grammatical evidence for our rendering of Ephesians 1:15.

When the time came that the twelve apostles in Jerusalem were assembled to their fathers and the last of their followers had died and the proclamation of the Kingdom was no longer authorized, then "this faith of yours" became indeed the faith *for* all the saints, even though not *of* all the saints, for they had lost all knowledge of their own special celestial faith, and could not understand any reference to it. Even during Paul's lifetime all his ecclesias in Asia had turned away from him.

In Ephesians 1:15, the apostle does not give thanks because those to whom he writes had believed, but because they have become the recipients of the grace glorious. He was grateful that they also were included in its embrace. His prayer is just as definite in its scope. It all refers immediately to God's calling, His allotment, His power. The need for this prayer certainly ought to be apparent in these days, for spiritual wisdom and realization of God's will are needed today more than ever. Hence let us pray for it so as to perceive the expectation of God's calling, and the transcendent greatness of God's resurrection power for Christ and for us, also to perceive the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of God's allotment among the saints.

A. E. Knoch

WITH FAITH AND EXPECTATION

Gleeful, yet unostentatious in their giving, the Yoder family of Hemet, California, Maurice and Anita, and their five children, were instrumental in the continuance of the Concordant Publishing Concern in the early years by financial support and much encouragement. We now learn of the deaths of the eldest son, **Charles Yoder** at the age of 99 years and the younger daughter, **Evelyn Tatton** at the age of 93. They were blessed with faith and expectation, while walking in love.

Together with their extended families and many friends we mourn their loss with the happy expectation of being together with our Lord always.

GOD MAKES OUR TRIALS

IT IS CERTAINLY CORRECT to say that God makes our trials, not merely permits them. For, "No trial has taken you except what is human" (1 Cor.10:13a). And, "A man [a "human"] cannot get anything if it should not be *given* him out of heaven" (John 3: 27). "Now, faithful is God, Who will not be leaving you to be tried above what you are able, but, together with the trial, will be *making* the sequel *also*, to enable you to undergo it" (1 Cor.10:13b).

If a furniture maker were to say to us, "Together with the table, I will be making the chairs also," we would understand just what he meant. He would mean that he would be making both items of furniture, making them together, one as well as the other. Thus it is with God's making of our trials and their sequels, though He has no need to attempt the actual trying, or "probing" (*peirazo,* PROBIZE), and so has delegated that work to others who will ultimately benefit from the experience (e.g., Gen.50:20). Therefore, God brings us into trial (*cp* Matt.6:13; Luke 11:4), yet He Himself does not try us (James 1:13).

The standard PROBE accurately represents the central idea in the stem *-peir-,* from which we get *peirasmoa,* PROBing, trial, and *peirzaō,* PROBize, try. Its most elementary sense is shown in the passages that speak of attempting to do something. Thus, Saul *tried* to join the disciples in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26); Paul and Timothy *tried* to go into Bythynia (Acts 16:7); Paul was charged with *trying* to profane the sanctuary (Acts 24:6). The essence of the term, then, points us to the idea of *attempting* to do something. And, in the nature of the case, the purpose of such

an endeavor also involves the thought of probing. In some passages it is the essence of *-pier-* (to attempt) which is in view. In others, we are directed toward its purpose (to discover) and the means which it employs toward this end (probing, into the unknown).

POWER PROMISED TO ENDURE

Though God may often "leave us to our own devices" (which are themselves ultimately the work of His hand), He will not be leaving us in such a way or to such a degree that we are tried above what we are able. He promises us power to endure our trials, not exemption from their consequences or a way to escape their grasp. He enables us to endure by giving us faith to believe that one day we will "step out" of all our trials, and will then enjoy their "sequel" (*ekbasis,* OUT-STEPPing). Therefore, "we may be glorying . . . in afflictions, having perceived that affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness expectation" (Rom.5:3,4). Indeed, "Happy is the man who is enduring trial" (*cp* James 1:12a). And, "Lo! we are counting those happy who endure," for we have heard of the endurance of Job, and have perceived the consummation of the Lord, "for very compassionate and pitiful is the Lord" (*cf* James 5:11).

James speaks ideally when he says, "Let no one undergoing trial be saying that: 'From God am I undergoing trial' . . ." (James 1:13a). He by no means, however, declares that the reason no one should be saying "From God am I undergoing trial" is because (as most believe) He has neither made our trials nor given them to us. To the contrary, since God *has* made our trials and given us *all* that we have, it cannot be that James is hereby denying God's deity with regard to our trials. To the contrary, he explicitly tells us why he says what he says. We are not to be saying, "'From

God am I undergoing trial,' *for* God is not tried by evils, yet[1] He is trying no one" (James 1:13).

Unlike ourselves, God is never tried by evils, in the associated sense of experiencing *perplexity* or *distress* due to suffering. In the face of evil, God is neither perplexed nor distressed, for He knows just what it will do, and that it will accomplish His purpose. Likewise, evils cannot probe into the untraceable ways of the Deity in order to put Him on trial or discover something about Him. They have no such ability, and have been given no such ministry. Our trials may consist of much that is evil, but in themselves they can teach us nothing. God, however, can teach us much through the experiences of evil which He wisely gives us (Ecc.1:13).

We are not to be putting God on trial (1 Cor.10:9), attempting to make Him prove Himself; we are to be believing His Word and trusting His promises. However, while confidently relying on Him, we are to be *testing* God (examining and testing out His ways) that we might have Him in recognition and discover the goodness of His ways (*cp* Rom.1:28; 12:2). But we must never be so foolish as to put Him on trial, to contend with our Maker out of our own unbelief (e.g., Ex.17:1-7).

It is true that we are not being tried by God, as if He were trying to discover something about us (for He already knows all; 1 John 3:20). Consequently, in *this sense and for these reasons*, when being tried, we should not be saying that "From God am I undergoing trial" (literally, we should not say, "From *God* [the *Placer*] I am being *tried*," Concordant Greek Text sublinear, James 1:13). This is quite true. For the Placer does not "try" (attempt and probe), He *subjects*.

1. "Yet" represents the particle *de*, "an adversative connective, yet, sometimes very slightly so; [it is] used as a resumptive, now" (Keyword Concordance, p.337, entry "yet"). *De* is sometimes idiomatically rendered "or" (e.g., James 4:13). Here, in James 1:13b, the sense is: The reason no one is to be saying, It is from *the Placer* that I am being *probed*, is because (first of all) God is not tried by evils; yet (another reason why no one should be speaking thus is because) He is trying no one.

Trying or Probing

"Let us take the case of Job as a concrete example. Here we have both God and Satan. God undoubtedly *brought* Job into trial, but He did not try him. He left that to Satan. God knew Job and did not need to probe him to find out what was in him. Satan did not know Job and needed to be shown. And so it is in all other cases. Trial, probing, experiment is a thing God does not need for Himself, since He knows all. But His creatures need it, for they are here to learn, as Job, not only what is in themselves, but also what is in God (*cp* Job 1:6-12,21,22; 42:12-16).

"The meaning of *try* or probe involves ignorance. The outcome is questionable. Whenever the men of His day tried our Lord they manifested their own blindness as well as their lack of confidence in Him. Yet in the contrary instance, when Philip was tried by our Lord (John 6:6), it is immediately explained that He was aware what He was about to do. His words tried Philip. He practically brought him into trial. Once we see this essential element in the word "trial," which we have tried to express by the standard probe, it becomes evident that God cannot try anyone, except in a figurative sense (e.g., Gen.22:1). The teacher in a classroom may "experiment" before the pupils, but that is a vastly different matter from the experiments of an inventor or investigator. God brings trials to demonstrate. This should be abundantly clear from the fact that with each trial He makes a sequel as well. He is like a novelist who determines first of all what the end of the

tale is to be, and then brings on all the dangers and difficulties which will lead up to the sequel, but hold this back for the second volume."[2]

IF THE LORD SHOULD EVER WILL, WE SHALL BE DOING

Indeed, James' words in reply to those who boast in "the free will of man" concerning one's plans and achievements are among the most condemnatory in all Scripture against that position: "Come now, you who are saying, 'Today or tomorrow *we will* be going into this or that city and should be spending a year there, and *we will* be trafficking and getting gain'—who are not versed in that which is the morrow's, for what is your life? For a vapor are you, which is appearing briefly and thereupon disappearing—instead of your saying, '*If the Lord should ever will,* and we shall be living, we *also* will be doing this or that.' Yet now you are vaunting in your ostentations. *All* such boasting is wicked. Then to one perceiving how to be doing the ideal and not doing it, to him it is sin" (James 4:13-17).

This scriptural teaching, through James, is obviously transadministrational in nature. Indeed Paul presents himself as our model in this matter as well: e.g., "I shall come back again to you, God willing" (Acts 18:21). Similarly, "I shall be coming to you swiftly, if ever the Lord should will" (1 Cor.4:19). Upon hearing the prophecy that at Jerusalem the Jews would put the apostle in bonds and give him over to the Romans, the brethren declared, "Let the will of the Lord be done!" (Acts 21:14). They realized that this was the will and work of the Lord, for, "Would there come to be evil in a city, and Yahweh not have done it?" (Amos 3:6b).

It is not that we may never use the future tense concerning ourselves under any circumstances, but that we

2. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.31, pp.304-307; A. E. Knoch.

are not to do so when speaking predictively where God has not promised. When it is evident we are simply speaking *ideally,* as an example of a commended course, the future tense may freely be used by itself. For example, Paul said, concerning all who were announcing Christ, "I am rejoicing in this also, and will be rejoicing nevertheless" (Phil.1:18). He is not boasting of the morrow, but setting us an example.

Yet if indeed when saying "I will" (or, "I'm going to") we actually mean no more than "I intend to do so" or, "my plans are," then why not say as much—at least when speaking of matters of some importance? Undoubtedly, not unlike the matter of saying "eonian life" instead of "eternal life," here too we wish to be accepted by others, and so convince ourselves that these matters are not very important after all. Yet Paul has said, "Have a pattern of *sound* words, which you hear from me, in faith and love, the faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.1:13). Though even among ourselves, perhaps we need not always express the words, "the Lord willing," nonetheless, we should be very far from neglecting them altogether. But let us not be overrighteous in this matter, or intent upon reforming our friends. We have enough to do to deal with our own weaknesses, and in many areas. Let us be sensible and practical, but not unfaithful under guise of these.

Yet let us remember, "It is the glory of the Elohim to conceal a matter" (Prov.25:2). Most are well satisfied as to their own rectitude in paying little heed indeed to these teachings. Their consciences do not bother them. They are quite ensconced in their habitual ways of thinking and speaking. So let us remember that it is God's grace that brings adjustment, not our impatience.

It is extremely helpful to realize that our trials, with all their human failings (or "sin") do not happen by free will. Instead, they occur according to the wise counsels of

our God and Father. This realization becomes a powerful influence upon us, giving us an ability to undergo many an unhappy matter that we would otherwise never have. Like Job, we can take these things from the hand of our *God,* our Subjector. For we know, though they find no place whatever in His *heart* of love (*cf* Jer.32: 35; *cp* 44:21), His wisdom dictates their ephemeral presence, and His *hand* brings them to pass, according to His counsels (e.g., *cf* Acts 4:28; *cp* Isa.53:10). This is so that we might one day have the blessing of deliverance from all evil, and glorify and thank Him accordingly.

We rejoice in the assurance that God is faithful. Together with the trial He will be making the sequel also, to enable us to undergo it. Consequently, in the midst of trial, in everything we are giving thanks (1 Thess.5:18). May we be giving thanks always for all things, in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, to our God and Father (Eph.5:20).

James R. Coram

OUR PRESENT TASK

Our future testimony may be brief. Our opportunity for service may be very short. When our Lord calls us to Himself the ministry of suffering will be over, and give place to the glory. Shall we not make the most of the time that still remains?

There is nothing we can do in the world comparable to making known God. That was the mission of Christ. That will be our work in the coming eons. That is our task now. And what truths in the Scriptures are so necessary to a knowledge of Him as His transcendent grace to His saints in this administration and His limitless favor to the whole universe in the consummation? What is more derogatory to His great Name than the defeated, vindictive, vengeful god revealed by the doctrine of eternal torment? Let us do our utmost to exalt the love and power and wisdom of our God and the potency of the cross of His Christ by showing what they will accomplish when the eons have been harvested. Let us deem it an inestimable privilege to suffer in the proclamation of the truth that thus we may bring pleasure to Him Who suffered for our sakes on the accursed tree.

A. E. Knoch

PAUL AND GOD'S EVANGEL

HERE I wish to begin a review (and note anew in some cases) of certain important details relating to God's evangel as Paul contributes them in Romans and beyond. First of all let us look closely at what Paul says about himself in relation to this good and highly welcome message of God.

Using the "sublinear" of the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT as a basis (with some changes) it might be helpful to render Romans 1:1 in English, word for word and grammatical form for grammatical form[1] as Paul expressed it in Greek, thus:

PAUL SLAVE OF-ANOINTED-One JESUS CALLED FROM-PUT-ed-one HAVING-*been*-FROM-definED INTO WELL-MESSAGE OF-God . . . .

JESUS CHRIST'S SLAVE

Paul was a slave of Jesus Christ . . . for God's evangel. A slave obeys [UNDER-HEARS], that is, he submissively listens to what is said to him by his Master (*cp* Rom.6:16,17). He was making known the evangel which came to him, not from a human but through a revelation of Jesus Christ (*cf* Gal.1:11,12). His testimony was, "For if I should be bringing the evangel, it is not for me to boast in, for necessity is lying on me, for it were woe to me if I should not bring the evangel! For if I am engaging in this voluntarily, I have

1. The words or parts of words in SMALL CAPS represent the English root STANDARDS chosen in the Concordant System. Those in lower case letters (with capital letters beginning names and titles of Deity) represent terms used in translation or more readily understandable meanings.

wages, yet if involuntarily, I have been entrusted with an administration" (1 Cor.9:16,17; 1 Tim.1:4b).

Few have understood what Paul is saying in Romans 7:25 concerning the enslavement of his mind, but it is in full accord with his position as a slave of Christ Jesus for God's evangel. It is by God's grace through Jesus Christ, our Lord that Paul will be rescued out of his body of death. "Consequently, then," Paul declares concerning his present life, "I myself, with the mind indeed am slaving for God's law, yet with the flesh for sin's law." Paul plays on the word "law" throughout this context. There is the law of God, given at Sinai, for which Paul is gratified as to his inner self (v.22). And there is a different law in his fleshly members which wars with that inner gratification of mind (v.23). Yet in view of the evangel of God's grace through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Paul himself now enslaves his mind to God's law. That is not *the* law of God imposed upon Israel, but God's own "law," the law by which God operates in not sparing His Son, but giving Him up for us all (Rom.8:32), even God's evangel. Consequently even while sin's law operates in his flesh, Paul enslaves his mind, day by day, hour by hour, to God's law of grace through Jesus Christ.

A CALLED APOSTLE

Furthermore, Paul was a called apostle . . . for God's evangel. The sublinear of the CV Greek Text uses the English word "commissioner" for the Greek word *apostolos*. A commissioner is not one who commissions, but one who is sent with a commission "with authority for the execution of some task."[2] This is its usage. Accordingly Paul declares, "Christ does not commission me to be baptizing, but *to be bringing the evangel*" (1 Cor.1:17).

Yet according to its elements, the commission was not

2. *cf* Keyword Concordance, p.55, under the term *commission.*

only a placement ("putting") *to* some task, but also *from* some situation, or activity. The twelve apostles were put into a new service *from* an old work. Paul was put into the execution of a new task, the work of bringing the evangel, which was just the opposite of his former activity. "For I am the least of the apostles, who am not competent to be called an apostle, because I persecute the ecclesia of God" (1 Cor.15:9). Nevertheless he was a *called* apostle, commissioned for the task of evangelizing God's evangel.

In this we see what is most certainly a telling feature of God's evangel (that is, God's "law") ". . . the stupid things of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the wise ones, and the weak things of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the strong, and the ignoble things and the contemptible things of the world God chooses, and the things which are not that He should discard the things which are, so that no flesh at all should boast in God's sight" (1 Cor.1:27-28). In accord with His own law God calls the very one most unlikely from the world's standpoint to be the apostle for His evangel.

SEVERED FOR GOD'S EVANGEL

Paul had been *severed* for God's evangel. The Greek verb *aphorizō* refers to a decisive separation. In his "expanded translation" of the New Testament, Kenneth S. Wuest has "permanently separated to God's good news" here in this passage.[3] And in his ("expanded, amplified, multiple rendering) translation, Jonathan Mitchell has "being one having been marked off by boundaries (parted away and determined by bounds separated away and limited off, delineated, defined).[4]

3. The New Testament, an Expanded Translation, Eerdmans, 2001, ISBN 0-8028-0882-4.

4. The New Testament, copyright 2009, by Jonathan Mitchell, ISBN 978-1-4507-0505-9.

Many modern versions use "set apart" here. This is better than "separated" by itself as in the AV (which uses "sever" in Matthew 13:49). Luke 6:22 clearly refers to a strong separation, even as some note, an *excommunication,* (many modern versions use "exclude"). The CV uses "sever" consistently, and this is especially fitting in Galatians 1:15 which is parallel to Romans 1:1 regarding Paul's relationship to the evangel:

15 **Yet when** it **delights** ᶜ**God,** ᶜWho **severs me** ᵒ**from my mother's womb and calls** me **through His** ᶜ**grace . . . .**

Here, as he often does, Paul uses terms from the Hebrew Scriptures (as rendered in the Septuagint translation), making changes as suits his purpose and adapting them into his present flow of thought. Paul does not speak of what God did for him when he was in his mother's womb (or was given birth out from his mother's womb), as was the case of Jeremiah or the Servant of Yahweh (*cf* Jer.1:5; Isa. 49:1-5). He refers to God's severing of him from Judaism when God called him in His grace. This severing was like that of a baby being decisively separated from its mother's womb in birth. Elsewhere Paul speaks of that which was gain to him in flesh, both by birth "of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin" as well as his development in Judaism "in circumcision the eighth day, . . . in relation to law a Pharisee, in relation to zeal, persecuting the ecclesia, in relation to the righteousness which is in law, becoming blameless. But things which were gain to me, those I have deemed a forfeit because of Christ" (Phil.3:5-7). These were a forfeit to him because God had severed him from them when He called him through His grace to unveil His Son in him.

Having told the Galatians of this severance and call, Paul recounts, in carefully wording, his avoidance (complete for three years, and qualified after fourteen years) of the apostles and leaders in Jerusalem.

Clearly, in introducing himself and his concerns, Paul makes it clear that all is directed to the progress of God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. And in this he is set apart from his former life, and his commission is to be distinguished even from that of those former apostles who remain within the sphere of Judaism. In this way we will begin to see why he sometimes calls the evangel, "my evangel."

Paul is our apostle, and we need to give careful attention to what he says concerning the revelations made known to him by the risen Lord.

D.H.H.

GOD FILLS OUR EVERY NEED

Now my God shall be filling your every need. I can hardly think of any passage we might need more than this one, because we see so many things in our lives that we tend to think are our needs, you know, and they don't become filled, deficiencies, our own weaknesses, the trials, the things that happen to our family and friends. And we really feel that, well, we needed this person who died, or we needed this good relationship, or we needed a better habit at this time, or we needed to be this or that, you name it. Well, if it was your need for you to have had it, you would have had it, because God fulfills our every need, and it must be in His wisdom that these other things are present when they are things that are so disappointing to us.

James. R. Coram

On hearing of the death of James Coram, our friends, Daryl and Bonnie Jo Reedy, who struggle with their own serious illnesses, sent out the preceding, word for word extract from one of his recorded messages. We feel it is an ever-timely reminder for us all.

"WHEN IT DELIGHTS GOD"
Galatians 1:10-17

For, at present, am I persuading men or God? Or am I seeking to be please men? If I still pleased men, I were not a slave of Christ. (Gal.1:10, CLNT)

With these words, having completed the introductory, preparatory portion of the epistle to the Galatians (1:1-9), Paul now begins his personal defense. The dominant theme of the entire epistle is *Paul's defense of his own evangel.* On this behalf, he would first defend his apostleship. If he has been commissioned by Christ Himself to proclaim this evangel, then it is a true evangel. Therefore, it is to be accepted accordingly by all who are in Christ; and, it is to be heeded and personally applied by all who come under its blessing.

The epistle began with the words, "Paul, *an apostle, (not from men, neither through a man. . . .)*" (1:1, CLNT). Now, beginning in verse 10, Paul begins to demonstrate the truth of this initial affirmation. He does so through the word "for," which refers us to his repeated, insistent declaration, "If anyone is bringing you an evangel beside that which you accepted, let him be anathema!" (1:8,9, CLNT). That is, the reason why an "anathema" (i.e., a certain, adversative judgment) must fall upon any who bring a *different* evangel (*cp* 1:6b) to those whom God is actually blessing according to *Paul's* evangel, is because, in announcing his evangel, the apostle is not persuading "[as to] human beings," but "[as to] *God.*"

Idiomatically, the Greek word for "persuade" (*peithō,*

PERSUADE) is also rendered "*have confidence*" (e.g., "those who *have confidence* in money," Mark 10:24; *cp* Gal.5:7-10).

No one would imagine otherwise than that in performing his evangelistic labors, Paul was seeking to persuade *men,* not God. If, however, the word "persuading" is taken literally, without allowance for an ellipsis such as "as to" (i.e., "persuading [as to]"), the sense would then be merely the trite fact that Paul was seeking to persuade men, not God. In that case, however, the causal conjunction "for," in relating us back to verses 8 and 9, would introduce an illogical statement. The sense would then be that the reason why an anathema must befall those who bring a different evangel, is because, in performing his ministry, Paul sought to persuade men! Of course it does not follow from the mere fact that Paul's ministry was on behalf of all *men* (not God), that *this* constitutes grounds for the pronouncement of an anathema upon Paul's opposers.

Therefore, the elliptical "as to" ("persuading [as to] men or God?") or "in" ("having confidence [in] men or God?") must be understood when considering Paul's words here. Then, the sense is, "Am I having confidence (in) men or (in) God?" or, when expressed using the English "persuade": "Am I persuading (as to) men or (as to) God?" The point then becomes that in proclaiming his evangel, *Paul* is confident in (or persuaded as to) the truthfulness of his message, for his message, first of all, is *God's* message. And, because *that* is so, *therefore* ("For," 1:10a) it follows, "if anyone is bringing you an evangel beside that which you accepted, let him be being anathema!" (1:9, CLNT).

In proclaiming his evangel, Paul's persuasion is with *God* in view. Therefore, the apostle's ministry of seeking to persuade others was first of all founded upon his own persuasion as to what God had revealed to him through Christ.

Hence, Paul must further add, "If I *still* pleased men, I were not a slave of Christ" (1:10b, CLNT). Paul's words

here should be considered in connection with his related declaration in Galatians 5:11: "Now I, brethren, if I am *still* heralding circumcision, why am I *still* being persecuted? Consequently [i.e., "In that case, then;"], the *snare of the cross* of Christ has been nullified."

For a time, after Saul of Tarsus (as Paul was originally known) first became acquainted with the Lord on the Damascus road (Acts 9:27), he continued on, seeking the righteousness which is in law, according to Moses (Phil.3:6; John 7:23). Saul anticipated the restoring of the kingdom unto Israel, according to the times and eras which the Father placed in His own jurisdiction (Acts 1:6,7).

During this period, Saul was a member of the ecclesia of believing Jews at Antioch. All such ones lived in expectation of Israel's promised kingdom, according to the writings of their prophets, while seeking to become blameless themselves according to the law, in anticipation of that day. Believing Jews were zealous for the law (Acts 21:20); they practiced circumcision and sought to keep the law of Moses (*cp* Acts 15:5). Jesus Himself had warned that any of that calling who were "workers of *lawlessness,*" had no relationship with Him and would not enter into the kingdom of the heavens (*cp* Matt.7:21-23; James 2:10).

Therefore, during that early period, before Saul was *severed* from his law-observing brethren for the work to which God ("the holy spirit") had called him (Acts 13:2), Saul too must have heralded circumcision. In so doing, he, in a righteous sense, *pleased men* by doing that which those who were seeking to establish their own righteousness according to law (*cp* Rom.10:3, 4), rightly deemed essential to entrance into life in the terrestrial kingdom.

Were Paul, *now*, however, to *still* "please men" by continuing to herald circumcision, as he says, "I were not a slave of Christ" (Gal.1:10b).

After having been severed from his past associations,

that he might now be engaged in the service of that glorious evangel of God which, apart from law, bestows a declaration of righteousness on *all* who are *believing* (Rom. 3:21,22), it would be entirely out of place for Paul still to be pleasing men by heralding circumcision.

That is, such service, now, by Paul, could only "please human beings" in the case of any who continued to deem such a rite essential for themselves, even though they erred in supposing that it should be imposed as well on the believers of the nations (Acts 15:1,5). In connection with the evangel of the Circumcision and its service, such a rite was indeed essential; even so, it has no place whatever in connection with the evangel which Paul was heralding among the nations (Gal.2:2). Hence, were Paul now to continue to enjoin circumcision even on those of the nations, doing so out of a motive merely to please those who imagined that this was necessary, he could not be "a [worthy] slave of Christ."

Today, when we ourselves become persuaded as to the evangel which God first revealed to Paul, our confidence too is in God. We can no longer have confidence in the false, human traditions which we first embraced. We must now set aside various ceremonies and observances, ones which we should never have practiced in the first place. If we would be faithful, legalistic scrutiny of days and foods, besides giving heed to sundry do's and don'ts as prerequisites to salvation, must all be repudiated. This is so, even if in so doing we should incur the *dis*pleasure of man as a result.

NOT IN ACCORD WITH A HUMAN

For I am making known to you, brethren, as to the evangel which is being brought by me, that it is not in accord with man. For neither did I accept it from a man, nor am I taught it, but it comes through a revelation of Jesus Christ. (1:11,12, CLNT)

Again, the reason why ("for") Paul was not *seeking* to please men, and was *not still* pleasing *men,* was because the evangel which he brought was not in accord with a *human.* And, in turn, the reason why his evangel was not in accord with a human, was because he neither accepted it from a man nor was he taught it by a man.

"Those who were disturbing the Galatians had no message except what they had received [and corrupted and misapplied] from the twelve apostles. But Paul is unwearied in his insistence that he received nothing from them (*cp* Gal.2:6). His revelation was a fresh revelation made known to him by the Lord Himself. If Paul merely proclaimed what the twelve taught, why did he not receive it through them? What need for the Lord to descend and call him on the Damascus road? Why should he be severed from the rest at Antioch? Why did the *believing* Jews in Jerusalem oppose his ministry among the nations?"[1]

Just as in verse 1 Paul declares that his apostleship is neither of human origin nor derivation, he now makes a similar claim concerning his evangel. Paul's evangel is not "in *accord* with (*kata,* DOWN) a *human.*" That is, his evangel itself is not based upon some preexisting message which was already being taught by someone else. Paul—unlike ourselves, who take our evangel from him—did not simply repeat some extant message which was already in the hands of those who were in Christ before him.

This was because "*neither* do I *accept* [his evangel] from a man, nor was taught it [by a man]," *but he accepted it through a revelation of Jesus Christ, and he was taught it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.*

The way this text is rendered in the Concordant Literal New Testament, is expedient for the ordinary reader in an idiomatic version. Yet with the added words "it came," even as with no indication of either the ellipsis or of the parallel construction which obtains in the Greek, it lacks the forcefulness and clarity of the more precise sense, as we have sought to bring out in the preceding paragraph.

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.280.

Paul did not accept his evangel "from [*para,* BESIDE] *a man,*" nor was he taught it by *a man.* The word "man" is in the singular, as in the phrase "through *a man,*" in verse 1. In accepting and learning his evangel, since Paul did not stand "beside" *any* man in so doing, neither did he thus stand beside any particular man.

The emphatic intimation here, however, through the repeated, singular form, is implicative of a *particular* man. "It points unmistakably to Peter who figures so prominently in this recital. The circumcisionists asserted Paul's dependence on the elder apostles and the Jerusalem church. They insinuated that he had received his gospel from Peter. Whence, said they, could Paul have derived his knowledge of Christ, but from this fountainhead? This was the fulcrum of the argument which Paul foils."[2]

In a wider sense, neither is Paul's evangel in accord with man, with respect to the entirety of the human race. The Hebrew term for human being is *adm* ("Adam"). The Circumcision evangel is very much concerned with the human race, not just Israel, and God's purpose for it on the earth and in the flesh. So Paul has in mind to distinguish his evangel from that of the Circumcision (which is in accord with humanity). The apostle does not simply make a general contrast between a message from God that is divine in nature, and one concerned with ordinary human thinking and philosophy. It is not only that Paul's evangel was not "secular" or was not in accord with human wisdom (this *is* in view in 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, for instance). But Paul's evangel is also different from that of the Circumci-

2. V. Gelesnoff, PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, p.35.

sion which has much that accords with humanity, though indeed being of God and concerned with Christ.

It seems that broadly considered, "not in accord with humanity" incorporates both these ideas: (1) not in accord with human wisdom and thinking (as in 1 Corinthians 1), and also (2) not in accord with God's message concerning Israel and the nations, the earth, and the place of humanity as promised from Adam and on through the prophets. Yet the context of Galatians makes it clear that (2) is what Paul has predominantly in view here, "at present" (1:10).

While Paul is indeed relating "his story" in chapters 1 and 2, nevertheless his account focuses on "the grace of Christ" (1:6), "Jesus Christ's revelation" (1:12), that is, "the evangel which is being brought by me" (1:11). So both Paul's story, and the message given to him, have this one pattern: not in accord with humanity, and being in accord with God and a revelation of Jesus Christ that came from God.

SEVERED FROM JUDAISM

For you hear of my behavior once, in Judaism, that I inordinately persecuted the ecclesia of God and ravaged it. And I progressed in Judaism above many contemporaries in my race, being inherently exceedingly more zealous for the traditions of my fathers. (1:13,14, CLNT)

Paul's use of the term "Judaism" in itself by no means implies any disparagement (*cp* his related expression, "judaizing," Gal.2:14; *cf* Acts 15:21). Under Judaism, Paul had been circumcised the eighth day, and, in his majority, had become a Hebrew of Hebrews. In relation to the righteousness which is in law, he had been becoming blameless (Phil.3:5,6), even if he was a member of the sect of the Pharisees, which had added many vain traditions to the law.

The point is that "Judaism" simply refers to the institutions of the Jews, the observance of the law of Moses as understood and practiced beginning with the Babylonian

exile. The traditions of Paul's "fathers:" were by no means all vain traditions of men, but were, in many respects, a devout and intelligent observance of the law, as handed down from one generation to the next.

Though the expression "Judaism" was perhaps originally coined by non-Jews, of whom some doubtless used the word with a connotation of contempt it would, when naturalized among the Jews themselves, lose this idea, and even become a title of honor. The case of the term "Christian," which was likewise originally a term of reproach (*cp* Acts 11:25; 26:28), is a parallel case: "For let not any of you be suffering as a murderer, or as a thief, or an evildoer, or as an interferer in other's affairs; *yet if as a Christian,* let him not be ashamed, yet let him be glorifying God in this Name . . ." (1 Peter 4:15,16).

Paul's *behavior,* however, once, in Judaism, in the days of his unbelief, was another matter. As he says, "I inordinately persecuted the ecclesia of God and ravaged it." Indeed, not only had he endorsed Stephen's assassination (Acts 8:1), but he was continually "breathing out threatening and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1). He had supposed himself bound to commit much contrary to the name of Jesus the Nazarene, and so had acted accordingly. He locked up many of the saints in jails, and even deposited a ballot to despatch them. At all the synagogues, often punishing them, he compelled them to blaspheme. Being exceedingly maddened against them, he persecuted them as far as the outside cities (Acts 26:9-11).

Yet it was *also* true that he had progressed in Judaism itself, above many contemporaries in his race, being inherently exceedingly more zealous for the traditions of his fathers (1:14).

Paul's point is that there was nothing in his former career to account for his becoming a herald of the cross. "His prechristian career was such as to exclude all possibility of

his receiving any doctrine from the followers of Jesus Christ, least of all from Peter, whom, as leader of the Nazarenes [Acts 24:5], he could only regard as an arch-heretic to be hunted to death."[3] Thus the apostle proves that it was simply absurd to suggest as certain of his enemies were insinuating, that he had received his evangel from Peter.

Now, when it delights God, Who severs me from my mother's womb, and calls me through His grace, to unveil His Son in me that I may be evangelizing Him among the nations . . . (1:15,16a, CLNT).

The particle *de* (YET), though sometimes, as here, rendered "now," is often translated "yet," which captures more of its essence. For example, "*Yet* now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest . . ." (Rom.3:21); or, "*yet* God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us . . ." (Eph.2:4). Though sometimes only slightly so, *de* is an adversative connective, in the sense that that which follows this expression and to which it refers (e.g., God's righteousness, or, His mercy and vast love) stands against the subject which precedes it. just as God's righteousness, mercy, and vast love, blessedly stand against human sin, thus also God's "delight" to unveil His Son in the foremost sinner (1 Tim.1:15,16), Saul of Tarsus, stood against Saul's Judaism, in which, in his unbelief, he had so ferociously persecuted the ecclesia.

To clarify this point, instead of saying, "Now, when it delights God . . ." we will say, "Yet when it delights God." Then the sense becomes more apparent: It is true that, as Saul, Paul had once been engaged in *Judaism,* and had progressed in *Judaism* above many contemporaries in his race. "Yet when it delights God," He *severed* Paul "from his *mother's womb* and call[ed him] through His *grace*" (1:15).

Thus it becomes evident that "mother's womb," here, is

3. V. Gelesnoff, PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, p.37.

not literal but figurative. Indeed, through the severing of the umbilical cord, all infants, when first born, are severed from their literal mother's womb. But Paul, in the considerations before us, was severed from *Judaism.* Judaism was that which had long been *nourishing* him, as well as being that in which he had enjoyed much *growth.* Hence, he speaks of it as having been his "mother's womb."

Thus, Paul was severed *from* Judaism, and even *from* those of its practitioners who were believers in Christ (*cp* Acts 13:2). Yet Paul was "severed *for* the [i.e., that] evangel of God . . . concerning His Son . . . Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom.1:1-4), which, in its most complete form, has been preserved for us in the epistle to the Romans. This evangel of God—which is also the evangel of Christ (Gal.1: 7)—was revealed to Paul by Jesus Christ Himself. Hence, with reference to the one to whom Christ had revealed this evangel, Paul termed it "my evangel" (Rom.16:25). This is the evangel *which* Paul brought (1:11); the evangel *which* he heralded among the nations (2:2).

god unveils his son

When it delighted God to unveil His Son in Paul, He simply did so. Nothing is too marvelous for Him (Jer.32: 17,27). In this, Paul becomes "a pattern of those who," even when they do not as yet believe, "are *about to be* believing on [Jesus Christ] for life eonian" (1 Tim.1:16). Even in the days of their unbelief, it may be truly said of them that their faith is "*impending.*" Thus it was that "whoever were *set* for life eonian," "*they* believe" (Acts 13:48). It is those for whom eonian life has been *arranged,* who believe on Christ. This is because the Lord "overwhelms" the unbelief of "those who are *chosen*" (2 Tim.2:10), "with faith and love in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.1:14).

I did not immediately submit it to flesh and blood, neither came I up to Jerusalem to those who are apostles before

me, but I came away into Arabia, and I return again to Damascus (1:16b,17, CLNT).

Paul had not received his evangel from those who were apostles before him, and was acting under a sense of a unique divine call that admitted of neither human validation nor supplement. Therefore, rather than seeking out one or more of the twelve *for any reason whatsoever,* Paul instead came away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

James R. Coram

GALATIANS 1:10-17 (CVNT)

10 **For at present am I persuading** as to **human** being**s or** ˙**God? Or am I seeking to be pleasing human** being**s? If I still were pleasing human** being**s, I** ˡ**were not** a **slave of Christ.** 11 **For I am making known to** ⁼**you, brethren,** as to **the evangel, the** evangel which is *ev* **brought by me, that it** ˡ**is not** in **accord** with a **human.** 12 **For neither** do **I´ accept it** *b* **from** a **human, nor am I taught** it by a human, **but** I accept it and am taught it **through** a **revelation of Jesus Christ.** 13 **For** ⁼**you hear** of **my** ˙**behavior once, in** ˙**Judaism, that I** *ac* **inordinate**ly **was persecuting the ecclesia of** ˙**God and ravaging it.** 14 **And I was progressing in** ˙**Judaism above many contemporaries in my** ˙**race,** being ˡ**inhere**ntly **exceedingly more zealous** for **the traditions of my fathers.**

15 **Yet when** it **delights** ˙**God,** ˙Who **severs me** *o* **from my mother's womb and calls** me **through His** ˙**grace,** 16 **to unveil His** ˙**Son in me that I may be evangelizing**° **Him among the nations, I** do **not immediately submit**° it **to flesh and blood,** 17 **neither come I up** *io* **to Jerusalem to** *d* those ˙who are **apostles before me, but I come away into Arabia, and I return again** *io* **to Damascus.**

THE MESSAGE

1 Paul, a **slave of Christ Jesus,** a **called apostle, having been severed**[◦] [io]**for**
God's evangel
2 **(which He promises**[◦] **before through His** ·**prophets in** the **holy scriptures)**
3 **concerning His** ·**Son**
(·Who [b]**comes**[◦] **out of David**'s **seed**
according to the **flesh,**[2 S 7:12; 1 C 15:25-28]
4 ·Who is **designated God's Son** [i]**with power,**
according to the **spirit of holiness,**
[o]**by dead** one**s' resurrection),**[1 C 15:20-24; 35-57]
Jesus Christ, our ·**Lord,**
5 **through Whom we obtain grace and apostleship**
[io]**for obedience of faith**
among all the nations,
[ov]**for His** ·**Name's** sake,
6 **among whom** [l]**are** [=]**you´ also,** the **called of Jesus Christ:**
7 **to all** ·who [l]**are in Rome, beloved of God, called saints:**
Grace to [=]**you and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ.**

THE WORDS "God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, for obedience of faith among all the nations, for His Name's sake," are distinguished here, as a title for Paul's letter to the Romans. It is suggested by this that all that is written in this epistle is centered in and developed from this message. Of course Paul did not set

these words out this way. But it is well for us to see them thus. Indeed it can aid us greatly if we relate these words to all of Paul's letters as his leading theme.

GOD'S EVANGEL

The Greek is *eua[n]ggelion Theou* ("evangel of God"). There is no "the." The only modifier of "evangel" is the genitive form of "God" *(of-God),* which can be expressed in English by the possessive case, "God's," bringing it into an equality of prominence with the first noun, "evangel." This is also true of "Son of God" (God's Son) in verse 4, "power . . . of God" (God's power) in verse 16 and "righteousness of God" (God's righteousness) in verse 17, as well as numerous other such constructions here and throughout Paul's writings.

However, at the end of Romans Paul calls this message "the evangel of the God," referring to *the* evangel as it has been presented, and to *the* God as He has been made known in this letter (Rom.15:16).

CONCERNING GOD'S SON

God's evangel concerns His Son. Jesus Christ stands alone in the middle between God and us. "For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and human beings," and this Mediator is Christ Jesus come as a Human, Who gives Himself as a Correspondent Ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:5,6). The tendency, however, is for us to insert ourselves along with Christ Jesus (even sometimes replacing Him) in this mediatory position. That must not be.

Before we look at Romans 1:16,17, connected with 3:21-28 let us jump ahead to God's evangel as Paul presents it in Romans 5:8, where Christ clearly stands between God and us, that is, between God and sinners.

·**God is commending** this ·**love of** *sf*[f]**His** *io*[i]**to us,**

Seeing **that,** while **we** ˡ**are still sinners,**
Christ dies *ov*[o]**for our** sakes**.**

God's evangel here is that He loves us, and this is made known in a particular way. That way is that He spares not His Son (Rom.8:32), Christ Jesus, Who dies, and this is for us. Paul does not say here that Christ dies for us who put our faith in Him (or us as God's chosen ones), but that He dies for us who are sinners. *He* does the thing that is done. We contribute nothing to God's commendation of His love except to be what we are: sinners.

Paul continues in 5:9-11 to speak of what Christ's act of dying does for us, that is, "over us" (translated into English idiom: "for our sakes"). The suffering death of Christ is the cause of justification ("justified in His blood") and the channel of conciliation in this life and present glorying ("boasting") in God along with the enjoyment of conciliation ("we may be having peace toward God," Rom.5:1). This then will be exceeded by the future salvation in the life of Christ.

All of this is to be traced to the death and resurrected life of God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is not due to our faith or acts of any sort (though reckoned at present to us who are believing it).

"Therefore!" Since justification and conciliation, future salvation and present glorying in God, and enjoying the peace of conciliation are all *through our Lord, Jesus Christ,* "therefore," the situation is "even as" the situation which entered into the world "through one human," Adam (whose name in Hebrew is "Human"). Adam, through whom sin and death entered into the world is a type of Jesus Christ in that they both affect all human beings in a radical way with opposite results. Thus all eyes are focused on Jesus Christ in Romans 5:18,19, the One Mediator between God and human beings:

18 **Consequently, then, as** it is **through one offense**

[io]for all human beings **[io]for condemnation,**
Thus also it is **through one righteous** response
[io]for all human beings **[io]for life's justifying.**
19 **For even as through the disobedience of the one**
human the many are constituted sinners,
Thus also through the obedience of the One
the many shall be [l]constituted righteous.

This, then, is the commendation of God's love to us, the righteous response to God's message concerning Him of the One, Jesus Christ. That is, the obedience (submissive hearing) of that One, His faithful obedience unto the death of the cross.

In seeing this we now in the twenty-first century should be made ready for Romans 1:16,17; 3:21-28. (The Roman believers would have understood Paul already in the first and third chapters, but poor translation and accumulated tradition have gotten into the way for us.) God's evangel concerns the *obedience,* the *faith* of Jesus Christ, His death for sinners as the channel to the salvation of sinners and the revelation of God as never before made manifest.

The evangelical pattern of God first, Christ in the middle, and the human third is seen in Romans 8:3,4 and 8:32-34 as well as many other places throughout Paul's epistles (and elsewhere as well). It is our joy to encounter them. But for now we go back to Romans 1 for a brief look at God's evangel concerning His Son as it appears in verses 16 and 17.

16 **For not [l]ashamed[°] am I** of **the evangel:**
For it [l]is God's power [io]for salvation to everyone [c]who is **believing** it**—to** the **Jew first, and to** the **Greek as well.**
17 **For in it God's righteousness is being revealed[°]**
out of faith, [io]for faith,
according **as it is [°]written[°]:**
[y]**Now the Righteous** One,*Is 53:11*

out of faith shall He be living[°].*Hk 2:4*

With these words Paul introduces God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, for which Paul was severed with grace and apostleship for obedience of faith among all the nations. It is a message of God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it. Salvation is a work of God's power, not of human believing, but it is for those who are believing it, who, at present, are those who have graciously been granted a measure of the spiritual endowment of faith (*cf* Rom.12:3; 1 Cor.13:13; Phil.1:29). Paul's evangel concerning His Son is a message of power, not human power, but of God's power. What this is saying, in effect, is that the death of God's Son in pain and ignominy and *weakness* is God's power. "For the word of the cross is stupidity indeed to those who are perishing, yet to us who are being saved it is *God's power*" (1 Cor.1:18).

This is the first reason why Paul is not ashamed of the evangel. It leaves no room for the human to boast (which is contrary to all religion; it seems shameful that we do not "help out"). But it does save sinners, and this is the only way this can be done righteously.

The weakness of the cross, its shame and suffering, its darkness of forsakedness, reveals God's righteousness as it truly is. The justification of God is the issue of issues. Thus Romans 1:17 is the verse of all verses in the opening chapter. It must be in accord with Romans 5:8-19 and 8:3 and 8:32. And this can only be done by the faith of Jesus Christ. Hence we read in Romans 3:21,22:

21 **Yet now, apart from law,**
God's righteousness has been made **manifest[°]**
(being attested[°] by the law and the prophets),
22 **yet God's righteousness**
through Jesus Christ's faith
[io]for all (and on all [c]who are **believing** it**), for** there **[l]is no[t] distinction . . . .**

It is in God's evangel concerning His Son, in the exercise of God's power for salvation that God's righteousness is manifested. Previously Paul points out that in God's righteous *judgment* every sin of every human being is taken into account (Rom.2:5-16a). But no one is saved (Rom.3:9-20). In the death of God's Son every act of sinning of all human beings is put to death (Rom.5:18; 2 Cor.5:14) resulting in life's justifying of all human beings so that all shall be constituted righteous (Rom.5:18,19). Hence the living God is the Saviour of all human beings (1 Tim.4:10), and God is displayed as the righteous Justifier (Rom.3:26).

God's righteousness is revealed "out of faith," and manifested "through faith," and this faith which is the source and channel of this revelation is the faith of the Righteous One, prophesied in Habakkuk 2:4. The Righteous One is God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (*cf* Isa.53:11; Acts 7:52; 22:14).

This is what we are believing. It is *for* our faith.

ROMANS 8:3

Let us turn now to God's evangel concerning His Son as presented in Romans 8:3.

3 **For** ᶜwhat is **impossible** to **the law, in which it was** ᶦ**infirm through the flesh—**

ᶜ**God,** ᵀ**sending** His ˢᶠ**own** ᶜ**Son**
in the **likeness of sin's flesh**
And concerning sin,
Condemns ᶜ**sin in the flesh,**

Here God's evangel concerning His Son appears as it serves the believer as a spiritual force in behavior and mental state. It is obvious that Paul is contrasting the impossibility of the law to rid us of sin (because of the infirmity of the flesh) with what God *does* in the sending of His Son. But he leaves out the verb "does" and rushes us immediately to what it is that God does. God sends His Son. God

sends His Son in the likeness of sin's flesh. And God sends His Son concerning sin. In doing these things He condemns sin in the flesh.

The three principals are here, God, His Son, and the human, now represented by "sin's flesh." But the evangel focuses on what God does, and that is what we need to focus on in mind and heart.

Paul uses a fact participle, "sending," reaching forward to a fact verb "(He)-condemns." God sends His own Son in two particular ways. He sends Him "in the likeness of sin's flesh," and in doing this, He sends Him "concerning sin." And by these two features of God's sending of His Son God puts sin in the flesh under condemnation, so there He may rid us of sin in the flesh. He does what law could never do, that which is impossible for law to do because of the infirmity of our flesh.

Fact verbs do not, in themselves, identify the time of the action of which they speak. They simply speak of the fact of the action. We know that God's sending of His Son occurred about two thousand years ago. That is made clear from the scriptural context. So also sin in the flesh was condemned to destruction, to abolishment, indeed to annihilation when Christ died, and this is assured by His resurrection. But sin is still with us, in our flesh. So it is that while we continue to walk through life we need to set our minds on the facts of God's evangel. For in this there is spiritual power for growth in worthy walk and peace of mind.

Nevertheless, the way to present, worthy walk and peace is not God's evangel. God's evangel is what trains us in that direction (*cf* Titus 2:11-13). God's evangel speaks of what has been done—done by God in the sending of His Son. This is apart from us, and it is not at all what we would have advised Him to do (*cf* Rom.11:34). God sent His Son to deal with sin, not in visible power and glory but in the likeness of sin's flesh, in the likeness of the very state

which brought about the trouble in the first place and which keeps us in it. He was like Adam, capable of sinning. Indeed our Lord did not sin as Adam did, but He was made to be sin (2 Cor.5:21), and this is a matter we can hardly begin to grasp.

Yet this is what is being brought before us by the words "concerning sin." These two words in Greek, *peri amartias* are the very words the Septuagint Version of the Hebrew Scriptures, uses for what has been traditionally translated "**for** a **sin** offering" (e.g., Lev.5:6,7,11; 16:3,5,9; Num. 6:16; 7:16; 2 Chron.9:23,24, etc. *cp* Heb.10:6,8), although the word "offering" is not there in the Hebrew or Greek. God's Son was sent by God as the Antitype of that offering which is called SIN.

SIN CONCERNING SIN

Perhaps no article by A.E. Knoch reaches to the heights and depths of God's evangel as the one entitled "Sin for Sin."[1] It is mainly based on 2 Corinthians 5:21, which, following Paul's beseeching, "Be conciliated to God!" is translated in the CVNT as follows:

21 **For the** One **not** ⁻**knowing sin, He makes** to
be **sin** [ov]**for our** sakes
That we´ may become° **God's righteousness**
in Him.

Formerly the CV inserted the word "offering" in lightface type ("**makes** to be a **sin** offering"). This was to help many of us who are not aware that the sin offering is simply referred to in Scripture as *sin.* But now it seems best to render it here as in Hebrew and Greek and add a footnote of explanation. The type of Christ's death in the

1. *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.15, p.131-138; vol.99, pp.127-134; also THE PURPOSE OF EVIL AND THE JUDGMENTS OF GOD, pp.24-41.

Old Testament offerings was a sin. So also the Antitype, is made to be sin.

In summing up his study Brother Knoch writes: ". . . God settles sin by sin. Every sin is transmuted by the sin of sins into an act essential to God's highest glory and the creatures' greatest good. All the righteousness and glory and honor which are Christ's, either before His incarnation or after His glorification, do not offset sin. His undeserved humiliation and distress and shame and death are sufficient to transform all sin into righteousness and holiness and bliss."[2]

A. E. Knoch did not bring the words "concerning sin" in Romans 8:3 into this exposition, but they surely belong there to be considered under the heading, "Sin Concerning Sin." God sends His Son in the weakness of sin's flesh, and this is as (a) sin (offering) concerned with the condemnation of sin. This is God's evangel as it spiritually affects the walk of those who set their minds on it even while, like Paul, their flesh is enslaved to sin (*cf* Rom.7:25 where "God's law" is used for "God's evangel" by word play).

ROMANS 8:31-34

31 [a]**What, then, shall we be declaring to**[d] **these** things**?**
If ˙**God** is [ov]**for us,** [a]**who** is **against us?** 32 **Surely**
He Who spares° **not** His **own** ˙**Son,**
But gives Him up [ov]**for us all,**
how shall He not, together with **Him, also be grac**iously° grant**ing us** ˙**all?**
33 [a]**Who will be indicting** [ag] **God's chosen** one**s? God, the** ˡ**Justifier?** 34 [a]**Who** is **the** ˡ**Condemner? Christ Jesus,**
The One Who **dies,**
Yet rather is **roused,**
Who ˡ**is also** [i]**at** ˙**God's right** hand, **Who is pleading also** [ov]**for our** sakes**?**

2. *Unsearchable Riches* vol.99, p.134.

In Romans 8:31-34, Paul sums up God's evangel concerning His Son (that evangel which is for our submissive hearing of faith) in a joyous, glorious, majestic passage in praise of God's love which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. It is mostly focused on the present and future by "act verbs" (progressing actions), but three times, twice in verse 32, and once in verse 34, Paul employs fact verbs (expressing truth apart from time) to bring out features of the core evangel as it speaks of God and His Son on Golgotha, so long ago. (The verb "loves" in verse 37 is also a fact verb, drawing the verbs, "spares not," "gives up," and "dies" into itself).

God loves in that He spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all. The giving up of His own Son is the giving up to death. Christ Jesus *dies.* Strange love! Astounding obedience! Yet this is God's evangel concerning His Son. But it is not the whole of this WELL-MESSAGE. Christ Jesus dies. "Yet rather He is roused!" He is roused from among the dead *one*s—from among all the dead ones from Abel to Lazarus, who was briefly roused and died again, and all those who have died since God's Own Son dies and is roused.

Paul speaks of God here as the One Who loves *us.* He speaks of Christ Jesus as the One Who dies and is roused, Who rather than condemning us because of our sins and offenses is pleading (present tense) for *our* sakes. We should not have to ask, but wrong teaching and established tradition have made it necessary: Who are the "us"? For whose sakes is the death of the One Who dies, and for whom is He roused?

The question has already been answered. All sin (fact verb) and are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). God rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead ones, Jesus our Lord Who is given up (fact passive verb) because of our offenses, and is roused because of our justifying (Rom.

4:25). Consequently, then, as it is through one offense for all human beings for condemnation, thus also it is through one righteous response for all human beings for lifes justifying (Rom.5:18).

Yes here in Romans 8:30 Paul speaks of and addresses Gods chosen ones, who are designated beforehand for a special glorification. Yet if we who have the firstfruit of the spirit are presently groaning in ourselves it is a groaning known by the entire creation (Rom.8:22,23). What is true of the chosen ones is true of all in relation to Gods counseled will (Eph.1:10,11), which shall be attained to His glory.

Nevertheless for now Gods evangel shines forth in the hearts of those who are believing it. May God make it known more and more in its purity and power, removing the crusts that have accumulated about it, mixtures of law works (which have their place in the evangel of the Circumcision, Gal.2:7) and traditions of human beings, so that we may see it truly as Gods achievement through the death and rousing of His beloved Son.

FOR OUR FAITH

We have traced God's message of gladness and triumph (so extremely welcome and desperately needed), as it is set forth in the first eight chapters of Romans by means of five passages, Romans 1:16,17; 3:21,22; 5:8-14; 8:3 and 8:32-34. These point first to God, and then to His Son, and last of all to us God sends. Christ dies. And this is for the sake of the sinner.

There are many further references to the message in Romans 1-8, and it is not left behind in Romans 9-11 concerning Israel, nor in chapters 12-16 with reference to practical matters of our present lives. It is there in every letter of Paul's, and in noting how essential and critical it is, we find it is traceable throughout Scripture. D.H.H.

IT IS GOD WHO IS OPERATING

THE EVANGEL is not good advice; the evangel is good news. Nor is the evangel some hazy thing called universalism. The evangel is that Jesus, the Nazarene, is the very Christ of God, and that since Christ has died for our sins, our sins have been died for. The evangel is that those of us who now find ourselves believing in Christ, by the grace of God were long ago already chosen for our present place in Christ as well as for our coming eonian allotment, an allotment which will surely be ours in that day.

GOD OPERATES ALL FOR GOOD

The evangel is that since God, Who is love, is truly operating all, He is operating all together for good. Therefore, this world is the best possible world, and our own individual allotment therein is exactly as it should be. The evangel is that God is our Saviour and we are not at all our own saviour. The evangel is that we owe all to His grace and that boasting in self is debarred. Best of all, the evangel is that we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God, our God and Father, Who will finally abolish death and become All in all.

We cannot possibly give proper attention to these glorious themes, however, if we are distracted and led away from them, either through false and contrary human tradition, through pleasure seeking, or through our own jealousy and competition. Then it will be, just as surely as with the Galatians, "Where is your happiness?" (Gal.4:15; *cp* Gal.5:15). The evangel is good *news* not good *advice* for our behavior. But the good news operates in us with power for joy, peace and self-control.

WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING

Yet as much as we want to be rid of sin and to avoid suffering, we must not lose sight of the fact that God alone is our Saviour. We will therefore remain in our weaknesses until God graciously delivers us. We cannot "help Him out." Even so, *as God's means of saving us,* He may well awaken us and cause us to do many things, to "save ourselves".

"On these things meditate. In these be, that your progress may be apparent to all. Be persisting in them, for in doing this you will *save yourself* as well as those hearing you" (1 Tim.4:15,16). By persisting in the teachings of the apostle Paul, Timothy would be saving himself, as well as those hearing him, *from withdrawing from the faith.* This practical salvation is the salvation of the context (*cf* 1 Tim.4:1).

In no sense do we save ourselves with respect to our *positional* salvation, our place in the ecclesia as members of Christ's body. We neither gain nor maintain this salvation. It is ours entirely apart from our acts.

Yet practical salvation, remains very important to us, even so. This is the salvation which is in view in Philippians 2:12b: "With *fear and trembling,* be carrying your own salvation into effect" Here the subject is not so much our faith but our faithfulness; our obedience *through* faith, that we might be becoming "blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse" (Phil.2:15).

Our "fear" is not a fear of divine indignation. We shall be saved from the indignation of God through Christ. This is one notable way in which God is "especially" the Saviour of those who are believing (1 Tim.4:10b; Rom.5:9; 1 Thess.5:9). It is not because we fear divine wrath, but because we are constrained by divine love that we fear to offend our God and Father. Similarly, in a spirit of reverence, not of terror, we "tremble" in His glorious presence.

It is only fitting, then, that we should approach our practical salvation in such a spirit of reverence and devoutness—"*for* it is *God* Who is operating in you [the] to be willing as well as [the] to be working." It is *God* Who is "operating" both our willingness and our actions, whenever we are *graced* to be "effecting" (or "carrying out") our practical everyday salvation!

This work of God is "for the sake of His delight" (Phil.2:13b). Many of God's operations find no place in His heart, even though they are the work of His hand, according to His wise counsels. Yet our faithfulness is also God's work, and it delights Him to accomplish it in us. The phrases "the to be willing" and "the to be working" are the strict readings, as indicated in the CV by the superior periods (for the definite articles) and by the vertical strokes preceding "Will" and "work" (in order to indicate the incomplete form).

The self-control, which, indeed, is requisite to good character and constitutes the key to its possession, is itself a fruit of the spirit, not a work of the flesh (Gal.5:23). It is only our pride, in a veiled attempt to deny the truth, that seeks to complicate this simple fact.

May it be our heartfelt privilege to join with the apostle Paul in affirming the glorious *good news* of 2 Corinthians 1:12: "Our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and sincerity *of God,* not in fleshly wisdom, but *in the grace of God,* we behaved ourselves in the world, yet more superabundantly toward you" (2 Cor.1:12).

James R. Coram

PAUL EVELY

Our friend, **Paul Evely**, recently of Wilmore, Kentucky, was put to repose on September 12, as the age of 99. Paul was in many ways a happy man of Romans 4:8, having the happy expectation of Titus 2:13. He will be greatly missed by us, his family and many friends

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FOURTH QUARTER 2022
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

EDITORIAL

ONCE again, although late and far from what was hoped for, we bring another volume of *Unsearchable Riches* to a close. And as always, we are thanking God for His enabling.

Volume 113 marks the death of a co-editor, even as volume 13 did one hundred years ago. Many questions arise as to the future of this work, but we continue, and prospects are encouraging.

This issue opens with A. E. Knoch's comments (with deep appreciation) on Paul's first prayer in Ephesians. This needs to be read in instalments, it seems to me, for so much is said that it seems impossible to summarize. Yet some selected quotes may point the way: "It is our highest duty and privilege to pray this prayer" (p.148). "The spirit of wisdom and revelation is desired for . . . the special realization of the celestial faith which is now ours in the Lord Jesus" (p.149). "Our blessings are spiritual among the celestial hosts" (p.149). "We are His complement Who completes the entire universe" (p.154).

On pages 155-162 James Coram takes up the subject of our choosings, reminding us that "Our choices are not things of chance, but the *effects* of their causes" (p.156). Hence, "Only those who are called and chosen actually choose Christ" (p.158).

We have tried in preparing this magazine (not always with success) to keep in view what A. E. Knoch unfolds in his article entitled "The Knowledge of Good" (pages 163-174). That the knowledge of evil is necessary for the knowledge of good is a fundamental fact. "The contrast between the two is the only means the creature has for the realization of God's goodness and the appreciation of His love" (p.174).

The rest of the issue is occupied with my own studies, which have centered so long on Romans and God's evangel as Paul unfolds it "apart from law" (Rom.3:21), yet still traceable through God's prophets in the holy scriptures (Rom.1:2; *cp* 3:21b). Most clearly this was attested in Habakkuk 2:4, which Paul cites in Romans 1:17 and again in Galatians 3:11 (as does the writer of Hebrews in 10:38). God's power for salvation, in which His righteousness is revealed, is employed out of (i.e. sourced in) and through the faith of Jesus Christ, which is His obedience unto the death of the cross. This is the basis of all present spiritual blessings and the glories to come. Early on, A. E. Knoch noted this, but with some diffidence, and without translating Romans 1:17 with Christ in view as the Righteous One.

I believe with all my heart that the subject of the faith *of* Christ Jesus needs to be recognized wherever context and grammar bring it forward, even in Ephesians 2:8 and 3:12,17. It is not that we have been wrong concerning the importance of our faith, but that the clear teaching that our faith is in the evangel concerning Christ's faith has been obscured by mistranslation. God's righteousness is revealed out of Christ's faith, and this evangel is for our faith. This is the basis of all blessings. Even if we have believed this, we may have missed it in some important passages which bring it out.

We are not alone in testifying to the faithful, wise, powerful and righteous operation of God in bringing all to Himself in reconciliation and love—testifying as well that He is doing this through the faith and obedience of His beloved Son, even unto the death of the cross—and giving special testimony to God's glorious purpose for us as members of the body of Christ. Yet I feel it is well that in God's grace this little effort of magazine and translation of God's Word may continue. To God be the glory. D.H.H.

THE FIRST EPHESIAN PRAYER

> *"Therefore, I also, on hearing of this faith of yours [which relates to you] in the Lord Jesus, and that for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him . . ."* (Eph.1:15-17)

THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM

The two prayers in this epistle (*cf* 3:14-21) are like the two wings of an eagle which soars into the empyrean, bearing us aloft on its pinions. We do not know what it is proper to pray for (Rom.8:26). Here we have God's Spirit inditing a petition. It is the unceasing prayer of Paul and, at the same time, God's expressed desire on our behalf. It is a pattern prayer. How pleased would He be if we follow the spirit of these petitions! Let us note carefully his first request. It is for *a spirit*—a wise spirit, a revealing spirit. *Nothing is more needed by His saints today.* But how few even realize their lack!

This is not a prayer for the holy spirit. The title of those addressed to this letter and to the allotment it conveys was the spirit by which they had been already sealed. They had God's spirit in measure, just as we have it. The capacity it gave them was not unlimited, as it was with our Lord. This prayer is an appeal that its limits might be enlarged in the direction of wisdom. God's spirit alone can give capacity to enter into divine affairs. God's wisdom, as displayed in the

grace glorious, would be concealed from them apart from this spirit. Such amazing, multifarious wisdom needs an especial enduement, an overflowing measure, an enlarged capacity, to entertain it.

THE SPIRIT OF REVELATION

The apostle has been imparting a secret to them which not only displays God's wisdom, but is so novel, so different, so far above the reach of mortal mentality, that their spirits not only need enlargement, but an entirely new apartment must be added, as it were, to house it properly. He prays for a spirit to accommodate the new disclosure, the new revelation. This request would be quite superfluous if those to whom he is writing had received the "mystery" while he was among them in person. He had declared the whole counsel of God to the Ephesians (Acts 20:27), but the purpose he now unfolds could not be publicly revealed during the period of his itinerant ministry.

It is our highest duty and privilege to pray this prayer. Long years ago the writer urged the believers to make this their special petition, not only for themselves, but for all saints, and particularly for himself. Since then his insight into the prayer itself has been revolutionized. He has been delivered from the tyranny of unspiritual translations. He has discovered its intimate relation to the preceding unfoldings. He has found its harmonious concord with the remaining revelations of the "mystery" in this epistle. We cannot expect such high and hidden unfoldings to blaze upon us and blind us in a moment. Let us covet this revealing spirit, so that we may gradually discern that supreme secret wisdom, which the "mystery" alone reveals.

THE EYES OF THE HEART

". . . the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for you to perceive what is the expectation of

His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints . . ."
(Eph.1:18)

The spirit of wisdom and revelation is desired for a specific object, the special realization of the celestial faith which is now ours in the Lord Jesus (Eph.1:15). Nor is it a mere matter of mental speculation, a philosophical tidbit for wise savants, which does not affect the practical affairs of life. It is not perceived by merely mental processes or grasped by minds of more than normal brilliancy. It is for those whose hearts have eyes, the core of whose being can photograph the ultra rays of God's revelation. The eyes of the head are limited to the spectrum. The eyes of the heart have a much wider range.

THE EXPECTATION OF GOD'S CALLING

We must remember that, at the time this was written, the destiny of believers among the nations was not at all clear. Before Paul's epistles were penned, the nations had no expectation, except as subordinates of Israel in the Kingdom on the earth. Paul brings in the truth of the Lord's presence in the air and teaches a sudden change in resurrection. Still there is no definite destiny. The prospect before them is veiled and vague. Are they to come back to earth? If not, what is their expectation? Now it is revealed that our lot is cast with Christ in His headship of the universe. *Our blessings are spiritual, among the celestial hosts.*

ITS GLORIOUS RICHES

This allotment or "inheritance" is supernal. High as the heavens above the earth are our blessings above the most magnificent mundane display of wealth or glory. We are denied equal participation with the Circumcision in the coming eons on the earth. They must be first down here

below. The nations of that time must be inferior in place and portion. To have a similar position among the celestials would place us above the highest of the Circumcision in the Kingdom, for the meanest saint in the celestial allotment will be superior to the highest on the earth. But we are *not* subordinate in the heavens! We are below neither the Circumcision nor the celestials themselves. We are superior to the heavenly hosts and of equal rank with the few of the Circumcision who are members of Christ's body.

It is intensely human to desire property and position. Men literally spend their lives in pursuit of them. And then, when they are within our grasp, they afford but little real satisfaction, for they cannot shield us from corruption and death. In the coming eons, the actual wealth of mankind will be much greater than now, for they will be able to enjoy their riches and maintain their rank. In this evil eon, men hurt their health to win their wealth, and then they can't enjoy it. So they waste their wealth to hunt their health, and often just destroy it. The wisest of men tried all that rank and riches could bring and he summed it all up as a feeding on wind. All is vanity, until One Who is greater and wiser than Solomon takes the helm in the eons of the eons.

Only that is ours which we enjoy. He alone is truly rich whose eager senses claim a generous tribute from the world about him. He may not have a legal right to aught the earth contains, yet revel in its benefits and beauties beyond the power of many a millionaire. In this, the truest sense, we are the wealthiest of God's creatures. All is ours. Our estates are not confined to earth. The universe is spread before us. In Christ, the Owner and Redeemer of all, we have a double title to everything that heart can wish or heaven can provide. As joint enjoyers of the celestial allotment we have entered into an inheritance so vast that we may never fully explore its riches or compute its wealth.

THE TRANSCENDENT GREATNESS OF GOD'S POWER

> *". . . and what the transcendent greatness of His power for us who are believing, in accord with the operation of the might of His strength, which is operative in the Christ, rousing Him from among the dead and seating Him at His right hand among the celestials, up over every sovereignty and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but also in that which is impending: and subjects all under His feet, and gives Him, as Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body . . . ."* (Eph.1:19-22)

For the Circumcision the might of Messiah is measured by His resurrection and His return in majesty to administer the government of the earth. They also will be raised, and they will rule. So may we measure His might for us. So may we gauge the power which is operating on our behalf. It is not limited to His resurrection. It is not confined to His earthly sovereignty. The transcendent greatness of the power available on our behalf is displayed in the ascension and seating of Christ at God's right hand among the celestials, over every political power in the empyrean. It took Him from beneath the confederated forces of evil, Satan, the high priests, and Rome, from an infamous death, from the curse of God Himself, to the supremest place of power and glory. This is what it can do for us.

Blessed it is to trace the steps of Christ's descent to the cross. Every move He makes has a meaning. Every step He takes has a tongue. Much more delightful and full of significance is His return to the glory. His earthly pilgrimage was the perfection of weakness. It ended in a tomb. His heavenly march is omnipotence perfected. It attains its royal rest at God's right hand. There are three stages to his exaltation. These are His rousing, His ascen-

sion, and His rest. Resurrection brought Him back to life among His beloved disciples. Ascension sees Him again in God's presence, whence He had been sent to do His will. Rest seats Him at God's right hand when His work has been accomplished.

On that marvelous resurrection morning He meets Mary in the garden, and says, "Do not touch Me, for not as yet have I ascended to My Father" (John 20:17). Not many days later He invited Thomas to put his hand into His side (John 20:27). It seems evident that He ascended to the Father on the very day He rose, to receive the acclaims of heaven and His reward and rest at God's right hand. This is the clue for us. The forty-days' reappearance was not concerned with His heavenly kingdom but with that on earth. Even His public ascension was related to His return to Olivet rather than His celestial session.

In Acts He is active, not seated. Stephen saw Him, *standing* at God's right hand (Acts 7:56). In days to come He will be *walking* among the assemblies in Yahweh's day (Rev. 2:1). The Lambkin will *stand* in the midst of the throne (Rev.5:6). When He descends, His feet will *stand* in the mount of Olives. When all His enemies are subdued He takes His *rest* upon His glorious terrestrial throne. His active career on earth's behalf gives place to tranquil rule.

Power must still be exercised before Messiah sits on the throne of David. Not so in the empyrean. There He is already seated. The work has been accomplished. There is no waiting there for an apostate people. There is no patience with a wicked world. There is no necessity for delay. The superexcess of power has swept Him from the deepest depth of infamy to the highest heights of glory, and He is at rest. Such is the power appropriate to our case, which is available to those whose faith is in Christ Jesus, the glorified celestial suzerain, rather than in Jesus Christ, the rejected sovereign of the earth.

Even as the power needed for our faith (for endurance and patience with joy, Col.1:11) is greater than that of the Circumcision, so also is our relationship to Christ nearer and dearer. They are figured by a bride, we are His body. There can be no closer, no more vital or indissoluble union. The love of a man for his own body has persisted when all other forms have failed. Israel's union with Yahweh goes through many vicissitudes—coldness, rejection, divorce, reunion—but no such history is possible for the body of Christ. A man's fondness for himself is fixed in the very nature of the universe. Such is the illustration used to show our relation to Christ's celestial headship. He is Head over all *to* the ecclesia which is His body. This is not His headship of the body. It expresses the fact that He will exercise the headship through the body, as a man uses his members to carry out the dictates of his mind. He, with us, will administer the celestial realms.

THE COMPLEMENT OF THE ONE COMPLETING THE ALL IN ALL

". . . the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all."
(Eph.1:23)

Since sin has entered, God has put into operation the necessary agencies to cope with it, and, after it has fulfilled its function and completed its course, to remove it from the scene. The story of earth's restoration should be familiar to us all. God chose Abraham and his seed, that through them He may deal with the earth and bring it back to Himself, through Christ. This will suffice for the earth. No such provision was made for the heavens. No celestial family was chosen to reach the rest. No messengers are given this honor. Their primal place is too high for them to fully appreciate God's grace. We, who were last and are first, are alone fitted to dispense the grace glorious.

In this way Christ and His body fill up the last lack in God's great purpose of the eons. We are His complement Who completes the entire universe. No other company of saints is needed to carry God's plans into effect. Israel on earth and the body of Christ in the heavens, with Him as their head, will bring all back to God by their ministrations during the eons of the eons. Thus, in God's wisdom, shall the earth, the plague spot of the universe, supply the alchemy by which He will transform Himself from a Creator into an affectionate Father and His creatures into fond and loving children. We, uncovenanted, unconsidered, scorned by the chosen nation, become the universal complement because we are the supreme achievement of God's grace.

A. E. Knoch

GOD'S OPERATIONS

A. The operation of the might of [God's] strength (Eph.1:19)
  B. The grace given to [Paul] in accord with [God's] powerful operation (Eph.3:7)
    C. The operation in accord with each one's part [in the body of Christ] (Eph.4:16)
    C. The operation which enables [Christ] to subject all to Himself (Phil.3:21)
  B. [Paul] struggling in accord with [God's] operation (Col.1:29)
A. Roused through the faithfulness of the operation of God (Col.2:12)

The "A" declarations speak of God's operation, both mighty and faithful, first in rousing Christ and then the believer from among the dead. The "B" declarations refer to God's operation with regard to Paul's dispensing the evangel and announcing Christ in accord with a secret. The "C" declarations refer to God's operations, involving human beings, first in regard to our part in the body of Christ, and then regarding the enabling of Christ to subject all to Himself.

These are all positive and glorious operations. In 2 Thessalonians 2:11 we hear of God's brief, negative operation of deception sent in response to Satan's operation through the lawless one (2 Thess.2:9) in the closing era of the current eon.

D.H.H.

CHOOSING WHAT IS CHOICE

WHEN Abram and Lot went their separate ways, it is recorded that Lot lifted his eyes and saw the Jordan basin, "so Lot chose for himself, the whole Jordan basin" (Gen. 13:8-11). When Moses's father-in-law advised him to delegate some of his work to others, we read "Moses chose men of ability from all Israel and set them as heads over the people . . ." (Exodus 18:25). When the Lord visited at the home of Mary and Martha, Mary chose "the good part" in sitting at His feet and listening to His word (Luke 10:38-42). When we choose, we choose what is *presently* choice *to us.* It is not possible for us to do otherwise, for our choices *reflect* the true condition of our heart, and manifest our character.

Moral, or volitional, ability must be distinguished from physical ability. No one can prefer anything which is contrary to his preference, any more than he can love what he hates. A man may well lie to others concerning his preferences, but he can never truly choose with his lips what he rejects in his heart.

There are all manner of things we would be able to *do,* to carry out through the use of our bodily members, if we were only able to *choose* to do them (in the sense of acting upon them), or at least able to choose something else connected with them which would result in their being accomplished. However, one's possession of a particular preference or ability to make a certain choice can only exist, like everything else, as the result of its own cause, of which it is merely a product.

A sinful will only reflects the much deeper matter of a sinful heart. The relative foolishness (or wisdom) of our preferences reflects the present condition of our heart (*cp* Prov.4:23b; Matt.15:18,19). Our choices are not things of chance, but the *effects* of their causes. Our choices are constantly changing, and are changing in many ways, from one moment to the next. With the exception of internal organic functions and certain involuntary or reflex bodily movements, the rest of our actions, great and small, occur voluntarily. That is, they reflect the choices which we have made.

We *do* many voluntary acts, however, that, in themselves, we have never *chosen.* Instead, we choose other things with which our deeds are connected and from which they result. Insofar as external acts are concerned, in many cases we do them even though we have not chosen them. We can never do a voluntary act, however, except as the product of a choice, regardless of what our *object* of choice may actually be. When we "decide to *do*" things that are undesirable in themselves, our *decision* is never made in favor of such an object, but in favor of some other thing with which it is connected, something which is desirable to us, or at least slightly preferable to all other things presently in view or under consideration.

Any statement of actual preference is an exhibition of truth. In any certain moment, either we *have* a given preference (and consequently effect a corresponding choice and action) or we do not. We cannot have a new preference while our old preference still exists. Nor can we make a new choice while we still have an old preference. For the act of choosing is merely the exercise of *existing* preference. One cannot prefer what is not yet preferable. Yet when it becomes preferable it is preferred and cannot be unpreferred.

CHOOSING CHRIST

The gospel today is nearly always presented as a transaction, as something quite available to any and all who would simply of themselves do some certain thing or things, even if others will not. Much is said of the importance of making "decisions." The idea, however, is simply that in these decisions it is man himself—not the spirit of God—which makes the difference between success and failure at present and, certainly, between happiness and horror for eternity. Indeed, it is insisted that God will do all for one man that He will do for another but that He will not do enough for any man to insure even his present pleasure, wealth or health, much less his eternal life.

It is insisted that when the lost—billions of whom either having never heard of Him or having only nominally done so—finally come into the Saviour's glorious presence, it is then that Christ Himself will command them all forever to leave it and enter into the terrors of everlasting burnings! "Evangelism" is carried on in the man-centered hope that at least a few will be strong enough to meet the divine demands.

Few realize that "No one is recognizing the Son except the Father; neither is anyone recognizing the Father except the Son and *he to whom the Son should be intending to unveil Him*" (Matt.11:27). Even in His personal ministry to Israel, the Lord plainly said to His numerous disciples, "'There are some of you who are [actually] not believing' . . . . 'No one can be coming to Me if it should not be given him of the Father.' At this, then, many of His disciples came away, dropping behind, and walked no longer with Him. Jesus, then, said to the twelve, 'Not you also are wanting to go away!' Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom shall we come away? Declarations of life eonian hast Thou! And *we believe* and know that Thou art the Holy One of God.' Jesus answered and said to them, *Do*

not I choose you, the twelve . . . ?' " (John 6:64-70). Indeed, "Not *you* choose Me, but *I* choose you" (John 15:16a).

Yet again, conversely, the Lord said to the throngs, "Wherefore do you not know My speech? Seeing that you *cannot hear* My word" (John 8:43). This was so "that the word of Isaiah the prophet, which he said, may be being fulfilled" (John 12:38a). Isaiah had prophesied long ago that unbelief would be widespread and that the strong arm of the Lord would not be revealed. "Lord, who believes our tidings? And the arm of the Lord, to whom was it revealed?" (John 12:38b).

Our closed minds must be *opened up* to understand the scriptures (*cf* Luke 24:45). Otherwise, we can no more grasp their true significance than a blind man can see the brightest of objects immediately before him. The reason for the unbelief of the Jews was that *God* had blinded His people: "*Therefore they could not believe,* seeing that Isaiah said again that *He* has blinded their eyes and callouses their heart, *lest* they may be perceiving with their eyes, and should be apprehending with their heart, and may be turning about, and I shall be healing them. These things Isaiah said, seeing that he perceived His glory, and speaks concerning Him" (John 12:40,41).

If we are wise, we too will recognize that "It is the glory of Elohim to *conceal* a matter" (Prov.25:2a). "For there is not anything hidden, except that it should be manifested, neither did it become concealed, but that it may be coming into manifestation. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!" (*cf* Mark 4:22,23).

Only those who are called and chosen actually choose Christ. How marvelous it is that God has *revealed* His Son to us: "This is My Son, the *Chosen*; Him be hearing" (*cp* Luke 9:35). No one can genuinely choose Christ who does not find Him *Choice,* or to be preferred above all others. Likewise, anyone to whom Christ *is* Choice, cannot but choose

Him during the time in which He is deemed Choice. For example, when it delights God to *unveil* (FROM-COVER) His Son in us (*cf* Gal.1:15,16), and while He continues to do so, we choose Christ and cannot reject Him. For we are no longer blind; we now see Him as He truly is: *choice* indeed. And we are getting to know Him as well, for God has unveiled Him in us.

Many, however—to whom Christ, in fact, is not choice—out of selfish interests, can only choose to make a *profession* of Christ. Their faith is only simulated or "feigned" (*cp* 1 Cor.15:2). Fleshly attempts at self-conviction do not constitute God-given faith. A decision merely to profess Christ, or to make a supposed public "acceptance" of Him, is a very different thing from actually choosing and accepting *Christ.* No one can "accept" (or "take along," *paralambanō*) Christ who has not first chosen Him. Yet Christ can never be *chosen* by those from whom He is veiled. An object must first be perceived before it can be compared and selected from a field.

Furthermore, we cannot tell the unbeliever that if he will only do a certain thing, God will then in return give him faith. All such claims are false. For they represent God as a Rewarder in granting faith, as One Who has obligated Himself to "meet halfway" all who will fulfill His requirements. Since salvation is a matter of grace, it cannot also be a matter of meeting requirements. All genuine faith in Christ is *graciously* granted to us (Phil.1:29).

Again, no one to whom Christ is not yet choice can choose Christ. And Christ cannot be choice to anyone to whom He has not yet been made choice. When He is made choice He *becomes* choice and so is choice; or to say the same thing, He is chosen. This first act of the believer in which Christ is consciously chosen, is merely a consequence of his new mental preference which has been *graciously* granted to him by God.

THE NATURE OF VOLITION

No one can *choose* what he does not *prefer.* There is no such thing as an object being choice which has not yet been chosen. A man can no more exercise volition contrary to his understanding and disposition than a tree can bear fruit contrary to its nature: "*Either* make the tree ideal and its fruit ideal, *or* make the tree rotten and its fruit rotten, for by its fruit the tree is known" (Matt.12:33). There is no middle ground. "Progeny of vipers! *How can you* be speaking what is good, *being* wicked? For out of the superabundance of the heart the mouth is speaking. The good man out of his good treasure is extracting good things; and the wicked man out of his wicked treasure is extracting wicked things" (Matt.12:34,35).

"From their fruits you shall be recognizing them. Not from thorns are they culling grapes, nor from star thistles figs. Thus every good tree ideal fruit is producing, yet the rotten tree noxious fruit is producing. A good tree *can not* bear noxious fruit, *neither* is a rotten tree producing ideal fruit" (Matt.7:16-18). "Shall a Cushite transform his skin, or a leopard its spots? Then you yourselves shall be able to do good, who are taught to do evil" (Jer.13:23).

Since there is therefore no hope from within, let us look only to our God and Father, but not, craftily, to ourselves. Our *humble* prayer, serious and heartfelt, should be that *God* might be "adapting [us] to every good work to do His will, doing in us what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom be the glory for the eons of the eons. Amen!" (*cp* Heb.13:20, 21). It is glorious to know that we are making our requests known to *One Who is able.* And so, to the One "Who is able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be the glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen!" (Eph.3:20,21). Only thus can our outlook and attitude accord with the truth. May God enable us to say from the heart and with understanding, even as it is written, "He who is boasting, *in the Lord* let him be boasting" (1 Cor.1:31).

This is not at all to say that our efforts are not essential or that there will be nothing for us to do since it is God Who saves us from our failings. To the contrary, God graciously saves us by causing us to work, "training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon" (Titus 2:11,12). But our efforts are merely a product; they are the means through which *God* saves us. *We contribute nothing.*

It is not a question of our discipline and volition, but of pride and self-reliance concerning our discipline and volition, of boasting in the flesh instead of glorying in the transforming power of God. As long as we continue to see ourselves, in a final sense, as the key to anything, we will remain proud, antagonistic to "the grace of God *in truth*" (Col.1:6).

It is one thing to conceive of ourselves, in a dutiful sense and *relatively speaking,* as "cooperating" with the Lord Jesus, as He leads us into paths of better service. It is quite another, however, *proudly* to fancy ourselves to be so utterly independent of the Supreme Deity Himself, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, that even He is at a loss to change our will or walk without our help.

Christ is the Head of the ecclesia, and He is the Saviour of the body (Eph.5:23). He "gives Himself up for its sake that *He* should be hallowing it, cleansing it in the bath of the water ([that is,] *with His declaration*) that He should be presenting to Himself a glorious ecclesia, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that it may be holy and flawless" (Eph.5:25-27). He is "nurturing and cher-

ishing" the members of the ecclesia, ". . . for we are members of His body" (Eph.5:30). Though the course is often arduous, slow, and disappointing, nonetheless, the entire ecclesia is growing in the growth of God (Col.2:19). We *will* be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make us stand (Rom.14:4). And it is by the *power* of these words of faith, because of their influence upon us, that we are learning to be choosing what is choice.

James R. Coram

PAUL THE UNASHAMED

THE only things of which man may speak without a blush or an apology are the things of God. Man may laud his achievements in certain matters. He may prate of noble buildings, mighty symphonies, famous paintings and such like products of human skill and industry, but he can hardly do so without having a lurking sense of the superficial nature of such "glories."

We learn of man's free will in theology, but the doctrine seems to be absent from history, at least in the history that Paul inscribed for us in Romans 1:18-3:20. Here, as far as man is concerned, is a law which clamps iron chains of grim necessity upon the race. Why did not at least *one* generation arise who by virtue of their "free will" would not yield obedience to sin's command? Why was there not *one* nation who would as gladly rebel against sin as the race had rebelled against God? Why did not *one* family arise who with their "free wills" would have broken the monotony of evil's rule over the race? And if individuals had done so why were not these exceptions to the rule noted by Paul when he penned this indictment of man? How obvious it is that Romans gives the history of a race enslaved. A race whose slavery was not enforced from without, but an internal slavery, moral and mental, a slavery to self in its finiteness and separateness from God. It does not look as if there was much "free will" to spare in the race whose deeds are recorded by Paul.

How much we should thank our blessed God for showing us the meaning of *grace!* A grace we had nothing to do with but to accept and then only and when that same grace gave us the will and the power to receive it. The whole alphabet of salvation by grace is an alphabet without a capital I.

Alan Burns

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD

BEFORE they sinned, Adam and Eve had no knowledge of good. Good lay all about them, unmixed with evil. Health, strength, honor, and companionship with one another and with God was their constant possession and privilege. Yet they knew nothing of the blessedness of these boons. This we learn from the name given to the tree which bore the forbidden fruit. To many minds it suggests only the knowledge of evil, rather than good. Yet, first and foremost, it was the tree of the knowledge of good (Gen.2:9; 3:4-14).

Thus at the very forefront of revelation we have the principle suggested which is the key to unlock the great problems that most perplex us. It is this: Our knowledge is relative; it is based on contrast. The knowledge of good is dependent upon the knowledge of evil. Hence the tree in the garden was not, as we usually think of it, merely the means of knowing evil, it was the means, primarily, of the knowledge of *good.* Adam and Eve had good but did not realize it because they had had no experience of evil.

The perfection of Eden's garden was greatly lacking in the one element most dear to God's heart. Adam did not and could not apprehend God's goodness. There is not the slightest hint of Adam's appreciation or thanks, or worship or adoration. He received all as a matter of course and was quite incapable of discerning or responding even to that measure of divine love which lies on the surface of His goodness. If *we* should suddenly be transformed into glorious sinless beings and transported to such scenes of sylvan perfection, we would exult and praise the author of

our bliss. Not so Adam. He knew no joy, for he knew no misery. He knew no good, for he knew no evil.

This point is most important, and we press it because it seems to be universally ignored and misrepresented. The garden of Eden has become a symbol of perfect bliss. We are always being reminded of its delights, and the happiness of the first pair has passed into a proverb. Yet there is not the slightest reason to suppose that Adam was delighted or enjoyed the bliss ascribed to him.

The mere possession of good does not give a knowledge or realization of it. Even today, when there is so much evil to contrast with the good, many do not appreciate their blessings until they lose them. Adam had perfect health, but what was that to one who never had even heard of disease? He had abundant food, but that was nothing to him, who had never felt a famine. Even pleasure had no appeal to one who had known no pain.

The fatal lack in all the perfection of Eden was the utter absence of any note of praise or thankfulness. Knowing no good, and utterly unacquainted with mercy or grace, Adam's heart was absolutely incapable of love or adoration or worship. God's goodness did not receive the least response, because it was unknown. All that He had bestowed on Adam failed to kindle the affection for which He longed, and which is the goal of all His gifts.

How could this grave defect be remedied? There was but one way, and that way was, in the wisdom of God, provided by the tree which He placed in the midst of the garden. Had Adam and Eve known good they would have treasured God's goodness and never would have forfeited it by disobeying His command. Yet, when they did eat of the tree, they set in motion the very forces which would remedy the defect which caused them to do it. What divine wisdom do we see here displayed! God's blessings being unappreciated, they offend Him by their deed and

in so doing pave the way for an appreciation which satisfies both. Love is a marvelous schemer!

Shall we pause here to insist that this primal sin is the archetype of all succeeding acts of sin? We may not realize it now, but there can be no doubt on the part of those who have a mature knowledge of God that sin is now, as then, the fruit of the ignorance of good and evil and the lack of appreciation of God's gifts. Moreover, now, as then, sin itself, in the wisdom of God, sets in operation the very forces which lead to a knowledge of good and evil and the appreciation of God and His love.

Light, then, is nothing, were it not for darkness. Love is lost but for hate. Strength is unknown where there is no weakness. Wisdom leans on folly for its display.

Where is the glory of the stars at midday? Their light is not dimmed, but they have no darkness to reveal their splendor. And we would not appreciate even the sun were it not for clouds, and its daily disappearance. All things are known by contrast. Creature knowledge is not absolute, but relative.

God did not plant two trees, one for the knowledge of good and another for the knowledge of evil. In the nature of things these are dependent on one another, and neither can be known without the other. Let us bow to the divine wisdom which planted one tree, so that it was impossible to know good apart from the knowledge of evil.

Having in mind God's great purpose to fully engage the affection of all His creatures, it is evident that the prime ingredient of their response to His love is a knowledge of Him. The process of revealing God is the problem of the eons. If God should be always seeking to reveal Himself He would never succeed in His purpose. Indeed, if infinity were needed to make Him known, then His creatures would always be infinitely short of such knowledge. God never speaks to us in terms of infinity, for we cannot

understand it. He has provided a definite period for self-revelation, called the eonian times. When these are past, the process is complete, God is All in all, and all the factors (such as sin and evil) which are no longer needed, are discarded.

The great purpose of God during the eons is to provide a background for the display of His love. What would be the simplest plan to produce this? Shorn of details, all that is needed is that each of His creatures should have, according to his capacity, such an experience of evil and its fruits as will enable him to appreciate the good which God will provide after the eons are past.

Thus we have established the necessity and utility of evil in God's universe for the period of the eons. We will now consider the details of the divine operations in connection with the sinner. The groundwork of the plan is very simple. The sinner experiences evil that he may know good. He knows good that he may love God, the giver of good. The result is intensified by making the evil, not only calamities and misfortunes over which mankind has no control, but by making evil the result of the sinner's sins, and by hedging him in with law, leading to transgression, and by giving sin a quality which offends the feelings of God.

No one can, or will, object that God should be good to His creatures after the consummation—the real beginning of the perfected universe. But that goodness would all be lost on creatures who know no evil. Hence no one will question the justice of any plan for making that goodness effective by filling their hearts with gratitude to God, and in satisfying His heart by their response. So that God is just—far more than just—in sending each one of His creatures into a world of sin and sorrow, grief and pain, and in using any means which impresses upon them the lesson taught to our first parents in the garden. We must digest the knowledge of evil ere we can enjoy the knowledge of good.

The process through which God is putting mankind, in preparation for their place in the consummation, is very complex. We can best understand it by grasping first the grand outlines and leaving the dimmer details for later contemplation.

We have said that all that would be absolutely *necessary* for the realization of God's purpose would be the introduction of each of God's creatures into the sphere of unmixed evil for a limited time, away from God. Yet practical experience teaches us that such a method would demand a very long period and produce comparatively meager results. It lacks that great force which is the prime factor in the acquisition of all knowledge. Evil alone lacks contrast. It must be seen in the light of good. Wrong must be viewed in the presence of right. Hence the eonian existence of every man is divided into three stages characterized by destruction, judgment, and salvation. He glimpses evil in the world by the feeble flicker of conscience or human justice until it involves him in death. In resurrection he sees evil in the light of God's justice. In the consummation, he contrasts it with God's salvation. These three grades completely equip each one for the enjoyment of God's goodness and love.

It is necessary to pause at this point to vindicate God's justice in His dealings with those who are not saved until the consummation. If all mankind should die in sin and should stand before the great white throne to be judged and none saved until the consummation, the righteousness of God's way with them could readily be justified, on the grounds already set forth. The very nature of endless bliss is such that those can quaff the cup of bliss most deeply who have drained the dregs of evil. Sin is an essential precursor and preparation for endless happiness.

But strong objection has been raised to the length and intensity of suffering as unwarranted and severe. This may be met in two ways. The difficulty depends upon an exag-

gerated, unscriptural impression of the length and terrors of judgment and a failure to see it in its proper proportion to the bliss to which it leads.

The happiness into which the eons usher mankind will be endless. Hence, in the light of eternity, no period of suffering, whatever its limits, can be deemed excessive. Indeed, it is not at all probable that the average sinner will suffer for one hundred years, including his life on earth and the judgment period. So that even such a period, which we may practically reduce to zero in comparison with infinity, may be seen, rather than being excessive, to be absurdly short in comparison with the boundlessness of bliss.

In this degenerate age we connect all value with money. If an investment of a dollar should produce a million dollars, no one would say the initial sum was excessive. Everyone would gladly pay it, even if the outcome were not absolutely assured. No one would question the right of it even if the dollar were lost. The *right* amount to receive for a dollar is about six cents a year, according to human standards. All above that is more than right.

We must acknowledge, then, that God is transcendently just in His dealings with all His creatures, and that He would be warranted in making their term of suffering much longer without impairing His justice.

The severity of suffering is so varied that it is not wise to say much concerning it at this point. It belongs, rather, to the discussion of the degrees of judgment, and the varied glories of the elect. Yet we must not overlook a merciful provision which tempers the severity of sin. Evil makes men callous and obdurate. If they had the supremely sensitive nature which will be theirs in vivification for the enjoyment of good, the slightest touch of evil would make them shudder. Their loathing of sin would be unbearable. Now they almost enjoy, in a way, the bitter burden that they bear.

Were God to let mankind live in sin until they learn

its lessons, it would take a long and weary life, and might never reach the desired result. Hence He also introduced the death state, lest Adam and his descendants should live on in the accumulating effects of sin. They would become old and decrepit, weak and blind, driveling and idiotic, and live on, a living corpse of corruption. Imagine what a sickening world this would be if all our progenitors still lived with all their constantly accumulating senility and disease! Can we not see the marvelous wisdom that provided that evil should make men mortal? Evil that results in death is sufficient to teach the lesson. Death is not only the result of sin. It is the intermission between one lesson and the next. It is the divine method of impressing upon the sinner the sinfulness of sin, and is the necessary prelude to the resurrection, which introduces the sinner into an actual experience of God's power and justice.

The judging of the sinner at the great white throne deals with the evil with which he is acquainted in a twofold way. By contrast with the right, its true nature becomes apparent. By a just infliction, the evil itself will be counteracted. No one should confound judging with "punishment," in its usual acceptation. Men "punish" in the crudest fashion, with the single thought of discouraging a future repetition of the act. A child is "punished" for poor lessons at school by being kept in at recess, when fresh air and exercise are the very correctives which may be needed. We must not charge God with such silliness.

God's judgments, as are manifest from those that have already taken place, impose penalties which rectify the cause underlying the offense. Thus, Adam's offense was the result of his lack of appreciation of God's gifts. Flowers, fruit, and food fell into his hands without effort. Hence he is doomed to toil and discouragement in tilling the ground, so that he may be duly thankful for God's sustaining love. This principle is always present in divine judging. It is, in

fact, inherent in the very term, for judging is that which rights the wrong.

If this were not so, it would be difficult to account for God's motive in such a tremendous exhibition of power as is involved in the resurrection of the dead, and such a marvelous display of judicial force, in assigning their sentence. In each decision the sinner will gain such a knowledge of evil, by contrast with its corrective, as would be impossible in any other way. The judging of his own sins and that of all the rest will be the school in which his knowledge of evil will immensely increase.

The final consummation of the knowledge of evil is always found in bringing it into close contact with the supremest form of good. The salvation of mankind at the consummation is the final lesson in good and evil. The lessons of the latter which have been learned by experience are now enforced by the realization of a good for which their sufferings have prepared them. The God Who had been their Creator and Judge now becomes their Saviour. They are ready to enjoy His love and give Him the response, which is the basis of eternal bliss. In this light we can see how God is just in dealing thus with His creatures, and His creatures are justified, eventually, as regards their sin.

SALVATION

Thus far we have kept to the most elementary principles in outlining God's dealings with mankind. The subject of salvation has hardly been touched, especially the subject of eonian salvation, for the unbeliever has no salvation during the eons. His does not come until their close. Before taking up eonian ("everlasting" or "eternal") salvation, it will be necessary to inquire a little into the nature of the salvation of the unbeliever.

Our first inclination, when we learn of God's grand purpose to save all mankind (1 Tim.2:4), is to substitute their

sufferings for those of Christ. We have been told that He bore our punishment, and we surmise that they are judged for their own sin, hence need no saviour.

But this is far from the truth. Judging may correct the sinner, but it does not give him the power to undo his sins toward other men or toward God. The murderer may be taught the utmost horror of his crime, but he cannot restore the life he took. The blasphemer may have learned to abhor his sin, yet no amount of suffering on his part will efface his offense. If judging made it possible for all men to right their wrongs then it would not be followed by, or rather, end in, the second death. Mankind fully learns the lesson of evil, yet in learning, finds itself the helpless victim of death. Indeed, this is the climax of evil. This shows the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The sinner, though raised from the dead, finds that he is unfit to live, on the ground of justice, and enters the second death.

Here is where the need for a Saviour arises. He needs to be One Who can do far more than bear the penalty of sin. If He had simply become a "substitute" for men and had taken their sins upon Him, then He must not only die, but, like the denizens of the second death, there could be no return to life except through another Saviour. Christ is no mere "substitute" to bear the "punishment" in "the room and stead" of the sinner. He died *for,* or *on behalf of* the sinner. He turns his sins into acts of righteousness. This is justification. He recalls the murderer's victim to life, restores what the thief has stolen, and harvests good from the evil that condemns them.

Thus far we have confined ourselves to the contrast between good and evil, and the basic principle that both are necessary to the knowledge of either. The same principle of contrast is used over and over again in the complex process which prevails during the eonian times. As, in nature, power and passivity qualify the one universal sub-

stance so as to produce the infinite variety which we see in the world, so good and evil are used in endless combinations and contrasts to bring out the vast variety of God's wisdom and the limitless resources of His love.

All of the eons are characterized by the presence of evil, which was not ere they began and will not be once they end. Yet the eons themselves are divided into two classes, some of which are evil, while others are *comparatively* good. The next eon, in which the millennium occurs, holds evil in check, and the succeeding one, the last eon, segregates and banishes it. In contrast with these, the present eon and the one before the flood are evil eons. The secret of the difference is not far to find. In the former, Christ is absent, or, when present, is crucified. In the latter He is on the throne and evil is suppressed.

The question arises, how can God be absolutely impartial in His dealings with mankind when one person finds himself in Sodom and another has the privilege of hearing the Lord Himself? The answer to this lies in the equity which will characterize God's judgment throne. It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for the cities visited by our Lord during His earthly ministry. Judgment will be tempered by consideration of opportunity and circumstance (Matt.10:15).

The gravest problem, to some, is the fact that God, in His mercy and grace, selects some for eonian salvation, so that they do not enter the judgment at all. Is it just of Him to favor them and pass by others no more undeserving? Why should some sorry sot secure salvation and eonian glory when a pure and pious philanthropist (Christ unknown) passes on to judgment?

Even from the human side the *justice* of it is apparent. Shortsighted though we are, we must not let this contrast destroy the conclusion already established that, first of all, the philanthropist is not to be the subject of any injustice.

In the judging he will get his due deserts, and in such a fashion that he himself will acquiesce and acknowledge their equity. More than this, in the consummation he will be unutterably thankful, in his measure, for the judging of his pious sins. *He* will have no charge to bring against God in that day. Then why should we, with a beam in both our eyes, seek to remove a seeming speck in God's?

God is not satisfied, nor is it sufficient for His purpose to reveal the excessive depths of His love, to save all men at the consummation. The contrast is not great enough. The distinction is not sharp enough. Such a course would leave depths unexplored, recesses unrevealed. So He proposes to compare the good with the best. The righteousness of such a course is manifested by our Lord in His parable of the laborers in the vineyard. Right demands the payment of a just equivalent. Yet this does not debar God from *giving* freely when He chooses (Matt.20:1-16).

God will be more than just to *all.* It is only the lurking impression that He is not just to unbelievers, the non-elect, which suggests that there is an element of partiality in His favor for the few. God, having provided for a full accounting with all His creatures, which is good, proposes to display the riches of His love, which is better, as well as the exceeding riches of His affection, which is best. In fact, it is this last which has been His aim in all the rest, only it takes a pyramid of love to rear its highest pinnacle.

First of all, by what process does God save men now? Is it not, in essence, the very same process as that which will save the unbeliever in the future? They are brought into the presence of the great white throne and learn God's judgment on their sins. We are brought into His presence at Golgotha and learn the same lesson through Him Who suffered there. No scene in all the universe of time or space will ever expose the hideousness of sin as does the cross of Christ. Even the great white throne with its

exposure of the sins of myriads of mankind, will not equal it. We know what sin is, not merely by our own sad experience, but by the place it gave Him. He was the Highest of heaven. It made Him the lowest of earth. He was the life and the light of all. It put Him into the darkness of death. That pole on which He was nailed is the real tree where we may gain the knowledge of good and evil. Knowing that, what need is there for us to enter into judgment?

But the cross reveals far more than the judgment. The evil is eclipsed by the good. The vivid and appalling contrasts between the limitless love of God and the wretched wickedness of man makes it both the judgment and the consummation for all who gaze upon it. He is our Judge and our Saviour all at once, and we enter into a foretaste of the bliss which will finally embrace all of God's creatures.

In God's administrational dealings we see the vast value of contrast, in order to pile up a pyramid to give expression to His grace. God did not call all nations, but chose one as the special object of His favor. With this as a background He turns to the despised aliens when His chosen people apostatize. By showing the highest honors to those who deserve the least, He has at last succeeded in producing an object lesson through which, not only mankind, but the celestial spheres as well, may learn and luxuriate in the lavishness of His love.

God Himself planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden of Eden. As both were combined in a single tree, it was impossible for Adam to know good, apart from evil. The contrast between the two is the only means the creature has for the realization of God's goodness and the appreciation of His love. For this cause evil and sin have invaded the universe temporarily. Their presence is appalling, but their stay is brief, and their ultimate effect, not only the knowledge of good, but the enjoyment and adoration of the God of all good.

A. E. Knoch

GOD'S EVANGEL FOR OUR FAITH

WE have seen that Romans 5:8, 8:3 and 8:32 express God's evangel concerning His Son explicitly:

ˊGod is commending ˊthis **love of** *sf*__**His** *io*__**to us,**
Seeing **that,** while **we** ˡ**are still sinners,**
Christ dies *ov*__**for our** sakes . . . .
3 **For** ˊwhat is **impossible** to **the law, in which it was** ˡ**infirm through the flesh—**
ˊGod, ˉ**sending** His *sf*__**own** ˊ**Son**
in the **likeness of sin's flesh**
And concerning sin,
He condemns ˊ**sin in the flesh . . . .**
32 **Surely He Who spares**° **not** His **own** ˊ**Son, but gives Him up** *ov*__**for us all, how shall He not, together** with **Him, also be grac**iously° grant**ing us** ˊ**all?**

It is God's evangel that He loves us and commends this love by means of Christ's death for the sake of sinners, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh, and sending Him as the Antitype of the sin offering, thus putting sin under condemnation. In view of this astounding love, that of sparing not His own Son but giving Him up for us all, how shall God, together with His Son, not be gracing us with all that is good, even including righteousness and glorification (*cf* 8:28,30)?

GOD PROMISES BEFORE

God promises this evangel before Paul had been severed from Judaism and from the apostles in Jerusalem for its proclamation and defense. This evangel is not severed from the holy scriptures entrusted to Israel as their

foremost prerogative (Rom.3:1,2). It is traceable in them, although Paul, as his apostleship advances, unfolds the evangel of the untraceable riches of Christ (Eph.3:8).

This is the first point Paul makes in Romans concerning that evangel of God for which he is severed. However, the CV sets it apart in parenthesis so that we may jump ahead to the words, "concerning His Son," which are of utmost importance. Yet in seeing that God's evangel concerns His Son it follows that those passages where it is promised before concern God's Son.

SEED OF DAVID AND SON OF GOD

Most of verse 3 and all of verse 4 are in the form of Hebrew poetry, not matched in length and rhythm, but with thought parallels. Here in verse 3, the prophecy of Yahweh through Nathan concerning Solomon found in 2 Samuel 7:12 is noted. The words "I will raise up *your seed* after you, . . . and will establish the throne of his kingdom," are seen to apply to God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. He comes in the humility of human flesh, God sending Him in the likeness of sin's flesh (Rom.8:3; Phil.3:8), yet He shall reign. This shall occur only after His emptying of Himself and coming in sinful flesh. Here God's evangel as the message of Christ's suffering in death is confined to the word "flesh," and His exaltation is given prominence. But Paul does not dwell on this matter of future rule in Romans as he does in 1 Corinthians 15:25-28, showing its expansion beyond King of Israel to all being subject to the Saviour as their Lord, and even further in Ephesians 1:10 concerning the complement of the eras when all will be headed up in the Christ—"both that in the heavens and that on the earth." What is made clear here in Romans 1:3 is that all the process of reigning and its glorious goal of God becoming All in all, are dependent on His coming as the Seed of

a very human king, good in heart but sinful in flesh. This speaks of Christ's humiliation prior to His exaltation.

Then in verse 4 where no explicit prophecy is cited, Paul speaks of Jesus Christ our Lord as He shall be designated (even *proven* to be) God's Son by His work of resurrecting the dead ones. This operation is clearly expounded in 1 Corinthians 15, especially in verses 20-24 with further details beyond. It is in the vivification of all in Him (1 Cor.15:22) that Christ Jesus, our Lord is designated without doubt and with full recognition to be God's Son. This indeed will take not simply *spirit*, but *"holiness of spirit,"* spirit that most fully reflects God Who is spirit.

These two verses speak of God's evangel concerning His Son as it speaks of future results. But they are based solidly on the evangel of God's operations of salvation and of Christ's faith and obedience to which Paul now directs our attention.

OBEDIENCE OF FAITH

Paul and those apostles associated with him obtain grace and apostleship "for obedience of faith among all the nations." This is the object of their apostleship. Literally it is for UNDER-HEARing of faith, submissive listening of faith. This corresponds with Romans 6:17 ". . . you UNDER-HEAR from the heart the type of teaching to which you are given over," which in turn corresponds with "you are not under law, but *under grace*" (Rom.6:14). What Paul is dispensing is God's message of a very particular type—an evangel (WELL-MESSAGE) of gratuitous grace for our submissive hearing of faith.

The wording Paul uses here is in significant contrast to the words of Moses to Israel at Sinai: "Now this is the instruction . . . . You will hear . . . and you will observe to do it" (Deut.6:1-3). There, what is heard, is instruction which is to be carried out by Israel's doing. Now what is

heard is God's evangel of grace which is something quite different from the law given at Sinai. There it was instruction for human doing. Now it is *God's doing* through His Son which in His grace and by His spirit He writes on the heart (2 Cor.3:3) in accord with His will and purpose. Our doing is one of believing this evangel and the enslavement of our minds to this message of power, righteousness and love which Paul calls "God's law" (Rom.7:25), that law which God Himself follows in the sending of His Son.

OUR FAITH

In Romans 1:8-12 Paul thanks God for the faith of the believers in Rome and its consoling effects, both their faith and his. This faith was being announced in the whole world, and still today it is being announced and heard, although much encrusted by tradition and human philosophy in our translations and heralding. Yet God makes at least the core of His evangel shine in the hearts of those He has chosen. The faith here is the message the believers in Rome were believing which still needed further sharing of spiritual grace from Paul for them to be *established.* It is given to Paul not only to announce the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor.15:1-4) but to make known this evangel's ever-increasing spiritual grace for mutual consolation, and thus for ourselves as well.

THE EVANGEL

We come, then, to the evangel which is called "God's evangel." There is much that is different, or at least goes beyond what had been revealed, and which will leave certain matters behind during the current era. Nevertheless, at its core, it was promised before in the holy scriptures. Where they concern Jesus Christ, they very often speak as Paul speaks here of Him. He shall reign and resurrect the

dead with great power of spirit. Yet first He must come in the weakness of human flesh.

Humbling before exaltation—weakness before power—that is God's law! That is the pattern of God's evangel. Yet Paul is not ashamed of it and eagerly evangelizes it (Rom.1:14,15). And in verses 16 and 7 he tells us why.

16 **For not** [l]**ashamed**[°] **am I** of **the evangel:**
For it [l]**is God's power** [io]**for salvation to every**one [·]who is **believing** it**—to** the **Jew first, and to** the **Greek as well.**
17 **For in it God's righteousness is being revealed**[°]
out of faith, [io]**for faith,**
according **as it is** [°]**written**[°]**:**
[y]**Now the Righteous** One,
out of faith shall He be living[°]**.**
18 **For God's indignation is being revealed**[°] **from heaven on** [e]**all** the **irreverence and unrighteousness of human** beings**. . .** 23 **for all sin and are wanting**[°] **of the glory of** [·]**God.**[1]

Here, in two positive declarations, in contrast to one (long) negative Paul sets forth God's evangel for which he is severed and concerning which he is not ashamed. It is the same message as we hear in Romans 5:8; 8:3 and 8:32, telling us what God does through His Son, the Righteous One, for our sake. It is a message which is itself God's power for salvation *for* us who are believing it—but not *caused* by our believing it (it is God's power because of Christ's dying for us—the cause is Christ's faith).

In this message God's righteousness is revealed—righteousness that is His and always has been His and always will be His, but which is not revealed until God sends His Son in the likeness of sin's flesh to bring sin into condemnation. Thus we can see that God, all along, through

1. Romans 3:23 is attached here to Romans 1:18 as the summation of 1:18-3:20.

the wicked eons is working out a purpose that involves evil so that His goodness of righteousness and love shall be known. All human beings sin. Christ Jesus dies. God's righteousness is revealed.

SALVATION AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

The first two reasons Paul gives for not being ashamed of the evangel are that it is a message of God's power for salvation for those who are believing it, and that God's righteousness is being revealed in it. This salvation and this righteousness are sourced in (they come "out of") the faith of the Righteous One, Who is God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. The salvation is directed to everyone who is believing this evangel which concerns this Righteous One, Jesus Christ, our Lord. (In 3:21,22, after all are brought before us in 1:18-3:20, Paul makes known that this is directed toward all.)

APPRECIATION OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The fact that God's own, personal righteousness is made known in the evangel should help open up its glories to us and strengthen our appreciation for it. The insight into God's righteousness which the evangel provides is a guard against much wrong thinking about salvation.

The idea, often vaguely felt, and sometimes clearly expressed, that salvation is a matter of God's grace but not of His justice (which is His righteousness) is mistaken. God's grace harmonizes fully with His righteousness. In fact, because of the nature of His righteousness God's grace would not be exercised apart from a sure and righteous foundation. If the death of Christ on the cross does not provide an actual, righteous basis for salvation, then it accomplishes no more than the sacrifices of sheep and goats. Christ is the *Antitype* of the propitiatory shelter (Rom.3:25) and of the sin offering (2 Cor.5:21) and of the

approach present (Eph.2:8; *cf* 5:2). The types could only be a shadow of the operation of God which really brings an end to sin and offense, enmity and infirmity and death. God's righteousness in dealing fully and finally with sin is now revealed.

Salvation is all of God, entirely based on His giving of His Son. It is His power at work. But also in God's powerful work of salvation we see God's very own attribute of righteousness at work. The joy and peace of the believer grasps this revelation of God with tight hold.

PSALM 98

As he often does in his epistles, Paul employs the language of the Hebrew Scriptures here as he introduces the theme of righteousness. In this case he particularly borrows from Psalm 98 which anticipates the marvelous works of the kingdom and the praise of Yahweh the King. The psalm speaks of a "new song" (Psa.98:1) which is one of good news, and Paul speaks of the evangel of God (Rom.1:16):

Sing to Yahweh a new song,
For He has done marvelous works;
His right hand and His holy arm
have brought His salvation.

For not ashamed am I of the evangel,
For it is God's power for salvation . . . .

But Paul is speaking of the message of Christ's death for sinners, not of Israel's deliverance from their enemies and from the evil they represented. God's salvation of Israel was limited in extent. Yet indeed it was given with that absolute salvation which is announced in the evangel in view. Every divine operation of salvation is based on the truth of the faithful and welcome message that Christ Jesus comes into the world to save sinners (1 Tim.1:15). None of the promises of future glory concerning Israel, and reaching to the

nations of the earth as well, can be fulfilled apart from the cross of Christ. That is the real basis of all God's works of salvation and of the revelation of God's righteousness in His works of salvation. Apart from God's giving up of His Son for us all, there is no real and lasting salvation, and no possibility of a full revelation of divine righteousness.

Hence certain key words of Psalm 98:2 appear in Romans 1:17 in a wider and deeper context:

Yahweh has made known His salvation;
To the eyes of the nations
He has **revealed His righteousness**.
For in [the evangel]
God's righteousness is being revealed . . . .

How is it that God's work of the salvation of Israel, by His powerful arm, revealed His righteousness to the nations? God's righteousness was seen in His dealings with the idolatry and wickedness of the nations. Yet the psalm does not focus on the defeat of the enemy but on Israel's salvation from the enemy's influence of idolatry and wickedness. God's righteousness was not seen so much in paying back the enemy for its wickedness as in ridding Israel of that wickedness. In effect, the wickedness was taken away. Hence what the nations learned was that God's righteousness demanded the removal of evil. Irreverence and unrighteousness would not be tolerated.

To be sure, these displays of God's righteousness in His acts of deliverance of Israel from idolatry and its wicked associations, were impermanent and incomplete. In relation to the general situation of humanity when, in His patience and forbearance God does not execute His judgments on human unrighteousness, these works of temporary salvation gave a glimpse of divine righteousness to the world. But it was not the full orbed revelation that the evangel of God provides.

In addition of course, Israel itself was sinful, continually

falling into idolatry and participating in corrupt practices. The salvation given them internally and externally was neither perfect nor permanent, and consequently the revelation of divine righteousness was limited.

But that is not the case with God's work of salvation through the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ. This work deals with all unrighteousness and does so to a *finality,* as the writer to the Hebrews expresses it (*cf* Heb.10:1-14). When Christ dies, all die (2 Cor.5:14), for all is created in Him, through Him and for Him (Col.1:16). So also God delights, in His love and righteousness, through the blood of the cross to reconcile all to Himself (Col.1:19,20).

INDIGNATION AND UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

The third reason Paul gives for not being ashamed of the evangel is that, apart from its revelation, there is no salvation. Human beings are unrighteous and God is indignant (Rom.1:18). Human beings are irreverent and deserving of death (Rom.1:32). They cannot escape God's righteous judgment (Rom.2:3,5). This includes those of the nations and the Jew as well (Rom.3:4). Not one is righteous—not even one (Rom.3:10). In view of God's indignation and His righteous judgment no flesh at all shall be justified (Rom.3:20). All sin and are wanting of the glory of God (Rom.3:23).

This is attested through the law and the prophets, even as God's evangel is promised and attested there (Rom.1:2; 3:21). But this is not God's evangel for which Paul is severed and which concerns God's Son and is a message of God's salvation, revealing God's righteousness.

God's indignation is not His power for salvation of human beings who are unrighteous, everyone of whom sins. That is a fact which goes far in explaining whyPaul is not ashamed of the evangel. But it is in third place. His lack of shame is first of all what it *is* (it is God's power for salvation) and what it *reveals* (it reveals God's righteousness).

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS MANIFESTED AND DISPLAYED

With Romans 3:21 Paul returns to God's evangel itself as introduced in 1:16,17. It manifests God's righteousness, which, according to Romans 3:26 is displayed by God being the righteous Justifier (Righteous-ifier) of the human (the irreverent one, Rom.4:5) the source of which being Jesus's faith. It is out of faith into faith. The route which the revelation, the manifestation, the display of God's righteousness takes is *out of* Christ's faith in dying for us and then coming *into* our faith. Yet in view of Romans 1:18-3:20 salvation, is now seen as justification not only *for* us who are presently believing the evangel, but *for all*, both Jew and Greek, "for there is no distinction, for all sin and are wanting of the glory of God." It is for the believer (chosen in God's grace) because it is for all. But, in that God is especially the Saviour of those who are presently believing it (1 Tim.4:10) God's righteousness in constituting all righteous (Rom.5:19) through Jesus Christ's faith (Rom. 3:22) is already "on all who are believing it." It is not yet *in* us; we are still dying in Adam. But it is on us, which is something less and temporary like God's spirit that came *on* those gathered on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4,17,18). The believers are not yet constituted righteous (Rom.5:19), but righteousness is *reckoned* to them (Rom.4:5,6,24) it is securely put to their account until the deliverance of what is procured and they are constituted righteous.

To sum up, God's evangel is one of salvation revealing God's righteousness by means of (out of and through) the faith of Jesus Christ, His suffering unto death. This is for all, but in a special way is for us who are presently believing it. All shall be constituted righteous while already God has put this righteousness to the account of the believer.

D.H.H.

THE RIGHTEOUS ONE

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS is being revealed by means of Christ's faith. This revelation comes to us *out of* Christ's great act of faith in His God and Father and obedience to His Word in dying for human beings while they are still sinners. In support of this evangel the apostle Paul cites the words of the prophet Habakkuk in Romans 1:17. He sees the prophecy of Habakkuk 2:4 as having its reference to Christ Jesus in His unwavering faith through the most difficult of situations, climaxing in His death on the cross. More than any other, Christ is the Righteous One, and more firmly and enduringly than any other He believed throughout His life of humiliation what God had spoken concerning Him.

Regarding this faith of Christ Jesus, our Lord, God spoke long ago through a chosen prophet, in an era of great distress.

THE HABAKKUK CITATION

Habakkuk lived in dark days when lawlessness and misery, devastation and violence, contention and quarreling were corrupting the entire society of Judea, centered in Jerusalem (Hab.1:2,3). The law which had been given to Israel so that they would fear the One Elohim and might not sin (Exodus 20:20) was torpid, and judgment was tortuous (Hab.1:4).

In such a time Habakkuk implored to Yahweh, crying, "How long [shall this go on], and You are not saving?"

And Yahweh replied with a message to the people:

5 **See, [7]treacherous[l] ones~[cs], and look,**
And be amazed, be stunned,
For [7]I [l]effect~[c] a **deed in your days**
You would **not [l]believe though it were being related.**

What would not be believed even though it was being related as Yahweh's word through the prophet? It was, to begin with, that Yahweh was raising the Chaldeans, "that bitter and hasty nation," who would come from afar, "coming for violence" (Hab.1:6,9). That nation would be centered in one individual who "is making sport of every fortress" and "whose vigor is his eloah" (Hab.1:10,11).

Yet this operation of Yahweh was not to be a work of salvation. It would be violence against violence, treacherous ones against treacherous ones, misery upon misery. It was in view of this multiplication of troubles that the prophet spoke again to Yahweh (with considerable boldness), saying (Hab.1:12,13),

12 Are **You not from aforetime,** O **Yahweh?**
My Eloah, my Holy One, [s]**You**[ph] **shall not die.**
O **Yahweh, You have placed him for judgment,**
And, O **Rock, You have founded him for correction⁻.**
13 You are of **cleaner eyes [f]than** to **see⁻ evil,**
And to **look⁻ [>]at misery You are not [l]able.**
Why are You looking at the **treacherous[l],**
Are [l]silent [i]when the **wicked** person is **swallowing⁻**
up one **more righteous [f]than he?**

Habakkuk agreed that the judgment and correction were necessary, but what of salvation from Yahweh, Who is of cleaner eyes than to look at such things and is not able to look at misery indefinitely? Will He not bring this cycle of human violence followed by divine indignation to an end?

Hence Habakkuk stood on guard and ready for further word from Yahweh, "to see what He shall speak to me" (Hab.2:1).

2 **[+]Then Yahweh is answering me and saying,**
Write the **vision, and make** it **plain on [·]tablets,**
That he may run who is **reading [i] it.**
3 **For** the **vision** is [fr]**yet for** an **appointed** time**;**
And it shall [7]bud~ [>]at the **end,**
and it shall not prove a **lie.**

A vision is set before Habakkuk, and he is to record it plainly on tablets "that he may run who is reading it." This may remind us of Isaiah 40:31 concerning those who are expectant in Yahweh, who shall *run* and not be wearied, and walk and not faint. So also we read in Isaiah 52:7, "How comely on the mountains are the feet of the tidings bearer, who is announcing peace, bearing tidings of good, announcing salvation."

Yet the vision does not seem to be made clear in the Masoretic (Hebrew) text which continues to speak *about* it, but offers no message of peace and good and salvation for one who is expectant in Yahweh, no evangel for the tidings bearer to bring with running feet. The third and fourth lines of Habakkuk 2:3 seem to repeat the thought of the first two lines. The vision is for an appointed time when it will bud forth and not prove a lie. But what is the vision? What is coming at its appointed time? What is it that if it be dallying, the faithful Israelite is to tarry for it? What is it that shall come, yea come, and shall not be late?

According to the Greek translation called the Septuagint the third and fourth lines of verse 3 do not speak of "it" (that is, the vision), but of "Him" (that is, the Coming One"). The vision is of the Coming One Who shall come at the appointed time and not be late. That is an evangel of peace and good and salvation, worthy of the running feet of the tidings bearer who is expectant in Yahweh.

If this is so, then Habakkuk 2:4 also speaks of the Coming One, Who is now called the Righteous One.

With this in mind, we have presented an expanded translation of Habakkuk 2:4 as indicated by the Septuagint:

3 **For** the **vision** is [fr]**yet for** an **appointed** time**;**
And it shall [7]**bud~** [›]**at** the **end,**
and it shall not prove a **lie.**
If [7]**He~ be dallying, tarry for** [7]**Him~,**
For [7]the **Coming** One **shall come~,**
[7]**and**[cs] [7]**He~ shall not be late.**
4 [bd]**If He is made presumptuous,**
His soul is not upright in Him;
[7]**If He is shrinking,**
My soul is not delighting in Him.[0]
[+]**Yet** the **Righteous** One [i]**by His faith, He shall live.**

With this reading we can see that Yahweh gives Habakkuk a vision of the Coming One, Who is the Righteous One Who will be living by faith. Yet the faith is no easy pathway, for the ordinary person would shrink from it and follow what would presumably be more beneficial. Yet the soul of the Coming One will be upright, and despite the immediate suffering will not be presumptuous and follow His own will. He will live "out of His faith" in accord with the word of God. In every way God will delight in Him.

In full accord with this, and surely with it in mind, Stephen, in reviewing the history of Israel's unfaithfulness, reaches a climax in shouting, "Stiff-necked and uncircumcised in your hearts and ears, you are ever clashing with the holy spirit! As your fathers, you also! Which of the prophets do not your fathers persecute? And they kill those who announce before concerning *the coming of the Righteous One,* of Whom now you became the traitors and murderers—who got the law for a mandate of messengers and do not maintain it!" (Acts 7:51-53).

There should be little doubt that, whatever words of the prophets Stephen had in mind, he most certainly had

Habakkuk 2:3,4 in view when he spoke of the coming Righteous One. From Stephen's view the Righteous One had already come and lived a life of faith, culminating in being killed by His own people. And we may add that this faith of the One Who came opened the way to His living again in resurrection.

Later, the writer of the book of Hebrews cites lines from the Septuagint version of Habakkuk 2:3 and 2:4 in order to encourage the Hebrew believers in endurance and faith in their own days when what is expected is not what is being observed:

37 **For still how very little,** He ·Who is **coming° will be arriving and not delaying.** 38 **Now My ·Righteous** One [o]**by faith shall be living°, and If He should ever be shrinking°, My ·soul is not delighting in Him.**

In this revision of the CV of Hebrews 10:37,38, we see that the reference is to God's Son, as His Righteous One. Again, the Righteous One has already come and exercised faith to perfection. But the writer cites the words of the prophet as they were written and understood by Stephen in order to draw attention to the strength and glory of Christ's faith. The Righteous One did not shrink, and God did indeed delight in Him (*cf* Matt.3:17; Matt.12:18 [*cp* Isa.42:1]; and Matt.17:5). And thus He becomes the First and Highest Example of faith for the Hebrew believers. No one could come up to His level, but all will be encouraged in faith by keeping His faith in view.

Consequently, after presenting the vast cloud of witnesses in living lives of faith, the writer returns to Christ as the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith in chapter 12.

This focus on the faith of the Messiah was provided in the vision given to Habakkuk. The prophet was not about to perceive the Coming One as He shall come in indignation and power, going forth for the salvation of His people

(*cf* Hab.3:12,13) after which the earth will be filled with the knowledge of Yahweh's glory as the waters are covering the sea (Hab.2:14). Instead the Coming One, Who would not be late, would come first as the Righteous One, Who shall live by faith. Before He comes in the day of God's indignation, with fierce and decisive action against enemies within and without, seen by all, He must come as One Who lives by faith. That is, He Himself would not fulfill the place of Conqueror and King in Habakkuk's day, but He would come at the appointed time, and even then would live under conditions where the glory is not yet realized. And when that time arrives, instead of entering immediately into the promised joy set before Him, it would be His place to live by faith in accord with the words spoken through Isaiah the prophet (Isa.53:7):

7 **Hard pressed is He, and He** is **humbled**[l],
[+]**Yet He is not opening His mouth;**
Like a **flockling to slaughter is He** [l]**fetched,**
And as a **ewe before her shearers**[l] **is mute,**
[+] **He is not opening His mouth.**

In this we see the Inaugurator and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, the Righteous One of Habakkuk 2:4, Whom Yahweh will desire to crush, and in Whose hand Yahweh's desire shall prosper (Isa.53:10). Yet as written in Isaiah 53:11, out of all this toil, God's **righteous Servant** shall justify many (Isa.53:11):

It is this coming, His coming, that rests on faith, that must occur before the coming Habakkuk longed for. It is because of His coming and living in faith that the prophet's prayer in chapter 3 will be fulfilled.

3 **Eloah is coming from Teman,**
And the **Holy** One **from Mount Paran.**
His splendor covers the **heavens,**
And His praise, it fills the earth.

PAUL'S USE OF HABAKKUK 2:4

Ananias of Damascus told Saul, "The God of our fathers fixes upon you beforehand to know His will, *and to be acquainted with the Righteous One*" (Acts 22:14). Paul, in writing to the Romans, has not forgotten Who that Righteous One is.

As for Stephen in Acts 7:52 and the writer of Hebrews 10:37,38, so also for Paul in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11, Habakkuk 2:4 speaks as a prophecy of Christ, living in faith's obedience unto the death of the cross. It surely is one of the passages expounded by the risen Lord on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:27). It certainly is one of God's promises of His evangel made before through His prophets in the holy scriptures (Rom.1:2).

We do not discard the application of the passage to God's people in times of distress and, as it may be, seasons of violence and lawlessness and contention, and in fact we see how this fits our situation even more emphatically than those of Israel, for our walk is fully by faith and not by perception. Indeed we are believers who are being saved with much daily joy and peace as we retain, in faith, the evangel of Christ's faith through our lives (*cf* 1 Cor.15:1-3).

But what has been missed is that here in Romans 1:17 Paul solidly bases our faith on the message of Christ's faith. Our faith is in His faith, which is "the deliverance in His blood" (Romans 3:24), in His giving of Himself for our sins, that He might extricate us out of the present wicked eon (Gal.1:3).

Therefore, Paul writes regarding his present pathway of living in faith: ". . . that I should be gaining Christ, and may be found in Him, not having my righteousness, which is [out of] law, but that which is *through the faith of Christ,* the righteousness which is [out] of God for [into] faith" (Phil.3:8,9).

D.H.H.

later by faith's law. Consequently, in Romans 4 Paul will speak of accounted justification. But the basis of such a limited and temporary justification has been set before us in Romans 3:21-30, all proleptically made righteous by means of Jesus Christ's faith, for the manifestation of God's righteousness. D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME 114

According to the Promise . . . 70
Boasting in God's Will . . . 63
Celestial Sovereignty . . . 51
Christ's Supremacy . . . 71
Earnest of the Spirit, The . . . 26
Era Preceding the Present, The . . . 147
Faith Perfected . . . 87
Forbear—Justify—Propitiate . . . 123
God's Evangel Concerning His Son . . . 47,75,135,187
God is One . . . 187
God's Righteousness Manifested Through Jesus Christ's Faith For All . . . 135
Herald the Word! . . . 113
His Achievement are We . . . 4,63,113,158
Holy Spirit . . . 13
Obituaries: C. Booher 74, J. Bowerman 86, D. Cornwell 133, S. Goerzen, 86, H. Neimeyer 86, J. Orton 133
Righteous One's Faith, The . . . 47
Romans 3:21-28 . . . 134
Rooted and Grounded in Love . . . 26,35,51,99,147
Sealing of the Spirit, The . . . 35
Seated Among the Celestials . . . 99
Singular Faith of Christ, The . . . 75
Soul and Spirit . . . 35
To God be all the Glory . . . 4
Together with the Lord . . . 167
Word of Christ, its Grace and Power, The . . . 158

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 114th Year

(1909–2023)

Contents:

2 God's Wondrous Grace
3 Editorial
4 To God be All the Glory
13 Holy Spirit
26 The Earnest of the Spirit
35 The Sealing of the Spirit
47 The Righteous One's Faith

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GOD'S WONDROUS GRACE

Are you trusting in the Saviour?
Do you long for His return?
Does His word become more precious
Though the world does not discern?
There's a work for all believers
In that realm beyond the sky,
Teaching God's celestial beings
Why our Saviour came to die.

Can you glimpse God's love and mercy
In His plan for all the race?
Can you see His whole creation
Finally in His fond embrace?
If you wish to know His purpose;
It's unfolding every hour;
Just believe what God has spoken
And adore Him for His pow'r.

Life is but a fleeting moment;
Time is swiftly passing by;
Soon we'll hear our Saviour calling
Us to meet Him in the sky;
Won't you join that grand reunion
And with Him forever be;
Telling all celestial beings
How His love and grace is free?

There's a happy day awaiting,
When this world will be at peace;
All the sorrow, all the crying
Will at last forever cease:
'Tis the reconciliation
Of the universe, you know;
All will bow in adoration
To the One Who loves us so.

T.K.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FIRST QUARTER 2023
BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

EDITORIAL

WITH thanksgiving to God, Who spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all, we begin volume 114 of *Unsearchable Riches* magazine. The articles center on God and the activities of His holy spirit with a final reminder of His evangel concerning His Son.

Jim Coram writes of God, that "He sees to it that all moves toward . . . the fulfillment of His purpose to become 'All in all' (1 Cor.15:28). Whatever occurs has a place to fill toward this end" (pp.11,12).

Concerning God's spirit, A. E. Knoch concludes his three articles as follows: "The holy spirit is not a distinct personality from God Himself. Christ was born of both God and His holy spirit—*one* 'Person' . . . . The earnest of the spirit is the initial instalment which we receive of that plenitude which will be ours in His presence" (p.46).

It is in view of God operating all by His spirit, and of the spiritual blessing of the *earnest* of the spirit, by which we are sealed on hearing and believing the evangel of our salvation—sealed to the deliverance of that which has been procured—that this issue closes with some selected and expanded passages from Paul's letter, centering on Christ's faith.

(I wish to add, with thanksgiving to God, the first names of certain ones who take part with me in carrying on the work of the Concordant Publishing Concern: Tony, Alta, Wayne, Sean, David, Daryl and Bonnie Jo.)

D.H.H.

TO GOD BE ALL THE GLORY

> O, THE DEPTH of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For, who knows the mind of the Lord? or, who becomes His adviser? or who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen! (Rom.11:33-36)

This is not a passage "to fall back on when everything else fails," but one that needs to be in the forefront of all our thinking. As with the events of Israel's history, everything that happens in our lives and throughout all the eons is out of God and through Him and for Him. What is written here concerning the experiences of one group of people is true of everyone.

Indeed, it is evident that "whatever is written before," throughout the Hebrew scriptures, is *representative* of God's ways with ourselves, insofar as His direction and control of human affairs is concerned. If this were not the case, those things could hardly have been "written for this teaching of ours," and it could never be "that through the endurance and the consolation of the scriptures we may have expectation" (Rom.15:4).

It is consoling and a source of joyful expectation to realize that man today is no more the master of his fate and captain of his soul than were his ancestors before him. For "the Supreme is in authority in the kingdom of mortals" (Dan.4:17), and "according to His will is He doing" (Dan.

4:35). Were it otherwise the Scriptures could never help us to endure; they would not console us, and could never afford us expectation out of our own failures and sufferings.

It is significant that the best-known Bible stories, such as Joseph and his brothers and the terrible troubles of Job, focus directly on the work of divine providence. The explicit testimony of God's Word is that He is operating all.

According to the apostle's rhetorical question—since no one at any time already *knows* the mind of the Lord, or becomes His *adviser,* informing Him of things of which He as yet had not been aware, or were in need of repayment inasmuch as they had given Him something *first*—this is why the riches, wisdom and knowledge of God are so deep, His judgments inscrutable, His ways untraceable. Again, none knows His mind, advises Him, or gives anything to Him first, *seeing that* out of Him and through Him and for Him is *all*: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen! (Rom.11:36).

THE ALL

It is clear, then, that in this passage the thought is, *all* that *is*, and *all* that *happens*, is out of, through, and for God. The words "the all," in any text, refer to all that is in view, all that is comprised in the subject at hand, or true in the nature of the case. Therefore, by means of the illuminating rhetoric which Paul employs in this marvelous passage, he clearly manifests the universal scope of that which brings glory to God for the eons.

That these words are used in a limited way in certain other passages (e.g., Col.3:8), is quite irrelevant. The question is: What is the scope of "the all" in Romans 11:36?

Outside of God Himself (*cp* "it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him . . ." (1 Cor.15:27), there is no exception to this "all" of Romans 11:36, nor can there be. For if just once, even concerning a trivial

matter, someone had already known His mind when He as yet had not informed him, or if at any time someone had advised Him of something of which He had hitherto been ignorant, or had given something to Him first that He had not already dispensed, then indeed some things would not be out of God. But since Paul's whole point is that such an idea could never be true, we can be sure that *all* is used universally in this passage.

FOREKNOWLEDGE AND PROPHECY

Since all that exists and all that occurs is out of, through and for God, it is evident that God knows all. He could hardly be ignorant concerning anything that found its origin, ultimate cause, and purpose in His own counsels. Future events are as much an object of God's knowledge as past events. Therefore, the Scriptures having explicitly declared that He *does* know all (1 John 3:20), there is no sound reason to suppose that anything is excluded.

What God fore*tells* He first of all fore*knows,* and it is evident He foreknows only that which He will bring to pass Himself. He can hardly rely upon man to help Him out! He fulfills His own word. Surely He has a perfect knowledge of all the great number of prophetic events recorded in the Scriptures, though these events should be ever so complex in themselves, and connected with innumerable other events of equal complexity before and after them.

Prophecy always declares that the events foretold *shall* come to pass, often insisting that they *must* occur (e.g., Luke 24:46; Rev.1:1). Though the prophetic word in itself does not cause events to happen, this fact is very far from being of any aid to the concept of free will.

The sheer existence of prophecy constitutes absolute *proof* that the events it predicts will be caused to happen. For events without a cause would be unpredictable, and our subject is predictive prophecy.

Events which *shall* and *must* take place can never be events of free will. Events of free will, according to their supposed nature, never *have* to occur, and it can never be said that one day they *will* happen, for there is always a "chance" they will not! In the nature of things, they would be absolutely unpredictable, even by God Himself.

By itself, therefore, prophecy constitutes a complete disproof of the theory of human free will. Furthermore, all prophetic events are connected with countless other events upon which they depend for their existence. And these events as well are themselves dependent upon countless antecedent events for their own existence, and so forth. This is true of all things, throughout all time, "up to the fountain, God," Who alone is self-existent.

To say that the foreknowledge of an event is certain and infallible and yet the foreknown event itself is quite uncertain and may therefore never occur, is completely unsound. For if the event that is foreknown to occur does not occur, the foreknowledge is not foreknowledge.

In order for an event to be known, there must be evidence of that which is to be known. But if any future event should truly be an unnecessary event, that is, one that does not have to occur, the future existence of that event would be absolutely without any evidence whatsoever. It could not be, and therefore would not be, an object of knowledge. The event would not be evident, and so could not be seen to be evident, or to say the same thing, it could not be known. One who has infinite strength of sight and infinite capacity of discernment will be able to see all that there is and all that, in fact, *will* be, quite perfectly indeed. Yet such abilities will not enable anyone to observe evidence which does not exist. To the contrary, they will enable the one who has such abilities to discern with absolute certainty that there is no evidence whatever of any and all unnecessary events.

To claim that things which God knows will occur may not occur, is contradictory. To say, as some have claimed, that He may have ways of knowing of unnecessary events even though we cannot conceive of such things, or at the same time that God knows a thing to be certain, He also knows it to be uncertain, is as foolish as to say that, for all we know, God may know contradictions to be true.[1]

It is *impossible* for anything to occur that would disprove God's foreknowledge, and thus make it fore-error. His foreknowledge *must* be correct; it is not enough that it simply turn out that way. At the moment it is subjected even to possible failure, it no longer has to be true. And at the moment in which it no longer has to be true, (1) it is then possible that it may become false, and (2) it then becomes quite uncertain that it is correct; that is, any convictions of it which may yet be entertained, become fallible opinion, and they are no longer *knowledge.*

Consequently, then, it is impossible that something even *could* occur which would prove God's foreknowledge mistaken. No man at any time can even possibly do a single thing that, if done, would disprove His foreknowledge. And divine omniscience would indeed be subjected to possible failure in the instant that it became possible for man to act contrary to it. Yet, as we have shown, this would make it contradictory to itself, and therefore nonexistent.

No clear mind can understand the nature of both free will and foreknowledge and believe in them both. The whole subject is really quite simple: According to the fundamental claims of its own advocates, events of "free will" *never have to occur.* And yet, foreknown and prophesied events *always have to occur.* These concepts are mutually

1. Portions of the preceding two paragraphs were adapted from FREEDOM OF THE WILL, Jonathan Edwards, pp. 74-76: Robert Carter and Brothers (1881).

exclusive. The latter one is scriptural; consequently, the former *must be mythical.* And men *have* been turned aside to myths (2 Tim.4:4). "As to the faith, they swerve" (1 Tim. 6:21). Yet we are not to be heeding myths (1 Tim.1:4).

DESIGNATION BEFOREHAND AND "PREDESTINATION"

In the Authorized Version, *proōrizō* is translated "predestinate," as well as "ordain" and "determine before." The Concordant Version translates it uniformly as "designate beforehand." This is its sense; it simply speaks of what is designated or specified (*cf* Acts 11:29). Man often fails to accomplish his plans, the things he designates to accomplish. But God's plans, the things He designates to occur in His own wise counsels, always come to pass, for it is He Who fulfills them all (Isa.46:9-11).

In the Scriptures the expression "designate beforehand" is only used in reference to a few subjects, all of them of great consequence. Yet it should never be inferred from this that these are the only things God *designates* beforehand. For God's counsels are concerned with *all* (Eph.1:11). Concerning matters yet to occur, His "counsels" speak of His *plans*—those things which, in the nature of the case, He has *designated* to accomplish. The issues involved in this great question cannot be resolved by merely noting that only a few matters are directly *spoken of* as being designated beforehand. This is especially so when even these are not truly accepted as the work of God (e.g., Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:27,28).

The question is this: Does God *operate all* (Eph.1:11)? or, absolutely speaking, Is there any other God (or Placer) except One, "the Father, out of Whom *all* is" (1 Cor.8:4-6)?

Along with the expression the "sovereignty" of God, "predestination" has been the traditional expression which has been employed by many in order to express their belief

(or disbelief) in God's deity or subjectorship, His regulation of man's actions.

Certainly we ought to believe that it is the Deity Who regulates man's actions, for the scripture declares, "And actions are *regulated* by Him" (1 Sam.2:3). This is also true concerning man's "spirit" and "heart" (Prov.16:2; 21:2), "from it spring the outflowings ("issues," AV) of life" (Prov.4:23). Indeed, "Yahweh has made everything for its own outcome, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov.16:4). "I know, O Yahweh, that it is not for a human to choose his way; it is not for a man to walk and to establish his step" (Jer.10:23). For it is our God Who directs our steps (Prov.16:9).

As Benjamin Warfield wrote, "Our difficulties with Predestination arise from a, no doubt not unnatural, unwillingness to acknowledge ourselves to be wholly at the disposal of Another. We wish to be at our own disposal. We wish 'to belong to ourselves,' and we resent belonging, especially absolutely, to anybody else, even if that anybody else be God. We are in the mood of the singer of the hymn beginning, 'I was a wandering sheep,' when he declares of himself, 'I would not be controlled.' We will not be controlled. Or, rather, to speak more accurately, we will not admit that we are controlled.

"I say that it is more accurate to say that we will not admit that we are controlled. For we are controlled, whether we admit it or not. To imagine we are not controlled is to imagine there is no God [no *Placer*]. For when we say God, we say control. If a single creature which God has made has escaped beyond His control, at the moment he has done so he has abolished God. A God who could or would make a creature whom he could not or would not control, is no God. The moment he should make such a creature he would, of course, abdicate his throne. The universe he had created would have ceased to be his universe;

or rather it would cease to exist—for the universe is held together only by the control of God . . . .

"The only justification, for making anything is that we both can and will control it. If a man should manufacture a quantity of an unstable high-explosive in the corridors of an orphan asylum, and when the stuff went off should seek to excuse himself by saying that he could not control it, no one would count his excuse valid. What right had he to manufacture it, we should say, unless he could control it?

"It is purely this idea of control which people object to when they say they object to Predestination [or, the deity of God]; not the idea of previousness, but purely the idea of control. They would object just as much if the control was supposed to be exercised without any previous intention at all.

"They ought to object much more. For a control exercised without intention would be a blind control. It would have no end in view to justify it; it would have no meaning; it would be sheerly irrational, immoral, maddening. That is what we call Fate. Say intention, however, and we say person; and when we say person we say purpose."[2]

UNIVERSAL GRACE AND GLORY

Since God is so marvelously wise, the end which He has purposed will be a wise end; since He is good, it will be good; since He is love, it will be full of love; since He is just, it will be right.

He can never become All in any who remain all in themselves. Yet to become All in all is His very purpose. Therefore, He sees to it that all moves toward this goal, the fulfillment of His purpose, to become, "All in all" (1 Cor.

2. SELECTED SHORTER WRITINGS, Volume 1, "Some Thoughts on Predestination," pp.103-106: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co. (1970).

15:28). Whatever occurs has a place to fill toward this end. Thus significance, justification and purpose are given to all; there are no purposeless events in all the universe at any time. This is our theodicy; only thus can we harmonize and vindicate even the temporary existence of evil with the goodness and deity of God.

Interminable evil simply cannot be. Indeed, it is not the justice of God that requires an "eternal hell," but the myths of man. It is God's *good* news that reveals His righteousness (Rom.1:17; 3:21); horrible predictions about everlasting burnings can never make it known. And the good news is, since all are in need ("for all sin and are wanting of the glory of God"; Rom.3:23), that "being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" is "for *all*" (Rom.3:22,24)!

Then through these considerations too, besides the other plain passages of glad tidings for all, it becomes evident that the doctrine of endless punishment, even as that of unpurposed eonian evil, is perfectly false, and is impossible to reconcile with the divine attributes.

It is for these reasons, in light of these scriptural considerations, that we believe as we do. In the Scriptures, human affairs are not left to chance, but are to be accounted for on causal grounds. Indeed nothing whatsoever can be *accounted* for except on this basis. And since divine causality is what the Scriptures reveal concerning *all*, we need not apologize for the Word of God, or for our faith in its testimony. Instead, it is in a recognition of these things that we glory in God and in His Son.

May we ascribe all the glory to God for all our achievements, and with much thanksgiving, being aware that He is doing all things well, "the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph.1:11).

James R. Coram

HOLY SPIRIT

THE doctrine of holy spirit has been concealed beyond solution in the popular versions of the Scriptures. Any attempt to criticize or correct their unwarranted addition and capitalization is sure to call down the anathemas of those who cleave to tradition. Perhaps no single feature of the CONCORDANT VERSION has occasioned so much criticism as its lack of capitals in spelling holy spirit. This calls for more explanation than has hitherto been given. It is the aim of this version to avoid all interpretation. The use of capitals for holy spirit is, in every case, a matter of judgment. There can be no real reason given why holy spirit should be capitalized. It is not a name of deity. It is God's possession, not His person. Unless it is figuratively used for God or Christ, it should always be printed and written with small letters.

Spiritually-minded translators and revisers have experienced much confusion in this matter. They seldom settled the question to their own satisfaction. J. N. Darby, who would be the last to put a small 's' where a large one should be, calls attention to this in the preface to his translation. Since he sees a glimmer of light as to the reason of this, we quote his words: "The use of a large or small 's' is of extreme difficulty in the case of the word Spirit; not in giving it when the Holy Spirit is simply spoken of personally. There it is simple enough. But as dwelling in us, our state by it, and the Holy Spirit itself, are so blended as to make it then very difficult; because it is spoken of as our state, and then as the Holy Ghost. If it be put large, we lose the first; if small, the Spirit personally. I can only leave it with this warning, calling the attention of the reader to it . . . ." Note that he calls the spirit "it," and dimly per-

ceives the cause of the confusion, which arises from the fact that the saints share the spirit of God, and are one spirit in the Lord.

A cloud is cast over the eighth chapter to the Romans by the capital S's. For many years I could not seem to get an intelligent concept of the argument because the Holy Spirit has everywhere intruded. The very first verse is evidently wrong. "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" is out of balance. It is the believer's flesh and spirit here, primarily. So also in the second verse. The spirit's law of life, refers first of all to *our* spirit, as in the tenth verse. Verse four speaks of our flesh and our spirit. Surely "the things of the spirit" and "the mind of the spirit" cannot ignore our spirit. Note the curious contradiction in verse nine. "Ye . . . are . . . in the Spirit, if . . . the Spirit of God dwell in you." We are in spirit, not in the Spirit. That is in us. It takes both spirits to "mortify the deeds of the body" (verse 13). Surely "spirit of bondage" should be balanced by "spirit of sonship" (verse 15). Note that even the Authorized Version speaks of "the Spirit *it*self "(verses 16,26) as Tyndale did in his basic English version, which has been modified in this matter to meet the prejudice of ecclesiastical traditions.

The Authorized Version has changed greatly in the course of time. At first it capitalized quite a few nouns, such as Priest, and Sabbath, but now all such words are spelled with small initial letters. The word spirit, however, has been greatly altered in the contrary direction. In many places where they had a small 's' we now have a capital. These changes are not "authorized." The alteration of other nouns is hardly worthy of notice. It is a mere matter of printers' "style." But the change of spirit to Spirit fixes the interpretation. As a result any study of this theme in the Authorized translation is worse than useless. It is misleading.

The Revised Version has followed the same tendency as the previous editorial revisions of the Authorized Version. They use fewer capitals as a rule, yet they still further increase the number of occasions where spirit is capitalized. The result of this tendency is evident on all sides. Not only is there great ignorance on the subject of holy spirit, but editors and reviewers are quite outspoken in acknowledging the fact, though they do not see the inconsistencies in the common translations, and vehemently oppose the uniform rendering of the concordant method. The only possible remedy is the constant use of a version which agrees with the Greek and nowhere inflicts the opinion of the translator on the text by the use of capitals.

The same remarks apply to the Greek texts. Modern editors all differ among themselves, and their opinion on a matter outside their proper province is worth no more than any other man's. The uncials are *all* in capitals. The cursives have very few, and these are mere matters of style. In none of the ancient texts is the word spirit distinguished at any time as in the later Greek and English reproductions. This is why the Concordant Greek Text follows the most ancient evidence. This avoids even those unconscious alterations which cast a cloud over our understanding and give the traditions of men all the authority of the Word of God.

The spirit of God and the spirit of a man are often in closest coöperation, so that they ought not to be distinguished. For instance, we are God's dwelling place, *in spirit* (Eph.2:22). What spirit? Surely it must include God's spirit, for that is the only power which can keep us in His holy presence. Surely it must include our spirit, for this is not true except in spirit. It is in contrast with flesh. How perplexing is the Revision! We are "a habitation of God in the Spirit." Either God lives in us, who live in the Spirit, which is a strange medley of figures, or God lives in the

Spirit which lives in us, which is almost as farfetched. The simple fact is that God dwells in us, not in our flesh, but in our spirit, not in any physical sense, but by His spirit. His spirit and ours are both involved in the simple phrase, in spirit. Instead of aiding us to understand, the capital precludes the possibility of intelligent interpretation.

The problem of "personality" is just as complex. The strongest passage which can be produced for the personality of the holy spirit gives it an impersonal name (John 16:13-15). In contrast with the spirit of deception it is called the spirit *of truth.* Truth is an abstract quality. Yet, in contrast with the false spirits which seek to lead astray, it is called a guide, which is neutral. These evil spirits spoke from themselves, but it speaks only what it has heard from God, which seems to be personal. All this refers to the paraclete, the holy spirit. As replacing Christ and opposing evil spirits it is given the attributes of personality, but when considered as opposed to the spirit of error, it is the impersonal spirit of truth. In itself it is neutral, but it reflects the character of that with which it is composed. When replacing a person it is personified.

The doctrine of the distinct personality of the holy spirit probably arose from this passage. Our Lord's figures of speech were often misunderstood by His disciples. When He spoke to them of leaven, they worried about bread. "This is my body" was taken literally, and earnestly defended by the church for a thousand years. So the personification of the spirit of truth, because it was to take the place of a Person, and was in contrast to evil spirits, has been taken literally, leading to the creation of another god in the Christian pantheon. We may rest assured that the disciples never understood it so. No Jew would believe in another deity. They looked for no person at Pentecost. They received a spirit, God's spirit, the spirit of truth, which

was in them and abode with them in a manner impossible to a person.

THE VARIOUS PHRASES

In the original there are a number of striking variations in combining the two words, holy and spirit. There is *holy spirit, spirit holy, the holy spirit,* and *the holy the spirit.* A laudable attempt has been made to show that these differ in *meaning.* It is supposed that the longest phrase, *the holy the spirit,* is applied only to the "Giver" and the shortest, *spirit holy,* only to His "gifts." The difficulty with this is that it has no analogy in any language. The definite article does not change the *meaning* of the words to which it is prefixed. It cannot change a power into a person. For instance, "spirit of-God" (God's spirit, Rom.8:9, CV) differs from "the spirit of-the God" (1 Cor.2:11) in emphasis, but surely not in sense. *"The God"* is only a *restricted* application of "God." The latter is not a mere power.

In order to show that "spirit" may refer to God's spirit quite as well as "*the* spirit" we will give the occurrences in which it is in direct combination with the name of God. These will, at the same time, give further light on the fact that God's spirit is not a separate deity from God Himself. The two phrases are distinguished, where possible, in the latest revision of the CONCORDANT VERSION by rendering one "the spirit of God" and the other "God's spirit."

the spirit of-the God

1 Cor.	2:11	that which is of God no one has known except *the spirit of God*
	2:14	the soulish man is not receiving that which is of *the spirit of God*
	3:16	you are the temple of God and *the spirit of God* is making its home in you
	6:11	you were justified . . . by *the spirit of* our *God*
1 John	4: 2	In this you are knowing *the spirit of God*

spirit of-God

Matt.	3:16	*God's spirit* descending as if it were a dove
	12:28	I am casting out demons by *God's spirit*
Rom.	8: 9	if so be that *God's spirit* is making its home in you
	8:14	as many as are being led by *God's spirit*
	15:19	in the power of *God's spirit*
1 Cor.	7:40	Now I presume that I, also, have *God's spirit*
	12: 3	no one, speaking by *God's spirit,* is saying, "Anathema is Jesus."
2 Cor.	3: 3	but with *the spirit of the living God* [*living God's spirit*]

Who can distinguish between "the spirit of God" (1 Cor. 3:16) and "God's spirit" (Rom.8:9), which makes its home in us? It is "God's spirit" that leads us, not "*the* spirit of God." In each case the difference is entirely in the relation of the phrases to the context, not in its meaning.

If the absence of the article before *spirit* denotes that it is a thing, and its presence a personality, then the many passages which treat it as a quality should all be anarthrous. Yet we read of *the* spirit of the truth (1 John 4:6), *the* spirit of the grace (Heb.10:29), *the* spirit of the deception (1 John 4:6), *the* spirit of your mind (Eph.4:23), though, of course the article is usually lacking in such cases. We would also expect that personal spirits always have the article. Yet we read "nor spirit" (Acts 23:8), [a] spirit (Acts 23:9), [a] spirit (Luke 24:37), unclean spirits (Luke 6:18), [an] unclean spirit (Mark 1:23; 5:2; 7:25), etc. The article has no such function.

Moreover, the same spirit is sometimes referred to as "*the* spirit" and "*spirit.*" Our Lord spoke of *the* spirit which the disciples were about to get, and then calls it "holy spirit" (John 7:39). Then it is called "the holy spirit" (Acts 1:8; 2:33). Later it is called "the spirit the holy" (Acts 15:8, see 11:15). So, in many instances, these variations are applied quite freely to the same spirit operating on the same occasion.

We will now give the various phrases in which *holy* and *spirit* are combined, with all their variations in grammar as well as those produced by the presence of the article. Such an analysis is needed, that those who really wish to study the facts as they are in the original may do so with ease and profit. First we give the forms without the article, later those with it. It should be observed that, in Greek, the adjective, as *holy,* normally comes *after* the noun, so that *pneuma hagion, spirit holy,* is the same as our *holy spirit.*

hagion pneuma, holy spirit

Luke	12:12	for *holy spirit* will be teaching you

to hagion pneuma, the holy spirit

Luke	12:10	the one who blasphemes *the holy spirit* shall not be pardoned

In these passages *holy* is emphatic by position. In both God's spirit and its operations are involved, so that neither can be excluded. Indeed, the broad and comprehensive adjective "holy" is used in all of these passages, rather than the limiting "God's," in order to include whatever is within the scope of the context. It is not necessary, nay, it is undesirable, that we should dissect its manifestations into the "personal," and the operative, and the human aspects. All is operative and due to the contact of God's spirit with the human spirit.

pneuma hagion, spirit holy (nom. or acc.)

Luke	1:35	*Holy spirit* shall be coming on you
	2:25	and *holy spirit* was on him
	11:13	be giving *holy spirit* to those requesting Him
John	7:39	this He said concerning the spirit which those believing into Him were about to get. For *holy spirit* was not as yet given
	20:22	Get *holy spirit!*
Acts	8:15	pray for them so that they may be obtaining *holy spirit*

	17	and they place their hands on them and they obtained *holy spirit*
	19	that on whomever I may be imposing hands, he may be obtaining *holy spirit*
	19: 2	Did you obtain *holy spirit* when believing?
	2	neither hear we if there is *holy spirit*

pneumatos hagion, of-spirit holy

Matt.	1:18	ere their coming together was found pregnant by *holy spirit*
	20	that which is being generated in her is of *holy spirit*
Luke	1:15	he will be filled with *holy spirit*
	41	Elizabeth is filled with *holy spirit*
	67	Zacharias, its father, is filled with *holy spirit*
	4: 1	Now Jesus, full of *holy spirit*
Acts	1: 2	directing the apostles whom He chooses through *holy spirit*
	2: 4	and they are filled with *holy spirit*
	4: 8	Then Peter, being filled with *holy spirit*
	25	who through *holy spirit* . . . art saying
	31	and they are all filled with *holy spirit*
	6: 5	they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and *holy spirit*
	7:55	possessing the fullness of faith and *holy spirit*
	9:17	recover sight and be filled with *holy spirit*
	11:24	he was a good man and full of *holy spirit* and faith
	13: 9	Saul, who is also Paul, being filled with *holy spirit*
	52	The disciples were filled with joy and *holy spirit*
Rom.	5: 5	God's love has been poured out in our hearts, through the *holy spirit* which is being given to us
	15:13	in the power of *holy spirit*
1Thes.	1: 6	receiving the word in much affliction with joy of *holy spirit*
Titus	1:14	Guard that ideal thing committed to you, through *holy spirit,* which is making its home in us.
Heb.	2: 4	and parting of *holy spirit*
	6: 4	becoming partakers of *holy spirit*
2Peter	1:21	holy men of God speak, being carried on by *holy spirit*

pneumati hagiō, to-spirit holy (dative)

Matt.	3:11	He will be baptizing you in *holy spirit* and fire
Mark	1: 8	He shall be baptizing you in *holy spirit*
Luke	3:16	He will be baptizing you in *holy spirit* and fire
John	1:33	This is He who is baptizing in *holy spirit*
Acts	1: 5	you shall be baptized in *holy spirit* not many days hence
	10:38	God anoints Him with *holy spirit* and power
	11:16	John, indeed, baptizes in water, yet you shall be baptized in *holy spirit*
Rom.	9: 1	my conscience joining its witness with me in *holy spirit*
	14:17	but righteousness and peace and joy in *holy spirit*
	15:16	having been hallowed by *holy spirit*
1 Cor.	12: 3	no one is able to say "Lord Jesus" except by *holy spirit*
2 Cor.	6: 6	in *holy spirit*
1Thes.	1: 5	in *holy spirit*
1 Peter	1:12	preaching the evangel to you by *holy spirit dis*-patched from heaven
Jude	1:20	praying in *holy spirit*

It will be a surprise to many to find that most of the mentions of "*the* Holy Spirit," are simply "holy spirit," without the definite article. The context usually confines it to the manifestation of God's spirit in humankind. Yet it is also used in the most "personal" way possible, for our Lord was generated by "holy spirit" (Matt.1:18,20; Luke 1:35). The theory that the article is latent after prepositions has no support in fact, and is not in point in Luke. There we have a combination which ought to satisfy all that holy spirit is God's personal power. We repeat it:

Holy spirit shall be coming on you,
And the power of the Most High
shall be overshadowing you.

Here it is actually paralleled by "power," and the nature of the case demands that it should be vital energy yet it is so personal that it resulted in the generation of a Person.

ton hagion pneumatos, of-the holy spirit

Matt.	28:19	baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of *the holy spirit*
Acts	1: 8	you shall be obtaining power at the coming of *the holy spirit* on you
	2:33	obtaining the promise of *the holy spirit*
	9:31	the consolation of *the holy spirit*
	10:45	the gratuity of *the holy spirit* has been poured out on the nations
	16: 6	forbidden by *the holy spirit* to speak
1 Cor.	6:19	your body is a temple of *the holy spirit* in you
2 Cor.	13:13	the communion of *the holy spirit*

tō hagiō pneumati, to-the holy spirit

Acts	15:28	it seemed good to *the holy spirit*

Perhaps no other passage is supposed to prove the existence of the "Trinity" so conclusively as Matthew 28:19: "baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit." But there are no logical premises for this idea whatever. Baptism was not necessarily in the name of the deity. The apostles never used this formula. They intelligently varied the name and title of our Lord because this was in harmony with the conditions into which baptism brought its subjects. It is only when the kingdom is set up on earth that this threefold formula will be used. The holy spirit is especially added in that era because it will be a day in which the spirit of God will work marvels among all flesh, and their baptism is the introduction to them. It is a special formula for a special time, not a dissection of the persons of the Trinity. So important a revelation must not be inferred from a casual statement on another theme. When the subject itself is discussed the unity of God is averred and plurality denounced.

to pneuma to hagion, the spirit the holy

Mark	3:29	whosoever should be blaspheming *the holy spirit*

	12:36	David himself said, in *the holy spirit*
Luke	3:22	*the holy spirit* descended on Him in bodily appearance as a dove
John	14:26	the consoler, *the holy spirit*
Acts	1:16	*the holy spirit* predicted through the mouth of David
	5: 3	to falsify to *the holy spirit* and to embezzle
	32	*the holy spirit* which God imparts to those yielding to Him
	10:44	*the holy spirit* falls on all those hearing the word
	47	who obtained *the holy spirit* even as we
	11:15	*the holy spirit* falls on them even as on us
	13: 2	*the holy spirit* said
	15: 8	giving *the holy spirit* even as to us
	19: 6	*the holy spirit* came on them and they talked languages and prophesied
	20:23	*the holy spirit,* city by city, certifies
	20:28	the entire flocklet among which *the holy spirit* appointed you supervisors
	21:11	Now this *the holy spirit* is saying
	28:25	*the holy spirit* speaks through Isaiah the prophet
Eph.	4:30	do not be sorrowing *the holy spirit* of God by which you were sealed
1Thes.	4: 8	Who is also giving you His *holy spirit* [*the holy spirit* of Him]
Heb.	3: 7	according as *the holy spirit* is saying
	10:15	*the holy spirit* also is testifying to us

ton pneumaton ton hagion, of-the spirit the holy

Matt.	12:32	whoever might say aught against *the holy spirit*
Luke	2:26	he was apprized by *the holy spirit*
Acts	13: 4	being sent forth by *the holy spirit*
Heb.	9: 8	*the holy spirit* making it evident

tō pneumati tō hagiō, to-the spirit the holy

Luke	10:21	he exults *in the holy spirit* and said
Acts	7:51	you are ever clashing with *the holy spirit*
Eph.	1:13	you were sealed with *the holy spirit* of promise

Many of these passages present the holy spirit acting as a person. We have it as the consoler; it speaks, it predicts, it

appoints, it testifies, it sends forth. Yet, on the other hand, it is imparted and it falls on them, it is a seal—all outside the possibilities of personality. It is only as we combine these two thoughts, and consider it the spirit of a Person, that we can understand all of the passages concordantly.

God's holy spirit is not a distinct individual, with a will, a mind, and an independent existence. It is God at work; the localization of Himself, the means of His activities, the medium of His operations. He does all things by His spirit through His Christ. This spirit is just as "personal" as the human spirit. It is so one with God that it is His mouthpiece. The Scriptures are the word of God, yet actually inspired by His spirit. But the spirit never speaks aught but God's words, thinks aught but God's thoughts, is aught but God's manifestation in His creatures.

The problem is, how can the holy spirit have all the attributes of personality combined with the impersonal qualities of a force or power? The answer is simple: *it is the power of a Personality.* Spirit force is not mere material energy like the wind that figures it. It is a living, intelligent, personal power like that developed in mankind by breathing.

As we also have a spirit, we ought to be able to test the "personality" of God's spirit by our own. There are times when our spirit rejoices, and again it is sad. Only a person can be depressed or joyful. Do we therefore conclude that our spirit is a distinct personality from ourselves? By no means. Do we therefore speak of it as "he" or "she?" By no means. The human spirit, *it* is refreshed (1 Cor. 16:18), *it* is restless (2 Cor.2:13). My spirit is so intimately mine that, like the soul and body, I may speak of it as if it were myself. God speaks in just this way in order that we may understand Him. If He were speaking to spirit beings He might change His method. But to us, human beings, with spirits, He speaks as if He also were human, and His spirit like ours.

Once we see that the holy spirit is not a distinct spirit being from God, but is His spirit, the many difficulties which surround this subject vanish. This reconciles the passages in which it appears to act as a person with those in which it seems to be an impersonal power. Both are true of God's spirit, for it is the function of that spirit to operate as a power in God's creation and in His saints. If we wish to make a distinction between the "Giver" and the "gift," we will find that God Himself is the Giver, and His spirit the gift. He gives "*the* holy [*the*] spirit" (Acts 15:8; 1 Thess.4:8).

A. E. Knoch

WHAT IS SPIRIT?

Spirit is the invisible, intangible power of action, life, and intelligence. It is an intelligent principle of action (Luke 9:55; 2 Cor.12:18), as the spirit of meekness (1 Cor.4:21), of prophecy (Rev.19:10), of faith (2 Cor.4:13), of sonship (Rom.8: 15), of power and love and sanity (2 Tim.1:7), of slavery (Rom. 8:15), of stupor (Rom.11:8), and of the world (1 Cor.2:12). It is used of the life principle common to animals (Ecc.3:21), and mankind (Gen.6:17). It is also applied to metaphysical beings (2 Chron.18:20) without flesh or bones (Luke 24:39), which are usually unclean or evil (1 Tim.4:1), as well as demons (Luke 4: 33) and messengers (Rev.4:5).

Its highest use denotes the divine power as manifested in His invisible, intangible operations (John 4:24), the spirit of God, that holy spirit (Matt.1:18; John 3:8; Acts 13:2) which comes on men for power (Acts 1:8), baptizes for cleansing (Acts 1:5) and unifying (1 Cor.12:13), filling for utterance (Acts 2:4; Eph.5:18), sealing for safety (Eph. 1:13), and homing (1 Cor.3:16) for permanent fellowship.

A. E. Knoch

THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT

THE NEED for the possession of God's spirit has been felt from the earliest times. When Israel left the land of bondage they craved flesh to eat as they were wont to have in Egypt. Moses breaks down beneath their murmurings and cries to Yahweh in his distress. But divine wisdom knows that flesh was not the need, but God's spirit. So Yahweh bids Moses gather seventy elders to receive the same spirit that rested on him. A cloud, the emblem of God's spirit in those dim days, covers them. His spirit rests upon them. They prophesy.

A strange thing occurs. Yahweh said He would put His spirit on *seventy.* As it was, only sixty-eight are in the appointed place, standing near the tent of testimony. Two, whose names mean Affection and Affectionate-Deity (Medad and Eldad) are not there. They remained in the camp. Did God's spirit pass them by? Such a breach as this in the regular ritual of the tabernacle would be an unpardonable transgression (Num.11). But His spirit refuses the limitations of the flesh and ignores what it deems so important. Distance, and time, and place, so vital in physical affairs, are nothing to God's spirit. Eldad and Medad are not left out, though they are not in the appointed place. They lift their voices in the camp, far from the tent, speaking Yahweh's word! What must their neighbors have thought! How dared they! What an awful thing to do! It must be stopped! A young man runs and tells Moses. Joshua chimes in: "My lord Moses, forbid them." But Moses answers: *"O that all the people of Yahweh were prophets! For Yahweh put His spirit on them" (Num. 11:29).*

So the seventy helped Moses bear the burden of the people by the spirit imparted to them by Yahweh. We need not more than make mention of Joshua, who by this spirit brought Israel into the land Yahweh promised them: of Othniel and Gideon and Saul and David, of Elijah and Elisha, and all the prophets who served Yahweh's people as His spirit gave them capacity. The Messiah fills up the measure of the spirit's power and accomplishes all His mighty work by its anointing. "I have put My spirit upon Him," said Yahweh (Isa.42:1). Even in that coming day of blessing for this earth, the power behind material good will be Yahweh's spirit. The essence of that Kingdom does not lie, as some supposed, in food and drink, but in the righteousness and peace and joy which His spirit imparts (Rom.14:17).

THE PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT

Is Moses's wish ever to come true and *all* Yahweh's people receive His spirit? Ezekiel foretells a day for his people when this will be fulfilled. ". . . a new spirit will I put within you" (Ezek.36:26). What new spirit is this? "I will put *My* spirit within you, and make you walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments, and do them. And you will dwell in the land which I gave to your fathers, and you shall become My people, and *I* will become your Elohim" (Ezek.36:27,28). Nothing less than the word of Yahweh will bring life to their dry bones. "Behold," says He, "I will cause spirit to enter into you, and you shall live" (Ezek.37:5).

"If anyone should not be begotten of water and of *spirit,* he can not enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Isaiah bears a like testimony. The desolation shall continue "until the spirit from the height shall be emptied out upon us" (Isa.32:15). And again, "I shall pour My spirit on your seed and My blessing on your offsprings" (Isa.44:3). Peter

refers to this on the day of Pentecost: ". . . and you shall be obtaining the gratuity of the holy spirit. For to you is the promise and to your children, and to all those afar, whosoever the Lord our God should be calling to Him" (Acts 2:38,39). Many of Yahweh's people, like "Affection" (Medad) in the camp of old are, physically, at a distance from the place of blessing. They are afar, scattered among the nations. They are not eligible to the physical enjoyments which the land will produce. But this cannot hinder a *spiritual* blessing, however it might interfere with their material welfare in Yahweh's day.

This spirit was not promised to the nations. Moses's wish went the great length, as he thought, of embracing all of Yahweh's people. God's promise, through Joel, goes further than this. It includes *all flesh* (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17). Not all flesh at all times, but all flesh after the nation of Israel receives this blessing and thus becomes the channel to convey it to the other nations. The Jews had no thought whatever that the spirit would be imparted to men of other nationalities before the time mentioned by Joel, after God has judged all nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat.

THE PROMISE CONFIRMED

The greatest of all prophets born of woman was John the baptist. He was filled with holy spirit even before his birth. In spiritual capacity he was fitted for and filled the place of Elijah. As that great prophet must come and restore all things, so he came to prepare the people for their Messiah. Elijah himself shall truly come, but the spiritual power he will exercise has already been present in Israel (Matt.11: 11-14; 17:10-13). But greater and higher than all is the One Whose very generation was by holy spirit, the power of the Most High (Luke 1:35), the life-imparting Spirit on Whom the fulfillment of the promise depends. As to His flesh Christ was David's Seed. As to His most holy spirit,

He was God's Son (Rom.1:3,4). God, the Father of spirits (Heb.12:9), was His Father. But, while He was on earth, He did not fulfill the promise concerning the spirit. Ever and anon He referred to it, but deferred its fulfillment until His exaltation.

THE HINDRANCE

What was the hindrance? Strange words fell on their ears when He spoke of this and His departure. Sorrow filled their hearts at the thought of His leaving them. Yet He tells them: "It is expedient for you that *I* may be coming away, for if *I* should not be coming away, the consoler will not be coming to you. Now, if I should be gone, I will send him to you" (John 16:7). While He was with them in the world He kept them and taught them and comforted them. He was their *Paraclete* or Consoler (John 17:12). Lest His departure should bereave them, He promises another consoler, which would remain with them. This spirit would be their teacher and keeper and consoler (John 14:16,26).

But why not have both Paracletes at the same time? Why wait until after His departure? Speaking of it once, He cried, "If anyone should be thirsting, let him come to Me and drink. He who is believing in Me, according as the scripture said, out of his bowel shall gush rivers of living water." Then we are informed that He said this concerning the spirit which those believing in Him were about to get. For holy spirit was not as yet given, seeing that Jesus *was not as yet glorified* (John 7:37-39). He was the only temple of the divine spirit during His humiliation (John 2:21). He alone could furnish a draught for the thirsty. But, wonderful to relate, the time was to come when those who believed in Him should become a channel for this living water, this life-imparting spirit. Let us embed this deeply in our hearts: The spirit was not given by the "lowly Jesus," but by the glorified Christ. *The measure and plenitude of the gift of the spirit is gauged by the glory that He gets.*

After His sufferings He returns to them in the subdued glory of the pre-ascension days, and gives the disciples holy spirit, with authority to forgive sins (John 20:22). Yet He bids them remain at Jerusalem for the fulfillment of the Father's promise, after He Himself has ascended into the heights of heavenly glory, from whence He would send the gift.

At Pentecost Peter proclaims the exaltation of Messiah, thus removing the hindrance to the free outflow of the spirit. He proclaims the conditions on which the spirit will be imparted. "Repent and be baptized each of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the pardon of your sins, and you shall be obtaining the gratuity of the holy spirit. For to you is the promise and to your children, and to all those afar, whosoever the Lord our God should be calling to Him." This is not confined to the land. Like all the spirit's work, it is unhindered by place or distance. The sons of Israel who (like Medad and Eldad at a distance from the tabernacle) were scattered among the nations, were eligible to this spiritual blessing, as well as those in Jerusalem.

Israel knew, from Joel's prophecy, that after Yahweh's day set it, God's spirit would be extended to all flesh. Yet at this time they had no such thought, not even that it might include non-Jewish proselytes dwelling in the land. Indeed, until they once more rejected Christ in the stoning of Stephen, this blessing was confined to Israel's narrow pale and the city of Jerusalem. But after that, Philip proclaims Messiah to the Samaritans, and they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. But holy spirit did not fall on them. The kinship they claimed with Israel was based upon the flesh. The spirit repudiates the flesh and ignores its pretensions. The flesh cannot channel spiritual gifts. Only in answer to the apostles' prayers, and the laying on of hands, do they also receive God's holy spirit (Acts 8:5,15-17).

How different is Cornelius's case! Physically, he is further removed than the Samaritans. In fact, though he was a proselyte, a devout worshiper of Yahweh, the God of Israel, and dwelt in the land He gave them, he was loathed, instead of loved as Yahweh's laws commanded (Deut.10:19). Even Peter dreaded to enter his house or eat at his table, and his fellow saints were furious about it. Israel had forgotten Egypt and their bondage, so, instead of loving a stranger as themselves, they made him keep his distance.

God uses extraordinary means to induce Peter to go to Cornelius and proclaim that which was sent to the sons of Israel (Acts 10:36). But, having been convinced that God is not bound by the letter of their law, he is persuaded to go with Cornelius's messengers. His first words were not at all reassuring: "*You* are versed in the fact how illicit it is for a man who is a Jew to join or come to another tribe . . ." (Acts 10:28). While Peter was still telling them what Jesus of Nazareth did by the power of holy spirit, and of the pardon of sins through His name, a marvelous thing occurred. *Holy spirit fell on all the aliens who heard his word!* And not only so, but they spoke languages and magnified God, even as the apostles themselves had done at Pentecost (Acts 10:44,46).

The Circumcision who were present were astonished. It was too late for baptism or prayer, or the laying on of hands, or any ceremony prior to the spirit's coming. The flesh had such a large place with them that God's gracious action seemed inexplicable. Since Cornelius and his household received the spirit, Peter is forced to join them by baptism to the cleansed company at Jerusalem. Though he was chief of all the apostles, he had to answer for such a flagrant transgression as this! "You enter to men having uncircumcision, and you eat together with them!" It took much talking to stop the mouths of these believers.

Until this time the disciples, the repentant, the bap-

tized, the proselytes, received this gift. But nowhere did God promise it to His enemies. If we read His word aright, they were to be utterly destroyed from among His people. The most malignant enemy Messiah ever had among mankind rose and wrought havoc among the ecclesias and destroyed His saints. In the very height of his rebellion Saul of Tarsus is stricken to the ground, blinded by the glorious brightness of Messiah's presence. Ananias (meaning *Yahweh responds*) is sent to him to restore his sight and that he might be filled with holy spirit. Saul eventually becomes a prophet and a teacher at Antioch (Acts 11:19-30; 13:1).

SENT FORTH BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

The first mission ever directed by holy spirit was that of Barnabas and Saul. Christ Himself, before His ascension, had sent out the twelve. This new ministry was not only distinct from theirs, but also from the previous service of Saul and Barnabas themselves. The *holy spirit* separated them. The *holy spirit* sent them forth (Acts 13:2-4). It is only as we see this that we realize the intensely spiritual character of the work they did.

The first extended account of this mission is concerned with their visit to another Antioch, in Pisidia (Acts 13:14-52). For the first time we hear of *justification.* For the first time we read that the law is superseded by faith. For the first time the *nations* are brought into the light and receive eonian life. After Barnabas and Paul are forced to leave, we find that the disciples are filled with joy and holy spirit (Acts 13:52). What stress is laid on the operation of God's spirit in all this! They are sent by holy spirit. The blessings proclaimed are spiritual. The disciples are filled with holy spirit.

When the mission had been accomplished, and they had returned to Antioch, from whence they started, certain men came down from Judea, insisting on the necessity

of physical circumcision for salvation. In the subsequent discussion the one point which outweighed all others, and which finally decided the matter against the Judaizers, was thus put by Peter: "God, the Knower of hearts, testifies to them, giving the holy spirit according as to us also, and in nothing discriminates between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:1,5,8,9). So it was acknowledged, even by their opponents, that believers among the nations received holy spirit by faith, when they believed, apart from repentance, baptism, or laying on of hands.

This seems to be a departure from the strict letter of the promise, for it contained no hint of spiritual blessings for the other nations until after the Lord had entered upon His earthly glories. Perhaps the reason is this: Though His glorious feet have not yet stood upon Mount Olivet nor touched a spot in Israel's land, He has come, in sun-dismaying splendor, *outside that land,* upon the distant Damascus road, leading to an *activity* (such is the meaning of the city's name), in harmony with such grace, for He claims the worship and fealty of His worst enemy.

The ministry of Saul (or rather Paul, his spiritual cognomen) is based upon and proceeds from this glorious sight. Just as John the baptist anticipated Elijah, being endued with his spiritual capacity, so Paul anticipates the mission of Israel in the coming eon, by means of his enduement with the nation's spiritual power. Messiah cannot be present in person among His people in their land, nevertheless, *in spirit,* He now goes outside the land, where He never could have gone while still on earth. In spirit, He now walks up and down the land of aliens, who have no claim on Him in flesh.

THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT

The characteristic feature of Paul's itinerant ministry was that all received holy spirit on believing. Nothing but

faith was required for the gift. It was by faith in order that it might accord with grace. Consequently, while it was not, strictly speaking, the promised gift (for it was so gracious that it came to them apart from any promise) it is a gift *with* a promise. It is a promissory gratuity. God does not give His spirit without, at the same time, pledging Himself to further favors. Hence it is called the holy spirit *of* promise (Eph.1:13).

An earnest is not only a pledge of future payment, but is a part of it. It is the same in character. All our blessings are spiritual, hence we are given the spirit as an earnest. This of course is temporary, pending the deliverance of all that has been procured for us. Our heavenly honors cannot be realized until the usurping powers of darkness, who now reign among the celestials, are cast out. Meanwhile, we have not only the promise in the Scriptures, but the pledge in our hearts. We have a small foretaste of our spiritual wealth the moment we believe.

A. E. Knoch

SOUL AND SPIRIT

A glimpse of the vast gulf between the soulish and the spiritual will save us from many deceptions which afflict Christendom today. Almost all religious literature gives the soul the place which God reserves for the spirit. The soul is strictly limited to the physical senses. It uses the various bodily members to function. It feels and sees and hears and tastes and smells. It is consciousness and sensation. It yearns for physical pleasure and carnal comfort. It dominates the human body now, before it is vivified by the spirit. The joy and satisfaction which are ours in Christ do not come through sweet smelling incense, or fulsome food, or solemn, stirring music, or majestic cathedrals, ornate without and beautiful within, or even through moving emotions in great mass meetings. It comes through the still small voice of revelation, striking the strings of the spirit, engaging it with the delicious thoughts divine, energizing it by the Living Word. A. E. Knoch

THE SEALING OF THE SPIRIT

In the Sacred Scriptures, a seal is the symbol of security. Back of Caesar's seal on the stone which secured our Lord's sepulcher (Matt.27:66), was the full force of Rome's imperial power. He who dared to break that seal must reckon, not only with the procurator Pilate, but with the Roman senate and the emperor himself. Opposed to the risen Christ were the *custodians*, or Roman watch, and these could call the host of armed men in Jerusalem and in Judea and, if necessary, the whole military force of the empire. The greatest earthly power was back of Pilate's seal. That it was broken does not disprove this, for God's weakness is greater than man's might.

The sixth chapter of Daniel gives us a notable instance of man's farcical efforts to imitate the adamantine solidity of God's determination. "The law of the Medes and Persians, which changes not" has passed into a proverb. Nothing on earth was supposed to be more inflexible or secure than the decrees of these ancient kings. They themselves could not alter or change them once they had been passed. And when the seal of the kingdom is added to this, we may well consider Daniel in the lions' den as the most hapless and hopeless of that faithful host who have laid down their lives for the faith of their fathers. The seal on the lions' den is symbolic of man's utmost limit in securing his victim's doom. But it is God's sport to hold man's majesty and might in derision. Let them put on seven seals if they will, He will frustrate all of them! Daniel shall not die! Man seals to destroy, but God will circumvent him. God seals to save, and man is impotent to prevent Him.

What a contrast when God seals! When Satan is locked up in the abyss for a thousand years He sets His seal on it, and not all the opposing powers of earth or heaven are able to loose him from his jail (Rev.20:3). When God seals a hundred and forty-four thousand (Rev.7:4) all the onslaughts of Satan and his minions do not diminish their number by a single one. They are secure in the midst of the most terrible times which earth will ever know. Were only a hundred forty-three thousand nine hundred ninety-nine saved, God would forfeit His throne and lose the lustre of His great name.

The seal upon the hundred and forty-four thousand was put on their foreheads by a messenger of God (Rev.7:4). It will save them from the torment of the locusts out of the abyss (Rev.9:4). Most probably it will be a literal, visible mark, the counterpart of the emblem which all the worshipers of the wild beast must wear on their right hands or on their foreheads (Rev.13:16).

It is most significant that, in dealing with the Circumcision in the accounts of our Lord's life and in the Acts, nothing is said of a seal for the safety of the saints. It is true that their circumcision itself should have been a seal of the righteousness of faith, as it was with Abraham (Rom.4:11). But, alas, it had degenerated into the merest physical form, without any spiritual significance whatever. The followers of Christ or of His twelve apostles were not sealed. That is why so many fell away. Most of the Pentecostal believers apostatized.

The so-called doctrine of the "security of believers" would gain much force if it were kept in its proper place. All attempts to prove that the Pentecostal believers were saved beyond the possibility of being lost are fatally weakened by the distinct statements in the sixth and tenth of Hebrews that they did fall aside (Heb.6:6) and trampled on the Son of God and outraged the spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29). At Pentecost they became partakers of holy spirit (Heb.6:4), for they were baptized for cleansing (Acts 1:5) and filled for utterance (Acts 2:4) by the holy spirit which came upon them for power (Acts 1:8), and those who repented and were baptized in water obtained holy spirit, but it was not a *seal* to secure them to the day of deliverance.

The first intimation of the sealing of the holy spirit is found in Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians. After expostulating that his actions are not governed by the flesh, and that his whole preaching to them was based on God's faithfulness and that Christ was the Amen to it all, he concludes, "Now He Who is confirming us together with you in Christ, and Who anoints us is God, Who also seals us and is giving the earnest of the spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor.1:21,22).

It will be noted that the *seal* and the *earnest* of the spirit are closely associated here and in our next passage, in the first chapter of Ephesians. The two thoughts have much in common. While the earnest has not the supreme sense of security conveyed by a seal, it also implies a pledge of that full measure of the spirit which comes only with our deliverance. Perhaps it would be best to consider the earnest of the spirit as the seal which secures our ultimate deliverance, for when we have the fullness of the spirit security will be beyond question.

Now let us note the contrast between this seal and that given a limited number of the sons of Israel. The hundred and forty-four thousand had a visible token on their flesh. They were a chosen company out of the nation. In the body of Christ there is no such division. All are sealed. And the seal is the invisible, intangible, life-giving spirit which is the only token given by God to distinguish His own from the sons of Stubbornness, who are actuated by the spirit of the aerial jurisdiction (Eph.2:2).

The time element is very prominent in the two remaining references to the spirit's sealing. In Ephesians we are

told that it occurs when we believe (1:13) and continues until the day of deliverance (4:30). This is important. Security depends on uninterrupted vigilance. If the sealing were delayed a year or a day or even a second after believing, what assurance would His saints have of "enduring to the end?" Our salvation, past, present, and future, is wholly of God, and by His spirit. The briefest interruption in the spirit's presence would expose us to the fearful fate of the Circumcision who were partakers at one time, but later fell aside.

We should never confuse the falling upon of the spirit in the past with the present surpassing grace. The spirit is now making its home in us. Yet it is instructive to note the contrast between the tardy reception of the spirit by the Circumcision after repentance, baptism, and pardon (Acts 2:38), and its precipitate outpouring on the proselytes in the household of Cornelius (Acts 10:44,45). And in Paul's epistles the gift of the spirit is always predicated of all who believe apart from any acts or ceremonies whatsoever. Faith is the only requisite. It comes on believing.

In Paul's earliest epistle, he tells the Thessalonians that God has given them His holy spirit (1 Thess.4:8). In Romans, it is the basis of conduct (5:5) and is fully discussed in the eighth chapter. He assures the Corinthians that we have obtained not the spirit of the world, but that which is of God (1 Cor.2:12). As we have seen, in his second letter, he assures them that they are sealed by the earnest of the spirit (2 Cor.1:22). In Galatians he reminds them that they had *begun* in spirit (3:3). Ephesians clearly commences the sealing coincident with faith (1:13), and continues it until our deliverance (4:30).

We may rest assured that the God Whose seal suffices to secure Satan for a thousand years can safely be trusted to see that no one violates His seal in us for the brief span of our mortal existence. All the assaults of the Adversary

and his hosts can do nothing to break His seal. We are invulnerable to his attacks. The weakest believer now is far more certain of ultimate deliverance than if he had been one of the twelve apostles. One of them was lost, for they were not sealed. Not one of the Pentecostal saints was sealed. Only those to whom Paul preached the message of boundless grace immediately received the seal of the spirit and the absolute assurance of salvation.

The most precious point for us is the character of this seal. The seal of faith given to Abraham was in his flesh, because his blessings included the physical. Not so this: it is a purely spiritual seal, because the blessings it guards are exclusively metaphysical. *It coincides with the pledge given to those of the Circumcision, associated with Paul, whose faith was placed in Christ Jesus, who looked for His presence in the air, and whose changed destiny and new spiritual allotment among the celestials depend on its possession.*

This is the key to the somewhat enigmatical statement in Ephesians 1:13: "In Whom *you* also—when hearing the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation—in Whom, on believing also, you are sealed . . . ." Before this the apostle has been limiting his exposition to himself and his circumcised associates in this grace. Now he includes the gentile believers. *Because those of the other nations who believe receive the same spiritual seal, the same spiritual earnest, as this special remnant of believing Israelites, they are entitled to the same spiritual allotment among the celestials.*

Physical differences cannot be transported into the celestial, spiritual sphere, hence they vanish. Thus we arrive at the logical conclusion which coincides with the first item of the "mystery" that *the nations are joint-enjoyers of the celestial allotment.* Beloved, this is where we come in. This is the first and choicest portion of the threefold secret. It reveals our relationship to God. The second deals with our

relationship to Christ, as members of His body. The third has to do with our relationship to one another.

Now, if we wish, we may read the preceding part of Ephesians again, with the comforting assurance that, though, in its first intention, it is concerning Paul and those of Jewish blood, its extended arms enfold us also in its embrace! Some years before, when Paul wrote to the Galatians and to the Romans (among whom he now is), he had taught them that they were sons of God and consequently enjoyers of Christ's allotment. Wherein, then, lies the secret which he now reveals?

At that time Christ's celestial dignities had not been made known. His highest place was over all the earth. The blessings of His people were all in this nether sphere. It had been clearly defined by the prophets. The hope set before them was not in heaven but on earth. But in that sphere there could not be equality of blessing for the nations. Israel must have the first, the highest place. They must rule. Even in Pentecostal days the apostles at Jerusalem lorded it over the faithful of the nations and laid down decrees for their observance. However high their spiritual blessings, as sons of God, or as members of Christ's body, these never raised the nations to the same level or rank as Israel.

It is only after the mystery of Messiah, the secret of Christ's universal headship, is revealed, and the consequent destiny of those having the prior expectation is changed from earth to heaven, and altered from a partly material to a purely spiritual allotment—it is only then that equality is possible. This is the secret: not that the gentiles were to be heirs, but the nations are to be *joint* allottees, on an absolute equality with a remnant from the favored nation. The nations have become the peers of Israel! A realization of what we are and the covenant relation He sustained to them, coupled with a sense of that latest, highest destiny,

in which we share, should moisten every eye with tears of abundant gratitude.

THE FILLING OF THE SPIRIT

The filling of the holy spirit is for utterance or expression. The twelve apostles at Pentecost, Stephen before the Sanhedrin, and Paul before his namesake Sergius were all filled with holy spirit to prepare them for speaking forth the mind of God. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth is talking. When the holy spirit surcharges a human heart it is bound to overflow in exultation, in denunciation, in declamation, or in melodious musings.

The filling of the spirit is one of the operations of God which comes to us through His previous activities. It characterizes the proclamation of the kingdom. John the baptist, our Lord Himself and His mother Mary, Peter and Stephen—all the chief heralds of the coming kingdom were filled with holy spirit to give utterance to the proclamation.

Before considering the effect of the spirit's filling in the present economy, it is of prime importance that we consider its previous operations. The first example is John the baptist (Luke 1:15). He was filled with holy spirit even before his birth. Yet we are told explicitly that *he did no sign* (John 10:41). No miracles attended his ministry. No power attested his proclamation. It is evident that the *filling* of the spirit fitted him for oral testimony, not supernatural demonstrations.

His parents, Zacharias and Elizabeth, both were filled with holy spirit in connection with his birth and signalized it by breaking out in inspired peans of blessing (Luke 1:41,67). The presence of the unborn Christ provoked the outburst of Elizabeth. The filling overflowed in a loud shout of exultant praise (Luke 1:42-45). Zacharias' experience is most striking. His unbelief makes him dumb and he remained a deaf-mute until the spirit filled him

and loosed his tongue to prophesy (Luke 1:18-23). In an inspired poem he foretells the ministry of Messiah and the service of his son. It was the filling of the spirit which opened his dumb lips and gave him utterance.

The supreme example of the spirit-filled life is found in our Lord Himself. At His baptism in the Jordan, the spirit not only *came on* Him to remain, so that He performed powers and miracles and signs, but He was also *filled* with holy spirit in order to proclaim the kingdom (Luke 4:1). His anointing with the spirit gave Him the needed authority, but the *filling* gave Him utterance. Yet the *leading* of the spirit controlled the time and place of its exercise. Though full of holy spirit, He did not immediately go out to begin His proclamation, but was led out into the silence of the wilderness with the wild beasts.

There is a needed lesson in this action of our Lord. Even though we are full of utterance, we need not imagine that this gives us the right to public proclamation. That comes from the *anointing* of the spirit. Nor does the filling call for immediate relief in words. The time and place depend on the *leading* of the spirit. Undoubtedly our Lord was full of what He wished to say while He was in the wilderness. It may be that He gave voice to the spirit's urge even though no one could hear. But He waited till God's time ere He loosed the pent up stream of sayings upon the populace. Hence His words themselves were spirit, and were life.

It was with this that He met the Slanderer's words. It is only as we are filled with holy spirit that we refuse to entertain the suggestions of an unholy spirit. One who is not full has room for other and different spirits that use but abuse the words of God.

THE SPIRIT OF PENTECOST

It is exceedingly interesting and instructive to distinguish the three different operations of the holy spirit on the day

of Pentecost. They were *baptized* in holy spirit (Acts 1:5) for cleansing and unity. The holy spirit *came on* them for power (Acts 1:8). They were all *filled* with holy spirit and begin to speak different languages, according as the spirit gave them to declaim (Acts 2:4). The failure to distinguish these diverse manifestations of the spirit's presence has led to serious misconceptions. Both baptism and filling have been incorporated into the present grace, modified to suit the later and higher revelation, but the *coming on* of the spirit has been displaced by its *homing in.*

As spirit baptism was the actual of which water baptism was the symbol, it stands for the cleansing of conduct and consequent unity of all thus cleansed. All God's saints have part in this. All have their hearts cleansed. At present this baptism effects the unity of the body of Christ, then it was associated with its symbol, water, in producing the body called the bride. Above all things let us not fall into the common error of associating spirit baptism with *power.* It is never so in God's word.

The filling of the spirit is likewise continued down to the present. It also changes in character. Only a few notable cases occur before our Lord's resurrection. At Pentecost all the *apostles* were filled. Later, under Paul's ministry (Acts 13:52) the *disciples* were filled with joy and holy spirit. The tendency is clear. It is to diffuse the spirit. It is from few to many. And it varies according to the purity of the grace revealed. Little grace calls for the filling of a few for denunciation and exhortation, such as was done by John the baptist, and Paul before Sergius. Much grace is always accompanied by a more liberal diffusion of holy spirit, yet a change in the character of its operations.

The very word "grace" is but a form of JOY in the Greek. So that the filling of the disciples was a compound of joy and holy spirit. This is the form in which it passes on into the present. Being gracious, it is joyous. Only once in the

range of Paul's epistles do we read of the filling of the spirit. But then it is a positive command. And it is not the occasional and unusual, but the normal state of the beloved believer. The command to be filled with spirit is preceded by a negative charge which throws light on its fulfillment. "And be not drunk with wine, in which is profligacy" is at once an injunction to be obeyed and an illustration to be observed. He who is filled with wine becomes drunk; so he who is filled with spirit falls under its mellowing influence. But here we need to walk warily, for the fulfillment of the figure is confined to the *utterances* of the wine bibber and of the one who imbibes intemperately of the spirit.

Someone has defined the various stages of drunkenness on this wise: Jocose, verbose, lachrymose, bellicose, comatose. There is joy and garrulity, followed by tears and quarrelsomeness and insensibility, to say nothing of the morning after. Let us not force this figure beyond its bounds. Let us not follow the bubbling joy of spiritual intoxication with the bibulous babbling and quarreling, the stupor and headache, not to say heartache, which follow the toper's potations.

The point of the comparison is limited to the effect of wine on the tongue. It loosens and lubricates that organ until it functions perfectly. I have heard of singers who could not carry their part unless under the influence of liquor. Many a man cannot speak sincerely, unless he is filled with mellowing spirits. In the old days a man in his cups could be depended on to talk truthfully and freely. It gave a joyful release from self and a hilarious and irrepressible abandon that overflowed in speech and song.

There are altogether too many symptoms of the other stages of drunkenness among the saints of this day and generation. We have the bellicose and the comatose on all sides. But these are not within the scope of this passage. Such conditions come, not from *filling* with spirit, but from

failing to be filled. And let us never imagine that those grotesque physical antics and contortions which excite our risibility in the case of the drunkard have any counterpart in the spirit-filled believer. Our conduct should always be decorous and dignified.

And what is the effect of the filling of the spirit? Speaking, singing, playing. It is the impulse of utterance. It fills the air with the cadence of sweet sounds. It raises the harmony of song. It wakes the instruments of music. We have all heard of the music of the celestial spheres. And now that we know that light and sound are convertible, so that we can step sound up to light and light down to sound, we may rest assured that the universe is filled with sweet harmonies. It is God's harp to accompany the praises of the celestial choir.

We need no longer hesitate as the poet has done, and say,

> What though in solemn silence all
> Move round this dark terrestrial ball!
> What though no real voice nor sound
> Amid their radiant orbs be found,
> In reason's ear they all rejoice,
> And utter forth a glorious voice;
> Forever singing, as they shine,
> "The hand that made us is divine."

To the perceptions attuned to the whole range of physical vibrations, from the lowest sound, inaudible to the human ear, beyond the swiftest speed of light, the universe will respond by the power of this same spirit, with ineffable symphonies.

The filling with spirit finds expression in harmony. It sets our speech to stanzas. It makes our measures melodious. It finds outlet in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

We have briefly considered the doctrine of spirit. It is a *power* comparable to the force of the wind. It is applied to

beings, good or bad, who have no flesh or bones as is the case with mankind. We are not in need of the ministration of good spirits, such as served the Circumcision. The holy spirit warns us explicitly, however, that, in this closing era, some will be withdrawing from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and the teaching of demons. True spirituality recognizes but avoids spirits which ape the holy spirit among the saints. No one should rest until sure that such deceptive forces are not a factor in his experience. Never become the passive instrument in the hands of an unknown spirit. God calls for our active coöperation.

The human spirit differs from all others, because it is sustained by the breath and the body. Destroy either, and the spirit departs. There is no active spirit apart from the body, and there is no life apart from the spirit.

The holy spirit is the power of God. It is not a distinct personality from God Himself. Christ was born of both God and His holy spirit—*one* "Person."

The *baptism* of the holy spirit is for cleansing and unity, never for power. The *sealing* of the holy spirit is for safety, and was not given to the Circumcision, many of whom fell away. The *earnest* of the holy spirit is the initial instalment which we receive of that plenitude which will be ours in His presence. The *filling* of the spirit is for utterance. The *coming on* of the holy spirit was for power, but is entirely absent in this economy of grace, in which God's power is perfected in infirmity. It is replaced by the *homing* of the spirit, which is the characteristic function of God's spirit in this administration. As never before, God has His home in the hearts of His hallowed.

We are now ready to consider, once more, the spirit of wisdom and revelation which alone will open to us the portals of "the mystery."

A. E. Knoch

THE RIGHTEOUS ONE'S FAITH

For not [l]**ashamed**[°] **am I** of **the evangel: For it** [l]**is God's power** [io]**for salvation to every**one ·who is **believing** it**—to** the **Jew first, and to** the **Greek as well. For in it God's righteousness is being revealed**[°] **out of** [the Righteous One's] **faith,** [io]**for** [the believing one's] **faith, accord**ing **as it is** [°]**written**[°]**:** [y]**Now the Righteous** One, **out of faith shall He be living**[°] (Rom.1:16,17).

. . . out of works of law, no[t] **flesh** at [e]**all shall be** [l]**justified in His sight, for through law** is the **recognition of sin. Yet now, apart from law, God's righteousness has been** made **manifest**[°] **(being attested**[°] **by the law and the prophets), yet God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith** [io]**for all (and on all** ·who are **believing** it**), for** there [l]**is no**[t] **distinction, for all sin and are wanting**[°] **of the glory of** ·**God, being justified**[°] **gratuitously** in **His** ·**grace, through the deliverance, the** deliverance which is **in Christ Jesus (Whom** ·**God purposes**[°] for a **Propitiatory through** ·that **faith, in His** ·**blood . . .) toward the display of** [God's] ·**righteousness in the current era,** [io]**for Him** ·**to** [l]**be righteous and** a [l]**Justifier** of **the** human **out of Jesus's faith** (Rom.3:20-26).

[tg]**With Christ have I been crucified**[°]**, Yet I am living; no**[t] **longer I,** [y]**But living in me is Christ.** [y]**Now** that **which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith, the** faith **of the Son of** ·**God,** ·Who **loves me, and gives Himself up** [ov]**for me** (Gal.2:20).

[y]**Now that in law no**[t] **one is being justified**[°] [b]**with** ·**God** is **evident,** [t]**for: The Righteous** One, **out of faith shall He be**

living° [y]**Now the law** [l]**is not out of faith, but:** He ·who **does them shall be living**° [t]**by them. Christ reclaims us out of the curse of the law,** ¯**becoming**° a **curse** [ov]**for our** sakes, [t]**for it is** °**written**°**: Accursed** is **every**one ·¯**hanging**° **on** a **pole, that the blessing of** ·**Abraham may** [b]**come**° [io]**to the nations in Christ Jesus, that we may obtain the promise of the spirit through** ·His **faith** (Gal.3:11-14).

. . . the scripture locks up ·**all together under sin, that the promise out of Jesus Christ's faith may be given to** ·those who are **believing** it**.** [y]**Now before the coming of** ·that **faith we were being garrisoned**° **under law, being locked**° up **together** [io]**for** ·that **faith** [l]**about to be revealed. So that the law has become our escort** [io]**to Christ, that we may be justified out of** His **faith.** [y]**Now** at the ¯**coming of** ·that **faith, we** [l]**are no**[t] **longer under** an **escort, for** =**you** [l]**are all sons of God in Christ Jesus through** ·that **faith** (Gal.3:22-26)**.**

For in [God's] ·**grace** [l]**are** =**you** one**s having been saved through** [Christ Jesus's] **faith, and this** is **not out of** =**you;** It is **God's** ·approach **present, not out of works, lest any**one **should boast**° (Eph.2:8,9)**.**

. . . that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of ·**God,** in **accord** with the **purpose of the eons, which He makes in** ·**Christ Jesus, our** ·**Lord; in Whom we are having** ·**boldness and** ·**access** [i]**with confidence, through His** ·**faith** (Eph.3:10-12)**.**

The preceding passages, expanded with bracketed insertions from the context, are a few examples of the important place of Christ's faith in the evangel and for our blessings.

D.H.H.

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 114th Year

(1909–2023)

Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Celestial Sovereignty
63 Boasting in God's Will
71 Christ's Supremacy
75 The Singular Faith of Christ
87 Faith Perfected

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EDITORIAL

In the opening "meditation" of this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* A. E. Knoch conveys "a tremendously transcendent truth" that "virtually none" are preaching today. Thus our brother writes: "Now that we have discovered our own distinct destiny and the unparalleled favor which is involves, let us join the apostle in his prayer for all the saints who belong to His body" (p.51).

This is followed by James R. Coram's article, "Boasting in God's Will" (pages 63-70). Here again is a subject seldom preached: "God's operations are concerned with *all,* all that exists and all that occurs. There are no exceptions to what is out of, through and for God, and to His glory" (p.69).

Then in what is called a "devotional" study when it was reprinted in 1969 (vol.60, p.255) from its first appearance in 1920 (vol.12, starting on page 41), Alan Burns turns our attention to "Christ's Supremacy" (here abridged on pages 71-74). This is a theme, which, if not neglected in preaching, is nevertheless much opposed by the Adversary and denied by the wise of this eon. Yet for us: "On such a sublime subject we cannot take less than the whole Bible for our text" (p.71).

My own article, "The Singular Faith of Christ," which follows on pages 75-86, concerns an important matter that has been covered up by tradition and translation. This, too, calls for special consideration and prayer. It is not new to the pages of this magazine, but still calls for renewed clarification and expansion in accord with God's evangel set before us by Paul in his epistle to the believers in Rome. It is carried through all his letters, (and given support

through all of Scripture). God's operations and blessings are founded on Christ's faith unto the death of the cross, not on our faith in Him. In the matter of faith, Christ's faith is supreme. Our faith is centered on His faith. The expectation of our calling, and the riches of the glory of a celestial allotment, and the transcendent greatness of God's power are in Christ and based on His faith. They are for us who are believing this evangel, but the evangel is a message sourced in and channeled through Christ's faith, and His alone. So also God's will in His operations of all that exists and all that occurs always is carried out through Christ's faith, His faith, not human works or even human faith (which is graciously granted to us in measure).

Abraham is the great example of faith, but at first it was much flawed and imperfected where he serves as an example of human faith. It is not until Genesis 22 that we see his faith as "Faith Perfected" (see pages 87-96). There his faith was that "God was able to rouse [Isaac] from among the dead (Heb.11:19)" (*cf* p.87). In this we can perceive a picture of Christ's faith, Whose faith is perfect. Hence Paul testifies of Abraham that "he believes [the promise] of the God Who is vivifying the dead" (Rom.4:17), in which "the promise of God is not doubted in unbelief, but he is invigorated by faith, giving glory to God, fully assured also that what He has promised He is able to do also" (Rom.4:20,21). Do we not perceive in this a picture of Christ's faith?

Although this parallel of Abraham's perfected faith with Christ's faith is not noted by Brother Knoch, he closes this article with reference to "the One Whose faith led Him from the highest heights of glory to the deepest depths of shame, and has called us to share the fruits of His faith with Him, by blessing us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials."

D.H.H.

CELESTIAL SOVEREIGNTY

EPHESIANS 1:17-23

THE JOINT ENJOYMENT of the allotment among the celestials is such a tremendously transcendent truth that no one is able to receive it without a special spiritual enduement. The apostle knew this. We ought to realize it far more keenly, for nearly two millennia have passed, and practically no one seems to have enjoyed this secret, and virtually none are preaching it today. There is no hint in ecclesiastical literature, so far as we are aware, that any theologian, from the early fathers to the latest commentaries, had grasped this grand foundation stone of the present secret administration of grace. It certainly calls for prayer! It calls for prayer today! Now that we have discovered our own distinct destiny and the unparalleled favor which it involves, let us join the apostle in his prayer for all the saints who belong to His body.

Paul prays that we may perceive the expectation of God's calling, the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of God's allotment among the saints, and the transcendent greatness of God's resurrection power, operative in Christ and in us while we are believing.

God has given us a special call or invitation. What is its expectation? He has endowed us with an allotment. What are its opulent glories? He has exalted us with Christ. What is the measure of the power of this tremendous transaction?

We have seen that the whole epistle is devoted to three subjects, the three articles of the secret. In general, it seg-

regates our relation to God, to Christ, to one another. In a secondary sense, these divisions are repeated in discussing each subject. This is true of this prayer. As a whole, it concerns our joint allotment, which comes to us from God, but in detail, this is divided into the same three aspects. It is *God* Who calls us, the *saints* who enjoy the allotment with us, and *Christ* in Whom its transcendent power is displayed (*cf* chart, vol.53, p.138).

OUR CELESTIAL CALLING

The prospect presented by this special revelation has been degraded to an indistinct idea that all good people go to heaven when they die and become angels or members of the celestial choir. Nothing is known of Christ's headship. Blessedness is entirely selfish and not based on blessing others. This is a travesty on the truth. Before Paul received his revelations, what human dared to dream of dwelling in the heavens? In the ancient myths, a man must be deified before he could claim a heavenly home. Even Elijah did not go into the heavens, as our version suggests. He simply went in that direction. More we are not told. Our Lord alone ascended into the heavens. There is no reason to believe that any saint of the Circumcision ever went or will go into heaven. His blessings come from there, but he enjoys them on the earth (*cf* Acts 2:34).

We are not looking forward to a Mohammedan paradise, with every sensual delight and selfish dream. Our joy will not spring from soulish sensations but from spiritual dignities and activities. Above "angels," or messengers, we shall not only rule in the heavenly regions, but bring to them the blessings that can come only through such as we, who are the most perfect picture of God's grace, and the best example of the lavishness of His love in all creation. We shall be blessed in blessing. Such is the prospect of the calling of the present secret administration.

Its most precious phase, as well as a true index of its graciousness, lies in the fact of its fulfillment *before* Israel's hope is realized and *before* the fearful inflictions of Yahweh's day. It is first in time as well as foremost in rank. It is a present, an imminent expectation. There are no signs to prevent its instant fulfillment. It is a most wonderful thought that, at every moment of our lives, we are on the very threshold of our glorious future. We are waiting for the door to open. We do not know when this will be, but its constant imminence should keep us in a state of expectation. There is nothing between us and its realization. Even death, so far as our consciousness is concerned, is immediately followed by His glorious presence.

OUR CELESTIAL WEALTH

In the present day wealth is measured by legal possession. In reality we have only what we enjoy or can donate to the enjoyment of others. In both ways we are supremely supplied. The height of human avarice seeks to own the earth. But if we should succeed in making all here ours, we would be very poor, indeed, compared with the illimitable possessions of the celestial realms. In Christ all this is ours. We need no title deeds, for no one can dispute His right. All is ours to use and to enjoy, in Him. But this is but a tiny fraction of our wealth. Mere material possessions do not satisfy the spirit. It is the prestige that wealth gives, and the place that it provides in human society, the associations to which it leads, which are its true glory.

Our glorious riches not only give us entrance into the presence of God Himself, but to the highest and most exclusive social set in the universe, the society of His saints, who are the ruling aristocracy of the eonian times. Our wealth was not tainted in the getting, nor will it be a curse to us in the withholding. It was gained in glory and will be given in greater and grander glory. We will have limitless stores

of that spiritual sort which increases with its dispensation. Our wealth will not impoverish creation. We will enrich all to whom we are sent. The knowledge of God's grace, which is our most precious deposit, will add to the wealth of every creature in the universe.

CHRIST ROUSED FROM THE DEAD

Some day we shall be ever with the Lord. Meanwhile we cannot do better than to anticipate that overflowing joy by the spirit's enablement. But before we find Him on His present seat, let us trace more leisurely the steps that led Him there.

All of the forces of evil, headed by Satan, aided by Rome, the sovereign of the world, and abetted by the nation of Israel, were combined to accomplish the death of Christ. The Adversary knew that God had sent His Son to undo his work and to destroy him. So he strains every nerve to bring about His death. Judas did not betray his Lord of his own accord. Satan entered into him. So every actor in that dreadful drama, on the side opposed to Christ, was but a puppet in his hands; he was the moving cause of all, he was the spirit that impelled the dull clods of earth to fulfill his dark behests.

Our Lord well knew that they were not aware what they were about. Satan alone, of all His enemies, had some conception of what was involved. Rome did not realize that she had everything at stake. Messiah is the rightful ruler of the earth. Even in their stupidity they acknowledge it in the superscription Pilate wrote. Satan, their spiritual overlord, their true Caesar, made sure that the Roman power is pitted against God's Christ. The high priests, who should have worshiped Him, seem most malignant of them all. Though they pose as Yahweh's representatives, urged on by Satan, they mock Him with a trial, and loudly demand

His death. The great power of God, which once shielded Him, seems now to stand aside.

Satan's unseen hosts, the Roman legions, and Israel's religious leaders comprise a full array of all the enemies of God. All the powers of evil combine to accomplish His death and thus defeat His God. And there was every indication of their success. They had bound Him in the chains of death and they would keep Him bound! If God had given Him into their hands, who could deliver Him from them? But, in reasoning thus, we show our ignorance of that great sacrifice, and the vast change it wrought.

Why did God allow them to crucify His Son? Yea, rather, why did He abandon His Beloved in His hour of direst need? For His enemies He cries, "Father, forgive them, for they are not aware what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). God's ear is open to this prayer. But not for long. He is on the accursed tree. He is made sin. Soon a dense and dreadful darkness hides the scene, feebly figuring the hiding of God's face. Christ bears not only the fierce offensive of the forces of evil, but God Himself, true to His word, sends fire from above to consume the Sacrifice. The arrows from His quiver find lodgment in Messiah's heart. Himself so sinless, He becomes sin. He is not only shut out from God's presence, but is the object of His furious indignation. God Himself becomes His enemy.

But God did not cast Him off forever. Even as the darkness of nature passed away and the sun once more smiled upon that sight, so does His spirit again enjoy the radiance of God's face. "My God! My God! Why do You forsake Me?" could not have been uttered in those three hours of darkness and distance and estrangement. God would not have lent His ear to any cry He could have made. Now, as the Sufferer recalls their awfulness, what does He remember? Not the gibes of men, not the roars of Satan, but the silence and desertion of His God. Fire has consumed the

sin He bore. God's smile beams upon Him once again. In His very death He commends His spirit to His Father's care.

Now that sin's Sacrifice has been accepted, Satan's triumph is short-lived. The high priests see that Caesar's seal secures the dead, and Caesar's soldiers guard the lifeless form, so that all of evil's power is present to keep the Christ in the clutches of death.

HIS ASCENSION

Christ arose! The high priest's guards, affrighted, flee! He breaks the seal of Caesar! He escapes from Satan's jurisdiction, death! With victorious and majestic calmness He carefully strips off His swathings, the tokens of their temporary triumph and lays them in their appropriate place. He comes forth the Victor over the vast confederacy of the forces of evil!

HIS REST

In Matthew's account we are told that all authority in heaven and on earth is given to Him (Matt.28:18). Yet it is so foreign to that account to enter upon His celestial glories, that His ascension is not so much as mentioned. His earthly exaltation is anticipated by His ascent into a high mountain. The Son of David's Kingdom has not yet come.

Mark, speaking to us of His *service* as the Son of God, sets before us a completed course, a finished work. His part of this ministry was fulfilled, and its proclamation also was accomplished according to the creation commission that He gave before the gospel was put on record (Mark 16:20). Therefore it is that we read, at His ascension, that He is seated at God's right hand (Mark 16:19). This rest is confined to the service of which Mark's evangel speaks.

Luke presents us with a picture of Adam's greater Son. The very fact that Acts takes up the unfinished thread of

Luke shows that this aspect of His work is incomplete. In view of this we need not be surprised when Stephen sees Him *standing.* There is no seating of the *Son of Mankind* until He comes in His glory to rule the nations of the earth (Matt.25:31).

Let us seek to understand these various attitudes of Christ. Let us not miss their true spiritual import by a strict insistence on their literally. A king may be aspiring to a throne or he may be warring in its defense. In either case, he is not *seated.* When all the authority which the throne represents is truly his, when all opposition has been broken down, when the regal and judicial functions which pertain to it are in undisputed exercise, then he is *seated.*

This does not mean that he continually occupies the piece of furniture called the throne. He may be far from it, visiting in distant parts of his empire, and yet, while thus absent, find a continual acknowledgment that he is upon it. The kings of earth feebly figure Messiah. But Christ has many glories. On earth He is still rejected. He certainly is not seated on its throne. Only in a spiritual sense, as the Son of God, and as swaying over *creation,* is He seated. Every aspect of His work as Son of God is finished; every aspect of the human side still bides its proper season. This is the key to the seemingly contradictory attitudes in which He is presented to us. Mark says the Son of God sat down. Luke says the Son of Mankind is still standing.

John's evangel presents a distinct aspect of His ascension, as the Son of God, which we should not ignore, for it is a prelude to the present grace far more fitting than the subsequent public scene on Olivet. Even as He, as the Son of God, partially anticipated Pentecost by breathing the spirit on them beforehand, so He also ascended on the resurrection day. Mary was forbidden to touch Him because He had not yet ascended (John 20:17). Thomas was asked to touch Him on a later occasion. It is not so

very strange, then, that the later ascension is not recorded in John's account. The spiritual tendency of the narrative forbids it. The ascension of which He spoke to Mary is the one for us, *before* the forty days sojourning, before any human contact.

Interesting and important as these various aspects of His ascension are, it is of still greater profit to note that this Ephesian epistle contains not the slightest reference to the forty days during which He manifested Himself on earth after His resurrection. There is no recognition of the ascension scene in the book of Acts. In relation to us and the spiritual blessings He has wrought for us, and has brought to us, His work was completely finished when He rose, and on that day, as He intimated to Mary, He ascended untouched into God's presence, and sat down at God's right hand. All opposing forces have been defeated. His work is finished. The Son of God is seated.

CELESTIAL SOVEREIGNTY

Christ descended into the depths at the mercy of Satan and Caesar, of Pilate and the priests, of the centurion and the soldiers, of the Pharisees and the people, and was the scorn even of the crucified robbers at His side. None so lacking in power, in influence, in authority, none so far from God, so helpless and weak, so poor and vagrant, none so guilty as He! But when He arose, not only was every shadow of sin forever gone, but God exalted Him above His every enemy.

When He was on earth He had no allotment for His own. Now, as the Son of Abraham, every inch of the promised land is His. The jackals had their burrows, the winged creatures had their roosts, but the Son of Mankind, their rightful Head, had nowhere to pillow His head. Now all of Adam's lost authority is vested in the erstwhile homeless Nazarene. The One Who left His riches in the glory

to become poor has returned to become the Owner of the universe. The weakness that permitted His arrest in Gethsemane has given place to a personal power and presence of such awful intensity and force that it fells His beloved apostle at His feet (Rev.1:17). The Man Who submitted to Pilate's petty power and Satan's suzerainty has seized all that and vastly more. Satan once offered Him the sovereignty of the earth if He would but worship him (Matt. 4:1-10). Soon He will receive it from the hands of God.

These were but earthly dignities. Earth's rulers are the unsuspecting tools of higher spiritual powers. Satan claimed—and Christ did not deny his claim—that the kingdoms of this world, with all their pomp, belong to him, and to whomsoever he might give them. At times the veil is lifted which hides these spiritual powers from our sight. A parallel is apparent between earth's sovereignties and spiritual suzerains. A messenger sent to Daniel is hindered twenty-one days by "the chief of the kingdom of Persia" (Dan.10:13). He is aided in his warfare by Michael, one of the head chiefs, who is also called "the great chief, standing over the sons of your [Daniel's] people" (Dan.12:1). Like those of earth, the heavenly rule and influence is apportioned by various grades. The highest are called "princes" or "sovereigns." Their dominions are first-rate powers or empires. The Authorized Version calls them "principalities," but this name is now used of a third rate power, below the rank of a kingdom. This is not the thought. They are the highest among the heavenly hosts.

Like those of earth, however, they are divided into lesser jurisdictions, with delegated power or authority. Pilate is a good example of such rule, exercised on behalf of a superior. They told him if he let Messiah go he would not be Caesar's friend, and thus would lose his office. Pilate also imagined that he derived his ultimate authority from Rome, and could do just as he wished, provided it was pleasing

to the emperor. But our Lord pointed out his error when He said, "No authority have you against Me in anything except it were given to you from *above*" (John 19:11). He, and his overlord in Rome, were only underlings, obeying the behests of spiritual forces they did not even suspect.

Israel's Messiah still waits for the actual transfer of earthly government to His shoulder. But in the highest heavens He is already seated at God's right hand, up over every sovereignty and authority and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this eon, but in that also which is future (Eph.1:21). God subjects the whole universe beneath His feet and gives Him headship over all. Peter, viewing this from the standpoint of the future kingdom on the earth, sets Him above messengers and authorities and powers (1 Peter 3:22). He cannot, from his standpoint, speak of sovereigns being subjected, for as yet Satan holds his heavenly place and is supreme above all earthly powers. But we can see that even Satan, though he seems opposed to Christ, is preparing the apostasy predicted by God, which is the necessary prelude to the kingdom.

Messiah's headship over all the earth was a mystery long known and the delight of many an initiate in Israel. Now it is our privilege to anticipate and enjoy His heavenly honors, which were not revealed until His earthly headship seemed hopelessly deferred. The coming Kingdom awaits the repentance of His earthly people, but His spiritual kingdom waits for naught. We, His celestial saints, already realize, by the spirit He has given us, what it means to be rescued out of the authority of darkness and to be transported into the kingdom of the Son of His love (Col.1:13).

These thoughts, these kingdoms, do not clash. The future realm to be set up on earth replaces earthly kingdoms. He will rule His people as the Son of David and all others as the Son of Mankind (Dan.2:44). The kingdom now in force is opposed, not to any earthly government

(for we are bound to be subject to such), but to the spiritual overlordship of which Satan is the sovereign. It does not lead us to acknowledge Christ as David's or as Adam's Son (though we gladly hail Him these as well), but as the Son of God, the true Suzerain of the spirit realm. All hail to the Son of God, the Sovereign of the universe! All hail to His God and Father, Whose power has placed Him at the summit of creation!

HEADSHIP OVER THE ECCLESIA

Sin is not confined to the earth. It existed long before its presence in Eden's paradise. The heavens are not clean in the sight of the Deity. Sin has invaded the whole cosmos, and has drawn away a host of God's celestial creatures from allegiance to His will. God's great purpose to reconcile the universe to Himself (Col.1:20) implies that they have been alienated before they can be brought back. Enmity must always precede reconciliation. Before perfect friendship can be restored sin must be restrained. There must be subjection. The celestial realms must be administered as well as those upon the earth.

In the process of earth's restoration many are associated with Messiah in its administration. Only the saints of the Circumcision will have a hand in its government. The twelve apostles will rule the twelve tribes, the hundred forty-four thousand will wield the iron club among the other nations. Messiah will administer His millennial reign through the priest nation. So, also, will it be in His far greater celestial sovereignty. His body, composed of saints of this present secret economy, will be His subordinates, the executives of His throne. He is Head of all *to* the ecclesia which is His body (Eph.1:22,23). This body is the hope of heaven, as well as heavenly in its hope.

This is the key to high heaven's restoration. Christ's blood not only avails for all, but fills the throne of the uni-

verse with the dregs of earth. They become the wonder and amazement of the celestial throng, for they display the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom, the plenitude of His power, the overwhelming redundance of His grace and love. Through them, His name, His fame, will form the theme of praise from the pole star to the southern cross.

Here, then, we have the final arrangement necessary for a complete and finished universe. The earth is Messiah's footstool, and He will win it back to God by means of His chosen people. Then heaven, too, will be subject to His sway. The ecclesia which is His body is the means of its administration. Thus this becomes the "fullness that filleth all in all," or, more clearly rendered, "the complement of the One completing the all in all" leaves nothing still unattended to. It is the finishing touch which will round it out to its consummation.

The figure of the body is not new. Paul had used it before in writing to the Corinthians and the Romans. At that time he stressed the mutual relation and dependence of the members on one another. This is also the prevailing aspect in Ephesians, though it has now been made a joint body. In Colossians the salient feature is *our relation to the Head.* So it is in this passage in Ephesians. It is concerned with the transcendent greatness of God's power as displayed in the exaltation of His Christ to the place supreme. This is the power which is ours in Him. It has no parallel. It is appalling. Maggots of the dust are made the mightiest monarchs in the empyrean.

May this meditation aid us to grasp, in some degree, what is the transcendent greatness of the power which operates in this administration for us, for it is the same as the mighty strength which operated in Christ, and roused Him from among the dead, and seated Him among the celestials (Eph.1:19,20).

A. E. Knoch

BOASTING IN GOD'S WILL

IN LIGHT OF our own pride it is well to remember the account recorded by Daniel concerning King Nebuchadnezzar: In His wisdom, God brought the great king to utter abasement, and caused him to make his abode with the animals of the field. He was shoved from among mortals, and ate herbage even as the oxen; his body became streaked with the night mist of the heavens till his hair increased as vultures' feathers, and his claws became as those of birds. God did this "to the intent that the living may know that the Supreme is in authority in the kingdom of mortals" (Dan.4:17), "and He gives it to whomsoever He will" (Dan.4:32). This was needed. For Nebuchadnezzar had said (and no doubt believed for many years), "Is not this Babylon the Great that I myself have built for the royal house with the might of *my* safeguarding walls and for the esteem of *my* honor!" (Dan.4:30). Yet "While the declaration was still in the mouth of the king, there was a voice that fell from the heavens: 'This has been decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar, that the kingdom has passed away from you'" (Dan.4:31).

Yet at the end of the appointed days, rather than complaining of this tremendous judgment, when his understanding returned to him, Nebuchadnezzar lifted his eyes to heaven in praise: "Then I blessed the Supreme, and I lauded and honored Him." The king found that God's jurisdiction is not an occasional thing but is "an eonian jurisdiction, and His kingdom is with generation after generation" (Dan.4:34). Nebuchadnezzar continued, "All those abiding on the earth are reckoned as naught; *according to His will*

He is doing with the army of the heavens and with those abiding on the earth. And there is no one who shall stay His hand and say to Him, 'What have You done?'" (Dan. 4:35). "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, am lauding and exalting and honoring the King of the heavens, since all His deeds are verity and His paths are adjudication, and *He is able to abase all those walking in pride*" (Dan.4:37).

God is the Maker of good and the Creator of evil (Isa.45: 7). And, righteous is Yahweh in all His ways, and benign in *all* His works (Psa.145:17). To the illuminated believer, when he learns of God's wisdom and perceives His purpose, this becomes evident even in those things which are so terrible in themselves. It is not at all sinful for God to create those evils which are *men's* sins. Rather than this being wrong, in light of evil's necessary yet salutary ministry for permanent and universal good, it would be wrong were He to fail to do so.

If God is good, able, and knows what is best, and if it is best that evil should not exist, then it would be necessary for Him to make its existence impossible. For in order to retain one's attributes, one must act in accord with them. Since God *is* good, able, and knows what is best, and since evil *does* exist, it must be best that evil should exist.

If it is best that evil should exist, there can be no doubt—instead of leaving its existence to chance—that it is also best that God alone should create and superintend it. Otherwise, if it should even come into being at all, it might well dissipate before accomplishing its mission or, alternatively, overflow its bounds altogether.

Likewise, if we would experience good, it follows that God is the One best suited to determine the times in which we should enjoy it, and all the particulars attending it, lest our enjoyment of it be less than ideal or even never occur at all.

Would we not far prefer to have what *is* best according

to the only and wise God, instead of what merely seems best in the eyes of shortsighted and sinful man?

Yet even these meditations concerning our own best interests must never be our main concern. The greatest thing—what we desire the most—is that all should be for God's glory and according to His purpose: "Yahweh has made everything for its own outcome" (Prov.16:4). "Out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:36). Our own unique experience of good and evil is only of secondary importance. Only in the wisdom and goodness of God, for His own glory, can we find our own perfect blessing.

FATALISM IS FALSE, EVEN AS FREE WILL

God *is* operating all. His operations, however, accord not with fatalism, but with the counsel of His own will. The divine will *includes* the human will. God's will does not eliminate man's will. To the contrary, it *creates* it. God imparts to men's hearts whatever is needed that they might do His "opinion," that is, whatever He has wisely concluded is best and has decided should occur.

This principle is well illustrated for us by the leading events which will occur in Babylon in the Lord's Day, during the time of the end, the conclusion of the eon. We read that the ten kings will be led by God Himself in their opposition to His will!

The messenger is saying to John, " 'These waters which you perceive, where the prostitute is sitting, are peoples and throngs and nations and languages. And the ten horns which you perceive, and the wild beast, these *will* be hating the prostitute, and they *will* be making her desolate and naked, and they *will* be eating her flesh, and they *will* be burning her up with fire, *for God imparts to their hearts to form His opinion,* and to form one opinion, and to give their kingdom to the wild beast, until the words of God shall be accomplished' " (Rev.17:15-17).

"The Jews in Babylon will be supported principally by the toil of the great masses in the Western nations. The enormous interest on the national debts will make the people comparative slaves of those to whom the interest is paid. When it becomes known that the greater part of this money is used by the Jews in Babylon for their luxurious magnificence, it will arouse the hatred of the peoples and the governments who are under a perpetual tribute, as there is no possibility of paying off the principal. This hatred will lead to the unanimous opinion that Babylon must be destroyed. The wild beast upon which Babylon rests, after being obsessed by the dragon, becomes her implacable enemy. This is God's means of destroying the apostates in Israel.

"By a bold figure of speech God is said to have an 'opinion.' The ten horns pride themselves in forming their own opinion and in carrying it out, when, as a matter of fact, they are obliged by the purpose of God to think and act as they do. Man is moved by ulterior motives. God provides these, and men, conscious only of their own selfish aims, accomplish His end. God wants Babylon destroyed: They gladly do it for their own sakes, not for Him."[1]

It is important to recognize that the truth on this theme repudiates fatalism as much as free will. The idea that God's will shall prevail and the things He intends occur without or regardless of our own wills is fatalism. This is not the scriptural position. According to God's operation of all, however, events do come to pass just as inevitably as they do according to fatalism. (After all, at least fatalism is not so foolish as to deny causality.)

Let us consider an example: A man is extremely ill with a terrible disease; apart from the power in his medicine (an excellent one), he will surely die. Yet, if he takes it, he will recover. And, God knows he will take it, and has even designed that he should do so, and then recover. The man is free to do whatever he wants. *All these things are true.* Thus it becomes obvious that apart from and except for man's essential choices and actions a given state of things cannot and will not be achieved.

1. Concordant Commentary, p.400; A. E. Knoch.

Under God's operations, what we choose and what we do are no less *essential* and vital than under the mistaken concept called "free will." Avoiding laziness and being industrious are just as important as we always thought they were. In the example, though the man will surely take his medicine, and cannot fail to do this, he is still free to do as he pleases. And, *due to* all the causal factors with which this is connected, whether heredity or early childhood training, internal or external considerations, inclinations or disinclinations toward certain things, or special immediate circumstances, the man *will* do this very thing, and *not* something else.

That which he does will be that which he wants to do, at least at that moment. Or at least it will be something connected with his wants, of which his actions are a consequence. It will be the product of all the factors, from within or without, distant or immediate, which cause him to act accordingly.

Prayer remains essential. Indeed, God will provide it whenever this is so. For many things are only given to us in response to our requests in prayer. It certainly is true that in many cases, not having been given to ask, we have not because we ask not. God graciously sustains us in any case, but for believers much of His provision is directly related to prayer.

Let us consider a further example: My child becomes injured in some type of accident. We are miles away from all help, and I do not know what to do to save his life, though one who was well trained to care for such inju-

ries would know just what to do to take care of this matter ideally. Now I believe that since this has happened, ultimately speaking this is only because God has given us this experience. And I also know that in themselves all men are useless and incompetent, including myself. Yet if the proper emergency care is not given, my child will soon die. It should be added that I also believe God has already decided what is best. Whether my child should recover or not, God will bring to pass His own will in this matter.

In ourselves, my child and I are absolutely helpless. Actually our case is always this very way continually, apart from God's saving hand. We are always in need of salvation, whether for preservation or deliverance. Not at any time, nor in any situation, can we say, "I have no need of You." But we are often simply too unenlightened to realize this.

However, because God has *given* me at least some uprightness of mind, I do not want my child to die. Indeed, I cannot even bear the thought. Yet he will die if *I* do not do something about the matter immediately. It is not at all that he will either recover or die whether I do anything or not, or whether I do the right thing or the wrong thing. No, I must choose to do and then actually act to carry out the proper choice. Yet I do not even know what that may be! But God knows, and He is able. So being the person I am, as God has shaped me, I make my request—my urgent plea—known to Him. With much heartfelt concern and anguish, I ask Him, *if it be His will* (*cf* Matt.26:39), to cause me to do whatever is necessary to save my child, or that He otherwise provide for his deliverance.

Since I am aware that prayer is essential, I have not a thought toward the neglect of prayer. Besides, I love God and am glad to pray to Him. In fact, I instinctively cry out to my God, Who alone is able to save. Nor do I pause to entertain any fancies concerning the glories of free will, craftily asking the Deity to help me only in part, so that

I might still remain the key to it all, and have a glory of my own, and a tremendous one at that! I am not interested in either fatalistic or freewill foolishness—I want my child to live!

Let us be no more fatalistic than autocratic. Let us make our plans and have our goals. And when we have made and even accomplished some of them, let us account for this as due to the providence of our God. For He is doing all things well. God's operations are concerned with *all*, all that exists and all that occurs. There are no exceptions to what is out of, through and for God, and to His glory. Indeed, the passages that declare this can have little practical value to us apart from this realization.

Though to the calumniator and to the immature our teachings may somehow appear to promote laziness and apathy in particular, and sinfulness in general, they actually do no such thing. Whatever weaknesses we have had along these lines may still remain in us, but they are certainly not made the worse by our faith. To the contrary, many have been given special strength through their reliance upon God alone, while recognizing that any good they may achieve is due entirely to His gracious work in them: "For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience: that in holiness and sincerity *of God*, not in fleshly wisdom, but *in God's grace, we behave ourselves* in the world, yet more superabundantly toward you" (2 Cor.1:12).

It is "not that we are competent of ourselves, . . . but our competency is of God" (2 Cor.3:5). To those who are "puffed up, one over the one, against the other," Paul says, "For who is making you to discriminate [differ]? Now what have you which you do not obtain? Now if you obtain it also, why are you boasting as though you do not obtain?" (1 Cor.4:7). In this way the apostle guides us to boast, like Nebuchadnezzar after his experience of humiliation, to boast in God's will and the glory of His ways. Only such

convictions as these can deal effectively with our pride and reliance upon the flesh. They afford us a special happiness which we can otherwise never know.

James Coram

ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE

Let us now consider Paul's allegory, based upon the story of Hagar and Sarah, which he places before the Galatians (Gal.4:22-31). As a preface to his allegory, however, the apostle first declares,

Tell me, you who are wanting to be under law, are you not hearing the law? For it is written . . . (Gal.4:21,22a).

That is, if the Galatians wished to become such ardent devotees of the law, Paul would ask them only to comply with its own dictate (viz., Drive out this maidservant and her son; Gen.21:10), as recorded in the story of Hagar and Sarah, of Ishmael and Isaac. Essentially, the story teaches that works of the flesh, under a system of bondage, rather than being the key to God's allotment, are the lock which debars entrance into God's allotment.

The allotment which the Galatian believers longed for (even as we ourselves who are believing today) was salvation out of this present wicked eon (*cf* Gal.1:4), and salvation into glorious life and joy, in the presence of Christ Himself, in the oncoming eons.

Paul would have us know that God has *promised* this allotment to us, doing so in His *grace.* He chose us for it before the disruption of the world (Eph.1:4), in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian (2 Tim.1:9). Accordingly, He has designated us beforehand for it (*cf* Rom.8:29), having *not* appointed us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess.5:9).

The allotment of life eonian is our expectation, not merely our hope, for it is Gods gracious gift to us (*cp* Titus 3:7; Rom.6:23). Thus it is that Paul declares that we who now are blessed according to his evangel, even as Abraham, Sarah and Isaac of old, are "enjoyers of the allotment according to the promise" (Gal.3:29). That is, we are enjoyers of the allotment which God has for us according to the promise which He has made to us (*cp* Titus 1:1,2).

This is the evangel of our salvation. The evangel is not at all the foolish notion to the effect that if (and only if) we will keep the law satisfactorily (or otherwise engage in sufficient upright behavior) we then will be granted eonian life.

James R. Coram

CHRIST'S SUPREMACY

ON such a sublime subject as this we cannot take less than the whole Bible for our text. Not that we shall do more than lightly touch upon certain portions of it.

So uniquely exclusive are the claims of Christ that they will not be satisfied with a mere percentage of our time, or our thoughts, or a portion of ourselves. ALL it demands, and ALL it will ultimately possess. "Eventually, why not *now*?" The place that Christ is given in modern literature is that of an ALSO rather than an ALL. Suppose an allusion is made to the great religious leaders of the world. There you have the catalog: Buddha, Krishna, Confucius, Muhammad, Moses, and somewhere in the middle of the list, or maybe at the tail end, an allusion to Jesus. To the modern literary and religions world He is one of many. Know here and now that you cannot say He is good. He must be BEST. You cannot say He is great. He must be GREATEST.

The supremacy of Christ in the Old Testament is a prophetic one. That supremacy lay enshrined in the promise that Eve's Seed would crush the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15). For more than a thousand years that one verse was the Bible Prophecy of the race. We now have Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Daniel and a host of others, but for many centuries the human race had just one little verse of prophecy. We have John's great Evangel and Paul's mighty exposition to the Romans, but all the evangel the race had then was contained in a sentence or two. Little do we appreciate the overflowing abundance of revelation with which we are blessed. Those sentences however were pregnant with as yet unuttered truths concerning the Coming One's supremacy. This verse was revelation. All succeeding prophecy and gospel was but added explanation.

The reader is familiar of course with the way Hebrews 12:24 brings out the supremacy of Christ's shed blood in contrast to that of murdered Abel. The latter cried aloud for vengeance, but the former petitioned for peace. What marvel is this, that the blood of a murdered man may shield his murderers from the penalty of their crime! History gives us no comparison. Christ is supreme over all analogy!

Again, was not His unique supremacy shown forth in the ark? Ark, mind you, not *arks.* It was not one ark amongst many. You had no choice in the matter. It was the ONE ARK or NONE! Nor did that one ark have *two doors*—only one. And when Christ Himself was speaking He did not say "I am A door" as if He were one of many, but I am "THE door" (John 10:7,9). He gave His hearers no alternative choice. When the law was given it made a demand that none but the Supreme One could comply with. The types in their incompleteness required a sacrifice which none but He could offer. The prophecies are silent without Him, and the Psalms lack music and meaning.

The New Testament opens with an account of His antecedents. Some of them we would gladly expunge from *our* records. If Rahab were in our family you would not find her name in the family Bible. Nor would we care to perpetuate the remembrance of Uriah's wife. Yet there they are, and the remainder of the New Testament shows how gloriously supreme was Christ over all His antecedents.

Herod plots, but He is supreme over the enemies' plotting. Satan himself appears at a later date, but He rises supreme over every bribe to leave the pathway of obedience. Again, through Peter, does the Serpent hiss out his suggestion to avoid the cross, but He rises supreme once more and cries "Get thee behind me Satan!" (Matt.16:23).

And then upon that mount where He was transfigured, we see Moses and Elijah and Christ, but the first two dissolve and leave the Master supreme. The disciples,

we read, "saw Jesus only" (Matt.17:8). Reverse the words and you describe what He means to a world that sees in Him "only Jesus."

And now let us look at what seemed the eclipse of His ministry. The cross itself was like a burning glass that focussed a myriad scattering rays into a scorching point. The "fiery darts" of the Adversary must have been showered upon Him by His envenomed antagonist. Not a possible weapon in all of Hell's offensive armory but was employed in this the last crushing attack upon the defenses of His soul. Listen now to that word "Father" as it comes from torture-wrung lips commending His spirit to His God. "Father" He cries (Luke 23:46), and rises in majestic supremacy over DOUBT. "I claim Thee as Father" cries the Suffering One "in spite of this cross, this darkness, and this pain."

Let us listen again. "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34). Thus, did He rise supreme over MALICE. They had scourged Him, and mocked Him; their spittle smeared His blessed person; and they had nailed Him to the tree. "Now," Satan would suggest, "get even with them!" "Father, forgive" is the Sufferer's reply.

And that mystery of God's silence through it all! The heavens seemed as brass. They had opened before, at Jordan, and upon the mountain. God's voice had come proclaiming the divine Sonship of the Man. And now the Man needed God as He had never needed Him before. And Heaven was silent! "Father"—thus does He rise supreme over the silence of God.

If the Gospels reveal to us the story of His personal supremacy, the Epistles continue to reveal its rising tide. In Romans we have the righteousness of God in Christ rising superior to the unrighteousness of man, and the grace of God rising supreme over human sin. Consider all the wars and murders, and lies, and uncleanness, and what a

vast filthy ocean of sin it is. Yet over all this the justifying grace of God rises supreme. The supremacy of His wrath as revealed in Revelation is but auxiliary to the supremacy of His righteousness as displayed in Romans.

In Colossians the grace of God in Christ rises over the creature's enmity and hatred. Through His Son, God reconciles the universe unto Himself. In 1 Corinthians the life of God in Christ rises supreme over death in its every aspect. The supremacy of His life is such that it will quicken the Universe and expunge death from His domains. Lastly we remind ourselves of Philippians—the heart of the New Testament writings—and there we learn anew of Christ's supremacy. Then, in that scene of universal worship and praise, the Christ of God will not be one amongst many; the Supreme One of Calvary will be recognized as Lord in all His gracious and glorious supremacy "to the glory of God the Father" (Phil.2:9-11).

He will be supreme THEN.

It is our privilege to recognize His supremacy NOW.

Alan Burns

REPOSING

Born deep in lumber country, Charles Willis Booher (1920-2022) worked Oregon's mills, fished her coastlines, and with his wife Dorothy, raised a big family, reveling in the truth of the evangel. Late in his life, Chuck liked to tell people that "if we are believing that Jesus died and rose, thus also, those who are put to repose, will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with Him" (1 Thess.4:14). "It's just that simple," he'd add. Dorothy was happy to explain that her favorite scriptural word was All.

Chuck and Dorothy Booher were beloved to a cohort of believers who learned of concordant truth through their faithfulness and suffering in the evangel—"appearing as luminaries in the world, having on the word of life" (Phil.2:15). Chuck was put to repose on January 27, 2022—his one-hundred and second birthday. Dorothy predeceased him by twelve years. This is the epitaph on their gravestone in the Comstock Cemetery, Curtin, Oregon: "Asleep until we are called to rise to meet our Lord in the air."

THE SINGULAR FAITH OF CHRIST

"THE FAITH OF CHRIST is brought before us in the otherwise enigmatical statement '*from* faith *to* faith' (Rom.1:17 AV). Literally this is '*out* of faith *into* faith.' There are two faiths in view. The latter is our faith; the former is Christ's. Justification is founded on His faith; it is conferred on our faith . . . . Hence we find the statement (which is so often referred to us who believe) 'the Just One shall live by [His] faith.' This refers to One only, not many or all, however aptly it may be 'applied' to them . . . .

"Just as it was in Abram's case, faith and righteousness are inseparably linked together. Not only that righteousness will be ascribed to us as it was to Abraham when we, too, believe God, but the faith of Jesus Christ is always put as the basis out of which this blessing flows."[1]

So wrote A. E. Knoch in 1916. Such clear and positive application of this verse to Christ as the Just One of Habakkuk 2:4 must have been surprising to say the least. (Yet several theologians in Germany and England had made similar claims, and surely other students of the scriptures had understood and taught along this line independently without leaving a written record. For indeed the context of Romans and the parallel with Romans 3:21,22, as well as the grammar give the strongest of support to this application).

However, when the first edition of the Concordant Version was published in 1926 there were no initial capital letters on "just one" and no indication in the explanatory notes for verse 17 that Christ was in view. Nevertheless, the note for Romans 3:22 read as follows:

1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.7, pp.266,267.

"The channel through which we may obtain this righteousness is the *faith* of Jesus Christ. He alone of all mankind, not only did good and kept the law, but He believed God even when He smote Him for our sins. It is out of His faith for our faith (Rom.1:17)."[2]

Finally in 1938, in an article entitled "Jesus Christ's Faith," Brother Knoch explains how he came to this understanding.

"I do not remember ever reading of Jesus Christ's faith until I began to read my Greek text. Then it impressed me very much in my studies of the third of Romans. Nevertheless I was rather diffident in regard to it and said little until I was forced to translate this phrase in the version. Then the question arose, Am I mistaken as to the force of the genitive here? It does not seem possible that it denotes the faith of others in Him, as usually rendered, but perhaps it denotes the faith, or body of belief, which is derived from Him, not His own believing.

"But it is not a translator's duty to interpret, yet he ought to preserve distinctions, especially in connection with such an important matter as faith, so there was no way but to bring over the genitive into the English, leaving the student to decide this by means of consistent renderings."[3]

Later in the same article (p.380), Brother Knoch takes up the matter of Christ's faith in relation to Romans 1:17, under the heading OUT OF FAITH INTO FAITH: "It is only as we take it of Christ in the first place, the Just One because of His faith (though He did not need to be *justified* from sin through faith), the *source* of the revelation of God's righteousness, and make our faith the *object* (as the grammar of the Greek), that we can understand that,

2. These notes are presently published separately from the Version as the CONCORDANT COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT.
3. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.29, p.375.

in both cases, a just one is living by faith. Indeed, the word *just* is in the singular here, as it is in Habakkuk 2:4, so that its first application may be to Christ Himself."

THE RIGHTEOUS ONE ALONE

It will be noted that there was less certainty about the "just one" in the 1938 article than in that of 1916. Earlier Christ alone was identified as the Just One. Later, albeit in the first place, He is presented as sharing this title with the believer (which is still an advance over the long-held view which sees the believer only in Romans 1:17). There are two faiths in Romans 1:17a (this is correct and the only understanding that accords with the whole context. "Out of faith" points forward to "the Righteous One, out of faith" and "for faith" back to "everyone who is believing.") But are there two singular just ones in 17b? This cannot be. God's evangel as promised before through the prophets in the holy scriptures concerns God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord (Rom.1:1-4). So also the evangel of Romans 1:15-17, which as verse 16 makes clear is the evangel of our salvation spoken of in Ephesians 1:13, concerns God's Son. The revelation of God's righteousness is "out of" (sourced in, founded in) Christ's faith. The promise of the Just One in Habakkuk 2:4 concerns the Coming One of Habakkuk 2:3 (as rendered in the Septuagint, *cf* Heb.10:37,38). It is "out of" His faith that He is to be living. (It is best to use the English word "righteous" in Romans 1:17b to show its association with the word "righteousness" in 17a. It is the *Righteous* One Who, by His faith and obedience unto the death of the cross, reveals God's *righteousness* in all its purity and power.) The singular designation, the Righteous One of Romans 1:17b refers to One alone, and that is God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Paul speaks in the singular of that One's singular and flawless faith.

Brother Knoch wrote of this faith often without iden-

tifying it by the term, "Christ's faith." A good example of this is the following where this is seen in Gethsemane and then on the cross.

"It is evident on the surface that the latter part of our Lord's ministry was weighted with His impending doom, which even caused a clash between Himself and one of His disciples. But it is not till we reach Gethsemane that the veil is torn aside and we get a glimpse of the awfulness of the cross as it affected His fellowship with God. Hitherto the will of Christ was in perfect parallel with that of His Father. True, He did not do His own will, but He acquiesced in the divine will cheerfully and with His whole heart. But now He begs the cup pass from Him. His will was not at all in line with the will of God. But the will is not the final arbiter. The heart may furnish motives deeper and more powerful. So He adds 'Not My will, but Thine, be done' . . . .

"We are now concerned only with those most mysterious and terrible of all His sufferings, the loss of fellowship, the averted face, the active hostility of God Himself, which wrung from Him the orphan cry 'My God! My God! Why do *You* forsake Me?' The terror of those three hours of darkness when the Sun of His life was hid from His soul surpasses the power of the pen, yet the psalmist compares it with the power of fire and water and the sword."[4]

This is Jesus Christ's faith. Paul presents this faith as the *mindset*[5] *of humbling himself and of obedience* which is in Christ Jesus "Who, being inherently in the form of God,

4. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.15, page 134,135.

5. The word "disposition" which the CV used in previous editions is not misleading, and serves well concordantly. But in its present usage it speaks of a mental *tendency*, while the relatively new English word "mindset" is more in accord with the word "faith" with regard to a settled conviction (*cf* Heb.11:17).

deems it not pillaging to be equal with God; nevertheless He empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of human beings, and found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil.2:5-8).

OUT OF FAITH INTO FAITH

We have thus seen that Romans 1:17 speaks of Christ's faith, first of all by the words "out of faith" and then by the words 'the Righteous One, out of faith." God's righteousness is being revealed out of Christ's faith. Its revelation is sourced in Christ's faith in His God and Father even unto the death of the cross. (We can understand why some who see this use the word "faithfulness." Indeed true believing involves faithfulness to what is believed. Our own faith does not appear to reach this standard. But the point is that Christ's faith does.) Then (in Romans 1:17b) this is repeated as it was promised in Habakkuk. Christ Jesus as the Righteous One lives out of faith, that is, His faith is the source of His living when He emptied Himself and came in the likeness of humanity unto death, and when He was roused from among the dead ones, no longer dying, but living to God (*cf* Rom.6:12; 1 Cor.15:14,20).

This evangel of Christ's humiliation, suffering and death is what we are believing. It is only that most believers have not seen this evangel here in the words "out of faith," and none of us perhaps have seen it as clearly and fully as it is presented here in connection with other wordings of God's evangel. We have a great way to go in tracing out the prominence and dominance of this message.

Now let us review some of the evidence that Romans 1:17 directs attention to Christ's faith, doing so for our faith:

1. God's evangel concerns His Son (Rom.1:1,3). We should expect that in telling us he was not ashamed of the evangel, Paul would make reference to God's Son.

2. So also, where God's evangel was promised before through His prophets the promise would have concerned God's Son. Indeed without parenthesis the words "concerning His Son" are connected directly to such a promise. If the evangel concerns God's Son, the promise would concern God's Son. So already we see that Habakkuk 2:4 concerns God's Son; it is a "Messianic" promise.

3. The remarkable parallel of Romans 3:21,22 with 1:17, extending to their associated verses, matches "God's righteousness revealed" with "God's righteousness manifested" and "out of faith" with "through Jesus Christ's faith" among other parallels. Clearly Romans 3:21,22 takes up in repetition and expansion what was said in 1:16,17 after the long section on God's indignation and righteous judgment of Romans 1:18-3:20. What is in view in 3:21,22 is surely in view in 1:17, and a consistent understanding of Paul's presentation of God's evangel directs us to understand the words "Jesus Christ's faith" as a reference to His humbling Himself to the death of the cross. It is in this that God's righteousness is made known.

4. But not only does this open up the critical connection of Romans 1:16,17 with 3:21,22, but it opens up the harmonious connection between the opening chapters of Romans with chapters 5-8. The teaching to which we have been given over (Rom.6:17) is God's evangel concerning His Son ("apart from law," Rom.3:21). It is the message of the Righteous One's faith, which says (in one later wording of God's evangel), "God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ dies for our sake" (Rom.5:8).

It is not our faith that reveals and manifests God's righteousness, putting it on display. It is the Righteous One's faith, God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord's faith in dying for our sakes that reveals God's righteousness in His operation of the justification of the irreverent. (The believer's faith

is flawed, yet, in God's grace, it is the channel through which God reckons already to us what Christ Jesus gains for all). Consequently whenever we read of Christ's faith we should see God's evangel concerning His Son.

This is true of the three citations of Habakkuk 2:4, twice in Paul's letters (here in Romans 1:17b and then in Galatians 3:13) and once in Hebrews where the Septuagint version of Habakkuk 2:3 is reflected along with 2:4 (Heb.10:37, 38). It is true of the passages noted in A. E. Knoch's 1916 and 1938 articles where the noun "faith" is followed by a reference to God's Son, our Lord in the genitive case (faith *of* Him, that is, His faith). These are: "Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22); "the faith of Jesus" (Rom.3:26); "the faith of Christ Jesus" (Gal.2:16); "the faith of Christ" (Gal.2:16); "faith of the Son of God" (Gal.2:20), "Jesus Christ's faith" (Gal.3:22); "His [Christ Jesus, our Lord's] faith" (Eph.3:12); "the faith of Christ" (Phil.3:9); and "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory" (James 2:1). To these may be added "My faith" (Rev.2:13) and "the faith of Jesus" (Rev.14:12).

These passages where Christ's faith is explicitly stated are expanded by other passages where only the word "faith" or the phrases "out of [Christ]," or "through [Christ]" appear in their contexts. Without attempting to defend this claim in any full way, I would like to trace some of these passages as indicated by the proposed Concordant Version of the New Testament.

ROMANS 2:16b

Starting with Romans 2:1 Paul writes of the revelation of God's righteous judgment which stands in contrast to the revelation of God's righteousness made in God's evangel of salvation sourced in the Righteous One's faith (Rom.1: 1-17). There is no salvation in God's righteous judgment which is based on what the human being does in accord with the standards of law. For both Jews and Greeks are

all under sin; not one is righteous—not even one (Rom. 3:9,10). Out of works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified (Rom.3:20). This was a foregone conclusion already in Romans 2:16a where it is declared that in God's righteous judgment even the hidden things of human beings will be taken into account.

It is at that stern and bleak point almost exactly halfway through the long dissertation of Romans 1:18-3:20 that Paul inserts the cryptic words "According to my evangel, through Jesus Christ" (Rom.2:16b). In all the 63 verses of this diatribe this is the only use of the word "evangel" and the only reference to Jesus Christ by any terminology. Paul interrupts his consideration of God's indignation on and judgment of human irreverence and righteousness with the shout (surely he shouts!) of Romans 2:16b. The desperate need of humanity's salvation and of the revelation of God's righteousness is the third reason Paul is not ashamed of the evangel: (1) it is a message of salvation. (2) In it God's righteousness is revealed. (3) The human situation is hopeless and God's righteousness remains a mastery without solution apart from this evangel.

Paul cannot wait to bring us back to Romans 1:16,17, when he has reached the terrible truth of Romans 2:16a, and before he has finished its application to the Jews. He turns toward his readers face to face and declares with his full soul "According to my evangel [which is God's evangel for which I am severed], [God's righteousness is manifested] through [the faith of] Jesus Christ!" In this way he connects Romans 1:1-17 to 3:21-26 and beyond.

There is no room for boasting in Paul's evangel. There is no place for human beings to make a contribution. There is no human "part." And Paul is not ashamed of it as much as the religious person thinks it is shameful.

ROMANS 3:3-8

There is one more positive connection of Romans 1:18-3:20 to the resumption of the evangel in 3:21. Near the close of this dissertation, Paul contrasts God's faithfulness with the Jew's unfaithfulness and God's righteousness with Jew's unrighteousness (Rom.3:3-8). Here Paul draws attention to God's righteousness, which was introduced in Romans 1:17 and is about to be given detailed consideration starting with 3:21.

God's righteousness in *His judgment* of the Jews is not God's righteousness in *their salvation* when "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26) and the Rescuer comes out of Zion and God eliminates their sins (Rom.11:26,27).

Paul points in Romans 3:3,4 to the testimony of God's oracles to God's faithfulness as a matter of being true (Psa.116:11), associating this faithfulness of God with His righteousness (Rom.3:5) as was done in Psalm 143:1. All this prepares us for Romans 3:21-22. All humans beings, including the Jews, are sinners who stand in need of God's righteousness now manifested through Jesus Christ's faith in His death for their sake, that faith through which God's faithfulness to all His promises is assured.

ROMANS 3:21-23

[21] **Yet now, apart from law, God's righteousness has been** made **manifest**[◦] **(being attested**[◦] **by the law and the prophets),** [22] **yet God's righteousness** [*made manifest*] **through Jesus Christ's faith** [io]**for all (and on all** [ˑ]who are **believing** it)**, for** there [l]**is no**[t] **distinction,** [23] **for all sin and are wanting**[◦] **of the glory of** [ˑ]**God.**[6]

This is an extremely important passage where every point is critical to our understanding and appreciation of God's evangel. It does not stand alone but collects from what has

6. This is the translation of the proposed CVNT except I have added in brackets the words "made manifest" in verse 22 as probably to be understood. D.H.H.

been said and directs forward to what follows. The parallels with Romans 1:16,17 assure us that this is the evangel of which Paul was not ashamed, being resumed after 1:18-3:20 which is not evangel but which makes the evangel so very good and welcome.

The "yet now" tells us that the passage speaks of something in contrast to what has been said in 1:18-3:20 (except for the exclamatory interjection of 2:16b).

The "apart from law" explains why Paul said he was not ashamed of the evangel (Rom.1:15), for law had been so essential to God's message to Israel that had dominated previous scripture. So we are now being brought to a new and fuller understanding of justification (explained in 3:24) which had been greatly limited to "the doers of the law" in 2:13, and in 3:20 declared to be an impossibility.

What is now being evangelized (but previously attested) is first of all that God's righteousness has been made manifest. This directly repeats the happy announcement of 1:17 that God's righteousness is being revealed in the evangel. And this leads forward to what is said in Romans 3:25,26 concerning the display of God's righteousness, and is even brought back into the picture in Romans 9:30-10:13 where Paul considers Israel's present stumbling and future rescue.

But now, God's righteousness is being revealed and has become manifest in the evangel being heralded by Paul. It is apart from law, although attested by the law and the prophets. Paul had previously noted this at the beginning of this epistle. God's evangel for which Paul was severed was promised before in the holy scriptures. In particular Paul cites the prophet Habakkuk and soon he will turn our attention to Abraham and his experience in Genesis 15 as a type of what the evangel says about faith.

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

With this reminder in view Paul returns to the matter of God's righteousness which has been made manifest

through Jesus Christ's faith. The preposition "through" replaces the "out" of 1:17 but was prepared for in 2:16b by the phrase "*through* Jesus Christ" and continues in 3:24 by the words "*through* the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus." God's righteousness has been made manifest through Jesus Christ's faith which led Him to the cross and thus is the means of deliverance from sin and death and to the expectation of the glory of God, of which glory we all are now wanting (that is, lacking), as sinners. All human beings sin, and all are now wanting of the glory of God. So it is that the manifestation of God's righteousness is through Jesus Christ's faith, which speaks of the deliverance which is in Him, in His suffering and dying, is "for all." This accords with Romans 5:18,19 where we read, "Consequently, then, as it is *through* one offense for all human beings for condemnation, thus also it is *through* one righteous response [to God's will] for all human beings for life's justifying. For even as *through* the disobedience of the one human the many are constituted sinners, thus also *through* the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted righteous."

A PRESENT SALVATION

The justification which manifests God's righteousness and comes through (and is sourced out of) Jesus Christ's faith is for all as must be if it is a righteous operation. It is presently on (but not yet in) all who are believing, who are sealed with holy spirit of promise which is an earnest of the enjoyment of our allotment to the deliverance of that which has been procured (Eph.1:13,14) through the faith of Jesus Christ. This is a matter of present salvation given to those who are believing it (Rom.1:16). Justification is reckoned to us (as it was to Abraham in view of what his Seed would do, Rom.4). We have a special salvation as believers. But the salvation itself is because we are part of

the all *for* whom Christ died. God is the Saviour and this is due to Christ's faith.[7]

God's judgments are righteous, but in that no one is saved through them, they do not reveal or manifest or display God's righteousness. It is made known out of and through Christ's faith. Thus not one will be left out of this justification—not even one.

It is thus that God's righteousness has been made manifest. In that Christ dies for all, all die (2 Cor.5:14). The old humanity is put to death, proleptically to be sure, but certainly in God's own time, for it is through Christ's faith, in dying for the sake of sinners.

There are special callings along the way (and most transcendently gracious is ours in Christ), but all shall be vivified in Christ, and God shall be All in all (1 Cor.15:22,28).

D.H.H.

7. This is also true of Israel, but their special salvation in the promised, terrestrial kingdom, is granted on faith and backed up by signs and miracles *and* works of law.

WITH FAITH AND EXPECTATION

Three widows of "Concordant" teachers, rejoicing in Paul's evangel and the salvation of all, have recently been put to repose in faith and expectation of the time when we will all be together with our Lord.

Helen Niemeyer died September 22,2022 at the age of 92. She, her husband Fred and their family immigrated from the Netherlands to Ontario, Canada in 1959 already believing in God's ultimate purpose.

Susanne (Friesen) Goerzen was born in the Ukraine and lived much of her youth in Siberia. She was enabled to immigrate to Alberta, Canada after World War II, where she met and married Jacob W. Goerzen. Supporting him in domestic matters and in faith, they raised seven daughters. She died January 19, 2023 at age 97.

June Bowerman aided her husband, Leonard, in a ministry in Lansing, Michigan, joining with him as he grew in understanding of God's grace and purpose. She died at age 96 on June 12, 2023.

FAITH PERFECTED

THE UNFOLDING FAITH of Abram went through many phases before it was perfected by the offering of his only son, Isaac (James 2:22). Each of these had a special quality and has been characterized by giving it a name. We will copy these, and seek to improve on them if possible. The *obedience* of faith brought him to the promised land (Gen.12:4). The *humility* of faith gave Lot the first choice (Gen.13:8). By the *strength* of his faith he conquered the kings (Gen.14:15). The *firmness* of faith enabled him to believe when all hope of an heir seemed futile (Gen. 15:6). The *boldness* of faith led him to intercede for Sodom (Gen.18:23). In the *joyfulness* of faith he named the son of promise (Gen.21:3). By the *loyalty* of faith he submitted to Sarah, and expelled Hagar and Ishmael (Gen.21:14). In the *gratitude* of faith he planted a tamarisk (Gen.21:33). In its *perfection* he offered up his only son (Gen.22:2).

It is said that the Canaanites, among whom Abraham dwelt, made a practice of propitiating their deities by sacrificing their dearest possessions, even their children (2 Kings 3:27). But, in his case, it seemed to be directly contrary to all of Yahweh's previous promises, besides being an *only* son, the fruit and fulfillment of faith. Yet many tests had shown him that God could even bring back from death. He himself had been deadened before he generated Isaac. Abraham was quite prepared to actually slay his son, for he reckoned that, even so, God was able to rouse him from among the dead (Heb.11:19). Thus we are given a parabolic representation of the important fact that the chosen

nation is the fruit of *faith,* and the resurrection power of God, but not of the *flesh.*

PROBE, NOT TEMPT

The AV reading, that "God did *tempt* Abraham," may have been allowable when it was first translated, but, like, "lead us not into *temptation*" (Matt.6:13), it throws a dark shadow on the divine character. Elohim was not inducing Abraham to act contrary to His will, but was probing him to *prove* to all concerned that be would obey Him, even when it was contrary to his own desires. His reaction to this test entitled him to his high place among those who are famed for their faith (Heb.11:17).

MOUNT MORIAH

Mount Moriah was the eminence on which the temple of Solomon was later built, where millions of sacrifices were offered, which prefigured the supreme sacrifice of God's Son. It *may* have included Golgotha, the place of a skull (Matt.27:33, Mark 15:22, Luke 23:33, John 19:17), which is north of the highway which borders the temple area. Otherwise, it is not clear why it was necessary to travel the long way from Beersheba, perhaps a two days' journey northward, to where Jerusalem now is. Ordinarily an altar could be built in any location. Doubtless Abraham had one near his tent, and offered flocklings upon it, for Isaac knew of this (Gen.22:7). The distance is given as fifty-four miles. But, as it is measured by days, a time period, each of them may represent an eon, for the Lamb of God was sacrificed in the middle of the third of the five eons, that is, in the symmetrical center of the eonian times.

THE ASCENT APPROACH

The character of the offering is of prime importance here, for Abraham possessed God's righteousness, and

had no need of a sin-, or a trespass-, or even a present-approach. Being justified by faith, there was no necessity for one of these. He had access into the divine presence, so required no approach gift. The only one he could offer was an *ascent* approach. It is remarkable, and most significant, that the ascent approach comes before us in Genesis only when Noah (who also was a just man) brings it after the deluge, and in this passage, when Abraham offers Isaac and the ram (Gen.8:20; 22:2,3,6,7,8,13). It *all ascended* to God as an act of pure *worship,* and may be brought only when there is no need for minor sacrifices, or when they have already been offered.

Today, such an ascent approach can be brought only by those believers who know that, in Christ, all the other sacrifices have been offered for them, and there is *nothing* to *hinder* them from worshiping God, not even their shortcomings and failures. These His divine alchemy transmutes into His own righteousness, for He uses them as a foil to reveal the opposite in Himself.

WORSHIP

Abraham's faith assured him that, even though he should offer up Isaac as an ascent approach, his son *must* later be alive to fulfill Yahweh's promises concerning the seed, seeing that "In Isaac shall your seed be called." "He reckoned that God is able to rouse him from among the dead, also, whence he recovers him in a parable . . ." (Heb.11: 18-19). This is evident from his words to the two lads who were left behind: "We will worship and return to you." (5). Usually, Abraham is represented as terribly distressed, his heart sorrowing in anticipation of the loss of his son, and shuddering at the thought of shedding little "Laughter's" blood. But that is not the reaction of faith. That is the fruit of unbelief. No, he seems to have given no sign of unbeliev-

ing trepidation, because he had the assurance that, whatever he did, Isaac must live to fulfill God's promise.

ELOHIM WILL SEE

They went together, Isaac carrying the load of wood, while his father had the fire and the knife. Isaac evidently realized that they were about to offer a sacrifice, so was perplexed as to the victim, for that prime essential seemed to have been forgotten. Very diffidently, he asks permission to speak. When his father assents, he points out that they have the wood and the fire for an ascent approach, but no flockling. His father's reply was such as no one without perfect confidence in the Subjector could have expressed: *"Elohim will see for Himself . . ."* (8). He knew that this must be so, but how it would be done he could not say, and he did not venture to express a conjecture. It was doubly fulfilled, once at the time, by a divinely provided ram, but not fully till the death and resurrection of the great Antitype, God's beloved Son, our Saviour.

The usual reading, "God will provide himself a lamb" is not warranted by the text. Isaac did not *see* any sacrifice. Abraham did not say that Elohim will *provide* one (Isaac), but that He is seeing, or will see, this apparent lack, and implies that they mast leave that to Him. He saw the ram (and He saw the Lamb), but they could not.

It is hard to imagine how Abraham could help being perturbed while making the actual preparations; building the altar, arranging the wood, trussing LAUGH-causer, stretching out his hand, taking the knife, and—but he is not allowed to raise it, for a voice calls out his name repeatedly: "Abraham! Abraham!" Thus, at the last instant, the Subjector, having attained His object, reverses His previous command: "You *must not* stretch out your hand on the lad, and you *must not* do aught to him . . ."

FEARING GOD

Even in this day of transcendent grace, we are exhorted to carry our salvation into effect with *fear* and *trembling* (Phil.2:12). So long as we are in our mortal flesh we cannot help having a holy awe in view of the fact that, apart from faith in Christ, and reliance on God's grace, we are not able to do a single thing or speak one word, with absolute confidence that it measures up to the divine ideal, and is perfectly acceptable to our Creator and Subjector. To do that which we ourselves would doubly dread to do, in fact would not dare to do, at the divine behest, must have a powerful motive. No *man* could have persuaded Abraham to sacrifice his son. Only the fear of Elohim could cause him to commit such a murderous deed as this.

GOD PROVIDES

As Abraham had told Isaac, Elohim saw the need of the sacrificial victim, but it was not a flockling, as Isaac proposed. There were different grades of ascent offerings, which correspond to the faith of the offerer. The highest was taken from the herd, the second from the flock, the third from the flyer. Elohim's opinion of Abraham's faith, and the value He put upon His offering is shown by the *ram* which He Himself had foreseen. This was the highest, for it closely foreshadowed the supreme sacrifice of His Own Son on Golgotha (Lev.1:2,10,14).

EVIL

This transaction has a close bearing on the so-called problem of evil. Was it good or evil for Elohim to charge Abraham to do this? Was it not an evil merely to truss up his son and then act as if he were about to murder him? But this was only a typical preview of that future scene in this very vicinity, in which Elohim's own Son was not

merely trussed up, but cruelly crucified, not only menaced with a knife, but pierced with a lance head, and not simply threatened with death, but actually forsaken by His Father and left to die. This, the greatest evil ever committed, was due to the deliberate decision of Elohim, so that it could actually be rehearsed here long before it took place. Yet, out of this, the greatest of all evils, will come the greatest and grandest good.

THE ANTITYPE

Such a memorable place as the scene of Isaac's sacrifice deserved a name, so Abraham calls it *Yahweh-irae* (Yahweh-is-See-er) which implies, not that He merely *observed* Abraham's offering of Isaac, but that He saw the ram which Abraham saw and sacrificed later, and He also "saw" the future Antitype, His only begotten Son, which was to be seen later in this mount. This led to the proverb "In the mount of Yahweh it will be seen." (Gen.22:14). It can hardly be interpreted as Yahweh *sees,* or *is seen,* or *appears.* He was not Himself present, but sent a messenger. Even the following promise, perhaps the most memorable and magnificent that Abraham received, was relayed to him through a mediating messenger. In the great Antitype, Christ Jesus, He already saw the sufficient Sacrifice, fore-ordained before the eons, ample for all.

At Beersheba (WELL-SATISFY, or -oath) Abraham had sworn *by* Elohim. Now, however, that *Yahweh swears to* Abraham, *by* whom can He swear? Men swear by a Greater, but there is no greater one than He, to swear by, so He swears by Himself (Heb.6:13). No assurance can be more certain than that. And no list of Abrahamic blessings can be greater than that incorporated in this oath. Being based on faith, it includes all who believe, not only his physical seed on the earth, but also Abram's innumerable celestial star-seed as well.

THE STAR SEED

Abram was assured of a seed as numerous as the stars on two occasions. After the conquest of the kings and the blessing of Melchizedek, and after the refusal to take any of the goods of Sodom, when Abram feared that he would have no heir, then he is told of a numberless star seed (Gen.15:5). Then it was that he was justified by *faith.* Later, once again, after the severest test of his *faith,* in the offering of his son, the promise is renewed (Gen.22:17). It seems clear from this that the star seed is connected with his *faith,* and consists of that great and glorious company who *believe* God during the eons, as Abram had done, not merely those of His physical progeny, many of whom did not believe. As was most fitting, this promise was renewed to Isaac, when he was about to go down to Egypt (Gen.26:4).

THE SAND SEED

On this occasion Abraham is also assured of a sea shore seed (Gen.22:17,18). This is most appropriate, for it was not a question of the *faith* of *Isaac,* but of his *physical* life. No doubt he did believe, and may belong to the star seed. Yet it is as sand seed that Israel will rule over their enemies in the kingdom. But it is principally as believers that they will *bless all the nations* (Gen.22:18) in the day of Yahweh. Later this promise is repeated to Jacob, when he feared the wrath of Esau, as he was returning to the land, as he recalls this promise (Gen.32:12).

CELESTIAL

The secret of a celestial seed (1 Cor.15:51) was not made known to Abraham. The soil of the land and the sand of the sea may suggest their presence on the earth. Abraham's name is brought in nearly twenty times when justification by faith is taught and enforced in Paul's preparatory epis-

tles. This grand theme is illustrated in the fourth chapter of Romans by seven references to the patriarch (1,2,3,9, 12,13,16). To sum up, we are told that the *righteousness* which was *reckoned* to him will be *reckoned* to us also, who are *believing* on Him Who rouses Jesus, our Lord, from among the dead. But nothing is said of any further blessing, beyond this, among the celestials. It is only after the celestial calling is revealed by Paul, that we see the aptness of this illustration when referring to the saints in this secret administration.

In Galatians we may see the same truth, when in conflict with the flesh. Circumcision *signified* the *cutting off* of the flesh. They were trying to make it the *completion* of the flesh (3:6,7,9). Here, again, the blessing is confined to the *justification* of *believers* of the nations. This is the blessing of Abraham which comes to the nations by faith. The law, which came later, and the present celestial blessings do not subtract or add to the justification by faith that we have in common with Abraham (14,16,18,22,29).

THE GATE OF ENEMIES

Israel according to the flesh, the soil and sand seed, did not always tenant the gateway of its enemies (Gen.22:17). This picturesque phrase is based upon the fact that the elders, the rulers of a city, sat in the gateway. They held court there and ruled the city from its entrance. Literally, *faithful* Israel is to govern its foes, and thus be at peace. The reason they have not always done so is that this promise is limited to those who had inherited Abram's faith as well as his flesh. In the days of David and Solomon, who had this faith, this was the case. And it will be so in the future when Israel, as a nation, will accept its Messiah. Even today we can see the plight of the Jews in unbelief. Even though they are the sand seed, they are threatened

by their enemies because they refuse to put their faith in the Messiah Yahweh has given them.

Beersheba (*Bar-shbo* WELL-oath) was the southernmost city of consequence in the land of Israel. Indeed, "from Dan to Beersheba" is the common phrase for the whole length of the land (1 Sam.3:20). It lies in the center of the Negeb, or south rim, on the regular road through central southern Palestine to Egypt. It remained the headquarters of the patriarches, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, until the latter went to Egypt. Now it seems to be once more within the boundaries of the nation of promise. Dan is also inside the northern boundary, so they may speak of having the land from Dan *around* to *Beersheba,* though much of that lying between, including ancient Jerusalem, is in the hands of their bitter enemies.

DEATH OF SARAH

Sarah, like Abraham, must have been rejuvenated when she bore Isaac, for she was beyond the normal age for childbearing. So she lived on to the age of a hundred and twenty-seven years. It seems that Abraham no longer lived in Beersheba, but somewhat northeast of it at Arba (*Arbo* FOUR), sometimes called Kirjath (*Kirth* CALL, town) of Arba, or Arba-town. It is here identified with Hebron (*Chbr-un* JOINed), in the foothills that lead up along the road to Jerusalem. It was in the land of Canaan (*Knon* SUBMITter), given to the grandson of Noah (Gen.9:25). The inhabitants were descended from Heth (*Chth* Dismay) whose name seems to indicate that they were daring and defiant men, who would be difficult to deal with.

ABRAHAM BUYS A TOMB

Abraham calls himself a *sojourner* and a *settler,* not a "stranger," as the AV has it. The word sojourn comes from STIR, to move about. But he was not continually moving

either, and seems to have remained in some locations for a long time. This would give him the right to ask for a tomb, for he could hardly carry a corpse with him. But he wanted a *permanent possession* for a tomb, so he asks for a *holding.* Land tenure in the Scriptures is of various kinds. The principal methods were *tenancy* and *holding.* Israel as a nation never acquired, or bought, or owned, or held, or possessed, the land, for it *belongs* to Yahweh Elohim, and they were only *tenants* at His pleasure, and were evicted when they did not serve Him, and will never be safe as long as they refuse their Messiah.

A tomb should not be a transient abode. It should last until the resurrection. Abraham did not get a temporary tenancy, but *acquired* (23:17) a *holding* (23:4,9) and weighed out four hundred shekels (250 ounces') of silver (15), which *confirmed* it (17) as his. It included the field of Ephron (*Ophr un* SOIL-er), in which is the doublet cave which is adjoining Mamre (*Mmra* CHANGE or *Bitterness*) with all the trees in its boundary by acquisition, before the eyes of the sons of Heth to all entering the gates of the city. Is there any other transaction of this kind in the Scriptures in which such extraordinary emphasis is laid on its permanence? What a contrast to the rest of the land, which had been promised to him, of which he did not own enough to place one of his feet? And several hundred years had to elapse before his seed could take over its tenancy.

In conclusion, may we look beyond the picture presented by Abraham and Isaac, to the *inaugurator and Perfecter* of faith Who, for the joy lying before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now seated at the right hand of God (Heb.12:2). Isaac was only a type, a dim shadow of the One Whose faith led Him to descend from the highest heights of glory to the deepest depths of shame, and has called us to share the fruits of His faith with Him, by blessing us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials (Eph.1:3).

A. E. Knoch

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 114th Year

(1909–2023)

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 Seated Among the Celestials
113 Herald the Word!
123 Forbear—Justify—Propitiate
134 Romans 3:21-28
135 God's Righteousness through Jesus Christ's Faith

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BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

EDITORIAL

THE MOTTO of this magazine is "For God and His Word," and in accord with this A. E. Knoch writes that "The end and aim of all things is the revelation of God" (p.109). Taking up the astounding passage of Ephesians 2:1-10, our brother expounds on the glories and transcendent riches of grace of the joint allotment for the members of the body of Christ.

So also, James Coram writes of the word of "the deity of God, His sole subjectorship" and of the making known of this truth (p.113). "If we would do well to emphasize and keep before us the truth of our security in Christ or the ultimate salvation of all, why should we not be similarly edified by a constant awareness that all things are of God, especially in light of the ever present practical importance of this revelation?" (p.116).

Much of the last two articles center on Romans 3:21-26. However, there are differences in detail between them especially regarding the faith in view in verses 25 and 26. Brother Knoch writes from the CV as he had "compiled" it (just as he does of course in his first article), and I write from it as presently rendered in my revision which is given on page 134 (the revision of Ephesians 2:1-10 is also given on page 99). The whole matter revolves around the question: Whose faith is in view in its five uses in Romans 3:21-28? And this applies also to Ephesians 2:8 (as well as further passages in Romans, Galatians and other places). It was A. E. Knoch who introduced this matter of Christ's faith in the pages of this magazine (see its development

as traced in volume 107, pages 49-63 along with later testimony of others throughout this second quarter issue of 2016). Yet he did not extend the thought much beyond those passages where our Lord is specifically referred to as the subject of faith. Yet now that further evidence such as that of the Septuagint translation of Habakkuk 2:3,4 indicating a Messianic interpretation of that prophecy and a reexamination of the grammar and the contextual development of Paul's thought, it seems apparent that often when "the faith" or even "faith" by itself appears it refers to Christ's faith.

This is so important that the words "the faith" in Romans 3:25 are rendered as "'His **faith**" in the CVNT and a lightface "His" is inserted in the translation of Ephesians 2: 8 (see my article entitled "Whose faith?" in volume 112, pages 111-118, *Unsearchable Riches,* second quarter, 2021).

This of course calls for adjustment not only in translation but in many of our explanations of the relevant passages. The CV has always made it clear that "faith of Jesus Christ" in Romans 3:22 refers to *His* faith, and should not be rendered "faith *in* Jesus Christ" as done by many modern English versions.

So also we ought to read Romans 3:25 as speaking of Christ's faith and the suffering of His soul (which is in the blood).

Accordingly, whenever I hear or read the words "justification by faith" I mentally insert reference to Christ, whether as God's Son, or Jesus, or the Lord, or combination of designations to Him, thus: "justification by [Jesus Christ's] faith." In certain cases I suggest in footnotes, how I would adjust Brother Knoch's wordings, while leaving his own wording intact in the article itself. In doing this it is my hope that we may be growing in appreciation of God's evangel.

D.H.H.

SEATED AMONG THE CELESTIALS

> "And you, being dead to your offenses and sins, in which once you walked, in accord with the eon of this world, in accord with the chief of the jurisdiction of the air, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness (among whom *we* also all behaved ourselves once in the lusts of our flesh, doing the will of the flesh and of the comprehension, and were, in our nature, children of indignation, even as the rest), yet God, being rich in mercy *because of His vast love with which He loves us* (we also being dead to the offenses and the lusts), vivifies us together in Christ (in grace you are ones having been saved!) and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials in Christ Jesus, that in the oncoming eons He should display the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For in grace are you ones having been saved through His faith, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not out of works, lest anyone should boast. For His achievement are we, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should walk in them."
>
> (Eph.2:1-10)

THE exaltation of Christ is God's most notable exhibition of power (Eph.1:19-23). Let us remember that we are reminded of it in order to give us an intimation and an example of God's power on behalf of those who believe. If the Head of the body is exalted, then the members must be likewise. *The power that raised Him has raised His members also.* It is to this aspect of the present grace that we now address ourselves. As in the first chapter of this epistle, there are two classes here, *you,* the Uncircumcision, and *we,* the Circumcision, both of whom believe

Paul's message and, because of the utmost grace which it displays, are united by its reception.

The long and involved sentence (Eph.2:1-7) which presents this truth has been a trial to translators. They usually insert *hath he quickened* (AV), or *did he make alive* (RV). This is quite correct, yet a true rendering of the rest of the sentence requires the repetition of these words in the fifth verse. It is better to leave it as it is in the Original. The connective also is confused. It is simply the dative case, not *in* your (AV) or *through* your (RV) trespasses and sins, but *to* your offenses and sins. Both *in* and *through* suggest a period when each individual actually sins, whereas the passage deals with two classes in relation to sin in the abstract, whenever committed. As a matter of fact we were dead *to* the sins in the death of Christ, but not dead *in* or *through* them until after our birth.

It is true that Vaticanus has added the preposition *in* when dealing with the Circumcision, making them "dead *in* the offenses and the lusts" (Eph.2:5). As this reading is not well supported, and may easily have been added after the truth had been lost, we have decided that it also should read "to." The *in* should be omitted. It is not an individual death recurring each time a sinner receives the evangel, but a figure embracing all who are in the body of Christ. It took place concurrently with the fact of Christ's death and His vivification and rest at God's right hand. Death is a figure of oblivion. We were oblivious to our sins when Christ died and was roused and vivified and seated in the heavens.

To get the controlling thought of the passage, let us leave out the secondary clauses. "And you . . . *we* also [3] . . . God [4] . . . vivifies us together in Christ [5] . . . and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials [6] . . ." It is, in fact, an expanded statement of the second item of the mystery—the joint body—and, by the repetition of the Greek *sun* (*together* or *joint*), enlarges on the fact that Jew

and Gentile are united in death and vivification, and are seated together in Christ among the celestials.

In connection with the joint allotment, we were chosen in Christ before the disruption of the world to be holy and flawless in His sight (Eph.1:4). Our saintliness was ours in God's purpose long before we had sinned. So it is with this grace also. When Christ died, we died with Him. When He was roused and vivified, we were in Him, and we ascended and sat down among the celestials in Christ Jesus. Let us not blur this marvelous truth by imagining that all this occurs for each individual after becoming dead *through* sin, or *in* trespasses. Death is oblivion. We were dead *to* everything before we were born. All these high honors were ours before we could make or mar them. They are absolutely independent of our conduct.

JEW AND GENTILE JOINED IN DEATH

"The love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died" (2 Cor. 5:14). It is impossible to view the death of Christ aright without coming to the conclusion that the One Who bore its bitterness was not receiving His own deserts, but suffered on behalf of others. In its effects, His death was not only for them, but was their death in relation to sin and to offense. In this reckoning there can be no discrimination between Jew and Gentile, for death allows of no degrees. This is the sad yet solid basis on which our equality with the Circumcision rests. A dead Jew is no better than a dead Gentile! His advantages disappear in death, yet all the more in His death, which ought to have repealed every promise or benefit ever conferred on the Circumcision.

Death is the great equalizer. The death of Christ, involving the death of all others, is the one plane on which the Circumcision can claim no preëminence. Yet it is not death in the absolute sense which is in view. It is death

relative to sin, to offenses, to lust. These things, if allowed a place, would debar us from all blessing. It is marvelous to escape the consequences by faith[1] in the blood of Christ. But it is ineffably more precious to realize that God thought of us before we were sinners and bestowed all these rich benefits and high honors upon us long before we proved our utter unworthiness of them by our life. The power, the wisdom, and the grace thus revealed are calculated to draw out *our most heartfelt love and ardent adoration.*

Once more the common version obscures this precious truth in verse 2 by translating *pote,* as *in time past,* and *periepatêsate,* the indefinite *walk,* by the past *walked.* The Revisers corrected the first, but not the second. Dating from the death here spoken of, our walk was future, rather than past. With reference to the present it is past. So it is well expressed in the aorist, which we indicate by prefixing a horizontal bar to the verb form "walked," since "once walk" may seem odd in English. The only possible way to express the *truth* is to render it "in which once you ¯walked."

A slight inaccuracy in translation has robbed us of the grand truth of our death *to* sin in His death. It has substituted the popular but erroneous "dead *in* trespasses and sins" and applied it indiscriminately to all sinners, who are not in view in this connection at all.

We are now called upon to consider the conduct of those who form the body of Christ, before they believe. In keeping with the theme, the walk of the Gentile is treated separately from that of the Jew. The nations are under the influence of the world and the evil spirit of the air; the Jew was influenced by the flesh and the comprehension. The possession of the divine oracles seems to have separated them from the world and shielded them from the spirit

1. In context Paul speaks of Jesus Christ's faith as in v.22 as expressed in His blood, (see p.138) D.H.H.

operating in the Gentiles, yet they were just as stubborn and equally subject to the divine indignation. Their great advantages increased their responsibility rather than lessened their offense.

THE EON OF THIS WORLD

The present is a wicked eon (Gal.1:4) because it coincides, in time, with a world, or *kosmos,* or system of things which is opposed to God and devoted to the deification of man. Both the eon and the world began after the deluge, and will end with the change in the constitution of earthly affairs brought about by the advent of the Son of Mankind. The two terms, eon and world, are not interchangeable, but they synchronize. The time occupied by each world is its eon, and corresponds in character with the *kosmos* with which it is associated. The point is that the members of Christ's body were all born at a time when the world was estranged from God, and they became a part of it and were in harmony with it. They were, by nature, introduced into the sphere which deserves, and will yet receive, the divine indignation. This is in contrast to God's previous purpose for them in Christ.

There is a sense in which this charge was not true of the Jew, for he moved in a modified "world," or order of things, in which God was at least superficially recognized. Instead, the charge against him is that he conducted himself in line with the flesh (Eph.2:3). The Gentile was surrounded on all sides by that which made him an enemy of God; the Jew found the enmity in himself. Consequently, he also was "by nature," a child of indignation. The difference between the two is one of externals. The system into which the Jew was introduced by birth was largely divine, and had his flesh responded to it, he would not have entered into the same condemnation as the nations.

Let us avoid the false deduction that there is something

radically wrong with human "nature" or instinct. If that were the charge, it certainly would be just as true of the Gentile as of the Jew. The phrase "by nature" in this passage merely limits the thought to natural processes, apart from the operation of grace. Human instinct, or "nature," is not corrupt. It is still arranged against sin (Rom.1:26). By the correctness of their instinct it is actually possible for the Uncircumcision to exceed the Circumcision in fulfilling the law's demands (Rom.2:27). It is a law written on their hearts (Rom.2:14). Scripture knows nothing of an "old nature" or "new nature." Our natures do not make us children of wrath. The Jews were such, not because of their instinct, or nature, but by the natural process of birth and upbringing.

Let us not imagine that the nations are left to themselves. They, like the Jews, are under the influence of unseen spiritual powers. God made Himself known to Israel, and gave His Word to guide them. Their lack was mental. They did not understand Him. Their darkness was in themselves. The nations are also led, and pursue a path chosen for them by a higher power. Since Eve hearkened to the serpent, until the dragon is chained in the abyss for a thousand years, the real sovereign of the earth is the chief of the aerial jurisdiction, the spirit now operating in the sons of stubbornness (Eph.2:2); his is the hand that reaches "through darkness, molding men." He who first estranged mankind from God has arrayed it against its Maker ever since; he is the great deceiver of the nations. One of the chief blessings of the thousand years is the withdrawal of his deceptive influence over humanity (Rev.20:3).

The hateful history of mankind may be summarized, in a sense, by that strange statement, "Satan entered into Judas" (Luke 22:3). After that he became the medium of the Adversary and betrayed his Lord. So it is with the nations. They are unconsciously the puppets in the hands

of unseen spirit powers, which are urging them on to oppose or counterfeit all that is of God and of His Christ. Latterly they have even succeeded in enlisting the nominal church in the schemes for human betterment and aggrandizement, which God plans to perform only through His Christ in the coming eon. Mankind is stubbornly against God and His Word, not because of a defective or sinful "nature," but because of the superior spirit forces which control its actions.

Sometimes there is actual "possession" or obsession by demons. These extreme cases serve to show what is true of all in a more moderate degree. The victim does not follow his own bent or volition, but is forced to act as the demon dictates. In ancient times the nations seem to have had a clearer consciousness of this, for they worshiped and served the demons, as the arbiters of their destiny. The apostle warned the Corinthians that "that which the nations are sacrificing, they are sacrificing to demons and not to God" (1 Cor.10:20). With this agrees the psalmist, "They also sacrifice their sons and their daughters to demons" (Psa.106:37).

Our Lord connects the demons with the dominion of Satan (Matt.12:26). They are probably under his jurisdiction. There is no hint that they are heavenly beings, for they seem always associated with the earth. Their ascendency and possession of humanity will cease when the Kingdom of God is established on the earth. When the sixth bowl is emptied, demon spirits are sent out to mobilize the kings of the whole inhabited earth for the battle of the great day of God Almighty (Rev.16:13,14). As a result the next bowl is poured out on the *air,* and great Babylon is overthrown, to become the dwelling place of demons and a jail of every unclean spirit. Thus the air is cleared of the unclean spirits which have mobilized mankind against God from the beginning (Rev.18:2).

The various divinities of ancient and modern times are too often dismissed as mere figments of a vivid imagination. Yet Paul assures us that there are many gods, though, for us, there is only One. The spirits of the air are real beings, into whose charge Satan has put the details of human affairs. God's messengers will not accept divine worship (Rev.22:9), but these demons crave the worship of their dupes. They can perform real miracles, as is evident from the power of Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses. We are distinctly told that they will do so in the future, to induce earth's kings to mobilize at Armageddon. To most of mankind the supernatural is a synonym for the divine. Hitherto these spirits have been accorded the worship of the greater part of the race. The goal to be gained is to bring all to the worship of the dragon, their chief.

The fact that the Jews as well as the Gentiles are children of indignation is fully sustained and exemplified by the fearful judgments in the book of Revelation. The few who are faithful are shielded from God's wrath, but the apostates of the chosen nation are overtaken by judgments more terrible than those which visit God's displeasure on the nations. Thus, once again, we have the Circumcision leveled with the Uncircumcision. They are both sunk in sin. God's purpose operated on their behalf when they were dead *to* these sins. Salvation is not an afterthought with God. He plans to save, and uses sin to make it possible. We were dead *to* sin before we became dead *in* it or *through* it. This is Godlike and grand. It is a fitting foundation for the gracious structure which is built upon it.

In tremendous contrast to the conduct of the members of His body is the career of Christ Himself. He came into this sinful eon, but was not carried along by its current. He met the chief of the aerial jurisdiction, who appealed to His flesh, but failed to swerve Him from His fealty to God. Far more than this, on Golgotha He was made sin in

order that we may become God's righteousness in Him. He brought God, as it were, under such heavy obligations, He has enriched Him with such a vast store of glorious wealth, that God is engaged to recompense Him for His work. His deserts are high, yet not higher than His rich reward.

God rouses Him from the dead. He gives Him immortality. He seats Him at His right hand among the heavenly hosts. *Glorious to relate, the Jew or Gentile whose faith lays him low with Him in death—both were roused and vivified and seated together with Him. This is the fullest expression of God's rich mercy, the supreme revelation of His vast love!* (Eph.2:4-6).

It is not merely together with Christ, however. It is the believing Gentile together, conjointly, with the believing Jew. The mother of Zebedee's children could form no greater wish than that her two sons might sit one on His right, the other on His left, in His Kingdom. He could not promise that. But suppose this, the highest earthly honor, were given to a gentile cur! How excessive were such grace! Even as the heavens are higher than the earth, so also is His heavenly throne exalted above His earthly sovereignty. And this, the loftiest place in all the universe, is reserved for an election out of the nations as well as a remnant out of Israel! Surely they will have the honor of His right, and we shall revel in a place subordinate at His left! Not so! We are peers in these celestial dignities! We are not merely members of His body. We are *fellow* members. It is a *joint* body. This is the secret! This is the truth that God concealed from previous generations! *As members of the joint body of Christ, the believers among the nations are of equal rank with those out of Israel who are chosen for this high honor.*

Leveled in the dust of death, the physical differences which divided us have passed away. This exaltation is an

exclusively spiritual grace. The flesh has no place in it at all. We are not members of "the body of Jesus." He has a glorious physical frame. He has flesh and bones as real as our own. But we are in Him only in His official role, as God's Anointed, Christ, the Messiah. We are members of the joint body of Christ. We cannot claim kinship to Him, like Israel. We are joined by the one spirit, which is our common life.

Let us note that the secret here revealed is not "Christ Mystical," by which is meant the figurative body of Christ. That had been made known years before to the Corinthians (1 Cor.12) and to the Romans (Rom.12:5). These earlier uses of the figure of a body were by no means intended to bring out the heavenly equality of the nations. The figure was confined to the spiritual relations of individual saints to one another in their behavior down here on earth. That body is not a joint body. Christ is not seen as its Head. This is the same figure—a human body—but it is now applied to the relationship of the two great classes, Jew and Gentile, and makes Christ the Head. The same Christ, the same apostle, the same saints, the same body, but the relationship of each is rearranged to reveal the secret hitherto unknown.

SAVED IN GRACE AND FOR GRACE

The parenthetic ejaculation of the apostle, "in grace are you saved!" is one of those high pinnacles of faith that few ascend. Our translators, in rendering it "*by* grace," have not reached any higher than that elevated peak in the Roman epistle. Were it in the text, we would gladly expatiate on the marvels of such a salvation. "Therefore it is out of faith, that it may accord with grace" (Rom.4:16) deserves a sermon by itself. But we must not allow it to rob us of this far greater grace, which is much more in keeping with the transcendent nature of the context. Literally, we read that

it is *to grace.* Salvation *by* grace is past. Salvation *in* grace is our present and future position. There are glories awaiting us which are ours as freely and gratuitously as the gift of life when we believed.[2]

There are many who wish to work for salvation. They cannot have it on such terms. Many who have it by grace, through faith,[3] imagine that all further blessing must be earned by their own efforts. There will be a reward for faithful service, but this could never include the supernal glories which are in store for us. These are the common lot of all who are members of His body, not because of their attainment, but because God's love gives it to them before they had any deserts, either good or bad, and apart from their faithfulness or service.

It will help us to realize the gracious character of God's dealings with us if we forget ourselves for the moment and consider one of His motives in this lavish outpouring of His favor. The end and aim of all things is the revelation of God. In order to display His attributes He first allows mankind to discover its weakness and folly and hate in the past and present eons. Then He intervenes, and in the coming eon He discloses His power and wisdom and love in His mercy to Israel and to the nations. The fruitful earth, with curse restrained, will teem with plenty. What an exhibition to show what He can do! Yet in that day, and in the still more glorious eon when a new creation reveals His heart in far fuller measure, what will be His most prized gem of grace? Will He point us to these scenes to learn the power of His love? Not so. He points us not to them. *He points them to us!*

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2. *Unsearchable Riches,* volume 31, pages 141-142, deals with the grammatical evidence for our rendering "in grace" in Ephesians 2:5,8.

3. Whatever the measure of grace, it is surely based on *Christ's* faith. D.H.H.

FAITH FINDS FAVOR

The oncoming eons will be freighted with blessing, yet they will look to us to learn the transcendent riches of His grace. Such a redundant wealth of favor is not an outgrowth of the grace that has saved us. It does not spring from our efforts. It is not a reward for our faithfulness. It is naught of ours. It is God's oblation, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting (Eph.2:9).

It is precious to ponder the goings of grace. Full of comfort is the fact that righteousness flows from faith,[4] apart from works. Moreover, where sin abounds, grace superexceeds. Grace reigns! For us there is no condemnation. Being justified, we shall be saved from future indignation. Whether watching or drowsy, we shall live together with Christ when He comes. All these footprints of grace are good—far better than we know. Yet they are only the symptoms and beginnings of the amazing grace which the future shall unfold. All of these leave us naught to boast of. And so shall be the future favor. It is God's oblation. He alone will be able to boast.

The use of the word *dōron, oblation,* commonly confused with a simple gift, is a most exquisite and appropriate touch of the Divine Author. It is a special gift offered to win another's favor. It is the equivalent of the Hebrew *corban* (Mark 7:11). This is the approach offering, or oblation, of Leviticus 1:2. It was not concerned with sin, but was intended as a present with which those who approached the Divine Majesty sought His favor. This is the term applied to the gifts of the wise men (Matt.2:11). Is it not astounding to discover that, far from God's favor depending on *our* oblations, He has turned the tables, and makes that very favor *His* oblation by which He wins our regard! This, we submit, is grace beyond our fathoming.

4. Once again faith refers to Christ's faith, for our faith. D.H.H.

HIS ACHIEVEMENT

To everyone who knows a little of the plague of his own heart, and has a hint of the impotence of his own hands, there is intense satisfaction and exultation in the contemplation of ourselves as *His* achievement. We do not feel worthy of taking His name upon ourselves, and consider our own efforts at self-improvement so far from our ideal that the less attention drawn to us the better. But this is not our permanent condition! It is the best preparation for that future day when God Himself will be proud to own us as His handiwork, the highest specimens of His skill.

We have been created for good works, which God makes ready beforehand in order that we should be walking in them (Eph.2:10). Our desire to render acceptable service shall be gratified. It may not be fulfilled on earth, for this is not the normal sphere of our activities. What good deeds are these for which we have been created? What employ will be ours as the glory-laden eons roll their bounty to the feet of God? How strange that we, who look to spend the eons with our Lord, should have so little knowledge of our future work! All we need to know is what is *His* employ. If we learn this, then we have the knowledge that we seek. So intimately are we one with Christ that His official duties are ours as well. An unselfish interest in His work and exaltation is enough to stir our hearts to study this. But when we see that He is not alone in all He does, that we share in His activities, how much the more should we search the future glories that are His!

This is the alchemy that transforms the dull and heavy page of prophecy into a program of intense delight, a bulletin of future bliss. More blessed is the blesser than the blessed. So, if we read of blessing that is not for us, we share the happier portion of the blesser. Not only is the future fully known to God, but every detail has been pre-

pared and arranged by Him to fulfill the purpose of the eons. Our every step is chosen for us as for a child who follows in his father's footsteps across a muddy street. We do not need to scheme and plan to improve the condition of mankind. Our Head has done all this in His own inimitable way, and He, unlike poor creatures such as we, can carry out His plan. He will not waste His efforts now, but do it in its proper time, through the instruments He has chosen and fitted for the task.

We do not need to scheme and plan our own work for Him, as though we were "workers *together* with God," as the common version mistranslates. We are not fellow workmen by any means. He is our Master. We work *for* Him. He lays out the task we are to do. Our wisdom lies in conforming to His plan, in seeking light from Him at every step, in order to achieve the consummation of His purpose. Let us exult that He has prepared our good works for us and created us in Christ Jesus so that we are competent to perform them.

Thus closes the divine discussion of the second item of the secret. Jews and Gentiles had already been closely associated by Paul's evangel. They were members of the body of Christ. But now that Israel as a nation is temporarily repudiated, all blessing is based on spirit and transferred to celestial realms. This relieves the Circumcision believers of their preëminence, based on flesh, and puts all the members of the body on the same plane of transcendent grace. There is no figure in nature to illustrate this. The members of the human body are variously esteemed. Some are far more honorable than others. So a new figure must be invented to adequately set forth this most glorious grace. It is called a *joint body,* in which each member is equally and preëminently exalted, in order to display the transcendent riches of God's grace.

A. E. Knoch

HERALD THE WORD!

THERE ARE TIMES when the Word is held back rather than heralded. For example, some believers who hold to the teaching of the ultimate salvation of all feel that even though the teaching of the deity of God, His sole subjectorship, is true, its being made known will be more of a hindrance than a help to those to whom it is proclaimed. Although this teaching is considered important, they tend to set it aside. And even when it is considered in some measure, they may not speak of it with the openness and depth which other teachings enjoy.

It should not be assumed that there is never a place for such an approach, especially when we consider the dangers attending human pride when antagonized. Moreover, the power of tradition is great, and if we would contend against it, we must do so carefully and wisely. Indeed many of us, to our shame, have sometimes been imprudent and ungracious in sharing the Word of God with others. Yet though the importance of the manner in which we present truth must not be minimized, it should not be an excuse for not making the truth known.

Our motive for so doing is very important as well: Do we seek to glorify God and build up our brethren in the faith, or do we seek to exalt ourselves while being unmindful of the feelings of others? This is not to suggest that reserve is to be our constant companion. But there is a time for everything.

An extensive printed exposition such as the present

work, which is prepared for the purpose of teaching and of encouragement in faithful service, can hardly have the advantages which are afforded private words among friends. So we commit it, as well as ourselves and all our brethren, to God, "and to the word of His grace which is able to edify" (Acts 20:32).

Things good in themselves, and very helpful to some, may not be helpful at present to those who are not yet ready for such "solid food" (1 Cor.3:2). "Now solid nourishment is for the mature, who, because of habit, have faculties exercised for discriminating between the ideal and the evil" (Heb.5:14). The ideal is to be "pursuing that which makes for peace and that which is for the edification of one another" (Rom.14:19). It is not that we are to be seeking peace at the price of truth, but that peace is to be our desire and active pursuit, for it is essential to the welfare of all. Still, there is a time, as Paul found with the immature Corinthians, when it becomes needful to present vital revelations in a plain way, even at the risk of offense.

Some have said it is inadvisable to make various teachings known to young people, certainly including this one, as if it were somehow better for them to be instructed in error, or at least left to its influences. Surely this is a mistaken approach, for all scripture is beneficial (2 Tim. 3:16), and the sacred writings are founded upon and filled with this teaching.

We seek to give no one cause to stumble in anything, even if we should fail in this at times. Besides, we can only serve others well, or at all, where God opens a door, an "operative" one (*cf* 1 Cor.16:9; *cp* Col.4:3). This is all we wish to do, having no taste for iconoclasm, or desire to disturb anyone. Yet it is important for us all to remember, "He who is not with Me is against me, and he who is not gathering with Me is scattering" (Matt.12:30).

THE STRUGGLE

Wherever truth of such great importance is opposed or neglected, in God's wise counsels there always seems to be a struggle involved in making it known. And there is always a danger, due to the pressure of having been critically perceived as doing so, that in our own weakness we will indeed be driven to the point of overemphasis or of becoming reactionary, or at least somehow become less than edifying in our presentations. Yet if this should occur, it would be more helpful if criticism—constructive criticism and support—could come from those who freely teach the truth. We trust that where God gives us grace to present this truth in wisdom, in a good spirit and with patience, there will be little danger of actual overemphasis. Indeed, boldness is needed, and, so is loving-kindness.

By practicing protracted reserve and employing ambiguity of expression out of loving concern and a fear of offending certain ones, we fail to provide the instruction which is vital to the growth of those whom God may graciously enable through instruction to think sensibly and fairly, and receive the clear declarations of Scripture. Boldness is not without draw-backs, yet it has a great many advantages. These thoughts are not presented as a criticism of any approach, but as observations taught through experience.

It is a very difficult task to herald and teach the word concerning these matters. "And for this, who is competent?" (*cp* 2 Cor.2:16). May God be adapting us to do His will, "doing in us what is well pleasing in His sight," that we may be offering divine service to Him (*cf* Heb.12:28; 13:21).

Let us not assume that some teachings are just "too dangerous" to be helpful. There is not a major revelation of Scripture which some have not appraised thus. Though it has often proved dangerous for truth to be placed in the hands of foolish men, in itself it is error, not truth, that is dangerous. Indeed, if men will wreak such havoc from

the possession of truth, what will they do when entrusted with error?

If we would do well to emphasize and keep before us the truth of our security in Christ or the ultimate salvation of all, why should we not be similarly edified by a constant awareness that all things are of God, especially in light of the ever present practical importance of this revelation?

If indeed we do live our lives by these principles, we also need to make this known to others in order to set an example and to help them do the same. In order for the heart to be touched, the mind must be instructed. Otherwise, we can do no more than "put on a fair face in the flesh" (*cf* Gal.6:12).

THE PHARISEES AND THE GALATIANS

This is the very point of the Lord's figure, "whitewashed sepulchers," concerning the hypocritical Pharisees: Outside, indeed, they are "appearing beautiful," yet inside they are crammed with the bones of the dead and all uncleanness. "Thus you, also, outside, indeed are *appearing to men* to be just, yet inside you are distended with hypocrisy and lawlessness" (Matt.23:27,28). Paul told the Galatians, "So foolish are you? Undertaking in spirit, are you now being completed in flesh?" (Gal.3:3). The Lord's order of things is, "*Cleanse first the inside* of the cup and the plate, that their outside also may be becoming clean!" (Matt.23:26).

Those whose arrogance is apparent do not even have a fair face, and do not even appear to men to be just. It is those who seem modest who are found commendable. Pride and self-righteousness, however, are not at all confined to those who are offensive and constant in talking about their own virtues and generally obnoxious about it, but include as well all who appear humble in manner but who nonetheless fail to *believe* that all good character, especially their own, is *solely* due to the grace of God, without any help from man. The self-righteous are those who "have confidence *in themselves* that they are just" (Luke 18:9). For this reason, though they may well go through the motions of thanking God for their virtues, practically speaking and to no small degree, they pray these things toward themselves (Luke 18:11).

They boast of "letting" the Lord work in them, and insist on having a "part" in it all, especially in the formation of personal uprightness. When all that God will do for them is finished, their salvation remains unfinished, awaiting their help to turn defeat into victory. Many are, so to speak, glad to travel "the sea and the dry land to make one proselyte" (*cp* Matt.23:15), zealously proclaiming, "*Christ* is the answer" while singing of "victory in *Jesus*," but do they actually believe it?

The truth is, nearly all believe that it is not Christ at all, but some type of human cooperativeness that is the final solution to weaknesses of the flesh. Similarly, stripped of outward forms and nominal claims, victory is actually seen to consist not in the all-sufficient grace which is in Christ Jesus, but in the independent power that is said to inhere in the human will.

Such an approach is the essence of popular Christianity, ancient and modern. In fact, these are the Pharisees and Galatians of today. They may be friends of the Lord, but they are "enemies of *the cross* of Christ" (Phil.3:18). They are opposed to the *sufficiency* of Christ's sacrifice in effecting salvation, and are antagonistic toward the glorious *consequences* which it alone ensures. For they boast of what *they* have done to be saved from wrath, or at least of what *they* must contribute if they would avoid an unworthy walk. "Now may it not be mine to be boasting, except in *the cross* of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal.6:14). May it not be, through this present exposition, as with the Galatians toward Paul, that I "have become your enemy by being true to you" (*cf* Gal.4:16).

The Galatians had been "bewitched" (Gal.3:1), they were "under a spell" and in "the trap of the Adversary, having been caught alive by him, for that one's will" (2 Tim. 2:26). They had been transferred from the evangel of *grace* which Paul had first taught them, to a very different message (Gal.1:6), one in which the flesh had a vital place, that of "finishing up" what Christ had left undone.

Yet they were *persuaded* of this false message anyway, instead of the truth (Gal.5:7,8). Their only accord was with these deceptions. As to the evangel, "they [knew] nothing but to do evil" (*cp* Ecc.5:1). However well-intended and innocent in appearance it may be, evil includes—whether in word or in deed— all that is destructive, all that is the opposite of good. Therefore, Paul avers, "if ever we also, or a messenger out of heaven, should be bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you, let him be anathema!" (Gal.1:8).

Paul had no illusions that, of themselves, the Galatians would respond to his entreaties. Instead, his prayer was that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ would be with their spirit, enlightening them anew (Gal.6:18). God "manifests His word in its own eras *by heralding*" (Titus 1:3; *cp* 1 Tim.2:6). And our hope is always, May this be the day, and our message the way.

Eventually *all* in the province of Asia turned from the apostle Paul (2 Tim.1:15). By today's foolish standards of success, the apostle to the nations would be an abject failure. "Howbeit, the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: The Lord knew those who are His, and, Let everyone who is naming the name of the Lord withdraw from injustice" (2 Tim.2:19). Injustice is not confined to external deeds, but includes what we believe and what we say as well. It is important, then, for us to be "sober, grave, sane, *sound in the faith,* in love, in endurance" (Titus 2:2).

SUFFERING EVIL WITH THE EVANGEL

If we would fully follow the apostle Paul, we will need to follow him not only in his "teaching, but in his "motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, [and] endurance." We will also find ourselves identifying with him in his "persecutions [and] sufferings, . . . persecutions such as I undergo, and *out of them all the Lord rescues me*" (2 Tim.3:10,11).

"The Lord is near" (Phil.4:5b), but we need to realize this and be aware of it. Let us not look to ourselves, but instead make our requests known to God concerning our need for this important realization and awareness. For we know and are certain that He *shall* be *filling* our *every* need, in accord with His riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Phil.4:19). But concerning any particular need, we cannot say whether it will be met next week or in the next eon. We would have Him fill our needs whenever His own wisdom and purpose dictates, not every time our foolishness wishes to beg for an immediate deliverance from suffering.

Paul was afflicted in everything, perplexed and persecuted, yet he was not distressed, despairing or forsaken (2 Cor.4:8,9). This was so, for the Lord was with Him: "Yet the Lord stood beside me, and He invigorates me, that through me the heralding may be fully discharged, and all the nations should hear; and I am rescued out of the mouth of the lion" (2 Tim.4:17). In spirit, by faith, we are aware that the Lord is with us as well, standing beside us in the work which He gives us to do. We find that He indeed invigorates us, and that we accomplish all that He intends, if not all that we desire.

It is *His* work, not ours (*He* is our Saviour, in grace are you saved!), to make His Word live in us, and to open our hearts to heed what is spoken by Paul. It is much better to wait upon Him and to trust in the ability of the word of His grace, "in its own eras," than continually to con-

ceive of ourselves as the key to success, and then fancy that *we* have achieved it simply because many of our acts may be upright.

It simply will not do to point to all the good that is *present* in men's behavior and then give credit to the flesh for the existence thereof. What an insult this is to God! No human virtue is due to ourselves, but is a resultant phenomenon produced by *the spirit of God* which effects good characteristics to some degree in the lives of all.

Galatians 5:19-23 contrasts what man in his present state is able to do of himself ("the works of the flesh"), with what the imperceptible power of God is able to produce in him ("the fruit of the spirit"). The figure "the flesh" points to our own inherent *weakness.* The figure "the spirit" (*pneuma,* BLOW-effect, "blast" or "wind") points to God's great *power.*

Just look at the shameful sins of the flesh and consider what *we* can do! The works of the flesh are adultery, prostitution, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, enchantment, enmities, strife, jealousies, furies, factions, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkennesses, revelries, and the like of these. If we did have a "part" in it all—if we *had* been called upon to assist in our own salvation—the works of the flesh would be our only offering.

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

So let us turn away from a consideration of man's depravities to gaze upon the glory of those marvels which God alone can create even in such ones as ourselves. The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control.

Here we see the practical value of heralding the Word. It is an exercise that dwells on the glory of God and His achievement. Joy and peace especially are the fruit of confidence in the Deity, and of assurance that He is doing all

things well. The conviction that His love is fully triumphant is a genuine source for the walk of love. That all is of God leads to genuine meekness, and that all is for good to kindness, goodness and faithfulness. The assurance that God is in full control is the proper and only effectual motivation for self-control.

There is a world of difference between fleshly discipline and spiritual self-control. True self-control, in the scriptural sense, is a thing of purity, for it is a fruit of the spirit. Unless good deeds are performed under the influence of God's love or because of the assurance of His deity, they are actually works of the flesh. Inner motive must be distinguished from outward result. Even if many of his deeds are disciplined, "he who is sowing *for* his own flesh, from the flesh shall be reaping corruption" (Gal.6:8a). External morality is often the product of sinful motives. Stronger lusts of the flesh merely restrain weaker ones when the latter fail to serve the purpose of the former.

The apostle presents these striking contrasts between the flesh and the spirit for the consideration of the Galatians. They were under the delusion that they themselves were capable of "completing" if God would only "begin": "So foolish are you? Undertaking in spirit, are you now being completed in flesh?" (Gal.3:3).

The contrast is *not* between, as popularly imagined, the deeds of "Christians" and "non-Christians," but between that which *proceeds from* the old humanity in itself and that which God is able to *produce in* such ones nonetheless—whether they be believers or unbelievers.

Though it is humiliating to the flesh, if we are to do what is pleasing to God, God must see to it that we do so. He not only does not need our help, but He will not have our help. He will bless us as He intends and when He intends, not otherwise or before.

"The Lord *will* be rescuing me from every wicked work

and *will* be saving me for His celestial kingdom" (2 Tim. 4:18a). Salvation and glory and power is of our God (Rev. 19:lb). This is the word which we herald; it has even become the testimony of our conscience (*cp* 2 Cor.1:12). Our God is great, and greatly to be praised, "to Whom be the glory for the eons of the eons. Amen!" (2 Tim.4:18b).

James R. Coram

THE VALUE OF CHRIST'S BLOOD

WHO will place an estimate on the value of the sufferings of Christ? Who will dare to limit the preciousness of His outpoured blood? Justice may indeed demand the loss occasioned by sin, but the sternest righteousness cannot complain when it overpays the "price" with such rich redundance that it not only fends against all future failure, but adds an infinite superabundance of richest grace and glory to those who are beneath its shelter. It does not return us to Adamic innocence, but brings us God's own righteousness, beyond the reach of condemnation, and leads us into fullest harmony with the heart of God. No mere equivalent could do this.

A. E. Knoch

A CONTEMPLATION

ONCE one contemplates the absolute miracle
of just being in existence,
THAT every day granted to us
is an outright miracle,
THAT after this life we have an eternity
of perfect life, perfect joy and perfect love,
NOTHING, and I mean absolutely nothing
in life is too difficult.

Tony Nungesser

FORBEAR—JUSTIFY—PROPITIATE

NOAH IS A JUST MAN. Noah finds grace in the eyes of Yahweh Elohim. With the Subjector *walks* Noah (Gen. 6:8,9). These lines concerning the ancestor of all who live in this eon are startling statements which give us a very different introduction to this eon than was true of Adam, in the previous one. It is too radical a change, and too far-reaching to be grasped from the simple statements, so we will enlarge on it by casting a glance over this and the next eon, and considering the subjects of *justification by grace* and the walk connected with it. As a contrast to these we will consider God's *forbearance,* and *propitiation,* which also have a large place in these periods, as well as their relation to *evil.* But justification by grace will be the controlling theme, for this is not only connected with Noah, but is also our own peculiar portion in the present parenthesis between Yahweh's dealing with the nation of Israel.

God's relationship to His people during the two central eons may be summarized by the words, *forbear—(justify)—propitiate.* Under the law covenants, He displayed His *forbearance* in passing over the penalties of sins through the sacrifice of animals, in the *past.* In the *future* He will be *propitious* to His people, and not remember their sins in the Kingdom, because of the sacrifice of Christ. But at *present,* under grace, *He is just* when He *justifies* us apart from law, through the deliverance in Christ Jesus. To fully grasp these important parts of God's plan, let us look at them from His side, and consider all three and their differences, so that we may be able to adore and worship Him

for *His* justification, and its importation to us now, and to all at the consummation.

The differences between forbearance, propitiation and justification are seldom understood today because His people are far more concerned with their own salvation than with God's glory. They think of little beside their own welfare. In fact, the weak and confused ideas of "atonement," or "forgiveness" or "pardon," etc., and the fearful mixture of these in the popular versions, has made it practically impossible for them to fully enjoy the greatness of the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus, as expressed in the terms *justification* and *reconciliation.* As justification is usually confused with propitiation, it may help to contrast these two, and discover their proper places in God's plan.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In John's first epistle we read of the position of the Circumcision saints in verse nine: "if we should be avowing our sins, He is faithful and just that He may be pardoning us our sins. . . ." This seems to be the position taken by many serious saints today. But the question arises, how can we possibly know all our mistakes? For example, those who appeal to this text today, do they realize that this act itself is a serious error? Moreover, it may make us self-centered, concerned with our own failings, instead of exulting in the transcendent truths that God has justified us through what *Christ has done,* and freed us from our sins *and* from ourselves.

VERSION VARIETIES: PROPITIATION

Four forms of the stem *-il-* are translated in so many different ways in the later Scriptures that it is less than useless to study the subject by means of the popular versions. But it may be helpful to give their translations just to show how confusing they are. The first rendering below is that

of the AV, and the second is the Revised Standard. The last is the Concordant Version.

Matt.	16:22	*Far be it* from thee. *God forbid.* Propitious be it.
Luke	18:13	*merciful. merciful.* make a propitiatory shelter.
Rom.	3:25	*propitiation. expiation.* propitiatory shelter.
Heb.	8:12	*merciful. merciful.* be propitious.
Heb.	9: 5	*mercyseat. mercy seat.* propitiatory shelter.
1 John	2: 2	*propitiation. expiation.* propitiatory shelter.
1 John	4:10	*propitiation. expiation.* propitiatory shelter.

In three cases the AV had it correct, but the RSV has actually perverted, rather than revised it!

SHELTER

Shelter is the thought which underlies the word *propitiation,* while *vindication* may be the nearest synonym for *justification.* The basic idea of *shelter* was almost entirely ignored or expunged from the Hebrew stem *kphr,* from which springs the word propitiation, by translating it *pitch, atone, forgive, merciful, pardon, purge, put off, reconcile, cleanse, disannul,* and *ransom.* However it can still be dimly discerned in such terms as *appease, pacify, village* and *bribe.* The word's background is impending danger or disaster. A *village,* for instance, is a cluster of habitations which *shelter* the inhabitants from the elements. Only when *not* used of the sacrifices the renderings are usually nearer the truth, as *appease, pacify, satisfaction,* etc. Thus the translators themselves have shown us the impropriety of rendering it "atonement" at any time.

THEORIES OF THE ATONEMENT

This may have been dimly seen by some who have tried to explain its force by its derivation, at-one-ment. But this meaning is now obsolete. The dictionary defines it as:

"The saving or redeeming work of Christ wrought by His obedience, personal sufferings, and death. Prior to Anselm (*d.* 1109) Christ

was thought to have paid a ransom to the Devil by His sufferings and thus wrought the deliverance of those who believed in Him. But since that day the leading theories are:

a. The Anselmian, or the *vicarious,* or *substitutional* atonement. This is the generally accepted orthodox view, and is held by Roman Catholic and by Calvinistic theologians. According to this, the righteousness of Christ was accepted by the Divine Father as a substitute for the righteousness of mankind lost through the fall, and the suffering and death of Christ were accepted as an equivalent of the punishment justly incurred by mankind; men being consequently released from punishment, on condition of their acceptance through faith of Christ's sacrifice.

b. Governmental atonement, a theory originated by Grotius (*d.* 1645) the Dutch statesman, but common among New England theologians, that violated law must be followed by punishment, for the deterrent effect on the community as in the penalties inflicted by human society, and that Christ's death as a spectacle to the universe serves this purpose of warning, and obviates the necessity of the punishment of man.

c. Moral atonement, set forth by Maurice (*d.* 1872) and Robertson (*d.* 1853) in England, and Bushnell (*d.* 1876) in America. Christ, it is held, reveals by His holy life and love-inspired suffering, the nature of God, and so wins man to repentance and the pursuit of holiness, which is the only satisfaction God requires."

We do not usually give so much space to human theories, but, in this case, we hope to show how contradictory and confused Christendom is on this simple subject, and what a false impression it produces in respect to God's righteousness and grace and love. The great and glorious truth that all is out of God and is designed to glorify Him and reveal His love is nearly eclipsed by all the theories of the atonement, even in the orthodox Bible schools today. We hope our readers will rid their minds and hearts of these false theories, so that they may be able to grasp and enjoy the rich truths which replace them.

SUBSTITUTION

A favorite method of "explaining" the "atonement" is

by calling Christ a "Substitute" for those who believe on Him. He "took their place" and "suffered in their room and stead." The writer preached this as the gospel to unbelievers for a while, as he had been taught. But when he failed to find the word "substitute" in the Bible, and began to consider closely what this involved, he had to stop. If Christ had suffered in the place of those to whom He preached, then it would be the most flagrant injustice if they were not saved. As comparatively few believed, the theory of substitution was false, because it was unjust. Christ suffered and died *for* us, not *instead* of us.

The idea that past sins can be "atoned for" by future good conduct is absolutely unscriptural and irrational. Even human adjudication does not recognize it. If a man steals a thousand dollars, he cannot atone for it by stealing no more. The use of this expression in theology is most unfortunate, and has led to much obscurity in understanding God's dealings with humanity. It bolsters up the idea that salvation is due to human efforts rather than the sacrifice of Christ.

One reason, and probably the principal one, why so few really grasp the full import of justification, is the prevailing view that God's attempt to salvage mankind is a huge failure. Only a small percentage will be saved, and the vast majority will suffer everlasting punishment. If that were true, then God is *not* just Himself, and how can He justify others?

SHELTERED FROM THE FLOOD

We are given several instructive pictures of the shelter afforded by propitiation in the Hebrew Scriptures. The earliest and simplest occurrence refers to the sheltering coat which was put on Noah's ark to keep it from leaking and sinking in the deluge. It is usually rendered *pitch,* although there is nothing in the original to indicate what

material was used. That is quite immaterial. Here we are given the basic idea of falsely called "atonement," really propitiation, in tangible form. Noah's ark, although intended to *preserve* him and all soul life through the flood, was in dire danger, for it might become waterlogged and sink with all on board. The ark represents Christ. With the sheltering coat *it includes His propitiatory sacrifice.* This shelters from *impending judgment.*

JACOB PROPITIATES ESAU

Jacob had robbed his brother Esau of his birthright and his blessing, so Esau was only waiting for the death of his father, Isaac, when he would kill his brother. So their mother sent Jacob away to Padan, in Syria, in order to be out of Esau's reach. Now, however, Jacob was returning to the land, and was about to meet his brother again. He knew that he was in danger of his life, so he sent a series of presents to Esau, "for, said he, a propitiatory *shelter* will I make before his face with the present offering which is going before me, and afterward I will see his face" (Gen. 32:20). Here we have a good illustration of the meaning of our word in the ordinary dealings between men. Jacob wished to turn Esau's anger away from him, and so shelter himself from the danger of his brother's wrath.

The whole narrative shows plainly that Jacob is not making any "atonement" for his own previous sins, but rather preparing for amicable relations with Esau in the future, especially in stopping Esau from killing him. The dictionary says that atonement is *satisfaction* or *amends* for a *previous* injury. But this was not at all Jacob's intention, for he retained both the birthright and the blessing. Later on, when he met Esau, he explained that all the presents were intended to *find grace* in the eyes of Esau in the *future.* This is the great difference between "atonement," and propitiation, which shows that all talk about "the atonement"

is beside the mark. It gives a fatally false impression. No wonder there is so much disagreement as to its meaning!

SHELTERED FROM THE LAW

Another picture is given us in connection with the *law* of Sinai. The law, when observed, should bring blessing, but, if not kept, it is a very dangerous thing, for it transformed sin into transgression, and this draws down the wrath of the Lawgiver. Israel broke the law before it really reached them, so Moses broke the tablets before they could call down a curse upon the people. When he descended with the second set, what could he do to *shelter* the people from the curse which it denounced on all law-breakers? He put them in the coffer of the covenant and put a *sheltering* lid over it, and called it the *propitiatory shelter* (AV, mercy-seat), and sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice on it. This kept it from killing all who came near.

TEMPORARY PROPITIATION IN THE PAST

Propitiation, in the past, under the law, before the sacrifice of Christ, was a temporary affair, repeated daily (Ex. 29:36), or year by year, as in connection with the so-called "day of atonement" (Ex.30:10; Lev.16). It was deadly dangerous for Israel to have a holy Subjector dwelling in their midst, Who would judge the least infringement of His holy law. Even the priests, the sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, were devoured by fire when they used the wrong fire to burn their incense (Lev.10:1-3). To shelter the sons of Israel from such catastrophes, Aaron was told to make a propitiation, to last for a year, for the priests and the people. Aaron had to confess the failures and transgressions of the sons of Israel, and put them on the head of a live goat, which took them away into the wilderness for a year. So was Yahweh, the Subjector of Israel, temporarily propitiated. There was no "atonement" for past sins.

As the sheltering sacrifices were intended to be an object lesson, which would hardly be comprehended from a single occurrence, they had to be repeated in each generation, and every year, and every day, so that the truth they taught might be impressed on the hearts of the holy nation. These were at once the token and the reason why they could dwell so near to Yahweh Elohim without being consumed by His presence. And the fact that these offerings were continually made to shelter them from *prospective* sins, should have impressed them with His *protective* provision and care, as well as their own ingrained sinfulness.

EONIAN PROPITIATION

It was only before the sacrifice of Christ that propitiation had a very limited scope in time. The animal sacrifices had no permanent value, so had to be repeated again and again. They were only temporary shadows of a future Sacrifice whose value was unlimited in every way. The sufferings and death of Christ provides *beforehand* for all future sin and offense. It will never need to be repeated. So it comes that, in Israel, in the kingdom eon, God is *propitious* to their injustices, and is not reminded of their sins and lawlessness (Heb.8:12). This is the fulfillment of the types and shadows of the past.

PROPITIATION IN THE PAST

Propitiation is limited to Yahweh's earthly people, although justification will eventually include all (Rom.5:18). This is clear, not only from the fact that it is used almost exclusively in the Circumcision writings, but is clinched by its single occurrence in Paul's epistles. In Romans 3:24,25 we read: "Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory Shelter, through faith in His blood,[1] for

1. see footnote p.102.

a display of His righteousness because of the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before in the forbearance of God) . . . ."

Here we have propitiation located in the *past,* in contrast to the present, as well as a definition and description of it at that time, before Christ Jesus, *the Antitype of all the sacrifices,* had offered Himself. It was a *passing over of the penalties of sins . . . in the forbearance of God.* It is impossible for the blood of bulls and of he-goats to be *eliminating sins* (Heb.10:4), so they were merely *passed over,* not in view of God's righteousness, but in His *forbearance.* The penalties still stood against them. They were not eliminated until later by the Great Sacrifice. Such was the propitiatory shelter provided by the sacrifices in Israel in the past. Because the Great Sacrifice has since been offered, propitiation will mean much more in the future.

The first reference to propitiation in the Greek Scriptures is very striking when we know the meaning of the term. It deals with the first occasion on which Jesus speaks of Himself as the true Propitiatory Shelter, and shows how little it was understood even by the most spiritual of the disciples. "Thenceforth begins Jesus to show His disciples that He must be coming away into Jerusalem and to be suffering much from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and the third day to be roused. And, taking Him to him, Peter begins to rebuke Him, saying, '*Propitious* be it to Thee, Lord! By no means shall this be for Thee!' Now He, being turned, said to Peter, 'Go away behind Me, Satan! A snare are you to Me, for you are not disposed to that which is of God, but to that which is of men'" (Matt.16:21-23).

The AV translates, "*Far be it from Thee,*" and so covers up the meaning of the passage. The RSV says "God forbid!" which is worse. The whole point of the passage lies in the fact that Jesus could not have a propitiatory shelter

for *Himself,* because *He* was to be it for *others.* Besides, there was no need for God to be propitious to Him, for He neither sinned nor had sin in Him, so no one, not even God, could be propitious to Him. Peter was asking for the same thing that Satan wanted, that is, to enter the kingdom apart from the cross. Therefore Peter fully deserved to be called an adversary. Jesus was just beginning to tell them the opposite, that is, that the opposition of the people was about to lead up to *His propitiatory sacrifice,* so that He *must* suffer, not for Himself, but for their sakes.

THE TRIBUTE COLLECTOR

Tax collectors, even in our day, are in an unenviable position. But a tribute collector who takes the tax for a foreign power, is in a far worse fix, for who wants to pay for their own oppression? It was even worse, under the Roman government of that day, for the tax collectors had to add their own wages to it. The worst was when a *Jew* demeaned himself by sinking to this low level. The self-righteous Pharisee, in the parable in Luke (18:9-14), considered one of them as the lowest in the scale of sinners. The tribute collector agreed with this estimate of himself, evidently, for he kept his distance. With down-cast eyes, he beat his chest, saying, "God, make a *propitiatory shelter* for me, the sinner!" Such is the power of propitiation, however, that our Lord considered *him* righteous, rather than the self-righteous Pharisee who thought that he needed no shelter.

PROPITIATION FOR THE WORLD

In the book of Hebrews we are told of the new covenant with Israel, that under it, He will be propitious to their injustices. The apostle John, however, widens the scope of blessing, so that it flows through Israel to the whole world. So will it be in regard to propitiation also. Speaking first of Israel, he says, "And He is the propitiatory shelter concerned with our sins, yet not concerned with ours only, but concerned with the whole world" (1 John 2:2).

A. E. Knoch

CHRIST'S BLOOD

"Through His blood" indicates that a sacrifice has been made. The blood is associated with the soul, and we remember the passage in Isaiah 53:12. "He gives up His soul unto death." Peace is to be made with all creation "through the blood of His cross" (Col. l:20). This has reference to the *manner* of Christ's death, and indicates the intensity of the suffering which He underwent in order to fulfill God's purpose. So extreme was the suffering that Christ Himself, always obedient to His Father's will, at one point prayed that, if it were possible, the cup might pass from Him. The chief component in that suffering was undoubtedly the temporary, yet complete, alienation between God and His Son, indicated by the darkness which hung over the cross for three long hours. Yet there were other factors, too, which would grieve Christ's sensitive spirit, such as the numbering of the sinless Son of God among the malefactors, the mock trial, the gibes of the throng, the crown of thorns and the scourging, and the curse of being hanged upon a tree.

John H. Essex

REPOSING IN EXPECTATION

Our brother in Christ, **Delbert "Del" Cornwell**, age 92, died July 18,2023. He grew up in the small town of Vernon, South Dakota where he learned how to farm alongside of his father. Farming remained his interest and vocation even after moving with his family to California where he was employed by a college as Poultry Manager. But there also, along with his wife, Kathryn, and especially through the ministry of her uncle, Joseph E. Kirk, he came to rejoice in God's purpose of love and righteousness for the reconciliation of all.

We have recently heard of the death of **Joyce (Davies) Orton** of Bramcote, England, at the age of 103. Fervent in faith she held to the teachings of Paul along with her father, Bernard Davies and husband, Frank Orton, and others who fellowshipped in the Nottingham area.

ROMANS 3:21-28

21 **Yet now, apart from law,**
God's righteousness has been made **manifest**°
(being attested° **by the law and the prophets),**
22 **yet God's righteousness**
through Jesus Christ's faith
io·**for all**
(and on all ·who are **believing** it),
for there ˡ**is no***t* **distinction,** 23 **for all sin and are wanting**°
of the glory of ·**God,** 24 **being justified**°◊ **gratuitously** in
His ·**grace, through the deliverance, the** deliverance which
is **in Christ Jesus** 25 **(Whom** ·**God purposes**° for a **Propitiatory through** ·His **faith,**◊ *i*·**by**◊ means of **His** ·**blood,** *io*·**for** a
display of His ·**righteousness because** of **the passing over**
of the penalties of **sins** which °**occurred before in the forbearance of** ·**God)** 26 **toward the display of His** ·**righteousness in the current era,**
io·**for Him** ·**to** ˡ**be righteous**
and to be **justifying the** human
out of Jesus's faith.
27 **Where, then,** is ·**boasting? It is debarred! Through what law? Of** ·**works? No***t*! **But**
through faith's law.
28 **For we are reckoning**° a **human to be** ˡ**justified**° by **faith apart from works of law.**

3:24 being justified°**:** the process of being righteous-ified is proceeding, having begun, apart from law, through Jesus Christ's faith.
3:25 ·His **faith: the faith** is that of v.22, the faith of Jesus Christ; ˡ**by: in** probably has an instrumental sense here as well as in Ro 5:9 and Ep 2:13, *cp* **through** in Ep 1:7 and Col 1:20.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS MANIFESTED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH FOR ALL

First of all we must recognize that the subject—indeed the critical and glorious subject of Romans 3:21-28 is the manifestation of *God's righteousness.*

Then we need to see that this manifestation of God's righteousness is by means of *Jesus Christ's faith*—not by means of our faith in Him, but by His perfect faith to which He was fully faithful unto the death of the cross.

Furthermore it is essential for our joy and peace that we understand that God's righteousness as it is manifested (and secured) through Jesus Christ's faith is *for all* human beings—not one is left out—not even one.

Connected with these three fundamental facts are three further facts that are no less important and critical, but which stand in relation to the fundamental, evangelical facts of (1) the manifestation of God's righteousness (2) by means of Jesus Christ's faith (3) for the benefit of all human beings and indeed all creation.

These associated facts are that the message Paul is bringing concerning the manifestation of God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith for the good of all is (1) apart from law (2) yet attested by the law and the prophets and (3) that it already benefits those who are believing it, not with its full enjoyment of benefits but still in a truly significant and powerful way. This is expressed here by the

preposition "on" and in Romans 4 by the verb "reckoned," and in 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5 and Ephesians 1:14 by the noun "earnest."

Each of these grand and happy facts may be considered by itself, but as it relates to the others with the manifestation of God's righteousness heading them all. We are presently focusing on *Jesus Christ's faith* which is a condensed way of speaking of gratuitous justification through *the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus* (Rom.3:24), and of saying: "Christ dies for our sins" (1 Cor.15:3), or more fully: "God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that while we are still sinners, Christ dies for our sakes" (Rom.5:8), or even more fully: "Christ Jesus, . . . being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be to be equal with God; nevertheless He empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of human beings, and found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil.2:5-8).

This justification through Jesus Christ's obedience in faith unto death is what makes God's righteousness manifest. And it is for all (*cp* 2 Cor.5:14). But it has a special connection to us who are believing it (*cp* 1 Tim.4:10).

"FOR" AND "ON"

Both Jews and Greeks ("Greeks" referring here to all humans who are not Jews) are all under sin. "Not one is righteous—not even one" (Rom.3:10). Out of works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight (Rom.3:20). Yet now, through Jesus Christ's faith, God's righteousness is made manifest in gratuitous justification, in God's grace (Rom.3:21-24). This is "*for* all . . . for all sin and are wanting of the glory of God" (Rom.3:22,23). Justification in God's grace is marked out for all, and therefore all human

beings will, in God's own time, enjoy the justifying of their lives (Rom.5:18). The many (counted now at least in the billions) who are descended from Adam and are constituted sinners shall be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19).

Yet also, concerning those who are believing (to some extent, whether with strong and growing faith, or with the merest flicker of faith, as God measures to them, Rom. 12:3), God has already placed this justification *on* them, reckoning it to them (Rom.4:5).

FIVE REFERENCES TO FAITH

There are five references to faith in Romans 3:21-28. First we hear of "Jesus Christ's faith" (v.22) and later of "Jesus's faith" (v.26). These have dominated our current attention. They speak to us of grace, which is essentially JOY. They take us back to Paul's greetings in which he writes: "Grace to you . . . from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom.1:7). These two references especially point to gratuitous justification in God's *grace* through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24) as the manifestation of God's righteousness.

But in between these references are the words literally rendered "through the[3] faith" (Rom.3:25a). This brief prepositional phrase is followed by another, "in His blood," and these together are directed "for [INTO] a display of His [i.e., God's] righteousness" in relation to both "the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before, and toward that display in the current era.

What is "the faith" of Romans 3:25? Most certainly "through the faith" points us back to "through Jesus Christ's faith" in verse 22 and ahead to "out of Jesus's faith" in verse 26.

3. 3:25 **the:** supplied by Codex Vaticanus.

We have already noted how the words "through Jesus Christ" in Romans 2:16b prepare us for "through Jesus Christ's faith" in 3:22 and from this how we are led forward to the "through one righteous response" of 5:18 and the "through the obedience of the One" of 5:19. The words "through the faith" of Romans 3:25 make the same connections.

CHRIST JESUS AS PROPITIATORY

The CV puts Romans 3:25 in parentheses. This is to suggest that Paul's principal concern is the evangel of gratuitous justification in God's grace by means of ("through") the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus which is directed "toward the display of [God's] righteousness in the current era." Yet Paul is also concerned that this display of God's righteousness relates to what occurred "before" as "attested by the law and the prophets" (v.21).

Propitiation by means of the blood of the sacrifices was a temporary shelter from God's indignation. Now Paul points to Christ Jesus as the Antitype of that provision of old. Using a fact verb (which is not concerned with the time of the act, but wholly concentrates on its truth), the apostle tells us that God *purposes* Christ Jesus for a Propitiatory, not as a temporary shelter from indignation, but as a Deliverer from all operations of God's indignation, such as those brought before us in Romans 1:18; 2:5,9; 3:5. This purposed deliverance of God is not carried out by our faith in Christ's blood (as we have understood and thought) but (as indicated in the revised CV on page 134) by means of that faith of verse 22, the faith of Jesus Christ which is vividly brought before us here in terms of His blood.

For ourselves who have the completed word of God (Col.1:25) we may well carry forward the subject of peace by propitiation to the present blessing of the conciliation (Rom.5:1-11; 2 Cor.5:18-21) and then to the ultimate

blessing of the reconciliation of all when peace is made through the *blood* of the cross (Col.1:20). So also the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before in the forebearance of God, and which was not righteous in itself, is made righteous by that of which it was a foreshadow, the display of God's righteousness (rather than His forebearance) through Christ's faith, by means of His blood. "The soul of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev.17:11). Thus "blood" refers to the *sensation* of suffering and agony endured by our Lord in His obedience unto death.

THE RIGHTEOUS JUSTIFIER

Romans 3:26 points us back to 3:21-24. God Who is manifest as righteous *is* righteous. This has been made manifest and is put on display through the faith of Him Who empties Himself of His glories and becomes obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that is, Jesus.

Consequently, if there is a display of God's righteousness there must be a righteous justification of irreverent and unrighteous human beings (as we are identified in Romans 1:18). God does this. And He does this righteously. He cannot do this by means of unrighteous human beings, not even by their faith. It can be done only by means of (literally, sourced *out* of) One (*cf* "One" in Rom.5:15, 17,19) Who is Himself righteous. Romans 1:17 identifies that One as "the Righteous One." Romans 3:26 identifies Him as "Jesus." This is the Name of the One Who empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in the likeness of human beings, He Who humbles Himself in obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, *Jesus*, in Whose Name every knee shall bow and Whose Lordship every tongue shall acclaim to the glory of God the Father, Who is thus made manifest and put on display as both righteous and One Who is making all righteous (*cf* Rom.5:19).

It dishonors Jesus, the Righteous One, and it makes

God's righteousness a mystery at best and a mockery at worst, to say that God justifies sinners by means of their faith. He reckons righteousness to those who are graciously granted to be believing with whatever measure of faith God, by His spirit, endows on them, but the basis and source and channel is Jesus Christ's faith.

God appears in Romans 3:26 as both *righteous* and the *Justifier* (the One Who is justifying). Christ appears as *Jesus,* the humbled and obedient and faithful One Who dies. But the human appears only by the definite article "the" in the singular. Who is the (one) of Romans 3:26? It is the individual human being. Adam, Eve, Abel, and also Cain—Peter and also Judas—Paul and each one named in Romans 16—you who read this and I who write it, sinners as we are in flesh, each one of us is the one of this verse. "O human!" (Rom.2:1). "For we are reckoning a *human* to be justified by [Jesus's] faith" (Rom.3:28). God already reckons righteousness to the believer who is believing on Him Who is *justifying the irreverent one* (Rom.4:5), and will constitute all righteous (Rom.5:19), but the achievement of justification is through Jesus Christ's faith alone. "A *human* is not being justified by works of law except through that [law work] of Jesus's faith . . . (Gal.2:16).

Here in Romans 3:26, however, the means of justification is expressed by the preposition "out" rather than "through." Accordingly we read that "God's righteousness is being revealed *out* of [the Righteous One's] faith" (Rom. 1:17 *cp* Gal.3:11; Heb.10:38). And in Galatians 2:16 Paul testifies that those Jews who believe in Christ Jesus are "justified *out* of Christ's faith and not out of works of law" (nor out of their faith). Furthermore the scripture was perceiving before "that God is justifying the nations *out* of faith" (Gal.3:8,9). Indeed, "the scripture locks up all together under sin that the promise *out* of Jesus Christ's faith may be given to those who are believing it" (Gal.3:22).

(This will affect our understanding of Romans 3:30, which calls for consideration in a separate article.)

EXPLANATION

In all this there is much that is different from the usual explanation of Romans 3:21-28. Paul is not speaking of righteousness from God (though righteousness is from Him), but of the righteousness *of* God, that is, God's own righteousness. This is what has been made manifest, or "revealed" (Rom.1:17), or put on "display" (Rom.3:25,26). In that our apostle speaks of the justification ("righteousification") of the sinner (Rom.3:23,24) this evangel is the manifestation of God's righteousness, so that it may be established that God *is* righteous (Rom.3:26).

What has been obscured is Jesus Christ's faith, so that God's righteousness is obscured. Where Paul speaks of Christ's faith, it has been widely understood to be our faith in Him, both in Bible translations and expositions. Even now when it is proven by some scholars, noted in some translations and felt certain by some believers, the old error dominates in much of our thinking and teaching.

The CVNT translation of Romans 3:21-28 above is not perfect (for no translation is perfect), but by its efforts for consistent renderings in vocabulary and grammar and attempts to keep the context in view where wrong premises and self-centered mindsets are most likely to creep in, it points in the right direction.

It is blessedly true that our faith is in Christ, but that is not what Paul is saying here. God is in first place. The human is in third place, with Jesus Christ as the connecting link, the Mediator in second place. The passage concerns God's righteousness made manifest and put on display by means of Jesus Christ's faith as it relates to the fact that all human beings are sinners. This is *for* our faith

(Rom.1:17) but not by means of our faith. And this is for all (*cp* 1 Tim.2:3-6).

FAITH'S LAW

"Where, then, is boasting? It is debarred!" (Rom.3:27). But boasting is not debarred if gratuitous justification is achieved by means of our faith in Jesus Christ. It is a most blessed and glorious gift to be believing and to place our faith in Jesus Christ as the One Who dies for our sakes. This brings joy and peace into our present lives and in full measure during the oncoming eons. But if these blessings are based on what we do (and to believe, even in the smallest measure, is to do something) there is room for our boasting in ourselves.

We see, then (since boasting is debarred), verses 27-28 continue the theme of God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith for all human beings. Boasting is debarred because of this "law" of Jesus's faith.

The two words, "faith's law," in context, say much the same thing as the two words, "God's law," in Romans 7:25 in their context. There they refer to God's evangel concerning His Son. Paul enslaves his *mind* to "God's law," that is, to God's evangel in contrast to "the law of the God" laid down at Sinai which, for all its righteousness and holiness brings wretchedness into his life because of the different law, "the law of sin" (indeed, "the law of sin and death") which is in his flesh. So now in Romans 3:21-28 we hear the evangel of faith's law. In lieu of saying, "we are believing," Paul says "we are *reckoning.*" We are accounting it a fact that a human is justified by Jesus Christ's faith apart from works of law. We are enslaving our minds to this evangel. Believe—reckon—enslaving our minds—these terms are all ways of saying the same thing, each way bringing out its special aspect. Thus Paul takes us back to the "for faith" of Romans 1:17. It is for our faith, for our believing, for our reckoning, for the enslaving of our minds that justification is out of the Righteous and Humbled One's faith, indeed out of Jesus's faith.

So also Paul is pointing ahead to what he will say in Romans 5:8, that while we are still sinners Christ dies for our sakes. This is faith's law, which is for our faith.

APART FROM WORKS OF LAW

If it is so that God is righteous and that this is made known by means of the faith of Jesus Christ in His obedience unto the death of the cross, then it is this that is apart from works of law. Our faith is neither the cause nor the channel of the revelation that God is righteous and that all He does is justified. That our faith could be the cause and means of such supremely good results is as incomprehensible as it is impossible.

Once again, our faith is a spiritual endowment from God (1 Cor.12:1; 13:13), which He graciously gives to us in measure (Phil.1:29; Rom.12:3) on the basis of what He has done for us (even for all) out of and through the faith of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Consequently we are reading Romans 3:21-28 as we read Romans 5 where Paul speaks of God's love commended in that while we are still sinners Christ dies for our sakes. There also we hear of the One Human through Whom the lives of all human beings are being justified and of the One through Whom the many sinners descended from Adam shall be constituted righteous.

Again we read in chapter 8 of God sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh, which speaks of Him in His humiliation as Jesus, and this is "concerning sin" so that sin in the flesh is condemned. God spares Him not, but gives Him up for us *all.* Even as God's righteousness is manifested through Jesus Christ's faith, so also His love is expressed in Christ Jesus in His death for us, not as a

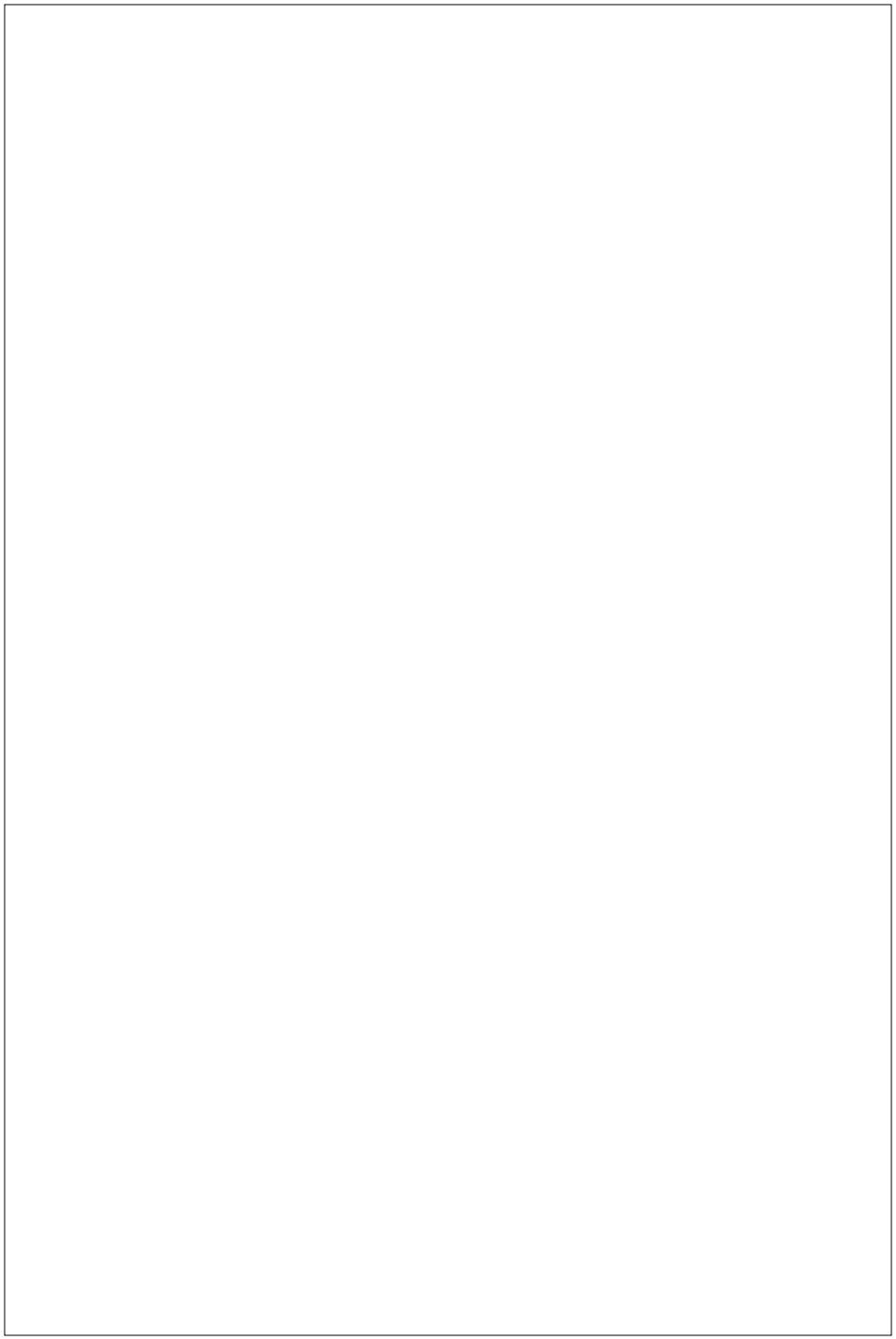
response to the imperfect and much varied faith of a limited number of human beings. God's evangel is not one thing in Romans 3:21-28 and another thing later on. All our blessings are based on Jesus Christ's faith, which makes it clear that God is righteous. This is for our believing.

A CLOSING NOTE

There are important distinctions that need to be noted, not only between what Paul means when he speaks of Circumcision and Uncircumcision (Rom.3:30, *cp* "Jews and Greeks," Rom.3:10), but here especially the distinction between what is sometimes called *cause* and *occasion*, and between justification in the full and literal sense of *make* righteous and its frequently used sense of *call* righteous.

God's evangel as set before us most directly in Romans 1:16,17; 3:21-28 and 5:1-19 (and ever kept in view throughout his epistles) tells us of the cause of literal justification (being made righteous to the end of vindication) by means of the faith of Jesus Christ, that is, His death of humiliation and suffering, followed by His being roused by God. It reveals what has been done and its results which are assured, but are not yet brought into effect—into full enjoyment. On the other hand, in the meantime, we who are believing this evangel are justified in the sense of *reckoned* by God to be righteous, which is a matter of God "calling what is not being as if it is being" (Rom.4:17), for it is certain to be so. Our believing (that is, our faith) is not the cause (or means) of this reckoning of righteousness, but it is the *occasion* in which what has been achieved through Christ's faith is even now put to our account by God (*cp* Eph.1:13). Hence, in spirit, in the renewing of our mind, in faith and expectation, we are enjoyers of justification and may be enjoying peace toward God (Rom.5:1).

D.H.H.



Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 114th Year

(1909–2023)

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 The Era Preceding the Present
158 The Word of Christ, it's Grace and Power
167 Together with the Lord
187 God is One

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EDITORIAL

THE RECOGNITION of God's ways with humanity and the world in which we live is of prime importance for us. God's ways have not always been the same in their details and will not always be as they are now. Yet this one thing is so—that He is working all together for good. This is the conviction of those who are loving God (Rom.8:28).

In this issue of our magazine, the opening article is a reprint of A. E. Knoch's comments on Ephesians 2:11,12. It concerns "The Era Preceeding the Present" (pages 147-157). That era was a time of transition in the operations of God, the period covered by the book of Acts.

It was during that era that many spiritual blessings were introduced through the apostleship of Paul alongside of visible and tangible blessings and a priority maintained by Israel in such matters. Paul describes that situation in Ephesians 2:11,12 in terms that seem puzzling to us who never lived in that transitional period. In order for us to appreciate more fully the blessings for believers now in contrast to the situation in the previous era, Brother Knoch states: "We must dismiss from our minds the rich *spiritual* blessings such as justification, conciliation, sonship, which had come to the nations through Paul's ministry. Though they had a spiritual circumcision far more effectual than the fleshly rite, still they remained the 'Uncircumcision.' Though they enjoyed a knowledge of God quite supreme to that possessed by the twelve apostles and their followers, they had no fleshly standing though 'in Christ' *in spirit*, *they were apart from* Christ in flesh (Eph.2:12). They were aliens of political Israel. They were allowed to partake of her covenants as guests only . . . ."

But now, having recognized that there were limitations having to do with the position in flesh of the nations as compared to Israel, we bring our minds back to "the rich *spiritual* blessings unfolded in Paul's epistles, even in those written during the previous era. Thus in his article, "The Word of Christ, its Grace and Power" (pages 158-166), James Coram writes "Paul speaks to us from the vantage point of his own evangel which came to him through a revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal.1:2), which he heralded among the nations (Gal.2:2). He does not even take up the many details of the personal ministry of Jesus, those things associated with the Lord's 'personal entrance' to 'the entire people of Israel' (*cp* Acts 13:24; Matt.15:24)," (page 159).

Similarly John H. Essex traces steps toward our always being "Together with the Lord" (pages 167-186) as revealed through epistles written throughout his ministry: "With the cross comes a change. The flesh is mentally discarded—considered to be dead—crucified together with Him, and, as Paul puts it in his second letter to the Corinthians, 'If anyone is in Christ there is a *new creation.* the primitive passed by. Look! there has come new' (5:17). A new creation! This change is so radical that, from now on, we are to be acquainted with no one according to flesh. 'Yes,' adds the apostle, 'even if we have known Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now we know Him so no longer' (1 Cor.5:16,17)" (pages 175,176).

Finally this issue ends with my own comments on Romans 3:21-31 (pages 187-192). Here in an epistle written in the previous era Paul dwells on one of those spiritual blessings. A. E. Knoch advised us to dismiss from our minds in considering Ephesians 2:11,12, that of justification. In this there is no distinction between Circumcision and Uncircumcision (Rom.3:22), for all sin (Rom.3:22), being justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). D.H.H.

THE ERA PRECEDING THE PRESENT

> Wherefore, remember that once you, the nations in flesh—who are termed "Uncircumcision" by those termed "Circumcision," in flesh, made by hands—that you were, in that era, apart from Christ, being alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and guests of the promise covenants, having no expectation, and without God in the world. (Eph.2:11,12)

We have now considered the two leading aspects of the "mystery," joint enjoyers of an allotment, and joint members of Christ's body. In the first (Eph.1:3-14) we discovered our new relationship to God. In the second we considered our relationship to Christ. In both we fare equally with an election out of Israel. It now behooves us to study the third aspect of the mystery. What is our direct relationship to the saints of this and of all other divine administrations? Here is a rich field of truth, almost unexplored, because the key had long been lost (Eph.2:11-22).

The saints among the nations who first received the mystery were the same ones whom Paul had reached in his previous ministry. When the mystery was made known, Paul could not send it to an entirely new company of people, for no such saints existed. He sent it to those who had a part in that transitional economy which preceded the present. Those saints did not form a special body apart from us. They will not be one body of Christ and we another. If so, Paul must be in both! Some of his friends would be likewise embarrassed. Christ would have two figurative bod-

ies! Paul would have two distinct destinies, if, indeed, any definite destiny can be found for the earlier saints, apart from the Ephesian revelation. The mystery was made known to and through those saints who had received the truth taught in Paul's previous epistles. It is most significant that it was not sent to or through the twelve apostles or those to whom they ministered.

First of all we are invited to remember what a low place was accorded the nations during the era preceding the revelation of the mystery (Eph.2:11,12). This is difficult to apprehend unless we give due attention to the stress laid upon the word *flesh.* During Paul's previous ministries he had brought rich *spiritual* blessings to the nations. We will do well to forget them in this connection. The various points God charges us to remember here are *all dependent on physical descent.* The rite of circumcision placed an impassable boundary between Israel and the nations. "Wherefore, remember that once you, the nations, *in flesh*—who are termed 'Uncircumcision' by those being termed 'Circumcision,' *in flesh, made by hands . . . .*" Miss this, and we miss all.

We must dismiss from our minds the rich *spiritual* blessings, such as justification, conciliation, sonship, which had come to the nations through Paul's ministry. Though they had a spiritual circumcision far more effectual than the fleshly rite, still they remained the "Uncircumcision." Though they enjoyed a knowledge of God quite superior to that possessed by the twelve apostles and their followers, they had no fleshly standing. Though "*in* Christ" *in spirit,* they were *apart from* Christ in flesh (Eph.2:12). They were aliens of political Israel. They were allowed to partake of her covenants as guests only. They were not "strangers *to,*" but guests *of.*

In *spirit* the nations had an expectation, a "blessed hope." At that time it was not very well defined. Their destiny was

obscure, yet gloriously covered by the wondrous words "always together with the Lord" (1 Thess.4:17). But they had no physical heritage in view. "Having no expectation" (Eph.2:12) must be limited to the controlling theme—*in flesh,* or *physically.* It is not to be applied to the unbeliever, but to the company of saints who had believed Paul's message. They did not become proselytes in order to share in Israel's physical benefits. They remained uncircumcised, and lacked all fleshly claims.

Strange as it may seem, they were without God in the world (Eph.2:12). How very far from true this was in the spiritual sphere we leave each one to imagine. The *spirits* of those who had turned to God from idols (1 Thess.1:9), who reveled in the eighth of Romans, who had the spiritual endowments of Corinthians, were certainly not without God in the world. But that is not the point. In *flesh* they had no God to call their own. Even the unbelieving Israelite could claim Yahweh as his God, and enter His sanctuary to perform his devotions. The believers among the nations had no such privilege.

It would be an easy task for the Ephesians to recollect that in which they themselves had been vitally concerned. They could readily look back to their own experience. Not so with us. We cannot recall such an experience. We have never lived in a different administration such as this, which covered the period dealt with in the latter half of Acts, so long as Paul preached the evangel of God, during his itinerant ministry among the nations. But it is urgent for our understanding of the present grace that we also may compare and contrast the present superlative grace with the favor previously shown to the nations. To do this we shall consider the personal experience of Trophimus, who was given a powerful object lesson on this very theme.

The Scriptures give us three typical men who may illustrate for us the various experiences of the believers among

the nations in the time of transition which preceded the revelation of the mystery. These three men are Trophimus, Tychicus, and Onesimus. Their very names are significant. Trophimus means *Nourished.* Tychicus can probably best be rendered freely by *Fortunate.* Onesimus is *Profitable.* In the personal histories of these three men God has given us a living and moving panorama of the inauguration of the present order of things. Each name, together with every detail recorded of them—where they are, what they do, what befalls them—is full of meaning. The history of these three men forms a picture in miniature of God's dealings in their day. If we associate each with such a knowledge of God and His ways as had been revealed, and rigidly exclude and deny to each things not recorded of them and those revelations which were yet future, we shall enjoy an engaging and instructive picture of the inception of the present secret administration.

Nourished (Trophimus) brings before us the era which we are considering, which came between the Pentecostal and the present administrations—the things we are exhorted to remember. His presence in Jerusalem with Paul is the touchstone which will apprise us of the real nature of that era and the prominent place given to the physical supremacy of Israel. We will return to him presently.

Fortunate (Tychicus), the bearer of this message to the Ephesians, is a true picture of those to whom he was sent. While Nourished is left behind (for lack of nourishment, 2 Tim.4:20), Tychicus is "fortunate" indeed, for he leaves the past era and enters the present. He has had the experience of Nourished, but to him it becomes a mere memory, in the light of the amazing grace which he brought with him from Rome to Ephesus.

Profitable (Onesimus) was like us. He had no personal experience of a previous administration. He was the fruit of Paul's *bonds.* Like the nations of whom he was a representative, he had, in time past, been *un*profitable. The nations had not been on terms with God. They could never wipe out the debt they owed Him, or destroy the fact that they were His property. They were His slaves, but they had run away from His service, like Onesimus. How strange that a man *in chains* should catch the runaway and return him to his Master! Yet that is God's way with us. Paul's chains, borne for the sake of the nations, have turned many an unprofitable fugitive into a freeman who is "profitable" indeed (Philemon 10-19).

Trophimus, the Ephesian, was seen in Jerusalem with Paul, on his last visit to the city (Acts 21:29). The Jews supposed that Paul had brought Trophimus into the sanctuary. This was the cause of Paul's imprisonment. It is a most graphic illustration of the truth we are considering. Trophimus was far nearer to God spiritually than anyone in the mob that assaulted Paul. But the mere supposition that he had approached *physically* precipitated a riot. All Jerusalem is in an uproar! The captain of the Roman squadron is hurrying to the scene with centurions and soldiers. As he arrives at the center of the disturbance he finds the mob seeking to kill a man, a Jew, after they had drawn him out of the sanctuary and shut the gates. After he had seized and chained the man, he demanded who he was and what he had done.

Had he been an alien it would have been a clear case of going beyond the "soreg," or "middle wall of partition," the central wall of the enclosure beyond which it was unlawful for a Gentile to go. But this man was evidently a Jew. The crowd was so vociferous in their denunciations that he could not find out what really was the matter, so he ordered him to be brought into the castle. As the Jew is about to enter he obtains leave to speak to the people. As his speech is in Aramaic, the Hebrew dialect used among the Jews, the tumult is hushed and they listen with rapt

attention. At length, however, he speaks one word which breaks the spell. Once more they cry, "Away from the earth with such a one, for it is not befitting for him to be living!" They strip off their clothes, ready to stone him, and throw dust into the air. Paul is taken into the castle and disappears from view (Acts 21:27-22:24).

As the cause of all this disturbance was the report that Paul had brought him into the sacred precincts and had defiled the sanctuary, this occurrence must have powerfully impressed Trophimus. His name and physical environment are but a parable of the truth. Though not a Jew, he is in Jerusalem, "nourished" on Jewish food and in Jewish lodgings. For a time he sojourns there as their *guest* (Eph.2:12). This was the position of the nations. They were partakers of Israel's spiritual blessings (Rom.15:27). Now he is to learn that, in flesh, he is without God in the world. Some Jew from Asia had recognized him with Paul, and had jumped to the conclusion that Paul, having brought the nations near to God spiritually, now intended to bring them close in flesh. Otherwise why bring him there at all? The guess was received with conviction. No evidence was needed. This is how it started. But how did it end? What was that horrid word which broke the spell the apostle cast over the angry mob? It was the hated "goyim," the name for the alien *nations.*

They gladly heard the story of Paul's conversion. They did not object to the fact that Israel had rejected God's mercy. But to hear that God had sent Paul to the other nations—curs, uncircumcised—this was far beyond their endurance. And the man who dared voice such a thought—"Away from the earth with such a one!" Little did these faithful Pentecostalists dream how God would yet use these words to describe His purpose for Paul and the nations. They were, indeed, unfit to live, so reckon themselves crucified with Christ. They have no place on the earth. They are to be

taken away from the earth, not, indeed, in the sense in which these prophets intended, but to take a higher place among the celestials.

How must poor Trophimus have felt at the thoughts these scenes compelled? He was nothing but one of the despised "goyim." As such he knows his place far, far away from the dwelling place of Yahweh. He had sad proof of this today, when the mere rumor, that he had dared to come as near to Him as they had precipitated all this tumult. The great gulf between him and the meanest of the Circumcision was accentuated by his presence in Jerusalem, near the reputed dwelling place of Israel's God. In his journeys with Paul among the nations no such stress had been laid on the rite which he now found made such a difference. True, Paul had circumcised Timothy, but his mother, at least, was a Jewess. Trophimus had no title to the ordinance or to the privileges it conferred.

"Uncircumcision" meant nothing in most countries, for that was the normal state of man. It is only as he came into contact with the Circumcision, and in condescension to them that he must acknowledge that he belonged to a lower caste—the "Uncircumcision." It was not a matter of merit or attainment or character—merely an incident of birth. Above all, it was not the possession of God's grace or a knowledge of Himself. Scores of godly, devoted believers in his native city lived better lives than these circumcised Israelites. But this was of no avail. They came of the wrong stock. The great thing was to reckon the patriarchs among your ancestors. If you are not a physical descendant of Abraham you are not entitled to the rite of circumcision and must keep your distance from God's dwelling place.

APART FROM CHRIST

"Christ has become the Servant of the Circumcision for the sake of the truth of God, to confirm the patriarchal

promises" (Rom.15:8). During His ministry He scarcely set foot outside the land of Israel. In the ecclesia of His day there were no *goyim* (nations, or Gentiles). Indeed, when He explains to them how to shun a brother who refuses to hear the ecclesia, He bids them treat him as they did tribute collectors and aliens (Matt.18:17). Traitors and non-Jews were equally excluded and condemned. He came to take hold of the physical seed of Abraham (Heb.2:16).

The Canaanitish woman had to learn this humbling lesson. "Be merciful to me, Lord, Son of David" failed to touch a responsive chord in His gracious heart. His disciples hear, but do they sympathize? Strange sympathy they gave! "Dismiss her," they say. He seems to acquiesce in their harsh demand, for He says, "I was not commissioned except for the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He was the true David Who tended His Father's sheep. But the woman was not of this fold. As Son of David He could not help her. It is only as *Lord* that He is over *all.* So, when she cries "*Lord,* help me!" He seems to relent a little, yet answers, "It is not ideal to be taking the children's bread and to be casting it to the puppies." She received a blessing only by claiming the crumbs which are falling from the table of her lords. She was forced to acknowledge Israel's prior, almost exclusive place. This was the only ground on which blessing was dispensed to uncircumcised aliens. They were slaves of the Lord, but they had not Messiah. They were apart from Christ (Eph.2:12).

GUESTS OF THE PROMISE COVENANTS

Christ is not only the Servant of the Circumcision, but also gives occasion for the other nations to glorify God for His mercy (Rom.15:9) This mercy was dispensed by Him in the character of their Lord, or Master, for *He is Lord of all.* It was on this basis that Peter proposed to baptize Cornelius (Acts 10:36,48). The covenants God made with

His people were not for themselves alone, for their greatest privilege is to be a channel of blessing to the other nations. God promised Abraham that through him, and through his Seed, *all* the families of the ground would be blessed. The normal place of the Gentiles is to be the invited guests of Israel. This was their place during the era preceding the present secret administration.

ALIENS FROM ISRAEL'S CITIZENSHIP

No citizenship on earth can compare with that of Israel. Other nations rise and fall, but it will supersede them all, and confer on its citizens a power and prestige above all others and lasting for the eons. To Israel alone belongs the rule of the earth. Our ancestral tree may be most glorious, and full of famous names, but if it does not lead back to Abraham's grandson, whose name was changed to Israel (Upright-with-God), we lack the one essential to real political eminence on earth. Between the Jew and Gentile must ever be the disparity that exists between the ruler and the ruled, the sovereign and the subject, for such will be the place of aliens in the promised Kingdom on the earth.

NO EXPECTATION

As Gentiles, *in flesh,* we can have no national expectations. Egypt once boasted in world supremacy, and was followed by Assyria and Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander, Caesar, raised their realms into the place of preeminence and their citizenship into high esteem. Paul claimed the privileges of a Roman citizen. But all these mighty empires had no future. They have passed away, as will the many which have inherited some of their prominence and pride. The page of prophecy assures us that gentile rule is doomed. Israel alone has any expectation. If we are aliens, in flesh, the best that we can look forward to on *earth* is a place subordinate to them.

By far the most interesting and impressive sight in all Jerusalem was the temple on mount Moriah. "The outward face, in its front, wanted nothing that was likely to excite either admiration or astonishment; for it was all covered over with plates of gold of great weight; and at the rising of the sun reflected a very fiery splendor, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it turn their eyes away as they would have done at the sun's rays. It appeared at a distance like a great mountain covered with snow, for those parts of it that were not gilt were exceedingly white." Such is the description given by Josephus.

Had we come to the holy city with Paul and Trophimus, our chiefest wish would be to get a close glimpse of the sacred structure. So we enter the gate through the outer wall, into the court of the nations (which was an unwarranted addition to Herod's temple) and admire its cloisters, with polished marble pillars and a cedar roof. Beyond this we tread an open space with polished inlaid stones. As we approach the second court, with its high wall, we see that it is surrounded by a lower wall of elegant construction. Upon it stand pillars, at equal intervals, declaring the law of purity, some in Greek, and some in Roman letters, warning us that further progress is at the peril of our very lives.

One of these inscriptions was recently unearthed. In our Concordant Commentary on the New Testament, page 290, we have published a tracing of this inscription together with the following translation:

"No alien is to enter within the balustrade and embankment about the sanctuary. Whoever is caught will be responsible for his death, which will ensue." This is the "soreg" which they thought Trophimus had passed with Paul.

True, Trophimus had never transgressed this central wall of the temple enclosure. But what comfort was there in that? If Yahweh, the only true and living God, dwells within those walls, why are we refused access to Him?

Why must we keep our distance? Trophimus, in his Ephesian home, dwelt in the city which was the sexton of the temple of the goddess Artemis, whom the Romans called Diana, whose worship had spread over all the earth (Acts 19:27,35). Perhaps he also had worshiped at her shrine, but now he had turned to God from all idols, to serve the living and true God. And now, at last, he is in the city which kept His temple, and he is denied access by God Himself! Truly, he had no God to call his very own, since, in spirit, he cannot but acknowledge Israel's God, Yahweh.

Such is a true picture of that era, preceding the present, which we are exhorted to remember. The nations who turned to God and His Christ, and received His Spirit, and sent succor to the saints in Jerusalem, had no standing in flesh. They were by no means equal to the Jews who shared the same salvation. Nor is there any indication in the previous Scriptures of any better thing in store for them unless we wait for the far-off day when this earth is dissolved and a new creation takes its place (Rev.21:3). Then, indeed, God will dwell with the nations. Even then they are secondary and subordinate.

The Fate of Trophimus

True to the truth, Trophimus (Nourished) found scantier nourishment at Israel's board as time went on. Jerusalem was herself stricken with a famine (Acts 11:27-29). He follows Paul a little way, but is left at Miletus, sick [from lack of nourishment] (2 Tim.4:20). His experience is a fit picture of the waning weakness of the administration which fails with Israel's failure. But Tychicus (Fortunate) follows Paul all the way to Rome (Col.4:7). He received and relayed the truth of this epistle to the saints. Surely he was "Fortunate"! So are we!

A. E. Knoch

THE WORD OF CHRIST, ITS GRACE AND POWER

"Let the word of Christ be making its home in you richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing yourselves; in psalms, in hymns, in spiritual songs singing with grace in your hearts to God. And everything, whatsoever you may be doing, in word or in act, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God, the Father, through Him" (Col.3:16,17).

The word of Christ needs to be making its *home* in us, not merely visiting upon occasion. And it needs to be present in abundance, or "richly," not in short supply, or "poorly." How we need to be thinking Christ's thoughts and to be governed by His motives! "Therefore we also, from the day on which we hear" (Col.1:9a) concerning the realization of "the *grace* of God in truth" (Col.1:6)—whenever we learn that it has been given to any of our fellow believers—we "do not cease praying for you and requesting that you may be filled full with the realization of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (Col.1:9b).

This is Paul's prayer for us, for "you to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in the realization of God; being endued with all power, in accord with the might of His glory, *for all endurance and patience with joy*; at the same time giving thanks to the Father, Who makes you

competent for a part of the allotment of the saints, in light" (Col.1:10-12).

THE WORD

As a figure of association, Paul uses the expression *"the word of"* in a number of places in reference to various foundational unfoldings of truth entrusted to him by the Lord Jesus Christ. Each of the following seven expressions or passages from Paul's ministry present or make reference to "the word of" (the teaching concerning) a particular consequential theme: "the word of [God's] *grace*" (Acts 20:32); "the word of promise" (Rom.9:9); "the word of *the truth*" (2 Tim.2:15); "the words of *the faith*" (1 Tim.4:6); "the word of *life*" (Phil.2:16); "the word of *the cross*" (1 Cor.1:18); "the word of *the conciliation*" (2 Cor.5:19).[1]

Yet here in Colossians 3:16 Paul's expression is "the word of Christ." We are to heed his entreaty concerning it: "Let the word *of Christ* be making its home in you . . . ." Just as any consideration of "the word of God's grace" will concern itself with the nature of and various key elements pertinent to grace, all our meditations upon "the word *of Christ*" will be centered upon those most notable things pertaining to Him.

Paul speaks to us from the vantage point of his own evangel, the evangel which came to him through a revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal.1:12), which he heralded among the nations (Gal.2:2). He does not even take up the many details of the personal ministry of Jesus, those things associated with the Lord's "personal entrance" to "the entire people of Israel" (*cp* Acts 13:24; Matt.15:24). Paul begins his evangel where Matthew, Mark, Luke and John conclude theirs. From beginning to end (*cp* Acts 13:16-48;

1. for a consideration of each of these expressions, *cf* "Herald the Word," *Unsearchable Riches*, vol. LXXVI, pp.89-94.

Phil.2:8-11), Paul's message is the sacrifice of Christ and "the blood of His cross" (Col.1:20).

THE SCANDAL OF THE CROSS

To Paul, "the word" which is "of Christ," is vitally connected with "the word of the cross," the sufferings and shame associated with His death. Yet it centers upon, to borrow a phrase from Peter, "the glories after these" (*cp* 1 Peter 1:11), upon glories which were hidden from the prophets of old of whom Peter writes, glories which are only revealed through the "prophetic scriptures" (Rom. 16:26) of the apostle Paul.

In itself, the word of the *cross* heralds not Christ glorified, but Christ *crucified.* To those not called, it appears to be a very stupid message (1 Cor.1:21). It "is stupidity, indeed, to those who are perishing, *yet* to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor.1:18). It speaks of the terrible suffering, the pain, humiliation, cursedness and abandonment of the cross. It presents a *bloody* Sacrifice—in all its stark ugliness and terror—yet a Sacrifice which is a fragrant odor to God (Eph.5:2).

The "word of Christ" reveals to us, most notably, the *significance* and *consequences* of His sacrifice in achieving God's purpose. Briefly, all is for God and His glory, and is according to His purpose. This entails the highest measure of blessing for His creatures. The entire ecclesia, and eventually all mankind, will one day find their All in God, yet only through Christ. God is working all together for good, but only through, and because of, the cross.

Sadly, many who gladly receive the word of the cross with respect to the terrible event itself and its sacrificial nature on their behalf, nonetheless become "enemies of the cross" (Phil.3:18). For they insist on adding something of their own to its saving power, insisting that Christ's work

alone is insufficient to ensure their salvation. Though a few of them may succeed in doing so modestly, they all boast in their own flesh, in the supposed "part" which they fancy they had in the whole matter. Thus they nullify the "scandal" (*skandalon,* AV "offence") or "*snare* of the cross," its completeness or all-sufficiency for salvation, and so avoid being persecuted for the *cross* of Christ Jesus (*cf* Gal.5:11; 6:12-14).

When God enlightens us, He makes known the word of Christ to us. He reveals the truth to us concerning His own righteousness, the good news concerning gratuitous justification for all through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:21-24). It is this word "of Christ," this gracious message pertaining to Him, which must dwell in us if we would *enjoy* and *experience* its practical benefits.

So, by His grace, we are heeding Paul's entreaty to "be rejoicing *in the Lord.* To be writing the same to you is not indeed irksome for me, *yet it is your security.* Beware of curs; beware of evil workers" (Phil.3:1,2). We are "glorying in Christ Jesus," not in ourselves (not in "that flesh of yours"), for we "have no confidence in flesh" (Phil.3:3; Gal.6:13).

We must *beware* of those who teach differently, who, like wild dogs of the street, voraciously take to themselves all manner of things from Scripture (since they are "in the Bible") which, as employed by them, detract from, if not altogether deny, the work of Christ. Thus many are distracted from a greater appreciation of the word of Christ, and many more are debarred from it altogether.

FAITH IN WHAT GOD HAS SPOKEN

The word of Christ needs to be making its home in us not only richly, but "in all wisdom" (Col.3:16). "Brethren, do not become little children in mindset. But in evil be minors, yet in mindset become mature" (1 Cor.14:20). "Do

not become imprudent, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Eph.5:17). It is not sufficient simply to read the Scriptures casually, or to repeat many passages from its pages merely by rote. We would become *aware* of the facts which it contains, and acquire an intelligent grasp of what the Scriptures actually say. This itself is a great advance. Even then, however, we would judge each passage as to whom it concerns, when it applies, and in what sense it is true. This calls for competency, and especially for *wisdom.* Wisdom is "the faculty which makes the highest and best application of knowledge" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.329). We need to use our minds[2] and to use them well.

"Faith is out of tidings [what is heard], yet the tidings through a declaration of Christ" (Rom.10:17). "The sword of the spirit . . . is a declaration of God" (Eph.6:17). As Paul says, "In accepting the word heard from us, from God you receive, not the word of human beings, but, according as it truly is, God's word, which is operating also in you who are believing" (1 Thess.2:13).

Our faith, if it is "the faith [which is] of God" (*cp* Mark 11:23a), is found only in what God has spoken, not in man's mistranslations, misapplications, or inferences. We need to be fostered (NOURISHed) in "the words of the faith" (1 Tim.4:6), and to learn to think and express ourselves accordingly.

It can certainly be helpful to be "admonished" (MIND-PLACED) by those who teach us well, but we also need to be admonishing *ourselves,* "in psalms, in hymns, in spiritual songs singing [whether literally or figuratively], *with grace in our hearts to God*" (Col.3:16). It is at least as important for true grace to be a matter of the heart as it is for it to be a matter of the intellect. The joy and assurance of God's

2. It is interesting to note that the elements of the Greek word for "foolish," *anoêton,* are UN-MINDed.

gracious goodness to us cannot live in mere intellectual correctness. It is vital for us to be *correct* that we might be faithful, but it then becomes vital for us "to know the *love* of Christ as well which is transcending knowledge—that you may be completed for the entire complement of God" (Eph.3:19).

Everything, whatsoever we may be doing, in word or in act, is to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, with thanksgiving to God, the Father, through Him (Col. 3:17). Anything that cannot be done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, is not to be done at all. This entreaty reminds us of Paul's words, in Romans 12:1,2, to present our bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God. This is our logical divine service. We are not to be configured to this eon, but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind, for us to be testing what is the will of Cod, good and well pleasing and perfect.

If it was foolish for Israel of old to say, "All that Yahweh speaks we shall do" (Ex.19:8a), it is beyond foolishness for us to make a similar response when reading these words of Paul's. We laud and commend the ideal, but we recognize that we must have a Saviour if we are even to begin to live in accord with these lofty admonitions.

FAITHFULNESS VS. SUCCESS

In the phrase, "Let the word of Christ be making its home in you richly" (Col.3:16), the idea is not "let" in the sense of "permit," but "let" in the sense of, "Let each one be fully assured in his own mind," or, "Let there be light." It is the imperative mood, not the thought of cooperation. We, who are nothing (Gal.6:3), are nonetheless given this imperative.

If we have any hope in heeding this imperative, however, it is not to be in ourselves. The confidence that we have is

"through Christ toward God" (2 Cor.3:4). "Not that we are competent of ourselves, to reckon anything as out of ourselves [would be wrong], but our competency is of God" (2 Cor.3:5). "*He,* then, Who is supplying you with the spirit, and operating works of power among you—" [will be completing what He has undertaken] (Gal.3:5; *cp* Gal.3:3).

Concerning the one who is infirm in the faith, the apostle says, "he will be made to stand, *for* the Lord is able to make him stand" (Rom.14:4). Patience will wait upon God and for His appointed time. Similarly, wisdom will shun all human wisdom, especially that concerning "the free will of man," while recognizing and accepting God's wise counsels as to "what must be" (Rom.8:26). We simply wish to be meek and humble, to rely upon God instead of man, to boast in our Saviour instead of ourselves. It is not that we wish to be lax in the meantime, until God gives us further saving grace. Not at all. To the contrary, as in all things, we long to be faithful and we seek to be faithful. Indeed, we are thrilled that, in measure, we *are* faithful, and we give God *all* the glory.

But when we fail, as we often do, we wish to recognize that this is because of what we are in ourselves. We are members of the old humanity. We sin because of what we are. We are flesh. "The mindset of the flesh is death . . . because the mindset of the flesh is enmity to God, for it is not subject to the law of God, for neither is it able" (Rom. 8:6,7). Indeed, whenever we obey or disobey, we act due to a cause, and therefore must act as we do whenever we *do* act as we do.

Until we recognize and understand this simple fact, we can never be humble of heart. Regardless of what we may *say,* so long as we finally see something of ourselves as the key to our problems, we are boasting in the flesh and not relying on God. The question is not what is popular, but

what is true; not what "works," but what is faithful; not what *seems* right, but what actually *is* right.

Everyone wants to *succeed,* even those who have no interest at all in obeying God or in pleasing Him. No one enjoys the suffering which attends failure. Since all genuine believers have a new mindset and walk, it would seem that each one would have some measure of interest not merely in success, but in *faithfulness.* However, unless we have a greater desire to be faithful than merely to be successful, we will care more about success than faithfulness. Even if we have a considerable desire to be faithful, if our desire to succeed—to have what we want—is greater than our desire to be faithful, we will surely be disqualified as to the faith (2 Tim.3:1-7).

We may well attain a great many of our goals, even including an externally upright walk, while all the while being remarkably *unfaithful.* Unless our desire for *faith*fulness is greater than our desire for success, we will not enjoy the former even if we should have the latter in abundance. If we do not care *how* we succeed, we will never actually succeed at all. The only true "success" is found in faithfulness to God. Yet faithfulness is impossible apart from the faith.

Knowing the truth and loving the truth—while making some progress in pursuing righteousness even though falling far short of the ideal—is ever so much better than being ignorant of the truth or willfully repudiating what is actually true, even if we should manage to gratify many of our desires for success and happiness by so doing.

The withdrawal (or "apostasy") from the faith is inevitable, for the spirit is saying "explicitly" that it *will* occur (1 Tim.4:1,2; 2 Tim.3:1-13; 4:3,4). The only question, from the human standpoint, is whether we will be a part of it. Therefore, under God and in His grace, we wish to save ourselves from such a course (*cp* 1 Tim.4:1,16). Paul's

words to the Ephesian elders serve ideally as a solemn entreaty for us as well: "Now I am aware that, after I am out of reach, burdensome wolves *will* be entering among you, not sparing the flocklet. And from among yourselves will arise men, speaking perverse things to pull away disciples after themselves. Wherefore, be *watching*, remembering that for three years, night and day, I cease not admonishing each one with tears. And now I am committing you to God *and to the word of His grace, which is able to edify* and give the enjoyment of an allotment among all who have been hallowed" (Acts 20:29-32).

LIVING BY THE FAITH OF THE EVANGEL

If to us Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, we *have* been called and we are "in Christ" (1 Cor. 1:24). But to be growing in assurance that we are indeed living our lives in the faith of the evangel, we need to be growing in an understanding of the evangel itself and in a practical realization of God's faithful hand in our daily affairs.

"The word of the cross . . . to us who are being saved . . . is God's power" (1 Cor.1:18). Or, to say the same thing, the power of God is the word of the cross. It constitutes God's appointed means. The word of the cross is the agency which God uses to savingly affect us. It is "powerful to God" (*cp* 2 Cor.10:4). Wisdom will not drink from any other fountain, no matter how sweet its water or promising its cures.

The word of the cross, and its associated revelations, constitute the word of Christ. It is the agency which God uses to effect our practical salvation. He causes us to be influenced by it in ways which result in salvation, in our preservation or deliverance each day according to His own counsels. "The evangel . . . is God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it" (Rom.1:16). Consequently, we say, Let the word of Christ be making its home in you richly.

James R. Coram

TOGETHER WITH THE LORD

THE HOPE of being together with the Lord has been very real to all believers in Jesus since that distant day when He stood upon this earth and announced to His immediate followers that He would soon be leaving them. "I am going," He said, "to make ready a place for you. And if I should go . . . I am coming again and I will be taking you along to Myself, that where I am, *you* also may be" (John 14:2,3).

Many dear people have read into this passage far more than Jesus actually said, and have supposed that He was going to prepare a place for them in heaven, whereas He was actually telling them that He was going to heaven to prepare a place for them on earth, where all their longings and expectations lay. His followers were looking for the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel. This was the theme of the two who walked with the risen Lord on the way to Emmaus; this was the question on the tongues of those who were with Him on the day of His ascension; this was the last question they put as He was about to leave them (see Luke 24:21; Acts 1:6).

There is something very touching in the effect of the Lord's ascension on His disciples. In the last chapter of Luke, we find that Jesus had been telling them that the message of repentance for the pardon of sins was to be heralded in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Then He took them to Bethany, to the Mount of Olives (Luke 24:50; Acts 1:12). They sensed that something was impending. Important things had happened on previous occasions when Jesus had gone up a mountain: His initial preaching of the rules of the Kingdom (Matt.

5:1); His healing of the multitudes (Matt.15:29-31); the transfiguration (Matt.17:1). All these events took place from mountainsides, and now they were on another mountain. The disciples asked anxiously, and perhaps expectantly, "Lord, are You at this time restoring the Kingdom to Israel?" But Jesus gave them what would seem to them to be an evasive answer. "Not yours is it to know times or eras which the Father places in His own jurisdiction." And then He left them—and that was nearly two thousand years ago, and still He has not come back, and the promises concerning the Kingdom remain unfulfilled!

How the surprised eyes of the disciples followed the vanishing figure of the Lord into heaven, until He disappeared in the cloud! How longingly they continued to gaze after He had gone! Had He really gone? Would He perhaps reappear in a moment or two? What were they to do next?

It was very necessary that their disturbed minds be put at rest, so two messengers in white attire suddenly appeared beside them and brought them back to earth with the question, "Men! Galileans! Why do you stand, looking into heaven? This Jesus Who is taken up from you into heaven shall be coming thus, in the manner in which you gaze at Him going into heaven" (Acts 1:11). But, we repeat, nearly two thousand years have passed, and still the Lord has not come back.

"If I go," Jesus had said, "I am coming again." The messengers were reminding the disciples of this promise. Earlier, on this same mountain, the disciples had pressed the Lord to tell them what would be the sign of His presence, and of the end of the eon (Matt.24:3). Jesus had told them that His presence would be preceded by terrible and violent events, including a time of affliction such as never had been known before, nor would ever occur again. So severe, in fact, would it be that no flesh at all would be saved, unless those days were in some way shortened—discounted, lopped off at the end. For the sake of the chosen in Israel, this would actually happen—they would be discounted.

Many of these calamities which will beset mankind, and Israel in particular, are listed in Matthew 24, and in verse 29 we find Jesus continuing, "Now immediately after the affliction of those days the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not be giving her beams, and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." In short, an intense darkness will set in, an unnatural darkness probably accompanied by great noises. "And then shall be appearing" the sign for which the disciples were asking, the sign of the presence of the Lord, "the sign of the Son of Mankind in heaven, and then all the tribes of the land shall grieve, and they shall be seeing the Son of Humanity coming on the clouds of heaven with power and much glory" (Matt.24:30).

In Revelation 1:7, John says, "Look! He is coming with clouds, and every eye shall be seeing Him—those also who stab Him—and all the tribes of the land shall be grieving over Him. Yes! Amen!" Though some may become aware of the imminence of His approach by taking note of events as they occur, His presence will not be manifest until He is really here, and many will be taken unawares by the suddenness of His appearing. The only sign that they will get is when He actually reveals Himself as the Son of Mankind in heaven, and the tribes of the land will then grieve because they will at last realize the insult and the injury which mankind as a whole, and they in particular, have done to Him.

The faithful in Israel are preserved through this period of affliction which precedes the second coming of the Lord, but even for them it will be a very trying experience. In reference to them, it is said, "He who endures to the consummation, *he* shall be saved" (Matt.24:13). But they

will not be without encouragement. Quite apart from the words of Jesus Himself, which they will surely remember and take to heart during those dark days, the epistles of Peter were specially written for the faithful ones of persecuted Israel in the end time. They were probably penned during the persecutions of Nero, and would have had an application at that time, but they have undoubtedly been preserved to be a stimulant towards endurance during the far greater afflictions that are to test the nation before the return of the Lord. To try to apply them to the ecclesia of today, in this intervening period of grace, is to remove them completely from their correct setting.

Now, just as the afflictions under Nero were the possible occasion for the writing of Peter's epistles, so a different persecution was the immediate cause of Paul's earliest writings, the two letters to the Thessalonians. For the Thessalonian ecclesia was suffering a rather grievous, though limited, persecution as a result of agitations stirred up by fanatical Jews who were opposed to the teachings of Paul. And again, while Paul wrote to the afflicted saints of his own day, his letters, like Peter's, have a future application which is even more important than the immediate one. For they too point to the coming day of the Lord, and to the terrible events which introduce it. But *with a difference,* for Paul is not writing to those who are called upon to *endure to the end* to be saved, but rather to a people living in a day of absolute grace—a community whose salvation is entirely of God, and who, consequently, are not called upon to pass through a day of indignation. Paul, in fact, presents the Lord to the saints in an entirely new light—as a "Rescuer out of the coming indignation."

We find this phrase in the tenth verse of the first chapter, where Paul reminds the Thessalonians that they are waiting for God's Son out of the heavens (1 Thess.1:10). But now let us look at the first few verses of chapter five. Here the

apostle writes, "Now concerning the times and the eras, brethren, you have no need to be written to, for you yourselves are accurately aware that the day of the Lord is as a thief in the night—thus is it coming! Now whenever they may be saying 'Peace and security,' then extermination is standing by them unawares, even as a pang over the pregnant, and they may by no means escape" (1 Thess.5:1-3).

They may by no means escape. That is one side of the picture, but now let us look at the other (verses 4-5): "Now *you*, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day may overtake you as a thief, for *you* are all sons of the light and sons of the day." And now Paul associates himself with them. "We are not of the night nor of the darkness. Consequently, then, we may not be drowsing, even as the rest, but we may be watching and be sober. For those who are drowsing are drowsing at night, and those who are drunk are drunk at night. Yet *we,* being of the day, may be sober, putting on the cuirass of faith and love, and the helmet, the expectation of salvation, for God does not appoint us to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, the One Who dies for our sakes, that, whether we may be watching or drowsing, we should live at the same time together with Him. Wherefore, be consoling one another and edifying one the other, according as you are doing also" (1 Thess.5:9-11).

These words should of themselves be sufficient to make us realize that here is a different revelation of truth from anything given elsewhere. When, for example, Jesus spoke of the day of the Lord, it was with an exhortation to His followers to keep awake, lest, being asleep at the time, they might miss the opportunity of entering into its blessings. Over and over again this thought is pressed home. But here it is not so. Paul is absolutely positive. Though likewise urging us to be watching, he insists that it will nevertheless make no difference to our prospects of being with

the Lord whether we are found watching or drowsing when He comes, for we are not appointed to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then how is this rescue out of the coming indignation to be effected? The apostle tells us in the previous chapter. Before ever the Lord is manifested to Israel and to the world—before ever the great day of indignation sets in, He is to make a prior descent to the atmosphere surrounding this earth, to call His ecclesia to meet Him in the air. This is something Peter, James, John and the rest knew nothing about. It was revealed only to Paul, and disclosed by him to the saints. Let us reread the well-known words of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18:

"Now we are not wanting you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are reposing, lest you may be sorrowing according as the rest also who are having no expectation. For if we are believing that Jesus dies and He rises, thus also, those who are put to repose, will God, through Jesus, be leading forth together with Him. For this we are saying to you by the word of the Lord, that we, the living, who are surviving to the presence of the Lord, should by no means outstrip those who are put to repose, for the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the Chief Messenger, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall be rising first. Thereupon *we,* the living, who are surviving, shall at the same time be snatched away together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be together with the Lord. So that, be consoling one another with these words."

These verses form the basis of our expectation today, as well as the expectation of all those who have fallen asleep in Christ all down the years. Let us note that they are held together by three solid assurances, each beginning with the little word "for."

"*For* if we are believing that Jesus dies and He rises." This is the first assurance. Well then, let us ask ourselves, do we believe this? If we do not, then we have no expectation at all (1 Cor.15:17-19); but if we do, then we should see this assurance as a firm guarantee that those who are put to repose, will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with Him.

"*For* this we are saying to you by the word of the Lord" (1 Thess.4:15). This is the second assurance. Paul stresses that he is not voicing his own opinion, but rather a direct declaration from the risen Christ. Do we believe Him, and understand that Paul is His mouthpiece to the nations today? If so, then we shall accept as a fact, his declaration that those who survive to the presence of the Lord, will gain no advantage whatever over those who have died during the intervening time, even though, in consequence, they may not have had this full knowledge which is available to us today.

"*For* the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven with a shout of command . . . "(4:16). In another epistle we read that "The Lord knows those who are His." This is in the second letter to Timothy (2:19), written at a time when the ecclesia was already in disarray, just as, to be sure, it is at this present time. Only the Lord knows all those who are His, and we may be sure that not one of them will be missing on that day when He calls them to meet Him in the air.

We may not be always certain
Whom the Lord has made His own,
But to Him, Who comes to call them,
Each is intimately known.
And in this we may be happy,
When He greets them in the air,
Every member of His body
Will assuredly be there.

Regardless of all the confusion caused by so many sects

and religions, the Lord most surely knows those who are His, and the fact that He is coming in person to meet them, is the third great assurance that we, who believe that He is our Saviour, will one day be *together with the Lord.*

SUFFICIENT QUESTIONS

Let us begin this section by asking ourselves a few questions. If it is part of our expectation that we shall be together with the Lord, would it be true to say that we are together with Him now? If being together with the Lord is something which is promised for the future, as it is in Thessalonians, can it be a present experience? And where is this lasting association with the Lord to be maintained? In the air, where our meeting with Him is to take place? And what is the purpose of this association? In other words, what are we going to do together with Him throughout the time encompassed by the word "always"?

Let us remind ourselves that the order in which the Pauline letters appear in our Bibles (canonical order) is not the order in which they were written (chronological order). In the order of writing, the two letters to the Thessalonians come first, although (apart from the personal letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon) they are last in the canonical order. Being the first of Paul's writings, they *never rise higher than this earth and its surrounding atmosphere.* That is to say, *they never take us higher than a fleshly body can breathe. The Lord meets us in the air.* He *descends* from heaven to do this.

The astronauts, in their journeys to the moon, have risen much farther from the earth's surface than Paul raises the saints in Thessalonians; and (within the context of this letter) although the cumulative effect of the gathering together of the saints to meet the Lord in the air is far, far greater than anything that has gone before,

individually it is not so. Wonderful things had happened all down the years. Enoch was taken out of the impending judgment of his time, though Noah was called upon to go through it. Elijah was caught up into heaven. Lazarus was raised from the dead with a shout. In the context of Thessalonians, there is nothing to suggest that the individual experience of each believer is anything greater than what had happened before, with the exception of the one great promise, "Thus shall we always be together with the Lord." This stamps it as something exceptional, for no such promise was made to Enoch, to Elijah, or to Lazarus.

THE WORD OF THE CROSS

In his letters to the Thessalonians, Paul tells us no more than that we are to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. He does not say anything about a change of body to suit a celestial environment. That is why he has to keep us within the earth's atmosphere. In Thessalonians, he *cannot* speak of a change of body. Why is this? Simply *because he has not yet preached the word of the cross.* This he does in the *very first chapter of his next letter,* the first letter to the Corinthians. Let us remember, Corinthians was written before Romans. It is well that we should appreciate this. The second group of letters, which includes Romans, first and second Corinthians and Galatians, has its basis in the word of the cross. The cross is not mentioned at all in Thessalonians.

With the cross comes a change. The flesh is mentally discarded—considered to be dead—crucified together with Him, and, as Paul puts it in his second letter to the Corinthians, "If anyone is in Christ, there is a *new creation*: the primitive passed by. Look! there has come new" (5:17). A new creation! This change is so radical that, from now on, we are to be acquainted with no one according to flesh. "Yet," adds the apostle, "even if we have known

Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now we are knowing Him so no longer" (2 Cor.5:16,17).

The disciples, who had watched Jesus ascend, had known Him only according to flesh. The Thessalonians too were acquainted with Him according to flesh. To them, Paul was the apostle of the *Lord Jesus Christ,* not the apostle of *Christ Jesus,* as He is in Corinthians and in all his later epistles. (*Christ Jesus* is the title of the *risen Lord.*) Only *now, after the preaching of the cross,* can the saints be acquainted with Christ according to spirit; now they can attain to heights to which the mind of the soulish man cannot aspire (1 Cor.2:14-16). And so, to the Corinthians, Paul redescribes the scene which he had first portrayed to the Thessalonians, but now he is able to add more detail. He can now raise it to a plane *higher than the earth,* and so the actual meeting with the Lord in the air is not mentioned. This is what he says in 1 Corinthians 15, beginning at verse 42:

"Thus also is the resurrection of the dead ones. It is sown in corruption; it is roused in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is roused in glory. It is sown in infirmity; it is roused in power. It is sown a soulish body; it is roused a spiritual body." Notice the change in each instance.

"If there is a soulish body, there is a spiritual also. Thus it is written also, the first human, Adam, becomes a living soul; the last Adam a vivifying Spirit. But not first the spiritual, but the soulish, thereupon the spiritual.

"The first human was out of the earth, soilish; the second Human is the Lord out of heaven. Such as the soilish one is, such are those also who are soilish, and such as the Celestial One, such are those also who are celestials. And according as we wear the image of the soilish, we should be wearing the image also of the Celestial." Contrast after contrast!

"Now this I am averring, brethren, that flesh and blood

is not able to enjoy an allotment in God's kingdom, neither is corruption enjoying the allotment of incorruption. *Look! a secret to you am I telling!*" (Here the apostle picks up the theme, of Thessalonians). "We all, indeed, shall not be put to repose, yet *we all shall be changed,* in an instant, in the twinkle of an eye, at the last trump. For He will be trumpeting, and the dead ones will be roused incorruptible and *we* shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality.

"Now, whenever this corruptible should put on incorruption and this mortal should put on immortality, then shall come to pass the word, the word which is written, Swallowed up is Death by victory."

Here, in 1 Corinthians, the facts as given to the Thessalonian friends are confirmed, but enormously amplified. We all, indeed, shall not be put to repose, yet we all shall be *changed,* in the twinkle of an eye, at the last trump. This does not refer to any of the seven trumpets brought to our notice in the book of Revelation, but to the trumpet of God, which our Lord sounds when He comes to meet His saints in the air. With the early notes of that trumpet, the dead will be raised; with the final note, the last trump, the living will be changed.

But let us note carefully that the verses we have just read in Corinthians do not apply, at this stage, to all and sundry; they are often read at funeral services as though they do. They only apply to those who have been brought to the cross of Christ. We believe that all will eventually be brought to that happy position—that the work begun at the cross will go on until all are ultimately reconciled to God, but it is simply not true to say, apart from the cross, that this corruptible will put on incorruption and this mortal immortality.

We are prone, at times, to speak of immortality as though it were something that the Scriptures are proclaim-

ing all down their pages, whereas Paul is the only one, in the whole of God's Word, who introduces this theme, and he uses the Greek word *athanasia* (immortality) only three times (1 Cor.15:53,54; 1 Tim.6:16). And he only uses it after he has proclaimed the word of the cross. Paul is the only one who draws the distinction between mortality and immortality. Even Jesus never spoke of immortality. It could not be promised to anybody until the word of the cross had been preached, and this commission was given to Paul. Even Paul could not say anything about immortality to the Thessalonians, for he had not then written anything about the cross.

But Paul did promise the Thessalonians that they would be "always together with the Lord." He did not say this to the Corinthians. Why not? To find the answer, let us look at the Roman epistle, chapter six, verses 1-11:

"What, then, shall we declare? That we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing?

"May it not be coming to that! We, who died to sin, how shall we still be living in it? Or are you ignorant that whoever are baptized into Christ Jesus, are baptized into His death? We, then, were *entombed together with Him* through baptism into death, that, even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus *we* also should be walking in newness of life. For if we have become *planted together in the likeness of His death,* nevertheless we shall be of the resurrection also, knowing this, that our old humanity was *crucified together with Him,* that the body of Sin may be nullified, for us by no means to be still slaving for Sin, for one who dies has been justified from Sin.

"Now if we *died together with Christ,* we believe that we shall be *living together with Him* also, having perceived that Christ, being roused from among the dead, is no longer dying. Death is lording it over Him no longer,

for in that He died, He died to Sin once for all time, yet in that He is living, He is living to God. Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

There we have it. What is put before the flesh in Thessalonians as a future expectation (although the later revelation of Corinthians shows that the flesh must be changed before the expectation can be realized) is enjoyed by the spirit in Romans as a present experience. There is, however, a subtle difference. In Thessalonians, it is "Together with *the Lord;*" in Romans, it is "Together with *Christ.*" And this is a closer 'togetherness' than that which is presented to us in Thessalonians, which is a "togetherness" of future association; this is a "togetherness" of vital spiritual experience, which takes us on to the cross with Him, and into the tomb with Him, before we enter into a state of glorious living with Him. We are *united with Him in His sufferings* as well as in His glory. Because we have now reached the cross, we can regard our flesh as dead—as having been crucified together with Him. In spirit, we are living, even now, with the risen Christ; waiting only for our bodies to be changed, in an instant, in the twinkle of an eye, when He comes, for us to enjoy to the full the "togetherness" of living with Him.

We are watching, we are waiting
For that long expected sound,
That will call us to His presence,
And to joys that will abound.
In an instant, in a moment,
In the twinkle of an eye,
Changed from weakness into glory
For that gathering on high.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE PRISON EPISTLES

Have we yet reached the summit of Divine revelation concerning our theme? By no means! The scene which

Paul has already described in Thessalonians, and enlarged upon in Corinthians, is again brought to our notice in his letter to the Philippians. Now Philippians is one of the prison group of epistles, being sandwiched between Ephesians and Colossians in the canonical order. These were the last of Paul's general letters to be written, and undoubtedly contain the highest revelations ever made by God to man. They unfold to us the secrets of the celestial realms, and make known to us God's purpose both concerning His Son and the ecclesia which is Christ's body.

In Corinthians we learned that, when the Lord comes, we are all to be changed. Changed into what, and for what purpose? Corinthians does not tell us. Corinthians *cannot* tell us, because, when Paul wrote that letter, *he had not revealed the secret of Christ.* This he does in Ephesians and Colossians. Not until Paul writes from his prison in Rome does he unfold the greatness of God's purpose; that it is eonian in its extent and universal in its expanse; that it includes the heavens and all their vast contents as well as the earth; that Christ is exalted to a position of 'Head over all,' and that the whole universe is to be headed up into Him. And what of the ecclesia, the church? Why, it is shown to have been chosen in Him *before the disruption of the world;* it is declared to be blessed with every spiritual blessing among the celestials; to it, Christ has been given as "Head over all" that the ecclesia may be used in the work of subjecting all to God. And then, in Philippians 3:20, we have this most remarkable phrase, which should cause us to ponder deeply, "For our realm is inherent in the heavens."

Inherent in the heavens: What do we understand by the word, "inherent"? Let us note two of its other usages. The man whom Peter and John healed at the gate of the temple in Jerusalem was "inherently lame from his mother's womb" (Acts 3:2); that is, his lameness was inseparable

from him; it had always been with him; it *belonged* to him. According to Paul, Peter was "inherently a Jew" (Gal.2:14). He *belonged* to Israel; he could never disassociate himself from Israel. Peter could never have written, as Paul wrote, that in Christ "there is no Jew nor yet Greek" and that "neither circumcision is availing anything, nor uncircumcision" (Gal.3:28; 5:6). Peter's realm was inherently Jewish; ours is inherently celestial. Our realm belongs to the heavens, and has belonged to the heavens since that far-off day before the disruption, when we were chosen in Christ.

We cannot really appreciate the prison letters of Paul unless we take up our position in the midst of the heavens. Astronomers tell us that the earth is, in fact, fairly central in the universe, and is surrounded by space stretching for billions and billions of light years in all directions. Countless numbers of stars and nebulae form the material content of the heavens, but their spiritual content is undoubtedly a correspondingly uncountable number of celestial beings. All the evidences of Scripture suggest that they are both very numerous and very powerful.

In these prison letters we learn quite a lot about them. They have degrees of status, for in both Ephesians and Colossians we read of sovereignties, authorities, powers and lordships among them, and it is above all these that Christ is raised, and it is as Head over all these that He is given to the ecclesia. And why is He thus given? Because the realm of the ecclesia is inherent in the heavens, and it is the privilege of the ecclesia to be used of God in the work of reconciling all in the heavens to Himself. This will be no simple task.

It is a complete fallacy to imagine that all in the heavens is at present in happy relationship with God. True, the Hebrew Scriptures speak of heavenly hosts, who hearken to the voice of the Lord, and do His pleasure (Psalm 103:21). But Ephesians 6:12 speaks of "spiritual forces of

wickedness among the celestials." It is because our realm is inherent in the heavens that we do not wrestle with humanity, flesh and blood, but with these celestial forces of wickedness. Colossians 1:20 makes it quite clear that the reconciling work covers those in the heavens as well as those on earth.

The work of reconciling the universe to God will take a long time, but there is no force even among the celestials which can prevent it, for Christ is exalted above the very highest powers that exist. He is graced with the Name which is above every name, that in His Name, Jesus, "every knee should bow, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean, and every tongue should acclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father" (Phil.2:10,11). It is in Christ that the lot of the ecclesia is cast, and it is this superior One Who is given to it as Head over all.

Let us now look at three Scriptures which show unequivocally that the realm of the ecclesia is "inherent in the heavens."

Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ, according as He chooses us in Him before world disruption . . . ." This shows the *origin* of the ecclesia: *"among the celestials."*

Ephesians 2:6: ". . . rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus, that, in the oncoming eons, He should display the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus." Here we see the *future place and function* of the ecclesia in God's operations: *"among the celestials."*

Ephesians 3:10: "That now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God." Here is shown the *present influence* of the ecclesia: *"among the celestials."*

In the context of these prison letters we are clearly out of place on earth; against this celestial background these fleshly tabernacles in which we now dwell become bodies of humiliation, tending always to retard us, and the sooner that they are out of the way the better. The only body really suitable for one whom God has chosen for His ecclesia is one conformed to the body of Christ's glory.

And so, in Philippians 3:20,21, the third account of the Lord's coming amplifies still further the descriptions that we have noted in Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians, for now we read:

"For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself."

Nothing here about a meeting in the air, or about the sounding of a trumpet! In the context of the prison letters these are irrelevant details. And what about our always being together with the Lord? Is this now a future expectation or a present spiritual experience? It is both of these, but in the prison letters, something far deeper as well. It is *an eonian "togetherness" of purpose.* What is future in Thessalonians, present and future in Romans and Corinthians, becomes past, present and future in the prison letters. The ecclesia is shown to be with Christ—nay, more, to be *in* Christ—from the time when it was chosen in Him before the disruption of the world (long before any of its members appeared on earth) until that grand consummation when God will be All in all. The bond between Christ and the ecclesia becomes a fundamental and essential component of God's purpose; the ecclesia is Christ's complement, by which all in all is being completed.

Paul is the only apostle to speak of the purpose of God, and again only after he has preached the word of the cross.

In all but two instances, whenever Paul uses the term purpose, either as a verb or as a noun, it is to draw attention to the closeness of the relationship between Christ and His ecclesia. In Romans 8:28,29, for instance, he speaks of those "who are called according to the purpose that, whom He [God] foreknows, He designates beforehand, also, to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren." But it is in Ephesians where the intensity and strength and importance of the bond is most fully brought out. Let us read Ephesians 1, from verse 9:

"In all wisdom and prudence making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He *purposes* in Him) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth—in Him in Whom our lot is cast also, designated beforehand according to the *purpose* of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will, that we should be for the laud of His glory, who are pre-expectant in the Christ."

"In Him in Whom our lot is cast." This is the state of "togetherness" as portrayed in the prison letters. Or, to quote from Colossians, our lives are "hid together with Christ in God" (Col.3:3). These expressions are far more intense, far more dynamic, far more penetrating than the one in Thessalonians, "Thus shall we always be together with the Lord." They contain within them the basic ingredient of the whole of the Divine operations. When God first conceived His purpose for the universe, He built it upon the basic unity of Christ and the ecclesia, and the calling with which He now calls us is "in accord with His own purpose and grace, the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times eonian" (2 Tim.1:9). It is because of this radical oneness that Paul can write, again in reference to God's purpose, that remarkable passage in Ephesians 3:9-11:

"To enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all, that now may be made known to the sovereignties and authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God, in accord with the purpose of the eons, which He makes in Christ Jesus, *our* Lord."

Readers of *Unsearchable Riches* will be well aware how necessary it is to correctly partition the Word of Truth, and nowhere is this more desirable than in the writings of Paul himself. We should mentally place them into three boxes. The box containing the two letters to the Thessalonians should be placed on the ground. The second box, containing the two letters to the Corinthians, Galatians and Romans, with its key, the Word of the Cross, should be placed on top; and the third box, containing the prison letters of Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, should be lifted higher still.

And whether we only comprehend the truths of the first box, or whether we assimilate the more advanced teachings of the second box (and many believers have lived and died without understanding the preaching of the cross!), or whether we are given the ability to grasp the length, breadth, depth and height of the marvelous treasures of the third box—in whichever category of believers we find ourselves, let us rejoice in this—THE LORD KNOWS THOSE WHO ARE HIS, and *all* whom He calls in that day will always be together with Him. No one is saved by knowledge; each is saved in grace through faith (Eph.2:8). And whatever knowledge we may lack in that day will be made up to us when the Lord comes to meet us in the air, and we are all changed in an instant, and these bodies of humiliation are conformed to the body of His glory.

So let us not be despondent if we cannot for the moment grasp some of the deeper truths of Scripture. This does not

mean that we should give up trying to understand them. Paul's aim was to present every man mature in Christ Jesus, but he realized that this would not be easy. He calls it a toil and a struggle. But if we can enter into the truths of the prison epistles by seeking that which is above, where Christ is—by being disposed to that which is above in preference to that which is on earth—then, even in this life, we shall enter into joy unspeakable, for we shall see our unity with Christ as something really vital to God's designs—as nothing less, in fact, than the firm central pillar around which the whole edifice of God's eonian purpose is being constructed. And with this realization, our lives will take on a new meaning. Every vestige of vagueness and despondency will vanish; doubts and disappointments will melt away; frustrations and failures will become insignificant, for our lives will have become supremely purposeful in the Beloved, Whose complement we are.

Our lives are hid together with Christ in God. Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, then we also shall be manifested *together with Him* in glory (Col.3:4).

This the summit of our blessings,
To be always with the Lord,
And to wear the glorious likeness
Of the One we have adored;
Then throughout His Father's kingdom,
For God's glory we shall shine,
With a splendor all transcendent
And a radiance Divine.

John H. Essex.

A SURE AND CERTAIN HOPE

In the preceding article, John Essex begins with "hope," but thereafter uses the CV term "expectation." A few lines into the article he writes of "longings and expectations" (p.167). This helps direct our minds to the fact that the Greek word *elpis* expresses both certainty and a longing for what God has prepared for us in the future.

D.H.H.

GOD IS ONE

We come now to Romans 3:29-31 which is a passage of transition. We have seen that God's evangel to begin with, is the message that God is righteous in His operation of justifying all human beings. All sin and are wanting of the glory of God, yet now on the basis of the faith of Jesus Christ (in His obedience unto the death of the cross) God is manifested to be what He is, the righteous "Righteousifier" of each and every irreverent and unrighteous human.

[29] **Or** is He **the God of** the **Jews only?** Is He **not of** the **nations also? Yes, of** the **nations also,** [30] **if so be that** 'God is **One, Who will be justifying** the **Circumcision out of faith and** the **Uncircumcision through** 'that **faith.**

Paul does not deny that God is the God of the Jews in a special way in the past (as, for example, announced at Sinai, *cf* Deut.6:4) and in the future (*cf* especially Jer.30 and 31, and note Matt.1:22; 2:6). In this epistle itself he affirms that their prerogative, the Circumcision's benefit, is "much in every manner." They are entrusted with the oracles of God (Rom.3:2). It is out of Israel that Christ comes according to the flesh (Rom.9:5), becoming "the Servant of the Circumcision . . . to confirm the patriarchal promises" (Rom.15:8). Nevertheless, as made clear in Romans 3:21-28 (CV, as revised), God's evangel for which Paul is severed, the evangel which manifests God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith in the gratuitous justification of the sinner is "for all" (Rom.3:22), whether of the Circumcision or the Uncircumcision.

The viewpoint of Romans 3:21-30 is wider than that of

the law and the prophets. It is wider than shown in the evangel of the Circumcision (Gal.2:7), and even wider than Romans 4. It spans the eons and brings us to Romans 5 which tells of God's love commended in Christ Jesus, when all shall be constituted righteous. It accords thoroughly with Philippians 2:6-11 and anticipates Ephesians and Colossians concerning the revelations there of the administration of the complement of the eras and the reconciliation of all.

It has been shown in this passage of God's word that God as the righteous God Who makes each individual human righteous by means of Jesus's faith is One in this work. He is not only the God of the Jews, but the God of the nations—not only the God of those who are of the Circumcision but of those who are of the Uncircumcision (to speak of humanity as divided in so much of Scripture). God is the God of us all in the giving of His Son in His purpose and goal unto the end that all people and all their deeds be justified.

WHO WILL BE JUSTIFYING

In Romans 3:21-24 justification is viewed as a present accomplishment. Now in 3:29,30 it is viewed as a future realization. In both cases the viewpoint is without tangible evidence. We have only the word of God's evangel that God is righteous and that Christ's death and resurrection is the means by which all human beings have been delivered from sin and death and will be made righteous with glorious vindication of their existence. That evangel is a great treasure to have, yet God must endow us with faith that the evangel is true and shall become reality in every way.

God will be bringing the Circumcision into the righteousness which has been made certain when Christ died, and they, as a part of *all* humanity, died (proleptically) with Him (2 Cor.5:14). They, in God's appointed time, will be enjoying literal justification achieved *on the basis of* Jesus's

faith. This is expressed by the preposition "out" (Greek *ek*), which was the preposition used in the Greek translation (the Septuagint) of Habakkuk 2:4 and just now in Romans 3:26 used to speak of justification by means of *Jesus's* faith.

So also God will be bringing the Uncircumcision into the full enjoyment of righteousness which God has secured *by means of* "that faith," the faith of Jesus Christ. Now Paul uses the Greek preposition *dia* to express the thought of "by means of." This is the preposition that was used more readily to express this idea in the Greek of Paul's day.

Both *ek* and *dia* basically express the sense of "by means of" in this passage, except that *ek* points to the source of the means, and *dia* to its channel. God's righteous, gracious, and gratuitous work of justification is based on Jesus Christ's faith in His God and Father's will for Him.

But here I would agree with many others that the "*through* that faith" as used of the Uncircumcision suggests something distinctive about them in relation to the Circumcision. As to that future when all will be constituted righteous and God will be revealed as righteous in all He is and does, the basis is the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners. In this the "out of faith" and the "through that faith" express the same thing. But as to the past and concerning the intervening future before the ultimate glory involving all human beings, and all their sins, there is a distinction between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision with regard to justification.

This distinction is expressed in Galatians 2:7 where Paul says, "I have been entrusted with the evangel *of* the Uncircumcision as Peter *of* the Circumcision." Paul is about to narrow the scope of God's evangel in Romans 4 as it relates to those presently believing it, to whom Paul is commissioned as their apostle.

This is a *reckoned* justification, not that ultimate justification when all shall be constituted righteous and God

will be perceived by all as the righteous Justifier. This reckoned justification is like that of Abraham in Genesis 15:6, bestowed on his believing God apart from works of law.

On the other hand, James, who is of the Circumcision and writes to the twelve tribes, says, "You see that by works a human is being justified and not by faith only" (James 2:24). Here, as with Paul in Romans 4 justification is not used in its literal sense of made righteous but of being accounted righteous. But James adds works to faith.

George L. Rogers, in *Unsearchable Riches*, volume 20, page 334 claims that, "To justify is always to account righteous." He overstates the case. In support of this claim he points to Luke 7:35 and 10:29 along with Romans 3:4, and I would add Romans 4. Yet Pastor Rogers was commenting on Romans 3:24 where (as we can now see) justification goes far beyond a declaration of righteousness. Justification through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus and which manifests God's righteousness can be nothing except the making of irreverent and unrighteous human beings righteous (*cp* Rom.5:19). When Christ died, all died (2 Cor.5:14). This was death in the sense of the annihilation of the old humanity. Christ was given up *because* of our offenses and roused *because* of our justifying (Rom. 4:25). Christ's faith in dying for sinners justifies us in that we were put to death in His death (Rom.6:3) and this is true of all (though not yet recognized, and hardly so by believers). It is on this basis that all will be vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:22). Thus God's righteousness will be fully and gloriously made manifest to all.

It is true that both Circumcision and Uncircumcision will be justified in its literal grammatical sense of being made righteous, and either "out of faith" or "through faith" can express this fact. But Paul chooses "through" to express the relationship of Christ's faith to the justification of the Uncircumcision, and it may well be that he does so with a

glance ahead to what he is about to say about a reckoned ("accounted") justification.

In this way, by such a double application of "through that faith [of Jesus]," Paul turns our attention to justification as it is placed "*on* those who are believing" (3:22). This will be an exposition on the words "for faith" in Romans 1:17. In Romans 3:21-30 he has dealt with the revelation of God's righteousness by means of the Righteous One's faith, but now he will deal more directly with this evangel as it is the evangel for our faith—for our believing.

LAW SUSTAINED

31 **Are we, then, nullifying law through** ᵗthat **faith? May it not** ᵇ**come**ᵒ to that**! But** indeed **we are sustaining law.**

Paul has finished, for the present, the evangel as it is given "for all" (Rom.3:22) and he turns his attention to the "on all who are believing" of that same verse. The believers are justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (through His faith) because they are part of all humanity. But now Paul will speak of them separately as those who are presently believing God's evangel concerning Jesus Christ, *our* Lord.

Consequently Jesus Christ's faith (His giving of Himself for all sinners) is apart from human works of law. But so is our present, reckoned justification which is ours on believing. (Similarly the Circumcision will be declared righteous before actually made righteous. This will be for one thousand years and will be received when they both believe and do the works of the law under the new covenant.)

Thus Paul turns directly to those who are believing God's evangel, who, whether of the Circumcision or Uncircumcision, are sons of Abraham as he was before circumcision was laid down as law. In doing this he sustains what is written in the law, the Torah. Genesis 15:6 speaks of a reckoned justification based on what Christ would do

later by faith's law. Consequently, in Romans 4 Paul will speak of accounted justification. But the basis of such a limited and temporary justification has been set before us in Romans 3:21-30, all proleptically made righteous by means of Jesus Christ's faith, for the manifestation of God's righteousness. D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME 114

According to the Promise 70
Boasting in God's Will 63
Celestial Sovereignty 51
Christ's Supremacy 71
Earnest of the Spirit, The 26
Era Preceding the Present, The 147
Faith Perfected 87
Forbear—Justify—Propitiate 123
God's Evangel Concerning His Son 47,75,135,187
God is One 187
God's Righteousness Manifested Through Jesus Christ's Faith For All 135
Herald the Word! 113
His Achievement are We 4,63,113,158
Holy Spirit 13
Obituaries: C. Booher 74, J. Bowerman 86, D. Cornwell 133, S. Goerzen, 86, H. Neimeyer 86, J. Orton 133
Righteous One's Faith, The 47
Romans 3:21-28 134
Rooted and Grounded in Love 26,35,51,99,147
Sealing of the Spirit, The 35
Seated Among the Celestials 99
Singular Faith of Christ, The 75
Soul and Spirit 35
To God be all the Glory 4
Together with the Lord 167
Word of Christ, its Grace and Power, The 158

INDEX TO VOLUME 115

Both Blessed Together in a Joint Body 147
Choice and Deity 120
Concordant Version, The 180
Consolation in Expectation (1 Thess.4:13-18) 5
From Enmity to Peace 67
Given Up and Roused 30
God's Evangel Concerning His Son 22,93,129,183
God's Righteous Love 129
His Achievement are We (series) 41,83,120,171
His Achievement are We 171
Joint Partakers of the Promise 161
Justified out of Christ's Faith 93
Listening to God's Evangel of Joy 183
Living God and the Eons, The 83
Love Transcendent 109
Mysterious Mysteries, The 92
Obituaries: C. Anderson 170, D. Nordstrom 48,
P. Winter 170
Our Believing and Christ's Faith 22
Our Relationship to Christ 51
Paul to the Romans 30
Romans in Ephesians 179
Romans 4:25 21
Romans 5:12-6:23 180
Rooted and Grounded in Love . . . 51,67,99,109,147,161
Secret of Christ, The
and the Dimensions of His Love 99
Secret of the Resurrection, The 5
Through Faith of Jesus Christ 119
We Rely on the Living God 41

Unsearchable Riches

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For God and His
Word

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CONSOLATION

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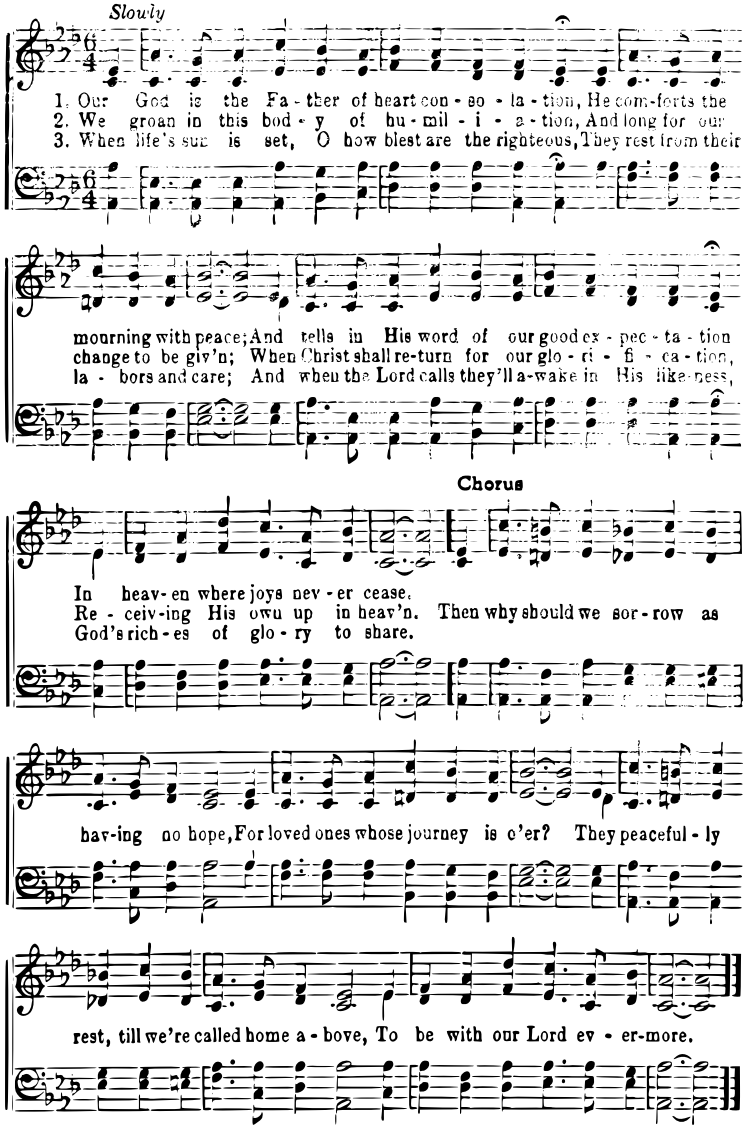
Slowly



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Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 115th Year

(1909–2024)

Contents:

2 A Hymn of Consolation
3 Editorial
5 Consolation in Expectation
22 Our Believing and Christ's Faith
30 Given Up and Roused
41 We Rely on the Living God

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BEING THE FIRST NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

EDITORIAL

THE WORD of God does not change, but the translation and understanding of it must continually be adjusted more truly to what the Word actually is saying. From the first issue of *Unsearchable Riches* in October 1909 there has been a call for adjustment in much of the usual and dominant thinking concerning what God is saying in the Scriptures and especially what He is saying directly to us. This has been so even to calls for adjustments to previous adjustments. At first the "Authorized Version" of 1611 (somewhat adjusted itself) was used for the most part. But it soon became apparent that a new translation was needed, based on a Greek text that reflected the original wording as accurately as seemed possible. This was a gigantic challenge and task, involving much drudgery and perseverance. A first edition of the Concordant Version was issued in 1926, joined with a "Lexical Concordance" in 1931. Then a new approach using different typefaces and superior letters to indicate the Greek text more literally in the translation itself was issued in 1942, joined by the Keyword Concordance in 1944. This too was revised in 1966 under the name CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT, again revised slightly in 1976. Yet now we are struggling to prepare a further (and in some ways a more radical) revision to be called the CONCORDANT VERSION NEW TESTAMENT, designed to accompany the CONCORDANT VERSION OLD TESTAMENT, first issued in 2014 and slightly revised in 2021.

But why all this? It is hardly noticed even by fellow be-

lievers, and when it is noticed there is still much disagreement about what God is saying. Nevertheless God continues to operate all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), and if in any way He uses us to testify to this fact and to what He has made known in His Word as to His counseled will, may it be so that He continues to do so in this small effort of a concordant translation and ministry.

Once again we draw attention to some important and happy revelations made known in God's Word: (1) The consoling expectation of always being together with the Lord (pages 5-21); (2) The evangel of Christ's faith unto the death of the cross and God's rousing of Him from among the dead ones (pages 22-40), and (3) Our reliance on God Who is carrying out His purpose within a series of eons beginning with creation and consummating in God being All in all (pages 41-48).

(1) There is sorrow in the death of those near us, family, companions, friends and especially of fellow believers, and there is loss in the death of every human being. Death is the big evil. But that evil of the death of God's Son nearly two thousand years ago produces the greatest of all goods.

(2) The death of Christ in faith and obedience unto the cross gives us joyful and peaceful expectation of the death of death and end of sin. "The night progresses yet the day is near" (Romans 13:12). Thus we read in Romans 4:25:

Jesus our Lord "is given up because of our offenses,
And He is roused because of our justifying."

(3) In this "We *rely* on the living God Who is the Saviour of all human beings" (1 Tim.4:10). "Rely" and "expect" are the same word in Greek. Consequently this issue of *Unsearchable Riches* ends where it began hopefully with a clearer view of the righteousness of God in the justification of all.

D.H.H.

CONSOLATION IN EXPECTATION
(1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-18)

BE CONSOLING one another with these words (1 Thess. 4:18). The earliest revelation concerning our future fate was given to saints sorrowing for their loved ones. And to this day there are no more comforting words for the bereaved believer than Paul's message concerning those who were put to repose in Thessalonica. Here we have the balm we need for our wounded feelings when a beloved believer is put to repose. All has to do with our future experience at His presence. It is a solace for our *souls.* In this it differs from Paul's revelations to the Corinthians, for that gives us the glories of our resurrection *bodies,* and ends with an exhortation to abound in the *work* of the Lord (1 Cor.15:58). The expectation of our calling (Eph.1:18; 4:4) with all its glories as the complement of the Head of all future rule, appeals to our *spirits.* We shall consider only the first of these aspects of our expectation at this time—the consolation of our souls.

To fully appreciate Paul's consoling words to the Thessalonians we should seek to transport ourselves into their special circumstances. After Paul's call to Macedonia (Acts 16:9), and his release from the Philippian jail he came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue. For three sabbaths he argued with the Jews, with the result that some of them were persuaded. It was a rather discouraging harvest for the great apostle among his brethren according to the flesh. But, in contrast to the few Jews, a *vast multitude* of the reverent Greeks believe, and of the foremost women not a few (Acts 17:4,12). Moreover, the Jews of Thessalonica made up a mob and sought to persecute Paul, and even followed him to Berea.

The attitude of the Jews and Gentiles in Thessalonica is characteristic. It is most important that we grasp the situation, if we would fully appreciate the force of Paul's epistle to them. Paul had a number of ministries. In Acts we find him bearing the message of the kingdom to the Jews of the dispersion. Jerusalem and Judea had rejected the testimony of the twelve. Paul then carries the kingdom message to those scattered among the nations. In his early ministries he always acted on the principle, to the Jew first. So it seems that his principal efforts in Thessalonica were directed toward reaching them, although the result was that he reached the nations. It may be this background which leads him to write, "having perceived, brethren beloved *by* God, His choice of you, for the evangel of our God does not come to you in word only, but in power also" (1 Thess.1:4,5). To the Jews the message came in word only, for God had chosen the Gentiles. It was a small epitome of the present work of God, and needed only the conclusion to make it complete. And this is given us in Paul's epistle.

Paul seems to have spent his time in Thessalonica chiefly in arguing with the Jews, seeking to prove that Jesus is their Messiah (Acts 17:2,3). He was not allowed to stay much more than three weeks, hence he had not many opportunities to teach those among the nations who had believed, what he later wrote to them. Had he done so, his revelations concerning the future would not have been at all agreeable to the Jews who might be present, for this epistle practically involves the repudiation of Israel. Neither could these things find any record in the book of Acts at that time, for they go beyond the theme of that treatise, which closes, once the Jews among the nations finally reject the kingdom message. Most appropriately, this new revelation is made in writing, not to the few *Jews* in Thessalonica, but to the *Gentiles.* To them, in their sorrow, God is pleased to reveal a future coming of our Lord

which was quite unknown to the prophets of old, or to the disciples of our Lord on earth.

Under the circumstances we can readily see why the Thessalonians should be ignorant of what the future had in store for them. They probably were not ignorant of the destiny of Israel. Probably they had heard much of what Paul had said to the Jews, and of the glorious return of the Messiah to set up the kingdom. They had been accurately informed concerning the times and the eras. The day of Yahweh, coming as a thief in the night, was no mystery to them, even though, in the second epistle, it would seem that they were later alarmed by a letter, supposedly from Paul, teaching that the day of the Lord was already present (2 Thess.2:2). In reading the Thessalonian letters let us always remember that the background is Paul's heralding of the kingdom to the Jews. Then we will not be perplexed by the many allusions to that which concerns them at the time of the end. Of their own expectation they were ignorant, but not of the expectation of Israel.

Perhaps, in their first love and abounding joy, they hardly gave any thought to their own future. But this was forced upon their attention in a most tragic manner, for some of their members died, and the first thought concerning their loved ones was that they would miss the anticipated kingdom. What would become of them? The faithful Jews would be raised to have their portion in the kingdom. Even the proselytes would have some share in that glorious day. But their reposing friends—nothing seemed in store for them, for nothing had been revealed. It was a sorrowful outlook. Paul later reminds the Gentiles of it in his Ephesian letter: "Wherefore, remember that once you, the nations in flesh . . . that you were, in that era, . . .guests of the promise covenants, having no expectation . . ." (Eph. 2:11,12).

It is not easy for us to put ourselves in the position of

such as the Thessalonians at that time. Israel still monopolized all prerogatives. The Thessalonians had gone to Jewish meetings to hear the evangel. They had believed on *Israel's* God, and they no longer had one of their own. They had no political rights in Messiah's kingdom, for they were alienated from its citizenship. As to the covenants they were merely guests. Perhaps no better picture can be given of them than that which our Lord Himself used—they were hardly more than puppies at Israel's board. But what distressed them was not their present state, but the future of their dead. They had no "hope." Of what use were all these future glories to them, if they were to have no part in them?

No marvel that the apostle did not want them to remain in ignorance! They *had* an expectation, a glorious prospect, a hope more marvelous than that of Israel. This he now proceeds to unfold to them (1 Thess.4:13-18). It is the great antidote for hearts sorrowing over those who have died, or rather, according to the expressive figure used by the apostle, who have laid their weary limbs down for sweet repose.

"Those who are put to repose"! What comfort there is even in these words! Some of us have loved ones whose lives, at least in part, were anything but repose. There was toil and anguish, and the daily ordeal was like the torture of the rack, until death mercifully released the groaning frame. How often did we wish that some miracle could be wrought to provide a transient rest! And now comes death. Is it really an end of suffering for the time? That alone is cause for thankfulness. Yet we know what glories lie beyond. And, indeed, our sorrow is not like that of others, who see naught ahead but the black shadows of an unknown night.

The Thessalonians looked for the coming of Messiah and hoped to survive until His presence on the earth, but they

had no definite idea as to their own place in the future. We need not be surprised at this, for thousands today know even less than this and are satisfied with a mere consciousness of salvation. Other thousands consider the Lord's coming too deep a subject for this life. Its intense practical value in this vale of tears is often unheeded until some great sorrow sinks the soul in despair, and loosens its hold on the things of this evil eon.

GIVEN UP AND ROUSED

The foundation on which our every expectation rests is the resurrection of Christ. For our souls, our bodies (1 Cor.15:14), and our spirits, our faith is directed to the empty tomb near Golgotha. "If we are believing that Jesus died, and rose," all else is possible. Then those for whom He died must share in His resurrection. Let us note the names here. It is Jesus, our Lord's personal appellation, which presents Him as Saviour. This reminds us of Paul's amplification of this very point in his epistle to the Romans. There righteousness is reckoned to those who are believing on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead ones, Who is given up *because of* our offenses, and is roused *because of* our justifying (Rom.4:24,25). He was not roused because of His own justness, but because we had become just. He was made sin for us, and, until expiation of our sin had been made, until we were utterly cleared from its slightest taint, until we were justified, He could not be roused.

To believe "that Jesus died and rose" involves ever so much more than the casual reader apprehends. It is, so to speak, the salvation of our Saviour. And this involves our future welfare. The work which He accomplished for us led to His being roused by God and guarantees our own resurrection. Through this Saviour, God will lead us forth with Him. And this applies to all, even to the far-off

Gentiles like the Thessalonians, who only listened in on Paul's arguments with the Jews, and who only wished a few crumbs from God's redundant provision for themselves.

But this great truth was not enough. It would give rise to questions. The dead will be raised, but When? Where? How? Will it be at some far distant time, the "last day" (John 11:24) of which Martha spoke at the grave of Lazarus? Will the dead miss all the bliss of being with Messiah in the day of Yahweh? Will we be separated from them in that day? How long will the ones who survive until that day precede those who have fallen asleep? And, since the Messiah is the King of Israel, how will it be possible for any of us to be with Him in His exalted and exclusive majesty?

These questions could not be answered by an appeal to the prophets, for the situation is just the reverse of that contemplated by them. "Rejoice, ye nations, with His people," would almost need to be read backward, as, Rejoice, His people, with the nations. Paul was not succeeding in his efforts to reach Israel. The nation, as such, even in the dispersion, was rejecting their Messiah, and their expectation of possessing the kingdom was receding. In contrast with this, multitudes among the nations were believing *notwithstanding Israel's apostasy.* If this goes on (as it did), then Israel will not be blessed at all, hence will not be in a position to dispense blessing to others. It is clear, therefore, that God will need to step in and resolve the dilemma. A new revelation is needed. And this is just what the apostle receives, and what he passes on to the sorrowing Thessalonians.

A FRESH REVELATION

"This we are saying to you by the word of the Lord . . . ." This solemn formula is not often used in God's later revelations. It marks a new departure, a fresh unfolding of God's ways. It is useless to seek for this revelation in any

previous portion of God's Word. No prophets mention it. Our Lord said nothing of it. Even the Circumcision apostles, in their later ministries, give no hint of the glorious event which Paul is about to foretell. More than that, this "word of the Lord" concerning our recall from death introduces a wedge between the recipients of Paul's evangel and the Circumcision evangel which eventually split them wide apart, so that, not only in their future expectation, but in all else they constitute a distinct and different work of God, dependent, not on Israel's *acceptance* of the evangel, but on her *rejection* of God's Christ.

As the main motive of the apostle is to console, he first assures the Thessalonians that they would not get ahead of their reposing friends. "We, the living who are surviving, to the presence of the Lord, should by no means outstrip those who are put to repose . . . ." This alone should have satisfied the Thessalonians, and dried their tears. But this sorrow of theirs, and its consolation, is only a God-made opportunity which must serve a higher and a greater purpose. God's grace has been dammed up so long that it must overflow. The sorrow of the Thessalonians has opened up a crevice for it to flow forth. But the crevice soon widens into a crevasse, and breaks down the dam of legalism and fleshly privilege, bringing floods of blessing to the nations.

God knows the end from the beginning, so it comes that the first real revelation concerning God's present work of grace among the nations deals with the closing scene of this administration, if, indeed, it should not be counted with the next. Then "the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the Chief Messenger, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead ones in Christ shall be rising first." Marvelous moment! Ecstatic expectation! Most entrancing sound! Those blessed lips have already given commands to His own, but none to compare with this! When will the voice

of the Chief Messenger bring mankind more bliss, or trumpet blast sound sweeter?

The Lord Himself—and not another! We, sinners of the Gentiles, unworthy of a place at Israel's board, would be highly honored to have Him send the meanest of His servants to call us back to life. How marvelous if He should delegate an archangel for this task! In His unveiling, when He deals with the earth in judgment, much of His work is delegated to mighty messengers, who fulfill His will. Let us charge our hearts to give due heed to the favor which is poured forth upon us in this precious phrase. To be sure, we are last, and least deserving. Yet, in this new dispensation, which has its birth in this very revelation, the last are made first and the least, greatest. Even in the kingdom He will do much through His servants, such as David, and His apostles, who will rule the twelve tribes, but when He bids us to His presence He will come *Himself* to raise our bodies, rouse our souls, and vivify our spirits, to make us fit and welcome in our celestial home.

Three sorts of sounds combine to recall the dead to life and vivify the living. One is an inarticulate sound, the trumpet's stentorian tones, which will raise the bodies of the dead and change the living. The second is the voice, of a *messenger* bringing tidings of great joy. The third is an *order,* a command to be obeyed.

THE VOICE THAT RAISES THE DEAD

The voice of the Chief Messenger is none other than the voice of our blessed Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. No so-called "angel" can raise the dead. Not even Michael, or any other archangel, can wake the sleeping saints. The hour is coming when the dead shall be hearing the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear shall live. For even as the Father has life in Himself, thus also He gives to the Son to have life in Himself . . . The hour

is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and those who do good shall go out into a resurrection of life (John 5:25,26,28,29). And this same voice gave a foretaste of its power when, in later days, it clamored loudly at the tomb of His dear friend, "Lazarus! Hither! Out!" (John 11:43). And the dead man heard and obeyed that vivifying voice.

In His dealings with Israel, in heralding and setting up the kingdom, God uses many messengers. John the Baptist was sent before the Lord to prepare His way. Gabriel was sent to announce His birth to Mary. Many mighty messengers will be employed in the judgments which usher in the kingdom. Wherever God needs a courier to carry His messages or carry out His decrees, especially when these are not in direct harmony with the heart of His great Mediator, or of a nature which He cannot perform, He uses other messengers. Our Lord could not announce His own birth, so Gabriel came. Christ could not be His own forerunner, so John the Baptist was sent. Christ's great function is to save, not to destroy, so the destructive judgments of the end time are delegated to other messengers. But when the time comes for the deliverance of our bodies He takes the announcement of this glad message upon Himself, and we will hear the news from His own mouth, as the Chiefest of all God's couriers.

THE TRUMPET OF GOD

Only God can call dead bodies back to life, yet He has delegated this power to His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. This is pictured most perfectly for us in the phrase "the trumpet of God." By using a trumpet a man may magnify the power of his voice beyond all human proportions. In using the divine trumpet, His voice reverberates with the power of God, which alone can raise the dead.

In the beginning God worked by means of His spoken

word. God said, "Let light come to be!" and light came to be. Resurrection is a much greater work, so is appropriately pictured by a much more forceful sound, by which life is given to the dead, as well as immortality to the living. Though listed last, it would seem that this will be the first of the sounds to be heard, for how can the dead hear a message or hearken to a command unless they have been brought back to life? As Paul told the Corinthians, the work of resurrection will take but an instant to transform the corruptible to incorruption and the mortal to immortality. The trumpet will sound, but nothing will occur until the concluding blast. Then, presto! change! the greatest miracle of the eons!

A SHOUT OF COMMAND

One of the grave difficulties in this passage is our being snatched into the air. How can this be? It is not explained here, but fully expounded later in Paul's letter to the Corinthians. Even here, however, we have an indication of this secret of the resurrection, for only *changed* bodies could respond to such a command. Peter had the secret of it in his heart when he said to his Master, Who was walking on the Galilean waves, "Lord, if it is *You*, *order* (*keleuson*, the verb of this word)—*order* me to come to You on the waters." Then came the shout of command, *"Come!"* And descending from the ship, Peter walks on the waters to come to Jesus (Matt.14:28,29). If *He* gives an order, it carries with it the power needed for obedience. Peter, alas! had not been permanently changed, his faith failed, and he began to sink. We need more than Peter's scant faith to obey the command that will call us up into the air to meet Him there. We will have glorious power in spiritual bodies, which will be equal to obeying any command.

The touching scene on Galilee seems to picture Christ's coming to Israel in the days ahead. But be it they or we,

what other order could He give than this one blessed invitation, *"Come!"*? "Depart!" is for those who know Him not. We would not be at all surprised if, in that supreme moment, when the last trump has transformed our feeble and dishonored frames into glorious, powerful, spiritual bodies, the first word that we shall hear will be His order, *"Come!"*

When Peter heard it, he stepped *down* from the ship and walked upon the *water.* But we shall go *up* from the earth and meet Him in the *air.* Every such contrast is intensely significant just at this juncture, when God's grace is being switched off to another track. We, who are accustomed to the thought of heaven as our future home, can have little conception of the astonishment this must have created in Thessalonica. Our Lord returned with Peter into the ship. But there is not a single hint that He will return with us to the earth, but simply the statement that we are to be together with Him always.

All this is full of meaning, and worthy of much meditation. All is symptomatic, and points forward to the grace which was about to be revealed. All is contrastive, and indicates a change in God's dealings with mankind. The most important point is the position of our Lord. He is not on earth, hence the kingdom has not come. He is in the air, which is a higher and more spiritual sphere. He does not descend to the earth, though He undoubtedly does so later. This fact, however, is definitely excluded from this revelation, for it has no bearing upon it. If we did not have any further unfolding of this theme, we might not be able to see the significance of all this, but now that we know that our destiny is not terrestrial but celestial (Eph.1:3), that our bodies will not only be vivified but changed (1 Cor. 15:51), and that our citizenship belongs to the heavens (Phil.3:20), every syllable glows with a celestial light. The

gates are opened to the great grace which is ours in Christ Jesus, and we get a small glimpse of our future glory.

There is a pleasing contrast between the orders given by our Lord and those issued by other characters in the sacred records. His commands bring blessing, theirs usually result in evil and even death. When He, in His compassion, wishes to feed the throng, He orders them to recline on the grass (Matt.14:19), the better to receive His bounty. At Jericho, when the blind mendicant implores, "Jesus, Son of David, be merciful to me!" He stood and *orders* the blind man to be led to Him (Luke 18:35-40). Here we have a beautiful little foreview of His future coming to Israel, as deep down in the depths of despair as Jericho is sunk on the surface of the earth, when He restores their sight so that they may behold His glories and follow Him. The false rulers gave far different orders. The Idumean, Herod the Great, *orders* the head of John the Baptist to be given to Herodias' daughter (Matt.14:9). Another Herod orders Peter's guards to be put to death (Acts 12:19). The *orders* of men bring suffering and death. His order, which all of His will hear, betokens life and lasting joy.

THE DEAD RISE FIRST

Once again the apostle reassures the Thessalonians in regard to those who are reposing. We shall by no means outstrip them because they will be rising first, before any of us leave the earth. As there is no consciousness in the death state, it has no practical effect on their expectation. It is just as if they had lain down to slumber, instead of dying. And that is why the apostle persists in speaking of "those who are put to repose," where we would say "the dead." The *fact* is that they died, but the far more truthful *figure* is that they are reposing. When they awake they will not be in His presence. They will first join the living (who will have been changed, as we shall see later), and, as one

company, just as if none had ever died, all together will be snatched away in clouds for meeting the Lord in the air.

Especial emphasis is laid on the simultaneous ascension of the saints. At various times teachers have arisen who claimed that the resurrection does not occur at one time, but that some, more faithful or more privileged than the rest, would be raised earlier. Some have even claimed that Paul himself reversed these words in a later revelation, when he made known an "out-resurrection." But this is an eclectic resurrection, leaving the vast multitude of mankind in their graves. It does not even include those believers who belong to the kingdom. Paul's later characterization *describes this resurrection,* rather than distinguishes another from it. A careful reading will show that the words, *at the same time,* are not necessary for the sense, for the word "together" conveys the same thought. It is emphatic. *Simultaneously,* the dead and the living, if "in Christ," will be snatched away in clouds for meeting the Lord in the air. Whatever lack of unity may have been caused by division and death, all will be one the moment we hear His vitalizing voice.

THE LIVING, WHO ARE SURVIVING

The normal outlook of the believer of this dispensation of God's grace is not death but life. From Paul down to the present day the prospect put before the saint is the vivifying presence of Christ. From the beginning all have been kept in ignorance of the date when this will occur, for an imminent expectation is the most powerful and blessed means of producing a consecrated life. It was no mistake on Paul's part when he said, "we . . . who are surviving." It is a serious error and shortcoming on the part of critics, to condemn it because they hold no such vital hope. Day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, the next event for which we yearn should be the trumpet's joyful note.

And in these last days this should be the case as never before, for the next administration is already in formation, the signs of the next era seem prematurely present, so that we sometimes wonder why we are still here, performing our little part while the stage is already being rearranged for the final act of earth's tragic misrule. We feel out of place and in the way, for all seems ripe for the day of Yahweh. The storm clouds are gathering, out of which will come the lightning and the thunder of God's wrath. We view its oncoming terrors unafraid, for we know that, before the storm shall burst, we will be above it, safe and serene, in His presence. Surely there is no excuse for us in these closing days not to live in constant and joyful anticipation of this expectation.

SNATCHED AWAY IN CLOUDS

Clouds have their place in the air, hence the first thought which usually comes upon one reading this passage is that we shall be screened from the earth by vapory clouds floating in the sky. It may be so, but the absence of the article—not "*the* clouds," but simply "clouds"—and the close connection with the words "snatched away together with them in" suggests that it may be the saints, living and raised, who may form the clouds here spoken of. That is, the saints will not go separately, but in company with others, in groups of sufficient numbers to form figurative clouds. Like these fleecy formations they will be composed of particles which can float in the air. The Lord will act like the summer sun on the surface of the water. Heavy as that fluid is, it rises at the sunbeams' call into the empyrean.

A would-be scientist might bang all sorts of objections as to the practicability of this event. One might say, "If all *ascend* from all over the earth, they will not meet, but scatter." But nothing is said here of *ascending.* The word *snatched* will allow of any direction. Not so many years

ago some would have said that no sound could possibly be heard all over the earth at the same time. But that idea is now outdated. If men can mount their messages upon the wings of light and send them to every portion of the earth in a small fraction of a second, this will not be impossible to Him Who in the beginning said, "Let light come to be!" None of these things compares with the greatest of all miracles, which precedes our going, the impartation of life and incorruption to millions of reposing saints.

MEETING THE LORD IN THE AIR

For those like the Thessalonians, who had never heard of a heavenly hope, and who had some knowledge of the kingdom on earth as heralded to Israel at the time this was written, the thought of meeting the Lord in the air must have been most marvelous and full of mystery. A little later the Corinthians found it so, and Paul was called upon for further explanations. Now that our celestial destiny has been revealed (Eph.1:3), and the prospect of "heaven" is common to everyone in Christendom, the surprising nature of this revelation is not appreciated. Yet even for us it lacks finality. No one thinks of this as the permanent abode of the saints. It leaves us with a feeling of incompleteness. We know that our Lord will not remain in the air. He will come down to earth a little later. Then, if our destiny is on earth, why should we be given the marvelous power of traversing the air? Israel will not be able to do this. There is something here which suggests that we will go up, and not down, that our abode is the heavens, and not the earth, but it is only intimated, not revealed.

THUS

In this way, after this manner, shall we be together with the Lord. Early was this blessed expectation lost, and ever since some of the saints have sought to intrude

into His presence by another way. They have tried to find Him behind the portals of Death, although He is the Life. They have even altered Paul's own words. When he found no attraction in life or in death, he revealed his heart by saying that he was pressed out of these by his desire of being *with Christ,* which, rather, is much better. Living is not now being with Him. How much less is dying! No one of His will ever be ushered into His presence alone, apart from the rest. First those who are in Him will be gathered. Paul found it necessary to insist that the living shall not precede the dead. Today we must insist that this clearly shows that the dead shall not precede the living! And so, both, *simultaneously* (*hama* in the Greek), at the same time will be snatched away to meet Him in the air.

TOGETHER WITH THE LORD

It might be a difficult matter to tell just "where we will spend eternity," so the Scriptures describe our future sphere in the almost all-embracing terms, "among the celestials." The popular conception of heaven, somewhat like the great festive halls I have seen in the palaces of Europe, in which each one has a place in the orchestra, is grotesque and utterly unscriptural. Leaving out the earth, the heavens, in which our future lies, comprise the whole universe. Now we are confined to an exceedingly narrow stratum near the surface of the earth. Our limitations will not allow us to go very far below its crust, nor ascend very high above its lowlands. Bars, much stronger than iron, cage us in, so that we cannot come forth. But then all limitations will be withdrawn and the boundless universe will be before us, and the object of our ministrations. How impossible to describe our whereabouts in that supernal sphere!

Only one location need be given, for this includes all others and imparts to every place the one thing needed to

make it all that heart can wish. And that is circumscribed by the simple words that allay our fears and soothe our sorrows, and crown the future with a halo which no other phrase can ever impart. Our bliss will not consist in being in a place, but in being *with the Lord!* His presence would make "hell" heaven, and what would heaven itself be without Him? And so, in the midst of life, as well as in the presence of death, let us console one another with these words.

A. E. Knoch

ROMANS 4:25

Everywhere God's vindication and ours depends on Christ's sacrificial work. His being made sin is the ground of our becoming the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor.5:21). Our personal offences sent Jesus Christ to the cross; but if we are to be assured that His offering was satisfactory, if we are to be made one with Him, He must not stay there. He died, as love always will, to save the beloved who are in jeopardy, *and was roused because of our justifying.* This is the only true and consistent translation. Grammatical expedients have been invented to escape the plain meaning of the words. But we were justified in His blood (5:9). The propitiation was for our justification (3:25,26). He was made sin for our justification (2 Cor.5:21). It is the death of Christ, not His resurrection, which is the basis of our justification. The resurrection is the seal of our justification. He was raised because of our accomplished justification, accomplished as far as grace and blood could secure it. Our justifying, like our deliverance, is actual and concrete in Christ Jesus, and becomes ours on believing. Our sin killed Him; our justification permitted His resurrection. It was not a personal resurrection only, but something that concerned all men. As our condemnation brought Him to crucifixion, so our justification releases Him from death. A risen Sin-bearer shows that the sin is removed. A complete resurrection shows that Justice had no claim on Him beyond the realm of death. If His body, or any part of Him, was left in the grip of death, we should never know the sufficiency of His sacrifice.

George L. Rogers

OUR BELIEVING AND CHRIST'S FAITH

In Romans 3:21 Paul declares that God's righteousness has been made manifest through Jesus Christ's faith "apart from law." In Romans 3:31 the apostle asks "Are we, then, nullifying law through that faith [of Jesus]?" And here he declares "May it not come to that! But indeed we are sustaining law"!

Consequently the apostle turns to the "Law" (Torah) where it is apart from law. He sustains law where it is a *declaration* of the reckoning of righteousness and not *instruction.* He turns to the law section of scripture where it speaks of justification through faith and not out of works of law. He turns to the first book of the "Torah," to Genesis chapter 15, verse 6 which tells of believing God and not of instruction for human doing (such as Genesis 12:1-3 where instruction precedes promise). Paul turns to the law where a passage of promise comes first (Gen.15:5) and then is followed not by instruction but by another declaration of something apparently very simple and minimal which was done by one individual, Abraham, not in response to instruction, but in response to a most joyful promise. Abraham *believes* God.

Thus "law" as "faith's law" is what is sustained, yet apart from human works of law.

4 [a]**What, then, shall we be declaring** that **Abraham, our** [·]**forefather accord**ing to **flesh, has found?** [2] **For if Abraham is justified out of works, he** [|]**has** something to **boast** in, **but not toward God.** [3] **For** [a]**what is the scripture saying?**

[y]**Now Abraham believes** [·]**God,**
And it is reckoned to him [io]**for righteousness.**

[4] [y]**Now to the** [|]**worker**[°]**, the wage is not being reckoned**[°] [ac]**as** a **favor, but** [ac]**as** a **debt.** [5] **Yet to** him [·]who is **not working**[°]**, yet** is **believing on** Him [·]Who is **justifying the irreverent** one**,**
his [·]**faith is being reckoned**[°] [io]**for righteousness.**

RIGHTEOUSNESS BEING RECKONED

The citation of Genesis 15:6 moves us from Jesus Christ's faith to the believer's faith, and justification moves from the literal sense of being made righteous (proleptically) to being reckoned righteous. What was seen as the manifestation of God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith in the gratuitous justification of all human beings is now seen as justification as presently placed *"on* all who are believing" (Rom.3:22). What is revealed *out of* the Righteous One's faith is now considered as it is *for* the believer's faith (*cf* Rom.1:16,17). "Faith's law" (Rom.3:27) as it operates in the faith of the humbled Jesus in the justifying of the irreverent one, is placed before us now as what the believer is believing. Our faith is believing that God is justifying the irreverent one through the faith of Jesus Christ, and on believing this evangel of our salvation we are sealed with the holy spirit of promise unto the deliverance of the procured, literal justification to be enjoyed in the future but *achieved in the death of Christ* (*cf* Eph.1:13,14). Now through every day, hour, minute and second this justification is being reckoned to us, being put to our account.

BELIEVING GOD

This pattern of believing God when He speaks to us in words of an evangel of joy and well-being was displayed by Abraham as recorded in the Torah before the law of circumcision was given and long before the law of Sinai was imposed. God speaks of good. Abraham believes. God reckons this for righteousness.

Abraham's faith was described above as something "apparently very simple and minimal." Yet in reality it was something astounding and fully opposed to the reality of Abraham's life and circumstances in the world. Abraham believes what was unbelievable as far as physical evidence is concerned. And this was, in reality, neither simple nor minimal. It was contrary to everything that could be seen or known. It can be explained only as Paul later explains our faith. It was a spiritual endowment from God (1 Cor.12:1; 13:13).

Abraham's faith would falter and only approach perfection when he serves as a type of Christ's faith and of God's giving of His Son in righteousness and love as recorded in Genesis 22. Yet the measure of Abraham's faith is not the issue. It is that he believed God as God endowed him with faith, and reckoned it for righteousness.

Nevertheless the faith graciously granted (*cp* Phil.1:29) was most remarkable and positive apart from doubts.

Now as much as we may profit from dwelling on the blessing of believing God as Paul expounds it in Romans 4, our concern at present is on God's evangel as it concerns His Son and His Son's faith. So for now let us skip ahead beyond David's testimony concerning the happiness of being reckoned righteousness, and beyond this happiness as it relates to the Uncircumcision as well as the Circumcision, and beyond it as a matter of grace rather than law. We will not pause even to consider Paul's use of the word SEED as it refers to Christ in 4:13, except to note that in God's evangel Christ is always kept in view. So also, in passing, we catch a view of Christ's faith in the description of Abraham's faith in 4:16-20. Again we go beyond all this as it relates to our believing and God's reckoning of righteousness to us, returning to the evangel concerning God's Son itself—beyond the theme of our faith to that of

Christ's faith in the purpose and operation of God.

ROMANS 4:23-25

23 [y]**Now it is not written because** of **him only, that it is reckoned to him,** 24 **but because** of **us also, to whom it is** [l]**about to be** [l]**reckoned**[°]**,** [·]who are **believing on** Him [·]Who **rouses Jesus our** [·]**Lord** [o]**from** among the **dead** one**s,**

25 **Who is given up because** of **our** [·]**offenses,**
And is roused because of **our** [·]**justifying.**

It is God "Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead ones."

And it is Jesus our Lord "Who is given up because of our offenses, and is roused because of our justifying."

The focus turns again from our believing to the message we are believing. Chapter 4 for the most part concerns us who are believing in the pattern set by Abraham, but it ends with God, Who gives up His Son and rouses Him from among the dead ones, and with Jesus our Lord Who is given up and is roused. Paul brings us back to God in the first place, our Lord in second place, replacing the emphasis on us (who are in third place as offenders who are justified).

Consequently in Romans 5:1 Paul speaks (as in 3:21-28) of justification as the result of God's operation in the giving of His Son and His Son's faith (not our faith) in that operation.

God's evangel concerning His Son reveals first of all that His Son is given up because of our offenses. While we are still offensive sinners God commends His love in sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh, sparing Him not but *giving Him up* for us all (Rom.5:8; 8:3,32). It is because of our offenses that Jesus our Lord is given up to crucifixion ("Christ crucified," 1 Cor.1:23,24), coming in sin's flesh, and coming in this state of humiliation *concern-*

ing sin so that sin would be *condemned* (Rom.8:3). Such is the commendation of God's love and the constraining power of Christ's love that He dies for the sake of all and consequently all die (2 Cor.5:14).

It is in the death of Christ that everyone, each and every human sinner and each and every offense of irreverent and unrighteous human beings dies. "One who dies has been justified from sin" (Rom.6:7). It is in the sinner's inclusion in the death of Christ that all are being justified gratuitously in God's grace (Rom.3:23,24).

Consequently God's evangel first tells us that Christ dies for our sakes. It is not because Christ is roused from among the dead that we are justified, delivered and saved from sin and death and shall be constituted righteous. He is roused because of our justifying which is achieved in His death for all so that all sinners and all their offenses and sins are put to death (to be experienced in God's own time).

Christ is roused *because of* our being justified in our inclusion in His death. If He was not roused then His death did not accomplish what it was intended to accomplish, that is our justifying. "Now if Christ has not been roused, vain is [our] faith—[we] are still in [our] sins" (1 Cor.15:17). It is not Christ's resurrection that justifies. It is Christ's death that justifies, and His resurrection is the glorious manifestation of "life's justifying." It is through Jesus Christ's faith in dying for sinners, His righteous response to what His God and Father set before Him, "for all" human beings that brings about life's justifying (Rom.5:18). It is through His obedience unto the death of the cross that the many who are constituted sinners shall be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19).

CONTRARY VIEWS

In his commentary on Romans, C.E.B. Cranfield writes: "It is to be noted that *dia* is used in this verse in two different senses, first in a causal, and then in a final sense."[1] He adds in a footnote: "The suggestion that the first *dia* should be understood as final ('in order to deal with') is not very probable. Still less probable is the suggestion that the second *dia* should be taken as causal (the meaning being that Jesus was raised up because we had been justified through His death) . . . ."

Cranfield's claim of two different senses of *dia* in Romans 4:25 is well carried out in the reading offered in the New English Translation (NET): "He was given over because of our transgressions and was raised for the sake of our justification." Here also in a footnote, this rendering of *dia* as "for the sake of" in the second usage is discussed as follows: ". . . in light of the unsatisfactory sense that a causal nuance would here suggest, it has been argued that the second *dia* is prospective rather than retrospective . . . . The difficulty of this interpretation is the structural balance that both *dia* phrases provide ('given over because of our transgressions . . . raised because of our justification'). However the poetic structure of this verse strengthens the likelihood that both clauses may bear a different force."[2]

These two construals of the parallel lines of Romans 4:25, one from a scholarly commentary, the other from an equally scholarly Bible translation, may well represent the majority understanding of teachers and students of Scripture today. It is based on the claim that the two uses of the Greek preposition *dia* have different meanings. The first is "causal" or "retrospective" in the sense of "because" as is usual when *dia* is followed by a noun or

1. C.E.B. Canfield, *The Epistle to the Romans,* in The International Critical Commentary Series, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1975, vol.1, p.252.
2. *New English Translation* (www.netbible.com), First Beta Edition, p.2123.

pronoun in the accusative case. The second which is also followed by an accusative, is "prospective" (directing to the "final" purpose). That Paul should use a preposition twice within five words of each other, and in exact parallel, with such opposite senses of relationship is most surprising, if not unbelievable.

But the greater problem is the association of justification with the resurrection as though it were the only factor in this great achievement of righteousness. Consequently those who see two senses of *dia* here assure us that both the giving up of Christ to death and His resurrection bring about justification—the two steps together—even though Paul's wording does not actually say that. It is explained that Paul adopts the wording of an early Christian hymn, or at least expresses himself in poetic language which was not always precise.

Nevertheless we must insist that, Paul's wording is exactly what he wishes to say. And he does so in parallel lines.

COMPATIBLE VIEWS

Happily some scholars and translations as well as some ancient writers see Paul's use of *dia* in the normal sense of "because." The Swiss German theologian, Adolf Schlatter (1852-1938), writes: "it is not advisable to suggest a meaning for the second *dia* different from the first one. Our fall precedes the execution of Jesus; he was condemned because we fell. Likewise our justification precedes his resurrection; he was raised because we were justified through his death."[3]

Similarly the American scholar, Randolph O. Yeager, in his multivolume, analytical translation and commentary entitled The Renaissance New Testament, writes: "Christ was not raised from the dead in order to justify those for whom he died, but because in His death He had actually justified them." In accord with this he translates Romans 4:25 as follows: "Who was delivered to death because of our moral lapses and was raised up because of our justification."[4]

3. Adolf Schlatter: ROMANS, The Righteousness of God (English translation by Siegfried S. Schatzmann), Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, Massachusetts, 1995, p.118.

These comments accord well with our own understanding, as expressed by A. E. Knoch who wrote in his notes accompanying the first and second editions of the CV (1926,1931) and republished in the CONCORDANT COMMENTARY (1968): "Jesus Christ . . . was roused because the sin He bore was all gone, and we were vindicated."[5]

GOD'S EVANGEL CONCERNING HIS SON

To see two senses for *dia* in Romans 4:25 is to miss the clarity of Paul's thought, and to obscure its connection with what has preceeded in chapters 1-4 and what follows.

What is missed when *dia* is given two senses is the clarity of contrast between two *causes* and God's response to them. The first cause is "our offenses" to which God responds by giving up His Son—that is, He "spares not His own Son, but *gives Him up* for us all" (Rom.8:32). The second cause is "our justifying" achieved in Christ's death, to which God responds by rousing "Jesus our Lord from among the dead ones" (Rom.4:24).

Thus we are prepared for Romans 5 where God's evangel is explicitely presented. It is a message of God's love expressed by His Son Who gives Himself up for all humanity.

D.H.H.

4. Randolph O. Yeager: The Renaissance New Testament, vol.11, Pelican Publishing Company, Gretna, Louisiana, 1983, p.413.
5. CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.234; see also A. E. Knoch comments on p.9 of this magazine.

GIVEN UP AND ROUSED

THE EVANGEL is a matter of death and life. It proclaims the death of Christ on the cross and in the tomb. *Christ dies for our sins, and He is entombed* (1 Cor.15:3,4). Then it speaks of the life of Christ in resurrection. *Christ has been roused* (1 Cor.15:4; Rom.4:24,25).

Concerning humanity, the evangel faces the deep-seated problem of death, both as a state and (figuratively) a power leading downward to that state, and tells of its defeat and ultimate elimination, and the establishment of life immortal and incorruptible. It is because death as a destructive power in us producing sin and offense has infected the entire human race through the sin of Adam (Rom.5: 12-14), culminating in the state of death, that the death of Christ (and our inclusion in His death) is so critical. And it is because His death accomplished what was so desperately needed by humanity that He was roused to life.

The pattern of death followed by life is presented throughout the Sacred Scriptures. In Romans 4, Paul points to this pattern in the experience of Abraham. He and his wife, Sarah, were *deadened* in the ability to have children (Rom.4:19). But in His promise that Abraham would be the father of many nations, God reveals Himself as the One Who is *vivifying* the *dead* (Rom.4:17).

So also for us: In His evangel concerning His Son, God reveals Himself as the One Who will be *vivifying* our *mortal* bodies (Rom.8:11), both now, in spirit, and in the future, in Christ's presence (1 Cor.15:22,23). Hence God tells us of His love to us in giving up His Son for us, "seeing

that, while we are still sinners, Christ *dies* for our sakes" (Rom.5:8). We who are believing are identified with Him already in His *death,* as He was in the tomb (Rom.6:3,4). Then God's message to us adds triumphantly: "Christ has been *roused* from among the *dead,* the Firstfruit of those who are *reposing.* For since, in fact, through a human comes *death,* through a Human, also, comes the *resurrection* of the dead *ones.* For even as, in Adam, all are *dying,* thus also, in Christ, shall all be *vivified*" (1 Cor.15:20-22).

RIGHTEOUSNESS

God's evangel, as Paul is presenting it in Romans, focuses on the theme of righteousness. Justification is established through the faith of Jesus Christ, that is His faith-obedience to the death of the cross. It is gained by His death and our inclusion in that death, and it is enjoyed in life, both in the future when we are fully vivified, and at present, in spirit. In Romans 4, the apostle has been especially concerned with the blessing of being reckoned righteous, granted to us when we believe the evangel that Christ dies for our sins and is roused from among the dead ones.

This blessing of being reckoned righteous is also pictured for us by Abraham's experience in Genesis 15:6, who was fully assured that, what God has promised, He is able to do also. *Wherefore, also, it is reckoned to him for righteousness* (Rom.4:21,22).

> *Now it was not written because of him only, that it is reckoned to him, but because of us also, to whom it is about to be reckoned, who are believing on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead ones.* (Rom.4:23,24)

Abraham did not know that what God did for him in reckoning righteousness to him had us in view as well as himself and his physical descendants. But God knew this. What He did for believing Abraham, He intended to do

for us in a way centered even more fully in His grace and based explicitly on the giving up of His Son. When God spoke to Abraham in Genesis 15 and reckoned righteousness to him, He also had us in view, who were "about to be believing."

BELIEVING ON GOD

In believing God's promise that he would have descendants numbering as the stars of the heavens, Abraham was believing it *of the God Who is vivifying the dead* (Rom. 4:17). His faith was placed entirely on God Who is able to do what He has promised (Rom.4:20,21).

Likewise, for us, in believing the evangel that we are justified gratuitously in God's grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus, and in believing also that God reckons us righteous when we are believing this evangel concerning His Son, we are placing our faith wholly on God, Who is vivifying the dead. In our apostle's words as expressed in Greek, we believe *on* God, even as we rely [*expect*] on the living God (*cf* 1 Tim.4:10), Who is actively carrying out His operations in dealing with death and sin and bringing forth life and righteousness.

Justification through the death of Jesus our Lord is assured by God rousing Him from among the dead. It is the work of God and the grace of God and the gratuity of God. Therefore, we are not trusting in ourselves or our works but are believing on the God Who vivifies the dead. We are believing on the God "Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead" (Rom.4:24).

THE EVANGEL

Now in Romans 4:25, the apostle Paul presents the evangel he was evangelizing (*cf* Rom.1:15), wording it in two parallel clauses in terms that continue to echo in our hearts and resound in our spirits:

> [*God*] *rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead ones,*
> *Who is given up because of our offenses,*
> *and is roused because of our justifying.*

As in Romans 1:1-7 and 3:21,22, the evangel speaks to us here first of all as it speaks of *God.* God gives up Jesus our Lord and rouses Him from among the dead. Then the evangel directs attention to *God's Son,* Who is given up (to the death of the cross and of the tomb) and roused (to life from among the dead ones). He is the One in Whom we are created (Col.1:16), and consequently the only One through Whom we can be saved. Hence we know and honor Him as Saviour and Lord, as ultimately all will do (*cf* Phil.2: 10,11). Finally, therefore, Paul presents the evangel as it affects *us.* and eventually all human beings.

JESUS IS GIVEN UP

It is God Himself Who gives up His Son to suffering and death. The passive fact verb, "is given up," in Romans 4:25 becomes an active fact verb in Romans 8:32, with God as the One doing the action.

This latter passage culminates with Paul's jubilant song in praise of the love of God (Rom.8:35-39), making clear to us that God's giving up of His Son is an act of love. So also in Romans 4, what the apostle says about Christ being given up by God leads forward to that amazing wording of the evangel that we find in Romans 5:8. The fact that Christ dies for sinners is God's commendation of *His love.*

GOD'S LOVE

How can we comprehend this? We see Christ's love here, but can we see God's love in this giving up of His Son? In Romans 5:7 we are directed to consider the love of a human who might die for the sake of a good person. Yet Christ dies for sinners, who indeed still remain sinners in

themselves. Yet Christ's death is called *God's love* for us! The Father gave up His Son to the sufferings of the cross and the death of the tomb, for us! It was the love of Christ. But in its deepest sense it is the love of God, Who is love.

Let us pause here to consider what the verb "is given up" tells us of God and of His love. Some passages from the Hebrew scriptures may help us see what was in God's heart as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in His giving up of His Son for our sake.

THREE FATHERS

We turn to Genesis 22 where we read of Abraham taking his son Isaac to the mountain where he was instructed to give him up as an ascent offering. Knowing full well that this meant giving up the one in whom all his expectation and joy was centered, Abraham, nevertheless, "took the wood for the ascent offering and placed it on his son Isaac, while he took the fire and the knife in his hand; *and the two of them went along together*" (Gen.22:6). Isaac was the son Abraham loved, in view of the promise his only one (Gen.22:2). But the circumstances, determined by the instructions of God, called for the father to do what he would never do otherwise. Yet, through it all, he never wavered in his love for Isaac, and he never tried to cover it up in order to steel his resolve for the deed ahead. They walked on together, and Abraham replied to Isaac's questions with faith in God, but also with the gentle words of love for his son: "Here I am, my son . . . . Elohim, He shall see for Himself as to the flockling for the ascent offering, my son" (Gen.22:7,8).

It was not given to Abraham that the togetherness of himself and his son would be severed by the death of Isaac. But God gives up His Son to the hours of suffering and darkness on the cross, and then to death itself in the silence of the tomb. This is done for sinners, and all are sinners.

As God is greater than Abraham, so His love for His Son is greater beyond all comparison as the Two of Them approach the cross together. God, Who is aware of the suffering and travail of all creation, is keenly aware of the sorrow and pain of His Son. God, Who is keenly conscious of the evil of death, from that of Abel onward, feels the evil of this separation from His Beloved Son beyond all measure. This is to speak now of the Father's heart. And that God would do this is to speak of His love for us.

Jacob also becomes a type of the love of God as Father when he weeps over the apparent death of his son, Joseph. "Jacob tears his raiments and puts sackcloth on his waist and mourns over his son . . . and refuses to be consoled" (Gen.37:34,35).

As the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is greater than the father of Joseph, so God's love for His Son, Whom He gives up to death, is greater and deeper in the loss of His Son in death, than Jacob could ever have felt. This is to speak of the Father's heart, and in doing so it speaks of His love for us, who continually *offend* His heart. In knowing the outcome of great good resulting from this sacrifice, God gives up His Son to death, in happy expectation (*cp* Rom.8:18-21). But there still was the giving up, and all that it meant to the heart of God.

Even David, in his piercing cries over the death of his unworthy son, Absalom, becomes a type of what was in God's heart as the Father, in the giving up of His most worthy Son for us who are so unworthy. "O my son . . . my son! . . . . O that I had died instead of you! O . . . my son, my son!" (2 Sam.18:33).

Yet the Father could not die, and He could not die for us. It had to be the Son of His love in Whom we are created (*cf* Col.1:13-20). God's love for us involves His suffering as Father over the suffering of His Beloved Son. This is God's love as it is commended to us.

JESUS OUR LORD

God gives up His Son for us in love. But God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, acts in love Himself. Referring again to Colossians 1:15,16, we note that Christ is the Image of the invisible God, and so, in His love for us, He reflects God's love. But also He loves us because we are created in Him. In dying for us Christ reveals the heart of God, and also exposes His own heart of love for us whom God brings forth in Him. As we (all human beings) are created in Him, so are we (all human beings) included in Him in His death. "For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One dies for the sake of all, consequently all die" (2 Cor.5:14).

The One Who dies for our sake, for the sake of the irreverent, of enemies and offensive sinners, is Jesus, our Lord. He dies so that we might be living a life that recognizes Him as Saviour and Lord.

BECAUSE OF OUR OFFENSES

What God does in the giving up of His Son, and what Christ does in being given up, is *because* of us. This is where we first come into the message called God's evangel. We are unrighteous; we are sinners; we are *offenders* at enmity with God. It is our miserable state under the reign of death as a power that calls for God's astounding act of power in giving up His Beloved Son.

What is called "sin" in Romans 3:9 and 3:23 is called "offense" in Romans 4:25. Offense is that aspect of sin which wounds the feelings, that which degrades and denies the glory of God. Again, what is called the "sin" of Adam in Romans 5:12, and his "disobedience" in Romans 5:19, is referred to as his "offense" in Romans 5:15,18,20. The offensiveness of humanity is especially centered in its *irreverence,* in which we change God's glory to our own level

and avoid Him and His ways. Paul has already defined this offensiveness and its effects most concretely in Romans 1:18-32. In our offensiveness we are vain in our reasonings, and darkened is our unintelligent heart. The human mind is a disqualified mind, distended with envy, murder, strife, guile, depravity; in our flesh we are whisperers, vilifiers, detesters of God. Such offensiveness is the cause of God giving up His Son in order to put it to death, and bring all that is good to life. This is the measure of God's love for us.

"Who will be indicting God's chosen ones? God, the Justifier? Who is the Condemner? Christ Jesus, the One Who dies, yet rather is roused, Who is also at God's right hand, Who is pleading also for our sakes?

What shall be separating us from the love of God, the love which is in Christ Jesus? Affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? According as it is written that: on Your account we are being put to death the whole day, we are reckoned as sheep for slaughter. But indeed, in all these we are more than conquering through Him Who loves us.

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God, the love which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom. 8:33-39).

ROUSED FROM THE DEAD

Jesus was dead and among the dead. The fact that He was entombed proves that He was dead. Consequently, when He was roused on the third day, He was roused from that state of death in which millions upon millions of human beings have entered. As to the condition of being dead there was no difference between Jesus our Lord

and all who have died from Abel unto the present. But as to the significance of His death, and as to its effects, it is singularly, and exultantly unique. It alone makes the righteousness of God manifest and establishes His work of justification. Hence, God rouses Him from among the dead ones (who remain dead ones until He resurrects them, *cp* Rom.1:4). He is roused *because* of our justifying.

BECAUSE

From the standpoint of traditional Christianity, the wording of the evangel here is mystifying. What can it mean that our Lord Jesus is roused *because of* our justifying? If our offenses are the cause of the giving up of Christ to death, can it be that our justifying is to be seen as something prior to Christ's resurrection, somehow already an accomplishment established by the death of Christ which opens the way for God to rouse Him? Does the word "because" carry the same sense in these parallel lines?

How can it not?

We are baptized into Christ's death, entombed together with Him through baptism into death (Rom.6:3,4). Our old humanity is crucified together with Him (Rom. 6:6). It is with this in view that Paul declares, "If Christ has not been roused . . . you are still in your sins" (1 Cor.15:17). He has been roused, and thus the old humanity as an entirety had been put to death in the death of Christ.

This fact as declared in the evangel has not yet become a fact manifested in realization. But because of the obedience of Jesus Christ to the death of the cross, the many who are dying in Adam will ultimately enjoy the benefits of Christ's obedience to the death of the cross, and thus all shall be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19). All are included in the death of Christ, and eventually will enjoy the benefits of life's justifying (Rom.5:18).

Yet in the meantime we are enjoying these benefits in spirit now, and will be enjoying them in every way in the oncoming eons, among the celestials.

OUR JUSTIFYING

What is referred to as the manifestation of God's righteousness in Romans 3:21, and as the blessing of being justified gratuitously in God's grace in Romans 3:24, is called "our justifying" here in Romans 4:25. Our old self has been put to death in the death of Christ; it is done away with. Christ as the Sin Offering was put to death, and when that occurred, sinful humanity, under the sway of Death, was also put to death. The enjoyment of justification by all mankind was thus assured, although it has not yet been realized. But for us who are believing, this which was gained through the death of Jesus Christ for all is reckoned to our account and is becoming a powerful force in our present lives. There can be no doubt that we shall be living together with Christ and living to God in the oncoming eons. But concerning the present, Paul says to us, "Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom.6:11).

ROUSED TO LIFE

The verb "given up" refers to the crucifixion of Jesus our Lord, given up to sufferings and the death which resulted by means of the cursed cross. In this astounding act of God, the old humanity with its sin and offensiveness is done away with. But the evangel does not stop there. The verb "given up" occurs once in our passage, but the verb "rouse" occurs twice. God rouses Jesus from among the dead, and He is roused because of our justifying. We have given much attention here to what the evangel says about death, but the passage itself gives more attention to what the evangel says about life.

The death of the old is necessary, but it is necessary in order that there be life that is new. The verb "rouse" speaks of life that is awake and aware of its condition and surroundings, life as it is felt by the senses and known by the heart. For our Lord, His rousing from among the dead brings an awareness that stands not only in glorious contrast to the sufferings of the cross but also stands in glorious contrast to the entire lack of awareness of the tomb.

LIVING TO GOD

When He was roused, Christ was living to God in a new and expanded way. He is now living to God as the God Who is vivifying the dead. So also, in believing the evangel that we die together with Christ, and in believing that we shall be living together with Him also (Rom.6:8), we find we are putting our faith on God as the Vivifier of the dead. As Christ is living to God, so also, in spirit and in heart, we are living to Him Who gives life out of death.

Thus the fourth chapter of Romans concludes with God's evangel concerning His Son as it relates to the evil of death and to the exceeding good of life. It announces that God gives up Jesus our Lord to death and rouses Him from among the dead ones. It points to Jesus our Lord as the One Who is given up and roused. The giving up is because of what we are as offenders, and the rousing is *because* of what God accomplished for us in the giving up of His Son, and by our inclusion in Him. That accomplishment is, to start with, our justifying. But that is not all, as our apostle now makes clear:

"Justified, then, out of His faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by that faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God" (Rom.5:1,2).

D.H.H.

WE RELY ON THE LIVING GOD

GOD is the First Cause, Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will. This is the testimony of the Scriptures, but, as we have found, the deceptive teachings of "free will" and "chance" drastically and direly undermine this truth of God's deity.

Another most dangerous error, and one that equally obscures the character of God, is the idea of everlasting punishment. This denies to God the achievement of His will to save all mankind and bring them into a realization of the truth (1 Tim.2:4). In addition, it gnaws away at our own confidence in God and the glorious effects of Christ's obedience even to the death of the cross.

For we read, "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome (for for this are we toiling and being reproached), that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers" (1 Tim.4:9,10).

In this article we wish to test one of the principle arguments used in defending the doctrine of unending loss as opposed to the teaching that God is the Saviour of all. This is the claim that the words *aion* and *aionios* have different and even opposite meanings in different passages of Scripture.

THE EONS, WORD MEANING AND COMMUNICATION

There is a likeness between the arguments for "free will" and those for giving *aion* ("eon," CV) the idea of endlessness. In both cases, the actual issue, that which is most pertinent and important, is unrecognized. It needs to be emphasized that the underlying position which has been

taken here is that some words in Scripture, certainly *aion*, do not have any meaning at all. In themselves, they mean nothing whatever.

Even as it is not realized that those who teach "free will" champion the absence of causality as to human choice (even though this actually gains them nothing), it is also not realized that the position of those who oppose us on the eons affirms the absence of all meaning *in* the word *aion* (and, in a number of other terms as well). It is claimed that the word *aion* has a variety of meanings; it may mean "world," or it may mean "age," or it may mean "endless ages," or perhaps it may even mean "timelessness; eternity"; that which is outside of time (including ages) altogether. Again, it may mean "lifetime" or perhaps "course" (as the AV renders the word in Ephesians 2:2). Yet none of these "meanings" can be taken as intrinsic. This is indeed the traditional position, that there is no actual, singular meaning that can be applied to *aion*. We might call it the doctrine of "the destitution of inherent morphological meaning."

Now a number of corollaries follow from this position: (1) In all non-definitive passages, of which there are many, it will be impossible even to *assign* any meaning at all to the word with any certainty. For instance, when we read that "God makes the eons" (Heb.1:2), how can we have any idea of what He makes? After all, a wide variety of ideas, even beyond those suggested above, might also be assigned to *aion*, and for these non-definitive passages, it would be impossible to determine which of these is to be understood; most all such "meanings" would make sense. (2) Even when a genuinely definitive passage is discovered (a passage in which only one idea will even conceivably make sense and avoid absurdity), the definition discerned must be confined only to that passage and any other fully parallel ones. That is, the basic idea or meaning discovered in such a passage may not be applied to other types of passages. (3) This "principle" of the absence of inherent morphological meaning for some terms would actually have to be applied to all words. But it will follow from this that (4) there will not even be a single stable context in which to discover the meaning of any word in question. After all, these contextual terms may themselves mean something quite different in one passage than they do in another! But if this were true, we could not know the meaning of even a single passage of Scripture.

The purpose of language is to communicate, and yet the "orthodox" position, when fairly considered, makes communication impossible. Besides, its advocates are not foolish enough to practice it very often themselves. If they were to employ it continually, they would soon know nothing at all! It is only when one of their pet notions, such as "everlasting life" or "eternal punishment" is challenged that they seem to want to give much heed to it.

Other terms do not take on an altogether new nature "in some contexts," and they certainly do not become antonyms to themselves. Does the word "dog," in some places, come to mean "cat"? Does darkness become light, good become evil, and false become true upon occasion? Then neither does eon, a period of time, mean endless "in some contexts."

THE CONCORDANT PRINCIPLE OF TRANSLATION

Those who oppose the concordant principle of translation, the use of concordances through which definitive passages are discovered for intrinsic word meanings, are actually claiming, whether realized or not, that scriptural words do not *have* any meaning at all. Instead they assign a wide variety of meanings to be applied as fits their predetermined ideas.

It is not enough for us to produce a variety of New Testament, Septuagint and secular citations which are man-

ifestly speaking of time periods by means of the word *aion.* For it will generally be freely admitted that *aion* has such a sense in these passages. Indeed, most all students acknowledge that in those cases in which the AV translates aion as "world" the meaning is actually that of an age or eon. And most will agree that this is its meaning in a number of other passages as well.

Our opponents do not disagree with us here. Nevertheless, after considering these many definitive passages, they remain unconvinced that the basic idea inherent in the word "eon" (that of a period of time) is to be understood in all passages in which some form of the word *aion* is present. They insist that the word *aion* used in those passages which speak of life, redemption and judgment acquires a sense that is the very opposite of "age," not at all referring to a period of time. It is this practice of arbitrarily assigning quite different senses to the words *aion* and *aionios* from context to context, without recognizing a single, inherent meaning, that is used to defend everlasting punishment and to obscure the fact that God is truly the living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind.

APPEAL TO TRADITION

Good men, intelligent, educated and dedicated, have believed all manner of things. The Arminians and the Calvinists have been unable to agree concerning who it is for whom Christ died (all or some), and whether the work of Christ saves or only makes salvation possible. A number of renowned scholars and famous theologians, due to their findings in the Scriptures, have been constrained to affirm that the dead are not alive, only to have most others, no less erudite than themselves, just as insistently reply that it is in death that glorious life, or terrible pains, truly begin. Similarly, over the centuries, most have confidently believed that God will never actually give the nation of

Israel the glorious terrestrial kingdom which her prophets so explicitly predict, even if Isaiah and all the rest should insist otherwise.

In light of such a history of human controversy, how doubly welcome it is to place reliance on the living God and His Word. He is the Saviour of all mankind and is faithful to this designation.

"EVERLASTING" LIFE AND CONTEMPORARY SELFISHNESS

Perhaps the most common objection we receive concerning the eons is the claim that if "everlasting punishment" should ever come to an end, then "life eternal" would do the same (Matt.25:46, AV). The objector is so selfishly preoccupied with preserving what he supposes to be blessings for himself in this passage, that he is prepared to assist in stoking the fires of hell forever if this should be necessary in order to protect his own interests.

Instead of the usual "translation," these words should be rendered "chastening eonian" and "life eonian." By its ending, *-sis, kolasis* ("chastening") refers not to a state, but to an action continuing on. And it has in view an action performed not as a penal infliction, but one with a view toward amendment or rectification. Since God is love, and wills to save all, His ultimate purpose in even His most severe judgments could never be the "eternal punishment" of anyone. He cannot deny Himself.

Indeed, it is well known that even the secular usage of *kolasis* had in view not some kind of terrible vindictive punishment, but acts done for the sake of betterment or correction.[1] In the Scriptures, in Acts 4:21, the Jews released John and Peter, "finding nothing how they should be *chas-*

1. *cf* John Wesley Hanson: Aiōn-Aiōnios, Northwestern Universalist Publishing House (1875), pp.50-55. *cf* F. W. Farrar: ETERNAL HOPE (1883), pp. 199-201; MERCY AND JUDGMENT (1881), pp.407-409.

tening them." Did they not aim to reform them? Was not their "chastening" with a view toward their returning to the unbelieving Jewish fold? From their standpoint the word was certainly used to convey the idea of reformation.

To show that it had this meaning in Greek usage, we cite Plato: "For if, O Socrates, you will consider what is the design of punishing [kolazein] the wicked, this of itself will show you that men think virtue something that may be acquired; for no one punishes [kolazei] the wicked looking to the past only, simply for the wrong he has done—that is, *no one does this thing who does not act like a wild beast,* desiring only revenge, without thought—hence he who seeks to punish [kolazein] with reason, does not punish for the sake of the past wrong deed, but for the sake of the future, that neither the man himself who is punished, may do wrong again, nor any other who has seen him chastised. And he who entertains this thought, must believe that virtue may be taught, and *he punishes [kolazei] for the purpose of deterring from wickedness.*"[2]

Besides, the words *kolasin aiōnion* in Matthew 25:46 are in reference to *national judgments* which the Son of Mankind will make in the day of the Lord, "whenever [He] may be coming in His glory" (Matt.25:31). These judgments concern the kingdom of the heavens, and are to be implemented in the coming eon. This judgment of God is prompted by the unworthy way in which many of the living nations will treat the people of Israel in the time of her great affliction, in the conclusion of this present eon.

Concerning the judgments of that day, Isaiah declares, "For as a light Your judgments will be to the earth, the dwellers of the habitance will *learn righteousness*" (Isa. 26:9b). Instead of suffering "the eternal torments of the damned," the nations will "learn righteousness."

2. Hanson: op. cit., p.53; quotation from Protag.Sec.38, vol.1, p.252.

Matthew 25:31-46 is not concerned with any of God's dealings with the members of the ecclesia which is Christ's body (cf Eph. 1:22). Instead, it has in view the granting of rewards, or chastenings, in response to the *works* of the *nations* of that day. It is not a revelation concerning divine grace, nor of the evangel of our salvation and its transcendent grace. Perhaps the best proof that men do not really believe that our salvation is a matter of gratuitous grace is the fact that this passage concerning the "sheep" and the "goats" is commonly perceived as a summary of the gospel for today.

Though *eonian* life (and certainly, eonian chastening) *will* come to an end, death will one day be abolished, and all will then be made alive, in an era in which it already will have been true for an entire eon that "death will be no *more*" (Rev.21:4; 1 Cor.15:20-28). The promises concerning our future life do involve the thought of endlessness. But this idea is not conveyed through any usage or form of the word *aion.* Therefore we should never speak of the matter of the endlessness of our future life by employing any of the usages of this word.

Instead, we should say that we will *always* be together with the Lord (1 Thess.4:17,18). We will be *immortal* and *incorruptible* (1 Cor.15:53), conformed to the image of God's Son (Rom.8:29), our mortal bodies having been *vivified* (Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor.15:23). We will have already been alive for a thousand years (the coming eon) when the promise goes forth that there will be no more death! We will continue to live during that eon as well (the length of which is not revealed), until the consummation when all will finally be vivified. Death will then be abolished for all mankind.

THE SAVIOUR OF ALL

The entire case for everlasting punishment is built on faulty arguments. Definite, intrinsic meanings are denied

to Scriptural terms. The ideas of certain good and wise men are made decisive when apparently contradictory passages such as Matthew 25:46 and Romans 5:18 are considered. But perhaps most dangerous of all, there is a clear tendency to deny to God the achievements through the work of Christ that He has claimed. He is the reliable, the living, the saving God, Who cannot fail to achieve His purpose.

James R. Coram

DAVID NORDSTROM

Though we sorrow at the loss of David Nordstrom, at the same time we are consoled in expectation that we will meet again, at the same time, in the air, with Christ Jesus our glorious Lord and Saviour.

David and I first met in Baldwin, Michigan at a Bible conference at the Grace and Truth Chapel in 1983 along with his wife and children. We kept in touch all these many years. In fact, he visited with me November 7, 2023. He spoke concerning problems with his heart. He and I always communicated concerning the Scriptures and healthy living. He passed away January 31 of 2024, having had a major stroke as they were trying to fix a blockage in his carotid artery. David was a constant supporter of the work here over all these many years. We look forward to seeing him again in the future!

Tony Nungesser

EDITORIAL NOTE

The scheduled instalment in A. E. Knoch's studies on Ephesians, entitled "Our Relationship to Christ" is postponed until our next issue. This is because it seemed best (and timely) to me to concentrate on Romans 4:25 along with the subject of consolation concerning those who have been put to repose. The failure of many to see clearly that all the good things being presently enjoyed in spirit and lying ahead for us in the future rest on the foundation of the *death* of Christ stirs us to give added attention to God's evangel as presented in Romans. In this we all need to see more truly what is meant by God's righteousness, not only as it affects us but all humanity and indeed all creation.

D.H.H.

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FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 115th Year

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Contents:

49 Editorial
51 Our Relationship to Christ
67 From Enmity to Peace
83 The Living God and the Eons
93 Justified out of Christ's Faith

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EDITORIAL

THE PLACE of our Lord Jesus Christ in God's operations is so critical and glorious that we must surely give diligent attention to it and uphold it always in our faith and teaching, in our understanding and fellowship. Regarding the headship of the ecclesia which is the body of Christ, A. E. Knoch writes, "Let us take heed that, in seeking to realize our high place, we may not rob Him of His!" (p.66). So also regarding the evangel itself (as well as the glories to come), I urge that "we must ever be wary of putting ourselves in places where the scripture speaks of Jesus Christ, our Lord" (p.94).

Yet as for "the scripture," as James Coram puts it: ". . . we cannot know what to believe if we do not know what has been said" (p.84). The whole matter of "Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22) to which I (joining many others) have been giving much attention, needs to be moved out of the realm of debate into the realm of "grace and peace" into which God has brought us—and by "grace" I mean the gift of JOY which is its elementary meaning. That is, our Lord's faith should not be a matter of dispute, but of one for rejoicing and peace. That the salvation-blessings of justification and reconciliation could be based on our faith is incredible. Faith, expectation and love are spiritual endowments which remain as God's gifts for us today, but they are based on Christ's faith and obedience unto the death of the cross.

Yet not these blessings alone, but all the promises of good, whether particular or general, whether temporary or final and permanent, are founded and settled on God's

love (commended to us) in that while we are still sinners, Christ dies for our sakes (Rom.5:8).

Yet the most fundamental and best result of Jesus Christ's faith is the manifestation of God's righteousness. All of God's choosing and blessing, even all His operations must be righteous. Resurrection and kingdom, (celestial as well as terrestrial) are not exclusive ends in themselves, but must ultimately embrace all God creates and does, and this for good. This is covered up in bad translation and wrong teachings which distort the revelations He makes in His word. We are apt to make too much of ourselves. Let us, then, be prepared for every revelation of the honor of our Lord as it leads forward to the glory of God.

In his writings, especially the studies on Ephesians currently being reprinted in this magazine, A. E. Knoch concentrates on our calling in grace as the joint body of Christ. Here there is much that is new and untraceable, and hardly recognized even by those chosen and called. But he gave emphasis to, and never neglected the basis of the "sacrificial suffering" (p.68) of our Lord Jesus Christ as it relates to the reconciliation of all and the justification of all that God does through the eonian times. Thus he writes concerning our calling: "The nations had no sacrifice, and it seemed they had no share in the great Sacrifice, the body, adapted for Christ. That Christ died for all was a truth unknown and repugnant to the ritual of Israel . . . . There is one Christ, and His body serves for all . . . . Since the same Christ, the same Sacrifice, the one body, sufficed for us as for them, we are both equally at peace with God and with one another" (p.75,76). And we may add: This peace will ultimately embrace all. In all this, the place of God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord is essential, critical and worthy of all welcome.

D.H.H.

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST

OUR Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour of all believers, in every divine administration, but in each He also sustains some special relation which arises from the particular design of each administration.

As the present economy is intended to reveal the very zenith of God's grace, we are united to Christ more closely than the saints of other eras, and we share His glories in a transcendent measure. What could be of greater interest to us than to explore some of these high honors, and discriminate, not only between what is ours and what is for others, but between the various phases of our own relationship to God's Anointed?

There is a tendency in all of us to go to extremes. Once we thought that all saints, in all times, had the same blessings, especially the same destiny—heaven. I would have shuddered once if I had stopped to consider that David had *not* ascended into the heavens (*cf* Acts 2:34). The Circumcision have their place on earth, together with all others who are blessed with them.

Those who are blessed during their defection, however, have a celestial destiny. They alone "go to heaven." This is the great dividing line between believers.

Let us not go so far as to say that we have nothing in common with the saints of other economies. We have the same God, the same Christ, the same Lord, the same Saviour. *The same blood avails for both.* In many ways we are one with all who believe God. We share the very name "holy ones," or *saints,* because we are hallowed by contact with Him. All saints belong to Christ, hence such a phrase

as "who are Christ's" (1 Cor.15:23) is especially worded so as to include the Circumcision and those connected with them, for they also will be vivified at the presence of Christ.

19 **Consequently, then, no**[t] **longer** [l]**are** [=]**you guests and sojourners, but** [l]**are fellow-citizens of the saints and** belong to [·]**God's family,** 20 **built** [on] **on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,** the **cap**stone of the **corner being Christ Jesus Him**self, 21 **in Whom the entire building, being connected**[°] **together, is growing into** a **holy temple in** the **Lord:** 22 **in Whom** [=]**you´ also are being built**[°] **together** [io]**for** [·]**God's dwelling place, in spirit.** (Eph.2:19-22)

Happily there is a section of the Ephesian epistle which is devoted to this very theme. In a laudable zeal to emphasize the riches of the grace shown to us, this part of Ephesians has usually been misinterpreted. The close of the second chapter (Eph.2:19-22) is intended to record, not the differences between us and other saints, but the points of contact. It sets forth our mutual interests under three figures of speech, a government, a family, and a temple. These we have in common with all saints of all time. God dwells in all, He is the Father of all, and He governs all. We are not given a subordinate place in these relationships, as is the case with the nations who are blessed through Israel. We are *fellow-citizens,* members of God's family and a part of the great temple of God, because the place of our blessing is not on earth, where Israel is supreme.

Our peculiar blessings are all brought before us in connection with the title "Christ," or Anointed. He is our Saviour, as His personal name Jesus (Yahweh-Saviour) shows. But we share salvation with all saints. The greatness of our salvation is not associated with His Hebrew name, but with His title. He is our Lord, yet no less the Lord of all others, though they are not so vitally united to Him as we are. The fact that all our special honors are concentrated in the title

"Christ" will help us much in clarifying our thought, and defining our special portion in God's program.

Let us note first of all that this is an *official title.* Anointing is always an induction into an *office.* It constituted Aaron a priest. It made David a king. It empowered Elijah to be a prophet. It is a strictly spiritual office. Israel is related to Him by physical bonds. They know Him according to the flesh. We have no part in "Jesus" except as He is our Saviour and Lord, and God's Christ. Others were anointed, hence were christs. We also are christs (2 Cor. 1:21). But He is preeminently *the* Christ, of Whom all christs are but faint and faulty figures. God's spirit is His in transcendent measure.

Let us look at some of our relationships to Him and their significance. There is a marvelous contrast in the fifth of Romans which is usually overlooked (Rom.5:8-11). There we see that, while we are *sinners, Christ* died for our sakes, hence we are *justified,* and saved from indignation by His blood. That is a summary of the teaching of Romans up to this point. In introducing the new subject, the apostle, in blessed contrast to this, asserts that the same One, as God's *Son,* while we are *enemies,* died so that we may be *conciliated,* hence are saved by His *life.* The sphere of the *feelings* is largely left to the sonship of our Saviour, as the apostle writes to the Galatians. "The Son of God, Who loves me, and gives Himself up for me" (Gal.2:20). Before being called, as *sinners* we need *Christ,* as *enemies* we need His *Son.* We are *justified* by the *blood of Christ.* We are *conciliated* by the *death of God's Beloved.* In view of God's coming indignation we are sheltered by Christ's blood, and shall be saved by the life of God's Son.

Christ is the Man Who can. He has power and authority by reason of His anointing, to carry out the work of redemption. He is able to accomplish all that humanity is impotent to perform. Priests have failed. In His Melchisedek priesthood He will so effectively fill the office, that no

priests will be needed in the last eon, after the thousand years. Kings have failed. And He will reign to such purpose that, at the consummation, all rule will be abrogated because all God's enemies will be subdued and subject to Him. Prophets, though sent when kings and priests had failed, are also failures. He alone perfectly conveys God's mind to humanity. Failure was made for Him, to form the background of His surpassing success.

In the accounts of our Lord's life the title *Christ* is used in strict accord with its Hebrew usage. He came to Israel as their *mshich,* or Messiah (John 4:25). There is not the slightest intimation that He was to have any connection with the other nations except through His own people, Israel. He never went among them. It is all strictly personal. No one, in those days, is said to be in Christ. When such a close relationship is presented, as in John's account, the disciples are related to the Son (John 17). We should never associate ourselves with Him at that time. For instance, the first occurrence, Matthew 1:1, speaks of the *lineage of Jesus Christ.* In this He is alone. Personally, He has this office, quite apart from His union with some of His saints, as set forth in later revelations.

Let those who have a concordance consider all the occurrences of the title before Paul was sent to the nations. There is not the shadow of a hint that He has shared or will share His anointing with others. The central crisis in the ministry of our Lord was accomplished by the recognition of His own anointing. Peter received a revelation and confessed, saying "*You* are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt.16:16). This was the testimony in Acts. God made Him Whom they have crucified both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). They proclaimed that Jesus, the Man of Nazareth and Golgotha, He is the Christ (Acts 17:3; 18:5,28). His relationship to the saints of that era was comparatively loose, because they had a very limited measure

of spirit. Christ is presented as their Saviour (Luke 2:11), their King (Matt.2:2), their Lord (Acts 2:36), and their Possessor (Mark 9:41).

It is only when we enter Paul's epistles, when the saints are *sealed* by the spirit, where the occasional *coming on* of the spirit is replaced by the permanent *homing* of the spirit, where the saints are actually *anointed* (literally *christed*) by the spirit, that they received the place of official nearness and unity. Such was impossible even for them so long as Paul was presenting Israel's Messiah according to the flesh. Our union with Him is by spirit.

OUR POSITION IN CHRIST

In Christ physical distinctions disappear. Those who have been baptized into Christ, being cleansed and united, have put on Christ, in Whom there is no Jew, nor yet Greek, no slave nor free, no male and female. All are one in Christ Jesus (Gal.3:27,28). This was true long before the "mystery" was revealed, and is not a part of it. Let us not, however, push it to extremes. It is limited to *spirit,* being "in *Christ.*" We are also "in the *Lord,*" as to conduct, and *there all of these distinctions persevere* until we are in His presence. "In Christ" deals with our *position* in grace, not with our *deportment,* which is in the Lord.

As we have seen, the phrase "in Christ" is not limited to us. Peter appropriates it. Eventually it will include all. "In Christ" "shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22). This is quite essential, for there is no life elsewhere. As all were once in Adam, so all shall be in Christ. They cannot be made alive, or justified, or reconciled in any other way. Though they are not in Him when He vivifies "those who are Christ's," they will be in Him at the consummation. The order of identification here must correspond with the facts. Christ *personally* has been vivified. He can die no more. No saint has this yet. It is not actually ours until we are also changed to

immortality and incorruption (1 Cor.15:50-55). The Circumcision saints will also receive it later on in the period of His presence. The time periods are these: In the past, Christ personal. In the near future, "those who are His," which is a special phrase broad enough to include all of His saints. The rest wait until the consummation, when all will be vivified "in Christ."

In Him we are hallowed (1 Cor.1:2). He becomes to us Wisdom from God, besides Righteousness and Holiness, and Deliverance (1 Cor.1:30). We have none of this in ourselves. We glory alone in Him.

It may be well, in passing, to note that there is no such figure in Scripture as the "bride of *Christ.*" There is the wife of Yahweh and the Bride of the Lambkin, but never a bride for Christ. They who use such a phrase expose their ignorance of Scripture and of the significance of this title. He is an Officer. As such, He has no physical connections. The Bride of the Lambkin consists only of those faithful saints in Israel who are related to Him by ties of flesh, as well as of spirit. The marriage bond is essentially a physical one. Hence its aptness in the case of the redeemed, or the chosen people, to whom He belongs as to the flesh.

We now approach the heart of the subject: the various special relationships sustained to Christ by us. So seldom are the Circumcision spoken of as being "in Christ" (1 Peter 3:16; 5:14) that we almost have a monopoly of it. At least it is so characteristic of the present grace that we can condense all our blessings into one phrase, "in Christ Jesus." By adding His personal name we fix the title to His present glory and so it is ours in a special sense. All that we have is *in* Him. We have the *deliverance* which is *in* Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). We have *eonian life in* Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom.6:23). There is no *condemnation* to those who are *in* Christ Jesus (Rom.8:1). Nothing is able to separate us from the love of God *in* Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom.

8:39). These phrases practically summarize the doctrinal divisions of the Roman epistle.

THE ONE BODY

. . . [16] **and He should reconcile ˙both in one body to ˙God through the cross, ¯killing the enmity in it.** [17] **And ¯coming, He** brings the **evangel**° of **peace to ¯you,** ˙those a**far, and peace to** ˙those **near,** [18] *t*__for through Him we ˙both have had the access, in one spirit, to__*d* **the Father.**

(Eph.2:16-18)

The deportment that should accompany this blessed oneness is presented under a notable figure of speech. We, who are many, are *one body in Christ* (Rom.12:5). Figures of speech are proverbially difficult. Few elements of the education of saints have been so neglected as this branch of literary science. There are over two hundred distinct figures of speech used in Scripture, yet few are able to identify more than a score. Even our Lord's disciples did not understand His figurative reference to falseness under the figure of leaven (Matt.16:11,12).

The relationship we have already been considering is a figure. We are not *in* Christ Jesus in any literal sense. No disciple could by any stretch of imagination be in the Messiah. It denotes a limited identification. Look at me. In myself I am a sinner, with neither deserts nor dignities. Look again. I have vanished. In spirit I have entered into Christ. He only is seen. I am *in* Him. What He is, I am. What He has is mine. His deliverance, His life, His freedom from condemnation, His deserts from the Father are mine *in* Him. But, like all figures of speech, its scope is limited. I am not all that He is *personally.* I am not Jesus the Saviour. I am not the Lord of all. I am not the Head of all. Let us not ignorantly presume upon His grace. We are in *Christ.*

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST

This relationship that we have already considered is not to be taken literally. We are *in Christ* in a figurative sense, but we are *not identical with Him in all His glories.*

So also with the figure of the body. Our Saviour has one incorruptible body of flesh and bones quite apart from us. We also shall have such bodies. To put it literally, the saints of this administration are *like* His body. Not each one of us, but collectively. The aggregate of believers under Paul's ministry forms the body of Christ—not of Jesus. Each one of us is like a member of His actual body. In spirit we are one organism, vivified by His life, having various functions, through which He will operate officially. We are not the body of the *Son of God.* That is a personal appellation. We are *not* the body of the *Lord.* It is only in His official capacity as God's Executive, that we are united with Him. Christ was not anointed with oil, but with the spirit. Our spirits enter into His official place. This is the body of Christ. Misled by the figures used, there has been much confusion as to the relation of the Head to the body. Misunderstanding the figure of headship, the Head is supposed to include all the functions which are in the physical organ, such as sight and smell. As a result some have said that the body in Corinthians has not *Christ* as its Head! It is said that, since the eye is a member, and the nose is another (1 Cor.12:16-23), the head is made up of members! We know that the head itself is represented as a member, which cannot say to the feet "I have no need of you" (1 Cor.12:21). Taken literally, this is utterly incongruous. The head one member! The eye another! The nose another! So that Christ is absolutely absent from His own body!

Such is the confusion into which we fall when we literalize figures of speech! But if we leave each figure in its place, how enlightening each is! The highest possible member is represented by the head. Such a one cannot dispense with the functions of the lowest. Let us not make this mean more than this. It has no reference to Christ. It is concerned only with His members. Can anyone suppose that the *headship,* the *leadership,* the control of the body in Corinthians was given to one of the members? Surely the Pope would be glad to hear this interpretation! But we know that, in this body, the whole is under the headship of the same Lord (1 Cor.12:5). Christ's headship is not figured by a part of the body.

Occasionally inquiries come to me which speak of "the body, Head and members." This shows that the student has been led astray, and needs to retrace his steps. In this figure *the head is one of the members.* The eye, the ear, the nose—each is a member. The "body" is not a decapitated corpse apart from Christ. He is not represented by the physical head in this figure, neither here nor in later manifestations. As a literal fact, He controls it. If we were to force Him into the figure we would liken Him to the brain. Headship means leadership, not sight, hearing, smell, or taste.

The figure of the body must not be taken literally. It is not composed of bones, cartilage, and muscle, but of certain saints who have a closer union with Christ than Israel ever had. Israel was married to Yahweh, but was divorced, and is now *lo ammi* ("not My people"). Our union is far more vital and intimate. As illustrated by this figure, we cannot hate our own flesh, nor can we cast it off. So also, in our relation to Christ. He loves us as He loves Himself (Eph.5:25-31). Let us remember that our Lord has a literal material body, as well as this spiritual counterpart, and never confuse these two.

In regard to the gender of the body, it is always neuter, for *sōma* is a neuter noun. The idea of sex is foreign to the

figure and can only cause confusion if it is injected. One of the most necessary lessons to be learned by the student is to confine each figure to its point of contact. For instance, if we developed the figure of the lion as far as some go with that of the body, we could easily "prove " that Christ and the Slanderer are one and the same, for both are seen under the figure of the lion! But in one case the figure is confined to the roaring, swallowing lion (1 Peter 5:8). In the other, we have the Lion of the tribe of Judah, strong to control the wild beasts of the earth (Rev.5:5).

MIXING FIGURES

Another cause of confusion is the mingling of this figure with others which are quite distinct. The new humanity ("new man") is an entirely different idea. It is racial. The new humanity is created by razing the partitioning wall between Jew and Gentile. In it Christ takes the place of Adam as the Head of the new race. We are exhorted to put off the old humanity and put on the new (Eph.4: 22-24). This is utterly impossible if referred to the "body." We cannot put that on. Above all, let no one use this figure to "prove" that the body is masculine. The man in this figure is grammatically masculine, but the term has reference to humankind, whether male or female.

Still another figure must be kept separate from that of the body. It is that of *maturity* (usually translated *perfection*), or *adult stature,* "the measure of the stature" (Eph. 4:13). This is an individual attainment, open to each one of us. Unless we do reach maturity in our spiritual life we will be minors, surging hither and thither, and whirled about by every wind of teaching (Eph.4:14). The point in this figure is *individual* maturity. The body always speaks of *corporate* unity. If it were a question of the members of the body as a unit becoming mature there would be no hope! The most advanced would be dragged down to the

mass of minors. This maturity comes to those only who have discarded the accompaniments of minority (1 Cor. 13:11). Some at that time were not mature (Phil.3:15). The apostle admonished and taught *every man* in all wisdom in order that He might present *every man* (not the body) mature in Christ Jesus (Col.1:28).

THE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST

How is Christ the Head of the ecclesia which is His body? Is the torso with legs and arms to represent the body, and a head to represent the Christ? This seems to be implied in some modern phrases concerning "Christ, Head and body." That this is not correct is evident from the divine comparison given us in Ephesians. The husband is the head of the wife *even as* Christ is Head of the ecclesia (Eph.5:23). Needless to say, the wife has a head of her own, just as the ecclesia has members who are eyes and ears and nose. The husband and wife are not fragments which need to be combined in order to make one body. The headship of the husband is not figured by the body at all. It is faded metaphor. In some languages this distinction can be expressed. In German we might say that the husband is the *haupt* of the wife, though she has her own *kopf.*

Perhaps this is the key to many confusing ideas which abound relative to the body of Christ. In the Scripture *it is always presented as a complete body,* with the functions of sight, hearing, smell, which belong to the head. The headship of Christ over this body is a further figure, distinct from it, which ought never to be confounded with it.

Some have suggested that the body in Ephesians is a headless one, in contrast to Corinthians. Such is far from true, for headship in Ephesians is never set forth by this figure. Christ is Head over *all to* the ecclesia which is His body (Eph.1:22,23). Here it is impossible to imagine so

grotesque an idea as the head of a body which is composed of all things! He is in control of all with reference to His body, the ecclesia. This body is only one part of the universe of which He is Head.

The same may be said of Colossians. There He is presented as the Head of every sovereignty and authority (Col.2:10). Headship does not necessarily involve the figure of a human body. *It never does in the Scriptures.* We have forced this into it by confusing the two figures. When we read in the same epistle that He is the Head of the body we should remember that the figure demands that many of its members be in the head. It is not a decapitated body. It is, as Ephesians puts it, an "entire body" (Eph. 4:16). This is an especially strong idiom in the Greek—*every the body*—in which the article is put before the noun to express not merely all of the body, but the body in its *entirety.* We repeat, Christ's headship is never figured by the head of the body. It is an entirely distinct matter, figured by the headship of a husband over his wife, in the Ephesian epistle.

THE BODY IN CORINTHIANS

It is notable that we have the strongest statement of our spiritual unity in Corinthians, not in Ephesians. In the Greek Scriptures no one is anointed but Christ (Luke 4:18; Acts 4:27; 10:38; Heb.1:9) and the Corinthians (2 Cor. 1:21). Of course, this was true of all to whom Paul wrote, yet it is significant that it is written to the same saints to whom the figure of the body of Christ is expounded at length. Since the spirit of God anointed all of them, and was the element into which they were baptized as well as that which they imbibed (1 Cor.12:13), we are prepared for the statement that they are one, as the human body is one, and constitute "the Christ."

This figure of speech is a very common one in some languages. In English we often speak of a person as a "body." It is tacitly understood that we do not limit the sense to the physical frame. In this sense "the body of Christ" is spoken of as "the Christ." The danger in our day is that the expression be made the basis of reasoning as though it were literal. For instance, we might argue "we are the Christ. Therefore, we are the head of all things." But immediately we are reminded that *He* is the Head of all *to us* (Eph.1:22). *We have no headship.* Some have said that, being the Christ, we are the Husband and not the bride. *But Christ has no bride.*

NO ROOM FOR HUMAN PRIDE

Innumerable reasonings and deductions, all outside the proper scope and limits of the figure, are indulged in by the saints who are intoxicated by the wine of God's grace. The danger is that we are inclined to exalt ourselves even if it lowers Him Who has raised us up. When we find ourselves appropriating the place reserved for Him, let us beware! Let us leave no room for pride. The body of Christ is not going to usurp His place! It must ever be subject to the Christ, even as our bodies are under our control. It must ever bask in a reflected glory. It has no light of its own. It must never infringe on those functions which are outside of its sphere, which are His alone, which He cannot share with His closest companions.

How shall we avoid these mistakes? By giving due place to *all* that has been revealed. Our knowledge of figures of speech may not be sufficient to keep us from getting out of bounds. Then we should have recourse to a well-rounded knowledge of the truth. To cite a very common example: Many reason that a woman should behave just the same as a man because the sexes are done away with in Christ. They may know so little of the import of this title that they cannot see how wrong this reasoning is. But they

can turn to the inspired Word and find that, in the very highest revelation, conduct is regulated by our place in *the Lord,* and husbands and wives, as well as masters and slaves, are not only recognized, but instructed how to act so as to please God.

The remedy for the mishandling of Scripture is the handling of more Scripture. Some suppose that, being ourselves "*the* Christ" we can no longer use this phrase without including the members of the body. There are numerous passages where this is impossible. "The Christ" is *Head* of the ecclesia (Eph.5:23). Surely the body is not head of itself! He is the *Saviour* of the body (Eph.5:23). Are we our own saviours? The Christ loves us (Eph.5:2). Does that mean that we love ourselves? He is actually in the heavens. He will descend for us. We will ascend to Him. He will never be a member of the body. Let us never allow this marvelous grace to lead us to rob Him of His place supreme!

THE JOINT BODY

Finally, how does the body in Ephesians differ from the body of Corinthians? Some have gone so far as to say that they are totally distinct, and that we are not members of "the Christ" at all, but of another body. Some have said that since the Corinthians were figured as a "chaste virgin," the body in Corinthians was female! Some say that Ephesians speaks of a new man [humanity], so that the body there was male! Such are the vagaries of human inference. We can just as easily "prove" there were none but men in Corinth. Otherwise how could the apostle exhort them to be manly (1 Cor.16:13)? This also "proves" that the body must be male. All this is futile inference. The body is always neuter. *Since it ignores all differences of sex, surely it cannot be either!*

The body of Corinthians was a *figure of speech,* not a frame of flesh and bones. It was composed of those saints

who received Paul's message. The body in Ephesians is identical with it. It unites the same saints and is subject to the same Head. If it were a literal fact it would be difficult to alter its condition. Nothing could be simpler than to transform and glorify the unity which it represents. As a matter of fact it changes to an "unhuman" body, if we may be allowed to use a rare word where the spirit of God has been compelled to coin a new one. Literally, no such organism exists in nature. The grace shown to us is superhuman, hence cannot even be pictured by an ordinary human body.

The change between Corinthians and Ephesians lies in the rank of the members. As the Circumcision were superior to the Uncircumcision in fact, in Paul's early ministry, so some of the body's members were above the rest, in figure. The head was exalted above the feet. The eye looked down upon the hand. Since the "mystery," or secret, was revealed, the feet are level with the head. The hand is as high as the eye. The Circumcision have no preeminence over the Uncircumcision. We are still like the human body, but all the members are peers of each other. There is a joint body. Furthermore, there is only *one* body (Eph.4:4). There can be no greater violation of the unity of the spirit than the formation of another, or the teaching that there are several.

We should *not* make a cut between the head and the members, for we have seen that the head is one of the members, and illustrates others by its functions. The "body" is a complete one in the figure. All of it is "the Christ" (1 Cor.12:12). Note that this occurs in the same passage which makes the head a *member.* We cannot say that only the head is "the Christ." The feet, which may represent us, is also a part of "the Christ," just as well as the head. Now that it is a joint body, the feet are *equally* a part of "the Christ." But none of them have the head-

ship of the body. That is a distinct figure, which we must not confound with the body member which has the same name. The best way to get the matter clear is to illustrate the headship of Christ by the figure used in Ephesians. Christ is *not* Head of a decapitated human torso, but of a complete body, *even as the husband is head of the wife* (Eph.5:23). This illustration is undoubtedly given us in order that we may not be misled by the fact that the word "head" is used in two different figures. Just as the wife has a complete body with a head, besides her spiritual head (her husband), so the body of Christ has its head, besides having Christ as its Head, *with reference to His lordship and our subjection.* These thoughts have no place in the figure of the "one body," hence its head cannot represent them.

These facts are certainly applicable to the twelfth of first Corinthians, where the body is called "the Christ," for in the same context *more members are found in the head than anywhere else.*

TRANSCENDENT RELATIONSHIPS

Such are some of our relationships to our Lord Jesus Christ. All are distinctive and transcendent. Grace is connected with His office as Christ. The figure of a complete human body, including its head, sets forth our special blessedness. He is not a member of this body, although He is its "Head." This is not figured by that member of the body. He is Head of it, even as a husband is head of his wife. The head members of the body—the eyes and the ears—are not in control. They are subject to Him. Our highest grace is figured by the same figure, artificially modified to conform to the truth that all the members of the body are of equal rank. Let us take heed that, in seeking to realize our high place, we may not rob Him of His!

A. E. Knoch

FROM ENMITY TO PEACE

THE PENTECOSTAL ERA was characterized by increasing enmity between the saints of the Circumcision and Uncircumcision. In the present administration of God's grace all antagonism is gone. There is not the slightest ground for further division. The change is based on the prominence accorded flesh or spirit. Then flesh was foremost and led to fighting. Now spirit is supreme, and leads to peace. This is brought before us figuratively by razing the "soreg," the wall that hindered the approach of Gentiles to the sanctuary. This is the religious aspect. It is enforced by the abrogation of the decrees which James had forced on the nations. This is the political aspect. It is accomplished by creating a new humanity, in which there are no such divisions as Circumcision and Uncircumcision. This is the social side (Eph.2:13-18).

The key to the great change is the title Christ Jesus. Had the nation of Israel received their Messiah at the end of the Acts era, then the terrestrial Kingdom would have come and He would have been their Christ on earth, and the nations would have continued in their subordinate place. He was rejected on earth. Here He is simply Jesus Christ, Who is denied His rights and refused allegiance. But He is acclaimed in the heavens. Israel is connected with the rejected Jesus Christ. We are in the elected Christ Jesus, in the heavens. In Him, in spirit, all physical relations disappear. The Circumcision who now believe gain nothing by the rite. The Uncircumcision lose nothing by its lack.

Since sin has severed man from God the only means of approach is blood. Literal blood can have no such won-

drous efficacy, so we must look beneath the figure for the reality. This is found in the fact that the soul of the flesh is in the blood (Lev.17:11). The soul is the seat of sensation. The shedding of blood is a figure of *suffering.* Sin naturally and justly entails suffering, but this is not the passport to the divine presence. It is *sacrificial* suffering which satisfies God's head and heart, and leads to peace. The blood of animals allowed a physical nearness, a picture of the true. The blood of Christ brought actual access of spirit to God, Who is Spirit.

THE ENMITY

As the literary structure will help us to see that the central thought of Ephesians 2:14,15 is the removal of enmity, we present it herewith:

He is our *Peace,*
Who makes both *one,*
and *razes* the central wall of the barrier
(the *enmity* in His flesh),
nullifying the law of precepts in the decrees,
that He should create the two, in Himself, into *one* new humanity, making *peace;*

This arrangement shows, at a glance, that peace has replaced estrangement in relation to the three great departments of human experience: government, worship, and society. The incarnation of Christ did not bridge the gulf between Israel and the nations, as some would have us believe. Rather, it accentuated it. The enmity between the believing Jew and Gentile was not based merely on their own flesh, but on His. The fact that Messiah was of the seed of David gave the Israelites a vast advantage. It gave them authority over the nations. It made them priests and intermediaries between the nations and God. It gave them a social prestige, as blood relatives of the Messiah. All of this will yet be seen in milder form in the millennial reign, when Israel will be a royal priesthood.

The process of making peace is illustrated by three specific acts, two of which were destructive, and one creative. He abrogates the decrees, razes the "soreg," and creates a new humanity. The lordship of James and the twelve apostles over the saints of the Uncircumcision is denied. The ritual of the apostate leaders of the nation is repudiated. The nation itself is practically renounced by the creation of a new humanity in which it has no place.

THE DECREES ABROGATED

The unfortunate and inconsistent rendering "ordinances" in both the Authorized and Revised versions has hid from the saints one of the most enlightening truths connected with this secret economy. The translators had already used the word "ordinance" for several other Greek words. The laws of language are such that it is impossible for the intelligent student to avoid associating this passage with others with which it has no connection. At the same time it prevents him from linking it with that transaction to which it really refers. They had twice rendered *dogma,* "decree," when used of Caesar's act (Luke 2:1; Acts 17:7) as well as of the decrees made for the nations by James (Acts 16:4). Why not render it the same in the remaining passages (Eph.2:15; Col.2:14, see 2:20) which directly refer to the same document?

The decrees were a fourfold prohibitory enactment, relating only to the flesh. The believers among the nations were not to be compelled to be circumcised and keep the law, as most of the Jewish saints insisted, but they were ordered to abstain from eating idol sacrifices, and blood, and what is strangled, and prostitution (Acts 15:29). No doubt, these seemed to be very wise expedients, intended to reduce the friction between Jewish believers, who were still strict ritualists, trying to keep the law, and the believers among the nations who were not under law. Very lit-

tle social fellowship would be possible without some such restrictions. The only real purpose which they served was to give concrete expression to the attitude of the Jews toward the Gentiles, and later, by their repeal, show the change brought in by the revelation of the mystery.

Without in the least intending to do so, the compilers of these decrees indicted themselves by the terms of their enactment. Physically they kept them, spiritually the nation to which they belonged was guilty of breaking them all. Though they would not allow the nations to eat meat which had been offered to idols, they themselves idolized the outward forms and ceremonies which had displaced the spiritual worship of Yahweh. They not only did not eat blood, but they refused the blood of Christ, which had been shed for their souls. They strangled the spiritual life out of the divine ritual. They will yet, as a nation, be untrue to Yahweh, and form an alliance with His enemies. It were better for James to legislate for his own nation, than to enmesh the Gentiles in man-made restrictions.

In the realm of spirit all of these prohibitions are unnecessary, so they are repealed. They accord with a ritual, a religion, which was only a shadow. We have the substance, in Christ. In Israel the form of worship was of divine appointment, but what profit is there in that if its meaning is not apprehended? God is spirit, and must be worshiped in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). The divine ritual symbolized Christ and His glories. Instead of leading them to Christ, these ceremonies actually barred the way. So also, they reckoned the blood of animals too holy for use, yet counted the blood of Christ a common thing and refused God's estimate of its value. They refuse to eat the flesh of a strangled animal, yet seek to maintain their spirits on the strangled corpse of formalism.

The believers among the nations had already fulfilled the spirit of these prohibitions. They had broken with

idols, they had perfectly acknowledged the peerless power of Christ's precious blood, they did not subsist on lifeless forms, they were intensely true to God. Since, then, they had the reality, why revert to the shadow, as though that were more vital than the substance? This is what Paul warns us against in his Colossian epistle. "If, then, you die together with Christ from the elements of the world, why, as living in the world, are you subject to decrees . . . in accord with the directions and teachings of human beings, which are, (having indeed an expression of wisdom in a willful ritual and humility and asceticism) not of any value against the surfeiting of the flesh" (Col.2:20-23).

The curtain, the doors, and the courts of the temple were all indications of distance from Yahweh. The nearness of the Circumcision was only a comparative one. The high priest was nearest, for he went into the holy of holies once a year. The priests were nearer than the men of Israel, who could not enter the inner courts. Yet all of these were near, compared to the Gentile who was shut out of the sanctuary altogether. In Herod's temple magnificent cloisters were built especially for the nations, but these were not in the divine plan of the holy places. They did not rightly belong to the sanctuary.

We have already described the "soreg," the "middle wall of partition," inside of which a Gentile dare not go. No better sign of the dissolution of the antagonism between Jew and Gentile could be imagined than the demolition of this wall. As a matter of fact, it was still standing when this epistle was penned by Paul. It was gone only *in spirit.* But a few years later witnessed its fulfillment as to fact. Although, at the siege of Jerusalem, both the Jews and Titus used every precaution to keep the temple from harm, an unseen Hand seemed to insist on its destruction. Before the sacred edifice was wholly consumed by the flames, Titus entered the holy of holies, an alien, and a conqueror. After the siege

was over he had all of the walls leveled with the ground.

To most of us this scene is among the saddest in the history of mankind. But the anointed eye can see beneath the heap of ruins the gladdest truth the nations will ever know. Access to the temple site was no longer obstructed by walls or any intervening barrier. So now, Jew or *Goyim* may go direct into the divine Presence, by His spirit. The way is open for men of every race and people and nation! In this economy Paul will have no trouble in bringing Tychicus past the place where the "soreg" was, for it is gone. He was imprisoned for supposedly doing it. In a very different sense he was imprisoned for [in order to be] doing it. He could not bring Trophimus near in flesh, but he can bring Tychicus very near in spirit (*cf* Acts 20:4, 21:29, Eph.6:21).

THE NEW HUMANITY

We are now given the reason for the breaking down of the "soreg," and the abrogation of the decrees. These were based on schisms in the old, or Adamic, humanity, the old creation, in which there are many divisions, especially Circumcision and Uncircumcision. Now there is a new race, "wherein there is no Greek and Jew, Circumcision and Uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman, but all and in all is Christ" (Col.3:11). We are no longer in Adam, but in Christ.

The teaching of the new humanity is of paramount importance in this administration, but it has been lost to us in the confusion of translation and interpretation. The new "man" has been generally explained as a new "nature" or else confounded with the "body" of Christ. English lacks a constant equivalent for the Greek *anthrōpos,* human. It is usually rendered "man," the same as *anêr,* man, not a woman. The best that seems possible at present is to use *mankind* and *humanity* when feasible, and seek to introduce *human* when possible. Meanwhile, let us note that

Christ does not make peace with the Circumcision by giving us a "new nature" or putting us in the body. He does this by creating a new humanity, in which the old animosities are absent.

There is a double sense in which this humanity is *new.* It is *neos,* YOUNG, fresh and vigorous (Col.3:10, *cf* John 21:18). It is *kainos,* NEW, novel, different (Eph.2:15; 4:24). It is in constant contrast to the old humanity, in Adam. The old humanity was created innocent, but soon was corrupted in accord with its seductive desires (Eph.4:22). The new humanity is created in righteousness and benignity of truth (Eph.4:24). Over seven thousand years have shown the incorrigibility of the Adamic race. Peace is impossible between its antagonistic elements. The more it is proposed the less it is practiced. There is no hope of ever uniting its discordant fragments into a united and pacific people.

The old humanity is shattered into many warring fragments. Rationalism and religion, covenant privileges, the place of residence and accident of race, liberty and servitude—these divide it into irreconcilable factions. The new humanity is one. It is not divided. The Greek had his philosophy, the Jew his religion. But Christ is *our* Wisdom. In Him we outstrip the highest ideals of the Greek intellect. And Christ is *our* religion. Every shadow of their ceremonies was cast by Him. We are complete in Him (Col.2:10). The Circumcision had a covenant with Yahweh. *We* have much more *in Christ.* The Uncircumcision were shut out from Him. But now they are the true Circumcision (Phil. 3:3), through His cross. Language and race, the potent sources of prejudice and warfare in the old humanity, lose their baneful influence in Christ. It is only as we fail to put on the new humanity that these divisions disturb our fellowship with other saints.

As we look down the vista of earth's history, we may note the entrance of these five disrupting features and the

reason for their appearance. Each is the outcome of some form of sin. The curse of Canaan, Noah's son, brought bondage (Gen.9:25). At Babel, languages appeared and mankind was separated and sent into various areas of the earth (Gen.10:25; 11:8). To save the world from sin, Abraham is called and Israel separated (Gen.17:1-14; Exodus 19:5,6). To one was given the sign of circumcision, to the other a divine ritual. Thus, gradually, the "old man" disintegrates. There are continual efforts at racial unity, but they lead only to further division. Not so in Christ. All are one in Him. All of those divisions are founded on the flesh. The new humanity is a spiritual unity which never can be marred.

Lest we should lose the special blessing here unfolded by merging it into that of our relationship to Christ as His spiritual *body,* we wish to emphasize the difference in the two images, the place of their occurrence, and the practical application. In one the figure is of a single human body. In the other it is that of a race of beings, including many individuals. The figure of the body, in Ephesians, is confined to those sections of the epistle which elaborate our special relationship to Christ as His joint body. The new humanity, however, is found only in those sections dealing with our joint participation with the saints. We are members of the body, no matter what our behavior. The conduct becoming the humanities, however, is compared with clothing, which can be put on or off. We are exhorted to divest ourselves of the old humanity and put on the new. This cannot be said of the figure of the body.

In the passage before us we are especially concerned with the old humanity as divided into two factions—Circumcision and Uncircumcision. The other divisions are ignored. It is these *two* which are created into one new humanity. *Both* are reconciled with God through the cross (Eph.2:15,16). *Both* now have the access, in one spirit to

the Father. In this part of the argument there is a return to the sacrificial system suggested by the blood. In the old humanity there was no sacrifice for the Uncircumcision. Israel might have a peace offering, but there was none for the nations. It is also blessedly true that Israel's sacrificial system had no place for the *cross.* There was blood and death, but the deeper suffering of the accursed tree was reserved for the great Antitype.

Who could have supposed that the blessings presaged by the sacrifices in Israel would come to them through the awful murder of their own Messiah? It was the leaders of the Circumcision who were especially guilty of the atrocious crime. Does not this rob them of all rights to its benefits? Does this not lower them beneath the level of the rest of mankind? Not content with His death, they cry "Crucify! Crucify!" well knowing that, according to the law, the curse of God was on the one who hung upon a tree. Morally, this one act nullified every advantage they claimed, every promise they possessed, and gave God a free hand to do as He saw fit.

The nations had no sacrifice, and, it seemed, they had no share in the great Sacrifice, the body adapted for Christ. That Christ died for all was a truth unknown and repugnant to the ritual of Israel. This was one of the disturbing differences between the Circumcision and Uncircumcision. God doubtless could have provided some lesser sacrifice for the aliens, but it pleased Him to reconcile them to Himself through the same body as that which brought the Circumcision nigh. There were not two bodies, one for the nations and one for Israel. There is one Christ, and His body serves for all. (There is no reference here to the figurative body of which we are members. We are not a means of reconciliation.) Since the same Christ, the same Sacrifice, the one body, sufficed for us as for them, we are both equally at peace with God and with one another.

When they killed Christ they also killed the enmity between themselves and the Uncircumcision (Eph.2:16).

The mystery or secret of the evangel is conciliation or peace on God's part toward all mankind. That is the evangel of peace figured by the sandals in the panoply provided in the last part of Ephesians (6:15). Here, however, the context throws a special coloring on the phrase. It is not God's attitude of peace toward the world, but peace between those who have access, in spirit, into God's presence. Once we were afar off and the Circumcision were near. Now both are brought near by the blood of Christ, and, as a result there is an evangel of peace to both, declaring the enmity between them to be at an end. Physically, there is no change, but the flesh is ruled out. In spirit, through Christ, Jew and Gentile may walk, with clasped hands, not merely beyond the "soreg," not only into the court of the priests, but into the temple itself, yea, into the holy of holies, into the very presence of the Father.

BARRIERS BROKEN DOWN

Now that, in spirit, the barriers have been removed which separated the nations, not only from God's presence, but from those privileges which the Circumcision alone could claim, what is our relationship to the saints of other eras and economies? We have been considering an election out of Israel joined with believers out of the nations to form a distinct and hitherto unrevealed company. Yet, as there is but one God, Who has but one Christ, Who is Lord of all, it must follow that the relations of saints to Him will bring about mutual relations to each other. The term "saints," or holy ones, is not confined to any company or administration. It is universal in its scope, including all who are hallowed by relationship with God, all whom He has set apart for Himself. It should never be used in a restrictive sense. All who are holy are saints.

This aspect of the mystery is presented under three figures: a government, a family, and a temple (Eph.2:19). All saints, of all time, no matter what their peculiar blessings are, no matter what their eonian privileges and destiny, stand in some relation to God's kingdom, His family, and His dwelling place. These figures are by no means confined to the administration of the mystery. They are not at all characteristic of it. In fact, the kingdom and the temple are far more prominent in relation to the terrestrial blessings of the Circumcision. Just as the point of the mystery does not lie in the figure of the body, but in the prefixed "joint," so here the figures used are not new, but our changed relation to them is the burden of the passage.

The tendency, in studying the mystery, is to cut loose from all previous revelation and all other saints. But a little reflection will show that we must bear some relation to others, notwithstanding the exalted nature of our own destiny. This treatise would hardly be complete without setting forth the points of contact which we have with others who are the subjects of God's redeeming love. They belong to God's kingdom. So do we. They are in God's family. So are we. They are indwelt by Him. We also are God's temple. In these things we are not severed from them, but associated with them. It is intolerable to imagine the body of Christ isolated in solitary and frigid splendor, too exclusive to acknowledge the hallowed of other times, and denying all relationship to them. One great love embraces us all. One Christ died for all. One spirit animates all.

These are spiritual realities. In Israel they were shadowed by physical facts. Their citizenship, their family, their temple were but parables of the true. They were terrestrial models of celestial realities. God's real temple is in the spirits of His people. His family is limited to His believing saints. His kingdom embraces all who obey Him. We were excluded from association with the physical counterparts

of the true. We are included in the spiritual realities. We were aliens, guests, sojourners. Now we are not only citizens, but *fellow* (or joint) citizens. We had no access to the temple on mount Moriah. Now we are one of the temple buildings. Then the nations could not go into the courts of the sanctuary. Now they cannot get out of the temple. The contrast is between the physical disabilities of the era preceding the present (Eph.2:11,12) and the spiritual privileges brought about by Christ as our Peace.

FELLOW CITIZENS

For brevity's sake the term "kingdom" is often used in a restricted sense of the millennial rule of Christ, or it may also include the succeeding reign in the eon of the eons. But the kingdom of God is really a much wider thought. In the Ephesian epistle Paul does not hesitate to warn certain sinners that such have no allotment "in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph.5:5). The three figures used merely separate God's relationship to His saints into its political, social, and religious aspects. All the saints are subject to God, are His dependents, and worship Him. Even now we are in the kingdom of the Son of His love (Col.1:13). Not all who are subject to a sovereign are citizens. They may be slaves. They may be temporary residents from another realm. This was the case with the nations in the preceding era. They were sojourners.

But the point here is not merely that we have become citizens. These may be of various grades and privileges. A child is a citizen, yet does not function as such, nor does it possess the privileges attached to maturity. In ancient states citizenship was usually graded into various ranks, so that there were no joint citizens. This implies that all privileges are shared alike, that none have rights or horrors above the rest. If, for instance, a nation should be invited to share the citizenship of Israel in the millennium,

it would need to be in some subordinate sense, without the full power of the sacred people. The question is, now that we are one with an election out of Israel in the celestial realms, are we, as Gentiles, to be inferior to them, or of equal rank? The answer is, we are *fellow*-citizens.

In our case alone do Gentiles come into full political privileges in the kingdom of God. A little reflection will show how impossible this would be in the millennium. The nations there are ruled by Israel. To give them the political power of that nation would practically take all government out of Israel's hands and utterly wreck the whole character and purpose of that administration. The saints among the nations in the millennium can never be fellow-citizens. We receive a much higher place than they. No such disability operates in our case. The Israelites in the body of Christ do not rule over the Gentiles. Both rule over the universe, under the headship of Christ. Hence both have equal political privileges. The nations are *fellow*-citizens.

There was a time when the Circumcision attempted to assert their political prestige over the believers among the nations. James, who had obtained the leadership because he was the blood brother of our Lord, formulated a decree, ostensibly to keep the Circumcisionists from imposing circumcision on the nations, yet in reality laying down the law to them as though he had authority over them (Acts 15:1-29). One of the tokens of our present position is the repeal of these decrees. The Circumcision, as a class, has no more right to formulate decrees for us than we have to decide their conduct. We are now fellow-citizens.

MEMBERS OF GOD'S FAMILY

In the ancient language of inspiration the words *guest* and *stranger* were practically synonymous. As there were very few inns, a foreigner was compelled to be the guest of some family almost everywhere he went. Trophimus,

in Jerusalem, was a stranger and a guest. This figured the relation of the nations to the promise covenants and to the family of Israel. Now we are connected with a new covenant, not of the letter but of the spirit (2 Cor.3:6), and a new family, not physical but spiritual, in which we may claim all the privileges of membership. The Syrophoenician woman was not allowed a seat at the table. She was but a puppy. If she had lived in this economy she would not need to ask for crumbs. Though a Gentile, she could demand all that belongs to the family circle.

God is Spirit. Those who are joined to Him are one spirit. He is the Father of spirits. His family is a spiritual one. When Israel rejected His spirit and the nations attended to His words, did they receive a different or lower spirit than the elect in Israel? They received the same spirit. This brought them into the same spiritual relationship to God as they. Physical hindrances hindered the acknowledgment of this great truth hitherto. Now that physical distinctions are gone, it shines out in all its effulgence. God is our Father just as really as He is theirs!

Eden knew no temple. Adam knew no shrine. God walked and talked with him out in the garden in which he dwelt. So also in the holy city, new Jerusalem. There will be no temple in it (Rev.21:22). But in between, during the sway of sin, God withdraws into a building of His own where the defilement of sin cannot come, and where it is fended by the blood. None of the literal temples were accessible to Gentiles. They were shut out. Now, however, that there is no temple at Jerusalem, God dwells in His saints, both individually and as a class. Once more the question arises, in this figurative temple, have we as close a place as the Circumcision, or are they the temple building and we the outside court? The answer is found in the phrases "connected together" and "built together" (Eph.2:21,22).

The word "together," in these two phrases, is the same

as the word *joint,* or *fellow,* in the statement of the mystery. They are elaborations of its third item, that we are *joint partakers.* They refer particularly to the fact that we rank equally with the election out of Israel who believe during this present secret administration. The place accorded them in this temple is ours, just as the allotment described in the first twelve verses of chapter one, though primarily theirs, is ours. The reason is the same. We have received the same spirit.

Moreover, the Greek word represented by "being connected together" is the same as that used later of the body—"being articulated together" (Eph.4:16). These are the only two occurrences. The figures are very diverse, and should not be confused. A human body is quite different in structure and composition from a temple. In this place the body is used to illustrate our growth as related to the Head, and our unity. The temple presents an entirely different aspect. It sees us as God's abode, yet it also presses the idea of unity. Both body and temple are composed of two hitherto jarring elements, the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision, and these are TOGETHER-CONNECT-LAID, as the Greek has it, or "fitly joined together," as the Authorized Version puts it.

But there is a vast distinction to be observed between these two figures. The body is used only and exclusively of the celestial allotment, while the temple is used of the terrestrial also. Peter assures the dispersion that they are being built a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5). God dwells in all His saints, not merely in those who are the body of Christ. The figure here is all-embracing, and includes all saints, just as the figure of the family and the kingdom included all. We have the same Capstone, Christ Jesus, as the Circumcision on the earth. In plain language, God's Spirit indwells us both through Christ. However diverse may be our destiny and our function, this connects us together.

There is a double union here. First, with the elect of the Circumcision who are in the body and also with those who are without. Alone we do not form this temple.

In the laudable endeavor to make everything in the Ephesian epistle something new and unknown before, without reference to the argument or context, it is often claimed that these apostles and prophets must be confined to "new testament prophets" and Pauline apostles, for only these are in the foundation of "the church." The looseness of our phraseology is costing us much precious truth. This passage does not deal with the church, which, by the way, is by no means a divine title for the present grace. It is not dealing with the "body." It is dealing with us as *joint partakers* with others. It is illustrating our relation to saints of other times under the figure of a *temple.* This temple, including us, is founded on *all* the apostles and *all* the prophets. *In this aspect,* as part of the dwelling place of God, we may well acknowledge the prophets of old and the apostles of our Lord, as well as those which are associated with our own peculiar grace.

This concludes the discussion of the third item of the secret. That we are joint allottees was first set forth. Then we were made members of the joint body. Now we are joint partakers. After being reminded of the fleshly disabilities of the Uncircumcision, being political, social, and religious inferiors in the divine administration which followed Pentecost, notwithstanding our spiritual blessings, our whole relationship to other saints is revolutionized and raised to full equality by the introduction of a new economy in which *spirit,* and not flesh, is dominant. Christ Jesus breaks down the barriers, abolishes the decrees, creates a new humanity. We become the peers of the Circumcision in the kingdom—fellow-citizens. We are members of God's family. We are an integral portion of the holy temple in which God dwells. In all these we are *joint partakers.*

A. E. Knoch

THE LIVING GOD AND THE EONS

In the providence of God, concerning all terms of consequence, the sacred writings provide their own internal evidence which establishes the significance of their vocabulary terms and grammatical forms.

Many important passages, however, are nonetheless not definitive passages. For example, in themselves, those passages which refer to the life which pertains to God's people, or to the duration of certain adversative judgments, simply are not definitive. This is because perfectly conceivable ideas may be represented by both "eonian" and "everlasting." Whether these should be foreign or familiar to our traditions is altogether irrelevant.

In the majority of instances, words are not used definitively. A passage may be vital, but that has nothing to do with whether its key terms are used definitively. For example, the words of Romans 3:24 are of the greatest importance to us, for they lie at the heart of the gospel: "Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance, the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus." But what does it mean to be *justified?* What does it mean for something to occur *gratuitously?* What significance is there to the fact that this gratuitous justification (whatever that may be) occurs in God's *grace?* The passage itself will not inform us.

We must learn the force of each of these terms from other places. For example, "justify" appears definitively in passages such as Luke 7:29 and Romans 3:4, "gratuitously" in John 15:25 and 2 Thessalonians 3:8, and "grace" in Romans 4:4 and 11:6.

It is through such passages as these latter ones that we determine the meaning of these key expressions. We then carry the knowledge we have gained concerning the meaning of these words into our considerations of Romans 3:24. Before we read it, we already know what each of these terms mean, and only wish to note their particular usage in the passage at hand. There is no other way to be certain of the meaning of a word whenever it appears (as is often the case) in a passage that is less than definitive. In many texts it is possible to assign any one of several ideas to a term and still express a conceivable thought through the clause in which it is found. But this is only to speculate; it is not to know. We are not to guess; we are to believe. Yet we cannot know what to believe if we do not know what has been said.

It is popularly believed that many words have two or more meanings. Actually, however, this is not the case. In any certain instance, according to its usage, a word may indeed convey a special *connotation,* one which is not present in other passages in which it is found. Yet no such specialized usage—even in the slightest degree—changes a word's essence, its *denotation* or basic meaning.

Within any certain era, those words which come into common use during such a period (or already exist at its beginning) cannot possibly *denote* more than one idea, even if they should soon find themselves being employed in a multiplicity of special applications. Otherwise, communication (much less translation), except for perhaps a few well-placed grunts, would be impossible and vanish from the face of the earth.

A "word," then, is simply a linguistic form which is used to communicate an idea, a form which, by itself, is capable of conveying an unmistakable thought. Strictly speaking, a "*word*" (apart from homonyms) is "a linguistic form

that can meaningfully be spoken *in isolation.*"[1]

Dictionary definitions of a word's *usage* must be distinguished from a word's own definition, its *meaning,* which distinguishes it from other expressions. Since many *derived usages* necessarily enter into popular speech in reference to new applications or objects, most people hazily and mistakenly refer to such usages (which, in turn, become dictionary "definitions") as "different meanings." Nonetheless, whether we speak of a dining room table, a multiplication table, a desert table (a mesa or plateau) or tabling (postponing) a project, the meaning of "table" (viz., "a flat horizontal surface") *never changes.*

This principle, then, must be true concerning the word *aiōn* as well. Therefore, while all scriptural passages in which some form of *aiōn* is found are either definitive or indefinitive, none of them present any essential different meaning than the rest. As we shall see, the idea of an "eon," or of that which is in some way eonian, is always present in any of the definitive usages of this word. None of the definitive occurrences of *aiōn* can sensibly be conceived as signifying "that which has no end."

THE MEANING OF "EON"

We have been asked to give a simple explanation concerning the word "eon." Basically, an eon (or age) is simply a *period* of time; in most cases, it is used of a very long period of time. Being a period, it has a beginning and an end.

The Scriptures make reference to five notable eons—five epochal periods—which are determined, or marked off, by exceptionally extraordinary occurrences, tremendous upheavals in the established order. They run their course, (1) from the beginning of creation to a great cos-

1. FUNK AND WAGNALLS STANDARD COLLEGE DICTIONARY, The Reader's Digest Association (1966), p.1547.

mological *disruption* (evidently of a geological nature though occasioned by moral disruption or sin); (2) from the disruption of the world to the great flood; (3) from the flood to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom on earth (which includes the present era, necessitated by the Pauline evangel which unfolds the untraceable riches of Christ for the nations); (4) from the establishment of the terrestrial kingdom (primarily the thousand years or "millennium") to the destruction of the earth by fire; and (5) from the creation of the new earth to "the consummation" revealed by the apostle Paul.[2]

After the consummation of vivification and of the eonian times which are revealed in Scripture, the kingdom of the Son of the Most High will continue on, never ceasing, for "of His kingdom there shall be *no* consummation" (Luke 1:33b). The Scriptures do not reveal any certain events during the endlessness which follows the time when God becomes All in all. Long periods of time may well be marked off by notable events and termed eons, but any such things are not revealed to us now.

Christ's literal rule will be so effective as to "rule out" all rule. None will be needed, for all will be subject, vivified, headed up in Christ and reconciled. The term "kingdom" will be retained, not because He is still finding it necessary to rule those who are in subjection, but, by association, in honor of what was accomplished and permanently established as a result of His literal reign until the time when He gave up the kingdom to His God and Father.

"Eonian" simply means "of or pertaining to, the eons [or eon]." In the Scriptures, the "eonian times" are from "the beginning" to "the consummation." The meaning of "eon" and "eonian" never change, even though they are sometimes used in different senses and in reference to more than one subject. *Aiōnios* never *means* "age-*lasting*," and so should not be translated thus, even though *some* of its occurrences are in accord with this thought (others are not, only making reference to a portion of an eon). In most cases, it is "the oncoming eons" (Eph.2:7) which are in view. Some passages refer directly to the periods of time themselves; others, by association, have in view the *character* or nature of things which will prevail during the periods being discussed. God has various operations (economies or administrations) during the eons for the accomplishment of His goals, all leading to the greatest one of all, becoming All in all at the consummation.

2. *cf* "Eternal Torment or Universal Reconciliation?" pp.25-28, A. E. Knoch.

DEFINITIVE EONIAN PASSAGES

The following are a few representative examples of passages in which the Hebrew *olam,* and its Greek equivalents, *aiōn* and *aiōnios,* are definitively used in the Scriptures: "Yahweh, He shall reign for the eon *and further*" (Exodus 15:18); "the earth is standing for the eon" (Ecc. 1:4); a statute "for Aaron and for his sons, . . . it is an eonian statute" (Lev.24:9); "Across the Stream your fathers dwelt from the eon of old" (Joshua 24:2); "I took account of . . . the years of the eons" (Psa.77:5); "before the eons" (1 Cor. 2:7); "before times eonian" (2 Tim.1:9); "a secret hushed in times eonian, yet manifested now" (Rom.16:25, 26); "the present wicked eon" (Gal.1:4); "the current eon" (1 Tim. 6:17); "the eon of this world" (Eph.2:2); "this eon" (Matt. 12:32); "that eon" (Luke 20:35); "the coming eon" (Mark 10:30); "the oncoming eons" (Eph.2:7); "the conclusion of the eon" (Matt.24: 3); "the conclusion of the eons" (Heb. 9:26); and "the consummations of the eons" (1 Cor.10:11).

Thus we can be certain that "eon" means a period of time; it is the longest segment of time known in the Scrip-

tures. It is not used to speak of endless time, or of any foggy philosophical speculations about "eternity."

HE WHO IS LIVING FOR THE EONS

Likewise, concerning God's living "for the eons" (Rev.4: 9,10; 10:6; 15:7), it is only because this expression is unfamiliar to us that it seems awkward or difficult. A parallel familiar expression should make this evident. Were we to declare that the living God *is* living *today,* this would be found quite acceptable. It becomes evident, then, that it is just as sensible (even if most are not familiar with the expression) to declare that He *will* be living *tomorrow,* namely, in the glorious scriptural morrow of the oncoming eons. The fact that He Who is living during this current era will also be living "for" (actually, *"into," eis*) the eons of time ahead, constitutes a further word of assurance concerning His providential care during these future long eras of time.

It is to be regretted that the hazy English "for" can be misused in connection with the eons. The literal rendering "into," in such cases, however, would unduly strain English idiom. Opposers imprudently couple "for" with their own gratuitous inference "*only* (for)" in order to "disprove" the meaning of *aiōn* as "eon." This is done in order to make the meaning *eon* appear to be obviously mistaken with regard to the revelation that God is living *eis tous aiōnas tōn aiōnōn* ("for the eons of the eons," CV). The Authorized Version rendering, "God, Who *liveth* for ever and ever," adds to the confusion, and lends support to the popular misunderstanding. For it makes the reference appear to be to the length of God's life, when it instead is a reference to a *particular* time during which God will be *living* ("God, Who is *living* for the eons of the eons," CV).

Inasmuch as the word *aiōn* appears in both classes of passages, crude reasonings from the usual mistranslations of those passages which interconnect God, or Christ (Rev.1:18), a form of the word "life," and the word *aiōn,* are routinely set forth as clear proof in favor of "everlasting (*aiōnion*) punishment" (e.g., Matt.25:46). That is, since God "liveth for ever and ever," and it is felt that the thought here must be that His life never ends, it is concluded that the punishment of the lost must likewise be endless, since the same Greek word is used concerning these respective revelations.

This conclusion, however, is based on mistaken premises, ones which are derived from false inferences and mistranslation: (1) the injecting of "only (for)" into "for" (in relation to the phrase "for the eons") while failing to note the literal "into"; (2) the AV mistranslation "liveth" ("lives" in modern English) instead of the correct form "is living"; (3) the gross mistranslation "for ever and ever" instead of the accurate rendering "for the eons of the eons."

Whenever we read the expression "*for* the eons," we should always keep in mind the actual literal idea of *into.* That is, God *will* be living on, *into* those eras of time, in order that He should be living *within* or *during* those time periods as well, even as He *is* living within or during these present hectic times, when we need Him so much.

The fact that I lived during the nineteen seventies is no proof that I now am dead in the nineteen eighties! And if I should say that I *am* living in the *year* 1988, and that, the Lord willing, I *shall* be living on into the *year* 1989, this would give no license to any of those who might translate my words into another language to make a claim, and so translate, to the effect that while in one case where I used the word "year" I actually meant a year, while in another place where I used this same word I did not mean a year at all (even if I did say so!).

Yet this is just the sort of thing that most translators of the Scriptures have done with the words in the Original

for "eon." Most simply lacked the insight to see the point of many of the passages that spoke of the *eons.* Since they were able, however, to make sense of these passages by translating by "everlasting" or "eternal," they simply went ahead and did so, any resultant problems notwithstanding. Due to a lack of sensible thinking and an abundance of confidence in the flesh, it is impossible for most to face the fact that the usual translations of this word are quite mistaken and extremely harmful.

We believe that God's life will never end, not because of any passages in reference to Him which include the word "eon," but because it is written that His "years shall not come to end" (Psa.102:27). Furthermore, since God is the Source of all life, and since, at the consummation, all will be gloriously made alive so that He may become All in each one, it is evident that He must ever have life Himself in order to impart it to His creatures.

As the Lord declared, "Seeing that I am living, you also will be living" (John 14:19). In light of the fearful nature of the terrible judgments in the Revelation, one might infer that all hope is lost. But this is not the case at all. For the living God, Who is living today, will be *living* on as well into the coming eons! The fact that He is said to be *living,* at any time, is not declared in order merely to inform us that He still exists, but is a lively figure of association designed to testify to His great power and subjectorship. He lives! He is the living God, and so is great and marvelous, strong to save, and "able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending" (Eph. 3:20). "We rely on the *living* God, Who is the *Saviour* of all human beings, especially of believers. These things be charging and teaching" (1 Tim.4:10,11).

THE EONIAN GOD

In light of these things, we may join Paul in saying,

"Wherefore we are not being despondent, but even if our outward human is decaying, nevertheless that within us is being renewed day by day. For the momentary lightness of our affliction is producing for us a transcedently transcedent eonian burden of glory, at our not noting what is being observed, but what is not being observed, for what is being observed is *temporary [proskairon,* TOWARD-SEASON], yet what is not being observed is *eonian*" (2 Cor. 4:16-18).

Paul is not making a contrast between time and eternity, as the Authorized Version's terms "temporal" (pertaining to time, from the Latin *tempus*) and "eternal" would suggest. Antithetical terms are not the only ones which may be set in contrast to one another. Paul is contrasting this present lifetime, the present brief season in which we are afflicted, with the exceedingly long future *eons* in which we will enjoy a great burden of glory.

Our God and Father is the God of the eons, the eonian times or ages revealed in the Scriptures (this fact is reflected in the well-known hymns, "Rock of Ages," and, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," which includes the line, "From age to age the same"). The Greek word for "God," *Theos,* means *"Placer"* (or, "Subjector"; *cf* KEYWORD CONCORDANCE entry, p.127; e.g., 1 Cor.12:18,28). It is not His name, nor is it a reference to Him as the Creator of nature or as the heavenly Father. Instead, "God" is a title which represents the Deity as the Disposer, Subjector or Placer of all things (Acts 17:24,25).

It is not improper to accommodate custom and use the English word "God" when speaking of the Supreme. It is not so vital just which word we use as the idea we conceive whenever we use a certain word. God is the great Placer of men, nations, and the entire world during the eonian times. Consequently, He is the *eonian* God (Rom.16:26).

Thoughts along these lines are in view in those passages in which God is identified with the eons.

By the consummation, all will have been placed by Him into such conditions as have been best and for the good of all. Then there will be no more need for authority and government. Rule will be ruled out; all will be ideal, for the living God will be All in all. James R. Coram

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THE MYSTERIOUS MYSTERY

THE marvelous truth of the "mystery" is set forth in Paul's Ephesian epistle. This letter is an orderly discussion of the new revelation and its relation to previously revealed truth. The only safe way to acquire a knowledge of present truth is to follow its arguments and acquiesce in its deductions. But this is not the usual method. It seems to suit us better to do our own reasoning. So we find most expositions about this secret administration a series of inferences based on the nebulous idea that the mystery is an absolutely new teaching with no relation whatever to what has gone before. The third item of the secret distinctly states that Paul's previous evangel is incorporated into it, yet the usual inference from the word "mystery" is that all the past is practically blotted out.

We must first know what the mystery really is before beginning to reason about it. Unfortunately, hardly anyone takes sufficient pains to inform himself accurately, and most of the arguments on the subject are nullified the moment we define the secret itself. As we have given a full definition of its terms in our booklet "To Enlighten all as to The Secret" we will only repeat it briefly here. It is that, "*in spirit, the nations are to be joint enjoyers of an allotment, and a joint body, and joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which I [Paul] became the dispenser . . .*" (Eph.3:4-7).

At this time we wish to emphasize only one feature, the *channel* through which the mystery comes to us. It is the evangel Paul had preached. Any argument which does away with Paul's previous evangel on the score that it was not "hidden in God," is only a denial of the mystery itself. The only part of the mystery which was secret is found in the thrice repeated "joint." The nations had an allotment before, they were in the body of Christ before, they had been partakers before. Paul's evangel, as set forth in his previous preparatory epistles, is the *channel* through which we receive the blessings of this secret administration. A. E. Knoch

JUSTIFIED OUT OF CHRIST'S FAITH

We are believing on God Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead ones—Jesus our Lord Who is given up because of our offenses, and is roused because of our justifying (Rom.4:24,25).

Justified, then, out of His **faith, we may be having peace toward ˙God, through our ˙Lord, Jesus Christ** (Rom.5:1).

The revised CV of Romans 5:1 as presented above inserts a lightface "His" before **faith**. Two other changes from the CLNT, the use of the simple passive "Justified" rather than "Being justified," and the more direct "out" rather than "by" with a superior "o" call for explanation, but the insertion of "His," indicating that our Lord's faith is in view rather than the believer's faith needs special attention.

The usual (and mostly unchallenged) understanding is that Paul refers to the faith of those who are believing God's evangel concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as in 4:24. However, the more attentive listener to Romans 4:24,25 will see this resurrection as *God's* rousing of our Lord, and even a few will discern that this rousing is *because* of our justifying which occurs in God's giving up of Jesus our Lord to death. Furthermore, in God's grace, some will be enabled to go so far in joy and peace to take God's giving up of His Son to death as the manifestation of God's righteousness in the justification of all sinners, and this by means of Christ's faith and obedience to the death of the cross (Rom.3:21-24; Phil.2:6-8), and not by means of our faith. Hence it is seen that God's

righteousness is displayed in His giving up of Jesus our Lord to the curse of being hung up on a "tree" as a criminal (Gal.3:13). The giving up of His Son to death is for the display of God's righteousness in justifying each and every human sinner—and this (we note again) is by means of (fully sourced in) Jesus's faith!

If we have gone this far in following what Paul is saying as Jesus Christ's slave and a called apostle, who is severed for this evangel of God—if we see what God's rousing of His Son from among the billions who are still dead signifies and guarantees, that is, a completed justification of all and all the wrongs we do and evils we suffer—if we see that this victory in the death of Christ is victory over death and sin which is achieved by means of Jesus Christ's faith (and faithfulness to that faith)—then is it possible for us not to take our apostle as speaking of our faith in the opening line of Romans 5? It does not seem possible. For how much peace toward God can we have if our justification rests on our faith?

Paul speaks here of justification, of righteousification, not of being accounted righteous, but (in view of what happened on Golgotha and in anticipation of its full and certain application and realization in the future) of being constituted righteous, and that is by means of God's giving up of His Son to the suffering and death of the cross. Our faith is the believing of Christ's faith. We must ever be wary of putting ourselves in places where the scripture speaks of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

WHY DEATH?

Death is not life. It is the very opposite. Death is not life, but rather separation from life. (We can be sinners in our thoughts and understanding as well as our acts.) The fact that Christ is given up to death is primary and critical to our appreciation of God's evangel. In that nearly two

thousand years ago, Christ dies (as an act of love) all die (proleptically) in that death (2 Cor.5:14).

But Christ Himself (now roused from among the dead) is no longer dying (Rom.6:9). His emptying of Himself and coming in the likeness of human flesh, able to die, and then actually dying (actually failing to stay alive, actually being made a Sin Offering which is called simply "Sin") that is in the past. That condition no longer exists, nor can it exist again. What Christ became is annihilated. But that is not all that is now true. All that Christ suffered and all that He endured in expectation and in love, and in faith in His God and Father, is justified. The Sin of it all is made righteous. It is righteousified by its results, for by its means death (and its sting of sin, 1 Cor.15:55) are doomed to extinction, and all will perceive and rejoice in the righteousness of God (along with His wisdom, power and love).

But as for the present we who are endowed with some measure of faith in believing some measure (the more we are given, the better) of the truth of Christ's death and significance of His resurrection may be enjoying peace toward God.

THE FACT AND ITS ORIGIN

The faith that secures justification has been carried out without shrinking (*cf* Heb.10:38) and without any tinge of doubt (*cf* Rom.4:20). This occurred nearly two thousand years ago. Its glorious results, however, have not been delivered (Eph.1:14) except as they vibrate in spirit (*cf* Gen.1:2) in those who are believing this evangel of the manifestation of God's righteousness in the vindication of all that He does and the justifying of all He creates in and through the Son (*cf* Co.1:16-20).

Thus now Paul speaks of justification as a settled fact, using an aorist passive participle: *justified.* What Jesus Christ our Lord has procured is reckoned to us even now

before it is delivered. It is not procured by our faith, but by His in being given up because of our offenses. It is because it rests on His faith and not ours that we may be having peace toward God.

The means is expressed here by the preposition *out.* Justification is procured out of faith—that is, originating out of God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord's faith. This was promised before (*cf* Rom.1:2) through God's prophet Habakkuk in words which even he did not seem to understand: "Now the Righteous One, out of faith shall He be living." (Hab. 2:4, as cited in Rom.1:17, Gal.3:11 and Heb.10:38).

The source of the revelations of God's righteousness in the justification of sinners is the faith of the Righteous One.

Again this has been brought before us in Romans 3:26 where Paul speaks of the display of God's righteousness in the current era, "For Him to be righteous and a Justifier of the human out of Jesus's faith."

THE CHANNEL OF JUSTIFICATION AND PEACE

As previously noted, Paul uses the preposition "through" instead of "out" in many places to relate justification and other aspects of salvation to the faith of Christ. Heading these passages is Romans 3:21-24 where we read: "Yet now God's righteousness has been made manifest *through Jesus Christ's faith* for all . . . For all sin and are wanting of the glory of God, *being justified* gratuitously in His grace, *through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus*" (*cf* Gal. 2:16). So also the phrase "through" our Lord Jesus Christ" in Romans 5:1 which parallels "out of [His] faith," directs our minds and hearts to the faith of our Lord in being given up and dying for our sake. This is the channel of the enjoyment of peace toward God as it is the source and channel of justification—not our faith, but His faith in dying for our sakes, which is the evangel Paul brings here *for* our faith and peace. D.H.H.

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FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 115th Year

(1909–2024)

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 The Secret of Christ and the Dimensions of His Love
109 Love Transcendent
120 Choice and Deity
128 God's Righteous Love

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EDITORIAL

In his opening "Meditation" on the third chapter of Ephesians A. E. Knoch observes that "we have two separate secrets in this chapter" (p.100). There is the "Secret of Christ," which was briefly introduced in the first chapter, that God purposes, in Christ, "to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth" (Eph.1:9,10). And then there is the "Ephesian Secret" which tells of a joint allotment of the chosen out of the nations with those out of Israel, in a joint body as joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus (Eph.3:6).

"The channel through which [this latter secret] comes to us is the evangel which Paul had previously dispensed (Eph.3:7). It does not superexceed or displace this evangel ["God's evangel" as presented in Romans], but includes it. Justification and conciliation are the portals to the higher grace" (p.102).

I would add the word "basis" to the word "portals." God's evangel as it is expounded in Romans is not only the door to the "transcendent riches of [God's] grace" (Eph.2:7), but is the *foundation* of the untraceable riches of Christ being expounded in great length in Ephesians. For unless the righteousness and love of God in not sparing His own Son, but giving Him up for us all is made manifest as settled and true, what Paul says about the two secrets in Ephesians 3 cannot be appreciated and enjoyed with full assurance in joy and peace. Hence we discern two graces in Ephesians 2:7,8, "the transcendent riches of [God's] grace," and the grace in which we are "having been saved through [Christ Jesus's] faith."

It was A. E. Knoch who first noted in *Unsearchable Riches* that there were "two faiths" in view in Romans 1:17 (vol.7, p.266). This has been my focus for many years, being continued here on pages 129-144. In Romans 5 we see the faith of Jesus Christ clearly in His death for us (not only believers, but all human beings). While we are still infirm and living in accord with the era that begins with Adam, and still sinners, He gives Himself to the death of the cross. And once we see that Romans 3:21-28 tells of Jesus Christ's faith manifesting God's righteousness for the good of all, we are brought into a growing realization of God's evangel of love already before the plain words of Romans 5:8. Yet also once we see that there are two "alls" in Romans 3:22, "for *all* [human beings], and on all who are believing," we can see how fully and joyfully Romans 3 stands in harmony with Romans 5 and with the secrets of Ephesians.

Such distinguishing between two applications of one word accords with the purpose of this magazine as stated in the opening words of the first issue in August 1909! "It is with a sense of deep gratitude to God that we send forth the first number of this Magazine in the interest of a rightly apportioned Word." Of course what was in view was a distinguishing between the application of whole sections of Scripture from each other. But this principle certainly is beneficial with regard to the application of words.

It is also of great importance and benefit with regard to distinguishing the application of such major themes as "choice" and "will" as applied to the human and God. We see this in James Coram's article, "Choice and Deity" (pages 120-128). Hence our brother concludes: "We do not need any help from myths about free will and contrary choice to give us an incentive to obey. Rather, we have *the word of God* which is *operating* in us who are believing (1 Thess.2:13)."

D.H.H.

THE SECRET OF CHRIST AND THE DIMENSIONS OF HIS LOVE

PAUL is about to pray. He proposes to indite a petition for power to grasp the *transcendent dimensions of the love of Christ* (Eph.3:18,19). But he cannot proceed with his prayer until he has given, in breathless, hurried style, the ground on which his prayer is based. Twelve verses of the third chapter of Ephesians—from the second to the thirteenth inclusive—are a parenthetic prelude to the apostle's prayer. In them he gives a *summary of the grace* already set forth. This is, for us, one of the most vital and illuminating paragraphs in all the Word of God. It is a brief epitome of the Ephesian secret, and includes also a concise statement of the secret of Christ, which is the subject of our present meditation (Eph.3:3-5,8).

It is impossible to have a clear conception of the present secret administration without a special knowledge of the secret of Christ. This is why, before the apostle defines the subject which is on his heart, he inserts another parenthesis to acquaint us with this distinct, yet related mystery. The secret of Christ is in closest *accord* with the new revelation, but must never be confused with it. Perhaps nothing has done more to hinder the reception of present truth than the application of the phrase "*as* it is now revealed" (3:5) to the present *grace*, which was an absolute *secret* (3:2,9). How many have been on the verge of receiving the truth of the exclusiveness of Paul's ministry and then were turned aside by the little word "as," thinking it referred to the secret administration of the grace of

God! Some of the best expositors have never been able to explain its apparent contradiction.

Let us first of all quote that part of this passage which presents the secret of Christ, so as to keep it distinct. In the third verse the apostle says that a secret is made known to him by revelation, *(according as I write before, in brief, by which you who are reading are able to apprehend my understanding in the secret of the Christ, which, in other generations, is not made known to the sons of humanity as it is now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets).* Here we have a number of facts which show that he is not referring to the main subject, the secret administration. It is *according to* it, hence distinct from it. It had been referred to *briefly* (1:9,10), while the Ephesian secret, as we have seen, had been set forth at length. The secret of Christ is concerned with Christ Himself, not with His people. It was made known to other generations after a fashion, though not as it is now revealed. It was evidently made known to all the apostles and prophets. The Ephesian secret came only through Paul.

Any one of these five points is sufficient to show that we have two separate secrets in this chapter. The harmony between them, expressed by the words "according as" is a proof of their distinctiveness, not their identity. The fact that the secret of Christ had been widened in scope so as to include the heavens as well as the earth, brings it into full accord with the present grace, in which blessing is celestial.

The greater part of the first two chapters of Ephesians is taken up with an elaboration of its secret which is summarized in chapter three, verse 6. In contrast with this the secret of Christ is briefly stated within the compass of two verses, as follows: *". . . making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him) to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth"* 1:9,10). Two verses for the secret of Christ: two chapters for the Ephesian secret. Surely Paul did not write briefly of the secret administration, but he did give a most succinct account of the secret of Christ (. . . to head up all in the Christ).

This secret, so briefly set forth, is concerned with the headship of Christ, not with the blessings of His saints. Among the celestials we will be associated with Him in His administrations. But on earth we have no such place. He alone is Head, yea, He is Head over us also. The secret administration raises us to a place of *equality* with an election out of the Circumcision. But this secret raises Christ to a place *above* all others. It is not the secret of the body of Christ, but of our Lord Himself.

Long before there was any body of Christ God began to give glimpses of Messiah's headship over the earth. From the first promise of One Who was to bruise the serpent's head to the glorious visions of the prophets who foresaw the dominion of the King of kings, there was a continued advance in the revelation of this secret. From the mists of early intimations emerges God's promised Messiah, Adam's greater Son, and David's Lord, Who will resume the reins laid down by the father of the race and forfeited by Israel's kings. So was this secret made known to earlier generations. Now God has added the heavens to His realm, and has revealed Christ's heavenly headship to His apostles and prophets, especially to Paul.

Paul is not the exclusive recipient of the celestial side of Messiah's headship. Our Lord did not hide His heavenly character from His earthly disciples. He called them to Olivet to witness His ascension. The Circumcision are informed that He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens (Heb.1:3), and that messengers and authorities and powers were made subject to Him (1 Peter

3:22). Paul does not claim a monopoly of this knowledge or its dispensation. On the contrary, he is careful to inform us that it was made known to apostles and prophets, of which he was only one.

Following his brief allusion to the secret of Christ, the apostle gives us that short summary of the present secret administration to which we have so often appealed in seeking to clarify our thoughts on the subject. As this has been so fully treated in a previous article[1] we will do little more than quote it again, merely to emphasize the fact that it is *not* the secret of the preceding parenthesis. Condensing the unfoldings of the preceding chapters into one terse statement, it all comes to this, that, *in spirit, the nations are to be joint enjoyers of an allotment, and a joint body, and joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which Paul became the dispenser* (*cf* 3:6,7).

Contrast this with the secret of Christ. The point of the Ephesian secret lies in the word *joint.* Blessing for the nations has always been in view, even in choosing Israel to be its channel. But blessing apart from Israel, on an equality with the members of the chosen nation, was absolutely unknown and unknowable. No prophet ever hints at such a possibility. No apostle suggests it. It was not made known to apostles and prophets in any manner. Even Paul's previous ministry to the nations did not give the Gentiles this rank. Hence the Ephesian secret was absolute, not relative. It is made known only through Paul.

The channel through which it comes to us is the evangel which Paul had previously dispensed (*cf* 3:7). It does not supersede or displace this evangel, but includes it. Justification and conciliation are the portals to this higher grace. It is for those only who were made righteous and are reconciled. Paul was called and separated in order to

1. "Both Blessed Together in a Joint Body," vol.59, pages 147-160.

prepare a people for the reception of this secret, when the time should come for its revelation. It could not be received by any except those who had been made ready for it by means of the truth which had come through the apostle of the nations.

Paul calls himself less than the least of all saints (3:8). Let us not reduce this to a mere rhetorical gesture. His active opposition to Christ made him the most undeserving of favor. He brings it in that he may have a suitable background for the grace that he received. No one will dispute that he became the greatest of all, as measured by the favor bestowed upon him. He receives two gratuities which have no parallel in the annals of God's saints. He is to make known the untraceable riches of Christ to the nations. He is to enlighten all as to this secret administration of the grace of God (3:2,8,9).

THE UNTRACEABLE RICHES

The untraceable riches of Christ refer to His celestial headship. His traceable riches are those recorded in the writings of the prophets, concerning the rule of the earth. No trace is found in these of His reign in the heavens. These riches are not "unsearchable" in an absolute sense. They can be traced now. But they were kept *secret* until God should reveal His plans for the celestials, and make known the universal scope of His purpose. Other apostles made this known to the Jews. Paul was honored with the commission to make it known to the Gentiles. This he has done for us in the first chapter of this epistle (1:10-11).

THE SECRET ADMINISTRATION

Paul's statement of his stewardship of the Ephesian secret is weighty with precious truth. He is *to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God* . . . (3:9). Where

these words are heard and heeded, they revolutionize the life and understanding of the believer. Because they are practically deleted from the bible of christendom, it has gone astray and is lost in a confusing maze of doctrines. The great bulk of religionists are seeking to follow Peter into the Kingdom, or John into his earthly allotment. How few have heeded this plain intimation that *Paul alone can give the light* which illumines present truth!

Let us note each weighty word. Paul is to *enlighten.* The converse of this must be true, so that all who do not know Paul as the means of their illumination are in darkness as to this administration of the grace of God. Does not this account for the dense ignorance which is so prevalent that few are even conscious of its black obscurity? We speak much of enlightenment, but, judged by this standard, we are living in dark ages indeed. Only those are *truly enlightened* who recognize *Paul as the channel of present truth* and dwell in the light he has shed upon God's present operations.

He is to enlighten *all.* Paul does not make known the secret of Christ to all. There he is limited to the nations, for the Jews receive that secret through their own apostles. But the present secret administration is his exclusive revelation. *No other apostle made it known,* unless he had first received it through the apostle of the Gentiles. This is confirmed by the fact that it is entirely absent from the Scriptures except in Paul's epistles written at or after the time of this declaration. *Those who will not be enlightened by Paul will not be enlightened at all!*

We cannot overstress the word *secret.* This is the only administration which is so named. God has made known at least three administrations beyond the present, with varying degrees of detail. The era of His indignation, which follows this, was never hid from humanity. The blessings which follow in the day of the Lord were often the subject

of prophetic unfoldings. Even the succeeding day of God was dimly foreseen. Not so with the present secret administration of the grace of God. It was not merely unknown but unknowable. It was positively withheld.

It is an administration or economy. This is the same word as stewardship, when applied to household affairs. It is often called a "dispensation" in current theological language. This is another aspect of it. When speaking of God's gifts we should call this a *dispensation of grace.* But if we refer to the peculiar characteristics which distinguish it from other administrations it is best to follow the dictation of inspiration and call it a *secret* economy or *administration,* because the internal arrangement of affairs and the object of its operations are not at all such as are predicated in previous scriptures.

Let us note the tautological emphasis in the words *secret* and *concealed* in 3:9. For the sense, the word secret is quite unnecessary. Read it without this word. It adds nothing to the meaning. In view of the fact that almost all saints and scholars fail to get any meaning out of either, or both, we admire the foresight which presses the thought on our attention. It is precisely this point which has eluded almost all expositors, and this it is which is practically denied by almost all theologies. They persist in introducing truth from other administrations, which, by such misplacement, becomes malignant error.

This important point is further enforced by telling us *where* it is hidden and from whom it is concealed. It is popularly supposed that it is contained in the Old Testament, much as a puzzle picture contains hidden characters. There are supposed to be types and shadows of this era throughout the ancient scrolls and almost all of the blessings promised to Israel are said to be diverted to us. But this is all false. The secret was not concealed in the Scriptures, but *in God.* It was concealed *from* the eons, not

revealed *to* them. It seems impossible to imagine a more emphatic statement to the effect that the present administration of the grace of God was an *absolute secret.*

The secret of Christ, His universal headship, is the purpose of the eons which God makes in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph.3:11, 1:9,10). Our call is in accord with this purpose (Rom.8:28). God is operating the universe in line with this purpose. The present secret administration is in harmony with it, especially its celestial side. Hence we read that God, Who creates the universe, is now making known His multifarious wisdom to the sovereignties and authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia of this administration (Eph.3:10). The purpose includes the revelation of God's attributes to all creation.

There are few considerations more delightful than a realization of God's need of us to make Himself known. He not only reveals Himself to us, but through us. When we see this, our salvation ceases to be a selfish concern of our own. Our assurance of "safety, certainty and satisfaction" becomes anchored in God's purpose, which is essential to His glory and that of all His creatures, as well as the basis of our blessing. It is blessed to give rather than to get. Few of His saints realize that, even now, we are teaching celestial beings the lesson of God's wisdom which few of us understand ourselves!

Apart from a mature apprehension of the two secrets which have been set forth, no one can have more than a vague and unsatisfactory idea of the wisdom which is involved in God's present workGD. He Himself describes it as "multifarious" (3:10), because of its variety. It copes with problems which had never arisen before, which seemed insoluble and unforeseen. The most difficult of all dilemmas was the apostasy of Israel, as seen in Acts. They were the only channel of blessing. God could not give their place to the Gentiles, as the church foolishly has taught, for His

Word cannot be broken by their faithlessness. There seems to be no means or place of blessing for the Gentiles who had turned to God. Then it is that He throws back the curtain and reveals the fact that all was anticipated and provided for before the eons commenced their course. Then also He opens His hidden heavenly purpose and reveals the celestial destiny of Christ's body. What seemed to be an insurmountable problem was transformed into a carefully prepared program. Humanly speaking, Israel's continued rejection of Yahweh, and of the incarnate Christ, and of the testimony of God's spirit, utterly wrecked His revealed plan of blessing, not only for them, but for the other nations also. From the viewpoint of the divine wisdom all of this was a part of His intention, and prepared the scene for the present grace. Indeed, such *depths and heights of grace* as we now know would be impossible to reveal apart from the very failure which seemed to deny it any place.

At present this display of multifarious wisdom seems largely wasted on the saints. Sad as it may seem, the impression appears to prevail among them that God's wisdom has failed Him, that He sorely needs our help to save a few from the wreck of His universe, and that our chief concern should be to aid Him in recovering from the dilemma into which His enemies have brought Him. They do not understand the variety of wisdom that uses temporary evil to produce permanent good. They do not realize that Israel's opposition was necessary to afford a foil for the transcendent grace which has come to us. They are not aware that the heavenly hosts are learning of God's limitless resources of wisdom through us.

The present practical result of this insight into God's wisdom is to keep us from despondency in the midst of affliction and adversity. Throughout this administration the forces of evil have been uppermost. Paul himself was

a prisoner because of Christ. *All Asia turned from him before he died* (2 Tim.1:15). The world has always been against the church. And now the church itself has admitted so much of the world that God is being forced out. Matters have gone from bad to worse in this administration. *Is this failure?* Or is it another exhibition of God's wisdom working out His will through the opposition and apostasy of His creatures? Let us not despond. There is not a single loose thread in God's design. All, evil as well as good, will work out His glory and our good.

Let us remember that these transcendent truths come to us through a *prisoner.* Paul emphasizes his character at *this* supreme crisis of his life. Human wisdom would have made him higher and more powerful than the pope of Rome has ever been. Is not that the way to impress men with the message he bears from the high court of heaven? Give him his liberty. Give him means. Give him influence with the imperial power. That is the way we would have managed the matter. That is the way men are doing today. But no! The circumstances of the new messenger must harmonize with his message. Mankind is at enmity with God. He is at peace with them. What can picture this so well as the imprisonment of His ambassador? The great truth of the conciliation, as set forth in the fifth of Romans, remains the substream of the present grace.

God is revealing His wisdom now, and by its means His weakness is stronger than the might of men. The prisoner Paul, by writing a single letter, accomplishes more for God than anyone of the great theologians after him. *God is working through weakness now* in order to display the wonder of His wisdom. Afflictions like Paul's are our glory. Bonds like his should cause us to exult, as it makes the celestials marvel. It was no mistake. It was no mishap. It was God's deliberate design, to show *His power* in human infirmity and *His mastery* of human might.

A. E. Knoch

LOVE TRANSCENDENT

PAUL, after he had set forth the three sections of the secret (Eph.1:3-2:22) began a prayer for the appreciation of the fathomless favors which he had revealed, but broke off at its very commencement to give a summary of this grace, which is now shown to the nations, He says, "On this behalf, *I* Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you, the nations—" (Eph.3:1) and then introduces the parenthetical digression which we have just been considering. He would have them clear as to the two secrets, the secret of Christ and the Ephesian secret. Otherwise his proposed prayer would be impractical. This knowledge is essential to its fulfillment. Let no one read the prayer, or its exposition, without first drinking the preceding cup of blessings to its dregs. Paul would not have interposed this parenthesis unless it was vital to his petition. Now, however, he resumes, "—On this behalf am I bowing my knees to the Father . . ." (Eph.3:14).

There is a practical lesson to be learned from this parenthetical procedure. A prayer of such intensity as the apostle's would not easily be diverted into an exposition. If another had interrupted him, it would have seemed most offensive. There must be a very powerful reason why we must have knowledge before strength. We must understand and grasp God's grace before we can realize His love. It is useless to expatiate in glowing but abstract terms on the transcendent love of God. We need to see that love in exercise. We must view its activities. We must marvel at its achievements. We must wonder at its wisdom. Its scope must astonish us. Its riches must ravish us. If

a celestial messenger were to fly in mid heaven with the proclamation "God is love," it might reach their ears, but it would find no harbor in men's hearts.

Paul's parenthetic interlude in the third of Ephesians is the divine summary of present truth. It is the key to the correct understanding of God's present activities. All the wisdom of the world is not worth it. Much of God's Word cannot be comprehended without it. No other portion of the Scriptures has as much vital value to the believer of this era. Let us, then, give it the place in our hearts and thoughts that it deserves. May it prove as enlightening to every reader of these lines as it is to the writer! May it be the open sesame to the wealth and glory and love which God has in store for all who love Him during this day of Christ's rejection by Israel and the world.

In our preaching, let us not urge men to believe without giving them a message for their faith. The evangel does not consist in the exhortation to believe. Its substance may be indicated by the simple phrase "Believe God!" But the evangel itself consists of God's words concerning Christ. It would be well if many of our prayers that sinners be conciliated to God were interrupted, as Paul's was, in order to explain God's attitude and the basis of our exhortation. So also, in ministering to saints. Love cannot be pumped out of a dry well. First prime the pump with the overflow of God's love, before seeking a response in the hearts of His saints. This meditation is utterly dependent, therefore, on those which have preceded it. It has little force for those who have not grasped the gracious glories which God has granted to the nations in the present secret administration.

Once before Paul had indited a prayer on our behalf.The burden of that petition was that we should receive a *spirit*, a spirit of wisdom and revelation, in order that we may perceive the threefold secret (Eph.1:15-19). Now his petition is for spiritual *power to realize the love* that underlies the

new revelation (Eph.3:14-22). What a contrast with the approved prayers of today! We pray for power, but it is for service. Our god is a little deity who needs our help, not a great God Who wishes our heads and our hearts. Let us not decry diligence in doing His will, but let us never forget the better part chosen by Mary, and the fact that she, though condemned by her sister, was commended by her Lord. And who shall say that Mary did not devote as much strength to her lessons as Martha did to her household duties? Did we devote one tenth as much energy to delving into the depths of revelation as we do into the duties of a livelihood, how great would be our appreciation of God's grace!

It is customary to name those derived from a common stock after the father from whom they sprang. So we find the sons of Israel divided into twelve tribes according to the patriarchs. They are known by the name of their ancestors. In the world of spirit there is but one Father, and all who are His, own Him as such. They may be many families in the flesh, but in spirit they are one. Israel, on earth, will receive her bounties from the same Hand as the saints among the celestials.

STAUNCH WITH POWER, THROUGH HIS SPIRIT, IN THE MAN WITHIN

The previous prayer was to God: this is to the Father. We rightly connect power with God, and affection with the Father. Why, then, do we pray the *Father* for *power* in this passage? Because the greatest display of power is not connected with God as Creator, or with the reconciliation of the sinner, or even with great supernatural manifestations. Far more is needed to give the saints a grasp of the love which underlies this latest overflow of God's affection, as manifested in the Ephesian secret. If the reader of these lines has been enabled to apprehend the truth of

the epistle to this point and goes on to lay hold on the *love* which it reveals, he may rest assured that it is the fruit of a spiritual force far beyond any other in this administration of God's grace.

On all sides saints are seeking *power*—power for service, power for miracles, power for healing, power for everything except the one thing essential: power to entertain and *respond* to the truth of the Ephesian secret. It is this response for which the apostle is bowing his knees. And why should not the supremest display of God's grace and wisdom lead us into the greatest grasp of His affection? How else could this be revealed? Yet even after we are graced with the spirit of wisdom and revelation in order to fit our minds to apprehend God's secret grace, we may still be unable to fathom the *love* from which all springs, and for which all operates.

God's glory is the universal goal. From the tiniest insect in its aimless seeming way, to the most sovereign sun star in its parabolic path, all have one common aim, one pure purpose to perform. Men may deem the one a foolish, fruitless wandering; they cannot see the star's objective; but God has harnessed both to His chariot of glory. The earth is His most fruitful field. Mankind is the creature fittest to display His varied excellence. To trace God's footsteps in the earth—that is the true history of humanity. And such a narrative will yet transform this darkling world into the brightest of the heavenly luminaries, whose effulgent rays will reach the utmost borders of the universe, and radiate the deepest recesses of God's love.

God's goal is not gained until He receives the heartfelt adoration of all His creatures. Great as are His efforts on our behalf, they are but the means to make Him known. Ephesians does not find its climax in the secret itself, but in a prayer for its appreciation. A knowledge of the secret is not sufficient or satisfactory to God unless it includes a

heart-hungry occupation and enjoyment of the surpassing love of Christ. Even before the secret was made known the apostle could say, "If I should be perceiving all secrets . . . yet have no love, I am nothing" (1 Cor.13:2). *Nothing has any vital value unless it leads to love.* It is the glory of God's wisdom that all things in the universe, including sin and hate, shall be lured into the livery of love.

At present most of God's creatures are out of harmony with Him. He is either unknown, ignored, or defied. The ideal relationship with God is well expressed by the word "complement." His creatures should combine with Him to make one harmonious whole. All that is in Him should find a response in them. There should be such mutual reciprocation in every relationship of life as will be most delightful to both. He is the Creator and we should take our place as His creatures. He is the Father, we His beloved sons. He the Reconciler, we the reconciled. He the Deliverer, we the delivered. But more than this, we are accorded a place with Christ in His work of revealing Him to the celestial hosts. It is only as we ourselves are filled with His affection that it can overflow to others.

HIS GLORIOUS RICHES

No epistle in the Scriptures is so full of harmonies as Ephesians. There is a continual assurance that each phase of our blessing is in accord with all the rest. Our sonship suits the delight of His will (1:5). The "forgiveness" of our offenses is raised on the scale to harmonize with the riches of His grace (1:7). The secret of His will is consonant with His delight (1:9). Our predestination is in unison with His purpose (1:11). Paul's dispensation agrees with God's grace which, in its turn is attuned to His powerful operation (3:7). The insight of the celestials is in line with the purpose of the eons (3:11). So, now, power is desired such as will harmonize with His glorious riches (3:16).

Paul prays for a power which will accord with the wealth of glory which has become ours through this new revelation.

God's riches are glorious. In these last days riches have increased. There are many men of vast wealth, and fortunes have been amassed which are amazing. Much of our unrighteousness and crime is connected with money. It occasions far more misery than it alleviates. In general, riches are a menace to society. Yet all will acknowledge that wealth has power. It is fast becoming the paramount force in human affairs. It overrides social prestige and political influence. What could we not accomplish with an unlimited command of means! Yet one thing cannot be bought by all the wealth of all the world. That is love. God's wealth alone has the moral glory that influences the affections.

Outwardly we may be as weak as Timothy, with his frequent infirmities. We may be clothed in rags and live in the meanest of shelters. There may be nothing to indicate that we are rolling in the real riches. This wealth is not for the outer man at present. It is spiritual, and for the spirit. It is for the man within. Men behold the external appearance, God looks on the heart. Through His spirit our hearts become the habitation of Christ. This is the ground of our strength. The meanest human heart, indwelt by Christ, has a glory that surpasses the temple of Solomon. All its moral values are living in him.

GROUNDED IN LOVE

Our vitality and stability depend upon the apprehension of God's love. As a plant seeks its sustenance and strength in the soil, so we should search for our sustentation and support in the subsoil of all of God's activities, the fact of His affection. We can flourish in no other ground. Here alone can our roots find nurture and our trunk find strength. Both of these are necessary for fruit. The most beautiful tree in all my garden fell to the ground. It had

ample roots, but was not well grounded. It could not withstand the winds of adversity. How many of us have failed to fasten firmly on the love transcendent? Only in this can we stand and bring forth fruit for God's delectation. Nothing else will delight Him. No substitute should satisfy us. Hence, let us pray this prayer for ourselves. Let us make it a petition for all saints. Only thus can we grasp these immeasurable measurements.

THE TRANSCENDENT DIMENSIONS OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST

The transcendent love of Christ and the dimensions of the secret are usually merged into one. However, let us remember that the apostle has interrupted his prayer to explain the secret, and this is the subject on his heart as he proceeds. He expatiates on the vastness of its scope in order to make this a stepping-stone to that which lies beyond. No one can grasp the transcendent dimensions of the love of Christ without an amazed wonder at the moral breadth and length and depth and height involved in this, God's latest and highest revelation.

THE BREADTH

A characteristic feature of the tabernacle in the wilderness was the width of the gate which led into the court. It indicated something of the breadth of the evangel in the era which it typified. Though Israelites could enter, yet all aliens were shut out. So with the proclamation in the early part of Acts. They spoke to the Jews only. Gentiles could not enter without becoming proselytes of Judaism. Now, the evangel is for *all.* In effect, the gate of the tabernacle is only a hindrance, for the whole wall surrounding the tabernacle is now taken down. Access to God is unhindered. The evangel could be no broader. Corresponding to this,

the central wall of the temple has been abolished. In this aspect the present grace is unlimited in breadth.

Not only is the secret evangel all inclusive now, but the future service of the saints is all embracing. Israel will broaden out to evangelize the whole earth in the day of her glory. When we enter our proper allotment, we will reach out to the utmost bounds of the universe. Our parish will include all of the celestial hosts. Tell me the breadth of the universe and I will give you one of the dimensions of this secret. The physical measure is an index of its moral extent. It is an indication of the vastness of Christ's love.

THE LENGTH

In space, we can hardly make a distinction between its length and breadth, for both are beyond our grasp. Perhaps we should think of time, when meditating on its length. It goes back before the eons, long before the entrance of sin. It preceded the disruption in God's purpose. It is the earliest intimation of God's love for His creatures. We were not an afterthought with God. Let us revel in the realization that He thought of us long before He took up His earthly people Israel. His care for us is not due to the rebound arising from Israel's rejection of His favor. We are His first love, the earliest to call forth His affection.

THE DEPTH

The Ephesian secret not only has the greatest sweep of any of God's administrations, but it digs down into the very dregs of human depravity and soars to the highest heavens. Israel had promises and privileges which raised them above the balance of mankind. The Gentiles were below them, far from God, sunk in sin, ignorant and alienated, deserving only death. The grace of God reaches down into the deepest depths of degradation for the trophies of its triumph.

Never in the story of this somber scene, had come a time so dark and dismal as the days that followed Paul's final visit to Jerusalem and his imprisonment in Rome. The Jews will not have Messiah. Neither will they allow the other nations any place. Paul is a prisoner. Every avenue of blessing seems effectually choked. Everything is ripe for judgment. So it seemed. Then, with a spiritual convulsion as great as the material cataclysm which ends Yahweh's day, a place is prepared for a new creation. God creates a new, a spiritual sphere, unheard of and unknown. He reveals this present secret administration, which fills the hosts of heaven with admiring wonder and the hearts of His hallowed with impassioned praise.

THE HEIGHT

Israel will have the highest place on earth. We will have the supreme position in the heavens. What can be higher than that? No celestial creature will be above us. All will be beneath. Had we been raised to a place of blessing under Israel, as will be the portion of the nations in the coming eon, that would have been an undeserved and undreamed exaltation. Had we been put upon a par with them, that would have been an almost unthinkable elevation. To be the humblest in heaven, how far beyond our highest hopes! To be equal to celestials would seem the limit of human anticipation. Truly, it never has entered into the human heart what God has for those who love Him! Highest of the high, we shall be above all the heavenly host.

TRANSCENDENT LOVE

All of these dimensions are love tokens. Each adds to our assurance and appreciation of His affection. Each is a step which raises us to the temple of Christ's love. We cannot now measure these dimensions. We have no means to calculate their immensity. They are beyond our powers. So

is the love to which they lead. It is like the universe itself, which seems to expand as it is explored. The most powerful telescope, with photographic plates that picture millions of stars that human eyes have never seen, cannot find the boundary of God's material world. Its transcendent size is a parable of the immensity of the love that conceived it, which is embodied in His Christ, and which has been revealed in the moral dimensions of the Ephesian secret.

THE EONS OF THE EONS

The coming eon is particularly concerned with God's glory in Israel. It includes the day of Yahweh. The succeeding eon approximates our present status. It will be the day of God. Then God's glory will be publicly displayed in accord with the present spiritual manifestation.

Israel's spiritual supremacy will be past in that concluding eon. Now it is only eclipsed temporarily. Then God will tabernacle with mankind, as such. No temple, no priesthood will bar their approach to Him. It is serenely satisfactory to see that the only occurrence of this phrase, "the eon of the eons," occurs in Ephesians, for this epistle sets forth spiritual blessings for the nations which parallel those of that day. It is true that the Son still rules, and the saints still reign, but their authority will be near its vanishing point for lack of opposition. Those who are near God need few restraints.

But that eon will not only witness the nearness of the nations on the earth. It will be the scene of celestial splendors among the star strewn empyrean. God will be glorified on earth beyond all previous administrations. But His greatest glory will shine forth through the celestial saints, the ecclesia which is Christ's body. Having learned the lesson of Christ's transcendent love, it will be their lot to publish it abroad among the heavenly hosts, from the north star to the Southern Cross. Then we shall have the greatest privilege which can be accorded to any person.

We shall bring glory to God and good to His creatures. Vessels of grace are we, not only to have and to hold, but to give and to gratify. Our bliss will not be based on ourselves, but in blessing God and benefitting His handiwork.

This is the keynote, on which our happiness began. Our salvation, our justification, our reconciliation, our glorification are merely the means of glorifying God. This thought, once it enters into our heart, will give us rest and relief from ourselves, and serene surcease from dread of the future. Our personal destiny is so pitifully unimportant in this great universe, when viewed by itself. But when it is seen to be a part of God's own glory, it ceases to be insignificant. It is no longer inconsequent. It must be safe and sure. It cannot fail or fall. It is not the reward of our merits, for we have none. It is reared on our demerits, of which we have no lack. Let us but see that we are the instruments for revealing God's grace, and essential to His goal, and we have the best basis of eonian bliss which man has ever imagined.

Hence we too are bowing our knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith, and that we, having been rooted and grounded in love, should be strong to grasp the breadth and length and height—so as to know the transcendent dimensions of the love of Christ.

A. E. Knoch

THROUGH FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST

The third of Romans, especially the paragraph from verses 21 to 28, is of the highest importance to the understanding of justification. It is *for* (into) all and *on* all who are believing *through* faith of Jesus Christ . . . .

"Jesus" is our Lord's personal Name, so it is difficult to understand anything else than the personal faith of the Man of Sorrows when we read of the "faith of Jesus." Hence it is difficult to see why almost all translators simply change it to *in*. A. E. Knoch

CHOICE AND DEITY

FREE WILL is a hallmark of orthodoxy. It is believed not only that it is true, but that it is essential, upright and noble. Many even claim that it is the chief capacity distinguishing man from beast. Consequently, its proponents often become filled with "righteous indignation" at the least suggestion of its untenability. They earnestly desire the concept to be true; and, that the scriptures might be fulfilled, it has long been certain that they *will* defer to their own desires, instead of the word of God (2 Tim. 3:1-8; 4:3,4). They seek to discover this idea in the Scriptures, and are confident that they have done so in many places. But their sedulous efforts are in vain, for, as with the Trinity, it is nowhere expressed, frequently disproved, and only falsely inferred.

Like every good thing, the great and foundational truth that *all* is out of, through and for God (Rom.11:36), can be abused. Its liberty can be misused by the foolish as an incentive to the flesh (*cp* Gal.5:13). Yet the wise must learn the truth on this theme so that they might make *good* use of it and be freed from the evil imposed upon them through its denial. God's truth is not only true; it is also vital and beneficial.

Even those believers whose consciences are generally sensitive as to the need for sound words, seem to have no compunction when it comes to the misuse of volitional terms. They regularly employ words such as "choice," "decision" or "responsibility," in quite the same sense as is common in the world. Much of this is the result of peer pressure and the influence of popular ethics.

Good and glorious as it is, like the teaching of even-

tual universal reconciliation, the teaching of God's deity seems both false and wicked to those who cannot receive it. And even if we should receive it, it may be that we will do so only faintheartedly, and so fail to "herald the word" concerning it or live our lives in accord with it. Yet if this should be the case, this too will be the wisdom of God.

THE NECESSITY OF ACTION

In light of Romans 11:36, I freely agree (in essence if not in semantics) with the renowned physicist Albert Einstein, who said, "I do not at all believe in human freedom in the [popular] philosophical sense. Everybody acts not only from external compulsion but also in accordance with inner necessity . . . . A man's actions are determined by necessity, external and internal, so that in God's eyes he cannot be responsible [i.e., able to act otherwise], any more than an inanimate object is responsible for the motion it undergoes . . . . [This realization] mercifully mitigates the easily paralyzing sense of responsibility [i.e., in the sense of contrary choice] and prevents us from taking ourselves and other people all too seriously; it is conducive to a view of life which, in particular, gives humor its due."[1]

"If men had not this false refuge of human responsibility, many more would be forced to reconsider the fiendish doctrines of human destiny which they hold. As it is, if their hearts are not utterly hard, they will not believe in the damnation of infants, and are led into many non-scriptural notions as to the age of accountability, the appointment of sponsors at baptism, confirmation, and what not, seeing that *eternal* torture or annihilation can never be justified in the case of those who are not fully answerable. If they could only see that God holds none responsible, they

1. Albert Einstein, IDEAS AND OPINIONS, pp.8,39; New York: Crown Publishers, 1954

would find everlasting suffering or death utterly repugnant and impossible. 'Responsibility' is a twin heresy with eternal doom . . . ."[2]

MISUSE OF VOLITIONAL TERMS

At the outset, advocates of free will commandeer the word "choice" (and its synonyms) and boldly incorporate the thought of *avoidability* into the term itself, even though this is actually no part of the meaning of any volitional synonym. Instead it is merely what most believe to be true *concerning* human choice. This extremely common practice is completely unwarranted, and leads to much error. *For a choice is simply that which is chosen or selected*; man's opinion as to whether or not choices are avoidable forms no part of the meaning of the word itself and should not be forced into it.

It is most unwise to impose the idea of "avoidability" onto the word "choice," as if this somehow validated the concept of *freewill* choice. To do so is both linguistically incorrect and logically fallacious. It is also unfair, and exposes its own prejudice. Worse still, it is deceptive, for to those who are unable to think clearly, it seems to give much credence to the idea of free will.

Reading the idea of avoidability into the word choice is the equivalent of reading the word "flat" into the word "earth," or the word "endless" into the word "eons": (1) "The only earth fit to be called such is a flat one." (2) "The only number of eons worthy of the saint's life and the sinner's punishment is an infinite number." (3) "The only choice worthy of the name is an avoidable one."

The problem is only compounded by those who otherwise speak plainly, who may not fully realize that clarity

2. A. E. Knoch, The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God, p.234

of expression is needed on this theme as well. We are not at all suggesting any undue or gratuitous strictness, but only that we avoid being ambiguous or evasive. We must define our terms and speak clearly in order to be clearly understood, so as not to be sadly misunderstood.

Due to common misconception, one might well suppose that only the proponent of free will believes that men do whatever they want, according to their own choice or voluntarily. Yet these are our convictions as well, and are concepts which are fully in accord with our teaching. The fact that we act according to our own choice, and, had we chosen to do so, could have acted differently than we did, is not at issue and is acknowledged by all.

THE VAUNTED "POWER OF CONTRARY CHOICE"

No one can be what he is not, or, at present, act contrary to his present character. "How can Satan be casting out Satan?" (Luke 11:15). Even God cannot deny Himself (2 Tim.2:13). "From their fruits you shall be recognizing *them*. . . . A good tree *can not* bear noxious fruit, neither is a rotten tree producing ideal fruit" (Matt.7:16,18).

Due to influences from within and without, a man may well change in the next moment from what he is in the present moment, but *in* any certain moment his deeds are simply the outflowings of his heart (Prov.4:23b). They reflect what is presently choice *to him*; that is, they constitute his true preferences, however excellent, or awful, they may be.

Though we *do* what we want, according to our own choice, and therefore act voluntarily, we cannot always *want* what we want. That is, we cannot truly want, in a decisive sense, what we want, simply in an abstract sense, so long as there are other things that we want *more*, in a decisive sense, than we want the ideals for which we abstractly long. Even if, abstractly speaking, we love righteousness, often, decisively speaking, we prefer the "temporary *enjoyment*

of sin" (Heb.11:25). This is the very message of Romans 7:15-23, as well as that of all perceptive personal observation. It is vital for us to be clear as to these two distinct senses in which the word "want" (or, "will") is used.

Of course what those who advocate "free will" actually mean to stand for by means of this expression is the notion that men have the power of *contrary* choice: Even though, in fact, we chose as we did, we *could have* chosen otherwise. That is, we could have done so *at that time.* It is not contended (nor is it disputed) that, hypothetically and by itself, *we might* have chosen otherwise. That is not the idea at all. Instead, it is claimed that, notwithstanding the fact that we *did* choose as we chose, we nonetheless *could have* chosen otherwise. *This,* and this alone, is the question to be resolved.

Due to our self-reliance, pride, impatience and anger, as well as our self-assured ethical notions about praise, blame and judgment, this idea of contrary choice is an extremely attractive one. Then there is the matter of our strong desire, whether acknowledged or not, for independent personal glory. Thus the wish becomes the father to the claim, and, consequently, the very foundation of human ethics.

Advocates of this position, which should be called, "the power of contrary choice," prefer to perpetuate it instead under the innocuous and advantageously ambiguous title "free will." At once, this gives it the advantage of a respectable-sounding name, and makes those few who are constrained to reject the actual doctrine appear as strange extremists, inasmuch as they reject such a well-accepted, desirable and seemingly reasonable concept.

The advocate of free will actually stands for the position which asserts that man's choices are uncaused—absolutely devoid of all necessity. And yet he does not realize, or at least he refuses to admit the fact, that the denial of causality will not bring him any closer to what he wants than its advocacy.

Essentially this matter is a simple one: It is impossible to prevent anything that is the product of a cause from coming into existence; *and,* it is also impossible to prevent anything that is *not* the product of a cause from coming into existence. If a truly uncaused event were ever to occur (were such a thing even possible), being the product of nothing, uninfluenced and uninfluenceable, it would simply "show up," appearing "out of nowhere." While it would not be brought in, neither could it be kept out.

Whether "determinism" (i.e., causality), divine or otherwise, is true or false, we cannot possibly be free either way—that is, in a freewill or contrary-choice sense. If we are *caused* to choose as we do, we cannot help choosing as we do. And, if we are *not* caused to choose as we do, we still cannot help choosing as we do.

"Surely we cannot be free agents, in the ordinary, strong, true-responsibility-entailing sense, if determinism is true and we and our actions are ultimately wholly determined by causes which existed anterior to our own personal existence. And surely we can no more be free if determinism is false and it is, ultimately, either wholly or partly a matter of chance or random outcome that we and our actions are as they are."[3]

Neither *determined* nor *random* will afford any place for free will. Neither determinedness nor randomness (nor any mixture of the two) can give or allow what is wanted, even though between these two the field of possibilities is exhausted. Therefore, contrary choice or "free will" not only does not exist but cannot exist.

OUR NEED OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Perhaps an illustration would be helpful. Whether an

3. Galen Strawson, FREEDOM AND BELIEF, p.25; London: Oxford University Press, 1986

object falls to the ground because of the law of gravity or by sheer chance, in either case, it is not responsible for what it does. It could not help falling. The principle is the same concerning man's chosen deeds. For either they are caused to be as they are or they are not. Whether a man behaves as he does due to some cause or entirely apart from any cause at all, in any case, he is not responsible for (able to avoid) what he does.

Therefore, man is never responsible and cannot ever become responsible for any of his actions at any time. The recognition of this fact depends solely upon one's ability to think sensibly and fairly. It does not depend upon a personal conviction that the Scriptures are the Word of God, much less upon any judgment that our exegesis thereof is correct. Indeed, even if both of these were to be rejected, it would still remain true that man is not responsible and that free will is a foolish myth. Unless we have a secret fondness for myths (at least when it comes to this subject), we will be grateful to see them exposed and disproved.

Whether causality should be affirmed or denied, either way, free will is false. Thus we possess conclusive evidence that free will is not only a mistaken position, but is logically impossible, and consequently, inconceivable. The acceptance of this fact, however, requires not only intellectual honesty but genuine *understanding.*

This issue is far from complex, and where understanding is granted, is easy to comprehend. We cannot expect assurance, however, apart from understanding, for true assurance is impossible apart from genuine understanding. May we be growing into maturity (Col.1:28), "into all the riches of the assurance of understanding, unto a realization of the secret of the God and Father, of Christ, in Whom *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are *concealed*" (Col.2:2,3).

Otherwise, even where simple and sufficient evidence

is given —perhaps we should say, especially where this is the case—it may not yet be *recognized.* While stubbornness is certainly a cause of the rejection of truth, so is a lack of understanding. It is the glory of God to conceal a matter (Prov.25:2), and, in His greatness, even as He is able to reveal the most complex things imaginable, He is also able to hide the simplest things conceivable.

Samuel Johnson had the perfect answer to the man who has not yet been convinced by sufficient proof: "Sir," he said, "I have found you an argument; but I am not obliged to find you an understanding."[4] If, however, in the case of the reader, the light is beginning to dawn, it is important that you act upon your newfound knowledge, thus being *adjusted* by it while *rejoicing* in it (*cf* 2 Cor.13:11). Indeed, since we are men, and, "men love the darkness rather than the light" (John 3:19), "be *walking* while you have the light, lest the darkness may be overtaking you" (John 12:35).

INVIGORATION BY GRACE

So many, inferring ability from duty, have claimed, "I ought, therefore I can." This simply does not follow, and it is not true. Others have cleverly said, "Though you cannot, Christ can, and He will if you will only let Him." If it were acknowledged that both any "letting" of our own and any action in us by our Lord were themselves entirely the work of God in His own time and way, we would gladly concur. As these are denied, we cannot do so. Apart from the truth of God's deity, any talk of "letting the Lord have His way," degenerates into ill-disguised religious self-help, for it gives the vital glory to man, upon whom all depends.

We are indeed entreated to put on the new humanity and to think and walk ideally in every way, according

4. Samuel Boswell, LIFE OF JOHNSON, 6 vols., 4:313; New York: Oxford University, 1970

to the apostle Paul's wise counsel which he got from the Lord. This includes our implementation of the panoply of God. But what we are not entreated to do is to create those influences which will cause us to heed these very counsels. For this we have a God, *and He will see to all our needs.*

This simple point is of great significance—indeed it is revolutionary—and, as it begins to influence us more, it will remove much of our self-hatred for our failures *while enabling us to obey.* This is so, even though we will have to bear the proud attitudes of others who cannot understand, since they do not rely on God alone for victory but ultimately look to themselves.

Having the spirit of sonship, as those who are loving God and are fond of the Lord Jesus Christ, we long to be well pleasing. We already *have* a new disposition and a new walk. It is too late for us to do our part by attempting to work one up. We are invigorated in the Lord and in the might of *His* strength (Eph. 6:10). We are invigorated by the *grace* which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim.2:1), and so do not need to have any confidence in the flesh (Phil.3:3).

In addition, we are aware that ideal acts are beneficial and that all that are otherwise are destructive, both at present and at the dais of Christ. So as Paul says, "we are ambitious . . . to be well pleasing to Him" (2 Cor.5:9). We do not reason, Since I cannot help it if I should sin, let sin be increasing. Rather, we say, *Even though that is true,* if we should sin, we shall suffer and God will be displeased.

We do not need any help from myths about free will and contrary choice to give us an incentive to obey. Rather, we have *the word of God* which is *operating* in us who are believing (1 Thess.2:13). Therefore, let us pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace (2 Tim.2:22), recognizing our self-control and faithfulness for what they are, the fruit of the spirit, the spirit of our dear God and Father.

James Coram

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS LOVE

IN COMING to Romans 5 as it is introduced in the closing references to God and Jesus our Lord at the end of chapter 4, we resume the focus on God's evangel concerning His Son which was there in 1:16,17 and 3:21-28. But now there will not be so much playing on words, for Paul speaks plainly and openly of the death of Christ. "For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, *dies* . . . . God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ *dies* for our sakes" (Rom.5:6,8).

That is the bedrock of God's evangel concerning His Son. The Son of God dies. That is the bedrock of what we are believing. Jesus our Lord *is given up* (to death) because of our offenses (Rom.4:24,25). Christ *dies* for our sakes.

To be sure there is no evangel apart from God's rousing of His Son from among the dead. But He is roused *because* of our justifying which occurs in His death. "Now if Christ has not been roused, vain is [our] faith—[we] are still in [our] sins" (1 Cor.15:17). But it is His death which deals with our sins as sinners. "Judging this, that if one *dies* for the sake of all, consequently all *die* . . ." (2 Cor. 5:14). ". . . for one who dies has been justified from sin" (Rom.6:7). The death does the work, and the resurrection shouts the victory. "Where, Death, is your sting [of sin]?" (1 Cor.15:54,55).

Thus the evangel we have accepted is, first of all, "that Christ *dies* for our sins," and then to secure the fact that He really dies Paul adds "that He is entombed," and then he adds the joy-filled word "that He has been roused" (1 Cor.

15:3,4). Here as in Romans 5, it is the death of Christ that deals with our sins even as it does with the sinner and the whole problem of sin itself. Death and its sting of sin must die, but our death because of Adam does not bring this about. Only the death of the One in Whom we are created (Col.1:16) can do this.

Let us hear it again as summarized in Romans 5:8:

> 'God is commending 'this **love of** [sf]**His** [io]**to us,**
> Seeing **that,** while **we** 'are **still sinners,**
> **Christ dies** [ov]**for our** sakes**.**

Here there are three (God, His Son, and human beings) as in Romans 1;16,17 and 3:21-28. As *God's righteousness* is revealed (manifested and put on display) in the previous passages, so *God's love* is now commended to our attention. As the source and channel of this revelation is Jesus Christ's *faith* earlier, so also this is now explicitly made known as His *death.* And as we are previously seen as believers who along with everyone else are *sinners,* we are now still seen as *sinners,* and as soon to be repeated here we are *sinners* along with everyone else.

In the center of this there is God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, as He is sent in the likeness of sin's flesh (Rom.8:3), coming in the likeness of human beings (Phil.2:7). "For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and human beings, a Human, Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5). The *faith* of Jesus Christ is His obedience in humiliation unto the *death* of the cross (Phil.2:8).

Through this faith unto death God's righteousness is made known and His love is commended. It is not His righteousness in His righteous judgment of the irreverent and unrighteous human (including the Jew), for in view of our acts, not one of us can be justified, not even one (Rom. 3:10-20), and we all would get what we deserve (Rom. 1:32). That would be the end of it all. No indeed God's righteousness now manifested is one in which Christ's death is

the end of every sinner, (but not the person) and every sin of every sinner, even the death of the old humanity. This will be followed (in due time) by the vivifying (the making alive) of everyone *in Christ* (1 Cor.15:22).

In this way God's righteousness is a righteousness of love, and God's love is righteously expressed. God will have annihilated the old humanity and brought forth as a new humanity all who then will know God, having learned what God's righteousness, power, wisdom, glory and love are.

SIN ENTERS

In Romans 5:2 Paul adds the blessings of peace, and access to that of the joy of justification. Peace and access are the features of conciliation as Paul brings it out with clarity in verses 9-11. So with both justification and conciliation in view we come to Romans 5:12. This takes us back to Genesis 3 and leads us forward to God's evangel concerning His Son in terms that can hardly be mistranslated or misunderstood in verses 18 and 19.

But before that we come to verse 12 (which has been mistranslated and sadly misunderstood):

> 12 **Therefore, even as through one human**
> **'sin enters into the world,**
> **And through 'sin 'death,**
> **And thus 'death passes through into all human**
> beings**,**
> **On** the basis of **which all sin—**

This speaks of one human and his effect on all. This leads up to verses 18 and 19 which speak again of One and His effect on all. It has proved possible to mistranslate 5:12, but 5:18,19 can be translated (honestly) only as it is done in almost every version. The only way to make these two verses mean what they do not say is to introduce a problem that is not there or claim that Paul overstates the mat-

ter and does not really mean what he says.

18 **Consequently, then, as** it is **through one offense**
*io***for all human** beings *io***for condemnation,**
Thus also it is **through one righteous** response
*io***for all human** beings *io***for life's justifying.**
19 **For even as through the disobedience of the one**
human the many are constituted sinners,
Thus also through the obedience of the One
the many shall be l**constituted righteous.**

There is no getting around it. The one offensive response of Adam to God's instruction is set in contrast to the one righteous response of Christ to God's will (*cf* Matt.26:39). In both cases what is done affects *all* human beings. The offense brings condemnation which stands in direct contrast to life's justifying which the righteous act of Christ in dying for the sake of sinners brings. The same pattern of contrasts affecting all human beings is repeated in verse 19. What comes about through the disobedience of the one human is that the many human beings are constituted sinners. What shall ultimately come about through the obedience of the other One, Jesus Christ, is that the same many human beings will be constituted righteous.

To say otherwise is not only to deny what is written here in God's Word, but to say that the obedience of Jesus Christ to the death of the cross was not enough for the justification of the sinner, for salvation from sin and death, for life of joy and peace, but requires something from us who are flawed even in our believing. But more than this, to say otherwise is to say that even we who are believing (to the extent than we may be blessed with a measure of the spiritual endowment of faith which God gives us) cannot be saved righteously.

Nevertheless many say otherwise than what Paul says in Romans 5:18,19 much to their loss at least in the present

era of their lives. Perhaps this is best seen in the translation of Romans 3:21-26 in the New International Version (NIV)[1] and comments on Romans 5:18,19 based on that translation.

Clarity is a major goal of the NIV along with *accuracy.* This is certainly commendable. Its translation of Romans 5:18,19 is as follows:

> Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners. so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

As far as accuracy is concerned some details in vocabulary and verb form might be improved (in my opinion), but Paul's thought comes through with *clarity.* Commenting on this NIV reading, Everett F. Harrison writes, "One trespass brought condemnation for all humanity and one act of righteousness brought justification for all."[2] Nevertheless as with many other commentators, Professor Harrison finds the clarity going too far, for he adds: "Does the sweeping language used ('the many' being all men) suggest that all mankind will be brought within the circle of justification, so that none whatever will be lost? Some have felt so. But if the doctrine of universalism were being taught here, Paul would be contradicting himself, for he has already pictured men as perishing because of sin (2:12; *cf.* 1 Cor.1:18). Furthermore, his entire presentation of salva-

1. New International Version of the Holy Bible: Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1978.

2. Everett F. Harrison, in The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Frank. E. Gabelein, General Editor, vol.10, Zondervan (Regency), Grand Rapids, 1976, p.64.

tion has emphasized the fact that justification is granted only on the basis of faith. We must conclude, therefore, that only as 'the many' are found in Christ can they qualify as belonging to the righteous" (p.65).

CONTRADICTIONS

Paul does not contradict himself. What he says in Romans 5:18,19 is not a suggestion but a declaration. The NIV clearly renders the Greek as a statement of truth: "the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men . . . through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous." Professor Harrison takes this to say that "one act of righteousness brought justification for all." The translation and its explanation might be improved, but they are definitely worded as true statements, not suggestions. And there is not the slightest hint that some important qualification is left out. The words stand as they are.

However if Paul's "entire presentation of salvation has emphasized that justification is granted only on the basis of faith," and "faith" is understood as the believer's faith there is a contradiction. Romans 1:17 and 3:21,22 as rendered in the NIV as follows:

> For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."
>
> . . . a righteousness from God, apart from law has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus . . . .

It is certainly a contradiction to say that justification is granted only on the basis of the [believer's] faith" and then

to say that "one act of righteousness [of Jesus Christ] was justification that brings life for all men [i.e. human beings]," and "through the obedience of the one man [Jesus Christ] the many [who were made sinners through Adam] will be made righteous."

How can this contradiction be eliminated? Is it caused by taking Romans 5:18,19 as meaning what it says? Or does the problem lie with the translation and understanding of the meaning of Romans 1:17 and 3:21-24 which has been held by many at least from the sixteenth century? The translation of Romans 5:18,19 is not in dispute; it is only the meaning that is in dispute. But the translation of Romans 1:17 and 3:21-26 (besides many other passages which relate faith to justification or salvation or any other such happy achievement) is very much in dispute.

The contradiction is introduced by the claim that Paul's "entire presentation of salvation has emphasized the fact that justification is granted only on the basis of [the believer's] faith." There is no contradiction with Romans 5:18,19 if Paul's entire presentation of salvation announces the fact that justification is granted only on the basis of [Jesus Christ's] faith, and that the believer's faith is the condition in which God grants a special salvation, including reckoning to the believer already what Christ has gained for all.[3]

HARMONY

Let us therefore, look again at the revised CV of Romans 1:16,17 and 3:21-22 in which there is no contradiction with the fifth chapter:

[16] **For not [l]ashamed[o] am I** of **the evangel:**
For it [l]is God's power [io]for salvation to everyone [v]who

3. The Scriptures also tell of a special choice and calling pertaining to Israel with the nations in a future period of a thousand years, but that also is based on what Christ has done for all.

is **believing** it**—to** the **Jew first, and to** the **Greek as well.** [17] **For in it God's righteousness is being revealed° out of faith,** [io]**for faith, accord**ing **as it is** °**written°: ** [y]**Now the Righteous** One, **out of faith shall He be living° . . . .**

[21] **Yet now, apart from law, God's righteousness has been** made **manifest° (being attested° by the law and the prophets),** [22] **yet God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith** [io]**for all (and on all** who are **believing** it**), for** there [l]**is no**[t] **distinction,** [23] **for all sin and are wanting° of the glory of** °**God,** [24] **being justified° gratuitously** in **His** °**grace, through the deliverance, the** deliverance which is **in Christ Jesus . . . .**

As for God, the issue of His own righteousness is prominent and fundamental in the CV translation of Romans 1:16,17; 3:21-24, just as His love is the foundation of the evangel in chapter 5. God takes first place as the Operator of all.

As for God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, the revelation, even the manifestation of God's righteousness is secured in and channeled through Christ's faith according to the above translation, just as God's love is commended by means of Christ's death according to chapter 5. Christ takes second place as Mediator of justification and salvation.

As for human beings, all are sinners who can be justified and saved unto joy and peace only by Christ's faith unto death as directed by His God and Father (and our God and Father) Who in every way is righteous and rich in love. In this deliverance the believer is already reckoned righteous with a special salvation. But the end of sin and death and enmity in life's justifying and being constituted righteous is *for* all.

But God's evangel concerning His Son is not completed in Romans, nor does Romans direct our attention to all its connections with God's promises given before through His prophets in holy scripture. There is much for us to

search out. And there is much still to come before the glory of God's righteousness and love is fully realized by all throughout the universe—that we may safely say.

ALL SIN—CHRIST DIES—GOD IS GLORIFIED

Let us reverse the order and look at God's evangel from our standpoint as things are seen to be. Here we are as described in very unpleasant terms in Romans 1:18-3:20 and summed up so directly and simply in Romans 3:23 and 5:12—"all sin."

We are failures. God has created us, and (this is the really hard part many to accept) He is responsible. That is why Christ dies. That is why God spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all. God, Whose most essential quality is love has brought about a world of chaos, vanity and darkness to which He sends the Son of His love to die in pain and sorrow, shame and forsakedness so that His love may be known, and this as a righteous love. To God be the glory!

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

There are a number of differences in translation between the NIV and CVNT in Romans 1:16,17 and 3:21,22. Most are minor and do not significantly affect Paul's thought. But the following stand out as important and critical matters of faith:

(1.) In both passages the NIV has "a righteousness from God" where the CVNT has simply "God's righteousness."

(2.) The NIV brings over Habakkuk 2:24 as referring to "the righteous" while the CVNT has "the Righteous One."

(3.) Where the NIV has "through faith in Jesus Christ," the CVNT has "through Jesus Christ's faith" in 3:22.

(4.) Following those renderings in verse 22, the NIV has simply "to all who believe," but the CVNT reads "for all (and on all who are believing it)."

GOD IS RIGHTEOUS

As true as it may be God's evangel concerning His Son is not a manifestation of righteousness *from* God. All good things come from God (for all is out of God), but this is not what Romans 3:21,22 is saying. The righteousness here is not the justification of the sinner, by means of Christ's faith (which also is true). It is that the justification of every sinner by means of the faith of Jesus Christ is the manifestation of *God's righteousness.* What Christ's death means to us must take second place to what it means to God. And if it does not reveal that God is righteous the evangel comes to us without its most fundamental basis. The manifestation of God's righteousness precedes the commendation of His love, so that, as noted above in this article, we come to see that God's love is a righteous love.

Long we may meditate on and enslave our minds to the fact that God's sparing not of His own Son but giving Him up for all of us sinners manifests God's righteousness as well as commending His love. There is no *manifestation* of God's righteousness in God's righteous judgment, nor in His operations apart from the sending of His Son to die, not even in His heeding of Abel's sacrifice and not heeding that of Cain, nor in the preservation of Noah and Noah's three sons and their wives while everyone else was put to death in the deluge, nor in God's choice of Israel, nor in His choice of us as members of the body of Christ, *except* as all these acts of mercy and kindness *and grace* are connected with the death of Christ and God's rousing of Him out from among the dead. It is only here that we may see God's righteousness.

How important is this revelation that God is righteous? It is absolutely critical. God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11). Yet the world is filled with unrighteousness, irreverence, transgression, sin and

offense. So also it is filled with dangers, sufferings and vanity. We may say, in truth, that there is good mixed in it all, and occasions of happiness and peace, but what we see and experience is as a whole hardly a testimony to God's righteousness. It is only as we believe God's evangel concerning His Son that God's righteousness is made manifest, even God's righteousness in all that occurs.

JESUS CHRIST IS THE RIGHTEOUS ONE

It was revolutionary when A. E. Knoch wrote in an article published in *Unsearchable Riches*[4] in 1916, the following:

"The faith of Christ is brought before us in the otherwise enigmatical statement 'from faith *to* faith.' There are two faiths in view. The latter is our faith; the former is Christ's. Justification is founded on His faith: It is conferred on our faith . . . . Just as it was in Abram's case, faith and righteousness are inseparably linked together. Not only that righteousness will be ascribed to us as it was to Abraham when we, too, believe God, but the faith of Jesus Christ is always put as the basis out of which this blessing flows."

Yet it was not seen clearly at that point that Jesus Christ is the "Just [Righteous] One" of Habakkuk 2:4, and so every CV edition to the present has "the just one," indicating that Paul saw the human who believes God being in view in the Habakkuk quotation. Indeed there was no evidence in 1916 that the prophet's words referred to Christ, and Martin Luther's understanding of this text stood supreme in Brother Knoch's mind, despite his insight regarding "out of faith" in the previous line. No coordination was noted between the "*out* of [Christ's] faith" and the "out of faith" by which the JUST ONE would be living. Yet now the evidence is very strong that this title refers to

4. vol.7, pages 266, 267.

Christ in Habakkuk 2:4, Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11 and Hebrews 10:38 just as it does in Acts 3:14; 7:32 and 22:14 (see also Isaiah 53:11).

How important is it that we see the words THE RIGHTEOUS refer to Jesus Christ our Lord? It is extremely important to us who are believing God's evangel *concerning His Son,* that He is explicitly introduced here in Romans 1:17. He must not be left out of this opening preview of the evangel. And certainly we must not take His place as the ones out of whom God's righteousness is revealed and through whom God's righteousness has been made manifest.

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST'S FAITH

That Paul speaks of the Righteous One's faith in Romans 1:17 and similarly of Jesus Christ's faith in Romans 3:22 (as well as making the same association of faith with our Lord in a number of places throughout his epistles) is the theme of this present series of studies. To me it is firmly settled that these passages refer to Christ's faith, not to our faith in Christ. God's evangel concerning His Son speaks of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord's faith in giving Himself unto the death of the cross. To focus on Christ's faith as the channel of the manifestation of God's righteousness and commendation of His love in the justification and salvation of sinners is our joy and our peace as well as the channel of God's power for present salvation. To suppose that Paul speaks of our faith in these passages does not keep out boasting in ourselves or bring in assurance of salvation, let alone lead us forward in the appreciation of God's righteousness and the abundant measure of His love. Nor indeed does it strengthen our awareness of and thankfulness for the spiritual endowment of faith which comes from the righteous God of love.

This, then, is of the highest practical importance to us day by day as we live our lives in infirm and dying flesh

within this present wicked eon. Jesus Christ is the faithful One Who dies for us in pain and rejection, even forsaken by God, so that we may be constituted righteous in living, as He is living, unto God.

TWO PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Despite the omission of the words "and on all" in the earliest extant Greek manuscripts the CV continues to include them. The short reading, "for all the believing (one)s" appears in codices Sinaiticus, Vaticanus and Alexandrinus, which are the basis of the Concordant Greek Text, carefully handwritten in the fourth and fifth centuries (as well as a fragment written on papyrus even earlier). That is certainly a strong point in its favor. Yet the long reading with two prepositional phrases, "for all and on all the believing (one)s" is found in the majority of all the preserved handwritten Greek manuscripts up to the introduction of printing. And it also is added to Codex Sinaiticus by its principal editor who claimed to work from a compilation of mostly scriptural writings made in the second century, whose editings are given special attention in our Greek Text. I believe this longer reading accords best with the context and is well defended by the fact that in transcribing from one text to another omissions are more likely than additions.

The current theory of textual scholars is that the short reading, "for all the believing (one)s" was combined with another reading "*on* all the believing (one)s" (which appears in some early manuscripts, mostly Latin, producing the longer reading. But a strict combination would be "for all the believing (one)s, and on all the believing (one)s." This would have settled the question of whether both "for" and "on" had the same object. But the reading we accept (and as used by the AV and all English translations up to present times) was often seen as providing two distinct

thoughts: "for all [human beings], and on all believers." Thus in his commentary on Romans[5] first published in the nineteenth century, Robert Haldane wrote: "While it [this righteousness] is proclaimed to all men, it is actually *upon* believers . . . placed *upon* them as a robe" (p.141). Thus the Calvinistic idea of a double predestination was preserved. And this is reflected in such Bible translations as Robert Young's Literal Translation (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids) and Darby's *The Holy Scriptures* (Stow Hill Bible and Tract Depot, Kingston-on-Thames, England) by placing a comma after the first "all." Starting with the 1944 edition, the CV also separates the first prepositional phrase, "for all," from the second, "and on all who are believing," but with the understanding that the revelation of God's righteousness manifested through Jesus Christ's faith is actually for all human beings, and will be actually realized by us all, and furthermore it is already placed *on* (in a sense parallel to "reckoned to") those who are believing it. So that this present distinction not be overlooked, the CVNT puts the second phrase in parentheses. Thus it can be seen that the evangel declared here in Romans 3 speaks of blessing gained by means of Christ's death is for all mankind, while having a special application to believers, just as this is made clear in Romans 4 and 5.

How important is this distinction between "all" and "all who are believing"? It carries forward the coherence of the opening chapters of Romans in the critical matters of God's righteousness in the creation of all and His purpose of good for all. It does so while preserving the revelation of God as the Saviour of all especially of those who are believing. Indeed Paul writes to believers, but not as though they were wholly exclusive from unbelievers. We

5. The Epistle to the Romans, The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1958.

are included in the "for all," that great mass of human beings from Adam forward, all of whom will receive ultimately what God has achieved *for* them in the giving of His Son. But not all are included now in the "on all" (to whom we would make known this evangel that they may join in the blessing of perceiving God's righteousness through Jesus Christ's faith).

through jesus christ

Romans 5 ends with that joy-filled phrase, "through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:21) which recalls the beginning words of the epistle: "Paul . . . having been severed for God's evangel . . . concerning His Son . . . Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.1:1-4). God's righteousness has been made manifest *through* Jesus Christ's faith for all (and on all who are believing it), for all sin and are wanting of the glory of God, being justified gratuitously in His grace *through* the deliverance, the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:21-24). "Therefore, even as through one human sin enters into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passes through into all human beings, on the basis of which all sin—[Rom.5:12] . . . even as through the disobedience of the one the many are constituted sinners, thus also *through* the obedience of the One the many shall be constituted righteous" (Rom.5:19).

grace superexceeds

"Yet law comes in by the way, that the offense would increase. Yet where sin increases, grace superexceeds, that even as sin reigns in death, thus also grace should reign through righteousness for life eonian through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom.5:20,21).

Consequently through Jesus Christ's faith, in that while we are still sinners He dies for our sakes, yet not for believers' sakes alone, but for all. *This is God's evangel of grace*

which is the gratuitous gift of joy through the death of our Lord, yet not for us alone, but for all, while placed on us and reckoned to us in spirit already.

"What, then, shall we be declaring? That we may be persisting in sin that grace would increase? May it not come to that! We who die to sin, how shall be still be living in it?" (Rom.6:1,2).

Here then is the evangelical meaning of Christ's death as it relates to us who are believing that He dies for us (even as He dies for all). We are baptized (in spirit) into Christ Jesus's death! We are entombed together with Him into that death, that even as Christ is roused from among the dead ones, through the glory of the Father, thus we also should walk in newness of life (Rom.6:3,4). This evangel which declares that in that Christ dies, we as we are in the old humanity die (the fact form of the verb "die" does not speak of time, but of simple truth). The explanation of how Christ's death can bring about salvation is that when He dies the old humanity also dies as absolutely and finally as Christ as the One Who was made sin dies. This is what theology calls so poorly "the theory of the atonement," not that Christ died in our place, but that the sinner died in and with Him. And this is not for ourselves alone but is true of all human beings. "For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that if One dies for the sake of all, consequently all die" (2 Cor.5:14). This evangel "is being God's power to everyone who is believing it" (Rom.1:16). It is not the law which is being God's power every day for salvation from the wretchedness of the war between that law and the law of sin and death which is in our members (Rom.7:18-24). It is rather "God's law" of grace and peace through Jesus Christ, our Lord that rescues us (Rom.7:25).

D.H.H.

Unsearchable Riches

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FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 115th Year

(1909–2024)

Contents:

145 Editorial
147 Both Blessed Together in a Joint Body
161 Joint Partakers of the Promise
171 His Achievement are We
180 Romans 5:12-6:23
183 Listening to God's Evangel of Joy
192 Index

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EDITORIAL

It has been extremely difficult for me in these days of my increasing dissolution to put together a further revision of Romans 5:12-6:23 together with comments and explanations. Yet I feel there are important matters here which at least need to be brought out whether or not it is done with clarity. Too often Romans 6 has been taken as a sort of correction of Romans 5 in which it is supposed the case is overstated. May it not come to that. There is complete harmony between the joyous gratuity of God's evangel concerning His Son and what is said about our walk in newness of life and our enslavement.

First of all let me say that the scripture in translation is far more important than my explanations, and this is so even without any revision. But what is being said in this passage and within its near and far context? Using the word "listening" for "obedience" I take it that our job as believers is to listen to what God says to us in this passage—yes, that we listen from the heart to the type of teaching to which we are given over. It is not a teaching of law but rather of grace which is essentially joy. It is a teaching of God's joy which reveals God's righteousness and commends His love. It is a teaching which tells of Jesus Christ's listening unto the death of the cross—or as we learned earlier in Romans, a teaching of Jesus Christ's *faith* which is for our faith.

What our Lord heard with perfect and full submission was *instruction* from His God and Father. And so our present use of the word "obedience" may seem appropriate. But what we hear is *revelation*, and our present usage of the word obedience is not very enlightening in that context and even seems to work mischief. How can one carry out a revelation of God's righteousness? The point of the Greek word *[h]upakoê* (UNDER-HEARing) is to listen, to

pay attention to what is heard. The listening is fundamental. And so it was for our Lord.

So we are to listen to God's message of gratuitous joy in the crushing of His beloved Son! And we are to listen to the message of Christ Jesus's faith in giving Himself up because of our offenses and dying for us while we are still sinners.

Believing and listening are mental activities. We are directed to pay attention in mind and heart to what God has done through His Son (note how often the preposition "through" is used in Romans 5:17-21 in relation to Jesus Christ as the channel of our blessings). The death of the sinner in the death of Christ is God's evangel concerning His Son in Romans 6:2,3. The rousing of Christ is set forth as the pattern of our future walk in newness of life (Rom.6:4). Both our death with Christ in His death and the assurance of living together with Him are brought forward in 6:5-11. There is so much joy in all these passages where God speaks of that which is not as though it were, for it has been accomplished with assurance in the death of Christ and assured in His rousing. It is not a passage of what we must or ought to do in order to secure our blessings, but of what God has done through His Son's death, and of what shall be because of that most glorious and critical event. To such joyous revelations we are to enslave our minds. Thus we are to be reckoning (taking into account) ourselves to be dead to sin and living to the God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I have not drawn attention here to A. E. Knoch's two articles concerning the joint body of Christ and its future place as the complement of Christ in His work of completing all—nor to James Coram's article concerning the One out of Whom and through Whom is all. But such glories rest on the death and rousing of Christ Jesus our Lord, so that all themes of Scripture stand in harmony around His death and resurrection. D.H.H.

BOTH BLESSED *TOGETHER* IN A *JOINT* BODY

> "Who makes *both* [groups, Uncircumcision and Circumcision] *one* . . . creating the two, in Himself, into one new humanity, making peace . . . reconciling *both in one body* to God through the cross" (Eph.2:14-16).

IN THE PRECEDING article of this series, we have shown that there was "an allotment from God" (Rom.8:17) for believers among the nations long before Ephesians was written. Even in those days, long before Paul came to Rome, the same believers were known to be *members* of the body of Christ (Rom.12:5; 1 Cor.12:12-31).

Also that the believers among the nations were joint partakers of His promise in Christ Jesus through Paul's evangel, was made known early in his ministry. It is the burden of the latter half of the book of Acts. Writing to the Roman saints (Rom.1:7) speaking of the contribution about to be taken for the Jerusalem saints (15:26), Paul declares: "If the nations *participate* in their spiritual things, they ought to minister to them in fleshly things also" (Rom.15:27).

Since the Ephesian secret evidently did not consist in being an "heir" or allottee, or in membership in the body of Christ, or in participation in the promise, wherein does it lie? Its whole point and force is found in that thrice-repeated word TOGETHER, *fellow,* or, as we have rendered it, *joint* (Eph.3:6). The joint body, as we have pointed out before, is the result of vivifying, rousing and seating

together, among the celestials, *both groups* of believers, those from among the nations, and the Pauline Jews (Eph. 2:5,6). The apostle refers to the two groups as "nations" (or "Uncircumcision") and "Circumcision" respectively (Eph.2:11).

The believers among the nations could not have been *joint* allottees before because the allotment was on the earth and Israel must have the supreme position there. They must always be aliens from the earthly commonwealth. They could only be guests (Eph.2:12). The Jew was first (Rom.1:16; 2:9). The nations were Israel's debtors (Rom.15:27).

The secret reveals that the believers among the nations as a group have been accorded an allotment, a membership in a body, and a partnership in the promise which Paul had preached, all *in equal measure, in as high degree, and in every way the same* as that given to the group of Pauline Jews to whom they are united. This is the message of the small but emphatic prefix *joint.*

These three distinct items of the secret are each elaborated in the first two chapters of the Ephesian epistle. Ephesians 1:3-14 deals with the first item, the allotment or "inheritance," and concludes by giving the nations the same seal, the same spirit, hence the same allotment, as Paul and his fellow Israelites. Ephesians 1:20-2:10 deals with the second item, the one body, and shows that the nations are blessed in it equally with the Jews. Ephesians 2:11-22 shows that the physical inferiority of the nations no longer bars them from the fullest participation in the promise of Paul's evangel, which is the third item.

Each of the three unfoldings of the secret is concerned with a different relationship[1]. The *Godward* side is seen in connection with the celestial allotment. It is concerned

1. *cf* chart in volume 53, page 132.

with our place in His predestination and plan and purpose. The *Christward* side comes before us in dealing with the joint body, of which He is the Head. The *manward* side of the mystery is developed in dealing with our joint participation with all believers.

JOINT ALLOTTEES

The *Godward* aspect of the mystery comes before us first (Eph.1:3-14). It is divided into two sections. In the first (1:3-12) the allotment of Paul and the Israelites associated with him is transferred from earth to heaven. The blessedness of this group is among the celestials. They reign, not on earth, but in the wider sphere of the universe. In the other section (1:13,14) the nations as a group—"*you* also"—are accorded the same allotment because they have received the same spirit, and have the same pledge. Hence they are joint enjoyers of these celestial honors.

THE JOINT BODY

The *Christward* side of the secret is developed next (Eph.1:20-2:10). First He, as the Head of the whole universe, is given His place above all. Then His body is introduced as His complement. Israel will be His instrument in earth's redemption. The ecclesia which is His body will supply what is needed in the heavens. Thus it is the complement of the One Who is completing the entire universe (*cf* Eph.1:23). Christ, including the members of His body, will administer the government of the empyrean.

What place will the nations have in this? On earth they must be the subjects of Israel. In the heavens, however, the celestials are the subjects. The body was made up of both Jew and Gentile. In this new sphere, are the Jews to keep their superior place? They are not. First, the apostle addresses the believers among the nations—"And you" (2:1). In the third verse he turns to the Israelites—"among whom *we.*" But both groups are included when He

vivifies us together (2:5),
rouses us together (2:6) and
seats us together (2:6)

among the celestials, in Christ Jesus. Hence the two groups are of equal rank. Both are blessed *together* in a *joint* body.

CREATING ONE NEW HUMANITY

The cross is the end of the old creation in regard to the *flesh* and *circumcision* and *approach to God.* In Galatia the apostle put the Judaizers in their place, who made much of flesh and the religious rites of Judaism. That belongs to the evangel of the Kingdom, which will flower during the millennium. But it has no place today, for, in spirit, we are already beyond that eon. In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but a new creation (Gal.6:15). The new creation is not a figure confined to Ephesians and applied to the "mystery" or the one body. It is never applied to these directly. It has to do with *mankind,* with the vanishing of the fleshly preeminence of the favored nation in its approach to the Deity, as will be the case in the literal new creation, after the thousand years.

Ephesians simply repeats and reapplies the figure of the new creation to the relation between those who were near and those far from God. Its two main and complementary occurrences (Eph.2:15; 4:24) deal with the *new humanity* (in the third item of the secret), not with the joint body (the second item, Eph.1:20-2:10; 5:21-6:9). Those who confound these two figures will never be able to see the truth of the joint body clearly. In Ephesians 2:13-18 the apostle is dealing with two classes of believers, those among the nations and those in Israel, two distinct groups. Just as it will be in the thousand years, those among the nations were far off even if they were believers. There was a wall between them and God, which was made by their flesh and

by the decrees (Acts 15:20) of the apostles. They belonged to a humanity split into two by the rite of circumcision.

In the future the nations who were kept at a distance during the millennium will be brought near in the new creation (Rev.21:1-4). They will not worship a distant God, shut up in a temple to which only the Circumcision have access. God will be with them Himself. There will be a new humanity. Religiously, the cleavage between Jew and Gentile will disappear. Priesthood will vanish. That is the message of Ephesians to believers now. The figure of the new creation which Paul had previously brought in to show God's relationship to all mankind at present, that is, the conciliation, he now uses afresh to show that the barrier keeping believers out of God's presence has been abolished and they enjoy the same access to God that Israelites have, not because of a creation confined to saints, but because of one affecting *all humanity.* Only the believers, however, enter this *new humanity* now, for it is a matter of joint *participation* in faith and spirit.

In fullest accord with this revelation concerning a new humanity in the doctrinal section of Ephesians, we find a similar statement in the second half, dealing with deportment. To see the exquisite symmetry of this, study the structure of Ephesians.[2] These two references to the *new humanity* in the new creation are in the complementary sections dealing with *joint participation* (the third item of the secret), not with the figure of the joint body (the second item). Putting on the new humanity (Eph.4:24) deals with conduct, and is not nearly so limited in its scope as the figure of the new humanity in 2:15. The corruption and seduction of the old humanity go, and the righteousness and benignity of the new are to be put on, just as the millennial conditions, ending in the great apostasy, vanish and give place to a new creation in which righteousness dwells.

2. Volume 59, page 64; *cf* volume 53, page 138.

INDIVIDUAL CREATION

Twice we have the figure of an individual new creation, once in Paul's earlier epistles (Gal.6:15) and once in his perfection group (Eph.2:10). In both cases the context deals with the same themes as the corporate creations. In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but a *new creation.* After dealing with the conduct of Jew and Gentile, we read that we are His achievement, being *created* in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them. It is really a picture which will be fulfilled literally by those on the new earth, when religious distinctions will be done away. God has prepared only good works for them, and they are part of a new creation, hence sin will be almost unknown at that time.

ONE BODY AND ONE NEW HUMANITY

The figure of "one body" is also used in a variety of ways, as we shall see. In Ephesians 2:15,16 the one body simply denotes that two groups of believers, those of the Circumcision and those of the Uncircumcision, are now changed into *one* body. Literally this cannot be done. Figuratively such things can be done, and often occur. The body of a *man* and a body of *people* are not subject to the same limitations, nor can they be made the object of the same reasoning. We cannot reason about figures as we do about facts. The creation of one new humanity (Eph.2:15) is connected with the *re*conciliation of the two classes of believers, just as the creation in 2 Corinthians 5:17 was concerned with the *con*ciliation of mankind. One is based on the other. The secret of the *evangel* flows from conciliation, and the *third* item of the secret (joint partakers) flows from this reconciliation of two groups of believers.

ONE BODY COMPOSED OF GROUPS

Let us seek to settle clearly in our minds what is literally intended by the figure of a "body." This faded implication is used so freely in English that we apply the term to any aggregation of persons or things, or to the mass of anything. In the passage we have already considered (Eph. 2:16) it is used in this way. Two groups accepted Paul's teaching. The Circumcision were near, the Uncircumcision were far. The flesh separated them. In spirit, in Christ, these two became *one.* That is the *one* body. In this case the adjective *one* is prefixed to express the fact that there are no divisions among believers today, for we all have one spirit. There is only *one* body, *not* many groups, as there seem to be in Christendom today, humanly speaking.

In Ephesians 2:15,16 it seems clear that the one body results from the union of two groups, a thought altogether foreign to the figure as used before in Romans and Corinthians. There there were *many* members and *many functions.* Here it is not a question of functioning, but of *peace* and *reconciliation* between two groups. These two aspects should be kept entirely distinct. It is the special message of Ephesians, which recognizes and adapts the body made of members, but *adds* to it the body made of differing or hostile groups. This is its peculiar and crowning revelation, which culminates in the secret that, in spirit, the nations are not only joint enjoyers and joint partakers, but a *joint body* (Eph.3:6).

THE JOINT BODY

Mature reflection has convinced me that the force of the prefix *sun* (joint) does not refer to the many members of the body so much as to the two unequal *groups* of which it was composed, the Circumcision, who were near, and the Uncircumcision, who were afar off. Now that both

are near, in spirit, the cleft between them is gone, and it has become a joint body, in which both are of equal rank; the two *groups* have been reconciled.

It is this special figure, one body composed of both Circumcision and Uncircumcision (or any other groups), which brings about peace or reconciliation among the believers (Eph.2:16). By the cross all fleshly distinctions, and all attainments, privileges, pride, or other causes of division, are set aside, so that no strife has a right to raise its head. In entreating the believers, therefore, to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of *peace,* the *first* unity is the *one body* (Eph.4:4). No different or dissenting *groups* are to be in this body, or it will disturb this peace. And has the experience of well nigh two millennia not shown us that, where this unity is not kept, there is strife and contention?

ONE BODY COMPOSED OF INDIVIDUALS

But there is another aspect of this figure used especially in Paul's earlier epistles, which we ourselves have never clearly distinguished. That is, a body composed of *many individual members* (Rom.12:4,5; 1 Cor.12:12-27). This is referred to as the body *of Christ,* for each member is anointed by the Spirit, and all together they form a living organism which is to Christ what our body is to us, the medium through which we operate. This is referred to in Ephesians 1:23: the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One Who is completing the All in all; 4:12, 13: the upbuilding of the body of Christ, unto the end that we should all . . . ; 4:16: the entire body, being articulated together . . . making for the growth . . . for the upbuilding of itself in love; 5:30: we are members of His body.

Even in this aspect we can see vast differences in the figure, according to its application. In Romans and Corinthians the point is *variety in unity.* One body, but many *members* with varying *functions.* In Ephesians 1:23 the

body is the *complement* of Christ in His Headship of all. In 4:12,13,16 the picture is altogether different, for there the vital union serves for *growth.* In 5:30 the scene changes once again to the *nourishing* and *cherishing* which we humans accord the physical frame.[3] Almost every occurrence of the figure of the "body" has a setting of its own, and we ought always to regard it in our expositions.

Let us always keep the many aspects of this figure distinct. Let us never confuse the body *of* Christ, and Christ as the Head of the body. The figures are very different, even if the word "body" is used in both. In one, Christ is one of the members of the body, the Head, and the rest is *subject* to Him. In the other *all* the members, including the eyes in the head, are Christ's body, through which He works, and which He cherishes.

THE SEX OF THE BODY

Among the most humiliating aspects of my early effort to clear up the question of the body and the bride was the attempt to fix the sex of the body. I read some most remarkable statements on both sides. I now see how utterly inane it all was. If Paul could be both father and mother of the Thessalonians (1 Thess.2:7,11), then the ecclesia could be a bride as well as a body. Reasoning is most illogical here. Yet it may help some if we give the facts of the case, and point out some of the pitfalls into which we fell before we knew how to handle figures of speech.

The word *body,* in Greek as well as in English, has no sex at all. It can be used of the body of Dorcas (Acts 9:40) who was a woman, as well as of a man. Of course, when it is specifically used of Christ, we might infer that it is the

3. While the term "members" occurs 16 times in 1 Corinthians, we find it only twice in Ephesians, in 5:30 (as quoted before), and in 4:25 where "speaking the truth" is the point in view.

body of a male. But this is utterly beside the point, and worse than useless. Much was made, at one time, of the fact that the word *ekklêsia,* in Greek, is *feminine,* and this was used to prove that the body is *female!* From this was deduced that it was the bride of Christ! By similar mental processes we could prove that it has no males but is composed entirely of females!

One of our favorite methods was to bring in some other figure to show that the body is male. We thought that the "one new *man,*" of course, must be identical with the body of Christ, hence this was a favorite proof until we found out that *anthrōpos,* though masculine, simply meant *human,* or *humanity.* The new humanity of the future will not be composed of males only. Neither is the present figurative one. That would exclude the sisters from participation in the grace of Christ!

The latest along this line seems to be based on Ephesians 4:12,13, where we read of "the upbuilding of the body of Christ, unto the end that we should all attain to the unity of the faith and of the realization of the son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ, that we may by no means still be minors . . . ." Is it not evident that this passage deals with the *individuals* which compose the body, some of whom are minors and only some mature? The body at that time was evidently composed of both, and the gifts were given to make mature saints out of the minors. So that the phrase "mature *man*" is a *figure,* just as applicable to a woman as a man. It is not descriptive of the body as a whole, and cannot be used to determine its sex.

I understand that some go even further than this, in that they render the Greek word here (*anêr*) *husband,* and this is the status and goal of the church which is the body of Christ. This is so startling that it calls for investigation. But we must note first of all that the Greek of the Scriptures

has no term for "husband." This word is simply *man,* that is, a man, not a child or a woman. How foolish it would be to translate it *husband* in all of its occurrences is evident from these samples: Jesus of Nazareth, a *husband* (Acts 2:22), I [Paul] am a *husband,* a Jew (Acts 22:3), or even this passage itself, unto a perfect *husband* (Eph.4:13). The Greek usually says *own man* for *husband.* That is why we read of your *own husband* (Eph.5:22). The word *husband* is only an idiomatic idiosyncracy, and should not be made the basis of a new teaching such as this.

But why stop reasoning, once we have begun? If the body is a husband, it must have a wife. Who can this be? I suppose the bride, believing Israel, is the only one in view. But if our destiny is the heavens and theirs the earth, there is much ground to fear for our future felicity. They would be absent from each other most of the time! They would not be congenial. Their interests would be quite different. More than that, we would come into conflict with the real husband of the restored nation— Yahweh. They are not the bride of *Christ,* but of Yahweh. And we are not Yahweh. Our reasoning will not carry us that far. Into what absurdities do we fall when once we desert faith for fallible, foolish reasoning!

The rendering *husband* reminds us of a remarkable rendering in our Authorized Version, which the Revisers did not change. There we read that Paul had *espoused* the Corinthians to one *husband!* (2 Cor.11:2). This may have been understandable when the Authorized Version was made, but now it would be a crime to betroth a pure virgin to a man who is already a husband. I am inclined to regard the word rendered *espoused* or *betrothed,* not as *married,* but *engaged* to be married, and I find that the best German versions so render it. This is the real figure. Not a marriage, but the condition of a virgin before marriage, calls for singleness and purity in a special way.

Literally, Paul wished the Corinthians to be wholly and altogether for Christ. They could be this without literally becoming Israelites or taking a place in the Kingdom. We, members of the body, should be like this. Even if we should illustrate it by means of the marriage relation, that would not take us out of the body and put us in the bride. Figures are not facts.

The attempt to force the figure of the bride of Yahweh into one of Paul's epistles seems to me to be most unfortunate and reprehensible. A "proof" seems to be needed that the Corinthians were "Jewish," and since none can be found, one must be invented. Would we also lose our membership in the body of Christ and be joined to the bride of Yahweh if we should be *single* and *pure* toward Christ? This is all that the figure conveys.

ALIENS—FELLOW CITIZENS

In the preceding era, in flesh, the believers among the nations were aliens, having no civil rights, as it were, in the Kingdom which is Israel's (Eph.2:12,19), but at the crisis when the epistle was penned they became fellow-citizens, not, indeed, of Israel, but of the Jewish believers. Philippians takes up this figure and locates our citizenship above. It does not belong to the earth but to the heavens. Let us not confuse this figure with facts. Paul had a Roman citizenship in Tarsus (Acts 21:39; 22:28). There was no conflict between the two. One was for his body, the other for his spirit. In due course we will enjoy our celestial rights and drop our earthly ones.

GUESTS—MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

In the era before Ephesians, the Uncircumcision had rich *spiritual* possessions, but could not enter the family circle of Israel on account of their *fleshly* disabilities. They could only take the place of a *guest* at Israel's board. This

is a beautiful figure of the place of the nations when they participated in *Israel's* spiritual blessings. Now, however, our status is different. We have become members of God's family. We are not proselytes, or full-fledged Israelites, but, on another basis, not of the flesh, we are *bona fide* members of God's great family. A figure, not a fact. We do not need to desert our families, a wife or children, in order to enter this relationship. We retain both (Eph.2:12,19).

THE WIFE AND THE ECCLESIA

The husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is Head of the ecclesia (Eph.5:23). For years after I had fought myself free from the teaching that the church is the bride, I was very loath to consider any feminine figure for the ecclesia. Now I have no fear. The facts are clear. We must be *subject* to our Head. And why should not a wife learn from this subjection to find her true place in relation to her husband? If we go on and inflate this figure beyond its legitimate bounds, as we did with other figures, then there is cause for fear. Then we will come into conflict with the wife of Yahweh and of the Lambkin. But if we leave it without artificial additions, as it stands, all is well. There is not even any infringement on the fact that the husband is to love his wife as his own body—as Christ loves His ecclesia.

MINORS AND MATURE

Since "perfection" or maturity came with Paul's latest revelations (1 Cor.13:10), it is open to all believers to attain it. This figure has to do chiefly with the *disposition.* The Authorized Version rendering "in understanding be men" (1 Cor.14:20), should read "in disposition become mature." It was possible for some to whom the apostle Paul taught wisdom to be mature, because he divulged to them the secrets about to be revealed (1 Cor.2:6,7), yet the believers as a rule were immature minors, except in relation to

the law. The mere revelation of the present secret administration does not guarantee the *attainment* of maturity, but *makes it possible.* Paul admonished and taught in order to present every man mature in Christ Jesus (Col.1:28). The apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers were given to adjust the believers to the present era of maturity in order that they should not remain minors, surging hither and thither and being carried about by every wind of teaching . . . (Eph.4:11-14). Judging by this test, few have attained maturity yet. They are disposed to the playthings of childhood, religion, rites, self-righteousness, displays, power, and all that is not found in the cross of Christ. Those who are mature will find their disposition set forth in the Philippian letter (3:1-16).

ROOTED AND GROUNDED

Figures are by no means confined to the realm of which they speak. Some of the most magnificent figures in the Hebrew Scriptures represent the Lord as a wild beast. Here we have the saints pictured by a plant with roots sunk in the ground. The thoughts seem to be *sustenance* and *steadfastness.* A plant well-rooted lives and grows. Properly grounded, it stands sturdy and strong. Love is the soil in which we may thrive and stand. All *flesh* is grass, because it soon fades and vanishes. We are not in flesh but in spirit, and, with love as our garden bed, we will not emulate the grass, but grow and stand firm.

And now we pray that God will graciously grant the reader the spirit of patient and quiet investigation. It may be painful to forsake much that we have held dear, and which may have cost us much to gain and to maintain. But let us weigh these things before God. Let us take years to ponder our position, and to adjust ourselves if necessary to the divine message of the Ephesian epistle.

A. E. Knoch

JOINT PARTAKERS OF THE PROMISE

> You were, in that era, apart from Christ, being alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and guests of the promise covenants, having no expectation, and without God in the world. (Eph.2:12)
>
> In spirit the nations are to be joint enjoyers of an allotment, and a joint body, and joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which *I* became the dispenser. (Eph.3:6,7)

JOINT PARTAKERS

The manward aspect of the secret is the last to be elaborated (Eph.2:11-22). The distinction between Israel and the nations was a matter of flesh, summarized in the rite of circumcision. This left the nations, even after they believed the evangel, ineligible to the citizenship of Israel. Thus believers among the nations were aliens, mere guests of the covenants, with no expectation or God of their own, *as far as flesh is concerned.* But now that they are joint allottees and members of a joint body, and all their blessings are spiritual, the fleshly disabilities vanish. As a result they are *fellow* citizens, and members of God's family and built *together* for God's dwelling place *in spirit* (Eph.2:19-22).

It is of prime importance that we note the channel through which this grace flows. It is not that we are made "partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph.3:6, AV), but "*joint* partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, *through the evangel of which I [Paul] became the dispenser*" (CV). The apostle is not so absurd as to inform the Ephesians, or any other believers to whom this epistle was sent, that he was a minister of the gospel! He is

not telling them that they are joint partakers through the evangel of the Circumcision, which was proclaimed by the twelve, for they never can be blessed on equal terms with Israel in her earthly Kingdom. He is rather telling them that this grace comes to them through *the* evangel which *he* had been preaching to them, which he called "my evangel" (Rom.16:25), including the great truths of justification, conciliation, and glorification (Rom. chapters 3 to 8), which they had received, but which gave them a place subordinate to Israel in the flesh.

Hitherto they had a standing "in flesh," or on the physical plane. They were the Uncircumcision, and as such must take a lower place than the Circumcision. They were bidden to remember that time (Eph.2:11,12). This does not refer (as the translators evidently thought, judging by their rendering) to that time when they were unbelievers or "unsaved." It refers to the time when they were partakers, but not *joint* partakers. Then they were *guests of* (not *strangers to*) the covenants of promise. This they could not be before they believed. *From the physical standpoint* (not from the spiritual) they had no expectation, for Israel monopolized that. They even had to acknowledge the Deity as the God of Israel. If they should be physically present in Jerusalem, all of this would be painfully apparent to them. No matter how great their spiritual attainments, they dared not enter the temple precincts beyond the court allotted to them. They were emphatically not *joint* partakers.

But now that the secret *is* revealed, the Jew is not shut out of the holy places nor is the gentile kept at a distance, but both, *in spirit,* enter into the holiest of all. The fact that a Jew is not of the seed of Aaron cannot keep him out. Though the gentile is not of the seed of Israel, that does not bar his approach. Physical disabilities vanish before spiritual graces.

IN SPIRIT

We must not fail to emphasize the fact that every one of the three items of the mystery is modified by the introductory phrase, *in spirit.* All other translations I have ever seen join this with the preceding verb "revealed." They tell us that it was revealed "by the Spirit." There is little point to this, as that is the ordinary mode of revelation. Standing, as the word does, between two statements (Eph. 3:5,6), either ending one or beginning another, it must be emphatic. Once we see how important it is as applied to the secret, we cannot but connect it with the mystery.

The nations are not joint allottees in flesh; they are not members of a joint body in flesh; they are not joint participants in flesh. It is only *in spirit* that all this is true. Physical preeminence belongs to Israel. Physically the nations can claim no equality. Fleshly blessings have no place in Ephesians. They are not involved in the secret. We are blessed with all *spiritual* blessings among the celestials, hence the threefold divisions of the secret are all dominated by the opening phrase: *in spirit.*

The nations are joint enjoyers of the allotment because they were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which was its earnest. They had a spiritual pledge of a spiritual portion (Eph.1:13). They are in the joint body because of the purely spiritual grace of being vivified and roused and seated together with a faithful remnant of Israel (Eph. 2:5,6). The believers among the nations, once the Uncircumcision as to flesh, kept at a distance from the material temple at Jerusalem, now have access, together with Pauline Jews, *in one spirit,* to the Father (Eph.2:18).

PAUL'S EVANGEL

Now that we have seen that the secret consists in a change from a subordinate place to a position of equal-

ity we will be able to judge its effect on previous revelation. As the allotment to Israel in the land will not brook any equality with the nations, an *entirely new allotment* is revealed, among the celestials. As the body of Christ was already in existence, a new body was unnecessary, but it was *modified into a joint body.* As the evangel Paul had preached was almost exclusively spiritual in its blessings it merely needed to *drop a few physical phases* to be the channel of the mystery.

As we are distinctly told that joint participation comes through the evangel Paul had been preaching, it is of the utmost importance that we give it a place in the administration of the mystery. *It continues in force.* The promise it brought is *not set aside,* but is definitely incorporated into this secret economy. There are only such minor modifications as the secret itself demands, due to the new destiny and the changed relations of the Jews and gentiles who come into its embrace.

In his itinerant ministry Paul deemed it necessary to speak to the Jews first (Acts 13:46). The priority of the Jew is recognized, even in his previous writings (Rom. 1:16; 2:10; 3:9). It is necessary to insist that this is no longer true, for it is contrary to the very essence of the secret now revealed. His previous teaching is modified by the addition of a celestial allotment and the withdrawal of all physical distinctions and blessings, for this is essential to the administration of the mystery.

Paul's previous proclamations, as presented in his Preparatory and Promise epistles, may be summed up in three words, Justification, Conciliation, and Glory. All three are the subjects of Romans, and its companion epistles, Corinthians and Galatians. The Thessalonian epistles also bring in the future glory in connection with the coming of our Lord. The revelation of the mystery does not involve a reconsideration of these great doctrines, but assumes

them, amplifies them, glorifies them. As they were all given to Paul after his separation from the rest, and in preparation for the secret economy about to be revealed, they are incorporated in it.

JUSTIFICATION

The grand doctrine of justification is not repeated in Ephesians, rather *it is recognized*[1]. In the panoply provided for us in our conflict with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials is the cuirass of righteousness (Eph.6:14). True, this is composed of our actual conduct. But apart from the enjoyment of justification such conduct is impossible.

Philippians, the companion epistle of Ephesians, written to correct the conduct of those who come into the light of the mystery, clearly sets forth our connection with justification. There Paul eagerly grasps this grace. He had striven to attain to righteousness under the law. But now, "Things which were gain to me, these I have deemed a forfeit because of Christ. But, to be sure, I am also deeming all to be a forfeit because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, because of Whom I forfeited all, and am deeming it to be refuse, that I should be gaining Christ, and may be found in Him, not having my righteousness, which is of law, but that which is *through the faith of Christ,* the righteousness which is from God for faith" (Phil.3:7-9). Here we find the aged apostle, who doubtless apprehended the mystery as no one else ever did or could, resting on the firm foundation of justification by faith. It not only fails to conflict with the latest revelation, but is in fullest accord with it. It supplies the only basis on which it can be built.

1. For a more direct connection see "Romans in Ephesians" p.179.

THE CONCILIATION

Romans records the great truth that God's attitude toward the nations has changed since Israel refuses to convey His blessing to them. God is conciliated to all mankind. Those who receive this are reconciled (Rom.5). Second Corinthians deals with the ministry of the *conciliation* (2 Cor.5:18-20. It is our point of contact with the world, for our feet are to be sandaled with the readiness of the evangel of peace (Eph.6:15). It also is a secret, "the Mystery of the Gospel" (Rom.16:25). The Colossians had accepted it and were reconciled (Col.1:21). Eventually it will be enjoyed by the whole universe (Col.1:20).

In Ephesians this truth is amplified to accord with the secret. Those near (the Jews) and those far off (the gentiles) are reconciled with God in one body (2:16). To both He preaches "the evangel of peace" (2:17). Even the Israelite was shut out of the inner courts of the sanctuary and could not enter the temple building. Only the chief priest could enter the holiest of all. So that this evangel of peace, this conciliation, now has a message for them as well as for the nations. Both are brought nigh, in spirit, into the very Presence of the Father (2:18).

FUTURE GLORY

The rendering "who first trusted in Christ" (Eph. 1:12, AV) has practically eliminated all reference to the Lord's coming from the Ephesian epistle. Change "trust" to "expect" or even "hope," as the Revisers have it, and we have an important link which connects the mystery with the advent of our Lord as revealed in the Thessalonian epistles. It was the Circumcision who first trusted in Christ, not the nations. And of these Paul was among the last, not the first. But he and the believers among the nations expected the return of Christ before His coming

to the earth. They had a prior expectancy. This is revealed in Thessalonians.

Peter and James and John show conclusively, by their epistles, that they never received the truth contained in Paul's writings. The advent of our Lord for them was just the same as the prophets had foretold, and our Lord had predicted, and as they themselves had proclaimed in the Acts. It was to be a glorious manifestation to His people Israel, resulting in the millennial Kingdom. Such an expectation leaves no place for a celestial destiny such as Ephesians unfolds.

But those to whom Paul had gone with his evangel did not expect to wait until Messiah should come in glory to the Mount of Olives. Paul had said to them *by the word of the Lord,* that they would be assembled to Him (2 Thess. 2:1) when He shall be present in the air *before* His wrath is visited upon the earth (1 Thess.1:10; 4:15-18; 5:9). That it was "by the word of the Lord" shows that it was one of those truths which enabled him to speak of "my evangel," and so is included in the third item of the mystery. This surely was a "promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel" of which *he* became the dispenser (Eph.3:6,7).

The nations are now joint partakers of this promise (Eph.3:6). But were they not joint partakers when Thessalonians was written? The key lies in the title used. It is the coming of the *Lord* (not Christ). Peter makes this distinction when speaking to Cornelius. "Of the word He dispatches to the sons of Israel, bringing the evangel of peace through Jesus *Christ* (*He is Lord* of all), *you* are aware." Here we find the nations connected with Him as *Lord,* just as in the prophets they are connected with Adonai, and not Yahweh. So we find that *Messiah,* or *Christ,* is connected with Israel. At that time the nations, in flesh, were *apart from Messiah,* or *Christ* (Eph.2:12).

In keeping with this lower plane of blessing, the Thess-

alonians were told of the coming of the *Lord* to the air (not heaven). The fifteenth of first Corinthians adds to our knowledge of this event. It initiates us into the secret of the resurrection. In it we are told that our bodies will not only be *raised,* but *changed*—changed to a celestial body. Why is this? Philippians supplies the answer: Our realm has all along been in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to His body glorious. Resurrection, change, ascension, transfiguration, glory.

In describing his ministry the apostle compares himself with Moses. Moses put a veil on his face that the sons of Israel should not see the *consummation* of that which is vanishing. He did not hide the glory from them, but the fact that it was a fading glory. It changed from glory to gloom. Paul's ministry does not do this. It leads in the opposite direction. It is continually gathering new glory. "Now *we* all, with uncovered face, mirroring the Lord's glory, are being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the spirit." (2 Cor. 3:18).

So it was with our precious expectation. It began in *grace.* All were to be snatched away, whether watching or drowsing (1 Thess.5:10). It will change our bodies from soilish to celestial at the sound of His trump. But even celestial bodies vary in glory. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for star excels star in glory (1 Cor.15:41). Not content with mere celestial glory, we are to excel the very sun itself, even as the glorified Christ outshone its Syrian noonday brilliance when Paul first met Him on the Damascus road. We are to be transfigured into the body of His glory.

Some expositors do not believe there is any secret in this epistle at all because Paul assured the Ephesians, on

his last visit to them, that he did not shrink from informing them of anything which is expedient (Acts 20:20). The last word is usually rendered "profitable" in this passage, though the Authorized Version itself often translates it "expedient" (John 11:50; 16:7; 18:14; 1 Cor.6:12; 10:23; 2 Cor.8:10; 12:1). This word is the key to the fact that the secret was withheld until after Paul's imprisonment and the setting aside of Israel. So long as God was still dealing with the nation of His choice, he could reveal much of His grace to the nations in preparation for the transcendent revelations which were to follow. But it would have been most confusing and unwise, as well as unfair to Israel, to announce the new administration while the hope of the Kingdom was still held out to them. Paul could not reveal this secret when passing by Ephesus, and it is for this reason that he qualifies his statement by this expression; he did not inform them of everything, but everything *which is expedient.*

A little later, in the same discourse, he almost repeats himself. He did not shrink from informing them of the entire *counsel* of God (Acts 20:27). God's counsel is always distinctly limited to His public revelation. When the Pharisees and those learned in the law repudiated the counsel of God for themselves (Luke 7:30), they were concerned only with what was open to all. They could not reject a divine secret which had not been revealed. So Paul fully expounded so much as was due of God's counsel. The secret was not yet due. It was not yet true. In Acts Paul takes the believers up to it. In Ephesians he takes them through it.

This question resolves itself into a simple matter of faith. Shall we believe both Acts and Ephesians, or shall we pit one against the other and thus destroy both? Ephesians refers to a later time. There Paul says it is a secret. Faith immediately concludes that he did not make it known

before. Faith then examines his words in Acts and finds that he did not claim to divulge the secret then, but was speaking of the truth which was applicable to that era.

In order to prepare the believers among the nations for the secret it was expedient that they be fully informed of God's dealings with Israel and the nations up to the time when the mystery itself could be made known. While Israel was apostatizing they lost their hold on God's counsel. They were being prepared for dismissal. But the believers among the gentiles were taken into God's confidence as far as possible under the circumstances. This is what Paul speaks of on his last journey past Ephesus.

To sum up: The "mystery," or secret, of the present administration is not the revelation of "the one body," sometimes called "the mystical body" of Christ. It is concerned with this in one of its three aspects. It changes it from a body with members of various rank to a joint body with two groups of equal rank. After the revelation of the celestial allotment for those associated with Paul's ministry, the status of the nations, or gentiles, is changed from subordination to the Circumcision to full equality. Together, both groups of believers are raised to the highest place in the universe. "To Him be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! *Amen*!"

A. E. Knoch

REPOSING

We regret to record the deaths of two friends which whom we enjoyed fellowship in years past. **Carl Anderson** of Lakewood, Ohio, was put to repose at age 83 on November 5, 2024. His quiet steadiness will be greatly missed. **Pauline Winter** of Muncy, Pennsylvania who with her husband Elwood gave us much encouragement and support for many years died on January 7, 2025 at age 89. We extend our sympathy especially to her husband who survives.

HIS ACHIEVEMENT ARE WE

For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them (Eph.2:8-10).

This passage is a most enlightening one. Its revelations are clearly expressed and are exceptionally glorious. We are overwhelmed by the magnificence of these declarations, and are exceedingly glad that they are true. For they allow us—indeed, they constrain us—to glorify God as God and to take our proper place as His creatures.

Ephesians 2:8 begins with the word "for" (*gar*, SURELY-CONSEQUENTLY): "*For* in grace, through faith, are you saved." *Gar* is "a causal conjunction, introducing the logical reason" (KEYWORD CONCORDANCE, p.114, entry "for"). Whenever a sentence or clause begins with this word, what follows tells us why that which has gone before is so. It joins one thought to another, forming the causal link between them.

YET GOD

As in any passage in which *gar* appears, in Ephesians 2:8 at the beginning of the verse, we should note the causal relationship between a former and a latter statement, in order to understand why the declarations which have already been set forth are true.

The immediate revelation previous to Ephesians 2:8 is comprised in verses 1 to 7. There we learn that, notwithstanding our former walk, our shameful behavior in the

lusts of our flesh, being, in our nature "children of indignation, even as the rest, *yet God . . . .*" (Eph.2:3b,4a).

Yet God! "O what meaning, O what wealth these words impart." It is true that, having become unnatural through our own inherent disposition with which we were born (Rom.8:7), besides the ravages of mortality and those influences of sin which "accord with the chief of the jurisdiction of the air" (Eph.2:2), we were indeed, "in our nature, children of indignation, even as the rest" (Eph.2:3b). Consequently, we could only anticipate severe divine judgment. This is because, in the day of indignation and revelation of, God's just judgment, "indignation and fury, affliction and distress" will be upon "every human soul which is effecting evil" (Rom.2:9).

Nonetheless, *Yet God*! It is evident that Paul is speaking here in an ultimate or final sense in accounting for the stupendous change that has occurred with regard to our present standing and future course. He has just rehearsed our awful past and insisted that insofar as anything related either to our acts or nature is concerned, it can only be said that we were, "children of indignation, *even as the rest.*" That is, we had no more claim upon God's blessing and were no more entitled to exemption from indignation, much less to possession of eonian life, than anyone else.

Now if it were true, as many will say, that man is finally the key to his own welfare—especially to such unspeakable gain as exemption from indignation and deliverance unto glory—this would have been just the place to have made this known. In fact, if such a thing were true, Paul should have made this clear, and would have been terribly remiss in having failed to do so.

But what does our apostle declare? Does he say, "Yet man . . ."? Does he say, "Yet men, those such as ourselves who are saved, at the vital point, their former sinfulness notwithstanding, summoned something from within so as

to make the right decision and thus qualify themselves for divine deliverance"? If this idea is the truth, Paul should have said as much, and he should never have said—especially at this vital juncture— "Yet God . . . ."

Yet this is just what he *did* say! He said, setting forth the truth, "Yet God . . . " "*Yet God,* being rich in mercy, *because* of the vast love with which He loves us (we also being dead to the offenses and the lusts [*cp* Rom.6:10]), vivifies us together in Christ (*in grace* are you saved!) and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:4-7).

THE GRACE OF GOD IN TRUTH

The words of our Lord in Luke 6:32-35 give us an illuminating illustration of true grace: "If you are loving those loving you, what *grace*[1] is it to you? For sinners also are loving those loving them. And if you should be doing good to those doing good to you, what *grace* is it to you? For sinners also are doing the same. And if you should ever be lending to those from whom you are expecting to get back, what *grace* is it to you? For sinners also are lending to sinners, that they may get back the equivalent. Moreover, be loving your enemies, and be doing good, and be lending, expecting nothing from them, and your wages will be vast in the heavens, and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked."

Grace is that which is not *out* of works (Rom.11:6), which exists in order to bring joy and blessing to its beneficiaries (*cp charis,* JOY, "*grace*"; *charisma,* JOY-EFFECT, "grace"; *chara,* JOY, "joy").

While grace is not partial (sinfully preferential), it is

1. "thanks," literally, is "grace."

nonetheless *purposeful.* Any gracious gift, then, that is not intended for all, through its very purposefulness, necessarily excludes those for whom it is not designed, as much so as would be the case if its motivation were that of partiality.

"Grace" refers to God's work or action of grace, the work which He does for us and in us, as a favor or gracious gift. As ordinarily used, the expression "God's grace" is a figure of speech. It is a metonymy (figure of association) for "God's *work of* grace," in reference to whatever gracious gift may be in view. That is, literally, grace is not an action, but the character of an action.

The grace of God is effective, for it, like everything else, only exists according to God's own intention and purpose (Eph.1: 11; Rom.9:19; Isa.46:10,11). Indeed, it is the *saving* grace of the *Almighty* God (Titus 2:11; Rev.11:17).

Consequently, then, since it is effective, grace is a *causal* entity. This entails the necessary and inevitable existence of its achievements. That is, *Grace cannot fail.*

Grace is not a wage or requital in response to service or cooperation (Rom.4:4). Instead, it constitutes a *favor.* Grace acts in order to bless. It does not offer to bless, but actually effects blessing. Therefore, at the deepest level, grace always *initiates,* out of its own intrinsic virtue. Though it responds to need, it is never under extrinsic obligation to do so and can never be put under such obligation.

Our God is in the heavens: He has done whatsoever *He* has pleased (Psa.115:3; *cp* Psa.135:6). Though He loves His creatures and provides for them ideally, He is never beholden to them. "For, who knew the mind of the Lord? or, who became His adviser? or, who gives to Him first, and it will be repaid him? *seeing that* out of Him and through Him and for Him is *all*: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!" (Rom.11:34-36).

"The word of the truth of the evangel . . . is bearing fruit

and growing . . . [in] you . . . ," "from the day on which you hear and realized the grace of God in truth" (Col.1:5,6).

IN GRACE, THROUGH FAITH

In light of these prior and related revelations, Paul declares, "*For in grace* . . . are you saved" (Eph.2:8). We have all that we enjoy in Christ, *because* we are saved *in grace.* It is true, in the nature of things, that we are saved *by* grace, for we are saved by God Who acts in grace in saving us. "Grace," however, is in the dative case, and this idea is most clearly conveyed in English by the word "in" (or "to," or "into"). It speaks of the *sphere* in which salvation occurs, in which we find ourselves, the effectual agency of which having wrought our salvation.

We are about to address the question of the words "through faith," which we omitted (indicated by the elliptical dots) in our citation from Ephesians 2:8 in the previous paragraph. We did so not because we wish to minimize them or pass them by altogether, but because we wish to show that they do not represent the primary revelation here. The emphasis of this passage is upon God's grace, not the means which it employs.

FAITH IS A CHANNEL

It is frequently very helpful to simplify a statement into its most basic form, for apart from the wider thought of its complete expression, the basic expression of a thought in itself remains fully true. For example, if we are told that "thus God loves the world, that He gives His only-begotten Son . . . ." (John 3:16a), it must be so, first of all, that "God loves the world." He could not love the world "*thus*" if He did not love the world at all.

Similarly, we could never be saved in grace "through faith," if it were not first of all true that, in any case, "in *grace . . . are* you saved." We have been saved in grace.

The revelation of any further particulars concerning our salvation in grace will not change this fact.

In most considerations of the phrase, "through faith," "through" is usually ignored altogether, "faith" alone being given any attention. Yet what does it mean for something to come to us "through" something else? That is, what does "through" mean? "Through" is a preposition which means "by way of." A synonym for "through" is "by means of." That which serves as the means *through* which something else is achieved, is merely a *channel.* It is the means which the one who achieves the objective in view uses in order to accomplish his purpose.

The fact that God *uses* the faith that we have[2]—which He first of all grants us—in order to effect one aspect or another of the salvation which He Himself thus works in us, does not make faith into some type of contributing factor which ultimately owes its existence to the flesh and not to God.

GOD'S APPROACH PRESENT

Similarly, before giving emphasis to our own pursuit of a righteous walk, we would emphasize *God's* righteousness, and seek to perceive its significance as well as its achievements. God's righteousness is manifested to us "*through* Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22). Even Christ's faith, His faithful obedience to God even unto the death of the cross, is only the channel of God's own righteousness. Ultimately, it is the Deity Himself Who alone is our God and Saviour. Our Lord's sacrifice would have occurred in vain were it not the fulfilling of God's own counsels (*cp* Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:27,28).

In speaking of our glorious salvation in grace through faith, Paul would have us know that "this is not out of you;

2. More likely "through Jesus Christ's faith" as in the next paragraph; *cf* Romans in Ephesians, p.179.

it is God's approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting" (Eph.2:8b,9). We doubt that any are so foolish to suggest that salvation itself is actually man's creation and that God only makes use of it after it comes to Him "out of us." This cannot be what the words, "this is not out of you" are denying (Eph.2:8b). Rather, Paul's point is that it is not due to something from (i.e., "out of") us that we now find ourselves in Christ and the beneficiaries of God's saving operations.

Instead, our salvation in grace through faith, is God's "approach present" (*dōron,* GIVE-GUSH). Our salvation, in its entirety is a present! It is that which God has given us out of His love. *Dōron* is practically the same word as *dōrea* (GIVE-GUSH) and is defined for us by the adjectival form, (*dōrean*) (GIVE-GUSHed), which means "gratuitously" or "freely."

This clearly shows that it is completely mistaken to conceive of one's faith as a means of qualification, a practical warrant entitling its bearer to God's salvation while placing the Deity under obligation to grant it, as if He had promised to do so on such a basis.

In Greek this special form, *doron,* served to represent the Hebrew "corban" (*korban,* Heb. *qrbn,* NEAR, approach; Mark 7:11). In the figure, here in Ephesians 2:8b, instead of the sinner bringing a sacrificial gift unto God, God brings a sacrificial gift on behalf of the sinner in order that he may approach unto God! The gift has already been purchased and its character fully determined before we are even told what it is. Any "rejection" of it by ourselves will not change the fact that it is ours. That is, this will be so if we are indeed among God's chosen ones, which is evidenced not by our understanding of these mature revelations of Ephesians but by our basic faith in Christ's death and resurrection.

Indeed, if we should reject the salvation encompassed

in the approach present of God of Ephesians 2:8, it can only be because we really do not believe at all, or because while we do believe in Christ and His sacrificial death, we do not yet believe what God actually says as to the nature of His approach present for us which is presented in this passage. This, of course, will not change the character of God's gift; it will only mean that, at present, we cannot *enjoy* what we actually possess, being in the trap of the Adversary, having been caught alive by him, for that one's will (*cf* 2 Tim.2:25,26).

THE DOINGS OF GOD

Our salvation is not out of ourselves. We do not possess it because we have done this or that in order to acquire it. Consequently, boasting is debarred (Rom.3:27). This is because we are *God's* achievement. "*For* His achievement are we" (Eph.2:10a). We are saved because we are God's achievement. It is just that simple and this is fully the truth.

The word "achievement," is *poiêma* (DO-effect). We are the product of God's doings. It is only unbelief that will seek to modify this or to explain it away. This unbelief is due to the deceptive influences of the worldly philosophy known as free will. We do not care for the fact that we ourselves, who effect much evil and some good, are the product of God's own doings.

God, however, is able to operate in us, to will and to work for the sake of His delight (Phil.2:13), so that we think of these matters continually, and in a profitable and uplifting way. As those who are God's achievement, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, ones which God Himself prepared beforehand, there is no possibility but that we should be walking in them. Indeed, since the subjunctive, "should," in this case, points us only to God, the good works to which it refers are just as certain to be accomplished as would be the case had the indicative "shall" been used instead.

May God grant us a foretaste of the superabundant and transcendent good works of the future in a measure of good works even now, even if the best of these should be totally eclipsed when compared to our labors to come, during the oncoming eons, when we are conformed to the image of God's Son and seated together among the celestials (Rom.8:29; Eph.2:6).

"Lest *anyone* should be boasting"—lest we ourselves should artfully contrive some way to look to and lean upon the flesh—we would glory only in God and in His Christ. We are saved in grace through faith, faith being an assumption, based upon God's own word, concerning what is already true prior to and apart from our conviction in it. "For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them" (Eph.2:10).

James Coram

ROMANS IN EPHESIANS

IN an article entitled "Whose Faith?" appearing in Unsearchable Riches, volume 112, p.111-118, I claim that in at least two places what Paul says in Romans is repeated quite closely in Ephesians: ". . . being justified gratuitously in His [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus [through Jesus Christ's faith] . . . boasting . . . is debarred" (Rom.3:22,24,27); "for in that grace are you ones having been saved through [Christ Jesus's] faith, and this is not out of you; it is God's approach present, not of works lest anyone should boast" (Eph.2:7,8). Then in Romans 5:2 Paul speaks of our access by that faith [of our Lord Jesus Christ] into this grace in which we stand, while in Ephesians 3:12 he says that "in [Christ Jesus our Lord] we are having boldness and access with confidence through His faith."

To be sure the evangel in Ephesians is that of salvation, while in Romans it is justification. And the source and channel of both justification and salvation is out of and through Christ's faith, for our faith (*cf* Rom.1:17; Phil.3:7-9). We might conclude, then, that justification is salvation from unrighteousness unto being constituted righteous, and this is for our believing (and listening). D.H.H.

ROMANS 5:12-6:23

12 **Therefore, even as through one human**
the sin enters into the world,
And through that sin the death,
And thus the death passes through into all human beings**,**
On the basis of **which all sin—**
13 **for until law sin** [l]**was in** the **world, yet sin is not being** taken into **account**[c] when there [l]**is no law;** 14 *bt*__nevertheless__ **the death reigns from Adam unto Moses** *on*__over__ [d]those **also** who do **no**t **sin** *on*__in the likeness of the transgression__ of **Adam, who** [l]**is** a **type of** Him [d]Who is [l]**about** to **be.**
15 **But not as the offense, thus also the** *joy*__gracious__ gift. **For if,** by **the offense of the one, the many die, much rather the** *joy*__grace of the God and the gratuity in__ *joy*__grace,__ **the** gratuity **of the One Human, Jesus Christ,** *io*__to the many superabounds.__
16 **And not as through one** act of [=]**sinning** is **the gratuity. For indeed the judgment** is **out of one into condemnation, yet the** *joy*__gracious__ gift is **out of many offenses into** a **righteous** outcome. 17 **For if,** by **the offense of the one, the death reigns through the one, much rather,** [d]those **obtaining the superabundance of the** *joy*__grace and the gratuity of the righteousness shall be reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ.__
18 **Consequently, then, as** it is **through one offense**
*io*__for all human__ beings *io*__for condemnation,__
Thus also it is **through one righteous** response
*io*__for all human__ beings *io*__for life's justifying.__

19 **For even as through the disregarding of the one human**
the many are constituted sinners,
Thus also through the listening of the One
the many shall be [l]**constituted righteous.**
20 **Yet law comes in by** the **way, that the offense** *sh*__shall increase. Yet where the sin increases, the__ *joy*__grace super-exceeds,__ 21 **that, even as the sin reigns in the death, thus also the** *joy*__grace__ *sh*__shall reign through righteousness__ *io*__for life eonian through Jesus Christ, our [d]Lord.__
6 *a*__What, then, shall we be declaring?__ That **we may be persisting** in **the sin that the grace** *sh*__shall increase?__
2 **May it not** *b*__come__[c] to that**! We who***a* **die to the sin, how shall we still be living in it?**
3 **Or are** [=]**you being ignorant that we, whoever are baptized into Christ Jesus, are baptized into His [d]death?** 4 **We, then, are entombed together** with **Him through** [d]that **baptism into** [d]that **death, that even as Christ is roused** *o*__from__ among the **dead** one**s through the glory of the Father thus we´ also** *sh*__shall walk in newness of life.__ 5 **For if we have become planted together** in **the likeness of His [d]death,** *bt*__nevertheless we shall__ [l]**be of the resurrection also,** 6 **knowing this, that our old [d]human**ity **is crucified together** with Him, **that the body of the sin** *may*__shall be nullified,__ for **us by no means [d]to be still slaving** for **the sin,** 7 **for** one [d]who **dies has been justified**[c] **from the sin.**
8 *ij*__Now if we die together__ with **Christ, we are believing that we shall be living together** with **Him also,** 9 **having perceived that Christ, roused** *o*__from__ among the **dead** one**s, is no**^{t} **longer dying. Death is lording** it over **Him no**^{t} **longer,**
10 **For** in *w*__that He dies, He dies to the sin once for all__ time,
Yet in *w*__that He is living, He is living to the God.__

11 **Thus =you also be reckoning° yourselves to |be**
dead indeed to the sin,
Yet living to the God in Christ Jesus, our ˙Lord.
12 **Let not the sin, then, be reigning in =your mortal**
˙body, *io* **for** you **˙to be listening to its ˙lusts.** 13 **Nor yet be presenting =your ˙members** as **implements of unrighteousness to the sin, but present yourselves to the God as if |alive** *o* **from** among the **dead** one**s, and =your ˙members** as **implements of righteousness to ˙God.**
14 **For sin shall not be lording** it over **=you,**
For =you |are not being under law, but under
joy **grace.**
15 *a* **What, then?** *sh* **Shall we sin,** seeing **that we |are not being under law, but under grace?**
May it not *b* **come°** to that! 16 **Are =you not °aware that to whom =you are presenting yourselves** as **slaves** *io* **for listening,** his **slaves =you |are, to whom =you are listening, whether of sin** *io* **for death, or of listening** *io* **for righteousness?** 17 *y* **Now** *joy* **thanks** be **to the God that =you |were slaves of the sin, yet =you listen** *o* **from** the **heart** to the **type of teaching** *io* **to which =you are given over.** 18 *y* **Now freed from the sin, =you are enslaved to the righteousness.**
19 As a **human am I saying** this **because** of **the infirmity of =your ˙flesh. For even as =you present =your ˙members** as **slaves to the uncleanness and to the lawlessness** *io* **for the lawlessness, thus now present =your ˙members** as **slaves to the righteousness** *io* **for holiness.** 20 **For when =you |were slaves of the sin =you |were free** as **to the righteousness.**
21 *a* **What fruit, then, were =you having then?—** *on* **of which =you are now being ashamed°, for indeed the consummation of those** things is **death.** 22 **Yet now, freed from the sin, yet enslaved to the God, =you are having =your ˙fruit** *io* **for holiness.** *y* **Now the consummation** is **life eonian.** 23 **For the =ration of the sin** is **death, yet the** *joy* **gracious** gift **of the God** is **life eonian in Christ Jesus, our ˙Lord.**

LISTENING TO GOD'S EVANGEL OF JOY

WHEN Paul first presented God's evangel concerning His Son (of which he was not ashamed) in Romans 1:16,17, he described it as God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it. "*For* in it God's righteousness is being revealed out of [Jesus Christ's[1]] faith, for [everyone who is believing's] faith." So now the apostle will speak of this evangel as the joy of God (Rom.5:15) in "the listening of the One, Jesus Christ" (Rom.5:19) for our listening (Rom.6:16-23).

THEREFORE

"Therefore" in light of what has been said before concerning the death of Jesus Christ for sinners (Rom.5:1-11), this matter of sin and death comes before us in greater detail in Romans 5:12. But it only gets as far as how these two evils relate to human beings. There is an "even as" concerning us, but not yet a "thus also" concerning Jesus Christ.

As for human beings our attention is first directed to one human (Adam, whose name means "Human"). It is through him that *the* sin enters into the world (the system of things).

Through one man only (not through all of us, and even Eve is left out here) the sin enters into the system of things. Paul does not direct attention to sin in general (though that is also true) but to a definite, specific missing of the mark of

1. **Jesus Christ's**: as in Rom.3:22, the same designation given to God's Son in Rom.1:6,8 and 2:16, Who now in 1:17 is called "the Righteous One."

righteousness. He tells us what this particular sin is when he resumes the "even as" in verse 19, and there he supplies the "thus also." *The* sin is *the* BESIDE-HEARing[2], the setting aside of the message of instruction which the one human hears, which is: "From every tree of the garden you may eat, yea eat. But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it . . ." (Gen.2:16,17a).

Indeed Adam hears this instruction, but he puts what he hears in Genesis 2 aside and listens to Eve who had listened to the serpent and was deceived. We may say that he also *sees* that the fruit is *desirable,* and even that he remembers Yahweh Elohim's words of Genesis 2:24 about clinging to the woman. In any case he makes his choice and can do no other. He disregards Genesis 2:17a and thus his sin becomes a particular *transgression* of law (Rom.5:14) and a particular *offense* (Rom.5:16) to *the* God.

It is through this particular sin that a particular *death* enters the world. This death is *the* death described in the warning: "for on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying" (Gen.2:17b). We are all familiar with that death, for it passes through from Adam into all human beings. We are dying unto the point of death. This is the death of Romans 5:12. It is not the death of Romans 6:3-7 where we hear of "the death of Him," that is of Christ Jesus, into which we are baptized in spirit (1 Cor.12:12). The death of Romans 5 is one of great evil. But the death of Romans 6 is one of great goodness, righteousness and glory, for this death puts the evil death to death (to be realized in God's own time). And this is for all, for in that Christ dies for all, all die (2 Cor.5:14), and ". . . since in fact through a human comes death, through a Human also comes the resurrection of the dead ones. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:21,22).

2. The use of this term in Mark 5:36 shows it does not signify "disobey" but rather, "disregard."

That sin of disregarding God's words of instruction leads to the death of dying unto the state of death, the death of mortality and its consequence. Then also we are told here that the death described in Genesis 2:17b passes through into all humans beings.

So Paul brings us to the words "on which" in Romans 5:12 concerning which there is a great deal of controversy because of a failure to listen to what they say. The preposition "on" may seem strange here (but it does not mean "for"). But the pronoun "which" most certainly refers to "the death," grammatically and logically. It is only because this is denied for theological reasons, for predetermined convictions which arise from human reasoning that what is said here is set aside. Nevertheless it is *on* the basis of the death of Genesis 2:17b that "all sin." The many human sinners are constituted sinners because of the disease of death that is in them which no medicine and no religion can remove.

Only the death of Jesus Christ can rid the world of that which entered through Adam.

THUS ALSO

We, then, come to the "thus also" of Romans 5:19b which carries forward the "even as" of Romans 5:19a and the "even as" of Romans 5:12 as well. This "thus also" is God's evangel concerning His Son. It has already been presented over and over again, and with striking clarity in the present context in Romans 4:24-5:11 and even more recently in 5:16-18. But now in verse 19 this evangel is put in glorious contrast to what has been said about "the sin" and "the death" and "the disregarding" which relate to the one human, Adam, and drastically affect all of us.

The translation, "through the *obedience,*" as in most English versions including the previous editions of the CV does not represent the Greek thought as well as it prob-

ably did when the AV was translated. The word "obedience" was directly carried over from the Latin word which meant something like "toward hearing," that is, the action of directing one's attention to what has been heard. Similarly the Greek word was composed of the elements: UNDER-HEARing, giving a sense of submission to what was heard. In Greek, in Latin, and even in middle English[3], a sense of hearing or listening was dominant.

But in modern English that sense has almost disappeared. My American Heritage Dictionary (Second College Edition, 1982) defines "obedience" as "The quality or condition of being obedient" and "obedient" as "Obeying or carrying out a request or command; dutiful," which is indeed true of our Lord in dying for our sins. But Paul's word is focusing on the quality or condition of attentive *hearing*,—not the carrying out of an instruction but of listening to it. My dictionary defines "listen" as "1. To make an effort to hear something. 2. To pay attention; give heed." That reflects the sense of under-hear and toward-hear quite well. While Adam set aside what he heard in Genesis 2:17 Jesus Christ paid attention with intense faithfulness to such passages as Genesis 22 and Isaiah 53 (and Habakkuk 2:3,4).

The evangel tells of our Lord's hearing submissively, that is, listening to the instructions of His God and Father concerning what He was to observe and do. All that He hears He does despite the opposition from His disciples and the jibes and cruel taunts of the crowd as well as His own will to avoid the cup of suffering and forsakenness He was to drink. We however are to listen attentively to the revelations of joyous justification, conciliation, salvation and

3. John Milton (17th century) wrote: "What obeyes Reason, is free" (SHORTER OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY, p.1426 [Milton's spelling]) where we would say "Whoever *listens to* reason is free."

deliverance which the evangel declares, and do so without diluting the glory of Christ's listening by inserting something of ourselves for boasting.

Joy to God for the listening of His Son, Whom He spares not but gives up for us all. And joy to God for the evangel concerning the listening of His Son which is for our listening.

JOY

It needs to be seen, then, that the Greek word, *charis*, which is translated "grace" in most of its occurrences is essentially a matter of JOY. Hence it is first defined in the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE (p.132) as "an act producing happiness," and in ENGLISHMAN'S GREEK CONCORDANCE as "that which gives joy, pleasure, delight . . . ." This fundamental meaning of *charis* is not directly brought out in the widely used work, A GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT prepared by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich[4], but there it is noted at the beginning that "It seems that *charis* is not always clearly differentiated in meaning from *chara*" which is consistently rendered "joy."

I would say, judging by its usage, that *charis* always conveys much the same sense as *chara*, and in one way or another all Greek words in the *char-* family (e.g., *chairō*= *"rejoice"). It is to be noted that charis* is sometimes rendered **thank**s as in Romans 6:17 and 2 Corinthians 9:15, but in those cases the word "joy" would serve as well (*i.e.*, to give God *charis* is to give Him joy).

However, a problem has been introduced by giving *charis* a second associated definition which has confused our understanding of its *essential* meaning. That is, after giving *charis* the meaning of happiness (representing the

4. The University of Chicago Press, 1957, p.805.

root sense of JOY), the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE adds that it is "a benefit bestowed on one who deserves the opposite," and THE ENGLISHMAN'S GREEK CONCORDANCE adds as a "b" definition: "grace, undeserved favor." Indeed in the contexts of Romans 3:24 and 5:15-21 the *charis* (as well as the *charisma*) is undeserved. This is true of God's evangel. We do not deserve the joy of justification, of conciliation, of salvation, of reconciliation, whether present in spirit or future in full experience and enjoyment—joy that is based on God's giving of His Son and His Son's response in faith and His listening to the will of God. But the undeservedness is not brought out solely by the word *charis,* but by its association with the word "gratuity" (*dōrea*), and by the fact that we are sinners.

When we see how dominantly joy defines grace we may come to see that "the grace of God" as Paul speaks of it in Romans 5:15 is a reflection of Isaiah 53:9,10 where the prophet declares: "Although He does no wrong, And no deceit is in His mouth, Yet Yahweh, He desires to crush Him, And He causes Him to be wounded"! Such a joy and such a desire can be understood only by the results of Christ's listening unto death, even the death of the cross. "Wherefore God highly exalts Him and graces [re**joices**] Him with the Name that is above every name" (Phil.2:9).

How can we listen to such a revelation without exclaiming "Joy be to God!"

SUPEREXCEEDS

In Romans 5:20,21 Paul declares, ". . . where the sin increases, *the joy grace superexceeds,* that even as the sin reigns in death, thus also the joy grace shall reign through righteousness for life eonian through Jesus Christ, our Lord." Then immediately the questions of Romans 6:1,2 come up: "What, then, shall we be declaring? That we may

be persisting in sin that joy grace shall increase?" That idea is decisively dismissed: "May it not come to that!"

The declarations of 5:20,21 are positive and fully in accord with God's evangel concerning His Son. The declaration of 6:1,2 is rejected and is not to be declared as evangel. To say that the grace which is God's joy in the giving of His Son to the death of the cross could be something that increases as we persist in sin is sorely to mistake that grace. The joyous grace is the act of God that superexceeds over the entirety of sin introduced through the sin of Adam in ignoring God's instruction. That grace is the once and for all (Rom.6:10) death of Jesus Christ our Lord in which we *die* to sin. That grace, as it affects us is our inclusion with Christ in His death, being entombed together in His entombment that we shall walk in newness of life when we are vivified in Him. Such a grace cannot be increased—certainly not by anything we do. It *is* superexcessive over all sin, for the doing is that of our Lord in giving Himself for our sins. That has been done. The superexcessiveness of that grace over our sins and the whole problem of sin cannot be increased!

The very idea that something we do makes it necessary for what God has done through His Son to somehow be increased must be rejected. May it not come to that!

Let us then be declaring God's evangel as it is expressed in Romans 1:17 and 3:21-28 and Romans 5:1-21 and Romans 6:2-7 (not excepting what it says in Romans 4 and 6: 8-8:38) and throughout Paul's letters). Let us be enslaved to listening to the teaching to which we are given over (Rom.6:17,18). This is God's power for being saved in the present—God's power as it is being believed (Rom.1:16). And this is ultimately for all (Rom.3:22; 2 Cor.5:14), everyone of whom shall be constituted righteous (Rom.5:19). Yet in that God has graciously (joyfully) endowed us with a message of faith, this evangel is already saving us in many

special ways (1 Tim.4:10) and with full enjoyment in the oncoming eons. Joy be to God for His superexcessive joy to us and His indescribable gratuity!

THE SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD

In Greek the subjunctive verb (indicated in the CV by the words "should" and "may") is closely allied in its usage with the future indicative (that which "shall" or "will" be). It serves many times to draw our attention to a preceding statement which stands as its basis. We see this in Romans 6:6 where the subjunctive is indicated by the word "may." The contingency expressed by the verb "may be nullified" rests on whether or not it is certain that our old humanity is crucified, and this is what God has done in including us in Christ. In effect Paul is saying that our old humanity is crucified so that the body of sin *shall* be nullified. He certainly is not saying that the body of sin ought to be nullified. It shall be nullified. That is a certainty.

Yet somehow many take Paul as saying in Romans 6:4, that we ought to be walking in newness of life. Whether or not that is so, it is not what is being said here. Rather, the "should" is clearly to be understood as what *shall be.* "Even as Christ was roused from among the dead ones through the glory of the Father, thus we also shall walk in newness of life" through the glory of the Father. It is not through our efforts but through the glory of the Father in rousing Christ out of death.

This is the evangel of our future walk in newness of life gained for us by means of the glory of the Father. His glory is His giving of life, and we shall walk in newness of life even as Christ "is living," that is, "living to the God" (Rom.6:10).

This is our expectation. "*For* if we have become planted together in the likeness of His death, nevertheless we shall be living together with Him also" (Rom.6:5).

As for the present, it is in view of what God's evangel says concerning the death and rousing of Christ Jesus and us together with Him that Paul urges us to be presenting ourselves as *slaves of listening.*

LISTENING FROM THE HEART

If, however, a sense of carrying out instructions is in view here, it is puzzling how we can carry out the type of teaching to which we are given over. That type of teaching is a *revelation* of salvation and justification and deliverance and joy and peace already carried out in Christ Jesus and most certainly to be enjoyed in the future. How does one obey (in its current sense) a message that is apart from law? How does one carry out a revelation of the righteousness of God in gratuitously justifying sinners in His joyous grace? How does one carry out what has been carried out and is already made certain?

In Romans 6:16-22 Paul sees the primarily essential act of a slave is to listen attentively to what his or her master says. That act is to be carried out indeed, but we mistake it if we think what we hear in the evangel of God concerning His Son involves the carrying out of a type of teaching which was given to Israel, in the law.

The point Paul makes in Romans 6 is, therefore, not that we are obligated to cease sinning and live a new life, but that we are to listen with attention to God's evangel of joy concerning His Son. This evangel of the death and rousing of Christ and what it means to us is presented as a certainty. Nothing we do or do not do changes what is done and shall be. But there is spiritual power for the present salvation of joy and peace and other qualities of the fruit of the spirit (Gal.5:22) in our continued listening to this teaching of gratuitous joy.

D.H.H.

INDEX TO VOLUME 116

Adjusting the Saints 109
An Evangel is Brought to the Dead 30
Appreciation of God, The 75
Celestial Conflict, The
[Eph.6:10-17] 157
Chained Ambassador, A
[Eph.6:18-24] 171
Concordant Studies 30
Concordant Version, The 83
2 Corinthians 10:4-6 170
Darnel, Fire, Furnace, Outer Darkness 135
Evangel of the Circumcision, The
[Galatians 2:6-14] 17
Evangel of which Paul is
not Ashamed, The 180
Figure of Salt, The 89
Figures of Speech 89,135
Gender of Pronouns, The 29
God's Evangel 99
Joint Body—in the Lord, The
[Eph.5:21-6:9] 147
Listening to "Listen" 83
Listening to the Evangel 99,180
Metaphor of God being a Consuming Fire, The 190
"Mystical" Body of Christ, The 4
New Humanity, The 124
Obituaries: G. Hyde 72, E. Winter 134
Romans 1:1-12 108
Rooted and Grounded in Love 4,36,51,109,124,147,
:157,171
Spirit's Unity, The 51
Studies in Galatians 17
Unity of the Spirit, The 73
Who Receive the Secret? 36

Unsearchable Riches

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 116th Year

(1909–2025)

Contents:

2 Editorial
4 The "Mystical" Body of Christ
17 The Evangel of the Uncircumcision
30 An Evangel is Brought to the Dead
36 Who Receive the Secret?

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EDITORIAL

THIS is a time of transition and adjustment for this magazine. I am no longer involved actively in its production and have requested that my name be withdrawn from the title page. Nevertheless I am writing this editorial. As has been so for many years, there are several workers involved in the production of this instrument of the Concordant Publishing Concern. And so it continues.

Yet I am grateful for this opportunity to speak personally here at the beginning of volume 116. What I wrote about "listening" and "joy" and "should" in the last issue keeps running through my head, and I would very much like to add a few words on these matters of the evangel.

My concern is mainly that what Paul writes with clarity in Romans 5 not be diluted by what he writes in chapters 6-8. We have already seen that the properly grammatical rendering of the phrase "faith *of* Jesus Christ" (not "faith *in* Jesus Christ") in Romans 3:22 opens up the harmony of the opening four chapters with chapter 5. When Paul speaks of Jesus Christ's faith he is saying the same thing as the words stated more plainly in Romans 5:8, "Christ dies for our sakes." The faith of Jesus Christ in dying for our sakes is God's evangel concerning His Son which is for our faith. Similarly, this evangel is worded in Romans 5:19 as "the listening [UNDER-HEARing] of the One," and it is this which is for our listening as a slave listens to the words of his or her master (Rom.6:16-18). The English word "obedience" no longer conveys a sense of attentive hearing as it once did. It is true that a slave is obligated to carry out instructions, but first it is critical to listen carefully to such

instructions. To do what is not instructed and fail to do what is instructed is actually to be disobedient and may have harmful consequences. But what God says to us is "apart from law" (Rom.3:21), that is apart from instruction of what we are to do or not do. Rather we hear a message of revelation of what God has done through His Son and what this reveals about God. It is a message of joyous achievement. Our Lord, however, heard a message of what He was to do, or rather more exactly, what was to be done to Him. His listening was most attentive and submissive, first as His faith which was of the highest and purest quality. Our listening (or paying attention) to God's evangel of joy and peace concerning the death and rousing of Jesus Christ is, by comparison, more flawed (for we are sinners who are dying), but nevertheless Paul urges us to present ourselves as slaves of listening from the heart to the type of teaching to which we are given over.

This type of teaching is one of joy and peace. To be sure, the joy is undeserved and gratuitous, so it differs from the joy we give to God in the form of abundantly deserved thanks and praise for not sparing His own Son but giving Him up for us all. But in both cases the Greek word used (*charis*) conveys the sense of joy.

Accordingly I believe we must see that Paul's use of the subjunctive "should" in Romans 6:4 does not convey a sense of "ought," but a sense of certainty concerning the future, as in Romans 3:4 where "should" exactly matches "shall."

All of this calls for testing. A list of all the passages where a form of the Greek word UNDER-HEAR appears would be helpful with some form of the English word "listen" used. I am not opposed to obedience, but as that word is understood today the sense of the original term, UNDER-HEAR, is in danger of getting lost. As listening slaves we are to be listening attentively to God's evangel concerning His Son.

Dean H. Hough

THE "MYSTICAL" BODY OF CHRIST

"For even as, *in one body,* we have many members, yet all the *members* have not the same *function* . . ." (Rom.12:4).

"God blends the body together . . . that there may be no schism *in the body,* but the *members* may be mutually *solicitous for one another*" (1 Cor.12:24).

"Making *peace . . . reconciling both* [groups, Uncircumcision and Circumcision] *in one body*" (Eph. 2:15,16).

TO GET AT THE VERY HEART of the secret unfolded in Ephesians is a great spiritual achievement, far beyond the soulish man (1 Cor.2:14) and impossible to minors in Christ (1 Cor.3:1-4). It has become so mysterious that it is well called a "mystery."

Even among those well advanced in truth, who have not shaken themselves entirely free of the shackles which once bound them, there is much misapprehension on this matter. Well do we remember the notable series of articles on this subject by Dr. Bullinger. But even he made the Ephesian secret the body of Christ, as many spiritual divines, especially among the Puritans, had done before him. That position is well crystallized in the phrase "the mystical body of Christ." My own suspicions were aroused by the fact that no such phrase is found in Scripture. This led me to inquire what "the mystery" really is.

After much study, I found the answer to my quest in the categorical statement of Ephesians 3:6. There it is defined for us so clearly and concisely that we need never be at a

loss as to its precise provisions. There we are told that, *in spirit,* the nations are to be

> *joint* enjoyers of an allotment,
> and a *joint* body,
> and *joint* partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which Paul became the dispenser.

That the nations were to be *heirs* or *allottees* was no secret. Long before this Paul had written to the Roman believers: "For you did not get slavery's spirit to fear again, but you got the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying, 'Abba, Father!' The spirit itself is testifying together with our spirit that we are children of God. Yet if children, enjoyers also of an allotment, enjoyers, indeed, of an allotment from God" (Rom.8:15-17). Similarly he expostulates with the Galatians: "Now, seeing that you are sons, God delegates the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying 'Abba, Father!' So that you are no longer a slave, but a son. Now if a son, an enjoyer also of God's allotment, through Christ" (Gal.4:6-8).

That the believers among the nations were members of the body of Christ was no secret either, as we propose to show.

THE BODY AS A FIGURE

The word "body" is frequently used as a *faded* figure for any group of people, as we say of a crowd, "They went to the place in a *body.*" We wish, however, to consider particularly those passages where the body is used in a definitely figurative sense in the Scriptures, and see if we cannot correct our thoughts and expressions to accord therewith.

ISRAEL FIGURED AS A BODY

Before considering the special figures usually associ-

ated with the ecclesia of the one body it may be well to consider the word "body" as figuring other things. When our Lord was explaining to His disciples how it would be when the Son of Mankind is unveiled, they say to Him, "Where, Lord?" In reply He speaks this enigmatic parable: "Wherever the *body* is, there the vultures also will be assembled" (Luke 17:37). In the parallel passage (Matt. 24:28) the body is called a *corpse.* The most probable interpretation makes the body to be Jacob, as the victim of the nations in his time of trouble. As the vultures assemble about a dead body, so will the nations of the end time be drawn together to destroy Israel. Here the word *body* is used of those whom we usually *exclude* from "the body."

THE BODY OF JESUS

Our Lord used His physical frame in a figurative way frequently. He would have them eat His flesh (John 6:51). To this they took violent exception, because they did not recognize His meaning. Our life depends on food and drink. Just so our spiritual life depends on Christ. Unless we get nourishment from Him we will die.

The figure used in the Lord's dinner is different. There we have emblems, which we may literally eat and drink. And here it is His broken or given body and His shed blood, tokens of His sufferings and death, which are brought to our recollection, not merely to our minds, but to our feelings, by this figure.

HIS BODY IS A TEMPLE

He also compared His whole body to a temple (John 2:21). The Jews asked for a sign, and He answered, "Raze this temple and in three days I will raise it up." They should have realized that the literal pile of stones before them did not really house the Deity. God lived in His body, hence

it was well worthy of the figurative appellation, "temple." They razed it and He raised it.

THE BODY AND BLOOD OF THE LORD

Those who delight in the exquisite diction of the Scriptures, and especially in the marvelous way in which the titles of our Saviour are varied to agree with the context, will enjoy the change from the *communion* of the blood and the body of *Christ* (1 Cor.10:16), to eating and drinking *unworthily* of the body and blood of the *Lord.* It is precisely the same body and the same blood, but the viewpoint in one case is privilege, in the other conduct. The passage follows (1 Cor.11:27,29):

> So that, whoever should be eating the bread or drinking the cup of the Lord unworthily, will be liable for the body and the blood of the Lord. . . . For he who is eating and drinking unworthily is eating and drinking judgment to himself, not discriminating the body of the Lord.

The Corinthians seem to have made a literal meal of this figurative memorial. They ate when hungry, instead of waiting to partake of the memorial in common with the rest. To set this right, they were disciplined. That which *figures* sacred spiritual realities must not be made a means of physical and literal satisfaction.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

The body of *Christ* is literally, of course, the same as the body of *Jesus,* or of the *Lord.* But, in figures of speech, the title used indicates a vast difference, which must be noted, or its force will be lost. Perhaps we should vary the title "Christ" occasionally for its equivalent, "Anointed," to show its *official* character. The main need, however, in these days, is to distinguish the various figures in which the body of Christ is employed. The thoughtless accep-

tance of these as one and the same has created much confusion, which need not continue if we will only test each context carefully for the *literal interpretation.* In figures, each usage stands by itself, and cannot be transported into another context. The word "body" here may figure one thing, yet quite another picture may be presented there. This is exceedingly important in concordant study. The *meaning* of a word is constant. It is the same everywhere. *On the contrary, the figurative usage is special.* It may occur nowhere else.

The first occurrence of the phrase, "the body of Christ," has been largely overlooked, because the figure does not fit well with so-called "body truth," which deals with the believers of this administration as a whole, not as individuals. But the individual saint has a relation to the body of the Anointed quite apart from his place in the one body. In dealing with the law, the apostle writes, "*you* also were put to death to the law through *the body of Christ* . . ." (Rom.7:4). Here we have the *death* of the body, and *through* that death all who are in Christ and under law, die to law. The important point for us, in this study, is to see that there is an *individual* relationship to the literal body of the *individual* Christ.

Let us foolishly try to carry over the "one body truth" into this passage, as is sometimes done with other texts. Then the "body of Christ" *dies,* literally, and through that death those in it who were under the law of Moses are dead to it! But when did it die? And how could the death of its members, in any sense, provide a release from the law? Is it not clear that "the body of Christ," though usually used figuratively of a company of saints, can also be used literally of His actual body of flesh and bones?

THE PERSONAL BODY OF CHRIST

To clear the way, let us first consider those passages in

which the personal body of our Lord is referred to. When He said "This is My body" (Matt.26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 1 Cor.11:24), the bread was not transmuted into flesh, hence His words are not true as to fact. The figure is explained to us by Paul by the words *communion* and *partaking* (1 Cor.10:16):

> The cup of blessing which we are blessing, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we are breaking, is it not the communion of the *body* of Christ? . . . all are partaking of the one bread.

That the one body of the saints is not in view here is evident from the parallel with the blood. The believers have in common both the blood and the body of Christ. By the figure of *Association* (usually called *Metonymy*) we partake of the benefits *associated with* the sufferings by His sheltering blood and the sustenance suggested by the bread and body.

THE BELIEVERS TODAY AS A BODY

We should seek to draw a clear line between those figures already presented, in which we partake of Christ and He comes to be *in us,* and those to which we now turn, in which we are *in Christ.* In these alone we have what is intended by the phrase "body truth." The blessings in store for Israel were shadowed by food and drink and festivals and sabbaths, but our blessings are in Christ, and are illustrated by various points which are literally true of His physical body.

MANY MEMBERS WITH DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS

Paul uses the body as a figure first in Romans 12:4,5:

> For even as, in one body, we have many members, yet all the members have not the same function, thus

> we, who are many, are one body in Christ, yet individually members of one another.

Let us note carefully just what the picture here really illustrates. It is not the relation of Christ to the saints which is uppermost, but of believers to one another. There were many different kinds of persons, with varying functions among them, yet all are in Christ, hence, like the members of the human body, all cooperate and are dependent on one another, and make one complete whole, because all have the same spirit.

If we are accurate in our statements we will not refer to this as the body *of Christ.* The literal is *our* body, not necessarily that body which He has in glory. The emphasis is on the individual members, as is fitting in Romans. They are spoken of as *members of one another.* The point is not their relationship to Christ. They are "*in* Christ," but the figure does not illustrate that. The emphasis is laid on the *variety of functions in many members,* which make up one body. Literally, it may be interpreted thus: The believers in Christ form a single organism, although they are given different gifts. These graces are complementary, so that the whole makes one complete organism. Let us carefully keep this figure distinct from similar ones in Corinthians and Ephesians. These are not "different bodies" but *different figures* concerning the *same* company of believers. In Romans we may take our own body as the basis of the figure, but in Corinthians the picture varies. In some connections it is *our* body (1 Cor.12:23), but it begins and ends with the body of *Christ* (1 Cor.12:12,27).

THE FIGURATIVE BODY OF CHRIST

In order to explain the spiritual endowments of the believers, the twelfth chapter of 1 Corinthians uses a figure almost identical with that used in Romans. There it is

illustrated by any body. Now the figure is expanded and enriched. As all the saints are anointed by God's spirit, the ecclesia is compared with the body of the Anointed. It is called "the Christ" or "the Anointed" (1 Cor.12:12). In Romans, the emphasis was placed on the *diversity* of the members. In Corinthians it lies on their *unity.* This unity is brought about by the baptism of the spirit. See how the figures are mixed! We can baptize many "bodies" and thus unite them, but you can hardly baptize the members of one body to unite them! But the literal is clear. All who enter the sphere of God's spirit are incorporated into one body.

The fullest unfolding of this figure is found in this passage. The object is to illustrate the relation of the believers to one another, especially in regard to the spiritual endowments which obtained at that time. It will be worth our while to study the occurrences of this figure very carefully, hence we will give the full text of this passage.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-31

For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the one body, being many, are one body, thus also is the Christ. For in one spirit also *we* all are baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and all are made to imbibe one spirit.

For the body also is not one member, but many. If the foot should be saying, "Seeing that I am not a hand, I am not of the body," not for this is it not of the body. And if the ear should be saying, "Seeing that I am not an eye, I am not of the body," not for this is it not of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the scent? Yet now God placed the members, each one of them, in the body according as He wills. Now if it were all one member, where were the body?

> Yet now there are, indeed, many members, yet one body. Yet the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," or, again, the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." Nay, much rather, those members belonging to the body supposed to be weaker are necessary, and which we suppose to be a more dishonored part of the body, these we are investing with more exceeding honor, and our indecent members have more exceeding respectability. Now our respectable members have no need, but God blends the body together, giving to that which is deficient more exceeding honor, that there may be no schism in the body, but the members may be mutually solicitous for one another. And whether one member is suffering, all the members are sympathizing, or one member is being esteemed, all the members are rejoicing together with it.
>
> Now *you* are the body of Christ, and members of a part, whom also God, indeed, placed in the ecclesia, first, apostles, second, prophets, third, teachers, thereupon powers, thereupon graces of healing, supports, pilotage, species of languages. Not all are apostles. Not all are prophets. Not all are teachers. Not all have powers. Not all have the graces of healing. Not all are speaking languages. Not all are interpreting. Yet be zealous for the greater graces. And still I am showing you a path, suited to transcendence.

First let us note that it illustrates a temporary condition. It is suited to the grace then shown to the nations, but this was far below that which was revealed later. But, when the path suited to transcendence led to maturity, the figure of the body was not abandoned. It was used over again seven times, but always with a different point. The human body is not merely a composite unit, as here set forth. It may be looked at as needing food, or as being cherished, as executing the will of the mind, etc. In these and other relationships the ecclesia is also called a body.

In order to keep from confounding this figure with that of Christ's headship, let us note carefully that the *growth* and *subjection* of the believers is quite foreign to the theme here. The saints are the complete body of Christ, head included. The ear, the eye, the scent, are all *members* even though they are in the head. The relation of Christ to *this* body is *not* that of Head. He is *All.* Just as His literal body in glory consists of feet and hands and head, so His figurative body is a complete organism, and His spirit gives life to *every member,* whether it is the lowest (the feet) or the highest (such as the eyes in the head). And He is full grown. No growth is possible on the part of His literal body, so that it cannot be used to illustrate growth or increase. *Growth* is true only where He is the figurative *Head* (Eph.4:16).

The literal truth so graphically set forth under the figure of the body (in 1 Cor.12:12-31) should be clear to each one. It is the spirit they receive which unites all who are in Christ, and which gives them the power of *cooperation and mutual sympathy.* The more this spirit fills us the more this will be apparent. The less there is of it the less we will see of the cooperative unity and sympathy which should be the most marked feature of the church.

It is seldom, indeed, that a figure is so detailed as in this example. There are many points of contact. There are *many members* in one organism, and mutual dependence, helpfulness, and sympathy.

THE BODY IN THIS SECRET ADMINISTRATION

Ephesians does not repeat all that Paul gives us in his previous epistles, even if it is included in the truth for today. It simply incorporates what was already revealed by referring to it under some clear designation. Thus, little is said of our expectation in this epistle, yet the subject is based upon what had been made known before.

"Those who are in a state of prior expectancy" clearly recognize what he had written to the Thessalonians and Corinthians (Eph.1:12); then follows the prayer that they should be able to perceive the prospect now revealed (Eph.1:18), and the exhortation to keep the unity made by the one expectation (Eph.4:4).

So also with the truth of our spiritual union in Christ. No detailed illustration is needed, since it has already been given, and the saints associated with Paul's ministry have come to be called "the ecclesia which is His body" (Eph.1:23). It is the special designation for them when their relation to *Christ* is before us, as the expression "body-church" is with some today. Since, in fact, the same believers and the same unity are shown by the same figure we are hardly justified in making different bodies of these.

THE JOINT BODY

At this point I hope to help our friends by freely confessing my own failure in confusing the figure used in Ephesians with that in First Corinthians. Even though there is a basis in fact, as we shall see, the two figures are too different to form a direct contrast. More mature reflection has led me to see that the *joint* body of Ephesians and the *one* body of Corinthians must not be mixed in our minds. They were made by different methods and cover distinct areas of truth, which may, indeed, overlap, but are not identical. The one body was brought about by spirit baptism, and unites its many *members,* Jews and Greeks, but also slaves and free, and those who vary in the scale of respectability and honor. It leads to *sympathy in suffering,* and *rejoicing in esteem.* It is concerned with the *mutual care* we should exercise *for one another* while in weakness and insufficiency and shame in this nether sphere (1 Cor.12:13,26).

This joint body, however, is the result of *vivifying* and *rousing* and *seating* two *groups* of believers, those among the nations *together* with an election out of Israel, among the *celestials* (Eph.2:5,6), both groups being dead to their offenses. The action is literally true of Christ's body. In this view it is not composed of *many members,* but of only *two groups,* which have been dealt with *together,* or *jointly.* It is not concerned with their sympathetic exercise, but with the display of God's grace in the coming eons. The words *joint* and *together* are the same in the Greek, and mark a distinction between this aspect (*two groups* brought together) and that of a body with *many members,* though, of course, both describe a *unity,* and may be called *one* body.

Yet the fact that this joint body does away with the prerogatives and preeminence of Pauline Jews and gives them the same place among the celestials as believers among the nations, in Christ, has its effect on the constitution of the one body of Corinthians. This is clearly indicated by the different lists of the gifts. Those in Corinthians were suited to the time. Ephesians does not discard them all, and start fresh. It continues those suited to the new grace, drops those which are not in line with it, and adds two new ones. Apostles and prophets continued in the foundation (Eph.2:20). Teachers are still with us, as well as evangelists and pastors. As we also are baptized in one spirit, and have gifts, we, as many individuals, are one body, as in Romans and Corinthians, composed of various degrees or ranks with different functions, which are figured by the differently esteemed members of the body in all of these epistles.

Thrice, in Ephesians, the nations are addressed in order to *explain their jointure* with some believers out of Israel, which constitutes the secret. First, in relation to God and their celestial allotment, we read in 1:13: In Whom *you* also . . . are sealed with the holy spirit . . . which is an earnest of . . . *our allotment.* The nations are joint enjoyers of

an allotment with select Israelites *because they, too, have been sealed* with the spirit of promise, which is its earnest. In relation to Christ the joint body is explained in 2:1-5: And *you* being dead . . . *we* also . . . God . . . vivifies *us together* . . . and rouses *us together* and seats *us together* among the celestials, in Christ Jesus. The nations belong to the joint body because *they, as well as those of Israel* whose lot was in Christ among the celestials, are vivified, roused, and seated jointly. In the coming eons our bodies will be literally raised together and He will display His transcendent grace through us. The nations form a joint body with Pauline Jews because they are vivified, roused and seated together.

In relation to each other, their joint participation is set forth in 2:11: once *you*, the nations in flesh, and 2:13-18: now . . . *you* . . . far off . . . near . . . *our* peace . . . *both* one . . . the *two* . . . into one . . . into *one* new humanity . . . *we both* have had access. The nations participate with selected Israelites *in spirit* because they are no longer shut out from access to God on account of their *physical* relationship.

BOTH BLESSED TOGETHER IN A JOINT BODY

Let us, then, confine the figure of the joint body to our union with the Circumcision, and let us revel in the transcendence of the grace which is thus revealed. It would have been a great mercy had we been blessed as subordinates of Israel, on the earth. Quite unthinkable would be the favor had we been made their equals in the Kingdom. Much higher than this would have been our blessing had we been put beneath them among the celestials. But how unsurpassable is the grace that blesses us *together* and makes us a *together* or *joint* body in the highest sphere in all the universe!

A. E. Knoch

THE EVANGEL OF THE UNCIRCUMCISION

Galatians 2:6-14

IN Galatians 2:3, Paul refers to the time when "not even Titus, who is with me, being a Greek, is *compelled* to be circumcised." This was during the period of Paul's second visit to the holy city, after the lapse of fourteen years, when he again went up to Jerusalem together with Barnabas, taking Titus along with him (2:1). Yet while not even Titus, who was with Paul, being a Greek, was *compelled* to be circumcised, Paul adds that nonetheless, "it was because of the false brethren who were smuggled in, who came in by the way to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, that they shall be enslaving us—"(2:4). That is—and the sense is so evident that Paul breaks off his words without actually expressing his thought—it was because of the claims (*cp* Acts 15:1,2,5) of certain "false brethren" that Titus *was* then *pressed* by some to be circumcised, even though even these could not well *compel* him to undergo the rite, contrary to the counsel of the pillars of the Jerusalem ecclesia.

Now from those reputed to be somewhat—what kind they once were is of no consequence to me (God is not taking up the human aspect)—for to me those of repute submitted nothing. But, on the contrary, perceiving that I have been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, according as Peter of the Circumcision (for He Who operates in Peter for the apostleship of the Circumcision operates in me also for the nations), and, knowing the grace which is being given to me, James and Cephas and John, who are supposed to be pillars, give to me and

Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we, indeed, are to be for the nations, yet they for the Circumcision—only that we may be remembering the poor, which same thing I endeavor also to do. (2:6-10)

In speaking of the twelve as "those reputed to be somewhat," Paul should not be understood as disparaging them. Paul does not refer to any exalted claims which the twelve made for themselves, but to those advanced in favor of the twelve by the circumcisionists, in the interests of their own legalistic devisings.

Those who were apostles before Paul "submitted nothing" to him. The twelve acknowledged the message and ministry of Paul as sufficient unto itself. Paul's evangel needed no *addition*—and received none—from the twelve. But on the contrary, since God was *operating* in Paul for the apostleship of the nations, as well as in Peter for that of the Circumcision, the twelve *perceived* that Paul had been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, according as Peter of the Circumcision. Hence, James, Cephas, and John "knew" the grace which was being given to Paul. As a result, they gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, acknowledging that Paul and Barnabas were to be for the nations, yet they themselves for the Circumcision. The only word they wished to add was a request that Paul and his fellow workers may be remembering the poor among the Jews, which same thing, as Paul assures us, he endeavored also to do.

Considered in itself, it is possible to understand the phrase "the evangel of the Uncircumcision" as a metonymy for "the evangel*ization* of the Uncircumcision." But it is not translation but interpretation to render this phrase, as in most modern Bibles, "the gospel *to* the Uncircumcision." Such a rendering supports the popular claim that in all respects Paul's gospel is the same as that of the twelve. It gives credence as well to the related common assertion

that by the words "the gospel of Christ," we are to understand a *singular* message of good news which, in all particulars, applies to all who are in Christ.

Both "Uncircumcision" and "Circumcision" are in the genitive case. As will be explained later in this article, the sign of the genitive in English is OF- not TO-. Ideally, objective translation requires the former and precludes the latter. There may be a few cases where, due to the idiosyncracies of English, good diction may be strained if the genitive should be represented by OF. Nearly always, however, and certainly in this case at hand, it makes perfectly good English to say "the evangel of the Uncircumcision," as much so as to say, "the epistles of the apostle Paul." They are not the epistles *to* the apostle Paul, but the apostle Paul's epistles. Similarly, Paul does not speak of the evangel to the Uncircumcision, but of the Uncircumcision's evangel.

No one claims that the phrase "the apostleship *of* the Circumcision" (2:8), ought to be translated "the apostleship *to* the Circumcision." Further, it should be noted that by the words which follow in verse 9, "we, indeed, are to be *for* [lit., "in*to*"] the nations, yet they *for* [i.e., "in*to*"] the Circumcision," any general thought of evangelization directed, respectively, to both the nations and the Circumcision is thereby adequately expressed. Hence it becomes all the more untenable to render verse 7 as "the evangel *to* the Uncircumcision."

We are plainly told that the One Who operates in Peter for the apostleship of the Circumcision, is the One Who operates in Paul also for (the apostleship of) the nations. And, the word to us also is, that *Paul* has been entrusted with the *evangel of* the Uncircumcision, according as *Peter* (with the evangel) *of* the Circumcision. Let us accept the Scripture for what it says, while adjusting our faith accordingly.

Paul speaks explicitly of "the evangel *which* I am herald-

ing among the nations" (2:2); "the evangel *which* is being brought by me" (1:11); *which* he neither accepted from man nor was taught by man, that instead came to him "through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:12). The apostle himself will inform us as to its particulars. If we *believe* and *understand* both the revelations of Paul's evangel, according to Christ Himself, as well as the teachings of the twelve according as the Lord instructed them, we will soon know whether Paul's evangel "of the Uncircumcision" is a fresh revelation, distinct in various respects from the teaching of the twelve, or is, however expressed, essentially merely a restatement of their teaching.

It is not that the evangel of the Uncircumcision is the exclusive province of those of the nations; nor is it that the evangel of the Circumcision debars all but those who are Israelites by nature. It is rather that the evangel of the Uncircumcision is the evangel which is primarily for those of the nations, as brought to the nations through the ministry of the apostle Paul, who is the apostle of the nations (Rom.11:13; *cp* 1 Tim.2:7; 2 Tim.1:11; Eph.3:8).

Certain Israelites (such as Paul himself) are also called and blessed according to that evangel which, characteristically, is the evangel of the *Un*circumcision. Similarly, certain non-Israelites were themselves called and blessed according to that evangel which, characteristically, is the evangel of the Circumcision.

In the former case, any such descendants of Jacob lose their standing as Israelites and forfeit the advantages of the law—while concomitantly gaining the even greater benefits of the evangel of the Uncircumcision. If they are faithful, like Paul, they gladly forfeit all such benefits of flesh, while deeming them mere refuse (*cf* Phil.3:4-8).

In the latter case, like those of old who sojourned in Israel, any such non-Israelite believers who were nonetheless called and blessed according to the evangel of the Cir-

cumcision, were required to heed the law of Yahweh, which attended that evangel. Any such ones must become proselytes (*cf* Acts 2:10; 6:5; 13:43); that is, they must "come toward" Israel and observe the "one law," which applied not only to the native-born, but to the naturalized citizen as well (Ex.12:49). Initially, such ones had to undergo the rite of circumcision; subsequently, they would make a passover to Yahweh. They would then be deemed "natives of the land [of Israel]" (Ex.12:48,49). As naturalized Israelites, they would also be required to keep from violating the sabbaths, as well as to keep their hand from any evil, according to the law of Moses. Only thus could they hold fast to Yahweh's covenant (Isa.56:1-7; *cp* Acts 15:21) and be *worthy* of the resurrection of the *just* (*cf* Luke 14:14; 20:35; *cp* Matt. 5:17-20; 7:21-23).

Thus it is fitting for Paul to declare that God will be justifying the Circumcision "*out* of faith" and the Uncircumcision "*through the* faith" (Rom.3:30). In each case, the faith which justifies is "Jesus Christ's faith" (Rom.3:22); "the faith of Jesus" (Rom.3:26). As in Romans 11:36, where it is revealed that all is not only *out* of God, but *through* God as well, here too in Romans 3:30, it is certainly likewise true that under God, both the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision owe not only the origin but the agency of their justification as well to the faith of Christ.

Yet in the case of the Circumcision believers, who must center much of their attention upon their own observance of the law, it is not so obvious that even so, their justification is solely out of Jesus Christ's faith. After all, this truth, as such, is not even a part of the evangel of the Circumcision, even though it is certainly true concerning them, even as Paul declares.

However, in the case of the believers of the Uncircumcision, who are not under law at all (Rom.6:14), for whom Grace reigns even where sin increases (Rom.5:20,21),

whose very evangel *brings to the forefront* the fact that their justification is not only out of (the faith of) Christ but is *through* (the faith of) Christ as well, it becomes fitting for Paul to emphasize that God will be justifying them "*through the* faith [of Christ]."

FEAR AND HYPOCRISY

Now when Cephas came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, for he was self-censured. For, before the coming of some from James, he ate together with those of the nations. Yet when they came, he shrank back, and severed himself, fearing those of the Circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also play the hypocrite with him, so that Barnabas also was led away with their hypocrisy. (2:11-13)

Cephas was "self-censured" concerning his hypocrisy; he knew he was wrong and experienced guilt. Before the coming of "some from James," he had eaten together with those of the nations. "Yet when they came, he shrank back, and severed himself *fearing* those of the Circumcision." Then the rest of the Jews joined in, and they too played the hypocrite, together with him. They were all aware that even though the believers of the Uncircumcision did not observe the law, this was no reason to decline their fellowship, much less to sever themselves from them. It was those who came "from James" who were in the wrong, not Paul or the believers of the Uncircumcision. In supposing that those of the Uncircumcision must be circumcised and keep the law if they would be saved (*cf* Acts 15:1,2,5), or at this juncture, at least in imposing their own opinions as to practical holiness and perfection upon others, these unnamed men behaved most improperly. Yet to have such a profound influence not only upon Cephas but upon the rest of the Jews and even Barnabas besides, they must have been highly esteemed men of renown. Yet even so, they

were in fact but self-appointed authoritarians engaging in shameful (albeit highly effective) fear tactics.

But when I perceived that they are not correct in their attitude toward the truth of the evangel, I said to Cephas in front of all, "If you, being inherently a Jew, are living as the nations, and not as the Jews, how are you compelling the nations to be judaizing?" (2:14).

It was not that they were wholly ignorant of the evangel heralded by Paul, but that they were incorrect in their *attitude* concerning it. They failed to give it sufficient honor and recognition. Thus under the duress of circumstance, their remarkable fear of these Circumcision authoritarians became the decisive influence in determining their behavior.

Cephas was "inherently" (i.e., originally, by right) a Jew; it was not that he had become a naturalized citizen, but that he was a Jew "by nature" (*cp* 2:15). Even so, in acknowledgement of Paul's evangel, Cephas properly *had been* living "as [those of the] nations" live, and "not as Jews," who commonly had little or no association with non-Jews. This is simply to say that in respect of free intercourse with those of the nations, Cephas, hitherto, had behaved as if he himself were one of the nations. Yet when some formidable ones from James came, due to his fear of these men of the Circumcision, he shrank back and even went so far as to sever himself from those of the nations.

How is it then, Paul asks, that *you,* Cephas, are *compelling the nations to be judaizing? It was by no means Peter's teaching,* in word, that judaizing was compulsory for those of the nations; in fact earlier, he had spoken against any such claim (*cf* Acts 15:7-11). Even though Cephas did not verbally affirm that it was compulsory for the nations to be judaizing, nevertheless, by his actions, he *effectually* did this very thing. That is, in light of Cephas' own behavior, the non-Jewish believers might well conclude that the

only way for them to be accepted as faithful at least by their Jewish fellow believers if not by God Himself as well, would be by their taking up with Judaism. How inconsistent it was of Cephas to behave as he did, in light of the strong, negative influence that this would bring to bear upon the believers of the nations.

THROUGH FAITH *OF* CHRIST, OR FAITH *IN* CHRIST?

In the next article in this series, we intend to consider Galatians 2:16, which is centered in the revelation that "we may be justified through the *faith of Christ* and not by works of law." But in preparation for that study, we first need to consider the translation itself, "faith *of* Christ." This becomes a special need since most modern translations, even as they render "the evangel *of* the Uncircumcision" (2:7) as "the gospel *to* the uncircumcised" (e.g., the NASB), translate "faith of Christ" similarly, as "faith *in* Christ."

This question as to the sense of the phrase, "the faith *x* Christ," is by no means solely a question of grammar; yet it is indeed a question in which grammatical issues are an important consideration. Grammatically, the question as to what is to be understood by *pistis Iesou Christou* (i.e., "faith *x* Jesus Christ"), is a question of the usage of the *genitive* case. Grammatical *case* is the syntactical relationship of a noun, pronoun, or adjective to other words in a sentence, generally indicated by declensional endings in inflected languages (such as Greek), or by prepositions and word order in non-inflected languages (such as English).

The Greek genitive case includes the English possessive case. The genitive's presence is indicated in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT's sublinear by OF- (when no connective is present; e.g., "son *of* David," Matt.1:20). OF is intended as a neutral means by which to indicate the genitive (that is, to indicate that in some respect "this is *of* that").

Though the Concordant Version sometimes renders the genitive as an adjective (e.g., "His messengers OF-POWER" as "**His power**ful **messengers**," 2 Thess.1:7), otherwise, the CV nearly always represents the genitive case by the English "of."[1]

The genitive case is the case of genus or kind. It is the *specifying* case; the case of appurtenance. The function of the genitive is largely adjectival (e.g., "the day of preparation," was the preparation day; Luke 23:54).[2] Indeed, the Concordant Version renders "[after] the exile OF-BABYLON," as "[after] **the Babylon**ian **exile**" (Matt.1:12). Similarly, "the blasphemy of the spirit" (Matt.12:31), in the Greek syntax, is "THE . . . OF THE spirit blasphemy."

The usual claim, however, is that the genitive "OF-Christ faith" is nonetheless translated true to sense as "faith *in* Christ," since, we are told, this phrase is an "objective genitive." It is said that as the phrase "faith of God" in Mark 11:22[3] concerns man's faith God-ward, the Pauline phrase

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1. An exception is the genitive "faith OF-TRUTH" in 2 Thessalonians 2:13, which the 1976 edition renders "**faith** in the **truth**." Perhaps the idiom is along the lines of the thought that the Thessalonians' faith partook of the nature of truth. Thus it was "of-truth faith." Truth indeed fosters confidence in itself. Like ourselves, the Thessalonians found faith growing in them as they received truth; hence, "faith OF-TRUTH."

2. *cp* A. T. Robertson, A GRAMMAR OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT, IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH, p.493; Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1934.

3. "And answering, Jesus is saying to them, 'if you have *faith of God,* verily, I am saying to you that whosoever may be saying to this mountain, 'Be picked up and cast into the sea,' and may not be doubting in his heart but should be believing that what he is speaking is occurring, it shall be his, whatsoever he may be saying." It should be noted that *genuine* "OF-God faith" (as opposed to mere fleshly credulity in its name), necessarily incorporates the ablative sense of faith which is *from* God, according as He has spoken. Only then, in turn, does it become faith that is also God-ward.

"faith of Christ" concerns man's faith Christ-ward.

The answer to this, of course, is that it does not follow that if, in the nature of the case, "faith of God" in the preceding text involves man's faith God-ward, "faith of Christ," as Paul uses this expression, refers to man's faith Christ-ward. By such faulty logic as this, nearly anything can be "proved." Yet beyond such fallacious arguments, there is little to commend the claim that "faith of Christ" means *man's* faith *in* Christ.

In fact, the main reason for the acceptance of this interpretation (which is made a part of the translation itself in most modern Bibles) is the age-old tradition that affirms that one is saved by his own believing. Such a notion is then read into the text. In turn, it is further claimed that through such very passages, Paul himself sets forth the self-same teaching. Thus, through such circular reasoning, the rendering "faith *in* Christ" is justified by its advocates.

All that the Greek says is: OF-Christ faith; that is, faith that, in some respect, has reference, or relates to Christ. The translation "faith *in* Christ," then, is not really a translation at all, but an interpretation. And, as popularly understood, it is certainly a mistaken interpretation as well.

Even on grammatical grounds the case here for an "objective" genitive (i.e., for a faith that is directed Christward) is very weak. Yet if one insists on such an interpretation, it would then become necessary to refer this "faith in Christ" *to God,* not to man, in order for this expression to accord with the evangel itself, the revelation that justification is gratuitous and in grace, through the deliverance *which is in Christ Jesus.*

In the Pauline epistles, apart from the disputed cases in which the genitive is "Christ" or its equivalent in every case (approximately twenty-four instances) in which "faith" is followed by a proper noun or pronoun in the genitive case, the genitive is unmistakably subjective. Twenty instances

refer to the faith of believers; one to the faith of anyone who believes; two to the faith of Abraham; and one to the faithfulness of God.

When Paul wishes to speak of the believer's faith in (i.e., "into") Christ, he does so not by means of a genitive noun apart from a preposition, but by means of an accusative (i.e., objective) noun together with an accusative preposition: ". . . rejoicing and observing your order and the stability of your faith *in* (i.e., "into") Christ" (Col.2:5).

A parallel expression to the *faith* of Christ is that of the *grace* of Christ: "*grace* which is *of* the One Man, *Jesus Christ*" (Rom.5:15). It would never occur to anyone to translate this text as "grace *in* Christ," much less to claim that it speaks of the *believer's* grace! Yet the only real difference between the genitive "of Christ" here and those which we have considered elsewhere, is that here the phrase is appended as a modifier of grace, while in the others (as in Galatians 2:20) the same phrase functions as a modifier of faith.

Similarly, just as Romans 3:3 speaks of "the faith(fulness) of God" Romans 3:22,26 speaks of the "faith(fulness) of Jesus Christ," the "faith(fulness) of Jesus." Further, the phrase "the faith of Abraham" in Romans 4:16 forms a precise formal parallel to the phrase "the faith of Jesus" in Romans 3:26. Thus, as these parallels between the faith of Abraham and the faith of Christ make clear, "the faith of Christ" refers to His faithful obedience unto death; our Lord's trust in God concerning the cross.

The very notion that those texts which say "faith of Christ" nonetheless have in view faith *in* Christ—*namely the believer's own faith in Christ*—is but the stepchild of the long-standing tradition that affirms that "justification *by* faith" means man's justification not by his performing works of law, but by his acceptance of Christ and assenting to faith in Him. The idea is that man saves himself, or

if it is preferred, qualifies for God to save him, not by a former method, that of performing righteous deeds, but by a new method, that of acquiescing in faith.

Traditional theology is not merely saying that salvation comes upon believing in Christ, and not apart from or prior to. What it is also saying (even if more implicitly than explicitly) is that salvation is of the nature of an exchange, a reward, requital, or compensation. When preachers say that salvation is "by faith [i.e., man's faith]," they are using "by" in a transactional sense, according to the meeting of a requirement (as in, "by doing your work, you are entitled to your wages").

The phrase faith OF-Christ however, is parallel to and must agree with the essence of the evangel itself, the revelation that we are "being justified gratuitously in [God's] grace, through the deliverance *which is in Christ Jesus*" (Rom.3:24). The deliverance is not said to be through *our faith* in Christ Jesus, but through Christ Jesus Himself. Similarly, it is not revealed that we were conciliated to God through *our faith in* the death of His Son, but that we were conciliated to God *through the death of* His Son (Rom.5:10). Further, it will not do to attempt to avoid this truth by artfully claiming that while this is so, it is only so on the "condition" (i.e., based upon a requirement) that we accept and believe on Christ. Any such claim is spurious; for we are not justified on a "conditional" basis that we meet some sort of requirement. Instead, we are justified apart from law, on a gratuitous and gracious basis, which precludes any and all requirements.

Therefore, all passages which declaim "the faith of Jesus Christ," out of which we are justified, must be understood to be referring to a faith which is His own: Christ's own perfect faith—not man's faulty faith in Him.

Of course we ourselves can only *speak* of our justification by means of our own faith, since it is by faith that we

apprehend what God has achieved through the work of the cross, even as what He will yet achieve in the eons ahead, when His promises are fulfilled. Still, the saint's own faith only gains for him a recognition of the justification which God has already established for him—through the faith *of* Christ (*cf* Rom.4:25-5:1; 5:9).

James R. Coram

THE GENDER OF PRONOUNS

GREEK nouns are usually masculine or feminine, quite apart from personality or sex. *Logos,* word, is masculine, *alêtheia,* truth, is feminine. How little this means may be seen in the statement "Thy word is truth." The word "truth" can have only a formal gender. Yet the relative pronoun, in referring to these words, must be *he* and *she.* Our Lord is the Truth *feminine* and the Life *feminine.* Shall we therefore refer to Him as *She*? That is one of the problems which perplexed the compiler of the sublinear in the Concordant Version. There are times when the literal is misleading. Let us suppose that John's account had opened with the word Truth in place of Word. Then our Lord would be continually referred to as *She*! Truth is always *she,* and word is always *he—but not in English.*

Few understand figures of speech. Our Lord is not literally a word. He is like a word, in that He conveys to our ears the thoughts of God. If He is called a word, however, we must refer to Him as *It* in English, to preserve the figure, just as the Greek calls Him *She* when He is the Truth. The pronoun must correspond with its noun grammatically in both languages, no matter what the actual gender may be. The same confusion has been introduced when speaking of God's spirit. The fact that it is referred to *in a figure* as *he* has been made the false foundation for one of the main items in the creed of Christendom. The plain evidence is ignored and a rule of English gender is ignorantly used to interpret the Greek, which is vastly different. Spirit is always *it* in Greek and English. When it is called a paraclete *masculine* it must be referred to *grammatically* as *he.* As a dove, the spirit is *she* (Matt.3:16).

(A. E. Knoch, Unsearchable Riches, v.21, p.272)

AN EVANGEL IS BROUGHT TO THE DEAD

"AN EVANGEL is brought to the dead." This statement is found in 1 Peter 4:6. Many are the imaginative interpretations regarding these words penned by Peter close to two thousand years ago. It is often thought that this phrase is referring to 1 Peter 3:18-20, which is: "seeing that Christ also, for our sakes, once died concerning sins, the just for the sake of the unjust, that He may be leading us to God; being put to death, indeed, in flesh, yet vivified in spirit, in which, being gone to the spirits in jail also, He heralds to those once stubborn, when the patience of God awaited in the days of Noah while the ark was being constructed, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were brought safely through water."

We should note concerning the above passage, that Christ was *first* vivified out of death, *then He went to the spirits* (not humans) in jail (not "Hell"). "Therefore those who suffer for doing good will also be exalted in due time. With this in mind, it is evident that it is not the evangel which is proclaimed to the spirits in prison, for that would be entirely out of line with the argument. It would imply that, as a result of their sufferings, their enemies will be evangelized. Such grace is foreign to Peter's epistles. The word here used is not evangelize, but herald or proclaim. It tells us, not that they were blessed, but that He was exalted. And what is more likely than that, after His ascension, He should be proclaimed the universal Suzerain to all creation, obedient or rebellious?"[1] In order to correct the

1. A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.360,361.

common misconceptions related to the phrase in 1 Peter 4:6, it would be helpful to first look at its context.

> "Christ, then, having suffered for our sakes in flesh, you also arm yourselves with the same thought, for he who is suffering in flesh has ceased his sins, by no means still *to spend the rest of his lifetime in the flesh in human desires, but in the will of God.* For sufficient is the time which has passed by to have effected the intention of the nations, having gone on in wantonness, lusts, debauches, revelries, drinking bouts, and illicit idolatries, while they are thinking it strange of you not to race together into the same puddle of profligacy, calumniating you; who shall be rendering an account to Him Who is holding Himself in readiness to judge the living and the dead. For for this an evangel is brought to the dead also, that they may be judged, indeed, according to men in flesh, yet should be living according to God, in spirit" (1 Peter 4:1-6).

The one who "spends the rest of his lifetime . . . in the will of God" (verse 2) is alive *to God.* The one doing the things of the flesh mentioned in verses 3 and 4 is dead *to God.* The evangel is brought to those who were dead *to God* in Peter's day. Though they were physically alive to sins, lusts, etc., they were, at the same time, "dead to God."

FIGURATIVE AND LITERAL USE OF "DEAD"

In the following conversation Jesus had with a scribe and a disciple we can see two ways in which "dead" is used in the same sentence.

"Approaching, one scribe said to Him, 'Teacher, I will be following You wheresoever You may be coming away.' . . . Now a different one of the disciples said to Him, 'Lord, permit me first to come away and entomb my father.' Yet Jesus is saying to him, 'Be following Me, and leave the dead to entomb their own dead'" (Matt.8:19-22). The

first usage of "dead" is figurative and the second is literal. Jesus said: ". . . Be following Me, and leave the *dead* to entomb their own *dead*" (Matt.8:22). He was saying, let those who are dead *to God* be entombing those who are literally dead. He told the disciple, "Be following Me." If he would have followed Christ, he would have been *alive to God.* He would not be like those who were dead to God.

JUDGING OR SETTING RIGHT IS BENEFICIAL

Verse 5 of 1 Peter 4 is concerning the judging of those who are living *to God* verses those who are dead *to God* by their living in debaucheries etc. Those who were dead to God while they were alive, who were evangelized, were running to the puddle of profligacy. "Profligacy" according to the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE is "unsafe action." So these folks were racing together into the same puddle of unsafe action. I am reminded of little children who, upon seeing a puddle, run to it and jump into it, splashing muddy water everywhere. They get their nice shoes, socks and attire all muddy and think it is fun. Then they are judged, or set right, by their parents taking them home and cleaning them. An evangel was brought to those who were dead *to God,* who raced to the puddle of profligacy [so] *"that they may be judged,"* or set right, as to their improper, sinful lives. *Their being judged or set right is for the purpose that they "should be living according to God, in spirit." This judging will have a salutary effect upon them!*

TWO WIDOWS, ONE LIVING, ONE DEAD

> "Now one really a widow, and alone, relies on God and is remaining in petitions and prayers night and day. Yet she who is a [prodigal, though living, is dead" (1 Tim.5:6).

Notice the widow who relies on God and remains in petitions and prayers night and day? She is *alive to God.*

And what of the widow who is considered to be dead? In 1 Timothy 5:9 Paul speaks of widows being listed to be cared for by the ecclesia. If a woman has widows living with her, she should be relieving them and they are not to be a burden to the ecclesia (5:16). These widows would not be on the list for the ecclesia to relieve their living expenses. This widow who is "dead" *to God* should not be on the list of care. Her prodigalling takes her off the list. If she was "attested by ideal acts: if she nourishes children, if she is hospitable, if she washes the saints' feet, if she relieves the afflicted, if she follows up with every good work" (1 Tim.5:10) she would be alive to God and on the list.

In the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT there is a vertical line in front of the word "|prodigal." On page 608 in "Instructions for Use" of the CV under the subhead |ACT FORMS we have this: "1. ACT (or ACTION) forms are *incomplete, with action going on.*" If we take this information and apply it to the prodigal widow, we will see her life is characterized by the ongoing act of *prodigalling.* In the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE under "prodigal" we are told to see "squander." For squander, *spatalaō*, we have "spend freely and foolishly." Concerning the widow who is prodigaling her wealth, she has no need for God. She is spending freely and foolishly. Though she, by all outward appearances, acts as if she is living *to God,* she is actually dead *to God.* Therefore, when we see the word "dead" in relation to the widow and those to whom an evangel was brought by Peter and others, we are not to see them as literally dead.

DID JESUS PREACH TO THE DEAD WHILE HE WAS DEAD?

Another passage is often brought forth to promote the idea that when Christ died He went to some sort of "Hell" and preached to the dead. This passage supposedly proves

Jesus died, went to "Hell" and preached an evangel to the dead. As tradition goes, He preached the evangel to the lost suffering dead souls to give them a chance to "get out of Hell and go to Heaven." Here is that passage:

> "Wherefore He is saying, Ascending on high, He captures captivity And gives gifts to mankind. Now the 'He ascended,' what is it except that He first descended also into the lower parts of the earth? He Who descends is the Same Who ascends also, up over all who are of the heavens, that He should be completing all. And the same One gives these, indeed, as apostles, yet these as prophets, yet these as evangelists, yet these as pastors and teachers, toward the adjusting of the saints for the work of dispensing, for the upbuilding of the body of Christ" (Eph.4:8-12).

"The sooner the English reader realizes that he has but a translation of the word of God, and that the idiom is not English nor even Greek so much as Hebrew, the sooner will he make solid progress in the knowledge of God. There is no doubt but that the phrase 'in the heart of the earth' (Matt.12:40), means in the *center* of the earth, in *English.* But it matters not how we understand it. The real question is, how did those to whom it was spoken understand it? That they did not apprehend it to mean the *center,* but referred it to the *surface* is clear from other instances of its use.

"We have the similar phrase, the 'heart' of a tree, meaning the innermost part of the trunk. Absalom was left dangling from the branch of an oak. Yet we read that Joab took three darts and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while yet alive in the *heart* of the oak (2 Sam.18:9:14). The two words we have rendered 'heart' are the same in the Hebrew.

"But more conclusive is the phrase 'heart of the sea.' It is applied to the place at which the Israelites crossed the Red Sea (Ex.15:8). It describes the way of a ship upon the surface of the sea (Prov.30:19). But the most striking and instructive example is its fourfold reference to the city of Tyre, which was partly on an island on the coast of Canaan. Indeed, the island

was so near the shore that Alexander the Great, in order to conquer it, built a mote out of the ruins of the shore city and thus connected it with the mainland. Tyre was far, indeed, from being in the center of the sea in any sense. And if Tyre might be described as being in the heart of the sea, what difficulty can there be in speaking of our Lord's tomb as 'in the heart' of the earth? It may sound strange to *us,* but most natural to those who heard Him.

"The same principle applies to the phrase 'the lower parts of the earth' (Eph.4:7-10). Neither the Psalm which is quoted nor the context in Ephesians give any color to a subterranean visit. The contrast is between Sinai (Psa.17), when our Lord did not condescend to the lower parts of the earth, but came down only to a high, inaccessible mountain, and the captivity to the law which was thus prefigured, and the humiliation of His earthly life, when He, literally as well as figuratively, condescended into the very vales and depths, bringing gifts, and, through His death, resurrection and ascension, leading captive the captivity which Sinai had brought. The rendering 'multitude of captives' has no foundation in fact" (A. E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches,* vol.6, pp.272,273).

IN CONCLUSION

Based upon the foregoing, it is safe to conclude that Peter was not informing anyone concerning the literal dead when he stated in 1 Peter 4:6 that "an evangel is brought to the dead." Jesus was not alive while He was dead. Jesus was so dead that He had to be vivified by the glory of the Father.

Just as a living widow can be dead while she lives and that the dead, while living, can entomb their literal dead, so also we can see that when an evangel went to the dead, that such ones, *while living,* were dead to God by their sinful living. Their being judged will have a salutary effect upon them so they "should be living according to God, in spirit."

Tony Nungesser

WHO RECEIVE THE SECRET?

> Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus . . . to all the saints . . . who are pre-expectant in Christ (Eph.1: 1,12). I do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may be giving you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him . . . for you to perceive . . . what the riches of the glory . . . (Eph.1:16-18)

THE SECRET that, in spirit, the nations are to be *joint* allottees, and a *joint body*, and *joint* partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which Paul was the dispenser (Eph.3:6) was not made public until after he was a prisoner at Rome. It is evident that it was neither sent to the twelve apostles nor received by them. The epistles of James, Peter and John, although they may have been written afterward, do not acknowledge it at all. Peter may have hinted at it, since he found "some things" in Paul's epistles "hard to apprehend" (2 Peter 3:16).

It is quite evident that those to whom Peter wrote did not receive the secret. The salvation which they received was that which the prophets had foretold (1 Peter 1:10). This was by no means a secret. They prophesied concerning the grace which was for them. They were a "chosen race," a "royal priesthood," a "holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9; Ex.19:4-6). Every one of these expressions is a direct negation of the truth of the secret. In the present administration there is no chosen race. All races are on the same footing. There is no royal priesthood. We need no priests, for we all have access to the Father. There is no holy nation. All nationalities are equally blessed in Christ.

Peter, in his epistles, is upholding the prior place of Israel over the other nations, in flesh, on the earth. Paul reveals the equality of the nations with them, in spirit, in the heavens. Not only Peter, but all of the Circumcision epistles, from Hebrews to Jude, and including Revelation, are saturated with Israel's superiority and base almost all blessing on a physical relationship to Messiah. Paul himself, in his earlier ministries, had "known Christ according to flesh" (2 Cor.5:16). It was not until the conciliation was revealed that the physical was entirely removed from his ministry. In his epistles—not in Acts—we find his distinctive message.

FAVOR CONVEYED THROUGH PAUL'S EVANGEL

Who, then, received the secret? If it was not meant for all, what were the distinguishing characteristics of those to whom it came? As might be expected, the answer is plainly given by God Himself, but men have dimmed its clearness by a defective version. The third item of the secret should read: "*in spirit* the nations are to be . . . *joint* partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which I became the dispenser . . ." (Eph.3:6). It would be very trite, indeed, to say that this grace came through the evangel. It would be still more trite for Paul to inform the Ephesians that he was a minister of the gospel. But to assure them that this new favor is conveyed through *his evangel* (and not that of the twelve) is most instructive and needful.

It is not true that the nations are, or ever will be, *joint* partakers of the promises contained in the gospel which Peter preached. Almost every promise in that evangel, apart from personal pardon, is based on the very opposite. The believers among the nations cannot be incorporated in the holy nation, the chosen race, or the royal priesthood, for these are dependent on the presence of faith-

ful gentiles for their existence. Priests must have people in order to officiate. For some time the apostle Paul fulfilled this function in relation to the believing gentiles (Rom.15:16), but, now that the nations are joint partakers, priesthood is impossible.

We have the choice of two distinct lines of ministry, one for the Circumcision and one for the Uncircumcision. To one the very thought of copartnership is repugnant. To the other it is the logical and necessary sequel. Only those who had received the evangel Paul proclaimed were prepared for the reception of this secret. To them it was sent and to no one else. There are many considerations which confirm this. Let us see if we cannot discover the points of contact between Paul's previous preaching and the secret as revealed in Ephesians.

THE PROMISES OF THE EVANGEL ARE IN CHRIST JESUS

There is much significance in the titles of our Lord. "Jesus Christ" lays the emphasis on His humiliation and physical relationship. "Christ Jesus" is the title of His exaltation. As Paul was first introduced to Him in glory, his ministry is associated with His celestial dignities rather than His rejection on earth. The fact that the promises of his evangel are in Christ Jesus clearly cuts out the Circumcision evangel. The twelve apostles seldom used this title, for they were well aware of its significance. Until the Kingdom comes they must proclaim Jesus Christ, the lowly One, the suffering One, and now still the rejected One, so far as the Kingdom is concerned.

The refusal and increasing failure of the Kingdom proclamation was accompanied by the gradual introduction of Paul's evangel, which is based on His exaltation at God's right hand among the celestials, hence is associated with

the title Christ Jesus. The significance of the title is in fullest accord, not only with Paul's preparatory evangel, but especially with its sequel, the secret now revealed. We do not wait for the Kingdom to be set up on earth. Our Head is already glorified in heaven. He is not despised or rejected there as He is on earth. And our destiny is that celestial realm, where He is exalted as Christ Jesus.

The promise in Christ Jesus included such transcendent blessings as justification, reconciliation, and glorification, and all flow from unforced favor. It also includes a future salvation from coming indignation (Rom.5:9), and our assembling to Him before the day of indignation should set in (2 Thess.2:1; 1 Thess.1:10; 4:13-18; 5:9). The Circumcision were never promised such immunity, but some of them will be carried through the time of trial. The hundred forty-four thousand will be protected in it.

WE ARE PRE-EXPECTANT

Thus the expectation set before those who receive Paul's evangel is to be fulfilled prior to that held by the Circumcision. They expect the Lord to come to the air before He descends to Olivet with His holy ones. This is referred to in the twelfth verse of the first of Ephesians, where the Authorized Version reads, "That we should be to the praise of His glory who first trusted in Christ." The Revisers changed this to "who had before hoped in Christ." This is still ambiguous, but much nearer the truth. Rotherham is much the same, "we who had hoped beforehand in the Christ."

The statement is not true as it stands in these versions. It is contrary to the facts. Paul and those with him were by no means the first to trust in Christ. Peter and those with him trusted in the Messiah long before Paul was called. The change from "trust" to "hope" does not help much. It would be more in accord with the records to put Paul

among the *last.* He was the last to see Christ after His resurrection (1 Cor.15:8). Paul had not preceded the other apostles in either trust or hope. This cannot be the meaning of the passage.

The CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT reads, "who are pre-expectant [in a state of prior expectancy] in the Christ" (Eph.1:12). The sublinear has it THE *ones*-HAVING-BEFORE-EXPECTED IN THE ANOINTED. The Greek verb form is *proêlpikotas.* It is in what is called the "perfect" tense. It does not denote a specific act, but the state or condition resulting from an act. The state of those associated with Paul was one of expectancy. As they looked for the fulfillment of it before the return of the Lord to rescue His people Israel, it was a prior expectancy, in the sense that it was to receive a prior fulfillment. The "before" refers to the future, not the past. They were to be snatched away in clouds, for meeting the Lord in the air before the Circumcision would meet Him on the earth.

THE NATIONS HAVE A CELESTIAL ALLOTMENT

To such as had received this prior expectancy the message now comes that, not only was their immediate expectation to be different from that foretold for Israel by the prophets and our Lord, but their subsequent destiny also was to be changed. They were not to come back to the earth to receive an allotment down here, after meeting the Lord in the air. The gentiles among them were not to take a subordinate place to the holy nation on the earth. Instead, they were to be joint enjoyers of the celestial allotment with a few of the Circumcision who also had received Paul's evangel and who had this prior expectation.

It is evident, then, that, speaking broadly, the mystery was received by the nations, the Uncircumcision, and that remnant among the Jews, the Circumcision, who had become associated with Paul. Most of the Circumcision

did not receive it, but followed the fortunes of the Kingdom. They either died in faith, not having received the promises, or drew back and apostatized. Almost all gentile believers did receive it, for the Circumcision reached only a few, such as Cornelius and the Ethiopian eunuch, who became proselytes of Judaism. The division between the two classes was clearly marked by their future outlook. Those who held to the Kingdom expectation could not receive the secret; those who held the prior expectation could not do otherwise.

The entire context confirms this interpretation. Not merely are our blessings to be among the celestials (Eph.1:3), but Christ Himself is given the place preeminent. He is to be the Head in the heavens as well as on the earth (Eph.1:10). And this exaltation of His is the basis of our blessing, just as His suzerainty of the earth is the source of Israel's sovereignty.

The full force and special significance of "Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will" (Eph. 1:11) is lost if we do not see its peculiar application to the Pauline Jewish remnant. They are certainly entitled to a place in the millennial earth. Paul deserves the best place in the earthly Kingdom. What excuse has God to offer for changing his allotment to heaven and thus causing him to forfeit his place in the Kingdom administration on earth? It is this, that He is operating the universe, not only in accord with His revealed counsel, as proclaimed hitherto, but according to the counsel of His will, which includes the secrets now made known.

NO ONE CAN COMPLAIN

Of course, none of the Israelitish remnant can complain. The change is such a marvelous promotion, such a tremendous advance, so much grander and more glorious than the allotment they lose, that they not only acqui-

esce but exult. They do not murmur in disappointment but rejoice in His appointment. There is much to admire in what we may call the arbitrary graciousness of God. He gives, not merely what is expected, but what accords with His high intention.

The Uncircumcision had no promises, no allotment in the land. Yet they also had received the spirit of promise, which was the earnest received by the Circumcision. They had received this spirit, under Paul's preaching, simply on hearing and believing, without baptism or repentance (Acts 2:38) or the laying on of hands (Acts 8:17). Since they had the same pledge, they are entitled to the same possessions, hence are joint allottees.

THE SECRET HAD NO APPEAL TO THE TWELVE

It follows, then, that the secret was received by a special company who had been prepared for its message by Paul's previous epistles, or by his personal ministry in accord with them. It had no appeal to the twelve apostles, no place in their public proclamations or epistles. It does not even make contact with Paul's Kingdom ministry as detailed in the latter part of Acts, which clears the ground, but does not lay the foundation. This is laid in his epistles to the four ecclesias in Thessalonica, Galatia, Corinth and Rome. On these the secret is erected.

To put the matter briefly, we may say, then, that the key to this question is contained in the *written* name *Paul.* Those who received his written ministry also received the secret. Paul, separated from the rest by the spirit (Acts 13:2), learning nothing from them (Gal.1:12; 2:9), receiving added revelations (2 Cor.12:1-4, etc.), the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the nations (Eph.3:1), the fullest expositor of the secret of Christ (Eph.3:4), and the only one who can enlighten us as to the present secret administration (Eph.

3:9)—the name PAUL is the open sesame to the treasuries of transcendent truth.

The Circumcision, represented by Peter, found these things "hard to apprehend" (2 Peter 3:16), not because they lacked intelligence or spiritual understanding, but because the secret is outside the sphere where their own blessings are found. If it needs a special spiritual enduement (Eph.1:17) for *us* to perceive these great truths, how difficult and well-nigh impossible is it for those beyond the bounds of its operation to get more than a glimpse of the greatest of all of God's revelations!

GOD'S WISDOM IN A SECRET

Paul knew this secret when he wrote to the Corinthians. It seems that he even made it known in a private way to those who were mature (1 Cor.2:6-10). What else could he refer to when he says, "but we are speaking God's wisdom in a secret, which has been concealed, which God designates beforehand, before the eons, for our glory"? He plainly predicts its public revelation in the twelfth and fourteenth chapters, when not merely individuals would be mature, but the era of maturity should arrive.

It is more than probable that he had received the revelation of it fourteen years before (2 Cor.12:2), when he was snatched away to the third heaven. He knew this secret before he had penned any of his epistles. Hence they were written with it in mind, and with the object of preparing the readers for its reception. God was ordering all of Paul's acts and words in view of the impending deluge of grace, which could not come until the full apostasy of Israel. Then, after the apostle warns the Jews that the salvation of God is dispatched to the nations, and that they will hear (Acts 28:28), he commits the secret to writing.

While, therefore, we are plainly warned that some matters in these epistles are temporary and some would cease,

the great controlling themes, like faith, expectation and love, abide. This is the point in the thirteenth of first Corinthians. Many have been imagining that the maturity there alluded to referred to the resurrection glory of the individual. It is concerned with the great administrative change which is impending. Faith and expectation will not engage us in the glory. They will be replaced by sight and fulfillment. Love alone lingers there. But now, in this secret economy, the signs of immaturity vanish, and the tokens of maturity abide.

SAINTS NEED ADJUSTMENT

The question may arise as to what authority there is for believing that the faith of early believers was modified by later revelations. Can we be sure that the saints themselves are the same, and that the teaching changed? This is evident from Ephesians itself. Teachers were specially given for the *adjusting* of the saints to the new revelation (Eph.4:12). The Authorized Version rendering, "perfecting," contains only a part of the thought. They themselves, however, have rendered it *mend, fit,* and *restore,* elsewhere. The saints needed more than perfecting. They needed to be adjusted to these later disclosures. Some doctrines were dropped and others took their place. All matters were modified by the change in administration.

The same adjustment is needed today, and should be the chief function of a teacher who knows the truth, for many believers have not only failed to understand the secret, but they cling to that which has been discarded by it, and even to that which never had a place in any of Paul's writings or ministry. Indeed, the word "adjusting" seems quite inadequate for some, who are almost wholly occupied with matters pertaining to Israel and the twelve apostles. But this does not affect their right to the blessings brought by the secret, though, of course, they cannot

enjoy them until they recognize and appreciate their transcendent treasures.

The question is often asked: "If the Acts does not deal with the body of Christ, who are those of whom James speaks, when the subject of the nations comes up at the apostolic counsel (Acts 15:14)? Is not God visiting the nations now, to take out of them a people for His name?" James is speaking of the place accorded the nations in the prophets. He refers especially to the preaching of the Kingdom by Peter, who was the first to go beyond the Jewish pale in his proclamation. The passage that he quotes has a specific fulfillment at the time of the end, when the tabernacle of David is rebuilt. After the nations are almost destroyed by the judgments, the *rest* of them will seek the Lord.

James and the other leaders of the Circumcision had then no inkling of the secret. The nations themselves took the place of subordination to Israel. For the time being, they occupied the position which would have remained theirs permanently if Israel had repented and the Kingdom had come. The Pauline believers come before us in Acts only as they are related to the Kingdom with which the book is concerned. Therefore, while most of the *persons* immediately concerned probably later became identified with the present grace, they were not so then. They may, even then, have been members of the body of Christ, but it was not then a joint body, which was not known until the close of the Acts activities.

At such times of transition, we should not ask what "class" each company is in, as though that were fixed and changeless. Paul himself was probably in three different "classes" during his career. At first, though called for special service in an entirely different sphere, he was identified with the Circumcision. Later, in his ministry among the nations, he was separated from the Circumcision and

in the one body, in its transitional aspect. Later, he lost his standing in the flesh entirely, and becomes a member of the joint body. There is, to speak accurately, no "body class" now. All are in the "joint body." The "body class" existed only during Paul's pre-prison ministry, and was merged into the present. Now there is only one "class," for grace has unified all who believe, by the Spirit of God.

ALL BELIEVERS ARE RECIPIENTS OF THE SECRET

The secret embraces all who belong to Christ today. Whether Jews or gentiles, Circumcision or Uncircumcision, now all who believe God are the recipients of its far-flung favor. We are well aware that the gospel of the Circumcision is more often proclaimed than the conciliation. We may almost affirm that the secret is never made known. But this is a day of *grace.* And it is not the way of grace to withhold what is not apprehended or appreciated. Men may proclaim pardon now, but God gives justification. They may insist on a new birth, but He makes a new creation. They get what He gives, not what they believe He is dispensing.

It is the fashion today to make God's gifts a matter of reward for service, or knowledge, or some fancied superiority. We trust that all who read these lines will enter into an exultant understanding of the secret we are unfolding. But may He ever shield us from the assumption that a grasp of His truth will give us a place superior to our brethren! As individuals we will receive rewards. But there are no divisions in the body of Christ, even though some, because of special enlightenment, will claim a different or a higher destiny. We are all one! In Christ the most ignorant and useless believer, by grace, has access to all of the treasures which the most intelligent and useful can enjoy.

Knowledge puffs up. Love builds up. Almost every advance in the knowledge of God has resulted in an arro-

gant, self-assertive division among His saints. We witness the sad spectacle of the followers of Christ divided into hostile camps, each proclaiming its own superiority and relegating the rest to an inferior position. Each claims a monopoly of His grace, because of some fancied attainment in faith or faithfulness. Let no one imagine that a knowledge of the secret is requisite in order to receive its benefits. If that were so, how few would ever find the place prepared for them by God!

We trust that many will be led into the enjoyment of this marvelous secret, and open their heart's eyes to apprehend this, the highest revelation given by God to mortal man. It is not only the grandest in glory, but also the greatest in grace. It is our earnest prayer that such a knowledge will be suffused with love. It is our fervent petition that no one will arrogate its benefits to himself and exclude others because they have not yet apprehended its message. *All who believe now* "receive" the secret in the most potent and precious sense of the word. They may never have heard of it, they may not understand it, they may even reject and oppose it. Yet it is theirs, and they will receive it in due time, as determined by the despotism of grace.

Other administrations call for conformity in faith or practice as a condition of participation. The coming era of indignation will have different "classes" to accord with degrees of faithfulness. But in this economy of purest grace, where the only requirement is to admit a lack of all deserts, the most elementary faith is the key which opens the portal to all of God's treasures. Having Christ, we have all. We can enjoy more as we explore what is ours in Him, but we can do nothing to add to our possessions. Hence we are all in the same "Class," we are one in Christ Jesus.

If, however, we press the present aspect of our question, and ask "Who receive the secret?", that is, who accept it, and enjoy it, and exult in its transcendent glories, the Scrip-

tures give us a very clear answer. Two qualifications are necessary, according to Paul's Corinthian letter. He made this secret known to those who were *mature* (1 Cor.2:6,7), and could not reveal it to the fleshly (1 Cor.3:1). Spirituality, as well as "dispensational" maturity, is a necessary condition for the enjoyment of the secret.

Maturity is manifested in the rejection of human wisdom and philosophy, and a recognition of the rudimentary nature of the Kingdom activities. Those who follow a philosophy of human origin, though dealing with the Scriptures, effectually shut themselves up where they cannot receive God's secret. And those who, like the Corinthians, are occupied with the manifestations of minority, the affairs of spiritual childhood, will find it impossible to enjoy the secret in its plenitude and preciousness.

Carnality is chiefly manifested in sectarian divisions, and in walking as men in the flesh comport themselves. In my own experience I have found the futility of even trying to teach the secret to anyone whose heart cleaves to the confusion of man-made divisions, or even claims to be a follower of Christ in a sense peculiar to his own party. Sectarianism effectually destroys the possibility of delving into the secret. It is an impervious coating which truth cannot penetrate. The secret is only for the unsectarian and spiritual.

Indeed, so marvelous is this secret that Paul prayed for the believers of his day, who may not have been either immature or unspiritual, for a *special spirit of wisdom and revelation* for its realization (Eph.1:16-18). I join with Paul in praying for all who wish to enter into the enjoyment of this surpassing secret, the summit of divine knowledge, wisdom and love, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father glorious, may indeed enlighten the eyes of their hearts, that they perceive its call, its allotment and its power.

A. E. Knoch

Unsearchable Riches

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Contents:

49 Editorial
51 The Spirit's Unity
73 The Unity of the Spirit
75 The Appreciation of God
83 Listening to "Listen"
89 The Figure of Salt

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BEING THE SECOND NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

EDITORIAL

"ALMOST all of us are short-sighted. We see part of the way, but we do not see the end. We confuse the going with the goal." This observation by A. E. Knoch (p.75) might well serve as the theme of this issue of *Unsearchable Riches*. Yet also it is a truism to keep in mind day by day as we live our lives in the present state of things.

Things are not as they shall be. Yet they are in accord with the purpose of God Who is operating all.

So it is that the first two articles here are concerned with the unity of the body of Christ in the midst of disunity. The unity is of the spirit and thus cannot be seen, while the disunity is very visible. "The days in which we are living are days of dissension and discord and division" (p.55). Nevertheless, there is a true unity which "is a *spiritual* one and *still exists* in spite of all the apparent divisions" (p.56). This is the situation at present, but it is not the goal of God. It is part of the process toward the goal, which is a visible and wholehearted unity of all those who are members of the ecclesia which is the body of Christ. But even that is not the final goal and is indeed but part of the process toward that unity encompassed in God becoming "All in all' (1 Cor.15:28).

Backing up to the theme of the present unity of the spirit, which A. E. Knoch discusses in our opening article, we present as our second article, James Coram's thoughts on the same subject which concludes, "Our common quest is, in God's own time, that we should all attain to the *unity of the faith* (Eph.4:13)" (p.74).

Perhaps uppermost in this "quest" is that "the knowledge of God's Word is good, an acquaintance with the ways is better, but a realization of Himself is best" (p.78).

A future process which seems to be soon to commence is an adjustment of the eons (*cp* Heb.11:3) in which God's promises to Israel concerning a terrestrial kingdom will be carried out. Tony Nungesser writes on a certain feature of that kingdom in which select Israelites will be set up as *preservers* of an orderly system of government and society (pages 89-96). That will be a welcome improvement on the present. But it will last only for a thousand years (for it involves human works of law) and will be succeeded by a new creation in which all are headed up in the Anointed One.

Such in brief are some of the processes toward God's goal of becoming All in all. But what is the basis of all this? It is that sparing not of His own Son, and the Son's listening of faith unto the death of the cross (*cf* pages 83-88 for some partial meditations on this great and glorious evangel).

Therefore, listen! God's evangel for which Paul was severed from the Jerusalem apostles and from his birth heritage is promised throughout Scripture. Listen! God's evangel is concerned with His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Listen! God's evangel concerning His Son (not the law of God given at Sinai) is God's power for present salvation to those who are believing it. Listen! it is in God's evangel concerning His Son that God's own righteousness is being revealed. Listen! God's righteousness is being revealed out of (i.e., it is sourced in) the faith of the Righteous One, that is, manifested through Jesus Christ's faith. Listen! this evangel out of and through Jesus Christ's faith is for our faith. Listen! Jesus Christ's faith is that He dies for us while we are still sinners, which not only makes God's righteousness known, but also commends God's love. Listen! Jesus Christ's faith is His listening to the will of His God and Father unto the death of the cross. Listen! this evangel is for our listening as slaves listen to the words of their master, that is, listening to the teaching to which we are given over, the teaching that through the listening of the One, all will be constituted righteous.

D.H.H.

THE SPIRIT'S UNITY

GOD begins with Himself and ends with Himself. Before the eons God sits in His solitary majesty. With the eons comes the revelation of His Christ. Then we are called upon to consider His dealings with His creatures. As soon as the climax of the eons has been reached, history will recoil upon itself. Each former phase will be rehearsed on a vaster scale, until once more we find all beneath the rule of Christ, its earliest Head. Then comes the consummation, and God becomes All once again. Then, however, He becomes not All in Himself, but All in all His creatures.

The same course is followed in revealing the structure of the tabernacle in the wilderness. First He describes His own throne. Then He reveals the various excellences of Christ as displayed within the holy places, and later leads us without to the vessels of the court, and the outer gate. In practice, the priests reversed this order. They began outside the enclosure, and passed the altar and the laver before coming to the holy place.

Our meditations on Ephesians have been somewhat like this. Beginning with God in His inmost secret affections, conceived before creation, we have traced our relationship to Christ, as His members, and have considered the mutual relationships of His saints. We have come out from God, through Christ, to our fellows. The rest of the epistle reverses this order. We will now retrace our steps, and consider the present practical effect of these marvelous unfoldings. First we will take up the conduct consequent upon our relationship to one another; second, our responsibilities as members of the body of Christ; third, the war-

fare which awaits those who enter our celestial allotment by faith in anticipation of that day.

We wish to impress our readers with the helpfulness of the literary structure of this epistle. The exhortations which follow are not only based on the previous half in general, but apply to particular portions. Our deportment has the same three aspects as the doctrine. What we believe of God, and of Christ and of the saints, to the saints, and to Christ, and to God must be lived. It is instructive to read the epistle parenthetically. After considering our allotment among the celestials (Eph.1:3-19) we may skip to our heavenly warfare (Eph.6:10-20). From the first section which deals with the body of Christ (Eph.1:20-2:10), we may turn to the second (Eph.5:21-6:9). To understand the "new man" (Eph.2:11-22), see what is said about the new humanity (Eph.4:17-5:20). These remote contexts are corrective checks on our interpretation which may be easily undervalued.

The first half closed with a summary and a petition. Before entering on the three main themes of the epistle, we are given an exhortation and another summary, both dealing with conduct. The first six verses of chapter four present a plea of the utmost importance to all who wish to please God in this secret administration. Let us note that these are the first words which God gives to regulate our conduct, after making known the riches of His grace. At the same time they are a test. If we have really received the great revelation which goes before, this should be the fruit. If, for instance, we find a brother endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit, we may be assured that he is living in the power of the previous unfoldings.

We must not fail to note Paul's new title—the prisoner in the *Lord.* In order to present *truth* he is the prisoner of *Christ Jesus* (Eph.3:1). To enforce it, he is the prisoner in the *Lord* (Eph.4:1). We have been considering Christ

Jesus and our place *in* Him. Now we are called upon to acknowledge Him as our Master and consider what conduct is pleasing *to Him.* Christ serves out blessing.[1] [The Lord seeks a worthy walk. The key to all good conduct may be condensed into a single phrase, "Christ, my Lord."

All worthy conduct must be the unforced fruit of the former part of this epistle. It is utterly useless to enter Ephesians by the back door. No one can walk in accord with any of these exhortations, except through the power generated by the grace glorious. Anyone who seeks to enforce the exhortations in Ephesians apart from the enabling favor on which they are founded, degrades them to the level of the law. Let us not render a forced, unwilling compliance, but let each act be the outgrowth of God's most glorious grace.]

Who can *walk worthily of a calling* which he does not apprehend? Let us not strive to be what we are not. All God asks of us is to live up to what He has made us. The preparation for such a walk, the power for such deportment, lies in a consciousness of our high social standing among God's nobility. Among men we readily recognize a nobleman by the superficial niceties of his conduct. We ought to be the true nobility, known by the deeper and more enduring virtues which adorn the teaching we profess.

The rarest and most precious gem found in the field of human conduct is true humility. In these days it is derided and condemned. It is considered a weakness, if not a disease. The greatest hindrance to "success" is an "inferiority complex," to use the up-to-date philosopher's phrase. Even in the religious sphere, humility is at a tremendous discount. Aggressive self-assertion seems necessary for preferment. How far have we fallen from the great ideal! How little do we see of that genuine meekness which springs

1. The section between brackets has been edited to accord better with the viewpoint of *exhortation* to worthy walk.

from a profound realization of the truth! The sunlight of God's favor has not only revealed our exaltation in Christ, but our degradation in ourselves. Though perfectly righteous in Him, we have lost all self-righteousness. We may glory in God and His Christ, but this involves the utter repudiation of all merit of our own.

Only one who has a low estimate of himself is in a position to bear long with the failings and shortcomings of others. Patience is the rare and precious virtue which follows humility and meekness. We are to bear with one another in love (Eph.4:2). All of this is based upon the unfathomable affection which God lavishes upon us and on all who are His. We cannot respond to His love without, at the same time, including those who are embraced by it. We can manifest it best in practice, by a becoming conduct toward His saints. When the apostle first gives us a glimpse of the transcendent path which we now tread, he summed it all up in one word—love (1 Cor.12:31-14:1). He begins his eulogy by saying "Love is patient" and he ends by affirming that it endures all (1 Cor.13:4,7). This is the greatest of the abiding trinity—faith, expectancy, love—and love shall never lapse.

Now we have a foundation for peace. The warring factions of Christendom are seeking peace by compromise. Real peace between God's saints is based on humility and meekness, patience, and forbearance, and a recognition of the spirit's unity. Apart from this there can be no real reconciliation. The peace and unification which is proposed today is based largely on indifference to the vital values of God's revelation. It is human in its method and its object. We can really unite with all who are hallowed only by ignoring the sects and parties and schisms to which they belong. Let us have fellowship with all, irrespective of their church affiliations. Do they belong to the body of Christ? Then they belong to us, and we to them.

THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT

The days in which we are living are days of dissension and discord and division. There is a continual and persistent effort for unity, but it seldom bears any fruit but schism. One of the saddest features is the fact that truth itself is made an excuse for further division. Every "movement" rapidly degenerates into a sect. And so fertile are the seeds of schism that it is only a short time until the division itself is divided into dozens of fragments.

The only *human* method of arresting this disintegration is to set up some human head, such as the patriarchs of the eastern churches, the pope of Rome, or the bishops and councils of the western churches. There must be some human authority. Leaders find that they cannot keep their followers together unless they assume jurisdiction over their faith and decide for them just what they must believe.

A very practical and searching question arises at this point. We have learned some great and precious truths, notably the reconciliation of the universe. Shall we allow this truth to separate between us and our fellow believers? Shall we let it be the nucleus of a sect? Shall we confine our fellowship to those who see as we do on this important point? Shall it create a division, another breach in the unity which God intends shall characterize His saints in this administration?

That this is its natural tendency no one will deny. And no one can help having more intimate fellowship with those of like faith than with those who are otherwise minded. To human wisdom a strong separate organization would be the surest method of promoting a successful propaganda. The answer to all these questions is found in the opening entreaty of the Ephesian epistle (Eph.4:1-6). There we have a unity—the unity of the spirit. We are not called upon to *make* this unity but to *keep* it.

This is most vital. All efforts toward Christian unity

today are like the patching together of broken fragments. They are all directed toward restoring the outward semblance. The true unity is a *spiritual* one and *still exists* in spite of all the apparent divisions. *All that is needed is to recognize this unity* and ignore the other so-called unities and alliances and associations which are trying to create a superficial communion, but which are really the greatest hindrances to the display of the God-made unity which embraces all His own.

The unity which we are to keep with diligence is based upon seven fundamental truths. Its keyword is *one.* There is *one* body—and *only* one—*one* spirit, *one* expectation, *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God and Father. The apostle is not revealing to the Ephesians that there *is* a God, or that there *is* a body. He is insisting that there is *only one.* The church of today repudiates every one of these divine unities.

When we read of "the protestant *bodies,*" or "the Methodist *body,*" what is it but a denial that there is *one* body? But is it not still more sad to hear of those who meet "on the ground of the one body" yet exclude all who do not meet upon this ground? The body of Christ is no organization of our manufacture. It is an organism whose members are placed in the body as *He* wills (1 Cor.12:18). It has but one Head, even Christ. It is our duty and privilege first of all to acknowledge His headship and, in doing this, we must also recognize every member that He has. We are all members of the same body. We are not divided. We are one.

The lack of visible unity among God's saints is a source of the utmost shame and confusion to those who seek to please Him. To mourn over the many organizations which have marred the manifestation of this unity to the world is the constant exercise of all who know the truth. Not only are the castes of Israel revived, so that we have clergy and laity, but we have a hundred sects for every one of theirs.

There is only one body in Christ, but there may be a thousand in the world. There is but one faith, but creeds are numberless. There is only one Lord, but how diverse are the disciplines which have replaced Him!

Many attempts have been made "to get back to the ground of the *one body,*" but each has resulted in another organization, another division. Every effort made to unify God's people seems to be but another means of further schism. A new truth is proclaimed. Some believe. Some do not. One faction leaves, and there is another "body." Unbelief creeps in, and such a movement as "Modernism" invades a congregation or a pulpit. Those who wish to be faithful revolt, and there is still another body. The tragic truth is that it is indifference and compromise which are tending to organize Christianity into one great dead body, and it is the sincere and faithful spirits (who ought to preserve the unity of the spirit) who are continually causing further disintegration. What are we to do? We cannot compromise nor do we dare divide.

The difficulty is that men are making their own unity while ignoring the unity of the spirit. The moment we *make* it we are sure to *break* it. *It does not need making. It needs taking.* Negatively, all that is necessary is to ignore all other unities, however fair they seem, however godly the saints that they include, however indispensable they appear. Positively, let us acknowledge all who are sealed by the spirit, all who know God and are members of the body of Christ. Let us acknowledge only *one* body, *one* spirit, *one* expectation, *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, and *one* God.

Unity is one of the controlling thoughts of Ephesians. It is not confined to this exhortation. Each item of the secret consists in joining together those who have been far apart. The first chapter gives the nations the *same* allotment as an election among the Circumcision, because they have

obtained the *same* spirit. In the second chapter Jew and Gentile are roused and seated *together,* and later on, the two are made *one* and He creates the two into *one* new humanity. Physical distinctions are all repealed. The distressing divisions of the past are done away. One of the principal aims of all our lives should be the preservation of the oneness which actually exists between us and all the other saints of this era. Let us resist every effort to divide and sunder what God has joined together.

ONE BODY

In Israel, apart from the various sects, there were several "bodies" of divine appointment. The anointing oil was confined to a privileged class of men, the priesthood. They formed a distinct body, separated from the Levites, their brethren, and the rest of Israel. The priests were, in a special manner, God's christs, or anointed ones, in Israel. They had the oil, a sign of the spirit. All, in this administration, have the anointing of the spirit itself, and all today have access into the very presence of the Father. No one in the body of Christ is like a common Levite, or a mere Israelite of another tribe. There were at least three distinct bodies in Israel, determined by their distance from the Deity. Outside of these there were distinct "bodies" even among the nations. There were the proselytes, and others who believed, making two or three "bodies" among the Gentiles, though each had few privileges of any kind.

In contrast with these there is only *one* body today. It is a joint body in which all the members are of equal rank. Not only are the Circumcision, priests, Levites, and others, on the same level, but the proselytes and devout believers among the nations are not distinguished from one another or from the three bodies in Israel. The most uncouth and unlearned saint in far off Thessalonica ranked just the same as Barnabas, the Levite, in the body of Christ. There is no

temple curtain, barring out the priests, no holy place into which the Levites cannot come, no court to which an Israelite has no access, no wall to shut out the nations, no ceremonies to mark off the proselytes from inferior ranks of Gentile believers. All are *one* body, for all are in Christ, so near and dear to God that distinctions are impossible.

Let us insist that the characteristic truth for today is not merely that we are the body of Christ, but that this is a *joint body,* and *there is only one.* There are differences between saints. There are degrees of knowledge or ignorance. There is variety in service, and in the rewards to which it leads. But let us remember that we are not in the body of the *Lord,* but in the body of *Christ.* Attainment and service are not necessary to membership. The most ignorant saint is entitled to a place in the joint body. No service whatever is needed to become a member. Faith alone is all that is necessary. Only thus can there be but one body.

Christendom today has many organizations. Yet in all of these, and outside of them as well, are those who are living members of that one great spiritual organism whose Head is Christ. This is the true "catholic," or universal, church. It is the only one worthy of our thought or serious consideration. Its membership is based solely on the possession of God's spirit, not on any man-made bonds whatever. God alone can put men in it, and no one can put men out of it. It is divine. It is the work of God's spirit. Let us recognize His handiwork and acknowledge His achievement. Many a saint is awed by the religious atmosphere of some great cathedral, but does not realize the solemn sanctity of God's real dwelling place, the church of Christ. It alone is hallowed. Let us make much of it.

ONE SPIRIT

We have so long been accustomed to reading "spirit" with a capital "S" and referring it to God's spirit exclusively

that, to many, the small "s" seems offensive and derogatory. But the word spirit is by no means confined to God's holy spirit. It would be trite indeed to insist that God's spirit is only one. We have a spirit. Each act of our lives is characterized by a spirit. Each administration has its own peculiar spirit. The spirit of the Mosaic administration was legal. It has no place today. When the disciples desired to draw down fire upon their enemies they were told that they did not know what spirit pertained to them. The spirit of Elijah's ministry was quite different from that of our Lord's, though both were actuated by the same holy spirit.

The "spirit" speaks of the temper of the mind, the key to which life's activities are pitched. In every divine administration this is dependent on God's assumption and the nature of the work which engages Him. Elijah's attitude toward his enemies could not be duplicated by our Lord. Neither can we duplicate the spirit of our Master's day. Gentiles were treated as outsiders, deserving almost no consideration. The same spirit was not shown them which obtained in the churches in Israel. Only when a Jew was obstinate and would not bow to the decision of the congregation, then he also was to be treated like a man of another nation. Today no such distinctions may be maintained. Jews and Gentiles are on one common ground, and this a spiritual one. We deal with one another on the one high plateau of His exalted favor.

Those of the Circumcision who died in their faith never entered into this truth. Even after this letter was sent forth, Peter wrote to the dispersion, telling them to behave themselves ideally "among the nations" (1 Peter 2:12) where they found themselves. This is not an isolated statement, but one of many which show the double spirit which he and the surviving Circumcisionists showed to the end of their days. Nowhere in his letters, or, indeed, in any epis-

tles except Paul's latest, does the truth of the one spirit receive acknowledgment.

Christendom has almost utterly missed the spirit which should distinguish it from all previous administrations. It has lived in the atmosphere of Sinai or Jerusalem instead of in the prison house of Paul at Rome. In the bondage of the law, or seeking to fit into the earthly kingdom, it has imbibed and manifested a spirit foreign to the truth. It should display such boundless grace and love, in accord with God's own attitude, that all men everywhere would recognize its every act by its delicious Christ-like spirit. Instead, it has become the opposite, and is described by God Himself as an unearthly monster, more ferocious than the beasts of the earth.

ONE EXPECTATION

The earliest written record that we have of Paul's peculiar ministry is stated thus: ". . . you turn back to God from idols, to be slaving for the living and true God *and to be waiting for His Son out of the heavens,* Whom He rouses from among the dead, Jesus, our Rescuer out of the coming indignation" (1 Thess.1:9,10). The wrath impending on Israel and the earth, of which Peter spoke at Pentecost, which is detailed in Revelation, will be endured to its close by the saints who survive for the kingdom. If our place were in that kingdom and we hoped to enter it alive, our future outlook would be one of terror and dread. At any moment the portals of Yahweh's day might open and we would enter its terrible trials and suffer its terrific tribulations. Only those who endure to the end will be delivered.

This is the key to Paul's epistles to the Thessalonians. This is what they dreaded, and this is the predicament into which they supposed that they had fallen. It seemed very real to them. Paul expresses the matter in a most realistic figure, in anticipation of their mistake. He puts it all into

the *present,* notwithstanding the word "waiting" demands the future. Our Lord is presented as the One deliver*ing* them—not who *will* deliver them. In line with this they are delivered *out* of the indignation—not *from*—as though they had already entered it. Paul uses the same figure of himself when he speaks of being rescued *out* of the mouth of the lion (2 Tim.4:17). He was never in it. But such dangers impress themselves vividly on the mind, and it is more fitting to state the feeling rather than the fact.

A word of warning to close students of the Scriptures is called for here. It is well to be exact and to insist on the literal meaning whenever possible. I have great sympathy with those who point to the connective *out of* to prove that the Thessalonians will be in the coming indignation, for, they say, "How can they come *out* of it if they never were *in* it?" But there is a higher logic than this. It may be stated thus: *Every word, in the Scriptures, must be interpreted in accord with its context and the entire production of which it is a part.* Now it is the main burden of the Thessalonian epistles to prove that they were *not* appointed to indignation, but to the procuring of salvation (1 Thess.5:9,10). No single word in the epistle must be forced to teach otherwise, especially when its figurative use lends life and force, and is found elsewhere in the same sense. Let us *feel* that the Son of God is delivering us out of the coming indignation which might, at any moment, close its maw upon our helpless heads.

Israel's expectation in the kingdom finds no fulfillment until *after* the time of tribulation. Hence Paul gave the Thessalonians and the Corinthians a *prior expectancy.* This is what especially distinguished the Circumcision who followed Paul's teaching from the rest. Peter's words still held with the latter. The heavens must receive Christ until the restoration of all spoken by the prophets (Acts 3:21). They knew nothing of His previous descent to the

air. When Paul seeks to identify those of the Circumcision who had received his revelations he falls back on this fact. They looked for Christ to come before the affliction. They had a *prior expectation.* The celestial allotment of Ephesians is for them (Eph.1:12). It is the mark which identifies Pauline believers among the Circumcision, hence the Ephesian revelation is limited to them.

Unlike the kingdom expectations, our outlook is the same for all. All will have a celestial allotment, all will be with Christ, all will go at the same time. There is only *one* expectation! This is the fruit of grace transcendent. It ignores the distinctions of flesh and makes favorites of all. In the kingdom almost all the promises and privileges are for Israel. The nations have no expectation worthy of the name. If the Gentiles of this era were to be with them in the kingdom we would soon discover that there was more than one expectation. Our outlook would not compare with that of a Jew, no matter what our spiritual attainments might be.

This gracious truth is being assailed from all sides. It does not seem possible to leave grace unadulterated. Some imagine that our expectation is only for the watchful, when the apostle distinctly declares that it is also for the drowsy (1 Thess.5:10). Others think He comes only for those who look for Him (Heb.9:28), and thus limit it to those who believe in His advent. Hebrews speaks of His coming to Israel, not to us. A few make it a matter of attainment or knowledge. For those who have gone to repose this expectation is necessarily an eclectic, or out-resurrection, for it occurs before the saints of Israel are roused, and leaves them in their tombs. The apostle's desire to conform his experience to it has led to the idea that he hoped to be raised immediately at death, and thus precede other saints into Christ's presence. All such departures deny this unity.

There is one, and only one expectation common to all the saints of this most gracious administration.

ONE LORD

There is *one* Master, or Lord. How this strikes at the very root of the ecclesiasticism of today! With the Ephesians the contrast would consist in the repeal of the decrees issued from Jerusalem, which were the token of their subjection to the twelve. But now decrees are issued, not only from Jerusalem, but from Rome and Petrograd, from London and Berlin, and from a thousand councils and conferences and synods, and so voluminous as to fill whole books with rules for the discipline of the saints. And at the very same time the inspired exhortations of the prison epistles, which are the real rule of conduct for today, are forgotten or ignored.

The kingdom will be administered by many masters. The whole nation of Israel will be a royal nation with the rest of the world as their subjects. The twelve apostles will sit on twelve thrones, ruling the twelve tribes of Israel. If this were such an administration, we should have Paul and Timothy and all the rest of the apostles, or their successors, ruling over us today. It is well that the Roman pontiff does not claim to be Paul's successor, for Paul himself would refuse to take the place he occupies. Such delegated authority is a necessity in the kingdom. Christ will rule through His representatives, and men must be subject to them, as to under-lords.

But for us there is only *one* Lord. When men step in and dictate to us what we are to believe, how we are to behave, and assign our tasks, they usurp *His* place, and deny His headship, and underrate His capacity. Before the present status of the saints had been made known, and the nations were still supposed to be subject to Jerusalem, a convention could be called to make decrees, and James could set-

tle matters by saying "*I* decide." Not so now. God has not replaced the deposed Circumcision by other lords, taken from among the Gentiles. Those who have risen to reign over the saints have usurped the place of Christ. He needs no earthly vicar, Catholic or Protestant. Nor Jerusalem, nor Rome, nor Council, nor Synod, nor any Diotrephes (3 John 9) has any right to stand between us and our Lord!

There is dire need that the people of God realize the fact that they are not only saints saved by Christ but slaves serving their Lord. There is much religious work today, but how little of it is under His direction! How much will merit His approval? How little effort is being made to discover His will! In most cases some man has made himself a master, and the lordship of Christ is lost.

ONE FAITH

It seems almost ironical to say that there is *one* faith. Whence, then, are the thousands of divine "faiths" which challenge us with the assurance that they are all taken from the Bible? And many of them *can* point to proof texts for their doctrines and thus found all, as they fondly believe, "on the Bible." Some go to the law, in spite of the fact that the nations never were under the law. Some refer us to the "gospels," forgetting that Jesus Christ was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Some stake all on John's or Peter's ministries, not heeding their own words that the gospel of the *Circumcision* was committed to them, but that of the *Uncircumcision* to Paul.

There is only one true creed today. The many confessions and statements of belief are all fragmentary and faulty. They divide rather than unify. Christendom contains a thousand beliefs. Each is stoutly defended as the only one! They are all buttressed by "the Bible." Have we not discovered the key to this confusion? Once the truth is correctly apportioned, once the last great revelation—

the secret administration—is given its due place, then only one belief is possible. All prior revelation is glorified by its transcendent truths. Practically all of the creeds ignore it. Their dogmas are derived from previous administrations. They base their beliefs on passages which have no present application.

We must remember that, before the current administration, there was more than one body of truth. What was true of the Jew was not by any means to be taken of the Gentile. This was especially the case in the transitional period between Pentecost and the present. This is the background for the statement that there is but one faith now. It is not selective, predicating of one class what is not true of another. When those of the Circumcision who were with Paul received a celestial allotment, they had no monopoly of it. It was for the Gentiles also. When a new humanity was created, the superiority of the Circumcision vanished. So long as the churches seek to establish themselves on the shifting scenes of Acts there will be many conflicting faiths.

ONE BAPTISM

The so-called "Great Commission," at the close of Matthew, must have been given but a short time before Pentecost. Yet there is no record that it was obeyed in a single instance during the period covered by the book of Acts. This shows the great confusion into which the truth as to baptism has fallen. While claiming the support of primitive practice, the attempt is made to fulfill the Matthew commission, baptizing in the name of the so-called "trinity," *which the disciples never did*! The early disciples were right. That commission waits for the day when all earthly power is in the hands of the great King. It is not the one baptism for this era.

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, conditions the reception

of the spirit upon baptism in water (Acts 2:38). Conversely, in Cornelius' case, he conditions baptism in water on the reception of the spirit (Acts 10:47,48). The tendency was away from water to spirit, especially in regard to the Gentiles. Under Paul's ministry this is carried much further. Of baptism in water he said: "Christ does not commission me to be baptizing but to be preaching the evangel . . ." (1 Cor. 1:17). Though so vehemently denying the practice of baptizing *in water,* he insists, in the same epistle, that "*in one spirit* we all are baptized into one body" (1 Cor.12:13).

Spirit baptism is essential to membership in the body of Christ. Water baptism is not. During our Lord's life water baptism was the only one. During the Pentecostal era spirit baptism was added, so there were two. Now there is a return to one. Either water or spirit baptism is no longer in force. Can anyone hesitate which one to drop! Spirit baptism is vital. Without it we have nothing. We are not cleansed. We are not united into one body. Not so water baptism. Paul had practically dropped it long before. It was nothing but a ceremonial, of no efficacy in itself, a type of spirit baptism. One was the shadow, the other the reality. Spirit baptism is the one baptism for today.

Perhaps some of those who first received this epistle had known two baptisms. Some in Corinth had been dipped in water. Since that time there has been a constant change from the physical to the spiritual. This epistle finally sets aside all fleshly prerogatives. Nothing depends on the physical and everything is based on the spiritual. The very unity of which this is a part is made by *spirit.* How could such a oneness come from the superficial contact of water with the flesh? In a catalogue of spiritual unities it should be unnecessary to insist that the one baptism is that of God's spirit. All to whom this was written had been baptized in spirit. It is the vital basis of unity.

The popular view of the baptism of the spirit is far

astray. Like its type, water baptism, it *cleanses* and *unifies. It does not impart power.* That is done by the *coming on* of the spirit, a manifestation which must not be confused with it. After the Pentecostal era, which paraded the powers of the coming eon, this *coming on* of the spirit ceased. In its place we have the homing of the spirit. We are not promised power, but weakness such as may be used as a foil for God's strength. The manifestations popularly connected with spirit baptism are usually the work of deceiving spirits, promising powers which have no place in this administration.

ONE GOD

The "proofs" of trinitarianism all flow from false inferences founded on passages which do not deal with the subject. The texts which actually and definitely decide the question are either ignored or "explained," notwithstanding the vehement emphasis put upon the word *one* and the denial of more than one. The Scriptures plainly teach that there is one God, the Father, but orthodox Christianity upholds a form of apologetic polytheism, in which Satan, as well as the so-called persons of the godhead are invested with the attributes of deity.

Postulating a good and beneficent God, eternal torment is unreasonable and insane. By a reversal of the logical process, it demands a monstrous deity, partial, cruel, vindictive.

The doctrine that good proceeds from God and evil from another source is the basis of an ancient Persian religion, founded by Zoroaster. It was later embraced by the Gnostic philosophy, against which Colossians warns us. It is impossible to teach that evil originated in any being, independent of God, without destroying the basic truth of the Bible, that there is only *one* God. Monotheism becomes

a cloak to disguise the doctrine of dualism. God is defied and Satan deified.

It is this false and pagan philosophy of the genesis of evil which bears fruit in the further falsehood that evil has always existed and always will exist. No one not equally powerful and divine could have introduced evil against the will of God, hence the god of evil must be as great as, or greater than, the god of good. Hence this evil god is a proper deity with divine attributes. He can have neither beginning nor end, and his work is as eternal as himself.

But this is not all. If there is more than one god, and these two are not in accord, then, as an inevitable consequence, there is no real God at all, with any of the theological "attributes." A good god would not allow an evil god either place or power if he could help it. He could not be "omnipotent." He could not endure the presence of his rival, hence could not be "omnipresent." In short, two gods are no God. There is One or none.

THE PANTHEON OF CHRISTENDOM

The Christian pantheon consists of four distinct deities. No being that successfully contests the power of the divine Creator can be denied omnipotence. Such is Satan of Christendom. He occupies practically the same place that Zeus, or Jupiter, did in Greek mythology. Saturn was first supreme, and Zeus succeeded in overcoming him. The same fable is foisted upon us by orthodox theology. God has been overpowered and cannot prevent the evil in the world, or He would. Satan has the upper hand!

A few facts will show how unfounded is the explanation of the "trinity"—three "persons" in one "godhead." These expressions are not found in the Scriptures. Is it not significant that we must go outside God's Word entirely to explain its most important truth? The holy spirit is not a distinct "person" from God Himself. Both are given as the

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was generated by the holy spirit. His Father was God. Surely we have only one "person" here! Christ did not have two fathers! The only spirit is God's spirit, and in no sense a separate personality.

Christ, as the Son of God, is divine as to His spirit and human as to His body. He is the Image of God and the Word of God, by means of which we hear and see the invisible deity. As such He is called God. But His entire work is to manifest Another. He has a will, but prefers His Father's. He has all power, but it is given Him by His Father. He carries out God's purpose, not His own. He rules as God's Executive. And when His work is gloriously finished and He hands over a reconciled universe to God, He Himself becomes subject. None of this is proper to absolute deity. He is the one *Lord,* not the one God and Father, of this passage.

But the special thought which is called for by the context, has to do with the present grace. Now, as never before, the one God is the one Father also. In preceding eras Israel had almost a monopoly of His covenant care. For them He took a special title. Yahweh was their special deity. He did not belong to the other nations. They were shut out of His temple, and kept at a distance from His habitation. All of this is past. We know Him as our God, in the most intimate and blessed of all His characters. He is our Father.

In this regard we come very close to God's ultimate. We anticipate the time when He will become All in all His creatures. He, as the Father of all who believe, is over all and through all and in all. Toward us He does not assume the role of a distant deity, to be approached only through His appointed people, by means of a forbidding ceremonial. He bids us draw very near to an affectionate Father, Who is involved in all that we do and are. Again, He is this to all, not to a special class. May our hearts be enlightened to appreciate this culminating grace! May its blessedness

be ever fresh and may it be enjoyed with an increasing sense of its preciousness!

Perhaps no better test of our interpretation of Ephesians, or of our understanding of the truth for today can be found than this sevenfold spiritual unity. Happy is he who can say with a true heart that he acknowledges but one body, one spirit, one expectation, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God! Who cannot look back to the time when he recognized at least two of each? Christendom, with its trinity, its various baptisms, its multitudinous faiths, its many lords, its hazy expectations, its conflicting spirits, and its organized bodies, presents a spectacle to make angels weep and sadden every saint who gets a glimpse of God's ideal. Man has multiplied every unity God has made.

The point in all that we have been considering lies in the word "one." No one doubts that there *is* a body, a spirit, an expectation, a lord, a faith, a baptism, a God. It would have conveyed the sense to say that there is one body, spirit, expectation, Lord, faith, baptism, God and Father. But the Author of this epistle was solicitous on this point. So He repeats the word "one" before each item to give it extraordinary emphasis. We have printed it in italics in the first edition of the CV. In view of the prevailing refusal to believe and keep this unity, we feel like printing it in italic capitals, with all the force that type can convey. There is only *ONE* body, *ONE* spirit, *ONE* expectation, *ONE* Lord, *ONE* faith, *ONE* baptism, *ONE* God and Father!

Of course, there *are* many gods (1 Cor.8:5), two baptisms and many modes, many faiths, mostly false, many lords, a multitude of mirages beside the one expectation, many spirits, for we are warned against them, and bodies too numerous to mention. But for us there is only *ONE* of each of these. To acknowledge this is to keep the spirit's unity.

What closer links than these can there be to bind us to

one another? We are members of a joint body. The spirit that animates it is undivided. We look forward to the same glorious future. We heed the directions of a single Master. We believe the same truth. We are cleansed by a baptism which fits for a common membership in God's great family, knowing Him as our Father. Even in this earthly scene we know the unifying power of family ties, the clannishness of priests cleansed at the laver, the ecclesiastical bond of a common creed, the community of interests which flows from working under the same master, the ties of mutual expectancy, the fellowship of spiritual affinities, and the marvelous unity of the human frame. There is oneness of life, oneness of spirit, oneness of hope, oneness of work, oneness of faith, oneness of worship, oneness of affection!

We are one in spirit! O that each would do his utmost to preserve this unity! Strife has exploded its manifestation into a million fragments. We beseech you, gracious reader, nay, *God* beseeches you to guard this precious ideal. The breach between Jew and Gentile no longer cleaves the saints in twain. But in its place we find a thousand factions, all ignoring this great exhortation. But the unity still is there. We need not make it. Let us keep it! When we stand before His dais, may it be our joy, and His, that we have ever striven, by word and deed, to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace!

A. E. Knoch

GEORGE HYDE

We have received a letter from our dear friend, Margaret Hyde, concerning the passing of her husband, George Hyde. She writes: "He died at home on April 21, 2025, at the age of 81. He studied the Word of God for several years using sermons from the Concordant Publishing Concern. We were so thankful that God led us to understand His glorious truth. Thanks to all who helped provide this for us."

THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT

In the following restating of Ephesians 4:1-4, while the text remains the same, I have added some words in brackets. The careful reader will note that these additions are relevant, and true in the nature of the case; ideally, even self-evident. While they do not change the sense of what Paul says, hopefully the reader will find that they do help to clarify the sense of what is actually stated:

"I am entreating you, then [in consideration of all the foregoing in this epistle], I, the prisoner in the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called. [Thus, I declare,] with all humility and meekness, with patience, [be] bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to *keep* the *unity* of the spirit with the tie of peace [thus—which is, according to truth, whether recognized or not, that there is but]: *one* body and *one* spirit. [This is so, as you are aware, though the infirm in faith may not agree] according as you were called also with *one* expectation of your calling, [it being true, in fact, even as, again, *you* are aware, that, for us, there is but] *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all."

Thus we see that Paul herein provides us not with a means by which we may justify ourselves in excluding others from our circle of fellowship (or still worse, even from our acknowledged circle of sainthood), but with the *one* true foundation upon which we may rest, becoming "settled, unmovable" (*cf* 1 Cor.15:58), *growing* in maturity ourselves, while *bearing with* one another in *love.*

The unity of the spirit which God has made and we, in our practice, are to endeavor to keep, is that God has made it so that there is, in truth and faithfully speaking, but *one* body and *one* spirit.

Be the organized church bodies all around us ever so numerous, and the many false spirits abounding among those who are deceiving others, being deceived themselves (*cf* 2 Tim.3:13), there remains but *one* body of believers, through which they are enlightened by *one* spirit, the holy spirit of God (Eph.4:30).

The *one* body is the ecclesia, which is the "body" of Christ: "the ecclesia which is His body" (Eph.1:23), its members being so closely identified with Him as to be, in a figure, the very members of His body.

In 1 Corinthians 12:11-13, these two intimately related themes of the *one* body and the *one* spirit, are brought together in a single passage: "Now all these *one and the same spirit* is operating, apportioning to each his own, according as He is intending. For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the one body, being many, are one body, thus also is the Christ. For *in one spirit* also we *all* are baptized into *one body,* whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and all are made to imbibe *one* spirit."

Accordingly, ". . . whoever are baptized into Christ, put on Christ, in Whom there is no Jew nor yet Greek, there is no slave nor yet free, there is no male and female, for you *all* are *one* in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3:27,28).

It is unnecessary to be very widely acquainted with the many theologies and theological systems of Christendom, whether present or past, to realize that over the course of more than two millennia, "every wind of teaching" (Eph.4:14) has indeed circulated and prevailed among some, whether among only a few or a great many.

Concerning every vital subject as rehearsed here by Paul, concerning which he assures us that there is but "*one,*" the theological world effectively has cried out saying, "No! there are *many.*" Yet this is only to be followed by each one of its representatives, bickering among themselves, wishing to add, "the only true one, however, is mine."

It is vital to note that here in Ephesians 4, Paul's by no means *defines* the parameters of truth, the truth concerning the one body, the one spirit, the one expectation of our calling, the one Lord, the one faith, the one baptism, the one God and Father of all. That is not his purpose. Instead, his purpose is to assure us that there is indeed but *one* of each, and that that true *one,* in every case, may be discovered through an enlightened reading and study of the collective whole of his epistles, complemented to be sure by the rest of the sacred scriptures as well.

Our common quest is, in God's own time, that we should "*all* attain to the *unity* of *the faith*" (Eph.4:13). In the meantime, let us all, "with all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, [be] endeavoring to keep the *unity* of the *spirit* with the tie of *peace*" (Eph.4:3).

James Coram

THE APPRECIATION OF GOD

GOD HAS A GOAL. He intends to become All in all His creatures (1 Cor.15:28). He will accomplish this by way of reconciling all His enemies by the blood of Christ's cross, by justifying, vivifying, and saving all mankind at the consummation (Col.1:20; Rom.5:18; 1 Cor.15:22; 1 Tim2:4; 4:10). But before this there is a long and painful preparatory process, a weary way which leads His creatures to this consummation, much of which is as dark and distressing as the goal is bright and filled with blessing.

Almost all of us are short-sighted. We see a part of the way but we do not see the end. We confuse the going with the goal. Our translations are partly to blame, for they fail to clearly mark the fleeting nature of the process, as it is in the Original. And if an honest attempt is made to carry this across in a concordant version, it clashes with our conventions and our hard hearts. God grant that we may faithfully witness, in our renderings, when God reveals a *fact,* and when it is only a temporary *process,* for this He has clearly indicated in the Original.

Judgment is God's strange work. He uses it on the way. Men make it the end. No matter how an unbeliever is dealt with, whether he dies as a result of sin, or by the direct intervention of God, whether he be cast into outer darkness or into Gehenna, *this is not his end.* All who do not belong to Christ will be roused from the dead and judged before the great white throne. There they are not forgiven, or saved, but judged. *But this is not their end.*

All these will be cast into the lake of fire, to suffer the second death. *Even this is not their end.* God does not reach His goal in any of His disciplinary measures. These only prepare His creatures for it. Let us not confuse the going with the goal.

Very little is said to us about God's goal until Paul completes the orbit of God's Word with his later revelations. Hints there have always been by which hearts in tune with God have been filled with high hopes. But it is not until the meridian sun of God's grace has come from behind the clouds of sin and law to reveal the deepest recesses of God's immanent love to the most undeserving of the race; it is not until the truth for the present was made known that God tore aside the veil of the future completely and gave us a clear and unclouded view of His ultimate. Once we revel in this we will never go back to previous revelation on this theme, for like the curtain of the tabernacle, it seems to hide, rather than reveal the full blaze of the Shekinah glory.

The usual way is to view the goal in the darkness of the way. We go back to passages which deal with judgments and allow them to throw their dark shadows across the consummation. We should *believe* that *God* will *justify all* mankind (Rom.5:18,19), and view the previous judgments in the light of this final achievement. We bring up passages which tell of death, to darken God's declaration that it will be abolished. We should *believe* that *God* will make death inoperative at the *last,* and view the previous passages in this glorious light. We turn to texts which prove that unbelievers will be lost or destroyed, and, with these passages, dim the great declaration that God wills the salvation of all. We should illumine them with the later and higher revelation. We find God's enemies in the fiery

lake at what seems to be the close of revelation, and misuse this fact to deny God's declaration that all will be reconciled (Col.1:20). We should not take one to destroy the other, but believe *both,* for reconciliation *follows* estrangement, and it alone accords with God's final goal.

How perverse and blind have we often been! When God says *all,* we have said *some.* When God speaks of a very small fraction of mankind, such as the living nations who stand before Christ to be judged according to their treatment of Israel—a mere handful as compared with all mankind—then we extend their sentence to *all!* Faith has almost fled from the earth. What calls itself faith is mostly a masquerade, for it refuses God's Word for the traditions of men, yet insists that it is genuine.

Let us allow the light of the latest revelation to illumine the earlier, partial unfolding, and let us not use the earlier to eclipse the latest, the highest, and the only complete unveiling of God's mind and heart.

MULTIFARIOUS WISDOM

The past eons seem to be replete with failures on God's part. Adam sinned and offended, and brought the whole human race into the service of sin and the doom of death. Could not God have prevented this by prudent provision? Thereupon the race that sprang from him became so wicked that they had to be almost wiped out by a deluge. Why did not God foresee this and prevent the evil? Thereafter the nation of Israel was segregated to be a blessing to the balance. But they became worse than the rest and even crucified God's Christ, so seemed to utterly fail to fulfill their function. Failure! Failure! Failure! All that God did seemed to end in futile failure. Both creation and revelation were full of evidences of God's infi-

nite wisdom, yet His dealings with mankind apparently showed the reverse. He seemed to pyramid one failure upon another.

To the human, unanointed eye the present operations of the Deity are the greatest failure of all. In almost every avenue of life the mortals that He made fall short. They excel principally in evil and death-dealing devices. But the greatest of all failures is Christendom, His avowed representative on earth. Notwithstanding its immense privileges, its tremendous advantages over Israel, it has sunk even lower than the favored nation. Only the eye of faith on earth can see the multifarious wisdom of God in these apparent failures, for only those whose hearts have been opened to the secret which He concealed from the eons hitherto, are able to apprehend the vastness of the wisdom therein displayed.

THE REALIZATION OF GOD

The knowledge of God's Word is good, an acquaintance with His ways is better, but a realization of Himself is best. Faith accepts His sayings, confidence acquiesces in His ways, love rests in His essence. Let us believe what He says, and we will not only delight in what He does, but exult in what He is. How few of His saints are found with even the first of these favors! Faith they have, but so scant, so adulterated with credulity, and so faltering, that God's ways are dark and inscrutable, and He Himself is hid behind a thick curtain of ignorance and tradition. Alas! even to His children, He is the great Unknown and Unknowable.

The attitude of scant faith is clearly revealed when its own welfare is at stake. It does not deem it safe to leave the future in God's hands, without some definite prom-

ise, some written bond, that will hold Him to His Word. It is this trembling unbelief which changes God's eons into eternities, for it rightly reasons that, if the eons end, there is no certainty of future bliss, unless they leave their fate in the hands of a God Whom they do not fully trust! It is true that God has made no "promises" beyond the eons. As He gives us deathlessness and incorruptibility, why should we be concerned about "eternal" life? Where there is no death, such a "promise" would only reflect upon His character, and our future welfare is far more dependent on His integrity than on His declarations.

It will be seen in the Scriptures that the abundance of promises decreases rapidly once the millennium is past. Not many refer to the new earth and the new heavens. There is hardly a specific engagement on God's part beyond the eonian times. Why should there be? There is no need for many promises when all men are vital with life and where sin has been repudiated, where faith is replaced by sight, and all are subject to God. Where there is no sin there can be no salvation, where there is no enemy there can be no rescue. With God the All of all hearts, the present is bliss and the future felicity, and there can be no concern, no anxiety as to either.

There are saints who would be in despair if the promises in the Bible should suddenly be revoked, and they should be left entirely at the mercy of God, without any recorded document to which they could hold Him. But can they hold Him? If He is not to be trusted without a definite promise, can we be sure that He will stand by His Word? Promises are expedient and gracious, a help to confirm faith, and we would not be without a single one of them. Yet our confidence should not rest in the promises but in Him Who made them. We should be more

than willing to trust Him when and where His promises do not reach.

Scant faith is afraid of the consummation. Israel's promises on earth and ours in the heavens come to a conclusion when Christ abdicates the throne. We will no longer reign, for all rule will be abolished. Our eonian mission will be fulfilled, for all will be reconciled. True, there is no death, so we cannot die. Deathlessness indeed is ours, yet we have no written assurance of peace or happiness or glory in that consummation. To the average saint it looks like a leap in the dark, or into an abyss without a bottom. There is nothing on which faith can fasten—except God! And is not this precisely what He wishes? Then He will be All in every one. Faith, promises and all such crutches will be past. They would only mar the perfect and mutual confidence which will exist between God and His creatures. It is not a leap in the dark, but a serene entrance into light and love unlimited.

The overwhelming glory of God's grand ultimate has been utterly wrecked by current unbelief, and the substitution of such a fearful future *for God* as the annihilation of the bulk of His creatures, or their far more heartless and hideous torment for all eternity. Let us for the time consider these only as they affect God's glory, not human welfare. If He is a real God, then all destiny is the deliberate fruit of His efforts. Even if He is the subordinate deity of Christendom, Who has lost control of His creation and cannot do what He would, these destinies are foreseen and allowed by Him, and He makes no adequate effort to prevent them. Say what you will, they make it impossible for even His saints to trust Him as they should.

If He is such a God, the thought will arise, Could He not save the bulk of His creatures in the past, how can

He preserve His saints in the future? If sin came in and ruined His fair creation against His will, what will hinder a repetition in the eternity to come? Even if we believe His promises, can we rely upon His love and power when they have been fulfilled, and there is no further guarantee? The more closely one considers the false doctrines of annihilation or eternal torment, the more it will be apparent that they make it utterly impossible for God to gain the full confidence of His creatures. The usual result is His dethronement by the doctrines of free will and divine irresponsibility in the past and present, and by the utter eclipse of His ultimate goal in the future. An annihilator and tormentor eternal cannot become All in all, not even if we make the all a tiny residue.

Here we have the secret source which supplied the mistranslations *everlasting* and *eternal.* And this shows why saints are so slow to give them up. They cannot trust their God, and must have a public record to bind His actions in the future. He has promised them eonian life. If this is not eternal, they are not sure—in fact, they are afraid—that He will take life from them when it comes to its end. Can we not see how the promise of "eternal" life really defeats its own purpose? It is given that the saints may get to know God, yet, being endless, it implies that they never attain this goal. As it denies the possibility that He shall be All in them, it totally defeats the object for which it is given, of making them so utterly content with Him that they not only are willing but eager to leave themselves in His heart, without a single assurance from His lips. What He *is,* is enough!

It is the office of faith to transfer us, in spirit, to this consummation, even in the midst of our present career, while everything visible still seems the very reverse of

God's ultimate. Perhaps never, in the history of mankind, has there been such marked distrust, between men as well as toward God. Confidence is going or gone. Faith is vanishing. And I, for one, freely confess that, without a knowledge of the consummation, when God will reconcile all and become All in all, I could not have confidence in a deity who allowed the world to work itself into such a mess, and who can do little more for most men than to sweep them into destruction, extinction or torment. I, too, would fear that such a god must be put under bond to perform His oaths, and even then—? But now, how can I distrust Him? Mankind is just where He has brought it. The effect of all the present evil and distress will be salutary. God will get glory out of it, and men will be prepared by it to appreciate the gifts He has in store for them.

Here we have the great contrast between man's miserable self-made destinies and God's grand and gracious goal. Man's not only destroys God's creatures, but undermines His deity and robs Him of the appreciation of His heart's handiwork. God's goal not only upholds His deity but gives His creatures such confidence in Him that all concern as to His love and power disappears. They willingly, yes eagerly, leave themselves in His hands without any assurance whatever on His part as to His intentions. Faith and hope are no longer needed, so they vanish, and only love remains. Knowing Him as God, limitless in power and wisdom, and as essential Love, they prefer to remain in fond anticipation of that which the ear hears not, to which the heart of man cannot ascend, that which God makes ready for those who are loving Him. They rely on His Word, they delight in His ways, and they revel in the appreciation of Himself.

A. E. Knoch

LISTENING TO "LISTEN"

IN the last issue of this magazine I ended my editorial with a call for a testing of the use of the English word "listening" for the Greek words built on the elements UNDER-HEAR. The particular test I had in mind was a list of all the passages using some form of UNDER-HEAR and rendering these with some form of "listen." Since that time I have been working on such a list along with my comments on how such a reading might be understood and be an improvement on the usual use of some form of "obey" as presently understood. The task has been a challenging one to me, and is not finished, but always rewarding. And now I receive a list of all thirty-nine passages done in concordance form, traditional book order, on one sheet of paper with the change of wording I was urging. (Thank you very much Jeff Bohlender!).

The following is his list with some adjustments in wording (the substituting of "disregarding" for "disobedience" is also indicated.)

Testing "listening" for UNDER-HEARing

Ro 1:5	grace and apostleship for *listening* of faith
Ro 5:19	through the *listening* of the One
Ro 6:16	presenting yourselves for *listening*, his slaves you are
Ro 6:16	to whom you are *listening*
Ro 15:18	effect through me for the *listening* of the nations
Ro 16:19	your *listening* reaches out to all
Ro 16:26	made known to all nations for *listening* of faith
2 C 7:15	having a recollection of the *listening* of you all
2 C 10:5	every apprehension into the *listening* of Christ
2 C 10:6	avenge every *disregarding*, whenever your *listening*
Phn 21	Having confidence in your *listening*
Hb 5:8	learns *listening* from that which He suffers
1 P 1:2	in holiness of spirit, for *listening* and sprinkling

1 P 1:14 *listening* children, not configuring to the former desires
1 P 1:22 having purified your souls, by the *listening* of truth

Testing "listening" for UNDER-HEARD

Ac 7:39 our fathers are not willing to become *listening* ones
2 C 2:9 that I may know your testedness, if you are *listening* ones
Ph 2:8 He humbles Himself becoming One *listening* unto death

Testing "listen" for UNDER-HEAR

Mt 8:27 the winds as well as the sea *are listening* to Him
Mk 1:27 enjoining the unclean spirits, and *they are listening* to Him
Mk 4:41 even the wind and the sea *are listening* to Him
Lk 8:25 the winds as well as the water, and *they are listening* to Him
Lk 17:6 be planted in the sea, and *it would listen* to you
Ac 6:7 a vast throng of the priests *were listening* to the faith
Ac 12:13 a maid approaches *to listen,* named Rhoda
Ro 6:12 reigning in your mortal body, for you *to be listening* to its lusts
Ro 6:16 his slaves you are to whom *you are listening*
Ro 6:17 yet *you listen* from the heart to the type of teaching
Ro 10:16 But not all *listen* to the evangel
Ep 6:1 Children, *be listening* to your parents, in the Lord
Ep 6:5 Slaves, *be listening* to your masters
Ph 2:12 as *you* always *listen,* not as in my presence only
Co 3:20 Children, *be listening* to your parents, in all things
Co 3:22 Slaves, *be listening* in all things to your masters
2 Th 1:8 those who *are* not *listening* to the evangel of our Lord Jesus Christ
2 Th 3:14 if anyone *is* not *listening* to our word
Hb 5:9 the cause of eonian salvation to all who *are listening* to Him
Hb 11:8 By faith Abraham, being called, *listens,* coming out
1 P 3:6 to their own husband (as Sarah *listens* to Abraham)

When the Lord calms the storming winds and sea those human beings with Him who had been in danger of perishing exclaimed, "What manner of Man is this, that the winds as well as the sea are UNDER-HEARING to Him" (Matt.8:24-27). Indeed the winds and the sea did exactly what was instructed to them by way of rebuke. But that is not exactly what the text says. The mariners were greatly

impressed by the fact that the winds and the sea heard the words of the Lord's rebuke with such exactitude and submission that they became calm.

The Lord's words were words of instruction. The wind's and the sea's response was immediate, attentive hearing. That is, they listened.

How important is listening? In communication listening is vital. So it is that a teacher will say to an unruly class of students, and a parent to arguing children, and a boss to the workers, "Listen to me!"

God's word, however, is not always one of instruction, but in its highest and final character is one of revelation of goodness and glory. God's Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord, heard words of instruction which He did not want to carry out, but He did not set them aside. Instead He submissively and attentively kept them before Him, saying to His God and Father, "Not as I will, but as You [will]!" (Matt. 26:39). The listening was vital to the desired doing.

The above list of thirty-nine usages of some form of UNDER-HEAR is for testing. I do not feel able to examine every passage here and now accordingly. What follows are a few comments on certain of the passages in Paul's epistles. I urge others to test for themselves the use of "listening" in these passages. It may be (as some others have claimed) that "pay attention" is better (or "attentive hearing," even "attentive listening").

THE LISTENING OF CHRIST

In this matter Romans 5:19 is perhaps the most important text. Together with verse 18, the proposed CV rendering is presently as follows:

18 **Consequently, then, as** it is **through one offense**
*io***for all human** beings *io***for condemnation,**
Thus also it is **through one righteous** response
*io***for all human** beings *io***for life's justifying.**

19 **For even as through the disregarding of the one human**
the many are constituted sinners,
Thus also through the listening of the One
the many shall be [l]constituted righteous.

To me this passage stands with Genesis 1:1 and 1 Corinthians 15:28 as the bedrock of my faith. Yet it is so glorious and so astounding as to transcend in value and importance over all other words of scripture. I am not claiming the translation is perfect. But I am claiming that the word "listening" brings out the original meaning much better than "obedient" as presently used.

In the first place what was set before our Lord was not so much what He must do as what He must not do, rather what must *be done to Him,* contrary to all His previous doings. And all through this ordeal He kept in view what was said to Him, never turning from it, never listening to others who would have Him do what He wanted to do.

You say, "Well that was His obedience in the sense of doing what He was instructed to do." And I agree. But the scripture says it was His listening, His unwavering paying attention to what He heard from His God and Father, that was absolutely necessary for His faithful doing. At any point He refused to let any detail of the instruction slip away from His attention.

OUR LISTENING TO THE TEACHING WE HAVE OBTAINED

Once more let us listen to Romans 6:14-18:

14 **For sin shall not be lording** it over [=]**you,**
For [=]you [l]are not under law, but under [JOY]**grace.**
15 [a]**What, then? Should we sin,** seeing **that we [l]are not under law, but under** [JOY]**grace?**
May it not [b]**come**[°] to that! 16 **Are [=]you not** [°]**aware that to whom [=]you are presenting yourselves** as **slaves** [io]**for listening,**

his **slaves** =**you** |**are, to whom** =**you are listening, whether of sin** *io***for death, or of listening** *io***for righteousness?** 17 *ỵ***Now** *JOY***thanks** be **to** ·**God that** though =**you** |**were slaves of the sin, yet** =**you listen** *o***from** the **heart to** the **type of teaching** *io***to which** =**you are given over.** 18 *ỵ***Now freed from the sin,** =**you are enslaved to the righteousness.**

We have been sadly misled due to faulty translation of this passage. Yet despite that, God has made His evangel concerning His Son known. The passage is filled with the pronouns "you" and "we," and there is no direct reference to Christ such as we find in chapter 5 and 6:1-11. But the evangel concerning Him is the solid foundation of what is said concerning us here. Even more so, Christ is there in the words "grace" and "righteousness" as He listened to His God and Father, Who is operating all.

So it is that Paul opens the path of listening before us, that of enslavement in listening to the message of Jesus Christ's listening. We are not under the message of law which puts the spotlight on the actions of human beings, but under the message of grace and righteousness that puts the spotlight on God's grace and God's righteousness as they are seen in the listening of Christ Jesus unto the death of the cross.

The word "obedience" no longer conveys what Paul says here, as it once did. It needs to be removed from the translation, and "listening" or "paying attention," or "attentive hearing" put in its place.

Furthermore, as to translation, the word "though" should likely be supplied in Romans 6:17, as others have suggested. This accords with the "while" of Romans 5:8. Our giving of joy to God by means of thanksgiving and praise is for the gift of listening from the heart to His message of gratuitous joy which manifests His righteousness in "righteousifying" us through the listening unto the death of His Son.

"The" sin of disregarding God's words which reigns over us all in our flesh is no longer over us in God's reckoning and our position before Him. We have died to it in spirit (though not yet in flesh). Hence Paul's own personal testimony is, "I myself with the mind indeed am slaving for God's law, yet with the flesh for sin's law" (Rom.7:25). By a play on the word "law" Paul speaks of God's rescue through Jesus Christ (which perhaps was originally encompassed in the word "Grace," which immediately fell out of the text due to haplography). God's law is His sending of His Son, in the likeness of sin's flesh for the condemnation of sin in the flesh (Rom.8:3).

Joy (not gratuitous joy, but well deserved joy) be to God for His gratuitous joy to us.

LISTENING IN PHILIPPIANS

In Philippians, as in Romans, Paul speaks of Christ's under-hearing first and then of that of believers. If we understand the act as one of obedience as presently understood it is a matter of *doing* on the part of both. But if we understand Paul to speak of *listening*, the point of the two passages is enhanced considerably.

Christ was a listening Christ unto the death of the cross (Phil.2:8). He never let His God and Father's will leave His mind and heart. He never set it aside.

The Philippians as well listened to Paul's teaching even in his *absence* (Phil.2:12). Whether it was entreaty ("Let this mindset be in you which is in Christ Jesus also") or revelation ("Christ Jesus . . . empties Himself . . . [and] humbles Himself becoming a listening One unto death), they kept on attentively hearing what the apostle had said. With fear and trembling over such a message their salvation became effective in their lives as God operated in them (through their listening) to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight. D.H.H.

THE FIGURE OF SALT

THE DISCIPLES ARE THE SALT OF THE LAND

> "You are the salt of the earth. Now, if the salt should be made insipid, with what will it be salted? For nothing does it still avail except to be cast outside, to be trampled by men" (Matt.5:13).

FIGURES of speech, when they are understood, help to add interest when communicating both orally and when writing. The writers of the Old and New Testaments employed them. Jesus especially used them when speaking to the crowds using parables. They evoke imagery and emotion when stating phrases such as, "salt of the earth," "furnace of fire," and "salted with fire," as well as "outer darkness." By their use, richness is added when communicating with others. They make what we say or write much more interesting. Complex ideas are conveyed using figures of speech such as similes, metaphors, personifications, hyperbole, and so on. For instance, writers of the Bible employed anthropomorphisms when trying to convey certain aspects about God. Examples are when God is described as having hands, a heart, and a soul. When plain language is not enough to convey ideas we employ figures of speech.

When explaining to the disciples that they are the salt of the land, Jesus employed the *figure of likeness.* He spoke of the salt becoming insipid. But what did He intend to convey by "insipid"? It would be helpful to take a trip back two thousand years ago to Israel to see how they procured salt, how it was used, and how it could become insipid. Concerning Matthew 5:13, in Christ's day, in Israel, salt was usually procured from the Dead Sea (Sea of Salt). This salt

has bitter impurities such as gypsum and carnallite, and, when dried, is colorless and resembles salt. If these impurities are not removed, the sodium chloride can leach away by water and what still looks like salt would lose its saltiness because the small amount of sodium with gypsum and carnallite would not be very good tasting. Also, what is left over, having lost its salt, would not have very good preserving effects. The disciples can lose their preserving qualities as well as their savor. Such impure salt would be cast out into the street because it was not fit to be put on the land or mixed with manure for crop production.

In the Greek, in verse 13, "insipid" is *mōranthê. Moron* comes from the Greek word *mōron.* In the Keyword Concordance, in the back of the CONCORDANT LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT under *mōrainō* we have, "**stupid** (make)." According to Webster's Dictionary, a person who is *insipid* is *weak.* If we join the dictionary's idea with that in the Keyword Concordance we could come up with "weak minded"—one who is made stupid or moronic. Let us look deeper into this verse and expand on it so it makes more sense.

> *You* [disciples] are the *salt* [preserver] of the earth [Greek *ge,* land]. Now if the *salt* [*disciples*] should be made insipid [made stupid, weak], with what will *it* [the disciples] be salted [preserved]? For nothing is *it* [*it* being the disciples] still availing except [for the disciples] to be cast outside, to be trampled by human beings.

Therefore the disciples are the salt (preserver) of the land. If any of the disciples, (the twelve and thousands of other disciples) should be made stupid, or weak, they will lose their preserving qualities. Due to this, the people of the land will rise up and cast out those disciples, and will trample them under foot. In Luke 14:25-33 Jesus was talking about what it takes to be His disciple. Then He ends with this: "Ideal, then, is salt. Yet if even the salt should be made insipid, with what shall it be seasoned? Neither is it

fit for the land nor for manure. Outside are they casting it. Who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Luke 14:34-35). This being the case, if the salt/disciple is made insipid, it is not fit for the land nor even for manure since, if put in with manure, it would kill the plants the manure is put on. This is due to what looks like salt which has lost its saltiness and what is left is gypsum and carnallite. These minerals, when mixed in with manure, are poisonous to the plants. Jesus is telling them they will be cast out into the streets to be trodden upon should they become insipid.

Consequently, Jesus is telling them they need to be vigilant in looking for weakness in themselves, and be preserving the kingdom order so insubordination of the populace is kept in check. They (the twelve and many other disciples) will be *preserving* the societal structure which they are to be presiding over. Otherwise it will end badly for those disciples as well as the society they are ruling over. The people will rise up and cast them out of their position of rulership and trample them under foot.

In Matthew 25:19-23 it is said of the ones faithful over what "the lord of those slaves" gives them, when he returns, he will be placing them over many. So the twelve preside over the twelve tribes (*cp* Matt.19:28, Luke 22:30), and there will be many disciples placed over cities and humans. For example, in Luke 19:17, one faithful servant will be placed over ten cities.

Jesus was not made stupid but He was made weak. He wanted to gather Jerusalem's children as a hen gathers her brood but they would not. Instead, they said "we do not want this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14). They cast Him out and trampled Him under foot. "For even if He was crucified out of weakness, nevertheless He is living by the power of God . . ." (2 Cor.13:4). Had He exhibited power—He could have called twelve legions of messengers (*cf* Matt.26:53)—they would not have been able to cast Him out to trample Him.

JESUS LEADS BY EXAMPLE AS THE SALT OF THE EARTH

When Jesus returns to reign over Israel and the nations, lawlessness and insubordination will be dealt with swiftly. He will rule with great power and authority. Prior to setting up His millennial reign He must do battle and be victorious over all opposition. We see this in Revelation 19:15: "And out of His mouth a sharp blade is issuing, that with it He should be smiting the nations. *And He will be shepherding them with an iron club.* And He is treading the wine trough of the fury of the indignation of God, the Almighty." Notice the figures employed in the above verse: "out of His mouth a sharp blade is issuing," and "shepherding," also, "iron club" as well as "treading the wine trough."

> "Yet who will endure the day of His coming? And who will stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire, and like the soap of launderers. And He will sit like a refiner and a cleanser of silver. And He will cleanse the sons of Levi, and purify them like gold and like silver. And they will come to be for Yahweh, bringing close the approach present in righteousness" (Mal.3:2,3).

"Cupellation is a refining process in metallurgy in which ores or alloyed metals are treated under very high temperatures and subjected to controlled operations to separate noble metals, like gold and silver, from base metals, like lead, copper, zinc, arsenic . . ." (WIKIPEDIA).

We are not told exactly *how* Jesus is going to purify or cupel the sons of Levi *like* a refiner and cleanser of silver. The end result of the refining or cupelling process is that the Levites will bring the approach present in *righteousness.* So the cupellation must separate the base things of unrighteousness from the precious substance of righteousness which remains for proper service in the temple. The refiner of silver knows when the refining is completed when he sees his image reflected in the silver.

SALTED WITH FIRE AND SALTED WITH SALT

When explaining to the disciples concerning sins associated with the hands, feet, and eyes, and the consequential threat as to the fires of Gehenna, Jesus stated:

> "And if your hand should ever be snaring you, strike it off. It is ideal for you to be entering into life maimed, rather than, having two hands, *to come away into Gehenna, into the* **unextinguished fire** where *their worm is not deceasing* and *the fire is not going out.* And if your foot should be snaring you, strike it off. For it is ideal for you to be entering into life maimed or lame, rather than, having two feet, to be *cast into Gehenna, into the* **unextinguished fire,** where *their worm is not deceasing* and **the fire is not going out.** And if your eye should be snaring you, cast it out. It is ideal for you to be entering into the kingdom of God one-eyed, rather than, having two eyes, to be cast into the **Gehenna of fire,** where *their worm is not deceasing* and **the fire is not going out**" (Mark 9:43-48).

Gehenna, the fire, and worm are literal. The fire and worm, during the millennial reign are useful for dealing with the garbage of the city throughout the time of that future eon. Concerning the fire not going out, why would the inhabitants of Jerusalem even try to extinguish the fire in Gehenna? It serves a useful purpose. Their constant burning of refuse in Gehenna is testimony to the great blessings the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be enjoying. With a largess of blessings comes an unrelenting disposal of waste by fire and worms.

THE FIGURE "SALTED WITH FIRE"

> "For **every**one will be salted with fire, and every sacrifice will be salted with salt. Ideal is the salt, yet if the salt should be becoming savorless [UN-SALT], with what will you be seasoning it? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another" (Mark 9:49,50).

> "All of your approach presents shall you salt with salt; and you shall not cause the salt of the covenant of your Elohim to cease on your approach present. On all of your approach presents shall you bring salt near to Yahweh your Elohim" (Lev.2:13).

Notice "one" in **every**one" in Mark 9:49 (quoted above) is in lightface in the CONCORDANT VERSION. It is literally "EVERY for IN FIRE-WILL-BE-BEING-SALTED." Could it be every person in Israel who commits these egregious sins listed in Mark 9:42-48 will be salted (preserved in their sinful state)? Prior to Mark 9:49,50 Jesus admonished over and over concerning the worms, the unextinguished fire, and the Gehenna of fire, and which sins will cause an Israelite to receive the death penalty. They will then have their dead body cast into Gehenna rather than receive a decent entombment. Then He used the conjunction "for" to start verse 49. By using this conjunction, the connection is made between Gehenna and every(one) being salted with fire. He is telling the disciples, I am explaining to you disciples concerning the fires of Gehenna, *for* (or the reason why this is so, is), every (failing of the flesh I recently spoke of) will result in that person being cast into Gehenna and shall be being salted (shall be being preserved) in their sins in fire, in Gehenna. The twelve will need to keep these standards concerning the eyes, hands and feet when they sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes. I wonder how many thousands of Israelites will enter the kingdom of God with one eye and one hand, hobbling along on one foot so as to avoid the Gehenna of fire? Of course, we know Gehenna is not their final, so-called "eternal" preservation or fate as some wrongly claim. We know God eventually will save them as well due to Christ giving Himself a ransom for all per 1 Timothy 2:4-6. Also, He was not explaining this only to

the twelve disciples for there were many disciples. (In 1 Corinthians 15:6 Paul says, "He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once.")

THE LITERALNESS OF "SALTED WITH SALT"

Jesus continues His discourse in Mark 9:49: "and every sacrifice will be salted with salt." *Sacrifices salted with salt* is in the law of Moses, specifically Leviticus 2:13. It is of great interest to note Jesus appending to His explanation related to Gehenna and what it takes to receive such a judgment, "*For,* . . . every sacrifice will be salted with salt." He is detailing to the disciples that the law of Moses will be stringently followed during His reign. Israel, to a great degree, will be preserved from failures of non-law compliance due to the threat of Gehenna. Also, the sacrificial system will be stringently enforced.

The Greek word *pas* (used in Mark 9:49) is also translated "entire" in Matthew 3:5, "Then went out to him Jerusalem and *entire* Judea, and the *entire* country about the Jordan." Similarly Mark 9:49 could be: "For **entire** (Israel) in fire will be salted (preserved)," thus showing the preserving effect which the salting with fire of Gehenna will have on holding the majority of Israelites back from committing grave sins recently enumerated.

"Since the kingdom has been rejected, entrance into it is necessarily a path of judgment. Salt is a preservative. During the kingdom era corruption will be stayed. The salt that counteracts the corruption of that day will be fire, a judgment. As already elaborated, nothing that offends can enter that kingdom. It must be judged. If not, it will drag down those who harbor it into Gehenna and its fires" (A. E. Knoch, CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.74).

In the above two passages salt is used both literally and figuratively. During the millennial reign, every sacrifice

will literally be salted with salt. It is helpful to understand that salt was used to preserve sacrifices prior to bringing them to the temple to be offered up by the Levites. Being *salted* with fire obviously is a figurative usage of salt since one does not sprinkle fire on a person like one sprinkles salt on a sacrifice of meat.

SALT REPRESENTING SAVOR

After explaining to the disciples the determining factors that result in one being cast into Gehenna, encouragement is given the disciples by using the figure of salt to represent seasoning: "Ideal is the salt, yet if the salt should be becoming savorless, with what will you be seasoning it? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another" (Mark 9:50). Savorless, *analon* is literally "UN-SALT." One who is savorless is a pungent, bitter person; one who cannot coexist in peace with others. What is remaining when salt loses its savor? The bitter gypsum and carnallite is left. Savor is recognized by scent, taste and a pleasant inner quality. In this usage of salt, Christ is employing it as a figure representing an inner quality rather than preservation. If salt loses its savor, with what can they make it savorable again? If the salt becomes un-salt, what remains is the unusable bitter impurities such as gypsum and carnallite. The disciples are encouraged to not lose their peaceful, sweet demeanor, which results in being at peace with one another.

When the Lord returns to Israel, His disciples will become the salt of the land. As salt, they will be the preservers of the law-based system Christ will set up during His millennial reign. The fires of Gehenna will have a preserving effect on Israel and the disciples' reign with Christ will have a preserving effect on the entire planet.

Tony Nungesser

(*To be continued*)

Unsearchable Riches

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FOR GOD AND HIS WORD

Our 116th Year

(1909–2025)

Contents:

97 Editorial
99 God's Evangel
108 Romans 1:1-12
109 Adjusting the Saints
124 The New Humanity
135 Darnel, Fire, Furnace
Outer Darkness

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, THIRD QUARTER 2025
BEING THE THIRD NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

EDITORIAL

THIS issue of *Unsearchable Riches* begins with an emphasis on joy and peace (pages 99-108), and ends with passages of scripture which speak among other matters of lamentation and gnashing of teeth (pages 135-144). In this the need to be correctly cutting the word of truth is certainly called for. To be sure, Christ's millennial reign is certainly "glorious" (as noted at the end of Tony Nungesser's article). But it lacks the glory spoken of in God's evangel concerning His Son.

Yet in order to see more clearly the glory of God's evangel of joy and peace concerning His Son there needs to be an adjustment at several points in our translation, followed by an adjustment in understanding. Even as the transcendent riches of Christ (Eph.2:7) call for an adjustment in the spiritual endowments given to us in the present administration (see A. E. Knoch's article, "Adjusting the Saints," pages 109-123), so the evangel calls for adjustment in our appreciation of God.

An adjustment in translation, such as "God's righteousness" instead of "a righteousness of God" in Romans 3:21, 22, calls for a recognition of God's own attribute of righteousness being manifested here before we go forward with the subject of the justification of the sinner. Then, in the same passage, we are to see that Paul is speaking of the manifestation of God's righteousness in His joyous achievement of justification as coming about through Jesus Christ's own faith rather than the believer's faith, as widely claimed.

Now that at least the critical matter of the faith *of* Christ

Jesus rather than our faith in Him has been recognized (and indeed done so successfully) by numerous scholars, much adjustment in translation and commentaries as well as preaching is called for. Whether or not this will happen is uncertain. It is certainly resisted.

For instance, I would adjust Millard J. Erickson's discussion of justification in his book, CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY,[1] as follows:

"[*Our*] justification is something completely undeserved [*but it is righteous and reveals God's righteousness*]. It is not an achievement [*on our part, neither by works of law nor by our faith*]. It is an obtainment, not an attainment [*on our part, but an achievement on God's part, through the giving up of His Son, and on Christ's part Who gives Himself in fullest and purest of faith*]. Even [*our*] faith is not some good work [*while Christ's faith is the greatest of good works*] which God must reward with salvation. [*Christ's faith is the good work which reveals and manifests God's righteousness in justifying and saving sinners which must be fully brought about in all being constituted righteous.*] It [*the salvation of the justification of sinners*] is God's [*righteous*] gift [*of joy*]. It [*our faith*] is not the cause of our salvation, but the means by which we receive it."

Yet we all need adjustment from time to time in our believing as we listen attentively to God's evangel concerning His Son, and as this message is translated in accord with the way in which it was originally understood (as such is possible). God is operating all things, and is doing so through the Son of His love, Whom He spares not, but gives up for the sake of sinners. This is for all, and it is on all, already reckoned to all who are believing it, to whom the consummations of the eons have attained in spirit.

D.H.H.

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1. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1983, p.959.

GOD'S EVANGEL

[32] **Surely He Who spares° not** His **own 'Son, but gives Him up** [ov]**for us all, how shall He not, together** with **Him, also be** [JOY]**gracious**ly° grant**ing us 'all?** (Rom.8:32)

GOD'S evangel is set before us in Romans 1-8 and applied to Israel and the nations in chapters 9 through 11, and summed up as it affects our walk now, in the world in which we live, in chapters 12 through 16.

Using two fact verbs, *"spares* not" and *"gives up,"* followed by a future tense, *"shall be graciously granting"* (with the "graciously" being taken in the sense of "joyously"), Romans 8:32 condenses God's evangel in plain words, and should ever be kept in view.

CONCERNING GOD'S SON

That which God does, His act of sparing not but giving up concerns His Own Son and what He does. God spares not His Own Son, Who *dies.* Thus we hear:

[8] **yet 'God is commending** 'this **love of** [sf]**His** [io]**to us,** seeing **that,** while **we are still being sinners, Christ dies** [ov]**for our** sakes. (Rom.5:8)

We also have come into the picture. *God* spares not *His Own Son,* but gives Him up for *us all,* and *Christ* dies for *our sakes.* Consequently:

For even as through the disregarding of the one human the many are constituted sinners, thus also through the listening of the One the many shall be 'constituted righteous. (Rom.5:19)

In these three verses there may be enough to make

God's evangel known. What is said in them is but repeated in one way or another through eight chapters, but with many other important revelations added to enrich our understanding and increase our joy and peace. Therefore, keeping in mind what is said about God, His Son and us in these marvelous passages, we may go forward through all that is said from the beginning.

Without anywhere near covering all that is said (who indeed could do that?) I am proposing here to share some of what I have come to see at least in the opening passages as they first set God's evangel before us.

THE ENSLAVED AND SEVERED APOSTLE

Paul, "a sign in every epistle" (2 Thess.3:17), presents his credentials as an evangelist in three respects: 1. **Christ Jesus's slave . . . for God's evangel**, 2. a **called apostle . . . for God's evangel**, and 3. **severed for God's evangel**.

(The phrases "slave of-Christ Jesus" and "evangel of-God," as expressed in Greek, are anarthrous, that is without "the's." Our minds are taken immediately from the first term to the second, giving it an emphasis that is at least equal to the first term. This seems to be well expressed by the English possessive case: "Christ Jesus's slave" and "God's evangel." (There are numerous other such anarthrous, genitive phrases to be noted as we go along.)

CHRIST JESUS'S SLAVE

It is as Christ Jesus's slave that Paul directs his attention to (literally **into**) God's evangel. We are apt to think of this slavery only in terms of what Paul does in bringing the evangel, such as the list he presents (quite reluctantly) in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28 and his plans for coming to Rome and then going on to Spain as set forth here in this letter to the saints in Rome. But as Paul writes of slavery in Romans 6:16,17, there is a mental aspect that takes

precedence over the physical aspect, and that is described by the Greek word, *[h]upakouō* (UNDER-HEAR). Here is a matter of attentive listening which has become sadly lost (though originally dominant) in the English word "obedience." It is as Christ's slave that Paul makes known the evangel, "that it is not in accord with a human. For neither do I accept it from a human, nor am I taught it [at the *side* of a human teacher], but it comes through Jesus Christ's revelation" (Gal.1:10-12). To this revelation he is an attentive slave, enslaving his *mind* to God's "law," which is God's evangel as distinguished from the law of the God given at Sinai as well as from "sin's law" (Rom.7:21-25).

A CALLED APOSTLE

Although "the least of the apostles" as to competency in record (1 Cor.15:9), Paul knows firsthand the joy of God's grace which he is heralding to irreverent and unrighteous humanity, most distinctly as the apostle to the nations (Rom.11:13). In this his competency in his apostleship is his incompetency in his reputation. He *was* what he *was*. *"Yet,"* he exclaims, *"in God's grace [*JOY]and His grace, [JOY], that which is in me, does not come to be for naught, but more exceedingly than all of them [the other apostles] toil I—yet not I, but the grace [JOY] of God which is together with me" (1 Cor.15:10).

SEVERED FOR GOD'S EVANGEL

Paul is severed from all that was gain to him by birth. For ". . . it delights God, Who severs me from my mother's womb and calls me through His grace [JOY], to unveil His Son in me that I may be evangelizing Him among the nations" (Gal.1:15,16). Those things which were gain to him in birth and in relation to the law, those he has deemed a forfeit because of Christ (Phil.3:4-9). Jeremiah was hallowed, that is, set apart, for service as a prophet,

even before Yahweh formed him in his mother's belly and he came forth from the womb (Jer.1:5). But Paul is severed for making known God's evangel as an adult as pictured metaphorically by his birth and the cutting of the umbilical cord. It is a very keen and settled separation, so much so that he can rightly call that evangel, "my evangel" (Rom.2:16; 16:25).

GOD'S EVANGEL

Paul is writing to us as Christ Jesus's slave, and as a called apostle, having been severed from all that was gain to him by birth, and all of these positions are being directed **into** the making known of **God's evangel**.

God is speaking. And it is well for us to listen. Once again we turn to Romans 6:16; "Are you not aware that to whom you are presenting yourselves as slaves for listening his slaves you are, to whom you are listening . . . ?" If someone has something to say, he or she wants others to listen. God has a message for us that is altogether good. Listen to it.

It is **God's evangel (which He promises before through His prophets in holy scripture) concerning His Son . . . .**

God's evangel is promised in holy scripture. It gives cohesion to God's Word because it concerns **God's Son** Who is the central character of Scripture, as it speaks of good. What scripture says about humans and what they are to do tends to take our attention away from what it says about God's Son. Only by giving attention to what it says concerning God's Son can we hear exactly what God is saying in His evangel.

First of all, then, Paul evangelizes God's evangel as it concerns God's Son in dealing with two primal evils afflicting the earth, chaos and vacancy (*cf* Gen.1:2): God's Son [b]**comes**° **out of David's seed accord**ing to the **flesh,** and He

is **designated God's Son** [i]**with power, accord**ing to a **spirit of holiness,** [o]**by dead** ones' **resurrection.**

Chaos is put to an end by God's Son coming "out of David's seed" as prophesied in 2 Samuel 7:12. There Yahweh speaks to David through the prophet Nathan, saying, "I will raise up your seed after you that shall come forth from your internal parts; and I will establish his kingdom." Now in Romans 1:3 Paul identifies this seed of David's as God's Son, the central figure of God's evangel. The apostle makes much the same connection again in 2 Timothy 2:8, saying: "Remember Jesus Christ, Who has been roused from among the dead ones, is out of David's seed, according to my evangel . . . ." God's Son will reign as One Who descends according to flesh from David. And this is so as His reign is expanded in 1 Corinthians 15:25-28 (by the holy prophet, Paul): "For He must be reigning [as One Who is in the line of a *human* king] until He should place all His enemies under His feet . . . (see also Ephesians 1:10 and Philippians 2:10,11 and Colossians 1:16-20.)

Only as He empties and humbles Himself is God's Son exalted above every name with the Name Jesus (Yahweh-Saviour) and all chaos be put away in permanence.

This is one great, future good of God's good message concerning His Son.

But Paul follows it (again, only briefly) with another great, future good: God's Son "is designated God's Son with power, according to a spirit of holiness, by dead ones' resurrection."

This puts an end to the horrible vacancy of death. God's Son is designated God's Son, not by His resurrection from among the dead, as most translations and commentaries indicate (although His own resurrection is critical), but by powerful and distinctively holy spirit which He is given for resurrecting dead ones. It is as Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, "For since in fact through a human comes

death, through a Human also comes the resurrection of the dead ones. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ shall all be vivified."

PAUL AND US

Now in Romans 1:5-14 we return to the matter of Paul's distinctive apostleship as Christ Jesus's slave, severed for God's evangel. Now also those being addressed are particularly in view. But all that is said about Paul (and other apostles) and us is viewed as channeled **through** One only and in view of His place in God's evangel, **Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

We must not lose sight of that. The "concerning" God's Son has become "through" Jesus Christ our Lord, which is repeated in verse 8 where Paul is thanking God "through Jesus Christ" and in the parenthesis of 2:16b where Paul associates the evangel (as his evangel) with the words: "through Jesus Christ." The same wording comes before us again in Romans 3:22 (God's righteousness has been made manifest "through Jesus Christ's faith") and again in 3:24,25,30, and at such important evangelical points as 5:1,9,10,11,17,19,21. (See also Galatians 2:16 and 3:22 and Ephesians 2:8 where "through faith" must certainly be Christ Jesus's faith, as in Ephesians 3:12, and as in Philippians 3:9 where righteousness sourced in God is "through Christ's faith").[1]

JOY AND PEACE

It is at this point that Paul greets us as he does in all his letters:

JOY**Grace to** =**you and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ.**

Paul first spoke of grace in verse 5 as something of joy

1. In some similar passages, the "through" is replaced by "out."

which he (and other apostles) obtained along with the position of apostleship. In verse 7 he greets God's beloved ones, called by Jesus Christ as saints. They are the "you," but a group of "you" who are among those to whom Paul is commissioned, among all nations, "for listening of faith." Now if we are listening to what Paul is saying and listening with faith (for there is no perceptible proof of what he is saying), we have joined the "you" in Rome and the "you" to whom he was commissioned, among all nations. And we have joined the "you" he greets in verse 7.

GRACE AS JOY

The word "grace" has the essential meaning of JOY as indicated in the CVNT. In both 1:5 and 1:7 it is certainly undeserved joy, and this is so in most occurrences. But it is not so in Romans 6:17, 1 Corinthians 15:57 and 2 Corinthians 9:5 (as well as Romans 7:25 as in the CVNT). The Latin translation as published by the United Bible Societies uses *gratia* or *gratias* in all these passages. But the early English translations all used a form of *thanks.* This was followed by the CV and most other English translations. This situation has led to the suggestion by some scholars that there are two distinct words here in Greek with the very same spelling.

Yet if we understand that JOY is the denotation of this word to be heard whenever it appears, and that the idea of something undeserved is a connotation, applying only in certain usages, the whole problem is solved, and God's word is opened up. Paul greets us with joy and peace. Both are undeserved, but they are what they are, matters of joy and peace.

At this point at least, I do not see that we can discard the word "grace," for in the evangel the joy is gratuitous, bestowed apart from human contribution. But we must always hear that this is a matter of joy.

Thus Paul says to us first of all "Joy to you from God, our Father," and then he says, "Peace to you from God our Father. And then he says, "Joy to you from the Lord Jesus Christ," followed by, "Peace to you from the Lord Jesus Christ."

These are words of evangel, indeed of God's evangel concerning His Son, and they are directed to "you" who are sinners. For "all sin and are wanting of the glory of God, being justified gratuitously in God's joy" (Rom.3: 23,24). And it is that while we are still sinners that Christ dies for our sakes as we read in Romans 5:8. This is joy and peace for sinners who do not deserve such blessings. And this is from God, our Father, Who spares not His own Son but gives Him up for us all. Furthermore this is from the Lord Jesus Christ Who dies for us. And so we say to God, "Joy to You!"[2]

THANKING GOD

It is in view of joy and peace from God, our Father, and [from] the Lord Jesus Christ that Paul now says:

8 **First indeed I am thanking** [well-joying] **my ·God through Jesus Christ** [Who dies] **concerning all of =you** [including us who were not yet born] **that =your ·faith** [not that "you have faith" but "the faith itself which you have"] **is being announced° in the whole world** [the *system* of things as they are].

We may say here that in Romans 6:17 Paul directs joyful appreciation to God for the joy God gives to us in "sending His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin in the flesh" (Rom.8:3). That is, we direct joy to God for such an evangel. Now in Romans 1:8 Paul is giving God an even richer, joyful recognition of

2. And so also God "*re*joices" His Son with a Name that is above every name (Phil.2:9).

the joy from Him Who spares not His own Son. And this is the way he puts it "first" of all.

God's evangel concerning His Son is the faith of the Roman saints (the message they are believing), both theirs and Paul's (Rom.1:12) and ours today.

PAUL'S PRAYERS

Paul's thanksgiving is thus for the fact that God's evangel concerning His Son is being announced in the whole world. This evangel is our faith to which we are to be listening. It is the evangel of God's Son.

[9] **For** [Paul adds] **·God |is my Witness, to Whom I am** offer**ing divine service in my ·spirit in the evangel of His ·Son, how unintermittingly I am making° mention of =you always** *om* **in my ·prayers** [10] **beseeching° if** some**how, sometime at length I shall be |prospered in the will of ·God to come to***d* **=you.** [11] **For I am longing to** *p* **see =you that I may share** *q* **some spiritual** gift of *JOY* **grace** with **=you** *io* **for =you ·to be established . . . .** (Rom.1:9-11)

We may listen to this beseeching prayer of Paul's which he was praying in all his prayers as one that is still being heard by God as having us in view as it had the saints in Rome in view when this was written so long ago. But now Paul's coming and sharing is by means of what he writes and says in this epistle. It is in this way that God is hearing Paul's prayers as making mentioning of us whom Paul never saw in his flesh as he did the Roman saints. Nevertheless Paul is sharing spiritual joy with us in his presentation of God's evangel concerning His Son. God is seeing to it that Paul is with us in spirit as we listen to what Paul is saying to the Roman believers here in this epistle sent to them, for them to be established.

We are thus brought into the "you" of Paul's prayers.

D.H.H.

ROMANS 1:1-12

1 Paul, Christ Jesus's slave, a **called apostle, having been severed**° *io*for
God's evangel
2 **(which He promises**° **before through His** ·**prophets in holy scriptures)**
3 **concerning His** ·**Son**
(·Who *b*comes° **out of David's seed**
according to the **flesh,** *2 S 7:12; 1 C 15:25-28*
4 ·Who is **designated God's Son** *i*with **power,**
according to a **spirit of holiness,**
*o*by **dead** ones' **resurrection),** *1 C 15:20-24; 35-57*
Jesus Christ, our ·**Lord,**
5 **through Whom we obtain** *JOY*grace **and apostleship**
*io*for **listening of faith**
among all the nations,
*ov*for **His** ·**Name's** sake,
6 **among whom** ˡare ⁼you´ **also, Jesus Christ's called** ones:
7 **to all** ·who ˡare **in Rome, God's beloved** ones**, called saints:**
*JOY*Grace **to** ⁼you **and peace from God, our Father, and** the **Lord Jesus Christ.**
8 **First indeed I am thanking my** ·**God through Jesus Christ concerning all of** ⁼you **that** ⁼your ·**faith is being announced**° **in the whole world.** 9 **For** ·**God** ˡ**is my Witness, to Whom I am** offer**ing divine service in my** ·**spirit in the evangel of His** ·**Son, how unintermittingly I am making**° **mention of** ⁼you **always** *on*in **my** ·**prayers** 10 **beseeching**° **if** some**how, sometime at length I shall be** ˡ**prospered in the will of** ·**God to come to***d* ⁼you. 11 **For I am longing to** *p*see ⁼you **that I may share** *a*some **spiritual** gift of *JOY*grace with ⁼you *io*for ⁼you ·**to be established:** 12 **yet this** ˡ**is to be consoled together among** ⁼you **through** *i* **one another's** ·**faith, both** ⁼**yours and mine.**

ADJUSTING THE SAINTS

THE transcendent nature of the present outflow of God's favor corresponds with the exaltation of Christ among the celestials. Because He is "up over all who are of the heavens" (Eph.4:10), we are raised to the heights supreme. It is not, indeed, as the English may suggest, that He is located in space at a point outside of and beyond the universe, for that is a palpable absurdity. As to space, the universe is made up of the earth and the heavens. The more accurate Greek makes it *of* the heavens, for He is the highest *of* the celestial hosts, not as to space, but as to dignity and glory. There can be no higher exaltation. He completes the universe (Eph.4:10).

He Who descended into the lower parts of the earth has now ascended to the highest heavens. Just as the celestial aspect of the secret of Christ is the basis of the secret economy, so now also, the completeness of Christ's sweep of all creation is the basis of our maturity. A complete revelation raises us to the plane of adults. Being associated with Christ in His headship of the whole universe the believers now have attained their majority.

The inauguration of the present administration of God's grace brought many changes with it. This called for an *adjusting* of the saints, in the language of inspiration (Eph. 4:12). It is figuratively presented as the change from minority to manhood (Eph.4:13; 1 Cor.13:10). The new celestial destiny severed the saints from earthly, physical blessing, which they had enjoyed as guests of Israel's covenants. The new status of the nations demanded that their spiritual growth be completed, so that they may truly be the complements of Christ among the celestials.

The spiritual manifestations of so-called "gifts" give us a graphic illustration of the changes involved. The twelfth chapter of first Corinthians shows what the nations had before the secret was revealed. The fourth of Ephesians tells us what gifts are ours today. There are great changes. Most of the early gifts were dropped in this adjustment. They are no longer needed. Two new ones were added. Three are carried over. Of the gifts which enter this administration, apostles, prophets, and teachers were known before. They link us with the past. Evangelists and pastors are unique, for they had not been classed as gifts before.

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS

1 Cor.12:7-10	1 Cor.12:28-29	1 Cor.13:8	Eph.4:11
By the spirit	*By God in the*	*Abrogated by*	*Given by Lord*
for expedience	*ecclesia*	*maturity*	*for adjusting*
wisdom	1. apostles	prophecies	apostles
knowledge	2. prophets	languages	prophets
faith	3. teachers	knowledge	evangelists
healing	powers		pastors
powerful deeds	healing		teachers
prophecy	supports		Eph.2:20
discrimination	pilotage		*In the*
of spirits	languages		*foundation*
languages	(*future tran-*		apostles
translation	*scendence*)		prophets

The accompanying lists of the spiritual endowments given in Paul's ministry will help us to compare and study these "gifts." First we have the nine gifts which were temporary expedients during the transitional era between the pentecostal administration and the present. These are individual manifestations of the spirit. Next we have eight corporate endowments, connected with membership in the body of Christ. These are arranged in the order of their rank. Note particularly that the first three—apostles, prophets, and teachers—are found again in Ephesians.

Then we have a special list of those which were to be discarded by the incoming of maturity. The last column gives us the facts in Ephesians. First we have the list of those given for adjusting the saints. Finally we find that two of these are confined to the foundation. This leaves three spiritual endowments today—evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

It is worth every effort needed to clear up the relation between the gifts in first Corinthians and Ephesians. Two extreme and opposing positions are based on untenable views of this relation. A large number of zealous believers claim that all of the gifts may still be appropriated by faith and that many are in exercise today. As in Corinth, they emphasize the gift of "tongues." Healing is also pressed. On the other hand, some cut off Corinthians entirely, claiming that we have absolutely no connection with them. We are told that the dispensation of the secret is unique, and is neither a blend nor a development of Corinthians, but a newly *created* thing, far above all. In contrast with both of these positions, the Scriptures, both in Corinthians and Ephesians, illustrate the relation between the two by the figures of *minority* and *maturity.* This is the key to the subject.

This figure avoids both extremes. It is in harmony with the fact that some of the gifts were present in the past which are ours today. It agrees with the setting aside of the lesser gifts and the retention of the greater. It accords with the character of the gifts which have been retained and those which have been repudiated. Paul and others were apostles and teachers in Corinthians and remained such in Ephesians. They were not reappointed, as though their previous services were not recognized. The figure of a new creation is not in point here. A man is not recreated when he reaches maturity. Some things remain as they were. Others are dropped because they are suited only to minority.

The believers among the nations had been enjoying some things, as the guests of Israel's promise covenants, which find no appropriate place among the spiritual, celestial blessings which characterize the present grace. Perhaps if such a change should be brought about in these days we would call it a reorganization. If a great business should change the sphere of its operations and the character of its products, some of its machinery would become useless and be discarded. Its system of doing business would be revised to suit the new conditions. So it was when this charter of our faith was first given. Some things were entirely dropped, others merely modified. Physical benefits vanished. Earthly disabilities disappeared. In Paul's preparatory epistles the believers are seen in the period of adolescence. They verge upon manhood. Some of the gifts given them at that time were the relics of childhood. Others were intended to develop them into manhood. The youth learns to talk and to care for his physical frame. These are represented by the gifts of healing and "tongues." The principal task of adolescence is the schooling and training for the duties of life. It is concerned with self-development, not with the care of others or the duties of maturity.

GIFTS FOR EXPEDIENCE

The manifestations of the spirit, given to the Corinthians, were *expedients* (1 Cor.12:7). Let us not miss this inspired characterization, which assures us that they were not ideal, permanent endowments, but only temporary measures to fill a lack which has since been supplied. "Now to each one is being given the manifestation of the spirit, *with a view to expedience.*" The Authorized Version rendering, "profit" is misleading, though of course it is not untrue. Expedients are resorted to because they are profitable or helpful for a time. This word, *sumpherō,*

they translate *profit* seven times, and seven times *expedient.* Another word, *oninêmi,* means *profit.* The loss of an eye or a hand can hardly be called *profitable,* though it may be *expedient* (Matt.5:29,30). It was *expedient* for the Lord to go away (John 16:7). Absence is not His permanent condition. All is allowed us, but not all is *expedient* (1 Cor.6:12). In every occurrence there is but a transient advantage gained by expedience.

This is confirmed by the fact that *none of these endowments are reaffirmed in Ephesians.* They are suited to the times of transition which introduced the present grace. It is put beyond all question by the further fact that *all three of the gifts which are definitely discarded are found in this list of expedient spiritual endowments* (1 Cor.12:7-10). These are prophecy, languages, and knowledge (13:8). They were necessary at that time, but such expedients are no longer needed since the present administration has been fully established. Instead of giving a few individuals supernatural fragments of information, God has completed the whole circle of knowledge in His latest revelation. This is open to all. Now each believer has access to all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, in Christ.

The more we know of the transitional era which accompanied Paul's early ministries, the more we see the necessity of temporary spiritual manifestations to tide the believers over into the present grace. Although we now have a record of this period in Paul's earlier epistles, as well as the full revelation which closed it, how few of the believers are really clear about it! Since early times the church has found this period prolific in confusion, for few understood that it was not a permanent part of the present. If this is so, how difficult must it have been for those who lived in those changing times to keep step with God's operations! There was no finally formulated system of truth, as we now have it in Ephesians. God was still occupied with Israel. If

we lived in an era in which God was winding up one system of truth while He was unfolding another, there would be more excuse for confusion than there is. They needed temporary help to tide them over the time of transition.

The expedients are of two different kinds. Some linked them on to the kingdom and the powers of the coming eon. These were *powerful deeds, healing, languages* and *translation.* These will find their fullest fulfillment in the millennium. Humanly speaking, if Israel had not rejected the Messiah in Acts, these gifts would have flourished more and more, yet they would be exercised only in subordination to Israel. They had nothing to do with Israel being set aside. The other gifts linked them to the approaching change, when Israel should be rejected. Without knowing what was in store for them, they would naturally fall into folly and ignorance. Hence some were specially endowed with knowledge and wisdom. Their faith would fail, as did that of so many in Israel, as the kingdom receded. There was need of the gift of prophecy, to receive direct word from God. Spirits must be discriminated, lest they be led contrary to God's intention. All of these gifts are displayed in Paul's epistles to them. All of the other group were found exemplified in the narrative of Acts, which begins with a special exhibition of "tongues" and ends with a notable example of healing (28:8).

But do we not need all of these things today? As our blessings are spiritual, among the celestials, we cannot claim the physical endowments of the coming eon. Instead of healing we are given grace for our infirmities. Instead of power we are promised weakness (2 Cor.12:9). Languages are directly denied to an era of maturity (1 Cor.13:8). Wisdom and knowledge, faith, and prophecy, and the discrimination of spirits may be greatly needed today, but they are no longer individual gifts. All the wisdom and knowledge we need is found in the secret now revealed. That is God's

final word to us. No gift of prophecy is needed (1 Cor. 13:8). And by this completed revelation we may test all spirits. The dispensation in which we now live abrogates all of the spiritual manifestations which the apostle so carefully labeled *expedients.*

We are not aware that this point has been pressed before. Hence we wish to urge it upon all who believe God. Many lines of reasoning may be developed to show that these gifts are no longer with us, but none should appeal to the man of God as the word here used by the holy spirit. Before we are even told that these gifts existed, their temporary character is asserted. This will be enough for everyone who wishes to believe God. We do not doubt that there are spiritual manifestations today which seem to correspond to the lesser gifts. Such there were even in those days. A special gift was needed to discriminate the spirits. If this endowment existed today it would unhesitatingly class all of these as the work of deceiving spirits. It is an effort to engross the believers with the things of minority in order to keep them from attaining majority, which is the primary object of the real gifts we have today.

Let us note carefully the opposite effect, the direct contrast, between the modern "gifts"—healing and tongues—and those given us by God. The former drag us back to childhood; the latter bring us to manhood. Pastors, evangelists, and teachers are given "toward the adjusting of the saints for the work of dispensing, for the upbuilding of the body of Christ, unto the end that we should all attain to the unity of the faith and of the realization of the son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of Christ's complement, that we may by no means still be minors, surging hither and thither and being carried about by every wind of teaching . . ." (Eph.4:12-14). Languages are listed by God as the least of all the gifts of minority. True pastors, evangelists, and teachers lead in the contrary

direction, toward maturity. That is their special function if they are faithful.

There are many methods of testing God's servants today which are without warrant in the Word. Success sometimes signifies failure in God's sight. Here, however, we have God's standard. Here He tells us what He expects. The test we should apply is found in this passage. Do they dispense that which edifies the body of Christ, so that all have one faith and realize their sonship and maturity in Christ? Alas! the very idea of maturity is unknown to many and their ministry is more calculated to make infants out of full-grown believers than to make mature saints out of minors. Let us note that *the prime object of the gifts we now possess is to lead the saints beyond the lesser gifts which characterized minority.* We are mature in Christ! Let us not relapse into infancy!

The eight spiritual endowments placed in the ecclesia by God are not introduced as expedients, hence we find that three of them enter the present administration. The notable point is that these three are expressly put at the head of the list and numbered, lest they should be misplaced. "*First,* apostles, *second,* prophets, *third,* teachers, thereupon . . ." (1 Cor.12:28). Furthermore, the other gifts are discounted by the exhortation, "Be zealous for the greater graces." This is followed by a statement which practically repudiates the lesser gifts. In confirmation of this we read that the last and least—languages—is to *cease* (1 Cor.13:8). The five unnumbered gifts, powers, healing, supports, pilotage, languages, are not suited to the present era of transcendence (1 Cor.12:31).

ABROGATED BY MATURITY

Prophecies, languages, knowledge are the gifts which are expressly discarded in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians. All three are found in the first series which

are expedient, and one—languages—is also the last of the second group, which is arranged according to rank. The gift of "tongues," therefore, is the least of all the gifts. But the path of transcendence which we now tread does not merely discard the signs of the coming eon, as languages and powers and healing, but also abrogates prophecies and the gift of knowledge. The reason given is that these were but installments and, in the impending era (in which we now dwell), such fragmentary revelations will be unnecessary because God will have given a full-orbed prophecy embracing all knowledge. Such we have in this Ephesian epistle.

The fact that the gift of prophecy has been abrogated is evident from the many modern attempts to supplement God's revelation. All who have sought to add to God's Word have only manifested their ignorance of what He has already revealed. I would advise those who imagine that they have a direct message from God to get a grasp of the Ephesian letter. They will find His Word final and complete. It is sufficient for every present need. The gift of prophecy, or the power to speak as the mouthpiece of God, has been abrogated. The only prophets in this administration are in the foundation, and all that they might reveal is already spread out before us in the epistles of Paul, the greatest prophet of them all.

A distinction should be maintained between the gift of prophecy, as one of the spirit's manifestations, which was given for individual exercise in the ecclesia, and the office of prophet, as given to the ecclesia to *complete the Word of God.* Paul was the great apostle and prophet through whom the truth was given in permanent form and incorporated in the Scriptures. The fragmentary prophecies were temporary expedients, but the gift of prophecy remains with us, in spiritual form, in the sacred scrolls. The prophet is found in the foundation. His prophecies, unlike those

earlier manifestations of which we have no record, are written for all to read.

In the Corinthian letter we notice that some gifts are discounted, though not forbidden. The gift of languages, or "tongues," together with interpretation is last on the lists, and is discouraged. The apostle declares he would rather speak five words with his mind, to instruct others, than ten thousand in a language which they could not understand (1 Cor.14:19). He gives notice that it is only a temporary endowment, for it would *cease* (1 Cor.13:8). It is not included in the latest list, given in Ephesians (Eph.4:11). It is beyond question that the "gift of tongues" is the least adapted to maturity.

The testimony of the Scriptures is sufficient, and I am not adding what follows to confirm it. It may, however, be helpful to those who do not clearly see that this gift has ceased, and who appeal to its presence as a fact. I have lived for about a score of years at the very center of the tongues movement and have had ample opportunity to hear it exercised. I have listened most carefully, each time I have heard, in order to determine if the utterance had the characteristics of language. It never has. There is usually a tell-tale repetition of sounds, such as one who is imitating a foreign tongue would use, after a slight acquaintance with it. No one who has a knowledge of a variety of languages has any reason to suppose that the "gift of tongues" today is a real language at all.

We do not need to turn to Ephesians to prove that most of the gifts were temporary and unsuited to the present administration. That is the burden of first Corinthians. Not only does the thirteenth chapter definitely name some which were to be abrogated, or cease, but the twelfth chapter, in which they are cataloged, just as definitely labels them as expedients, or turns us from some of them to a path suited to transcendence (1 Cor.12:31). Is it not

remarkable that these two warnings, one before and one immediately following the lists of the gifts, should have been so insistently ignored or obliterated by mistranslation and misinterpretation, that the object of God's spiritual endowments has been actually reversed? Almost everywhere the believers are enticed back to babyhood instead of being built up into Christ.

It is commonly supposed that the thirteenth of first Corinthians contrasts our present experience with our future glory in resurrection. Now we are supposed to see in a glass darkly, but then face to face (1 Cor.13:12). Then we shall know as we are known. This popular and erroneous interpretation has practically robbed us of the true teaching of the chapter. The apostle is not comparing our experience in this life with that in the next. He is comparing the dispensation before it with that of the present. That was minority. This is maturity. Then matters were dimly seen which now are clear and plain. Now knowledge is not being doled out in installments. We have a full revelation since the secret has been revealed.

The fourth of Ephesians gives us the gifts for the present. The mere fact that most of the endowments listed in Corinthians are not repeated here does not prove that they are abrogated. That would not be sufficient ground for discarding them. We must intelligently consider what is said about them in Corinthians. We must recognize the fact that the time of maturity has come. Then we will see why it is that the lesser gifts cannot enter this era of transcendence. Then we will exult in their disappearance. We will thankfully take our place as mature men, and refuse even the appearance of immaturity.

APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

Of the five gifts which belong to this administration, three have continued and two are in the foundation. Apos-

tles and prophets were imperative needs for its inauguration. God's mind must be made known by His spokesmen, and it must be accompanied with all the authority of God's commissioner. Since Paul, the greatest of all the prophets and apostles of this administration, has made a permanent record of the new revelation in his epistles, these have served the purpose of prophets and apostles. *They remain with us, in spirit, in these writings.* The evidence for their absence among us is not merely the lack of accredited men, but the statement that these gifts are confined to the foundation (Eph.2:20). A prophet who could not add to Paul's epistles would be useless. All who have tried it have proven to be false.

EVANGELISTS, PASTORS, TEACHERS

God's gifts today are three in number: the evangelist to preach to the world, the pastor to care for the saints, and the teacher to edify the body of Christ. The great weakness in Christendom today lies in the attempt to combine all three in a single cleric, who must entertain and shepherd saint and sinner alike, who seldom is gifted in more than one way, and often in none. With a rising tide of spirituality there has usually followed a separation of these ministries. Evangelists leave all else for their message to the unbeliever, and teachers arise and conventions are held for the one purpose of edifying the saints. In seasons of spiritual refreshing these divine manifestations come to the front.

In these last days the special need is for teachers who are themselves mature and who can establish the saints by dispensing the grace which has come to them by the revelation of the secret. Alas! most of those who are giving religious instruction today are bringing their hearers into the bondage of law and ceremony, or occupying them with the affairs of minority, and are thus dragging the believers

down when they should be building them up. Here we have the divine test of the true teacher. Does he correspond to Ephesians 4:12-14? Is he adjusting, dispensing, upbuilding, unifying, giving the realization of sonship, maturity, and adultness? These are the seven signs of the ideal teacher.

Most of the believers today need adjusting quite as much as those to whom Ephesians was addressed. Their doctrine and experience is limited to the teaching of our Lord while on earth, or his apostles in the book of Acts. Under the false impression that "the church began at Pentecost," they seek to utilize the varying presentations which follow it to determine their creed and practice. Others go further and seek to include some of the teachings of Paul's earlier epistles, notwithstanding the grave differences between the two. How few go to Paul's final presentations and modify even his previous ministries to accord with these transcendent truths! This is the task of the true teacher today. He must, first of all, be an adjuster.

He must also be a dispenser. Much of the teaching we hear fails to emphasize the grace of God and the gratuitous character of His gifts. He is not running a bargain counter or a commercial enterprise, but a free dispensary. Very few believers even know what He has for them. It is the duty of the teacher to put them into possession of their riches in Christ Jesus.

He must edify, or build up, the body of Christ. This is a vastly different matter from entertaining the members of a church or the adherents of a denomination. The teacher who merely recognizes the fact that there is a spiritual organism to which all believers belong, irrespective of creed or affiliation, is edifying or building up the body of Christ. The teacher who ignores it or displaces it by human organizations is demolishing the one body. He who discounts human associations, and presses upon the believers their place in that marvelous organism of which Christ

alone is Head, is a God-given gift, fulfilling the work of building up the body.

Many are the attempts which have been made to unite the saints. The true basis of such a unity is the one faith which we have today, which is set forth in this epistle. The cause of the divisions is the multiplicity of beliefs resulting from ignorance of this consummating revelation. If it were God's intention to make us all one before Christ comes again, He would probably call for teachers to make known the truths of this administration. This is a test of the ideal teacher. Does his message lead to the unity of all in Christ? Or does it divide the believers into classes? Especially, does it form a special, superior clique of all who heed his teaching? Let us remember that, if we all believed God we would be one in fact as we are in truth.

Sonship is a much higher thought than that conveyed by the figure of the new birth. Indeed, Paul leaves that illustration to the kingdom proclamation. He makes us a new creation, rather than a regeneration. Sonship is not necessarily based on birth. It may be obtained by adoption. It does not figure mere relationship, but the honors granted only to the heir when he comes of age, and is invested with the highest dignities which his father can bestow. It is vastly more to be a son of God than a child. A teacher in this administration should press this point, so that the saints may realize their sonship (Eph.4:13).

The crowning result of true teaching today has already been elaborated. It brings the believers to mature manhood, to the adult stature of Christ's complement (Eph. 4:13). This can be accomplished only by showing them the immature character of previous economies, and the fulless which is theirs in Christ in this transcendent administration. It is only as they realize that they have outgrown much that God once gave, and that, in Christ, they have attained their full stature, that they are fitted to stand steadfast in

the midst of the turmoil in which they find themselves. False teaching carries them about (Eph.4:14), the true establishes them in grace.

The phrase "systematizing of the deception" (Eph.4:14) is a most apt description of modern methods of maintaining error. Isolated departures from truth are difficult to promulgate. They must be worked up into a philosophic system in order to become popular. The great theologies are systematized to agree with their main position, which may be a half-truth. Many of the movements of the day which appeal to the Bible for support, have so systematized their deceptions that they appear to rest on divine revelation. They seem to have enough contacts in the Scriptures to give them the appearance of truth. However, the mature believer will not be deceived by them.

The path of transcendence is the way of love, as the apostle shows in the thirteenth of first Corinthians. So it is in Ephesians (4:15,16). It is further figured by the human frame, all parts of which are in loving sympathy with all the rest, through the head. Christ is Head of the body now, and the believers are its members. There is a vital union, which makes us one with Him and with every other member. All real growth and service in the church today has this for its basis. Its motive is love. Its impulse is from the Head. Its end is the upbuilding of the body.

In this meditation we have found that the revelation of the Ephesian secret was accompanied by the incoming of maturity. Minority prevailed before, even among the Pauline ecclesias. Hence many of the gifts are discarded and only a few enter this administration. Teachers are specially given to lead the believers into a realization of the fact that they have outgrown the immaturities of past eras, and are now mature in Christ. It is our privilege to tread the path of transcendence. May God grant that many who read these lines will enter that path in conscious appreciation of the privileges of their majority.

A. E. Knoch

THE NEW HUMANITY

THE saints of this secret economy are related in three different directions: Godward, Christward, and manward. If these are kept distinct it will add much to the clarity of our comprehension of this administration. We are now about to resume the consideration of these three aspects, but in the reverse order. A glance at the framework[1] of the Ephesian epistle will show that we have dealt with the three items of the mystery: first, our allotment in heaven, next, the body of Christ, then our participation with other believers. Following these there was a parenthetic interlude, consisting of two summaries and two petitions. Now we are about to take up the three aspects of the mystery again: first, "The New Humanity," or non-participation with unbelievers, then "The Body in the Lord," and lastly "The Heavenly Warfare." As will be seen in the framework, we reverse the subjects of the first part of the epistle.

As this letter is the highest revelation in Holy Writ, the most difficult for our dull intellects to grasp, we should welcome every aid to its understanding. Next to a concordant rendering, the literary structure is calculated to keep us from the confusion so common among expositors. Some inject the thought of the one body everywhere, whereas it is confined to two corresponding sections (Eph.1:20–2:10 and 5:21–6:9). It is especially bewildering when forced into the section dealing with the new humanity. Many utterly confuse the figures, and take "the new man" as merely another name for the body of Christ, to their great loss. It makes the language quite unintelligible, for the body

1. volume LIX, p.64; Concordant Commentary, p.288.

cannot be put on or taken off, as is the case with the two humanities. It robs Christ of one of His dignities, for He is not only the Head of the body, but He is also the Head of a new race, and displaces Adam in the new creation.

We implore our readers to note carefully the distinctions in these figures. To begin with, each dominates two entirely separate sections of this epistle. They are not mixed. The body is in those sections which deal with our relationship to *Christ* (1:20-2:10 and 5:21-6:9). The new humanity is found only in those sections which discuss our relationship to *mankind,* to saints (2:11-22) and to unbelievers (4:17-5:20). In one we are likened to the members of the human body. In the other we are compared to the individuals of a race. A human body and the human race are very different symbols. There is an old, as well as a new, and a young humanity. There is no old body, or new body, or young body. These thoughts are quite confusing, when thus misapplied. The Greek word *anthrōpos,* in the singular, may mean a human being of either sex, or it may denote mankind as a whole. Such is the case here.

In a previous chapter on the era preceding the present, we dealt with this subject from the doctrinal standpoint (Eph.2:11-22). We found that the physical distinctions of the old humanity, especially circumcision, have no place in this new era. We who once were far off are become near by the blood of Christ. The barrier which kept us out of God's presence, typified by the "soreg," or "middle wall of partition," the central wall of the temple enclosure, has been razed. The decrees formulated by the Jerusalem council, in which the Circumcision laid down the law for the Uncircumcision, are now abrogated. Jew and Gentile believers are now created into one new humanity. This does away with the previous enmity between them. Christ is our Peace. Through Him we both have access, in one spirit, to

the Father. This is the basis of the section now before us. The conduct which becomes this new race is our theme.

THE OLD HUMANITY

The old humanity has become so decayed that we are warned against wearing it any longer. This is the divine thought with regard to these two divisions of mankind. They are like two suits of clothes which may be donned at will. The "old humanity" is so worn out, disreputable, and filthy, that we are exhorted to put it off, and to put on the new (Eph.4:22,24). The only way of getting rid of the "old man" is to strip off every item of conduct which characterizes it. In Christ we are created a new humanity. In the Lord we are exhorted to conduct ourselves accordingly. The rejuvenation is in the spirit of our minds.

The old humanity is described for us in order that we may not conform to it in our conduct. We are told that the nations are walking in the vanity of their mind, their comprehension being darkened, having been estranged from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the callousness of their hearts, leading to wantonness and uncleanness (Eph.4:17-19). It is the old story, more fully set forth in the opening chapters of the Roman epistle. Mankind did not want to retain God in their knowledge, and the inevitable result is that its heart is darkened, men become vain in their reasonings and they sink into dishonorable and destructive sins.

The first charge is that their mind becomes vain. Many may rise to challenge this in the pride of present human scientific achievement. But if we judge human mental progress by actual results, we will confess that it has accomplished nothing satisfactory. It has utterly failed to solve the great elementary questions of human existence. It is surrounded by impenetrable veils. Not a single unbeliever, no matter how learned, can answer the simple question of

his own being. He does not know why he is or whither he is bound. He reasons in a circle, unable to find any goal. With all his intellectual brilliance he gets nowhere. All mentality that is not God-centered is useless and degrading in essence, no matter how fine its phraseology or how profound its philosophy.

Being ignorant of God, they are estranged from the life of God. There is a vital Power in the universe which can give men eternal youth and fulfill all the aspirations which stir their breasts. They are continually groping in this direction. How hard they try to suck satisfaction out of the husks they have! How vainly they seek to make the world, and the present life, a thing worth while! But they will not brook the interference of the Deity. They are alienated and at war with every force that emanates directly from Him. They are ignorant of His plans and of His purpose, and are seeking to carry out their own, which run counter to His. There is no ignorance so fatal as ignorance of God, no life so vain as that which is out of harmony with His heart.

As a man thinks in his heart, so is he. The mind is the key to conduct. It is not the direct suggestions of Satan which lead men into injurious excesses and debauchery. It is due rather to his indirect influence in leading them away from God. Out of the human heart, alienated from God, arise the ill-smelling and foul vapors of a decaying race.

HOW TO PUT ON THE NEW MAN

How are we to array ourselves in the new humanity? It will not do to make the exhortation of Ephesians (4:17-5:20) another law. We cannot work ourselves into a new humanity. The power lies in the gracious fact that we have been created anew. This must vitalize the spirit of our mind, before it can affect the conduct of our members. The power to strip off the old humanity and to don the new depends on our apprehension of the truth that Adam's offense and

the physical divisions and disabilities which our relationship to him entailed are gone in Christ. Adam is no longer the head of our race. His place has been taken by the last Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us then be renewed in the spirit of our minds. We are not called upon to conform to the earlier ethical standard of the law. It is far beneath this new sphere of conduct and in a lower key. Anger usually leads to sin. Yet there are times when it would be wrong not to be indignant. Such occasions call for especial care, for righteous indignation easily degenerates into wrongful anger and smouldering resentment, which would shatter the new humanity into antagonistic fragments like the old (Eph.4:26,27). There should be no grudges, no prolonged feuds, no continued vexation, no extended slander. Let no flare of indignation start a conflagration which must burn itself out.

Restitution, single, double, fourfold, or five-fold, is the righteous requirement of Sinai (Ex.22:1-15). This is far more just than the laws of the nations, for they lay almost all stress on the punishment of the thief, and very little on righting the wrong done to the victim. But grace goes far beyond justice or restoration. It is not enough for a thief to stop stealing and restore what he has stolen. That is merely corrective. In this new humanity sin is to be prevented. Those in need are to be provided for so that they will not steal. How ideal to have the erstwhile thief charged with the duty of sharing the fruits of his labor with the destitute! He who once stole now forestalls stealing.

Some day we may be able to trace the corruption of humanity in the degeneration of human language. Words, like their users, tend to descend the moral scale. It seems unreasonable to suppose that there would be tainted speech apart from the presence of sin. Here, again, we are not merely exhorted to shun the bad, but to cultivate the good.

No tainted word should issue from our mouths but there should be gracious words of edification (Eph.4:29).

The power that produces this fruit in the new humanity is the spirit of God. It is quite possible for us to fail to put on the new man, and do that which is displeasing to God. We may cause God to sorrow, by His spirit. This will react in us and cause doubt and distress. The question will arise, "Has His holy spirit left me?" The answer is supplied by comparing the spirit to a seal (Eph.4:30). It is a permanent pledge of final deliverance. Its presence is a practical guarantee that we will not be comfortable in the old humanity. It is an absolute assurance that we will be done with it forever in the future day of deliverance.

The old humanity bears bitter fruit. Its solidarity is shattered by antagonisms in all its divisions. Between nations and peoples this is most evident in time of war. What insane bitterness and fury and anger and clamor and calumny and malice is stirred in the hearts of belligerents! All this is absent in the new humanity. These destructive vices are replaced by constructive graces. Tender compassion, gracious dealing, should characterize our deportment in the new humanity. God's treatment of us, in Christ, is the standard set before us (Eph.4:32).

God Himself is the Example for our imitation (Eph.5:1). When we were sinners He gave Christ for us. When we were enemies He conciliated us to Himself through the death of His Son. As a pet child copies the ways of its father so should we imitate the loving acts of our God, in our contact with others. How much higher is this than the law! How far beyond the mere struggle for our own salvation! Nor is it only concerned with the happiness of others. It introduces us to the normal sphere of the highest of God's creatures, who should delight in Him and be His delight, who should manifest and magnify the depths of His affection.

The sacrifice of Christ has many aspects. The opening chapters of Leviticus deal with five of these. They fall into two classes, those concerned with sin and those which deal with nobler sides of His sacrificial work. The latter is of three kinds, the ascending offering, also called the "burnt offering," the present, or approach offering, also called the "meat offering" (Lev.2:1), and the peace offering (Lev.3:1). All of these are "oblations," which express the worship and homage of God's creatures even when sin does not sever them from Him. Christ was made sin for us on Golgotha. As such He suffered God's wrath. But He was also an odor of rest, a sweet smell, a delicious satisfaction. He gave Himself, not only for our sins, but as an Oblation, to win God's favor and delight (Eph.5:2).

Perhaps there is no more powerful deterrent from sin than a knowledge of this aspect of Christ's sacrifice. As the Sin and Trespass Offering He suffered for our sins, thus satisfying the demands of justice. But we are not mere neutrals, saved from indignation. He was our Approach Offering, or Present, which gives us access to the divine Presence. He was our Oblation, which secures to us God's favor when sin no longer bars our entrance. Let no one suppose that righteousness alone is sufficient to give access to God's presence. As with an earthly potentate, we must pave our way with costly gifts. Christ, as our Oblation, did this for us. Hence our walk should not merely lack sin, but should be fragrant with acts which transcend righteousness.

The gratification of the flesh, the filth of the flesh, and selfishness stand in marked antithesis to the exalted service and adoration offered to God by Christ in His sacrifice. Our conduct is not an imitation of His behavior during the years of His ministry to Israel. The Circumcision are exhorted to follow in His footsteps. We are to imitate God's grace in our dealing with others, and walk in love. The highest example of a course pleasing to God is

that aspect of Christ's sacrifice which was typified by the "burnt offering," or ascending offering. It was wholly for God, apart from all benefits to His creatures. In this day, this is deemed utterly useless. All work for God must be, first of all, philanthropic. It must benefit man. Such was not the first aim of our Lord. The act which brings the greatest good to humanity was, primarily, for God alone.

No consideration can convince me that there are any limits to God's grace. Sin is not its superior. Where sin increases grace superexceeds. But I deplore the perversity which makes this an excuse for sin. Grace is not a theological theory. It is a vital power. It is not in word only, but in deed. Let no one delude himself into the belief that it gives license to sin. It imparts power to overcome sin. I cannot acknowledge anyone to be His who talks of grace and lives in sin; however, God knows those who are His. God's indignation has been revealed against those who persist in offending Him. With grace comes light. We once were darkness, and could not keep from stumbling. Now we are light, and need not miss the way. Without in the least tarnishing the glory of grace we must insist that it bear fruit according to its kind, or it will degenerate into sentimental lenience.

God is Light as well as Love. We are the offspring of Light. In the natural realm there can be no fruit without light. In regions where daylight is lacking for half of the year, vegetation ceases to grow, and there is little life of any kind. In regions where the sun is always overhead there are luxuriant plants, dense jungles, and an abundance of animals. Darkness bears no fruit. It breeds disease. It hides evil. It decrees death. We belong to the realm of day; why, then, walk in the shade of night?

RECLAIMING THE ERA

It is evident to all that this is an era of futility. An appar-

ent gain in one direction is balanced by a loss in another. Men are riding a merry-go-round. They get nowhere. The same mirage looms up before them as in all previous eras, but it moves onward when it is approached. Some are not certain but that mankind is moving backward. We know that they are riding to a fall. The era of God's indignation is impending. Shall we participate in this futility? That would be most unwise. We are exhorted to reclaim it (Eph.5:16). God's purpose is being carried out in this era as in all others. Our wisdom is to fall in line with His plans, and avoid vain human devices for man's amelioration apart from God. The days are wicked. We cannot alter that. They will become more so, until Christ comes. But this very condition is fruitful soil for God's gracious activities. Business depression may cause spiritual prosperity. Human extremity is our opportunity.

UNDERSTANDING THE WILL OF THE LORD

The will of the Lord is the key to conduct. If we were to anticipate the bema of Christ, and investigate the lack of real efficiency in so-called Christian service, we would be astonished to find how little of it is in accord with the will of the Lord. A vast proportion of the efforts of God's servants is based on ignorance of His intention, and utter disregard of His administrations. Let no one imagine that such service will receive His approval, or that it will count in that day. The motive underneath it may be recognized and rewarded, but it is better to slave one hour in accord with His orders than to minister a whole lifetime disregarding His [commands]. Ignorant as we are of the process by which God's goal is to be gained, it is the utmost imprudence to ignore His mind in seeking to serve Him.

This section, concerned with our contacts with mankind, and the failure of humanity, closes with a glimpse of Utopia. The saints sing to themselves, give thanks to God for

all through Christ, and are subject to one another. What more would be needed for an ideal existence? We should be overflowing with happiness, glorifying God, and serving our fellows. If all men did this the problems of this era would be settled. But, alas, only the Spirit of God can occasion such a condition. Therefore, let us be filled with that Spirit, through God's Word, and, in some measure at least, we will realize the ideal of which men dream.

Some have supposed that instrumental music is not spiritual or scriptural. Some even go so far as to prefer discord to harmony. But that is not in accord with this passage. Psalms are not prose. Hymns are the highest expression of formal poetry. Songs must be measured and metered, or they are not sing-able. Misery may demand discord, but happiness must have harmony. If the instruments God has given us are unqualified or untrained, we may increase our satisfaction by artificial aid. Only, it must be from the heart. Well may we object to the abuse of instrumental music. When mind and heart are cold, it is futile to substitute a mere machine. God will not listen to it. But let us not insist on inflicting our dissonance on our fellow saints. That, alas, would quench the Spirit. Let us strive to utter our heartfelt happiness in words and notes harmonious to the sense and sound.

The operation of the Spirit in filling the believer may be most clearly traced when God graciously grants fresh light from His Word, such as is unfolded in these meditations. The heart overflows with joy and seeks expression for its new-found pleasure. The old songs fail to fully satisfy. New wine must have fresh wineskins. A theme suggests itself, which gives utterance to some phase of the truth. It develops into verse, and arranges itself into rhymes. But it should be sung! It must be music! So some notes are adapted to the thought, a movement emerges, the melody is made, and soon a song is sent forth to aid others to express their

sentiments, and the surge of the spirit within them. Some of the numbers in "Scriptural Songs" have been the fruit of this investigation of Ephesians.

GIVING THANKS FOR ALL

The unbeliever gives thanks for nothing. The infant saint is grateful for good. The mature man of God gives thanks for all things, bad as well as good, for he realizes that all is of God, and is destined to contribute to His beneficent end, however unfortunate its present aspect may seem. A conviction of God's deity, of His power to attain the goal He has set before Him, of His ability to use the evil as well as the good in His designs, of the great truth that He is operating the universe in accord with the counsel of His will (Eph.1:11), is of the utmost value in determining conduct and in harboring happiness. The saint who cannot take the ills of life from God's hand with thankfulness has hardly begun the life of faith. Job had attained to this even before he was tested by his sufferings. No one who understands that the present grace is the result of the greatest misfortune this world has ever had—the rejection of Messiah by His people Israel—will fail to find in every failure another occasion for thanksgiving and for praise.

A. E. Knoch

ELWOOD WINTER

Elwood Winter found repose in the Lord on September 20, 2025 at the age of 94. On March 27, 1954 he married the former Pauline R. Schultz, and together they celebrated 70 years of marriage until her passing in January.

We first made our aquaintance with Elwood and his wife, at the Bible conferences held in different states. They were always so happy and rejoicing over the truth of the evangel. Elwood would often call the office with words of encouragment. We will surely miss him and Pauline but we have the wonderful expectation of meeting them in the air when our Lord returns.

DARNEL, FIRE, FURNACE, OUTER DARKNESS

OUTER DARKNESS, FURNACE OF FIRE

> "Now I am saying to you that many from the east and the west shall be arriving and reclining with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens, yet the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness. There shall be lamentation and gnashing of teeth" (Matt.8:11,12).
>
> "He also will be declaring: I am saying to you, I am not acquainted with you! Whence are you? Withdraw from me, all workers of unrighteousness! There will be lamentation and gnashing of teeth, whenever you should see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, yet you cast outside. And they will be arriving from east and west and from north and south and will be made to recline in the kingdom of God" (Luke 13:27-29).

IN Matthew 8:11, Jesus says that individuals will come from the east and west to recline with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, highlighting the remarkable faith of the Roman Gentile centurion. In contrast to "east and west," Luke 13:27-29 adds "north and south" and "all the prophets" when Jesus addresses the Israelite workers of unrighteousness as shown in the above quoted passage.

Luke, writing to the Gentile leader Theophilus (Luke 1:3, Acts 1:1), presents a slightly different narrative than Matthew's account due to his audience. In Luke's account, the scope broadens to include those arriving from the four corners of the earth to be seated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob *and all the prophets.* However, the fate of the sons of the kingdom remains the same in both accounts: they will be cast out into outer darkness, a realm of severe hardship.

"Outer darkness" is a figure of speech. The kingdom of the heavens, which Christ will set up in Israel will be the antithesis of the realm of outer darkness. The workers of unrighteousness are to be cast out of Israel to live among the kid nations (*cf* Matt.25:32). Such nations are to experience divine discipline of "the fire made ready for the adversary class and its messengers" (*cf* Matt.25:41), also known as *eonian chastening* (Matt.25:46). Jesus stated in Matthew 8:12, "the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness."

IS "OUTER DARKNESS" "ETERNAL SPIRITUAL SEPARATION FROM GOD"?

Many theological works explore the concept of "outer darkness." Such works do not normally interpret this phrase to be concerned with countries or regions, but rather an "eternal spiritual separation from God." However, Jesus is speaking concerning those *in* Israel, who are lawless, who are to be culled *out of the kingdom of Israel, which kingdom is Christ's*: "The Son of Humanity shall be dispatching His messengers, and they shall be *culling out of His kingdom* all the snares and those doing lawlessness" (Matt. 13:41). When Christ *cast out* demons, He did not leave the demons inside the person and somehow spiritually separate the demon from the spiritual side of the individual. When Christ *cast out* of the temple all those selling and buying (Matt.21:12), He did not let them remain inside the temple by merely spiritually separating them from the others in the temple. This being the pattern, Christ, upon culling the lawless *out* of His kingdom, would not allow them to remain *in* the kingdom in some sort of sequestered living condition. Rather, they are expelled by force out of Israel into countries figuratively called "a furnace of fire," which is also, "outer darkness." The *outer darkness* represents the countries of the kid nations which are, of course, out-

side of Christ's kingdom. These lawless ones surely would not be deported to the sheep nations who receive life pertaining to the eon which will be emanating from Christ's kingdom. Any residency in Israel is disallowed them.

WHAT IS MEANT BY "SNARES"?

What are the snares Jesus alluded to in Matthew 13:41 which His messengers must cull out of Israel upon His arrival? A good usage of "snare" is to be found in the dialogue between Peter and the Lord: "And taking Him to him, Peter begins to be rebuking Him, saying, 'Propitious be it to You, Lord! By no means shall this be for You!' Now being turned, He says to Peter, 'Go away behind Me, satan! A snare are you to Me, for you are not setting your mind on that which is of God, but that which is of humans'" (Matt. 16:22,23). Peter unwittingly was tying to snare Jesus. The Greek word for "snare" is *skandalon.* In the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE snare is defined as "a means of tripping or a cause of falling." Peter was trying to cause Jesus to fall away from the goal He was listening to which His Father had given Him to do. The snaring ones whom the messengers will cull out of Israel are the ones who, if they remain in Israel, will cause Israelites to stumble or fall from what Christ will achieve while He is ruling in Israel.

> "Even as the darnel, then, are being culled and burned up with fire, thus shall it be in the conclusion of the eon. The Son of Humanity shall be dispatching His messengers, and they shall be culling out of His kingdom all the snares and those doing lawlessness, and they shall be ***casting them into a furnace of fire.*** There shall be lamentation and gnashing of teeth" (Matt.13:40-42).
>
> "And they shall be ***casting them into a furnace of fire.*** There shall be lamentation and gnashing of teeth" (Matt.13:50).

THREATENINGS DO NOT CHANGE THEIR INCALCITRANT HEARTS

The evil hearts of these lawless ones make them impervious to the threatenings Jesus levels against them. Those threatenings such as: "furnace of fire," or being "cast into outer darkness," or "lamentation and gnashing of teeth," could not change their hearts. Most likely these intransigent evil ones mocked and jeered Him when threatened. Why? Because their origin is not "ideal seed" (Matt.13:24), sown by the Son of Mankind (Matt.13:37). Rather, their origin was that of "the enemy . . . the Adversary" who sowed them as figurative darnel (v.25). Jesus told them their father was the Adversary: "Wherefore do you not know My speech? Seeing that you can not hear My word. You are of your father, the Adversary, and the desires of your father you are wanting to do. He was a human-killer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, for truth is not in him. Whenever he may be speaking a lie, he is speaking of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it. Yet I—seeing that I am speaking the truth, you are not believing Me. Who of you is exposing Me concerning sin? If I am telling the truth, wherefore are you not believing Me? He who is of God is hearing God's declarations. Therefore you are not hearing, seeing that you are not of God" (John 8:43-47). They were the seed planted by the Adversary. It is impossible for darnel to produce good fruit. Likewise, these ones sown by the enemy, the Adversary, imitate the character of the Adversary who sows them. Such ones must be culled and figuratively burned in a furnace of fire. They must be driven away to what is termed "outer darkness" in order to keep the righteous seed pure within Israel.

In the above parable of the darnel, we have fire used literally as well as figuratively. The farmers in Israel would cull the darnel and then destroy it with literal fire. The fig-

ure "furnace of fire" into which these lawless ones are to be cast represents a literal condition of living under hardship meted out by the iron club of Jesus.

DARNEL, SEED OF THE WICKED ONE
GRAIN, THE IDEAL SEED

The darnel plant in Israel resembles wheat[1] in its *early* stages prior to its fruiting stage. Distinguishing the difference in the early plant growth of the two plants is difficult. Darnel is considered a weed. It is poisonous to humans and livestock. Jesus rightly uses a toxic plant, such as darnel, to describe the seed (unrighteous ones) planted by the Adversary. *Once both the grain (wheat), which represents the righteous ones of the kingdom and the darnel, which represents the sons of the wicked one, mature,* it is *then* that the reapers can tell the difference in order to cull the darnel and then dispose of it properly by fire. This is why Jesus said: "Now, *when* the blade germinates and produces fruit, **then** appears also the darnel" (Matt.13:26). Therefore, once the wheat and darnel produce fruit, the difference of the fruited grain between the two plants is distinctively different and it is then seen for what it is and the darnel can be properly culled.

Just as the two plants are indistinguishable until their fruit appears, thus also the "sons of the wicked one" in Israel will be indistinguishable from the "ideal seed," i.e., the righteous ones, *until* they both begin bearing fruit—the one group bears unrighteous fruit (the snares and doing lawlessness) and the other group produces righteous fruit. It is then that the harvest occurs. This understanding enables the messengers to distinguish between the

1. It is taken for granted that "wheat" is the grain Jesus spoke of when He used the word *siton* (grain), in Matthew 13:29 since darnel is so similar to wheat prior to bearing fruit.

two groups in order to harvest them. The darnel group is figuratively cast into a furnace of fire which is literally eonian chastening. In other words, to reiterate, they are cast out of Israel to live among the kid nations who are under duress by the chastening eonian during the thousand years. This culling ensues at the conclusion of our current wicked eon (Matt.13:39).

Lawless ones who were formerly in Israel will exist in the figurative fire prepared for the adversary class and its messengers. The furnace and fire, though figurative, are representative of something very literal. Such ones will undergo harsh living conditions during the thousand years.

THE FURNACE OF FIRE

> "The Son of Humanity shall be dispatching His messengers, and they shall be culling out of His kingdom all the snares and those doing lawlessness, and they shall be casting them into a furnace of fire. There shall be lamentation and gnashing of teeth" (Matt.13:41-42).

The phrase "culling *out* of His kingdom" tells us the snaring ones and lawless ones are *rounded up inside Israel* which is "in his own field" and then *cast out of Israel* into a figurative *furnace of fire.* Just as Egypt was once an iron furnace when the Israelites were held captive there four-hundred some years, now, once again, these people must enter the furnace to be tried as if by fire for one thousand years. These lawless ones will not be cast into the sheep nations. If that were the case, they would receive all the blessings of eonian life of those nations. Being *cast out* of Israel, the only place they can live is among the kid nations who are under a curse of eonian chastening. This is the figurative fire prepared for them and their emissaries. There they will lament and gnash their teeth.

EGYPT WAS AN IRON CRUCIBLE OR FURNACE

According to some theologians, the furnace of fire

spoken of in Matthew is "Hell" and is eternal. What about Egypt being an iron furnace[2] ("crucible" in CVOT)? Was Egypt "Hell" and were the figurative fires in that iron furnace eternal? Surely, the throngs Christ spoke to would know what He meant when He used the term, "iron furnace." Unless one was a Pharisee or an ardent learner of their traditions, the phrase surely did not, in their minds, conjure up some sort of Dantean Hell with eternal torment in fire.

"for they are Your people and Your allotment whom You brought forth from Egypt, from the midst of *the iron crucible*[2]" (1 Kings 8:51).

". . . In the day I brought them forth from the land of Egypt, from *the iron crucible*[2], . . ." (Jer.11:4).

Yahweh put the sons of Israel, small in number, in the iron crucible and later brought them out, great in number to be His people. Was the entire land of Egypt literally an iron furnace? Was all of Egypt literally on fire? No. The iron furnace is representative of the slavery and hardships Israel endured while in Egypt.

In the future, at the return of Jesus, all of the representatives of the nations are brought before Him to be judged as to how they treated His brethren during their great tribulation. They are divided into two groups, the kid nations and the sheep nations. Just as Egypt was a figurative iron furnace which held Israel, the kid nations will enter the figurative furnace of fire. This will make more sense as we go along. The kid nations in that future judgment are separated from the sheep nations due to how they treated Jesus's brethren which caused His brethren's great tribulation. In our day all member nations meet at the building in

2. iron furnace: for "furnace" Matthew 13:42 has Greek: *kaminos*. LXX has *kaminos* for Deut.4:20; 1 Kings 8:51: Jer.11:4 and Ezk. 22:20. Hebrew has kûr H3564, *pot* or *furnace*. Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries.

New York called The United Nations Headquarters. Representatives there of each member nation attend to represent their nation. In the judgment of the kid and sheep nations, every nation will send representatives and Jesus will stand them on His left and right. Just as the *kids* and *sheep* are figurative, thus also is "the fire" the cursed kid nations must endure.

Then shall He be declaring to 'those **also** °**at** His **left:** ¦**Go**° **from Me,** you ·°**cursed**°**, into the fire** ·**eonian,** 'made °**ready**° for **the adversary** class **and its messengers**[3] (Matt. 25:41, revised CVNT).

If this fire the nations enter into is the fire prepared for "the devil and his angels" as so many translations wrongly state, or even "the Adversary and his messengers," which likewise makes one think it is Satan and his messengers or angels, then these nations must go into the lake of fire at the beginning of the thousand years in which they will enter unconscious death rather than chastening eonian. This is so if the lake of fire and sulphur really was prepared solely for the Adversary, i.e., Satan and his demons. Why does it not say "the fire prepared for the wild beast and false prophet"? Or why does Matthew 25:41 not say "the fire prepared for all those not found written in the scroll of life"? There is not one verse in all the Bible informing us "the devil and his angels will be cast into fire." We are told the Adversary will be cast into the lake of fire and sulphur a thousand years after this judgment. However, no mention is made of "his angels" being cast in with him. This is the only fire the devil, a.k.a. "Satan," i,e., "the Adversary," goes into after being released from his jail

3. "Editor's note: Although the present CV uses 'Adversary' with a capital 'A' in Matthew 25:41, A. E. Knoch's suggestion that the passage refers to the 'adversary *class of nations*' and its messengers has much merit and should be considered in future editions of the Version" (Dean Hough, footnote, vol.89, p.153).

of the abyss (*cf* Rev.20:7), at the *ending* of the thousand year eon. A. E. Knoch, in past Unsearchable Riches magazines, has stated the judgment for humans at the Great White Throne Judgment occurs one thousand years *after* this judgment of these nations. The fire of the lake of fire burning with sulphur is a literal fire. However, the fire the nations enter into is a figurative fire which represents a literal chastening eonian (Matt.25:46). Being a figurative fire, it is representative of the very harsh living conditions the kid nations will endure during Christ's thousand-year reign. For humans, the lake of fire is death. This being the case, if these nations enter into death, how is it possible for them to enter eonian chastening which is chastening for one thousand years? Also, how does a nation, such as Iran or the United States, enter the second death? Is it possible for an entire nation to not be written in the Lamb's scroll of life? Of course anything is possible. But improbable for a *nation* to be cast therein.

This judgment of Matthew 25:31-46, which occurs at the beginning of Christ's thousand-year reign, cannot be the great white throne judgment, nor are the kid nations cast into the lake of fire at the beginning of the thousand years. If that were the case, such nations would cease to exist and Christ would not rule over them with a rod of iron (*cp* Rev.2:27) for a thousand years. For humans the great white throne judgment takes place when the thousand years are finishing (not fully finished). Only the beast and false prophet are cast into the lake of fire and sulphur prior to Christ's millennial reign. The Adversary is bound and locked up in the abyss (not the lake of fire) for a thousand years. *It is only as the thousand years are in the process of finishing* that he is loosed out of the abyss to deceive the nations (*cf* Rev.20:7), and then, prior to the final eon, he is cast into the lake of fire and sulphur. This Adversary is not the adversary nation spoken of in Matthew 25:41.

The adversary nation is not locked up in the abyss at the beginning of Christ's thousand-year reign.

Another important point to make is this: If the "furnace of fire" the nations are to endure and the unrighteous and snares of Israel are to enter is the lake of fire, this would result in the death of those nations. In such a case who would be left of the kid nations for Satan, when loosed from his jail, to deceive of the nations in order to come against the holy citadel according to Revelation 20:9? Fire from God will, in that future day descend to devour them. Is Satan somehow going to resurrect these nations out of the second death in order to lead the revolt? If so, the inhabitants of the second death would have to be vivified beyond the reach of death and so the fire descending from God would have no effect upon them.

When Jesus tells the kid nations to "go from Me," He means those nations are to leave the realm of His blessings within Israel and enter the realm of the curse of chastening outside Israel. Rather than be ruled by Christ with the protective Shepherd's staff or crook, they will be ruled by with a club of iron.

> "Ask of Me, and I shall give the nations as Your allotment, and as Your holding, the limits of the earth. You shall smash them with a club of iron; like a vessel of a potter, You shall shatter them" (Psa.2:8-9).

The sheep nations, who most likely suffered greatly for resisting the demands of the man of lawlessness, beast and false prophet, and resisting the demands of the adversarial kid nation(s) who sent out couriers with letters to persecute Christ's brethren, will now enter into the realm of life emanating from Christ's glorious millennial reign. They will be guided and protected with His staff. He will repay their sufferings with great blessings.

Tony Nungesser

The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

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A. E. Knoch, paperback, 351 pages (ISBN 0-910424-59-4)

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES, FOURTH QUARTER 2025
BEING THE FOURTH NUMBER OF VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

EDITORIAL

In the August 1916 issue of *Unsearchable Riches* (vol.7, pages 266-268) A. E. Knoch writes: "The faith of Christ is brought before us in the otherwise enigmatical statement 'from faith *into* faith.' There are two faiths in view. The latter is our faith; the former is Christ's. Justification is founded on His faith; it is conferred on our faith. Abraham was [reckoned][1] righteous for his faith; Christ makes all men righteous because of His faith. Hence we find the statement (which is so often referred to us who believe) 'the Just One shall live by His faith,' . . . His faith is the foundation upon which God will finally justify all mankind (Rom.5:18)."

Forty-two years later A. E. Knoch wrote in the November 1958 issue of this magazine (vol.49, p.252): ". . . we may look beyond the picture presented by Abraham and Isaac, to the *Inaugurator and Perfecter* of faith, Who, for the joy lying before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now seated at the right hand of God (Heb.12:2). Isaac was only a type, a dim shadow of the One Whose faith led Him to descend from the highest heights of glory to the lowest depths of shame, and has called us to share the fruits of His faith, by blessing us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials (Eph.1:3)."

There is a grand harmony between these two meditations and the translations suggested. Of course I am prejudiced, for I was taught from my youth that all blessing are based on the *faith of Jesus Christ.* So many of my teachers made it clear to

1. A.E.K used the verb "constituted" here, but Romans 4:3, citing Genesis 15:6, uses the verb "reckoned" ("counted" in the AV). The verb "constituted" is fitting in Romans 5:19 where, not only Abraham, but all humans are in view.

me, that in A. E. Knoch's words, "[Christ] believed God even when He smote Him for our sins. It is out of His faith for our faith (Rom.1:17)."[2]

Yet especially in his earlier writings, A.E.K. seems to have backed away from his comments of 1916 concerning Christ's faith by taking Romans 1:17 as a reference to our faith only, as apparently taught by Martin Luther. This was a loss, which very much needs to be corrected. It is important, accordingly, that the "out of faith" in Romans 1:17 be seen as referring to the Righteous One's ("Just One's") faith in the revised Concordant Version. So also in Galatians 3:11 and Hebrews 10:38, the faith of the Righteous One is in view as the Inaugurater and Perfecter of faith.

In the meantime it is important whenever we read or hear the words "justified by faith" that we mentally take it to speak of Jesus Christ's faith, as it does in the CV of Romans 3:22.

The same is true of the term *obedience*, which has practically lost its sense of *submissive hearing*. Christ listened fully and exactly to the instruction He heard from His God and Father, so that what He did was in perfect accord with what He heard. We need to listen to the *revelation* of what Christ's listening achieves, despite our desire to have some credit in this achievement of Christ's. Accordingly, in a few cases, we have changed the words built on the verb *obey* to words built on the verb *listen* in the first article in this issue.

A. E. Knoch's final articles in his early studies on Ephesians follow, one on our celestial conflict and the other on Paul's imprisonment in this period of God's conciliation. My own thoughts on the opening chapters of Romans are then repeated.

We close with Tony Nungesser's timely reminder that God's blessings do not come out of judgments, but rather out of the cross of Christ.

D.H.H.

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2. Concordant Commentary on Romans 3:22, p.233.

THE JOINT BODY—IN THE LORD

We are now to consider the more intimate relationships of life, husband and wife, parent and child, master and slave. The figure of a new humanity is not an adequate basis for conduct in these contacts. If the "church" were the "bride of Christ" today, as is sometimes supposed, then this would furnish an excellent ground of exhortation for the marriage bond. But, as Christ, in His official capacity, our Lord has no bride or wife, and the bride of the Lambkin is Israel, the Circumcision. Therefore, nothing could be more fitting than that the close communion of these relationships should be governed by that most intimate and precious of all spiritual ties, the joint body of Christ. Membership in that body is the clue to conduct toward those near to us and dear to us (Eph.5:21-6:9).

"In Christ" there are no physical relationships. "In the Lord" these are recognized and controlled. In Christ the master and the slave, the mature and the minor, the male and the female, disappear. The master is subject to the Lord, the slave is free in spirit. The aged father is in his prime and the youth is fully matured. Sex is not recognized. None of these physical distinctions disturb the absolute equality of every participant in the spiritual unity. But let us not abuse this precious truth by applying it outside the spiritual sphere.[1] Let us not infer that when a slave believed, he became a freeman. That would have caused untold trouble. A believing child is not freed from the authority of its parents. On the contrary, it is more obliged to listen. The act of faith does not make a female mascu-

1. Nevertheless Paul is entreating those in Christ (not humans in general) as to *their* conduct in the Lord. D.H.H.

line, and give her the place of a man and a husband. She is still to be subject. Our place in Christ does not set aside subjection in the Lord.[2]

These simple facts are of surpassing importance in a day when all subjection is derided and when faith in God's actual utterance is largely superseded by inference from His words on a different subject. Both socially and theologically the tendency is away from the wholesome [entreaties] which are given us for our guidance in Paul's latest epistles. Independence, rather than subjection, is set before us as the ideal. As a result we see insubordination everywhere. The employee seeks to control the employer's affairs, and business is obstructed. The child scoffs at parental monitions, [disregards] without a qualm, and reaps a harvest of dissipation and crime. Marriage is no longer a bond, but an experiment, and brings the blight of divorce and parentless children, and moral corruption. This one sentence would solve most of our social evils: *Be subject.*

We are not only "in *Christ,*" but "in the *Lord.*" We are not capable of reasoning out the conduct which befits a saint from our position in Christ. This is done for us by relating us to Him as our Lord, and by giving us specific guidance to suit each sphere in which we may be found. Let us note that we are not referred to the law, which was given to govern the flesh before. Our physical affairs are not to be regulated in accord with that administration. They are to accord with the transcendent truths of our spiritual state. The prime ingredients of that revelation—love, grace, spirit—are to be mingled with our conduct toward our relatives, and should control the mutual attitude of master and slave. Let us acknowledge the lordship of Christ. It will be especially pleasing in these days

2. Nor does our subjection in the Lord set aside our place in Christ. D.H.H.

when subjection is derided as a weakness, and despised as if it were a crime.

As Christ is our Lord, or Master, there is a clear parallel to enforce obedience to masters in the flesh. Since slavery scarcely exists, these exhortations may be appropriated, in measure at least, by those who serve though not bound. In fact, much as we may abhor slavery, the ownership of one human being by another, there is not so great a gulf between it and other forms of service. Now our employers buy our time, our effort. They pay for a fraction of our life. It is a form of limited bondage, which absolutely [entreats] subjection, no less than slavery. Hence we are to conform the quality of this subjection to that which we render our spiritual Lord. "Fear and trembling . . . singleness of heart . . . not with eye-slavery, as man-pleasers . . . with good humor . . ." (Eph.6:5-8). How gladly will employers accept such service! How well it would be if servants would give it! There would be no loss of self-respect, as men vainly imagine.

He who is in service must serve. Not merely to hold his position or to increase his pay, but because of his similar relationship to Christ, he should *obey,* with fear and trembling. That is the normal, the appropriate posture of the creature. God is the only One Who should not obey. Christ obeys Him. We obey our Lord. Our obedience to masters in the flesh is only a miniature of these higher relationships, and is intended to teach us the absolute sovereignty of the Deity. It is no disgrace. Let us always remember that we serve the Lord Christ, in serving others, and the quality of our service will rise to the heights that no mortal man can inspire. Let us wear His livery, and the most menial task will assume a robe of royal dignity.

In these democratic days we work for wages and measure our hire by the amount of material for which we are able to exchange it. Few feel that they are properly re-

quited. How many would refuse a raise in salary? Happy are those who can look beyond their paychecks to the Lord they serve, with the confident expectation that their good will be requited! They may not be appreciated now. They will probably serve better than their wages require. Let them rest in perfect assurance that all they do will receive its just compensation, not necessarily from their earthly master in this era, but from their heavenly Lord, when He reviews the lives of all His slaves and awards to each his just deserts. Then shall all have praise from God, for all of His, in some measure, will merit His approval.

Masters also must make their heavenly Master a pattern of their part. Though they seem to have a high place, they are themselves but underlings. The subjection which they demand from those beneath them is due to Him Who is their Lord. Let them not imagine for a moment that they are supreme. Let them not abuse the power placed in their hands. Let them be gracious as they themselves desire the favor of their Overlord. One thing especially is debarred, and that is threatening. It is utterly at variance with the spirit of this economy. God prays and pleads, but He does not threaten. This is the resort of the weakling who is not fit to be trusted with power. Our Lord does not threaten us. There is a requital for the good slave, but no threat for a bad one (Eph.6:9).

It is sometimes supposed that these last days are the only ones in which children do not mind their parents. There is no doubt that it has gone to extremes never known before, but the mere fact that the Spirit of God found it necessary to pen an exhortation to this effect shows the universality of the sin. Apart altogether from the spiritual appeal which the apostle makes, it is evident that the place of immature offspring is subjection. Age should teach wisdom, and experience understanding. These are sorely needed in a world so full of pitfalls and of walking in darkness. Yet the great-

est lesson they should learn, the most important that parents should impart, is that obedience is *in the Lord.* The father has a right to demand it because he has authority from the Lord. If he is not himself obedient to his Master, that authority is weakened and invalidated.

The law was full of prohibitions. A welcome contrast is the promise to the fifth precept (Ex.20:12). The first to the third are negative. Thou *shalt not* have other gods before Me. Thou *shalt not* make any graven image. Thou *shalt not* take the name of Yahweh thy God in vain. The fourth is positive as well as negative. Remember the sabbath day . . . Six days shalt thou labor . . . but the seventh is the sabbath . . . thou *shalt not* do any work . . . . The fifth is the first and only one without a prohibition and with a promise attached: Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Thou *shalt not* . . . Thou *shalt not* . . . Thou *shalt not* . . . Thou *shalt not* . . . . Thou *shalt not* . . . .

We are not under law, but under grace. Does this mean that we are free to murder? By no means![3] Does it mean that the benefits accruing from obedience to its precepts will be withheld from us? Far from it! Those under law were in a state of minority and tutelage, corresponding very closely to the condition of our children according to the flesh. The rules and regulations for such a state are given in the law, and cannot be improved upon. If obedience to parents obtained a physical reward under the law, it will operate just as well under grace. Indeed, this precept comes nearer the administration of grace than any other, as indeed, it ought to do. If the present tide of disobedience could be stemmed, there is no more potent power to effect it than this simple word: *"Honor your father and mother, that it may be well with you!"*

3. See the endnote, p.156.

This may seem a selfish appeal. But what stronger motive exists in the breasts of the immature? Now selfishness finds an outlet in a feverish pursuit for present pleasure or insane seeking for sordid gain.

Again, as with the masters, fathers are enjoined from taking undue advantage of the position which is theirs from the Lord. A little brief authority is a temptation to most men. To use power with moderation, to temper it with kindness, is the mark of true nobility. Parental authority should always be just, never manifestly high-handed, never vexatious, never the result of capricious tyranny rather than wise lenience. In this passage the father's true place is indicated. The discipline and admonition of his children is in his hands. God will hold him accountable, even if he shirks his duty.

THE SUBJECTION OF WIVES

The fact that God's Spirit has indited two precepts for the regulation of the wedded state of His saints is sufficient to give us the key to the present deplorable condition. The family seems to be dying out. The whole social structure seems doomed to destruction. The crusade for women's rights seems to have caused a crop of women's wrongs. Men and women are hunting for happiness along illicit lines. They boldly refuse to use a marriage ceremony which embodies God's declarations of the relations of husband and wife. Women will not obey their husbands. To merely mention such a thing is deemed an insult to the sex. The story of Eden is said to be a myth; no intelligent person dares to accept it today. But the fact remains that the law is graven deep in the human constitution, and its infringement has wrought havoc. The emancipation of woman has made her a miserable slave. Her true happiness lies in subjection, not merely to her husband, but to

God, Who has given her this place, not in anger, but in wisdom and love.

In Eden's garden Eve took the initiative, and without according Adam a place in her counsels, took of the forbidden fruit and gave to him. In the judgment scene that follows every sentence is in exact accord with the nature of the sin. She had been insubordinate. She had scorned the command of God, "You shall not eat" (Gen.2:17). She had been lured by the evil one, and she had involved Adam in her offense. He did not transgress of himself. He was not deluded. His love for Eve alone involved him in the trespass. Hence the sentence: "He shall dominate over you" (Gen.3:16). Eve's daughters may do as Eve did, and listen to the lure of evil, and refuse to serve the sentence God has imposed. But, like all of God's laws, its infringement is fraught with inescapable retribution.

Every condition has its compensations. Many an emancipated slave has wished for the good old days when he had no cares, no responsibilities. His food and shelter were secure. The future did not worry him. His master did his worrying. Subjection is not an unmitigated evil. Ideally, it provides a safe, sheltered existence, which relieves him of many of the austerities of life. As a matter of fact subjection is the normal sphere of the creature. If he is not intelligently obedient to the Creator he must be subordinate to his environment, the physical elements or the social institutions. Lawlessness is always foolish and hurtful. There can be no comfort or happiness without subjection of some sort. God's laws are immutable. He has decreed that subjection shall be one side of the marriage bond. And who shall question the wisdom and the benefit of His arrangement?

In this connection we are given a hint which clears away much confusion. It is common to connect the headship of Christ to the figure of the one body. We are asked to

believe that none of the saints, as members of this body, are in the head, for that is reserved for Christ. The functions figured by the eyes, the ears, and the nose belong alone to Him. Since these are distinctly attributed to the members by the apostle in writing to the Corinthians, it is supposed that Christ has two bodies, notwithstanding the emphatic assertion to the contrary. That Christ is not a separate member of the body, even the head, ought to be evident, for the whole is His body. His headship is a distinct figure. It is over the whole body, including the head. All is clear when we read that "the husband is the head of the wife *even as* Christ is Head of the ecclesia." The wife, though subject, is not without a head of her own. The husband's is not her physical head. There is only one body of Christ in which some of the members are in the head and some in the feet, but now, in the joint body, all are of equal rank.

Love is the greatest thing in the universe, and it should find its fullest expression in the affection of a husband for his wife. A man is not charged to be her head, but to exercise his heart on her behalf (Eph.5:25-31), "Husbands, be loving your wives, according as Christ also loves the ecclesia . . . ." How tempting, here, to introduce the figure of the bride! How simple it would be! Yahweh does love Israel as a bridegroom his bride, and were we members of that nation, such an exhortation would be most apt. But we are not the wife of Yahweh or the bride of the Lambkin. We are the body of Christ. A man's own body is the figure of this relationship. Therefore, the apostle interjects the argument that husband and wife are one flesh. "Husbands ought to be loving their own wives as *their own bodies.* He who is loving his own wife is loving *himself.* For no one at any time hates *his own flesh,* but is nourishing and cherishing it, according as Christ also the ecclesia, for *we are members of His body*" (Eph.5:28-30).

THE SECRET OF MARRIAGE

If we were "the bride of Christ" there would be no necessity for bringing in the secret of marriage, in order to prove that the two are one flesh, and so, in a sense the wife is the husband's own body, thus forming a parallel with the relation of Christ to the ecclesia. All the members of His body are one *spirit* in Christ. The husband and the wife are one *flesh.* As Christ loves the ecclesia, His own body, so should the husband love his wife, not as such, but as *his own* flesh. This is based on the facts of creation, as recorded in the opening chapters of Genesis. Adam and Eve actually were one flesh at first.

"Male and female He creates them" (Gen.1:27) is the brief statement of the first record of man's creation. In the fuller account that follows we find that Adam was created bisexual. God did not build Eve out of a "rib." Out of more than forty occurrences *tzlo* is never rendered *rib* elsewhere. It is called a *beam,* a *board,* a *chamber,* a *corner,* a *leaf,* a *plank,* a *side,* and a *side chamber.* When we see that the leading idea is a *vault*, or *cell,* the creation of Eve may be intelligently understood. The female "angular [organ]" (Gen.2:22) was taken from him, as the basis for another individual. Man lacks no ribs, but he does lack the female functions which were incorporated into the body of Adam before the separation of Eve. It now takes two individuals to make a complete human being, as God created him. Hence in marriage, each is but part of a human, as to flesh, and, together, they are but one. This is the secret on which Paul bases his exhortation.

We may, with delightful delectation, dwell upon the fact that no man ever hated his own flesh. No exhortation is needed there. It is instinctive, inevitable. *So is Christ's love for us.* We are joined by bonds unbreakable. In loving us, He loves Himself. We need not implore Him to favor us, nor must we merit His affection. Within our own

breasts we have a continual reminder of the love of God's Anointed for the members of His body. We do not ask our members to earn our regard. Indeed, if an arm is hurt, we give it added concern. If a foot is lame, we do not discard it, but favor it all the more. So is the love of Christ. Let us not imagine that our weakness, our unworthiness, will make Him weary of us. That can never be. A man may weary of his wife, a woman of the child she bears, but Christ will never cease to love the most unworthy member of that celestial company who come to Him in the day of His rejection, before the time of His return.

A. E. Knoch

ENDNOTE

I believe Brother Knoch would have commented on the last three chapters of Ephesians in his later years quite differently at certain points than he does in these early meditations. He would not use the verbs "demand" or "command" where Paul uses the verb "entreat," and he would not suggest a separation of what we are "in Christ" from our present position "in the Lord," where Paul connects them by the conjunction "then" (Eph.4:1) which indicates a conclusion to what is said in the first three chapters. Here on page 151 where he brings in Romans 6:14 (quite appropriately) he would not refer to the sin of murder in terms of law, but would instead direct attention to our conduct in our human relationships in terms of grace, as grace is presented to us in Ephesians chapters 1-3.

Perhaps most relevant to Ephesians chapters 4-6 is the grace brought forward in Ephesians 2:4-8, first the transcendent riches of God's grace and then the grace of our salvation which is through Christ Jesus's faith.

Although there is no evidence that Brother Knoch saw the "through faith" in 2:8 as "through *Christ's* faith," as in the CV of Romans 3:22 ("through Jesus Christ's faith"), his testimony in the November 1958 issue of Unsearchable Riches, as cited in my editorial, concerning Christ's faith points us in that direction. The bottom line is: What did Paul say on the matter of grace and its authority over us in our conduct? Is not grace an authority of God's power far more vibrant than law (*cf* Rom.1:16)?

D.H.H.

THE CELESTIAL CONFLICT

STAND! This is the thrice repeated watchword for those who occupy the celestial allotment which is ours in Christ Jesus (Eph.6:10-17; 1:3-14). In case of attack by the cohorts of the heavenly hosts, *withstand!* (Eph.6:13). God has granted us an allotment among the celestials. It is only as we tenant the tract entrusted to us that we have a place to stand. It is only when we hold this ground that the enemy will seek to dislodge us. Then alone will there be warfare. This is not the rest we have at God's right hand, neither is it a war of aggression. Those who find the faith of Ephesians will have to fight to hold the ground they have gained. There are unseen strategists who will seek to dispossess them. There are powers of darkness who will assault their position and drive them from it.

When Israel was in the wilderness, *Forward!* was their watchword. The wilderness warfare, however, was, in a sense unnecessary. It was the result of their refusal to hearken to Yahweh. Once the land had been conquered, after they had taken possession, their aggressive warfare was at an end. Then it was their duty to stand upon it and withstand the onslaughts of all who sought to drive them from it. When faith was low and valor scarce, the people fled, and left their allotment to their enemies. On occasions such as these the mighty men of David gained their fame by defending their fields against the Philistines. We have no earthly allotment to hold, but we have a heavenly inheritance. No forward move is necessary now, for the fields are ours by faith. But there is need abundant to stand firm on the ground we have gained and withstand every effort to dislodge us from our allotment.

To those who confuse contexts, God's Word is full of contradictions. One of the great truths of a previous portion of Ephesians is that we are *seated* together among the celestials (Eph.2:6). There is relaxation and rest. Now this seems to be denied for we are exhorted to *stand,* clad with all the accouterments of conflict. There is vigilance and warfare. Both are true, *in their contexts.* Both are false *out* of their contexts. As related to Christ Jesus, as members of His body, we have no work to do, for He has completed it all Himself. But, as related to *God,* as *enjoying an allotment* among the celestials, we need to be invigorated with God's mighty strength, and to stand in His protective panoply. The allotment is ours. We shall enter upon its tenancy in fact when we are called above. But now we need to hold it by *faith.* There is where the danger lies. There failure may be found. There the saints have practically forfeited the enjoyment of their celestial blessings.

This warfare is almost unknown in Christendom today for the simple reason that few have even heard of the territory on which they are supposed to stand. The Adversary's stratagems have been so successful, the sovereignties and authorities, the world mights of this darkness, the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials have so outmaneuvered the saints that they are running around in circles on ground that does not belong to them, rather than standing firm on their own patrimony. Our enemies scarcely need to fight. They have outwitted us. How many saints are enjoying their celestial allotment? How many have appropriated the territory by faith which is theirs in this administration? One of the great Christian bodies has territorial sovereignty on earth. Most of them are possessed of plots of land down here. But few indeed are standing on celestial soil and defending it from spiritual foes.

We talk of apostate Israel, but, in all their apostasy, they have not utterly lost their bearings. They know where their

allotment is. True, they are foolish to fight for land that Yahweh will give them in due time, but their folly shows that they know His mind concerning them in a minute measure. They are ready to meet every effort which opposes their claim. Woe to the nation which will not concede it! O that the joint allottees of the celestial realms had a tithe of their intelligence and a fraction of their fervor. They would not come into conflict with the Arabs, as the Jews in Palestine, but with far craftier foes in the celestial sphere.

Israel's warfare is with blood and flesh. Their allotment is the land. Our holdings are in heaven. Our strife is with wicked spirits. One of the hardest lessons for us to learn is the fact that we do *not* fight with our fellows. There must be no close conflict, no grappling with men, no wrestling with those within our reach. This negative injunction has never been heartily heeded. Even Protestant princes have not hesitated to use the arm of flesh in forwarding the fight of faith. Saints have seldom worn the sandals of the evangel of peace, in their earthly contacts. The great truth of the conciliation of mankind was not recovered at the Reformation. There was only a blurred vision of Romans three and four, and a refusal to enter the fifth chapter.

Neither is the fight with our own flesh. It is a fatal mistake to seek to subdue the flesh. It is futile to strive against our physical propensities. The disposition of the flesh is death, so let us put it in the place of death. It cannot be subject, so let us cease to expect anything from it, or seek to improve it. The flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. The only successful solution is to starve the flesh, to put it in the place of death, to nail it to the cross. Those who are of Christ crucify the flesh with its passions and lusts. The flesh is not on a par with the spirit. We have power and authority over the flesh, so that we should never condescend to strive as equals. We must condemn it to the ignominious stake.

Much the same is true of the old humanity, which we receive from Adam. If we realize the great truth that we are a new humanity in Christ, and that the old was crucified with Him, we will not disgrace ourselves by entering the lists against the decaying and decrepit humanity to which our bodies still belong but which we should put off, by the power of the spirit, just as we discard garments too worn and filthy for further use. Let there be no conflict with the old humanity. With men we are at peace, even as God is conciliated toward them now. For them our feet are sandaled with the readiness of the evangel of peace, for our feet alone are in contact with the earth. Our very panoply provides for a truce with mankind (Eph.6:15). Only as we mount, by faith, to our celestial allotment, will we wage war.

OUR CELESTIAL STRIFE

As soon as we seek to enjoy our allotment among the celestials by faith we enter a scene of unceasing strife, carried on with skillful strategy and spiritual force. If the marvelous revelations of the previous portion of this epistle have been apprehended, two matters of much moment have emerged. On earth we have no interests which conflict with any man. We have no allotment here to form the basis of a quarrel. Palestine is not for us, hence we have no clashes with the Arabs who claim it. But, just as the dispossessed Palestinian Arabs resent and resist the presence of the Jews, to whom God has promised the land of Palestine, so the celestial powers oppose our appearance on their possessions. Moreover, no world power has been given a mandate over the celestial territory to help us retain our rights. Each one must hold his own ground, and defend the plot which is allotted to him single-handed and alone.

In the coming administration of God's indignation, the Adversary will come down to earth to be a roaring lion to

the remnant of Israel. Why does he single them out for his prey? Because he is well aware that earth's sovereignty, which he has held for more than seven millenniums, has been given to God's Anointed, and that His people Israel will administer His government when He ascends the throne. The same motive impels now the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials in their opposition to the ecclesia which, some day, will displace them in their celestial sovereignty. They know far better than the saints what our presence implies. It is a plain intimation that their sovereignty is succumbing to the assaults of Christ. It heralds the hour when their hold on the heavens will cease. They will do their utmost to keep us from the enjoyment of our allotment.

How well they seem to have succeeded! Few, indeed, of the saints even know that they have a celestial allotment to defend. They are like a Jew who has never heard of Palestine. Some deny our title to any celestial allotment. They are like those Jews who prefer the Argentine or some other place to the patrimony of their fathers. A few, very few, in spirit, hold celestial property. Even these are not well equipped, and suffer for lack of armor suited to the conflict. It is to these that we address ourselves. If, by faith, they have acquired the celestial homestead which is presented in the first chapter of this epistle (verses 3-19), then they have also come into the possession of a feud which will cost them many a defeat if they are not prepared for its defense. Do not let the stratagems of the Adversary shift your stand to earth. Do not allow his fiery darts to slip past the shield of faith. Remember, though you have been saved from your sins, and are being saved from sin, you still need salvation in the celestial spheres.

THE ADVERSARY

A good general sends out scouts to get all possible infor-

mation as to his enemy. It is wise that we should be well acquainted with our foes. It is essential that we should recognize our chief adversary. In the future, on the earth, he will resemble a roaring lion. He will openly attack the saints. No one will mistake him then. Not so now. To all appearances he is "an angel of light." His ministers are transfigured as dispensers of righteousness. Let us suppose that some radiant, angelic messenger graced the earth with his presence, teaching men to forsake the wrong and cleave to the right, disclosing marvelous secrets of science for the betterment of mankind, adding to our store of knowledge, harnessing the forces of nature for our use, the patron of education, philanthropy and religion. Suppose he consummated a movement for the federation of mankind, a congress of the nations, the brotherhood of man. Suppose he was able to suppress those vices which mar men's schemes, and bring them to fruition. Let him be their guardian angel, their guiding star. Let him ask no pay for his pains except the appreciation and the worship which his work inspires. On the surface he seems to have no fault but this, the acceptance of divine worship, which belongs to God alone, or to His Anointed. This is a true picture of Satan, the Adversary, the adversary of God and His Christ, and all who worship Him. He it is who seeks to cure humanity's mortal wound apart from the presence of Messiah.

Today he is the great deceiver. He employs a satyr with horns and hoofs, who delights in torturing men and dragging them down into the gutter, to mask his real occupation. Most men imagine that he is the monarch of an imaginary underworld, that he is enthroned in "hell." But from God's Word we know that he never was, nor is, nor shall be there. When death and "hell" are cast into the lake of fire he is already in that dreadful place, not its monarch, but its most miserable victim. In that day Christ alone will

rule throughout the universe. But in this era Satan holds sway in secret on the earth.

It is only by stealth and deception that he holds fast the homage of humanity. If men knew that the serpent of Eden had been transformed into a messenger of light in order to better carry on his early work of weaning men's hearts away from God, if they knew that the angelic glory hid the serpent's heart, would they so blindly do his bidding? Our adversary is the god of this eon. He is worshiped in Christendom as well as among the heathen. Everywhere is found his worship, except among the feeble few who to Christ are true. He it is who blinds the minds of unbelievers, so that the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God, does not irradiate them (2 Cor.4:4).

THE ADVERSARY'S STRATAGEMS

Satan could never blind men to the evangel by torturing them with miseries. That would drive them to Christ as a Refuge from his hands. He has learned far better than that. He can lead them on by filling their vision with a promise of prosperity. He does not gain their allegiance by siding with wrong. By propaganda for justice and peace he finds multitudes to applaud his measures and support his pretensions.

Such is his course with the unbelievers, especially with the self-righteous, church-going religionist. How does he behave toward the saints? Here also the danger lies in his strategy. The heart fails as we see multitudes of Christ's members become Satan's eager instruments for the reformation and moral uplift of mankind. Not only are they involved in sanitary politics and fleshly philanthropies, but the very "gospel" which is preached glides over the blood of Christ to a promise of bread and butter, better clothes, a cleaner and more prosperous career, and a respectable

standing in the community, all of which Satan will gladly give to those who will worship him. Christ's gospel bears no promise of temporal advantage in the world today. Instead, it may mean nakedness and poverty and ignominy. It brought all of these to the great apostle who is the example of its power.

But still more subtle are Satan's schemes to deceive the saints. With ingenious art he misplaces truth and presses the most precious portions of Scripture beyond their proper sphere. This passage will afford a good example. All saints acknowledge the power of the blood of Christ. In *God's* presence the blood is everything. But has it a place in this conflict? Does it avail in the sight of the Adversary? Is the blood our shelter from his arrows, our deliverance from his devices? For our protection in this warfare God has given us a spiritual armor. It consists of truth, righteousness, peace, faith. This is not the place for the blood. If these are lacking, the deepest appreciation of the potency of Christ's sacrificial death will not deliver us from the assaults of the powers of darkness.

This illustration will help to explain why some, who seem to give the blood a place we do not accord it now, fall in line with the Adversary's program and are deceived by his consummate imitations of physical and spiritual endowments. These are all latent in the sacrifice of Christ, but the time for their realization has not yet arrived. These graces are connected with an earthly allotment, not with the celestial holdings which belong to us. They are the Adversary's stratagem, intended to lure the saints from their celestial allotment.

OUR DEFENSIVE ARMOR

To correspond with our weakness, our panoply is composed of five pieces, truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation. These are figured by a girdle, a cuirass, sandals,

a shield, and a helmet. Let us remember that all of this is "in the *Lord*," not "in *Christ*." Our destiny is not at stake. It is altogether a matter of conduct and the present life. We have all of the spiritual graces which make up this armor in Christ. In Him we are righteous and justified. In Him we have peace with God. But this is not in view here. To win in this defense we must know the truth, we must act justly, we must practice peace with our fellow men, we must exercise faith, and then we will enjoy a present salvation from the assaults of the powers of darkness.

GIRDED WITH TRUTH

We need to know but little truth to be saved from sin. We need a thorough realization of God's revelation to be saved from Satan during our present life. Truth is first in this warfare. In these days truth is not only ignored but belittled. Satan's ministers are transfigured as dispensers of righteousness, but they oppose the truth. Without a certain measure of truth we will not even know of our celestial allotment. A mature grasp of God's present plans will give strength and readiness for action. It will give us assurance and steadfastness. Only this will keep us from being pushed from our position. It is the lack of truth which has left the heavenly allotment almost deserted. The saints are thieving Israel's physical and spiritual belongings instead of defending their own. Hence they lack the helmet of salvation.

THE CUIRASS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Righteousness in word and deed is our chief protection from the assaults of the spiritual forces of wickedness. It is figured by a complete covering for the thorax, not only a breastplate, but a backplate as well, so that the vital organs are well encased in a coat of mail. Wrong doing not only incurs the condemnation of men, but the accu-

sation of the spirit world, not to speak of the loss at the dais of Christ. The heavenly allotment cannot be enjoyed by those who act unjustly, and thus leave off this cuirass, and leave themselves open to the attacks of their malignant spirit enemies. It is only as we don this cuirass that we may receive the helmet of salvation from their attacks.

THE SANDALS OF PEACE

This is the most remarkable part of our panoply. Peace is not usually a part of conflict. Sandals are not armor. Yet, even among men, many a war was decided by peace. In World War I the outcome was largely influenced by the fact that Germany did not remain at peace with the United States. A country which is already fully engaged in battle is not fit to fight another enemy. If we engage in strife with mankind we will be unfitted for the fight with our real enemies. Sandals figure our contact with the earth, with humankind. To be saved in this warfare it is of the utmost value to know the truth of the conciliation, and to imitate God in His attitude toward the race.

The sandals of the readiness of the evangel of peace give us the positive side of the apostle's warning that it is not ours to wrestle with blood and flesh. It is a most difficult lesson to learn. There is so much friction with our fellow men; they are so blatant in their enmity to God, that it is difficult to maintain His attitude toward them, and refuse to antagonize the unbeliever. Yet this is essential to our celestial warfare. When this economy ends and the next begins the scenes will all be shifted. Then our celestial foes will be dislodged, and God will change His dealings with men. Peace will be replaced by indignation. Until then, let us not jeopardize our warfare by antagonizing those with whom He is at peace.

THE SHIELD OF FAITH

In ancient warfare two kinds of shields were used. A

small buckler parried the blows in a hand-to-hand conflict. A large shield, called a "door," fended the flying missiles of the enemy. Such a shield is ours, to protect us from the arrows of our enemies. One of the devices of ancient warfare was the use of elephants to dismay the enemy by their onslaught. For this a counter measure was invented. Arrows were fitted with combustibles, lit, and shot into the thick hide of the animals, who became so terror stricken by the blazing darts and maddened by the burning wounds that they stampeded, doing more damage to their own side than to the enemy. Our spirit foes use such fiery arrows to wound and torture us. Only faith can fend us from them. Those engaged in this warfare for long will find their shields studded with the charred stumps of arrows which would have rankled in their flesh if faith had not caught their force and quenched their fire.

To sight and sense men seem to be our enemies, who cause us untold suffering and agony of spirit. It is not so. Faith insists that men are merely the instruments of unseen spirit forces which impel them, of which they are not aware. Faith refuses to fight with men because it believes and receives the conciliation. No part of our faith is more helpful in defeating the fiery shafts of our foes than this great truth.

We have insisted, and rightly so, that this passage does not affect our position in Christ, but deals with our conduct in the Lord. Our behavior, however, is always dependent on what is ours by faith. If we had no celestial allotment we would have no heavenly conflict. With the large shield of faith we take refuge behind that which is ours in Christ, apart from our own doings. One blazing arrow may be the certainty that our sins and offenses are such that we have no right or title to any allotment on earth or in the heavens. Only faith in God's declarations can quench this rankling insinuation.

RECEIVING THE HELMET OF SALVATION

Do not *take* the helmet of salvation! We should take the panoply and the shield, but it is only after we have taken the rest that we may wear the helmet. The girdle and the cuirass must be put on. The shield must be held aloft. Only then, and not till then, may we *receive* the helmet, which is salvation. It is God's award to those who are girded with truth and protected by righteousness, and shod with peace, and sheltered by faith. Without these, our heads must be bared to the assaults of our adversaries. With them we wear the helmet which proclaims us invulnerable.

This helmet is not salvation from our sins or ourselves, but from the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials. If all this were needed to save us from sin, would anyone be saved? This salvation is confined to our contacts with unseen spirit forces. It is limited to the defense of our celestial allotment. It is deliverance from the mighty powers of darkness which seek to rob us of the enjoyment of our allotment among the celestials. Let us remember that this is the Godward aspect of the secret. It does not deal with our relationship to Christ as members of His body, or our place in the new humanity. Those are the Christward and manward aspects of the secret. Here we have a special salvation from the malignant world of celestial spirits.

OUR OFFENSIVE WEAPON

Only as thus accoutered are we ready to wage offensive warfare. The sword, like the helmet, is to be *received*, not taken. Only those should handle it who are measurably qualified. With God's declarations we can rout all our foes who trespass on our allotment. Israel, even under Solomon, never conquered all the land God gave to Abraham. The saints today hold hardly any of the ground which is theirs according to God's Word. There is no other means

of regaining our lost heritage. The first chapter of Ephesians is the unbroken sword which will clear our allotment of all intruders.

This sword is not for saints or sinners, but for spirits. Let us not use it to cut and slash our fellow believers. Let us not wage war against our fellow men. Our enemies gain a great victory when they introduce sedition into the citadel of the saints. They acquire a vast advantage when we turn its edge against our fellow men. It is utterly devastating to take the phrase "the sword of the spirit" away from its context and use God's Word as a blade to destroy all and sundry. Its cutting and killing power is only for those whom God accounts His enemies.

THE CELESTIAL WARFARE

To sum up, our warfare is not with blood and flesh, but with the sovereignties, with the authorities, with the world-mights of this darkness, with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials (Eph.6:12). The celestial allotment (Eph.1:3,11) which characterizes the present secret administration is still in the hands of opposing spiritual forces, who will not be finally dislodged until the day of deliverance. These enemies of ours are active in opposing every effort of faith to grasp its patrimony and maintain its heavenly stand. Conduct conforming to this truth, any measure of attaining to the out-resurrection, as the apostle puts it in Philippians, will meet sore opposition from sinister spirit forces. To withstand them we are provided with the panoply, the shield and the sword. So may we stand.

Our conduct toward these dark spirit powers should be the opposite to that of our behavior toward our fellow men. There is a sword for the former, an olive branch for the latter. Men may be used by these spirit forces to antagonize us, but let us always look beyond the human agents. The

sword is not for them. If we wish to be saved from these foes let us furnish our armory with the girdle of truth, the cuirass of righteousness, the sandals of peace, and God will furnish the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit. Let us then stand, like Shammah (2 Sam.23:11,12) one of David's mighties, with all our armor on, with shield and sword in hand, and defend our celestial fields from the dark spirit powers which seek to rob us of the enjoyment of our heavenly lot.

A. E. Knoch

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2 Corinthians 10:4-6

4 **For the weapons of our warfare** are **not fleshly, but powerful to God toward** the **pulling down of bulwarks;** 5 **pulling down reckonings and every height elevating** itself **against the knowledge of God, and** lead**ing** into **captivity every apprehension** [MIND-effect] **into the listening of Christ,** 6 **and having** all **in readi**ness **to avenge every disregarding, whenever your listening may be completed.**

In accord with Romans 5:19 and Philippians 2:8 "the listening of Christ" is His listening unto the death of the cross. It is "the evangel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor.4:4). We are to be listening to His listening and as we complete our listening, we are made ready to avenge every disregarding of Christ's listening, that is, of every disregarding of "our evangel" (2 Cor.4:3).

Let us, then, be listening to the listening of Christ in His suffering and death and to what it accomplishes. Such bulwarks as the teaching of a "limited atonement" and the idea of an "eternal hell" are pulled down by the evangel of Christ's love, "judging this, that if One dies for the sake of all [in His listening to the instructions of His God and Father unto the death of the cross], *consequently* all die [as to what they are in Adam]" (2 Cor.5:14; Rom.5:12-19). "For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified" (1 Cor.15:22). D.H.H.

A CHAINED AMBASSADOR

WHAT a change from the mailed and weaponed warrior of the preceding passage is this chained ambassador at Rome, the capital of much of the world! At one stroke of His graphic brush God gives us a picture of the conciliation. Following so closely on the celestial conflict, it displays the startling contrast between our strife with spirits and our truce with men. At the same time that Paul stands, armored and armed, ready to repulse any encroachment on his celestial allotment, he also allows the Roman power to load his limbs with chains, although no act could be more defiant and provocative of war than such degradation heaped upon God's representative.

Paul was an ambassador from the high court of heaven. The treatment accorded him is an index of the attitude of men toward the government of God. Rome, the political center of their controlled empire gives God's plenipotentiary a chain. Any earthly power would have declared war. All the resources of a government are pledged to protect its officials in a foreign land. The very first announcement of hostilities demands that the ambassador be safely withdrawn. Any indignities to his person are an affront to the court from which he came. Paul's chain is an outrage, a challenge, a gauntlet thrown down to the God of heaven to provoke Him to hostilities. Will He not declare war? Will He not at least deliver His ambassador from his fetters?

He is for peace! All their maltreatment of His ambassador does not shake Him from this resolve. Nothing that they can do to Him or to the saints can alter God's settled attitude toward all mankind so long as the present administration is in effect. They are His enemies, and they neglect no

occasion to express their enmity. The peace is not mutual, except in those who have received the evangel. All that men can do to show their defiance of God only serves to emphasize His unalterable attitude. No provocation can rouse His wrath. No insult can wake His anger. His Son has died, and He is conciliated whether men respond or reject. His chained ambassador is the graphic illustration of this secret evangel.

The secret of the evangel is not the special subject of this epistle, but, like much of Paul's previous ministry, it is recognized and incorporated into this secret administration by brief allusions. In the previous paragraph it is specifically described as "the evangel of peace" (Eph.6:15). Here it is called "the secret of the evangel." One phrase connects it with the fifth of Romans, where it is fully set forth, and the other refers to the last paragraph of that epistle, in which its secret character is emphasized. Here Paul is merely mentioning it as the subject of their prayers for him, since he still continued to make it known. He does not need to explain it to those who had been under his ministry. Nor do we need to elaborate upon this marvelous evangel, as it is fully treated in the book, *The Mystery of the Gospel.*

In presenting the secret economy in this epistle, Paul is seen in a variety of characters. In general, the revelation is made by an *apostle* of *Christ* in the first three chapters, and the exhortations come from a *prisoner* of the *Lord* in the last three. He dispenses the secret as a *steward* (3:2) who makes the necessary arrangements for the household of faith. In the previous economy, while the nations were still at a distance from God, he was a *priest* in order to bring them nigh (Rom.15:16). Now they are so near they need no mediation. It is only in relation to the secret of the evangel, that he is called an *ambassador.* And such are we also, who pray men to be conciliated to God.

This title indicates the change in the apostle's attitude toward the world. At first he went forth as a *herald,* to *proclaim* the evangel of the kingdom. This demanded freedom to fare forth among all nations. Now that he is bound, such a message is impossible even if the Kingdom had not been rejected. Now that he is a bound *ambassador,* all that is left is *prayer.* This is the essence of the evangel today. We are to *pray* men to be conciliated to God. And the apostle beseeches the saints to pray for him. In the corresponding section of this epistle we have Paul's prayer for them (1:15-19). Now he desires their prayers in his apparently hopeless dilemma. His body is bound. That should not be changed. But the evangel must not be fettered. It must be free.

PAUL'S PRAYER ANSWERED

It soon became apparent that chains were no hindrance to the spread of the evangel. The petitions which arose at Paul's request were speedily answered. In writing to the Philippians, not long afterward, he said, "Now I am intending you to know, brethren, that my affairs have rather come to be for the progress of the evangel, so that my bonds in Christ become apparent in the whole Pretorium and to all the rest, and the majority of the brethren, having confidence in the Lord as to my bonds, are more exceedingly daring to speak the Word of God fearlessly" (Phil.1:12-14). His own audience came to him, and his example spurred on the preaching of others.

No other part of the Scriptures is so suffused with prayer as Ephesians. While the opening strain may not be an actual prayer, it is a lengthened benediction: "Blessed be the God and Father . . . Who . . . ." Then Paul gives thanks and prays (1:15-17). When does he cease? There seems to be no definite stop until, in chapter three, he begins again! He resumes his direct petition in the fourteenth verse

(3:14). In chapter four he beseeches the saints. This continues until these concluding paragraphs where he pleads that they pray for him. In no other epistle is the spirit of petition more prevalent. It is heartening, therefore, to know that this prayer was answered. Is it not prophetic of the time when all of these petitions will be fulfilled?

Now that the great apostle has poured out his life, the prayer for him is no longer needed. Yet the necessity for such a petition is much more urgent today than when it was first dictated by the spirit. The *secret* of the evangel is practically unknown. It certainly is not preached. It is shackled with the chains of ignorance and tradition and unbelief. The darkness is dense. Let the reader quietly consider the basis on which present day evangelism is carried on by the more enlightened and faithful preachers. The commissions of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are given as their marching orders. Even the twelve apostles never followed Matthew's commission, for they knew that it awaits the day when the King is on His throne. Mark's commission is definitely said to be fulfilled. Luke's was continued in the Pentecostal period, and is set aside along with the ministries of Acts.

It was the *rejection* of the Lucan ministry by the nation of Israel, as detailed in the Acts account, which opened up the opportunity for the new and distinct revelation, hitherto hidden. It is subversive of all sense to go back to the previous commissions or to inject them into the later unfolding. Once this is acknowledged, and the secret is grasped, its distinctness from all previous evangels is so pronounced that it seems impossible we should have mixed them all together. We cannot help following Paul's example, and implore the saints to persevere in prayer and supplication that expression may be given to the secret evangel which God has specially given to reveal His grace in this

secret administration. It is only because He is dealing in pure grace that anyone is saved.

TYCHICUS' COMMISSION

Tychicus' name is apt, for it is formed from the root HAPPEN. He it is who observes the things that happen to Paul, and who is sent to inform the saints of Paul's affairs in order to keep up the bond of affection which bound them to him. In Christ he was a "brother beloved." In the Lord he was a "faithful servant." What higher praise could be accorded him? It is a rare combination. Many a brother is loving, but lacking in faithfulness. Others are faithful, but lacking in love. But Tychicus was balanced, a splendid specimen, such as Ephesians should produce when it is apprehended by the heart and practiced in the life.

THE CLOSING BENEDICTION

What a balm this benediction brings! To float calmly on life's troubled sea needs anchorage well grounded in God and in His Christ. The Father's affection and provision for His family can only be appreciated by the faith which luxuriates in His love. All saints of all time have known a measure of God's beneficence. It remained for us, who deserved it least, to reach the pinnacle of His grace, and so discover the zenith of His love. Let us revel in it, so that this benediction may find a satisfying fulfillment in our experience.

Love is the keynote of this epistle, and on this it closes. Grace and love. Grace is for those who love. Some have thought that God's special favor rests on those who know, and surely God greatly values intelligence and will give it due reward. But knowing is not an end. It is a means. It leads to love. The realization of the surpassing love of Christ cannot fail to kindle a kindred emotion in our breasts. Those who have followed the unfoldings of this

epistle to this point should be lavish in their love for Him. The deeper we explore His fathomless affection the more our love becomes like His.

Have we drunk so deeply of His grace that we can echo the apostle's closing words? Some saints may have slandered us. Some may have done us serious wrong. Most of them would refuse our fellowship. What is our response? If they love our Lord in incorruption, *may grace be theirs in unstinted measure!* It is not the attitude of His beloved saints to us that counts, but their heart for Him. This is the supreme test. Let a man love Christ and I am for him, no matter what he thinks of me! Love incorruptible is the precious fruit of God's primeval purpose, the end and object of all creation, the crown of redemption and the very aura of God's glory.

CONCLUSION

The secret administration which is revealed to our hearts in Ephesians is dominated by one controlling thought, which is expressed in the Greek by the prefix sun, and in English by the term *joint.* The elect among the nations are associated with a chosen remnant of Israel for equal, ineffable, celestial glory. This is presented from three standpoints, according as it expresses our relationship to God, to Christ and to the saints. God, in His absolute deity, selected some out of the apostate nation for a celestial allotment, giving them the earnest of His spirit. The believers among the nations receive the same pledge, and are therefore *joint allottees.*

Christ forms this Israelitish remnant into His spiritual body, for the administration of His universal empire. The spirit had already incorporated believers among the nation and individual Israelites into that body, but now all physical distinctions are further emphasized as *joint members* from the beginning of Paul's calling.

A new humanity is begun in Christ, in which the saints among the nations are made fellow citizens, members of God's family, and a part of the temple in which He dwells. In these we become *joint partakers.*

Each of these three aspects touches another "mystery" from which we must carefully distinguish it. The celestial allotment flows from the full revelation of the mystery *of Christ.* His earthly sovereignty had been revealed. His heavenly headship gives Him a universal throne. "As it is now further revealed," Christ's celestial domains are our allotment.

Faith has already seated the members of Christ's body on their heavenly throne. But His vivification, ascension, and rest shall yet be our portion in fact as well as in faith. Our present bodies are not fit for that celestial scene. They must undergo the change which the *secret of the resurrection* sets forth. They will be changed from miserable, mortal, soulish, soilish bodies to imperishable, glorious, spiritual, celestial bodies like His.

Following Israel's defection Paul proclaims the conciliation, the *secret of the evangel,* by which all mankind is conciliated to God and the priestly supremacy of Israel is set aside. In Ephesians this is not only true for the world, but it applies to the saints as well. We who do not belong to the favored nation are fellow partakers with all the saints.

To fully enjoy the message of Ephesians and revel in the grace which it reveals, we should apprehend these previous secrets. The exaltation of Christ to universal dominion, in the heavens as well as on the earth, is essential to a realization of our celestial destiny and high heavenly honors. This is equally true of the change wrought by vivification as set forth in the secret of the resurrection. If Christ were not exalted to the highest heaven we would not care to make it our abode. If our bodies were not changed, we could not share it with Him. These secrets should be our delight before we enter the portals of Ephesians.

Love underlies it all. All was created in the Son of His love. The eons will not cease to unfold until all shall respond and satisfy the longings of His heart. To display His love and create a response in the breasts of His creatures is the purpose of the eons. Does not this explain the pain, the sorrow, the despair, and the death which seem to have blighted all His efforts? These are but the background, the contrast so essential for the revelation of their opposites. They are the bitter ingredients without which we cannot know the balm, the joy, the ecstasy, the ineffable delight which God has prepared for us. Adam would never have known good if he had not eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We can never know grace unless we first experience sin.

In Ephesians we see man at his worst and God at His best. There is the deepest degradation and the greatest grace. It is an epistle of superlatives. The last become first, the lowest highest. The dregs of earth become the elect of heaven. We are His achievement, a special and permanent display to exhibit to an admiring universe the multifarious wisdom and the immense wealth of grace there is in Him. He has made us an essential feature of His glory. He needs our worthlessness to reveal His wonders to the whole creation.

The infinite wisdom, the excessive power, the fathomless love which this secret administration displays will forever set God's name at the very pinnacle of fame, not only in the coming eon and the eon of the eons, but in the ceaseless cycles which follow the consummation, not only for the sons of Adam, for all their generations, but in the spirit world as well, with its myriads upon myriads, from the meanest messenger to the mightiest monarch, throughout the stellar universe. Such glorious grace, such boundless favor, appalls, prostrates, and overawes. Silence and adoration can only whisper:

Blessed, blessed, blessed be the
God and Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ, Who has blessed us so.
AND THERE WILL BE
NO END A. E. KNOCH

PEACE AND GRACE

As noted above, Ephesians ends as it began on the high note of God's blessedness. As this blessedness was built first on grace and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, so it points at the close to *peace* (joined by love with faith) from God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, with a final salutation of *grace* to those who are loving our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus God's blessedness begins and ends with grace, which is JOY.

This is wholly appropriate for an epistle so filled with grace. Passing by 1:6-8 for the present let us listen attentively again to 2:4-10 as translated in the proposed CV revision as follows:

4 **Yet ˙God, being rich in mercy**
Because of **His vast ˙love** with **which He loves us**
5 **(we also being ⁼dead to the offenses and the lusts),**
Vivifies us **together in ˙Christ**
(in *JOY* **grace ⁼you ˡare** one**s having been saved!)**
6 **And rouses** us **together**
And seats us **together among the celestials**
in Christ Jesus,
7 **That in the oncoming° ˙eons He should display°**
the ˡtranscendent **riches of His ˙***JOY* **grace**
in His **kindness** *on* **to us in Christ Jesus.**
8 **For** in ˙*JOY* **grace ˡare ⁼you** one**s having been saved**
through His **faith,**◊
And this is **not out of ⁼you;**
It is **God's** ˙approach **present,**
9 **Not out of** our **works, lest any**one **should boast°.**
10 **For His achievement are we being,**

Peace and joy be with us all. D.H.H.

2:8 His **faith:** as in 3:12, *cp* Ro3:24; Ga2:16, the faith of Christ Jesus.

THE EVANGEL OF WHICH PAUL IS NOT ASHAMED

> "For not being ashamed am I of the evangel: For it is being God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well. For in it God's righteousness is being revealed out of faith, for faith, according as it is written: Now the Righteous One, out of faith shall He be living" (Romans 1:16,17).

In Romans 1:16,17, Paul is evangelizing God's evangel concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, as it presently applies to us who are believing it. But he does not begin with this evangel itself. Rather he jumps immediately into its present happy ending. The evangel is continually being God's power for salvation to us.

Note that this happy ending does not relate to everyone, but only to those who are presently believing it. Paul will relate it to everyone soon enough and make it clear that the happy ending is for all, but right now he has only those to whom he is writing (and that includes us) in view—only those who are believing it while living in the present administration of God's conciliation. Consequently the happy ending here in Romans 1:16 is not the full happy ending. Still, this salvation anticipates that glorious ending of salvation which embraces all humans and brings everything to real and lasting good.

(I have to admit I like to read fiction which has a happy ending and generally look at the end before starting to read the story. I do not care to read those accounts which reflect present reality of outcomes because there is enough of that without reading about it for relaxation. But God's evangel is not fiction, and it has a happy ending in every respect, in truth and glory.)

NOT BEING ASHAMED

The apostle Paul, who is severed from all that was gain to him at birth, severed for God's evangel, is well aware that he has his critics. To make matters worse, these were his former friends, who see things as he himself formerly saw things. They were telling him that he ought to be ashamed of bringing such a message as he was bringing. This is clearly brought out in Romans 6:1 and 6:15 where we hear the gist of the criticism which was that what Paul was saying encourages sin.

APART FROM LAW

The foundation of this supposed criticism, of course, is that the evangel Paul was bringing is "apart from law" (Rom.3:21; 6:14). Law was seen as necessary for dealing with sin. Hence Moses says to Israel in presenting the words of law to them:

> "Do not fear, for in order to probe you the One, Elohim has come, and in order that the fear of Him should come over your faces, that you may not sin" (Exodus 20:20).

But no one was able to stop sinning. Paul himself testifies: "For we are aware that the law is being spiritual, yet I am being fleshly, having been disposed of under sin. For what I am effecting I am not knowing, for not what I am willing, this I am putting into practice, but what I am hating, this I am doing. Now if what I am not willing, this I am doing, I am conceding that the law is ideal. Yet now it is no longer I who am effecting it, but sin making its home in me" (Rom.7:14-17).

Yet here the critic might point to Jeremiah 30:31-34 concerning "a new covenant" in which Yahweh promises for Israel: "I will put My law within them, and I will write it on their heart . . . . And I shall not remember their sin any longer." So also the critic might remind him (quite unnec-

essarily) of the Lord's words in Ezekiel 36:27, "I will make it that you shall walk in My statutes and observe My ordinances, and you will do them." But this lasts only for a thousand years because human works of law are an important factor in their salvation.

However, the evangel Paul is evangelizing is *apart from law.* For indeed it reveals God's righteousness in all He does including making it so that sinful Israel will not sin for a thousand years by giving them what He did not give Adam or other people. That certainly does not reveal God's righteousness and needs itself to be justified. The only way it can be justified is by God not sparing His Son but giving Him up for the sinner's sake, and that entirely apart from the sinner's doing, and wholly through the rescue of that gratuitous joy which comes through Jesus Christ, our Lord (Rom.7:24,25).

THREE EVANGELICAL POINTS

Paul is not ashamed of this evangel which is apart from law, and with intense passion he lists three reasons for this:

1. "It is being God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it—to the Jew first and to the Greek as well" (Rom.1:16).

2. "In it God's righteousness is being revealed out of [the Righteous One's] faith, for [the believing ones'] faith" (Rom.1:17).

3. "God's indignation is being revealed from heaven on all the irreverence and unrighteousness of humans . . . not one [of whom] is being righteous—not even one . . . [so that] because out of works of law no flesh at all shall be justified in [God's] sight" (Rom.1:18-3:20).

Paul presents these points in reverse order to their development. The first is the present happy ending. The second is the glorious solution to the problem. And the third is the problem. (This is the order in which I like to

read fictional stories. But God's evangel concerning His Son is not fiction.)

There are at least two points of relief within the long account of the very disturbing problem presented in Romans 1:18-3:20. The first is that parenthetical outburst of Romans 2:16b, and the second is the declaration that despite the unfaithfulness of "some" Jews God will remain faithful to (keep *faith* with) His covenanted promises to that nation (Rom.3:3,4). The first employs the only usage of the word "evangel" and only reference to Jesus Christ in this long presentation of the problem, and the second brings up the question, "How can God do this righteously?"

In an attempt to translate as much as possible in accord with Paul's intended meaning as understood by those who received this letter, the CVNT makes 2:16b a *parenthesis,* and (while keeping 3:3,4 as in most other translations) we may take these verses as a puzzle that will be solved in 3:21-28.

In Romans chapter 2, Paul intensifies the problem of human irreverence and unrighteousness because of which in His indignation, God gives them over to the lusts and dishonorable passions and a disqualified mind, by bringing in the matter of God's righteous judgment. How does God judge the situation? He must judge righteously which means He must respond to it righteously in accord with their acts and grant eonian life to anyone who endures in good acts, and He must express His indignation and fury in continued ways against those who are being persuaded to unrighteousness. And already when he reaches 2:16, where Paul notes that even the hidden acts of humans are to be taken into account, it is made evident that no one can be judged as enduring in good acts. No flesh at all shall be justified in God's sight by doing works of law because no one endures in such acts, for not one is righteous—not even one. In 2:16 Paul has not finished this account of the

problem but intends to show indisputably that the Jew is included in it. But at this point he interrupts his argument by shouting out the solution. According to Paul's evangel, which is God's evangel concerning His Son for which Paul is severed, God's righteousness is not revealed through God's righteous judgment but through the faith of Jesus Christ, that is, through His listening to His Father's instruction unto the death of the cross. God's righteousness is manifested *through Jesus Christ!* And that results in the happy ending of all humans being constituted righteous (Rom.5:19). Paul could not wait until he gets back to the evangel and tells us of this solution and happy ending for all. But still he must make it clear that the problem is one that involves everyone including the Jew. And so he continues with Romans 2:17-3:20.

In this, however, he claims that God remains faithful to all His promises despite that fact that not one (Jew included) is righteous. How can God do that righteously? It seems unrighteous. Thus we are led to the solution of this entire problem starting with Romans 3:21 where Paul begins all over again with what he said in 1:17, but with an addition: In Romans 3:21,22 the solution is "for all." It still is a revelation (manifestation) of God's righteousness by means of the Righteous One's (that is, Jesus Christ's) faith, and it still is for (that is "on" but not yet "in") all believers. But, it is on us because it is for all. For all sin and are wanting of the glory of God.

With the problem of 1:18-3:20 and its solution of 3:21-28 in view we may now return to 1:16,17 where the solution and happy ending as it relates to believers at present is presented.

A NEW WAY OF SEEING THINGS

Whether or not the "out of faith" in Romans 1:17a refers to Christ's faith, (the Righteous One's faith of 1:17b), or to the believer's faith in Him, makes a great deal of difference.

Furthermore, whether the "for [into] faith" refers to the believer's faith focused on the Righteous One's faith, or it is meant to emphasize the "out of faith" (with both prepositional phrases referring to the believer's faith in Christ) is of utmost importance. Either Paul is evangelizing justification as God's achievement through His Son's death on the cross, or as our achievement by our believing in Christ. It is one or the other, not partly one and partly the other (no matter how little our part may be). Either justification reveals God's righteousness in making all humanity right by not sparing His own Son but giving Him up for the sake of all humanity (both sinners who presently listen and sinners who do not yet believe) or there is no evangel whatsoever.

There is Adam ["human"] and there is Christ Jesus ["Anointed Yahweh-Saviour"], and there is the God and Father of Christ Jesus and of us all. He speaks to us with a message that says "It is well." All is well because God, Who is altogether good, is operating all, and One Who sends His own Son in the likeness of sin's flesh and does so concerning sin so that He condemns sin in the flesh (Rom.8:3) to a death that puts it entirely out of existence. Yet also sin itself is found to have been beneficial to the glory of God the Father in that it makes His righteousness and love known.

This is God's evangel ["well-message"] concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is apart from law placed over us, and it is in every respect a message of joy.

Now joy be to God for it all.

Paul brings us this evangel in the first eight chapters of Romans. It is being God's power for salvation to everyone who is believing it, day by day and hour by hour, in every circumstance, for in it God's righteousness is being revealed day by day and hour by hour and minute by minute and second by second in every circumstance. This revelation of God's righteousness comes out of the Righteous

One's faith unto the death of the cross, and it is for our faith. That is why Paul is not ashamed of it.

For if the revelation of God's righteousness were sourced in our faith, the message would be nonsense, and there would be no solution to death and sin, and no joy for us or to God.

Let us, then, not insert ourselves into the revelation of God's righteousness where Jesus Christ, our Lord, belongs. Let us listen with faith to what God is saying in His well-message concerning His Son. "Are you not aware that to whom you are presenting yourselves [day by day and minute by minute] as slaves for listening, his slaves you are being, to whom you are listening . . . ?" (Rom.6:16).

GOD'S POWER FOR SALVATION

To Paul's critic and to Paul as Saul of Tarsus, and to Israel and those of the nations associated with them, and to most reasonable and wise and noble ones among humanity, what is required for a measure of order and a good life and peace is law. That seems the best that can be expected under present conditions.

But Paul says that the evangel he is bringing is apart from law, and those who obtain its joy and peace are not under law. For its joy and peace are gratuitous. Instead of law, the evangel itself is God's power for present salvation from wretchedness and meaninglessness and ignorance of what is going on in God's operation of all. What God says to Moses is presently replaced by what He says in His evangel concerning His Son.

What Paul says in Romans 1:16 he repeats in 1 Corinthians 1:18, as follows:

> **For the word of the cross is being stupidity indeed**
> **to** those who are **perishing**,
> **Yet to us** who are **being saved**
> **it is being God's power.**

And again in 1 Corinthians 15:1,2, our apostle says:

[y]Now I am making known to [=]you, brethren, the evangel which I evangelize[°] to [=]you, which also [=]you accept, in which also [=]you [˚]stand, [2] through which also [=]you are being saved[°], if [=]you are retaining the **word [a]which I evangelize[°] to [=]you, outside** and **except [=]you believe feignedly.**

To be believing and retaining the evangel, listening with faith to it, brings a continual spiritual power (God's power) for present salvation to us. This is a tremendous change from God's message of law and its demands imposed on Israel and those associated with that chosen nation—a change that seems dangerous and powerless to anyone who is acquainted with "human nature."

THE EVANGEL ITSELF

Nevertheless, Paul is not ashamed of the evangel he is evangelizing. And as with Romans 1:17, so with 1 Corinthians 15:3,4, this evangel leaves out demands on the human and places all on Christ:

For I give over to [=]you among the **first** thing**s what also I accept, that Christ dies for the sake of our [˙]sins** in **accord** with **the scriptures . . . . [4] and that He is entombed, and that He has been roused[°] the third [˙]day** in **accord** with **the scriptures . . . .**

Concerning what Christ does the apostle uses two fact verbs (one active, and the other passive) and a final verb which tells of a completed state: Christ dies. Christ is entombed. And Christ has been roused.

It is not misleading to read the fact verbs as *past* facts (Christ "died," and He "was entombed"), but that does not bring out the simple force of the act unencumbered by any inflection. The "when" of the act is not expressed by the verb, but only the shocking truth that Christ, the Anointed One of God, *dies.* This is God's evangel concerning His Son. It is a fact infused with divine power for

those who are retaining it and believing it, and listening to it over and over again.

That is Romans 1:16. It is the believer's special blessing. The believer is perceiving that God is working all together for good. But He is doing so by means of the faith of the Righteous One, Who dies for the sake of the sinner.

We are thus led to Romans 1:17, which needs all the listening we can give it.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ONE

Paul is not ashamed of the evangel: "for in it God's righteousness is being revealed . . . ." In this evangel, which is a message of God's power for present ongoing salvation to those who are believing it, is a revelation. Here we come to the solution to the third evil of Genesis 1:2, that of darkness. Darkness is replaced by light. Yet more than that: Darkness is put to an end by the revealing light of God's righteousness.

This is not righteousness *from* God, but rather the righteousness *of* One, and that One is God.

God's righteousness is not revealed in God's righteous judgments, for they are based on law, and no flesh at all can be justified by works of law. If no flesh at all shall be justified by works of law, then by human works of law God's righteousness cannot be brought to light. And darkness remains.

For the evangel to be God's power in the lives of the believers it must reveal God's righteousness. Paul speaks here of what the theologian calls "theodicy." But we do not need a Greek word. What we need is to know that Paul speaks of God's own righteousness in all that He does.

So after bringing out the inability of law works to justify ("make righteous") irreverent and unrighteous humans (Rom.1:18-3:20), Paul says "Yet now, apart from law, God's righteousness has been made manifest" (Rom.3:21).

Again, Paul is not speaking of righteousness *from* God given to us, but of "righteousness *of* God" being brought to light in the evangel. Let us not jump ahead and prematurely relate this righteousness to our justification. We will get to that when Paul brings us to that. But now we are concerned with God's righteousness and His justification. And that is revealed in the evangel.

At this point we must listen very carefully and undistractedly to what is written. What does the evangel say that brings God's righteousness to light?

God's righteousness is being revealed "out of faith, into [in the sense of "for"] faith."

If we take Paul as speaking here only of our faith (as he does in verse 5 and 12, and also in verse 16 where he uses the participle form of the verb form of "faith," that is, "faithing") we have already lost our way. Paul immediately cites Habakkuk 2:4 from the Septuagint: "Now the Righteous One, *out of faith* shall He be living." To repeat what needs often to be repeated, the faith here is the Righteous One's faith. God's evangel concerning His Son concerns His Son's faith, for God's Son is the Righteous One, and it is His faith that is the source of the revelation of God's righteousness.

FOR FAITH

We come, then, to our faith. The believer's faith is focused on the Righteous One's faith—or rather, as Paul presents it, the Righteous One's faith is directed into our faith. We are believing that the Righteous One, Jesus Christ, our Lord, listened in flawless faith unto the death of the cross. While we are still sinners He dies for our sakes. We are believing that we are spiritually baptized into His death (Rom.6:4), so that in that He was given up because of our offenses He was roused because of our justifying which was secured in His death (Rom.4:25).

Now, as brought out in Romans 1:17 (where Paul expounds a matter he has tremendous eagerness to bring), we are believing that *God's righteousness* is being revealed "out of" *the Righteous One's faith.* This is a priority in our faith.

God, Who is operating all, is righteous in all that He does, and this is revealed by means of the death of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

That is my understanding of this passage, but the test is in the scriptural text itself as translated as closely as possible to its original meaning. Here, then, is such an attempt:

ROMANS 1:13-17

13 [y]**Now I** am **not wanting** [=]**you to be being ignorant, brethren, that often I purpose**[°] **to come to**[d] [=]**you (and am prevented** ˙**hitherto) that I should have** [a]**some fruit among** [=]**you also, accord**ing **as** [+] **among the rest** of the **nations.**

14 **To both Greeks and barbarians, to both wise and foolish,** a **debtor am I being.** 15 **Thus** ˙this **eager**ness [ac]**of mine to** bring the **evangel**[°] **to** [=]**you also,** ˙who are **in Rome.**

16 **For not being ashamed**[°] **am I** of **the evangel:**

For it is being God's power [io]**for salvation to every**one ˙who is **believing** it**—to** the **Jew first, and to** the **Greek as well.** 17 **For in it God's righteousness is being revealed**[°] **out of faith,** [io]**for faith, accord**ing **as it is** [°]**written**[°]**:** [y]**Now the Righteous** One, **out of faith shall He be living**[°]**.**

D.H.H.

THE METAPHOR OF GOD BEING A CONSUMING FIRE

Hebrews 12:25-29 addresses Hebrew believers who entered into a covenant with God emphasizing the gravity of adhering to this covenant. *God's response to lawbreakers is likened to a consuming fire,* symbolizing His jealousy

and judgment. Note the similarities in the Deuteronomy passage below. Note also that God, being a consuming fire, *is not concerned with purifying sinners.* Rather, that consuming fire is adversative judgment on lawbreakers. God being a consuming fire is an echo of this passage:

"Guard yourselves lest you forget the covenant of Yahweh your Elohim that He contracted with you, . . . for Yahweh your Elohim, He is a devouring fire, a jealous El" (Deut.4:23-24).

"Beware! You should not refuse Him Who is speaking! For if those escape not, refusing the One apprizing on earth, much rather we, who are turning from the One from the heavens, Whose voice then shakes the earth . . . we may be offering divine service in a way well pleasing to God, with piety and dread, for our God is also a consuming fire" (Heb.12:25-29).

Over the years, quite a number of Universalists have written articles on the internet message boards concerning, "Our God also is a consuming fire." From this statement they contend that God is the lake of fire. They rework the idea of *God being a consuming fire* into stating that God is *purifying* all the sinners in the lake of fire to make them presentable to Himself. Such a theological concept detracts from the outcome of what Christ accomplished for all mankind in His one act of listening to what God had Him do (Romans 5:18,19). Christ's one act guarantees the justifying of every human's life and guarantees that every human will be made righteous! *fire excluded.* Not only that, but, Christ giving Himself a ransom for all humans per 1 Timothy 2:6, is the basis of God saving all humans (1 Tim.2:4), *fire excluded.* Not to mention that all in the heavens and on earth will be reconciled to God, *by the blood of Christ's cross* (Col.1:20), *not by fire.* We must never detract from what Christ has accomplished for all mankind and the entire universe. Tony Nungesser